DESIGN AND ACCESS ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED CONVERSION OF THE EXISTING THREE SELF CONTAINED FLATS INTO TWO SELF CONTAINED UNITS INCORPORATING THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE EXISTING LOWER GROUND FLOOR TOGETHER WITH A LIGHT WELL TO THE FRONT AND REAR AND OTHER MINOR ALTERATIONS TO THE EXTERNAL FACADE

FRONT VIEW OF 14 ROSECROFT AVENUE - HAMPSTEAD – LONDON NW3 5PS

LOCATION

The property lies within The Redington and Frognal Conservation Area. The conservation area is further sub-divided and Rosecroft Avenue lies within Sub Area 2. There are three roads known as The Crofts. Rosecroft Avenue is one of these roads. Rosecroft Avenue largely comprises of semi-detached houses of varied individual appearance but with a “mix and match” set of elements and materials. This gives the street an overall coherent appearance. While most of the houses are built of red brick, these are interspersed by houses with rendered elevations or part tile hanging. The continuity of a small palette of materials play a significant roll in the overall harmony of the appearance of Rosecroft Avenue but this is also helped by the regular spacing of mature London Plane trees that dominate the view looking upwards along Rosecroft Avenue.

Windows are timber framed traditional sash and casement style.

The fronts of the houses are set mainly as pairs of houses. However, the rears of the houses have changed considerably over the years. There is an eclectic mix of sizes and styles of architecture from traditional to modern. There are large mainly traditional style extensions and multiple single and double storey extensions that have grown over the years giving a patchwork of heights and depths to the rear views.

HISTORY

There is no planning history within the planning department that I can find. The property was built as a family house but has been used as 3 self-contained flats for many years.

Planning Application Search Results

No Records Found. Date Validated is between 01 January 1926 and 31 December 2016 and Site Address contains 14 ROSECROFT AVENUE

The original rooms of the house have been preserved and much of the original detailing is still apparent.

The is visual evidence the house has been used as three flats at Ground floor level and a self contained flat on each of the upper floors. This appears historic and long established.

REAR VIEW OH HOUSE WITH ACCESS TO THE GARDEN FROM UPPER FIRST FLOOR FLAT

REASON FOR THE PROPOSAL

This application is to increase the floor area at the Lower Ground level and sub divide the house into two units. The larger maisonette over the upper floors to be occupied by the host family and the Lower Ground floor unit to be used by family members or offered for rent on the open market.

The upper parts can form a large maisonette for the clients family. The client's brief is to achieve a full improvement and renovation to the house to make it sustainable for the future generations. The family has three children and the rear garden will be used by the children and the mother can control the houses and see the children play safely at all times.

There is a rather ugly dormer window to the flank elevation and it is proposed to rebuild this dormer window to a reduced size, to use traditional detailing to its construction, thereby enhancing the local views. See application drawings.

The ground floor has magnificent rooms of good proportion. The ornate cornice detail, picture rails, skirting, window shutters and door architraves are original and the client does not want to harm or destroy these features. However the house is not Listed and internal works are not controlled by Camden.

It is necessary to create a new kitchen to the rear of the property – enhancing the ground floor accommodation and, thereby, maintaining a fully functioning family home at Ground and upper floors. The kitchen has been positioned away from the adjoining semi-detached property to avoid and noise or disturbance to their main rooms.

There is currently a Lower Ground floor over the part of the footprint of the original house. It is proposed to increase the floor area to give a constant floor to ceiling height over the entire Lower Ground floor.

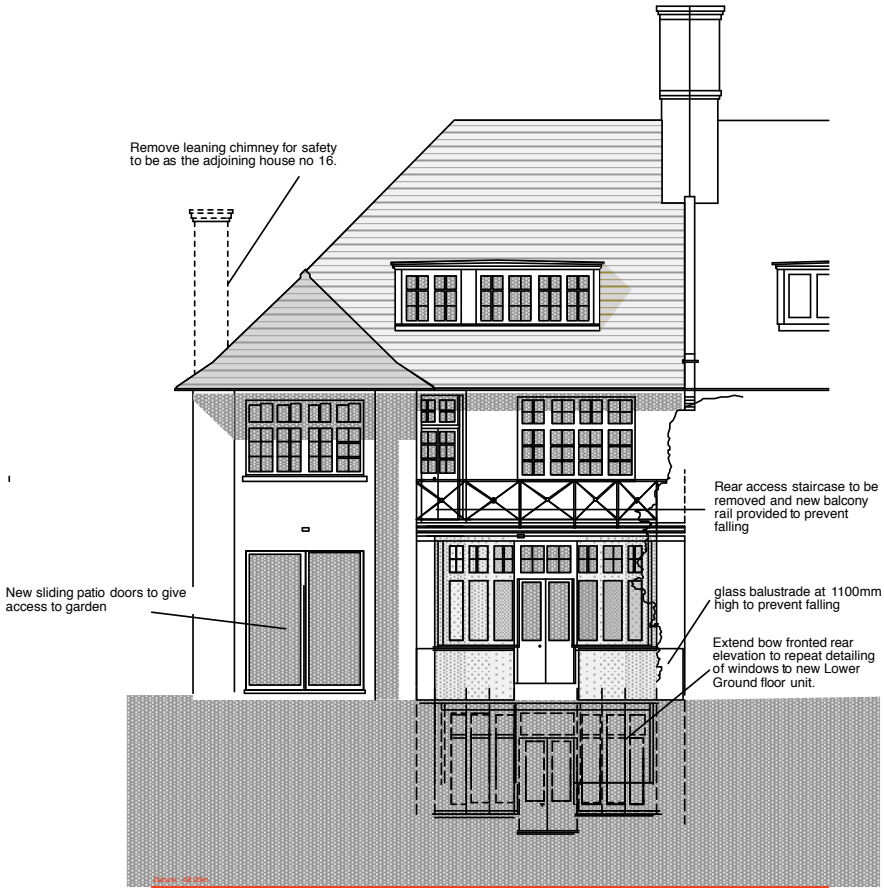
PROPOSAL - USE

The current use of the building is that as a 3 self- contained flats – Class C3 use

It is intended to create a self-contained 2 Bedroom flat in the Lower Ground floor.

The upper floors will create a large maisonette for the client's family. In this way the house will be fully SUSTAINABLE for more generations. All to be Class C3 use.

THE DESIGN PROPOSALS



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION

REAR VIEW

There are only minor alterations to the host building.

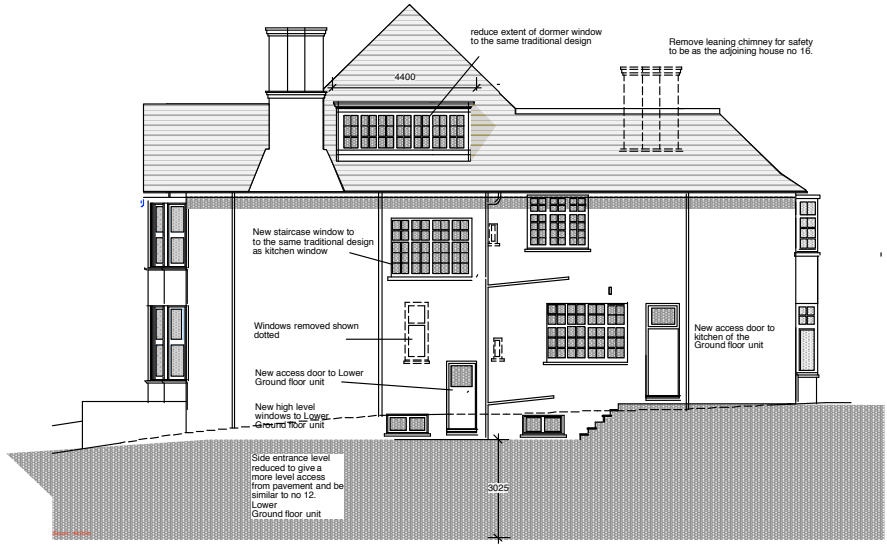
1) New sliding doors will be provided at ground level to give access to the garden

2) New rear light well to allow light into the rooms at Lower Ground level. The design is to have similar windows to the bow front bay window to be repeated. It has been designed to give a sensitive and lightness of touch to compliment the original house. The French doors are to be tall in proportion, taken from the existing French doors.

The proposed design of the rear light well does not harm the architectural integrity of the main house.

3). The existing external long staircase leading from the balcony to the garden shall be removed.

All casement windows and French doors are to be painted timber construction with period detailing.



PROPOSED FLANK ELEVATION

SIDE VIEW

1) The proposed re-design of the side dormer window well does not harm the architectural integrity of the main house. It improves the detailing abutting the front chimney stack.

2) The removal of the rear chimney stack will allow the pair of houses to read the same from the garden view. The identical chimney to no.16 Rosecroft Avenue has been removed. Please note that the existing rear chimney stack is sloping inwards and will become dangerous in time.

3) Lowering the side entrance to a level similar to the adjoining property will help to remove the retaining wall between the two properties.

4) Minor alterations to the windows only helps to improve the design and generally enhances the look of the flank elevation.

PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION

FRONT VIEW

1). The proposed front light well does not harm the architectural integrity of the main house. It cannot be seen from the pavement as the ground rises to the front of the house and the light well, at the upper level, will be above the normal sight lines seen from the pavement view.

Materials will be chosen that are sympathetic to the existing building.

The casement windows can be timber framed painted white.

The cover to the light well will be a dark grey metal grille to prevent animals falling into the light well. It will be finished flush with the surrounding surfaces and be nearly invisible from the highway. See application drawings.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

The external alterations are minimal and any alteration has been sympathetically designed to harmonise with the host building.

The proposal causes no loss of light to adjoining properties.

There is no harm to the environment, other than the process of building, which will be limited to about 9 months.

RELEVANT CAMDEN POLICIES

H3 - Protecting existing housing stock

The Council will resist proposals that lead to a net loss of residential floor space, except if the loss is to provide small-scale health care facilities that are needed locally and cannot be provided on an alternative site. The Council will seek, so far as practicable and reasonable, to protect land considered suitable for housing.

The Council will not grant planning permission for development that would involve the net loss of two or more residential units unless the development:
a) creates large affordable housing units; or
b) creates large housing units in a part of the Borough with a relatively low proportion of large dwellings; or
c) creates one or more units that comply with the Council's space standards where one or more of the existing units do not comply.

THE PROPOSED APPLICATION INVOLVES THE LOSS OF ONE RESIDENTIAL UNIT ONLY

H8 - Mix of units

The Council will only grant planning permission for residential development that provides an appropriate mix of unit sizes, including large and small units. The Council will consider the mix and sizes of units best suited to site conditions and the locality, and the requirements of special needs housing.

THE PROPOSED APLCATION PROVIDES A LARGE FAMILY HOME AND A SMALLER TWO BEDROOM UNIT

INFORMATION FROM CAMDEN DESIGN GUIDANCE NOTES

2 Basements and light wells

2.2 Policy DP27 Basements and light wells of Camden's Local Development Framework requires applicants to consider a scheme's impact on local drainage and flooding and on the structural stability of neighbouring properties through its effect on groundwater conditions and ground movement. Section 3 of this guidance document sets out how basement impact assessments need to provide evidence on these matters.

SEE ENGINEERS B.I.A. + SOIL TESTS AND GROUND REPORTS

2.3 Camden recognise that there can be benefits from basement development in terms of providing additional accommodation, but need to ensure that basement schemes:

- do not cause undue harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties;
- do not have a detrimental impact on the groundwater environment, including ponds and reservoirs;
- do not have any effects on surface water run-off or ground permeability;

SEE ENGINEERS B.I.A. + SOIL TESTS AND GROUND REPORTS

KEY MESSAGES

Camden will only permit basement and underground development that do not:

- cause harm to the built and natural environment and local amenity;
- result in flooding; or
- lead to ground instability.

Camden will require applicants to demonstrate by methodologies appropriate to the site that schemes:

- maintain the structural stability of the building and neighbouring properties;
- avoid adversely affecting drainage and run-off or causing other damage to the water environment; and
- avoid cumulative impacts upon structural stability or the water environment in the local area.

SEE ENGINEERS B.I.A. + SOIL REPORT AND THE COMPLETED B.I.A.

RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Basements and Lightwells

- do not harm the recognised architectural character of buildings and surrounding areas, including gardens and nearby trees, and that conservation area character is preserved or enhanced;
- conserve the biodiversity value of the site;
- achieve sustainable development; and
- do not place occupiers at risk or have any effects on the stability or bearing capacity of adjacent land generally.

THE APPLICATION WILL HAVE NO HARMFUL EFFECT UPON THE LOCAL CHARACTER OF THE PROPERTIES IN THIS LOCALITY

Size of development

The Council's preferred approach is therefore for basement development to not extend beyond the footprint of the original building and be no deeper than one full storey below ground level (approximately 3 metres in depth). The internal environment should be fit for the intended purpose, and there should be no impact on any trees on or adjoining the site, or to the water environment or land stability.

THE APPLICATION IS WITHIN THE FOOTPRINT OF THE ORIGINAL HOUSE

Basement walls, windows, and doors

The development of a basement and the introduction of light wells will result in an area of exposed basement wall and will usually mean new window or door openings. Any exposed area of basement development to the side or rear of a building will be assessed against the guidance in CPG1 Design (refer to section 4 on extensions, alterations and conservatories). In general, this expects that any exposed area of basement to be:-

subordinate to the building being extended;
respect the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style; and retain a reasonable sized garden.

The width of any visible basement wall should not dominate the original building.
In number, form, scale and pane size, basement windows should relate to the façade above. They should normally be aligned to the openings above and be of a size that is clearly subordinate to the higher level openings so as not to compete with the character and balance of the original building.

On the street elevation, and on certain rear elevations where there is a distinguishable pattern to the fenestration, the width and height of windows should be no greater than those above.

THE PROPOSED APPLICATION DOES NOT INVOLVE ANY ADDITIONAL FLOOR SPACE ABOVE GROUND LEVEL.

THE FRONT LIGHT WELL IS ELEVATED ABOVE THE PAVEMENT LEVEL AND THEREFORE CANNOT BE SEEN FROM THE PUBLIC VIEW THE REAR LIGHTWELL WILL CAUSE NO HARM TO NEIGHBOURS AND DOES NOT CAUSE THE LOSS OF ANY OF THE REAR GARDEN AREA

Trees, landscape, and biodiversity

Proposals for basement development that take up the whole front and / or rear garden of a property are very unlikely to be acceptable. Sufficient margins should be left between the site boundaries and any basement construction to enable natural processes to occur and for vegetation to grow naturally. These margins should be wide enough to sustain the growth and mature development of the characteristic tree species and vegetation of the area. The Council will seek to ensure that gardens maintain their biodiversity function for flora and fauna and that they are capable of continuing to contribute to the landscape character of an area so that this can be preserved or enhanced.

Consideration should be given to the existence of trees on or adjacent to the site, including street trees and the required root protection zone of these trees. CPG1 Design, (refer to section 6 on landscape and trees) sets out the evidence that the Council requires with respect to the protection of trees, including tree surveys and arboricultural method statements.

SEE ARBORICULTURAL REPORT

Railings, grilles and other light well treatment

In order to comply with building regulation standards, light wells should be secured by either a railing (1,100mm high) or a grille.

In gardens that front a street, railings can cause a cluttered appearance to the front of the property and can compete with the appearance of the front boundary wall, or obscure front windows. This is particularly the case in shallow gardens. Where front light wells are proposed, they should be secured by a grille which sits flush with the natural ground level, rather than railings.

THE PROPOSED APPLICATION SEEKS THE INCLUSION OF METAL GRILLES FINISHED FLUSH WITH THE SURROUNDING SURFACES SO AT TO BE NEAR INVISIBLE FROM THE STREET VIEW.

IMPACTS TO NEIGHBOURS FROM DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION

Some of the worst problems affecting amenity are experienced during the demolition and construction phases of a development, and this is particularly so for basement development. Although this is temporary, it tends to create noise, vibration, dust, air and light pollution, and can last for lengthy periods of time.

Considerate Contractors Scheme
Full care and consideration should be given to neighbouring properties, as the works can be particularly intrusive to immediate neighbours. All construction and demolition processes are expected to be in accordance with the Considerate Constructors Scheme standards. Construction and demolition processes are also expected to conform to the ICE Demolition Protocol (www.ice.org.uk) and should have regard to the Guide for Contractors working in Camden, Feb 2008, which is available the Camden Council website and to the GLA's best practice guidance document The Control of Dust and Emissions from Construction and Demolition (www.london.gov.uk).

Construction management plans
The Council will generally require a construction management plan for basement developments to manage and mitigate the greater construction impacts of these schemes. Construction management plans will generally be required for schemes on constrained sites, in conservation areas, on sites adjacent to a listed building, or in other areas depending on the scale of the development and the conditions of the site. Construction management plans include:
• provisions for phasing; • provisions for site management, safety, and supervision, • management of construction traffic and parking; •management of noise, vibration, dust, and waste; • provisions to ensure stability of buildings and land; • provisions for monitoring movement, and • provisions for a construction working group, where appropriate.
Construction management plans should take into consideration other developments taking place in the local area with a view to minimising the combined effects of these construction works. The Council encourages applicants to inform and engage with affected neighbours at an early stage.

Sustainable construction
As part of an application for a basement development, applicants will be required to describe within their Design and Access Statement how the development has considered materials, resources and energy. This statement should explain how the use of sustainable materials has been considered and applied in the proposal, and the reasons for the choices that are made. The statement should also detail which existing materials on the site are to be re-used as part of the development or made available for re-use elsewhere, and the measures to improve the energy efficiency of the development. Further guidance is provided within CPG3 Sustainability (sustainability assessment tools chapter).

THE APPLICATION WILL INCREASE THE THERMAL INSULATION OF THE ENTIRE EXTERNAL WALLING AREA AND TILED ROOF AREA PLUS PROVIDE DOUBLE GLAZING TO ALL WINDOWS THEREBY REDUCING THE HEATING REQUIREMENTS AND THUS REDUCING THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF THE EXISITNG HOUSE

SALVAGE MATERIAL WILL BE USED WHEREVER POSSIBLE WHEN ALTERING ANY OPENINGS IN THE EXTERNAL WALL

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Guidance on residential development standards General principles

All residential developments in the Borough are required to be designed and built to create high quality homes:

- All newly created dwellings for households of 2 or more people should be self-contained (applies to homes in Use Class C3).
- Each dwelling should have its own secure private entrance which leads either directly from the street or off a common entrance hall – the number of entrances off one corridor should be limited.

THE APPLICATION SHOWS TWO SELF CONTAINED UNITS EACH WITH ITS OWN ENTRANCE

Layout

There should usually be a permanent partition between eating and sleeping areas. Kitchens and living rooms that are permanently separated are preferable. However, combined kitchen and living areas are considered acceptable as long as the floor area is sufficient to allow for the greater range of activities that will take place in them.

THE APPLICATION HAS SEPARATE SLEEPING ROOMS AND WILL FULLY COMPLY WITH THE BUILDING REGULATIONS FOR FIRE SAFETY.

Rooms

- All rooms should be able to function for the purpose for the purpose for which they are intended.
- They should have an adequate size, shape, door arrangement, height, insulation for noise and vibration and natural lighting and ventilation.
- They should lead off a hallway or lobby so that it is possible to access any habitable room without passing through another habitable room, although Building Regulations Part B - Fire Safety allow inner rooms provided they meet certain criteria.

THE APPLICATION SHOWS ROOMS ABOVE THE MINMUM STANDARD.
THE APPLICATION COMPLIES WITH THE FIRE ESCAPE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CURRENT BUILDING REGULATIONS

Internal space standards Ceiling heights

All habitable rooms should have minimum headroom of 2.3 metres.

THE APPLICATION EXCEEDS THESE MINIMUM HEIGHTS

Although planning cannot control the precise internal layout of individual proposals, it is important to ensure that dwellings are capable of providing a suitable layout and adequate room sizes that reflect the use and type of accommodation. The Council will be flexible in the application of these guidelines in order to respond to site-specific circumstances.

The Council has set minimum space standards to ensure rooms are large enough to take on varying uses. Space standards relate to the occupancy of a home rather than number of bedrooms and the developer will be required to state the number of occupants each dwelling has been designed to accommodate. The occupancy of housing at the time of its first occupation is not a reliable prediction of future levels of occupancy over the lifetime of a home. The only sensible assessment of occupancy is therefore the designed level of occupancy.
The Council will expect bedrooms to meet or exceed the following minimum sizes:

- First and double bedrooms - 11.0 sq m • Single bedrooms - 6.5 sq m
- External amenity space is provided

THE APPLICATION EXCEEDS THESE MINIMUM FLOOR PSACE REQUIREMNTS FOR EACH ROOM AND THE OVERALL SIZE OF UNIT

Storage and utility spaces

All accommodation should have sufficient internal storage space to meet the likely needs and requirements of potential occupiers. Dwelling layouts should make suitable provision:

- for washing machines and drying clothes;
- a storage cupboard with a minimum floor area of 0.8 sq m should be provided for 1- and 2-person dwellings;
- for each additional occupant, a minimum of 0.15 sq m storage area should be provided;
- storage for bicycles and prams should also be provided, located at the ground or lowest level of the dwelling, preferably accessed from a hall or lobby area;
- for waste and recycling bins, reference should also be made to the section

THE APPLICATION COMPLIES WITH THE STORAGE REQUIREMRNY
THERE IS A SPACE FOR STORING BICYCLES WITHIN THE GARAGE. EACH FLAT SHALL HAVE ACCESS TO THE GARAGE AND THE PLANT ROOM OFF THE GARAGE.

Daylight, sunlight and privacy

Basements

All rooms within a basement should be able to function for the purpose of which they are intended. They should have an adequate size, shape, door arrangement, and height, insulation from noise and vibration, and access to natural lighting, ventilation and privacy (similar to the standards set out above). Four key considerations are set out here.

- Natural light - to ensure that adequate natural light is provided to habitable rooms, walls or structures (including the sides of lightwells) should not obstruct windows by being closer than 3 metres. Where this is not achievable, a sufficient proportion of the glazing should be above the point on the window(s) from which a line can be drawn at 30° above the horizontal to pass the top of obstruction. The glazed area above the point should total not less than 10% of the floor area of the room.
- Forecourt parking – nearby vehicles can also restrict light to basements, and consideration should be given to any further obstruction from vehicles parked on the forecourt that may present a barrier to light serving basement windows.
- Means of escape - basements should be provided with either a door or suitably sized window allowing access to a place of safety that gives access to the external ground level, or with a protected escape route within the building leading to a final exit at ground level.
- Lightwells - stairs, ladders and gates in any railings around a lightwell that are required for means of escape should be designed to be as discreet as possible and should have regard to the character of the building and surrounding area.

THE APPLICATION COMPLIES WITH EACH OF THE ABOVE – SEEPLANS FOR DAYLIGHT AREA CALCULATIONS. SEE APPLICATION DRAWINGS.

Outdoor amenity space

4.29 Outdoor residential amenity space can be provided in the form of private garden space, balconies, terraces, roof gardens or as communal amenity space. Where practical the following requirements should be met.

Private outdoor amenity space:

- All new dwellings should provide access to some form of private outdoor amenity space, e.g. balconies, roof terraces or communal gardens.
- Private gardens should be allocated to family dwellings. • Where provided, gardens should receive adequate daylight, even in the winter.
- The access to private amenity space should be level and should be from the main living space.

THE APPLICATION SHOWS THAT THE LARGER FAMILY UNIT WIL HAVE ACCESS TO THE REAR GARDEN.
THE SELF CONTIANED UNIT AT LOWER GROUND FLOOR WILL HAVE ACCESS TO THE REAR LIGHT WELL FOR OUTSIDE SPACE

ACCESS

Unfortunately the main front door has a stepped access to this property. It does not offer any scope for improvement for disabled users. The front door is only accessible from the steps. The rear access door is also only accessible by a step down to the rear terrace level with an inclined garden giving little scope for the enjoyment of a wheelchair user.