



Summit House, Red Lion Square, WC1R 4QH

Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent - Planning Statement

November 2018

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by DP9 Limited to accompany the Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent application submitted on behalf of The Office Group Properties Ltd ('the Applicant'), for Summit House, Red Lion Square, London, WC1R 4QH ('the Site').

1.2 The Office Group ('TOG') provides flexible and high-quality offices, meeting rooms, lounge spaces and co-working spaces designed for any time of business. The TOG portfolio currently comprises 43 buildings, including Summit House, and have 15,000 individual members, typically from creative, media and digital sectors. The design of each building reflects the local area and includes a range of facilities and vibrant communal areas to encourage collaboration and socialisation.

1.3 The proposed development is as follows:

“External alterations to create 2no. lightwells, installation of 5no. condenser units at roof level, rearrangement of cycle parking and new amenity space. Internal alterations to create new stairwell, revised office floor plans and minor changes to fixtures and fittings”

1.4 The Site is located within the London Borough of Camden ('LB Camden') and currently comprises a Grade II Listed vacant office building (Use Class B1a) set out over ground plus 5-storeys. The building has been leased by TOG since September 2018.

1.5 This Listed Building Consent application seeks alterations to fit out the building to accommodate TOG's style of flexible workspace office product and bring the building back into active office use by creating flexible and adaptable office and working spaces with ancillary communal spaces.

Planning Application Documents

1.6 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the documents and plans submitted to accompany the application, as set out below:

- Site Location Plan

- Existing and Proposed Plans
- Design and Access Statement
- Heritage Impact Statement
- Noise Impact Assessment

2. Site Context

- 2.1 The Site is located in Holborn on the south side of Red Lion Square, with Dane Street to the east and Eagle Street to the south. The Site lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The Site comprises a ground plus 5-storey purpose-built Grade II Listed office building, accessed from Red Lion Square. Parts of the building, specifically the frontage to Red Lion Square, date back to the 1920s whilst extensions were constructed to the back of the building around the 1970s. The building is currently vacant but has been leased by TOG since September 2018.
- 2.3 Surrounding uses consist primarily of residential and commercial uses, such as retail, restaurants, offices and hotels. The surrounding area is also diverse in architectural style and massing.
- 2.4 The Site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6b and is located approximately 200m north-east of Holborn underground station, served by the Piccadilly and Central lines.

Planning History

- 2.5 Summit House has undergone various approved changes including internal and external alterations, and historic extensions. The most relevant applications are listed in the table below:

Reference	Description	Determination
2017/0814/L	Internal refurbishment of existing Class B1 office building (Grade II listed) including alterations to floorplate layouts, new flooring, provision of secondary window glazing, replacement of services and ancillary facilities, enhancement of entrance lobby and waterproofing of basement areas; replacement of existing pavement lights; replacement of plant equipment at roof	Granted 12/05/2017

	level; and provision of cycle racks within existing service yard	
2017/0077/P	Replacement of existing pavement lights; replacement of plant equipment at roof level; and provision of cycle parking within existing service yard	Granted 12/05/2017
2018/2511/L	Installation of low level ducting and associated structures to serve existing roof level plant, including screening and replacement of external lighting on Dane Street elevation	Granted 14/06/2018
2018/1565/P	Installation of low level ducting and associated structures to serve existing roof level plant, including screening and replacement of external lighting on Dane Street elevation	Granted 14/06/2018

2.6 There have also been consent for applications for minor repairs and installation of services to the façade.

3. Proposed Development

3.1 The proposed alterations seek to bring back the existing vacant building into active and inspiring office use through a sensitive and high-quality approach, bringing the art deco style exterior into the interior spaces.

3.2 The alterations will involve:

- Opening up an existing covered external lightwell to the front façade at Red Lion Square to create external amenity space at lower ground floor;
- Creating an internal stair-well to link the ground and lower ground floors;
- Creating a new lightwell and amenity space at ground floor, and relocation of cycle parking;
- Replacing existing replica lights to the entrance hallway;
- Use of part of the roof as a private external amenity space;
- Reintroducing natural light from the pavement lights along Dane Street to the lower ground floor by removing the plasterboard partitions;
- Create a variety of individual office spaces and shared facilities to the upper floors and creating communal workspaces and lounges, meeting rooms, offices, reception and supporting facilities to the ground and lower floor; and
- Installation of 5no. condensers at roof level.

3.3 The primary entrance arrangement at ground floor will remain as existing with some of the finishes and fittings of the main building reception being updated and changed to complement the overall design vision, whilst retaining art deco features where possible. A management office will be created to suit operational needs. A secondary access is retained via the rear courtyard.

3.4 At ground floor the open plan office is subdivided to create a variety of office and meeting room spaces to accommodate the type of flexible office product that

- TOG members demand with a lounge and co-working space. A new staircase is also proposed to link the lounges at ground floor and lower ground floor.
- 3.5 A new light well will be created at the rear courtyard to improve the levels of natural light to the lower ground floor, whilst the appearance of the courtyard will be further improved through the creation of an external garden space for the lower ground floor users. Access to this garden will be via bi-folding glazed doors to the ground floor lounge, further improving natural light levels.
- 3.6 At lower ground floor, the existing central core arrangement will be retained, splitting the floor into two halves. The southern part of the floor consists of an open plan lounge and co-working space with meeting rooms and office spaces to the perimeter. The northern half will be a single open plan office space with direct access to the open lightwell to Red Lion Square.
- 3.7 The concrete lid with glass block pavement lights to the north-east corner will be removed to reinstate the original light well; this area at lower ground floor will create external space consistent with the original 1925 building. The original façade is currently blocked up and will be opened to allow reinstatement of two double glazed windows and a new metal frame glazed door to increase natural light and allow access to the new external space.
- 3.8 At floors 1 to 3, new divisions will be installed to create high quality office floorspace, break out areas, kitchens, communal working areas and supporting facilities that will remain sensitive to the building and creates impressive spaces. Where possible it is proposed to minimise all interventions and fixings to the existing facades and fabric.
- 3.9 The fourth floor will follow the format of the typical office floors at floors 1 to 3 but due to the existing form of the building, being set back from Dane Street and existing structural beams, this floor will create smaller private offices. Kitchen and break-out areas will be located with direct access to the existing roof terrace at the south-east corner. Private amenity space is proposed to the south-east corner of the building, currently used only for maintenance purposes, with new flooring and balustrade to meet those of the existing roof terrace to the south-west corner.

- 3.10 The existing 64 no. cycle parking spaces will be retained. 37no. cycle spaces will be located between the building and western perimeter fence to the rear courtyard, creating a clear route to the secondary entrance, and 27no. cycles will be located internally at ground floor, accessed from the secondary entrance. The relocation of the cycle parking will allow the creation of a new lightwell within the courtyard to increase natural light to lower ground floor and also open up the courtyard for external amenity space.
- 3.11 The 2017 permission brought Summit House in line with current legislation for access, as much as possible within the restraints of its Grade II listing. The current proposals make minimal changes to the access strategy, with the addition of the new proposed staircase between ground and lower ground floors.
- 3.12 The 2017 refurbishment permission included new mechanical and electrical services and the proposed development seeks to utilise these systems where possible for the proposed fit out. Sustainability factors included within these proposals include:
- Maintaining thermal performance in line with the listed character of the building
 - Retaining 2017 installed secondary glazing to existing single-glazed windows
 - Retain high efficiency heating and cooling, ventilation and hot water systems
 - High efficiency lighting
 - Low water use fixtures and fittings installed to new kitchens
- 3.13 The MEP solution has been designed to be concealed within the building architecture, leaving ceilings and walls free from ductwork and pipework.
- 3.14 The application includes the installation of 5 condenser units on the roof. The siting, type and location of the condenser units have been informed by a full Acoustic Report, which is submitted in support of this planning application. Further details of the condenser units is included in the enclosed Acoustic Report.

3.15 For further information please refer to the Design and Access Statement.

4. Planning Policy Assessment

4.1 This section provides an overview of specific considerations in respect of the Proposed Development.

Design

4.2 Adopted London Plan Policy 7.6 and emerging draft New London Plan Policy D1 requires architecture to make a positive contribution and should incorporate the highest quality materials and design appropriate to its context and pays attention to detail.

4.3 Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan states how Camden will seek high-quality development, including development that will:

- Respect local context and character
- Preserve or enhance the historic environment and heritage assets
- Is sustainable in design and construction
- Comprise details and materials that are of high-quality and complement the local character
- Is inclusive and accessible for all

4.4 The proposed external and internal alterations have been designed to both respect the Grade II listing of the building and also reinstate art deco style features where possible to enhance the building's character.

4.5 The office floor plans are designed to create impressive high-quality spaces to meet the demands of TOG members and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and create a pleasant and exciting work environment for all future tenants to enjoy.

4.6 The access and sustainability strategies as implemented from the 2017 refurbishment permission have been retained, with minor additions.

- 4.7 As such, it is considered the proposed development is in accordance with Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan.

Conservation

- 4.8 Adopted London Plan Policy 7.8 and emerging draft New London Plan Policy HC1 states that development affecting heritage assets should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural details.
- 4.9 Policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan states that the Council will preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings.
- 4.10 The alterations proposed seek to reinstate original features of the 1925 building, respect the Grade II listing and minimising intervention and retaining art deco style features where possible, whilst creating a building that meets the overarching design approach.
- 4.11 The design has evolved and been directly informed through consultation with the Council's Conservation and Design officer to ensure its sensitive and successfully preserves key elements of the building architectural significance.
- 4.12 As such, it is considered the proposed internal and external alterations conserve and respect the Grade II Listed Summit House and are in accordance with regional and local policies.
- 4.13 A Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by Turley in support of this application. This should be read in conjunction with this Statement and application. The Heritage Impact Assessment states that the significance of Summit House is primarily confined to the form, appearance, materials and detailing of those largely intact elements of its original or early interwar external envelope. This design has responses to this significance.
- 4.14 The Heritage Assessment considers the proposed interventions and concludes that:

- Overall these proposals would preserve the special interest of the listed building, and would also preserve the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area. These designated heritage assets would be conserved, and their significance sustained and or enhanced.
- The most substantial alterations are confined to a part of the internal envelope of the property which has no sensitivity in heritage terms;
- The reintroduction of the lightwell to Red Lion Square elevation represents a heritage benefit or enhancement;
- The stair proposed is stylistically appropriate to the 1920s character of the Site, creating a good degree of visual interest in this otherwise unremarkable area of the Site. The insertion of a stair in this location is considered to sustain the heritage significance of the Site by virtue of its high-quality design and location in an area of the building of very low heritage sensitivity.
- At first, second and third floor level, no original internal decorative features or fittings survive. The internal finishes to much of these floors are modern, dating from the 2017 refurbishment, and the floor plan of these levels is open-plan. The scheme proposal seeks to insert partition walls at these levels, to increase the functionality of the upper levels by creating distinct rooms and spaces. Although these upper levels are of little or no heritage interest and able to accommodate substantial alterations, the scheme proposals set out minimal interventions and fixings to the existing fabric.
- Other alterations do not impact historic fabric and will reflect distinctive character of the site; and
- Overall, the scheme would conserve the designated heritage assets of the listed building and conservation area and also sustain or enhance their significance.

Energy and Sustainability

- 4.15 Policy CC1 of the Camden Local Plan requires all development to minimise the effects of climate change and encourage all development to meet the highest feasible environmental standards that are financially viable during construction.

- 4.16 The MEP strategy implemented as part of the 2017 refurbishment permission has been utilised, with only minor sustainability measures added, such as low water use fixtures in kitchen.
- 4.17 The MEP strategy is as comprehensive as possible considering the Grade II listing of the building and therefore in accordance with Policy CC1 of the Camden Local Plan.

Transport and Servicing

- 4.18 The proposal seeks to retain the existing 64 cycle parking spaces and relocate them between the external courtyard and the internal corridor at ground floor closest to the secondary entrance, to allow greater efficiency of the courtyard space.
- 4.19 The retained cycle parking space provisions are in accordance with the standards set out within the draft new London Plan.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany a Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent application for alterations to the Grade II Listed Summit House for the following proposed development:

“External alterations to create 2no. lightwells, installation of 5no. condenser units at roof level, rearrangement of cycle parking and new amenity space. Internal alterations to create new stairwell, revised office floor plans and minor changes to fixtures and fittings”

- 5.2 The alterations will facilitate the fit-out of the existing vacant office space to create flexible and high-quality adaptable office and co-working spaces for operation by TOG.
- 5.3 The amendments have been designed to be sensitive to the buildings conservation and reflect and enhance its heritage through high quality standards, design and materials, whilst creating functional and exciting office space to meet market demand.
- 5.4 This Planning Statement has assessed the proposed development against the Development Plan and other relevant planning policy and guidance. It is concluded that the proposed development accords with the Development Plan and planning policy objectives and should be approved.