

BATHROOM EXTENSION, FLAT 3, 23 HAMPSTEAD HILL GARDENS, LONDON NW3 2PJ.
FOR ANNE-MARIE HURLEY

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

10th July 2012

The proposal contained in this planning application is for the erection of an extension, approximately 7.5m², at first floor level and the creation of a 'juliet' balcony overlooking the garden by lowering the cill of an existing window opening. The object of the proposal is to improve the amenity and practicality of Ms. Hurley's home; providing a more conveniently located and better equipped bathroom and a much needed utility room after the replanning of the existing bathroom.

The proposed extension is to be built on the footprint of accommodation on the two floors below in the 'gap' between the principle volumes of Nos. 21 & 23 Hampstead Hill Gardens. A previous planning application for such a development, No. PW9702204, was granted permission on 01JUL97. The development envisaged at the time of this application did not take place hence the need for a further application.

Nos. 21 & 23 are four storey red brick Victorian villas developed between 1875-83; No. 21 in a lightly classised Victorian Freestyle, No. 23 has a more overtly Queen Anne Revival cast to it. The narrow space between the principle volumes of the houses has been partially built upon at lower and upper ground floor levels. The lower ground floor of this may have been contemporaneous with the building of the rest of No. 23, certainly it would appear to have been built before 1930. The upper ground floor was constructed after a planning permission, No. P9601885, granted on 09AUG1996. This has a flat roof and rendered walls with a circular window in the street elevation, the style might best be described as builder's post-modern. The 'gap' or passage between the houses is very narrow and receives little sunlight consequently it presents itself as a dank, gloomy brick canyon; the proposed development will ameliorate this to some extent.

The volume of the proposed extension is deeply recessed from both the front and rear elevations of the principle volumes of the adjacent houses and presents, of necessity, very narrow frontages to the street and garden; for these reasons the proposed extension can have but a very slight visual impact in either direction. The overall height of the proposed extension is below the eaves height of the main body of the house; sufficiently to obviate the need to interfere with existing decorative cornice and eaves details. It is proposed that all materials finishes and details will match existing features of the adjacent houses.

The provision of the 'juliet' balcony to the rear elevation will facilitate a better relationship with the communal garden for the occupant of the flat. It necessitates lowering the cill of an existing window opening by approximately 500mm. The principle rear elevations of the houses opposite are in excess of 45m away and are very largely obscured by trees and high ever-green hedges. The adjacent house No. 21 has similar balconies at both first and second floor levels; it is proposed that the detailing and materials of the proposed new balcony will match those of No. 21.

The Camden Council Planning Department's report on the earlier application noted that the proposed extension would 'not have any significant effect on the visual privacy or daylight/sunlight conditions of other residential premises nearby' This was demonstrably true at that time and is very much the case now. Since that application and approval a small window has been constructed at first floor level in the gable of the adjacent house, No. 21 (application No. P9602828). Given the size of the window, its location 1.7m away from a high brick gable wall and the conditions attached to its approval that it should be unopenable and obscurely glazed we do not believe that this window can make a meaningful contribution to the lighting of the room into which it is let. We believe all relevant BRE and Building Regulation requirements for light and ventilation are more than adequately met by the two large pairs of french doors in the garden elevation which are the only windows into the equivalent rooms above and below the first floor room. At present the window has no legal right to light and while we regret the necessity of blocking it up we believe that allowing it to accrue such a right would unfairly stymie the legitimate development rights of the owners of No. 23.

Access to the new bathroom will be in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations and as all other access to rooms within the existing flat.