

<b>Application No:</b>	<b>Consultees Name:</b>	<b>Received:</b>	<b>Comment:</b>	<b>Response:</b>
2019/4294/P	Ian Sugar and Judith Torzewska	10/11/2019 18:02:46	OBJ	From: Ian Sugar and Judith Torzewska

10th November 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Regarding the Application for Planning Permission Reference: 2019/4294/P by Big Dreamer Productions, we have looked at the proposal: - Temporary Change of use from office, nightclub, and retail floor space to performance venue for –

35-37 (including 35A and 37A) and 39-41 New Oxford Street; 10, 11 and 12 Museum Street; 16/16A/18 West Central Street, London WC1A 1BN

PROPOSAL: Temporary change of use (for 5 years) from office, nightclub, HMO and retail floor space (Class B1, sui-generis and A1 uses) to performance venue (Class D2)

We have carefully considered this proposal and have found it unsatisfactory for a number of reasons:

First and foremost, we live in the area of Bloomsbury next to New Oxford Street; it covers Little Russell Street, Bury Place, Museum Street, Coptic Street, Gilbert Street, Streatham Street, and several others, all residential streets which are sandwiched between New Oxford Street and the British Museum; we, and the rest of the neighbourhood here were deeply affected by the negative impact of a club called 'The Den', the previous occupants of the site under consideration.

The Den created turmoil on our streets on a regular basis, noise nuisance, vandalism and criminal activities were common and ongoing. Drunken and drugged customers spilled onto our streets as they came and went from the club, to park their cars, fight and shout, and used our doorways and streets as toilets. The slamming of car doors, revving of engines, shouting and general lack of concern for the peace of local residents was a regular occurrence, but we did not get used to it, our entire area was turned upside down by the consequences of The Den. This feeling of foreboding concerning the site has not left us. Therefore, we are deeply concerned by the temporary planning application which Big Dreamer Productions has asked for.

Although Big Dreamer Productions has a more theatrical approach, we are very worried that the large audiences who could be attracted to the site and the surrounding streets would impact our area in a negative way once more, including the noise nuisance we previously experienced from cars parking regularly in our streets, engines revving and doors slamming late at night, especially as this would occur on a daily basis with customers coming and going much more often than before due to the rotational aspect of the shows. Furthermore, we are deeply troubled that the proposed change of use to D2, which incorporates music, concert and dance halls, could mutate from the original plan into something completely different, especially as there is no guarantee of the success of the project that Big Dreamer Productions have planned for the site. As this is predominantly a residential area with hundreds of people living in the surrounding streets south of the British Museum, we are deeply worried about this prospect due to the previous negative experience that we have recently had here, which we do not want to repeat. As it is predominately us, the residents, who live in this immediate area, we feel that any change of use should be for the benefit of local people, we want to maintain a sense of connection and belonging here, not the opposite. Big Dreamer is a commercial concern, so we are worried that profit is first and foremost their consideration.

And apart from these very worrying and genuine concerns, it would appear that this is a retrospective planning

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application, and there does also appear to be an 'extant' or 'existing' planning permission for the site, as the estate agent Savills have pointed out in their planning application dated 21st August 2019 on behalf of Big Dreamer Productions, (application reference 2016/0477/P). The original usage that was decided - mixed commercial/housing and some D2 was acceptable to local people, as much more in keeping with the mixed needs and character of the area. And again, we are concerned that if Big Dreamer Productions' planning application were granted, the site would more than likely turn into a well-known entertainment spot which we feel is a negative step for our area and should really be in a non-residential area or the West End. Also, importantly, is that some provision for the community was under discussion for local artists and was looking hopeful, we have not had anything which helps the local community from all the big developments here, so this is very much needed in the locality.

Finally, apart from the fact that we are concerned about this type of planning application (D2) for the reasons already mentioned, including the previous traumatising experience with The Den, it would appear that Big Dreamer Productions (Variant 31) have now been in trouble with Camden's environmental health department and the Fire Department for not having an electrical test certificate or adequate risk assessments in place, this does not exactly inspire confidence in the way they operate or help us to trust them regarding any other concerns. With these issues primarily in mind, we wish to object to the proposed planning application.

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2019/4294/P	Covent Garden Community Association	10/11/2019 17:12:52	OBJNOT	<p>Application Reference: 2019/4294/P.</p> <p>Site 35-37 New Oxford Street (including 35A and 37A), 39-41 New Oxford Street, 10/11/12 Museum Street &amp; 16/16a/18 West Central Street, WC1A.</p> <p>Application “Meanwhile” change of use to D2 (Assembly and Leisure).</p> <p>This application is for a temporary change of use for an Assembly and leisure use, namely as an immersive theatre for a period of 5 years, although this is renewable. The proposal includes a bar use.</p> <p>Appearance The application does not provide any details of the internal layout changes or the external changes which will be and have been made. In fact the D&amp;A Statement claims that:</p> <p>The proposal will not alter the external appearance of the buildings and would therefore not harm the local context and character of the Conservation Area and would conserve the setting of the adjacent Listed Buildings. Through the active use of the site, the visual appearance of the streetscape will be improved and will remove the current appearance of vacant buildings.</p> <p>In fact that applicant has already, in advance of the grant of the change of use, made significant changes to the shopfronts on New Oxford Street. In keeping with the “zombie” theme of the proposed first show, the shopfronts in our opinion are unappealing and detract from the appearance of the area. Whilst we accept that empty shops are also unappealing we do not believe that the application fulfils the CPG 1 requirement to “positively enhance the character, history, archaeology and nature of existing buildings on the site and other buildings immediately adjacent and in the surrounding area”.</p> <p>Given that the use, whilst temporary, is for 5 years and is renewable, the applicant must show how he has taken into account CPG 1 Design. It is not possible to consider this without the applicant providing details of the external changes being made. We believe that the application should be refused on these grounds alone.</p> <p>Use Class The D2 use class covers a range of uses some of which could have a significant negative impact. We believe that any D2 use granted on this site should be restricted by Planning condition to an immersive theatre use.</p> <p>Amenity and Management Plan The amenity of the surrounding area will suffer from the proposed use because of the large number of people who can visit the theatre and the fact that it will operate until as late as Midnight. Whilst in a more traditional theatre alcohol is consumed at an interval during the performance, here the main bar is intended to be used after the performance. We believe that people leaving the venue will cause a loss of amenity to people living in the vicinity. In order to mitigate this impact we believe that the use, if permitted, should end no later than 23:00. In addition the capacity of the bar area of the premises should be limited to 120 people, so that people</p>

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may not stay longer than 60 minutes in the bar area.

The Design and Access Statement in 5.23 and 5.24 states that customers will be guided from the exit on West Central Street via Museum Street to mitigate potential impact. In addition it states that “the venue will operate a 24 hour security presence with 20 – 30 uniformed staff including at the entrance and exit doors”. Whilst this sounds very positive, the corresponding Licence application makes no such claim. In the Licence application the number of door supervisors is limited to 3 (since increased to 6) and there is no reference to 24 hour security. As the applicant wishes to argue that high level of 24 hour security proposed is a way of mitigating the amenity impact then this should, if permission were granted, be required to be in place via a Planning condition.

As well as people, the other impact on the area is from servicing. The statement states that “Loading is permitted on both West Central Street and Museum Street.”. Whilst this is correct from a traffic restriction viewpoint, it is not possible for a vehicle to stop to unload on West Central Street without preventing other vehicles from accessing the street. We therefore ask that, if granted, a Planning condition be included to limit deliveries to Museum Street only, and also to restrict the time at which they can take place to between 08:00 and 20:00. Similarly waste collections should be limited, with a slightly later start time to between 09:00 and 20:00. This will reduce the risk of impact on the amenity of residents from servicing activity.

#### Summary

The application does not contain the information required to make an assessment of the visual impact of the proposed development on the area and should be refused.

If, despite this, planning permission were granted, then various conditions should be imposed including:

- Restriction on hours of operation.
  - Restriction to theatre use within D2.
  - Capacity limit for bar area.
  - Management Plan regarding:
    - Security, including levels of cover at different times;
    - Deliveries and servicing, including limitations on hours between 8am / 9am and 8pm, and access via Museum street.
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Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2019/4294/P	John and Sue Cole	09/11/2019 11:42:37	OBJ	<p>As local residents of Museum Street and Bury Place we ask members of the planning committee to take the following objections into consideration when assessing this application.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. As local residents, we have experienced the fallout from previous similar activities on this site when occupied by the Den nightclub and we fear the re-establishment of the hostile and aggressive street culture that it generated. We predict a return to the area becoming a magnet for the drug dealing and drunkenness that we all suffered, before the establishment was eventually closed down and its licence revoked. These proposals by Dreamer Productions do nothing to reassure us that the noise, disturbance to sleep and alcohol fuelled aggression will not return to these streets. This is not the "West End" but a primarily residential area and this proposal is a serious threat to our wellbeing. Sleep deprivation for us, (whether it be from street rowdiness, nocturnal heavy goods deliveries, ambulance sirens, police helicopters, accelerating motor bikes and sports cars, rickshaws with 'sound systems', shouting drug dealers, hooting impatient car drivers, etc, etc) is a constant issue here and these proposals, we know, will add further to this intolerable cocktail of disturbance and anti-social behaviour.</li><li>2. This is also a Conservation Area -- defined as "an area which has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or 'enhance'. These proposals do nothing to 'enhance' the special character of Bloomsbury. Dreamer Productions clearly wish to exploit these poorly maintained empty buildings as a decrepit backdrop for dubious entertainment and the sale of alcohol.</li><li>3. We ask that the committee take measures to retain this site under its existing planning use designation, or better still, promote it as a site for much needed public housing as a balance to the recent spate of new but empty office developments.</li><li>4. We are concerned that these proposals do not provide a safe environment on fire and public safety grounds. We trust that the current and parallel application for an alcohol licence will be refused.</li><li>5. We do not believe it was appropriate for this establishment to commence trading without either planning permission or an alcohol licence.</li><li>6. These proposals are at variance with all the declared policies put forward by Camden Council and City Hall to enhance the residential core of the city and to make this a better place for families to live and work.</li></ol> <p>We believe these proposals should be rejected.</p>

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2019/4294/P	South Bloomsbury Tenants' and Residents' Association	09/11/2019 20:34:21	OBJ	South Bloomsbury Tenants' and Residents' Association 9th November 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Regarding the Application for Planning Permission Reference: 2019/4294/P by Big Dreamer Productions, The South Bloomsbury Tenants' and Residents' Association has studied the proposal: - Temporary Change of use from office, nightclub, and retail floor space to performance venue for – 35-37 (including 35A and 37A) and 39-41 New Oxford Street; 10, 11 and 12 Museum Street; 16/16A/18 West Central Street, London WC1A 1BN

PROPOSAL: Temporary change of use (for 5 years) from office, nightclub, HMO and retail floor space (Class B1, sui-generis and A1 uses) to performance venue (Class D2)

Firstly, we would like to confirm that this updated objection replaces our previous submission dated 7th November 2019, as there are a few more points we wish to address.

This proposal has been carefully considered by our TRA and has been found wanting for a number of reasons:

First and foremost, this particular area of Bloomsbury – New Oxford Street, Little Russell Street, Bury Place, Museum Street, Coptic Street, Gilbert Street, Streatham Street, and others, was traumatised by 'The Den' the previous occupants of the site under consideration.

The noise, nuisance, vandalism and criminal activities in and around The Den were ubiquitous. Drunken and drugged revellers heading away from the club towards their cars, fighting and shouting, using doorways (or the street) as urinals, slamming car doors, revving engines; the entire area was turned upside down by the side-effects of The Den. This feeling of trepidation concerning the site has not left the area. Therefore, loopholes in the planning application are of intense interest.

'Big Dreamer Productions' itself seems at first, innocuous enough. But we are fairly certain that their theatrical events, both interactive and otherwise, could draw an audience large enough to affect the surrounding streets, specifically concerning vehicles, parking and the starting of cold engines late in the evening; especially as the productions are to occur every day.

However, there is no guarantee of the success of any theatrical venue in London at the present time, and the proposed change of use to D2 which incorporates music, concert and dance halls, is an area of concern.

The South Bloomsbury TRA is particularly concerned that Big Dreamer Productions original plans for the venue may well 'morph' into something completely different. This is primarily a residential area, there are hundreds of people living in a few blocks south of The British Museum, we have just come through a negative experience with the previous users of the site and are, therefore, extremely sensitive to any future descent into unintended chaos.

Big Dreamer's proposal states – 'Camden's attractiveness as a place to live, work or study', and their own specified wish to 'promote a sense of belonging and connection'. I reiterate that it is we, the residents, who

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live in this area, and any miss-steps taken by Big Dreamer Productions would rebound on us, in the immediate area, and sever any sense of belonging and/or connection. Also, bearing in mind that community resources are greatly under pressure here, we feel that any change of use should be for the benefit of local people, not the opposite.

Big Dreamer seems genuine in its desire to use the site in a creative theatrical way, but first and foremost they are a commercial concern, and are subject to all the considerations of such organisations – profit!

If this result is not forthcoming then the change of use is vague enough to embrace other ventures that would take the venue much closer to the previous use of the site, engendering the same sense of noise, criminality and chaos. Perhaps not to the same extent as previously experienced, but enough to seriously concern members of our TRA.

And apart from these very worrying and genuine concerns, it would appear that Big Dreamer Productions have started trading without first seeking permission anyway, and that this is a retrospective planning application. Furthermore, Big Dreamer's agent, Savills, have pointed out in their planning application letter dated 21st August 2019 on behalf of Big Dreamer Productions, that there is also an 'extant', in other words, 'existing' planning permission (application reference: 2016/0477/P) which appears to have been accepted by Camden's planning committee on 16th May 2017, and which also appears to be valid until three years from that date, if this is so, we assume that would make the previous applicants planning permission still valid until roughly mid-May 2020. The original usage that was designated - mixed commercial/housing and some D2 was acceptable to local residents, as more in keeping with the mixed needs and character of the area. And again, there is the fear among the local community that if Big Dreamer Productions' planning application were granted, which is all D2, the site would likely turn into a well-known entertainment spot which should really be in the West End or a non-residential area. And important to add here also, is that some provision for community space for local artists was under discussion and it was looking hopeful that this would indeed at last happen, given that we have not received anything from all the big developments so far.

Another point to think about is why is Big Dreamer applying for temporary change of usage for five years when the aforementioned party already appears to have planning consent which does not expire until roughly mid-2020? If this is the case, the five year temporary change of use does not seem very temporary to us, it is quite a long period of time, and appears to overlap with the timescale of the other party involved, so how can this be fair or even feasible?

Furthermore, apart from the fact that the local community does not welcome this kind of planning application (D2) for the reasons already mentioned, including the previous traumatising experience with The Den Club, Big Dreamer Productions have now been in trouble with Camden Council's environmental health department and the Fire Department for not having an electrical test certificate or adequate risk assessments in place, and have had formal written warnings issued about this. So apart from everything already said, this does not exactly inspire confidence in the way they operate, it does not help their case in gaining the trust of local people in any way regarding the future of the site if temporary use was granted to them.

With these issues foremost in mind, we cannot back the proposed change of use that Big Dreamer is so anxious to achieve.

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2019/4294/P	South Bloomsbury Tenants' and Residents' Association	07/11/2019 13:33:09	OBJ	South Bloomsbury Tenants' and Residents' Association  7th November 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Regarding the Application for Planning Permission Reference: 2019/4294/P by Big Dreamer Productions, The South Bloomsbury Tenants' and Residents' Association has studied the proposal: - Temporary Change of use from office, nightclub, and retail floor space to performance venue for – 35-37 (including 35A and 37A) and 39-41 New Oxford Street; 10, 11 and 12 Museum Street; 16/16A/18 West Central Street, London WC1A 1BN

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This proposal has been carefully considered by our TRA and has been found wanting for a number of reasons:

First and foremost, this particular area of Bloomsbury – New Oxford Street, Little Russell Street, Bury Place, Museum Street, Coptic Street, Gilbert Street, Streatam Street, and others, was traumatised by 'The Den' the previous occupants of the site under consideration.

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'Big Dreamer Productions' itself seems at first, innocuous enough. But we are fairly certain that their theatrical events, both interactive and otherwise, could draw an audience large enough to affect the surrounding streets, specifically concerning vehicles, parking and the starting of cold engines late in the evening; especially as the productions are to occur every day.

However, there is no guarantee of the success of any theatrical venue in London at the present time, and the proposed change of use to D2 which incorporates music, concert and dance halls, is an area of concern.

The South Bloomsbury TRA is particularly concerned that Big Dreamer Productions original plans for the venue may well 'morph' into something completely different. This is primarily a residential area, there are hundreds of people living in a few blocks south of The British Museum, we have just come through a negative experience with the previous users of the site and are, therefore, extremely sensitive to any future descent into unintended chaos.

Big Dreamer's proposal states – 'Camden's attractiveness as a place to live, work or study', and their own specified wish to 'promote a sense of belonging and connection'. I reiterate that it is we, the residents, who live in this area, and any miss-steps taken by Big Dreamer Productions could rebound on us, in the immediate area, and sever any sense of belonging and/or connection. Also, bearing in mind that community resources are greatly under pressure in our area, we feel that any change of use should be for the benefit of local people, not the opposite.

Big Dreamer seems genuine in its desire to use the site in a creative theatrical way, but first and foremost they are a commercial concern, and are subject to all the considerations of such organisations – profit!

If this result is not forthcoming then the change of use is vague enough to embrace other ventures that would take the venue much closer to the previous use of the site, engendering the same sense of noise, criminality and chaos. Perhaps not to the same extent as previously experienced, but enough to seriously concern members of our TRA.



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With this foremost in mind, we cannot back the proposed change of use that Big Dreamer is so anxious to achieve in its present form.

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