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15 GLOUCESTER CRESCENT, LONDON NW1 7DS

1827/D&A

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT TO ACCOMPANY PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATIONS FOR REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING CONSERVATORY WITH A NEW EXTENSION, INTERNAL ALTERATIONS, INCLUDING WIDENING THE OPENING IN THE LOWER GROUND FLOOR REAR WALL, SEPARATING THE DOUBLE RECEPTION ROOM ON THE PRINCIPLE FLOOR INTO TWO, AND ENLARGEMENT OF EXISTING FIRST FLOOR REAR WINDOW

Existing Building

15 Gloucester Crescent is a Grade II Listed house in a terrace of houses built by Henry Bassett, an architect, between 1840 and 1845. The existing building is 4 storeys, with a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, conservatory and utility room on the lower ground floor, a double reception room and study on the ground floor, a master bedroom, bathroom and dressing room on the first floor and three bedrooms and two bathrooms on the second floor. For a detailed description and history of the property refer to The Heritage Practice's Historic Buildings Report.

The Proposal

This proposal seeks to remove the existing conservatory and replace it with a new flat roofed extension, set slightly further into the garden, and widen slightly the opening in the rear wall. The proposed extension, would have a solid lead roof on two levels with clerestory windows and Crittal style painted metal doors and windows. This would mean that the least successful part of the existing building (in terms of materials, form and proportion) could be re-cast so that it is elevated to a quality equal to the rest of the property.

Elsewhere in the lower ground floor the utility room would be reconfigured to partition off the laundry area from the rest of the space.

On the ground floor it is proposed to reinstate the wall between the two reception rooms to create a formal sitting room and separate TV room. On the ground floor closet wing the existing study would be subdivided to allow the provision of a guest WC on the stair landing between the ground floor and lower ground floor.

On the first floor the existing window to the roof terrace would be replaced with a French door style window with a slightly lowered sill.

Design

The proposed new extension would replace an existing late 20th century conservatory which is poorly constructed, inefficient (it is very cold in the winter and it overheats in the summer), and out of keeping with the original building.

The enlarged extension allows the kitchen (the busiest room in the house) to be relocated to the rear of the property giving it direct contact with the garden and much improved natural light.

External alterations are largely restricted to the lower ground floor rear and, with largely glazed external walls, allow the form of the original house to be seen.

The recasting of the rear extension would also mean that the external drainage pipework can be reconfigured so that it would be largely concealed within the new building fabric. It currently appears clumsy and ill-considered.

Internally the spine wall between the ground floor reception rooms would be healed and the existing double doors from the entrance hall separated and re-hung as single doors into the respective reception rooms. So the most important rooms in the house would be reinstated to their original form.

On the ground floor closet wing the existing study would be sub-divided to allow the introduction of a guest WC, providing a much needed facility serving the principle rooms of the house.

The second floor closet wing rear window is, currently, a modern side hung casement. It is proposed to replace this with a French door style window with narrower frames and glazing bars. The sill to this window would be lowered by approximately 300mm.

Refer to The Heritage Practice's Historic Impact Assessment.

Planning

The proposed extension would contribute to a reduction in light pollution.

There would be no daylighting issues created by this proposal.

There would be no overlooking issues created by this proposal.

The proposed alterations will enhance the subject building, replacing an existing poor quality conservatory extension.

Sustainability

The existing inefficient conservatory will be removed. Elsewhere the majority of the existing building fabric will be left untouched by the proposed scheme.

Any new materials required will be obtained from sustainable sources.

Modern levels of insulation will be installed in the proposed extension.

Existing on site re-cycling facilities will be retained for waste.

Accessibility

Accessibility to the existing roof terrace would be improved. Accessibility to and within the property would elsewhere remain unchanged.

Materials

In general materials will be used which are sympathetic to the existing, original construction and replace inappropriate modern materials:

1. Roof to be lead.
2. External windows to be painted timber and painted metal.
3. External pipework will be painted metal.
4. New internal walls to be painted plaster.
5. Internal doors and joinery to be painted timber.

Maintenance

The glass roof will be removed, removing a maintenance problem. New windows will be accessible from ground floor level or the new flat roof.

Summary

The reconfigured accommodation resulting from this proposal would improve the balance of the main living areas of the house whilst, at the same time, removing an inappropriate late twentieth century unsympathetic conservatory.

Overall the impact on the subject property and its surroundings would be positive.