

Design and Access Statement

Miller Court, 61 Main Road, Romford, Essex, RM2 5ED

Client Engie Regeneration Ltd

Date **10 December 2021**

Job No 200574

1.00 Project Introduction

The proposed scheme includes replacement fenestration and recovering to all roof areas. Replacement timber casement windows with new bespoke joinery timber casement windows to match existing design in terms of size, colour, fenestration and proportion. The works also involve replacement of the roof coverings with Redlands Rosemary Craftsman plain clay tiles to match existing, together with the introduction of a heritage roof window as smoke ventilation to communal stairwell.

2.00 Site Location & Description

Miller Court, is located at 61 Main Road, Romford, Essex, RM2 5ED within the London Borough of Havering and the Gidea Park Conservation Area.

The location owes its unique character to the efforts of Sir Herbert Raphael, who in the early 20th century, designed a variety of houses base upon the social ideals of the garden city and late Arts & Crafts movement. The intention being to establish a discrete high quality suburb. Although all the 'exhibition' houses are different, this property is part of the special interest of the conservation area and is within Havering Council's self-guided tour of the area.



Figure 1: Existing South East Elevation / Front (June, 2020)

The houses, as built, were all of different designs, with a tendency to either picturesque Tudor or neo-Georgian. They were heavily dependent on the use of good quality materials, and sometimes exaggerated vernacular details, but often with sufficient recurring elements to mark them as members of the same family of designs.

The more notable characteristics of the 1911 exhibition houses include:

- A strong and sometimes complex roof profile as a result of steep and/or deep pitched slopes; tall and prominent well-modelled chimney stacks, often on external walls; a combination of hips and gables (sometimes asymmetrical gables) and small hipped dormer windows
- An emphasis on horizontally proportioned windows, often quite shallow or small; and occasionally, for contrast, very tall casements with mullions and transoms to dominate an elevation;
- Timber casement windows, often with small pane glazing;
- The use of brickwork to emphasise features in an otherwise rendered elevation;
- The use of plain clay tile with brickwork to create pattern as panels, or within window or door arches, or as cladding to gables;
- Tiled porches

Main Road itself features retail and commercial establishments in small pockets along its length between medium to large residential properties. There are a two listed buildings within the Conservation area both of which are public houses dating around C17. Raphael Park is a distinctive space in its own right, with open space and surviving historic features.

Miller Court is a large late Victorian house, set well back from the road, its size is commensurate with the width and status of the road. Two modern properties neighbour Miller court in sympathetic styles to Miller Court but significantly greater mass to the streetscape.



Figure 2: Existing South West Elevations / Side (June, 2020)



Figure 3: Existing South West Elevations / Side (June, 2020)

3.00 Existing

3.10 Window Condition

The existing property fenestration is of white timber single glazed windows. The windows are of mixed designs and ages of varied age from original to more modern. There are two dominant types of windows, casement and transom windows. The transom windows are assumed the original windows to the property which benefit from glazing bar details (see above pictures of the front and side elevations). The casement windows below, appear to be more modern replacements with 'simple' square edge detailing. Some timber windows to dormers and on other elevations do not include glazing bars to replicate and respect the original design. Many of these feature a slimline double glazed unit of little thermal benefit. A large number of opening lights are poorly fitting in their frames and are likely to provide a route for water ingress and further deterioration to both the casement and the transom above.

The condition of the existing cills and frames is deteriorating with significant evidence of repeated repairs and patch filling. This is of significant concern around the bay windows which support the roofs above, corner (structural) posts have been poorly repaired and are now beyond economic repair.

3.20 Roof Replacement

The existing roof of the property is formed in two parts following the previous extension and conversion work (believed to have been undertaken in 1997). There is a Traditional 'cut' timber roof (Roof A) which has been the subject of modification and the extension which is of modern trussed rafters (Roof B). Please read this section in conjunction with the drawing in Kendall Kingscott Drawing 200574-0500 - Aerial View of Roof.

All roof areas appear to have been covered in matching clay tiles supported on timber battens laid over a modern sarking material.

A small proportion of the areas to Roof A (primarily to bay windows) are finished with a semi-circular clay tile decoration.

Roof coverings to both roofs A and B are experiencing deterioration and a number of tiles are seen to have slipped, broken or the material is delaminating suggesting they are reaching the end of their life. There is evidence of repeated localised repair to the roofs. This situation represents an on-going safety and maintenance concern for the building owner.

The condition of the roofs to the rear extension is not in-keeping with the expected life of a pitched clay tiled roof, there is no evidence at this stage to suggest that this is due to workmanship or design issues. It is, however, possible that the tiles are 'reclaimed' resulting in reduced lifespan. This concurs with the conditions listed in the extension and conversion planning decision (P0315.96) where materials in keeping with the conservation area were required to be submitted for approval.

4.00 Proposed

4.10 Window Replacements

The building owner proposes to replace all timber doors with double glazed white composite timber doors and windows with bespoke joinery timber casement windows, matching the existing in terms of size, colour, fenestration and proportion. The exception to this is the improvement of architectural styling of the plain windows mentioned above (some dormers and side/rear elevations).

The proposal aims to improve the consistency of window appearance and style throughout the building. The windows selected are more in-keeping with the original architecture than a number of the existing windows.

The additional benefit of these units is improved thermal performance of the property by the introduction of double glazing. Less frequent maintenance will significantly reduce the disruption on-site to residents (parking and availability of natural light within the flats). It will also assist the building owner in maintaining the appearance of the property.

Please, see the manufacturers details and drawings supplied as part of this application also contained in RCM-03-0.

The property will continue to be used as residential property for social housing. In terms of layout, the accommodation will remain unaltered.

4.20 Roof Replacement

The building owner proposes to replace the existing covering to roofs A and B. New Redlands Rosemary Craftsman plain clay tiles to match existing, making efforts to match colouring as closely as possible. The proposal anticipates minor modification and replacement of existing timbers to facilitate the works to a high quality.

A recent Fire Risk Assessment has recommended the introduction of smoke ventilation into the main stairwell of the building serving Flats 1-6. The building owner intends to meet this recommendation utilising a Heritage roof window as smoke ventilation compliant to BS EN 12101-2:2003. Please, see the manufacturers details and drawings enclosed to Appendix A (Smoke Ventilation Details).

5.00 Access and Transport

The proposal will not alter the access or egress routes of the property.

The property is set back from the street, which will allow the scaffolding to be accommodated on site without causing nuisance to the general public or encroaching on to the public highway. The scaffolding will be set up in order to allow residents of the property to safely access and use the building with minimum hindrance. The existing parking is not fully utilised at present and therefore during the works it is anticipated all materials and site facilities can be accommodated on-site without displacing resident parking off-site.

6.00 Conservation and Heritage Appraisal

The proposed products emphasise the owner's careful and considered approach to the proposal. Suitable products have been thoroughly investigated and ultimately selected on the basis of appearance, ability to meet the Building Regulation requirements, long term maintenance and improvement in Fire Safety. Acceptance of the proposals will result in the removal of poorly detailed opening lights and an enhanced appearance of the property.

7.00 Conclusion

In summary, the application seeks to:

- Replace all existing windows (white painted timber single glazed) to new white painted timber double glazed, matching the existing windows in type, colour and size.
- Replace defective roof covering with new clay tiles to match the existing.
- Improve Fire Safety measures within the existing communal staircase by installation of a heritage style Roof Windows compliant with BS EN 12101-2:2003 - operating as a smoke vent in the event of fire.

The proposal is in keeping with a coherent street scene within the conservation area. The materials are not considered to cause detriment to the character and appearance of the area. Notwithstanding this, the improved energy performance will be of benefit to the residents of the property.