

Address:	7-8 Argyle Square London WC1H 8AS		
Application Number:	2005/0207/P	Officer: Jenny Fisher	
Ward:	Kings Cross		
Date Received:	12/01/2005		
Proposal: Change of use and works of conversion, including the installation of a window at rear ground floor level, of No.7 from hotel (Use Class C1) to residential (Use Class C3) to provide five self-contained flats, and the retention of No. 8 as a hotel (Use class C1).			
Drawing Numbers: PL/007; PL/008; PL/009; PL/010; PL/011; location plan; 03191/PL/101 REV E; 102 REV D; 103 REV A; 03191/EX/001 REV D; 002 REV D; 003; 004; Existing door schedule; Proposed door schedule; 2 x sheets of photos of internal features; Design schedule			
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant planning permission with conditions and a S.106 Agreement			
Related Application	12/01/2005		
Date of Application:	12/01/2005		
Application Number:	2005/0209/L		
Proposal: Alterations, including the removal of modern partitions, and the installation of a window at rear ground floor level, associated with the change of use and works of conversion of No.7 from hotel (Use Class C1) to residential (Use Class C3) to provide five self-contained flats.			
Drawing Numbers: PL/007; PL/008; PL/009; PL/010; PL/011; location plan; 03191/PL/101 REV E; 102 REV D; 103 REV A; 03191/EX/001 REV D; 002 REV D; 003; 004; Existing door schedule; Proposed door schedule; 2 x sheets of photos of internal features; Design schedule			
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant listed building consent with conditions.			
Applicant: Mr A Megaro c/o AGENT	Agent: DLA Town Planning Ltd FAO. R.Sillito (02/089) 3 College Street St Albans Herts. AL3 4PW		

ANALYSIS INFORMATION

Land Use Details:

	Use Class	Use Description	Floor space
Existing	C1 Hotel	(Nos. 7 and 8)	730m ²

<i>Proposed</i>	<i>C3 Dwelling House (No. 7)</i>	<i>440m²</i>
	<i>C1 Hotel (No.8)</i>	<i>290m²</i>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>730m²</i>

Residential Use Details:										
	Residential Type	No. of Habitable Rooms per Unit								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9+
Existing	<i>Flat/Maisonette</i>									
Proposed	<i>Flat/Maisonette</i>		4			1				

Parking Details:		
	Parking Spaces (General)	Parking Spaces (Disabled)
Existing	0	0
Proposed	0	0

OFFICERS' REPORT

Reason for Referral to Committee: Proposal is for the creation of five residential flats through a change of use of No. 7 Argyle Square [clause 3 (iii)].

1. SITE

- 1.1 The site comprises two adjoining properties on the east side of Argyle Square. No. 7 is a corner property at the junction of Argyle Square and St Chad's Street, which runs along the flank wall of the building. The buildings comprise basement, with a front basement area enclosed by railings, ground and three upper storeys, with a part 2 and part single storey addition to the rear.
- 1.2 No. 7, known as the Northern Hotel, has an entrance off St. Chad's Street. No. 8 has recently been used as a hotel linking the Northern Hotel and the Howard Winchester Hotel (Nos. 9 and 10). Previously No. 8 was in residential use.
- 1.3 4 storey buildings form terraces to the south and west of Argyle Square, a garden lies at the centre of the Square. The square is characterised by hotel uses but there are some dwellings in residential use. Nos. 7 – 25 (consecutive numbering) form a terrace of mostly small hotels.
- 1.4 Nos. 7 –25 (east), 26 – 35 (south), and 36 – 47 (west) are grade II listed and located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

2 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposed change of use of No. 7 would restore the building to its original use as a residential dwelling (before it became a hotel many years ago). The retention of the use of No. 8 as a hotel would allow Nos. 8 and 9 to operate as a single hotel unit.

- 2.2 No. 7 Argyle Square is currently in use as a hotel, comprising 23 bedrooms. Proposed is a change of use to accommodate five self-contained flats comprising 4 x 1 bedroom flats and 1 x 3 bedroom maisonette at second to third floor levels. Flat 3, which is one of the 1 bedroom flats, is accessed from an existing entrance off St. Chad's Street.
- 2.3 No. 8 Argyle Square would remain a 15-bedroom hotel, forming part of the Howard Winchester Hotel at Nos. 9 and 10.
- 2.4 There would be no external alterations to either building except for the insertion of an additional window in the rear addition to No. 7 at ground floor level. The historic plan form of No. 7 including all existing walls believed to be the original Georgian Structure will remain intact. Some modern plasterboard and stud walls (believed to date from the 1960s) will be removed.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

3.1 Enforcement history:

On the 20th March 2002, an Enforcement Notice was issued in respect of the unauthorised conversion of No. 8 from a house comprising 5 self-contained flats to part of a hotel (linked to No. 9). The Notice required the implementation of either of the following within 4 months of the Notice taking effect:

1. The permanent cessation of the use of the whole of the property as part of an hotel and the rearrangement of the accommodation to form 5 self-contained flats, and the bricking up of the interlinking doors between adjacent properties at nos. 7 and 9 Argyle Square, or
2. The permanent cessation of the use of the whole property as part of an hotel and the rearrangement of the accommodation to form a single dwelling house and bricking up the interlinking doors between adjacent properties at Nos. 7 and 9 Argyle Square.

- 3.2 An appeal (APP/X5210/C/02/1089221) lodged in respect of the above Enforcement Notice was dismissed (16th December 2002). However the period of compliance was extended to 6 months.

3.3 Planning history at 7 and 8 Argyle Square

Planning (2003/1481) and listed building (2003/2781) applications were refused on the 1st April 2004. for the change of use of No.7 from hotel (Use Class C1) to residential (Use Class C3) to provide seven self contained flats (6 x 1 and 1 x 2 bed) and the retention of No. 8 as a hotel (Use class C1).

Reasons for refusal of planning permission:

1. Proposed mix would result in an excessive no. of 1 x bedroom units and no family sized; contrary to HG18 and HG19.
2. Proposed residential units would be small and cramped; contrary to HG13 and SPG 2.3 (internal arrangements)
3. Fail to provide off-street parking; contrary to TR17. Informative advised car free S106 could overcome reason 3.

Reason for refusal of listed building application:

Removal of load bearing structural walls would result in a significant loss of original building fabric to the detriment of the architectural interest of the grade II listed building; contrary to EN38 and EN39.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Statutory Consultees

4.1 English Heritage have authorised the Council to determine the applications.

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

4.2 The Committee consider that this would be a good opportunity to seek the reinstatement of windows to the correct design. [Note that the windows were not altered as part of the unauthorised change of use, and so the reinstatement of sash windows cannot be a requirement].

Adjoining Occupiers

4.3

<i>Number of Letters Sent</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Number of responses Received</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Number in Support</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Number of Objections</i>	<i>0</i>

5. 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 Unitary Development Plan 2000

- 5.1 EN1 (general environmental protection and improvement) *complies*
 EN21 (alterations to existing buildings) *complies*
 EN31 (character and appearance of conservation areas) *complies*
 EN33 (restoration and maintenance of buildings in conservation areas) *complies*
 EN38 (preservation of listed buildings) *complies*
 EN39 (use of listed buildings) *complies*
 HG1 (Loss of residential floor space) *complies*
 HG2 (unauthorised loss of residential accommodation) *complies*
 HG9 (change of use to residential accommodation) *complies*
 HG18 (mix of units in conversions) *complies*
 HG19 (mix of units in conversions) *complies*
 TR16 (car free developments) *complies*
 TR17 (residential parking standards) *complies*

Supplementary Planning Guidance

section 2.3 (internal arrangements)

6. ASSESSMENT

6.1 The principal considerations material to the determination of this application are summarised as follows:

1. The change of use.
2. The mix and standard of residential accommodation.
3. The impact on the fabric of the listed building.
4. Parking

The proposed change of use

- 6.2 The proposed change of use of the premises is considered in the light of UDP policy HG1, which states the Council will resist the loss of residential accommodation. In addition HG2 which declares that the Council will use all available powers to seek the return of premises to residential use where this has been lost as a consequence of an unauthorised change of use. HG8 advises that a change of use to residential will be encouraged in existing non-residential buildings.
- 6.3 Although it would be within a neighbouring property, the change of use proposed would result in the reinstatement of residential floor space, lost as a result of the unauthorised change of use of No.8 to hotel. The proposal would accord with policy HG1; there would be no net loss of residential floor space, in fact there would be a gain in residential space as No.7 is a larger property than No. 8.
- 6.4 There are no policies that require the retention of existing hotels, and the benefit of the restoration of a building to residential use clearly outweighs the loss of hotel floor space.

Mix and standard of residential units proposed:

- 6.5 Policies HG18 and HG19 require schemes of residential conversion to provide a mix of unit sizes and include 50% family sized units (three bedrooms or more). Proposed is 1 x 3 bedroom unit and 4 x 1 bedroom units considered acceptable in this location, particularly given the constraints of works of conversion to a listed building.
- 6.6 Supplementary Planning Guidance (section 2.3) sets out minimum overall unit sizes as well as floor space standards for bedrooms and living areas. The units proposed comply with these standards, and would provide an adequate standard of accommodation.

Impact upon the fabric of the listed building

- 6.7 Alterations to listed buildings are considered in the light of policies EN38 and EN39. Policy EN38 states the desirability of preserving the building will be considered, in particular any features of special architectural or historic interest, as well as it's setting.

- 6.8 The submitted plans identify what are believed to be the walls of the original Georgian structure, and show that the plan form of the building would remain intact. There would be no external alterations apart from the installation of an additional window at rear ground floor level. This would open onto a light well, would not be visible from the street, and would not harm the appearance or setting of the listed building.
- 6.9 Internal alterations to the original fabric of the building would be minimal, and limited to those required to facilitate the residential layout proposed and described in para. 2.5 above. A site visit revealed that no cornices or other historic features remain, and the removal of 20th C. partitions is welcome.
- 6.10 It is considered highly likely that the building was originally in residential use. As such it is considered that the use of the building for the purpose for which it was originally designed is welcome. The residential use would make a positive contribution to the fabric, interior and setting of the building in compliance with the requirements of policy EN39.

Car parking standards

- 6.11 No off-street parking would be provided, and given that this is a highly accessible Central London location, the applicant will be expected to sign a legal agreement to secure the residential units as car-free. The applicant's agent has confirmed his client's willingness to enter into a S. 106 Agreement. This would be in line with policies TR16 for car-free development, and TR17, which refers to residential parking standards.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The previous reason for refusal, structural demolition and alterations considered likely to diminish the structural integrity of the building and adversely affect the special architectural and historic interest of this grade II listed building, have been satisfactorily addressed. There would be no net loss of residential floor space. The use of the end of terrace building as a residential dwelling, and the continued use of the adjoining property as a hotel in connection with No. 9 and 10, is considered acceptable.

8. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 8.1 Members are referred to the note from the Legal Division at the start of the Agenda.

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