
**PLANNING, DESIGN &
ACCESS STATEMENT**

**LONDON HOUSE,
MECKLENBURGH SQUARE,
LONDON
WC1N 2AB**

**APPLICATION BY GOODENOUGH COLLEGE
FOR PLANNING PERMISSION & LISTED
BUILDING CONSENT**

May 2014



Our Ref: SJC/ph./615/WC1/48/1

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is the Planning, Design & Access Statement ('Statement'), submitted on behalf of Goodenough College, for the installation of 4 no. low level ventilation housings (3 no. in the basement lightwell fronting Mecklenburgh Square, and 1 no. in the forecourt on Doughty Mews), in connection with the basement plant rooms. In addition, the installation of an external waste drainage run at first floor level of the quadrangle elevation of the Guildford Street block. These alterations are in connection with the continued use of London House as accommodation for international postgraduate students.
- 1.2 This Statement provides a brief summary of the background to the application, site and the surroundings, relevant planning history, and an overview of the proposed application.
- 1.3 The relevant policies and associated guidance at national, regional and local levels are referenced, and then the proposal is assessed in relation to these policies.

2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 London House is used by Goodenough College as accommodation for international postgraduate students.
- 2.2 The proposals involve the installation of 4 no. low level ventilation housings (3 no. in the basement lightwell fronting Mecklenburgh Square, and 1 no. in the forecourt on Doughty Mews), in connection with the basement plant rooms. In addition, the installation of an external waste drainage run at first floor level of the quadrangle elevation of the Guildford Street block. These alterations are in connection with the continued use of London House as accommodation for international postgraduate students.

3 APPLICATION SUBMISSION

3.1 The planning and listed building consent application submission comprises:

- Completed forms and associated certificates of land ownership;
- Copies of the following drawings:
 - Location Plan (Drg No. 5500-PL (00) 01 Rev. P2)
 - Lower Ground Existing / Demolition GA (Drg No. 5500-PL(1-) 12 Rev-P5)
 - Lower Ground Proposed GA (Drg No. 5500-PL(1-) 20 Rev-P4)
 - South Wing Terrace Wastepipe Drainage (Drg No. 5500-PL(1-) 113 Rev-P1)
 - Existing Elevations 1-2 (Drg No. 5500-PL(2-) 30 Rev-P3)
 - Existing Elevations 5-6 (Drg No. 5500-PL(2-) 32 Rev-P3)
 - Proposed Elevations 1-2 (Drg No. 5500-PL(2-) 230 Rev-P4)
 - Proposed Elevations 5-6 (Drg No. 5500-PL(2-) 232 Rev-P4)
 - Doughty Street Vent Housing – Details (Drg No. 5500-PL(27) 10 Rev-P1)
 - Doughty Street Vent Housing & Asphalt Repairs (Drg No. 5500-PL(27) 11 Rev-P1)
 - North East Pavement Vent Housings (Drg No. 5500-PL(27) 13 Rev-P1)
 - North West Pavement Vent Housing (Drg No. 5500-PL(27) 14 Rev-P1)
- Architectural Scope of Works – Vent Housing, and Balcony Drainage;
- The following accompanying reports have also been prepared in order to support the planning application:
 - i. Planning, Design & Access Statement – this document (prepared by Rapleys LLP and dated May 2014), as well as explaining the overall application, it sets out the relevant planning policy background, before going on to assess the proposals in planning terms.
 - ii. Historic Assessment (prepared by Rapleys and dated May 2014); this report sets out the history and heritage significance of London House, going on to assess proposals for the site against guidance for the historic built environment.
- Application Cheque for the sum of **£195**, made payable to the London Borough of Camden.

4 APPLICATION PREMISES

CURRENT USE OF SITE

- 4.1 London House is currently occupied by Goodenough College as accommodation for postgraduate students and consists of 308 predominately single rooms.
- 4.2 The existing building occupies four sides of an island site around an open quadrangle. The main entrance is central to the north wing on Mecklenburgh Square and faces the 'gardens'. London House was built over the period 1935 to 1963 in three phases:
- Phase 1 (1935-37) – the south and east wings, which included the Great Hall, Charles Parsons Library, common rooms and the original main entrance on Guildford Street.
 - Phase 2 (1948-53) – the west wing facing Doughty Street, consisting of the south west and northwest corners. Here the detail is simpler, and – as Herbert Baker died prior to its commencement - this phase was designed by Alexander Scott.
 - Phase 3 (1961-63) – the north wing and northeast corner completed the block and again the design was less sumptuous than the original phase.

COLLEGE HISTORY

- 4.3 In 1931 The Dominions Students' Hall Trust was formed by Mr Frederick Goodenough to create a collegiate setting for male students from the Dominions studying in London. After the Second World War the Lord Mayor's National Thanksgiving Fund raised finance for the Sister Trust which built and opened William Goodenough House in 1951 as a residence for female graduates and married families.
- 4.4 In 1965 the two Trusts merged, becoming London House for Overseas Graduates. Later the title changed again to the London Goodenough Trust for Overseas Graduates and then in 2001 it became Goodenough College, reflecting more accurately the purpose and ethos of the institution.
- 4.5 Although originally reserved for Commonwealth students the College was opened to those from the United States in 1957 and from Europe in 1974. In 2001 the College became fully international and its student community of 750 now represents over ninety countries, a large percentage of whom are studying at higher education institutions in the Borough of Camden.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.6 In terms of planning history, we have checked the Council's planning website and the relevant history can be summarised as follows:
- a) Planning permission (Ref: 9000467) was granted on 17 January 1991 for the change of use of part lower ground floor and sub-basement from leisure facility ancillary to the student accommodation to a health and leisure club for public use, together with the construction of an external entrance.

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- b) On 05 November 1991 planning permission (Ref: 9100302), and listed building consent (Ref: 9100303), was refused for the erection of a roof extension (corner of Guildford Street Mecklenburgh Place), for use as a student buttery.
 - c) Planning permission (Ref: 9200285) was granted on 25 February 1993 for the change of use and conversion of administrative and corridor space at ground floor level to study bedrooms.
 - d) On 24 May 1996 planning permission (Ref: P9600421) was refused for the retention of eighty-two replacement windows at fourth and fifth floor levels, due the impact the windows would have on the visual amenity of the building and character of the conservation area.
 - e) Planning permission (Ref: 2005/2252/P) and listed building consent (Ref: 2005/2254/L) were granted on 20 October 2005 for the installation of 2 no. air conditioning chiller units at roof level to the northeast corner.
 - f) On 08 January 2007 planning permission (Ref: 2006/4404/P) was granted for alterations to the existing building to install louvres within two windows at basement level, in connection with the installation of internal ducting at basement level. The accompanying listed building consent (Ref: 2006/4408/L) was also granted for internal and external alterations, involving the installation of secondary glazing at ground floor level to the windows fronting Guildford Street, heating and cooling system at ground floor levels, formation of a new plant room at basement level and installation of louvres within two windows at basement level.
 - g) Planning permission (Ref: 2012/3962/P) was granted on 12 February 2013 for the erection of a 4th floor mansard roof extension and alterations to the existing 3rd floor on the north side (facing Mecklenburgh Square) to provide 16 no. additional student bedrooms, as well as the installation of new roof plant at northeast corner of block, the installation of a new door on the internal courtyard elevation, and the widening of a kitchen service entrance on the Doughty Street entrance. The accompanying listed building consent (Ref: 2012/3998/L) also granted internal and external alterations as relating to the extensions and alterations to student bedrooms as well as the provision of heating in the Great Hall, alterations of the stairwells, and refurbishment of other parts of the College.
 - h) On 16 September 2013 Non-Material Amendments (Ref: 2013/4941/P) to planning permission (Ref: 2012/3962/P), were granted on 12 March 2013 for the erection of a 4th floor mansard roof extension and alterations to existing 3rd floor on north side to provide 16 additional student bedrooms, installation of new roof plant at northeast corner of block, installation of new door on internal courtyard elevation and widening of kitchen service entrance on Doughty Street elevation - namely to allow installation of various bathroom extractor fans on all elevations, replacement ramped access at

entrance from Mecklenburgh Square, new external ramp and staircase access between reception and internal courtyard, and new door access into Freddie's bar from courtyard.

- i) Listed Building Consent (Ref: 2013/4899/L) was granted on 16 October 2013 for amendments to the approved Listed Building Consent (Ref: 2012/3998/L), including new external services, new external door to quadrangle and widening of kitchen entrance onto Doughty Street; Internal alterations including the replacement of service infrastructure, conversion of offices and other areas into 15 additional bedrooms, creation of 2 x kitchenettes and refurbishment of bedrooms corridors and stairwells.
- j) On 23 January 2014 Listed Building Consent (Ref: 2013/8178/L) was granted, for the replacement of parquet flooring in study rooms with hardwood flooring to all floors.
- k) On 24 March 2014 a Planning Application (Ref: 2014/2089/P), and Listed Building Consent (Ref: 2014/2237/L), were submitted for the replacement of 89 UPVC windows and 3 doors at 3rd, 4th and 5th floor levels with metal framed windows & doors. These applications are currently under consideration by the planning authority.

5 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 5.1 London House is located on the south side of Mecklenburgh Square. The building is formed of a perimeter block with central courtyard. The block is bound by Mecklenburgh Square to the north, Doughty Street to the east, Guildford Street to the south, and Mecklenburgh Place to the west; with access from Mecklenburgh Square.
- 5.2 This is a neo-Georgian building and was designed in 1933; London House was built to the arrangement of architect Sir Herbert Baker, his partner Alexander T. Scott and their successor Vernon Helbing between 1935 and 1963. The building varies in height from three to six storeys, plus lower ground floor and basements. Its elevations consist of a basement of flint with random stone blocks, with the upper storeys of red brick with stone quoins, bands and cornices; the building has hipped roofs of tile.

SURROUNDING CONTEXT

- 5.3 To the north is Mecklenburgh Square Gardens, which is owned by the College, and operates as a statutory London Square Garden managed by a Garden Committee. Key access is provided to all Goodenough College students as an amenity.
- 5.4 The eastern boundary of London House is Doughty Street (to the south) and Mecklenburgh Square (to the north). Doughty Street consists of a grand terrace (numbers 29 to 38), of four storey (plus mansard roof) Georgian properties, which are Grade II listed. These properties are constructed out of yellow stock brickwork with gauged brick flat arches to recessed sash windows, and slate clad mansard roofs with inset dormers.
- 5.5 Mecklenburgh Square, consists of a terrace of four storeys (plus and basements), properties; numbers 11 to 24 are Grade II* listed buildings and were built between 1810 and 1820. The central and two end pavilions are enriched in stucco with attached ionic columns, cornice mouldings and entablature. The houses in between are more subdued in multi-coloured stock brick although the rusticated ground floor and cornice continues in plaster.
- 5.6 Guildford Street runs parallel to the southern elevation of London House; on the opposite side there is a mixture of typical London Georgian properties, numbers 8, 9, and 10 are grade II listed, together with more modern Interventions.
- 5.7 Coram's Fields to the west (on the opposite side of Mecklenburgh Place) are what remains of the Foundling Hospital, and include sports pitches and children's play areas, together with some small-scale pavilion buildings. This area of open space is preserved as much valued facilities for rest and recreation, and contains various listed relics.

6 PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') was published in March 2012 and sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government's vision of sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally to meet local aspirations.
- 6.2 Paragraph 17 advises that there are 12 core planning principles that underpin both plan-making and decision making include, amongst others, the following:
- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
 - encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value; and
 - conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.
- 6.3 Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment (Para 61).
- 6.4 In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance (Para 128).
- 6.5 In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (Para 131).
- 6.6 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be (Para 132).
- 6.7 Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (Para 134).

REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY - THE LONDON PLAN (2011)

- 6.8 The London Plan was approved in July 2011, and comprises part of the development plan for the Borough. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 6.9 Policy 5.4 (Retrofitting) - the environmental impact of existing urban areas should be reduced through policies and programmes that bring existing buildings up to the Mayor's standards on sustainable design and construction. In particular, programmes should reduce carbon dioxide emissions, improve the efficiency of resource use (such as water) and minimise the generation of pollution and waste from existing building stock.
- 6.10 Policy 7.8 (Heritage Assets and Archaeology) - development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology. Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.
- 6.11 The above policies are not affected by the Revised Early Minor Alterations to the London Plan (October 2013).

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY - LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

- 6.12 The application site is identified on the Proposals Map as lying within the Central London Area, the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, and a designated view crosses the site.
- 6.13 The Core Strategy is central to local policy and sets out the key elements of the vision and strategy for the borough while the Development Policies DPD sets out detailed planning criteria that are used to determine applications for planning permission. Both of these documents were adopted on 08 November 2010.

Core Strategy (November 2010)

- 6.14 Policy CS14 (Promoting High Quality Places and Conserving Our Heritage) - the Council will 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;
 - e. protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites inside and outside the borough and protecting important local views.

Development Policies (November 2010)

- 6.15 Policy DP24 (Securing High Quality Design) - 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.
- 6.16 Policy DP25 (Conserving Camden's Heritage) - in order to maintain the character of Camden's Conservation Areas, the Council will:
- a. take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;
 - b. only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;
 - c. prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
 - d. not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and
 - e. preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.
- 6.17 In order to preserve or enhance the boroughs listed buildings the Council will:
- f. prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
 - g. only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building; and
 - h. not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

OTHER RELEVANT LBC DOCUMENTS

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)

- 6.18 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy was adopted in April 2011. This document analyses what makes the Bloomsbury Conservation Area 'special' and provides important information about the types of alterations and development that are likely to be acceptable or unacceptable in the conservation area.

Camden Planning Guidance (2013)

- 6.19 Camden Planning Guidance provides advice and information on how planning policies will be applied, in accordance with the adopted Core Strategy and Development Policies DPD. The sections of the Camden Planning Guidance include the following:
1. CPG 1 Design
 2. CPG 2 Housing
 3. CPG 3 Sustainability
 4. CPG 4 Basements and lightwells
 5. CPG 5 Town centres, retail and employment
 6. CPG 6 Amenity
 7. CPG 7 Transport
 8. CPG 8 Planning obligations

7 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

- 7.1 In this section of the Statement we turn to consider the merits of the proposals in the planning policy context identified in Section 6.0.

DESIGN

- 7.2 In addition, to this document the application is supported by a Heritage Assessment; the purpose of the report is to set out the history and heritage significance of London House and to assess proposals for the site against policy and guidance for the historic built environment.
- 7.3 As previously stated London House is a grade II listed building and falls within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, which retains its predominantly Georgian layout and character as a whole. The adjacent Georgian terraced properties extending along the east side of Mecklenburgh Square and Doughty Street are grade II / II* listed buildings.
- 7.4 The scheme involves the installation of 4 no. low level ventilation housings (3 no. in the basement lightwell fronting Mecklenburgh Square, and 1 no. in the forecourt on Doughty Mews), in connection with the basement plant rooms. In addition, the installation of an external waste drainage run at first floor level of the quadrangle elevation of the Guildford Street block. Both these alterations are in connection with the continued use of London House as accommodation for international postgraduate students.
- 7.5 More particularly, in order that the basement plant rooms are ventilated to comply with the current regulations, ventilation ductwork must penetrate into open air. It was considered that the most discrete positions would be in pavement wells at the perimeter of the building. Three of these housings (along Mecklenburgh Square frontage) will be positioned in the basement lightwells and be below pavement level. These ventilation housings would be covered in roofing felt and finished to match the appearance of the lightwell. The ventilation housing on the Doughty Street frontage would position at pavement; however, it would be in a similar position to a raised manhole cover, which is to be removed as part of these proposals. The flank walls to the ventilation housing would be finished in smooth grey render, and the roof will be clad in roofing felt.
- 7.6 The ventilation housings have been designed to minimise their visual appearance and the housings are sympathetic to their surroundings, shaped to achieve the smallest possible profile, and an appropriate external appearance, finished in smooth grey render and / or roofing felt.
- 7.7 In terms of the external drainage run, due to the nature of the 'public spaces' (i.e. Chapel and Small Common Room), which do not have suspended ceilings and are seen as feature spaces in London House, as such the waste drainage run cannot penetrate these spaces. Therefore, the alternative is to route the waste drainage run along the outside of the elevation. The waste drainage run would be located at low level, and largely obscured from view (from the quadrangle) by the existing parapet wall of the first floor balcony. In addition, the pipework will be of a cast iron construction and painted black to match the existing rainwater pipework prevalent around the building.

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- 7.8 It is considered that these proposals would represent a high quality improvement to the building, which would be compatible with the appearance of the building and would not harm the special architectural or historical interest of the listed building and character or appearance of the conservation area. As such the proposal will comply with the NPPF and Policies CS14, DP24 and DP25.

ACCESS

- 7.9 The alterations that are the subject of this application involve the installation of replacement windows, and as such would not alter the buildings accessibility.
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8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed development is for minor external alterations, including the installation of 4 no. low level ventilation housings in connection with the basement plant rooms, and the installation of an external waste drainage run at first floor level of the quadrangle elevation of the Guildford Street block.
- 8.2 The application has been accompanied by a Heritage Assessment, which demonstrate that the proposals represent a well thought out high quality development.
- 8.3 These proposals will thus reinforce Goodenough College and will help it to continue to perform its role, and will not harm the heritage significance of the listed building.
- 8.4 The proposed development at London House accords with the NPPF, the London Plan and the saved policies of the Camden Local Development Framework.
- 8.5 In light of the above this application should be considered favourably and planning permission listed building consent be granted.