



## PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT UPDATE

<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>		<b>AGENDA ITEM NO:</b>	<b>B5</b>
<b>Date:</b>	9 September 2019		

Application number	P2019/1124/FUL
Application type	Full Planning Application
Ward	Clerkenwell
Listed building	Adjacent to the Grade II listed College Building
Conservation area	Adjacent to the Northampton Square Conservation Area
Development Plan Context	Core Strategy Key Area – Bunhill and Clerkenwell Central Activities Zone City University Sites – Finsbury Local Plan (site allocation BC1) Site Allocation – City University London BC1 Finsbury Local Plan Area – Bunhill and Clerkenwell Mayors Protected Vistas – Alexandra Palace to St Paul’s Cathedral
Licensing Implications	None
Site Address	The City University, 10 Northampton Square, London, EC1V 0HB
Proposal	Alterations and extension at 6th and 7th floor levels of the University Building to provide an extension to the library as well as replacement of the glazing units on the 1st - 6th floor facades and associated works.

Case Officer	Anna Luu
Applicant	University of London
Agent	Gerald Eve LLP

### AIM OF REPORT

1. The current application LBI reference P2019/1124/FUL was previously heard at the Planning Committee held on the 4 June 2019. The Planning Committee resolved to grant permission subject to various conditions and planning obligations.
2. At that time an application had been made to Historic England to list the building and Members advised that they would want to reconsider the scheme if the listing was confirmed. The purpose of this addendum report is to clarify the status of listing application:

it has been rejected. The original Committee Report and addendum are attached at Appendix 1 and 2:

## STATUS OF LISTING APPLICATION

3. In June 2019 an application (Historic England Application Number: 1464897) was made to Historic England to list the University building. Historic England evaluated the application and undertook an analysis of the building and provided the following assessment and conclusion:

*“Based on the information provided and with reference to the Principles of Selection (DCMS, November 2018) and our Selection Guides, the Sheppard Robson buildings at City University are not recommended for listing for the following principal reasons:*

*Degree of architectural interest:*

- as a development of 1966-74 the buildings would be expected to show a higher degree of architectural or historic interest, as well as intactness, to justify listing;*
- the buildings do not compare well with Richard Sheppard, Robson and Partners’ best educational buildings, a number of which have been recognised by listing;*
- the effect of the massing is rather forbidding, and the buildings do not show the level of detailing and finish of which the firm was capable, whilst the planning of the complex seems never to have provided unfettered circulation;*
- the buildings have received a number of significant alterations, eroding the integrity of the original design.”*

4. The application to list the building has been rejected, a full copy of the Historic England advice is attached at Appendix 3 of this report.

## FURTHER CONSULTATION RESPONSES

5. In addition to the issues and comments raised in consultation submissions presented to the Committee on 4 June, the following consultation responses have been received (where these do raise issues not already reported to the Committee):

### **20<sup>th</sup> Centenary Society**

In summary the 20<sup>th</sup> Centenary Society raised the following concerns (the full submission is attached to this report as Appendix 4):

*The Council policy DM 2.3 E states that proposals that unjustifiably harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will generally not be permitted. The works would harm a non-designated heritage asset, and therefore should be refused.*

*City University to be one of the most complete examples of the work of Richard Sheppard, Robson and Partners anywhere in the country practice has been responsible for a significant number of educational buildings around the country.*

*The university was designed with sensitivity towards the surrounding area, particularly in how the Greater London Council specified a maximum roof height determined by the 45 degree angle from the centre of the surrounding roads, creating a high density university campus of an appropriate scale in relation to its neighbours.*

*The addition of a dominant rooftop extension will negate the architect’s intention of creating a series of carefully composed and scaled buildings, and will negatively impact on the*

*surrounding area which is something the original architects and planners were determined to avoid.*

*The Society also considers refurbishment of existing windows to be a more appropriate option than replacement, as this would be sensitive to the building's original material palette and avoids unnecessary harm to the building's significance.*

*The Society therefore considers it to be appropriate for this planning application to be refused, as the proposals are not conservation-led and will result in avoidable harm to the significance of these buildings.*

Planning Case Officer Comment: An assessment of heritage impact is at para 10.36 – 10.43. of the original committee report. The relationship between the proposal and nearby buildings is addressed in the original committee report, see sections 8.26 and 10.26-10.27. Tall building consideration has been addressed in paras.8.26, 10.17-10.32 of the original committee report.

The Council notes that Historic England are not of the view that the building is worthy of being a designated heritage asset (i.e. they have not listed it for the reasons given above) The Council's Design and Conservation officer is of the view that the existing building should not be considered a non-designated heritage asset.

Below are the relevant extracts from the NPPF.

**Heritage asset:** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

**Designated heritage asset:** A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation

Notwithstanding the Design and Conservation officer's advice that the existing building should not be considered a non-designated heritage asset officers for completeness only and not because this view is not accepted planning officers have considered the proposal in light of the NPPF paragraph 197 which states:

*"The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."*

Planning officers have considered the benefits that would arise from the scheme (see paras 10.22 and 10.23 of the original committee report). The benefits of additional study space for students, improvements to accessibility and usability of the University Building are noted, along with the visual enhancements (e.g. removal of unsightly plant and equipment from view). The existing roof top features unsightly plant, equipment and telecommunication equipment, and is not considered to contribute the appearance of the building. The proposal is not considered to cause any undue harm to the significance of the existing building. Additionally, officers are of the view that the benefits clearly outweigh any concerns about the impact of the scheme to the existing building.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Society objection notes that Council policy states that proposals that unjustifiably harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will generally not be permitted. (Development Management Policy DM2.3 E). Officers have taken this objection into account along with Council policy DM2.3 but can't agree that in this case. The effect is not considered to

cause any undue harm to the significance of the building and any impact would be outweighed by the benefits of the scheme.