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| <b>CITY OF WESTMINSTER</b>                                       |  |  |              |
| <b>PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUB COMMITTEE</b>                       | <b>Date</b><br>5 March 2024  | <b>Classification</b><br>For General Release |              |
| <b>Report of</b><br>Director of Town Planning & Building Control |  | <b>Ward(s) involved</b><br>Pimlico North     |              |
| <b>Subject of Report</b>   | <b>Globe House, 89 Eccleston Square, London, SW1V 1PN</b>  |  |              |
| <b>Proposal</b>  | Use of building as hotel (Class C1) and part of ground floor as flexible commercial, business or service premises (Class E). |  |              |
| <b>Agent</b>   | Centro Planning Consultancy  |  |              |
| <b>On behalf of</b>  | Eccleston Square London Limited (Criterion Capital)  |  |              |
| <b>Registered Number</b>   | 23/01561/FULL  | <b>Date amended/ completed</b>               | 9 March 2023 |
| <b>Date Application Received</b>                                 | 9 March 2023   |  |              |
| <b>Historic Building Grade</b>                                   | Unlisted   |  |              |
| <b>Conservation Area</b>   | No   |  |              |
| <b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>  | No   |  |              |

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

Refuse permission: insufficient information submitted to demonstrate no interest in continued use of building within CAZ as offices.

**2. SUMMARY & KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

The building is currently vacant but has previously been occupied by various government departments, most recently by HM Passport Office for which ground, first and second floor levels of the building were open to visiting members of the public submitting and collecting passport applications.

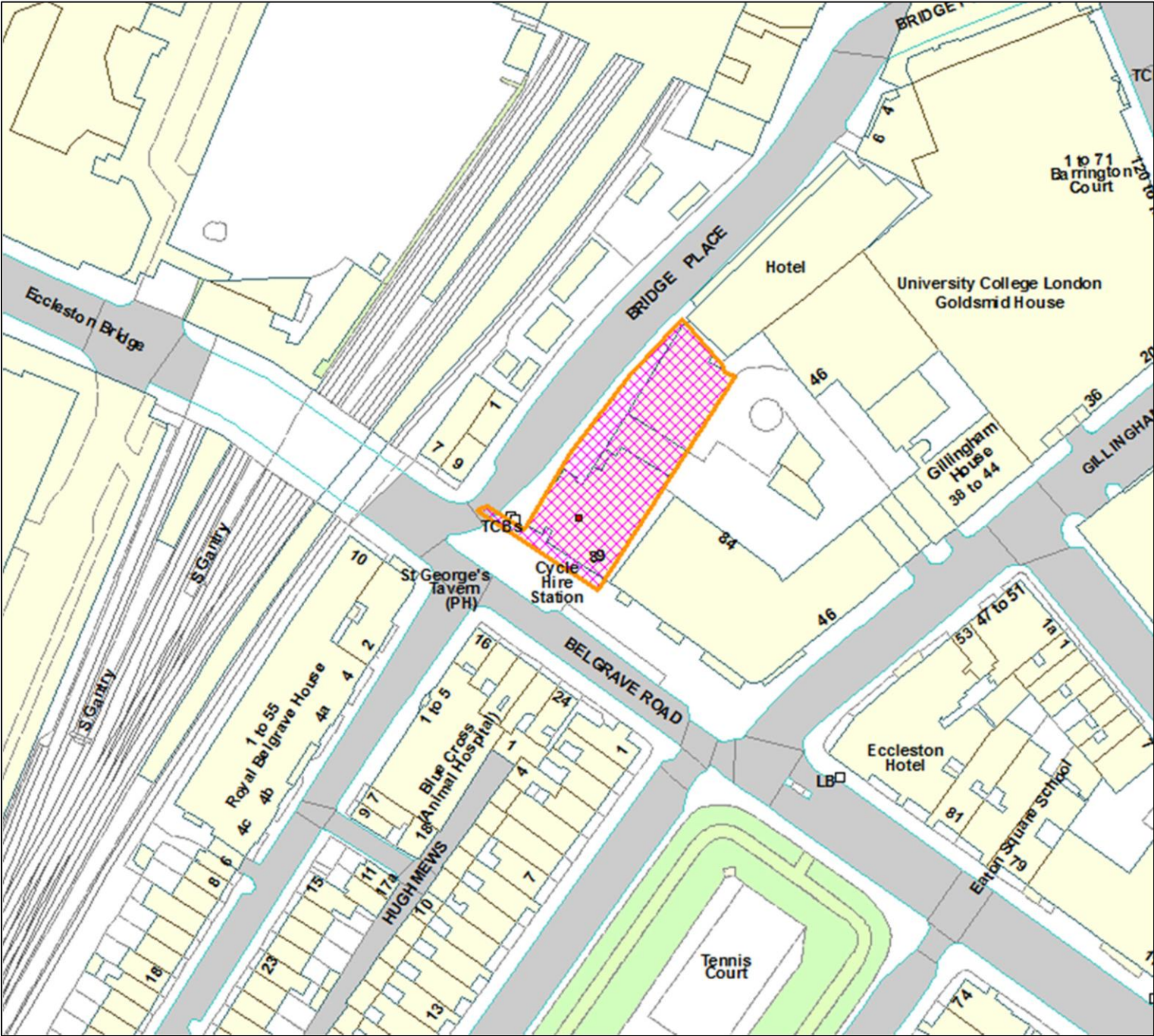
Permission is sought for a change of use to hotel with 357 guest bedrooms and a flexible Class E commercial unit (90.2sqm) at ground floor level on Bridge Place. Objections have been received to the loss of the existing offices and to the hotel on the grounds that it will have a harmful impact on residential amenity and the quality of environment in this part of Pimlico.

The key considerations in this case are:

- Loss of office floor space in the Central Activities Zone
- Impact of hotel on residential amenity and local environmental quality

This report assesses the proposal against the London Plan 2021, the City Plan 2019-2040 (April 2021) and any relevant material considerations. It concludes that the application fails to justify the proposed loss of office floor space in the Central Activities Zone, contrary to Policy E1 of the London Plan and Policy 13 of the City Plan and would adversely affect the objectives of the City Plan and London Plan which support office-based job growth in the Victoria Opportunity Area, as set out in Policies SD1, SD4 and SD5 of the London Plan and Policies 1 and 4 of the City Plan.

3. LOCATION PLAN



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#### 4. PHOTOGRAPHS



**View of 89 Eccleston Square from Belgrave Road**

## 5. CONSULTATIONS

### 5.1 Application Consultations

DR JAQUI WILKINSON WARD COUNCILLOR PIMLICO NORTH:

Strongly oppose. Large budget hotel would be out of character with townscape and heritage of Pimlico and would not be consistent with City Plan policies which require new development to protect and enhance amenity and local environmental quality. Pimlico suffers increasing anti-social behaviour and a large budget hotel may draw more anti-social behaviour into the area.

HISTORIC ENGLAND (ARCHAEOLOGY):

Do not consider it necessary to be notified of the application.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY:

No objection.

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON (TfL):

Bridge Place forms of the Transport for London Road Network (TFLN). TfL is the highway authority for the TFLN. Request that as part of this development the Council secures improvements to the lighting and feeling of pedestrian safety on Bridge Place; conditions should be attached requiring a car park management strategy, cycle parking details, a more detailed Delivery and Servicing Plan and that a Construction Logistics Plan be submitted for TfL review prior to determination.

WESTMINSTER SOCIETY:

Object on the grounds of loss of employment opportunities; building could be upgraded to meet future office demands; inadequate office market assessment and inadequate assessment of impact on other hotels in area; quality of proposed hotel accommodation; proposal should include improvements to the external appearance of the building, create active frontages and landscaped areas

PIMLICO FREDA:

Object. Do not agree that the existing office accommodation could not be brought up to 21st century standards; there is no need for a large low grade hotel in this primarily residential area; concerned about double occupancy of small sized guest bedrooms and the resulting high occupancy levels; the traffic and servicing associated with such a use will be detrimental to local amenity for residents and other users.

VICTORIA NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM:

Any response received to be reported to committee verbally by officers.

HIGHWAYS PLANNING:

Conditions should be attached to secure details of cycle parking which must include two long stay spaces for the Class E commercial unit; electric vehicle charging points and an Operational Management Plan which must include details of the process for dealing with coach arrivals and departures. As servicing would occur off-street an update to the submitted framework Servicing Management Plan will not be required but a condition must be attached to ensure that all servicing areas are permanently retained for this purpose. The Class E commercial unit should be restricted by condition to retail or office use only.

#### PROJECTS OFFICER (WASTE):

No objection subject to condition to secure storage for waste and recyclable materials.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:

The submitted air quality assessment demonstrates that the development will achieve 'air quality neutral'. There are no details provided of any new mechanical plant or kitchen extract ventilation (if required) for the Class E unit.

#### TREE SECTION:

No objection subject to a condition requiring the submission and approval of measures to protect the street tree during the course of works.

#### TRANSPORT FOR LONDON INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION:

No objection subject to a pre-commencement condition requiring the submission and approval of a detailed method statement which accommodates existing London Underground structures and the London Underground ventilation shaft located within the site.

#### THAMES WATER:

Advice provided for the applicant regarding waste (foul and surface) water and water supply to the proposed development. Request condition and informative attached should permission be granted.

#### ADJOINING OWNERS/OCCUPIERS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED:

No. consulted: 130 No. of replies: 42

No. of objections: 42 No. in support: 0

Objections received on the following grounds:

#### Land Use

- Loss of office space and employment opportunities
- Existing offices could be upgraded
- Too many hotels in area already
- Poor quality of proposed hotel accommodation
- Building should remain as offices or be used as affordable housing for key

workers/local people

Amenity

- Additional traffic, activity, noise and disturbance will have harmful impact on residents quality of life
- Budget type hotel will attract crime and anti-social behaviour

Design and Townscape

- Harmful impact on character of this part of North Pimlico/Victoria and Eccleston Square
- Offers no improvement to appearance of building

Highways

- Traffic generation – servicing and moped food deliveries to hotel guests
- Hotel guests will park in Respark spaces

SITE NOTICE AND PRESS NOTICE:  
Yes

**5.2 Applicant’s Pre-Application Community Engagement**

Engagement was carried out by the applicant with the local community and key stakeholders in the area prior to the submission of the planning application. The engagement activities undertaken by the applicant (as listed in the submitted Statement of Community Involvement) are summarised in the table below:

| Engagement Method/Event/Activity                 | Date                                    | Reach   |
|--|---|---|
| Website  | Launched 16 January 2023 (now inactive) | 318 website views   |
| Flyers   | Unknown                                 | 920 addresses in consultation area  |
| Emails to Ward Councillors and Amenity Societies | Unknown                                 | Ward Councillors<br>Pimlico Neighbourhood Forum<br>Westminster Society<br>Pimlico FREDA |

Responses received, across the range of engagement undertaken by the applicant, raised the following issues:

- The addition of another large hotel in the area and the quality of hotel accommodation proposed
- Preference for development as residential flats
- Raised height of the building (not proposed)
- Existing external appearance of building is out of keeping with area
- Main entrance should be on Bridge Place and not Belgrave Road

- Insufficient detail provided

The applicant submitted the planning application without amendment.

## **6. WESTMINSTER'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **6.1 City Plan 2019-2040 & London Plan**

The City Plan 2019-2040 was adopted at Full Council on 21 April 2021. The policies in the City Plan 2019-2040 are consistent with national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023) and should be afforded full weight in accordance with paragraph 225 of the NPPF. Therefore, in accordance with Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, it comprises the development plan for Westminster in combination with the London Plan, which was adopted by the Mayor of London in March 2021 and, where relevant, neighbourhood plans covering specific parts of the city (see further details in Section 6.2).

As set out in Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 47 of the NPPF, the application must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### **6.2 Neighbourhood Planning**

The application site is not located within an area covered by a Neighbourhood Plan.

### **6.3 National Policy & Guidance**

The City Plan 2019-2040 policies referred to in the consideration of this application have been examined and have been found to be sound in accordance with tests set out in Paragraph 35 of the NPPF. They are considered to remain consistent with the policies in the NPPF (December 2023) unless stated otherwise.

## **7. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **7.1 The Application Site**

Globe House, 89 Eccleston Square is located at the corner of Bridge Place and Belgrave Road and consists of basement, ground, mezzanine and eight upper floor levels. The building has been occupied by various government departments, most recently by HM Passport Office for which ground, first and second floor levels of the building were open to visiting members of the public submitting and collecting passport applications.

The site is located within the Central Activities Zone and the Victoria Opportunity Area. The building is not listed nor is it located in a conservation area. The site is within Flood Zone 3 and the Pimlico Tier 3 Archaeological Priority Area.

### **7.2 Recent Relevant History**

The building was, until December 2022, occupied by a succession of various HM government departments.



Prior to 7 June 2006 and the implementation of new planning legislation, the Crown (which includes government departments) was immune from planning law. Development on Crown Land was regulated under a parallel version of the planning system under Circular 18/84 'Crown Land and Crown Development'. This involved consultation with local planning authorities 'Notices of Proposed Development' which were submitted to the local planning authority and treated as though they were planning applications.

99/04840/1884

External alterations including new canopy on Bridge Place and Belgrave Road elevations; new roof level plant and screen; and use as offices to include the making, submission and collection of passport applications by visiting members of the public.  
No objections raised 14 September 1999

01/02114/1884

Erection of a three storey extension on Bridge Place frontage and a canopy on the Belgrave Road frontage in association with the use of the building as the UK passport office.  
No objections raised 12 June 2001

## 8. THE PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought to change the use of the building to a hotel (Class C1) comprising 357 rooms (8478.53 sqm) plus a commercial unit (Class E) (90.2 sqm) at ground floor level on Bridge Place.

Planning permission is not sought for any external alterations, however the submitted proposed Bridge Place elevation does show minor alterations to the entrance door, a new fire exit and a hotel sign which would require planning permission and advertisement consent respectively.

The application was originally submitted on the basis that the applicant believed the lawful use of the building to be Class E(c)(iii) public services offices with ancillary Class E(g)(i) office use.

**Table: Existing and proposed floorspace figures provided by the applicant.**

| Land Use                                   | Existing GIA (sqm) | Proposed GIA (sqm) | +/-       |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Commercial, Business and Service (Class E) | 8,568.73           | 90.2               | -8,478.53 |
| Hotel (Class C1)                           | 0                  | 8478.53            | +8478.53  |
| Total                                      | 8,568.73           | 8568.73            | 0         |

The applicant has subsequently sought to demonstrate that the existing lawful use of the entire building is sui generis and that City Plan and London Plan policies which seek to protect office use do not therefore apply to the site.

The existing lawful use of the building is discussed in Section 9.1 of this report.

## 9. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

### 9.1 Land Use

#### Existing Lawful Use

Identifying the existing lawful use of an application site is a matter of fact and degree for the decision-maker. Officers agree with the applicant that Globe House should be considered as one planning unit. The floors within the building are not physically separate and distinct, so the entire building is considered to be a single planning unit.

The applicant has sought to demonstrate that the lawful use of Globe House is not as offices and that the protection of office floor space as set out in the development plan does not apply. In their planning statement, the applicants initially considered the entire building to have a public service use falling within the former Class A2 (now Class E(c)(iii)) of the Use Classes Order 1987 due to the upper floors being ancillary to the areas that were open to visiting members of the public. Subsequently, they sought legal opinions in which their counsel suggests that it is most likely that the building is a single planning unit with a sui generis "passport office" use. However, it is considered that these conclusions can only be reached by ignoring the planning history of the site or through unfounded speculation about the actual use of the building while HMPO occupied parts of it. Given the facts of the site, officers consider that the existing lawful use of the building is a mixed use of Class E(c)(iii) (services provided principally to visiting members of the public which it is appropriate to provide in a commercial locality) and Class E(g)(i) (offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions).

When the primary occupier of the building changed from the Department of Trade and Industry to the HMPO in the early 2000s, the associated extensions and opening up of the ground to second floor levels of the building to members of the public did not require planning permission because the Crown operated under a parallel system of development control at that time (Circular 18/84) wherein the Crown only needed to notify the relevant local planning authority of its development proposals.

In 1999 the Crown notified the City Council of a proposed part change of use that would result from HMPO moving into the building, to which the City Council raised no objection (99/04840/1884 dated 14 September 1999). The City Councils' 'no objections raised' response letter to the Crown referred to operational development and to "...use as offices to include the making, submission and collection of passport applications by visiting members of the public."

This clearly indicates the areas of the building that would be open to visiting members of the public were not intended to be the principal use of the building. This is consistent with the description of the building in documents submitted by the applicant: Savills Social Infrastructure and Office Market Assessment dated February 2023 describes the building as an "existing office building"; Criterion Capital in their Summary Paper dated 11 May 2023 describe the building as "office space" and CBRE in their 30 January 2023 summary of their involvement in the disposal of the building describe it as an "office building".

Additionally, government agencies unrelated to HMPO and with no public facing

elements had offices in the building, e.g. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary. The submitted 'as existing' drawings - which are the proposed drawings for the Crown's notification (01/02114/1884) for the three storey extension on Bridge Place - do not show any proposed uses for levels 7 & 8 of the building, indicating the intent was never for HMPO to occupy the entire building and that other occupiers could use those levels of the building as offices independently of the activities of HMPO.

When HMPO moved their HQ and London Area Local Office functions from Globe House to the London Borough of Newham in 2022 and 2023, LB Newham refused their application for a certificate of lawfulness (application ref: 21/02015/CLP) for use of a building with a Class E lawful use on the grounds that the HMPO were "a mix of Use Class E(g)(i) [offices] and sui generis use." This suggests that there is consensus that an HMPO location containing HQ functions does consist of office space that falls within Class E(g)(i) and is not ancillary or incidental to the public facing part of the facility.

The legal opinions submitted by the applicant suggest that the level of interaction between the office and public parts of the building would have been so extensive that the overall planning unit would be sui generis. This does not stand up to the evidence indicating that multiple levels in the building were never intended to be occupied by HMPO, the fact that parts of the building were occupied as offices wholly unrelated to HMPO and the lack of evidence to suggest that the HQ functions of the HMPO carried out in the building had an extensive interaction with the passport office functions of the building that were open to the public.

The applicant's counsel is of the opinion that the most likely lawful use of the building is sui generis. However, they also consider the merits of other interpretations of the existing lawful use of the site based on the available facts which includes the view held by officers that the existing lawful use of the site is a mixed Class E(g)(i) (office) and Class E(c)(iii) (public services) use. The applicant's counsel considers that this view is supported by the description of development on the City Council's response to the Crown notification 99/04840/1884 (as discussed above) and a letter submitted by the Crown in support of that application which refers to a proposed "change of use of *part* of the premises [emphasis added]" and the historical use of part of the site by government agencies other than HMPO (e.g. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary).

The legal opinions also rely on the judgment of Slade LJ in *London Residuary Body v Secretary of State for the Environment* (1989) 58 P&CR 350 which sets out the special features that an Inspector attached particular importance to in deciding that County Hall in London had a sui generis rather than office use. In officers' view none of these special features apply to Globe House:

- (a) The presence of a debating chamber with voting lobbies, press gallery, committee rooms etc - none of which are present at Globe House
- (b) The significant degree of public involvement in and public access to the buildings - public access to Globe House was limited to three storeys and the public were not involved in decision making in the building
- (c) Parts of the buildings were used for public meetings of voluntary and local organisations - no such activities are known to have taken place at Globe House
- (d) Characteristics of public debate and decision making, administering services, responding to queries from the public, together with a range of other public and

ceremonial activities - aside from administering services and responding to queries from the public (which are activities carried out at least occasionally in most offices), none of these activities appear to have taken place at Globe House.

It should also be noted that in *LRB* case, Lloyd LJ considered that the planning unit should properly be regarded as having a mixed use. Lloyd LJ's judgment is consistent with officers' views and supports our assessment of the lawful use of Globe House.

The legal opinions also mention other examples to support the applicant's interpretation of the existing lawful use of the building. However, officers' assessment of the site has focused on the facts of the application site itself and as the applicant's counsel acknowledges the factual circumstances of these other sites are not relevant to the application site.

It is therefore concluded that, as a matter of fact and degree, the use of Globe House was as offices, with significant parts of the building being used for the carrying out of certain activities that were not incidental to the office use but were open to visiting member of the public. This is a mixed or composite use containing large areas of office floor space falling within Class E(g)(i) (offices). These areas of office floor space are protected by the development plan policies and should only be permitted to change use to a hotel after 12 months of vacancy and appropriate marketing.

## **Loss of Offices**

### **Policy Context**

The London Plan (2021) supports and encourages the growth potential of Opportunity Areas and office functions of the CAZ and requires that development proposals should not lead to a net loss of office floorspace in any part of the CAZ unless there is no reasonable and demonstrable prospect of the site being used for offices (Policies SD1, SD4 and SD5).

London Plan Policy E1 parts (G) and (H) require development proposals relating to new or existing offices to take into account the need for a range of suitable workspace including lower cost and affordable workspace and for the re-use of otherwise surplus large office spaces for smaller office units to be explored. Surplus office space is defined at paragraph 6.1.7 of the London Plan as 'sites and/or premises where there is no reasonable prospect of these being used for business purposes. Evidence to demonstrate surplus office space should include strategic and local assessments of demand and supply, and evidence of vacancy and marketing (at market rates suitable for the type, use and size for at least 12 months'.

The City Plan 2019-2040 (2021) supports the growth, modernisation and adaptation of a variety of business space to provide at least 63,000 new office-based jobs alongside other forms of commercial growth (Policy 1) and within the Victoria Opportunity Area seeks to achieve 4,000 additional jobs (Policy 4(A)).

Within the CAZ the net loss of office floor space to hotel use will only be permitted where there is no interest in its continued use for office or any other Class E (commercial, business and service), education or community uses, as demonstrated by vacancy and

appropriate marketing for a period of at least 12 months (Policy 13(D)). This is because, as paragraph 13.12 of the City Plan explains, the loss of office floorspace from the CAZ risks undermining its key strategic employment functions as defined in the London Plan, and as a result, the global competitiveness of the London economy.

City Plan Policy 13(A) supports new and improved office floor space in Opportunity Areas. In Westminster, the Opportunity Areas which include Victoria, provide the main opportunities for significant office growth in Westminster (para. 13.5) and office growth in these locations will be secured through a combination of means including the refurbishment and expansion of existing stock (para. 13.6).

The City Plan (para. 13.14) acknowledges that there may be instances where existing office stock within the CAZ has reached the end of its economic life, and there is no interest in its continued use for such purposes, or for other uses that fall within Class E of the Use Classes Order or education or community uses. However, past levels of permissions to convert or redevelop office floorspace from the CAZ to hotel use in Westminster justify only continuing to support such proposals after all other reasonable options have been exhausted.

#### Assessment of proposal

Without prejudice to their position that the existing lawful use of the building is sui generis and therefore not protected by London Plan and City Plan office policies, the applicant submitted marketing information which sought to demonstrate that appropriate marketing had taken place since January 2020 and that the poor quality of the office space rendered it unlettable.

The marketing information has been independently reviewed on behalf of the City Council, by surveyors with experience of the Victoria office market. The independent review concluded that 1) although there are a significant number of large Grade A office developments in the pipeline over the next five years, the demand for smaller office floor plates will remain strong in central Victoria; 2) although the building has a number of compromises (e.g. low floor to ceiling heights) these are not so severe that the building is no longer fit for purpose as offices if there was sufficient capital investment in the building; and 3) the marketing of the building has been very limited and did not amount to an 'appropriate' marketing campaign. The overall conclusion of the independent review was that the building is in a good location, could be refurbished to a sufficient quality and there is sufficient demand in the market for the building to continue to be used as offices into the future. And for these reasons, the independent review also concluded that London Plan Policy E1 was not relevant in this case.

The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the building is surplus office space with no reasonable prospect of being used for office purposes. The application is therefore contrary to London Plan and City Plan policies which seek to resist the loss of offices within the CAZ and to promote office based growth and job opportunities within CAZ and Opportunity Areas (London Plan policies SD1, SD4, SD5, E1 and City Plan policies 1, 4(A) and 13(D)).

#### **Proposed Hotel Use**

## Policy Context

Policy E10 of the London Plan supports new hotels in Opportunity Areas subject to their impact on office space but advises that the intensification of hotel provision should be resisted where this compromises local amenity or the balance of local land uses.

The City Plan (2021) supports growth and intensification of development within the CAZ, but it also recognises the need to balance the competing functions of the CAZ which includes residential neighbourhoods (Policy 1A(4)).

Policy 15 of the City Plan seeks to maintain and enhance the attractiveness of Westminster as a visitor destination while balancing the needs of visitors, businesses and local communities. Part G of Policy 15 directs new hotels to commercial areas of the CAZ.

City Plan Policy 7 requires development to be neighbourly by protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing amenity and local environmental quality and not to overburden the capacity of local infrastructure

## Assessment of proposal

Objections have been received from local residents, amenity societies and resident's groups on the grounds that the proposed hotel would have a harmful impact on residential amenity and local environmental quality.

The building is located within the Victoria Opportunity Area and within a commercial part of the CAZ - not immediately adjoining any residential properties and severed from the predominantly residential areas of Pimlico by the busy Belgrave Road. Had the applicant been able to demonstrate that appropriate marketing of the office building had been undertaken and that the building is surplus office space with no reasonable prospect of the building being used for office purposes, a change of use to a hotel would be acceptable in this location subject to conditions to secure an Operational Management Plan and Servicing and Deliveries Management Plan to mitigate any harmful impact on the amenity of local residents and the quality of the local environment. However, there are no policy or strategic benefits associated with the proposed hotel use which would outweigh the loss of office floorspace within CAZ contrary to Policy 13 of the City Plan.

## 9.2 Environment & Sustainability

### Sustainable Design

The applicant has submitted a BREEAM pre-assessment report to demonstrate how the proposal could meet BREEAM "Excellent" standard. Had the application been considered acceptable in principle, a condition would have been recommended to ensure that the completed development achieves BREEAM "Excellent" standard.

### Energy Performance

The submitted Energy & Sustainability Statement demonstrates how the proposed hotel development would minimise carbon emissions by following the principles of the Mayor



of London's energy hierarchy in accordance with Policy 36 of the City Plan. The energy strategy for the development includes passive design measures (i.e. use of the existing double glazing, low energy LED lighting and exposing areas of the existing concrete frame to assist in regulating the heat of internal areas) as well as heat recovery ventilation systems and renewable energy options such as PV panels on the roof. There are no external alterations proposed as part of the current application, so had the change of use to a hotel been acceptable in principle, details of all new mechanical plant and PV panels would be required to be submitted under a separate application for planning permission.

### **Air Quality**

The Councils' Environmental Sciences Team have confirmed that the submitted Air Quality Assessment demonstrates that the proposed development would achieve 'air quality neutral'.

### **Flood Risk & Sustainable Drainage**

The site is located within Flood Zone 3 and within the Pimlico North & Victoria Surface Water Flood Risk Hotspot.

The proposal involves a change of use from a 'Less Vulnerable' office use to a 'More Vulnerable' hotel use. In accordance with Part D of Policy 35 of the City Plan, this triggers the requirement for the proposal to pass the 'Exception Test' set out in the NPPF. The 'Exception Test' has two parts: first, that the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk and, second, the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall. As the proposal is limited to the change of use of an existing building, without any exterior works proposed, it is not considered possible for the proposal to meaningfully pass the first part of the 'Exception Test'.

A site-specific flood risk assessment (FRA) has been submitted with the application. The Environment Agency has raised no objection and is satisfied that the development would be safe in the event of a flood as there are no bedrooms proposed at basement and ground levels and there would be safe refuge on the higher floors of the building. The FRA explains that the basement of the building will be allowed to flood so as to not increase the amount or risk of flooding elsewhere any greater than the existing arrangement. Given no external alterations or extensions are proposed, the proposal would not reduce flood risk overall, but nor would it increase flood risk elsewhere. The proposal therefore passes the second part of the Exception Test.

Policy 35(E) of the City Plan advises that More Vulnerable uses should, as far as possible, be directed away from Surface Water Flood Risk Hotspots. The application involves a change of use to an existing building and the proposed hotel has been designed so that all bedrooms are above those levels of the building most susceptible to flooding.

## **9.3 Townscape, Design & Heritage Impact**

The building is not located in a conservation area, nor is it listed, and the proposal includes no external alterations. Hence, the proposed development raises no issues in relation to design or conservation matters.

It is acknowledged that some objectors have expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of any exterior or public realm enhancements associated with the proposal. However, as this application relates solely to the use of the building, the failure to improve its exterior or the public realm on Bridge Place is not a material consideration in the determination of this application.

#### **9.4 Residential Amenity**

There are no extensions proposed which might have a harmful impact on the daylight, sunlight or outlook enjoyed at any nearby properties. No new window openings, balconies or terraces are proposed that could reduce the privacy of any nearby occupiers.

No plant or equipment is proposed which may have a harmful impact on nearby occupiers. Had the application for a change of use been considered acceptable in principle, an informative would have been recommended to remind the applicant to apply for planning permission for any new plant equipment.

#### **9.5 Transportation, Accessibility & Servicing**

Guests would arrive at hotel reception via the existing ground floor entrance on Bridge Place. 357 guest bedrooms are proposed on mezzanine to eight floor levels. There would be no food and drink provision within the hotel. There is an existing vehicle access from Bridge Place into a rear courtyard area where there are currently six car parking spaces. These would be removed and replaced with one pre-bookable disabled parking space, the rest of this area would be used for small vehicle servicing and waste collection. Larger vehicle servicing (e.g linen delivery/collection) would take place from the existing delivery bay on Bridge Place. Cycle parking (20 long stay spaces) is proposed at basement level.

Had the application been considered acceptable in principle, conditions (as requested by TfL and the Council's Highways Planning Manager) would have been recommended to secure the Servicing Management Plan and an Operational Management Plan, servicing areas, cycle parking, storage for waste and recyclables, electric vehicle charging points and at TfL's request a Construction Logistics Plan.

Subject to these conditions, had the application been considered acceptable in principle, it is considered that the proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact on the public highways and would adequately promote sustainable modes of travel, in accordance with Policies 7, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30 and 33 of the City Plan.

#### **9.6 Economy including Employment & Skills**

Whilst the development is of insufficient scale to require an employment and skills plan, it would contribute positively to the local economy through the generation of increased opportunities for local employment, procurement and spending. Based on figures

provided by the applicant there would however be a reduction in jobs during the operational phase of the development as the hotel is expected to employ 80 full time equivalent staff, compared to the 500 full time equivalent staff employed by the HMPO.

**9.7 Other Considerations**

With regard to the proposed ground floor Class E unit on Bridge Place, had the application been considered acceptable in principle, a condition restricting the use of this unit to office, retail or restaurant would have been recommended because (as advised by the Council's Highways Planning Manager) other uses within Class E (e.g. education, nursery, medical) would require further assessment and a travel plan; as well as a condition requiring that, in the event this unit was used as a restaurant/cafe with primary cooking, details of the kitchen extract ventilation system be submitted for approval prior to commencement of that use.

The Council's Tree Officer has advised that the street tree on the corner of Bridge Place with Belgrave Road would require protection from potential damage during the course of building works. TfL (Infrastructure Protection) have requested a condition to ensure that London Underground structures and a ventilation shaft are adequately protected. Had the application been considered acceptable in principle appropriate conditions and/or informatives would have been recommended.

The site is within the Pimlico Tier 3 Archaeological Priority Area. Historic England (GLAAS) have offered no comment on the minor excavation within the building to create an additional service lift.

**9.8 Environmental Impact Assessment**

The proposed development is not of sufficient scale or impact to require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

**9.9 Planning Obligations & Pre-Commencement Conditions**

Planning obligations are not relevant in the determination of this application.

**10. Conclusion**

This report has considered the material planning issues associated with the proposed development in conjunction with all relevant national, regional and local planning policy.

The proposed development is unacceptable as it would fail to accord with Policies 1, 4 and 13 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021) and Policies SD1, SD4, SD5 and E1 of the London Plan (March 2021). Therefore, it is recommended that planning permission should be refused on grounds that insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that there is no interest in the continued use of the building as offices or any other Class E (commercial, business and service) uses, education or community use.

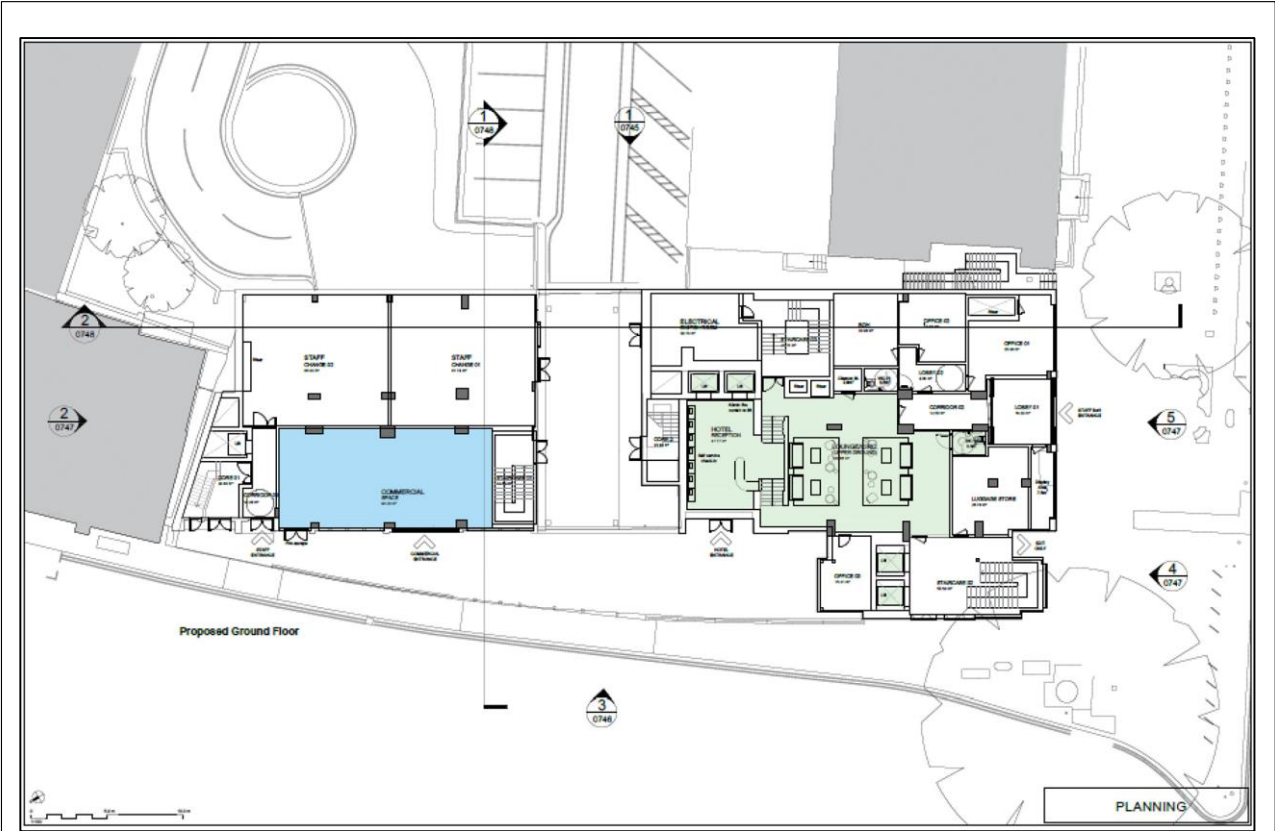
(Please note: All the application drawings and other relevant documents and Background

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Papers are available to view on the Council's website)

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| IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT PLEASE CONTACT THE PRESENTING OFFICER: AMANDA JACKSON ADD PRESENTING OFFICERS NAME BY EMAIL AT <a href="mailto:ajackson@westminster.gov.uk">ajackson@westminster.gov.uk</a> |
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11. KEY DRAWINGS



Proposed Ground Floor



**Proposed Fourth Floor (Typical)**



**Visualisation of Standard Room**



**DRAFT DECISION LETTER**

**Address:** Globe House, 89 Eccleston Square, London, SW1V 1PN

**Proposal:** Use of building as hotel (Class C1) and part of ground floor as flexible commercial, business or service premises (Class E).

**Reference:** 23/01561/FULL

**Plan Nos:** 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0700; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0701; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0702; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0710; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0711; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0712; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0713; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0714; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0715; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0716; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0717; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0718; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0719; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0720; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0721; 0025-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0725 (Existing Front Elevation); 0025-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0726; 0025-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0727; 0025-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0725 (Existing Sections); 0026-CCL-XX-B0-DR-A-0730; 0026-CCL-XX-00-DR-A-0731; 0026-CCL-XX-M0-DR-A-0732; 0026-CCL-XX-01-DR-A-0732; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0734; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0735; 0026-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0736; 0026-CCL-XX-05-DR-A-0737; 0026-CCL-XX-06-DR-A-0738; 0026-CCL-XX-07-DR-A-0739; 0026-CCL-XX-08-DR-A-0740; 0026-CCL-XX-X9-DR-A-0741; 0025-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0746; 0025-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0747; 0025-CCL-XX-XX-DR-A-0748.

**Case Officer:** Max Leonardo

**Direct Tel. No.** 07817095744

**Recommended Reason(s) for Refusal:**

Reason:

Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that there is no interest in the continued use of the building as offices or any other Class E (commercial, business and service) uses, education or community use and therefore the proposed hotel use would be contrary to Policies 1, 4 (A) and 13 (D) of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021) and Policies SD1, SD4, SD5 and E1 of the London Plan (March 2021).

**Informative(s):**

- 1 In dealing with this application the City Council has implemented the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way so far as practicable. We have made available detailed advice in the form of our statutory policies in the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021), neighbourhood plan (where relevant), supplementary planning documents, London Plan (March 2021), planning briefs and other informal written guidance, as well as offering a full pre application advice service. However, we have been unable to seek solutions to problems as the principle of the proposal is clearly contrary to our

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statutory policies and negotiation could not overcome the reasons for refusal.

Please note: the full text for informatives can be found in the Council's Conditions, Reasons & Policies handbook, copies of which can be found in the Committee Room whilst the meeting is in progress, and on the Council's website.