

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Ground and Lower Ground Floor flat, 3 Belsize Park, London NW3 Planning Application Submission

Following the meetings held on 28 October 2008 and 20 January 2009 with Camden Planning Services, the following report is submitted to obtain Planning Application permission for the project for a garden conservatory at the above property.

1.0 The existing property

3 Belsize Park is a Victorian semi detached house, typical of its location on the East side of Belsize Park, which lies within the Belsize Park Conservation Area. The property considered in this report is the garden flat located at Ground and Lower Ground Floor level.

The front of the property is and will remain unaltered.

To the rear of the property the facade presents a concrete balcony which runs along the full width of the Ground Floor level. A painted cast iron stair placed at the centre of the façade connects the balcony with the garden below. This structure is in a poor state of repair.

At Lower Ground Floor the main bedroom used to be connected with the garden through a conservatory built below the balcony. A planning application was granted in 1986 to retain this conservatory, though it fell apart later due to its bad structural condition. The floor pavement of the conservatory and brick parapet to the garden remain today.

2.0 Development proposed

The new scheme consists of the enclosure of the space below the balcony providing a garden conservatory to the Lower Ground Floor.

Due to its poor condition, the proposal necessitates the dismantling of the existing balcony, stair and remains of the former conservatory.

The conservatory will utilise the full width of the rear façade, the entire construction lying within the property boundary. A reinstated concrete balcony will be supported on two flank walls built to the North and South sides of the property in brickwork to match the existing fabric. The Lower Ground façade to the garden will be glazed with the sliding doors set back from the main facade line. A new

built stair will be located to the North side of the property, the balcony being protected with a new balustrade.

The extent of the proposed scheme has been carefully considered to minimize the external impact. The height of the party walls remains unaltered. The projection of the new structure into the garden is reduced since the former conservatory occupied a deeper footprint than the proposed extension.

3.0 Materials

The use of materials for the proposed extension is designed to complement the existing house. Its primary elements, the flank walls, will be built in bricks to match the existing fabric. Elsewhere materials are simple, with the metal framing to the glazing being kept as thin as possible.

The balcony slab will be built in pre-cast or insitu concrete and glass lens construction (Luxcrete or similar). The light coming through the pavement will improve the natural light gain in the lower ground floor rooms.

The proposed staircase will consist of timber treads on a metal structure, finished to complement the conservatory facade.

4.0 Consultations with Camden Planning Department

Initial Consultation: with duty planner Mr Rob Tulloch, 28 October 2008

The initial consultation was based on an earlier version of the scheme.

It was recommended to issue the drawings to the Conservation and Urban Design Team for pre-application advice due to the property forming part of the Belsize Park Conservation area.

Second Consultation: Pre-planning application advice submission, 14 December 2008

Existing and proposed drawings of the first scheme were submitted for pre-planning advice.

In response to our enquiry a letter from Mr. Tulloch was received on 24 December 2008, stating that a full width rear extension would be acceptable in principle. Concern was raised over the proposed staircase: it was considered to be too obtrusive because it had the balustrades trailing down to the ground. Advice was given to break up the full glazed rear facade, in terms of depth or material.

Third Consultation: with duty planner Ms Jasmine Hancock, 20 January 2009

This consultation was based on a revised scheme that addresses the pre-planning advice comments: the new glazing has been set back from the edge of the rear facade to create different planes in depth, and the staircase design was changed so the railings do not trail to the ground. The advice received was to submit the drawings for Planning, since there was no obvious reason why the application should be contentious, the glass facade being considered less obtrusive with the character of the existing building.

5.0 Access statement

The existing building is a Victorian semidetached terrace house, and the access conditions will not be altered by the proposal. Furthermore, the inclusion of a new stair and removal of existing structure in bad condition will improve the accessibility of the garden.