



**Date: 25/07/2022**  
**Our ref: 2021/5835/PRE**  
**Contact: Nora-Andreea Constantinescu**  
**Direct line: 020 7974 6253**  
**Email: [nora-andreea.constantinescu@camden.gov.uk](mailto:nora-andreea.constantinescu@camden.gov.uk)**

**Planning Solutions Team**  
**Planning and Regeneration**  
Culture & Environment  
Directorate  
London Borough of Camden  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
5 Pancras Square  
London  
N1C 4AG

[www.camden.gov.uk/planning](http://www.camden.gov.uk/planning)

Dear Eamon Nolan,

Re: 308- 312 Gray's Inn Road, WC1X 8DP

Thank you for submitting a pre-planning application enquiry for the above property which was received on 23/11/2021 together with the payment of £1,050 which was received on 03/12/2021. Additional information has been provided by the applicant on 06/05/2022. The advice is based on the information provided by the applicant which included photos, as well as aerial and street view desktop assessment.

A virtual meeting was undertaken on 05/07/2022 with planning officers, where preliminary advice was provided.

### **Development Description**

Proposed replacement windows:

Existing windows:

- soft wood, double glazed
- mosaic panel below
- frame thickness 43mm

Proposed windows:

- Aluminium framed windows thickness 55mm
- Colour – mid grey – to match the elevation of ground floor space
- Double glazed
- Mosaic panel below retained

### **Planning History**

Previous relevant records including the application site:

**2015/2939/P** - Change of use to ground floor to a café/restaurant (A3), a ground floor rear extension and the modernisation of the upper floors and frontages of the building. – **Granted (Planning Committee) 20/07/2015**

**2020/3880/P** – 314-320 Acorn House, Gray's Inn Road - Redevelopment of Acorn House as a part 6, part 10 storey mixed-use building with 33 affordable homes (with external playspace at level 6, a community room and terrace at level 9), affordable office space and retail unit at ground and basement level; together with cycle parking facilities and associated ancillary uses. – **Granted subject to s106 dated 01/11/2021**

### **Site description**

The application site is a corner building of part six-part three storey, located on the north-east side of Gray's Inn Road and north-west of Acton Street. The building lies within Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

### **Assessment**

The main issues for consideration are:

- Design and Heritage
- Impact on amenity
- Sustainability

### **Design and Heritage**

- The existing building has been designed with a particular rhythm of openings separated by stone pillars and mosaic panels underneath. This detail is replicated at the adjacent building, Acorn House, and together they form a coherent streetscape between Swinton Street and Acton Street. Acorn House has permission for demolition and redevelopment subject to permission 2020/3880/P, and the new design has altered the height of the building, as well as the position and design of the windows.
- Nevertheless, the window openings and their architectural detailing, at the application site have particular charm and consistency and this should be maintained by any future development.
- The existing windows have a trickle vent above the main opening, which overall is not considered to contribute greatly to the appearance and character of the building.
- The proposed windows would maintain the existing opening and the mosaic panel below but remove the trickle vent to install a larger window, which is considered acceptable.
- The proposed replacement of existing timber windows with aluminium should be acceptable subject to the frames matching as closely as possible the existing. Detailed information has been submitted which shows the window frames increased by 12mm. This would be a minor change to the existing and overall is considered to preserve the rhythm and character of the building.
- The proposed colour of the frame would match the ground floor commercial space which is considered adequate.

### **Impact on amenity**

- Due to the nature of the proposals and the fact that no new openings would be created, it is not considered that there would be any harm to the amenity of neighbouring residents through increased overlooking.

### **Sustainability**

- It is clear from the discussion with the applicant that the existing soft wood windows are not currently adequate for the energy efficiency of the building and therefore their replacement is sought.
- Every development has to comply with the cooling hierarchy. Passive cooling methods are promoted prior to active cooling through mechanical ventilation. However, in some particular areas due to high levels of air pollution, it is advisable that windows should be kept shut, however this needs to be supported by air quality assessment.
- It is understood that the proposed windows would be fixed shut. In the event of a future planning application you should submit an energy strategy to demonstrate that this would not lead to unreasonable energy use for ventilating the building.

### **Recommendations**

- The proposed replacement windows should be acceptable in terms of design and heritage terms. Should the windows be fixed shut, this should be supported by an Energy Strategy which demonstrates that the building would operate efficiently without natural ventilation.

Please see appendix 1 for supplementary information and relevant policies.

If you have any queries about the above letter or the attached document please do not hesitate to contact Nora Constantinescu (0207 974 5758)

**Please Note: This document represents an initial informal officer view of your proposal based on the information available to us at this stage and would not be binding upon the Council, nor prejudice any future planning application decisions made by the Council.**

Thank you for using Camden's pre-application advice service; I trust this is of assistance in progressing your proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Nora Constantinescu

Planning Officer  
Planning Solutions Team

## Appendix 1:

### Relevant policies and guidance:

- **National Planning Policy Framework 2021**
- **London Plan 2021**
- **Camden Local Plan 2017**
  - Policy G1 Delivery and location of growth
  - Policy DM1 – Delivery and monitoring
  - Policy D1 - Design
  - Policy D2 - Heritage
  - Policy A1 - Managing the impact of development
  - Policy C5 – Access for all
  - Policy CC1 – Climate change mitigation
  - Policy CC2 - Adapting to climate change
  - Policy CC4 – Air quality
- **Camden Supplementary Guidance 2021**
  - CPG – Design
  - CPG – Amenity
  - CPG – Energy efficiency and adaptation
- **Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal 2011**

### Planning application information:

The following documents should be included with the submission of a full planning application:

- Completed full planning application form
- The appropriate fee
- Location Plan (scale 1:1250)
- Site Plan (scale 1:200)
- Floor plans (scale 1:50) labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Elevations and sections (scale 1:50) labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Window Section detail drawings (scale 1:50) labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Design and Access and Statement
- Energy Strategy Assessment

More about supporting information for planning applications [here](#).

We are legally required to consult on applications with individuals who may be affected by the proposals. We notify neighbours by displaying a notice on or near the site and placing an advert in the local press. We must allow 23 days from the consultation start date for responses to be received. We encourage you to engage with the residents of adjoining properties before any formal submission.