

Section '3' - Applications recommended for PERMISSION, APPROVAL or CONSENT

Application No : 13/01141/FULL2

Ward:
Bromley Town

Address : 8 Sherman Road Bromley BR1 3JH

OS Grid Ref: E: 540424 N: 169668

Applicant : Mrs Carmen Tobitt

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Change of use from offices (Use Class B1) to foreign language school (Use Class D1)

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area
Bromley Town Centre Area
London City Airport Safeguarding
London City Airport Safeguarding Birds
Open Space Deficiency
Proposal Sites

Proposal

The application seeks permission to change the use of the building from offices (Class B1) to education use (Class D1).

The applicant proposes to use the premises as a new foreign language school to be supported by one full time and three part time employees. The property will be used between 9.30am and 8.30pm from Monday to Friday, and between 9am and 4pm on Saturday.

The illustrative floor layout indicates accommodation for 32 students.

Location

The application site is situated on the northern side of Sherman Road backing on to Bromley North Station and the main pedestrian entrance fronting Sherman Road itself. The site comprises a terraced three storey building with four car parking spaces.

Comments from Local Residents

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and representations were received which can be summarised as follows:

- comments from local resident stating that they would object to students 'hanging around' the area
- questioned the hours of operation and whether classes would be held on weekdays only or include evening and weekend classes

Comments from Consultees

Highways - No objection raised as the site is in a high PTAL area with a rating of 6a.

From a Heritage and Urban Design perspective, no objection is raised.

APCA - The Panel did not inspect the file.

Crime Prevention - No comments received.

Town Centre Renewal - The site sits within the boundaries of Bromley Town Centre proposals map and in line with Policy BTC 5 of the Adopted Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) any development proposals resulting in the loss of B1 floorspace will be expected to include provision of an appropriate level of replacement office floorspace. Given the particular circumstances of this case, the Town Centre Renewal team is not inclined to object to this application.

Planning policy - no comments received.

Environmental Health - no objection raised.

Planning Considerations

The application falls to be determined in accordance with the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan

- C1 Community Facilities
- C7 Educational and pre-school facilities
- EMP3 Conversion or redevelopment of offices
- EMP5 Development outside business areas
- T1 Transport Demand
- T3 Parking

Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan policies:

- Policy BTC5 - Office Development
- Policy OSA: Bromley North Station

The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance is also a consideration.

The above policies are considered to be consistent with the principles and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework which is a key consideration in the determination of this application.

Planning History

The site has a long planning history, those applications deemed relevant to this proposal are:

85/01090/OUT - LAND ADJ BROMLEY NORTH STATION SHERMAN ROAD BROMLEY BR1 3JH ERECTION OF 3 STOREY BLOCK COMPRISING GROUND FLOOR PARKING AREA WITH OFFICES ABOVE OUTLINE - permitted

86/03475/FUL - LAND ADJ BROMLEY NORTH STATION SHERMAN ROAD BROMLEY BR1 3JH THREE STOREY OFFICE BUILDING - permitted

Conclusions

The main issues in this case are whether the current proposal represent an appropriate use of this building, whether it would result in an over-intensive use of the site, whether it would adequately protect the amenities of adjacent residents in terms of increased noise and disturbance associated with the use, and whether the proposal would be in keeping with the character of the area in general.

Policy EMP3 allows for the loss of offices so long as there is no local shortage of office space; there is evidence of long-term vacancy despite marketing the premises, and there would be no loss of employment resulting from the proposal. In respect of the appropriateness of the use, the owners have stated that the building been vacant since May 2012, and has been marketed by the current agent since that time (marketing material has been included in the application). Information from the marketing agent submitted as part of the application states that no enquiries or offers from potential users of the site have been received other than that of the applicant. The proposal will bring the building back to a functioning use after being vacant for a significant period of time. In these circumstances and given the existing commercial use of the site, it may be considered that the proposed educational use, which enhances training opportunities locally, is appropriate. Since the building is currently vacant there is no likely loss of employment arising from the proposal.

The site also falls within Opportunity Site A: Bromley North Station as identified in the adopted Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP). AAP Policy BTC 5: Office Development states that any development proposals resulting in the loss of B1 floorspace will be expected to include provision of an appropriate level of replacement office floorspace.

From a Town Centre Renewal perspective, it is the default aim of the Council to retain existing office space provision within the town centre, however on further inspection of the evidence supplied it is the view that in spite of the premises having been well marketed for a period of time it has remained vacant. This could indicate that the property does not readily lend itself to office use. It is also noted

that the property will retain an employment use. Furthermore, taking the size and location of the property into consideration, it is also not likely to have any substantial impact on the loss of office space in the town centre.

The proposed development would be retained within the envelope of the existing building and consequently no impact to adjoining residences in terms of access to sunlight/daylight or outlook is anticipated. It is further considered that by virtue of its proposed use, the scheme would not generate a noise disturbance for other existing residential units in the area. Members may consider that the proposal represents a good opportunity to bring forward a use on the site that could maximise its potential by adding diversity to the local economy.

The parking provision at the site is four parking spaces, which is the same as that available for the site if used as offices, therefore no intensification or increased pressure on parking demand is envisaged. No objection is raised from the Council's Technical Highways department.

In terms of the character of the area in general, the proposal does not involve an increase in the size of the building and no external alterations are proposed. The surrounding area is a mixture of commercial and residential properties close to and within Bromley town centre.

Members may consider that the application satisfies the relevant policy requirements. The desirability of bringing this building into productive use and the benefits that will result from the proposed use can be considered to provide a good degree of justification for this scheme.

The application site was visited by the case officer and the aims and objectives of the above policies, national and regional planning guidance, all other material planning considerations including any objections, other representations and relevant planning history on the site were taken into account in the assessment of the proposal.

Having had regard to the above it was considered that the proposed change of use is acceptable in that it would not result in a significant loss of amenity to local residents nor impact detrimentally on the character of the area.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on file ref. 13/01141, excluding exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:

- 1 ACA01 Commencement of development within 3 yrs
 ACA01R A01 Reason 3 years
- 2 ACK01 Compliance with submitted plan

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the visual amenities of the area and the amenities of the nearby residential properties.

3 The use shall not operate before 9.30am and after 8.30pm on Monday to Friday, or before 9am and after 4pm on Saturday

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the amenities of the area.

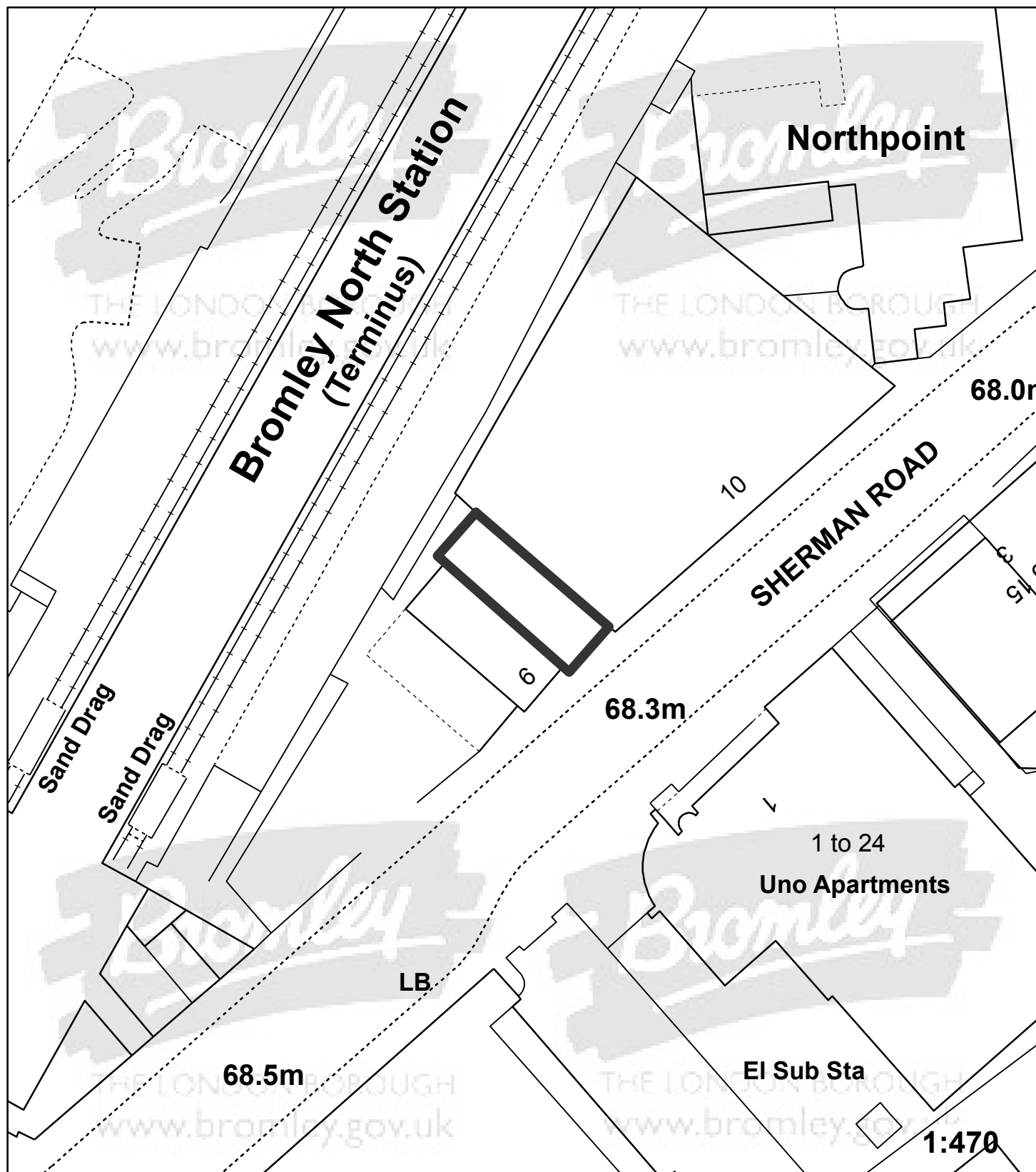
4 There shall be no more than 32 students accommodated within the use hereby permitted.

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the amenities of the area.

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"This plan is provided to identify the location of the site and should not be used to identify the extent of the application site"

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