

Design and Access Statement

March 2014



32 West Hill Park
London N6

Introduction:

This design and access statement is submitted in support of an application for Planning Permission made by Mr Jonathan Morgan for the installation of a velux roof light above the stairwell of 32 West Hill Park, Highgate, London N6.

The site:

32 West Hill Park is located within the West Hill Park estate. The estate was designed by Ted Levy of Ted Levy Benjamin and Partners in the mid 1970's. It is a private estate of 44 houses and 8 flats close to Highgate village and Hamsptead Heath. The estate is characterised by high quality architecture combined with lush planting and generous common spaces. There are no through roads and little traffic. The estate is set back from the adjacent roads and the houses within are hardly visible from the public highway. 32 West Hill Park is not visible from the public highway at all.

The estate lies within the Highgate Conservation Area, and benefits from a high level of statutory protection. This protection, together with the obligations set out in each resident's Deed of Covenant, has ensured that the character and appearance of the estate has remained largely unaltered since it was built.

When West Hill Park was added to the Highgate Conservation Area in 1978, Camden's supporting statement contained the following reference to West Hill Park:

"West Hill Park by Ted Levy, Benjamin and Partners is an example of low level high density brick and concrete housing carefully sculptured to the falling terrain and screened in a manner that makes it almost invisible from the surrounding public spaces. The standards of maintenance and control of the buildings and landscape within this estate should be a model to others."

The Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy adopted 4 October 2007 states:

"To the south of Merton Lane is West Hill Park, an estate of 42 dwellings by Ted Levy, Benjamin & Partners. The estate is an interesting late 20th century example of low-level high density brick and concrete housing. The distinctive neo-Vernacular, low-key, dark brick buildings with monopitched roofs, step down the hillside in the tradition of courtyard houses. The standards of maintenance, the control of development and the landscape quality within the estate are the result of restrictive covenants. Much of the frontage to Merton Lane is a brick wall, interspersed with prefabricated concrete fencing and earth banks. There is an abundance of planting screening the houses, for instance oak trees and laurels. The estate's internally illuminated box signage facing Merton Lane is visually intrusive. In recent years electronic gates have been installed at the main entrances for security purposes."



Front elevation – 32 West Hill Park



Rear elevation – 32 West Hill Park

As stated before, 32 West Hill Park is not visible from a public highway. The front elevation photograph is taken from the front garden of the house and the rear elevation from the communal space within the estate.



View of stairwell at 32 West Hill Park (1, 2 & 3)



Within 32 West Hill Park, the stairwell has no windows within and it relies on borrowed light from windows in adjacent spaces. This has resulted in a quite dark area within the house and one that requires the use of artificial lighting.



Identical roof light installed in the same position at 34 (left) and 33 (right) West Hill Park

Design:

The proposed design of a 114 x 118 cm Velux roof light has been proposed as it will dramatically increase the amount of natural light within the space and therefore create a brighter, day lit space.

The use of natural daylight instead of artificial light that is currently proposed will also provide a more sustainable approach to the lighting space.

A Velux window has been chosen because these sit almost flush to the rest of the roof and therefore have the least possible visual impact. This can be seen in the photographs above of the same size and type roof light that has already been installed in next door property (#33) and the next one on the estate (#34).

Velux windows have been used extensively within the estate and we believe are in character with the original design.

The proposed design will not be visible on either the front or the side elevations.

