

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR PROPOSED UNDERGROUND MEDIA ROOM AT BASEMENT LEVEL TO REAR GARDEN OF 8 ST KATHARINE'S PRECINCT, REGENT'S PARK, LONDON NW1 4HH

1.00 INTRODUCTION

The applications relate to a proposal to construct underground Media Room to the rear garden of 8 St Katharine's Precinct.

St Katharine's Precinct is located to the North East side of The Park with Gloucester Gate to the North and Cumberland Terrace to the South. 8 St Katharine's Precinct is towards the middle of the North terrace of four houses with a shared rear pedestrian walkway giving access to The Outer Circle via a gate set within the Precinct railings.

The houses were built in 1826-28 to a design by Ambrose Poynter. The design is in the style of "Collegiate Gothic" and is in contrast to John Nash's use of stucco-clad classicism in the villas and terraces within Regent's Park.

Poynter's buildings consisted of the main chapel, six clergy houses, a school and Master's Lodge (sited across the Outer Circle and facing the main precinct). The precinct was arranged around a courtyard in which there was a conduit for the supply of water. By the end of the 19th century the properties had become grace and favour retirement homes for royal retainers and eventually became private houses the freehold being vested in The Crown Estate. The house and properties within the Precinct are now Grade II* Listed.

The Listed Building Description for The Precinct is as below:-

Location: Nos.1-3 AND 6-9 (Consecutive) and attached railings

Street: St Katharine's Precinct

Grade: II*

Reference No: 798-1-151382

Date of listing: May 14 1974

Description:

Domestic collegiate buildings of the Royal Hospital of St Katharine, now private dwellings. 1828-1828. By Ambrose Poynter. Grey brick with stone dressings. Symmetrical composition comprising 2 similar blocks (Nos 1-3 & 6-8) linked to The Danish Church, The Pastor's House and St Katharine's Hall (qqv) by an arcaded screen wall. EXTERIOR: each block of 3 storeys and attics. No.9 in the form of a porter's lodge, fronting the Park and attached to No.8. Main blocks with 3 windows; Nos 1 & 8 with canted oriel windows and sculptured coats of arms on returns facing the Park. Four-centred arched doorways with fanlights and panelled doors. 3-light sash windows with stone architraves and mullions; 1st floor with hoodmoulds. Stone 1st floor sill string. Similar string above 2nd floor windows; stone-capped parapet forming gables to attics with 2-light windows. Slated roof with tall moulded brick Tudor style chimneys appearing between the gables. No.9, L-shaped lodge. Grey brick with stone dressings. Slated pitched roofs with stepped brick eaves. 3-light windows with stone architraves and mullions on gable ends. Porch in angle with pointed arches and round arch on columns. To right, a brick chimney-stack rising from the ground floor beyond the roof line, with stone pedimented

sculptured coat of arms at eaves level. Stone string following line of gable on ends. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings to Nos 6-9 areas. (Survey of London: Vol. XIX, Old St Pancras and Kentish Town, St Pancras II: London: -1938: 101-115).

2. 00 DESIGN, SUSTAINABILITY & HISTORICAL IMPACT

Camden Council granted planning permission and listed building consent on 22nd January 2007 under references 2006/4812/P and 2006/4813/L for the Excavation of the rear garden of 1 St Katharine's Precinct to create an underground swimming pool and gymnasium with new lightwells and associated railings. On 18th September 2006 Camden Council granted planning permission and listed building consent for the erection of basement and ground level extensions, new dormer at 3rd Floor level and internal alterations at 1 St Katharine's under references 2006/0698/P and 2006/0699/L. These approved extensions to 1 St Katharine's Precinct echoed the detailing of the original structure in its use of grey Gault bricks and stone dressings. The extensions were designed to compliment and enhance the original building being a reconstruction of an earlier demolished part of the building set behind the retained front and side walls.

As part of the documentation and to discharge a Condition of consent for 1 St Katharine's Precinct a Land Contamination Preliminary Risk Assessment Report was carried out by a specialist for the Precinct in May 2007. The Report was extremely comprehensive and concluded that there was no contamination of the site.

The Local Authority has also granted planning permission and listed building consent in the past for underground extensions at Nos: 6 and 9 St Katharine's Precinct.

The current applications seek consent for proposed Media Room/Bedrooms located in the rear garden area and set totally below ground level. The initial constructional stage would involve contiguous piling to the perimeter of the proposed extension followed by the excavation of the garden area and the construction of an insulated reinforced concrete box with a sunken roof structure. In support of the applications Jampel Davison & Bell Consulting Engineers have prepared Structural Engineer's Reports to accompany the applications.

Within the box structure at the rear it is proposed to create an external courtyard to give light and air to the underground rooms. Within the courtyard a York Stone staircase flight is shown giving access to the shared rear walkway with enclosed refuse and garden stores under. Once the main structure has been completed the garden and paved areas would be reinstated on top of the reinforced concrete roof and the site would look much the same as before.

This scheme is similar albeit on a reduced scale to the underground swimming pool and sunken garden that Kerr Parker Associates Architects carried out at 1 Cornwall Terrace, Regent's Park in 1985-86. Listed Building and Planning permission were granted by Westminster City Council under reference 840400 on 15th June 1984.

As the proposed structure is set below ground level and the garden reinstated above there is minimum impact on the existing Grade II* listed building as the structure is not visible. The historic listed building and its setting would not be affected by the works and as such addresses paragraph 3.5 of PPG15.

The fact that the proposed building is underground allows the construction of a sustainable structure with high insulation values to walls floor and roof in keeping with Policy SD9 Resources and Energy of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan. The roof structure itself is not only an insulated structure but has a minimum depth of 500mm of soil and grass acting as additional insulation.

This high value of insulation enables the size of the boiler plant to be kept to a minimum so reducing running costs. Indeed the waste heat generated by the electric lighting would make a contribution towards the heating of the building volume.

As the underground structure has openable doors to the sunken courtyard giving natural ventilation and daylight there is no requirement for air cooling and related plant. The structure is well insulated and would provide a comfortable environment.

The soil conditions in this part of Regent's Park are London Clay. As the building is below ground and the garden areas are reinstated with a planted roof laid to lawn there would be no change in the water table condition. As part of the design it is proposed to set storage rainwater storage tanks below the paved areas of the garden to create a sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) to use in the irrigation of the planted areas.

As the existing buildings are Grade II* and the proposal is for an underground extension the contents of the Lifetimes Homes Standards are only applicable as regards to the Building Regulations. The extension will comply with the Building Regulations in all respects.

In summary the amenity of adjoining properties would not be materially affected; there would be no material loss of open space; the structural stability of adjoining and adjacent listed buildings would not be put at risk and there would be no loss of trees.

In January 2008 Ove Arup & Partners Ltd Geotechnics Division prepared a detailed Scoping Study Report for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea to consider Subterranean Development in response to a rise in the number of planning applications involving subterranean development in RBKC, and the public's perception of the impacts of such developments. This is an ongoing study but their initial conclusions were that subterranean developments have been successfully achieved in London and elsewhere over many years. In general these successful projects have been undertaken by experienced, competent teams who recognised potential hazards and mitigated against them.

3.00 LANDSCAPE

The intention is to reinstate the garden after the underground rooms have been completed. It is proposed to relay existing York Stone paving that would

be set aside during the course of construction. The grass lawn on top of the roof structure would be reinstated.

As there are existing Plane and Ash trees on the other side of the main rear boundary brick wall in Gloucester Gate and a small fig tree within the garden of 9 St Katharine's Precinct it was considered appropriate to commission a Tree Report from IMS (Usher) Limited. Ushers recommended excavating two trial pits to the rear gardens of 7 & 8 St Katharine's Precinct. Ushers inspected the pits once the excavations were completed and took record photographs. Ushers concluded that there was low risk to these trees. A copy of their Report, photographs and Trial Pit drawing accompanies these applications.

It is also proposed to construct a raised brick planter with the base left open for drainage at the rear of the courtyard to provide a green backdrop to the garden when reinstated. IMS (Usher) Limited have made recommendations for landscaping the garden and planting within the raised brick structure in their supplementary report dated 26/03/09 following a meeting on site with the Council's Landscape Officer. This report is submitted as part of the application.

4.00 USE

The underground extension is incidental to the enjoyment of the main dwelling house for single family use and their guests and friends. It is not intended to have any commercial application.

5.00 SIZE AND LAYOUT OF ACCOMMODATION

At 8 St Katharine's Precinct the existing floor area of the house amounts to 355 square metres. The proposed underground extension adds 49 square metres and a further 9 square metres of floor area is obtained by the addition of a structural glass floor over a void within the existing conservatory.

The access to the underground extensions is via the basement of the existing house. At ground level the garden is linked to the rear pedestrian access by a pathway over the structural zone allowed for piling machines and contiguous piling. The rear open courtyards formed at basement level allow for an alternative means of escape from the underground rooms.

6.00 ACCESS

The underground extension is for private use for the benefit of the owners. As such the vehicular and transport links are not relevant to these applications. Having stated this fact it is however worth considering access during construction. This will be via the existing rear pedestrian access walkway that is wide enough to take a small piling rig. The spoil from the excavations would most likely be removed by a combination of conveyor belt and grab lorries. The owner has a right of way over the rear pedestrian access route to The Outer Circle. Gloucester Gate is located beyond the main boundary wall. Access to the Precinct forecourt itself would not be required for the removal of spoil and as such the building works would have minimum impact on the amenities of the existing residents within the Precinct.