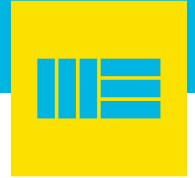


THIS IS A NOTE

**TO**

Camden Planning Department

CC**FROM**

Montagu Evans - Central London & Heritage
Planning

DATE

8 March 2022

SUBJECT

1 & 1A Montague Street – Change of Use Application

Planning Statement Addendum**Would the AA be intending to move to another premises after the 10-year time period?**

AA's interest in Montague Street is primarily about maintaining overall space allocation for students and staff since the loss of the Morwell Street property, and planning for the consolidation and expansion of the institution which is an important cultural body in the Borough. The AA's commitment to the area, anchored to the premises in Bedford Square with some additional space has long been the scenario.

The AA School includes about 1,000 students and employs 340 staff (largely part-time academic and full-time administrative) in total. The addition of 1 and 1A Montague Street would represent an expansion of some 15% in terms of its available space. Thus, proportionately, on any given day, about 150 students (majority postgraduate) and 50 staff would be distributed across the two properties

At this time, the lease of the property at 1 and 1a Montague Street is part of the medium term plan for the institution and at this juncture there are no clear plans to vacate or seek to extend occupation after the ten year period.

Regardless, the 10 year period would allow the AA to sustain a business model that could support taking a loan to purchasing a building elsewhere. Whatever happens, the AA would want to stay in the area and would need an equivalent or bigger building to accommodate their activities.

Will any cycle parking spaces be provided within the existing building for students and staff?

The capacity and access to the existing bike storeroom in basement (for 30+ bikes) is to be maintained. Most students and staff will continue to keep their bikes at Bedford Square as usual and walk to Montague Street from the principal premises.

Can you provide details of methods of access to and within the building?

The Bedford Square buildings are Grade I listed and have similar issues with making amendments and altering to provide level and inclusive access. At Bedford Square the AA use a folded ramp that is deployed and retrieved on an ad hoc basis per use. The same reversible solution is proposed for Montague Street.

What and where will the servicing and waste storage facilities be?

As at Bedford Square, the waste is to be collected in the cellars and brought up to ground floor level for collection day. There is no catering planned at the Montague Street premises, the AA bar and restaurant (and

associated social activities) will be maintained at Bedford Square. The Montague Street premises will have facilities for paper and card recycling.

When the building was originally occupied by the British Museum for back-of-house uses I assume it would not have been occupied by 250 people every day so the intensification of the use needs to be considered?

The nature of the AA's seminar and studio schedule makes for fluid comings and goings. It would be groups of 15-20 ebbing and flowing depending on their class schedules. In other words, there could be a net total of 250 people across a day, but these would not be all at one time and would not be moving all together. The core opening hours and use of the building would mirror Bedford Square, being 9am-10pm Monday to Sunday.

Appreciate that a marketing note has been submitted. It is not clear exactly how the site has been marketed, or the number of parties that have been interested in the site. Have other sites have been considered by the AA and if so, why have these been discounted?

Other sites all in Camden were shortlisted, toured, and considered by the AA senior management team. Montague Street was the clear preferred property given the character and disposition of the spaces mirrored the AA premises in Bedford Square. The continuity of the student experience and the expectations associated with the profile of the AA and teaching style were an important consideration and the Montague Street property met these requirements, as well as the spatial qualities and status of the listed building. Montague Street's proximity and links to a cultural institution (British Museum) also made it the top choice.

The Building lends itself to the type of studio based teaching that will be undertaken. This is a core part of how the School operates and is essential to architectural training. The AA intend to occupy the Building in a hybrid manner, providing office spaces for staff and teaching and learning spaces for student.

At the heart of its academic provision is studio-based instruction which is organised twice weekly along with a sequence of seminars, lectures, and workshops which are organised around the studios.

This approach to teaching is well suited to the layout of the Building at numbers 1 and 1a. More traditional aspects such as model building will largely remain in Bedford Square premises where the wood, metal and digital prototyping workshops are located. The use of 1 and 1a Montague Street is therefore wholly necessary to the teaching approach taken by the AA.

It may be necessary to secure the hours of operation by condition. We would expect opening hours similar to an office occupiers (Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 22:00). Is there a need for this site to be accessible 24 hours a day, 6 days a week? This would need to be justified to ensure there is no impact on local residential amenity.

If possible the AA would invite a condition securing opening hours of Monday to Sunday 08:00 to 22:00. This would match the AA provision elsewhere in Bedford Square. It is not necessary for the building to be accessible 24 hours a day.