

Delegated Report (Members Briefing)		Expiry Date:	30/10/2014	Officer:	David Peres Da Costa
Application Address		Application Number(s)	1st Signature	2nd Signature	
144 Gloucester Avenue London NW1 8JA		2014/5421/P			
Proposal(s)					
Change of use from office use (Class B1) at basement and ground floor levels to office (Class B1) at ground floor level and to residential (Class C3) at basement level to provide a 2x bed flat, including single storey rear extension at basement level, reintroduction of front lightwell, and installation of front staircase and railings.					
Recommendation(s):		Grant conditional planning permission subject to s106			
Application Type:		Full planning permission			
Consultations	Date advertised	21 days elapsed		Date posted	21 days elapsed
Press notice	11/9/14	2/10/14	Site notice	11/9/14	2/10/14
	Date sent	21 days elapsed	# Notified	# Responses	# Objections
Adjoining Occupier letters	5/9/14	26/9/14	7	0	0
Consultation responses (including CAACs):	<p>Primrose Hill CAAC - object This application proposes the loss of 75% of the office space in this property. The small one-room front office retained is not sustainable.</p> <p>The character and appearance of the conservation area, the sustainability of the local economy, our shops and other businesses, depends on the maintenance of a mix of uses.</p> <p>We note that planning policy requires evidence that a business use is not sustainable before conversion to residential is approved.</p> <p>Officer's comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to paragraph 2.1-2.4 of the assessment below. 				
Site Description					
The site is 4 storey (plus basement) terrace property on the east side of Gloucester Avenue (close to the junction with Regent's Park Road). The property falls within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area but is not listed. The property also falls within the Regent's Park Road neighbourhood centre.					

Relevant History

2013/6553/P: Change of use from office use (Class B1) at basement and ground floor levels to office (Class B1) at ground floor level and to residential (Class C3) at basement level to provide a 1-bed flat, including single storey rear extension at basement level, creation of front lightwell, and installation of front staircase and railings. Granted Subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement 10/07/2014

146 Gloucester Avenue

2011/3308/P: Creation of self contained flat at basement and part ground floor level and additions and alterations comprising the erection of a single storey rear basement extension, front basement lightwell with new staircase, access door and windows to front elevation and vaults, and a new shopfront associated with part ground floor office space (Class B1). Granted Subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement 02/04/2012

140 Gloucester Avenue

2012/3805/P: Erection of extension at rear basement level, creation of front basement lightwell enclosed by railings and with staircase to basement all in connection with change of use of basement and part ground floor from estate agent (Class A2) to a self contained flat (Class C3). Granted Subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement 22/04/2013

Relevant policies

NPPF 2012

London Plan 2011

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

CS1 (Distribution of Growth)

CS5 (Managing the Impact of Growth and Development)

CS6 (Providing quality homes)

CS11 (Promoting sustainable and efficient travel)

CS13 (Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards)

CS14 (Promoting High Quality Places and Conserving Our Heritage)

DP2 (Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing)

DP5 (Homes of different sizes)

DP6 (Lifetime homes)

DP13 (Employment premises and sites)

DP17 (Walking, cycling and public transport)

DP18 (Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking)

DP24 (Securing High Quality Design)

DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage)

DP26 (Managing the Impact of Development on Occupiers and Neighbours)

Camden Planning Guidance

Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement

Assessment

1. Proposal

- 1.1 Permission is sought for a change of use of the basement and the rear half of the ground floor office floorspace (Class B1) to a 2 bedroom flat. This would involve the opening up of a lightwell at the front with metal railings and a rear infill extension with glazed roof and full width aluminium bi-folding doors. The extension would be 1.3m deep and 2.9m wide. It would have pitched roof with a maximum height of 2.8m and 2.3m high at the eaves. The front elevation would have 2 timber sash windows.

Background

- 1.2 Planning permission was granted in July 2014 for the change of use from office use (Class B1) at basement and ground floor levels to office (Class B1) at ground floor level and to residential (Class C3) at basement level to provide a 1-bed flat, including single storey rear extension at basement level, creation of front lightwell, and installation of front staircase and railings (planning ref: 2013/6553/P). This application proposes a similar scheme but includes the change of use of the rear of the ground floor from office to residential to allow the creation of a 2-bed flat at ground and basement (instead of a 1 bed flat at basement level).

2. Land Use

- 2.1 The loss of office space at basement level has already been accepted by the previous approval (ref: 2013/6553/P). The loss of 17sqm of the rear office floorspace at ground floor has been justified on the basis that the office space has been marketed for 3 years without significant interest and the quality of the accommodation is poor and would require substantial investment to bring it up to the required standard. There is also a good supply of alternative office accommodation in the vicinity, including Primrose Hill Business Centre at 110 Gloucester Avenue, which offer a large range of serviced and managed business units. The applicant has also indicated that there is evidence of local demand for small 1-2 person offices (rather than larger units) and the retained office space at ground floor level fronting the street would meet this demand.
- 2.2 Given the justification provided by the applicant and that planning permission has been granted in 2012 for the loss of the rear part of the ground floor office at the neighbouring property, 146 Gloucester Avenue (ref: 2011/3308/P), it would be difficult to resist the proposed change of use. It is also important to note that planning permission was granted for the same scheme but without the ground floor change of use earlier this year (2013/6553/P). In addition, since May 2013, a change of use from office to residential is permitted development outside the Central London area with the Council's prior approval (Class J). It would therefore be possible for the applicant to implement the existing permission (ref: 2013/6553/P) and then apply for prior approval for the change of use of part of the ground floor from office to residential. If this were to happen, the Council would not be able to consider the impact of the loss of the B1 office space in its assessment (as only transport, contamination and flooding can be considered).
- 2.3 The applicant has also drawn attention to planning permission for a similar scheme at 140 Gloucester Avenue. At this property permission was granted 22/04/2013 for the change of use of basement and part of the ground floor from estate agent (Class A2) to a self-contained flat (ref: 2012/3805/P).

3. Design

Lightwell and railings

- 3.1 The proposal would see the creation of a lightwell with staircase down to basement level and traditional style railings. The lightwell and railings were previously granted planning permission (ref: 2013/6553/P). The principle of the railings and lightwell has therefore been accepted.
- 3.2 It is noted that 148 Gloucester Avenue has a lightwell with railings and the adjoining property, 146 Gloucester Avenue was granted planning permission 02/04/2012 for lightwell and railings. Therefore, the proposed lightwell would not be out of keeping with the street or harmful to the conservation area. The depth of the lightwell (0.87m) would be identical to that approved at the adjoining property 146 Gloucester Avenue. As with the neighbouring property, the lightwell would occupy the space between the existing basement and the existing vaults under the pavement. The depth of the lightwell would not project beyond the line of the rear pavement and would not visually harm the appearance of the street. A condition would be included to ensure the detailed design of the railings and plinth would be appropriate.
- 3.3 The front elevation of the basement flat would have timber sash windows. The windows are appropriately positioned and would be in keeping with the host property.

Rear extension

- 3.4 A single storey glazed infill extension is proposed within the side return created by the existing rear wing, it would measure 2.9m wide and 1.3m deep. The rear extension was previously granted planning permission (ref: 2013/6553/P). The principle of the rear extension has therefore been accepted. The extension would have bi-folding doors and the full height glazing would extend the full width of the property, including the existing projecting wing.
- 3.5 Given its subordinate size, the extension is considered sympathetic to the rear elevation of the host property. The extension would allow for a small rear garden to remain. It is also noted that a very similar alteration to the rear elevation including an extension was granted at the neighbouring property 146 Gloucester Avenue (ref: 2011/3308/P).

4. Standard of accommodation

- 4.1 The 2 bed flat would have a floorspace of 74.5sqm which meets the minimum floorspace for a flat occupied by 4 persons (75sqm) set out in the Council's residential development standards. The bedroom meets the minimum requirement for a 1st or double bedroom (11sqm). The basement flat would have a small rear patio garden (2.1m deep). A daylight / sunlight report has been provided which indicates that both the rear kitchen / living room and the front bedroom would exceed the average daylight factor provided in BRE guidance. It is accepted that sunlight will not significantly benefit the accommodation at the rear of the unit because the rear elevation faces north.

5. Lifetime Homes

- 5.1 Lifetime Homes standards are also expected to be met where possible, although it is accepted that conversions may not be able to meet all standards, and some may not be relevant. The proposed flat would not meet all 16 Lifetime Homes standards. Some standards, such as level entrance, would not be achieved due to site constraints. This is considered justified.

6. Transport

Car free

6.1 As the property is within a controlled parking zone and within easy reach of public transport, local development framework policy DP18 requires that the new basement dwelling be car free. A section 106 Legal Agreement will ensure that future occupiers will not be able to apply to resident parking permits.

Cycle Parking

6.2 Given that this is a basement flat it would not be possible to provide accessible cycle parking at ground floor level. Given the site constraints this is considered acceptable.

7 Amenity

7.1 Given its modest footprint and height within an existing side return, the proposed extension would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of adjoining neighbours.

8 Recommendation: Grant conditional planning permission subject to s106 legal agreement

DISCLAIMER

Decision route to be decided by nominated members on 1st December 2014. For further information please go to www.camden.gov.uk and search for 'members briefing'