

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:	12/08/2020
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:	24/08/2019
Officer			Application Number(s)		
Josh Lawlor			2020/1996/P		
Application Address			Drawing Numbers		
12 and 14 Northington Street London WC1N 2NW			See decision notice		
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		
Proposal(s)					
Demolition of front facade, re-construction of front facade with metal panelling, bay windows with Juliet balconies at first floor and new fenestration at ground floor.					
Recommendation(s):		Refuse Planning Permission			
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission			

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:			No. of responses	13	No. of objections	13
Summary of consultation responses:	A site notice was displayed directly outside the site Northington Street on the 19/06/2020 expiring 13/07/2020. Site notices were then re-displayed on John street and John Mews on the 31/07/2020 expiring 24/08/2020.					
	The application was also publicised in the local press from the 25/06/2020 to the 19/07/2020 Thirteen objections were received from a neighbouring address: <div><div>1. I am a local resident, an architect, and supporter of high quality contemporary design - and I'm afraid this is a terrible scheme, and I feel obliged to write in objection. The proposed cladding is not appropriate to the site or neighbourhood, and the scheme overall shows no subtlety or sensitivity, either to the immediately adjoining listed building or to the wider area. The existing facade is no great beauty, but it has character, which the proposed replacement entirely lacks. The applicant should be compelled to try harder, and if that is beyond them, to keep the existing facade. Either way, this scheme should be rejected on design quality and suitability to the conservation area grounds.</div><div>2. I would like to register an objection to the idea of using metal panelling to reclad the new facade. Given the building's proximity to one of the finest Georgian streets in London; the fact that the facade will be highly visible from John Street; and the character of the surrounding buildings in Northington Street which are all brick-built, this cladding would look totally out of place and mar the appearance of this corner of the conservation area. I live in the adjacent street.</div><div>3. I am writing as a local and as an architect, with some knowledge of the buildings in question. There is no point beating around the bush, this is an entirely insensitive design proposal. it is clear on numerous accounts that the context for this design has not been explored in any detail or depth. Both the interesting massing and quality materials of the existing facade should be retained and if larger window openings are desired on the ground floor, they should be very carefully considered within the composition of the rest of the facade. If the ground floors were to be more fenestrated perhaps street gardening which has taken off in the area could be used to give some privacy to inhabitants but without boundary treatments of any kind.</div><div>4. I am a resident in the immediate area of Northington Street and walk by 12 & 14 Northington Street on a daily basis. The developer is requesting to replace the brick and warm sandstone with modern metal cladding. It is an awful scheme for the following reasons: The proposed cladding does not suit the building, the modern metal cladding clashes with the brick facades of the neighbouring buildings, the proposed cladding does not fit within the Bloomsbury</div></div>					

Conservation area. I object for the reasons mentioned above. The application for extension should not be granted. It is totally inappropriate and goes against approved application 2016/6499/P where the planner rightly specified any work to the building should be carried out in materials as closely possible to the colour and texture of the existing building. Please do not allow the developer to destroy the existing facade.

5. The demolition of the handsome facade will be a loss to the neighbourhood. The area has been fortunate to see buildings restored and high-quality new interventions in recent years that have helped mark it out as an area with interesting architecture but which also a respect for what's gone before. Tearing down this intriguing and pleasant building would be a terrible idea and the suggested cladding looks gaudy and out of character with the neighbourhood. Please defend these nice Bloomsbury quirks and displays of character.
6. I am a long-term local resident, living at 14 Doughty Street (my married name is Horowitz), and I am an architectural writer, historian and critic. I am currently President of the Twentieth Century Society. I know the properties in question, which have a quirky Edwardian charm, in sympathy with the building opposite, originally a Fire Station which still preserves its character. The replacement of the buff brick with metal cladding seems entirely discordant in this quiet (visually, I mean!) residential part of the street, and the replacement fenestration looks equally brash, both in texture and scale. It is a small domestic reconfiguration and I cannot see that the redesign is appropriate or attractive. Metal cladding has its place but not here. I note that the location plan shows that Northington Street crosses 'York Street' and I defy you to find it in this area. I also notice that the applicant makes no reference to the origins of the building opposite as a firestation. I say this because it suggests a very cavalier regard to the reality of the site, and its qualities, which are reflected in conservation terms.
7. The proposed project demolishes the existing London Stock brick and sandstone facade and replaces it with a flat panel metal cladding; this is in no way compatible with Bloomsbury conservation area's purpose. All the immediate neighbours are brick and stone buildings.
8. Object to the proposals to demolish any part of the facade of this interesting and characterful building. The existing facade is a fine example of early twentieth century architecture, built as an extension to the Georgian house on John Street. It is a considered composition of different types of brick and stone, or artificial stone, and has very unusual cantilevered oriel bays which add to the street scene. It also quite wittily extends itself up a further two storeys to unite with the taller house to its right. While I have no objection to the mansard roof extension, provided it is clad appropriately in real slates and lead, the proposal for the lower facade is cheap, generic, ugly and entirely inappropriate. It uses materials which have no place on this listed building in its conservation area setting. The main reason for the rebuild, one supposes, is to enable the owner to bring the facade of the building a few feet further into the public realm, in order to increase internal floor area and thereby value. It will adversely affect the appearance of this listed building and be detrimental to the character of the conservation area. The design justification given by the applicant is entirely inadequate. If the owner wishes to enhance the

scheme by making use of the wide pavement here, I would suggest the creation of front gardens, adding green and increasing biodiversity, with an ideal south-facing aspect.

9. I am surprised this application comes under 'Residential Minor Alternations', as this proposal will substantially alter the character of Northington St. As a local resident I would like to object to the application on these grounds, and also for the unnecessary destruction of a characterful facade to replace it with an ersatz design of little architectural value. The current facade is relatively unusual, adding to the character of a street notable for its various interesting buildings reflecting the area's industrial, service and residential heritage. The stonework on the bay windows is good craftsmanship and of interest in itself. The replacement, with metal cladding, will sit uneasily with the diverse brick frontages of the street. There is a way to combine modern and older buildings, but the designs proposed indicate a low quality build which, to be frank, will look more like a lean-to against the substantial John Street residences than a valuable addition. I have no objection to the building of additional floor, but cannot see why this necessitates the destruction of the existing facade. If that is absolutely necessary, I feel that the designs need to change in order to add to, rather than detract from the local environment.
10. We are long term residents of Northington Street. We vehemently object to the proposed replacement of the current facade which blends well with the surrounding architecture of brick and and stone. The proposed metallic cladding design would be highly inappropriate and clash with all the buildings currently present in Northington Street and John Street. To go ahead with this project, which will also entail enormous disruption for the neighbours, would be totally unjustified and it would not benefit the community in any way, but would only have a detrimental effect.
11. The proposed scheme is totally out of keeping with the streetscape, especially in light of the Conservation Area status. The proposal will rob these buildings of their architectural heritage and rob the surround area of historical architectural features.
12. This application is for a building just outside our area but we wish to object to the plans as we find them unsuitable and out of character for the wider area. The existing building has a strong and interesting character which blends well with the variety of local styles. The proposed replacement in contrast is totally out of keeping and would jar sharply with the neighbourhood. We therefore hope you will reject the application. Rugby & Harpur Residents Association
13. I wish to strongly disagree with this dreadful visual application, this in an area already blighted by awful new architecture that does not marry well with the beautiful existing architecture. The building looks like a shopping centre in America

Officer response to points 1-13 above:

1. See Design and Heritage section of this report

Site Description

The application site comprises both 12 and 14 Northington Street which is a two-storey building with setback mansard roofs extensions. The buildings are on the northern side of Northington Street between buildings fronting John's Mews and John Street. The facade is a fine example of early twentieth century architecture, built as an extension to the Georgian house on John Street. It is a composition of brick, tile, timber and stone with distinctive cantilevered oriel bays. The building extends up a further two storeys to unite with the taller house to its right. The site is also closely related to 28 John Street, a Grade II Listed Building, which overhangs number 12 at second floor level, although the building itself is not listed.

The site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and is noted as making a positive contribution to the character of the area in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Strategy.

Planning History:

2019/5613/P Creation of dropped kerb to support off 2 x off-street parking following removal of 2 x cycle stands and 1 x tree Withdrawn 14/01/2020

2017/0391/L Partial infill of rear lightwell with single storey suspended extension following removal of external existing staircase and first floor balcony and removal of 2x rear windows at ground floor level Granted 27/02/2017

2016/6500/P Partial infill of rear lightwell with single storey suspended extension following removal of external existing staircase and first floor balcony and removal of 2x rear windows at ground floor level Granted 27/02/2017

2016/6499/P Erection of mansard roof extension to include dormer windows and inset roof terraces at second floor level, erection of metal balustrades at second floor level and alterations to front and rear elevations of adjoining dwellings Granted 24/02/2017

2013/0964/P Installation of single storey glass conservatory at ground floor level in rear lightwell of 12 Northington Street together with partial infill at first floor level, following removal of existing external staircase and first floor balcony, in addition to various internal alterations and new access door from 28 John Street at roof level to the existing roof terrace of single dwelling house (Class C3). Granted 24/04/2013

Relevant policies

The National Planning Policy Framework 2019

London Plan 2016, consolidated with alterations since 2011

Draft New London Plan showing Minor Suggested Changes (published 13th August 2018)

Camden local Plan (July 2017)

- A1 Managing the impact of development
- D1 Design

- D2 Heritage
- DM1 Delivery and monitoring
- T3 Transport Infrastructure
- T4 sustainable movement of goods and materials

Supplementary Guidance - Camden Planning Guidance

- CPG1 Design (March 2019)
- CPG Altering and extending your home (March 2019)
- CPG Amenity (March 2018)
- CPG Transport (March 2019)
- CPG Developer contributions (2018)

Assessment

1. Proposed Development

1.1. The proposed development would constitute the demolition of the front façade and the installation of a new replacement façade. The new elevation would feature bay windows with Juliet balconies at first floor. The first floor windows would have three vertical window panes and be full height with aluminium frame. The new windows at ground would also be aluminium frame and feature a form of Juliet balcony. The elevation would use metal cladding (trespa medeon cladding). A mansard roof has been approved under ref. 2016/7064/L and 2016/6499/P and is currently under construction, the mansard is therefore not assessed under this application.

2. Assessment

2.1. The principal considerations material to the determination of this application are as follows:

- Design and Heritage;
- Residential amenity;
- Sustainability;
- Transport

3. Design and Heritage

- 3.1. Camden Local Plan Policy D1 (Design) seeks to secure high quality design in development which respects local context and character. Policy D2 (Heritage) states that the Council will preserve and enhance Camden's heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas. The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of the heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal significantly outweigh that harm. The council will also require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible enhances the character or appearance of the area.
- 3.2. CPG Altering and extending your home (2019) paragraph 2.8 states that '*original surface materials should be retained or replicated wherever possible, as they are usually central to the architectural design / character treatment of a building. These may cover the entire building or façade, highlight specific features (such as windows or doors) or act as decorative elements (such as ironwork or terracotta panels)*'. The proposal is considered to constitute substantial demolition of a building which is identified as making a positive contribution to the character

and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The facade is a fine example of early 20th century architecture, it is an interesting composition of various types of brick and stone with distinctive cantilevered oriel bays which contribute to this characterful part of the conservation area. The elevations are of architectural merit, and the building is considered to hold heritage value which should be preserved. The proposal would involve the demolition of all original surface materials on the elevation, destroying the integrity of the building and harming the character and appearance of the conservation area.

- 3.3. CPG Altering and extending your home paragraph 2.5 states that *'alterations to a property and the materials used should always be complementary to the existing building and its original features. Consideration of materials should form an integral part of the design process. To do this, you must take into account its existing colours and textures, character and design and the surrounding area. Contemporary design approaches in alteration and extensions must be sensitive to the property and its context. The addition or alteration must compliment the property without eroding or harming its character and the surrounding area.'* CPG Design (2019), paragraph 2.11 states that good design should respond appropriately to the existing context through positively integrating with and enhancing the character, history and nature of existing buildings on the site and other buildings immediately adjacent and in the surrounding area, which is particularly important in conservation areas.

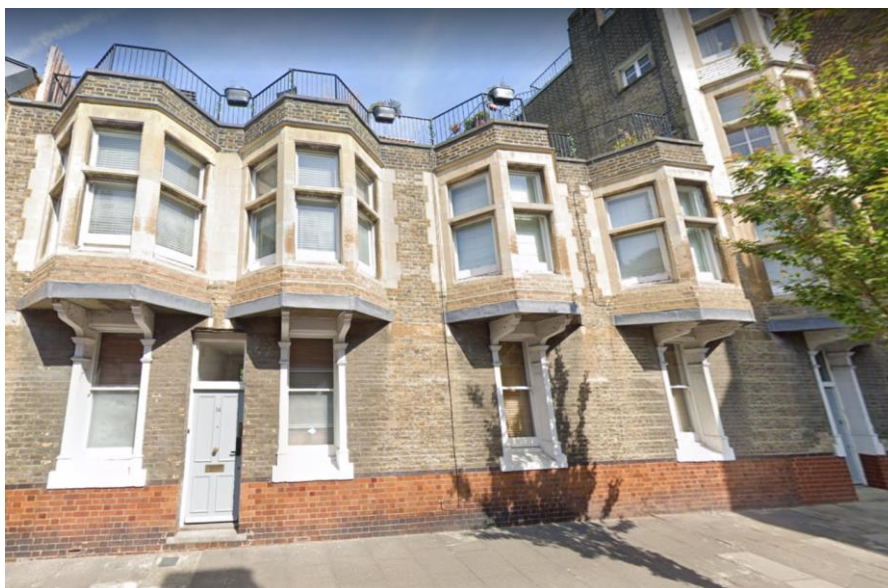


Figure 1 existing elevation



ARTIST IMPRESSIONS FRONT ELEVATIONS

Figure 2 Proposed elevation

- 3.4. Notwithstanding the loss of an entire elevation that holds historic and architectural value, the proposed replacement elevation is of poor quality design which is out of keeping with the rest of the streetscene. The new design fails to respond to the local vernacular in terms of materials, textures, colours and architectural style. The new contemporary elevation would be incongruous to its surrounds. The new design would contrast harshly with the style of buildings in this part of the conservation area. The elevation does not respond to the surrounding architecture and character of the street scene. Indeed it appears little consideration has been made into how the design will integrate into its surrounding context. Indeed there are no references to details within the streetscene or wider conservation area. The metallic cladding will appear harsh against the brick and stone of surrounding buildings. The proposed full height windows lack crispness, finesse and clarity. The size of the windows do not relate to surrounding buildings. There is an excessive amount of glazing in relation to the amount of solid surface, there is no hierarchy to the window sizes. The projecting glazing at first floor appears too dominant. It is not clear if these materials would weather well, so their ageing process contributes positively to the character of the area, and the site's wider context.
- 3.5. Para 196 of the NPPF (2019) states that 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'. The proposal comprises complete demolition of the front façade of a building which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and a replacement façade of poor quality design. Therefore the proposal is considered to cause 'less than substantial harm' to the character, appearance and historic interest of the conservation area as well as to the host property. There is no demonstrable public benefit created as a result of the proposal.
- 3.6. Considerable importance and weight has been attached to the harm and special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance conservation area, under s. 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013.

4. Residential 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. The factors the Council will consider: visual privacy, outlook; sunlight and daylight and overshadowing.
- 4.2. The new elevation would match the height of the existing and not create new outlooks which would cause harm to neighbouring amenity.

5. Construction Management Plan (CMP)

- 5.1. Policy A1 seeks to resist development that fails to adequately assess and address transport impacts affecting communities, occupiers, neighbours and the existing transport network. The Council will consider the impacts of the construction phase, including the use of Construction Management Plans. The supporting text of the policy (paragraphs 6.12 to 6.18) sets out when CMPs are sought.
- 5.2. Paragraph 6.16 of the Local Plan states that “A Construction Management Plan will usually be secured via planning obligations between the developer and the Council after an application is approved.” Paragraph 2.31 of the Transport Camden Planning Guidance says that: “CMPs are secured as a planning obligation through a legal agreement and the pro-forma must be agreed by the Council prior to commencement of work starting on site.” A CMP and a CMP implementation support contribution of £3,136 is required in order for the development to be considered acceptable and minimise the movement of goods and minimise the impact on the local area.
- 5.3. A support contribution is required to cover the costs of Council staff time in reviewing and approving the submitted CMP, the ongoing inspection and review of the plan during the construction works, and discussions to agree any amendments during the lifetime of the construction. This can take a large amount of time and this is a cost which should be covered by the developer who benefits from the planning permission rather than the tax payer. For applications in the area, the Council has used a consistent approach of requesting CMPs (via S106) for extensions and new dwellinghouses in the local area.
- 5.4. The development is minor however since Northington Street is relatively narrow and the site is in Central London, a construction management plan (CMP) would need to be secured to minimize the impact on the highway infrastructure and neighbouring community. A CMP bond would be required as well. The absence of a CMP and CMP bond to secure is an additional reasons for refusal.

6. Highways contribution

- 6.1. The Council, as the local highway authority, is responsible for the quality, maintenance and safety of the borough's roads and footpaths. The footway is likely going to sustain damage due to the demolition and construction of the front façade.
- 6.2. The Councils Transport Officer has advised that there is potential for damage to the public highway as a result of the works. Therefore there may be a need for highway works to repair any construction damage to transport infrastructure, including the reinstatement of all affected road and footway surfaces. If the development was otherwise considered acceptable the Council would secure a financial contribution via a combined Section 106 and Section 278 legal agreement for the highway works that the developer will be required to pay before

commencing development. This would be based upon estimates of anticipated works (including fees) prepared by LB Camden. If in the event that the actual works cost more than originally estimated, the developer will be liable to pay additional costs (up to a maximum agreed figure). On completion of the works, the Council will certify how much money was expended in undertaking the works. If the actual works required cost less than originally estimated, for example if the public highway was not damaged as much as was estimated for, the Council can refund the applicant any unspent financial contribution. The highway contribution would be estimated by the Councils highways engineers if the development was otherwise considered acceptable. The absence of a highways contribution is an additional reason for refusal.

7. S106 Heads of terms

- Construction Management Plan and associated Implementation Support Contribution of £3,136
- Construction Impact Bond of £7,500
- Highways contribution

8. Recommendation

Refuse planning permission