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**Our Ref:** 2015/2754/PRE

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Ben Muir

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Dear Ben Muir,

Request for Planning Pre-Application Advice  
Planning enquiry regarding: Flat 1, 140 Fortess Road; London, NW5

Thank you for your email request of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015 for written pre-application advice about the following proposal:

*Erection of single-storey ground floor extension at rear installation of iron balustrade and formation of new roof terrace at 1<sup>st</sup> floor level rear including new door as replacement of existing window to create a 2 x bedroom self-contained flat.*

Set out in the attached document is my observation on the proposal as related to the principal issues and what you need to do in order to submit a valid planning application for your proposal.

Please be aware that this is an informal officer opinion, which cannot prejudice any decision of the Council following the submission of a formal application.

I trust this answers your query.

Should you require any further information please contact me on the above telephone number.

Thank you for using Camden's pre-application advice service.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Miller –Planning Officer  
For Director of Culture and Environment

***Pre-Application Proposal Ref. 2015/2754/ /PRE***

140 Fortress Road, London, NW5 2HP

**Proposal:** *Erection of single-storey ground floor extension at rear installation of iron balustrade and formation of new roof terrace at 1st floor level rear including new door as replacement of existing window to create a 2 x bedroom self-contained flat.*

**1.0 History**

April 1995 – PP Granted - Change of use from Class A1 (shop) to Class A2 (professional & financial services) as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987; REF. 9401600.

November 2012 - INVALID - Change of use from A1 (sandwich shop) to A3 (restaurant); ref. 2012/6401/INVALID.

**2.0 Relevant Policies**

**LDF Core Strategy**

CS5 – (Managing the impact of growth and development)

CS6 – (Providing quality homes)

CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

**Development Policies**

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

DP6 - (Lifetime homes and wheelchair housing)

DP24 – (Securing high quality design)

DP26 – (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours)

DP28 – (Noise and vibration)

**Camden Planning Guidance 2011/2013/2015:**

CPG1 – Design (Extensions, alterations and conservatories); (Roof terraces & balconies);

CPG2 Housing – Space and room sizes

CPG6 (Amenity); CPG7 (Transport)

**London Plan 2011**

**National Planning Policy Framework 2012**

**3.0 - Assessment**

The main planning issues associated with the proposed development have been identified as follows:

Key issues: **a]** Design and impact of extension on the appearance of the building, **b]** enlarged self-contained flat and residential standards and **c]** impact on neighbour amenity.

The site is close to Tufnell Park Underground Station and comprises 4-storey building with retail at ground floor front and is located close to the junction of Fortress Road, Brecknock Road and Dartmouth Park Hill.

## **Design**

Three-storey closet wings are characteristic of the terrace of properties with matching depth, height and width. Similarly, single-storey extensions are common features; and they vary in detail design, sizes/ footprint and use of materials. Consequently, the remaining rear gardens also vary in size; and a few premises have no rear garden due to being link with Gottfried Mews properties. No. 138 Fortress Rd has 'L' shaped shallow depth single storey infill - extension that projects beyond the rear of the established closet wing.

The host building forms part of a terrace with shallow depth rear garden that measure 70.26sqm. It has a 3-storey closet wing [7.1m (d) x 3.7m (w) 25.56.10sqm GFA] and a recessed patio area with dimensions of approximately [7.1m x 2.5m] 17.75sqm.

### Proposed: Extensions /Roof terrace

The proposed 'L' shaped single-storey extension measures 40.00sqm [GFA]. It would extend the closet wing on the north and south sides (patio area & part of the rear garden) and include a small unbuilt area for access to an air conditioning unit. The extension would provide a 2-bed self-contained flat as replacement of the extant studio. It would have flat roof and comprise brick to match the host building plus casement windows and new French doors all matching the appearance of the main building. A roof terrace and railings are proposed, and access from the 1<sup>st</sup> floor level.

The proposed extension would be full-width and project beyond the single –storey extension at no.138. It would more than doubled in size in terms of general footprint, scale and proportion and is not considered subordinate to the main building; or the general principles paragraph 4.10 of Camden Planning Guidance. Similarly, the proposed extension would not be in compliance with policy DP24, paragraph 24.13, which advises against overly large extensions and their impact on the host building; and to avoid past extensions as a precedent for succeeding proposals.

Whilst there is no objection in principle to an extension here, the full-width extension is too solid in appearance and is considered excessive in scale and proportion and is unacceptable.

At the site visit I discussed the proposal with the agent and references were made to neighbouring existing extensions. It was agreed that revised drawings would be submitted to better reflect similar rear extensions within the terrace.

### Revised proposal

There two noticeable differences to the revised scheme are the omission of the 'L' shaped footplate and the depth reduction, by 0.9m (from 4.6m to 3.8m). The overall floor size remains largely as originally proposed; and it would also align with the single-storey extension at no.138. It is recognised that the extension would be limited to private views only being fully enclosed by neighbouring buildings.

Notwithstanding, the full-width extension still retains its solid appearance and is not in compliance with CPG guidelines; and is considered excessive in scale and proportion and not subordinate to the appearance of the host building and is unacceptable.

### Roof terrace & balustrade

Roof terraces are common features of the properties including the host building. The proposed terrace is set back on the north side and be accessed via the replacement door at first floor level. There is no objection in principle to the proposed roof terrace.

### Residential flat

The Council's minimum residential space standards CPG2 are 32sqm 1 person; 48sqm 2 persons; 61sqm 3 persons; (excluding communal lobbies and staircases); (paragraphs, 4.12 - 4.16). Please view via the link below -

<http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/planning-and-built-environment/two/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents/camden-planning-guidance/>

The net floor area (NFA) of the proposed flat is 55sqm and would comprise 2x double bedrooms (12sqm each) and is less than CPG minimum. The double bedrooms would equate 3 or 4 persons in occupation; and therefore the unit size as proposed is not in compliance with the CPG standards and is unacceptable.

In addition, bedroom 1 has one opening on the west side, which would be set back approximately 1.1m from a new boundary wall and 2.1m from the rear elevation of the host building.

As proposed therefore, the flat size is considered too small for the number of occupiers and is unacceptable and not in compliance with CPG2.

### **Amenity**

*Impact on neighbour:* At no. 142, the closet wing has windows at ground floor level that face due south. The gap between the closet wings measures approximately 3.0m. The shared boundary wall opposite would form part of the north flank of the proposed extension and height of the extension is considered satisfactory.

*Impact on occupier:* With only a single opening to bedroom 1 and being so close to the rear of the host building I have concerns about the limited amount of day/sunlight into this room and the impact on the occupier. As proposed this bedroom is considered substandard and is unacceptable.

### Plant/machinery

The existing plant machinery would be close to the habitable room and you will need to submit an acoustic noise report to demonstrate that it would not cause noise disturbance to the occupier of bedroom 1. As a consequence the bedroom in this location would appear unacceptable and not in compliance with policy DP26; impact on amenity.

### Roof terrace

The proposed roof terrace at 1<sup>st</sup> floor level would introduce opportunities for overlooking to 1<sup>st</sup> floor windows to the flank elevation of no. 142 Fortress Road and

the rear elevation of 138 Fortess Road. If these are windows to habitable rooms such overlooking would need to be mitigated.

## **Conclusion:**

### Key areas of concerns:

Design: The revised proposal would match the depth of no.138 which is considered a small improvement on the original. It is considered however, that an overall depth of 3.0m [from the closet wing) would be more acceptable here due to its full-width and full-depth footplate on the north side. Consideration should be given to a mixed of materials to the rear elevation to provide a light-weight appearance as this would minimise the visual bulk and be more satisfactory.

New residential accommodation: The proposed 3 - 4 person's self-contained flat is considered unacceptable owing to its small size and it would not be in compliance with the Council's residential standards CPG2.

Amenity: The proposed extension is not considered to cause harm to the neighbours' amenity in terms of loss of sun/daylight or loss of privacy.

You may need to consider adjusting the footplate to bedroom1 in addition to the inclusion of rooflights to bedroom 1. However, you should be mindful of light pollution to the occupiers on the upper floors of the host and neighbouring buildings.

Roof terrace: At the 1<sup>st</sup> floor level, the roof terrace is likely to impact on the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers. You will need to demonstrate how this can be avoided from the roof terrace, such as probable reduced terrace size, installation of privacy screens subject to design compliance, or omission of the roof terrace.

Dormer extension: dormer extensions are common to the terrace of buildings. The aerial photo shows a small rear dormer on the host building setting below the roof ridge and away from the party-wall upstands to the neighbouring houses. The submitted drawings show a replacement dormer. I can confirm that this assessment excludes the dormer extension shown. Should you wish to replace the dormer you are advice to review CPG1 Design guideline on dormer extensions; via the link above.