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Email: gmanley@firstplan.co.uk
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Camden Council
Planning Department
Camden Council
5 Pancras Square
London
N1C 4 AG

Dear Sir / Madam,

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR WORKS TO INSTALL WATERPROOF MEMBRANE SYSTEM AT LOWER GROUND FLOOR LEVEL AND ASSOCIATED WORKS
11 POND STREET, CAMDEN, NW3 2PN

We have been instructed by our client, Nick Cornwell, to submit the enclosed listed building consent application at 11 Pond Steet, Camden, NW3 2PN, via the Planning Portal (PP-12404614). The proposal comprises internal works to install a fully reversible waterproof membrane at the lower ground floor level. The external elements are limited to the installation of a single air brick at the base of the ground floor façade.

Prior to the submission of the application, Hutton and Rostron ('H&R') (who specialise in investigating problems in historic buildings) undertook a detailed condition survey of the property. The application site has for many years suffered from a severe damp problem at the lower ground level with water ingress leading to significant degradation of the internal walls. This severe damp problem is confirmed in the supporting documentation by H&R, as is the evidence of historical tanking and chemical damp proof injection attempts that have proven unsuccessful.

The damp and mouldy environment currently renders the lower ground floor of this property uninhabitable for anything other than the storage of non-perishable items due to the risk to human health arising from the conditions. To address these health concerns and bring this space into active use within the family home, it is proposed that a specialised contractor install a bespoke and fully reversible waterproofing system on the internal faces of the lower ground floor walls to resolve the damp problems and to the protect the structural integrity of the property from any potential further damage caused by the water ingress. This system will link up and share the drainage route installed under the floor, when a floor cavity membrane system was introduced in 2016 (under ref: 2016/1179/L). An air brick will be installed to front elevation to match to exiting one in situ and internal vents will be linked up with these for added ventilation.

Full details, including a method statement, for the proposed reversible waterproofing system are contained in H&R's Condition Survey and supporting technical drawings.

In accordance with national and local validation requirements, the following documents are enclosed in support of the application:

- Completed Listed Building Application Form and Ownership Certificate;
- Heritage Statement (included within this letter);
- Design and Access Statement (including Sustainability Statement and Photographs);
- Architectural drawings prepared by Brod Wright Architects:
    - Site Location Plan - drawing no. 1039-AP9-01;
    - Site Block Plan - drawing no. 1039-AP9-02;
    - Existing Basement and Ground Floor Plan - drawing no. 1039-AP9-03;
    - Existing First, Second Floor Plan - drawing no. 1039-AP9-04;
    - Existing Third Floor and Roof Plan - drawing no. 1039-AP9-05;
    - Existing Front Elevation - drawing no. 1039-AP9-06;
    - Existing Section A-A - drawing no. 1039-AP9-07;
    - Proposed Basement and Ground Floor Plan - drawing no. 1039-AP9-08;
    - Proposed Front Elevation - drawing no. 1039-AP9-09;
    - Proposed Section A-A - drawing no. 1039-AP9-10.
- Condition Survey including Method Statement Schedule by H&R;
- Technical Remedial Basement Plan by H&R;
- Technical Remedial Basement Detail and Section by H&R.

Site Description

The application site comprises a three-storey (plus basement) residential, mid-terraced dwelling located in the London Borough of Camden on the north side of Pond Street. The surrounding area comprises a mix of commercial and residential properties.

The application specifically relates to the lower ground floor (basement) level in addition to the vaults beneath the pavement at the front of the property. The interior of walls within this area are a mixture of exposed brickworks (mainly within the vaulted areas) and white painted brickwork. The accompanying documentation by H+R advises that this paint is impermeable film forming paint, however, it evidently is not functional and unable to prevent water ingress. There is a window and door positioned between the main storage area and the vaults, which H&R advised are likely to be non-original and introduced concurrently with structural steel lintel elements in circa 1960-70.

These areas can only currently be used for the occasional storage of non-perishable items (and not used for domestic recreational purposes) due to years of severe water penetration. This water ingress has caused a constant high humidity with significant damp and decay of the structural walls within the property, as well as the growth of surface mould.

The accompanying documentation prepared by H+R confirms that there is evidence to suggest that in circa 1990s the lower ground floor level had various campaigns to inject a chemical damp-proof course. There was also evidence of an early form of rendered tanking applied to the vault walls. Following this, in 2016 a new floor finish was installed which included the installation of a sump pump, studded damp proof membrane, insulation and floor screed.

The application site is Grade II Listed, as part of a group listing with nos. 5-13 (odd) Pond Street, and lies within the Hampstead Conservation Area. The site also lies within an area of archaeological significance.

Relevant Planning History

Application Site

- In March 2014, planning permission was granted for change of use of basement and ground floor levels from retail (Class A1) to residential (Class C3) (ref. 2013/3396/P).

- In March 2015, planning permission (ref: 2014/6956/P) and respective listed building consent (ref: 2014/6958/L) were granted for alterations in connection with the change of use from retail (A1) and conversion of the building into a single dwelling house (C3); including a replacement single storey rear extension internal alterations and alterations to the shopfront.

- In December 2015, a revised scheme to the March 2015 approval was subsequently approved which in addition to the above consent, allowed for internal alterations to reinstatement of original elements (refs: 2015/5987/P and 2015/6162/L).

- In September 2016, listed building consent was granted for the replacement of timber battened floor structure with heated floor membrane over existing concrete basement sub-floor (ref. 2016/1179/L). This application originally included a form of wall waterproofing, however this was removed from the scheme prior to the consent being issued. The water ingress has since continued and the applicant is now seeking consent to propose highly effective, yet fully reversible waterproof membrane system which will neatly link up with the drainage already installed as part of this earlier floor membrane improvement.

Comparable Consents in Camden

- In August 2022, planning permission (ref: 2022/3863/P) and listed building consent (ref: 2022/2376/L) were granted for excavation to two below ground vaults (amongst other works) at 11 Chester Terrace. This comparable consent related to a Grade I listed property. The delegated report confirms that officers supported the *'cavity drainage waterproofing membrane*', to the existing and indeed newly created vaults given their former damp condition. In addition the delegated report went on to state: '*While this will result in an uncharacteristic internal appearance for historic vaults, the works are reversible and in line with similar works to listed vaults previously consented within the borough'.*

- In March 2017, listed building consent was granted for waterproofing works to the below ground front vaults below payment level (amongst other works) at 28 Church Row (ref. 2016/5715/L). This comparable consent related to a Grade II* property. The delegated repot confirms that officers supported the *'membrane damp-proofing system',* which allowed a reversible solution to resolve the damp and leaking problems at the property. During the assessment of this application, Historic England reviewed the proposals and responded with no objection to the works.

- In May 2023, listed building consent was granted for various internal including internal waterproofing and strengthening works at the Ambassador's Theatre (ref. 2023/1423/L). This comparable consent related to a Grade II listed property. The delegated report confirms: *"… the proposed works are necessary to improve the structural and environmental conditions*", and accordingly, it is accordingly it is concluded that the works: "*…will cause no harm to the special interest of the grade II listed building or to the character and appearance of the Seven Dials Conservation Area".*

Application Proposals

This application seeks listed building consent for the works to install a fully reversible waterproof membrane system to internal walls at the lower ground floor level, specifically within the front storage room and the vaulted areas below the pavement and associated works.

The proposed waterproofing membrane system is shown fully within the architectural drawings prepared by Brod Wight Architects and within the technical documentation provided by H&R (Condition Survey report and technical drawings). In summary the proposed specification is as follows:

- Installation of 8mm studded plastic isolating membrane (Newton 508 or similar) to be fixed to bed joints in brickwork with specialist plastic 'plugs'. Wall membrane to extend at the top to within the ceiling void.

- Membrane fixing plugs inserted into 9mm dia. Holes in brick joints, to minimise damage to brickwork and allow removal of plugs and linings, making good mortar joints (allowing waterproofing installation to be reversed if later required).
- British Gypsum MF20 or similar metal batten, or similar, to be screwed into heads of membrane 'plugs' via flexible perforated metal straps.
- 15mm plasterboard with gypsum plaster skim coat, screw fixed to metal battens as above Plain skirting and moulding from softwood, adhesive fixed to 15 mm plasterboard.
- At lower level of wall, plain skirting and moulding from softwood, adhesive fixed to 15 mm plasterboard.
- At upper level of wall, coving to be fitted.
- New wall waterproofing would connect to existing below floor drain.
- Installed of new air brick in front elevation (to match existing).
- Installation of new internal vent and opening up existing internal vent to suitably link up with air bricks for ventilation.

Alternative Methods Discounted

There have been multiple attempts to resolve a longstanding damp problem at the property. The alternative waterproofing options (which have already been undertaken historically but have failed to resolve the damp problem) include:

1. Waterproof membrane to floor only;
2. Chemical wall injection;
3. Acrylic, 'impermeable' film-forming paint (early form of tanking).

With regards to method 1, these works have already been undertaken recently and indeed will be retained with the current proposal. As such, this method was discounted for the current proposal given that it is already in place and will be linked up with the wall membrane system proposed. The works to the floor in isolation, were not sufficient to resolve the damp issue, however it is recommended by H&R that together with the current wall system and added ventilation; the damp problem will be resolved.

Method 2 has been identified as having been undertaken historically at the property. This method is considered somewhat outdated and generally unsuitable for older wall construction without cavities. The absence of cavities means this technique on such walls can (as in the historic undertaking at the site) then be not effective at preventing water ingress and the damp problems this creates. As such, this method was also discounted for the current proposal.

Method 3 has also been undertaken historically at the site. This technique has also failed to deliver suitable results to solve the water ingress issue and is given its nature of being applied to entire surface of a wall considered more disruptive historic fabric than other methods. As such, this method was also discounted.

In contrast, as outlined within H&R's Condition Survey report, dry lining systems (such as that proposed in this application) are reversible in nature and enable excess moisture to dissipate from the masonry and not associated with increasing the risk to the long term stability of the fabric. As such, they represent a more acceptable approach in conservation terms over the methods defined above. Accordingly, it is considered that the current proposal, which will be effective in its design, minimal in disruption to the existing structure and 100% reversible is considered the only and most suitable technique preventing water ingress and resolving the damp problem. Further justification for this technique is contained within this statement.

Relevant Planning Policy

The statutory development plan for Camden Council comprises the Camden Local Plan (2017) and the London Plan (2021). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) is also a material consideration.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023)

The NPPF provides the overarching planning policy guidance for development across England. It states:

> ***"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."***

Chapter 12 of the NPPF focuses on the creation of high quality and well-designed places. Specifically, **Paragraph 126** outlines that good design is one of the fundamental factors in producing sustainable development by making better places to live and work and by helping to make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 130 outlines that decisions should ensure that development proposals will creates place that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and promote health and well-being with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, whilst also functioning well and add to the overall quality of the area.

Paragraph 189 states that heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. This section goes on to note that these assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Paragraph 199 highlights thar when considering the impact of a development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

London Plan (2021)

The London Plan is the overall spatial development strategy for London, setting out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20 – 25 years. The overall strategy is for 'Good Growth' to promote sustainable development – including the use of previously developed land and buildings in a design-led approach, ensuring development is accessible and takes into account physical constraints.

Policy D4 'Delivering Good Design' notes that the design quality of development should be retained through to completion.

Policy HC1 'Heritage Conservation and Growth' outlines that development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to the asset's significance and appreciation with their surroundings.

Camden Local Plan (2017)

Policy C1 'Health and Wellbeing' outlines that The Council will promote strong, vibrant and healthy communities through ensuring a high quality environment by, amongst many strategies, support applications which improve the quality of housing stock. The supporting text to Policy C6 remains relevant to the current application in stating at 3.139: "*Many aspects of housing quality have a critical impact on the health and wellbeing of occupiers. These aspects of quality include the external environment, the condition of the property and its state of repair and decoration*".

Policy D1 'Design' sets out that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development respects local context and character, is inclusive and accessible for all and promotes health. It goes on to state that the Council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Policy D2 'Heritage' confirms that the council will seek to preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings. With regard to listed buildings development should be shown to avoid total or substantial demolition, a change of use or alterations and extensions that may cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building and avoid harm to its setting.

Camden Planning Guidance – Design (2021)

This guidance document notes that when assessing listed building proposals, the Council has a statutory duty 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. Furthermore, it outlines that proposals should seek to respond to the special historic and architectural constraints of the listed building, rather than significantly change them.

Hampstead Conservation Area Statement (2002)

This Statement sets out the clear indication of the Council's approach to the preservation and enhancement of the Hampstead Conservation Area and is used by the Council in the assessment of all development proposals within this area. This document notes of the area's varied architectural styles and specifically references the application site, with its listed status and in noting it's former use of forming part of a parade of five stucco shops.

Heritage Impact Assessment

Character of the Grade II Listed Building and the Site's Contribution upon this Asset

The site is Grade II Listed property, as a group listing with nos. 5-13 (odd) Pond Street. The Historic England Listing (Listing Entry Number: 1139070) provides the following description:

> ***"Terrace of 5 shops with accommodation over, on a hill and slightly stepped. Late 1860s. Stuccoed brick. 3 storeys. 2 windows each. Shop fronts mostly altered but retain unusual fascia brackets with bearded masks. Upper floors have architraved sashes; 1st floor with lugged sills and bracketed cornices. 2nd floor, segmental-arched with keystones and lugged sills. The modillion cornices to each building are stepped and linked by further brackets with masks. Coped blocking courses with dies. INTERIORS: not inspected. Included for group value as part of a planned scheme with The Roebuck Public House (qv)."***

As set out in Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, '*in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall 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*.' It is considered, based on the above listing description and our understanding of the building, that the majority of the historical interest surrounding this property relates to its exterior, and its contribution as a group, with the interior remaining uninspected.

Whilst the property is no longer in retail use and its elevation has been altered for the residential purposes, facilitated under the aforementioned previous planning permissions and listed building consents; the existing

property is considered to make a moderate, positive contribution to this group heritage asset. This is owing to the retention of its architectural proportions and features on the front, external elevation.

However, the lower ground floor interior of the property is not considered to make a contribution to this asset's listed description, other than for its structural purposes. Indeed, one of the historic attempts to waterproof the basement level involved am early form of tanking. This arguably has lessened the historical interest of these internal walls (which themselves are considered to have little to no historical significance from a visual perspective) given the disruptive nature of this historic process.

As such, there is scope for the property to continue to make (and indeed increase) its positive contribution to this listed group by ensuring that any underlying (and not publicly visible) issues, which have the potential to degrade the structural integrity of the building are fixed/suitably resolved. For the reasons outlined in this statement, this can be achieved with the proposed waterproofing system.

Character of the Hampstead Conservation Area and the Site's Contribution upon this Asset

The site lies within the Hampstead Conservation Area ('CAA') and so the Council's CAA's statement is of relevance. This statement considers that the special character of the CAA is derived from the topography, the Heath, the mix of buildings styles, the street patterns and Hampstead's historical association with clean water and fresh air.

With regard to Pond Street, this document (at page 33) notes the area's varied architectural styles and specifically references the application site, with its listed status and in noting its former use of forming part of a parade of five stucco shops. It also describes properties upon this street at typically rising to three storeys and in being set-back from the pavement's edge.

As with outlining our consideration as to the site's current contribution to the group of listed building, the property's external front elevation is of relevance, of which the property provides a moderate, positive contribution to. There is an opportunity for this contribution to continue to be appreciated by the public for future generations if the proper maintenance and repair of this property is undertaken (inline with paragraph 189 of the NPPF) – this is salient given its current condition with severe damp. This can be achieved through installation of the proposed waterproofing system.

Impact of the Works

In assessing the values which are embodied within the identified heritage assets, regard has been had to the heritage values as defined in Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008), together with guidance within the NPPF (2023) and NPPG.

As outlined in the accompanying H&R documentation, the lower ground floor is in poor condition following years of a water ingress into the walls leading to a damp and mouldy environment. As such, the building requires a functional waterproofing system which will improve the environmental conditions within these subterranean spaces and indeed prevent any potential structural degradation in the future.

It is accepted that elements of the lower ground floor level, such as the internal brickwork walls, openings to the vaults and general delineation of the internal areas would have formed original elements of this property. However, as noted above (under 'Site Description') and further outlined within H&R's Condition Survey, there have been multiple attempts to resolve a longstanding damp problem at the property, however these have not been successful. The text under the 'Alternative Methods Discounted' sub-heading of this statement outline these methods and explain why such techniques have been discounted for the current proposal.

In accordance with paragraph 189 of the NPPF, heritage assets are irreplaceable and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Whilst the positive contribution to this listed group and the wider conservation area relates specifically to the exterior of the property (in which only the new air brick relates to), special attention has still been paid to ensure that the proposed internal waterproofing system and how it interacts in the most minimal way to the internal walls of the lower ground floor level and is entirely reversible in nature. Indeed, dry lining systems (as proposed in this application) are considered far more acceptable in conservation terms in protecting the structural integrity of masonry / building fabric as they enable moisture to dissipate effectively without the need for harsh chemicals or film-forming paints to be applied.

The accompanying technical drawing by H&R clearly shows the minimal nature of the proposed batten fixings to the mortar between the existing bricks to support the metal framework which the plasterboard would sit. The general proportions of the lower ground floor level would be retained in full and following installation of the works. The spaces could then be better utilised by the occupying family and allow them to be brought into active use that would improve the quality of the accommodation in terms of size, but also remove the health risk associated with the damp and mould (inline with the Council's support for health and well-being through the upkeep of properties as set out in policies C1 and C6).

As such, it is considered that the proposals are limited in extent, discreetly located and sensitive in nature and only serve to resolve a damp issue. The works will allow for better utilisation of the space and prevent any potential further degradation of the structure. As such, the works are considered to have little to no impact upon the significance of the listed building and Hampstead Conservation Area and as such will suitably preserve the significance of these designated heritage assets.

In addition, the proposed listed building application, seeking consent for a fully reversible waterproofing system is comparable to the works approved by Camden Council 11 Chester Terrace (Grade I), 28 Church Row (Grade II*) and Theatre (Grade II), as detailed within under 'Comparable Consents' above. Support the current application at 11 Pond Street would therefore be consistent with the Council's recent decision making at these listed properties where listed building consent has recently been granted for reversible waterproofing systems.

The development is considered to be in accordance with guidance within the NPPF, Camden Council's heritage policies and the content of the CAA.

Design, Amenity and Health and Wellbeing Considerations

From a design perspective, it is considered that the proposed works will significantly improve and enhance the currently uninhabitable and unusable spaces at lower ground floor level in this family home. The proposed works comprise minimal and sensitive fixings to the original internal walls to revitalise these areas. The only external element is limited to the installation of an air brick to match the scale and appearance of the existing one, at the base of the ground floor façade.

The improvements brought about to the health and well-being of the property's occupants will be significant and the works will make a valuable contribution to ensuring that Camden's housing stock remains well-maintained and is long-lasting for future generations.

Given the extent and nature of the proposed works, is not considered that they will have any detrimental impacts on neighbouring or surrounding amenities. It is therefore considered that the proposals adhere to the previously identified national and local planning policies, including policies C1, C6, D1 and D2.

Conclusion

The proposed changes are considered modest in scale and amount and have been sensitively considered to ensure that the works do not negatively impact or detract from the significance of the building, nor any historic interest associated with this heritage asset. The proposals will assist in facilitating the use of this currently space which is unhabitable for anything other than storage of non-perishable items. The resultant areas will be able to be enjoyed by the occupying family, providing associated health benefits and the works will significantly enhance and refresh its internal appearance.

We therefore trust that you have the necessary information, and we look forward to receiving confirmation that this application has been validated in due course. In the meantime, should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

TIM WILLLIAMS
Director

Enc.