

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	18/03/2008
		N/A / attached	Consultation Expiry Date:	12/03/2008
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Sara Whelan			1) 2007/6034/P 2) 2007/6035/L	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
Manishas Mini Market 242 Grays Inn Road London WC1X 8JR			Please see draft decision	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
1) Change of use of ground and basement floors from retail use (Class A1) to residential use (Class C3) and conversion to form a self-contained maisonette plus erection of infill rear extension and creation of new front lightwell with railings and new basement windows. 2) Erection of infill rear extension, internal alterations and creation of new front lightwell with railings and new basement windows.				
Recommendation(s):		Refuse Listed building Consent Refuse Planning permission		
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission Listed Building Consent		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	13	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
			No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	A site notice was erected 20/02/2008-12/03/20008					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	Bloomsbury Conservation Area Committee – objection - The application should include photographs - We are in principle opposed to the conversion of shops to residential unless it reinstates its original use.					

Site Description

No. 242 is a 3 storey plus basement terraced house on the east side of Grays Inn Road, close to the junction with Calthorpe Street. It dates to the early 19th century (and is visible on Greenwoods map of 1827 which shows the whole terrace developed). It was listed at grade II in 1974.

It is only one room deep and continues the footprint of no. 240, which itself comprises the return of the end house on Calthorpe Street, dating to 1821-6.

The materials comprise yellow stock brick, a wooden shopfront with pilasters carrying entablature with inswept frieze and projecting cornice; bowed out over former shop window (now altered). There is a recessed, part glazed shop door. The doorway to the existing residential unit at second floor is square-headed with fanlight and C20 paneled door. There are gauged brick flat arches to recessed 4-pane sashes on upper floors.

Relevant History

2007/4343/L - Internal and external alterations including new railings around new front lightwell in association with conversion of basement and ground floors to 2 residential studio units – withdrawn (23/11/2007)

2007/4341/P - Change of use including works of conversion of basement and ground floor from retail and ancillary storage to 2 residential studio units – withdrawn (23/11/2007)

Relevant policies

S1/S2 – Sustainable development
SD1 – Quality of life – Community safety
SD6 – Amenity for occupiers and neighbours
B1 – General design principles
B3 – Alterations and extensions
B6 – Listed Buildings
B7 – Conservation Area
R7 – Protection of shopping frontages and local shops
H1- New Housing
H7 – Lifetime Homes
T3 – Parking and Cycling
T8 – Car free Housing
Supplementary Planning Guidance (July 2006)

Assessment

Introduction

Consent is sought for the works in association with the conversion of the basement and ground into a residential unit including restoring the shopfront, opening the front lightwell and reintroducing the basement windows and the erection of a rear extension.

Change of use from Class A1 to Class C3

The proposals seek to convert an existing shop and associated basement to residential. The premises is not in a designated shopping parade. The proposal would create a self contained 1 bedroom flat at basement level and ground floor level. The one bedroom flat would be accessed from a new entrance at pavement level within the opening of the existing doorway. Policy R7 states that the Council will only grant planning permission for development that involves a net loss of shopping floor space provided that alternative shopping (Use Class A1) is available within walking distance. The Brunswick shopping centre is within 2 minute walking distance of the application site. This provides a wide choice of commercial uses including many A1 uses. Therefore the loss of an A1 unit in this location is not considered to affect the vitality and viability of the area. The provision of additional housing is welcomed in terms of addressing the Council's priority land-use (Policy H1).

Policy H7 seeks to improve the accessibility of housing. The policy states that the Council will seek to *encourage* all new housing developments, including changes of use and conversions, to be accessible to all. The proposal cannot meet the Lifetimes Homes standards or be accessible to wheelchairs. The building is Grade II Listed; therefore the internal fabric of the building cannot be readily altered in order to comply with Policy H7. Considering that the application property is Grade II Listed it is considered acceptable to allow a conversion to a residential unit despite it not complying with Policy H7.

The proposed additional residential unit should be made car-free through a Section 106 planning obligation. This is justified as the site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level of (PTAL) of 6b (excellent) and is within a Controlled Parking Zone. The site is within the "Clear Zone Region". Not making the development car-free would increase demand for on-street parking in the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) the site is within. King's Cross, Brunswick & Gray's Inn (CA-D) CPZ operates Mon-Fri 08:30 - 18:30, and Sat 08:30-13:30 and has a ratio of parking permits to available parking bays of 1.17:1. This means that more parking permits have been issued than spaces available. Therefore if planning permission were to be granted, a Section 106 would need to be entered into for the new unit to be car free.

The proposal includes cycle storage and refuse storage at basement level. This storage would be provided in a void under the existing pavement. The amount of cycle storage is in line with Policy T3. the amount of refuse storage is considered acceptable and would ensure that the highway is kept clear of refuse.

Conservation Area and Grade II Listed Building considerations

The works are not acceptable in conservation and historic building terms for the following reasons;

- Subdividing the property would result in an awkward partition at the bottom of the stair. This would harm the character and appearance of the building and prevent the building from being used as a single building as originally intended.
- The works do not show the installation of a kitchen. The only logical place for the utilities would be in the ground floor front room. The installation of Ventilation and extraction flues could have an undue impact on the special interest and fabric of the building without additional information on where the services will be located.

(Note- basement stair retains original newel and stick balustrading along panel under stair).

Rear in fill extension

The proposed in fill extension would be no higher than the existing boundary walls enclosing the courtyard. It is not considered that the extension would have any detrimental impacts upon the residential amenity of any surrounding properties. However, the infilling of the whole rear garden space to create a bathroom for the ground floor flat would be regrettable considering that the building is Grade II Listed. The foot print and bulk of the proposed extension is not considered to be subordinate to the Grade II Listed Building and would harm the appearance of the Grade II Listed Building.

The opening of the lightwell and insertion of railings is considered acceptable – these houses originally had open lightwells as evidenced on site, but the early 19th shopfront at no. 244 adjacent suggests that conversion to shop use started very early and the lightwells would have been blocked as a result. Whilst reversing this trend will result in a hybrid of domestic style railings and lightwell with shopfronts behind, it is not considered that it would be harmful and will show the gradual progression of alterations over time. The proposed front light well and railings are considered, on balance not to ham the appearance of the Grade II Listed Building or wider Conservation Area.

Recommendation

The proposed works in association with converting the basement and ground floor into a self contained residential unit, by reason of the loss of historic fabric and interest and loss of plan form in the ground floor vestibule, would be detrimental to the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building. This would be contrary to Policies B1, B3, B6 and B7 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006.

Disclaimer

This is an internet copy for information purposes. If you require a copy of the signed original please contact the Culture and Environment Department on (020) 7974 5613