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**FAO: Patrick Marfleet**

6 July 2018

**Our ref: GAO/HBR/J7860**

**Your ref: 2018/2224/P & 2018/2491/L**

Dear Sir

**52-53 Russell Square, London  
Objection Response Letter**

We write on behalf of our client, Ecole Jeannine Manuel, in response to two objection letters received; firstly from the Bloomsbury Association (BA) and, secondly, from the residents of 54 Russell Square, in respect of application refs. 2018/2224/P & 2018/2491/L at 52-53 Russell Square.

There are matters raised within the letters that were of concern to our client and accordingly we thought it would be helpful to provide our written response on these matters.

As a general point, however, it is worth highlighting that there is a live application submitted in respect of the change of use of the property from office (Class B1) to a school (Class D1) (application ref. 2017/2285/P), which is awaiting the signing of the s106. Accordingly, a decision has not yet been issued on this change of use application.

However, applications ref. 2018/2224/P & 2018/2491/L can be considered independently from the change of use application. The former application deals with the use of the property and the latter applications relate to physical works to the property. They are not reliant upon one another.

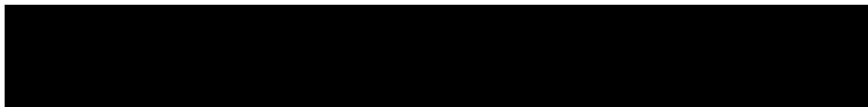
Within the s106 agreement for the application relating to the use of the building, there is a requirement for a Student Management Plan and a Noise Management Plan, to be provided, to protect residential amenity. This Student Management Plan and Noise Management Plan will need to have regard to the layout of the building including any changes approved as part of this application. All other conditions and obligations relating to the use would still apply notwithstanding these applications.

**Response to the BA**

We will firstly respond to the comments received from the BA. We have dealt with each issue raised, in turn, and provided our detailed response below.

1. Travel Plan

As set out in our correspondence with the BA in respect of the Travel Plan, Ecole Jeannine Manuel is fully aware of their requirement to consult with Ward Councillors on the Travel Plan and intends to do



so in due course. However, as the BA note within their objection letter, the s106 for the change of use of 52-53 Russell Square from an office to a school has not yet been signed and a decision not yet issued. The s106 Agreement sets out the framework for engagement on the Travel Plan which the client intends to follow once the decision is issued.

The current planning and listed building consent applications seek permission for the physical works of installing the required cycle parking facilities. The cycle parking that forms part of the current planning and listed building consent applications, is in response to the change of use application, and draft Condition 5 of planning application ref. 2017/2285/P, albeit that it could come forward independently of the condition. The proposals provide the exact quantum (28) of cycle parking spaces required by the condition. Accordingly, the physical works for the installation of the cycle parking facilities would have no bearing on the Travel Plan.

## 2. Cycle Storage

The BA states that the cycle storage provided does not meet the requirements of Condition 5 of planning permission ref. 2017/2285/P on the basis it is not covered. The condition wording included is Camden's standard condition wording for cycle parking. As the BA acknowledge, the cycle parking needs to be designed sensitively in order to ensure that there is no harm to the listed building. The Council acknowledged in pre-application discussions with Ecole Jeannine Manuel that it might be difficult to achieve Camden's standard cycle parking requirements on the basis that the property is listed and any proposals should ensure that there is no harm to the listed building.

It should be noted that these applications seek planning permission and listed building consent for the physical works of installing cycle parking rather than to satisfy the requirements of Condition 5 of planning permission ref. 2017/2285/P. An application for the discharge of Condition 5, and any possible variation required to the condition, will be dealt with separately.

## 3. Waste Storage

The BA states that the waste storage and removal proposed is not satisfactory to meet the requirements of Condition 8 of planning permission ref. 2017/2285/P. It should be noted that Condition 8 requires the provision of details of "the location, design and method of waste storage and removal". These applications seek planning permission and listed building consent for the physical works of enabling appropriate waste storage and removal in order that Condition 8 can be satisfied at some point in the future. However, the appropriateness of the waste storage and removal facilities proposed is not the subject of this application and will be dealt with as part of the discharge of Condition 8 of planning permission ref. 2017/2285/P.

In any event, careful consideration has been given to the waste storage and removal process and a detailed waste storage and removal strategy will be shared with the Council in due course in order to satisfy Condition 8 of planning permission ref. 2017/2285/P. The proposals are considered satisfactory by Ecole Jeannine Manuel and the design team to deal with the waste produced by the school.

### **Response to Residents of 54 Russell Square**

We will now respond to the letter received from the residents of 54 Russell Square. We have dealt with each issue raised, in turn, and provided our detailed response below.

The letter states that there are five families occupying 54 Russell Square. Our understanding is that the property is occupied by people over retirement age rather than families. This is consistent with the objection letter submitted in respect of the application for the change of use of the property which

stated "there are five residential flats at 54 Russell Square occupied by couples past retirement age". There therefore appears to be an element of inaccuracy within this letter as, having visited 54 Russell Square, the flats appear to all be occupied by couples of retirement age.

1. Change of use has not yet been finally granted – and, if it is, there will be substantial impact on this application. Further the applicant has no lease for the building and should not therefore be allowed to make an application of this sort.

As set out in the introduction to this letter, whilst there is a live application submitted in respect of the change of use of the property from office (Class B1) to a school (Class D1) (application ref. 2017/2285/P), which is awaiting the signing of the s106, these applications can be considered independently of the change of use application.

The determination of the change of use application is therefore not considered to have "substantial impact" on this application. The change of use application will have conditions and obligations attached to it which will ensure that residential amenity will be protected. These applications relate to physical changes to the building. If in due course permission is granted the applicant will still be bound by the conditions and obligations relating to the change of use application.

An objection is made that Ecole Jeannine Manuel do not have an interest in the property, and therefore they should not be allowed to make an application. It should be noted that anyone can apply for planning permission regardless of whether or not they have an interest in the land. The only requirement is that those with an interest in the land are notified of the application submission which, in this case, they have been.

2. There are many internal inconsistencies in the application.

The objection letter states that Room G13 has not been included within the Schedule of Works for the application. We have reviewed the information submitted and note that Room G13 was mistakenly missed out of the Schedule of Works. The Schedule of Works has been updated accordingly to account for the missing room and is enclosed with this letter.

Concern has been raised that inconsistencies will give the applicant leeway to vary the treatment of walls on soundproofing and avoid being held to account if work is not done. It is important to note that the application drawings will form the approved development and will be listed on any decision notice. The drawings clearly show the proposed acoustic lining positions and, assuming approved, the development will need to be built out in accordance with these drawings.

3. The details of the acoustic treatment on the party wall need to be more explicit and consistent.

It is considered that the application drawings show the proposed location and intent of the acoustic treatment in sufficient detail for the listed building consent application to be determined.

As set out in the application submission, the intention is for room uses which inherently generate less noise to be located along the party wall with 54 Russell Square. Ecole Jeannine Manuel have sought to locate less classrooms (considered to be noisier rooms by the residents) along the party wall in direct response to concerns raised by the neighbours. The uses of the rooms will be set out within the Noise Management Plan, and the operating hours of the school will be provided within the Pupil Management Plan, both required by the s106 Agreement for the application for the change of use.

The letter raises concern with the fire escape at fourth floor level. However, it should be noted that this was dealt with within the change of use application. There is a fire escape route from 52-53 Russell Square into 54 Russell Square. The intention, in the case of emergency, would be for the staff at fourth floor level to use the route through into 54 Russell Square. All other occupiers of the buildings at lower levels, including the pupils, would use the exits at ground floor level.

The use of the route through 54 Russell Square is the same as existing with the existing office occupiers having access to the route as a means of fire escape. However, with regards to the concern that the door is inadequate for fire resistance, Ecole Jeannine Manuel intend to approach the landlord, the Bedford Estate, to seek a replacement and upgrade of the interlinking fire exit door, between 53 and 54 Russell square at fourth floor level as part of the works to the building.

4. The design and access statement is inadequate.

We would like to clarify that the maximum number of pupils allowed to occupy the school is 180 pupils, not the 200 pupils referred to within the residents' letter.

The residents' objection letter states that the application has not provided a method statement for the operation of the school. The use and operation of the premises does not form part of this application and the operation of the school was dealt with as part of the change of use application, and is also secured within the s106 agreement for the change of use application, which requires Ecole Jeannine Manuel to provide a Student Management Plan to cover such issues.

In response to concerns raised regarding pupil movement around the building, Ecole Jeannine Manuel, and the design team, are content that movement of pupils around the building can be managed appropriately. The intention is for this to be similar to the pupil management in operation at their existing school located at 43-45 Bedford Square.

The residents suggest that the access to the school should be through 52 Russell Square rather than 53 Russell Square. We have considered this, however, the main staircase within the building is located within 53 Russell Square and accordingly, for practical reasons and to ensure the most efficient layout of the building, it is logical for the entrance to the building to be through 53 Russell Square. This was explained to the residents at our meeting in advance of submission of these applications. Moving the entrance would result in the loss of a classroom and/or require a classroom to be located adjacent to the party wall.

As set out above, the main entrance to the school will be through 53 Russell Square and this entrance will remain open and useable throughout the day. There is requirement for pupils and visitors to use this entrance for monitoring and to ensure pupil safety. However, Ecole Jeannine Manuel have agreed that the area outside the Bedford Place entrance will be used as the gathering point for pupils where they are to depart somewhere together as a group, to avoid any potential disturbance to the residents, and directly in response to residents' concerns raised. The entrance and exit to the building will be through the main entrance on Russell Square. The Bedford Place entrance will be used predominantly for deliveries and as an emergency exit only.

Again, we would like to reiterate that the operation of the school does form part of this application which is solely for physical works to the building. The access to and from the school will be dealt with within the Student Management Plan, a requirement of the s106 agreement for the change of use application. The Student Management Plan would need to have regard to the layout of the building including any changes as part of these applications.

5. The use of the third floor for Laboratories needs closer examination and specification.

The use of the room as a laboratory is not controlled through planning. Ecole Jeannine Manuel will be following Building Regulations to ensure that there are no risks of fire from the use of the room as a laboratory. Gas will not be used, all chemicals will be stored in accordance with Building Regulations for schools and the ventilation has also been designed to be compliant with Building Regulations. This is not considered to be a material consideration in the determination of these applications.

We hope that this provides clarity on the matters raised within the letters from the BA and the residents of 54 Russell Square. However, if you have any queries regarding any of the matters or points raised within this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Hannah Bryant or Emily Barnard of this office.

Yours faithfully



**Gerald Eve LLP**

