
Planning Statement

Development comprising the formation of a single storey basement level extension for residential use at Unit 1, 109 Goldhurst Terrace, London NW6 3HA

This Planning Statement demonstrates that these proposals for basement development at Unit 1, 109 Goldhurst Terrace, London NW6 3HA constitute sustainable development by reference to national and local planning policy guidance and the plethora of other basement planning permissions granted in the Swiss Cottage Conservation Area and Ward since the beginning of 2015.

The development proposed comprises a single storey basement for residential use. The gross external area of the basement will be 144.45m². The finished floor level of the basement will be at a depth of 3.336m below ground floor level.

Application site and its surroundings

The subject property comprises a detached mews house close to the southern end of Goldhurst Terrace in the South Hampstead Conservation Area. As outlined in the South Hampstead Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (February 2011), the special interest of the conservation area is the well preserved almost exclusively residential Victorian suburb, largely homogenous in scale and character. Goldhurst Terrace is typical of the large, semi-detached and terraced late-Victorian properties, in red or gault (white / cream) brick, with a particularly distinctive and attractive roof-scape including turrets, gables, and tall chimneys. These houses are made special by a variety of decorative treatments including terracotta panels and brickwork ornamentation, tiled and patterned footpaths, delicate ironwork, and elaborate timber doors and windows, including some original stained and leaded glass.

The subject property occupies back-land and is accessed from the east side of Goldhurst Terrace via a brick arch between Nos 107 and 111, by a service road providing access to the subject and neighbouring properties within these mews. 109 Goldhurst Terrace is arranged on ground and first floors and are subservient to but contemporaneous with the larger houses in Goldhurst Terrace which typify the housing in the conservation area. Unit 1, 109 Goldhurst Terrace is a former stables site, although more recently was used as a car repair workshop.

The Construction Method Statement and Basement Impact Assessment forming part of the planning application, explain how the engineering constraints have been considered and solutions employed to provide a safe design for supporting the refurbished dwelling and through the use of appropriate underpinning and construction managements affording safety to neighbouring properties and their owners.

Conformity with National Planning Policy Guidance - sustainable development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) explains and clarifies the meaning of sustainable development for the purposes of planning policy and development management, in paragraph 7 of the NPPF. This guidance states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental and that these dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- a social role – supporting 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, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy

In the context of the current planning application, these dimensions will be satisfied through the proposed basement development as this will fulfil the economic role through contributing to housing growth, where additional capacity is needed and may be accommodated. The social role will be attained by providing an increase in housing which will assist in meeting the needs of present and future generations, whilst the environmental role will be satisfied through the contribution that the basement development will generate in enhancing the built environment through innovative architectural and engineering design without causing environmental harm as demonstrated by the basement impact statement.

National planning policy on design considerations is set out in section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), “Requiring Good Design”. The NPPF guidance paragraphs 63-65 are relevant. The basement design at the subject property will allow a carefully engineered design solution to be implemented which will help raise the standard of design more generally in the area as demonstrated in both the Basement Impact Assessment and the Construction Management Statement. Accordingly, great weight should be accorded to these proposals in accordance with the advice in the NPPF.

The flexibility accorded by these proposals will be a positive advantage, essentially delivered by good design. Encouragement is to be found for these proposals in terms of the design guidance in the DCLG’s Planning Practice Guidance, which stipulates that well-designed housing should be functional, attractive and sustainable. Housing should also be adaptable to the changing needs of its occupants. The overall refurbishment of this building, including the basement proposals will satisfy the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance through the comprehensive re-design of the accommodation, allowing improved circulation, better daylighting and importantly a reconfiguration of servicing the dwelling, as advocated in Planning Practice Guidance, including the discrete storage of bins and bikes, access to meter boxes, space for drying clothes and places for deliveries.

In terms of parking, the existing successful off-street parking arrangement will be maintained, which will facilitate natural surveillance and thus will be compatible with advice in the Planning Practice Guidance.

Conformity with London Borough of Camden Planning Guidance - Basements and lightwells CPG 4

In preparing these proposals, it will be evident from the Basement Impact Assessment and Construction Method Statement that appropriate regard has been given to the Council’s informative guidance for basement development in, “*Basements and lightwells CPG 4*”. It will be appreciated that at the Pre-Application Meeting and subsequently, no objections have been raised to the principle of basement development in this location. Basement development has proved popular in the Swiss Cottage Ward during 2015. During the year, the London Borough of Camden’s planning data, indicates that in this ward alone, there were 62 planning applications involving basement development. Of these, as at 24th January 2016, 34 of these had been approved, 3 had been withdrawn, one application is recorded as having no objection to it and some 24 applications appear yet to be determined. These planning applications are listed in Appendix 1.

Within the locality, six basement planning applications were considered in Goldhurst Terrace during 2015. These are shown in Table 1 below. Of these, one planning application was made in respect of the subject property, which included proposals to use the basement as a dental surgery. Considerable reference was made to this use at the Pre Application Meeting and my clients are now seeking planning permission for C3 use (residential), which is not contentious.

Table 1

Planning Applications including basement development proposals in Goldhurst Terrace made during 2015.

Application Number	Site Address	Development Description	Status	Date Registered	Decision
2015/3793/P	63 Goldhurst Terrace London NW6 3HB	Excavation of basement with front and rear lightwells with cycle store to the front (Use Class C3).	REGISTERED	24/09/2015	
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2015/4513/P	Flat 3, 269 Goldhurst Terrace London NW6 3EP	Erection of single storey side extension and creation of basement below existing dwelling and new extension, with 2 no. front and 2 no. rear lightwells	REGISTERED	07/09/2015	
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2015/4370/P	207 Goldhurst Terrace London NW6 3ER	Excavation of basement with lightwells to the front and rear of the building (Use Class C3).	REGISTERED	19/08/2015	
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2015/4481/P	Unit 1 109 Goldhurst Terrace London NW6 3HA	Excavation of a basement to create a dental practise (<i>sic</i>) (D1 Use) and ancillary habitable accommodation (C3 Use).	WITHDRAWN	18/08/2015	Withdrawn Decision
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2014/6787/P	156 A Goldhurst Terrace London NW6 3HP	Excavation of basement with front and rear lightwells, erection of a rear extension following the demolition of the existing rear extension, the formation of a side door to front facade, and replacement windows at front ground floor level to ground floor flat	FINAL DECISION	15/01/2015	Granted

Three of these planning applications are yet to be determined, the other two have been permitted, one being subject to the completion of a s106 Agreement. Thus, basement development has become a popular and acceptable form of development in the Swiss Cottage ward and there is

substantial evidence of basement development being acceptable in Goldhurst Terrace and more widely throughout the Swiss Cottage Conservation Area.

As no potential harm as a consequence of physical development was raised at the Pre Application Meeting, it is assumed that in common with other basement planning applications in the locality, that these revised proposals will be supported by the Borough Council's officers and Planning Committee.

South Hampstead Conservation Area

The subject property is located close to the eastern boundary of the South Hampstead Conservation Area. In relation to basement development the South Hampstead Character Appraisal and Management Strategy has recognised the need for this form of development, commenting at paragraph 7.11 that in recent years, South Hampstead Conservation Area has experienced a proliferation of basement developments and extensions to existing basement accommodation, together with excavation of associated lightwells at the front and rear of properties. The conservation area statement explains that some basement extensions have caused harm consequent upon a *“loss of verdant front and rear gardens, detracting from the serene, leafy character of the rear gardens in the CA.”* Within this part of the Conservation Area, as with most mews, landscape features are generally sparse and there would be no planning harm to the visual character of Goldhurst Terrace and the associated mews on completion of this basement development.

No suggestion or indication by the Borough planning officer has arisen that the revised proposals would offend the South Hampstead Character Appraisal and Management Strategy due to over-development due to the basement development being of an inappropriate scale to the host property or to its neighbours, or due to impacting on the immediate and neighbouring garden setting. In such situations, the Council will resist this type of development where it is considered to harm the character or appearance of the conservation area. By comparison, in considering the proposal at Unit 1, 109 Goldhurst Terrace, the effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area and the neighbourhood will be minimal. The development when completed, will not be visible. The property will remain in single family ownership and will not give rise to the usual stresses on parking and other social impacts. As part of the overall refurbishment of the dwelling, the basement proposals will be a positive influence on the character of the Conservation Area, through the physical improvements to the architectural quality of the building and by appropriately increasing residential floor space without causing any visual harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The South Hampstead Character Appraisal and Management Strategy implicitly accepts basement development provided that it does not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area. Indeed, at the pre-application meeting with planning officer Mr Shane O'Donnell on 7th July 2015, there was no suggestion that the principle of a basement would be unacceptable. The main issues discussed related to the possible use of the additional accommodation and the need for a Basement Impact Assessment to consider the likely impact from a town planning perspective and to demonstrate appropriate mitigation in order to justify these proposals; this will be noted from the comprehensive Basement Impact Assessment submitted as part of this planning application.

The design considerations relating to the basement are principally concerned with the internal arrangement of spaces including the provision of adequate daylighting and ventilation. The basement will incorporate a plant room and storage which will allow the upper floors to provide more living space and allow a more flexible configuration, as will be apparent from the drawings submitted with this application and the other proposals for the refurbishment of the building.

Conclusion

In common with other basement developments in Camden and in conservation areas, there is no doubt that the proposed development will contribute to the objectives of undertaking sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF and will enhance the character of the conservation area, taken together with the other related proposals to conserve and carefully refurbish this building. The proposals would also satisfy the need to conform with the Council's Planning Guidance - Basements and lightwells CPG 4 and the South Hampstead Character Appraisal and Management Strategy, 2011. The planning application has been carefully prepared with an acceptable engineering solution to safeguard and underpin neighbouring property as demonstrated in the Basement Impact Assessment and Construction Method Statement.

The proposal will therefore satisfy the presumption of providing sustainable development and I respectfully request that planning permission should be granted.

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26th January 2016