

PLANNING AND DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

43 WHITFIELD STREET STAIRCASE EXTENSION

PLANNING STATEMENT

1. The applicant is West London & Suburban Property Investments Limited part of the Derwent London Group plc. It owns the freehold of the site, 43 Whitfield Street (including 14/22 Tottenham Street), which is highlighted with a red outline on P/001. Note that the ground floor property which the proposal is part of is now also registered separately as Twenty Tottenham Street.
2. The purpose of this application is to seek permission to extend the current accommodation stairs connecting the ground and 1st floors to the 2nd floor. The tenant which occupies the ground and first floors will also be taking a lease of the 2nd floor and therefore wishes to continue the staircase to this floor. Note that there are a common lift and two common staircases in the building which also provide the means of escape.
3. The proposal will result in a small increase to the current staircase outbuilding, but no additional usable area. The total additional GEA is 13sqm including voids.

PLANNING HISTORY

4. Planning permission was granted on 2 September 2008 (ref 2008/3397/P) to change the use from class B1 office to an alternative use of either class B1 office or to class A1 shop with the removal of garage doors and replacement with glazing at ground floor on the Tottenham Street elevation.
5. Planning permission was granted on 4 September 2008 (ref 2008/3396/P) for alterations to the Whitfield and Tottenham Street elevations to existing ground floor office use, class B1.
6. Both applications were implemented and a further application was submitted which was granted planning permission on 12 May 2010 (ref 2010/0043/P). This application sought permission for minor changes to the glazing and to introduce a new staircase between the ground and 1st floor. This application was also implemented and the purpose of this new application is to extend the staircase to the 2nd floor.

DESIGN STATEMENT

7. The applicant is a company which places good design as a fundamental objective of all its projects.
8. The proposed extension to the staircase is located in a small area at the rear of the building. It is contained within the footprint of the current staircase and recessed from the adjacent mews building. The extension is from the street only partly visible from a corner of Charlotte Mews. It is set back approximately 10m from the street. The applicant contends that due to the position and scale of the proposal there are no amenity issues which arise from overlooking or loss of light. The existing situation is shown in drawings P/100-103 and P/120-121 and the proposals have been shown on P/200-203 and P/220-221. Note that the ground floor plans (P/100 and P/200) have only been included for completeness and that no changes are proposed here.
9. Materials are noted on the drawings. It is considered that this is a minor application.

PRE-APPLICATION NOTIFICATION

10. In this case, the applicant itself is the most immediate neighbour to the application site. Therefore no consultations have been carried out by the applicant at this stage.

PLANNING POLICY

11. Since it is only a minor application, no special reference is made to national or strategic policies. There is no change in use and no real change in floor space figures. Nevertheless passing reference is made to PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development. We believe that the proposed scheme adheres to the promoted good design, providing attractive, useable, durable and adaptable places as a key element in achieving sustainable development.
12. The proposal takes into account the design principles set out in policy B1 of the 2006 Camden UDP. In particular the applicant believes that the proposal is respectful of the site.
13. The proposal also takes into account policy B3 of the 2006 Camden UDP. It will be constructed of high quality materials matching the existing building and particular the existing accommodation stair enclosure. The size of the extension has been designed to fit within the footprint of the existing stair enclosure and has been recessed from the neighbouring property to keep its impact to the minimum.
14. In relation to Policy B7 of the 2006 Camden UDP the applicant believes that the proposal preserves the setting of the conservation area. The proposal will only be partly visible in a corner of Charlotte Mews and will not have a detrimental impact on the setting.
15. The Camden Planning Guidance (2015) has also been taken note of, in particular its commitment to high quality design. The applicant is a design-led company with a high interest in the area and who supports these aspirations.
16. The site is located within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area and therefore subject to the 2008 Appraisal and Management Plan. The site has not been identified as a listed building or positive contributor in this document and its impact is therefore neutral. The properties to the north/ north-east of the site, the ones closest to/ with a view of the proposed extension are also shown to have a neutral contribution.
17. The applicant has also taken note of the Camden Development Policies 2010-2025, Local Development Framework, in particular policies DP22, DP24, DP25 and DP26.
18. The applicant has also taken note of the 2015 Camden Draft Local Plan, in particular policies D1 and D2. The applicant believes that the proposals respond positively to the policies as described against UDP policies B1, B3 and B7 above.
19. The site is also situated within the area identified within the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan. The site and its direct neighbours are not mentioned within this document and due to the minor scope and limited visibility of the proposal it is considered to not have any impact in relation to this document.

ACCESS STATEMENT

20. The proposal is for extending the current ground to 1st floor private accommodation staircase to the 2nd floor which is in addition to two existing common staircases, which also act as means of escape, and a lift. The applicant is committed to improving access wherever this is possible and proportionate. This extends to floor finishes, signage and lighting as well as to doors and easy access around its buildings. The applicant believes in an all-inclusive policy for people with disabilities whether by reason of mobility, hearing or sight. Such policy informs the design stage of each of its developments.
21. In the case of this application site, it is notes that there is a very good connection with public transport.