

<b>Delegated Report (Members Briefing)</b>	<b>Analysis sheet</b>		<b>Expiry Date:</b>	16/10/2022
	N/A		<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>	11/09/2022
<b>Officer</b>		<b>Application Number(s)</b>		
Nathaniel Young		2022/3338/P & 2022/3957/L		
<b>Application Address</b>		<b>Drawing Numbers</b>		
1-5 Flitcroft Street London WC2H 8DH		Please refer to draft decision notice		
<b>PO 3/4</b>	<b>Area Team Signature</b>	<b>C&amp;UD</b>	<b>Authorised Officer Signature</b>	
<b>Proposal(s)</b>				
Repair and refurbishment of existing building to provide flexible office space (Class E), with associated ancillary accommodation, plant and an external terrace to the rear of the building and roof. External alternations to include repairs, new doors and doorways, replacement of gallery glazing. Internal alterations to include basement waterproofing, existing staircase to be replaced/extended and enclosed, new spiral staircase and platform lift (resubmission of permissions ref: 2019/1998/P & 2019/2370/L).				
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	<b>Grant Conditional Planning Permission &amp; Listed Building Consent</b>			
<b>Application Type:</b>	<b>Full Planning Application &amp; Listed Building Consent</b>			
<b>Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:</b>	<b>Refer to Draft Decision Notice</b>			
<b>Informatives:</b>				
<b>Consultations</b>				
<b>Adjoining Occupiers:</b>	No. of responses	<b>0</b>	No. of objections	<b>0</b>
<b>Summary of consultation responses:</b>	Press notice: 22/09/2022 – 16/10/2022 Site notice: 16/09/2022 – 10/10/2022  No objections were received.			
<b>Historic England (HE)</b>	No objection. Suggests that Council seeks the views of internal specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.  <u>Authorisation on 29/09/2022:</u>  Historic England confirmed by way of a letter that the Local Planning Authority is authorised to determine the application for listed building consent as it sees fit. Draft authorisation was sent to the Secretary of State.			

**Greater London  
Archaeological  
Advisory Service  
(GLAAS)**

The site is in a Tier 1 Archaeological Priority Area and on the site of a medieval leper hospital and burial ground. We have also been informed that there is a possible entrance door from the basement of the building into an ossuary (burial chamber) associated with St Giles burial ground next door.

The design proposals indicate that there may be impacts on below-ground archaeological remains from proposed works in the basement of the building, including revealing the door to the possible ossuary, if it exists.

Recommendations

The significance of the asset and scale of harm to it is such that the effect can be managed using a planning condition.

No objection is raised subject to a condition being attached requiring a written scheme of investigation (WSI) be carried out.

Officer response:

*The WSI condition has been attached accordingly.*

**Covent Garden  
Community  
Association (CGCA)**

The CGCA object/make the following requests:

1. Since previous permission was granted, Class E has been introduced. As permission is no longer required to switch from an office into various other uses (such as a restaurant/café), it is requested that the operating hours are restricted (08:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 19:00 on Saturday, 10:00 to 18:00 on Sunday). Also request that servicing and deliveries hours are restricted (8:00 to 20:00 Monday – Friday) – to reduce impact to residential amenity.
2. Request that roof terrace use hours are restricted (8:00 to 20:00 Monday – Friday).
3. Request that planning conditions to refurbish the painting frames in situ and in such a way as to maintain movement; refurbish the winches in situ and allow public access once every six months to see the mechanisms in action.

Officer Response:

1. *The applicant has agreed to have an alternative condition preventing a café or restaurant use. They will not agree to restricting the operating hours as suggested (as they may host the occasional exhibition evening, as they have done in the past).*
2. *A condition is recommended to limit terrace use to 8am-8pm Monday-Friday (same as the previous permission).*
3. *The proposal is to make alterations to the frames to both protect for them for the future and ensure the internal spaces are more useable. The painting frames are very fragile and in poor condition. Officers consider that the applicant's approach is the most sensitive solution, whilst retaining the historic fabric and providing a usable and safe building. Retaining a complete set of working winches is not considered to be a viable option for the longevity of the building, especially in consideration of the ongoing maintenance and testing required that would rely on a working knowledge of the frames to look after them sufficiently. There are also health and safety issues involved in having very large moveable painting frames in a tenanted*

*building. The proposal for fixing the frames would sufficiently preserve without causing long term safety and maintenance implications, which would no doubt increase the likelihood of neglect.*

## Site Description

The application site is a two storey predominantly yellow brick building, with red brick façade, built in 1903-4 as painting rooms for theatrical scenery. The building is grade II listed and sits within the Denmark Street Conservation Area in close proximity to the grade I listed St. Giles in the Fields Church. The historic heart of the conservation area is St Giles Church and churchyard. The historic street pattern and network of narrow passageways which remains in much of the southern part of the area lends an intimate character and the surrounding architecture is a varied mix of former residential, industrial and commercial, dating from the late 17th Century to the early 20th Century, but which has a consistency of materials and scale.

To the north, the site is bounded by St. Giles-in-the-Fields Church on St. Giles High Street and the terrace of buildings lining Flitcroft Street to the north west. Adjoining the site to the east is the St-Giles-in-the-Fields Vestry Rooms. The churchyard, playground and community garden wrap the building to the south and face onto New Compton Street. Directly to the west, Flitcroft Street narrows to become a pedestrian passage linking Stacey Street with Denmark Street.

## Relevant History

**2019/1998/P & 2019/2370/L:** Repair and refurbishment of existing building to provide flexible office space (Class B1), with associated ancillary accommodation, plant and an external terrace to the rear of the building and roof. External alternations to include repairs, new doors and doorways, replacement of gallery glazing. Internal alterations to include basement waterproofing, existing staircase to be replaced/extended and enclosed, new spiral staircase and platform lift. **Approved 13.08.2019**

## Relevant policies

### National Planning Policy Framework 2021

### The London Plan 2021

### Camden Local Plan 2017

G1 Delivery and location of growth

C6 Access for all

E1 Economic development

E2 Employment premises and sites

A1 Managing the impact of development

A4 Noise and vibration

D1 Design

D2 Heritage

T1 Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport

T2 Parking and car-free development

### Camden Planning Guidance 2021

CPG Amenity

CPG Design

CPG Employment sites and business premises

CPG Transport

### Denmark Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2010

## Assessment

### 1.0 Proposal

**1.1 The proposal is a resubmission of permissions ref: 2019/1998/P & 2019/2370/L. There are no differences between the current proposal and what was proposed under the previous permissions (which were also reviewed by the members briefing panel). The applicant has submitted new applications as the previous permissions expired in August 2022**

1.2 Planning permission and listed building consent are sought for repairs and refurbishment to the existing office building (Use Class E). A range of internal and external works are included. The external works include repairs, new doors and doorways, replacement of the gallery glazing, new plant equipment and associated acoustic screening, installation of a new rooflight, opening up of blocked up window a first floor level, new second floor window, creation of external terraces (at second and third floor level) and associated screening. Internal alterations to the building include basement waterproofing, works to existing staircases, the creation of a new spiral staircase and a platform lift.

1.3 The external alterations largely include minor works to improve the appearance of the building including the removal of redundant and harmful materials, repair and replacement of roof coverings, repair and redecoration of windows, doors and rooflights, cleaning and repairing of existing brickwork, repairs to damaged lintels, redecoration and repair of render and installation of new cast iron rainwater pipes and gutters. The most significant works are the replacement of the roof glazing system with a metal double glazed and framed system, new plant and enclosure and the creation of terraces.

1.4 The internal works include the strip out of redundant services (M&E and plant), non-original internal dividing partitions, existing floors and staircases, sections of wall to form new external openings, safe removal of all asbestos containing material and removal of one set of winches and supporting mechanism for the painting frames from ground to basement level.

1.5 The proposal would result in 758sqm of high quality flexible office space over basement, ground, first and second floor levels. Other proposals include the creation of a bike store (with space for at least 5 spaces).

### 2.0 Land Use

2.1 Since the previous permission was granted, the new use class order has come into effect and the subject building is now Class E. Some local residents have raised concerns that the subject property may be used as a restaurant (or other similar use). A condition is attached preventing a café or restaurant use on the site (hot food takeaways, pubs etc do not fall under Class E and would require planning permission for the change of use, as such they do not need to be restricted by condition).

### 3.0 Design and conservation

#### Statutory Duty and Assessment of Harm

3.1 In considering the proposals, special regard has been given to the desirability of preserving the listed buildings and their setting, and their features of special architectural or historic interest, under s.16 and s. 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013.

3.2 Special attention has also been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area, under s.72 of the aforementioned statute as amended.

3.3 The NPPF advises that great weight should be given to a designated heritage asset's conservation when considering the impact of a proposed development on its significance, in this case being the listed building at 1-5 Flitcroft Street and the Denmark Street Conservation Area. The NPPF also cites that

*'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.'*

3.4 1-5 Flitcroft street, is regarded as a significant and complete survival of a theatrical scene-painting workshop. The building is grade II listed and fronts onto Flitcroft Street. The site is closely connected with the setting of the current St Giles-in-the-Fields church, a grade I listed building designed by Henry Flitcroft. The single storey building adjoining the application site is used as the church Vestry, which is also grade II listed. Any development will have to have regard to the setting of the adjacent listed structures.

#### Assessment of proposals

3.5 Primarily the proposals are to repair and refurbish the existing building so that it can continue to provide office accommodation that is full of character and unique. Externally the building would be improved in appearance with the brickwork, stone and windows cleaned and sensitively repaired where necessary. Internally the building would be predominantly repaired. As much of the existing fabric is to be retained and where appropriate, strengthened to improve its longevity and use. Overall, much of these works are considered to be of a heritage benefit and are welcomed.

3.6 The works proposed are sensitive to the original floorplan of the building, retaining its legibility. The loss of historic fabric is minimal and where new openings are proposed, they reflect earlier openings within the wall. New openings to the building are supported. Historic features including the basement stair and first floor wood burner would be retained, and other important elements are to be retained and repaired. The proposed high level walkways work within the existing boundaries and would be constructed of lightweight materials with glazed balustrades to ensure the spatial qualities of the rooms are retained. The visual impact of the new roof terraces is considered to be minimal due to the position of the building and the narrow width of Flitcroft Street. Full details of the privacy screens and plant enclosure would be secured by planning condition.

3.7 The site is in a Tier 1 Archaeological Priority Area and on the site of a medieval leper hospital and burial ground. We have also been informed that there is a possible entrance door from the basement of the building into an ossuary (burial chamber) associated with St Giles burial ground next door. The design proposals indicate that there may be impacts on below-ground archaeological remains from proposed works in the basement of the building, including revealing the door to the possible ossuary, if it exists. GLAAS have reviewed the application and have stated that the significance of the asset and scale of harm to it is such that the effect can be managed using a planning condition. As such, a condition being attached requiring a written scheme of investigation (WSI) be carried out, as recommended by GLAAS.

3.8 In conclusion, it is considered that the works would preserve the significance of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area, in compliance with Local Plan policies D1 and D2. The proposal has not changed since it was previously approved, nor has Camden Planning Policy. The development would therefore be acceptable, subject to conditions attached to the listed building consent to secure detailed drawings of the new fenestration, proposed rooflight, privacy and acoustic screens; and the submission of a WSI.

#### **4.0 Residential amenity**

4.1 North to north east of the site lies the St Giles Church and associated grounds and Vestry. To the east lies a public park and children's play area, beyond which lie six storey high residential premises. Immediately to the south lies an area of undeveloped land. South to south west lie residential flats in "The Alcazar", extending to four storeys in height. South west of the site there are terraced properties with their frontage on Flitcroft Street. To the west lie the buildings on the north side of Flitcroft Street, these being of commercial use in appearance.

## Noise and disturbance

4.2 An Environmental Noise Survey has been submitted as part of the application as it is proposed for a number of items of mechanical plant to be installed on the roof of the building. Paragon Acoustic Consultants Ltd conducted the survey to obtain statistical noise data to characterise the existing local background and ambient noise climate at the site and to derive noise limits to atmosphere based on Camden's Local Plan policies and other relevant policy guidance.

4.3 The submitted information sets out satisfactory noise criteria for the proposed installation. The Council's Environmental Health – Noise Officer has assessed the report and confirms that the proposal would comply with policy, subject to securing the following planning conditions:

- *The external noise level emitted from plant, machinery or equipment at the development with suggested mitigation measures hereby approved shall be lower than the lowest existing background noise level by at least 10dBA, by 15dB*
- *Prior to use, machinery, plant or equipment and ducting at the development shall be mounted with proprietary anti-vibration isolators and fan motors shall be vibration isolated from the casing and adequately silenced and maintained as such.*

4.4 Details of the acoustic enclosure would be secured by way of a condition attached to the planning permission.

4.5 A condition is also attached preventing the use of the business premises as a café/restaurant without prior written consent of the local planning authority.

## Overlooking/loss of privacy

4.6 The proposal would include two terraces, located at second floor level on the south eastern corner of the building and another at third floor level on the south western corner of the building.

4.7 The new terrace at second floor level would be accessed through a new opening. The terrace does not directly overlook any residential properties and would be screened by a proposed timber slatted fence to the terrace edge. Therefore the terrace and the openings behind it would not lead to any significant overlooking impacts.

4.8 A terrace is proposed at third floor level. Officers noted on a site visit that this area of the roof is already accessible via a roof hatch. There is no screening in situ meaning that overlooking is unimpeded in all directions. The roof would be formalised into a terrace and include plant equipment, behind an enclosure, and a timber slatted fence around the edge to prevent overlooking. This introduction of screening would prevent any significant increases in overlooking.

4.9 Details of the screening to the proposed terraces would be secured by way of a condition attached to the Planning Permission. The planning permission would include a condition restricting the use of the terrace to between 8am-8pm Monday-Friday.

## Loss of light/outlook or overbearing

4.10 Due to the limited nature of the external works, it is not considered that there would be material impacts on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers by way of loss of light, loss of outlook or an overbearing impact.

## **5.0 Transport**

5.1 The site has a PTAL score of 6b, the highest achievable, which indicates that it has an excellent level of accessibility by public transport. The nearest station is Tottenham Court Road; with Holborn, Goodge Street, Oxford Circus, Covent Garden and Leicester Square all within walking distance. The accessibility of the site will be further increased following the introduction of Crossrail services at

Tottenham Court Road. The nearest bus stops for the many bus routes in the area are located on Charing Cross Road, Tottenham Court Road, St Giles High Street, Oxford Street and New Oxford Street.

#### Cycle parking

5.2 The proposal does not contain a change of use or a material uplift in floor area. Notwithstanding this, a new cycle store is proposed. These details are welcomed and would be secured via planning condition.

#### Other matters

5.3 Given the nature of the proposal, no other transport associated planning conditions or obligations are considered necessary to make the development acceptable.

### **6.0 Recommendation**

6.1 Grant conditional planning permission & listed building consent.

#### **DISCLAIMER**

***The decision to refer an application to Planning Committee lies with the Director of Regeneration and Planning. Following the Members Briefing panel on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023, nominated members will advise whether they consider this application should be reported to the Planning Committee. For further information, please go to [www.camden.gov.uk](http://www.camden.gov.uk) and search for 'Members Briefing'***