

Design an Access Statement.

31 Rochester Road London NW1

Site and existing building

The property is Regency in style and is a semi-detached property comprising lower ground, ground and first floor with the lower ground floor currently configured as a separate flat. The property is currently used as a single residential dwelling but has no internal access from the ground floor to the lower ground floor. The property is located within the Rochester conservation area.

The property was constructed in the 1840s using yellow stock brickwork with rusticated stucco being used to the ground floor front elevation with a prominent heavy rendered cornice and typical large-scale windows, the overall style and appearance of property has been retained. This property forms part of a pair and the adjacent building mirrors the appearance of the front facade of No 31 and its period details.

There are similar properties adjacent and within the immediate area however there have been post war infills carried out to the streetscape in the past.

The current configuration of the property is two separate units with the lower ground floor comprising a two bedroom self-contained flat with a separate access door to the front and access to the shared garden area at the rear. The ground and first floors are configured as a maisonette with three bedrooms on the upper floor and living space to the raised ground floor. Access is available to the property from the front original raised access to the building and via stepped access into the shared garden to the rear.

The property is largely unaltered externally however there is a canopy addition to the rear of the building which covers the stepped access down into the garden. This is largely timber in construction and of limited size and scope.

Proposal

The proposal is to reinstate the property as a single residential dwelling as whilst it is being used for that purpose at present by a single family there is no stair access between ground and lower ground floors other than externally to the rear via a staircase open to the weather. The intention is to provide a new staircase in the position in which it would have originally been located within the property to reintroduce this connection.

As part of these works it is also intended to reconfigure the lower ground floor to provide a new layout in keeping with a family house to include a new bedroom, lounge, bathroom and a utility space. It is also intended to increase the size of the rear opening on the lower ground floor to give access direct to the garden from the new lounge space.

The proposed works are not intended to alter the front elevation from its original configuration maintaining existing window openings and or positions. The same is intended for the flank elevation with all window openings been retained in their existing positions with the exception of the lower ground floor rear opening. It is intended to increase the size of this opening to the rear to incorporate a four-panel glazed arrangement with central opening doors, this would be a metal framed style design with narrow section framing in steel and powder coated.

We would not consider this detrimental to the appearance of the building as it is not a significant alteration given the existence of an opening already in position and also its position to the rear elevation is not easily viewed even from adjacent houses as the garden area is laid out in two levels with the lower ground floor access being sunk some 700 mm below existing garden level. It also does

not seek to replicate the existing window / fenestration pattern which is maintained for the most part with traditional sliding sash windows so maintaining the integrity of the building appearance.

Planning history

The planning history for the property is as shown in the table below.

Application Number	Development Description	Date	Decision
2016/4765/P	Use as a 2-bed residential unit at lower ground floor level and a 3-bed residential unit over ground & 1st floor levels (Class C3).	06-09-2016	Granted
2009/0669/P	Erection of a two storey rear extension at lower ground and ground floor levels to enlarge accommodation to the existing flat and maisonette and associated window alterations to side elevation.	17-02-2009	Refused

The property has been changed from its original use as a single dwelling house to two flats with this change being applied for through established use. This reflects the changing demands for both the property and those of the local area over the passage of time. The change back to a single dwelling would reflect the current neighbourhood in which the property is located.

Planning policy

Assessing the policies that would be applicable to the proposal the works would be of such limited effect to the heritage of the building there would be no impact to the conservation area as the proposal to return the property to a single dwelling would enhance the heritage returning the house to its original use.

There is also limited effect to the external appearance of the building with the exception of the provision of an extended door opening to the rear elevation at lower ground floor. This alteration would not be visible from the street and would also have limited visual impact to the rear given its position at a lower level to the general garden space. As the proposal does not affect the character or the appearance of the conservation area it is not intended to seek conservation area approval.

Policy H3 resists the loss of homes within the borough but in this instance the loss is of a single two bed unit with the creation of a 4-bedroom family home which is in keeping with council policy. In this instance obviously there is no potential for successive change to further reduce dwelling numbers.

The property is privately owned and occupied by a single owner at present who will retain the reconfigured space to accommodate their existing family.

Dillon Associates

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