

Planning & Heritage Statement

Kirkman House, 12-14 Whitfield Street,
London, W1T 2RF



Contents

Executive Summary	ii
1. Introduction	1
2. Site and Surroundings	2
3. Site Photographs	3
4. Planning History and Background	4
5. Proposed Development	6
6. Planning Policy Position	8
7. Planning Justification	9
8. Summary and Conclusions	14

Planning Potential Ltd**London**

Magdalen House
148 Tooley Street
London SE1 2TU
T: 020 7357 8000

**Report Author: Charlotte Ryan-
Elliott**

Charlotte.r@planningpotential.co.uk

Report Reference:
4621

Executive Summary

Kirkman House, 12-14 Whitfield Street is an existing office building, with a single residential unit at fourth floor level. The proposals seek to reconfigure the building internally, demolishing the existing single storey roof extension, replacing it with a two-storey roof extension and adding a rear extension. The proposal also seeks to introduce a ground floor retail / restaurant use on the secondary façade fronting Kirkman Place, which leads on to Tottenham Court Road.

The proposals are minor in nature and retain the existing facades, facing Whitfield Street and Kirkman Place. The existing building is identified as a contributor towards the Conservation Area and as such the proposals have been respectfully designed, being subservient to the host building, whilst also being sensitively designed to reflect the design characteristics of the host building. The roof extension is set back from the principle elevation, making it of very low visual impact both from street level and from longer views. The rear extension has also been sensitively designed taking into consideration the proximity of existing neighbours.

The proposals will enable the property to increase its commercial offering, by maximising the office floorspace available. The rear extension will also allow for the existing residential unit to be relocated within the property, whilst also adding a second residential unit. Furthermore, a ground floor retail or restaurant use to the rear of the property is to be introduced, increasing the active frontage along the passageway leading to Tottenham Court Road, improving the quality of the existing space and the overall street scene experienced from Tottenham Court Road.

The scheme has been sensitively designed to reflect the character of the surrounding area, along with addressing the noise and daylight / sunlight sensitivities associated with development in a confined space.

In summary, the proposals respond appropriately to the commercial needs of the tenants / occupiers, as well as retaining the family sized residential unit, adding a second residential unit and introducing a ground floor retail or restaurant use which will make a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the passageway (Kirkman Place) leading on to Tottenham Court Road, creating a welcoming space to the existing secondary access route.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Kirkman House, 12-14 Whitfield Street comprises a five-storey commercial building (ground + 4 storeys, with an additional basement). The existing premises is predominantly used as an office building, with a single 3-bedroom dwelling found at fourth floor level.
- 1.2. This Planning & Heritage Statement supports a planning application for a roof and rear extension, as well as some internal reconfiguration to introduce a second residential unit to the development and a ground floor retail or restaurant use to the rear of the property. The proposed description of development is as follows:

“removal of the existing fourth floor extension and replacement with a two-storey roof extension and an extension to the existing rear courtyard, along with a change of use introducing increased residential and office accommodation along with the introduction of a ground floor / basement level flexible restaurant / retail unit towards the rear of the property at Kirkman House, at 12-14 Whitfield Street, London, W1T 2RF”
- 1.3. Historically pre-application advice has been sought (please refer to section 3 of this report for further details), whereby the Council Officer’s advised against the loss of residential units in this location and provided design advice to improve the relationship of the proposed extensions with the host building. Having considered the comments received from Officer’s during the previous pre-application meetings the proposals were modified, namely to include the retention of residential development in this location, along with an uplift in the number of units provided. The design of the roof extension was also suitably modified in order to address comments received, taking further reference from the high-quality design and appearance of the art deco façade of the host building.
- 1.4. The existing premises is located within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area and, although is not listed, is identified as making a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2008. Accordingly, the report duly addresses the historic context and the contribution of the building to the Conservation Area.
- 1.5. As such, having considered the comments previously received, amending the proposals accordingly and suitably considering the building as a contributor towards the Conservation Area character, we are now confident that the proposals put before you should be found acceptable and request that planning permission is granted.

2. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1. The site, Kirkman House, is situated on the eastern side of Whitfield Street. Kirkman House consists of 12-14 Whitfield Street, located in Fitzrovia, Camden. The site neighbours the British Transport Police building to the north and a commercial office building to the south. Kirkman House is adjacent to Crabtree Place, a five-storey residential development, which abuts Crabtree Fields area of public open space.
- 2.2. Kirkman House is very sustainably located (PTAL 6b) between Goodge Street station to the north (3 minutes' walk) and Tottenham Court Road station to the south (6 minutes' walk).



Figure 1: Site Location Plan (source: LAP Architects)

- 2.3. The site comprises a five-storey building with an additional basement storey. Kirkman House is defined by art deco, decorative architecture, distinguishing itself from the neighbouring properties with less detailed facades. Whilst the neighbouring buildings do not share the art deco design of the application site, their bulk, scale and massing are similar to the subject site.
- 2.4. The site has three entrances, the primary access is located on Whitfield Street and two secondary, smaller, accesses are located to the rear of the site and are accessed via a narrow passageway (Kirkman Place) that connects with Tottenham Court Road.
- 2.5. The majority of the building is in commercial use (B1 – office) however there is a three-bedroom flat (C3 – residential) located within the existing single storey fourth floor roof extension.
- 2.6. The site is located within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area and is not listed, however is identified as making a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2008.

3. Site Photographs



Figure 2: Photograph of existing building from Whitfield Street (source: Planning Potential)



Figure 3: Photograph of existing building from Tottenham Court Road, looking down Kirkman Place (source: Planning Potential)

4. Planning History and Background

- 4.1. Camden Council's online planning records identify two planning applications associated with the site, the first in 2003 and the most recent in 2011:
- 2003/1054/P – Erection of a roof extension to provide additional residential floorspace to the existing flat. Approved 22/08/2003
 - 2011/4395/P – Change of use of ground floor space from garage ancillary to Class B1 office use Class A1/A2/B1 flexible use. Approved 02/11/2011.

Pre-Application Meeting

August 2017

- 4.2. An initial pre-application meeting was held with the Council in August 2017. Drawings were submitted and discussed at the meeting. During the meeting it was agreed that some amendments to the proposals were required. It was agreed that once amended drawings had been submitted and considered by Officer's, the pre-application written response would be prepared considering only the updated information.

September 2017

- 4.3. Having updated the drawings a second pre-application meeting was held to discuss the revised plans in September 2017. The pre-application written response was positive, with the Council welcoming the refurbishment and extension of the existing building to provide additional B1 office space at the site. The Council also considered that the location of a café / retail unit at ground floor and basement level may also be considered acceptable provided that additional B1 space could be suitably provided elsewhere in the building to compensate for the loss.
- 4.4. The Council made clear that they would not support any proposals that involve the loss of the existing residential unit.
- 4.5. The written response also stated that the size, scale and bulk of the proposed rear and rooftop extensions are considered to represent proportionate additions within the context of the host and adjoining buildings.
- 4.6. However, the Council did state that in their current form the proposed roof top extensions appeared unsympathetic additions that lack detailed design and architectural merit. Accordingly, the Council sought a further pre-application meeting prior to submission of any planning application.

March 2018

- 4.7. Accordingly, a further pre-application meeting took place in March 2018, reconfirming that the Council would not support the loss of the existing residential unit.
- 4.8. The Council remained of the view that the size, scale and bulk of the proposed rooftop extensions could be considered to represent proportionate additions within the context of the host building and the adjoining buildings.

- 4.9. However, the Council stated that the revised plans failed to overcome the concerns previously raised by Officers with regard to the overall design and architectural quality of the proposed roof extensions. The Council stated in their response that the proposals, in their current form, appeared incongruous and discordant additions that lack the high-quality detailed design expected for this location.
- 4.10. Subsequently, as a result of the pre-application advise received to date, the applicant has amended the proposals to ensure the retention of the residential unit and improve the overall design and architectural quality of the proposed roof extension prior to submitting this planning application.

Consultation

- 4.11. Mr Cullum of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee was consulted on the proposals on the 13th June 2019 via email. Mr Cullum was provided with a copy of the plans and a description of the proposals.
- 4.12. On 25th June 2019 we reminded Mr Cullum of the proposals and provided another opportunity to comment.
- 4.13. To date we have not heard back from Mr Cullum or any other member of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee.

5. Proposed Development

Description of Development

5.1. The application seeks the following development:

“removal of the existing fourth floor extension and replacement with a two-storey roof extension and an extension to the existing rear courtyard, along with a change of use introducing increased residential and office accommodation along with the introduction of a ground floor / basement level restaurant / retail unit towards the rear of the property at Kirkman House, at 12-14 Whitfield Street, London, W1T 2RF”

5.2. In summary the changes proposed are listed as:

- Erection of rear extension to include 2 residential dwellings;
- Erection of a two storey roof extension to create new office accommodation; and,
- Basement and ground floor change of use to introduce a flexible restaurant / retail unit towards the rear of the property.

5.3. The proposals rearrange the internal uses of the building. The office floor space area remains unchanged; however, the proposals seek to reconfigure the space to align all office development at the front of the building (fronting Whitfield Street), including within the proposed rooftop extension. The residential floorspace is all located to the rear of the building (fronting Kirkman Place), including a proportion within the courtyard extension. In addition to this, a flexible restaurant / retail use is proposed in a small area within the ground floor and basement to the rear of the building.

Area Schedule

5.4. Below is a breakdown of the floor areas associated with the proposed development. For full comparison of the floor areas, against the existing, please refer to page 16 of the Design and Access Statement accompanying this application.

	Proposed Office GIA	Proposed Retail / Restaurant GIA	Proposed Residential GIA (including circulation)
Basement	426.55	22.26	0
Ground	227.8	124.82	40.26
1 st Floor	349.99	0	77.39
2 nd Floor	346.1	0	78.08
3 rd Floor	347.27	0	77.96
4 th Floor	224.96	0	0

5 th Floor	122.93	0	0
TOTAL	2045.6	147.08	273.69

Table 1: Area Schedule

- 5.5. All residential units are designed in accordance with the Nationally Described Space Standards.

Amenity

- 5.6. The residential units will have access to the newly created roof terrace space, providing a suitable quantum of amenity space to the residents, in accordance with the Mayor's SPG.

Appearance & Materials

- 5.7. The proposed rooftop extension has been designed to reflect the art-deco style of the existing building below. The materials of the extension are a mixture of cream brick and stone cladding, both reflecting the existing building below.
- 5.8. The design is symmetrical, and tapers away to the top. The complex shape has also been designed to limit its visual appearance, whilst also maximising the floor area. The rear elevation has been designed to look symmetrical from Kirkman Place.
- 5.9. The window proportions reflect the existing windows below in size however with simpler window bars.
- 5.10. Windows are to be in crittal-style glazing with white frames.

6. Planning Policy Position

6.1. The relevant planning guidance in Camden consists of the following documents:

- National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
- London Plan (2016)
- Camden Local Plan (2017)
- Camden Planning Guidance (2011/2015)
- Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2008)
- Fitzrovia Area Action Plan (2014)

6.2. The relevant planning policies principally are as follows:

Camden Local Plan

- A1 – Managing the impact of development
- D1 – Design
- D2 – Heritage
- E1 – Economic development
- E2 – Employment premises and site
- H2 – Maximising the supply of self-contained housing from mixed use schemes
- H3 – Protecting existing homes
- H4 – maximising the supply of affordable housing
- T1 – Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport
- T2 – Parking and car-free development

Camden Planning Guidance 2011/2015

- CPG1 (Design)
- CPG6 (Amenity)
- CPG7 (Transport)
- CPG8 (Planning Obligations)

7. Planning Justification

Response to Pre-application Advice

7.1. Following extensive pre-application discussions, the two outstanding matters meriting justification relate to the design of the proposed extension, by way of architectural detailing (rather than scale, bulk or mass). Secondly, any loss of residential development would require justification.

Loss of residential

7.2. Dealing firstly with the loss of residential development which has been opposed throughout the numerous pre-application stages undergone to date, the applicant no longer seeks a reduction in residential floorspace, only a reconfiguration and as such in accordance with Policy H3 of the Camden Local Plan (2017) there is no net loss in residential floorspace provided.

7.3. In accordance with the latest pre-application advice received (2017/6859/PRE) the applicant has moved the existing residential space to an alternative location within the building.

7.4. Furthermore, the proposed mix of dwellings provided includes a three bedroom unit, replacing the existing like-for-like, as well as an additional one bedroom flat being created.

7.5. As such the proposals wholly comply with the aims and objectives of Policy H3 of the Camden Local Plan.

7.6. Policy H2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017 outlines the Councils aim to promote the inclusion of self-contained accommodation where non-residential development is proposed. In the Central London Area where development involves additional floorspace of more than 200sqm (GIA), we will require 50% of all additional floorspace to be self-contained housing, subject to a number of considerations relating to:

- The character of the development, the site and the area;
- Site size, and any constraints on developing the site for a mix of uses;
- Whether self-contained housing would be compatible with the character and operational requirements of the proposed non-residential use.

7.7. We are providing an uplift of 257.76 sqm of new floorspace, 273.69 sqm of the building is to be residential (an uplift of 110.68 sqm of residential floorspace on the existing position). Accordingly, to meet Policy H2 with regards to 50% of all new additional housing being self-contained housing, the proposals fall short by 18.2 sqm, however, this proposal is to ensure the office building is as commercially viable as possible, meeting the needs of the current and future tenants. Increasing the residential floorspace by a further 18 sqm would be harmful to the internal design of the proposals and the practicality of the layout, if the additional space was captured through internal configuration or alternatively would be harmful to the overall design of the building if the building was extended externally.

Design & Heritage

- 7.8. The size, scale and bulk of the proposed rear extension and roof extension are considered to represent a proportionate addition that would not have a significant impact on the character of the host building. During pre-application discussions the size, scale and bulk of the proposals were deemed acceptable.
- 7.9. During pre-application discussions officers noted that the design and fenestrations do not appear to have taken any reference from the design and appearance of the art deco façade of the host building.
- 7.10. In seeking to address the Council's design concerns, significant redesign of the proposed extensions has taken place.
- 7.11. Kirkman House is recognised as a positive contributor within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area. The building is characterised by its tripartite windows with high and low transoms. Each floor has 7 identical windows with the ground floor containing a central opening which forms the principal entrance to the building.
- 7.12. The design of the fenestration, set on a stone façade, and with a blue square detail beneath each window, allows for a consistent rhythm within the building's design. The stone façade is the dominant element of the building and this part of the building protrudes out beyond the two side wings, of a brick design and with narrower fenestration containing horizontal glazing bars.
- 7.13. The rear of the property is partially covered by other buildings but those area that are exposed have a consistent but simpler design compared to the front façade. The side elevation to the rear is landlocked and cannot be seen from public views. The secondary façade is fairly basic with no public views.
- 7.14. The building has a single storey off centre rendered roof addition that fails to correspond with either the style or design the rest of the building.
- 7.15. The proposed works seek to retain the front elevation of the building which is considered to contribute positively to the conservation area.
- 7.16. The proposals focus on improving the area of the building that is considered to currently offer a negative contribution to the building and the conservation area. The existing roof addition will be removed and replaced with a two-storey addition set back from the front façade. The new addition has been designed to follow the symmetry of the host building and the materials, with the use of brick and stone cladding, respecting the host building. The height of the building and narrow character of the street means that setting the two storey element back from the front of the façade will ensure subservience and the building, as a whole, will not become overly dominant within the streetscene.
- 7.17. The use of tripartite windows in a white Crittall style will continue the theme of the floors below. Likewise, the use of black metal railings takes direct reference from the character of the host building. These positive alterations are considered to not only sustain, but also enhance, the host building's positive contribution to the conservation area.
- 7.18. Overall, the proposals have been careful to sustain the primary contributor to the building's character, its front façade. Works to the side elevation and roof addition

have limited visibility, nonetheless the proposals have sought to take direct reference from the design and materials used within the host building. As such, it is considered that the proposals sustain and enhance the building's character and are for the benefit of the building and the conservation area, as a whole. The proposals thereby comply with Policy D1 (Design) which requires development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, which improves the function, appearance and character of the area, Policy D2 (Heritage), which states that the Council will preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings and NPPF Paragraph 197 which states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application and that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Further considerations

Retail / Restaurant use

- 7.19. The proposals seek a flexible consent for a small retail / restaurant use at basement / ground floor level (A1/A3) to introduce an active frontage to the rear of the building on Kirkman Place. The building is appreciated from Tottenham Court Road and we believe that the introduction of a set back active frontage within Kirkman Place would add vibrancy and character to the area, which can be enjoyed by pedestrians walking along Tottenham Court Road. The proposals would increase the vibrancy of the space, encouraging pedestrians to utilise this space, making the area more inviting.

Transport & Highways

- 7.20. Kirkman House is sustainably located (PTAL 6b) between Goodge Street to the north (3 minutes' walk) and Tottenham Court Road station to the south (6 minutes' walk). Accordingly, development in this location should be car free in accordance with Draft London Plan Policy T6. As such, the development proposals do not include the provision of car parking facilities.
- 7.21. The proposals seek to introduce three cycle parking spaces for the residential dwellings, meeting the Draft London Plan Policy T5 requirement for 1 space per 1-bedroom dwelling and 2 spaces per 3-bedroom dwelling.
- 7.22. The office use is existing, and the quantum of office proposed by way of this application remains unchanged, as such the proposal does not seek to alter the existing cycle provision for the office development due principally to the constrained size of the development.

Noise

- 7.23. RBA Acoustics undertook noise monitoring at the proposed development, the findings of which are presented in the full report submitted as part of this application (report reference: 9326.RP01.EBF.0). The resultant noise levels were then used in the assessment of the glazing requirements to ensure suitable internal noise levels could be achieved at the proposed development, in accordance with BS 8233 and WHO.

- 7.24. RBA Acoustics findings suggest that internal noise levels can be effectively controlled by fairly simple glazing configurations and there was therefore no reason why noise should form a reason for the application to be determined unfavourably by the Local Authority.
- 7.25. General guidance configurations are suggested for the glazing constructions and RBA Acoustics confirm that these should be capable of achieving the required specifications.
- 7.26. The measured background noise levels were also used to set plant noise limits in accordance with the expected Local Authority criteria (as detailed in section 6 of the acoustic report).
- 7.27. In addition, sound insulation testing of the existing separating floor structure between ground and first floor level was undertaken, in order to assess the likely level of noise transfer between the proposed commercial and residential spaces. Recommendations for upgraded constructions were given, all of which can be adhered to.

Daylight and Sunlight

- 7.28. Malcolm Hollis have been appointed to consider the impact of the proposed development on the surrounding area and the quality of amenity achievable for future residents.
- 7.29. Looking first at the impact of the development on the surrounding residential properties, the report concludes that the proposed roof top and rear extension development at Kirkman House, 12-14 Whitfield Street will have no material effect on the daylight and sunlight amenity enjoyed by the surrounding residential properties.
- 7.30. Malcolm Hollis believe that their assessment results demonstrate that the proposed roof top and rear extension has been thoughtfully designed, such that the neighbouring windows and rooms are not adversely affected. Malcolm Hollis consider that the proposals are fully supportable in that they enable adjoining properties to retain sufficient daylight and sunlight amenity, and, in so doing, satisfy the Council's planning policy objectives.
- 7.31. Turning our attention to the quality of the environment created for the future residents at Kirkman House, the Malcolm Hollis report finds that overall the proposed residential accommodation is broadly compliant with the BRE guide in terms of daylight amenity. The sunlight enjoyed by the proposed accommodation will be more limited, but the rooms that are likely to be occupied by day do benefit from some exposure to sunlight.
- 7.32. Where there are shortfalls in sunlight and daylight amenity these are at a level which are supportable and are in keeping with the wording of the BRE guide, given the city centre location of the application site. The proposals have been considerably designed for the use of future occupiers, particularly as the principal habitable rooms on the first and third floors have been positioned with their primary windows facing within 90° due south. There is a limit to the extent to which the daylight and sunlight amenity of the proposed development can be improved without compromising other aspect of the design.

7.33. Finally, it should be noted that the BRE Guide acknowledges that the numerical target values are purely advisory and have been drafted primarily for use in low density suburban developments, and should therefore be interpreted flexibly, particularly for a city centre location such as that occupied by the Application Site. The guide also states that in historic city centres, a higher degree of obstruction may be unavoidable.

8. Summary and Conclusions

8.1. In summary, the proposals seek:

“removal of the existing fourth floor extension and replacement with a two-storey roof extension and an extension to the existing rear courtyard, along with a change of use introducing increased residential and office accommodation along with the introduction of a ground floor / basement level flexible restaurant / retail unit towards the rear of the property at Kirkman House, at 12-14 Whitfield Street, London, W1T 2RF”

8.2. Extensive pre-application discussions have influenced the proposals, ensuring that the current scheme put before the Council, retains the quantum of residential floorspace and the proposed extensions suitably respect the character and design of the host building, as a contributor to the character of the Conservation Area.

8.3. Having addressed the matters identified through the pre-application advice, we are now confident that the proposals fully comply with national, regional and local planning policy requirements.

8.4. The introduction of a ground floor flexible retail / restaurant use will make a welcome contribution to the vibrancy of Kirkman Place and maintain the active frontage enjoyed when walking along Tottenham Court Road.

8.5. The residential element of the scheme retains the 3-bedroom family unit, whilst also providing an additional 1-bedroom unit, complying with the local policy requirements.

8.6. The design of the roof top and rear extensions have been carefully designed to reflect the art deco nature of the host building, whilst remaining subservient and not visually prominent, either from long or short views.

8.7. Accordingly, we are confident that the proposals should be deemed appropriate, making a positive contribution to improving the quality of the existing building, whilst maximising the viability of the existing operations, improving the commercial offer.

8.8. In conclusion, we respectfully request that the planning application is approved without delay.