



61 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON WC1B 5BB

REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING SHOPFRONTS; REMOVAL OF 2 COMMERCIAL UNITS; WIDENING OF THE ENTRANCE INTO THE COURTYARD; CHANGE OF USE OF THE ANCILLARY HOTEL BAR FROM (CLASS C1) TO (CLASS A4)

Application for planning permission reference: 2020/2365/P

Application for listed building consent reference: 2020/3124/L

20 July 2020

The Bloomsbury Association objects to this application and repeats the following comments made at the time of the original consultation.

1. A more uniform, street-facing, shop frontage, with strict tenant guidelines to manage shopfront design and signage would be encouraged. The suggestion that the proposed copper clad 'fins' between shop units add to the architectural integrity of the original building lacks conviction. Indeed, they are likely to offer more to street crack addicts and as public urinals than to the appearance of the building. The team is encouraged to be mindful of Local Plan policy D3 and design such opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour out and not into the proposal.
2. To animate the street frontage, use of the 'private forecourt' to provide external seating for cafés and bars should be encouraged; down-lighters for the underpass are welcomed.
3. The courtyard to the rear of the hotel is a lost opportunity. It should be celebrated as a predominantly pedestrian space and not the vehicular environment it currently is. Uses should be determined and the landscape designed to clearly indicate that this is peopled space over which the pedestrian has priority. This space contains the only remains of the Fitzroy Doll building, which deserve a more appropriate setting. It is not a location for bottle deliveries to be made or for taxis to wait with their engines idling..
4. Dropped curbs on the pavement crossover at the entrance should be removed to provide a shared surface with clear priority to the pedestrian. The vehicular entrance to the courtyard should be narrowed considerably and the proposal that a shop unit might be cut back to create a separate, wider pedestrian entrance, segregated from vehicles is not supported.
5. We object to the creation of a separate planning unit by the proposed change of use from ancillary C1 to C4.

We would be grateful if you would let us know of any further modification to the application; the decision, if it is to be decided under delegated powers, or the meeting date if it is to be decided by Committee.

Stephen Heath
On behalf of the Bloomsbury Association

Copies to:
Nathaniel Young, London Borough of Camden
Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee
Chair, Bloomsbury Association