

1 September 2020



Planning and Building Development
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Dear Sir/Madam,

88 Kingsway, High Holborn, London, WC2B 6AA
External Alterations to Façade and Lightwell
Planning Portal Reference: PP-08998212

On behalf of our client, Holborn Station Property Ltd, please find enclosed a planning application for:

'Alterations including new entrance door and signage onto Kingsway, modifications to secondary entrance onto Gate Street, conversion of existing gantries within the atrium to provide new doors to access terrace space, new fire doors and fire glazing'

In addition to this covering letter please find enclosed the following supporting documents:

- Site Plan prepared by Rolfe Judd;
- Design Document prepared by Rolfe Judd;
- Existing and Proposed Drawings prepared by Rolfe Judd; and
- Planning Application Form prepared by Savills.

Introduction

88 Kingsway sits within the London Borough of Camden, within the Kingsway Conservation Area. The London County Council created The Kingsway Conservation Area at the turn of the 20th century, sandwiched between Lincoln's Inn and Covent Garden, between the City and the West End, creating a link between central London and south of the River Thames.

The property is an existing office building, and the Applicant seeks to holistically upgrade the existing office space. The internal lightwell will see the installation of new fenestrations and planters to create an amenity space of occupants of the property. A new door and associated signage is also proposed as part of the refurbishment of the building to create an elegant and contemporary entrance with additional modifications to

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the entrance leading onto Gate Street. Accordingly, these proposals are submitted as part of a drive to enhance the building's usability and create a more positive working environment for those who occupy it.

Site & Surroundings

88 Kingsway was completed around 1906 in the Edwardian style which defines much of the conservation area. The building includes the Holborn Station Entrances with the main entrance off of Kingsway Road and a smaller entrance off of High Holborn. The original station and surrounding lower levels which were originally designed by Leslie Green using his typical grand arched bay frontages. Uniquely, 88 Kingsway is constructed in stone rather than the standard red glazed terracotta typically employed in the rest of Green's stations of the era. This was due to planning regulations imposed by the London County Council which required the use of stone for façades in Kingsway.

The station entrance and exit sections of the street façade were constructed in granite with the other parts of the ground, first and upper floors in the same style, but using Portland stone. Located at the junction of two earlier tube railway schemes, the station was opened by the Great Northern, Piccadilly and Brompton Railway (GNP&BR). Holborn Station was modernised in the early 1930s to replace the lifts with escalators. The station frontages on Kingsway and High Holborn were partially reconstructed to modernist designs by Charles Holden with the granite elements replaced with plain Portland stone façades perforated with glazed screens.

The site comprises an existing seven storey office building, situated within the London Borough of Camden. The building itself is not listed, however the site is located within the Kingsway Conservation Area. The Camden Policies Map reveals that the property is marked as a Central London Frontage, and a primary Protected Frontage.

The position as a CLF recognises the role of the property as a shopping and service centre for workers and residents. High Holborn is predominately a commercial area, with a very small residential community. To the north of the site is King's Cross, to the east is Holborn station, to the south is the Strand, and to the west is Oxford Circus.

Planning History

Following a review of the London Borough of Camden online planning register found that there is no relevant planning history on the site.

Proposed Development

The proposals in this application are designed to ensure the comprehensive refurbishment of 88 Kingsway. This application proposes to transform the redundant existing gantries to the atrium space into external terraces. The terraces will include planting and seating with new doors that will allow direct access from the relevant floor plates. It is considered that this will enhance the quality of the space for the tenants..

Additional refurbishment works include modifications to the lightwell elevation. These include new fire doors to the external stair, new doors from the main stair to the gantry and fire rated glazing near the external escape stair. These changes are all regulatory led upgrades.

The proposals in this application also include the refurbishment of the external office entrance and lobby entrance area, including new signage and CCTV to enhance the appearance of the building. The existing building entrance is comprised of an inviting solid timber door and signage with no lighting in place. The new design replaces the existing entrance with a new, elegant, more contemporary design including a transparent glazed door and overpanel. The new signage will be nickel bronze coloured with double glazing over the panel above the doors. It is also proposed that the existing stairs are also updated to include a new bronze stair strip nosings.



Figure 1: Proposed Entrance

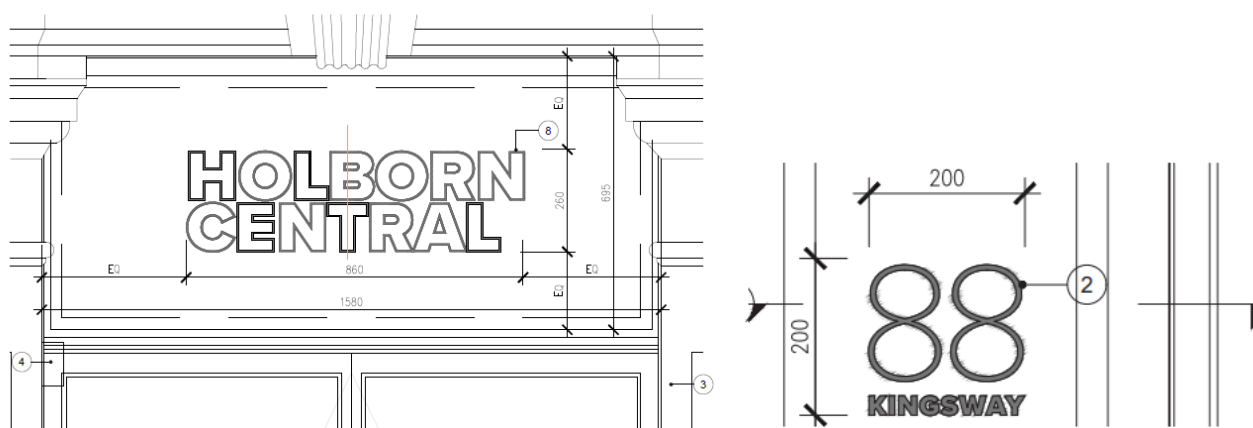


Figure 2: Proposed Signage Drawing

The proposal includes the installation of a new entrance door and associated signage, shown in further detail in the drawings submitted as part of this application. The signage located either side of the entrance door is proposed to be nickel bronze painted aluminium metal with cut out letters and no illumination. The proposed signage located above the entrance door will also not be illuminated and is proposed to be comprised of nickel bronze coloured aluminium metal with cut out letters fixed to clear plexi backing sheet. The dimensions of each sign can be found on the attached drawings.

Planning Policy Considerations

In accordance with Section 38(6) of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this instance, the development plan comprises:

- The London Plan (2016);
- The Camden Local Plan (2017); and
- The Camden Policies Map (2019).

Other material planning considerations include:

- National Planning Policy Framework (2019);
- National Planning Policy Guidance (2019); and
- Intend to Publish Draft London Plan (2019).

The remainder of this letter will identify the key planning considerations of policy related to the proposals.

Principle of Development

Policy E1 Economic Development from The Camden Local Plan illustrates that the Council will support businesses of all sizes, but maintaining a stock of premises that are suitable for a variety of business activities, whilst directing offices to growth area, including Central London where the site within this proposal is located. The continued and enhanced office use of the premises is therefore in line with the policy requirements of the local Council.

The Camden Local Plan Policy G1 names Holborn as an area where development with the most significant growth is expected to be delivered. The Council also sets out their aspirations for the area within the Core Strategy, which includes:

“provision of a mix of land uses, with offices and housing as the predominant uses”

The proposal contributes to the aspirations of the area by enhancing the entrance way, which in turn increases the desirability of the office space. The modernisation of the entrance is expected to attract further demand to the property in this vibrant and core office location. Furthermore, the addition of the external terraces providing seating and planting will further enhance the quality of the office space for its occupants. By encouraging the continued office use of the property, the proposal aligns with planning policy with regards to the principle of development.

The London Plan states in Policy 4.2 Offices that the Mayor and boroughs should:

“encourage renewal and modernisation of existing office stock in viable locations to improve its quality and flexibility”

As such, the proposal is compliant with both local and GLA policy, as it aims to renew the existing office entrance, and as such increase the desirability of the office property. In doing so, the proposal will improve the quality of office stock provision by bringing the frontage up to modern design and quality standards.

Design & Conservation Area

Policy D1 Design of The Camden Local Plan sets out a list of requirements for proposals. Those which are relevant to this application can be seen below. The Council will require that development:

a. respects local context and character;

- c. is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;*
- d. is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses;*
- e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;*
- f. integrates well with the surrounding streets and open spaces, improving movement through the site and wider area with direct, accessible and easily recognisable routes and contributes positively to the street frontage;*
- g. is inclusive and accessible for all;*

The Camden Local Plan also makes clear the importance of design within Holborn. The policy document illustrates that the Council are seeking:

“high quality, sustainable design that respects its surroundings and preserves and enhances the area’s historic environment”

The proposed development utilises a combination of high quality and sustainable materials to reform the office entrance. The use of glazed screens that have been integrated into historic facades are featured in a number of nearby office buildings. They all portray a heightened sense of openness, which is a key ambition of the designs in this proposal. Furthermore, the elegance of the proposed thin framed, bronze coloured door, coupled with the contemporary signage results in a more elevated and contemporary design of the building’s frontage. As such, the proposal integrates well with the surrounding area, and positively contributes to the street frontage.

The Kingsway Conservation Area Statement makes clear the character and design of the area, and states that:

“Most of the original composition in Kingsway survives and the buildings are characterised by elaborately composed and decorated Portland stone facades, some with Nouveau motifs, capped by a varied roofscape containing many interesting parapet and cornice details, attic storeys, dormers, domes, turrets and pieces of sculpture. Windows are decorated both with carving and with ironwork. Entrances are given prominence with capitols and decorated pediments and make a punctuation point along the road.”

As discussed in the Area Statement, the Kingsway area has largely remained unchanged and has retained its original characteristics. Kingsway has been categorised as an area comprising of commercial buildings, it is therefore clear that the proposal promotes and enhances the continued usability of the office space. As the proposals are only focused on the entrance of 88 Kingsway and the redundant gantries, the refurbishments

will not dramatically impact the façade of the remainder of the building and only seek to enhance the usability of the space. In doing so, the building is able to maintain the existing character of the area.

Conclusion

The proposed development would refurbish the existing office entrance to one with a significantly enhanced quality, making it fit for purpose long into the future. The proposals would improve the visual appearance of the building, attracting desirability to the office space within this key Central London location. It is considered that the refurbishment of the internal lightwells to create an amenity space for the occupants of the property and the elegant new door and associated signage will be a positive contribution to the surrounding area and improve the existing office space.

I trust you have all the necessary information required to validate this planning application, and I look forwarding to receiving confirmation soon. Should you have any queries, please feel free to contact me using the information in the head of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Savills" or a stylized version of the name, written in a cursive script.

Molly Morris
Graduate Planner