

88 OAKSHOTT COURT NW1 1ST

88 OAKSHOTT COURT, LONDON NW1 1ST

## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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*...proposal for a modern, high quality, lightweight extension which will improve the host building...*

KENNEDYTWADDLE ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN  
24 TOTTENHAM ROAD  
LONDON N1 4BZ

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## INTRODUCTION

This application is for a small scale residential rooftop extension. In this statement we aim to demonstrate that the extension will have a positive effect on an estate and help meet the demand for affordable accommodation for a growing family. The block on which the extension sits is designated a separate block.

The design and access statement will also explain how the extension meets with Camden Council development policies and Planning guidance documents – in particular CPG1 and CPG9.

The new extension will help give a boost to the surroundings by introducing positive new development and act as a catalyst to breathe new life into the estate. It will also provide much needed additional accommodation.

Oakshott Court is not listed and is not in a conservation area.

In conjunction with this application there is also an application for a matching extension at number 87 Oakshott Court – part of the same separate block. The extensions provide additional accommodation which comfortably exceeds the Council's space standards. Symmetry is maintained by the extensions and the massing of this separate block comfortably accommodates this proposed scheme.

Both applicants are the leaseholders of the properties and in conjunction with this application will be seeking landlords consent for the works.

Architecture and design studio kennedywaddle have been producing successful renovations and new buildings for 15 years, several of which have included modern rooftop extensions. Similar extensions have been approved in Clerkenwell and completed on City Road with Islington Council. Our work aims to improve the surrounding context in a beautiful, functional and pragmatic way through quality design.

As we will show later on in this document this type of lighter, modern, rooftop extension has been used many times and to great effect. Camden council has approved a very good example at 101 Euston Road which is nearing completion. The tried and tested language and approach works well in both large and small scale.

On a similar scale to this application we understand Camden have considered a similar approach on parts of the Regent's Park Estate, to provide residential accommodation, images of which were recently published in the Camden New Journal.

## SITE ANALYSIS

Oakshott Court is a 1970's residential block bounded by Polygon Road to the north, Phoenix Road to the south with Chalton street and Werrington street to the east and west respectively.

Originally designed by Peter Tabori while working in Camden council architects' department the apartments the blocks are stepped in section – a popular approach with housing around this time and especially those produced by the borough during this era.

The residential units vary in size and form an 'L' shape development backing on to Chalton and Werrington Streets. There is 8 blocks in total – 4 on each leg of the 'L'. The lowest blocks are at basement level and rise up toward the rear of the site culminating in the highest point at the junction Chalton street and Polygon road. The highest point is accentuated by the mass of the chimney tower which houses the lift motor room and the boiler flues. It is adjacent to this high point on the separate blocks that the proposed extensions are.

Each of the apartments enjoys a southerly aspect which is maximized by the large glazed sliding doors to each dwelling.

In general the landscaping of the block is predominantly hard although planters have been designed in to provide relief. Recent work by residents has sought to reintroduce redundant planters and provide additional ones to create more greenery. The design of the court has worked relatively well over the last 40 years although the robust and unorthodox design would welcome some new accents – this is proposed with these two roof extensions on Blocks A & B.

Blocks A & B are separate from the other blocks and set back from the line of the adjacent units. This – together with the chimney height – allow for scope to extend. There is only one lift in Oakshott Court and it is housed in blocks A & B. The lift and separate staircase are not

integral to the way the whole estate operates. Investigation of early designs for the blocks demonstrate it took a few attempts before this section was resolved. A few options existed for the corner portion of the scheme before 6 additional flats were decided on.

We will demonstrate later why the eventual resolution used can be improved and the design will enhance the estate.



*Aerial view of Oakshott Court – 87 & 88 are a separate blocks the top left corner under the higher 'chimney' tower.*

*The two apartments where the extensions are set back from the main line of the other blocks – allowing them to maintain the composition without detriment to overall composition.*

## CONTEXT

Oakshott Court is in Somers Town – the area bounded by Euston Road to the south, Eversholt street to the west, Midland Road to the east and Oakley Square to the north.

The area has a high density of housing, predominantly owned by local authority. The area is witnessing some major changes at the moment with the construction of the Crick Institute, visible from Oakshott Court, and forthcoming developments of private housing and the rebuilding of Edith Neville primary school. In the context of the scale and amount of development in the area these proposed extensions in relation to these applications is very small.

Oakshott Court is a 4 storey robust block, both aesthetically and physically. The concrete slabs supporting brick cavity walls. The roof is a concrete slab and therefore capable of taking a lightweight extension.

To the east is Walker House – a 6 storey mansion block with the steeply pitched roof typical of this type of pre-war housing. The upper most units in this block are housed in dormer windows – common in roof extensions but in this case part of the original design. The high chimneys rising above the ridges of these blocks make the whole mass feel higher. This is the block closest to the proposed extension and will still exceed one storey above the proposed extension.

To the west is another similar mansion block on Werrington street – this block is the same height although differs with the access decks facing the street as opposed to the courtyard access of Walker House.

## PROPOSALS

In keeping with the language, form and materials of the existing block the proposed extension is simple and modern.

As mentioned, and illustrated in the submission drawings, Blocks A & B at Oakshott Court form one block separated from the others. The height of the chimney tower and lift motor room allow scope for extension and still leave the tower over 3.5M above the proposed extension.

In the spirit of many successful similar developments the proposed extension will complement the existing building by being lighter and more transparent.

The extension is very much subservient to the host building both to the immediate block and the wider context.

A structural engineer has been consulted on the principle of creating an extension on the building and the feedback is positive.

Fenestration for the addition has been designed using a similar aesthetic to the existing building – the current apartment enjoys a south facing wall with floor to ceiling glazing. This will be replicated in the extension and will result in an internal space which benefits from a lot of natural light, creating a healthy environment in which to live.

The coping and fascia of the extension have a pressed horizontal seam, introduced to make reference to the horizontal emphasis of the current building produced by the concrete slabs.

From a maintenance point of view all routes required to access other parts of the roofs will be maintained.

Examples below of a similar language of extension executed successfully – although much larger in scale the benefits are obvious.



101 Euston Road – the modern lightweight extension designed by Levitt Bernstein gives a previously tired looking building the ability to make a positive contribution. The same effect can happen on much smaller scale projects.



Earlier and well known examples of this approach have lasted well. The Tate modern by Herzog and de Meuron and the Jerwood space by Muckenbeck architects.



*On a smaller and similar scale to these proposals the award winning Lynch architects created a private extension on a Hackney council building. The lower floors still occupied by council tenants and the freeholder is Hackney council. This extension was prefabricated and craned onto the blocks – which are from a similar era to Oakshott Court.*



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*Clerkenwell Extension by David Adjaye*



*Aerial view of 87 & 88 showing the set back and towering chimney – making an extension possible in terms of scale. The photograph also shows blocks A&B as separate blocks.*

Materials and composition for the proposed extension have been chosen to match and complement the existing building. The scale, proportions and general massing of the new addition is in keeping with the rhythm of the host building. The sliding doors proposed will be the same design as those on the existing building.

The relatively high parapet allows the extension to sit down behind the brickwork and therefore ensure it doesn't dominate. The new extension would also be set back from the parapet line – this means it will not be visible from the pavement immediately below.

To the street side in addition to not being seen from the pavement below there is also cover from nearby trees.

The proposed cladding for the extension is powder coated aluminium in the same colour used throughout the estate. The material is light yet durable and will sit well within the context.



*An example of quality powder coated aluminium cladding creating a pleasing palette with brickwork. This new school in Southwark Council has recently been completed.*

Although not necessarily a planning issue the proposed method of construction is prefabrication. This technique was used on another similar lightweight extension close to the site on Bidborough Street. UCL student accommodation was craned into place with ease.

This approach will ensure minimum disruption and enable the build stage to take place without the use of scaffolding. Utilising this type of construction means a lot less time on site and consequently any nuisance to neighbor's.

It is interesting to note that a similar proposal to extend properties in the same manner has been suggested on the Regent's Park estate to assist with the loss of housing should the current HS2 plans materialise.

In terms of the accommodation proposed the living area of the current apartment would move into the extension to then provide three bedrooms below. A simple staircase would be inserted into the hall and a hole cut in the concrete slab to allow access.

Illuminated at night the proposed extensions will enhance Oakshott Court and contribute to deterring unwanted visitors – an ongoing issue on the estate.

Access for maintenance to other parts of flat roofs on Oakshott Court will be maintained and has been considered during the design development.

## CAMDEN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES & PLANNING GUIDANCE

The proposals included in this application comply with Camden's Planning guidance documents and in particular CPG1 and CPG9

In relation to Core Strategy CS17 – making Camden a safer place – this application will positively contribute to this. Oakshott Court is not immune to design faults which can encourage and harbour anti-social behavior. 'Grand schemes' typical of this type of social housing development, created during a period of housing innovation, are not without problems.

The erection of these extensions will not only 'lift' the estate by introducing an element of clean new design they will also reinforce the notion that Camden look after and improve the housing stock. This in itself is enough to send a message that the estate has not been forgotten and can be part of the non-stop development happening all around.

The proposed extension also complies with DP24 of Camden Development Policy – 'securing high quality design'. This is ensured by the careful consideration of scale, proportion and materials – selected to enhance the host building.

Recent initiatives by residents of the estate have sought to reintroduce planters that were empty and paved over – this has already started to improve the place. These new extensions would be a beacon of regeneration and further improve the surroundings.

With regard to CPG1 Chapter 5 this extension will not harm the character and is sympathetic to the existing building.

## CONCLUSION

The proposed new extension is sympathetic to the host building in terms of scale and materials. The existing composition lends itself well to accommodating the addition. As the blocks are separate and the chimney rises high the additions sit well.

The set-back, parapet and surrounding trees all mean the proposed extensions will not look obtrusive.

A new addition will provide high quality accommodation which is energy efficient and flooded with natural light. The popularity and acceptance of this type of addition is proof that they work and are a welcome modern element of the built environment especially in London. Camden have shown acceptance of this type of form several times and also most recently with suggestions of similar proposals for blocks on the Regent's Park Estate.

In conjunction with the proposed extension at no. 88 balance is achieved and the symmetry maintained in the two leasehold properties.

It cannot be underestimated the positive effect this would have on the estate – and in particular this area which feels barren and neglected.

We believe the approval of this will allow Oakshott Court to be part of the massive amount of development in the area, from the Crick Institute, 101 Euston Road, Kings Cross. It will add a spark of creative new development much needed on the estate.



## APPENDIX

The following pages show some examples of recently completed projects by our studio relevant to this application.



Foulden Terrace N16. New build mews houses. Glass and brickwork composition referencing traditional forms with a modern language. This new development greatly improved the surroundings just by being a new modern addition – similar to the effect the proposed extension would bring



The Whisel House, N1.

Lightweight glass on a solid base – illuminated at night this extension creates a safer environment – similar to the effect envisaged at Oakshott Court.