

Heritage Surveys Limited

Design and Access Statement

Relating to:

**11 – 17 The Marr
Curnock Street Estate
Camden Street
London NW1 0HE**

Ref: SEB/194

Version: 1

Report date: 11 December 2013



Identification photograph

View of 11 – 17 The Marr, NW1

From Estate

Table of contents

	Identification photograph	i
1	Introduction	3
	1.1 General Introduction	3
	1.2 Plans	3
	1.3 Existing Block	3
2	Use	4
	2.1 Planning History	4
	2.2 Residential	4
	2.3 Proposed Development	4
	2.4 Accessible Design	5
	2.5 Lifetime Homes	5
3	Accommodation Amount and Layout	8
	3.1 Entrance and Access	8
	3.2 Ground Floor - Flat 1 - 2B x 4P	8
	3.3 Ground Floor – Flat 2 – 3B x 5P	8
	3.4 Ground Floor – Flat 3 – 3B x 5P	9
	3.5 Sound Insulation and Fire	9
	3.6 Thermal Insulation and Ventilation	9
4	Scale and Appearance	11
	4.1 Proposals Generally	11
	4.2 Roof	11
	4.3 Walls	11
	4.4 Window and Doors	11
	4.5 External Areas and Landscaping	11
5	Access and Transport	12

Table of contents

5.1	Vehicular Transport	12
6	Conclusions	13
6.1	Conclusion	13

1 Introduction

1.1 General Introduction

This design and access statement is prepared in support of a planning application to convert existing ground floor office space in the ground storey of an existing residential block into three self-contained flats designed to be fully accessible to Wheelchair Housing design standards.

The existing ground floor is currently used by Camden Federation of Private Tenants (CFPT), Camden Federation for Tenants and Resident's Associations, and Camden Mediation with office, meeting room, kitchen and WC facilities. The space has not been used to its best advantage and conversion into three dwellings will support a local demand for affordable accessible housing.

The conversion presents an opportunity to convert sympathetically with the rest of the block and adjoining properties. The opportunity will be taken to improve and upgrade insulation to provide improve energy consumption and to achieve decent living standards in the three units.

1.2 Plans

Proposed plans and elevation drawings are included within the application pack, submitted on-line via the Planning Portal.

1.3 Existing Block

The building appears to be of 1970s "cross wall" construction with cavity walls and face brickwork to the majority of elevations, with the ground floor north elevation predominantly storey height glazing/windows incorporating various louvres and vent grilles. The structure probably includes a concrete frame at the end of the cross walls, extending to the upper levels and visible at access balcony level.

Windows to the ground floor are probably original comprising metal framed type, generally single glazed, some with either folding security grilles or external security bars and mesh.

The upper levels of the block provide residential accommodation with a communal staircase accessed via security doors on an access control system, leading to a communal access balcony. Ground floor flats have their own direct access off the estate pathways.

2 Use

2.1 Planning History

The property is a purpose-built residential block of flats and maisonettes, with offices in part of the ground storey to the west of the communal staircase. The ground storey of this block also used to accommodate a public house (known as 55 Camden Street) which was the subject of various applications for conversion to residential use, notably 2010/1739/P which was approved. It appears that the works have been carried out as residential accommodation is now provided at ground and first storey levels at that end of the block.

2.2 Residential

The block is located in a predominantly residential area on the Curnock Street Estate. The proposals have taken this location into consideration in selection of finishes for the conversion.

The property is not located in a Conservation Area, nor listed based on the Council's Environment website. It is located close to Camden Town Conservation area.

2.3 Proposed Development

The proposals are to convert the remaining non-residential space in the block into three self-contained accessible single storey family sized flats at ground floor level. This is in keeping with the Council's UDP of housing as a priority and will go a small way to contributing to the Council's goal of achieving additional housing units. In this instance with the added advantage of a fully accessible design in accordance with UDP H7.

The proposed accommodation is a mix as follows;

- Flat 1
2 Bedroom x 4 person, Gross Internal Floor Area 96.3 m²
- Flat 2
3 Bedroom x 5 person, Gross Internal Floor Area 119.8 m²
- Flat 3
2 Bedroom x 5 person, Gross Internal Floor Area 117.8 m²

Access to each flat will be via a communal estate road and footpath to the south elevation at ground storey level.

2.4 Accessible Design

2.4.1 Consultation

During the design process consultation has taken place with Neil Stedman, Camden's Allocations Occupational Therapist - Permanent Allocations, and Michelle Horn, the Council's Access Officer & Access Auditor.

2.4.2 Design Guidance

Camden's' Wheelchair Housing Design Brief 2013 has been used as the main reference and generally meets this with the following clarifications;

1. Bathrooms for three bed flats – agreed omit showers in the separate WC and make this an accessible WC only.
2. Bathrooms generally – bathrooms to be designed for a shower but the waste to be suitably positioned for a bath to be easily installed over it as well in case the preference or needs of the occupant are for a bath rather than a shower.

Paths and Roadway

3. Agreed that locally 1 in 12 gradients will be acceptable provided there is a level landing at the flat entrance doors.
4. Consideration to be given to gates and fobs, both pedestrian and vehicular for the access road as it is likely that once this is opened up, it will be subject to abuse by either other residents or non-residents.

2.5 Lifetime Homes

As recognised by CPG2, conversions of existing properties mean it is difficult to meet all Lifetime Homes criteria. This development is constrained by the nature of the existing design and construction. However The Marr is well placed in terms of topography, and the building grid sizes are reasonably generous which has assisted in the review of Lifetime Homes Criteria. These have been included in the design where possible and are addressed in the schedule below;

2.5.1 Parking (width or widening capability)

The proposal is to provide on-site parking, which will need to be subject to Permit Holder control and access control via new gates otherwise there is potential for disabled person's bays to be abused. The proposal is to provide 1 bay per flat. Parking in close proximity will be an important consideration for disabled persons, either as passenger or driver.

2.5.2 Approach to dwelling from parking (distance, gradients and widths)

The estate and adjacent roads are all reasonably level and gradients are generally suitable.

2.5.3 Approach to all entrances

The estate road is reasonably level without steep gradients approaching the property. It is proposed to alter the approach to each entrance door slightly to create level landings outside each door in this development.

2.5.4 Entrances

The existing upper level flats access a communal entrance to the north. The flats created from the public house conversion access on north, east and south elevations at ground level. The proposal for the new flats in this development is that the entrance doors are placed on the south elevation to provide immediate proximity for disabled persons to the car parking and access road.

Each entrance door will be provided with a canopy roof and will be lit by suitably controlled lighting. The canopy provides an element of weather protection but it is not proposed to add a porch which would be out of keeping and encroach too far on estate roads and pathways.

Based on our consultation with Council's officers each door will be provided with;

1. Access control with electronic release.
2. Video – one video receiver near the front door only; not required in the bedrooms and living rooms.

2.5.5 Communal Stairs and Lift

Not applicable as all three flats are accessed directly off ground storey level.

2.5.6 Internal doorways and hallways

Internally doors will be 1000mm door sets wherever possible including flat entrance doors, subject to site constraints by existing structure. Hallways and circulation within the dwellings is as wide as possible.

2.5.7 Circulation Space

Wheelchair access will be possible with turning circles achieved where possible whilst maintaining an otherwise workable space planning solution. It will not be necessary to fit stair lifts being single storey dwellings

2.5.8 Entrance level living space

All living, kitchen, bathroom and WC space will be at entrance level.

2.5.9 Potential for entrance level bed-space

See 2.5.8 above.

2.5.10 Entrance level toilet and shower drainage

See 2.5.8 above.

2.5.11 Toilet and bathroom walls

All external and party walls will be of solid construction and will be capable of supporting loads for grab rails and the like. All new internal partitions will be specified to incorporate the fixings and loads imposed by fixtures and fittings.

2.5.12 Stairs and potential through-floor lift in dwelling

Not applicable as 2.5.8.

2.5.13 Potential for fitting of hoists and bedroom/bathroom relationship

Ceiling track hoists – Camden’s OT confirmed that a strong secondary ceiling needs to be provided in the main bedroom and bathroom. Hoists are to be used for localised transfer only from beds to chairs, baths to chairs, chairs to WCs etc. and are not ceiling track hoists running from room to room.

2.5.14 Bathrooms

An accessible bathroom is provided in all proposed flats.

2.5.15 Glazing and window handle heights

Windows in the principal living space will allow persons to see out when seated. Window controls will be reasonably accessible. Camden’s OT advised “top hung” style window preferred as the handle will be by default at low level. No electronic opening aids required at this stage.

2.5.16 Location of Service Controls

Controls to services will be located within a height of 450mm to 1200mm from the floor and at least 300mm from any internal corner unless the limitations of the existing building prevent this.

Kitchens to include a Sure Stop type switch to immediately shut off the water main, to be fixed at a suitable height for wheelchair/ disabled persons.

3 Accommodation Amount and Layout

3.1 Entrance and Access

The conversion will provide three self-contained family sized flats, each accessed directly from estate footpaths.

The proposal is that the accommodation will comprise;

3.2 Ground Floor - Flat 1 - 2B x 4P

Main flat entrance door at ground floor level accesses into a private hallway leading to a living room/kitchen/diner, 2 bedrooms and bathroom.

The gross internal floor area is 96.3 m² comprising;

GROUND STOREY	
Living Room/Kitchen/Diner	36.7 m ²
Bedroom 1	19.5 m ²
Bedroom 2	13.7 m ²
Bathroom with WC	7.3 m ²
Stores x 2, totalling	2.4 m ²

In addition to built-in storage there is space to provide free standing furniture or build in further cupboard space.

3.3 Ground Floor – Flat 2 – 3B x 5P

Main flat entrance door at ground floor level accesses into a private hallway leading to a living room/kitchen/diner, 3 bedrooms, bathroom and WC Cloak room.

The gross internal floor area proposed is 119.8 m² comprising;

GROUND STOREY	
Living Room/Kitchen/Diner	35.1 m ²
Bedroom 1	21.2 m ²
Bedroom 2	15.8 m ²
Bedroom 3	8.1 m ²

Bathroom with WC	8.8 m ²
WC/Cloakroom	4.3 m ²
Stores x 3, totalling	4.0 m ²

In addition to built-in storage there is space to provide free standing furniture or build in further cupboard space.

3.4 Ground Floor – Flat 3 – 3B x 5P

Main flat entrance door at ground floor level accesses into a private hallway leading to a living room/kitchen/diner, 3 bedrooms, bathroom and WC Cloak room.

The gross internal floor area proposed is 117.8 m² comprising;

GROUND STOREY	
Living Room/Kitchen/Diner	35.3 m ²
Bedroom 1	21.2 m ²
Bedroom 2	12.5 m ²
Bedroom 3	8.2 m ²
Bathroom with WC	8.8 m ²
WC/Cloakroom	4.5 m ²
Stores x 3, totalling	4.0 m ²

In addition to built-in storage there is space to provide free standing furniture or build in further cupboard space.

3.5 Sound Insulation and Fire

As part of the proposals sound insulation will be provided between dwellings and existing first floor structure above to comply with current Building Regulations as will fire compartmentation. The existing floors appear to be of concrete construction.

3.6 Thermal Insulation and Ventilation

The external walls and windows will all be rebuilt to improve significantly on current insulation standards to meet, or exceed, current Building Regulations if reasonably technically and economically achievable.

Part of the ground storey on the north side of the block has a “roof” comprising the first floor communal access balcony to the existing first floor flats. Additional insulation will be added to the ground floor structural ceiling to improve insulation at this point.

Mechanical ventilation will be provided to kitchens and bathrooms to meet current requirements, with trickle ventilation and openable windows to all habitable rooms.

4 Scale and Appearance

4.1 Proposals Generally

The external appearance of the building will be retained as far as possible to maintain the character of the block and estate generally.

No extension is proposed to the building footprint.

4.2 Roof

Not applicable, the existing block roof will be retained.

Canopy roofs will be provided over the new flat entrances to the south elevation min 2.3m high above ground level, and min 1.2m x 1.5 extending beyond the lock side of the door. Anticipated to be of flat construction with Liquid applied membrane and aluminium or zinc fascia detail.

4.3 Walls

The external walls will be demolished between the structural frame and structural cross walls and rebuilt to suit the new flat layouts and window and door designs. This will be in a yellow face brick to match existing as far as reasonably practical.

4.4 Window and Doors

The proposal has benefit of dual aspect as flats will have windows facing the front and rear and in one case to the end elevation. The benefits of dual aspect will allow cross ventilation through the dwelling. The proposed entrances are on the south side which, with canopies, will enhance the elevation and increase its importance relative to its current appearance.

The windows are proposed to be double glazed PVCu to current standards. PVCu windows were used for the pub conversion project and also for replacement windows to the block generally. PVC windows would therefore be in keeping with the surroundings.

Flat entrance doors will comprise factory coated/decorated timber or GRP security door sets with small vision panels.

4.5 External Areas and Landscaping

The existing estate roads and footpaths serve the building and are not required to be altered significantly for this development. However it is proposed to adapt the south road to provide dedicated disabled person parking spaces, one per flat and create level access paths. The access road will be resurfaced with a tarmacadam type finish.

To the north it is proposed to create “defensible” space around the windows using raised planters to improve privacy for the occupants.

5 Access and Transport

5.1 Vehicular Transport

The south estate road and pavements will be altered as described in 4.5. Otherwise there are no proposed changes to vehicular transport access to this building.

There is scope for cycle storage.

The area is well served by public transportation and has an excellent public transport accessibility level.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Conclusion

11 – 17 The Marr currently offers underutilised ground floor accommodation used as offices, and not being used to its full potential. The proposed development would meet the requirements of the UDP H1 in good use of underutilised buildings and H7 for wheelchair housing.

The level/low gradient estate and surrounding road lends itself well to provision of accessible housing which is the subject of this application.

The conversion work can be executed in keeping with the building's age and style whilst adding the benefits of modern insulation values to improve resident well-being.

The proposal to convert this part of the building into self-contained flats will provide three affordable accessible dwellings in excess of space standards, without any adverse effect on the character, function and amenity of the area.