



Fig.01 – Existing elevation of the main property

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

6th August 2013

44 Ferncroft Avenue, London, NW3 7PE

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

44 Ferncroft Avenue is a 4 storey residential property located within the Redington/Frognaal Conservation area. Built at the turn of the 19th century, the building is currently divided into 5 apartments. This application seeks to convert the existing apartment at ground floor level, into two separate apartments. This will include extension of the existing basement, which is currently used as storage space, to facilitate the new accommodation.

2.0 USE

The existing property is currently in residential use. The new accommodation proposed will remain in residential use.

3.0 AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposal entails the conversion of the existing 4 Bed apartment at ground floor level into two separate units; a 5 Bed apartment and a 1 Bed studio apartment over two levels. The existing side extension was once a separate unit with a separate entrance door located in the main communal entrance hall (See Fig.02, Fig.03). It is proposed to separate this unit once more to become an individual unit again. The existing basement will be extended to match the existing footprint of the ground floor level above. The existing footprint of the ground floor level is 249sqm. The basement will be extended to a footprint of 250sqm and will sit directly below the footprint of the ground floor level. Light wells will be provided to both the front and rear of the

property, to allow for light and ventilation into the proposed lower ground floor level. At the rear a terrace to the lower ground floor level, will replace the existing rear projection of the house, which currently accommodates a bedroom with ensuite and wardrobe. The proposed front lightwells sit at approx. 1.5m wide.

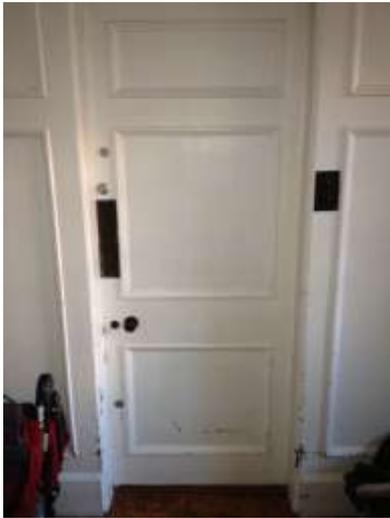


Fig.02 – Entrance door to side unit



Fig.03 – Left: Entrance door to main unit, Right: entrance door to side unit – both located within the communal entrance hall

The recent addition to the side of the property at ground floor level will be retained, except for the front elevation wall and existing flat roof structure which is to be demolished. In 2001 the property received permission to replace the existing garage with this single storey side extension (Planning application ref: PWX0002899). Our proposal seeks to demolish the existing front elevation of the extension, which is of poor design and does not fit well with the existing property (See Fig.04). As well as replacing the flat roof structure with a new pitched roof, to match the shape and height of the existing front parapet wall. The existing basement level will be extended below the footprint of this side addition, to create a 1 Bed studio apartment, over two levels. A separate entrance to this unit will be located to the front of the property.

The existing internal area of the building, including both units is 304sqm. The proposal seeks to extend at lower ground floor under the existing footprint of the building, bringing the proposed internal floor area to 408sqm. From the proposed ground floor site plan it is clear the extent of the existing building footprint of the house and external hard landscaping to the rear. The proposed building footprint and external hard landscaping, has been decreased in area by approx. 25sqm please refer to drawing number 268.(1).1.000.

Areas;

Existing gross internal area;	304sqm
Proposed gross internal area;	408sqm
Proposed ground floor footprint	235sqm
Existing ground floor footprint	249sqm
Proposed basement footprint	250sqm
Existing hard landscaping	78sqm
Proposed hard landscaping	67sqm

The overall building footprint at ground floor level will be decreased by 14sqm

The overall building footprint and hard landscaping will be decrease by 25sqm



Fig.04 – Existing elevation of side extension

The Redington/Frognaal conservation area guidelines state that for Basements (RF2); “extending into basement areas will only be acceptable where it would not involve harm to the character of the building or its setting.” It also states that the majority of planning applications within the area are for alterations or extensions to existing buildings. Many of which involve addition or alteration to basements.

There has been a precedent set along Ferncroft Avenue in relation to the extension of basements and the addition of light-wells and it has become a common feature within the local vernacular. Examples which have been granted planning approval most recently are listed below. All the applications listed received approval to extend the basement, 5 of which also received approval for the provision of light-wells.

Application Ref:	Address:	Decision:
2012/4785/P	18 Ferncroft Avenue	Granted
2013/0579/P	3 Ferncroft Avenue	Granted
2012/2753/P	34 Ferncroft Avenue	Granted
2012/2946/P	32 Ferncroft Avenue	Granted
2010/4600/P	36 Ferncroft Avenue	Granted
2010/4912/P	38 Ferncroft Avenue	Granted
2010/6788/P	29 Ferncroft Avenue	Granted

RELEVANT HISTORY

When comparing with the neighbouring developments, please note the following below:

No. 36 Ferncroft Avenue – Contains a new internal courtyard and retains one existing light well. (See Fig.05, 06 below)



Fig.05



Fig. 06

No. 32 Ferncroft Avenue – Lower ground floor accommodation houses 2 Bedrooms, one with a very small light well and grate over, therefore providing no outlook. The second bedroom has a light well which is 1.3m from the front of the bay window projection to the retaining wall of the light well and approx. 4m wide. Three new light wells have been added to the property, two to the two bedrooms and one larger light well to rear of property.

The Delegated Report from the Planning case officer granting approval for the proposed works to no. 32 (Ref: 2012/2946/P), in relation to design considerations states that;

'To the front of the building, the works will be apparent as a result of the new basement lightwell....It is also understood that the applicant intends to plant a further low hedge to the front of the lightwell (not indicated on the plans) which would completely screen the lightwell from any view from the street, details of which are proposed to be secured by condition.....Visible lightwells are part of the prevailing character of the street and in the vicinity- lightwells of very similar design are to be found at neighbouring properties at no's 36 and 38, another was permitted recently at no 34 and a number of others are to be found on nearby streets, such as Kidderpore Gardens..... The proposed lightwell to the front of the property would thus be discreet in this location and the front lightwell is therefore considered to be acceptable.'

No. 34 Ferncroft Avenue – The delegated report also references the previously approved planning applications that have set a precedent along Ferncroft Avenue under the heading 'Relevant History'. These include numbers 34, 36, 38 Ferncroft Avenue.

The Delegated Report for the planning approval granted at no. 34 Ferncroft Avenue also lists the approved planning applications for numbers 32, 36 Ferncroft Avenue. Setting a precedent and reasoning for allowing the application under relevant history.

No. 38 Ferncroft Avenue – retains an existing light well with railings. (See Fig.07, 08 below)



Fig.07



Fig. 08

The Camden Development Policy DP27 states that in relation to basements and light-wells an assessment is required of the scheme's impact on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability. Please refer to the 'Basement Impact Assessment- Screening and Scoping Report', 'Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Strategy' and 'Planning Application Structural Report' carried out by a Consulting Structural Engineer (Conisbee), attached with the application.

Conclusions to the reports carried out are summarised as follows;

The flood risk assessment of the site concludes that the development of the site will not increase flood risk elsewhere (p.10, 4.3). It states that there are no negative impacts anticipated in relation to this proposal on the hydro-geological and hydrological conditions of the local environment that cannot be suitably addressed in the detailed design of the proposal (p.10, 4.4).

The 'Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Strategy', has been carried out in accordance the Government Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 25, as is a requirement set out in the Camden Development Policy DP27, paragraph 27.6. The report concludes the property sits within a Flood Zone 1 area and therefore is at minimal risk of pluvial flooding. The SFRA and the site specific flood risk assessment also concluded that no potential flood risks for the site were identified, that could not be managed (p.15, 12.0).

4.0 LAYOUT OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposed 5 Bed unit will be accessed through the existing main entrance at ground floor level. The ground floor will include minor interior alterations to create the living, dining and kitchen accommodation at this level. The bay to the rear of the property will be demolished and extended to allow for a larger kitchen / dining area in this location. The lower ground floor level will house the 2 guest bedrooms with ensembles, flexible playroom and media room, an office / study space, and utility / plant room. Light wells will be created to the front and rear of the property to allow light into the lower level. The rear light well, will provide an external terrace off the playroom and media room and provide access stairs to the existing rear garden level. This sits well within the extensive garden which exists to the rear of the property. The front lightwell to the main house is 1.3m from the front of the bay window projection to the retaining wall of the light well, as per the approved lightwell to no. 32 Ferncroft Avenue.

The proposed 1 Bed studio apartment, will be accessed through a new entrance located to the front of the property. The living and kitchen accommodation will be located at lower ground

floor level with a half mezzanine over at ground floor level, to create a double height space over the main living area. The ground floor level contains a main bathroom to the left on entry to the apartment and a bedroom to the proposed mezzanine. A light well will be created to the front and rear of the side unit to provide light into the lower ground floor level.

5.0 SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT

Careful consideration has been taken to ensure that the proposal does not impact significantly on the existing property. The lower ground floor level will match the existing footprint of the ground floor level of the property. The front elevation will remain largely unaltered, except for the addition of railings around the proposed light wells. Additional hedging will be added to conceal the new railings to the front lightwells of the property only. The elevation to the side unit has been redesigned to be more in keeping with the style of the original building. The side unit will remain similar in scale and size to that which already exists. The rear elevation will include alterations to the ground floor fenestration, the redesign of the existing bay and new terrace to the lower ground floor level with access doors off two of the playroom and media room.

6.0 LANDSCAPING

With the proposed addition of light wells to the front and rear of the property, tiered soft landscaping will be created, to soften the impact of the hard landscaping and allow for pleasant views out from the lower ground floor level to the rear of the property. The light-wells to the front elevation will be discreet and smaller in scale compared to the rear light well, with railings and hedging to conceal views of into the proposed lightwells. The rear light well will be large to cater for an external patio area at lower ground floor level and the provision of access stairs to the rear garden level. The rear garden is extensive, as can be seen from the plans and the images below (see Fig.09, 10).

The Redington/Froggnal conservation area guidance states that vegetation contributes greatly to this areas quality, character and appearance. The alterations to the front streetscape of the property will retain its existing and mature vegetation. Ferncroft Avenue is noted for its vegetation of regularly spaced roadside London Plane trees which dominate the views along the street. In relation to 44 Ferncroft Avenue, there are two mature London Plane trees in the street to the front of the house. The Camden Development Policy DP27, paragraph 27.10, states that consideration should be given to the existence of trees. In the 'Basement Impact Report' attached (P.4, 2.7) it addresses this issue, and states that the existing trees (which are to be retained) are a minimum distance of 6.1m from the new excavations. Overall the impacts are considered to be minimal (Please refer to the report for further clarification).



Fig.09



Fig.10

7.0 APPEARANCE

Overall the proposal aims at achieving a complementary addition to the existing property. The proposed front elevation will have new windows and a bay installed at lower ground floor level, with a similar fenestration pattern, to match the existing windows at ground floor level. The lower ground floor level and the side unit will be built in red brickwork to match the existing property. The proposed rear elevation will have a bay similar in style to that which already exists. Bi-folding doors will be located at lower ground floor and ground floor level off the main reception room, with the addition of a balcony at this level. Careful consideration has been given to the fenestration pattern to ensure that it reads in conjunction with the rest of the property.

8.0 ACCESS

Access to the property will remain as existing. The main entrance to the property will remain unaltered and the access to the side unit will be provided via a bridge over the light well at ground floor level.

9.0 CONCLUSION

It is intended that the works to the building will enhance the appearance of the existing property and provide new accommodation to the currently unusable basement level. The front and rear facades have been carefully designed to replicate the original fabric of the building. The proposal will have no impact on the existing streetscape, as it will remain in line with the existing building.