

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		10/01/2007	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		11/12/2006	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Stuart Minty				2006/4019/P 2006/4020/L			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
66 Lincolns Inn Fields London WC2A 3LH				Refer to Draft Decision Notice			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		Date:		
Proposal(s)							
<p>1) 2006/4019/P - Installation of replacement air conditioning units in the basement lightwell of the existing office (B1 use class).</p> <p>2) 2006/4020/L - External and internal alterations to the basement area of the existing office building to include replacement air conditioning units in the basement lightwell, and new wall mounted air conditioning units.</p>							
Recommendation(s):		<p>1) Grant Planning Permission</p> <p>2) Grant Listed Building Consent</p>					
Application Type:		<p>1) Planning Permission</p> <p>2) Listed Building Consent</p>					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
Summary of consultation responses:		A site notice was displayed on the 20/11/2006. No representations have been received.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>		<p>The Bloomsbury CAAC have made the following comments '<i>The committee is of the view that provided no original features are being removed and new air conditioning units are not visible from the road, then will leave to the planning committee to decide whether its acceptable</i>'.</p> <p>Note - The planning/listed building issues are discussed within the assessment part of the report. The CAAC does not have authorisation to refer applications to the planning committee.</p> <p>English Heritage have recommended that the Council determine the application in accordance with national and local policy guidance and on the basis of the Council's specialist conservation advice.</p> <p>GOL have given authorisation for the Authority to determine the Listed Building application as it sees fit.</p>					

Site Description

The application site relates to No's 65 and 66 Lincoln's Inn Fields, which are located on the west side of Lincoln's Inn Fields, on the corner with Remnant Street. No. 66 Lincoln's Inn Fields is a grade II* listed building built in c1685 and designed by William Winde and is currently used for office purposes (Class B1). The building is of 3 storeys with attic and semi-basement, it is 7 windows wide with a projecting central pedimented bay. The central entrance is approached by twin quadrant flights of steps with wrought iron railings and overthrow lamp holder. As well as being listed, the site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Relevant History

None of relevance

Relevant policies

Set out below are the UDP policies that the proposals have primarily been assessed against, together with officers' view as to whether or not each policy listed has been complied with. However it should be noted that recommendations are based on assessment of the proposals against the development plan taken as a whole together with other material considerations.

Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006

SD1 – Quality of Life; SD6 – Amenity for occupiers and neighbours; SD7 – Light, noise and vibration pollution; SD8 – Disturbance; B1 – General Design Principles; B3 – Alterations and extensions; B6 – Listed Buildings; B7 – Conservation areas.

Camden Planning Guidance (Consultation Draft 2006)

P49 – Conservation Areas; P117 – Noise and vibration; P167 - Plant, machinery and ducting

Assessment

Proposals:

The applications propose a number of alterations at semi-basement level. These are as follows:-

1. Insertion of a ceiling below the existing with a further raft suspended below with concealed perimeter lighting and recessed down lights to accommodate 2 no. cassette style units for air conditioning. These suspended rafts will also conceal pipe runs for the new cooling system to the adjacent kitchen. In addition it is suggested that these new suspended ceilings may be used to conceal new pipe work from any future proposed improvements to the air conditioning to the ground floor Peacock Room above.
2. A range of alterations to the prep room and the kitchen involving new equipment, air conditioning and services.
3. The installation of new store cupboards and a new riser cupboard within the existing dining room.
4. The removal of 2no existing outdoor air cooling units and the existing double rubbish storage unit from the front semi-basement area, and the installation of 2no double outdoor air cooling units and a new reduced size rubbish storage unit, in their place.

Principle Issues:

The principal issues to consider are as follows: -

- Design/townscape/impact on the Conservation Area
- Impact on the special character of listed building
- Noise/disturbance/vibration and impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential properties

Assessment of Proposals

1. The existing dining room has a floor to ceiling height of approx. 4.3 m. The room has a deep moulded cornice which has been reproduced in part where it runs along later service boxing. However it is possible to see from the riser cupboard that the original cornice survives on the wall behind these service boxings and the profile is similar to the visible cornice within the room at present. The fireplace in the dining room is of an 18th century design and may well be an original fireplace from the building, if not originally in this position. The height of the room and the cornice and fireplace give the room the feeling of an important room of c18th character (albeit altered), this character would be lost if the original proposal were to be implemented. The reduced ceiling height and modern appearance of the suspended ceilings, lighting system and air conditioning grilles outlined in the original proposal was considered detrimental to the character and appearance of this area of the listed building.

Revisions – Revised proposals were submitted following the Council's concerns omitting the suspended ceilings and the installation of air conditioning units within the proposed new cupboards along north wall. Details of these amendments are detailed on revised drawing no. FA07.002K. These revisions would omit the contentious elements of the original scheme i.e. the 2 no suspended ceilings with associated air conditioning grilles in the ceiling and the new lighting scheme. The intention in the revised scheme is to contain the air conditioning grilles within the proposed new cupboard along the north wall. The pipe work from these new units will run within the new cupboards and within a new boxing out of the window cills along the east wall. This new 'boxing out' is not considered to be harmful to the historic fabric or to the appearance of the room.

2. The proposals for the works to the kitchen and prep room are not considered contentious as these rooms retain no early features and are of a very utilitarian nature. However the location of the pipe runs from the proposed new air conditioning to these 2 rooms needs to be amended as they are currently proposed to run through the dining room above the proposed suspended ceilings.

Revisions - Revised proposals were submitted following the Council's concerns and are illustrated on revised drawing no. FA07.002K. As revised, the pipe runs from the new air conditioning units within the kitchen will run within the existing featureless corridor and through the existing ducting on the north wall. The pipe runs from the new air conditioning units within the prep room will run into the new riser cupboard and join the other new runs within the new boxing out under the window cills. The exit route of these runs is under the steps to no. 65 and into the new external units without being visible from the street. No new lighting scheme is now proposed, the existing pendant lighting is to be renewed.

3. The proposals for new store cupboards and a replacement riser cupboard within the dining room are not contentious. The design is simple, the north wall on which the new cupboards are situated already has a services bulk head at high level, and the cupboards will not result in the loss of any historic fabric.
4. The proposed new external air cooling outdoor units, to be located in the basement area, are shown in section as being below the height of the stone base to the railings. At this height they will not be visible from the pavement and will not be read with the front elevation of the building and thus is not considered to have any detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area or the special character of the listed building. Given its reduction in size, no objections are raised to the reduced rubbish storage area.

The nearest residential property is located to the rear of the site at No 44-46 Kingsway, which is approximately 34 metres away. Beyond this, the next nearest residential property is located at no 71 Gate Street which is approximately 50 metres away from the proposed plant/machinery. The Council's environmental health officer listed a number of discrepancies with the initial acoustic report and the report has subsequently been revised to show compliance with Camden's noise condition. It is therefore considered that the proposed plant/machinery would not have a detrimental impact on the neighbouring residential amenity subject to the Council's model noise condition.

Conclusion

Given all of the aforementioned, it is considered that the various alterations at semi-basement level including the installation of plant/machinery would not result in material harm to the design and appearance of the building, the character and appearance of the conservation area or the setting of the listed building. The specifications of the units subject to conditions would not infringe on the residential amenities of neighbouring amenity. The grant of planning permission and listed building consent is accordingly recommended.

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