

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		26/11/2014	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		07/11/2014	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Mandeep Chaggar				2014/5777/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
Motoserv (London) Ltd 18 Acton Street London WC1X 9ND				Please see decision notice			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Change of use from a workshop (Class B1) to a live/work unit (Sui Generis) at ground and first floor level.							
Recommendation(s):		Refused					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	21	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		A site notice was displayed from 22/10/2014 – 12/11/2014 and a press notice from 23/10/2014 – 13/11/2014. No responses received.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		Bloomsbury CAAC – No comments received.					

Site Description

18 Acton Street lies on the north side of Acton Street, between the junction of Swinton Place and the sunken metropolitan railway to the east side of the site. The application site is a triangular corner plot which is occupied a Victorian house. The application proposal concerns the ground and first floor of the house, which has a light industrial use, with residential uses on the upper floors.

The application premises themselves have a light industrial use. The site was previously in use as a motorcycle repairs premises, with workshop on the lower floor and ancillary sales counter upstairs.

The site is not listed, but is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, it is not noted as making a positive contribution to the conservation area.

The site has a PTAL rating of 6b (very good) being located close to Kings Cross and St Pancras Station and numerous bus routes.

Relevant History

No relevant history.

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

Core strategies

- CS1 (Distribution of growth)
- CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development)
- CS6 (Providing quality homes)
- CS8 (Promoting a successful and inclusive Camden economy)
- CS11 (Promoting sustainable and efficient travel)
- CS18 (Dealing with our waste and encouraging recycling)
- CS19 (Delivering and monitoring the Core Strategy)

Development policies

- DP2 (Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing)
- DP6 (Lifetime homes and wheelchair homes)
- DP13 (Employment sites and premises)
- DP17 (Walking, cycling and public transport)
- DP18 (Parking standards and the availability of car parking)
- DP26 (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours)
- DP29 (Improving access)

Camden Planning Guidance 2011 & 2013

- CPG2: Housing (4.1 – 4.30)
- CPG 5: Town Centres, retail and employment (7.1 – 7.18)
- CPG 7: Transport (5.1- 5.22)
- CPG 8: Planning obligations (10.1 – 10.3)

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2011

London Plan 2015

NPPF 2012

Assessment

Proposal:

Permission is sought for the change of use from an employment use as a motorcycle workshop to a live/work unit (Sui Generis) at ground and first floor level.

Assessment:

Land use

The site was previously in use as a motorcycle repairs premises, with workshop on the lower floor and ancillary sales counter upstairs. It measures approximately 96sqm in total area.

The proposal would see the existing workshop remain on the ground floor and the first floor in residential use. The access to the residential use would be through the workshop.

Policy DP13 of the LDF has a broad presumption against the loss of employment floorspace in the Borough, particularly those sites that are suitable for flexible B1a/B8 floorspace. DP13 states that the Council will only support the provision of live/work premises provided they do not:

- h) result in the loss of any permanent residential units; or
- i) result in the loss of site in business or employment use where there is potential for that use to continue.

The supporting text clarifies at paragraph 13.5 that where a non-business use is proposed a thorough marketing exercise, sustained over at least two years must be provided to show no realistic demand to use the site for employment uses.

The proposal would not result in the loss of permanent residential units, however it is considered that the scheme would result in the loss of business or employment use where there is potential for that use to continue.

The applicant has submitted a statement demonstrating that the proposal will generate more jobs providing 8 computer work stations in comparison to the previous light industrial use (2 jobs). However, no evidence in the form of a marketing exercise has been submitted to demonstrate that there is a lack of demand for the site in its current form. It is considered that the statements provided do not sufficiently justify a change of use away from employment use. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed floorspace of 77.64sqm for the workshop would severely restrict the viability of the site for future users, and further erode the prospect of retaining the unit as valuable employment use.

The large proportion of space lost to the living element (67.77sqm) compared to the work element of only 77.64sqm would also provide a precedent for any future proposal for a fully residential use on the site. With such a small amount of space being retained for the work element it would become all but unusable for the majority of potential future users and could result in a contrived marketing exercise being carried out to comply with the requirements of DP13. Therefore, if the Council were to accept the live/work unit in this location, it would be difficult to sustain a reason for refusal for a future application at the site for wholly residential uses. As such, the proposed use is considered in the context of being a non-business use.

Residential accommodation

The Council considers live/work unit proposals in the same way as housing units, as specified in paragraph 13.9 of the LDF Development Plan document. In terms of the living accommodation being proposed, it is of sufficient size to accommodate a four person, two bed unit; according with CPG residential space standards. All rooms are regular in size and shape while also providing sufficient outlook and ventilation to future occupiers.

With regard to lifetime homes, the applicant has submitted a statement detailing how the proposed scheme will adhere to the lifetime homes standards outlined in Policy H7. Given the constraints of the existing building, it is acknowledged that not all standards will be able to be complied with in their entirety. However, where applicable, the applicant has demonstrated a willingness to adhere to the lifetime homes standards and this is welcomed.

External alterations

The building is an end of terrace Victorian house that has been significantly changed on its ground floor, front elevation: an industrial style, metal roller shutter door has been added. The proposed live/work unit will involve removing the shutter door and replacing it with a new glazed access frontage. There are other similar glazed frontages in the street and the proposed external alterations would not be out of character with the conservation area.

Transport

With regards to cycle provision, Camden's Parking Standards for cycles (Appendix 2 of the Local Development Framework Development Plan document), states that 1 storage or parking space is required per residential unit.

The live/work unit proposed is considered to require 1 cycle storage/parking space. There is sufficient space in the proposed parking/storage area to accommodate a vertical bicycle space. Therefore this requirement is considered to have been satisfied.

The site has a PTAL rating of 6b, being located very close to numerous bus routes, the area is also within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). It is therefore considered that the proposal would need to be car-free secured by way of s106 agreement. In the absence of an acceptable scheme, this forms a further reason for refusal of the application. An informative will denote that without prejudice to any future application/appeal, in an acceptable scheme this would be able to be overcome by way of entering into a s106 legal agreement.

Amenity

As there are only internal works proposed there would be no impact on the amenity of any adjoining neighbours.

Recommendation: Refuse Planning Permission