

Design & Access Statement for 56 Avenue Road

Local History

Avenue Road came into being between 1826 and 1829 as a new road to develop the Eyre estate. The Eyre Family had aspired to create something in the style of Bath crescents when they commenced planning the area in 1794 but this was abandoned as the Napoleonic era drew on. Most of the original houses were detached, brick-built with stucco detailing and cast-iron balconies. The styling is varied but the houses are mainly Italianate.

Location

Away from Swiss Cottage this part of Avenue Road is residential and mainly large detached houses on this side. Many of these are quite modern but built to resemble Georgian-style villas. Avenue Road is a busy road (B525) connecting the back of Regent's Park with Swiss Cottage. Close to the site is Swiss Cottage School and there is good access to transport with nearby bus-stops and Swiss Cottage and St John's Wood underground stations.

No. 56 is at the junction of Avenue Road and Elsworthy Road. Although just outside of the Elsworthy Conservation Area No. 56 Avenue Road shares much of the street-character of this part of the borough with its mature trees and traditional appearance. There is a small Mews House on Elsworthy Road which is part of the site of No. 56. Nothing is proposed for this building.

Design of No. 56

The present building dates from 1914 and 1935. It is a two-storey block of two street frontages facing Avenue Road and Elsworthy Road but this latter is a secondary frontage and concealed behind mature planting. The main frontage is a symmetrical block centred on a pillastered-doorcase with a broken pediment. Set back to one side is a ground floor extension built over the garage which is at a lower level with an alarmingly steep ramp to it. This extension is flat roofed and there is a narrow terrace over the wide garage door. The secondary front is a much more relaxed elevation though similarly symmetrical with two large semi-circular bays either side of a recessed portico. Behind the brick parapets, the roof contains a second-storey within a mansard tiled-roof lit by dormers.

The detailing of the house is robust and quite imposing but the copies of traditional 18th and 19th century features are decidedly modern. The windows are set in shallow reveals.

Existing Features of the Site & Building

There is a large area of garden at the back laid to lawn. The front of the site is dominated by the turning sweep connecting the two gateways to the central stepped entrance. The elevation has a series of tall mature trees. Protection works around the bases of these were a large feature of the planning application of but these are not affected by the present proposals.

Laundry Design

The present garage is not used for parking at present and provides an ideal opportunity to enlarge the present laundry with an adjacent storage-cum-staff office. This would utilise the existing drainage connections in the garage.

Exterior Features.

The proposal is to remove the garage door and fill in the space with a matching brick elevation with openings that mirror the wall above. The brickwork would be made to match the existing though the flat brick-arch feature would be retained. The windows would be in timber with profiles to match

those of the rest of the house and one of them would be set back in the reveal to provide essential ventilation to the laundry.

Access

The existing ramped approach is to be retained and it is expected that this will become a service entrance for deliveries brought by trolley where they can be handled by the staff. The present Laundry function is housed within the basement so this should not make any part of the existing arrangement worse.

Previous Application

A previous application for the house was made in 2012 reference 2012/4562/P and granted Subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement on 12-07-2013. This involved demolishing the two buildings on the site and creating an additional basement level. As understood none of this approved work has been carried out and the proposals of this present application has no relation to the former application.

References

British History - Vol 9 - A History of Middlesex
Planning Application Documents 2012/4562/P

Photographs



Front elevation with
Garage bottom left.



Front elevation with
Garage bottom left.



Garage: View towards the
garage door.



Existing Ramp from
garage to parking area