

Smerin Architects have been appointed by the owners of 15 Rudall Crescent to act as Architects for the remodelling of the existing extension to the rear of the house. The house, which is a semi-detached single-family dwelling, is arranged over ground, first, second and third floors. The site also includes a front and rear garden. The proposed works are intended to improve the internal quality of the rear part of the house, creating more usable spaces with good daylight levels whilst addressing the environmental problems of the existing structure and creating improved access from inside to out. The works involve the replacement of an existing rear extension that in turn replaced earlier additions to the original house and aim to replace this with a contemporary extension of architectural finesse constructed from good quality materials.

The house is located on the southern side of Rudall Crescent towards its western end and forms part of the Willoughby Road Area of the Hampstead Conservation Area. In Camden Council's 'Hampstead Conservation Area Statement' the Willoughby Road Area is described as being "one of the most dense and homogenous parts of Hampstead, laid out somewhat like a grid". The house is one of a number of Queen Anne style late Victorian houses on that part of Rudall Crescent built in pairs in red brick in with a Dutch gable roof line and front bay. The side and rear elevations are finished in yellow stock brickwork as are an integral rear extension at first floor level and dormer at roof level. Planning permission was granted in 2012 to extend the house rearwards with a single storey pitch roofed extension that projects approximately six metres beyond the rear of the house to one side and four metres to the other side to create a kitchen on one side and playroom to the other side. The extension was designed in a mix of quasi-traditional and more contemporary style with yellow stock brick finished walls and timber framed french doors with shallow pitched roofs and an area of metal framed glazed roof and folding sliding doors. The remaining parts of the house have been renovated to a high standard consistent with the original quality and character of the house.

The proposed new extension to the rear of the house would replace the existing extension with a similar size extension. Although the overall footprint of new extension is broadly similar to the existing extension it is less deep and creates spaces that are more usable internally by locating the kitchen to the area below the first floor extension to one side with a larger living/dining area taking advantage of the space available to the other side where the site boundary cranks away from and then back towards the flank wall of the existing house. Environmentally the new extension will ensure good daylight levels to all the spaces within whilst avoiding the excessive heat losses or gains of the existing glazed roof structure. The introduction of a sedum planted green roof will also provide environmental benefits and reduce rainwater run-off from the roof and in addition to being highly insulated incorporates a strip of rooflights to allow daylight to all areas of the extension.

Externally the new extension provides a visually more cohesive element on the rear of the house resolving the ambiguity of the current quasi-traditional extension, the shallow pitched roofs of which sit rather uneasily in relationship to the steeper pitch of the roof to the original integral rear extension at first floor level. The overall height of the extension is lower than at present so that the eaves sit well below the parapet of the brickwork wall

adjacent to the existing house and timber fence that runs rearwards beyond that mark the site boundary. As such it is consistent with the recommendations in Camden Council's 'Hampstead Conservation Area Statement' which states that "rear extensions should be as unobtrusive as possible". Whilst the new extension is intended to read as an honest product of its time, the areas of solid external wall are constructed in yellow stock brickwork to match existing with glazed screens and doors arranged in a series bays. The metal framed glazed doors to the new rear elevation allow better access from inside to out between the living spaces and terrace area beyond and the vertical proportions of the screens and doors maintains the vertical emphasis of the window openings in the original parts of the house. Similarly the slender framing to both the screens and doors relates well to the timber framed glazing of the original parts of the house.

With the overall depth and height of the new extension being less than the existing extension it should not have any effect on the daylight or sunlight levels of the rear of the adjoining houses or the sense of enclosure from the rear of those properties. Similarly there is no detrimental effect on the privacy of adjoining properties and there is no loss in garden area to the rear. By re-utilising the footprint of the existing extension and terraces, the new extension will also avoid having any adverse effect on the existing mature tree in the adjoining Marty's Yard, which is used for car parking. An arboricultural impact assessment by Arbortrack Systems, which is included with the application, has established that the proposed extension and new terrace area beyond will not have a detrimental effect on the nearby tree, or any other trees in the vicinity, due largely to the likely spread of roots from the tree and significant difference in levels between the base of the tree and existing rear garden level.

Overall the proposed new extension is intended to improve the spatial quality of the house through an addition that whilst being a clear product of its time is respectful of and sits comfortably with the forms and materials of the original parts of the house and way the site boundary works. It is consistent with the recommendations in Camden Council's 'Hampstead Conservation Area Statement'. The existing extension that is to be demolished has no intrinsic architectural merit and its demolition and replacement with a more contemporary structure of equivalent or better architectural quality will have no adverse effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The new extension is in addition not visible from the publically accessible parts of the Conservation Area. The environmental performance of the property will be enhanced and access arrangements within the property and between the internal and external areas will be better suited to wheelchair users.