

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		21/11/2007	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		01/11/2007	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Stuart Minty				2007/4278/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
Regent Square United Reformed Church Tavistock Place London WC1H 9RT				Refer to draft decision notice			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Amendment of planning permission dated 20th April 2007 (ref 2007/0979/P) for the erection of single storey ground floor extension to create cafe and community space for uses ancillary to the main church use; amendments involve alterations to main front window, the metal framed glazed screen to the main entrance foyer, alterations to position of the existing stained glass windows to the south & west elevations, and addition of a high level window to the west elevation to match the existing windows.							
Recommendation(s):		Grant Planning Permission					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	36	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		A site notice was displayed on 11/10/2007, expiring 01/11/2007. No representations have been received.					
CAAC/Local groups comments:		The Bloomsbury CAAC, The Friends of St George's Gardens and the Twentieth Century Society have been consulted. No responses have been received.					

Site Description

Regent Square United Reform Church is situated on the south-west side of Regent Square between a Georgian residential grade II listed terrace (1829) to the east and a 1960s office block to the west. The original church (1827) was commissioned by the National Scottish Church, designed by William Tite as a miniature version of York Minster. The church was orientated on a north-south axis, with twin 120ft high pinnaced Gothic style towers on the north elevation. Together with St Peter's Church on the north-east side of the square, the United Reform Church became a notable landmark in the area. In February 1945, the Tite designed Church suffered extensive bomb damage and was later demolished. In 1965, the existing Regent Square United Reformed Church was built.

The site falls outside a designated conservation area. However the Bloomsbury Conservation Area lies to the south, west and east of the site.

Relevant History

A number of pre-application discussions have been held with LBC officers to assist the applicant in refining the proposed design. An earlier version of the scheme (2006/2333/P), which included significant alterations to the tower, loss of original features at ground floor level and a full width projecting 'oriel box' punctuating the existing north facade was submitted as a planning application, but later **withdrawn** (July 2006), on the basis of concerns raised by officers, that the inherent design aesthetic of the existing church would be unacceptably compromised.

Following withdrawal of this application, a further application was **approved** in April 2007 (Ref: 2007/0979/P) for the erection of single storey ground floor extension to create cafe and community space for uses ancillary to the main church use, and various external alterations.

Relevant policies

Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006

S1-S3 – Strategic Sustainable Development; SD1 – Quality of Life; SD6 – Amenity; B1 – General Design Principles; B3 – Alterations and extensions; B6 – Listed Buildings; C1 – New Community Uses.

Assessment

The application seeks various design alterations to a previously approved scheme

It is considered that the proposed amendments, including the following, are acceptable on the basis that they do not compromise the original design integrity of the approved scheme.

Alterations to the main front window

This revision proposes to divide the main front window into four sections (of clear, double glazed units with minimal framing), rather than the originally proposed three. This is deemed acceptable on the premise that it improves the scale of this element of the front (northern) elevation. The artist Haluk Akakce has been engaged, to design a three dimensional piece which is to be installed behind the window.

Alterations to the metal framed glazed screen to the main entrance foyer (northern elevation)

Similarly, this proposed revision is considered to provide better visual definition to this contemporary insertion. The entrance screen is to be divided into six equal glazed panels, with a secondary frame around the entrance door, maximising views into this side extension, as well as providing a greater degree of visual separation between the church building and adjacent office building.

Alterations to the position of the existing stained glass windows to the south & west elevations

This is deemed to have minimal impact on the appearance of the respective elevations, primarily as they are not visible from the public realm.

Addition of a high level window to the west elevation to match the existing windows

Similarly, this alteration is not considered problematic as it is on a side elevation, which is not visible from the street scene. It is considered that the replacement window is consistent with the existing fenestration pattern on the western elevation with replacement brickwork to match existing.

Recommendation

On the basis of the above comments and assessment it is considered that the proposed amendments are acceptable and as such are recommended for approval.

