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Via Planning Portal only

14th May 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION - THE TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY ROOF EXTENSION TO FIVE DWELLINGS AT 1-5 ERSKINE MEWS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL LIVING ACCOMODATION

1-5 ERSKINE MEWS, LONDON, NW3 3AP

Please accept this covering letter as an accompaniment to this full planning application for a proposed single storey roof extension to the existing properties at 1-5 Erskine Mews. This letter provides a summary of the site and the proposed development.

Please also find enclosed a completed application form, full set of existing and proposed plans including site location plan, Design and Access Statement, Heritage Appraisal, Daylight and Sunlight Report's (for neighbouring properties and for the properties within the development) and a Draft Construction Management Plan.

The site

The site is accessed from the south side of Erskine Road and comprises a mews development of five two-storey homes in active, and private residential use. The mews is gated and cannot be seen from the public realm but is contemporary in appearance with the inward facing properties presenting largely brick elevations punctuated by front doors and small rectangular windows. The site comprises communal car parking and refuse storage.

The site is located outside of, but immediately adjacent to the Primrose Hill Conservation Area to the north and east and a locally listed terrace (1-29 Ainger Road) to the west.

Approximately 23 metres to the south of the site is a Grade II listed terrace (9-14 Chamberlain Street).

The predominant land use in the immediate surroundings is residential and there is also an eclectic range of commercial uses over the wider surroundings.

The site is located in an area with a PTAL Rating of 3. The site is located within flood zone 1 and has a low probability of flooding.

Planning History

Application site

Planning Permission (**H9/7/4640**) was granted on 28th March 1968 for the erection of five dwelling houses at Erskine Mews and the provision of five car parking spaces.

Planning permission (**8903757**) was granted at 5 Erskine Mews on 28th February 1990 for the erection of a rear extension at first floor level to form a study.

Planning permission (**2011/4781/P**) was granted at 1 Erskine Mews on 17th November 2011 for the erection of a first-floor side extension with a roof entrance to the existing dwelling house.

Neighbouring site

Planning permission (**2017/1162/P**) was granted at The Gatehouse, Mayfair Mews (which is adjacent to the east boundary of the site) on 7th June 2017 for the erection of a roof extension with 2 x rooflights to the front, 2 x obscured glazed rooflights to the rear, installation of 1 x window to the flank elevation and 3 additional rooflights at roof level all associated with the use as ancillary accommodation.

For further details of the planning history of the site and surroundings please refer to the Design and Access Statement.

Pre-Application Advice

A request for formal pre-application advice (**2020/3508/NEW**) was submitted to the Council in August 2020 in respect of the proposed single storey roof extension to 1-5 Erskine Mews. As part of this process two meetings were held, one in September 2020 and one in January 2021.

The pre-application meeting held on 17th September 2020 introduced the concept of a roof extension to 1-5 Erskine Mews, detailing an initial design and massing strategy to extend the properties. Six individual design massing options were presented as part of this initial pre-application. The main issues raised by Council officers at the meeting were in relation to scale, massing and neighbouring impacts.

Following this meeting, a revised scheme was submitted to the Council on 15th December 2020 which was further developed prior to a second pre-application meeting held on 7th January 2021. The revised scheme sought to address previous concerns raised by Council officers by reducing the scale and massing of the extension, whilst providing a greater assessment with regard to its impact to neighbouring development. The feedback from the meeting was largely positive but further information was requested in relation to the subservience of the extensions to neighbouring development, materials, details of the proposed green roof and the protection of neighbouring privacy.

A final amended scheme was submitted to the Council on 19th January 2021 for the proposal to be assessed by the Council's Internal Design Review with a written response received from the Council's Planning Officer on 2nd March 2021. The feedback was very complimentary of the extensions design, massing, angled outer walls and splayed roof in maintaining the open character of the mews and considered the extension maintained a subservient appearance to the perimeter surrounding buildings had been achieved. The use of standing seam Zinc and the proposed green roof were supported both in terms of its visual and biodiversity benefits. Consequently, the pre-application advice concluded the proposed development would not harm the character of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area or the setting of the locally listed terrace on Ainger Road.

The pre-application advice highlighted that further information was required in relation to neighbour impact, both in terms of privacy and daylight/sunlight impacts, which has now been addressed within this application.

The proposal

This application seeks full planning permission for a proposed roof extension at 1-5 Erskine Mews. The development can be described as:

'Erection of single storey roof extension to five dwellings at 1-5 Erskine Mews to provide additional living accommodation.'

In detail, the proposed development includes:

- Single storey roof extension to increase Erskine Mews properties from two to three storeys;
- Increased living accommodation including additional bedroom and bathroom to each property resulting in an increase from 2 to 3 bedrooms at 1 Erskine mews, and 3 to 4 bedrooms at 2-5 Erskine Mews;
- Second floor external balcony spaces to 2, 3 and 5 Erskine Mews with perforated metal screening;
- Zinc standing seam finish to elevations with recessed windows; and
- Provision of green roof

For full details of the proposed development please refer to the supporting plans and the Design and Access Statement.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which incorporates three specific strands – economic, environmental and social. The following sections are relevant to the consideration of this application; Section 11 (making effective use of land), Section 12 (achieving well designed places), and Section 16 (conserving and enhancing the historic environment).

Local Planning Policy

For the purposes of this application, the adopted Development Plan for the London Borough of Camden (LB Camden) comprises the London Plan (2021), the Camden Local Plan (2017) and the Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) Documents. The following policies are considered relevant to the consideration and determination of this application:

London Plan 2021

- Policy D1 – London's form, character and capacity for growth
- Policy D3 – Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- Policy D4 – Delivering good design
- Policy D6 – Housing quality and standards
- Policy HC1 – Heritage conservation and growth
- Policy G1 – Green infrastructure
- Policy G5 – Urban greening

Camden Local Plan 2017

- Policy A1 – Managing the Impact of Development
- Policy A3 – Biodiversity
- Policy D1 – Design
- Policy D2 – Heritage
- Policy CC1- Climate Change
- Policy CC2 – Adapting to climate change

Camden Planning Guidance (CPG)

- Home Improvements CPG
- Amenity CPG
- Design CPG
- Energy Efficiency and Adaption CPG

Planning Assessment

Design and heritage impact

Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan (CLP) requires development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, have particular regard to design and visual impact and to the context within which it is placed, and the contribution it makes to the landscape qualities of the area. The aim of this policy is further reflected in the 'Design' Camden Planning Guidance (CPG). Specific guidance in relation to extensions to existing properties, including roof alterations, is also provided in the 'Home Improvements' CPG.

CLP Policy D2 states 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.

Erskine Mews, along with the adjacent mews developments at Mayfair Mews and Ainger Mews, are surrounded by larger 4-5 storey properties on Ainger Road, Erskine Road, Regent's Park Road and Chamberlain Street. The existing buildings at Erskine Mews therefore currently have a subservient relationship to the perimeter buildings which surround the site, and which is an identifiable characteristic of the how the existing site relates to surrounding development.

The proposed extension has been limited to a single storey roof extension resulting in a three-storey building which will be at least a single storey beneath the prevalent scale and massing of surrounding development. Consequently, the proposed scale of the development has been purposefully designed not to disrupt the existing townscape, thus maintaining the existing building hierarchy to the surrounding terraces.

To further maintain this subservient relationship, the proposed roof pitches are asymmetrical and faceted to break up the scale and massing of the roof form whilst allowing views through and between roofs. The result is a coherent extension design which helps to reduce the overall massing and to distinguish each building as a separate property.

Mews' buildings typically have pitched roofs and the proposed roof extension would read as an appropriate addition to the existing mews. As demonstrated within the supporting Heritage Appraisal the original buildings on the site would have been two storeys with pitched roofs and therefore the proposed increase in roof height would be consistent with the height of the original mews building in the site. The proposal would therefore sensitively respect the sites historic character as a mews development.

The CPG 'Home Improvements' states that where a group of buildings are originally designed as a complete composition a comprehensive design for the whole group is encouraged. The proposal takes this approach and has considered the site as a whole, resulting in a cohesive design which better preserves the existing appearance of the area.

The extension is to be clad in traditional standing seam Zinc which is considered an appropriate material for a roof extension, whilst the provision of a green roof would provide

a highly sustainable approach which will help soften its appearance from neighbouring properties whilst providing valuable habitats to promote biodiversity. Furthermore, as required by Policies CC1 and CC2 of the Local Plan, the provision of a green roof has significant environmental sustainability benefits, by helping to cool the local microclimate and in playing a vital role in slowing the speed at which rainwater enters the drainage network. Further details of the materials and proposed green roof are provided in the Design and Access Statement.

In summary, the proposed development represents a high-quality design which is sympathetic to the existing character and appearance of the existing property. The design and massing is well considered and the scale and height of the roof extensions would retain the mews' subordinate relationship to the perimeter buildings and the openness that currently exists. For these reasons there would be no harm to the character of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area or the setting of the nearby locally listed buildings and listed buildings. The development therefore complies with Policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan.

Amenity impact

CLP Policy A1 seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered. It seeks to ensure that development protects the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. Further guidance is provided in 'Amenity' CPG which recommends that a minimum distance of 18 metres between windows of habitable is achieved unless mitigation measures are incorporated to safeguard privacy.

All external facing windows are to be finished with fritted glass to prevent both views into and out of the proposed extensions. The windows to the east facing side elevation have been recessed from the outer face of the elevation to further limit outlook from these windows. Turning to the external balcony areas to 2, 3 and 5 Erskine Mews, these are to be enclosed by a rising perforated metal screen which will prevent overlooking to neighbouring properties but allowing these spaces to receive good levels of light. Please refer to the supporting Design and Access Statement for further details of the proposed mitigation measures.

The proposed scale and massing of the roof extensions have been restricted to single storey and designed with shallow pitched roofs to limit the overall scale and massing of the extensions. This, combined with the existing physical separation of the existing mews from the neighbouring surrounding development, will ensure the proposal does not have an adverse impact on neighbours in terms of outlook and daylight/sunlight.

The application is supported by two Daylight and Sunlight Reports which confirm that the proposal will have an acceptable impact on the amenity of neighbours and the future residents of the extended properties, concluding that the proposal will fully comply with the BRE Guidelines in daylight, sunlight and overshadowing. Please refer to the Daylight/Sunlight Analysis for further details.

For the reasons outlined above the proposal will not cause harm to the amenity of any nearby residential properties in terms of overbearing impact, a loss of light or loss of privacy.

Summary

As demonstrated within this letter and supporting documents, the proposed works are considered to have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the existing mews building, the setting of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings, and neighbouring amenity. The development is in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies and it is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

I trust this letter and the enclosed documents provide you with sufficient information to determine the application but if you require any points of clarification or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Stuart Minty
Director
SM Planning