

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT  
FORMING PART OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION  
IN RESPECT OF  
THE NEW BOUNDARY WALLS & RAILINGS  
BAM ESTATE, FINCHLEY ROAD, LONDON, NW3**

**Site address**

Buckingham, Avenue and Marlborough Mansions,  
Finchley Road,  
London  
NW3 6AU

**Date** December 2016

**Planning Application No. (if relevant)**

**Contact details**

<b>Applicant</b>	BAM Estate Ltd		
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## **1.00 Background and Features of Existing Site**

BAM Estate comprises 211 flats which are housed within three Victorian Mansion blocks, as follows:

- Buckingham Mansions, West End Lane.
- Avenue Mansions, Finchley Road.
- Marlborough Mansions, Cannon Hill.

The estate is managed by Estate Management (Hampstead) Ltd, who have an office on site at 18b Avenue Mansions, Finchley Road, NW3 6AU.

Construction work at BAM Estate began at the end of the 19th century and we understand all of the work was completed by 1898. The buildings comprise five storey mansion blocks of self-contained flats, arranged on lower ground, ground and three upper floors.

The buildings form part of the West End Green Parsifal Road Conservation Area and were constructed in accordance with a good specification typical of high class mansions blocks of this age and type. The blocks generally incorporate a flat asphalt covered main roof with sloping slate clad mansard slopes to the front, either side of a raised brick and stone pediment. The external walls are of solid brick construction, the windows comprise the original single glazed sliding timber sash windows which have been painted internally and externally, and the downpipes are a mixture of the original lead and cast iron and more recent plastic components.

The front elevation of each block is finished with gauged brick arches over the window openings and a series of decorative stone embellishments, including moulded cornices, string courses and quoins. Each building is sub-divided into a series of smaller blocks, each of which has its own front entrance, which is accessible from either West End Lane (Buckingham Mansions), Finchley Road (Avenue Mansions), or Cannon Hill (Marlborough Mansions). Each entrance is enclosed by a brick and rendered partially painted portico.

The blocks were originally finished with low level brick front boundary walls, topped by wrought iron railings which were secured to matching brick piers. However, the railings were removed during the Second World War, and over the years the original brick walls and piers were either replaced or were modified - some were reconfigured and were then rendered and painted, others were reduced in height and capped with stone copings. Decorative, tapered stone obelisks have been introduced on top of the rendered piers, in some areas, where these have been reduced in height.

Over the years the existing brick and rendered boundary walls have begun to deteriorate and several sections are now in a state of disrepair. The deterioration of the older walls in Cannon Hill was exacerbated by flash flooding in 1998 and 2012, which caused extensive damage to a number of basement flats on the Estate. These events led the applicants to implement a regime of flood protection measures, as detailed in Section 2.00 below. Campden Council were consulted as part of this process and this process helped determine the design and appearance of the new walls which are shown on the planning application drawings, which now form part of the current application.

## **2.00 Background**

As you are aware, some new sections of boundary wall have already been built, to the northern end of Cannon Hill. BAM Estate have asked us to highlight in this Design and Access Statement a number of points which have influenced their approach to remodelling of the previously damaged walls, which have been replaced to-date. These are as follows:

- i. During the heavy flooding which affected Hampstead Heath in 1998, there was water damage in the locality of BAM Estate and eight of the basement flats were flooded. Extensive damage was also caused to the boundary walls enclosing the Bank Block, (35 – 45 Avenue Mansions) at the top end of the estate and this left them in an unsafe condition. The resulting storm water running down Cannon Hill caused flooding within and beyond the buildings which make up BAM Estate and the cost of the subsequent repairs ran to millions of pounds.
- ii. As a consequence, it was necessary for BAM Estate to implement a flood alleviation programme and London Borough of Camden were consulted about the flood protection measures which were most suitable for the estate. BAM Estate therefore decided to follow the advice of Camden which included increasing the height of the water damaged boundary walls outside flat 35a Avenue Mansions, installation of flood protection doors on the flood-affected basement flats, and construction of storm-relief drains, as part of the flood damage reinstatement works. The first section of new boundary wall was therefore built almost 15 years ago with a view to continuing the replacement of further sections over subsequent years.
- iii. The first new section of new wall was strengthened with brick piers, to make it more robust and flood resistant, and railings were added to simulate to those which formed part of the original building, and were in place before the Second World War. (The style of the new brick piers and railings was based on photographic evidence obtained during research into the history of BAM Estate by the Estate Manager, Mr Graham Hamilton - see photographs attached).
- iv. Since then, further damaged sections of the boundary walls on the estate have been rebuilt, as part of an ongoing repair/replacement programme; this has been undertaken as and when the existing brick and rendered finishes have deteriorated to such an extent that they become unsightly, and/or unstable and are too costly to maintain.
- v. BAM Estate would now like to continue with this ongoing replacement programme for all of the remaining brick and rendered front elevation boundary walls, so that it can be completed within the next few years to create a uniform boundary detail throughout the estate.

### **3.00 Design Considerations**

The proposed alterations will involve replacing the existing boundary walls with new low level red-brick walls capped with reconstituted stone copings and decorative railings. The railings will be secured to intermediate brick piers, as shown on the drawings and photographs which form part of the planning application.

The work will cause minimal impact to the outward appearance of the existing buildings and indeed, the new boundary walls and railings will be similar to the walls and railings which formed part of each building originally, and will be more in-keeping with and sympathetic to the style and appearance of the existing buildings on the estate.

The proposed changes to the boundary walls have been designed so that they match the scale and proportion of the original boundary components.

### **4.00 Access**

The new boundary walls will be built in place of the existing boundary walls to the front of each block. They will not therefore alter the access route into each block, nor the means of access to and from other blocks on the estate.

In view of the fact that the existing means of access to and from each block will remain unchanged, the proposed works should not have any impact upon the relationship between public and private routes into and around the buildings which form part of BAM Estate.

## **5.00 Landscaping**

Privet hedges will be planted behind the new boundary walls, once they have been built, and will be encouraged to grow up to a height which will correspond with the top of the new railings. These hedges will provide added screening to the basement flats from the surrounding pavements, and will be maintained by the on-site gardener, employed by the Estate.

Several examples of such screening are already evident behind the new boundary walls which have been built to the upper end of Cannon Hill, enclosing the northern flank elevation of Avenue Mansions.

## **6.00 Impact Upon the Street Scene**

The new walls have been designed so that they have no detrimental impact upon the street scene to the front of any of the blocks on the estate.

The new walls and railings will enhance the appearance of each block and will be more in-keeping with the walls and railings originally in place - as can be seen from the historical photographs attached to this Design and Access Statement, which show the detailing of some of the original boundaries.

## **7.00 Sustainability of the Proposal**

The new walls and railings will be constructed from durable materials which will require limited ongoing maintenance over their lifetime. This will reduce the environmental impact of the scheme.

## **8.00 Provision for Storage of Waste and Recyclable Material**

BAM Estate employs its own maintenance staff and porters, who carry out cleaning and rubbish collection duties. The occupants of the flats on the estate are required to leave their rubbish in designated areas on particular days of the week for collection and transportation by the estate staff. The new boundary walls will therefore not have any adverse effects upon the existing waste management provisions of the estate.

## **8.00 Ancillary Information**

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines provided by CABI (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) and those of Camden Council.

The design of the new walls and railings pays due regard to the effect they have in enhancing the street-scene to the front of each block. The applicants feel that the beneficial effects the new walls and railings will have, if this application is approved, can be easily assessed on site by inspecting the new walls and railings which have already been built to the upper end of Cannon Hill, for the reasons outlined in Section 2.00 above.

We have appended to this Design & Access Statement a number of photographs of the existing buildings and site boundaries plus some historical photographs; we believe these help illustrate some of the design and architectural features of the blocks, which will be enhanced by the proposed works.

We hope that you agree that the new boundary walls and railings which are the subject of this application are in-keeping with the age and style of the blocks which make up BAM Estate and that you will consider the planning application favourably, once this has been processed.

If there are any queries relating to this Design & Access Statement please contact Peter C Bensted B.Sc., MRICS at Fenton Associates on 020 3214 5000 or by e-mail [peter@fentonassociates.co.uk](mailto:peter@fentonassociates.co.uk)

**PCB/FENTON ASSOCIATES/VR/DECEMBER 2016**