



Date: 22/02/2024
PINS Ref: APP/X5210/W/23/3335300
Our ref: 2023/2881/P
Contact: Miriam Baptist
Direct line: 020 7974 8147
Email: miriam.baptist@camden.gov.uk

Planning Solutions Team
Planning and Regeneration
 Culture & Environment
 Directorate
 London Borough of Camden
 2nd Floor
 5 Pancras Square
 London
 N1C 4AG

Dear Sir/Madam,

www.camden.gov.uk/planning

Appeal site: Units 8-9 Pratt Mews, London, NW1 0AD

Appeal by: Mr Leo Kauffman against refusal of planning permission dated 24/11/23, ref 2023/2881/P.

Proposal: Erection of an additional storey to 2 mews buildings.

I refer to the above appeal against the Council's refusal to grant planning permission. The Council's case is largely set out in the Officer's delegated report. The report details the application site and surroundings, the site history, relevant policies and an assessment of the proposal. A copy of the report was sent with the questionnaire.

In addition to the information sent with the questionnaire, I would be pleased if the Inspector could take into account the following information and comments before deciding the appeal.

1. Summary

- 1.1. The application site is located within the Camden Town Conservation Area and one of the two buildings to which the application relates, No 9, is identified as a positive contributor within the Camden Town Conservation Area Statement.
- 1.2. 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. It is noted that the upward extension of No 8, was approved prior to the conservation area designation.
- 1.3. The mews is located off Pratt Street (to the north) and is located in Camden Town Centre parallel to the high street.

The application site buildings form part of the terrace of buildings along the western side of Pratt Mews. The mews was developed as subsidiary to Camden High Street and is likely to be mid-nineteenth century; a tertiary street in context of secondary Pratt Street and primary road Camden High Street. The area did not suffer bomb damage and the Pratt Mews is highlighted in the conservation area appraisal as an example of a historic floorscape: granite setts. The scale is a defining feature of the mews typology and results in an intimate, modest built environment, unusual of other central London settings.

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), all 2-storey London stock properties, which the exception of the additional mansard on No 9 of the appeal site. It is noted that there is an expired permission for a mansard roof at No10, which, had it been implemented, would make the property the same as No 9 is currently, two storeys plus mansard.

- 1.4. The two mews buildings are in commercial use on the ground floor as a photography studio while the floors above are in residential use and comprise 4 flats, 2 flats on each floor. The proposal relates to one of the flats on the second floor.

Relevant history

- 1.5. On 28/04/23, permission was refused for a larger proposal on design, conservation and amenity grounds.
- 1.6. The proposal has been reduced since then and has been refused on design and conservation grounds solely as set out below.

Description of the proposal

- 1.7. It is proposed to add an extra floor to No. 9 by replacing the existing mansard with a sheer storey and to erect a mansard above that which would also extend across the roof of adjoining No.8. This is to provide 2 additional bedrooms and a bathroom for the existing second-floor 1 bed flat, making it a 3 bed. A comparison between the existing buildings and the proposed can be seen below in Figure A below.

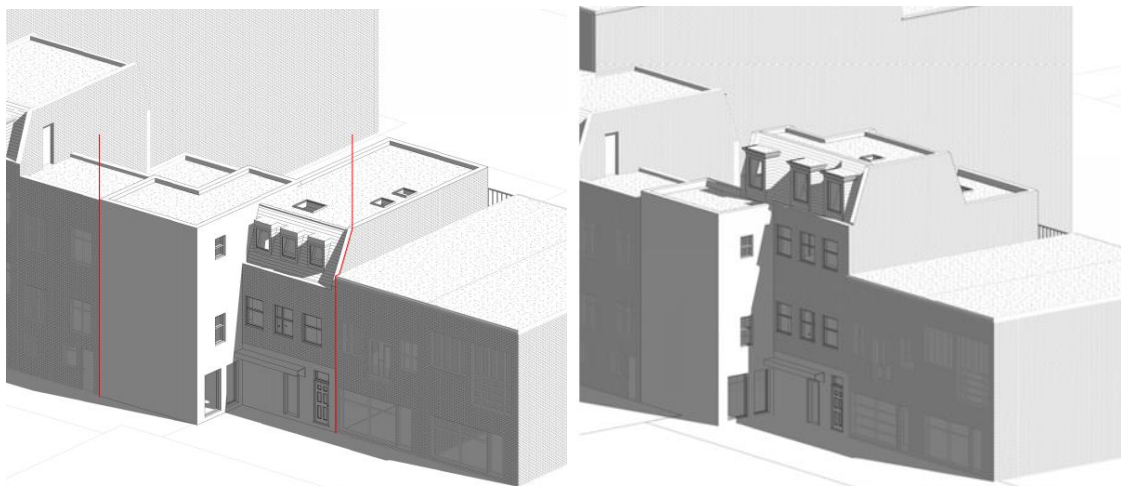


Figure A: Left: Existing building massing, right: current appeal scheme refused in Nov 2023

Reason for refusal

- 1.8 Permission was refused on 24/11/23 for the following reason:

The proposed development, by reason of its size, bulk, and location would be an incongruous and dominant addition which would harm the character and appearance of the host building and the mews terrace of which it is part, causing harm to the significance of this part of the Camden Town Conservation Area contrary to policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) of Camden's Local Plan 2017.

Cross refer to delegated report for assessment at this stage

1.9 The scheme is assessed fully in the delegated report and is not repeated here. The inspector is directed to the delegated report at this stage. The following focuses on the grounds of appeal.

2. Comments on appellant's grounds of appeal:

2.1. The appellant's grounds of appeal focus on the impact on the mews of which the host buildings are part and the Camden Town Conservation Area. These are summarised below following appraisal of the site.

Impact on the host building, mews and Conservation Area

- 2.2. The application site is located within the Camden Town Conservation Area, wherein the Council has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, in accordance with Section 72 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 (as amended).
- 2.3. Policy D1 of the Local Plan seeks to secure high quality design which respects local context and character; preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2; comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character; and preserves strategic and local views. Policy D2 seeks to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings.
- 2.4. The site is in a conservation area and one of the two properties is identified as a positive contributor along with adjacent properties. The appellant challenges the weight given to the Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal (CTCAA), highlighting that the document has not been updated since publication in 2007.
- 2.5. The council has given appropriate weight to the CTCAA which is read as supplementary guidance used to inform the application of policy. The decision has been made in light of Local Plan Policies D1 and D2, which require development that: '*respects local context and character*' and '*preserves and enhances the historic environment and heritage assets*'. Although the CTCAA was published just over 16 years ago, the mews does not appear to have significantly changed since then. A chief difference is the redevelopment of 1-6 Pratt Mews, where the original two-storey mews buildings have been replaced with a building of very similar intimate scale: a 2-storey-plus-mansard modern take on a warehouse-style mews building (decision date 12/02/2015, ref 2013/7739/P). Despite being a significant

redevelopment on one side of the mews, the special sense of scale has been preserved.

- 2.6. As part of their case, the appellant highlights the buildings in the mews that already exceed this benchmark. It is noted that the set-back mansard storeys at third floor level to the taller buildings near the entrance to the mews were granted in 1990, before the CTCAA was published. As aforementioned these buildings are physically closer to Pratt Street and more akin to its building scale. Although unfortunate, the height here has less of an impact as these buildings frame the entrance into the **mews rather than being central to the view into the mews.** Also, as aforementioned, these were permitted before the CTCAA. The appellant also draws attention to the building behind the appeal site, No 6 (or 178 Camden High Street), but the Council note this building is hidden from view from the mews by No 8 and sits within the shadow of 43-47 King's Terrace beyond, and therefore does not have a bearing on the perceived scale of the mews.
- 2.7. Any additional height at the application site is **much more clearly read as it stands in a prominent position at the end of the mews and** therefore is central in the principle view on entering the mews.
- 2.8. For these reasons, the council consider the fundamental nature of the mews to have been retained since publication of the CTCAA in 2007 and thereby maintain that the document is relevant.
- 2.9. The appellant challenges what the Council consider to be an appropriate modern scale in the mews: two storeys plus mansard, as it is not referenced in the conservation area statement. Although the Council are not applying a strict adherence to the CTCAA in terms of modern development, the document clearly informs this modern standard. The Camden Town Conservation Area statement states that *'The predominantly two-storey buildings give the narrow passages their special scale'*. The addition of an appropriately scaled mansard storey is considered to respect and reference the historic scale, as the set-back and angled façade maintain a sense of subordination to the main facade.
- 2.10. The Council would highlight the modern development on the opposite side of the mews, Regent House (1-6 Pratt Mews), is a successful example of a relatively recent scheme which has adopted a scale and character respectful of its setting: a historic mews within a conservation area.
- 2.11. The additional storey within view from the public realm would be considered to exacerbate the unsympathetic heights of buildings within the mews, thus eroding the character of the mews, directly effecting the positive contributor No 9, as well as the setting of the other positive contributors 10, 11, 12 and 13.
- 2.12. The appellant argues that the mews does not experience high footfall, and although that may be true by some comparison, there are many users of the mews who will appreciate the immediate character of the streetscape: residents, businesses whose premises are there, members of the two churches that meet there, as well as those visiting the Camden Foodbank which operates there.

- 2.13. Overall, the Council still considers that the proposed additional storey would fail to respect, but instead cause harm to the character and appearance of the host building and views along Pratt Mews, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the host building, the street scene and the wider area, including the Camden Town Conservation Area. In line with NPPF guidance, the Council considers that the harm to the designated heritage asset (the Camden Town Conservation Area) amounts to “less than substantial harm” and the Council does not consider there to be any notable public benefits associated with the proposal significant enough to outweigh the harm caused and therefore there is no justification for the proposed development. The Inspector is kindly requested to dismiss the appeal on this basis.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. Based on the information set out above, and having taken account of all the additional evidence and arguments made, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.
- 3.2. The information submitted by the appellant in support of the appeal does not overcome or address the Council’s concerns. The proposal presents no benefits that would outweigh the harm identified.
- 3.3. For these reasons the Inspector is respectfully requested to dismiss the appeal. However, should the Inspector be minded to approve the appeal, suggested conditions are included in Appendix 1.
- 3.4. If any further clarification of the appeal submission is required please do not hesitate to contact Miriam Baptist on the above direct dial number or email address.

Kind regards

Miriam Baptist
Planning Officer
Regeneration and Planning
Supporting Communities

Appendix 1 – Suggested Planning Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan, 1909AL01-P, 1909AL02-P Rev A, 1909AL03-P Rev A, 1909AL04-P Rev A; Design and Access dated January 2022 prepared by Habispace Ltd.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

3. All new external work shall be carried out in materials that resemble, as closely as possible, in colour and texture those of the existing building, unless otherwise specified in the approved application.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the premises and the character of the immediate area in accordance with the requirements of Policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.