



25 John Street, London WC1N 2BS
Design and Access Statement / Planning Statement

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This combined Design and Access / Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant and is submitted in support of an application for full planning permission and listed building consent for the development of 25 John Street ("the Site") described as:

Demolition of existing conservatory and replacement with conservatory of similar size. Removal and replacement of first floor skylight, replacement of existing modern sash windows to rear of extension, replacement of existing window to lightwell, rendering of modern brickwork to rear extension. Introduction of traditionally detailed metal security bars to the basement door at front lightwell. Internal works. Associated landscaping works to garden.

- 1.2. This Statement provides a description of the site and its surroundings, discusses the relevant planning history of the site and describes the proposed development. Further, it aims to assess the proposed development in the context of planning policy, as well as other relevant and best practice guidance and any other material considerations. The Statement explains how the proposed development is in accordance with and will deliver the objectives of such policies and, therefore, represents an appropriate and acceptable development for the area.
- 1.3. The proposed development builds on an extant planning permission and listed building consent, which has been implemented. The proposed development has a more limited scope to the extant permission and relates primarily to works to the modern extension and conservatory to the rear of the house.
- 1.4. The proposed works will make the house more comfortable for the occupiers by allowing the better utilisation of the modern rear extension to the rear of the property. While improving the thermal performance of the conservatory, reducing solar glare and associated overheating during the summer.
- 1.5. This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following accompanying documents:
- Application form and certificate
 - CIL Questionnaire
 - Location plan

- Demolition plans (included on existing plans)
- Existing and proposed plans/sections and elevations
- Heritage assessment (incorporating photographs)

2. The site & surrounding area

- 2.1. The application site comprises a four-storey plus basement terraced house. It is located on the west side of John Street near the junction with Northington Street, with John's Mews to the rear.
- 2.2. Originally built as a Georgian townhouse, the building was occupied as offices but was converted back to residential use, as outlined in the planning history section below.



Photograph 1 – Front elevation



Photograph 2 – Rear elevation (site to right)

- 2.3. The surrounding area predominantly consists of residential and office uses, as well as a small amount of retail and leisure. The building is part of an early 19th-century Grade II listed terrace located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. A more detailed description of the area and its character is included in the Heritage Assessment.
- 2.4. As is the case in most of Georgian London, the front elevation of both the house and terrace have retained an ordered character (see photograph 1) whilst the rear of the properties are more eclectic. This is particularly the case with John Street, where several of the buildings were used for commercial purposes and have undergone iteration of development of extensions of various qualities (see photograph 2) over many decades.

Site designations

The Site is located within or includes:

- The building is statutorily listed as grade II
- Conservation Area
- Archaeological Priority Zone

3. Planning history

3.1. Below, we have a detailed recent planning history. Planning permission 2021/3925/P and the associated Listed Building Consent was secreted in 2021. All pre-commencement conditions have been discharged and the project was implemented.

Ref	Description	Status
2023/0393/L	Alterations including replacement of external plaster with lime render to front lightwell, replacement of radiators in the principal rooms of the first floor, installation of an air brick and recessed lights to ceiling of the bathrooms on the upper floors.	Granted
2022/4226/L	Approval of Details - Existing and proposed detail drawings of the external service stairs in front lightwell.	Granted
2022/2786/L	Installation of a suspended ceiling at basement level.	
2021/4813/L (LBC)	Internal and external alterations in connection with the change of use from office use to residential use including replacement stairs to front elevation at basement level, external wall lights to entrance and basement, and new services to rear. Internal alterations including removal and replacement of modern partitions, fixtures, fittings, services, sanitary fittings and pipes at all levels. Replacement of modern chimneypiece at second floor, and new opening and secondary glazing at third floor level.	Granted subject to conditions.
2021/3925/P	Change of use from office (Class E) to single dwelling house (Class C3) and works of conversion including external alterations of replacement stairs to front elevation at basement level, external wall lights to entrance and basement level, and new services to rear.	Granted subject to conditions and s106 Legal Agreement
2017/1571/L	Approval of condition 4 (materials specification) granted under reference 2016/4220/L dated 05/09/16 to insert 12mm toughened glass within the existing opening between the front boardroom and reception at Ground floor level and reinstate timber folding doors to front boardroom. (Part retrospective).	Granted
2016/4220/L	To insert 12mm toughened glass within the existing opening between the front boardroom and reception at Ground floor level and reinstate timber folding doors to front boardroom (Part retrospective)	Granted and warning of Enforcement Action
8800194	The erection of a conservatory at ground floor level with the rebuilding and enlargement of an extension on the basement ground and first floors as offices as shown on drawings 3178/1 and 2.	Granted with conditions

4. Relevant planning policies

Statutory framework

- 4.1. Section 70(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out that in determining a planning application, the local authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and any other material considerations.
- 4.2. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.3. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) requires that decision makers, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, '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'.
- 4.4. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) requires that decision makers, in exercising their planning functions in relation to buildings or land in a conservation area, pay 'special attention ... to the *desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*'.

Development Plan

- 4.5. The Statutory Development Plan for the Site comprises the London Plan (2021), the Camden Local Plan (2017) and the Policies Map. Further relevant guidance is provided at the local level with adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs):
 - Amenity
 - Design
 - Home improvements
- 4.6. Further guidance is provided in the Conservation Area character appraisal.
- 4.7. Relevant guidance at the national level is included within:
 - The National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
 - The National Planning Practice Guidance

The London Plan (2021)

4.8. The London Plan (March 2021) is the overall strategic plan for London, setting out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20–25 years. The document brings together the geographic and locational (although not site-specific) aspects of the Mayor's other strategies – including those dealing with Transport, Economic Development, Housing, Cultural, Social and Environmental issues. Relevant policies include:

- D4 (Delivering Good Design)
- HC1 (Heritage conservation and growth)

Local Plan

4.9. The Camden Local Plan was adopted in 2017. Relevant policies include:

- A1 (Managing the impact of development)
- D1 (Design)
- D2 (Heritage)

5. Proposed Development and Planning Policy Considerations

- 5.1. The proposed development includes the replacement of the existing modern conservatory to the rear of the property and works to the 1980s extension as well as internal works. The description of development is below:

'Demolition of existing conservatory and replacement with conservatory of similar size. Removal and replacement of first floor skylight, replacement of existing modern sash windows to rear of extension, replacement of existing window to lightwell, rendering of modern brickwork to rear extension. Introduction of traditionally detailed metal security bars to the basement door at front lightwell. Internal works. Associated landscaping works to garden.'

- 5.2. The relevant planning policies are set out below by policy level and theme, followed by a short evaluation; these include:

- Principle of Development
- Design / Conservation and Heritage
- Neighbourly matters

6. Principle of Development

- 6.1. The proposed development involves the replacement of the existing conservatory to the rear of the property and works to the 1980s extension, as well as some internal works and refurbishment of the garden. Issues of conservation and design are addressed in the following section. As such, the principle of development is limited to the acceptability of demolition.
- 6.2. Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of buildings and areas.
- 6.3. The proposed demolition will be limited to the removal of a relatively modern and small existing conservatory. As detailed in the Heritage Assessment, the conservatory, which was built in the 1980s, has no heritage significance in its own right and does not contribute to the appearance of the listed buildings or broader Conservation Area.
- 6.4. However, the demolition has been limited to as small an area as possible and only includes the removal of the rear elevation and glass roof. The two masonry nib boundary walls are retained.
- 6.5. There are some additional limited areas of demolition, including works to the window openings on the rear elevation of the extension at first floor. However, again, these elements of the building are not significant in heritage terms and, as detailed below, are required to make improvements to the fenestration design which will enhance the Conservation Area.

7. Design/Conservation and Heritage

- 7.1. Section 12 of the NPPF stipulates that developments should be sympathetic to local character and history and be visually attractive. Further, section 16 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation when assessing the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset. This is elaborated on under Policy HC1(c) of the London Plan, which states that development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to the asset's significance and appreciation within their surroundings.



Photograph 4 – Existing conservatory



Photograph 5 – Conservatory – Showing boundary walls

- 7.2. The proposed development includes a limited scope of works, primarily related to the existing rear extension and conservatory built in the 1980s as well as some internal works to the main structure and the basement.
- 7.3. Great care has been taken to ensure that the proposed works, are limited, and meet high design standards and preserve and enhance the heritage assets, both the Conservation Area and house.

- 7.4. A comprehensive Historic Building Report (Heritage Impact Assessment) has been submitted as part of this application. The report includes details of the legislative framework and planning policy, an assessment of the significance of the heritage asset and an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the heritage asset.
- 7.5. The report concludes that the proposal will not harm the heritage assets, whether the listed building or conservation area and are therefore acceptable in terms of heritage. For completeness we have included below a summary of the report.
- 7.6. Summary Assessment of Significance

A detailed assessment of significance with guidance on the relative significance of elements of fabric and plan form and the extent to which these elements are sensitive to alteration is included in Section 4.0 of this report [Heritage Assessment]. The following paragraphs are a summary explaining why the listed building/ conservation area/non designated heritage asset is considered of nationally-important architectural and historical interest.

25 John Street is of special interest as a good example of an early-19th century, second rate, terraced London townhouse built by a speculative developer to designs set out in 'pattern books'. Its principal architectural significance lies in its external appearance and contribution to the architectural composition of the listed terrace, together with its contribution to the wider street scene and the 'character and appearance' conservation area; elements of particular note are the building's façade proportions, the composition and hierarchy of the window openings and its original double pitched roof.

The interior plan form has been largely preserved and is also of significance, particularly on the principal floors. The original hierarchy of floor levels (and their different status) is still evident in terms of the varied storey heights and some of the surviving decorative features. The principal timber staircase is of high significance, as are some early-19th century chimney pieces, decorative architraves and doors, sash windows and some original cornices where they remain.



Image 1: visualisation of rear elevation

- 7.7. Below we have included a summary of the proposal as included in the Heritage Assessment:

A detailed analysis of the proposals with a commentary on the effects that they have on the fabric and the wider significance of the building together with a justification in terms of local and national heritage planning policy is included in Section 5.0 [of the Heritage Assessment]. In summary the proposals would see

the rebuilding of the conservatory and alterations to the rear extension of the listed building, as well as minor works at basement level within the main house.

The proposals relate principally to the 1988 rear extension and conservatory of 25 John Street, and would see the rebuilding of the conservatory and the replacement of the existing windows and rooflights in the rear extension. The proposals would also see the insertion of a door at basement level within the listed building and the installation of traditionally detailed security bars to the basement door onto the front lightwell. The existing rear extension and conservatory are not of architectural or historic interest, and the proposals have been sensitively designed to read as subservient to the listed building and would improve the appearance of the rear elevation.

As set out in Section 5, it is considered that the proposals would not cause harm to the significance of the listed building or the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, while offering some benefits. It is, therefore, the conclusion of this report that the proposals meet the requirements of local and national heritage planning policies included in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, The National Planning Policy Framework, The London Plan, and the Camden Local Plan and are acceptable in heritage terms.

- 7.8. As outlined, the proposed works, either the demolition or replacement, will not impact the significance of the heritage assessment.
- 7.9. The proposed works are of a high standard and have been carefully conceived to be acceptable in both design and marriage terms.
- 7.10. The replacement conservatory is of a very similar size to the existing structure and retains a discreet and subservient character. It will sit comfortably with both the host building and neighbouring properties.
- 7.11. The choices of materials for the conservation and new rear windows of the elevation have been carefully chosen to mediate between the host building, the existing extension and more utilitarian mews to the rear.

8. Neighbourly matters

- 8.1. Neighbourly matters and protecting amenity is managed through policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) of the Camden Local Plan. This is expanded in the Amenity CPG document.
- 8.2. Policy A1 states that the council will seek to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours. It expands that factors that the council will consider that are relevant to this application include: visual privacy/outlook, sunlight, daylight and overshadowing.
- 8.3. The proposed replacement conservatory will be the same size as the existing structure. As such, there will be no greater impact on the neighbouring occupiers created by the development.
- 8.4. Furthermore, the conservatory (existing and proposed) sits between two boundary walls that screen the structure from both neighbours. These walls will be retained, ensuring that there will be no further impact on neighbours than the existing situation.
- 8.5. The separation distance between the conservatory and adjoining buildings will not be changed as part of this proposed development. For the same reasons above, there will be no impact on the daylight/sunlight levels of neighbouring occupiers.
- 8.6. As detailed above, the proposed works will not negatively impact the amenity of adjoining occupiers or the occupiers of the host building. However, the proposed works will include several benefits in terms of amenity. These include improvements to the rear fenestration with the introduction of more traditionally sized windows.
- 8.7. This improvement to the elevation will benefit the Conservation Area and outlook for some adjoining occupiers of the mews. The property's occupiers will benefit from the improved thermal performance of the conservatory, which will radically reduce overheating during the summer, allowing the entire house to be utilised.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1. This combined Statement assesses the proposed development in the context of planning policy at the national, regional, and local levels and other relevant and best practice guidance and material considerations. As outlined, the proposed development is in accordance with and will deliver the objectives of all relevant development plan policies.

- 9.2. The proposed works are limited and focus on the existing modern extension to the rear of the house. As such, the works will preserve the character of the Conservation area and will not impact the significance of the listed building. The proposed changes will allow the family to use their home more comfortably and make improvements to its environmental performance whilst enhancing the rear elevation.

- 9.3. The proposed development meets all relevant development plan policies and represents high-quality development appropriate to the context. We respectfully request that planning permission and listed building consent be granted.