

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	28/02/2008
			Consultation Expiry Date:	25/02/2007
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Jenny Fisher			1. 2007/5857/P 2. 2008/0147/L	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
Senate House Malet Street London WC1E 7HU				
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
1. Installation of diesel engine generator set in an acoustic enclosure to provide standby power to computer centre in Stewart House and located in existing service yard adjacent to refuse compactor and goods loading bay, including replacement of wall with metal framed acoustic barrier with louvred vents and gates (SCHEME 1). 2. Works associated with the Installation of diesel engine generator set in an acoustic enclosure to provide standby power to computer centre in Stewart House and located in existing service yard adjacent to refuse compactor and goods loading bay, including replacement of wall with metal framed acoustic barrier with louvred vents and gates (SCHEME 1).				
Recommendation(s):		Refuse planning permission Refuse listed building consent		
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission Listed Building Consent		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	07	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
			No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	<u>English Heritage</u> Authorised to determine the application 06/02/2008					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>	<u>Bloomsbury CAAC</u> object The Committee was concerned about the potential impact on the setting of the listed buildings which the new work would adjoin fronting onto Russell Square. The appellant appears to recognise that this proposal would be contentious and it is the same old story of the University degrading the area – sadly.					

Site Description

Senate House is a grade 11* listed building and within the University of London campus. The site is bounded to the south/west by Malet Street, to the north/east is Russell Square and a terrace (Nos. 25-30) of grade II listed buildings, to the south/east Montague Place, to the north/east is the pedestrian link between Russell Square and Malet Street. There is a public right of way through Senate House linking Malet Street with Russell Square, with a courtyard in front (Malet Street) and an east courtyard between the rear of the main Senate House façade and Russell Square.

The main entrance to Senate House is off Malet Street, there is also access from Russell Square.

Stewart House is part of Senate House on the Russell Square side. The University of London Computer Centre (ULCC) is located in the basement of Stewart House, providing computer services for the central university and various external clients.

Within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area

Relevant History

None

Relevant policies

Replacement UDP: S1/S2; SD6; SD7; SD8; B1; B3; B6; and B7

Camden Planning Guidance Dec. 2006: conservation areas; listed buildings; noise and vibration

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement

Assessment

Scheme 2 for a similar development has been withdrawn. 28/02/2008

Proposed is the installation of a new diesel generator to provide standby back up power for the continuity of data service in the event of a network power failure.

The generator is to be sited to the rear of the Grade II listed terrace at 25-30 Russell Square. A listed building consent application has been requested because of the degree of attachment to the boundary wall with the listed buildings behind.

The application has been advertised, and English Heritage consulted, on the basis that the works are to Senate House itself which is a Grade II* listed building. As this is not the case, and the existing building is not a pre-1948 curtilage structure, normal Grade II listed delegated powers apply. The site is also located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

The site is currently occupied by a workshop with a corrugated metal roof and a brick wall fronting the adjacent loading bay. To the north of the site is a structure containing a refuse compactor used by the University. Proposed is the replacement of the existing structure with a new generator enclosed within a metal louvred acoustic screen. The west elevation of the structure would increase in height by 800mm to take account of the replacement of the shallow pitched roof with a flat roof, whilst the east elevation would remain the same height backing onto the Russell Square properties.

Above the structure, within which the generator would be installed, a large stainless steel tube attenuation mechanism would be installed.

Whilst the enclosure containing the generator itself is broadly acceptable, the silencer located upon its roof is considered an unattractive and visually intrusive addition. It is acknowledged that the location of the proposed generator, despite being a well used pedestrian thoroughfare currently has a rather 'back of house' character, particularly given the proximity of the adjacent building containing the rubbish compactor and the loading bay in the side elevation of 31 Russell Square. Nevertheless it is considered that approval for the use of the site as proposed would reinforce this character in a harsh and utilitarian manner in public view. As such, the proposal is recommended for refusal by reason of the resulting adverse visual impact that would undermine the appearance and setting of the Grade II listed buildings on Russell Square and detract from the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

It is considered that the application fails to comply with UDP policy B3 g) which states that the Council will not grant planning permission for alterations that it considers harm the existing building or surrounding area and that building services equipment is appropriately located. Policy B7 will not approve development that fails to conserve or enhance the conservation area.

Noise/vibration

All of the buildings adjoining and overlooking the site are in University ownership and used mainly for teaching and ancillary purposes.

Council's Environmental Health Officer confirms that the nearest non university noise sensitive premises appears to be approximately 300m away on the corner of Gower and Montagu Streets. There is a residential property next door to the application site, but this is in control of the university. No objection subject to condition requiring the submission of a scheme of sound attenuation.

The University has considered a number of alternative sites, it was decided the site currently proposed would be the most practical and least objectionable.

The applicant has discussed the proposal with the Council's Conservation and Urban Design and Planning Officers. Scheme 2 has been withdrawn and the applicant has stated (e-mail 28/02/2008) that if the current application is refused, proposals in line with his recent telephone conversation with the C&UD Officer will be submitted. Offered opportunity to withdraw this scheme, having been advised that they will be recommended for refusal, but request a decision (opportunity for appeal if they decide to pursue that option).

Reason for refusal

The proposed silencer, by virtue of its size, materials, design and siting, would harm the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed buildings and undermine the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

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