

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	31/03/2022
		N/A / attached	Consultation Expiry Date:	17/03/2022
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Sofie Fieldsend			2021/5853/P	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
132, 134 and 136 Royal College Street London NW1 0TA			See decision notice	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
Alterations to existing single storey rear extension on all properties to increase its height to a double storey extension plus partial demolition to create rear lightwell behind no 132 and addition of 2 windows and alteration of other windows on rear elevations.				
Recommendation:	Refuse planning permission			
Application Type:	Full Planning Permission			

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	00	No. of responses	0	No. of objections	0
			No. electronic	00	No. of comments	00
Summary of consultation responses:	Site notices were displayed on the 21/02/2022 and the consultation period expired on the 17/03/2022. No responses were received.					
CAAC and other community groups	None					

Site Description

The site contains 3 three storey mid terrace properties property located on the eastern side of Royal College Street. While the terrace is not listed, it is on the local list. The site is also not located within a Conservation Area but the Regent's Canal Conservation Area adjoins the rear of the terrace. The properties currently contain 5 residential units in total and the ground and basement floors of Nos 132 and 136 are currently in office use. All three properties have a large rear extension in office use which has full site coverage and 3 large roof lanterns.

Both Bangor Wharf and Eagle Wharf are located at the rear of the site. Bangor Wharf is on the current 2013 site allocations document and the more recent 2020 draft version of the site allocations document for redevelopment.



Relevant History

No.132

2020/0703/P- Notification for Prior Approval for the change of use from office use (B1a) to residential use (C3) at lower ground and ground floor levels to provide 1 residential unit. – **Prior approval approved subject to S106 11/08/2020**

2019/5172/P- Notification for Prior Approval for the change of use from office use (B1a) to residential use (C3) at lower ground and ground floor levels to provide 3 residential units. – **Withdrawn**

2013/4264/P -Change of use of basement and ground floor from office (Class B1) to Pilates Studio (Class D2). - **Granted 12/11/2013**

No. 134

9501213 - Conversion of No.134 from office (B1) to self-contained flat on ground and lower ground floor involving internal alterations. – **Granted 18/12/1996**

No.136

2021/1849/P - Change of use of the basement and ground floor from office use (Class B1a) to a residential unit (Class C3). – **Prior approval approved subject to S106 18/02/2022**

Nos 132-134

2021/1848/NEW -Notification for Prior Approval for the change of use from office use (B1a) to residential use (C3) at lower ground and ground floor levels to provide 3 residential units – **Withdrawn**

Nos 132-136

9300567 - Retention of change of use of first and second floors and works of conversion to provide four two bedroom flats. – **Granted 28/04/1994**

Neighbouring properties

No.138

2011/2695/P - Change of use from a house in multiple occupation (Class C4) to 3 self contained residential units (Class C3) and associated alterations to include changing the windows to the front elevation. - **Granted 10/04/2012**

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

London Plan (2021)

Camden's Local Plan (2017)

A1 – Managing the impact of development

D1 – Design

D2 – Heritage

T1 - Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport

T2 - Parking and car parking

T4 - Sustainable movement of goods and materials

Supplementary Guidance (2021)

- CPG Home Improvements
- CPG Design
- CPG Amenity
- CPG Transport

The Local List (2015)

Regent's Canal Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2008)

Camden Sites Allocations Plan (2013)

Draft Site Allocations Local Plan (2020)

Assessment

1.0 Proposal

1.1 Planning permission is sought for the following:

- Raising of roof of joint rear extension on all properties, nos. 132-136, to increase it from single to double storey height and demolition to create rear lightwell behind no.132.
- Insertion of new windows and alterations to others on rear elevations.

2.0 Assessment

2.1 The main considerations in relation to this proposal are:

- The visual impact upon the character and appearance of the host property, streetscene and setting of the Regent's Canal conservation area
- Impact on the amenity of adjoining occupiers
- Impact on Bangor Wharf's site allocation

3.0 Design and Appearance

Policy/background

3.1 Policy D1 of Camden's Local Plan outlines that the Council will require all developments to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings and the character and proportion of the existing building. In addition it should integrate well with the surrounding streets and contribute positively to the street frontage. Policy D2 states that Council will seek to protect other heritage assets including non-designated heritage assets (including those on and off the local list) and resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area.

3.2 CPG Design outlines that proposals should assess the impacts of the scheme from a design perspective and the contribution it makes to townscape character including:

- having regard to the scale, form and massing of neighbouring buildings;
- using materials and detailing that are sympathetic to the host building and buildings nearby;
- respecting and preserving existing architectural features, such as projecting bays or chimney stacks;
- respecting and preserving the historic pattern where it exists, and the established townscape of the surrounding area, including the ratio of built to unbuilt space;
- the effects of the proposal on the amenity of adjacent residential properties with regard to daylight, sunlight, outlook, light pollution/spillage, privacy or the working conditions of occupants of adjacent non-residential buildings;
- the desirability of retaining existing areas of landscaping (or areas that can be enhanced) to meet the amenity needs of workers, e.g. for social interaction;

3.3 CPG Home Improvements states that rear extensions should:

- Be subordinate to the building being extended, in relation to its location, form, footprint, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing;
- Respect and preserve the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style;
- Be carefully scaled in terms of its height, width and depth;

3.4 While it is noted that the site is not in a conservation area, the rear of the site does adjoin the Regent's Canal Conservation Area and the development would therefore have an impact on views into/from and its setting. Also, the terrace which includes the three properties within this proposal are recognised as being on the Council's Local list as a non-designated heritage asset and this also needs to be included in the assessment.

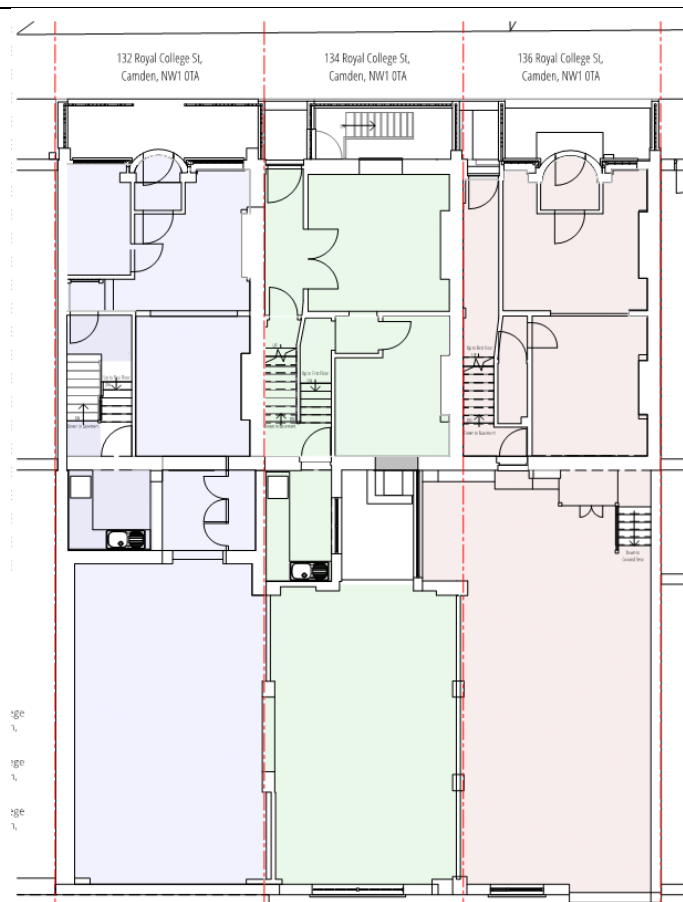
3.5 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area when considering applications relating to land or buildings within that Area.

3.6 The effect of this section of the 1990 Act is that there is a statutory presumption in favour of the preservation of the character and appearance of Conservation Area. Considerable importance and weight should be attached to their preservation. A proposal which would cause harm should only be permitted where there are strong countervailing planning considerations which are sufficiently powerful to outweigh the presumption. The NPPF provides guidance on the weight that should be accorded to such harm and in what circumstances such harm might be justified (paras 193-202). 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.

3.7 Section 203 of the NPPF outlines that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

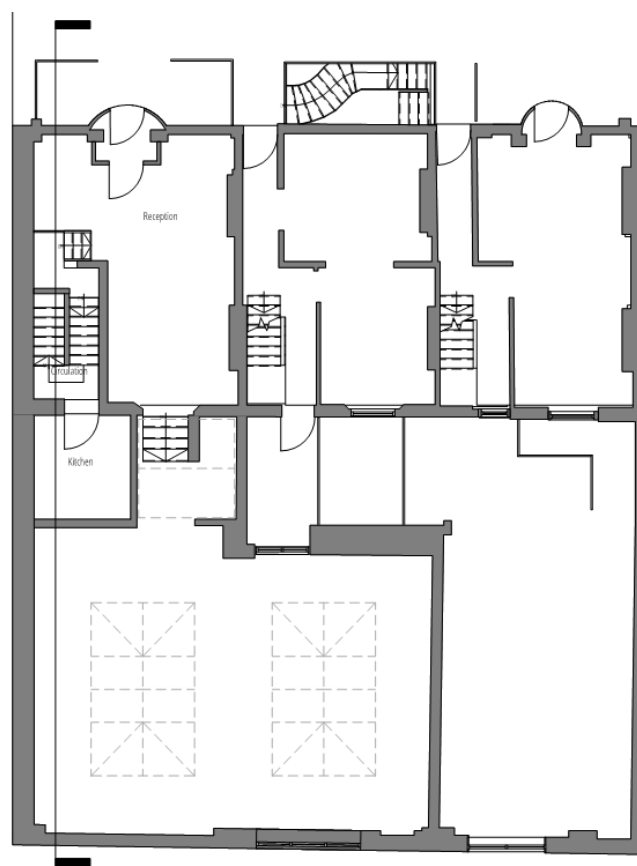
Assessment

3.8 It is noted that the existing floor plans may not accurately show the correct layout within nos 132 and 134 when compared to the existing floor plans submitted with the previous application ref. 2020/0703/P. There appears to be a staircase providing access to the first floor flat in the previous application whereas the current application does not show how this unit is accessed as no staircase is shown at first floor level. In addition the ground floor extension occupying the garden of 134 is actually part of the floorspace of No.132. This is shown in the plans below:



② Existing Ground Floor
1:100

Current application ground floor



① Existing Ground Floor GA Plan
1:100

previous application ref. 2020/0703/P

3.9 Nonetheless, based on the proposed plans submitted with the current application, the Council considers the proposed development to be an extension to the existing office space only. It does not appear that there are any changes proposed to the flat layouts at first floor.

3.10 The character of the Regent's Canal Conservation is outlined in the appraisal as being of an industrial nature along the Camden section of the canal. The application site is part of a mid-19th century terrace. It is noted that the neighbour at No.128 has had its garden eroded by an industrial extension to a property in Eagle Wharf. The current extensions at Nos 130-138 are considered to detract from the terrace and appear at odds with the character of the terrace as they appear industrial in nature and are visually very bulky and unattractive; those at Nos 132-136 have total site coverage resulting in the total loss of the original rear gardens.

3.11 The existing rear wall of the extensions stands at a height of 4m; the proposal would increase this boundary height by 1.4m to 5.4m. It would be taller than its neighbours at No.130 and 138 and give the appearance of a two storey extension at the rear. Internally due to the lower floor levels, an internal height of 5.8m would be achieved and it is likely that a floor could be inserted to create two levels within the extension. Part of the roof over No.132 would be demolished to create a rear lightwell. On the rear elevation there are two existing windows at No.134 and 136 and the proposal would replace these with four windows on this elevation. While no floorplates are shown in the section drawings, it is considered that, with the height increase and location of the proposed windows, the intention is likely to provide additional floorspace over 2 floors.

3.12 The development fails to adhere to the CPG's guidance outlined above and would not respect the proportions, scale and architecture of the host building or its neighbours within the terrace. A two storey extension would appear very bulky and dominant and would overwhelm the character and appearance of the rear elevations of these properties. While it is acknowledged that there is a two storey rear extension at Number 138, this is not a locally listed building unlike the remainder of the terrace. It is also noted that the majority of the terrace has either no rear extensions or single storey rear extensions.

3.13 The site is considered to have already been developed to its maximum and this proposal for a trio of full width two storey extensions would fail to either preserve or enhance the character and appearance locally listed buildings and would be detrimental to the setting of the neighbouring Regent's Canal conservation area, contrary to policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan.

3.14 The proposal is considered to lead to 'less than substantial' harm to the significance of designated heritage assets, both the locally listed buildings and the adjoining conservation area, and would not create any public benefit. In accordance with the NPPF balancing exercise outlined above, it is considered that this harm is not outweighed by any benefit and thus the scheme should be refused permission.

4.0 Amenity impact on neighbouring properties

4.1 Local Plan Policy A1 seeks to ensure that the amenity of neighbours is protected including visual privacy, outlook, sunlight, daylight and overshadowing.

4.2 CPG Amenity states that development should be designed in order to ensure that "the proximity, size or cumulative effect of any structures do not have an overbearing and/or dominating effect that is detrimental to the enjoyment of their properties by adjoining residential occupiers" and that where development is considered to have a detrimental impact upon levels of daylight, sunlight or overshadowing into neighbouring properties, the submission of further evidence of this impact may be required.

4.3. It appears that No.134 is entirely residential and that the 1st and 2nd floors of 132 and 136 are residential with office on the ground and basement levels. It is noted that both No.132 and No.136 have recently been granted prior approval to convert their basement and ground floor into 1 residential unit each. While the rear garden of the neighbour at No.138 is largely occupied by an extension to an industrial building in Eagle Wharf to the rear, the main body of the house contains four flats.

4.4 No daylight and sunlight report has been provided to assess the developments impact on light to the residential properties at Nos.134-138 Royal College Street. The flats at No.134 and 138 Royal College Street at the lower levels are served by narrow and small scale lightwells (see image 1 below). In addition the proposal would remove or reduce the scale of the rear windows across all three buildings.



4.5 In absence of evidence demonstrating otherwise, it is considered that the increased height of the extension could have a detrimental impact on these properties in terms of loss of daylight to Nos.134-138 Royal College Street and loss of outlook and increased sense of enclosure to the flats at Nos 134 and 138 Royal College Street.

4.6 The new windows in the rear boundary would face onto Bangor and Eagle Wharf, which are currently in industrial/office use and therefore it would not harm them as they are not in residential use. However the site needs to be future-proofed if the land behind this application is developed in line with the Council's site allocation documents which are discussed in the next section.

5.0 Impact on Bangor Wharf's site allocation

5.1 Bangor Wharf adjacent to the rear of the site is recognised in the Site allocations document (2013) as being earmarked for redevelopment including new housing. The draft site allocations document (2020), in policy CSP7, sustains this.

5.2 As mentioned above in the design section, the proposal will modify and add windows on a shared boundary that relates to a development site. This would be considered to be unneighbourly as the proposal would rely on light from this neighbouring site, thus prejudicing the location and form of future development here.

5.3 No consideration of this site allocation and its future housing potential has been demonstrated in this application, therefore it is considered that its siting and detailed design, involving rear boundary windows facing onto Bangor Wharf, could prejudice development on this site.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The proposed rear extension, by reason of its siting, height, scale and design, would appear as visually bulky and obtrusive on all rear elevations, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the host buildings, the locally listed terrace of which these buildings form part, and the setting of the adjoining Regent's Canal conservation area. It is therefore contrary to policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

6.2 In the absence of evidence in a daylight/sunlight report to demonstrate otherwise, it is considered likely that the increased height of the extension could have a detrimental impact on daylight to residential flats at Nos.134-138 Royal College Street and on outlook to residential flats at Nos 134 and 138 Royal College Street. It is therefore contrary to policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

6.3 The proposal to include rear windows on the shared boundary with Bangor Wharf, by virtue of their siting, scale and detailed design, would be likely to prejudice the future development and delivery of new homes on the adjoining Bangor Wharf site to the rear, as outlined in the Site Allocations Plan (2013) and Policy CSP7 of the draft Site Allocations Local Plan (2020). The proposals are thus contrary to policies A1 (Managing the impact of development) and G1 (Delivery and location of growth) of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 Refuse planning permission.