

201 ALBANY STREET, REGENT'S PARK, LONDON, NW1 4AB

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT & HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT



201 Albany Street - Front Elevation

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT AND HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement and Historical Assessment is submitted in accordance with Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England Order 2010, "Guidance on Information and Requirements and Validation" March 2010) and follows guidance laid down in DCLG Circular 01/2006. The Historical Assessment considers the design of the proposed works in respect of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the government's objectives for the historic built environment as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012). The assessment also takes account of The Regent's Park Conservation Area Statement, which provides supplementary planning guidance.
- 1.2 The proposal seeks planning permission and listed building consent for the insertion of two new windows to the rear elevation at ground and second floor half landings to the staircase. This application follows on from the planning permission and listed building consent approved under references 2014/1760/P and 2014/1798/L dated 30th April 2014. The works the subject of these applications and in the process of being carried out on site at present.

2.0 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 At the beginning of the 19th century the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues took steps to develop the farmland comprised by Marylebone Park. John Nash, who was the then architect to the Office of Woods and Forests, submitted a very different plan to other architects consulted. Nash's conception of The Park was, in the first instance, an assemblage of villas in landscape with an almost continuous belt of terraces as a kind of architectural backcloth. It is this original concept, his "Grand Design" that sets the architectural and historic value of The Park today.
- 2.2 Albany Street runs from Marylebone Road to Gloucester Gate following the east side of Regent's Park. It is about three-quarters of a mile in length. The Crown Estate owns the freeholds on the west side of the street. It was laid out by John Nash along the line of an earlier farm track that served the tenant of Coneyburrow Farm. It divided the Park terraces from the commercial service district surrounding the canal basin. Three markets for hay, meat and vegetables were planned to the east but only one was built; the hay market and was named Cumberland Market. Road works first began in 1811 with houses being constructed from the 1820's onwards. A barracks to the west of Albany Street was laid out by John Nash as part of the Regent's Park scheme in 1811. The site was later changed to the present one backing on to the 1816 canal cut. Many properties on the east side of The Regent's Park Estate suffered from general bomb damage during the war.

2.3 The Gorell Committee reporting in 1947 recommended that:

“the Nash Terraces were of national interest and importance and should be preserved as far as that was practicable, and without strict regard to the economics of prudent estate management.”

2.4 The Crown Estate qualified matters relative to “preservation” in their publication *The Future of The Regent’s Park Terraces - Third Statement* by The Crown Estate Commissioners June 1962. They decreed under Clause 25(i) that:-

“We have said that the fronts of the Terraces would remain as in the original design. This will apply to the ends and to any other ornaments part covered by the original Nash design.”

and under Clause 25(ii) that:-

“Most of the back walls have no architectural merit. Many will, however, be kept and strengthened where this course is proper for the design of the interior. It must be emphasised that all Terraces were designed to be used as a series of single houses. Sometimes the shape, depth and size do not readily convert to flats. In Cumberland Terrace conversions extending over one, two or three houses have been very practical. But this will not be so in all Terraces. We shall insist on a proper treatment of all back elevations but shall not prevent demolition. In the case of York Terrace we shall, indeed, insist on the removal of the present back wall and its replacement in a better design. In proper places we shall encourage a reduction or an increase in the depth of the Terrace.”

and under Clause 25(iii) that:-

“We shall not insist on the preservation of party walls where conversions into flats are to be carried out. They have never had any significance in the Nash design and in some Terraces their retention would seriously hinder proper conversions.”

2.5 It was reported that Gloucester Gate to the west of the application site had been affected by subsidence, but for the exception of two or three houses The Crown hoped to avoid renewal after demolition. In fact the mews houses fronting onto Gloucester Gate Mews were reconstructed in part in the 1960’s with further work being undertaken in the 1970’s. Fortunately the houses at the upper end of Albany Terrace from nos: 197 – 217 seemed to escape any major war damage or reconstruction by The Crown Estate.

3.0 LISTED BUILDING DETAILS

3.1 The Listed Building Description for 197-211 is as below:-

Description: Numbers 197-211 Albany Street and Attached Railings

Grade: II

Date Listed: 14 May 1974

English Heritage Building ID: 476566

OS Grid Reference: TQ2863683368

OS Grid Coordinates: 528636, 183368

Latitude/Longitude: 51.5346, -0.1468

Location: Gloucester Gate Mews, Camden Town, Greater London NW1 4AB

Locality: Camden

Local Authority: Camden Borough Council

County: Greater London

Country: England

Postcode: NW1 4AB

CAMDEN

TQ2883SE ALBANY STREET

798-1/82/25 (West side)

14/05/74 Nos.197-211 (Odd)

and attached railings

(Formerly Listed as:

ALBANY STREET

Nos.197-217 (Odd))

GV II

Terrace of 8 houses. C1830-40. Stucco, No.197 with rusticated ground floor. Nos 199, 203 & 205 with later slate mansard roofs and attic dormers. 3 storeys and basements; No.197 slightly higher. 2 windows each except Nos 199, 203 & 205 with 3 and No.201 with 4. No.197 with 2 window left return.

Square-headed doorways with patterned fanlights and panelled doors. Plain 1st floor sill band. Recessed sashes, upper floors architraved; 1st floor with cast-iron balconies and 2nd floor with lugs under the sills. Cornice and blocking course.

INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with spearhead finials to areas.

Listing NGR: TQ2863283380

4.0 CAMDEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

4.1 Camden's Local Development Framework (LDF) replaced the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) in November 2010. It is a collection of planning documents that sets out a strategy for managing growth and development in the borough. Camden's Core Strategy sets out the key elements of the Council's planning vision and strategy for the borough. The following policies have been considered and addressed as part of the proposed planning and listed building applications.

4.2 As part of the Core Strategy Section **CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage** considers that:

The Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

- a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;*
- b) preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens;*
- c) promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;*
- d) seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible;*
- e) protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites inside and outside the borough and protecting important local views.*

4.3 The following policies are relevant under the Camden Policies under the LDF and have been considered as part of the design principles for the proposed alterations and additions to the property.

Policy DP24 - Securing high quality design

The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

- a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;*
- b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;*
- c) the quality of materials to be used;*
- d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;*
- e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;*
- f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;*
- g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;*
- h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and*
- i) accessibility.*

Policy DP25 - Conserving Camden's heritage Conservation areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;*
- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;*
- c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this*

harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and
e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

Listed buildings

To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

e) prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
f) only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building; and
g) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

4.4 Policy DP26 - Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

The Council will protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity. The factors we will consider include:

a) visual privacy and overlooking;
b) overshadowing and outlook;
c) sunlight, daylight and artificial light levels;
d) noise and vibration levels;
e) odour, fumes and dust;
f) microclimate;
g) the inclusion of appropriate attenuation measures.

We will also require developments to provide:

h) an acceptable standard of accommodation in terms of internal arrangements, dwelling and room sizes and amenity space;
i) facilities for the storage, recycling and disposal of waste;
j) facilities for bicycle storage; and
k) outdoor space for private or communal amenity space, wherever practical.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

5.1 At the national level the government's objectives for the historic environment are set out in Part 12 of The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012). The document places emphasis for decisions relating to listed building consent and planning permission to be determined by the Local Authority against their specific policy and guidance. The NPPF is a material consideration in the planning process and has amplified the guidance previously set out in PPS5.

5.2 The NPPF defines significance as:

"The value of heritage assets to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting".

- 5.3 The NPPF makes it clear that local authorities, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to that asset's conservation, that is:

"The process of maintaining and managing change to heritage assets in a way that sustains and where appropriate, enhances its significance".

- 5.4 The NPPF recognises a distinction between levels of harm to a listed building or conservation area and defines these as substantial or less than substantial. Paragraph 133 states that:

"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss".

- 5.5 Paragraph 134, states that:

"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use".

- 5.6 Paragraph 187 states:

"Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area."

6.0 THE BUILDINGS SPECIAL INTEREST AND SIGNIFICANCE

- 6.1 At the end of the Second World War the Nash terraces were in deplorable condition. Many had been damaged by bombing, while all the buildings were badly affected by dry rot and the effects of the minimum maintenance during the war years. The terraces presented a gap toothed, peeling prospect and most of the houses were empty and derelict.

- 6.2 The houses at the north end of Albany Street are Grade II listed as of "group value" being part of the composition of neo classical buildings built around Regent's Park designed to John Nash's plan of the 1820's. Located on the outside of The Park this terrace of eight houses was constructed c1830-40. Gloucester Gate to the west beyond the Gloucester Gate Mews was one of the last terraces to be constructed inside The Park and dates from c1827. 201 Albany Street is slightly larger than the other houses in this group being a double pile plan form set about a central staircase and hall. The buildings' significance and special interest is in the external fabric and its relationship to the neighbouring buildings and the composition as a whole that forms part of development of the architecture of The Park. As the house survived bomb damage and major reconstruction by The Crown Estate the interior is of interest as it remains reasonably intact.

- 6.3 The proposed works are confined to the rear of the building. There will be no loss of amenity as a result of the works. During the course of the works all efforts will be made to reduce any inconvenience to the neighbours. The works to the buildings will be subject to a Licence to Alter prepared by The Crown Estate which limits the hours of work and more particularly controls and limits any potential noisy building operations to specific times of day.

7.0 DESIGN & HISTORICAL IMPACT

7.1 External Alterations

- 7.1.1 The alterations would enhance the building and its setting.
- 7.1.2 The works are confined to the rear elevation (west). It is proposed to insert two new windows to the rear elevation at the ground and second floor half landings to the staircase. The new sash windows are shown designed to traditional details and would provide more natural daylight to the staircase. The insertion of the new windows would also increase the light reaching the main landing levels and enhance the staircase areas generally. The insertion of new sash windows is similar to the new windows recently approved under references 2013/1034/P and 2013/1254/L at 213 Albany Street and indeed to the window approved to this property under 2014/1760/P and 2014/1798/L dated 30th April 2014.

8.0 ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The following assessment is undertaken using the customary scale of assessment of the change as Negative – Neutral – Positive and the potential for qualifying the degree of change as Major or Minor for each change other than Neutral

Floor	Works	Consideration	Assessment
G + ½	Formation of new window to rear wall of staircase	Improvement to daylight. Similar to that approved at 213 Albany Street. Major	Positive
2 + ½	Formation of new window to rear wall of staircase.	Improvement to daylight. Similar to that approved at 213 Albany Street. Major	Positive

- 8.2 In summary the proposed alterations do not result in any harm to the significance of the listed building or to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

9.0 LANDSCAPE

- 9.1 There are no landscape issues associated with this application.

10.0 USE

- 10.1 The use of the residential property as a single-family dwelling remains unaltered.

11.0 SIZE AND LAYOUT OF ACCOMMODATION

- 11.1 201 Albany Street is a double pile house comprising basement; ground, first, second and third floors. The layout of the accommodation remains unaltered.

12.0 ACCESS

- 12.1 The property is at the northern end of Albany Street and backs onto a rear mews access road at Gloucester Gate Mews. The front entrance door faces onto Albany Street, which is on a major bus route into the centre of London. Underground and mainline stations are located close by in Camden Town. Regent's Park is a short walk away. The paving and mews roadway at the rear is the responsibility of The Crown Estate Paving Commissioners.

13.0 CONCLUSION

- 13.1 The proposed works enhance the level of daylight reaching the staircase and main landings. There is a small loss of historic fabric but this is considered not to be significant in relationship to the overall benefits gained. The works preserve the building's special interest. The proposed works do not give rise to any adverse impact upon the neighbours' amenity. The proposal meets the requirements of the relevant national and local policies. The external alterations preserve the special interest of the building and the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area. We trust that the London Borough of Camden will have no difficulty approving the applications as submitted.