

<b>CITY OF WESTMINSTER</b>			
<b>PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUB COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Date</b> 9 January 2018	<b>Classification</b> For General Release	
<b>Report of</b> Director of Planning		<b>Ward involved</b> St James's	
<b>Subject of Report</b>	<b>Blackstone House, London, EC4Y 9BW.</b>		
<b>Proposal</b>	Erection of an infill extension between Blackstone House and 1 & 2 Garden Court to create a new atrium connecting the buildings at second, third and fourth floor levels, to provide additional chamber floorspace and to improve the circulation between the buildings, and associated external alterations including installation of rooftop plant to Blackstone House.		
<b>Agent</b>	Indigo Planning Limited		
<b>On behalf of</b>	The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple		
<b>Registered Number</b>	17/08153/FULL	<b>Date amended/ completed</b>	1 December 2017
<b>Date Application Received</b>	11 September 2017		
<b>Historic Building Grade</b>	Blackstone House is unlisted and 1 & 2 Garden Court are grade II listed		
<b>Conservation Area</b>	Strand (City of Westminster) and Temple (City of London)		

## 1. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse permission – design and increased sense of enclosure.

## 2. SUMMARY

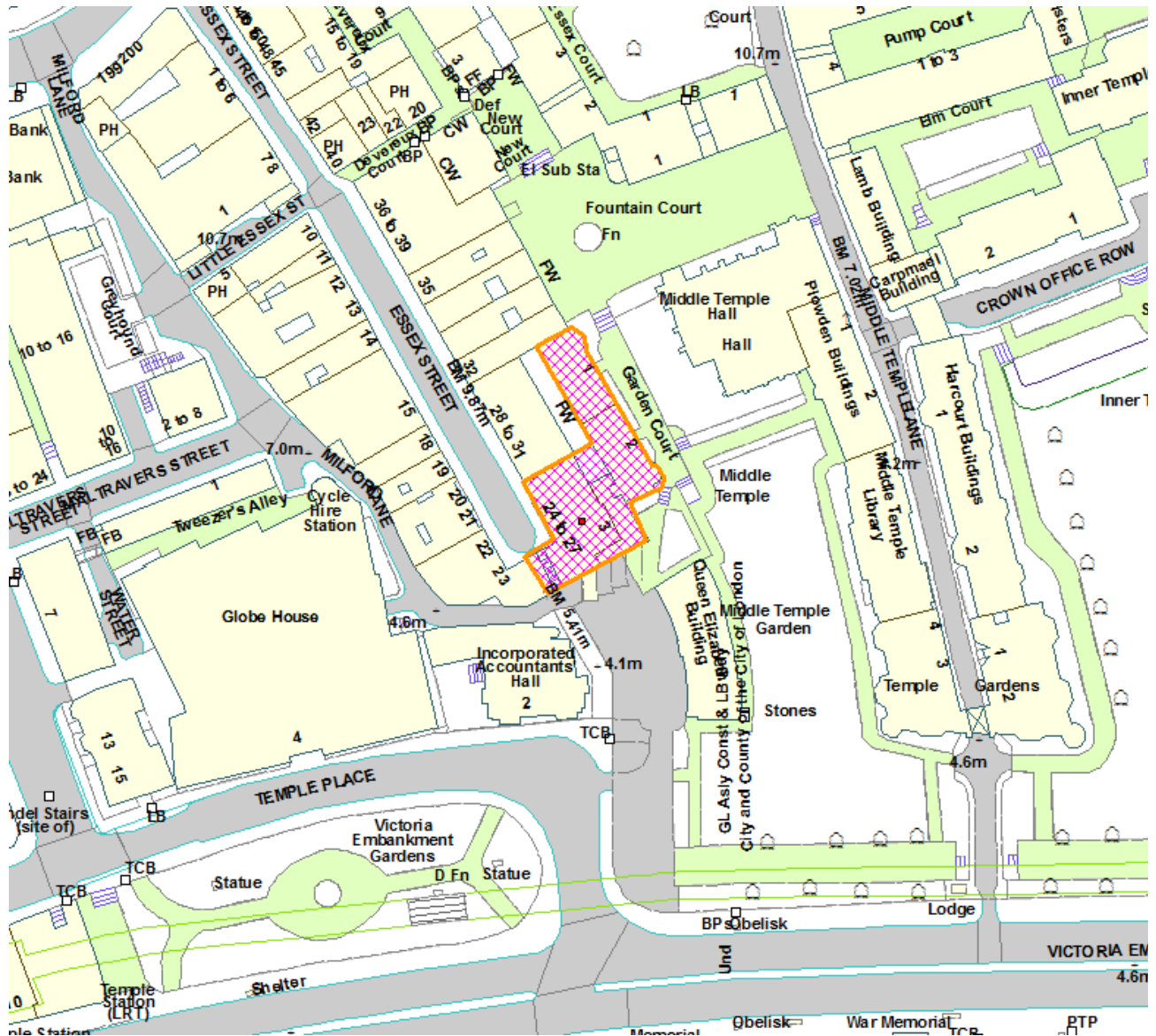
Blackstone House is an unlisted building and 1 & 2 Garden Court are grade II listed buildings in Middle Temple. The buildings are used as barrister's chambers. The boundary between the City of Westminster and the City of London runs between Blackstone House and 1 & 2 Garden Court. The buildings are interconnected at ground and first floors. The site is located within the Strand (City of Westminster) and Temple (City of London) Conservation Areas.

The key issues in this case are:

- the impact of the proposals on the significance of designated heritage assets including the impact on listed buildings, an adjoining listed garden and conservation areas; and
- the impact of the proposals on the amenity enjoyed by neighbouring residential occupiers.

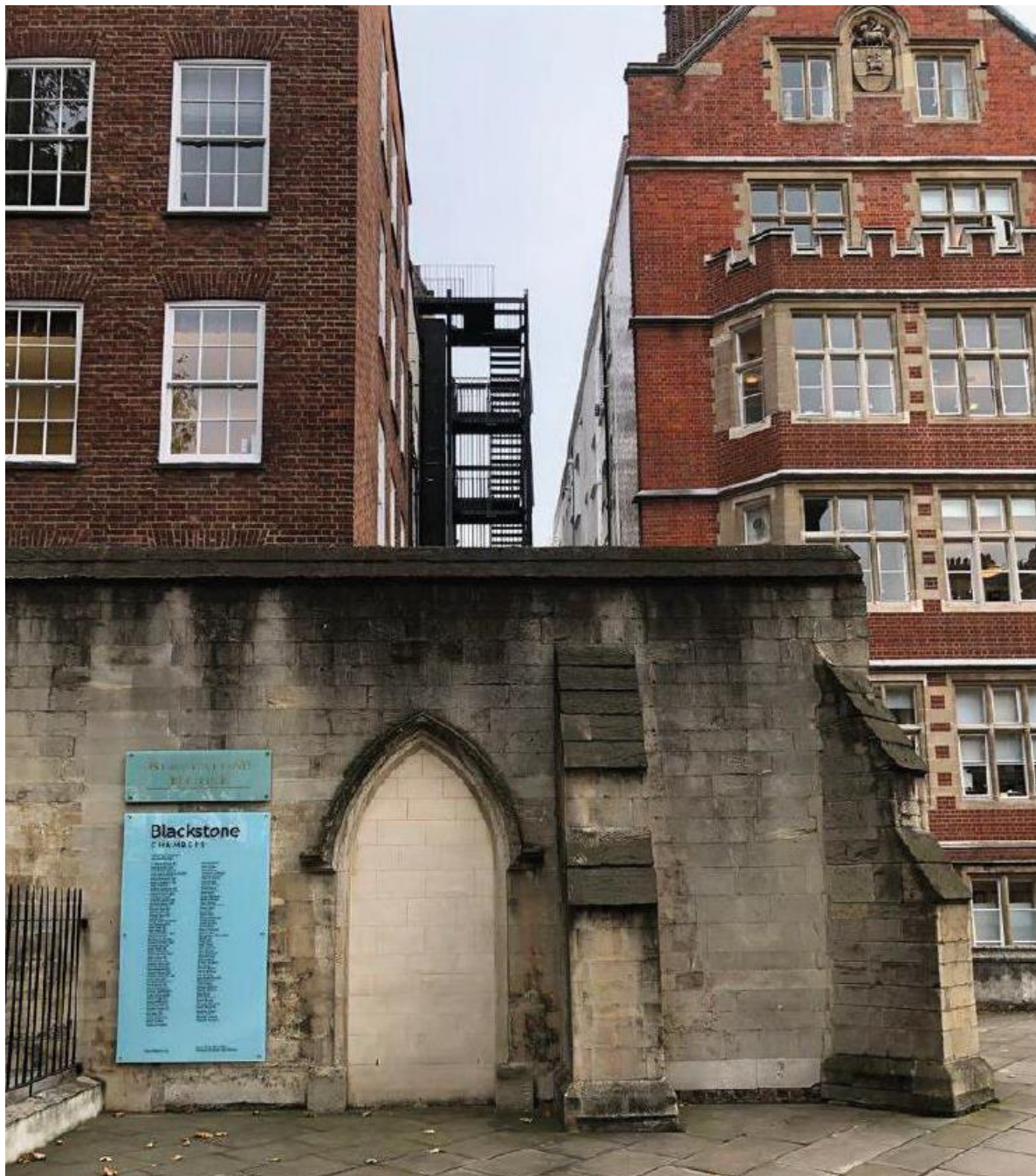
The proposed infill extension would harm the character and appearance of Blackstone House and the Strand Conservation Area; and would harm the setting of the Grade II listed 1 & 2 Garden Court, the Temple Conservation Area and the neighbouring Grade II Registered Gardens at Middle Temple Gardens. The extension would also result in a significant increase in a sense of enclosure for residents living in Aldwych Chambers, Essex Street. As such the proposal fails to meet with the policies set out in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and Westminster's City Plan (the City Plan) and is recommended for refusal for the reasons set in the draft decision notice.

## 3. LOCATION PLAN



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4. PHOTOGRAPHS



**Blackstone House (left) and 1 & 2 Garden Court (right)**



**View from fire escape  
Blackstone House (right) and 1 & 2 Garden Court (left)**

## 5. CONSULTATIONS

### CITY OF LONDON:

Consider the application acceptable. Less than substantial harm is caused to designated heritage assets by the visual prominence of the extension, but this harm is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal which principally relate to improved access between the buildings.

### HISTORIC ENGLAND:

No comment.

### HISTORIC ENGLAND (ARCHAEOLOGY):

No objection subject to conditions.

### THE GARDENS TRUST:

No comment.

### WESTMINSTER SOCIETY:

Recommend the application be approved.

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:

No objection subject to conditions.

### HIGHWAY PLANNING MANGER:

No objection.

### CLEANSING MANGER:

No objection, subject to conditions.

## ADJOINING OWNERS/OCCUPIERS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

No. Consulted: 39

Total No. of replies: 17 (objections)

Objections received on the following grounds:

### RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- Loss of light and increased overshadowing, the submitted daylight and sunlight report is inaccurate;
- Overbearing height and bulk and loss of outlook;
- Increased overlooking; and
- The proposals would increase the intensity of the use of the buildings.

### DESIGN

- Harm to the character and appearance of the buildings and conservation area.

### OTHER

- Noise and disturbance from building works, hours of work should be restricted;

- The applicant ought to investigate an alternative fire strategy for the building to allow for the removal of the external fire escape staircase which has a negative impact on the appearance of the building and residential amenity;
- The benefits of the proposal to the applicant/ tenant in terms of improved circulation and increased floorspace does not outweigh the harm it would cause to neighbouring residential occupiers and designated heritage assets; and
- The extension would result in the loss of monetary value of adjoining properties.

The applicant and tenant of the application building have written in support of their proposal.

PRESS ADVERTISEMENT / SITE NOTICE: Yes

## **6. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **6.1 The Application Site**

Blackstone House is an unlisted building located within the Strand Conservation Area and the City of Westminster. 1 & 2 Garden Court are grade II listed buildings located within the Temple Conservation Area and the City of London. Both buildings are used as barrister's chambers and are interconnected at ground and first floors by an existing glass infill extension. The site is located within the Core Central Activities Zone (Care CAZ).

### **6.2 Recent Relevant History**

On 2 July 2007 permission was granted for the erection of a part one, part two storey glazed link between Blackstone House and No. 2 Garden Court to provide additional (Class B1) office space. Alterations to Blackstone House including the formation of new openings in the rear elevation, installation of seven air conditioning units at roof level, alterations to library wall including blocking up of existing entrance and formation of new window. Alterations to No. 2 Garden Court including the formation of new openings in rear elevation, demolition of existing single storey extension and installation of new platform lift. (RN: 07/04155/FULL)

## **7. THE PROPOSAL**

Permission is sought for to erect a new glazed infill extension between Blackstone House and 1 & 2 Garden Court. The extension would create an atrium connecting the buildings at second, third and fourth floor levels. The additional space would provide chamber floorspace and improve the circulation between the buildings. Other works are sought to install plant to the foot of Blackstone House.

The applicant has submitted identical applications to the City of London and the City of Westminster. Whilst the submissions are identical, each planning authority can only authorise or refuse work within their boundaries. Blackstone House and the gap between it and the Garden Court buildings where the proposed extension is sought is within the City of Westminster.

The floorspace figures are summarised below:

	Existing GIA (sqm)	Proposed GIA (sqm)	+
Chambers (office B1)	3905	3934	29

## 8. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

### 8.1 Land Use

Policy S20 of the City Plan identifies the need for significant additional office floorspace within Westminster to retain and enhance Westminster's strategic role in London's office sector and support London's global competitiveness. The Core CAZ is identified as a suitable location for office floorspace in Policies S6 and S20 of the City Plan as it contributes to the unique and varied mixed use character of the Core CAZ which will ensure the continued vitality, attraction and continued economic success of Central London. The provision of additional office floorspace in this location is therefore acceptable in principle.

Policy S1 of the City Plan sets out the circumstances in which development proposals which include an increase in office floorspace trigger a requirement to provide new residential accommodation. As the net additional floorspace (29 sqm GIA) is less than 30% of the total existing building floorspace and less than 400sqm, no residential floorspace is required to offset the increase in office floorspace.

### 8.2 Townscape and Design

The two buildings that form the site are currently linked at ground and first floors by a part single-storey, part two-storey glass atrium within the gap which separates the two. This low atrium is set behind and concealed from public view by the high stone boundary wall which encloses the southern end of the site.

The Westminster portion of the site is wholly within the Strand Conservation Area, it is spatially separate and defined from, the grade II listed 1 & 2 Garden Court by a sizeable open gap. 1 & 2 Garden Court are located within the Temple Conservation Area. Blackstone House is unlisted but defined by the Strand Conservation Area Audit as a building of merit. It is built of brick to an L-shape planform enclosing the southern end of Essex Street where a rebuild of the old Essex Steps descend through the Grade II listed gateway to Milford Lane and Temple Place, marking the ancient line between the street and the pre-embankment riverside. The building's southern elevations are a plainer stripped-back version of the front, representative of their 20<sup>th</sup> century date. They are however positive elevations and a well-mannered composition.

Close to the east of the site is Middle Temple Garden, a Grade II Registered Garden within the City of London. The site and the gap between the buildings is readily visible from the gardens and forms part of its setting, contributing generally positively to the collegiate character of the Temples.

In addition to the evident positive characteristics of the site, the metal fire escape staircase, which is visible in the gap between buildings, has a negative impact on the buildings and area.



## Legislation, Policy and Guidance

When determining applications for development within a conservation area, or affecting a listed building or its setting, Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 are relevant and require special regard be had to the desirability of preserving the setting of the listed building, and of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Sections 7 and 12 of the NPPF require that great weight be placed on design quality and on the preservation of designated heritage assets. Paragraph 133 makes it clear that 'substantial harm' must only be approved in exceptional circumstances in return for substantial public benefits and subject to various tests. Paragraph 134 meanwhile requires a similar but proportionate assessment of 'less than substantial harm' against public benefits; 'less than substantial' should not be confused with 'acceptable' harm.

Together, and as informed by a range of legal judgments, the above statutory and national policy basis for decision-making equates to a strong presumption against harm, which may only be permitted if the harm caused would be significantly and demonstrably outweighed by public benefits which could only be achieved through allowing that harm. In considering this, it should also be considered whether there may be less harmful means of achieving the same, or whether those benefits could not be acceptably provided elsewhere.

UDP Policies DES 1 (urban design / conservation principles), DES 5 (alterations and extensions), DES 9 (conservation areas) and DES 10 (listed buildings) and DES 12 (registered parks and gardens) apply to the consideration of the application proposals, whilst S26 and S28 of the City Plan provide the strategic basis for the application. Relevant London Plan (2016) Policies include 7.4 (Local Character), 7.6 (Architecture) and 7.8 (Heritage assets and archaeology). The Strand Conservation Area Audit is directly relevant to the application proposals.

## Design, Conservation and Townscape Impacts

The extension would provide bridge links at every level linking the two buildings, along with additional meeting and break-out spaces. The extension would rise to just below the buildings' parapets, representing an increase in height of the equivalent of three storeys.

The extension would be essentially glazed. The glazing would incorporate a patinated bronze metal mesh encapsulated within its laminations, to help provide solar shading and control of outward light spill and reflectivity. The proposed extension would visually fill the gap which currently divides the site, and would present a tall wall of glass and metalwork readily to view from a number of angles to the south and neighbouring residential properties to the north. Objections have been received from neighbours on the grounds that the extension would harm the appearance of the buildings and conservation area. Some objectors consider that the metal fire escape staircase should be removed as part of these proposals as it impacts negatively on the appearance of the buildings and their properties.

The existing low level atrium is successful precisely because it is well concealed behind the pre-existing boundary wall – a clever and well executed scheme which has allowed the

two buildings to be used as one site. The proposed extension by contrast would quite dramatically alter the spatial character of the site, introducing a large object which architecturally and materially jars with the soft tones and textures of the brick and stonework which dominates the collegiate character of the Temple complex.

Whilst the bronze mesh within the glass would mean the glazing would appear different to regular glazed walling, the proposal would act as a large illuminating presence at night, and during the day it would present a visually hard and solid wall enclosing what spatially should be a gap separating two architecturally defined buildings. Both day and night, the gap would be transformed into a visually occupied place, exposing high levels of human activity where historically there has been none. Furthermore, the bronze mesh within the glass would fail in its stated intentions (of mitigating the appearance of the glass), and would instead present a highly eye-catching, decorative aesthetic, which would be notably discordant with the traditional materiality and aesthetic characteristics of this collegiate location.

These impacts would also have a direct effect on the appearance, character and setting of both of the site's main buildings. The rear elevations facing into the lightwell gap would be largely screened from view. Whilst the atrium's glazing would theoretically provide some visual permeability, the rear elevations of both buildings would be fundamentally changed to become internalised elevations, largely obscured from free view from the outside. This would also have a wider impact on the site's positive contribution to the conservation area, to the Temples Conservation Area and to the setting of Middle Temple Gardens.

For these reasons, it is considered that the proposals would harm the character of both Blackstone House and 1 & 2 Garden Court, and would also fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Strand Conservation Area, the setting of the Temples Conservation Area and Middle Temple Gardens. This harm is considered 'less than substantial harm' as defined by the NPPF which means the presumption is for refusal unless public benefits outweigh the identified harm.

### **Public Benefit and Potential Alternatives**

The applicant notes the benefits of the scheme include the improved usability and accessibility between the two buildings and the increase in office floorspace, without which the applicant contends will result in the existing tenant seeking alternative accommodation elsewhere and this would have financial implications on them. The applicant also contends a benefit of the proposal would be to obscure the fire escape staircase from public vantage points. It is understood that the fire escape staircase is required as part of a fire excavation strategy for Blackstone House (and it is not redundant). External works outside of Westminster's boundaries to the front of 1 & 2 Garden Court are being considered by the City of London and these would provide level access externally in front of the Garden Court buildings and are cited by the applicant as a benefit. Some objectors have recognised the benefits of the scheme but do not consider they outweigh the harm.

The applicant's and tenant's circumstances are understood, and the provision of additional office floorspace and the improvement in the accessibility of the existing buildings are welcomed in principle. In this case however, these benefits are not

considered to outweigh the harm discussed above. The application buildings are, and it is considered they should remain as, separate visual entities and in this context there will therefore be limits to the degree to which they can be used together or expanded. The spatial and architectural limitations noted above are perhaps the most fundamental of these. Nonetheless, officers have advised the applicant that with a suitable degree of compromise and sensitivity a single link-bridge at either third or fourth floor level could be appropriate. This, whilst still requiring some transfer between floors, would improve accessibility whilst causing a much smaller degree of visual intrusion between the buildings thereby achieving much of the accessibility benefits the applicant seeks. There are many exemplars of well-designed high level link-bridges, both traditionally and more recent.

Furthermore, given the improved buildings are private chamber office premises, the extent to which the benefits of their very modest expansion in terms of floorspace and improved accessibility can be reasonably considered a weighty public benefit is somewhat limited. Given the obscuring of the fire escape is achieved by way of an extension that is considered harmful itself and would evidently be more prominent from public vantage points than the fire escape, this is not considered a benefit. Even if it were, it could be screened by much less intrusive means than the application proposals. Neighbours have noted that cumulative impact of both the proposed extension and existing staircase would be negative visually, and officers concur. There would also be significant harm to residential amenity which is discussed in section 8.3 of this report. As the works to the front of Garden Court are within the boundaries of the City of London and could be proposed separately to, and are not understood to be dependent on, the proposed extension, limited weight is given to this as benefit that would outweigh harm caused by the proposed extension.

In light of this, it is considered that the proposal is not the least intrusive means of improving this site and providing the benefits that the applicant states would arise. Therefore, permission is recommended to be refused in accordance with the presumption against harm discussed above.

### **8.3 Residential Amenity**

The nearest residential properties are located within Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street. This residential building is immediately adjoining Blackstone House to the north of the application site. The flats here have windows which face into the gap between 1 & 2 Garden Court.

Policies S29 of the City Plan and ENV13 of the UDP seek to protect residential amenity in terms of light, privacy, sense of enclosure and encourage development which enhances the residential environment of surrounding properties.

17 objections have been received from residents who live in Aldwych Chambers on the grounds the extension would harm the enjoyment of their flats in terms of loss of light, overbearing/ increased enclosure, overshadowing and loss of privacy.

## **Sunlight and Daylight**

The applicant has carried out an assessment on the neighbouring properties based on the various numerical tests laid down in the Building Research Establishment (BRE) guide "Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: a guide to good practice". The BRE guide stresses that the numerical values are not intended to be prescriptive in every case and are intended to be interpreted flexibly depending on the circumstances since natural lighting is only one of many factors in site layout design. For example, in a dense urban environment, a higher degree of obstruction may be unavoidable if new developments are to match the height and proportions of existing buildings. The BRE guide principally seeks to protect light to principal habitable rooms.

### **Daylight**

The principal BRE methodology for the assessment of daylight values is the 'vertical sky component' (VSC). This measures the amount of light reaching the outside face of a window. Under this method, a window achieving a VSC value of 27% is considered to be well lit. If, as a result of the development, light received to an affected window is below 27%, and would be reduced by 20% or more, the loss would be noticeable.

The applicant's daylight and sunlight report has been conducted in accordance with BRE guidelines. It identifies four windows which would receive losses in daylight in excess of the guidelines. These are located at basement, lower ground, upper ground and first floor levels within Aldwych Chambers adjacent to the proposed infill extension.

The four windows belong to four different flats and they serve three bedrooms and one living room. Only one of the windows is the single window to the room it serves, namely a bedroom to Flat 9 at first floor level. The remaining three windows serve rooms with at least one other window which complies with the VSC test.

The extent of actual light loss to the windows is low but the losses appear high in percentage terms given the low existing VSC levels. The actual losses in VSC are between 0.1% to 0.52%.

Given three of the rooms impacted are served by other windows which do not fail the VSC test and the single window room is in use as a bedroom, which should be considered of less importance than principle living areas, on balance it is not considered sustainable to resist the proposal on the grounds of loss of daylight.

### **Sunlight**

In respect of sunlight, the BRE guide suggests that if a living room has a main window facing within 90 degrees of due south then the sunlighting of the existing dwelling may be adversely affected if it receives less than 25% of annual probable sunlight hours (APSH) or less than 5% of APSH between September and March, and receives less than 0.8 times its former sunlight hours during either period and has a reduction in sunlight received over the whole year greater than 4% of APSH.

None of the Aldwych Chambers properties face 90 degrees of due south and as such will not be impacted upon in terms of loss of sunlight.

## **Overshadowing**

The BRE guidelines have methodologies to assess overshadowing of gardens. And during the course of the application the applicant conducted one with reference to the sun-on-ground on the spring equinox. This is used to determine the areas which receive direct sunlight and those which do not. This method applies to both new and existing areas of amenity space. The BRE Guidelines suggest that the Spring Equinox (21 March) is a suitable date for the assessment as this is the midpoint of the sun's position throughout the year. It is recommended that for it to appear adequately sunlit throughout the year, at least half of a garden or amenity area should receive at least 2 hours of sunlight on 21 March.

The applicant's assessment confirms the existing gardens to the rear of Aldwych Chambers are currently inadequately sunlit and they receive zero sunlight hours on 21 March. The proposal would not alter this position. As such, the proposals would not result in a noticeable increase in overshadowing.

## **Sense of Enclosure**

The proposals would result in three additional stories on the boundary with Aldwych Chambers and the application site. The gap between the Garden Court and Essex Street properties is narrow and the existing extension to Blackstone House infills part of the gap, being two stories high on the boundary with Aldwych Chambers. The flats in Aldwych Chambers have windows which face into this gap and most of these windows serve habitable rooms, the lowest flats also benefit from courtyard gardens inside the gap. The properties nearest to the proposed extension also endure the enclosure which the existing fire escape staircase creates.

Policy ENV13 of the UDP states that developments should not result in a significant increase in the sense of enclosure. Many of the objections from neighbours relate to the scale, proximity and overbearing nature of the proposed extension which they consider would harm the enjoyment of their flats.

The applicant contends that because officers do not consider the loss of light would be of a severity that could sustain a refusal on that ground that the development is thereby also acceptable in terms of enclosure. Loss of light and sense of enclosure are distinct however, and the applicant's assertion is addressed directly under policy ENV 13 where it states even when there may be no material loss of daylight or sunlight, new development can still be unacceptable because of an increase in the sense of enclosure.

This existing situation is already highly compromised. Even when compared to other dense urban environments this existing situation is highly enclosed. It is considered that the proposals would result in the further enclosure of this space which would be to the detriment of residents, particularly those who live close to the boundary, which includes units with a single aspect facing Garden Court. Outlook is severely restricted by the very close proximity of Garden Court – the gap is approximately 4.5 metres wide. For those rooms which are closest to the boundary, which include living rooms and bedrooms, this severely restricted outlook is worsened by the fire escape staircase structure directly in front of them. The proposals would unacceptably worsen this further by adding an additional three stories of height and bulk on top of the existing boundary wall. This would

unacceptably increase the sense of enclosure experienced by residents within Aldwych Chambers making them feel too shut in.

### **Loss of Privacy**

Objectors consider the extension would allow for additional opportunities to overlook their properties. The additional three stories on the boundary within the gap would consist of an extension to the party wall of one storey with two glazed stories on top. The glazing would include a metal mesh and the applicant states the opacity of this glazing to the rear elevation would be of a degree that would prevent harmful views through it. The applicant states that the gauge of the mesh would be adjusted to make it more transparent to the front and less to the rear. Had the application been acceptable, a condition could have been attached to ensure that the mesh is of sufficient density to prevent views through it.

### **Light Spill**

Highly glazed extensions can result in harmful light spill. The applicant states the metal mesh glazing that is proposed has properties that prevent harmful light spill. Had the application been considered acceptable, a condition could have been attached to ensure that the mesh was sufficiently dense to reduce light spill.

## **8.4 Transportation/Parking**

Given the modest increase in floorspace, the Highway Planning Manager does not consider that there would any implications in highway terms.

## **8.5 Economic Considerations**

Discussed earlier in this report.

## **8.6 Access**

The proposal would increase the accessibility and circulation between the two buildings by reducing or eliminating the need to use multiple lifts to travel between the two buildings, which would be an improvement to this private use. All floors are currently accessible by lifts however the applicant considers this arrangement sub-optimal.

## **8.7 Other UDP/Westminster Policy Considerations**

### **Plant Equipment**

The applicant has submitted a noise survey as part of the application. Plant equipment is proposed at roof level of Blackstone House; the noise report indicates that the equipment assessed would likely be inaudible at the nearest residential premises. Had the application been considered acceptable, standard noise conditions could have been imposed.

## **Refuse /Recycling**

Details of waste storage and collection have not been provided. Given its modest size, it is accepted that the proposed extension will not result in waste being left on the highway for collection. However, the Cleansing Manger recommends details of this provision be secured and that could have been done by condition had the application been acceptable.

## **Archaeology**

The site was formerly within the grounds of the medieval Knights Templar and is located in a Tier 1 Archaeological Priority Area (Lundenwic and the Strand) which is strongly suspected to contain heritage assets of national importance. The Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) reviewed the archaeological assessment provided by the applicant to support the proposal and considered that further exploratory fieldwork and assessment was required. GLAAS advised this could be secured by appropriate conditions to secure a staged programme of archaeological work, and had the proposals been acceptable a condition requiring this would have been attached.

### **8.8 London Plan**

This application raises no strategic issues.

### **8.9 National Policy/Guidance Considerations**

The City Plan and UDP policies referred to in the consideration of this application are considered to be consistent with the NPPF unless stated otherwise.

### **8.10 Planning Obligations**

Planning obligations are not relevant in the determination of this application.

### **8.11 Environmental Impact Assessment**

Environmental Impact issues are not relevant to a development of this scale.

### **8.12 Other Issues**

#### **Construction impact**

Objectors have raised concern on the grounds of the disruption of building works. Noise and disturbance during construction is an unwelcome and well understood consequence of allowing new development; had the proposal be acceptable a condition would ensure work is not carried out at anti-social times. Maintenance, including keeping the property clean, would be the responsibility of the building's operator.

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

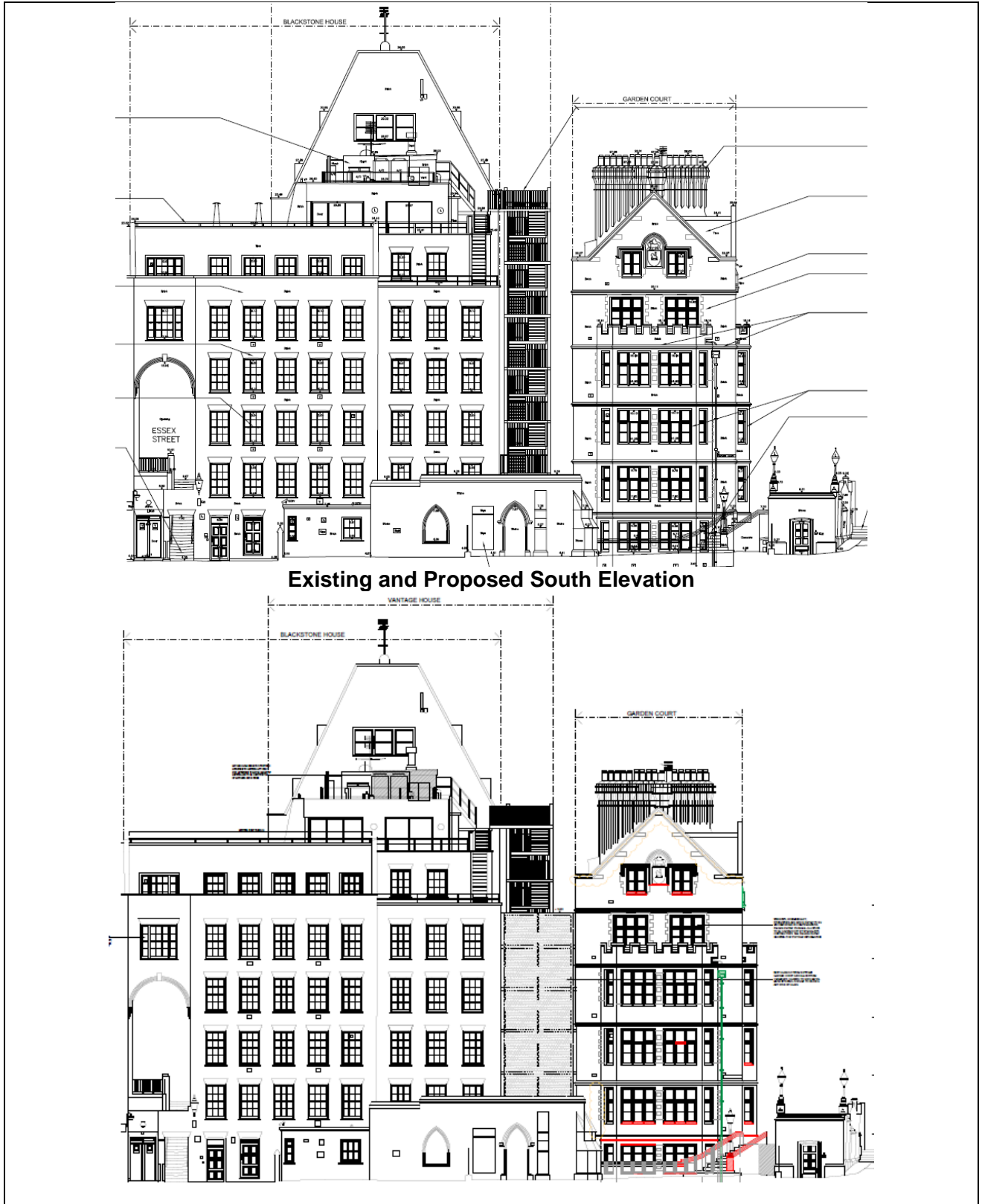
1. Application form.
2. Response from Westminster Society, dated 28 September 2017.
3. Responses (x3) from Environmental Health, dated 3 October 2017, 2 November 2017 and 13 December 2017.
4. Response from Historic England, dated 9 October 2017.
5. Response from Cleansing Manager, dated 16 October 2017.
6. Response from Historic England (Archaeology), 23 October 2017.
7. Response from Highway Planning Manager, dated 11 December 2017.
8. Response from The Gardens Trust, dated 3 December 2017.
9. Response from The City of London, dated 13 December 2017.
10. Objection from occupier of Flat 7, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 8 October 2017.
11. Objection from occupier of Flat 8, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 9 October 2017.
12. Objections (x2) from the occupiers of Flat 1, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street both dated 12 October 2017.
13. Objection from occupier of Flat 17, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 12 October 2017.
14. Objection from freeholder of Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 12 October 2017.
15. Objection from occupier of Flat 6, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 14 October 2017.
16. Objection from occupier of Flat 14, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 14 October 2017.
17. Objection from occupier of Flat 11, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 15 October 2017.
18. Objection from occupier of Flat 13, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 15 October 2017.
19. Objection from occupier of Flat 12, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 15 October 2017.
20. Objection from occupier of Flat 18, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 15 October 2017.
21. Objections (x2) from occupiers of Flat 2, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street both dated 15 October 2017.
22. Objection from occupier of Flat 16, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 16 October 2017.
23. Objection from occupier of Flat 9, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 16 October 2017.
24. Objection from occupiers of Flat 15, Aldwych Chambers, 29 Essex Street dated 21 October 2017.
25. Letter of support from applicant The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, Carpmael Building, Middle Temple Lane dated 22 November 2017.
26. Letter of support from tenant Blackstone Chambers, Blackstone House, Temple dated 23 November 2017.

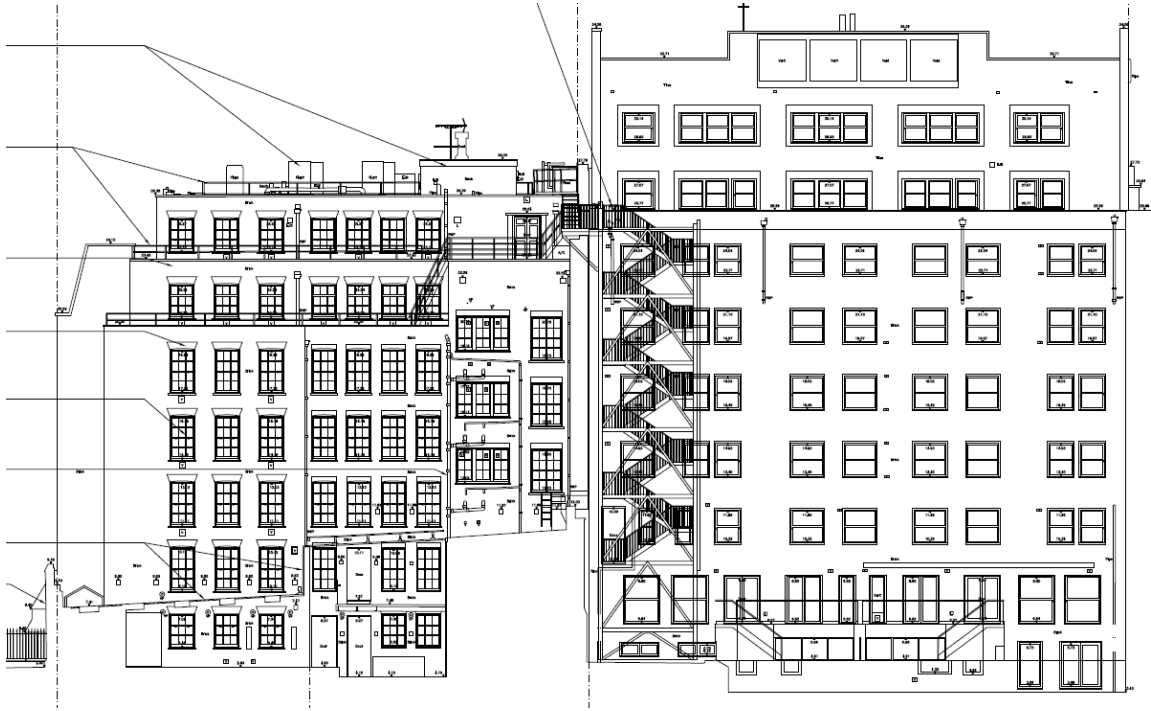
(Please note: All the application drawings and other relevant documents and Background Papers are available to view on the Council's website)

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT PLEASE CONTACT THE PRESENTING OFFICER: VICENT NALLY BY EMAIL AT [vnally@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:vnally@westminster.gov.uk)



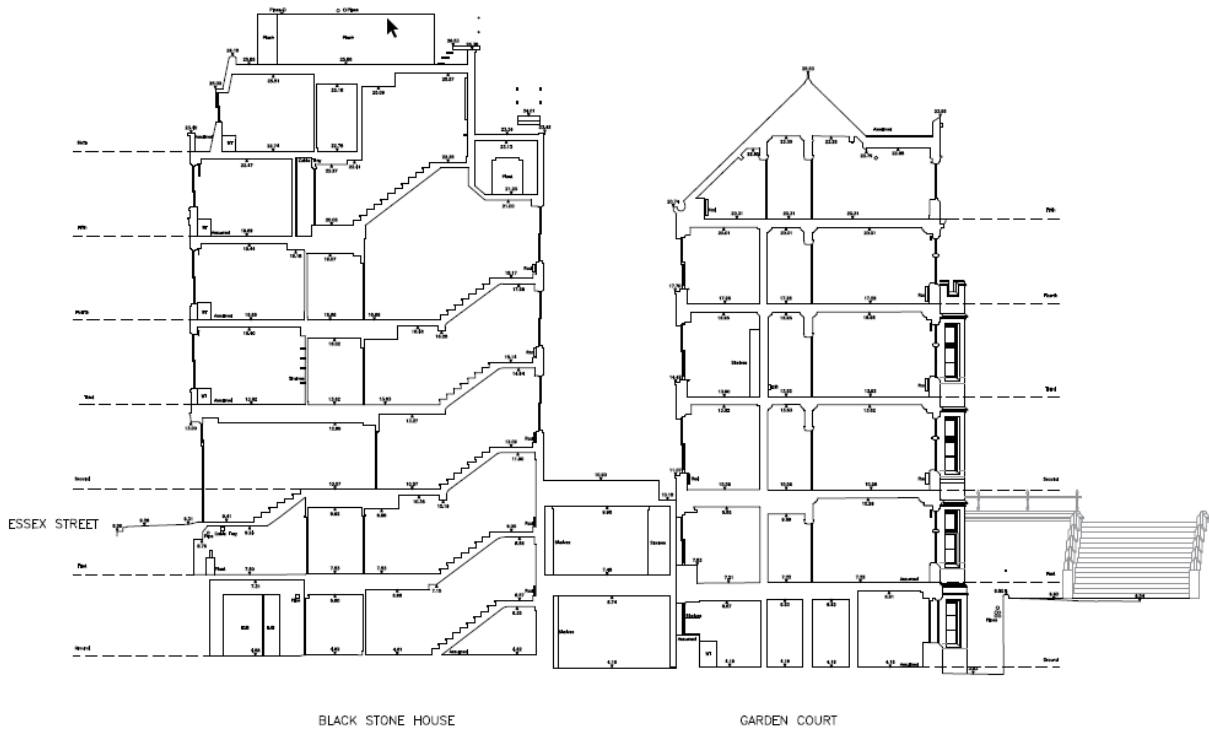
10. KEY DRAWINGS





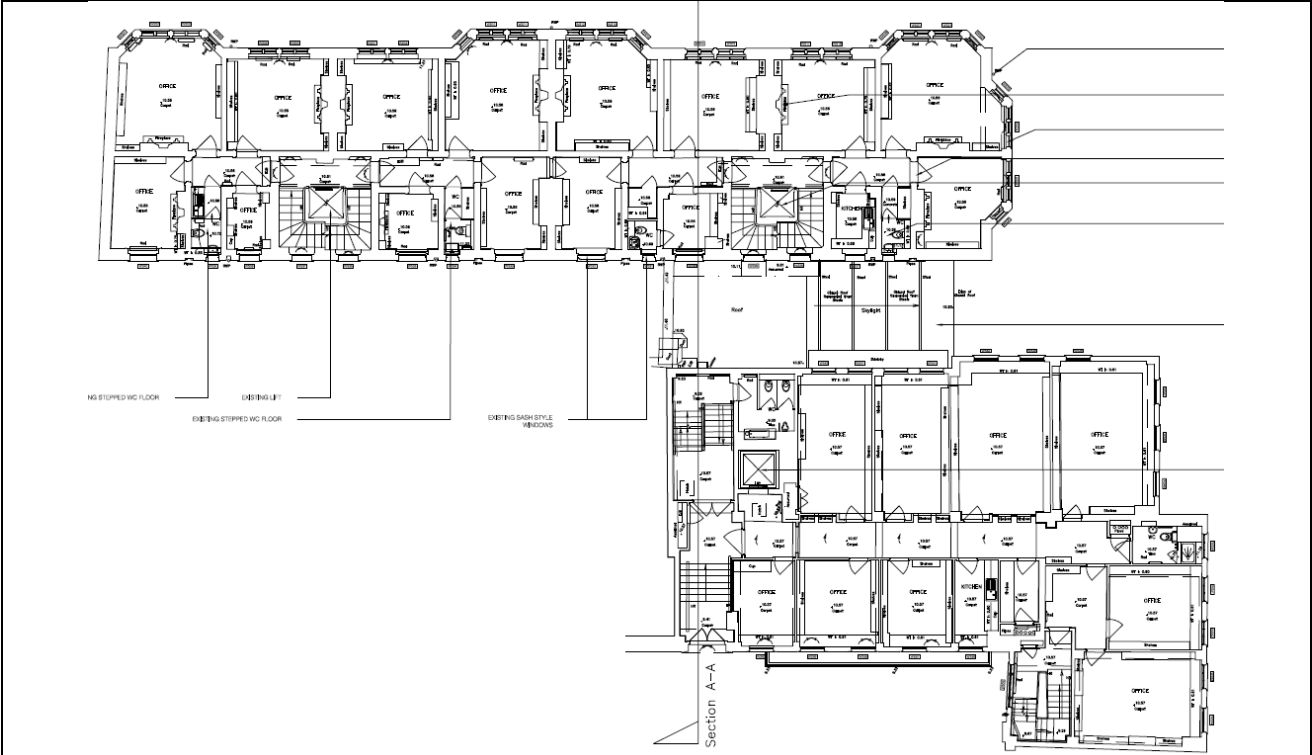
**Existing and Proposed Section Facing Aldwych Chambers**



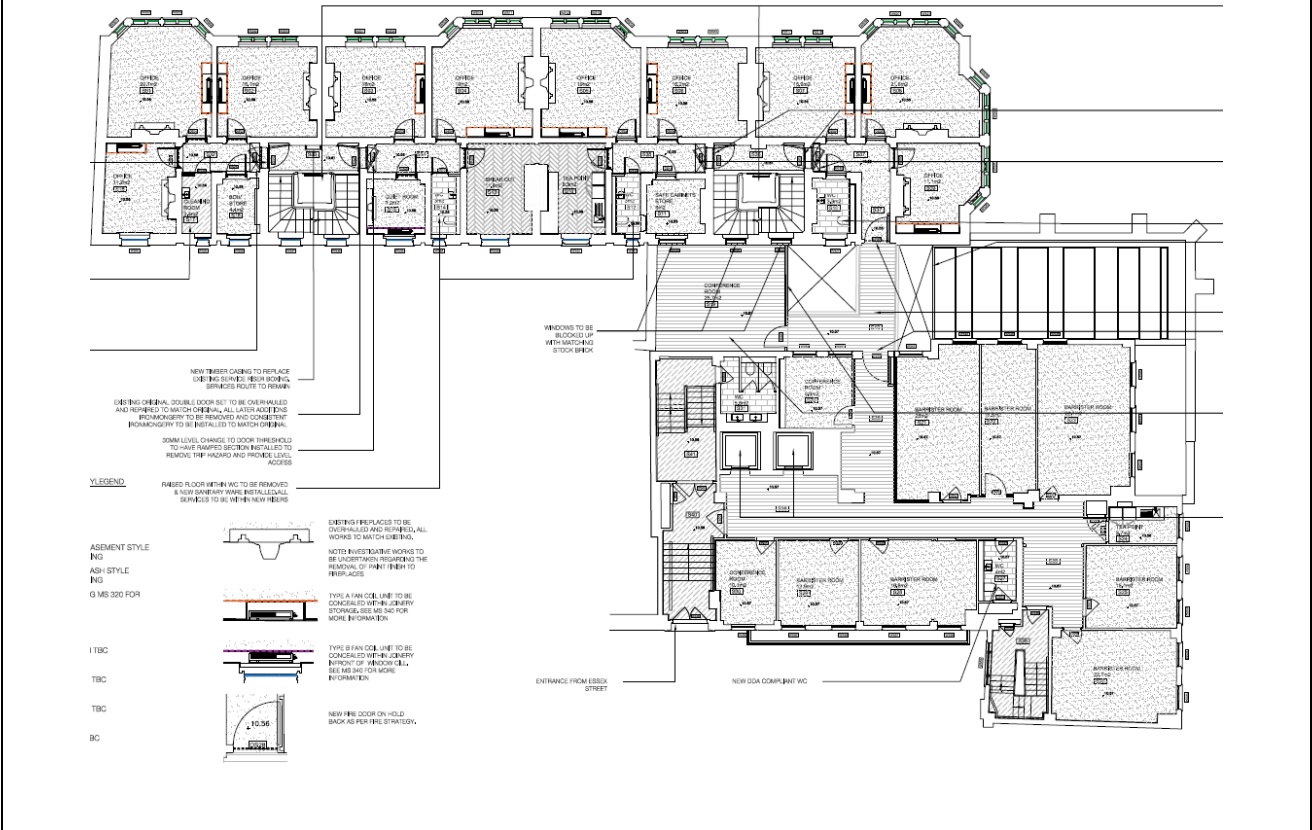


**Existing and Proposed Section AA**





Existing and Proposed Second Floor Plans



**DRAFT DECISION LETTER**

**Address:** Blackstone House, 3 Garden Court, Middle Temple, London, EC4Y 9BW.

**Proposal:** Erection of an infill extension between Blackstone House and 1 & 2 Garden Court to create a new atrium connecting the buildings at second, third and fourth floor levels, to provide additional chamber floorspace and to improve the circulation between the buildings, and associated external alterations including installation of rooftop plant to Blackstone House.

**Reference:** 17/08153/FULL

**Plan Nos:** Site Location and Boundary Plan; MS 100; MS 101; MS 102; MS 103; MS 104; MS 104; MS 105; MS 106; MS 10R; MS 150; MS151; MS152; MS 153; MS 154; MS 160; MS 170; MS 171; MS 172; MS 173; MS 174; MS 175; MS 176; MS17R; MS 180; MS 181; MS 182; MS 183; MS 184; MS 200; MS 201; MS 202; MS 203; MS 204; MS 205; MS 206; MS 20R; MS 220; MS 221; MS 222; MS 223; MS 224; MS 225; MS 600; MS 610; MS 611; MS 700; MS 701; MS 702; MS 703; MS 704; MS 705; Planning Statement; Design and Access Statement; Additional Design Information Note including Historic Maps and Photos; Structural Plans; Acoustic Report and Additional Plant Information Notes; Daylight and Sunlight Report and Addendum Letter; Historic Environment Assessment; Historic Building Report; Energy and Sustainability Statement; Cover Letter.

**Case Officer:** Joshua Howitt **Direct Tel. No.** 020 7641 2069

**Recommended Condition(s) and Reason(s)****Reason:**

Because of its scale, design, materiality, and its relationship with neighbouring buildings and its surroundings, the infill extension would harm the character and appearance of Blackstone House and the Strand Conservation Area; and would harm the setting of the Grade II listed 1 & 2 Garden Court, the Temple Conservation Area and the neighbouring Grade II Registered Gardens at Middle Temple Gardens. This would not meet S25 and S28 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and DES 1, DES 5, DES 10 (A) and paras 10.108 to 10.146 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007.

**Reason:**

The infill extension would make the people living Aldwych Chambers, Essex Street, feel too shut in. This is because of its bulk and height and how close it is to windows in that property. This would not meet S29 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and ENV 13 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (X14BC)

**Informative(s):**

- 1 In dealing with this application the City Council has implemented the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way so far as practicable. We have made available detailed advice in the form of our statutory policies in Westminster's City Plan (November 2016), Unitary Development Plan, Supplementary Planning documents, planning briefs and other informal written guidance, as well as offering a full pre application advice service, in order to ensure that the applicant has been given every opportunity to submit an application which is likely to be considered favourably. In addition, further guidance was offered to the applicant by the case officer during the processing of the application to identify amendments to address the issues identified with the scheme. You did not wish to amend the scheme in the manner suggested. Should you reconsidered your scheme, you are encouraged to consider the submission of a fresh application incorporating the amendments set out in the officer report.
  
- 2 You have submitted identical applications to the City of London and the City of Westminster as is required of you for cross boundary applications. Whilst the submissions are identical, each planning authority can only authorise or refuse work within their boundaries. This decision only relates to work within the City of Westminster, and does not constitute a decision on the works shown in your submission that are within the boundaries of the City of London.

Please note: the full text for informatives can be found in the Council's Conditions, Reasons & Policies handbook, copies of which can be found in the Committee Room whilst the meeting is in progress, and on the Council's website.