

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Creation of living accommodation within a new Roof Extension
together with Minor Alterations

for

4 Kings Mews, London, WC1N 2HY

March 2010

Cluttons Planning and Regeneration

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Cluttons LLP Planning and Regeneration on behalf of the applicant, Mr J Frazzo. The statement supports the application for planning permission for a roof extension and minor alterations to No. 4 Kings Mews. The roof extension will provide further living accommodation and convert the two bedroom dwelling into a three to four bedroom family house. Details of the proposed alterations are listed in Section 4.0.

2.0 Location and Description

- 2.1 4 Kings Mews is a residential property located immediately north of Theobald's Road, within the Central London Area. The building is two storeys in height and constructed mainly of brick, with timber boarding and glass on the rear elevation.
- 2.2 To the rear there is a garden and immediately beyond the boundary wall are the gardens of the properties which face John Street.
- 2.3 Kings Mews is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings in Kings Mews, but there are some in the immediate locality. Nos 2-9 John Street are Grade II listed buildings and these share rear garden boundaries with properties on Kings Mews. To the south, properties along Theobald's Road are Grade II listed buildings (Nos 12-22).
- 2.4 Other buildings within Kings Mews are of a mix of styles and currently range in height between 2 and 3 storeys. Immediately south, Nos 1 and 2 Kings Mews are of 2 storeys, followed by the rear of buildings along Theobald's Road which are of 4 storeys. To the north of 4 Kings Mews is a temporary garage building, set back from Kings Mews. The owners of this property live on John Street to the rear and have built a garden area with parking underneath that has access onto Kings Mews. We understand that this is a temporary arrangement until the missing building in the terrace at 5-6 Kings Mews is rebuilt. North of 5-6 Kings Mews is a 3 storey house (Nos 7-8). Opposite 4 Kings Mews is a 3 storey building (Nos 26-30), followed by 2 storey (No 25), then 3 storey buildings (Nos 23-24). However, **planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of Nos 23-30 Kings Mews for residential buildings of 3 and 4 storeys (Ref 2009/0710/P). The proposed buildings opposite 4 Kings Mews will be 3 storeys in height.**
- 2.5 Kings Mews has not retained the traditional character that many other mews in central London have. Instead, the original buildings have not survived and the character of the Mews is industrial, with the majority of buildings built in the late 20th Century.
- 2.6 The site is highly accessible. The nearest underground stations are at Chancery Lane, Farringdon, Holborn and Russell Square. Main line services are available from Farringdon and Kings Cross which are also a short distance away. The site is easily accessible by bus with numerous bus services along Theobald's Road and Gray's Inn Road.

3.0 Planning History

- 3.1. LB Camden's records indicate that the existing buildings at 2-4 Kings Mews were built under planning permission granted in 1969. They were constructed as warehouses at ground floor level with two residential flats above. Records show that an application was submitted in 1997 for the change of use of these properties to two residential units (PS9704987), but that this application was withdrawn.
- 3.2. The online records indicate that a revised application was submitted in February 1998 but there is no further information in relation to this. Our pre-application letter requested any further information on this application that LB Camden should have, but we have not received any further details. In these circumstances, we consider it appropriate to assume that there are no restrictive conditions regarding the use or further development of the building.
- 3.3. Kings Mews does not have a traditional mews character, unlike others in the area. The buildings have generally all been redeveloped, with those on the east side of the mews built in the 1950s and 60s.

23-30 Kings Mews

- 3.4. LB Camden's planning committee resolved to grant planning permission for the redevelopment of 23-30 King's Mews on 11 February 2009, subject to a Section 106 agreement which was signed in May 2009. The permission provides for the demolition of Nos 23-30 Kings Mews and development of 3 and 4 storey buildings to accommodate 18 flats.
- 3.5. The application proposals include the development of a 3 storey building opposite No 4 Kings Mews. Immediately to the south, the proposed building steps up to 4 storeys. The sections provided within that application show that the height of the proposed 3 storey buildings will be significantly higher than the existing 3 storey building at Nos 7-8 Kings Mews (see Appendix 3 for drawings). Therefore, development opposite the application site will be considerably higher than that proposed by this application. The application proposals are submitted in the context of LB Camden's decision to allow 3-4 storey buildings within King's Mews. The majority of buildings on the east side of Kings Mews will be of at least 3 storeys including the entire frontage opposite 4 Kings Mews.

No 7-8 Kings Mews

- 3.6. Immediately north of the application site is the temporary garage building with a garden area above for the property at John Street behind. The garage building is set back from the traditional building line. This is followed by No 7-8 Kings Mews which is a three storey building. Planning permission for this building was granted in June 2005. The site had previously been vacant, but LB Camden considered that a three storey building on this site within the mews would be entirely appropriate.

4.0 Proposed Alterations

- 4.1 This section of the report sets out the features of the proposed application for planning permission being submitted to the London Borough of Camden.
- 4.2 The application seeks planning permission for:
- i. the construction of a roof extension to provide additional living accommodation
 - ii. minor alterations comprising a new balustrade to the front balcony and new doors to the garage on the front elevation
- 4.3 The existing two bedroom house will become a family dwelling of 3 to 4 bedrooms. The proposed extension will result in the height of the building being three storeys, which is the same as many already in the street.
- 4.4 Other minor alterations are proposed which do not require planning permission. This includes the internal alterations to living space to create a three to four bedroom house which complies with fire safety standards and other building regulations. At ground floor level, the garage would be converted to a utility room and the garage doors replaced with glazed door unit to match the existing door units. There are no planning conditions requiring the garage to be retained for use by a car. Therefore, planning permission is not required for the use of this space as a utility room.
- 4.5 At first floor level, it is proposed that there will be internal reconfiguration to include new stairs up to the new second floor. The balcony at the front of the property will remain unaltered, but the balustrade will be replaced with a new steel/obscure glazed balustrade. This will increase privacy for occupants as well as improve its design.
- 4.6 The new second floor level will provide a new master bedroom together with dressing room and bathroom. There will also be a new terrace at the rear of the property. To each side of the terrace there will be a 2.2m high wall to act as a screen to prevent overlooking into neighbouring properties. There will also be a 1.1m high steel and obscure glazed balustrade on the rear elevation.
- 4.7 The area over the existing dining room will not be built over, pulling back the rear façade at this height and having no detrimental effect on the daylight levels of windows to surrounding buildings, including those along Theobald's Road.

Pre Application Advice

- 4.8 Pre-application advice was received from LB Camden on 8th February 2010. A number of issues were raised with regard to the roof extension and these will be addressed in full in Section 5.0 below. The letter advised that the proposed alterations to the front elevation were considered to be acceptable. It was also noted that the loss of the garage may be considered acceptable.

Design

- 4.9 The overall design philosophy for alterations to 4 King's Mews has been to conserve and enhance the conservation area, whilst providing residential accommodation suited to the needs of the 21st century.
- 4.10 The main change to the appearance of the building will be the addition of a roof extension as outlined above. To the front, a mid/dark grey coated metal cladding has been selected to match the character and detailing of the floors below and following the precedent set at other mews buildings within the immediate area, for example, at John's Mews to the west. It is also selected as a lightweight material, which the existing structure can support without further work.
- 4.11 Other materials, including the brickwork and timber boarding have been selected to match the existing. The windows and door units will match the existing fenestration.

Access

- 4.12 Accessibility has been considered in this application. Access to the ground floor is level and there is a toilet at ground floor with level access.

5.0 Relevant Planning Policies

5.1 Recognising that the proposal needs to be judged against development plan policy the national, regional and local planning policies relevant to the proposals are considered in this section.

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)

5.2 PPS1 encourages sustainable development through using already developed areas in the most efficient way, reducing the need to travel, making a positive difference in helping deliver homes, jobs and better opportunities. Sustainable development is the core principle underpinning planning.

PPS3: Housing (2008)

5.3 PPS3 seeks to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, high quality home, whether it be of an affordable or open market tenure so long as it meets the requirements of the community. This policy statement advises that Local Planning Authorities should continue to make effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed.

PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994)

5.4 PPG15 provides a full statement of government policies for the protection of listed buildings and conservation areas. 4 King's Mews is located within a conservation area. There are listed buildings within the immediate area, along Theobald's Road and John Street. PPG15 sets out the requirement to protect listed buildings and to preserve and enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Regional Guidance – The London Plan (2004 as altered 2008)

5.5 Policy 3A.4 requires a variety of housing types to be provided in London. The provision of the 3 to 4 bedroom dwelling will assist in providing family accommodation in London.

5.6 Policy 4B.11 London's Built Heritage seeks to protect and enhance London's historic environment. As mentioned previously, 4 King's Mews lies within a conservation area and the proposals do take consideration of the historic character of the area.

The London Borough of Camden's Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

5.7 The proposed changes to 4 King's Mews support a number of the Council's key policies. The development plan is the London Plan, as already referred to, together with the adopted UDP, Saved Policies version dated 2009. We understand that planning applications should also comply with Camden Planning Guidance 2006 and these policies are also assessed. LB Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies were submitted to the Secretary of State in January 2010 for consideration by a Planning Inspector. As these documents have reached an advanced stage we have also taken them into consideration in our planning assessment.

Housing

5.8 We understand that the principle of continued residential use is supported by the UDP and that the Council seek a range of unit sizes. The proposals will increase the size of the house from two bedrooms to three to four bedrooms and therefore will be more flexible for a range of households, including families. As encouraged at paragraph 2.61 of the UDP, this unit is accessible from the ground floor and has its own garden and therefore is suitable for family accommodation.

5.9 In addition, the Core Strategy Submission Document notes that one of Camden's four themes is a sustainable Camden that adapts to a growing population. This includes providing sufficient housing of the right type and quality. Housing is the priority land use of the LDF. The provision of 3-4 bedroom market housing is identified as a medium priority in providing a range of housing.

5.10 Therefore, the principle of continued residential use and the extension to provide a 3-4 bedroom house is supported by adopted and emerging planning policy.

Design

5.11 Policy B1 of the UDP requires development to be designed to a high standard. It sets out key criteria for the consideration of planning application proposals, which are required to:

a) respect its site and setting;

At present, the site is a two storey, flat roof brick dwelling. The development will respect the site in providing an appropriately designed roof extension. The roof extension will follow the design of other extensions in the area with metal cladding to the front elevation. The cladding will tie in with the doors and fenestration on the front elevation. To the rear, the existing timber boarding will be continued, and the extension will follow the existing design principles of the elevation.

The setting is mixed, with buildings heights ranging between 1-3 storeys and an industrial character. The choice of materials to the front elevation will respect the industrial character and to the rear, the timber boarding will maintain the character of the existing building. There are listed buildings to the rear and the timber boarding positively contributes to the appearance of the building in this location.

b) be safe and accessible to all;

The building has a level entrance from street level and has a level WC. The open plan nature of the ground floor enables optimum accessibility.

c) improve the spaces around and between buildings, particularly public areas;

The application proposals do not affect the spaces around the building, either public or private. The rear garden already provides sufficient amenity space for a family dwelling and is of high quality.

d) be sustainable by promoting energy efficiency and efficient use of resources;

The extension of a building uses less energy than the creation of a new one and optimises the resources that have already been used in the building. The application proposals will provide improved thermal insulation to the roof and thermal insulation to the walls.

e) be easily adaptable to changing economic and social requirements;

The larger dwelling will provide family accommodation and the extension in itself will enable easy adaptation to changing social requirements.

f) provide appropriate high quality landscaping and boundary treatments;

The existing garden is already of high quality and will provide sufficient amenity space for a family dwelling.

g) seek to improve the attractiveness of an area and not harm its appearance or amenity.

The area is already mixed in character and the extension will increase the height of the dwelling to match several of those already in the mews. The extension has been designed to complement the character of the mews and we consider that it will contribute positively to the appearance of the mews.

In assessing how the design of a development has taken these principles into account, the Council will consider:

h) building lines and plot sizes in the surrounding area;

The extension will maintain the existing building line and plot size.

i) the existing pattern of routes and spaces;

The routes and spaces around the property are not affected by the application proposals and the external space to the rear is already of high quality.

j) the height, bulk and scale of neighbouring buildings;

The existing buildings within Kings Mews are mixed in height, bulk and scale, and this will alter further as the development along the east side of the mews is built out. Currently, both sides of the mews are of 2 to 3 storeys, with the occasional gap. The application proposals will increase the height of the building to three storeys so that it will become consistent with many of the existing buildings on both sides of the terrace. It will also be consistent with the 3 storey development opposite the site that has recently been granted planning permission by LB Camden. This development will reach up to 4 storeys at its southern point.

k) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;

The site is on a slope with steps up to the rear garden. This will not be affected by the application proposals. There are no trees to the front, and trees to the rear will be unaffected by the proposed works.

l) the design of neighbouring buildings;

The application proposals will follow the scale of neighbouring buildings. In terms of more general design, the neighbouring buildings are generally of an industrial nature and appearance and this is reflected in the detailing and use of materials to the front elevation.

The rear elevation has softer detailing to reflect the character at the back of Kings Mews and John Street.

m) the quality and appropriateness of detailing and materials used;

As above, the detailing and materials to the front will reflect the industrial nature of the mews and this is softened to the rear with timber boarding to reflect the residential context.

Materials used will be of high quality and durability.

n) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level; and

The only alteration at street level is the replacement of garage doors with doors that match the existing ones elsewhere on the front elevation.

o) the impact on views and skylines.

The proposals are small in scale and there will be no impact on views or skyline.

5.12 In a similar way, Policy CS14 of the Core Strategy also states that the Council will require development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character. This policy is developed by Policy DP24 of the Development Policies Proposed Submission document which sets out further criteria to be considered in development. The application proposals are considered against this criteria below:

a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;

The character and setting of Kings Mews is predominantly industrial. The variety in building styles and scales mean that there is no formal pattern to be continued. None of the original historic mews properties remain. The proposals respect the neighbouring buildings, with different elevational treatment to the front and rear as appropriate, and also through maintaining the established height of properties at 3 storeys. This has most recently been established through the grant of planning permission at 23-30 Kings Mews.

b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed

The proposals follow the dimensions and character of the existing building. The metal cladding to the front elevation will mark the third floor as distinct from the rest of the building and give the appearance of subordination to the original dwelling. The material ties in with the materials used for the doors and windows on the front elevation. To the rear, the existing

timber boarding is continued and the character of the existing building is followed through in the design and fenestration of the rear elevation.

c) the quality of materials to be used;

As with the existing property, the proposed materials are to be of high quality. The metal cladding to the front elevation will be lightweight to enable them to be supported structurally.

d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;

The only alteration at street level is the replacement of garage doors with doors that match the existing ones elsewhere on the front elevation.

e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;

There will be no significant changes from the existing provision. There is no air conditioning proposed and the installation of a new boiler is not material to this application.

f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;

As stated above, the site is on a slope with steps up to the rear garden at the rear. This will not be affected by the application proposals. There are no trees to the front, and trees to the rear will be unaffected by the proposed works.

g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;

The existing garden is already of high quality and will provide sufficient amenity space for a family dwelling.

h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and

The existing garden already provides appropriate amenity space and no changes are required.

i) accessibility.

The ground floor will benefit from level access and a WC will be provided at this level.

5.13 We consider that the proposals are consistent with the architectural quality of the existing building and are appropriate to the area. Therefore, we consider that the proposals comply with Policy B3 which deals with alterations and extensions. The proposals have been drawn up with specific regard to the creation of a development that respects the form, proportions

and character of the building and its setting. The architectural integrity of the existing building has been preserved and the additions are appropriate to the scale, materials and design of the existing.

5.14 Paragraph 3.34 deals specifically with roof extensions and terraces, and notes that they can have a significant effect on the appearance of the existing building and its surroundings. It requires special care in their siting, design, size, proportions and materials, particularly in areas where roofs are plainly visible over a wide area and where roofs are an especially attractive feature of the building or area. We do not consider that the proposal site is in a particularly visible area or an area where the roofs are especially important. There is a wide ranging design of roofs within Kings Mews and the surrounding streets. The building will remain of an appropriate height in comparison with those around it, and will be lower than the three to four storey buildings that have been granted planning permission opposite the site at 23-30 Kings Mews.

5.15 Camden Planning Guidance 2006 develops the guidance in relation to roof alterations and extensions further. The application proposals do not fall within the description of circumstances where a roof addition is likely to be unacceptable. We consider that there will be no adverse affect on the skyline, the appearance of the building or the surrounding street scene, as follows:

- (a) there is no unbroken run of valley roofs
- (b) 4 Kings Mews is not part of a "complete terrace" or "group of buildings" with an unimpaired roofline. The policy requires complete terraces or groups of buildings with an unimpaired roofline to be protected. This policy is designed to protect terraces and groups of buildings which have features in common. Whilst the original mews buildings may once have been described as a complete terrace, these buildings have all been demolished and redeveloped. There are no remains of a uniform terrace or group of buildings. Kings Mews has been redeveloped by piecemeal. There is no uniformity of design and it is a mix of buildings. There are no uniform heights, no uniform scale, no uniform materials, no uniform design features, and no uniform fenestration patterns. There is an absolute lack of continuity in the street scene. The buildings in Kings Mews are a long way from their original character, being urban and industrial. The policy is designed to protect the character of a complete terrace or homogenous group but this is not a reasonable description of the terrace here. There is no continuous roofline.

- (c) The building does not already have an additional storey or mansard
- (d) The building is not already higher than neighbouring properties.
- (e) The building does not have a roof profile that is exposed to an important view from a public space
- (f) The flat roof of 4 Kings Mews is appropriate for a roof addition
- (g) The building is not listed
- (h) The architectural style of the building would not be undermined by the roof level which has been sensitively designed to complement the style and materials of the existing building.
- (i) The building is not part of a group and the extension would not detract from the existing form.

5.16 The application proposals do conform to the criteria set out where additional storeys are likely to be acceptable. In particular, the alterations are architecturally sympathetic to the building and the roof form. There is a variety of additions within the mews and the proposed development would continue a form of development that has already been carried out elsewhere within the mews, and which has been granted recently on the opposite side of the mews.

5.17 The pre-application advice received from LB Camden by letter dated 8 February 2010 suggests that the building forms part of a collection of mews properties that have a roofline which is largely unimpaired by alterations or extensions. We appreciate that the comments were made without visiting the site, and we consider that at the site visit it will be clear that No 4 could not be described as one of "a collection of mews properties that have a roofline which is largely unimpaired by alterations or extensions". The comments in the pre-application letter refer to the Camden Planning Guidance 2006 policy that is dealt with at Paragraph 5.15(b) above. The policy is designed to protect the character of a complete terrace or homogenous group but this is not a reasonable description of the buildings at Kings Mews. There is no continuous roofline. Whilst the original mews buildings may once have been described as a complete terrace, these buildings have all been demolished and redeveloped. There are no remains of a uniform terrace or a collection of mews buildings. Kings Mews has been redeveloped by piecemeal and there is no uniformity of design. The street scene presents a mix of buildings with a lack of continuity. Therefore, we do not consider it is reasonable to object to the application proposals on this basis.

- 5.18 The character of the whole road is of a mix of building heights. Some consistency will be introduced on the east side of the Mews which has recently received planning permission for 3-4 storey buildings. We consider that the additional storey at 4 Kings Mews will be appropriate to the existing mix of buildings within the Mews.
- 5.19 Camden's Planning Guidance 2006 also gives guidance regarding the new terrace on the rear elevation. There is already a balcony at second floor level and the new terrace would be at third floor level, with screens to prevent overlooking. The terrace has been designed within the new floor to complement the design of the existing rear elevation. The fenestration pattern and materials take their cue from the existing building.

Conservation Area and Listed Building Issues

- 5.20 The proposal site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and Policy B7 of the UDP requires development in a conservation area to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the area. As stated above, the application proposals have been designed to respect the site and surroundings and as a result we consider that they will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area.
- 5.21 Adopted and emerging planning policy also seeks to protect listed buildings and the Council will not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building (Policy B6 of the UDP and DP25 of the Development Policies Document). The pre-application advice raised concern over the impact of the development on listed buildings in the area. However, we understand that this advice was influenced by recent advice regarding No 1 Kings Mews which is adjacent to listed buildings on Theobald's Road. In contrast, No 4 Kings Mews does not contribute to the setting of those listed buildings. It does back on to listed buildings along John Street. However, the properties on John Street are of four storeys and the relationship between 4 Kings Mews and properties along John Street are only seen from the rear private space behind the properties. The proposed alterations to the rear elevation of 4 Kings Mews have been sensitively designed and we consider that the application proposals will not have a negative impact on the setting of the listed buildings.

Amenity

- 5.22 Policy SD6 of the UDP states that planning permission will not be granted for development that causes harm to the amenity of occupiers and neighbours. The proposals have been

designed to comply with this policy. With the addition of a storey, consideration has particularly been given to the potential for overlooking. As a result, 2.2 metre high walls have been added to the side elevations at second storey height to prevent overlooking. The 1.1 metre high balustrade to the rear balcony will be obscure glazed so occupiers cannot look out from a seated position. Even when standing, the occupants cannot see into neighbouring gardens due to the existing fencing and vegetation. This is demonstrated through photos taken from the existing roof level as shown in Appendix 2.

- 5.23 Camden's Planning Guidance 2006 suggests that there be a minimum distance of 18 metres between the windows of habitable rooms of different units that directly face each other. This is applied to new build units. The distance between habitable room windows between 4 Kings Mews and the nearest property on John Street is well over 18 metres. The relationship between the windows is well established and is already in existence at second storey level. It is not unusual to have this relationship in properties within central London and this was noted within the committee report for 23-30 Kings Mews, where it was noted that 'in dense urban environments a more flexible approach should be applied to recognise the characteristic dense urban grain of city locations'. We therefore consider that the level of privacy and extent of overlooking will be found to be appropriate. The proposals could not be considered to be overdevelopment or detrimental to the urban grain in the context of development that has been approved at 23-30 Kings Mews and the dense urban grain of the area.
- 5.24 Policy SD6 also protects sunlight and daylight levels. It should be noted that part of the rear elevation is already stepped back at first floor level and this ensures that light reaches the windows of properties that look on to this area. This area will be maintained within the proposals.

Parking Stress

- 5.25 Finally, the proposals will convert the existing garage to a utility room. The garage is not used for cars as it is too narrow and cannot accommodate a standard car. The site is within the Central London Area where parking standards are a maximum of 0.5 spaces per dwelling. We have not identified any planning conditions requiring the garage to be kept for the use of cars. Therefore, we do not consider that the use of the garage area for living accommodation requires planning permission. The loss of the garage will not reduce car parking provision in the area due to the inadequate size of the garage. Therefore, the proposals will not increase parking stress.

5.26 Furthermore, the pre application advice letter from LB Camden noted that given the limitations of the garage and as the site is easily accessible by public transport, the loss of the garage may be considered acceptable.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 We consider that the application proposals will improve the existing residential building. They will provide a high quality house suitable for a variety of households including families, thereby contributing to LB Camden's housing stock.
- 6.2 Careful attention has been paid to the design of the extension and the proposals will improve the external appearance of the building. The design is sensitive to the different contexts to the front and rear of the property. The proposals will also preserve and enhance the appearance and character of the conservation area whilst protecting listed buildings in the locality. The application proposals also respect the amenity of surrounding residents and occupiers of the building.
- 6.3 Therefore, we consider that the application proposals are appropriate within the mixed setting of Kings Mews and request that planning permission be granted.



APPENDIX 1: SITE LOCATION PLAN



APPENDIX 2: SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



APPENDIX 3 –

DRAWINGS SHOWING DEVELOPMENT PERMITTED AT 23-30 KINGS MEWS IN 2009