



Specialist Yoga Studio

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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF USE FROM CLASS A1 TO CLASS D2 WITH
ANCILLARY A1 AND D1 USES

**100-102 CROMER STREET
LONDON, WC1H 8BZ**

for

REBEL STUDIO LIMITED

23 November 2015

Planning Validation
London Borough of Camden
5 St Pancras Square
London
N1C 4AG

23 November 2015

Dear Sirs

100-102 CROMER STREET, LONDON, WC1H 8BZ

100-102 Cromer Street is a double retail unit arranged over ground and basement. The commercial units form part of Cromer house, which is not listed but is marked as a positive contributor to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, Sub Area 13: Cartwright Gardens/Argyle Square. The subject site is near but outside of the Kings Cross and Euston growth area. It is within the Central Activity Zone, considered a highly accessible area.

The application is for a change of use of the subject property from its current Class A1, to Class D2, with ancillary A1 and D1 use. The proposed uses are shown on the attached existing and proposed floor plans for both ground floor and basement.

History of Property

Cromer House is one of a series of philanthropic tenement blocks on Cromer Street, built by the East End Dwelling Company in the 1890's, to its east is Whidbourne Street and Tonbridge Street to the west. The four storey residential block is red brick and the small shop units at street level boast red stucco. Both the residential and commercial units are owned and managed by One Housing Group.

The subject site is currently vacant, Myesha Boutique Limited previously occupied it from 2006 as a retail store, until they went out of business and surrendered their lease in August 2015. Since then, the property has been marketed online and on site as Class A1, but hasn't attracted significant demand for A1 usage during this time.

Surrounding Area

The area is primarily residential, owing to several Cromer street facing mansion blocks. Immediately opposite Cromer House is the grade 2 listed building, Holy Cross Church, which was consecrated on 1st November 1888.

The adjoining commercial units that make up Cromer House are Romzan Halal food store at 98, which is a Class A1 convenience store, and Allen Goldstien Limited at 104 is a Class A2 estate agents. Units 106-108 are currently vacant and have an A3 land use.

The disjointed parade of commercial units on Cromer Street falls outside of all designated Neighbourhood Areas, (the closest being Somers Town

Neighbourhood Area), and therefore the loss of an A1 use on Cromer Street is not policy significant. Indeed, there are a number of commercial properties on Cromer Street that have been granted full planning permission to change their use from A1: South Camden Access Point at numbers 82-84, from A1 to D1 on 25/02/2000; Bismallah at number 80, from A1 to D1 on 23/06/2010; and The Arts Catalyst at numbers 74-76, from A1 to D1 with ancillary B1 and A1 use, on 04/02/2015. The latter application also demonstrated the lack of interest in A1 use on Cromer Street, which is relevant to CPG 5 (5 Small Shops) Town centres, retail and employment.

DP10 – Helping and promoting small and independent shops, maintains that the council will grant permission for the loss of shops in the Central Activity Zone only if ‘the replacement use will also contribute positively to the local area,’ and provide essential services for residents, businesses, workers and businesses, of which, ‘community facilities’ is included. Additionally, alternative sites for A1 use must exist within the area deemed necessary to provide a substitute for the loss of a shop. Figure 1. illustrates this radius, which includes parts of the growth areas of Kings Cross and Euston, as well as areas with multiple A1 sites such as the Brunswick Centre. Policy CS7 – Promoting Camden’s centres and shops, states that ‘a total of 20,000m² of additional A1 retail floorspace’ will be created through the kings cross development alone, which more than satisfies DP10.

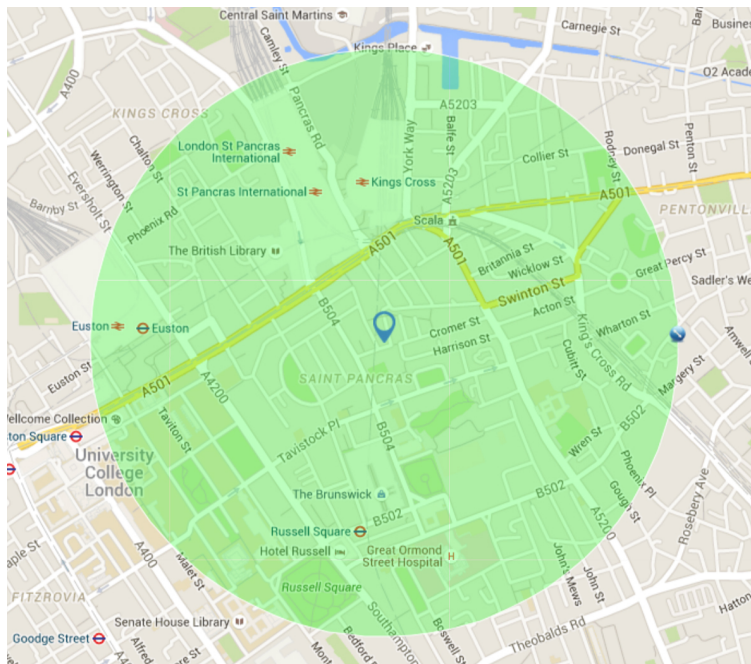


Figure 1. 800m Radius of 100-102 Cromer Street, WC1H 8BZ

Planning History

19/09/1977 – Planning permission granted for the change of use from café to retail shop.

01/07/1980 – Planning permission granted for the change of use from shop to site office and welfare accommodation.

30/11/1982 – The continued use as a site office and welfare accommodation.

Proposal

Rebel Studio has been running high quality group yoga classes in West Hampstead for just over a year, which are currently taught in a multi-purpose space and have gained a strong reputation within the London yoga scene. Both Bertie and Jacqui have over 12 years individual experience. Bertie is a registered Osteopath based in Highgate who has specialised in the treatment of yoga injuries for over 3 years and with the continued increase in the popularity of yoga, the demand for such a service is rapidly increasing.

They intend to amalgamate these elements to create a specialist yoga studio, offering a variety of high quality technique based yoga classes, catering for different levels of experience and providing expert Osteopathic diagnosis and treatment for injuries and their prevention. Such a centre would strongly support policy CS16 – Improving Camden’s health and wellbeing, by having substantial physical, mental and wellbeing benefits on clients and patients, going beyond those of a traditional yoga studio. The name ‘Rebel’ derives from our unique approach, which fundamentally differs from the majority of yoga studios. Instead of relying on outdated myths and traditions we combine yoga with Osteopathic and biomechanical evidence based medicine to help treat and prevent injury and maintain the health and vitality of our student’s bodies and minds. We should not be confused with the company 1Rebel, or their approach, which is that of a fast paced, loud and intense fitness studio.

Whilst the majority of business will be D2 use, D1 ancillary use is required for a small Osteopathic treatment room, secondary to the main use. Additionally, there will be a defined A1 retail area in the basement where yoga clothing and other apparatus will be on sale, as well as light snacks and drinks.

DP13 – Employment premises and sites, seeks to retain premises that are in business use. The proposed use would not result in the loss of employment opportunities and does not alter the building, so if required the property could easily be converted back to A1 use if necessitated.

Core Strategy Policy CS8 – Promoting a successful and inclusive Camden economy, supports a mix of employment facilities and types, including the provision of facilities for small and medium sized enterprises such as Rebel Studio. They intend to teach 3 daily yoga classes, with a maximum capacity class size of 18 and take approximately 4 patients a day. Whilst it is not considered that the proposed subject use will result in significant increases in users compared to a typical A1 use, the site’s highly accessible location (within the Central Location Zone yet outside of the growth areas) is indication that the proposed use is an appropriate scale of development encouraged by policy CS1 – Distribution of growth, that will have positive social and physical benefits to the surrounding community.

Community

Policy CS9 – Achieving a successful central London, covers Camden’s Central London area, which forms part of London’s Central Activities Zone, where the subject premises is located. Due to the high accessibility of this part of Camden the council will encourage growth here and will support the concentration of community facilities. Similarly, DP15 – Community and leisure centres, seeks to encourage the creation of new community and leisure facilities to meet community needs. CS7 states that ‘Kings Cross is amongst the most deprived wards in the country and we plan to include at least one “community class” on our weekly schedule at a significantly reduced rate, making it accessible to those with fewer means, further ‘balancing the economic, social and cultural role in the interests of the local community.’

DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours, highlights potential harmful factors to neighbouring occupiers such as noise and vibration (d) and waste disposal (i). Such elements are also seen in DP12 – Supporting strong centres and managing the impact of food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses.

Noise generated will not be unreasonably loud or excessive in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and will not exceed that of normal A1 use. We will seek to attenuate the impact of noise pollution, DP26 (g) by acoustic insulation at ceiling level below the residential units as well as secondary glazing, whilst not affecting the external appearance of the building in any way. Appropriate ventilation will remove the need to open windows and therefore remove any fluctuation in noise output to local residents and businesses. This will have further benefits in energy efficiency and support CS13 – Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards, ensuring that the business would minimise their energy consumption.

Rebel Studio will meet the needs of the local residents, workers and visitors by providing high quality classes, treatments and physical health education, improving their quality of life, providing variety, vibrancy and choice to the street without compromising the amenity of the community.

There is no commercial bin store on Cromer Street. A contract will be arranged with the local authority to establish a waste and recycling collection service that respects DP26 (i) and policy CS18 – Dealing with our waste and encouraging recycling, therefore preventing any negative impact.

The proposed hours of operation for the D2 allocated space are 7am - 10pm Monday - Friday and 8am - 8pm Saturday and Sunday. The D1 clinic room would be 9am - 7pm Monday - Friday and 10am - 5pm Saturday and Sunday.

Policy CS10 - Supporting community facilities and services, aims to support and create ‘a connected Camden community where people lead active, healthy lives, which seeks to encourage a greater sense of community’. As mentioned above, One Housing Group owns and manages the residential flats above the subject site, as well as the adjacent retail units of Cromer House. They

have carefully considered our proposal and its effect on the local environment and their residents and have concluded that it would be of great benefit to the area and its community.

Kings Cross and its neighbouring ward Somers Town and St. Pancras are listed in Policy CS16 as the areas of poorest health. The addition of this integrated wellness/healthcare/yoga centre would provide individual attention in group classes and expert advice on the body's biomechanical requirements for a variety of ages and backgrounds, significantly increasing the health and wellbeing of Camden's population. Our ideology is analogous to Policy CP16's guidance to enhance GP services in the most deprived wards, 'to provide more detailed advice and individual support to promote exercise and healthy eating'. Its position in the deprived Kings Cross Ward may also help tackle the existing health inequalities in the borough. We plan to provide people with the opportunity to meet, learn, develop skills and interests and socialise and by doing this, help improve their quality of life. Healthy light snacks, fresh juices and nutritious smoothies will be sold at the studio to make healthy eating easier.

Transport

The subject site has been measured as having a PTAL rating as 6b, making it extremely accessible by multiple modes of transport. The London Plan adopted in July 2011 encourages the support and enhancement of arts, culture, sport and entertainment located in sites where there is 'good existing or planned access by public transport. Due to the central location and its proximity to Kings Cross Station, St. Pancras, and Euston, we expect virtually all visitors and staff that are not local residents or workers to travel by public transport, which covers DP16 - The transport implications of development. Additionally, we predict a significant proportion of our users to come from local businesses and the majority to be local residents, cutting journeys and helping ease congestion, supporting policy CS3 - Other highly accessible areas, as well as DP17 - Walking, cycling and public transport. Encouraging 'walking and cycling and less motor traffic promotes an active and healthy lifestyle', policy CS11 - Promoting sustainable and efficient travel, and aims to reduce pollution in the borough.

We expect that due to the site's highly accessible location within the Congestion Charge zone, there will be no negative impact on residents parking, satisfying DP18 - Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking. We will actively encourage cycling to and from the studio, although the size of the subject site does not warrant extra provisions for bicycle parking or indeed any other categories of parking spaces, Camden Development Policy Appendix 2 - Parking standards.

Design

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, contains Class J development '*consisting of a change of use of a building from a use—(a) falling within Class A1 (shops) to a use falling within Class D2 (assembly and leisure)*' which is not permitted under J.1(d) as 'the

building is on article 2(3) land'. This indicates that government supports the principle of A1 to D2 change of use, but seeks to uphold Conservation Area's (Bloomsbury) DP25, 'to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area.' We will not be altering any of the external fabric of the building and therefore our proposal supports this.

Change of use from A1 may be allowed as long as the development contributes to 'local character, function, vitality, viability and amenity.' The change of use from A1 to D2 will not impose any external alterations or extensions so the overall character of the building and appearance of the area will not be affected. Supporting CS14, 'Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage,' we will bring back a vacant unit within a conservation area which otherwise could have become derelict and suffered from lack of repair. Helping to conserve a building listed as a 'positive contributor' fully complies with DP25.

The ground floor windows will remain transparent so that the studio can be viewed from the street during and after business hours, to contribute to the street frontage, DP24 – Securing high quality design, which will also increase the sense of security, as suggested in policy CS17 – Making Camden a safer place. During class times, opaque blinds will be partly drawn to obscure the people inside. An internally fitted security alarm will offer a deterrent to intruders and extra security measures to fortify the entrance to the basement will be taken to protect all valuable items.

One Housing Group has accepted our offer and Heads of Terms for the lease have been drawn up, completion is dependent on planning permission being granted.