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London Borough of Camden
Planning and Building Development
5 Pancras Square
King's Cross
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Our ref: KAH/GBR/KVA/U0018690

Your ref: 2022/0161/P

30 May 2022

Dear Sir / Madam,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Application for Planning Permission
The Corner Building, 91-93 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3LN

On behalf of our client, Corner Property Limited, we write to submit an application for planning permission in respect of The Corner Building, 91-93 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3LN ('the site') for the following:

"Alterations to the roof of 91-93 Farringdon Road including the installation of decking, 3no. pergolas and metal balustrade for the use of the roof as a roof terrace; alterations to the roof top plant and associated works."

Background

This submission seeks permission for a new roof terrace which will complement and enhance the offering of the office building which is soon to be refurbished internally.

The creation of the roof terrace will provide much needed outdoor break-out space, which is highly valued by modern office occupiers and which is particularly critical in the context of the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to encourage workers back to central London.

The applicant has sought to ensure that a design is proposed which would not negatively impact views from either street level or private vantage points and is committed to managing the terrace so it would not impact local amenity.

Site and Surroundings

The site is located at the junction of Farringdon Road and Clerkenwell Road and falls within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ). The site is located in the south-east of the London Borough of Camden and borders the London Borough of Islington to the east.

The site occupies a corner plot and is arranged over lower ground, ground and six upper floors. The building is finished in Portland stone. The site is located within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area but the property is not listed. The conservation area audit confirms that the building is a 'positive contributor'.

Relevant Planning History

There are very limited planning history records in connection with the building. On 28 May 2002, planning permission was granted (ref. PSX0105231) for the following:

“Amendment of condition 5 of permission PSX0104184/R1 to extend the allowed hours of operation of the air conditioning units by 2 hours to 22:00hours, as shown on: Location plan; acoustic report dated October 2001.”

The Proposals

Oktra have been appointed by the applicant to prepare a scheme which would sensitively create the roof terrace and alter the plant layout.

The proposals seek to create a roof terrace measuring 160sqm on the existing flat roof of the building, accessed via the existing staircase on the north-west side of the roof area.

The proposals include the installation of a black balustrade, synthetic decking, 1no. weatherproofed timber pergola as well as 2no black metal pergolas. A sensitive lighting scheme to illuminate the proposed roof terrace is also proposed.

A number of loose furniture and planters are also proposed. These are shown indicatively in the Design and Access Statement.

The proposed rooftop plant reconfiguration includes relocating two condenser units as well as the installation of two new condenser units and one new chiller unit. New timber clad louvres are also proposed to replace the existing screening. The proposed rooftop plant area measures 94sqm. There would be no change in terms of gross internal area.

Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ('NPPF') is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It sets out the government's overarching planning policies for England and how they are to be applied.

Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the statutory Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted Statutory Development Plan for the purpose of this application comprises The London Plan (2021) and the Camden Local Plan (2017).

Planning Policy Considerations

Design

Policy D1 of Camden's Local Plan (2017) states that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development.

Policy D1(a) of the Plan highlights that development must respect local context and character, whilst Policy D1(e) states that the details and materials comprising development must be of high quality and complement the local character.

Camden Local Plan Policy D1(i) seeks to ensure that new development incorporates outdoor amenity space, with supporting text at paragraph 7.23 stating new private outdoor amenity space, including roof terraces, is encouraged.

In line with Policy D1(a) and D1(e), the proposed roof terrace will be constructed of high quality materials and has been carefully considered to be sympathetic to the existing building and its surroundings.

The roof terrace will help to modernise the building to bring it up to today's standards and ensure that office occupiers have access to private outdoor amenity space, in line with Policy D1(i) of Camden's Local Plan. Simple black railings are proposed which are considered to tie in best with the period building. All fixed furniture has been set back on the terrace as far as possible so would not be visible in street views, as is demonstrated within the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

The reconfigured rooftop plant increases the available space for the roof terrace. The unattractive existing plant enclosure louvres will be replaced with high-quality timber louvres that will be more visually pleasing and sympathetic to the rest of the roof terrace design, in line with Policy D1(a) and Policy D1(E).

Amenity

Camden Local Plan Policy A2(o) aims to ensure developments seek opportunities for providing private amenity space.

Policy A1 of Camden's Local Plan (2017) states that the Council will seek to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours and will grant permission for development unless it causes unacceptable harm to amenity. Policy A1(a) asserts that the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours will be protected.

The Plan also indicates several factors that will be considered by the Council in regard to amenity, including Policy A1(e) which states that visual privacy and outlook will be considered.

Policy A1(g) indicates that artificial lighting levels will also be considered, with supporting text at paragraph 6.6 affirming that artificial lighting should only illuminate the intended area and not affect or impact on the amenity of neighbours.

Camden Local Plan Policy A1(j) signals that noise and vibration are other factors that will be considered, with supporting text at paragraph 6.20 explaining that the Council will require an Acoustic Report to accompany the application if the development is likely to generate noise.

In line with Policy A2(o) of Camden's Local Plan, the proposed private outdoor amenity space of the roof terrace will be especially important to modern office occupiers for whom outdoor amenity space is critically important, particularly in the context of the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

To protect the amenity and quality of life of surrounding occupiers and neighbours, as per Policies A1(a) and A1(e) the proposed roof terrace will have a maximum capacity of 50 people and operating hours of 08:00-20:00. The terrace will be actively managed by Workman and there will be building management staff on-site between 08:00 and 20:00 Monday to Friday, covering the times that the terrace would be open. The building management team is seeking to ensure that CCTV is installed so that activities on the terrace can be monitored from the ground floor reception desk.

The roof terrace area would be open for use by all office tenants and will be unlocked during the warmer months (April-September) but still may be used outside these months if requested and approved via building management.

There will be no music played on the roof and it will not be used for events. Headphones should be used for any music, radio, or calls in this area when possible. Smoking will be forbidden at all times on the roof terrace. Building management will ensure that rubbish from the roof terrace will be taken away from the area and disposed of within the building. Building management will also ensure that the communal furniture is treated with care and not moved.

Access beyond the roof terrace to the plant room area is by authorized persons only, and the gate should be locked at all times. The roof terrace may be closed during extreme weather conditions for safety reasons.

These measures will ensure that a suitable work environment is provided at the terrace at all times.

The proposed lighting of the roof terrace has been carefully designed to sufficiently light the terrace for office occupiers, whilst paying attention not to impact on amenity of neighbours, in line with Policy A1(g) of Camden's Local Plan. All lighting would be switched off by 20:00.

An Acoustic Report has been produced by Venta Acoustics and accompanies this application. This report confirms the anticipated noise generated from the proposed plant equipment and the use of the roof as a roof terrace. The report indicates that the most noise sensitive receivers are expected to be the apartments to the west on Onslow Street.

The report concludes that expected noise generated from the proposed roof terrace use would be 44dB(A) 1m outside the façade of the nearest residential property and the proposed plant equipment would be 35dB(A) 1m outside the façade of the nearest residential property. Therefore, the proposals will comfortably meet Camden's noise criteria and comply with Policy A1(j) of Camden's Local Plan.

Heritage

Paragraph 197 of the NPPF is clear that local authorities, in determining planning applications, should take account of (a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; (b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and (c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The NPPF at Paragraph 199 is clear that: "when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and

the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”

Policy HC1 of the London Plan states that development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets’ significance and taking their surroundings into account.

Camden Council places great importance on preserving its rich architectural and historic environment, with Policy D2 of the Council’s Local Plan outlining that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden’s heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas.

Policy D2(e) explains that the Council will require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area.

The proposed works have been carefully considered to modernise the building whilst not effecting the character and appearance of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area.

The fixed furniture on the proposed roof terrace has been designed to not be visible from street level. The proposed balustrade of the roof terrace and top of the pergolas will only be visible in certain long views and would therefore not impact upon the Conservation Area.

As such, the proposals will enhance the offering of 91-93 Farringdon Road by maintaining a high-quality building with a sensitive design. Ultimately the proposals are minor in nature and serve to upgrade and modernise the appearance of the building and the wider streetscape.

It is therefore considered that the proposed works are acceptable in heritage terms, meeting the relevant statutory tests and fully according with development plan policies.

Application Documentation

In line with Camden Council’s validation requirements, the following documents, along with this cover letter, have been submitted via Planning Portal:

- Completed planning application form and certificates;
- Completed CIL form;
- Site Location Plan, produced by Oktra;
- Existing, demolition and proposed drawings, produced by Oktra;
- Design and Access Statement, produced by Oktra; and
- Noise Impact Assessment, Venta Acoustics.

The applicant will pay the £462.00 application fee via the planning portal plus the £28 service charge.

We trust that the information submitted as part of this application is sufficient, but should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Gary Brook (0755 774 2363) or Kris Vasili (0738 540 9542) of this office. We look forward to receiving notice of your receipt and validation of this application.

Yours faithfully

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Enc. As above