

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
23 ROCHESTER ROAD
CAMDEN

Date	Rev	Notes
14.07.2014	P1	Planning Submission

Site address: Ground Floor Flat
23 Rochester Road
Camden
London
NW1 9JJ

Owner: Mr Hopi Allard

Applicant: Mr Hopi Allard

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1.0 Introduction

This report is submitted in support of an application for planning permission for works to the ground floor flat at 23 Rochester Road, NW1 9JJ.

It has been prepared by Clive Sall Architecture acting as agents for the applicant, Mr Hopi Allard.

The application site is at present a three-storey semi-detached property located on the northern side of Rochester Road, which has been divided into three flats; this application relates to the ground floor flat.

The existing rear of the building has been extended in the form of a three-storey half-width/rear outrigger rendered extension. It is not listed, but the building's front elevations is identified as a positive contributor to the Rochester Conservation Area.

This application looks to:

- Increase the floor-to-ceiling height to the existing ground floor level whilst also creating a new extension to the rear, as approved under planning application 2013/4811/P
- Create a basement beneath the footprint of the existing building, and part of the side and rear gardens to create additional floorspace in connection with the existing lower ground floor flat
- The creation of front, rear and side lightwells, and associated external alterations.

This is to create a new larger family unit which the property lends itself to by it's ground floor access conditions and the ownership of a large rear garden.



Aerial View showing rear of no. 23 Rochester Road



Location plan showing no. 23 Rochester Road



The following Planning Policies have been considered in the preparation of this application:

- Rochester Conservation Area Appraisal

- The London Plan

- 7.4 Local Character
- 7.6 Architecture
- 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology

-The Core Strategy

- UDP - EQ14 Alterations and Extensions of Buildings in Conservation
- Areas
- CSP - 24 Design
- CSP - 25 Historic Environment
- Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2018
- SPD Residential Extensions and Alterations

2.0 Site Appraisal

23 Rochester Road is an early Victorian (circa 1848) semi-detached villa. The front façade is in the regency style with a grand stair leading to an elevated ground floor. To the rear there is a 20th Century full height rendered addition which is mirrored at No.24 and similar extensions are present at Nos.25 to 32.

The rear elevation of 23 Rochester Road is marred by the irregular fenestration of the 20th century extension and the poorly maintained and discoloured render it is covered in.

The Rochester Conservation Area Appraisal considers Nos. 23 and 24 to make a positive contribution to the character of the area and as such its street facing façade is to be protected. No. 23 is the last building in a block of 5 matching villas.

23 Rochester Road is next to a 3 storey block of flats (17-22 Rochester road) which is in keeping with the scale of the area but breaks the continuity of the street and negatively impacts the setting of the building.

The building was divided into 3 flats in 1978; this planning application relates only to the ground floor flat.



Rear elevation of 23 Rochester Road showing poor state of repair and irregular fenestration

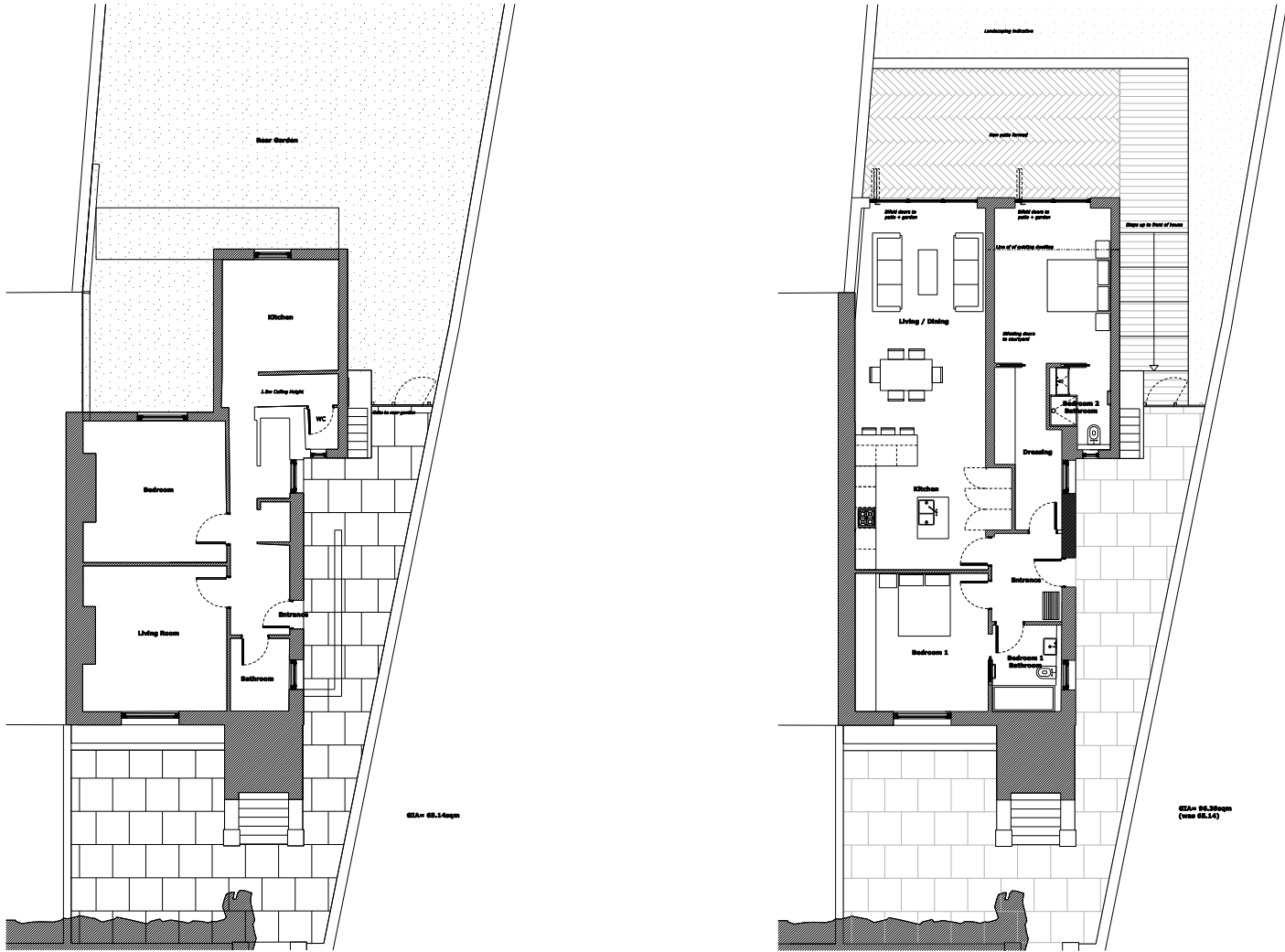


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3.0 Planning History

Full Planning permission was granted on 29th October 2013 for the erection of single storey rear extension to provide additional floorspace to the lower ground floor flat (Class C3) under Application No. 2013/4811P.

There is no other previous planning history for this property.



Existing and Proposed Lower Ground Floor plans, as approved under Application 2013/4811P



4.0 Design

4.1 Design Principles

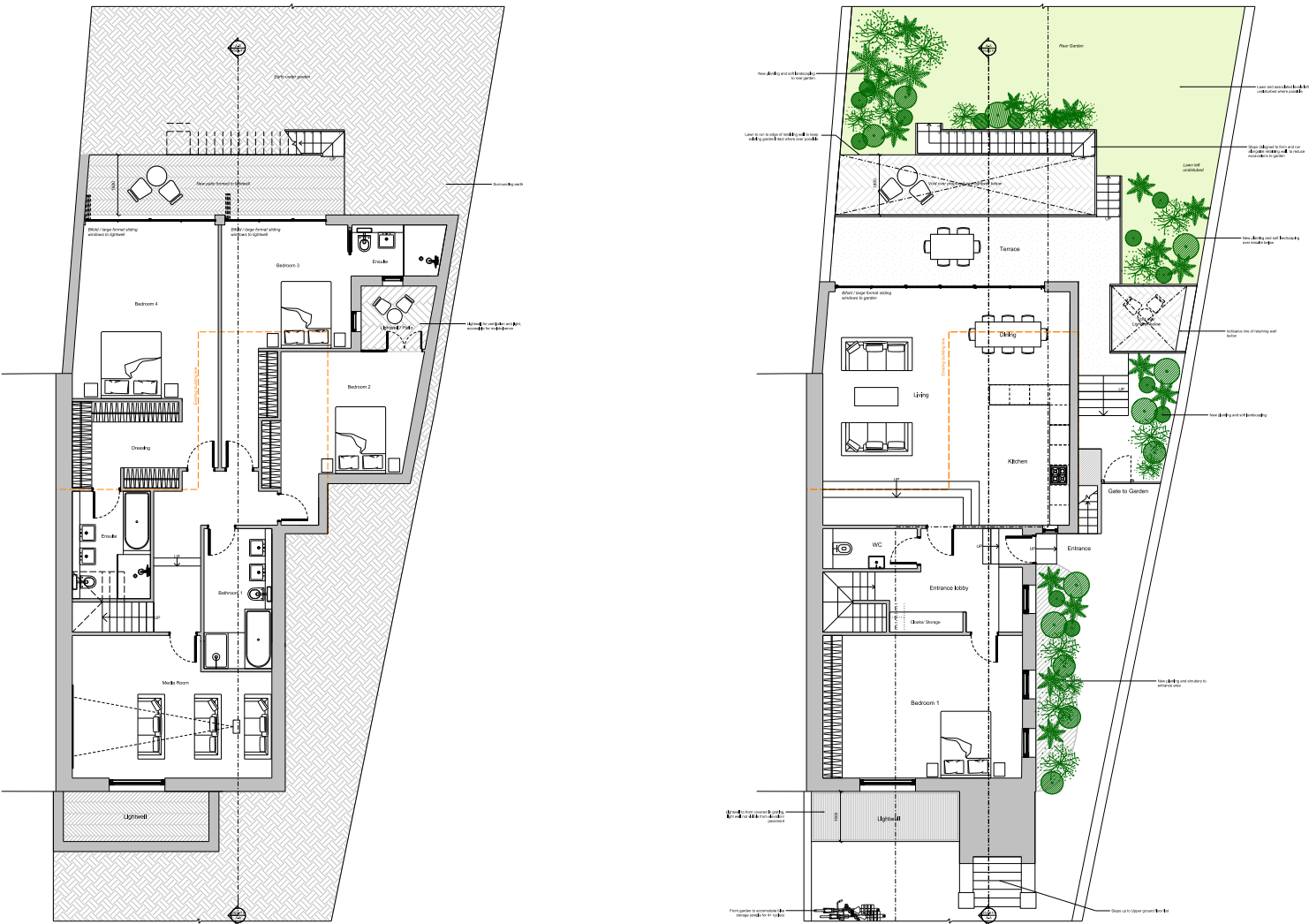
To reiterate, this application looks to:

- Increase the floor-to-ceiling height to the existing ground floor level whilst also creating a new extension to the rear, as approved under planning application 2013/4811/P
 - Create a basement beneath the footprint of the existing building, and part of the side and rear gardens to create additional floorspace in connection with the existing lower ground floor flat;
 - The creation of front, rear and side lightwells, and associated external alterations.
- This is to create a new larger family unit which the property lends itself due to it's ground floor access conditions and the ownership of a large rear garden.

New glazed doors to the rear of the lower ground floor and proposed basement not only maximize daylight as well as creating a source of ventilation and direct access to the garden, but also ameliorate the existing shabby rear façade into one of a more considered, contemporary and desirable family unit, whilst not compromising the status and character of the conservation area. The glazed bi-fold doors create a series of semi- external spaces where the boundaries between garden and house are blurred, and thus inviting the occupants to make use of their outdoor green space, ideal for families and a much desirable commodity in modern-day London.

4.2 Proposed Use

The ground floor flat will convert from a small-scale rental unit to a unit fit to house a family, thus satisfying Camden *DP5 - Homes of Different sizes* for homes of varying sizes, where the target for dwellings with four bedrooms or more has been identified as 'very high' (social affordable), high for intermediate affordable and medium for market. The creation of a new dwelling with a spacious living area, washing facilities and bedroom all at entrance level also means that the proposals with some minor adaption meet the criteria set out in *DP6 - Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Homes*.



Proposed Basement and Lower Ground Floor plans, as proposed under this application



4.3 Layout

The proposed extension extends 3.5m from its north façade, as per previously approved application 2013/4811/P, with a lightwell of 1.8m beyond that (less than the patio area proposed in application 2013/4811P). The extension stretches across the garden toward the boundary wall but leaves a vegetation/ soft landscaped stretch over 2.5m wide between the garden wall to the east façade (bar the side light well).

The floor level to the existing lower ground floor and proposed extension (which is the same as that of application 2013/4811P) will be lowered in order to increase headroom to a reasonable height to meet modern-day living standards.

4.4 Scale

The back garden has an area of 220m² at present and the proposed extension has a footprint of 60sqm and as such will not significantly reduce amenity, leaving a substantial rear garden of 160sqm. In fact the proposed new extension will allow greater access to the garden, thus increasing amenity for the occupants, without adversely affecting that of the surrounding neighbours.

The extension's parapet will be 2.1m above existing ground level, in keeping with the internal division between floors and below the height of the 1st floor windows.

There will be planting next to the boundary wall and along the whole length of the side extension running into and along the whole garden.

4.5 Landscaping

In the course of the works the unkempt and poorly maintained garden will be landscaped, pruned and planted to augment its appearance. The patio and light wells will be hardpaved but there will be extensive planting next to these in the garden, as well as along the face of the rear lightwell wall. The front/ eastern side towards the entrance door will also be soft landscaped and planted to decrease surface run-off and reduce the quantity of hard paving. The lawn to the rear garden will be kept to a maximum following the pre-application advice received and the large eucalyptus tree in the garden (which was previously to be removed) will now be retained, as the reduction in the scale of the rear lightwell now means that its removal is no longer required.



Photograph showing extent of rear garden

4.6 Appearance

The new extension will be finished in white painted render, to match that of the existing rear C20th addition above. Timber and glass, materials found in the original building and area, will be reused but with modern detailing to the windows and doors, to give a crisp definition between old and new. The proposal will be low level in order to reduce visual impact on the neighbours. Extensive existing planting on site obscures the proposals from the adjacent neighbours (see photo above).

4.7 Context

The proposal has no impact on the view from the street nor on the view from Nos 17-22 as it is concealed by the existing building and trees and boundary fence lines. The one tree that was to be removed at the time of the pre-application is now to be retained, as the excavations and works to the site no longer impact upon it.



5.0 Pre-Application Advice

Text shown in italics quoted from Pre-application advice letter dated 20 May 2014.

Ref: 2014/2541/PRE

1. Basement excavation / structural issues

Camden has a comprehensive policy framework for dealing with basement applications. In November 2010 the Council adopted new planning documents - our Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and Development Policies. Camden Development Policies includes a new policy specifically on basements (Policy DP27) dealing with such development. The policy requires developers to submit material to demonstrate that proposed basements will not harm the built and natural environment or local amenity, result in flooding or lead to ground instability to both the host and nearby buildings. Policy DP27 is supported by CPG4: Basements and lightwells. Any application would require a 'Basement Impact Assessment' (BIA) to be submitted, clearly identifying any potential impacts of the proposed scheme on structural stability and the water environment and sets out mitigation measures.

This has been submitted as a part of the application

2. Design

...It is noted that the proposed lower ground floor extension would be of the same dimensions as that approved in October 2013; the proposed change to the rear elevation in terms of the full-width doors is likely to be considered appropriate.

This has been maintained as such.

However this proposal also includes the installation of a rear lightwell, which would extend approximately 2.7m further into the rear garden, with further steps leading up to it from basement level. As discussed on site, a more preferable approach would be to reduce the depth of the staircase and lightwell so that the extent of rear garden which is lost by the proposal is kept to a minimum.

This has been reduced from 2.7m to 1.8m. The stairs line the perimeter edge of the lightwell so as not to 'eat into' the garden in a more invasive way

...The installation of a front lightwell is likely to be acceptable in principle, provided it is kept to an appropriate depth (the proposed depth of 1.5m is likely to be acceptable).

A depth of 1.5m has been proposed.

A search of planning records and review of photos along Rochester

Road suggests that front lightwells are not a characteristic of the area; however provided it would be covered with a grille or 'walk-on' rooflight (i.e. something that is not visible from the street), it is not considered to cause any harm to the appearance of the host building or wider conservation area. Railings around the lightwell are not likely to be appropriate given they would at least be partially visible from the street, in an area in which lightwells are uncharacteristic.

The lightwell is covered with a walk-on grille with no railings thus not visible from the street.

3. Amenity

The Council has a duty to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause material harm to amenity in accordance with Policy DP26, which stems from CS5. CPG6: 'Amenity' provides further advice on how extensions and alterations can impact upon the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with particular regard to loss of daylight/sunlight, loss of privacy and sense of enclosure.

The proposed external alterations are limited to the installation of the front, rear and side lightwells; **the nature of these alterations means that they are not likely to cause any material loss of amenity to neighbouring occupiers.**

However some concern is raised about locating all three bedrooms at basement level, which would limit the levels of natural daylight and outlook reaching these principal rooms. Any application would need to demonstrate that satisfactory levels of natural light and outlook are achieved to at least the two main bedrooms – this may be possible due to the relatively deep rear lightwell, but re-locating one of the bedrooms to ground floor level is considered the preferred option.

As such we have relocated a bedroom to the ground floor level at the front as suggested.

4. Trees

Policy DP24 (F & G) of the LDF are relevant, and expects all development to consider existing natural features, such as topography and trees, and the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping, as part of producing a high quality design.

An initial tree report has been submitted in connection with the pre-application (prepared by Skerratt on 10th May 2014), which has been reviewed by the Council's arboricultural officer.

The report states that the large eucalyptus tree (identified as tree 001) would be removed as part of the proposed excavation works. The

officer's informal view is that it is likely that the removal of the tree would be justified, subject to a condition requiring a good quality replacement further to the rear of the garden.

Following a reduction in the proposed scale of the light well and excavation works to be carried out, this tree is now to be retained.

However the tree constraints plan (appendix A) also appears to show an element of hard surfacing around the perimeter of the rear garden (denoted in grey on the plan). This would be resisted in design and sustainability terms, given the amount of excavation which is already taking place underneath the footprint of the building and to a relatively large section of the rear garden.

As such, any hard-paving beyond the lightwell and access path along the building perimeter edge, have been removed and replaced with soft landscaping- hard landscaping has been kept to a minimum. It is also considered that the level of excavation to the rear garden should be kept to the minimum possible.

By the reduction of the lightwell depth in the garden, the level of excavation has been reduced.

You are also advised that a 1m deep level of top soil should be retained to the rear garden where possible in order to allow natural planting to be retained.

1m min. of top soil will be retained wherever possible to allow for planting on top. In the case of the ensuite at the rear of the new basement level, this is now covered over with 1m min. of top soil and planted accordingly, bringing the garden literally over the development in this area where possible.

5. Transport/ Highways

The main highways issue in this case is the potential impact of construction / delivery vehicles associated with the basement excavation on the local highway network. A draft Construction Management Plan (CMP) would be required to be submitted with any application setting out how construction matters would be dealt with, for example deliveries, how material will be stored and construction waste removed from site etc.

A draft Construction Management Plan is included as a part of this application.

You are strongly encouraged to engage with neighbouring occupiers at an early stage in the process, given the likely concerns neighbouring occupiers will have with the comings and goings of construction / delivery vehicles and the nature of the proposals. Although adjoining occupiers will be notified of any application by us, initial consultation



may help offset any concerns neighbours have before any application is submitted.

Neighbouring properties have been approached by the client in order to pre-notify them of these proposals.

You are also advised to discuss your proposals in advance with the Conservation Area Advisory Committee..... Again, this group will be formally consulted at application stage but you are strongly encouraged to engage with them in advance.

We have sent out proposals to the Conservation Area Advisory Committee for their comments and thoughts but unfortunately their response was not received on time for the submission of this application.

6. Sustainability measures

Policies CS13 and DP22 require new development to incorporate sustainable design and construction methods in order to mitigate and adapt to climate change. No such features have been included in your proposals. Any new submission should seek to include appropriate sustainability features to demonstrate compliance with CS13 and DP22. In this respect you may wish to consider:

- natural ventilation as opposed to any mechanical air-conditioning;

Natural ventilation is provided throughout the proposals in favour of mechanical air-conditioning.

- use of renewable energy technologies on site;

Solar, solar thermal and wind power generation are not suitable for use on this site due to its low height and surrounding buildings/ landscape. Air source and ground source heat pumps are being considered.

- measures to reduce water consumption;

Several measures to reduce water consumption will be incorporated into the end development, eg. Eco dual-flush toilets.

- limiting rain-water run off.

The quantity of proposed garden excavation and hard-paving has been reduced, and soft landscaping has in fact increased throughout the scheme, from front to rear. Measures to reduce flash flooding and increase soakaway times will be implemented (eg. Rainwater soakaway crates, covered by 1m min. top soil). A drainage report is included as part of this application, which addresses water run-off and calculates the affect of the proposals on the site to be negligible.



6.0 Transport and Access

As requested in the pre-application advice, a draft Construction Traffic Management Plan has been created and appended to this application (as part of the Basement Impact Assessment). The application property has a PTAL rating of 5, and is in close proximity to buses, trains and tube stations.

7.0 Conclusion

Having considered and addressed all points in the pre-application advice from Camden, we feel that this application has been suitably honed and adapted to mutually meet both the requirements of not only our client but also of Camden and the surrounding properites.



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