

81B Albert Street, London NW1

Design , Access and Heritage Statement

February 2017

Covering statement to accompany drawings:

Existing:

- AS 001 (Location plan – 1:1250)
- AS 01 (Second floor plan existing – 1:50)
- AS 02 (Roof plan + Section AA existing – 1:50)
- AS 04 (Front elevation existing – 1:50)
- AS 05 (Rear elevation existing – 1:50)

Proposed:

- AS 1 (Second floor plan approved and proposed – 1:50)
- AS 2 (Third floor plan proposed – 1:50)
- AS 3 (Roof plan + Section AA proposed – 1:50)
- AS 4 (Front elevation proposed – 1:50)
- AS 5 (Rear elevation proposed – 1:50)
- AS 6 (Detail proposed – 1:20/1:5)

This document considers the heritage asset status and historical significance of the Grade 2 listed building in relation to the requirements of National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 128, and relevant local planning policies regarding the historic built environment.

The property is currently a two story sub-division of a four story terraced house dating from the first half of the 19th century, situated in the middle of the west side of Albert Street. The building is within the Camden Town Conservation Area and the buildings forming the terrace, numbers 45-97, were listed Grade II in May 1974.

This Heritage statement relates to the proposed works in connection with the construction of a traditionally proportioned and detailed mansard extension to the roof of the building creating an attic storey.

The significance of the architectural and historical interest and character of the building

Albert Street is part of a development plan by surveyor George Bassett between 1844-48. Constructed in a Georgian style both sides of the street are relatively uniform terraces of yellow stock brick and coursed stucco ground floors. The terrace displays a common pattern of fenestration (two windows wide), with 1st floor cast iron balconies over square headed doorways and in the case of number 81 and its adjoining neighbours, a tripartite sash window to the ground floor.

Albert Street has generally retained its original character and is considered to provide high value townscape. Many of these family houses were converted into multiple occupancies containing two or more flats, as is the case with number 81B.

It is evident from recent documentary evidence that significant work has been undertaken to the extant 'butterfly' roof carried out within the last 10 years. As part of this work second (top) floor ceiling and cornices had been removed.

Enforcement action on the previous owner resulted in the reinstatement of plasterwork, however it is evident (fig.1) that the opening up and demolition works required for the proposed mansard extension will not be affecting original or historic fabric.



Fig.1 photograph of unapproved renovation works undertaken in 2013 showing the renewed roof timbers and clearly showing that the ceiling had been removed without consent by the previous owner.

The principles of and justification for the proposed works at no. 81B

The impact of the proposed mansard roof extension has been assessed in accordance with the following documents:

- - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 72(l)
- - PPS5 (Planning and the Historic Environment), Policies HE 1.1, HE6, HE 7.2, HE 9.1 and HE 9.4
- - Camden Council UDP, Policy des 10: Listed Buildings
- - Supplementary Planning Guidance - Repairs and alterations to listed buildings

In principle, adjustments to the organisation of existing spaces are as minimal as possible to accommodate the clients growing family. The original fabric, where remaining, has been preserved, and the adjustments proposed are in line with the existing planning approval awarded in 2014 (application number 2013/7986/L and 2013/7543/P).

The adjoining properties have a modern (pre-listing) roof extension to the North and a modern flat roof replacing the original 'butterfly' arrangement to the South. As such neither property provides an appropriate context for response. The existing mansard approval sought to impose a regularly geometric mansard formula to the design, utilizing a 70 degree-30 degree combination of pitches, with a 36 degree setting out geometry from the centre of the plan to determine the termination of the steep slope. The reference for this geometry is taken from Historic England sources, for example: (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/london-terrace-houses-1660-1860/>).

The dimensions relating to the height of the apex of the party walls framing the slate roof is also taken directly from the existing approval, and are highlighted in red on the listed building application drawings to which this document refers (drawing AS 2).

A key difference in detailing between this proposal and the existing listed building consent is the use of an on edge brick coping (as used on the rear elevation parapet wall termination), whereas the current consented design shows the use of coping stones on the party walls. Generally copings stones were used only on the front parapet, with party wall and rear parapet walls utilising on edge bricks (Fig.2). The use of coping stones in these secondary locations are therefore unoriginal, but also draw the eye to the line of the mansard roof profile by being substantially lighter than the brick walls they cap. It is considered that the mansard roof should be treated as a backdrop and visually subservient to the original elevation, so minimising strongly contrasting or geometrically rigid materials visible at roof level behind the parapet should be prioritised.

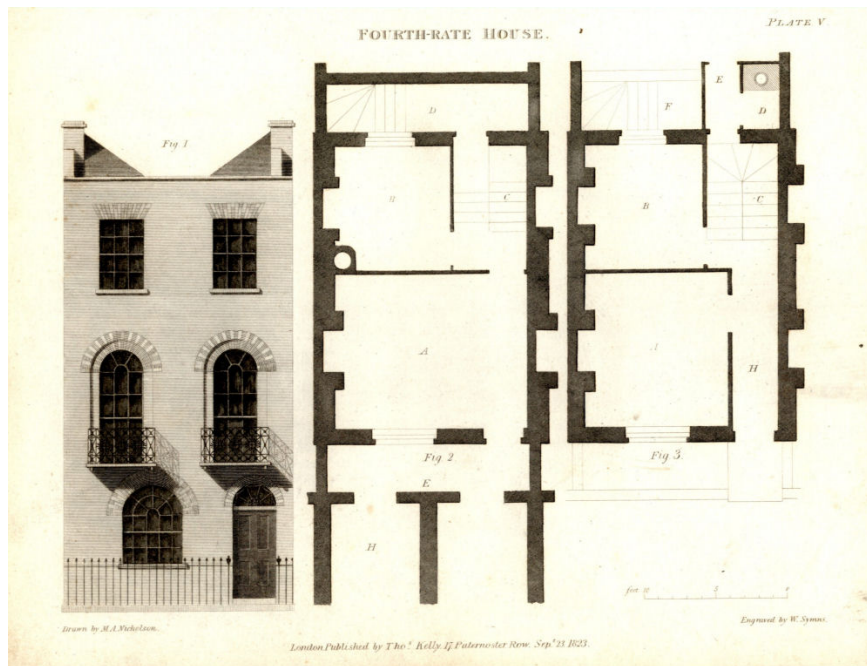


Fig.2 Contemporary drawings of First to Fourth rate houses show the use of on-edge brick copings to the top of the party walls

The impact of the proposal on the setting of adjacent listed buildings

Without an existing historic precedent for the design of the mansard roof in Albert street (they were all built without Mansard rooves), and with a variety of new roof extensions present within the immediate and opposite neighbouring buildings, consent for the erection of a traditionally set-out and detailed mansard roof was given consent in 2014. The direct effect on the adjacent properties is the requirement for the raising of the party wall and chimneystacks to the South and the party wall only to the North (given that these stacks were removed when the modern roof extension was built prior to 1974).

The use of brick that is a match to the existing was stipulated in the existing consent and has been fully adopted, along with the used of a standard lime based (cement free) construction and pointing mortar to minimise differential movement and respect appearance. Existing original chimney pots will be reinstated on the same flues that they currently serve, and the existing brick detailing to the apex of the stack and the flaunching detail will be replicated.

The steps that have been taken to minimise any adverse impacts on the building

Structural considerations have been made prior to finalising the design in order to minimize or obviate interventions on the original fabric of the house. The timber used to frame the mansard is of a standard/traditional section size and spacing without the use of steelwork or concrete.

Traditional materials and rainwater management using slate and lead work which follows LSA guidance for best practice replaces the existing (replacement) butterfly roof and retains ease of access for gutter maintenance through the provision of the attic level sash windows (which affords safe visual inspection of the gutters on a daily basis), securing the listed building against potential water damage.

The new attic storey construction employs high levels of insulation for both heat retention during the Winter and heat resistance in the Summer, exceeding the Building Regulation minimum. 'Above insulation' ventilation is provided to eliminate interstitial condensation and the risks this poses to both slate and lead roof construction. The use of argon filled Low-E coated slimline double glazed units in the sash windows increases the thermal properties of the house without compromising the traditional detailing.

Revisions to Internal Plans subsequent to Listed Building Consent 2014

The current layout of the dwelling is described on drawing 300A/101 submitted as part of application number 2013/7986/L and 2013/7543/P. The following adjustments are proposed to this existing consent:

Second floor –

- Storage will be redesigned within the front bedroom to ameliorate the adverse impact of the internal bathroom built and approved under a previous consent. The storage will be fitted furniture and will not require the removal of any of the plaster ceilings or cornice. It is noted that these elements were installed in 2014 (Fig.1), however there is no reason to alter the existing finishes and the installation of the new storage is fully reversible.

Third (attic) floor –

- The internal bathroom is considered detrimental to the simple geometry of the habitable rooms within this period of house. A new layout provides the same accommodation – two bedrooms and a bathroom, while integrating storage and giving square room plans and access to a shared en-suite shower room.
- The stair layout within the current consented design does not comply with Building Regulations regarding equal depth of tread. The proposed organization of the treads rectifies this situation.
- The drainage of rainwater from the front box gutter behind the parapet showed no means of draining in the current consented drawings. A pipe-route to reach the rear of the house by building out the internal plasterboard surface to the Southern party wall and a providing a stepped up floor to the shower room allows for this route to be established, with discrete rodding access to the rear of the storage wall. The water will drain into the rear box gutter then exit through the existing hopper/RWP.

Roof Plan –

- A second low profile ‘conservation’ roof light is added to the existing consent for one roof light, which is proposed in order to bring light into the stairwell in addition to the rear room. The roof lights are aligned to the rear attic dormer windows to establish a considered relationship.
- The copings to the raised party walls are proposed as brick on edge, which is the traditional solution, in preference to coping stones which are drawn on the consented design but not specified in terms of material (which would most likely be pre-cast concrete).

Front and rear elevations

- No changes are proposed from the consent that have not been previously mentioned. It is noted that the current consent drawings show double-glazing to the dormer windows, the Heritage statement states single glazed. The new proposal utilizes slim-line double-glazing to optimize the performance of the traditionally constructed sash windows whilst retaining acceptable traditional glazing bar section sizes and sightlines.

Access statement

House steps up from the street level preclude a fully accessible solution to the building, and as the dwelling is on the first floor and above, there is no possible need for the provision for disabled or ambulant disabled WC facilities.

Arboricultural statement

The garden is part of the ground floor and basement level maisonette. No works involving trees are being proposed.

Conclusion

The proposed adjustments to the existing/current listed building consent for number 81B Albert Street aims to provide comfortable and well-scaled spaces for the long-term security of the listed building. The amendments to the design of the new attic storey follows the respectful form and materiality of the Conservation area established in the 2014 approved scheme, but amends and improves the quality of internal living spaces and addresses key Building Regulations deficiencies which would impact on the ability to deliver the approved Listed Building design.

Appendix

Listing Description without reference to internal or rear aspects of the house.

CAMDEN

TQ2883NE ALBERT STREET 798-1/76/35 (West side) 14/05/74 Nos.45-97 (Odd)
and attached railings
GV II

Irregular terrace of 27 houses. 1845. Surveyor George Bassett Jnr. Yellow stock brick and rusticated stucco ground floors. Nos 77, 87, 93 & 95, slate mansard roofs with attic dormers to all save No.97. Nos 63, 75 & 83 with penthouses. Nos 93 & 95 projecting. 3 storeys and basements. 2 windows each. Square-headed doorways, some with pilaster-jambs carrying cornice-heads; fanlights and panelled doors. Nos 93, 95 and 97 with stucco doorcases of pilasters supporting an entablature. Recessed sashes; Nos 45-61, 65, 67, 73, 77 & 79 with margin glazing to ground floor. Nos 81-97, tripartite ground floor sashes; Nos 93, 95 and 97 with consoles on mullions. Upper floors with architraved sashes; 1st floors having console-bracketed cornices and cast-iron balconies. Stucco cornice and blocking course except No.53 having a brick parapet.

INTERIORS: not inspected.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings flanking entrance steps and geometrical railings to areas. Nos 93, 95 and 97, attached cast-iron railings with foliated finials to areas. The whole of Albert Street forms a cohesive group of the 1840s. No.97 Albert Street was listed on 14/01/94.

List entry Number: 1378630