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Design & Access & Heritage Statement for 140 Gloucester Avenue, London NW1 8JA

The property is a three storey property with a basement. The first, second and third floors are form one self contained residential unit, the ground floor is an estate agents office and the basement is used in conjunction with the estate agent's business as a meeting room, small kitchen and general storage.

The property is in the Primrose Hill Conservation Area constructed in the mid 19th century and along with its neighbours in the terrace has undergone various changes over the years.

In 2010 an application was approved for a roof extension and terrace, similar extensions have been approved and constructed to the adjoining properties in the terrace.

Earlier this year a similar application incorporating a lightwell and staircase to new residential accommodation in the basement was approved at No. 146, just a few doors along. No 148 already has a lightwell and staircase to the basement.

The proposal is to extend the basement to the rear and convert part of the ground floor and the basement to a self contained two bedroom residential unit.

The area of required for a three person flat is 61m², the total area of the flat is 79m², so the proposal is compliant with the guidelines set by CPG2 paragraph 4.14.

The basement extension to the rear is approximately 2.1m² and incorporates the awkward angle to the rear of the site, making better use of the space.

The new sliding folding doors to the rear elevation make the lounge/kitchen area a light, airy and open space to live in.

The new lightwell and staircase to the front of the building are the same as that proposed for No. 146 Gloucester Avenue, provides an alternative access to the flat at basement level.

The existing vaults are to be used as bathroom and utility room.

The new window in the lightwell to the front bedroom in the basement will provide sufficient natural daylight to exceed 10% of the floor area as required by CPG2

A new wc and separate washing area is provided for the estate agents at ground floor.

A new bin store is provided in the common hallway.

The front elevation of the property will remain the same as existing with the exception of the railing around the new lightwell. In accordance with CPG4 the lightwell will be discreet and not harm the character of the building or the appearance of the surrounding area. The proposed lightwell and railings will be similar in appearance to those already approved at No. 146 and already in existence at No. 148. The floor to ceiling height exceeds 2.1m, which is the minimum requirement for the height in a basement.

The existing external area to the rear of the property at basement level is in poor condition and the new slabs laid on a permeable base, which are proposed outside the sliding folding doors will provide a pleasant area for outside seating. The existing step irons and gate, which provide the fire escape from the basement will be retained.

The front of the property will only change at ground floor with the addition of the railings and lightwell, which as stated previously will be similar in appearance to those at No. 148 and those already approved at No. 146. The extension to rear at basement level will not have any adverse impact on neighbouring properties, it will be constructed of brickwork to match the existing building and the glazed roof to the extension will be partially concealed by the boundary wall.

The main access at ground floor will remain the same as existing and will provide access to the shop and both the existing flat and the new flat. The new access to the basement level will be via the new staircase and lightwell at the front of the property.

It is clear from the appearance of the front of the property and the existing opening at basement level giving access to the vaults, that this property along with the others in the terrace used to have staircases and lightwells with railings at street level and these were at some point all covered over.