

DESIGN STATEMENT

February 2012



8 ANTRIM GROVE, LONDON NW3 4XR

INTRODUCTION

An application is being made for planning consent to fully refurbish and extend an existing dwelling at 10 Antrim Grove in Belsize Park. It is proposed to demolish and rebuild a single storey rear kitchen wing and adjoining glass conservatory and replace these with a new single storey extension. A new basement would be excavated below the existing dwelling and part of the garden. Finally, the existing 2nd floor accommodation would be improved by provision of a new side and enlarged rear dormer window. This Design Statement is appended to that application to explain the relevant planning considerations in its support.



THE SITE

Aerial photo with plot outlined

Antrim Grove is a short residential side street branching off the west side of Haverstock Hill which changes its name to Antrim Road as it bends to the South to connect with England's Lane. The short stretch of Antrim Grove is lined with private dwellings while both Antrim Road and Haverstock Hill comprise purpose built flats. A terrace of late 20th Century townhouses lines the south side of Antrim Grove while the north side comprises substantial Edwardian semi-detached dwellings. No. 8 is one of these latter whose rear gardens adjoin a substantial plot of allotments occupying the centre of the block bounded by Belsize Grove and Primrose Gardens.



Allotments behind Antrim Grove



Photos of Antrim Grove

Antrim Grove is located at the eastern boundary of the Belsize Conservation Area, but No. 15 is the only property that is listed. The dwelling at No. 8 was converted to flats at one stage but consent was granted in 2002 to reconvert the property back to a single family dwelling (PWX0202425). In other respects the property is effectively in its original state and now requires substantial refurbishment and modernisation to allow it to serve as a family home. The adjoining property, No. 10, was extensively refurbished a few years ago. To the rear, a suite of single storey elements was demolished and replaced with a new glazed extension. The first floor was also modified to create a large glazed opening onto the main bedroom suite. The existing 2nd floor accommodation was renovated and several new rooflights were inserted in the side and rear roof slopes.



Rear of No 10 Antrim Grove

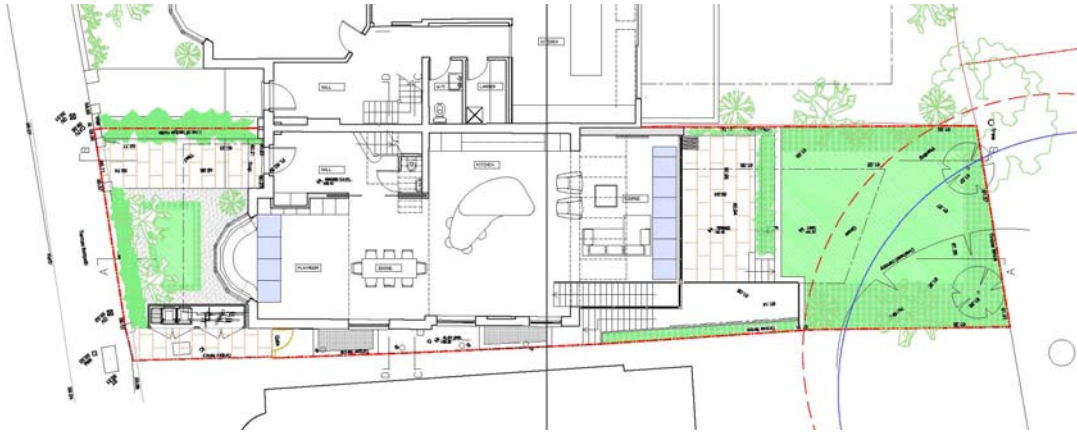


Existing garden to front of property

No. 8 Antrim Grove is in the middle of a trio of semi-detached dwellings set back behind landscaped front gardens of approximately 6 Meters depth. Side alleyways connect to rear gardens of approximately 14 Metre depth which rise in elevation following the generally rising topography of Haverstock Hill. The garden of No. 8 comprises a shallow, level pathway with a raised lawn area with planted borders. The gardens are a typically compact size for the Belsize Conservation Area although this terrace benefits from the privacy and aspect afforded by the adjacent allotments. There are no mature tree specimens in either the front or rear garden although there is a large sycamore in the adjoining garden to the rear. A tree report has been prepared by professional arboriculturists, ACS Consulting to assess the proposed scheme and direct the position of the proposed basement.



Existing garden to rear of property



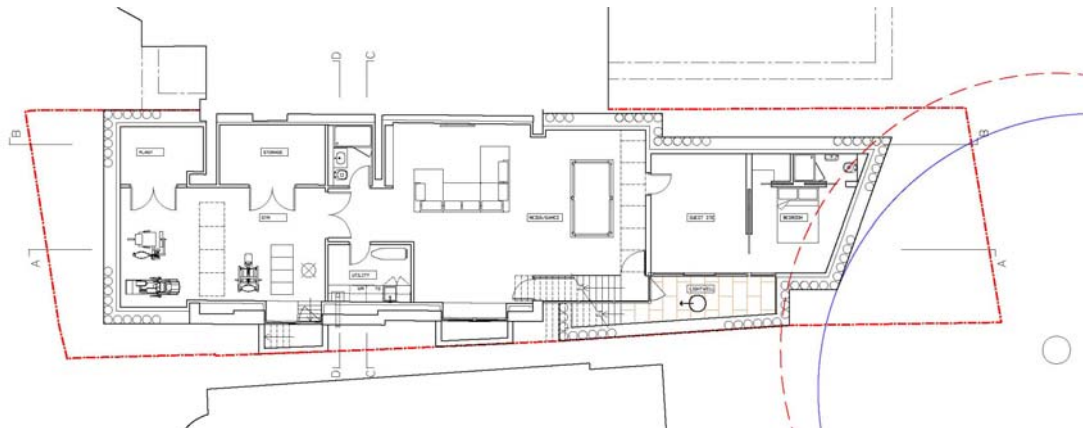
Proposed garden level

PROPOSALS

The owners of No. 8 Antrim Grove intend to carry out works to fully refurbish and modernise the dwelling. An important part of these works will include restoration of its architectural features including its render, brick pointing, hanging tiling, and painted timber trims and windows. A similar programme of works has recently been completed on the adjoining No. 10 Antrim Grove which readily demonstrates the improvement which can be offered to the visual coherence and quality of the conservation area. Works to the front of the property will comprise a faithful restoration whereas to the rear the opportunity exists to create a more contemporary design. An existing single storey wing and adjoining glass conservatory would be removed as part of the project and replaced with a new modern extension featuring a full width wall of glazing. The footprint of the dwelling would be increased into the garden by 1.6M, establishing a visual relationship to the neighbouring property to the East, No. 6 Antrim Grove, which is set further to the North. The single storey structures which the extension would replace appear to be original to the building, so that the new development can be considered under the guidelines of the General Permitted Development Order allowing single storey rear extensions. The roof level of the extension has intentionally been kept to a minimum height so that its bulk will be minimal viewed from the raised level of the rear garden. As further mitigation, approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ of the extension roof will be planted with sedum to protect views from both the host and adjoining properties. No extension has been proposed at 1st floor level, however, the existing window openings would be enlarged to form a single glazed opening matching that on the adjoining No. 10. At roof level the existing dormer window would be widened to a proportion matching that of No. 6; consent for an identical enlargement was granted last year for No. 10 (2010/4405/P).



View of rear of terrace at Antrim Grove



Proposed basement level

The owners of No. 8 Antrim Grove feel acutely the relative deficiency of recreational space on the existing plot. Densely built neighbourhoods like Belsize Park rely in part on their shared open spaces, whose popularity is indicated by the waiting list of some 10 years for an allotment in the adjacent plot. In order to achieve the sort of accommodation the owners require for their growing family they propose to extend the property through the excavation of a new basement level. This new accommodation would allow them to provide a suite of recreational facilities including a gym in addition to a media room and guest suite.

The scheme proposes to excavate below the house with an extension under the garden. The existing rear garden has been neglected for a considerable period of time, providing an opportunity through this project to create a richly landscaped space similar to adjoining properties. The roof of the basement would be fully integrated and intensively planted making it effectively invisible within the garden aside from a modest light well to one side. The raised level of the existing lawn allows the installation of a substantial, deep roof garden with mature planting to a minimum depth of 500mm providing no restriction on the species and size of the new planting. The basement is offset from the shared property boundaries in order to allow full depth planted borders. To the front of the property, a small basement extension would again be hidden below intensive planting with a wide band of planting behind the rebuilt boundary wall.

The completed garden after the works would contribute fully to the verdant character of this part of the Belsize Conservation Area, and would maintain its amenity value for both this dwelling and the outlook of neighbouring properties.



Proposed longitudinal section

Natural light will be brought into the basement via discreet openings including lightwells in the side alley and glass floor panels to the front and rear of the interior as well as a recessed glass wall onto a new light well and escape stair in the rear garden. The loss of garden area would be minimal and would not have a visual impact on the character of the Conservation Area. The proposed accommodation has been carefully considered to make the best use of the available amenity. The excavation is planned to achieve a ceiling height identical to the existing ground floor in the new storey so that the new level would enjoy a bright and spacious feel.



Proposed rear & side elevations showing dormers

Modifications to the roofscape are proposed to improve the accommodation in the existing 2nd floor rooms at the rear and side of the house. The existing rear dormer would be widened by a single window bay and the window would be replaced to match the modern character of those on the lower stories. The revised width would be consistent with that on No.'s 4, 6, & 14 Antrim Grove and would match the widening granted for No. 10 last year. It is also proposed to widen an existing and build a new dormer onto the side roof of No. 8. In both cases the new dormers have been sized so that they are set far back from the hipped ridge, eaves and top ridge of the main roof form and their height and proportion are consistent with the period of the dwelling.



Existing dormers on roof of No's 6 & 8

PLANNING POLICIES

The scheme has been designed with reference to a number of documents and policies published by London Borough Camden:

- Draft LDF policy DP27 – Basements and Lightwells
- Draft LDF policy DP23 - Water
- Draft LDF policy DP22 – Promoting sustainable design & construction
- Guidance Note – New Basement Development and Extensions to Existing Basement Accommodation; Feb 2009
- Conservation Area Statement – Belsize Conservation Area
- Camden Planning Guidance – Dec 2006

A number of specialists have been consulted in preparation of this design proposals including: an arboriculturist for assessment of existing plants on the host and adjoining properties; a structural engineer to advise on suitable details for excavation and retention of the new basement storey ensuring no damage is caused to adjoining dwellings and gardens; a team of specialist engineers to prepare the Basement Impact Assessment required under new LB Camden guidance. These specialists' reports are appended to this application. A number of close neighbours have been consulted about the proposals to canvas concerns and potential support for the scheme.

Bchitecture has broad experience working on a number of basement projects including both new build and refurbishment including underpinning, sheet piling and contiguous piling with a short list of experienced and suitably scaled building contractors. Most recently, these have been involved nearby in the Belsize Conservation Area as well as in the Highgate Conservation Area, including the consent granted last year for a new basement to No. 10 Antrim Grove. The works will be carefully programmed to minimise the disruption to neighbours from noisy work, deliveries and removals.

Due consideration will be given to determining the most sustainable manner of carrying out the work, disposing of the excavated material and sourcing new building materials. Air sourced heat pumps to provide a highly efficient source of heating and the potential to use the stack effect within the existing multi-storey stair core to drive natural ventilation of the house are options which will be developed in greater detail during detailed design. Excavated clay is a material sought after by landfill sites as it is needed to meet daily cover requirements. Energy efficient lighting and other environmental systems are a committed part of the design brief.

The proposed amendments to the roofscape to create and enlarge dormer windows at the rear of the property have been carefully considered under the Conservation Area guidelines and in the Camden Planning Guidance 2006. These elements would be subordinate to the existing dwelling and carefully respect its original design in both materials and details.

ACCESS STATEMENT

The existing dwelling will be extended to create new accommodation which will be no less accessible than the existing building. The new internal staircase serving the basement storey will be designed to comply with Approved Document M standard. All building works will comply with current Building Regulations and best practice.