

PLANNING STATEMENT

66 Rochester Place, Camden, London NW1 9JX

CONTENTS

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION
- 2.0 SITE AND LOCATION
- 3.0 PLANNING HISTORY
- 4.0 PLANNING POLICY
- 5.0 ASSESSMENT
- 6.0 CONCLUSION
- APPENDICES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement is prepared on behalf of Ms Justine McLucas in connection with an application for full planning permission for change of use from Class B1 office space to a Class D2 dance and fitness studio at 66 Rochester Place, Camden, London.

The Statement addresses relevant planning policies and other material considerations and sets out the case for approval of the proposed development. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

2.0 SITE AND LOCATION



The proposal relates to an existing mid-terraced property (shown above with the red door) currently used as Class B1 offices. The property is located in Rochester Place, a traditional cobbled street containing mainly commercial buildings, offices and warehousing.

Building forms vary considerably in terms of height, bulk, width and depth. Pitched roof forms predominate but there is little consistency in terms of the individual arrangements. This results in a rich and diverse streetscape. The wider locality is similarly diverse, including commercial and residential development built at various scales and reflecting different periods of redevelopment and renewal. This has resulted in traditional terraces being in close proximity with new build apartment blocks.

The site is well connected to the local road network, with easy access to the A400, A502 and A503 distributor roads. Rail and underground connections are available from Camden Road (approximately 350m to the south), Kentish Town West (approximately 450m to the northwest) and Kentish Town (approximately 600m to the north). Camden High Street and Camden Town tube station are also within an easy 600m (one third of a mile) walking distance. Buses run regularly from Camden Town.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The lawful use of the site is as Class B1 offices. The building was originally constructed as a dress making factory and was last occupied by a television production company. There is no planning history that is directly relevant to this proposal.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

The Core Strategy (CS) and Development Policies (DP) development plan documents were adopted in Camden in 2010. These documents, along with the Mayor's adopted London Plan, form the statutory development plan.

Policy CS5 seeks broadly to manage the impact of growth and development in the interests of meeting the need for local infrastructure and facilities whilst protecting local areas and amenity. Policy CS7 is concerned to promote local centres and provide for a range of shops, services and other uses to provide variety, vibrancy and choice. Policy CS8 is committed to promoting a successful and inclusive local economy. It recognises the importance of securing a mix of employment types and other employment generating uses, including leisure and health uses.

Policy DP13 seeks to retain land and buildings that are suitable for continued business use and will resist a change to non-business uses unless (a) it can be demonstrated that a site or building is no longer suitable for its existing business use and (b) there is evidence that the possibility of retaining, re-using or redeveloping the site or building for similar or alternative business use has been fully explored over an appropriate period of time. If these criteria can be satisfied, there is a further presumption in favour of retaining an element of business use. If it can be demonstrated that a site is not suitable for any business other than offices, a permanent change to residential or community use may then be permitted.

Under Policy DP15 new community and leisure uses should be close or accessible to the community they serve and accessible by a range of transport modes. Policies DP16 and DP17 ensure that regard is paid to the transport implications of development whilst seeking proper integration with the transport network, including travel by walking, cycling and public transport. Under Policy DP18 car parking should be restricted to the minimum necessary. Policies DP26 and DP28 are concerned to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by preventing development that harms amenity in relation to such matters as noise and vibration.

National policy is contained primarily in the recently published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which replaces the former system of planning policy guidance notes and statements. The NPPF introduces a new presumption in favour of sustainable development, defined as having economic, social and environmental components. The NPPF is particularly concerned to proactively encourage sustainable economic growth, enhance quality of life, promote vibrant and healthy communities and deliver the social and recreational facilities needed by local communities.

5.0 ASSESSMENT

The main planning issues in respect of the proposed development are considered to be as follows:

- Whether the proposal would comply with planning policies seeking to retain land and buildings in business use.
- The effect of the proposed development on the character and amenities of the area.

Loss of Business Use

As noted above, there is strong policy support for the provision of community facilities and services, including health and leisure facilities, in the interests of promoting healthy communities and a diverse economic base. However, it is acknowledged that Policy DP13 also provides specific protection against the loss of existing business (B Class) land and buildings. Two main criteria must be satisfied to comply with the policy.

First, it must be demonstrated that the site or building is no longer suitable for its existing business use. Second, there must also be evidence that the possibility of retaining, re-using or redeveloping the site or building for a similar or alternative business use has been fully explored over an appropriate period of time.

The existing building was originally constructed as a dress-making factory, as a consequence of which it is not well adapted for modern business use. Prior to the Applicant taking occupation, the property had been marketed with a local estate agent, Christo & Co, for one year beginning in June 2011. During this period only 3 offers were made, including the Applicant's, which was accepted. The other offers submitted during this period were from a production company and a fashion photographer. However, neither was competitive and they were not accepted. A copy of the sales particulars is included at Appendix A.

Prior to this the property had been marketed between May 2008 and June 2009 with Bruce Commercial Estate Agents. A copy of these sales particulars is included at Appendix B. Again, only 3 offers were made during this period, 2 of which were rejected as being well below the asking price. Thus it took over a year to successfully let the property in 2009 to the former tenant, a television production company. After that tenant vacated the premises, it took a further 12 months of marketing to secure the occupation of the property by the Applicant.

The marketing history amply demonstrates an extremely low level of interest in the property, due no doubt to its unsuitability for modern business use and the availability of more suitable and better quality office accommodation elsewhere in the locality. It is highly unlikely that a further period of marketing would yield a different result. Neither would it be economically viable to redevelop the property for office use due to its small size and the restricted plot, which would be uncompetitive when compared with

alternative purpose built office accommodation that is readily available in the wider locality.

The proposed dance and fitness studio, whilst not a business use, nevertheless constitutes an employment use. Indeed, the proposed use would employ up to 8 instructors and 2 administrative staff. This is comparable with the employment associated with many small businesses. The proposal would, moreover, retain an element of ancillary office space on the upper floor of the building. In this way the aims and objectives of Policy DP13 and of the NPPF are satisfied.

In the event that the local planning authority still has any concerns about the permanent loss of business use, the Applicant has no objection to the imposition of a condition restricting the use of the premises to a dance and fitness studio only or any other use falling within Class B1. This would prevent a general Class D2 from becoming established whilst also allowing the property to revert automatically to business use in the event that it ceases to be used as a dance and fitness studio. A suitable condition is suggested below:

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or any order revoking or re-enacting that Order, with or without modification, the site shall be used as a dance and fitness studio only or for any other purpose falling within Class B1.

Effect on Character and Amenities of Area

The design aspects of the proposal are dealt with in detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. This demonstrates that the proposal would complement the existing uses in the area and enhance local services by increasing the range and quality of facilities available to the local community, in accordance with important planning policy objectives for delivering sustainable development.

In terms of the effect on the amenities of the area, the absence of any adjoining residential occupiers largely precludes the potential for adverse or unneighbourly impacts upon the amenities of adjoining land users. Furthermore, unlike residential properties, the adjoining commercial premises are unlikely to be occupied at potentially unsociable hours, during the evenings and weekends.

Accordingly, Policy DP28 is satisfied. Should the local planning authority consider that any specific noise attenuation measures should be provided, this could easily be secured by means of a condition on any approval.

Other Matters

The site is located in area with good access by public transport, walking and cycling. Although there are no immediate residential neighbours, the property is well located to serve the local resident population. Full details are given in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, which demonstrates that the proposal represents an appropriate and

sustainable form of development, fully in accordance with the latest local and national planning policies.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This Planning Statement demonstrates that the proposal complies with the relevant development plan and national planning policies.

In particular, the loss of the existing office use is justified by the marketing evidence and in the interests of securing a beneficial use, which would diversify the local economy and improve the quality and range of facilities available to the local community.

It has also been demonstrated that the proposal would complement the character of the area by providing a complementary use, which is appropriate to the form and character of the local area, and by providing a service not currently available in the locality.

No demonstrable harm would be caused by the proposal, which also represents a sustainable form of development. Having regard to the provisions of the NPPF, it follows that there is a clear presumption in favour of approval. Accordingly, the local planning authority is requested to grant planning permission, subject to appropriate conditions where necessary and in accordance with the relevance national advice.


Humphreys & Co.

APPENDIX A – MARKETING PARTICULARS 2011/2012

COMMERCIAL
Property Particulars

**Christo
& Co**

CHARACTER OFFICE / STUDIO
1,700 SQ.FT (158 SQ.M)
TO LET
ROCHESTER PLACE, KENTISH TOWN, NW1



LOCATION:
Situating in Rochester Place close to the junction of Rochester Road and very near to all the High Street amenities on Kentish Town Road. Transport connections are very good – a few minutes walk from both Camden Road (British Rail) and Kentish Town (Northern Line and Mainline) Stations. Numerous buses also serve the area.

DESCRIPTION:
A period building on ground and first floors, self contained, benefiting from high ceilings and double loading doors at the front of the building. The first floor is currently divided into 3 separate areas via demountable partitions. *perfect for a office*
The ground floor is perfect for an office / a studio. The 1st floor
it has the 3 large windows

148 Kentish Town Road, London NW1 9QB

T: 020 7482 1203 • F: 020 7482 4441 • E: mail@christo.co.uk • www.christo.co.uk

ESTATE AGENTS ▴ SURVEYORS ▴ VALUERS

APPENDIX B – MARKETING PARTICULARS 2008/2009

Bruce

COMMERCIAL ESTATE AGENTS

TEL +44 (0) 20 7267 6772

FAX +44 (0) 20 7267 0660

OFFICE/STUDIO BUILDING

TO LET @ £15.45 psf

1780 SQ. FT. (166²) APPROX.



ROCHESTER PLACE, NW1

LOCATION: Situated in a terrace of units close to the junction of Rochester Road and Kentish Town Road. Camden and Kentish Town underground stations are within 10 minutes walking distance.

DESCRIPTION: The building is approached either through double loading doors or separate office entrance. The premises are in good decorative order with the ground floor mainly clear space area, stairs leading to 1st floor divided by removable partitions into 3 rooms. Loft storage is approached via the 1st floor and the whole building is served by gas central heating, wooden floors, kitchen, wc/shower all ready for occupation.

GROUND FLOOR	930 SQ. FT. (87m²) APPROX
1ST FLOOR	850 SQ. FT. (79m²) APPROX
TOTAL	1780 SQ. FT. (166m²) APPROX

LOFT STORAGE	100 SQ. FT. (09m²) APPROX
---------------------	---

AMMENITIES:	9' HIGH CEILING	CAT 5 CABLING GROUND FLOOR
	III PHASE ELECTRICTY	BURGLAR ALARM
	SECURITY BARS	CENTRAL LOCATION

TERMS: **RENT:** £27,500 pa ex

LEASE: A new 3 year lease on full repairing & insuring covenants, outside the provisions of the Landlord & Tenant Act, will be granted.

RATES: £4,300 payable (08/09)

DEPOSIT: A quarters rent deposit is required.

SUBJECT TO CONTRACT

94 UPPER WALKWAY, WEST YARD, CAMDEN LOCK, LONDON NW1 8AF
email lkb@brucecommercial.co.uk www.brucecommercial.co.uk
Useful Properties T/a Bruce Director: Laurence K Bruce 07831 246 096

APPENDIX C – PROPOSED OPENING HOURS

Mon: 6:30pm-9:30pm

Tue: 11am-2:30pm and 6:30pm-9:30pm

Wed: 6:30pm-9:30pm

Thur: 6:30pm-9:15pm

Fri - usually closed (occasional private lessons only)

Sat: 11:30am - 4pm (occasional private lessons after 4pm)

Sun - usually closed (occasional private lessons only)