

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		03/07/2024	
		N/A		Consultation Expiry Date:		03/06/2024	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Lauren Ford				2024/0557/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
52-54 Gray's Inn Road London WC1X 8LT				See draft decision notice.			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Erection of 8 balconies with glass balustrades and 1.8m high privacy screens to the rear of the building, replacement of 8 sash windows with doors, alterations to the ground floor shop frontage along Gray's Inn Road and minor changes to the flue and two windows.							
Recommendation(s):		Refuse planning permission					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00	
Summary of consultation responses:	Site notices were displayed on 10/05/2024 and expired on 03/06/2024. No responses were received.						

Site Description

The application site comprises a seven story (including basement) terraced property located on the eastern side of Gray's Inn Road comprising of flats, and a commercial unit at ground floor level. The site is locally listed as part of a row of locally listed terraced buildings (nos. 38-54). Although not within a conservation area, the site lies opposite Grade II* listed buildings within Bloomsbury conservation area. Hatton Garden conservation area is 40m to the east.

Relevant History

Relevant planning records at the application site:

2021/6143/P: *Erection of front infill roof extension at 5th floor level and mansard roof extension at 6th floor level with rear roof terrace and front rooflights, to create a 1 bed flat and 2 bed maisonette.*
Granted, subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement, 17/05/2024.

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

London Plan (2021)

Camden Local Plan (2017)

Policy A1 – Managing the impact of development

Policy D1 – Design

Policy D2 – Heritage

Policy D3 – Shopfronts

Camden Supplementary Planning Guidance (2021)

CGP - Design

CPG - Amenity

CPG – Home Improvements

Draft Camden Local Plan

The Council has published a new [Draft Camden Local Plan](#) (incorporating Site Allocations) for consultation (DCLP). The DCLP is a material consideration and can be taken into account in the determination of planning applications which has limited weight at this stage. The weight that can be given to it will increase as it progresses towards adoption (anticipated 2026).

Assessment

1. Proposal

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of 8 balconies to the rear of the building, replacement of 8 sash windows with doors, alterations to the ground floor shop frontage along Gray's Inn Road and minor changes to the flue and two windows.
- 1.2 The proposed materials for the balcony includes steel framing (powdered coated black), 1.8m high timber privacy screen and glass balustrade.
- 1.3 The changes to the ground floor shop frontage includes new doors.

2. Considerations

2.1 Key planning issues to be considered are as follows:

- Design and Heritage
- Neighbouring Amenity

3. Design and Heritage

3.1 The Council's design policies are aimed at achieving the highest standard of design in all developments. The following considerations contained within policy D1 are relevant to the application: development should respect local context and character; comprise details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character; and respond to natural features. Policy D2 'Heritage' states that the Council will seek to protect non-designated heritage assets including those on the local list, and that the effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

3.2 The CGP (Design) states the following with the respect to balconies:

- *Detailed design to reduce the impact on the existing elevation*
- *Careful choice of materials*
- *Possible use of screening*
- *Glazed balustrades around balconies are unlikely to be acceptable on traditional buildings because they can appear unduly prominent.*

3.3 The proposal includes 8 steel framed balconies to the rear with glass balustrades and privacy screens. Given the nature and design of the proposed balconies, which includes 1.8m high privacy screens, the proposal reads as one large and wide structure to the rear of the building, as opposed to a series of lightweight balconies. A structure of this size and design, located on the rear elevation of this late 19th century building is not considered appropriate. The design would appear heavy and would not be respectful or sensitive to the rear elevation of the locally listed building or surrounding area and would not complement the existing rear elevation of the building. Further, Council's preference would be for metal balustrades as opposed to glass, as supported through the CPG. The rear elevation of the host property is visible in long views from Baldwin's Gardens.

3.4 While there are some existing balconies to the rear within the area (e.g. no 48), none of these have been granted permission under current planning policies and guidance and are therefore not considered precedent.

3.5 While Council has no objection to the principle of the replacement of windows with doors, this change is associated with the proposed balconies which are considered unacceptable.

3.6 The changes to the ground floor shopfront which includes the addition of new doors, would be acceptable as the design would be in keeping with other shopfronts in the surrounding environment, and is therefore considered to be in accordance with policy D3. The proposed doors would be of the same height and a similar design to the existing doors along this elevation at the site.

3.7 Overall, the proposed balconies, due to their design and location, would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the locally listed host building and surrounding area, contrary to policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

3.8 Considerable importance and weight have been attached to the harm and special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area, under s.72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990

as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013. While the proposal would result in the benefit of creating additional amenity space for the units, this is not considered to outweigh the harm.

4. Neighbouring Amenity

- 4.1 Local Plan Policy A1 seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development on their amenity is fully considered. It seeks to ensure that development protects the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. Relevant to the application are overlooking, privacy, sunlight, daylight, overshadowing and outlook consideration.
- 4.2 The provision of 1.8m high timber privacy screens would prevent any unacceptable amenity related effects resulting from the balconies such as privacy and overlooking. Details of these would be secured via condition.
- 4.3 The proposed balconies would result in the positive effect of providing additional amenity space to the subject units.
- 4.4 Therefore, the proposal complies with policy A1 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

2. Conclusion and Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended to Refuse planning permission for the following reason:
- 2.2 The proposed balconies, by reason of their size, location, bulk, materials and design, would appear as an incongruous and unsympathetic addition harming the appearance of the locally listed host property and the surrounding area, contrary to policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.