

T: 07766 023077

DDI: 0207 692 0643

E: allen@smplanning.com

W: www.smplanning.com

80-83 Long Lane

London

EC1A 9ET

08 March 2024

Via Planning Portal only

Dear Sir/Madam,

**FULL PLANNING APPLICATION - THE TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 &
LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION – PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING & CONSERVATION AREAS)
ACT 1990**

**CHANGE OF USE FROM COMMERCIAL USE (USE CLASS E) TO RESIDENTIAL USE (USE CLASS C3) AND
MINOR INTERNAL ALTERATIONS**

125 PARKWAY, LONDON, NW1 7PS

Please accept this covering letter as an accompaniment to this full planning and listed building consent application for the above works. The planning application is accompanied by a site location plan, existing and proposed floorplans and a Heritage Statement.

The Site:

The application site comprises a 4-storey end of terrace building with a basement, located on the eastern side of Parkway (A4201), northeast of Regents Park. The building is Grade II listed and lies within the Regent's Park Conservation Area. The property is currently utilised as an office space, though recently these office spaces have been vacant due to a lack of interest in the building as a commercial unit.

The site is bordered by 123 Parkway to the north, a building in residential use and by 'Gordon Ramsay Street Pizza', a one-storey restaurant to the south. To the rear of the property is Park Village East.

The site is well located with respect to access to existing bus and rail transport infrastructure, reflected in its public transport accessibility rating of 6a. The site is located within zone 1 of the Environment Agencies flood mapping and is therefore at low risk of flooding.

The Proposal

The proposal seeks full planning permission and listed building consent for the change of use of the entire building from commercial office space to a single residential dwelling.

Planning History:

30600 – Alterations to the front elevation at basement and ground floor level and the erection of a four-storey rear extension to provide additional toilet and staff facilities – 21/05/1980 - APPROVED

HB2517 – The erection of an additional third floor for residential purposes – 22/09/1980 - APPROVED

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which incorporates three specific strands – economic, environmental, and social. The following sections are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- Section 2 (Achieving sustainable development)
- Section 5 (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes)
- Section 11 (Making effective use of land)
- Section 12 (Achieving well designed and beautiful places)
- Section 16 (conserving and enhancing the historic environment).

Local Planning Policy

For the purposes of this application, the adopted Development Plan for the London Borough of Camden (LB Camden) comprises the London Plan (2021), the Camden Local Plan (2017) and the Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) Documents. As the site lies within the Regent's Park Conservation Area, the guidance in the Regent's Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy will also be considered.

The below policies are considered most pertinent to the determination of this application:

London Plan (2021)

GG4 – Delivering the homes Londoners need

D3 – Optimising site capacity through the design led approach

D4 – Good design
H4 – Increasing housing supply
E1 - Offices
HC1 – Heritage conservation and growth
T6 – Car parking

Camden Local Plan (2017)

Policy A1 – Managing the Impact of Development
Policy H1 – Maximising housing supply
Policy H7 – Large and small homes
Policy D1 – Design
Policy D2 – Heritage
Policy T1 – Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport
Policy T2 – Parking and car free development

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Amenity (2018)
Housing (2019)
Transport (2019)
Developer Contributions (2019)

Planning Assessment

Principle of development

Law requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The law also requires the Local Authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and their setting.

Local Plan Policy E2 sets out that the Council will protect sites that are suitable for continued employment use by resisting developments for non-business uses unless it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer suitable for the existing business use. However, it should be noted that the policy is superseded by the introduction of permitted development rights that allow the conversion of commercial premises to residential uses under Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended). The only reason the permitted development right does not exist in this instance is because of the listed status of the property. Therefore, the key determinative and planning policy consideration relates to the impact on the fabric and setting of the listed building and any other considerations allowed under the prior approval process, discussed further below.

Notwithstanding the above, it is noted that the property has been marketed consistently since April 2023 and throughout this time it has appeared on most of the property portals and has been on the open market. Reductions to the rates have been applied during this time and only one offer has ever been received which was significantly below the guide price and was of course dismissed by the owner.

The market for commercial offices remains extremely challenging currently, with an over supply in Camden, and throughout the 12 month marketing period the property has had a total of only 13 viewings.

In light of the above, emphasis is drawn to housing which is identified by Camden as a land use priority. The re-use of an existing vacant building for residential purposes, would contribute to the housing supply in the borough and make the best use of the land available, in accordance with the development plan and national planning policy guidance.

Design, visual and heritage impacts

Section 72 of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 places a statutory duty on decision makers to have special regard to their desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas. Sections 16/66 of the same act places a similar duty in relation to listed buildings and their settings.

Camden Local Plan Policy D2 reflects the statutory duty, setting out that the Council will preserve and where appropriate enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings. CLP Policy D1 seeks to ensure high quality design in new development by ensuring it is sensitive to the local character, preserves or enhances the historical environment and provides a high quality, safe and sustainable form of housing.

The site is located within the Regent's Park Conservation Area and is identified, in the conservation area appraisal, as an important and positive contributor to the character of the area, particularly the transition it provides between parkscape and townscape. Having regard to this, the proposed development does not extend the building and there are no proposed external alterations to the original building. The development also intends to retain all existing walls and windows, further minimising the changes to the existing buildings character and wider streetscape. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Local Plan Policies D1 and D2.

In respect of the alterations considered in their own right, and the relationship between the proposed development and its surroundings, the effect will be entirely positive. The proposed development will enhance the quality of the townscape of the area and the character and appearance and significance of the Regent's Park Conservation Area. There will be no adverse effect on the setting of the listed building. In respect of design and built heritage considerations, it is in line with the policies and guidance on design set out in the NPPF and PPG; London Plan policies; local plan policies and CPGs. Please refer to the Heritage Assessment that accompanies the application for a full assessment of heritage impact.

Quality of residential accommodation

Policy A1 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure development provides accommodation of a suitable standard of living taking into account size of the unit, daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and noise and vibration and this is echoed in guidance contained within the NPPF and the London Plan. Further guidance is provided in CPG Amenity which sets specific standards of development. This is echoed by the relevant conditions of Class MA of the GPDO which requires all new residential accommodation to be served by adequate daylight.

The layout of the proposed development is fixed by the built composition of the building and this is not proposed to be altered. The new residential accommodation will serve a single dwelling and will benefit from a courtyard and all rooms will be served by windows as originally envisaged, as per the neighbouring properties which have also reverted to residential use.

The proposed residential unit will be of a high quality and meet the required internal space, storage and room size standards.

In light of the above, the quality of the residential accommodation is acceptable, in accordance with guidance and standards set out in the development plan and national planning policy guidance.

Neighbouring Amenity

Policy A1 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that standards of amenity are protected. This requires the highest standards of design to ensure the amenities of existing and future occupiers are safeguarded and this is echoed in guidance contained within the NPPF and the London Plan. Further guidance is provided in CPG Amenity which sets specific standards of development.

The property will benefit from a well-proportioned amenity area that is entirely appropriate in the context of this central location and for the scale of dwelling proposed.

As set out in the 'Amenity' CPG, a minimum distance of 18m should be established between the windows of directly facing habitable room windows serving different properties or windows facing external amenity space of neighbouring properties. The distance between the application property and residential development immediately southeast of the site would be approximately 18m and with regard to the surrounding development, the proposal would not depart from the existing context. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not result in overlooking. It should be stressed that office use could result in a significantly worse environment for neighbouring residential occupiers.

Given the scale of the building is not changing, the proposal would not give rise to any adverse light, overbearing or overshadowing impacts. The proposed development is relatively minor in nature and scope and would not give rise to any abnormal or significantly disruptive works. The proposal is therefore not expected to give rise to unacceptable neighbour amenity impacts during construction.

The proposed works will therefore have an acceptable impact on residential amenity and complies with the guidance contained within the 'Amenity' CPG.

Highways, parking and servicing

London Plan policy T4 seeks to ensure that new developments do not give rise to adverse transport impacts.

The delivery, servicing and waste collection arrangements associated with the existing site would be retained post-development and there is sufficient space within the curtilage of the development to accommodate cycle parking.

The change of use of the site would lead to a significant reduction in the number of trips generated by the site which would offer improvements in terms of highway safety and capacity.

Overall therefore, the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Contamination and flood risk

There is no planning history at the site regarding potentially contaminative uses. The proposed change of use would not result in disturbance of any undisturbed ground and the proposal would not therefore expose future residents to known contamination risk.

The Environment Agency's (EA) flood zone map identifies the site within Flood Zone 1, which confirms that the site is not currently at risk of fluvial flooding. The site is identified as having a low risk of surface water flooding. The site is not identified as being at risk of flooding from reservoirs. As the site is already developed, and the proposal results in no increase in impermeable hardstanding or extensions to the building footprint, the proposal would not increase flood risk on or off site.

Summary

As set out in this letter, the proposed works create no harmful visual impact, will not negatively affect neighbouring amenity or highway safety. The proposal would provide a high-quality new dwelling that will contribute positively to local housing needs. The proposal preserves the contribution the building makes to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the listed status of the building. There is no conflict with the adopted development plan policies most relevant to the determination of the application. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

I trust this letter and the enclosed documents provide you with sufficient information to determine the application but if you require any points of clarification or have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Stuart Minty
Director
SM Planning