



GL Hearn

Planning Statement

Create REIT Ltd

225 Kentish Town Road
London
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Prepared by

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This document must only be treated as a draft unless it has been signed by the Originators and approved by a Business or Associate Director.

DATE
21 April 2015

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Limitations

This document has been prepared for the stated objective and should not be used for any other purpose without the prior written authority of GL Hearn; we accept no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than for which it was commissioned.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by GL Hearn on behalf of Create REIT Ltd in support of a full planning application submitted at 225 Kentish Town, Camden.

1.2 The full planning application seeks planning permission for:

“Redevelopment of upper floor levels to provide four further levels for use as 4 x 1 bedroom studios (Class C3)”

1.3 The site is located within the jurisdiction of the London Borough of Camden. The general context of the site is provided at **Figure 1** below.



Figure 1: Aerial photo of the site

1.4 This Planning Statement provides a planning assessment of the proposal considering the scheme against the relevant policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), The London Plan (2011) and Camden Core Strategy (2010). Our proposal also pays due regard to Camden Development Policies document. A separate supporting Design and Access Statement prepared by Fresson and Tee is submitted with the application to deal with the matters of design and access.

1.5 In addition to the above, a full set of plans illustrating the proposals have been prepared by Fresson and Tee.

2 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The site is located on the western side of Kentish Town Road near to the junction with Anglers Lane.
- 2.2 The site is located within the core shopping frontage of Kentish Town Centre. The surrounding area predominantly consists of commercial accommodation at ground floor with a variety of commercial and residential uses above.



Figure 2: Close view of 225 Kentish Town Road (centre-left)

- 2.3 The ground floor of the premises formerly had a temporary permission to operate as a restaurant (A3) which has since lapsed. Most recently the ground floor was granted planning permission to be occupied by an A2 user. It is important to note that the ground floor is not subject of this application.
- 2.4 The application site has been vacant for almost three years and therefore does not contribute to the vitality and character of the Kentish Town Centre.
- 2.5 The three storey building is of no architectural significance. These two floors were used as ancillary spaces with open plan layouts and are currently unoccupied.
- 2.6 There are no car parking spaces specifically serving the ground or upper floors.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The available relevant historic planning applications relating to the appraisal site are limited to the use of the ground floor.
- 3.2 Permission for change of ground floor use from A1 to A2 has recently been granted (application ref: 2014/4455/P). Nevertheless the upper floors remain valuable unoccupied spaces, which is why the overall proposal is considered to result in a positive contribution to the Kentish Town Centre.
- 3.3 In relation to the upper floors, due to the fact that there is no planning history relating to these, it is assumed that these floors were used as ancillary space to the ground floor use.

4 APPLICATION PROPOSAL

4.1 The submission by Create REIT seeks full application permission for:

“Redevelopment of upper floor levels to provide four further levels for use as 4 x 1 bedroom flats (Class C3)”

4.2 The development seeks to provide for 4no. residential units as part of a new-build scheme. The development will provide appropriate accommodations which are compact and well-designed to meet the increasing demand for housing in urban locations.

4.3 Three terraces have been provided to the rear in order to provide private amenity space for each residential unit.

4.4 Access to the upper floors is proposed at ground floor level via an existing staircase access adjoining the commercial space. Common parts within the building have been kept to a minimum to ensure that the units make the most efficient use of space.

4.5 Given the site’s urban location and its high accessibility rating, the proposal forms a car free scheme.

4.6 Please refer to the supporting Design and Access Statement for further details on the scheme.

5 PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Section 38(b) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:

“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”

5.2 The following section of the statement has been formulated with due regard to the policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), the London Plan (2011)

5.3 In this section we outline the planning policy framework against which the proposal has been developed and confirm that the scheme is in compliance with the policies of the development plan.

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and replaced all previous national planning guidance in Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance documents. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and is material to consideration in planning decisions.

5.5 The NPPF confirms that the purposes of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development where sustainable means *‘ensuring better lives for ourselves don’t mean worse lives for future generations’* and where development means growth implying the need for housing of a *‘rising population, which is living longer and wants to make new choices’*.

5.6 There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, in both decision making and plan-making. The NPPF encourages local authorities to approve development proposals that accord with up to date development plans unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against policies in the NPPF or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted (Paragraph 14).

5.7 With regard to decision-taking, councils are advised to do this in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development, and highlights local authorities should look for solutions rather than problems and that local authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Proposals that can demonstrate an evolving design that takes into account of the views of the community should be looked on more favourable

5.8 The NPPF sets out 12 Core Planning Principles of which the most relevant to this proposal are considered to be:

- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes and business (...) that the country needs;
- Always seek high quality design and a good standard of amenities for all existing and future occupants (...) of the buildings
- Encouraging the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed; and
- Conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance

5.9 Local authorities are encouraged to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. Specifically paragraph 49 of the NPPF states "*housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development...*" It also highlights that empty properties should be brought back into use.

5.10 The NPPF supports planning policies which promote competitive town centre environments and plan for the management and growth of centres over a plan period. Local authorities are advised to:

- Allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres; and
- Recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality and viability of centres and set out policies to encourage residential development on appropriate sites.

5.11 The NPPF attaches great importance to good design of the built environment. The key design requirements in determining planning applications are set out within section 7 of the NPPF.

The London Plan (July 2011)

5.12 The London Plan sets out planning policy and guidance for Greater London. It sets an annual target for the provision of 32,210 net additional dwellings across London. It sets an annual target of 665 dwellings within Camden.

5.13 **Policy 2.15** states that development proposals in town centres should conform with **policies 4.7 and 4.8** preserving and supporting the diversity of retail sector whilst sustaining and enhancing the vitality of the centre, being in scale with the centre, promoting access by public transport and walking and cycling.

5.14 All housing should be of high quality internally and externally, whilst consideration of the local character, density, tenure should be given (**Policy 3.5**). In continuing this theme, **policy 3.8** provides for a genuine choice of homes in terms of affordability.

5.15 Minimum space standards for flats are set out within **Table 3.3** of the London Plan.

5.16 **Policy 3.14** requires the efficient use of the existing housing, whilst reducing the number of vacant buildings.

London Borough of Camden – Local Development Framework (November 2010)

5.17 The London Development Framework (LDF) comprises:

- Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025
- Camden Development policies 2010-2025

Camden Core Strategy (November 2008)

5.18 **Policy 1.8** specifies that housing is considered to be the priority land use of the Core Strategy and the Council's other LDF documents. The Council aims at delivering 12,250 new homes between 2010/11 and 2024/25 including over 20% located within highly accessible areas.

5.19 **Policy CS3** gives more detail on the Council's approach to Kentish Town area, which is considered to be suitable for uses that are likely to significantly increase the demand for travel.

5.20 **Policy CS6** goes onto highlight the importance of providing self-contained flats and ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home at a price they can afford in a community where they want to live.

Camden Development Policies 2010-2025 (November 2010)

5.21 Policies in this sub-section relate to the same forms of housing as Core Strategy CS6 predominantly self-contained houses and flats (Use Class C3).

5.22 **Policy DP2** goes onto state that the Council will seek to maximise the supply of additional homes in the borough, especially homes for people unable to access market housing, by expecting the maximum appropriate contribution to supply of housing on sites that are underused or vacant, taking into account any other uses that are needed on the site.

6 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 This planning application proposes the redevelopment of the upper floors of 225 Kentish Town Road to create 4no. flats resulting in the net gain of 2 units. From preceding planning history and policy analysis the main planning considerations in this application are considered to be planning considerations:

- Principle of development (Use Class C3);
- Design; and
- Impact on surrounding amenities

Principle of development (Use Class C3 and Use Class A2)

6.2 The proposal seeks the demolition of the upper storeys of 225 Kentish Town Road and, in place, the erection of a four upper levels to create residential accommodation.

6.3 The proposed C3 use will make use of the upper floors that would otherwise continue to lie vacant. To note, there is no policy which states that the upper floors in this location should be active and therefore this mixed use development is in-keeping with adopted policy as well as the character of the area.

6.4 Residential use is considered to be the most suitable alternative use at this location which will also contribute to the improved vitality and viability of the area and encourage town centre living in accordance with the NPPF.

6.5 In addition, the site is clearly located within a suitable location for residential development as the application site has been vacant for almost 3 years and one of the 12 Core Planning Principles of the NPPF encourages the use of previously developed land. The site is also located in a highly accessible location with a PTAL (Public Transport Accessibility Level) rating of 5.

6.6 Furthermore, it is located in a residential area predominantly consisting of ground floor commercial uses and residential upper floors. In addition there is a need to increase housing supply throughout London.

6.7 The development is proposing 4no. spacious studio flats. This type of residential unit is appropriate in this town centre location.

Design

Layout

- 6.8 The design of the proposed residential units has been carefully considered to meet the increasing need for town centre housing. The compact but flexible internal layout of each of the new flats allows changes and therefore complies with policies encouraging the provision of sustainable housing suiting a wide range of demands (see **Figure 3** below).

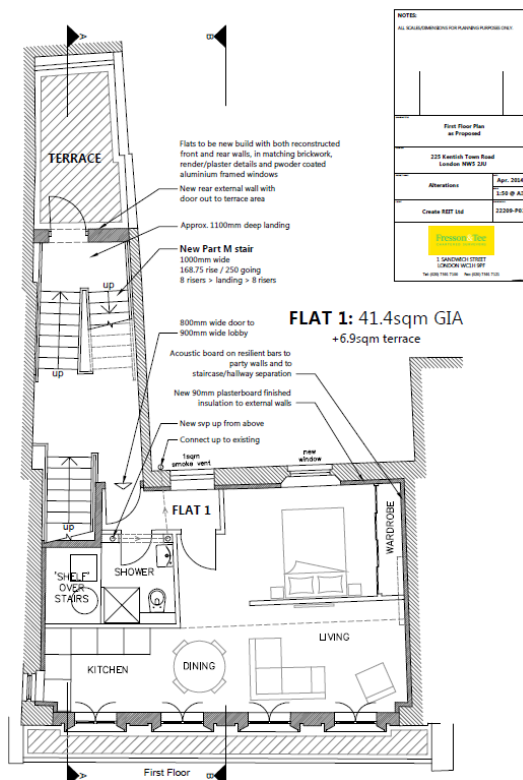


Figure 3: First floor plan as proposed

- 6.9 The upper floors will seek to provide well-arranged internal layout based on the same position as the existing floor plans and will not result in the loss of residential accommodation.
- 6.10 The application site has been vacant for almost 3 years and its redevelopment has been formulated with due consideration to maximize its use within a key location.

Scale

- 6.11 The new height will contribute towards creating a regular roof line that relates more appropriately to surrounding heights. The proposed building remains slightly smaller than the adjacent no.225 which preserves the articulation of the roofline through a stepping variation in roof height and the street scene.

- 6.12 In addition, the extension will seek to replicate the existing roofline located at no.209 by a habitable mansard-style roof, which in turn respects the hierarchy of built form. In addition, stepping back the upper floor refines the massing of the proposed housing block.
- 6.13 The design of the residential amenities seeks to pick up the features of recently built buildings of Kentish Town Road whilst preserving its physical character by using traditional materials.
- 6.14 Information surrounding the detailed design (and choice of materials) is identified within the supporting Design and Access Statement.

Impact on surrounding amenities

- 6.15 There are a number of parks and green spaces in close proximity to the site including Talacre Gardens, and Cantelowes Gardens. As such it is not considered to provide amenity space. Notwithstanding this, the development does seek to provide access to intimate rear balconies to accommodate much needed outdoor amenity space for the residential element.
- 6.16 The site is considered to be relatively constraint free in terms of impact upon amenity. Notwithstanding this, the scheme has been design in order to protect the residential amenity of both the existing and the proposed residential occupiers.
- 6.17 Policy 7.4 of the Development Policies states that new development should be a minimum distance of 18m between the closest points on each building (including balconies) unless these design requirements cannot be met. In this circumstance this requirement cannot be met however careful attention is paid to reducing potential overlooking while also providing valuable amenity space.

Space standards

- 6.18 The space standards for Camden are set out in the London Plan (2011) table 3.3. The proposed redevelopment allow for these new dwellings to benefit from a comfortable and practical living whilst having access to rear balconies.

Parking

- 6.19 No car parking space is provided as part of the part of the proposal due to the sustainable urban location of the site. The applicant is prepared to accept a planning condition that states the development must be car free.

6.20 Buses and Overground (Kentish Town West) are within a walking distance from the site and the applicant therefore proposed a sustainable approach to the redevelopment that will encourage the use of alternative modes.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed development comprises the redevelopment of the site located at 225 Kentish Town Road within Kentish Town Centre. The benefits of the scheme are identified below:

- The redevelopment provides 4no. self-contained residential units (C3) on the upper floors within a sustainable location.
- The residential development being based on 'car free' principles the development is not likely to result in increased traffic or congestion.
- The proposal will also result in a high quality redevelopment preserving and enhancing Kentish Town Road streetscape.
- The proposal complies with national, regional and local policy, and meets the space standards set out in the London Plan as well as providing outdoor amenity space.
- The proposal is in compliance with the NPPF which encourages the uses of accessible locations, bringing an underused site into full use, whilst also highlighting the aim to deliver high quality housing which the proposal will achieve.
- The proposal accordingly provides 4no. flats on the upper floors which are set to efficiently use the available space at 225 Kentish Town Road.

7.2 The Council is respectfully urged to grant planning permission.