

23A, 23B AND LAND ADJOINING 23 RAVENSHAW STREET, LONDON, NW6

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT TO FORM 12 NEW FLATS

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

1. ACCESS AND DESIGN

The planning of "An inclusive environment is one that can be used by everyone regardless of age, gender, disability...It recognises and accommodated differences in the way people use the built environment and provides solutions that enable all of us to participate in mainstream activities equally, independently, with choice and with dignity." (Paragraph 3.3.1, page 20, Planning and Access for Disabled People, A Good Practice Guide, ODPM, March 2003).

The concept of inclusive design is a key guiding principle of the proposals for the development at Ravenshaw Street. The development will be planned and designed to be inclusive to meet the diverse needs of people of all ages and with a variety of physical and sensory disabilities.

The applicant is committed to a process of inclusive design, whereby access issues are considered at an appropriate level of detail at significant stages of the development process.

Design is also an integral part of the evolutionary design process for a scheme. Good design ensures attractive usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. High quality and inclusive design is also integral to the creation of well-mixed and integrated developments which ensure a place will function well and add to the overall character and quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in compliance with the CAGE guide to design and access statements.

1. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The Development Plan currently comprises of the adopted London Plan (February 2004) and the Camden Unitary Development Plan (June 2006). Other relevant policy considerations are National Planning Guidance Notes (PPGS/PPSS) and Circulars, White Papers and other Government Guidance publications; and various Supplementary Planning Guidance Documents prepared by the GLA and Camden Council.

A) Planning Policy Statement 1: Sustainable Communities (2005)

Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) (2005) concentrates on sustainable development, the spatial planning approach and community involvement.

PPS1 confirms that the issue of urban design is a material consideration and that good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process. In this regard, it is appropriate for applicants to be able to demonstrate how they have taken into account the need for good design in their development proposals.

PPS1 also states that development proposals must address the connections between people and places within and across buildings.

B) Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport (2001)

PPG 13 states that local planning authorities should aim to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, by adopting planning and land use policies which, inter alia, accommodate housing principally within existing urban areas and plan for increased intensity of development for both housing and other uses at locations which are highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling (Paragraph 6).

C. The London Plan (2004)

Policy 3A.4 relates to housing choice and seeks ten per cent of new housing to be designed to be wheelchair accessible, or easily adaptable for residents who are wheelchair users.

Policy 4B.5 refers to creating an inclusive environment. The Mayor will require all future development to meet the highest standards of accessibility and inclusion. In accordance with SPG Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment (2004), an Access Statement should be submitted with the proposed application. This document concludes that the development has been designed in accordance with relevant accessibility policies and standards.

Policy 3C.22 seeks to ensure that on-site car parking at new development is the 'minimum necessary'. In order to encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport the use of the private car will be discouraged by a low level of car parking. The number of car parking spaces has been designed in accordance with Camden Council's car parking requirements.

D) Camden Unitary Development Plan (2006)

Policy H7 relates to wheelchair housing and seeks ten per cent of new housing to be designed to be wheelchair accessible, or easily adaptable for residents who are wheelchair users.

Policy B1 relates to general design principles. The policy states that the Council will grant planning permission for development that is designed to a high standard. In accessing applications consideration will be given to a proposals site and setting, accessibility to all, space around and between buildings, efficient use of resources and level of improvement a development provides to the attractiveness of an area.

2. THE DESIGN PROCESS

The design started from an assessment of the street scene and the need to make the new buildings fit into their setting.

The proposal site currently comprises an existing a Victorian style, with a side extension and area of hard standing. In urban design terms, we consider the extension to be out of keeping with the existing street scene and have poor design quality. We consider its demolition and replacement to be beneficial to the overall quality of the street scene.

The site is of a sufficient size to accommodate more than one property. As a result of housing need in the area, and in urban design terms, it was considered that the site could accommodate a larger number of units. This also reflects Government guidance, which seeks to maximise the potential of a site, which is compatible in design terms with the local context.

The principle feature of the buildings is the proposed balconies, which is intended to reflect the bays windows within the existing Victorian houses. It is envisaged that the proposed colour and treatment of these will also reflect the existing built form.

The pitched roofs over the bay balconies are intended to echo the conical roofs within the street, as seen at No. 25. Again, the proposed apartment block includes dormers within the roof space to reflect this design element.

The metalwork of the full height bays and the proportions of the front elevation are intended to give the building verticality, which is repeated along all of the properties within the street.

The proposed heights have been designed to reflect the natural incline of the street, in the same way as all the other buildings in the road. The design proposal means that the natural stepping of the street scene is evident, when viewed from any point along the street.

The rear elevations of the building continue the theme of the front elevation but, as the buildings get broader towards the back of the site and the elevations diverge, the spacing of the bays becomes more irregular. The proposed balconies have been angled to face their respective sections of the site.

The extent that the proposed building subtends into the rear garden has been influenced by the need to protect the level of sunlight and daylight reaching the rear windows of the adjoining properties. This has been dealt with specifically in the Sunlight and Daylight report which accompanies this application.

The set backs at the upper levels of the building have also been adjusted in order to ensure that there is no overlooking, either of adjoining owners' windows or of their rear gardens.

The building overlooks the railway track at the rear. Consequently, all of the buildings beyond the railway line are at a considerable distance from the proposed development site. We, therefore, consider that the proposed development would not have any detrimental impact in terms of visual amenity, or access to light on these properties.

3. AMOUNT

The building heights have been determined by the adjoining buildings and the progression of the stepped street scene. This has determined the amount of units which the site is capable of accommodating.

Car parking provision has been provided at basement level. Therefore, there will be no detrimental impact on capacity of the existing road.

4. LAYOUT

The position of the front elevation reflects the existing building line within the street. The entrance point has been located at the point where a re-entrant angle is formed. The entrance canopy comprises of steel and glass and has been designed to a size, which identifies it as an entrance.

The existing 2m high brick wall will enclose the amenity space at the rear of the proposed apartment. This will protect the future amenity of users.

It is proposed that the upper gardens would be furnished with open wrought iron railings, and the depth of the garden maximised, in order to maximise the amount of light to the basement level apartment.

5. SCALE AND DETAILED DESIGN

The proportion of the front bays were directly related to the existing bays on the Victorian buildings on both sides, being the same width and the same profile as the existing bays, so that the new buildings reflect the existing bay windows, albeit in a more modern form.

The expressed lintels and oversized windowsills of the proposal are also intended to echo the head and sill details of the Victorian buildings adjacent, again, in a modern format.

6. LANDSCAPING

It is proposed that the majority of the private gardens will be laid to lawn, with a small number beds and shrubs laid out by the developer. We envisage that any landscaping treatments will be dealt with by way of planning condition attached to the planning permission.

It is envisaged that the entrance ramp to the car parking area is to be block paved, whereas the entrance walkway and steps are to be surfaced in new natural york stone slabs, which are inherently non-slip and should give a quality feel to the entrance area. Again, we envisage that any treatment will be dealt with by way of planning condition attached to the planning permission.

7. APPEARANCE

The overall feel of the development was intended to be sympathetic to the existing street scene.

The materials used will be selected to compliment those within the existing street scene. We envisage that any materials will be dealt with by way of planning condition attached to the planning permission.

8. ACCESS

The site is accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes and is in close proximity to a number of local facilities and services. The benefit of this is to reduce the reliance on cars and to mitigate consequences on the environment.

The proposed pedestrian routes along the street are clear and unobstructed. This facilitates the movement of all groups, including those with mobility or sensory impairments.

There are no significant changes in levels across the site. Where these do exist within the building they will be designed to accord with the provisions set out under Building Regulations. This will provide a convenient, comfortable and accessible building for all.

Access from the street to the entrance door is made via the vehicle ramp and the side ramps, with a covered level access to the main entrance door. Ramps have been incorporated into the design and rise at no more than 1 in 12 from the entrance area to the main gates of the site. This ensures provision of a wheelchair accessible entrance for occupiers and visitors.

Wheelchair access to the ground floor units and car-lift is also feasible.

The two ground floor flats have been designed to be wheelchair accessible, in accordance with Part M of Building Regulations. These comprise 16% of the total amount of accommodation. The proposal therefore complies with the Council's requirements for 10% of units to be suitable for use for disabled persons.