



JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

November 2021

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The proposed development seeks to include students as a permitted occupant at the hostel. The existing hostel is not viable when limited only to 'Working People.' The anticipated lengths of stay for the students would cover at least two terms. The students would therefore not be short-term residents and would form a connection with the established community.

The inclusion of students as occupants is assessed against Camden Local Plan policies H9 (Student accommodation) and H10 (Housing with shared facilities) below.

Policy H9 (Student accommodation)

Policy H9 states that: *'the Council will aim to ensure that there is a supply of student housing available at costs to meet the needs of students from a variety of backgrounds in order to support the growth of higher education institutions in Camden and Camden's international academic reputation.'*

The policy states that the council will 'seek a supply of student housing to meet or exceed Camden's target of 160 additional places in student housing per year.' This is however, subject to criteria A-J. The proposal is assessed against these criteria as follows:

1. The proposal would not involve the net loss of self-contained homes;
2. The proposal would not prejudice the Council's ability to meet the target of 742 additional self-contained homes per year;
3. The site is not identified for self-contained housing through a current planning permission or development plan document;
4. There would be changes to the internal layout and the existing hostel complies with relevant standards for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs);
5. There are numerous higher education institutions which are accessible from the site: University College London (14 minutes via public transport), London School of Economics and Political Science (28 minutes via public transport), King's College London (26 minutes via public transport), Queen Mary, University of London (41 minutes via public transport), Imperial College London (38 minutes via by public transport). Given the small-scale nature of the use, it would not be practical to produce an undertaking with one or more of these education institutions to tie occupation to attendance at specified education institutions;
6. The existing layout with 20 bedrooms, W/Cs and a shared kitchen/breakfast room would remain as existing. The single rooms have a minimum of 7.1 sqm and the double room are at least 10.2 sqm. The use would therefore continue to meet minimum space standards;
7. The current rent is £200 per week for a furnished room, which includes all utilities, council tax, internet, cleaning, maintenance, and laundry facilities. This is accommodation that would be affordable to the student body as a whole;
8. The use will be accessible (it is in close proximity to Kentish Town Underground and Overground and a number of Bus routes), it is close to Kentish Town centre which has a range of shops, services and community facilities;
9. The nature of the use would not significantly change as it already is a form of shared accommodation. The addition of students as a permitted occupant would contribute to a mixed, inclusive and sustainable community;

10. There are no other student accommodation uses within the immediate area. The proposal would not increase the number of occupants at the site but rather allow the hostel to operate at its permitted maximum capacity. The existing Hostel, benefits from a full-time maintenance caretaker, who is available 24/7 to address any management issues. The hostel employs a Management Support officer, who holds an accredited Landlord licence with Camden Council. Furthermore, the Hostel Manager/Lead Tenant lives within the hostel and manages day-to-day activities at the site. The nature and intensity of the use would not significantly change and as such would not cause a harmful concentration, or harm nearby residential amenity.

Policy H10 (Housing with shared facilities)

The proposal would not involve the loss of housing with shared facilities or the self-containment of the existing shared accommodation. As such, the proposed use would remain as a form of shared living facility with the same maximum occupancy of 27 persons.

The current rent is £200 per week for a furnished room, which includes all utilities, council tax, internet, cleaning, maintenance, and laundry facilities. The rent would not change and as such would continue to function as long-term low-cost housing.

As discussed above the nature and intensity of the use would not change considerably and as such would not cause a harmful concentration, or harm nearby residential amenity. There are a number of personnel on site to manage tenants.

In summary, we consider that the addition of students as an occupant would be in accordance with the requirements of policies H9 and H10 of the Camden Local Plan 2017 and as such planning permission should be granted.