

CITY OF WESTMINSTER			
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE	Date 16 May 2017	Classification For General Release	
Report of Director of Planning		Ward involved Knightsbridge And Belgravia	
Subject of Report	25 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2ET		
Proposal	Use of the property as a hotel (Class C1) providing 7 bedrooms.		
Agent	Boyer Planning		
On behalf of	Albert Properties Holding Ltd.		
Registered Number	17/00401/FULL	Date amended/ completed	19 January 2017
Date Application Received	18 January 2017		
Historic Building Grade	Grade II		
Conservation Area	Knightsbridge		

1. RECOMMENDATION

For Committee's consideration:

1. Does the Committee consider that the circumstances of this case outweigh the strong policy presumption to protect residential accommodation?
2. Subject to 1. above, grant conditional permission.

2. SUMMARY

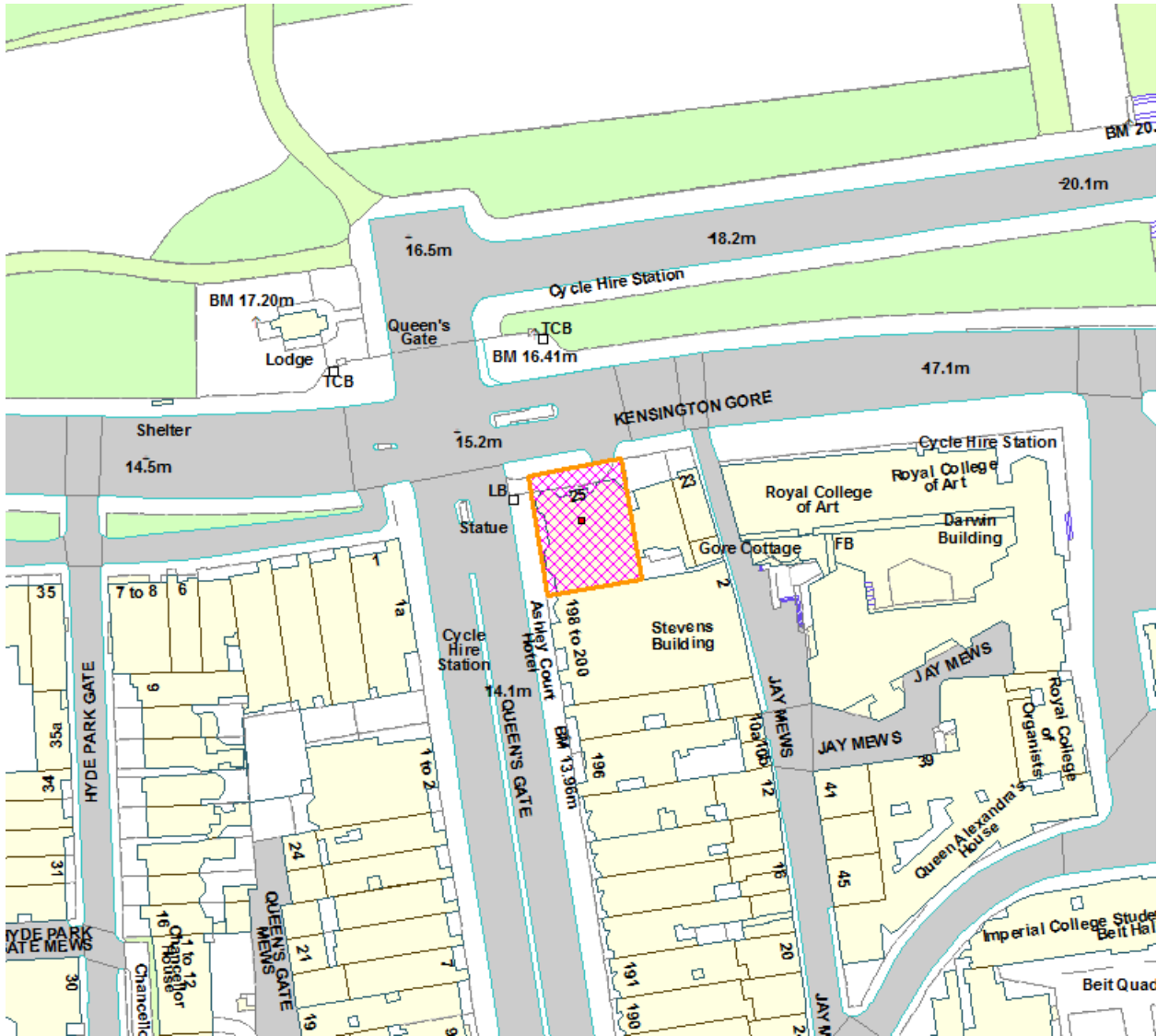
No. 25 Kensington Gore is a Grade II listed single family dwelling located in the Knightsbridge Conservation Area. Permission is sought for the use of the property as a hotel (Class C1) providing 7 bedrooms and ancillary facilities.

The key issues for consideration are:

- * The impact of the proposals in land use terms.
- * The impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.

There is a strong policy presumption within Policy S14 of the Westminster's City Plan to protect residential accommodation. Given this, Committee's views are sought as to whether the circumstances put forward by the applicant outweigh the strong policy presumption to protect residential accommodation in this instance.

LOCATION PLAN



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3. PHOTOGRAPHS



Front of property from Kensington Gore



Entrance Hall and Staircase



Ground Floor Dining Room



First Floor Ballroom

4. CONSULTATIONS

KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Raise concern over car parking facilities and comment that reception should not be permitted beyond 11pm to safeguard neighbours.

KNIGHTSBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

No response received.

CLEANSING MANAGER

Revised waste storage details required.

HIGHWAYS PLANNING MANAGER

Recommend a Servicing Management Plan and cycle spaces be secured by condition.

ADJOINING OWNERS/OCCUPIERS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

No. Consulted: 11

Total No. of replies: 0

PRESS ADVERTISEMENT / SITE NOTICE: Yes

5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5.1 The Application Site

No. 25 Kensington Gore is a Grade II listed building located in the Knightsbridge Conservation Area. The site is located in the Knightsbridge Central Activities Zone and falls within the Knightsbridge Strategic Cultural Area of the City Plan. The property is in use as a seven bedroom single family dwelling (Class C3).

No. 25 Kensington Gore was completed in 1875 by Albert Sassoon, a notable businessman and philanthropist. Subsequently the building was in embassy use before being transferred to the Royal College of Art in the twentieth century, who used it as offices, teaching space, workshops and studios.

5.2 Recent Relevant History

Planning permission and listed building consent were granted in February 1995 for alterations and renovation of existing house with additions to the third floor and rear in connection with use as a dwelling house.

6. THE PROPOSAL

The table below provides a breakdown of existing and proposed floorspace:

	Existing GIA (sqm)	Proposed GIA (sqm)	+/-
Residential (Class C3)	1,695	0	-1,695
Hotel (Class C3)	0	1,695	+1,695
Total	1,695	1,695	0

7. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Land Use

The application proposes the change of use of a single-family dwelling (Class C3) to a 7-bedroom hotel (Class C1). No physical alterations are proposed.

Loss of residential unit

The loss of the residential unit (Class C3) is contrary to Policy S14 of the City Plan which seeks to protect all residential floorspace.

Policy S14 states that proposals that would result in the reduction in number of residential units will not be acceptable, except in particular circumstances, such as when a converted house is being returned to a single family dwelling, or where two flats are joined to create a family-sized dwelling.

In this instance, the unit is a seven bedroom single-family dwelling amounting to 1,695 sqm. It is acknowledged that the proposals would result in the loss of an exceptionally large home. The applicant has advised that the dwelling is occupied very infrequently and, given its size, is always under-occupied.

Given its lack of use, the applicant has actively sought an alternative use for the property, which respects its historic significance. The applicant has advised that consideration was given to sub-divide the property to provide residential flats. However, given the building's Grade II listed status they did not consider such a scheme would be either successful or feasible.

The rooms on the Queens Gate side of the property at ground and first floor level are very large. It is understood that during first owner Sir Albert Sassoon's occupation they were created by amalgamating the existing rooms to provide single rooms for entertaining and dining on the ground floor and as a ballroom on the first floor. The panelling in the dining room on the ground floor was originally made for the Prince of Wales Pavilion at the 1878 Paris Exhibition by Messrs Gillows and was returned to England after the exhibition and purchased by Sassoon. The ballroom at first floor level is similarly grand, and is thought to have been originally designed by Daukes in a Louis XVI style.

From a historic building perspective, the City Council considers that the existing and seemingly original arrangement of the building is such that internal alterations to create the number of rooms required as part of a residential conversion to flats (i.e. installation of ensembles, kitchens etc.) are likely to harm the original layout and therefore its special character. This is especially true of the ground and first floor where the room sizes do not lend themselves to the scale that is generally associated with residential properties. The upper storeys do not possess the same scale as the rooms below and could possibly be converted, subject to detailed design.

The proposed hotel use would retain the property as a whole whilst providing public access to the currently private interior. The applicant has identified this as a form of public benefit, although this is not recognised formally by development plan policies.

In terms of location, the property has both frontages close to the busy main roads of Kensington Gore and Queen's Gate. There are no gardens or sizable amenity space which reduces the appeal of a house of this size in terms of its potential for family occupation. Prior to the current owner's extensive five year renovation of the building in the early 1990s, the property had been in non-residential use for most of the twentieth century.

Given its listed status of the building, the inflexibility of the property for residential conversion and its otherwise likely continued use as an under occupied large seven bedroom, single family dwelling with limited outdoor amenity space, the Committee is asked to consider whether the the proposed use of the property as a boutique hotel, serving visiting members of the public, would outweigh the strong policy presumption against the loss of residential accommodation in this case.

Proposed hotel use

The application site is located within the Knightsbridge Strategic Cultural Area where Policy S9 of the City Plan considers that appropriate town centre uses are acceptable, including hotels. Policy S23 further explicitly directs new hotels to this area. The introduction of a new hotel use in this location is therefore considered acceptable in principle.

The application proposes a number of ancillary facilities to the hotel including spa/fitness facilities at basement level, bar/billiard room/siting room at ground floor level, and drawing room/breakfast room/dining room areas at first floor level.

Whilst it is appreciated that the majority of 'luxury' hotels within Westminster provide bars, restaurants and other facilities that are also open to members of the public, there is not enough information in the applicant's submission to assess the potential impact on neighbouring residential amenity if any of these areas were open to the public. The closest residential occupiers being those in the flats in the adjoining No. 24 Kensington Gore and No. 197 Queen's Gate.

Given the location of hotel bedrooms directly above, it would be in the interests of the hotel to ensure that non-hotel guests to these areas were properly managed. Conditions could be applied restricting hours of opening to members of the public to protect the amenity of nearby residents, restricting the restaurant use and number of covers and requiring them to operate in accordance with an approved Servicing and Operational Management Plan.

Accordingly, a condition is recommended requiring that should permission be granted these facilities shall only be used by hotel guests. If the uses of these areas are to be extended beyond guests of the hotel, a further planning application with supporting information will be required.

Notwithstanding the policy presumption to protect residential accommodation, the proposed use is considered appropriate in this central area of Westminster, close to many of London's attractions and with good access to public transport. It is considered that the small scale of the hotel would not have a significant effect on residential amenity or local environmental quality subject to the recommended conditions.

7.2 Townscape and Design

The application does not propose any external or internal alterations.

7.3 Residential Amenity

Noise

Conditions have been recommended to restrict the use of the bar, dining room and other ancillary facilities to hotel guests only. In addition, conditions are added to ensure that no music should be audible outside the premises, to control internal noise and the submission of a Servicing and Operational Management Plan.

Subject to adherence to these conditions and approval of an acceptable Servicing and Operational Management Plan the proposed hotel use is considered acceptable in amenity terms, compliant with policies S29 of Westminster's City Plan and ENV13 of the UDP which seek to protect residential amenity.

Ventilation/Extraction

A kitchen already exists at the property and includes an extract duct running to main roof level, however no details of the ventilation and extraction equipment have been provided. A condition is therefore recommended requiring submission of these details for approval prior to commencement of the hotel use. Additional conditions requiring compliance with the City Council's standard noise and vibration policies are also recommended, which the ventilation/extraction will need to adhere to.

7.4 Transportation/Parking

Policy S42 of Westminster's City Plan and TRANS20 of the UDP require off-street servicing provision. While there are areas marked out on the submitted drawings for back of house functions, there is no off-street servicing provision and vehicles will remain on-street. The applicant has indicated they will not use the existing vehicle drop-off.

It is anticipated that servicing of a hotel use would be at a higher level than the existing single residential dwelling and in order for the operator of the proposed development to demonstrate that the site is to be closely managed it is recommended that a Servicing Management Plan is secured by condition.

The London Plan requires 1 cycle parking space per 20 bedrooms (minimum 2 spaces). No cycle parking is proposed within the site, however ample space exists on site to accommodate 2 cycle parking spaces. A condition is not considered necessary in this instance.

Revised details of how waste is to be stored on the site, including the bin capacities used to store the residual waste, food waste, waste cooking oil and recyclable materials separately, is also recommended to be secured by condition.

The Knightsbridge Association has raised concern that the application does not mention car parking facilities, which may create problems for people living locally and that reception should not be permitted beyond 11pm, so as to safeguard neighbours. The site is within a Control Parking Zone which means anyone who does drive to the site will be subject to those controls. The Highways Manager considers that the impact of the change of use on parking levels will be minimal.

A Servicing and Operational Management Plan is also required by condition which should address these concerns in detail.

7.5 Economic Considerations

The economic benefits generated are welcomed.

7.6 Access

No changes to the access arrangements are sought. A lift providing access to all floors already exists within the building.

7.7 Other UDP/Westminster Policy Considerations

None relevant.

7.8 London Plan

This application raises no strategic issues.

7.9 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.

7.10 Planning Obligations

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

This development does not generate a Mayor CIL or WCC CIL payment.

7.11 Environmental Impact Assessment

The application is not a sufficient scale to require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

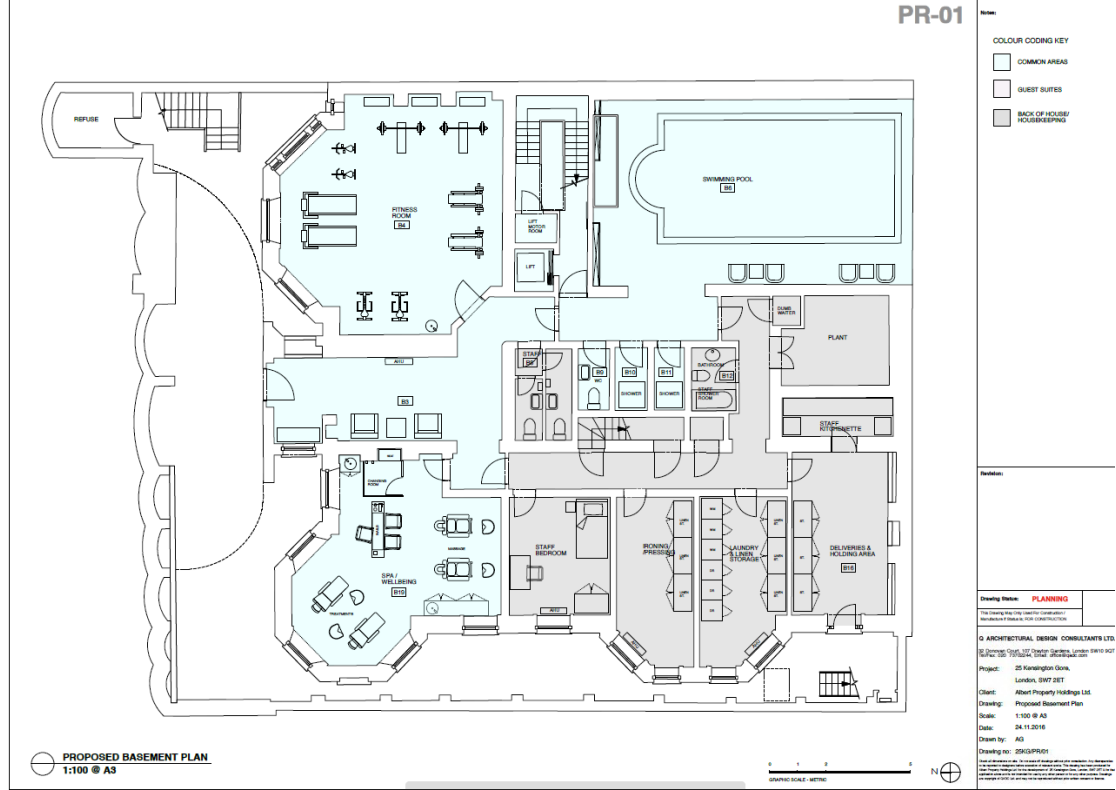
8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form.
2. Response from Knightsbridge Association dated 1 February 2017.
3. Response from Highways Planning Manager dated 6 February 2017.
4. Response from Cleansing Manager dated 27 January 2017.

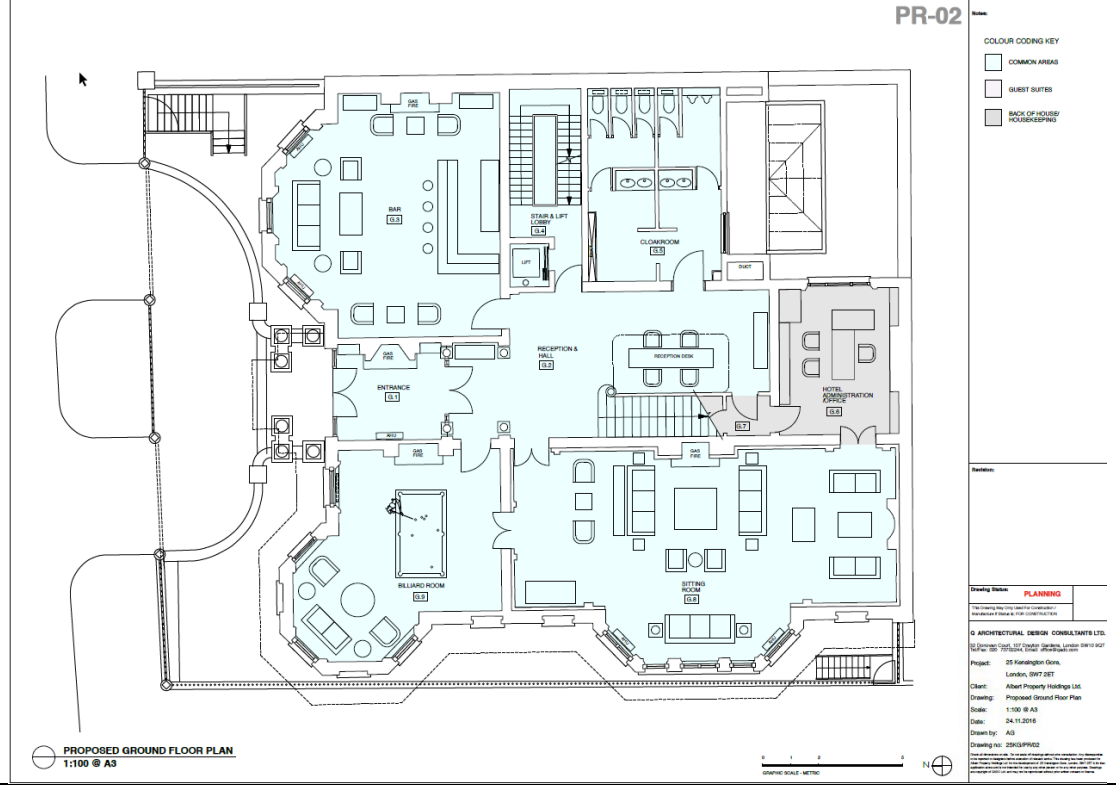
(Please note: All the application drawings and other relevant documents and Background Papers are available to view on the Council's website)

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT PLEASE CONTACT THE PRESENTING OFFICER: VINCENT NALLY BY EMAIL AT vnally@westminster.gov.uk

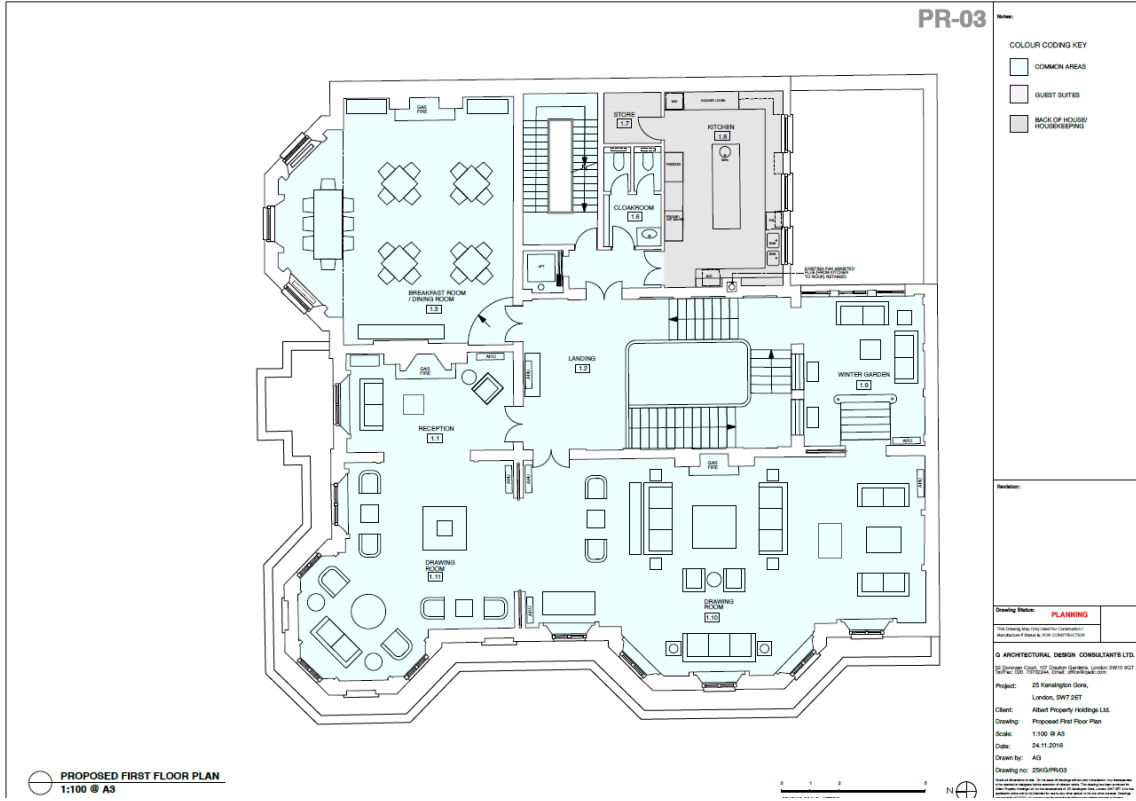
Proposed Basement Plan



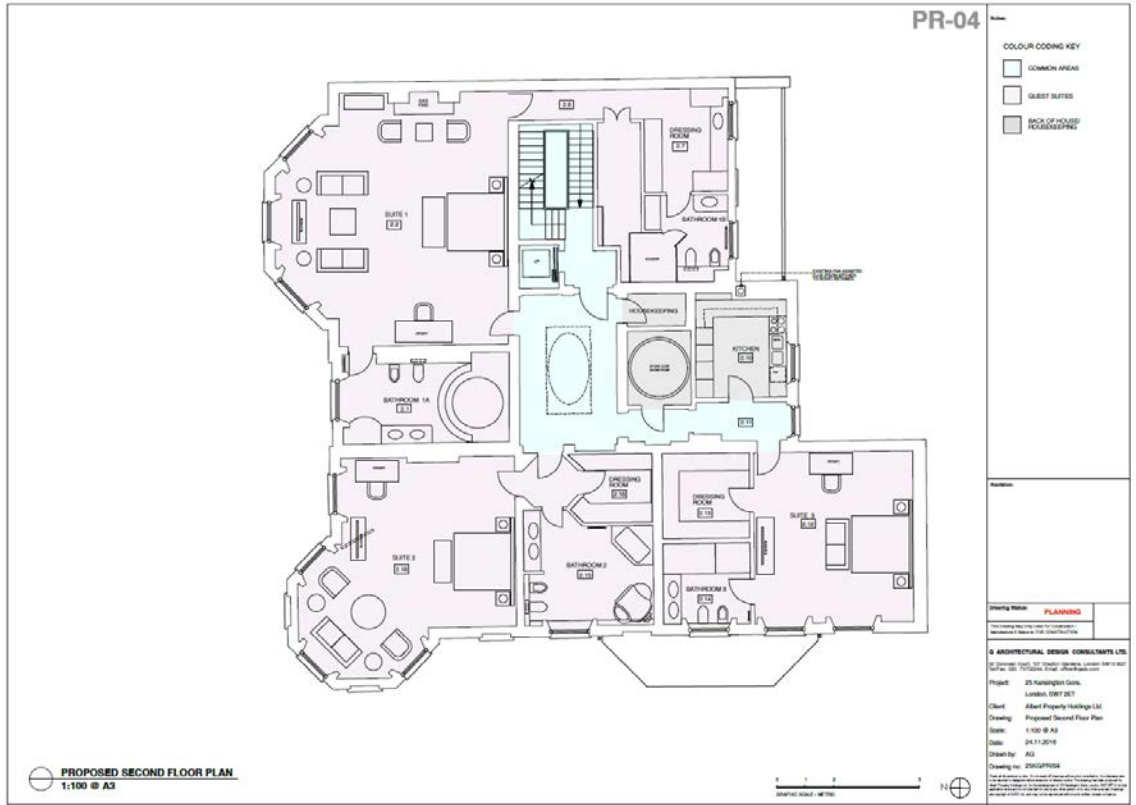
Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan

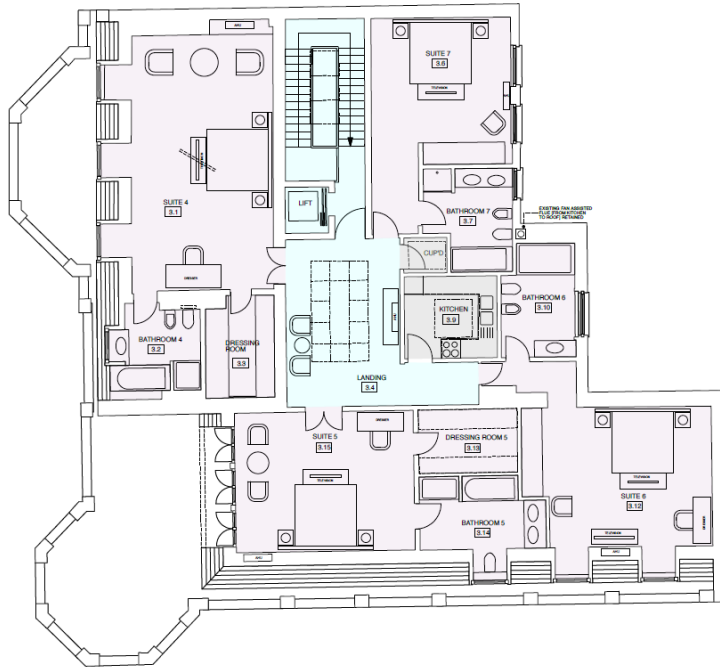


Proposed Second Floor Plan



Proposed Third Floor

PR-05



- COLOUR CODING KEY**
- COMMON AREAS
 - GUEST SUITES
 - BACK OF HOUSE/ HOUSEKEEPING

Revisions:

Drawing Status: **PLANNING**

Q ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN CONSULTANTS LTD.
 25 Darnley Court, 107 Darnley Gardens, London SW16 6QT
 Tel: 020 7536 6000 Email: info@qad.co.uk

Project: 25 Kensington Gate,
 London, SW7 2ET
 Client: Albert Property Holdings Ltd.
 Drawing: Proposed Third Floor Plan
 Scale: 1:100 @ A3
 Date: 24.11.2016
 Drawn by: AG
 Drawing no: 25KGP005

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PROPOSED THIRD FLOOR PLAN
 1:100 @ A3



DRAFT DECISION LETTER

Address: 25 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2ET

Proposal: Use of the property as a hotel (Class C1) providing 7 bedrooms.

Reference: 17/00401/FULL

Plan Nos: Site location plan; 25KG/EX/01; 25KG/EX/02; 25KG/EX/03; 25KG/EX/04;
25KG/EX/05; 25KG/PR/01; 25KG/PR/02; 25KG/PR/03; 25KG/PR/04; 25KG/PR/05.

Case Officer: Sebastian Knox

Direct Tel. No. 020 7641 4208

Recommended Condition(s) and Reason(s)

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings and other documents listed on this decision letter, and any drawings approved subsequently by the City Council as local planning authority pursuant to any conditions on this decision letter.

Reason:

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 2 You must apply to us for approval of a Servicing and Operational Management Plan prior to occupation. The plan should identify process, internal storage locations, scheduling of deliveries and staffing, and a clear process for managing taxis and private hire vehicles arrivals/ departures including measures to deter coaches. You must not commence the hotel use until we have approved what you have sent us. The Servicing and Operational Management Plan must thereafter be maintained and followed by the occupants for the life of the development.

Reason:

To avoid blocking the surrounding streets and to protect the environment of people in neighbouring properties as set out in S42 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and STRA 25, TRANS 20 and TRANS 21 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R23AC)

- 3 The spa/fitness facilities at basement level, bar/billiard room/sitting room at ground floor level, and drawing room/breakfast room/dining room areas at first floor level shall only be used as an ancillary part of the hotel use and must only be used by hotel guests.

Reason:

To protect the environment of people in neighbouring properties, as set out in S32 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and ENV 6 and ENV 7 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R13BC)

- 4 You must apply to us for approval of revised details of how waste is going to be stored on the site, including the bin capacities used to store the residual waste, food waste, waste cooking oil and recyclable materials separately. You must not start work on the relevant part of the development until we have approved what you have sent us. You must then provide the waste store in line with the approved details, and clearly mark it and make it available at all times to everyone using the hotel. You must not use the waste store for any other purpose. (C14CD)

Reason:

To protect the environment and provide suitable storage for waste and materials for recycling as set out in S44 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and ENV 12 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R14CC)

- 5 No music shall be played in the hotel such as to be audible outside the premises.

Reason:

To protect the environment of people in neighbouring properties, as set out in S32 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and ENV 6 and ENV 7 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R13BC)

- 6 (1) Where noise emitted from the proposed internal activity in the development will not contain tones or will not be intermittent, the 'A' weighted sound pressure level from the internal activity within the hotel use hereby permitted, when operating at its noisiest, shall not at any time exceed a value of 10 dB below the minimum external background noise, at a point 1 metre outside any window of any residential and other noise sensitive property, unless and until a fixed maximum noise level is approved by the City Council. The background level should be expressed in terms of the lowest LA90, 15 mins during the permitted hours of use. The activity-specific noise level should be expressed as LAeqTm, and shall be representative of the activity operating at its noisiest., (2) Where noise emitted from the proposed internal activity in the development will contain tones or will be intermittent, the 'A' weighted sound pressure level from the internal activity within the hotel use hereby permitted, when operating at its noisiest, shall not at any time exceed a value of 15 dB below the minimum external background noise, at a point 1 metre outside any window of any residential and other noise sensitive property, unless and until a fixed maximum noise level is approved by the City Council. The background level should be expressed in terms of the lowest LA90, 15 mins during the permitted hours of use. The activity-specific noise level should be expressed as LAeqTm, and shall be representative of the activity operating at its noisiest., (3) Following completion of the development, you may apply in writing to the City Council for a fixed maximum noise level to be approved. This is to be done by submitting a further noise report including a proposed fixed noise level for approval by the City Council. Your submission of a noise report must include: (a) The location of most affected noise sensitive receptor location and the most affected window of it; (b) Distances between the application premises and receptor location/s and any mitigating features that may attenuate the sound level received at the most affected receptor location; (c) Measurements of existing LA90, 15 mins levels recorded one metre outside and in front of the window referred to in (a) above (or a suitable representative position), at times when background noise is at its lowest during the permitted hours of use. This acoustic survey to be conducted in conformity to BS 7445 in respect of measurement methodology and procedures; (d) The lowest existing LA90, 15 mins measurement recorded under (c) above; (e) Measurement evidence and any calculations demonstrating that the activity complies with the planning condition; (f) The proposed maximum

noise level to be emitted by the activity.

Reason:

Because existing external ambient noise levels exceed WHO Guideline Levels and as set out in ENV 6 (1), (6) and (8) and ENV 7 (A)(1) of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007 (UDP), so that the noise environment of people in noise sensitive properties is protected, including the intrusiveness of tonal and impulsive sounds; and as set out in S32 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016), by contributing to reducing excessive ambient noise levels. Part (3) is included so that applicants may ask subsequently for a fixed maximum noise level to be approved in case ambient noise levels reduce at any time after implementation of the planning permission.

- 7 You must apply to us for approval of details of the ventilation system to get rid of cooking smells, including details of how it will be built and how it will look. You must not begin the use allowed by this permission until we have approved what you have sent us and you have carried out the work according to the approved details. (C14AB)

Reason:

To protect the environment of people in neighbouring properties as set out in S29 and S32 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016) and ENV 6, ENV 7 and DES 5 of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007. (R14AC)

- 8 (1) Where noise emitted from the proposed plant and machinery will not contain tones or will not be intermittent, the 'A' weighted sound pressure level from the plant and machinery (including non-emergency auxiliary plant and generators) hereby permitted, when operating at its noisiest, shall not at any time exceed a value of 10 dB below the minimum external background noise, at a point 1 metre outside any window of any residential and other noise sensitive property, unless and until a fixed maximum noise level is approved by the City Council. The background level should be expressed in terms of the lowest LA90, 15 mins during the proposed hours of operation. The plant-specific noise level should be expressed as LAeqTm, and shall be representative of the plant operating at its maximum., (2) Where noise emitted from the proposed plant and machinery will contain tones or will be intermittent, the 'A' weighted sound pressure level from the plant and machinery (including non-emergency auxiliary plant and generators) hereby permitted, when operating at its noisiest, shall not at any time exceed a value of 15 dB below the minimum external background noise, at a point 1 metre outside any window of any residential and other noise sensitive property, unless and until a fixed maximum noise level is approved by the City Council. The background level should be expressed in terms of the lowest LA90, 15 mins during the proposed hours of operation. The plant-specific noise level should be expressed as LAeqTm, and shall be representative of the plant operating at its maximum., (3) Following installation of the plant and equipment, you may apply in writing to the City Council for a fixed maximum noise level to be approved. This is to be done by submitting a further noise report confirming previous details and subsequent measurement data of the installed plant, including a proposed fixed noise level for approval by the City Council. Your submission of a noise report must include:, (a) A schedule of all plant and equipment that formed part of this application;, (b) Locations of the plant and machinery and associated: ducting; attenuation and damping equipment;, (c) Manufacturer specifications of sound emissions in octave or third octave detail;, (d) The location of most affected noise sensitive receptor location and the most affected window of it;, (e) Distances between plant & equipment and receptor location/s and any mitigating features that may

attenuate the sound level received at the most affected receptor location;; (f) Measurements of existing LA90, 15 mins levels recorded one metre outside and in front of the window referred to in (d) above (or a suitable representative position), at times when background noise is at its lowest during hours when the plant and equipment will operate. This acoustic survey to be conducted in conformity to BS 7445 in respect of measurement methodology and procedures;; (g) The lowest existing L A90, 15 mins measurement recorded under (f) above;; (h) Measurement evidence and any calculations demonstrating that plant and equipment complies with the planning condition;; (i) The proposed maximum noise level to be emitted by the plant and equipment.

Reason:

Because existing external ambient noise levels exceed WHO Guideline Levels, and as set out in ENV 6 (1), (6) and (8) and ENV 7 (A)(1) of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007, so that the noise environment of people in noise sensitive properties is protected, including the intrusiveness of tonal and impulsive sounds; and as set out in S32 of Westminster's City Plan (November 2016), by contributing to reducing excessive ambient noise levels. Part (3) is included so that applicants may ask subsequently for a fixed maximum noise level to be approved in case ambient noise levels reduce at any time after implementation of the planning permission.

- 9 No vibration shall be transmitted to adjoining or other premises and structures through the building structure and fabric of this development as to cause a vibration dose value of greater than 0.4m/s (1.75) 16 hour day-time nor 0.26 m/s (1.75) 8 hour night-time as defined by BS 6472 (2008) in any part of a residential and other noise sensitive property.

Reason:

As set out in ENV6 (2) and (6) of our Unitary Development Plan that we adopted in January 2007, to ensure that the development is designed to prevent structural transmission of noise or vibration.

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. 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 applicant has been given every opportunity to submit an application which is likely to be considered favourably. In addition, where appropriate, further guidance was offered to the applicant at the validation stage.
- 2 This permission does not allow any work which would change the outside appearance of the property. (I18AA)
- 3 We recommend all hoteliers to join the Westminster Considerate Hoteliers scheme and to support the Considerate Hoteliers Environmental Charter. This aims to promote good environmental practice in developing and managing hotels. For more information, please contact:

John Firrell MHCIMA
Secretary - Considerate Hoteliers Association

C/o Wheelwright's Cottage
Litton Cheney
Dorset DT2 9AR

E-mail: info@consideratehoteliers.com
Phone: 01308 482313

(I76AA)

- 4 You must get listed building consent for any work inside the building that would affect its character. (I02AA)
- 5 Please contact our Environmental Health Service (020 7641 2000) to make sure you meet their requirements under the Control of Pollution Act 1974 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990. (I07AA)

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.