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## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

330A/DAS/SEPTEMBER 2011

**THE RAILWAY HOTEL, 11-12 WELLS TERRACE,  
LONDON, N4 3JU**

**PREPARED BY**

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## Section 1.0 – Introduction

- 1.0.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of the owners of the application property. It accompanies an application for full planning permission to extend the application property to provide six self-contained flats. The ground and basement floor public house (A4) will be retained as part of the application. This statement describes the evolution of the proposal and the rationale behind its design. It should be read in conjunction with the application drawings.
- 1.0.2 This report responds to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006 (the GDPO) for all planning applications – apart from some exceptions – to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement that explains:
- a) the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and
  - b) how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.
- 1.0.3 The structure and content of the Statement has been informed by DCLG Circular 01/2006 'Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System' (12 June 2006) and 'Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them' (CABE 2006). In essence there is a need to:
- a) provide a review of the site's immediate and wider context in terms of its physical, social and economic characteristics and relevant planning policy and guidance;
  - b) provide a rationale for the scheme's design;
  - c) explain and illustrate the design principles in terms of the development's layout, density, scale, landscape and visual appearance, and explain how future users of the site will be able to access the development from the existing transport network and why the main access points to the site and the layout of access routes have been chosen; and
  - d) explain how the development will meet the local authority's planning and urban design objectives.
- 1.0.4 Based on Circular 01/2006 and the CABE advice, this Statement is structured thus;
- Section 2.0 - Context:** provides a review of the existing physical, social and economic characteristics of the site, its surroundings and its public transport accessibility, and provides a brief review of relevant design related policies and guidance.
- Section 3.0 - Analysis:** provides an analysis of the form, character and visual role of the proposal site and an analysis of the constraints to and opportunities for, the proposed physical works.
- Section 4.0 - Proposal:** describes the proposal, its evolution and its design principles outlining the approach taken in terms of use, amount, scale, layout, landscaping, appearance and access.
- Section 5.0 - Sustainability:** describes the measures taken to promote sustainability through the design.
- Section 6.0 Assessment against Policy:** provides a review against relevant design policies in national guidance, the adopted UDP, the emerging LDF, and other relevant planning guidance.

## Section 2.0 – Context

- 2.0.1 Photos of the existing site are included as part of the application documents on drawings 330-EX.03. A site map and block plan are illustrated on drawings 331-EX.01 and 330-EX.02 respectively.

### Section 2.1 Local Context

- 2.1.1 The application site is located on the corner of Wells Terrace and Clifton Terrace, opposite Finsbury Park tube station and adjacent to the local bus station. It is not a listed building nor is it situated within a conservation area. The area is identified by the Council in its Core Strategy as one of seven “key areas” and a number of nearby sites have been identified as capable of supporting high-density development. In particular, planning permission has recently been granted for the City North development, which would include 335 dwellings and two 23-storey towers.
- 2.1.2 Neighbouring properties are primarily mixed-use with ground floor commercial spaces with active frontages and residential units above.
- 2.1.3 The surrounding buildings are generally of traditional in design utilising primarily brick frontages with the odd painted brick and rendered frontage. The height and massing of the buildings surrounding the application site are shown on the computer model images (drawings 330A-PA.16 to 19)

### Section 2.2 Site Description

- 2.2.1 The existing building, The Railway Hotel, appears to date from the mid-twentieth century. It occupies most of the site and is located on a prominent corner. The total site area is about 163sqm of which the building occupies approximately 121sqm. It comprises a ground floor public house with a basement that is used for servicing and storage. On the first and second floors there are 6 bedrooms with shared kitchen and washing facilities, which essentially constitutes a house in multiple occupation (HMO) (Use Class C4).
- 2.2.2 The accommodation on upper floors has an independent entrance via a door in the Clifton Terrace frontage, The A4 space has a number of entrances on the two principal elevations as well as via the yard to the side on Wells Terrace.
- 2.2.3 The building is in red brick with concrete details and timber sash windows. The ground floor A4 area has a red painted frontage which reads as a public house. The building is slightly lower in height than the majority of the buildings along Wells Terrace and Clifton Terrace.
- 2.2.4 The application is within the Finsbury Park Town Centre and the Wells Terrace frontage is defined as a “Secondary Frontage”.

### Section 2.3 Planning History

- 2.3.1 Planning permission for the “erection of a five storey infill extension and a two storey roof extension to provide additional studio flats and elevational changes to the Wells Terrace and Clifton Terrace frontages” (ref P110883) was refused on 26 July 2011 for the following reasons.
- 1. Due to the design and appearance the proposed scheme is considered unsympathetic to the historic building and sits uncomfortably with the neighbouring properties contrary to policies CS2 (Finsbury Park), CS8 (enhancing Islington’s Character) and CS9 (Protecting and enhancing Islington’s built and historic environment) of the Islington Core Strategy (2011) and policies D3 (Site Planning, D4 (Designing in Context), D5 (Townscape) and D11 (Alterations and Extensions) of the*

*Islington Unitary Development Plan (2002) and the guidance contained within the Islington Urban Design Guide (2002)*

2. The roof and infill extension fail to respect the existing building heights and are therefore incongruous with the area and contrary to policies CS2 (Finsbury Park), CS8 (enhancing Islington's Character) and CS9 (Protecting and enhancing Islington's built and historic environment) of the Islington Core Strategy (2011) and policies D3 (Site Planning, D4 (Designing in Context), D5 (Townscape) and D11 (Alterations and Extensions) of the Islington Unitary Development Plan (2002) and the guidance contained within the Islington Urban Design Guide (2002)

3. The increase in the number of bedsits at this site would fail to provide a sustainable mix of accommodation contrary to policy CS12 (Meeting the housing challenge) of the Islington Core Strategy (2011)

4. The resultant residential units would fail to provide satisfactory living space and would fail to meet the minimum room standards set with the Planning Standard Guide (2002). The submitted plans also fail to comply with the Islington HMO Standard for bedsit accommodation, which requires each room, that is 12sqm to have extensive use of kitchen facilities. The resulting residential accommodation would also be contrary to policy CS12 (Meeting the housing challenge) of the Islington Core Strategy (2011) and policy H7 (Standards and Guidelines) of the Islington Unitary Development Plan (2002)

2.3.2 The following planning permissions have been granted recently in the surrounding area:

- City North Islington Trading Estate (P092492) "Demolition of existing ..construction of a mixed use development comprising two 21 storey buildings above ground/first plinth; 10 storey building above ground/first plinth; and 3 storey building above ground floor plinth for: 355 dwellings; 2172sqm of office space; 436sqm restaurant and cafe space; 9665sqm of flexible space for uses within Use Classes A1-A4 and/or gym and/or including up to 2000sqm of office floor space at first floor only"

- 4-6 Clifton Terrace (P101115) "Demolition of building and construction of a new five storey building to accommodate a commercial unit at ground floor; B1 office units at first and second floor and three residential units at third and fourth floor. New third floor extension to number 4 Clifton Terrace to accommodate two flats and remodelling of the front elevation."

- 6-9 Clifton Terrace (P080592) "Erection of two additional storeys including a four storey full width rear extension in association with the change of use of upper floors to residential use to provide 9 studio flats".

2.3.2 The above are shown on the application drawings.

## Section 2.4 Accessibility

2.4.1 The site has a 'Very Good' Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL 6b) and is located within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). It is across the road from Finsbury Park tube station and adjacent to the bus station. The former provides direct access to the Piccadilly and Victoria underground lines, over ground services to central London and to the north of London. The bus station accommodates a number of local bus routes.

## Section 2.5 Planning Policy and Guidance

2.5.1 Planning Policy Statement 1:

Delivering Sustainable Development (2004), sets out central Government's overarching guidance on the delivery of sustainable development and design quality. It states that; "although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are clearly factors in achieving these objectives, securing high quality and inclusive design goes far beyond aesthetic considerations. Good design should:

- a) *Address the connections between people and places by considering the needs of people to access jobs and key services;*
- b) *Be integrated into the existing urban form and the natural and built environments;*
- c) *Be an integral part of the process for ensuring successful, safe and inclusive villages, towns and cities;*
- d) *Create an environment where everyone can access and benefit from the full range of opportunities available to members of society; and*
- e) *Consider the direct and indirect impacts on the natural environment."*

#### 2.5.2 National and Regional Design Advice:

In addition to central Government's Planning Policy Statements, a variety of design guidance and advice has been published that builds upon the increased emphasis on high quality design. The key documents are:

- a) By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice, Thomas Telford Publishing DETR & CABE (2000);
- b) By Design: Better Places to Live. A Companion Guide to PPG3, DTLR & CABE (2001);
- c) Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention. ODPM/ Home Office (2004);
- d) Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice. DETR (1998);
- e) Manual for Streets: Communities and Local Government (2007);
- f) Protecting Design Quality in Planning. CABE (2003);
- g) Urban Design Compendium. English Partnerships, The Housing Corporation (2000);
- h) Planning and Access for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide ODPM (2003); and
- i) Access Statements: Achieving an Inclusive Environment, Disability Rights Commission (2004).

#### 2.5.3 Development Plan Policy:

The Development Plan applicable to the proposal site comprises the London Plan (2011), the Islington Core Strategy (2011) and Islington Unitary Development Plan (2002).

#### 2.5.4 The London Plan provides the strategic planning policy framework for development in Greater London. Policy 3.3 recognises that there is a pressing need for more homes in London and states that "*boroughs should seek to achieve and exceed the relevant minimum borough annual average housing target*". Policy 3.4 states that "*Taking into account local context and character, the design principles in Chapter 7 and public transport capacity, development should optimise housing output for different types of location*"

#### 2.5.5 Chapter 7 of the London Plan sets out broad design aims for the quality of new buildings and public space and for designing out crime. In respect of tall buildings, which are defined as those that are "substantially taller than their surroundings", Policy 7.7 states that they should generally be limited to "*sites in the Central Activity Zone, opportunity areas, areas of intensification or town centres that have good access to public transport.*"

#### 2.5.6 Amongst other matters Islington's Core Strategy Policy CS9 states that:

*High quality architecture and urban design are key to enhancing and protecting Islington's built environment, making it safer and more inclusive.*

*A. The borough's unique character will be protected by preserving the historic urban fabric and promoting a perimeter block approach, and other traditional street patterns in new developments, such as mews. The aim is for new buildings to be sympathetic in scale and appearance and to be complementary to the local identity.....*

*D. All development will need to be based on coherent street frontages and new buildings need to fit into the existing context of facades. ....*

*E. New buildings and developments need to be based on a human scale and efficiently use the site area, which could mean some high density developments. High densities can be achieved through high quality design without the need for tall buildings.....*

*G. High quality contemporary design can respond to this challenge as well as traditional architecture. ....*

- 2.5.7 UDP Policy D4 largely reiterates the broader aims of CS9. It states:  
*Proposals for new and altered buildings should acknowledge the most important elements of the urban context and create a positive and appropriate relationship with surrounding buildings and spaces. Particular attention should be given to:*
- i) defining the public and private spaces through reinforcing building lines and encouraging appropriate infilling of gaps;*
  - ii) appropriate windows and window arrangements on buildings;*
  - iii) ensuring that the building relates to the street and/or waterside setting as appropriate by avoiding faceless walls and including entrances;*
  - iv) encouraging a mix of uses; and*
  - v) ensuring all alterations and extensions are sympathetic to the building and its surroundings.*
- Within this framework the Council will encourage architectural innovation and imaginative design solutions.*

- 2.5.8 In addition to the above, the following provide the Council's policies relating to design and access matters:

- CS2 Finsbury Park
- CS8 Enhancing Islington's character
- CS10 Sustainable design
- D3 Site planning
- D5 Townscape
- D11 Alterations and extensions
- D24 Materials
- D25 Roof extensions
- D26 Side extension
- D27 Side extensions

## Section 3.0 – Analysis

### Section 3.1 Constraints

- 3.1.1 The proposal needs to respond to the existing streetscape including the design, scale and massing of the existing whilst recognising that it is in an area that will see much development in the future.
- 3.1.2 Based on the national, regional and local policy and guidance outlined above in section 2.5, the following sections of this Design and Access Statement demonstrates how the proposed development satisfies the following ‘tests’:
- 1) Achieving high quality design and a positive response to the site’s context;
  - 2) The provision of a safe and secure environment;
  - 3) Provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers;
  - 4) The achievement of accessible and inclusive environments; and
  - 5) Maximisation of water and energy conservation.

### Section 3.2 Opportunities

- 3.2.1 The site is located within a “Key Area” as identified in the Core Strategy, is within the Finsbury Park Town Centre, and is very close to a major public transport interchange. Core Strategy Policy CS2 “Finsbury Park” supports the redevelopment of low density sites around the station and notes that such sites will provide between 500-700 units of housing.
- 3.2.2 City North, a high-density scheme located on the south side of Wells Terrace, has received approval. This scheme incorporates two 23-storey towers and suggests that higher storey buildings will be acceptable in the area. On the opposite side of Clifton Terrace, sites have also been identified as capable of development into high storey buildings. Therefore we believe that increased height, on the corner of Wells Terrace and Clifton Terrace would be in-keeping with the emerging character of the area.
- 3.2.3 The upper floors of the building are already used as non self-contained residential studios and there is scope to improve the quantum and quality of residential accommodation on the site.



## Section 4.0 - Proposal

### Section 4.1 Use

- 4.1.1 The building currently comprises a public house on the ground floor with ancillary storage space in the basement (A4 Use Class). The first and second floors are in HMO use (Use Class C4) and comprise six rooms with shared kitchen and wc/washing facilities.
- 4.1.2 The proposal would retain the A4 use on the lower floors and provide self-contained residential accommodation (Use Class C3) on the existing and extended first and second floors and within new third and fourth floors. .

### Section 4.2 Amount and Layout

- 4.2.1 The public house will be retained. The proposal will result in a very slight loss of internal floorspace to enable the provision of cycle storage. The table below sets out the amount of floorspace per room/flat and the amount of internal storage per unit.

Flat	Pers.	Bed 1	Bed 2	Bed 3	Living/ kitchen	Storage	Total
1	2	13.0	-	-	25.0	1.0	50 (50)
2	3	12.0	9.5	-	26.5	2.0	67.5 (61)
3	2	13.0	-	-	25.0	1.0	50 (50)
4	3	12.0	8.5	-	26.5	2.0	67.5 (61)
5	5	14.5	12.5	9.5	33.5	2.5	93.5 (86)
6	4	14.0	11.5	-	23	2.0	70 (70)
<b>TOTALS</b>							<b>398.5sqm</b>

Table **Error! No text of specified style in document.**1: Proposed residential floorspace (sqm - gross internal area).

Areas in brackets are the minimum standards in the London Plan.

- 4.2.2 The table demonstrates the space standards fully comply with the Council's Planning Standards Guidelines (2002).
- 4.2.3 The proposed flats have been arranged so that they would all benefit from acceptable levels of natural light, privacy and outlook. Where feasible given the site's physical constraints, private amenity space has been provided.

### Section 4.3 Scale and Appearance

- 4.4.1 The height of the existing building parapet would be increased to form an additional floor which would replicate the style and materials of the host building. Behind the raised parapet a traditional mansard extension would be formed incorporating tiles roof slope and dormer windows.
- 4.4.2 The site occupies a prominent corner location in a town centre close to a major public transport interchange. In the light of the height and scale other frontages along both Wells Terrace and Clifton Terrace, the recent planning permissions in the area (City North, 4-6 and 6-9 Clifton Terrace), and the potential for the redevelopment of nearby sites (Clifton House opposite and Morris Place), it is considered that the scale of the extensions would not unacceptably harm the character or appearance of the area. The Computer Model Images provided demonstrate how the proposal would respond to the changing character of the area resulting from the implementation of recent

planning permissions and the Council's policy aim to intensify the use and development of nearby sites (see drawings 330A-PA.16 to 19).

- 4.4.3 The side extension would respond to the height of the neighbouring properties. Its facade would be of a simple neutral design so as not to compete with or disrupt the balance of the frontages to either side.
- 4.4.4 The extended corner building is constructed in materials to match the existing building. The side extension is constructed in brick to match 9-10 Wells Terrace. This distinguishes it from the original Railway Hotel. The windows in the principal building would be timber sash to match the existing whilst those in the in-fill addition would be more contemporary.

#### Section 4.4 Landscaping

- 4.5.1 The public house yard would be retained but would be partly covered by the extended building above.
- 4.5.2 The flat roof of the roof extension will make use of a green roof system (discussed in more detail in the section 6.0).

#### Section 4.5 Access

- 4.6.1 All existing doors and access routes are to be retained. The existing door to the stair leading up to the studio rooms is maintained as the route to the flats. The door to the yard is to be widened and gates are provided.
- 4.6.2 The table below illustrates a review of the application scheme against the Lifetime Homes Standards criteria.

CRITERIA	PASS/FAIL	COMMENTS
1a. Car parking width	Pass	No parking space is provided.
1b. Access from car parking	Pass	No parking space is provided.
2. Approach gradients	Pass	The site is on a shallow gradient and no ramps are required or proposed.
3. Approach to entrances	Pass	The site is on a shallow gradient and no ramps are required or proposed.
4. Entrance	Pass	The entrance has a level threshold, is of a satisfactory width and is adequately lit.
5. Communal stairs and lifts	Fail	The existing Part K stair is maintained and extended. No lift is provided due to the existing building constraints.
6. Doorways and hallways	Pass	Corridors are 1050mm and clear door openings are 825mm.
7. Wheelchair accessibility	Fail	No lift is provided. Corridors, living spaces and bedrooms are all generous with their space to allow for ease of navigation.
8. Living room	Pass	The flats are on one level.
9. Entrance level bed space	Pass	The flats are on one level.
10. Entrance level wc and shower	Fail	The flats are on one level. As no wheelchairs can access the flats and due to site constraints the bathrooms are not compliant except flat 5.
11. Bathroom and wc walls	Pass	Handrails can be fitted to all bathrooms walls retrospectively if required. The walls will be strengthened.
12. Stair lift	Pass	The flats are on one level.
13. Tracking hoist route	Pass	Reasonable, clear routes are available between main bedrooms and bathrooms / en suite bathrooms in all units. The en suite bathrooms are capable of having a level access shower.
14. Bathroom layout	Fail	All main bathrooms are configured to enable ease of access to the bath, WC and washbasin, however they are not fully compliant.
15. Window specification	Pass	All windows will be easily accessible.
16. Control, fixtures and fittings	Pass	All controls will be at 'usable' height in accordance with the LH criteria (i.e. between 450mm-1200mm).

## Section 5.0 Sustainability

- 5.0.1 The use of renewable materials or materials that can be recycled at the end of the building's lifespan have been maximised throughout the proposed scheme. The use of bricks, which require little or no maintenance, helps energy saving. When specifying the materials and internal fittings and appliances consideration will be given to the associated CO2 levels to reduce them as far as possible.
- 5.0.2 Natural ventilation will be used throughout the scheme utilising the mass of the walls to regulate internal temperature throughout the year. Windows will be double glazed with frames to provide adequate u-values and minimise unwanted heat loss. Both of these characteristics will help to reduce the energy demands of the users of the building and provide comfortable spaces.

### Section 5.1 Solar Thermal Heating (Water)

- 5.1.1 It is proposed that solar thermal water heating should be used to heat the water as far as possible and reduce the energy consumption of the flats. By providing approximately 13 sqm of solar thermal panels on the flat roof, positioned facing south, south east it is estimated that these panels could provide up to 60% of the water heating energy demands of the studios.

### Section 5.2 Green Roof System

- 5.2.1 The provision of an extensive green bio diverse roof provides a lightweight, low maintenance landscape based on aggregates taken from the land below the building during construction works. They have numerous benefits including *"aiding rain-water management, providing a bio-diverse landscape, reducing the heat island effect, air quality, improve sound and thermal insulation and extending the life expectancy of waterproofing materials"*. Bio-diversity within the setting will be greatly improved with the inclusion of this green roof.
- 5.2.2 The green roof system which we are proposing to use will have the following benefits;
- a) replaces permeable lost land
  - b) wherever possible, salvaged, reclaimed, recycled or recyclable materials are used within the Bauder Green Roof System
  - c) the plants of the roof will absorb the heat and also the natural evaporation of water from the plants and soil helps to cool and humidify the air, lowering the ambient temperature
  - d) improved air quality as the plants photosynthesis uses energy from the sunlight to convert water and carbon dioxide into sugars and oxygen
  - e) storm water management as the biodiverse roof retains water by storing it in the plants and substrate. This then evaporates back into the atmosphere. By slowing down and reducing the levels of rainwater entering the drainage system, less strain is placed on old sewage systems and helps to stop flooding.
  - f) noise reduction from internal to external and external to internal.
  - g) the green roof will provide a good thermal performance for the roof (the exact level depends upon the time of year and amount of water stored).
  - h) creates a natural habitat for birds and plants that has been lost through the footprint being used for construction.
  - i) bio diversity is encouraged through a specially designed self supporting habitat used to target a specific species of plant or animal.

## Section 6.0 Assessment against Design Policy

6.0.1 The below table provides a review of the scheme against policy objectives outlined at the end of Section 2.0.

No.	Design Policy Objectives	Response
1	Achieving high quality design and a positive response to the site's context	The new corner is of a high quality design and maintains the proportions of the surrounding buildings. The increase in height responds to the site's prominent corner location, its town centre location next to a public transport interchange and future development in the area.
2	The provision of a safe and secure environment	The intensification of development would increase activity on the corner site and therefore improve natural surveillance and security.
3	Living conditions of future occupiers	The proposed dwellings comply with internal space standards and would benefit from acceptable levels of natural light, privacy and outlook. Private amenity space has been provided where possible
4	The achievement of accessible and inclusive environments	The building is located in an area with excellent public transport accessibility.
5	Maximisation of water and energy conservation	Provision of natural light and ventilation. Use of sustainable materials. Use of green roof and solar panels.