

4 St Augustines Road London NW1

Issue 2 - February 2009

Design and Access Statement

accompanying planning application dated October 2008

Design Process

The design has been significantly informed by recent consultation and advice with the Councils Design and Conservation officer and follows on from the submission of a previous application for residential development in September 2008.

Design Context

Site photographs



view looking towards 6 St Augustines Road



View from Agar Grove looking towards the rear of 6 St Augustines Road



view looking towards 27 Agar Grove



view looking towards the Murray Arms

Site Description

The site is an island site as it is bounded on 3 sides by Agar Grove, Murray Street and St Augustine's Road. The most direct relationship with other buildings is with those opposite and adjacent in St Augustines Road.

Along the south side of St Augustines Road are 3 storey semi-detached Victorian villas rising to 4 storeys approximately 30 metres from the development site. On the opposite side of St Augustines Road there are larger Victorian villas of a more elaborate stucco rendered character.

On both sides of the road the villas are set back by 6 metres from the site boundary. The development proposals maintain this building line.

On the opposite side of Murray street is the Murray Arms which is built right up to back of pavement line and is a tall 3 storeys.

Design Character

The site lies at the entrance to Camden Square from Agar Grove, it's also bounded by St Augustine's Road and Murray Street within the Conservation Area. The site is important as the gateway into Camden Square but it's also extremely significant in it's location as the long distance focal point for views which don't relate to Camden Square itself.

Agar Grove is a busy through route from Camden to Islington and a significant approach to the Kings Cross redevelopment sites. The land rises as the road approaches York Way and the design must address this important view, it's an opportunity to define this exciting open corner. There are distinctly different aspects to the approaches to the site, the corner is pivotal, with heavy use by pedestrians and vehicles throughout the day and night. The building needs to be dynamic and energetic. The proposals allow for an expression of this continual movement in a built form, the building curves in three dimensions following all the sight lines of this corner.

There are strong but not so obvious constraints and influences. The building line is informed not only by the built environment and streets, but by the railway beneath. The upper floors are modelled to take advantage of the amazing views across the railway tracks straight to St. Pancras Station and Hotel. This building doesn't just relate to the domestic architecture of Camden Square, or the route along Agar Grove, it's very significant to the railway and the parallel pedestrian way to Maiden Lane. It's not about the views from the bridge as far as the railway lines are concerned, or even from a room in the St. Pancras Hotel, it's the building ON the bridge. The design in quality and massing and scale and character must address these important long distance views.

A building on this site must make a transition from being the significant focal point of longer distance views to the domestic scale of the elegant villas on the sheltered side of the site within the Conservation Area, in St. Augustine's Road. The strong curve of the Agar Grove elevation takes the eye around the corner and closes gently to the residential scale of the sloping street. The villas give design guidance in their form; strong and steady bases, with easy rhythms of horizontal banding and vertical fenestration. There's lots of movement, the relative heights of the villas soon step up the hill, from three to four stories with a repeating constant character. The design proposals respect the domestic scale but note that at the same time a very strong elegant uncomplicated building is needed to sit alongside these confident villas. The proposals must be confident too, the height is therefore focussed on the corner where a strong impact is needed to emphasise the importance of the site visually. This site isn't the 'best supporting building' at the entrance to the square, it should lead.

The materials have been chosen to keep a balance with the existing, white painted render is a dominant feature of the Conservation Area and it's suitable in every way for the new building. The scheme doesn't repeat the period detail of horizontal emphasis with stucco, it's modern and uses jura stone cladding to define a strong base for the new building. The windows and glazing components show a light modern design choice, the elevation to St. Augustine's Road, the scheme's entrance, is relieved with glass and timber cladding, modern Scandinavian bespoke designs, to the full height of the building, the character is elegant and open and different from the protective solid single curve of the Agar Grove elevation. The top floor continues this theme of lightness above and behind the protective wall, the upper floor of the duplex has the character of an elegant modern timber observatory, with views over the square from the bedroom floor resting under a green roof sheltered

behind the solid structure of the strong curved structure of the Agar Grove wall, contrasting both materials and character at this level.

Use and amount

The site is currently vacant and does not have any authorised use. The previous use of the site was as a builders yard on a temporary planning consent which has expired.

The principle of change of use of the site to residential was agreed with the Council at the pre-application consultation meeting on 26.11.07.

The application proposes a total of 9 flats with a mix of 5 x 2 bed and 3 x 3 bed flats and 1 x 4 bed flat in accordance with policies H1 and H7. Each flat would meet the internal space standards set out in the Residential Development Standards set out in Camden Planning Guidance 2006.

Layout

The proposed building addresses itself both to Agar Grove and to St Augustines Road but with the living rooms of the flats adjacent to number 6 St Augustines facing onto At Augustines Road itself whilst those further away take advantage of the views across Agar Grove and the railway lines to the panorama of central London.

The general building footprint is pre-determined by the building line constraints. In addition there is a notional boundary marking the extent of the bridge over the main line railway beyond which it is not possible to build.

Scale

The proposed building is 3 storeys above ground adjacent to number 6 St Augustines Road.

The building rises to 5 storeys above ground on the corner with Murray Street and Agar Grove.

Appearance

The site lies within the Camden Square Conservation Area.

The proposals pay respect to the urban grain and character of the area whilst using modern materials and detailing.

All aspects of the appearance are developed in the Design Character section of this statement.

Sustainable Design and Construction Statement

The scheme has been designed in accordance with Code for Sustainable Homes and achieves level 3 of the Code. A copy of the BREEAM assessment and report undertaken by Briary Energy Consultants forms part of this application.

Residential Amenity

A separate daylight sunlight assessment has been prepared and accompanies the application.

To the rear of the proposed building the flats facing into the site are on the other side of Agar Grove and are at their nearest point 23 metres away from the proposed building line.

There are no flats opposite the proposed building on the opposite side of St Augustines Road as this area of land is taken by the railway bridge and lines.

The nearest building to the proposed development on the opposite side of Murray Street is the public House, the Murray Arms which is 48 metres away.

Adjacent to the development site is the existing Victorian villa at number 6 St Augustines Road. The development is no higher than the parapet line of this building on the upper levels and immediately adjacent to the building is only 3 m above ground level. There are no windows to habitable rooms in the flank elevation of number 6 St Augustines – only staircase and bathroom windows.

In terms of privacy therefore there can be no demonstrable harm to the occupants of the flats on adjoining plots of land.

Proximity to the railway lines :

A separate acoustic report accompanies the application demonstrating that the site is suitable for residential use so far as noise and vibration is concerned.

Landscaping

By maintaining the existing building line along St Augustines Road and setting the building back from Agar Grove, significant areas of landscaping can be provided at pavement level totalling 81m². It is proposed that these be planted with semi-mature trees. A full scheme of detailed landscaping proposals is being submitted for approval.

In addition to the landscaping at pavement level, at lower ground floor level 'private' patio areas totalling 84m² are provided relating directly to the 2 flats at this level.

At third floor level a roof terrace is proposed for the sole use of the third and fourth floor duplex flat. The guard rail for this garden is set well back from the building lines to Agar Grove and St Augustines Road to prevent any overlooking of adjoining properties and gardens.

Recessed balconies are proposed for the living rooms of flats on the elevation facing across Agar Grove to take advantage of the long views from this location.

In addition to the forgoing, a sedum 'green' roof is proposed for the 'flat roof' areas of the building. Details of the proposed green roof are included with the application.

Secured by Design

The scheme will meet the criteria set out in the Metropolitan Police document Secured by Design New Homes Security Scheme.

Access

Vehicular access to the site will remain unaffected by the works.

There are 2no existing vehicular crossovers to the site one from St Augustines Road and the other from Agar Grove, no change is proposed to these. The St Augustines access will be used for the disabled parking space whilst that to Agar Grove will be used for cycle access.

The number of parking spaces has been restricted to 1 in total – being the number which can be accommodated to facilitate on site turning of vehicles so that they can enter and leave the site in forward gear. It is proposed that this be a 'disabled' space.

Pedestrian Access : a new pedestrian access from St Augustines Road is proposed in the location shown on the plans.

Access to Public transport is very good with bus stops in Agar Grove and Camden Road both with very frequent services. Camden Road Network Rail overground station with the north London Line is only 5 minutes walk away and Camden Town Underground Station is 10 minutes walk away.

Cycle parking : secure cycle parking for 9 cycles is provided for in a secure cycle shed at ground level on the Agar Grove side of the building. Within the shed 7 sheffield type stands are proposed.

Inclusive Access : the proposals provide for level entry wheelchair suitable access to the principle residential entrance.

A disabled persons standard lift is proposed to provide inclusive access for the upper parts and to the garden level.

Wheelchair Flat

It is proposed that the 3 bedroomed ground floor flat adjacent to number 6 St Augustines Road be constructed to be suitable for wheelchair users.

Lifetime Homes Standards

Statement of compliance accompanying planning application June 2008

	Standard	Statement of compliance
1	Car parking spaces – width	The scheme provides for 1 no disabled space of disabled standard width : 3.6m
2	Distance from car parking space to the home	The location of parking spaces is predetermined by the position of the existing vehicle crossover from St Augustines Road The disabled space accessed from St Augustines Road is 19m from the main front entrance to the development.
3	Approach to entrance to be level	The new main entrance to the development from St Augustines Road will be a 'level' entrance with a wheelchair compliant 1in 14 slope from back of pavement to ground floor main entrance. This is marked on the ground floor site plan.
4	Detail of entrances	The entrance from St Augustines Road will be illuminated and have level access, There will be a canopy over the main entrance from St Augustine's Road.
5	Stairs/Lift	The upper parts and the garden level will be accessed by a fully wheelchair compliant lift.
6	Width of doorways and hallways	Clear doorway and corridor widths will comply with Part M of the Building Regulations. As a minimum no corridor is less than 1100mm in width.

		A minimum width of 300mm has been provided to the leading edge of all doors.
7	Wheelchair turning circles	A turning circle of 1500mm is provided in the living rooms and in front of the lift. In the wheelchair flat additional turning circles have been provided to circulation spaces.
8	Living room to be at entrance level	All flats will have level entries to their respective living room either from the ground floor hall or from each lift landing.
9	Houses of 2 or more storeys	Not applicable
10	Wheelchair accessible wc at entry level	WC's are contained within bathrooms which are at entry level and capable of being converted to wheelchair use.
11	Walls in bathrooms and wcs	Walls in bathrooms and wcs will be constructed of blockwork capable of adaptations such as handrails.
12	Future stair lift/through the floor lift	Provision for a future lift is made in the floor between the two levels of the duplex.
13	Future hoist	Main bedrooms are located conveniently for future incorporation of a hoist to the bathroom
14	Bathroom – ease of access	The bathrooms have been designed to incorporate ease of access to the bath wc and wash basin.
15	Height of living room windows	Window cills to living rooms and bedrooms in all cases will have a maximum cill height above FFL of 800mm.
16	Switches sockets etc heights	Switches sockets, ventilation and service controls will be at a height usable by all between 450mm and 1250mm above FFL.