

Planning Services
Camden London Borough Council
5 Pancras Square
London
NC1 4AG

My reference:

Your reference:

14th November 2021

Dear Sirs

17 Railey Mews, London NW5 2PA
Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Proposal for alterations at ground floor and extension at rear of first and second floor levels

1. I am instructed by Aran Chadwick, the occupier of this house, to submit this application.
2. Planning permission was granted on 12th September 2018 for the following:

Erection of three storey rear infill extension; excavation of basement level with closed front lightwell; other external alterations including installation of timber cladding to front and side elevation and replacement of gates at ground floor level.

3. As set out in the Members' Pack to this permission, this permission therefore related to the following matters, each of which are capable of being undertaken as separate and divisible elements without implementing other aspects:
 - Erection of full height (3 storey) rear infill extension measuring 7.8m (h) x 2m (w) x 2m (d)
 - Excavation of basement level with internal lightwell to front
 - Re-cladding of building with timber fins
 - Alterations to fenestration at ground and first floor level
4. Therefore, for example, it would be possible to re-clad the building with timber fins and undertake alterations to the fenestration at ground and first floor level without implementing that part of the permission relating to either the approved rear extension or the basement.
5. This permission was granted subject to a Section 106 Agreement also dated 12th September 2018.

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Reason for Current New Application

6. Initially, when the applicant obtained planning permission for these works in 2018, he intended to implement and undertake all of these works together.
7. However, due to supply and labour costs escalating in construction, especially as a result of the Pandemic, it is currently prohibitively expensive to undertake the principle excavation work now, in particular in respect of the approved basement.
8. The cost that the applicant had pre-pandemic for the basement works (essentially, a waterproof structural box) was around £160,000-£170,000. However, despite obtaining a number of quotes, the updated pandemic costs are at £295,000 plus VAT and this excludes fit-out costs (i.e. no bathroom / floors / doors etc). Once these costs are added in, the applicant would lose a significant sum based on current valuations. It is generally expected that values may continue to rise in the short term before falling-back and costs returning to more sensible levels in the next few years.
9. Therefore, the applicant now applies for essentially the same scheme as the Council approved in 2018, but without proposals for a new basement and ancillary works of excavation.
10. KHBT Architects have been commissioned as architects and, along with a Householders Application form, we enclose the following:
 - OS survey extract Location Plan at 1:1250 scale.
 - Floor plans, roof plans, section drawings, elevation drawings or 'existing' and 'proposed'.
11. The Local Plan policies relevant to the proposals are:

Camden Local Plan (adopted 3rd July 2017)

A1: Managing the impact of development

D1: Design

D2: Heritage

DM1: Delivery and Monitoring

T4: Promoting the sustainable movement of goods and materials

Camden Planning Guidance 2011/2015

CPG1 (Design)

CPG6 (Amenity)

CPG7 (Transport)

Kentish Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy 2005

Planning History

12. Planning permission was granted for the existing three storey house on 28th April 1998; LBC reference PE9700933R1. The property comprised part of the rear of the property at No.1 Lupton Street at the time, before being given the new address of 17 Railey Mews. Condition No.4 withdrew permitted development rights under Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Condition 6 required the glass block window to the first floor to retain obscure glazing to prevent the unreasonable overlooking of nearby rear private gardens.
13. The existing front bedroom previously comprised an off-street garage. However, it was not wide enough to accommodate a motor vehicle and therefore was converted to use as a bedroom roughly 10 years ago.

Proposed ground floor and upper floor extensions and alterations

14. Policy D1 requires that development should be of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character. The property falls within the Kentish Town Conservation Area. It already presents a contrast in styles with its neighbour, a more traditional warehouse building for the area.
15. The Council's Appraisal and Management Strategy for this Conservation Area notes the degree of alteration to the character of housing in this northern part of Railey Mews.
16. The proposed development would comprise a high-quality design that would contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Policy D2 of the Local Plan. This proposal seeks to upgrade and improve on the current design, which whilst it was unique, was poor in detail. The enclosed Design and Access Statement explains in full the design concept to the proposal.
17. The impact of the proposals on occupiers and neighbours has also been considered with regard to Policy A1. In respect of visual privacy and overlooking, in accordance with planning condition 6 to the original planning permission to this house, it is proposed to retain obscured glazing (sand blasted), so as to prevent overlooking into neighbouring houses. The occupier proposes to retain clear glazing to this window above eye level, as it would help to improve the quality of the sunlight and daylight coming into the proposed lounge/dining room a first floor and would also allow them to see the sky and improved sense of outlook.
18. The current glass blocks cause condensation around the frames and to the paintwork near to the window and a better more sustainable solution therefore needs to be found. The effect of the proposals would improve the external appearance of the building in accordance with Policy D1 and Policy D2 (impact on the conservation area).
19. The use of timber fins to the outside skin of the building will be positioned and set so as to achieve a balance between daylight and sunlight to the existing house and avoid an unacceptable increase in overlooking to neighbouring properties. These fins would not oversail any neighbouring land. This planning application includes a daylight, sunlight and overshadowing assessment that was submitted at the time of the 2018 approval and considers this aspect, along with the minor increases in footprint of the building to the rear at ground and upper floors and the relationship to neighbouring gardens, with regard to Policy A1.

20. With regard to the proposed full height rear extension, the extension would measure approx. 2m deep by 2m wide by 7.8m/ 3 storeys high. It would not alter the rear or side building line and would be a coherent alteration that would not harm the integrity of the building form. The contrasting use of materials to the extension would give this area of the building a more lightweight appearance which is an attractive approach to the use of materials that would also mitigate an overly bulky appearance.

Amenity

21. The proposed extension will be situated a sufficient distance away from neighbouring properties for there to be no adverse impacts on amenity in terms of daylight/sunlight and outlook. A sunlight impact study has been included with this application to demonstrate what the impact would be on the rear gardens of properties on Lupton Street; see the Design and Access Statement.
22. The replacement windows to the front elevation would be variegated frosted glass to ensure no views are possible to the gardens of the properties opposite, as per the existing situation. The side window would also be clad in louvres to prevent views into rear gardens.
23. The proposed extension would not breach the 25 degree line when taken from the centre point of the nearest directly facing neighbouring window.

Parking and highways

24. The property experiences very good accessibility to public transport (PTAL of 5) being located close to local bus routes, the Overground railway and the Underground Stations in Kentish Town. The site is located within the East Kentish Town (CA-M) CPZ which has a parking capacity to accommodate additional on-street parking, and Railey Mews is not listed as a street that experience from parking stress.
25. The integral garage that existed before its conversion to habitable space was too small to accommodate a car space and therefore its use as a bedroom represented a better use of this space.
26. There have been other cases where planning permission was granted for the change of use of integral garages in the same street to habitable accommodation, taking into account the very good public transport accessibility and on-street parking capacity. For example, planning permission was granted for the removal of condition 3 (relating to use of the garage for car parking purposes only) of planning permission dated 17/12/99 to allow conversion of existing garage into habitable space for dwelling house including alterations to garage door and insertion of glass panels at No.3 Railey Mews on 29th January 2008 (LBC reference: 2007/5883/P). Adopting the same approach to this development would be consistent with Policy T4.

Conditional matters

27. Three pre-commencement conditions were imposed to the 2018 planning permission relating to trees (condition 4), the engagement of a 'checking engineer' for the basement works (condition 5) and compliance with the Basement Impact Assessment (condition 6). Given the omission of the basement proposals from this application, no information in respect of these matters is included herein.

We have canvassed and discussed this new application with planning officers and sought to assure them that this development would be of a high standard of design that would respect the local context and character of this area, and we look forward to receiving the support of officers in favour of these proposals.

Yours faithfully,

David Kemp BSc(Hons) PGDL MRICS

Director

DRK Planning Ltd