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1.

Executive Summary

1 • Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared by Kanda Consulting on behalf of New College of the Humanities ('The Applicant') in support of a full planning application for the change of use of Boston House from office (Class B1a) to non-residential educational institution use (class D1), including internal alterations.
- 1.2 The Applicant appointed Kanda Consulting, a specialist public affairs and consultation company, to undertake the community and stakeholder consultation as part of the pre-application process for the project.
- 1.3 The consultation process was carried out in conjunction with pre-application meetings with the London Borough of Camden's planning and design officers, details of which are included within the Planning Statement which accompanies this application.
- 1.4 The brief was to develop and implement an engagement strategy with community and political stakeholders in the London Borough of Camden.

Previous applications

- 1.5 The present application represents a minor revision to proposals originally submitted in the summer of 2019 (*2019/3961/P & 2019/4256 P*).
- 1.6 A public consultation on the change of use was undertaken with the local community last summer; further details may be found in the Statement of Community Involvement which accompanied the previous applications.

Public consultation on the current application

- 1.7 Activities undertaken as part of the consultation process included:
- 1396 letters sent to local residents and businesses in April 2020, introducing the proposals and inviting interested residents to register for a virtual meeting to discuss the proposals;
 - Introductory emails sent to Bloomsbury ward councillors and other local stakeholders, offering an invitation to the virtual meeting;
 - A virtual residents' meeting, in which members of the project team were available to respond to residents' questions about the proposals;
 - Emails offering further details and one-to-one advice sent to residents and businesses who expressed an interest in the scheme.

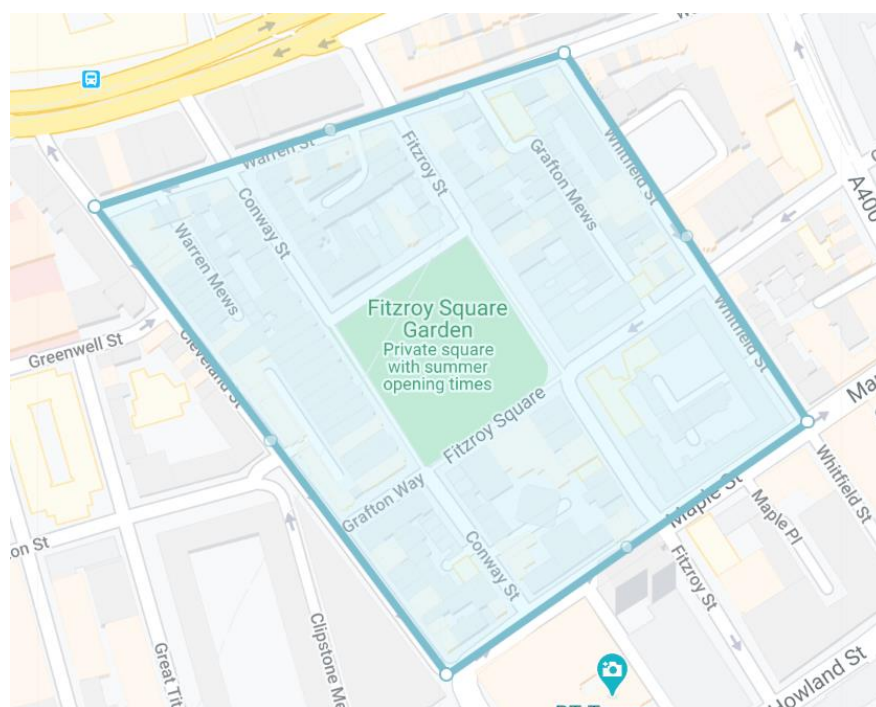
- 1.8 The responses to the consultation suggest that residents are keen to ensure that the proposed change of use is undertaken in a way that minimises disruption to the local area.
- 1.9 Throughout the consultation process, a telephone number and e-mail address were supplied and managed by Kanda, providing further information to residents, businesses and stakeholders on request.
- 1.10 This report has been informed by Central Government guidance within the Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 on community involvement in planning. It forms part of the supporting documentation informing the planning application.
- 1.11 The Applicant will continue to engage proactively with the community throughout the project.

2.

Consultation Process

2. Consultation Process

- 2.1 The objectives of the consultation process were to approach key local stakeholders who may have an interest in the site and raise awareness amongst local residents and businesses of the proposed development, prior to a planning application being submitted.
- 2.2 Working with and on behalf of the Applicant, Kanda Consulting approached local residents in conjunction with the formal pre-application process with the London Borough of Camden.
- 2.3 1396 introductory letters (see Appendix I) were distributed to local residents and businesses in April 2020, extending an invitation to a virtual meeting to discuss the proposals. The distribution area is shown below and in Appendix II.



- 2.4 In April 2020, introductory emails containing invitations to the virtual meeting were sent to the Bloomsbury ward councillors:
- Cllr Sabrina Francis
 - Cllr Adam Harrison
 - Cllr Rishi Madlani

2.5 Further introductory emails and meeting invitations were sent to representatives of several local organisations and stakeholder groups, including:

- The Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association
- The Victorian Society
- Fitzroy Square Frontagers' & Garden Committee
- 10 Fitzroy Limited
- KJ Tait Engineers

2.6 A virtual meeting was held with residents and stakeholders who responded to the invitation, discussing the proposals and allowing residents to direct questions to the project team.

2.7 The Applicant is committed to continuing its engagement with the community and other key stakeholders throughout the planning application and construction processes.

3.

Virtual Residents' Meeting

3. Virtual Residents' Meeting

3.1 The Applicant held a virtual meeting with residents who had signed up in response to the initial invitation. This was hosted on the Microsoft Teams platform on the following date:

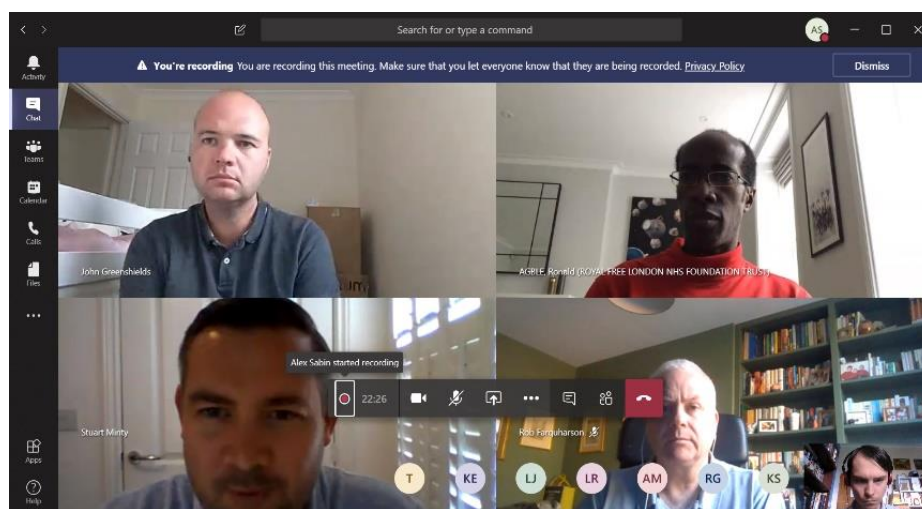
18:00 – 19:00 on Tuesday 12th May

3.2 The virtual residents' meeting was staffed by representatives of the project team from the Applicant; SM Planning; and Kanda Consulting.

3.3 In total, the virtual meeting saw **11** attendees.

3.4 The virtual meeting included a mix of residents of the area and representatives of nearby community organisations. These included a representative of the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association.

3.5 Attendees were advised that the meeting would be recorded; a recording of the meeting was subsequently shared with all attendees.



Virtual residents' meeting, 12th May

3.6 The key themes of the discussion at the virtual residents' meeting are summarised overleaf.

Qualitative feedback and response

Issue	Response
Changes since previous application – residents were keen to understand how the new application differed from those previously submitted to Camden Council in the summer of 2019.	The Applicant welcomed the opportunity to clarify this, explaining that the material revisions to the previous application relate to the retention of a greater amount of B1 office space at County House
Nature of the academic space – attendees sought clarification as to the numbers of students expected to use the new space; at what times the space would be at peak use; and average class sizes.	The Applicant outlined the core operational hours of the academic space and anticipated student numbers and growth. In line with the academic ethos promoted by the Applicant, smaller classes are favoured.
Preventing disruption – a key concern for near neighbours was the prevention of disruption to the local area as a result of an increase in student numbers. Residents enquired as to the security and operational management measures proposed to limit waste and prevent noise and other disruption associated with evening events, such as socials.	<p>The Applicant is proud of its record as a good neighbour at its existing Bedford Square campus and is keen to pursue a similar approach at Boston House, safeguarding the amenity and security of the area. Further details are set out in the Operational Plan document which has been submitted as part of this planning application.</p> <p>The Boston House site will primarily be used for academic purposes and the Applicant will carefully consider arrangements for any late-night events, in order to minimise disruption to neighbours. The Applicant will consider additional waste management measures, should existing provisions prove inadequate.</p>

4.

Conclusion

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The pre-application process with LB Camden provided an opportunity for constructive engagement with leading members of the development team.
- 4.2 The consultation began in April 2020 and sought to engage with statutory and non-statutory consultees, including local stakeholders working and living near the site at Boston House.
- 4.3 As part of the brief for wide-ranging and open consultation and on behalf of the Applicant, Kanda Consulting distributed 1396 leaflets to local residents and businesses inviting them to a virtual residents' meeting to discuss the proposals.
- 4.4 Correspondence with local ward councillors in Bloomsbury Ward included an email offering an invitation to the virtual residents' meeting.
- 4.5 A number of local organisations and stakeholder groups were also invited to the virtual residents' meeting.
- 4.6 A virtual residents' meeting to discuss the proposals was held in May 2020 and attended by 11 local residents, including a representative of the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association.
- 4.7 Feedback on the Applicant's proposals suggests that residents' key priority is the prevention of disruption to the local area as a result of the change of use.
- 4.8 The Applicant is committed to continuing its engagement with the community and other key stakeholders throughout the planning application and conversion processes.

Appendices

Appendix I Introductory Letter

**KANDA**Kanda Consulting
44-48 Paul Street
London EC2A 4LBTel +44 (0) 20 3900 3676
Email nch@kandaconsulting.co.ukDate
30 April 2020Re
**New College of the
Humanities –
virtual meeting**

Dear neighbour,

You may recall that we wrote to you last year on behalf of the New College of the Humanities (NCH) to discuss NCH's plans to refurbish Boston House to provide a new headquarters for the College. I'm now writing with a brief update on the proposals and to offer you the opportunity to participate in a virtual meeting to discuss the plans.

By way of a recap, NCH is a university-level college that was founded in 2012, with the aim of providing the highest quality education in the humanities and social sciences. The College offers a unique and broad liberal arts-inspired curriculum with highly personalised teaching including a one-to-one tutorial system.

As a result of the College's success and the growth in its student body year-on-year, NCH has now outgrown its current building in Bedford Square. Given its ties to the area, the College is now looking to relocate to a larger building in the Bloomsbury area.

Boston House, a large property in Fitzroy Square, has become available to lease, and NCH proposes to refurbish this building and use it as their new headquarters. A public consultation with the local community was undertaken last summer ahead of the submission of two planning applications for a change of use (**2019/3961/P** & **2019/4256/L**).

NCH has since decided to amend its proposals for Boston House, which will allow for the retention of a greater amount of B1 office space than in the now-withdrawn applications from last year. Ahead of the submission of a new planning application, we are holding a virtual meeting at **6pm on Tuesday 12th May** with local stakeholders to discuss the proposals – if you would like to register for this meeting, please email us on the above details.

If you have any further questions or comments about the proposals – or if you would like a more detailed briefing from the project team – please feel free to get in touch.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'John Greenshields'.

John Greenshields
Associate Director, Kanda Consulting19 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3HH, United Kingdom
Tel +44 (0)20 7637 4550 nchlondon.ac.uk
NCH at Northeastern Ltd • Registered in England no. 07317195 • Registered office as above

Appendix II Distribution Area

