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**From:** Ronald Agble [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 26 March 2021 15:21  
**To:** Planning  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Planning Application for Boston House, 36-38 Fitzroy Square, W1T - Ref: 2020/2226/P - update and request for information

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]** Beware – This email originated outside Camden Council and may be malicious Please take extra care with any links, attachments, requests to take action or for you to verify your password etc. Please note there have been reports of emails purporting to be about Covid 19 being used as cover for scams so extra vigilance is required.

Hi Mr Marfleet

I hope you are well.

Just following up on this matter: please can you advise if this application will be heard at a planning meeting: if so, please can you let me know the date and time, so that we can plan our representation accordingly?

As an addendum to our objection, I would also like to bring it to your attention that properties at 27 and 28 Fitzroy Square have recently been let for office use. One of these properties (No 27) had been vacant for some time.

This provides direct and current evidence that there is demand for office space in the area, providing the facility is appropriately refurbished.

Anyone suggesting otherwise is deliberately ignoring the facts. As part of your report, I think it is reasonable to expect that office lettings in the immediate vicinity will be properly covered.

Thank you

Ronald Agble  
Resident of Fitzroy Square

On 14 Mar 2021, at 11:16, Ronnie Agble [REDACTED] wrote:

## **For the Attention of Patrick Marfleet**

Re: Planning Application for Boston House, 36-38 Fitzroy Square, W1T (Ref: 2020/2226/P)

I write to object to the above planning application for the third time in the last 18 months. In which time, I must add, the owner of the building has not proactively contacted any residents or businesses to discuss our objections or seek views as to the types of scheme that could be supported by the local community.

The reasons for my objection are set out below, under headings 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

**1 - All the reasons outlined in my two previous objection letters, in autumn 2019 and summer 2020**

**2 - Significant loss of employment space (contrary to Policy E2)**

The applicant, in their second planning application, went to great lengths to maximise office space with the inclusion of County House and Bedford Square properties.

However, the proposed Section 106 (for a Bedford Square property) was found to be legally defective and has, therefore, been omitted by the applicant from this third application: that means there is now a significant loss of office space.

Also, County House has now been omitted from the application, again meaning the loss of office space is even more significant: loss of office employment space is contrary to Camden local planning Policy E2.

JLL, a reputable London and internationally-based professional advisory firm, opined on the building twice (see previous reports submitted to LB Camden) to advise that it is the lack of investment which is preventing this prestigious and well-located building from leasing - not because there is a lack of demand for offices with a PTAL rating of 6b in central London.

Therefore, it is not credible for the applicant to suggest that a change of use should be allowed because the property is no longer sought after for office use. This is not the case: it is just that the building has not been refurbished and, therefore, is not attractive to tenants. Indeed, the high number of viewings by prospective office tenants underlines the attractiveness of the location.

It is interesting to note that the owner is currently marketing the building for sale for £30m+, despite not making any investment in the space since acquiring it in December 2016 (when it was occupied with office users) for £24m.

How can the owner expect a change of planning use to be consented, and to sell the building for a significant profit, when he has not invested in the building to ensure its successful letting?

**3 - No specific occupier**

The new application is even more concerning than the previous two applications, because there are so many important unknowns - for example: the identity of the end user is now no longer specified; and the number of people who will actually occupy the building is not declared.

Can planning permission legitimately be granted for a change of use, from a protected employment use to educational use, without an end user?

**4 - Delivery & servicing**

Without knowing the occupier, how can we realistically be expected to believe the applicant's assertions regarding the proposed activities within the building? For example, how can the Council know what proportion will be teaching space, or for serving food and beverage or for administrative uses? Furthermore, how can the Council determine and

restrict the servicing arrangements or the number of vehicular and bicycle movements and parking in the Square?

Again, there appear to be too many unknowns under items that are of importance to local businesses and residents - as well as LB Camden.

#### **5 - Unsuitable use for a Conservation Area with listed buildings**

As previously asserted, fundamentally, Fitzroy Square is not suitable for student use. The Square is residential and commercial and has existed in this capacity, harmoniously, for decades. Indeed, the current balance is approximately 50% office and 50% residential occupation. Students and typical student behaviour is not suitable for this quiet and virtually pedestrianised environment.

My final point regards the time, effort and taxpayer money that has been utilised for this application. Surely, it cannot be right that the residents and businesses in and around Fitzroy Square have had to invest significant time and funds to challenge this application for the third time in just 18 months?

Also, at a time when public sector funds are under so much pressure, it seems hard to justify use of resources for this application to be administered by LB Camden for the third occasion in such a short period.

We urge LB Camden to finally address this application and make a decision to refuse it, once and for all, on the basis of one or more of the genuine planning-related arguments that have been outlined in this letter - and many of the other objection letters that have been submitted to the Council.

Yours sincerely

Dr Ronald Agble  
Resident of Fitzroy Square