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BY EMAIL:
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Dear Joshua,

**RE: THE POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT OF 5/6 ROSSLYN MEWS AND ROSSLYN MEWS COURTYARD –
INDICATIVE DAYLIGHT & SUNLIGHT REVIEW**

GIA have assembled this short review to qualitatively assess the Daylight and Sunlight risks associated with developing the site at 5/6 Rosslyn Mews, Hampstead, London.

The extent of this daylight and sunlight review does not include technical analysis but rather a professional judgment to establish the potential changes in light to the neighbouring properties at 42-48 Rosslyn Hill and their rear extensions fronting on to the Rosslyn Mews courtyard. As you are aware, GIA have not had access into any of the neighbouring properties and thus have completed this review against reasonable assumptions, made from external observation and research into publicly available records to determine the internal use and subdivision of the neighbouring properties.

Introduction

In considering the development potential and the quality of amenity for the surrounding properties once the scheme has been implemented, the analysis is based upon the Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidelines 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight' which provides the criteria and methodology for calculation in connection with daylight and Sunlight. This handbook is the primary authority for these matters and therefore it is not only our practice, but the local authority who will be considering your application by reference to these guidelines. The BRE Guidelines place greater emphasis on the daylight enjoyment to residential properties over commercial properties, given the latter's reliance on artificial lighting. Consideration, therefore, will need to be given to the surrounding residential properties only.

The site is currently a mixed use building located in Rosslyn Mews within Hampstead Conservation area and is opposite mixed use buildings to the south west along Rosslyn Hill/Rosslyn Mews. The proposal seeks to include alterations to the fenestrations, a raised parapet with a slatted metal screen fixed to the back of it which together will act as a balustrade to an overall height of 1.75 m along the north west, and part of the south west edges of the site (the top of the balustrade being 1.035 m above the level of the top of the existing parapet), and a stair enclosure to the north west side of the roof. With reference to the proposed roof plan, the balustrade does not continue along the entire length of the floor plate but stops approximately half way.

It should be noted at this juncture that the previous planning officer, Ms. Emily Marriot-Brittan had stated in a letter dated 24th October 2014 (attached):

'The proposed changes to the fenestration on the front, side and rear elevations are considered acceptable. The changes would allow more light into the existing building make it more appropriate for residential use. The proposed stair enclosure to the roof is also considered acceptable in design terms. The structure will extend above the existing parapet but is sympathetic to the existing building and would not be easily visible from street level.'

'...to reduce the bulkiness of the glazing (then proposed in lieu of the slatted metal referred to above), it may be possible to raise the existing solid parapet wall to 1.1m'

This suggestion was adopted and is incorporated in the current proposal.

From a daylight and sunlight perspective therefore the pertinent issue is whether or not the additional 1.035 m obstruction caused by the balustrade will result in transgressions from what is permissible within the BRE Guidelines to the properties on the opposite side of the Rosslyn Mews courtyard.

There is a strong argument to suggest that the material and form of the screen element of the balustrade will have light mitigating features in the form of horizontally slatted sheets, however we have been instructed to undertake this assessment under the pretence that the balustrade is considered to be a solid opaque structure. This is in the interest of providing an appraisal of the worst case scenario to the alterations in daylight amenity of the neighbouring properties.

Rosslyn Mews Courtyard



Figure 01 – Rear of 42-48 Rosslyn Hill

The properties at 42-48 Rosslyn Hill are located directly to the south west of the site. Our best assumptions indicate that these properties are commercial on the ground floor to the front and in their upper parts and their rear pop out extensions fronting on to the Rosslyn Mews courtyard they are residential. As you can see the pop out extensions significantly reduce the separation distance between these buildings and the development site.

From a planning perspective none of the ground floor apertures facing onto the development site appear to serve habitable rooms and therefore do not need to be assessed. There are a number of bedroom windows facing onto the site on the first and upper floors however the majority of these are setback against the fenestration of the original building (i.e. not on the pop out) and will benefit from the increased separation distance.

It is likely that the balustrade (which does not continue along the entire parapet), if considered to be a solid opaque structure, will cause some alterations to the daylight enjoyment to these rooms however it is unlikely that this modest development will have significant impacts to these apertures. The one room on the pop out (marked W1 on figure 01) appears to serve a small kitchen and is within a very close proximity to the site; however, the triangular window form suggests that both panels are orientated away from the site which will help to mitigate any impact caused as a result of the proposed scheme.

Additionally if this window does experience daylight alterations in excess of what the BRE recommends; this is likely to be a consequence of the existing site constraints (i.e. very narrow separation distance) rather than a direct result of the proposed development itself. The narrow site constraints mean that there will be low existing light levels within the rooms behind the fenestrations of the windows facing directly onto the site, with particular reference to W1. Therefore, any increase in massing on the site is going to cause a disproportionate percentage alteration to the windows serving these rooms.

It is also important to keep in mind that the BRE document (which recommends that a target value of 20% change in daylight enjoyment to the neighbouring properties to be reasonable) is a flexible document. It is not mandatory and it is not planning policy. Therefore, any potential reductions beyond 20% would be, in my professional opinion, interpreted with the flexibility of the BRE document in mind.

Conclusion

This desktop appraisal considers the potential daylight and sunlight impacts of the proposed scheme at 5/6 Rosslyn Mews in relation to the properties on the opposite side of the Rosslyn Mews courtyard.

There is a potential for a small reduction of daylight enjoyment as result of the narrow separation distance between 42-48 Rosslyn Hill and the site, which (as a result of the existing urban context) has led to low existing light levels within this property. However, given the modest nature of the current proposal, GIA feel that the potential alterations in daylight to the rooms behind the fenestrations of the neighbouring properties will remain within the flexibility intended within the guidelines. In the event that any of the apertures suffer impacts which transgress from the BRE, this is more than likely to be as a result of the existing low levels of light rather than the development aspirations of the owners at 5/6 Rosslyn Mews.

As there are no windows in the Rosslyn Mews courtyard which face within 90° due south of the development site we do not have to consider the sunlight implications to the neighbouring properties.

GIA feel that the impacts that may result from the implementation of the modest proposed scheme are in keeping with the flexibility intended within the BRE Guidelines and are therefore considered to be acceptable.

I trust this information finds you well.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely
For and on behalf of GIA



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