

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		16/03/2010	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		25/02/10	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Katrina Christoforou				2010/0178/P 2010/0194/L			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
25 Neal Street London WC2H 9PR				See decision notice			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
(i) Change of use and works of conversion of second floor to flexible uses for either Class A1 (Shop) or Class B1 (Office) or Class C3 (Residential). (ii) Internal alterations in association with change of use and works of conversion of second floor to flexible uses for either Class A1 (Shop) or Class B1 (Office) or Class C3 (Residential).							
Recommendation(s):		(i) Grant planning permission subject to s106 agreement for car-free housing (ii) Grant listed building consent subject to conditions					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission Listed building consent					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	49	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		A site notice was erected on the 04/02/10 – no responses have been received					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		<u>Covent Garden CAAC – no objection</u> However, did comment that the applicants should make up their minds what they want and submit an application accordingly. Our view is that continuing business use is most appropriate. <u>Covent Garden Community Association – no comment on the application</u>					
Site Description							
The site is located at 25 Neal Street by the junction with Earlham Street and Shelton Street. The building itself comprises three storeys with an A1 shop at basement, ground and first floor levels, with offices at second floor level. The site is within the Covent Garden Local Area of Central London characterised by retail, food and entertainment uses at ground floor level, offices and residential to the upper levels. The application building adjoins the terrace and shopping frontage of Neal Street and							

the mixed use Thomas Neal Centre. The application property and the adjoining buildings are grade II listed and the site is within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area.

Relevant History

LSX0204312: (Listed building consent) Internal alterations to listed building comprising creation of a lobby and office enclosure on top floor. Granted 14/05/2002.

The application site was formerly known as 43 Earlham Street. Various applications have been approved under this address including the following:

Planning permission was **granted** on 14/08/2000 for the change of use of the second floor from Class B1 to dual use for office (Class B1) or showroom (Class A1) purposes (PSX0004657).

Relevant policies

Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006

SD1- Quality of life
SD6- Amenity for occupiers and neighbours
SD9- Resources and energy
H1- New housing
H7- Lifetime homes and wheelchair housing
H8- Mix of units
E2- Retention of existing business uses
R1- Location of new retail uses
R2- Impact of retail and entertainment uses
B1- General design principles
B3- Alterations and extensions
B6 – Listed buildings
B7- Conservation Areas
T1- Sustainable Transport
T3- Pedestrians and Cycling
T8 - Car free housing and car capped housing
T9 - Impact of Parking

Camden Planning Guidance 2006

Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area Statement

Assessment

The proposal seeks flexible use of the second floor of the building for office (B1 use class), retail (A1 use class) or as a residential flat (C3 use class) plus associated internal alterations to the listed building. The ground floor of the building is in use as a shop. The upper floors share an access from Neal Street. The first floor is in use as offices. The lawful use of the second floor is considered to be B1 office; however the space is currently vacant.

The principal considerations material to the determination of this application are summarised as follows:

- Change of use
- Character and appearance of building
- Residential amenity of future occupiers and neighbours
- Transport

Change of use

This application seeks flexible use for either A1, B1 or C3 at second floor level. Only one use would be implemented at any one time. An informative would be attached to any permission granted stating that whichever use is in operation 10 years from the date of permission granted would become the lawful use of the second floor.

The change of use to either retail or residential would result in the loss of 144m² of office. Policy E2 seeks to protect business uses. Being located at second floor level alternative business uses would not be practical in terms of accessibility – level access and no lift provision. The UDP makes an exception for the conversion of offices to other uses in areas where there is considered to be a surplus, particularly if housing is to be provided. In addition it is important to note that the flexible nature of the proposal would allow for the office use to continue. It is therefore considered that the loss of office is acceptable in this case.

The introduction of an A1 use is welcomed, albeit at second floor level, in this central location in the context of Policy R1 as it would provide additional retail floor space within the Central London Area. The applicant has not stated possible opening hours for the A1 use. Given that the existing office use does not appear to have any restrictions in terms of opening hours it would not be considered necessary to limit the opening hours of any future retail uses.

In addition the principle of new residential floorspace is acceptable in the context of Policy H1.

Character and appearance of building

The building is Grade II listed and is located within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area. No external alterations are proposed apart from repairs to the roof and the installation of a small external grille to help ventilate the space. Internal alterations are proposed to the listed building. Considering the external elevations of the building would not be substantially altered it is considered that the character and appearance of the conservation area would be preserved.

Internally the proposal would replace the existing modern suspended floor and floorboard with underflooring heating and new floorboards. This is not considered to affect the presumed original floor beneath or raise the existing threshold of the floor. As such there would be no impact on the historic fabric or character of the listed building. The existing non-historic trunking around the perimeter of the floor would be replaced with more appropriately sized skirting with space behind to run any pipework or cabling. This is considered to improve the appearance of the room and is welcomed by the Council. The roof would be insulated with no impact to the fabric or appearance of the listed building.

A ventilation core with external grille would be installed to help ventilate the space. This would result in a negligible loss of masonry. The external grille would match the façade and is not considered to harm the industrial character and appearance of the façade and would preserve the historic fabric and

character of the listed building. The proposed subdivision of the existing spaces would relate to the position of the existing timber roof structure which would be retained and left exposed. Moreover the large central space would be maintained. In this regard the special character of the space would be preserved and as such the three proposed layouts are considered acceptable.

Secondary glazing would be installed within the depth of the window reveal. This would not cause any harm to the fabric of the listed building. Additional information has been submitted by the agent to clarify how the fenestration of the secondary glazing would relate to the design of the existing large multi paned casement windows. The submitted information illustrates an acceptable design of the secondary glazing. The design of the secondary glazing is considered to sit comfortably with the existing fenestration pattern and would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the listed building and conservation area.

Residential amenity of future occupiers and neighbours

The proposed residential unit would provide two bedrooms, three bathrooms and an open plan living space. The proposed residential unit would provide two double bedrooms, thereby providing accommodation for potentially four persons. The bedrooms would meet the 11sqm minimum standard for double rooms and the overall floorspace for the flat would be 136 sqm. The minimum floorspace for a four person unit would be 75 sqm. Therefore the proposal exceeds the minimum floorspace requirement and is considered to provide good circulation and living space for four persons.

The habitable rooms would all have windows providing adequate light and ventilation. The area is mixed use in character and therefore the neighbouring buildings may include commercial uses. Building Control regulations would ensure that adequate sound proofing between different uses would be provided at the building. In addition building regulations would ensure that the proposed A1 or B1 uses were adequately insulated/soundproofed to ensure that no detrimental impacts of noise or disturbance would occur upon the neighbouring properties.

A life time homes assessment has been submitted to the Council this has taken account of all 16 of the criteria. The proposal has incorporated as many of the lifetime homes criteria as possible. A justification has been provided for the criteria that cannot be complied with. The Lifetimes homes assessment is considered to be acceptable considering that the building is Grade II Listed.

The proposed residential unit would be at the end of a terrace and would utilise existing windows. It would overlook Neal Street and Earlham Street. It is not considered that the proposal would have any detrimental impacts of overlooking upon any of the surrounding residential units.

Transport

The application site is in the Clear Zone Region and has a PTAL of 6b. It is in the Holborn/Covent Garden CPZ with a ratio of parking permits to spaces of 1.44:1. Considering this, the application would be recommended for approval subject to a Section 106 legal agreement for the residential unit to be car free.

Considering that the application site is at second floor level the Council would not insist upon cycle parking as it would not be possible to provide level access to the cycle parking. In addition no alterations are proposed at ground floor level and the building is Grade II listed. On balance it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable

Recommendation – Grant planning permission subject to a Section 106 legal agreement for car-free development and grant listed building consent

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