

35 Baker Street, Reading, RG1 7XX

Application for Listed Building Consent

4 January 2022

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been produced in response to the list of documents required by the Planning Portal. It relates to an application for listed building consent for the refurbishment, remodelling and improvements to 35 Baker Street. The building and surrounding area have been visited and assessed alongside a review of planning policy. The aim of the project is to refurbish the property and turn it into an attractive, functional home without harming the special characteristics of the building or the setting of the conservation area.

Use

The application does not seek to change the use of the building which will remain as a house located in a residential area.

Amount and Scale

The application relates to the conversion of a three-bedroom house. There are no changes proposed to the size of the building or the number of rooms.

Layout

The application seeks to alter the layout of the house to make it into a more functional arrangement of rooms. The main reasons for carrying out the work are to bring the property up to a modern standard and improve the layout, creating a family home for the Applicant. The property was previously used as a rental for several years and requires modernisation. The alternative option explored was to locate the new bathroom within part of the front bedroom but that only left a very small room and created an unsightly appearance where the wall would be next to the window.

Moving the bathroom upstairs and replacing it with the kitchen will enable a proper dining room to be created. The current kitchen/diner space is poorly configured and both functions sit within key circulation routes making it particularly difficult to use the space for eating. The proposals will, where possible, use the floorboards and floor joists removed to fill in the old stairwell.

Adding a new set of stairs also creates an opportunity to improve the entrance into the Office/Bedroom 3. The current door is only 1.5m high and lies approximately 360mm below Bedroom 2. Therefore, any person entering the room must duck whilst dropping down two steps, which is hazardous. The design deals with these restrictions by providing a new landing at the same height as the Office/Bedroom 3 together with a larger door (possibly reusing one from elsewhere in the building) into a new opening, as per the proposed section drawing. A new Office will help with the current working from home arrangements which are unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

There will be a new opening created between the new dining room and lounge. This will keep a down stand to retain some of the historic features and help demarcate the two functions/spaces. Parts of the central walls will be removed to accommodate these changes. Replacing the asbestos roof of the single-storey rear extension will help with the insulation, improve the building's appearance, and remove a potentially hazardous material.

Landscaping

The application does not propose any changes to the landscape.

Appearance

The aim is to create an attractive new home that retains the character of this historic listed building whilst providing a layout that works for today's lifestyles. The Applicant intends to repair and refurbish the property, reusing materials where possible, and redecorate inside and out. Replacing the casement window in the front elevation will improve the appearance of the building whilst also helping with insulation, noise and security.