

## Planning Statement

**Site** - 14 Daleham Mews, London, NW3 5DB

**Proposal** - Change of use from garage for motor vehicle repairs (Class B2) to residential living space (Class C3), ancillary to the existing residential unit at the site, with associated external alterations.

### Site and surroundings

The application site contains a part one/part two storey mid-terrace property located on the western side of Daleham Mews. The building is predominantly finished in exposed brickwork, and has three projecting bay window features at first floor level to the front. A terrace is located at first floor level at the rear, with adjacent rooflights serving the ground floor below. At ground floor level the site contains two distinct uses; a vacant commercial unit, which was most recently in use as a commercial garage used for motor vehicle repairs (Class B2), and ancillary residential space associated with the dwelling which is primarily located at first floor level (Class C3). The commercial unit has been vacant since June 2015.

The site backs on to the rear garden to 16 Daleham Gardens to the west, and a privacy screen is mounted on the party wall between these properties.

The building is not listed; however the site is located within Belsize Conservation Area.

Works are currently underway on site pursuant to application ref.'s 2014/1909/P (as amended by 2016/1511/P), 2015/3844/P and 2016/1806/P (as amended by 2016/5370/P) (see summary of planning history below). It is noted that the existing plans submitted with this application show the situation before these works commenced.

### Relevant planning history

9005102 - Application for established use certificate for use of ground floor garage for motor vehicle repairs. Granted 12/04/1990.

2011/5035/P - Erection of timber fence above existing party wall between 14 Daleham Mews and 16 Daleham Gardens. Granted 08/12/2011.

2013/5859/P - Rear extension at first floor level, in connection with the change of use from existing garage for motor vehicle repairs (Class B2) with residential flat above, to a single dwelling house (class C3). Refused 26/09/2013.

2014/1909/P - Change of use of part of ground floor vehicle repair garage (Class B2) to utility / storage room ancillary to first floor flat (Class C3) and erection of first floor rear extension to flat. Appeal allowed on 28/03/2015.

2015/3844/P - Conversion of domestic garage to habitable room and associated external alterations. Granted 04/08/2015.

2016/1511/P - Alterations to front and rear fenestration; lowering of rear terrace; installation of 4 x rooflights to rear roofslope and 1 x rooflight to rear extension, as an amendment to planning permission granted on 28/03/2015 under reference 2014/1909/P for the change of use of part of ground floor vehicle repair garage to utility/storage room ancillary to first floor flat and erection of first floor rear extension to flat. Granted on 23/05/2016.

2016/1806/P - Change of use of 15sqm of ground floor from vehicle repair garage (B2 Use) to ancillary residential use (C3 Use). Granted on 09/05/2016.

2016/5370/P - Non-material amendment of application ref: 2016/1806/P dated 09/05/16 for change of use of vehicle repair garage (B2 Use) to ancillary residential use (C3 Use), namely, a change to the floor layout of the two units. Granted on 17/10/2016.

### Proposal

The proposal involves the change of use of the commercial unit (Class B2) to ancillary residential living space associated with the existing residential unit at the site, which occupies the remainder of the ground floor and the first floor of the building.

The only external alterations will be the replacement of the existing garage style doors with a new façade to match the style evident at neighbouring properties, i.e. high level windows above a timber wall.

### Policy justification

Camden Planning Guidance 5 (CPG5) provides guidance relating to the change of use of employment sites and business premises. Sites are categorised according to their characteristics to determine which sites and premises should be retained. The 3 categories are set out below.

*Category 1 - Sites in this category provide the highest quality accommodation. Typically, they provide:*

- *purpose built accommodation;*
- *predominantly single storey premises;*
- *clear, high ceiling heights;*
- *high loading bays and doors (min 5.5m or 18ft high);*
- *access for large delivery and servicing vehicles both into and around the site;*
- *24 hour operation with unrestricted loading access; and*
- *minimal risk that the 24-hour operation will adversely harm the amenity of neighbouring properties.*

#### *Category 2*

*The majority of Camden's industrial stock falls into Category 2. They usually have a selection of the following characteristics:*

- *good access for servicing and delivery;*
- *slightly more restricted hours of operation than Category 1 sites;*
- *roller shutter doors;*
- *clear, high floor to ceiling heights (3-5m);*
- *lots of natural light;*
- *level access – normally ground floor;*
- *flexible neighbouring uses;*
- *limited number of upper floors with goods lift access; and*
- *some off street parking.*

#### *Category 3*

- *small, isolated premises;*
- *poor access - narrow streets, small doors, steps;*
- *no goods lifts;*
- *little or no space for servicing;*
- *incompatible neighbouring uses (most often residential); and*
- *lower ground or basement level.*

The premises are small, with an internal floorspace of approximately 70.5m<sup>2</sup>. The location is isolated, set within a residential mews, away from any major thoroughfare. There is only one other known commercial premises within Daleham Mews, at no. 25. The rest of the street is entirely residential; indeed, the premises sit below and immediately adjacent to residential uses. There is no goods lift. There is no formalised area for servicing, and the only access is at the front of the premises onto Daleham Mews. The street is not particularly wide, and parking occurs on both sides of the road, severely restricting the carriageway width in places. The road surface is cobbled and uneven. For these reasons, it is clear that the premises can be considered to fall within Category 3.

Camden Planning Guidance 5 states that Category 1 sites are rare in Camden and will always be protected. Category 2 sites are more common in Camden and will usually be protected unless there is very strong marketing evidence to show that they are no longer suitable. The Business Premises Study 2011 advises that most sites within categories 1 and 2 can be marketed and let successfully. However, Category 3 sites are heavily compromised and may not be suitable for continued industrial use when they become empty or need significant investment.

The premises have been vacant since June 2015. The previous tenant was a personal friend of the owner, who benefited from a peppercorn rent, but has since retired. Understandably, the owner has no further desire to let the property at less than a reasonable market rent. Given the residential location and limitations of the premises as identified above, it is not considered that the premises would represent an attractive proposition for any future tenant at market rent, and would therefore be highly likely to remain vacant, as has been the case for some 2 years. This has significant financial ramifications for the owner, who is still required to pay business rates for an empty property. The owner is retired and has no income besides a pension, thus the continued payment of business rates, particularly since the recent rise, is unsustainable.

CPG5 states that in instances where the principle of redevelopment of an employment site is acceptable, the priority will be to secure permanent housing and/or community uses. The proposed use as permanent housing therefore accords with this principle and represents an acceptable alternative use. Indeed, this would accord far better with the established residential character of the Mews.

Table 1 (Dwelling Size Priorities) at paragraph 3.158 of Camden's emerging Local Plan identifies 3 bedroom market housing as being high priority. The resultant 3 bedroom dwelling will contribute to addressing Camden's housing need. The property will meet nationally described space standards and the standards contained within the London Plan's Housing SPG.

Regard has been had to the Belsize Conservation Area Statement, as the site is located within Sub Area 2 (Belsize Village) of the Belize Conservation Area. The proposal is considered to result in no harm on any of the features which contribute to the special character of this area. There will be only minimal alterations to the front elevation, which will reflect similar alterations evident on many of the surrounding properties in Daleham Mews.

In summary, it is considered that the proposed loss of the business premises is justified in this instance due to the constrained nature of this site which does not provide high quality accommodation for a business use. In particular, the character of the Mews has evolved over the years, resulting in a strong residential focus. The existing business use is now at odds with the established residential nature of this quiet side street. Moreover, the premises have been vacant since June 2015, and it is considered that bringing this site back into use,

through a change to residential use, will present a more efficient and desirable use of this land.