



Design & Access Statement V.2

Mia Lounge
135 Finchley Road ,
Swiss Cottage,
London,
NW3 6JH

Job No. 4025

Planning consent for staircase extension with alteration and addition of outdoor area to 135 Finchley Road on behalf of **Mr Murat Karagozlu / 135 Finchley Road Ltd**

July 2023 / Dec 2023 Revision 2



135 Finchley Road – Front Elevation with adjacent land on the side

1. INTRODUCTION.

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared to accompany the planning application in regard for the alteration of the land adjacent to 135 Finchley Road.
- 1.2 Bloc Architecture has been appointed by the 135 Finchley Road Ltd to carry out this proposal.
- 1.3 The works to the adjacent land is to create a nice open landscape without any hazardous drop-down areas. The method of this is also to the redesign of the outdoor area to also become a fire assembly point.
- 1.4 The new outdoor design will give a better appearance of the open area of the adjacent land with a new refurbishment in place to give it a more visually appealing outlook to the street and surroundings including:
 - Relocation of a new timber composite staircase for split level decking.
 - upgraded timber decking for lower level with cycle store and ancillary storage.
 - Proposed composite panel low-level walls and artificial bamboo planters and composite decking on upper level which would be level with the street.
- 1.5 This statement should be read in conjunction with plan drawings accompanying the planning application.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.0 135 Finchley Road is a three-storey detached commercial property located in Swiss Cottage right next to Swiss cottage tube station. The building is occupied by Mia Lounge, a middle Eastern Restaurant.

The former bank is of grey granite concrete construction with a golden façade around the curtain walling at its frontage. The site area is 222sqm. Transport links can be by way of extensive bus services on Finchley Road or the Swiss Cottage tube station, which is next door to the premises adjacent to the lower ground floor entrance on the side of the building. There is also two car multi storey parks at the back of the site. Along the street scene has been a mixture of retail on ground floor level with offices and apartments on upper levels all the way down the street and opposite.

- 2.1 The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk of flooding. The site is not within a conservation area.
- 2.2 The site has an overall PTAL rating of 6b which is the highest classification, with the site classified as having excellent access to public facilities.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The application seeks to revitalise the current outdoor land as follows:

Ancillary area boundary & entranceway

- 3.2 The proposed low level composite wall and planters will also have a gate entranceway directly fronting onto Finchley Road and will provide a direct and safe access to the street level decking for staff access use and fire escape assembly point.

Proposed street level composite decking area

- 3.3 New composite decking platform will be level with the street which will be useful ancillary use for staff to enter back of house to store cycles and access to the building without having to use main entrance and will also be a fire assembly point.

Proposed low level storage area and yard

- 3.4 The Lower ground level is the restaurant yard area and fire escape route from the lower ground floor of the building to access onto Belize Road. The covered area under the raised platform will be storage for the restaurant and will also house a cycle store.

Proposed composite timber staircase, walls, gate and planter boxes

- 3.6 All new composite decking will be from the lower-level staircase up to the upper level which will be the new street level decking area for easy access between levels from front to back. The tall Boundary walls surrounding the new upper level facing the public staircase to Swiss Cottage underground, the staircase wall overlooking the lower level and the low level walls fronting the street which will also be planter boxes will be all composite panelling. The low level yard and rear walls fronting Belize road will remain as existing timber decking and fencing.

Proposed tall planters

- 3.7 Proposed artificial planters to screen the frontage of the low-level wall and gate at the front of the adjacent land raised at street level. There will be planters around the site boundaries to enhance the space.



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135 Finchley Road – Location Map

4. PLANNING HISTORY & LOCAL PRECEDENT

- 4.1 There have been numerous applications onsite since the 1960's. Below shows recent applications and application 2016/3401/P established the decking area and existing entranceway to the existing decked area granted on 14th September 2016

Application Number	Site Address	Development Description	Status	Date Registered	Decision
2018/1335/P	135 Finchley Road London NW3 6JH	Installation of LED lighting strips	FINAL DECISION	19-06-2018	Granted
2016/5714/P	135 Finchley Road London NW3 6JH	Submission of a management strategy and landscaping details, as required by conditions 4i & ii and 6 of planning permission ref 2016/3401/P (dated 14/09/2016) for the erection of landscaping to side elevation of restaurant and bar, with associated deck, framed planters, balustrades and an awning to front elevation.	FINAL DECISION	16-11-2016	Granted
2016/3401/P	135 Finchley Road London NW3 6JH	Erection of landscaping to side elevation of restaurant and bar (Class A3/A4), with associated deck, framed planters, balustrades, and awning to front elevation.	FINAL DECISION	30-06-2016	Granted
2015/4946/P	135 Finchley Road NW3	Alterations to the fenestration at ground and first floor level for the replacement of the existing vertical framed windows between the ground and first floor level with horizontal aluminium double glazed windows.	FINAL DECISION	10-09-2015	Granted
2015/5554/P	135 Finchley Road NW3	Installation of aluminium perforated screen facade fixed on aluminium rails on the existing front and side elevations.	FINAL DECISION	14-10-2015	Granted
2015/6098/A	135 Finchley Road NW3	The display of 2 x non-illuminated fascia signs to the front and side elevation at raised ground floor level.	FINAL DECISION	21-12-2015	Granted
2012/1948/P	135 Finchley Road NW3	Installation of brick piers, metal railings and associated landscaping in connection with enclosure of an area of land.	FINAL DECISION	16-04-2012	Granted

5. DESIGN & ACCESS

Design Rationale

Design

- 5.1 The design rationale for the development seeks to refurbish the tired outdoor area of the premises which is currently boarded up with timber decking and has been prone to graffiti over the years. It has been used at the front for temporary refuse storage but will now be omitted from the site. The refuse will be positioned at the front of the road with all the other businesses for ease of pick up from the bin men.
- 5.1.1 The resultant look of the new street level platform will be modern and will be in keeping with the rest of the building as the client recognises the land has been poor in its upkeep and would like to deter from its existing layout which has been regularly vandalised by graffiti and so would like to compliment the front building façade of green walls with composite low level wall boxes with artificial bamboo planter for frontage screening. This new screening would be better served and be less prone to graffiti vandals. The street level flooring will be of composite decking also and is raised to stop overlooking and risk from fall safety measures besides making practical use of the spaces with a store and cycle store underneath. The buildings adjacent land will hopefully give vibrancy to the street and add some aesthetically appealing landscape to the people of Camden to create a sense of place in the area to be admired.
- 5.1.2 The redesign has been accelerated recently due to enforcement and by local resident complaints of the site being left unfinished, so boarding had to be put up which also resulted in vandalism from graffiti on the walls. The unfinished land which had planning approval was halted due to covid and initial financial constraints, but the occupiers are now able to address this with an addition of a staircase for the building.

Access

- 5.2 There is extensive car parks situated in the rear and the side buildings surrounding 135 Finchley Road but public transport links are good with Swiss cottage tube station next door and extensive bus links on Finchley road and a taxi rank area just in front of the building. The new raised platform to the street level would be accessed either via the new low level entranceway gate at the front of the land or the existing entranceway at the rear.

Amount

- 5.3 The revised decking area will cover the existing area of 87sqm, The storage area at lower ground level will be 31sqm of storage space and cycle store for staff. The new upper street level will cover 40sqm. There is currently a temporary storage shed in place which will be removed.

Appearance and Scale

- 5.4 The new design features of the outdoor area will be of timber composite cladding and will complement the modern uplift of the building.

Use

- 5.5 The proposed entranceway will serve the revised decked area for access route for staff and a fire assembly point. The lower level will be for a storage room to be for the storage of stock with potential area for bike store/ rack

Other Considerations

- 5.6 The impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties will be improved. The amount of pedestrian traffic entering and exiting at Swiss cottage underground will have a better visual impact when passing by and will also prevent obvious vandalism with the old boarded up walls removed.

6. PLANNING POLICY & GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.1 Paragraph 97 of the NPPF states that “Planning policies and decisions should promote public safety and take into account wider security and defence requirements by: a) anticipating and addressing possible malicious threats and natural hazards, especially in locations where large numbers of people are expected to congregate”.
- 6.2 It is considered that with the provision of a new staircase extension and outdoor landscaping at the front of the property this will increase the security and safety of customer flow in and out of the building and for better staff access to the open area which doubles as a fire assembly point and more effectively manage the split-level area to gain access to storage and cycle store at lower level.

The London Plan (2021)

- 6.3 Paragraph 6.9.9 of the London Plan supports local independent businesses. The paragraph states that “Independent businesses, including shops, cafes and restaurants, play an important role in supporting the vitality and vibrancy of town centres and local communities and many operate from smaller premises”.
- 6.4 It is considered that the restaurant and the decking area play an important part in the vibrancy of Swiss Cottage.

Camden Local Plan (June 2017)

- 6.5 The following policies are of particular relevance to the revised decked area and entranceway:

- Policy C5 – Safety and security;
- Policy C6 – Access for all;
- Policy TC2 – Camden’s centres and other shopping areas;

Policy C5 – Safety and Security

- 6.6 Point E of Policy C5 states that the Council will aim to make Camden a safer place through addressing “the cumulative impact of food, drink and entertainment uses, particularly in Camden Town, Central London and other centres and ensure Camden’s businesses and organisations providing food, drink and entertainment uses take responsibility for reducing the opportunities for crime through effective management and design”
- 6.7 It is considered that the provision of a new revised open area will reduce the opportunities for crime through increased overlooking at the new split level compared to the existing enclosed layout.

Policy C6 – Access for all

- 6.8 The provisions of Policy C6 expect any development proposal to be accessible for all. The decked area continues to be accessible by way of a new street level platform for the site. lower ground floor for back of house staff use, fire assembly point and cycle store.

Policy TC2 – Camden’s Centres and other shopping areas

- 6.9 Point B of Policy TC2 states that the Council will promote successful and vibrant centres through “providing and maintaining, a range of shops including independent shops, services, food, drink and entertainment and other suitable uses to provide variety, vibrancy and choice”.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This statement is submitted in support of a proposal to improve the premises aesthetic function and enhance its appearance.
- 7.2 The external alterations have been designed to have a sense of prominence but not overbearing for the visual enhancement of the buildings surroundings as well as creating good aesthetics to its outlook for the rest of the street.
- 7.3 The proposed development is for refurbishment of a tired outdated and often vandalised frontage artificial planter screening introduction would be considered acceptable in all aspects such that planning permission should be granted.
- 7.4 This statement is submitted in support of a proposal to improve the premises practical function and enhance its spaces for better business.
- 7.5 The area has been designed to create an extended storage space with partial roof covering which will form an upper-level deck and to enhance its outdoor environment.
- 7.6 The refurbishment of an enclosed decked yard which was previously for outdoor storage to be put into better use and to utilise the dead space.
- 7.7 Having regard to the afore mentioned policies and guidance, it is considered that the new revised area of composite decking platforms, low-level storage and cycle store area would be in line with current council policy. It is considered that the additional extended landscaping would allow for a more productivity in the area to an more aesthetic business and better spaces for the community and safer clean access to the new area.
- 7.8 It is therefore considered that the development proposals are in keeping with the local area and will continue to make an important contribution to the vitality and viability of Finchley Road / Swiss Cottage Area.
- 7.9 Due to local complaints about the current land condition that the owner agrees needs updating. There has been every effort to address this condition in this new application and the entthesis of improving the space has been at the forefront of the new design. We have been in dialogue with the enforcement officer Miles Peterson to make good the area which had previously been halted due to covid and financial restraints thereafter.

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