



**GERALDEVE**

London Borough of Camden  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 5 Pancras Square  
c/o Town Hall, Judd Street  
London  
WC1H 9JE

72 Welbeck Street London W1G 0AY  
Tel. 020 7493 3338  
[www.geraldeve.com](http://www.geraldeve.com)

11 February 2016

**Our ref: J10210**

Dear Sir / Madam

**251 Camden High Street, London, NW1 7BU**  
**Town and Country Planning Act 1990**  
**Planning Portal Ref: PP-04822893**

On behalf of our client, Castlehaven Row Limited ("applicant"), we write to submit a planning application for:

**"Alterations to the rear of the site including excavation works at lower ground floor level for continued retail (Class A1) use."**

The planning application comprises the following:

- Application forms;
- The relevant certificate (Certificate B);
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Form;
- A site location plan;
- Existing, proposed and demolition drawings prepared by Barr Gazetas;
- Design and Access Statement prepared by Barr Gazetas;
- Basement Impact Assessment prepared by CGL;
- The requisite application fee, being £195.

The application has been submitted electronically via the planning portal (reference: PP-04822893). The requisite application fee cheque has been issued under a separate cover.

### **The Site**

The site lies on the western side of Camden High Street close to its junction with Jamestown Road to the north. Inverness Street adjoins the block to the south.

The site forms part of a terrace of properties which comprise commercial units at basement and ground floor levels, fronting on to the High Street, and a mix of residential and commercial uses at upper floor levels.

The site itself comprises retail (Class A1) use at basement and ground floor level, with residential (Class C3) accommodation located above. The residential accommodation is accessed via an entrance at ground floor level in between Nos. 251 and 253 Camden High Street.

The existing retail accommodation is of poor quality and provides compromised space at basement level which is not suitable for retail use due to restricted access to it, level changes and restricted head heights.

The site benefits from excellent public transport links and has a PTAL rating of 6b which is the best rating available.

### **Planning History**

An application for the 'erection of a part two, part three storey building within the rear yard and change of use from offices to residential at ground floor level of existing building to create 5 self-contained flats (Class C3), and retention of external staircase at ground and first floor levels' was refused planning permission on the 4 April 2012 (application reference: 2012/0755/P).

The application was refused on the following grounds:

- The proposed development being visually intrusive and overly bulky as a result of its height and massing;
- That it would appear out of place and context and would have harmful levels of overlooking; and
- Would fall short of providing quality living accommodation.

It was considered by the planning officer that any development in the rear yard should be subservient to the main buildings fronting Camden High Street and that a building higher than two-storeys is unlikely to be acceptable.

The decision was appealed by the applicant and subsequently dismissed in March 2013 (reference: APP/X5210/A/12/2184739).

The Inspector considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, the living conditions of future and existing occupiers, sustainable transport and infrastructure provision.

Planning permission was granted on the 14 November 1980 for the 'erection of a single storey rear extension to the shop' (application reference: 31255). The principle of a rear extension has therefore been accepted as part of this planning permission

### **The Proposal**

The proposals for the site seek planning permission for alterations to the rear of of the site and excavation works at lower ground floor level to facilitate the provision of an improved retail unit.

The proposals are limited to ground and lower ground floor levels only and do not propose to change the use of the existing unit.

The existing lower ground floor level will be reduced in level to provide a new level slab and appropriate headroom suitable for retail use.

The existing ground floor will be retained and access will be made level.

The outcome of the proposals will be the provision of a new high quality retail unit across ground and lower ground floor levels.

The proposals do not include any alterations to the existing shopfront. An application relating to shopfront proposals will follow separately.

### **Application context**

This planning application is submitted as part of a suite of applications which propose to increase and improve the existing retail accommodation at No. 251, No. 253-255, No. 257 and No.259 Camden High Street.

The proposals vary for each unit but broadly comprise excavation works at basement level and a ground floor extension at the rear.

The applications have been made separately due to the conflicting lease arrangements for each unit and other issues specific to each unit including rights to light negotiations (which sit outside town planning controls).

The applicant wishes to retain the ability to implement each of these proposals in isolation should discussions on these issues become protracted and compromise the ability to implement any one, or more, of the units.

### **Planning Policy Assessment**

Within the Local Plan policies map the site is designated as falling within Camden Town Centre and forms part of a Core Shopping Frontage.

The site is not located within a Conservation Area.

### **Land Use**

At a national planning policy level the NPPF makes clear that local planning authorities should promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres.

At a local level, the Core Strategy (policies CS1, CS3 and CS7) confirms that Camden Town is a suitable location for accommodating growth in retail floorspace. Core Strategy Policy CS7 relates to the Borough's strategy for promoting Camden's centres and shops, including the provision of additional retail floorspace.

The proposals will result in a minimal reduction of retail (Class A1) floorspace of 8 sq m (GIA). The proposed loss in floorspace will facilitate the provision of a much improved retail unit with useable floorspace at ground and lower ground floor levels.



It is considered that the proposals would improve the unit's contribution to the vitality and viability of Camden Town Centre and the local economy, thus meeting planning policy objectives at all levels.

### **Design**

In accordance with Policy DP24 the Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider the following, *inter alia*:

- a) The character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;
- b) The character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;
- c) The quality of materials to be used; and
- d) Accessibility.

Full details of the proposals are set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

The proposals fully accord with previous comments made by the planning officer for a previously refused scheme on the site by remaining subservient to the main building fronting Camden High Street and not being more than two-storeys in height.

The scale and massing of the proposals is proportionate to the surrounding context at the rear of the site. The proposed parapet height of the extension will be in line with the rear of 261 Camden High Street to the north of the site.

The proposals are restricted to the rear of the site and would not be visible from the street. The new extension would improve the outlook of the existing residential units and tidy up what is a currently a compromised, poor quality and underutilised space.

The materials to be used will be of high quality and commensurate with the surrounding context.

### **Basement excavation works**

Policy DP27 of the Development Policies Document deals with basements and lightwells and stipulates that proposals for basements and other underground developments will require an assessment of the schemes impact on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability.

The Council will only permit basement development that does not cause harm to the built and natural environment and local amenity and does not result in flooding or ground instability.

The Council will require developers to demonstrate by methodologies appropriate to the site that schemes:

- a) Maintain the structural ability of the building and neighbourhood properties;

- b) Avoid adversely affecting drainage run-off or causing other damage to the water environments;
- c) Avoid cumulative impacts upon structural stability or the water environment in the local area.

In addition, the Council will consider whether schemes:

- d) Harm the amenity of neighbours;
- e) Lead to the loss of open space or trees of townscape or amenity value;
- f) Provide satisfactory landscaping, including adequate soil depth;
- g) Harm the appearance or setting of the property or the established character of the surrounding area; and
- h) Protect important archaeological remains.

Additional guidance is provided in Camden Planning Guidance Document 4 (CPG4) 'Basements and Lightwells'. The guidance requires Basement Impact Assessments to be undertaken for new basements in the Borough.

In accordance with planning policy guidance a Basement Impact Assessment has been prepared by CGL and forms part of this planning application submission.

The report addresses the screening, scoping and impact assessment processes set out in CPG4 and the Camden geological, hydrogeological, and hydrological study (CGHHS).

The report is applicable to the four properties forming part of this terrace (No. 251, Nos. 253-255, No.257 and No.259) on the basis the proposed basement works at each property are broadly similar and can therefore be tested together. Although it is acknowledged that the proposals at each property could come forward at separate stages.

Based on the assessment undertaken in the report, ground movements are anticipated to be of low magnitude in the locale of the adjacent structures and can be mitigated in the structural and temporary works design.

The long terms impact of the basement proposals on the local hydrogeological regime is considered to be negligible.

Assuming high quality workmanship and appropriate contingencies for groundwater control, it is considered that the calculated ground movement would limit building damage categories to no worse than 'Category 1' (very slight). Additionally, ground movements predicted along the line of the LUL tunnel fall below current limits recommended.

The proposed basement works are therefore considered to be acceptable having been assessed in accordance with planning policy requirements.

## Amenity

Policy DP26 of the Development Policies Document states that the Council will protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting planning permission that does not cause harm to amenity. The factors that will be considered include, *inter alia*:

- a) Visual privacy and overlooking;
- b) Overshadowing and outlook;
- c) Sunlight, daylight and artificial light levels;
- d) Noise and vibration levels; and
- e) Odour, fumes and dust.

The proposals are restricted to basement and ground floor level only, the rear of the building, and would not rise above the parapet of the existing residential terrace above or of buildings adjacent to the existing yard area. As a result there would be no impact on Sunlight and Daylight or overlooking as a result of the proposals.

The application does not propose to provide any external plant to the unit. This would follow under a separate application once the requirements of an occupier had been identified.

There would be no harm caused to the amenity of adjacent occupiers or neighbours as a result of these proposals.

## Conclusions

The proposals would greatly improve the existing retail accommodation at both ground and lower ground floor levels. The proposed excavation works at lower ground floor level would facilitate the ability to utilise retail floorspace at both levels by providing appropriate floor to ceiling heights and access arrangements.

The proposals are restricted to the rear of the unit in a currently underused inaccessible space and would not rise above the parapet of the adjacent buildings. As such, the proposals would be commensurate with the surrounding context and would not harm the amenity of adjacent neighbours or occupiers.

Comments received as part of a previous planning application for the site have been considered in full and have influenced the scope and scale of the works proposed.

The proposed increase and improvement of retail accommodation is fully supported by planning policy in this location and would enhance the viability and viability of Camden Town Centre.

We look forward to officers' confirmation that the application has been validated. However, please contact Samuel Palmer or Natalie Davies of this office if you wish to discuss any matter in the meantime.

Yours faithfully

*Gerald Eve LLP*

**Gerald Eve LLP**

NDavies@geraldev.com  
Direct tel. +44 (0)20 7333 6371