

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed development at 106-109 Saffron Hill, London EC1N 8QS



Applicant: Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM)

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INTRODUCTION

This report forms part of the Full Planning Application for the proposed re-development of No. 106-109 Saffron Hill, an existing un-listed office use building within the Clerkenwell-Barbican area of London close to Farringdon Train Station. This Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the proposed planning application drawings outlined within Appendix 'A' (page 13).

The existing building consists of a three storey building with basement level dating back to circa 1900. The site is found within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area with the Saffron Hill elevation consisting of yellow stock brickwork above a render clad ground floor plinth. A planning application submission for the re-development of the site was made in August 2010 with planning consent being formally granted by Camden on 8th August 2011 (Application Ref: 2010/4669/P).

The above named planning consent consisted of the demolition of the existing building with the retention of the existing front (Saffron Hill) façade. A new structure was proposed behind the front façade providing equal number of floors plus extension of the existing basement floor to the rear party wall line (west elevation). The basement, ground, first and second floors would comprise of new B1 office space for the applicant CIWEM, with the erection of new third and fourth floor levels with associated external terraces creating 4 No. residential flats (2 No. 2-Bedroom flats plus 2 No. 1-Bedroom flats).

The new planning application encompasses all of the design principles and proposals as described above with various specific design changes introduced, all of which have been submitted to Camden Planning for Pre-application advice on 19th July 2011 (Ref: CA\2011\ENQ\04474). These specific design changes have been discussed in detail later in this report.

SITE LOCATION / EXISTING CONDITION

The site is located within the central London area of The London Borough of Camden. The site is extremely well served by public transport and is within walking distance from Farringdon Train Station and Bus connections to inner and outer London areas. The site is not located within a flood plain.

The existing building has been purchased by the Applicant with the intention to continue the use of the basement, ground, first and second floor as B1 space. These floors will become occupied as office space for their organisation; with the addition of new third and fourth floor levels as privately owned residential flats.

The existing gross external area of the office building foot print is approximately 807sqm. With the new planning application maintaining the current planning consent approval to extend the existing basement accommodation to the rear party wall line (an increase of 50 sqm), the gross external area of the office floors will increase. A breakdown of the GEA's for the residential and office accommodation will be as follows:

Office Accommodation

Basement Floor – 216 sqm
Ground Floor – 177 sqm
First Floor – 188 sqm
Second Floor – 188 sqm

Residential Accommodation

Basement Floor – 37 sqm
Ground Floor – 26 sqm
First Floor – 22 sqm
Second Floor – 22 sqm
Third Floor – 194 sqm
Fourth Floor – 152 sqm

DESIGN PROPOSALS – MASSING AND SCALE

The new planning application encompasses the massing and scale principles established within the current planning consent scheme. This importantly includes the retention of the Saffron Hill front elevation in order to retain the immediate scale and style of the site along Saffron Hill. Both of the two additional residential floors above the existing facade, both of which are set-back (as per the planning consent scheme) to minimise their visual impact at street level, are designed as 'modern zinc clad floors'.

The height of the existing building is currently three storeys including ground floor, with the new planning proposals comprising an additional two new floors of residential accommodation (i.e. an increase to five storeys including ground floor). The roof parapet heights for the two additional floors have not been altered in comparison with the proposals contained within the approved planning consent scheme.

The proposed overall height of the development has not been changed in comparison with the existing planning consent scheme, except for the inclusion of a new rear elevation rooftop plant enclosure which is discussed later in this report. Due to the new plant room being located at rear north west corner of the site, thereby reducing its visibility from Saffron Hill street level, the overall perceived height by the public along Saffron Hill has not changed. With the new proposals following the established massing and height proposals contained within the planning consent scheme, any impact in terms of sunlight / daylight and privacy to neighbouring buildings will therefore be unaffected.

DESIGN PROPOSALS – LAYOUT

The existing building occupies the entire footprint of the site with no external space provided at basement, ground, first and second floor levels. As per the proposals established within the planning consent scheme, the new planning application has retained the use of the entire site as office and residential accommodation with external space being created for 2 No. flats at fourth floor level via a set-back roof terrace.

The planning application drawings that accompany this report outline the internal layout proposals for the development and include ambulant designed vertical circulation staircases plus lift access for both the residential and office accommodation.

ACCESS

The access proposals into the building are unchanged from the proposals established within the planning consent scheme. This involves the closure of the existing central opening, with the existing openings either end of the building providing level threshold / DDA compliant access from pavement level to the residential accommodation (third and fourth floors served via an ambulant communal staircase plus lift) and the office accommodation (all floors are served via an Approved Document Part M [Building Regulations - access for disabled persons] staircase plus lift).

PLANNING POLICY

Policy SD3 of Camden's UDP requires a mix of uses within developments including a contribution to the supply of residential accommodation. With the new planning application proposals corresponding to the accommodation established within the current planning consent, policy SD3 will be met in terms of compliance.

Policy H1 stipulates requirements for the residential accommodation. The third and fourth floor residential accommodation has been designed to comply with the Council's minimum space standards where possible and to match / exceed the space standards established within the planning consent scheme. Details of lifetime homes (required by Policy H7) and the project's sustainability aspirations are detailed later in this report. The proposed mix of residential units – 2x 2-Bed flats and 2x 1-Bed flats – corresponds with the mix approved within the planning consent scheme and will therefore comply with Policy H8.

Planning Policy Statement 5 Assessment – A PPS 5 Statement providing justification for the demolition behind the retained façade within a conservation area has been prepared by the appointed Planning Consultants – Rolfe Judd – and accompanies this report as part of the planning application submission.

Planning Statement – The appointed Planning Consultant – Rolfe Judd – have prepared a planning statement to accompany this report as part of the planning application submission. This report addresses the proposals with reference to the Council's Development Plan policies.

SUSTAINABILITY AND LIFETIME HOMES (Residential Accommodation only)

The Applicant of the new planning application has encouraged the design team to pursue and develop their aspirations in achieving a highly sustainable development that matches their organisation's philosophies. The development has been designed by the design team to achieve a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating for the offices plus Code For Sustainable Homes Level '4' for the residential accommodation. To achieve these sustainable aspirations on a tight urban site, the new application proposals have resulted in internal layout developments for the office and residential accommodation plus a new rooftop plant room that is required to accommodate the necessary mechanical plant equipment. In order to achieve the aforementioned ratings, a series of PV panels will also be located on the brown roof serving the office and residential accommodation. These PV panels will not be visible along Saffron Hill as a low set-back zinc clad parapet wall has been proposed at roof level to conceal the panels as conveyed on the accompanying drawings. These issues have been discussed further via the recent pre-application advice application with Camden and have been summarised later in this report.

With the residential accommodation aspiring to meet Code Level 4, plus Camden's Policy H7, achieving compliance with the Lifetime Homes standards was paramount to the new proposals. We can confirm that all sixteen criteria, as set out within the revised July 2010 version of the Lifetime Homes scheme have been achieved.

The development is to be car-free with secure cycle-storage provided at ground floor level for both the office and residential accommodation. Opposite the combined cycle storage provision, located at ground floor level, will be a waste and recycling storage area for both the office and residential accommodation.

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

On behalf of the applicant, Rolfe Judd (appointed Planning Consultant) submitted the revised proposals for Pre-application advice on 19th July 2011. The planning application consists of specific design changes in relation to the current planning consent scheme, all of which were discussed and responded on by Camden via pre-application letter correspondence dated 21st September 2011. A copy of the letter (Ref: CA\2011\ENQ\04474) has been enclosed for reference purposes.

New Rooftop Plant Enclosure

In order to achieve the aspired Code For Sustainable Homes Level 4 rating plus BREEAM Rating Excellent for the development, the scheme has been designed to accommodate good quality sustainable mechanical plant equipment comprising of Heat Pump (whole house ventilation) Condensers for the residential accommodation and VRF air conditioning / space heating combined system with heat recovery for the office accommodation. Due to the nature of the tight urban site, the resultant internal space limitations have been reviewed extensively by the entire design team, with the priority being to maximise the amount of usable office space and residential space in order to comply with the applicant's space needs plus Camden's space standards and lifetime home requirements. It was assessed at an early stage by the design team as to how to accommodate the aforementioned plant equipment with the most efficient solution in maximising internal accommodation was creating a small rooftop plant enclosure on the roof of the building. This reasoning was in addition to the free-air ventilation requirements that both the heat pump condensers and the VRF plant equipment both require to function efficiently (plant equipment needs to be cooled), a requirement that meant the plant equipment could not be accommodated internally within the building. This has resulted in the rooftop enclosure being designed as an acoustic louvered enclosure, a principle that has allowed the design team to minimise the size of the enclosure in comparison to a 'solid' enclosure. In addition to the rooftop plant enclosure, a further response to the sustainability aspirations of the building was to provide a series of PV panels on the brown roof serving the office and residential accommodation.

The design team were fully aware of the visual implications of a proposed rooftop enclosure and have therefore worked closely together to minimise the size of the enclosure as much as possible - both in height and width. A computer generated model was prepared in order to generate two street view perspectives along Saffron Hill in order to assess the impact of the enclosure. Via this computer model, the design team have established the maximum size the enclosure could be in relation to not being visible by pedestrians at street level.

A precedent for a visible rooftop enclosure, as seen from Saffron Hill, can be viewed on an adjacent property along Saffron Hill (see photograph below), however the design team have worked to reduce any visibility of the proposed enclosure for the 106-109 site.



No. 91-94 Saffron Hill with visible rooftop louvered plant enclosure

Two Street Perspectives images have been provided as part of the planning application submission - drawing: 10046(L)010. These perspectives have also been enclosed below (pages 8 and 9 of this report):

Street Perspective No.1 – looking north along Saffron Hill



nash
partnership

Street View 1-Rev. B
10100 Saffron Hill, London

Street Perspective No.2 – looking south along Saffron Hill



nash
partnership

Street View 2 - Rev. B
10100 Saffron Hill, London

PV Panels

PV panels have been proposed on the brown roof - please refer to Proposed Roof plan – drawing 10100(L)104. In order to maximise their efficiency (i.e. to avoid over shading) plus to ensure that the panels are not visible at street level, the Panels have been set back from the roof parapet with a low zinc clad parapet wall located on the front (east) and side (south) elevations. This low parapet wall will further conceal the top of the angled Panels from street level. The success of this design approach by the design team can also be seen via the two street perspectives images on pages 8 and 9.

Removal of Green Roof

As part of the BREEAM assessment, the design team sought advice from the appointed Ecologist on an alternative brown roof specification that would maximise the ecology credentials of the building. The design team was advised that a brown roof would afford a greater biodiversity benefit for priority species (e.g. black redstart) compared to a green roof. With the introduction of PV panels located on the roof to allow the building to meet the applicant's aspired sustainability credentials (as discussed above); the benefits of specifying a brown roof for the building coincided well due the fact that a reduction in the green roof's growth/performance would occur by having PV panels located above. The proposed brown roof will be a brown / sedum roof with a 2/3:1/3 ratio located above the main waterproof membrane. Please note the appointed ecologist will provide further advice on the setting out of the brown and sedum portions of the roof on site (i.e. respective areas will be located on site to best suit the PV panel locations).

Internal Alterations

Internal alterations have been proposed to maximise the net usable area for both the offices and residential accommodation. The residential accommodation layouts have been designed to ensure compliance with the Lifetime Homes standards.

Entrance Doors

The two entrance doors at ground floor level to the residential and office areas have been set-back from the site boundary / edge of pavement due to fire regulations contained within Approved Document Part B of the Building Regulations. Due to both stairs being used by the Office accommodation in the case of a fire (the residential stair acts as a second means of escape for the offices in order to comply with AD Part B), the number of persons escaping through each entrance is above 60 persons. Below 60 persons and the doors can open inwards, however above this figure and the escape doors must open in the direction of escape. In order to minimise the extent of the set back from the pavement, the doors have been designed as double opening doors, thus minimising the length of each door leaf.

Basement Level Extension

The new planning application submission comprises of extending the basement to the rear party wall line, a proposal that was established within the current planning consent scheme. Further to receipt of the Pre-application advice from Camden, a Basement Impact Assessment Screening Report has been commissioned and forms part of the planning application submission.

Windows at Ground Floor Level

The new planning application proposals outline a design change to the current planning consent scheme in the form of lowering the existing cill levels of the ground floor windows along Saffron Hill. The design team plus the applicant have discussed in detail how the office accommodation could actively respond / relate to the activity found along Saffron Hill. Many of the existing buildings along Saffron Hill have taken a similar approach and installed full height glazing that will allow the internal office floors to enjoy a sense of

connectivity with Saffron Hill (please see precedent photo below). During early discussions with Camden, a statement was required to be submitted by the applicant justifying their desire to achieve this additional 'connectivity' between their daily office activities and Saffron Hill:

The Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management considers that lowering the cill levels of the ground floor windows would allow our employees to enjoy a much better quality of daylight compared to leaving the cills at their existing height. By lowering the cills, the new glazing will also provide CIWEM a higher degree of connectivity with the activity found along Saffron Hill and are more relevant and suitable to an office environment compared to small high cill windows. We are content that this will not result in any undue security risk and is consistent with the approach adopted by many other offices in the locality.

Statement provided by CIWEM, September 2011.

Below: Precedent image taken along Saffron Hill – full height glazing to internal ground floor office space provides a sense of connectivity with the activity found along Saffron Hill.



PLANNING OBLIGATIONS / SECTION 106

The previous planning permission was subject to a range of planning obligations which were secured by a Section 106 Agreement. In regards to the new planning application, the applicant would seek an addendum to be agreed to the current Section 106 agreement.

APPENDIX A

The following drawings form part of the Planning Application and should be read in conjunction with this report:

Planning Basement and Ground Floor Plan	10100(L)100
Planning First and Second Floor Plan	10100(L)101
Planning Third and Fourth Floor Plan	10100(L)102
Planning Plant Room and Plant Roof Deck (Option 2)	10100(L)104
Planning Saffron Hill Elevation	10100(L)105
Planning Side Elevation	10100(L)106
Planning Rear Elevation	10100(L)107
Planning Section A-A	10100(L)108
Planning Existing & Proposed GF Plans, Elevations & Sections	10100(L)109
Street Perspectives along Saffron Hill	10046(L)010