

<b>Delegated Report</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>		<b>Expiry Date:</b>	<b>22/03/2013</b>
		N/A / attached		<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>	<b>20/02/2013</b>
<b>Officer</b>			<b>Application Number(s)</b>		
Hugh Miller			<b>A:</b> 2013/0478/P <b>B:</b> 2013/0500/L		
<b>Application Address</b>			<b>Drawing Numbers</b>		
Victoria House Southampton Row London WC1B 4DA			See draft decision		
<b>PO 3/4</b>	<b>Area Team Signature</b>	<b>C&amp;UD</b>	<b>Authorised Officer Signature</b>		
<b>Proposal(s)</b>					
A: 2013/0478/P - Installation of 1 air-conditioning unit, 3 condenser units and extract vent to the north side roof level. B: 2013/0500/L – Works in association with installation of 1 air-conditioning unit, 3 condenser units and extract vent to the north side roof level.					
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		Grant Planning permission – 2013/0478/P Grant Listed building consent - 2013/0500/L			
<b>Application Type:</b>		Full Planning Permission			

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
<b>Consultations</b>						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
			No. Electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	Applications advertised in Ham & High 14/02/2013, expires 07/03/2013. Site Notice displayed 01/02/2013, expires 22/02/2013.  No responses were received.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>	<u>Bloomsbury CAAC</u> : No Comment.					

## Site Description

Victoria House is 8 storeys, sub-basement and basement located on a rectangular island site with facades to Bloomsbury Square, west, Bloomsbury Place north, Vernon Place south and Southampton Row due east. The building has a mix of office, retail, restaurant bar and entertainment uses. The building dates from 1926 with recently completed internal works including the erection of a roof over the two existing two light wells to form atria and the insertion of glazed pods in the atria. The building is grade II listed and lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

## Relevant History

There have been numerous planning applications approved at Victoria House and the most relevant permissions are set out below.

### **Victoria House 4 Southampton Row**

July 2001 – PP Granted - for the refurbishment of the listed building including alterations at roof level, alterations to the shopfront, the formation of an internal vehicular loading bay at the north end of Bloomsbury Square elevation, the use of the building to involve the retention of office use on part of the ground and all upper floors, double height Class A1 retail units on the Southampton Row frontage, retention of the existing bank on the southern corner and introduction of a new restaurant use and a new health club on the basement floor; ref: PSX0004957.

### **Unit 5**

November 2011 – PP Granted - Change of use of ground floor level retail unit (Class A1) to restaurant / café use (Class A3); ref. ref: 2011/3965/P.

### **37-63 Victoria House**

February 2012 – Change of opening hours to: 07:00-02:00 Mondays to Thursday, 07:00-03:00 Fridays and Saturdays and 07:00-01:00 Sundays pursuant to condition 1 of planning permission 2006/3681/P dated 29/09/2010 for: The retention of use of part of upper basement level (with ground floor entrance lobby) as an events promotion venue and public bar (sui generis) as an amendment to planning permission ref. PSX0004957 dated 18 July 2001; ref. 2011/6402/P.

A: 2012/5594/P- Installation of 4 CCTV cameras to the side elevation above the ground floor level.

B: 2012/5226/L – Works in association with installation of 4 CCTV cameras to the side elevation above the ground floor level.

### **37-63 Victoria House- December 2012 – PP Granted & Lbc Granted – December 2012.**

A: 2012/5572/P - Replacement of existing side doors with automated doors excluding middle door to front elevation at the ground floor level.

B: 2012/5562/L - Internal and external alterations including replacement of existing side doors with automated doors (excluding middle door) to front elevation at the ground floor level, installation of external plant comprising air-conditioning unit and fan condenser units to the roof level, display of 2 internally illuminated fascia signs, installation of new lift, reinforcement and extension of mezzanine floor and relocation of staircase.

(C- 2012/5564/A- display of fascia sign- to be withdrawn as advert consent not required)

D: 2012/5565/P - Installation of air-con unit and fan condenser units to the roof level.

## **Relevant policies**

### **LDF Core Strategy**

CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development)

CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving heritage / conservation areas)

### **Development Policies**

DP24 (Securing high quality design)

DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage)

DP26 (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours)

DP28 (Noise and vibration)

### **Camden Planning Guidance, 2011**

CPG1 Design

CPG5 Town Centres, Retail and Employment

CPG6 Amenity / Section 4

CPG7 Transport

### **Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement**

### **Revised Planning Guidance for Central London 2007**

### **The London Plan, 2011**

### **NPPF 2012**

## Assessment

### **Proposal**

- A: 2013/0478/P - Installation of 1 air-conditioning unit, 3 condenser units and extract vent to the north side roof level.
- B: 2013/0500/L – Works in association with installation of 1 air-conditioning unit, 3 condenser units and extract vent to the north side roof level.

The main issues are a] design, b] impact on the listed building and CA, c] amenity.

### **Design & appearance**

#### Plant machinery – Roof level

The extant approved scheme, roof top plant (*see history section above ref. 2012/5565/P and L. ref.2012/5562/L*) in relation with the intended establishment of a Sainsbury's Local convenience retail A1 store. However, the plant is to be repositioned and the location of the plant has moved from south (drawing ref. P-11271-300 A – Approved Plant) to the north on the roof of Victoria House building. This current proposal would supersede the extant approved scheme of December 2012 as referenced above.

There is existing plant on the roof. These applications are similar to the extant approved schemes (not implemented), which proposed to install 1 air-con unit and 3 condenser units on the west side (rear) of the roof of building. The new units would be 1.7 metres in height and, given their setback position and height, should not be visible from the western side of Bloomsbury Square. The applicant has confirmed that no screening or mountings for the units are required which would increase their visual impact. The works here are considered satisfactory because the roof is not considered to be original and no harm to the historic fabric is envisaged. The plant is required to support the retail use at ground floor level. These units will connect into existing services and it is considered acceptable so no new penetrations will be made through the building to impact on the building's historic fabric.

Generally, the height of the host and adjacent buildings and also the narrowness of streets would ensure that the plant units would be suitable obscured from views due to their location. In the locations specified, it is considered that the units would not harm the appearance of the host building or the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The application for repositioned plant proposal will preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, and will preserve the character and enhance the appearance of the surrounding areas.

#### Amenity for occupiers and neighbours from plant equipment

The closest residential units/windows to the host building are opposite side of Southampton Row at 5<sup>th</sup> floor level. There are also residential premises to the northwest across Bloomsbury Way and to the south-west across Bloomsbury Way.

The acoustic report (Cole Jarman Ltd) carried out a noise monitoring survey commenced over a 24 hour period between 10:00 hours on January 10<sup>th</sup> 2012. The refrigeration condenser and freezer condensers will operate 24 hours per day, with the air-conditioning condensers operating store hours only between 0700 and 2300 hours. The conclusion is that the predicted noise levels will be within the plant noise limits set during the daytime (53 d(BA) & 48 d(BA) and night time (47 d(BA) & 45 d(BA) periods.

The Council's noise standards require that noise levels measured outside sensitive windows should

be 5 dB(A) less than existing background levels and 10dB(A) where tonal. The Council's Environmental Health officer has assessed the submitted acoustic report, and has deemed it to comply with Camden's requirements set out in the LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies, even though some plant units would operate 24 hours per day. Conditions are recommended to ensure that the plant, when installed, continues to meet the Council's noise standards.

The siting, location and height of the proposed a/c units plus enclosures would ensure no impact on neighbouring occupiers' residential amenity in terms of their outlook and the proposal is acceptable.

It is considered that the installation of the plant would not result in material harm in terms of design and appearance to the external historic fabric of the listed building or the character and appearance of the conservation area. The submitted acoustic report has demonstrated that there would be no harm to neighbouring residential occupiers' amenities (noise nuisance) at nearby buildings and a condition is proposed to ensure this noise levels remain within the Council's standards in the future.

**Recommendation:** Grant Planning permission and listed building consent