

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		04/06/2009	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		20/05/2009	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Jonathan Markwell				2009/0226/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
112a Camden Road London NW1 9EE				Please see decision notice			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
Change of use and works of conversion of basement ancillary retail storeroom (Class A1) to a self-contained studio flat (Class C3), including creation of front lightwell with railings and stairwell and associated alterations to shopfront.							
Recommendation(s):		Refuse Planning Permission					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	10	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		In addition to the adjoining occupiers being formally consulted, a site notice was erected on 29/04/2009, expiring on 20/05/2009. No responses were received.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>		None.					
Site Description							
<p>The application site comprises a five-storey (basement, ground, first, second and mansard roof third floor level) mid terrace building located on the south-east side of Camden Road. The application site is situated in close proximity to Rousden Street (to the north-east) and the junction of Camden Road with Royal College Street (to the south-west). At this point is Camden Road overground railway station, with the railway bridge crossing Camden Road to the south-west of the application site.</p> <p>The application site is in retail use (Heaven Dry Cleaners, Alterations and Accessories – Class A1) at ground floor level. At basement floor level is ancillary storage space for the retail use at ground floor level. On the upper floors of the building are four flats.</p> <p>The application site is located within a neighbourhood centre. Within this frontage are four shop units (110 – Camden Boxframe Co Ltd (furniture store); 114 – Curry 4 u (restaurant); 116 – Top Nails), with residential uses on the upper floors. No's 114 and 116 include front railings, with No. 116 including a front lightwell and flush grille.</p>							

Although the building is not listed, it is located within Camden Broadway Conservation Area. Within the conservation area statement it is identified as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. This part of Camden Road is also a TfL Red Route.

Relevant History

None.

Relevant policies

London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006)

S1/S2 - Sustainable development

SD2 – Planning obligations

SD6 – Amenity for occupiers and neighbours

B1 - General design principles

B3 - Alterations and extensions

B4a - Shopfronts

B7 – Conservation areas

H1 - New housing

H7 - Lifetime homes and wheelchair housing

T1 – Sustainable transport

T3 – Pedestrians and cycling

T8 – Car free housing and car capped housing

T9 – Impact of parking

T12 – Works affecting highways

R7b – Protection of shopping frontages and local shops – Neighbourhood centres

R8a – Upper floors

Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) 2006

Camden Broadway Conservation Area Statement

Assessment

Introduction

Planning permission is sought for the change of use and works of conversion of the ancillary retail storeroom (Class A1) located at basement floor level into a self-contained studio flat (Class C3). This storeroom is ancillary to the main Class A1 retail use at ground floor level. To facilitate these works, it is proposed to create a front lightwell with railings to provide access to the studio flat. A stairwell will lead from the pavement down to the entrance of the studio flat. A three paned window is also proposed next to the proposed entrance. In order to allow access to the studio flat, alterations to the existing shopfront are also proposed.

Principle of development

The application site is situated within a neighbourhood centre. Policy R7 relates to the protection of shopping frontages within neighbourhood centres at ground floor level. Policy R8 relates only to upper floor levels within neighbourhood centres. As such, there is no specific policy relating to the protection of basement floor levels from retail to other uses. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the change of use of this storage area will not cause harm to the character, function, vitality or viability of the centre. The existing retail floorspace (c. 67m²) is to be retained and this constitutes what is considered to be a viable retail unit. Consequently, there are no issues raised regarding the loss of the ancillary retail storeroom at basement floor level.

Regarding the proposed use, housing is the priority land use of the UDP, as indicated by policy H1. The proposed change of use will therefore help to meet and exceed the strategic housing target for the Borough. This is on the basis of the residential accommodation proposed being of an acceptable standard. As such, the principle of providing residential accommodation at this location is accepted.

Quality of residential accommodation / Amenity

The proposal involves the creation of a self-contained studio unit at basement floor level. The

applicant denoted that the overall floorspace of the proposed unit to be 32.2m², in excess of the 32m² minimum standard set out in section 40 of CPG. However, the submitted plans indicated that the actual size of the proposed unit is 30.39m², 1.41m² below the required standard.

It is also considered that the proposed unit will not receive adequate amounts of natural light or ventilation. A front lightwell (with a depth of 1.35m) has been proposed, with a three paned window 2.6m in width and 1.65m in height (set 0.3m above the basement floor level). In accordance with the guidance set out in paragraph 40.19 of CPG, the glazed area of the window should total not less than 10% of the floor area of the unit. This is based on a 30° angle from the front of the proposed lightwell.

When this is calculated, only 1.56m² of the glazed area (2.6m in width and 0.6m in height) would provide adequate light to the flat. This is below 10% of habitable room size of the flat, which is calculated to be 2.604m² (overall flat size minus the size of the bathroom; 30.39m² minus 4.35m² = 26.04m²). In addition, this figure is based on a 30° line from the front of the lightwell, 1.35m from the window. The lightwell also includes a stairwell down to the entrance to the flat. This structure is within 0.45m of the proposed window. As such, this would further reduce the amount of light to the proposed flat. It was not possible to calculate this figure owing to the proposed section drawing submitted not showing the proposed stairwell. In overall terms, the proposed flat will not receive sufficient levels of natural light, especially the proposed bedroom located to the rear of the flat. This lack of daylight, sunlight and outlook will be to the detriment of the amenity of future occupiers of the proposed flat.

With regard to ventilation, the applicant has not denoted that the proposed windows will be openable. Paragraph 40.30 of CPG states that an area of 1/20 of the floor area of the room must be able to be opened to provide natural ventilation. As such, this will also impinge on the amenity of future occupiers of the proposed flat.

The floor to ceiling height of the proposed flat is 2.35m, above the 2.1m minimum standard. As such, the proposed scheme is acceptable in this regard. The applicant has also denoted an area between the shopfront and the stairwell for refuse facilities; this is also considered to be satisfactory.

In terms of neighbouring amenity, there is not considered to be any adverse impact on neighbouring properties from the proposals. The works are at basement floor level and the proposed lightwell and railings will not impact on access to the upper floor flats or the ground floor retail unit at the host building. In addition, there are no issues regarding the impact on neighbouring occupiers, in terms of overlooking/privacy, outlook or sunlight and daylight matters.

In terms of community safety issues, there are a number of existing lightwells in the terrace and the proposed design is not considered to increase the fear of crime or safety issues at this point. Similarly, there is not considered to be any loss to pedestrian amenity given the wide pavement at this point and the presence of existing lightwells at neighbouring buildings.

Design

In terms of design, there are no principle issues raised with the proposed changes to the shopfront. The existing double doors in the centre of the shopfront will be removed and a single door, next to the existing entrance to the flats on the floors above is proposed. This amounts to the reconfiguration of the shopfront to allow access to the proposed basement flat. The existing features of the timber based shopfront, such as the stallriser, mullion, transom and small toplights will be retained in the proposed design. Although the applicant has not provided details of the proposed material, had the application been in a position to be able to be granted planning permission, a condition would have been added denoting all materials to match the existing.

Similarly, the front lightwell and associated railings and stairwell is considered to be acceptable in design terms. Enclosed areas to the front of shops are an established feature in this frontage, with existing railings at No's 114 and 116 Camden Road. Beyond Rousden Street, there are further railings leading to basements at No's 118, 122 and 124 Camden Road. The proposed design is similar in nature to the existing railings nearby and, as such, is not considered to cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area at this point.

The windows, doors and finishes at basement floor level appear to relate to the character of those at the floor above. However, no details have been submitted by the applicant as to the proposed materials. Given that these works are at basement floor level, there will not be highly visible from the public realm. Similar to the shopfront alterations, had the application been in a position to be able to be granted planning permission, a condition would have been added denoting all materials to match the existing. The lack of details regarding materials is not considered, in itself, to be sufficient grounds for a reason for refusal of the application.

Transport

In terms of transport, the proposed flat would need to be made car-free through a S106 Agreement. This is considered to be necessary owing to the site having a Public Transport Accessibility Level of (PTAL) of 6a (excellent) and being within a Controlled Parking Zone. As such, not making the development car-free would increase demand for on-street parking in the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) the site is within. Somers Town (CA-G) CPZ operates Mon-Fri 08:30 - 18:30 and has a ratio of parking permits to available parking bays of 1.07:1. This means that more parking permits have been issued than spaces available. The applicant has not indicated that they will be willing to enter into the S106 agreement within the determination period of the application.

With regard to cycle storage / parking, Appendix 6 of the UDP states that 1 storage or parking space is required per residential unit. The proposal is for 1 residential unit; therefore 1 cycle storage/parking spaces is required. The applicant has not included provision for a cycle storage/parking in the proposed design. However, given the unit is at basement floor level and only minor changes are proposed at ground floor level, it is considered that this requirement is not sought in this context.

It is not considered that the scale of the work proposed would require a construction management plan to be sought. However, a licence from the Highway authority (TfL) would be required.

Recommendation:

Refuse Planning Permission

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