

Our Ref. 1228BA002

Date: 14th May 2019

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PROPERTY: 322 Kentish Town Road, Camden, London, NW5 2TH

Background

This property was the subject of a Dangerous Buildings Notice exercised by Camden Council. The notice demanded all unsafe structures to be removed. The defects however were far more extensive than initially anticipated resulting in a greater proportion of the building being demolished than initially anticipated including now the front facade.

2019/0579/INVALID was received by the Council 25th January this year 2019 and an officer Nora allocated to administer this application. This application sought to regularise the client's visual amenity preferences, to replace the original single window design of the front façade with the double window design in this application, to enhance the buildings appearance fronting the street. The proposed internal floor layouts we understood retained the same original use configuration of a shop and two studio's on the ground floor and 4 HMO studios on the upper two floors.

Nora has given her contact number 0207 974 5758 and we have liaised on email for the over 3 months now to find a suitable way of validating the application after Noras identified that the building outline indicated on our existing drawings was different to that shown on the council records. These records refer to the building form as it was 25 years ago. The Council has confirmed that it has more recent photos to back these drawing records up but have been reluctant to share these with us as they are concerned that the identity of a neighbour complainant might be revealed should these photos be brought into the public realm.

To help resolve this impasse we have revised our existing drawings to reflect the Council's records of how the building was 25 years ago and formally apply for an extension to the two residential units shown on these records, to reflect the "as built" form of the building's reconstructed external shell.

The reconstructed external shell has been skilfully planned and executed by a fully qualified structural engineer who had their drawings and calculations scrutinised by a private building control inspector who has carried this through to full site inspections throughout. The original Dangerous Building Notification was as a result of extensive timber structure including Bessemer beams becoming compromised by "core rot" where the outer timber fibres appear sound and the inner core of the beam defragments. As all the upper floor brickwork was supported on these timber structural elements it was this that created the eventual inevitability where a large portion of the building was sequentially safely and progressively dismantled.

The application now being submitted is for the simple extension to the two dwelling units indicated on the email from Nora on the 20th of March 2019.



Principal: Donald M. Shearer, Bsc.(Arch),
RIBA,ARB (Registered Architect)



1.0 Location

- 1.1 The property is on the east side of the Kentish Town Road, which is a primary route for traffic from north London suburbs into central London.
- 1.2 The property is 200 yards from the Kentish Town centre.
- 1.3 The property is set directly onto the pavement.
- 1.4 The existing property has a Ground, 1st & 2nd floors. There is no attic floor.
- 1.5 The original 3 storey terraced building had a shop and 2 residential studio dwellings on the ground floor with 4 HMO style residential studios on the upper two floors.
- 1.6 There is a school 400 yards to the North East, main line station 200 yards to the south and the main transport route of Kentish Town Road lies adjacent.

2.0 Topography

- 2.1 The site has the traditional terrace property topography, with the road and pavement on the same level adjacent to the ground floor with the 1st and second floor above.
- 2.2 Kentish Town Road slopes gently from north to south.

3.0 Character of Surrounding Properties

- 3.1 The surrounding properties have been built in fragmented sections with part four, part three and part two stories. The terrace is a surviving mid Victorian terrace of shops with residential accommodation to the rear and above built around 150 years ago. Over the years the terrace has featured many alterations although these are mainly concentrated at the rear of the properties. The essential character of the original terrace remains from most public views
- 3.2 The area is characterised by the tight urban grain. Kentish Town Road is a Retail / Commercial street and affords a wide variety of local commercial facilities.
- 3.3 Many properties on Kentish Town Road have double windows as is now proposed for the front façade of this property being rebuilt.
- 3.4 N/A
- 3.5 On this application the visual continuity of the front facades remains balanced and enhanced by more regular window proportions.



4.0 Planning Policy

- 4.1 This application does not have the benefit of existing plans as the client never envisaged, when the DBN letter was served, that the defects were as extensive as they turned out to be. The layouts indicated on this application are based on the information supplied by the Planning department on the 20th of March 2019 relating to the property 25 years ago for the same upper floor configuration
- 4.2 The proposals for the front façade are designed to be visually sympathetic with previous proposals approvals on this street and are subservient to the host building.
- 4.3 Para 117 of the NPPF encourages proposals to maximise use of previously developed land which the proposals achieve as noted in para 4.1 above.
- 4.4 Para 118 of the NPPF encourages proposals to extend upwards if the proposals are no higher than neighbouring properties, as 322 Kentish Town Road is lower at the rear than 320 and 324 this in forms the rearward extensions that this application forms .
- 4.5 The July 2018 NPPF para 123 which seeks to ensure that where land is in short supply existing properties are to ensure they achieve the optimal potential, but recognize that this cannot exceed the previous use intensity. By designing the proposals to match the accommodation profile that pre existed the application can be considered to achieve this as the rear upwards extension would not alter the character of the pre existing property and terrace, which only applies to the rear of the property and without this proposed extension the rear could be considered incongruous within this part of the terrace.
- 4.6 N/A
- 4.7 In accordance with paras 8, 10 & 11 of the new NPPF (July 2018) the rebuilding of this property will conform to the latest sustainability requirements of the building regulations and will therefore greatly enhance the sustainable credentials of this rebuilt property through greatly enhanced thermal insulation which will dramatically reduce this buildings carbon footprint.
- 4.8 In accordance with the sustainable credentials of this proposal Para 38 of the new NPPF (July 2018) empowers the Planning officers to approach decisions on this type of application in a positive and creative way at every level to seek approval of this type of sustainable development.
- 4.9 In accordance with para 104 of the new NPPF (July 2018) the rebuilding will maximise through rebuilding the same use intensity in this urban area.
- 4.10 The proposals sought to effectively embrace LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies 2010 CS1 (Distribution of Growth) CS5 (Manage impact of growth) CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage) DP24 (Securing high quality design) DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage) DP26 (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours) St John's Wood conservation area appraisal and management strategy 2009 Camden Planning Guidance 2013 - CPG 1 (design) & CPG 6 (amenity).



5.0 Condition Report on Existing Building

- 5.1 We understand that the existing walls that remain are structurally sound and could accommodate support for the dead & people loadings with the assistance of new steel structural elements.
- 5.2 The existing roof voids had no effective thermal insulation. As part of the proposals the reformed roof would have a U value of 0.2W/m²/K. This would substantially reduce the carbon footprint (as noted in 4.9above) of all the existing accommodation.

6.0 Design Objectives

- 6.1 To reinstate and enhance the front façade of a previously developed site.
- 6.2 As noted in para 4.1 above the building had to remain on only 3 floors.
- 6.3 In rebuilding the site we had to ensure that the strategy embraces emphatically Government policy to reduce pressure on the Green Belt by maximising the potential of brown field sites, whilst respecting primary characteristics of the surrounding area and creating a design that enhances and improves the adjoining area, hence the change proposed to the front façade.

7.0 Design Solution

- 7.1 Taking all government directives and initiatives into account it is clear that a comprehensive redevelopment of the site with a higher building is not possible.
- 7.2 The most visually significant features of Kentish Town Road are the front facades. Our design retains this features dominance with enhancements.

8.0 Access

- 8.1 The site lies on Kentish Town Road local Centre affording access by foot to these facilities, together with the associated bus, car, tube and pedestrian links.
- 8.2 The proposed accommodation will all be accessed by the existing ground floor entrance doors and common hallway. The private internal staircases are up to present day width requirements to facilitate ease of access to the upper floors.

9.0 Landscaping

- 9.1 The proposals had no external space associated with the existing accommodation, other than an access passageway which is maintained.

CONCLUSION

This application addresses the need for the highest standards in the design of facades, together with improvements to the sustainability of the pre-existing accommodation.

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