

Ariel Photograph - 87 Highgate West Hill: red



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
87 Highgate West Hill/ 6 Holly Terrace
London, N6 6LU

August 2012



SQUARE FEET ARCHITECTS

8a Baynes Mews, London NW3 5BH . 0207 431 4500 . studio@squarefeetarchitects.co.uk . www.squarefeetarchitects.co.uk

Introduction

This is a supporting statement for a Planning Application for the rebuilding and renovation of the garage structure and covered walkway at the above address. This report is to be read alongside the submitted set of planning drawings and additional information.



Context

1.1 Existing Site

The property, a single family dwelling, is second to the end of a listed terrace row within Highgate Village Conservation Area. The row which forms Holly Terrace was built in the early 19th Century, with the garages to the rear built at the beginning of the 20th Century. The main houses and original entrance to the terrace are listed - grade II.

The houses were originally accessed from the south as indicated on the birdseye views, with the main access and garages to the rear coming into play with the advent of the car.

No. 87 is a 2 storey building with mansard roof, attic and semi basement. The main house has been added to over the years with a number of rear extensions. The two storey garage and covered canopy walkway (from Highgate West Hill entrance to rear house entrance) were added in the 1920's.

As the garage was built before 1949 it is automatically included in the listing of the main house (as advised by the duty planner 23.02.12).



View along Highgate West Hill - 'rear' garage and entrances

No.87 garage assumed to have been built 1920's. The whole of this street elevation has very much a 'back door' feel with the various design/ period elements tied together through colour and finish.

No. 87 street elevation of garage and entrance doors



1.2 Existing Building

The proposals here relate to the garage structure, which fronts onto Highgate West Hill and is assumed to date from 1920's. Following a Pre-Planning site visit by officer Alan Wito it was advised that the garage is of special interest, although this mainly lies in the ornate facade facing onto Highgate Hill. In this proposal we are also looking at the glazed walkway.

The existing garage is two storeys, providing level off-street car access and due to the natural topography, a storey below.

The existing structure is in a poor state of repair and a structural engineer has assessed it as being unsafe. We understand that the previous owner of the house had a chauffeur who washed their car everyday in the garage and without proper drainage in the floor, has badly corroded the existing steels and caused them to expand, causing significant cracking in the brickwork and windows to fall out. The walkway is also in a poor state; cracked glass, badly rusting steel structure and rotting timber encasing.



Covered walkway canopy - in disrepair



Covered walkway canopy - in disrepair



No. 87 internal courtyard garage elevation



Upper garage interior - structural damage



Upper garage interior - structural damage

1.3 Consultation

Planning

Square Feet Architects have worked with the Camden planning team to develop the current scheme and resolve issues identified at the pre-planning meeting.

Working with Camden we aim to achieve a positive outcome in the current planning application.

05.07.12 Pre-planning site meeting with Alan Wito, MSc, BSc (Hons), IHBC (Senior Planner_Consevation).

11.07.12 Pre-planning written advice from Alan Wito (see advise attached at end of this document).

Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service

As part of the Pre-Planning response, we were advised to contact the above Service as our site falls within an Archaeological Priority Area and because we are proposing to lower our ground level by approx 1m. We have spoken with Kim Stabler, North + West London Archaeological Advisor and await their input as they deem necessary.

Heritage Investigation

As part of the Pre-Planning submission we commissioned a Heritage survey, which we include as part of this submission also.

Building Control

We will appoint an adviser to work on this property.

Structural Engineer

Due to the sensitive nature of this project, we have engaged the services of a Structural Engineer at this early stage. The following email extract from a local Structural Engineer regarding the current state of the garage building.

'I am writing to you in my capacity as a structural engineer and would like to confirm our discussions on site regarding the existing two storey garage block.

We would assume the building was built approximately 60 years ago given its form of construction and weathering. The building's original / current structural detailing would give the building a design life of ten years from build date, due to its lack of protection against the elements. There is significant levels of damage to the load bearing masonry walls and floor structure at street level due to weathering.

The floor structure at street level is 'filler joist' construction, a series of steel joists with concrete infill. The flanges of these steel beams give the structure its strength and these have an extremely high level of corrosion. We could not justify this floor structure given the level of corrosion and recommend the slab be demolished and rebuilt to modern standards.

From our desktop study it appears that the masonry walls to the superstructure are on shallow footings and would be affected by ground movement, which would explain some of the cracking in the external walls. The corrosion present in the slab listed above has caused expansion in the slab causing it to push on the wall, forcing it out and the wall is no longer plumb. In order to achieve best practice we would recommend these masonry walls be taken down and rebuilt true, on mass concrete footings to a greater depth than the existing footings, with the original footing broken out. The original brickwork could be re-used to rebuild the garage block if required.

In the short term, we would recommend propping the existing street level floor slab with 'acro-props' until it can be rebuilt.'

John Cox (for and on behalf of John Cox Associates, 341B Kentish Town Road, London NW5 2TJ. 020 7284 2613)

Basement Impact Study

We have commissioned this report as advised by the Pre-planning Officer and included it as part of this submission.

1.4 Design

The design intent is to rebuild the garage in a manner sympathetic to the existing building. The facade to Highgate West Hill will remain the same - the only change here being a new automated garage door. All efforts will be made to retain this facade intact, minor repairs and redecoration will take place as part of the works.

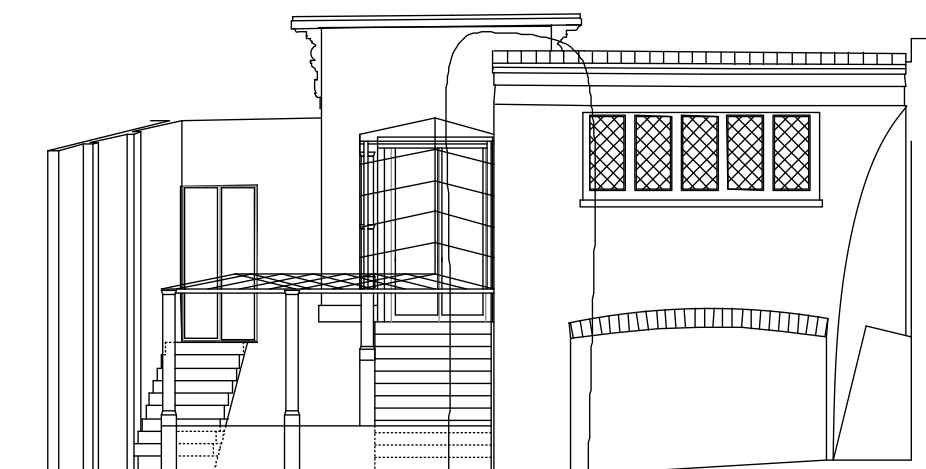
The proposal to rebuild the garage has been strongly informed by an initial structural investigation and comment (previous section). The Structural Engineer has advised that the structure is unsafe and would have to be demolished within the next 10 years.

The SE report also advises that the lower ground floor needs to be lowered in order to reinforce the existing retaining wall and buttresses. We propose to take advantage of this and create a useable space on the lower ground floor with sufficient head room for the client to use as a gym.

The covered canopy to the walkway from Highgate West Hill street entrance to rear house entrance is currently in a state of disrepair. It is proposed that the canopy and its structure be removed as part of these works and replaced with a lighter, more easily maintained structure.



Above: Existing street facade 'rear' onto Highgate West Hill.



Left: Existing courtyard facing garage elevation.

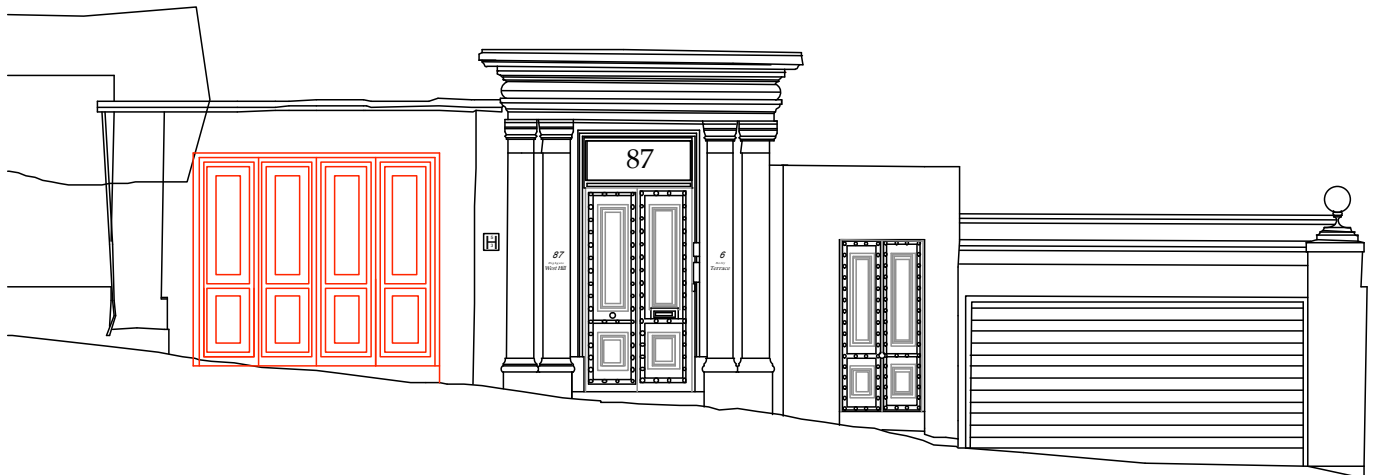
Proposal

2.1 Proposed

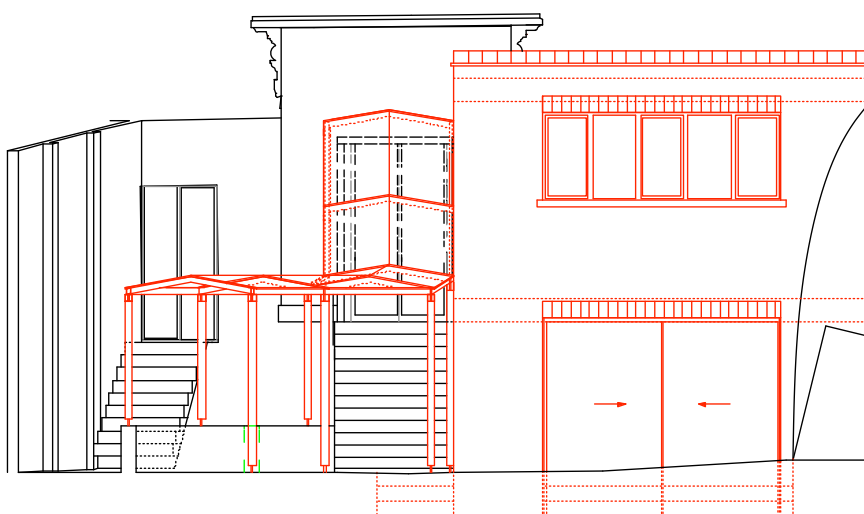
The proposal covers the demolition and rebuild of the two storey garage and the covered canopy walkway. The proposals include;

- Retention of Highgate West Hill street facade and ironwork. This will be renovated as necessary to address movement and will be redecorated to match existing.
- Retention of buttressing and retaining walls (2no. sides of the building) - Highgate West Hill facade and boundary wall to no.88. Facade to be propped and retained throughout works, the contractor and structural engineer, once appointed, shall provide the necessary method statements.
- Demolition and rebuilding (on the same footprint) of the walls and floors behind the facade. We propose to reuse as far as possible the existing bricks and source any extras required to match existing.
- New doors and windows to replace existing. These will in the main be in the same position as existing. They will be timber framed and double glazed.
- New garage door (either side sliding or up and over) to street facade. The new doors will mimic the four panel design of the original albeit in a more refined manner.
- Lowering of lower ground floor of garage to create sufficient head room to be used as a gym
- Demolition and replacement of the covered canopy walkway. The columns on the side onto the garden area will be ground bearing instead of being supported onto a dwarf wall.

The proposals are being conceived to match the existing as far as possible and give the structure a new lease of life.



*Above: Proposed street facade 'rear' onto Highgate West Hill.
Facade retained, renovated and redecorated as required to match existing.
New 4no. panelled garage door.*



*Left: Proposed courtyard facing garage elevation.
2no. courtyard facing external walls rebuilt on same footprint as existing.
New timber framed window and doors in existing openings.
New glazed covered walkway on the same footprint as existing.*

2.2 Access

The proposals neither worsen or improve current provisions for access.

Appendix

Pre-Planning Written Response

11.07.12 email

Thank you for meeting me at the property on the 5th of July, it was most useful in helping me assess your pre application proposals.

The first aspect to consider in your proposals is the demolition of the existing structure behind a retained façade. The existing structure appears to date from the 1920s and is of special interest although this lies mainly in the ornate façade facing onto Highgate West Hill. An inspection of the structure behind revealed that it is in a poor condition with extensive cracking and significant bowing in the outer walls. You advised that a structural survey had been undertaken advising the demolition of the structure. From what I saw, providing that the demolition can be justified, there would be no objection to the loss of the building behind the façade. The part of the building lost is of limited interest and the amount of work required to repair and retain the structure would be unlikely to be proportionate to its historic interest.

If an application is submitted you would be required to submit information regarding how the façade would be retained and supported during works.

In terms of the impact on the listed building there would be no objection to the lowering of the garden level to form a gym. However this is within an Archaeological Priority Area so excavation downwards may uncover remains. You are advised to contact the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service for further advice. Their contact details can be found here:

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/advice/our-planning-role/greater-london-archaeology-advisory-service/>

Additionally in terms of the planning permission you would be required to carry out Stage 1 Basement Impact Assessment as a minimum. Further information can be found in Camden Planning Guidance 4 which can be found here on our website:

<http://camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/planning-and-built-environment/two/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents/camden-planning-guidance.en>

The replacement building would match the existing foot print and height and in those terms would be acceptable. In your supporting statement you state that your aim is to re-use the existing bricks if possible. This approach is supported although if this is not possible then new stock bricks would be appropriate. The reinstatement of the ironwork to the roof is also supported.

Although the design is more modern it still retains a modest character which could work. However the design needs to be improved to respect the setting of the listed building. Detailing of the windows, reveals and lintels needs to be carefully considered to avoid a generic appearance.

It is also proposed to replace the canopy which links the Highgate West Hill entrance to the house. An inspection of this shows that it is a modern structure which has been detailed to appear historic. A proposal to replace this would not raise an objection subject to the design.

I did not inspect the garage door facing onto Highgate West Hill but if it is of historic interest then it should be retained.

The works you propose would require an application for both planning permission and listed building consent.

Please note that the advice set out in this e-mail is the advice of an officer and is without prejudice to further consideration of this matter by the Development Management Section or to the Council's formal decision.

I hope that this advice is helpful but if you require any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

Alan Wito MSc, BSc (Hons), IHBC
Senior Planner (Conservation)
Regeneration and Planning
Culture and Environment
London Borough of Camden

Telephone: 020 7974 6392

Web: camden.gov.uk