

239 Royal College Street Design and Access Statement

This Design and Access Statement explains design and access principles and provisions for the application to convert the existing house at 239 Royal College Street into two self-contained flats, including a replacement rear extension.

Existing property

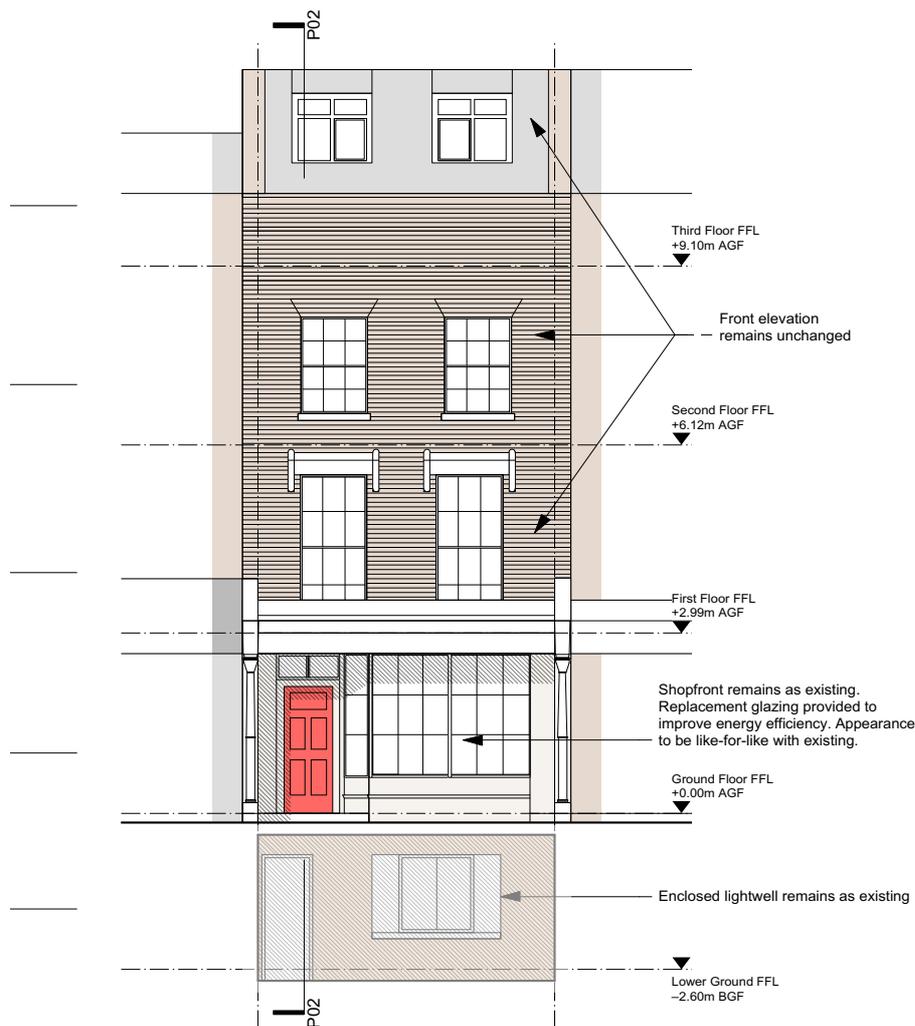
The existing property is a 5-storey town house dating from 1790–1800 within the Jeffrey’s Street Conservation Area in Camden. The building is described as having a ‘shop front of merit’ in the conservation area statement, as well as forming part of the terrace described as making a ‘positive contribution to the character of the conservation area’. The shop front is in need of repair and restoration. At the rear the house has been added to and amended over the years with full-width and part-width extensions, rendering and window alterations.



Existing frontage and ‘shopfront of merit’ to Royal College Street

Design principles

The design principles are to retain the existing historic street-facing frontage whilst dividing the large existing house into two self-contained flats for two generations of the current family owners. The conversion creates two units exceeding London Plan space standards, thereby adding an additional dwelling in an area of high housing pressure. The existing rear elevation, which is of little merit having been altered in a piecemeal fashion over time, is rationalised, re-glazed and a replacement part-width rear extension added.



Front Elevation
Proposed

Front elevation remains unchanged

Use

The proposed use is as two self-contained residential apartments, thereby making a net addition of one unit. The size and occupancy of the units is as follows:

Unit	Bedrooms/occupancy	Internal area	London Plan requirement
Lower flat	3b5p	125sqm	99sqm
Upper flat	2b3p	76sqm	70sqm

Layout

The proposed layout divides the existing five-storey house into a 3-bed 5-person lower flat (lower ground, ground and first floors) and a 2-bed 3-person upper flat (second floor and existing roof extension). A replacement part-width rear extension provides area to the lower flat at lower ground and ground levels, in lieu of a poor quality existing extension. The existing rear garden terrace at ground level is renewed to make better use of the garden space and permit light into the rear at lower ground level. Please refer to drawing RCS_P01.

Scale

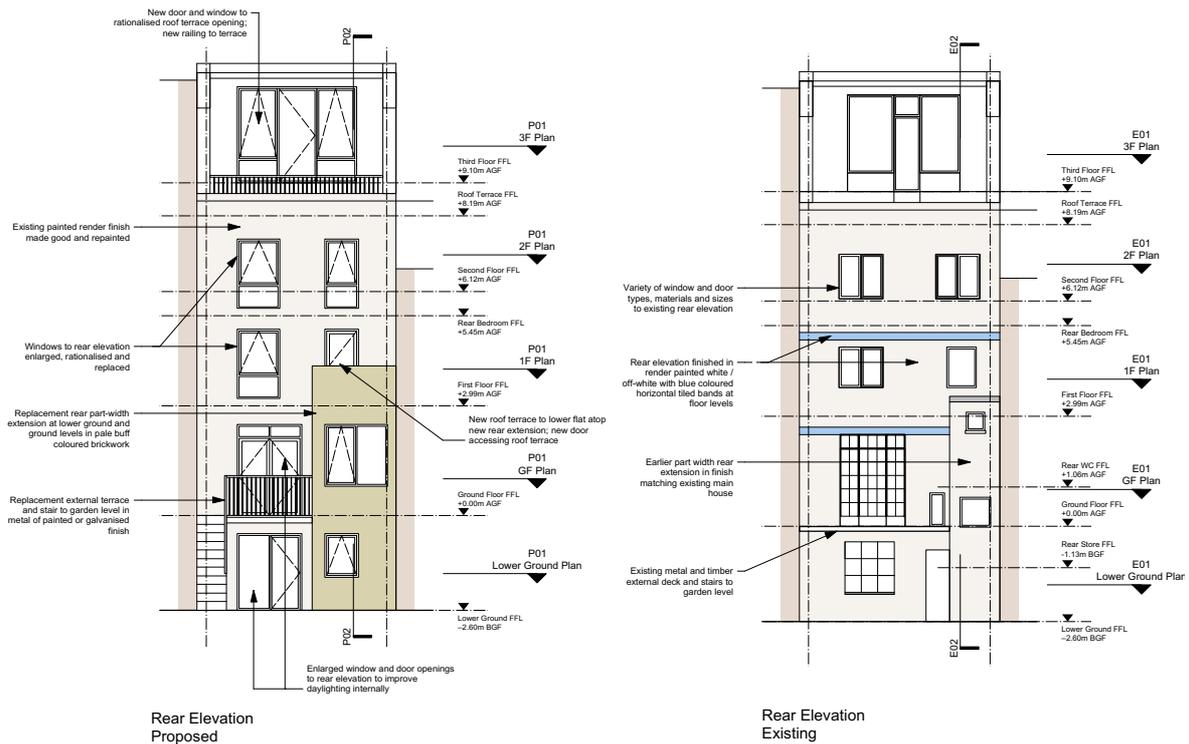
The only change in scale pertains to the replacement rear part-width extension, which is approximately 1 metre wider, 2 metres longer and 1 metre taller than the existing rear extension. This is considered to remain an acceptable scale that is in proportion with other extensions on the street and subservient to the main house. The original main house itself remains unchanged in scale. The existing roof extension was carried out several decades ago.

Public and private outdoor space

No alterations are proposed to the existing front hardstanding. The front light-well is covered at present and this is proposed to remain covered. The private rear garden will receive a new terrace at ground level.

Appearance

The proposed rear elevation including replacement extension is intended to clarify and rationalise the existing, which is of poor quality design having been modified in an ad-hoc manner over time. The existing is finished in a white coloured render. The proposed rear extension will be finished in a buff-coloured brick to harmonise with the original house but slightly contrast with a renewed white rendered main rear elevation. The applicant is taking the opportunity to rationalise the rear window openings and fenestration to return clarity to the rear façade, including adopting openings in proportion (more vertical) harmonious with the original house and front elevation, to replace the smaller, more rectangular 20th Century windows currently at the rear.



Rear elevation rationalised with larger, more vertical openings to respect original character (left)

Access

Access arrangements from outside will remain unchanged, with upper and lower flats accessed via the existing shop front door which gives to a communal hallway.

It is understood that, due to Camden's car-free policy, parking permits will not be issued to the additional dwelling – assumed to be the upper one.