

Steve Bando & } Residential
Glenn Roberts }

Item No.

7

has been issued, in the City Council's opinion the lawful use of the building would be educational, being ancillary to the remainder of the college, and not a separate dwellinghouse forming its own planning unit independent of the college.

The site fronts Peter Street where it is two storeys above ground level, whereas on its rear and eastern flanks it is lower due to a difference in levels which enables it to be three storeys here. Apart from the Brewer Street car park, Peter Street includes some residential buildings, most notably Salvo House which is a block of flats diagonally opposite the application site.

4.2 Relevant History

None relevant

5. THE PROPOSAL

The proposals are to use the building as an art gallery primarily for local artists and the local community with an ancillary licensed café in the basement, which the applicant states is necessary to financially support the free-admission gallery use.

The facility would be run by a local community group, providing flexible space to accommodate a range of events, including:

- Fine art, sculpture display, photography
- Meetings for local groups
- Coffee mornings
- Poetry reading/comedy
- Sunday jazz music
- Jumble sales
- Book clubs

The applicant states that the project would only be financially viable with café sales including alcohol. The normal opening hours would be 11.00-midnight Monday to Saturday and 11.00-23.00hrs on Sundays, but the applicant states that later opening hours would be required for occasional events such as private review launches.

6. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Land Use

The main issue is the loss of the existing educational use of the building which is considered under Core Strategy Policy CS33. This policy states that all social and community floorspace will be protected unless no longer required by the current provider as part of its published strategy for improving services. In this case there is no published strategy by Westminster Kingsway College in which this building is identified as being surplus to requirements in the context of an overall plan for delivering an improved educational service, which means that there is no justification for its loss to another use. However, the applicant argues that as the building has been left vacant by the college for more than 20 years, this demonstrates that the college does not need it and it should therefore be offered for use by another community body.

The college has made representations explaining its position in this respect, stating that the application site is integral to their plans to consolidate the educational service they provide, and which they intend to demolish in order to accommodate an extension to the main college building. They have the funding in place for this. Regardless of the outcome of the current planning application the college states that it has no intention of leasing the site to another party. Therefore, far from demonstrating that the application site is surplus to their