



Appeal Decisions

Hearing held on 6 November 2007

Site visit made on 6 November 2007

by **N A C Holt** TD BArch(hons) DipTP
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an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State
for Communities and Local Government

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Decision date:
29 November 2007

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/A/07/2035326/NWF

3, Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
- The application Ref 2006/2228/P, dated 11 May 2006, was refused by notice dated 18 July 2006.
- The development proposed is: 'Installation of a glass door at ground floor entrance'.

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/E/07/2035308/NWF

3, Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
- The appeal is made by The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
- The application Ref 2006/2230/L, dated 11 May 2006, was refused by notice dated 18 July 2006.
- The works proposed are: 'Installation of glass door at ground floor entrance'.

Decisions

1. I allow the appeals and:

- A. Grant planning permission for the installation of a glass door at the ground floor entrance of No 3, Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 2006/2228/P, dated 11 May 2006 and the drawings submitted therewith subject to the conditions listed at Annex A.
- B. Grant listed building consent for the installation of a glass door at the ground floor entrance of No 3, Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 2006/2230/L, dated 11 May 2006 and the drawings submitted therewith subject to the conditions listed at Annex A.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue in these cases is the effect of the proposal on the listed building and on the wider conservation area and if harm would result, whether this would be outweighed by benefits of the proposal.
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Reasons

3. Lincoln's Inn is within the extensive Bloomsbury Conservation Area. It is of late medieval origins and contains quadrangles, terraces and individual buildings of various ages within a walled enclosure. It accommodates mainly barristers' chambers and associated facilities.
4. Stone Buildings comprise a collection of classically styled buildings set around a long narrow courtyard, the southern end of which is open. No. 3 Stone Buildings lies on the west side of the courtyard at its northern end and forms part of a range (Nos. 3 – 6) constructed of Portland stone in 1775 to the design of Sir Robert Taylor. Along with its neighbours No. 3 is a Grade I listed building.
5. Nos. 3 – 6 have their original entrance arrangement with open doorways leading to the communal hall and stone stair which leads to secure doors to individual chambers, an arrangement similar to that seen in many Oxford and Cambridge Colleges.
6. In the determination of listed building applications and planning applications affecting listed buildings or their setting, sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. With development within a conservation area, section 72 of the same act requires the decision maker to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.
7. The statutory requirements and the national guidance in PPG15 relating to Planning and the Historic Environment are reflected in particular in policies B6 and B7 of the Camden UDP. These indicate that consent will not be granted for alterations which cause harm to the special interest of a listed building and that consent will only be granted for development within a conservation area which preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the area.
8. The current access arrangement at No 3 Stone Buildings with its open doorway will be a cause of considerable inconvenience to those using the premises. As is becoming more common, a single set of barristers occupy most of No. 3, with users of the building having to cross the common areas, open to the street, to reach the various rooms in what were originally separate chambers.
9. If security is to be maintained and petty theft prevented doors off the various landings have to be locked and unlocked as members and staff of the chambers move around the building. Furthermore I appreciate that with an open common stair only basic decorative finishes can be applied and such an arrangement does not make for thermal efficiency.
10. The fabric of Lincoln's Inn and its grounds are maintained to a particularly high standard and it is important that this should continue, thus enabling future generations to appreciate the quality of the buildings and spaces. A pre-requisite for this is that the buildings remain in viable use. Providing that unacceptable consequences for the character and appearance of the buildings are avoided, certain adaptation and change must be accepted to ensure that the buildings are fit for purpose in the context of the user requirements of the

21st Century. In this context I have had particular regard to the advice in paragraphs 3.12 to 3.15 of PPG15.

11. The west elevation of Nos. 3 - 6 Stone Buildings comprises a rusticated arcade at the upper ground level over which are two further main floors. The arcading is consistent whether occupied by a window or doorway and it is the arcading that is the visually dominant element. Providing that it was designed to be visually unassertive I consider that the architectural composition could accommodate the introduction of a door without adverse consequences.
12. Whilst the Council and English Heritage express concern about the reflective qualities of glass and the effect that a glass door, with a relatively shallow reveal close to the façade, would have on the appearance of the east elevation, the potential impact would be mitigated by the use of non-reflective glass. I consider that the glass door would not be visually intrusive and would not appear as a damaging feature in the context of the overall façade.
13. Arguably with the introduction of the door, there would be some effect on the 'collegiate' character of the building. However, with a glazed door it would still be possible to see through to the hall and stairwell and I do not consider that the consequences for the overall character of the building would be significant. Any slight impact would be outweighed by the benefits of improving the nature of the accommodation to meet the needs of the 21st Century, thus helping to ensure the continued use of a listed building of outstanding importance.
14. Of the options available to address the current operational deficiencies of the building I am satisfied that the one chosen is the least intrusive in terms of its impact on the building. In this context I note that whilst no longer considered acceptable by the Council, it follows advice given by the Council's former Conservation Officer.
15. It is accepted that a permission in this case would establish a precedent in relation to 4, 5 and 6 Stone Buildings which have a similar entrance arrangement. However it is pertinent in this context that the First Secretary of State granted planning permission and listed building consent on appeal for an almost identical proposal at No. 6 Stone Buildings. Although this has not yet been implemented, the permission remains current.
16. It is my conclusion that subject to care in the execution of the work there would be no material harm to the listed building and its setting or to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Furthermore, the proposal would have the benefit of meeting the operational requirements of the 21st Century, thus helping to ensure the long term use of a listed building of outstanding importance.
17. Account has been taken of the various other matters raised but these other matters do not alter my conclusion that the appeals should be allowed.
18. The Council seek conditions in relation to the submission of samples of glass and also details of any manifestations on the glass. In addition, to safeguard the special interest of the building I consider that conditions should require submission of samples of the stainless steel fittings on the door.

Neil A C Holt Inspector

ANNEX A

Conditions – applicable to both the planning permission and the listed building consent.

1. The development/works shall be commenced no later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
2. Before the development/works are commenced samples of the proposed glass and the stainless steel fittings shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The glass type and fittings used for the door shall be as agreed.
3. Before the development/works are commenced details of any manifestations to be applied to the surface of the glass for safety purposes shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The development/works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

APPEARANCES

For the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn

Mr D J Morris	Partner, Langley-Taylor, Chartered Surveyors
Mr J Scarratt	Langley-Taylor, Chartered Surveyors
Mr M D P Bullen	Partner, Weightman and Bullen, Architects

For the London Borough of Camden

Victoria Fowlis	Conservation and Urban Design Officer, London Borough of Camden
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Documents

Document 1	Attendance list
Document 2	Council's letter of notification of hearing
Document 3	Council's Statement
Document 4	Appellant's initial statement together with appendices
Document 5	Appellant's comments on Council's statement together with appendices

Plans

Plan A	Location plan 5501/100
Plan B	Entrance door to No 3 Stone Buildings 5501/03/B
Plan C	Proposed entrance door details 5501/11/A

Further appeal references:- APP/X5210/A/07/2035326

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