

Design Statement

Submitted as part of a Householder Application for Planning Permissions for works or extension to a Dwelling and for Relevant Demolition in a Conservation Area at:

Bromwich House
1 Witanhurst Lane
Highgate
NW6 6LT

For: The Bromwich Trust
Aeulestrasse 30,
PO Box 1240,
Vaduz,
Liechtenstein,
LI-9490

Site:

The property is located off on the south side Highgate West Hill and falls within the Highgate Village Conservation area and is positioned in what was the gardens of 78-79 Highgate West Hill. The site is not visible from the main road and is access by the private road of 1 Witanhurst Lane.



Use:

The property is a single-family residence.

Existing House:**Entrance Elevation**

The existing house is a substantial post-modernist styled private home, designed by Elena Keats in the mid-80's and completed in the mid-90's after an extensive planning process. The house is concealed on approach down Witanhurst Lane by a large, curved brick wall. This wall is broken in centre by the main entrance door to the house, which is surrounded by large, light-coloured stone. Above this entrance, the 2nd floor Studio/Conservatory roof and windows accentuate the symmetry of the approach.



Central Entrance

The curved walls either side of the entrance are penetrated by 2 garage doors on the right and a single gate/garage door on the left.



Front Entrance Court/Driveway

The roof area on either side of the 2nd Floor Studio has extensive planting with trees, shrubs, and wild grass areas between which rooflights to the house below have been positioned. This planting overhangs the front entrance wall concealing a large portion of the brick wall from view.

Garden Elevation

The topography of the site is such that the house is exposed to the South West with substantial mass and presence. Again the post-modern symmetry is evident with clear delineation of the elevation through the carefully scaled and aligned windows with chamfered reveals. This elevation is completely stone faced with the stone modules linking directly into the proportions of the windows in both vertical and lateral dimensions.

The massing symmetry is mimicked by the flying stone beams and pier on kitchen wing (LHS of Garden Elevation Panorama) which allow the house to recede without losing the strength of form.

The elevation is exposed over 2 floors (Ground and Lower Ground) with the basement pool complex projecting out below this into the landscape with planting and lawns over. The Basement/Pool level of the house is only visibly from the gardens as it is tucked in the landscaping either side of the site.

The existing windows on this facade are a commercial curtain walling system consisting of 50mm W x 100mm D sections in white powder-coated aluminium frame with double glazed panes. The styling of this is dominated by central large panes (or double panes) with side lights, fanlights, and footlights. The window transoms and mullions are arranged keeping with the post-modern style and strong linear delineation of the elevation.



Garden Elevation Panorama

The head course above the windows on Ground Floor level are decorated with stone relief in the form of alternating simplified square medallions and raised panels.

Proposal:

The house has not been refurbished externally since it was purchased by the current owner 17 years ago. The house has several ongoing maintenance issues including leaking rooflights (concealed from view on the roof scape) and blown double glazing panels which this proposal seeks to remedy in order ensure the property's future.

The proposal is four-fold.

Firstly, the owner wishes to replace all the existing windows with new bronzed stainless steel frame. These replacement windows will be design in keeping with the overall design arrangement of the existing and will an updated look and feel to the property without losing the design intent of the original. As part of the replacement of the windows, it is proposed to omit middle transoms and mullions in the side and fan light elements of the windows to increase the overall glass pane sizes and improve the sense of light in the house.

Secondly, it is proposed to replace the existing 2nd floor Studio/Conservatory with a new structure matching in scale and proportions but bronzed stainless steel to match the new windows below. Certain sections of frame are proposed to be omitted to increase the size of the glazed sections and improve the contemporary nature of the Studio. The only massing variation proposed is the creation of two extensions on the flanks of the Studio. These will not project above the level of the existing doors and extend to positions that align with existing structural elements of the roofscape so as not to be at odds with the character of the house property. These extensions will have glazed roofs and side elevations. These will not impact on the landscaping of the roof area as they extend onto paved areas adjacent to the studio and will generally be concealed from view.

There is an existing tree on the entrance side of the roof area which has died, and the client wishes to remove this and replace it with a new tree of the same species.

The third component is the replacement of two existing rooflights. These are the domed rooflight over the main staircase and pyramidal rooflight over the double volume Study. Both existing structures leak extensively and continue to cause water damage within the property. It is proposed to replace both with flat structural glass rooflights.

The last component of the proposal is the replacement of the existing front door and garage doors with new to match the existing. The existing timber has suffered over the years and as such require replacement of part of general maintenance of the house.



Existing Garden Elevation



Proposed Garden Elevation with new window frame configuration (artist's impression)



Existing Entrance Court Elevation



Proposed Entrance Court Elevation (artist's impression)



Existing dead tree to be replaced.



Existing domed rooflight to be replaced.



Existing pyramidal rooflight to be replaced.

Access:

The proposal makes no changes to the principal access into the site and the house.

Conclusion:

The proposal is respectful of the post-modernist character of the property but seeks to bring in upgraded elements and improve the sense of openness to the view. Similarly, the replacement of existing elements with new, more thermally efficient, and elegant products, will ensure the future of this remarkable property. All elements of this proposal respond to the scale and character of the house in an inconspicuous manner so as not to undermine the original intent of the design but to reinforce it.

The proposal has acknowledged the feedback received from Edward Hodgson of Camden Borough Council Planning in March 2023 to a pre-application advice submission submitted by STS-SE on behalf of the client. The owner has considered the advice very carefully. The architectural importance of this property is understood, and the proposal has been tailored to reinforce this and ensure the longevity of the property for future generations.

We trust that the proposal will meet with your approval.