

Heritage Appraisal, Design & Access Statement

Revision A

Accompanying Proposals for 40B Hollycroft Avenue, London, NW3

July 2016

Heritage Appraisal

Early Development- regional

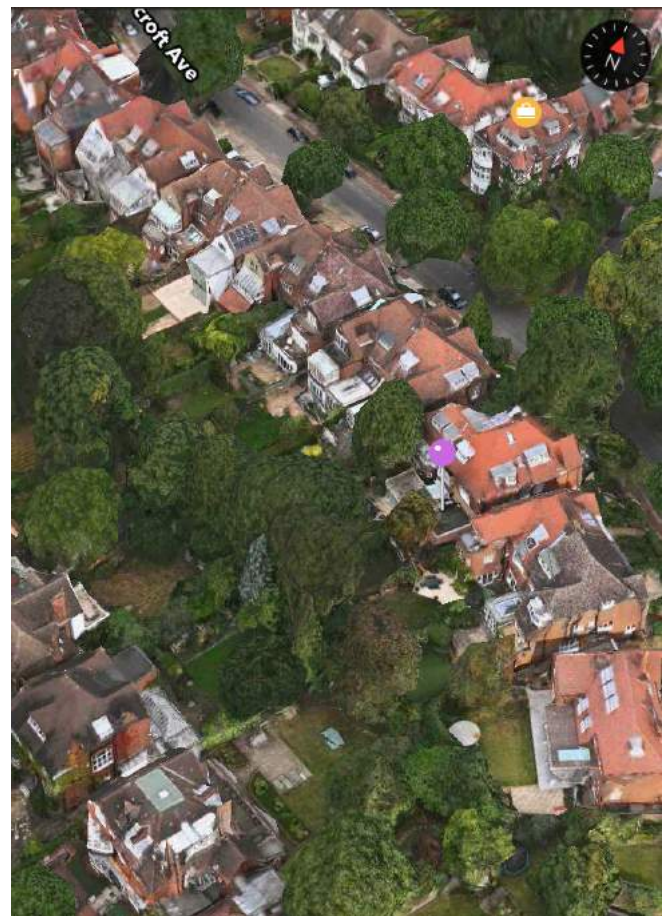
The property is situated within the Redington/ Froggnal conservation area. The area is a well-preserved, late 19th century Edwardian residential suburb consisting of predominately large detached and semi-detached houses. The sub-area “Crofts” (including Ferncroft, Hollycroft and Rosecroft Avenues) represents the second phase of the region’s development. Largely completed by 1910, these avenues incorporate a range of domestic styles and differing degrees of formality.

Relative to neighbouring Ferncroft Avenue, Hollycroft Avenue is modest in scale and has a more informal feel. The street’s character is defined by red-brick houses of varied architecture and size together with sloping streets lined by mature trees. The roof lines and gaps between the semi-detached pairs are considered to further reinforce the character of the street.

Recent Development

Whilst generally well-preserved from the street, properties on the western side of Hollycroft Avenue have been almost universally extended at the rear. Many of the extensions include additions at ground and first floor, often incorporating roof terraces at the second floor. The architectural style of the often sizable rear extensions at the neighbouring properties on Hollycroft Avenue has been variable. Recent notable examples of nearby large rear extensions on Hollycroft Avenue include (No 34, 2015/4065/P), (No 36A 2008/2952/P) and (No 46, 2009/4288/P). Similarly, numerous recent extensions are visible from the applicant’s property at the rear of neighbouring houses on Ferncroft Avenue (No 16, 2011/3930/P), (No 18, 2012/6768/P), (No 20, 2011/0039/P), (no 20a 2007/1678/P) and (no 22 2015/0144/P).

The images opposite and below illustrate some of the above extensions to the rear of properties on the Western side of Hollycroft Avenue (Images from I Phone maps, August 2016, No 40 Hollycroft Avenue indicated with “dropped pin”).





Aerial view across rear of properties on Hollycroft Avenue showing the various extensions at ground, first and second floor.

40b Hollycroft Avenue

The original house at 40 Hollycroft Avenue is typical of the character of the Redington and Frognal Conservation area. Whilst considered to contribute positively to the area, the building is not listed. The property is one of the largest on the Avenue and was built at the turn of the 20th century with a red brick construction and a clay tiled roof.

Number 40 Hollycroft Avenue consists of four flats. The applicant's ownership includes part of the building at the ground, first and second floors together with the western half of the rear garden. The garden extends to the rear boundary with the properties on Ferncroft Avenue and contains a number of mature shrubs, two Lime trees and an Ash.

Previous significant alterations to the property include first and second floor extensions together with two garden level extensions at the rear of the property. Within the garden, a summer house was constructed approximately 50 years ago (16339 & 5645) and subsequently extended (9301474). The building is of no architectural merit, fits poorly within the garden and has fallen into significant disrepair.

Prior consultation/ permissions

In 2008 (reference 2007/48883/P), permission was granted for the erection of glazed infill extension at ground floor level between the conservatory and main building. The delegated report commented that “The proposed infilling between the existing building and the conservatory and the alterations to the windows are minor works which would not detract from the host building or the wider conservation area”.

In 2008 (2006/5752/P) permission was also granted for extension of the summerhouse to the rear of the garden of 40B Hollycroft Avenue. Whilst this work was not undertaken, the conclusion of planning assessment was “it is considered that this development in this location will not compromise the existing garden setting and will not be harmful to the established character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.”

Prior to submission of current plans, pre-application consultation was undertaken with LB Camden planners (March –April 2016). The points raised by planning and conservation officers led to amendments to the proposed design as discussed later in the document.

Heritage impact

Ground Floor Extension

The proposal does not alter the appearance of the building from the public domain. To the rear, the proposal is to replace the existing ground floor extension which is poorly designed and is falling into disrepair. Specifically, the current construction is not well integrated with the main building with inaccessible areas between the two structures. As before, construction will be predominately glazed with a flat roof. The proposal is therefore not considered to adversely affect the architectural integrity of the building, nor will it disrupt the harmony of the building with the neighbouring properties. The proposal will not result in the loss of any original features.

Summer House Replacement

The proposal is to replace the existing summerhouse with a new structure that sits in harmony within the garden and along-side the large trees towards the rear of the garden. The original summer-house was constructed approximately 50 years ago and has no notable architectural features. The proposed structure will incorporate a lower and gently sloping green roof. It is intended that this organic form will sit more comfortably within the garden setting. The proposed summerhouse is located in an underused section of the garden that is of little amenity value as it is set below the main garden level and is largely overshadowed by mature trees. The building will therefore not be highly visible from beyond the property. As such there will be no significant impact on the amenity value of the adjoining properties. It is not considered that it will detract from the generally soft landscaped nature of the garden. Indeed, it is anticipated that the use of a green roof will further emphasise the areas verdant quality whilst contributing to local biodiversity.

Appraisal of street views



Street views illustrate that proposals, focussed at the rear of the property will not have an impact on the character of the conservation area.



1. Above: front view of application site showing steps leading to 40B entrance. (The garage owned by the adjacent property). The gap between properties and difference in height mean extensions to the rear are not visible from the street.

2. Street view along Hollycroft (application site on left).



3. Street view from Rosecroft Avenue (application site centre)

Design and Access Statement

The homeowners at 40B would like to update accommodation to better meet the needs of their growing family and address aspects of the building that no longer function adequately.

Proposals include reopening of two windows to the front of the house plus alterations to the rear of the property that will not be visible from the street. Former alterations and additions currently result in an ad hoc appearance to the rear and proposals aim to achieve coherence through a better balance of materials and form between original and new elements.

Proposals include:

1. The replacement of the rear extension, replacing an un-insulated concrete and steel frame and glazed construction with a one that provides thermal conservation and comfort to meet current standards. The proposal is to increase the width of the extension to include a connection to both rear receptions and enclose current dead spaces.
2. Replacement glazing to the secondary rear bay window to improve proportions in relation to original windows at first floor. This bay has been previously re-glazed and currently contributes to the disharmony of the rear elevation.
3. The replacement of the garden studio, which was built in the 1960s and later extended but has fallen into disrepair. The principle of a larger outbuilding was approved in 2008, and considered as part of recent pre-application consultation, and proposals submitted show a larger garden studio set back into the site to provide more useful garden space.
4. Some internal alterations to the main house are also proposed, which are shown on the submitted plans. This includes reopening and restoring two large original windows to the front elevation.

Consultation through LB Camden's pre-application service was undertaken through March – April 2016. The points raised by planning and conservation officers have been given careful consideration and addressed in developing the design submitted with this full application (detailed below).

Front of property viewed from Hollycroft Avenue



Currently blocked windows to be restored on ground and first floors.



← 40A & 40C → 40B (entrance over garage owned by others) →

Rear of property

(40b occupies part ground and full width of first and second floors to the rear)



Proposals include replacement of the bay window to improve proportions in relation to original windows at first floor.



T3: Lime Tree

The existing concrete and steel framed and glazed extension lacks insulation and is consequently hot in summer and cold in winter.

Existing rear garden and garden studio

Existing garden studio, T1 and T2 Ash trees adjacent to the side and rear boundaries.



Existing rear / south facing boundary. New fence erected by adjacent owners following the completion of development at 22 Ferncroft Avenue



The current studio is overgrown with ivy, which does provide a level of screening but has caused considerable damage. Proposed designs reposition the studio to make better use of the garden and natural light, whilst retaining a level of screening and visual amenity by proposing an organic form and green roof.

Design Approach

Use / Layout

The overall use of the house and its individual rooms will remain the same, providing single-family residential accommodation. Similarly, the replacement garden studio, including a bathroom and kitchenette (as existing), will remain ancillary to the main house. At ground floor one ambition has been to make a stronger connection between the front door and garden by introducing a new through route and reconfiguring the stair. The route connects into the proposed wider rear extension that now allows both receptions direct access to the dining and kitchen spaces providing the family with more flexible, social, spaces. The removal of the secondary staircase between first and second floors provides space for a family bathroom (first floor) and a study (second floor).

Scale and Massing

Although a large proportion of the proposal is to replace previously extended areas of the house and outbuilding, the scheme aims to make adjustments that remain subordinate to the original house that comprises both the applicants' and neighbours' properties. On plan, the larger south facing extension is proposed at the same depth as the existing but utilises current dead spaces across the width and is taller than the existing structure by 230 mm to accommodate better insulation and a sedum roof.

The applicants' brief for the studio has been to replace the current building with one that sits more comfortably within the garden and the organic modelling of proposals in terms of form and orientation is described further below. The natural slope of the site also means the new studio can sit low in the garden (- 600 mm below top of existing retaining wall and - 1.6 mm below internal finished floor in the main house). Proposals push the outbuilding back to return more useable area to the garden and extend the landscaping to meet the building.

Light

The availability and quality of light within rooms has been a strong consideration during design development. Alterations to the hall and stair, and the moving of the downstairs cloakroom, allow an original window to be restored to the front to provide additional north light to one reception. The rear extension, which faces south, includes rooflights to ensure light is maintained to the rear receptions. One replaces an existing rooflight to the main living space, the other is proposed to light the second reception and is set at a height that clears the existing French window so that the proportion of this opening can be retained. Some rooflights will be detailed as clerestory glazing with solid or back-painted roofs adjacent to trees (due to resin deposits).

The garden studio has been modelled to respond to the way the sun / light travels around the garden. Clerestory windows and roof lights are positioned to capture the morning, south and evening west light, which intentionally result in a roof form that breaks up the mass of the outbuilding. The studio's north-facing glazed elevation is angled to reflect the garden's planted areas and lighten the appearance of the building in comparison to the existing solid structure.

The roof to the existing secondary bay at first floor is currently single glazed, which results in uncomfortable overheating that will be over come by its replacement with a solid roof and new bay window glazing.

Materiality

Brickwork is proposed for external walls of the rebuilt rear extension to the main house. The original house reads as a red brick but there is a variety of quality and colour within the red-to-brown spectrum. The brick selected for new areas will complement the original and, if feasible, a handmade brick will be used to positively contribute to the quality and character of the rear of the house that has been lost through previous alterations.

The images below show the types of brick discussed with planning officers and we would aim to extend the use of the selected brick to landscaped steps and as an interior facing brick within the studio to blur the boundaries of interior and garden spaces.

A sedum green roof is proposed for the ground floor rear extension to replace the current leaded roof with a more pleasing outlook. Similarly, the organic form of the new garden studio is proposed as a sedum roof to help the studio sit in the garden landscape and replace the current green screen provided by the ivy. Planting will also be trained up the walls of the new studio to further the intention of the studio being part of the garden landscaping.

Trees and Landscaping

Wassells Arboricultural Services maintain the trees at 40B Hollycroft Avenue and have recently pollarded both lime and ash trees. Wassells surveyed the trees in May 2016 and have liaised with the project architect and structural engineer on foundation designs that will best protect the root protection area. The collective approach at this stage is for mini piles with a grillage beam so that the impact of excavation is minimized and structure raised above ground to allow roots to breath in areas identified by Wassells - specifically the 3 metre zone around the trunk of the lime T2.

Further investigation and monitoring work is proposed during detailed design to finalize the designs, placement of piles with respect to significant roots and the method of construction.

Both arboriculture and structural consultants have prepared reports to accompanying the application:

- Pre-Development Tree Survey and Report, Richard Wassells, Wassells Arboricultural Services, June 2016
- Structural Engineer's Appraisal, Ian Harban Consulting Engineers, June 2016

Access and parking

Maintained as existing: The front entrance is via a set of external steps and side entrance via the adjacent garage roof and then steps down. Parking is on-street within controlled parking bays.

Material references discussed during pre-planning consultation



Kolumba, brickwork and sedum roof examples.



Pre application consultation and design development

Site meeting and liaison with LBC, planning officer Tessa Craig, and written feedback received 16 March 2016:

1. Ground Floor replacement extension

Ground level- The proposal would see the existing modern rear extension altered to unify the appearance of the lower ground floor extension. The extension would infill unused space between the existing conservatory structure and the main building and extend slightly wider beyond the existing extension. The extension would remain subordinate in relation to the property. Glazed doors at ground level would be likely to be acceptable due to their limited visibility. A green roof is supported.

> *Proposals remain as reviewed at pre-application stage.*

2. First Floor bay window

Extension of bay window- The size and detailed design of the bay window extension would not relate to the existing architectural composition and would be an unsympathetic addition to a building which is a positive contributor to the conservation area. Due to the height of the extension at first floor, the development at this level would be more widely visible. It is recommended the bay window including its traditional style windows should be retained. Replacement of the rear elevation windows on the left hand side is likely to be acceptable.

- Revised proposals to retain the central bay and rebuild the secondary side bay as a larger box bay window were discussed as a more acceptable approach. However, the submitted scheme retains both bays and limits alterations to replacing the secondary bay windows to improve the proportions in relation to both first floor original windows and more contemporary glazing to the replacement ground floor extension.

3. Garden Studio:

The property benefits from an existing large outbuilding (hosting a small bathroom and kitchenette) which is sunken in at the rear of the garden (sited on a lower ground level) and covered in ivy. The current outbuilding is approximately 26sqm and the proposed outbuilding would be 21sqm larger (47sqm). It is considered that whilst there may be some scope for a larger outbuilding replacement, the outbuilding should not extend forward beyond the retaining wall and existing structure. The roof profile should be as low as possible and strategic planting should be implemented to help screen the structure (details should be provided at application stage). The current proposal is bulky and not sympathetic to the main building.

- In response, proposals have been revised to reduce the footprint of the proposed replacement studio and its siting revised to improve its relationship to the garden. This includes pulling the leading corner back away from the house, lowering the proposed green roofs and keeping the proposed new studio behind the retaining wall. The proposed area is reduced by 6 sqm (approx. 15%)
- As noted, proposals for a larger studio were granted permission in 2008. The application drawings have not been found in planning records but the decision notice indicates the consented scheme similarly proposed a solution for occupying the underused space at the rear of the garden whilst not damaging the Lime tree.

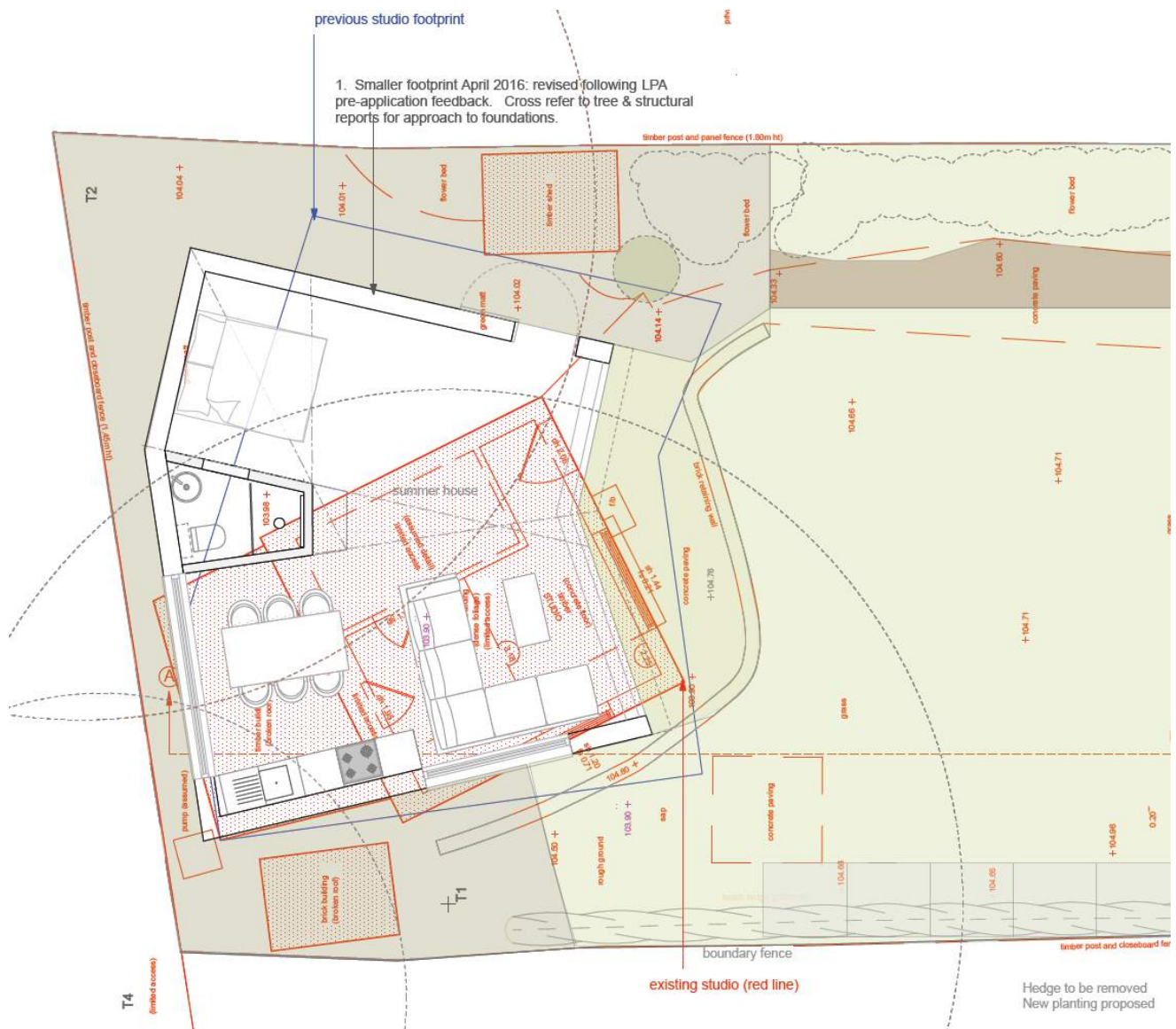
typical garden structure. It will not detract from the generally soft landscaped nature of the garden.

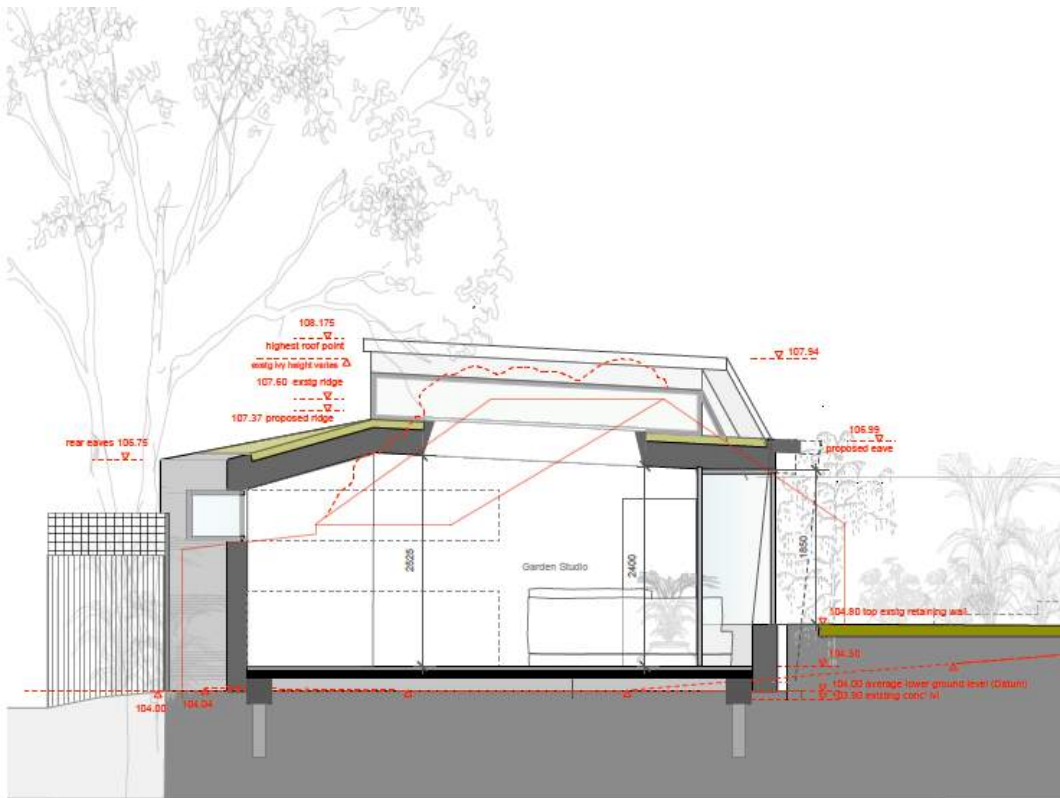
Whilst it is acknowledged that the cumulative impact of buildings within the curtilage of existing dwellings can impact on elements that contribute to the character and appearance of conservation areas, it is considered that this development in this location will not compromise the existing garden setting and will not be harmful to the established character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.

The proposed construction does fall within the root protection zone of a Lime tree at the rear of the garden and this tree is considered to contribute to the character of the conservation area. Whilst it has been demonstrated that the proposal is capable of being constructed without damaging this tree, it is recommended that a condition be attached requiring the submission and approval of a method statement for the protection of the tree during the construction process.

Recommend approval subject to conditions.

The revised plan compares the existing studio footprint (red line), initial proposals discussed with LBC in March 2016 (blue line) and revised, submitted proposals.





Proposed Studio Section (showing existing outbuilding in red line)



Proposed Studio Elevation to Garden