

Heritage Statement

21 St. Marks Crescent, London, NW1 7TU:

Installation of a single storey detached garden room to the rear garden

Background & The Site

The application site is a four-storey terraced building with raised ground floor. The house dates from the mid 19th century and is among the mid-terraces of the houses on the eastern side of the road.

The property is located within Camden Council's Primrose Hill Conservation Area. The property is not a locally or statutory listed building however, Camden Council's Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement classifies St Marks Crescent as a 'Secondary Road' in terms of contribution to the character of the area.

The site is in flood zone 1 and has a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea.

Planning History

There is a relatively limited planning history associated with the site in recent years, with the most recent applications relating to tree works and a Householder application. Recent applications that are considered to be of relevance are set out below;

- Application Ref: 2018/4365/P
- **Proposal** Erection of full-width single storey lower ground floor extension with rooflight and green roof, two storey glazed half width extension at ground floor. Creation of roof terrace at ground floor with associated opening. Installation of roof lights. Demolition of existing two storey closet wing extension.
- Granted: 04-12-2018.

The Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a single storey detached garden room within the rear gardens of 21 St Mark's Crescent. The rear garden is landscaped with two separate terraces one at lower ground floor level and one at higher level towards the rear. The rear garden is approximately 14m deep, tapers slightly to 5m width at the rear, east facing and sloping downwards towards the house. The garden is enclosed by 6ft timber fencing to all three boundaries. It is proposed that the flat roofed single-storey garden structure is to be located at the end of the rear garden.

The proposed garden room is rectangular in shape with the following modest dimensions; 3.5m x 3.7 m. There is no roof overhangs protruding from the building line. The proposed overall roof height is 2.5m from ground level. The total floorspace proposed is 12.95 sqm.

British made structural insulated panels (SIPs) will be used for the structure with a cedar clad finish, similar in style to the existing wooden fencing, Glazing is limited to a single larger window facing the dwelling with a small side facing window and a flat rooflight allowing daylight to the rear of the garden room whilst limiting any overlooking. The entry door is concealed in a flush finish to match the timber cladding. The roof will be finished with a grey rubberised single ply EPDM coating which will not omit glare to surrounding dwellings.

Given the nature of the proposed garden room is considered acceptable in land use terms. The room is not to be used as separate habitable accommodation or for business use, the space will be used as a home office and garden room and will be incidental to the use of the main house.

The outbuilding is to be located at the end of the garden away from neighbouring residential windows and will be screened by the existing boundary walls, fencing and vegetation.

Primrose Hill Conservation Area

The Primrose Hill Conservation Area was designated on 1st October 1971 and extended to include the north part of Erskine Road on the 18th June 1985. The designation report notes that the character of the area “is made up of a series of well laid out Victorian terraces. It is residential in character.

The character of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area is determined to a large extent by the fine examples of 20th century, predominately residential buildings. St Mark’s Crescent is located in sub area one of the ‘Regent’s Park Road South’ of the conservation area statement.

On 3rd March 1983 Permitted Development Rights relating to single family dwelling houses and minor operations, were withdrawn by an Article 4 Direction under the Town and Country Planning General Development Orders 1977 (now updated as General Permitted Development Order 1995).

Other Material Considerations

Other material considerations at local level include:

National Planning Policy Framework (2018) The London Plan (2016)
Camden Local Plan (2017)

- A1 Managing the Impact of Development
- D1 Design
- D2 Heritage
- A3 Biodiversity
- CC2 – Adapting to climate change
- Policy CC3 – Water and Flooding

Camden Planning Guidance:

- CPG 1 – Design
- CPG 6 – Amenity
- SPG 3 – Sustainability

Primrose Hill Conservation area statement (2000)

Planning Policy Assessment

The main considerations relevant to the proposal are the impact of the design on the host dwelling and wider conservation area, impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and the arboricultural implications of the development in relation to the proposed foundations and proximity to any mature trees in the neighbouring gardens.

Design

The garden room addition has been carefully designed to ensure that it integrates successfully and becomes subservient to the main dwelling and the gardens in general. This serves to respect the character of the area and neighbouring properties.

The London Plan Policy D3 'Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach' seeks to ensure that all development makes the best use of land whilst enhancing local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape. The policy also seeks to maximise opportunities for urban greening and high sustainability standards.

The London Plan policy D4 'Delivering good design' requires that all development delivers high quality design and place-making.

The design strategy ensures that the garden room forms an appropriate relationship with the host dwelling and with the rear garden and trees. A natural palette is proposed with timber panelling, concealed timber clad door and dark grey window frames. The high quality, modern yet sympathetic design fits within the garden setting without harming the significance of the Conservation Area.

The scale of the proposed garden room is appropriate to its surroundings ensuring the retention of a significant area of garden. Given the unobtrusive location, size and materials, it would have minimal impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding Conservation Area and would not detract from it. The development cannot be seen from within the public realm and will be of a contemporary design to avoid pastiche of the existing.

Extensions to buildings in conservation areas should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. They should in general be confined to the rear or least important facades and should not upset the scale or proportions of the building or adversely affect the character, appearance or setting of neighbouring buildings.

The applicants are committed to achieving high quality design whilst respecting the local heritage and character of the area.

The proposed development has been designed to integrate into its setting in a manner that respects the character and appearance of the conservation area. Furthermore, the proposed outbuilding has been designed with materials that resonate with its garden setting, enhancing the appearance of the garden space, and therefore preserve and enhance the character, setting, and appearance of the conservation area.

Landscape and Tree Impact Assessment

It is acknowledged that trees, whether on the streets, in parks or within gardens are an integral and historic component of Primrose Hill Conservation Area townscape and bring an enormous amenity value.

The impact on trees has been considered. The assessment of the impacts of the proposals on the existing trees concludes that no mature, veteran or ancient trees, and no trees of high landscape or biodiversity value

are to be removed. The footprint of the garden room is almost entirely to match the area of the rear paved terraced area. Thereby, none of the main arboricultural features of the site are to be removed and therefore no alteration to the main arboricultural features of the site. The proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the local landscape or the conservation area.

The proposed foundations will not have a negative impact on tree roots. The proposed ground screw pile foundation design is designed to ensure that the ground screws can be adapted to accommodate any significant roots, which will ensure that no significant roots are severed.

Amenity

The proposed garden room is located to the rear of the garden with glazing facing back towards the main house. Due to its single storey nature and location at the end of the garden it is not considered that the proposed garden room will have a significant impact on the amenity of adjacent occupiers. The proposed use of the outbuilding as a home office and garden room would not result in an unacceptable level of noise or light, and there will be no increase in overlooking, loss of daylight/sunlight and an increased sense of enclosure in relation to existing residential neighbouring buildings or the host dwelling.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would result in no harm to neighbour amenity.

Energy and Sustainable Design

The development will enable the extended lifetime of the buildings and spaces and respond to the likely risks and consequences of climate change by incorporating principles of sustainable design, including:

1. use of high-quality durable materials and detail;
2. providing flexible, high quality floorspace;
3. optimising resource and water efficiency;

The proposed garden room incorporates the above principles of sustainable design using the highest quality materials from sustainable sources. The sustainably sourced high specification SIPs allow for the lowest U-values meaning that the garden room is environmentally friendly from both a build and energy use perspective. Additionally, a water butt will be fitted to support a sustainable drainage system.

Research conducted by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) has determined that the most cost-effective way of reducing energy consumption is through improvements to the building fabric. The garden room will be constructed in high specification SIPs panels which will meet if not exceed the building fabric requirements set out in Part L of the Building Regulations to minimize the energy consumption of the development. The space will benefit from passive solar gain throughout the mornings whilst natural shading from the existing trees on the eastern boundaries will limit overheating in the warmer summer months. The garden room will have openable windows and benefiting from layouts that facilitate cross ventilation. Low energy light fittings will be installed throughout. It is considered that the proposals accord with the objectives of the NPPF and the London Plan by promoting a highly sustainable form of development.

Conclusion

In summary, the proposal represents a well-considered, high-quality design that is appropriate for the local context, the proposed works will enhance the appearance, functionality and desirability of the site whilst respecting the Conservation Area.

There would be no overshadowing or increased overlooking of adjacent properties, nor would there be any detrimental impact on the views of adjoining properties or their amenity generally. The impact on existing trees affected as part of the proposal is limited. It is considered that the development is compatible with the settlement's character and setting.

Given the above and the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the current National Policy Framework and the onus on councils to grant consent unless it can be demonstrated that there are adverse impacts which significantly outweigh the benefits, the applicant hopes the Local Authority will look favourably on this application.