



BLOOMSBURY CONSERVATION AREAS

Advisory Committee | Est. 1968

61B Judd Street
King's Cross
LONDON
WC1H 9QT

bloomsburyconservation.org.uk
planning@bloomsburyconservation.org.uk

30th June 2021

2021/1233/P

Jaspreet Chana
LB Camden
5 Pancras Square
King's Cross
LONDON
N1C 4AG

OBJECTION: Application 2021/1233/P at 64-66 Millman Street, including change of use at ground floor and associated works, and erection of two storey rear extension.

The Bloomsbury CAAC wishes to register a formal objection to 2021/1233/P.

- We **object** to the erection of a two storey rear extension.
- We **object** to the works at ground floor on the front elevation.
- We **object** to the proposed change of use.

Impact of the change of use upon the conservation area

The CAAC objects as a matter of principle to the change of use of ground floor commercial spaces to residential, especially where the ground floor has a legible shopfront and the host building has been designed to accommodate ground floor commercial space. The planning application does not state the efforts made to lease or rent the space nor for how long the space has been vacant predating the COVID pandemic. There is no demonstration that there is a continued lack of demand for ground floor commercial space in the wider area, and elsewhere in the conservation area there has been a surge of new businesses renting previously unoccupied commercial spaces following the most recent lifting of restrictions. The CAAC is therefore not convinced that continued use of this space as Class E is unviable.

While the heritage harm to the host building and neighbouring properties and street through a change of use is admittedly minimal, it is the wider effect of incremental changes which can cause long term harm to a conservation area, especially one where residential lettings can be lucrative.

Impact of ground floor shopfront changes

The CAAC objects to the ground floor alterations to the shopfront. Given the low architectural status of the existing building relative to the wider area, and the prevailing classical and restrained architectural expression of domestic buildings, any alterations to the shopfront should be entirely

anonymous and unremarkable in form. Preferably if change of use were to go ahead a build-up in brick and render would be preferable with regularity of fenestration. The seemingly random and 'edgy' mosaic of glass panels is entirely inappropriate for the character of the building, the setting of neighbouring terraces, and the wider CA.

Opening of basement

The CAAC does not find anything objectionable in the opening up of the ground floor to form a basement level given appropriate details submitted and approved for railings.

Rear extension

The CAAC finds the rear extension to be entirely inappropriate in design for the conservation area, host building, and the setting of neighbouring terraces. The use of excessive glazing and simple block massing is entirely insensitive to the architectural form of this rear elevation and wider CA. Any rear extension should be massed sensitively, have a traditional solid-to-void ratio, be subservient to the existing building and neighbouring buildings, and be constructed in materials drawn from the host building.

Conclusion

The CAAC therefore lodges a formal objection to this application and recommends that it be refused.

Bloomsbury Conservation Areas *Advisory Committee*

30th June 2021