

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT/ LISTED BUILDING APPRAISAL

GHK ARCHITECTS

Project:	36 Downshire Hill, Hampstead London NW3	Ref/File No:	HK 2/ 3.1
Client:	Julian and Nicola Sinclair		
Title:	Design & Access/Listed Building Appraisal		
Date:	13 November 2016		

INTRODUCTION

Planning & Listed Building Consent is sought for alterations to the Grade 2 Listed house for the following works:-

- The roofing over of the sunken area and service access in front of the 1920s extension to create a store amenity space.
- Replacement of the existing front boundary wall with a low wall surmounted with railings to match those in front of the original house and generally with adjacent properties on Downshire Hill.
- The provision of an iron access stairs in the existing front area and a new railing to protect the area perimeter.

The proposed accommodation will be wholly below ground level and will not be visible. The only change in appearance will be replacement of the front wall with lower wall with railings on top.

HISTORY

The north eastern end of Downshire Hill was completed in or about 1819/20 and No36 Downshire Hill was built about 1830. Ordnance survey mapping from the 1870s shows the rectangular plan form of the original building. To the north east of this, and separated from the house, is shown a long detached structure, which may have been a coach house and/or servants' quarters. To the south western side, next to the boundary with No.37, there was a small detached outbuilding

Later mapping produced in the 1890s shows a structure attached to the house along the rear half or the north eastern flank wall. Also attached to No.35, which by this time had also been extended, this element had a rear wall flush with the rear elevation of the original house. No evidence of these structures remains although the flank wall of the late Victorian "stub" element may have been subsumed into the later extension. The "stub" may have been linked to the original main house via a lower ground floor door at the base of the stairs.

Evidence suggests the recessed side addition, which replaced the structures on the north eastern side, was added in about 1925. The roof/top story was also altered at this time. This was partly needed to accommodate bathrooms as well as additional bedrooms and living space. At the front this element is set behind the main building line and has a full width stepped sunken front area extending to the street boundary.

The property was refurbished in 2014 replacing the previous garage and glazed octagonal conservatory replaced with a new wooden fronted garage and glazed rectangular extension at lower ground/garden level. See Planning and Listed Building consents 2013/2398 and 2013/1475.

LISTING DESCRIPTION

CAMDEN TQ2785NW

DOWNSHIRE HILL 798-1/28/332 (South side)

14/05/74 No.36 and attached garden wall, railings, gate pier and gate

GV II

“Detached house. Early/mid C19 with later extension. Stucco with channelled ground floor. Slated shallow hipped roof with projecting eaves and dormer. 3 storeys, attic and basement. 2 windows plus 3 window later extension to left. Round-arched doorway with patterned fanlight and panelled door. Recessed sashes. INTERIOR: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings to areas. Attached garden walls with cast-iron railings having urn finials; gate piers and gates.”

Listing NGR: TQ2704585774

PHYSICAL FABRIC

The property is of traditional brick construction. To a large extent the brick has been rendered with a fine stucco render which is painted. At the principal level the front elevation is rusticated to give the frontage a formal appearance. The roof is hipped with broad projecting eaves and clad with Welsh slates. The windows are timber framed, predominately sashes. The property is in good condition and is well maintained.

PLANNING HISTORY

Pre Application advice was sought in 2013.

Pre application advice for 36 Downshire Hill (ref: CA\2012\ENQ\08958)

Case Officer Adam Wito.

“The front steps to the basement are of limited interest to the building so their replacement should be acceptable. I also see no objection as to why a landing could not be provided at street level for a bin store. You would need to use traditional materials such as stone and brick for these. In terms of providing some sort of infill extension here at basement level I feel that the most that could be approved would be a 3store² similar to those found already to the front of the property. Something with a glazed roof would provide obvious development forward of the front building line of the building. A store would be clearly subservient to the building and in character with the building”

- **36 Downshire Hill**
- Ref 2013/2398/P & 2013/1475/L
- Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent sought and obtained for the building of a new lower ground floor extension to the rear of the property

LOCAL PLANNING & RELEVANT PRECEDENTS

- **35 Downshire Hill**
- Ref 2011/1462/P & 2011/1462/L
- Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for the neighbouring property was sought and obtained for the remodelling and enlargement of an existing extension. Of note is the introduction of a **ground level skylight** providing daylight to the lower ground floor in the car parking bay at the front of the building.
- **34 Downshire Hill**
- Ref 2014/6545/P & 2011/6610L
- Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent was sought and obtained for internal and external alterations associated with the erection of a single storey rear extension at lower ground floor level, and **including** excavation to extend existing basement beneath front garden and the demolition and rebuilding of three storey rear bay window extension.

PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

- **Policy CL3** of the adopted Core Strategy requires that buildings within conservation areas resist substantial demolition in conservation areas. Policy CD 63 identifies the requirement to preserve the character and appearance of buildings within conservation areas with regard to the affects that a development has on its streetscape.
- **Policy CL5** of the Core Strategy highlights the requirement for developments not to compromise or significantly reduce the daylight and sunlight of adjacent buildings and that buildings should achieve high standards of amenity.
- **Policy CL6**, is perhaps most relevant to the proposal, and requires that alterations and additions are of a high quality design and that they do not harm the existing character and appearance of the building and its context.

The proposed development falls within the guidelines contained in the policy documents cited above.

PROTECTION OF HERITAGE ASSETS

The proposed extension to 36 Downshire Hill has been designed to minimise the impact on the period features and original fabric of the house and the streetscape. The scheme is wholly below front garden level and in front of the later 1920s extension. Being below ground the proposed extension cannot be seen from the public highway and will have a minimal effect on the streetscape and neighbours. Significant and historic architectural features of the property are not affected by the development. The proposed appearance of the front facade from opposite will remain the same except for the replacement of the high brick wall and service access door with a lower wall and railings. The changes to the front boundary railings and walls match those in front of the original house and are in keeping with neighbouring properties maintaining the uniform appearance along Downshire Hill. It also allows the original front garden to be restored.

We consider this proposal is not only not detrimental to the character and appearance of the building but in unifying the front boundary aesthetic and enabling reinstatement of the front garden area it reinforces the primacy and enhances the significance of the original building.

DESIGN and ACCESS

The following paragraphs address the requirements for Design and Access in accordance with the headings set down in national guidance for the preparation of such statements.

USE

36 Downshire Hill is a single occupancy residential dwelling. This proposal does not alter the use of the property.

LAYOUT

The stepped area originally a service yard of sorts is now redundant. With the advent of wheelie bins etc and modern Health and Safety requirements its stepped design mitigates the intended use and being north facing and overshadowed is difficult to landscape and manage successfully. The proposed layout will remove the “ad hoc” designed external steps that are now in poor condition with unequal risers and inadequate landings and a serious Health and Safety risk. The new lower ground room restores the original garden levels provides useful ancillary storage/amenity space for the lower ground floor garden level. The design also proposes new iron steps in the existing area.

SCALE

The design and addition of a below ground room is consistent with the traditional development of cellars beneath the front gardens at No 36 and adjacent properties. The proposed extension is modest and will have no impact on neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking or daylight issues.

LANDSCAPING

The roof over the new lower ground spaces will run at the same level as the external step to the front door. The area will be paved to match the existing with natural stone and planters will be provided to extending the existing front design to unify the front. A continuous rooflight will separate the new structure from the existing reflecting the open area in front of the original house.

VEHICULAR LINKS

The scheme does not change existing arrangements for the property.

INCLUSIVE ACCESS

The new space is intended primarily for storage and as such there is no requirement for it to be fully accessible.

CONCLUSION

We consider that the application proposals are in full compliance with the aims and objectives of the relevant Camden Borough Planning policies and national planning guidance. There are several precedents among neighbouring properties and the Hampstead Conservation generally for approved planning applications for similar works to be carried out.

The proposal seeks to improve the residential use and appearance of the existing property. It is modest in nature and scale, and as such does not adversely affect the surrounding area. As the extension is below ground level in a previously existing area it is mostly out of sight from public viewpoints and as such the effect upon the conservation area and the existing building is both minimal and positive.

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November 2016