

Design & Access Statement for
Proposed reinstatement of the
basement flat into the main house and
extensions at basement and ground
floor levels @ 21 Oval Road.

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Prepared on behalf of
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Scheme: Combining basement flat into main house and extensions at basement and ground floor.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Henebry

Architect: Edward McCann

1 Proposal

- 1.1 The basement flat of 21a to be re-incorporated into the main house.
- 1.2 Basement extension to the front involves glazing over the existing front light well and removing the front wall at basement level to incorporate the space into the basement interior.
- 1.3 Removal of rear basement wall to open it up to the garden. Large sliding glass doors across the width of the façade. The garden to be stepped down to basement level.
- 1.4 Rear extension of the existing side wing to provide a shower area at ground floor and external storage at basement level.

2 Context

- 2.1 21 Oval Road is a semi-detached Victorian Villa, part of the Primrose Hill conservation area.
- 2.2 The road is flanked by similar semi-detached Villas on the west side, while the east side is a terrace of housing.
- 2.3 The ground floor is stucco rendered while the upper storeys have received a less defined render. All painted white.
- 2.4 The house has a side wing at ground floor where the front door is situated.
- 2.5 The light well at the front is set back from the street by a front garden which is partially planted. Concrete steps lead down to the basement

from the front garden, which are a later addition – possibly to provide access to the basement flat when it was separated from the main house. The boundary to the front garden is defined by a solid masonry wall rather than railings

- 2.6 The light well of the adjacent house has been dug out to the extent of the boundary so there is no front garden and there is an extension beneath the path to the front door. Other light wells and front gardens along the west side of the road have had various modifications done which means there is little uniformity among the houses that make up this side of the road.
- 2.7 The rear of the house has a steel balcony and steps to the garden from a set of long casement windows in the kitchen on the ground floor. The steps and balcony are industrial in appearance, and the long casements are not original. The garden faces onto industrial buildings to the rear.

3 Planning Context

- 3.1 21 Oval Road is within Sub Area 4 of the Primrose Hill conservation area. There are specific policy guidelines to do with extensions, basements and light wells.
 - 3.1.1 Extensions _ PH25 – 30
 - 3.1.2 Front Gardens _ PH36 & 37
 - 3.1.3 Basements & Light wells _ PH38 – 42
- 3.2 Camden Planning Guidance CPG24 _ Basements & Light wells

4 Use

- 4.1 The proposal is to convert the house into a single residential unit. The basement will become the main living space with kitchen, dining and sitting room with direct connection to the garden.

5 Amount

- 4.1 Glazing over the existing light well will provide an additional 7.5 sqm.
- 4.2 The rear extension provides an additional 1.25sqm at ground floor and 1.3sqm of external storage space at basement level.

5 Design

- 5.1 The front extension involves glazing over the existing front light well and removing the front wall at basement level to incorporate the space into the basement interior. The glazing will be set below the upstand that surrounds the light well so that viewed from the street it will not be apparent that the light well is in fact glazed over. The light well is also set back from the road buffered by a front garden which will be planted as with similar properties on the road to further provide screening.
- 5.2 With particular reference to PH39. The alteration of the lightwell will be unobtrusive and sensitive to maintaining the existing proportions and definition of this part of the building. It is also set back from the pavement so less prominent than those on the opposite side of the road which front the pavement directly. The light wells along the west side of Oval road have all been modified considerably so that there cannot be said to be an overarching typical character. The removal of the concrete steps to the basement and reinstatement of the garden to the front will bring the light well visually closer to its original appearance than its current arrangement.
- 5.3 The main body of the basement will be opened up to provide an open plan living/kitchen/dining space incorporating the front extension all the way through to the rear garden.
- 5.4 The rear wall is opened up to the garden to provide light and visually connect the interior to the outside. From the exterior this in combination with the removal of the steel balcony and stair and reinstatement of the sash window where currently there is a long

casement window, produces a more composed rear elevation, maintaining clear definition between the basement which is rendered in a contemporary manner and the upper storeys which are refurbished to their period status.

- 5.5 A new stair re-instated in the original location connects the house to the basement.
- 5.6 The rear extension of the side wing fills a niche currently defined by the main body of no.21 and the side wing of the neighbouring property @ 23 Oval rd. It will be partially set back from the main part of the house to remain subservient to the principle elevation and it will be rendered and painted to match so as to appear as a congruent part of the house. A sash window to match those on the rear elevation will be installed in the shower area looking to the garden, while at basement level a timber door will provide access to the external store.
- 5.7 It should be noted that while all the proposals to the rear have been considered in a way that maintains the hierarchy of the rear elevation and are congruent with the building, they are not overlooked and have a view onto industrial buildings and the railway beyond.

6 Sustainable Construction

- 6.1 The proposed modifications will provide improvements to the buildings thermal efficiency, with insulation at basement level and high performance double glazing in the front extension and rear sliding doors.

7 Access

- 7.1 Access to the house will be directed solely through the existing front door at pavement level, with the external basement access blocked with the new extension.
- 7.2 Internal access to the basement will be reinstated via a new portion of stair continuing in what would have been the original location.

7.3 Access to the garden will be through the rear sliding doors at basement level. Access to the garden from the ground floor will be removed.

8 Consultation

8.1 The Primrose Hill Conservation Area statement

8.2 Camden Planning Guidance 4 _ Basements & Light wells.

8.3 Pre Application Advice _ ref: 2013/7208/PRE. This scheme had an extension into the light well at the front. The comments were as follows:

8.3.1 Infilling the front lightwell in order to extend the basement level is considered to be unacceptable in principle as it would alter the character of the existing building. Both the proposed glass over the front lightwell and glazed blocks in the front garden are considered to harm the character and appearance of the conservation area and unacceptable in design terms. In response to the extended front lightwell at no.19 in your design and access statement the Council has no planning history records for it.

8.3.2 Provided that the front lightwell is retained a storage or utility space (like a vault) could be created under the front garden. This arrangement should look similar to the existing front garden and open front lightwell arrangement.

8.4 The proposed alterations to the rear elevation and the proposed rear extension at basement and ground floor levels are considered to be acceptable in design terms.

9 Conclusions

9.1 The incorporation of the basement into the main house is necessary to serve the current occupants family needs, and in doing so reinstates the house to its original configuration,

9.2 The extension of the basement into the light well at the front provides both more space for a functional living/kitchen/dining area in the basement as well as more light. It has been considered in a way that makes it both unobtrusive and entirely subservient to the existing structure to the point it will be unclear there is an extension when viewed from the road. This is reinforced by the presence of an existing solid masonry wall on the front boundary plus a planted garden to the front of the light well, both of which serve to obscure the light well from the road. The formalisation of the light well to provide a clear boundary within which to install the glass roof will serve to return the light well closer to its original form before the installation of concrete steps to the basement when the property was broken into flats.

9.3 Opening up the basement wall to the rear is necessary to bring light into the basement and provide both the physical and visual connection to the garden. The proposal respects the logic and hierarchy of the building retaining the aesthetically contemporary changes to basement storey while refurbishing and reinstating period features on the upper storeys. The removal of the steel stairs and balcony and reinstatement of the sash window reinstate some formality to the rear elevation.

9.4 The rear extension is unobtrusive and subservient to the main building while providing additional shower/WC space on the ground floor.

9.5 In conclusion, all the proposals have been considered in a way that respects the existing building and its locality, while providing a much improved reconfiguration of the house for family life. All the works will be carried out to the highest standards and will provide changes that genuinely enhance this property, and make a positive legacy.

Appendix



Figure 1: South Aerial



Figure 3: North Aerial



Figure 2: East Aerial



Figure 4: West Aerial



Figure 5: Street Elevation



Figure 7: Front garden



Figure 6: Boundary wall

Edward McCann _Architecture & Design



Figure 8: Front garden

Planning Application Submission _ **21 Oval Road**



Figure 9: Steps to light well



Figure 10: Light well

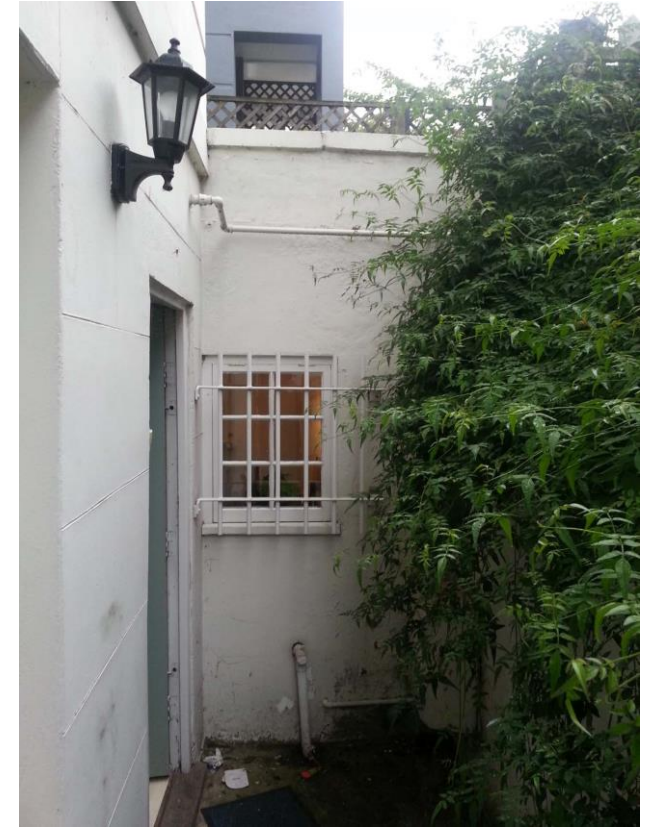


Figure 11: Light well



Figure 12: Neighbours (no.19) light well



Figure 14: pavement boundary



Figure 13: Neighbours (no.19) light well



Figure 15: Front garden party wall



Figure 16: Rear elevation



Figure 17: Rear elevation