

0567_68 Charlotte Street

Design & Access and Heritage Statement

Introduction

This Design & Access and Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany the planning application for the replacement of a motorcycle workshop on basement level and ancillary use office space on ground floor at 68 Charlotte Street, with new apart-hotel accommodation and ancillary support facilities. The document records the client's brief that has informed the design process, the analysis of the site and surrounding context and the architectural design approach. The statement concludes with a description of the building and how it responds to its setting within the conservation area.

Brief

Black Architecture have been commissioned by the client DC London Rooms to reconfigure the existing floor plans at 68 Charlotte Street to provide additional Apart-hotel bedrooms and improve the quality of supporting ancillary spaces. The brief seeks to remove the unsatisfactory light industrial workshop on basement level and introduce a variety of bedrooms towards the rear of the property. The proposal seeks to replace the ancillary office space with a more sensitive use on the ground floor to enhance social activity along the street frontage. To improve the quality of the existing upper-level cellular kitchen/dining spaces, shared ancillary facilities are introduced to the existing basement level, providing a more comfortable, open plan layout for residents. The upper-level kitchen areas are removed and substituted with ancillary studio spaces, offering a small break-out area on each level. The unutilised living room on the third floor is replaced with an additional bedroom and ensuite bathroom.

Site analysis

The existing site of 68 Charlotte Street falls within the Camden Town Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden and is located south-east of the conservation area. The site is approximately 20.4m long and 6.4m wide and consists of an existing terrace over 6 levels and a rear extension at lower ground level.

The site is bounded to the north, south and east, by neighbouring buildings of a similar scale and typology, and to the west by Charlotte Street. Many of the neighbouring properties accommodate commercial units on the ground floor and cellular accommodation at upper levels.



View of existing ground floor condition at 68 Charlotte Street and 70 Charlotte Street

Planning History

The application site has been subject to consent through a certificate of lawfulness 2018/1254/P allowing use as an apart-hotel (Class C1) at 1st, 2nd, and 3rd floor levels. The site has also been subject to through a full planning permission 8701925 permitting the installation of a new shopfront.

Design

Use

In response to the brief and site analysis a design has been developed that limits the number of structural changes to the existing fabric and adopts principles which enhance the appearance and function of the property.

The proposal seeks to replace the motorcycle workshop at basement level and ancillary office space at ground level with an active frontage through the introduction of a sympathetic and appropriate use. The introduction of a new Apart-hotel reception area and shopfront on the ground floor provides the opportunity to activate and enhance the frontage along Charlotte Street. The removal of the unsensitive motorcycle parking along the street allows for a small terrace area to be incorporated which adopts the character of the existing terrace.

The motorcycle workshop at basement level is replaced with shared supporting facilities and additional Apart-hotel accommodation, significantly reducing the amount of noise pollution which currently affects the neighbouring properties.

Layout

Internally, the ground floor layout provides the opportunity to include a fully compliant DDA M4(3) bedroom and bathroom to improve diversity within the existing Apart-hotel. The position on the ground floor allows level-access into the bedroom from a new communal corridor. The introduction of a new reception area at ground floor provides area for a desk and couple of chairs for guests to use. The proposed layout allows the reception to be secured at night while providing direct access to the bedrooms.

On the lower ground, an appropriately sized family room is located towards the back of the property, isolated from the other uses of the Apart-hotel. The bedroom benefits from increased natural light which enters through windows which overlook the existing courtyard.

Improved supporting facilities including a laundry room, shared kitchen, dining, and lounge area are introduced at basement level. The layout allows for natural light to diffuse into the lounge area through pavement lights located on the ground floor, while the dining room utilises borrowed light entering from the kitchen. The position of the kitchen provides access into the courtyard and enables ventilation to run through to the external rear wall, limiting the negative effect of changes the principal frontage along Charlotte Street.

The introduction of the shared supporting facilities on the basement levels allows for the kitchen areas to be removed from the first and second floors and be replaced with ancillary studio spaces. On the third floor the underused living room is replaced with an additional bedroom and ensuite bathroom. The new proposed bedrooms improve the variety of bedroom typologies within the existing Apart-hotel.

Appearance

Externally, the scheme seeks to redesign the ground floor shopfront by accommodating a more sensitive use along the existing street. The new Apart-hotel reception area and outdoor terrace aims to activate and enhance the street frontage and compliment the terrace.

The scheme adopts similar design principles implemented at 64 Charlotte Street by introducing a rusticated white stucco finish at the ground floor. The large format glazing will be replaced with openable timber windows improving the visual connection between the building and the street. Pavement lights located within the terrace area provide natural light into the lounge area at basement level. Traditional black painted wrought-iron railings are proposed to enclose the external terrace area adopting a similar design approach to properties within the existing terrace. A separate advertisement application will be made regarding future signage.



Precedent images showing rusticated stucco at 97 Charlotte Street and wrought-iron railings at 72 Charlotte Street

Heritage Statement

68 Charlotte Street forms part of Camden Town Conservation Area and located in the southeast of the area. The property is not statutorily, or locally listed. Several properties located within proximity of the site are classified as Grade II listed which include 24,26,28 and 30 Tottenham Street and 72 Charlotte Street which the proposal does not impact, as no material adjustments are proposed to the scale and massing of the existing fabric

The character and appearance of the development of the proposal has been carefully considered, drawing inspiration from the buildings of merit nearby. The scheme adopts a similar approach towards materiality and neighbouring characteristics of the surrounding context, complimenting the existing terrace. The introduction of the new apart-hotel reception and terrace area at ground floor activates the street frontage and enhances the existing terrace. The scheme proposed incorporates openable timber windows, rusticated white stucco, and traditional wrought-iron railings at ground floor. Changes to the internal layout will not be visible from the public realm, Charlotte Street or from the adjacent properties, as no external changes are proposed on the rear or upper levels.

Summary

Following research into the brief and surrounding context, the proposal provides an opportunity to:

- Enhancing the street frontage by redesigning the existing shopfront and introducing an external terrace along Charlotte Street
- Introduce a more sympathetic and complimentary function on the ground floor which enhances and activates the street frontage, following the removal of an unsuitable light industrial unit on ground and basement levels
- Provide additional bedrooms and increase variety of bedroom typologies in the existing Apart-hotel
- Compliment the character of the existing terrace by drawing inspiration from buildings of merit nearby
- Refurbish rear courtyard to improve quality of amenity space