



**BLOOMSBURY
CONSERVATION AREAS**
Advisory Committee

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bloomsburylives.co.uk

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2019/4609/P

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Our consultation response to application 2019/4609/P: proposal to demolish and reconstruct the mews connection to the rear of 40 Bedford Square.

The BCAAC is the advisory committee for all developments in Camden occurring within conservation areas south of Euston Road, with the exception of Hatton Garden. This application concerns 40 Bedford Square and its mews building to the rear, a Grade I listed building within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, with list entry reference 1244553.

A core consideration in determining applications regarding heritage assets is the significance of those heritage assets and the substantiality of harm caused to those heritage assets.

40 Bedford Square is a Grade I listed building which is a heritage asset of the highest significance, within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area which is also a heritage asset of high significance. Bedford Square exhibits in the highest degree the essential special architectural and historic interest of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Accordingly, great weight should be afforded to every aspect of its conservation.

The mews connection building is itself a 1980s alteration within the curtilage of the listed building. Although it is therefore of little historic value, we find that it is of architectural interest and contributes positively to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and 40 Bedford Square. It is constructed of appropriate materials and in an appropriate style which could be easily mistaken for a contemporary Georgian building by the untrained eye. It is entirely subservient to and complementary to the listed building and the special appearance of this part of the conservation area.

This is in stark contrast to the proposed structure which by reason of its inappropriate solid to void ratio and especially its excessive glazing would in our opinion diminish the significance of both heritage assets. We are not convinced that the '*clean and distinctly contemporary appearance*' providing a '*clear contrast*' between the structure and the listed building preserves or enhances the Bloomsbury Conservation Area or 40 Bedford Square in any way. On the contrary, we believe the replacement of this structure with a wall of glass and metal will only serve to draw attention to the inappropriateness of the structure and its materials and therefore would substantially detract from the

significance of the historic environment. We are particularly concerned about the entirely negative impact the proposal would have upon views from the public realm looking eastwards from Adeline Place, and views from within the courtyard space and from the rear windows of 40 Bedford Square.

Furthermore, the cumulative effect of this proposal combined with proposal 2019/4352/P to demolish and alter elements of the associated mews building would diminish significantly this part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and the rear of 40 Bedford Square, in our view. In conjunction, we believe these proposals would cause substantial harm to the Grade I listed building by reason of its currently well-preserved state and high significance.

We therefore believe that this application should be rejected for its failure to preserve and enhance the historic environment contrary to policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

Yours Sincerely,

