

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE GREENWOOD SHELTERED HOUSING ACCOMMODATION

1 GREENWOOD, OSENEY CRESCENT, KENTISH TOWN, LONDON NW5 2BB

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Background

Greenwood is a sheltered housing scheme for older residents owned and operated by Camden Council. It contains 67 studio flats and ancillary accommodation and was originally built in the 1950s. It has been modified over the years most recently and extensively by the introduction of external insulation over-cladding to improve the thermal performance of the buildings.

Camden Council recently commissioned a study to look into ways of improving and updating a number of their sheltered housing schemes, including Greenwood. The study concluded that the existing building at Greenwood generally worked well internally but that there were a number of issues particularly the approach to the building and landscaping which could be improved. It is these issues which the proposals seek to address.

Existing

Greenwood is a three storey building with accommodation in a wing facing Oseney Crescent at the southern end, a parallel wing at the rear, north end of the site and a three storey block linking the two. The main entrance is at the front of the building on Oseney Crescent with the main entrance doors raised up above the level of the pavement being accessed by steps and a ramp.



Ramp and steps up to the main entrance at the front of the building

The ramp which has a single slope at a gradient that is too steep to meet current requirements for disabled access. On the right hand side of the entrance is the manager's office and to the left is the communal lounge which has direct access onto a raised south facing terrace at the front of the building. There is a low wall around the terrace but no railings presenting a safety hazard for residents using the terrace particularly those who may have dementia or are short sighted.



Raised terrace at the front of the building with the communal lounge on the right

The majority of the flats in the front block and the block linking it with the rear block are accessed from internal corridors but those in the rear block are accessed via an external access deck which is narrow and unwelcoming.

There is a large area of garden on the south west side of the building. Most of it is grassed and there are two raised planters but is not very attractive and is consequently underused by the residents.

In the southern corner of the garden there is a wheelchair ramp which has a glazed canopy over it. The ramp provided access from the building to an adjacent annex but as this has now been sold off and the main purpose of the ramp has gone.



Rear, north facing elevation showing access decks



Access deck on the north block showing raised threshold at the entrance door



Garden on South West side of the building showing raised planters

Proposals

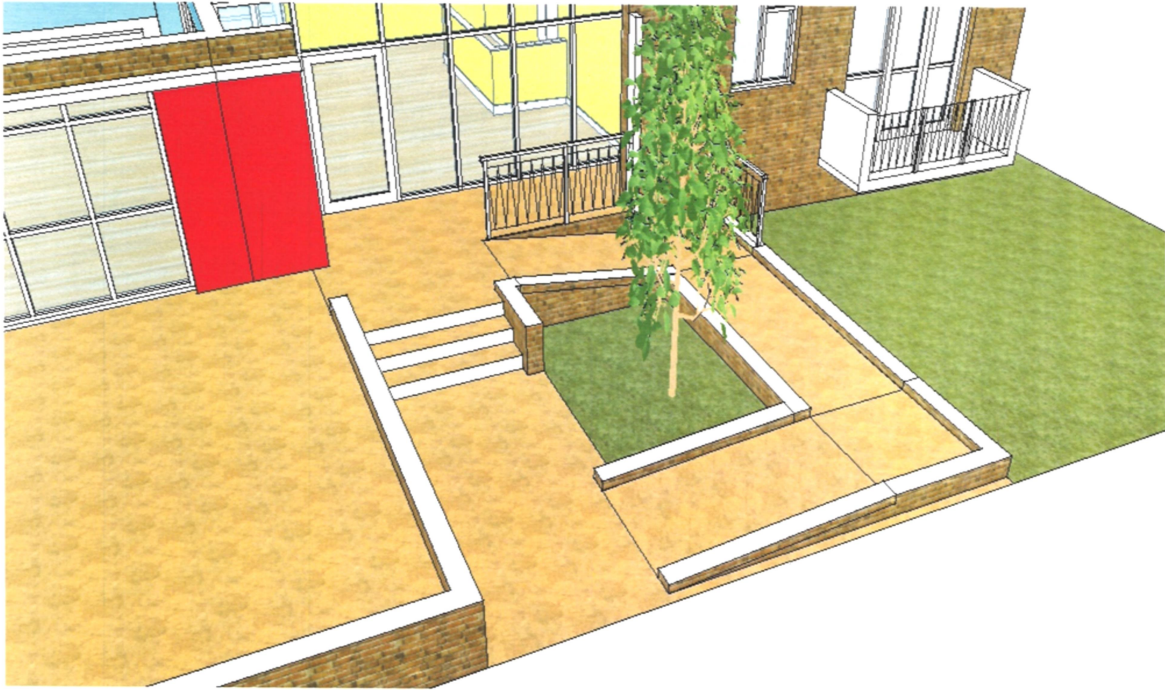
Main Entrance

It is proposed to build new steps and a ramp up to the main entrance at the front of the building which will be designed in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations to provide wheelchair access. In order to comply with permitted gradients the ramp needs to be much longer than the existing and it is proposed that it will be 'U' shaped around a central planter containing an ornamental tree. New railings around the ramp and landings will be designed to match the original 1950s design of the railings on the adjacent balcony. The ramp and landings and paving will be finished with a resin bonded gravel.

The existing wooden front doors and screen will be replaced with power assisted doors with powder coated aluminium frames and screen.

Terrace

The terrace at the front of the building will be retained as for use by residents as it is south facing, has direct existing access from the lounge and is on the side of the building where there is 'street life'. The existing paving slabs will be replaced with self draining resin bonded gravel and railings will be erected on top of the existing low wall to prevent falls. The railings will be of the same 1950s design as those around the ramp.



View of proposed entrance ramp and steps [railings not shown]

Access Decks at the rear of the building

It is proposed to widen the existing access balconies by erecting five balconies alongside positioned opposite the entrance doors to the flats. These will provide some outdoor space for the residents as well as providing passing places for wheelchairs. The balconies will have a steel structure which will be supported on steel columns from ground level and which will be independent from the access deck structure. The existing balustrade at the side of the access deck will be replaced with new painted metal railings to match those on the balconies. The access decks will have a new tiled finish and the existing upstanding thresholds at the flat entrance doors will be removed to assist with access.



View of the new balconies attached to side of the access decks at the rear of the building

External Area on the west side of the building

The ramp down from the rear of the main entrance, used previously to access the adjoining annex will be removed but the glazed canopy over will be retained. A new raised terrace will be formed with new access doors from the rear of the communal lounge with the retained canopy providing a shelter for residents using the terrace.

The garden area between the new terrace and block at the north of the site will be re-landscaped to make it more attractive and accessible for residents and the ground will be re-graded to form a gentle slope down from the new terrace at the south end to the main part of the garden removing the need for an access ramp. Raised brick planters will be built and the hard landscaping, paths etc will be finished with resin bonded gravel



Landscaped area on west side of the building [indicative layout]

Access

Access to the building from Oseney Crescent will be improved by the new wheelchair ramp and steps which will be designed to meet the requirements of Part M of the building regulations and by the new entrance doors in the glazed screen will be power assisted.

Access to the flats via the external decks at the rear will be improved by the introduction of the balconies providing passing places for pedestrians and wheelchairs. The existing threshold upstands at the bottom of the flat entrances will be removed to facilitate easier access.

The gardens on the west side of the building will be landscaped to provide full access to wheelchair users and the ground re graded to avoid the need for ramps. Additional raised planters will be provided for the use of wheelchair users.