Planning Application for 3 Willow Road, London NW3 1TH

Design and Access Statement

Features of the existing building

3 Willow Road is the end house of a terrace of three modernist houses (grade II* listed) designed by Erno Goldfinger and built in 1937. They form a single unified block, the middle house being a National Trust property, and the other two being privately owned. The windows in all three houses are standard steel-framed single-glazed Crittall windows, with panes of varying sizes.

1-3 Willow Road front elevation. 3 Willow Road is on the right of the picture

Proposed alterations

The intention is to double glaze most of the windows on the front (N facing), rear (S) and side (W) aspects of 3 Willow Road, with the aim of reducing heat loss. Currently the large single-glazed windows throughout the house mean that energy conservation is poor; in particular, the front windows on the first floor, because of their large area and north aspect, cause major heat loss. The overall thermal insulation of the house is poor. The locations of the windows are shown in the attached photographs and drawings.

Most of the double glazing, carried out by Metwin Limited, a contractor specializing in Crittall windows will consist of replacing the 4mm glass in the existing frames with sealed 14mm units, coated to reduce heat loss, without affecting optical transparency (see document 6 for drawings). Where panes are too large for sealed panels, as in the case of one panel of the living room window (first floor front elevation, see photograph above and documents 1 and 3), both top floor rear bedroom windows (see documents 2 and 4) and the side elevation window in the living room (see document 5), secondary double glazing will be installed. In the bedrooms and the side elevation living room windows the secondary double glazing will have sliding inner panels (see document 7 for drawings). In the front elevation of the living room the secondary glazing will comprise a removable non-sliding panel.

The balcony doors in the dining room are damaged so badly that Metwin Limited has proposed replacing them with new, which would be made to look the same as the original doors, but with 16mm double glazed panes (see document 8 for drawings).

Other measures considered

Repairs and silicone draft proofing will be carried out to all windows at the same time as the installation of double glazing. Additional possibilities for improving the insulation have been considered, but rejected as inappropriate. The flat roof does not allow loft insulation, and the house does not have cavity walls that could be insulated.

Design and effect on appearance

Design details of the integral and secondary glazing units are shown in documents 6 to 8.

The integral sealed panes will have no significant effect on the appearance of the building, either inside or out. The panes, though 10mm thicker than the existing panes, will fit into the existing frames and will be essentially invisible, having no effect on either the transparency or reflectance of the windows.

The secondary glazing units will be designed so that the upright dividers coincide with the existing dividers, so that that they will have minimum effect on the outside appearance. The sliding panes will allow access for cleaning purposes. The non-sliding panel in the living room (front elevation) will be removable from the inside for cleaning. The secondary frames will be painted to match the existing window frames.

There are no issues relating to access, landscaping or effect on neighbours.

Previous planning consent was granted at 1 Willow Road, in the same unified building, in 2011. At that time experts from English Heritage (Mr Richard Parrish) and the National Trust (Ms Tessa Wild and Mr Edward Diestelkamp) visited the property and inspected the plans, with which they were satisfied (see Document 9). The work on 1 Willow Road has been completed, and it would be possible arrange a view of this work.

The proposed alterations will have no significant impact on the appearance or character of the house.