

Design and Access Statement  
ref REP J174/4.01

Variation of Conditions  
ref PP-05303128

July 2016

21 Rosecroft Avenue, NW3 7QA

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Index	page
<b>DESIGN</b>	
1. Response to Context	1-3
Planning History	4
2. Amount	5
3. Use	5
4. Layout	5
5. Scale	5-6
6. Appearance	7
7. Landscaping	7
<b>ACCESS</b>	7
30 Hollycroft Avenue example	8
Planning Policy	9
<b>OTHER CONSIDERATIONS</b>	
Sustainability	9
Privacy and Amenity	9
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	10
Appendix 1	11-13

# DESIGN

## Description of the works

The house is an existing 1960's property located on Rosecroft Avenue in the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area. It is a semi-detached, brick-built, single family dwelling on three storeys above ground with an existing lower ground floor at garden level.

This application is for a change of materials at the upper level rear extensions. It follows previous approvals that were consolidated in the last permission granted on 22 March 2016, ref 2016/0218/P. The extent of floorspace remains the same as previous approvals, and none has yet been built.

### 1. Response to Context

The existing house is located towards the edge of the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area and is a post-war, semi-detached house built on a vacant site with large mature gardens on the boundaries.

The closest property to the rear is approximately 38m away and the neighbouring period house at no.23 Rosecroft Avenue is set in ample grounds and screened to the side by mature trees. The site plan and aerial view with red outline show that the house at no.21 is relatively small and narrow compared to the period properties and gardens in this vicinity.

The Conservation Area statement clearly states that these c1960 flat-roofed houses are considered neutral in the Conservation Area, lacking as they do any historic features and being unremarkable in their design. The proposed alterations have thus been carefully considered to respect the context and to remain neutral and preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



Conservation Area plan with property highlighted



Location plan with the site outlined in red



Aerial view showing large secluded gardens



View from the street, no.21 is on the right



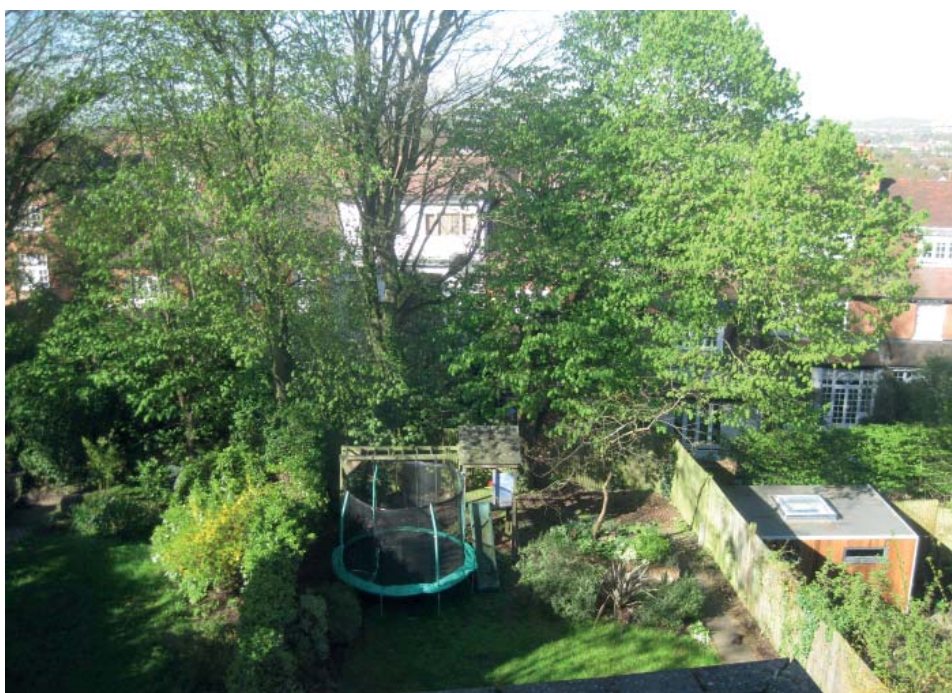
View from the rear showing no.19 obscured at garden level

It has been established through the grant of previous consents that development is acceptable and the resulting distinct asymmetry to the rear, with no.19 was also accepted. Moreover the inspector for the second floor rear extension appeal stated that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area remained unharmed and granted consent in the context of these other permissions.

The rear view of the two houses (above right) shows they are never seen in true elevation. Even at a distance from the houses, you cannot see the full garden elevation of no.19, and the houses step in plan as well as section, creating perspective views. No significant changes are proposed/permitted to the front elevation, and no new amendments to the front are proposed in this application.

The approved upper level rear extensions are set back and down by 400mm making them subordinate to the host dwelling, and they have flat roofs like the existing building. This application seeks to enhance views out from these upper levels by using more glazing, in a contemporary and minimal way, which was considered acceptable for other fenestration in previous approvals.

Indeed the inspector noted on grant of appeal in May 2015\*: *“At the back the pair of dwellings would not be symmetrical but a distinctly asymmetrical appearance has been accepted when granting previous planning permissions. Moreover, I consider that the additional articulation, such as in relation to the rear walls of the upper floors of the pair, would add visual interest.”* Accordingly, the proposed changes could be said to add to this visual interest, which the Inspector inferred was a positive consideration when weighing the planning merits of the proposals in the balance. \*Appendix 1

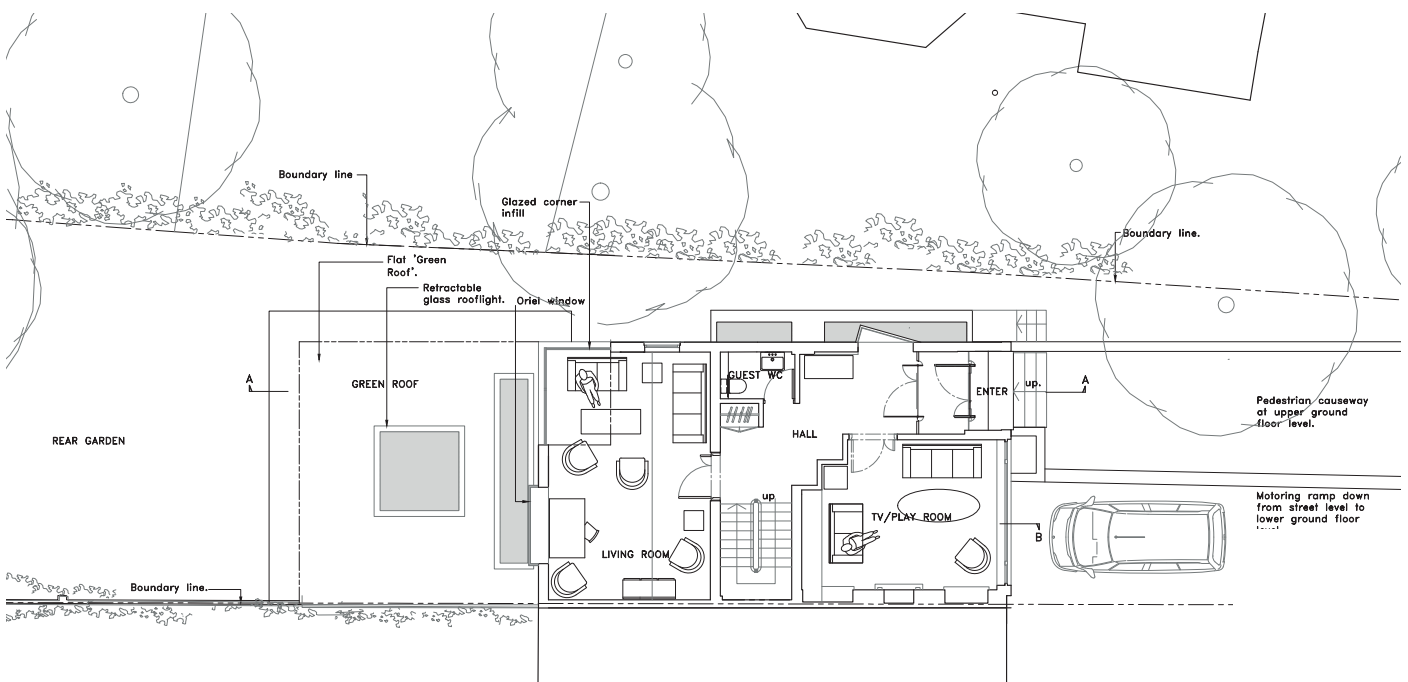


View of the extensive garden of 21 Rosecroft Avenue, mature trees and shrubs and the views beyond

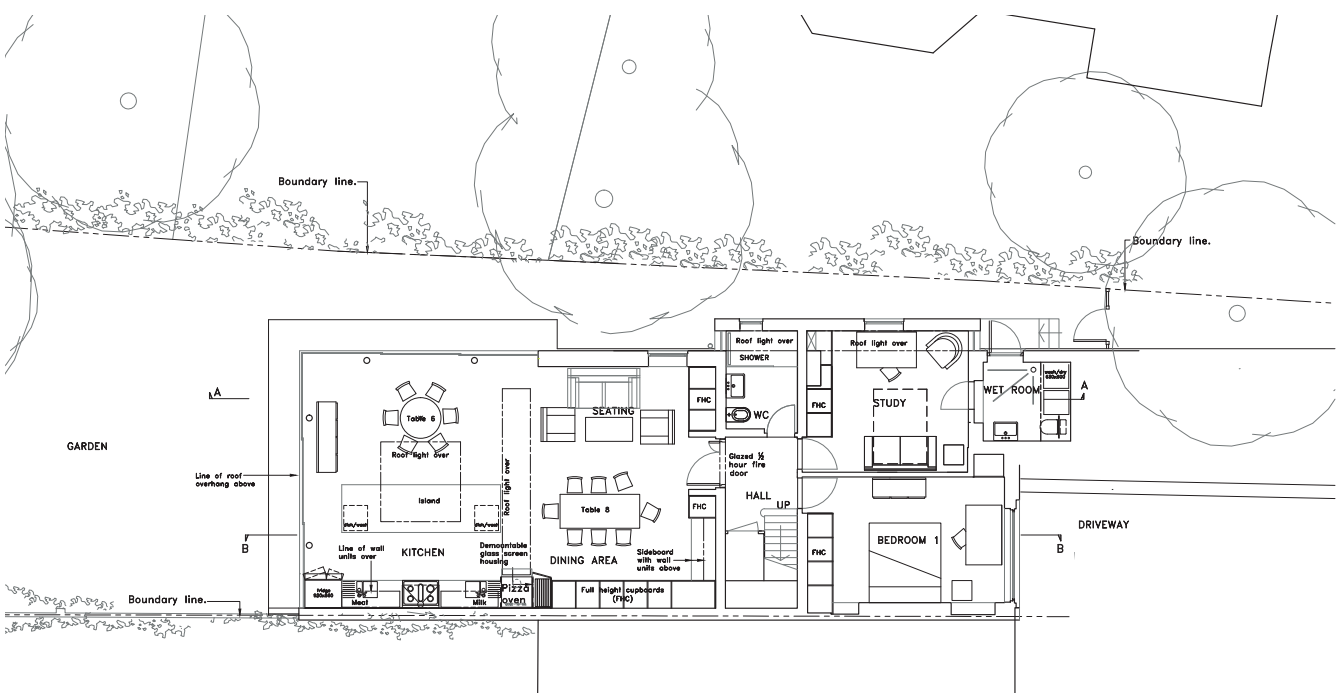
## Planning History

There have been six previous green roof applications, all approved, for this house in the last three years, as per the following list :

- 2012/6688/P - Lower ground floor rear and part side extension and 'oriel' window to upper ground floor side
- 2013/6298/P - Upper ground floor glazed infill corner
- 2014/4402/P - First floor rear extension
- 2014/6453/P / APP/X5210/D/15/3004848 - Second floor rear extension
- 2015/4575/P - Lower ground floor addition to square off corner of lower ground floor extension and revise rooflights
- 2016/0218/P - Consolidation of previous approvals



Proposed upper ground floor plan incorporating the previously consented corner infill to square off the living room



Proposed lower ground floor plan incorporating the previously consented rear and part side extensions

**2. Amount**

There is no change to the amount - this application does not add any more new floor area to that which has been previously permitted.

**3. Use**

There is no change of residential use to the existing single family dwelling.

**4. Layout**

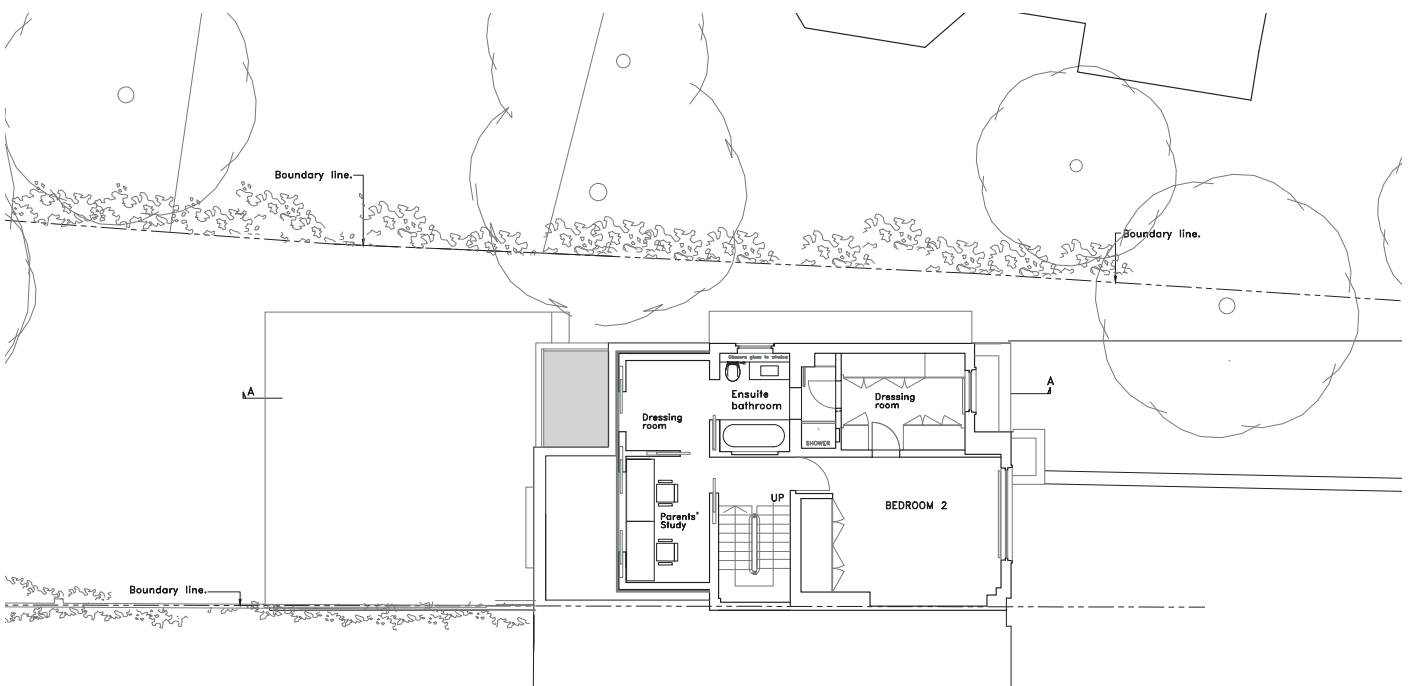
There is no change to the layout - previously approved extensions are included.

**5. Scale**

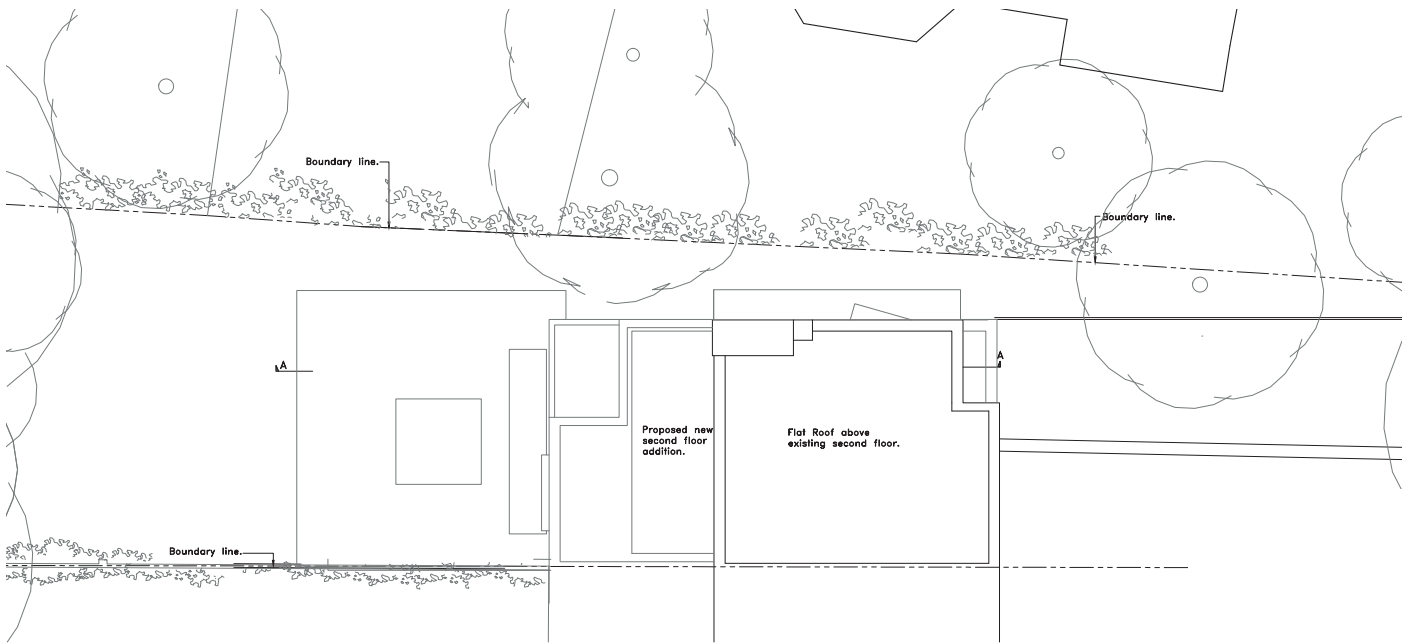
There is no change to the scale - previously approved upper level extensions are of modest scale (as noted in the reasons for approval in the previous application) and sit within the footprint and elevation of the house.



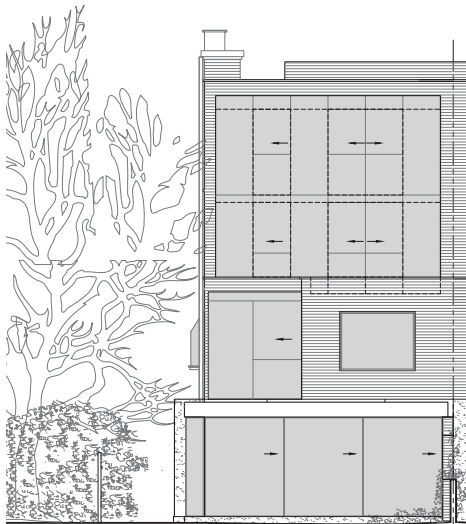
Proposed second floor plan incorporating the previously consented rear extension



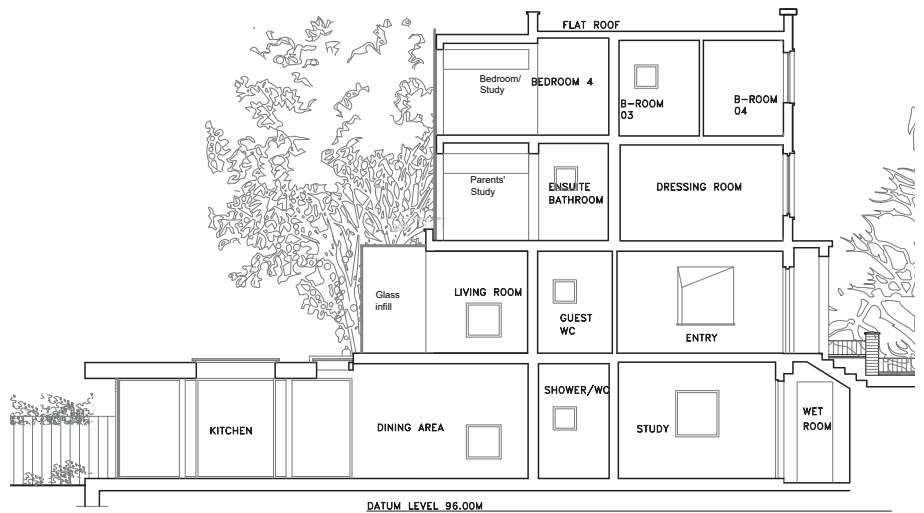
Proposed first floor plan incorporating the previously consented rear extension



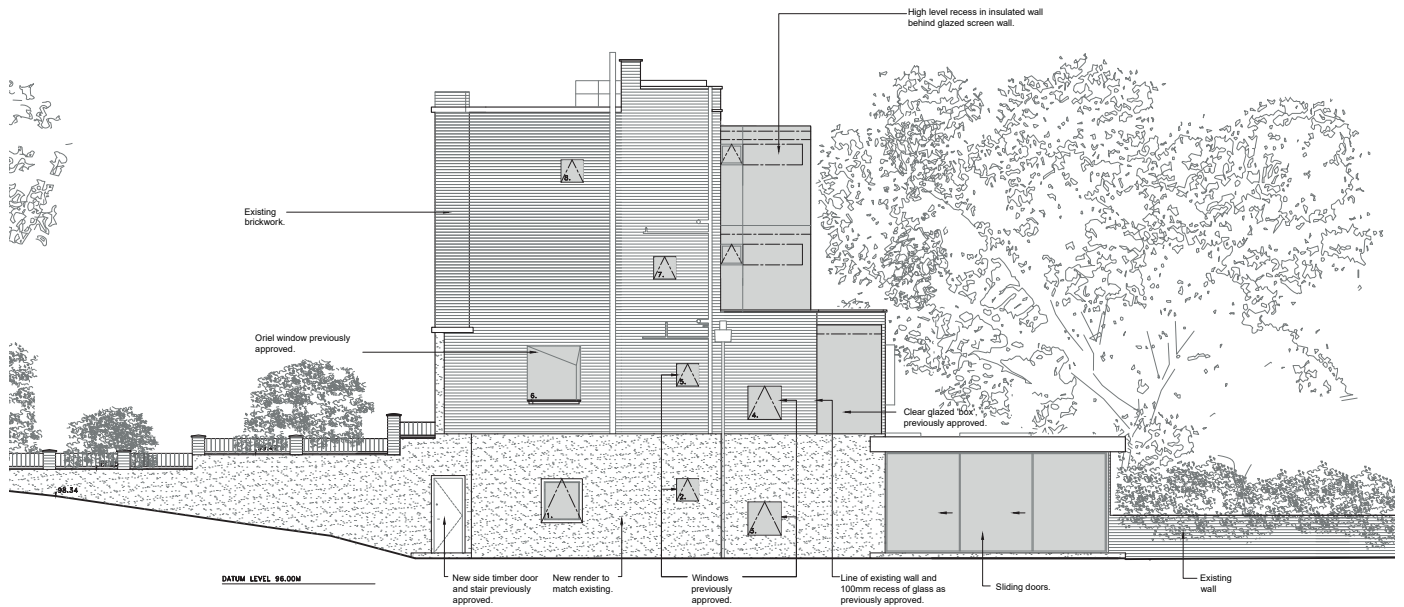
Proposed roof plan



Proposed rear elevation



Proposed SectionAA



Proposed side elevation showing windows permitted in previous applications

## 6. Appearance

The previously approved rear, lower level extensions have been designed in a minimal, contemporary way to complement the existing 1960's, brick house, and the proposed treatment of the elevations to the rear upper floors is intended to unify the whole rear elevation. The views to the west are dramatic and far reaching but the two existing windows per floor, are small and heavily framed, thus closing off these views to the occupants. The previously approved upper levels elevation replicated these unappealing white UPVC windows, which are not original to the house, but now there is an opportunity to glaze this facade at first and second floor levels. The lightweight appearance of the glazing would be more consistent with the approved glazed extensions at the lower ground levels, than the previously approved brick would be. The appearance of the proposed glazed elevation will be of high quality in terms of materials and execution.

Marseille rails, which are 1.1m high glass panels, would provide safety when the full height glass door panels are slid open. At the upper ground floor level this balustrade would prevent use of the green roof as a terrace (except for emergency purposes) all as conditioned in the last permission. The arrangement of sliding doors could echo the asymmetric pattern of existing openings when they are open.

Nearby at 30 Hollycroft Avenue, permission was granted in 2011 for a fully glazed two storey rear extension, as shown overleaf. This house is also semi-detached, and notably is a period property, thus the contrast with the minimal extension is marked, unlike the house at 21 Rosecroft Avenue where the boxy, modern appearance of the existing house complements the proposed minimal glazing.

The existing rear window to the upper ground floor is proposed to be simplified in line with the minimalist appearance of the other glazed elements. Thus the white UPVC frames with six sub-divisions would be replaced by a single glazed panel, projected slightly beyond the facade to create a subtle, fully glazed, oriel window.

## 7. Landscaping

Not applicable to this proposal.

### ACCESS

This is an existing single family dwelling and no changes to access are proposed.



Existing view from first floor staircase window



Existing constrained view from first floor bathroom window

The existing windows, which were replicated in the previous application, are relatively small and their heavy framed sub-divisions limit the view out. The proposals widen the outlook to the magnificent views over the treetops towards the west of London.

At second floor level the views open up even more and would dramatically enhance the amenity of the occupiers with regard to outlook, as well as significantly improving daylight levels internally.



30 Hollycroft Avenue rear glazed extension completed in 2014

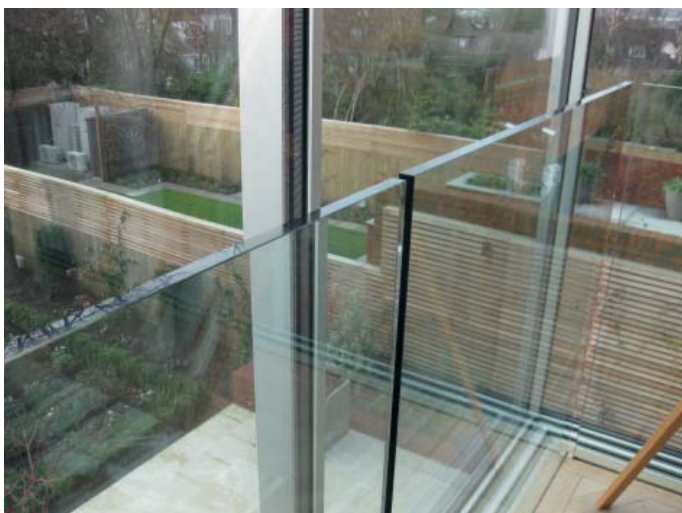
This two storey rear extension is much deeper and much wider than that proposed at 21 Rosecroft Avenue but the glazed appearance to the rear would be similar, with slender silvery grey frames to full height glazed panels, which are either sliding or fixed.



Garden view of much larger rear extension at 30 Hollycroft Avenue, than that proposed at 21 Rosecroft Avenue



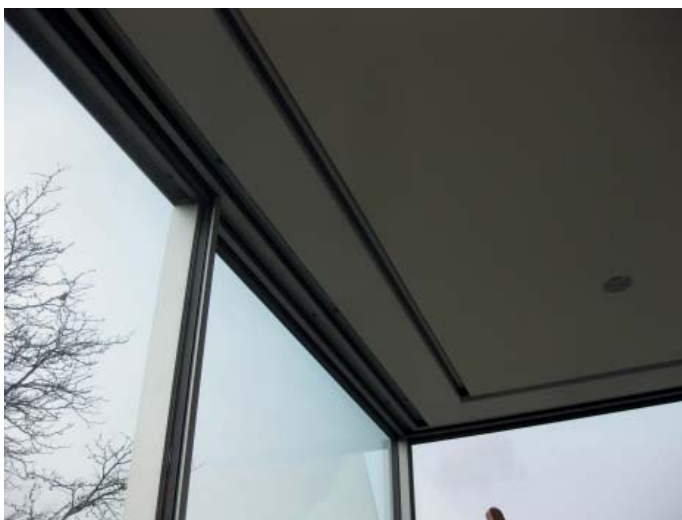
Garden view of much larger rear extension at 30 Hollycroft Avenue, showing the contrast with the period host building, and the adjoining neighbour



Marseille rails at 30 Hollycroft Avenue, similar to those proposed at 21 Rosecroft Avenue



Outward view at 30 Hollycroft Avenue shows the houses opposite to be much closer and at the same level than would be the case at 21 Rosecroft Avenue



Blinds are recessed into the ceiling, similar to proposals at 21 Rosecroft Avenue



Outward view at 21 Rosecroft Avenue shows the houses opposite to be much further away and lower down than those seen from the extension at 30 Hollycroft Avenue

## Planning Policy

The proposals have addressed the relevant policies in the UDP and Supplementary Planning Guidance, especially para 4.7 relating to windows, and the tenets of the Redington and Froggnal Conservation Area statement. They comply with the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025, Policies CS5 and CS14, Camden Development Policies 2010-2025, and Policies DP22,24,25 and 26 which include conserving Camden's heritage and securing high quality design. They are also in line with the National Planning Policy Framework and the London Plan.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### Sustainability

The family have lived here for a number of years and would like to stay here whilst accommodating their changing family needs. It is more sustainable to realise these proposals, to release the long term usefulness of this house than for the family to move, or demolish and rebuild this house.

### Privacy and amenity

The proposals would not cause overlooking or loss of privacy to the neighbours. The distance to the neighbours and the extensive garden and mature trees on the side boundaries will protect privacy and amenity, together with some obscured glass to side return glazing facing north and south (towards nos 19 and 23), moreover previous officer's reports have underlined that there are no overlooking issues.

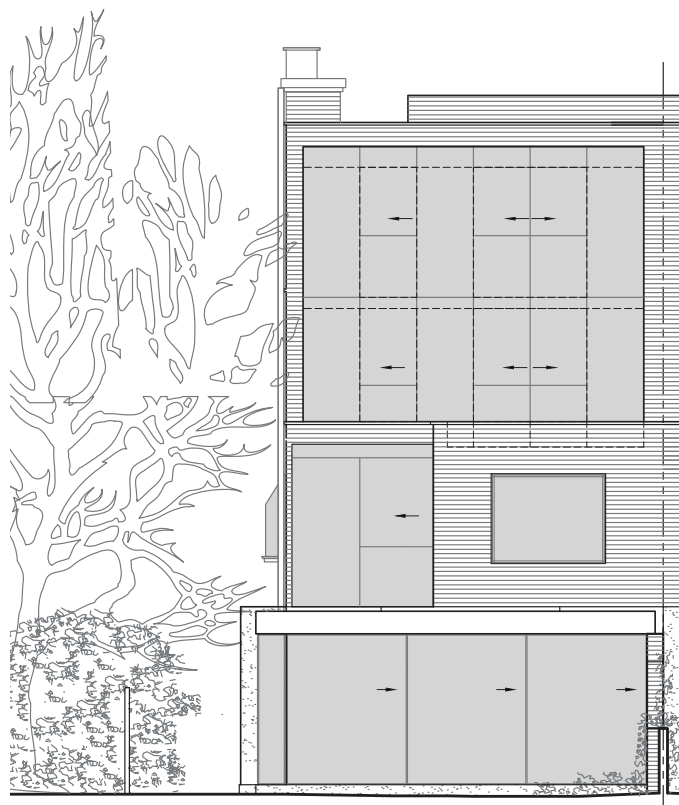
The distance from the proposed upper level glazing of 21 Rosecroft Avenue to the neighbouring houses at Hollycroft Avenue is c38m away and obscured by mature trees and garden fences. The window of no.19 Rosecroft Avenue that is closest to the proposals at second floor level serves a staircase and the local authority has previously not considered it to be a reason for objection. The inspector concurred, especially due to the open outlook to the rear.

In short, there is no increase in overlooking as the number of opening windows remains the same (it is the style and materials that are different), there is no change to the layouts, or the number of bedrooms, and the floorspace is unchanged from that previously approved.

Blinds are proposed to be recessed into the ceiling and would be lowered to provide privacy to occupants, control solar glare and contain any night light pollution; notwithstanding that it has been established that neighbours are a long distance away and the side elevations of the glazing would be in obscured glass where applicable.



View towards no.23 Rosecroft is heavily screened by mature foliage. The side elevation of the upper levels' glazing would be in obscured glass (translucent or opaque).



Proposed rear elevation showing all new additions in glass, distinguishing them from the 1960's brick building, and forming a more coherent elevation. No.19 is not shown, as the asymmetry of the pair has been established through previous permissions.

## CONCLUSION

We believe this application should be granted planning permission because:

- The quality of the design, materials and execution will be high
- UPVC windows, not original to the house, and not making any positive contribution to the Conservation Area, would be replaced with contemporary slender glazing
- The proposals are carefully considered, sensitive additions to the main 1960's house
- The upper level glazing proposals bring cohesion to the rear elevation, being complementary to the previously permitted glazed elevations of the lower levels
- The floorspace of the proposals has previously been granted consent
- The current proposals are to the rear and not visible from the street or public domain
- The proposals are hidden from view from most neighbouring properties due to ground levels, mature trees and extensive gardens
- The scale of the proposals is subordinate to the host building (each previously approved extension sits within the footprint of the house and is indented in plan and elevation)
- The proposals would not affect neighbours, as has been evidenced in previous consents
- The proposal complies with planning policy
- It is more sustainable to change the materials to give coherence to an already permitted scheme, than to relocate or rebuild
- The existing house makes a 'neutral contribution' to the Conservation Area and the scale, design and form of the proposals respect the Conservation Area setting and preserve it
- The approved proposals do not demonstrably harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, indeed they have been deemed in previous consents and by the inspector to have an 'absence of any detrimental impact'.

For all the above the reasons we commend this application for approval.



Existing view from second floor bathroom window is limited by a heavily framed window, sub-divided into four uneven panes.



Proposed view from the second floor. Photo taken through one of the opening panes of the bathroom window (shown left). The proposed wider, glazed, full height panels would open up spectacular views.

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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 April 2015

**by Michael Evans BA MA MPhil DipTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

**Decision date: 20/05/2015**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/D/15/3004848**  
**21 Rosecroft Avenue, London NW3 7QA**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr Theo Duchen against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
  - The application Ref 2014/6453/P was refused by notice dated 19 January 2015.
  - The development proposed is described on the application form as 'rear second floor extension on permitted rear first floor extension, with fenestration and materials to match the existing, together with two small windows on the side elevation in obscure glass'.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a rear second floor extension on permitted rear first floor extension, with fenestration and materials to match the existing, together with two small windows on the side elevation in obscure glass, at 21 Rosecroft Avenue, London NW3 7QA, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 2014/6453/P, subject to the following conditions:
  - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
  - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: J168/D 54,55,56,57,58,61,63.
  - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

### Preliminary Matter

2. The description of development given in the heading above refers to a second floor extension on a permitted first floor extension. However, the latter has not been constructed. Although I do not have the power to alter the description given on the application form, in these circumstances the development shown on the submitted drawings would be a two storey rear extension.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue in the consideration of this appeal is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area, within which the site is located.

## Reasons

4. The appeal concerns one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings with three storeys plus a lower ground floor level. The pair date from the 1960s and contrast in their flat roof form with the traditional pitched roofs of the often fairly imposing dwellings that typify the street.
5. The overall building has been designed with a symmetrical appearance at both the front and rear. The Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area Statement (CAS) identifies it as making a neutral contribution to the Area, so that while not being detrimental it does not positively contribute.
6. Due to the surrounding rear gardens and fairly extensive vegetation the rear elevation is significantly less prominent than the front. Furthermore, the Council has granted planning permissions for extensions to the rear of no. 21 that would appreciably alter the appearance of the overall building.
7. As well as the first floor extension referred to above, a lower ground floor extension and a ground floor infill addition have been permitted. Either the first floor extension, or the lower additions together, would result in no. 21 significantly contrasting with the attached property and the pair not being symmetrical. In my view, these fairly recent permissions, which could still be implemented, are inconsistent with the Council's concern that the addition now proposed would unbalance the pair of dwellings and detract from their symmetry and uniformity.
8. The two storey extension would be set back noticeably from the end of the existing rearward projection at the two lower floors, while also being set in from the sides and below the top of the host dwelling. In consequence, it would be a subordinate feature, with its flat roof form matching that of the host dwelling. At the back the pair of dwellings would not be symmetrical but a distinctly asymmetrical appearance has been accepted when granting previous planning permissions. Moreover, I consider that the additional articulation, such as in relation to the rear walls of the upper floors of the pair, would add visual interest.
9. In consequence of these factors, the extension would not appear overly dominant or visually intrusive, with the architectural quality of the overall building not being adversely affected. It is therefore concluded that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be preserved. There would be compliance with the main thrust of Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025, Policy CS14 and Camden Development Policies 2010-2025, Policies DP24 and DP25, which, taken together, includes conserving Camden's heritage and securing high quality design.
10. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Camden Planning Guidance, September 2013, indicates that in most cases extensions should not be higher than one full storey below roof level. The guidelines in the CAS include that in most cases rear extensions should be no more than one storey in height. However, given the absence of any detrimental impact this is a case where the advice in these documents should not be applied.
11. There would be no conflict with Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework, where it is indicated that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.

12. The adjacent second floor window in the attached property serves a staircase. It would be set back from the addition, which would not be of such a depth as to result in an unacceptable loss of daylight or undue sense of enclosure. This is especially so given the particularly open outlook to the rear and other side, the secondary nature of the opening and the lack of any objection in this regard from the Council.
13. Taking account of all other matters raised, there are no considerations sufficient to justify rejecting the proposal given the absence of harm that would result and the appeal succeeds.
14. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is necessary for the avoidance of doubt. The facing materials used in the development should match those of the host dwelling in order to protect its appearance.

*M Evans*

INSPECTOR