

# Planning, Design and Access Statement

20 Albert Terrace Mews, London

February 2017



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## **1.0 Introduction**

This statement is written to accompany the planning application for the development of a basement at No.20. Albert Terrace Mews, London, NW1. It should be read in conjunction with the following plans and reports included within this planning submission;

- Basement Impact Assessment,
- Construction Management Plan,
- Traffic Management Plan,
- Construction Method Statement
- Tree Impact Report
- Assessment of Daylight and Sunlight, and;
- Drawings listed at Section 8.0 of this report

Camden's planning guidance recognises the fact that basements are a typical feature of the cityscape and an acceptable solution to gaining additional space while offering a more efficient use of the boroughs limited land. It also raises the issues that must be considered and addressed in any application.

The purpose of this design statement is to support the planning application, to provide a clear understanding of the local context and to illustrate the impact and contribution the design proposal will make in compliance with Camden's planning guidance: DP27 – Basements and Lightwells in Camden, CPG4 – Basements and Lightwells and Core Strategies, CS5 – Managing the Impact of growth and development, CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage, CS15 Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces & encouraging biodiversity.

20 Albert Terrace Mews is not a listed building but is located within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

## **2.0 The Existing Context**

### *2.1 Site Context*

Albert Terrace Mews was a service road for the larger houses on Albert Terrace, Prince Albert Road and Regents Park Road. Service cottages began to appear in the mews in the 19th Century and No. 20, one of the last additions, was granted permission in 1989 and constructed shortly afterwards.

The cottages were designed individually and over time, altered and extended sporadically, creating a mixture of contemporary architectural styles. The scale of 2 storey buildings along the mews is mainly preserved, though there are no uniform parapet datum, front building lines or roofscapes as can be seen from the aerial image on the front page.

Constructed in 1990, No.20 has a contemporary architectural style. It sits within a small plot of land to the rear of No.20 Prince Albert Road and forms a 2-storey detached house with a flat roof. It has a small double pitch roof at its centre, which serves as skylight to the rear of the house, bringing daylight into the internal stair core.

The houses along the South side of the mews do not form a uniform street elevation. No. 21 sits prouder than No.20 while No 19 is set back from No.20 creating a large front garden.



Figure 2.1 OS Map, NTS



Figure 2.2 (Left) View of No. 20 from the West of the mews  
Figure 2.3 (Right) View of No. 20 from the East of the mews

## *2.2 Planning History*

There have been numerous planning applications submitted for No.20, the most recent are listed below:

**Planning permission 2015/0485/P**, which allows for:  
Erection of a first floor extension to the front elevation.  
Installation of full height French windows at ground floor level.  
Installation of a first floor box window to the rear elevation.

The drawings of the permitted proposal are included in this application for reference.

**Planning application 2015/3102/P**, which sought permission for:  
Formation of roof terrace & glazed access structure  
The application was withdrawn following the feedback received from the planning team and conservation officer.

**Planning application 2016/1129/P**, which sought permission for:

Creation of terrace at roof level with privacy screens, low level access and associated internal alterations

The application was refused following council's concerns over the design.

The two planning applications above relating to roof terrace are not relevant to this application for a basement extension.

There was also a pre-application submission in early 2015, ref 2014/5182/PRE.

Part of the proposal in the pre-app was for the formation of a basement.

The pre-app report written by the case officer dated 24<sup>th</sup> October 2014 didn't mention any feedback on the basement proposal. However, during the pre-app meeting, the case officer stated that there would be no objection to the basement proposal as no light well to the front of the building was proposed within the design. We were also advised a full basement impact assessment would be an essential requirement to accompany the planning application.

### **3.0 The Proposed Design**

The proposal consists of:

1. Formation of a basement and creation of a rear lightwell. In line with Camden's planning policies, the footprint of the basement excavation will be fully within the boundary line and will be a single storey excavation. The basement will provide 1no. additional bedroom, a media room, storage, a plant room and a bathroom.
2. The relocation of the stair to rationalize the internal layout, to provide better connection between the kitchen and living room on ground floor and to enlarge the bedrooms to the first floor.
3. Infilling the recess to the front door.
4. Reinstatement of a kitchen window in the north elevation

## 4.0 Planning Policy

Relevant planning policy is contained within the following documents;

- The London Plan March 2016
- Camden Core Strategy - November 2010
- Camden Development Policies - November 2010

Supplementary Planning Guidance is also provided within the following documents;

- Camden Planning Guidance – Design (CPG1) July 2015
- Camden Planning Guidance – Basements and Lightwells (CPG4) July 2015
- Camden Planning Guidance – Amenity (CPG6) 2011
- The Primrose Hill conservation area statement - December 2000

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Guidance (PPG) are also material considerations.

## 5.0 The Proposed Development – Policy Compliance

### 5.1 Creation of a basement & rear lightwell

Policy DP27 – Basements and lightwells advises:

*“smaller schemes will be expected to submit information which relates to any specific concerns for that particular scheme or location (e.g. any history of flooding at the site or in the vicinity of the site, the presence of underground watercourses, proximity to water bodies such as the ponds on Hampstead Heath, structural instability of the developed or of neighbouring properties, or unstable land). The Council will assess whether any predicted damage to neighbouring properties from the development is acceptable or can be satisfactorily ameliorated by the developer.”*

During the design process, a close reference had been made to Camden Planning Guidance 4 Basements & lightwells and DP27 to ensure that the proposal complies with the council's requirements

The relevant guidance contained within CPG 4 is more recent than policies contained within the Core Strategy and Development policies and provides a useful reference and structure to assess proposals for basement extensions and these are addressed below.



## Size of development

Para 2.6 states;

*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).*

**Response:** The basement footprint will sit within the footprint of the existing building and small rear hard surfaced area.

*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*

**Response:** There are no trees which will be affected by the construction of the proposed basement. The closest tree is approximately 10 meters away from site boundary. An assessment of existing trees near / adjacent to the site (John Cromar's Arboricultural Co. Ltd) has been undertaken and is submitted with this application. This concludes that no encroachment on the Root Protection Area of any retained tree is entailed. The adjacent hedge is a relatively recent planting and is separated from the site by a substantial boundary wall. No significant roots of the hedge lie within the site and probably no roots of the hedge whatsoever and no special footings are needed from the arboricultural perspective.

In response to the internal environment of the host dwelling, an assessment of daylight and sunlight provision to habitable rooms of the property has been undertaken by Herrington Consulting Ltd.

This concludes that all the proposed habitable rooms receive in excess of the minimum (ADF) values, based on room uses, as recommended by BRE Guidelines and British Standards; this includes the two proposed habitable rooms in the basement.

The report also concludes that three rooms of the seven analysed within the proposed dwelling achieve the BRE recommended levels of sunlight and exceed the BRE guidelines.

## Habitable rooms

Para 2.8 states;

*Development Policy DP27 (Paragraph 27.6) states that the Council will not allow habitable rooms and other sensitive uses for self-contained basement flats and other underground structures in areas at risk of flooding.*

**Response:** A Basement Impact Assessment has been undertaken by Card Geotechnics Limited. The report concludes that there is no historic record of flooding



in the area, no underwater streams within the vicinity of the property and that the ground material is clay to a depth of over 10m and as such any running water at low level is highly unlikely to impact negatively on the proposed development.

The BIA report states that the Environment Agency locates Albert Terrace Mews as in a low to medium risk area for surface water flooding. They also note that the mews was not affected during the extreme rainfall events of 1975 or 2002 and that the property has not been flooded since its construction. The actual risk of flooding from rainfall is therefore very unlikely to have an impact on the development.

Based on the findings of the assessment undertaken it is considered that the proposed basement development will have a negligible effect on groundwater flow, surface water and flooding at this site.

The construction of the basement will generate ground movements due to a variety of causes including heave due to demolition and excavation, ground settlement due to pile wall installation, and deflection during basement excavation.

An assessment of the results of the detailed ground movement analysis and displacement profiles indicate that these movements could give rise to a damage category within 'Category 1' (very slight damage) for the critical neighbouring properties identified assuming a high standard of workmanship. This damage category is within allowable limits as specified by Camden's Camden Planning Guidance: Basements and Lightwells (CPG4), July 2015.

It is recommended that an appropriate monitoring regime is adopted to manage risk and potential damage to the neighbouring properties.

*Outside of these areas, where basement accommodation is to provide living space (possibly for staff), it will be subject to the same standards as other housing in terms of space, amenity and sunlight. Further guidance is contained in CPG2 Housing (refer to section 4 on residential development standards).*

**Response:** The lightwell proposed at the rear of the house will provide daylight to the bedrooms in the basement. The rest of accommodation such as storage, plant and bathrooms are not considered habitable rooms and will not require daylight. Mechanical ventilation (extractors) will be included in these spaces.

### Conservation areas

Para 2.11 notes that the Council;  
*...will seek the submission of a management plan for demolition and/or construction where basement works are proposed in conservation areas*

*Further guidance on this is contained within CPG6 Amenity (refer to section 8 on construction management plans).*

As a development within a conservation area regard has been had to the policies set out in Core Strategy policy CS14 – Securing high quality design and DP25 – Conserving Camden’s heritage

Policy DP25 states that the Council will;

b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;

**Response:** Careful consideration had been taken to ensure that the impact of the basement construction to neighbours will be minimised as much as possible. The details of these can be found in the Construction Management Plan, the Traffic Management Plan and relevant drawings.

The Primrose Hill Conservation Area Appraisal Policy PH39 does not suggest that basements are unacceptable in the Conservation Area. PH40 does states that;

*PH40 Excavation of a basement lightwell is unlikely to be acceptable where this is not a characteristic of the building type or street, i.e, to the side elevation of a terrace property or to the forecourt of a shop or public house.*

No part of the basement would be visible from the front façade of the building and thus the impact on the heritage asset (the Conservation Area) will be very limited and cause no harm at all.

#### Basement walls, windows, and doors

Para 2.12 states;

*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.*

*2.13 The width of any visible basement wall should not dominate the original building*

**Response:** No part of the basement would be visible from the front façade of the building and thus the impact on the heritage asset nor dominate the original building.

*2.14 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*

**Response:** Drawings and sections accompanying this application demonstrate that openings relate well to those at the upper floor. These would be discretely positioned at basement level and not impact upon the overall character of the original building.

#### Trees, landscape, and biodiversity

Para 2.15 states;

*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*

**Response:** Amenity space will be enlarged by the formation of terraces at ground and lower ground floor level.

Biodiversity is not impacted by the development as the current use of container planting on the existing terrace will be carried over to the new terraces.

*2.17 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.*

**Response:** There are no trees which will be affected by the construction of the proposed basement. The closest tree is approximately 10 meters away from site boundary to the west along the Mews to the right hand side of No 21. There were no roots encountered within the trial pits carried out at the front of the site and the proposed excavation works will not affect the tree.

As identified in the arboricultural report accompanying this application, there are no trees which will be affected by the construction of the proposed basement

#### Lightwells

Para 2.21

*In plots where the front garden is quite shallow, a lightwell is likely to consume much, or all, of the garden area. This will be unacceptable in streets where lightwells are not part of the established character and where the front gardens have an important role in the local townscape*

**Response:** The rear lightwell proposed and the basement will not be visible at all to the public view and as such will not harm the character of the Conservation Area.

#### Railings, grilles and other lightwell treatment

*2.24 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.*

*2.26 The lowering of the natural ground level to the rear of the property should be minimised as much as is practicable. It is recommended that the rear garden should be graded rather than secured by railings.*

**Response:** Amenity space will be enlarged by the formation of terraces at ground and lower ground floor level

#### Basement impact assessments

The purpose of a BIA is to enable the Council to 'assess whether any predicted damage to neighbouring properties and the water environment is acceptable or can be satisfactorily ameliorated by the developer' as stated in DP27.3.

Part 4 of CPG6 refers to the need to assess the impacts to neighbours from demolition and construction.

**Response:** In this respect careful consideration had been taken to ensure that the impact of the basement construction to neighbours will be minimised as much as possible. The details of these can be found in the Construction Management Plan, the Traffic Management Plan and relevant drawings.

The Traffic Management Plan will be implemented to ensure that Lorries and deliveries vehicles will reverse into Albert Terrace Mews from Regent's Park Road under the control of two Banksmen.

The Basement Impact Assessment concludes that the proposed Construction Method Statement will not cause any harm or subsidence to other neighboring buildings especially No.19 & No.21.

#### Sustainable construction

Consideration had also been taken to ensure the proposed construction would achieve sustainable attributes; a highly efficient gas boiler and low energy lighting and white goods will be used to limit the use of energy.

Biodiversity is not impacted by the development as the current use of container planting on the existing terrace will be carried over to the new terraces.

As the proposed basement is below ground level, pumps will be specified to connect the house's drains to the main drains situated at street level.

A fire escape hatch and ladder is proposed in the basement store as a second mean of escape to comply with Building Regulation.

#### *4.2 Internal layout alteration & infilling the recess on the front door.*

As can be seen from the drawings, the proposed work listed above will not cause any negative impact to neighbours' amenity in terms of scale, massing, overshadowing,

overlooking, daylight, sunlight & privacy.

The proposed front door material will match the materials used in that elevation and as such will not have any negative impact on the conservation area.

#### *4.3 Reinstatement of kitchen window*

A kitchen window was approved as part of the original dwelling house granted in July 1990 (planning application ref. PL/8903326/R3) to the front (north) elevation.

This was shown as a somewhat larger window on the subsequent permission ref. 2007/1628/P granted on 15 June 2007 (shown below)

It is apparent that the presence of this window has previously been accepted under previous permissions. Its inclusion would have limited impact upon the Conservation Area and enable additional sunlight / daylight to the kitchen.

## **6.0 Precedent**

Basements have been constructed at No11 Albert terrace Mews (Planning permission ref 2004/7709/P) and No.21 Albert Terrace Mews (Planning permission ref 2007/3213/P).

Basement development is a feature of all houses on Prince Albert Road, which the rear of No 20 Albert Terrace Mews adjoins.

Basements are a feature of much of the housing stock of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

## 7.0 Conclusion

The proposed basement will meet the highest environmental standards and also comply with the guidance set out in the Camden Planning Guidance 4 Basements & lightwells and DP 27 Basement and Lightwells.

The accompanying documents demonstrate:

- 1 The structural stability of neighbouring and adjoining properties will be protected and maintained.
- 2 Drainage and run off will not be affected and there will be no impact on the water environment in the local area.
- 3 There will be no cumulative impact on the structural stability of the host or neighbouring buildings or on the water environment.
- 4 The development will have no effect on the amenity of neighbours.
- 5 There will be no loss or impact on open space or trees.
- 6 The proposed development will not harm or impact negatively on the appearance or setting of the property or the established character of the surrounding area.
- 7 The internal and minor external alterations proposed will not harm the character of the Conservation Area.
- 8 The risk of flooding is negligible.



## 8.0 Drawing Schedule

Permitted proposed plan 2015/0485/P

1403\_GA\_101\_A Ground Floor Plan as Proposed  
1403\_GA\_102\_A First Floor Plan as Proposed  
1403\_GA\_103\_A Second Floor Plan as Proposed  
1403\_EL\_101\_A North Elevation as Proposed  
1403\_EL\_102\_A South Elevation as Proposed  
1403\_SE\_101\_A Section AA as Proposed

Existing plans:

1403\_SI\_001\_A Site Location Plan  
15003\_0100\_ Existing Ground Floor Plan  
15003\_0101\_ Existing First Floor Plan  
15003\_0102\_ Existing Roof Plan  
15003\_0200\_ Existing Section A  
15003\_0201\_ Existing Section B  
15003\_0300\_ Existing North Elevation  
15003\_0301\_ Existing South Elevation

Proposed plans:

15003\_1100\_ Proposed Ground Floor Plan  
15003\_1103\_ Proposed Basement Plan  
15003\_1101\_ Proposed First Floor Plan  
15003\_1102\_ Proposed Roof Plan  
15003\_1200\_ Proposed Section A  
15003\_1201\_ Proposed Section B  
15003\_1300\_ Proposed North Elevation  
15003\_1301\_ Proposed South Elevation

Demolition plans:

15003\_2100\_Demolition Ground Floor Plan  
15003\_2101\_Demolition First Floor Plan  
15003\_2102\_Demolition Roof Plan  
15003\_2200\_Demolition Section A  
15003\_2201\_Demolition Section B  
15003\_2300\_Demolition North Elevation  
15003\_2301\_Demolition South Elevation