

# DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

November 2014



FLAT 21, HAMPSTEAD GATES, KENTISH TOWN NW5 3EH

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING & LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

## INTRODUCTION

An application is being made for planning & listed building consent to carry out alterations to an existing private dwelling, flat 21 Hampstead Gates on Ryland Road in Kentish Town in the London Borough of Camden. An existing flat formed from the 2003 conversion of a Victorian school building into residential accommodation, the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor maisonette dwelling would be enhanced through reorganisation of the internal accommodation and provided with new rooflights as part of previously approved works to open up the existing vaulted roof space to the upper mezzanine level. This Design & Access Statement is appended to that application to explain the relevant design and planning considerations in its support.



*Aerial photo with plot indicated*

## THE SITE

Ryland Road is a typical, densely built road in Camden combining terraced houses, converted institutional buildings and renovated workshops and small factories. The road branches northward off of Prince of Wales Road which runs East to West connecting Kentish Town to Chalk Farm. It forms part of the Inkerman Road Conservation Area, a relatively intact example of the historical development of Kentish Town through the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a suburb of London with a typically diverse range of building types and uses. The flat forms part of the conversion of the St Richard of Chichester Catholic Secondary School, a Grade II listed building designed by Thomas Henry Wyatt and David Brandon, built in 1849 and altered and extended in 1877-9 for Camden School for Girls by EC Robins. The converted school occupies the western side of Ryland Road from Prince of Wales Road to Perren Street. It faces a terrace of Victorian 2-3 storey houses on the eastern side of the road to which it is a substantially taller and more dominant neighbour.





*Birds Eye view of Inkerman CA with plot outlined*

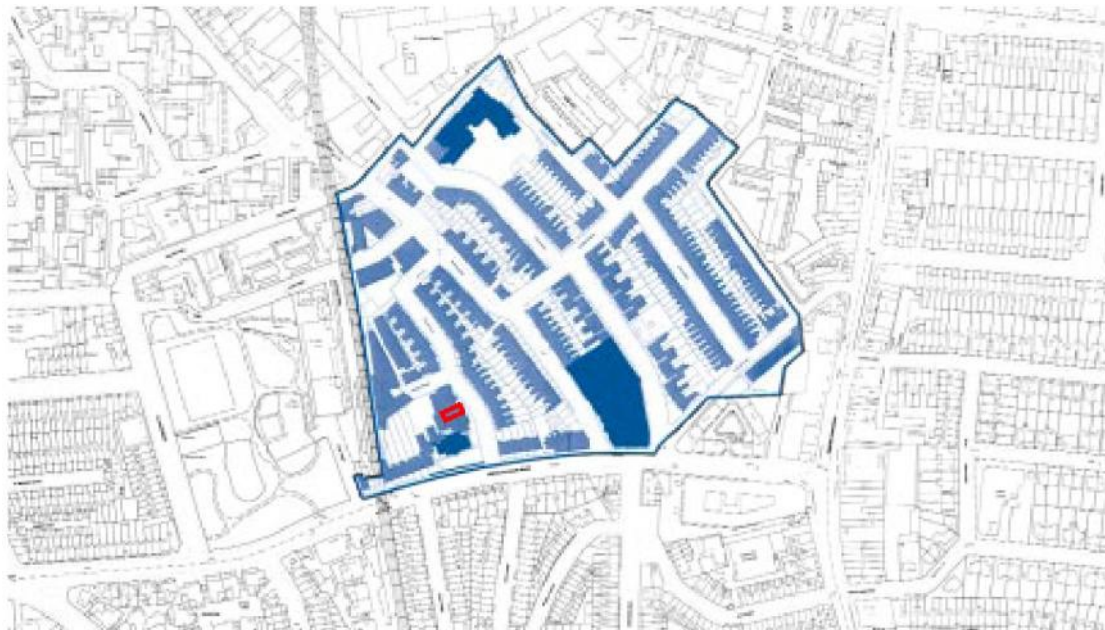
The former school building was listed by English Heritage on 14 May 1974 with the following notes on file:

*Ragstone with slate roofs. 2 storeys, 3 gabled bays. 2-storey bay window on central bay, with small gargoles at the angles, at cornice level. INTERIORS not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: gates and railings: both pairs of double gates have come from elsewhere. Gates in 1700-25 style and influenced style of railings. Wrought-iron. Right hand gate segmental-arched with scrolled overthrow including initials "GI"; openwork box piers surmounted by scrollwork and finials. Double gates to left with delicate scrollwork overthrow and openwork box piers surmounted by complex scrollwork and finials. Railings with urn finials and alternate rails with double curved motif taken from the gates.*

No particular mention is made of any external features apart from those of the main building fronting Prince of Wales Road and the railings forming the boundary of the complex. The statement clearly states that interiors of the complex were not inspected, a somewhat curious omission given that the building was a public school at the time of listing. The Inkerman CA Statement elaborates a bit more stating simply that "the later extensions along Ryland Road were carried out in similar materials and in a similar style, with a certain amount of render introduced for economy." In fact, the Conservation Area plan included in the Statement clearly indicates that only the main Prince of Wales building is listed, the rest of the complex afforded only ordinary protection as "buildings which make a positive contribution".







■ Listed buildings ■ Buildings which make a positive contribution

*Inkerman Conservation Area plan*

This application relates to proposals to refurbish the existing self-contained accommodation on the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> floors of the building. The flat comprises 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and a kitchen on the lower level and a large lounge on the upper mezzanine level accessed via an open stair from the kitchen. The roof structure provides a main pitched volume with gables at either end and a transverse pitch which is not currently apparent in the space above a false ceiling. Three smaller gables facing north surmount double height windows to that side. The flat was converted from an original classroom of the school with 2 of its windows split between floor levels and 2 more open to a double height space above the kitchen. A second escape route leads from the mezzanine down a staircase to the main escape route below. The building complex has been converted with a relatively light touch to alter the original structures. The roof scape of flat 21 is particularly untouched although aerial photos show that many parts of the complex have been provided with new dormers and roof lights.



*Aerial view with plot outlined*



*Views of Hampstead Gates building in context of Rylands Road*

Since granting planning and listed building consent for the conversion of the school into the residential development now called Hampstead Gates, LB Camden have granted a number of consents for alterations to the complex. These include Ref LEX/0201061/R1 & PEX/0201060/R2 which allowed the insertion of mezzanines to the flat the subject of this application and its adjoining neighbour as well as the insertion of conservation rooflights to front and rear roof slopes of that adjoining flat. Recently, listed building consent was granted for internal alterations to Flat 9 (2014/6204/L) and to Flat 15 (2013/2602/L) which allowed creation of a new mezzanine floor level behind the existing tall windows. Consent was granted in 2011 allowing creation of 3 new dormer windows to Flat 10 (2011/5848/L). Finally, listed building consent was granted this year for internal alterations to Flat 21 itself to move an internal partition, to extend the mezzanine level and to remove the existing lowered ceiling to open up the main vaulted roof of the flat. The current design proposals pick up from that recent consent and proposes several further alterations to the internal layout to improve the accommodation and enhance the architectural response to the existing features of the space.



## POLICY

Camden's Development Policy relating to conservation areas and listed buildings is DP25 Conserving Camden's Heritage. Proposed external alterations must be judged to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of a conservation area. Alterations to listed buildings will only be allowed where this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building nor cause harm to its setting. The Inkerman CA Statement contributes the following statement with respect to alterations to roofs: "further dormers or 'velux' type windows at the rear will normally be allowed if sensitively designed in relation to the building and other adjacent roofs." (INK26)

The Officer's Report for the recent consent for internal alterations to Flat 21 states that "historically this space was a double height hall ... the layout with mezzanine levels pushed away from the windows facing onto Ryland Road allows the original space to be appreciated from within the flat ... any layout must respect the original proportions."

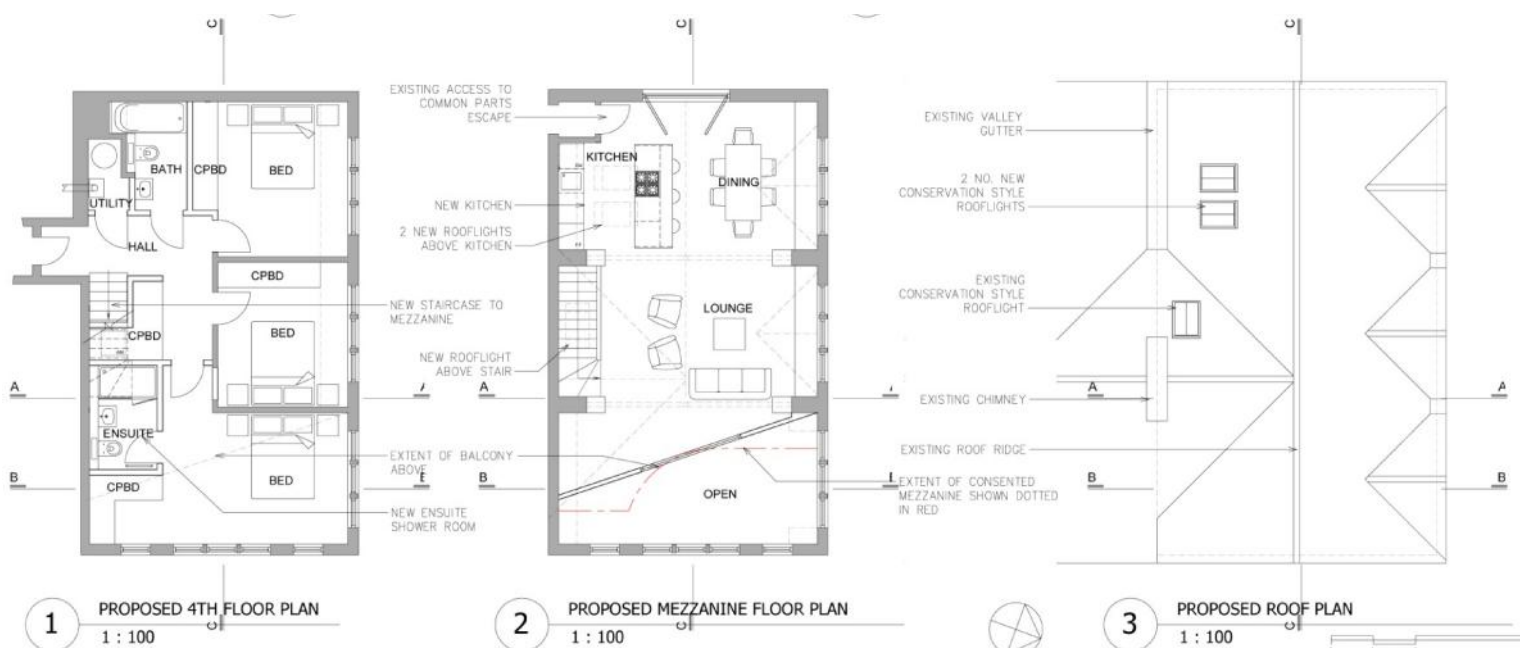


*Views of kitchen and mezzanine lounge*

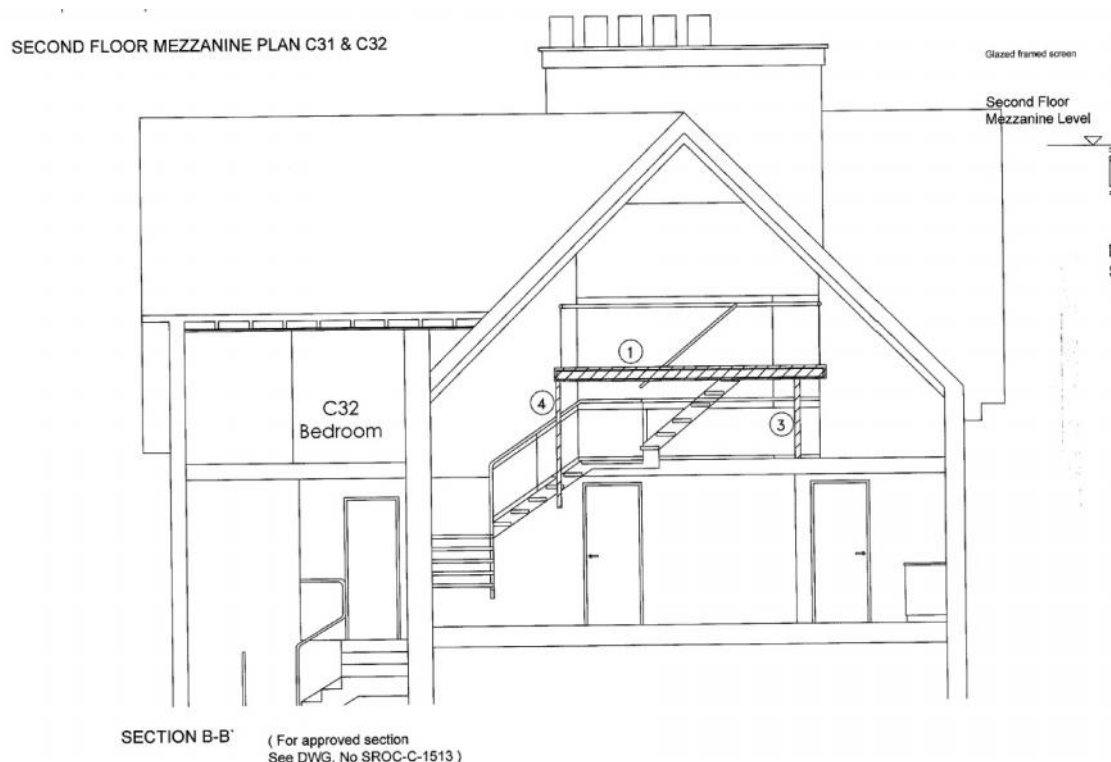
## THE PROPOSAL

The application scheme proposes to fully refurbish the existing accommodation and improve its functional and design layout. The current accommodation comprises approximately 66.1m<sup>2</sup> on its lower level and 51.3m<sup>2</sup> on the mezzanine giving 117.4m<sup>2</sup>. This is an unusually large space for a 2 bedroom flat, substantially in excess of the Mayor's Housing Space Standard which provides a minimum threshold of 67m<sup>2</sup> for a 4 person flat and 105m<sup>2</sup> for a 7 person unit. While some diversity of housing types is desirable, the current accommodation is significantly out of balance since 70.5m<sup>2</sup> of the space is allocated to the lounge and kitchen leaving relatively modest spaces for the bedrooms. The current owners of the flat would reasonably like to provide a 3<sup>rd</sup> bedroom within the current accommodation. This will be achieved through a creative solution converting the existing kitchen into the new bedroom. Moving the kitchen up to the open vaulted mezzanine level would significantly improve the functional arrangement by combining this with the main living space. The communicating staircase would be moved to a position closer to the entrance to the flat, providing better functional circulation within the unit.

The consented scheme was allowed a further extension to the existing mezzanine level at the Ryland Road end of the space. This would result in a double height space reducing from a width of 2.3m to 0.8m in front of the left hand window. It is debatable whether either the existing accommodation or the consented alteration to this really 'respects the original proportions' of the open volume of the original classroom. The consent to open up the vaulted roof would also fundamentally change the 'original proportions' of the space, albeit through an enhancement of the available space. None the less, there is a sensible design principle established not to allow further division of the tall window openings (as the existing bedroom windows have already been divided) and to maintain a degree of transparency between the separate levels and spaces of the flat. The public view of this vaulted space from Ryland Road will be necessary quite limited due to both the bend in the road and the position of this space at third floor level. Opening the roof void will enhance the volume and character of the mezzanine level although this would remain essentially hidden from the main bedroom level below.



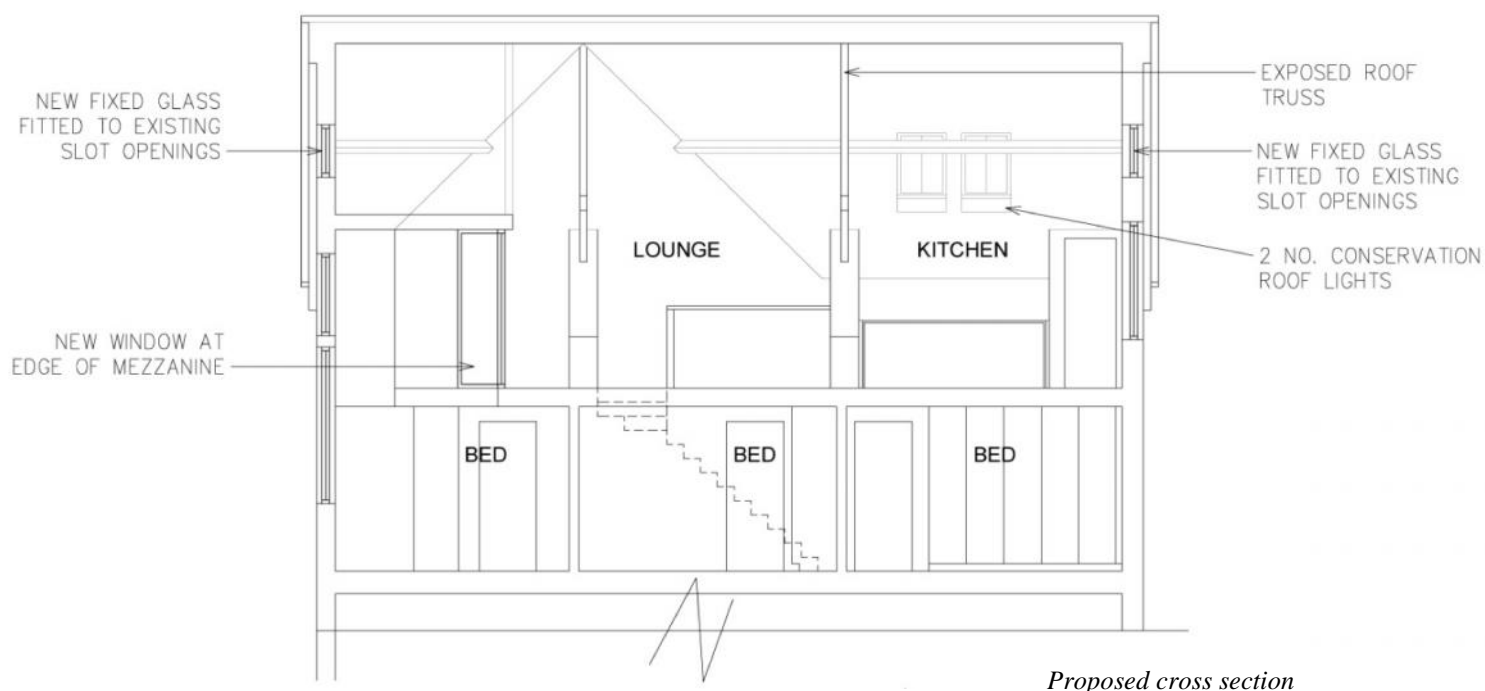
The new scheme proposes to replace the existing over-articulated staircase and balcony with an angled, part glazed partition which would provide a simpler, nuanced division of the space. The transparency would be maintained while also allowing a degree of aural privacy, currently impossible. With the inclusion of the unused and mislabelled 'garden room' at the western end of the mezzanine, this space would be the same size as the existing lounge. Relocating the staircase will mean that it would arrive on the mezzanine level presented with a view directly across the double height volume of the new bedroom and the roofscape beyond. The division of the space with a multiple levels is fundamentally similar to the scheme granted consent for the flat next door which includes an additional level floating above the main living space which subdivides the volume of that original room.



*Cross section of adjoining flat*

The design proposals would further enhance the mezzanine accommodation through provision of several new conservation rooflights. One of these would be located on the west facing slope of the intersecting transverse roof, above the new staircase position. Two more rooflights would be positioned on the south facing main pitch roof above the new kitchen location. Both of these positions are on internal facing roofs which are completely hidden from Ryland Road and only very obliquely visible from the courtyard side of Hampstead Gates, and then only from an elevated position. Several precedents for such skylights are listed above in this report; most relevant of these are two rooflights to the directly adjoining flat which is the only other accommodation on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor level of this portion of the development. Each of the existing gable ends of the flat currently features 3 narrow slotted openings which give onto the loft space. Once this is opened up, the proposal would be to fit these openings with fixed glazing, an enhancement to the main building facades.





## ACCESS STATEMENT

The project comprises renovations to an existing residential flat on the top storey of a converted dwelling. There is no lift and there is not scope to alter the existing staircase which is shared with other self-contained accommodation. However, all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that the stair and access route comply with Approved Document M. Internal space standards, lighting, fittings and sanitary accommodation will comply where possible.