550

4 FROGNAL RISE

LONDON NW3 6RD

PLANNING DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

A two storey single family house with pitched roof, attached on the north eastern boundary to no 2, formerly the stable block to Frognal Rise House dating from late 19C, converted and largely reconstructed in 1937.

PURPOSE OF APPLICATION

The purpose of the proposals is to improve and upgrade the quality of accommodation in the single family house both internally and in the relationship between interior and external space. The proposed scheme will deliver 204m² more living space to the property.

The house at present has relatively small rooms, with no connection between living accommodation and the rear garden, the front garden area being largely given over to hard landscape for car parking. As such it does not meet the needs of present day family living.

PLANNING HISTORY *(excluding tree applications)*

date	*details*	*reference*	*decision*
19th Dec 1984	Erection of bathroom and external wc at rear	8223	*approved*
2nd Nov 1958	Erection of garage and new access to highway	17124	*approved*

PRE-APPLICATION

Preliminary scheme designs and documentation were submitted for pre-application advice in May 2014, with responses received from planning officer Karen Scarisbrick by letter dated 9th July 2014. The proposals now submitted have been developed in light of the comments and recommendations made at that time, as more fully set out below.

LOCATION CONTEXT & SITE

The property is within the Hampstead Conservation Area, sub-area 4: Fenton House area.

Local Context

In the early 19th century Frognal was described as 'a hamlet of handsome residences'. It is still characterized by relatively large freestanding houses with only a smaller number of late Victorian terraces, for example on Windmill Hill, as compared to other more densely developed parts of Hampstead.

A number of older houses remain, notably Frognal Rise c.1850, together with houses of more recent dates from mid 20th century, e.g.115 Frognal on the opposite corner with Oak Hill Way, to 1960s-70s of which the neighbouring house at 22 Windmill Hill (Ted Levy Benjamin) is a substantial example.

The junction of Frognal to Frognal Rise is dominated by Mount Vernon (Consumption Hospital 1880) redeveloped to residential use in 1995, with the new 7-storey apartment building Highgrove Point standing on the corner, facing the application site, which is encompassed by the description of 'bulky additional buildings' in the Conservation Area Guide.

The key word in describing the architecture of this part of Hampstead would be 'variety'; though the majority of buildings do have in common brickwork walls, with joinery windows and doors, and pitched roofs, a wide range of materials, colour, and detailing is present within these general categories, the majority of buildings are individual, with only relatively few groups and terraces of architectural uniformity.

Nos 2 & 4 Frognal Rise comprise the former stables of Frognal Rise House, possibly dating from late 19C when the house was 'extended and modernized ' in the Art Nouveau style'.

The stables conversion, into the two semi-detached houses, took place in 1937, and the conversion plans are appended on page 37 of the Archaeological Assessment. The drawing shows how no. 4, being the western end of the building, was reduced in size with a substantial portion of the original building forward of the present front elevation being removed (no reason is recorded on the drawing).

The subsequent two houses, both painted render externally with joinery windows, red clay pantile roofs, make a distinctive visual contribution to the locality, and are noted in the Conservation Area Guide as being 'of Arts & Crafts style'; however much of the outward appearance dates from the 1937 conversion and it is probable that the render finishes date from this time, perhaps concealing more detailed features of the original building

Although not statutorily listed, the two houses are identified in the Hampstead Conservation Area Guide as 'making a positive contribution'.

Site

The site slopes steeply from Windmill Hill down to Frognal Rise with an overall change in level of nearly 6m. The house is set into the slope so that the ground floor, being raised above the road level of Frognal Rise, is below ground at the rear, and the first floor is at garden level to the rear.

The front garden area is largely laid to impervious paving to provide off street parking.

The rear garden is landscaped, with a high retaining wall to Windmill Hill, but is little used as it has no connection to the living areas of the house.

On the north western side of the site is a freestanding garage (dated late 1950s) set back and raised up at intermediate level between ground and first floors, with steps between the house and the garage leading up to the rear garden.

Adjoining properties

The site is bounded by two roads, fronting Frognal Rise to the south-west, with Windmill Hill to the rear. On the south-east boundary the house adjoins no 2 Frognal Rise sharing a party wall (the two houses having been originally a single building), and on the north-west boundary no 22 Windmill Hill a substantial detached house with frontage onto Windmill Hill and its gardens running down to Frognal Rise.

Adjacent neighbours have been consulted through the design development process, and issued a preview of drawings and draft documentation in advance of this application submission, giving the opportunity for their comments to be taken into the design process.

Party wall matters will be conducted in accordance with the Party Wall Act, at the appropriate time in the project programme, and to be concluded in advance of construction.

TREES

A primary factor in developing the proposals has been to ensure protection of trees on and adjacent to the site.

A tree survey and root investigation has been carried out by Dr Martin Dobson and his report is appended.

Key findings of the survey and root trench investigation are

- That the boundary retaining wall and garage substructure adjoining 22 Windmill Hill have formed an effective root barrier such that there is no root spread across the boundary onto the site
- The survey and report sets out root protection zones for all trees on and adjacent to the site.
- All trees on and adjacent to the site are to be retained with exception only of the small ornamental birch which is compromised by its proximity to the front boundary wall.
- Tree protection measures are shown on the drawings attached with the tree report

A new tree is proposed, to be planted on completion of the construction works, in replacement of and located close to the position of the compromised birch tree to be removed.

PLANNING POLICY

Key aspects of policy shaping the design development:

- Preserving and enhancing the conservation area
- Designing in context of surrounding area
- Long views and impact on townscape
- Preserving open spaces between buildings
- Protecting amenity of neighbouring properties
- Quality of accommodation
    - Design for living, scale and proportion, natural light & ventilation, access to outside space
- Basement development compliance with CPG4
- CPG2 Housing, and 16 criteria for Lifetime Homes

Camden Guidance on Design CPG-1 sets out the following principles:

- Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings.
- Windows, doors and materials should complement the existing building……. extensions should be secondary to the building being extended.

And from the Conservation Area Guide

- H27 - Extensions should be in harmony with the original form and character of the house and the historic pattern of extensions within the terrace or group of buildings. The acceptability of larger extensions depends on the particular site and circumstances.

DESIGN

General design approach

Key principles underlying the overall design are:

- Overall design and use of materials to match the existing buildings
- Setting back the extension to the rear of the property to maintain the articulation of buildings and open space along the street elevation
- Utilising the steeply sloping site to set the development into the ground
- Using the footprint of the existing garage as the basis for extension
- Adding architectural detail and materials sensitively to the existing buildings to enhance the quality of design whilst remaining in context
- Replacing large areas of impervious paving with soft landscape and porous surfacing to protect groundwater levels and minimise surface water runoff into the drainage system

Protection of amenity to adjacent buildings is ensured by:

- Not overlooking adjoining properties
- No light spill to adjoining properties
- Windows positioned for outlook only over/within the property, or towards the street

Development of a lower floor (basement), to provide 128m² of living space, makes sense in this context due to:

Capitalising on the steeply sloping site with potential to connect to a south facing front garden area, whilst maintaining privacy from the road.

That the existing ground floor is raised above road level

Reducing the level of the front garden to the lower floor level for direct connection, and allowing natural light and ventilation to the interior; the additional floor would more properly be described as 'lower ground' (the use of the word basement is retained for simplicity)

The proposed extension at the side, providing 76m² of living space, has been achieved by:

Setting it back to maintain open space beside the house, and minimise impact on street views

Leaving the form of the existing house unchanged

The first floor being effectively single storey at the rear, at garden level

Having the whole of the development below boundary wall height at the rear so as not to be visible from Windmill Hill

Proposed works to the Garden areas entail:

Relocating car parking to the opposite corner on Frognal Rise, grading levels and landscaping creating a new south facing garden with direct connection to the main living rooms of the house.

The rear garden remains unchanged

Street views & visibility have been considered as follows:

Frognal & Frognal Rise:

The Conservation Area Guide states that the northern side of Frognal Rise 'is prominent looking up Frognal…and two houses are visible' these being Frognal Rise itself, and the very substantial garden elevation of 22 Windmill Hill. The views of no 4 are limited by the mass of Highgrove Point and its high boundary wall.

Photomontage views illustrating the visibility of the proposed extension are included within the documentation. Note that there are no views into the basement lightwell from the surrounding area, the lower part of the ground floor elevation, and the basement lightwell, being screened from view by the front boundary wall.

Windmill Hill

Due to the steep hillside running down from north to south into which no 4 is set, the ridgelines of the roofscape are lower than the top of the boundary wall along Windmill Hill; only the chimneys are visible from the road.

Architectural Design

Nos. 2 & 4, as already noted, are considered to have distinctive character that positively contributes to the Conservation Area. The elevation studies have been developed adopting the characteristics of the existing buildings notably:

- Painted render external walls
- Painted joinery windows and doors
- Arched windows and doors to the ground floor
- Pitched red clay pantile roofs

The design of the proposed extension utilises this same palette of materials with

- Painted render external walls
- Use of reclaimed red clay pantile pitched roofing
- Painted joinery windows with glazing bars and pane sizes drawing on the detail of the existing building
- Simple painted joinery balustrades to south facing balconies
- Stepping back the elevation on the boundary towards no 22 Windmill Hill as it rises from basement to ground to first floor, as the façade of the existing building

Internal

In the internal planning the form of the original building is retained, removing much of the subdivision dating from the 1937 conversion, to create more generous living rooms on the ground and lower floors, and an arrangement of bedrooms on the first floor all with ensuite bathrooms, the master bedroom opening directly onto the rear garden.

All habitable rooms will have good natural light and ventilation. The principle living rooms are southwest facing, and all open directly to outside space to the south and west, with the master bedroom having dual aspect.

Level access from/to outside at ground and basement, wider stairs and doors, provision of bedroom accommodation on the ground floor, and the detailed design of stairs, kitchen, bathroom and WCs, will improve accessibility into and around the house, and to be compliant with CPG2 Housing, and meeting the 16 criteria for Lifetime Homes.

Lowering the extension roofline

Following the recommendation in response to the pre-application submission the roofline of the proposed extension has been redesigned so that the ‘ridge of the roof extension… be made noticeably lower than that of the main ridge height of the host property’ to ensure the extension remains visually subordinate to the existing building.

Scale of basement floor

In the responses to the pre-application submission the scale of the proposed basement was highlighted, noting in particular that ‘council guidance outlines that modest basement extensions which are typically acceptable do not extend beyond the footprint of the original building’.

In this case the basement plan adheres closely to the footprint of the existing buildings on the site so that

- Footprint of existing buildings 128.3m²
- Footprint as proposed 150m²
- Site area 418m²
- (building footprints measured overall external walls)

Notwithstanding this small increase in area the coverage of the site remains relatively modest, rising only from 31% as existing, to 36% as proposed.

First floor terrace

Following the pre-application advice 'suggest(ing) that this element is removed' after further consideration has been retained in the developed scheme design as:

- following the established pattern of the existing building which has first floor terraces to both bedrooms on the street elevation
- providing southerly oriented outdoor amenity to ground floor living rooms and the first floor master bedroom, in line with Lifetime Homes recommendations
- the terrace is screened from overlooking neighbouring properties by the existing building on the eastern side, and the existing trees on the western boundary
- the terraces at first and ground floor levels are designed to provide solar shading in summer to the southerly aspect windows, to reduce overheating, and so avoid need for installation of cooling/conditioning

Window detailing

The pre-application advice recommended that the 'fenestration detailing takes reference from existing premise' has been adopted into the design.

Environmental and Sustainability

The form, construction and detailing of the proposed building is designed for low energy use, utilising sustainable & recycled materials

Provisions for surface water drainage will replace the largely impervious paving existing to front and rear gardens with soft landscaping and porous paving. In addition the residual part of the existing garage structure will house a surface water storage tank taking the majority of rainwater runoff from roofs, for use in garden watering. The quantity of surface water discharged into the main sewerage system will be very substantially reduced by these proposals

The additional extent and variety of soft landscaping to replace the large areas of existing paving will Increase biodiversity and wildlife habitat.

On site refuse and recycling bin storage is provided within a painted joinery shelter screened from street view inside the front boundary wall

Car parking & bicycle storage

Vehicle access onto the site and on-site car parking is relocated to the south eastern end of the Frognal Rise frontage, adjacent to the vehicle entrance to no 2. The change in street access does not affect on-street parking provision, and is beneficial in removing the access position further from the intersection of Frognal Rise and Frognal. On site parking space is provided for one car.

On-site bicycle storage is provided within the painted joinery shelter provided against the inside of the front boundary wall (where the existing vehicle entrance gate is to be infilled with brickwork).

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ACCESS

Street level pedestrian and vehicle access to the site is maintained, with the vehicle gate relocated to suit the new layout, as more fully described above

The relocation of the site entrance has no effect on road layout, and does not impact upon on-street parking

On-site parking space is to standard for disabled users

Level entry into the house, and from the principal rooms level access to garden areas

Level access from/to outside at ground and basement, wider stairs and doors, provision of bedroom accommodation on the ground floor, and the detailed design of stairs, kitchen, bathroom and WCs, will improve accessibility into and around the house, and to be compliant with CPG2 Housing, and meeting the 16 criteria for Lifetime Homes.

CONCLUSION

The extension and alterations to this small and inconveniently arranged house set within a relatively large steeply sloping site area are designed to create a house with the quality, scale, layout and amenity of interior rooms, gardens and outside spaces to meet the needs of present-day family living. The design provides this by respecting, maintaining and enhancing the architectural character of the existing building in style, materials and articulation, and the surrounding locality with particular attention to street views.

Protection of trees on and adjacent to the site, and the amenity of adjoining buildings have also been key factors in design development.