

**12 CAMDEN ROAD - CONVERSION TO TWO SELF CONTAINED MAISONNETTES  
DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT  
DALE LOTH ARCHITECTS, NOVEMBER 2008**

**USE OF THE BUILDING**

This four storey Victorian terraced house is currently derelict and not subdivided. Given the location on the busy Camden Road, it is not the ideal house for a large family, therefore division into separate flats is appropriate. The existing floorplan is too small for separate flats on each floor, but the layout lends itself to two maisonettes with separate entrances. This can be achieved with relatively minor internal alterations, a new rear extension, and a new stair in the front area to give access to the lower maisonette. This solution gives two sensibly planned 2 bedroom maisonettes which would suit a range of different occupiers.

**CONSTRUCTION PROCESS**

We have considered the disruption that the construction work would cause. The rear of the site is landlocked and inaccessible, and at the front on Camden Road, only short term deliveries and removals would be possible without causing traffic congestion. Therefore, it appears the best solution would be to avoid extensive excavation, demolition and work such as underpinning which requires a large volume of materials. We propose making best use of the existing layout and fabric of the building to limit the disruption to both Camden Road and the neighbouring houses.

**LAYOUT OF THE MAISONNETTES**

Working within the existing floorplan of one front room, one rear room and circulation, the proposals create sensible and practical arrangements for the two maisonettes. Generous bathrooms, storage or laundry spaces have been provided in the rear room on three of the four floors, which mean that these functions do not encroach on the habitable rooms in each maisonette. As a result, decent sized bedrooms and living rooms have been achieved. The proposed rear extension is necessary to create a satisfactory living space for the lower maisonette, which would otherwise have a smaller floor area due to the entrance and circulation space required on each of the two floors. The resulting floor area is still slightly smaller than recommended, but this maisonette has sole use of the large garden and roof terrace. The existing basement ceiling height is slightly below the recommended 2100mm; however, as it would be financially and ecologically unsound to demolish the relatively new damp-proofed concrete floor slab to lower it, we have used this area for a bedroom, bathroom and circulation. To compensate, the proposed roof lit extension has a generous ceiling height of about 2500mm.

As far as possible, rooms of the same function have been stacked. There is one living room above a bedroom which was unavoidable. This will be mitigated by providing acoustic insulation within the living room floor.

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**REAR EXTENSION**

The proposed rear extension contains the kitchen / living / dining room for the lower maisonette and opens to the private garden via full height glazed doors. This extension projects 4.5m from the chimney stack on the rear elevation, which is approximately the depth of the rear extension to No.8 and slightly more than the extension to No.10. A flat roof is proposed, as a pitched roof would encroach on the ground floor windows. Since flat roofs are frequently used as unofficial roof terraces, we propose a legitimate roof terrace from the start, with stairs up from the garden for use by the occupants of the lower maisonette. The boundary wall to No.14 and party wall to No.10 will be raised and topped with a timber trellis to reduce overlooking.

The south-east facing roof to the proposed rear extension is an ideal location for a solar panel to generate hot water. Maintenance access is safe and easy from the roof terrace.

**ENTRANCES**

It has been possible to provide a separate entrance to each maisonette by making use of the front basement area. A new stair with lockable gate at the top gives access to the front door to the lower maisonette under the ground floor porch. There is evidently an issue with people throwing rubbish into the front areas on this stretch of road, as the neighbouring houses have fitted either wire grating or polycarbonate sheeting coverings. By turning the front area into a visibly occupied and well lit entrance space rather than an inaccessible light well, we believe this will reduce the amount of rubbish thrown and ease maintenance.

The upper maisonette has sole use of the original front entrance and hall, which will have a new door and lighting added.

**MATERIALS AND APPEARANCE**

Windows to the front elevation will be replaced with painted timber sash windows to match existing windows adjacent, with secondary glazing added on the inside. Rear elevation windows will be replaced with double glazed painted timber sash windows, without intermediate glazing bars. For the rear extension, the boundary wall and party wall will be raised using 2<sup>nd</sup> hand yellow stock brick to match existing, with a natural timber trellis fixed to the top of the walls. The flat roof will be a single layer membrane with natural aggregate finished promenade tiles for surface protection.

The rear wall of the proposed extension will be in 2<sup>nd</sup> hand yellow stock brick, with full height framed glazed doors. External stairs and balustrade to the roof terrace will be in natural galvanised steel with clear toughened glass infill panels.

The front stair, balustrade and gate will be black painted steel, generally match existing. The main front door will be replaced to match the original and the surround repaired. All parts of the front façade which are currently painted will be redecorated.

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**SUSTAINABILITY**

As noted under the 'construction process' heading above, the proposals aim to make best use of the existing fabric, and limit excavation, demolition and heavy construction work. Thus the development will keep use of materials, resources and disposal of waste to a minimum.

All windows will have an improved performance, with double glazing throughout. The new rear extension will have a well insulated roof, insulated plasterboard to the side walls, and cavity insulation to the rear wall. The south east facing glazed doors will give useful solar gain, and solar shading is added to limit overheating in summer.

A solar panel for water heating will be fixed on the flat roof. Both maisonettes will have new condensing boilers, cylinders and radiators to meet current standards. The new plumbing and sanitary ware includes a shower to each maisonette and dual flush cisterns to reduce water consumption.

**ACCESS**

The location on Camden Road has excellent public transport with buses, overground and underground trains within a few minutes walk. Local shops and amenities are also close by.

The 16 points of the Lifetime Homes Standards have been addressed in a separate statement, but the main points are summarised here:

The existing room sizes and circulation are adequate but not generous and the extent to which this can be improved is limited by the overall dimensions of the building. The priority in this design is to create good, practical layouts with sufficient storage and ancillary space to give two flexible maisonettes which will suit different occupiers.

The existing levels and the narrow space between pavement and entrance preclude ramped access to either ground floor or basement. Therefore, it has not been possible to create a wheelchair accessible apartment. For the upper maisonette, the existing arrangement of front porch steps will be retained, and for the lower maisonette, a new stair will be constructed in the front basement area.

**NOISE**

Camden Road is busy and noisy, particularly at this point. Therefore, secondary glazing is proposed to all the front rooms to improve the internal environment.

**BICYCLES / BINS**

The front vault can be used for storage of bicycles and bins for the lower maisonette. The upper maisonette has sole use of the entrance hall, where bicycles could be hung on the wall to keep clear access. There is no outside space which can be used for storing refuse from the upper maisonette, but as there are two collections a week, short term storage provided within the kitchen cupboards will be adequate. Storage for recycling will also be allowed for in the kitchen cupboards.