

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)

PLANNING APPLICATION BY MR ADEL BENTALEB

SITE AT 8 MANSTONE ROAD, LONDON NW2 3XG

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

CWA REF: 1318

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Design & Access Statement relates to the planning application by Mr Adel Bentaleb for *'installation of 5 rooflights on the front and side roof slopes (retrospective), and erection of one rear dormer and two side dormers on roof, all in connection with creation of self-contained studio flat at loft level'* at 8 Manstone Road, London NW2 3XG.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with existing drawing no. 8/10A and proposed drawing no. 8/200E.

2. THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The application site is located on the north-west side of Manstone Road, approximately midway between the junctions with Cricklewood Broadway in the west and Fordwych Road in the east. The site is occupied by a detached two storey property which has been converted to a total of 9 self-contained flats comprising 2no. one bedroom flats and 7 studio flats.
- 2.2 The property has recently been extended at roof level by the addition of a dormer window on each side roof slope, and a single rear dormer window. The dormers are unauthorised in planning terms (see further below). The converted loft area, which is unfinished and not currently occupied, is accessed via stairs located within the right-hand (as viewed from the street) side dormer window. The stairs lead up from the communal first floor landing. The site includes a communal rear garden and a front forecourt which is used for off-street car parking.
- 2.3 The site is situated in an accessible location close to shops and other services on Cricklewood Broadway. Residential development along Manstone Road and the closest section of Fordwych Road is of a broadly consistent character typically comprising closely-spaced detached properties, many of which have been converted to flats. Various properties in the locality include rear and side dormer windows, and there is considerable variety in terms of the position, size and detailed design of these features.

2.4 The property is not listed and is not situated within a conservation area. No heritage assets have been identified in the vicinity of the application site.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The application site has an extensive planning history including the following:-

- A certificate of lawfulness was issued on 12th June 2014 under reference 2014/2985/P for the proposed erection of 2 x side dormers and 1 x rear dormer and installation of roof lights at front and both sides;
- A certificate of lawfulness was issued on 21st September 2015 under reference 2015/3853/P for the use of the building as 9no. self-contained flats (Class C3). This decision would appear to override the certificate issued under reference 2014/2985/P in that the subject property would not have been in use as a single dwelling at the date of issue of the latter;
- Planning permission was granted on 12th January 2017 under reference 2016/6049/P for the removal of unlawful side and rear dormers, making the roof good (where necessary), retention of 5 rooflights on the front and side roof slopes and construction of a rear dormer;
- Planning permission was granted on 14th March 2017 under reference 2017/0343/P for the installation of 5 rooflights (retrospective) and erection of one rear and two side dormers;
- Planning permission was granted on appeal on 15th February 2018 (LPA ref: 2017/1926/P) for the installation of 5 rooflights on the front and side roof slopes (retrospective) and erection of one rear dormer and two side dormers on roof. This permission is referred to in this statement as 'the approved scheme'; and
- A Planning Enforcement Notice was issued on 26th May 2017 in respect of the existing side dormer windows. An appeal against the notice was dismissed on 15th February 2018. Compliance with the notice is required within 4 months of this date.

4. THE APPLICATION PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The planning application proposes the removal of the three existing dormer windows, including the two side dormers which are the subject of the enforcement notice. These would be replaced by three new dormers including a rear and a left-hand side dormer which would be identical to the equivalent features of the approved scheme. On the right-hand side elevation, a new dormer (of identical dimensions and position to the left-hand side dormer) would be constructed. It should be noted that the right-hand side dormer which forms part of the approved scheme is slightly narrower than the approved dormer on the left-hand side elevation. All three dormers would feature hipped roofs, and would be set down from main roof ridge level and located above eaves level. The five existing rooflights would be retained.
- 4.2 The application scheme also proposes the formation of a studio flat within the loft space. This would involve lowering the existing loft floor level. The proposed studio flat would be accessed via a continuation of the existing staircase which would be accommodated within the proposed right-hand side dormer. This would involve the modification of the existing stair arrangement within the existing (larger) side dormer. The proposed flat would comprise a single habitable space with a separate WC/shower room.

5. PLANNING POLICY

The 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, inter alia, 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.
- 5.2 The NPPF states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is

indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription of detail but should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access for new development in relation to the local area. LPAs should not impose architectural styles or tastes.

The statutory development plan

- 5.3 The statutory development plan for the area comprises the consolidated London Plan 2016 (incorporating Early Minor Alterations 2013 and Further Alterations 2015/16), and the Camden Local Plan which was adopted in July 2017. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications 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 Policy 3.4 states that, taking account of local context and character, the plan’s design principles, and public transport capacity, development should optimise housing capacity. Policy 3.5 states that housing developments should be of the highest standard, and should achieve specified internal space standards based on the nearest equivalent national technical standard. The minimum space standard for a one person dwelling (with a shower) is 37 square metres of gross internal area (GIA). Further guidance on housing standards is set out in the Mayor’s Housing SPG.

- 5.6 Policy 5.3 seeks the highest standards of sustainable design and construction to improve the environmental performance of new developments.
- 5.7 Policy 7.4 states that development should have regard to the form, function and structure of an area, place or street, and the scale, mass and orientation of buildings. Design should be a high quality and human scale that has regard to existing context. Policy 7.6 states that development should protect residential amenity, and should be of the highest architectural quality including details and materials that need not necessarily reflect local character.

The Camden Local Plan

- 5.8 The following policies of the Camden Local Plan are considered to be of relevance:-
- Policy H1 states that the Council will aim to ensure a sufficient supply of homes to exceed the target of 16,800 homes from 2016/17 to 2030/31;
 - Policy H6 states that the Council will aim to create mixed and inclusive communities by seeking a variety of housing sizes. Self-contained housing should comply with nationally described standards;
 - Policy H7 states that the Council will take a flexible approach to assessing the mix of proposed dwellings in each development including by having regard to site size and constraints;
 - Policy A1 states that the Council will seek to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours, including in relation to the factors of visual privacy, outlook, sunlight and daylight; and
 - Policy D1 states that the Council will seek high quality design in all developments, and will require proposals to respect local context and character, including in terms of detailing and the use of materials. It states that the Council will require development to be of sustainable

design and construction.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- 5.9 Camden Planning Guidance (Design) (CPG1) was adopted in July 2015. The guidance states that the Council is committed to excellence in design, and schemes should consider the context of the development and its surrounding area, the design and use of the building itself, and the materials used. Alterations should take account of the character and design of the property and its surroundings. Extensions should be subordinate to the original building in terms of scale and situation unless the specific circumstances of the site, such as the context of the property or its particular design, would enable an exception to this approach.
- 5.10 CPG1 lay down a series of general principles relating to roof alterations and extensions. Alterations are likely to be acceptable where they are architecturally sympathetic to the age and character of the building and retain the overall integrity of the roof form, or where there are a variety of additions or alterations to roofs which create an established pattern and where further development of a similar form would not cause additional harm. Specifically in relation to roof dormers, paragraph 5.11 states that roof dormers should be sensitive changes which maintain the overall structure of the existing roof form. Such proposals will be generally considered acceptable where (in summary) (a) the pitch of the existing roof is sufficient to allow adequate habitable space; (b) dormers do not cut through the roof ridge or edge of the hip but are sufficiently far below (usually by way of a 500mm gap) the ridge or hip; (c) dormers do not interrupt an unbroken roofscape; (d) dormers are separate small projections which relate to the façade below; (e) dormers are located below the parapet line (where applicable); and (f) complimentary materials are used.
- 5.11 Camden Planning Guidance (Housing) (CPG2), which was adopted in May 2016, includes residential development standards. Flats should be well laid out with a secure private entrance. Units within attics should have a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.3 metres over at least half of the floor area although floor space with a height of less than 1.5 metres is not included within this calculation. A one person unit should have a minimum floor area of 32 square metres.

The Emerging New London Plan

- 5.12 The draft New London Plan was published on 29th November 2017. Policy H1 sets out ten-year housing targets for each borough, and requires boroughs to optimise the potential for housing delivery on all suitable sites including small housing sites. For Camden, the target set out in Table 4.1 requires the borough to deliver 10,860 new homes during the period 2019/20 to 2028/28, equating to an annualised average of 1,086 new dwellings.
- 5.13 Policy H2 states that small sites (defined to include those delivering between 1 and 25 dwellings below 0.25 hectares in size) should play a much greater role in housing delivery. Table 4.2 sets out the 10 year targets for net housing completions on small sites including a requirement for Camden borough to provide 3,760 (equating to an annualised average of 376) for the period 2019/20 to 2028/28. To deliver these targets, the policy lays down a presumption in favour of schemes which provide between 1 and 25 units on sites which are vacant or underused, or where density can be increased, on sites within PTALs 3-6 or within 800 metres of a station or town centre boundary, through conversions, extensions, redevelopment or infill.

6. PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS

Amount of development

- 6.1 The proposal would deliver an additional studio dwelling with a GIA of 38 square metres (GIA), as measured for the area which would have at least 1.6 metres minimum headroom. At least 50% of this floor area would have a minimum headroom of 2.3 metres.

Layout & Amenity

- 6.2 In addition to its satisfactory overall size, the proposed studio dwelling would provide a well-proportioned habitable space with good quality outlook and light via dormer windows to the rear and to one side. The retained roof lights would provide additional sources of light and outlook to the front and both sides of the building.

The location of the proposed flat within the existing loft space offers the opportunity for ample domestic storage within the lower eaves section of the accommodation. The unit would also have its own secure private entrance at the top of the communal staircase. As is the case with the existing flats in the application property, occupiers of the proposed studio flat would have access to the communal rear garden. The unit would be fully soundproofed, in compliance with the latest Building Regulations.

6.3 The proposed dormer windows and retained roof lights would not result in any loss of light, outlook or privacy for occupiers of neighbouring buildings, as confirmed by the grant of planning permission for the approved scheme. The formation of one additional studio dwelling within a building which currently contains nine small homes would not materially increase the amount of 'comings and goings' at the property, and would therefore not harm local residential amenities or the character of the street.

6.4 For the above reasons, the proposed flat would constitute a well-designed small dwelling which would meet the expectations of Local Plan Policy A1, and applicable guidance set out in CPG2.

Scale & Appearance

6.5 Manstone Road, which is a short road linking Cricklewood Broadway and Fordwych Road, is fronted by closely-spaced, detached residential properties with hipped roofs and off-set front bay windows. Properties of similar design are found in the closest section of Fordwych Road. The overall character of this area is therefore defined by residential buildings of similar age, design and scale which provide almost continuous built-up frontages other than at street corners.

6.6 The approved scheme has established the principle of constructing side and rear dormers at the application property. Externally, the only difference between the current application proposal and the approved scheme is that the right-hand side dormer would be increased in width to be the same size as the approved left-hand side dormer. That apart, the position of the proposed dormers on their respective roof slopes, and their detailed design, would be identical to the approved scheme.

- 6.7 More specifically, the proposed side dormers would be set back from the main (non-bay) front elevation by just over 5 metres, and would be set-back from the closest point of the existing main front roof hip by 1.7 metres. All the proposed dormers would be centrally located on their roof slopes, and would also be set down from roof ridge level and set above roof eaves level by a margin which comfortably exceeds the 500mm guideline dimension set out in CPG1. Furthermore, matching materials and sensitive design detailing would be employed.
- 6.8 For the above reasons, the proposed dormers would constitute well-designed and architecturally subordinate roof level features which would meet the requirements of Local Plan Policy D1 and the design guidance set out in CPG1.

Use

- 6.9 The application site is located within an established residential street which is sustainably located close to local shops, services and public transport. The lawful use of the property comprises a number of small flats. The application proposal would provide an additional small dwelling at this accessible location, and would make a worthwhile contribution to housing supply and choice, in compliance with all levels of planning policy. This is a material planning consideration which weighs in favour of the application scheme.

Access

- 6.10 The application site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 4, and is located within a controlled parking zone. The site also includes two off-street parking spaces. The proposed small dwelling is unlikely to result in significant demand for additional kerbside parking in the locality, but any such demand that might arise could be met by existing on-street parking capacity.
- 6.11 The application scheme would not result in any changes to existing pedestrian (level) access arrangements from the public highway to the property's ground floor entrance.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The application proposal would deliver a new dwelling, accessibly located close to local services and public transport, and ideally suited to the needs of a small household. The dwelling would meet all relevant quantitative and qualitative planning standards, both internally and externally. The proposal therefore responds to the urgent need for additional good quality housing, as identified by the current London Plan and the draft new London Plan.
- 7.2 The planning merits of the proposed dormer windows and associated retained roof lights need to be assessed in the context of the approved scheme. When compared to the approved scheme, the small increase in the width of the proposed right-hand side dormer window is considered entirely justified in design terms given that this feature would, as a result, be the same size as the approved left-hand side dormer. All proposed roof level changes would be architecturally subordinate, and would be appropriately detailed.
- 7.3 The proposal would not materially harm the living conditions of adjacent occupiers in terms of its impact on existing levels of light, outlook, privacy, noise and disturbance.
- 7.4 For all these reasons, the proposal constitutes sustainable development which accords with the NPPF, the statutory development plan, and applicable planning and design guidance.
- 7.5 This practice looks forward to early discussions with the case officer on the merits of the proposal, and to the application being brought forward for approval.

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