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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

331A/DAS/JUNE 2012

**55 ROCHESTER PLACE & 3A WILMOT PLACE,
LONDON, N1 9JU**

PREPARED BY

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Section 1.0 – Introduction

- 1.0.1 This Design and Access Statement accompanies an application for full planning permission to extend the existing corner building with a two storey extension to the corner of Rochester Place and Wilmot Road and a single storey set back extension to the Rochester Place elevation. The new development will retain and reorganise the 288.0 sqm. of gross internal area used as B1 space, removing much of the unused areas of the existing building and providing the same amount of floor space in a new more considered arrangement at first floor. The area of the building on the corner, including the new second and third floor, will contain a new five person residential unit. This statement describes the proposal and the rationale behind its design.
- 1.0.2 The application site is located off Camden Road, a short walk from Camden Road Station. It is not a listed building or in a conservation area, although it is bounded by the Jeffrey's Street Conservation Area to the south and west and the Rochester Place Conservation Area on the opposite side of Rochester Place.
- 1.0.3 This report responds to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006 (the GDPO) for all planning applications – apart from some exceptions – to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement that explains:
- the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and
 - how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.
- 1.0.4 The structure and content of the Statement has been informed by DCLG Circular 01/2006 'Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System' (12 June 2006) and 'Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them' (CABE 2006). In essence there is a need to:
- provide a review of the site's immediate and wider context;
 - provide a rationale for the scheme's design;
 - explain and illustrate the design principles in terms of the development's layout, density, scale, landscape and visual appearance, and explain how future users of the site will be able to access the development; and
 - explain how the development will meet the local authority's planning and urban design objectives.
- 1.0.5 Based on Circular 01/2006 and the CABE advice, this Statement is structured thus;
- Section 2.0 - Context:** provides a review of the existing physical, social and economic characteristics of the site, its surroundings and its public transport accessibility, and provides a brief review of relevant design related policies and guidance.
- Section 3.0 - Analysis:** provides an analysis of the form, character and visual role of the proposal site and an analysis of the constraints to and opportunities for, the proposed physical works.
- Section 4.0 - Proposal:** describes the proposal, its evolution and its design principles outlining the approach taken in terms of use, amount, scale, layout, landscaping, appearance and access.
- Section 5.0 Proposal Assessment:** provides a review of the scheme against relevant design principles
- Section 6.0 - Sustainability:** describes the measures taken to promote sustainability through the design.
- Section 7.0 - Lifetime Homes Assessment:** describes how the proposals respond to the lifetime homes criteria.

Section 2.0 – Context

- 2.0.1 Photos of the existing site are included as part of the application documents on drawings 331A-EX.11 to 331A-EX.12 (inclusive). A site map is illustrated on drawing 331A-EX.01.

Section 2.1 Local Context

- 2.1.1 55 Rochester Place and 3A Wilmot Place is located in Camden, London, NW1. The site is located close to Camden Road Station and is on the corner of Rochester Place and Wilmot Place, as illustrated on the Site Location Plan, drawing 311A-EX.01.
- 2.1.2 Neighbouring properties are primarily residential with a similar mass, rhythm and style to that which we propose.

Section 2.2 Site Description

- 2.2.1 The existing building that forms the application site, accommodates two floors of B1 office space. The gross internal area of the building is 288.0 sqm. The building is currently vacant. The two buildings are situated on the corner of Rochester Place and Wilmot Place providing the site with two street frontages.
- 2.2.2 The building has two entrance ways on Wilmot Place, one which accesses the ground floor and one the first. Additionally there is a large opening on Rochester Place, which has been filled in by a window, but was used for loading to the ground floor unit in the past. The building line is stepped back from the boundary line along the Wilmot Place frontage.
- 2.2.3 Externally the building reads as a warehouse and the massing and design is informed by the frontages along Rochester Place rather than the more traditional housing character of Wilmot Street in terms of massing and design.
- 2.2.4 The south and west elevations front on to the public highway. The building also forms the boundary between a rear courtyard belonging to 3 Wilmot Place.

Section 2.3 Planning History

- 2.3.1 The site has been the subject of a couple of planning applications in recent time. These are detailed below:
- 2.3.2 2011/1540/P. Application to redevelop the land into a part four storey plus basement, part three storey plus basement building comprising B1 space and 4 residential units. Refused at appeal.
- 2.3.3 2009/0009/P. Application to redevelop the land into a three storey plus basement building comprising B1 space and 6 residential units. Refused at appeal.
- 2.3.4 2009/5284/P. Application to redevelop the land into a three storey plus basement building comprising B1 space and 5 residential units. Refused at appeal.
- 2.3.5 There were three applications for minor works between 1974 and 1976 to develop the existing building.

Section 2.4 Accessibility

- 2.4.1 The site is approximately 0.5 km from Camden Road Station and numerous bus stops along Camden Road. Camden Town tube station is approximately 1.0 km away

and provides access directly to the northern line. The site is situated within short distance of many transport links and residents / users will find it easy to travel from and to the site.

Section 2.5 Design Guidance

2.5.3 National and Regional Design Advice:

In addition to central Government's Planning Policy Statements, a variety of design guidance and advice has been published that builds upon the increased emphasis on high quality design. The key documents are:

- a) *By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice*, Thomas Telford Publishing DETR & CABE (2000);
- b) *By Design: Better Places to Live. A Companion Guide to PPG3, DTLR & CABE* (2001);
- c) *Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention*. ODPM/ Home Office (2004);
- d) *Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice*. DETR (1998);
- e) *Manual for Streets: Communities and Local Government* (2007);
- f) *Protecting Design Quality in Planning*. CABE (2003);
- g) *Urban Design Compendium. English Partnerships, The Housing Corporation* (2000);
- h) *Planning and Access for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide* ODPM (2003); and
- i) *Access Statements: Achieving an Inclusive Environment*, Disability Rights Commission (2004).

2.5.4 Development Plan Policy:

The Development Plan applicable to the proposal site comprises the London Plan (2011) and the recently adopted Camden Local Development Framework. 2.5.5 The London Plan provides the strategic planning policy framework for development in Greater London and forms part of the statutory development plan for Camden. It emphasises that good design is central to all the objectives of the London Plan.

2.5.10 Amongst other matters Camden's Core Strategy Policy CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage – seeks to

ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

- a) *requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;*
- b) *preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens;*
- c) *promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;*
- d) *seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible.*

2.5.11 Policy DP24 – Securing high quality design states:

The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

- a) *character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;*
- b) *the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;*
- c) *the quality of materials to be used;*
- d) *the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;*
- e) *the appropriate location for building services equipment;*
- f) *existing natural features, such as topography and trees;*

- g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;*
- h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and*
- i) accessibility.*

2.5.12 In addition to the above, the following provide the Council's policies relating to design and access matters:

- CS6 Providing quality homes
- CS13 Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards
- CS17 Making Camden a safer place
- DP6 Lifetime homes and wheelchair homes
- DP22 Promoting sustainable design and construction
- DP23 Water
- DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage

Section 3.0 – Analysis

Section 3.1 Constraints

- 3.1.1 The proposal involves maintaining the existing two storey building located on the site and introducing two extensions. The first is a two storey extension above the existing building on the corner of Wilmot Place and Rochester Place that principally responds to the residential frontages of Wilmot Place. The second extension is a single storey and set back above the existing, located further down the Rochester Place elevation and responding to the street characteristics of Rochester Place. This approach is seen as the most appropriate way to develop the site, linking the two street scenes whilst being sensitive to both.
- 3.1.2 Based on the national, regional and local policy and guidance outlined above in section 2.5, the following sections of this Design and Access Statement demonstrates how the proposed development satisfies the following ‘tests’:
- 1) Achieving high quality design and a positive response to the site’s context (London Plan, CS14, DP24);
 - 2) Preserving or enhancing the settings neighbouring conservation areas (CS14, DP25);
 - 3) The provision of a safe and secure environment (London Plan CS14, CS17);
 - 4) The achievement of accessible and inclusive environments (London Plan, CS14, DP6); and
 - 5) Maximisation of water and energy conservation (London Plan,, CS13, CS14, DP22, DP23).

Section 3.2 Opportunities

- 3.2.1 Through previous applications and discussion with the local authority it has been established that a four storey building to Wilmot Place in a design similar to the traditional houses along the street, combined with a three storey building to the Wilmot Place elevation will enhance the character of the area and be viewed as acceptable by the local authority.
- 3.2.2 There is scope to provide residential space as part of the building however most of the B1 space provided should be replicated in any proposal. The proposal provides the chance to produce more flexible space than that of the existing building.

Section 4.0 - Proposal

Section 4.1 Use, Amount, Layout and Scale

- 4.1.1 The proposal comprises the following:
- a) The introduction of a two storey extension above the existing building to the Wilmot Place elevation that will adjoin and respond to the height and scale of the frontages along Wilmot Place.
 - b) The introduction of a set back single storey extension above the existing building to the Rochester Place elevation that will adjoin and respond to the height and scale of the frontages along Rochester Place.
 - c) The provision of 299sqm gross internal area of B1 space at ground, first and second floor levels.
 - e) The provision of a 3-bedroom self-contained residential unit capable of accommodating five people.

Section 4.2 Appearance

- 4.2.1 The scale of the proposal responds to the other frontages along both Rochester Place and Wilmot Place. The heights of the proposed building change to suit the existing context with the Wilmot Place elevation, four storey, and the Rochester Place frontage, stepping down to three storeys to respond to the lower heights of the narrower street.
- 4.2.2 The larger extension is constructed using primarily brick, a material that is widely used in the area. The brick will be chosen to match the existing building. The windows to the main body of the building are to be sash windows to maintain the traditional character of the street scene. A mansard roof is constructed in slate as 3A Wilmot Place.
- 4.2.3 The set back second floor on the Rochester Place elevation is set back and constructed in a metal cladding, similar to that of the second floor of 57 Rochester Place and to reduce the impact of an extra floor, creating a contemporary extension that compliments the main building but is clearly secondary to it.

Section 4.3 Landscaping and Access

- 4.3.1 The existing entrance to the first floor level becomes the entrance to the residential unit. The entrance to the ground floor space is retained but a new large opening reopened as described in 4.3.1. This will become the main entrance and a new stair that is easier to navigate introduced.
- 4.3.2 The large opening on Rochester Place is to be opened up as part of the proposals to allow greater flexibility to the space and an improved entrance to the B1 space.

Section 4.4 Refuse, Cycle Storage and Car Parking

- 4.4.1 The ground floor plan, drawing 311A-PA.01 shows the provisions for cycle storage. Drawing 311A-PA.02 shows provision for refuse storage within the kitchen area.
- 4.4.2 No car parking spaces are required or provided for.

Section 5.0 Proposal Assessment

5.0.1 The below table provides a review of the scheme against the objectives outlined at the end of Section 2.0.

No.	Design Policy Objectives	Response
1	Achieving high quality design and a positive response to the site's context	The new elements are designed to compliment the existing and maintain the proportions of the surrounding buildings.
2	Preservation or enhancement of the settings of conservation areas	The extensions act to tie the two elevations together and responds to existing mass and designs in a positive way.
3	The provision of a safe and secure environment	Mixing uses and increasing the activity on the corner site increase natural surveillance.
4	The achievement of accessible and inclusive environments	The building is in an area that has lots of transport links and adequate cycle provisions are proposed.
5	Maximisation of water and energy conservation	Provision of natural light and ventilation. Use of sustainable materials. Use of flexible design. Use of green roof and solar panels.

Section 6.0 Sustainability

- 6.0.1 The use of renewable materials or materials that can be recycled at the end of the building's lifespan have been maximised throughout the proposed scheme. The use of bricks, which require little or no maintenance, helps energy saving.
- 6.0.2 Natural ventilation will be used throughout the scheme utilising the mass of the walls to regulate internal temperature throughout the year. Window will be double glazed with frames to provide adequate u-values.

Section 7.0 Lifetime Homes Assessment

7.0.1 The table below illustrates how the proposed flats meet the lifetime home criteria;

Criteria	Pass / Fail	Comments
1. Car parking width	NA	No parking provided
2. Approach from car parking	NA	No parking provided
3. Approach gradients	Pass / Fail	Level access thresholds are provided for flats 3 and 4.
4. Entrances	Pass	Entrances are safe and well lit
5. Communal stairs and lifts	NA	No communal stairs / lift.
6. Doorways and hallways	Pass	All doors and hallways are fully compliant
7. Wheelchair accessibility	Fail	No lift is provided.
8. Living room	Fail	The constraints of the existing building mean this is not possible.
9. Entrance level bed space	Fail	The constraints of the existing building mean this is not possible.
10. Entrance level wc and shower	Fail	The constraints of the existing building mean this is not possible.
11. Bathroom and wc walls	Pass	Handrails can be fitted retrospectively if required
12. Stair lift / through floor lift	Fail	The constraints of the existing building mean this is not possible.
13. Tracking hoist route	Pass	Reasonable clear routes are available between main bedrooms, bathrooms and en-suites
14. Bathroom layout	Pass	All bathrooms are laid out for ease of access and use.
15. Window specification	Pass	Windows are fully compliant
16. Control, fixtures and fittings	Pass	The fit out of the building will involve the installation of new switches and controls which will be installed to comply with the requirements (450 – 1200mm height form FFL)

Section 8.0 Local Consultation

- 8.0.1 As part of the design process, the proposals were sent to a member of the Reed's and Rochester Place Neighbourhood Association for comments. These comments were considered through the design process. Below can be seen the email received in response, dated 1st June 2012.

Charles

You have invited us to look at and comment on [on advice from Camden] a series of drawings which are in preparation for a new application at 55 Rochester Place. I understand that no application has as yet been sent to Camden and no pre-application has been requested from Camden.

The comments given here are my personal views and have been copied to neighbours and traders in Rochester Place - as well as to Camden Officers previously involved in applications at this site. These views do not indicate that Reed's and Rochester Place Neighbourhood Association would support or oppose any new application which may appear for this address.

- The retention of the existing building facade on Rochester Place is appreciated.*
- The principle of no basement is appreciated.*
- The principle of increased business space is appreciated.*

- Access to the business space on Rochester Place for pedestrians and separately for goods is appreciated; as this would be classed as renovation to the existing build I doubt whether a lift would be additionally required by Camden.*
- We note the inclusion of external access to the first floor for goods [traditional in this street and of buildings of this age -1900].*
- We note that the existing windows will be retained and that matching goods entrance doors will be included. You should be aware that security [from passing views] of the working environment is a priority to business owners; the previous occupants had several opportunist burglaries - until the lower half of the windows were obscured. You might like to check out the rest of the street for other solutions.*

- We note that the ground floor will have about the same amount of daylight as the existing.*
- We note that the first floor has light from skylights. They will not provide as much light as existing; perhaps consideration could be given to extending the lights - or providing a 'glass roof' in the area.*
- We note that the second floor has light from high level chamfered windows tucked behind a crenelated wall. They will not provide as much light as the windows in the existing 'office' area; perhaps consideration could be given to extending the windows - or providing a 'glass roof' in the area.*

- We note that the residential space has a detailed layout [possibly to indicate to the owners where the return on their investment is located].*
- We note that the business space layout contains less detail at this stage. Camden's Business Premises Study notes that business space often attracts/receives little design attention.*

Preserving the large open spaces from which the business space benefits will be a major concern in detailing the business space.

The present location of the staircase reduces the open space from which the building benefits at present; consideration might be given to locating the

staircases to the first and second floor at the back of the building where they might be able to benefit from skylight as staircases do at present.

The location of toilets/showers/kitchen facilities is not shown but will reduce the space further; consideration might be given to locating them in the same area on the ground floor.

- Waste and recycling management for the business space is not detailed*
- Waste and recycling management for the residential space is insufficient inside and non outside [contravening the LDF]. Problems from waste management and weekly curb-side collections will be transferred to the local authority and the neighbours.*
- No cycle storage space is included.*

We mention these items as they will reduce net space.

Amenity for residents and neighbours.

The terrace for the business space on the second floor directly overlooks second floor of the residential at 6.5m and possibly over looks the balcony at 57-59. [Does the business space need a terrace? - unless it is to be turned into residential at some future date?] This would only be resolved by having a solid wall on each side of the terrace to roof height.

The amenity of the first floor flat at 3 Wilmot would be reduced by the building of the wall of the second floor business space - increasing their feeling of enclosure [the new wall would be 6.5m from their window instead of 11m existing]. An inspector noticing the close proximity of the wall at 57-59 when considering an appeal on that site thought the feeling of enclosure would be intense and asked for walls to be reduced and the design of walls to be considered.

As an organisation, R&RPNA is approached for comment at regular intervals. We may not always have time to respond in depth until applications are put to Camden. This should not be interpreted as no comment.

*Yours sincerely
Gill Scott*

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