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Date

DESIGN ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed alterations to rear of building at 25 Ely Place, Camden

Introduction

This statement has been prepared in accordance with DCLG Circular 01/2006 (as amended by the “Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation” March 2010 and the Development Management Procedure Order 2015). It also incorporates the assessment of the impact of the proposal on the architectural and historic importance of the building which is a Grade II listed building, and on the character and appearance of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area, as required in paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework. It should be read in association with the submitted application for the proposed development.

The proposals all relate to alterations to features at the rear of the building as follows

- The repair of a flat roof over a ground floor extension at the rear of the building.
- The construction of a small bridge over a void that separates the ground floor extension from the main building
- The installation of railings around the edge of the flat roof, to either side of the bridge and around the existing lantern unit in the centre of the flat roof.
- The alteration of an existing window opening on the rear of the main building to provide a door to gain access to the bridge and flat roof area for the purposes of maintenance and repair.

The Application Site

The application site is located on the eastern side of Ely Place within the London Borough of Camden. The main building is a 5 storey building that is part of a terrace of buildings of a similar scale. There is a single storey flat roofed extension to the rear of the building. The building is used as offices with ancillary facilities. The rear of the building is screened from public view by the buildings on Ely Place and high office buildings to the rear.

The building is a listed building and is within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area.

Planning Policy

The main development plan document for this area is the Camden Local Plan that was adopted on 3rd July 2017. The following policy of this document is considered relevant to the consideration of this application.

Policy D2 states that the Council will preserve and where appropriate enhance Camden’s heritage assets and their settings. Development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area. The council will resist alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building.

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the government's national policies for the planning system and may be a material consideration in considering individual proposals.

Paragraph 128 of the Framework requires that applicants should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made to their setting and that the level of detail submitted should be no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Paragraph 132 requires that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the assets conservation. The impact of the proposals on the significance of the conservation area and the listed building is considered below.

Use

The use of the building as offices is unchanged by the proposals. The fact that the only access to the rear roof area will be through the main building will ensure that its use is restricted from within the building.

Scale

The proposal will add little to the existing scale of the building the only additional floorspace being the bridge to access the area.

Layout

The layout of the proposal involves access to the flat roof area from the rear of the existing building with guardrails around to ensure the safety of users of the area. The existing building and all other buildings around the site are in office use so there will be no loss of amenity for adjoining occupiers arising from the proposal.

Appearance

The proposals will not be visible from any public viewpoint the rear of the building being screened by existing buildings along Ely Place and other buildings to the rear.

The new features are to be constructed in natural materials: mild steel powder coated mid grey for the new bridge and railings. The new door at the rear of the existing building will be inserted into an enlarged existing window opening and the material to be used in the frame is satin anodised to match the windows on the rear of the building.

The general appearance of the alterations will be of a simple structure that is in keeping with the historic character of the building.

Effect on the historic and special architectural importance of the Listed Building and on the character and appearance of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area

25 and 21 Ely Place are a Grade II listed building. The listing description of the building indicates that it was listed for group value and that the original listing only included the façade of no 25. The features of interest in the description only refer to features on the front elevation and it indicates that the interior was not inspected. It must also be noted that the building has been rebuilt behind the existing façade following the granting of permission for this work in 1973.

In view of this history it must be concluded that there is no historic fabric at the rear of the building and that the proposed works would not have any detrimental effect on the historic fabric of the building. Despite the lack of historic interest to the rear of the building the scheme has been designed, and to use materials that would be in keeping with the existing building. The only loss of fabric in the main building is the removal of an existing window and its replacement with a door in the same materials as the 1970s windows.

Overall the proposed alterations will have no adverse effect on the special architectural and historic interest of the building.

The site is also within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area. The conservation area character statement for this conservation area describes the area as being densely built up. The statement considers that the infilling of yards and rear spaces between buildings will generally be unacceptable where they contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area. In this case the rear space is already built over and the only physical development to the rear of the building is the construction of a small bridge and the erection of railings around an existing flat roofed area. These features have been designed to be in keeping with adjoining buildings and to use materials that are in keeping with those buildings.

There will be no adverse impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area.

The Heritage Environment Record identifies a number of other listed buildings in the vicinity of the site. These include 7, 8, 9, 13, 14 Ely Place and St Etheldreda's Church all of which are on the opposite side of Ely Place, and the Porters Lodge at the entrance to Ely Place. The proposals will not be visible from any of these buildings. They also include 21 and 26-34 Ely Place. Again the listing descriptions only include features on the front elevations and the descriptions indicate that nos 26-30 (the numbers directly adjacent to no 25) were rebuilt in the 20th century in facsimile. All of these buildings also have single storey rear extensions of a variety of designs. The proposed alterations to no 25 would have no adverse effects on the setting of these buildings.

The site is also identified as being within an Archaeological Priority Area. The works proposed do not involve any excavations below ground level and there will therefore be no effect on any archaeological remains on the site.

Context

The alterations that are to be carried out have taken full account of the context of the architectural character and historic interest of the building and its surroundings.

Access

The proposals will make no alteration to the means of access into the main building. Access to the flat roof area will be achieved through the new door opening in the rear of the building, across the bridge and a step.

Conclusion

In view of the above statement together with the details included in the application, it is hoped that the Council will be able to support this proposal, which is in accordance with the relevant development plan policies and has no adverse effect on the structure, historic interest or setting of the Listed Building and no adverse effect on the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Revised 23rd December 2017.

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