

Design & Access Statement

19 Elizabeth Mews, NW3 4UH

Planning Portal Ref: PP-02212418

27 September 2012

Summary

This application proposes a few external changes to the designs included in the application **2011/2844/P** and granted Full Planning Permission on 01-09-2011. As per the application, a small rear glazed extension, the extension underneath the existing undercroft and incorporation of the main entrance porch into the building remain largely unchanged. However, we are seeking a permission for a few minor changes to the external works as outlined in the section "Proposed Works" below.

Layout

The layout of the building on the site will remain unchanged. The house is part of the Mews and situated at the far, dead-end of the road. It is facing Elizabeth Mews and backing onto two private gardens; no 80 and 82 Belsize Park Gardens and onto the back yard of no 40 England's Lane. Like most other mews properties, the property has no private outdoor space.

The layout of the building - the distinct u-shape - is a memento of how the house we see today came to being as one entity. Each of the three volumes rising over the u-shaped footprint has different levels of internal floors as well as different ceiling levels and roof structures, not to mention the fenestration. The three were, most likely, independent buildings or sheds and, more then likely, built at different stages then brought together into one building at some point later. The two 'sides of the U' continue the pattern of other buildings lining the Mews, while the third one acts as a kind of bridge between them.

Proposed Works

The proposal is to refurbish and improve the overall characteristics of the building, maximizing it's volume without enlarging. One of the aims is to bring it into a single entity through subtle changes (also see attached plans, elevations, and photos). The existing footprint of the building remains unchanged. Instead, the full building volume is explored and put to use 'from within' by opening up the existing roof constructions and so offering more possibilities to inhabiting the space.

The design objective is to work alongside the features of the building's original character:

Mews-facing Elevations – External Works (Dwgs A022, A031, A032, A220, A310, A320, A500)

Further to the Full Planning Permission **2011/2844/P** (1 September 2011), the current application proposes the following design changes:

- A.) First Floor - Instead of a mixture of window types, we propose to retain the sizes and locations of the existing window openings but fit them with new, double-glazed windows of a coherent design. For this, we adopted the design of the only original 1st floor window – one on the South East elevation (see Section CC) – a box-sash window of painted timber construction. Keeping the openings unchanged in size and location would allow for continuity of reading the differences in their origin, the new window design would bring the currently missing coherent look to the property. The new double glazed sash units would also significantly improve the windows' thermal performance. The appearance and the positioning of the new units, in both elevation and section, will be as the existing window shown on Section CC. The relevant details are shown on Drawing A500.
- B) Ground Floor - The openings on the ground floor, as visible from the still remaining lintels at all sections of the property, were predominantly wide, garage-like doors indicating the original (predominantly) non-domestic nature of the ground floor in a mews house. Some of these have since become windows, the openings' proportions becoming wider than tall and one opening has a bay-window appearance. The proposal maintains the openings as exist, fitting them with a combination of sliding sashes and fixed double glazed fenestration.
- At the existing entrance door opening – see Section BB and the North West Elevation - we propose maintain the existing raised entrance platform (step) and fit a pair of timber framed and part-glazed doors. The doors are set back from the face of the building, clearing the original timber lintol in that location.
- A low, timber slatted refuse enclosure is proposed next to the entrance.
- A new, timber slatted gate is also proposed to close off the narrow passage into no 20 – see the North West Elevation – in order to prevent potential loitering in an area otherwise difficult to oversee.
- C) The small, existing Mews-facing skylight, will remain same size but be repositioned in accordance with the internal layout.

Garden-facing Rear Elevation – External Works (Dwgs A025, A250)

Compared with Full Planning Permission 2011/2844/P (1 September 2011) we propose a minor change to the elevation. At the roof we propose to insert an oblong-shaped skylight. Due to its' location in the property - the new stairway - the issue of overlooking the adjoining garden and property @ no 82 Belsize Park Gardens is avoided.

Roof Plan – External Works (Dwgs A012, A120)

The Full Planning Permission 2011/2844/P (1 September 2011) included no roof plans. As part of the proposal for 'inhabiting' the currently inaccessible attic spaces and generally overhauling the leaking roofs, the new thermal insulation will be added to all roof slopes. This will raise the roof ridge levels by no more than a few centimeters (about 7cm).

The total of four skylights will be inserted in the roof slopes, compared to currently existing two – two of the proposed skylights will be of the traditional, small roof-light proportions, no bigger than the two existing lights (about 60cm x 75cm). One new skylight will and the long, narrow skylight, situated in the short, garden facing roof slope, would be no more 250cm x 70cm. None of the new skylights, due to their location, will cause an issue of overlooking.

Scale

The scale of the proposed changes will all be within the existing building envelope with the following exception (already described above, but reiterated for clarity):

- The existing Entrance niche will be incorporated into the building, still clearing the exposed timber lintol .

Access

Access to the building will remain unchanged.