

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		01/12/2011	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		10/11/2011	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Tina Garratt				2011/4894/L			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
13 Swinton Street London WC1X 9NL				Refer to decision notice			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Replacement of all windows on the front elevation of dwelling house with timber double glazed sash windows and all windows on the rear elevation with single glazed timber sashes (retrospective).							
Recommendation(s):		Refuse listed building consent and enforce					
Application Type:		Listed Building Consent					
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:	N/A						
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>	The Bloomsbury Conservation Area made the following comments: <i>"It is unfortunate that this is a retrospective application given the listed status of the building and the condition of the pre-existing windows is a matter of hearsay".</i>						

Site Description

No.13 is located at the eastern end of Swinton Street, on the south side of the street. The property is Grade II listed and falls within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. It forms part of a wider group of listed buildings (Nos.5-17) dating from c.1835-44. They are three storeys high, plus basement, and are built of darkened stock brick with rusticated ground floor and a plain stucco first floor cill band and profiled cornice.

Relevant History

No.13

No relevant planning history

No.39 Swinton Street

2010/6116/P & 2010/5690/L – Replacement of existing single glazed windows at first, second and third floor on front and rear elevations with double glazed windows to first floor /flat and second and third floor maisonette (Class C3). APPROVED 06/01/2011.

- Approved on the grounds that the windows being replaced were NOT original, all of the sash boxes were retained and most of the windows in the terrace were replacement sashes therefore the appearance of the terrace was much altered.

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage
DP22 Promoting sustainable design and construction
DP24 Securing high quality design
DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage

PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment (March 2010)

PPS5: Practice Guide (March 2010)

Camden Planning Guidance 1: Design (April 2011)

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (April 2011)

Assessment

Retrospective listed building consent is sought for the replacement of single glazed timber sash windows with double glazed timber sash windows on the front elevation of the building and replacement of single glazed timber sashes with single glazed timber sashes on the rear elevation.

In determining this application, consideration has been given to;

- The level of harm caused to the special interest of the listed building;
- The level of harm caused to the setting of the listed building;
- Whether the works preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Background

As with most listed London terraced houses, whilst individually they can be of architectural or historical interest, much of the special interest is derived from the front facades and the character and appearance of the group value of the terrace as a whole. The original design concept, whereby the individual houses did not compete with each other but were subordinate to the overall composition, is a key part of their significance.

Special Interest

No.13 forms part of a group of Grade II listed terraced houses (Nos.5-17) dating from c.1835-44. It is built of darkened stock brick with rusticated ground floor and a plain stucco first floor cill band and profiled cornice.

- One of the overarching qualities of these buildings is the consistency in glazing across the terrace, with rounded arch timber sashes at ground floor level, tall 6-over-6 sashes at first floor and smaller 6-over-6 sashes at second floor level, all with slim glazing bars.
- The upper windows on the rear elevation are visible from Acton Street, within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Photographic evidence shows these were original, hornless, timber sashes.
- Some of the properties in close proximity to No.13 retain their original timber sashes, others have been replaced by authentic single glazed replacements.
- It is important to note that the list description specifically identifies Nos. 5, 11 & 13 as having margin light glazing at ground floor level.
- Swinton Street is recognised within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal as an area vulnerable to negative change through incremental deterioration of built fabric arising from neglect and lack of maintenance of buildings. The photographs below, taken from Google maps, certainly show Nos.13 and 11 were more recently in a poor state of repair.



Rear elevation, as seen from Acton Street

Assessment of Works

As stated in PPS5 Practice Guide, "doors and windows are frequently key to the significance of a building. Change is therefore advisable only where the original is beyond repair, it minimises the loss of historic fabric and matches the original in detail. Secondary glazing is usually more appropriate than double-glazing where the window itself is of significance" (para.152).

The following assessment has been made:

- The windows which were replaced appear to have been original therefore the works have caused substantial harm to the building as a result of the loss of historic fabric.
- The original ground floor windows with margin lights formed an important part of the special interest of the listed building. These have not been replaced on a like for like basis thereby resulting in the loss of a significant architectural detail which both harms the character of the listed building and its setting and fails to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area
- No consideration was given to like-for-like replacement (i.e. single glazed timber sashes with sash cords and weights and putty) plus the installation of secondary glazing, as advised by English Heritage and Camden Green Buildings Guide.
- Although the replacement double glazed windows on the front elevation have apparently replicated the original glazing bar width and internal profile and included the use of white spacers, the windows are not traditionally constructed. Putty is not used externally to hold the glazing in place and is instead a timber detail and the detailed profile of the frame is crude.
- The timber sash windows on the rear elevation have been replaced by single glazed timber sashes which have replicated the glazing bars of the original windows. These windows are considered to be acceptable.

The works are considered to have caused substantial harm to the special interest of the listed building by virtue of the loss of historic fabric, failure to accurately replace the original windows on a like for like basis and failure to consider all other means of sound proofing. The double glazed windows inserted on the front elevation have a different reflective quality to the windows they replaced and to many of the other windows in the terrace such that harm has been caused to the individual building and its setting. The alterations also fail to preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area by virtue of the impacts on the appearance of the building, the wider streetscape and the loss of a significant window detail i.e. margin light glazing.

Policy HE9.2 states that where substantial harm would be caused, listed building consent should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the harm is necessary in order to deliver substantial public benefits or the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site, no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term that will enable its conservation, conservation through grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is not possible and the harm to or loss of the heritage asset is outweighed by the benefits of bringing the site back into use.

Although the building was in poor condition previously, no evidence has been provided to demonstrate to the council that the changes were necessary or in the public benefit. Whilst the restoration of the buildings has delivered a public benefit, this does not outweigh the harm caused to the listed building and its setting or to the conservation area.

The replacement windows on the rear elevation are single glazed and appear to replicate the original windows in appearance.

The replacement windows on the front elevation are considered to unduly impact on the character and special historic and architectural interest of the building and its setting and fail to preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area which is contrary to Policy CS14 and DP24 and 25 of the LDF.

Recommendation: Refuse listed building consent and enforce.

Disclaimer

This is an internet copy for information purposes. If you require a copy of the signed original please telephone Contact Camden on (020) 7974 4444