



**Date: 04/11/2016**  
**Our ref: 2016/4337/PRE**  
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*By email*

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Dear Mr Moldán,

**Re: Crabtree Place, 7 - 15 Whitfield Street, London, W1T 2AS**

Thank you for submitting a pre-planning application enquiry for the above property which was received with the required fee of £960.00. These pre-application notes were informed via a site visit to the property completed on the 29 September 2016.

## 1. Drawings and documents

1.1. Following discussions on-site, the original submission was amended and now contains the following drawings in support of the pre-application request:

- Revised 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Plan (P05 Rev B) received 06 October
- Revised N Elevation (P07 Rev B) received 06 October
- Sectional Analysis (P11) received 06 October
- Section Detail (P12) received 06 October
- Revised S Elevation (P13) received 06 October

## 2. Proposal

2.1. Advice is requested for the erection of extensions and terraces to the roof of the existing buildings to provide additional residential floor space and outdoor amenity areas for the 7 residential units (C3). The roof extensions (labelled as conservatories) would be a series of 4 glazed structures with crown roofs, internal areas of 10.7sqm and internal stairs to the units below. The outdoor terraces would have an area of approximately 19.3sqm each and would be enclosed by obscurely glazed screens to the sides, and a sloping green wall to the rear. The southern half of the roof would be retained as a green roof (which currently the existing roof is exclusively comprised of).

## 3. Site description

3.1. The subject site relates to a row of 7 mews style, 3 storey townhouses, constructed as part of a recent mixed use redevelopment of the former substation site. The site is located within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area and the Central London Area. It is located immediately to the south of the protected Open Public Green Space of Crabtree Fields. The site lies

immediately adjacent to older properties to the west and south which front Charlotte Street and Windmill Lane. The majority of these properties feature commercial units at ground floor and residential accommodation above and have an average height of 4 storeys.

- 3.2. Due to the development being relatively recent, the Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (adopted 2008) makes no specific mention of the existing development (as it was yet to be built). There are no Article 4 Directives which have been applied to the application site. There are no trees protected by tree preservation orders on or adjacent to the application site.

#### 4. Relevant planning history

- 4.1. Following planning history is relevant to this site:

After two sets of refused planning and conservation area request applications (2005/2742/C + 2005/2739/P; and 2006/0242/P + 2006/0245/P), the following applications were:

2007/5162/P & 2007/5188/C: – Planning and conservation area consent was granted subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement for the demolition of the existing substation building and the *'Redevelopment of site comprising the erection of a part 2, 3, and 6 storey building with retained basement, for uses comprising 22 self-contained residential flats (Class C3), flexible Class B1/D1/D2 uses, a secondary electricity substation (Sui Generis) and ancillary facilities'*

2008/4667/P: - Planning permission refused on the 17/12/2008 for variations to the scheme approved under 2007/5162/P.

2009/1215/P: - Planning permission granted subject to deed of variation on the 25/06/2010 for variations to the scheme approved under 2007/5162/P.

#### 5. Relevant policies and guidance

- 5.1. The relevant policies that would apply to this proposal are taken from the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework (Core Strategy and Development Policy documents) as adopted on 8th November 2010, The London Plan 2016 and the NPPF 2012. The following policies will be taken into consideration:

- **National Planning Policy Framework 2012**
- **London Plan 2016**
  - Policy 3.3 – Increasing housing supply
  - Policy 3.4 – Optimising housing potential
  - Policy 7.4 – Local Character
  - Policy 7.6 – Architecture
- **Local Development Framework**
- **Core Strategy (2011)**
  - CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development
  - CS6 – Providing quality homes
  - CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage
  - CS15 - Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces & encouraging biodiversity
- **Development Policies (2011)**
  - DP2 – Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing

- DP16 – The transport implications of development
  - DP17 – Walking, cycling and public transport
  - DP22 - Promoting sustainable design and construction
  - DP24 – Securing high quality design
  - DP25 – Conserving Camden's heritage
  - DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours
  - DP31 Provision of, and improvements to, public open space and outdoor sport and recreation facilities
- **Supplementary Guidance**
    - CPG 1 – Design 2015
    - CPG 6 – Amenity 2011
  - **Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2008)**

## 6. Assessment

### Design and conservation

#### Impact upon host row of dwellings :

- 6.1. Policy DP24 (Securing high quality design) states that all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, will be expected to consider the character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings; the character and proportions of the existing building, and the quality of materials to be used. Policy DP25 (Conserving Camden's Heritage) states that development will only be permitted within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of that area.
- 6.2. The Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (AMP) states that inappropriate roof level extensions - particularly where these interrupt the consistency of a uniform terrace or the prevailing scale and character of a block; are overly prominent in the street; or contain prominent roof level fencing - can have a detrimental impact either cumulatively or individually on the character and appearance of the area (para.12.3).
- 6.3. As outlined in the Relevant History section, the scheme which was approved and subsequently implemented was subject to an iterative design process with various schemes being refused by virtue of (almost other things) their scale, height and resulting visual impact. The approved scheme had been negotiated down in terms of height prior to determination and, now that it has been built out, the design of the row of dwellings is successful in that it appears lower in height than the existing buildings to the north and south of the site, reflecting a mew-style relationship to the adjacent properties along Windmill Lane. The terraced dwellings have a use and form that is characteristic of the conservation area, and their scale and simple roofscape and form would reflect something of the pattern and scale of traditional mews houses.
- 6.4. With the above in mind, the Council's Planning and Conservation officers are of the view that the addition of the proposed pavilion structures as well as the visual clutter necessitated by the proposed terraces (glass balustrade, privacy screening etc.) would appear at odds with the mews style and form of the dwellings. Whilst it is acknowledged that the revised scheme has been amended in an attempt to better relate the roof extensions to the principle façade below, as well as set these structures further backwards; it is still considered that the form, scale and design as well as the heavy use of glass would draw undue attention to the dwellings and would have an intrusive effect on the character and appearance of the

dwellings. It is also considered that the extension would not reflect the pattern, form or scale of traditional mews houses and would reduce the integrity of appearance of the development, resulting in harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Whilst it is also acknowledged that the extensions to the rear of properties along Windmill Lane have in part acted to degrade the surround roof scape; it is not considered that this would justify further alterations to the established roof forms of the area. Based on the above, the proposed roof extensions and associated structures would be unacceptable in principle as they would be incongruous additions that would materially detract from the character and appearance of the host buildings whilst causing unacceptably detrimental harm to the conservation area.

- 6.5. While it is noted that during the assessment of the proposed development a view was taken that the extensions were more akin to roof pavilions rather than conservatories (as labelled); it should be noted that CGP1 (Design) states that proposed conservatories should be located adjacent to the side or rear elevations of the building at ground or basement level; and that only in exceptional circumstances will conservatories be allowed on upper levels (para.4.19). The glazed nature of the structures would be materially harmful to the area and would be a characteristic that is uncommon on mews type buildings and within this part of the conservation area.

Impact upon adjacent Open Space:

- 6.6. Camden's parks and open spaces are important to the borough in terms of health, sport, recreation and play, the economy, culture, biodiversity, providing a pleasant outlook and providing breaks in the built up area. Core Strategy policy CS15 states that the Council will protect and improve Camden's parks and open spaces by protecting any open spaces designated in the adopted open space schedule. The policy continues to state that the Council will *"only allow development on sites adjacent to an open space that respects the size, form and use of that open space and does not cause harm to its wholeness, appearance or setting, or harm public enjoyment of the space"* (para.15.6).
- 6.7. As aforementioned, the application site is immediately to the south of Crabtree Fields which acts as a popular oasis of calm in the midst of the surrounding dense development and maintains a peaceful atmosphere. Being one of the few green open spaces in the area, the park is heavily used by local residents and workers. This is acknowledged in the Charlotte Street AMP which finds there to be a *"contrast in the vicinity of Whitfield Gardens and Crabtree Fields where there is a greater sense of openness deriving from the open spaces that have been created from car parks and bomb damaged sites in the second half of the 20th century. Crabtree Fields has been [the most] successful in creating a sense of place"* (para.6.23).
- 6.8. Although submitted sectional analysis would indicate that a maximum of 1.8m of the proposed conservatories would be visible from views within the open space, these elements would still be visible and prominent – especially from longer views. They would add visual mass and an increased sense of enclosure to the adjacent open space. Furthermore, as users of the proposed terraces could walk up the closest edge of the roof, users of the adjacent park (as well as child's play area) would have a sense of being overlooked to a much greater extent than existing (photos demonstrating these views are included in appendix one).
- 6.9. It is therefore considered that the proposed extensions as well as terraces would have an intrusive effect when seen from within the gardens, resulting in an adverse effect on its calm, private and peaceful setting. Due to this effect on the setting of the adjoining open space, the proposals would fail to preserve or enhance the overall character or appearance of the conservation area.

- 6.10. It is also noted that of that the previously refused applications for the site a number contain reasons for refusal which relate to the visual impact upon this adjacent space. For instance, applications 2005/2739/P and 2006/0242/P both including refusals on the ground of the following: *“The proposed development ... would be detrimental to the setting of the adjoining public open space, resulting in visual intrusion and increased sense of enclosure...”* The concern for the protection of the character of this adjacent space is paramount and the proposal would lead to a significant level of harm.

### **Residential Amenity**

- 6.11. Policy DP26 seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to their living conditions/residential amenities. Factors to consider and which are relevant in this case include sunlight, daylight, artificial light levels, noise and general disturbance, outlook and visual privacy/overlooking.
- 6.12. The subject site is within an extremely dense area and is surrounded on three sides by (primarily) residential development at upper floors. As previously mentioned, successive schemes for the subject site were amended in terms of their height and massing at roof level, partly due to the overbearing visual impact/reduction of outlook formed upon the rear facing habitable room windows of the units within adjacent properties along Windmill Street and Charlotte Street. As was mentioned onsite, any proposed development at roof level would thus attract significant concern in terms of the impacts that this additional mass might cause upon the outlook of neighbouring units, particularly at third floor level. Although due to the proposed scale and set back it is not considered likely that the extension would lead to a substantial loss of light, the justification of the scheme in terms of impacts upon outlook would be crucial.
- 6.13. During the site visit it was not possible to gain access to the rear of the properties or their roofs, the assessment in terms of the impacts upon the adjacent properties cannot be fully confirmed. It is noted that the structures would be set back away from the Southern boundary, maintaining a distance of approximately 11m (as measured from the sectional analysis drawing) from the opposing rear elevation. It is also noted that the views from the rear have been softened via the raising of the green roof up to a height of approximately 1.5m and that the proposed screening would prevent any potential privacy issues. Despite the screening though it would still be possible for mutual overlooking between parts of the terraces and upper level windows (i.e. neighbouring windows above the screening). In addition, the proposed screening is unacceptable in design and conservation terms due to the resulting additions to the roof. Given these would need to be removed, overlooking and privacy issues would be exacerbated. Roof terraces are likely to be unacceptable in principle.
- 6.14. Following the above, further information and analysis into the potential reduction in outlook from habitable room windows would be necessary prior to the Council finding the development acceptable in these terms. If a formal application were to be submitted it would be advisable to outlined the position of habitable rooms on adjacent properties as well as including further assessment into the impact of these views. Whilst the submitted analysis would indicate that views from the section provided would not be subject to a great reduction in outlook, particular concern is maintain in relation to units along Charlotte Street, which are likely to be situated much closed to the proposed extensions. Furthermore, detailed commentary, plans and diagrams would be required to illustrate the harm brought about through overlooking from the terrace and conservatories.

### **Transport / Highways**

- 6.15. Works associated with the development have the potential to generate a significant number of construction vehicle movements during the overall construction period and there are concerns with the impact of this on the wider transport network. Whilst the primary concern is public safety, the Council would also need to ensure that construction traffic does not create (or add to existing) traffic congestion. The Council also needs to ensure that the development can be implemented without being detrimental to residential amenity or the safety and efficient operation of the highway network in the local area.
- 6.16. Should any subsequent application be found to be acceptable by the Council, it should therefore be noted that given the site's location and ability to be accessed, it is anticipated that the proposal would require a Construction Management Plan (CMP). It would therefore be expected that a draft CMP should be submitted at application stage.
- 6.17. The Council has a CMP pro-forma which must be used once a Principal Contractor has been appointed. The CMP, in the form of the pro-forma, would need to be approved by the Council prior to any works commencing on site. A financial contribution of £1,140 would need to be secured to cover the costs of reviewing the Construction Management Plan. This would also need to be secured by a Section 106 planning obligation if planning permission is granted. Some highway licenses would additionally be required to facilitate the proposed works. It would be necessary to obtain such highway licences from the Council prior to commencing work on site. Any such licence requirements should be discussed in the CMP

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1. Overall, in terms of design and conservation; although it is acknowledged that the provision of private amenity spaces for the subject dwellings would clearly be preferable to the occupants, it is not considered that this private benefit would outweigh the significant harm caused by the proposed development. The proposals are considered to disrupt the mews style character and form of the existing dwellings as well as causing a greater intrusive effect upon the adjacent protected Open Space of Crabtree Fields. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to policies CS5, CS15, DP24 and DP25 and it is advised that it would be unlikely for planning officers to support any formal submission on these grounds.
- 7.2. In terms of residential amenities, although submitted information has acted to demonstrate that within certain views the proposed extensions would have a less than substantial impact upon outlook, there is not enough evidence to be sure that these impacts would be acceptable to all of the numerous surrounding units. Particular concern is highlighted regarding those rear windows facing east, which appear to be much closer to the proposed development location. There is also the potential for overlooking and privacy issues. It was therefore advised that any formal submission should be accompanied by greater analysis / justification in terms of these impacts.

## **8. Planning application information**

- 8.1. If you submit a planning application which addresses the outstanding issue detailed in this report satisfactorily, I would advise you to submit the following for a valid planning application:
- Completed form – Full Planning
  - An Ordnance Survey based location plan at 1:1250 scale denoting the site in red.
  - Floor plans at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
  - Roof plans at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
  - Elevation drawings at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'

- Section drawings at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Design and access statement including detailed assessment of the impacts in terms of neighbouring outlook as well as the adjacent Open Space.
- Sample photographs/manufacturer details of proposed materials
- Please see [supporting information for planning applications](#) for more information.

8.2. We are legally required to consult on applications with individuals who may be affected by the proposals. We would notify neighbours by putting up notices on or near the site and, advertise in a local newspaper. The Council must allow 21 days from the consultation start date for responses to be received. Whilst it may be possible for a proposal of this size to be determined under delegated powers, if more than 3 objections from neighbours or an objection from a local amenity group is received the application will be referred to the Members Briefing Panel should it be recommended for approval by officers. For more details click [here](#).

**This document represents an initial informal officer view of your proposals based on the information available to us at this stage and would not be binding upon the Council, nor prejudice any future planning application decisions made by the Council.**

If you have any queries about the above letter or the attached document please do not hesitate to contact me direct.

Thank you for using Camden's pre-application advice service.

Yours sincerely,

**John Diver**  
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Regeneration and Planning  
Supporting Communities  
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**Appendix One: Views of the site from the adjacent Crabtree Fields**

*1. View from main open green space*



*2. View from child's play area*

