

Design & Access Statement to accompany planning application to 20 King Henry's Road, London NW3 3RP

Overview of the property & planning history

The application concerns development of the self contained maisonette at basement and ground floor level within a property which has 2 further flats, each on the first and second floors. The property is on the North side of King Henry's Road, these properties back onto the main railway line cutting. The building is not listed and is not within a conservation area.

The property is believed to be late 19th century, it is 3 storeys high plus a converted attic, it is built in brick with a partly stuccoed façade and slate covered roof. This is one of a row of 6 properties built in the same style and the façades are generally original and in good condition. In a wider context, King Henry's Road is virtually all residential and generally all 19th century buildings has varied styles and shapes of buildings, with random infill's. The rear of the building has been modified within the past 40 years – these are summarised below – although the rear is not visible from the highway.

The proposals are to add a free standing studio to the rear garden and a small extension under the front entrance steps. The studio will be used as a home office and the front extension as an additional bathroom. There are precedents for both developments in the neighbouring properties: at no 12 there is a recently added garden pavilion which is used as a children's nursery and and numbers 16, 14 and 12 the area below the front entrance steps has been extended within the basement units in a similar fashion.

The recent and relevant planing histories for this, and the neighbouring properties which have been implemented are as follows:

no. 12 King Henry's Road

case 2010/1820/P	pending	application for rear extension and landscaping works to the front & rear (works partly implemented)
case 2009/4261/P	granted 17th sept 2009	garden pavilion and internal alterations to provide a nursery

no. 20 King Henry's Road

case 2007/6006/P	granted 24 th Jan 2008	conversion of a basement entrance door into a window on the highway elevation.
case 2005/4366/P	granted 9 th Dec 2005	addition of rear steps from ground floor level to garden (basement) level.
case CTP/H9/10/D/15877	granted 28 th Feb 1973	addition of conservatory extension at basement level.
case CTP/H9/10/D/9753	granted 2 nd Oct 1970	conversion of single dwelling house into 4 self contained flats

A preliminary enquiry concerning both aspects of the developments was made to the duty planner in May 2010. The guidance referred to for the rear garden building was in line with that of Householder applications and in the Camden Planning Guidance December 2006 edition, with particular reference to the footprint and volume related to the host building. Concerning the front lightwell although there is no specific guidance to refer, sensible regard to the existing appearance to the street was advised. The following paragraphs describe our interpretations of the guidance and the considerations made.

The proposals.

The design intentions are split into 2 parts, one for each element as follows:

i) The Garden Studio.

The use of this new studio is as a self contained home office as ancillary use to the host dwelling. It is positioned over 6 metres from the rear building line of the host building and due to a covenant in the lease, is positioned 25 feet, or 7.5 metres, away from the rear boundary. This covenant represents an historic building exclusion area along the rear boundaries of the properties and the railway line. In practical terms this has a further advantage as being outside the root protection area of the mature Cherry tree.

The footprint of the building, at 26 sq metres, represents less than 20% of the footprint of the rear garden, which has a total area of 136 sq metres. The combined footprint of the host building and the garden studio, at 120 square metres, represents 40% of the overall footprint of the plot. whilst we are aware that the current guidances for householder applications do not specifically apply in this case, this proportion is well within the currently acceptable standards for outbuildings, where the property to be a single family dwelling.

In terms of height, the intention is to keep this to a practical minimum and to be conscious of the perceived volume, particularly when viewed from within the host, and more significantly, the neighbouring properties. Given that approximately 75% of the outlook views are from a higher vantage point than the garden level, the view of the roof is of greater importance and we consider that a pitched roof provides a more pleasing view than a flat roof. The impact of this has been moderated in the design with very low eaves - at 1.9 metres high - and in the surface covering which is proposed as Cedar shingles. The use of shingles is well suited to a low pitch of roof (whereas tiles would have required 30°), is a natural material and gives a muted, matt appearance which we believe would be 'softer' visually than conventional roof coverings, for similar reasons we also propose the same shingle cladding for the walls.

The positioning of the studio, to the eastern boundary is to allow large westward facing windows without overlooking to neighbouring plots, the Western boundary wall is 1.3 metres in height and heavily covered in shrubs and small trees. This also accounts partly for the irregular shape, and this captures part of the garden as a courtyard between the original building and the outbuilding.

The studio will be built as an extremely high environmental standard and will not require heating. It shall be built so highly insulated, and with a heat recovery ventilation system so that the internal temperature is permanently stable throughout the year. Therefore, once built, the studio shall be 'carbon neutral'. The walls and roof structure will all be built from timber from sustainable sources. The applicants intention to work from home further reduces the carbon footprint of the home-owner, as well as maintaining, by default, the advantage of permanent security for both the studio and the host building.

ii) The Front Lightwell Extension.

The existing building has a void area underneath the platform of the main entrance steps, this is part of the lightwell which is accessed by a thin staircase connecting the lightwell to the front garden level. The front garden level, which is at street level, is approximately 2 metres above the basement lightwell, the lightwell is therefore almost completely obscured from the street.

The intention here is to add a bathroom to one of the front bedrooms and, given that this is on the front elevation, to incorporate it as discreetly as possible. This is achieved by utilising the area of the void beneath the front entrance steps and adding a small extension at the foot of the staircase to the basement. Given that the basement is already 2 metres below street level, this top of the new extension can be set at 300mm above street level, and this will be obscured from view by the solid walls of the existing main entrance steps.

From the main garden side of the entrance steps, the land is terraced down approximately 700mm to the front of the house. again, given that the front garden has a all hedge to the pavement, the view of the infill to this side is heavily obscured, and the face of the infill will be inset by 300mm, preserving both the existing bedroom window opening and the appearance of the void below the steps.

The roof of the new extension will be built in obscured glass, this choice selected so as both to enhance the amount of light into the room below, and as glass will result in the thinnest enclosure, thus minimising the overall height.

These types of infill can be seen on numerous neighbouring buildings, and is a typical adaptation of Victorian buildings, but specifically it can be seen on both numbers 16, 14 and 12. The arrangement of the garden will not be affected, and access to the front lightwell can still be achieved practically from the terraced garden.

A preliminary enquiry has been submitted to Camden Conservation and Urban Design department in March 2009, and drew out the opinion that the addition would not have a negative impact on the surrounding site or the adjacent Listed Buildings, this attached to the submission.

Site Photographs



view from first floor looking to gardens of Nos. 20 & 18 King Henry's Road



view of rear gardens looking East, the new pavillion to the rear of no 12 can be seen in the distance



view of rear gardens looking West showing the heavily foliated boundary walls and existing outbuildings to No 22.



View of entrance steps from the front garden of No 18



View of entrance steps from the front garden of No. 22



View of entrance steps from the footpath, with staircase down to the left



View of similar infill – this is No. 14 King Henry's Road