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Planning and Regeneration
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FAO Jennifer Chivers

22 October 2015

Dear Jennifer,

Response to objection to planning application (2015/4180/P) relating to works at 21 Bedford Square, WC1B 3HW.

We understand that on the 15 October, the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee (BCAAC) lodged an objection in relation to planning application 2015/4180/P. The application seeks approval for:

"Internal and external refurbishment works including repair and rebuilding of chimneys; repairs to roof and new external plant including 6 x roof mounted condenser units and 1 x AC Unit in front pavement vault."

Within their objection, the BCAAC has raised concerns over the inclusion of new air conditioning units on the roof of No. 21 Bedford Square and within a vault. These concerns regard noise, the demolition required to accommodate the pipework and louvered face to the basement pavement vault door. We respond to each of these concerns in turn below and provide further clarity to demonstrate how the heritage significance of the building has been carefully considered throughout the design of the proposal.

1. The AC units will be noisy.

Response

The Noise Impact Assessment submitted alongside this application confirms that the proposed AC units will meet Camden's Policy requirements. The assessment identifies the nearest noise sensitive receptors to be windows on Gower Mews Mansions located 35 metres away from the proposed roof plant location. It concludes that the predicted noise level would comply with the level recommended by BS8233:2014 for

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sleeping in bedrooms at night. Compliance with Camden's criterion is demonstrated in the Assessment and therefore no further mitigation measures are required.

2. Demolition will be required to accommodate the pipework.

Response

Very minor demolition will be required to accommodate the pipework associated with the installation of the AC units. Only one hole is required to be core drilled through the elevation of the Coach House which will be approximately 100mm x 100mm. Other works associated with installing the AC will utilise existing risers and also existing notches in the floor voids.

These AC units are vital to the successful functioning of the building as office space and the amount of demolition required is minimal. It is considered that the benefits of securing the building's continued use as office floorspace outweigh the small level of harm proposed where the hole is needed.

3. A louvered face is proposed to the basement vault door

Response

This proposal has been revised due to the sensitivity associated with works to the basement vault door. A louvered face is no longer proposed and the doors will remain as existing, with repair and renovation works carried out where necessary. The air conditioning unit is now proposed to be located in a less sensitive location in the rear lightwell of the property, as shown on drawings 21-P000 A 'Proposed Basement' and 21-P06 A 'Proposed Rear Elevation 1' available for viewing online (uploaded by Camden Council as of the 21 October). The AC unit will not be located in the basement vaults.

General comments.

Similar schemes within the Square have been approved in recent years, such as approved application 2013/7803/P for refurbishment works to No.26-27 Bedford Square. These applications demonstrate the increasing need to install AC units in order to improve the functionality of the buildings as office space.

The building was last refurbished in the late 1980's, following permission received in 1988 for an application at numbers 21/25 Bedford Square. Since then, the building has become outdated and tired in appearance and not fit for purpose as a modern and functional office space. The proposals are for a comprehensive set of refurbishment works to be carried out with the utmost regard to the sensitivity of the Grade I Listed building. The implementation of the refurbishment works would safeguard the long-term use of the building for office space, which is in-keeping with the surrounding uses within Bedford Square.

If you have any further questions in relation to the application then please contact my colleagues Vicky Woollett (020 7303 3053 / vwoollett@deloitte.co.uk) or Ellie Bird (020 7007 3891 / ebird@deloitte.co.uk).

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Yours faithfully,



Leonie Oliva

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