

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS & CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

SITE AT 189 KING'S CROSS ROAD, LONDON WC1X 9DB

PLANNING APPLICATION BY
MR YIANNAKIS CHRISTODOULOU

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
(INCORPORATING HERITAGE ASSET IMPACT ASSESSMENT)

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement, incorporating a Heritage Impact Assessment, forms part of the planning application by Mr Yiannakis Christodoulou for the *'demolition of existing rear extension, construction of three storey rear extension, construction of mansard roof extension with associated alteration to second floor rear elevation, alterations to front and rear elevations, all in connection with existing use of property as 4no. self-contained residential units'* at 189 King's Cross Road, London WC1X 9DB.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the existing and proposed application drawing set numbered L01/01, L02/01, L12/01, L04/01, L14/01, L05/01 and L15/01.

2. THE APPLICATION SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site, outlined in red on the location plan, is situated on the south side of King's Cross Road, a short distance to the west of the junction with Field Street. The site is occupied by a three storey plus basement property which is the penultimate house in a terrace of ten similar buildings when viewed from west to east. Each floor of the property includes a small self-contained flat served by a communal hallway and staircase. The property includes a rear extension at ground floor level with a half-storey void below, and an adjacent small open yard. The ground floor front elevation of the property retains a shopfront-type window and second door, notwithstanding the full residential use of the building.
- 2.2 The site is situated within the King's Cross Conservation Area. Land to the rear of the site comprises an open parking area accessed from Field Street. Adjacent and nearby buildings on the south side of King's Cross Road include commercial on the ground floor with residential accommodation above.
- 2.3 The application site occupies a highly accessible location close to King's Cross/St Pancras Rail Stations, and other public transport services.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

The application site

- 3.1 Planning permission was granted in 1980 under reference 30952 for the *'erection of rear addition on ground and first floor levels to provide WC and bathroom facilities for shop and residential parts respectively'*.
- 3.2 Planning permission was granted on 9th November 2010 under reference 2010/3175/P for *'retention of three self-contained flats at basement, 1st and 2nd floor levels to residential dwelling'*.
- 3.3. A Certificate of Lawfulness was granted on 6th November 2014 under reference 2014/5448/P for the existing *'use of part of ground floor retail unit as a self-contained dwelling'*.

187 King's Cross Road (Adjacent property to the east)

- 3.4 Planning permission was granted on 21st April 2006 under reference 2006/0933/P for *'erection of mansard roof extension at third floor level to create an extension to existing 2nd floor residential unit, with new window/doors at ground, 1st and 2nd floor levels on the rear elevation and new railings at 1st and 2nd floor levels and the erection of balconies to 1st and 2nd floor window openings at the rear'*. This planning consent has been implemented.

4. THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The applicant proposes the refurbishment, alteration and extension of the application property associated with its continued and enhanced use as 4no. self-contained residential units.
- 4.2 The property's front elevation to Kings Cross Road would be restored. The white paint would be removed and the brickwork cleaned, and the existing single glazed steel windows would be replaced with double or triple glazed windows matching the original Crittal style steel windows of the neighbouring buildings in the terrace.

The two small windows would be removed and bricked up, and two small cast iron ventilation grilles would be installed to serve the bathrooms. The ground floor shopfront would be replaced with an entirely new shopfront featuring obscure glazing. The low level window serving the basement room would be restored and obscure glazed. There would be one entrance door, leading into the common hall, and the door giving direct access from the street to the ground floor studio unit would be removed.

- 4.3 The existing self-contained flats would be reconfigured to improve the quality and amount of space and the provision of light and ventilation. The existing rear extension, which is unsightly and in poor condition, would be demolished. The proposed replacement rear extension would be positioned on the other side of the building to provide better light and ventilation to the habitable rooms at the rear of the building. This extension would provide new ancillary (WC, bathroom and/or kitchen) facilities to the lower three flats. The flat at basement level would have access from the bed-sitting room to a patio garden, while the flats at first and second floor level would have small enclosed balconies recessed within the volume of the retained chimney stack.
- 4.4 The proposed mansard roof would match the profile and form of the recently constructed roof storey on the adjacent building (187 King's Cross Road), and would be finished in similar materials. The dormer windows on the front elevation would have a similar size and design to the neighbouring property. There would be one new dormer window to the rear. The proposed mansard roof addition necessitates associated alterations to the existing second floor rear elevation comprising new facing brickwork.
- 4.5 Matching materials would be employed throughout. Windows at the rear would be double-glazed composite windows with powder coated aluminium exteriors and solid engineered timber frames. The windows to the sides of the rear extension would be obscure-glazed.

5. PLANNING POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.1 The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development which is defined to comprise economic, social and environmental dimensions. The planning system should, inter alia, support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations, and by creating a high quality built environment accessible to local services, and should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, including through the prudent use of resources, the minimising of waste and pollution, and moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.2 The NPPF states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Planning decisions should ensure that that developments function well, establish a strong sense of place, optimise the potential of the site, respond to local character while not preventing appropriate innovation, create safe and accessible environments, and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription of detail but should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access for new development in relation to the local area. LPAs should not impose architectural styles or tastes.
- 5.3 The NPPF states that, in determining applications, LPAs should require an applicant to describe the significance of the 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 their significance. In determining applications, LPAs should take account of (i) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, (ii) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic

viability, and (iii) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. When considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

The statutory development plan

- 5.4 The statutory development plan comprises the London Plan of July 2011 (subject Revised Early Minor Alterations in 2013 and to Further Alterations in 2015), the Camden Core Strategy which was adopted in November 2010, and the Camden Development Policies DPD which was also adopted in November 2010. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications and appeals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The London Plan

- 5.5 London Plan Policy 3.4 states that, taking account of local context and character, the plan's design principles, and public transport capacity, development should optimise housing capacity. Policy 3.5 states that housing developments should be of the highest standard, and should achieve specified internal space standards. Further guidance on housing standards is set out in the Mayor's Housing SPG.
- 5.6 Policy 7.4 states that development should have regard to the form, function and structure of an area, place or street, and the scale, mass and orientation of buildings. Design should be a high quality and human scale that has regard to existing context. Policy 7.6 states that development should protect residential amenity, and should be of the highest architectural quality including details and materials that need not necessarily reflect local character. Policy 7.8 states that development affecting heritage assets should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

The Camden Core Strategy

- 5.7 The following policies of the adopted Core Strategy, as summarised, are

considered to be relevant to the issues raised by this planning application:-

- Policy CS1 seeks to direct growth in Camden to the most suitable locations. Development should make full use of its site whilst respecting context and taking into account the quality of design;
- Policy CS5 states that the Council will manage the impact of growth and development in Camden including the need to protect and enhance heritage assets;
- Policy CS6 states that the Council will aim to make full use of Camden's capacity for housing which will be regarded as the priority land-use; and
- Policy CS14 states that the Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by requiring development to be of the highest standard of design.

Camden Development Policies DPD

5.8 The following policies of the Camden Development Policies DPD, as summarised, are considered to be relevant to the issues raised by this planning application:-

- Policy DP2 seeks to make full use of Camden's housing capacity;
- Policy DP24 requires all developments, including alterations and extensions, to be of the highest standard of design having regard to character, setting, context, the quality of materials, landscaping and accessibility;
- Policy DP25 states that, in order to maintain the character of conservation areas, the Council will only permit development that preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area; and
- Policy DP26 states that the Council will protect the quality of life for

occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity.

Camden Planning Guidance

5.9 Camden Planning Guidance (Design) (CPG1) was adopted in 2014. The guidance states that the Council is committed to excellence in design, and schemes should consider the context of the development and its surrounding area, the design and use of the building itself, and the materials used. Good design should positively enhance the character, history and nature of existing buildings on the site and in the surrounding area. Alterations should take account of the character and design of the property and its surroundings. It may be appropriate for some new work to be distinguishable from the existing building but in other cases, closely matching design details and materials will be more appropriate. New windows and doors should match the originals as closely as possible, and external materials which match the original will usually be the most appropriate.

5.10 Paragraph 4.9 of CPG1 states that a rear extension is often the most appropriate way to extend a house. However, rear extensions that are insensitively or inappropriately designed can spoil the appearance of a property or group of properties, and harm the amenity of neighbouring properties, for example in terms of outlook and access to daylight and sunlight. Paragraph 4.10 lists a series of criteria that rear extensions should be designed to meet. In summary, these include the need for extensions to:-

- be secondary to the host building in terms of location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing;
- respect and preserve the building's design, proportions and style;
- respect and preserve existing architectural features;
- respect and preserve the historic pattern and established townscape of the surrounding area;
- not cause a loss of amenity for adjacent properties;
- allow the retention of a reasonable sized garden; and
- retain the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity. Sympathetic materials should be used.

- 5.11 Paragraph 4.12 states that in order for extensions to be subordinate to the original building, their heights should respect the existing pattern of rear extensions, where they exist. Ground floor extensions are generally preferable to those at higher level, and the maximum acceptable height should be determined in relation to the criteria listed at paragraph 4.10 of CPG1. Paragraph 4.13 states that, in most cases, extensions that are higher than one full storey below eaves/parapet level, or that rise above the general level height of neighbouring projections and nearby extensions, will be strongly discouraged. Paragraph 4.14 states that the width of rear extensions should be designed so that they are not visible from the street and should respect the rhythm of existing rear extensions
- 5.12 Paragraphs 5.7 and 5.8 of CPG1 lay down a series of general principles relating to roof alterations and extensions. The guidance states that alterations are likely to be acceptable in three different circumstances including where alterations are architecturally sympathetic to the age and character of the building and retain the overall integrity of the roof form. An addition is likely to be unacceptable where in complete terraces with a roof line which is largely unimpaired by alterations or extensions. Where acceptable, roof dormers should be sensitive changes which maintain the overall structure of the existing roof form. Such proposals will be generally considered acceptable where (in summary) (a) the pitch of the existing roof is sufficient to allow adequate habitable space; (b) dormers do not cut through the roof ridge or edge of the hip but are sufficiently far below the ridge or hip; (c) dormers do not interrupt an unbroken roofscape; (d) dormers are separate small projections which relate to the façade below; (e) dormers are located below the parapet line (where applicable); and (f) complimentary materials are used.

King's Cross Conservation Area Statement (KCCAS) – June 2004

- 5.13 The King's Cross Conservation Area was designated in March 1986, and was subsequently extended in 1991 and 1994. The application site is located in 'Sub Area 4' (Gray's Inn Road). The conservation area boundary runs down the middle of King's Cross Road.
- 5.14 The KCAAS refers to 187-205 King's Cross Road as '*a terrace of 10, three storey buildings of mid to late 19th century date. They are constructed of red brick and*

have suffered from a high degree of poor quality reconstruction following WW2 bomb damage. They have modern windows with concrete lintels and unsympathetic commercial frontages at ground floor level.....The rear of these buildings is visible from St Chad's Place and have hipped, tiled roofs with dormer windows and with a tall chimney on the rear elevation on alternate buildings'. The KCAAS identifies the partial terrace of buildings at 183-199 King's Cross Road as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The KCAAS identifies various current issues in Sub Area 4 including unsympathetic roof level changes to terraced houses. It also provides detailed guidance on the circumstances in which rear and roof level extensions are likely to be acceptable. It is notable that the roof level extension and associated works at 187 King's Cross Road were granted planning consent approximately 2 years after the publication of the KCAAS.

6. PLANNING & DESIGN ASSESSMENT

Amount of Development

- 6.1 The application property has an existing gross internal area (GIA) of 117.5 square metres. The existing rear extension, which is proposed to be demolished, has a GIA of 6 square metres. The proposed extensions would provide an additional 42 square metres (GIA) of new accommodation, resulting in a total new GIA of 153.5 square metres including communal circulation.
- 6.2 The application proposal would not change the number of self-contained residential units within the building. However, the size of each unit would be increased, as shown in the table below.

Flat	Existing GIA sq.m.	Proposed GIA sq.m
Basement	24	32.5
Ground floor	26	27
First floor	24	29
Second floor	23	53.5

Layout & Amenity

- 6.3 The application property is currently laid out as four small self-contained studio flats. These units are lawful by virtue of planning consent 2010/3175/P (basement, first and second floor flats) and Lawful Development Certificate 2014/5448/P (ground floor flat). All the existing units fall well short of the London Plan space standards, and are generally poorly laid out with low quality kitchen and bathroom facilities. In addition, none of the units has access to external amenity space, and some rooms at basement and ground floor levels have low levels of light and outlook.
- 6.4 The proposed rear and roof level extensions would offer increased space and improved layout for each unit, and in would provide external amenity space for the lower three units. The basement and ground floor units would experience improved levels of light and outlook by virtue of the re-positioning of the rear extension. The improvements to all units represent a material planning consideration which weighs in favour of the application scheme.
- 6.5 The proposed rear extension, which would be located on the western side of the rear elevation, would not give rise to any material loss of light or outlook for adjacent occupiers. Rear facing residential windows at 191 King's Cross Road would not be impacted given their position relative to the proposed rear extension including its recessed alignment at first floor level. First floor flank windows in the proposed extension would be obscure-glazed as these would serve a bathroom. Outlook from the small rear (recessed) terraces at ground and first floor levels would cause no loss of privacy for nearby occupiers as these would face the car park to the rear of the application site.

Landscaping

- 6.6 There are no trees of other landscape features within the application site.

Use

- 6.7 The proposal would facilitate the formation of additional residential floorspace

within an existing residential property, and would therefore beneficially contribute to the efficient use of the application site for this priority land-use. The proposed extensions and associated internal reconfiguration of the existing flats, as described above, would offer clear-cut improvements to the standard of residential provided at the site.

7. HERITAGE ASSET IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Significance of the Heritage Assets

- 7.1 The application property is situated within the King's Cross Conservation Area which is a designated heritage asset. The property itself is neither statutorily nor locally listed.
- 7.2 This part of the King's Cross Conservation Area is characterised by nineteenth century terraces interspersed by larger institutional buildings. The areas between the main roads contain narrow streets and passages, lined by a mixture of later nineteenth century buildings and some vacant sites. These streets are bisected by railway cuttings.
- 7.3 The application property can be regarded as making a marginally positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area as part of a terrace of similar buildings comprising nos. 187-205 King' Cross Road. The terrace includes a well-defined front roof parapet line, and the adjacent property at number 187 includes a mansard roof addition. However, in common with various other buildings in the terrace, the application property has been subject to poor quality post-war re-construction following WW2 bomb damage, and is in need of substantial renovation. The front and rear elevations of the building feature unsightly metal windows. Part of the roof has been covered in modern red tiles, and the rear chimney has been re-constructed using poor quality red brickwork. The front elevation is painted, and the rear extension is crudely constructed and finished in metal panelling. These features are shown in the photographs of the front and rear elevations below.



Rear Elevation



Front Elevation

- 7.4 The mansard roof and dormer windows at 187 King's Cross Road are of a similar form to those currently proposed. These works, which were granted planning permission in 2006 (2006/0933/P), are shown in the above photographs. This planning consent was granted after the publication of the KCAAS in 2004.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 7.5 The application proposals include rear and roof level extensions, along with various alterations to the building's front and rear elevations, all as previously described.

Rear Extension

- 7.6 The proposed rear extension would replace the existing structure which straddles the basement and ground floors. The existing extension significantly harms the character and appearance of the application property by virtue of its external finish and crude form, and its replacement is considered to be supportable, as a matter of principle. The new rear extension would meet the objectives of CPG1 in that it would be confined to low level, would be of subordinate scale, would not be full-width, and would allow for the retention and increased visibility of the existing chimney stack. The extension would also be finished in matching materials, and the bulk of its top storey would be less than that of the ground and basement floors. The extension would terminate one full storey below the proposed eaves level.
- 7.7 The proposed rear extension is therefore considered to preserve the character and appearance of the application property and this part of the King's Cross Conservation Area.

Mansard Roof & Dormers

- 7.8 The proposed mansard roof extension would precisely match the height, form and detailing of the approved and implemented mansard roof scheme at 187 King's Cross Road. This approved scheme is considered to set a relevant 'in-principle' precedent for further similar development on this terrace. It was approved in the context of a similarly restrictive, criteria-based approach to roof level extensions as set out in contemporary planning and conservation guidance, including the 2004

KCAAS. These policies have their current expression at paragraphs 5.6 to 5.10 of CCG1. Although most properties in the terrace at 187 to 205 King's Cross Road do not include a mansard roof, the application proposals represent a sensitively-designed continuation of the mansard roofs in place at numbers 185 and 187.

- 7.9 To the front, the proposed mansard would be set back from and would retain the existing parapet line, and would be of an authentic size, form and detailing featuring a traditional dual pitch. Appropriate materials would be used, and two small front dormers would be incorporated. The dormers, which would be identical to those at number 187, would be sensitively detailed and finished in line with the requirements of paragraph 5.11 of CPG1. The building is not exposed to long views but within the immediate street-scheme along this part of King's Cross Road, the mansard roof would be a recessed and subordinate feature viewed in the context and as a continuation of the mansard roof at number 187, and against the background of the taller mansarded roof form of the property at 185 King's Cross Road.
- 7.10 To the rear, where there are only restrictive views of the property from the public realm, the raised parapet line would match that of number 187, and a modestly-sized single dormer window would be incorporated. Again, the detailed form and design of the rear dormer would comply with relevant guidance. The existing chimney stack would be retained at its current height but this could be raised to match the raised stack at number 187.
- 7.11 For the reasons set out above, the proposed mansard addition with front and rear dormer windows is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the application property and this part of the King's Cross Conservation Area.

Other Proposed Alterations

- 7.12 The various proposed elevational alterations would enhance the appearance of the application property by introducing better quality detailing and materials. The removal of the paint from the front elevation would improve the appearance of the building and the wider terrace, and the new windows at all levels, and the improved 'shopfront-style' treatment of the ground floor front elevation would enhance the

character and appearance of both the building and this part of the conservation area. The insertion of modest openings into the rear chimney stack can be regarded as an innovative and imaginative means of improving light penetration to the units and providing some limited external access at first and second floor levels, whilst retaining the overall visual integrity of the feature.

8. ACCESS

- 8.1 The site occupies a highly accessible location close to local facilities and to public transport. The proposals involve no changes to the existing access external arrangements to the property from the street.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The application property is in a poor state of repair, and the existing residential flats are of a sub-standard size and layout. The proposals have been sensitively designed to facilitate the modernisation and enlargement of the application property in a manner that respects its appearance and character, and that of the wider conservation area, and ensures no loss of amenity for neighbouring residents. The scheme would result in significant improvements to the layout, size and general amenity of the existing lawful residential units, and this planning benefit is considered to represent an important material consideration which weighs strongly in favour of the development.
- 9.2 The proposed extensions preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the application property and this part of the King's Cross Conservation Area. The rear extension would be well-designed and of a subordinate scale and form. At roof level, the proposed mansard extension is designed in accordance with traditional principles, and follows the form and detailing of the approved and implemented scheme at 187 King's Cross Road.
- 9.3 The application proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with the development plan, the NPPF and relevant local planning guidance. The applicant looks forward to early dialogue with the case officer, and to the favourable determination of the planning application.