

<b>Delegated Report</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>		<b>Expiry Date:</b>		17/03/2009	
		N/A / attached		<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>		18/02/09	
<b>Officer</b>				<b>Application Number(s)</b>			
Katrina Christoforou				2008/3656/P 2008/3803/L			
<b>Application Address</b>				<b>Drawing Numbers</b>			
5 Lincoln's Inn Fields London WC2A 3BT				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>							
<p><u>Planning:</u> Change of use from single dwelling house to 1x5 bedroom house fronting Lincoln's Inn Fields and 1x2 bedroom house in rear wing fronting Whetstone Park.</p> <p><u>Listed building:</u> Alterations in association with the change of use from single dwelling house to 1x5 bedroom house fronting Lincoln's Inn Fields and 1x2 bedroom house in rear wing fronting Whetstone Park, including the erection of internal walls, new staircase and obscure glazing to lightwell windows in the existing rear wing.</p>							
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		Grant planning permission subject to S106 (car-free) grant Listed building consent					
<b>Application Type:</b>		Full Planning Permission & 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	04	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
<b>Summary of consultation responses:</b>		A site notice was erected on the 26/01/09.					
<b>CAAC/Local groups* comments:</b> <small>*Please Specify</small>		Bloomsbury CAAC responded offering no comment.  The Covent Garden Community Association responded offering no comment.					

## Site Description

The four storey plus basement mid-terraced property lies to the north west corner of the square facing onto the open space of Lincoln's Inn Fields within the central London area. The building dates from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century (façade re-built in early 19<sup>th</sup> century) and is grade II listed as well as being part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The building comprises the original house fronting Lincoln's Inn Fields and a full height 1970's extension to the rear. The property was previously used as offices but planning permission was granted in 2007 for the change of use back to a single dwelling house, however, the property is currently vacant.

## Relevant History

P15/16/6/24738: erection of an extension on basement, ground and 3 upper floors and external alterations in rear part of the main building. Granted 01/07/1977.

2007/2177/P: Change of use from office (Class B1) to one six-bedroom residential dwelling (Class C3). Granted subject to a section 106 agreement 04/09/2007.

## Relevant policies

Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006

SD1- Quality of life  
SD6- Amenity for occupiers and neighbours  
H1- New housing  
H7- Lifetime homes and wheelchair housing  
H8- Mix of units  
B1- General design principles  
B3- Alterations and extensions  
B6- Listed buildings  
B7- Conservation Areas  
T3- Pedestrians and Cycling  
T8 - Car free housing and car capped housing  
T9 - Impact of Parking

Camden Planning Guidance 2006  
Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement

## Assessment

### The proposal

Originally the traditional Georgian property would have been in residential use but at some time in its history it was converted into offices and the extension was added to the rear. Planning permission was granted in 2007 allowing the change of use of the whole building back to a single dwelling. The works now proposed are to divide the property into two separate dwelling houses. The rear 1970's wing accessed via Whetstone Park would form a two bedroom dwelling whilst the original house fronting Lincoln's Inn Fields would be separated to provide a substantial 5 bedroom dwelling. The dwellings would be vertically divided by new internal walls and a new staircase would be added to the rear wing to serve the 2 bed unit.

### Principle of the conversion & residential development standards.

The Council encourages the provision of residential accommodation provided that it is of an acceptable standard. No new residential floor area would be created as part of the proposals but the property would be divided to provide two dwellings. The main house would be returned to its original configuration which provides substantial residential accommodation of a high standard. The rear wing would provide a two bedroom dwelling of 187m<sup>2</sup> over 5 floors. The habitable rooms would provide a good standard of residential amenity with ample head height and natural lighting from the windows to the rear apart from the kitchen at basement level.

The original house would still provide generous family sized accommodation whilst the rear wing would provide a good sized two bedroom unit. The principle of the change of use is therefore considered to comply with Council's housing policies.

A lifetime homes assessment has been submitted with the application. The constraints of the existing building and arrangement of accommodation over five floors limits the level to which the standards can be achieved, but justification has been provided and the proposals are considered to be broadly in line with policy H7.

### Design and appearance

No external changes to the street elevations are proposed as part of the application. The only external alteration is to the windows facing the central courtyard at 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> floor level that will be replaced with obscure glazing. As these proposed changes are not the windows of the original house and would not be visible from the public realm the principle is considered to be acceptable. However, Specific elevations showing these alterations have not been provided. It is recommended that a condition be attached to any permission requiring full details to be submitted to and approved by the Council for these alterations.

The internal alterations are the erection of a new wall at each level to separate the dwellings and the installation of a new staircase serving the rear dwelling. At present, the main rear rooms act as corridors leading to the annexe at the rear, which confuses the original plan layout. The separation of the extension will allow for the original domestic configuration of the main house to be restored, creating a better level of understanding and useage of the space more appropriate to the listed building. It is unclear whether the original build included a closet wing to the rear; if it did, this would have been confined to the lower levels of the building. However, it is clear that the existing annex is a 1970's addition and the benefits of its separation from the plan form of the main house are considered to outweigh any loss of the closet wing at the lower levels.

No significant doors or architraves will be lost as a result of the blocking of the doorways between the front and rear. The installation of the new staircase is in the 1970's section of the building, would not harm the fabric of the original house and is therefore considered to be acceptable.

The proposal seems to include the removal of some non-original partitioning installed in association with the office use. It is unclear whether these works have already taken place but they are considered acceptable.

### Amenity

The windows to each of the proposed dwellings look onto each other and the neighbouring office accommodation at no.4 via a central lightwell from 1<sup>st</sup> floor level up. The windows of the annex and the main house directly face each other and the adjacent window in the rear wing faces onto the windows of no 4. Planning permission has already been granted for residential use with these windows remaining as they are currently. However, as there would be a direct line of sight between the proposed units, it is proposed to change the windows facing onto the lightwell in the rear wing to be obscure glazed, thereby eliminating this concern. All habitable rooms affected in the rear dwelling would retain outlook via the windows in the Whetstone Park elevation. Despite being north facing, these windows (2 to each room) capture a significant amount of light in the afternoon reflecting off the windows of the buildings opposite.

No other amenity issues would occur as a result of the proposals.

### Transport

The site has Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6b (excellent), is within a clear zone region for which the whole area is considered to be under parking stress and the area is within a controlled parking zone. The site has no access to parking and none is proposed. It is therefore recommended that the additional residential unit at the rear be made car-free through a section 106 agreement. The applicant will need to indicate which of the units will be car-free on floor plan drawings that should be attached to the S106 to avoid any future doubt.

The Council's encourages the use of cycles as a sustainable means of transport. Generally the Council would seek one cycle storage space per residential unit. No specific cycle storage has been proposed as part of this application but both units would have access from the street (up a few steps) and sufficient internal space at entrance level to accommodate a cycle.

### Recommendation

Grant planning permission subject to a section 106 agreement for car free housing relating to the additional residential unit.

### **Disclaimer**

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