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| Delegated Report | | Analysis sheet | | Expiry Date: | 02/10/2006 |
| | | N/A / attached | | Consultation Expiry Date: | |
| Officer | | | Application Number(s) | | |
| Elaine Quigley | | | 2006/2571/P | | |
| Application Address | | | Drawing Numbers | | |
| 5 King's Mews Land Rear of 4 John Street London WC1 | | | | | |
| PO 3/4 | Area Team Signature | C&UD | Authorised Officer Signature | Date: | |
| | | | | | |
| Proposal(s) | | | | | |
| Erection of 3-storey building with basement to accommodate a self-contained 2-bedroom maisonette at first and second floor levels with a garage at ground floor level and storage and plant rooms at basement level associated with the main dwelling at 4 John Street. | | | | | |
| Recommendation(s): | | To refuse planning permission | | | |
| Application Type: | | Full Planning Permission | | | |

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| Conditions or Reasons for Refusal: | Refer to Draft Decision Notice | | | | | |
| Informatives: | | | | | | |
| Consultations | | | | | | |
| Adjoining Occupiers: | No. notified | 10 | No. of responses | 01 | No. of objections | 01 |
| Summary of consultation responses: | <p>1 letter of objection received from resident at 2 King’s Mews raising the following concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Too great a concentration of mews houses on this side of the mews• Basement area constitutes a risk to foundations of the existing building• Already 6 months of building works with the current development• Additional car parking problems/ water and drainage <p><u>Policy Team</u> – no objections Providing residential accommodation is of an acceptable standard and the development meets lifetime homes.</p> <p><u>Conservation and Urban Design</u> – objects The height, scale, detailed design materials and appearance would be considered to harm the setting of the Grade II listed terrace and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and would be recommended for refusal.</p> <p><u>Transport Group</u> – no objections The proposal would be acceptable subject to conditions relating to cycle storage and S106 agreement for car-free housing for the new development</p> | | | | | |
| CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify | <p><u>Bloomsbury CAAC</u> – objects Regretted the third floor – taller than the existing adjacent building. Uninspiring architecturally. Stock bricks should be used and left unpainted.</p> | | | | | |

Site Description

The application site is located to the west of Kings Mews and is presently an empty plot of land which is used for car parking. To the north is a new development that is three storeys in height that was granted permission in 07/06/2005 (see planning history for details). To the west are properties that front John Street. No 4 John Street is a Grade II listed terraced building dating from the 1750's and the application site is to the rear of the property. The site falls within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Relevant History

4 John Street and 5 Kings Mews

2005/5121/L

Listed building consent was granted on 07/03/2006 for the addition of glazed roof to the rear courtyard in conjunction with the removal of the rear elevation at basement level to form enlarged rear room, replacement of window with door to rear ground floor elevation, modification of internal partitions and associated internal alterations.

PSX0205232 and LSX0205246

Planning permission and listed building consent were granted on 24/11/2003 for the change of use from office (B1) to a single family dwelling house (C3) with associated internal and external alterations, and the erection of a new mews house with garaging to replace the existing parking area on Kings Mews to the rear of 4 John Street. The applicant's entered into a legal agreement to achieve the following heads of terms (i) that the residential unit would be permanently designated as car-free housing, (ii) that the mews house would be developed simultaneously with that at 7-8 Kings Mews (iii) that one garage would be available for use by the owner occupiers of 4 John Street in perpetuity.

2004/0919/P and 2004/0920/L

Planning permission and listed building consent were granted on 18/06/2004 for the installation of replacement windows to front and rear elevation, reinstatement of bay window to basement rear elevation, formation of new window openings at rear third and fourth floor level, demolition of existing basement rear extension and erection of new single storey extension at basement level. Internal works including installation of new partition walls, doors, formation of new bathrooms and kitchenettes.

Related applications

5 John Street and 7/8 Kings Mews

2004/4713/P

Change of use of 5 John Street from offices (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) to provide 2 bed self contained basement flat and 3 bed maisonette on upper floors and rear garden with enclosed pool at basement level including the erection of a 3 storey building to 7/8 Kings Mews to provide 2x 2 bed flats and garage following the demolition of the existing office building.

2004/4756/C

Conservation area consent was granted on 17/01/2005 for the demolition of the existing office infill building to rear garden of 5 John Street facing Kings Mews.

2005/4755/P

Submission of details pursuant to condition 2 of planning permission dated 7th June 2005 (ref. 2004/4713/P) relating to elevational detailing and sample panel of elevational materials on 7-8 Kings Mews. Condition 2 of the permission required the submission of detailed drawings showing the design of the street elevation, including the materials to be used for external surfaces. An informative gave specific advice regarding the design. Baggeridge Brick Medium Dark Red (R10165) was considered an acceptable brick.

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.

Adopted Unitary Development Plan 2006

S1 and S2 'Strategic policies', SD6 'Amenity for occupiers and neighbours', B1 'General design

principles', B6 'Listed buildings', B7 'Conservation areas', H1 'New housing', H7 'Lifetime homes and wheelchair housing', T3 'Pedestrians and cycling', T4 'Public transport', T7 'Off-street parking, city car clubs and city bike schemes', T8 'Car free housing and car capped housing'.

Camden Planning Guidance Consultation Draft 2006

'Built form', 'Car-free and car capped housing', 'Conservation areas', 'Design', 'Lifetime homes and wheelchair housing', 'Listed buildings', 'Materials and resources', 'Overlooking and privacy', 'Residential development standards'.

Assessment

Planning permission is sought for the erection of 3-storey building with basement to accommodate a self-contained 2-bedroom maisonette at first and second floor levels with a garage at ground floor level and storage and plant rooms at basement level associated with the main dwelling at 4 John Street. This application proposes alterations to the previously approved scheme that include the following:

- Height: The height of the building is 8.5m to the ridge of the roof. The previously approved scheme was 7.9m in height to the ridge
- Mass: The proposed dwelling is three storey's in height. The previously approved scheme was designed in the more traditional mews style as a two storey building with an attic storey set behind a parapet.
- Design: The form of the new dwelling is of a contemporary design in terms of the fenestration pattern, the roof design and the materials. The previously approved scheme was for a more traditional mews building that was to match the adjoining building at No.7/8 King's Mews thereby creating an identical pair of dwellings.
- Additional floorspace: The proposal includes the erection of basement accommodation that would extend along the width of the plot from John Street to Kings Mews and would provide a private gym, storage area, shower room and plant room. This would be associated with the adjoining property at No. 4 John Street.
- Creation of terrace: It is proposed to include a terrace area at first and second floor levels to the rear of the building.
- Renewable energy: It is proposed to incorporate a grass roof on the flat roof of the building

The main issues to consider as part of the application area:

- Principle of loss of office accommodation
- Principle of new residential development
- Standard of accommodation
- Design
- Impact on the character and appearance of the listed building and conservation area
- Amenity of adjoining residents
- Parking and cycling
- Renewable energy

Loss of office accommodation

The proposal would result in a loss of a B1a office space building to residential and therefore requires consideration under policy E3C of the Adopted UDP. This policy normally resists the loss of suitable employment sites or premises; however an exception to the policy can be made where the proposed use is residential. Given that the proposal is for new residential development the principle of the loss of office accommodation is considered acceptable.

New housing

Policy H1 supports development that would increase the amount of land and floorspace in residential use and provides additional residential accommodation. The proposal would provide a new 2 bedroom unit. It must be noted that the principle of a new residential dwelling on the site has already been established by the previously approved scheme and, as there has been no significant change in

policy since the previously approved scheme, this is considered acceptable.

Standard of accommodation

Floor area

The minimum floor area required for a 2 bedroom unit is 48 sq.m. The new dwelling exceeds this minimum requirement and provides approximately 135sq.m of floor space. This would be considered acceptable.

Basement accommodation

The SPG advises that new basements should have a room height of 2.3m. The proposed basement area provides a floor to ceiling height of approximately 3.3m and would therefore comply with the guidance. No windows would be proposed within the basement area. Given that it would be used as a gym there is no requirement to provide adequate natural light to this area.

Lifetime homes

Policy H7 requires all new dwellings to be built to Lifetime Homes standards for accessible living. There are 16 standards that should be complied with in order to meet these standards. Although the proposal complies with the majority of the criteria relating to Lifetime Homes the new dwelling does not provide a living room at entrance level. Given the design of mews development habitable accommodation is normally provided above ground level and this proposal would not provide an exception to this.

Design

Height and bulk

Kings Mews, although altered, is considered to have a homogenous character. The buildings are mainly two storeys in height with a consistent parapet line, shallow pitched roof or recessed mansard. No.7 Kings Mews is the exception in the mews. The anomalous development adjacent to the site represents a departure from the typical height, form and colour of the existing buildings.

The proposed scheme accords with the height and scale of the neighbouring building no. 7 Kings Mews, for which approval was granted on the 7th June 2005. With the benefit of seeing this recently approved infill building erected in context the additional storey, despite being set back 1.5m from the front building line, is not considered to be sufficiently subordinate to the front elevation, significantly increasing the scale of the building in relation to the existing buildings within the mews. This fails to respect the character of the mews and is not considered to appropriately assimilate itself in the streetscene.

Consequently it is considered that the proposed three-storey development by reason of its scale and height would also fail to respect the character and appearance of the mews. The sheer top floor of the proposed scheme, over dominates the building and results in a top-heavy appearance which would be at odds with the general proportions of the mews. The proposed building, along with no. 7, would appear as an incongruous feature, conspicuous in the street scene, especially in long views both north and south. The cumulative harm of further three-storey development in Kings Mews would extensively erode the existing character, appearance and profile of the Mews and make it very difficult to resist further depreciation from similar proposals for the remaining vacant plots that would be similarly detrimental to the established character.

This would fail to enhance the character and appearance of the mews and the Conservation Area contrary to policies B1 and B7 of the adopted UDP and would not be recommended for approval.

Design

Mews buildings are generally small, simple buildings whose character relies on well proportioned and detailed elements. Kings Mews is no exception - characterised by two-storey building constructed with exposed or painted London stock brick, structural openings at ground floor level, timber sash windows set in small window openings on upper floors. The mews also contains enjoyable

architectural detailing such as winch doors, cast iron drain pipes and door hinges. All of which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the mews.

The proposed mews fenestration intends painted brick with recessed timber garage door and large double door at ground floor level, a large horizontal protruding steel frame window at first floor and zinc clad sheer top storey dominated with steel framed window. It is difficult to interpret the poorly annotated and detailed drawings however it appears that the rear will comprise completely glazed façade subdivided in vertical steel panes. Although simple with ground floor fenestration that matches the general mews principles the detailed design it is not considered to be informed by, or respect the adjoining buildings. The window materials, pattern and size of glazing discord with existing architectural characteristic of the mews and results in the building appearing at odds with the prevailing style of its immediate neighbours. This fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the mews or Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

It is considered that the large expanse of glass at the rear would create an imposing incongruous lightbox at night and may prevent the mews building from appearing subservient to the main dwelling house at 4 John Street. This fails to preserve the character and setting of the listed buildings and may fail to preserve the appearance of the Conservation Area contrary to policy B6 and B7 of the UDP.

It must be noted that excavation under the rear garden of no. 4 Johns Street is unlikely to harm the character of the listed building however the proposed basement gym would be fixed to/about the rear basement wall of the listed building at No. 4 John Street. However, having consulted with the Conservation and Design Group they have confirmed that the works to 5 Kings Mews fall within the definition of listed building curtilage as set out on S1(5) of the Act and therefore Listed building consent would need to be submitted to and approved by the Council.

Amenity of adjoining residents

The SPG advises that there should normally be a minimum distance of 18m between the windows of habitable rooms of different units that directly face each other. The separation distance between the rear of No. 4 John Street and the new building is approximately 17m. Given that the properties along King's Mews abut the rear boundaries of the principal dwellings in John Street, the rear gardens of these properties are already overlooked by neighbouring properties. This is not an uncommon scenario in central London particularly within mews developments and would be considered acceptable.

The proposed scheme would introduce full width full height glazing on the rear elevation at first and second floor level. It is also proposed to create terrace areas on the rear elevation at these levels that would project up to the rear building line of the adjoining property at No. 7/8 King's Mews. This varies from the previously approved scheme that restricted window openings to three dormer windows at second floor level. The introduction of full width glazing and terrace areas at first and second floor levels on the rear elevation of the new dwelling would increase the level of overlooking especially at second floor level. This would not be considered acceptable.

Parking

Car parking

The proposal would include the creation of a garage at ground floor level. This would measure 6m by 5m and would provide parking area for approximately 2 cars. Policy T7 of the UDP states that the general car parking requirements is 0.5 spaces per dwelling. This is a maximum standard for the low provision area which is designated by the Clear Zone Region and the King's Cross Opportunity Area. The Council do not sanction parking where the use of non-motorised transport and public transport offers the best prospect for reducing the impact of vehicles on the environment. The application would normally be the subject to a Section 106 agreement requiring that the development is car-free restricting future owners/occupiers of the units obtaining a parking permit for the surrounding CPZ. The scheme is deemed suitable for such an agreement, given its accessibility to public transport, its proximity to amenities including shops and leisure activities and is also within a congested controlled

parking zone, therefore meeting the policy objectives of T8 of the UDP

It must be noted that the previously approved scheme also provided off-street parking. As part of the permission the legal agreement confirmed that one garage would be available for use by the owner occupiers of 4 John Street in perpetuity and the residential unit would be permanently designated as car-free housing. Given that this element of the scheme remains unchanged from the previously approved scheme the applicant would be required to enter into a similar S106 agreement.

Cycle storage

Council standards require the provision of secure cycle parking. Appendix 6 of the UDP states that 1 cycle storage space would be required per unit. The need for secure cycle parking has been acknowledged as part of the application however a condition would be attached to any permission to ensure that sufficient cycle storage spaces would be provided and details of the means of securing bikes.

Renewable energy

Policy SD9 of the adopted UDP states that the Council will seek developments that conserve energy and resources through various means including the use of recycled and renewable building materials. The proposal would include the installation of a grass roof system that would contribute towards this requirement.

Conclusion

The proposal would not be considered acceptable in terms of its height, scale detailed design materials and appearance and would be recommended for refusal.

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