

Camden Council Correspondence

5 Pancras Square
London
N1C 4AG

30th July 2024

Dear Sir or Madam,

049; Top Floor Flat, No, 242 Grafton Road, London – Design and Access Statement**1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant to support a planning application for new windows and a new roof terrace, including a glass access hatch and railings. It should be reviewed alongside the other drawings and documents submitted with the application.

1.2 This statement comprises:

- A description of the application property and surrounding area.
- A description of the proposed design and outcome (inc. arrangement, scale, appearance/materials, neighbouring flats and accessibility; and,
- A summary of relevant planning history.

2.0 Application property and surrounding context

2.1 242 Grafton Road is a four-storey residential block situated in the Kentish Town area of the London Borough of Camden. The property benefits from a prime location with easy access to local amenities, public transport links, and community facilities. Originally the site of the Mitre Tavern and Public House (Figure 1), it was converted into nine self-contained residential flats (Use Class C3) following the approval of planning permission (ref PEX0200158) in 2003.

2.2 The property is bounded to the north by a railway line, as illustrated in Figure 3. There are no residential/private properties immediately to the rear. The block is accessed from a staircase adjoining the public pavement on the front elevation. Entry to individual flats is facilitated by a staircase located at the rear of the block.

2.3 The site is not situated within a conservation area nor is the property a listed building.

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Figure 1 – Mitre Tavern, 1931



Figure 2 – The Mitre, 2024

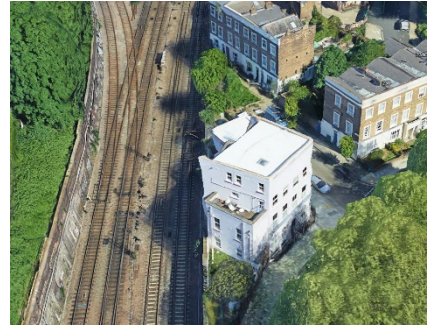


Figure 3 – The Mitre, 2024

3.0 Proposed design

- 3.1 The proposed modifications to the property include the addition of four new windows on the front elevation. A new window will be added to the south-east elevation, and an existing window on the north-west elevation will be widened. Additionally, a new timber-clad roof terrace will be introduced on the existing main roof, with black-painted metal railings to the perimeter. Access to the terrace will be provided by a new winder staircase, and a new glass box roof access hatch will be installed to enclose the access route.
- 3.2 **Arrangement** – The existing layout of the flat will largely remain unchanged, with the exception of new windows to enhance natural light and spatial quality, particularly in the open-plan living, dining, and kitchen areas. Additionally, a new staircase will be installed to provide access to the roof terrace, designed to align with the orientation of the existing rear staircase. The addition of the roof terrace will introduce 65m² of quality amenity space to the property.
- 3.3 **Scale** – The design aims to preserve the character of the surrounding area by minimising the scale of changes to the roof and the external appearance of the property. To achieve this, black-painted metal railings will be installed behind the existing parapets, thereby limiting their impact on the property's overall profile. As shown in the proposed drawings, these railings will extend no more than 620mm above the existing parapet height as viewed from the front and side elevations. The glass access hatch will be positioned at the rear of the property, well away from street view. Therefore, both the railings and access hatch are minimally visible from the public realm/street level.
- 3.4 **Appearance/materials** – The external appearance of the proposed has been carefully considered and designed to seamlessly integrate with the existing property. By using matching materials, the proposed changes to the roof and facade will preserve the current aesthetics of the property and respect the character of the local area.

Windows: The four new windows on the front elevation have been designed to align with the existing windows below, following the façade's rhythm to create symmetry. Currently, there is a "blank façade" (Figure 2) on the front elevation that appears disproportionate/unbalanced. The addition of the new windows will restore a sense of hierarchy to the

façade and improve its overall visual appeal.

Railings: Black painted metal railings have been chosen as they are a common feature in the Kentish Town area. This choice ensures that the new railings will blend well with the local materials and help preserve the area's character.

- 3.5 **Accessibility** – The new staircase leading to the roof terrace has been designed in compliance with Approved Document K, adhering to regulatory requirements for minimum and maximum rise and tread dimensions. This ensures that the staircase provides safe, comfortable, and convenient access to the new roof terrace.
- 3.6 **Neighbouring amenity** - The view overlooking the railway does not present any privacy issues. Similarly, the view opposite the front elevation is shielded by dense vegetation with no window openings directly opposite. 240 Dale Road is the only property with windows facing the terrace, with a separation distance of approximately 16.5 meters. Given that the terrace is roughly one storey higher in elevation, the potential for overlooking is significantly mitigated.
- 3.7 **Intended Use** – 242 Grafton Road will remain a residential block (Use Class C3). The modifications to the individual flat are designed to enhance both the quality and functionality of the living space, aiming to improve overall comfort and usability. Additionally, these changes will introduce a new, much-needed amenity space on the roof, while maintaining the flat's residential use and character.

4.0 Planning history

- 4.1 The relevant planning history includes a significant change of use for the property, transitioning from a public house (Use Class A3) to nine self-contained residential units (Use Class C3). This development comprises 3 one-bedroom, 5 two-bedroom, and 1 three-bedroom units. The project also involved adding an additional storey within the existing building envelope, extending the ground and first floors, and excavating the basement area, including the installation of lightwells. The planning application for these changes was approved under reference PEX0200158 on the 9th of April 2003.
- 4.2 In the local neighbourhood, roof terraces and railings have been observed on numerous properties including 188 Grafton Road and 14 Inkerman Road. Although specific planning approvals for these developments have not been found, observations of the surrounding area provide a strong contextual basis for this proposal. These demonstrate a precedent for this type of development, indicating acceptance from the local community and an alignment with local planning standards

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 In conclusion, this Design and Access Statement has outlined the proposed modifications to the top floor flat in a four-storey residential block in the London Borough of Camden. The changes aim to enhance the quality and functionality of the flat while introducing a new roof terrace with black-painted railings and a glass access hatch. Careful consideration has been given to preserve the property's character and harmony within the surrounding area. The new windows, staircase, and terrace have been designed to improve natural light, spatial quality, and accessibility, ensuring a comfortable and usable living space for the client and their family. It is important to note that these modifications will not impact neighbouring properties or shared spaces within the block. The property will continue to serve as a residential block (Use Class C3), adhering to regulatory standards. This statement, in conjunction with the submitted drawings and documents, supports the planning application and demonstrates the thoughtful integration of these improvements within the established context and planning policies.

Yours faithfully,

Mai Hoang Ngoc

Architectural Assistant

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