

1276_D&A Statement

Design & Access Statement 63 Quickswood London NW3 Issued for Planning: 26.07.12

1.0 Introduction

This Design & Access statement describes the application site and proposals. It should be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

- 1276_E00 Location / site plan & photographs
- 1276_E01 Existing floor plans
- 1276_E02 Existing elevations & sections
- 1276_P01 Proposed plans
- 1276_P02 Proposed elevations & section

2.0 Site

Quickswood is a sector of the Chalcots Estate, a large estate of family houses built in the 1970's and early 1980s. The Quickswood sector occupies the majority of land bounded by Adelaide Road to the north, Primrose Hill Road to the east, King Henry's Road to the south and Elsworthy Rise to the west.

No. 63 Quickswood is one of a terrace of houses that backs on to Adelaide Road, near to its junction with Primrose Hill Road. The houses here are all three storey, with a split-level internal layout, so that the rear rooms at garden level are approx. 1.35m higher than the entrance level. They have small north facing gardens backing onto Adelaide Road, and benefit from large south facing terraces at roof level.

The majority of houses in this terrace have been adapted in some way since they were built, most alterations having taken place since freeholds of the houses were sold to individual leasehold house owners in the early 1990's. The most common alteration has been conversion of the ground floor garage to a habitable room, and there are a wide variety of window / infill treatments to the houses where garage doors have been replaced. The other significant and common alteration is the addition of an extension to the rear, and again there are a variety of single storey extensions.

3.0 Description of Proposals

This application seeks planning permission for:

1. A new single storey rear extension, and associated works to existing rear elevation and garden, including replacement of timber boundary fence;
2. Alterations to the front elevation at ground level comprising removal of the existing garage door and replacement with new windows, and at roof level comprising new glazed access door and glazed panel adjacent.

There are a number of precedents for the works in various forms in the houses immediately adjacent and nearby.

3.1 New single storey rear extension, and associated works to existing rear elevation and garden, including replacement of timber boundary fence.

The proposal is for a new single storey ground floor full width rear extension with sliding doors opening onto a small courtyard garden. The extension would be 3.7m(d) x 3.0m(h) x 5.5m(w) and as such rear wall and height would align precisely with the recently constructed extension to no 65.

Like the extension at no 65 adjacent, the proposal involves removal of the existing balcony railing at 1st floor window, necessary to achieve a consistent internal floor to ceiling height and to match the roof levels at no 65, so the two extensions read coherently.

Being built between the two existing flank walls of neighbouring extensions, the new extension has very limited external elevation. The external walls will be white rendered blockwork (as at no 65), with a simple pair of polyester powder coated slim section aluminium framed double glazed sliding doors. At roof level there will be a new precast coping (to match no 65), and a single ply membrane flat roof covering, with a simple rectangular rooflight.

Planning permission for similar extensions have been granted at numerous properties facing Adelaide Road, eg nos 45, 47, 55 as well as adjacent houses. The design of this extension complies with the Chalcot Architect's Forum (CAF) Draft design guidance for rear extensions.

3.2 Alterations to the front elevation comprising, at ground level, the replacement of the existing garage door with new windows and a new front door, and at roof terrace level, a new glazed sliding door and glazed side panel.

The proposal is to convert the existing garage room to a habitable room and as part of this it is necessary to improve the thermal performance and introduce glazing in lieu of the garage door. It should be noted the room has not been in use as a garage for some time, and is currently used as a utility room.

The alteration to the elevation has been designed to be as simple as possible, and comprises a single opaque glazed fixed window, with a new opening window in place of the existing fixed light, in line with the horizontal band of windows band above. The design complies with the Chalcot Architect's Forum (CAF) Draft design guidance for garage alterations.

Also at ground level the proposal is to replace the existing narrow double front door arrangement with a single full width timber painted door, as common elsewhere on the Estate.

At roof terrace level (not visible from ground level), the proposal is for replacement of the existing access door to the roof terrace and the blanking fascia panel adjacent, with a glazed sliding door, which will improve thermal efficiency and internal natural light levels to the stairway inside.

4.0 *Planning Considerations*

4.1 Impact on Amenity for Occupiers (SD6)

The proposals will improve the amenity for the occupiers. Whilst the proposal for the extension involves building over more than 50% of the rear garden area, the impact of loss of garden is not considered to be detrimental for the following reasons:

- the north facing aspect means this garden currently gets no sun and is underused;
- the garden faces Adelaide Road, a busy road which is extremely noisy. The extension will provide an acoustically improved habitable space;
- the property already benefits from a generous (20m²) south facing roof terrace for private amenity;
- the property further benefits from the extensive communal garden that are a key feature of the Quickswood estate.

4.2 Impact on Amenity of Neighbours (SD6):

The rear extension proposal does not have significant impact on the amenity of either of the neighbouring properties. Though marginally taller and deeper than the extension at no 61, the extension is the same height and depth as that of no 65. Both neighbours have been consulted on the proposal and support the application in principle.

4.3 Impact on the appearance of the building and character of the area (B1, B6)

The proposed works are part of a scheme for the upgrading and refurbishment of the whole house that is currently in a poor state of repair and will benefit from internal and external redecoration.

The rear extension has been designed to tie in with the neighbouring extension. It would be screened by the rear boundary fence along Adelaide Road and would be only partially visible from the public realm. It will project across the full width of the building, between existing extensions and will help unify this elevation, but its high level of glazing and simple, low profile form mean it will appear as a subordinate element to the terrace.

There are several precedents for the extension design and for the design of the replacement window to the garage. The proposed designs are in accordance with the options detailed in the Chalcot Architect's Forum Draft Design Guidelines.

4.4 Accessibility

No amendments are proposed to the existing access, which is level to the adjacent pavement. It is noted the proposals include a new bedroom and shower at ground floor, which is a significant improvement as there will be an accessible habitable room and shower facility at entrance level.

4.5 Existing Trees (N8)

There are no trees on the property, although there are two large street trees in the pavement in Adelaide Road beyond. However these are some distance away (approx 3.5m from the proposed extension) and as such are considered unlikely to be affected by the proposed extension. (They are a similar distance from the rear of the recent extension of no 65).

The existing retaining wall forming the raised planter at the end of the garden will be slightly adapted, with a design that ensures any tree roots are not affected. Mini piles will be used for the extension foundations, designed to minimize any potential future movement. The existing, dilapidated boundary fence will be replaced.

4.6 Energy Reduction

The existing building was built in the mid 1970's when statutory requirements for energy efficiency were at far lower levels than at present. The works provide the ideal opportunity to carry out significant improvements in terms of increasing its energy efficiency. The new extension will be well insulated to reduce heat loss, and new sliding doors & windows throughout will be double glazed with low E coating to achieve low u-values. Elsewhere the upgrading of the heating system and addition of insulation at roof level will provide significant reduction in energy use. The new opening door at roof level will provide opportunity for secure cooling by stack effect natural ventilation, and additional internal natural light levels.

5.0 *Conclusion*

The provision of an extension is consistent with current UDP policies: SD6 (amenity for occupiers and neighbours), B1 (general design principles), B3 (extensions), N8 (trees), and improves energy use and accessibility. There are a number of precedents for the proposals in various forms, both immediately adjacent and nearby, and the designs comply with the Chalcot Architect's Forum (CAF) Draft Design Guidelines.

On this basis it is recommended that planning permission be granted for the proposals.