

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:	23/11/2007
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:	09/11/2007
Officer			Application Number(s)		
Victoria Lewis			2007/4237/P		
Application Address			Drawing Numbers		
32 Swinton Street London WC1X 9NX			See decision.		
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		
Proposal(s)					
Erection of a mansard roof extension to create two additional self-contained studio flats.					
Recommendation(s):		Refused			
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission			

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	18	No. of responses	01	No. of objections	01
			No. electronic	01		
Summary of consultation responses:	One representation has been received objecting to the proposal on the following grounds: Request a proposed front elevation to ascertain whether there would be any loss of light to a flat opposite. <u>Response</u> – a proposed front elevation has been submitted and is available on line. The road measures approximately 15.5m wide and the relationship of the site with the properties opposite would be typical of most streets. No significant loss of light would occur. Consideration should be given to fire evacuation routes from the building – response – this is covered separately under the Building Regulations.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	Bloomsbury CAAC has commented as follows: This would represent an over-development and produce a particularly unattractive gable end, visible from a distance, that would detract from the Conservation Area.					

Site Description

Unlisted end of terrace building over three storeys. It is unclear from the drawings what form the concealed roof takes, but it is assumed to be a valley. Forms one of a group of three unlisted buildings in a terrace of 15; the remaining 12 to the east date from c. 1835-44 and are Grade II listed. According to historic maps this building appears to date from between c. 1874 and 1894; it seems that the buildings on the site were demolished to make way for the Metropolitan railway cutting then later reinstated, in an attempt to match the remaining terrace.

The site forms part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

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 for the erection of a mansard roof extension to provide an additional 2 studio flats within the building. 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.

Permission is also sought for the insertion of a new window at the new top floor level within the flank wall of the building.

Principle of the proposed 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 the flats would measure 11.97 square metres and 20.79 square metres which falls well below the recommended standards. 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.

A number of properties in the terrace have mansard roof extensions therefore there are no objections in principle. There are concerns however, regarding its detailed design which would be poor and would not be traditional to this type of building. The resulting roof profile would not match the others in the terrace and the gable end design would appear incongruous and visually jarring in the streetscene. The provision of casement windows would not be appropriate to the building and a new high level window in the flank wall would appear incongruous; insufficient details of materials have been provided, 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.

The proposed roof extension would not give rise to any overshadowing or loss of light to the neighbouring properties. Levels of light to properties across the street would not be significantly affected given the width of the street which is approximately 15.5m, and the relationship is typical of properties facing each other across a street.

There would be no greater level of overlooking from its windows and the proposed side windows, than from the existing third floor windows.

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. As none have been shown on the plans, the proposal is technically contrary to policy T3. However, given that there is very limited space outside the building, very little communal space internally and a number of flights of stairs, it is not considered practical to provide cycle parking in this instance.

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'.

Recommendation

That planning 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