

Hunters Lodge, 5 Belsize Lane,
Hampstead, London, NW3 5AD

Heritage, Design & Access Statement for Full
Householder and Listed Building Application –
Response to detailed Pre-Application advice from
Camden

August 2011

Introduction

Our planning submission has been prepared subsequent to several pre planning meetings, active dialogue and a site visit on 16th June 2011. We would like to thank Carlos Martin, Planning Officer, Tina Garratt, Conservation Officer and Victoria Pound, Conservation Officer for their valuable input and ideas over this pre application process. This document addresses each of the points raised by Camden in the written pre application advice we received from the process.

Our responses to the detailed pre application advice received from Camden Planning on 11th August 2011, are highlighted below in “red” and correspond to the points in the advice letter (also shown below in “black”). Please note in particular, the comment made under the Basement Impact Section

Date:
Our Ref: CA\2011\ENQ\02458
Your Ref:
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Dear Heritage Architecture Ltd

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
RESPONSE TO ENQUIRY, REFERENCE CA\2011\ENQ\02458
Site: Hunter's Lodge, 5 Belsize Lane, London NW3 5AD

Thank you for your recent enquiry regarding external alterations at the above address. This advice is based on the proposal shown on the submitted documents titled "Draft Design and Access Statement" dated May 2011 and "Preliminary Hydrological Assessment" dated June 2011, a site visit undertaken on 16th June 2011 and amended drawings provided subsequently.

Design and conservation considerations

The site has a long planning history as outlined in the 'Draft Design and Access Statement' (dated May 2011) written by Stephen Levrant. The most recent applications for 'works associated with the erection of a garden level single storey extension following the demolition of an existing side extension' (2007/5036/P and 2007/5038/L) were refused on the grounds of the bulk, height, projection and material finish and also the loss of historic fabric which would harm the special interest of the listed building. The officer's report for this application makes specific reference to the prominence and significance of the original bow fronted elevation and the mid 19th century Victorian Gothic elevation of the addition and notes that "it is important that extensions are seen as subsidiary to the existing building".

Our latest proposals represent a negotiated alternative to the most recent planning application that was refused for reasons stated above. We have taken guidance from Camden and note that a more appropriate location for a "Garden Room" would be attached to the rebuilt extension, sweeping away from the original bow fronted elevation and along the garden wall. Given this alternative approach would be acceptable to us, no appeal is expected

The proposals which have been put forward as part of this pre-application submission are as follows:

1. Demolition of the 1928 extension
2. Construction of a 3 storey extension on broadly the same footprint as the 1928 extension
3. Ground excavation for the construction of a basement
4. Construction of a contemporary 2 storey (basement and ground floor) extension along the western boundary of the site.

The contemporary garden room included in this application is hence just a single storey (ground floor) addition along the boundary of the site

The proposals are considered in more detail below.

Demolition of the 1928 extension

The 1928 extension is considered to be reflective of its period but of lesser architectural merit than the original and Victorian parts of the building and it is regarded as a neutral contributor to the public realm and does not make a substantial contribution to the special interest of the listed building. Therefore, it is considered that the demolition of this element of the building would not cause harm to the listed building. For your information, if an application were to be submitted to the council, on the grounds that the works would constitute substantial demolition, the 5 National Amenity Societies and English Heritage would be consulted on the proposals as a matter of course.

We agree with Camden that the demolition of the 1928 extension “would not cause harm to the listed building”. However, it is the considered opinion of Stephen Levrant of Heritage Architecture, that the 1928 extension is a negative contributor to the public realm. Further, given the very limited scale of the demolition relative to the built size of Hunter’s Lodge, Stephen Levrant considers that the works should not constitute “substantial demolition” of a listed building

Principle of extending the building

Although in its original form the house almost certainly consisted only of what is now the central portion of the building with its triple-bowed elevation, it has been extensively extended but each of the phased extensions are clearly apparent. Accordingly, it is recognised that part of the character of this building are the incremental extensions which have been added to it and therefore the principle of further extensions, subject to scale, footprint, design and detailing, could be considered to reflect the evolved character of the building.

The original extensive pleasure gardens in which the house originally sat have been eroded but it still retains a relatively large garden. Whilst the new contemporary 2 storey extension would encroach further into the garden setting it is considered that its proposed location, alongside the boundary wall, would not encroach onto the open garden setting but merely continue the line of the former patio area.

A key element of our proposals is the “Landscape Master Plan” – see section 13 of our Heritage, Design & Access Statement. Much consideration has been given to the original form and layout of the regency pleasure gardens shown in the 1871 Ordinance Survey Drawing. We note in the garden, a simple layout of a central lawn, surrounded by a border of ordered trees, borders of shrubs and a single stone pathway. The single storey Garden Room will be constructed on existing hard landscaping (used for parking cars) and will not encroach into the open garden and lawn area

The principle of demolition will also require full justification that neither the demolition or construction works would affect the structural stability of the house and the boundary wall which is integral to the setting of the listed building. Please be aware that consent will not be granted for the entire demolition of the boundary wall simply to enable construction of the new extension. It may be possible to remove some sections of the wall during the construction phase and rebuilt them using original London Stock bricks, where they are proven to be structurally unstable (subsidence and heavy cracking due to tree roots) or of modern construction.

Our proposals include a structural survey to ensure that neither the demolition or construction works would affect the structural stability of the house. In terms of the boundary wall, as discussed with the Council, there are several sections of this wall, which are either modern, badly subsiding or structurally cracked. Hence it will be necessary to repair and rebuild certain sections of the wall whilst construction is taking place. We have submitted full details of which sections of the garden wall could be retained and which will need to be replaced in due course. We would intend to use the salvaged original materials in combination with reclaimed London Brick stock for these works. Drawing reference 1007-005 Revision A shows our intended treatment of the garden wall – these works would be subject to more detailed surveys

Therefore full details in the form of a structural survey and method statement setting out the details behind ensuring the structural stability of the boundary wall both during and after the works should be submitted with any applications.

A method statement, setting out details of how we would ensure the structural stability of the portions of the garden wall which are to be retained, will be submitted with the application

Design Proposals

Scale

It is important that the rebuilt extension is subordinate in scale, character and appearance to the original dwelling. Therefore it is advised that the 3 storey extension should be no wider than the 3 storey element of the Victorian extension. In addition, in order that the scale of the original building is not overshadowed, the eaves and roof ridge should be no taller than those of the original part of the building.

In our application, we have designed the rebuilt extension in a manner to reflect the scale, massing and style agreed with Camden during the pre application phase and shown in drawings 1007-015 and 1007-016 Revisions F (the agreed Option 3). Most important, the eaves and roof ridge on the new

gable end of the rebuilt extension are no taller than those of the original parts of the building. In addition, we have designed the rebuilt extension, as requested, to be no wider than the 3 storey element of the Victorian extension

The proposed modern garden room extension, comprising a basement and ground floor, should not project beyond the building line of the existing or new 3-storey extension. This will aid in retaining the original bow fronted element of the building remaining the prominent part of the garden elevation.

Our revised design shows the modern garden room extension sitting slightly behind the building line of the new addition

The scale of the modern garden extension will only be largely apparent at ground floor level as the basement extension will be paved over and lit by a single glass pavement light and a glass floor within the pavement adjacent to the new 3 storey extension. A void to a patio terrace is proposed in close proximity to the new garage. This would not be visible from the public realm as a result of the high boundary wall but it may impact on the trees which were subject of previous proposals. Full consideration and justification will be required to ensure no trees will be lost or harmed as part of the works.

No trees will be lost or harmed as a result of the works – please see the tree protection method statement within the Heritage, Design & Access Statement. No basement is proposed in this application

Layout

PPS5 Practice Guide (para 182) identifies that the plan form of a building is frequently one of its most important characteristics and internal partitions, staircases (whether decorated or plain, principal or secondary) and other features are likely to form part of its significance. Indeed they may be its most significant feature. Proposals to remove or modify internal arrangements, including the insertion of new openings or extension underground, will be subject to the same considerations of impact on significance (particularly architectural interest) as for externally visible alterations.

The proposed openings to the rebuilt extension will be based on a “reopening” of existing opening, with the exception of the opening at garden level. Our proposals to modify internal arrangements are very modest

It is important that the new extensions do not render the original central part of the building redundant or turn it into a corridor to provide access between the Victorian and modern extensions. The original part of the building should remain as the focus and central hub of the house.

The proposals are centred on retaining the original entrance hallway and staircase as the primary focus and central hub of the new layout. To this end, as you enter the house, the proposed new staircase (from the ground level to garden level) will be hidden from view. This staircase will be very much subservient in scale and detailing to the original Victorian one. The original hallway will retain its significance as the main hub between the new kitchen, garden room and all the original reception rooms

As the original staircase and evidence of it no longer survives it is essential that the significance of the principal staircase in the Victorian extension is recognised. The new extension should not become the new hub of the house with the original and Victorian elements subservient to it. Accordingly, it is important that the staircases within the new extension are no grander than the existing principal staircase and are not visible from the entrance hall, but discretely located as shown in the revised drawings.

The new staircases are discretely located as agreed on the revised drawings and are certainly less grand in both design and scale than the Victorian principle staircase

Detailing

The Gothic style of the Victorian extension is accentuated by the tall gable on the garden side, pointed windows many with hood-moulds and crenellated parapets on the street elevations. The proposals seek to make reference both to the original building and the Victorian extension, particularly with the addition of a gabled garden elevation and in its window designs and detailing. Whilst this is considered to be an acceptable design approach it is important that the proposals do not seek to identically replicate the historic elements in order that the new and old can be visually recognised.

The design agreed in the pre applications process (see attached drawings) do indeed make reference to the original buildings. However, the rebuilt extension is designed with much simpler detailing, so as to distinguish “new” from “old” and to make it subordinate in scale and character to the original

The front elevation of the new extension onto Belsize Lane would be revised so that the garage would no longer be incorporated and the elevation would be pierced by windows with drip hood moulds to echo the detailing on the original building and Victorian extension. This would improve the street elevation of the building and be an improvement in terms of improving surveillance.

The proposals seek to incorporate a large oriel window on the side elevation of the replacement extension which would echo the first floor window on the garden elevation of the Victorian wing. This detail is considered to be an acceptable approach, subject to scale and detail.

Our proposals show a four panelled oriel window as suggested by the Council to echo the original Victorian bay window on the garden elevation. All detailing is to match the original and we would be willing to discuss any minor changes to scale required by the Council

A single window and door on each floor on the garden elevation (as the revised drawings show) would help to ensure the new extension is read as a subservient addition as opposed to overshadowing the Victorian extension.

Our proposed design now shows just a single window or door to each of the 3 levels of the addition as agreed in the final version of the pre application drawings submitted to Tina Garratt. This is to ensure that the addition is very much subservient to the Victorian extension

The roof of the new extension if fully glazed is likely to allow significant light spill from the new extension, therefore consideration should be given to incorporating a part zinc or part obscured glass roof in order to limit the light spill. Where possible, photomontages would be useful to provide a visualisation of the light spill from the new extension.

The proposed glazed roof of the contemporary garden room has now been redesigned to be circa 60% of solid construction to mitigate any light pollution. Further, we would be prepared to consider the addition of opaque glazing which would serve to almost eliminate any light pollution or indeed any other suggested amendment to the roof construction that the Council may consider necessary. The solid section of the roof is shown with a metal alloy covering but we would be happy to discuss suitable alternatives if required. Photomontages will be made available during the planning process to visualise the proposed design and any potential light spill

Further consideration would have to be given to the proposals for 2 roof lights in the new 3 storey extension as these would be visible from the public realm. Consent was granted for 2 roof lights within the Victorian extension which are visible from the public realm therefore the incremental changes would require further consideration.

Our proposals include 3 small conservation roof lights in the proposed new 3 storey addition. Although this does add to the 2 existing roof lights (consented in 2008 on the Victorian addition), we have positioned them so as to be almost hidden from the view of the public realm. We would be willing to consider discussions with the Council on their positioning

Neighbouring amenity

Given the distance to neighbouring properties and given that the proposed new wing would replace an existing one with windows on all the external elevations at a similar height, the proposal is not expected to result in any significant impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, outlook or privacy. The proposed ground and basement extensions due to being enclosed by the existing boundary fences are also not expected to have an impact on neighbouring amenity in terms of loss of light. However, the glazed roof of this extension may produce light pollution at night time and mitigation measures should be incorporated.

The proposed glazed roof of the contemporary garden room has now been redesigned to be circa 60% of solid construction to mitigate any light pollution. Further, we would be prepared to consider the addition of opaque glazing which would serve to almost eliminate any light pollution or indeed any other suggested amendment to the roof construction that the Council may consider necessary

Loss of garage

The loss of the existing garage does not appear to be a contentious issue given the fact that the site already benefits from off street parking. However, the council is likely to impose a "Grampian condition" requiring that no

development commences before a contract has been entered into with the local highway authority to secure the reinstatement of a level public footway by removing the existing vehicle crossover and dropped kerb. This condition is intended to ensure that the pedestrian environment is improved.

Please note that in addition to the off street parking (2 spaces), there is also the newly consented garage in the grounds of Hunter's Lodge. We would be willing to negotiate on the reinstatement of the public footway by removing the vehicle crossover with the objective of improving the pedestrian environment

Basement Impact Assessment

According to current policies, the Council will only permit basements and other underground development where you can demonstrate it will not cause harm to the built and natural environment and local amenity, including to the local water environment, ground conditions and biodiversity.

The submitted Preliminary Hydrological Assessment concludes that: *"As a consequence of the potential presence of slightly more permeable materials being present below the site, it is considered that in order to address the issues raised by Policy DP27, a ground investigation should be undertaken and, as a minimum, a single borehole should be constructed to confirm the ground and groundwater conditions at the site."* And also that: *"due to the generally low permeability of the anticipated ground materials, it is anticipated that groundwater pressures within the monitoring wells will take time to reach equilibrium. Therefore, there is likely to be the need to undertake a number of monitoring visits in order to establish groundwater equilibrium and potential fluctuation."*

The submitted assessment therefore does not offer sufficient certainty that the proposal would comply with current policy on basements and would not be acceptable in its present form. The required Basement Impact Assessment needs to conclude that the proposal will not cause any harmful environmental impact. If the identified consequences are not acceptable, mitigation should be incorporated into the proposed scheme and the new net consequences determined. Any proposed mitigation measures should be described in the BIA report with details of how they reduce and/or alter the impact of the proposed basement on the surrounding environment. Further guidance on BIA reports can be found on CPG4, available on the Council's website on the following link: <http://camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/planning-and-built-environment/two/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents/camden-planning-guidance.en>

The "Preliminary Hydrological Assessment" mentioned above has been followed up in this current application, with a full Basement Impact Assessment (BIA), following further extensive ground investigations. Monitoring visits have now been completed on groundwater levels over a six month period, and the findings will be incorporated into the design of the basement. We believe that the assessment now concluded provides sufficient certainty that the proposals would comply with current policy on basements and will not cause any harmful environmental impact.

Application process

Planning application forms can be completed online through the National Planning Portal www.planningportal.gov.uk or downloaded from our website www.camden.gov.uk/planning. The website also provides details of the validation requirements and guidance notes.

For a valid application, I would advise you to submit the following:

- Completed “householder planning permission and listed building consent” form (original plus 3 copies)
- An ordnance survey based location plan at 1:1250 scale (original plus 3 copies) clearly denoting the application site in red.
- Full set of plans (plans, sections and elevations) at a scale of 1:50 labelled ‘existing’ and ‘proposed’ - (original plus 3 copies).
- The completed Ownership Certificate (this is part of the application form)
- Completed Agricultural Holdings Certificate (this is part of the application form)
- Heritage and Design and access statements – 3 copies
- Structural survey
- Method statement, in particular relating to the propping and piling works. (These reports should include details about any works to the boundary wall.
- Basement Impact Assessment report
- The appropriate fee (£150)
- Photographs are helpful to provide site context

Once you have submitted your application, if any further information is required to make your application valid, the validation team will write to you.

Please note that the information contained in this letter represents officers’ opinion and is without prejudice to further consideration of this matter by the Development Management Section or the Council’s final decision.

I trust this information is of assistance. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours,

Carlos Martin