

31 WILLES ROAD LONDON NW5 3DT

PLANNING APPLICATION TO LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN: 01/11/2009

DESIGN STATEMENT: 6 NO. PLANTER BOXES AT REAR OF 31 WILLES ROAD NW5
5 Pages + 4 Photo Sheets

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1ST NOVEMBER 2009

Background / Time Line

31 Willes Road is a single dwelling house at the south corner of the junction of Willes Road and Inkerman Road, London NW5. The property falls within the Inkerman Conservation Area. It is an end of terrace house, originally built in approx 1860. Its front (NE) elevation faces onto Willes Road and the side (NW) elevation faces onto Inkerman Road, ie the part of Inkerman Road between Willes Road and Grafton Road. (See Location Plan)

Planning Permission for alteration and extension of 31 Willes Road was granted in Camden's Decision Notice/Approval of Planning Permission dated 22 September 2003 (Application Ref: 2003/0289/P). The approved works were carried out in accordance with the Planning Permission in 2004 and 2005.

Mr and Mrs Ferraro bought the house in February 2007. The 6no. metal planter boxes (to which this Planning Application relates) were placed on the rear flat roof on 27th June 2007, and in the following days they were filled with earth and planted using a selection of flowering and non-flowering plants. Other smaller plant pots (with plants) were also placed on the rear flat roof in April-June 2007.

NB: 31 Willes Road is a single family dwelling and there are no planning or legal impediments to the use of the flat roof of the rear extension as a terrace. Such activity can properly be seen as part of the overall enjoyment of the use of the house. (Also there are numerous roof terraces within the Inkerman Conservation Area.) Please note that the rights to use the rear flat roof in this way at 31 Willes Road have not been removed by the Council in the same way that they were for the flat roof area at the front of the house, ie behind the parapet on the front elevation. (Ref: Camden's Decision Notice of 22 September 2003, Condition 4.)

Following an anonymous approach to the Council in mid-2009, a letter was issued to the Owner/Occupier of 31 Willes Road (Mr Ferraro, the Applicant) by Development Control Planning Services, LB Camden. The letter was dated 25th September 2009 from Mr Simon Cullen, Camden's Ref: EN09/0397. The letter was headed 'Possible Breach of Planning Control' regarding alleged unauthorised aspects of a roof terrace at 31 Willes Road.

Since receiving the Council's letter, Mr Ferraro has made written representations to LB Camden Development Control, with a view to resolving the matter. (Relevant points are repeated here.)

In summary, it remains Mr Ferraro's view that there is no outstanding requirement for Planning Permission. However, following discussions and a site visit/ full inspection at 31 Willes Road by Mr Cullen, Development Control takes the view that Planning Permission is required for the 6no. metal planter boxes.

This Planning Application covers the scope and extent of the Council's concern in the matter.

Location/ Immediate Surroundings

The 6no. metal planter boxes are located on the rear extension of 31 Willes Road, which is on the Inkerman Road side of the plot.

Facing the rear of the house (to the SW) is a blank wall, which is the rear wall of business premises facing 'side on' to Inkerman Road, and 'front on' to Grafton Road (46 Grafton Road). NB: 31 Willes Road has a brick built garage facing onto Inkerman Road (as September 2003 Planning Permission). The garage lies between the back extension of 31 Willes Road and the blank wall of the commercial property behind.

There is a residential property at 33 Willes Road, on the opposite side of Inkerman Road to no. 31, with its front (NE) elevation onto Willes Road and its side (SE) elevation onto Inkerman Road. This is a house that's been sub-divided into flats, and there's a roof terrace at first floor level at the rear of the property, on its back extension, facing onto Inkerman Road.

Outside Amenity Space at 31 Willes Road

31 Willes Road has no rear garden or private outdoor amenity space, except the rear flat roof area where the 6no. planter boxes are located.

There is a small front garden at ground level, but this is not appropriate for sitting out due to lack of privacy. This front area houses planting and dustbins, and the entrance path to the front door of the house.

Design and Arrangement of the Metal Planter Boxes; Sizes of Planter Boxes; etc.

The planter boxes are simple rectangular metal boxes made of stainless steel, to a high standard. They are arranged in two rows (at right angles), in-board from the parapet of the brick external walls of the rear extension. There is one row of 4no. boxes parallel with the NW elevation of the rear extension (facing onto Inkerman Road), and another row of 2no. boxes parallel with the SW elevation of the rear

extension (see Dwg. No. WR/RF/02). These latter 2no. boxes face onto the blank rear wall of the commercial premises at no. 46 Grafton Road. (See photos)

The 6no. metal planter boxes are all 420mm wide and 750mm high. They vary in length from 1330mm to 1570mm. Their lower part is masked from view from Inkerman Road by the brick parapet of the external walls of the rear extension, so the exposed height is only 600mm above the brick parapet (when viewed in true elevation from the Inkerman Road side). When viewed normally (ie obliquely) from street level, the effective height is less than 600mm, as the planter boxes are set back from the face of the wall. (See photos)

Please note that the NW and SW brick elevations of the rear extension of 31 Willes Road were in fact built slightly lower than shown on the Approved Drawings (ref. the September 2003 Planning Permission). The height of the external walls of the rear extension (to the top of the brick parapet) is 450mm less than shown on the Approved Drawings, relative to datum and the external pavement level in Inkerman Road.

As a result, the height in elevation of the top edge of the planter boxes is maximum 150mm (6 inches) above the height of the brick walls as approved in 2003. Therefore the planter boxes could not reasonably be considered as being of inappropriate bulk, massing or height.

(NB On this point, Mr Ferraro takes the view that, should he so wish, he has the right to build up the brick parapet walls of the rear extension by 450mm, as per the 2003 Planning Permission. However, without prejudice, Mr Ferraro prefers at this stage to achieve Planning Permission for the current arrangement of the 6no. planter boxes.)

Materials and Appearance

The 6no. planter boxes are made of flat panels of stainless steel and are left unpainted. This is compatible with materials used in parts of the Inkerman Conservation Area, including this part of the Conservation Area (ie Inkerman Road between Willes Road and Grafton Road). This part of the Conservation Area is characterised by a variety of different building types and uses, with buildings using a variety of materials. (See photos)

The overall appearance of the planter boxes is much enhanced by the plants they contain, which spill over the tops and sides (see photos). They provide attractive and much needed green planting in this part of the Conservation Area, and they enhance the green character of the Conservation Area.

Impact of the Planter Boxes on Other Properties and the Conservation Area

The 6no. metal planter boxes cause no harm or detriment whatsoever to other properties, or to residential amenity. For example, they do not cause any

overshading, or any loss of daylight or sunlight to any habitable rooms or other buildings, or to 31 Willes Road itself.

The lack of harm and lack of detriment are due to the location of the planter boxes relative to other buildings, and the design.

Please note that the 6no. planter boxes have been in place since June 2007, and during that time Mr and Mrs Ferraro have received no complaints or objections from neighbours or others, regarding loss of amenity or any problems regarding the planter boxes or the plants they contain. Quite the reverse is true as, for example, Mr and Mrs Ferraro have been stopped in the street on numerous occasions and complimented by passers-by and neighbours on the attractiveness of the planting and the planter boxes, as seen from Inkerman Road.

In short, attractive planter boxes with attractive planting in this location at the rear of 31 Willes Road provide significant amenity in their own right. The planter boxes and their planting are to a high standard of external landscape design, and they enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In particular they enhance the 'green character' of the Conservation Area.

These are all objectives contained in the Inkerman Conservation Area Statement, published in March 2003. (For example, 'Ink 41'.)

To assist a better understanding of the 6no. planter boxes, as installed, please see the Notes below and attached Photosheets.

Photo Sheet 1 : Willes Road / Inkerman Road – Context

A. Front elevation of 31 Willes Road, facing onto Willes Road. (NB As an aside, all stonework and cornices have been restored and replaced if damaged or missing.)

B. Oblique view of terrace of houses in Willes Road. No 31 is on the right.

C. Side elevation of 31 Willes Road, facing onto Inkerman Road. This view is looking towards the front of the house. The property in the distance is opposite no. 31, ie no.36 Willes Road. The metal planter boxes can be seen on the top right of the photo.

Photo Sheet 2 : Inkerman Road (Willes Road to Grafton Road) – Street Scene

A. Looking from Willes Road towards Grafton Road. 31 Willes Road is on the left. 33 Willes Road is on the right. The side door into no.33 (from Inkerman Road) is the entrance to the ground floor flat. The window in the side elevation of the rear extension of no.33 is a window in a corridor within the ground floor flat. All other buildings in this part of Inkerman Road are commercial buildings (not residential).

B. View from rear of 31 Willes Road, looking down into Inkerman Road. The building opposite with the glazed elevation at ground floor is an office building on ground and first floors. (NB This glazed front is normally covered with an unpainted steel roller shutter across the whole area of the glazing. The metal box to house the steel shutter runs along the top of the glazing.) The terrace in the distance is the rear of properties in Grafton Road.

C. Side elevation of 31 Willes Road, facing onto Inkerman Road. This view is looking towards the rear of the house. The metal planter boxes at the rear of 31 Willes Road can be seen in the centre right of the picture.

Photo Sheet 3 : Rear of 31 Willes Road / adjoining buildings / other roof terrace

A. View along the pavement in Inkerman Road (towards Grafton Road). The back extension of 31 Willes Road is on the left and the metal planter boxes can be seen top left. Behind the back extension is the garage of 31 Willes Road (behind the parking sign in the picture), and behind that is the commercial building with the blank wall facing the rear of 31 Willes Road.

B. The roof terrace to a flat over commercial premises in Inkerman Road, behind 31 Willes Road. The roof terrace has a metal balustrade and overlooks Inkerman Road.

C. View from the rear of 31 Willes Road, showing the blank wall of the commercial premises behind.

Photo Sheet 4 : Flat roof at rear of 31 Willes Road

A. View looking to the rear, showing the metal planter boxes and planting. These enhance the green character of this less green part of the Inkerman Conservation Area.

B. Ditto, as A, but turning more to the south, looking across the rear gardens at the rear of properties in Grafton Road, which are obscured and not visible.

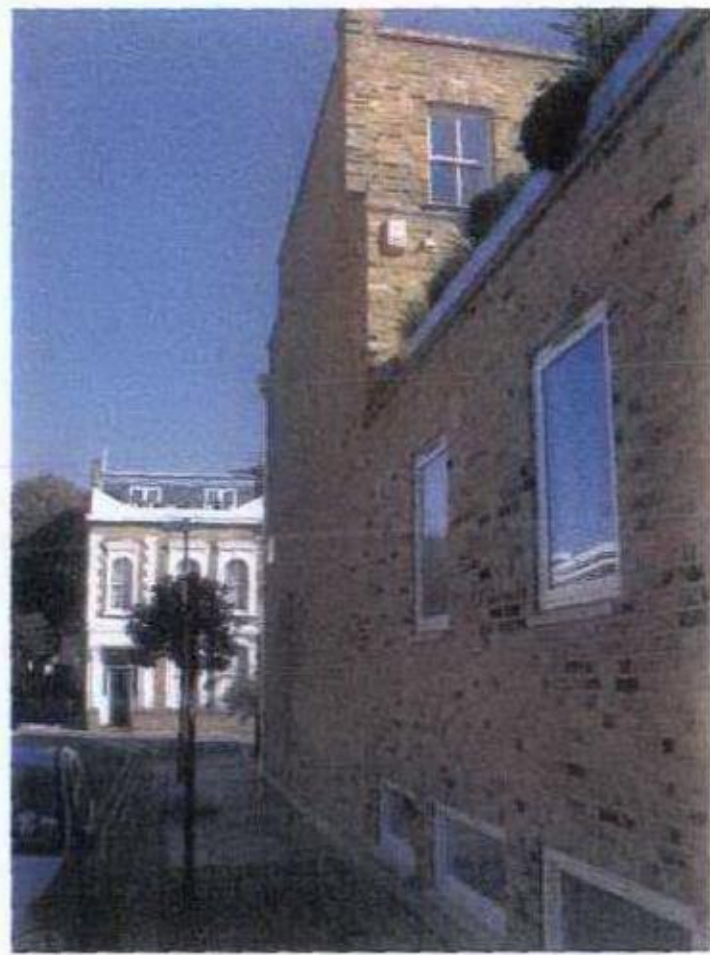
C. Ditto, as B, turning more to the south.



A



B



C

PHO
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①



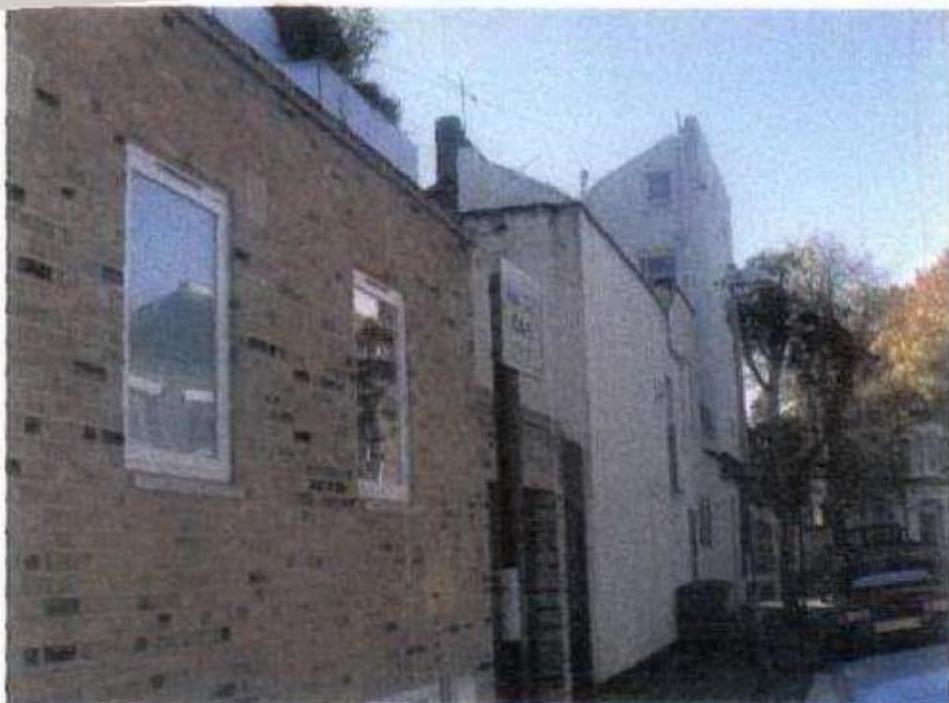
A



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A



B



C

④



A



B



C