

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		02/05/2022	
(Members Briefing)		N/A		Consultation Expiry Date:		25/05/2022	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Laura Dorbeck				2022/0898/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
Rockefeller Building 21 University Street London WC1E 6DE				Please refer to draft decision notice.			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
Alterations including removal of redundant services and construction of new lightwell and lifting beam, installation of new louvre openings, and associated works.							
Recommendation(s):		Grant conditional planning permission					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:			No. of responses	02	No. of objections	02
Summary of consultation responses:	The application was advertised in the local press on 17/03/2022 (expiring 10/04/2022) and a site notice was displayed on 16/03/2022 until 09/04/2022.					
	<p>One objection was received on behalf of the Gordon Mansions Residents Association and the Chenies Mews Working Group raising the following concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are a number of residential homes in close proximity which are affected by noise in this canyon-like street.• The servicing plan secured by S106 agreement for planning permission PSX0205442 dated 13/08/2003 should be adhered to for these works. (Officer comment – see planning history section for details of planning application).• Concerns that proposals could lead to a reduction in the size and functionality of the loading bay and result in loading/unloading occurring in the street.• Concerns about the completed development bringing long term noise issues.• Concerns about noise and traffic congestion in Chenies Mews while the works are in progress. <p>A second objection was received on behalf of the Chenies Mews Working Group raising the following concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project management planning is the main area of concern.• Proposal is likely to have a significant impact on residential amenity in the short term (during construction) and in the longer term (effects of vehicular access to the loading bay).• Concerns about noise from the equipment itself, the operation of new facilities like doors, gratings, etc., construction works, and anti-social behaviour during construction. <p>In response to the objections, the applicant provided a written response and submitted a construction management plan (CMP) setting out measures to be implemented to mitigate impacts on neighbouring amenities.</p> <p>One further response was received from the Chenies Mews stating that the information and CMP did not address their objections. The following additional comments were received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A noise compliance condition should be imposed on any permission.• Hours of operation of the loading beam and lightwell should be restricted by condition.• The proposal includes the use of the Welfare Facility approved by 2015/3414/P but this permission has expired.• Please ensure no deliveries will be made before 8am.• Site manager should co-ordinate with UCL’s existing schedule of deliveries.					

- The front entrance to the Rockefeller Building should be used more during the works.
- Query about what noise assessments will be undertaken.
- Contractor should meet with residents before work starts.
- Details of single named person should be provided for complaints.

The applicant's submitted a further response, and a revised CMP incorporating the following:

- UCL are happy for the Council's standard noise condition to be imposed on any consent.
- UCL agree to the core hours of use suggested by CMWG (not including emergency maintenance).
- Regarding the use of the welfare facilities, Camden Officers previously confirmed that the use of this premises for UCL Service and Maintenance Contractors would be ancillary to the existing education use and wouldn't need planning permission.
- No deliveries will be made before 8am and will be managed with a pre-booking system.
- The CMP sets out appropriate measures to mitigate any historical concerns that have arisen from previous development, and the community liaison initiatives will provide an opportunity for such matters to be discussed and resolved.
- Noise assessments are to be carried out prior to works commencing, which will be monitored by an appointed party, to ensure best methods/practices have been considered and implemented to reduce noise pollution as far as is reasonably practicable.
- The opportunity has been provided within the updated CMP for an initial site review meeting to be held with three local stakeholders, two members from UCL project team member/ principal designer and a member from Alpine Works project management team where any concerns or queries will be able to be raised.
- Contact details of a representative provided.

A member of the Chenies Mews Working Group confirmed by email that the updated details addressed many of their concerns.

Please see Amenity section for full officer assessment.

Site Description

The Rockefeller Building's main entrance is located on University Street. To the east of the site is Gower Street and to the south is Chenies Mews. The site is currently used for educational purposes by University College London (UCL). The building is Grade II listed and falls within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

The surrounding area consists of other University and medical buildings such as the Cruciform Building to the North of the Site, and UCL's Main Quadrangle Building and campus to the east.

The area in which works are proposed falls to the rear of the Rockefeller Building within a goods yard which is located behind a set of security gates at the north of Chenies Mews and which is not included within the grade II listing.

Relevant History

2021/4710/P & 2021/5433/L - Erection of a plant enclosure on the roof facing Huntley Street. Permission granted December 2021.

2020/0695/P & 2020/0823/L - Erection of a plant enclosure on the roof and a solid acoustic screening and associated works at the edge of the roof. Permission granted April 2020.

2018/4242/P & 2018/4243/L - Re-configuration of internal spaces, replacement and upgrade of services within risers and concealed ceilings with associated works to corridor spaces; additional plant at roof level and within the rear courtyard on multi-storey deck; replacement of existing metal fire escape stairwell to the rear lightwell. Permission granted December 2018.

2015/3414/P – 96A – 98 Chenies Mews - Change of use of part basement, ground and first floors from education and teaching facilities (Class D1) to construction welfare facilities (Class Sui Generis) for a temporary period of 5 years, including installation of heat recovery unit and 2x condensers above first floor roof and 14 temporary cycle spaces within the site. Permission granted 10/11/2015.

PSX0205442 – Rockefeller Nurses Home - Demolition and redevelopment of the unlisted nurses' home, hospital offices and ancillary accommodation (in buildings B & C, all sui generis use) with a seven storey building, together with refurbishment and change of use of the adjacent grade II listed nurses' home (part of building A, also a sui generis use) to form a new development (Class D1) to provide accommodation for the Institute of Cancer Studies, part of University College London Medical School, comprising research laboratories, teaching rooms, administrative offices, ancillary floorspace and roof plant, involving the retention of the existing basement plant area, minor alterations to 70 Huntley Street and the formation of a servicing area at the rear of the site. Permission granted following appeal subject to S106 agreement 13/08/2003.

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The London Plan (2021)

Camden Local Plan (2017)

A1 Managing the proposed impact of development

A4 Noise and Vibration

D1 Design

D2 Heritage

T1 Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport

Camden Planning Guidance (2021)

Amenity

Design

Bloomsbury Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy 2011.

Assessment

1.0 Proposals

- 1.1 The proposals involve the installation of a new UCL substation, associated switch rooms, and a new UKPN substation to meet future demand. The infrastructure will be located within the basement level of the Rockefeller Building oil tank room. In addition, a new lightwell is proposed within the goods yard adjacent to the oil tank room to allow for the delivery of the equipment and easy access for future maintenance requirements. A new electrical cable is required to link the new substations and switch gear in the oil tank room to the existing electrical panels beneath the Paul O’Gorman cafe. This will entail a cable running through the Rockefeller Building Fire Escape Alley which will be below ground, and any excavations will be made good to match existing.
- 1.2 The works requiring planning permission are as follows:
- Construction of lightwell within the goods yard roadway,
 - Construction of lifting beam,
 - Two openings for ventilation louvres, and
 - Installation of external cable routing.
- 1.3 Given the location of the works, the Council’s Conservation Officer has confirmed that listed building consent is not required in this instance.

2.0 Assessment

- 2.1 The principal considerations in the determination of this application are as follows:
- Design and Heritage (the impact of the proposal on the character of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and the setting of the listed building), and
 - Amenity (impact on neighbouring amenity in terms of daylight/sunlight, outlook, privacy and noise/vibration).

3.0 Design and Heritage

- 3.1 The Council’s design policies are aimed at achieving the highest standard of design in all developments, including where alterations and extensions are proposed. Policy D1 of the Local Plan requires development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, which improves the function, appearance and character of the area; and Policy D2 states that the Council will preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden’s rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings. Camden’s Local Plan is supported by CPG document ‘Design’ and the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement.
- 3.2 Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (“the Listed Buildings Act”) provide a statutory presumption in favour of the preservation of the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, and the preservation of Listed Buildings and their settings. Considerable importance and weight should be attached to their preservation. A proposal which would cause harm should only be permitted where there are strong

countervailing planning considerations which are sufficiently powerful to outweigh the presumption.

- 3.3 The proposed external works associated with the installation of the new substations are fairly minor, involving the installation of a lightwell, lifting beam, ventilation louvres and cabling. The works are all proposed within the external goods yard area which is utilitarian in appearance and shielded from public views by existing metal gates which would be retained. The works would all involve alterations to the late 20th century rear extension to the original building which does not contribute to the significance of the listed building.
- 3.4 Although the works involve excavations to create a new lightwell, these would involve excavation of the ground levels down to the existing basement level and as such, do not constitute basement development requiring basement impact assessment.
- 3.5 As such, the works would be in keeping with the character of the existing goods yard, and would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the building, the significance of the listed building or its setting, or the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

4.0 Amenity

- 4.1 Policies A1 and A4 seek to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered and does not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. This includes daylight/sunlight, privacy, outlook and noise disturbance.
- 4.2 Due to the location and nature of the works at ground and basement level, within a goods yard which is screened from public views, the proposals would not impact neighbouring amenity by way of loss of outlook, daylight/sunlight or privacy.
- 4.3 Potential impacts on neighbouring amenity would arise from noise generated from construction impacts and noise from the completed development. The proposed substation uses fall within the existing use of the building (i.e. they are 'permitted development'), and are located entirely internally at basement level. As such, planning permission is not required for their installation and their installation is not considered as part of the current planning application. Nevertheless, the location at basement level would ensure that any noise/vibrations would not impact neighbouring residents, and permission would be granted subject to a condition that the completed development must comply with the Council's standard noise levels.
- 4.4 The Council's Transport Officer has confirmed that they do not have concerns regarding the proposals in transport terms, and that the lightwell excavation is far enough away from the public highway to not warrant the submission of an Approval in Principle. Although initially stating that the scale of the works would not warrant a construction management plan (CMP) to be secured, they recognise the concerns raised by residents regarding the potential to cause disturbance and historic issues experienced with construction loading, traffic management and noise, and welcome the submission of the CMP submitted by the applicant.
- 4.5 The CMP was submitted to alleviate the concerns by local residents and was revised a number of times to address their comments. The CMP sets out the following key measures:
- General maintenance and use of the beam and lightwell will only occur during the core hours of 8am-6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays.
 - No deliveries will occur before 8am and will be managed by a pre-booking system to coordinate deliveries.
 - Community liaison measures will be provided.
 - Noise assessments are to be carried out prior to works commencing, which will be monitored by an appointed party, to ensure best methods/practices have been considered and implemented to reduce noise pollution as far as is reasonably practicable. The contractors will work to the Noise at Work Regulations 2005 noise

thresholds and appropriate mitigation will be undertaken to meet such thresholds if required.

- The opportunity has been provided within the updated CMP for an initial site review meeting to be held with three local stakeholders, two members from UCL project team member/ principal designer and a member from Alpine Works project management team where any concerns or queries will be able to be raised. Then, during the construction works phase, a monthly newsletter will be issued explaining the upcoming works and scheduling, and contact details are provided should local stakeholders have any queries they wish to raise during the construction period.
- Contact details of a representative for any complaints were provided.

4.6 Officers consider the measures set out in the CMP to be sufficient to ensure the construction and completed development would not cause harm to neighbouring amenity. The completion and ongoing management of the development in accordance with the CMP shall be secured by condition.

4.7 Concerns were also raised that the proposals could lead to a reduction in the size and functionality of the loading bay and result in loading/unloading occurring in the street, traffic congestion and disturbance. The submitted CMP includes measures to manage vehicle movements, prevent accumulation of vehicles, vehicle parking for delivery, servicing and waste, and storage of waste. UCL have confirmed that there will be minimal effects on the day-to-day operation of the loading bay area, and the majority of physical works would be undertaken internally. Once the proposals have been completed, the proposed lightwell will only be utilised for maintenance purposes on an infrequent ad-hoc basis.

4.8 As such, subject to the suggested conditions and compliance with the submitted construction management plan, the proposed development is not considered to unduly impact neighbouring amenity.

5.0 Conclusion and recommendation

5.1 In conclusion, the proposed works would preserve the appearance of the building, the setting of the listed building and the character and appearance of this part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, and would not result in harm to neighbouring amenity. As such, the proposals are considered to accord with the requirements of policies D1, D2, A1 and A4 of the Camden Local Plan and it is recommended that conditional planning permission is granted.

The decision to refer an application to Planning Committee lies with the Director of Regeneration and Planning. Following the Members Briefing panel on Tuesday 5th September 2022, nominated members will advise whether they consider this application should be reported to the Planning Committee. For further information, please go to www.camden.gov.uk and search for 'Members Briefing'.