



# **25 St Petersburg Mews W2 4JT**

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT  
AND PLANNING STATEMENT**

**STUDIO Y<sub>2</sub> PARTNERSHIP**

Architecture    Urban Design    Planning

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application at 25 St Petersburg Mews London W2 4JT for the conversion of part of the garage to living accommodation, retaining the existing parking space and elevational changes including new windows and doors.



Figure 1 Photograph of the front of 25 St Petersburg Mews (as existing)

- 1.2 This statement covers the key design principles and concepts applied to the proposed development. It should be read in conjunction with the application submission, including plans and elevations.



Figure 2 View of rear of application property

## 2.0 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The property is a mews house arranged over 3 floors with a garage and kitchen at ground floor level with living room and bedrooms on the upper floors. The site is bounded by No 23 St Petersburg Mews to the east, 27 St Petersburg Mews to the west, St Petersburg Mews to the South and the rear garden of 35 Bark Place to the north.
- 2.2 The front of the property is of modern construction in brickwork with timber windows and a garage door. The rear the property is of modern construction with brickwork and timber windows. The second floor is contained within the roof space, which is of a mansard construction clad in lead with standing seam joints.
- 2.3 The pattern of fenestration is irregular with a large garage door and a narrow double height window at the front.
- 2.4 The property is access via the garage, which given the narrowness of the garage is unsatisfactory and when a car is parked in the garage makes exiting the property in an emergency hazardous.



Figure 3 View towards application site from outside No 3 St Petersburg Mews

- 2.5 St Petersburg Mews is in the Bayswater Conservation Area. It is a predominantly two and three storey mews with some properties having a second/third storey in mansard roofs. Opposite the application property is a three storey block. The character and age of the properties is varied with some older Victorian mews houses and a number of more modern mews houses.
- 2.6 Materials are also varied with a mix of different types and colours of brick and a mix of different colours of render. A number of newer properties have large areas of glazing and metal framed windows, while the older properties generally have smaller openings and timber framed sash windows.
- 2.7 The most unifying built elements are the pattern of garage doors and the two storey to eaves heights. Views of the mews shown in figures 3 and 4 show the varied character of the mews and the varied materials.



Figure 4 View towards application site from outside No 17 St Petersburg Mews



Figure 5 Aerial View showing general location of application site

## 3.0 Planning and Heritage Policy Context

### Planning Policy

#### National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance

- 3.1 The determination of planning applications is made mindful of Central Government advice and the Local Plan for the area. The NPPF retains a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This applies unless any adverse impacts of a development would 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits.
- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework, published in 2019, provides guidance in relation to the achievement of sustainable development, including the protection of heritage assets. Paragraph 189 states – *The significance of heritage assets and the contribution of the setting to that significance should be described as part of any application, in a proportionate amount of detail.*

#### Westminster City Plan 2016

- 3.3 The Westminster City Plan 2016 sets out Policy S25 Heritage which states;
- Recognising Westminster's wider historic environment, its extensive heritage assets will be conserved, including its listed buildings, conservation areas, ..... Historic and other important buildings should be upgraded sensitively, to improve their environmental performance and make them easily accessible*
- 3.4 St Petersburg Mews is in the Bayswater Conservation Area, which was first designated on 9 November 1967 and extended on 23 October 1978, 20 November 1990 & 1 May 2002
- 3.5 The Conservation Area Audit by Allan Baxter Associates 2000 describes mews in the Bayswater Conservation Area as follows;
- There is a clear hierarchy of spaces and streets .... An important aspect of the street pattern of the several mews some quite intimate others so large has to be seen almost like development in their own right the contrast of scale provided by these mews is an important aspect of the area's character as there are views into them which can be glimpsed from the busier public highways. [Policy] calls for ...new development in conservation areas to respect the character and scale of historic streets lanes and passageways.*
- 3.6 The Bayswater Conservation Area General Leaflet describes the area as including streets and mews such as Star Street and Bathurst Mews of smaller scale whilst the ..... The character of the area remains predominantly residential, with many of the larger houses converted into flats, and numerous mansion blocks.

Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended)

- 3.7 Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order - Permitted Development Rights Part 1 Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse Class A – enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse - grants Permitted Development for

A. The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse.

**Planning History**

- 3.8 There have been a number of planning applications on this site of relevance as follows;
- 3.9 TP/15969 Alterations to a three storey storey mews house with integral car port in the course of erection. Application Permitted 29 May 1981
- 3.10 16/06754/CLOPUD Use of garage as habitable floorspace associated with the existing dwellinghouse. Application Refused 22 November 2016
- 3.11 16/01329/FULL Use of integral garage as living space, alterations to fenestration to front elevation including new windows, door, french windows and Juliet balcony to first floor and partial excavation of garage to increase floor to ceiling height. Application Withdrawn 9 June 2016
- 3.12 18/07526/CLOPUD Alterations to front elevation, including replacement and new windows and garage doors. Certificate of Lawfulness issued.

## 4.0 Proposals

- 4.1 The proposals involve the conversion of part of the garage to a living accommodation retaining the existing parking space and elevational changes including new windows and doors. The proposals are clearly illustrated on the drawings attached to this planning application. In addition, demolition drawings have been provided to describe the extent of the limited demolition required in the Conservation Area.

### **Amount**

- 4.2 The proposals do not extend the property so there is no increase in gross internal area. There is a small addition to the living accommodation of approximately 4 sqm through the use of part of the garage, which is surplus to the use of the space as a garage, but this is within the same use class order.

### **Layout**

- 4.3 The layout of the proposals is set out on the plans, section and elevations accompanying this application.
- 4.4 On the ground floor the garage is significantly longer than required for a single parking space, but at less than 9 metres is too short to accommodate two cars. It is proposed, therefore, to convert part of the unusable part of the garage into a shower room, this will still leave 4.8 metres minimum for the parking of one car.
- 4.5 In addition, on the ground floor it is proposed to reconfigure the accommodation to allow for the introduction of a new front door. This is an essential access improvement as currently access to the property is via the garage. This is not an appropriate accessible means of entering the property given that the garage is only 2.2m wide. Furthermore, exiting the property via this route, particularly in an emergency, is not a safe means by which to escape particularly as it is through a garage.
- 4.6 The upper floors will be laid out as living and bedroom accommodation as shown on the drawings.

### **Scale and Appearance**

- 4.7 The proposed appearance is illustrated on the elevations provided as part of this application.
- 4.8 The proposals for the front elevations involve: the replacement of the existing garage door with a door with top glazing; the enlargement of the window above the garage door; the enlargement of the vertical window feature and; the introduction of a new front door, which would extend the vertical window feature to the ground. At roof level the existing roof will be repaired and the windows will be replaced.
- 4.9 At the rear two windows will be replaced

## **Materials**

- 4.10 The enlarged openings will be made good using matching brickwork. It is proposed that the garage door will be in timber, half glazed with a metal frame and the front door will be metal framed to match the new windows. The replacement windows will be metal framed and double glazed. This metal framed appearance is in keeping with the more modern mews houses in St Petersburg Mews and provides an interesting contrast with the timber framed sash windows of the earlier Victorian Mews Houses.

## **Access**

- 4.11 Access to the property will be as existing from St Petersburg Mews for vehicles and parking for one car will continue be provided in the existing garage.
- 4.12 A new front door will be provided opening directly from St Petersburg Mews. This new door will provide a decent access to the property and remove the need for residents to 'squeeze' past a parked car to access and egress the property. It will also provide a more reasonable means of escape in an emergency.



## 5.0 Assessment of Proposals

- 5.1 The proposals in this application are very minor and could normally be dealt with by permitted development. Indeed, in determining the Lawful Use Application of November 2016 (16/06754/CLOPUD) Use of garage as habitable floorspace associated with the existing dwellinghouse. The planning officer's report stated;

*A certificate of lawfulness is sought for the conversion of a garage to habitable residential accommodation. There are no restrictions within Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 2015 prohibiting the use of the garage as habitable accommodation, as this results in no enlargement to the dwellinghouse and the change of use of the garage area to additional habitable accommodation for the dwellinghouse does not amount to a material change of use.*

- 5.2 The officer's report, however, went on to refuse the Lawful Development Application because of a restrictive condition on the planning application of May 1981 as follows;

*There is a restrictive condition requiring the retention of the garage for use as car parking accommodation for occupiers of the dwellinghouse. Condition 2 of the aforementioned planning permission states:*

*The parking accommodation hereby approved shall be used solely for the parking of a private motor vehicle, and for no other purpose, (including use as living accommodation) and no trade or business shall be carried on*

- 5.3 The justification for the condition is to not add to traffic congestion and to not impact on the amenity of the local area. This is set out in the informative as follows;

*'To ensure the permanent retention of the car port for parking purposes so that the use of the building does not add to traffic congestion and in order to safeguard the amenities of the dwelling area and of the area generally'*

- 5.4 The current configuration of the garage would not allow for the parking of more than one car, but it is larger than required for one parking space. It is, therefore, proposed to keep the front part of the garage for vehicle parking and convert the back of the garage to living accommodation such as a shower room.

- 5.5 This will maintain the purpose and reason for the planning condition and not result in additional traffic congestion or loss of amenity in the area generally.

- 5.6 It should be noted that the same approach was taken to a planning application at No 4 St Petersburg Mews, where permission was granted for the Conversion of part of the garage/storage area at the ground floor into habitable space. The same restrictive condition as at the application property was in place, but permission was granted, provided that 4.8m at the front of the garage was retained for car parking. The officer report for the application (19/02529/FULL) in 2019 stated;

*A condition exists to retain the garage for the parking of cars in connection with the residential property. The Highways Engineer states that due to the length of the existing garage, approximately 8.5m in length it is unlikely to accommodate two 'normal sized' cars, therefore it is accepted that partial conversion of the garage to residential would not result in a loss of off-street parking. The Highways Engineer has*

*raised concern regarding the depth of the remaining garage, and advised that a minimum depth of the retained garage should be 4.8 m.*

- 5.7 The proposed elevational changes are also very minor and could normally be dealt with under permitted development. A similar proposal for the application property was submitted in 2019 for a Certificate of Lawfulness, which was granted/issued. The proposal (18/07526/CLOPUD) was for Alterations to front elevation, including replacement and new windows and garage doors. The officer report stated;

*The alterations proposed to the front of the property materially affect the external appearance of the building so would constitute 'Development' within the meaning of section 55a of the Town and Country Planning Act, so the test for the scheme would be whether the alterations constitute 'Permitted Development' by virtue of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended).*

*The relevant section of the GPDO is Part 1 (Development within the Curtilage of a Dwellinghouse) Class A (The enlargement, improvement or other alteration to a dwellinghouse). The proposed windows are to the front of the property which is not restricted by the GDPO and are therefore permitted development. The proposed replacement of the garage doors with timber folding garage doors and the replacement of the windows with timber casement windows are of a similar style and would be constructed of the same materials as those found elsewhere on the property.*

*Accordingly, the proposal constitutes permitted development by virtue of Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) and therefore does not require the benefit of planning permission.*

- 5.8 The proposed elevational changes have been included in this application for completeness to give a single coherent set of proposals. The only material difference between the current proposals and those submitted and approved in 2019 is in the materials proposed. The proposed doors and windows will be metal framed. As stated previously, metal framed windows are a common feature of houses on St Petersburg Mews particularly on the more recent buildings. This metal framed fenestration would, therefore, be in keeping with the conservation area and with the host building itself.

- 5.9 A recent planning permission was granted for at 17 St Petersburg Mews for the use of metal framed windows. The officer report granting permission stated;

*The application site is a mid terraced, two storey mews property within the Bayswater Conservation Area and is not listed.*

*The proposed replacement doors maintain the appearance as a traditional mews frontage albeit with a modern material. The works will not harm the appearance of the building or the Bayswater Conservation Area and are therefore acceptable in accordance with DES 1, 5 and 9 of the UDP and S25 of the City Plan and are therefore recommended for approval.*

*The works do not raise any amenity issues for the neighbouring properties.*

- 5.10 There appears to be no material difference between No 17 and No 25 St Petersburg Mews, so there would appear to be no reason why the same approach should not be applied.

## 6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The proposals set out in the planning application for the conversion of part of the garage to a living accommodation retaining the existing parking space and elevational changes including new windows and doors should be given favourable consideration, as the proposals;

- provide much needed improved pedestrian access to the property,
- provide a safer means of escape from the property,
- provide better and more efficient use of the property,
- safeguard the current existing car parking arrangement and will not result in any loss of parking ensuring no loss of residential amenity or increased congestion,
- provide for improved daylight and sunlight in the existing property,
- upgrade the existing elevations through the provision of new doors and windows,
- conserve and enhance the Bayswater Conservation Area through the use of materials appropriate to the local context, which is appropriate to the age and detailing of the host building.

6.2 The proposals do not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area, existing building, the street scene and the wider locality nor to the living conditions or amenity of neighbouring residents. Planning permission, therefore, should be granted for the proposed extension as set out in this Planning, Design and Access Statement and as shown on the submitted drawings.

