

Design and Access Statement for
44 Queens Grove, London, NW8 6HH

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SCHNEIDER DESIGNERS
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Existing Plans

Scale 1:100 @ A3

This Design and Access Statement has been compiled as part of the preparation of proposals for alterations to No 44 Queens Grove, within the St John's Wood Conservation Area.

The house is a semi-detached 19th century Italianate villa situated halfway through the North side of Queens Grove, running East/West between Avenue Road and Ordnance Hill. It is a stucco fronted four-storey building that relates in design to neighbouring properties as well as to others in adjacent streets.

Schneider Designers has been appointed to prepare architectural designs for this property as part of the owner's intended redevelopment. The proposed development requires the submission of an application for planning permission.

The client would like to do an overall internal renovation of the property, introduce better circulation throughout and partially extend the rear facade to the garden, facing North.

On both sides modern extensions have been built to the rear. Permission has been granted for a planning application of similar scope for the neighbour property No. 43 (Application 2010/6736/P) as well as granted to property No. 45 (Application 2008/2073/P).

This document has been prepared with reference to a number of sources including the following sources:

- Camden's Local Development Framework 2011
- The National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- St John's Wood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2009
- The London Plan 2011
- British History Online



Front view



Rear View





Location

44 Queens Grove is located in the London Council of Camden within St. John's Wood conservation area. It is situated halfway through the North side of Queens Grove between Avenue Road to the East and Ordance Hill to the West.

This street has a residential character comprising of large three/four storey semi-detached villas and detached houses. The predominance is of traditional painted stucco houses although there are also several brick houses from different periods. This mixture of external materials and styles creates an incoherent and inconsistent urban character existing on this part of the street.

No 44 forms one of these semi-detached stuccoed villas with No 45 and is not statutory listed. The house comprises of four storeys and is set behind security gates, occupying a larger than average plot giving width both front and back. It benefits of ample off street parking for two cars, a front patio and a rear landscaped garden. The rear of the property overlooks a group of apartment buildings belonging to Wymondham Court separated by a block of garages and a cul-de-sac road parallel to the North boundary.

The property benefits from excellent access to public transports and amenities as well as parks and schools within walking distance. There are underground stations located at Swiss Cottage and St Johns Wood within a 5 minute walk and regular buses on Avenue Road. On St Johns Wood High Street & Finchley Road there are a large variety of local shops. Quintin Kynaston School is located just at the end of the street to the West, with The American School in London next to it. Primrose Hill and Regent's Park are also nearby.

Description

The house is constructed from solid brickwork main walls and intermediate load bearing timber framed walls. The front elevation consists of traditional painted channelled stucco finish with bevelled quoins, string courses and cornices in a simple classical detailing. The entrance has a square headed doorway with a fanlight, while the windows are placed in a regular pattern in a mix of sash and casement, incorporating glazing bars, fan and sidelights in some. The stucco coped parapets accentuate the division between floors, ending in a characteristically shallow pitched roof with broad overhanging eaves set on brackets, complemented by tall chimneys.

The rear elevation is faced with render facade including cornice and parapet to the extension. The fenestration is of a similar character to the front facade consisting of a mix of white painted timber sash and casement windows and doors.

Internally, the house has main social spaces on the ground floor with sleeping areas and bathrooms on the further two upper floors. On the lower ground floor it has service accommodations, kitchen, laundry and living areas.



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The new design proposes an overall internal house refurbishment introducing better circulations through new openings and new spaces. It also proposes a partially extension of the rear facade into the garden.

Internal refurbishment and alteration

The new internal layout will improve the daily living while inkeeping the original main layout. It will introduce better circulation on all four floor and re-use the existing stairwell from the ground to the top floor.

More bathrooms and wc's are introduce troughout and improvements are suggested to two of the existing bathrooms. Together with a laundry room on the lower ground and plenty of storage on all floors, this new layout suggests better infrastructures to level the todays needs of a house of this size, amending the present condition. This internal space reconfiguration will not detriment the external appearance of the house.

New extentions

The current rear facade of the house is incongruous, having a confusing mixture of forms bluntly connected with the main dwelling and with each other. As there is no possibility to create or expand new spaces within the house, the design envisages an erection of a new single storey extension and the enlargement of the two storey side extension towards the rear, incorporating a glazed structure in between to accomodate a new staircase to the lower ground.

The new single storey extension will generate a lower ground floor area for daily meals close to the kitchen and facing the garden, bathed with light from triple sliding glass doors and a skylight above. A new staircase is proposed from the ground to the lower ground floor, being projected out from the main building, incased in double storey glass structure and a skylight above. These complements the entrance of northen light into the main hallway and improves the circulation by creating a new relationship between the entrance and rear of the house. Its visual impact minimize the transition in between the two new volumes and at the same time, preserves the discreet character of the house. By enlarging the existing two storey side extension in 3.7m towards the rear, the new design will offer additional and much needed space to the new kitchen and dinning room, allowing them to have generous areas to fulfill our client's necessities.

Exterior Appearance

There is no amendment to the front elevation of the property. The facade and detailing to the external walls facing Queens Grove are the main elements that form the historic and special architectural interest and character of the building as well as other elements of the original fabric.

To the rear of the property the main change will consist of redesigning the two-storey facade by creating an inverted L shaped masonry wall enclosing a strutural frameless glass curtain wall. To allow a consisting continuous reading this design turns the corner and returns to meet the middle volume. To respect the residential character of the building by keeping a window repetition there will be a framed juliet balcony at the ground level accessed by double casement glass doors.

This bent elevation is replicated in the the new stairwell volume completing the transition to the lower volume.

As the existing terrace shows no coherence in style and proportions with the rear facade, the new lower volume will create a stone tiled terrace out from the ground floor living room, deeper and steadier than the existing and guarded by a frameless glass banister behind a L shape planter.

This extension mirrors in proportion the design of the two other volumes reproducing the inverted L masonry and glass surface as well. This allows for a throughout comprehensive reading of the whole rear elavation.

To distinguish from the existing, all windows and doors will have bronze anodized aluminum frames. The walls will be painted rendered to match and the framed balcony will be limestone cladded. The external walls of the main building to the rear of the property will remained with slight degree of alteration; same as the adjoining properties.

Layout

The total gross building area of the existing property is 444 sq m. The proposed gross building area of the building is 515 sqm, a gross increase of 71 sqm divided by 46 sqm on the lower ground floor and 25 sqm on ground floor. It corresponds to a 46sqm increase on surface area. This is the result of the proposed rear extensions.



Photomontage of Rear Elevation

Scale

The proposed design remains in scale with the existing and surrounding buildings and in similar granted extensions as the neighbour properties No. 43 and 45. The alterations will not affect the appearance of the property from the street.

In contrast with the traditional design of the front of the building the back is rationalised into a modern contemporary architectural style. However it is seen that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on its surroundings as the design has taken into account its context with respect to the building's scale, design and materials.

Landscaping

There is no amendment to the front of the plot a part front paving the driveway with permeable resin bound and side passage with stone slabs.

The rear garden will be landscaped allowing a better ratio between green and paved area. This will be amended to fit better with the proposed extensions. The planting is arranged to provide green area to the back of the garden as well as some planters in front of the house. There will be also a water feature aligned with the stairwell volume.

Access

The property is accessed from Queens Grove. There is no side nor rear access.

Pedestrian access is via a single iron gate through a pathway towards the building, up a number of steps to the main entrance door at raised ground floor. Access can also be provided sideways through a iron gate or down a short and narrow external stair that leads to a stone paved patio at lower ground level and through french doors into the building. Moreover it is proposed lowering part of the side passage to introduced a flight of steps along the new extension which will provide access down to the lower ground floor new kitchen.

Neither entrance are currently suitable for direct wheelchair access due to the level difference although a vertical wheelchair platform lift can be installed hereafter next to the patio stairs to provide access to the lower ground floor. At this level the new proposed layout guarantees all the necessary amenities and wide passage for a wheelchair user.

Vehicles can gain off-street access via a double iron gate leading to a gravelled driveway. This is a generous space which makes it excellent access for disabled people. It will be improved by repaving it with resin bound permeable paving and therefore increasing the safety for any disabled person.

The design proposes to retain the original access without any further changes apart from general improvement where it is need.

Conclusion

The proposal balances the volume of the main building with three stepped smaller lighter volumes adjacent to it. They will bring lightness and transparency as a contrast to the solidity and heaviness of the main rear elevation. The scale, mass and character of the proposed rear extensions were carefully designed to respect and blend sympathetically with the original building. It was also considered the conservation area settings and the integrity, form and style of the house and street. The front elevation remains unaltered and a new access to the lower ground floor kitchen is being proposed from the side passage.



Rear View of Model from Northeast



Rear View of Model from Northwest



Front Entrance



Front Patio



Driveway



Two-Storey Side Extension



Rear Elevation



Rear Garden