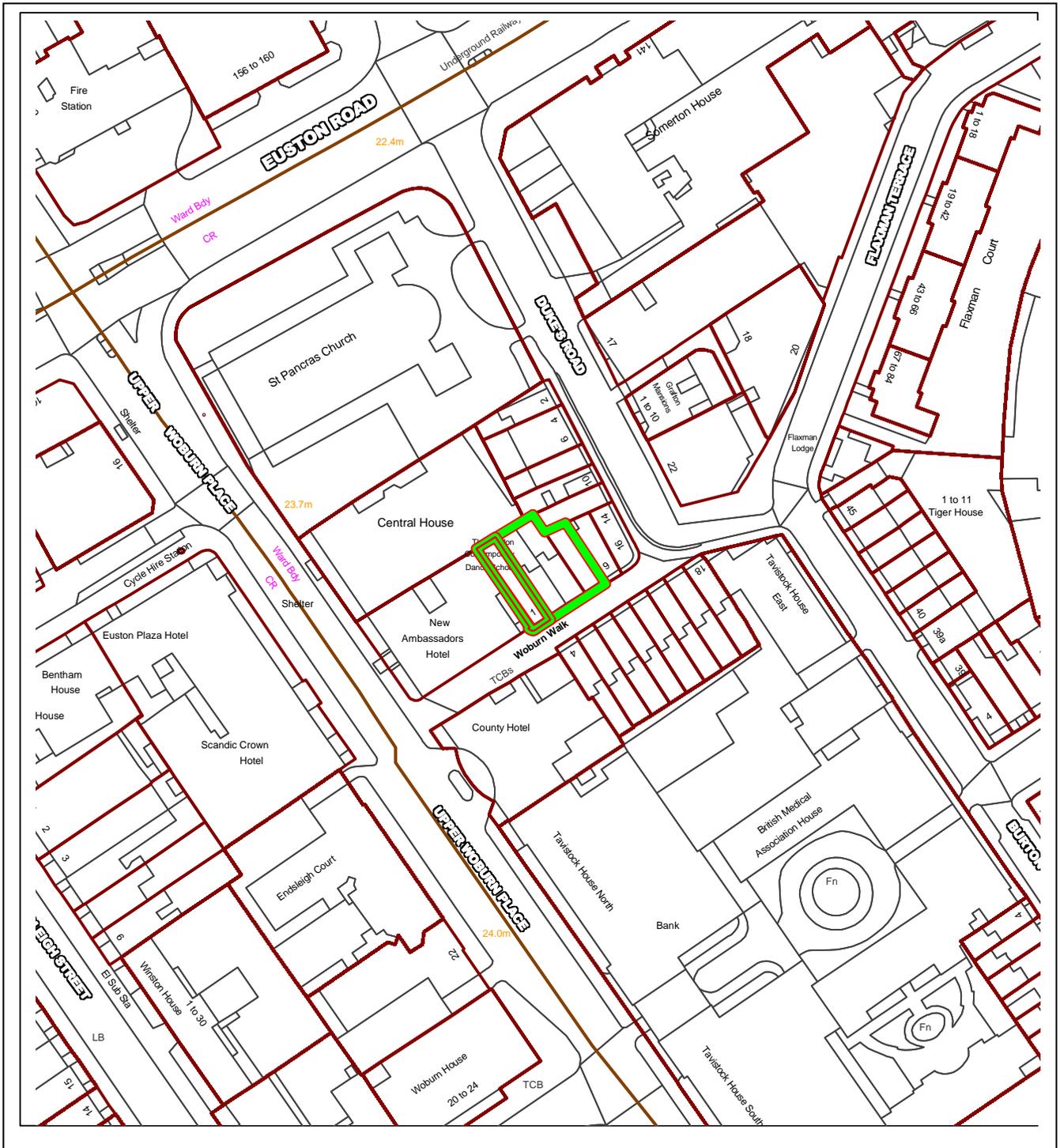


# Woburn Buildings, 1-7 Woburn Walk, London, WC1H 0JJ 2015/4272/P and 2015/4576/L



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**Site Photos –**

**Photo 1: 1-7 Woburn Walk from Dukes Road**



**Photo 2: 1-7 Woburn Walk**



**Photos 3 and 4: Rear elevation of 1-7 Woburn Walk**



**Photo 5: Interior corridor showing existing lateral conversion**



**Photo 6: Interior of third floor showing existing lateral conversion**



<b>Delegated Report</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>	<b>Expiry Date:</b>	<b>17/09/2015</b>
<b>(Members Briefing)</b>		N/A / attached	<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>	<b>03/09/2015</b>
<b>Officer</b>			<b>Application Number(s)</b>	
Jonathan McClue			(i) 2015/4272/P (ii) 2015/4576/L	
<b>Application Address</b>			<b>Drawing Numbers</b>	
Woburn Buildings 1-7 Woburn Walk London WC1H 0JJ			Refer to Draft Decision Notice	
<b>PO 3/4</b>	<b>Area Team Signature</b>	<b>C&amp;UD</b>	<b>Authorised Officer Signature</b>	
<b>Proposal(s)</b>				
(i) Conversion of first, second and third floors from offices (B1a) to 3 x self-contained residential flats (2x2 bed and 1x1 bed) (C3) with associated alterations.				
(ii) Internal and external alterations associated with the conversion of the first, second and third floor offices (B1a) to residential flats.				
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		(i) Grant Subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement (ii) Grant Listed Building Consent		
<b>Application Type:</b>		<b>Full Planning Permission</b>		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	<b>Refer to Draft Decision Notice</b>					
Informatives:						
<b>Consultations</b>						
<b>Adjoining Occupiers:</b>	No. notified	<b>23</b>	No. of responses	<b>01</b>	No. of objections	<b>01</b>
<b>Summary of consultation responses:</b>	<p>A Site Notice was displayed on 12/08/2015 for both applications and they were advertised in the local press on 13/08/2015.</p> <p>One objection was received from the freehold owner of 9 and 9a Woburn Walk. The objection was based on the location of the proposed living rooms being located adjacent to their property, which would lead to noise and general disturbance.</p> <p><b><u>Officer Response:</u></b></p> <p>It is not considered that the location of living rooms adjacent to existing residences would lead to a material level of noise that would justify a refusal based on a significant harm to neighbouring amenity. Residential uses are common in this area with shared party walls at upper level. The layout of residential properties can change without planning permission so there would be no merit in requiring the living rooms to be located further away for the adjoining party wall. In addition, the sound proofing of the walls would be required to meet Building Regulations standards and it is considered that this would adequately address any noise concerns.</p>					
<b>CAAC/Local groups* comments:</b> *Please Specify	<p>The Bloomsbury CAAC was consulted on 10/08/2015 and no response has been made.</p> <p>The Georgian Group made an objection to the proposal due to the lateral conversion of the building which would prejudice its return to the historic vertical plan-form.</p> <p><b><u>Officer Response:</u></b></p> <p>The lateral conversion of the buildings has already taken place prior to the buildings being listed. Whilst the reinstatement of the vertical circulation would be welcomed, this is not under consideration here, and the current proposal would not preclude the reinstatement of the vertical plan in the future as the party walls are not being affected.</p>					

## Site Description

This application relates to the first, second and third floors of 1-7 Woburn Walk which were historically in residential use, have been used as a hotel, and are currently in office use (B1a). The offices lie within a grade II\* listed terrace which has been altered internally and externally, particularly to the rear, and is laterally divided on the upper levels. On the ground floor of the building the historic retail units have been retained. The host property is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and the Central London Area.

The site lies adjacent to the New Ambassadors Hotel (west); Central House (a UCL building) is located to the rear (southwest) and upper level residential accommodation is situated at 9 Woburn Walk and 2-12 Duke's Road to the side (east) and rear (northeast). The opposite side of Woburn Walk (4-18) contains retail on the ground floor with residential above.

Within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2011, Woburn Walk is located within Sub Area 13: Cartwright Gardens/Argyle Square. It is described as a "very distinctive and small-scale shopping street, designed by Thomas Cubitt in 1822." The grade II\* listed buildings are three-storey Regency townhouses with stucco fronts and first floor balconies retain original, purpose-built, bay-windowed shopfronts of a uniform nature. The shopfronts are considered to be of merit within the Appraisal and Management Strategy.

## Relevant History

**TP3183/7281:** Planning permission was granted on 07/05/1962 for the construction of a hotel, an extension to the Ambassadors Hotel and alterations to 1-7 Woburn Walk. The approval included improvements to the shopfront of 1-7 and restricted the ground floor premises to retail.

**32591 and HB2696:** Planning permission and listed building consent were granted on 16/10/1981 for the change of use of the first, second and third floor of 1-7 Woburn Walk from hotel to office use. The approved plans show the office layout to be similar as what exists today.

**2014/4803/P and 2014/5080/L:** Planning permission and listed building consent were submitted for the change of use of the upper floors to 3 residential flats along with associated alterations. Both applications were withdrawn on 02/12/2014 due to an insufficient justification for the loss of office use and other issues relating to harm to the listed building.

## Relevant policies

### NPPF 2012

### London Plan March 2015, consolidated with alterations since 2011

### Local Development Framework 2010

#### Core Strategy

- CS1 (Distribution of growth)
- CS3 (Other highly accessible areas)
- CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development)
- CS6 (Providing quality homes)
- CS7 (Promoting Camden's centres and shops)
- CS8 (Promoting a successful and inclusive Camden economy)
- CS9 (Achieving a successful Central London)
- CS11 (Promoting sustainable and efficient travel)
- CS13 (Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards)
- CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage)
- CS18 (Dealing with our waste and encouraging recycling)
- CS19 (Delivering and monitoring the Core Strategy)

#### Development Policies

- DP2 (Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing)

DP3 (Contributions to the supply of affordable housing)  
DP5 (Homes of different sizes)  
DP6 (Lifetime homes and wheelchair homes)  
DP15 (Community and leisure uses)  
DP12 (Supporting strong centres and managing the impact of food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses)  
DP13 (Employment sites and premises)  
DP16 (The transport implications of development)  
DP17 (Walking, cycling and public transport)  
DP18 (Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking)  
DP19 (Managing the impact of parking)  
DP22 (Promoting sustainable design and construction)  
DP23 (Water)  
DP24 (Securing high quality design)  
DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage)  
DP26 (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours)  
DP28 (Noise and vibration)

**Camden Planning Guidance**

CPG1 (Design) 2015  
CPG2 (Housing) 2015  
CPG3 (Sustainability) 2015  
CPG5 (Town Centres, Retail and Employment) 2013  
CPG6 (Amenity) 2011  
CPG7 (Transport) 2011  
CPG8 (Planning obligations) 2015

**Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2011**

## Assessment

### 1.0 Proposal

1.1 Planning permission is sought to change the use of the offices (B1a) on floors 1-3 into 3 self-contained flats (2x2 bed and 1x1 bed) and associated internal and external works to the listed building.

1.2 The internal works include the creation of new openings; the removal of doorways and parts of the internal walls; making good of removed doorways and new internal walls.

1.3 The external alterations are limited to the replacement of UPVC windows with timber to match the opposite side of Woburn Walk and new timber windows to the rear to replace existing 1950s metal framed casements.

1.4 Three cycle parking spaces (one for each unit) within lockable storage are proposed on the ground floor within the communal corridor to the proposed residential flats.

### 2.0 Land Use

#### Loss of Office Employment Space

2.1 The building is located within the Central London Area and within walking distance of London King's Cross and St Pancras International. It is considered to be in a suitable area generally for office and employment use and any change from this would need to be sufficiently justified. Any application involving the loss of an office use must demonstrate that the site is no longer suitable for its existing business use and that there is evidence that the possibility of retaining, reusing or redeveloping the site for a similar use has been explored appropriately. This criteria is set out in policy DP13 (para 13.3). Paragraph 7.4 of CPG5 gives other considerations regarding the loss of office use.

2.2 The applicant has submitted a 'Loss of Employment Supporting Statement' to justify the loss of office space. The statement includes a letter from Bruce Commercial Estate Agents and an EGi (a real estate data service company) audit of available office accommodation in the locality. The justification for the loss of employment space is summarised below:

- The existing accommodation is poor for current office users and would be even less suitable for other business operations (light industry, workshops etc) due to the building's constrained layout, access and location
- The host property is of a significant age and was originally designed for residential use. Aside from the heritage benefits of re-instating the original function, the design and layout of the building is more suitable for residential use than offices
- The host premises would require significant investment to improve the quality of office space and the heritage constraints (grade II\* listed building) would prevent the creation of office accommodation that would be suitable for modern requirements
- The level of investment required to improve the quality of office space would not be commensurate with increased rental levels or tenant security. Refurbishment of the building for office use would therefore not be financially viable. Notwithstanding this, it would not be possible to get the building to modern office standards
- Reverting the upper floors to residential use would be the most appropriate outcome having regard to the particular circumstances of the site and the desire to secure a long term viable use for the heritage asset
- The premises are currently occupied on a short term basis and due to fall vacant in December 2015. There is considerable alternative space of better quality in the locality as evidenced by

the EGi audit (i.e. with modern facilities suitable for office use). The proposed residential conversion will secure an optimal long term use for the building that will also support the significant the upgrading of the heritage asset (i.e. the refurbishment works to bring the use into residential)

2.3 The first and second floor office space contains a series of four relatively small (for modern office purposes) individual rooms divided by original structural walls. The cellular suites are accessed via a long corridor formed at the back of the floorplate. Electrical lighting and heat detectors are mounted on the original ceiling. The third floor office accommodation is within the loft of the building which restricts the ceiling height. The accommodation is divided into three areas by the original chimney structures which would restrict the creation of an open plan office. Each of the floors suffer from few electrical/IT connections within the rooms, heating is provided via a single gas boiler, there is no cooling system and only a single WC per floor. Generally the floor to ceiling heights are too low for office accommodation and the rooms are in a poor condition that has not been refurbished for a considerable period of time. It is considered that the offices would require a significant overhaul and upgrade to meet the demands of office occupiers in this location.

2.4 Due to constraints of the historic structure it would not be possible to create open plan space which would prevent modern standards of office accommodation being provided. The listed status of the building would also restrict the creation of lift access and make other modern adaptations difficult such as connections for IT and communication equipment, the raising of internal ceiling heights and providing separate male and female WCs. The restricted layout would be even less suitable for other business uses (light industrial workshops etc) which typically would require larger furniture, specialist equipment and storage space. Opportunities for ventilation and cooling are also limited by the historic fabric. Furthermore, access to the building is restricted due to the location on a pedestrianised street to the front and access to the rear as the rear boundary abuts an adjacent hotel. Therefore, vehicular access for the delivery of materials and collection of products related to light industrial/workshop use would be difficult. Access to the upper floors within the building is also constrained by a relatively narrow stairwell and no lift. In addition, given that there is residential accommodation adjacent to the office units, it is considered that there are no other employment (B class) uses that would be appropriate as light industrial works would detract from the quality of life of the adjoining occupiers through noise and general disturbance.

2.5 The building is currently occupied on a short term basis by a variety of tenants. As stated, these short term leases are due to expire in December 2015, following which the accommodation will be vacant. Previous tenants have relocated from the application site due to the poor standard of the accommodation. It has also not been possible to secure longer term office tenants on standard full repairing and insuring leases due to the nature and quality of the building. Local agents do not consider that this tenant profile would improve even with significant investment in the building.

2.6 Based on the above factors, it is considered that due to the standard of accommodation and the site constraints that the building is not suitable for continued office use and does not make a valuable contribution to employment within the Borough. Furthermore, the associated heritage benefits of reverting the building back to its historic use and the significant physical improvements that would result to the upgrading of the property to residential would outweigh any harm by way of a loss of employment space.

#### Principle of Residential Accommodation

2.7 Residential floor space is a key objective for the Council, as outlined in CS6 and DP2, and as such new residential floor space is welcomed. Furthermore, the building would revert back to its historic residential use and would be in keeping with the prevailing pattern of development which includes residential units on the upper floors.

2.8 The proposal would provide 3 flats (1x1 bed and 2x2 bed). Set out in Policy DP5, the Dwelling Size Priorities Table identifies market homes with 1 bedroom of low priority, 3 or more bedroom units of medium priority and 2 bedroom units very high priority. The Council expects at least 40% of market housing to provide 2 bedroom units. The proposal would therefore comply with Policy DP5 by

providing 66.66% 2 bedroom units.

### Quality of Residential Accommodation

2.9 The proposed residential units conform to table 3.3 of the London Plan and paragraph 4.14 of CPG2 (Housing), with the flats all exceeding the minimum gross internal floor area requirements comfortably. The room sizes are generous, in accordance with CPG2 (Housing), and the layout of the units are functional with good levels of circulation and storage space. All of the units would have a good level of outlook with their habitable rooms benefiting from windows. The units would be dual aspect and are likely to provide an adequate level of light and ventilation. No external amenity space is proposed which is acceptable in this instance given the listed building constraints and the property's Central London location.

### **3.0 Impact on Listed Building and the Character and Appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area**

3.1 The upper floors of the building were laterally converted in the 20th Century and the buildings' rear elevation was rebuilt in the 1950s (it is thought after damage caused during WWII). The upper floors are accessed by a single staircase addition to the side of 1 Woburn Walk with each individual building having lost its own internal stair. The 1950s addition to the rear forms a corridor access to each room. There are few significant decorative features remaining internally.

3.2 The buildings' lateral conversion has affected principally the rear elevation and the loss of the individual staircases. The party walls to the front of the buildings remain substantially intact, and are not proposed to be removed or otherwise altered. It is proposed to add stud partitioning between the rear of each room and the corridor area at the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor level, to match the existing layout at the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor levels. This approach is considered to preserve and reinforce the buildings' historic layout; the lateral link corridor will remain at the rebuilt rear of the plan, and will not impact upon the original fabric and room layout which remains at the front of the properties.

3.3 A small amount of demountable partitioning is proposed to be installed at all 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor levels towards the rear of the plan within the two westernmost rooms only. This is not considered to cause harm to the buildings' special interest and represents a reversible intervention which would not involve the loss of any historic fabric.

3.4 Externally, it is proposed to replace some of the 1950s metal windows to the rear with timber framed casements. This is considered acceptable in terms of the proposed form and materials.

3.5 Overall, the proposed alterations are considered to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed buildings, and the character and appearance of this part of the Bloomsbury conservation area, in line with policies CS14, DP24 and DP25, and the NPPF.

### **4.0 Residential Amenity**

4.1 The introduction of residential units is unlikely to have any harmful impacts on surrounding residential occupiers by way of noise and general disturbance. As the works are largely internal the development would also not be likely to result in a loss of light or outlook and the proposal is not considered to introduce material levels of overlooking through any of the windows to the front or rear.

4.2 The second and third floors have an external fire escape to the rear which leads to a platform. The submitted drawings indicate that there would be no changes to this arrangement. Given the platforms close proximity to other residential properties a condition would be attached to ensure that this area is only used for emergency and maintenance purposes only and for no other use (i.e. it could not be used as external amenity space). The condition would also state that the fire doors on second and third floors must be locked and only openable when needed for the uses described above.

## **5.0 Transport**

5.1 The site's location is within the Central London Area and has an excellent PTAL of 6b. As such the development must be car-free and this would be secured through a section 106 legal agreement so as to accord with policies DP17 and DP18. This would be required for all 3 of the proposed units.

5.2 The proposal includes 3 cycle spaces on the ground floor that would be within a lockable storage container. This would result in cycle parking that would be accessible, convenient and secure. While this would result in a shortfall of the requirements of the London Plan which required 2 cycle spaces for 2 bedroom units and 1 for 1 bedroom (equalling 5), the provision of 1 space per unit is considered acceptable here given the constraints of the grade II\* listed building.

5.3 Due to the nature of the works a Construction Management Plan would not be required.

## **6.0 Sustainability**

6.1 As the development would be under 500sqm and less than 5 units, there would be no specific sustainability requirements required under policies DP22 or 23.

## **7.0 CIL**

6.1 As no new floorspace is being created a CIL contribution would not be required as long as the basement and ground floors have been in lawful use.

**Recommendation:** Granted Subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement and Listed Building Consent

### **DISCLAIMER**

**Decision route to be decided by nominated members on Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> of October 2015. For further information please click [here](#)**

Montagu Evans LLP  
5 Bolton Street,  
London  
W1J 8BAApplication Ref: **2015/4272/P**

22 October 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

**DRAFT**  
**FOR INFORMATION ONLY - THIS IS NOT A FORMAL DECISION**  
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)**DECISION SUBJECT TO A SECTION 106 LEGAL AGREEMENT**

Address:

**Woburn Buildings**  
**1-7 Woburn Walk**  
**London**  
**WC1H 0JJ**

Proposal:

Conversion of first, second and third floors from offices (B1a) to 3 x self-contained residential flats (2x2 bed and 1x1 bed) (C3) with associated alterations.

Drawing Nos: (14A\_032) 001 Rev B; 002 Rev A; 011 Rev C; 012 Rev B and 013 Rev B, Loss of Employment Supporting Statement dated July 2015, Outline Schedule of Works dated 15/07/2015, Heritage Statement (ref: 2015/5066) dated July 2015 and Design and Access Statement Version 5 dated July 2015.

The Council has considered your application and decided to grant permission subject to the conditions and informatives (if applicable) listed below **AND** subject to the successful conclusion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement.The matter has been referred to the Council's Legal Department and you will be contacted shortly. If you wish to discuss the matter please contact **Aidan Brookes** in the Legal Department on **020 7 974 1947**.

Once the Legal Agreement has been concluded, the formal decision letter will be sent to you.

Condition(s) and Reason(s):

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 All new external work shall be carried out in materials that resemble, as closely as possible, in colour and texture those of the existing building, unless otherwise specified in the approved application.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the premises and the character of the immediate area in accordance with the requirements of policy CS14 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policy DP24 and DP25 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

- 3 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans (14A\_032) 001 Rev B; 002 Rev A; 011 Rev C; 012 Rev B and 013 Rev B, Loss of Employment Supporting Statement dated July 2015, Outline Schedule of Works dated 15/07/2015, Heritage Statement (ref: 2015/5066) dated July 2015 and Design and Access Statement Version 5 dated July 2015.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

- 4 The proposed escape stairs and platform to the rear of the building on the second and third floors shall be used for emergency and maintenance purposes only and for no other use. The fire doors on second and third floors must be locked and only openable when needed for the uses described above.

Reason: In order to prevent unreasonable overlooking of neighbouring premises in accordance with the requirements of policy CS5 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policy DP26 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

- 5 As per drawing no. 14A\_032011 Rev C, 3 secure and covered cycle storage facilities for the proposed residential units shall be provided in their entirety prior to the first occupation of the development, and permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the development provides adequate cycle parking facilities in accordance with the requirements of policy CS11 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policy DP17 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies and table 6.3 of the London Plan.

Informative(s):

- 1 Your proposals may be subject to control under the Building Regulations and/or the London Buildings Acts which cover aspects including fire and emergency escape,

access and facilities for people with disabilities and sound insulation between dwellings. You are advised to consult the Council's Building Control Service, Camden Town Hall, Argyle Street WC1H 8EQ, (tel: 020-7974 6941).

- 2 Noise from demolition and construction works is subject to control under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. You must carry out any building works that can be heard at the boundary of the site only between 08.00 and 18.00 hours Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 on Saturday and not at all on Sundays and Public Holidays. You are advised to consult the Council's Compliance and Enforcement team [Regulatory Services], Camden Town Hall, Argyle Street, WC1H 8EQ (Tel. No. 020 7974 4444 or on the website <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/contacts/council-contacts/environment/contact-the-environmental-health-team.en> or seek prior approval under Section 61 of the Act if you anticipate any difficulty in carrying out construction other than within the hours stated above.
- 3 You are reminded that this decision only grants permission for permanent residential accommodation (Class C3). Any alternative use of the residential units for temporary accommodation, i.e. for periods of less than 90 days for tourist or short term lets etc, would constitute a material change of use and would require a further grant of planning permission.

In dealing with the application, the Council has sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way in accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Yours faithfully

**DECISION**

Culture and Environment Directorate

Montagu Evans LLP  
5 Bolton Street,  
London  
W1J 8BAApplication Ref: **2015/4576/L**  
Please ask for: **Jonathan McClue**  
Telephone: 020 7974 **4908**

15 October 2015

**DRAFT**

Dear Sir/Madam

**DECISION**

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

**Listed Building Consent Granted**Address:  
**Woburn Buildings**  
**1-7 Woburn Walk**  
**London**  
**WC1H 0JJ****DECISION**

## Proposal:

Internal and external alterations associated with the conversion of the first, second and third floor offices (B1a) to residential flats

Drawing Nos: (14A\_032) 001 Rev B; 002 Rev A; 011 Rev C; 012 Rev B and 013 Rev B, Loss of Employment Supporting Statement dated July 2015, Outline Schedule of Works dated 15/07/2015, Heritage Statement (ref: 2015/5066) dated July 2015 and Design and Access Statement Version 5 dated July 2015.

The Council has considered your application and decided to grant subject to the following condition(s):

## Conditions And Reasons:

- 1 The works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this consent.



Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 2 All new work and work of making good shall be carried out to match the original work as closely as possible in materials and detailed execution.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy CS14 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policy DP25 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

- 3 The works hereby approved are only those specifically indicated on the drawing(s) referred to above.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy CS14 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policy DP25 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

You can find advice about your rights of appeal at:

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/appeals/guidance/guidancecontent>

Yours faithfully

Director of Culture & Environment

**DECISION**