**Design and Access Statement (revised 4 December 2019 following pre-validation discussions)**

**Solicitor’s Offices and Premises at 1st Floor**

**108 Kilburn High Road, London, NW6 4HY**

**1. Assessment**

The site comprises the upper floors of 2 x four storey mid-terrace Victorian buildings on the north-east side of Kilburn High Road. The upper floors of No 108 are vacant but were occupied by a firm of solicitors being an A2 Financial and Professional Services use. The upper floors of No 110 are self-contained flats (C3 use).

The ground floor accommodation does not comprise any part of the proposal.

As originally constructed over 100 years ago, the upper floors were clearly designed as residential accommodation. 108 seems to have been built separately from 106 and 110 as it has full front to rear supporting walls. Both 108 and 110 Kilburn High Road have a full staircase. This seems to be an excellent opportunity to minimise common areas and maximise useable space.

The first, second and third floors have been unused for over 20 years. The accommodation was last occupied by a solicitor’s firm over 20 years ago. All fixtures and fittings and services need complete renewal. New steel support is necessary for stability of the floors. New staircases are needed.

Reverting to the original residential use seems the reasonable solution.

The front elevation does not share any of the attractive details which were included in the original design of 110-114 Kilburn High Road. The second and third floor elevations of 108 Kilburn High Road are extremely simple. The first floor front has been ruined by the addition of a high shop front which obliterates the fenestration at first floor.

The roof design of 106 Kilburn High Road includes a mansard roof with a strongly detailed dormer and the eaves of 110 Kilburn High Road has intrusive balustrade and rush fence details which mar the appearance.

**2. Involvement**

The adjoining buildings are predominantly owned by the applicant. Involvement of other parties has not been necessary. The extent of the applicant’s ownership is shown edged blue on the Location Plan.

**3. Evaluation**

There is a clear opportunity to

i) Provide additional self-contained flats in this locality in accordance with Camden’s planning policies

ii) improve the front and the rear elevations of 108 Kilburn High Road by adding cement render features to the window surrounds and eaves fascia and by removing the overbearing first floor shop front

iii) Increase the useable space in 108 Kilburn High Road by unifying the staircase access with 110 and adding a 2.5m rear extension between existing flank walls.

iv) add floor space at loft level by providing a mansard roof which complements the roof detail of 106 Kilburn High Road and removes the balustrade details at 110 Kilburn High road

v) Provide new access at the rear to open air and to covered refuse facilities

vi) Improve surface water drainage by the addition of a green roof

**4. Design**

*4.1 Use*

The proposed use is residential which accords with the original use when first constructed. The adjoining uses at 106 and 110 Kilburn High Road are self-contained flats. The uses of the buildings around the rear first floor courtyard access are self-contained flats.

*4.2 Amount*

The floor areas are given in detail in the Planning statement at paragraph 5(ii) Housing, Standard of accommodation, floor space. The studio flats exceed the minimum nationally prescribed floor space standard of 37 sq m. The 1 bedroom 2 person flats exceed the minimum standard of 50 sq m. The two bedroom 3 person flat exceeds the minimum flor area of 61 sq m.

*4.3 Layout*

The layout is prescribed by the sensible location of the staircase in 110 Kilburn High Road. Good daylight is provided to all rooms with a westerly and easterly aspect. All rooms meet the width and floor area criteria set down by the nationally prescribed floor space standards.

*4.4 Scale*

The scale and mass of the terrace of 12 properties of which 108 and 110 form part is varied in height, style and age at both front and rear.

The property is part of a terrace of 12 shop units, mostly Victorian or Edwardian in design, 102-126 Kilburn High Road and 124-126 has a fifth floor set back from the High Road. At each end of the terrace, there are existing four storey buildings. 106 Kilburn High Road has a mansard style roof with a strong front dormer treatment and a high ridge.

The rear elevations are framed by the four storey rear of 102 and the five storey rear of 124-126 Kilburn High Road. The rear elevations of 110-114 have an existing mansard roof at fourth floor.

Adding a mansard roof adjoining a) 106 Kilburn High Road at the front and adjoining b) 110 Kilburn High Road at the rear would not be out of keeping and would be in scale.

The 2.5m deep extension at the rear of 108 is framed by the large extension of 106 and by the existing staircase enclosure of 110. The extension is not a stand alone structure but enclosed by existing walls and a logical infill. The height of the new extension is similar to the height of the eaves and loft dormers of 104 and 106. There is a large external staircase at 112-114, which serves other flats belonging to the applicant. The new extension cannot be seen as a stand alone feature devoid of examples in the immediate vicinity.

*4.5 Landscaping*

There is no existing landscaping for the existing A2 premises to enjoy. The existing A2 accommodation has no access to open air.

A green sedum roof is proposed over the rear flat roof of 108 and 110. The existing railings will remain and repeated around the green roof above 110. Access to the green roof will be for maintenance only. Even so, the roof will provide a permanent green feature with seasonal changes as the sedum plants come into flower.

The green roof could be extended to cover the flat roof to the rear of 110-114 as this is within the applicant’s control.

*4.6 Appearance*

The existing elevations are described above. This proposal seeks to improve the streetscene by adding new cement render/painted feature with window surrounds and eaves fascia to match the simple but attractive details at 110-114 Kilburn High Road.

The existing high and ugly first floor shop front is to be removed and the new shop fascia will match the height of the existing shop front of 110-114 Kilburn High road.

There will be a marked beneficial effect on the streetscene.

The existing rear elevation of No 108 is disjointed and does not complement the unified and attractive appearance of 110-114. The rear elevation of 108 would be renewed by the addition of the 2.5m deep extension creating a new elevation in harmony with the elevation of Nos 110-114.

*5. Access*

The existing access is directly from a busy shopping street, which is also part of the national road network, the A5 trunk road. Whilst in one sense it is extremely sustainable, it is a very busy location. The impact on the floor plate is allow usability ratio of only 75%.

The access from the rear via Quex Mews is attractive and quiet. The entrance to the mews is secured by locked gates, one personal and one for vehicles. Both gates have an electronic lock controlling both ingress and egress. The access serves 15 flats at present and the applicant/owner finds no adverse comments from potential tenants about the access or its route. The access via 110 improves the floor plate usability to 91%.

**6. Summary**

The proposal is well conceived and designed, providing new self-contained flats in a sustainable location with improved appearance, landscaping and access.

Stuart Cunliffe

October 2019