

**7a BUCKLAND CRESCENT
LONDON NW3 5DH**

DESIGN ACCESS STATEMENT

January 2009 Scheme 5

1. INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for an extension to the rear of the property at lower ground/garden level to provide extended kitchen, dining and living space, together with an additional shower area attached to bedroom 3. The scheme also includes various alterations to enable wheelchair access from street level down to the lower ground floor level by means of a scissor lift, in addition to the alteration to a number of existing door openings to provide 900mm clear opening width and a wheelchair access to one bathroom of adequate size located in Bedroom 1 as shown.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

The property is located in the Swiss Cottage conservation area. The building itself is a semi-detached Victorian villa of grand proportions and within the context of surrounding roads and buildings is considerably larger in width and depth, with a large garden to the rear. The building was converted into four self-contained apartments in 1985.

There are two recent planning applications that have a bearing on the proposal now being submitted for planning approval.

i) Application No PWX0002795/R1 case file: G7/13/23

The first relates to the property in question and was granted in 2001 under the Application No PWx0002795/R1 case file: G7/13/23. This application was approved on the 26 February 2001, and was for a single storey extension to the lower ground floor apartment (No 7a) providing additional kitchen/dining areas.

Some of the approved works were carried out under this planning application, mostly internally, however the single storey extension was not implemented. It is questionable as to whether this planning approval is still extant as more than five years have elapsed since it was granted. Although some of the internal works have been started and executed it could be argued that this approval is still valid.

ii) Application No 2006/2894/P

The other planning approval is Application No 2006/2894/P that was granted on 28 September 2006 for a single storey extension at lower ground floor level to No 9 Buckland Crescent. The approval has been implemented and the rear extension has been built. In addition to this application a further application was submitted for the addition of a side extension contiguous with the Kitchen

of the new extension. This side extension goes to the side boundary wall adjoining No 7 Buckland Crescent.

A two-storey rear extension was constructed at No 9 providing additional kitchen space on the lower ground floor and a conservatory at ground floor level. This configuration was copied at No 7, and both these extensions were presumably undertaken sometime after the buildings were converted into apartments around 1985.

In any event the projection into the garden of both these two storey extensions at No 7 and No 9 measured from the original rear elevation walls is approximately 3.4m.

It is interesting to note that the recent planning application No 2006/2894/P in favour of No 9, approved a single storey extension which projects a further 4.3m into the garden area, making a total projection of 7.8m measured from the original rear elevation of No 9.

iii) Pre-Application Correspondence and Meetings:

In August 2008 a letter and a series of plans were emailed to Sheri Waddell at the Camden Planning Department requesting comments and advice on Scheme 3 which proposed a similar single storey extension projecting into the garden by approx 4.5m and aligning with the recently completed single storey extension at No 9.

This request was forwarded to Eimear Heavey, and a response was received from her on the 28 August 2008. In this email Eimear Heavey suggests that the proposals might be considered acceptable but that a projection of 7.5m from the original rear elevation would be too great and that a reduction of this projection would be more likely to receive consent.

A reply to Ms Eimear Heavey's email was sent on the 17 September requesting clarity on a number of points. The recommendation to this email from Ms Heavey was to contact the conservation officer for further detailed clarification.

An email was sent to Mr Alan Wito, Conservation officer for the area in question, and an on-site visit was arranged for the 23 October 2008. After this meeting Mr Wito responded in an email dated 11 November with his views and recommendations.

Essentially Mr Wito considered that the projection into the garden would be too great and suggested a lesser projection so as to make the new extension subservient to the main building.

A further conversation with Mr Wito indicated that he would be more or less agreeable with the plan 517.40 (Scheme 4) subject to a number of small alterations that have been included in the latest Scheme 5 proposals submitted as part of this planning application.

Mr Wito's advice provides for an overall projection into the garden as measured from the original rear elevation wall of No 7 as being 6.3m (see attached drawings 517.40 Scheme 4).

2. PLANNING POLICY

There a number of policies applicable to the submitted proposals namely Built Environment B1 - General Design Principles; B3 Alterations & Extensions; B7 – Conservations Areas; SD1 – Quality of Life.

SD1 – Quality of Life

The proposal has incorporated, as far as is practicable with a Victorian building of this age and its existing configuration and layout, facility for wheelchair access. The main difficulty has been the front access way, which is presently only accessible by steps from the street level to lower ground floor level. Therefore a combination of ramping, steps and a lift have been devised to allow for wheelchair access, which will require some minor alterations to the front side entrance.

The existing entrance gate and gas meter cupboard will be removed and a lintel installed approximately 750mm higher than the exiting lintel.

A scissor lift is proposed to cover approximately 1400mm difference between the FFL of the lower ground apartment and the new levels from street level.

In order to provide wheelchair access within the apartment two existing door opening will be slightly widened to provide 900mm clear width. A bathroom has been incorporated into bedroom 1 as shown to enable wheelchair access. It is intended that the lower ground will be made up to provide a level floor throughout.

B1 – General Design Principles

- a) & b) • In order to provide adequate access to the site for wheelchair access some minor alterations to the front of the building will be required.
 - The space between the flank elevation wall of the building and the boundary wall will be retained so that adequate means of access can be maintained to the side and rear of the building.
 - h) • Building lines have been adopted, particular the rear extension building line, with advice from the conservation and planning officers prior to the application being submitted.
 - j) • The height of the new parapet walls around the new rear single storey extension will be approximately 450mm above the finished roof level. With advise from the planning and conservation officers the scale and bulk of the new extension will be subservient to the main building and existing conservatory at ground floor level.
 - l) • The materials will match the existing stucco detailing which has been applied to the ground and lower ground floors of many of the surrounding buildings to provide additional reflected light as much as to blend in with the surroundings.
 - o) • Because the rear gardens are raised in relation to the finished floor levels of the lower ground floor the visual impact is minimal, in addition the garden itself is some 25m in length to the rear boundary wall a feature which reduces the visual impact from other neighbouring properties.
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B3 – Alterations and extensions

- a) • The rear gardens of Buckland Crescent are substantial and many of the existing trees are set well back from the rear facades of these buildings. However due to the maturity of many of these trees there is very good foliage cover during the summer months adding to the privacy to each garden one from the other.
- b) • The proposed extension is subordinate to the original building, and sits well within the context of the large rear garden.
- e) • The fenestration of the sliding folding doors has been designed to allow as much light into the building whilst relating to the existing fenestration of the conservatory at first floor level that is plain and simple. The organization of the windows has also been aligned to the existing fenestration of the conservatory above providing a balance to the elevation.

B7 – Conservation Areas

- A • The proposal has adopted the detailing of the surrounding buildings, and the garden itself is higher than the internal floor levels of the lower ground floor area, so that the new extension does not appear to be too high or overbearing.
- It is considered that the proposal meets the requirements as set out in B7.

3. AMOUNT OF ACCOMMODATION

It is proposed to increase the floor area on the ground floor by approximately 32sq m (gross). The existing basement floor area (gross) is 143 sq m.

4. SCALE AND APPEARANCE

The scale and appearance of the proposal is within keeping with the various policies and requirements set out in Camden's UDP, and with the help of the planning and conservation officer the bulk and size of the proposal meets their requirements.

Attention has been given to the building materials and will be match as closely as possible the type and colour of the existing building.

5. LANDSCAPING

The proposal will include the excavation of part of the existing raised garden to provide outside space around the new extension sufficient to enable good use of the area.

6. ACCESS

The access component of a design and access statement relates to access to the development and also the layout of within the building. The present access to the building is via the front garden area, which has been given over to parking some years ago. It has not been easy to incorporate wheelchair access into the building but with careful consideration it is possible to satisfy the needs under SD1 both externally and internally.

7. SUMMARY

In general the proposals are in keeping with the style of the surrounding buildings and context, and will enhance the existing building as well as its surroundings.

8. CONSERVATION

At each stage of the development of the scheme we have been in contact with both the planning and conservation officers at Camden and trust that, whilst their views or not necessarily the opinions of the Council, their views have had some influence on the application. Their views and advice has been acted upon and the proposals modified to reflect their input.

We therefore trust that the Council will review the application favourably and recommend it for approval.

Elliot Camp Associates
January 2009
