

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		27/06/2017	
		N/A		Consultation Expiry Date:		22/06/2017	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Nora-Andreea Constantinescu				2017/2393/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
6 Coptic Street London WC1A 1NH				See decision notice.			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Erection of first floor rear extension, installation of glazed entrance and enlargement of rooflights to existing ground floor rear extension, alterations to the rear windows and replacement window at the ground floor level to front elevation, all to office building (Class B1a).							
Recommendation(s):		Refuse					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		Site notice Press notice	31/05/2017-21/06/2017 01/06/2017-22/06/2017	No. of responses	0	No. of objections	0
Summary of consultation responses:		No comments were received from the neighbouring residents.					
Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee		No comments were received from Bloomsbury CAAC.					

## Site Description

The application site is located at the west side of Coptic Street, on the junction with Little Russell Street. The site can also be accessed to the south via New Oxford Street and the west (rear) via Stedham Place.

The application building is 4 storey (plus basement), comprising office accommodation (Class B1a). The buildings along the west side of Coptic street are predominantly residential in use (Class C3). Whilst Nos. 7, 8 and 9 are wholly residential, only the third floor level of No.5 and upper floor levels of No.10 are residential, their lower levels are commercial in use being either offices (B1a) or as a restaurant (Class A3).

On the east side of Coptic Street, Nos.24, 25, 27 and 29 are in residential use, with the lower floor level of No.24 in use as a restaurant (Class A3). On the junction with Little Russell Street, directly facing the application building is the purpose built residential block of No.1 Little Russell Street.

To the rear, Nos. 1, 3 and 2-5 Stedham Place are in office use (Class B1a), whilst the upper floor level of No.3 Stedham Place/No.5 Coptic Street is in residential use. To the north of the application site, Stedham Chambers is a purpose built residential building.

The application building is not listed, nor are the adjacent/adjoining buildings, but it has been identified as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

The application building falls within the Museum Street local area of Central London and an Archaeological Priority Area.

## Relevant History

### 6 Coptic Street:

2017/2394/P - Change of use of basement and ground floor levels from office (Class B1a) to restaurant (Class A3) and associated installation of extract system to the rear, installation of glazed entrance and enlargement of rooflights to existing ground floor rear extension, alterations to the rear window at third floor level, and installation of two rooflights to front elevation. – Pending consideration

2016/0321/P - Erection of two storey rear extension and mansard roof extension with associated fenestration alterations – **Refused under delegated powers – 07/06/2016 – Appeal dismissed 09/02/2017 APP/X5210/W/16/3155073**

2013/5970/P - Erection of two storey rear extension and mansard roof extension. **Refused 08/04/2014 at Development Control Committee (DCC) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014**

*Reasons for refusal:*

- 1. The proposed rear extension, by reason of its bulk, mass and terminating height would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host building and of this part of the Bloomsbury conservation area, 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) and DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.*
- 2. The proposed roof extension, by reason of its design, form, bulk, location in a pair of buildings unimpaired by later additions and removal of original roof form would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host building, the pair of buildings of which it forms part and of this part of the Bloomsbury conservation area, 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) and DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.*

3. *The proposed rear closet wing extension by reason of its height and location would result in a loss of amenity to neighbouring occupiers by virtue of the impact on sunlight, daylight and sense of enclosure to the adjoining roof terrace and windows at 5 and 7 Coptic Street, contrary to policy CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development) the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy; and Policy DP26 (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.*

8800404 - Rear extension (fronting Stedham Place) at first and second floors levels for office use. The extension was full width and depth of the property. – **Refused 22/11/1988 - Appeal dismissed 19/04/1989**

*Relevant planning history at neighbouring properties.*

#### **5 Coptic Street:**

35649/R1 - Works of conversion to provide a self-contained flat on the 2nd and 3rd floors, including the formation of a garage and a new entrance at rear ground floor; 1st floor rear extension for additional office floor space, and the installation of a new shop frontage. – **Refused – 1983**

*Reasons for refusal:*

- 1. The proposal would involve and increase in office floor space contrary to the policies of restraining such growth as expressed in the Written Statement of the District Plan*
- 2. The proposed extension is considered to be undesirable as it would obstruct light to adjoining properties to the detriment of their amenities*
- 3. The loss of a separate access facility from the street to the residential unit on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors is considered to be detrimental to the amenities of the residential accommodation and represents a reduction in the quality of the residential provided*
- 4. The proposed shop frontage, by reason of its design and external appearance would detract from the appearance and character of the building and thereby detrimental to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.*

#### **7 Coptic Street:**

2014/1564/P - Change of valley roof form and creation of roof terrace, including roof access window, and installation of two air-conditioning units to chimney wall at roof level. **Non Determination – would have Refused, Appeal Dismissed 14th August 2014**

#### **Relevant policies**

**National Planning Policy Framework 2012**  
**London Plan 2016**

#### **Camden Local Plan 2017**

G1 Delivery and location of growth  
A1 Managing the impact of development  
DM1 Delivery and monitoring  
D1 Design  
D2 Heritage  
C6 Access  
TC1 Quantity and location of retail development  
TC2 Camden's centres and other shopping area  
E2 Employment premises and sites

T1 Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport  
T4 Sustainable movement of goods and materials  
CC1 Climate change mitigation

### **Camden Planning Guidance**

CPG1 Design (2015) - Sections 3, 4, 10 & 11

CPG5 Town centres, retail and employment (2013) – Section 7

CPG6 Amenity (2011) – Sections 2, 4, 6, 7, 8

CPG7 Transport (2011 – Section 3, 4, 5, 6, 9

### **Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement/Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal 2011**

## **Assessment**

### **1. Proposal**

1.1 The proposed scheme would include:

- Demolition of existing first floor small addition and erection of a first floor extension adjacent to the property at no 5 Coptic Street, with a depth of 3.5m and width of 3.3m with a chamfered corner which ends with a smaller width of 1.9m.
- Replacement of existing window and door to rear elevation at ground floor level with glazed doors.
- Enlargement of rooflights to existing ground floor extension.
- Replacement of window to front elevation at ground floor level with traditional timber framed sash window.

1.2 The existing mezzanine extension is greatly set back from the rear boundary (approx. 5m), with a height of 1.6m, depth of 1.8m, width of 2.2m adjacent to the host building and 1.7m at end of the projection.

1.3 As the planning history is a material consideration in the assessment of the proposed scheme, it is noted that the two storey extension refused under application ref 2016/0321/P had a proposed width of 2.8m, with a chamfered corner which ends with a smaller width of 1.9m, and the depth of 3.5m. The currently proposed extension has a width greater than the previous one by 0.5m.

1.4 Revisions were requested to reduce the bulk and scale of the proposed first floor extension, however this was not considered by the applicant.

### **2. Considerations**

2.1 The main issues for consideration are:

- Design and heritage
- Amenity
- Transport
- Land use

### 3. Design and heritage

- 3.1 The Council's design policies are aimed at achieving the highest standard of design in all developments. The following considerations contained within policy D1 are relevant to the application: development should consider the character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings, and the quality of materials to be used. Policy D2 states that within conservation areas, the Council will only grant permission for development that 'preserves and enhances' its established character and appearance.
- 3.2 CPG 1 states that rear extensions should be designed to be secondary to the building being extended, in terms of location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing; respect and preserve the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style; respect and preserve existing architectural features, such as projecting bays, decorative balconies or chimney stacks; respect and preserve the historic pattern and established townscape of the surrounding area, including the ratio of built to unbuilt space; not cause a loss of amenity to adjacent properties with regard to sunlight, daylight, outlook, overshadowing, light pollution/spillage, privacy/overlooking, and sense of enclosure; allow for the retention of a reasonable sized garden; and retain the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity, including that of neighbouring properties, proportionate to that of the surrounding area.
- 3.3 The rear of the properties Nos. 5 and 6 Coptic Street can be accessed from the rear through Stedham Place, accessed via New Oxford Street, via a controlled gated used solely by the occupier's properties of Stedham Place and Stedham Chambers. Comprising a single highway lane, this alley is used for additional seating for the restaurant at no. 3 Stedham Place/No. 5 Coptic Street. The rear elevations of Nos. 7-10 (cons) Coptic Street is obstructed from public view by the 3 storey building of No. 1 Stedham Place, no such obstruction is set in front of Nos. 5 and 6 Coptic Street and the rear elevations of these buildings are therefore visible from public view.
- 3.4 Both properties at Nos. 5 and 6 have infilled the historic 'rear garden' of the properties with single storey full width rear extensions abutting Stedham Place. The extension at no 5, ends at 4m high whilst the one existing at no. 6 is 3.2m high. The height of the ground floor extension is proposed to be retained.
- 3.5 At first floor level, the property at no. 5 has been extended previously with a full width first floor extension, set back from the rear wall to form a terrace. This extension was refused in 1983 but regardless of that, it has been built. No enforcement action was taken at the time and the structure owing to its age is now immune from enforcement action. The proposed extension at no 6 Coptic Street would project in line with this existing extension, approximately 3.5m in depth, and set down by 0.8m from the height of the extension at no 5, with an overall height of 6.2m. The width of the proposed extension, 3.2m is greater than half the width of the house by 0.45m, except for the width given by the chamfer element which reduces to 1.9m.
- 3.6 It is acknowledged that the proposal has been reduced in height from the previous planning application, however the proposed extension still appears prominent to the rear elevation given its bulk and scale. The proposed extension projecting in line with the existing first floor extension at No. 5, exacerbates further the appearance of the existing rear elevation of these properties, adding additional bulk to an already tight and greatly developed site, and rear elevation.
- 3.7 The design of the proposed first floor extension with the chamfer element, does not reflect the existing character of the host building or the surrounding ones. The application property has a clean and simple rear elevation, which would be disrupted by the proposed addition. Whilst the rear of the host building has already had some alterations that may not add positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area, the proposed extension, albeit using

matching materials, would appear bulky and out of character with the host building.

3.8 The proposed extension would project beyond the rear elevation of the of No. 1 Stedham Place, and due to its bulk and scale, it appears to enclose further the gap between the rear of the properties at Nos. 7 to 10 Coptic Street, with No. 1 Stedham Place, which has no regard to the existing typology of the build environment.

3.9 In line with the Inspector's para. 8 from previous appeal decision at this site , it is highlighted that "although the proposed rear extension would not be in a particularly prominent or publicly visible location, the significance of the CA drives from the buildings and layout of development as a whole, irrespective of whether elements are publicly visible or not. As such the significance of the CA does not rely solely on the elements that can readily be seen."

3.10 It is therefore considered that the proposed first floor extension, does not take into consideration the character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings, and would harmfully affect the appearance of the host property, and neighbouring ones, and this part of Bloomsbury Conservation Area, contrary to policies D1 and D2 of Camden Local Plan 2017.

3.11 In relation to the proposed alterations to the existing rear extension, including replacement of the existing door and window with fixed glazed door and windows with a height of 2.6m, are considered to preserve the appearance of the host property. In addition, the neighbouring property at Nos. 2-5 Stedham Place, have full height glazing doors and windows at the ground floor level facing the rear of the application site. It is therefore considered that the proposed alterations, would not cause significant harm to the character of the host property, neighbouring ones and wider conservation area.

3.12 The proposed window replacement at ground floor level to front elevation and the one to the rear at the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor with timber sash window are considered to preserve and enhance the character of the existing property and the street scene.

3.13 In light of the above, it is considered that the acceptable elements of this proposal do not overcome the significant harm caused by the proposed first floor extension in terms of siting, bulk and mass, and the proposal is therefore considered unacceptable.

#### **4. Amenity**

4.1 Policy A1 seeks to ensure that development protects the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission to development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. This includes privacy, overlooking, outlook and implications on daylight and sunlight.

#### Daylight/sunlight

4.2 The issue of impact on amenity to be caused by a proposed development at the application site, has been raised in the appeal decision in 1989 (ref: 8800404), and in the appeal decision in 2014 (ref: 2013/5970/P) where the inspector stated:

"12. The impact on sunlight has been assessed and subsequently reassessed due to errors in the original reports. This has resulted in the Council and other interested parties, including neighbouring occupiers, having some uncertainty and limited confidence in the evidence provided by the appellant. Notwithstanding this, I note the amendments and alterations made to the appellant's evidence."

"15. From what I have seen and read, I am not satisfied that the proposed development satisfactorily demonstrates that no significant harm would be caused to neighbouring

properties and occupiers in relation to loss sunlight.”

- 4.3 Taking into consideration the current proposal and submission of the Sunlight/Daylight report, the loss of sunlight/daylight and overshadowing of the property at no 5 Coptic Street has been overcome. Significant concerns are still standing in relation to the impact of the proposed scheme to the amenity of the residents at no 7 Coptic Street.
- 4.4 In term of the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) it appears that the amenity of the residents at no 7 Coptic Street would not be affected. However, it is noted that part of the previous submission under application ref no 2016/0321/P, the officer's delegated report highlights that the first submission of the Sunlight/Daylight Report had some errors, which lead to a subsequent submission of the report (submission 2). The current submission of the Sunlight/Daylight Report indicates different before figures for the calculation of the Vertical Sky Components (VSC), for window 1 (no. 7 Coptic Street) and window 43 (nos. 27 to 31 Coptic Street). Whilst the agent indicated that these discrepancies are due to a rounding matter which happened when processing the data, this still raises further concerns on the actual credibility of the study. Without independent verification, the Council maintains concern.
- 4.5 Furthermore, the Daylight/Sunlight report does not present details of the Sunlight hours in relation to the windows 2 and 3 of No. 7 Coptic Street. The Planning Statement (April 2017) states that “The report confirms that all windows which face within 90 degrees of due south have been tested for direct sunlight and they all pass the total annual sunlight hours test and the winter sunlight hour test”. This information is incorrect, and the figures for these windows have been missing from the previous submissions as well. This raises further concerns that the proposed scheme would fail the guidelines in relation to the sunlight hours on the two windows, which were indicated by the Inspector in the previous appeal as corresponding to habitable rooms.
- 4.6 It is therefore considered that insufficient information has been provided to the Council's satisfaction to demonstrate that no harm would be caused in terms of loss of daylight and sunlight to the amenity of the neighbouring residents at No. 7 Coptic Street, with specific regard to windows 2 and 3.

#### Sense of enclosure

- 4.7 With special regards to para 16 of the most recent appeal decision stating:  
*“With regard to the effect of the proposal on the outlook of neighbouring occupiers, the rear closet wing extension would reduce the distance between the first floor flank window, indicated as ‘Window 2’ of No 7 and the flank wall of No 5 by approximately 3 metres. Whilst I appreciate that the proposed rear extension would be narrower than previous proposals and would include a chamfered element, I find that the height and massing of the scheme would result in a materially detrimental effect on outlook from Window 2 of No 7 and would create a heightened sense of enclosure for its occupiers. Furthermore, from the evidence before me, it appears that Window 2 of No 7, albeit secondary, is identified as serving a habitable room. In such circumstances, I find that this would only exacerbate the significant detrimental impact on the outlook of the occupiers of No 7.”*
- 4.8 The current proposed first floor has greater width than the previous proposal by 0.5m, which gives a gap of 5.3m between the habitable flank window 2 of No. 7 and the side of the proposed extension. Although, the rear extension would be reduced in height from the previous proposal, and feature a chamfer element, its width is greater, and therefore the bulk and mass of the extension is still considered to harmfully affect the outlook of the residents at no 7. Due to the close proximity of the adjacent windows, the proposed first floor extension would be experienced as an overbearing visual impact as seen from the windows at no 7. Taking into account the existing first floor extension, it is noted that due to its significantly smaller bulk and scale (height of 1.6m, depth of 1.8m, width of 2.2m), it does not appear as

obstructive and overbearing, and allows better outlook from the windows at no 7. The proposed first floor extension would therefore result in a significantly diminished outlook to the residents at no 7, which would result in harmful sense of enclosure contrary to policy A1.

### Privacy

4.9 It is considered that the proposal would not cause greater loss of privacy levels than the existing arrangement. The proposed first floor extension includes installation of the window facing Nos. 2-5 Stedham Place, however there is an existing window in the same location on the rear elevation. The additional projection of 3.5m along with the proposed extension is not considered cause greater detriment to the impact on Nos. 2-5 Stedham Place in terms of loss of privacy.

4.10 In light of the above, it is maintained that the proposed first floor rear extension, by reason of its sitting, bulk and scale would result in a loss of amenity to the neighbouring occupiers by virtue of the impact on sunlight, daylight and sense of enclosure to the adjoining windows at No. 7 Coptic Street, and shall from a reason for refusal.

## **5. Transport**

5.1 Given the nature and extent of works proposed, in addition to good access to all areas of the site, a Construction Management Plan, would not be required in this instance.

5.2 The proposal would not result in a significant intensification of use and associated traffic generation/congestion.

## **6. Land use**

6.1 The provision of new and refurbished office floor space is supported by Policy E2 of Camden Local Plan 2017.

## **7. Conclusion**

7.1 The proposed first floor rear extension, by reason of its siting, bulk and mass would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host building, the pair of buildings of which it forms part and of this part of the Bloomsbury conservation area, and in a loss of amenity to neighbouring occupiers at No. 7 Coptic Street.

## **8. Recommendation**

8.1 Refuse planning permission.