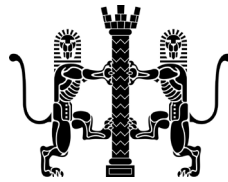


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Architects



Design & Access Statement:
7 Stratford Villas, London NW1 9SJ

Refurbishment and extension of lower-ground floor
flat and construction of a studio / home office

1.0 Site Description:

No. 7, Stratford Villas is a semi-detached three storey 19th Century Villa situated within the Camden Square Conservation Area. The front elevation of the house faces onto Stratford Villas, while the side elevation faces onto Rochester Square, forming the southerly end of the terrace. A semi-derelict double garage belonging to the property exists on its north-west boundary, against the old nursery site at the centre of Rochester Square.

The building is in a generally poor condition and has lost all of its original window joinery. A decent run of cast-iron railings sitting on a dwarf wall along the street edge survives particularly on the side elevation, although there are some gaps. The front door leading to the raised ground floor has an attractive painted stucco surround with pairs of flanking pilasters sharing a single capital and supporting an entablature with wreath motifs on the frieze. The arrangement may interpret elements taken from the *Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus* in Athens.

Internally, the building is split into approximately six separate dwellings - the precise allocation of the arrangement of the existing spaces on the upper floors into dwellings is hard to determine. This work was previously carried out under separate ownership. The lower ground floor contains a partially refurbished one-bed flat with access to the rear garden. This flat is the subject of this application. The entrance to the flat is through the side elevation on Rochester Square. No internal staircase is extant between the lower and upper ground floors. The upper floors of the house - from raised ground to second floors - contain five bed-sits. These are single room dwellings with shared staircase access and in some cases, shared bathrooms. Cooking facilities are almost non-existent.

The site falls within an area indicated as making a “positive” contribution in the CAA audit of heritage assets map, while Stratford Villas and Rochester Square streets are indicated as having “neutral” impact.

2.0. Project Description:

The proposals are for the refurbishment and extension of the existing lower ground floor flat. It is also proposed to construct a studio / home office at the end of the garden, approximately on the footprint of the existing double garage which will be demolished.



Front and side elevations



Side and rear elevations showing entrance to lower ground floor flat



Garage at end of plot



Typical interior

The upper floors (raised ground-floor to second) are the subject of a separate application which seeks to amalgamate the existing bedsit rooms on these floors into a three-bed family dwelling.

3.0 Description of Proposed Works

Internal - as described in accompanying drawings:

- The existing plan will be adjusted to provide good sized bedroom, kitchen, shower and utility rooms.

External - as described in accompanying drawings:

- It is proposed to construct a modest extension with a green roof to provide a sitting room with access to the garden.
- The existing u-PVC window to the bedroom will be replaced with a timber framed, double glazed sash window.
- All new glazing is to be timber-framed and double glazed - either French doors, or sash windows.
- The existing door and window openings on the gable elevation of the building will be rationalised and aligned with the order of openings and window niches on the floors above.
- A new painted stucco porch will be constructed around the relocated entrance door to the flat.
- A new studio / home office is to be constructed at the end of the garden.
- The existing cast iron railings will be refurbished and gaps in-filled.

4.0 Discussion of the Proposed Works

Internal.

The existing flat will be refurbished and extended to provide a generous one-bed flat.

External - Rear Extension

The new extension uses traditional forms and materials to make a modest extension subordinate to the existing building. The use of stucco and London stock brick echoes the materials used to construct the host building. A green roof is proposed to help with the management of rainwater run-off and to contribute to biodiversity in the area. It also provides an attractive outlook when seen from above. New and replacement glazing is timber-framed and traditional in design, appropriate to the conservation area context.

There are a number of existing extensions to houses in the terrace. Not all of these are recorded on the OS map, but are visible in the photograph below.



Rear View of Stratford Villas showing existing extensions at lower ground floor to other houses on the terrace - No. 7 is at far right.

The existing extensions are all larger than the proposed extension to No.7

External - openings on gable wall; railings; downpipes

As part of the works it is proposed to rationalise the messy and somewhat ad-hoc arrangement of openings on the gable elevation of the building at lower ground floor. The new openings are aligned with the existing blind openings and windows on the floor above to give a simplified arrangement of traditionally-proportioned and glazed openings.

The existing cast-iron railings will be refurbished, painted , and gaps repaired where possible.

The works provide an opportunity to rationalise the number of rainwater down pipes on rear and gable façades.

External - New studio / home office.

The existing garage is in poor condition and not constructed from attractive materials. It is suggested that its replacement with a better building would make a positive contribution to the street scene. The proposed studio makes use of a simplified and more robust version of the architectural language of the existing house and proposed extension. The design is traditional and reflects the semi-industrial nature of the sort of mews building that might be found in such a location. Materials and glazing are again traditional in nature and reflective of those found in the conservation area.

Anti-social behaviour

The LPA is asked to note that the site, which has been vacant for some time, has been the location of a significant amount of anti-social behaviour in recent months. The approval of the proposed works and subsequent occupation of the building will help to prevent these sorts of activities to the benefit of the wider area.

5.0 Sustainability

All new elements, materials and build-up insulation values will be specified to meet or exceed the relevant Building Regulations and will significantly improve the environmental performance and internal comfort of the building.

6.0 Access

Access conditions into and within the house are not altered by the proposals. Access between the house and the garden is marginally more direct.

7.0 Conclusion

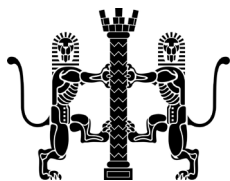
The proposals will preserve a mix of high-quality housing types on the site. The new and replacement glazing, works to the existing railings and the improvements to the gable facade will enhance the street scene and conservation area. The proposed extension and studio will contribute to the quality of the wider conservation area with appropriate traditional design and materials. Occupation of the currently vacant building will help to reduce the likelihood of anti-social behaviour occurring on and around the site. The applicants and their agents believe that, if approved, the proposals will have a positive impact on the conservation area and contribute meaningfully to the supply of mixed housing in the borough.

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Achievement Award 2021