

Delegated Report (Members Briefing)		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:	11/06/2012
		N/A		Consultation Expiry Date:	(1) & (2) 31/05/12
Officer			Application Number(s)		
Angela Ryan			(1) 2012/2034/P (2) 2012/2264/L		
Application Address			Drawing Numbers		
2 New Square LONDON WC2A 3RS			Refer to decision notices		
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		
Proposal(s)					
(1) Installation of a plant at rear rooftop level and an external wheelchair lift to front of building in association with refurbishment of building (Class B1) (2) Internal and external alterations comprising installation of internal lift, new services, plant at roof top level at the rear and an external wheelchair lift to the front of the building in association to refurbishment of the building.					
Recommendation(s):		(1) Grant Planning Permission (2) Grant Listed Building Consent			
Application Type:		(1) Full Planning Permission (2) Listed Building Consent			

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	16	No. of responses	1	No. of objections	1
			No. Electronic	1		
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>A site notice was displayed from 04/05/12 to 25/05/12 and a notice published in the local pres on 10/05/12 which expired on 31/05/12. One letter of objection was received from the occupier of 1 New Square. A summary of the objections are as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Potential noise disturbance as noise measurements were undertaken in the middle of the week, whereas this part of Central London seems much quieter on the weekend and query whether the 37dB limit stipulated in the initial noise assessment report submitted is sufficient (Officer's response: See section 3 of this report)- Lack of information provided in respect of noise and vibration from the lift shaft and the potential disturbance that this may cause to their property and the residential properties situated on the floors below (Officer's Response: The applicant has since submitted a noise and vibration assessment, see section 3 of this report)- Lift overrun blocking the fire escape route (Officer's response: The applicant has confirmed that there is no formal fire escape route via the roof of the application site)-Location of the proposed disabled lift resulting in the removal of some of the existing front railing. It would be better placed near the entrance of no. 3 on one of the existing staircases (Officer's response: see section 2 of this report)- Concerned that the orientation of the disabled lift would make it difficult to access (Officer's response: See section 2 of this report)- Proposed panelled door half-way along the entrance corridor adversely impacting on the look and feel of the square particularly after dark (Officer's response: See section 2 of this report)					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	<p>Bloomsbury CAAC: Were formally consulted and confirmed that they have no comments to make.</p> <p>English Heritage: Raised no objections in respect of the listed building consent application and authorised the Council to determine the application in accordance with national and local policy guidance (see letters dated 18/05/12)</p> <p>Secretary of State: Has considered that application and does not intend to require the application to be referred. (See English Heritage letter dated 18/05/12 (Ref: L00141214))</p>					

Site Description

The site comprises a four-storey plus basement building, located on the east side of New Square. It lies within a group of three buildings that are fairly homogenous in their design. It was built between 1693 and 1697 and was built speculatively as chambers to be let to barristers. The interior does not date from the 17th century as the building was gutted by fire in 1849 and rebuilt.

The site is grade II* listed and also lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The listing is primarily due to its importance in the overall setting of Lincoln's Inn. The basic layout replicates the historic chambers layout and is considered to contribute to the special interest.

Relevant History

2 New Square:

24/05/1973- Listed Building Consent **granted** for alterations to the staircase enclosure at 2 New Square (Ref: HB/562)

24/02/1978- Listed Building Consent **granted** for internal alterations to 1st floor office accommodation. (Ref: HB/1819)

13/07/1989- Listed Building Consent granted for general refurbishment including: (i) Removal of existing subdivision between present; (ii) typists and senior clerks rooms (ii) Subdivision of present barristers rooms adjoining reception into library and typists and clerks office; (iii) Removal of glazed partition. (Ref: 8970039)

20/10/2010- Listed building consent **granted** for works at roof level including the renewal of asphalt to flat roof areas and new slate roof to 2 New Square, replacement of slates at 3 New Square, installation of new plain tiles at 17 and 20 Old Buildings and rooflights at 20 Old Buildings. (Ref: 2007/1623/L)

4 New square:

26/06/2000- Permission and Listed Building Consent **granted** for the installation of a disabled access lift platform from pavement to lower ground and ground floor levels at No.4 New Square entrance to the building.(Refs: PS9904567& LS9904568)

6 New Square:

10/08/1998- Listed Building Consent **granted** for internal and external alterations including the introduction of a lift shaft between basement and 5th floor level, a new staircase from ground to basement level, the introduction of dormer windows within the rear roof plane, and the removal of lower ground floor outbuildings (Ref: LS9804264R1)

09/10/1998- Listed Building Consent **granted** for internal and external alterations including the introduction of a lift shaft between basement and 5th floor level, a new staircase from ground to basement level, the erection of a roof extension with 9 dormers to rear (Carey Street) and the infilling of an area at lower ground level (Ref: LS9704904R1)

10 New Square:

15/09/1999- Listed Building Consent **granted** for works for the insertion of a hydrospace lift together with the formation of three new rooflights(Ref: LS9805017R1)

10/01/2000- Listed Building Consent **granted** for the insertion of lift and staircase and the formation of three new roof lights (Ref: LS98050170)

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

Core Strategy:

CS1(Distribution and growth)

CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development)

CS14(Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage)

Development Policies:

DP24(Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage)

DP25(Conserving Camden's heritage)

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

DP28 (Noise and vibration)

Camden Planning Guidance 2011:

CPG 1- Design: Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4

CPG 6- Amenity: Chapters 1, 4, 6, 7 & 9

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement 2001

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

Assessment

1.0 Proposal:

1.1 The application involves the installation of plant at rear rooftop level and the installation of an external disabled lift on the front elevation of the building. Other works include external and internal alterations comprising an installation of an internal lift, provision of new services, removal of internal partitions and the installation of new doors in association with refurbishment of the building. The building is currently vacant and the proposal seeks to modernise the building in order to meet the needs of the end users.

1.2 During the course of the application the scheme has been altered to include revisions to the orientation of the proposed lift access and a reduction in the extent of proposed modifications to the existing front railings. The proposed storage area originally proposed at basement level has also been omitted from the scheme.

1.3 The key issues to consider are:

- The impact of on the character and appearance of the listed building and conservation area;
- The impact on amenity

2.0 Impact on the character of the listed building and conservation area:

2.1 The proposed roof plant is to be location on a flat section of roof at the rear of the building (the original pitched roof has been removed). The new plant enclosure would not be visible in views from New Square or from the upper floors of the buildings on the west side of the Square. In views from the east the plant room would be visible from a small number of windows on the upper floors of the buildings located on Chancery Lane. These views would see it in the context of a number of other plant rooms and therefore the level of harm is not considered to be significant. No views would be possible from New Square Passage located to the rear of the building and in light of the above considerations no objection is raised in respect to this aspect of the scheme.

2.2 A concern was raised in respect of the size of the lift structure and the proposed opening in the railings on the front elevation at ground floor level. The building regulations stipulate that the platform lift (in terms of usable area) only needs dimensions of 900mm x 1400mm therefore it was considered that the lift platform could be reduced to this size. It was also considered that the landing area could be removed and the lift accessed directly from the pavement. This would be similar to the 2005 permission whereby the lift itself was much smaller and accessed directly through the modified historic railings. It was also considered that the visible structure (gate and control station) should be as minimal as possible and that the lift should be stored in the basement when not in use. As a response to the above although the size of the lift structure remains the same as the original its orientation has been altered in order to reduce its visibility from the street. It will also be accessed from the street as opposed to a side access originally proposed and secures the removal of the originally proposed landing area. The proposed store area which was originally proposed to adjoin the lift has been omitted from the scheme. As a result of the above changes it is no longer proposed to modify the front railings to the extent as originally proposed, and a small access gate is now proposed to be inserted within the existing railings. The gate will be designed to match the existing railings and therefore is considered to be a discreet intervention.

2.3 Internally it is proposed to provide a lift serving all the floors. This would involve the loss of some historic (although not original) fabric and also affect the visual impact of the interior of the building. The proposed positioning of the new lift is one that would have the least impact on the original floor plan and would simply truncate the corridor which serves the offices. It is also in the rear part of the building so would not impact on the larger rooms which face onto the square. Given that the interior of the building is much later than the façade and contains rather "standard" Victorian features the proposed internal lift is considered to be appropriate and any harm in terms of the loss of fabric would be compensated for by the provision of a level access into to the interior of the building thus improving the access for all.

2.4 Other internal alterations are proposed involve removing existing partitions. Most of the partitions removed are modern apart from the following:

- New toilets are proposed at the southern end of each corridor. These have been carefully sited to minimise alterations to the floor plan (eg they have been set back so as to not overlap with the adjacent chimney breasts.
- The only wholesale removal of a historic wall is at the rear at ground floor level to create a reception space. This creates a more usable space to be used a reception and still leaves the rest of the building's cellular arrangement intact.
- Whilst the stair from the basement to the ground floor is to be replaced this is acceptable as the stair in this position is non original. Originally the basement and upper floors were not linked internally. The above alterations are considered to be respectful in term of their context to the original plan form of the building as barrister's chambers which is characterised by a cellular arrangement.

2.5 It is also proposed to introduce air conditioning into the building involving the installation of extensive pipework. This aspect has been carefully routed to run down one of four vertical risers (two of which are located in the new lift or toilet areas). The pipework is then proposed to run horizontally on each floor with the floor void to units beneath each window.

The units themselves have been carefully designed to be installed within casings. Such fittings are considered to be appropriate as they are less intrusive in the context of the listed building.

2.6 Structural works are proposed to the floor structure, in order to strengthen the existing fabric rather than involve wholesale replacement. It is proposed to remove some of the pugging (dirt) between the joists in order to reduce the loading on the floors. Whilst this is a historic method of providing sound proofing the material to be removed is of little interest other than being historic waste material.

2.7 The internal features are Victorian but not overly elaborate. Whilst the interior is of interest, it is not considered to be exceptional (however they have some interest as 19th century chambers) and would be considered to be of lesser significance than the façade. The scheme has been amended in order to reduce its visual impact on the building and the street scene, would help to bring an otherwise vacant building back into beneficial use and seeks to upgrade the interior of the building in a manner which is sympathetic to the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building. It is also considered to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and as such the proposal is considered to be acceptable and complies with policies CS14, DP24 and DP25 of Camden's LDF.

3.0 Amenity:

3.1 In terms if amenity the proposals would not result in the creation of any adverse impacts on amenity in terms of the loss of natural sunlight/daylight, loss of privacy, the loss of outlook or adding to the sense of enclosure.

3.2 Objections have been raised in respect of the potential noise nuisance that may occur as a result of the proposed internal lift. The applicant has submitted noise assessments for both the plant proposed at basement and roof levels. Both reports suggest that Camden's noise standards will be met over a 24 hour period with the necessary attenuation recommended. In respect to the proposed roof plant the lowest background noise level was given as 4dB(A) with the target being 37dB(A). The cumulated noise at the receiver was given at 36dB(A). The proposed condenser unit (model: RXS50f2V18) noise data and calculation suggests there will be no requirement for attenuation on this plant for the purposes of meeting the planning standard. In respect to the plant proposed in the basement the lowest background level was given as 33dB(A) with the target noise level at the receptor being 23dB(A) which the report demonstrates will be achieved.

3.3 An objection has also been raised in respect of the possible impact on residential amenity by virtue of vibrations caused by the operation of the internal lift. The nearest sensitive receptor is at 1 New Square. It is stated in section 2 of the report that the basement to second floor is office use with the third floor used as residential property. The vibration report submitted in support of the scheme theoretically demonstrates that the lift proposal should not give rise to complaint from either vibration or noise. It is noted that the report considered a higher target standard for noise levels then are provided by British Standard 8233, and achieved acceptable vibration levels in British Standard 6472. Moreover it is recommended that appropriate conditions are attached to the decision in order to reduce any impact to neighbouring premises.

3.3 Given the above it is considered that the proposal would have no significant impact on residential amenity. Moreover it is recommended that appropriate conditions are attached to the decision notice in order to safeguard residential amenity.

Recommendation: Grant planning permission and listed building consent.

Additional notes following comments raised by members :

In regard to the concern regarding access to the external lift, the initial form which was objected to - which required entering a small landing platform and making a 90 degree turn to enter the lift – has been replaced where the lift is entered directly from the pavement and exited in the same direct manner. As such, the objectors concerns are considered to have been addressed'

The proposed panelled door proposed in closer proximity to the main front facade is characteristic of other main front doors around the square. The doors are a mixture of lightweight glazed design, a combination of glass and timber panelling or solid timber doors. Given that the proposed door is to remain recessed, though to a lesser degree, the impact on the appearance of the Listed Building and character and appearance of the conservation area would be limited.

DISCLAIMER

Decision route decided by nominated members on Monday 6th August 2012. For further information please click [here](#).