

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		29/08/2019	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		N/A	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Catherine Bond				2019/3442/L			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
23-24 Montague Street London WC1B 5BH				Site Location Plan; 061 001 rev 0003; 061 002 rev 0005; 062 001 rev 02; 910 001 rev 01; 910 001 rev 0001; Fire Stopping Details 000 000; Door Schedule; Fire Stopping Schedule; Nullfire Smart Protection FB750 Coated Batt Product Specification; Nullfire Smart Protection FB750 Intumescent Sealant Product Information; Considine Structural Engineer's Letter 7 January 2019; Design and Access & Heritage Statement.			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
Installation of a panelled door in the spinal wall of the two ground floor reception rooms at Nos 23-24 Montague Street.							
Recommendation(s):		Refused					
Application Type:		Listed Building Consent					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		N/A					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		N/A					

Site Description

The two adjacent properties are grade II listed and are situated in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, forming part of the Bedford Estate. They are part of a wider terrace, the list description of which reads: "Terrace of 18 houses. C1803-6. By James Burton. Built by WE Allen, altered. Yellow stock bricks with stucco ground floors. Stucco sill band at 3rd floor level. Nos 15-17 and Nos 22 and 23 slightly projecting. Gateway to rear gardens (qv) between Nos 20 and 21. 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each. Round-arched doorways with reeded door frames or sidelights mostly 2-leaf doors' Nos 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28 and 29 with patterned fanlights... Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sash windows, most with original glazing bars... 1st floor windows with cast-iron balconies. Parapets. Rear elevations of Nos 25-29 with bowed bays." Along with Bedford Place to the east, the terraces are described in the *Buildings of England* series as 'characteristic and perfectly preserved examples of the style of the Duke of Bedford's new developments of this time'.

Relevant History

26/01/2017: pre-application advice ref 2016/4697/PRE issued for change of use from hotel to residential (C3).

10/05/2017: listed building consent ref 2017/0044/L granted for replacement windows to front elevation and associated internal alterations in association with change of use from hotel (Class C1) to 6x flats (Class C3).

15/01/2018: planning permission ref 2016/7061/P granted for change of use from hotel (Class C1) to 6x flats (Class C3) and replacement windows to front elevation.

03/01/2019: planning permission ref 2018/4885/P & listed building consent ref 2018/5254/L granted for replacement of window at rear ground floor level with French doors and metal steps to garden associated with installation of railings to existing lightwell.

05/03/2019: listed building consent ref 2018/4886/L refused for removal and replacement of the 2nd-3rd floor staircase at No 24 Montague Street (appeal lodged).

18/03/2019: listed building consent ref 2018/4892/L refused for internal alterations to first floor layout, pursuant to listed building consent ref 2017/0044/L.

31/03/2019: listed building consent ref 2019/1519/L granted for internal alterations to first floor layout, pursuant to listed building consent ref 2017/0044/L.

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

National Planning Practice Guidance 2018

Camden Local Plan 2017

D1 (Design)

D2 (Heritage)

Camden Planning Guidance 1

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Strategy

Assessment

The proposals subject of this application involve the installation of a panelled door in the spinal wall of each of the two ground-floor reception rooms at Nos 23 & 24 Montague Street, the layouts of which were approved under listed building consent reference 2017/0044/L granted on 22/05/2019 for replacement windows to the front elevation and associated internal alterations in association with the change of use from hotel to 6 flats.

Despite some later subdivision and a lateral conversion for the previous hotel use, the application properties comprising Nos 23-24 Montague Street generally retain their internal historic plan form and significant internal features including staircases, chimneybreasts, and historic joinery and plasterwork. These features reflect the buildings' typology, domestic function, period and hierarchy and are integral to the understanding of the historic and aesthetic values that underpin the overall significance of the buildings, as reflected in their grade II listed status.

It is proposed to substitute the approved flush jib doors to be located in the central section of the spinal wall dividing the living room and kitchen spaces in the consented duplex apartments with six-panelled timber doors of the same dimensions and in the same locations. The proposed panelled doors will be moulded on both sides and framed with moulded architraves adorning the door surrounds. The proposed design intends to match the detailed design of the historic room entrance doors and cupboard doors located on either side of the bowed walls, the latter although designed to be scholarly replicas of the originals being a traditional feature of such configurations. However, there is no evidence that such doors would ever have existed at the centre of each spinal wall, which as existing comprise an uninterrupted section of wall within each front room, adorned on either side by arched alcove recesses and panelled doors in a symmetrical arrangement. It is therefore considered that the installation of panelled doors at the centre of each bowed wall will be over-dominant, visually breaking up the simple curve of the wall and constituting visual clutter. As such, the proposed scheme constitutes a misinterpretation of the layout and architectural hierarchy of the Georgian townhouse interiors.

Notwithstanding, the installation of flush jib doors within the ground-floor rooms of each townhouse, with their leafs flush with the bowed spinal wall on the front room side, is considered acceptable as their unobtrusive design using materials, finishes and detailing to match the spinal wall (including moulded skirting boards and dado rails) blends in with the historic and architectural character of the principal rooms, whilst allowing a physical link between the living room and kitchen spaces. It should be noted that flush jib doors are a traditional feature of London townhouses of the Georgian period, such as the application properties.

As such, approval was granted for jib doors linking the front and rear ground floor rooms in Nos 23 and 24 Montague Street as part of listed building consent ref 2017/0044/L dated 22/05/2017, meaning that the applicants can proceed with the installation of jib doors as part of the residential conversion of the properties. The current application does not give a full explanation or justification for the installation of panelled doors as a departure from the consented scheme, both in terms of function and impact on the historic buildings.

To conclude, the proposed works comprising the installation of moulded six-panel timber doors with decorative architraves in the spinal walls dividing the front and rear ground-floor rooms of Nos 23 & 24 Montague Street, is considered to cause harm to the special historic and architectural interest of the grade II listed buildings, as they will visually detract from the uninterrupted central section of the curve of the bowed spinal wall on the front room side of each townhouse. Furthermore, their detailed design will be out-of-keeping with the hierarchy of the ground-floor principal front rooms and their features of historic and architectural interest. As such, the proposals do not meet the requirements of NPPF policy or policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

Recommendation : It is recommended that this listed building consent application be refused.