

A dense forest of bare trees with a red overlay. The trees are thin and dark, with many bare branches reaching upwards. The ground is covered in fallen leaves and low-lying vegetation. The entire image has a strong red tint, giving it a monochromatic appearance.

Southstudio

Design and Access Statement

'The Cottage', Spaniards Road, London, NW3 7JH
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by:

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INTRODUCTION - PROPOSAL

The following Design and Access Statement is submitted to London Borough of Camden as part of the Planning Application for the new residence, The Cottage, Spaniards Road, London NW3 7JH. It should be read in conjunction with Southstudio's drawings of the existing and proposed single dwelling house, together with the technical reports listed within the Appendix.

The site is located on the edge of one of the outlying zones of the Hampstead Conservation Area, Sub Area Eight - The Elms. It is outside, but adjacent to Hampstead Heath, which is classified as both Public Open Space and Metropolitan Open Land.

The existing detached two-storey dwelling house and double garage sits on a linear plot, bounded by Hampstead Heath on two sides, Mt Tyndal Apartments on the third side and accessed from Spaniards Road (1).

Image 1 key:

- A 'The Cottage'
- B Hampstead Heath
- C Spaniards Road
- D 'Mount Tyndal'
- E 'The Spaniards'



1 - Aerial view of site location

The Entrance to the property is from Spaniards Road, and is all but invisible from the public realm, being set below the road and screened by a high brick boundary wall, and by dense tree and shrub planting from the Heath and from the adjacent grounds of Mount Tyndal (2).

The two-storey property dates from the mid 1940's, of brick construction with a concrete flat roof and has been in the ownership of the client's family since the 1960's. It has suffered bad vandalism in the recent past and is at risk of dereliction.

It is also significant to note that since the purchase of the property in the 1960's, the adjacent surrounding wood in Kenwood has substantially matured, making the residence much less visible than when it was first built. See the photographs of the 'Sale by Auction Brochure' compared with current photos from similar angles (3 - 5).

The proposal is to demolish the existing dwelling and replace it with a new two storey and part basement dwelling of contemporary design, as the residence for the family and a live-in carer as support to the client's daughter who has special needs.



2 - Spaniards Road, property entrance



3 - 'The Cottage' 1966, view toward Kenwood



4 - 1966 'Sale by Auction Brochure' frontcover



5 - 'The Cottage' 2014, view toward Kenwood obscured by wooded area

PLANNING HISTORY

The current proposal has evolved with the benefit of two Pre-Application consultations, the first dated 20/11/2011 (ref: ENQ/04194) and the more recent advice dated 18/02/2014 (ref: 2013/7909/PRE).

THE SITE AND CONTEXT

a) Heritage Impact-Demolition

With regard to justification of demolition of the existing house, in line with Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) the following should be noted:

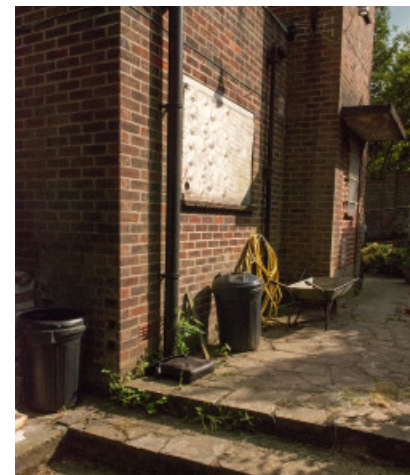
Research into the building's history has revealed that it is erroneously classified as an early 20th Century house. It was in fact, constructed probably in the 1940's as demonstrated on 1936 OS Map of the site, on which it does not feature, whereas on the 1951 OS Map it first appears on site. (See Appendix No 7, fig 9 and fig 10).

Similarly, the stretcher bonded facing brickwork of the building envelope signifies cavity wall construction, which only began to be adopted as common building practice, post WWII (6 - 7).

The misdating of the property therefore calls into question any historical significance that may have been attributed to the property in justifying it as making a positive impact in the Conservation Area.

Also, with regard to assessing any merits that might be prescribed to the existing property in comparison with Camden's selection criteria guidelines related to local list nominations, it seems not to measure up to any of the listed criteria, as follows.

1. It has little or no architectural significance having no obvious design merit, being of unremarkable construction, materials, form, layout and has little or no detail of interest. It is of anonymous authorship and is not innovative. It has also been subject to an unsympathetic extension with aluminium cladding.



6 & 7- Existing brickwork

2. The building has no historical significance, either in its date of construction, or events associated with the residence. For example, the name of the property being 'The Cottage' has lead to possible anecdotal association of an earlier building on site related to the former Mount Tyndal residence, demolished in the early 1960's.

However, Tithe and Ordnance Survey maps demonstrate that no building stood on the site prior to 1936. (See Appendix No 7, fig 9).

3. The Townscape importance of the building is negligible, by virtue of minimal visual impact on the public realm and therefore provides no material contribution to character of the locality (8, 9).

4. It has no social significance, either of communal, commemorative, symbolic or of spiritual regard.

The original pre application submission included a detailed case for demolition of the existing residence, which was made on practical and functions grounds. The main points are summarised as follows:

- Vehicular and inclusive access is constrained due to the steep slope into a very confined forecourt (10). Vehicles therefore have to reverse into the busy road.
- The construction fails to comply with current Building Regulations and would require extensive repair, replacement and upgrading



8 & 9 - View of 'The Cottage' from the Heath and from Spaniards Road, practically invisible



10 - Constrained inclusive access

of the building fabric.

- The building is semi-derelict having suffered repeated vandalism.
- The family's requirements include accommodation for a carer to assist a family member with special needs. This would necessitate substantial modification and extension of the existing dwelling.

In conclusion, owing to the nature of the building and its location, a new build proposal presents an opportunity to provide a residence of much improved amenity, greater sustainability, improved accessibility and of greater contribution to the Conservation Area.

b) Public Open Space and Metropolitan Land

The Site bounds Hampstead Heath, which is designated as both Public Open Space and Metropolitan Land. Camden Core Strategy CS15 'Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces and encouraging biodiversity' (11, 12) provides guidance and most relevantly, those listed below:

"n) Taking into account the impact on the Heath when considering relevant Planning applications"



11 - Hampstead Heath park



12 - Map of the Hampstead Heath park

The design and form of the new residence aims to make a positive contribution to its setting but also carefully considers and mitigates any possible impact on the Heath as follows:

- The scale and height of the proposal matches that of the existing dwelling, to be demolished
- The existing ecology on site (both flora and fauna) has been analysed and preserved in the proposals (see Appendix No 1A and 1B)
- The proposals carefully accommodate the existing species trees and shrubs and the proposed landscaping allows for new tree and enhanced complimentary planting (see Appendix No 2)
- The extent of the proposed part basement is limited by the need for root protection as defined in the arboriculture report (see Appendix No 2 Stage 1) and has received a favourable basement impact assessment (see Appendix No 3) and similarly with regard to root protection as defined in the arboriculture report (see Appendix No 2 Stage 1)
- Initial consultations have been undertaken with numerous stakeholders, and their observations have contributed positively to the design development. (Appendix No 9).

“0) Protecting views from Hampstead Heath and views across the Heath and its surrounding area”

- As previously stated, site is surrounded by dense tree and shrubs cover along the boundary contiguous to the Heath, thus rendering it all but invisible from the Heath and surrounds (8, 9).
- The proposed envelope comprises warm grey toned render with timber in-fills. This combination is carefully chosen to complement the wooded greenery in tone with the result that it is visually recessive. Likewise, the glazed areas within the dwelling will reflect the sky and natural greenery to create an overall effect of blending into the existing context.
- The boundary treatment is designed to make a positive contribution to the Heath, by affording support for greenery and to screen possible light slippage at night.
- A series of photomontages is provided (in Appendix No 6) to demonstrate the above.

In response to Paragraph 15.6, the proposals are designed to enhance the wholeness, appearance, setting and amenity of the adjacent public open space.

SCHEME PROPOSALS

a) Amount

The proposal is for a 4-bedroom two-storey residence with carer's accommodation in the lower ground floor/basement, which also contains an exercise pool and ancillary space.

The site area is 930m² / 0.093hectares, with approximately 85% of site devoted to outside space, allowing for the new dwelling footprint of 226.3m² (existing building footprint equals 125.8m²).

b) Size and Scale

The new build G.I.A comprises: Basement 174.9m²; Ground floor 190.4m² and First floor 162.1m². A full schedule of accommodation is attached to drawing No 024_102 for information.

As a consequence of the pre application advice the current design provides access to the main roof areas for maintenance only. Also, the previously proposed link gallery and garden studio (61.1m² in area) have been omitted in favour of a smaller single storey garden room of 28.5m², which is now attached to the body of the house in line with advice given.

The proposal is to keep within the bulk and massing of the existing dwelling as far as possible. The two-storey structure is conceived as a linear pavilion, which mediates between the Spaniards boundary wall and the specimen Llucombe oak within the rear garden. The consequent layout creates a scale appropriate to its setting and optimises the opportunities of this unique site.

The new first floor roof parapet is at the approximate level of the existing, thus maintaining minimal visual impact as seen from Spaniards Road, and is also well below the tree line of the Heath. The new house entrance is set further back from Boundary than the existing by some 4.7m.

However, the general ground floor level is raised above that of the existing building by approximately 400mm, in order to reduce vehicular and wheelchair access gradients, down from Spaniards entrance. This is achieved while not consequently raising the parapet above that of the existing by reducing floor to ceiling heights of the new build to that as existing.

Raising the new ground floor level similarly reduces the depth of excavation for the basement construction under.

c) Organisation and Layout

The new property is designed as a simple, contemporary pavilion, the grain of which follows the linear nature of the site and visually appears to 'float' over the ground. A continuous double height space leads from the entrance through the length of the house, providing for horizontal and vertical circulation as well as separating the main living areas from the boundary to Mount Tyndal.

At first floor level, bedrooms are accessed from an open corridor that looks into the double height space, which is naturally top lit to provide daylight and sunlight within the house.

The position of the existing garage remains in the existing location, with a bedroom suite over at first floor. At right angle to the garage is an open carport and turning area, extending under the first two bays of the body of the house.

A second entrance is provided under the carport, entering into a utility area with a separate staircase, which leads to the carer's accommodation under. By virtue of the sloping site, this accommodation receives natural light to both the living and bedroom spaces.

d) Appearance and Materials

There is no particular immediate precedent or building context to help inform the choice of cladding materials for the property, which is almost completely screened from its surroundings, and with Mount Tyndal being over 40metres away.

However, the proposed materials are self finished, low maintenance and long life comprising a warm grey self finished render surface for the majority of the external envelope, with areas of sustainable sourced sweet chestnut vertical cladding with fixed and opening window assemblies in aluminium and timber frames.

The external shared boundary wall facing Mount Tyndal is clad in London stock brick, at the request of the residents group, during consultations.

Along the North elevation, the structural grid of slender columns is of self finished white pre cast concrete. Flat roofs have paved areas for access, surrounded with green roof construction.

The warm grey walls, with timber in fills and green roofs, which together with glazing creating transparency and reflections of sky and greenery, combine to complement the surrounding woodland setting.

e) Lifetime Homes Assessment and Wheelchair Housing Statement

The dwelling is designed in accordance with CPG 2 Housing 2011 and is to meet the 16 criteria that form the Lifetime Homes Standards. See marked up drawings in Appendix No 4 Section A that illustrate LHS criteria 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 12, 14 and 15 are achieved.

The incorporation of the above features will make accessible living easier and the house more adaptable to the needs of the entire lifecycle of the occupants.

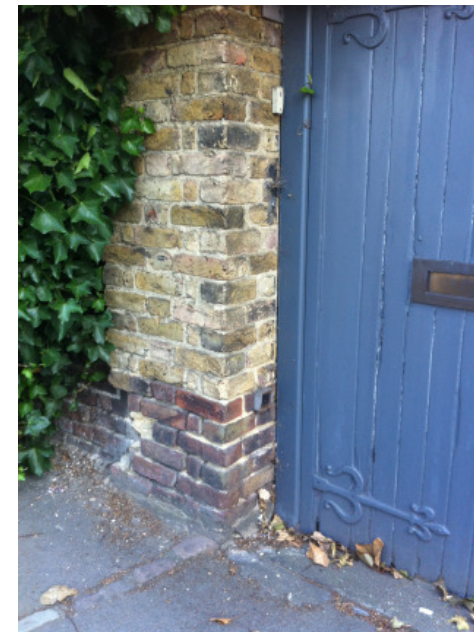
f) Access, Safety / Security

In all regards the proposal satisfies Part M of the Building Regulation with regard to access related to a private residence.

It has been previously stated that the existing 1:7 ramped entrance down into the site is to be eased, by both raising the ground floor of the dwelling and by introducing a wheelchair ramp in accordance with Lifetime home criteria 3. This necessitates closing the existing single doorway in the boundary wall and removing the stepped approach and combining both vehicular and pedestrian entrances into an enlarged entrance arch. It is noted that this existing arched entrance has been previously modified, as

indicated by the age and type of brickwork used in this section of the wall (13).

Pre application advice confirmed that the provision for three on plot car spaces is acceptable, and spaces are provided in the footprint of the existing double garage and in a car port adjacent to the dwelling's front door. This space allows for parking widening (to meet criteria 1 of Lifetime Homes standards).



13 - Patch of non original brickwork

Vehicular access is improved by easing the ramp as mentioned, and the space in the forecourt is arranged to allow for on plot turning allowing vehicles to enter and exit site in a forward gear. See Appendix 4 Section B illustrating the required 'swept path analysis'.

Consistent with TfL guidance, two cycle spaces are provided, one with a Sheffield stand, as illustrated in Appendix 4 Section C.

With regard to crime prevention, the proposal follows guidance in Camden's policy CS17, and an initial 'designing out crime' consultation with the Council's Crime Prevention Design Advisor.

The existing 900mm high hoop iron and finial topped fencing along the Heath boundary is proposed to be replaced/complemented by a more secure physical boundary fence approximately 2.4metres high comprising fine woven substantial mesh supported at 2.5m centres on steel posts. All boundary metalwork is to be coated dark green/black.

Due to the sloping nature of the site, a stone gabion base is proposed to allow partial retaining within the site to allow backfilling where pathways are located. See drawings No 024_110, 024_112, 024_113 & 024_114.

The substantial brick boundary to Spaniards is considered sufficient secure, and the new combined entrance doors are designed to completely fill the enlarged opening.

The boundary wall to Mount Tyndal's grounds is of brick construction of a minimum height of 2.4m, in lieu of the existing 1.8m timber close-boarded fence with razor wire top.

Finally, electronic detection systems are proposed in and around the new dwelling, but will not include external security lighting.

g) Sustainability Statement

A pre-assessment CfSH report has been undertaken, in line with CS13, DP22 and CP3 Chapter 9.

In summary, the new building is designed to maximise the potential of the site with regard to passive sustainable design measures to reduce energy consumption and thus increasing energy efficiency.

This is achieved in a variety of ways. Good utilisation of the site orientation to negate unwanted internal solar heat gains while allowing for generous areas of glazing. Natural ventilation of habitable spaces throughout combined with mixed mode ventilation and high efficiency heat recovery system. Energy demands are also

reduced by provision of Photovoltaic panels (14) combined with high levels of fabric insulation with minimal thermal bridges, air-tight construction, water and waste management. Finally, sustainable sourced materials are specified where possible, plus areas of green roof (15) to reduce carbon consumption.

Accordingly, the project achieves CfSH level 4. For details see CfSH reports in Appendices No 5A & 5B.



14 - Photovoltaic panels



15 - Green roof

h) Amenity / Light Impact Statement

The first pre-assessment report acknowledges no issues arising with regard to Daylight/sunlight, ventilation, room sizes and possible light slippage. Similarly, given the context of the site and surroundings, no issues arise from overlooking or outlook/sense of enclosure.

In line with Camden's policy DP26c, the design of external lighting will aim to only illuminate the intended areas, with the avoidance of glare and excessive lighting. External lighting is therefore proposed only at the point of entry from Spaniards Road into the forecourt area. This leaves the main site unaffected from external lighting to help minimise any adverse impact on wildlife or ecology.

Secondly, with regard to the possibility of light spillage from glazed areas within the property, the following should be noted.

The occupants are concerned to maintain privacy in winter evenings and at such times when internal artificial lighting is in use. Therefore motorised internal blinds (dim out quality) are specified to all habitable rooms. It is also understood that Kenwood is closed to the public from dusk.

By virtue of the steep slope away from the residence toward the Heath, the design and position of the proposed boundary fence creates a visual cut off sight line to the ground floor glazing on the North elevation facing the Heath (see diagram 16).

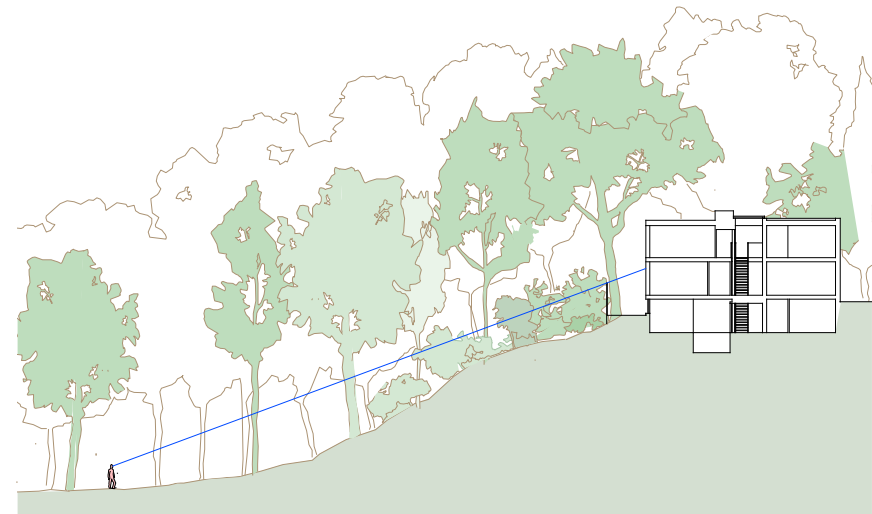
All internal lighting is specified as dimmable, so that unnecessarily high levels can be actively controlled.

Finally, the dense woodland and undergrowth provide a blanket of greenery to naturally conceal the residence in all but the winter months, at which time Kenwood is closed to the public. The impact of potential light spillage is illustrated in a series of photo-montages in Appendix No 6.

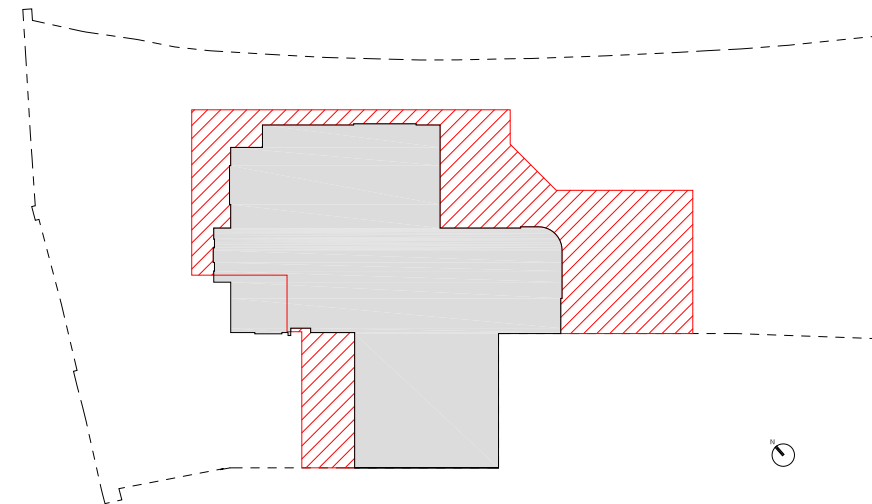
i) Basement

The design of the basement takes account of the tree root protection zone, to limit excavation in the areas of potential tree roots. See diagram 17 which illustrates the extent of the proposed basement as compared with the footprint of the existing residence.

A full Basement Impact Assessment has taken place in accordance with policies CS13, DP22, 23 and 27, which includes soil analysis and ground water monitoring and analysis. The report concludes that the proposed basement does not materially af-



16 - Visual cut off by boundary fence



17 - Extent of the proposed basement (red) as compared with the footprint of the existing residence (grey). Boundary limit as dotted line

fect subterranean (groundwater) flow, slope (in) stability and surface flow and flooding (see Appendix No 3).

j) Archaeology

Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service have been consulted and in consequence a desktop archaeology report is appended for information, It concludes that no significant archaeology existing on the site, and that subsoil disturbance caused by the construction of the existing dwelling would have further negated any possible find (see Appendix 7).

k) Trees, Landscape and Ecology

A full tree report including survey, constraints plan, implications assessment and protection plan is appended. Similarly a method statement for the construction/foundations within the tree protection zone is also attached together with a landscape design for the site, which also includes biodiversity (see Appendix No 2).

Due to the adjacency of the Heath which of Nature Conservation Importance as designated by Natural England, an ecological assessment has taken place. It concludes that the site does not manifest any species (either flora and fauna), which are of special interest or endangered (see Appendix 1A & 1B).

A draft Construction Management Plan is also appended, to demonstrate protection of amenity and to mitigate any impacts of the construction phase of development in accordance with Camden's Planning Guidance 6, section 8 (see Appendix No 8).

CONCLUSION

The design exhibits an architecturally balanced and well proportioned building that maximises the advantages of this special site. The design has developed sensitively through a process of consultation and collaboration, with the result that the residence will sit naturally within the site, and further enhanced by the proposed use of high quality, natural, carefully detailed materials together with a complementary landscape and planting proposal.

The proposal also provides much improved access into and from the property and addresses issues of long term sustainability. These culminate in a high quality design and well executed house, in a manner which is sensitive and harmonious with its setting.



18 - Elevation looking at the proposed North East facade through the woods

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Appendix 1A - Ecology Survey, Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey
Appendix 1B - Ecology Survey, Initial Bat Survey
Appendix 2 - Tree Survey / Arboricultural Statement
Appendix 3 - Basement Impact Assessment
Appendix 4 - Diagrams
Appendix 5A - Sustainability Plan, Energy Statement
Appendix 5B - Sustainability Plan, CfSH Statement
Appendix 6 - Photographs / Photomontages
Appendix 7 - Archaeology
Appendix 8 - Draft Construction Management Plan
Appendix 9 - Initial Consultation

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