

## **Design and Access Statement**

**Project:** 4 Pond Square, London N6 6BA  
Reduction of floor level in existing basement and kitchen and waterproofing of lower ground walls. Strengthening of beam in ceiling of basement. New outside door in basement and new double door at the rear.

### **I. Description and justification of the planning application**

On 27.07.2010 planning approval for the waterproofing of the basement walls and the excavation of the ground to accommodate a concrete slab was obtained, Ref.No. 2010/2301/L.

A more detailed examination of the intended work and a more holistic view towards an integral solution of functional issues such as waterproofing, with architectural ones, led to the decision to revise the design and to resubmit for planning.

The decision, whether this newly submitted application should supersede the received approval or if it should be treated as a new, additional approval, is a decision which will be taken by the Council according to internal considerations.

We herewith apply for:

- 1. Proposed dining room in the existing basement**
  - 1.1 Increase of existing room height from 2.0m to proposed 2.2m through excavation.
  - 1.2 New floor structure.
  - 1.3 Strengthening of existing timber beam in ceiling.
  - 1.4 New outside door/window as burglar-resistant unit.
  - 1.5 Waterproofing of all lower ground walls with a waterproofing system as approved in the previous planning permission.
- 2. Refurbishment of existing kitchen on the ground floor**
  - 2.1 Increase of existing room height from 2.115m to proposed 2.185m through excavation.
  - 2.2 New floor structure.
  - 2.3 New additional door opening with matching door to existing.
  - 2.4 Improvement of details at rear façade.

### **II Design concept**

**To Point 1: Proposed dining room in the existing basement**  
**See also drwgs. 18.23, 18.23.1, 18.24**

The existing basement can't be used since the humidity of the walls and floor don't permit its use even as a storage space. The room height is only 2m and the floor is the original soil.

The property does not have a dedicated dining-room and a table in the kitchen is used for dining. We propose to refurbish the basement as a dining-room and to upgrade at the same time the WC with a lobby and the existing storage room as a utility / storage room.

To Point 1.1: Increase of existing room height of 2.0m to proposed 2.2m through excavation:

We propose to excavate the basement to a depth of 500mm. The existing room height would be increased by 200mm to 2,200mm and the remaining 300mm would accommodate a concrete floor, the required floor insulation, the screed and the final floor.

To Point 1.2: New floor structure (see drwg. 18.23.1):

The party walls and the supporting walls don't have explicit foundations. They terminate approx. 50mm under the existing soil level. Excavation requires support of these walls through underpinning or through a system which keeps the existing compressed soil under the walls in position.

The adjoining properties are structurally connected. There are no joints between the properties which would allow free movement of each individual house. The underpinning system involves the risk in future that the underpinned property will become more rigid and stable than the adjoining properties.

We therefore propose the second system in which the compressed existing soil under the walls remains untouched. The foundation system of the property is therefore unchanged. The new concrete slab has an up-stand which prevents the existing walls from moving inwards (see floor-structure plan and section on drwg. 18.23.1).

These up-stands will be integrated into cupboards or the joinery of the wall cladding (see basement floor plan on drwg. 18.23.1). The up-stands are not visible in the habitable room area and appear only in the WC and the storage area.

To Point 1.3: Strengthening of existing timber beam in ceiling.

The existing timber beam supporting the ceiling is itself supported by the wall of the staircase. This does not conform with the existing ground floor solution in which the beam of the ground floor ceiling spans from party wall to party wall.

Since we would like to open up the stair to the new dining-room to obtain natural lighting in the stairwell and also to integrate the kitchen area with the dining area optically, we suggest strengthening the timber beam and removing the internal partitions. This is shown in section A and B of drwg. 18.24. The new structure is in the floor cavity and therefore will not be visible.

To Point 1.4: New outside door/window as burglar-resisting unit.  
See dwgs. 18.25 – 18.30

The existing timber door in the basement does not have the architectural quality of the sash-windows or the entrance door. The profiling is simple and heavy and the usually fine detailing of Georgian doors is missing.

In addition, the timber door is not burglar-resistant and has to be secured by a metal mesh in the glass area and two horizontal bars from the inside.

We propose to use a steel window system by the Swiss company Forster (see drwg. 18.30). This system combines the following criteria:

- a. The profiling is slim in its frontal appearance. This matches the slim appearance of the sash-windows above and also allows more natural light into the new dining area, see proposed exit from basement on drwg. 18.25 and the inside elevation of proposed door on drwg. 18.26.
- b. Additional hollow sections can be applied to the system, which open up the possibility of interrupting the flash appearance to result in fine detailing similar to the traditional moulding. See detail drawings 18.27 and 18.28.
- c. The security bolts are integrated into the hollow sections and are not visible.
- d. The system allows heavy toughened glass to be installed which results in a burglar-resistant unit.

The unit would be painted in white, matching the sash-windows. We think that the proposed solution is possible on the following grounds:

- a. The unit is not in direct contact with the existing timber windows.
- b. The unit is on basement level under the front garden level, and therefore is not part of the composition of windows and doors which constitute the Georgian façade.
- c. The profiling, with additional hollow sections matches the slim appearance of standard timber doors, but with the additional advantage of security requirements.

The unit would be an integral part of a window "alcove solution" in the inside, see internal view on drwg. 18.26. The sloping sides of the cupboards increase optically the width of the relatively small door and allow more natural light into the room.

## **To Point 2: Refurbishment of existing kitchen on the ground floor** **See also drwg. 18.22, 18.31 and 18.32.**

The existing room height is 2115mm. The floor is a tiled solid concrete slab which is uninsulated towards the ground. The existing floor is also uneven and sloping (approx. 25mm).

The dominant feature of the kitchen is the ceiling with the visible beam structure and the view through the double door towards the terrace outside.

The design concept of the new kitchen proposal is to enhance the connection of the room with the outside terrace and to simplify the design from inside and outside. We propose to open up the existing window to a double door matching the existing. This enhances the connection inside / outside and also the natural light and sun input from the south into the room and down the stairwell into the dining-area.

To Point 2.1: Increase of existing room height of 2.115m to proposed 2.185m through excavation.

We propose to excavate the kitchen floor to a depth of 370mm. The existing room height would be increased by 70mm to 2,185mm and the remaining 300mm would accommodate a concrete floor, the required floor insulation, the screed and the final floor.

The step from the entrance area into the kitchen is now 100mm and would increase to 170mm as the step from the kitchen to the terrace.

To Point 2.2: New floor structure:

The outside walls are already extended into the ground and the excavation would not extend under the existing foundations. Therefore no underpinning or special construction as adopted in the basement area is required.

To Point 2.3: New additional door opening with matching door to existing:

On drwg. 18.31 and 18.32 the existing and proposed views of the proposal are visualised. Inside the room the door opening is already marked with a recess of the outside wall. The existing window is almost a second thought in the building process and does not relate to the wall structure nor to the kitchen layout.

From the outside, the new double door would simplify the façade. The brick arch, all the door dimensions and materials will match the existing door.

To Point 2.4: Improvement of details at rear façade:

We would like to use the opportunity of doing this building work to improve the general appearance of the façade. Many small details have been added or changed during the years without regard to the whole appearance of the façade. Most obvious is the pipework, but also the lighting. A repositioning, as shown, will be mostly sufficient to enhance the appearance.

### **III. Access**

The access to the basement is from outside via the existing steps which will remain. From inside, the existing timber staircase will be replaced by a timber stair which will comply with Building Regulations.

The property is not suited to disabled use, since the entrance is only accessible via steps, and also the interior levels require stairs and steps.

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