

**DISCLAIMER**

Decision route to be decided by nominated members on Monday 05<sup>th</sup> October 2009. For further information see <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/planning-applications/development-control-members-briefing/>

<b>Delegated Report (Members Briefing)</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>	<b>Expiry Date:</b>	11/08/2009
		N/A / attached	<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>	22/07/2009
<b>Officer</b>			<b>Application Number(s)</b>	
Aysegul Olcar-Chamberlin			2009/1736/P	
<b>Application Address</b>			<b>Drawing Numbers</b>	
8 -9 Warren Mews London W1T 6AT			See draft 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>				
Replacement of existing door and window to the front elevation, at ground floor level and the removal of the existing garage to form an internal lightwell at front of basement, in connection with the change of use from office (Class B1) to three flats (Class C3) (one 2 bed, one three bed, and one four bed).				
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		Grant permission subject to a S.106 agreement		
<b>Application Type:</b>		Full Planning Permission		

<b>Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:</b>	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
<b>Informatives:</b>						
<b>Consultations</b>						
<b>Adjoining Occupiers:</b>	No. notified	<b>23</b>	No. of responses	<b>02</b>	No. of objections	<b>00</b>
			No. Electronic	<b>00</b>		
<b>Summary of consultation responses:</b>	A site notice was displayed from 01/07/09 to 22/07/09.					
<b>CAAC/Local groups* comments:</b> *Please Specify	<p><b>Bloomsbury CAAC</b> raised no objection to the proposed conversion to residential in principle. However, they objected to the number of residential flats and the loss of garage. In summary, the grounds of their objection are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to intensification, there should only be a single family dwelling house in this small mews building.</li> <li>• The loss of garage will encourage on-street parking.</li> </ul>					
<b>Site Description</b>						
The application relates to a typical three-storey mews building on the south end of Warren Mews in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The building has an office use (Class B1). The rear of the site joins other mews buildings on the north end of Fitzroy Mews.						
<b>Relevant History</b>						
<p><u>Application property:</u>  <b>2008/2166/P</b> – Planning application for the change of use of office building (Class B1) to single family dwellinghouse (Class C3) was withdrawn by the agent on 14/10/2008.</p> <p><u>Planning application for a larger scheme which the application site from part:</u>  <b>2006/0308/P</b> – Planning permission was subject to s106 was granted on 12/05/2006 by the Development Control Committee for the change of use of 1-5, 7 &amp; 10 Fitzroy Mews and 8 &amp; 9 Warren Mews including works of conversion from 6x Class B1 units to 4x single family dwelling houses (Class C3) and 6x live/work units (sui generis), plus provision of integral garages to nos. 4, 5, 7 &amp; 10 and associated front elevational changes to ground floors. This planning permission has not been implemented and expired on 12/05/2009.</p>						

## **Relevant policies**

### **Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006**

SD1 – Quality of Life  
SD2 – Planning Obligations  
SD6 - Amenity of Occupiers and Neighbours  
H1 – New Housing  
H7 – Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Housing  
H8 – Mix of Units  
B1 – General Design Principles  
B3 - Alterations and Extensions  
B7 – Conservation Areas  
E2 – Retention of Existing Business Uses  
T3 – Pedestrian and cycling  
T8 – Car free Housing and Car Capped Housing  
T9 – Impact of Parking

### **Camden Planning Guidance 2006**

### **Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement**

## **Assessment**

## Proposal

The proposal is for the replacement of existing door and window to the front elevation, at ground floor level and the removal of the existing garage to form an internal lightwell at front of basement, in connection with the change of use from office (Class B1) to three flats (Class C3) (one 2 bed, one three bed, and one four bed).

The proposal has been amended since it was originally submitted. Now, the garage door would be replaced with new windows and there would be no balustrading at the front of the proposed internal lightwell.

The key considerations are as follows:

- The principle of conversion of office space into three residential flats;
- Size mix and quality of residential units;
- Design and impact on Conservation Area;
- The impact of the proposal on residential amenities;
- Refuse/cycle storage and management; and
- Transport and parking.

## Principle of use change

Policy H1 of the UDP encourages development that increases in the residential floor space and provides additional residential accommodation as long as the accommodation reaches acceptable standards. On the other hand, policy E2 protects the existing business use unless the site is proved not to be suitable for the continuation of any other business use except B1(a) offices, as an exception to the general approach, the Council may allow a change of use to permanent residential uses. The proposed change of use from office to residential would be contrary to policy E2 unless the loss can be justified.

The proposed change of use to residential is considered to be acceptable in principle as there is no area-specific reason for protecting office use in this location. Additionally, the Council approved the conversion of the office space in the application property into two houses as part of the larger scheme which was approved in 2005 (ref: 2006/0308/P). The current proposal would increase the approved number of residential units on the site by one in the application property. Instead of vertically dividing the application property, it is proposed to divide the property horizontally to provide three self-contained flats (one of which would be a maisonette on the basement and ground floor levels).

The conversion of office use to residential subject to size mix of units and their quality of living standards is considered to be acceptable in principle.

## Size mix and quality of residential units

The proposed land use in detail:

Residential Use	No. of bedrooms	Person occupancy	Floorspace (sqm)
Flat 1 (maisonette on basement and ground floor levels)	4	between 6 and 8	111
Flat 2 ( on first floor level)	2	3	63
Flat 3 (on second floor level)	2	between 2 and 3	68

Policy H8 seeks a mix of large and small units and considers larger units of three or more bedrooms to provide flexible use to range of household sizes, including families. Additionally, Policy H8 states the conversion of a large dwelling with four or more bedrooms or the conversion of a property to provide one bedroom flats will generally be considered acceptable provided that a three bedroom unit plus smaller units are provided. The proposed basement and ground floor maisonette would be suitable to accommodate a medium to large size family. The flats on the upper floor levels would be suitable to accommodate small number of householders. Given the proposal would provide one large unit with a potential to be used as four bedroom unit and two smaller units, the proposed mix of units is considered to comply with policy H8.

The existing lightwell at the rear of the building which is 3.5m by 4.6m would provide adequate lighting to the bedrooms of the proposed flats in accordance with the Council's standards (except bedroom 4 on the basement level). The proposed basement and ground floor maisonette would have one bedroom (bedroom 4) which would be served by a large opening in the proposed internal lightwell just behind the front wall of the building. The proposed window area which allows natural light to bedroom 4 would be 1.98m<sup>2</sup> and would provide daylight which is just above the Council's minimum requirement for daylight level to bedrooms (10% of the total area of habitable room).

Policy H7 encourages all new dwellings to be designed to Lifetime Homes Standards. Given the building already exists and the design constrain of the existing building, it would be unreasonable to expect the proposed new units to comply with all Lifetime Homes Standards. The proposed flats would be accessed via the existing main entrance. There are few steps at the front of the main entrance. Although it would not be possible to provide a level or ramp entrance it is proposed to make allowance for a removable ramp to the entrance. Additionally, the ground floor of the proposed maisonette would have an appropriate layout for wheelchair users. It is considered that adequate provision has been made to comply with lifetime homes standards where possible.

### **Design and Impact on Conservation Area**

The proposed external alterations would involve replacement of the existing garage door with new steel Crital windows, replacement of front entrance door with timber door and erection of timber bin store area at the front entrance. The proposed internal lightwell would be within the demise of the existing built form and would not be visible from the streetscene.

The proposed external alterations would be minor and acceptable in design terms and would be in keeping with the general pattern of development in the area. The windows and doors at number of mews buildings on Warren Mews have also been altered. It is considered therefore that the changes to the building would not harm the appearance and character of the existing building and the wider conservation area.

### **Residential Amenity**

The proposal would not give rise to a material loss of residential amenity.

The windows of the proposed flats which face the existing rear lightwell face each other and the windows of 1 Fitzroy Mews which face the same lightwell in close proximity. Whilst not being ideal, such an arrangement is considered to be acceptable on the basis that it only affects units within the scheme as a whole and is a matter for the applicant – ie. any potential purchaser would be buying into the situation. This overlooking issue was raised during the assessment of the approved scheme for the conversion of the application property into two houses and assessed similarly. Given the design of the existing building and the fact that the proposed scheme would not result in additional overlooking to the nearby neighbouring residential properties, the

proposal is considered to be in accordance with the aims of policy SD6.

### **Transport and parking**

The proposal would result in extra demand on off street parking. The Council's Transport planner recommended a section 106 agreement securing the proposed development to be car free housing in accordance with policies T8 and T9 of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006. The agent stated in the 'design and access statement' which was submitted with this application that the applicant would accept entering into s106 agreement to prevent future occupiers to obtain residents parking permits.

The Council's transport planner pointed out that the no cycle storage/parking spaces for the proposed units are proposed in accordance with the Council's standards (1 storage or parking per unit). Given the size of the proposed units, it is considered that it would be possible for future occupiers of each of the units to store bicycles inside the units.

### **Refuse/recycle storage and management**

It is proposed to locate the bin store at the door step inside the covered entrance hall. The Council's Street Environment Services considered the proposed bin store to be insufficient for residual waste containers and recommended that it would be possible on-street bag collection to be done from front of the building. An informative for refuse storage and collection in accordance with the Council's standards is in the decision notice.

**Recommendation:** The proposal would provide much need additional residential accommodation units without compromising the character of the conservation area, amenities of the neighbouring residents and the existing transport conditions therefore planning permission should be granted.