



# PLANNING STATEMENT

**GROUND FLOOR REAR INFILL EXTENSION AT ARIEL HOUSE, 74A CHARLOTTE STREET, LONDON, W1T 4QJ**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This Planning Statement accompanies an application for planning permission at Ariel House, 74A Charlotte Street, London, W1T 4QJ for

*“Change of use of rear ground floor car park to offices B1(a) with alterations to the front and rear ground floor elevations”*

- A change of use of the rear ground floor car park to provide additional office floorspace at Ariel House, 74A Charlotte Street, is considered to comply with adopted development plan policies subject to detailed design and materiality (**See: page 13**).
- The Site is located within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area, with the Proposed Development being considered to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (**See: page 14**).
- The Proposed Development will comply to the relevant cycle storage and waste storage standards prescribed in Camden’s planning policy and guidance (**See: page 16**).
- The proposed development positively responds to the Council’s adopted development plan policies pertaining to quality urban design and neighbourly development, whilst preserving or enhancing the significance of the adjacent heritage asset and consequently the presumption in favour of granting planning permission is met and planning permission should be granted without delay in accordance with paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 This Planning Statement (“**Statement**”) accompanies an application for planning permission at Ariel House, 74A Charlotte Street, London, W1T 4QJ (“**Site**”) for the “**Proposed Development**”:

*“Change of use of rear ground floor car park to offices B1(a) with alterations to the front and rear ground floor elevations”*

1.2 The application is submitted to the London Borough of Camden (“**Council**”) under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

1.3 This Statement explains how the Proposed Development will provide additional high-quality office accommodation and complies with the relevant national planning policy, the development plan and other material considerations.

1.4 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents submitted:

- Application Form;
- Existing and Proposed drawings (prepared by Burogloo dated February 2020);
  - P003B
  - P051B
  - P101E
  - P151D
  - P155D
  - DWD001
- Design and Access Statement (ref: 1381)
- CIL Form; and
- Location Plan (ref: DWD001)

1.5 The sections of this Statement consider the site and its surroundings (Section 2) with a description of the development in Section 3. Section 4 provides a brief overview of the planning history of the Site and surrounding development followed by the relevant policy at Section 5. An assessment of the Proposed Development against the adopted development plan is contained in Section 6, with Section 9 providing a conclusion to support the positive determination of the application.

## 2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The Site is located in the south of the London Borough of Camden, in the Fitzrovia area of the West-End. The Site consists of Ariel House, a part 7-storey office block which fronts Charlotte Street and a part 4-storey rear block fronting Charlotte Mews which also contains office floorspace above the ground floor, with the two connected via a link extension. Car parking space currently occupies the rear of the ground floor fronting Charlotte Mews.
- 2.2 Charlotte Mews runs parallel to Charlotte Street egressing onto Tottenham Street and Chitty Street and provides rear access to Ariel House and a number of residential and office buildings which front Charlotte Mews.
- 2.3 The Site forms part of a perimeter block of buildings varying between 5 to 7 storeys which contain a mix of commercial, office and residential uses which are located approximately 134m east of Goodge Street station and Tottenham Court Road.
- 2.4 Immediately adjacent to the northwest of the Site is the mixed-use building at 76-78 Charlotte Street which consists of office and residential units, whilst to the southeast lies the mixed-use building at no. 74 which consists of commercial and residential uses. Access to the upper floor of no. 74 is achieved via the rear of the building which contains 6 apartments and is known as 6 Charlotte Mews.
- 2.5 To the northwest of the Site on the opposite side of Chitty Street lies the under-construction development at 80 Charlotte Street which, when complete, will provide a large mixed-use scheme comprising of office, residential, retail and education floorspace as part of a comprehensive redevelopment scheme.
- 2.6 Included in the 80 Charlotte Street redevelopment is the building at Asta House, 55-65 Whitfield Street, directly adjacent to the north-east of the Site which is also a mixed-use scheme with housing and business uses.
- 2.7 The Site is located within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area but is not specifically referenced in the Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal. Reference is made however to Charlotte Street and Charlotte Mews, which have been included in the appraisal as their streetscape typologies are a character of the Conservation Area.
- 2.8 Ariel House is designated along a Secondary Shopping Frontage in the Council's Local Plan Policies Map which allows for a broad range of town centre uses including offices, which would support the

vitality and viability of the locality. The Site as a whole is also located in the Central Activities Zone (“**CAZ**”) which is a strategically important area of London in which a number of specialist retail, tourist and cultural uses and activities are located in addition to being recognised in policy terms as an appropriate location for office accommodation.

### 3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The “**Proposed Development**” is for the “*Change of use of rear ground floor car park to offices B1(a) with alterations to the front and rear ground floor elevations*”. The Proposed Development would result in the net addition of approximately 121sqm of office floorspace with an open plan design which would replace 8 car parking spaces in the existing undercroft parking area and will be connected to the existing ground floor office floorspace.
- 3.2 The Proposed Development would also include secured cycle storage for the additional proposed office floorspace. Access to the office space will be achieved independently via Charlotte Mews or via internal access corridors which egress on to Charlotte Street and Charlotte Mews.
- 3.3 To facilitate the infill of the existing undercroft parking area, the development would also involve infill brickwork and fenestration additions at the rear ground floor of the Site which would replace the existing brick boundary treatment which fronts Charlotte Mews.
- 3.4 The proposal will be designed to ensure the ground floor fenestration additions correspond to the design principles of the upper floor façade of rear office block which was given approval under reference 2011/2351/P in July 2011.
- 3.5 In addition, fenestration alterations are proposed to the front of the building at the ground floor which will enhance the appearance of the building along the Charlotte Street façade which has a more prominent role in the preservation of the character and appearance of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area. The proposal involves the removal of all the ground floor front fascia elements, including the curtain walling/glazing to the front elevation and the main entrance door. In addition, a new front door is proposed to replace the existing inverted bay window on the front façade. The ground floor front ‘buffer’ zone between the building and footway will also be amended to replace the existing front railing with a glass balustrade as well as minor changes to the associated signage.
- 3.6 The Design and Access Statement and drawings produced by Burogloo Architects in support of the Proposed Development, show drawings for the proposal at full scale and provide the design rationale behind the development.
- 3.7 A detailed assessment of how the Proposed Development conforms to the policies contained in the adopted development plan is contained within Section 6 of this Statement.

## 4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 DWD has undertaken a search of the planning history of the Site and surrounding area using the Council's online database. Relevant findings are detailed below.

Address	Reference	Description	Status
Offices and Premises At 6th Floor, Ariel House, 74A Charlotte Street, London, W1T 4QJ	2018/3166/P	Alterations at sixth floor level including installation of grey metal cladding, external lighting units, replacement balustrade and double-glazed window units	Granted. September 2018
74A Charlotte Street, Ariel House, London, W1T 4QJ	2014/1138/P	Removal of external staircase to the front at lower ground floor level, including infilling of lower ground floor lightwell and associated ground level works to provide additional office accommodation.	Granted March 2014
	2011/2351/P	Installation of new fenestration to rear elevation of existing office (Class B1a)	Granted July 2011
66 Charlotte Street, London, W1T 4QE	2018/3839/P 2018/3850/P	Erection of three storey rear closet wing extension, mansard roof extension with rear dormers and two storey outbuilding to provide additional office space. Demolition of existing rear closet wing extension and outbuilding. (2018/3850/P minus the mansard roof)	Granted October 2018
64-66 Charlotte Street and 32 Tottenham Street, LONDON, W1T 4QE	2017/3795/P 2017/3796/P	Change of use and reconfiguration of existing basement and ground floors at No.64 Charlotte Street from office (Class B1) to restaurant (Class A3) and 32 Tottenham Street from restaurant (Class A3) to office (Class B1) including replacement plant extract equipment (as consented under 2016/3133/P); Alterations to existing ground floor retail unit (Class A1) at No.66 Charlotte Street including installation of front lightwell and new shopfront; (shortened)	Refused March 2018
Saatchi Block, 80 Charlotte Street, 65 Whitfield Street and 14 Charlotte Mews, London, W1T 4QP	2010/6873/P	Creation of additional floorspace through the infilling of the existing courtyard, the extension of the existing basement, seven storey extension to the Chitty Street elevation and the construction of two additional storeys (creating a nine storey building in total, with existing buildings to be partially demolished) in association with the existing office use (Use Class B1); (shortened)	Granted May 2012
76-78 Charlotte Street, W1T 4QS	PS9804486R2	Alterations to the elevations on Charlotte Street and Chitty Street, the erection of a single storey extension at roof level for office use with plant	Granted March 2000

		over and conversion of the ground floor loading bay and basement car park to office and ancillary storage uses	
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#### 74A Charlotte Street

- 4.2 The principle of development at the Site with regards to the provision of additional office floorspace has been established through the granting of consent for approximately 216sqm of additional B1(a) office space in the basement, under application reference 2014/1138/P, which was approved in March 2014. With regards to the potential design of a ground floor extension to the office space, the design principles for the rear block have been established in the approved fenestration alterations for the upper floors of the rear block, approved under reference 2011/2351/P in July 2011.

#### 76-78 Charlotte Street

- 4.3 The application approved at nos. 76-78 Charlotte Street in March 2000 relates to the erection of a single storey extension at roof level for office use with plant over and conversion of the ground floor loading bay and basement to office and ancillary storage uses. Given the nature of the Proposed Development at the Site, the principle of loss of on-site parking for additional office floorspace has been established by the approval at nos. 76-78 Charlotte Street in which consent was given for servicing of the office block to occur on-street, in the designated parking bays.

#### Saatchi Block, 80 Charlotte Street, 65 Whitfield Street and 14 Charlotte Mews

- 4.4 This application relates to the comprehensive redevelopment of two parcels of land which are on opposite sides of Chitty Street. In addition to the 55 residential units approved the proposal would also involve the creation of 8411sqm of B1 office floorspace, 4487sqm of A1/B1 flexible office space in addition to 27,156sqm of existing B1 office floorspace.
- 4.5 In assessing the principle of the development, the Council in the delegated report have commented that *"Policies CS3 and CS8 of Camden's Core Strategy promotes additional office development in highly accessible locations, provided they are of a suitable scale. The creation of additional floorspace at this site is therefore considered acceptable in principle."* Whilst Policies CS3 and CS8 have been superseded by Policies E1 'Economic development' and E2 'Employment premises and sites' of the Camden Local Plan (2017), direct parallels can be drawn between the acceptability of additional office floorspace in this major redevelopment and the proposals for the Site, given



adopted policy strengthens Camden's policies in relation to the creation of additional office in growth areas such as the CAZ.

## 5.0 PLANNING POLICY

5.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Under Section 38(2), the development plan for any area within Greater London comprises the Spatial Development Strategy and the development plan documents (taken as a whole) which have been adopted and approved in relation to that area. The statutory development plan for the Site comprises of the following:

- Camden Local Plan 2017; and
- The London Plan 2016.

5.2 The Draft London Plan 2019 is expected to be adopted in Q1 2020 therefore the policies contained within should be given due consideration in the determination of planning applications in accordance with Paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

5.3 In addition to the statutory development plan documents the following supplementary planning documents are relevant materials considerations to the Proposed Development

- Fitzrovia Area Action Plan (2014)
- Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2008)
- Transport CPG (March 2019)
- Design CPG (March 2019)

### Draft New London Plan (“New London Plan”)

5.4 The New London Plan Policies which are considered relevant to the Proposed Development are listed below:

SD4 – ‘The Central Activities Zone (CAZ)’

SD5 – ‘Offices, other strategic functions and residential development in the CAZ’

D1 – ‘London’s form, character and capacity for growth’

D4 – ‘Delivering good design’

T5 – ‘Cycling’

T6 – ‘Car parking’

HC1 – ‘Heritage conservation and growth’

Camden Local Plan 2017 (“CLP”)

5.5 The Local Plan policies which are considered relevant to the Proposed Development are listed below:

G1 – ‘Delivery and location of growth’

E1 - ‘Economic development’

E2 – ‘Employment premises and sites’

A1 – ‘Managing the impact of development’

D1 – ‘Design’

D2 - ‘Heritage’

CC5 – ‘Waste’

T1 – ‘Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport’

T2 – ‘Parking and car-free development’

The London Plan (2016) (“London Plan”)

5.6 The London Plan Policies which are considered relevant to the Proposed Development are listed below:

2.10 – ‘Central Activities Zone – Strategic Priorities’

2.11 - ‘Central Activities Zone – Strategic Functions’

6.13 – ‘Parking’

7.4 – ‘Local character’

7.6 – ‘Architecture’

7.8 – ‘Heritage assets and archaeology’

## 6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 The main issues relating to the Proposed Development are:

- Principle of Development
- Design and impact on the Conservation Area
- Highways and refuse impacts

### Principle of Development

#### Central Activities Zone (CAZ)

6.2 The Site is located within the CAZ which is the main business and employment centre within London and the main focus of Camden's economy. CLP Policy G1 'Delivery and location of growth' outlines Camden's ascribed need for 695,000 sqm of office space over the plan period with a focus on delivery of growth through development in highly accessible locations such as Central London.

6.3 In expanding on Policy G1, the CLP paragraph 2.52 states the Council will support Central London as a focus for offices amongst other uses. In focusing on the location for additional office space, CLP Policies E1 'Economic development' and E2 'Employment premises and sites' also support the direction of new office development to the growth areas, including Central London in order to meet the forecast demand of 695,000sqm of office floorspace between 2014-2031. Whilst the Proposed Development at the Site does not constitute a major redevelopment of the existing building, the proposal would increase the B1(a) office floorspace of the existing building and thus employment opportunities in the CAZ, which would accord with the aims and objectives of Policy E2.

6.4 In supporting Camden's approach to the CAZ, the New London Plan outlines the strategic support of new office floorspace in the CAZ as the justification for Policy SD5 'Offices, other strategic functions and residential development in the CAZ' states *"the provision of a range of office floorspace in terms of size, quality and cost should be supported through a combination of intensification, redevelopment and refurbishment"*.

6.5 It can therefore be summarised that the principle of development with regards to additional B1(a) office floorspace would adhere to CLP and London Plan policy.

#### Redevelopment of Existing Car Parking

6.6 CLP Policy T2 'Parking and car-free development' states that the maximum parking provision for office development in the CAZ is 'Car-free' with support for the redevelopment of existing car parks for alternative uses to reduce private car usage.

- 6.7 Given the acceptance of car-free development in Camden and the support for the redevelopment of existing car parking spaces, the provision of additional employment floorspace at the Site would also have a residual benefit, through the promotion of more sustainable modes of transport given the loss of 8 off-street parking. The proposal would therefore accord with the aims and objectives of CLP Policy T2 and the Transport Planning Guidance which states *“the Council will seek to capitalise on opportunities arising from development, to achieve a net reduction in its overall stock of parking spaces throughout the borough”*.
- 6.8 Draft London Plan Policy T6 also requires all non-residential elements of a development to provide at least one on of off-street disabled parking bay (for blue badge parking), with provision available to the front of the Site in the residential parking bays.

### **Design and Impact on the Conservation Area**

#### Design

- 6.9 The Proposal involves the change of use of the ground floor rear car park to office space in addition to alterations to the front and rear elevation.
- 6.10 Camden’s Design CPG also states under Chapter 5 ‘Alterations and extensions in non-residential development’ that *“Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings. A harmonious contrast with the existing property and surroundings may be appropriate for some new work to distinguish it from the existing building; in other cases closely matching materials and design details are usually more appropriate to ensure the new work blends with the older parts of the building”*.
- 6.11 The proposed alterations to the front elevation are intended to rationalise the appearance of the ground floor of the building using floor-to-ceiling glazing to activate the building frontage whilst the enhanced glass balustrade will lighten its appearance. The rationalisation of the ground floor of the building also includes the removal of the existing inverted bay window on the northern end of the front façade which along with the fascia detailing of the ground floor, gives the building a dated appearance. The new door on the ground floor of the building which is to replace the inverted bay window would provide a secondary access to the existing ground floor office. These alterations, are intended to mesh with the façade of the buildings upper floors which will retain the existing cladding system, whilst providing uplift to the prominent ground floor facade. The approach to amendments on the ground floor is intended to enhance the visual amenity of the locality, given the buildings prominence within the streetscene.

- 6.12 The proposed rear elevation replicates the principles of the existing building with the placement and size of the fenestration apertures intended to match the upper floors retaining the 'grid-like' arrangement of the existing elevation. It is also intended to reinstate the footway in front of the proposed office space given the redundancy of the vehicular crossover. The repositioned substation and cycle storage are secured via a gated entrance which matches the adjacent residential entrance of the building at no. 6 Charlotte Mews which creates a coherent transition between the buildings.
- 6.13 In designing the rear façade of the proposed office floorspace to stitch into the fabric of the existing urban form, the design principles of the development would be consistent with the objectives of Camden's Design CPG Chapter 5.

#### Charlotte Street Conservation Area

- 6.14 The Site is located in the Charlotte Street Conservation Area which covers an area of approximately 8.9Ha area extending from Tottenham Court Road in the east to Cleveland Street - the boundary with Westminster in the west - and from Chitty Street in the north to Gresse Street in the south, again adjoining the London Borough of Westminster.
- 6.15 The Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan ("**CSCA Appraisal**") outlines the character of the Conservation Area which consists of a grid pattern of streets dating from the mid-late 18th century, with long streets running north-west to south-east parallel with Tottenham Court Road and shorter cross streets running south-west to north-east. This in turn results in a secondary system of narrower mews streets, which the front façade of the Proposed Development addresses.
- 6.16 In this regard when assessing a proposal in a Conservation Area, S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that "*in the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*".
- 6.17 New London Plan Policy HC1 'Heritage conservation and growth' also states "*development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets significance and appreciation within their surroundings*".
- 6.18 Camden's Local Plan Policy D1 'Design' states that development is required to respect the local character and context, preserve or enhance the historic environment in accordance with Policy D2 'Heritage', in addition to outlining general design principles governing the materiality of a proposal and its integration within the surrounding urban fabric.

- 6.19 In addition to the general design principles entrenched within CLP Policies D1 and D2 and Camden's Design CPG, CSCA Appraisal describes the significance of the mews areas of the Conservation Area (including Charlotte Mews), with specific reference to the small scale of the mews buildings and their large workshop windows. The fenestration apertures are consistent with these larger workshop windows and would result in the removal of the existing oppressive boundary treatment which serves the existing ground floor car park of the Site. The aforementioned 'grid-like' arrangement of the rear elevation also references the grid pattern of streets which characterises the Conservation Area, and the removal of the existing blank boundary treatment and replacement with glazing will activate the street frontage along Charlotte Mews. Overall the introduction of the proposed interface along this elevation would enhance the character and appearance of Charlotte Mews to the benefit of the Conservation Area as a whole.
- 6.20 The proposed alterations to the front elevation of the building would similarly enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through rationalising the existing glazing, balustrade and entrance feature which appears dated, with the use of linked materials ensuring the newly designed front elevation retains a sense of familiarity within the existing streetscene. This light touch would also ensure the ground floor front elevation harmonises with the existing upper floors but still makes a positive contribution to the amenity of the streetscene along the prominent ground floor frontage.
- 6.21 Therefore, in enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the Proposed Development would adhere with CLP Policies D1 and D2, and Draft London Plan Policy HC1.

## **Parking and Refuse**

### Cycle parking

- 6.22 The Draft London Plan Table 10.2 sets minimum cycle parking standards for inner London of 1 space per 75sqm for employees and for the first 5000sqm of a development 1 space per 500 sqm for short-term visitors.
- 6.23 TfL's LCDS Section 8.5.4 'Places of Work' suggests work facilities should be secure, with access for staff only, covered, conveniently located with step-free access, designed to allow the frame and one wheel to be secured and be introduced with complementary facilities such as storage lockers and showers.
- 6.24 The Proposed Development which would result in approximately 121sqm of additional floorspace would therefore require an additional 2 long term cycle spaces and 1 space for visitors. The 3 cycle

spaces are to be located within a sheltered area in the domain of the Site, and secured via a bespoke 'Sheffield' type stands which can be moved by authorised personnel in the event of UKPN requiring access to the substation. The cycle standards are also secured behind an access gate. The office floorspace also includes showering and changing facilities for office users in line with TfL's LCDS Section 8.5.4.

#### Waste storage

- 6.25 CLP Policy CC5 'Waste' requires development to "make sure that developments include facilities for the storage and collection of waste and recycling". This is expanded by Chapter 8 'Storage and collection of recycling and waste', which states occupiers of commercial premises are required to make an arrangement with either the Council or an Environment Agency licensed waste carrier for the collection of the waste produced from the premises.
- 6.26 The Proposed Development will utilise the existing waste management arrangements with collection contracts already in place as part of the existing arrangement. Waste and refuse will be stored in a designated waste area within the domain of the proposed office floorspace.



## 7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The Proposed Development is for “*Change of use of rear ground floor car park to offices B1(a) with alterations to the front and rear ground floor elevations*” which will provide additional high quality office accommodation in the CAZ to the benefit of Camden’s office stock offering.
- 7.2 The design of the elevations will also enhance the character and appearance of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area and cater for the additional cycle storage requirements in line with the Council and London Plan standards.
- 7.3 The Proposed Development positively responds to the Council’s adopted local plan policies pertaining to quality urban design and neighbourly development, would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and consequently the presumption in favour of granting planning permission is met and planning permission should be granted without delay in accordance with paragraph 14 of the NPPF.