

## Imperial Hotel

### Design and Access Planning Statement for the Conversion of the Existing Old Ballroom

#### Introduction

This planning application is presented to the London Borough of Camden to request permission for the refurbishment of the existing casino building, which is attached to the Imperial Hotel, Russell Square, WC1B 5BB.

The old ballroom is located within the entrance courtyard to the hotel and is an existing two storey structure, which was completed as part of the main hotel works. The hotel was constructed in 1967 and the courtyard housed the entrance to the ballroom. Up until November 2022, the ballroom was used as a casino, serviced from the main hotel for public access and rear access through the service yard via Queen Square.

The casino formed part of the overall hotel accommodation and in planning terms, was identified as an ancillary operation to the hotel.

In December 2022, the building became vacant and this application and this application seeks permission for the refurbishment of the old ballroom and its integration into the main hotel.

The proposals include:

- To utilise the space originally designed as the ballroom to provide an all-day dining facility for guests staying at the Imperial Hotel. This involves the opening up of the facade to the courtyard with a series of glazed windows and bi-fold doors.
- The basement will be used to provide staff welfare facilities. This will incorporate uniform, lockers, store, changing facilities and staff welfare, together with a small kitchen and servery.
- The basement links to the existing car park and a small area of the car park will be converted to provide kitchen and a lift for access to the upper levels.
- There will be no changes to the external boundary walls or increase in footprint along the party wall.
- The First Floor will be stripped of the existing single storey structures that cover the plant.
- The existing terrace at first floor level is 29.49 datum AOD. However, the pergola and structures which hide the plant have a height of +31.50 AOD. It is the intention to remove the pergolas, strip the roof and reorganise the spaces accordingly.
- It is intended to relocate the plant into a smaller contained area with a feature screen and to enclose the staircase for access up to this space.
- The roof will subsequently become a small garden terrace with direct access to the existing hotel. This will provide guests to utilise a south-facing feature terrace. Concept designs for the landscape proposals are incorporated.

#### The Existing Building

The existing building is a concrete frame structure, with steel columns. The steel is encased in concrete.

The existing facilities in the basement are limited. The area was previously used as staff and support areas to the old ballroom. The existing floor level to the basement is 22.29 AOD and will remain as such.

The ground floor similarly has a concrete structure with supporting columns, located to the perimeter or within the space itself. The existing ground floor level is +25.51 AOD. It will remain as such as part of the new proposals.

The existing roof level is +29.49 AOD. The height of the pergola and roof structure is +31.50 AOD, the highest point being +33.250.

The external facade is generally concrete or brickwork. The facades facing into the courtyard are feature concrete panels, which match the banding to the front of the facade. These extend to a ground floor ceiling height. It is proposed to remove the canopy and structures including signage to the front of the building; and to restore the building to match the main entrance and courtyard facade.

The remaining two elevations: one to a light well and one to Queen House are brickwork. These will be cleaned and retained as existing.

A small light well is also located to the norther part of the building and this will house condensers. It currently exists as a plant space.

The existing roof will be retained. It presently offers a waterproof surface to the ground floor level. Many of the structures will be removed and provide a flat surface for the creation of the terrace and a heavily reduced plant housing.

There will also be a small area with regards to the staircase for means of access from the terrace to ground floor level and to the basement. The staircase currently exists to the ground floor and basement.

Works within the basement will just involve the enclosure of four parking spaces. There is no external increase in footprint.

### **The Proposals**

The proposals are to refurbish and renovate the existing accommodation and create a much needed Staff Welfare facility for the main Imperial Hotel and to provide an all-day dining facility for guests to the hotel.

This will open up to the courtyard and create an open and enhanced elevation, respective of the entrance area to the hotel reception, acknowledging the concrete facade and features at high level, and retaining the overall mass and form. There will be no increase of height to this elevation.

### **Basement**

The basement level will provide for uniform, lockers, changing facilities and staff welfare, together with a small kitchen and servery. A lift will also be provided within this area.

The existing changes in floor level will be retained, they are nominal.

Smoke extract from the car park will be incorporated in service risers. This will not have an impact on the external facade or treatment of the building.

The existing staircase from the basement to the ground floor will remain.

The datum floor level and floor to ceiling heights will remain as existing for the basement. Works will be undertaken to provide ventilation and fully renovated spaces. The basement proposed and existing finished floor level being 23.550.

### **Ground Floor**

It is the intention to convert the ground floor level to an all-day dining restaurant facility. This will include an interior-designed feature area for the breakfast offering. It will incorporate bi-fold doors which open out to the courtyard, respectfully incorporated into the pattern and grid of the main building.

To the rear, the existing stairs will be retained to provide access for staff to the welfare and breakfast facility. The smoke shaft from the car park will be incorporated within a structure. There will be a series of small grilles which will provide extract from these to the walkway within the Imperial Hotel's ownership to the northern edge of the site.

The floor to ceiling heights will remain as existing. There will be new ventilation and interior features within the building itself. The nominal change to this area is the removal of a series of small lightweight bays which have been attached to the previous building. These have been rationalised to enable a staircase to be provided for means of escape to the terrace / roof area and to rationalise the building form and weather proofing.

The proposed ground floor level will be 25.503 as existing. The courtyard level being 24.745.

**First Floor**

The first floor level of the building will be located on top of the existing concrete roof structure. The existing roof supports the plant and respective services for the old ballroom. The level is +29.49 AOD.

Above the existing roof area was a trellis structure, which hid the plant. The height of this was 31.50. It is proposed to remove the pergola, open up four windows which exist into the Tudor Room of the hotel, and install glazed windows and doors. One of the facades will be fixed lights.

It is also proposed to remove the external structure which remains on the roof.

In replacement, there will be the staircase to link to the ground floor and basement level and a small enclosure to the plant. The plant compound will also be located on the roof area. This will have a height of 2.1 metres to a proposed lightweight mesh cover, which will protect the top of the plant.

The height of the plant screen to the adjacent properties will be approximately 2.3 metres. The top of wall being 32.250.

The screen to the garden area will link into the proposed staircase, which links up to the roof terrace. This will have a top of wall height of 32.796.

The enclosure to the staircase will have a top height of 32.500.

On the surface of the existing roof, cross falls will be considered with regards to drainage and the install of paved materials. It is also proposed to locate a pergola and planters on to the terrace. There is no intention for any further structures to be incorporated as part of the building form.

**Overall Area Schedule**

Please see below the areas identifying the current gross internal floor areas, the demolition areas and new build areas.

	Area to be Demolished (GIFA)		New Build (GIFA)	
	SQM	SQFT	SQM	SQFT
Basement	3.1	33.3	0	0
Ground	9.3	100.1	13.9	149.6
First	0	0	33.2	357.4
Total	12.4	133.4	47.1	507

There is a nominal increase of 34.7 sqm for these works. This does not consider the removal of the covered roof top plant, which has not been taken into our figures.

**Occupancy**

It will be a nominal allowance in terms of the occupancy and will be Hotel Guests/Executive members only. The internal building occupancy for the Executive Membership will be circa 100 at one key time. The occupancy of the terrace could be between 150-180.

**Services**

Service have been incorporated as part of the design proposals. There is no immediate change to the existing incoming services to the site.

All plant on the roof has been assessed and a report prepared by Applied Acoustic Design consultancy, which confirms that there is no major impact.

The plant area will have a minimal impact to the adjacent properties and every effort has been made to keep the height as close as possible to the existing pergola construction.

The staircase enclosure will extend up to a height of approximately 2.5 metres above the floor level. This will have an impact to adjacent properties but the major form of the extension has been kept facing towards the Imperial Hotel, so the narrow form faces towards Queen House.

Photographs included identify the existing roof area and the adjacent sight zones, which have significant plant areas.

The reduction of the structure adjacent to the Imperial Hotel reduces the impact on the overall form and mass of the adjacent properties.

### **Access**

Access to the Old Ballroom and proposed terrace is to be provided from within the hotel. The terrace will be access directly from the Executive Lounge and Old Ballroom. The terrace will be used predominantly by the Executive Club Members, who have a loyalty status with the hotel itself.

A means of escape / access is provided to the all-day dining, which is controlled and managed by the hotel at courtyard level.

The all-day dining facility will be accessed via the main hotel reception for the guests.

### **Hours of Operation**

The hours of operation to the terrace will be from 08:00 to 23:00 but will also match with the hotel's evening use, which is 23:00.

The overall strategy for the Executive Terrace and Old Ballroom will be managed by the main hotel.

### **Acoustics**

An acoustic report has been prepared and is incorporated as part of the proposals. The existing use of the site is a hotel it will always be the priority of the hotel to ensure the guests are not disturbed.

### **Terrace for Executive Club Members**

Any potential impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupants primarily relates to changes at roof level, particularly the use of a terrace. This terrace will be exclusively available to Executive Club Members who hold royalty status with the hotel. Its management will be in alignment with the hotel's policies and procedures to ensure minimal noise and disturbance. As above, the existing use of the site is a hotel it will always be the priority of the hotel to ensure the guests are not disturbed.

### **Materiality**

It is intended to retain the concept and theme of the existing materials. The concrete panels will be extended to the ground level, cleaned and careful matching of the concrete will be undertaken.

Similarly, in terms of the install of windows, it will be in accordance with the glazing proposals which have been established and approved for the main hotel.

All perimeter walls will remain as brickwork.

### **Landscape**

A concept scheme has been prepared for the landscape and incorporates the inclusion of soft landscape, feature areas and seating. The whole intention to create a softer space for the amenity of guests, both in terms of the terrace and visually from above.

A feature pergola with a retractable roof has been identified as part of the works to link into the proposed staircase that runs from the basement level up.

Details of the proposed materials for the landscape are also identified.

### 3D Visuals

The 3D visuals identify the proposals in respect of the building configuration. These are illustrative but are key to portray the scale, mass and form of the proposed works; and indicate the impact and reduction of impact with regards to the timber pergola roof structure, which existed on the old ballroom roof.

### Architectural Drawings

The following drawings are submitted to support this application:

Drawing Reference	Revision	Drawing Title
1431-P101	C	Location Plan
1431-P102	D	Existing Basement Plan
1431-P103	D	Existing Ground Floor Plan
1421-P104	E	Existing First Floor Plan
1431-P105	D	Existing Roof Plan
1431-P106	D	Proposed Basement Plan
1431-P107	D	Proposed Ground Floor Plan
1431-P108	D	Proposed First Floor Plan
1431-P109	C	Proposed Roof Plan
1431-P110	E	Existing & Proposed Cross Section 11
1431-P111	D	Existing & Proposed Elevation 8
1431-P112	C	Existing & Proposed Elevation 10
1431-P113	C	Proposed Executive Lounge Terrace Elevations
1431-P114	B	Ballroom Plant – 3D Visuals
1431-P115	B	Executive Terrace – Concept Proposal
1431-P116	B	Existing Photographs
1431-P117	B	Glazing Bars Precedent
1431-P118	B	Bifold Doors Precedent
1431-P119	B	Rear Boundary Dimensions.
23106/002/lf		Acoustic Review Note