

<b>CITY OF WESTMINSTER</b>			
<b>PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUB COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Date</b> 7 September 2021	<b>Classification</b> For General Release	
<b>Report of</b> Director of Place Shaping and Town Planning		<b>Ward(s) involved</b> Regent's Park	
<b>Subject of Report</b>	<b>Grove End House, Grove End Road, London, NW8 9HP</b>		
<b>Proposal</b>	Conversion and extension of existing porters lodge and storage facilities into a one bedroom self-contained residential dwelling. Conversion of the remaining storage shed block into a new staff facility with kitchenette and WC, and associated works.		
<b>Agent</b>	Lamberts Chartered Surveyors Ltd		
<b>On behalf of</b>	Grove End Housing Ltd		
<b>Registered Number</b>	21/04117/FULL	<b>Date amended/ completed</b>	16 July 2021
<b>Date Application Received</b>	21 June 2021		
<b>Historic Building Grade</b>	Unlisted		
<b>Conservation Area</b>	None		

## 1. RECOMMENDATION

Grant conditional permission.

## 2. SUMMARY

This application relates to the existing porters lodge and storage facilities to the rear of Grove End House, an unlisted residential block of flats which is located adjacent to the St John's Wood Conservation Area.

Planning permission is sought for the conversion and extension of the existing porters lodge and storage facilities into a one-bedroom residential dwelling and the conversion of the remaining storage shed block into a new staff facility with kitchenette and WC.

Objections have been received from neighbouring residents on a number of grounds including the design and the impact on amenity.

The key issues in the determination of this application are:

- The impact of the proposal on the appearance of the host building and the character and appearance of the St John's Wood Conservation Area; and

- The impact of the proposal on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

Subject to appropriate conditions as set out in the draft decision letter appended to this report, the proposed development is considered to comply with the relevant design, conservation and amenity policies in the City Plan 2019 – 2040 adopted in April 2021. As such, the application is recommended for approval.

**3. LOCATION PLAN**



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4. PHOTOGRAPHS

Existing porters lodge



Existing storage sheds



## 5. CONSULTATIONS

### ST JOHN'S WOOD SOCIETY:

Note objections raised by Grove End House residents and request that the case officer makes a site visit so as to fully establish the impact the proposals will have on the amenity of ground floor residents.

### HIGHWAYS OFFICER:

Concerns raised over lack of cycle storage could be addressed by condition.

### WASTE PROJECT OFFICER:

Drawings submitted are not in line with the Council's requirements but could be addressed by condition.

### ADJOINING OWNERS/OCCUPIERS AND OTHER REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

No. Consulted: 260

Total No. of replies: 6 (from four households)

In summary, six objections have been received raising some or all of the following grounds:

#### **Amenity:**

- Loss of privacy to ground floor flats within Grove End House
- Loss of light to ground floor flats within Grove End House

#### **Design:**

- Not in keeping with the architectural style of Grove End House and the surrounding townscape therefore not complying with Policy 40 of the City Plan.

#### **Other:**

- Lack of storage within the new residential unit
- Reduction in storage space for the existing residents within Grove End House
- Inaccuracies within the submitted documents
- No details in regards of the proposed green roof
- Result in poor quality housing
- Reduction in staff facilities which is included in service charges
- Impact on the value of properties

### PRESS ADVERTISEMENT / SITE NOTICE:

Yes

## 6. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 6.1 The Application Site

This application relates to an existing single storey porters lodge and storage facilities located within the western/rear corner of the site of Grove End House, an unlisted Victorian mansion residential block of flats which is located on the junction of Grove End

Road and St John's Wood Road. It is located adjacent to but not within St John's Wood Conservation Area.

## **6.2 Recent Relevant History**

20/01925/FULL (Withdrawn 15 March 2021)

Conversion and extension of existing porters lodge and storage facilities into a one bedroom self-contained residential dwelling. Conversion of the remaining storage shed block into a new staff facility with kitchenette and WC.

17/00509/FULL (Approved 16 May 2017)

Demolition of existing shed and erection of new two single storey buildings for storage and additional smaller units and a two storey bike rack with polycarbonate roof together with associated works.

## **7. THE PROPOSAL**

Planning permission is sought for the conversion of the porters lodge and storage facilities into a single storey, one bedroom, self-contained residential dwelling and the conversion of the remaining storage shed into staff facilities with a kitchenette and accessible WC. The existing porters lodge is 3m in width, 10m in length and 2.4m in height. The extended building would be 4m in width, 15m in length and 3m in height.

## **8. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS**

### **8.1 Land Use**

#### **8.1.1 Loss of storage space**

The storage facilities to the east of the porters lodge are to be lost as part of this application. These storage units were approved in May 2017, although it is unclear as to when the permission was implemented. It is unclear as to if these are all in use; which residents have access to these units and on what type of arrangement. As the 2017 permission did not seek to protect these storage facilities with a condition, their loss cannot be resisted.

#### **8.1.2 New Residential Unit**

The provision of a new residential unit is welcomed in accordance with policies 8 and 10 of the City Plan 2019 – 2040 (April 2021) ("the City Plan"). An objection has been raised on the grounds that the proposal results in poor quality housing. The proposed unit will be approximately 52.5 sqm in size, which meets the Nationally Described Space Standards. The unit will be accessed through the existing mansion block and via the courtyard. The residential unit would have outlook from its front elevation windows which serve the main bedroom and kitchen, dining and living areas. Not only would these units receive natural light from these windows but rooflights are proposed as well. The quality of residential accommodation is therefore considered acceptable and in accordance with policy 12 of the City Plan.

Objectors also consider that the proposed flat would have insufficient storage space. However, the proposed flat is 2.5 sqm over the minimum size for a one-bedroom flat like this. The additional space would provide sufficient storage for future residents. Accordingly, an objection on this basis would not be sustainable.

### 8.1.3 New Porters Shed

There is no objection to the loss of porters shed as a new facility is being re-provided. Whilst the size of the new facility is substantially smaller at 11 sqm, there is no development plan policy in relation to the size of such facilities and an objection to the development on this basis would not be sustainable.

## 8.2 Townscape and Design

Objections have been received to the proposals on design grounds and that the residential unit would not be in keeping with the architectural design of Grove End House.

The key legislative requirements in respect to designated heritage assets are as follows:

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that *“In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”*

Section 66 of the same Act requires that *“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”*

Section 72 of the same Act requires that *“In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area...special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”*

Whilst there is no statutory duty to take account of effect on the setting of a conservation area, Policy 39 in the City Plan 2019 – 2040 requires that where development will have a visibly adverse effect upon a conservation area’s recognised special character or appearance, including intrusiveness with respect to any recognised and recorded familiar local views into, out of, within or across the area, it will not be permitted.

The existing structures to be removed are not of importance to the overall design of the mansion block or the adjacent conservation area. The new residential building is to be faced in brickwork to match the existing mansion block, and with stone coping above and lead detailing to the head of the angled window projections. These materials will help integrate the new building into its townscape context. It is a small-scale structure, and simply detailed and of appropriate design quality. The angled window openings will add visual interest to the overall composition and the use of aluminium to the windows

on this structure is considered acceptable given their discreet location, the modern nature of the new building, and that the white framing will otherwise integrate with the use of white generally for window framing in the surroundings. The drawings are not fully clear in terms of the nature of what appears a screen following the line of the front forecourt above the planter, and an amending condition is added requiring details of any works to this area, with an informative advising that any such structure should be designed as traditional metal railings to ensure that it appears of appropriate design quality for this setting.

The replacement staff room structure is small scale and also incorporates brick facing with stone coping, a simply detailed door and a timber sash window and as such will integrate appropriately with the main building and surroundings generally. Both new buildings keep a low profile relative to surrounding boundary walls and will not appear unduly prominent in views from the surrounding area. The application also includes a planted green roof above the new structures, which is welcomed in terms of its appearance and contribution to biodiversity.

Whilst recognising the concerns raised by neighbours, the proposal is considered acceptable, mindful of policies 38, 39 and 40 of the City Plan 2019 – 2040 and therefore, a recommendation to grant conditional permission would be compliant with the requirements of the NPPF and the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

### **8.3 Residential Amenity**

The relevant policies for consideration of the proposal are 7 'Managing developments for Westminster's people' and 33 'Local environmental impacts' of the City Plan 2019 – 2040.

Objections to the proposals have been received on the grounds that the proposal although revised will result in overlooking and loss of sunlight/daylight.

The existing porters lodge is 3m in width, 10m in length and 2.4m in height. The extended building will result in an increase in width to 4m (5.5m at the western end which replaces storage units), 15m in length and 3m in height. In front of part of the building a dwarf wall approximately 1m in height is proposed to provide separation of this unit from the courtyard and an entrance path.

The porters lodge is located facing the ground floor flats (No's 13-16) within Grove End House. The distance between the bulk of the main porters lodge to windows of Flat 16 is 4.5m and to windows of flats 14 and 15 is 6m. As a point to note, some of the windows of these flats are set beneath existing external overhang created for the walkways for the flats at first floor level. The residential units in Scot Ellis Gardens are 7m away.

The building will extend towards the residents opposite at ground floor in Grove End House and be some 3.2m away (in relation to windows of Flat 16) and 5m away (in relation to windows of Flats 14 and 15), The increase in width of the building by 1m, coupled with a height increase of 0.6m, will be noticeable to the residents at ground floor

level. However, its separation distance from these flats and the relatively minor increase in height would not result in an unacceptable increase in sense of enclosure for the occupants of these flats. Given the sites orientation; the taller buildings of Scot Ellis Gardens to the north and that a number of the residential units have windows already obscured by the walkway overhang, the proposals would not result in an unacceptable loss of light for the occupants of these flats. Given the greater separation distance between the proposed development and the flats in Scot Ellis Gardens and that it is largely screened by existing structures on that site, the proposed development would not result in unacceptable loss of light or sense of enclosure for the occupants of those properties.

In response to the loss of privacy objections, the introduction of four windows to the front elevation at a distance of 3m and 5m away from existing windows in the ground floor of Grove End Gardens are not considered to result in any significant levels of overlooking so as to warrant refusal, due to the angled design and orientation. It should be noted that a number of the windows in flats 13-16 are obscured glazed in any event. No overlooking can occur from the proposed residential flat to residents in Scot Ellis Gardens. A condition is recommended to ensure that the roof of the proposed residential unit is not used as a terrace to mitigate further overlooking.

The existing free standing storage shed is proposed to be upgraded and converted to the porters facilities this will result in an increase in height to 3m, due to its small size this is not considered to result in any amenity impact to the neighbours.

The proposed residential unit is in close proximity to the recently installed cycle storage facility. Given its size, in comparison with the number of residential units in Grove End House, it is unlikely that the comings and goings to this facility will be harmful in terms of noise to the future occupiers.

The proposals are acceptable in amenity terms and the objections received are not considered sustainable in this instance. The proposals accord with policies 7 and 33 of the City Plan 2019 – 2040.

#### **8.4 Transportation/Parking**

No car parking is proposed. This accords with policy 27 of the City Plan.

No cycle parking provision is shown on the submitted plans. Policy T5 of the London Plan requires 1 space per residential unit of 1 bedroom or fewer. The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application states that residents would have access to the cycle store adjacent. However, it is unclear whether there would be sufficient space or that it would be secure in any event. A condition is therefore recommended to secure cycle parking for the proposed flat. Subject to this condition, the proposed development accords with policy T5 of the London Plan.

The Waste Project Officer notes that the waste storage arrangements proposed do not meet the City Council's standards but could be amended by condition. A condition is recommended to secure this. Subject to this condition, the proposed development would be consistent with policy 29 of the City Plan.

## **8.5 Economic Considerations**

No economic considerations are applicable for a development of this size.

## **8.6 Access**

Access to the new flat is through the existing mansion block and via the courtyard. This appears to be the same access arrangements as Flats 13-16. There is level access from the courtyard into the proposed unit.

## **8.7 Westminster City Plan**

The City Plan 2019-2040 was adopted at Full Council on 21 April 2021. The policies in the City Plan 2019-2040 are consistent with national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021) and should be afforded full weight in accordance with paragraph 219 of the NPPF. Therefore, in accordance with s.38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, it comprises the development plan for Westminster in combination with the London Plan adopted in March 2021 and, where relevant, neighbourhood plans covering specific parts of the city (see further details in Section 8.9). As set out in s.38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and paragraph 49 of the NPPF, the application must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## **8.8 Neighbourhood Plans**

None relevant.

## **8.9 London Plan**

This application raises no strategic issues.

## **8.10 National Policy/Guidance Considerations**

The City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021) policies referred to in the consideration of this application are considered to be consistent with the NPPF 2019 unless stated otherwise.

## **8.11 Planning Obligations**

Planning obligations are not relevant in the determination of this application.

## **8.12 Environmental Impact Assessment**

The proposed development is of insufficient scale to require the provision of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

## **8.13 Other Issues**

The issues raised in objections have been largely addressed above. The following is also noted.

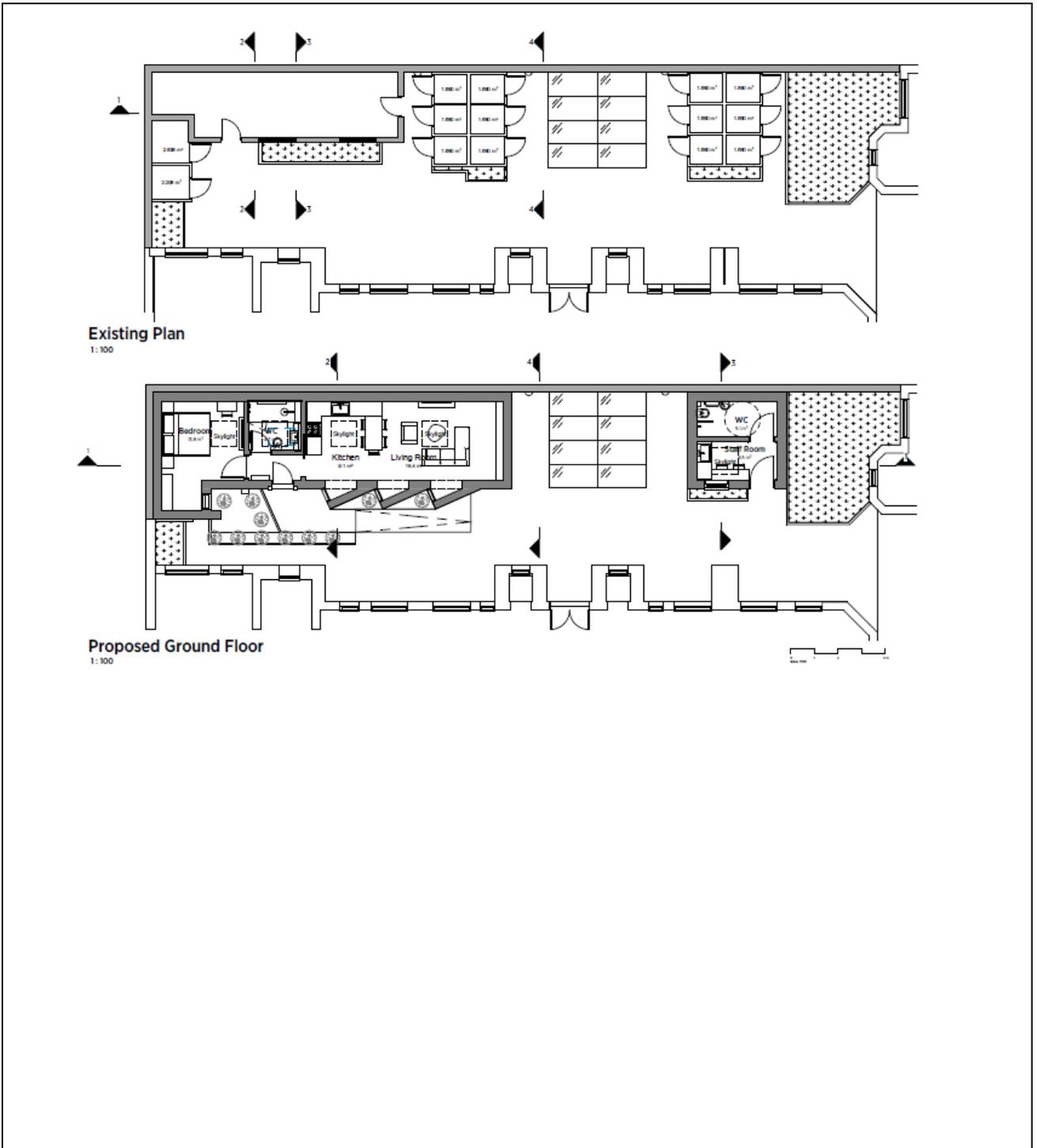
Concerns have been raised in regards to the proposal resulting in a reduction in staff facilities which is included in service charges. This is a private matter and therefore cannot be a reason to withhold permission.

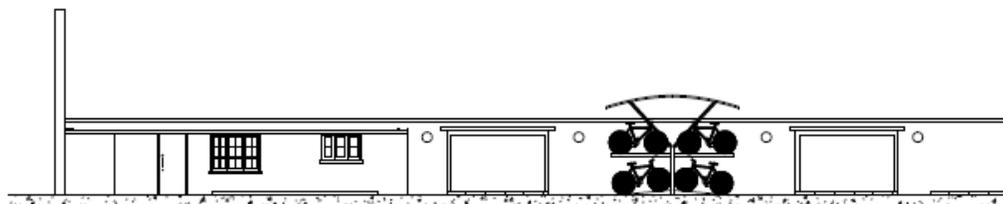
Neighbours have commented that the proposal will impact the value of their properties. Again, this is not a planning matter and these objections cannot be supported.

(Please note: All the application drawings and other relevant documents and Background Papers are available to view on the Council's website)

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT PLEASE CONTACT THE PRESENTING OFFICER: NATHAN BARRETT BY EMAIL AT [nbarrett@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:nbarrett@westminster.gov.uk)

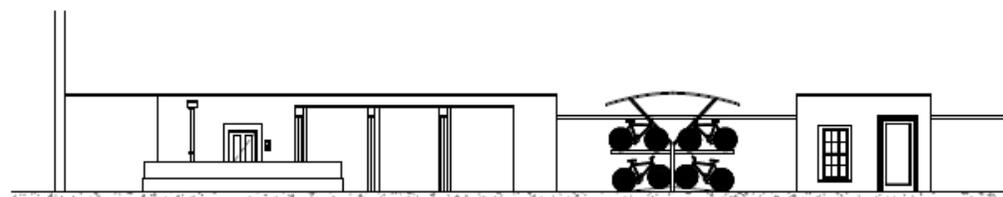
9. KEY DRAWINGS





**Existing Elevation**

1:100



**Proposed Elevation (North West)**

1:100

**DRAFT DECISION LETTER**

- Address:** Grove End House, Grove End Road, London, NW8 9HP
- Proposal:** Conversion and extension of porters lodge and storage facilities into a one bedroom self-contained residential dwelling, use of the remaining storage shed block into a new staff facility with kitchenette and WC, and associated works.
- Reference:** 21/04117/FULL
- Plan Nos:** Site Location Plan, 15005-001, 15005-002, 15005-003 Rev A, 15005-004, 15005-005 Rev A, 15005-006, 15005-007, Design and Access Statement dated May 2021, Heritage Statement dated June 2019 and Site Photographs.
- Case Officer:** Frederica Cooney **Direct Tel. No.** 07866037206

**Recommended Condition(s) and Reason(s)**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings and other documents listed on this decision letter, and any drawings approved subsequently by the City Council as local planning authority pursuant to any conditions on this decision letter.

**Reason:**

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 2 Except for piling, excavation and demolition work, you must carry out any building work which can be heard at the boundary of the site only:
- o between 08.00 and 18.00 Monday to Friday;
  - o between 08.00 and 13.00 on Saturday; and
  - o not at all on Sundays, bank holidays and public holidays.

**You must carry out piling, excavation and demolition work only:**

- o between 08.00 and 18.00 Monday to Friday; and
- o not at all on Saturdays, Sundays, bank holidays and public holidays.

Noisy work must not take place outside these hours unless otherwise agreed through a Control of Pollution Act 1974 section 61 prior consent in special circumstances (for example, to meet police traffic restrictions, in an emergency or in the interests of public safety). (C11AB)

**Reason:**

To protect the environment of neighbouring occupiers. This is as set out in Policies 7 and 33 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R11AD)

- 3 All new work to the outside of the building must match existing original work in terms of the choice of materials, method of construction and finished appearance. This applies unless differences are shown on the drawings we have approved or are required by conditions to this permission. (C26AA)

Reason:

To make sure that the appearance of the building is suitable and that it contributes to the character and appearance of this part of the St John's Wood Conservation Area. This is as set out in Policies 38, 39 and 40 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R26BF)

- 4 You must apply to us for approval of samples of the facing materials you will use, including glazing and including to the planter structure to the front forecourt of the new building, and elevations and roof plans annotated to show where the materials are to be located. You must not start work on the relevant part of the development until we have approved in writing what you have sent us. You must then carry out the work using the approved materials. (C26BD)

Reason:

To make sure that the appearance of the building is suitable and that it contributes to the character and appearance of this part of the St John's Wood Conservation Area. This is as set out in Policies 38, 39 and 40 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R26BF)

- 5 The new windows shall be formed in white coloured timber framing, and the new sash window to the 'staff room' shall be formed in white painted timber framing, and the framing and solid elements to the new external doors shall be formed in painted timber.

Reason:

To make sure that the appearance of the building is suitable and that it contributes to the character and appearance of this part of the St John's Wood Conservation Area. This is as set out in Policies 38, 39 and 40 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R26BF)

- 6 You must provide, maintain and retain the following bio-diversity features before you start to use any part of the development, as set out in your application.

Green roof

You must not remove any of these features. (C43FA)

Reason:

To increase the biodiversity of the environment, as set out Policy 34 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R43FC)

- 7 The sash window to the new staff room shall operate only in a vertically sliding manner

Reason:

To make sure that the appearance of the building is suitable and that it contributes to the character and appearance of this part of the St John's Wood Conservation Area. This is as set out in Policies 38, 39 and 40 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R26BF)

- 8 Notwithstanding the submitted drawings, you must apply to us for approval of drawings of any railings/screens to the front forecourt of the building. You must not start any work on these parts of the development until we have approved what you have sent us. You must then carry out the work according to these drawings. (C26DB)

**Reason:**

To make sure that the appearance of the building is suitable and that it contributes to the character and appearance of this part of the St John's Wood Conservation Area. This is as set out in Policies 38, 39 and 40 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R26BF)

- 9 The new external downpipe shall be formed in black coloured metal

**Reason:**

To make sure that the appearance of the building is suitable and that it contributes to the character and appearance of this part of the St John's Wood Conservation Area. This is as set out in Policies 38, 39 and 40 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R26BF)

- 10 You must apply to us for approval of details of how waste is to be stored on site and how materials for recycling will be stored separately. You must not start work on the relevant part of the development until we have approved in writing what you have sent us. You must then provide the waste and recycling storage prior to occupation of the development and thereafter permanently retain the stores according to these details. You must clearly mark the stores and make them available at all times to everyone using the residential unit. (C14ED)

**Reason:**

To protect the environment and provide suitable storage for waste and materials for recycling as set out in Policies 7 and 37 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R14CD)

- 11 You must apply to us for approval of details of secure cycle storage for the residential use. You must not start any work on this part of the development until we have approved in writing what you have sent us. You must then provide the cycle storage in line with the approved details prior to occupation and make it available at all times to everyone using the flat. You must not use the cycle storage for any other purpose. (C22HA)

**Reason:**

To provide cycle parking spaces for people using the development in accordance with Policy 25 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R22FB)

- 12 You must not use the roof of the building for sitting out or for any other purpose. You can however use the roof to escape in an emergency. (C21AA)

**Reason:**

To protect the privacy and environment of people in neighbouring properties, as set out Policies 7 and 38 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021). (R21AD)

**Informative(s):**

- 1 In dealing with this application the City Council has implemented the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way. We have made available detailed advice in the form of our statutory policies in the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (April 2021), neighbourhood plan (where relevant), supplementary planning documents, the London Plan (March 2021), planning briefs and

other informal written guidance, as well as offering a full pre application advice service, in order to ensure that applicant has been given every opportunity to submit an application which is likely to be considered favourably. In addition, where appropriate, further guidance was offered to the applicant at the validation stage.

2 With regards to condition 8, you are advised that any railings should be designed as black metal railings with plain balusters beneath a flat handrail.

3 HIGHWAYS LICENSING:

Under the Highways Act 1980 you must get a licence from us before you put skips or scaffolding on the road or pavement. It is an offence to break the conditions of that licence. You may also have to send us a programme of work so that we can tell your neighbours the likely timing of building activities. For more advice, please visit our website at [www.westminster.gov.uk/guide-temporary-structures](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/guide-temporary-structures).

CONSIDERATE CONSTRUCTORS:

You are encouraged to join the nationally recognised Considerate Constructors Scheme. This commits those sites registered with the Scheme to be considerate and good neighbours, as well as clean, respectful, safe, environmentally conscious, responsible and accountable. For more information please contact the Considerate Constructors Scheme directly on 0800 783 1423, [siteenquiries@ccscheme.org.uk](mailto:siteenquiries@ccscheme.org.uk) or visit [www.ccscheme.org.uk](http://www.ccscheme.org.uk).

BUILDING REGULATIONS:

You are advised that the works are likely to require building regulations approval. Details in relation to Westminster Building Control services can be found on our website at [www.westminster.gov.uk/contact-us-building-control](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/contact-us-building-control)

Please note: the full text for informatives can be found in the Council's Conditions, Reasons & Policies handbook, copies of which can be found in the Committee Room whilst the meeting is in progress, and on the Council's website.