

**To Design and Access Statement Incorporating Heritage Asset Statement
Proposed Construction of a Fourth-Floor to create additional accommodation
at 20, Bloomsbury Street, London, WC1B 3JH**

1.0 The Site and Locality

1.1 The site lies within a mixed-use urban area wherein development, including change of use, is acceptable in principle. It is within the Central London Area, the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, and an Archaeological Priority Area all as designated in the Local Development Framework. The character of the locality is that of a highly urban city neighbourhood, with strong residential representation juxtaposed with the commercial and retail uses.

1.2 The current use of the building is as a Bureau de Change (class A2 under the Use Classes order) on the ground floor, with the first and second floors being in B1 general office use and the third-floor recently permitted and converted for use as a two-bedroom flat. The upper three floors are accessed independently of the A2 use.

2.0 The Proposal and Relevant Planning History

2.1 This application is for the construction of a fourth-floor for use as additional dwelling space for the third floor flat. Converting the current lounge dinner into an additional bedroom, removing the Kitchen to allow for a private staircase to lead up to the new open plan living/dining/kitchen space with additional w.c.

2.2 Planning permission was granted in October 2013 for conversion of the third floor into a two-bedroom flat under application reference 2013/4691/P. This has now been implemented.

3.0 Key Policy Considerations National Policy

3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has reduced national planning guidance from in excess of one thousand pages to less than one hundred. In doing so it's advice is less detailed, less prescriptive and provides fewer opportunities for the discovery of barriers to place in the way of allowing development through the scrutiny-driven approach that Central Government believes has too often developed into a search for problems rather than solutions in decision-making.

3.2 The NPPF also promotes a general presumption in favour of protecting, preserving and where possible enhancing designated heritage assets such as Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.

3.3 For all development types, it instructs at paragraph 197 that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should always be applied when determining planning applications. The Camden Local Development Framework

3.4 This is the currently adopted Local Plan providing the policy framework for the Borough and against which development proposals are judged. There are seven policies of the Core Strategy and ten of the Camden Development Policies document which have some reasonable degree of relevance to the application proposal and have been acknowledged in its conception.

They are summarised as follows:

The Core Strategy

CS1: 'Distribution of Growth'

CS3: 'Other Highly Accessible Areas'

CS5: 'Managing the Impact of Growth and Development'

CS6: 'Providing Quality Homes'

CS9: 'Securing a Successful Central London'

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'

DP6: 'Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Homes'

DP13: 'Employment Premises and Sites'

DP16: 'The Transport Implications of Development'

DP17: 'Walking, Cycling and Public Transport'

DP18: 'Parking Standards and Limiting the Availability of Car Parking'

DP24: 'Securing High Quality Design'

DP25: 'Conserving Camden's Heritage'

DP26: 'Managing the Impact of Development on Occupiers and Neighbours'

DP29: 'Improving Access'

3.6 Some of the broad-brush, strategic policies of London Plan 2011 may also bear upon the site and the development proposal and the Council will apply and test against them as necessary.

4.0 Design

4.1 The philosophy behind the proposal is to achieve: Most efficient use of urban land appropriate to local context to accord with the objectives of the Local Development Framework and national policy guidance in the NPPF. Maximisation of site development potential within acceptable planning parameters. Sustainable development to increase quantity and improve the quality and choice in the local housing stock to accord with the objectives of Local Development Framework and national policy guidance in the NPPF.

4.2 The proposed development has been designed to be subsidiary to the existing building. As to not distract from the existing strong design features of the existing building and others in the surrounding area. The proposed mansard style roof has been set back from the existing facade, follows the roofline and angle set by the existing fourth storey element and sits lower than the existing fourth storey element. Resulting in the additional floor being inconspicuous. Thus, no harm to the Conservation Area would be caused by it.

4.3 The proposed dormer windows will be finished in lead and the main roof in smooth grey slate tiles, all matching in colour to avoid the dormers being dominant features within the roof.

5.0 Access

5.1 The site is within the urban area and situated on a bus route, close to Tottenham Court Road Underground station and within comfortable walking and cycling distance of all day-to-day amenities. It is therefore in a sustainable location.

5.2 The site has no off-street vehicle parking provision and none can be made. It is within a Low Parking Provision Area as designated in the LDF and wherein the maximum requirement for private dwellings is 0.5 spaces. It is also to be noted that the NPPF promotes development that does not need to rely on the private motor car and does not accommodate it unnecessarily. In this case the site offers easy access to a wide range of services and facilities and access to key modes of public transport, all without reliance on the private motor car, and is similarly accessible itself. In this situation a zero provision of off-street parking is therefore appropriate.

6.0 Heritage Asset Statement

6.1 The relevant heritage asset in this situation is the Conservation Area. The value of the Conservation Area as a designated heritage asset in this part of lies in its pleasing mix of historic architectural character and planned street layout which combine to make a very pleasing townscape experience. The proposed development would have no adverse effect on the significance or value of the Conservation Area.

7.0 Statement of Community Involvement

7.1 The proposed development is relatively minor in nature and would have no appreciable environmental effects on, or adverse implications for, the wider local community. No consultation with neighbours has taken place in the knowledge that all adjoining property owners/occupiers will be directly or indirectly consulted (by public notice) by the Council for their views, as part of the planning application process.

8.0 Trees and Biodiversity

8.1 There are no trees of high public amenity value on the site. The site provides no important wildlife habitat.

9.0 Flood Risk Assessment

9.1 The application lies within Environment Agency designated Flood Risk Zone 1 where little, if any, risk of flooding has been identified. No special ameliorative construction or protection measures are considered to be necessary.

10.0 Conclusion

10.1 The location of the application site in the heart of the urban area of Central London, in combination with the inherent positive planning merits of the development proposal itself, commend it as harmless to any interest of acknowledged importance and beneficial in terms of meeting and supporting national and local housing delivery and Heritage Asset policy objectives. The development is thereby worthy of approval. The Council is respectfully requested to recognise these attributes and grant planning permission accordingly.