



Planning, Design and Access Statement

Washington House, 40-41 Conduit Street, W1S 2TY

January 2024





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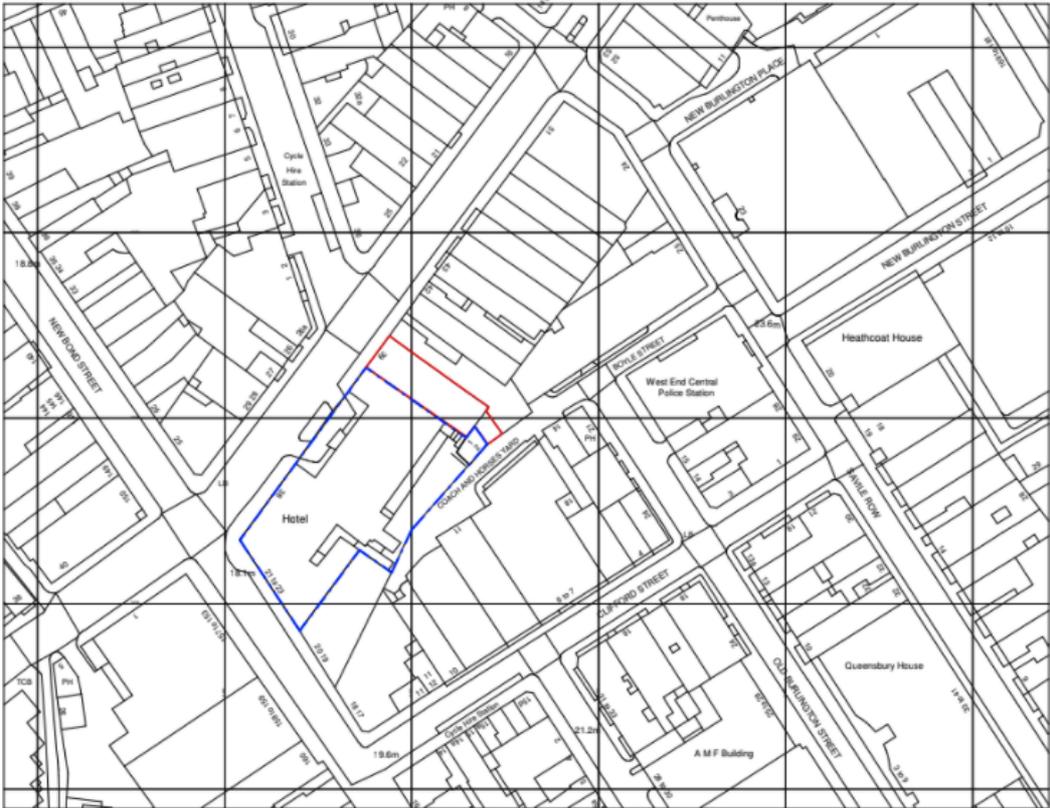
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by hgh Consulting on behalf of the Westbury Hotel Ltd, submitted alongside a planning application to Westminster City Council ('the Council'). The application proposal relates to Washington House, which is located on 40-41 Conduit Street, Mayfair ('the site').
- 1.2

A site plan identifying the location is provided below (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Site Location Plan with the site outlined in red and the Westbury Hotel in blue



- 1.3 The planning application has the following description of development:

“Erection of a 7th storey extension with front terrace to provide additional hotel floorspace and the replacement of plant”

- 1.4 The application is intended to be delivered alongside the change of use of the building to restaurant and hotel (ref: 21/02880/FULL as amended) and will provide an additional penthouse suite and a potential second bedroom (which can be used as part of the penthouse suite if required). The application also involves the removal of existing rooftop plant and the introduction of a new plant area.

- 1.5 This Statement presents the case for the proposal. It outlines the site history and context within the wider locality and goes on to assess the principle of the development and relevant matters against the prevailing planning policies, guidance and other material considerations. The Statement then sets out the planning and material justification in support of the scheme.
- 1.6 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying plans, drawings and other application documents submitted with the planning application.
- 1.7 The remainder of this Statement is set out in the following sections:
- **Section 2** describes the history of the site and the surrounding area;
 - **Section 3** identifies the relevant planning history;
 - **Section 4** describes the proposed development;
 - **Section 5** highlights the key planning policy;
 - **Section 6** contains a planning assessment against adopted policy and other material considerations; and
 - **Section 7** provides a summary of the assessment and concludes on the justification for the proposal.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 Site and Surroundings

2.2 Washington House is a grand 6-storey building above ground floor and basement located at 40-41 Conduit Street, a short distance from the junction with New Bond Street, in the heart of the commercial area of Mayfair and within London's Central Activities Zone ('CAZ'). It is flanked to the west by the Westbury Hotel and to the east by 42-43 Conduit Street (a Grade II listed building). To the rear of the building is Coach and Horses Yard which is cul-de-sac surrounded by modern office buildings and an apartment building. Coach and Horses Yard provides a secondary service access for buildings including Washington House and the Westbury Hotel.

2.3 The existing building has a total floorspace of 3,409 sqm, which most recently has been in use as a private members' club known as the 'The Conduit'. The Conduit Club provided access to a number of on-site facilities including; conference and meeting rooms, a gym and wellness centre, restaurant and two bar areas, co-working space, and event space.

2.4 A retail unit is also located on the ground floor of the existing building which comprises 156 sqm of floorspace.

2.5 Washington House fronts Conduit Street, with both the retail and former Conduit Club entrance accessed directly from this road. Aside from the elaborate marble ground floor frontage, the front façade is largely clad in Portland Stone incorporating a variety of architectural treatments. Each storey, aside from the ground floor, has a total of 5 windows across, with four identical windows spaced equally either side of a larger, wider central window.

2.6 Surrounding Area

2.7 The building is located within the eastern boundary of the Mayfair Conservation Area. Mayfair was largely developed in the eighteenth century, and the Conservation Area retains much of the original street plan. There is a variety of building types and architectural styles throughout the Conservation Area, with some eighteenth-century terrace houses remaining, alongside mid-nineteenth century Italianate and late nineteenth century Queen Anne, and Arts and Crafts redevelopment. There has also been much twentieth century infilling, as well as modern extensions and rebuilding across the Conservation Area. In terms of form, particularly, the Westbury Hotel is unusually large, occupying a site that historically was composed of 10 distinct plots as described above.

2.8 Given the strong commercial focus of this part of Mayfair, the majority of the surrounding buildings comprise commercial uses; usually ground floor retail units with offices and other functions above. There are few residential dwellings within the immediate area, limited to the second, fourth and fifth floors of 26-27 Conduit Street, which sits opposite to the site.

- 2.9 The site is extremely sustainable, being easily accessible by all modes of public transport and having the highest possible public transport accessibility rating ('PTAL') of 6b. It is located within a 10-minute walking distance of Oxford Circus, Bond Street, Green Park and Piccadilly Circus underground stations (providing Central, Victoria and Bakerloo lines at Oxford Circus; Jubilee and Central lines at Bond Street; Jubilee, Victoria and Piccadilly lines from Green Park; and Piccadilly and Bakerloo lines from Piccadilly Circus). There are many regular bus routes within ten minutes' walk of the site offering numerous routes through Central London.
- 2.10 Planning Designations
- 2.11 The building itself is not statutorily or locally listed but it is located directly adjacent to 42-43 Conduit Street which is a Grade II Listed Building. There are numerous other listed buildings in the immediate surrounding area, including Church of St George (Grade I) and No.8 Clifford Street (Grade II*).
- 2.12 The Westminster Policies Map indicates the site has the following designations:
- West End Retail and Leisure Special Policy Area (WERLSPA);
 - Area of Open Space Deficiency; and
 - London CAZ.
- 2.13 The site is also in close proximity to, but not within, Special Protection Area 2 (Mayfair and St James's) and Special Protection Area 4 (Saville Row).
- 2.14 The site is located in Flood Zone 1, indicating a low risk of flooding.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The site has been subject to a number of historic planning applications, some of which are relevant to this planning application.
- 3.2 There were a number of applications from 1992 and 1996 seeking permission for the demolition of the building behind a retained façade and redevelopment to create a six-storey building housing a variety of uses. The 1996 planning permission (96/02774/FULL) was implemented and involved retail/restaurant use at basement, retail at ground floor and offices above. The permission also included the demolition of 1-2 Coach and Horses Yard and redevelopment to provide a three-storey building incorporating office use.
- 3.3 As shown in the table below, between 2009 and 2011 there were separate planning permissions allowed for the change of use of Washington House to hotel use, each in connection with the operation of the adjacent Westbury Hotel. The basement area was permitted as a bar; the ground floor as a second hotel restaurant; the first and second floors for conference facilities and third to sixth floor to provide 30 hotel bedrooms. The permissions for the changes to the lower floors (up to the second floor) were implemented and put into operation use (application ref: 09/06069/FULL & 10/01117/FULL). However, the consent for the additional hotel bedrooms at the third to sixth floor was not implemented (ref: 11/07518/FULL).
- 3.4 The private members’ club (sui generis) use of the building was permitted in August 2017 (under application ref: 17/04929/FULL, along with the retention of the ground floor retail unit which remained in Class A1 (now use Class E). This permission was implemented and remains as the lawful use for the building.
- 3.5 Most recently, in July 2021, permission (ref: 21/02880/FULL) was granted for the building to be converted into a restaurant on part of the basement and ground floor (Class E), and a hotel on part of the basement and ground floor as well as the first to sixth floors (Class C1).
- 3.6 This permission established the acceptability of the loss of the private members’ club and the principle of the basement and ground floor for a restaurant use. This application is still extant and can be lawfully implemented. There are no pre-commencement conditions to be approved.
- 3.7 The most recent permission, granted in September 2023 for use of the building as offices above the ground floor has not been implemented.

| Reference | Decision and Date | Description |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 92/01406/FULL 92/01407/CAC | Permitted: 04/02/1993 | Demolition behind façade and redevelopment to create use as A1 or A2 at basement, ground floor retail, first - fifth offices and 2 flats on fifth and sixth floors. |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 93/02010/CAC 93/02009/FULL | Withdrawn: 09/05/1995 | Redevelopment behind façade to provide office, retail and commercial premises; demolition of 1-2 Coach and Horses Yard and Erection of 6 residential units. |
| 94/06810/FULL 94/06811/CAC | Permitted: 12/01/1995 | Redevelopment behind retained façade to provide sub-basement, basement to sixth floor levels for retail, restaurant and office purposes. Demolition of 1-2 Coach and Horses Yard and redevelopment on ground to third floor levels for parking, offices and 2 residential flats. |
| 96/02774/FULL 96/02775/CAC | Permitted: 18/07/1996 | Redevelopment as offices behind retained façade to provide basement, ground and 6 upper floors. Retail/restaurant use at basement, retail at ground floor and offices above. Demolition of 1-2 Coach and Horses Yard and redevelopment on ground to third floor levels for parking, offices and 2 residential flats. |
| 09/06069/FULL | Permitted: 15/10/2009 | Use of first and second floor of Washington House to create additional conference suites (class D1) ancillary to the Westbury. Access to be created at ground floor level. |
| 10/01117/FULL | Permitted: 04/11/2010 | Use of ground and basement levels as an extension to the Westbury to provide ground floor restaurant and basement bar. |
| 11/07518/FULL | Permitted: 14/12/2011 | Use of the third to sixth floors to provide 30 new hotel bedrooms in association with the Westbury. Included a modest extension of sixth floor fronting Conduit Street. |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 17/04929/FULL 18/01443/NMA | Permitted: 22/08/2017 | Use of the building as a private members club (sui generis), dual alternative use of the ground floor as retail (Class A1), associated alterations including an erection of sixth floor extension and external terraces. |
| 21/02880/FULL 22/02483/FULL | Permitted 15.07.2021 | Use of part basement and part ground floor as a restaurant (Class E) and use of part basement, part ground and first to sixth floor level as a hotel (Class C1). |
| 23/03930/FULL | Permitted 29.09.2023 | Use of basement and part ground floor as dual alternative restaurant or retail (Class E) and use of part ground and first to sixth floors as offices (Class E), including provisions for cycle storage, refuse and servicing. |

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the following development:

“Erection of a 7th storey extension with front terrace to provide additional hotel floorspace and the replacement of plant”

- 4.2 The proposed development would consist of the addition of an 7th storey to the building, to provide 208sqm of additional hotel floorspace along with the approved scheme for the building (aside from ground and basement levels) to be used as a hotel. Access will be achieved by the existing stair and lift core and the servicing arrangements will remain the same as that under planning permission ref: 21/02880/FULL.
- 4.3 The extension would be set back from the main façade of the building to provide a terrace area and line up with the new height of the adjacent Westbury Hotel. The extension is designed to be in keeping with the design of the existing facade, utilising the same arched windows and Portland stone on the front elevation. The side (north east) elevation will comprise a modern glazed façade, replicating the floors below.
- 4.4 New plant will be contained within a screened enclosure on top of the extension which will be set in from the edge of the building. No other alterations are proposed to the building as part of this application.

Figure 2 - Existing and Proposed front elevations



5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND FRAMEWORK

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) as amended requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Statutory Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following section summarises the relevant local, regional and national planning policies that will be material in the consideration of the proposed development.

5.2 The site is located within the City of Westminster. The Statutory Development Plan for the City of Westminster comprises:

- Westminster's City Plan 2019-2040 (adopted 2021);
- Westminster's City Plan Policies Map;
- Mayfair Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 2019); and
- London Plan (adopted 2021).

5.3 The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF' or 'the Framework') is also a material consideration in the planning process.

NPPF (2023)

5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (paragraph 7). Paragraph 8 confirms that the planning system's overarching objectives are economic, social and environmental.

5.5 Paragraph 11 states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development where in decision making development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay.

5.6 Paragraph 38 advises that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive way and creative way and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

5.7 Paragraph 90 of the revised NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning should assist in meeting the anticipated needs of main town centres uses over a period and should not be compromised by limited site availability. The NPPF states in Annex 2 that main town centre uses include tourism development such as hotels.

London Plan (2021)

5.8 The London Plan was adopted in March 2021 and its key policies include:

- Policy SD4 (The Central Activities Zone [CAZ]);
- Policy D5 (Inclusive Design);
- Policy T5 (Cycle Parking); and
- Policy T7 (Deliveries, Servicing and construction).

Westminster's City Plan (2021)

- 5.9 Westminster's City Plan 2019-2040 (WCP) was adopted by full council on 21 April 2021 and replaced the previous Westminster City Plan (2016), Westminster Unitary Development Plan 'Saved' Policies (2007), and the Westminster City Plan: Policies Map (2016).
- 5.10 Policy 14 (Town Centres, High Streets and the CAZ) sets out support for the intensification of town centres, high streets and the CAZ to provide additional floorspace for main town centre uses in principle, subject to impact on townscape and heritage.
- 5.11 Policy 15 (Visitor Economy) looks to maintain and enhance the attractiveness of Westminster as a visitor destination, balancing the needs of visitors, businesses and local communities.
- 5.12 The other key policies from the WCP include:
- Policy 24 - Sustainable Transport
 - Policy 29 - Freight and Servicing
 - Policy 33 - Local Environmental Impacts
 - Policy 38 - Design Principles
 - Policy 39 - Westminster's' Heritage
 - Policy 40 - Townscape and Architecture

Mayfair Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 2019)

- Policy MD - Design
- Policy MSD - Servicing and Deliveries

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 6.1 Policy 15 (Visitor Economy) of the WCP sets out the approach to maintaining and enhancing the attractiveness of Westminster as a visitor destination. It seeks to balance the needs of visitors, businesses and local communities. Part G of the policy states that new hotels and conference facilities will be directed to the commercial areas of the CAZ. Part H goes on to explain that applications for extensions and upgrades to existing hotels will have regard to impacts on the wider area.
- 6.2 In addition, Policy 14(a) of the WCP supports the intensification of town centres, high streets and the CAZ to provide additional floorspace for main town centre uses in principle, subject to impact on townscape and heritage.
- 6.3 The site is located on a busy commercial street located in the heart of Mayfair, within the West End Retail and Leisure Special Policy Area. It is also a short distance from New Bond Street which forms a key part of the commercial centre of the West End. In addition, there is a limited number of residential properties in the area which may be affected by such development. Impact on townscape and heritage is discussed in more detail below, but the addition of a storey on the existing building will not have significant impacts on character given the context of the site.
- 6.4 As such, the principle of additional hotel accommodation, in the form of an additional storey and provision of one-two additional rooms, in this location should be supported.

Design and Impact on Character

- 6.5 Policy 38 of the WCP sets out design principles for new developments, requiring schemes to development incorporate exemplary standards of high quality, sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture befitting Westminster's world-class status, environment and heritage and its diverse range of locally distinctive neighbourhoods. All development will positively contribute to Westminster's townscape and streetscape, having regard to the character and appearance of the existing area and adjacent buildings and the materials, building lines, scale, orientation, access, definition, surface treatment, height and massing of schemes.
- 6.6 Policy 39 of the WCP relates to heritage and confirms that Westminster's unique historic environment will be valued and celebrated for its contribution to the quality of life and character of the city. Development must ensure heritage assets and their settings are conserved and enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 6.7 Policy 40 requires that development be sensitively designed having regard to; the prevailing scale, heights, character, building lines and plot widths, materials, architectural quality and degree of uniformity in the surrounding townscape. Part E relates to roof extensions and confirm that they will be supported in principle where they do not impact adversely on heritage assets. In addition, where part of a terrace or group already characterised by roof additions or alterations, they should be of appropriate design which follows an established form and would help to unify the architectural character of the existing terrace or a group.

- 6.8 The site is an unlisted building located within the Mayfair Conservation Area. The adjacent buildings No's 42 and 43 are Grade II Listed Buildings.
- 6.9 Permission was granted on in August 2017 for a seventh storey level extension which has subsequently been built out. Since then, the adjacent Westbury Hotel has been raised by a further storey. The proposed scheme involves raising the building height up to that of the Westbury Hotel. It will be set back from the front building line ensuring it does not appear dominant and minimising the impact on long views. It is also set away from the edge of the building and the adjacent listed building. The proposed detailed design is to match that of the seventh storey, consisting of a stone clad frontage with arched fenestration. This ensures a consistency of design rationale at the top of the building, which respects the design of the lower building and adjacent buildings including the adjacent Westbury Hotel.
- 6.10 In terms of scale, the proposed extension will not be taller than the adjacent Westbury Hotel. This adjacent building is more dominant in the streetscene, and wider area, and the proposed extension of the application building will remain subservient to it.
- 6.11 A full assessment of the impacts of the proposal on the surrounding conservation area and listed buildings is provided within the submitted heritage statement which is accompanied by townscape views.
- 6.12 Overall, the proposals are considered compliant with the relevant policies of the WCP and will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of this part of the Mayfair Conservation Area and the setting of the adjacent listed buildings.

Noise

- 6.13 Policy 33 of the WCP states that development should prevent adverse effects of noise and vibration and improve the noise environment in compliance with the Council's Noise Thresholds, with particular attention to:
1. minimising noise impacts and preventing noise intrusion to residential developments and sensitive uses;
 2. minimising noise from plant machinery and internal activities;
 3. minimising noise from servicing and deliveries; and
 4. protecting the relative tranquillity in and around open spaces.
- 6.14 A Noise Impact Assessment is submitted with the application which has assessed the existing noise environment of the site, and considered the impact on the proposed development. It sets out that measured noise levels allowed a robust glazing specification to be proposed which would provide internal noise levels for all residential environments of the development commensurate to the design range of BS8233:2014. No further mitigation measures are required in order to protect the proposed habitable spaces from external noise intrusion.

- 6.15 The maximum openable area for bedroom windows with the development has been presented and an assessment of the external amenity areas with the development has been undertaken. The noise levels within the external amenity areas are in line with the guidance presented within BS8233:2014.
- 6.16 A maximum noise emissions criterion for the proposed plant installations has been set based on the requirements of the Council for new plant unit installations.
- 6.17 As such, the proposed development can be suitably mitigated to ensure no adverse impacts in relation to noise are created, in accordance with Policy 33 of the WCP.

Highways

- 6.18 Policy 24 of the WCP states that development must promote sustainable transport by prioritising walking and cycling in the city.
- 6.19 It was noted in the previous approval for use of the building as a hotel that the number of trips associated with the site would likely reduce and therefore it was unlikely that it will have a significant impact on the public highway.
- 6.20 The proposed extension for one-two additional guestrooms will not create a significant increase in trips generated by the approved hotel use. Any additional trips created by the proposal can be easily absorbed into the management of guests by the hotel, and suitable cycle storage will be provided within the building.
- 6.21 There is no existing off-street servicing associated with the site and this is not proposed to change with this proposal. Again, it was previously noted that the number of servicing trips was likely to reduce from 12-16 deliveries per day to 7-8 per week and the proposed extension will not significantly increase this, such that then benefit of a hotel use would continue to be a significant benefit in transport terms.
- 6.22 The proposal therefore accords with Policy 24 of the WCP.

Waste and Operations

- 6.23 Policy 29 of the WCP states that servicing, collection and delivery needs should be fully met within a development site. Policy 37 goes on to state that all new developments (including extensions) must provide appropriate facilities for the storage of separate waste streams which are safe and convenient to access for deposit and collection, with sufficient capacity for current and projected future use.
- 6.24 A Waste and Operations Plan is submitted with the application which sets out how the one-two additional guestrooms will be serviced as part of the wider hotel use. The addition of additional rooms will not have a significant impact on the production of waste or need for storage of items, all of which can be suitably met within the previously approved waste and storage areas of the hotel below which are safe and convenient to access by staff of the hotel.
- 6.25 The proposal therefore accords with Policy 29 of the WCP.

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by hgh Consulting on behalf of the Westbury Hotel Ltd in support of a planning application to WCC. The application proposal relates to Washington House, which is located on 40-41 Conduit Street, Mayfair, and is for the addition of a modest 7th storey extension to provide additional hotel guestrooms.
- 7.2 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has demonstrated that the proposed development accords with the Development Plan as well as the objectives of sustainable development in the NPPF and policies of the London Plan and WCP. The proposed 7th storey extension is acceptable in terms of the principle of development; as well as technical matters including design and impact on character of the local area. It is considered that there are no adverse impacts that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the considerable benefits of this proposal.
- 7.3 The proposal therefore accords with all relevant national, regional, and local planning policy and should therefore be approved.



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