

<b>Delegated Report</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>	<b>Expiry Date:</b>	29/03/2023
		N/A / attached	<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>	23/04/2023
<b>Officer</b>		<b>Application Number(s)</b>		
Duty Determination Team		2023/0446/P		
<b>Application Address</b>		<b>Drawing Numbers</b>		
Units 8-9 Pratt Mews Camden London NW1 0AD		See Decision Notice		
<b>PO 3/4</b>	<b>Area Team Signature</b>	<b>C&amp;UD</b>	<b>Authorised Officer Signature</b>	
<b>Proposal(s)</b>				
Erection of an additional storey to 2 mews buildings.				
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	Refuse			
<b>Application Type:</b>	Full Planning Permission			

<b>Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:</b>	<b>Refer to Decision Notice</b>					
<b>Informatives:</b>						
<b>Consultations</b>						
<b>Adjoining Occupiers:</b>	No. notified <b>00</b>		No. of responses <b>05</b>		No. of objections <b>00</b>	
<b>Summary of consultation responses:</b>	<p><b>Site Notices</b> were displayed on 22/03/2023 expiring on the 15/04/2023 in the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 80 Camden High Street</li> <li>- Northern end of King's Terrace</li> </ul> <p>A <b>Press Advert</b> was published on and 30/03/2023 and expired on 23/04/2023.</p> <p>8 x adjoining occupiers objected on the proposal on the following grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address relates to residential units not commercial units on the ground floor.</li> <li>• Pratt Mews is a conservation area and should not be overdeveloped/ this is not in-keeping with the character of the area.</li> <li>• A further storey would further impede light to surrounding properties, some of which already receive limited natural light.</li> <li>• This application will pave the way for other properties to do the same having a huge impact on light levels to adjacent properties.</li> <li>• Proposal will increase the number of tenants in the building and that would increase the noise. No sound proofing currently. Business below needs quiet for filming.</li> <li>• Extra height will affect the natural light received by business below which is important in their filming and photography work.</li> <li>• The building will be higher than surrounding developments and overlook bedroom windows (and balconies) at close proximity.</li> <li>• There have been enforcement issues at the property in the past.</li> <li>• Construction vehicles will cause a lot of disturbance as mews is narrow, and danger to pedestrians (including queues for nearby foodbank).</li> <li>• Proposal will cause significant increase in traffic and parking problems which will affect residents and refuse collection.</li> <li>• Current renter's loss of existing place to live.</li> </ul>					
<b>Camden Town CAAC comments:</b>	<p>The CAAC does not object to the principle of an additional storey on the structure, however in view of the height of the immediate neighbour to the south, the proposed design is of poor quality and does not enhance the CA. A modern set back additional storey would have less visual impact from the mews below and the view from Pratt Street and be a more appropriate response to the character of the mews. The committee would like to emphasise that additional mansard storeys are not generally acceptable in mews settings, and this application must not be used as a precedent.</p>					

## Site Description

The application site comprises two properties, no 8 and no 9 Pratt Mews. No 8 is a three-storey mews building and the adjoined no 9 is a two-storey mews building. Both are part of the same terrace of buildings along the western side of Pratt Mews. The mews is located off Pratt Street (to the north) and is located in Camden Town Centre parallel to the high street.

The buildings are not listed but are in the Camden Town Conservation Area, and no 9 is identified as being a positive contributor.

## Relevant History

**2005/0811/P** – (8 - 9 Pratt Mews) *The erection of a two storey roof extension to a light industrial (B1) / residential (C3) building to provide an additional 1 x 1-bed flat and 1 studio flat at second floor level and 1 x 1-bed flat at third floor level.* – **Withdrawn**

**2005/1633/P** – (8/9 Pratt Mews) *Erection of a first floor rear extension to accommodate a 2 bedroom flat and conversion of existing first to third floor levels from a 3 bed maisonette to 3 x 1-bedroom flats.* – **Refused** 22/07/2005 for the following reasons: 1. Replacement windows to front elevation of 78 Camden Mews by reason of design and materials and the proposed alteration to the window at rear first floor level by reason of size and design would be detrimental to the appearance of the building and the character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area contrary to policies EN1 (general environmental improvement), EN21 (alterations to existing buildings) and EN31 (character and appearance of the conservation area) of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2000. 2. The proposed development would fail to provide off-street car parking which would exacerbate existing levels of overnight car parking stress in surrounding streets. In this respect the proposal is contrary to policy TR17 (residential parking standards) of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2000. 3. The proposal includes a bedroom window at rear first floor level to the proposed extension that would be only 8m from bedroom windows at the rear of 78 Camden High Street and close to other windows to habitable rooms. Therefore the proposal would not provide an adequate level of visual privacy for existing and future residents contrary to the requirements of policies HG12 and EN19 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2000. 4. The proposed housing mix of 3 x 1 bed flats and 1 x 2 bed flat would not provide an adequate number of larger units and would be inappropriate and contrary to the requirements of policies HG18 and HG19 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2000.

**2005/2721/P** – (8 - 9 Pratt Mews) *Mansard roof extension and additional storey to the front of No. 8 to provide 1x1 bedroom flat and 1x1 studio at second floor level.* – **Granted** 22/12/2005 subject to a section 106 legal agreement.

**2006/1716/P** – (8-9 Pratt Mews) *Submission of details of mansard roof and dormer windows, pursuant to condition 2 of the planning permission 2005/2721/P, dated 22/12/04 for the erection of a mansard roof extension.* – Condition 2 **approved** 19/05/2006

### Nearby sites:

2016/5942/P - Erection of roof extension to create second floor level, with associated installation of rooflights and alterations to rear elevation to office building (Class B1). – **Granted** 03/02/2017.

2013/7963/P – Erection of roof extension to create second floor level, with associated installation of rooflights and alterations to rear elevation. – **Granted** 07/02/2014.

## Relevant policies

### National Planning Policy Framework 2021

### London Plan 2021

### Camden Local Plan 2017

Policy A1 – Managing the impact of development

Policy D1 – Design

Policy D2 – Heritage

### Camden Planning Guidance

Design (2021)

Amenity (2021)

### Camden Town Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy (2007)

## Assessment

### 1 Proposal

- 1.1. Planning permission is sought for the erection of a mansard roof extension over both properties.
- 1.2. Although No 8 is not mentioned, no 9 is highlighted as a positive contributor within the Camden Town Conservation Area as part of the group nos 9-13 (consecutive). Pratt Mews is identified in the Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy as an example of historic floorscape: granite setts.

### 2 Assessment

- 2.1 The main considerations in relation to this proposal are:
  - Design and Heritage (the of impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building, the mews of which it is part and wider Camden Town Conservation Area);
  - Amenity (the impact of the proposal on the amenity of adjoining occupiers);

### 3 Design and Heritage

- 3.1 Policy D1 of the Local Plan requires proposals to consider the character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings; and the character and proportions of the existing building. Through Policy D2, the Council will seek to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's conservation areas.
- 3.2 The Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy outlines the many '*diverse historic rooflines*' which are important to preserve and highlights that roof alterations and extensions '*can harm the historic character of the roofscape*' and are therefore unacceptable. It also states that the special character the Conservation Area is vulnerable to erosion through, among other things, '*inappropriate change*'. While change is acknowledged as necessary, it is noted it must '*be managed so as to retain the distinctive and varied character*'.
- 3.3 The document also highlights the following issue: '*Some, though not all, more modern development has been inappropriate, eroding the character and detracting from the townscape. These unsuccessful changes have particularly taken the form of inappropriate building massing, and detail, and poor choice and use of materials, with inadequate attention to the form and character of surrounding buildings*'.
- 3.4 In regard to the three mews that run between Bayham Street and the High Street, of which Pratt Mews is one, the document states that '*the predominantly two-storey buildings give the narrow*

*passages their special scale*'. It is also noted that no 9 is identified in the conservation appraisal as being part of the group of properties 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. These are humble properties in terms of height, all two storeys but no 9, and they have group value in their scale and perception from the mews below. It is this strong mews character and grouping which forms part of the significance of this part of the conservation area.

- 3.5 Although never built out, the adjacent no 10, was granted permission for a mansard roof level extension in 2017 (ref 2016/5942/P). This extension, like the existing extension at no 9 fits the modern character of the mews which is considered by the Council to be established as two storeys plus mansard/roof level.
- 3.6 In this vein, no.9 currently retains its two-storey historic appearance but has an additional mansard storey which is set back slightly and therefore not overly apparent from the streetscape of the mews itself. The proposal would demolish the existing mansard roof and replace it with a brick storey, flush with the lower floors of the property, and an additional mansard roof extension on top – taking the building to four storeys.
- 3.7 The two storey appearance of the existing structure is an important aspect of the building as it represents the historic scale and continues the building height of the mews terrace in which it sits. The two storey building height is mentioned in the Conservation Area appraisal as a defining characteristic of the street. As a result, the additional storey on this building is not supported as it would harm the significance of this part of the conservation area.
- 3.8 No.8 Pratt Mews is a three storey building and appears to mark the end of Pratt Mews, it is not likely to be an historic component of the street, however it may have just been substantially altered. It is three storeys and is the same height as its neighbour to the south. An additional storey is considered odd here as at present the buildings of the terrace gradually increase height, reaching a peak at Kings Apartments, and then returning back to two and three storeys in the next mews, King's Terrace. The rhythm of this height increase and decrease creates a pleasing transition and allows the historic scale to remain the predominant feature of the mews.
- 3.9 Although the properties are already one storey higher than the adjacent two-storey properties, as outlined above the existing additional one storey does naturally contribute to the rise in height further south of the Kings Apartments and therefore the effect is not considered detrimental.
- 3.10 Despite this, any additional height and mass to the buildings would not be sympathetic to the scale of the mews which is a defining attribute of the mews typology. The result of the proposal would be to compromise the historic character of the mews, harming the significance of this part of the conservation area.
- 3.11 There is no objection to the material palette proposed as such, rather the objection is to the inappropriate increased mass and height of the mews buildings.
- 3.12 The principle of an additional storey on the two existing mews buildings is not considered to reveal or enhance the character and appearance of the mews or the wider conservation area, rather it is considered to upset the modest scale which is fundamental to the humble nature and typology of a mews. Overall, the proposal is considered to harm the character and appearance of the host buildings, the mews of which they are part and the wider conservation area. The harm to the significance of the conservation area is less than substantial. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) of the Camden Local Plan 2017.
- 3.13 Special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area under s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013.
- 3.14 Local Plan policy D2, consistent with the NPPF, seeks to preserve and enhance heritage assets, stating that the Council will not permit development that results in harm that is 'less than

substantial' to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

3.15 The proposed scheme would not provide any notable public benefits that would be capable of outweighing the considerable weight and importance given to the identified heritage harm. The application is recommended for refusal on this basis.

#### 4 Amenity

4.1 Policy A1 of the Local Plan seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered and would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. This includes privacy, outlook, noise, daylight and sunlight.

4.2 CPG Amenity guides that interior and exterior spaces which lack privacy can affect the quality of life of occupants; new development should be designed to avoid overlooking; gardens and habitable rooms such as residential living rooms, bedrooms and kitchens are considered the most sensitive. In terms of overlooking, the benchmark distance outlined by the councils CPG Amenity Guidance as good practice between habitable rooms (either non-residential or residential and assuming a level topography) is 18m, or the established building line.

4.3 While there is already an established building line in this case, the distance, circa 6m between the properties in some cases, is much closer than the ideal benchmark and although this aligns with the existing situation it would increase the existing level of overlooking between buildings. At present, there are only two glazed access doors to the rear façades of no 8 and no 9 at a higher level, whereas the proposal would introduce three dormer windows which will look directly across towards habitable windows, and thus overlook, at a close range in the case of no 9, is increased.

4.4 As can be seen from Figure 1 below, there is an existing tight relationship between the mews properties, and the Camden High Street properties to the rear which means light levels, outlook and privacy are already constrained. Any additional storey to nos 8 and 9 Pratt Mews would be considered to further exacerbate an undue sense of enclosure to those facing into the space between the taller buildings in a way which is considered harmful to amenity of the surrounding properties.



**Figure 1 (above): The area between the mews and Camden High Street properties to the rear**

4.5 The increased enclosure of properties to the rear would cause harm to neighbouring light levels, outlook and privacy, which cumulatively is considered unacceptable in amenity terms. Overall, the proposed works would cause harm to the amenity of nearby properties, and the proposal is therefore contrary to Amenity CPG and Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) of the Camden Local Plan 2017. The application is recommended for refusal on this basis.

## **5 Conclusion**

5.1 The proposal is for the incongruous erection of additional storeys on two mews buildings, visible from the public realm within a conservation area. The development would have a negative impact on design and heritage in terms of its size, bulk and location, harming the significance of the conservation area, contrary to policies D1 and D2 of Camden's Local Plan 2017.

5.2 In addition to this, the overall impact on light, overlooking and the sense of enclosure of neighbouring properties would harm the amenity of neighbouring properties contrary to policy A1 of Camden's Local Plan 2017.

## **6 Recommendation**

6.1 Refuse planning permission.