

Design & Access and Planning Statement

Site: 59-61 Camden High Street, London NW1 7JL

Proposal: Roof extension on the main roof. Removal and reinstatement of butterfly parapet wall at the rear. Mansard roof extension at the rear at 2nd floor level. External alterations to first floor rear addition. Conversion of four flats into eight flats. Provision of storage for eight cycles.

1.0 Application Site and Location

The site is a 3-storey building on the west side of Camden High Street close to the junction with Miller Street.

The site is located within the Camden Town Conservation Area and the Camden Town Centre.

The site is located within an area where controlled parking measures are in place.

The site is within an area with a Public Transport Accessibility Rating (PTAL) of 6(b) which is the highest PTAL rating.

The site is located in a low flood risk zone.

2.0 Planning Proposal

Roof extension on the main roof.

Removal and reinstatement of butterfly parapet wall at the rear.

Mansard roof extension at the rear at 2nd floor level.

External alterations to first floor rear addition.

Conversion of four flats (3 x 2-bedroom, 1 x 1-bedroom) to into eight flats (3 x 2-beds + 5 x 1-bed).

Provision of storage for eight cycles.

3.0 Relevant Planning History.

Planning permission was refused on appeal 6th December 2021 (application Ref 2020/2434/P & appeal ref: 3280049), for erections to rear roof level and conversion of property to provide 8x dwellings.

4.0 Relevant Planning Policies

Paragraph 10 of the National Planning Policy Framework Document (NPPF) (2019) states; *“So sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).”*

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states; *“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.”*

Paragraph 111 states: *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”*

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2019) states: *“Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development...”*

Sections 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (“the Listed Buildings Act”) requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area when considering applications relating to land or buildings within that Area. The effect of this sections of the Conservation Area Act is that there is a statutory presumption in favour of the preservation of the character and appearance of Conservation Areas. A proposal which would cause harm should only be permitted where there are strong countervailing planning considerations which sufficiently outweigh the harm caused.

The London Plan was adopted March 2021. The relevant policies for this appeal include:

GG2 - Making the best use of land. Part c of the policy states: *“Proactively explore the potential to intensify the use of land to support additional homes and workspaces, promoting higher density development, particularly in locations that are well-connected to jobs, services, infrastructure and amenities by public transport, walking and cycling.”*

GG4 - Delivering the homes Londoners need. This policy reinforces the need to delivery more homes because the delivery of more homes is a strategic priority.

Policy SD6 - Town centres and high streets. This policy seeks to strengthen the viability and function of town centres. The policy promotes housing growth in such areas to help strengthen the viability and function of town centres.

Policy D3 - Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach. This policy seeks design led higher density development in sustainable locations.

Policy D4 - Delivering good design.

Policy D6 - Housing quality and standards

Policy H1 - Increasing housing supply. This policy sets new housing delivery targets for all London Boroughs. The annualised target for housing completions in Camden has been increased to 1,380.

Policy - H2 Small sites. This policy states that small site housing developments will be the strategic priority to deliver housing. Part A of the policy states that *“small sites should play a much greater role in housing delivery...”* Part B, 1, recognises that planning decisions should accept that local character evolves over time and will need to change in appropriate locations to accommodate additional housing provision and increases in residential density through small housing developments. The policy also includes a new housing delivery target solely for the number of dwellings approved for applications of small sites. The annualised target for housing completions set for Camden is 328 dwellings per annum.

The London Plan Housing SPG (2016) is also a material consideration.

Camden’s Local Plan was adopted 2017. The **relevant policies within Camden Councils adopted Local Plan include:**

A1 – Managing the impact of development

D1 – Design

D2 – Heritage

G1 – Delivery and location of growth

H1 – Maximising housing supply

H4 – Maximising the supply of affordable housing

H6 – Housing choice and mix

H7 – Large and small homes

T1 – Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport

T2 – Car-free development and limiting the availability of parking.

Camden Council have also adopted the following planning guidance:

- Design (2019)
- Amenity (2019)
- Housing (2019)
- Transport (2019)
- Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy

5.0 Planning Assessment

The proposal seeks to address all the issues raised by the planning inspector in the appeal decision (appeal ref: 3280049).

The Inspector stated; “The Council has confirmed that the Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Report (November 2020) submitted with the appeal overcomes the second reason for refusal. I am satisfied that this matter is no longer a main issue in this appeal.”

The Inspector agreed with the Council that matters relating to; affordable housing contributions, CMP, car free, needed to be resolved with a legal agreement. The applicant agrees to address these matters through a legal agreement.

The other main planning considerations in this are:

- Whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area
- Mix of dwellings
- Quality of dwellings provided
- Whether the proposed development complies with policies relating to air quality
- Energy reduction
- Other material considerations

6.0 Whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area.

The comparative drawing submitted with the application documents illustrates the differences between the proposed scheme and the scheme refused at appeal – this is shown below.



The Inspector stated the following: “It is proposed to raise the height of the rear extension and erect a L-shaped mansard roof above the original roof and enlarged extension. As the mansard would sit behind the retained parapet it would be largely shielded from street level views along Camden High Street. Nonetheless, the proposal would result in the infill and loss of the distinctive butterfly roof formation, which would diminish the positive contribution made by the appeal site to the significance of the CA as a whole. In addition, the proposal would unacceptably increase the overall bulk and massing of the rear projection, making it disproportionately large and more visually conspicuous, such that it would overwhelmingly dominate the rear elevation. The harm would be further exacerbated by the form and composition of windows at the rear, which would not respect the architectural integrity and character of this 19th century building. Therefore, both individually and cumulatively, the proposed mansard and rear extension would be an overly dominant and discordant addition at the rear of the building.”

The application proposal addresses all the issues raised by the Inspector.

The existing butterfly roof will be removed but reinstated further back (closer to the rear elevation) at roof level to ensure this important characteristic of the property at the rear is retained.

The proposal seeks to significantly improve the character and appearance of the existing rear addition by the removal of existing windows at first floor level, which are ugly, and the addition of conservation style sash windows.

The proposal also seeks to provide a mansard roof addition at the rear at second floor level. This addition will be subordinate to the main building and the design will introduce conservation style sash windows which would significantly improve the character and appearance of the area.

7.0 Mix of dwellings

The proposal seeks the conversion of four flats (3 x 2-bedroom, 1 x 1-bedroom) to into eight flats (3 x 2-beds + 5 x 1-bed).

The proposal would provide the same number of 2-bedroom flats as existing.

The proposal seeks the provision of additional 1-bedroom dwellings because these are more appropriate in a town centre location. The constraints of the site mean there is limited opportunity to provide external amenity space which is needed for family sized dwellings.

8.0 Quality of dwellings provided

The proposed dwellings meet or exceed minimum floor space standards.

All the flats will be provided good levels of light and outlook for habitable rooms.

Two flats will be provided private external amenity space. It is not possible to provide external amenity space for the other flats because of the constraints of the site.

This position was accepted by the Council and the Planning Inspector in the last proposal.

9.0 Whether the proposed development complies with policies relating to air quality.

Refer to Air Quality report.

10.0 Energy reduction

An energy statement was not submitted with the previous application. The Council's planning report stated as follows: "It is considered that the development could meet the 19% reduction in CO₂ by measures such as enhanced fabric specifications and low u-value double glazed windows. If planning permission were to be recommended, the submission of an energy statement demonstrating a 19% reduction in CO₂ and investigating the feasibility of renewables (to achieve a 20% reduction in CO₂) would be secured by condition."

The applicant would agree to the imposition of such a planning condition.

11.0 Other Matters

The site is located in a town centre and the newly adopted London Plan promotes high density development in and close to town centres. The adopted London Plan (published March 2021) is an additional material planning consideration.

Policy H1 of the London Plan sets new housing delivery targets for Camden. The annualised target for housing completions in Camden has been increased to 1,380. It is understood that Camden is not meeting this target. To deliver this substantial increase in housing completions the London Plan recognises that a presumption in favour of housing development is required.

Policy H2 of the London Plan states that small site housing developments will be the strategic priority (paragraph 4.2.1). to deliver housing. Part A of the policy states that "small sites should play a much greater role in housing delivery..." Part B, 1, recognises that planning decisions should accept that local character evolves over time and will need to change in appropriate locations to accommodate additional housing provision and increases in residential density through small housing developments. The policy also includes a new housing delivery target solely for the number of dwellings approved for applications on small sites. The annualised target for housing completions set for Camden is 328 dwellings per annum. It is understood that Camden is not meeting this target.

Therefore, the provision of four additional dwellings in a town centre location should be afforded significant weight.

12.0 Conclusion

The proposal represents an opportunity to put the site to its best and most efficient use in a highly sustainable location.

The proposal would provide a good standard of much needed housing in a highly sustainable location (the site has excellent access to public transport and town centre amenities).

The proposal takes the opportunity to significantly improve the character and appearance of the existing building and this part of the Camden Town Conservation Area.

The proposal would not demonstrably impact on any neighbouring residential amenity.

The provision of four additional dwellings would contribute to much needed housing.