

<b>Delegated Report</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>		<b>Expiry Date:</b>		17/05/2010	
		N/A / attached		<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>		22/3/10	
<b>Officer</b>				<b>Application Number(s)</b>			
Charlie Rose				2010/1262/L			
<b>Application Address</b>				<b>Drawing Numbers</b>			
7 Argyle Square London WC1H 8AS				Refer to decision notice			
<b>PO 3/4</b>	<b>Area Team Signature</b>	<b>C&amp;UD</b>	<b>Authorised Officer Signature</b>				
<b>Proposal(s)</b>							
Internal alterations to main building to provide 5 self contained accommodation suites including new staircase, floors and internal partitions.							
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		Grant consent					
<b>Application Type:</b>		Listed Building Consent					
<b>Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:</b>		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
<b>Informatives:</b>							
<b>Consultations</b>							
<b>Adjoining Occupiers:</b>		No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
<b>Summary of consultation responses:</b>		N/a					
<b>CAAC/Local groups* comments:</b> *Please Specify		N/a					

## Site Description

No. 7 is a grade II listed corner property at the junction of Argyle Square and St Chad's Street within Kings Cross Conservation Area. The building comprises ground, plus basement and three upper floors with a recently rebuilt four storey side extension and part 2 storey rear addition.

Internally the building has been completely gutted including the removal of the timber floorboards and joists, spine wall and staircase. Work is commencing on-site. New timber floors supported on a steel frame bearing between partywalls have been installed, as well as replastering and servicing in anticipation of creating self-contained short term (up to 90 days) serviced apartments on each floor.

The building is grade II listed and within the Kings Cross Conservation Area.

## Relevant History

12/02/2010 REFUSED Internal alterations to main building to provide 5 self contained accommodation suites including new staircase, floors and internal partitions. (ref: 2009/4845/L)

01/02/2010 Approval of Details (listed building) GRANTED - Submission of details of window samples; brickwork and render pursuant to conditions 1 and 2 of planning permission dated 08/07/2009 ref no. 2009/1390/L for works associated with the retention of rebuilt rear ground and first floor level extension. (ref: 2009/5853/L)

01/02/2010 Approval of Details (listed building) GRANTED - Submission of details pursuant to condition 2b (window sample), 3a (brickwork sample), 4 (render sample) of planning permission dated 03/09/2007 ref no. 2007/3008/L for works associated with the erection of a four storey side extension to a hotel (Class C1). (Ref: 2009/5853/L)

08/07/2009 GRANTED - Retention of rebuilt rear ground and first floor level extension, plus associated alterations to windows on rear elevation and installation of new windows to side elevation, plus internal alterations. (ref: 2009/1390/L & 2009/1929/P)

15/05/2009 Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Interview conducted (ref: EN08/1041)

23/12/2008 ENFORCEMENT LETTER requesting that all work on-site is ceased (ref EN08/1041)

16/12/2008 ENFORCEMENT FILE OPEN regarding unauthorised works to the interior (ref EN08/1041)

03/09/2007 GRANTED - Works associated with the erection of a four storey side extension, and the replacement of existing windows with sliding sash windows to a hotel (Class C1). (ref; 2007/3008/L & 2007/3007/P)

15/05/2007 WITHDRAWN - Works associated with the erection of a side extension at ground to third floor levels, replacement of existing windows with double glazed sash windows and internal alterations to a hotel (Class C1) Ref: 2007/0797/L & 2007/0795/P)

08/09/2006 GRANTED subject to 106 - Change of use and works of conversion, including the installation of a window at rear ground floor level, of No.7 from hotel (Use Class C1) to residential (Use Class C3) to provide five self-contained flats, and the retention of No. 8 as an hotel (Use class C1).(ref: 2005/0207/P & 2005/0209/L)

01/04/2004 REFUSED - Conversion of No.7 from Hotel (Class C1) to provide seven self-contained residential apartments (Class C3) and associated internal alterations at all levels. (2003/2781/L & 2003/1481/P)

## Relevant policies

### Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006 – B6

*The following policies in the draft LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies documents have been taken into consideration*

### LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies – CS14, DP25

*As the draft LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies documents have now been published, they are material planning considerations. However, as a matter of law, limited weight should be attached to them at this stage.*

## Assessment

Listed building consent is sought to regularise the internal alterations to the main building following authorised works which have taken place since approximately November 2008. The proposed works include new timber floors with additional steel supports; new staircase; reinstatement of roof joists; the reconfiguration of the plan form including new openings in the masonry wall adjoining the side extension and new bathrooms, in conjunction with provide 5 self contained accommodation suites.

The newly formed side and rear extensions including their internal layouts have been dealt with under separate applications outlined above.

The application has been assessed on the impact the works would have on the special architectural and historic interest of the grade II listed building without prejudice to the lawful use of the building or legal action by the Council in relation to the unauthorised works carried out on a listed building without our consent.

The proposed scheme follows the refusal on 12/02/2010 to regularise the situation due to the failure to reinstate the stair compartment and spine wall in their original form, proportion and design which would detract from the plan form and internal appearance of the listed building to the detriment of its special architectural and historic interest.

### Previous internal arrangement

The internal arrangement of the building, prior to works carried out without the benefit of listed building consent, comprised an historic two room plan, along with the presumed original stair flights in their original position. The front room of the ground and upper floors had been divided with lightweight plasterboard and stud walls to create 2 rooms with en-suite showers cubicles. A lobby, running parallel with the spine wall, had been inserted in the rear room at ground floor level to gain access to no. 8 through a single door opening in the party wall. No chimney breasts remained. No features of historic interest remained internally including joinery or cornicing. It is likely that historic plaster had also been replaced with modern plaster board walls and ceilings, although there is some evidence of original lath and plaster to the original stair soffit.

It is unclear if this work was carried out prior to the building being listed in 1974. There are no historic consents for the works however historic records dated June 1987 show the upper floors having a similar plan form as was evident prior to the recent works taking place.

Nevertheless the historic two room plan form was still evident on all levels (and could easily have been reinstated with the removal of the lightweight partitions) and it was known that the original floor and roof structures remained, as well as original fabric including masonry envelope, spine walls at basement to first floor level and staircase from basement to third floor level. In this regard the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building largely comprised the historic plan form including the form and proportions of the stair and stair compartment as well as the retained historic structure of the building

### Proposed works

#### *Structural work*

The loss of the existing historic fabric is regrettable.

The applicant has reinstated a suspended timber floor, albeit with load bearing steel beams spanning between the party walls, within the depth of the floor structure, rather than using load bearing spine wall. Given the original load bearing spine wall had already been removed above first floor level (as shown on the existing 2005 application drawings) the capacity of the spine wall to transfer the weight of the structure to the ground had already been lost. In this regard the integrity of the existing new timber suspended floor is, on-balance, considered to perform in much the same way as the previous floor (i.e supporting its own weight) and there is no resultant harm over and above the previous situation, notwithstanding the loss of historic fabric which cannot be reinstated.

This proposed drawings confirm the intention to reinstate 100 X 50mm exposed timber ceiling joists. The joist that are to be reinstated will be at the same height as the original ones and will be space at 475mm c/c to give a more open feel to the room. These joists will be notched into a wall plate replicating a more traditional form of construction. No joist hangers will be used. This is considered to satisfactorily reinforce the historic form, and character of the upper floor. A condition should be added to the decision notice to ensure the work is completed

and inspected prior to occupation.

#### *Plan form*

The proposed application intends to reintroduce a timber stair in the correct position with a secondary stair to the upper floor similar to that approved on 03 September 2007 (ref: 2007/3007/P)

The design of the staircase has been addressed following the previous refusal to include the original quarter landings and reinstates the original size of the stair compartment between basement and first floor.

The spine wall is being reintroduced in its original position allowing the original form and proportions of the two room plan form to be appreciated and recognised.

In terms of bathrooms: these would all be located in the rear room except for at second and third floor levels. The basement suite would be located beneath the stairs; at ground and first floors the suites satisfactorily mitigate potential conflicts with the plan form by ensuring a simple shower screen separates them from the room rather than a full partition and that the sanitary wear would be free standing within suite and a simple. At second floor level a centralised bathroom has been designed as a low level pod positioned around the spine wall. At third floor level the traditional two room plan form is not so critical. In this regard the bathroom helps break up the space to provide cellular form which is typical of the upper floors of buildings of this age.

The door openings in to the side extension have been revised so as not to interfere with the stair compartment. These have also been reduced in size to allow the original historic envelope of the building to be more easily read.

#### *Decorative plaster features, finishes and Joinery*

The annotations on the proposed drawings state that: the ceilings are to be plaster with decorative details to primary rooms.

The doors would be traditional raised and fielded four panelled doors with traditional architrave and skirting. The new stair would also be of traditional design for the age and style of the building, comprising newel, hardwood handrail, 22mm square section balustrade rails housed 2 per tread.

No internal features of historic or architectural significance remained in the building prior to the recent stripping out. This is confirmed by DLA Town planning report dated January 2005 (ref: 02/089) submitted as part of the application ref: 2005/0207/P except for the stair which would appropriately match the original design. In this regard the new modern plaster work and joinery is not considered detrimental to the previous situation.

#### *Recommendation*

In my view the scheme has satisfactorily addressed the loss of historic fabric resulting from the unauthorised works to the building interior by reinstating new stair and spine wall to correspond with the original historic layout form and design. Moreover the front rooms would be reinstated to reinforce the historic character of the building from the street and care has been taken to reduce the impact of new en-suite bathrooms. More historically appropriate joinery would be introduced to add historic character to the interior.

In this regard the proposed application is to comply with UDP policy B6 and should be recommended for approval subject to a condition requesting all the work shown on the approved drawings be completed and inspected prior to occupation.

### **Disclaimer**

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