

requirements, the college has stated that it is essential to their plans to improve its educational service. In these circumstances the application cannot be supported and it is recommended for refusal on the grounds of loss of educational floorspace.

Should it have been demonstrated that the application site was surplus to the needs of the educational service provider, the proposals would have been supported in principle under CS33 which encourages new social and community facilities. However, given that the use would include a licensed cafe, this would have been subject to controlling conditions as discussed in the amenity section of this report below.

6.2 Townscape and Design

No external alterations are proposed.

6.3 Amenity

The site is located in the West End Stress Area as identified in the UDP. As the application proposes a small-sized licensed café UDP Policy TACE9 applies which requires the City Council to consider carefully the potential impact on residential amenity and environmental quality, taking into account the cumulative impact with other nearby entertainment uses, and the effect on the character and function of the area. Although the Soho Society does not object to the gallery element of the proposals, they have lodged an objection to the inclusion of a licensed café and its proposed late opening hours.

Soho is characterised by numerous entertainment uses, and no application site is far from such a use. However, the current application site is relatively isolated from other entertainment uses, and in the Soho context it could be argued that the proposed licensed cafe would not result in a concentration of entertainment uses in the immediate area around the application site, and that the likely cumulative impact of allowing a new licensed facility would not be harmful provided that it could be adequately controlled by planning conditions.

The proposed terminal hours of midnight Monday-Saturday and 23.00hrs on Sundays would be as late as would be appropriate in this location where there are flats diagonally opposite on Peter Street. The applicant wishes to have later opening for special events, but this would be prevented by planning condition if permission were to be granted. Given the proximity of the site's entrance to neighbouring residential properties, late night activity beyond midnight would not be appropriate, even on an occasional basis.

The proposal includes no kitchen extract plant and therefore if planning permission were to be granted conditions would be imposed to limit the range of products to be sold to ensure that no primary cooking could take place on site, as without a means of discharging fumes at a high level cooking smells would be likely to have a harmful impact on the surrounding environment.

6.4 Transportation/Parking

No serious issues arise for consideration.

6.5 Economic Considerations

The economic benefits of the re-use of a vacant building are acknowledged.

6.6 Access

There is level access to the ground floor Peter Street entrance from street level. Internal access to the lower floors is via stairs and the proposals do not include the installation of lifts. Whilst this is regrettable, it is recognised that the provision of lifts would be prohibitively