

Application ref: 2019/5004/P
Contact: Patrick Marfleet
Tel: 020 7974 1222
Email: Patrick.Marfleet@camden.gov.uk
Date: 29 October 2020

Development Management
Regeneration and Planning
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

Phone: 020 7974 4444

planning@camden.gov.uk
www.camden.gov.uk/planning

Johanna Molineus Architects
22 Great Chapel Street
London
W1F 8FR

Dear Sir/Madam

DECISION

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Full Planning Permission Granted Subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement

Address:

37-41 Gower Street
London
WC1E 6HH

Proposal:

External alterations to rear elevation associated with change of use of ground and lower ground floors from office use (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) to provide 2 x 2 bed and 3 x 1 bed flats.

Drawing Nos:

282.37-41.100 P1, 282.37-41.101 P1, 282.37-41 150 P1, 282.37-41 200 P1, 282.37-41 201 P1, 282.37-41 250 P1, 282.37-41.002, 282.37-41.001, Heritage Assessment dated September 2019, Planning, design and access statement dated September 2019.

The Council has considered your application and decided to grant permission subject to the following condition(s):

Condition(s) and Reason(s):

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 All new external work shall be carried out in materials that resemble, as closely as possible, in colour and texture those of the existing building, unless otherwise specified in the approved application.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the premises and the character of the immediate area in accordance with the requirements of policy D1 and D2 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

- 3 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 282.37-41.100 P1, 282.37-41.101 P1, 282.37-41 150 P1, 282.37-41 200 P1, 282.37-41 201 P1, 282.37-41 250 P1, 282.37-41.002, 282.37-41.001, Heritage Assessment dated September 2019, Planning, design and access statement dated September 2019.

Reason:

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

- 4 The development hereby approved shall achieve a maximum internal water use of 110litres/person/day. The dwelling/s shall not be occupied until the Building Regulation optional requirement has been complied with.

Reason: To ensure the development contributes to minimising the need for further water infrastructure in an area of water stress in accordance with Policies CC1, CC2, CC3 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

- 5 Prior to occupation of the units, details of the location, design and method of waste storage and removal including recycled materials, shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The storage as approved shall be provided prior to the first occupation and permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that sufficient provision for the storage and collection of waste has been made in accordance with the requirements of policy CC5 of the Camden Local Plan.

Informative(s):

- 1 Reasons for granting permission.

The current application seeks permission for the change of use of the ground and lower ground floors of the existing building from office (Class B1) to residential use (Class C3) to provide 2 x 2 bed flats at ground floor level and 3 x 1 bed flats at lower ground floor. The proposals also include some minor external alterations to the rear of the building, namely the lowering of 4 existing windows cills to provide doorways at lower ground floor level. The application has been submitted alongside another application at 2 Bloomsbury Place for the reverse change of use (i.e. C3 residential use to B1 office use). These applications are being considered simultaneously and would be the subject of a land swap clause secured via a s106 legal agreement to ensure that there would be no loss of residential or office space.

Policy H1 (maximising housing supply) of the Camden Local Plan identifies self-contained housing as the priority land use in the borough. Meanwhile, policies E1 and E2 of the Camden Local Plan encourage the redevelopment and intensification of existing employment sites, particularly in the CAZ. The proposals would result in the loss of approximately 294sqm of office space at 37-41 Gower Street, which is contrary to Policies E1 and E2. However, as mentioned above, the existing basement and third/fourth floor flats at 2 Bloomsbury Place (along with the proposed rear extension) would be converted to provide 310sqm of office space in the Central London area. This would result in an uplift of 16sqm, ensuring no office floorspace is lost as part of the proposals. Furthermore, the remaining floors at 37-41 Gower Street are already in residential use and so the proposed flats are considered to be compatible use for the ground and lower ground floors. The proposals are therefore considered acceptable in land use terms.

The current application seeks to provide 3 x 1 bed flats (lower priority) and a 2 x 2 bed flats (high priority). Therefore, whilst the proposals include the provision of three lower priority flats, they also include the provision of two high priority flats, which is welcomed. Furthermore, the proposals would create three additional residential units in the Central London Area thus helping the Council to maximise the borough's housing supply in accordance with the requirements of Policy H1 of the Local Plan. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of residential mix.

The proposed 2 bed 4 person flats would both be dual aspect and have a GIA of 85 sqm each, which exceeds the minimum floor-space requirement of 79sqm for a dwelling of this size. The proposed 1 bed 2 person flats (Flats 3, 4, 5) would have floor areas of 42, 44 and 47sqm respectively, which fall slightly below the minimum floorspace requirement of 50sqm. However, this shortfall is marginal and considered acceptable in this instance given the works are for the conversion of an existing building with heritage constraints. The main living rooms and bedrooms for all three flats would receive adequate daylight/sunlight from the existing windows to the front and rear. As such, the proposed flats are considered to provide a good standard of accommodation.

The application site suffered severe bomb damage during WWII and was largely re-built in the years following the war. As a result, the rear elevation is relatively modern and holds no particular historic significance. Therefore, the proposed minor alterations to lower the cills of 4 existing lower ground windows to the rear are considered acceptable and would not cause harm to the character of the host building or the appearance of the surrounding conservation area.

- 2 Policy T2 of the Local Plan states that the Council will limit the availability of parking and require all new residential developments, in the borough to be car-free. The current application would create five new flats at the site, at second and third floor level. As such, all five of the proposed new flats would be secured as car-free units via a s106 legal agreement.

The proposed development is not considered to cause harm to neighbouring amenity in terms of loss of light, outlook or privacy.

No objections were received prior to making this decision. The planning history of the site and surrounding area have been taken into account when coming to this decision.

Special regard has been attached to the desirability of preserving the listed building and its features of special architectural or historic interest, under s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013.

Special regard has also been attached to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the conservation area, under s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013.

As such, the proposal is in general accordance with Policies D1, D2, A1, E1, E2, H1 and T2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017. The proposed development also accords with the policies of the London Plan 2016 and National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

- 3 Your proposals may be subject to control under the Building Regulations and/or the London Buildings Acts that cover aspects including fire and emergency escape, access and facilities for people with disabilities and sound insulation between dwellings. You are advised to consult the Council's Building Control Service, Camden Town Hall, Judd St, Kings Cross, London NW1 2QS (tel: 020-7974 6941).
- 4 Noise from demolition and construction works is subject to control under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. You must carry out any building works that can be heard at the boundary of the site only between 08.00 and 18.00 hours Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 on Saturday and not at all on Sundays and Public Holidays. You are advised to consult the Council's Noise and Licensing Enforcement Team, Camden Town Hall, Judd St, Kings Cross, London NW1 2QS (Tel. No. 020 7974 4444 or search for 'environmental health' on the Camden website or seek prior approval under Section 61 of the Act if you anticipate any difficulty in carrying out construction other than within the hours stated above.
- 5 This approval does not authorise the use of the public highway. Any requirement to use the public highway, such as for hoardings, temporary road closures and suspension of parking bays, will be subject to approval of relevant licence from the Council's Streetworks Authorisations & Compliance Team London Borough of Camden 5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE (Tel. No 020 7974 4444) . Licences and authorisations need to be sought in advance of proposed works. Where development is subject to a Construction Management Plan (through a requirement in a S106 agreement), no licence or authorisation will be granted until the Construction Management Plan is approved by the Council.
- 6 All works should be conducted in accordance with the Camden Minimum Requirements - a copy is available on the Council's website at <https://beta.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/1269042/Camden+Minimum+Requirements+%281%29.pdf/bb2cd0a2-88b1-aa6d-61f9-525ca0f71319> or contact the Council's Noise and Licensing Enforcement Team, 5 Pancras

Square c/o Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE (Tel. No. 020 7974 4444)

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In dealing with the application, the Council has sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way in accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

You can find advice about your rights of appeal at:

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/appeals/guidance/guidancecontent>

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DPope', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Daniel Pope
Director of Economy, Regeneration and Investment