

# **Planning Statement**

2A Conway Street

London W1T 6BA

1 July 2014

## **1. Site and Surroundings**

- 1.1 2A Conway Street is a three-storey building in mixed use situated on the south eastern side of Conway Street close to the junction with Maple Street. It comprises ground and two upper floors with a terrace at rear second floor level. The property is currently used as an art gallery on the ground floor with ancillary office and meeting rooms above.

The property is not listed but is located within the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area.

- 1.2 The immediately surrounding area to 2A Conway Street is in mixed use. Adjoining 2A Conway Street to the north is a pub whilst to the south, separated by a passageway at ground floor level, is 2 Conway Street which is divided into four flats. To the rear is County House a large office building with residential flats on the upper floors. On Maple Street to the south east there are both residential properties and offices as well as a Council-owned social services facility.

## **2. Relevant Site History**

- 2.1 In June 2006 planning permission was granted for change of use of the ground floor from office use (Class B1) to retail use (Class A1) as an art gallery.
- 2.2 In May 2007 planning permission was granted for the retention of a new ground floor frontage to the art gallery.
- 2.3 In October 2011 an application for the erection of an additional storey at roof level with rooflights, photovoltaics and green roof; creation of a terrace on the roof of the extension at rear third floor level and rear second floor extension; and extension of the existing terrace in connection with the provision of a studio flat within the roof extension was withdrawn.

- 2.4 In April 2013 planning permission was refused for the erection of a roof extension with terrace over, creation of a terrace at rear third floor level and enlargement of the rear second floor level terrace through the erection of a metal platform and creation of a doorway, all in connection with the provision of a studio flat within the roof extension.
- 2.5 In November 2013 planning permission was granted for a first floor rear infill extension including the extension of the existing roof terrace and balustrade at first floor level and replacement of the existing window with an access door to the existing art gallery/retail unit (Class A1). It should be noted that the art gallery/retail unit use is on the ground floor and not the first floor.
- 2.6** In June 2014 planning permission was refused for the erection of an extension at roof level in connection with the use of the second and new third floor as a residential flat; the provision of a balustrade at third floor level; and the installation of planting boxes at third floor level to provide privacy screening.

### **3. Proposals**

3.1 Planning permission is sought for:

- the use of the second floor as a residential flat;

### **4. Planning Considerations**

4.1 The main planning considerations to be taken into account in determining this application are the land use issues associated with the creation of a new dwelling.

4.2 The relevant Core Strategy policies are: CS1 (distribution of growth), CS5 (managing the impact of growth and development), CS14 (promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage), DP24 (securing high quality design), DP25 (conserving Camden's heritage) and DP26 (managing the impact of

development on occupiers and neighbours). The relevant Camden Planning Guidance is CPG1.

## **6.0 Land Use – Creation of a New Dwelling**

- 6.1 Housing is regarded as a priority land use in Camden’s Local Development Framework and the proposed residential flat at second floor and roof level would assist the Council in meeting its strategic housing target. In assessing application 2012/2754/P and application 2013/8002/P the Council considered that providing residential accommodation on this location acceptable provided it was of a suitable standard and did not conflict with other planning policies. In the report to the Development Committee meeting of 19 June it was stated that “the provision of an additional residential unit is welcomed, there is demand for 1 bedroom units, albeit lower and therefore the proposal does not conflict with policy DP5”.
- 6.2 The proposal would result in the loss of 70 sq.m of floorspace which is currently utilised as a small office and meeting room ancillary to the main exhibition space of the gallery use on the ground floor. The loss of this space would not impact on the overall operation of the gallery as the second floor is underutilised and unsuitable for exhibition use due to the lack of suitable wall space for hanging art works; its lower ceilings; and because access is via a small spiral staircase which is not practical when there are a large number of visitors to the gallery.
- 6.3 The use of the second floor as residential accommodation would also go some way to addressing residents’ concerns about noise, privacy and disturbance as a residential use would, by its nature, be quieter and less intrusive.
- 6.4 It is accepted that other Camden policies seek to resist the loss of existing employment sites and employment generating uses. However, as stated above the second floor of 2A Conway Street is underutilised and its loss would not impact on the functioning

of the gallery use at ground floor level.

**6.5** The applicant is prepared to sign a section 106 agreement with respect to car free residential development.

**7.0 Impact on the Conservation Area**

7.1 The proposed residential use would not impact on the Conservation Area.

**8.0 Impact on the Amenity of Nearby Properties**

8.1 The proposed residential flat would be accessed from an existing external staircase which is currently in use. There would therefore be no significant change to the existing current arrangements at the property.

8.2 The windows on the side elevation towards Maple Street are existing windows. These are semi obscured glass. No change is proposed to these existing windows.