

Minor Internal and external alterations

at

31 Great James Street Camden London

Design & Access Statement

March 2017



Contents Page:

1.0 The Proposal

2.0 List of Drawn Information

3.0 Context

4.0 Planning Status

5.0 Design Principles

6.0 Sustainable Development

7.0 Access Statement

1.0 The Proposal

1.1 Introduction

The applicant wishes to make minor internal and external alterations to the family home to allow independent access to the basement

1.2 Opportunities

Reinstating original features and access route to make use of original gate in railings

1.3 Constraints

Grade II* Listed status of the building.

2 List of Drawn Information

2.1 This Design and Access Statement accompanies the Planning Application and should be read in conjunction with the following design drawings:

2.2 Cowper Griffith Architects LLP –

31 GJS Basement Floor Plan 1257 - SK20

31GJS Sections S and W Plan 1257-SK21

31 GJS Sections 1257-SK22

3 Context

3.1 The site is in Camden, Northwest London.

3.2 The house is Grade II* and is within a designated conservation area.

3.3 In terms of Significance of Heritage Assets the original form of the house and its setting are both considered generally of very high significance with the basement considered to be of moderate significance

4.1 Planning Status – the property has had Residential Planning Status since 2014

4.2 In addition pre-application advice has been sought and the changes accepted in principle with queries over design of the new entrance door

5 Design Principles

5.1 Architectural Approach

- 5.1.1 The approach seeks to minimise the disruption to both the external and internal fabric of the house and consequently its character, with all new interventions kept to a minimum to preserve the integrity of the original house
- 5.1.2 It is intended that new additions are consistent with the approach used in the previous renovations of the house in 2014 when a modern glass sided light weight extension with metal roof was added
- 5.1.3 Restore features lost over time to match the surviving original details in a neighbouring house, namely by reintroducing arch beneath bridge to front door
- 5.1.4 All new interventions are designed to be contemporary in material and detailing so that they are distinct and easily readable (changes that are necessary to facilitate the new use). At the same time they make reference to the existing original house and modern extension
- 5.1.5 Fire Strategy- The whole building already has the benefit of a residential sprinkler system and a fireproofed stairway. The rooms in the basement retain access to the internal fireproofed stairway as the doors to it remain in place. In addition there will be a new means of escape out of the basement front door and up the new stairs

5.2 **Use-** the building is currently occupied as a family home and has residential use

5.3 **Amount** The entire basement floor area is approximately 100 meters squared. The additional internal area created will be approx. 1meter squared

5.4 Layout

- 5.4.1 The house provides residential accommodation over five floors, comprising principle accommodation on the ground (street level) and first floor level, and secondary accommodation in the basement along with the second and third floors
- 5.4.2 The basement which is the area in question currently is only accessible from an internal staircase. It contains a utility and gym area, a bedroom, bathroom and living area with two pavement vaults
- 5.4.3 The proposal allows separate access to the basement via new stairs and allows easier access to the north pavement vault through a new lobby area

5.5 Scale

The extent of the minor alterations is limited to adding a staircase into the front light well; introducing a glass screen beneath the bridge to the front door to create a lobby area allowing easier access to the pavement vault, and introduction of an interconnecting door between front room and bedroom to allow occupants privacy. These rooms will remain accessible to the rest of the house.

5.6 Appearance

- 5.6.1 The glass screen is designed with minimal intervention to highlight restored original arch and the original brickwork on the vault door jamb
- 5.6.2 There will be a frameless glazed over-light above the screen door to minimise distraction from the new arch formed under the bridge to the front door
- 5.6.3 The screen will be flush with the bridge to create a clean look and avoid drawing attention to itself from above
- 5.6.4 The screen is not expected to be very reflective given that it is a dark corner of the house and if possible non-reflective glass will be used as the aim is to create a dry draughtless internal space to allow easy access to the vault room whilst as far as possible being invisible
- 5.6.5 The staircase will be as steep and as narrow as possible within building regulations to retain as much light as possible in front room. It will be made of folded metal
- 5.6.6 The new internal door will match its neighbouring door which was previously salvaged from an upper floor in the house
- 5.6.7 Floor finishes, wall finishes, decoration, heating and services remain unchanged

6 Sustainable Development

- 6.1 The minor works will be carried out to high standards, achieving air tightness and thermal insulation to the highest degree possible whilst working within the limitations of the existing structure
- 6.2 By adding the modern glass screen, airtightness will be improved significantly because, despite draught proofing measures, the large original front door to the basement has gaps around it inevitable with a house of this age. It is currently a source of significant heat loss

6.3 The pavement vault will be ventilated with a small opening in the wall

6.4 Light to the pavement vault will enter from the glass infill panel forming a corner of the glass screen

7 Access Statement

7.1 Access to the main house for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles will remain unchanged

7.2 Access to the basement will be enhanced with the staircase

7.3 Good access to public transport is available

7.4 Vehicle on street parking possible with a permit

7.5 Clear access for the emergency services is possible to the street front but access to the rear is limited

7.6 Inclusive access

7.6.1 The historic nature of the house with its steps to the main entrance door and many changes in floor levels make inclusive access problematic.

7.6.2 Means of access for wheelchair users will be difficult to achieve and substantial harm to the historic fabric will result from incorporating methods to improve access. Therefore no improvements are proposed in this application and none are required under Building Regulations.