



PLANNING STATEMENT

ON BEHALF

OF

FIONA FISHER

FOR

**THE CREATION OF A BASEMENT SELF-CONTAINED
ONE-BEDROOMED FLAT**

AT

**10 PRIMROSE HILL STUDIOS, FITZROY ROAD,
LONDON NW1 8TR**

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1. DESCRIPTION OF THE APPEAL SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 1.1** The application property comprises a part single and part two storey property. Originally constructed as a single storey artist's studio, circa 1877-82 by Alfred Healey, it has subsequently had a mezzanine level and rooflight added to create an additional bedroom and bathroom. Access to this first-floor accommodation is gained by way of a spiral staircase. The ground floor of the property comprises a large living/dining and kitchen area, together with a separate bedroom, bathroom and study. The property has a double frontage with its rear elevation facing onto Kingston Street. This rear elevation comprises a brick and render finish and a wall, plainer in form and detail than the front, which is punctuated by a number of windows and doors.
- 1.2** Number 10 forms part of a group of 12 buildings of similar design and clustered around a small paved courtyard, which is used mostly for the parking of cars. They are constructed in the Arts and Crafts style with London Stock bricks, hipped roofs and large studio rooflights. Two of the adjoining houses (Numbers 7 and 8) have created self-contained accommodation at basement level. A narrow single car width road provides vehicular and pedestrian access to the site from Fitzroy Road. To the rear, there is a more mixed character comprising a terrace of town houses to the north-west, in Manley Street, and a more modern three storey housing development containing houses and flats, known as Auden Place. The application property is a Grade II Listed building and is subject to an Article 4 direction that restricts permitted development rights. It is also located within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1** It is proposed to extend the area below the existing building to create a single bedroomed self-contained flat. A door and four small windows are proposed on the Kingston Street frontage to serve the new flat.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1** Planning permission was granted for the use of the premises as a single family dwellinghouse (C3) under LPA reference 2009/1184/P.
- 3.2** Planning permission was granted for 2 window openings in the rear elevation along with replacement rooflights and the erection of an internal staircase and associated internal alterations to existing dwelling. LPA reference: 2009/4424/L.
- 3.3** The installation of a rooflight to a side roofspace was granted under LPA reference 2013/6657/L.
- 3.4** A planning application for a basement extension to the property to create a basement studio flat was withdrawn by the applicant. LPA reference: 2016/6164/INVALID.

4. RELEVANT POLICIES

National

- 4.1** The basis on which planning applications are to be determined is set out in S.38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This states:

“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”

The National Planning Policy Framework (2018)

- 4.2** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states at paragraph 193, *“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether*

any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”

4.3 Paragraph 196 continues, *“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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

4.4 Paragraph 59 (Delivering A Sufficient Supply Of Homes) states, *“To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.”*

Local

The London Plan

4.5 Policy 3.3 (Increasing Housing Supply) states that the Mayor recognises the, *“Pressing need for more homes in London in order to promote opportunity and provide a real choice for all Londoners in ways that meet their needs at a price they can afford.”*

4.6 Policy 3.5 (Quality And Design Of Housing Developments) states that the design of all new housing developments should enhance the quality of local places, taking into account physical context, local character, density, tenure and land use mix. The policy also includes Table 3.3, which sets out minimum space standards for new dwellings.

Camden Local Plan

4.7 Policy H1 (Maximising Housing Supply) states that the Council will aim to secure a sufficient supply of homes to meet the needs of existing and future households. It regards self-contained housing as the priority land-use of the Local Plan. It also states that where sites are underused or vacant, it expects the maximum reasonable provision of housing that is compatible with any other uses needed on the site.

4.8 Policy A5 (Basements) states that the Council will only permit basement development where it is demonstrated that the proposal would not cause harm to:

- a. neighbouring properties;
- b. the structural, ground, or water conditions of the area;
- c. the character and amenity of the area;
- d. the architectural character of the building; and
- e. the significance of heritage assets.

4.9 Policy A5 also requires siting, location, scale and design of basements to have minimal impact and be subordinate to the host building and property and sets out 8 specific criteria, which it sees as important in meeting this aforementioned requirement. In addition, the policy requires the submission of a Basement Impact Assessment, which shows that the scheme poses a risk of damage to neighbouring properties no higher than Burland Scale 1, 'very slight'. Other listed criteria include the need to avoid harm to the amenity of neighbours, to avoid harm to the appearance or setting of the property or the established character of the surrounding area, avoid cumulative impacts and adversely affecting drainage and run-off or causing other damage to the water environment.

4.10 Supporting paragraph 6.142 states that basement developments underneath a listed building can harm the fabric, structural integrity, layout, inter-relationships and hierarchy of spaces and architectural features of the building. *"The addition of a floor level beneath the original lowest floor level of a listed building (basement, cellar, or vault) may affect the hierarchy and historic integrity of the floor levels of the building. The development of a basement beneath a listed building can also necessitate the removal of significant parts of the original structure and fabric of the building."*

4.11 Paragraph 6.143 states that basements will only be permitted where they do not cause harm to the significance of a listed building or the character and appearance of a conservation area.

4.12 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 and conservation areas.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Primrose Hill Conservation Statement

4.13 Primrose Hill Studios are referenced in the Conservation Area Statement as:

“A group of 12 buildings clustered around a quiet courtyard in the centre of a block. These buildings are constructed in the Arts and Crafts style with hipped roofs and are modest in scale, being a maximum of two storeys in height.”

5. PLANNING ISSUES

Introduction

5.1 It will be noted in the Planning History section to this statement that a previous application for an extension to the basement of the application property was withdrawn (LPA reference: 2016/6164). Subsequent correspondence with the LPA and specifically with the Council's Conservation Officer (Antonia Powell) raised a number of issues with the proposal. These can be summarised as follows:

- The creation of the basement flat with entrance and windows would further interrupt the historic pattern of rear elevations and unbalance the main focus of the building;
- The proposed bulkhead in the rear bedroom would occupy a substantial amount of the room and 'uncomfortably' abut what is likely to be the original chimney flue.

5.2 This statement will focus on these issues raised by the LPA and demonstrate that they do not singularly or cumulatively amount to harm to the listed building, particularly when set against the benefit from the creation of a single self-contained flat. It will also be demonstrated that the proposal complies with planning policy, specifically Policy A5 (basements) of the Camden Local Plan.

Impact upon the Dwelling

5.3 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, requires decision makers to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a listed building and conservation area.

- 5.4** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes good design to support sustainable principles. This is achieved by ensuring that design of the development promotes or reinforces local distinctiveness. It also seeks to optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, responds to local character and history, and reflects the identity of local surroundings and materials, whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. Policy D2 (Heritage) of the Camden Local Plan requires development within conservation areas to preserve or, where possible, enhance the character or appearance of the area and resist proposals for alterations or extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building. Policy A5 (Basements) of the Camden Local Plan states that the Council will only permit basement development where it would not cause harm to a number of factors, including the architectural character of the building and the significance of heritage asset.
- 5.5** The proposed basement, which will create a separate self-contained flat that will have its access from the rear, as is the case with Numbers 7 and 9 Primrose Hill Studios, via a new front door. In order to provide the necessary headroom, the steps down to the new basement flat would require a bulkhead in the ground rear bedroom of the studio. During the pre-application, the Council's Conservation officer considered this bulkhead to occupy a substantial amount of the room and, *"Uncomfortably about what is likely to be the original chimney flue."* It was considered that this would reduce and alter the historic room proportions and floor plan unacceptably. As noted in the Heritage Statement, submitted with this application, the existing interiors are being left unaltered except for the boxing of the new stair, which projects to about 1m high in the spare second bedroom. As shown on the section drawing PR1-EX-GA-08, the line of the bulkhead is below that of the line of the original chimney flue. In addition, given the low level of the bulkhead (1m from ground level) the apparent proportions of the roof will not be affected.
- 5.6** As previously stated, the proposed basement accommodation will be completely divorced from the studio, given its separate entrance, and would therefore not be viewed as additional or ancillary accommodation. As such, it would not increase the level of accommodation within the house and, importantly, not materially alter the

overall layout and carefully considered form of the building, or upset its finely balanced hierarchy of spaces commiserate with its former use as an artist's studio.

- 5.7** The external rear wall of the property, facing Kingstown Street, is the only area of the building to be visually affected by the proposal. It has a generally plain appearance, comprising brick with render at the lower level. There are two windows at ground and first floor serving the application property, with a similar sized ground floor window on the adjacent property (Number 9). Numbers 7 and 8 Primrose Studios have a wide variety of fenestration on their rear elevations. These all add variety and interest to the building and the Conservation area. The four basement windows are designed to a similar size and design to the existing windows but given their location, almost at ground floor level, they will provide an attractive, albeit discreet, addition to the rear of the property. Likewise, the proposed single door will be set into the wall and form a sympathetic feature in the context of the rear wall and existing openings.
- 5.8** In the light of the above it is not considered that the proposed changes will result in harm to the significance of the listed building. The proposed alterations would not lead to the loss of the building or its important architectural features. Consequently, whilst the harm to the heritage asset would be material, it would be less than substantial.

Increase Housing

- 5.9** The proposal will result in an additional residential unit. Policy 3.3 of the London Plan (Increasing Housing Supply) states, *"The mayor recognises the pressing need for more homes in London in order to promote opportunity and provide a real choice for all Londoners in ways that meet their needs at a price they can afford."* Policy H1 of the Camden Local Plan states the Council will, *"Aim to secure a sufficient supply of homes to meet the needs of existing and future households by maximising the supply of housing."* The policy states that the Council will seek to exceed the target for additional homes, particularly self-contained homes by regarding self-contained housing as the priority land use of the Local Plan. Paragraph 196 of the NPPF requires that, in the case of designated heritage assets, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. The main public benefit resulting from the scheme would be the provision of an additional self-contained unit of accommodation that is located within an easy reach of a range of

local services and facilities. Given the encouragement of the NPPF and London and local plan policies to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, this is a matter that should be given significant weight in the determination of the proposal.

Basement Impact Assessment

5.10 Policy A5 of the Camden Local Plan states that in considering proposals for basements and other underground development, the Council will require an assessment of the scheme's impact on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability in the form of a Basement Impact Assessment and where appropriate, a Basement Construction Plan. A Basement Impact Assessment has been prepared by LBHGEO and has demonstrated that the proposed basement will have no adverse residual or cumulative stability, hydrological or hydrogeological impacts to either neighbouring structures or the wider environment as a result of the development. The BIA has, however, revealed that the site is located within a designated flood risk area and, as such, a detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared.

5.11 The Environment Agency Surface water flood maps indicate that Primrose Hill Studios are at a low risk of surface water flooding. The FRA states, at paragraph 6.1, that the risk of flooding from various sources has been assessed and the overall risk of flooding at this site is considered to be low. Further, at paragraph 6.2, it states that the run-off likely to be generated from the developed site is not expected to change given that there will not be any increase in impermeable area.

Impact upon Residential Amenity

5.12 Policy A5 (Basements) seeks to ensure that basements will not cause harm to neighbouring properties. In addition, Policy A1 (Managing The Impact Of Development) seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours. This policy sets out a number of criteria, which should be met in order to ensure that proposed development meets this objective. These factors include visual, privacy and outlook, sunlight, daylight and overshadowing, noise and vibration levels. The proposed flat will be below current ground level and, as a result, will have no impact upon the amenity of the neighbouring properties. The Basement Impact Assessment

has also found that the proposed basement will have no residual unacceptable impacts upon the surrounding structures, infrastructure and environment.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1** It has been demonstrated during the course of this statement that the proposed basement will not be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property as a Grade II listed building, nor to the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. The only outward physical sign of the development will be a door and four low-level windows, being a sympathetic feature of the Kingston Street elevation. The Basement Impact Assessment and the Flood Risk Assessment further demonstrate that the basement can be constructed without harm to the amenity of the adjoining properties. In addition, the two existing basements at Numbers 7 and 8 Primrose Hill Studios further demonstrate how basement accommodation can be provided without harm to the character of their respective properties and the wider character. This lack of harm, coupled with the benefit of providing an additional flat, thereby contributing to the Council's housing land supply, ensures that the proposal is in compliance with both national and local policy, and in these circumstances planning and listed building consent should be granted.