

Cassidy+ Ashton

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Architecture + Building Surveying + Town Planning

OFFICE EXTENSION AND REFURBISHMENT

Planning Statement

On behalf of The Senator Group

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Cassidy + Ashton on behalf of The Senator Group in respect of the proposed provision of new entrance, internal reconfiguration to extend existing showroom area, and roof extension to provide additional office floorspace, new roof terrace and 1 No. 2 bed residential unit at 144 A Clerkenwell Road, Camden.

This Statement describes the site and its surroundings before setting out the planning policy context under which the application should be considered. The planning merits are then examined and the conclusion is reached that the development conforms to the principles of sustainable development and there are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should not be granted.

This Statement is to be read in conjunction with the drawings, application forms and documents submitted alongside the application.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

The site is located within the heart of Clerkenwell, close to Farringdon Station and a short walk from the areas of Farringdon and Smithfield. The immediate area is characterised by mixed-use developments resulting from the reuse and refurbishment of warehouses, factories and other light industrial units that were predominant until the 1970s and 1980s.

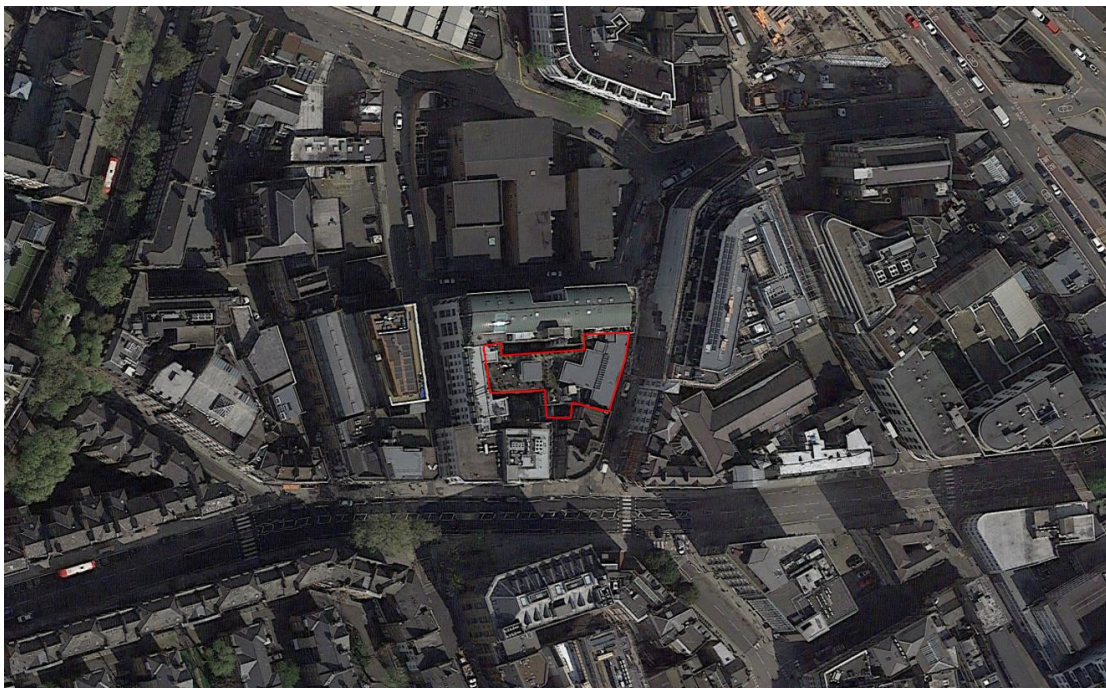


Figure 1 – Site Location

The site has an area of approximately 606m² and comprises an infill-type building, which fronts onto both White Bear Yard and Back Hill. The existing building in fills the block off Clerkenwell Road and Back Hill, and is surrounded by buildings of 4-6 storeys, which vary in occupational use and architectural style.

The site lies within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area and although the building itself is not listed, it sits adjacent to the Grade II* listed Roman Catholic Italian Church of St Peter and Presbytery. The current use of the building is offices (Class B1a).

For the purposes of planning, the site is located within the Borough of Camden, ward of Holborn and Covent Garden. The site is also located within the Central London Area, as defined in The London Plan.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The aim of the development is to provide new, high-quality office residential floorspace by rationalising the internal layout of the existing building. Whilst doing so, the design should also enhance the external appearance of the existing building in a way that is appropriate to its location within a Conservation Area.

From the outset the proposed design approach was therefore to work with and promote the best features of the existing building, maintaining its overall appearance and architectural ethos whilst upgrading and modernising the internal layout.

An additional 274m² GIA / 287m² GEA of B1a and 127m² GIA / 139m² GEA of new C3 floorspace will be provided as part of the proposed development, broken down as follows:

3.1.1 Existing B1a

Floor No.	Area (m ²)	
	GIA	GEA
B	546	588
G	547	589
1	529	569
2	529	569
3	242	258
Total	2393	2573

3.1.2 Proposed B1a

Floor No.	Area (m2)	
	GIA	GEA
B	546	588
G	547	589
1	529	569
2	529	569
3	446	465
4	70	80
Total	2667	2860

3.1.3 Proposed C3

Floor No.	Area (m2)	
	GIA	GEA
B	0	0
G	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	127	139
Total	127	139

3.2 Pre-application Discussions

Prior to the development of the final design, the proposals were the subject of a pre-application consultation exercise, which involved engaging with several key stakeholders at the Local Planning Authority. Following this process the LPA made a number of recommendations, which were subsequently incorporated into the scheme.

The proposed new double-height entrance off Back Hill has been redesigned to incorporate existing features and detailing in the form of the white banding, which is an important architectural feature. This approach reflects the strong warehouse and industrial language of this elevation, with the incorporation of the new opening at first floor level helping to retain and enhance it.

The existing hierarchy, views, spaces and details between buildings have now been retained as part of the revised proposals. The previous iteration of the proposed roof extension, which was considered to be too visually prominent and dominant above the host building, has now been set-back and finished in more sympathetic materials as part of the revised design. Photoviews incorporating the additional storeys have also been produced and are submitted alongside this application.

Elevations have been prepared to illustrate the view from Clerkenwell Road into White Bear Yard, which demonstrate the visual appearance of the proposed development and how it works with the existing building and those around it.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.1 The Development Plan

For the purposes of this application the Development Plan is comprised of:

- London Plan (2011);
- Camden Core Strategy (2010);
- Camden Development Policies DPD (2010); and
- Camden Site Allocations DPD (2013).

Other planning policies and guidance which are material considerations in the discussion of this proposal are:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- London View Management Framework (2011);
- Crossrail SPG (2013);
- Camden Policy Guidance 1 – Design (2013);
- Camden Policy Guidance 2 – Housing (2013);
- Camden Policy Guidance 3 – Sustainability (2013);
- Camden Policy Guidance 6 – Amenity
- Camden Policy Guidance 7 – Transport
- Camden Policy Guidance 8 – Planning Obligations
- Hatton Garden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2017)

4.2 Designations

- The Site and surroundings are affected by the following planning designations:
- Central London Area;
- Hatton Garden Conservation Area;
- Archaeological Priority Area – London Suburbs; and
- London View Management Framework viewing corridor

5.0 APPRAISAL

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the starting point for planning applications is the development plan. Applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In accordance with Section 38(6), the main issues of relevance to this application are as follows:

- Principle of development;
- Design considerations, including:
 - Impact on the Hatton Garden Conservation Area; and
 - Impact upon identified views.
- Standard of residential accommodation;
- Affordable housing provision;
- Neighbouring amenity; and
- Transport.

5.1 Principle of Development

Core Strategy Policy E2 provides guidance on the Council's approach to maintaining and securing a range of premises for businesses to support Camden's economy and provide employment opportunities for the borough's residents. As such, Policy E2 seeks to protect premises or sites that are suitable for continued business use.

Based on feedback received during pre-application consultation, the entirety of the existing floorspace is being retained for its current B1(a) use as part of the proposals, with an additional 274m² being provided as part of the revised third and new fourth floors. This would represent an increase in the overall provision of employment floorspace of more than 11%.

The proposals also include the creation of 127m² of C3 floorspace as part of a single residential unit located within the new fourth floor. Housing is regarded as the priority land-use within the Local Plan, with the Council encouraging the inclusion of self-contained homes in non-residential development in all parts of the borough. The Plan also identifies a priority need for 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings over 1 and 4+ bedroom units.

Policy H2 states that where development in the Central London Area provides more than 200m² of additional floorspace, the Council will require 50% of all additional floorspace to be self-contained housing, subject to the following considerations:

- the character of the development, the site and the area;

- site size, and any constraints on developing the site for a mix of uses;
- the priority the Local Plan gives to the jewellery sector in the Hatton Garden area;
- whether self-contained housing would be compatible with the character and operational requirements of the proposed non-residential use and other nearby uses; and
- whether the development is publicly funded or serves a public purpose.

Although the new residential unit represents around 46% of the additional floorspace proposed, this minor shortfall should be considered in the context of the existing building and its location, as outlined above.

Whilst self-contained housing would be compatible with a neighbouring B1(a) use, the site is heavily constrained in terms of the height and massing of neighbouring buildings and their uses, and the internal layout of the existing building. Coupled with the site's location within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area and a subsequent need to retain the existing hierarchy, views, spaces and details between existing buildings, there is therefore limited scope to increase the amount of C3 floorspace provided.

In light of the above, it is therefore considered that the development is acceptable in principle and that the proposals are compatible with the relevant Local Plan policies with regard to employment sites and new residential development.

5.2 Design

Whilst design considerations relating to the proposed development are covered in detail as part of the submitted Design and Access Statement, there are a number of policies that relate specifically to the site's location within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area a strategic view (London Panorama 2A.1), which are considered below.

5.2.1 Impact on the Hatton Garden Conservation Area

Policy D1 of the Local Plan sets out a general requirement for development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality in order to improve the function, appearance and character of the area. Policy D2 builds upon this, stating that the Council will preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed building.

Although the proposed development site is not listed, part of the existing building (7 Back Hill) is identified as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area within which it is located.

Despite the context being varied with many original uses having been lost, the surrounding area is still characterised by a number of industrial and warehouse buildings historically used for storage and manufacture, of which this is one. As the existing building reflects the form and history of the area, positive features will be retained and enhanced, such as the prominent white banding to the Back Hill elevation.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation area, and contribute to the setting of nearby listed buildings. As such, the proposed development is acceptable in heritage terms.

5.2.2 Impact upon Strategic Views

Due regard has been given to the London View Management Framework when designing the proposed development. Although the site falls within London Panorama 2A.1, the proposals will have no material impact as the overall height of the roof extension will remain well below that of surrounding buildings and structures.

5.3 Standard of residential accommodation

Camden Policy Guidance 2 (Housing) provides guidance on how the Council expects development to provide high quality housing. Nationally described space standards for all new dwellings (including conversions of existing buildings) are also set out in the London Plan.

For a single storey 2 bedroom apartment, the minimum gross internal floor area must exceed 70m², which the proposed unit comfortably achieves at 127m². The layout has also been designed to ensure appropriate levels of daylight and ventilation, and sufficient space for internal storage.

As such, the proposals are considered to be appropriate in terms of the standard of residential accommodation provided.

5.4 Affordable housing provision

Policy H4 states that the Council will expect a contribution to affordable housing from all developments that include housing and provide one or more additional homes. It also states that a sliding scale target applies to developments that provide one or more additional homes and have capacity for fewer than 25 additional homes, starting at 2% for one home and increasing by 2% of for each home added to capacity.

Although Policy H4 states that affordable housing should be provided on site for developments with capacity for 10 or more additional dwellings, where this is not possible (as is the case here), it has been

conformed that the Council will accept a payment-in-lieu of affordable housing. With this in mind and given the scale and nature of the development and the residential floorspace proposed, it is not considered appropriate to make an on-site contribution towards affordable housing in accordance with Policy H4.

5.5 Neighbouring amenity

Policy A1 seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours, stating that the Council will grant permission for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to amenity. Of particular relevance to this development are potential impacts relating to privacy, outlook, noise, daylight and sunlight.

5.5.1 Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing

A Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Report has been undertaken to describe the effect of the proposed development on the daylight, sunlight and overshadowing to habitable rooms and open spaces in existing developments, adjacent and cumulative to the application site.

For further details, please see the accompanying Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Report.

5.5.2 Noise and Vibration

5.6 Policy A4 seeks to ensure that noise and vibration is controlled and managed. Further to this, any development involving the installation, alteration or replacement of plant, ventilation, extraction or air conditioning equipment, will require a noise assessment.

As such, an Acoustic Planning Report is submitted as part of this application, which demonstrates that the proposed development would comply with the Council's noise standards. As outlined in the report, noise from plant and machinery is capable of achieving a BS 4142 Rating Level of 5 dB below the representative LA90 background noise level, or 10 dB below where noise source is tonal, at the nearest noise sensitive properties.

For further details, please see the accompanying Acoustic Planning Report.

5.7 Transport

Policy T1 of the local plan requires development to provide cycling facilities in accordance with Camden's own minimum standards and alongside those set out in the London Plan.

In order to meet the relevant requirements, sufficient space will be provided to accommodate a total of 32 No. long stay (1 per 90m²) and 6 No. short stay (1 per 500m²) cycle parking spaces within storage rooms on the ground and lower ground floors.

Further to this, the development will also be car-free, as required by Policy T2 of the Local Plan. As such, no further vehicle parking spaces are specified as part of the proposed development.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development will involve the provision of a new entrance, internal reconfiguration to extend existing showroom area, and roof extension to provide additional office floorspace, new roof terrace and 1 No. 2 bed residential unit.

Both the Client and the Local Authority have been engaged from an early stage in respect of the proposed development. Consultation will continue to take place with a wide range of stakeholders throughout the formal application process.

The proposals represent an appropriate and high quality form of development, providing new and improved office and residential floorspace, for which there is an identified need.

Advice has been taken from the Council to ensure that the scale, layout and appearance of the development are also appropriate for the site. The proposals would allow for the viable redevelopment of an existing building, whilst providing appropriate modern facilities, thereby making a significant contribution to the continuing regeneration taking place across the Borough.

The proposals will conserve and enhance the character of the conservation area, including the setting of the Grade II* listed Church of St Peter. Similarly, due to their nature, they will not have any adverse impacts upon strategic views.

Finally, the site benefits from a sustainable location and would not result in a significant increase in traffic movements in comparison to the existing.

It is therefore considered that the development is acceptable in respect of local and national planning policy, and that planning consent should be granted without delay.

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