

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS & CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

SITE AT FLATS 1 & 5, 86 CANFIELD GARDENS, LONDON NW6 3EE

PLANNING APPLICATION BY
MS HEMAL PATEL

PLANNING STATEMENT

April 2017

CHRISTOPHER WICKHAM ASSOCIATES
Town Planning Consultancy

35 Highgate High Street, London N6 5JT t: 020-8340 7950 e: cmwickham@aol.com

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement accompanies the planning application submitted by Ms Hemal Patel for the *'Vertical sub-division of existing ground and basement level four bedroom maisonette (Flat 1) to provide 2no. three bedroom maisonettes (no changes proposed to external appearance)(Amendment to consent 2016/5934/P to apply 'car-free' restriction to existing Flat 5)'* at Flats 1 & 5, 86 Canfield Gardens, London NW6 3EE.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the application drawing set. The 'as existing' elevation drawings are annotated to confirm that this application proposes no changes to the external appearance of the property.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site, which is situated within the South Hampstead (formerly Swiss Cottage) Conservation Area, is located on the north side of Canfield Gardens, and is occupied by a three storey semi-detached property which has been converted into five flats (numbered Flats 1 to 5). This planning application concerns proposed conversion works to Flat 1 which is a ground floor and basement maisonette with a gross internal floor area (GIA) of approximately 300 square metres and 9 habitable rooms. The applicant also owns the top floor flat, known as Flat 5, which is a three bedroom dwelling.
- 2.2 Flat 1 incorporates a recently-constructed, two storey rear extension served by light wells. Beyond this, there is a deep rear garden which is for the exclusive use of the ground floor flat. The garden includes a number of mature trees and other established planting. A small landscaped garden, with a central pedestrian entrance and a refuse and recycling store, is found at the front of the property.
- 2.3 Canfield Gardens is a residential street which is fronted by properties of similar scale and design on each side. Many properties have been converted into self-contained flats, and many include rear and roof level extensions.
- 2.4 Canfield Gardens forms part of a controlled parking zone. The application site

occupies a relatively accessible location within convenient walking distance of local shops, public transport and other services. Flat 1, which is owned and occupied by the applicant and her family, is not subject to a 'car-free' restriction. Flat 5 is also not subject to a 'car-free' restriction.

3. RELEVANT RECENT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 A planning application (2013/3855/P) for the *'demolition of existing conservatory extension, excavation of lower ground floor to provide habitable accommodation, construction of lower ground floor and ground floor rear extension, formation of front and rear lightwells, all in connection with conversion of existing ground floor flat into 2no. three bedroom maisonettes at lower ground and ground floors'* was deemed to be withdrawn on 8th March 2016. This follows officer's support for the scheme, and its favourable processing through the members' briefing procedure.
- 3.2 Planning permission was granted on 21st October 2014 under reference 2014/2282/P for *'excavation of basement with the creation of lightwells and associated openings to front and rear, erection of extension incorporating basement and ground floor levels and alterations to openings to rear and side elevations all in connection with flat 1 (Class C3)'*. The permission was subject to the terms of a S.106 agreement of the same date which required the approval of and compliance with a Construction Management Plan (CMP), and the payment of a highways contribution for works to the footway in the vicinity of the site. This planning consent was implemented in full.
- 3.3 Planning permission was granted on 7th April 2017 under reference 2016/5934/P for the *'conversion from 1 x self-contained 4 bed flat to 2x self-contained 3 bed flats at ground and basement floor levels'*. This planning permission, which has not been implemented, is subject to the terms of a s.106 agreement which imposes a 'car-free' restriction on one of the proposed units. In this statement, this planning permission is referred to as "the approved scheme".

4. THE APPLICATION PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The application scheme proposes internal works which would result in the vertical

sub-division of the existing basement and ground floor maisonette into 2no. three bedroom maisonettes. These units are identified as Flats 1 and 6 on the proposed drawings. Each dwelling would be internally accessed from the existing communal hall. No changes are proposed either to the external appearance of the property or to the layout of any of the flats within the building.

- 4.2 As previously stated, the applicant owns and occupies Flat 1, and also owns the top floor unit, Flat 5. Neither flat is currently subject to a 'car-free' restriction. The applicant will continue to live within reconfigured Flat 1 following the completion of the proposed development, the subject of the current planning application. In order to prevent an increase in on-street parking pressure associated with the proposed additional dwelling at the application site, the applicant proposes to enter into a s.106 Planning Obligation, by way of a bilateral agreement or a unilateral undertaking, which would impose a 'car-free' restriction on Flat 5.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.1 The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development which is defined to comprise economic, social and environmental dimensions. The planning system should (i) contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places, (ii) support 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 accessible to local services, and (iii) contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, including through the prudent use of resources, the minimising of waste and pollution, and moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.2 The NPPF seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing. LPAs should use their evidence base to ensure that the Local Plan meets the full needs for market and affordable housing, and housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. LPAs should

seek to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes by planning for a mix of housing sizes, and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

The statutory development plan

- 5.3 The statutory development plan comprises the consolidated London Plan 2016 (incorporating Early Minor Alterations 2013 and Further Alterations 2015/16), the Camden Core Strategy which was adopted in November 2010, and the Camden Development Policies DPD which was also adopted in November 2010. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications and appeals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The London Plan

- 5.4 The London Plan places a high priority on the provision of additional housing. Paragraph 3.13 states that “*the Mayor is clear that London desperately needs more homes in order to promote opportunity and real choice for all Londoners.....*”. This objective is reflected in Policy 3.3 which states that boroughs should seek to achieve and exceed the relevant minimum borough annual average housing target as set out in revised Table 3.1. For Camden borough, Table 3.1 identifies a minimum ten year housing target for the period 2015 to 2025 of 8,892 new homes equating to an annual level of 889 units.
- 5.5 The Mayor’s Housing Standards Policy Transition Statement (October 2015) requires new dwellings to meet minimum space standards as set out in the nationally described space standards. The minimum standard for 6 person, 3 bedroom units of 2 storeys is 102 square metres (GIA).

The Core Strategy

- 5.6 The following policies of the adopted Core Strategy, as summarised, are considered to be relevant to the issues raised by this planning application:-

- Policy CS1 seeks to direct growth in Camden to the most suitable

locations. Development should make full use of its site whilst respecting context and taking into account the quality of design;

- Policy CS5 states that the Council will manage the impact of growth and development in Camden including the need to protect and enhance heritage assets; and
- Policy CS6 states that the Council will aim to make full use of Camden's capacity for housing which will be regarded as the priority land-use.

Camden Development Policies DPD

5.7 The following policies of the Camden Development Policies DPD, as summarised, are considered to be relevant to the issues raised by this planning application:-

- Policy DP2 seeks to make full use of Camden's housing capacity;
- Policy DP5 states that the Council will seek to provide a mix of dwelling sizes reflecting stated priorities;
- Policy DP18 states that the Council will seek to ensure that developments provide the minimum necessary parking provision. Development will be 'car-free' in areas within Controlled Parking Zones that are easily accessible by public transport; and
- Policy DP19 states that the Council will resist development which would increase demand for on-street parking where on-street spaces cannot meet existing demand.

Camden Planning Guidance

5.8 Camden Planning Guidance 2 (Housing) (CPG2) lays down a series of residential development standards. Family-sized units should have access to private gardens.

5.9 Camden Planning Guidance 7 (Transport) (CPG7) states that existing parking rights can normally be retained on development sites where it can be demonstrated that existing occupiers are to return to the address on completion, for example where a dwelling is to be sub-divided.

6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of additional dwelling

6.1 The existing basement and ground floor maisonette (Flat 1) is very large; it has a GIA of approximately 300 square metres, and incorporates 9 habitable rooms. This exceptionally large private dwelling which does not make best use, in market housing terms, of the available floorspace.

6.2 The application scheme would provide 2 no. family-sized, three bedroom units for which there is a strong demand, as confirmed by Policy DP5. The proposal would add to overall housing supply, and is therefore supportable under London Plan Policy 3.3, Core Strategy Policy CS6, and Development Policy DP2. It also accords with guidance in the NPPF which seeks to boost housing supply significantly.

6.3 The principle of providing an additional family-sized dwelling at the application site is therefore considered to be wholly supportable in policy terms, and has been established by the approved scheme.

Layout & Amenity

6.4 Both dwellings would comfortably exceed the national minimum space standard of 102 square metres (GIA) for a 3 bedroom, 6 person, two storey dwellings. The units would have floor areas of 130 square metres in the case of Flat 6, and 166 square metres in the case of reconfigured Flat 1 (both as identified on the application drawings). Both units would also incorporate dual aspect outlook, and the main daytime habitable areas would be located at ground floor level. Satisfactory light and outlook would be provided to all bedrooms via the front and rear lightwells. Each unit would have access to part of the rear garden.

- 6.5 The provision of an additional dwelling would have no material impact on neighbour amenity. Many properties in Canfield Gardens have been converted into flats, and are relatively intensively occupied. Furthermore, the application scheme does not propose additional floorspace, and the level of overall occupation would not necessarily increase as a result of the proposal. The absence of any changes to the external appearance of the building provides a further safeguard to the living conditions of adjacent residents.
- 6.6 The acceptability of the conversion in terms of the size and layout of the resulting units, and the impact on neighbour amenity, has been established by the approved scheme.

Car-Free Issues

- 6.7 The applicant, who lives with her family at the application property and has two parking permits associated with Flat 1, will remain in residence within reconfigured Flat 1 on completion of the proposed sub-division. CPG7 allows for returning occupiers to retain existing parking rights following works of this kind. On this basis, a 'car-free' restriction for just one dwelling would be justified in connection with the application scheme under Policy DP18. This principle has been established by the approved scheme.
- 6.8 The approved scheme imposes the 'car-free' restriction on proposed Flat 6, i.e. the other unit which results from the proposed sub-division of existing Flat 1. In obtaining planning consent for the approved scheme, this arrangement was agreed to reluctantly by the applicant, and was not the basis on which the application was submitted.
- 6.9 In the current application, the applicant seeks to apply the 'car-free' restriction for the net increase of one dwelling to her existing top floor flat (Flat 5) rather than the new dwelling (proposed Flat 6). Flat 5 has full existing rights for occupiers to obtain on-street parking permits but no permits have been applied for, and the applicant has no intention of obtaining parking permits associated with Flat 5. The applicant is prepared to enter into a s.106 Planning Obligation, either bilaterally or unilaterally, which would prevent future occupiers of Flat 5 from obtaining on-street

parking permits.

- 6.10 The proposal would meet the expectation of Policy DP18 to prevent an increase in on-street car parking demand arising from a conversion scheme on a property located in a CPZ and easily accessible to public transport. The application of the 'car-free' restriction to Flat 5 would achieve the same planning outcome, in terms of preventing increased on-street car parking pressure arising from the proposed development, as would arise from the implementation of the approved scheme. Both existing Flat 5 and proposed Flat 6 are 3 bedroom units, and the units are of comparable size. However, proposed Flat 6 would be more suited to family occupation in terms of ease of accessibility from the ground floor communal entrance, and by virtue of access to a private garden. It is considered that a family's need for a car is greater, and it would therefore be more reasonable to apply the 'car-free' restriction to Flat 5. The proposed planning obligation would also meet the 'tests' set out in the NPPF in that (i) it would be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms for the reasons set out above, (ii) it would be directly related to the development because it would be associated with the same property, and (iii) it would be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind.
- 6.11 It should also be noted that the principle of applying a 'car-free' restriction to an existing flat in the same building (and in the same ownership), rather than to a proposed unit, was accepted by officers on withdrawn application 2013/3855/P (see paragraph 9.1 of officer's report). In that case, officers were proposing that two units at the application site should be 'car-free' because the applicant was not in occupation at that time. The report stated as follows:-

'The applicant is the owner of the freehold of the property and owns two other smaller flats within the application building. In this instance, they have requested that the smaller units become car-free and the two proposed units retain the right to apply for car parking permits. It is considered that due to the circumstances and the potential for the smaller units to lose their right to apply for a permit, the overall outcome would be equal and that two units within the development would become car-free.'

6.12 It is proposed that two secure cycle spaces would be provided in the front garden of the application property. It is suggested that this provision would be delivered by way of a planning condition requiring details of the spaces to be submitted to and approved by the LPA, and for the spaces to be provided prior to occupation of proposed Flat 6.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The proposal would result in a net increase of one dwelling at 86 Canfield Gardens. This increase in housing supply is supported by all level of planning policy. Furthermore, family-sized, 3 bedroom accommodation would be provided with access to a private garden. The new accommodation would be of a high standard in terms of size, layout and outlook, and the conversion would not harm neighbour amenity. The new unit would be provided in a sustainable location close to public transport and other services.

7.2 Through the proposed planning obligation, the proposal would not result in any material increase in the demand for on-street car parking associated with the property at 86 Canfield Gardens because the net increase of one dwelling within the property would be accompanied by the imposition of a 'car-free' restriction on one dwelling of comparable size within the same property.

7.3 The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the development plan and related planning guidance.

CHRISTOPHER WICKHAM ASSOCIATES
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