

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		23/11/2007	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		09/11/2007	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Victoria Lewis				2007/4236/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
34 Swinton Street London WC1X 9NX				See decision			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature		C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature			
Proposal(s)							
Erection of two storey roof extension including the formation of a mansard roof to create 6 additional self-contained studio flats (Class C3)							
Recommendation(s):		Refused					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
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:		N/A					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		Bloomsbury CAAC has commented as follows:  This is a horrific application that would have an extremely negative impact on the conservation area and on the modest, attractive building that is proposed to receive it.					

## Site Description

Two storey building positioned to the western end of a terrace of 15 buildings, set well back from the front building line of the terrace. The building is not listed but forms part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. From historic maps the building dates from between 1874 and 1894, and appears to have been introduced as an ancillary, backland building after the cutting for the Metropolitan railway was introduced. It has an irregular, almost triangular floor plan with a deep flank wall which follows the line of the railway cutting. These blank, angled flank walls are a significant feature within this part of the conservation area as they visibly demonstrate how this piece of townscape has been shaped by the railway (which itself is not immediately visible).

The building is a scaled-down interpretation of the terrace adjacent, and comprises stock brick with sash windows and a hipped roof behind a shallow brick parapet. The floor levels as shown on the front elevation do not correspond exactly with the end of terrace building at number 32, and indeed the position of the building well back from the front building line ensures that the two are not read together in the terrace.

## Relevant History

CTP16087 - Conversion of the existing building into 16 self-contained bedsitting rooms at 32-34 Swinton Street. This application was GRANTED. It is noted that there are now 20 self-contained studio flats within the building therefore 4 are unlawful. The Enforcement Team have been notified and the applicant advised that this must be addressed.

## Relevant policies

H1 – New housing  
H8 – Mix of units  
SD6 – Amenity for occupiers and neighbours  
B1 – General design principles  
B3 – Alterations and extensions  
B7 – Conservation areas  
T8 – Car free and car capped housing  
T9 – Impact of parking  
T12 – Works affecting the highway  
Camden Planning Guidance 2006  
Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement

## Assessment

### Overview

Planning permission is sought to add one additional sheer floor plus a mansard roof extension to the building to provide an additional 6 self-contained studio flats. The application form states that bedsits are proposed, but as each would have its own kitchen and bathroom facilities they are considered to be studio flats, falling within Use Class C3; the description of development has been amended accordingly.

Two sash windows are proposed at third and fourth floor level in the flank wall of the building.

### Principle of the propose development

Housing is the priority use of the UDP, identified through policy H1. In light of this there are no objections to the principle of providing additional residential units within the building, subject to compliance with other UDP policies.

Policy H8 seeks to ensure developments provide an appropriate mix of unit sizes. The supporting text refers to minimum floor area requirements set out in Camden Planning Guidance, which requires studio flats or one person accommodation to have a minimum floor area of 32 square metres. The supporting text to policy H1 also refers to the need to provide high quality accommodation.

The plans indicate that all of the proposed flats would fall well below the recommended standards, the smallest measuring 10.87 square metres and the largest 20.07 square metres. It is therefore considered that the proposal would fail to provide appropriately sized units and a high standard of living accommodation, contrary to policies H1 and H8. It is considered that the provision of a single unit within the proposed mansard could prove to be acceptable.

### Design

Policy B1 of the UDP establishes general design principles, B3 relates to alterations and extensions to existing buildings and policy B7 seeks to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of designated conservation areas.

As a backland / infill type of building whose position and shape has been dictated by the railway, the height and position of the building in relation to the adjoining terrace is significant to the townscape. The proposal seeks to bring the height broadly in line with the adjacent terrace. This is not considered acceptable as a) it would appear slightly out of scale as the floor levels would not match up, b) it would result in an awkward junction at roof level between the two buildings, and c) a clear contrast between the formal terrace building and this building should be retained in order to appreciate the historical development of the area.

Furthermore the detailed design of the roof extension would be poor, and would not be traditional to this type of building. The proposed sash windows in the flank elevation of the building would not be appropriate and would appear incongruous. The proposed materials are unclear, although this could be addressed by way of condition.

Overall it is considered that the proposal would fail to preserve the appearance of the building and the character and appearance of this part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, contrary to policies B1, B3 and B7 of the UDP.

### Amenity

Policy SD6 of the UDP seeks to ensure an adequate standard of amenity for occupiers and neighbours.

There may be some loss of light to windows at the rear of 32 Swinton Street arising from the proposed extension, although it is noted that this building is within the applicant's ownership. There is a building

to the northwest of the site, 31a Swinton Street and its use is not known. Only the top of this building can be viewed from Swinton Street and Wicklow Street from the rear and there is no planning history relating to it. In light of this it has not been possible to assess the impact of the proposed extension on this building. It is recommended that in the event of a resubmission, access to the upper floor flats at the rear of numbers 32 and 34 Swinton Street be arranged which would allow views of this building. There would be no greater level of overlooking than from the existing windows at the front and side of the building.

### **Transport and movement**

Policy T3 of the UDP seeks to ensure adequate provision for cyclists and pedestrians. Appendix 6 requires the provision of one cycle parking space per residential unit. No cycle parking spaces are shown on the plans and there does not appear to be scope to provide any on site.

Policy T8 states that the Council will grant permission for car free housing in areas of on-street parking control. The site forms part of a controlled parking zone and has a public transport accessibility level of 6b (excellent). The new units must therefore be car free and as no section 106 agreement has been submitted to secure this, the proposal is contrary to policy T8. The new units would add to demand for on-street parking, contrary to policy T9 'Impact of parking'.

In order to ensure no adverse impact upon highway safety during the course of the building works, a construction management plan is required, to ensure compliance with policy T12 of the UDP. No construction management plan has been submitted therefore the proposal is contrary to policy T12. A servicing statement is also required, to ensure there would be satisfactory storage and removal of refuse from the site. Were there no other concerns with the proposal, this could be secured by way of condition.

### **Recommendation**

That permission be refused.

### **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***