

4 October 2011

Portland House Penthouse extension, Ryland Road, Kentish Town, London

Design and Access statement

The proposal is for an additional set back 5th floor which provides a single penthouse residential unit. The lower floors have consent for 9 residential units and office space is retained at basement, ground and first floor levels for our client. The annexed trade showroom is unaffected by the proposed alteration.

Design

Portland House consists of a five storey brick built 19th century industrial building with a mostly submerged basement floor. Generally the height of the new additional floor is kept below the line of the existing goods lift over run, with the exception of the new residential lift which will need to serve the penthouse floor. The passenger lift over run is set well within the building foot print and therefore unlikely to be seen from ground level.

The penthouse floor plate has been designed to minimise the visual impact from the street, by setting back the penthouse face from the building edge. A previous planning approval for B1 extension had allowed an approximately 800mm set back floor on the north, south and west elevations, but for residential use it was felt that this should be increased to provide meaningful amenity space for the occupants. The north elevation is set back from the building edge by a minimum of 1.35m adjacent to the goods lift overrun and extends to 3.4m as it approaches the north-west corner of the building. The west elevation is set back 1.35m at its north edge and extends to 3.8m on the south edge. The south elevation is set back 1.55m along its entire length. The tapered forms of the terrace are intended to allow maximum floor space where viewing corridors are short – such as from the north - but minimise the visual impact where views of the building can be seen at distance – such as from the south and west. The south elevation looks particularly short compared to the actual length of the building. The wider terraces at the north-west and south-west corners are purposefully adjacent to the living areas where they will be of most benefit to the occupants.

The extensive use of glass at this level is intended to contrast with the solidity of the existing brick building as well as offering expansive views across London and masses of natural light into the apartment. The solid elements meanwhile are clad in horizontal zinc panels with standing seams. This material combination is also used on the adjacent showroom building extension completed previously.

Access to penthouse floor

The entrance to the penthouse is via what is currently the main entrance to Delbanco Meyer's offices on the south side of the building. The existing exterior steps have been removed and the internal ground floor level to the lift lobby will be lowered to enable level access for the residents and their visitors. The

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existing lift shaft has been enlarged and now solely serves all the residential units. There are no internal changes of level within flats. These access arrangements have recently been approved – ref 2011/1484/P. The penthouse is served by two means of escape via the existing external and internal escape stairs.

Lifetime Homes Standards

The building already has planning consent for 9 residential units and despite a requirement for only 10% of the units to comply all the approved units adhere to Lifetime Home Standards. The penthouse will be no exception. In accordance with the Lifetime Home Standards, all criteria have been addressed. The following points correspond to each criteria:

1. Two parking spaces positioned immediately adjacent to the residential entrance enable a 1200mm pathway alongside. Being positioned next to the entrance means there is minimal travel distance from the parking space and entrance with no changes of level encountered, other than falls needed to successfully drain the car park.
2. See point 1 above.
3. See point 1 above
4. The residential entrance has been lowered from the existing raised ground floor to ground level to enable a level threshold. A new internal lift enables all visitors to access all residential units without the need for steps or ramps. Entrances to apartments are positioned to allow straight-on access with an 800mm clear width. The communal entrance as a double door exceeds the 800mm clearance required and benefits residents when moving large items in and out of the building. Internally to every dwelling entrance and the main entrance, there is sufficient space to incorporate a 300mm nib on the leading edge. Weather protection to the main entrance is provided in the form of a glass canopy as indicated on drawing 1051.08 as approved.
5. The existing concrete stairs are retained but the risers and goings already comply with requirements. The handrail will be upgraded to adhere to current building regulations, such as reducing gaps to less than 100mm and height of handrails increased to a minimum of 900mm. The lift shaft has been designed to accommodate a lift car with internal dimensions of 1100 x 1400mm and serves just the ground floor and residential units on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and proposed 5th floors.
6. The internal hallway meet the minimum requirement for a 900mm clear width but are all generally approx. 1300mm wide. This also enables straight-on approach to all internal doors, all of which meet the requirement for a minimum clear opening of 750mm. Positions of all doors allow for a 300mm nib on the leading edge of the pull side.
7. The generous floor plan incorporates open plan living/dining/kitchen spaces and so can easily accommodate wheelchair movements if the resident's furniture arrangements allow. The master bedroom is sufficiently sized to allow at least a 1000mm clear path on three sides of a king size bed and so exceed requirements.
8. The proposed dwelling is entirely on one level therefore all rooms are wheelchair accessible.
9. See point 8 above.
10. See point 8 above.

11. All internal partitions will be constructed from 2 layers of plasterboard each side of a 50mm metal stud to ensure strength, resilience and acoustic properties with the incorporation of insulation. As such, the introduction of grab rails, etc, can be easily accommodated if required.
12. See point 8 above.
13. A new steel structure will be sufficient to accommodate hoists should the need arise. The principle bedroom and second bedroom incorporate ensuites for ease of access.
14. See point 13 above. There is at least one bathroom in each dwelling which complies with diagram 14b and always applies to each ensuite which are larger than required.
15. At penthouse level there are no new windows enabling external thresholds to be level.
16. As required to meet Building Regulations Part M, service controls will be positioned between 450mm and 1200mm above floor level in each dwelling.

Parking

Parking is provided on the south side of the building as now. The spaces will be split - 5 for residential use and 5 for commercial use and marked accordingly. Public transport in the area is good, with bus routes, Kentish Town West and Kentish Town stations just minutes away on foot. Secure bicycle storage is provided adjacent to the residential entrance but can be shared with users of the commercial premises. Users of the commercial premises who are utilising the parking provisions can access the west entrance by walking around the south west corner of Portland House next to the showroom building.

There are two parking spaces positioned immediately adjacent to the residential entrance that allow disabled visitors to park with a minimum 900mm wide access path alongside. This exceeds the requirement for 10% of residential units to have access to a parking space for disabled drivers.