

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		25/09/2006	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		01/09/2006	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Gareth Wilson				2006/3557/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
52-54 Gray's Inn Road London WC1X 8LT				See decision notice			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature Date:	
Proposal(s)							
Replacement of existing timber windows with white UPVC double-glazed Rehau 'Heritage' sash and casement windows as a revision to planning permission granted subject to a section 106 legal agreement dated 26th January 2005 (ref. 2004/4289/P) (for the change of use from welfare advice centre (Class D1) and associated offices (Class B1) to flexible use as office/retail use (Class B1/A1) at ground and basement levels, and the creation of 1x1 bed and 7x2 bed self-contained dwelling units (Class C3) on the upper floors).							
Recommendation(s):		Refuse Full Planning Permission					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
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:		Site notice: No responses					
CAAC/Local groups* comments:		N/a					
*Please Specify							

Site Description

A site spanning two laterally joined properties with a total floor area of 890sq.m spread over five storeys and a basement level. The front elevation of the ground floor consists of a shopfront entrance and a glazed bay. Floors 1, 2, and 3 have sets of wooden framed triple window sets surrounded by predominately London stock brickwork. The upper floor is mansard sided tile clad with a dormer window centrally located above each set of windows on the lower floors.

The two joined properties are part of a terrace of four bounded to the South by Baldwin's Gardens. To the North the site is bounded by a modern seven storey building. To the rear the site overlooks a private car park and a small school. To the South East fronting Baldwin's Gardens is Courtfield House, a residential mansion block of 19 flats.

The building is located on the boarder of the Bloomsbury Conservation C.A.

Relevant History

26/1/2005 (2004/4289/P) Approved DCSC - Change of use from welfare centre (Class D1) and associated offices (Class B1) to flexible use as office/retail use (Class B1/A1) at ground and basement levels, and the creation of 1 x 1 bed and 7 x 2 bed self-contained dwelling units (Class C3) on the upper floors.

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.

S1 - Sustainable development

S7 - Built environment

SD1 - Quality of life

SD9 - Resource and energy

B1d - General Design principles

B3a - Alterations and extensions

B7 - Conservation Area

Camden Green Building Guide - Leaflet 6: Windows

Assessment

Permission is sought to replace existing timber windows with white UPVC double-glazed sash and casement windows on front and rear elevations.

The existing windows are painted timber and are in keeping with the traditional Victorian design of the building. Gray's Inn Road is a busy arterial road heavily trafficked most times of the day and night. Combined with the location on the border of the C.A. the building is considered prominent with views from Gray's Inn and there are long views of the rear elevation from streets immediately to the east. The impact of the proposal on the appearance of the building is therefore a key concern.

Policy B3a 'Alteration and extensions' states that the council will not give permission for alteration that are considered harmful to the architectural quality of the existing building and seeks to ensure that high quality materials that match or complement existing materials are used in developments.

The building is traditional Victorian and the loss of wooden windows and insertion of UPVC windows is considered completely out of character with the design and materials of the building and would result in an unacceptable detrimental impact on the architectural quality and visual appearance of this Victorian building. Views of the building would, therefore, be unacceptably impacted upon.

In terms of maintenance, life expectancy, and aesthetic quality timber is considered a superior material. Additionally the production and disposal of UPVC is recognised to release no less than six of the 15 most hazardous chemicals listed by European governments for priority elimination. Given the concerns over the UPVC windows when compared to timber windows the replacement of timber windows with UPVC windows on this property is considered contrary to policy S1 which seeks to protect the built environment and natural environment, S7 which seeks to protect and enhance the Borough's historic environment, SD1 which seeks to ensure sustainable communities and SD9 which seeks the use of renewable building materials.

In this instance the proposals impact on the building and the concerns over the sustainability of the material is considered sufficient to **refuse the application**.

Note. The presence of unauthorised PVC windows on an adjoining building is considered to add very little weight to the assessment, and should not be considered an acceptable argument for precedence.

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