



Chief executive's department
 Planning division
 Development management (5th floor - hub 2)
 PO Box 64529
 LONDON SE1P 5LX

Mr. Peter North & Mr. Milan Babic
 Milan Babil Architects
 151B Bermondsey Street
 Bickels Yard
 London SE1 3UW

Your Ref:
Our Ref: 14/EQ/0063
Contact: Dipesh Patel
Telephone: 020 7525 1778
E-Mail: planning.applications@southwark.gov.uk
Web Site: <http://www.southwark.gov.uk>

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Dear Mr. North & Mr. Babil

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (as amended)
PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY

At: 15 AND 16 LONDON ROAD, LONDON, SE1 6JZ & 2 GLADSTONE STREET, LONDON SE1

Proposal: Conversion and change of use of no. 2 Gladstone Street and proposed mansard extension to form 1 no studio flat and 1 no 1 bedroom (2 person) flat. Proposed rear extension of 3 storeys to provide staircase access to proposed mansard units.

I write further to your pre-application enquiry received on 17 April 2014 and meetings with council officers on 11 and 24 June 2014.

Description of proposal

The proposal is for a mansard extension to 15 and 16 London Road, a three storey extension to the same property to provide staircase access and the change of use of 2 Gladstone Road to residential.

Policies

The Development Plan is made up of the London Plan 2011, Core Strategy 2011 and Southwark Unitary Development Plan 2007 saved policies, along with Supplementary Planning Documents. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration.

Key issues

- Principle of development
- Quality of residential accommodation
- Impact of proposed development on amenity of adjoining occupiers and surrounding area
- Design and impact on the Borough High Street conservation area and the setting of nearby listed buildings
- Transport

Principle

Being in the Central Activity Zone, B class uses are protected by saved Policy 1.4 of the Southwark

Plan. It seems that the last lawful use of 2 Gladstone Road was as some form of employment space within use class B which means its use is afforded protection by policy 1.4. Justification for a change of use will need to be provided though compliance with clause a or b of the exceptions to this policy. The principle of providing additional residential accommodation at 15 and 16 London Road is acceptable.

Quality of residential accommodation

15 and 16 London Road

The proposed studio is significantly below the minimum size requirements in the council's Residential Design Standards SPD and is not acceptable. Indeed, it would function more as a one bedroom flat as a physical separation is proposed between the bedroom and the rest of the dwelling. The proposed one bedroom flat would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation; however it is not clear how much of the living area would have a head height of more than 1.5m; only area above this clearance would be included within dwelling size calculations. Nonetheless, because of the unacceptable shortfall in the size for the 'studio' flat, it is recommended that the scheme be amended to provide for a more generous single dwelling within the mansard.

Adequate outlook would be provided from the proposed dormers for any dwelling(s) in the mansard. Private amenity spaces are not proposed, however this is largely determined by the constraints of the site.

2 Gladstone Road.

Dwelling size

While the proposal for this building suggests a two bedroom house, for the calculation of dwelling sizes, the study would be included as a bedroom and need to comply with the size standards for a three bedroom house which is 87m². No overall size is provided for this property but the sum of habitable rooms, including the kitchen/living/diner is just over 55m², well below the minimum requirement. The living room and kitchen would be physically separated from each other by the staircase meaning that separate size requirements of 18m² and 8m² would need to be met.

An option to provide better quality living accommodation would be to move the stairs to the eastern part of the building providing for a combined kitchen/living/dining area. The ground floor arrangement could then be amended to provide two good sized bedrooms, assisted by the removal of the en-suite for the master bedroom that would otherwise make this bedroom an awkward shape. A two bedroom four person house would normally need to be 83m² and these changes would make the proposal more acceptable.

Outlook, daylight and sunlight

There would be an extremely poor outlook from the ground floor, looking south to a boundary wall 2m away. This seems to be the reason why the bedrooms are proposed at on the ground floor. Subject to suitable levels of daylight and sunlight into the rooms on the ground floor, bedrooms at this level would provide an acceptable quality of accommodation.

Outlook from the first floor living area would be limited to the west as obscure glazing is proposed on the southern elevation to prevent loss of privacy to existing dwellings on Gladstone Road, however some element of clear glazing is proposed above 1.5m which would allow in daylight. Generous glazing to the terrace and unobstructed views, albeit across a London Underground carriage depot, would provide suitable outlook and should ensure sufficient daylight and sunlight.

Outdoor amenity

The garden on the ground floor would a poor outdoor amenity and in all likelihood not be used for amenity. The terrace on the first floor however would, providing good amenity, even if reduced in

area as recommended below.

Impact of proposed development on amenity of adjoining occupiers and surrounding area

Mansard extension

No adverse impact on local amenity from the erection of the mansard and its use for residential accommodation would be caused as it would repeat existing relationships.

2 Gladstone Road

A residential use in this building could cause significant harm from overlooking and loss of privacy, principally for occupiers of dwellings to the south, on Gladstone Road. Obscure glazing to a height of 1.5m on south facing windows on the first floor would address this matter.

A privacy screen of the height proposed, while protecting amenity, would add to the already significant height of the boundary to the south. With a combined height of 4.5m, the existing wall and proposed screen is likely to cause in a sense of enclosure for the garden immediately to the south. To mitigate this effect, it is recommended that the usable terrace areas be reduced so that it would be brought back in line with the southern wall on the first floor, a distance at which a privacy screen of 1.5m would be acceptable. The area to the south of this screen could be used to sustain a green or brown roof.

The introduction of a terrace with the amendment suggested should not result in any significant harm to existing amenity, particularly considering that there are already terraces to the rear of dwellings on Gladstone Road.

Transport

Parking

Cycle parking is proposed at ground floor level at 15-16 London Road and is acceptable. Cycle parking for 2 Gladstone Road is proposed on the ground floor outdoor space. This will need to be weatherproof and details will need to accompany any planning application.

Design

The site is within the St George's Circus conservation area and adjacent to the listed buildings at 2-14 London Road and while the site is not, 15-16 London Road contribute positively to the character of the area.

15 and 16 London Road

The mansard extension is considered to have the greatest potential to affect the conservation area and the listed buildings to the north. Of great significance are the butterfly roofs seen from the rear. The proposal would maintain the outline of these, although their substance would be lost. Considering that there are similar, albeit historical, extensions on the listed buildings to the north, the present proposal would be acceptable in principle.

Details of the mansard do however need refining. The relationship between the rear dormers and the butterfly roofs as shown would be awkward and a better relationship should be designed. Additionally, the number of dormers proposed should provide sufficient light to the living areas meaning that there would be no need for the rooflights to the rear, their removal would reduce clutter on this elevation. Welsh slates and timber windows are acceptable but the roofs and the cheeks of the dormers should be finished in lead.

The pitched roof form of the rear extension would follow a traditional form that is found on the rear of many townhouses of the same type and age. A simple design is welcomed and its subservient nature should not cause any harm to the character and setting of the conservation area.

Other proposals, including the replacement of existing windows with timber framed windows and the

removal of render are welcomed. Re-pointing should be undertaken with a flush lime render based mortar to provide a traditional appearance; raking out should be carried out by hand.

2 Gladstone Road

The contemporary additions of a green roof and roof lights would not cause any harm to the setting of the listed terraces on London Road. Alterations to the entrance on Gladstone Road are similarly acceptable.

Community Infrastructure Levy

With a new residential dwelling, the development would be subject to a financial contribution under the Community Infrastructure Levy, presently £35 per m² of new floorspace.

List of documents required at application stage

The following link will take you to the council's webpage where you can view the list of documents that should accompany the application:

https://www.southwark.gov.uk/downloads/download/2021/full_planning_permission

Conclusion

The principle of the development is acceptable, however there are concerns about the size of the studio proposed in the mansard extension and the dwellinghouse that would be created at 2 Gladstone Road. It is recommended that the mansard extension be amended to accommodate one dwelling while the internal arrangement at 2 Gladstone Road is altered to accommodate two bedrooms and an open living space at first floor. The outside terrace for this property should be reduced in extent to prevent a sense of enclosure for occupiers of dwellings to the south by the privacy screen is necessary.

With respect to design, the mansard extension is acceptable in principle but some amendments improve the relationship with the butterfly roof to the rear are required. Other aspects such as the replacement of existing windows with timber ones and the removal of rendering are welcome and with suitable workmanship and finishing should enhance the conservation area.

This advice is given to assist you but is not a decision of the Council. Further issues may arise following a formal planning application, where a site visit and public consultation and consultation with statutory consultees would be undertaken.

Yours sincerely

Rob Bristow
Group Manager- Major Applications.