

Our Ref: 18218/CW/gc
Your Ref: PP-07210403
Email: cwhyte@firstplan.co.uk
Date: 18 September 2018

London Borough of Camden
2nd Floor, 5 Pancras Square
c/o Town Hall, Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

Dear Sir/ Madam,

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE RECONFIGURATION OF EXTERNAL PLANT
PHOENIX HOUSE, 104-110 CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON, WC2H 0JN**

We have been instructed by our Client, The Phoenix Artist Club, to submit the enclosed application online via the planning portal (ref: PP-07210403) for the reconfiguration of the existing extract duct at the above address.

Replacing the inefficient extract duct with up to date kit will allow our client to further reduce their energy consumption and enhance their work with the CCCA.

Accordingly, the application comprises:

- Completed Application Forms;
- Completed CIL Forms;
- Site Location Plan;
- Acoustic Report Prepared by Emtec;
- Existing Basement Plan (drawing no. 4242_M_900_P);
- Existing Ground Floor Plan (drawing no. 4242_M_901_P);
- Existing First Floor Plan (drawing no. 4242_M_902_P);
- Existing Second Floor Plan (drawing no. 4242_M_903_P);
- Existing Roof Plan (drawing no. 4242_M_904_P);
- Existing Elevation E-E (drawing no. 4242_M_905_P);
- Existing North Elevation from Flitcroft Street (drawing no. 4242_M_906_P);
- Proposed Basement Plan (drawing no. 4242_M_920);
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan (drawing no. 4242_M_921_P);
- Proposed First Floor Plan (drawing no. 4242_M_922_P);
- Proposed Second Floor Plan (drawing no. 4242_M_923_P);
- Proposed Roof Plan (drawing no. 4242_M_924_P);
- Proposed Elevation E-E (drawing no. 4242_M_925_P);
- Proposed North Elevation from Flitcroft Street (drawing no. 4242_M_926_P).

The requisite fee of £462 has been paid separately by the Client. The remainder of this letter sets out the relevant planning considerations in respect of this application.

Site Description

Phoenix House is located on the east side of Charing Cross Road, between Phoenix Street and Flitcroft Street. The application concerns the Phoenix Artist Club, an independently owned members bar located in the basement of the building. The site comprises a six-storey mixed use building, with the Phoenix Artist Bar/Club at basement level, retail units at ground floor level, and five floors of residential flats above. Permission has also been granted for a two-storey roof extension providing additional residential flats, and works are due to begin soon.

To the rear of the building between Phoenix Street and Flitcroft Street there is a narrow lightwell, which has been utilised by the Phoenix Artist Club for the long-standing placement of external plant, with a kitchen extract duct running up the rear elevation to roof level.

The building itself is not listed, however it is adjoined to the Grade II listed Phoenix Theatre to the north and east. The building is also located within the Denmark Street Conservation Area. The site is subject to no other designations.

The Artist Club

The Phoenix Artist Club is an independently owned venue, who host over 700 live productions per year across multiple performance spaces. It supports up-and-coming talent and local creative projects, providing a platform for both local community events and nationally acclaimed high-profile productions.

The Phoenix Artist Club are members of the Camden Carbon Footprint Reduction Scheme. Over the past year they have worked under this council initiative to replace old, energy inefficient equipment, including lighting, air handling units and air-conditioning units, significantly reducing their carbon footprint and achieving a Band C energy efficiency certificate. Below is a link to an article on Camden's website, recognising the Artist Club for their contribution to achieving a sustainable site:

<http://www.camdencca.org/phoenix-artist-club-following-a-sustainable-path/>

Planning History

The relevant planning history for the Phoenix Artist Club and wider block is set out below:

In 2005, permission was granted at the Phoenix Theatre for a two-storey infill extension at roof level to provide 4 x 1-bedroom and two x 2-bedroom self-contained flats, including the reuse of an existing lightwell for residential circulation space, together with an extension of the fly tower (ref: 2004/5547/P and 2004/5548/L).

In July 2010, permission was granted at Phoenix House to extend the retail units on the ground floor of the building into the lightwell to the rear of the property (ref: 2010/2824). Permission was subsequently granted in April 2011, to relocate the ventilation and cooling equipment from ground floor level of the lightwell to the new first floor roof level (ref: 2011/0657/P). This involved updating and replacing the Phoenix Club's external plant, however it appears that neither of these permissions were ever implemented.

In September 2016, Mr & Mrs H S Markham and The Hallam Partnership LLP submitted an application for a two-storey roof extension with garden room and terrace at rooftop level, providing 2 x 2-bedroom flats (ref: 2016/5190/P). The application was approved on the 30th June 2017. This extension would sit directly on top of the current extract fan at roof level and, as such, it is necessary for our client to relocate the extract duct.

Application Proposals

This application proposes to update and relocate the extraction system which will allow the Phoenix Artist Club to continue operating as a members bar/restaurant, whilst also meeting the necessary environmental standards and protecting residential amenity.

In order to protect the amenity of the new flats approved under application ref: 2016/5190/P, and the existing nearby residents, the current extract duct which runs up the rear elevation of the building to roof level is to be relocated at the opposite end of the rear lightwell. The new duct will adjoin to the existing basement connection at the northern end of the lightwell, then run across ground floor level to the southern end of the lightwell.

The proposed kitchen extract duct (500mm) will then run vertically up the existing stair steelwork on the other side of the lightwell, terminating one meter above roof level. The extract line will be fitted with the necessary attenuators and an industry standard extract fan which disperse of contaminated air, ensuring that there is no discernible odour at street level or within the new residential apartments.

Planning Policy

Camden's Development Plan is comprised of the Local Plan (2017) and the policies map (2017). Consideration has also been given to the policies contained within the London Plan (2016).

London Plan (2016)

The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London. Policy 7.15 concerns reducing and managing noise. It states that proposals should seek to manage noise by avoiding significant adverse noise impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development; and by mitigating and minimising the potential adverse impacts of noise on, from, within, as a result of, or in the vicinity of new development without placing unreasonable restrictions on development.

Camden Local Plan (2017)

Policy A1 resists development that fails to protect the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours. Noise and vibration levels, odour, fumes and dust are all considered when assessing the impact on amenity.

Policy A4 seeks to ensure that noise and vibration is controlled and managed. External plant and machinery is required to operate without causing any harm to amenity. Development likely to generate unacceptable noise and vibration impacts, or development sensitive to noise in locations which experience high levels of noise will not be granted planning permission.

Policy D1 concerns quality in design, and sets out that developments should achieve a high-quality design in order to improve the attractiveness of a local setting. Alterations to existing buildings are required to respect the character, setting, context and form of the neighbouring buildings.

Policy D2 requires that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character of appearance of the area.

Policy CC1 requires development to minimise the effects of climate change and encourage all developments to meet the highest feasible environmental standards.

Policy CC4 outlines that development proposals that are considered to reduce air quality will not be granted planning permission.

Heritage Assessment

The site is located within Denmark Street Conservation Area, which is situated on the south-western edge of the Borough. Charing Cross Road forms the western boundary of the conservation area, and is a major traffic route in central London. The buildings along Charing Cross Road are described within the Conservation Area Appraisal as having predominantly commercial and retail uses at ground floor level, resulting in the area feeling very busy. Flitcroft Street is described as a narrow pedestrian alley with an 'intimate' character, flanked by 4 storey brick warehouses on the north side, and the rear of the Phoenix Theatre on the south.

There is no specific mention of the application site within the Conservation Area Appraisal, however the Grade II listed Phoenix Theatre which is adjoined to our site is recognised for its historical importance. The theatre was built in 1929 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, and features a highly decorative frontage with Corinthian columns along Charing Cross Road and Phoenix Street.

Given the minor nature of the works, the proposals will not impact negatively on the Grade II listed building and they will continue to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Planning Assessment

The key planning considerations to this application relate to the impact the plant will have on the setting of the host building and the Conservation Area, and the implication of the external plant on the surrounding amenities, particularly the surrounding residential properties.

The existing plant equipment is now dated and in need of upgrading to meet modern standards and to facilitate the applicant's continued occupation of the premises. The new extract duct (500mm x 500mm) is to be located at the opposite end of the rear lightwell (northern end), and will discharge cooking air vertically at high velocity, ensuring odours are dispersed above the building height. This is similar to the existing situation.

It is necessary to relocate the duct so that the roof extension approved under application ref: 2016/5190/P can be built out, and the new location is also far less sensitive in amenity terms. The proposal satisfies the appropriate environmental standards to ensure environmental amenity is maintained in accordance with Policies A4, CC1 & CC4, and the accompanying Noise Survey and Report demonstrates that there will be no detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding occupiers.

The proposals have been designed and positioned to minimise visual intrusion in accordance with Policy D1. This has been achieved by restricting the plant to rear lightwell where it is not visible from street level (as per the existing arrangement). The principle of plant in this location should be considered acceptable, as the current plant has been operating in this area for the last ten years without any complaints or objections, and notably, the operation of the Phoenix Artist Club will not change. Further to this, many of the neighbouring units along Charing Cross Road and the surrounding area have used the space to the rear of their building for the placement of plant, with many similar units also providing high level extract ducts.

The new extract duct is far less bulky than the current arrangement, and the proposed installation would not appear incongruous or unlike the surrounding similar extract systems on neighbouring properties. The 'busy' and 'intimate' character of the wider Denmark Street Conservation Area will remain unaltered, and the character of the adjoining listed building will be maintained in accordance with Policy D2.

Conclusions

In conclusion, we consider the plant proposals, which are necessary to ensure the Phoenix Artist Club continued occupation of the site, should be supported.

Due consideration has been given to the significance of the site within the Conservation Area and the impact the proposed extract duct could be perceived to have on this heritage asset. The conclusion is clear, that the impact will be negligible. Instead, the resultant benefits, by allowing the installation of the proposed plant, are significant, including securing the long-term occupancy of the much-loved Phoenix Artist Club within the basement, ensuring the residential amenity of the upper floors is maintained, and allowing for the necessary environmental standards to be met in doing so.

The proposals are clearly in compliance with the Council's policies and guidance on design, amenity and conservation area management. I therefore trust that you have sufficient information to validate and approve the application, however, should you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact me. Otherwise, I look forward to discussing the application proposals with you in due course.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Whyte', written in a cursive style.

CATHERINE WHYTE

Associate