

## **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT:**

First Issue - 5<sup>th</sup> October 2009

**NEW REAR EXTENSION & GARDEN ROOM: Ground Floor Flat, 61 Goldhurst Terrace, London, NW6 3HB**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Alexander Abbey on behalf of the property owners, Mr and Mrs Paul Friston. It supports the planning and conservation area application for the proposed new rear extension and garden room to the flat at the address above.

#### **The Vision**

The owner's vision is to have the new extension and garden room complete by the Spring of next year to:

- allow the kitchen to move into the new extension so that the current kitchen can become a nursery for their new baby, who is expected imminently.
- create a large flexible living space.
- make a well insulated, naturally lit and ventilated open plan room that does not overheat in summer and freeze in winter, as is currently the case.
- open up views and connection to the garden.
- cut down on the levels of glazing to increase privacy.
- Provide a room and deck at the end of the garden to benefit from evening sun.
- Generate a flexible space at the end of the garden that can be used for study or play.
- Increase their storage space.

### **ASSESSMENT**

#### **The Site - Physical Context**

The Flat's address is Ground Floor Flat, 61 Goldhurst Terrace, London, NW6 3HB, and comes under the Swiss Cottage conservation area.

The characteristic of the local area is generally residential, with a mix of different house types and ages of construction. The flat forms part of a later era Victorian 3-4 storey terrace, which runs along the majority of Goldhurst Terrace. These have generally been sub-divided into flats. To the rear of the garden are three storey family houses, which appear to have been built in the 1980's.

Goldhurst Terrace is a relatively quiet one-way residential street. The terrace is set back from the pavement by large front gardens or yards. The rear garden where the development is proposed, is neither seen nor accessible from the street.

The rear gardens are generally very long, (approx 24-30m) by a standard building plot width of approx 5.5m. The gardens are well screened from each other with mature trees and planting. Many examples exist of large structures at the end of the gardens from garden rooms to sheds and stores, to play structures.

The original footprint for each plot in the terrace seems to have been a common L shape plan, with a three storey extension projecting into the garden. Some of these have roof terraces at the third storey level. At ground floor many additional rear extensions have been added over the years, ranging from Victorian through to more recent examples. Some of these ground floor additions also have roof terraces, accessed from first floor.

#### **Social & Economic Context**

This development will have little direct affect on the local community or economy.

#### **Planning Policy Framework**

There is no change to the use or access arrangements of the site and therefore will not be subject to any guidance.

## **INVOLVEMENT**

Extensive consultation has taken place between Alexander Abbey and Mr and Mrs Paul Friston between June and September this year. Various designs were tested to arrive at the current proposal.

A structural engineer was consulted to give advice on the roof structure and foundations and a local builder offered advice on the roof construction and drainage.

The Duty Planner, Jenny Fisher, was consulted, 12.8.09, at the Camden planning department. She suggested the scale of the garden room and overlooking of it at night from Goldhurst Terrace, may be issues to consider. We have endeavoured to address these, (see design description below).

The Duty Building Control Officer was consulted, 12.8.09, at the Camden planning department. He was able advise on drainage issues for the proposed WC/shower to the garden room and recommended as a general rule to meet the new Building Regulations, (Part L) the glazed areas to the new rear extension should be limited to 40% of the area of external envelope, which has also been incorporated into the design.

## **EVALUATION**

The site for the extension was chosen because it replaces the existing rear extension and thus links in the rest of the existing flat. It also limits the amount of land built upon and hence retains as much open space as possible. No other alternative sites were considered suitable.

The site for the garden room was chosen because it sits as far back as possible at the end of an exceptionally long garden. It is also secluded and well screened by several mature trees, an existing high brick garden wall to the rear and an existing shed to the fore. By pushing it as far back as possible it also limits the amount of land built upon and hence retains as much open space as possible. The garden in this area is currently covered in gravel so there will be no loss of planting. No other alternative sites were considered suitable.

## **DESIGN**

### **The Use**

This application does not propose a change in the use of the site or an increase in the overall number of people using the dwelling. Access to the site is unaltered.

### **The Amount of Development: Density & Scale**

The precedent for new extensions is well established along the terrace, but is most apparent to the adjacent properties, Nos. 63 & 65 Goldhurst Terrace, (see site photos, drawing P01). Reference has been made to these in the material selection and form.

This is a small single storey extension and its height and volume is comparable to other extensions mentioned above. The roof comes just below the window to the first floor, as does the extension to no 63. The new roof form has been kept to a 20° pitch; the minimum design limit acceptable for a slate roof.

It is proposed that the new extension will build between the two existing, but extended, party walls to create an open plan room that addresses the full width of the garden and the easterly aspect.

The visual impact of the garden room has been carefully considered, following comments from the duty planner, by keeping it as low as possible. This will be achieved by cutting into the rising ground slope in this area of the garden and by ensuring a minimal floor to ceiling height in conjunction with a gently sloping flat roof.

### **Layout**

The existing extension consists of three sections; a single pitched/hipped glazed area, a single pitch felt roof and a conservatory. Together they serve as the living and dining rooms and have been built in phases.

The result is an internal layout constrained by this piecemeal development. In addition, the roof junctions where these three areas meet have been poorly designed and constructed, (see site photos, drawing P01). This gives the owner an ongoing maintenance problem. Moreover, the contrasting materials and styles of the three parts do not sit happily as a composition or with the surrounding character of the adjacent buildings.

The new extension will consist of an open plan and flexible living space comprising living room, dining area and kitchen.

The garden room will contain a single room accessed straight from the external deck. Off this main room open two smaller spaces; a shower room with WC and wash hand basin, and a small study/store.

### **Landscaping**

The existing timber deck adjacent to the rear extension will be replaced when the new extension is built. It is proposed that stone paviours will be used, which is similar to what has been done to no 63 Goldhurst Terrace. The levels will remain similar to what is there now.

The garden room will have an external timber deck to benefit from evening sun.

### **Trees**

The garden to 61 Goldhurst Terrace is surrounded on all sides by mature and semi-mature trees providing a pleasant setting and good levels of privacy and screening. The tree constraints plan, P04, attached, sets out the species, spread, height and category following the guidance set out in BS5837.

From the analysis, the only potential areas where trees may be affected occur to the garden room site at the end of the garden. The root spread of trees 8, 9 & 10 on the plan could potentially be constraints to the structure of the new development. However, tree 8 is dead and will be removed. Tree 9 is at a higher ground level to the neighbouring garden and behind a garden wall. Its roots potentially impinge 1 metre onto the site.

Tree 10 is a large horse chestnut and its roots potentially spread 2m into the site area. However, the area concerned equates to approx 4-5% of the total root spread of this large tree. To mitigate root damage, it is proposed that the structural footings for the garden room will keep excavation to a minimum and will use four small concrete pads in each corner of the structure.

Garden fences and walls exist between trees 9 & 10 and as such these can be considered as effective barriers for protecting these trees during construction.

As the proposed structure is single storey and kept as low as possible the branch spread should not prove an issue to either tree 9 or 10.

### **Drainage**

Drawing P03 attached sets out the existing and proposed drainage scheme. Due to new floors and boxing in of waste pipes it has been difficult to ascertain the exact location of manhole positions. However from looking at adjacent properties and viewing the waste runs to the cellar area, it appears a manhole occurs in the area between the main house and the double storey extension.

To the street side the manhole has an invert level approx 2.2m below the finished floor level of the flat. The proposed drainage from the new extension and garden room, including rainwater, will tie into the existing manhole on the garden side and run through to the street side as before. The fall will be adequate to meet the building regulations at this level difference. New manholes will be provided at junctions to allow for adequate rodding and inspection.

### **Appearance**

A new pitched roof centred on the room will be constructed in slate with lead flashings and gutters to match the main roof of the building. Four Velux style roof lights will allow light to get to the back of the room. To the garden elevation, sliding-folding, painted timber glazed doors will be installed, into a painted cement render wall. Both of these elements have been selected to take cues from the neighbouring property's extension at No 63, (see site photos, drawing P01).

The proposal for the garden room is to create a discrete insulated timber frame construction. Materially, horizontal timber cladding has been selected to match the existing sheds and garden structures in similar locations to neighbouring gardens, (see site photos, drawing P01).

The duty planning officer suggested overlooking from the main terrace at night may be an issue to consider. As such, it has been designed to have shutters that can cut out any light spilling out, should the room be in use. It should also be noted that the existing shed will still be in place and will thus obscure the right hand side of the building.

### **Access**

The current flat has a step up from the street to the front yard, a step up into the flat and is then level to the front of the flat. A small ramp in the corridor drops 160mm to the current rear extension. There is then a step down to the outside terrace and a further step down to the garden.

The new extension will match the current finished floor level and the external situation to the garden will match the current condition. Access from the garden into the garden room will be at grade straight onto the deck and then into the building.

### **Sustainability**

A further reason to demolish and rebuild, is that environmentally due to the extensive areas of glazing, the principle living spaces overheat in summer and are too cold in winter.

The new development will be insulated to meet Part L of the building regulations and will use natural materials where possible, in particular timber cladding to the garden room from sustainable sources. Smaller areas of high performance glazing will balance the need for light and views with heat loss and privacy.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The new design will meet the owner's vision to:

- allow the kitchen to move into the new extension so that the current kitchen can become a nursery for their new baby, who is expected imminently.
- create a large flexible living space.
- make a well insulated, naturally lit and ventilated open plan room that does not overheat in summer and freeze in winter, as is currently the case.
- open up views and connection to the garden.
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- Increase their storage space.

The accompanying drawings illustrate the current situation with photographs that show that there are precedents for rear extensions to the houses on the street of a similar scale, construction and use.

To support this, materials have been chosen that reflect the character of the surrounding buildings, and both the extension and garden room have been designed to minimise their impact in terms of scale whilst at the same time creating new spaces that improve what is currently there and meet the client's vision.