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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPOSAL Creation of 2No 2-bed maisonette units on ground floor and basement levels

LOCATION 51 Werrington Street
London, NW1 1QN

AREA Somers Town

LOCAL
AUTHORITY Camden

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DRAWINGS AND OTHER APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION

1504 - 51 Werrington Street, London, NW1 1QN

Drwgs No 1504.1.EX.P00	Existing Floor Plans	1:100
Drwgs No 1504.1.EX.E01	Existing Floor Sections and Elevations	1:100
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APPENDIX

Appendix 01	Photographs of existing building on application site
Appendix 02	Photographs of existing frontages of immediate neighbourhood
Appendix 03	Images of traditional pubs with floral and planting decorations
Appendix 04	Computer generated images and photomontage of the proposal

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement accompanies the documentation for a new planning application for the creation of 2No 2-bed maisonette units on ground floor and basement levels.
- 1.2 The proposed new scheme incorporates improved design in terms of access, general arrangement and layouts, all within the existing building envelope and without alterations to the external appearance of the existing 4-storey building. Lightwells to the basement bedrooms are proposed to be created behind the existing railings, which will have no adverse effect on the appearance of the building.
- 1.3 The application seeks to obtain approval for the creation of 2No 2-bed maisonette units.
- 1.4 Since the latest planning application the design team, including the consulting structural engineer Conisbee and daylight consultants DixonPayne have reviewed the previously submitted design proposals together with architects Rowan Orchid Architects Ltd with view to identifying improvements to design and overcoming reservations held by Camden Council during the last application. The design improvements have been illustrated on drawings, relevant reports and graphic illustrations.

2 PLANNING HISTORY, SITE DESCRIPTION, CONTEXT

Planning History

- 2.1 A planning permission has been granted for 3No residential units on the upper floors (ref: 2012/0362/P) which has since then been implemented in full. The building now comprises 2No 1-bed and 1No 2-bed flat above the ground floor, with a separate entrance from the newly proposed residential units.
- 2.2 In 2012 two planning applications for a change of use for basement and GF spaces were refused (ref: 2012/1713/P and 2012/5827/P)
- 2.3 A Certificate of Lawfulness was issued in 2012 (ref: 2012/3981/P) for the installation of a metal railing along the external site perimeter between external areas of the former pub and public pavement.
- 2.4 The latest record for the application site shows an approval for a change of use application (ref: 2013/0787/P) for the ground floor from the existing A4(drinking establishment) to C3 (residential) featuring 1No 2 bed residential unit

Site description

- 2.5 The site including external areas is approximately 16m long by 9m wide. The total area of the site is appr.153sqm (0.01 hectares).
- 2.6 The property is located on the corner of Werrington Street and Cranleigh Street in Somers Town. It was a public house known as 'The Neptune', with ancillary residential/storage areas above and the pub and basement. The public house ceased trading in 2011, and residential units were approved on all floors since.
- 2.7 The application site contains a four-storey Victorian corner building with a basement. It features significant decorative elements throughout the street facing facades, with elaborate stonework around the windows, eaves and dormer gables in a red stone material, together with a slated roof and the original painted joinery features of the public house itself. Areas between window surrounds, eaves and the joinery panels above the public house façade are rendered in a light beige to blend in with the yellow brick of the majority of the buildings in this area. The rear facades consist of render walls without any openings or specific architectural features.
- 2.8 Presently the site is being protected on the ground floor by a hoarding, which has been erected during the works of the implementing the previously approved proposals. It serves as preventative site security, creating a semi-permanent and solid barrier to the lower, disused floors against the misuse of the vacant parts of the building.
- 2.9 The central entrance to the upper floor flats is from Cranleigh Street.

Site context

- 2.10 The area around the site is predominantly of residential character, characterized by building typologies of various different periods, with their respective architectural styles, heights, and appearances.
- 2.11 At the Northern end of Cranleigh Road, the recently refurbished and extended school building of Regent High School brings a more contemporary design language to the area.
- 2.12 A striking feature of the majority of the blocks of flats irrespective of their architectural appearance are the black metal railings, separating the public pavement from the building, forming small communal front gardens. All of these gardens are well kept with lawns or planters, hedges, flower pots or smaller trees, with some more mature trees flanking some of the streets. This small, but significant visual element of each site has a clear effect on the general streetscape and appearance of the area. The front gardens and green foliage, together with the railings form a consistency and bind buildings of different appearances together to one coherent setting.

3 DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS

Amount

- 3.1 The relevant plans for consideration are Drawings No 1504.4.PA.P01 and 1504.4.PA.E.01, further illustrated by the photomontages showing artists impressions of the property viewed from Werrington Street and Cranleigh Street respectively.
- 3.2 The proposal is for the use of the basement level in conjunction with approved residential use on the ground floor. The ground floor had previously been granted a change of use to C3. A material start has been made to implement the proposed scheme.
- 3.3 The proposal is completely within the existing building envelope, including parts of the arches underneath the fenced in external areas of the former pub. The structural report, prepared by Conisbee outlines the existing status of the covered arches, explains the urgent need for repair and recommends a structurally sound solution for the retention and alteration to the external areas around the former public house building. Parts of the arches are proposed to be opened up, fenced in by the already approved railing to provide natural light and ventilation to the bedrooms at basement level.
- 3.4 Lightwells are proposed to some of the arched areas below the external areas of the former pub to provide natural light and ventilation to the newly created bedrooms at basement level.

Site Layout

- 3.5 The separate entrances to each of the proposed maisonette flats are from Werrington Street and Cranleigh Street respectively. Each newly proposed unit utilizes an existing door opening, and the proposal envisages the retention of the existing door styles.
- 3.6 The black painted balustrades are proposed be retained as per the Certificate of Lawfulness. They form an enclosure in the same open, yet robust style as the enclosures of front gardens of the majority of existing building in the vicinity.
- 3.7 The proposal takes elements of the prevailing streetscape, such as front gardens and railings and uses these design elements to blend in the site with the surrounding properties and streetscape, making it yet again a valuable part of the urban structure, over and above its change of historic use.

Landscaping

- 3.8 The proposed landscaping follows the pattern of the prevailing designs and layouts of the surrounding blocks of flats, consisting of a building of specific architectural design, a railing along the boundary to public areas and front gardens with planting.
- 3.9 Elements of traditional pubs with floral and planting decorations are proposed to be installed to the inside of the metal railings and planters with larger plants and small trees at the corner of the former pub external area.
- 3.10 The proposal deliberately chooses the idea of planting and floral decorations to enhance the existing public house appearance as well as re-connecting this now partially disused building to the neighboring properties, thereby creating greater consistency in urban design and preservation of a traditional building.
- 3.11 The building has a substantial existing basement area, which extends outwards beyond the external walls of the building on both the Werrington Street and Cranleigh Street frontages. The area of the basement runs below paving at street level. The land above the basement at street level is in the applicant's ownership and was, when the building was in use as a public house, as an outdoor seating area. It is not part of the public pavement and clearly defined by the change of types of paving slabs. Furthermore a metal railing has been installed as approved in the Certificate of Lawfulness along the outline of the site.

Appearance

- 3.12 The overall general appearance of the property is not proposed to change. The existing joinery and glazing (windows and doors) of the former pub at ground floor is proposed to be retained, together with the stone finishes and the approved and installed metal railings around the property.
- 3.13 Where necessary, existing elements such as timber window frames, decorative joinery features, as well as the painted metal balustrade are proposed to be repaired or replaced in order to protect the proportions and general appearance of the original building. All elements shall comply with the latest building regulations.
- 3.14 The structural report by Conisbee Consulting Structural Engineers clearly outlines the condition of the outwardly extended area of the basement underneath the external areas outside the building. The report notes that the roof structure is poor with large numbers of leaks causing corrosion of steel beams. As a consequence the life expectancy of the paved roof is limited and will in time also be unsafe. It is recommended to replace this structure and reinstate the existing paving as finish as well as providing the opportunity to open up the existing beer drops to form light wells for the natural ventilation and light to the basement bedrooms.

- 3.15 The railings will slim feature metal frames holding flower pots. At the corner of the site between fenced boundary and building smaller trees and plants are proposed to make the property blend in with it surrounding.

Amendments to previous design

- 3.16 The decision notice of application 2012/5827/P contains five points, which this applications seeks to overcome with improvements to the design, and draft proposals for legal agreements.
- 3.17 Item 1 of above decision notice refers to the creation of lightwells and their impact on the building. The said item describes the lightwells as ‘visually prominent’, ‘revealing basement facades’ and having a ‘harmful impact on the significance of the building’.

The intention is to preserve the existing façade, joinery, stoneworks, and paneling of the former pub facade. The black painted railings will not have any detrimental effect on building or appearance and are already approved. The lightwells are below ground and narrow, and have no significant impact on the buildings overall appearance as the two submitted photomontages of appendix 04 demonstrate.

The overall character of the building is still very clearly identifiable as a former public house. All of its original features on upper floors have been preserved and are proposed to be preserved on ground floor level. The integration of nature adds a further emphasis and notion of liveliness of this building, whilst connecting it to natural appearance of the neighbouring front gardens

As the appendix 02 illustrates, black painted railings and lightwells of different shapes and sizes are found as the dominating design features to the majority of buildings in the surrounding neighbourhood. The proposed lightwells are therefore not an alien feature, but an integral part of the streetscape and the appearance of buildings in the vicinity.

See also full compliance with all relevant planning policies and design guidance in section “Planning policy context” of this document.

- 3.18 Item 2 of relevant decision notice refers to a required legal agreement to overcome the issues caused by providing a car-free development. Heads of terms are proposed to be agreed between the applicant and the council’s legal team and financial contributions established and paid prior to any approval of the proposed scheme or alternatively by way of conditioning such agreements. Such contributions would be made overcome issues of parking stress and congestion in the local area and to comply with policies CS11 (Promoting sustainable and efficient travel), CS19 (Delivering and monitoring the Core Strategy) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policies DP18 (Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking) and DP19 (Managing the impact of parking) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies
- 3.19 Item 3 of relevant decision notice refers to a required legal agreement for contributions to educational provisions. Heads of terms are proposed to be agreed between the applicant and

the council's legal team and financial contributions established and paid prior to any approval of the proposed scheme or alternatively by way of conditioning such agreements. Such contributions would be made to comply with policies CS10 (Supporting community facilities and services), CS19 (Delivering and monitoring the Core Strategy) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policy DP15 (Community and leisure) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies

- 3.20 Item 4 of relevant decision notice refers to a required legal agreement for contributions to open spaces provisions. Heads of terms are proposed to be agreed between the applicant and the council's legal team and financial contributions established and paid prior to any approval of the proposed scheme or alternatively by way of conditioning such agreements. Such contributions would be made to comply with policies CS15 (Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces & encouraging biodiversity), CS19 (Delivering and monitoring the Core Strategy) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policy DP31 (Provision of, and improvements to, open space, and outdoor sport and recreation facilities) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.
- 3.21 Item 5 of relevant decision notice refers to the provision of an Ecohome assessment. The central government has announced in March 2015 that the previously required compliance with code level 4 of the Code for sustainable homes would no longer be an applicable requirement for new planning applications. The relevant parts of the building will generally comply with the latest building control requirements. Achieving compliance with latest building regulations automatically incorporates the essential elements previously found at the core of Code for sustainable Homes requirements. This item can therefore be deemed to comply with essential elements of sustainability, when implementing the proposed scheme in accordance with building control requirements.
- 3.22 The structural reports (Basement Impact assessment – Screening and scoping report and the report on Vault structures) highlight all relevant technical information in connection with the existing conditions of the covered pavement vaults under external areas of the application site. The report has been prepared in response to Camden Development Policy DP27 and following the format guidance in the Camden Guidance CPG4. The report states that there is no adverse impact on the structural stability of the application site. To the contrary the condition of the existing vaulted structures are poor and in urgent need of repair and replacement. The report and structural proposals illustrate the methods and detailing.

4 SITE ACCESS / TRANSPORT STATEMENT

General transport assessment

- 4.1 The property has excellent transport links to public transport. It is located in close proximity to Kings Cross and Euston, both providing a great number of tube lines and bus routes, together with national and international rail connections, all within walking distance to the application site.

Site access

- 4.2 The proposal seeks to preserve current quality of architecture and therefore retains existing door and window arrangements. Existing doors will be used s new entrance doors to the proposed maisonette flats. From the public pavement access to the flats will be provided in compliance with the latest building regulations.

Public transport access & local cycle networks

- 4.3 The site at St Margaret's Grove is in short walking distance from Kings Cross and Euston stations.
- 4.4 The train stations of Kings Cross and Euston provide national and international directions, the tubes lines at these stations connect with the wider TfL network of public transport.
- 4.5 Bus services run along Eversholt Street, Camden Street, Pancras Road and Euston Road
- 4.6 The site is in principle accessible by bicycle, and a number of dedicated cycle routes as well as the general road network provide excellent conditions for bicycle use. This proposal encourages the use of bicycles and provides a secure bicycle storage.
- 4.7 A great amount of Parks and parkland define the wider area. Regent Park is nearby, but a number of smaller parks are in walking distance, such as Oakley Square Gardens and Harrington Square Gardens as well as Pancras Gardens, all in close proximity.

Refuse

- 4.8 During previous consultations it had been established with the Council's refuse department that there is no need for internal bin storage and that black refuse sacks can be kept in individual flats and put out on pavement on bin collection days. This is common practice elsewhere in this part of the borough.
- 4.9 There is a large recycling facility, in close proximity to the application site.

Car parking

- 4.10 No car parking has been proposed off-street or on-street.
- 4.11 The proposed scheme remains a car-free development, and any planning permission would regulate this agreement by way of legal agreements and contributions.

5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 The application has been based on the London Plan and the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025, Camden Development Policies 2010-2025 and relevant planning guidance.
- 5.2 Paragraph 1.8 of the Core strategy states:
“Housing will be considered the priority land use of this Core strategy and the Council’s other Local Development Framework documents.”
- 5.3 The requirement for providing quality homes is set out in the policy S6. This policy contains a list of priorities aimed at achieving this, including amongst others:
*“j) seeking a diverse range of housing products in the market...
k) seeking a range of self-contained houses of different sizes...”*
- 5.4 The Camden Development Policies supplements the Core Strategy Policies of specific relevance to this application are as follows:
- The core policies CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development) has been met. The building provides new residential units in a historic envelope. The building benefits from excellent transport links. The size of the proposal is limited to the provisions of 2No duplex units which has an insignificant overall impact on the area, particularly as one of the units has already been granted permission in a previous approval.
 - The efficient land use and minimizing carbon emissions as set out in CS13(Environmental standards) has been demonstrated by optimizing the use of the existing land and building without proposing further enclosures for the use of residential units.
 - The sensitive approach of preservation and enhancement as set out in CS14 (promotion of high quality places and conservation of heritage) is reflected in the preservation of the existing building, its historic, architectural features and the enhancing of the land around the building within the site boundaries.
 - Policy DP2 – Making full use of Camden’s Capacity for Housing: which seeks to maximize the supply of additional dwellings in the borough.
 - Policy DP5 – Houses of different sizes: which seeks to secure a range of self-contained houses and a mix of dwellings based on the priorities table. However paragraph 5.6 notes that the *“Council acknowledges that it will not be appropriate for every*

development to meet the aims set out in the Priority Table.”

- Policy DP23 – control of water consumption (see reports by Conisbee). No additional surface are being created, hence there no additional volume of surface water from the proposal. All new residential units will comply with latest building regulations controlling the consumption of water. As the building has an existing basement construction there is no interference with or risk of exposure to any ground water.
- Policy DP24 – Securing High Quality Design. The proposal incorporates and references characteristic design elements, such as railings and green front gardens, thereby embedding itself in the prevailing setting of the surrounding urban context. The preservation of the existing architectural features ensures the appearance of a building at the highest quality.
- Policy DP25 – Conservation of heritage. The building’s façade and historic architectural features are being preserved, the building is proposed to be further enhanced by the introduction of nature around the railings and on external areas typical for some public buildings.
- Policy DP 26 – Managing the impact of Development on Occupiers and Neighbours. Space allowances have been made for the storage of bins and bikes. there is no harmful effect arising from the building as the proposal is planned within the volume of the existing building including its basement spaces.
- DP 27 – (basement and lightwells) The proposal is an improvement of the existing vaulted basement structure (see structural reports/proposals by Conisbee for details), maintains structural integrity, avoids any additional surfaces or structures, improves the building and site by integrating more trees and other vegetation, preserves the high quality of the existing building and enhances the streetscape with design elements typical in the area (railings, vegetation in front gardens)
- DP30 – shopfronts. The high quality of the existing public house façade is proposed to be retained, thereby retaining the existing character, architectural and historic merit and design of the building. The installed railings are typical for the area and the proposed below ground lightwells have no visual impact on the appearance of the exiting building.

5.5 The Development Policies LDF sets out the need to maximize the supply of additional houses in the borough (Policy DP2) as well as providing for houses of different sizes (Policy DP5) and promotes a mix of unit sizes within developments. Associated with this there is a “Dwelling Size Priority table” which identifies the private market demand to be very high in the 2-bedroom self-contained market segment. It is proposed to convert the basement and ground floor accommodation into two 2-bedroom maisonette units, for which there is a substantial demand in the area as identified by the council.

5.6 The council has set a minimum space standards for residential properties which are expressed in a table set out in paragraph 4.14 of CPG2. The application proposes the following accommodation for the basement/ground floor maisonette units:

- Unit 1 68sqm (3 person)
- Unit 2 72sqm (3 person)

Both of these units meet and exceed the Council's standards as set out in CPG2

- 5.7 The conversion of the building into flats has been designed in accordance with the key message in section 4 of CPG2 – Housing, and provides:

“...secure, well-lit accommodation that has well-designed layouts and rooms.”

- 5.8 The structural report by Conisbee Consulting structural engineers deals with the structural impact of the basement development, and a further report was prepared dealing with other issues associated with the use of the basement, to deal with the drainage matters and local water assessment. This report was prepared in response to Policy DP27 (basement and lightwells) and to the more detailed guidance as contained in CPG4 – Basements and Lightwells. It is considered that the technical information submitted in these reports meets the Council's requirements and clearly illustrates that the development is possible without having any adverse impact outside the site in terms of adjacent properties or the wider environment.
- 5.9 As required by CPG6 section 6, Daylight and sunlight, the planning application is accompanied by an Internal Daylight and Sunlight report which considers in detail the proposed development of the ground floor and basement conversion in terms of an analysis carried out under BRE guidelines. The report, prepared by DixonPayne Chartered Surveyors who are specialists in the provision of daylight and sunlight reports, concludes that *“...all rooms on the ground and basement level will meet the BRE Guideline level and are thus in accordance with the BRE Guidelines daylight and sunlight criteria.”*

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The property has been vacant on ground floor and basement level, since the completion of works to the residential units on upper floors and the significant start of works to implement the residential unit on ground floor level. A hoarding has since blocked the ground floor premises for security purposes. Our aim is to obtain a planning permission to bring back not only a full use of the entire property, but also to restore the streetscape for the benefit of the wider public and local neighborhood.
- 6.2 In summary to the planning history section we note that applications were approved for residential units on all upper floors and on ground floor. The upper floor residential units have been implemented, the ground floor unit is partially completed.
- 6.3 The railings around the newly created lightwells have been approved as part of the Certificate of Lawfulness referred to in the section 'planning history' of this document. It is therefore a logical conclusion that no adverse effect arises from an already approved and implemented element now enclosing the site in the same style as enclosures of adjacent sites.

- 6.4 The character of the newly created lightwells is, like the metal railings, in line with the prevailing style and urban streetscape in the immediate area. The proposed provisions of planters and flowerbaskets on the railings around the lightwells will create a further visual link between adjacent front gardens and the application site and thereby create greater coherence between the buildings of different architectural periods. It is in the nature of the proposed narrow lightwells is, that they are barely noticeable from street level and have no visual impact due to the fact that they are below ground level. Given also the fact that several buildings in the area, most notably the building opposite the application site on Cranleigh Road have lightwells around their frontage without a detrimental effect to property or streetscape.
- 6.5 All previous five concerns expressed in the decision notice of application 2012/5827/P have been addressed. These have been highlighted in the section 3 under “Amendments to previous design”. Where resolutions to previously noted grounds for refusal will be address by way of Section 106 or other financial or legal agreements, heads of terms will be prepared and financial contributions established between the council’s legal team and the client’s solicitors and incorporated in a draft decision notice.