

CITY OF WESTMINSTER			
PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUB COMMITTEE	Date 9 October 2018	Classification For General Release	
Report of Director of Planning		Ward(s) involved Lancaster Gate	
Subject of Report	1-4 Gloucester Mews West, London, W2 6DY		
Proposal	Erection of a roof extension to Nos.1-4 Gloucester Mews West to enlarge four existing dwellinghouses.		
Agent	Ben Smith Architecture		
On behalf of	Householders, 1-4 Gloucester Mews West		
Registered Number	18/04329/FULL	Date amended/ completed	1 June 2018
Date Application Received	24 May 2018		
Historic Building Grade	Unlisted		
Conservation Area	Bayswater		

1. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse permission – on design grounds.

2. SUMMARY

The application relates to four unlisted two storey mews properties (No's.1 to 4) located at the south eastern end of Gloucester Mews West, within the Bayswater Conservation Area.

Permission is sought for the erection of a roof extension across all four properties to enlarge the existing dwellinghouses.

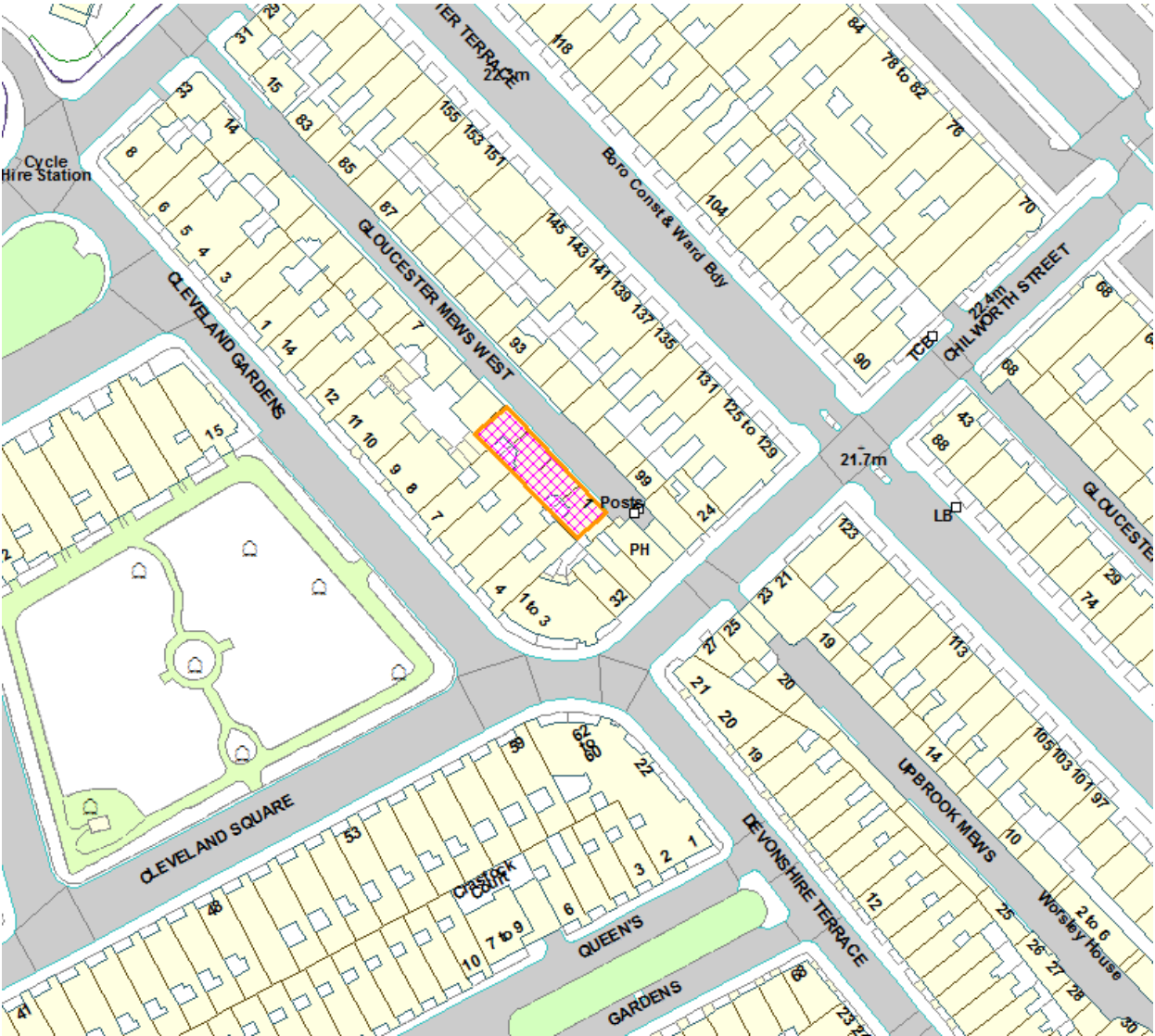
In response to consultation, the application has attracted objection and correspondence in support of the proposal. Councillor Davis has requested that the application be determined by a Planning Applications Sub-Committee.

The key issues in this case are:

- The impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents.
- The impact on the appearance of the buildings and the character and appearance of the Bayswater Conservation Area.

Because of its location, scale, massing and detailed design the roof level extension to the four properties is considered to harm the appearance of this building and fail to maintain or improve (preserve or enhance) the character and appearance of the Bayswater Conservation Area. The proposed extension would be contrary to Policies DES1, DES6 and DES9 in the Unitary Development Plan adopted in January 2007 (the UDP) and Policies S25 and S28 in Westminster's City Plan adopted in November 2016 (the City Plan). The application is therefore recommended for refusal on design grounds.

3. LOCATION PLAN



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4. PHOTOGRAPHS



Front elevation (top) and view looking north across roofs (bottom).

5. CONSULTATIONS

COUNCILLOR DAVIS

Asks that the application be determined at a Planning Applications Sub-Committee.

SOUTH EAST BAYSWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Objection on amenity, conservation and design grounds. Asks that views of neighbours of nearby properties should be given due weight and those letters of support should be discounted if not from immediate neighbours. Proposal fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Bayswater Conservation Area. Would be a bad precedent for the remainder of this Mews and for other Mews in vicinity. Substantial harm to amenity, especially through adverse impact on daylight and sunlight to flats at low level in Cleveland Square behind. In design terms, do not agree with applicant's statement that DES6 is outdated, disagree with suggestion that the consented roof extension to pub in Chilworth Street or examples in Westbourne Terrace Mews are comparable or relevance of historical photo of mews. Conditions recommended should the City Council resolve to grant permission.

ADJOINING OWNERS/OCCUPIERS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

No. Consulted: 89

Total No. of replies: 18

No. of objections: 7

No. in support: 11 emails from 9 respondents.

Objections raised on all or some of the following grounds

Design

- Adverse impact on the setting of adjoining grade II listed buildings.
- Adverse impact on the Bayswater Conservation Area.
- Additional floors adversely affect the architectural character and unity of the group of buildings.
- Proposed development out of scale and out of character compared with existing development in the vicinity.
- Proposed fenestration not uniform.
- Mew buildings were traditionally two storeys in height.
- Visually unsightly form private views from adjacent buildings.
- Poor detailed design/ lack of architectural detail.
- Non-compliant with the NPPF in terms of the harm that would be caused to the heritage assets (neighbouring listed buildings and the conservation area)

Amenity

- Loss of daylight.
- Increased noise disturbance.
- Light pollution.
- Loss of privacy.
- Potential overlooking is roofs used as terraces.

Other Issues

- Support grounds for objection raised by the South East Bayswater Residents Association.
- Concern about possible adverse effects of damp on party wall.
- Increased security threat.
- Adverse structural impact.

The letters of support received raise the following issues:

- Additional floors should be permitted on private residential properties.
- Consider there to be a disparity between which properties can be extended and which cannot.
- Objections on grounds of loss of light are unjustified as there would be no increase in height of the party wall.
- Support increased density.
- Provision of a more diverse and interesting view.
- Development will provide much needed additional space for the four dwellings.
- The design is considered to be appropriate.
- Similar extensions should be permitted along the mews.
- The existing houses are of no architectural merit to warrant their retention in their existing form.
- Many mews houses comprise three storeys or more.
- Note that Upbrook Mews to the south is predominantly three storeys in scale and more vibrant and eclectic.

PRESS ADVERTISEMENT/ SITE NOTICE

Yes.

6. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

6.1 The Application Site

The application comprises 4 two storey 1950s mews houses (No's.1-4) located at the south eastern end of Gloucester Mews West. The properties are in use as four dwellinghouses (Class C3). The properties are not listed, but are located within the Bayswater Conservation Area.

6.2 Recent Relevant History

12/03942/FULL (1 Gloucester Mews West)

Alterations to existing dwellinghouse to include the removal of existing roof level tower, erection of two storey infill extension to rear courtyard with parapet, and installation of green roof and roof access via openable roof light.

Application Permitted 10 July 2012

7. THE PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a roof level extension across all four of the properties to enlarge each of the existing dwellinghouses. The proposed extension would be a single storey in height, set back from the front elevation, but rising sheer from the existing side and rear elevations. The roof extension would have a flat roof. The elevations of the roof extension would be clad in zinc with a standing seam.

8. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Land Use

The enlargement of the existing dwellinghouse would accord with Policy H3 in the UDP and Policy S14 in the City Plan. Accordingly the proposal is acceptable in land use terms.

8.2 Townscape and Design

With the exception of the 1.97m set back from the existing front elevation, the footprint of the proposed roof extension would follow the existing footprint of the buildings, being designed around the courtyards and external lightwells to the rear of the buildings. The extensions would be pre-fabricated and clad in zinc, with the fenestration being of the same scale as the standing seam zinc panels to the elevations.

The South East Bayswater Residents Association have objected to the scheme on the grounds that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Bayswater Conservation Area and would set an unacceptable precedent for this mews and other surrounding mews streets. This view is shared by a number of neighbour objectors who consider the development to be out-of-scale and out of character in terms of its appearance compared with existing mews development in the vicinity.

Roof level alterations are permissible under Policy DES6 in the UDP in appropriate circumstances. Part (A) of the policy states roof level alterations and extensions may be refused where any additional floors would adversely affect the architectural character of a building or group of buildings; where buildings are completed compositions, where the buildings form was originally designed to be seen in silhouette and where historically significant or distinctive roof forms would be lost by such extensions. The Bayswater Conservation Area Audit has identified buildings where roof extensions would be unacceptable and the buildings within the application site are identified as such. The Audit goes further in saying that given the limited amount of extensions on unlisted buildings within the area there is now very limited scope for roof extensions, even in the mews areas.

Gloucester Mews West is highly uniform in terms of its scale, form and proportions, with all the buildings being two storeys in height with flat roofs. Therefore, the mews and the buildings within it can be considered as a completed composition with a historic reference to the impact on the skyline, despite the buildings themselves being mid to late 20th Century replacements of the original mews buildings. In this context, the erection of a roof level extension on these buildings is considered to be unacceptable in principle

and contrary to the aims of Policy DES6. Whilst it is noted that the proposal relates to a number of consecutive properties, the roof level extensions would adversely affect the architectural character of the mews as a whole, as the form and character of the mews as existing contributes to its unity as a group.

Mews buildings are traditionally subordinate to the surrounding terraces, historically being service buildings, hence the subservient proportions. Whilst the buildings are now independent dwellings, the historic interpretation of the relationship between Gloucester Mews West and the surrounding grade II listed terraces remains and is considered to positively contribute to the setting of the listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area. By altering the scale of the mews buildings with an additional storey, the buildings would become grander than consciously designed. As such the historic relationship between the mews and principal dwellings would be eroded and the character of the setting compromised.

Whilst the roof extension has been set back from the front building line in order to try to mitigate its visual impact from immediately opposite within the mews, it would be highly prominent in long views along the mews from the north and in a large number of private views from surrounding properties within the mews and surrounding listed buildings. The choice of standing seam zinc cladding would be a facing material that is uncharacteristic of the immediate and wider setting and this would draw further attention to what would be an inappropriate and intrusive roof level addition.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (hereafter “the 1990 Act”) requires the Local Planning Authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 72 of the 1990 Act places a duty upon the decision maker, in the exercise of planning functions, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area. Additionally, the NPPF (July 2018) states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The proposed roof extension would have a harmful impact on the setting of the identified listed buildings and upon the Bayswater Conservation Area, appearing as a highly prominent and incongruous addition and as such, in accordance with the 1990 Act, it is unacceptable in design terms. The proposal would be contrary to Policies S25 and S28 in the City Plan and Policies DES1, DES6 and DES9 in the UDP.

The proposal is considered to result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage assets, which in this instance is the setting of the surrounding listed buildings and the Bayswater Conservation Area. In accordance with Section 16 of the NPPF (July 2018), noting in particular that under paragraph 196, any harm identified should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The Planning Practice Guidance sets out that public benefits should be of a nature or scale to benefit the public at large and not just a private benefit. It is clear that the proposed development would deliver private benefit in the form of an additional bedroom to each of the four dwellinghouses. However, the overall harm to the architectural composition of the mews and the impact on the wider character and appearance of the area is not considered to be outweighed by this private benefit. Additionally, it has not been demonstrated during the course of the application that the extension is required to secure the optimum viable

use of the building and therefore the identified harm has not been outweighed. The buildings appear to be in continuous residential use and it has not been demonstrated that there has been a period of vacancy. It is therefore concluded that the public benefits of the proposal would be limited and do not amount to the clear and convincing justification for the harm that would be caused to the heritage assets.

Paragraph 118(e) of the NPPF (July 2018) states that *'Planning... decisions should... support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. In particular, they should allow upward extensions where the development would be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene, is well designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards), and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers'*. However, in this case the proposed development would not provide new homes; rather it would extend existing homes, and as set out in detail in this section of the report, the proposed roof extension would be inconsistent with the height and form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene and would inconsistent with local design policies and standards set out in the UDP and City Plan.

8.3 Residential Amenity

Objections have been received from neighbours and the South East Bayswater Residents Association on the grounds that the proposed extension would have an adverse impact on the residential properties on the lower floors of properties in Cleveland Square, which back onto the application site. The proposal would involve parts of the party wall between the site and properties in Cleveland Square being raised by 0.5m, where the buildings on the application site extend to the full depth of their plots. However, given the limited increase in height proposed and the distance to the nearest windows (approximately 10m), it is not considered that the proposed roof extension would result in such a significant loss of daylight or cause such a sufficient increase in enclosure, so as to justify withholding permission on these grounds.

The rear windows of properties in Chilworth Street would be approximately 9m to the south east of the application site. Given the distance between the application site and these neighbouring windows, and as views would remain to either side and above the single storey extension proposed, it is not considered that properties in Chilworth Street would suffer a material loss of daylight or a material increase in enclosure.

The rear windows in properties in Cleveland Square and Chilworth Street face within 90 degrees of north and therefore they already face predominantly north and consequently the proposed development would not result in a material loss of sunlight to these windows.

Within the mews, the set back of the front elevation of the proposed roof extension would be sufficient to ease the relationship with mews houses opposite and prevent the proposed development from resulting in an unacceptable loss of daylight or sunlight or a material increase in enclosure

Concerns have been raised by objectors in relation to the potential for overlooking to be caused to neighbouring windows by the use of the new roofs as roof terraces. No roof terraces are proposed, including in front of the proposed roof extension at second floor

level and had the proposal been acceptable in all other regards, a condition preventing the use of the roofs as terraces would be recommended to address the concerns raised.

The windows proposed to the front elevation would be set back from the existing elevation by 1.97m and would be limited in terms of their size. Given these factors and as there are existing windows at first floor level which afford similar overlooking across the mews, it is not considered that permission could reasonably be withheld on overlooking grounds to the window opposite in the mews.

No windows are proposed to the rear elevation of the proposed roof extension and those in the side elevations are staggered to prevent mutual overlooking between the properties themselves. Views to the rear from these side elevation windows would be oblique and this would prevent significant overlooking towards windows in the rear of properties in Cleveland Square. The window in the side (south east) elevation of No.1 would afford direct views towards windows in the rear elevation of properties in Chilworth Street and had the application been acceptable in all other regards, a condition would have been recommended requiring this window to be obscure glazed and fixed shut to prevent overlooking.

Given their position in the roof of the proposed roof extension and their slender 'slot' like form, it is not considered that the proposed rooflights would give rise to significant overlooking or cause a light nuisance to neighbouring occupiers. As such, the objections raised on these grounds cannot be supported.

In conclusion in amenity terms, it is considered that the proposed roof extension is capable of being considered acceptable and in accordance with Policies ENV5, ENV6 and ENV13 in the UDP and Policies S29 and S32 in the City Plan.

8.4 Transportation/ Parking

The proposed roof extension does not raise any transportation or parking issues as it involves the extension of the existing dwellinghouses and would not increase the number of residential units on the site.

8.5 Economic Considerations

No economic considerations are applicable for a development of this size

8.6 Access

The application does not propose any changes to the existing means of access to these private dwellinghouses.

8.7 Other UDP/Westminster Policy Considerations

None relevant.

8.8 Neighbourhood Plans

Not applicable.

8.9 London Plan

The application does not raise any strategic issues.

8.10 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 (July 2018) unless stated otherwise.

8.11 Planning Obligations

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

The proposed development would deliver 135m² of additional residential floorspace and would therefore be liable to pay the Westminster and Mayoral CIL. The liability would be approximately £49,904 in respect of the Westminster CIL and approximately £7,581 in respect of the Mayoral CIL. However, given that this is development proposed by householders, it is likely that it would qualify for an exemption from the CIL as a self-build residential extension.

8.12 Environmental Impact Assessment

The application is of insufficient scale to require an environmental impact assessment.

8.13 Other Issues

A number of additional concerns have been raised by objectors. These include concerns about the possible adverse effects of damp on the party walls with neighbouring properties. However, this is a private matter between the respective property owner and a matter that would be resolved via a party wall agreement. As such, it is not a ground on which permission could reasonably be withheld.

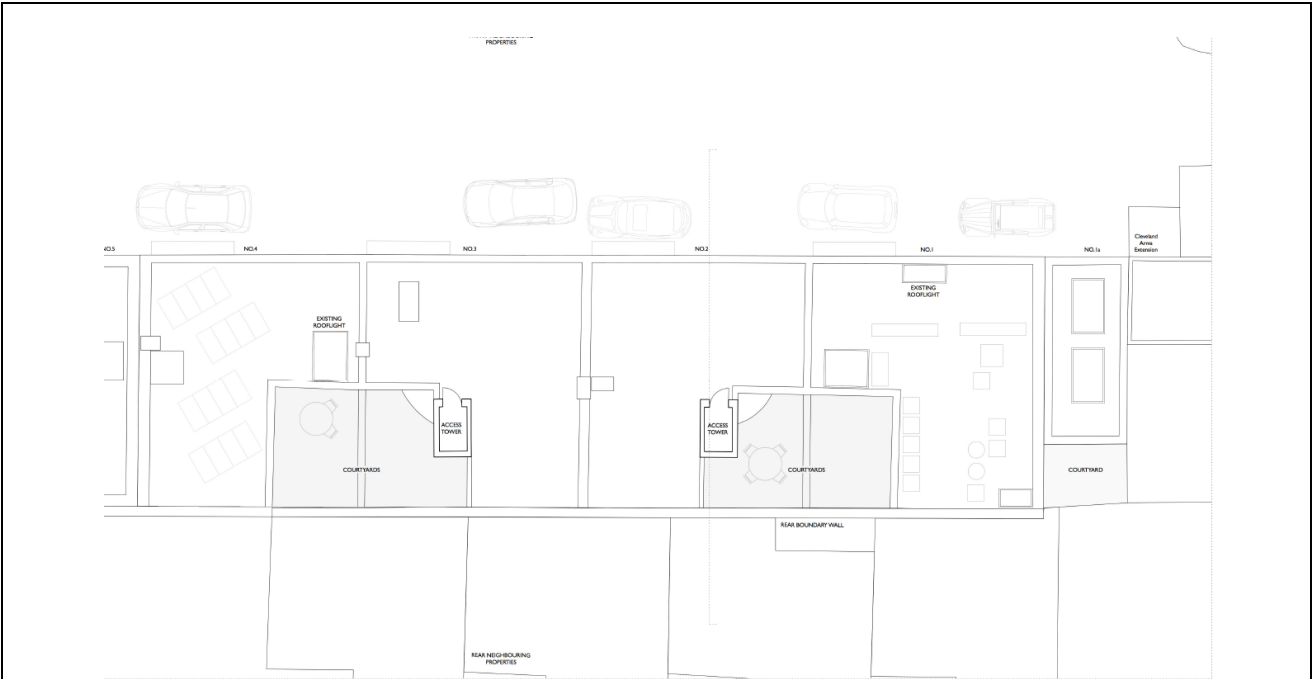
One objector has raised concerns that the proposal would result in an increased security threat to neighbouring properties. This is not considered a sustainable ground for objection as the proposed development would not result in any significant improvement in the accessibility of neighbouring buildings from the application site. Consequently, there would be no material change to the existing situation in terms of the security of neighbouring properties.

Concern has also been raised about the potential structural impact of the proposal. Roof extensions of the scale proposed can be constructed without any adverse impacts to the structural integrity of the existing building itself and surrounding properties. The detailed structural design of the proposed extension would be designed so that it would accord with Building Regulations and this is therefore not a ground for withholding planning permission. Should structural damage occur, this would be a matter to be resolved under the party wall agreements between the applicants and owners of neighbouring properties.

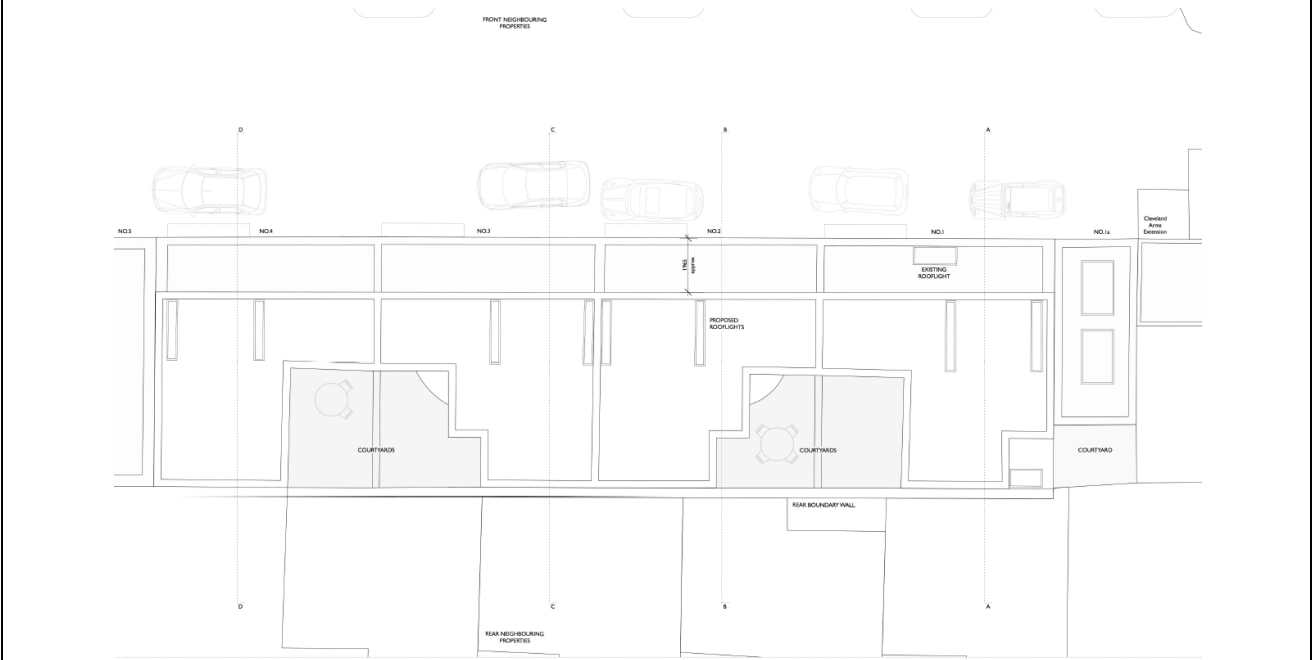
(Please note: All the application drawings and other relevant documents and Background Papers are available to view on the Council's website)

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT PLEASE CONTACT THE PRESENTING OFFICER: OLIVER GIBSON BY EMAIL AT ogibson@westminster.gov.uk .

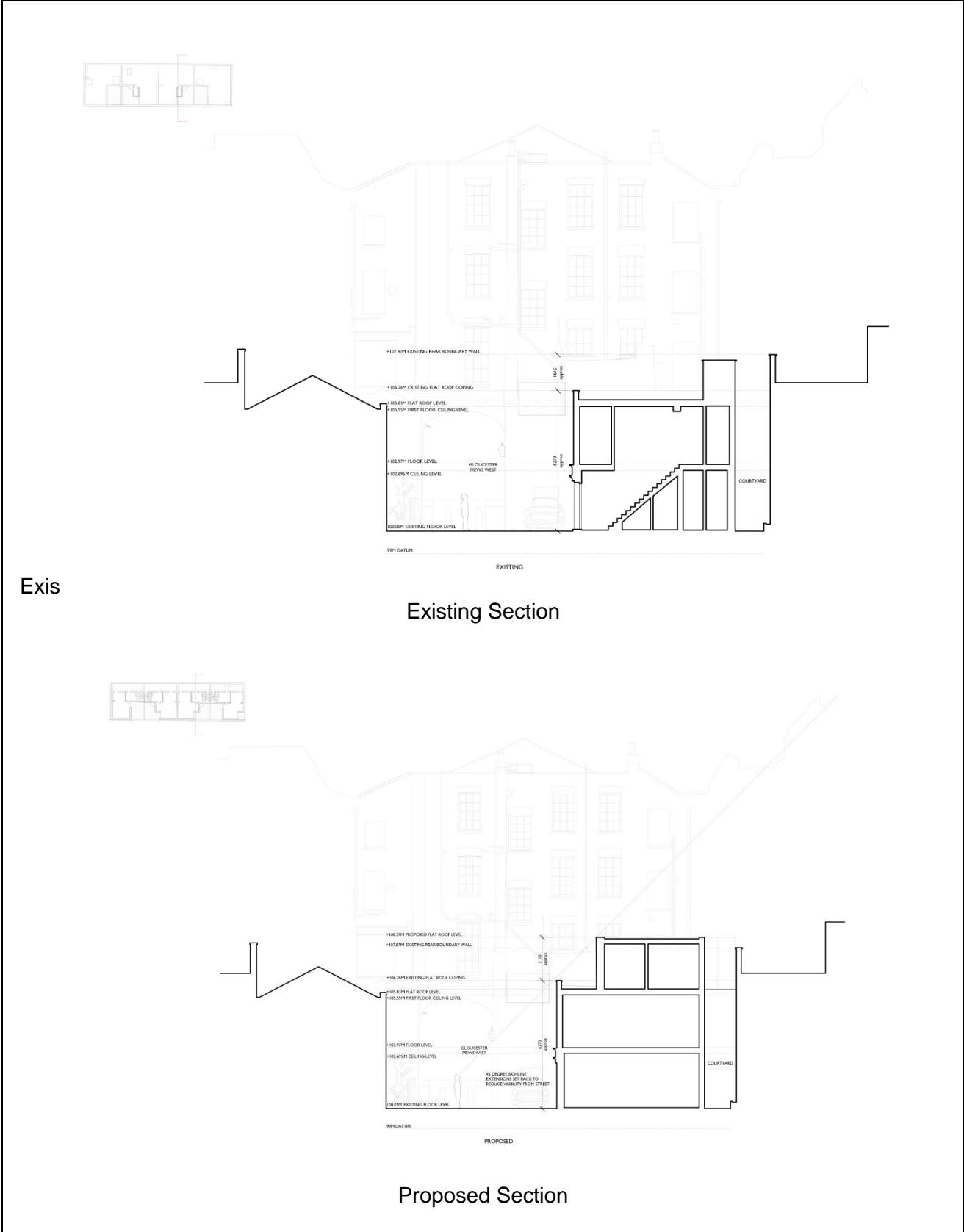
9. KEY DRAWINGS



Existing Roof Plan



Proposed Roof Plan



Exis

Existing Section

Proposed Section

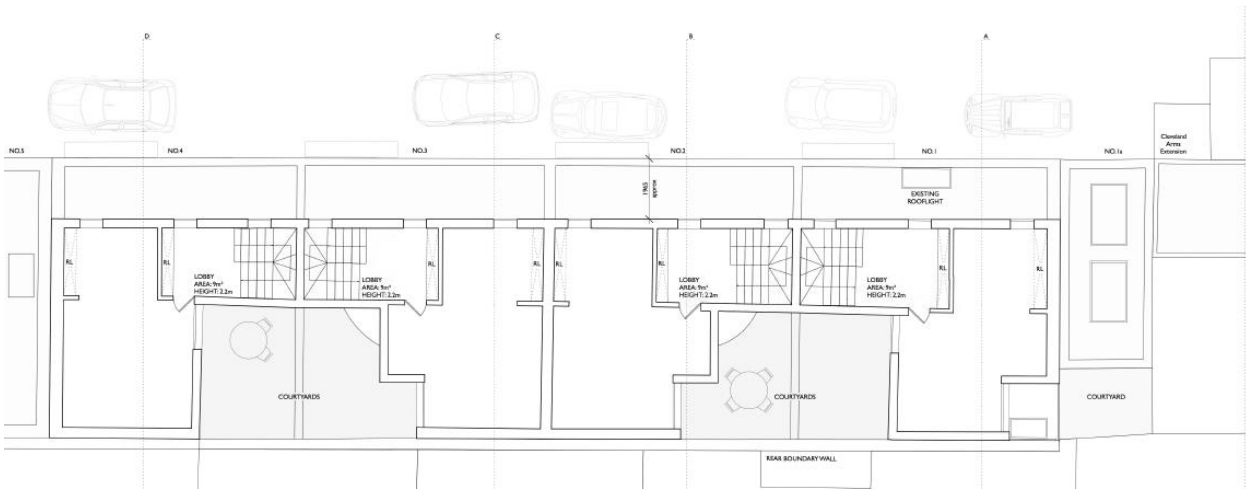


Existing Front elevation



PROPOSED

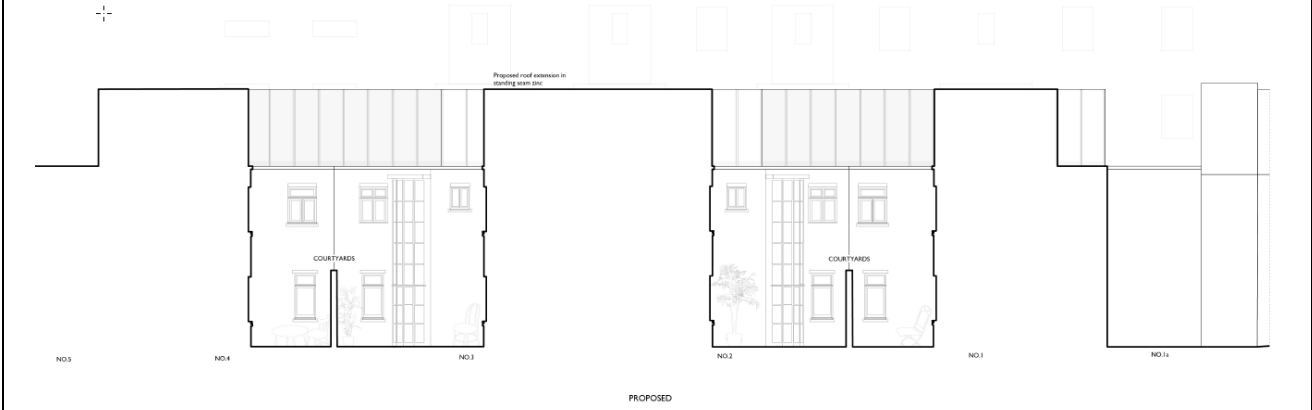
Proposed Front elevation



Proposed floor plan



Existing Rear elevation



Proposed Rear elevation

DRAFT DECISION LETTER

Address: 1-4 Gloucester Mews West, London, W2 6DY

Proposal: Erection of a roof extension to Nos.1-4 Gloucester Mews West to enlarge four existing dwellinghouses.

Reference: 18/04329/FULL

Plan Nos: 001 (23/05/18); 002 (23/05/18); 201 (01/06/18); 202 (01/06/18); 203 (01/06/18); 301 (01/06/18); 302 (01/06/18); 303 (01/06/18); 304 (01/06/18); 305 (01/06/18); 401 (23/05/18); 402 (23/05/18); 403 (23/05/18); 404 (23/05/18) and Design and Heritage Statement. For information only: 501 (23/05/18) and 502 (23/05/18).

Case Officer: Richard Langston

Direct Tel. No. 020 7641 7923

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

Because of its height, location, bulk and detailed design the roof level extension to the four dwellinghouses would harm the appearance of these buildings and fail to maintain or improve (preserve or enhance) the character and appearance of the Bayswater Conservation Area. This would not meet S25 and S28 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and DES 6, DES 1 and paras 10.108 to 10.128 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (X16AD)

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. However, we have been unable to seek solutions to problems as the principle of the proposal is clearly contrary to our statutory policies and negotiation could not overcome the reasons for refusal.

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.