

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Flat 4, 27 Parliament Hill, London NW3 2TA

The proposal is to develop the existing flat roof area over the main section of 27 Parliament Hill. This is currently used as a terrace, reached via stair and access hatch from the top flat exclusively (Flat 4). The terrace has timber decking and a metal handrail set behind a concrete capped parapet, and provides panoramic views to Central London and Hampstead Hill. To the rear, a felt roofed enclosure contains water tanks for the flats. This is visible to the rear, and engages with a small chimney-stack. The parapet capping is omitted in this area, breaking the visual line.

27 Parliament Hill is untypical of the houses on the street, which are generally Victorian semi-detached properties built during the 1880's. These are of red brick construction, with steeply pitched roofs and gables presented to the street. In contrast, no.27 is a rectilinear structure in white painted brick with irregular window openings. It is understood that this happened in reconstruction, the house having been hit by a WW2 bomb (which also affected the upper part of no.28 opposite). The rear elevation is similarly lacking in composition, although in this respect it stands out less, given that alterations and additions are common to neighbouring houses.

The design proposal is to construct a roof extension reached from Flat 4 by a continuation of the main stair. To minimise visual impact the structure occupies a central position on the roof, with a main terrace to the front. The set-back to the front and sides is such that the new structure would be practically invisible from street level. The extension is conceived as a restrained enclosure, with clean lines and a limited palette of materials, and as a secondary visual element to the main house.

The South facing elevations will be extensively glazed to take advantage of panoramic views and solar gain. Wrapping around the North facing elevations is a cladding of Western Red Cedar strips. Arranged vertically, these will weather to a pale silvery colour, so as not to be tonally 'heavy' in comparison to the white painted main volume of the house. The 'closed' nature of these elevations is for reasons of privacy, and to provide a highly insulated counterpoint to the 'open' glazed areas.

The proposed roof would be flat structure, finished in a seamless membrane of light grey colour to match the weathered tone of the Cedar cladding. A pressed metal perimeter trim will emphasize the delicacy of the roof, and also be coloured to match. A secondary enclosure, also clad in Cedar, will allow headroom to the half landing of the stair down.

Timber decking is to be re-laid across the terrace area. The rudimentary metal handrail will be replaced by a lightweight glass balustrade, which is intended to be less visually 'heavy'. The enclosure for water tanks would be removed, with missing parapet capping replaced.

In terms of access, Flat 4 is on the third floor and is reached by a steep common stair of irregular flights, with no lift. Access from flat level to the extension will be via a new shallow pitched stair, and a level threshold will be provided to the terrace.

Rev.A - Sept. 2007