

3 April 2014

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

139-141 QUEENS CRESCENT, NW5 4ED : new roof extension incorporating 2 new flats for rent

NOTES ON 139-141 QUEENS CRESCENT

The building to be extended in this proposal is on Queens Crescent, a well known neighbourhood shopping street in the Gospel Oak area of Camden.

139-141 Queens Crescent was built around 1950 in a contemporary style. It contains two shops at street level and 6 flats accessed off Gilden Crescent. The flats are all rented by the applicant.

The building is on a corner which gives it some prominence. Its relative modernity distinguishes it from many of the buildings around it. It's frontage is proud by some 500mm from adjacent 19thC shophouses. Along Gilden Crescent, it is separated from nearby buildings by an open space belonging to LB Camden flats.

The building has undergone various changes over the years. Originally built as shops with two maisonettes above, both the commercial and residential parts have been adapted to changing needs over the years.

1. NOTES ON GOSPEL OAK

1.1. LOCAL SERVICES

a) Public Space and Leisure

- The Malden Road pitches and surrounding grassy areas close by site have been improved and are well-maintained. The complete renewal of Talacre Gardens and construction of a new sports centre there, is a local success which is a short walk from site. Sports facilities are found at Kentish Town Baths and Swiss Cottage. Hampstead Heath and Primrose Hill are within walking distance.

b) Transport

- Very good bus services run along Malden Rd, Kentish Town Rd, Chalk Farm Rd and Gordon House Rd close to site.
- The Northern Line has stations at Chalk Farm and Kentish Town. The former is an 850m walk from site.
- The North London Line, Thameslink system, Clapham and Barking Line are accessible at Kentish Town West, Kentish Town and Gospel Oak respectively, all in walking distance of site.

c) Shopping

- Queens Crescent, with its street market, offers good value subsistence shopping. Its value as the "heart of Gospel Oak" is now fully acknowledged by council members and officers. It relies on shoppers on foot & bike.

d) Schools/NHS

- There are many local schools, both primary and secondary.
- Medical services are well-provided: the Royal Free is close to site, as are various single and two hander surgeries including the upgraded Queens Crescent practice. Long-standing plans exist to radically improve health services by the construction of a new health centre near to Lismore Circus which is within easy walking distance.

3 April 2014

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

139-141 QUEENS CRESCENT, NW5 4ED : new roof extension incorporating 2 new flats for rent

2. CONTEXT SUMMARY

The Gospel Oak area is a mixed residential area whose public facilities and general municipal management has been strengthened over the last decade or so. The area is very well connected by public transport and nicely positioned in relation to the Central Business District. It is a reasonable setting to make use of existing residential footprint through a roof extension.

3. DEVELOPMENT POLICY

3.1. POLICY SUMMARY

Policy documents referred to -
CPG1 - Roof extensions
CPG2 - Residential Development Standards
Camden LDF - Camden Development Policies

Objectives and related policy relevant to the evaluation of this application for 2 new flats (1b & 2b) must at least deal with the following:

- primacy of mixed use (DP1)
- general housing need
- impact on existing residents amenity
- impact on the urban setting & design quality

3.2. MIXED USE

- By building on an existing footprint, the proposed development reduces change of use pressure locally (DP13). This helps resist loss of the area's very hard-pressed but distinctive mixed use urbanism.
- Maximising the residential capacity in Queens Crescent takes advantage of existing services and thereby supports forms of residency that seem very likely to support lifestyles that can easily take advantage of short walking distances to local services, good public transport and freedom from car-dependency.

3.3. HOUSING NEED

Strategic Objective: *"to provide homes to meet Camden's housing needs as far as possible in terms of affordability, the type of properties built and the mix of sizes, and promote their sustainable design and construction. Housing will be the priority land use of this Core Strategy"*

DP 02 Use of Housing Capacity

- The proposal is for two new flats: a 2-bed and 1-bed for market rent. The 2-bed flat answers a priority or need noted in DP as "very high". The 1-bed does not correspond to a priority.
- The flats are intended for private rental and will contribute to the mix of units available locally and the "mixed communities" referred to as a positive effect of housing provision in policy CS6.29.

3.4. IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURS

DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

- There is no issue of overshadowing or loss of skylight component to any neighbouring space.
- There is no issue of overlooking arising from this proposal.

3 April 2014

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

139-141 QUEENS CRESCENT, NW5 4ED : new roof extension incorporating 2 new flats for rent

3.5. IMPACT ON URBAN SETTING & DESIGN QUALITY

CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage ... *"The Council will therefore expect the design of buildings and places to respond to the local area and its defining characteristics and reinforce, or if appropriate, create local distinctiveness."*

DP24.5 - *"Design should respond creatively to its site and its context."*

CPGI 5.20 - *"On some contemporary buildings a less traditional form of roof addition may be more appropriate."*

Policy DP24 - Securing high quality design

- The proposal extends a modern building which forms part of a retail frontage alongside 19thC shophouses. "local distinctiveness" means a mixed architectural setting combining modern and Victorian elements unified by the idea of a public high street, reinforced by a twice weekly market.
- The elevational treatment proposed enhances the original building by emphasising status of its corner condition. In the architectural jargon, the proposed extension celebrates the corner with a "lantern" feature. The strengthening of the building's role in colouring local urban space is entirely consistent with local renewal focused. In short, the proposal reinforces an important corner of the shopping street.
- The proposal helps resolve some of the unevenness of the building group which 139-141 is part of by reinstating the building's capacity to terminate the group's attic storey formed by a sequence of recent mansard roof extensions.
- The corner lantern feature and the associated set-back corner uses the idea of a corner balcony as an integrated part of the design.
- The principle of a roof extension meets the goal set out in DP 24.9 to reuse existing buildings to take advantage of the energy investment already made in their construction.
- Generally, it is to be observed that the reflex to extend roofs with mansard extensions - see neighbouring and surrounding buildings - has become a nearly mindless reflex which seems to us to need serious review by the LPA particularly regards the quality of execution and complete lack of invention and enrichment. This pattern amounts to a kind of debasement of conventional street buildings.
- Materials to be used are brick and render. Doors and windows are painted timber. The palette is consistent with local precedent.
- The proposed skylights are not prominent
- Room and overall apartment size match LBC requirements.
- Ceiling height = 2.4m.
- The internal arrangement is practical and legible.
- Storage for recycling bins and dustbins is provided adjacent to the street under main access stair off pavement
- Storage space for bikes is provided on shared external access platform.
- The design accommodates the dimensional requirements of a well-insulated new-build allowing for the exigencies of Part L.

3 April 2014

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

139-141 QUEENS CRESCENT, NW5 4ED : new roof extension incorporating 2 new flats for rent

4. CONCLUSION

The proposal meets policy prescriptions

- LDF
 - DP02 - use of housing capacity
 - DPO5 - mix of homes sizes
 - DP13 - protection of business premises (reduce impact of c-o-u pressures)
 - DP16 - good integration with existing transport provision
 - DP24 - good response to site and reuse of existing investment in construction
- CPG1
 - 5.07 - reuniting building groups
 - 5.20 - roof extensions for contemporary buildings (not Victorian/Georgian)
 - 5.21 - appropriate skylights
 - 5.23 - integrating balconies into design
- CPG2
 - housing development space standards