

Design and Access Statement:

Site: 37 John Mews, London WC1N 2NS

The principles / factors influencing the design:

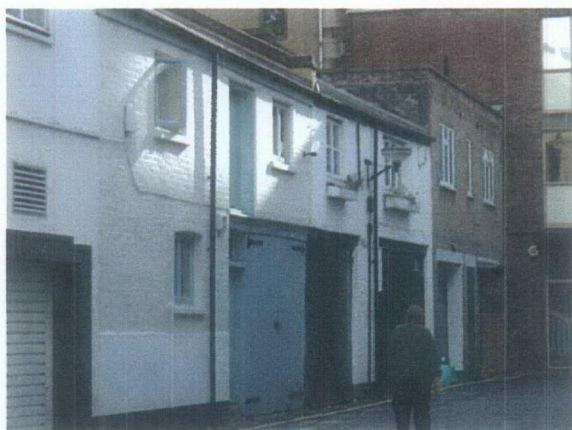
John Mews is a quiet street, terminated at the southern end with the library on Theobald's Road, and forms part of the Bloomsbury conservation area. 37 John Mews is the middle property in a terrace of three, 2-storey mews houses, which are dwarfed by many of the neighbouring buildings. Unusually for a mews property, 37 John Mews has the benefit of a large garden at the back, which is dominated by the presence of a mature London plane tree in the adjoining property (see below). Due to the variety in scale and type of the surrounding buildings, we believe that no 37 could be sensitively developed to increase the size of the property; maintaining the character of the mews, without adverse affect on the neighbourhood.

Design proposals:

The ground floor is currently used almost exclusively for parking; however, the redevelopment of the ground floor is restricted by a load bearing wall near the back of the building, leaving a strip of accommodation too narrow to be converted to living space. We would like to remove the load-bearing wall, and transfer the structure to the existing garden wall beyond. We are planning to reduce the parking provision to a single garage (but wide enough to keep bicycles as well), and redevelop the rest of the GF as auxiliary space to the accommodation above. We propose increasing the floor area of the FF in line with the GF below, and adding a second storey above, which will convert what is effectively a 1-bedroom flat into a 3-bedroom house (proposed GIFA = 160m², an increase of approx 70m²). Demand for housing in Camden exceed supply, therefore, with a shortage of available land, it makes sense to increase the capacity of what we have.

The brickwork on the front elevation will be raised in line with the adjacent property to the south. The second floor accommodation will be set back behind the parapet, with a mansard roof in accordance with current planning guidelines, so that it does not have an unfavourable affect on the skyline. There will be a small terrace at the front, mainly for maintenance, with a larger roof terrace at the back, overlooking the garden.

The scale and character of the mews house at the front will be preserved, however, the back will be more open. The mews house will be retained as a residential property with a domestic garage for private use.



37 John Mews looking towards the library

Trees:

There is a large plane tree about 3,5m from the back wall of the building, just on the other side of the boundary wall to the south (marked on plan). About 9 months ago, my clients carried out an extensive survey of the roots – a trench 2m deep was dug along the boundary wall, however, there was little evidence of roots on our side. Photographs were taken and the Camden Tree officer, Kevin Fisher made a site visit, concluding that introducing new foundations along the back wall were unlikely to have a detrimental affect on the tree. As a precaution, we have consulted out structural engineer, who has said that the foundations could be adapted if necessary.



2m trench along boundary wall, tree on RH side

Conclusion:

We have had informal discussions with the Camden planning department, consulted the UDP and the supplementary planning guides and believe that our proposals to redevelop the site will preserve the quality of the local conservation area, whilst increasing the capacity of much needed residential accommodation.



Front view looking toward the library



Front view looking north



view from garden looking towards library and plane tree



rear view of 37 john mews