Design and Access Statement for the Front Driveway of 152 Goldhurst Terrace London NW6 3HP

June 2015

Description

The application property is a three- storey mid terrace property located in the South Hampstead Conservation Area, but is not listed. The property was built in the 1870's, in the late Victorian period.

The existing driveway, brick pillars and dropped kerb were undertaken in 1997, listed under Planning Application PW9702381R1.

A front sycamore tree was removed, due to causing subsidence to the house and driveway; listed under Planning Application 2010/6082/T.

None of the features of the front brick wall or the driveway are original to the house. They have been inserted in 1997 and have not been repaired or updated since.

A Planning application was made for the driveway in 2012 and was refused. In this revised application we have amended the proposed opening, as per the Planning Officer's comments in 2012. We attach to this application the confirmation email from the planning officer Connie Petrou that after consulting with the Conservation Officer, the planners would agree to the reduced 4m width opening, which has been amended to reflect in this application.

Photo 1: The front driveway design and materials do not enhance the Conservation Area. Some of the paving is damaged.

The front driveway has large grey paving slabs, many of which are cracked. The current paving does not allow for a sustainable drainage solution and the surface water drains onto the pavement.

There is a brick upstand in a zig- zag pattern to the flowerbed which does not align to any features of the house. The brick upstand has been damaged in parts. To the rear of the wall, there is a whole section of the upstand missing due to a sycamore tree which had to be removed in 2010 due to causing subsidence to the existing house and which also cracked all the paving stones on the drive. In addition the applicant has been told to remove the flowerbed adjoining the bay window and put hardstanding in its place due to the subsidence caused by the soil and planting.

Photos 2 & 3: Damage to the flowerbed brick upstand due to the tree.

To the front of the drive, the entrance to the drive is flanked by two high brick pillars, with a lower brick wall on either side. The pillars are set too close to each other that the driveway is not fit for purpose. The dominance and narrow width between the piers means that it is difficult to exit out of the drive as there is no view out and is therefore a safety hazard. Also, many cars have been scraped on the pillars as they drive onto the drive. In addition, the design of the driveway means that when two cars are parked there is no allowance for pedestrian access to the front door of the property including access for pushchairs or wheelchairs.

The family who own the property have a baby and find access round the parked cars with a pushchair difficult on a continual daily basis. In addition they have close relatives who have disabilities including being confined to wheelchairs who visit and stay frequently and when they do they need to coordinate moving the cars off the drive.

Photo 4 & 5: The narrow width between the pillars does not allow for safe access onto and off the drive. The car has been repeatedly scrapped on the brickwork as shown in the photo. There is limited pedestrian access to the front door when vehicles are parked. Cars need to be moved to allow pushchair access to the house.

Design Scope

The driveway needs to be replaced as repair alone would not suffice. We propose replacing the drive to make a more attractive frontage, complement the existing period house, provide a more sustainable driveway, enhance the Conservation Area and allow for safer access onto and off the driveway.

In our proposal we propose a sustainable driveway solution by placing an Aco drainage channel along the boundary and allow rainwater to drain into a permeable paving and flowerbeds. Therefore this drainage channel will prevent water egress onto pavement. This is in line with current Planning and National guidance on specification on driveways.

The new blocks proposed will complement the brick frontage of the existing house and be an improvement on the existing hard standing and cracked paving slabs. We propose a more sympathetic design with flowerbeds and planting designed to enhance and make a feature of the frontage of the house. We will maintain the existing hedges and flowerbeds on both boundaries.

We also propose to redo the front wall along the boundary and widen the gap between the brick piers so that access onto and off the drive becomes safer and easier. Therefore the right side brick pillar is rebuilt 0.75metres along from its existing location. The front pillars and brick wall will be rebuilt in brick. The proposed width of the opening would be 4m, the width of the wall and pillars along the frontage would be over 5m long. Therefore the proposed opening width is less than 50% of the frontage.

As security is an issue, there have been a number of break-ins to this property and neighbouring properties, we propose metal gates which can help increase the safety. Numerous properties along the road have also installed metal gates. We propose an attractive, traditional frontage design whereby the brick wall, pillars and metal railings are in keeping with the local Conservation Area. This would meet the Council's long term aspirations for the conservation area by reinstating traditional features.

Photo 6: Similar Victorian style railings & gate that we propose

Intended use

The owners have a baby and access for a pushchair this is a problem throughout the day. The mother has to move her parked car onto the road to get a pushchair into and out of the property, which is difficult and dangerous. The driveway will still be the same use as a family drive for cars, but will be safer for drivers, pedestrians and other vehicles in the road. It will also mean that once the drive is in

use for parking, pedestrian access will be made easier, particularly for pushchair and wheelchair users.

Layout of the proposed development

For layout of the proposals, refer to the accompanying application drawings:
Existing Driveway Drawing No. 100
Proposed Driveway Drawing No. 120.

No change is proposed to the pavement or the existing crossover or dropped kerb. No change is proposed to the house itself.

Landscaping

The proposal is to introduce new planting in the flowerbeds to enhance the soft landscaping. There will also be maintenance of existing hedging at the boundaries.

Materials

The new paving to the driveway is to be block paving, to complement the bricks of the existing house. The brick wall and pillars to the frontage will be rebuilt in bricks. The drainage channel with be Aco drainage channel. The metal gates and railings will be a traditional ironwork design.

Camden Planning Guidance

Section 6 Landscape Paragraph 6.25 states:

Retain or re-introduce original surface materials and boundary features, especially in Conservation Areas such as walls, railings and hedges where they have been removed. If new materials are to be introduced they should be complementary to the settings

The current proposal due to the siting of the parking space, the construction of a traditional style wall with associated metal railings and gates and the detailed landscape planting, has demonstrated that the application would not harm the character and appearance of the conservation area. In fact it would support the Council's desire to retain some traditional features such as front boundary walls; railings etc. The proposals are therefore considered acceptable having regard to the policies contained with the London Borough of Camden Core Strategy and Camden Development Policies and the guidance within the NPPF. The Council is therefore requested to grant planning permission for the proposed development.