

Our Ref. 1436BA001

Date: 9th June, 2020

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

for

186 Grafton Road, London, NW5 4AX

Background

This property was the subject of a refused planning application P9600783 which was issued 13-03-96. Since this refused application no other applications have been submitted with the property now sitting at a considerable tangent to the objectives of the NPPF in 2012 and 2019 which encourage enhancement of the amenity of existing developed sites and ensuring they are being utilised as effectively as possible to reduce pressure on the greenbelt.

1.0. Location

- 1.1 The property is on the east side of the intersection of Grafton Road and Queens Crescent, which is a tertiary route for traffic.
- 1.2 The property is 400 yards from the Kentish Town centre.
- 1.3 The property is set directly onto the pavement on Queens Crescent but set back @ 3M with a front garden facing onto Grafton Road.
- 1.4 The existing property has a Ground, 1st & 2nd floors. There is no longer any attic floor.
- 1.5 The original 3 storey terraced building had a shop on the ground floor and residential accommodation above.
- 1.6 There are schools @ 500 yards to the North and East, main line station 400 yards to the east and the main transport route of Kentish Town Road lies at the same distance.

2.0. Topography

- 2.1 The site has the transitional terrace property topography, with the road and pavement on the same level as the ground floor units on Grafton Road but with the adjacent Queens Crescent properties having a lower and upper ground floors half a level respectively lower and higher than the pavement.
- 2.2 Grafton 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 the Grafton Road properties being simple artisan Victorian terraces and Queens Crescent being more Georgian and Regency inspired more decorative and highly ordered designed properties but all built between 120 to 170 years ago. Over the years the terrace has featured many alterations although these are mainly related to the uses changing from commercial to residential on the ground floor areas. War damage through has created obvious fractures in the original design cohesion particularly in the designs implemented between 40 and 60 years ago. The essential character of the original terrace remains readable from most public views, however the areas cohesion is fractured and diluted by the aforementioned bomb damage and subsequent ill considered rebuilding of the gap sites.
- 3.2 The area is characterised by the tight urban grain. Grafton Road is largely residential street and Kentish Town affords a wide variety of local commercial facilities within a few minutes walk.
- 3.3 N/A.
- 3.4 N/A
- 3.5 On this application the visual of the front facades remains balanced and alterations are limited to the side elevation fronting Queens Crescent by introducing enhanced regularised window continuity and proportions.

4.0 Planning Policy

- 4.1 The 1996 refused application had three reasons for refusal including obstructing light, overlooking to adjoining properties and visual amenity concerns. The proposals address all these concerns by ensuring that the existing building form is not added to in any significant way, whilst enhancing greatly the facades appearance through much greater window design refinement.
- 4.2 The proposals for the Queens Crescent façade are designed to be visually sympathetic with the established visual language of this street, yet remain 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 by introducing another level of accommodation to this rear outrigger matching the levels already established at 205 & 207 Queens Crescent.
- 4.4 Para 118 of the NPPF encourages proposals to extend upwards if the proposals are no higher than neighbouring properties, as the rear outrigger at 186 Grafton Road is lower than the main building and those adjacent this informs the introduction of this additional level is clearly acceptable in terms of this objective.
- 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. The rear extension would not adversely alter the character of the pre existing property and terrace, without this proposed extension the rear could be considered incongruous within this part of the street scene as pre-exists today.
- 4.6 This application benefits from a clear site history of existing plans and failed design approaches. This new application seeks to resolve the three reasons for refusal in **P960078** by using the design language of 205 & 207 Queens Crescent as the catalyst for a more relevant design approach.



- 4.8 In accordance with paras 8, 10 & 11 of the new NPPF (July 2018) the rebuilding of this part of the 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.
- 4.9 In accordance with para 104 of the new NPPF (July 2018) the rebuilding will maximise through rebuilding.
- 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.
- 5.3 The existing property at 186 Grafton Road already has a cellar and the adjoining property already has a lower ground floor at 205 Queens Crescent. Our preliminary investigations indicate that these pre existing walls will mean that the existing foundations will need no extension to achieve the half level indicated to create the lower ground floor that is noted on this application.

6.0 Design Objectives

- 6.1 To enhance the Queens Crescent façade of the previously developed site.
- 6.2 To maximise the previously developed building and create additional accommodation for the ground floor flat.
- 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 Queens Crescent facade.

7.0 Design Solution

- 7.1 Taking account of the refusal in 1996 it is clear that a comprehensive redevelopment of the rear outrigger with a materially higher building is not desirable to the planning authority.
- 7.2 The most visually significant features of Grafton Road are the front facades. Our design retains this features dominance with enhancements to the Queens Crescent facade.



8.0 Access

- 8.1 The site lies within a few minutes walk of 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 half levels proposed in this application.

9.0 Landscaping

- 9.1 The proposals had no external space associated with the existing accommodation.

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.

Donald Shearer



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



HISTORY OF EARLIER APPLICATIONS

This is not a Listed Building or in a Conservation Area.

Registered Decision P9600783

186 Grafton Road, NW5

Erection of an extension at first floor level, to be used as additional accommodation for the existing ground floor flat, as shown on drawing number 905/1.

FINAL DECISION 13-03-1996 Refuse

Registered Decision Planning Permission 8802708

186 Grafton Road NW5

Change of use of ground floor from retail to a two bedroom self-contained flat and associated elevational alterations as shown on drawing No.GR/186/3A

FINAL DECISION 08-12-1988 Grant Full or Outline Perm. with Conditions.

Registered Decision 8802448 186 Grafton Road NW5

Erection of a roof extension at third floor level to create a two bedroom maisonette on the upper floors as shown on drawing no.GR/186/2D.

FINAL DECISION 09-08-1988 Refuse Full or Outline Permission

Registered Decision 8803840 186 Grafton Road NW5

Change of use of first and second floors to form two self-contained flats including the rebuilding of the existing rear addition at ground floor level as shown on drawings No.GR186/1 and 2C.

FINAL DECISION 19-04-1988 Grant Full or Outline Perm. with Conditions.

Registered Decision 8701470 186 Grafton Road NW5

Change of use of first and second floors to form two self-contained flats including the erection of a single storey extension at first floor level and the rebuilding of the existing rear addition at ground floor level as shown on drawing nos. GR/186/1 2B. revised on 9th March 1988.

FINAL DECISION 27-11-1987 Refuse Full or Outline Permission

