

**Design and Access Statment for:  
117 Albert St, London NW1 7NB**

15<sup>th</sup> April 2013

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## English Heritage List Entry Summary

Name: Numbers 99-121 and attached railings

List Entry Number: 1378641

Location: Numbers 99-121 (odd) and attached railings, Albert St

Grade: II

Date first listed: 14 May 1974

Details: Terrace of 12 houses. c1845. Yellow stock brick, (Nos 111 & 121, painted) and rusticated stucco ground floors. No.119, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor refaced. Nos 99-107 & Nos 115-119 with C20 attic dormers, some in slated mansard roofs. 3 storeys and basements. 2 windows each. Doorways with stucco pilasters carrying entablatures, pilaster-jambs carrying cornice heads; fanlights and panelled doors. No.121 with architraved surround. Recessed sashes; Nos 101-115 ground floors with margin glazing. Upper floors with architraved sashes; 1<sup>st</sup> floors with console-bracketed cornices and cast-iron balconies (No.99, 1st floor casements). Stucco cornice and blocking course (Nos 103 & 119, cornice cut back).

Interiors: Not inspected.

Subsidiary features: Attached cast-iron railings with spike finials to areas.

National Grid Reference: TQ 28802 83633

## Location



Figure 1. Location plan

## **Pre-Application Submission – (Camden ref: 8263182)**

Nicholas Lee of Nicholas Lee Architects met with the planning officer Miheer Mehta and Conservation officer Antonia Powell of Camden Council, along with the clients, at the property on 26th February 2013 to discuss the pre-application. Subsequently a list of issues and comments regarding the ideas discussed on site were e-mailed by the planning officer (date 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013 copy enclosed) to Nicholas Lee Architects in response to the meeting.

## **Design Statement**

Our proposed extension works to 117 Albert St have taken on board all the comments from the pre-application report and are intended as a sensitive response to the site – recognising the restrictions upon it as a Grade II listed building – and the needs of the house's occupants. The proposed works seek to extend and adapt the property in a way that is sympathetic to the original character of the house and has no negative impact upon the surrounding area. Materials, design and construction techniques will be of a high quality to further support these aims.

Work will be carried out on all floor levels of the property, seeking to work respectfully with the original fabric and character of the house.

Our proposed extension will utilise high quality materials plus thermally efficient insulation and glazing when constructing new external surfaces in order to reach a high standard of environmental performance, in line with current building regulations and the Council UDP.



## **Proposed works**

### **Third floor**

The third (top) floor, which has been subject to a number of adaptations and changes over time, will be reverted to a simpler two bedroom, one bathroom pattern. This will involve little disruption to the layout, with the new (smaller) bathroom located where the existing one is situated and the remaining loft space separated into two neat bedrooms. Despite this not being part of the original house's accommodation, the intention is that this will better reflect the feel of the property.

Furthermore, the uncharacteristic spiral staircase (figure 2) will be replaced with a new, more traditional returning two-flight stair, reflecting those on the other storeys. The new stair will necessitate a new dormer window layout to the rear of the property, with the existing horizontal window (figure 3) removed and replaced with two new traditional dormer windows, built in line with the windows on the façade below and central to the spaces they serve, reflecting the traditional window placement of these properties.

### **Second floor**

The second floor will, much like the storey above, revert to a simple "two bedroom, one bathroom" layout. Following pre-application advice, any adaptations to the historic handrail will be carried out to minimise the impact upon it, with the one original door and doorframe on this floor retained and reused on this floor level.

### **First floor**

The first floor will see little change to its existing layout. Currently, one of the two original doors is blocked with a closed door panel and the architrave removed on the bedroom side. The intention is to open up this doorway and close up the other in the same way, relocating the "spare" architrave to the reopened doorway.

The existing dressing room will be converted into a new ensuite bathroom. In line with work in properties such as 113 Albert St, the rear window to the new bathroom will be dropped to floor level to allow the installation of two painted timber glazed doors, leading out onto a roof terrace.

## **Ground floor**

At ground floor level, the front space will be used as a living area, with the kitchen in the middle and the dining room to the rear, within the new extension. The main staircase (figure 4) will similarly be retained.

The hallway and corridor will be maintained in the section separating the new living space and hallway. The wall between the kitchen and hallway however, which is assumed to be non-original, will be removed (along with the door within it) and replaced in the same position with a new wall with a horizontal glazed strip, providing a visual link between the hall and the kitchen between countertop and upper cupboard level. A new sliding door will be installed between the new rear dining space and the hallway, to ensure fire regulations compliance.

The opening between the kitchen and new dining room will be brought down to floor level (figure 5) to allow movement between the spaces, with the opening widened slightly above kitchen counter level.

The existing heavily glazed extension (figure 6) will be replaced with a reclaimed London stock brick extension, designed to complement the existing house while differentiating itself through more crisp, contemporary detailing. A rooflight within the extension will cast light into the kitchen space, as the rooflights in the existing extension currently do.

## **Lower ground floor**

The lower ground floor level – which has been subject to a number of adaptations over the lifetime of the building – will also have a more simplified layout, which we believe will be more in keeping with the style of the house. A new corridor will be formed between the front basement level door, forming a more enclosed en-suite guest bedroom to the front of the property. The window to this room, currently an inappropriate 1970's window (figure 7), will be replaced with a timber sliding sash. This window replacement will be the only change made to the front elevation of the property (figure 8).

A simplified utility and two bathrooms (one being the en-suite to the bedroom) replace those currently in the central area of the floor, with the rear bedrooms combined into one larger family TV and music space. This space will also be extended into the existing sunken lightwell (figure 9) to the rear of the house, which we believe is currently out of character for the property. This back room will be lit from above by a flush rooflights set into the external garden decking. The existing stair will be repaired and retained.

**Access Statement**

Our proposed works to 117 Albert St will have no adverse effect to accessibility to or within the dwelling and will furthermore improve the residential amenity for its inhabitants. By removing level changes between the rear external space and the internal spaces, access between indoor and outdoor areas will be relieved of barriers to anyone with ambulant impairments, improving accessibility.





Figure 2. Non-original stair up to the third floor



Figure 3. Rear of the property, with the existing "horizontal" dormer windows visible





Figure 4. Main stair to be renovated and retained



Figure 5. View from existing living room towards the kitchen



Figure 6. Heavily glazed "lean-to" rear extension at ground floor level



Figure 7. Basement window to the front of the property





Figure 8. Front elevation of 117 Albert St (blue door)





Figure 9. Sunken lightwell to the rear of the property with modern horizontal windows