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O'ROURKE

Regeneration and Planning  
London Borough of Camden  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 5 Pancras Square  
C/o Town Hall, Judd Street  
London  
WC1H 9JE

11 December 2020

Our Reference: 265803

Dear Sir / Madam

**Full planning application for an office outbuilding with storage at Flat 74A  
Caversham Road, London, NW5 2DN (Planning Portal ref: PP-09332741)**

On behalf of the owner of the above property we hereby submit a full planning application for:

*'Construction of an office outbuilding with storage area.'*

In addition to this planning cover letter, which includes details on design and access, heritage and sustainability, this planning application submission comprises the following information submitted in accordance with the national and local requirements:

- Completed application form, including certificate of ownership
- Application drawings
  - Location Plan and Block Plan (ref: C30552 rev 2) - 1:1250@A4 and 1:500@A4
  - Site Plan and Sections - Existing (ref: C30552 rev 2) - 1:200@A4
  - Site Plan and Sections - Proposed (ref: C30552 rev 2) - 1:200@A4
  - Floor Plan (ref: C30552 rev 2) - 1:50@A4
  - Elevations (ref: C30552 rev 2) - 1:100@A4
- Illustrative drawings
  - Rendered Image (ref: C30552 rev 2)
  - Site Photos (ref: C30552 rev 2).

The proposal satisfies the requirements contained within the Altering and Extending Your Home Camden Planning Guidance (March 2019), and complies with London Borough of Camden's (LBC) Local Plan Policies D1 (Design), D2 (Heritage) and A1 (Managing the impact of development). Further, the proposal has had regard to the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan (September 2016) and the Bartholomew Estate Conservation Area Statement (2000).

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## **Site and surrounding area**

The application site is located in a residential area in Kentish Town on the north side of Caversham Road, at the junction with Bartholomew Road within the London Borough of Camden. It is only 415m from Kentish Town underground and national rail station and around 410m from the shops at Kentish Town centre. There is no vehicle access to the property with only on road parking on Caversham Road and Bartholomew Road. Pedestrian access to the property is via Caversham Road. The flank of the property is bounded by Bartholomew Road.

The four storey (lower ground, ground, first and second floors) end of terrace property comprises three flats, 74A, B and C, a shallow pitched roof and a varied palette of materials on the facades, including yellow brick and white render. There are steps at the rear of the property that provide access from the building down to a rear garden. The garden is separated into two sections with the northern section separated by a trellis covered in planting. Immediately after the trellis there are three steps surrounded on either side by raised beds which lead down into the northern part of the garden at a lower level. This area comprises a mix of planting beds, paving slabs and grassed area which is generally unkept and underutilised. The northern part of the garden is only for the benefit of Flat 74A and benefits from a dedicated access through a side timber gate on Bartholomew Road. The garden is long and enclosed on three sides by brick walls and timber fencing. The western boundary of the garden runs adjacent to Bartholomew Road, the northern boundary backs onto the rear garden associated with 63 Oseney Crescent and the eastern boundary of the garden is adjacent to the garden associated with the plot at 76 Caversham Road.

The site lies within flood zone 1, is not subject to any technical constraints or natural designations. The building itself is not listed, however the site is located within the Bartholomew Estate Conservation Area and is located 55m west of the Grade II\* listed church (Church of St. Luke with St. Paul), also on Caversham Road. To note, the site is located within the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan Area and is also within the Hampstead Heath Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone.

## **Planning history**

Planning permission for the retention of uPVC French doors on the rear elevation to the lower ground floor level maisonette (ref: 2011/0839/P) was approved on 13 April 2011.

## **Need for the development**

The owner works from home regularly and has managed to navigate the challenges of doing this so far, however the current arrangement is not practicable and with the current increased working from home scenario likely to continue, it is considered that having a dedicated space within which to work would be beneficial moving forward. The owner has considered incorporating a home office within the flat but this would not be ideal due to the current internal layout, as it would result in a reduction in the space enjoyed by the other rooms. Alternatively, an extension to the property is not considered feasible.



Accordingly, a detached outbuilding is considered to be the most appropriate approach to providing the additional home working space that is required. An outbuilding would also provide a practical and cost effective means of providing a home office. A small storage area adjacent to the office, but incorporated within the envelope of the same outbuilding structure, would be used for keeping garden equipment.

It is also important to note that the owner's work comprises of administrative tasks and would not therefore require an increase in any associated deliveries or cause any associated disruption within the local highway network, as it would not involve clients needing to travel to and from the property.

### **Planning policy context**

The development plan for Flat 74A Caversham Road comprises the LBC Local Plan (July 2017), LBC Site Allocations Plan (September 2013) and the London Plan consolidated with alterations between 2011 and March 2016. A review of the LBC Site Allocations Plan went through its first formal consultation between 13 February and 27 March 2020, no further updates to the review have been published as yet. The North London Waste Plan (NLWP) which covers LBC is being examined by an independent Planning Inspector and consultation on the proposed modifications ended on 10 December 2020. The draft new London Plan has been through consultation, but has not yet been adopted.

The proposal has also had regard to the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan (September 2016) as well as the Bartholomew Estate Conservation Area Statement (2000), the guidance within LBC's Altering and Extending Your Home Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) (March 2019), which is currently being redrafted as the 'Home Improvements' CPG, the Amenity CPG (March 2018) and Design CPG (March 2019).

In addition, regard must be had for national policy contained within the 2018 NPPF (updated February 2019). The NPPF is a material consideration for decision taking purposes.

### **Design and access details and planning considerations**

The modest single storey outbuilding is proposed to be located at the rear of the garden and would be incidental to the residential use of Flat 74A, intended as a home office with storage area. It comprises sensitive materials, such as timber, glass and aluminium trims which are used to create a high quality finish. The design ensures the building would respond to its context, making a positive contribution to the character of the area and providing a high quality, functional office and storage space.

The provision of a detached outbuilding is considered more desirable than subdividing the internal flat space or seeking an extension to the property, which could detract from the visual amenity of the building and its contribution to the character of the conservation area.

Section 12 of the NPPF provides guidance on achieving well designed places and emphasises the importance of good design. London Plan Policy 7.6 (Architecture) requires buildings and structures to be of the highest architectural quality, respond to the public realm within which they are set, complement the



local architectural character and not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings.

LBC's Local Plan Policy D1 (Design) provides a broad overview of issues that developments should address in order to secure high quality design in development. Relevant considerations include the requirement for development to respect local context and character, preserve or enhance the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 (Heritage) and that the development is sustainable in design and construction. The Council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) outlines that the Council will grant permission for development unless this causes unacceptable harm to amenity, including factors in respect of visual privacy, outlook, sunlight, daylight and overshadowing.

These policies are supplemented by further detailed guidance, including that contained within the Altering and Extending Your Home CPG (March 2019). Paragraph 5.23 of the CPG sets out detailed guidance on outbuildings, such as the home office, which proposals should conform with. Specific requirements relevant to this proposal include:

- ensure the siting, location, scale and design of the proposed development has a minimal visual impact on, and is visually subordinate within, the host garden
- not detract from the open character and garden amenity of neighbouring gardens and the wider surrounding area
- use suitable soft landscaping to reduce its impact
- ensure building heights will retain visibility over garden walls and fences
- ensure the size of the outbuilding will not result in excessive loss of garden amenity space
- ensure the siting of the outbuilding will not harm existing trees of high amenity value
- use materials which complement the host property and the overall character of the surrounding area. The construction method should minimise any impact on trees, or adjacent structures
- address any impacts of the new development upon water run-off and groundwater flows, and demonstrate that the impact of the new development on water run-off and groundwater flows will be negated by the measures proposed.

In accordance with the requirements of the CPG the proposed office outbuilding would be visually subservient to the main building, as the proposed rectangular single storey office and storage outbuilding would be located in the lower northern part of the garden, which benefits from excellent screening provided by the existing trellis and associated planting to the south, high sided timber board fencing to west, a high brick wall with trellis on top to the east and brick wall to the north. Further, the rear section of the garden steps down a level from the main property and the proposed outbuilding would have a flat roof, helping to lessen any visual impact. The office outbuilding would be 6m wide, 3.2m deep and 2.5m high. The 2.5m height is lower than the existing western boundary fence and is around the same height as the northern and eastern boundary brick walls/trellis which are 2.3m and 2.4m respectively.



The proposal would have a total GEA floorspace of 19.2m<sup>2</sup>, which is in line with the requirement in the CPG as it proposes an appropriate scale, noting that the entire rear garden is approximately 150.48m<sup>2</sup>. The outbuilding would not result in excessive loss of garden amenity space and its siting would not harm existing trees. Further, the outbuilding would be located on the eastern side of the northern section of the garden and at least 0.5m from the boundaries with neighbouring gardens. This space around the outbuilding creates a green corridor for wildlife and provides sufficient space to carry out long-term maintenance and repairs to the property boundaries and to the outbuilding, if required.

The proposed scale, siting and location of the outbuilding is also considered acceptable given the size and layout of the garden as it represents a marginal area in the context of the rear garden as a whole and in terms of the overall plot. As a result, it would not adversely impact on neighbouring amenity and would not be detrimental to the character of the local area. This is explained in detail below.

The proposed office outbuilding would be modest in size and subordinate in scale to the main building. The height and area of the development are considered necessary to ensure that enough space would be available to provide a high-quality internal office environment and storage space, however its modest scale, siting and appearance would ensure that it remains subordinate to the main building.

The proposal would sit comfortably within the northern part of the garden and would not result in it appearing overcrowded. Indeed, the proposed outbuilding would only occupy approximately 7% of the whole plot. A sufficient proportion of the garden space would be retained in the northern area to provide a high quality and useable amenity space for Flat 74A. The proposed outbuilding would be subordinate in scale to the building when viewed within the plot or the surrounding area. The substantial separation of approximately 17.2m between the main building and outbuilding would reinforce this subordinate relationship. Its location within an area that is well contained, heavily screened and at a lower ground level than the rest of the plot would help to minimise any visual impact, and helps to ensure the outbuilding does not detract from the open character and garden amenity of neighbouring gardens and the wider surrounding area.

In line with London Plan Policy 7.6 there would no significant detriment to the amenities of neighbours and the character and appearance of the street scene or locality in the vicinity of the outbuilding.

The proposed outbuilding would not result in a significant change in the relationship of the site to the surrounding area. It would not be visible from Bartholomew Road ensuring that there would no material change in views from public areas.

There would also be no detrimental impact on the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties at 63 Oseney Crescent and 76 Caversham Road. It is not envisaged that the use of the outbuilding as an office would result in a material increase in noise. Importantly, the location of the proposed outbuilding deep within the plot maximises the separation distance to the building at 76



Caversham Road, and the boundary distance of the outbuilding from 63 Oseney Crescent and 76 Caversham Road (0.5m distance from both boundaries) helps to reduce any potential impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, in line with London Plan Policy 7.6 and LBC's Local Plan Policy A1. It is anticipated that there would also be minimal, if any, impact on sunlight and daylight on the rear gardens at 76 Caversham Road and 63 Oseney Crescent. The existing brick walls, trellis, trees and planting along the boundaries would help to screen views of the outbuilding from 76 Caversham Road and 63 Oseney Crescent.

The full height glazing will allow for views into the rest of the northern part of the garden and to the western boundary, although this is well screened from Bartholomew Road from the timber fencing. There would be some limited views towards a neighbouring property with the small high level windows on the eastern elevation facing the neighbouring garden at 76 Caversham Road. However, as the brick and trellis which form the eastern boundary are 2.4m high, the windows would not be higher than the height of the trellis. These views are not at close quarters and they are restricted by the existing boundary brick wall, trellis, foliage and trees and as such any overlooking would not be significant.

The clean and elegant appearance of the proposed outbuilding, which would be constructed using a range of carefully selected natural sustainable materials including wood, metal and fibre cement products, would provide an attractive building. The wood cladding on the front elevation with doors and windows set within dark grey wood frames would be complemented by the silver grey metal roof and fibre cement cladding boards, with a natural finish on the side and rear elevations. In accordance with LBC's Local Plan Policy D1, the Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan Policy D3 (Design Principles) and the CPG, the careful selection of materials and colours would ensure that the proposed outbuilding would sympathetically tie in with the appearance of the main building and the overall character of the surrounding area. Hardwood decking under a porch within the envelope of the outbuilding would provide a safe and convenient access.

The proposed use of the outbuilding as an office would be entirely incidental to the residential use of Flat 74A. Indeed, the proposed scheme does not include a bedroom, shower room, toilet or kitchen. Further, the proposed outbuilding couldn't be used as a separate dwelling as it would rely on the access and utility connections enjoyed by Flat 74A. The application would welcome a suitably worded condition attached to a planning permission that restricts any use of the outbuilding for accommodation purposes.

### *Heritage considerations*

LBC Local Plan Policy D2 (Heritage) outlines that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings.

The outbuilding, which is located within the Bartholomew Estate Conservation Area, is well designed, unobtrusive, well contained and subordinate to the main property. Further, the materials and colours including timber cladding and window frames would ensure that the proposed outbuilding would be sensitive to the appearance of the main building, and would help to preserve and enhance the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance



with Policy D2. Further, the development would not cause harm to the setting and significance of the Grade II\* St. Luke's Church located nearby.

### *Sustainability*

The proposed outbuilding would be built in accordance with sustainable development principles with regard to LBC Local Plan Policy CC1 (Climate change mitigation) and CC2 (Adapting to climate change). The windows and door frames are timber which is a preferred material for garden structures, as it's a renewable resource with a low embodied energy.

The recent lockdowns during Covid-19 have revealed the importance of having high quality homes that are capable of meeting a wide range of needs, including for work. The proposed office outbuilding would enable the applicant to work more effectively from home in a comfortable environment helping to promote general health and wellbeing.

### **Planning benefits and conclusion**

The proposal is considered to be compliant with the strategic and local policy frameworks and would secure the following planning benefits:

- The proposed office and storage outbuilding would meet the need for additional space at Flat 74A without resulting in a detrimental impact on the character of the local area or amenity of neighbouring properties that could result from extensions to the building.
- The outbuilding would help to create a more useable, attractive and high quality garden space, which is currently unkept and underutilised, and provides an opportunity to improve the quality of the garden area and the way it functions.

We look forward to progressing this application with LBC and to receiving confirmation of validation. Should you have any queries, or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

**Sophia Goodhead MRTPI**  
Planner

cc John Keenan

Rooms Outdoor Limited