



Design and Access Statement
Rochester Square,
London
NW1 9RY
Ref: 1606_[-]_PL_101

1606_Re-development of Rochester Square Spiritualist Temple, London into a community space and residential units.

Introduction

The design team have approached this scheme with a view to create a well-considered, flexible, attractive and sustainable development for the benefit of the community of Camden. A thoughtful design process has been adopted taking into consideration the key principles of context, density, layout, scale, landscaping, and appearance. This document details and explains the design concepts and principles that have been undertaken.

This statement should be read together with the 'Planning Application' drawings, accompanying reports and Planning Statement.

History, Context and the Future

The Site, Rochester Square Spiritualist Temple is located at Rochester Square, Camden and faces the public highway to the North East and South West. It has been sat on its current site since 1926, please refer to the accompanying heritage statement that has been prepared by The Built Heritage Consultancy, which provides further detail on the history of the building, together with an assessment of its heritage value.

The surrounding context is predominantly residential in its use and has a variety of building styles, heights and mass, with a varied mix of architectural styles and materials. To the north of the site sits the single storey NHS Community Recovery Service for Older People (pic 1), to the east are the 4 storey residential dwellings 29-36 Rochester Square (pic 2). To the south sits the 6 storey residential flats that form Bessemer / Rochester Court (Pic 3) with the 2 storey new dwelling adjacent to the site to the west along with 4 storey Julian Court (Pic 4).



Pic 1 – NHS Community Recovery Building



Pic 2 – 29 – 36 Rochester Square



Pic 3 – Bessemer / Rochester Court



Pic 4 – Julian Court

The current building is in a dilapidated condition and would need of extensive major repairs to bring it up to current standards for future public use.

Use

The site is located in Rochester Square, London NW1 9RY. The Site area measures approximately 0.0408ha. The site consists of an existing building that occupies approximately half of the site area and is formed of a double height large worship hall, a function room and several small ancillary spaces such as WC's and kitchenette. The building was formerly used by the spiritualist Church, however they vacated the building in 2012 due to its dilapidated state not being fit for purpose.

At present 'live in' tenants currently occupy the building to avoid the building being broken in to / vandalised and used by squatters that have plagued the premises in the past when unoccupied. The spiritualist church has found alternative premises within the borough.



Pic 5 – Existing Building from the South

Due to the locality and context of the existing site it is in an ideal location for mixed use residential development. The proposal maintains the existing church, conserving the significance of the heritage asset, and adds a residential development to the north of the site. The refurbished church will accommodate for a community space that can be used by the local residents. The proposal will contribute positively to the promotion of a sustainable community in a location suited to this type of use, offering all the necessary facilities required for modern living within walking distance.

Design Principles

Density

The proposed redevelopment of the site retains the existing church building, with the exception of the single storey ancillary wing to the rear. The floor space from the rear wing will be reintroduced into the main church space through a mezzanine, 79.60m² (approx. 260sqft NIA) as part of the buildings overall refurbishment. The ground floor of the existing church space will continue to be used for community use accommodating a large single useable space of 128.80m². The total proposed floor space is 208.40m², an increase of 10.10m² over the existing building (198.30m²). To the rear, residential accommodation will form the remainder of the development (224.26 m²), accommodating 5 self-contained flats over 3 floors (two storeys, plus basement level – LGF, GF and 1st) comprising 1 x 1 and 4 x 2 bed units. Every unit has its own private balcony / courtyard space.

On the basis of the mix provision noted above there will be a 1 unit provided as an affordable dwelling.

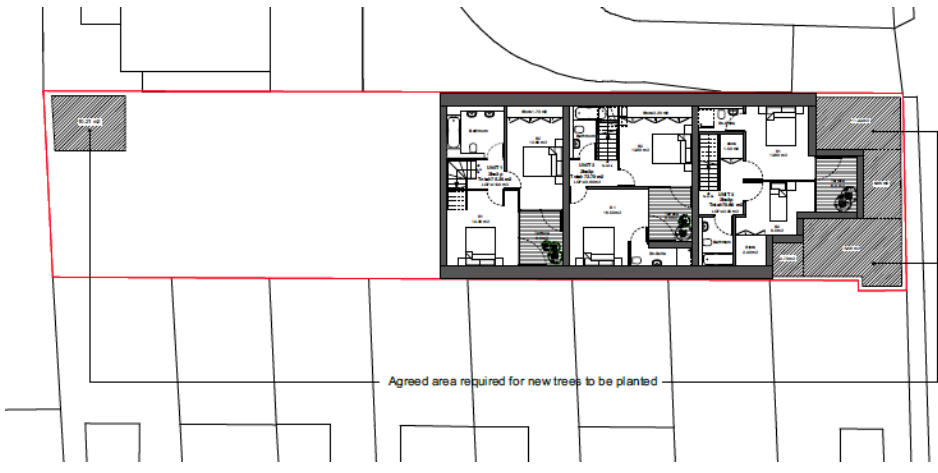
Layout

The existing church will be retained and refurbished. As part of these works, it is proposed to demolish the single storey wing at the rear of the church. The wing is utilitarian in appearance, and accommodates ancillary spaces, e.g. toilet, kitchen and a secondary function space. The floor space from the wing is proposed to be re-provided through a mezzanine level within the main church space, as part of the buildings refurbishment. The ground floor will continue to accommodate a large single useable space, incorporating a kitchenette/tea point, WC and a DDA complaint WC. The mezzanine level will incorporate further useable space. Through the retention of the church, there will be no increase in mass or bulk to the southern end of the site.

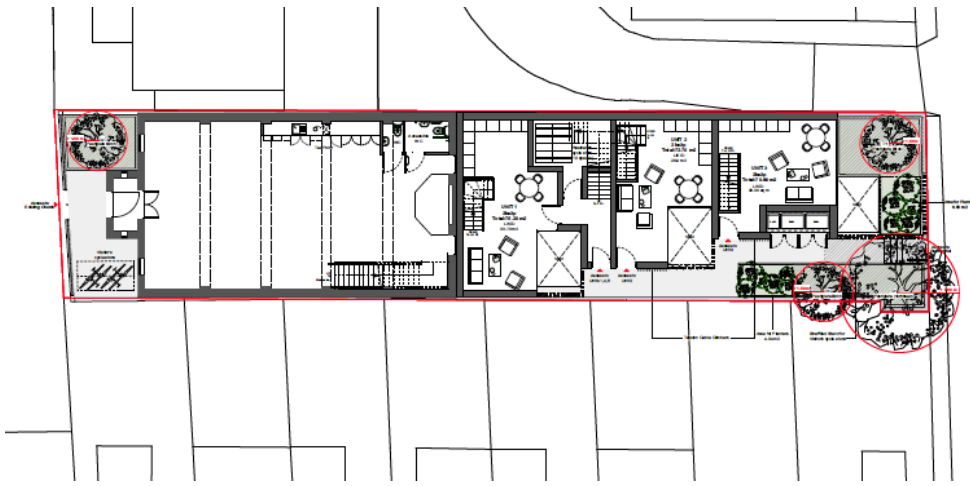
A new sole entrance is to be provided directly into the residential layouts to the northern end of the site, which incorporates only a two storey building consisting of 3 x 2 bed maisonette flats at Lower Ground Floor and Ground floor. The layout over these floors consists of sleeping accommodation to the Lower Ground Floor and living accommodation to the Ground Floor to maximise the natural light and views at this level. Accessible terraces are created to the Lower Ground Floor providing external space whilst creating light wells throughout the development maximising the natural light to the living accommodation above. The accommodation provided to the 1st floor consists of 1 x 2 bed and 1 x1 bed. All the units are designed in accordance with the Housing standards.

The new development would provide enclosed secure residential cycle stores and facilities for the residents at ground floor level accessed via their communal internal entrance hall/walkway. An enclosed and secure refuse facility would be provided with accessed via their communal external entrance/walkway.

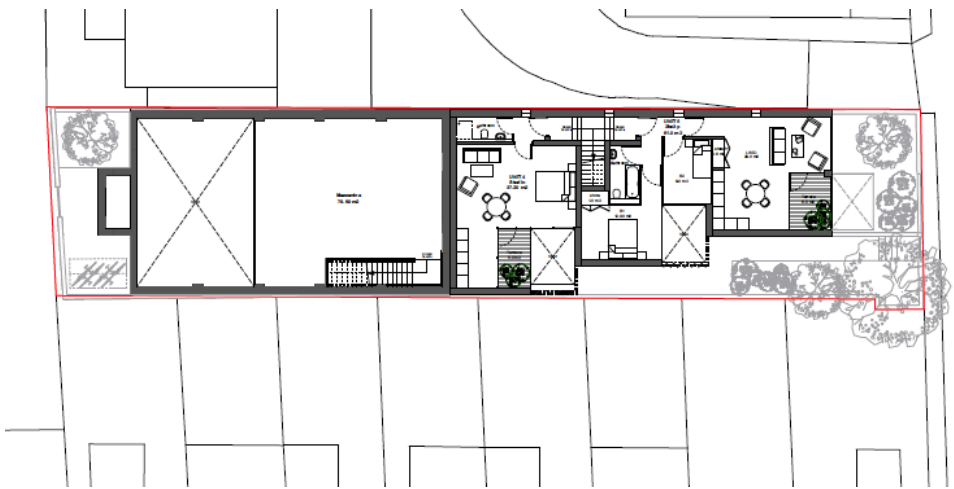
This is a car free scheme as the site has a PTAL 6 rating.



Pic 6 – Proposed Basement Layout



Pic 7 – Proposed Ground Floor Layout



Pic 8 – Proposed First Floor Layout

The proposed residential units have been designed to limit overlooking to the neighbouring properties to the east and west with apertures concentrated to the North and south direction with angled louvres screening overlooking towards the west. Strategically placed lightwells penetrate the scheme, breaking up the mass of the development whilst also allowing plenty of natural light to all habitable rooms from the lower ground floor to the 1st floor. The section below highlights how the scheme has been designed to provide quality accommodation to the whole development.



Pic 9 – Proposed Section BB

Scale

The proposed scale, massing and form addresses the surrounding buildings appropriately and reflects the scale of the existing building that currently occupies the site. Contextually the site is surrounded by larger residential buildings and the height of the proposed building sits comfortably within its immediate context and doesn't look out of place amongst its neighbours.



Pic 10 – Proposed North Elevation



Pic 11 – Proposed North Elevation – with Proposed Trees

The stepped terracing and internal lightwells reduce the overall bulk and mass of the building providing a well-considered and interesting built form on this site.

Landscaping

Landscaping to the whole scheme has been considered through hard and soft landscaping measures to enhance and protect the amenity of the site. New trees are being introduced to the residents secure internal walkways and to the front of the new development. These trees will be set in planters with an integrated irrigation system to help with the maintenance of the planting. All the residential units have a private amenity space, providing external terraces with level thresholds making them fully accessible and in line with the housing standards. The balconies will be finished in timber decking providing a softer feel to these areas and contrasting with the solid feel of the surrounding brickwork.

The roofs to the residential units will be green roofs creating a habitat for wildlife, whilst also providing a more aesthetically pleasing landscape to any overlooking buildings.



Pic 12 – Example of Lightwell



Pic 13 – Example of Green Roof

Appearance

The proposed design of the development creates a contemporary, striking new mixed use development in this urban context as befitting of a landmark building. The mixture of materials and finishes and the articulation of form creates interest to the elevations and sections across the site whilst also blending in to the local urban grain in a modern contemporary way. Inspiration has been taken from the local vernacular and in particular the form and materials of similar scale 'mews' type developments within the borough of Camden.

In keeping with the local context the predominant material to be used within the development is to be mid-brown brickwork articulated in a contemporary way using crisp and precise detailing throughout. Cor-ten steel elements will be introduced to complement but also break up the brickwork providing a continuous and a harmonious design thread throughout the development.



Pic 14 – Examples of Proposed Materials



Pic 15 – 3D view of the Residential Entrance to the North Elevation

Environmental Energy and Sustainability

Please refer to the accompanying Energy report for more information. The proposal will have a green roof and photovoltaic panels on the roof as part of the sustainability measures.

The proposal makes use of traditional materials and construction methods but in a contemporary style. The thermal, acoustic and power conservation requirements of the building regulations will be achieved by the specification of appropriate materials and construction details. The residential units will meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 rating. Where possible building products will be sourced from the 'Greenspec' directory.

The new building will be constructed from locally sourced and sustainable construction materials where possible, with local labour used for construction purposes.

Conclusion

The design team have been actively working on this considered project for the last year to make sure that this development offers high quality design and a sustainable community usage. It is considered that the proposal offers an extremely valuable and positive contribution to the local housing stock and will enhance the community through provision of a community facility. The proposed residential accommodation provides an excellent quality of dwellings that will promote a diverse and sustainable community to this existing site.

Spacelab are an RIBA award winning Architectural Practice based in Hackney who have worked on a number of successful residential mixed use schemes in the UK and abroad.

Access Statement

General Notes

The proposed scheme outlined above is to be fully accessible, with level thresholds throughout and designed to 'Lifetime Home' standards, we have outlined below specific areas that have been considered in more detail;

External Areas

There are two main residential access points, one on either side of Rochester Square with one also allowing access to the community space. There is also a private commercial access point on the south side for the community space. All pedestrian thresholds will be level and will be designed to provide access for all.

The refuse stores and cycle stores located on each side of Rochester Square are fully accessible with level thresholds throughout.

Car Parking

The proposed development is car free, the site has a PTAL 6 rating.

Building Entrance

The Building entrances are to have level thresholds and designed to meet accessible guidelines.

All of the proposed residential units are accessed via communal entrance walkways which will be secure and accessed via a fob and video entry systems. All entrances are to be flush and of sufficient dimensions to enable easy access to wheel chair users.

Vertical Circulation

All staircases throughout the development will be designed to meet the current Part M of the Building Regulations and be designed to meet the requirements for ambulant users.

General Units

The general units are all designed to 'Lifetime Home' and the London Plan space standard guidelines. They have level Thresholds throughout and these units all have 1000mm door apertures with 900mm clear opening to the entrance doors. They all have an outside terrace space with a level threshold between the inside and outside.

External Space

All external terraces are fully accessible and they all have level thresholds throughout.