

Ref: 132.1ROS

Regeneration and Planning
Culture and Environment
London Borough of Camden
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By e-mail(planning@camden.gov.uk)

15th January, 2016

Dear Sir or Madam,

26 Rosecroft Avenue: Planning Application

Please find attached materials to support a full planning application for the proposed development of the ground and lower ground floor flat at the above property ('the application property'). The application is submitted on behalf of a number of owners of the property.

The development briefly comprises extensions and alterations to the ground and lower ground floor flat including a lateral extension of the existing semi-basement (within the existing building footprint), formation of a front light well, enlargement of an existing ground floor rear bay window and formation of a rear semi-basement level light well.

This letter comprises the Design and Access, Heritage and Planning Statement to accompany the application.

1. Drawings and Plans

Please find enclosed the following submitted documents, plans and drawings:

Existing plans

- Location Plan 1:1250@A4 July 2015
- Existing Basement and Ground Floor Plan Ref. EX100 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Existing First Floor Plan Ref. EX101 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Existing Second Floor Plan Ref. EX102 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Existing Roof Plan Ref. EX103 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Existing Section AA (front to rear) Ref. EX200 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Existing Section BB and CC Ref. EX201 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Existing Front and Rear Elevation Ref. EX300 1:100@A3 July 2015

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- Existing South Side Elevation(right hand) Elevations Ref. EX301 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Existing North Side Elevation(left hand) Elevation Ref. EX302 1:100@A3 July 2015

Proposed plans

- Proposed Site Plan Ref. PL100 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan Ref. PL101 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Proposed Basement Floor Plan Ref. PL102 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Proposed Roof Plan Ref. PL103 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Proposed Section AA (front to rear) Ref. PL200 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Proposed Section BB and CC Ref. PL201 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Proposed Front and Rear Elevation Ref. PL300 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Proposed South Side Elevation(right hand) Elevations Ref. EX301 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Proposed North Side Elevation(left hand) Elevation Ref. PL302 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Proposed Street Elevation Ref. PL303 1:100@A3 July 2015
- Trees Proposed to be Removed Ref. PL101A 1:100@A3 January 2016

Supporting Statements

- Planning, Design, Access and Heritage Statement (this letter).
- Basement Impact Assessment. GEA, December 2015.
- Ground Movement Assessment. GEA, January 2016.
- Arboricultural Report. John Cromer Arboricultural Company, January 2016.

2. Site and context

Context

The application property is in an area of late 19th and early 20th century inner suburban residential development near the western edge of Hampstead Heath and bounded by Platts Lane to the north, Hampstead Village to the south east and Finchley Road to the south and west.

Houses in the area are predominantly large detached and semi-detached buildings of red brick with clay tiled roofs with occasional areas of tile hanging and render and white painted small paned windows.

Rosecroft Avenue provides a link between Hollycroft Avenue and Platt's Lane to the north. It is a wide, gently curving, tree-lined avenue of substantial detached and semi-detached late Victorian/Edwardian villas. The road gradually rises to the north, with the application property situated in the upper, northern section close the junction with Platts Lane.

Site

The property appears to 'stand alone' on the east side of the street. It is bounded to the north by the rear and flank elevations of a property facing onto Platts Lane (No.28), to the south by a building set well back from the street (No.24), with a large property above and to the rear that is practically invisible from the street (No. 22).

The large plot is trapezoidal in shape ranging from 10 to 18m wide and typically 52m deep. It extends to some 750 sq.m/0.075 Ha. (0.18 acres).

Application property

The site is occupied by a detached two-storey plus basement Edwardian villa in English vernacular style set within substantial grounds.

The ground floor is raised one full storey above general street level. This is partly masked by the steeply sloping front garden. The existing semi basement can be seen beyond the driveway, which slopes gently down to street level. The raised ground floor opens directly onto the rear garden level.

The front and side elevations are clad in plain tile with red brick below. The exposed semi-basement storey to the front is clad in white painted render. The roof is covered in matching plain tile with tall chimney stacks, typical of the English vernacular revival. Windows are timber casement with glazing bars dividing each casement into smaller panes. The rear and side elevations are of multi-stock brick.

At some point in time the front of the property has been remodelled. Earlier plans show a garage block extending forward from the front elevation in the position of the driveway. This has been demolished and a secondary entrance porch added on the left hand side. The resulting arrangement around the main front porch, with a misproportioned window to the left hand side and half-roof above is peculiar and detracts from the overall quality of the building.

Access

The site is accessed via a wide driveway with accommodation for two cars. There is a separate winding footpath and external stairs up to the original front door (now the door to the application property) with a side porch beyond the driveway giving access to the upper floor flat. The driveway is ungated

Landscape and trees

The front garden is planted with ornamental shrubs and trees. The front boundary is formed by a brick retaining wall with plain face render finish to the base and a small clipped hedge behind. There is a small timber lychgate with hipped and gabled plain tile roof over..

The rear garden is laid to lawn and slopes up to the rear. There are a number of mature trees and shrubs planted around the perimeter of the rear garden.

3. Planning History

Permission was granted 1978 for change of use to provide four self-contained flats including works of conversion and the formation of a balcony at second floor level (LPA

Ref. 26723). This permission was either not implemented, or was superseded by the later permission below.

Permission was granted in 1981 for change of use involving works of conversion to form two self-contained flats and the construction of a new entrance lobby and stairs. This permission was implemented (LPA Ref. 1893).

Permission was granted in 1988 for a reduction in height of chimney (LPA Ref. 8870515).

4. Development Plan

The Development Plan is the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework and the London Plan. The following core strategy, development policies and guidelines relate to this proposal.

Core Strategy 2010

- CS5 - Managing the impact of growth and development
- CS14 - Promoting high quality place and conserving our heritage

Development Policies 2010

- DP24 - Securing High Quality Design
- DP25 - Conserving Camden's heritage
- DP27 – Basement development

Guidance

- CPG1 Design
- CPG4 Basements and Lightwells
- Redington/Frogna Conservation Area statement (2001).

Careful account of these policies has been taken in devising the submitted scheme.

5. Proposed development

The application property is arranged as 2 flats. The application relates to the lower flat at raised ground floor and semi-basement level.

It is proposed to extend the existing basement level sideways to provide additional accommodation for the lower flat. A front light well will be formed on the right hand side, mirroring the curbing form of the front two-storey bay window. A rear bay window will be remodelled and light wells introduced. An unsympathetic lean-to rear extension will be demolished. The extension to the rear will not extend beyond the existing rear building line. The cill level of an existing rear ground floor window will be lowered to form French doors opening onto the garden with the glazing pattern replicated. A window to the right hand side will be slightly enlarged with matching glazing and one side window will be removed.

No change is proposed to the front elevation above semi-basement level, except that the proposed front light well will be bounded by black painted metal railings.

No changes are proposed to the side or rear elevations above raised ground floor level or at roof level.

The residential use C3(a) will remain unchanged.

6. Heritage and archaeology

History of the immediate area.

Except for the development of rural lanes, farmhouses and the occasional free standing villa estate, the area remained largely undeveloped until after 1870.

A military signal station was erected on the summit of Telegraph Hill in 1798, to the north of the application property. This was part of a national chain of telegraph stations.

By the mid-18th century Duval's Lane, or Devil's Lane had become established. It later became known as Platt's Lane, taking its name from a local landowner Thomas Platt, an oriental scholar and Librarian of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Platt lived in a house occupying a prominent position on Platt's Lane, slightly to the north of the application property known as Childs (or Child's) Hill House. The map of 1866 shows the house along with extensive landscaped grounds. Childs Hill takes its name from Richard le Child, who in 1312 held a customary house and 30 acres, probably to the north and west.¹

The house was occupied from 1846 by Joseph Hoare, associated with the Hoares and Barclays banking families. Hoare added a storey to the house and died there in 1886.² The house was vacant by c.1897, when house building began on the estate, and was pulled down in c. 1904. The site of Child's Hill House is now Telegraph Hill and part of No. 22 Rosecroft Avenue (to the rear of the application property).

Ferncroft, Hollycroft, and Rosecroft avenues (*'The Crofts'*) were laid out and developed between 1897 and 1913 with mostly semi-detached houses by Irish property developer George Hart. Several detached houses were designed by Hart's Architect and partner C. H. B. Quennell including Nos. 7, 20 and 22 Rosecroft Avenue from 1898 to 1905. Nos. 17 and 18 include plaster relief panels by artist Benjamin Lloyd.

Listed buildings

The application property is not nationally listed.

Nos. 17, 18 and 20 Rosecroft Avenue are nationally listed.

Conservation area

The Redington/ Froggnal Conservation Area occupies an area of sloping land to the west and south west of Hampstead Village, including the application property.

The conservation area statement describes the area as *'a well-preserved example of a prosperous late 19th century and Edwardian residential suburb'*. The houses are described

¹ F T Baker, Diane K Bolton and Patricia E C Croot, 'Hampstead: Childs Hill', in A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 9, Hampstead, Paddington, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1989), pp. 73-75 <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/middx/vol9/pp73-75> [accessed 7 January 2016].

² F T Baker, Diane K Bolton and Patricia E C Croot, 'Hampstead: Childs Hill', in A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 9, Hampstead, Paddington, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1989), pp. 73-75 <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/middx/vol9/pp73-75> [accessed 7 January 2016].

as 'predominantly large detached and semi-detached and display a variety of formal and free architectural styles typical of the last years of the 19th and early years of the 20th centuries. On the whole these are built in red brick with clay tiled roofs, occasional areas of tile hanging and render and many of them have white painted small paned windows'.

Buildings that make a positive contribution to the conservation area

The Conservation area statement lists a number of properties in Rosecroft Avenue that make a contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, including the application property and houses on either side.

- Nos. 3-7 (odd),
- Nos. 23, 6- 16 (even),
- Nos. 22-28 (even)

Conservation sub area

The conservation area area is divided into eight sub areas including sub area number 2: The "Crofts" – incorporating Ferncroft, Hollycroft and Rosecroft Avenues and the northern part of Platt's Lane and Telegraph Hill. It is described as follows:

'Rosecroft Avenue provides a link between Hollycroft Avenue and Platt's Lane to the north. It is the shortest of the three "Crofts" and includes a mix of semi-detached houses of similar style, scale and origin (Nos. 6-16 and 3 & 5) and large detached houses, Nos. 18 (listed), 20 (listed), 7 and 17 (listed). Of the latter, No. 17, with its extravagantly moulded reliefs, and Nos. 18 & 20 were designed by Quennell. No.22 is set on backland at the crest of the hill with extensive gardens. It was the site of Childs Hill House. Whilst Rosecroft Avenue is a continuation of the character established by Ferncroft and Hollycroft Avenues, by virtue of its street trees and building materials, the houses are more varied in scale and character and are interspersed by a number of properties with unfortunate alterations and additions'.

Whilst the application property is characteristic of the street and contributes to the appearance of the area, it should also be included in the list of properties with unfortunate alterations and additions.

Nos. 44-56 Platts Lane and 28 Rosecroft Avenue, to the side and rear of the application property, are described as a coherent group of three storey gable fronted properties which step back along this part of the bend in the road (Platts Lane).

Archaeology

An Archaeological Priority Area is indicated to the north of the application property, focused upon Hampstead Heath.

7. Planning issues

We suggest there are four main planning issues:

- Character and appearance.
- Basemen impact.
- Trees and landscape.

- Privacy and overlooking.

We address each main planning issue below.

8. Basement development

The property includes an existing semi-basement level beneath part of the building footprint. The property is also set into the natural ground slope so that the raised ground floor entrance floor level at the front of the property meets the garden level to the rear.

The pre-existing semi-basement and the varying ground levels indicate that the development cannot be categorised as a completely new basement level within the scope of DP27 and CPG4. Nevertheless, a basement impact (BIA) and ground movement assessments (GMA) have been carried out in accordance with DP27 and CPG4, Basement and Lightwells.

Basement Impact Assessment

The BIA reaches the following conclusions and recommendations:

- The proposed development will not have an impact on the hydrogeological setting.
- The proposed front light well is within an area currently underlain by permeable areas, resulting in a minimal increase in the proportion of hardstanding.
- A slope greater than 7° is present along the eastern boundary of the site in the rear garden. The slope is vegetated and there are no signs of movement. No excavation work is planned in this area and no trees are to be felled, such that the slope should remain stable.
- NHBC guidance should be followed to ensure all foundations extend to a suitable depth and all foundation excavations should be inspected by a suitably qualified geotechnical engineer to ensure foundations have bypassed any desiccated soils.
- A retention system will need to be adopted that maintains the stability of the excavation at all times to protect the highways. This is standard construction practice

The above measures can be required and controlled by way of a planning condition and/or legal agreement.

Ground Movement Assessment

The assessment concludes that the predicted damage to the neighbouring properties from the construction of the retaining walls and basement excavations would generally fall between Category 'Negligible' and 'Very Slight', which would fall within the acceptable limits.

It is recommended that movement monitoring is carried out on all structures prior to and during the proposed basement construction. This can be controlled by way of a construction management and monitoring plan to be controlled by planning condition and/or legal agreement.

Cumulative impact

We have checked the planning register for all adjacent properties (Nos. 17, 19, 24 and 28). There is no record of any current or recent application, or unimplemented planning approval involving basement development.

Ground contamination

The BIA identifies the presence of some limited ground contamination. This most probably relates to a historic land use. This can be satisfactorily controlled by a standard planning condition and also through the construction management plan.

9. Character and appearance

The application property is located within the Redington/Frogna Conservation Area and is considered to make a positive contribution.

The Development Plan requires development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character and preserves and enhances heritage assets, including conservation areas (CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage). All development should consider character and setting, the quality of materials, the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level and the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping, including boundary treatments (DP24 Securing high quality design).

Development Plan Policy DP25- Conserving Camden's Heritage states that the Council will take account of conservation area statements when assessing applications within conservation areas and only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

Front elevation

No changes are proposed to the front elevation above ground floor level.

A narrow light well will be introduced to the front elevation with a curving shape that follows the line of the existing curving bay window. The light well will be surrounded by simple black painted metal railings. The proposed new front basement level windows are aligned with the windows above and follow the established proportions of existing openings and glazing pattern.

There are a number of examples of front light wells in the immediate area and this was clearly a historic feature. The proposals replicate this historic form.

Roof

No changes are proposed to any part of the roof.

Rear extension

Conservation area guideline R/F23 states that rear extensions should be as unobtrusive as possible and should not adversely affect the character of the building or the conservation area. Guideline R/F24 states that extensions should be in harmony with the original form and character of the house.

Guideline R/F25 states that rear extensions should not spoil any uniform appearance of an unspoilt terrace or group of buildings.

The proposed rear extension is in effect a remodelling of the existing projecting bay window. It rises no higher than the main ground floor level. The demolition of the lean-to structure to the side will enhance the setting of the altered and amended ground floor bay window.

The proposals closely mirror the scale, form and details of extensions to adjacent properties.

Materials

Conservation area guideline R/F13 promotes the use of original, traditional and natural materials.

The proposed materials comprise matching red/stock brick with white painted timber casement windows and traditional glazing bars etc.

Basements

Conservation area guideline R/F2 states that extending into basements will only be acceptable where it would not involve harm to the character of the building or its setting.

The external expression of the proposed basement extension will be limited to the light wells to the front and rear.

10. Trees and landscape

The existing site location plan indicates the position and canopy spread of existing trees.

Policy

Policy on trees requires that new hard and soft landscaping should be of high quality and should positively respond to local character.

Conservation guideline R/F35 states that all trees all trees that contribute to the conservation are should be retained and protected. Guideline R/F 37 states that development should take account of any possible impact on trees.

Assessment

A survey has been undertaken in accordance with BS 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.

The survey categorises trees in ascending merit 'U', 'C', 'B' and 'A' as follows.

- 'U' category trees are dangerous \ low value trees that could require removal for safety or arboricultural reasons.
- 'C' category trees are of no particular merit, but in adequate condition for retention.

- 'A' category tree are trees of high vitality or good form, or of particular visual importance:
- 'B' category are good trees but may be of slightly poorer form or be not sited as importantly as 'A' category trees.

Proposals

The construction proposed, subject to precautionary measures as outlined in the report, will not be injurious to trees to be retained, nor will it require any trees of significant public amenity value to be removed.

Five trees are proposed to be removed as a result of the development. Their loss will be addressed by appropriate tree planting, which will play some role in providing for future public and local amenity.

The submitted arboricultural report confirms that the trees- five heavily shaped bay trees - have a relatively low value (C1) and can be replaced more suitable, semi-mature, varieties. This can be satisfactorily controlled by way of a planning condition.

11. Impact on neighbouring residential amenity

There is a tree screen to the sides and rear of the property. Rear and side views towards the site are relatively well screened by mature trees from most angles, with a relatively high non-deciduous mix.

The property to the right hand side (No.24) is set well back behind the application property. The property to the rear (No.22) is at a substantially higher level. No issue of privacy or overlooking is therefore expected to arise.

The proposed basement accommodation is arranged with principal aspects to the front and rear light wells, rather than the sides of the application property.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Doyle
Partner

cc Vipul Panchal
Shai Greenberg