

Heritage Statement/Design and Access Statement for 4B Oak Court

Official List entry:

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1379017

Date first listed: 11-Jan-1999

List Entry Name: 3-6 St Alban's Villas

Statutory Address 1: 3-6, St Alban's Villas, Highgate Road

Conservation Area: Dartmouth Park (CA9)

Detail about property:

GV II Two pairs of linked semi-detached villas. Mid C19. Colour rendered brick with stucco dressings and bands to upper floors. Angles have clasping pilasters, ground floor rusticated, second of Ionic type; paired to party walls. Slated hipped roofs with long slab chimney-stacks on the party walls.

Three storeys and semi-basements. Two windows each plus one window each in narrow two-storey linking bay. Round-arched entrances with rusticated voussoirs. Each has a ground floor canted bay rising from the basement and having rusticated mullions with keystones to windows with parapet having a continuous band. Between Nos. 4 and 5 a bowed three-light window. Casements to upper floors architraved; first floor eared with cornice and sill brackets, second floor with sill brackets.

Justification for proposed works (2024/2964/L):

As you can see from the details about the property on the official listing, the door and window that I seek to replace are not mentioned. They lead out onto a roof terrace which sits above a two-storey extension at the rear of 4 Oak Court, which is not also not mentioned in the official listing. However, having consulted the planning records, I cannot see any details about when this extension was done, but I did consult the Conservation Area plan (CA9) and found the following details about rear extensions:

Within the conservation area there are many interesting examples of historic rear elevations, many of which are exposed to public views from the surrounding streets. The original historic pattern of rear elevations within a street or group of buildings is an integral part of the character of the area and as such rear extensions will not be acceptable where they would diverge significantly from the historic pattern.

I can only assume then that this extension was done with due permissions and approval at the time, but I do not believe that this extension and thereby my door and window were not part of the original design for the building, but one of the area's characteristic rear elevations added at a later date. If you survey the rear elevation of 3-6 Oak Court (see drawing PL08 in 2005/5267/P), you will see that it is the only rear extension and so there are no other roof terraces or doors leading onto them. However, there are planning records (2005/5267/P) relating to changes to a window and a

door at the rear of 4D Oak Court, a ground-floor property that is at the base of this two-storey extension. Aside from the front elevation windows being recently replaced on throughout 3-6 Oak Court (2019/4889/P), this is the most relevant planning application. If you consult the drawings in 2005/5267/P, you will see on Page 5 that a door very similar to the one proposed in my application was installed, again on the rear elevation of the building. It should be noted that the other application, 2019/4889/P, which was predominantly about replacing the windows on the front elevation, also included replacing the French doors at the rear of 3, 5 and 6 Oak Court (again, see drawing PL08). I'm unsure why the door I am seeking to replace was not also done, perhaps because it is not an original feature and not a 'French door' as stipulated in the plans. Again, in the drawing PL08 in 2019/4889/P, you can see the current state of the rear elevation, which shows the door at the rear of 4D at the bottom, the new French doors, and my existing door. You will note that my existing door does not match the others, and this is just one of the reason for its replacement.

NB. when consulting drawing PL08 in 2019/4889/P, No. 3 Oak Court is on the far left and No. 6 is on the far right, with the 'C' flats at the top, Bs below that, then A, and D at the bottom.

The existing door at the rear of my flat, 4B Oak Court, requires replacement partly due to a poor visual and thereby historic fit with the rest of the rear elevation of 3-6 Oak Court, but also because it is poorly insulated, due to an unsealed fit and single-glazed glass. This is leading to cold air entering, warm air escaping, and condensation on the glass when it's cold outside, leading to cracking paint and mould. In addition, the fanlight above it is fixed and cannot be opened, meaning that the only way for the room to be aired is by opening the door, which is a security risk; not doing this only further encourages the mould. In the plans for refitting French doors on 3, 5, and 6 Oak Court (2019/4889/P), I could not see mention of the type of glass, but all of the new windows in these works were double-glazed 14mm slimline glass, which should justify the use of the same in this new window and door; the current plans submitted do not refer to 14mm slimline glass, but the supplier have confirmed that this is the type of glass that will be used (a contract stating this can be provided).

The door and window are being manufactured by the London Door Company (www.londondoor.co.uk) who specialise in period English doors, and it will be made of a wood compound called Accoya. The design provided was based on a request for something in keeping with a mid-Victorian building. Measurements of the proposed door are detailed in the design already provided (Proposed design at rear of 4B Oak Court). More exact measurements and annotated drawings will be provided after a site survey by the London Door Company, and so a detailed comparison of the dimensions of existing door with the proposed door will only be possible after this visit; it will be understandable if approval is subject to this more detailed information. The proposed door differs from the current one since it has a single piece of glass, rather than 9 small panels. In addition, the design has just one panel below it as opposed to 6, in keeping with the single pane of glass above. I do not believe that the existing door is in keeping with others in the building, which includes the all-glass French doors (3 or 4 glass panes per door) and the door into the rear of 4D (two panes of glass above two wood panels). For instance, the existing door has curved glass at the top of the door, something not seen in all of the rest of the glass fittings at the rear of 3-6 Oak Court. In addition, if you compare the elevations of 3-4 Oak Court and 5-6 Oak Court, you will note that all the glass fittings in 3-4 Oak Court have fewer subdivisions, leading to larger pieces of glass; again, the existing door design does not fit with this pattern. I also believe that the proposed design will fit with many of the glass fittings throughout 3-4 and also 5-6 Oak Court. For instance, the rear windows on the extended section of 4A Oak Court (one floor up from the bottom) are single panes of glass, and the glass in the proposed door (roughly 600mm x 1000mm) will also be comparable in size to those

in the large windows at the rear of 3A and 4A (one floor up from the bottom). In addition, the combination of the proposed window and the door glass below it will be very comparable to the windows at the rear of 5D and 6D (bottom floor).

Regarding the proposed window, replacing the fanlight above the door, you can see that it look extremely similar to the current design leading to little harm to the existing look of the building. I do not believe that the fact that it will be openable damages the historic look of the building.

Considering how the proposed design fits in with the other fixture at the rear of 4B Oak Court, a large sash window, it is noteworthy that the proposed glass in the door (roughly 600mm x 1000mm) will be very comparable to one of the 4 pieces of glass in the sash window next to it, each 550mm x 8700mm); I believe this is a strong argument for a single piece of glass of this size, rather than two or more panes. In addition, having a single panel below the glass in the proposed door will internally mirror the wood panel below the sash window in the room next door to it (see attached picture labelled 'Panelling below sash window in next door room at rear of 4B Oak Court'). I will note though that the internal doors of the flat have two panels below them, and the design could be adapted to match this. However, I think all evidence above justifies a single piece of glass rather than two smaller pieces such as the door at the rear of 4D Oak Court (bottom of the drawing).

Taken together, I believe I have shown the proposed design will not cause harm to the building or total loss of significance to its historic characteristics, in fact I think I have proved that the proposed design will bring it closer in line with the building's features. And so, in line with National Planning Policy Framework, I believe that I have described the significance of any heritage assets affected and shown how the building will benefit from this work.