

PLANNING STATEMENT

On behalf of A R & V Investments Limited

In support of a planning application proposing the conversion of the existing building from 3 self-contained flats to a single family dwellinghouse, incorporating the installation of a bathroom window within the side elevation of the building at ground floor level, at;

**37 Estelle Road
London
NW3 2JX**

BPC ref. : AB2183/Planning Statement
Date : August 2021

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Beamish Planning Consultancy on behalf of AR&V Investments and forms part of a full planning application being submitted to the London Borough of Camden (the LPA) relating to the existing building at 37 Estelle Road, London, NW3 2JX.
- 1.2 The planning application proposes the conversion of the existing building (in lawful use as three self-contained flats) to a single family dwellinghouse, with the only associated operational development comprising the installation of a small bathroom window within the side elevation of the building at ground floor level.
- 1.3 This planning statement has been prepared in support of this planning application submission and details the nature of the application site and the surrounding area, the site history, relevant development plan policies and associated guidance, followed by an assessment of the proposals against those policies, guidance and any other material planning considerations.
- 1.4 The statement concludes that the proposals accord with the adopted development plan and all other material planning considerations and accordingly planning permission should be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate and reasonable conditions.

2.0 Description of Application Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site comprises a three storey mid-terraced building (with additional accommodation within the loft space) located on the western side of Estelle Road, a wholly residential street close to Hampstead Heath to the north, characterised by similar three storey properties, some of which incorporate dormer roof features/extensions to their front and rear roof slopes, with Estelle Road having been originally developed in the 1890's.
- 2.2 The current and lawful layout of the building is as three self-contained flats, comprising a two bedroom flat at ground floor level, a one bedroom flat at first floor level and a two bedroom duplex flat both at second floor level and also within the roof space of the building.
- 2.3 Many other properties within Estelle Road have been converted into self-contained flats, either with the benefit of historic planning permissions or through immunity from enforcement action due to the passage of time since such conversions were completed, with many of the original dwellinghouses having been converted into smaller flats between 1919 and 1939.
- 2.4 Both the application site and its surroundings are located within Mansfield Conservation Area, which was first designated in September 1990, but the application building and adjoining buildings are neither statutorily or locally listed.
- 2.5 The application building lies within an area benefitting from a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 3 (on a scale of 1 (low) to 6b (excellent)), being under 7 minutes walk from Gospel Oak railway station, which is served by the North London Line, with frequent trains to Barking and Stratford heading eastbound and to Clapham Junction and Richmond heading westbound. Additionally, bus services 24, 46 and the C11 are also served by bus stops for travel in both directions located within 3 and 6 minutes walk of the application site.
- 2.6 Both Estelle Road and the surrounding streets are located within the CA-B Belsize Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), the operational hours of which are 09.00 to 18.30 on weekdays and 09.30 to 13.30 on Saturdays.

3.0 Relevant Planning History of Application Site and Surroundings

- 3.1 In May 2019, the LPA granted planning permission (application ref. 2018/5855/P) for the first floor floorspace within the application building to be converted into a self-contained one bedroom flat.
- 3.2 That permission, which was subsequently implemented, was also the subject of a legal agreement preventing the occupiers of that one bedroom flat from applying for or obtaining an on-street parking permit.
- 3.3 Other than a recent notification (ref. 2021/3861/T) of intended pruning works to a damson tree within the garden of the application site, there is no other planning history available online relating to 37 Estelle Road.
- 3.4 Recent planning history relating to nearby properties within Estelle Road include Certificates of Existing Lawful Use granted in February 2015 and August 2017 respectively relating to the continuing uses of nos. 29 and 35 as single family dwellinghouses.

4.0 The Proposed Development

- 4.1 The proposals for which planning permission is sought involve the amalgamation of the three existing flats that currently comprise the application building to create a 3 bedroom, 6 person single family dwellinghouse, which would actually reinstate the original use of the building as a single family dwellinghouse.
- 4.2 The total gross internal area of the single family dwellinghouse created by this amalgamation would be approximately 208 square metres (excluding the narrow, unlit cellar), whilst the proposed bedrooms would all comfortably exceed the minimum room areas and widths as set out in the Nationally Described Space Standards.
- 4.3 The occupiers of the proposed dwellinghouse would also benefit from the sizeable garden to the rear of the property, along with a landscaped area and refuse storage to the front of the property.
- 4.4 The only operational development associated with the proposed amalgamation is the installation of a small window serving a new bathroom within the side (north facing) elevation of the building at ground floor level.
- 4.5 Covered and secured cycle parking for the occupiers of the proposed dwellinghouse is provided at ground floor level and, should the LPA deem it necessary, the applicant would be agreeable to entering into a legal agreement to either limit or restrict altogether the abilities of future occupiers to apply for on-street parking permits, although we would stress that the number of self-contained residential units is being reduced from three to one.

5.0 Planning Policies and Government Guidance

- 5.1 The Development Plan for the application site and the surrounding area currently comprises the London Borough of Camden Local Plan, which was adopted by the LPA on 3rd July 2017 following independent examination.
- 5.2 At regional level, the Development Plan comprises the new London Plan, which has been published by the GLA in March 2021 following independent Examination in Public and subsequent review by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- 5.3 At national level, the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Government in July 2021 and streamlines previous national planning policy into a consolidated set of priorities, to ensure that planning decisions reflect genuine national objectives, with the principle of sustainable development permeating the framework.
- 5.4 The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) was launched by the Government in March 2014, is regularly updated and streamlines previously published national guidance, which had taken the form of planning policy guidance notes and planning policy statements.
- 5.5 Also, in March 2015, the Government published its 'Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard', which sets out floorspace, dimensions and storage standards for new dwellings, including conversions.

6.0 Planning Assessment

- 6.1 The starting point for determining any planning application is set out in Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which states that “where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”
- 6.2 The key local development plan policy of relevance to these proposals is adopted Local Plan policy H3 (Protecting Existing Homes), which advises that (whilst stressing that the proposed amalgamation will not result in the loss of residential floorspace) the LPA will resist development that would result in the loss of two or more residential units unless the proposals ;
- create large homes in a part of the Borough with a relatively low proportion of large dwellings.
 - enable existing affordable homes to be adapted to provide the affordable dwelling-sizes that are most needed.
 - enable substandard units to be enlarged to meet residential space standards.
- 6.3 Appraising these proposals against the above criteria, the second criteria is not relevant as the existing residential units are not affordable units. With regards to the first criteria, many of the buildings within Estelle Road (all of which were originally built as single family dwellinghouses) have been converted into flats, of which the vast majority are either studio, 1 bed or 2 bed units.
- 6.4 Table 1 (Dwelling Size Priorities) within Local Plan policy H7 (Large and Small Homes) advises that, in terms of market housing, there is a high demand for 3 bedroom units, whilst the 2011 Census found that 70% of Camden household comprises units of 2 bedrooms or less.
- 6.5 Consequently the provision of a large, family sized dwellinghouse, benefitting from its own private garden and restoring the original use of the building, would make a positive contribution to the housing stock within the Borough by assisting in the creation of a mixed, inclusive and sustainability community which will reduce mismatches between housing needs and existing supply, in accordance with Local Plan policy H7.
- 6.6 Turning to the third criteria set out above, it is acknowledged that all three existing flats satisfy the Nationally Described Space Standards. However, neither of the upper floor units benefit from access to any private amenity space.
- 6.7 On balance therefore the principle of the amalgamation of the existing residential units to create a single family dwellinghouse, i.e. restoring the original use of the application building, would accord with the development plan, including Local Plan policies H3 and H7.
- 6.8 Turning to other matters, the only operational development associated with the proposed amalgamation is the installation of a window, serving a new bathroom, within the north facing side elevation of the building at ground floor level.
- 6.9 The installation of this window, which will be obscure glazed (a requirement which can be ensured by way of the imposition of an appropriately worded condition), will not have any detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the host building or that of the wider Mansfield Conservation Area within which the application site is located. Furthermore, the proposed window will not result in any unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy to the occupiers of any neighbouring properties, including in particular no. 39 which is located to the north of the application property.
- 6.10 Of the three current units, the one bedroom first floor unit is the subject of a legal agreement preventing its occupiers from applying for/obtaining on-street parking permits. No such restriction applies to either the ground floor residential unit or the second floor residential unit, with both of those units comprising two bedroomed accommodation.

- 6.11 In light of this, and also stressing that the proposals would result in the reduction in the number of units from three to one, the applicant questions whether it would be reasonable or necessary for a legal agreement to be entered into to either completely prevent future occupiers from applying for /obtaining on-street parking permits, or to limit the number of permits which might be obtained by future occupiers of the single family dwellinghouse created by this proposed amalgamation.
- 6.12 Finally, as illustrated on the proposed plans, the proposals also incorporate secure, covered cycle storage for the occupiers of the proposed single family dwellinghouse, in accordance with relevant standards.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 As detailed within this planning statement, the proposals that are the subject of this planning application submission fully comply with all relevant adopted development plan policies and all other material planning considerations.
- 7.2 The proposal will secure the provision of a high quality, generous proportioned single family dwellinghouse, contributing positively to the mix of housing stock within the Borough, including by way of the provision of a much sought after family sized unit benefitting from a garden at ground floor level.
- 7.3 The proposed bathroom window associated with the proposed amalgamation will not have any adverse impact upon either the host building or the wider Mansfield Conservation Area, and nor will it result in any loss of amenity to the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties.
- 7.4 Consequently planning permission should be granted for these proposals, subject to the imposition of appropriate, necessary and reasonable conditions upon the granting of planning permission, and we welcome discussion as to the content of such conditions during the determination of this planning application (and/or the potential need for a legal agreement relating to on-street parking permits).