

Our Ref 1210BA001

Date: 28th July, 2016

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

for

Erection of Rear Extension to Garden Flat At 12 Strathray Gardens, Camden, London

a. Introduction / Context

This large villa built @ 1860 was subsequently during the mid 20th Century subdivided into flats. The lower ground floor flat has remained unmodified for the last 30 years and has a large garden facing west that is for the exclusive use of this flat.

The garden flat benefits from its own off street parking in front of the gated access on the north side of the property.

This application seeks to utilise more effectively the garden amenity space exclusive to this property, whilst increasing the volume of accommodation on this brownfield site in compliance with the aims of the NPPF. The communal amenity space at the front of the property facing east is useful primarily in creating distance privacy and parking between the dwelling and the street. It has no effective functional use for children playing safely or other related amenity functions that are better suited to the larger rear amenity space that will be still available through this proposal.

The outlook and privacy of the upper flats has been carefully considered along with sustainability aspirations for the proposals as part of the linear design process we adopt for these briefs to ensure all stakeholders benefit from the improvements proposed. The introduction of sedum roofs above the new rear extensions creates increased privacy for the upper floor flats, combined with the amenity improvements for these flats by bringing organic green features a level closer to their outlook from their west facing windows.

These combined alterations we respectfully submit, are in policy terms material improvements and will allow an increase of 450 sqft overall in floor area. The improved dwelling creates overall amenity improvements of this unit by not only increasing the space standards for this flat which is a clear goal of the London plan but also creates a much more literal connection with the garden through orientating the new accommodation to the south, which in addition benefits from the maximum passive solar gain possible which is a fundamental element of sustainable design.

b. Physical Context

This site comprises a 6 level villa that has subsequently been divided into flats with a rear west facing garden that is only accessible from the garden flat the subject of this application. To the front of the property facing west is largely given over to car parking and entrance features.

Adjacent on the south boundary lies the “Hereward School” and then on the west boundary lies the “The Hall School”. The location between two schools means that amenity benefits will accrue as a result of the application proposals being implemented as it achieves a better balance between spaces which are internal and where audible disturbances from the schools can be controlled and the external spaces where acoustic control is impossible. The use of moveable large glazed screens allows inside / outside spaces to be blended functionally and create sustainable benefits through passive solar gain due to their southern orientation.

The proposed single storey lower ground floor forms have been designed ensure they make a positive contribution to the conservation area through the use of the sedum roof contrasting with the adjacent schools extensions that feature flat felt roofs

The benefits of the sedum roof will be particularly evident from the upper floor flats which will ensure there are enhancements to the character of the conservation area and thus giving no material planning adverse effects to the character of these areas.

The final consideration is the fact that many of the adjacent properties site already have their full width built with the single storey infill extensions similar to the southern extension that exists at 12 Strathray Gardens.

The rear garden extension is in part to replace the loss of floor area of 160 sqft that reinstates the side passageway at lower ground floor level. These areas are at present of limited amenity value and are of very compromise construction. By removing them they will improved the setting of the built form and the character of the conservation area.

C. Planning Policy Context

Planning policy encourages re-use of existing properties and their extension providing this does not encroach on the amenities of neighbouring properties and does not detract from the character of an area. Policy over recent years has focussed on the efficient re-use of brown field (previously developed sites) to ensure that these sites are redeveloped efficiently and appropriately to reduce pressure to build on the Greenbelt.

The start point for the original design proposals was to identify if the changes would have any adverse effects on the adjoining properties. The existing building has features such as the southern infill extensions noted above that are incongruous forms and materials incompatible with the Victorian and Edwardian traditional brick and rendered forms of the site in a manner that is considered detrimental to the aesthetic harmony of the street scene. The most serious of these aesthetic incongruities are the scale and proportions of the windows and other fenestration elements.

By proposing a rear extension that will in part replace this lost area it focuses this accommodation away from the more visible street elements of the dwelling and proposes forms that are clearly well designed contemporary forms separate from the original built form with a Sedum roof that is compatible with these contemporary forms yet eliminates most of the visibility of built forms for the upper floor flats which would normally be the closest visual neighbours of these proposals.

It is submitted, that by the new proposals further intensifying this residential use, policy will support this, due to the additional accommodation created making effective use of this Brown field site which is located within close proximity of Rail, Tube and bus transport hubs, as well as having extensive leisure, employment, retail, commercial, possibilities within between 1 and 10 minutes' walk of this site.

The 450sq ft increase in area is allocated to amenity use within the detailed internal layouts to ensure flexibility is introduced to the inside / outside amenity mix so that when weather dictates that the widely available public external facilities are less appropriate to use. The dwelling can respond to the greater use of internal amenity spaces. In policy terms this proposal is desirable as it only provides more efficient use of this brownfield site

Amenity space has been carefully appraised within the unique context of this site, whilst taking full account of the rich hinterland of leisure facilities within a very short walk. The readily available parkland of Primrose Hill and child friendly play facilities make family use in this location possible as well as the more desirable single / two occupant use identified by policy.

Refuse storage will be provided at the front of the property.

POLICIES SUPPORTED BY THE APPLICATION

CORE STRATEGY

Camden Policy CS8 seeks to ensure that the Borough retains a strong economy. Paragraph b) is particularly relevant to this proposal as it is a windfall site (creating a larger family unit) which is located to existing employment centres, which will reduce the need for commuting to these employment centres thus supporting these employment centres, thus safeguarding their existence.

Camden Policy CS8.2 notes that 80% of all employees come from outwith the Borough. This clearly demonstrates that apart from Camden residents not having all the skills required within the Borough, that this figure is so high due to a severe shortfall in the housing available to employees within Camden, proportionate to the employment placements available. The proposals are in support of the objectives of this policy to bring a greater degree of skills required to Camden, by providing family friendly housing close to by employment and amenities appropriate for families.

Camden Policy CS 8.4 to 8.7 clearly states that there will be an increasing demand for offices, although this will be in established areas around the public transport hubs of Kings Cross Euston and Holborn. Swiss Cottage tube is a short walk from the site. This clarifies the essential links between the market demands for offices close to primary transport links. Where local transport needs are well catered for, then policy 8.4 to 8.7 can be interpreted to

support this application for residential accommodation that is well located for the local transport infrastructure which will reduce the demands for commuting from outside the borough to these additional offices in and around Kings Cross Euston and Holborn.

Policy DP24

Para. 24.12 highlights that it is where townscape is particularly uniform attention should be paid to responding closely to the prevailing scale form and proportions and materials. In areas of low quality or where no pattern prevails, development should improve the quality of an area and give a stronger identity.

We submit that the design closely relates to the scale and detailing of the pre existing buildings surrounding the site. The proposals achieve the aims of this policy the detailed elements have been carefully appraised to effectively embrace the requirements of PPS1 which demand that [Local planning authorities should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation.](#)

Policy DP25

This policy deals with Conservation areas. For the reasons detailed above in our commentary on DP24 the design proposals have chosen to innovate to significantly enhance the setting of the conservation area and therefore comply with all the requirements of DP25. Whilst removing the visual compromise of the existing south side extensions.

Policy CS14

This policy generalises the detail set out in policy DP24. In our commentary on DP24 the design proposals we established beyond all reasonable doubt that the proposals will significantly enhance local character and distinctiveness and therefore complies with all the requirements of policy CS14.

Policy CS13

The form of the new south facing façade and Sedum roof has been considered in the context of policies CS13 to ensure that sustainability possibilities for all sites are maximised. The open south facing unobstructed façade is a very infrequent but welcome opportunity in Camden which is recognised in CS13. Naturally this must be limited by the surroundings scale thus ensuring that the proposals are consistent in all respects with the demands of CS13, CS14, DP24 and PPS1 through the creation of a reinforced unique identity, hence the reasons for having a very contemporary visual form, despite this not being the pattern of the rest of the terrace.

Policy DP26

identifies that:

Camden's Core strategy seeks to sustainably manage growth so that it takes place in the most appropriate locations and meets our needs while continuing to conserve and enhance the features that make Camden such an attractive place to live."

In respect of DP26 the design proposed has its impact on neighbours and future developments adjacent carefully assessed. We cannot envisage any development on adjacent sites that could be prejudiced by the proposals.

POLICY CONCLUSION

The application should be considered favourably in the light of all the Core strategy policies noted above which the proposals are consistent with the aspirations of these policies.

d. Involvement / Evaluation / Design Process

The initial feasibility study identified that in this part of London the market requires mixed dwelling sizes arranged in a cohesive cluster which offer the most energy efficient envelope for dwellings, whilst having a much reduced Carbon Footprint as a result of the shared walls floors and roofs that reduces the amount of construction material whilst improving the like for like thermal efficiency of the development. Redeveloping an existing building with external alterations ensures that the carbon footprint for reuse is reduced to a minimum, by constructing the new walls in the most thermally efficient materials available.

The start point for us to develop this design was to attach greater emphasis to the need to provide additional useable dwelling floor space located close to good public transport links and amenities.

The unit is designed to have heat and power generation designed in a balanced manner within the Passivhuas design methods. This will substantially reduce, not only the Carbon footprint of the dwelling, but also the site orientation can be most effectively capitalised on by having the larger glazed areas facing south, with the smaller glazed openings facing north which not only reduces energy loss but ensures more effective acoustic suppression. This design submission sought to improve passive solar gain from the additional south facing frontage solution to achieved this improvement.

e. Use .

This site has been sude as flatted dwellings for several decades.

f. Layout

The layouts have been designed to use the available proposed internal space as efficiently as possible. Service areas and uses are stacked vertically for efficiency and compatibility reasons.

g. Scale

The approved designs form a bridging element between the dominant adjoining properties in a manner that enhances their townscape visual context.

By improving this as a family unit, this will ensure the small family unit accommodation with adjacent recreation and employment opportunities, will reduce congestion and carbon emissions, which form key objectives of Camden's Core Strategy adopted in 2010.

h. Appearance

The removal of the incongruous side extensions on the southern boundary will enhance the property when viewed from the public domain. The Sedum roof will bring a diversity and organic orientated outlook closer to the upper floor flats with resulting enhancements to these flats amenity.

i. Landscaping

The Sedum roof will bring a diversity and organic orientated outlook closer to the upper floor flats with resulting enhancements to these flats amenity.

The existing trees adjoin the site were carefully assessed and none were deemed being materially compromised both in terms of their canopy or root bowl by the small amount of excavation required by the proposals for a pile and cap foundations proposed for the single storey extensions. The proposed extensions are lightweight largely timber structured forms.

j. Access

The property is just a short 200M walk from the Swiss Cottage urban centre for commercial and transport routes, the property is extremely well located to utilise the existing bus rail and tube infrastructure.

Cycle storage, refuse and general storage are as existing.

Recycling storage is located at the front of the property to ensure it is accessible for both residents and collection.

Donald Shearer



Photographs of rear elevation taken from garden