

**3 PROWSE PLACE
CAMDEN TOWN
LONDON
NW1 9PH**

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT



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CHARTERED ARCHITECTS & TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

CONTEXT

The site lies in the centre of Camden Town, a mixed use area which has good transport links and a variety of shops and restaurants. There are also a number of small offices and commercial uses within the area.

The site is currently occupied by a 2 storey office building, built in the 1960's with a concrete frame and brick infill. The design is uninspired.

Adjoining the site and to the south-east there is a 2 storey brick cottage (the dwelling is unlisted but is an attractive building which adds to the mixed character of the area and has some architectural merit), to the north-west a single storey industrial workshop and the further along the arched tunnel of the massive brick viaduct of the North London railway. Immediately opposite the site are 2 storey office buildings and storage space. To the rear there are a couple of 5 storey high residential dwellings. The site can therefore be considered being in an area of mixed character.

The office building on site has been occupied by an independent record company Silva Screen Music for a number of years. Silva Screen has label branches in London, New York and Paris. The company recent expansion and international growth within the industry has created a need for additional office space in its London headquarters.

Camden has a strong, diverse economy that makes an important contribution to the economy of London which makes Camden Council is aware that surroundings have to adapt to meet social needs and economic requirements (*Design, Section 3 – Built Environment, Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan Part 1*). Erecting an additional storey to the existing building, designed to a high standard, would be a solution to this problem and would help retain this business location within the densely built-up borough of Camden.

As noted in Section 6 *Town Centres, retail and entertainment in the Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan Part 1*, the Council seeks improvement through design to support the character, function vitality and viability of the local centres. The Council also seeks to retain existing business sites and encourage the expansion of business development in appropriate locations, as well as strengthening the strategic and international economic role of Central London. "In particular, the Council seeks to retain good quality sites that are particularly suited to continued businesses use by virtue of their location, nature or relationship to other uses. This approach is especially important given the limited supply within the Borough of business premises other than offices." (*Providing a range of suitable employment premises and site, Section 7 – Economic Activities, Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan Part 1*)

RELATION TO THE CONSERVATION AREA

The site lies within the Jeffrey's Street Conservation Area which is an enclave of predominantly residential streets and narrow lanes between Camden Street and Royal College Street. Most of the buildings have three storeys plus a basement with two upper storeys of plain stock brick above a ground floor and a basement of stucco with channelled rustication and a varied design of roofs. The majority of Georgian houses make an individual contribution to the overall character and rhythm of the Camden Town area; with basement areas enclosed with decorative iron railings, first floor balconies and a strong parapet which unifies the terraces at roof level.

The area consists mainly of 18th and 19th century terraced houses set between areas of green open space, although there are a number of more contemporary 20th century buildings in the area. Some of the houses are converted to commercial uses with built workshops in the back gardens and under railway arches. There are also a number of modern developments with their scale, height and bulk in keeping with the character of streets. Kentish Town Road and Camden Street are a contrast to the adjoining quiet residential streets, with taller four to five storey brick and stucco terraced and semi-detached dwellings.

Along the adjoining Jeffrey's Street there is a row of four storey modern town houses built in the 1970s of stock bricks, with the top floor set behind roof terraces. The Jeffrey's Street Conservation Area Statement indicates that "these buildings fit in comfortably with the scale and character of Prowse Place and are good examples of modern backland development providing four storey buildings, which succeed in being subordinate to the Georgian buildings in Jeffrey's Street in terms of scale."

Prowse Place is a narrow cobbled lane that runs south-east from Jeffrey's Street through a brick arched tunnel below the railway towards Bonny Street. Prowse Place contains a number of small scale, mews type developments. On both sides of the railway there are rows of small-scale, mid 19th century brick cottages.

Within the Jeffrey's Street Conservation Area Statement there is no mention of the building located at number 3 Prowse Place. This is because the building has little architectural merit and makes no contribution to the character of the area due to its bland design. It is of no architectural or historic interest. The building has no original features nor has it been originally designed to compliment any of the characteristics within the conservation area.

We strongly believe that the redevelopment of the site would be beneficial for the area, following the statement that which 'the Council will seek to retain and promote creative and environmental industries in the Borough.' (*Specific business uses and areas, Section 7 – Economic Activities, Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan Part 1*).

DESIGN

The proximity of the railway is of great significance to the character of this part of the Conservation Area with industrial workshops and offices interwoven into the streetscape and set behind brick walls.

The 20th century building at no 3 Prowse Place was designed as an infill development two storeys in height with a flat roof and exposed concrete frame which is out of character with the surrounding developments.

The proposed design seems to introduce a roof extension which seeks to improve the appearance of the host building. The vaulted roof adjacent to the railway arches is integrated with the random pattern of the concrete frame and seeks to give random spacing some meaning and reflect the semi-circular tunnel adjacent. At the other end of the building the roof has been set back and a parapet terrace introduced to make it subordinate to the adjacent cottage.

As Camden is committed to design excellence (*Section 3 – Built Environment, Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan Part 1*), the sensitive redevelopment consisting of changing the form of the roof would have a beneficial affect and therefore be a good example of a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and enhance the overall townscape quality.

The elevational design respects existing features of the building by enhancing the architectural characteristics and brick detailing. Furthermore the introduction of parapets to the front and rear of the building together with the contemporary vaulted roof shape, making reference to the arched silhouette of the railway tunnel, create a positive contribution to the character of the building and its appearance in the streetscape.

The characteristics of the existing building and its surroundings have been taken into careful consideration and the features of local distinctiveness have been integrated in the design. The proposal complements the arched character of the view from Prowse Place through railway arch towards Bonny Street with the mixed nature of developments in the area. The building becomes more visually interesting from street level and improves the attractiveness of the street scene and does not harm its amenity.

ACCESS

The site is accessed via Prowse Place which is a minor distributor road providing good access for service vehicles and emergency vehicles.

The site is also accessible via a service area to the rear of the site from Camden Street.

Camden Road Overground and railways station is less than 100m walking distance and there is a number of bus stops on Camden Street approx 130m away.