

59 Lancaster Grove NW3

- A Reinstatement of original coping on front elevation, addition of bicycle and bin store and associated works
- B Demolition of existing rear extension and addition of new rear extension

Built c. 1890 and semi detached, 59 Lancaster Grove NW3 is a house in single family owner occupation. It was altered in 1994 (planning refs 9401216 and 9460127) and a pre-application meeting (ref 9110) about this current proposal was held on 24th June 2011.

Part of this application is to reinstate the missing upper double scooped coping and terrace railing on the front elevation, so making nos. 57 and 59 equal to the twin properties 53 and 55. This will noticeably enhance the appearance of the conservation area. In addition, it is proposed to add a new bin and bicycle store, to re-surface the side front area and to repair both the front wall and original geometric stone tiling leading to the front door.

The second part seeks to demolish the existing back extension and proposes instead a sensitive and modern single storey back extension which will add 35m² to the property. This has been conceived as an inhabited fragment of the garden wall; thus the predominant element is a long low sympathetic brick volume of only 3.3m width and 2.6m height.

The glass room that projects from this is a contemporary cousin of the lean-to greenhouse found in historic walled kitchen gardens and has a further architectural rationale as a counterpart to the existing projecting brick bay on the rear elevation, the proportions of which the glass room has been designed to match.

Although the extension is long, its overall shape and its materials are appropriate to its context; its transparent or low lying profile and slim footprint will maintain the openness that is characteristic of the gardens in this part of the Belsize conservation area. No trees will be affected.

By providing habitable space beyond the kitchen work area, the proposed design solves the flaw in the current layout whereby the supervising parent cannot prepare meals and keep the family company at the same time. Otherwise, the accessibility of the house is unaltered by the proposal.

It is extremely important that the glass room is set beyond the mean shadow of the main house. Placed where it is, it will take in east and west sunlight and be different in ambience from the north facing dining and family rooms on the garden side of the house.

There is no detrimental effect on the privacy or amenity of neighbours:

Because it is proposed that the existing sloping glazed roof party to no. 61 is extended as a solid zinc clad element at the same garden wall height and because the glass room is away from the boundary beyond a parapet, the extension will be appear discreet on this side. Currently shrubs grow beyond the height of the garden wall on both sides and it is intended that this density of planting is maintained.

The proposed rear extension will not be visible from the street. Seen from an upper level, light pollution will be kept to a minimum by the use of recessed floor lighting and PIR controlled retractable sheer roof blinds.

A sedum roof is proposed for the flat roofed part of the extension for further greening and visual interest when seen from above and as an additional wildlife habitat.

The design proposal respects its setting within the conservation area and seeks in a modern and sensitive way to fit into the tradition of unique architecture and place-shaping that has made the Belsize area special from the outset.

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July 2011