

Heritage Surveys Limited

Design & Access Statement

Relating to:

Proposed Security Gate & Railings
136 & 137 Levita House
Ossulston Estate
Chalton Street
London
NW1 1HR

Ref: SEB/379

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This Design & Access Statement is submitted to accompany an Application for Planning Permission for the installation of a gate and railings forming a secure, controlled entrance to 136 and 137 Levita House as part of the ongoing improvement works in this property.

An application for Listed Building Consent has also been submitted for which a separate Conservation Plan and Statement of Heritage Significance has been prepared.

2 Site

2.1 Location

Levita House is a Grade II listed residential block. The site is approximately 150m to the north of Euston Road and is bounded by Ossulston Street to the North East and Charlton Street to the South West.

The site forms part of the Ossulston Estate in the Somers Town area of the London Borough of Camden.

2.2 Existing Building

Levita House is generally 5 and 6 storeys in the area of the site forming the subject of this application with 3 storey sections at Nos. 62 and 76 Charlton Street. The top storey in each block is accommodated within the roof spaces with dormer windows for light.

The existing building is predominantly of residential use class; however, the Charlton Street elevation incorporates a number of retail properties and the Somers Town Coffee House public house.

An extensive programme of repairs and improvements to the external fabric of Levita House is underway at present. This work was the subject of previous Planning and Listed Building Consent applications.



3 Proposals

3.1 Background

The proposed gate and railings will serve to protect two ground floor dwellings, No 136 and no. 137 Levita House, part of 136 – 180 Levita House.

These properties are located in the western corner of the courtyard, accessed by their own open gallery walkway raised by five steps above courtyard level.

This gallery walkway is obscured from view of the courtyard by a large single storey communal refuse store, (on the right of the image below), which projects from the main building. As a result, this small space is a security blind spot presenting an opportunity for anti-social or criminal activity. This application seeks to design out this significant risk to the safety of the residents.



3.2 Proposed New Gate and Railings

It is proposed to create a new security gate and railing forming a defensible line from the front of the refuse store across to the main elevation of the building. The entrance doors to 136 and 137 would then be within a secure, controlled space accessed from a pedestrian gate, in plain sight of the courtyard.

The gate is to be key operated from the public side with an easy release mechanism on the residents side for emergency egress. The railings will be designed to prevent tampering with the gate release from the public side.

Each flat will have its own call bell, discretely mounted within the vertical sections of the railing. Each resident of which will then operate the gate manually and admit their visitor, closing the gate afterwards. The gate will have a closing mechanism and the lock will automatically lock once the gate returns to the closed position.

Two individual secure letter boxes will also be mounted on the railings with tamper proof flaps accessed from the public side and key operated doors to the boxes on the resident side.

The design of the gate and railings intends to be sympathetic to the existing gates and railings used elsewhere on the estate, some are original, however others are understood to be more recent additions.

Generally, on the estate gates and railings are black painted steelwork. Gateways are identified by a gate post on either side of the gate rising higher than the railings to each side. These posts are formed of four square-section steel rods arranged in a square with welded steel plates. This creates a strong post which retains a delicate appearance. The gates are formed of a frame of rectangular steel sections infilled with thinner square rods often incorporating a diamond motif. Railings tend to be formed of steel horizontal flats and square vertical rods which project above the top rail to prevent climbing. The images below illustrate the typical style of gates and railings used at Levita House.



The proposed gates and railings will be completely reversible so could be removed at some future date without detriment to the original fabric or design.

4 Accommodation

4.1 Generally

No internal alteration works to the dwellings are proposed.

5 Access

5.1 Vehicular and Transport

The property is extremely well located for public transport and vehicular access.

There are internal restricted access courtyards, no changes are proposed to this whatsoever. It appears that the courtyards are used by service vehicles only.

5.2 Inclusive Access

No changes are proposed to the access arrangements or use of the dwellings. Elsewhere in the estate ramped level access is provided and lifts are provided to access the upper floors. Flat nos. 136 and 137 are raised above the access level by a short flight of stairs, however at present there are no proposals to install a ramp, hoist or lift to overcome this change of level. The gateway has been sized to provide a wide clear opening suitable to enable those using wheelchairs or electric buggies to gain access should any future adaptations take place.

6 Conclusion

The proposal intends to improve the security of Levita House and the safety of its residents, particularly those living in Flats 136 and 137.

The railings and gate proposed have been carefully designed to be sympathetic to the original design of the listed property whilst providing this vital function. The gates and railings could be removed in the future without having any irreparable damage to the historic fabric.