

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:	20/12/2011
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:	23/11/2011
Officer			Application Number(s)		
Hugh Miller			A: 2011/5062/P B: 2011/5063/L		
Application Address			Drawing Numbers		
8 Tower Court London WC2H 9NU			Refer to draft decision notice.		
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		
Proposal(s)					
<p>A: 2011/5062/P - Alterations to include replacement of lean-to extension at rear ground floor level, installation of air conditioning cooling system at rear to chimney at roof level, installation of two rooflights at rear roof slope to dwelling house (Class C3).</p> <p>B: 2011/5063/L - External alterations including replacement of lean-to extension at rear ground floor level, installation of air conditioning cooling system at rear to chimney at roof level, installation of two rooflights at rear roof slope together with various internal alterations in association with dwelling house (Class C3).</p>					
Recommendation(s):		<p>A: 2011/5062/P – Grant planning permission</p> <p>B: 2011/5063/L - Grant listed building consent</p>			
Application Type:		Householder Application			

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
			No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	Advertised in Ham & High 10/11/2011, expires 1/12/2011. Site Notice displayed 4/11/2011, expires 25/11/2011.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	<u>Covent Garden CAAC:</u> Comment The committee questioned the desirability of double glazing for the listed building and its necessity given the impact on character and appearance of the building. Officer Comment: A condition is attached requiring this aspect to be addressed by a revised drawing.					

Site Description

A basement + 3-storey terraced building located on the east side of Tower Court, south of the junction with Earlham Street and Seven Dials and north of Tower Street. At ground level the front part of the building retains the former shopfront details characteristic of the street. The building is used as a single-family dwellinghouse although the basement accommodation is self-contained and can currently be accessed separately from the street. However it is used as ancillary to the main house having an internal connecting door. The building is listed Grade II. The building is within the designated Seven Dials conservation area.

Relevant History

April 1984 PP Granted - Change of use and works of refurbishment to provide a self-contained residential maisonette on basement and ground floors, and the retention of the four bed sitting rooms in multiple occupation on first, second and third floors; ref. 36439.

November 1989 – PP Refused - Change of use of the basement and the ground floor from residential to office use; ref. PL/ 8900437.

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy

CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development)

CS6 (Providing quality homes)

CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage)

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)

CPG 2011

Seven Dials CAS.

Assessment

Situation

The planning history shows that in the recent past the building has been altered internally and externally; with some historic features altered and or removed during its refurbishment. The current proposal is to carryout more alterations to improve its utility as a family dwellinghouse.

Proposal

Works comprise alterations to include replacement of lean-to extension at rear ground floor level, installation of air conditioning cooling system at rear to chimney at roof level, installation of two rooflights at rear roof slope to dwelling house (Class C3). The listed building application is for the same works and includes various additional internal alterations.

During the courses of the assessment the proposal was amended to address the following:

- amended secondary glazing to the front windows,
- removal of double glazing to the front windows,
- removal of the enlarged proposed roof light and replace with two smaller rooflights to match the existing,
- the ventilation unit relocated to the rear roofslope.

The main considerations are: **a]** design, **b]** impact on the appearance and historic fabric of the listed building and on the conservation area, **c]** neighbour amenity.

Design and appearance

Internal alterations:

Basement

The basement has been altered several times in the past and the proposal to remove the stairs is considered acceptable as these are non original and do not appear to even be in the original location. Although many of the cupboards feature timber panelling, these appear to have been designed to appear historic rather than being authentic reproductions of features which would have been in place. On closer inspection, it is considered that the redesigned floor plan would not harm any feature of note and is considered acceptable.

Ground floor

It would appear that the ground floor was altered when the basement staircase was inserted and the works seemed to only involve the removal of a non original partition. It is proposed to relocate the kitchen on this floor, serviced from the existing service riser but given the lack of features in this space it is considered that the alterations would not be harmful and officers raises no objections.

Because of the insertion of the new staircase to the basement, it would no longer be possible to access the rear courtyard through the existing door. Alternative access is proposed through adapting the existing rear timber sash window to form a hinged door. Unusually, below the window is a timber panel which is recessed behind the external face of the brickwork. The proposed adaption would result in the loss of only a negligible amount of historic fabric and when closed the appearance would be largely as existing. Very little decorative features survive on this floor so the visual impact of the door when open would not be as significant as on a more unaltered interior. Given that this proposal resolves the issue of accessing the rear yard in a way that causes minimum disruption both visually and in terms of loss of historic fabric, it is considered that the proposed alterations are acceptable.

First floor

At this level, a new door is proposed leading from the landing into the rear room. Originally, there would have been a door in this location and an inspection of the timber panelling corroborates this observation. The existing door into the front room will be retained and simply fixed shut and this is acceptable.

The dado panelling in the front room is not original and the cornice, whilst appropriate in terms of its grandeur in a house of this status is unlikely to be original. Therefore the proposed acoustic insulation to the wall is considered acceptable provided that both features are reinstated following implementation of the acoustic insulation. A condition should be attached to ensure this is carried out.

Second floor

It is proposed to enlarged the opening between the front and rear rooms which would approximately double door width in size. It is considered that such an opening would preserve the original proportions of both the front and rear rooms and with no impact to the historic fabric no objection is raised to this alteration and is acceptable.

Similar to the first floor, acoustic insulation to the wall is proposed and is considered acceptable subject to a condition that requires both features to be reinstated.

Third floor

The only change at the third floor is the removal of a non original partition to create an enlarged bedroom and given that no harm would be caused to the building historic fabric no objection is raised.

Loft

This is a space which has been created in the upper section of the mansard and has an extremely low head height. It is an area of extremely limited interest and so the proposed partitioning and ventilation unit are considered acceptable.

Heat recovery ventilation and cooling

The internal pipework associated with the ventilation system would be run vertically within the existing service riser. At each level, the unit would be installed within built in cupboards rather than into the fabric of the building to limit the harm to historic fabric and this approach is considered the most appropriate method of alteration and no objections raised.

External alterations

Plant machinery / Roof top works

On the main roof, it is proposed to install an air conditioning cooling unit to be located on the rear chimney. It would be positioned on the section of chimney that faced the main roof so as to conceal it from view. In this position, the unit will have a minimal visual impact on the surrounding area. It is proposed to enclose the unit on both sides. While this may create a bulkier structure, this would be necessary for acoustic insulation and would still be contained within the extent of the adjacent chimney. Therefore on balance this is considered acceptable.

The proposed ventilation unit would include a roof-tile vent on the front elevation. From the drawings it appears that this would be small in size and would sit relatively flush with the roofslope. However to minimise its impact on the appearance of the roof the applicant has revised the plans relocating these to the rear roofslope and this is now satisfactory.

Rooflights

Additionally, two smaller rooflights are proposed as replacement for the much larger rooflight opening originally proposed. The replacement rooflights would have dimensions of 800mm x 850mm and although larger than the existing they would be smaller than the original and be subordinate within the roofscape. On balance, the amended rooflights are more sympathetic to the appearance of the host building and this is considered satisfactory and no objections raised.

Single-storey extension - Rear courtyard

Presently, the rear yard has a small extension at ground floor level and is covered over with acrylic sheets to its roof. The proposed double-glazed roof would match the existing height and pitch and would still be substantially glazed to maintain its light-weight appearance and is acceptable. This is a contemporary modern structure and no objections are raised for its replacement.

Double glazing

A revision to the application has omitted the original proposal to double glaze the windows in the front elevation. Double glazing in this location is not considered acceptable in principle given that the openings are within the original envelope of the historic building and the differences in the profile of the windows and the reflective quality of the glass is likely to stand out inappropriately when viewed in the context of other buildings of a similar age and character where single glazing is characteristic.

Furthermore the proposed secondary glazing has been revised in order to better preserve the existing timber panelled window surrounds and shutters, which in the case of the first floor have had to be moved back, which is acceptable.

Neighbour amenity

Plant equipment

The closest residential units are at the rear of the host building; nos. 40, 42 and 44 Monmouth Street that lies due east; the neighbouring residential buildings are nos.6 and 7 Tower Court.

The applicant proposes to install one air conditioning unit to be located on the chimney at the rear of the building above the roof eaves but below the main roof ridge.

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 worst case scenario of the background noise survey shows that the plant should achieve 39 dB(A) and this is acceptable.

The Council's Environmental Health officer is satisfied that the proposed plant is capable of achieving the Council's required standards.

A condition is recommended to ensure that the plant, when installed, continues to meet the Council's noise standards. This ensures that if the plant becomes noisier than anticipated in the future the Council has sufficient powers to take the necessary enforcement action to protect residential amenity.

Overlooking / loss of light

The width of the chimney and together with the positioning of plant equipment would prevent it being visible to occupiers of the neighbouring buildings and thus ensure no harm is caused to the neighbours in terms of outlook or obscuring views.

The replacement rooflights are for ventilation and maintenance purposes only and they would not cause any additional loss of privacy or overlooking of the occupiers at the rear. Additionally, the roof is pitched with no flat roof area and therefore no harm to the neighbours in term so noise nuisance. The

proposed works would be compliant to LDF policy DP26.

Conclusion

Previous alterations to the host building appear to have damaged or replaced internal historic fabric. It is considered that the proposed external and internal alterations would have minimal impact on the host building and the proposed alterations are considered acceptable.

Recommendation: Grant planning permission and listed building consent.

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