

<b>Delegated Report</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>		<b>Expiry Date:</b>		18/06/2012	
		N/A		<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>		24/05/2012	
<b>Officer</b>				<b>Application Number(s)</b>			
Rachel Miller				2012/1844/P			
<b>Application Address</b>				<b>Drawing Numbers</b>			
6 GATE STREET LONDON WC2A 3HP				Please refer to 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>							
Change of use from legal chambers (Class B1a) to residential use (Class C3) to create 2 x one bedroom units at first and second floor levels and installation of a new entrance door at ground floor level.							
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		Approve subject to conditions and a S106 agreement					
<b>Application Type:</b>		Full Planning Permission					
<b>Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:</b>		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
<b>Informatives:</b>							
<b>Consultations</b>							
<b>Adjoining Occupiers:</b>		No. notified	12	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
<b>Summary of consultation responses:</b>		Press notice displayed from 03/05/2012 – 24/05/2012 Site Notice displayed from 27/04/2012 – 18/05/2012  No responses received					
<b>CAAC/Local groups* comments:</b> *Please Specify		Bloomsbury CAAC – no comment					

## Site Description

The application site comprises of an eight storey terraced building, including a basement level and mansard roof extension. The property fronts Gate Street which is a narrow pedestrian through-route and 'cul de sac' for vehicles, in-between Holborn tube station to the north and Lincolns Inn Fields to the south. The building is located in the Central London Area and is noted as making a positive contribution to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

The existing building is occupied in B1a Office use by Holborn Chambers a firm of solicitors with ongoing work to convert the upper floors (floors 3-7) to residential use. The building was occupied by a firm of barristers since approximately 1994 and the first and second floors are in use by clerks.

The site has no parking and vehicular access is only available from Gate Street. The property is a single aspect building with windows fronting Gate Street. The building has no windows on the rear elevation, apart from the rear windows at mansard roof level.

## Relevant History

2011/4508/P - Change of use from legal chambers (Class B1a) to retail (Class A1) at basement and ground floor levels and to residential use (Class C3) to create 2 x one bedroom units at third and fourth floor levels, 1 x two bedroom unit at fifth and sixth floor level; retention of office use (Class B1a) at first and second floor levels, associated alterations to fenestration, creation of bin store at front ground floor front elevation and installation of extract/ducting units. Approved on 16/12/2011

2011/1838/P - Change of use of offices (Class B1) to drinking establishment (Class A4) at basement and ground floor levels and 3 x self contained flats (Class C3) at 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th floor levels and associated alterations to fenestration, creation of bin store at front ground floor elevation and installation of extract/ducting units – Withdrawn on 01/09/2011

2011/0113/P - Change of use of office building (class B1) to A4 use at basement and ground floor level and to 4 x self contained flats (class C3) at 3rd,4th,5th & 6th floor level – Withdrawn on 02/04/2011

9400653 - Conversion of upper floors (1st-5th floors) and a mansard extension to provide 6 residential units – Withdrawn on 09-05-1994

PSX0204422 - Addition of a mansard roof extension. Refused on 29/07/2002 and allowed at appeal on 14/03/2003

## Relevant policies

### LDF Core Strategy

- CS1 Distribution of growth
- CS5 Managing the impact of growth and development
- CS6 Providing quality homes
- CS8 Promoting a successful and inclusive Camden economy
- CS9 Achieving a successful Central London
- CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage
- CS16 Improving Camden's health and well-being
- CS17 Making Camden a safer place
- CS18 Dealing with our waste and encouraging recycling
- CS19 Delivering and monitoring the Core Strategy

### Development Policies

- DP1 Mixed use development
- DP2 Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing
- DP5 Homes of different sizes
- DP6 Lifetime homes and wheelchair homes
- DP13 Employment sites and premises
- DP16 The transport implications of development

DP17 Walking, cycling and public transport  
DP18 Parking standards and the availability of car parking  
DP19 Managing the impact of parking  
DP22 Promoting sustainable design and construction  
DP24 Securing high quality design  
DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage  
DP26 Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

## **Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2011**

### **Camden Planning Guidance 2011**

### **London Plan 2011**

### **NPPF 2012**

#### **Assessment**

This application seeks permission to change the use of the first and second floors from legal chambers (Class B1a) to residential use (Class C3) to create 2 x one bedroom units at first and second floor. External alterations proposed in the form of a new front entrance door.

As listed above in the history section, permission was granted on 16/12/2011 for the change of use of the third and fourth floors to 2 x one bedroom units and change of use of fifth and sixth floor levels to 1 x two bedroom unit. The application included the retention of the office use (Class B1a) at first and second floor levels. The Applicant now seeks to change the use of the first and second floors to residential use.

#### Loss of employment floorspace

Policy DP13 states that where it can be demonstrated that a site is not suitable for any business use other than B1a (offices), the council may allow a change of use to permanent residential or community uses. When assessing applications for a change of use the Council will consider whether there is potential for that use to continue.

The site is located just outside of the Inns of Court Special Policy Area. The applicant has submitted a non-viability statement and evidence (dated 10<sup>th</sup> January 2013) that there is no demand to use the site for continued employment use and that there is a surplus of office space in the near vicinity. Holborn Chambers (the current occupier) was established in 1994 as legal chambers, servicing 23 barristers. Changes in technology, the need for modern facilities and the introduction of new working practices have greatly affected the building and the Applicant has said that the current offices on the first and second floors are underused. Traditionally, each barrister would retain their own desk and share the services of a clerk, this has now changed. The clerks remain, however the barristers have left, working from home accessing files remotely via the internet. The office is only needed for the clerks filing, client meetings and as a base to provide hot desking when attending the nearby courts. Only two floors are required to meet this need and the Applicant proposes to retain the ground and basement for this purpose therefore not implementing the permission for the A1 retail use granted in December 2012. It is considered that the loss of office space for residential use is acceptable in this instance.

#### Standard of the proposed residential accommodation

The proposed two flats would contain 1 bedroom and be for one person. Each flat would have a floor area of 39sqm which would exceed the minimum standard floor area of 32sqm specified in Camden Planning Guidance. The flats would be single aspect. As the flats would be located at first and second floor and the windows for the proposed residential flats are large, it is considered that an adequate level of natural light would reach the residential units. Both flats would have appropriate layouts and

exceed the minimum headroom of 2.3metres as specified in CPG2.

The Applicant has submitted a Lifetime Homes Assessment and addressed the 16 key points where possible. It is considered that this is compliance with policy DP6.

### Design

The existing entrance door to number 6 Gate Street is not considered to be of high quality. The proposed door would be predominantly glazed with toughened glass. It is considered that this would be acceptable and would not harm the appearance of the host building or the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

### Transport

Policy DP18 seeks developments to be car-free within controlled parking zones that are easily accessible by public transport. The application site is located within controlled parking zone and does not have any on-street parking and there is none proposed as part of this application. The site has a PTAL of 6B (excellent). Comments from Transport Officers are that the proposals are acceptable subject to a S106 agreement to secure the two new residential units as car free.

The proposals include the provision of five cycle parking spaces within the lobby on the ground floor. Camden and TfL cycle parking standards require a minimum of 3 cycle parking spaces to be provided therefore the proposals meet this standard. There are no details submitted showing the layout or type of cycle parking facilities. It is recommended that further details are secured by condition.

### Community Infrastructure Levy

Whilst the proposals involve the creation of a new residential dwelling, the scheme is not liable for a contribution to the Mayor of London's Community Infrastructure Levy as the relevant floors are currently in lawful B1 use and no extensions are proposed.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the application is approved subject to conditions and a S106 agreement for car-free development.

### **Disclaimer**

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