

CC/P7261  
11<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Development Management Planning Services  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London  
WC1H 8ND

Dear Sir/Madam,

**1 Birkenhead Street, London, WC1H 8BA**  
**Listed Building Application – Renewal of listed building consent 2016/0903/L for internal and external alterations.**

We are writing on behalf of our clients in support of the application being made by the freeholders of the above property, Lonprop Establishment. This application has been submitted via iapply and relate to the above property and a series of internal and external alterations to the listed building.

It should however be noted that the both the external and internal alterations have the benefit of listed building consent which was granted on (ref: 2016/0903/L). This granted alterations to remove unsympathetic modern partitions and to return the house more closely to its original plan form. Further details are provided below and within the accompanying Heritage Appraisal.

No fees are required for a standalone listed building application.

In order to assist you with your consideration of this application please find the following information which has been submitted electronically via iApply:

- Application form and certificates
- Site Location Plan
- Existing, proposed and detailed drawings prepared by Fresson & Tee
- Covering Letter
- Heritage Appraisal prepared by Martin O'Rourke

#### **Site Description**

The site is located just to the south of the Euston Road close to Kings Cross and St Pancras Station. The property itself is part of a grade II listed terrace of 7 houses built between c1827 and 1832 and is located within the Kings Cross / St Pancras Conservation Area. Whilst it is located just outside the 'Kings Cross Growth Area', it is located in the 'Central London' area as designated in Camden's

#### **Architecture Planning Interiors**

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Local Plan. It was most recently used as a small hotel containing 9 bedrooms (2 of which were for staff use), however has been vacant for the past four years. Located to the rear of the property, accessed via the undercroft mews style entrance, is a low level modern office infill development.

Despite its central location Birkenhead Street is a quiet side street which would have originally been residential in character. It currently has a mix of uses including offices and residential flats. The wider area incorporates a host of retail and entertainment uses including shops, hotels, bars, cafes and restaurants.

### **Relevant Planning History**

Planning permission and listed building consent were granted in April 2016 (2015/6470/P & 2016/0903/L) for the change of use from hotel (Class C1) to offices (Class B1) including alterations to the fenestration and doors. This is an extant permission and therefore can still be implemented. The new application being submitted looks to renew the change of use element of this permission, and as such is solely for full planning permission rather than listed building consent.

The above application followed a pre-application enquiry (ref: 2015/1178/PRE), for which officer advice was provided in a letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015. This letter confirmed that local policy protecting hotels could be overcome in this instance if sufficient justification could be provided to demonstrate that the current hotel was no longer a viable use. Listed building advice was also provided which confirmed that office use would be more suitable for a building of this as its impact would be less intrusive compared with a hotel use.

A further listed building consent was granted in February 2017 (2016/5926/L) for proposed internal alterations including the relocation of the toilets to the basement in association with the change of use from hotel (Class C1) to offices (Class B1). This permission is also extant.

### **Planning Policy & Considerations**

#### Heritage and Design

A full Heritage Appraisal has been produced by Martin O'Rourke and accompanies this application. This appraisal sets out the history of the site and provides a detailed commentary on the building.

The building is part of a grade II listed terrace. However, the building has clearly been compromised over the years and several interventions over its history have resulted in a muddled non-historic plan form and inappropriate modern windows and doors to the front and rear, which have a harmful impact upon the appearance of this building and the wider conservation area.

These proposals propose a series of alterations both internally and externally which will return much of the building to its historic plan and will repair and restore the buildings facades and historic integrity. The proposals include the following:

- Installation of single glazed six-over-six sliding sash timber windows on both the front and rear elevations as detailed within the proposed drawings and details drawings.
- Installation of historically appropriate six-panelled timber entrance doors to both the front and rear.
- The removal of hotel ensuite bathrooms and all modern partitions
- Appropriate internal painted timber panelled doors would be installed throughout the building

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- The original staircase would be retained and repaired
- The historic plan form at ground, first, second and third floors would be referenced throughout with the use of reinstated partitions and/or nib walls.

The benefits arising from these alterations above, coupled with the less intensive use proposed, are considered to significantly outweigh any perceived impact that the proposals may have upon the special historic or architectural interest of the building, and as such the proposals should be considered acceptable in light of the guidance outlined within paragraphs 126 (as set out in the accompanying Heritage Appraisal), 128, and specifically 131 and 134 of the NPPF, which are set out below.

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that in *determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that *where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.*

The London Plan seeks to:

- Identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate and
- Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail (**Policy 7.8**).
- Make use of heritage assets and reinforce the qualities that make them significant so they can help stimulate environmental, economic and community regeneration. This includes buildings, landscape features, views, Blue Ribbon Network and public realm (**Policy 7.9**).
- In line with the adopted London Plan policies, the proposed works will preserve and reinstate the key features of the building whilst the interventions will be sympathetic to the buildings original plan form, materials and architectural detail.

In line with the adopted London Plan policies, the proposed works will preserve and reinstate the key features of the building whilst the interventions will be sympathetic to the buildings original plan form, materials and architectural detail.

Local Plan **Policy D1 – Design** states that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage asset, respects local context and character and comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character.

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Local Plan **Policy D2 – Heritage** states that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden’s rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings. To preserve or enhance the borough’s listed buildings, the Council will:

- Resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
- Resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and
- Resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.

Previous pre-application advice from officer’s also confirmed that an office use is less intensive than a hotel use and would have a reduced impacted on this heritage building. In any event, officers may consider that any increase in bedroom numbers to be inappropriate in this relatively quiet side street.

**Conclusion**

This application looks to renew the listed building alterations relating to the change of use from hotel to office as previously approved under the application 2016/0903/L. The scheme still provides the opportunity to significantly enhance this listed building which has suffered from several unsympathetic alterations and additions over the years.

Having regard to the above and the enclosed material, we trust the council will agree that the proposals are acceptable and look forward to receiving a speedy and positive decision. However should you require any further information or wish to discuss any of the enclosures please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned

Yours sincerely

*Casey Conduct*

For and on behalf of  
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited

cc