

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		07/10/2011	
(Members Briefing)		N/A		Consultation Expiry Date:		15/09/2011	
Officer				Application Number			
John Sheehy				2011/3910/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
124 Finchley Road London NW3 5HT				Refer to draft decision notice.			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal							
Erection of a three storey glazed rear extension at first, second and third floor level to the existing office building, relocation of 9 existing air condenser units on rear elevation to flat roof of new extension and 1 air handling unit from rear elevation to flat roof on front elevation at sixth floor level.							
Recommendation:		Grant conditional permission					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	22	No. of responses No. electronic	3 2	No. of objections	3
Summary of consultation responses:		<p>A site notice was displayed from 17/08/11 to 07/09/11. A press notices was placed on 25/08/11.</p> <p>Objections received from 3 neighbouring occupiers, one residential to the south and one non-residential to the north, comments received from a non-residential occupier (guest-house) to the south*. In summary the following concerns were raised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed extension would result in a loss of outlook to neighbours, neighbours to the south will feel "hemmed in" by large extension which will be in proximity of north-facing windows of these properties; Loss of sunlight and daylight to neighbours to both sides - residential kitchens to the south and to commercial units to the north (entrance); Building is not attractive, a lot of buildings of this type are being knocked down - the applicants wish to retain this and "put the equivalent of Prince Charles' carbuncle on the back"; Does not preserve or enhance the conservation area; Why should a residential block play second fiddle to a commercial block?; Concerns about impact on safety, blocking and littering of well-used lane to guesthouse during proposed works; and The extension should be angled on the southern corner, moved back, and constructed of glass. <p>*Officer comment: <i>the applicant made changes to the scheme subsequent to these comments.</i></p>					
CAAC/Local groups comments:		Fitzjohns/Netherhall CAAC There should be significant effective acoustic screening between the bank of units and the flats to the south.					
Site Description							
The application relates to a substantial office building located on the eastern side of Finchley Road dating from							

the 1960s. The property is 7 storeys in height onto Finchley Road and 6 storeys to the rear where the ground is at a higher level.

The building is finished in brown brick; has large areas of glazing to the front and rear; and the top floor is set back from the front elevation. It has distinctive green spandrel panels and slender metal-framed windows to the front facing Finchley Road. Apart from a chamfered corner to the rear (southeast) the building is rectangular in plan.

The site contains a substantial surface car-park to the rear which is accessed via a lane off Netherhall Gardens to the north. Immediately to the south of the site is another laneway which provides access to 122c Finchley Road. Number 122a Finchley Road which faces the application building across this narrow lane has residential windows on its northern side facing the application site.

The site is located in Fitzjohns/ Netherhall Conservation Area (CA).

Relevant History

July 2011 Application for erection of three storey rear glazed extension at first, second and third floor level and relocation of 6 existing air condenser units on rear elevation to roof level of new extension withdrawn by the applicant, ref. 2011/2527/P.

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

LDF Core Strategy

CS1 Distribution of growth

CS3 Other highly accessible areas

CS5 Managing the impact of growth and development

CS14 Promoting high Quality Places and Conserving Our Heritage

LDF 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

Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area Statement 2001

Assessment

Proposal: Erection of a three storey glazed rear extension at first, second and third floor level to the existing office building, relocation of 9 existing air condenser units on the rear elevation to the flat roof of the proposed new extension and 1 air handling unit from the rear elevation to the existing flat roof towards the front elevation at sixth floor level.

The extension would measure ca. 9m (H) x 11m (W) x 3.5m (L) and would have a flat roof. It would provide additional meeting rooms for the existing office building (Class B1).

Revisions

During the application officers negotiated amendments to the design of the scheme. These are in addition to changes that were made following withdrawal of the previous application.

Initially it was proposed to terminate the southern corner of the rear extension at the angled corner of the building where it would project by 3.5m from the rear wall of the property.

During the course of the application the applicant moved the southern wall of the extension away from the

chamfered corner of the building and introduced a chamfer to the extension on this side.

Assessment

The application site is located within an established employment building and, in land use policy terms, would be suitable for extension to create additional employment floorspace. On balance, given the location and scale of the additional floor, no concerns are raised with the proposal in land use policy terms. Given the scale of the extension (124sqm) it does not trigger the requirement to provide housing in accordance with DP1. The principal considerations material to the determination of this application are therefore:

- The design of the proposal and the impact on the appearance of the building and the character and appearance of the CA; and
- the impact on neighbour amenity.

Conservation/ Design

Policy background:

The Council's design policies are aimed at achieving a high standard of design in all developments and preserving the architectural quality of buildings.

Policy DP24 states that the Council will grant permission for development that is designed to a high standard. With regard to this application, the following considerations contained within this policy are relevant:

- development should consider the character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;
- development should consider the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed.

Policy DP25 'Conserving Camden's Heritage' states that within CAs, the Council will only grant permission for development that preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the CA.

Discussion

The extension would be 3 storeys in height, approximately half the height of the rear elevation of the building. It would be set in from the rear northern corner by 0.5m (following the existing vertical line of glazing to a stairwell) and 4.0m from the southern side (and set in c. 0.8m from the angled rear corner at this side). Due to its height and dimensions the extension would be subordinate to the host building, respecting the existing lines and openings of the building.

The extension would be located to the rear of the property. It would be visible from street level in Netherhall Gardens to the north and from Finchley Road, however, it would be set in from the northern rear corner and would read as a subordinate rear extension attached to the substantial existing building.

In terms of detailed design the extension would be largely glazed, this would ensure that the extension has a lightweight appearance and would not appear bulky. The detailed design responds to the character and appearance of the building on the site which is a modernist office block of simple form and proportions. No information has been provided on the framing materials or doors, this is reserved by condition.

Numerous air handling units are located prominently on the rear elevation of the building. These are to be relocated to a position behind the parapet of the proposed rear extension. Their relocation would represent a considerable improvement to the appearance of the building and would allow scope for some additional landscaping. The proposal also includes relocation of 1 large item of plant from the rear to the front top floor. This would be well set back from the Finchley Road frontage and would not have any detrimental impact on the appearance of the large, robust application building in views from the street

Neighbour amenity

The side walls of the rear extension would be fully glazed. As these walls are substantial, this has potential to result in both light spillage and loss of privacy to the properties on both sides. As a result a condition is

attached to ensure that the walls to both side elevations are obscure-glazed to their entire extent.

The properties to the rear are over 20m away from the closest point of the proposed extension. These are shielded from the application site by trees and are also situated at a higher level. As a result of their layout and the scale and form of the proposed works, the development would have no significant amenity impact on the properties to the rear. The principal impact of the proposed extension in amenity terms is in relation to the properties on either side: 122a Finchley Road and 126-8 Finchley.

Impact on 122a Finchley Road

As noted above number 122a Finchley Road, which faces the application building across the narrow lane to the south has residential windows on its northern side facing the application site.

It is recognised that the cumulative impact of additional built space can, in some cases, result in an increased sense of enclosure to residential windows of neighbouring properties. In this case, the extension would be located approximately 7m from the windows to 122a Finchley Road. Given that the southern flank of the proposed rear extension would be located away from residential windows and would have a chamfered corner there would be no significant impact on the outlook to residents of 122a Finchley Road which would continue to have an outlook over the unbuilt rear of the application site.

There would be no loss of sunlight to residents of 122 Finchley Road as the property is located to the north of this site. While there may be a marginal reduction in the daylight to windows to 122a Finchley Road it is important to note that these windows are dependent almost exclusively on the application site for their daylight (as well as their outlook). Under the circumstances the revisions to the application, which involve setting the extension in from the angled corner and introducing a chamfer, safeguard the daylight to nearby residents to a reasonable and proportionate degree.

Impact on 126-8 Finchley Road

There is a hard-landscaped area with 1 tree between the application site and 126-8 Finchley Road to the north. The occupiers of this property state that this proposal would result in a loss of light to this area which contains an entrance to the property. The property is non-residential - it is occupied as a clinic. The proposed rear extension would be set in from the rear northern corner by 0.5m.

As existing the hard-landscaped area has limited amenity value and would still have generous sunlight and daylight from the eastern and western sides. The windows to the clinic are also set well away from the proposed extension. The impact of the proposed extension on the amenity of the clinic would be extremely limited and the Council cannot reasonably sustain a refusal of the application on this basis.

Noise

An acoustic report prepared by Dynamic Response Ltd (ref. DYN110811A/1) was submitted with this application which demonstrates that the proposed plant would meet the Council's noise criteria. This has been confirmed by Camden's Environmental Health Team. A time clock condition has been attached to ensure the plant does not operate between 18:00 and 08:00 (the following day). Further conditions have been attached to the decision notice to ensure that the specified noise attenuation measures are implemented in full and that any noise emissions from the plant are reduced to a level that will achieve the required standard, i.e. 5 decibels below background levels.

Other amenity issues

The proposal would have no significant impact on the long-term operation of the lane serving 122c Finchley Road and the large surface car-park will allow for construction of the extension without any detrimental impact on this lane or any other streets or open spaces in the vicinity of the site.

Recommendation: Grant conditional permission.

DISCLAIMER

Decision route to be decided by nominated members on Monday 3rd October 2011.

For further information see

<http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/planning-applications/development-control-members-briefing/>