



# Planning, Design and Access Statement

33 Craven Road, London, W2 3BX

**February 2024**

**Avalon**  
PLANNING & HERITAGE

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Prepared by	Reviewed by	Date
EB	JF	28.02.2024
EB	JF	15.03.2024





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## 1. Introduction

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1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement (the "Statement") has been prepared in support of an application for planning permission and listed building consent submitted by Mr T Leeman (the "Applicant") for internal alterations and a first floor extension to 33 Craven Road, Westminster.

1.2 For the avoidance of doubt, the application seeks permission for the following development:

*"Internal alterations, partial infill of existing lightwell and First floor extension to rear of 33 Craven Road"*

1.3 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support the planning application submission and will:

- Provide details on the site and its context;
- Detail the proposed development for which planning permission and listed building consent is sought;
- Identify the relevant policies from the development plan and material considerations;
- Provide a planning assessment of the proposals in the context of the identified policies and material considerations;
- Conclude on the planning balance and case for the proposed development.

1.4 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following supporting documents:

- Existing and proposed plans and elevations by Pencil and Brick Architects;



## 2. The site and context

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- 2.1 33 Craven Road (the "Site") is located in the City of Westminster, on the southern side of the B410 (Craven Road). It sits within the Bayswater Conservation Area and is part of the group listing, incorporating Nos. 29-45, all of which are Grade II. The Site has excellent access to public transport, which is reflected in its PTAL rating of 6B, and is within walking distance of publicly accessible green open space at Hyde Park.
- 2.2 The property is a 19th century terraced building with four storeys plus lower ground floor. The front part of the ground floor and the lower ground floor are in use as a restaurant. The rear part of the ground floor and the upper floors comprise residential apartments.
- 2.3 The applicant is the building freeholder and there is a leasehold owner of the ground and basement restaurant part of the building. All of the apartments are let by the applicant.
- 2.4 While the upper floor flats are a good size with dual aspect windows, the ground floor studio flat has a floor area of only 28.6 m<sup>2</sup>, which is almost 10m<sup>2</sup> lower than current minimum Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) for studio flats. Its main window has an outlook onto Brook Mews North and two further windows allow natural light into the flat via an existing lightwell.
- 2.5 A dedicated entrance at the front of the building at ground floor level provides access to all of the residential apartments. An internal staircase leads to a half-landing, which leads to a roof terrace at the rear of the building, directly above the ground floor studio flat. To date, the roof terrace has been used by the tenants of the first floor flat who are due to vacate the flat in March 2024. No other flats have access to the terrace.
- 2.6 An assessment of the building's historic significance is provided within the accompanying Heritage Statement by Avalon Planning & Heritage. It is considered that the building is principally of significance for the architectural interest of its Craven Road frontage, which is unaltered above ground floor. The rear elevations make a lesser contribution to the architectural interest, and modern additions to the rear elevation, including extraction ducts, cables and aerials, detract from its significance. The internal arrangement and proportions of the ground floor flat are not considered to hold particular interest.
- 2.7 The Site makes a positive contribution to the character of the Bayswater Conservation Area, principally in its main facade. However, the building's rear elevations are visible from Brook Mews North and therefore the Site is also a component of the street scene of the mews. Characterised by mews stabling, now converted to dwellings, the buildings along Brook Mews North are generally of a consistent scale of two storeys with a mansard roof. The Site's rear elevation steps down from five storeys to two storeys where it meets the mews buildings.



### 3. Planning History

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- 3.1 The City of Westminster online planning register lists a number of applications that relate to 33 Craven Road. The applications are set out in chronological order in the table below.
- 3.2 The planning history reveals that the ground floor studio flat was regularised in 2001 (01/07525/CLEUD). A subsequent application for a first floor extension was refused in 2004 (refs 04/03103/FULL and 04/03104/LBC). The extension took the form of a mansard roof and was set back only marginally from the edge of the existing building, extending across the entire existing roof terrace. It was refused due to the impact of its bulk, height and location on the character and appearance of the listed building and wider Conservation Area.

Ref.	Description	Decision	Date
04/00364/FULL & 04/00365/LBC	Removal of existing low-level kitchen extract and the erection of a new full height kitchen extract duct on rear elevation.	Permitted	August 2004
04/03103/FULL & 04/03104/LBC	Erection of first floor extension containing one bedroom flat.	Refused	July 2004
01/07525/CLEUD	Use of rear raised ground floor as a studio flat (Flat A).	Permitted	November 2001
96/03342/LBC	Demolition of existing roofs to 2 mansard flats.	Refused	July 1996
96/02842/FULL	Erection of mansard roof to provide two additional residential flats.	Refused	July 1996
96/02843/CAC	Removal of 4th floor roof & erection of mansard roof to accommodate 2 self-contained flats at 33,35 & 37 craven road.	Not required (?)	May 1996
91/01138/FULL & 91/01139/LBC	Installation of awning.	Refused	April 1991
87/01262/FULL	Conversion of ground floor flat and extension of building at ground floor level for restaurant use.	Refused	September 1987



## 4. Planning Policy Context

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4.1 The application Site falls within the City of Westminster where the statutory development plan comprises the Westminster City Plan 2019 - 2040 (adopted April 2021) and the London Plan (adopted March 2021).

### Westminster City Plan

4.2 Key policies from the Westminster City Plan which are relevant to the proposed development include:

- Policy 1 - Westminster's Spatial Strategy;
- Policy 7 - Managing development for Westminster's people;
- Policy 8 - Housing Delivery;
- Policy 12 - Housing Quality
- Policy 38 - Design Principles;
- Policy 39 - Westminster's Heritage.

### London Plan

4.3 Key policies from the London Plan which are relevant to the proposed development include:

- Policy GG2 - Making the best use of land;
- Policy GG4 - Delivering the homes Londoners need;
- Policy D1 - London's form, character and capacity for growth;
- Policy D3 - Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach;
- Policy D4 - Delivering good design;
- Policy D6 - Housing quality and standards;
- Policy HC1 - Heritage conservation and growth;

### Material Considerations

4.4 Other material considerations include:

- London Plan Guidance - Optimising Site Capacity: A Design-led Approach (June 2023);
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023);
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).



## 5. Proposed Development

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- 5.1 The proposal is to enhance the quality of the existing ground floor studio flat by partially extending into the existing lightwell and creating a modest sized single storey rear extension at first floor level.
- 5.2 The size of the flat will be increased from 28.6m<sup>2</sup> to 54.3m<sup>2</sup> and a new internal staircase will be installed to link the ground floor with the new first floor extension. The internal spaces will be reconfigured to provide a double bedroom, a study room and a shower room at ground floor level. At first floor level, the new extension will accommodate an open plan kitchen, living, dining space, which will provide access to the remainder of the existing first floor roof terrace.
- 5.3 The proposed rear extension is single storey and is set back from the edge of the existing roof terrace. Its form is slightly L-shaped, mirroring the existing closet wing, and reinforcing the geometry and character of the building's rear elevation. Its external walls will be faced in yellow stock brickwork and new windows will be painted timber with glazing bars to match the existing rear elevation.
- 5.4 Please refer to existing and proposed drawings for full details of the proposed development.





## 6. Planning Assessment

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- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 makes it clear that planning decisions should be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This section of the Statement provides an assessment of the proposed development in context of the development plan policies and material considerations identified in the preceding sections.

### The Principle of Development

- 6.2 The principle of residential intensification is supported by Policy 1 of the Westminster City Plan, which acknowledges the densely developed character of Westminster. As a result, it is accepted that it will be necessary to intensify existing urban areas and that this will likely be achieved through the optimisation of existing buildings. Furthermore, Policy 8 of the Westminster City Plan permits appropriate upwards extensions and the optimisation of existing site densities in order to achieve the delivery of high quality housing in Westminster. The principle of development is therefore considered acceptable.

### Design and Heritage Impact

- 6.3 As set out in Section 2 of this Statement, this application is supported by a Heritage Statement by Avalon Planning & Heritage. The Heritage Statement makes an assessment of the significance of the listed building and the wider Conservation Area. The report considers that, through the articulation of the massing, which emphasises the closet wing, the use of materials and the replication of the fenestration on the rear elevation, the proposed extension will be integrated into the existing building in a way that reinforces its historic character. In addition, the internal alterations and small loss of building fabric are not considered to erode the special interest of the heritage asset. For these reasons, the proposal is considered to cause no harm to the special interest of the existing building.
- 6.4 With respect to the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Bayswater Conservation Area, as the extension maintains the stepped hierarchy of the rear elevation of 33 Craven Road, and the form and detailing of the proposal sustains the distinctiveness of the elevation, its relationship to the surrounding mews buildings is preserved. For this reason, the proposal is considered to maintain the character of Brook Mews North and, by extension, the Bayswater Conservation Area.
- 6.5 As demonstrated above, the proposal has had regard to the character and appearance of the existing area, adjacent buildings and the pattern of existing streets, mews and passageways. In so doing, the proposed development represents a high quality design that will positively contribute to Westminster's townscape and streetscape and is therefore in accordance with Policy 38 of the Westminster City Plan and Policy D4 of the London Plan.

### Quality of Accommodation

- 6.6 The purpose of this application is to improve the quality of the existing ground floor flat. By extending into the existing light well and creating a new extension at first floor level, the internal floor area of the flat can be increased by 25.7m<sup>2</sup> to 54.3m<sup>2</sup>. Whilst this is under the



minimum standard set out in the NDSS for one bedroom flats over two storeys, it is considered that this is maximum amount that the ground and first floors can be extended without detriment to the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposed bedroom and storage areas exceed the minimum NDSS requirements and, overall, the shortfall is only 3.7m<sup>2</sup>. In the explanatory text under Policy 12 of the Westminster City Plan, paragraph 12.6 explains that the LPA recognises that it is sometimes impracticable to meet NDSS within Heritage Assets.

6.7 Turning to outdoor amenity space, the flat will benefit from 6.7m<sup>2</sup> of private roof terrace. This exceeds the minimum requirement of at least 5m<sup>2</sup> for one-two person dwellings set out in Policy 12 (D) of the Westminster City Plan.

6.8 In light of the above, the proposal will result in a substantial improvement to the quality of the existing accommodation within the rear ground floor apartment. The floor area will be significantly increased and the flat will have direct access to private outdoor amenity space. Due to heritage constraints, the flat is slightly under minimum NDSS, however the shortfall is minor at 3.7m<sup>2</sup>. In these circumstances, the quality of accommodation proposed is considered to be in accordance with the overall objectives of Policy 12 of the Westminster City Plan and Policy D6 of the London Plan.

#### **Impact on Neighbouring Amenity**

6.9 In terms of outdoor amenity space, the existing roof terrace is used by the tenants of the first floor flat only. No other apartments in the building have access to this outdoor space. However, access for the first floor flat will cease when the flat is vacated in March 2024. As such, the proposal will not result in the loss of outdoor amenity space to any existing residents within the building. The existing residents will continue to benefit from living in close proximity to the publicly accessible green open space at Hyde Park.

6.10 The proposals will have no impact whatsoever on the restaurant occupiers within the ground and basement floors.

6.11 Due to the height and location of neighbouring boundary walls and existing windows, the proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on the occupiers of any neighbouring properties along Craven Road or Brook Mews North in terms of loss of privacy, daylight and sunlight or sense of enclosure.

6.12 It is therefore considered that the proposal will not result in any adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

#### **Access, Waste and Recycling**

6.13 The proposals will not alter the existing access arrangements into and within the building. In addition, waste and recycling will continue to be stored within each flat and taken out at the relevant collection times.



## 7. Conclusion

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- 7.1 This Statement has been prepared to support an application for planning and listed building consent for internal alterations and a first floor extension to the rear of 33 Craven Road.
- 7.2 The proposal has been informed by a comprehensive understanding of the Site's existing characteristics and the local surroundings. The proposed development will result in a significant improvement to the quality of the existing ground floor flat in a manner that has no harmful impact on the special interest of the building or the character and appearance of the Bayswater Conservation Area.
- 7.3 This Statement has demonstrated that the proposal is in accordance with the development plan and will contribute towards one of the City of Westminster's key objectives to deliver high quality residential accommodation through optimising existing sites in highly accessible locations.
- 7.4 We look forward to working with the Council on this application to reach a positive outcome.

**Avalon**  
PLANNING & HERITAGE

The Generator  
Kings Wharf  
Exeter EX2 4AN

**01392 581150**

**[avalonplanning.co.uk](http://avalonplanning.co.uk)**