

HERITAGE, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR A NEW 3 BEDROOM MEWS HOUSE AND ASSOCIATED REAR EXTENSION TO THE EXISTING BUILDING, 18-20 ST PRANCRAS WAY

18-20 St Pancras Way, London, NW1 0QG

INTRODUCTION

This statement is submitted to accompany the application for Full Planning Consent at 18-20 St Pancras Way for a new 3 bedroom dwelling and associated extension at the rear of 18-20 St Pancras Way. The statement has been composed in line with the CABE guidance document, 'Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them.' The statement will consider the impact of the proposed works and their immediate environment.

The proposal has been prepared in response to our clients brief and both the local and national guidelines and policies, respecting the social, economic and environmental needs of the site and the wider context. This document should be viewed alongside our planning drawings.



Image A: Street frontage of 18-20 St Pancras Way

Image B: Rear courtyard of 18-20 St Pancras Way looking out to the canal

Image C: View from the canal of the rear courtyard and 18-20 St Pancras Way

LOCATION

The proposed development is located behind 18-20 St Pancras Way in a rear courtyard. This is accessed off St Pancras Way via a gated single lane that goes under the first floor of the building (seen on the right hand side in Image A)

Context

Surrounding the site is predominantly residential flats overlooking the Regents Canal, ranging from 5 to 6 storeys in height, as seen in Image C. Unlike 18-20 St Pancras Way, which sits back from the canal edge, the neighbouring properties either side are built up to the edge of the canal. Opposite the site, and across the canal is a public footpath, flanked by a retaining wall with typical 2 storey, pitched roof terrace houses beyond this.

The rear courtyard slopes up to a raised planted area along the site boundary facing onto the canal. There is a tall metal mesh fence along the entire boundary, planted with shrubbery that obscure the view of the canal from the rear courtyard, as evident in Image B above.

The surrounding buildings are relatively modern, although differ in style and materiality. The properties either side of the site vary between red brick, metal cladding and timber; while 18-20 St Pancras Way is predominantly buff brick with white render.

Conservation Area

18-20 St Pancras Way is not listed; however, the site does sit within a conservation area as it is located next to the Regents Canal.

Referring to the Regent's Canal Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, the character of the canal is mostly hidden, as the townscape turns its back on it. Its historical use means much of the ground floors of buildings flanking the canal are often brick, adding to the sense of enclosure; important to the character of the canal.

The document also recognises 'the change of use of the canal from industrial to leisure. This is reflected in new approaches to the treatment of the canal edge, which can be accommodated without necessarily losing the industrial quality of the area'.

Specifically the site sits between Gray Inn Bridge and Oblique Bridge (Sub Area 2) along the Regents Canal. The Conservation Area Appraisal describes the area as having an isolated feel, being the longest stretch without an access point. The buildings that flank onto the canal on the south western side are described as 'largely undistinguished, and some, have particularly poor relationships to the canal'

Regent's Canal Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy Adopted 11 September 2008

Nature Conservation

The Regents canal is also classified as a Public Space, and a site of Nature Conservation interest, as well as providing a link to other open spaces. Planting along the canal generally is informal, and often within narrow strips to soften the edge of the canal and contrast with the hard edge formed by various retaining walls; while also providing habitats for wildlife.

Regent's Canal Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy Adopted 11 September 2008

Our proposal has taken the above into consideration when carrying out the design process, as will be discussed below.

USE/LAYOUT

Existing

18-20 St Pancras Way is a 6 storey building which occupies a site that slopes up (approx. 2.5 m) from street level to the canal at the rear of the building. The existing property is mixed use, with commercial occupying the lower and upper ground floors and 10 1, 2, 3 bedroom flats on the upper floors

At the rear of the building a tarmac courtyard provides is used as informal parking, but predominantly provides the main entrance to the existing residential flats in 18-20 St Pancras Way, accessed from the upper ground floor level. The courtyard also provides rear access to the lower ground floor of the commercial unit. The main entrance to the commercial unit is directly off the street, St Pancras Way.

Proposal

Predominantly the proposal seeks permission for a 3 bedroom mews house located to the rear courtyard of 18-20 St Pancras Way; providing a modest bright, open plan home overlooking the Regents Canal.

In association with the mews house we propose an extension to the rear of 18-20 St Pancras Way over the vehicular entrance. This will link the existing building and the proposed mews house. The extension will extend an existing 1 bedroom flat (Flat 01), and turn it into a 2 bedroom, 3 person flat, with improved living accommodation and private terrace as illustrated below in Image D.

The decision to extend Flat 01 as part of the proposal seeks to address concerns that the outlook from that particular flat would otherwise be compromised by the proposed mews house that sits in front. Thus the proposed extension aims to re-orientate the outlook of the flat to the side, so it has views over the rear courtyard and the canal beyond.

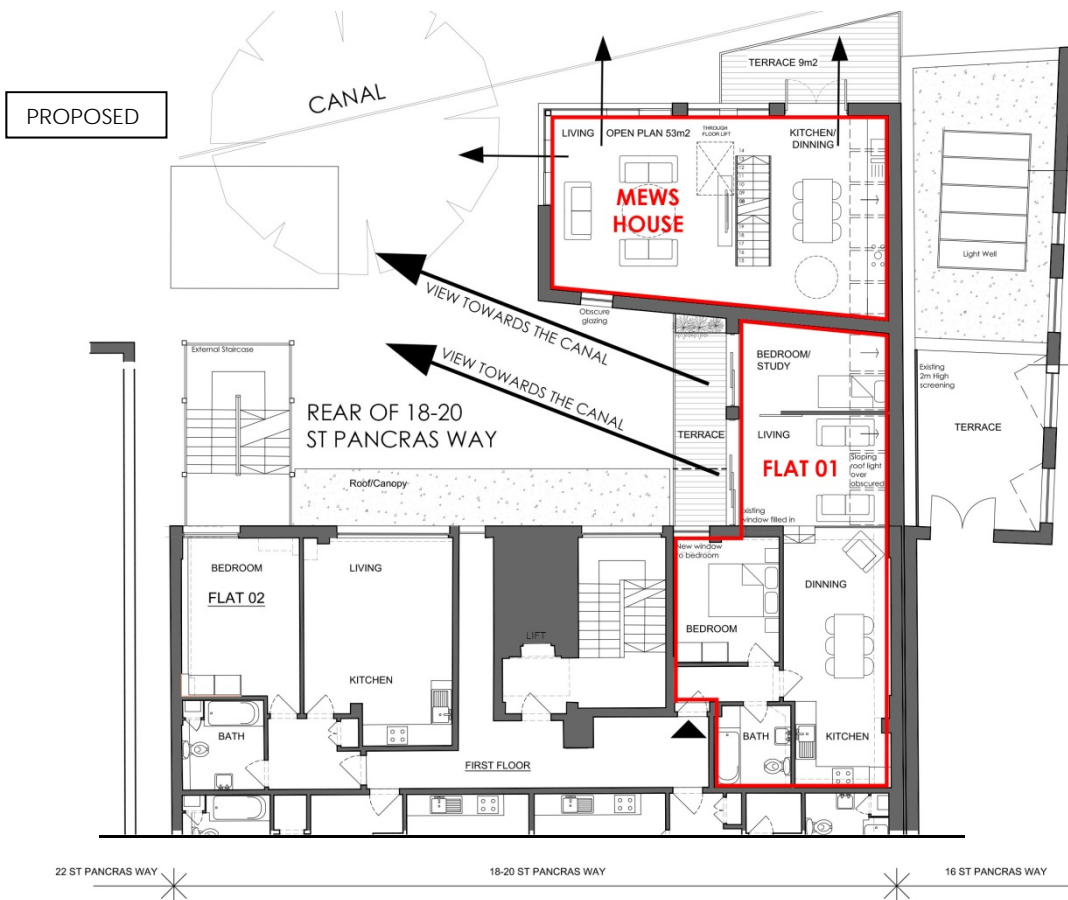
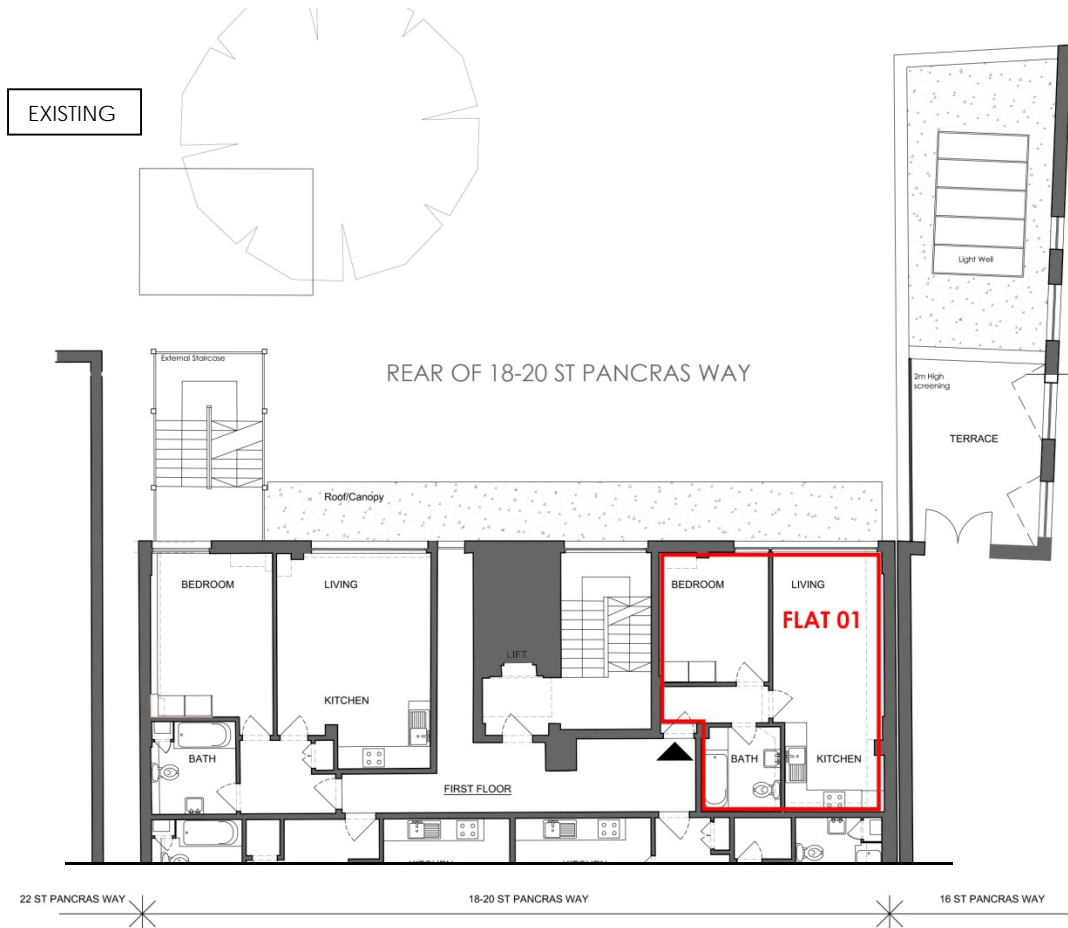


Image D: Extract from the first floor plan of the existing and proposed.

AMOUNT

- 3 Storey, 3 bedroom mews house: GIA 124m²/1335ft²
- Existing rear first floor 1 bedroom flat extended by 24m²/258ft² creating a 66m²/710m²/ft² 2 bedroom 3 person flat

SCALE

The scale of the development has been carefully considered in relation to the size and context of the site, predominantly concerning the outlooks and views across the canal from the flats in 18-20 St Pancras Way, and neighbouring property, No.16. Because of this our scheme is rather conservative in comparison to neighbouring property as we have avoided occupying the entire frontage facing onto the canal. This offers a break in the elevation along the waterway, and also breaks down the massing of the neighbouring buildings to create a better relationship with the canal.

The ground floor of the mews house is partly submerged; it follows the building line of the neighbouring building, No.16, before setting back in-line with the first floor. This is to establish a relationship with the neighbouring property; and retain the planting area along the canal.

The mews house boasts a small building footprint at ground level to maintain the vehicular access to the rear courtyard. It allows space for a car or small van to turn around.

Massing

The massing of the mews house, and extension that will link the house and existing building aims to have minimal impact on the flats surrounding the site. The form and massing has been carefully considered in relation to existing flats of both neighbouring property and 18-20 St Pancras Way.

The massing of the mews house has been designed to not encroach on the outlook from the existing flats in 18-20 St Pancras Way. Where the view has been compromised by the proposed mews house (as with Flat 01) we have proposed extending the unit to orientate its views over the canal to the side (as illustrated in Image D above)

Where the proposed house and extension 'butt up' against the neighbouring property, the roof line slopes down to the level of the parapet and an existing 1.8m high privacy screen of the neighbouring property (16 St Pancras Way) as illustrated in Image E. Behind the privacy screen at 16 St Pancras Way is a roof terrace as shown in images F & G, which also shows a gazebo structure. Both the gazebo and privacy screen prevent any overlooking from this residence onto our site and our proposal.

The second floor of the mews house is set back to the side so not to block out any direct view from Flat 05 (above Flat 01) over the canal at this level. The second floor has also been designed so that it does not sit in front of any existing flats in 18-20 St Pancras Way to avoid blocking existing views out to the canal. We have also been conscious of the relationship and proximity to 16 St Pancras Way at this level, this is to minimise any reduction of natural light to the neighbouring properties, again shown on Image E below.

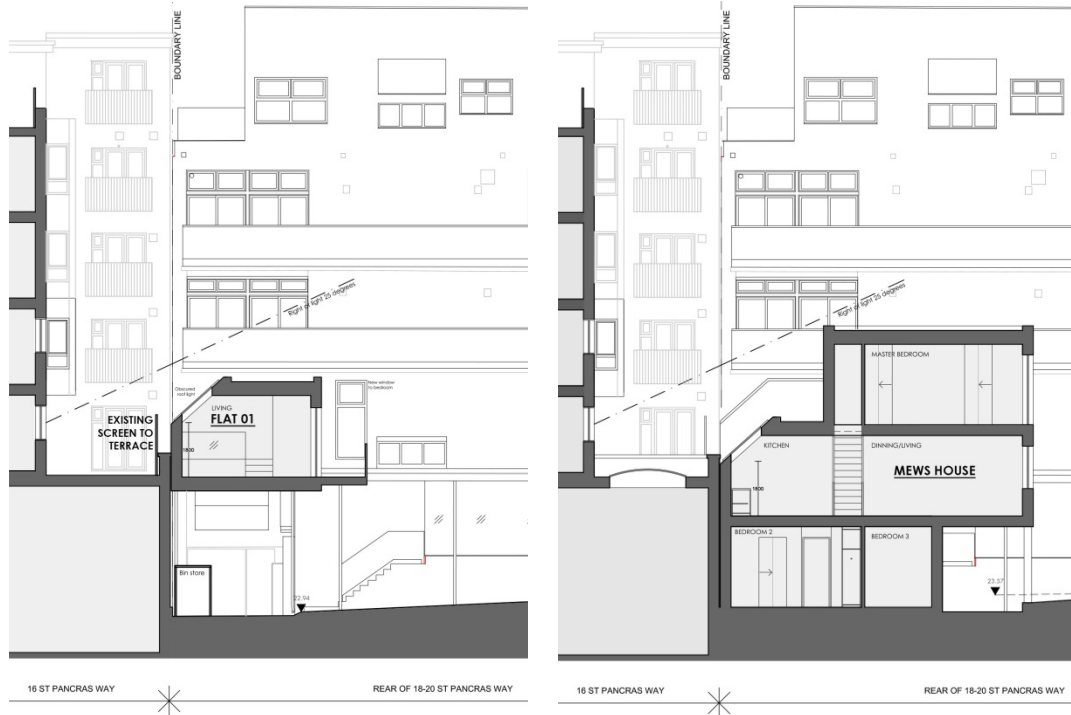


Image E: Sections through proposed development in relation to neighbouring property, 16 St Pancras Way



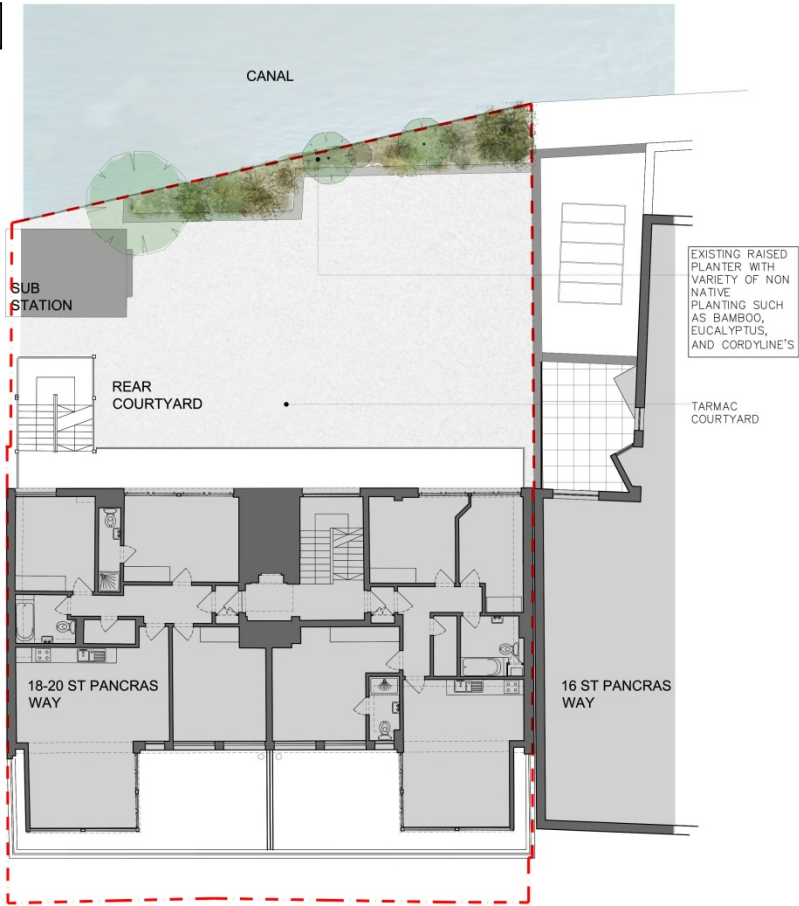
Image F: View from rear courtyard looking up to No.16 roof terrace at 1.8m privacy screen.
 Image G: Looking down onto No.16 roof terrace (Photos taken March 2015)

LANDSCAPE

The proposal seeks to improve on the existing landscape to the rear of 18-20 St Pancras Way, and create a better relationship with the canal. The mews house sits back from the canal edge to maintain the planted area. As existing this includes shrubbery such as Eucalyptus, Cordylines, and box hedging, which we hope to enrich with London native species as advised by the Canal and River Trust, in the hope to encourage local wildlife and habitats along the canal.

We seek to increase the biodiversity, and the amount of greenspace on the site to soften the boundary condition onto the canal, as illustrated in Image H below. The Conservation Area Appraisal discusses the industrial character of the canal, however also promotes the importance of planted areas and encouraging wildlife along the waterways, under the Nature Conservation.

EXISTING



PROPOSED

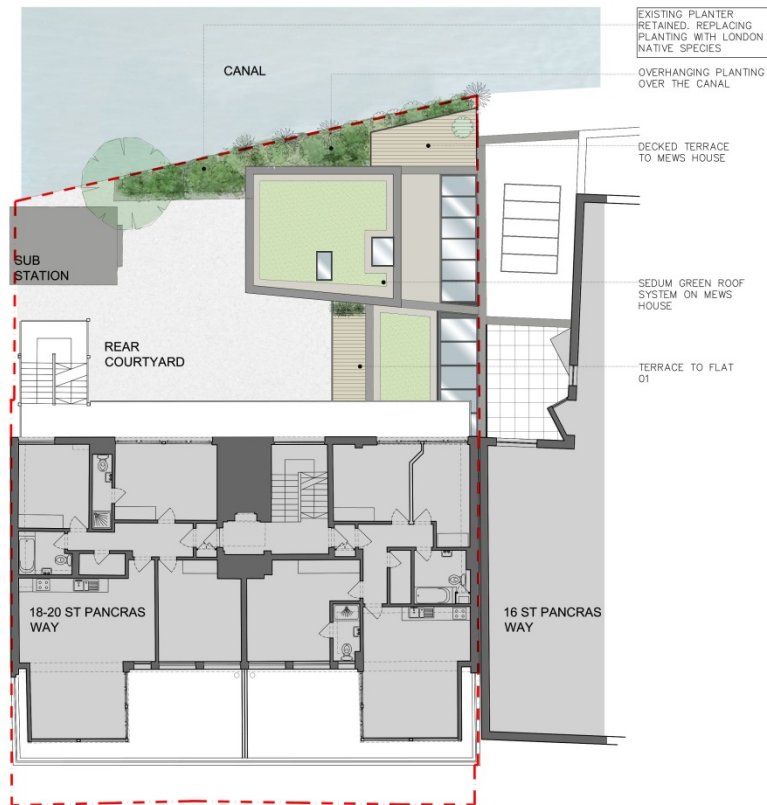


Image H: Existing and proposed landscape plan (Please refer to drawing PA.07 for full drawing)

Seeking pre-planning advice from the Canal and River Trust, they had '*no objections to the design in principle*'. However they are keen for us to take the opportunity to improve the interface onto the canal with planting, as well as increasing the biodiversity which we propose to do as mentioned.

As well as this we propose removing the existing tall mesh fence that runs the width of the site along the canal to improve the outlook for both the existing flats at 18-20 St Pancras Way and the proposed mews house. This will help animate the elevation onto the canal, and promote the 'change of use' of the canal from industrial to leisure; as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal. It also hopes to deal with ideas of isolation along this particular part of the canal.

The mews house will have a green roof system, to further improve upon biodiversity. This will be more visually appealing for the flats of 18-20 St Pancras Way, and neighbouring property, that will look down onto the house. This seeks to 'green up' the site.

APPEARANCE

The variety of styles and materials used at 18-20 St Pancras Way and neighbouring property presents little precedent for the proposed development. Instead the proposed mews house seeks to be contemporary in style, sitting quietly and sympathetically next to the canal and neighbouring properties; relying on well design detailing and a simple palette of materials that aims to unify the neighbouring buildings.

The introduction of the new house sited along the canal would partly screen the main building providing relief from this mass. The building has been designed so as not to dominate its position along the canal. The new dwelling, due to its modest size and scale would provide a proportionate building to its setting abutting the canal and the conservation area. The building would be stepped at two and three storeys and complimented with a green roof and canal side planting.

The proposals would add interest to the canal setting of the conservation area providing a modest well-designed building to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. In addition the loss of the existing fencing and its replacement with enhancement planting would improve the setting of the new building.

Materials

Predominantly the mew house will be brick, brown in colour, to provide a transitional colour between the red brick of No. 16 and the buff brick of 18-20 St Pancras Way, while subtly distinguishing itself as a new addition to 18-20 St Pancras Way, as illustrated in Image J.

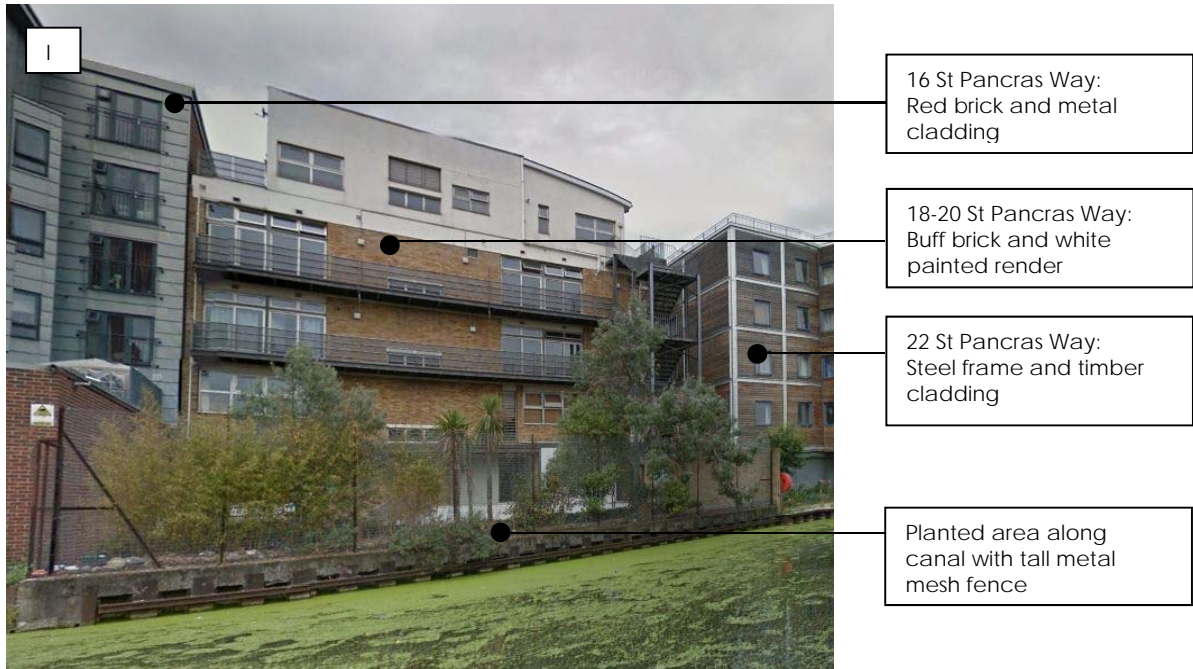


Image I: View from canal of existing rear elevation of 18-20 St Pancras Way and neighbouring property

Timber openable side lights will be used for natural ventilation to the mews house, and will allow the glazed units free of openable parts. Large picture windows will present a clean simple elevation onto the canal. The timber panels provide a link to neighbouring property (No.22) and will be also used to the rear of the mews house to identify the main entrance to the house at ground level.

The extension and link between the proposed mews house and 18-20 St Pancras Way will predominantly be glazed to allow as much natural light into the flat as possible, with a green roof system and roof lights. It will provide a visual connection between the new mews house and existing building.

We propose using metal railings to the balconies that will complement the industrial character of the existing building, with reference to the external upper floor walkways and staircase that dominate the rear elevation; as evident in Image I.



Image J: View from canal of proposed rear elevation of 18-20 St Pancras Way and mews house.

LAYOUT

The layout of the mews house is very much a response to the site and its context in order to maximise views over the canal and away from the courtyard and rear of 18-20 St Pancras Way; purposely utilising the views over the canal while avoiding overlooking issues within the site, and to neighbouring properties.

The mews house sits below the ground line as the site slopes up to the canal, similar to the neighbouring development. The ground level accommodates the main entrance (with level access) bathroom, and two bedrooms, both dual aspects; with views over the canal. At first floor, the open plan living and kitchen space utilises its elevated position with views over the canal, and access to a private terrace as illustrated in Image K below. The second floor provides a third master bedroom with en-suite and dressing room; this again benefits from being dual aspect with views across the canal. All habitable rooms also have openable side lights and/or roof lights for cross ventilation.



Image K: Proposed section through mews house, linking extension and existing building.

The extension to Flat 01 in 18-20 St Pancras Way, will involve minimal internal alterations to the rest of the flat. The flat will benefit from split level, open plan living and kitchen accommodation and the addition of a second single bed/study space with access to a private terrace. Obscured glazed roof lights will flood the extension and flat with natural light.

Life Time Homes

The scheme provides a new dwelling in the form of the mews house that will meet the requirements of Life Time Homes Standards as outlined in the table.

	Lifetime Homes – Principles	Proposal
1.	Provide, or enable by cost effective adaptation, parking that makes getting into and out of the vehicle as convenient as possible for the widest range of people (including those with reduced mobility and/or those with children).	No car parking is going to be provided. Both the existing building and proposed mews house is easily accessible via public transport, achieving a PTAL Rating 6a. Car free development
2.	Enable convenient movement between the vehicle and dwelling for the widest range of people, including those with reduced mobility and/or those carrying children or shopping.	N/A
3.	Enable, as far as practicable, convenient movement along other approach routes to dwellings (in addition to the principal approach from a vehicle required by Criterion 2) for the widest range of people.	N/A
4.	Enable ease of use of all entrances for the widest range of people	The entrance to the dwelling is fully compliant with level thresholds, clear opening widths and nibs, including covered entrance
5.	Enable access to dwellings above the entrance level to as many people as possible	N/A
6.	Enable convenient movement in hallways and through doorways	The proposal provides the required minimum width for hallways, doors with nibs
7.	Enable convenient movement in rooms for as many people as possible	The scheme is fully compliant with adequate circulation for disabled users.
8.	Provide accessible socialising space for	N/A

	visitors less able to use stairs.	
9.	Provide space for a member of the household to sleep on the entrance level if they are temporarily unable to use stairs (e.g. after a hip operation).	Two of the three bedrooms on entrance level
10.	Provide an accessible WC and potential showering facilities for: i) any member of the household using temporary entrance level bed space of Criterion 9 ii) visitors unable to use stairs	At entrance level there is a fully compliant bathroom
11.	Ensure future provision of grab rails is possible, to assist with independent use of WC and bathroom facilities.	The scheme has been designed to allow for future adaptation
12.	Enable access to storeys above the entrance level for the widest range of households	Location for a through list has been indicated
13.	Assist with independent living by enabling convenient movement between bedroom and bathroom facilities for a wide range of people.	The scheme has been designed to allow for future adaptation
14.	Provide an accessible bathroom that has ease of access to its facilities from the outset and potential for simple adaptation to provide for different needs in the future.	The bathrooms have been designed to allow ease of use and adaptation
15.	Enable people to have a reasonable line of sight from a seated position in the living room and to use at least one window for ventilation in each room.	Cill heights will be no higher than 900mm at entrance level, with larger windows on upper floors with openable panels for cross ventilation.
16.	Locate regularly used service controls, or those needed in an emergency, so that they are usable by a wide range of household members - including those with restricted movement and limited reach.	All controls will be located at appropriate heights to allow compliance

Access

The access to the rear courtyard will remain unchanged. From the courtyard, the access to the flats in the existing building will also remain unchanged, and access to the proposed mews house will have level access.

TRANSPORT

The addition of the mews house is designed to be a car-free dwelling, considering the good public transport in the area. The house provides internal storage for two bikes

AMENITY AND REFUSE

Refuse will remain as existing and located at the rear of 18-20 St Pancras Way at the top of the entrance lane. The proposal does however seek to provide covered storage for the bins which will include an additional separate store for the mews house refuse (please refer to drawing number PA.01 for location)

Amenity space for 18-20 St Pancras Way will be made no worse; however Flat 01 will benefit from its own external terrace. The proposal does however seek to 'green p' the site so it is more visually appealing.

The mews house has a private terrace that meets requirements set out in the London Plan, and is accessed from the open plan living and kitchen space.

SUSTAINABILITY

The building will offer the following characteristics of a sustainable and contemporary design:

- Designed to be energy efficient
- Designed to be long life, with particular regard to choice of materials
- Designed to be flexible
- Designed to maximise day lighting
- Link internal and external spaces with glazed openings
- Encouraging cross ventilation

Our scheme also seeks to encourage a greater biodiversity with the planting in front of the development and onto the canal, aided by the use of a green roof system on the larger expanses of roof.

Building with ecological concerns in mind does not mean you have to sacrifice aesthetics; in fact the two can and should go hand in hand. The elements that can make a building green also serve to maximise the quality of life – good natural light and air, comfortable heating and a sense of being in touch with nature create a pleasant, optimistic environment.

PREVENTING CRIME

The proposed mews house is accessed through a gated entrance off St Pancras Way as existing. This covered lane will have increased lighting and cameras for security and surveillance, although is also visible, from the street. The entrance of the mews house is consciously positioned to the side of the property away from the vehicular access route; however the front door is overlooked by neighbouring residents at the rear of 18-20 St Pancras Way for surveillance.

CONCLUSION

Overall the proposed scheme offers the opportunity to provide a quality 3 bedroom home, with contemporary open plan living, with external space overlooking the Regents canal. The scheme also hopes to improve upon existing accommodation in 18-20 St Pancras Way in association with the mews house.

The scheme aims to improve the environment along the canal within the site, and animate the frontage onto the waterway on an otherwise vacant plot sandwiched between two substantial residential developments.



Image L: View from public footpath of site and frontage onto the canal

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by:

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