

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		24/07/2015	
		N/A		Consultation Expiry Date:		31/07/2015	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Tessa Craig				2015/3074/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
Doltan House 51 Werrington Street London NW1 1QN				see decision notice			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
Creation of 2 x 2 bed maisonette units on ground floor and basement levels including excavation to increase depth of existing basement and three new lightwells.							
Recommendation(s):		Refuse Planning Permission					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	21	No. of responses	01	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		One response in support was received from 46 Flat St Nicholas, Werrington Street.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		n/a					

Site Description

The application site is a former public house (formerly The Neptune) on the corner of Werrington Street and Cranleigh Street. Works are currently being carried out to convert the upper floors of the building into residential use. The surrounding area is predominantly residential, consisting mainly of purpose built flats. Although it does not lie within a conservation area, the building is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset due to its architectural quality.

Relevant History

2013/0787/P Change of use of the ground floor from public house (Class A4) to a two bedroom flat (Class C3). Granted, 29/05/2013.

2012/5827/P Change of use of the basement and ground floor from public house (Class A4) to 2x 2-bed self-contained flats (Class C3) and associated installation of lightwells to front and side elevations. Refused 24/12/2012.

2012/3981/P Installation of railings to front and side forecourt area (Class C3). Certificate of Lawfulness (Existing) Granted 20/09/2012.

2012/1713/P Installation of lightwells and railings to front and side elevations in connection with change of use of the basement and ground floor from public house (Class A4) to 2x 2-bed self-contained flats (Class C3). Refused 22/05/2012.

2012/0362/P Erection of a rear extension at first floor level in association with the change of use of 1st to 3rd floors from ancillary public house (Class A4) to three (2 x 1 bed and 1 x 2 bed) self-contained flats (Class C3) and associated alterations. Granted 02/04/2012.

2011/5537/P Erection of a three storey rear extension with mansard roof, and excavation of lightwells and installation of railings to front elevation, in association with the change of use of 1st to 3rd floors from ancillary accommodation to public house (Class A4) to 4 x 1 bed and 1 x 2 bed self-contained flats (Class C3). Withdrawn on officer's advice due to concerns about the size of the extension and its impact on the host building, and the impact of the lightwells on the street scene and on the operation of the highway.

EN12/1118- An enforcement case is open for rendering of elevations. Permission was only granted for rendering of the rear of the first floor.

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

The London Plan March 2015, with amendments since 2011

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies 2010

CS1 Distribution of growth

CS5 Managing the impact of growth and development

CS6 Providing quality homes

CS10 Supporting community facilities and services

CS11 Promoting sustainable and efficient travel

CS13 Tackling climate change and promoting higher environmental standards

CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

CS18 Dealing with our waste and encouraging recycling

CS19 Developing and monitoring the Core Strategy

DP2 Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing

DP5 Homes of different sizes

DP6 Lifetime homes and wheelchair homes

DP12 Supporting strong centres and managing the impact of food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses
DP15 Community and leisure uses
DP17 Walking, cycling and public transport
DP18 Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking
DP20 Movement of goods and materials
DP22 Promoting sustainable design and construction
DP24 Securing high quality design
DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage
DP26 Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours
DP27 Basements and lightwells
DP30 Shopfronts

Camden Planning Guidance

CPG1 Design (Chapters 1-4 & 7)
CPG2 Housing (Chapters 4, & 5)
CPG3 Sustainability (Chapter 10)
CPG4 Basements and Lightwells (Chapter 2)
CPG6 Amenity (Chapters 5) 2011
CPG7 Transport (Chapters 5 & 8)
CPG8 Planning Obligations (Chapters 1, 2, 4, 10, 11)

Assessment

Background

The first to third floors of the building received planning permission for conversion from a public house to residential units in 2012. Two previous schemes for conversion of the ground and basement level into residential accommodation and installation of lightwells were refused in 2012. In application 2012/1713/P the principle of the change of use was considered acceptable however the lightwells and railings were considered unacceptable and formed one of the reasons for refusal:

The proposed lightwells and railings, by reason of their detailed design and location, would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the host building, contrary to policies CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage), DP24 (Securing high quality design), DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage), DP27 (Basements and lightwells) and DP30 (Shopfronts) of the London Borough of Camden Core Strategy and Development Policies 2010.

In the interim between the two previously refused planning applications, an application for an existing lawful development certificate was made for installation of railings in the front elevations which was approved. Once the railings were installed as permitted development, the second application was submitted to convert the basement into residential accommodation. That application was also refused and included in the reasons for refusal:

The proposed development, by reason of the appearance and visual prominence of the lightwell voids and revealed basement facades, would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the host building and have a harmful impact on the significance of a building considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, contrary to policy CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policies DP24 (Securing high quality design), DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage), DP27 (Basements and lightwells) and DP30 (Shopfronts) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

In 2013, permission was granted for change of use of the ground floor of the public house to be converted into a two bedroom residential unit.

Application 2012/1713/P was for the installation of lightwells and railings to front and side elevations in connection with change of use of the basement and ground floor from public house (Class A4) to 2x

2-bed self-contained flats (Class C3). One unit was proposed as 67m² and the other was to be 85m².

2012/5827/P is substantially the same scheme as 2012/1713/P except that the railings had now been installed and a Basement Impact Assessment was included to overcome one of the previous reasons for refusal. The unit sizes were 70m² and 76m².

The current proposal has slightly different unit sizes (69m² and 72m²) and includes planter boxes along the lightwell railings, but is otherwise the same scheme as the previously refused applications.

Proposal

Permission is sought for conversion of the basement level into residential accommodation to form 2 x two bedroom maisonettes over the ground and basement level. In order for the basement to provide a satisfactory level of accommodation, it would be necessary to install lightwell voids adjacent to the front elevations on the Cranleigh Street and Werrington Street facades. Windows would be installed to serve habitable bedrooms within the 2 basement level flats. The floor area of the proposed units are detailed in the table below:

Unit	GFA (m ²)	Bedroom 1 (m ²)	Bedroom 2 (m ²)
Unit 1 (2 bed, 3 person)	68	16	9
Unit 2 (2 bed, 3 person)	72	13	9

Principal of the use

Housing is the priority of the LDF and the proposal would provide two additional units. The upper floors of 51 Werrington Street have been granted planning permission for residential use. In principle, the proposal to create two new residential units is encouraged in order to provide additional housing in accordance with policies CS6 and DP2 of Camden's LDF.

Housing mix and standard of accommodation

Policy DP5 (Homes of different sizes) seeks to provide a range of unit sizes to meet demand across the borough. Policy DP5 includes a Dwelling Size Priority Table and the expectation is that any housing scheme will meet the priorities outlined in the table. The proposal includes 2 x 2 bedroom units. The housing priority is for units with 2 bedrooms or more, the proposal is therefore considered acceptable in this regard as it would create additional units that have been identified as being high priority. The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of size for both residential units.

Standard of residential accommodation

The proposed accommodation is acceptable in terms of gross floor area and room size. Adequate daylight and sunlight would be available to the habitable rooms including at basement level and overall the standard of residential accommodation is considered acceptable.

Heritage value

Although the building is not within a conservation area, paragraph 135 of the NPPF introduces the concept of a non-designated heritage asset and states that its significance should be taken into account in determining the application.

Using English Heritage's "Conservation Principles" as a basis it is clear that the building is of significance. An assessment of the building shows that to varying degrees it is of significance in exhibiting evidential, historical and aesthetic value.

The Victorian public house evolved out of the traditional tavern and beerhouse in response to the gin palace. Incorporating such innovations as large plate-glass windows, gas lighting, the hydraulic beer-engine and the island bar, the reinvented pub became a central feature of working-class life. As the Temperance movement battled to reduce the number of drink outlets, the licensed trade responded by upgrading their size and grandeur, culminating in a massive pub building boom in the last decade of the century.

In terms of its aesthetic value the building exhibits an ornate, well detailed and proportioned façade which is entirely in keeping with the elaborate pub facades of this period and as a landmark building within its surroundings. The building is easily recognised as a public house which gives it both historical and evidential value of this type of development. Despite the fact that most of the area around the pub has been redeveloped into modern block of flats it still has landmark qualities which distinguish it from the otherwise largely mundane architecture of the surroundings. However, the unauthorised rendering is considered harmful to the appearance of the building and its significance.

Design

A pub's basement is designed for the storage of beer in cool conditions and it was never designed to be habitable accommodation. No windows or glazing was put into the basement to create a controlled cool temperature. As a result it makes this space difficult to convert to residential without affecting the significance of the building. It may be possible to use this space for ancillary uses such as utility rooms or cycle storage.

Public houses generally had beer drops or glass lights set into the pavement rather than lightwells as the commercial use meant it was important to be able to approach the front of the building. As a result it makes this space difficult to convert to residential without affecting the significance of the building. It may be possible to use this space for ancillary uses such as utility rooms or cycle storage. Lightwells surrounded by railings are a feature from this period of architecture, however they occur predominantly on buildings which were intended for residential use.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the railings that were included in the originally refused scheme were lawful and have already been installed to the front of the building, the proposal would include lightwells to the front and side elevations to allow light into the basement level. The voids are necessary in terms of residential amenity to allow sunlight and daylight into the basement bedrooms. However the proposed voids would reveal the basement facade and would introduce an incongruous element to the overall façade of the building. Consequently the lightwell voids and revealed basement façade would introduce a discordant element to the overall façade and would thus have a harmful impact on the significance of a building which is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, and would not comply with policies CS14, DP24, DP25, DP27 and DP30 of the LDF and Camden Planning Guidance.

It must be noted that the previously refused scheme in December 2012 included identical lightwells and windows in the basement. There has been no material change in circumstances since this decision in terms of Camden's local plan policies.

Amenity

The proposal would not result in any loss of amenity to neighbouring properties. No extensions are being proposed as part of the application therefore no loss of light would occur. There would be additional windows at basement level to provide light into the bedrooms of the new basement flat, however these would not cause overlooking given they are below ground level. Therefore the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of amenity.

Transport

If the proposal were acceptable, a s106 agreement would be required to ensure the development is car-free, a construction management plan is in place, a financial contribution is made for highways works and that adequate and a condition would be imposed requiring secure cycle parking is provided onsite (2 Sheffield stands).

Recommendation

The proposed development, by reason of the appearance and visual prominence of the lightwell voids and revealed basement facades, would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the host building and have a harmful impact on the significance of a building considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, contrary to policy CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policies DP24 (Securing high quality design), DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage), DP27 (Basements and lightwells) and DP30 (Shopfronts) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies. Therefore it is recommended planning permission is refused.