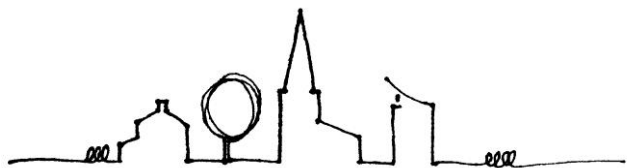


PRIMROSE HILL 6 Chamberlain Street

Proposed Alterations and Extensions:
Design and Access Statement



March 2014

Design Statement

1.1 Historical Introduction

The following extract has been obtained from the Heritage Gateway website regarding the listing of the house:-

Symmetrical terrace of 8 houses. Mid C19. Yellow stock brick with blue bands and stucco dressings. Slated roofs with overhanging bracketed eaves. 1 & 11 have pediments and slightly project. 3 storeys with basements. 2 windows each. Prostyle porticos; panelled doors with overlights. Ground floor tripartite sashes have channelled stucco voussoirs, keystones and triglyph with guttae drops; cast iron window guards and continuous cill band. 2nd floor sashes have bracketed cills, continuous cill band and are flanked at the top by the large enriches eaves brackets.

INTERIORS: not inspected.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast iron railings with spearhead finials to areas.

The houses in Chamberlain Street form a very complete group.

Listed grade II.

1.2 Description

The house follows the standard mid Victorian pattern for its type, with the level of elaboration to internal fittings defined by the status of each floor. Carrera fireplaces survive in the ground and first floors, and the rooms on these levels retain their cornices in part, whilst the basement and second floor had no cornices and plain 4 panelled doors, which still survive in the basement.

Also typical for its age, the external shell of London brick contrasts with internal partitions, which are all timber framed above basement level.

In perhaps the recent years a series of intrusive alterations have been carried out, including reconstruction of the rear pitch of the roof to provide accommodation on the third floor, removal and replanning of internal walls, and the splitting of the house horizontally to create two self contained flats. The flat conversion may have occurred in the 1960's, whilst much of the other work formed a scheme gaining planning approval in 1986.

Prior to purchase by the current owners, the basement/ground floor flat was stripped out, revealing the poor condition of the building.

1.2 The Site

The plot comprising the house and its garden is compact, and reflects the dense mid nineteenth century development of Primrose Hill. The rear boundary is defined by an industrial premises. The small back garden is partly paved in a mix of stone and concrete elements, and steps down immediately adjacent the basement to form a small lightwell. Masonry supporting this area is loose and collapsing. Above this a timber and steel bridge or deck allows access to the garden from the rear part of the ground floor.

To the front, in standard nineteenth century practice, an area encloses the basement window and coal vaults, one of which still retains its access cover within the

pavement above. Access to the area was originally via a small door under the porch, since blocked up to form a small window.

1.3 Planning History

Our search revealed only one application for the property, details laid out below:-

Date	Ref	Description
21.11.1986	Planning Permission 8602238	"the erection of a second floor rear extension on top of an existing first floor extension and the erection of two dormer windows at rear roof level with a patio between them as shown on drawing numbers 325/01A, 02A, 06 and 07."

The application documents reveal this was when the majority of the changes now apparent were carried out, including reconstruction of the top flight of the staircase to match lower levels, following removal of the original attic stair.

1.4 Planning Policy

The house is both listed and in the Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

The following Camden Council policies relate to this proposal:-

Policy DP25 – Conserving Camden's Heritage

Conservation areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;*
- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;*
- c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;*
- d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and*
- e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.*

Listed buildings

To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- e) prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;*
- f) only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building; and*

g) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement

The Primrose Hill Conservation Area statement also relates to our scheme, specifically the following headings:-

PH11: choice of materials in new work

PH18: roof extensions

PH22: dormer windows

PH26: rear extensions

PH27: rear extensions

PH41: staircases within light wells

1.5 Design Approach

Our approach to the house is to firstly understand its history and development, and to repair and conserve the building, whilst reworking some of the less attractive twentieth century alterations. This particularly relates to the rear roof extension and unsightly pipework in this area.

Our scheme seeks to improve the house, and to return it once again to a single family dwelling. This will enhance this historic building particularly in the following ways:-

- Cohesive and carefully considered approach to the whole building to bring the fabric up to a good standard throughout
- Appropriate conservation based repairs to surviving external joinery and detailing, with replacement of poor modern joinery with appropriately detailed traditional joinery
- Tidying and simplification of modern rear roof alteration with infilling of leak-prone third floor balcony
- Provision of a small extension to the ground floor (and basement below) using traditional detailing and slimlite double glazing
- Removal of the more intrusive internal alterations and reinstatement of partitions to their former alignments where practical, particularly at second floor level, where a poorly installed bathroom will be removed and partitions removed to accommodate it reinstated.
- Reinstatement of lost stair balustrades to the ground floor (main and basement stairs)
- Stabilisation to areas of movement internally (as a result of poor alterations in the past)
- Repairs to surviving cornices and fireplaces
- Improved means of escape including mains smoke detection and provision of a small stair to the front Area via a gate through the railings (to follow details of other houses in the street)
- Provision of a traditionally detailed dormer to the front roof pitch, not visible from the road and in keeping with the style and age of the historic building

1.6 The proposals in summary

The proposals in summary seek approval of the following key works:-

- Reinstatement of the house to a single dwelling
- Infill of rear roof balcony
- Rear two storey extension (basement and ground floor)
- Internal reordering
- Reconstruction of rear lightwell including access stair and reordering of garden areas
- Stair to front (area) lightwell
- Provision of traditional dormer to front pitch of roof

1.7 Amount

The house gains in size slightly from the new rear extension, a total of 11SqM gross taking basement and ground floor into account.

1.8 External Works

Means of escape from the house is an important consideration, along with providing good access to areas both internally *and* externally. We therefore propose a small steel stair within the front area, in line with those already installed elsewhere in Chamberlain Street. This stair will enable safe egress from the basement in the event of an emergency, whilst also providing maintenance access to the front area. The work will be carefully detailed, and the gate through the front railings designed to match those already installed nearby.

To the rear, the three components are a new lightwell, bridge and access stair. The lightwell replaces poor and collapsing masonry whilst moving ground back from the rear faces of the house, thereby allowing both more light into the building and improved ventilation, plus a reduction in levels of dampness in the building fabric. The bridge will be crisply detailed with glass balustrades to reduce visual impact, and will link the ground floor extension with the garden to form an attractive series of spaces.

The new access stair will link the basement rear elevation with the garden, also allowing for safe egress in an emergency, whilst also allowing good maintenance access to the new lightwell.

1.9 Use

The property will revert to a single domestic dwelling from its current form as two flats.

1.10 Layout

The proposals will in some areas reinstate rooms to their former dimensions whilst in others surviving spaces will be retained and refurbished as they stand.

The existing and proposed uses are compared in the table below:-

FLOOR	PROPOSED	EXISTING
Basement	Bedroom 1	Bedroom 1 (lower flat)
	Shr/bath 1	Former use uncertain
	Bedroom 2	Bedroom 2 (lower flat)

	Shr/bath 2	Bathroom
Ground	Dining Room	Living room (lower flat)
	Kitchen	Kitchen (lower flat)
	Utility	Utility
First	Living Room	Living Room (upper flat)
	Study	Kitchen (upper flat)
	WC/cloaks	Office/study (upper flat)
Second	Bedroom 3	Bedroom 1 and part shr (upper flat)
	Bathroom 3	Bedroom 2 and part shr (upper flat)
	Office/study	WC
Third	Dressing Room	Bedroom 3 (upper flat)
	Shr 4	Part bathroom/roof patio terrace

In summary on a floor by floor basis the internal changes run as follows:

Within the basement secondary partitions are rearranged to enclose shower rooms 1 and 2, and improve circulation for the two bedrooms, whilst the two original 4 panel doors are retained and reset. The lower part of the proposed rear extension allows for a more generous bedroom 1, with views through a new glazed screen to the new light well beyond.

Within the ground floor the principle change will be the new rear extension, which will create much needed space for the new kitchen. Otherwise this floor remains as currently arranged. Past intrusive work which removed. Much of the stair – facing wall of the rear reception room will be reinstated and will housing kitchen cabinets below. A small door allows access to the basement and utility areas.

Within the first floor an opening formerly existent between the two main rooms will be reformed, with appropriate repair and strengthening work, forming an attractive suite of rooms. The enclosure of the stair will be recreated, following historic wall alignments.

Within the second floor a bathroom straddling the main east-west spine wall will be removed, allowing the wall to be rebuilt locally. Placing the bathroom within the rear half of the floor plan allows wall alignments to be restored to their old alignments completely.

Within the third floor the 1980's roof extension will be repaired and the leaking and dilapidated balcony/patio area infilled to form a new shower room, the main area forming a dressing room. The boiler and hot water tanks will be accommodated in fitted furniture on this floor, allowing the roof – mounted header tank to be removed.

1.11 Scale

The alterations to the house have been carefully considered to improve the appearance of this attractive historic building, whilst being in character with it. The two storey extension stops at the line of the rear bathroom outshot, and remains a subservient element to the rear elevation.

Reconstruction of the roof is principally an infill in terms of volume and will not change the scale of the roofs.

The front dormer is proportionate to the front facade, and will be difficult to see form the street below, given lines of sight and the shallow pitched roofs of the terraces

facing onto Chamberlain Street. We calculate a person standing 6m away from the house will be unable to see the dormer, from projected lines of sight.

1.12 Appearance

Once complete, the proposals will ensure the house will be once again in good repair following a period of neglect and poor maintenance. The cohesive approach to improvements is further aided by the fact the property is to be returned to a single dwelling.

Throughout, our approach is to detail new windows, doors, the rear extension, roof alterations and other elements with care and attention to the historic joinery of the house, and also the hierarchy of status from principle floor through to secondary areas formerly used by servants.

Traditional materials are to be used throughout, with lead and slate for roofs, York stone for replacement of the asphalt clad front porch steps, and traditionally detailed steel for the external staircases, railing gate and bridge (rear).

Where stair balustrades are to be rebuilt on the ground floor, details will be matched to original fabric.

Attractive and important features of the house including cornices, shutters and fireplaces are being retained, this including the shuttered lining to the rear ground floor reception room.

Very poor quality joinery to the basement, rear roof and rear Wc outshot are all being replaced with more historically appropriate joinery.

1.13 Involvement

The local authority has been consulted on proposals the house, and a meeting was held on site with Hannah Walker, Conservation Officer on 12 March 2014 to run through the proposals in detail. Ms Walker's helpful and detailed feedback has been built into our scheme which has been adapted to accommodate her points raised.

1.14 Access Statement

These proposals will not significantly change access into the house, which will remain via steps up to the front porch. There are however improvements to access from the ground floor and basement areas to the garden, whilst a new stair to the front area will greatly improve maintenance access to this area, whilst also aiding egress from the basement in the event of an emergency.

Apart from the above, access arrangements will remain unchanged.