

Design and Access Statement

Proposed Extension and Alteration of
Northgate, North End Avenue, Hampstead, NW3 7HP

August 2023



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MC2 Architects
88 Clarence Road
St Albans
AL1 4NG

T. +44 (0) 7866 533 489
E. studio@mc2architects.co.uk

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The following Design and Access Statement has been prepared by MC2 Architects on behalf of the applicant Mr and Mrs Arenson, in support of proposals to alter and extend their property at Northgate, North End Avenue, Hampstead, London NW3 7HP. This document should be read in conjunction with the existing survey drawings, proposed architectural drawings produced by MC2 Architects and Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by Arbotrack Systems Ltd.
- 1.2. The application site is located to the south of North End at the end of North End Avenue on its east side bordering woodland to Hampstead Heath as shown in Figure 1 below.
- 1.3. The proposed development is for the replacement of three existing conservatories at the rear of the property, replacement of the front porch structure, new windows to the rear, side and front of the building, a new garden wall and internal alterations.

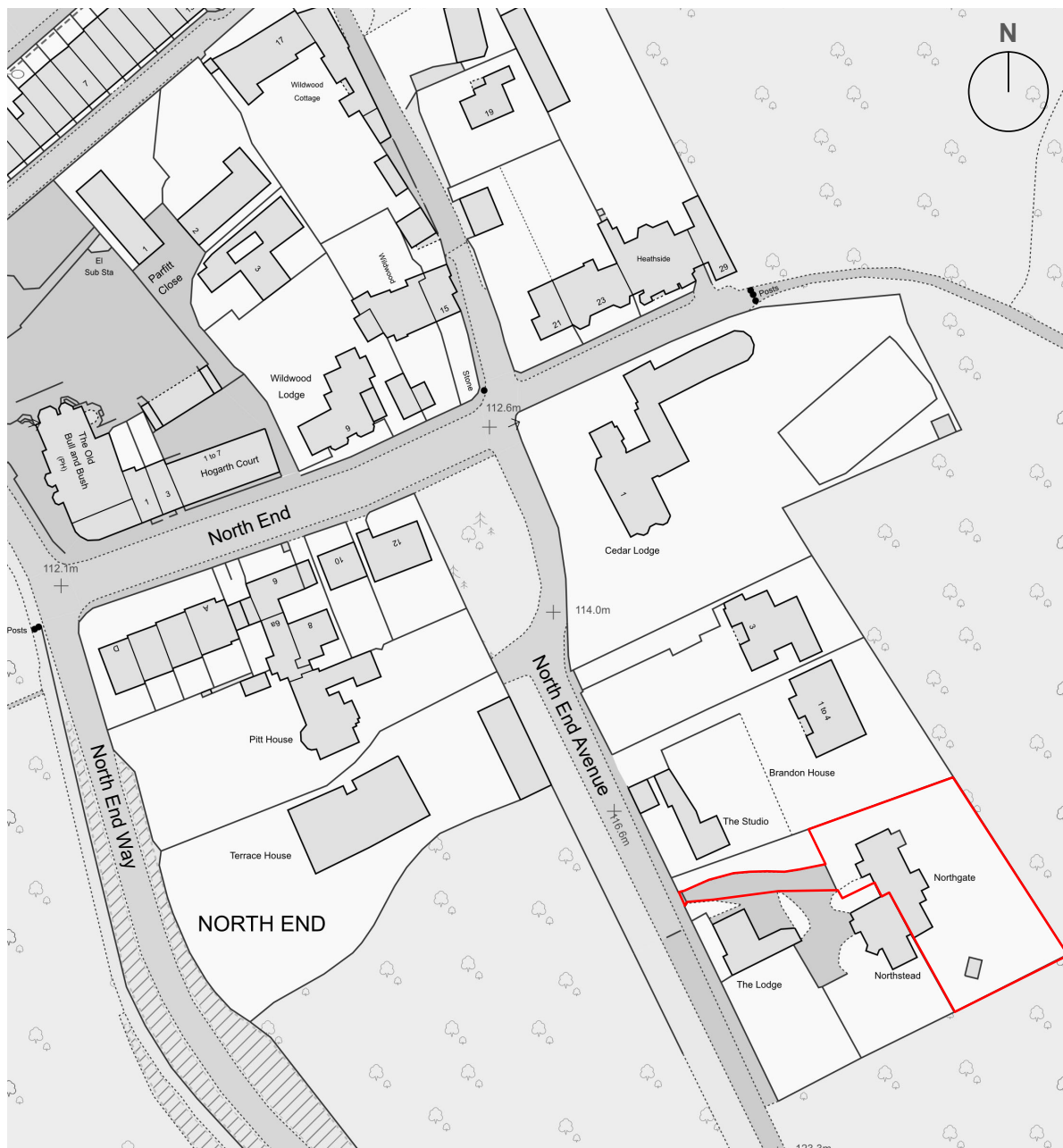


Figure 1: Site Location Plan - Northgate

Planning History

- 1.4. The application site has been the subject of a number of planning applications and approvals since 2003 for similar proposals to extend and alter the existing building. These are as follows:
- 2003/3136/P - The reconstruction of the existing rear extension, demolition of the existing garage and the erection of a new garage adjoining the front of the house; the erection of a new pitched roof rear extension, the erection of a new 2-storey front extension and front entrance porch, and associated internal and external alterations. Approved 02/02/2004.
 - 2004/0989/P - Alterations comprising new fenestration/balcony at side and rear, new basement storage space, resisting of garage and a new dormer window, as a variation to the planning permission reference 2003/3136/P for the reconstruction of the existing rear extension, with the demolition of the existing garage and the erection of a new garage adjoining the front of the house; the erection of a new pitched roof rear extension, the erection of a new 2-storey front extension and front entrance porch, and associated internal and external alterations. Approved 19/04/2004.
 - 2004/2606/P - Minor alterations to the front, rear and northern elevations as an amendments to the approved schemes (ref: 2004/0989/P and 2003/3136/P) for alterations and extensions to the property. Approved 16/08/2004.
 - 2021/2304/P - Replacement of existing rear conservatories, new windows at the rear, front and side elevations, new front porch and associated works. Approved 07/04/2022.

Planning Policy Context

- 1.5. The proposals have been designed in careful consideration of local and national planning policy and guidance. These include the following;
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013 - reference sections 66 and 72;
 - National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) 2021 - section 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment;
 - Camden Local Plan (CLP) 2017 - with reference to policies A1, D1 and D2;
 - Camden Planning Guidance: Design 2019;
 - Camden Planning Guidance: Home Improvements 2021;
 - Camden Planning Guidance: Amenity 2021;
 - Hampstead Conservation Area Statement (CAS);
 - Camden Planning Guidance: Hampstead Conservation Area Design Guide;
 - Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033 - reference policies DH1 and DH2; and
 - The London Plan 2021.

2. EXISTING SITE AND CONTEXT

Heritage Context - Conservation Area

- 2.1. The application site sits within Sub Area Eight - Outlying Areas of the Hampstead Conservation Area. Northgate is not a listed building or locally listed but is identified as a building which makes a positive contribution to the conservation area. The CAS describes the character of North End as: *....a loose cluster of quite modest houses centred on the Olde Bull and Bush pub with the Hampstead Heath Extension banked up steeply all around. It has the distinct quality of a small enclave detached from urban life. The roads peter out into paths through the surrounding woodland. Greenery dominates and the relationship between the houses, their gardens and the Heath is particularly intimate.*
- 2.2. More specifically the character statement describes North End Avenue as having: *....larger houses set in large gardens that merge into the surrounding Heath. Cedar Lodge (No. 1) is particularly fine and has a prominent brick boundary wall. The boldly modelled roofs of Northgate and Northstead are prominent in views from the Heath.*
- 2.3. The photograph at Figure 2 shows a view of Northstead from the public footpath beyond North End Avenue to the south illustrating the roof line mentioned above. While part of the same building mass, Northgate is not as prominent. The photograph at Figure 3 shows the available views of Northgate from the Heath woodland to the east which are restricted by dense mature planting, tree canopy and boundary fences, which provide more glimpsed views of the upper storeys and roof line of the building and not the overall roof and building form. It is a more intimate and private setting. Figure 4 shows a view of the front entrance to the building from North End Avenue.



Figure 2: View of Northstead from Hampstead Heath beyond North End Avenue (west).



Figure 3: Glimpsed view to the rear of Northgate from Hampstead Heath woods (east)

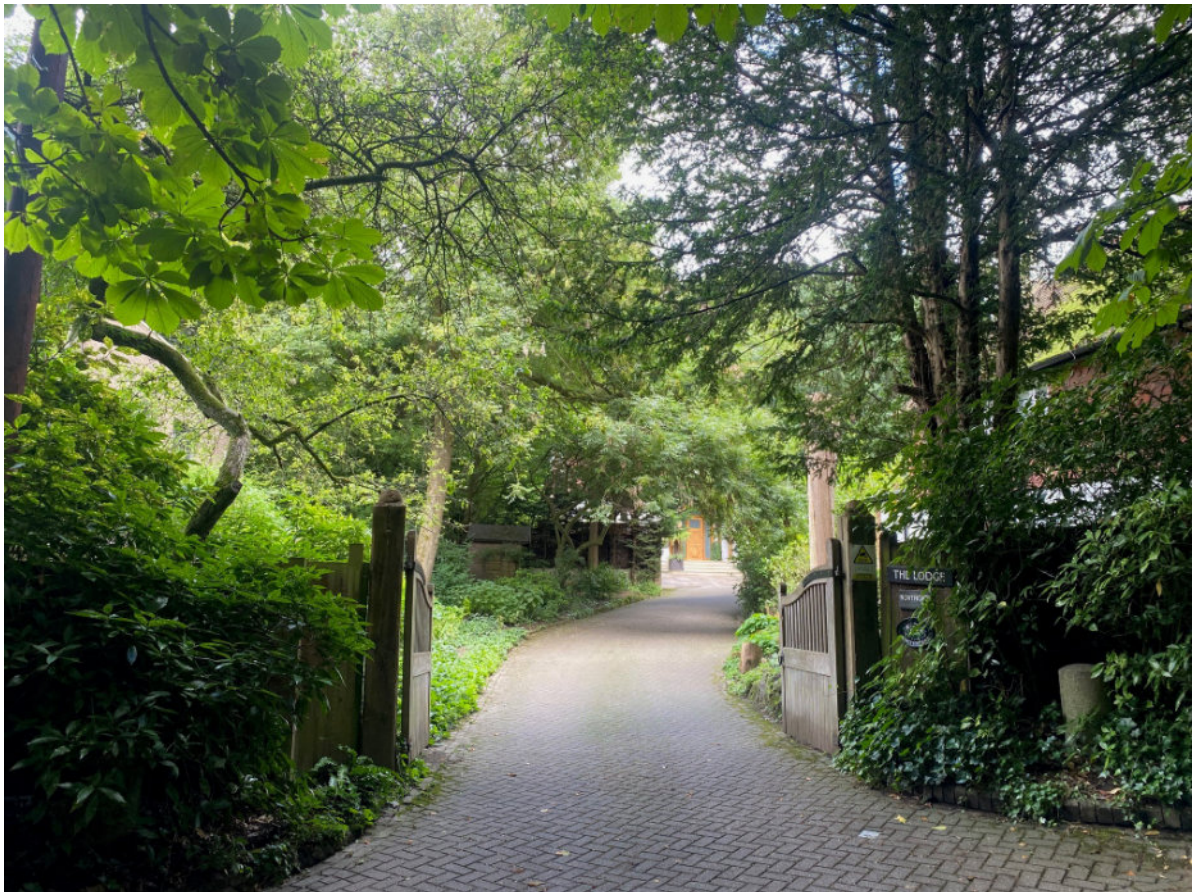


Figure 4: View of the Entrance to Northgate from North End Avenue along the shared private drive

Plot and Landscape Character

- 2.4. The house and plot are accessed from North End Avenue via a private shared drive and is approximately 37m from the street with views dominated by mature trees and low-level planting. The existing house sits to the west side (front) of the plot accessed from the drive and parking area. The rear garden is heavily planted and mature English Oak, Sweet Chestnut and Copper Beech trees that dominate the house and the views out, making a clear connection with the Heath woodland to the east and south as shown in Figure 6. The rear elevation of the main house is approximately 17.5m from the eastern site boundary at its shortest point.
- 2.5. There is a significant change in topography from the southern site boundary and Heath down to the north of approximately 6.5m and from the east to west of approximately 1.75m. Subsequently the house sits at the bottom of a natural bowl with the wider Heath sloping down towards North End. This provides a secluded and intimate setting for the house and garden as shown at Figure 7 and 8, with limited views from the public realm.



Figure 5: View south of the mature rear garden with the house to the right. Copper Beech to the foreground



Figure 6: View north west of the mature rear garden and house sitting in a natural bowl.



Figure 7: View north east of the mature rear garden and house sitting in a natural bowl and the Heath beyond.

Existing House

- 2.6. The house is a two-storey building when viewed from the front stepping up to three storeys when viewed from the rear where it joins the attached (neighbouring) Northstead. There is a basement level to the front. The main roofs are pitched with ridge-lines running north to south finished in traditional red clay tiles. There is an imposing timber frame pitched roof front porch to the entrance with stone steps leading to the front door shown in the photograph at Figure 8. The first and second floors overhang the lower levels to the north and south elevations with timber cantilevers and external walls finished in decorative red clay tile hanging at part first and second floors. The ground floor and part rear first floor external walls are finished in a white painted pebble dash/ roughcast render.
- 2.7. There are three conservatory extensions to the rear of the property all different in design as shown in Figure 9. They are a mix of traditional timber frame pitched and flat roofs with traditional and modern glazing. Visually they have an awkward relationship with the rear of the main house and each other.
- 2.8. Windows are generally painted timber frame sash windows with a traditional appearance and doors are generally painted or stained timber frame in a variety of traditional and more modern styles. There are white painted UPVC replacement windows and a door to the side (south) elevation at first floor
- 2.9. It is fair to say that the house has an interesting appearance with level changes responding to the topography of the plot and a variety of materials and architectural styles including ornate painted timber barge boards to the gables.



Figure 8: View of the front elevation and large entrance porch structure. Note cantilevered first floor to the side.



Figure 9: View of the rear elevation to the garden showing the flat and pitched roof extensions.

3. PROPOSALS

Replacement Rear Extensions and New Planters

- 3.1. The proposal to remove the three existing extensions to the rear of the property and replace them with new structural glass and metal frame conservatory structures with sliding doors that would have a lightweight appearance in contrast to heavier traditional masonry of the existing house. The contrast in in scale, architectural style and materiality would clearly define them as extensions to the existing building while visually remaining subservient to it.
- 3.2. Each of the new conservatories will be single storey and similar in height or lower than the structures they are replacing. Figure 10 below illustrates the scale of the existing and proposed conservatories. The new conservatory replacing the pitched roof structure to the Family Dining and Day Lounge would be significantly lower than the existing structure and match its footprint. The middle of the three conservatories to the Dining Room would be at the same height as the existing structure it is replacing but would occupy a larger footprint matching the size of the adjacent one. The third replacement conservatory to the Study would be slightly higher than the existing by approximately 200mm and occupy a marginally larger footprint to the corner of the existing deck area. This conservatory would not infill the recess to retain the clear definition between the main building and new structure.
- 3.3. Three new low-level planters are proposed between each of the new conservatories and turning the corner to the side elevation. The planters would be approximately 600mm in height and finished in wither white render. The purpose of the planters is to provide the opportunity to bring mature planting closer to the house creating a stronger visual connection between the house, garden, and Heath environment. When you sit in the conservatory spaces you would be surrounded by planting.



Figure 10: Proposed rear elevation showing scale of existing and proposed extensions.

New Front Porch and Window

- 3.4. The existing front porch is a dominant structure on the front of the building and restricts daylight into the Entrance Hall. The porch structure would be removed and replaced with a more modest high quality and crafted bronze finished metal canopy structure at the same height as the tile hanging to the first floor with a light weight appearance. The existing stone steps would be retained. The existing window at first floor above the new canopy would be extended down to bring more natural light into the entrance hall. The proportion and scale of the new porch working with the proportion of the new window would improve the overall appearance of the front elevation to Northgate as illustrated at Figure 11. The new window would not directly face neighbouring windows being at an angle of 90 degrees from them. The window is located over an internal void and therefore would not be directly accessible for views out. The window will be obscure glazed.



Figure 11: Proposed front elevation showing scale of existing porch and proposed new window and canopy

New Garden Wall

- 3.5. A new garden wall is proposed at a height of 1.8m with a timber gate to the north side of the house set back from the front elevation by 4m and would replace the existing timber fence in a similar location. The wall would be masonry construction finished in white render to match the existing house. The wall would not be seen from the public realm.

Side Window and Door.

- 3.6. A new side window and door are proposed to the new Family Dining and Day Room next to the existing kitchen. The door would provide direct access out to what will become a new area of the garden. This space is currently occupied by a shed and used for storage. The door and window would also introduce more natural daylight into the house during the late

afternoon. The frames would be painted metal frames matching the conservatory. The height of the new opening would be similar to the existing external door to the kitchen with the proportion of the opening having a vertical emphasis.

New First Floor Window

- 3.7. A new window is proposed to the Dressing Room at first floor to the rear of the house. The window would provide increased daylight to the Dressing Room and is designed to match the existing adjacent painted timber frame window in scale, design and material.

4. DISCUSSION

Alterations and Extensions

- 4.1. The modest scale of the new conservatories with simple forms and lightweight appearance, improves the connection between the main house and garden while appearing to remain subservient to the scale and mass of the existing building. The use of contemporary light weight glass structures alongside traditional buildings has been used successfully in the conservation area at Wildwood Lodge on North End as shown at Figure 12 and is visible from the public realm. Similar proposals have also been previously approved by the council on the application property
- 4.2. Two of the proposed new conservatory structures will have a larger footprint than those they are replacing however when seen as a whole, the design of the new additions to the rear elevation would not be disproportionate or out of scale with the host building.



Figure 12: Example of lightweight structural glass extension contrasting with historic buildings in the conservation area (Wildwood Lodge)

- 4.3. In consideration of their rear location, site topography and separation distance to the rear site boundary the proposed conservatories would not be seen from the public realm or be seen from the Heath. The importance of the roofscape of Northgate and Northstead when viewed from the Heath, as referred to in the CAS, would remain unaltered. It is fair to say therefore that the new conservatories would not harm the conservation area and the building(s) providing a positive contribution to it.
- 4.4. The proposed new porch and window would be well proportioned on the front elevation however they would not be fully visible from the public realm being in excess of 35m away from North End Avenue as shown previously in Figure 4. The use of a high quality bronze finished crafted material for the canopy would enhance the building entrance. The new/ altered window would be finished in painted timber in a sash style similar to those existing with the glazing obscured. It would be fair to say that the proposed new porch and window would be in keeping the design of the existing building and improve it with the removal of the dominant porch structure.
- 4.5. The new window and door to the ground floor side elevation would not be visible from the public realm. The scale of the opening would be similar to those existing at the ground floor. The new opening is would have a close relationship with the new conservatory structure immediately next to it on the rear elevation and it would therefore be appropriate to propose that the material of the frame would be a painted metal matching the sliding doors of the conservatory in contrast to the existing traditional timber frame materials.
- 4.6. The new garden wall replacing the existing fence is proposed be no higher than the existing boundary walls (1.8m) to the front of the plot. The wall would create a new garden enclosure to the side of the house. The wall would be finished in a painted render matching other rendered walls to the garden and the existing house. The wall would not be visible from the public realm due to its separation from the Heath to the east in excess of 20m and North End Avenue in excess of 35m. It would screened from view by existing boundary walls and fences. It would be fair to say that the new wall would not cause harm to the conservation area or the existing building.
- 4.7. The new window to the Dressing Room at first floor to the rear of the house would match the size of the existing window adjacent to it. Given the location of the new window in close proximity to similar timber windows directly adjacent, it would be appropriate to propose this window has the same painted timber finish and design to maintain the rhythm and proportion of fenestration to this part of the elevation. It would be fair to say that the design of the window in this location would be in keeping with the existing building design.

Trees

- 4.8. The proposals do not include for the removal of any trees. Please refer to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment for detailed information.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 4.9. The distance between the rear of the existing house and gardens to neighbouring properties is such that the proposed works would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbours. The roofs of the proposed new conservatories would not be accessible for amenity/ leisure purposes.

Parking and Access

- 4.10. The proposals do not change the existing parking provision and no alterations are proposed to access from the public highway into the site.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. We have shown that the proposed development has been carefully designed so as not to harm the conservation area with the greater majority of the proposed alterations not visible from the Heath and public realm. The character of the conservation area would be preserved and the positive contribution of Northgate and Northstead would be maintained.
- 5.2. We have shown that the proposals by way of their design, scale, and materiality would not be detrimental to the setting of the existing building and its gardens.
- 5.3. The proposals have carefully considered the impact on the existing house and the conservation area and as such we believe the proposals to be in general accordance with policies A1, D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017 and with policies DH1 and DH2 from Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan 2018, the London Plan 2021 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.