



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT  
1 ST. MARK'S CRESCENT  
LONDON NW1 7TS  
**FOR PLANNING APPLICATION**

December 2018  
Jonathan Freegard Architects

## Design and Access Statement



Aerial view from south (front)



Aerial view from north (rear)

## Location and Description

The application site, 1 St Mark's Crescent, is a 19th Century mid-terrace dwelling-house with accommodation arranged over the lower ground, ground, first and second floor levels.



View of front from south



View from rear garden

The dwelling is located on the North side of St Mark's Crescent and the rear garden of the property abuts the Regents Canal to the North. A smaller front garden behind a brick front wall is fully paved above brick vaults and has steps down to a lower ground floor entrance door.

The property is situated within a row of 5 dwellings (Nos.31, 1, 2, 3 and 4 St Mark's Crescent). The fronts the properties are of stucco finish and feature slate pitched roofs and flat roofed, single storey portico entranceways. The rear wall of the property is of buff-coloured London stock bricks. There is a small rear extension also of brick at upper ground floor level containing a bathroom. This extension is supported on a steel column. The two end properties of this group (Nos. 31 and 4) also feature two storey front bays as well as 3 storey flat roofed side annexes.





Front gate



Paved front garden



Steps to lower entrance

### Conservation Area

The dwelling is not statutorily listed but is situated within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. The dwelling is characteristic of the local area, being defined as making a positive contribution to the character of the CA by the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement (2000).

There are no trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders within the application site. The site is located next to a watercourse but is not within the Environment Agency's Flood Zones 2 or 3. The application site is, however, subject to a number of underground development constraints including slope stability, ground water flows and surface water flows.



Rear garden of 1 St Mark's Crescent showing extensive paving and large willow in garden of No.2 beyond.

### Use

The house is a single family dwelling and this use will remain unchanged.

## **Planning Development History**

The planning history for the application site can be summarised as follows:

### **Planning Application - 2005/3493/P (2005)**

Proposal: Replacement of existing lower ground floor rear conservatory with an enlarged white-powder coated aluminium one, replacement of front basement level window with a timber door and window under the front porch, alterations to the front boundary wall, and the installation of Velux rooflights to the front and rear roof slopes.

Decision: Granted 07-10-2005

### **Tree Work Planning Application - TPX0206121 (2002)**

Proposal: REAR GARDEN 1 x Ash - fell and replace.

Decision: Approve works (TPO) -with conditions 12-02-2002

### **Tree Work Planning Application - T9602379 (1996)**

Proposal: Reduction of 1 x Ash to previous reduction points and trimming of overhanging branches.

Decision: No objection to works-TCA-Council spec 04-09-1996

### **Tree Work Planning Application – 8692012 (1986)**

Proposal: Prune tree.

Decision: Agree to pruning of Trees. 19-02-1986

## **Pre-Application advice**

An application for pre-application advice was submitted on 12/04/2018 under Ref. 2018/1754PRE. An advice letter was issued on 18/05/2018 from Samir Benmbarek which contained the following conclusion:-

*The proposed basement excavation is generally considered to be acceptable by the Council subject to revisions made to the scheme (setting in of the lightwell to allow vegetation) to address point L of policy A5 of the Camden Local Plan. The proposed lightwells and other external alterations to the building is considered appropriate in design principles. Should the proposal be approved, it would be subject to a S106 legal agreement as discussed in section 10.*

The letter also covered all the criteria under Policy A5 and noted that all the criteria had been or could readily be met subject to a satisfactory Basement Impact Assessment with audit, and a minor amendment to the rear lightwell to ensure it is 1m away from the boundary. A BIA is now attached and the lightwell has been moved on the attached plans.

## **Relevant planning policies**

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

The London Plan (March 20)

Camden Local Plan (March 20)

G1- Delivery and location of growth

A1- Managing the impact of development

A3- Biodiversity

A4- Noise and vibration

## A5- Basements

D1- Design

D2- Heritage

CC1- Climate change mitigation

CC2- Adapting to climate change

CC3- Water and flooding

T4- Sustainable movement of goods and materials

DM1- Monitoring and delivering

### Camden Planning Guidance

CPG Amenity (2018)

CPG Basements (2018)

CPG1 (Design) (2011; Updated March 2018)

CPG7 (Transport) (2011)

CPG8 (Planning Obligations) (2015; Updated March 2018)

### Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement (2000) ·

## **Proposal**

The proposal is to build a new basement storey below the footprint of the property including beneath the existing rear conservatory to create 68.7m<sup>2</sup> of additional floorspace. This is needed to provide additional play-space and storage for a large family and to free up another room elsewhere in the house for an additional bedroom.

## **Arrangement**

The new basement is arranged with a storage room at the front and a playroom-cum-gym at the rear with an independent stair direct up to the rear garden from this room. This allows means of escape to be safely provided without the need for a protected stair connecting to the existing main stair above.

## **Scale**

The extent of the visible new building will be contained wholly within the footprint of the original dwelling and extends to the rear below the conservatory. It will not visually affect the size or scale of the existing property above ground.

## **Landscaping &**

There are no requirements for additional external landscaping although measures will be taken to improve the permeability of the rear terrace in the design of the rear garden and drainage.

## **Trees**

There are no qualifying trees on the site or adjacent sites sufficiently close and of such a size for the proposed basement for it to encroach on their root protection zones. An arboricultural Report confirming this has been prepared by Arbor Cultural Ltd, 36 Central Avenue, West Molesey, Surrey KT8 2QZ and is attached to the application along with a Tree Protection Plan showing measures to ensure the building activity does not cause damage to the one small tree and shrubs that are being retained.

## Appearance, Character and materials

Externally, the proposed alterations to the property are minimal and have been limited to the formation of small rear and front lightwells and the removal of the external stair serving the first floor but retaining the cast iron balcony. The front lower area will incorporate a grille at ground level to allow some natural light and ventilation to the new basement.

The proposed rear basement doors will be almost entirely hidden from normal viewpoints with the rear lightwell and the area of sunken garden beyond finished in the same yorkstone paving as existing.

A small glass bridge will connect the existing conservatory doors to the rear garden similar to this example (right) from an earlier project.



The (hidden) walls of the lightwell will be finished in stucco or an equivalent modern render. The new basement doors and windows at the rear will be of powder-coated aluminium to match the conservatory doors and frames above.

Any altered or rebuilt garden walls will be built of reclaimed buff-coloured stock bricks.

The proposals are similar to those approved recently for No.31 St Mark's Crescent next door and will share the new structural wall along the boundary at basement level thus limiting the amount of underpinning required to effect the work.

## Use

The proposed basement will be for the sole use of the occupier. It will contain a storage room at the front with a playroom/gym towards the rear.

## Lifetime Homes

Although the works are exempt from Part M in terms of access for the disabled, Lifetime Homes

Standards will be incorporated and enhanced where possible. The internal walls are non-structural and doorways can be increased to accommodate larger door sizes. A lift could readily be incorporated between the three lowest floors should the need arise.

## Impact

A Basement Impact Assessment with a Ground Investigation has been carried out by Chelmer Global Ltd and is attached to this application. covering the following areas: Desk study, factual reporting, ground model, PDISP analyses and damage category assessment, Slope/ground stability, Surface flow and flooding, Subterranean (groundwater) flow, Impact Assessment.

A separate Basement Impact Assessment: Structural Method Statement has been prepared by Conisbee Structural Engineers is attached to this planning application to assess any potential impact of the proposed basement on this property, the adjacent properties, and on any watercourses. It includes three appendices as follows:

Appendix A: Scheme, loading, method statement and sequencing drawings

Appendix B: Communications – canal & river trust

## Appendix C: Structural calculations

Although both the front and rear gardens are largely paved over at present, new drainage in the rear garden will be designed to Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) standards with rainwater attenuation.

The proposed extension will not be visible from street.

Although some neighbours and amenity groups have expressed concern about building below the level of the nearby canal in the past, modern basement waterproofing techniques make such construction routine and very safe as is demonstrated by the Kings Place Concert Hall One which is some 7m below water level of the adjacent Regents Canal.

## Sustainability

New windows and glazed doors at the rear will be high-performance double-glazed units providing better thermal efficiency than existing windows. The new basement walls and floors and upgraded existing walls will also be of insulating construction. Modifying and extending the existing house will allow for more intensive use by a larger family. A new high-efficiency condensing gas boiler will be installed for space and hot water heating. New light fittings will all be low-energy LED fittings.

A management construction plan will be produced before any construction is carried out and use will be made of the canal for the removal of spoil by barge to avoid using road transport (as is the case for the adjacent property No.31 St Marks Crescent where construction is already under way). If feasible, barges will also be used for bringing in heavy materials such as sand and cement and steel reinforcement.

## Access Statement

Pedestrian to the property will remain unchanged. There is no vehicular access.

No changes are proposed to the existing entrance and internal stairs to the house. New internal circulation areas and stairs will be designed to meet the requirements of Part M Approved Document of the Building Regulations.

St Marks Crescent has on-street controlled residents parking. The property is located within 300 metres of Bus route 274 and C2 on Regents Park Road and within 500m of the TFL bike hire stations at Gloucester Avenue or the London Zoo Car park.

## Summary

The basement extension will be discreetly hidden beneath the existing house. It will provide much needed additional storage and play-space for a large family whilst making space for another bedroom elsewhere within the house. Once constructed it will have minimal impact on the privacy and amenities of the adjacent properties.