

Application for Planning Permission for: -
Rear Extension, Roof Extension
and associated works at:

12 Modbury Gardens,
London NW5 3QE

Design & Access Statement

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1.0 Buildings Description and Site Context

1.1 12 Modbury Gardens is a terraced property located in Belsize Park, on one of four similar culs-de-sac on the west side of Queens Crescent, towards its southern end and the junction with Prince of Wales Road. The properties on Modbury Gardens and the other mentioned side streets are smaller in scale than the taller Victorian terraced housing along Queens Crescent. To the west of Modbury Gardens is the post-war Maitland Park Estate.

1.2 The narrow roadway and small scale of the properties give the street an intimate and informal atmosphere; the properties are painted different colours which contributes positively to the character and identity of the street. Although some of the architectural detail facing the street has been lost over time, and some of the original windows have been replaced, number 12 is one of the houses that benefits from its period-correct detailing remaining largely intact.

1.3 12 Modbury Gardens has three storeys, comprising lower ground, upper ground, and first floor levels. The property has been extended to the rear at lower ground and raised ground level since the property was built: a two storey part width extension dating from perhaps the late 1960s, and a glazed infill which was subject of a planning approval in 2005. The street elevation is in terracotta colour painted render, and the rear elevations in yellow London stock brickwork. Pitched roof slopes to the original London pattern roof are covered in natural slates; flat and monopitch roof slopes to the 1950s extension are in asphalt. The house as existing measures about 142 square metres gross internal area.



Google Earth aerial view of the site and its surroundings

1.4 The property is in use class C3. It is currently separated into two self contained apartments, but it is not clear if formal approval to subdivide the dwellinghouse was ever applied for or granted. The building is not statutorily listed and the site is not in a conservation area. There do not appear to be any noteworthy site specific planning policies.

2.0 Planning History

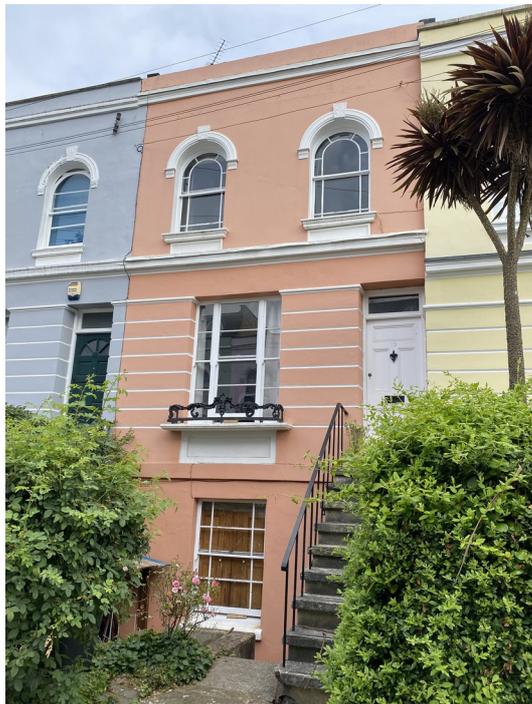
2.1 An online search of Camden planning archives has revealed one historic planning application on file, with none on record since 2010:

2004/5362/P – granted 3 Feb 2005

Construction of a glazed lower ground floor extension at the rear of the property

2.2 There is no record in the online archives of applications for consent to construct the presumed 1960s two storey rear extension, or for internal alterations to subdivide the original dwellinghouse into two apartments.

3.0 Photographs



Existing street elevation of house



Existing rear garden



View of nos. 8-12 Modbury Gardens



View of nos. 13 & 14 Modbury Gardens



View towards rear of site



View of rear of nos. 11 & 12 Modbury Gardens



View of of existing rear extension



View of rear of no. 13 Modbury Gardens

4.0 The Proposed Development

4.1 The planning application seeks permission to extend the property in two areas – at the rear, and at roof level.

4.2 The proposed rear extension is not excessively sized, and is replacing and rationalising previous extensions; as such it will add only five square metres to the gross internal area of the property.

4.3 The proposed mansard roof extension follows an established pattern of development in the street; the intention is to replicate the appearance and dimensions of appropriate examples of this historical development type as seen on nos. 1, 3 and 5 Modbury Gardens opposite.

4.4 A rear facing roof terrace at first floor level is proposed which again follows examples of recent development in the immediate neighbourhood; the size and location of the terrace mirrors existing terraces at nos. 5 & 6 Modbury Gardens, which were the subject of relatively recent approvals from Camden. No. 13 Modbury Gardens immediately adjacent to the development site also benefits from two rear facing roof terraces, one at first floor level and the other at upper ground floor level.

4.5 The separation between rear elevations of the northern terrace at Modbury Gardens and the opposite southern terrace on St. Ann's Gardens is relatively large at approximately 30 metres, which substantially exceeds the 18 metre separation distance contained within Camden's Amenity CPG. There are also a pair of large mature willow trees immediately behind 12 Modbury Gardens. Translucent glass privacy screens will also be provided to both property boundaries to shield direct views of nos. 11 and 13 Modbury Gardens from any occupants on the terrace. As such it is considered that there is adequate separation for the purposes of maintaining neighbours' privacy.

4.6 It is also proposed to carry out internal alterations in connection with a comprehensive refurbishment and upgrading of the accommodation, and to reconnect the lower ground and upper ground floors thereby reinstating the property's original status as a single family dwelling.

4.7 The proposed project will further include improvements to the building's energy performance, sustainability and accessibility. The principal motivation of the works is to improve the existing living accommodation to better suit the needs of the applicants' family.

4.8 The size of the proposed extensions is in keeping with the scale of the original dwellinghouse, and of similar dimensions to recently approved extensions at other nearby properties on the same street. As such it is not considered that the principle of the extensions should be contentious in any way.

4.9 The rear extension will be constructed in matching yellow London stock brick and will have a flat roof in grey single ply roofing membrane of similar appearance to the existing asphalt. The external terrace will be covered in porcelain paving slabs with an inset walk-on glass rooflight; the adjoining flat roof will be covered in a wildflower semi-intensive green roof system, for visual interest and biodiversity benefits.

4.10 The mansard roof extension will be faced to front and rear in natural slates to match the materiality of the existing London roof. Party walls will be extended upwards as required in yellow London stock brickwork to match the existing rear elevation.

4.11 The proposals include alterations affecting the street elevation of the property. The existing utilitarian plain metal railings and precast concrete step treads will be replaced with more appropriate historical details. Dedicated storage compartments for refuse bins and cycles will be constructed in timber slats. Planting beds will be provided to grow hedging just inside the railings on the pavement line, with a second hedge at the step down to the front lightwell.

4.12 The rear garden will also be altered, with some limited excavation needed adjacent to the house to create a more usable external amenity area accessed from the lower ground floor kitchen and dining room. The ground level at the rear of the site will be maintained as existing to avoid disturbing root protection zones of the existing willow trees.

4.13 The construction of floor, walls and roof of the extensions will exceed current standards of insulation and construction technology. The existing walls of the property will also be upgraded with thermal insulation prior to re-plastering, and the existing timber sash windows will be replaced with new period-correct traditionally weighted sliding sash windows in painted hardwood, incorporating slim double glazed units.

4.14 The building's services will be renewed, with the choice of heat source to be confirmed at a later date, but the applicants intend to maximise the building's sustainability credentials wherever possible. Lighting will be provided by low energy LED fittings.

4.15 The proposed works will therefore result in a significant improvement in the energy efficiency of the property.

5.0 Planning Policy

5.1 In preparing the application, reference has been made to the following:

Camden Local Plan [2017]

Policy H3 Protecting Existing Homes

Policy H6 Housing Choice and Mix

Policy H7 Large and Small Homes

Policy A1 Managing the Impact of Development

Policy A3 Biodiversity

Policy A5 Basements

Policy D1 Design

Policy D2 Heritage

Policy CC1 Climate Change Mitigation

Policy CC2 Adapting to Climate Change

Policy CC3 Water and Flooding

Policy CC5 Waste

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Home Improvements CPG (2021)

Amenity CPG [2021]

Biodiversity CPG [2018]

Basements CPG [2021]

Camden Climate Action Plan 2020-2025 [2020]

Mayor of London's Housing Design Quality & Standards LPG [2023]

5.2 The proposed alterations are considered to comply with the Council's and other applicable policies, and to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the application property, the surrounding area, and the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

5.2 The acceptability in principle of the two existing self contained apartments being combined into a single family dwellinghouse is set out in paragraph 3.75 of the Local Plan.

5.3 As the proposed extensions are modestly sized and mirror existing extensions already constructed at other properties on the street, the proposal is not considered to have any adverse effect on the character, setting, context, form and scale of neighbouring buildings.

5.4 The opportunity is being taken to match existing materials which are an appropriate level of quality, and replace or upgrade those which are dilapidated or of poor quality, while maintaining the same general appearance.

6.0 Trees

6.1 The proposals have been carefully considered in respect of their impacts on existing trees on site and off site at the rear of the property. Refer to the tree survey report prepared by arboricultural consultants ROAVR, which is included with the application documents, for further details.

6.2 Existing trees T1, T2, and T3, comprising two large willow trees just outside the site boundaries (T1 & T3) and a pear tree in the rear garden of the development site, will be retained and protected during the course of works.

6.3 A new specimen tree will be planted in the front garden to add visual interest and amelioration to the street elevation.

7.0 Flood Risk

7.1 The site is not in an identified Local Flood Risk Zone as shown on Camden's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment map [2014]. Camden South (covering the area from Belsize Park through Camden to central London) is considered to be of much lower risk of flooding compared to areas in the north of the borough (Camden Flood Risk Management Strategy document [2013]).

As such the proposals are not considered to need any special precautions against flooding, or to contribute significantly to any existing flood risk.

8.0 Access

8.1 Existing access to the building is via a flight of nine steps at the front of the building from pavement level up to the main entrance, with a further step up at the entrance door threshold.

8.2 A separate entrance to the lower ground floor is via a flight of four steps down from pavement level to the front lightwell, with a further step up at the entrance door threshold.

8.3 The existing house is subdivided into two separate apartments; each has a fairly complex internal arrangement with steps separating a number of different levels.

8.4 Camden Local Plan policy C6 expects that all buildings and places should meet the highest practicable standards of accessible and inclusive design so they can be used safely, easily and with dignity by all.

8.5 Within the context of the project and the need to maintain historic character and appearance of the building's street facing elevation, it is not considered possible or desirable to attempt to provide level access into the building from pavement level.

8.6 Within the building, accessibility is to be improved by rationalising each floor onto a single unified level, opening up the floor plans to provide more generously sized spaces, and increasing provision of sanitary accommodation to the upper floor levels, so that each bedroom benefits from an adjacent bathroom or shower room.

8.7 Internal doors will be sized according to guidance set out in Building Regulations part M.

9.0 Summary

The enclosed planning application seeks consent for extension, alteration and improvement works to an existing terraced residential property. The existing internal arrangement subdividing the house into two apartments is to revert to the original status of the property as a single family dwellinghouse.

The design of the extensions and alterations have been carefully considered to respect and maintain the character of the local area and protect the amenity of local residents.

We trust that you will be able to support this application. If any further information is required, please contact Gavin Challand at gavin@catfishstudio.ltd.uk or on 07989 414971.