



Design and Access Statement for 11-12 Grenville Street, London, WC1N 1LZ

Camden Planning Department

The Process

The application site is located at 11-12 Grenville Street, between Bernard Street and Guilford Street to the south of Brunswick Square in Bloomsbury. The site is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and is identified as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. The site contains a café (Class E(b)) and a small shop unit (Class E(a)) at ground floor level, and offices (Class E (g)) at first, second and third floor levels. All the units have been vacant for several years. The site falls within Central London Area and is also within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ). The area generally has a mixed-use character including residential, office, institutional (hospital, university, education), recreational and community uses.

Following planning permission (Ref: 2017/4551/P) dated 28th November 2019, the existing upper floors are approved for a change of use to 5no. residential units. Since then, the building has been sold to a new owner, the current applicant, who has the intention of implementing the approved scheme. The formal approval of the planning conditions relating to the permission are currently submitted and awaiting a decision.

Proposal

The current application consists of opening the front lightwells to match adjoining properties in the street as well as enlarging two existing side windows. These proposed changes are all intended to improve the natural light at basement level. Existing buildings on Grenville Street have front lightwells with metal railings, some even have stairs from the pavement going down to basement level. The proposal is to match this predominant design feature in the application site, albeit without the stairs. Access to the basement will remain internal, as is. **It is important to note that there is no additional excavation involved as part of the current application.** The lightwells at basement level are actually an existing feature of the current property, but at some point in the history of the building they appear to have been blocked at street level. Therefore, the proposal is simply to reinstate them, opening them again and fitting metal railings to match adjoining properties, in order to provide better ventilation and natural light to the existing premises at basement level.

Amount

The proposal is only for 2no. front lightwells.

Scale

As can be seen on the proposed drawings, the proposal maintains the predominant style of the area. The proposed scheme was designed in a sensitive manner, with the aim of forming an integral and proportional appearance which complements the host building and matches adjoining properties for a coherent street scene, while at the same time not affecting the privacy of the surrounding properties. There are precedents on the road of similar properties with front lightwells already. It is important to note that both adjoining properties benefit from front lightwells behind metal railings. Heights and scale will be to match the existing properties along the road.

Appearance

External appearance is to generally match the predominant style in the area in terms of materials, detailing and design. The proposed metal railings will match the design of existing railings in adjoining properties, painted gloss black. The proposed basement front window will match materials and detailing of existing windows.

Use

The use of the site is maintained: Commercial at Ground Floor and Basement (unchanged).

Access

The site is centrally located, with abundance of shops, workplaces, entertainment and other local amenities which will reduce the need for travel. The existing access to the building will remain unchanged and unaffected by the proposal. The access for Emergency Services will remain unchanged, as it is at present.