

# DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

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## CHANGE OF USE – 8 SOUTH VILLAS, NW1 9BS

This statement is submitted to accompany a planning application [Planning Portal reference PP-01636507] for 8 South Villas. The statement has been composed in line with the CABE guidance document, 'Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them' and [www.lifetimehomes.org.uk](http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk). The statement will consider the impact of the proposed works and their immediate environment.

8 South Villas is a terraced mid-1860's mildly Italianate style building, situated on the northeast side of the Camden Square Conservation Area – which is essentially a residential area, predominantly consisting of similar Victorian terraces, originally built as single-family dwellings.

This application seeks permission for 'change of use' from two maisonettes back into a single dwelling, as supported by the Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (November 2010) which encourages the reinstatement of original characteristics within the area.



Street View of South Villas Looking North-East

## USE

As previously described, the property currently comprises of two maisonettes. The smaller of the two (Flat 1) occupies the majority of the ground floor, and the entire lower ground floor, from which it can also be accessed via an external side door. This maisonette has possession of the rear garden.

Entry into the larger maisonette is via the main front door at ground floor level – all of the upper floors are allocated to this division.

The proposal seeks permission for change of use from the two-maisonettes, back into a single family dwelling, therefore reverting to the original use of the property.

## AMOUNT

- The existing gross internal area of Flat 1 is: **113.9sqm**
- The existing gross internal area of Flat 2 is: **124.8sqm**
- The existing gross internal area of the communal hallway is: **5.9sqm**
- The gross internal area of the proposed single-family dwelling is: **244.6sqm**

## ACCESS

The proposal involves minimal change to the access to the property.

The principal entrance will continue to be via the front door at ground floor level – here, the 1820mm external flight of stairs will be retained, as they are a period feature of the house. The stair width is ample and there is an existing handrail in place.

Due to the nature of the building and the topography of the site, stepped access is unavoidable. However, the existing stepped approach to the side entrance will be modified to create 4 ambulant steps – these will fully comply with both Part M and Lifetime Homes standards.

The proposed works are minimal, however, any proposed doors / corridors will comply with Part M and Lifetime Homes standards.

## LAYOUT

Due to the minimal nature of the works, the layout of the existing house is mostly unaffected by the proposal.

However, the existing internal entrance doors to Flat 1 and 2 will be removed in order to open up the ground floor plan. The kitchens to the upper floors will be converted into a store/utility, in order for the building to operate as a single-family dwelling.

The lower ground floor plan will be converted into a Lifetime Homes friendly zone, and adapted to include a bedroom and accessible bathroom.

## SCALE

In terms of scale, the proposed scheme will remain as existing.

## LANDSCAPING

The proposal does not involve any landscaping.

## APPEARANCE

The proposal does not involve altering the external appearance of the building, other than adjusting the external front side steps in order for them to be classified as 'ambulant.' Similarly, the application proposes minimal works internally - therefore the aesthetic will remain largely unchanged.

## PHOTOGRAPHS



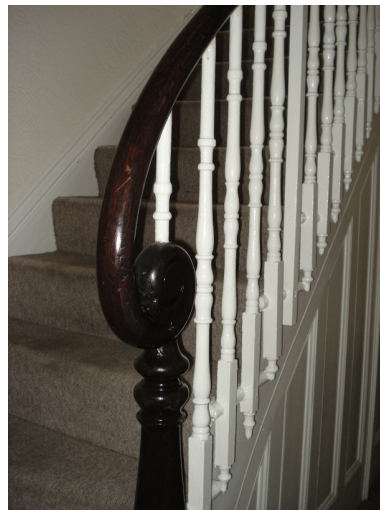
Front Elevation to 8 South Villas



Rear Elevation to 8 South Villas



Front Window to Basement Level



Staircase Detail

## **LIFETIME HOMES**

Whilst it is important to apply Lifetime Homes standards where possible, there are also inherited restrictions to consider in the case of conversions. With regards to this application, these include: the minimal nature of proposed works, the period features of the building, and the topography of the site in which it is situated.

As a solution, we have created a Lifetime Homes-friendly zone on the lower ground floor, which will be accessed via external ambulant steps. The plan at this level will be compliant with these standards, whilst also forming an indivisible connection with the rest of the house, as this is where the kitchen and living room are situated.

This document addresses each of the Lifetime Homes criteria, and describes how we have adhered to them where feasible/ relevant.

### **(1) Parking (width or widening capability)**

*"Principle: Provide, or enable by cost effective adaptation, parking that makes getting into and out of the vehicle as convenient as possible for the widest range of people (including those with reduced mobility and/or those with children)."*

This scheme does not include any parking provisions; therefore Criterion 1 is not applicable.

South Villas is a resident permit zone, this facility can be utilised by inhabitants if desired.

### **(2) Approach to dwelling from parking (distance, gradients and widths)**

*"Principle: Enable convenient movement between the vehicle and dwelling for the widest range of people, including those with reduced mobility and/or those carrying children or shopping."*

The existing property does not include parking provisions, therefore Criterion 2 is not applicable.

### **(3) Approach to all entrances**

*"Principle: Enable, as far as practicable, convenient movement along other approach routes to dwellings (in addition to the principal approach from a vehicle required by Criterion 2) for the widest range of people."*

Due to the topography and inherited design of the building - the main entrance cannot conform to Criterion 3, as an original flight of stairs, exceeding minimum requirements connects the main front door to street level.

The side entrance at lower ground level will adhere to the guidelines. Here, the existing stepped approach will be modified to create 4 ambulant steps. A new handrail will ensure that these are fully compliant with Lifetime Homes and Part M. At 900mm, the width of the path and stairs is also sufficient.

All approach routes will consist of firm, reasonably smooth, non-slip surfaces.

#### **(4) Entrances**

*"Principle: Enable ease of use of all entrances for the widest range of people."*

At ground floor level, stepped access is unavoidable due to the historical detailing of the house, which is protected by the Camden Square Conservation guidelines.

However, at lower ground level the entrance will adhere to Criterion 4, as the proposal includes a: 1200x1200mm external landing, a level threshold and an 800mm clear door width with a nib greater than 300mm to its leading edge on the pull side.

Both entrances will be illuminated using fully diffused luminaries. Covers will not be installed over either doorway, as these would appear incongruous within the otherwise uniform streetscape.

#### **(5) Communal stairs and lifts**

*"Principle: Enable access to dwellings above the entrance level to as many people as possible."*

This is a private dwelling; therefore Criterion 5 is not applicable.

#### **(6) Internal doorways and hallways**

*"Principle: Enable convenient movement in hallways and through doorways."*

As previously described, this application proposes minimal changes to the fabric of the building.

However, all existing hallway/landing widths exceed 900mm. All new doors will meet the minimum requirements outlined by Lifetime Homes in terms of door widths and nibs.

#### **(7) Circulation Space**

*"Principle: Enable convenient movement in rooms for as many people as possible."*

Within the lower ground floor living room, a clear 1500mm diameter turning circle, or a 1700x1400mm turning ellipse is easily achievable, even with furniture in place.

Similar circumstances apply with the formal living room and dining room at ground floor level.

The kitchen has a clear width of 1200mm between unit/ appliance fronts and the enclosing wall – this is maintained for the entire run of the units and worktop. The run is continuous and includes a built-in oven, hob, sufficient work surface area and a sink. The kitchen also features a clear 1500mm diameter turning circle.

Several of the bedrooms are capable of having a clear space of 750mm at either side and to the foot of the bed.

## **(8) Entrance level living space**

*"Principle: Provide accessible socialising space for visitors less able to use stairs."*

A living room is provided at lower ground level – this will provide seating / socialising space for household visitors. The kitchen is also at this level.

There is also a second living room and a dining room situated on the ground floor level.

## **(9) Potential for entrance level bed-space**

*"Principle: Provide space for a member of the household to sleep on the entrance level if they are temporarily unable to use stairs (e.g. after a hip operation)."*

There is a permanent bedroom at the side entrance level. The room is compliant with Lifetime Homes standards, and includes windows and a heat source. The bedroom is within easy reach of the living room, kitchen and accessible bathroom.

## **(10) Entrance level WC and shower drainage**

*"Principle: Provide an accessible WC and potential showering facilities."*

An accessible bathroom (compliant with Part M and Criterion 14) will be provided at the lower ground entrance level.

## **(11) WC and bathroom walls**

*"Principle: Ensure future provision of grab rails is possible, to assist with independent use of WC and bathroom facilities."*

Walls within the lower ground floor level bathroom will be capable of firm fixing and support for adaptations such as grab rails, at any location within the height band of 300-1800mm from floor level.

## **(12) Stairs and potential through-floor lift in dwelling**

*"Principle: Enable access to storeys above the entrance level for the widest range of households."*

The lower ground floor level contains the principle living accommodation, the kitchen, a main bedroom and an accessible bathroom, therefore, a suitable route for a through-the-floor lift from the entrance level, need not be identified.

If required a seated stair-lift could be installed.

## **(13) Potential for fitting of hoists and bedroom / bathroom**

*"Principle: Assist with independent living by enabling convenient movement between bedroom and bathroom facilities for a wide range of people."*

At the lower ground level, there is a direct relationship between the bedroom and the accessible bathroom as the two rooms are adjacent. Therefore, a reasonable route could be identified, should single point ceiling hoists need to be installed above the bed, bath and WC.

#### **(14) Bathrooms**

*"Principle: Provide an accessible bathroom that has ease of access to its facilities from the outset and potential for simple adaptation to provide for different needs in the future."*

The bathroom provided at lower ground floor level is accessible, and within easy reach of the corresponding bedroom - See Criteria 13.

Capped drainage for an accessible floor level shower will be installed beneath the bath, should the need for it to arise. In addition, there is a clear 1500mm diameter circular or 1700mm x 1400mm elliptical clear manoeuvring zone, should the bath be removed.

#### **(15) Glazing and window handle heights**

*"Principle: Enable people to have a reasonable line of sight from a seated position in the living room and to use at least one window for ventilation in each room."*

There are no proposed new windows within the development. Much of the fenestration is original and therefore will be retained; this is unproblematic as the majority of the windows provide a view outside when seated.

Within the lower ground floor living room - glazed double doors provide an undisrupted view and access into the rear garden. In addition, the bay window to the front elevation ensures south-east sunlight and a view into the front garden, which is staggered.

The size of these rooms ensures that the approach routes to these fenestrations would far exceed the 750mm required.

These windows are openable from the base as they are original sash windows.

#### **(16) Location of service controls**

*"Principle: Locate regularly used service controls, or those needed in an emergency, so that they are usable by a wide range of household members - including those with restricted movement and limited reach."*

The proposed works are minor, therefore all service controls will remain as existing.

**This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by:**

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