

**Planning, design and access statement**  
For **162 Agar Grove, Camden, London, NW1 9TY**

*Project* **Change of use of a vacant basement from restaurant ancillary (Class A3) to office (Class B1)**



**London Borough of Camden**

Revision (--) Jul 2020

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**1.0 Introduction**

We apply on behalf of our client to seek planning permission from Camden Council to change the use of the basement floor (former) restaurant ancillary (A3) to be used as office (B1).

The site is a terraced mixed use property on Agar Grove, near the York St/ Brewery Rd junction and it is composed primarily of flats (Class C3) at the ground, first, second and third floors while the use of the basement is reminiscent of the previous function of the ground floor which ended approximately 12 years ago.

The ground and basement floors of the property had been in use as a restaurant (at the ground floor) and ancillary storage (at basement level) until 12 years ago when the premises became vacant and in 2014 planning permission was granted to change the use of the ground floor into a 2 bedroom flat, the basement continuing to remain vacant until present day.

Through the current application, the freeholder is seeking the Council's support for the change of use of the vacant floor in order to unlock the potential of the unit and to create the opportunity for a local small business to occupy and adapt the space to their industry's and company's requirements.

**Existing Gross Internal Area – Basement: 50 sqm/ 538 sqft**

**2.0 Assessment**

**2.1 Physical Context** The unit site is located near the junction of Agar Grove and York Way.

North; Agar Grove  
East; 164 Agar Grove  
West; 160 Agar Grove  
South; St Paul's Mews

**2.2 Social context**

The site is located on the Agar Grove of Camden, near the commercial junction with York Way and benefiting from a multitude of new residential developments currently under construction nearby.

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### 2.3 Economical context

Under current conditions, we assess that the market demand for non-conventional, reduced size office premises is growing and will be sustained by emerging practices of mixed working from home and from office.

As companies return to work, there will be significant incentive for companies to lease downsized office premises and practice rotational programmes together with working from home.

### 2.4 Planning policy context

#### **LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies**

##### **Camden Core Strategy:**

- CS1 (Distribution of growth)
- CS3 (Other highly accessible areas)
- CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development)
- CS6 (Providing quality homes)
- CS8 (Promoting a successful and inclusive Camden economy)
- CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage)
- CS18 (Dealing with our waste and encouraging recycling)

##### **Camden Development Policies:**

- DP2 (Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing)
- DP5 (Homes of different sizes)
- DP13 (Employment premises and sites)
- DP17 (Walking, cycling and public transport)
- DP18 (Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking)
- DP19 (Managing the impact of parking)
- DP24 (Securing high quality design)
- DP25 (Conserving Camden's Heritage)
- DP26 (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours)
- DP30 (Shopfronts)

##### **Camden Planning Guidance:**

- CPG1 (Design) 2015
- CPG2 (Housing) 2015

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- CPG6 (Amenity) 2011

**London Plan 2016**

**National Planning Policy Framework 2012**

**Camden Square Conservation Area Statement.**

**3.0 Evaluation**

The available space at basement floor level, measuring 50sqm internally has the potential to accommodate a good quality, micro office working environment.

Additionally, the rear light tunnel and the recently installed glass pavers at the front of the property allow natural light at both the rear and the front of the proposed working space.

Lastly the former coal bunkers at the front of the vacant basement set out the opportunity to delimitate a private or semi-private space to be used as a meeting area or director's desk based on the future occupant's requirements.

**4.0 Design Constraints**

**The site is visible from Agar Grove.**

**The site is within Camden Square Conservation Area.**

**The property is not a listed building and is not of special Architectural merit.**

**(162 Agar Grove)**

**4.1 Design Ethos**

The proposed office configuration is designed to outline a potential use and space planning of the site while maximising the versatility of an open space unit and preserving the opportunity for a potential occupier to adapt the space to their needs.

The existing space boundaries are defined by narrow raised platforms which resulted from the minor excavations carried out to increase the available headheight. We thus define the boundary as an opportunity to provide built in storage space.

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A tea making facility and lavatory are proposed at the rear of the space with the opportunity to enclose these facilities to the potential occupier's requirements.

**4.2 Amount**

The proposed change of use comprises internal alterations only;

The proposed office will not exceed the size of the existing unit;

**4.3 Layout**

Following assessment, we are proposing to maximize available space along with the versatility of use and furnishing.

The proposed accesses of the ground floor and basement levels remain as existing.

**4.4 Scale**

N/A

**4.5 Landscaping**

N/A

**4.6 Appearance**

The proposed office will benefit from a high quality entrance and signage opportunity, as detailed via a separate application.

**4.7 Building Regs.**

The proposal has been designed with building regulations in mind. A separate building regulations submission will be rendered upon planning approval.

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**4.8 Access**

*Highways*

The site's response to the road layout is not seen as changing from its current condition.

*Servicing*

Access to services remains unchanged.

*Disabled Access*

The layout, design and material specifications for the proposed additions and layout alterations will comply with all Building Regulation Guidelines and the policies set out in the DDA Act, providing unaltered access to the main entry.

*Transport*

The development is aimed at serving the local community thus encouraging walking and the use of sustainable transportation. The access to public transport and the need of private parking space remain unchanged.

A bicycle storage space is proposed within the ground level lobby.

*Refuse*

Refuse collection remains unchanged

**5.0 Recommendation**

In view of the issues raised the Council is respectfully asked to grant planning permission for the development as proposed.