



## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

for **Full Planning Consent**  
for proposed change of use and extensions at

**7 Kent House Road, London, SE26 5LN**

Project Reference: 695

Issue 1: 03/09/2025



*Street view of nos. 1 – 7 Kent House Road with the application property shown on the right-hand side, with a blue entrance door*

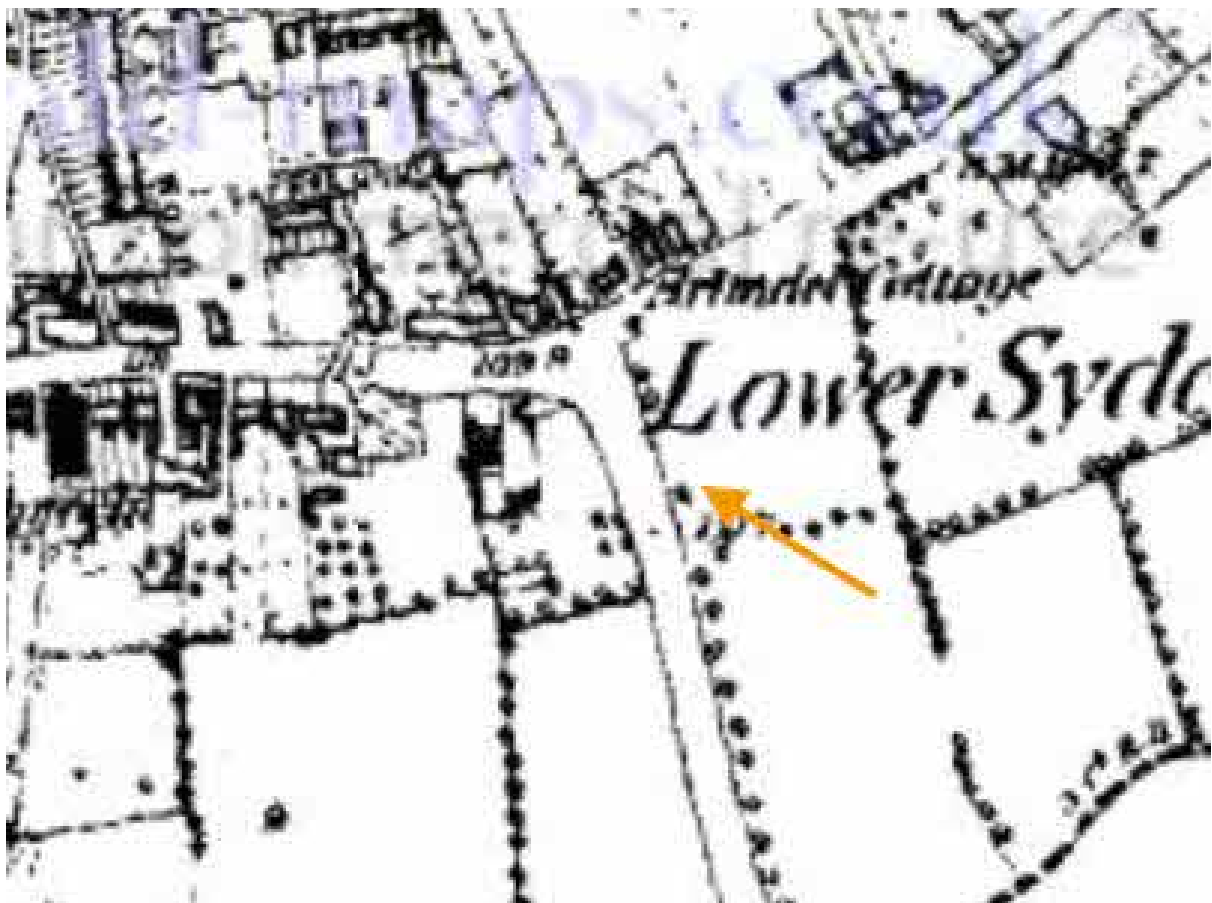
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# 1 Introduction

This Design Statement accompanies an application for the proposed conversion of part of and extensions to, an existing part residential, part shop premises building at No. 7 Kent House Road, London, SE26 5LN in the Sydenham East area of Lewisham. The **7 Kent House Road** property comprises two separate planning entities: the basement and ground floors are identified as '7' Kent House Road that also includes the freehold title of the whole building; the upper two floors maisonette are identified as 'Flat A' or '7A' Kent House Road is held on a long lease of 125 years from 2008.

This planning application is being submitted relating to the ground and basement floor unit 7 Kent House Road and does not comprise alterations or extensions to the upper floor unit 7A. This application is intended to address the extant planning enforcement issues relating to the lower unit, that stemmed from unauthorized works by a former owner of the building, including the excavation of the front forecourt and other works. Careful consideration has been given to National, Regional and Local Planning Policies relevant to the location and to the architectural character of the locality in the preparation of this application. All relevant policies and how the proposal addresses these can be found in the accompanying Planning Statement.



*The location of 7 Kent House Road marked with an arrow on an 1870–1882 OS map extract, indicating that no development had by then taken place on the land south of Sydenham Road bounded by Kent House Road to the West.*

## 2 Site Assessment and Involvement

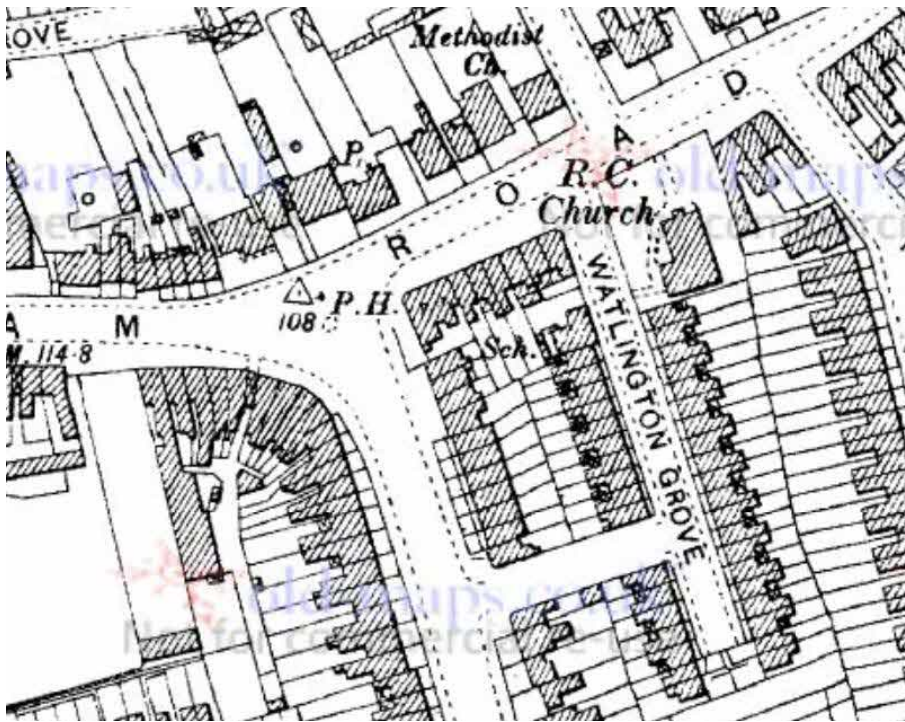
The site is located on Kent House Road close to the intersection with Sydenham Road. Kent House Road principally comprises semi-detached houses built in the 1930s, but towards the intersection with Sydenham Road there are rows of older terraced houses and shop premises on each side of the road that were built between 1882 and 1896. No. 7 Kent House Road forms part of one of these rows of terraced properties close to the junction and is believed to have been built around 1885.

To the north of the property and forming part of the same terrace of four are the remaining 3 Victorian shops with upper accommodation. Adjoining to the South there is a terrace of late Victorian houses with semi-basement, raised ground, first and attic storeys. Both building types appear to share some details including the use of yellow London stock brickwork, slate roofs, painted timber windows, and rendered architectural features, indicating that they may all have been built by the same developer.

All four of the properties 1 – 7 Kent House Road show that they were probably configured with shopfronts at ground floor level, with forecourts extending to the pavement line. However, when originally built each appears to have had a basement storey that, at least at no. 7, appears likely to have been habitable. There, in the front basement space, there is evidence of wall plaster and features associated with a domestic fireplace or kitchen range in the front chimney breast. It is plausible that when first built the terrace of four buildings were houses with front gardens and small front areas providing light and ventilation to the basement accommodation; but that a change to this configuration resulted in four shops with forecourts.

The earliest appearance of the terrace on OS mapping dates from 1896 when it appears to show forecourts contiguous with the pavement without front basement areas; although had they been fitted with pavement lights or metal grilles over the front area these would not necessarily have been recorded in the 1896 OS.(see OS map extract below).

The neighbouring properties Nos. 1 – 5 to the North do not have rear extensions. A supermarket on Sydenham Road extends to the back of 5 Kent House Road, making the gardens of 1,3 and 5 Kent House Road relatively compact; No. 7 Kent House Road is therefore the first house in the terraced row with a full-length garden that provides space for the proposed extensions to No. 7. Neighbouring No. 9 Kent House Road has a substantial ground floor extension and additionally, a first-floor rear closet addition in a pattern repeated on the remaining houses in the group to the South.



*OS Map extract from 1896 showing the terrace of four properties 1-7 Kent House Road in the centre of the image, showing how the properties 1-5 have short rear yards hemmed in by the longer plots at the rear of properties on Sydenham Road; 7 Kent House Road has a longer rear garden and wider rear elevation than nos. 1-5.*



*OS Map extract from 1916 showing the terrace of four properties 1-7 Kent House Road in the centre of the image. This map shows more detail than the 1896 edition including the rear basement and ground floor rear addition to No. 7 occupying a proportion of its wider rear elevation. NB: the plan appears to indicate a common front forecourt to Nos. 1-7 Kent House Road.*

## 3 Design

### 3.1 Design Principles

The underlying principles of design are to create good quality living accommodation within an extended building form that is contextually responsive and modestly scaled. The rear additions to the building are conceived of as in-keeping with the late 19thC character of the host building, formed from matching stock brickwork and flat roofs.

Additionally, it is proposed to enclose the open front forecourt with a half-height brick wall to define the semi-private/ semi-public space that is adjacent to a bus stop; this wall will also provide screening for refuse bins and cycle storage located in the front forecourt.

This application scheme proposes the change of use of the former basement and ground floor accommodation from café and storage use Class E(b) to become C3(a) residential use; that taken together with the existing first floor maisonette will entail the whole building 7 & 7a Kent House Road having C3 residential use class.

In part to facilitate this change of use the application proposes well-scaled basement and ground floor rear extensions to the building, providing additional accommodation at each level. One new dwelling unit will be created over both floors: *A 3-bedroom maisonette measuring 105 sqm GIA in total; 39 sqm at ground floor level and a further 66 sqm at basement level.*

At the front of the property the currently excavated front forecourt will not form part of the habitable accommodation of the basement or ground floor units, in order to conform to a 2019 Enforcement Notice; instead, it will be made good as a flat forecourt area with refuse bin storage and a covered bicycle store. Additionally, the ground floor shopfront will be adapted to the proposed residential use by provision of fixed and opening sections of new glazing devised to maintain a shop-like character.

The basement area below the main part of the existing property was excavated by a previous owner despite the works being unauthorized; they were abruptly stopped before completion following intervention by the planning department. After a lengthy period of inconvenience and disruption caused by the unauthorized works below them, the leaseholders at no. 7A acquired the lower part of the building comprising the unfinished basement and ground floor parts. As the works in the basement and ground parts had been left unfinished the building has been secured with temporary supports and is subject to engineering analysis to assess the scope of remedial work that will be necessary. The application that this statement accompanies is intended to resolve how best to regularize selective parts of the previously unauthorized works, in a form that represents appropriate and practical development meeting local and national policies.

The ground floor space was once used as a café, that for a period was known as ‘Steptoes’; however, this use is believed to have ceased in 2015 and is not believed to be viable going forward (see the accompanying planning statement and marketing study).



*A recent picture of the existing unfinished basement space, looking towards the front of the property. Note the absence of spine wall, replaced with temporary supports by the current owners; and the unauthorised excavated area below the front forecourt, lit by an opening in the roof.*

### **3.2 Layout and Scale**

The proposed ground floor and basement maisonette will be accessed via an entrance from the ground floor common area. The common area is accessed from the front forecourt by the existing door on the front elevation that will remain unaltered.

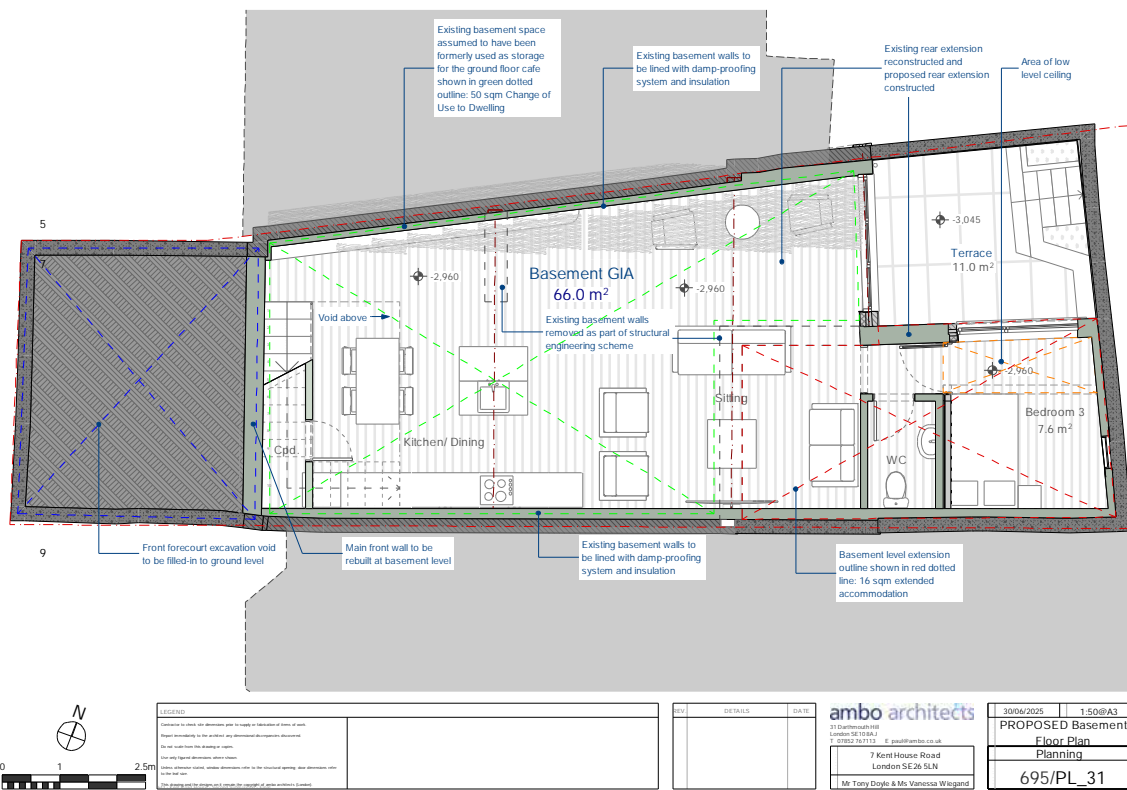
The dwelling unit is configured with dual aspect at ground floor level; and at basement level by glazing to the rear courtyard; and at the front by a double-height space open to the ground floor shopfront glazing. The rear garden will be dedicated to the basement and ground floor unit with access from both the basement patio area and the rear-facing ground floor bedroom windows.

The entrance hall of the dwelling unit to have a built-in seat with a large window facing the front shopfront glazing for daylight and aspect. The main bedroom accommodation is located on the ground floor accessed from the entrance hallway. The slightly narrower front part of the building (the plan tapers towards the front) accommodates the double height space; the two main bedrooms are situated side by

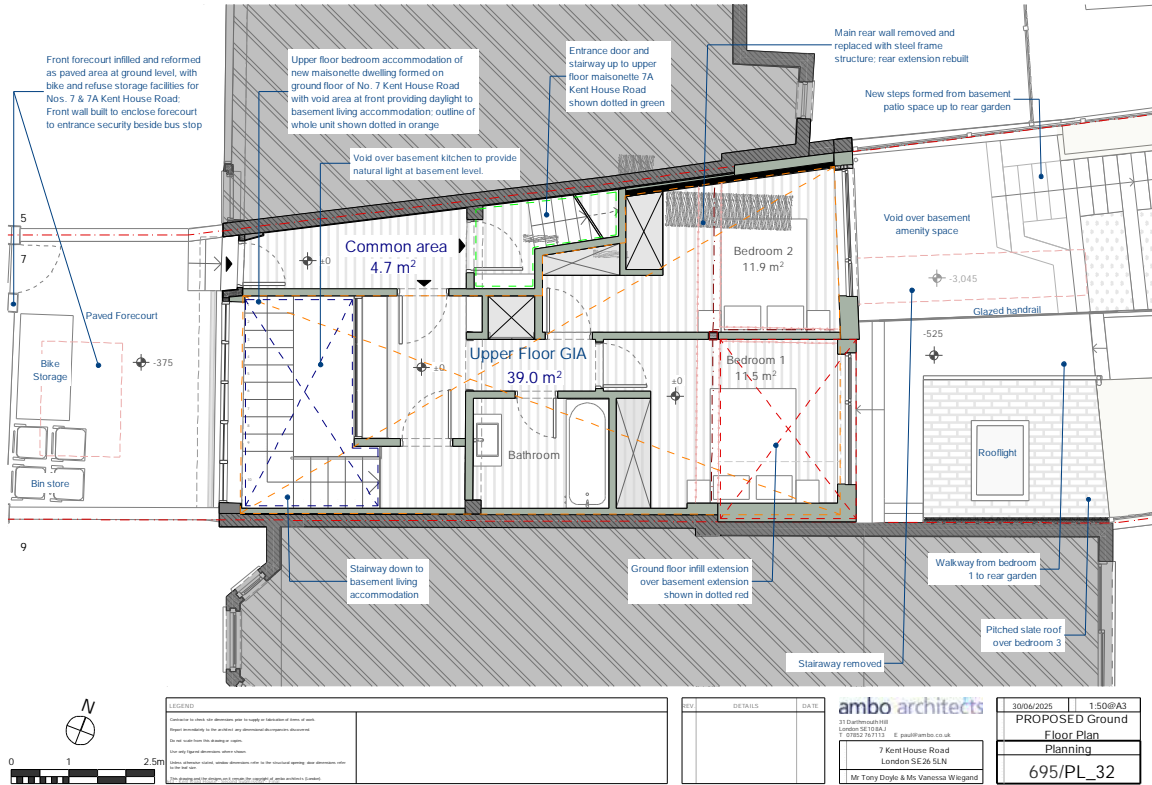
side across the wider rear elevation of the building. The principal bedroom has direct access to the rear garden via a walkway over the basement rear extension. The third bedroom is located on the lower floor at the rear with access to the rear patio, with ample natural daylight from a glazing situated in a pitched roof over the space.

In order to maximize light at the front of the basement the lower floor main space is configured as an open plan, living/ dining/ kitchen area that principally derives daylight and aspect from the shopfront glazing on the ground floor at the front, via the double height space; but that also benefits from glazed doors that open onto the rear patio, from where the rear garden can be reached. Vertical circulation is situated at the front in the double height space, combining both access and light.

The rear ground floor and basement extensions are modest (they do not project as far as that existing at No. 9) but are scaled to be in-keeping with the character of the host building whilst also providing the necessary accommodation to achieve a 3-bedroom maisonette. The ground floor extension does not protrude beyond the already existing rear extension at no. 7. The roof form over Bedroom 3 is devised to provide airy, well-lit accommodation but is also configured to prevent overlooking of the rear garden of no. 9 by occupiers of no. 7. This detail marks the principal difference between the previous refused application and this new application, in response to the inspector's comments in their appeal decision.



Proposed Basement Floor Plan



Proposed Ground Floor Plan



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PROPOSED Ground Floor Plan

Planning

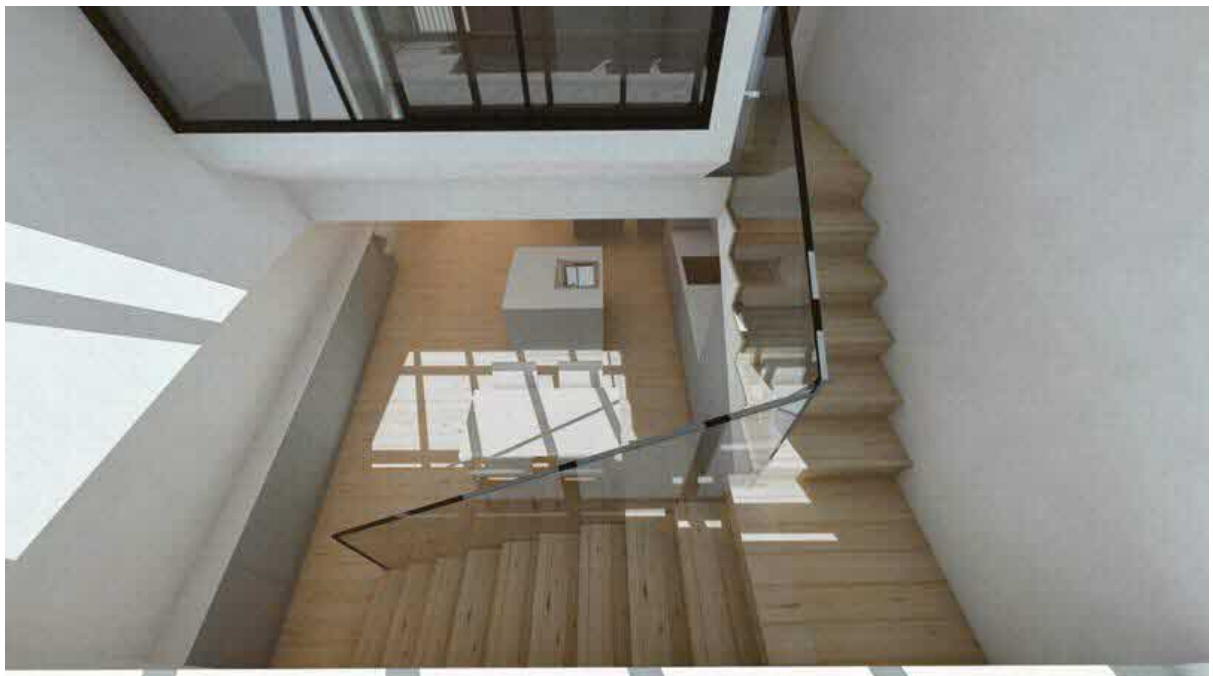
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Existing and Proposed Front Views





Basement Rear Patio Aspect



Basement Front Double Height Space with Stairway Down from Entrance Level



Basement Front Double Height Space with Stairway Down from Entrance Level

### 3.3 Appearance and Materials

The proposed extension will be built from materials matching those used in the host building and adjoining terraced buildings. The rear ground and basement extension will be formed in London stock brickwork with flat or slate-pitched roofs.

All new windows will be double-glazed, aluminium-framed in a dark grey colour finish, with matching aluminium rainwater downpipes and copings to the parapets. At the front, the existing shop-front door and sidelights will be replaced with new glazing in a multi-pane pattern style emulating a shop-front window, configured to provide openable elements for ventilation and maintenance. The existing front entrance door will remain in position unaltered. A new front forecourt boundary enclosure is proposed, built from yellow London Stock brick with a painted steel front gate and matching front lightwell guarding, both in a dark grey colour.

### 3.4 Proposed Gross Internal Areas

*Ground Floor EXISTING GIA: 49.40 m<sup>2</sup> Ground Flr. PROPOSED GIA: 39.00 m<sup>2</sup>  
Basement EXISTING GIA: 49.30 m<sup>2</sup> Basement PROPOSED GIA: 66.00 m<sup>2</sup>*

### 3.5 Access and parking

No changes are to be made to the existing pedestrian access to the building other than the provision of a gate and wall enclosure on the front boundary. This enclosure is proposed to define the forecourt as semi-private space, as distinct from the public pavement and adjacent bus stop area. The proposed boundary enclosures will also serve to contain the refuse, recycling, and cycle storage areas, to prevent visual clutter in the street scene.

Where the entrance door currently serves solely the upper floor maisonette and rear part of the ground floor accommodation, in the proposed scheme access to the existing and proposed dwelling units will both be from common parts accessed via the original front entrance door.

There is currently no off-street parking and 7 Kent House Road, and no provision of parking spaces is proposed as part of the application for development. Kent House Road is not located in a Lewisham CPZ. Although other properties nearby have used their front forecourt for car parking this can cause both visual clutter and pedestrian/road traffic collision risk. A pavement cross-over would be impractical given the location of the existing bus stop; the proposed front and side boundaries enclosing the forecourt will prevent its use for car parking.

## **4 Conclusion**

Care has been taken in the technical and aesthetic design of the proposals to ensure that current local and national policies are met, whilst creating good quality residential accommodation to help meet housing policy targets. The host building will maintain its role in the street scene through a sensitive refurbishment and appropriate reconfiguration of the front forecourt.

At the rear, well-scaled extensions to the property at basement and ground floor will provide additional accommodation without impacting negatively on the amenity of neighbours. Particular attention has been paid to addressing the inspector's comments regarding the reasons for refusal of the last application, specifically by the reconfiguration of the roof over the basement bedroom 3 to remove the opportunity to overlook the rear garden of no. 9 Kent House Road.

The materials used in the new work will match or compliment those existing on the host building and in the wider locality. The scale and existing heights of neighbouring extensions have been respected in the design of the proposed extensions at No. 7, to ensure a harmonious and neighbourly development.

In addition to this design and access statement, a marketing report and a planning statement have been prepared and included with this new application.

We trust that this full planning application for a change of use of the basement and ground floors of 7 Kent House Road will be found to be in accordance with national and local authority policies and that it may receive officer support towards a full planning consent.