



Architectural Appeal Statement

For

St Matthews Lodge, application ref: 2019/4012/P

Prepared by Echlin on 20/12/2019

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1 Introduction

- 1.1** This written statement has been prepared for the appeal against the refusal of planning permission at St Matthews Lodge, 50 Oakley Square, London, NW1 1NB, ref: 2019/4012/P
- 1.2** The statement has been written by Steven Clinch BA (Hons), DIP ARCH, ARB of Echlin. Steven has twenty years' architectural experience within the residential sector. Now Head Architect at Echlin Steve spent 7 years at Clay Architecture, an award-winning practice in Kent, and 5 years at MHK Architects. During this time, he has worked on a number of award-winning projects, 4 of which gained RIBA awards, with a number gaining Kent Design Awards during his time at Clay Architecture, plus a number of published projects.
- 1.3** In preparing this statement, I have referenced the following documents;
- Echlin Design and Access Statement, prepared by Echlin, July 2019
 - Drawings accompanying the submission
 - Case Officers Delegated Report 2019/4012/P
 - Decision Notice 2019/4012/P
 - Consented planning application 2018/4230/P for a single storey extension at 50 Oakley Square
 - Pre –application response 2017/0957/PRE and emails from Camden Council relating to design issues
 - 48 – 55 Bayham Place planning notice Decision Notice 2017/2739/P.
- 1.4** The evidence which I have prepared and provide for this appeal (in this proof of evidence, written statement or report) is true and has been prepared and given in accordance with my professional institution and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinion.

2 The Proposed Development and reasons for refusal

- 2.1** The application sought permission for:
Erection of a two storey roof extension at 5th floor level to provide 7 apartments (1 x 3 bed, 5 x 2 bed and 1 x 1 bed) with roof terraces facing Crowndale Road and Oakley Square (Class 3), including erection of a lift shaft (to the rear) and cycle store and alteration to the waste store.

2.2 Main reasons for refusal:

“The proposed two storey roof extension, by reason of its prominent location, height, bulk and design would be detrimental to the appearance of the host property and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area or preserve the listed buildings contrary to Policy D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017”.

3 Consented Scheme

3.1 Whilst the proposed scheme was not directly discussed during a pre application submission the design has been developed following a long planning process. During this process key parameters were discussed with many design principles agreed. Initially, the design proposal started with a 2 storey extension which I believed was the best design solution for the building.

3.2 The design parameters for the single storey scheme were discussed and agreed with Camden Council during a design meeting held at their office on 26th April 2018, and pre-application feedback (2017/0957/PRE), which included the following:

- The extension should continue the architectural language by referencing the architectural features and materials of the existing building.
- The top level should reflect a rooftop form and complete the existing building which in its current form looks incomplete.
- The extension massing is to be set back behind the parapet line forming a clear distinction between the new addition and existing façade.
- The building form should be stepped at either end continuing the massing of the existing building and setting within the street scene providing breathing space to the listed vicarage and terraces along Oakley Square and Crowndale Road.
- Stepping back the additional levels from the floor plate below to ensure there is no loss of light or overlooking to neighbouring properties and apartments below
- The extension form should add architectural interest.

3.3 As acknowledged by Camden Council within the Delegated Report for 2019/4012/P *“The existing building is not of great architectural merit. ... The building has an abrupt vertical termination however, with the oriel/bay windows situated directly at the top of the building”.* (see figure 1 and 2). This statement is also reflected in the comments from the pre-application feedback for the single storey scheme (2018/4230/P).



Figure 1: View from Crowndale Road looking towards St Matthews Lodge.



Figure 2: View on corner of Oakley Square and Crowndale Road

- 3.4 The abrupt termination of the building at the fourth floor gives the building an unfinished appearance and subsequently impacts negatively on the streetscape. Due to this, and along with the existing building being lower than the majority of surrounding buildings, the principle of adding a rooftop extension was deemed

acceptable. A single storey scheme was submitted and subsequently approved on the 08th March 2019 ref: 2018/4230/P.

- 3.5 The pre-application process for 2018/4230/P took over 12 months due in a large part to the changing officers and contradictory advice. Therefore, the building design presented within the planning application subject to the appeal does take into account the previous advice received by the council. The only point of contention was whether or not a two storey extension was a suitable option for the building.

4 **Massing**

- 4.1 The massing has been carefully considered to respond to both the wider and immediate context to avoid any negative impacts.
- 4.2 In the wider context there are a number of tall buildings which are visible along Crowndale Road and Oakley Square and these form part of the area's character. In the immediate area this includes the Godwin and Crowndale Estate, a prominent 8 storey apartment building opposite, three 21 storey high rise tower blocks in the background, and the Working Men's College.
- 4.3 Consideration was also given to two recently approved applications for two storey roof extensions at 48 – 56 Bayham Place (ref: 2017/2739/P) and Koko (ref:2017/6058/P), which is a grade II listed building. Both of these buildings are located within the Conservation Area and are visible from Crowndale Road. Bayham Road is now constructed (see Figures 3 and 4).

- Koko ref: 2017/6058/P

Although not a residential scheme, given its close proximity to Oakley Square the design treatment is relevant. The approved scheme comprises of renovation works and modern extensions, predominantly glazing, to the Grade II listed building known as Koko. These modern additions have been carefully considered and allow the original form to be read preserving the identity of the historic building within the conservation area. The scheme will alter the current view along Crowndale Road from the site looking towards Mornington Crescent tube station.

- 48 – 56 Bayham Place ref 2017/2739/P:

The approved design introduces two/three additional stories over an existing four storey brick building. The rooftop extension is treated as a roof termination to the warehouse in a similar design principle to the proposal at St Matthews Lodge. The design is contemporary and finished in metal cladding which allows the extension to be read as an addition to the host building. The scheme is next to the listed Koko club and smaller terraces but

adds to the variety of styles which make up the character and appearance of the conservation area. See figures 3 & 4. This interpretation appears similar to the Council's perspective with the following taken from the Decision Notice for 2017/2739/P:

"The existing building is of sufficient scale and robustness to accommodate the proposed extensions seen in the context of the larger scale building to west and the contemporary industrial design responds positively to the character and appearance of the building and vibrant character of Camden town more broadly."



Figure 3 & 4 Bayham Mews, 48 -56 Bayham Mews

- 4.4 Currently St Matthews Lodge is lower than the majority of surrounding buildings and does not reflect its prominent position on the corner site of Oakley Square and Crowndale Road. Historically the spire of the Church of St Matthews would have been a prominent landmark and would have formed a gateway to the area. The aim of the proposal is to replicate this gateway.
- 4.5 The additional 2 storeys reflects the wider context in terms of the scale and proportions of the 8 storey Godwin and Crowndale apartment block on the opposite side of Oakley Square. This provides symmetry and balance allowing the two buildings to form a gateway to the garden Square and intersection of Oakley & Crowdale Road. See figure 5 below.



Figure 5: Proposed view forming a gateway onto the corner of Oakley Square and Crowndale Road

- 4.6 In addition, the proposed massing continues the current architectural form of the host building which steps in at both ends. By recessing the built form in from the parapet edge at each level, the visible massing is reduced whilst also breaking the elevation verticality from street level. See figure 6.



Figure 6: Proposed View from Crowndale Road looking towards St Matthews Lodge

- 4.7 As a result, the offset to neighbouring properties increases as the building gets higher. This gives breathing room to the neighbouring listed buildings and ensures the extension does not compete or adversely affect the heritage assets. Whilst it's the view of the Council that the extension competes with the pyramidal roof form of the Old Vicarage, as noted within the Delegated Report, the proposed second storey element is offset by 22m giving sufficient space to allow the roof form to be read. See figure 7.

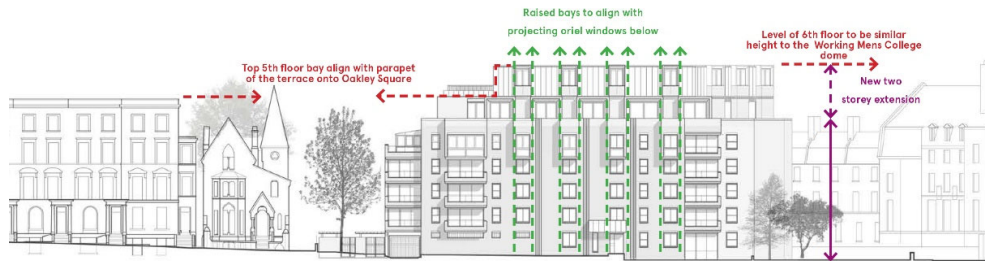


Figure 7: Proposed Oakley Square elevation, concept diagram. See DAS for larger image page 27

- 4.8 Similarly, the width of Crowndale Road provides a 22.2m separation between St Matthews Lodge and the Working Men's College with the extension second storey set back a further 1.5m. This ensures the height and massing of the proposal does not compete with the surrounding buildings but is actually in proportion to them.
- 4.9 Within the Crowndale Road street scene the building acts as a transition between the modest terrace run and the 8 storey apartment block on the opposite side of Oakley Square. To accommodate the change of height the building profile steps down creating a vertical connection along the street scene, see figure 8.



Figure 8: Proposed Crowndale Road elevation, concept diagram. See DAS for larger image page 28.

- 4.10 By elongating the form, the existing top-heavy appearance is resolved as the existing projecting bays, which make the building look top heavy, are integrated into the design. As a result, the building will have a softer and more balanced appearance despite it being increased in height.

- 4.11 The local area is formed by an eclectic mix of buildings which vary in design and height. There is no set building height and there is a highly diverse mix of architectural styles. The listed 19th terrace run on Crowndale Road is a typical example, with a higher modern building on the corner of Crowndale Road and Camden Street forming a termination to the terrace, see figure 9. Raising the height of St Matthews Lodge will mirror the proportions of the building at the opposite end which will book-end the terrace run.



Figure 9: Terrace on Crowndale Road with taller buildings terminating the run.

- 4.12 In my opinion the above demonstrates that the massing of the two storey scheme is well considered, respects the surrounding listed buildings and improves the existing building which subsequently benefits the conservation area.
- 4.13 The Conservation Area Advisory Committee also concluded that the existing building could accommodate 2 additional storeys with some refinements,

"The new added volume can be accommodated".

This reaffirms my opinion, and concurs with the Heritage advice provided by KM Heritage that the proposed two storey massing would not be detrimental to the host building, wider conservation area or the surrounding listed buildings.

- 4.14 Whilst the CAAC also made comments relating to aesthetics of the extension it should be noted that design is subjective, and the development and rationale will be discussed within the next section.

5 Design

- 5.1 The Delegated Report lists design as grounds for a refusal under policies D1 and D2 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017, noting that a reason for refusal of the Planning Application is due to the proposed two storey roof extension , by reason of its location height, bulk and design, would be detrimental to the appearance of the host building and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, or preserve the setting of the adjacent buildings. Much of the concern appears to be around the additional height, as noted within the delegated report, it would appear that regardless of the design quality any 2nd floor extension would have been considered an issue.
- 5.2 The design however is an important factor in addressing the relationship between the existing building and proposed rooftop extension. Careful consideration has been given to breaking the massing and ensuring the extension relates to the existing building, and that it doesn't appear top heavy.
- 5.3 Whilst in my opinion the approved single storey extension is a considerable improvement on the existing building the massing looks somewhat disproportionate and apologetic. By adding two additional floors to the host building the rooftop extension proportions are improved creating an elegant composition. This creates a vertical emphasis to avoid the appearance of a box being planted on the roof.
- 5.4 To integrate the two floors the materials have been staggered so the brick balconies extend up to the 6th floor providing a sense of unity between the two floors. This breaks the layering effect which can be seen on other rooftop extensions. See figure 10 and 11 along with DAS elevations and bay detail pages 29, 30 & 31 along with drawing 2106/PL/120 submitted with the application.
- 5.5 The design has been developed to respond to the council's initial feedback regarding application 2018/4230/P which specifically called for an aesthetic that creates a rooftop termination which relates to the existing building. Although consented as a single storey extension the original proposal began as a two storey scheme. The scheme was reduced to a single storey extension due to the divergent opinions on design.
- 5.6 Whilst the single storey scheme improves the existing building, in my opinion by addressing the top-heavy appearance the two storey addition forms a better relationship with the host building both in terms of form and massing.
- 5.7 I also believe that the design process with the council has led to an improved two storey scheme (2019/4012/P) which is stronger than the initial 2 storey design put forward at pre-application (2017/0957/PRE). The agreed design principles, see

[illegible]

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- 5.8 The rhythm is generated by aligning the fenestration with the existing oriel windows which creates a stronger, more balanced pattern connecting the extension to the existing building, see figure 7 and 8. This creates a relationship with the existing building and rationalises the existing projecting bays resulting in a coherent design whilst overcoming the current top-heavy appearance.
- 5.9 To provide architectural interest the façade has been manipulated to create a series of bays and set back sections in a contemporary architectural style. The bays and projecting windows maintain the architectural language of the existing building with the widths and proportions aligning with the existing windows and oriel projections below.
- 5.10 Materials have been selected to create a roof form and link the extension to the existing building. A high-quality metal roofing material is proposed to the 6th floor which is similar to other projects approved nearby and emphasizes the appearance of a roof form. This reflects the feedback received during the preapplication process (2017/0957/PRE) and for the approved single storey scheme, ref: 2018/4230/P.
- 5.11 The 5th floor is to be constructed in brickwork, which matches the existing building, and acts as a link that softens the transition between the zinc roof form and the existing building.
- 5.12 By setting the massing back behind the parapet it helps distinguish between the existing building and the extension. This is a good design principle and follows the guidance provided by Camden Council.
- 5.13 As part of the proposal the front entrance and tired external landscaping will all be improved. This will enhance the buildings setting within the nearby conservation area.

6 Summary

- 6.1 The two storey scheme makes a positive contribution to the existing building. The proposed extension is sympathetic to the host building respecting its architectural rhythm whilst relating to the key features of the existing building. The proposed roof additions finish the existing building which in its current form looks incomplete and top heavy. The massing is in keeping with recently approved schemes within the area, whilst the improvements to the host building provide a positive contribution to the nearby conservation area. In addition, modern detailing and the use of high-quality materials creates an exemplary contemporary design which responds to the vibrant character of the conservation area.
- 6.2 Based on the rationale provided within this evidence, it is my opinion that a two storey scheme is acceptable as the extension enhances the current building and makes a positive contribution to the conservation area whilst respecting the surrounding listed buildings.