

Design and Access Statement

Project Address: Rear of 159 Park Lane, London N17 0HN

Applicant: Sebastian Hicks

Date: 21.01.26

1. Introduction

- **The Proposal:** Change of use through retrofit and first floor extension of an existing building to create a single residential living space with an integrated artist studio.
- **The Vision:** To bring a redundant building back into beneficial use while preserving its character and improving its environmental performance.

2. Assessment of Context

- **Physical Context:** The site is located in a predominantly residential area of Haringey. The site consists of a former stable/garage structure which has recently undergone essential structural repairs and sanitation works (completed October 2024).

The building is essentially a corner plot that borders:

- Somerford Grove to the east, as the main street-facing facade,
- The rear utility space and trash storage of 159 Park Lane to the south
- A small gated 'alleyway' to the North
- A narrow garden with tree to the west.

The 'alleyway' to the North. The alleyway that runs between the building to the north and the Haringey Play Association grounds is an interesting territory within the fabric of the city.

The alleyway has been associated with antisocial behaviour, drug-related activity and car repairs. The site of the alleyway has several historical enforcement cases related to it. The council acknowledged that overall issues with the alleyway cannot be resolved through planning enforcement alone.

Having been in possession of the site for the last six months, establishing convivial relations with the 'users' of the alleyway, it is clear that the situation has stabilised. Drug related activities have diminished and the space is generally used for the accumulation of automotive components in preparation for shipping rather than active car repair.

The term 'alleyway' suggests a tight space running between buildings, however, to the north are the Haringey Play Association grounds, a park bordered with mature trees. The alleyway is therefore an interesting asset, creating external amenity and a buffer to the park, enabling pleasant orientation towards the tree at first floor level.

- **Historical Context:** Historically the building was a stable serving the Milford Tavern, a pub on the corner of Somerford Grove and Park Lane. Somerford Grove was once a through road running from Park Lane to the north. During what were colloquially referred to as 'slum clearances' in the 1970's and the creation of the estate to the east, the houses were mainly demolished, creating the play areas to the north and the corner situation for the stable. The stable was subsequently and intermittently used as an automotive garage.

The Milford Tavern has been converted to house 8 apartment units. Observing the site over the last 12 months, it is clear that the utility and rubbish storage space of 159 Park Lane is often 'overburdened'.

Whilst the building does not sit in a conservation area, it is none-the-less part of the original extension of Park Lane and is the only remaining 'stable' in the area. The proposal treats the structure as a heritage asset.

- **Planning Context:** The proposal aligns with Haringey's policies on optimizing housing density and reusing brownfield land/existing buildings.
- **Planning History :**

The site has a planning history, including the rejection of a three story multi-unit property.

HGY/2013/1352 - Demolition of semi-derelict warehouse and erection of 1 x two storey, three-bedroom dwelling. Withdrawn: 25/11/2013

HGY/2014/1878 - Demolition of existing garages and erection of 3 self-contained residential units. Withdrawn: 19/09/2014

UNW/2015/00116 - Car repairs taking place in the alleyway Use ceased 21/01/2016

HGY/2015/0631 - Demolition of existing garage and construction of 3 storey building comprising 3 self-contained residential units Refused: 27/04/2015

HGY/2015/3541 - Demolition of existing garage and erection of two storey building to create 2 x one bed self-contained flats. Not Determined: 10/06/2016

3. Design Principles (The Core Section)

A. Use

- **Current Use:** Redundant/Underutilized storage (Garage/Stable).
- **Proposed Use:** C3 Residential (Single Dwelling).
- **Justification:** The area is residential; the proposal brings a vacant space back to life. The transformational potential of the site will be maximised through the introduction, not only of a residential unit but an active art studio for the resident artist, whose work is

community based. Through natural implementation of security by design principles, the project will improve the aspect of the immediate surrounding area, in what has at times been a socially challenging space. The introduction of a first floor in particular will provide natural surveillance and make some of the ambiguous spaces more territorially defined.

- **Retaining the Envelope:** The footprint of the existing building is not being extended and the height increases to become more appropriate for a street facing facade whilst respecting the proportional massing of the original stable.

The northern aspect of the rear of 159 means there is no impact on sunlight. Whilst the yard that borders the first floor increase is used solely for rubbish collection and has no direct from the building.

- **Density:** The project makes efficient use of urban land (a key London Plan goal).

C. Layout and Orientation

- **Multi-Aspect:** "The layout is designed to be multi-aspect, providing natural light from multiple directions and allowing for cross-ventilation."
- **Internal Organization:** The project prioritises direct entry from Somerford Grove rather than the 'alleyway' and is arranged in such a way as to enable clear separation between living and homeworking. Within the dedicated living spaces, standards are exceeded for a 3 person, 2 bedroom apartment. Privacy and quiet are forefronted in the positioning of bedrooms whilst home work and studio engage more directly with street and 'alleyway'.

The mezzanine allows light to be brought from upper level and to improve air movement throughout the proposal.

D. Appearance and Materials

- **Sympathetic Restoration:** The facade will be treated with sensitivity, retaining the original character of the wall and replacing the door with a modern timber barn door..
- **Materials:** The use of a fully insulated lightweight timber structure with sheet metal standing seam cladding creates the look of a modern barn or industrial conversion.

4. Sustainability

The key sustainability benefits of this proposal are summarized as follows:

- **Preservation of Embodied Carbon:** By retaining, retrofitting, and repurposing the existing stable/garage structure rather than demolishing and rebuilding, we are

significantly reducing waste and preserving the carbon already embodied in the building fabric.

- **Fabric First & Passive Design:** The design prioritizes high levels of insulation using natural materials to minimize energy demand. The dwelling is multi-aspect, maximizing natural light to reduce electricity use and utilizing cross-ventilation to mitigate overheating without mechanical cooling.
- **Zero-Carbon Ready & Air Quality:** The development will be fossil-fuel free (no gas connection). Heating will be fully electric, sourced from a renewable energy provider, which supports Haringey's air quality objectives and ensures the home decarbonizes in line with the National Grid.

5. Access and Inclusive Design Statement

Regulatory Standard: Building Regulations Part M4(1) Category 1

The proposed development involves the conversion of an existing structure (stable/garage) rather than a new build. As such, the design has been developed to comply with **Building Regulations Part M4(1) Category 1: Visitable Dwellings**. This standard ensures reasonable provision for most people, including wheelchair users, to access and use the dwelling.

The scheme achieves M4(1) compliance through the following measures:

- **Approach and Entrance:**
 - The primary entrance to the dwelling is accessible via a **level threshold** ensuring step-free access from the public highway/driveway into the home.
 - The main entrance door provides a minimum clear opening width of **775mm**, suitable for wheelchair entry.
- **Circulation (Entrance Storey):**
 - As a ground-floor conversion, the principal living area (living room/kitchen) is located on the entrance storey.
 - Internal corridors and door widths on the entrance level are designed to accommodate basic circulation for a wheelchair user, meeting the minimum clear widths specified in Diagram 1.1 of Approved Document M.
 - Switches and sockets throughout the dwelling will be positioned at accessible heights (between 450mm and 1200mm from finished floor level) to assist those with limited reach.
- **Sanitary Facilities:**
 - A WC is provided on the entrance storey. This facility is positioned and sized to function as a **visitable toilet**, allowing for maneuverability and side transfer in accordance with Part M4(1) requirements.
- **Conclusion on Access:**
 - While the constraints of the existing building fabric limit the full implementation of M4(2) (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings), the proposal maximizes inclusivity

within the existing envelope. The conversion delivers a "Visitable Dwelling" that allows occupants to live comfortably and visitors, including those with reduced mobility, to enter and use the facilities independently.

6. Conclusion

- The proposal is a high-quality, modest, and sustainable conversion that respects the neighborhood character and has the potential to positively impact the street aspect of Somerford Grove, and provide increased definition and security for an ambiguous space.