

Delegated Report (Members Briefing)		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	22/08/2005
		N/A / attached	Consultation Expiry Date:	27/07/05
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Elaine McEntee			2005/2454/P	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
The Chestnuts 1 & 2 Branch Hill London NW3 7NA			See decision notice	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	Date:
				19/08/05
Proposal(s)				
Change of use and works of conversion from hotel use (Class C1) to residential use (Class C3) to create two single family dwelling houses.				
Recommendation(s):		Grant permission		
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission		

Conditions :						
Informatives:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	17	No. of responses	03	No. of objections	02
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>- Site notice also erected.</p> <p>- All responses welcome in principle the conversion to family dwelling houses:</p> <p>- Two of the responses raise the following objections:</p> <p>1. <u>Parking problems and traffic congestion concerns:</u> RESPONSE: Scheme subject to Policy TR17. Min 1 space per dwelling required although no on-site car parking proposed. None feasible, given the building & site constraints. Existing hotel use had no parking provision for its users/staff & proposed use unlikely to generate more traffic so would not worsen what would have been the existing situation (hotel use). Branch Hill not identified as being "heavily parked". Car-free cannot be required as there is no demonstrable harm caused to on-street parking by this scheme.</p> <p>2. <u>One concern expressed around hours of construction, dust and noise impacts to neighbouring properties:</u> RESPONSE: Not a material planning consideration; however an informative is recommended to restrict the hours of construction in compliance with Environmental Health Pollution Legislation.</p> <p>4. <u>Concerns that the outbuilding in the rear garden area will be used for accommodation purposes:</u> RESPONSE: this structure does not form part of the application. The structure is currently used for storage - the agent has indicated that there are plans to apply for permission to have such structures removed and more appropriate timber garden sheds built.</p>					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	Hampstead CAAC has "no objection".					
Site Description						
A vacant 35-bedroom Hotel, which takes the form of two converted 3-storey dwellinghouses located along the northern end of Branch Hill. The property is located within the Hampstead Conservation area, and is not a listed building.						
Relevant History						
5/05/01984 REF: 8400592 – Appeal allowed. Change of use from hostel and works of conversion into 5 self-contained flats. Not implemented.						
03/07/01985 REF: 8500569 – PP refused for change of use from hostel to a residential/nursing home for the elderly.						
07/01/01993 REF: 9201080 – PP granted for change of use and works of conversion to provide 2 x 4-bedroom flats and 3 x 3-bedroom flats. Not implemented.						
28/05/1998 REF: PW9702993 – PP granted for the renewal of the above pp for change of use and works of conversion from hostel (Class C2) to provide 5 residential flats. Not implemented.						
19/03/2002						

REF: PWX0202068/R1 – PP granted for the renewal of the above pp for change of use and works of conversion from hostel to 5 flats. Not implemented.

Relevant policies

UDP 2000

- EN1 - General Env Protection & Improvement
- EN7 - Noise Disturbance During Construction
- EN15 - Landscaping
- EN19 - Amenity for Occupiers & Neighbours
- EN21 - Alterations to Existing Buildings
- EN31 - Character & App of Conservation Areas
- HG8 – Increasing the Amount of Residential Accommodation
- HG9 - Change of Use to Residential Accommodation
- TR16 – Car free
- TR17 - Residential Parking Standards
- TR19 - Road Safety

UDP – Revised Deposit Draft-2004

- C2 – Tourism Uses
- H1 – New Housing

UDS – Hampstead

SPG 2002

- Section 2.3 Internal arrangements

Assessment

Proposal in Principle:

There are no objections to the loss of the vacant hotel (C1). The applicant's covering letter (dated 24th June 05) states that the use has been such for 20 yrs. Policy HG8 encourages the increase of the Borough's housing stock and making full use of vacant or under-utilised buildings considered suitable for residential development. Furthermore, Policy HG9 encourages the change of use of existing non-residential buildings to residential where adequate standards can be provided. The conversion & loss of tourism use is further supported by the previous planning approvals granted in relation to the change of use from hostel to 5 self contained flats [most recently in March 2002 (REF: PWX0202068/R1)]. This development was never implemented.

Design & Appearance:

Whilst the property has experienced various alterations to windows and the roof through the erection of front and rear dormer windows over the years, *the current application proposes no external alterations*. The proposed development is solely the change of use and therefore consists of entirely internal alterations, comprising a change of use from a hotel (The Chestnuts) to 2 dwelling houses. The hotel (currently vacant) has 35 bedrooms on the upper floors, two reception areas at ground floor level and a kitchen and dining area at the lower ground floor level. The proposed development consists of two 5/6-bedroom dwelling houses; (nos. 1 & 2 Branch Hill) with existing front pedestrian access from Branch Hill. The houses include an au-pairs living quarters and family living area at lower ground floor level, a sitting and dining area at ground floor level, bedrooms on the 1st and 2nd floors and a "media room" in the loft area accompanied by a kitchenette and bathroom. (*This could become a possible 6th bedroom.*)

Quality of the Conversion/Amenity of the Occupiers:

The proposed scheme of conversion achieves a very good standard of accommodation. Bedrooms are stacked above bedrooms, and the overall internal area is well above the minimum requirements as set out in SPG 2000. Each dwelling house results in over 750m² of internal floorspace. With respect to bedroom sizes, the main master bedrooms are in excess of 30m² & secondary bedrooms provide a minimum of 24m² – all well above the minimum 10/11m² as set out in SPG 2000. 180m² of amenity area exists in the garden, to be split between the two houses. The house and garden is large enough to accommodate 2 bike stands & provision for bin storage/recycling areas.

Traffic Implications:

The scheme is subject to Policy TR17, which requires a minimum of 1-car parking space per dwelling. No on-site car parking is proposed, and none is feasible given the building and site constraints. However, the existing hotel use has no off-street parking provision for its users/staff and therefore the proposed use is unlikely to worsen what would have been the existing situation (hotel use). It is also three less residential units than has previously been approved [although not implemented]. Branch Hill is not identified as "heavily parked" in either the schedule of "Heavily Parked Streets" in the UDP or in the most recent traffic surveys, so a car-free requirement cannot be justified as there is no demonstrable harm caused to existing on-street parking by this scheme. In addition, the site does not have very good accessibility to either public transport or local services, and is therefore not well suited to car-free housing under policy TR16.

Impact on Hampstead Conservation Area :

Whilst the property is not a listed building, it is located within 'Sub Area 4' of Hampstead Conservation Area. Nos. 1-5 Branch Hill [which includes the subject site (The Chestnuts)] is characterised by a gothic terrace of stock brick and red dressings. The property is noted as a building that contributes *positively* to the character and appearance of the Hampstead CA and stands as an example of local building tradition. There are no proposed external alterations to the property and the conversion of the hotel back to its original residential use would further enhance and preserve the character and appearance of Branch Hill and the Hampstead area.

Impact on Adjoining Properties:

There are no likely detrimental impacts to the amenities of the adjoining occupiers. The change of use is considered likely to improve the residential amenity of the area – through the loss of any potential traffic congestion caused as a result of the lawful hotel use, and also making use of a vacant property and therefore encouraging activity in the area once again and increasing the housing stock.

Other Issues:

There is no justification for removing permitted development rights. The only area of control that it would be legitimate to exercise would be over forecourt parking. However, this would be very difficult to achieve in front of the buildings because of the angle of slope of the front area and not in itself a problem if provided at the side of the building.

Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval.