

Intended Use Statement – Garden Annexe Building

28 Wood Lane, Highgate, London N6 5UB

Purpose of Statement and Summary

This statement is submitted in support of the full planning application for a proposed replacement garden annexe building at 28 Wood Lane. It clarifies the intended (retained) ancillary use of the building in relation to the main dwelling and addresses comments raised during pre-application consultation regarding potential independent residential occupation. The proposed works respond to the need to replace an existing structure which was destroyed by a fallen tree. In use terms, the replacement Annexe, as a structure ancillary to the main dwelling, continues the pattern of use established by a certificate of lawfulness in 2016 (HGY/2016/1906).

Background and Context

The annexe building is an important part of our long-term vision for 28 Wood Lane. The main house has three bedrooms: one occupied by us, one by our son Felix and one spare room for guests. We hope to have a second child in the next few years, but we are not planning to add any more bedrooms to the main house. The annexe will therefore contain our only bedroom for occasional visits from family and friends. The annexe will also provide everyday office space for us – I work from home every Friday and often during the weekend, and currently have to use a bedroom in the main house as an office. The annexe will also serve as our home gym with a treadmill and other equipment. Using the annexe for these ancillary rooms allows us to maintain the number of bedrooms in the main house at three, and means we do not have to convert any of the reception rooms into a gym or large home office, which would impact our plans for the heritage styling of the interior of the main house.

The site previously contained a single-storey ancillary building in the south-eastern corner of the rear garden, constructed in the 1960s as a garage and subsequently converted to an ancillary studio accommodation with shower, kitchenette and bedroom area. This building was destroyed by the collapse of a large diseased Horse Chestnut tree in 2021. The proposed annexe would occupy the same location and continue the established ancillary use.

Intended Use

The proposed building will be used for purposes ancillary and incidental to the residential use of the main dwelling at 28 Wood Lane only. It will not function as, nor be occupied as, a self-contained or independent residential unit. Throughout the pre-application process, our intention has consistently been for the building to serve an ancillary function to the main dwelling.

The intended uses are:

1. Home office – providing dedicated workspace separate from the main house to facilitate professional activities (we are both corporate lawyers) without compromising family living areas.
2. Home Gymnasium – A space for exercise and wellness activities for household members.
3. Occasional Guest Accommodation – Overnight accommodation for visiting family members and guests of the main household, necessary given the limited bedroom capacity in the main house for example during holiday/festive periods. This is necessary given the limited bedroom capacity in the main house.

Functional Relationship with the Main Dwelling

The annexe building will operate as an integral part of the residential use of 28 Wood Lane, maintaining the following functional links while remaining subsidiary:

- **Access and Curtilage:** While the annexe is primarily accessed via the rear garden of the main house, there is an existing access from Priory Gardens. This secondary access is often used as a more direct route to the Highgate Underground Station from the main house. The ancillary building remains within the single residential curtilage of 28 Wood Lane. Both the main house and annexe share the same postal address.

Importantly, we intend to remove the existing gate that currently separates the annexe site from the main rear garden. This physical opening-up of the curtilage will emphasise that both the main house and annexe are within a shared garden space.

- **Utilities:** The annexe is currently sub-metered from the main house – there are no proposed changes to this condition.
- **Refuse and Recycling**
Refuse and recycling storage will remain shared with the main house, with refuse continuing to be collected from Wood Lane.
- **Occupation:** The building will be occupied only by members of our household, our guests and our extended family. It will not be used or occupied by anyone not connected with the residential use of the main dwelling.

Ongoing Ancillary Use

We note that in 2016, the Council confirmed that proposed alterations to the previous annexe building on this site, including its conversion to include living space, a shower room, kitchenette and sleeping area, constituted permitted development.

This decision established a clear precedent that ancillary accommodation of this nature, in this location, serving the main dwelling at 28 Wood Lane, is appropriate and acceptable in planning terms. At that time, the then-owner confirmed to the Council (22 June 2016 – see attached) that *"the building use shall remain ancillary for the sole enjoyment of the owners of 28 Wood Lane"*.

We do not seek to establish a separate planning unit or independent dwelling on this site. The annexe building is designed and has always been intended to enhance and support our occupation of 28 Wood Lane as a family dwelling.

As the current owners of 28 Wood Lane, we reaffirm this commitment for the proposed replacement building.