

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Site Address:

137 Kings Cross Road,
London,
WC1X 9BJ

Date:

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Contact Details:**Applicant:**

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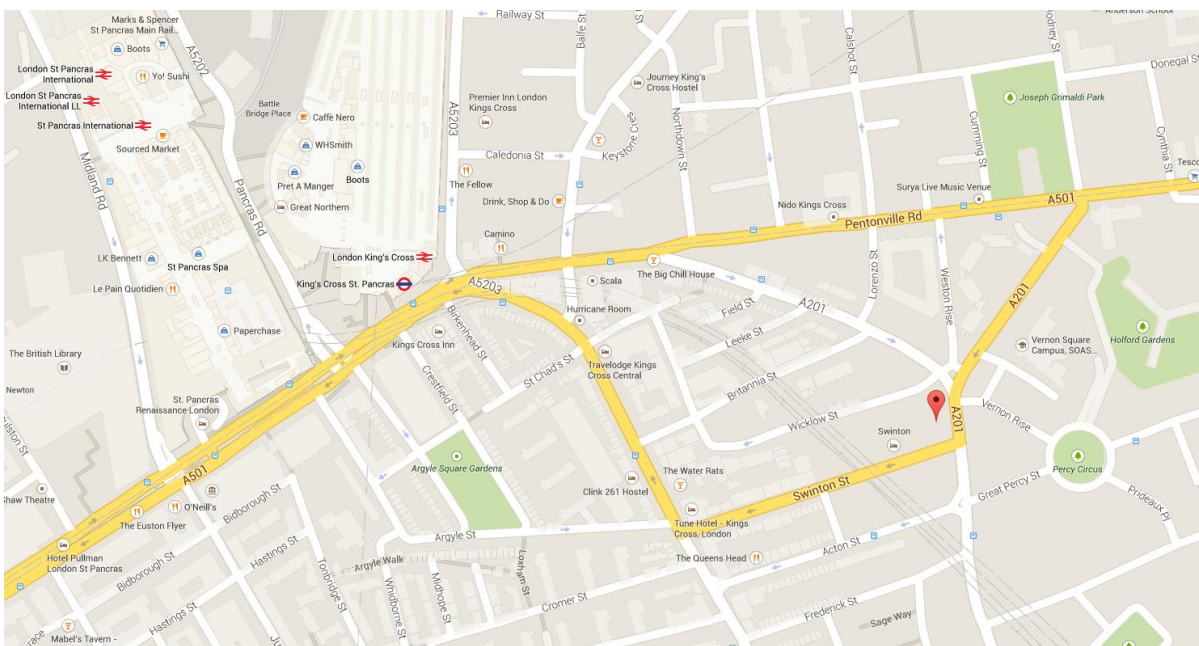
To be read in conjunction with submitted drawings and reports.

Description of the Development

Change of use from office to residential, on part of the ground floor level. Alterations of the existing flat on ground and basement levels. Internal alterations to the residential unit on the ground and basement and alterations to the front elevation at ground floor level, including the relocation of the entrance door.

Location

The site is on Kings Cross Road, and lies in the Kings Cross St Pancras Conservation Area. The buildings at nos. 129-137 date to the mid-19th century and form a terrace of 3 three-storey yellow stock brick houses.



Planning History and Design Development

In 2004, the property gained permission for the change of use from predominantly commercial use to predominantly residential. Only a small space at the front of the building was left for commercial use, class B1.

In March 2015, we submitted a pre application request for advice on the development, especially in regards to the proposed change of use of the aforementioned commercial space.

Statement for Change of Use

On the ground floor of the property is a commercial space, class B1, set back from the street frontage, of approximately 13 m² including a small bathroom. This has been in residential use, since April 2009. It has remained as residential use until present, by the same tenant. The room has its own bathroom facilities; however it shares kitchen and communal facilities with unit D, which inhabits the basement and ground floor. The space has had residential use, Class C3, for over four years and in accordance with the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 the space should therefore become lawful. However advice given at pre-application stage was that a change of use of this space may be acceptable. At present, the space is too small to be efficiently used as commercial space, and its set-back position also means it has limited scope for commercial street presence. We feel it would be more beneficial as a residential space incorporated into the rest of the property, ensuring use of the space rather than it becoming a long-term vacancy.

The pre application advice stated that *'the loss of approximately 13 sqm of ground floor commercial space in this property is sufficiently small to be acceptable within a building of predominantly residential use'*.

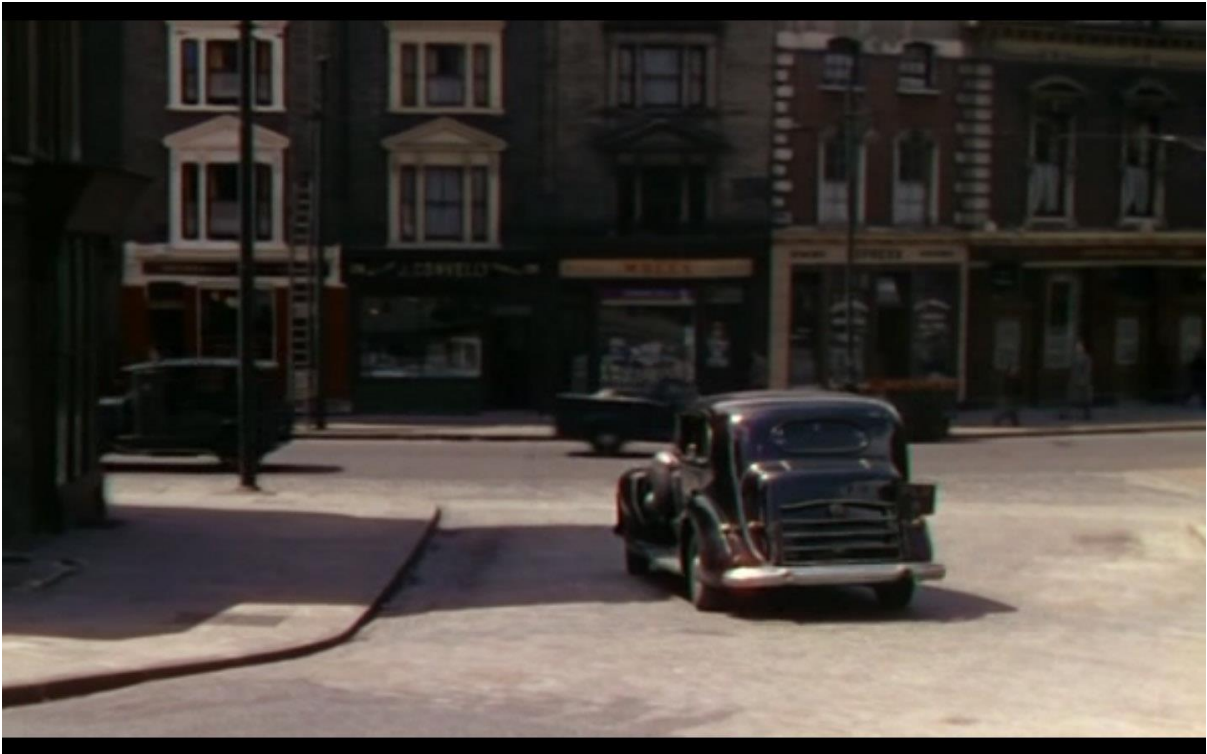
Photos



Traditional timber shop front of 137 Kings Cross Road



129-137 Kings Cross Road, the row of yellow stock brick houses date to the mid-19th century



Still from 'The Lady Killers' film of the mid 1950s.

This seems to suggest that the current shop front is not original and it may have used to have two entrances. The neighbouring buildings clearly have 2 entrances suggesting this may have been an original feature of these three buildings.

Design

The intention is changing the use is to incorporate that space into Unit D which inhabits the rear of the ground and entire basement floor. To do this, we propose moving the entrance door to the other side of the front elevation and altering the staircase of the ground floor to face the new entrance. These alterations will greatly improve the flat as a whole, so that the front and rear spaces of the ground floor are no longer separated by the communal corridor and stairs to the residential units above, but instead join to make one unit and a more efficient use of space.

Front Elevation

The building lies in the Kings Cross St Pancras Conservation Area. The shop front on the property is considered to be a well-maintained, traditional style frontage. The Kings Cross & St. Pancras Conservation Area Statement states that 'any shop front of historic interest or architectural quality should be retained'.

It was recommended in the pre application comments that the relocation of the front entrance door within an otherwise retained shop front might provide an acceptable solution.

Therefore, we intend to retain the original shop front, but propose to relocate the front entrance. By replacing the existing door with glazing and creating a new door of similar appearance on the other side, within the existing grid lines, the proportion, rhythm and form of the original frontage will remain the same

Materials

The new door is to be timber, like the existing frontage and painted to match. It will be a timber framed door, with a glazed panel, thereby keeping the same amount of glazing in the frontage.

Daylighting

At present there is a light well into the basement of the property, behind the glazed street façade. The front façade is to be kept as existing, ensuring the same amount of light enters into the basement level.

The entrance door bridges over the light well. Moving the entrance to the other side of the property will have the same amount of area covering the light well, and will not affect the amount of light entering the basement.

The pre application comments stated that 'the proposed changes do not alter the existing arrangements for providing light to these areas by very much'. Therefore we don't consider that a Daylight & Sunlight report is necessary.

However, as the front of the basement is proposed to be changed from the existing bedrooms to dining/ living room space, it was mentioned that a higher degree of natural light was needed. We have therefore proposed to remove the entire wall that separates the living space from the light well, so that the maximum amount of natural light can enter the space.

Overall Layout

The new layout has the same number of bedrooms as existing; however we feel that the layout is greatly improved with larger living spaces and larger bedrooms. The pre application comments stated it to be 'an improvement on the existing arrangement'.

The existing area of Unit D is approximately 80m², and with the proposed changes the area will be approximately 107m².

Ventilation

We propose a ventilated ceiling in the communal corridor to a vent above the new entrance door to keep the existing escape condition. A vent will also be installed across the ceiling from the new bedroom into the hallway.

Access

Access to the property is not affected by the development and there is no extra demand on car parking or bicycle parking than the current situation. The access into the building will be altered but this will allow us to improve on the current situation by upgrading the stairs to be more suitable for ambulant disabled visitors.

Sources of Guidance

For planning and design, we have referred to Camden's current and emerging policies, and London's planning guidelines.

Summary

The proposed alterations will improve the existing use of the property, and enhance the existing residential unit.