

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:	25/01/2022
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:	01/01/2022
Officer			Application Number(s)		
Sofie Fieldsend			2021/5199/P		
Application Address			Drawing Numbers		
47 Theobald's Road London WC1X 8SP			See draft decision notice		
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		
Proposal(s)					
Installation of external condenser unit to rear first floor roof					
Recommendation(s):		Grant conditional planning permission			
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission			

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice			
Informatives:				
Consultations				
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. of responses	0	No. of objections	0
Summary of consultation responses:	Press notice published from 09/12/2021 to 02/01/2022 Site notice displayed from 08/12/2021 to 01/01/2022 No objections were received during the consultation period.			
Amenity groups	<p><i>Bloomsbury CAAC raised the following objection:</i></p> <p><i>'The Bloomsbury CAAC formally objects to the application in its current form.</i></p> <p><i>In our view, photographs must be supplied showing the proposed location and the surrounding context, especially the rear elevations of neighbouring properties and general condition of the site and surrounding viewpoints. Providing measured drawings is neither necessary nor helpful for an application of this kind.</i></p> <p><i>The proposals may not actually be objectionable in heritage terms. It is a matter of formality that we must object at this stage to prevent premature approval prior to us having been able to make a proper assessment of this application.'</i></p> <p><u>Officer response:</u></p> <p><i>Aerial and site photos were submitted to address this request and sent to the Bloomsbury CAAC who withdrew their objection.</i></p>			

Site Description

The site is a four-storey mid terrace building located on the southern side of Theobald's Road. Whilst not listed, the host building is recognised as a positive contributor within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. It adjoins a Grade II listed building Conway Hall at 25 Red Lion Square.

Relevant History

2020/3573/P –Variation of condition 7 (opening hours) of planning permission ref 2019/6423/P dated 08/07/2020 for 'Alterations to shopfront and rear fenestration, replacement rear rooflights and rear roof extension at first floor all in association with the change of use from A2 (Solicitors) to D1 (Art Gallery).'- **Granted 08/10/2020**

2020/3218/P – Details of condition 4 (security grille) as required by planning permission 2019/6423/P dated 08/07/2020 (for alterations to shopfront and rear fenestration, replacement rear rooflights and rear roof extension at first floor all in association with the change of use from A2 to D1). – **Granted 14/10/2020**

2019/6423/P - Alterations to shopfront and rear fenestration, replacement rear rooflights and rear roof extension at first floor all in association with the change of use from A2 (Solicitors) to D1 (Art Gallery). – **Granted 08/07/2020**

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

London Plan 2021

Camden Local Plan 2017

Policy A1 Managing the impact of development

Policy A4 Noise and Vibration

Policy D1 Design

Policy D2 Heritage

Policy CC1 Climate change mitigation

Policy CC2 Adapting to climate change

Camden Planning Guidance 2021

CPG Design (January 2021)

CPG Amenity (January 2021)

CPG Energy efficiency and adaptation (January 2021)

Assessment

1.0 Proposal

- 1.1. Planning permission is sought for the installation of an external condenser unit to rear first floor roof to serve the ground floor art gallery

2. Main planning considerations

2.1 The main planning considerations are considered to be:

- Design, appearance and impacts on designated heritage assets;
- Amenity of neighbouring properties;
- Energy and Sustainability

3.0 Design, appearance and impacts on designated heritage assets

3.1 Local Plan Policies D1(Design) and D2 (Heritage) states that within conservation areas, the Council will only grant permission for development that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.2 One air-conditioning unit (0.9m wide, 0.3m deep and 0.9m high) would be installed at the rear at 1st floor to serve the existing art gallery.

3.3 Due to its location to the rear it would not be visibly prominent from the street and it has been sensitively sited against the rear elevation in the middle away from the site boundaries. It is noted that plant is not an uncommon addition at this level across the terrace. Overall, given the small-scale nature of the unit in relation to the host property, it is considered that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the host property, streetscene and the wider conservation area.

3.4 It is noted that the site adjoins a Grade II listed building west of the site, given the unit's small scale and siting away from the boundary it is not considered to harm this Grade II building's special interest or setting.

3.5 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 of the 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.

3.6 Special regard has been attached to the desirability of preserving the listed building and its features of special architectural or historic interest, under s.16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act [ERR] 2013.

4.0 Amenity of 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.

General assessment

4.2 Due to the siting, boundary screening, modest scale and separation distance to neighbouring properties, it is considered that the alterations would not materially harm any of the neighbouring properties amenity in terms of loss of light, privacy or a sense of enclosure.

Noise and vibration

4.3 An acoustic report was submitted for assessment and the Council's Environmental Health Noise Officer reviewed the report. They found the details satisfactory subject to conditions securing noise level compliance and installation of required mitigation measures. It is considered that with the requested conditions, the development would not significantly harm any neighbouring property's amenity in terms of noise.

5.0 Energy and Sustainability

5.1 Local Plan Policy D1 (Design) and Local Plan Policy CC1 expect all developments, whether for refurbishment or redevelopment, to optimise resource efficiency and minimise the effects of climate change.

5.2 More specifically, Local Plan Policy CC2 (Adapting to climate change) and CPG (Energy efficiency and adaption) confirm that the Council generally discourages the use of air conditioning for active cooling except in exceptional circumstances given the additional energy consumption required from operating the equipment and the adverse impacts on the microclimate from the warm air expelled from the equipment. As such, the Council expects justification to be provided for any proposals involving the installation of air conditioning equipment and supporting information which demonstrates an appropriate level of mitigation and measures incorporated in line with the London Plan 'cooling hierarchy.'

5.3 In support of the proposals, the applicant has submitted a justification and provided a thermal comfort analysis. It outlines that passive design measures have been implemented and explored in order to reduce the impact of rising temperatures and subsequently reduce the risk of overheating within the building.

5.4 The statements identify the specific energy efficiency measures to be undertaken to control cooling, including:

- new insulation glazing to the shopfront
- new insulation glazing to the rear extension rooflights
- new insulation to the existing rear extension roof
- new under floor heating throughout with replacement of existing boiler with modern high efficiency heat timing system
- new glazing units g-value has been considered to balance solar control and daylight provision to the space
- installation of rooflight and window blinds to reduce heat gain from solar gain
- new water saving sanitaryware

- new rooflight opening sections to allow natural ventilation throughout the gallery space - however, there is potential for issues for the internal function that is focused on the display of, often fragile artworks, associated with relying solely on natural ventilation to provide thermal comfort
- draft proofing and enhanced thermal performance to all external doors and internal doors to common stairs
- installation of LED lighting with smart PIR controls reducing the internal heat gains within the space, where possible
- the building fabric and air tightness has been improved, where possible, to achieve improvements against the requirements of Part L2A.

5.5 The building is in use as an art gallery, some of the artwork require a specific environment, and measures need to take this sensitively into consideration. It is intended that the unit would not be used all year round and only in the main gallery.

5.6 Thermal modelling has also been carried out at the site in order to simulate indoor temperatures and conditions for the purpose of identifying areas of potential overheating. It outlines that despite any improvements the results show that building is at risk of overheating given the highly unpredictable occupancy levels; the associated heat gains; and the limits on the design team imposed by the original building.

5.7 Therefore, in this particular instance, and having regard to all the supporting information submitted including the constraints of the application site, it is considered that the need for cooling is justified and demonstrated in general accordance with Camden Local Plan Policies D1 (Design), CC1 (Climate change mitigation) and CC2 (Adapting to climate change), and related Camden Planning Guidance.