

PLANNING STATEMENT

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This planning statement describes the planning application for the development at 123 Grove Park, in the London Borough of Southwark.
- 1.2 The building was previously occupied as a nursing home and more recently a training centre for a community use (Use Class D1).
- 1.3 Planning permission is sought for:

'Proposed change of use and remodelling of existing structure together with proposed extension for residential purposes. Proposed development of rear of land for residential purposes'.

2 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is situated in a residential urban environment between the centres at Camberwell Green to the northwest and Peckham Rye to the east.
- 2.2 The site is bounded by residential plots to the east, west and south. The northern declining slope of Grove Hill begins at the northern site boundary.
- 2.3 The property is currently accessed from a driveway off Grove Park to the South.
- 2.4 The building is currently vacant and fronts onto Grove Park, set in large grounds with a formal garden and area of woodland to the rear. The total size of the site including gardens is 0.58 hectares.
- 2.5 123 Grove Park consists of an existing building built in the 1880s (approximately 994 sq m GEA). It has a formal stepped garden to the rear, and beyond is a heavily wooded site with several high quality trees.
- 2.6 The site is located within the Camberwell Grove Conservation Area which is predominantly residential in character. The site is surrounded by an urban grain of detached and semi-detached residential dwellings.
- 2.7 The neighbouring property to the west at 124/125 Grove Park is a Grade II listed building and to the rear of the site is the extensive gardens of properties at 163-185 Grove Crescent which form a collection of 3 storey Grade II listed terrace buildings.
- 2.8 There are also a number of key unlisted buildings along Grove Park, all buildings occupying a leafy front and rear garden setting, and all are classified as key unlisted buildings in the Camberwell Grove Conservation Area.

3 Planning History

- 3.1 An online search was carried out to determine the planning history of the site. No planning records were found on the Southwark Council online database relating to this site.



4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 The statutory development plan for the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is the adopted Southwark Unitary Development Plan ('UDP') (July 2007) and the London Plan Consolidated with Alterations since 2004 (February 2008).
- 4.2 At a regional level, the London Plan sets the relevant regional planning policy guidance for central London including Southwark and forms a component part of the statutory development plan (Section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act).
- 4.3 The Mayor has also released for consultation his draft replacement London Plan (October 2009) which is expected to be formally published in late 2011. It is currently a material consideration in planning decisions and where relevant to this application London Plan policies have been taken into consideration, in particular Policies 3A.4 Housing Choice, 3A.8 negotiating affordable housing, 4B.1 Design principles, 4B.6 Sustainable design and construction.
- 4.4 Southwark adopted their new Unitary Development Plan ('UDP') in July 2007. The site is identified with the following local planning designations:
- Camberwell Grove Conservation Area
 - Urban Density Zone
 - Air Quality Management Area
 - Supplementary Planning Document: 123 Grove Park
- 4.5 The Core Strategy is a planning document that sets out how Southwark will change up to 2026 to be the type of place set out in their Sustainable Community Strategy (Southwark 2016). The preparation of Southwark's local development framework ('LDF') over the next few years will take into account the transition between the previous system of UDPs and the new system.
- 4.6 The Core Strategy has been examined in public by an independent inspector and the conclusion of the Inspector's binding report is that the Core Strategy is sound subject to minor changes. It is due to be adopted by Council in March 2011 and is a material consideration in planning decisions alongside the adopted UDP.
- 4.7 The 123 Grove Park Supplementary Planning Document ('SPD') was adopted on September 2007 and contains a description of the site and the council's aspirations for redevelopment in terms of
- land use
 - design
 - ecology
 - resources
 - transport

- accessibility

4.8 The SPD also:

- provides a framework for the reuse of the site, maximising potential and protecting conservation value;
- ensures any development preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the Camberwell conservation area;
- ensures the new development maximises the social, economic and environmental potential of the site.

4.9 The SPD has been consulted throughout the design process for the site and where relevant has been addressed in this Planning Statement.

5. Consultation

5.1 The proposal has been subject to extensive pre-application discussions with planners at the London Borough of Southwark and include;

- A pre-application submission was made to Southwark Council dated 22nd March 2010;
- Follow up meeting with Rachel Gleave of Southwark Council was held at Tooley Street on the 12th May 2010;
- Follow up site meeting with Rachel Gleave of Southwark Council was held on the 28th May 2010;
- Further information and revised layouts were submitted to Officers on the 25th May and the 9th June 2010.

Comments were received from Southwark Council dated 22nd June 2010 and a second pre-application submission was made on the 2nd September 2010.

6. Proposed Development

6.1 As in overview, this application proposes:

- The refurbishment and alterations to the existing building, to convert it into one house and five flats;
- An extension to the building in the form of one new house;
- New landscaping to provide private open amenity space;
- Five new houses to the rear within the landscape;
- Construction of a new access driveway and associated garden landscaping and infrastructure.

7. Key planning issues

Land use

Loss of community facility (Use Class D1)

- 7.1 Strategic policy SP 9 of the Southwark Plan, 'meeting community needs', outlines that *'all developments should, where appropriate, enable growth and development of education, community and welfare services in line with the community's needs'*.
- 7.2 Policy 2.1 of the Southwark plan, 'enhancement of community facilities', further notes that planning permission for a change of use from D class will only be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that a community facility is surplus to requirements and that the alternative use meets an identified need.
- 7.3 The site specific SPD also gives guidance that where the existing community use of the site is found to be no longer required in accordance with Policy 2.1, the most accepted alternative use will be residential.
- 7.4 The SPD clearly set out that the Council is satisfied that the National Offending Management Services Estate (as previous user of the site) and Office of Government Commerce (that managed the property) have demonstrated that the community facility is surplus to the requirements for all government departments and agencies.
- 7.5 Moreover, the SPD for the site gives guidance that where the existing community use is found to no longer be required, in accordance with Policy 2.1, the most acceptable alternative use will be residential. This is providing that all other policy requirements and guidance is satisfied.
- 7.6 A marketing report has been prepared by Colliers CRE to satisfy the requirements of Policy 2.1.
- 7.7 This proposal, through the introduction of a residential use to this site, can therefore be seen to meeting the aspirations of planning policy by meeting the requirements of Policy 2.1 and also the aspirations of the SPD for this site.

Residential (Use Class C3)

- 7.8 Strategic policy SP 17 of the Southwark UDP, 'housing', seeks that all developments should endeavour to provide more high quality housing of all kinds where appropriate, in particular and in particular affordable housing.
- 7.9 Furthermore, strategic policy SP 14 'sustainable buildings' states that all development should promote the efficient use of land, and be of high quality and where appropriate, include a mix of uses.
- 7.10 This application has therefore sought to comply with the aspirations of planning policy through the proposal of a high quality residential scheme that will be sustainable and that will promote the efficient use of land in the borough.

Affordable housing

- 7.11 Policy 4.4 of the Southwark Plan requires that developments of 12 units or more will provide 3 of them as affordable units. These should be provided with a tenure split of 70:30 social rented and intermediate housing.
- 7.12 In order to meet the requirements of policy, this scheme proposes 12 residential units in total (including the construction of 5 new houses and the refurbishment of the existing house into 2 houses and 5 apartments) of which 3 units will be affordable housing units. These units are identified as Flats B, C and E on the planning drawings.
- 7.13 The proposal can therefore be seen to be in accordance with Policy 4.4 of the Southwark Plan.

Residential Unit Mix and Access

- 7.14 Policy 4.3 of the Southwark Plan stipulates that all major residential new-build development and conversions should provide a mix of dwelling sizes and types to cater for the range of housing needs of the area. It is further noted that the majority of units should have two or more bedrooms, that the number of studio flats must not exceed 5% of the total number of dwelling units within a development, and at least 10% of all major new residential developments should be suitable for wheelchair users, except where this is not possible due to the physical constraints of the site.
- 7.15 As outlined in the Design and Access statement, the proposal is to provide a mixture of dwelling sizes ranging from a single bedroom flat to 4 bedroom houses. No studio units are proposed. The proposed unit mix is set out below:

Unit Size	Number of units proposed
1 Bedroom	1
2 Bedroom	1
3 Bedroom	3
4 Bedroom	7
TOTAL	12

- 7.16 An Access Statement has been provided in section 7.1 of the Design and Access Statement that highlights how the scheme has been designed to meet current requirements and standards. The Statement shows that as the development proposes 10 or more units, 10% have been designed to be wheelchair accessible, without further structural alteration or adaptation to the standards set out in "Wheelchair Housing" published by the Department of Environment, Housing Development Directorate. Accessible car parking is also provided as part of the proposal.

Design

- 7.17 Strategic policy SP 13 of the Southwark Plan, 'design and heritage', states that *'all developments should be of a high standard of design and where appropriate should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the historic environment'*.
- 7.18 Policy 3.12 'quality in design' outlines that *'developments should achieve a high quality of both architectural and urban design, enhancing the quality of the built environment in order to create attractive, high amenity environments people will choose to live in, work in and visit'*. This should be site specific and consider their site's shape, size, location and development opportunities.
- 7.19 In order to meet these design objectives the proposal is to form a high quality residential neighbourhood which is contextual, sustainable and respectful of the natural setting of the historic environment.
- 7.20 The unique nature of the site and the site depth of the existing building has required an appropriate development response, in terms of two differing environments with a transition space separating them.
- 7.21 Due to the depth of the site, two environments will be formed, firstly along the street edge (the existing building) and secondly in the land to the rear.
- 7.22 The first environment concerns the conversion of the existing building at the front of the site to form houses and flats. As part of this it is proposed to construct a side extension to the building and undertake internal alterations to the buildings layout. The existing building will be extended along its frontage, with the formal garden behind retained as a communal amenity space.
- 7.23 The second environment, which encompasses the rear part of the site, will be developed into private residences within the heavily wooded landscape, each with some private garden and access to the communal amenity space.
- 7.24 It is clear that the existing building at 123 Grove Park deserves to retain its prominence, and the proposed development is therefore subservient in terms of scale and height. The proposal would convert the currently vacant building into a high quality, residential building with the existing building to be re-planned and renovated. In addition, a new extension will be added and sensitively considered both in massing, scale and proposed materials. The essential principles of the renovation and additions are:
- Use of appropriate materials, brick masonry, roof tiles and suitable window frames;
 - Appropriate massing and articulation between the existing building and the proposed extension;
 - Balanced of glazed opening to solid brick/masonry, accordingly to the context;
 - High degree and quality of detailing in facades and internal features;
 - Special consideration of Root Protection Areas of relevant trees.
- 7.25 The existing building is proposed to be split into a house at the Western end (called 'House A') and a core of five flats which will use the current main entrance. An extension is proposed to the Eastern end and this forms another house ('House B'). This configuration allows for the lowest degree of alteration from the building's existing form and structure.

- 7.26 Number 123 Grove Park has an imposing streetscape along Grove Park, and is surrounded by a variety of architectural styles. The proposal allows the front elevation to preserve that dominance, and the extension is partially hidden by the large elms at the corner of the site facing the road.
- 7.27 The mass of the extension on the main building loosely mirrors the roof heights of the Western end of the building and this addition does not exceed the 50% of the existing building mass. It is considerably smaller in height, recognizing the predominant character of the existing building and providing an appropriate contextual response for the site.
- 7.28 The treatment of all elements of the facade are refined in proportion and detail to achieve a richness and quality that will contribute to the new complete building.
- 7.29 The units to the rear comprise five detached houses. These houses use the varied levels of the landscape to nestle into the site, and some are split level. The footprints of each house are determined by the surrounding tree roots, allowing for an organic, individual layout for each unit. A no-dig road leads the resident or visitor from the street past the formal garden to the houses, each with a parking space and individual entrance. Several trees have low-hanging canopies, and therefore flat roofs are appropriate as a design solution.
- 7.30 The heavily wooded site warrants a garden village concept, where landscape and building integrate. Each of the houses are original in plan, due to the tree root areas, and therefore a lightweight timber frame is appropriate with some masonry walls for stability. The structure will have large glazed areas which look out onto green private gardens, and materials will be locally sourced and natural wherever possible – timber and roughcast, long thin brickwork will dominate. A floor to floor height of 3.4m allows maximum daylight into the houses.
- 7.31 Further details on the design can be found in the Design and Access Statement which has been submitted with this planning application.

Heritage

- 7.32 This 1880s Victorian building is located in the Camberwell Grove Conservation Area. It is included in the published conservation area appraisal as a key unlisted building and as such is considered a heritage asset as outlined in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment. This definition, found in Annex 2 of PPS5, states that a heritage asset is:

'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Heritage assets are the valued components of the historic environment. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in this PPS) and assets identified by the local planning authority during the process of decision-making or through the plan-making process (including local listing).'

- 7.33 Camberwell Grove Conservation Area is predominantly residential in character and there are a number of listed buildings in the area. The neighbouring property to the west at 124/125 Grove Park is a grade II listed building and to the rear of the site is the extensive gardens of properties at 163-185 Grove Crescent which form a collection of 3 storey grade II listed terrace buildings. There are also a number of key unlisted buildings along Grove Park, all buildings occupying a leafy front and rear

garden setting, and all are classified as key unlisted buildings in the Camberwell Grove conservation area.

- 7.34 Policy 3.15 of the Southwark UDP, 'conservation of the historic environment' states that *'development should preserve or enhance the special interest or historic character or appearance of buildings or areas of historical or architectural significance.'* This includes sites located within conservation areas. Policy 3.16 relates specifically to development within conservation areas and the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the area.
- 7.35 The existing building considered as a local unlisted landmark is a substantial Victorian property, therefore the principals of style, appearance, and materiality have been developed after considerable consultation with Southwark Council planning department. The building will retain many of its original features, staircases, fireplaces and intricate covered ceilings.
- 7.36 Against this planning policy background, the existing building proposed a layout and features, many of which have been retained for conservation purposes. In accordance with the requirements of planning policy an assessment of the external characteristics of the buildings has been undertaken in section 3.1 of the Design and Access statement and includes a visual and written assessment of the external character of the existing building identifies a number of specific features of heritage value to be retained.
- 7.37 Broadly speaking, the assessment concludes that the following features are noteworthy and should be retained:
- Staircase balustrade;
 - Wall panelling and cornices;
 - Elaborate joinery;
 - Ceiling mouldings
 - Fireplaces
- 7.38 The structure will be largely preserved where the house and flat unit separations allow, but some reconfiguration will be necessary to plan the room layouts and make all the staircases accessible.
- 7.39 The proposal seeks to re-plan and renovate the existing building in addition to proposing a new extension sensitively considered, both in massing, scale, and proposed materials that will work to preserve the character of the area.
- 7.40 The proposed style of the extension replicates and extends the existing building, using the same materials and preserving the picturesque roofscape and plan form. The front-facing gable end of the existing building is preserved as the dominant form along the streetscape, and the extension adopts a smaller gable end.

Private Amenity Space

- 7.41 Policy 4.2 (ii) of the Southwark Plan and Section 3.2 of the SPD on Residential Design Standards states that development should provide high standards of outdoor amenity space.
- 7.42 The SPD advises that development for flats should as a minimum meet and seek to exceed the following standards:
- 50m² of communal space per development
 - For units containing 3 or more bedrooms, 10m² of private amenity space.
 - For units containing 2 or less bedrooms, ideally 10m² of private amenity space, and where this is not possible, the shortfall should be added to the communal amenity space provision.

Landscaping, Biodiversity and Playspace

- 7.43 Strategic policy 15 of the Southwark UDP outlines the necessity to create preserve and enhance green infrastructure and biodiversity and UDP outlines that all developments should, where appropriate, create, preserve and enhance open spaces, green corridors, traffic free routes, and biodiversity. The benefits of open space include those associated with health, sport, recreation, children's play, regeneration, the economy, culture, biodiversity and the environment.
- 7.44 Policy 3.13 addresses the issue of landscaping in development proposals, stating that developments should include landscape design that enhances the area and biodiversity, for example through the use of green roofs.
- 7.45 In compliance with these policies, the proposal offers an extensive soft landscaping concept with areas of hard landscaping within terrace/garden areas to the units. Chapter 4.3 of the Design and Access statement presents in detail, designs for the entrance, formal garden and communal woodland. Further detail and visuals of the landscaping design can also be found in this chapter.
- 7.46 Within the Design and Access statement, it is noted that a third space is proposed for informal play that will lead off the proposed formal garden. The area will cover 29m² AOD and will feature informal play features such as rounded glacial boulders, balancing rings, climbing logs and rectangular wood climbing blocks located beneath the canopy of the existing mature tree. This will be surrounded by shade tolerant under-storey shrub and ground cover planting. At its focus will be a spiral bench.

Biodiversity

- 7.47 Strategic policy 15, 'open space and biodiversity' emphasises the importance of the consideration of biodiversity in conjunction with green infrastructure networks. Building upon this, policy 3.28 stipulates that the LPA will take biodiversity into account in its determination of all planning applications and will encourage the inclusion in developments of features which enhance biodiversity, requiring an ecological assessment where relevant.
- 7.48 The site has a wooded character and the Council have stated that trees must be retained wherever possible in order to preserve this character as part of the Camberwell Conservation Area.

- 7.49 A full Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been prepared and is submitted with this application.
- 7.50 An environmental statement and ecological report has been submitted for this proposal to comply in accordance with these policies.

Environment and sustainability

- 7.51 Strategic policy 11 outlines that all developments should protect and improve amenity and environmental quality and encourage sustainable development. In addition to this, strategic policy 12 highlights the importance of reducing pollution from developments and improving the environmental efficiency of buildings in terms of water, energy and waste management.
- 7.52 Policy 10.4 places the environment and sustainability as a main priority.
- 7.53 Within the proposed development, the new houses are to achieve compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes 4**** rating and the refurbished dwellings are to comply with ECO Homes Excellent. The Code for Sustainable Homes incorporates a number of mandatory credit requirements and this includes a mandatory target reduction in CO2 emissions over the Part L1A 2006 baseline.
- 7.54 Further details can be found in section 4.5 of the Design and Access statement and the Environmental Statement and Energy Report, submitted by Hoare Lea.

Air quality

- 7.55 The site is located in an air quality area. Policy 3.6 states that permission will not be granted for schemes that lead to a reduction in air quality.

Cycle and Car parking/Serviceing

- 7.56 Policy 5.3 of the Southwark Plan requires cycle parking to be provided. It states that there should be provision of convenient, secure and weatherproof cycle parking to the minimum cycle parking standards set out in Tables 15.3 and 15.4 of Appendix 15.
- 7.57 In order to comply with this policy, the proposal sets out details of an outbuilding designed to house 20 bicycles located at the front of the courtyard. It is further noted that houses located to the rear of the development will be provided with a private location for the storage of bicycles.
- 7.58 Policy 5.6 addresses car parking requirements for residential developments in the borough and states that car parking provision should be kept to a minimum. Appendix 15 outlines the maximum acceptable standards.
- 7.59 The existing building has 7 car parking bays and 2 parking spaces for car club use and these spaces will be retained as part of this proposal with 9 car parking spaces proposed, thereby minimising any impact on on-street parking in the area and keeping car parking provision to a minimum.

- 7.60 Policy 3.7 states that there must be adequate provision of recycling, composting and residual waste disposal, collection and storage facilities. The design of waste and recycling facilities must be easily and safely accessible, improving local amenity.
- 7.61 In accordance with planning policy all servicing is to be undertaken on site and a sweep path analysis has been undertaken to demonstrate how vehicles will navigate the access route and the rear residential section of the development in order to collect any residential waste from the site.
- 7.62 A full Transport Assessment for the proposal has been submitted by Steer Davies Gleave in support of this planning application

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 It is proposed that the existing building be retained and converted into five flats and one house; an extension be added to the existing building in the form of one house; and five houses be constructed to the rear of the building. Policy outlines that a change of use to residential would be acceptable on this site.
- 8.2 The proposed new units will be designed sensitively to preserve and enhance the historic character of the conservation area. Comprehensive landscaping will be carried out as a means of preserving local amenity and ecology.
- 8.3 Access will be improved through the construction of a new driveway, car parking standards will be met and adequate cycle parking will be provided thus addressing sustainable transport requirements. The new homes are to achieve a level 4 Code for Sustainable Homes rating, whilst the units located within the existing building will achieve Ecohomes Excellent.
- 8.4 The proposal accords with the requirements of planning policy at a regional and local level at all levels by proposes to bring back into active usage usage what was a neglected and under-utilised building. The proposal facilitates the re-use of the site, maximising its potential, whilst preserving its conservation value through sensitive consideration of building design and appropriate land uses for this area of the Southwark in accordance with UDP police and aspirations of the 123 Grove Park SPD.