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**Proposed single storey extension**

**To**

**The Cottage, 28 Eton Avenue**

**London NW3 3HL**

**Design, Access and Heritage Statement**

August 2016

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Heritage England Listings for 26 and 30 Eton Avenue

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## **A DESIGN**

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### **1.0 Introduction**

28 Eton Avenue is a large detached residential building, originally a single dwelling, now extended and converted into nine flats. The property lies within the Belsize Park Conservation Area.

'The Cottage' is a modestly sized two /three bedroom duplex flat at the rear of the property, occupying approximately half of the overall rear elevation of number 28. The dwelling enjoys its own private garden area. The proposal is to add a single storey extension to the property, as part of a programme to refurbish the interior as a small family home for my client and her husband.

### **2.0 Context**

28 Eton Avenue sits between two similar sized buildings, 26 and 30 Eton Avenue, both of which are Statutory Grade II Listed buildings. The Historic England Listings are attached in Appendix I.

The immediate surroundings are mature rear private gardens, with plenty of screen planting giving total privacy. The garden to 28 is only overlooked by the second floor apartment above The Cottage. The rear elevation of the application property has a simple brick-faced finish with white casement windows. Photographs of the rear of the property are included in Appendix II.

### **3.0 The Design**

The drawings relating to this application are numbered PL-201 to PL-207 inclusive.

The proposed extension will be 3.0m long x 4.8m wide externally, with a modest side bay facing the patio. The design is in contrast to the house, with a white rendered appearance, capped with a cast stone parapet. The reason for this is an aesthetic one. The existing elevation is of a dark red facing brick, which gives a dark, dominant appearance. It was felt necessary design the extension as subordinate to the main host building. The proposal achieves this by contrasting the strong brickwork with a white render finish, in order to achieve a more lightweight aesthetic.

To keep the proposal to a modest bulk, a flat roof is proposed. This flat roof allows the provision of a lantern rooflight, in order not to diminish the daylighting level into the original dining room.

In addition, it is proposed to remove the glazed door, side window and timber canopy to the Living Room, and replace with a pair of glazed doors with fixed full height glazed side panels. This will have the effect of improving the views out and visual contact with the patio and garden.

It will be noted from the first floor plan that there are a number of internal alterations proposed, which consist of adjusting internal partition positions, to

improve the en-suite bathroom provision and to create a walk-in wardrobe for the master bedroom.

#### **4.0 Planning History**

Planning consent was granted on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1985 under reference 8501098 for the '*conversion and extension to provide nine self-contained flats*'. This consent was implemented.

#### **5.0 Planning Policy**

##### ***National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)***

The NPPF states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription of detail but should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access for new development in relation to the local area. LPAs should not impose architectural styles or tastes.

The NPPF states that, in determining applications, LPAs should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. In determining applications, LPAs should take account of (i) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, (ii) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability, and (iii) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. When considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

##### ***The Statutory Development Plan***

The statutory development plan comprises the London Plan of July 2011 (subject to Revised Early Minor Alterations 2013 and to Further Alterations 2015), the Camden Core Strategy which was adopted in November 2010, and the Camden Development Policies DPD which was also adopted in November 2010. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications and appeals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

##### ***The Core Strategy***

The following policies of the adopted Core Strategy, as summarised, are considered to be relevant to the issues raised by this proposal:-

- Policy CS1 seeks to direct growth in Camden to the most suitable locations. Development should make full use of its site whilst respecting context and taking into account the quality of design;

- Policy CS5 states that the Council will manage the impact of growth and development in Camden including the need to protect and enhance heritage assets;
- Policy CS6 states that the Council will aim to make full use of Camden's capacity for housing which will be regarded as the priority land-use; and
- Policy CS14 states that the Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by requiring development to be of the highest standard of design, and by preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets including conservation areas and listed buildings.

### *Camden Development Policies DPD*

The following policies of the Camden Development Policies DPD, as summarised, are considered to be relevant to the issues raised by this planning application:-

- Policy DP2 seeks to make full use of Camden's housing capacity;
- Policy DP24 requires all developments, including alterations and extensions, to be of the highest standard of design having regard to character, setting, context, the quality of materials, landscaping and accessibility;
- Policy DP25 states that, in order to maintain the character of conservation areas, the Council will only permit development that preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area; and
- Policy DP26 states that the Council will protect the quality of life for occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity.

### *Planning Guidance*

Camden Planning Guidance (Design) (CPG1) was revised in July 2015. The guidance states that the Council is committed to excellence in design, and schemes should consider the context of the development and its surrounding area, the design and use of the building itself, and the materials used. Good design should positively enhance the character, history and nature of existing buildings on the site and in the surrounding area. Alterations should take account of the character and design of the property and its surroundings. It may be appropriate for some new work to be distinguishable from the existing building but in other cases, closely matching design details and materials will be more appropriate. New windows and doors should match the originals as closely as possible, and external materials which match the original will usually be the most appropriate.

Paragraph 4.9 of CPG1 states that a rear extension is often the most appropriate way to extend a house. However, rear extensions that are insensitively or inappropriately designed can spoil the appearance of a property or group of properties, and harm the amenity of neighbouring properties, for example in terms of outlook and access to daylight and sunlight. Paragraph 4.10 lists a series of criteria that rear extensions should be designed to meet. In summary, these include the need for extensions to:-

- (i) be secondary to the host building in terms of location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing;
- (ii) respect and preserve the building's design, proportions and style;
- (iii) respect and preserve existing architectural features;
- (iv) respect and preserve the historic pattern and established townscape of the surrounding area;
- (v) not cause a loss of amenity for adjacent properties;
- (vi) allow the retention of a reasonable sized garden; and
- (vii) retain the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity. Sympathetic materials should be used.

Paragraph 4.12 states that in order for extensions to be subordinate to the original building, their heights should respect the existing pattern of rear extensions, where they exist. Ground floor extensions are generally preferable to those at higher level, and the maximum acceptable height should be determined in relation to the criteria listed at paragraph 4.10 of CPG1. In cases where a higher extension is appropriate, a smaller footprint will generally be preferable for visual and residential amenity reasons. Paragraph 4.14 states that the width of rear extensions should be designed so that they are not visible from the street and should respect the rhythm of existing rear extensions.

#### *The Belsize Conservation Area Statement*

The application site is located within Sub-Area Three of the Belsize Conservation Area. The statement identifies the subject property as making a positive contribution to the conservation area. Eton Avenue is described as relatively straight and quiet streets characterised by large, detached red brick houses. Numbers 22-32 Eton Avenue are described as having steep hipped roofs, gables over bays, prominent chimneys, rendering and tile hanging. Together with the listed buildings on the opposite side of the road, these form an enclave of Arts and Crafts influenced development along the street.

## **6.0 Amount**

The current property on two floors has a gross internal area of 125 sq. m. The prime reason for the proposed extension is to address the current dining room which is very small and cramped space. It measures 2.45m x 4.25m, having an area of only 10.4 sq. m., and so the Applicant wishes to increase this in size to make it more useable. The proposal adds 12.8 sq.m. gross internal area, increasing the area of the property to 137.8sq.m.

## **7.0 Layout**

The layout is a simple, single storey extension, increasing the dining space to a more useable size. The extension would therefore enhance the quality of accommodation within the application property. The scheme would also retain a good-sized rear garden for the property, and this would be subject to re-landscaping.

The extension would project by 3 metres from the existing rear elevation, and this limited degree of projection, allied to the low land level and the established landscape screening to the site boundary, would ensure no loss of light or outlook for the occupiers of 30 Eton Avenue to the west. The extension would occupy approximately half of the width of this part of the building's rear elevation, and would be set well away from the closest adjacent accommodation to the east. The proposal would therefore have no material impact on the living conditions of adjacent occupiers.

## **8.0 Scale & Appearance – Impact on Heritage Assets**

The proposed extension would be confined to the rear elevation of the application property, and would not be seen from the public realm. The structure would have a subordinate scale as a single storey, limited depth and half-width extension to the existing three storey "cottage". Although 28 Eton Avenue has previously been re-configured and extended as part of the 1985 conversion consent, this is not considered to represent an in-principle planning objection to a modestly-sized further alteration in the form of a low-level extension occupying approximately just one quarter of the width of the full rear elevation.

The extension would be finished in white render in order to provide contrast with the existing red brick, three storey façade. This contrasting treatment would underline the visual subordination of the extension, and would also provide some visual interest on the building's architecturally monotonous rear elevation. The style of the proposed fenestration to the extension and of the proposed replacement doors and side panels on the main elevation would match that of the existing rear elevation. The replacement of the existing openings and the loss of the existing timber canopy are non-contentious in visual amenity and heritage terms.

For the above reasons, we believe that the proposal would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of 28 Eton Avenue and the wider Belsize Park Conservation Area.

There are various listed buildings in the vicinity of the application site including the adjacent property to the east, number 30 Eton Avenue. This property has been extended on the eastern flank, and the extension includes a roof terrace. The proposed extension to the application property would be set at a lower level than the existing extension to number 30, and due to its location and limited footprint and height, would not represent an intrusive or discordant feature adjacent to the listed building. The dense boundary planting also provides screening and a sense of separation between the adjacent buildings. The proposal would therefore preserve the setting of the listed building at 30 Eton Avenue. The proposed extension would have no impact on the setting of the other nearby listed buildings.

## **9.0 Landscaping**

Externally, it is proposed to also increase the size of the patio and build a new curved dwarf wall and new steps, as shown on the proposals. It is intended to pave the current lawn area, and to replant the perimeter beds. The current shed is also to be replaced. The proposal would enhance the landscape quality of the rear garden.

## **10.0 Conclusion**

The application proposes a modest-sized extension to an existing dwelling. The additional floor space would substantially enhance the usability of the internal accommodation, and would not substantially reduce the size of the private garden.

The proposed extension meets all criteria for such development as laid down at paragraph 4.10 of CPG1. The extension, and replacement doors and side windows on the main elevation, would preserve the character and appearance of the subject property and this part of the Belsize Conservation Area. The scheme would also respect the setting of the adjacent listed building. As such, the scheme constitutes sustainable development which accords with the NPPF and complies with the development plan



## **B ACCESS**

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### **10.0 Access**

#### Vehicular and Transport Links

The public transport provision and links close to the property are good, close to a convenient bus and tube network. The closest tube station is Swiss Cottage, and by road the A41 gives easy access to the north via the north circular, M1 and M25.

#### Internal Access

As the residence is an existing property, it is not desirable to introduce barrier free access.

**Appendix I: Heritage England Listings for 26 and 30 Eton Avenue**

**APPENDIX II: Site photographs**



1. View of the living room to the left



2. View of the dining room to the right



3. View of the rear at high level



4. View of 30 Eton Avenue