

Planning Statement

65A Grafton Way, London, W1T 6JA

Supporting drawings: BE616/100 BE616/101

Proposed Single Storey Rear Extension At Basement Level Within Existing Courtyard

65A Grafton Way is a basement level apartment, created from a previous property conversion in which a large property was divided into 5 individual apartments. The building has 5 stories including basement level, located within 10 metres of Fitzroy Square, just south of Regent's Park and 1 street north of the BT Tower.

The apartment its self is a 2 bedroom basement level apartment comprising of a shared bathroom, Kitchen/Living room, 1 double bedroom, 1 single bedroom with front and rear courtyards. The second single bedroom is currently a small living space and our client would like to improve the living standards of this room as well as adding a small en-suite to the double bedroom.

The proposal comprises of a small basement level extension to the rear courtyard area increasing the size of the 2nd bedroom to create a fully habitable bedroom inline with the London plan as well as adding the en-suite to bedroom 1. A small rear service courtyard area has been included within the proposal to retain the light well for the rear of the apartment as well as air inlet & also allowing the existing extracts & pipe work runs to be retained within the courtyard.

The proposal improves living standards within the apartment but does not increase the potential for overlooking or reduce privacy levels for the property or any neighbours.

We have been in touch with Thames Water to discuss drainage and a feasible solution is in place for the construction stages of the project.



Left – Images of Rear Courtyard.

Heritage Statement

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The application dwelling is a flat formed in the basement of the original Georgian Town House that comprised of 5 floors including the basement. The original building forms a terrace of similar such dwellings that run around the corner into Conway Street.

The dwellings are very characteristic at the front, with stucco render at ground floor level up to a rendered band course with London stock brick facing to the upper floors, with flat gauge arches over openings in the façade, with some red brick and some yellow. The windows to the front are traditional georgian paned timber box sash windows painted white. The dwellings also have traditional wrought iron fencing along the front boundary lines, protecting the drop to basement level and also to some of the first floor windows.

At the rear, the application dwelling is not overlooked and the courtyard is fully enclosed at high level on all four sides. Whilst on the upper floors, the rear elevations benefit from London stock brick facing, at ground and basement floor levels, the walls are finished in modern smooth render and painted off white. There are many service ducts and pipes run over the surface of these walls at all levels too, no doubt as a result of the conversion to the flats. The existing courtyard, by way of the enclosure on all four sides, is dark and damp and offers little in the way of enhancement to the dwelling and at the basement level, it offers no significant heritage significance. It is also worth noting that part of the basement flat is formed of a more modern extension comprising of 2 floors and poor quality construction.

The proposed extension gives increase in area to the second very small bedroom, which is well below minimum habitable standards suggested in the London Plan. The main effect to the existing structure is the removal of the existing wall of the second bedroom, which forms part of the more recent extension and not the original building fabric. There would also be the loss of the existing timber sash window to the master bedroom facing into the courtyard, which we appreciate is an original feature, however, as the courtyard and specifically this window, is not overlooked, we do not consider that this represents a significant loss or that it creates significant harm to the heritage asset. Having previously worked with English Heritage and Purcell on several of the John Nash Villas in Regent's Park, we have been guided that at basement level, as long as not viewed from a public space, there is scope to deviate from traditional conservation appearances, perhaps using more modern materials and contemporary styles.

It is also worth noting that the flat itself has been extensively refurbished in recent years, presumably during the conversion to flats, with most of the original features having been removed internally and most of the plasterwork and all doors, architraves and skirtings are modern and not original. Every effort has been taken to avoid removing any of the original building fabric. Therefore, we do not feel that these proposals are in any way out of context with the host dwelling and the benefit offered to the habitable standards, far outweighs and detriment or harm to the original fabric of the building.

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