

JO/P6638
24th March 2017

Development Management Planning Services
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Argyle Street
London
WC1H 8ND

For the attention of Elaine Quigley

Dear Sir/Madam,

2-8 Bloomsbury Street and 52-56 New Oxford Street, Bloomsbury Plaza, London, W1
Section 73 Application to vary Condition 3 of Planning Permission 2015/3749/P
Planning Portal Ref: PP-05941753

On behalf of our client, Blenheim House Construction Limited, we write in support of an application to vary Condition 3 of planning permission 2015/3749/P at 2-8 Bloomsbury Street and 52-56 New Oxford Street (Bloomsbury Plaza).

We confirm that the application has been submitted online via the Planning Portal and the requisite planning fee of £195.00 has also been submitted to the Council online.

Site Location

The site is comprised of 2-8 Bloomsbury Street and 52-56 New Oxford Street, which are not listed but are located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The building faces on to the north-eastern corner of the junction with these two streets, and occupies a prominent position with facades stretching back along both Bloomsbury Street and New Oxford Street.

The properties are comprised of basement, ground and first to fourth floors, with a large plant room at roof level. The ground floor is a mix of offices (Class B1) and retail units (Classes A1 and A3). The upper floors are all in office (Class B1) use.

Externally the facades are primarily mock classical facades. Along New Oxford Street the facades are finished with white render/stucco with moulding details, and along Bloomsbury Street the dominant material is red brick. The mansard roof structures are slate tiled.

Relevant Planning History

Planning permission ref. 2015/3749/P was granted on the 17th December 2015 for the following development at Bloomsbury Plaza:

'Alterations to ground floor façades on both New Oxford Street and Bloomsbury Street frontages, including new shopfronts and new office entrance portico associated with the refurbishment of the building, alterations at roof level including increased roof pitch to install new dormer windows,

alterations to the rear fenestration, installation of new balconies at the rear and terrace on the roof of 2-8 Bloomsbury Street; reconfiguration of uses at ground floor level including conversion of rear courtyard building from retail to ancillary office facilities (Class B1).'

Condition 3 of the permission stated the following:

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Site location plan (895 S 00 rev PL); 895_EX_00; EX_B1; EX_01; EX_02; EX_03; EX_04; EX_RF; EE_01; EE_02; EE_03; EE_04; GA_00 rev A; GA_01 rev A; GA_02; GA_03 rev A; GA_04 rev A; GA_B1 rev A; GA_RF rev A; GE_01 rev A; GE_02 rev A; Covering letter from Rolfe Judd Planning dated 29th June 2015 (ref JO/DM/P5571); Design and Access Statement produced by Friends Life Ltd/Buckley Gray Yeoman dated June 2015.

On the 6th March 2017 a Section 96A Non-Material Amendment (Ref: 2017/0459/P) to the 2015 permission approved the following:

Replacement of louvered door and panel and installation of new door on the northeast side elevation and installation of new door on the northwest side elevation of the existing plant room, relocation of existing handrail and replacement of existing ductwork on the roof.

The Proposal

Our client has commenced works to redevelop the property following the grant of permission in 2015 and further to the recently approved NMA. I can also confirm that the 2015 parent permission did not include any pre-commencement conditions.

During the construction process and revised detailed design work some changes to the approved scheme have become necessary and our now client wishes to make an application to authorise these changes, which include the following:

Ground Floor

- Replacement gates to existing archway on New Oxford Street.
- Repositioning and alterations to doors serving the cycle store and shower facilities within rear private courtyard.
- Installation of brick-bond style roller shutter over recessed shop entrance.
- Two central bay windows reduced in width on Bloomsbury Street elevation.

5th floor and Roof Level

- Installation of three new windows to 5th floor to serve new office/meeting space. Two facing towards the rear and one facing over roof terrace area.
- Addition of built in seating within consented roof terrace area.
- Louvred service grille to existing plant room in place of existing door.
- Boiler flues and extract cowl located to plant room roof.

Our client seeks to substitute a number of the approved drawings as listed in condition 3 in order to approve the above listed works. The following replacement drawings are proposed: (Please note that the 'Approved Drawings' include some drawings approved under the recent NMA where relevant).

	Approved Drawings	Proposed Drawings
Proposed Ground Floor Plan	895_GA_00_revA	895_GA_00_PL2
Proposed Roof Level Plan	895_GA_RF_PL2 (NMA revision)	895_GA_RF_PL3
Proposed Elevation New Oxford Street	895_GE_01_revA	895_GE_01_PL2
Proposed West Elevation – Bloomsbury Street	895_GE_02_revA	895_GE_02_PL2
Proposed Courtyard East Elevation	895_GE_03_PL2 (NMA revision)	895_GE_03_PL3
General Courtyard Elevations	895_GE_04_PL3 (NMA revision)	895_GE_04_PL4

We therefore seek to vary Condition 3 to state:

‘The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

*Site location plan (895 S 00 rev PL); 895_EX_00; EX_B1; EX_01; EX_02; EX_03; EX_04; EX_RF; EE_01; EE_02; EE_03; EE_04; **GA_00_PL2**; GA_01 rev A; GA_02; GA_03 rev A; GA_04 rev A; GA_B1 rev A; **GA_RF_PL3**; **GE_01_PL2**; **GE_01_PL2**; **GE_03_PL3**; **GE_04_PL4**; Covering letter from Rolfe Judd Planning dated 29th June 2015 (ref JO/DM/P5571); Design and Access Statement produced by Friends Life Ltd/Buckley Gray Yeoman dated June 2015.’*

The following details for the proposed works have been submitted as part of this application:

- Site Location Plan
- Relevant approved and proposed plans and elevations, prepared by Buckley Gray Yeoman Architects

Considerations

Whilst there is no statutory definition of a ‘minor material amendment’, as set out in Central Government guidance, *‘it is likely to include any amendments where their scale and/or nature results in a development which is not substantially different from the one which has been approved.’*

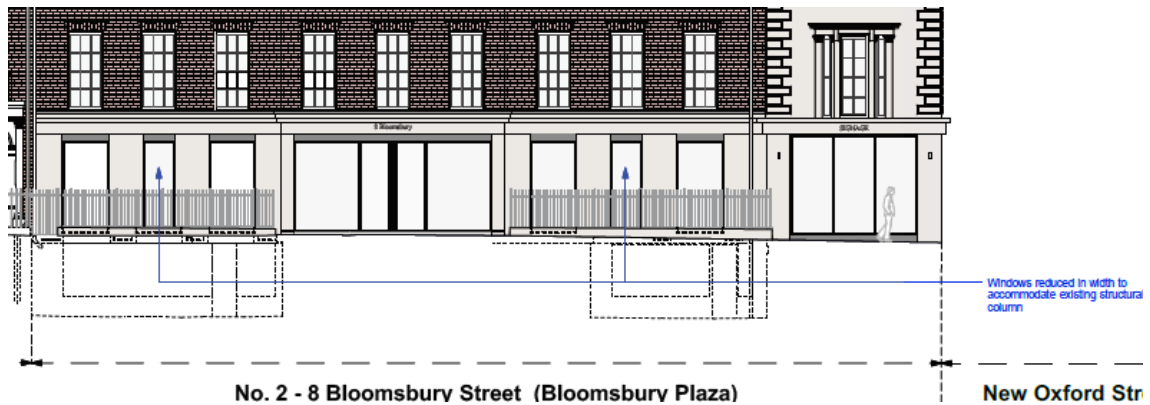
Taking each of the proposed amendments in turn, we consider that the proposed variations to the scheme are minor in nature, and can be considered not only as minor material amendments but also as being acceptable in planning policy and design terms.

Ground floor

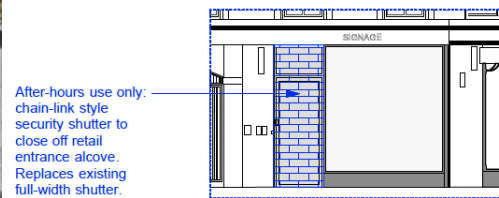
At ground floor level, the existing black metal gates across the existing archway opening on New Oxford Street are being replaced with a new set of flush-closing painted black metal gates. These will not open across the highway.

On Bloomsbury Street, the ground floor façade will be amended to incorporate slightly reduced central window openings to either side of the main office entrance.

This amendment is necessary due to existing structural columns. The exact nature of these columns was not completely understood until the development was fully underway. However, this variation will maintain the symmetry and balance of the ground floor façade and can be considered to not be substantially different from the approved scheme.



It is also proposed to install a brick bond roller shutter across only the recessed entrance door to the existing retail unit at 56 New Oxford Street. Whilst not shown in the existing or proposed drawings in the 2015 permission, the shop does currently have a full width roller shutter (shown in the photo below). The removal of this and its replacement with a much smaller version (required to prevent anti-social behaviour in the deep recessed entrance) represents a significant improvement over the existing.



Finally, the proposed alterations to the cycle store and shower area doors are located at the rear of the property and would ordinarily be considered non-material. However, they are included in this application for completeness.

Roof Level

At roof level three new window openings are proposed in the existing 5th floor plant room where some additional office space is being created. Two of the new window openings are at the rear and will replicate the position, size and dimensions of the existing window openings below. The third window will be in the elevation overlooking the new terrace area, and will not be visible from any public viewpoint.

These additional windows will not cause any overlooking when compared to the existing. With regards to their principle of their insertion and the design rationale behind them, some initial discussions have been had with Charles Rose (LB Camden Conservation Officer), and no in principle concerns were raised.

The small boiler flues and mushroom cowl proposed on top of the plant room were mistakenly left off the original proposed drawings; however they simply replace the existing ones which were in situ as shown in the site photos below.



The proposed louvered grille to the front of the existing plant room will be constructed in aluminium and will be painted to match the surrounding rendered façade. Whilst not shown on the existing drawings this will replace an existing door which is shown in the photo below.



Finally, the proposed new seat/bench to the roof terrace area would ordinarily be considered as non-material or even *de minimis*, but has been included for completeness.

Conclusions

We consider that these minor amendments to the proposed design will have little or in some instances no visual impact, and will certainly not result in a scheme which is in any way substantially different to that which was approved.

We trust that the submitted information is sufficient for the application to be validated and we look forward to a swift and positive outcome. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

John Osborn

John Osborn
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited