

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		17/05/2019	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		26/05/2019	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Mark Chan				1. 2019/1573/P 2. 2019/2175/L			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
6-7 Bedford Row London WC1R 4BS				See decision notice			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
1. Part removal of existing entrance steps for the installation of a new vertical stair/platform lift for step-free access. 2. Part removal of existing entrance steps for the installation of a new vertical stair/platform lift for step-free access.							
Recommendation(s):		1. Refuse planning permission 2. Refuse listed building consent					
Application Type:		1. Full Planning Permission 2. 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
Summary of consultation responses:		The application was advertised in the local press from 02/05/2019 until 26/05/2019. Site notices were displayed from 26/04/2019 until 20/05/2019. No consultation responses were received from adjoining occupiers or local residents.					

Site Description

The site contains a pair of four-storey mid-terrace properties situated on the eastern side of Bedford Row. The properties are former dwellings and are now used as an office for a legal firm. The properties were constructed in early 18th century within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and were first Grade II listed in 1951.

The terrace is constructed of brown bricks with brick band at the first floor and gauged red brick arches and dressings. The entrance steps at No. 7 has white tiles and black numbering whilst at No. 6, the steps are concrete.

Relevant History

2018/5123/P & 2018/5660/L – Installation of new/replacement air conditioning units and acoustic enclosure to internal courtyard (x6) and at rear roof level (x7) to Jockey Field's. Re-spray of existing balustrades and external windows to Jockey Fields. Replacement rear doors to Jockey fields and removal of louvres on Bedford Row. External repair works and internal alterations to both buildings. Granted on 26/02/2019.

2018/1041/L – Remedial works. Granted on 04/04/2018.

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

London Plan (2016)

Camden's Local Plan (2017)

Policy A1 – Managing the impact of development

Policy C6 – Access for all

Policy D1 – Design

Policy D2 – Heritage

Supplementary Guidance

CPG Design (2019)

- Chapter 2: Design excellence

- Chapter 3: Heritage

CPG Access for all (2019)

- Chapter 6: Listed buildings and heritage assets

CPG Amenity (2018)

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)

Assessment

1 Proposal

- 1.1 Planning permission and listed building consent are sought for the part removal of existing main entrance steps at No. 7 Bedford Row to facilitate the installation of a new vertical stair/platform lift for step-free access. The lift will be provided by the UK based company, Sesame Access Systems.

2 Assessment

- 2.1 The main considerations in relation to this proposal are:
- Impact on the character and appearance of the listed buildings and wider Bloomsbury Conservation Area; and
 - Impact on the amenity of adjoining occupiers

3 Impact on the character and appearance of the listed buildings and wider Bloomsbury Conservation Area

- 3.1 The Council's design policies are aimed at achieving the highest standard of design in all developments, including where alterations and extensions are proposed. Policy D1 requires extensions to consider the character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings; and the character and proportions of the existing building. Through Local Plan policy D2, the Council will seek to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's conservation areas. Camden's design policies are supported by Camden Planning Guidance Design.
- 3.2 CPG Design clearly states that the Council will only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and where possible enhances the character and appearance of the area. It further states that 'good design should respond appropriately to the existing context by:
- ensuring the scale of the proposal overall integrates well with the surrounding area
 - carefully responding to the scale, massing and height of adjoining buildings, the general pattern of heights in the surrounding area
 - positively integrating with and enhancing the character, history, archaeology and nature of existing buildings on the site and other buildings immediately adjacent and in the surrounding area, and any strategic or local views, vistas and landmarks.'
- 3.3 Moreover, in paragraph 3.27, CPG Design mentions that for applications that involves listed buildings, 'the impact of proposals on the historic significance of the building, including its features, such as:
- original and historic materials and architectural features;
 - original layout of rooms;
 - structural integrity; and
 - character and appearance'
- will be considered.
- 3.4 CPG Access for all states that for listed buildings and other heritage assets, the Council will balance the requirement to provide access with the interests of conservation and preservation. Sensitive design solutions that achieve access for all, to and within listed buildings, should be sought.
- 3.5 The host properties sit within a terrace of 7 properties (Nos. 1 – 7) with attached railings and lamp holder which are Grade II listed. The terrace is a fine example of early Georgian townhouses within the Great James Street/Bedford Row sub area in Bloomsbury Conservation Area in so far as it tends to adhere to a similar pattern of four storeys with basements with a strong parapet forming the roofline and a repeated pattern of windows and doors. Common elements are the black painted boundary railings, wooden architraved doorcases, panelled

doors, fanlights of various patterns and designs and entrance steps supported by brick arches.

- 3.6 It is therefore considered the introduction of stair/platform lift would have a detrimental impact to the existing entrance steps and the historic brick arch that supports the steps. To accommodate the stair/platform lift, the arch would need to be cut through which would affect the structural integrity of the steps and the historic fabric. Various other elements would also need to be installed, such as structural steels and padstones which would further affect the overall composition of the area underneath the stairs. Furthermore, the appearance of the replacement steps, mainly the proposed mosaic tiling in radial fashion is out of keeping with the host building and the wider area.
- 3.7 Paragraph 5.4 of The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy states that the loss of original details can have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Whilst the introduction of the stair/platform lift would increase the accessibility of the host building, it should be noted that there is an alternative access into the host building at the rear, via Jockey's Field which could be modified to become 'Step-free' and thus the intervention and harm to the listed building is not justified. (The submitted ground floor and lower ground floor plans show that the host buildings and the No. 6 Jockey's Fields are structurally connected.)
- 3.8 Therefore, it is considered that the proposal does not comply with CPG Access for all as alternative access is available and the development fails to preserve and conserve the host building. The proposal, by virtue of its design, visual prominence and location, would create incongruous additions, out of keeping with the host buildings, and detrimental to the established character and appearance of the listed terraced buildings and wider Bloomsbury conservation area.
- 3.9 The Council has had due regard to the public sector equality duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010.

4 Amenity

- 4.1 Policy A1 of the Camden Local Plan seeks to ensure that the amenity of neighbours is protected including visual privacy, outlook, sunlight, daylight and overshadowing.
- 4.2 The proposed stair/platform lift is not considered to impact adversely on the amenity of adjoining occupiers in terms of loss of privacy, sunlight, daylight or outlook.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The proposal involves an unjustified and preventable loss of original details within the entrance steps. Overall, given the design, visual prominence and location of the development, it would result in harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II Listed Building and the character and appearance of the street scene and the wider Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- 5.2 The proposal is therefore contrary to policy D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017. It is also contrary to the provisions of the London Plan 2016 and the NPPF 2019.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 Refuse planning permission.
- 6.2 Refuse Listed Building Consent.