

18th June 2014

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

8-9 Belsize Terrace,
London NW3 4AX

Introduction

This is a planning application for some works on the above building. The commercial unit is currently used as a pharmacy. The pharmacy has a retail area in the ground floor and a storage area in the basement.

The property is located within the Belsize Park conservation area.

The existing layout of the property is over two levels:

- Ground floor retail space with two small storage rooms and a toilet.
- Basement with two large storage spaces, a staff room and a narrow patio at the rear of the building.

Our client would like to make a number of alterations to both the ground floor and the basement level. These include;

Ground Floor:

- A new and more functional layout in the retail area.
- A small consulting room for the disabled in the rear of the unit.
- The relocation of the dispensary.
- The inclusion of a staircase in the front of the shop in order to give clients access to the proposed new layout in the basement.

Basement:

- The replacement of a large part of storage space with five consulting rooms.
- A public toilet and a private toilet at the rear of the unit.
- A staff eating area.
- Storage.

The front slab of the sidewalk will be rebuild like to like.

The Design Component and Use

It is our client's intention to enlarge the retail area and to have more space for clients. To reach that aim, the proposal is to simplify the internal layout on the ground floor. This will be done by reorganizing the rear and front of the ground floor.

The ground floor will be re-organized by:

- The patio space at the rear to be replaced with a new skylight in order to bring in light.
- A step (of around 20 centimetres) in the rear part of the slab will be levelled by the construction of a new one, providing fluency in the circulation.
- The slab on the toilet's roof (GF) is lower than the rest, so it will be leveled with the rest (raising it).

The whole commercial unit will be re-organized by adding a new staircase next to the main entrance. This will result in a double circulation and an alternative escape route.

The proposals in the basement are:

- Add five new consulting rooms and a toilet, accessible for the public through the front staircase and for the staff through the rear one.
- To add a new staff eating area and a private toilet to the layout, with the aim of improving the work environment for the employees.
- The existing height of the basement is of around 2.10 metres (variable in some areas). The strategy is to adapt the space to a generous height by lowering the floor level in order to get a 2.50 metres height ceiling.
- Rebuild the front slab –sidewalk- like to like.

Amount

The gross internal area of the extension measures approximately 5,72m² (2,86m² per floor) and the difference between the existing basement floor and the proposed one is 0.95 metres (in the most of the basement area).

Access

Access to the retail area on the ground floor stays in the same place with the proposal. However, the access/way out to the basement will be both through the new front staircase and the rear stairs.

Appearance

During the design of the scheme, great care has been taken to ensure that the main façade stays as similar as it is now. We intend to maintain the look of the existing façade understanding the importance of the general existing image of the village.

The infill extension on the rear of the unit is not visible to the public.

Change of Use

The existing use of the property is considered Class A1 - Shop (which covers most types of shops and agencies) and its storage space in the basement. With the proposal, the ground floor continues being a retail area. The basement changes its use to storage plus consulting rooms, which can be classified as Class D1 - Non residential Institutions (which covers health and medical services).

