

PLANNING STATEMENT

IN RESPECT OF A CHANGE OF USE OF THE BASEMENT TO USE CLASS D2

and

REINSTATEMENT OF GROUND FLOOR AS AN INDEPENDENT COMMERCIAL UNIT

4A STREATHAM STREET, LONDON WC1A 1JB



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4266/Planning Statement – December 2016

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and REINSTATEMENT OF GROUND FLOOR AS AN INDEPENDENT COMMERCIAL UNIT**

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1.00 Introduction

- 1.01 This statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the change of use of the basement floor of 4A Streatham Street, London WC1B 3QA, to D2 and the return of the ground floor unit to separate commercial use within use classes A1, A2 and B1.
- 1.02 It has been prepared on behalf of Revolution Personal Training Services / JA Fitness Limited, who intend to occupy the basement space and establish a further personal fitness and training studio to supplement Revolution's existing successful studios in Islington, in the City and in Brighton.
- 1.03 The proposed change of use will restore a currently unused area to active economic use, providing employment and a service to the residents and workforce in the area.
- 1.04 The restoration of an independent commercial unit on the ground floor will provide further employment or retail space and an active street frontage.

2.00 Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.01 The application site is 4A Streatham Street, London WC1B 3QA, a commercial unit forming part of the mixed-use development at 12 – 18 Bloomsbury Street.
- 2.02 The development is residential on its upper floors with mixed commercial uses (retail / café) on the ground and basement floors.
- 2.03 The surrounding area comprises predominantly residential and office buildings, with varied commercial accommodation (including shops, cafes, bars, restaurants, delicatessens etc) on the street frontages. The British Museum lies less than 200m away.
- 2.04 The part of the development that is the subject of this application has been vacant for some time, having previously been used as a restaurant (the original Wagamama's).

3.00 Planning History

- 3.01 Planning consent 92/00649 permitted the change of use of the ground floor (“shop unit 9A”, now known as 4a Streatham Street) to A3 use, ancillary to the restaurant use in the basement, together with alteration of the shopfront.
- 3.02 Otherwise, there is limited planning history on the Council’s record, mostly relating to the overall development at 12-18 Bloomsbury Street. 01/04149 permitted works to the railings and gate. 00/04436 permitted replacement of windows and doors in the residential areas. 97/05043 permitted modification of the forecourt. 93/80002 permitted restaurant signage.

4.00 Proposed Development

- 4.01 The change of use of the basement floor to Use Class D2 will allow the establishment of a personal training studio. The proposed occupier (and applicant) is Revolution Personal Training Services / JA Fitness Ltd, who offer personal fitness training to clients on an individual basis.
- 4.02 Revolution’s operation differs from most gyms as all clients have a one-on-one session with their personal trainer. The number of staff (i.e. employment generation) is therefore significantly higher than a “normal” gym, with one trainer to each client. Client visits are by appointment only, and therefore controlled.
- 4.03 The proposed use provides a beneficial and complementary use to the area, for which there is a strong need. The proposed gym will provide a service to both local residents and those who work locally. It will provide employment for up to 25 trainers.
- 4.04 The reversion to a commercial use at ground floor will allow this part of the building to also return to full economic use. Planning consent is sought for a range of uses, namely A1 (shop), A2 (financial and professional services and B1 (offices), to allow the widest reasonable use of the space, commensurate with its location on this pedestrian street and below residential property.
- 4.05 No alterations are proposed to the exterior or appearance of the building.
- 4.06 Access is afforded through the existing doorways, both of which are of more than adequate width and have flush thresholds. Access to the basement for those of restricted mobility is provided by a stair-mounted platform lift.

5.0 Planning Issues

- 5.01 The main planning issues to be considered are;
- Loss of A3 (restaurant) floor space
 - Appropriateness of D2 Use
 - Acceptability of proposed ground floor commercial uses
 - Employment
 - Effect on Residential Amenity

- 5.02 There is no shortage of restaurant space in the vicinity. Restaurant use is recognised as being potentially detrimental to the amenity of the residential users above (as noted in the conditions to planning consent 92/00649, governing the ground floor use). In addition, the basement location is not ideal for restaurant use, as it is remote from the street, and an alternative use without the need for high levels of public access is preferred. Accordingly, there should be no objection to the loss of A3 use.
- 5.03 The proposed change of use to D2 (gym) is appropriate because it would provide much needed support facilities for the area's workers and benefit residents. It makes good use of the space, retaining or increasing employment and enhancing the existing beneficial mix of commercial uses. Private sports and health clubs are important in meeting sport and recreation needs and promoting health and wellbeing.
- 5.04 The proposed ground floor commercial uses (A1, A2 and B1 office) are all appropriate for the area. None of these uses will impact negatively on residential amenity. The ground floor was previously in retail use. The independent operation will reintroduce activity at street level and providing additional employment.
- 5.05 The gym is likely to provide employment for in the region of 25 people, with further jobs created in the new commercial unit at ground floor.
- 5.06 The effect of the proposed change of use on residential amenity should be positive. The kitchen extracts will no longer be required. Late-night noise and activity will be reduced. It is unlikely that any noise from the gym will be heard at all – it is two floors below residential accommodation. In any event, the proposed use differs significantly from a larger gym. Noise is limited, as individual clients work directly with personal trainers, with no large classes or group activities and the associated loud music. Indeed, the business has operated for the last 10 years within the Business Design Centre in Islington, surrounded by office users and opening directly onto the principal exhibition hall, with no detrimental effect on amenity.

6.00 Summary and Conclusion

- 6.01 The proposed change of use will restore a currently unused area to active economic use, providing employment and a service to the residents and workforce in the area, with no detriment to the amenity to existing residential amenity or the occupiers of adjoining properties.
- 6.02 It is therefore requested that planning permission be granted.