



Juttla
Architects

Design & Access Statement

109-110 Guilford Street, London, WC1N 1DP

Rev - H

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2-4 High Street,
Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 7AR
t 01923 840077 | f 01923 840078
juttla-architects.com | info@juttla-architects.com

RIBA 

Chartered Practice

1.The Application

- 1.1. External works in association with change of use from 2 HMO bedsits to 2 x 1 bed self-contained flats at basement level at 109 and 110, refurbishment of both buildings including erection of 1st floor rear extension to existing closet wing, partial demolition of existing ground floor rear extension and enlargement of the existing lightwell, various internal alterations to retain 15no. HMO units, replacement of windows at third floor level to front elevation at no. 110 all in association with the existing HMO use (Class C4). Resubmission of the previously approved scheme (Reference: 2018/4338/P & 2018/4610/L).

2.Site Location

- 2.1. The application is for a site at 109 & 110 Guilford Street in the London Borough of Camden. The plot is approximately 190m².
- 2.2. The application site comprises of a five storey building – including a basement and loft level. The site is bounded by Guilford Street to the south-east, by no. 108 Guilford Street to the south-west and the corner property no. 111 Guilford Street to the north-east with other properties bordering the north-west boundary.
- 2.3. The buildings are part of the late 18th century and early 19th century development of the area. The site is occupied by two Grade II Listed Buildings, which have been converted into student accommodation comprising bedrooms and communal areas and have been used as such for many years.
- 2.4. The property is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and is to a similar scale and matches the architectural character of the adjoining properties on this parade.

3.Site Description

- 3.1. The existing Grade II Listed Buildings at no.109 & no.110 are five storeys with the inclusion of a basement and a habitable loft level. The buildings are finished in yellow stock bricks, with the fenestration being painted white timber double hung sash windows.
- 3.2. The existing property at no.109 has previously been extended to the rear at ground floor level to the full extents. The existing property at no.110 has also been previously extended, however, a small paved rear garden exists.
- 3.3. The properties were converted into student accommodation a number of years ago, with a total of 20 bedrooms, 4 communal kitchens, a number of communal bathroom facilities and a laundry room currently existing between the two properties. The layout has been outlined below:

3.3.1.Basement Level

At no.109, there is currently one en-suite bedroom and a communal kitchen. To no.110, there is one bedroom, a kitchen and a laundry room. A current light well exists to provide natural light to the rear parts. The basements are accessed from the front externally as well as from the rear internally.

3.3.2.Ground Floor Level

At no.109, there are three bedrooms, including one en-suite, with one of the bedrooms existing within the previously extended ground floor rear extension. No.110 has a further 2 bedrooms, 2 communal bathrooms and access to the small rear courtyard.

3.3.3.First Floor Level

At first floor level, no.109 houses two en-suite bedrooms, with no.110 having a further three bedrooms.

3.3.4.Second Floor Level

At second floor level, no.109 has one en-suite bedroom, a communal bathroom and a communal kitchen. No.110 at this level has two bedrooms and a communal kitchen.

3.3.5.Third Floor Level

Within the loft space, no.109 has two en-suite bedrooms and no.110 has three further bedrooms and also a communal bathroom.

- 3.4. During the previous conversion into student accommodation, minor internal alterations were undertaken to accommodate the change of use and as such not all of the internal partitions are original features.
- 3.5. The existing HMO accommodation is in a poor state and requires investment in order to bring it up to a better standard. As such, the client felt that undertaken the proposal will not only provide more accommodation but would enhance the overall standard of accommodation provided.

4.Design

- 4.1. This Design & Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the below drawings and documents:

- 4.1.1.Drawings:
 - P101 – Location Plan
 - P201 D – Existing Plans and Elevations
 - P202 N – Proposed Plans and Elevations
 - P203 G – Existing and Proposed Sections AA and BB
 - P301 E – Demolition Plan – Basement and Ground
 - P302 C – Demolition Plan – First and Second
 - P303 B – Demolition Plan – Third and Roof
 - P304 N – Proposed Basement and Ground Floor Plan
 - P305 J – Proposed First and Second Floor Plan
 - P306 I – Proposed Third and Roof Plan
 - P601 G – Unit 4 Detail
 - P603 G – 110 – Kitchen Detail

Oakley-P1110-M-100-P3 (Vent)
Oakley-P1110-M-101-P3 (Vent)
Oakley-P1110-M-102-P3 (Vent & svp)

4.1.2. Documents: Heritage Statement – AB Heritage

4.2. Proposal

The proposal is for part single and part double storey rear extension and internal alterations to the existing HMO to provide 17 units. The use of the property will remain as per existing, with the number of units decreasing from the existing number. However, the standard of accommodation will be significantly improved as all the units will benefit from an en-suite – which is the key reason the client is looking to undertake the works.

The proposal looks to retain as much of the existing original building as possible, whilst making certain alterations and minor amendments where necessary to allow the building to be utilised as an HMO with 17 units.

The internal layout within the building has been configured such that it retains the order and layout of the existing property as far as possible, and as such requires the least amount of intrusive works.

The roof of the building will be retained as per the existing construction and detailing. However upon closer inspection, it may be necessary to repair certain areas. These repairs will be carried out with a matching construction and detailing to that of the existing.

4.3. No.109 - Internal Layout & Alterations

At basement level, one unit is proposed. Following conversations with the HMO officer, it was suggested that a residential unit to the rear would not be acceptable due to the limited natural light. As such, we have proposed one unit that would benefit from dual aspect. To the front, we have proposed to remove all unoriginal internal stud walls, and reintroduce them into the unit as per the original historic plan form. This ensures that the unit size meets the minimum internal space standards. The en-suite is located to the rear portion where the bedroom is located. To the front, a kitchen and living area is located – benefitting from the two large windows and door, ensuring that there is adequate light in the unit. This kitchen is positioned directly below the proposed ground floor kitchen. The existing door opening and door from the bedroom to the hall is to be retained, however, it will be kept locked shut. A small door opening is to be formed in the spine wall to ensure the studio unit is kept open plan within out impacting the existing fabric.

At ground floor level, the room to the front is to be used as a kitchen. This will ensure that this primary room is to be used for socialising – as per its historical intended use. It was agreed during the pre-application process that this would be a much better use for the room instead of a bedroom. The existing curved wall is to be retained, as well as all of the features that exists such as the corning and central rose detail. A run of units and an island unit ensures that the kitchen complies with the HMO guidelines whilst ensuring that the overall form of the room is not impacted. The kitchen units are to be set away from the original wall by a metal stud wall which is 100mm away from the existing fabric. Furthermore, this is to have a soft joint to the existing walls ensuring that the changes can be completely reversible.

Two further units are proposed on the ground floor – similar to what currently exists. Unit 2 does not lead to any alterations internally. Additional partitions are proposed to unit 3 to allow for the en-suite.

On the first floor, two units are proposed as per the existing and therefore no alterations occur at this level.

At second floor level, two units are proposed and one kitchen. The units to the front replace one large unit and as such a stud partition is proposed. This partition is to be away from the existing windows and will match the characteristics of the original. It was discussed during the pre-app that as the second floor holds less historical importance, proposing an additional stud wall would not cause any harm or issues. A couple of the unoriginal stud walls are to be removed to accommodate the en-suites.

At third floor level, two further units are proposed. The door position of unit 8 en-suite is to be repositioned whilst unit 9, internal partitions proposed to allow for an en-suite.

4.4. No.110 - Internal Layout & Alterations

At basement level, one unit similar to that at no.109 is to be proposed. The laundry room accessed from the lightwell is to be retained.

At ground floor level, the primary room is to be used as the kitchen – similar to that proposed at no.109. Unit 2 is to be retained as per existing. Previously, a ground floor infill extension to match no.109 was proposed, however, as requested by Bloomsbury CAAC, this has now been removed. Instead, the existing extensions are to be partially retained – as they have been there for more than 15 years. This will allow the existing courtyard to be retained, being more in keeping with the original plan form. The proposed lightwell has been increased to ensure that the light and outlook to unit 1 & unit 2 is acceptable.

At first floor level, all the internal walls are to be retained apart from the unoriginal stud wall which exists to the front between the current bedroom 4 and 5. During the pre-application and planning process and following dialogue with the case officer and conservation officer, it was suggested that this wall be removed to create one large room to the front. The wall is not an original wall and therefore it was suggested that by removing this wall to the primary room (as it is to the front and at first floor level), would be a benefit to the overall scheme. As such, we have proposed to remove this wall and in turn lose a room, and instead create one large bedroom to the front, similar to that what exists at no.109. Two bedrooms are proposed at first floor level, one to the front and one to the rear. Both units, Unit 3 and Unit 4 benefit from new en-suites. These have been proposed as 'pods' which are built with 75mm metal stud walls and are to be completely separate and away from the fabric. These are to be attached to the existing fabric using soft joints, ensuring that they can be completely reversible if required. The pods are to be lower in height to the main floor to ceiling, therefore ensuring that the overall form of the room is retained. All services will run in the voids to ensure minimal impact. An additional bathroom is proposed in the closet which is to be slightly extended.

Two units are proposed at Second floor level, with minor alterations made, including a partition and block up some of the existing doors and reposition the en-suite doors to accommodate the revised layout. A second communal kitchen is also located at this level.

At third floor level, two further units are proposed. Internal partitions are proposed to both units to allow for en-suites.

As can be seen from above and the proposed scheme, we have proposed minimal internal alterations to ensure that the characteristics and the detailing of the existing buildings are retained.

4.5. Extensions

The existing Ground Floor extensions to the rear of no.110 are to be retained as they have been in place for over 15 years, however, these are to be partially reduced as part of this application.

At first floor level, the closet at no.110 is to be slightly increased to accommodate a shower room. This will be to the same extents of the closet at no.109.

All materials, styles and characterises of the proposal are to match that of the existing. The proposed extensions are to be finished in second hand yellow London stock brickwork to match with the existing.

All proposed windows are to match the existing painted white timber double hung sash windows.

5.Pre-App & Planning Dialogue

- 5.1. Over the last 18 months, there has been constant dialogue with Camden Council, initially as a pre-application advice and subsequently during the planning submission. This has led to changes and alterations to the scheme which have ensured that it is more in keeping and sympathetic with the existing fabric.
- 5.2. During the dialogue with the council, the design of the 'pod' has changed, with 75mm x 75mm shadow gaps proposed on all junction between new and existing walls and floors to ensure that the pod is read completely separate from the existing fabric – this also includes a shadow gap to the top.
- 5.3. Furthermore, the heights of the pods have been increased to minimise any views of the proposed ducting and servicing which would be required. There is still ample space proposed between the pod and the existing ceilings to ensure it is read completely separate from the existing, however, it is tall enough to ensure that the ducting and service pipes are almost unseen, and therefore not causing any negative impact.
- 5.4. In addition, the 'pod' are to be finished in 8mm Valchromat Panelling as suggested by the council. Each of the four pods are to be a different colour – Blue, Green, Orange and Violet. This allows the pod to be differentiated from the existing historic building – further minimising any impact to the existing.
- 5.5. Finally, as mentioned above, the existing stud wall between bedrooms 4 and 5 to the front at first floor level in no.110 is to be removed to create one large room. Given the importance of this room within the hierarchy of spaces, it was suggested that this unoriginal wall be removed to outweigh any impact caused by the addition of the pod. In addition, this would allow the unit to be the same as no.109 and restore the unit to its historic plan form. As such, this has been undertaken, albeit leading to the loss of one bedroom.

- 5.6. We feel the above alterations undertaken during the planning process have assisted in ensuring that any impact caused by the proposed works is to be minimal.

6. Previous Planning Application

- 6.1. A previous planning application was submitted and approved in May 2019 (Reference: 2018/4338/P). As the application is due to lapse within 2 months, this application is a resubmission of the previously approved application.

7. Heritage Report

- 7.1. A Heritage Report was undertaken by AB Heritage as part of this submission. The Heritage report does not object to the proposed works. The report does state that the property has some listed features and these should be retained. However, it also notes that some of the internal works have been undertaken during the previous change of use and as such are not original features – this is also the case of the windows.
- 7.2. Throughout the property, the existing detailing and architectural features will be preserved and enhanced where possible. All joinery items such as skirtings, architraves and rails, as well as any plasterwork will be retained and made good. Where necessary, new sections will be inserted as required to match up with the existing.

8. Access

- 8.1. The access to the site and property remains unchanged as part of the proposal. The ground and upper floor flat are accessed through the main entrance to the building at ground level. The basement is accessed independently through the front lightwell that is accessed at street level through a private gated stairwell.

9. House of Multiple Occupancy

- 9.1. The proposal is to ensure that the existing use is retained, and the works are to be undertaken simply to provide a better standard of accommodation as the existing units are dated and require revamp works.
- 9.2. We have ensured that all the HMO policies set out by Camden Council have been adhered to. A total of 17 bedsits are proposed along with 4 communal kitchens – two per building to be used by all of the residents in each building. The following number of units are proposed in each building and in total:

- No. 109 – 9 Units
 - 9 x 1 Person Units
- No. 110 – 8 Units
 - 8 x 1 Person Units
- Total – 17 Units
 - 17 x 1 Person Units

9.3. The following Camden Council HMO policies have been adhered to:

- Single Occupancy Rooms: 9m² (en-suite not included)
- Kitchens: 6-10 person Kitchen – 11m²
- No kitchens more than 1 floor away from any one of the units using it
- Bathroom sizes: 2.2m²

9.4. Kitchen 1 on the ground floor of no.109 is 20.5m² and is able to serve up to ten people. In this case, 5 people would be using it and therefore it complies.

9.5. Kitchen 2 on the second floor of no.109 is 11.3m² and is able to serve up to ten people. In this case, 4 people would be using it and therefore it complies.

9.6. Kitchen 1 on the ground floor of no.110 is 20.5m² and is able to serve up to ten people. In this case, 4 people would be using it and therefore it complies.

9.7. Kitchen 2 on the second floor of no.110 is 11.1m² and is able to serve up to ten people. In this case, 4 people would be using it and therefore it complies.

9.8. The above is achieved, with minimal demolition of existing internal walls. Each of the units are to be completed to a high standard and benefit from an en-suite which would provide a better standard of accommodation.

10. Sustainability and Renewable Energy

10.1. The proposal is consistent with current sustainable planning aims, to make full use of existing developed land in urban areas, as promoted by central and regional Government as well as by the local planning authority. Water conservation will incorporate the following:

- Water leakage reduction through use of water fuses
- Water efficient taps
- Water efficient toilets
- Low output showers
- Flow restrictors to manage water pressures to achieve optimisation
- Use of a water meter with device attached to guide consumption and increase savings.

10.2. The development will not have any use that creates pollution affecting the quality of ground water. Further guidance will be sought from Envirowise and also from The Department for

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs regarding the Enhanced Capital Allowances Scheme for water Technologies (www.ecawater.gov.uk)

- 10.3. All timber used on the project will be from sustainable sources. All steel work would be supplied pre-cut and ready for assembly on site thus reducing cutting and wastage. All concrete will be supplied ready mixed to site in pre-determined quantities. Any waste of construction material would be disposed of to other sites for recycling and reuse.

11. Conclusions

- 11.1. The proposal is for the extension and alterations to the existing building. The proposed alterations are required to provide better circulation and functionality of the overall scheme. Furthermore, the alterations allows the opportunity to unclutter the rear elevation whilst allowing the opportunity to increase the amount of light into the lightwell and the units that overlook it.
- 11.2. All the extensions are to be sympathetic to the existing building, with all the detailing and materials to provide a harmonious appearance to the existing. The proposed extensions enhance the scheme and the application site without influencing the existing street scene or impacting the neighbouring properties.
- 11.3. Internally, the proposed amendments have been made following the conversation with heritage consultants with the aim of not only reducing the negative impact to the historical importance of the building. We have ensured that the works are kept to a minimum with minor alterations proposed to allow for the scheme. However, it allows the opportunity to provide a much better standard of accommodation, with 17 HMO units proposed as oppose to the existing HMO Bedrooms and Communal areas that currently exist and are in a state that require updating.
- 11.4. As such, the proposal is seen to be a reasonable development as not only does it allow for additional units on this site, but it also significantly improves the standard of accommodation proposed.
- 11.5. In addition, a previous planning application was submitted and approved in May 2019 (Reference: 2018/4338/P). As the application is due to lapse within 2 months, this application is a resubmission of the previously approved application.
- 11.6. Thus, it is felt that the proposal at 109 & 110 Guilford Street is of an acceptable standard and we look to working with the planners on this scheme to facilitate a favourable decision.