

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Case reference number(s)

2020/1718/P & 2020/2582/L

Case Officer:

David Peres Da Costa

Application Address:

24 and 26 West Street
London
WC2H 9NA

Proposal(s)

Alterations to 24 West Street comprising removal of existing internal partitions, addition of roof vents to rear roof, refurbishment of washroom, erection of partitions to stairwells, installation of cycle store to crypt and air-conditioning unit to rear lightwell of 26 West Street following removal of existing a/c units from Nos 24 and 26.

Representations

Consultations:	No. notified	0	No. of responses	2	No. of objections	2
<p>Summary of representations</p> <p><i>(Officer response(s) in italics)</i></p>	<p>Objections have been received from an occupier of 11 West Street and an occupier of 90 Charing Cross Road. The following issues were raised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sadly this significant Wesley Methodist Chapel building was damaged extensively in the Blitz in WW2, leaving only the West street facade street but also the sacred crypt area. Over the following years, it was subsequently rebuilt and renovated, going on to become a new secular space still with benefits for the local community, becoming West St Dance Studios, where Princess Diana was a patron. <p>Historic places of worship have been community spaces for generations and I believe they should continue to be so. Inevitably this former chapel building has been rearranged over its lifetime, but I believe at this unprecedented time in our country history, with such huge changes happening, this should be an opportunity for Camden Council to be able to once again provide a community space and give something back to the residents, business and visitors to this very special historical area. These significant places should be restored and managed to sustain the historic environment, its values and be benefit for all, not the only elite.</p> <p>The application to use this building for private offices, or to be eventually leased long term by a large corporation, would be taking away any offer of benefit to the public community. As well as keeping in mind this current pandemic times globally and the change in the</p>					

way people are working in their local areas, it could be likely that this listed building could sit empty for years following the proposed redevelopment, benefitting no one. This would be a real waste of an opportunity for Camden council to be able to provide something like a community project, centre or space in this beautiful building. This could bring life and be extremely important and useful for the community spirit and wellbeing of the local residents, especially struggling with the aftermath of the post COVID and Brexit economy.

- Part of this application that I object to specifically, is the application to install a bicycle storage in the crypt below this listed chapel building. The crypt could also be considered sacred ground and religiously significant to members of the faith, and this application could cause harm to the special historic, archaeological and architectural of the building, its contents and setting. This part of the building is one of the only original surviving areas, and the idea that this will be become a place for bicycle storage, with people blocking movement on the pavement with bicycles entering and exiting this original chapel door. It would become a risk for pedestrian safety especially the narrow and often busy pavement, and with such close proximity to the multiple fire exit doors from the adjacent Ambassador's theatre. At peak times in the early evening when there are usually hundreds of people walking down West St attending both theatres on the street, this could become a health and safety risk to the public, with cars driving down on a tight and narrow road with car parking opposite and a bicycle lane coming the opposite direction. All on a very narrow street, this would be impossible for the public to manage safely.
- As my apartment is directly opposite the 24-26 West Street building, I would like to make an official comment as I disagree with this development and ask for you to take my comments on the proposed planning application seriously please.

As West St borders both the boroughs of Camden and Westminster, West street seems to get overlooked when it comes to keeping the local community properly considered. West street has just gone through Non-stop developments over the last 2 Years, and I'm appalled that the long term residents are going to have to endure more of this never ending Construction. There has been little or no consideration given to the local community here and the residents of West St, causing the permanent neighbours distress, lack of sleep due to noise and nuisance of continuous building work, for us residents to endure.

As a shift worker, it is becoming almost impossible to get any respite from these developments on West st. The last projects (Louis Louis & Brewdog) have literally just finished and the scaffolding as only just been taken down. almost every Neighbouring building to 24-26 West St - having scaffolding, noisy building work,)Now this large scale

development of 2 buildings on the street are proposed to go ahead immediately. It is unfair for the local residents and inconsiderate that there is no time taken to think about these ongoing constructions. Please can we finally have some peace and quiet for us key workers (including NHS staff who are going through this pandemic!) of West Street?!

- I also disagree with a change in the front windows of 24 West street, the roof lights being changed, the doors to the buildings, and believe if the special and extraordinary history this building would like to please make a comment high has such religious importance, also the heritage building and street. I don't believe there should be a bike storage added to the crypt, which is sacred ground.

Officer response

1. *The planning history indicates that planning permission was granted in 1985 for a change of use from warehouse to dance school. This permission was personal to the London School of Classical Dance during their occupation and the use was required to revert back to the lawful use for warehouse purposes. More recently, planning permission was granted 03/03/1994 for a change of use from warehouse within Class B8 to Class B1 use (ref: 9400032). The Council does not have any evidence that this use was not implemented. Given this, the lawful use of the building is as B1 offices and the building is not a community facility which provides a benefit to the wider community. This application does not seek to change the use of the building but rather to refurbish the building and to make some internal and external alterations.*
2. *The use of the basement for cycle parking is not considered to harm the special interest of this listed building. The width of the pavement in front of the existing entrance to the basement is sufficient to allow cyclists to access the basement cycle store. Access to the basement cycle store would not be expected to harm pedestrian movement on the adjoining pavement.*
3. *Noise and disturbance from the limited amount of external works would not be expected to harm neighbouring amenity. An informative would be included on the decision reminding the applicant that noise is subject to control under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 and the regulated hours of work.*
4. *No changes are proposed to the front elevation and the windows and doors would be repaired and redecorated.*

Recommendation:- Grant planning permission and listed building consent