DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

FORMING PART OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION

IN RESPECT OF

SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION,

FLAT 1, 37 FORTESS ROAD, LONDON NW5 1AD

Site address

Flat 1 37 Fortess Road London NW5 1AD

Date	November 2011

Planning Application No. (if relevant)

Contact details

Applicant	Newquest Developments Ltd

Name	**Agent** P C Bensted B.Sc., MRICS
Address	**Address**
7 Heathgate Place 75 – 83 Agincourt Road London NW3 2NT	Fenton Associates 246 – 248 Great Portland Street London W1W 5QY
Postcode NW3 2NT	**Postcode** W1W 5QY
Telephone 0844 209 4782	**Telephone** 020 3214 5000
E-mail	**E-mail** peter@fentonassociates.co.uk

1.00 Background and Features of Existing Site

The existing accommodation which is the subject of the current application consists of an existing self-contained two bedroom flat situated on the lower ground floor of No. 37 Fortess Road, a purpose-built end of terrace property which is currently subdivided into five self-contained two and three bedroom flats. The existing building has a double-width basement and an open garden area to the rear of the two lower ground floor flats. To the side of the main building, above the western side of the front lower ground floor flat, there is an open space which is presently used for parking a single car.

The outward appearance of the existing building suggests it was originally constructed approximately one hundred and ten years ago, in a specification typical of the late Victorian/early-Edwardian era. In fact, the property is of reinforced concrete framed construction and was constructed approximately thirty years ago to match the appearance of the original terrace of houses.

It incorporates a steel and timber framed mansard roof with a flat asphalt covered top section and steeply inclined mansard slopes to the front and rear covered with fibrous cement slates. There are lead clad dormer projections to both the front and rear, each fitted with traditional single-glazed timber sliding sash windows.

The external walls are a mixture of solid brick construction and cavity brick-blockwork construction, built around and secured to the aforementioned reinforced concrete frame. The front elevation incorporates a series of decorative features which match the appearance of the older, adjoining terrace property to the west, including a decorative cornice at high level and moulded rendered window surrounds with a painted finish. (Although the outward appearance of the front elevation is similar to the adjoining property to the west, a number of dissimilar building materials have been used, including fibre-glass for the high level cornice, in lieu of the brick and rendered cornice next door, and reinforced concrete for the projecting first floor balconies, instead of natural stone).

The external rainwater downpipes and soil and vent pipes have been run in plastic and the windows are a mixture of single-glazed sliding sash and timber casement windows with a painted finish.

Internally, the structural floors have been constructed from reinforced concrete and form an integral part of the part of the main reinforced concrete framework. These have been overlaid with a variety of finishes, including laminate flooring, ceramic floor tiles and vinyl sheeting.

The internal walls are a mixture of solid brickwork between the existing flats with a plastered finish, and non-loadbearing timber studwork with a plasterboard and skim-coat plaster finish, which has then been painted.

The building is situated on the northern side of Fortess Road, close to the heart of Kentish Town, but is not within a Conservation Area.

Over the years the applicants have carefully considered extending the rear lower ground floor flat, where additional accommodation is required. They have investigated alternative ways of extending this flat which would allow them to maximise the full potential of the available space but would not reduce the size of the garden or the available amenity space. This brief has formed the basis of the planning application drawings which now form part of the current application.

2.00 Changes to Site And Design Considerations

The proposed alterations will involve the formation of a new self-contained one bedroom extension to the rear of the existing property. The layout and configuration of the new extension will enable a small dedicated garden area serving the subject flat to be retained,

albeit that the layout will be reconfigured. The new extension will incorporate materials which match and therefore blend with the existing components of the rear elevation, as shown on the drawings which accompany the planning application.

Prior to formulating the current proposal, we have paid due regard to the recently adopted Camden Planning Guidance 2011, (Stage One, adopted by Cabinet on 6th April 2011), particularly CPG1 – Design and CPG3 – Sustainability. Accordingly, we would like to highlight the following design considerations which have determined the size and appearance of the current proposal:

- The new extension is a modest single storey extension which will blend with the existing finishes. This will ensure the new extension will have a minimal impact to the outward appearance of the existing building and will not disrupt the continuity of the existing terrace, when viewed from the rear.

- The existing Juliet Balcony to the rear of Flat 3 on the first floor will be retained so that the flat roof of the new extension cannot be accessed from the first floor; this will thereby avoid problems of overlooking from the first floor which would otherwise have resulted if the roof had been used as a terrace.

- Several of the adjoining buildings in the terrace, of which No. 37 forms part, have already been extended to the rear and the proposed extension would not therefore look out of place.

- The Street Scene along this part of Fortess Road will be unchanged by the proposed works.

- The proposed changes have been designed so that they match the scale and proportion of the existing building components and pay due regard to the amenity of the occupiers and neighbours.

- The new rear extension has been designed to take account of the guidance contained in CPG1, Sections 4.9 – 4.18, Rear Extensions. In particular, we would draw your attention to the following points:

    i. The new extension has been sized and located so that it does not spoil the appearance of the property or harm the amenity of the neighbouring properties in terms of outlook and access to daylight and sunlight.
    ii. The new extension is secondary to the main building in terms of location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing.
    iii. The new extension respects and preserves the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style.
    iv. The new extension respects and preserves the existing architectural features.
    v. The new extension allows for the retention of two reasonable sized gardens to serve the two lower ground floor flats, Flats 1 and 2. The existing arrangements, whereby these two flats each benefit from a dedicated garden space will not therefore be compromised by the new extension. The materials which have been chosen are sympathetic to the existing building.
    vi. In order for the new extension to be subordinate to the original building, the height of the new extension respects the existing pattern of the rear extensions which have been introduced further along the adjoining terrace.
    vii. The width of the new extension has also been designed so that it is not visible from the street and does not undermine the rhythm of the existing rear extensions.

3.00 Access

Access into the flat will be possible from a new dedicated main entrance to the rear of the building. This will be positioned close to the position of the existing flat entrance door which will be removed to enable the internal layout to be reconfigured, as shown on the drawings.

Access to the other flats in the building will be unchanged, and will still be via the shared communal entrance door to the front of the building.

In view of the fact that the existing approach-ways from both the rear and the front of the block will remain unchanged, the proposed works should not have any impact upon the relationship between public and private routes into and around the building.

4.00 Landscaping

The new extension will involve re-definition and re-landscaping of the two gardens to the rear of the building serving Flats 1 and 2, on the lower ground floor of the block. These are the only flats within the building which presently benefit from a garden space.

5.00 Impact Upon the Street Scene

The impact of the changes to the rear of the building will not have a noticeable effect on the Street Scene within Fortess Road, and will not detract from the building itself which is devoid of any special architectural features of note.

6.00 Sustainability of the Proposal

The new extension has been designed to comply with current Building Regulation requirements and take full account of Part L, relating to conservation of fuel and energy. The new windows will be thermally efficient double glazed units and the walls, roof and other structural components will satisfy current Building Regulation requirements in order to minimise heat loss through the structure, avoid cold-bridging and minimise the incidence of condensation.

Consideration is currently being given by the applicant to low energy and renewable energy forms of fuel although the specification for the actual system(s) to be used is unlikely to be finalised until planning consent has been obtained.

The constructional details of the new extension, which have not yet been finalised, will be tailored to take full account of the Code for Sustainable Homes with the aim of achieving the highest practical Environmental Impact Rating for a new property on this particular site. Ideally, a Zero Carbon Rating (Rating 6) will be the objective, but until it is known whether or not the proposed scheme is likely to receive favourable consideration by Camden Council, it will not be possible to formulate the full extent of the Sustainability Propopals nor therefore to finalise the rating. We will however be happy to discuss your requirements in this regard, once the application has been validated and is then given formal consideration.

7.00 Provision for Storage of Waste and Recyclable Material

The existing building incorporates a shared bin-store enclosure within the front garden area. This will be unaffected by the works. However, the applicant is currently considering changes which will conform to the requirements of Section 10, Waste and Re-cycling Storage of CPG1.

8.00 Ancillary Information

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines provided by CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) and the recently adopted Camden Planning Guidance 2011, particularly CPG1 – Design and CPG3 - Sustainability.

The recently adopted Local Development Framework which has now been adopted alongside Camden's Existing Development Policies confirms that the Council wants to encourage developments with high densities in the most accessible parts of the borough, including this part of Kentish Town. It is recognised that any such schemes will need to be of excellent design quality and should sensitively consider the amenity of occupiers and neighbours and the character and built form of their surroundings, particularly in Conservation Areas.

We have endeavoured to satisfy these requirements and hope that the planning drawings and this accompanying Design and Access Statement provide sufficient justification for approving the current application.

We have appended to this Design & Access Statement a number of photographs of the existing building, which hopefully help illustrate the size and setting of the current site.

If there are any queries relating to this Design & Access Statement please contact Peter C Bensted B.Sc., MRICS at Fenton Associates on 020 3214 5000 or by e-mail peter@fentonassociates.co.uk

PCB/FENTON ASSOCIATES/AS
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