

8 Robin Grove Design & Access Statement

8 Robin Grove, London N6 6NY

Design and Access (or how improved access has informed the layout and form) Statement
November 2023

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The proposal is to unite the two south facing kitchen windows and lower the cill from one metre height down to ground level allowing inclusive access for first time and also sunlight to insolate the house and illuminate the main kitchen living space.

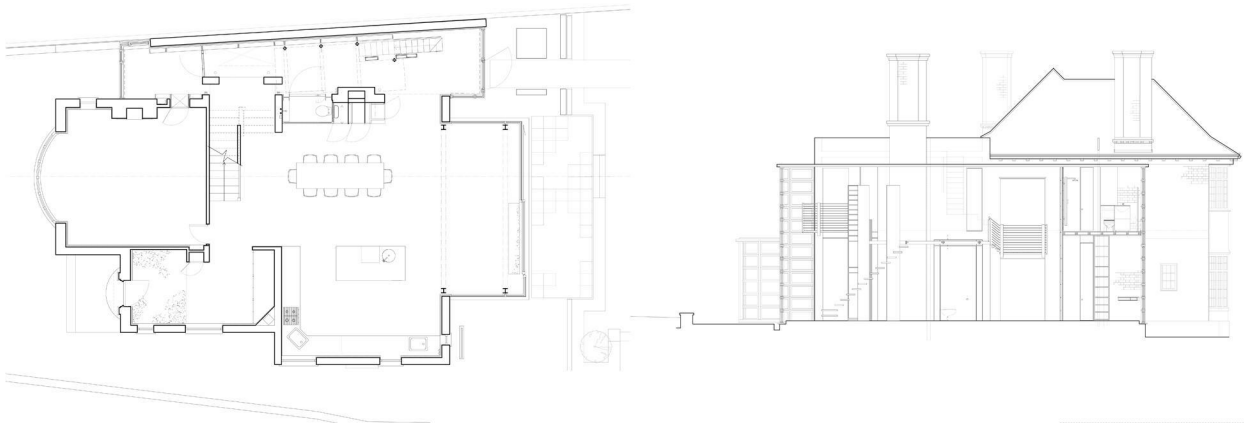
SITE LOCATION

The existing property is a detached house on the east side of the Robin Grove, Holly Lodge Estate. It is located within the Holly Lodge Estate conservation area, a distinctive planned development in the Garden Suburb tradition, dating to the 1920s and located in the south facing slopes below Highgate Village. The buildings are designed in an English vernacular style influenced by the Arts and Crafts tradition. The Conservation Area Statement notes it forms a group by 'dissociation' with the majority of properties within the Holly Lodge estate.

THE DESIGN PROCESS

The existing house extension to the garden unites house to garden and makes the garden a positive place. It is lit with sided natural light primarily from east by north east so but starts losing sunlight at midday. This proposal improves that by introducing afternoon direct sunlight into the main room of the house.

To the north double height space with three walls built of modular timber and glass panels infuses the spaces with natural light of the woodland setting. Direct sunlight is of short duration. The red brick wall that faces north is lined with joinery workshop eco source timber window modules and shelves hosting books and artwork. A mezzanine and staircase float within the volume, creating a space immersed within the books in which to take a moment to study.



1. Ground floor plan

2. Section



3. Photograph of the front exterior

4. Photograph of the rear exterior



5. Photograph of the Library

6. Photograph of the Auditorium

USE

Use remains unchanged.

LAYOUT

The existing windows are south facing but high sills, the proposed alterations will improve sunlight to the interior, this benefitting from dramatic natural south light into the main living area.

SCALE

The scale of the surrounding buildings are varied of pattern. The proposal here is subservient to the existing dwelling and will therefore not affect the pattern of the surrounding tree residential and streetscape. The proposed window though smaller respects the adjacent north and east elevations.

APPEARANCE

Consideration has been given to the alterations to the existing elevation, mirroring details already present. The design of the window is proposed to match the existing precedent of the glazed modular format at rear and side of property. The window will not adversely affect the composition of the elevations, but rather enhance them.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

We have taken into consideration guidelines and policies of the London Borough of Camden, including those set out in the Supplementary Planning Guidance (CPG), Camden Local Plan & The Holly Lodge conservation area appraisal. Key details of which, and how we have addressed them are set out below:

CPG: Good practice principles for external alterations 4.7 Windows P30

Original windows or those in the style of the original should be replaced or repaired with 'like for like' wherever possible in order to preserve the character of the property and the surrounding area. New windows should match the originals as closely as possible in terms of type, glazing patterns and proportions (including the shape, size and placement of glazing bars), opening method, materials and finishes, detailing and the overall size of the window opening.

Camden Local Plan Policy D1 Design P227

7.10 Schemes should incorporate materials of a high quality. The durability and visual attractiveness of materials will be carefully considered along with their texture, colour, tone and compatibility with existing materials. Alterations and extensions should be carried out in materials that match the original or neighbouring buildings, or, where appropriate, in materials that complement or enhance a building or area.

The proposed windows are to match the style and materiality and reflect the fenestration of the existing extensions to the north and east of the house, and will therefore mirror the aesthetic of the existing elevations.

CPG: Good practice principles for external alterations 4.7 Windows P30

Original single-glazed windows often contribute to the character and appearance of the area, and should be retained and upgraded. There may however be some instances where double-glazing can be installed in a design that matches the original, for instance sash windows or casements with large individual pane sizes, or in secondary glazing. In such cases, the window frame and glazing bars of the replacement windows should closely match the existing.

The proposed windows will be manufactured bespoke, designed to mirror the proportions, dimensions, joinery details, panelling and glazing of the existing windows to the north and east of the property.

Camden Local Plan Policy A1 Managing the Impact of Amenity P185

6.3 Protecting amenity is a key part of successfully managing Camden's growth and ensuring its benefits are properly harnessed. The Council will expect development to avoid harmful effects on the amenity of existing and future occupiers and nearby properties or, where this is not possible, to take appropriate measures to minimise potential negative impacts.

The spacing of the detached dwellings along Robin Grove has them set apart and the impact of the proposal on neighbouring properties unchanged due to retention of side access. In addition to this the wooded nature of the site provides extensive shelter to the amenity of the neighbouring sites.

Camden Local Plan Policy D1 Design P225

7.2 The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

Character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings; The character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed; The prevailing pattern, density and scale of surrounding development; The impact on existing rhythms, symmetries and uniformities in the townscape;

The composition of elevations; The suitability of the proposed design to its intended use;

Its contribution to public realm and its impact on views and vistas; and the wider historic environment and buildings, spaces and features of local historic value.

The character, setting, context and form of the proposal in relation to the neighbouring dwellings has been considered throughout the design process. Local historic value has been considered through our research of the Holly Lodge conservation area appraisal, namely the traditional English vernacular throughout the area. The proposal reflects the use of traditional materials, familiar to the existing dwelling, and will not adversely affect the building's appearance, ensuring the improved dwelling adheres to this aesthetic.

Camden Local Plan Policy D1 Design P227

7.7 The Council expects development to be sustainable in design and construction. Development should be consistent with the policies set out in section 8 of this plan on sustainability and also consistent with Camden Planning Guidance on sustainability

The original single glazed windows contribute to the thermal under performance of the dwelling. Replacing the existing timber windows with high quality double glazed units will have a significant improvement on the ecological nature of the house. All timber used in the window replacement is sustainably sourced.

LANDSCAPING

Step removal for possible wheel access and proposed planting around edges.

ACCESS & INCLUSIVITY

The proposal now satisfies the planning guidance and criteria on Access because inclusivity is achieved and is as follows:

Camden CPG: Access for all P3

The Council expects all development of buildings and places, including changes of use and alterations or refurbishment of existing buildings, to be inclusively designed and useable by all to promote equality of opportunity.

Camden CPG Access for all 5. Accessible buildings P7

5.2 The design of changes of use, alterations and extensions to existing buildings and spaces should take the opportunity to improve access for all.

Camden Local Plan Policy C6 Access for all P160

4.96 Good access and inclusion benefits everyone. However, many people are disadvantaged by poor access to facilities and buildings and many vulnerable disadvantaged groups, such as disabled people, older people and others who experience a barrier to the built environment, can be particularly affected. Poor access can also be caused by difficulties in using the specific facilities themselves

Access to the kitchen and consequently egress and means of escape are straightforward and on the level or ramped. The removal of the step along with level entry succeeds in giving the house properly for the first time universal access. This is social step-free access from exterior to all of ground floor interior and with its wc. The house has never before offered this.

An accessible home gives the resident choice about where and how to live, and means they are less likely to need or want to move. Fulfilling and independent lives in maturer ages chimes to policy 4.104 (P161) of Camden's local plan.

SUMMARY

We feel the proposal is not detrimental to the existing dwelling or the wider conservation area, but enhances. The materiality of the proposal references the host dwelling and wider conservation area while complimenting and enhancing the existing aesthetic, and greatly improving accessibility to all into the dwelling.