

Application ref: 2021/5309/PRE
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Dear Sir/Madam

Pre-application Minor Development Pre-application Advice Issued

Address:

**1 Wicklow Street
London
WC1X 9JX**

Proposal

Minor alterations to the existing front and rear façades and erection of a rooftop addition with roof terraces around and above

Site constraints

- Article 4 Direction Basement Development
- Kings Cross St Pancras
- Underground development constraint - Slope Stability
- Underground development constraint – Subterranean (groundwater) flow

Relevant planning history

No on-site planning history

Other relevant applications nearby:

2019/4683/P – 5-13 Leeke Street, London, WC1X 9HY - Erection of four storey office extension (Use Class B1a) following demolition of 13 Leeke Street (containing 1x1 bed self-contained flat (Use Class C3)); construction of additional storey at roof level with roof terrace above at 5-13 Leeke Street (Use Class B1a). – Granted 13/08/2020

Relevant policies and guidance

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

Camden Local Plan 2017

Protecting amenity

Policy A1 Managing the impact of development

Policy A3 Biodiversity

Design and Heritage

Policy D1 Design

Policy D2 Heritage

Sustainability and climate change

Policy CC1 Climate Change Mitigation

Policy CC2 Adapting to Climate Change

Policy CC3 Water and flooding

Transport

Policy T2 Parking and car free development

Camden Planning Guidance

Amenity CPG 2021

Design CPG 2021

Energy efficiency and adaptation CPG 2021

Home Improvements CPG 2021

Site and surroundings

The site is on Wicklow Street which contains a mixture of three storey properties, apartment blocks and other non-residential uses. The property was built in the mid-19th century and is within Kings Cross St Pancras Conservation Area. The site appears to be an ancillary site to the adjacent public house and is listed as a positive contributor.

ASSESSMENT

The principal planning considerations are the following:

- Design
- Neighbouring amenity
- Energy and sustainability

DESIGN

- The proposal is for the erection of a roof extension measuring 3.4m in height, 6.6m in depth and 6.8m in width. The extension contains a terrace at roof level and also on top of the extension which measures 25.3sqm. Improvements to the front façade are also included. Other features include an external spiral staircase and green roof to the front. Internally a new staircase to the front would be created.
- The building dates from the mid-19th century and has not undergone any significant alterations. The rear does contain a relatively new terrace and the gabled roof ends have been rebuilt; however the property still retains its character from when it was first built. The property itself is a positive contributor and represents a building with significant character on the street providing a clear example of the historic nature of the area.

- In terms of the roof extension, two options appear to be considered within the pre-app; a more traditional addition of a mansard roof extension or an extension which contrasts with the original character of the property. Obviously the proposed design itself is in the latter category and officers at the Council's Design Surgery support the principle of a 'non-traditional' or creatively designed rooftop extension. Whilst this principle of a modern design is accepted here, the design itself does not represent something that the Council would support and it fails to really harness the character of the Conservation Area.
- The scale of the roof extension appears acceptable with it being suitably set in from the edges and then further set back on the terrace above. Concern was raised regarding the extension essentially having two floors on top of the property, partly as a result of the rooftop balustrades. The scale of the roof terrace itself appears vast and can appear slightly overbearing within the context of the site. The principle of a terrace on top of the extension could be acceptable; however this element should be reduced in area.
- The point in relation to the design rationale and creating a lightweight design instead of a traditional mansard is taken; however it is considered that design does not need to be restricted to just 'lightweight'. The frame's appearance and use of the solar shading system appears quite commercial in character and does not link with the character of the conservation area or the residential use of the property. One example of this is that the solar shading system to the front is almost exclusively facing north so is not particularly required. More focus should be on how the materials relate to the character of the conservation area which has a mixture of both residential and industrial-type uses. Officers support the use of materials other than brick; however there needs to be clear justification. Currently the link between the blue colour and the use of terracotta blue pipes appears vague.
- The introduction of a green roof is supported and would encourage the design to build on this aspect, making any extension softer in appearance and also contributing to improved biodiversity.

NEIGHBOURING AMENITY

Policy A1 of the Local Plan seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours. The factors to consider include visual privacy, outlook; sunlight, daylight, and overshadowing; artificial lighting levels; noise and vibration; odour, fumes, and dust; and impacts of the construction phase, including the use of Construction Management Plans.

In terms of outlook, the extension is within the perimeter of the buildings walls and does not extend beyond the building lines. Both the flank walls from the public house and no.3 'hide' the extension which means from the front and sides the impact on outlook and creating an increased sense of enclosure is minimal. In terms of the rear, there are a number of rear gardens, terraces, patios and other small amenity areas. However in these parts the outlook is already limited and the additional extension does not appear to significantly contribute to this relationship. Therefore from this perspective it is also acceptable.

In terms of privacy, the extension includes both a terrace on the roof level and has a terrace on top of the roof extension. Towards the front, these aspects do not cause significant harm and there is not an additional perception of overlooking. However to the rear, the roof terrace and the additional terrace on top of the extension have quite significant views in to and around other people's properties on Kings Cross Road, Wicklow Street and Swinton Street. Whilst it is appreciated that there is an existing terrace, this is small in comparison and not as vast. Whilst the issue may be resolved, care should be taken in evidencing that issues relating to privacy and overlooking are not significantly worsened.

In terms of daylight and sunlight, the applicant has submitted a daylight/sunlight assessment along with the application plans. Only an assessment in letter form has been provided and the applicant is advised to follow through with a full assessment upon submitting a full planning application. The letter suggest that all the tested properties meet BRE guidance; however demonstration in the form of a full assessment would be required.

ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Council requires all development to minimise the effects of climate change and encourage all developments to meet the highest feasible environmental standards that are financially viable during construction and occupation. Policy CC1 requires all development to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by following the steps in the energy hierarchy; supports and encourages sensitive energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings; and expects all developments to optimise resource efficiency.

Policy CC2 requires all development to adopt appropriate climate change adaptation measures such as:

- a. the protection of existing green spaces and promoting new appropriate green infrastructure.
- b. not increasing, and wherever possible reducing, surface water runoff through increasing permeable surfaces and use of Sustainable Drainage Systems.
- c. incorporating bio-diverse roofs, combination green and blue roofs, and green walls where appropriate; and
- d. measures to reduce the impact of urban and dwelling overheating, including application of the cooling hierarchy.

No details of energy or sustainability measures have been provided as part of the pre-application document. Retrofitting the building with more energy efficient measures to minimise energy consumption (draught-proofing, thermally efficient windows and insulation) should be considered as part of any refurbishment works.

CONCLUSION

It is considered that the principle of the extension is acceptable; however in its current form and design it does not properly relate to the character of site or conservation area. Furthermore issues relating to amenity should be clearly evidenced due to the roof top nature of the addition.

This document represents the Council's initial view of your proposals based on the information available to us at this stage. It should not be interpreted as formal confirmation that your application will be acceptable, nor can it be held to prejudice formal determination of any planning application we receive from you on this proposal.

If you have any queries about the above letter or the attached document, please do not hesitate to contact **Ewan Campbell**

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