

Delegated Report		Expiry Date:	07/03/2016	Officer:	David Peres Da Costa
Application Address		Application Number(s)	1st Signature	2nd Signature	
Hotel Montana 16-18 Argyle Square London WC1H 8AS		i) 2016/0153/P ii) 2016/0495/L			
Proposal(s)					
i) Reinstatement of front balconies, replacement windows at front and rear, reinstate external window mouldings, replacement front doors, staircase to front lightwell, sedum roof to ground floor rear projecting wings; re-alignment of windows at rear lower ground floor and replace with aluminium double glazed windows, all to existing hotel. ii) Reinstatement of front balconies, replacement windows at front and rear, reinstate external window mouldings, replacement front doors, staircase to front lightwell, sedum roof to ground floor rear projecting wings; re-alignment of windows at rear lower ground floor and replace with aluminium double glazed windows, removal of internal walls including changes to internal layout on all floors and replacement slate roof, all to existing hotel.					
Recommendation(s):		i) Grant conditional planning permission ii) Grant Listed building consent			
Application Type:		i) Full planning permission ii) Listed building consent			
Consultations	Date advertised	21 days elapsed	Date posted	21 days elapsed	
Press notice	11/2/16	3/3/16	Site notice	5/2/16	26/2/16
	Date sent	21 days elapsed	# Notified	# Responses	# Objections
Adjoining Occupier letters	2/2/16	23/2/16	5		1
Consultation responses (including CAACs):	<p>One objection was received from an adjoining occupier (Elmwood Hotel)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Object to extending at the rear with new terrace due to resulting construction noise <p><i>Officer's response: Noise from demolition and construction works is subject to control under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. An informative will be included on the decision notice so that the applicant is aware of the prescribed hours for building work</i></p> <p>Bloomsbury CAAC – object</p> <p>This application is for a significant expansion at the back of these properties and inept changes at the front. These buildings are already excessively built up at the rear and anything more would be a gross over-development. These Listed buildings are on Argyle Square for which there is a Camden approved and produced Guide.</p> <p>The application fails to follow the guide in virtually every way: the fenestration (glazing bars) on most of the windows is wrong. All sashes should be openable. The entrance doorway to number 17 is over large and proposed to become a pastiche of a totally different kind of building, complete with lantern on arch. Front doors should be as described in the guide. The rendered ground floor external walls are a mess – what should be an indentation seems instead to be a raised bar. This all needs to be rectified.</p>				

We are totally opposed to this application as it stands, and request the Council to apply what is required by the Argyle Square guide. If the application is revised accordingly, then the Design Guide revisions should become mandatory conditions rather than pick and mix options.

Officer's response: the application has been significantly revised and the double entrance doors, arch with illuminated lantern and enlarged rear extensions have all been omitted. The fenestration of the windows would be in accordance with the drawing of 40 and 41 Argyle Square in 'Survey of London vol XXIV – King's Cross Neighbourhood' referred to in the 'Argyle Square A guide to its conservation and enhancement'. All sashes would be openable. The replacement of non-original inappropriately designed windows on both elevations with single-glazed timber sashes will lead to a major improvement to the listed buildings and to the square as a whole. The revisions directly sort to overcome the concerns of the CAAC. No further responses were received from the CAAC in regards to the publically available revised drawings online.

Site Description

The site is a 4 storey building with basement on the east side of Argyle Square which faces on to Argyle Square Gardens. The building is in the middle of a Grade II listed terrace, 7-25 Argyle Square and the site falls within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Relevant History

CTP/L14/30/2/748: The erection of an additional floor at first floor level to the existing basement and ground floor rear addition and the extension of the existing ground floor rear addition at No. 16 Argyle Square, Camden. Granted 24/09/1965

CTP/L14/30/F/18804: The erection of rear extensions at 17-18 Argyle Square, W.C.1. to form bedrooms, toilets, showers and a television lounge. Granted 18/07/1974

CTP/L14/30/F/5672: The erection of a 3 storey rear addition at the rear of 17/18 Argyle Square. Refused 20/11/1968

CTP/L14/30/F/7004: The erection of rear extensions to form bedrooms, toilets, showers and a television lounge at Nos. 17 and 18 Argyle Square. Granted 05/06/1969

L14/30/F/31349 & L14/30/F/HB2540: The installation of high level windows in the north-east and north-west elevations of the rear extensions at ground floor level. Granted 18/12/1980

TP1575/26767: To erect a new rear addition between ground and first floor levels at the premises No. 17, Argyle Square, St. Pancras. in order to provide two W.C. apartment and a bathroom. Granted 12/04/1961

TP1575/7891: To erect an additional floor to existing rear addition between first and second floor of the premises No.17, Argyle Square, St. Pancras, for use as a hotel Bedroom. Granted 14/09/1961

TP41949/22806: Alterations and extension at basement level at No. 17 Argyle Square, St. Pancras, to form a kitchen. Granted 12/03/1959

18 Argyle Square

8900548 & 8970176: The erection of a first floor rear extension to the hotel. Granted 17/07/1990

9000507: Established Use Certificate for hotel use. Granted 16/07/1991

Enforcement history:

EN16/0958: Demolition works without LB Consent. Enforcement complaint received 20/9/16 and the case is ongoing.

Relevant policies

NPPF 2012

London Plan 2016

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

CS1 (Distribution of Growth)

CS5 (Managing the Impact of Growth and Development)

CS14 (Promoting High Quality Places and Conserving Our Heritage)

DP24 (Securing High Quality Design)

DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage)

DP26 (Managing the Impact of Development on Occupiers and Neighbours)

Camden Planning Guidance

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement

Argyle Square A guide to its conservation and enhancement

Assessment

1. Proposal

1.1. The application seeks permission for the following changes

- removal of internal walls at lower ground and ground floor level; removal of non-original walls at 1st, 2nd and 3rd floor level including changes to internal layout on all floors
- replacement sliding sash windows at front and rear (bottom pane and top pane openable)
- Reinstatement white painted rendered concrete balcony with decorative steel railings painted 'invisible green' at first floor level
- Replace glazed entrance doors at No 16, 17 and 18 with three '4-panel' doors with arched fanlight above
- Reinstatement external window architraves / mouldings at ground and first floor level
- Reinstatement concrete staircase in front lightwell with Portland stone treads and risers
- Patterned Portland stone treads and risers to ground floor entrance steps with patterned Portland stone to external entrance area
- Sedum roof to ground floor rear projecting wings
- Re-alignment of non-original windows at rear lower ground floor level and replace with aluminium framed double glazed windows
- Replacement slate roof

1.2. Revision

1.3. Following officer's concerns the application has been significantly revised and the double entrance doors and the arch with illuminated lantern on the front elevation and the rear terraces with privacy screens have all been omitted (the entrance door would now be a single door). The sash windows would have both panes openable (rather than bottom pane fixed and top pane openable). The rear projecting wings would not be enlarged. The replacement windows at the rear would be single rather than double glazed.

2. Assessment

2.1. Design and Heritage

2.2. The application relates to three terraced townhouses of 1840-1849 which make a positive contribution to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

2.3. The houses have been modified internally, laterally connected and converted into a hotel. Large rear extensions have previously been added, stretching the full length of the back gardens. All windows have been replaced with inappropriate designs in unsympathetic materials. While much of the interior has been replaced with modern materials and has now been removed, two staircases remain, in the end houses, and the floors are still in situ.

- 2.4. The proposal would remove all non-original partitions from the three houses and would reorder the internal layout. The proposal also includes replacement roofs (like for like) and replacement of all the windows.
 - 2.5. Proposals to enlarge the modern rear wings and add terraces to them have been removed, because the rear extensions are already very large. The internal layout at ground floor level has been modified from the original proposal to return it somewhat to its historic form. Layouts on other floors have been modified to return them towards their historic forms. Proposals to add an inappropriately grand front door and arch with lantern have been removed. The replacement of the non-original inappropriately designed windows on both elevations with single-glazed timber sashes will lead to a major improvement to the listed buildings and to the square as a whole. The CA statement remarks how unsympathetic windows and doors detract from the homogeneity of the terraces and this proposal should go some way towards repairing that. Regard has been had to the Argyle Square Design Guide. The railings would be repaired on site and this would be secured by condition.
 - 2.6. Details of the windows, doors (external and internal), first floor bathrooms and schedule of architraves would be secured by condition
 - 2.7. The proposal alterations would enhance the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and would preserve the special interest of the listed building.
 - 2.8. Amenity
 - 2.9. The alterations to the external appearance of the host property would have no impact on the neighbouring amenity in terms of daylight, sunlight or loss of privacy. The re-instatement of the decorative balcony with railings would not be accessible and there would be sash windows immediately behind the balcony rather than doors.
3. **Recommendation:** Grant planning permission and listed building consent

DISCLAIMER

The decision to refer an application to Planning Committee lies with the Director of Regeneration and Planning. Following the Members Briefing panel on Monday 28th of November 2016, nominated members will advise whether they consider this application should be reported to the Planning Committee. For further information, please go to www.camden.gov.uk and search for 'Members Briefing'.