

**Design, Access & Heritage Statement for  
The Peto Pavilion Glazed Weather Screen  
at 41 Highgate West Hill, London N6**

**DRAFT ISSUE**

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## **1.00 INTRODUCTION**

1.01 The following Heritage & Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Witanhurst Construction Management Limited to support an application for Listed Building Consent to add a new glazed 'weather screen' on the inner side of the Ionic screen on the south side of the former tennis pavilion (Peto Pavilion) within the gardens at 41 Highgate West Hill.

1.02 Historically, the works for Sir Arthur Crosfield between 1913 - 1920 transformed the existing house and the estate into a spectacular and lavish house set in 11 acres of grounds, which had in the ensuing years become run-down and neglected, parts 'sold-off', seeking further use until ultimately, many of the Listed structures on the site were put on the English Heritage (now Historic England) 'Buildings at Risk Register'.

1.03 Since the current owners acquired the site in 2009 proposals have sought to repair and restore the House and surrounding listed structures to appreciate and protect them as important heritage assets

The gardens have undergone a restoration and renewal, with the Lower Garden having been given careful consideration in the scheme by Balston Agius to achieve a spectacular garden and setting for the House while providing focal elements, enhancement of spaces and a hard landscape and planting regime that supports this character.

Within the lower garden sits the former Tennis Pavilion (Grade II Listed), originally constructed to the designs of Harold Peto. Since 2009, the Peto Pavilion has been carefully restored from its derelict state in line with its listed building consents, such that it has now been removed from the 'Heritage at Risk Register'.

However, recently, feedback has been received from the site team regarding the operation and maintenance of the Peto Pavilion, which has brought forward this proposal to enhance the use and enjoyment of the facility and to protect this important heritage asset.

The proposal for a permanent 'weather screen' will enclose Peto Pavilion to protect the interior architectural features and furnishings from the external elements and vermin causing long term damage.

1.04 This statement sets out the details of this proposal and the context of the site and the heritage asset.

1.05 These proposals are indicated on the following architects drawings:

- 2238-01/00/01-04 Existing Plan, Elevations and Sections
- 2238-01/01/01-04 Proposed Plan, Elevations and Sections
- 2238-01/03/01+02 Proposed Details

## **2.00 THE SITE AND PLANNING HISTORY**

2.01 While the House is Grade II\*, there are a number of further elements on the estate which are also statutorily listed (Grade II), a number of them being the work of the noted landscape architect Harold Peto, including the former Tennis Pavilion, which is hereafter referred to as the Peto Pavilion to avoid confusion with the new Tennis Pavilion constructed in the norther part of the side as part of the recent restoration and refurbishment works.

The estate is also set within the Highgate Village Conservation Area.

2.02 41 Highgate West Hill is set in the north east corner of a 5 acre estate which also contains a number of ancillary buildings and associated structures.

2.03 The property has always been a private residence, albeit on a grand scale and its future came into doubt when it could no longer function as a private residence and alternative uses were sought for it, which were followed by its listing in 1970 and ultimately its inclusion on the Heritage at Risk Register (HE) before purchased by the current owners for use as a private residence again.

2.04 Recent works (2009-to date) have sought to refurbish and renovate the main house, its ancillary buildings and grounds to provide accommodation commensurate with its use as a 'grand house' by its occupants.

2.05 The existing scheme for the Lower Garden (substantially completed) includes an outdoor pool surrounded by ornamental paving and facilities including new changing rooms and a restored Tennis Pavilion (Grade II Listed), originally constructed to the designs of Harold Peto.

2.06 This Heritage & Design and Access Statement draws upon archival research and appraisal carried out by Adam Architects in 2009.

### 3.00 **THE EXISTING PETO PAVILION**

- 3.01 The former tennis pavilion (Peto Pavilion) has been painstakingly restored from a derelict state resulting in its removal from the Heritage at Risk Register and has become the focal point of the Lower Garden in the newly restored gardens at 41 Highgate West Hill.

Consent was also obtained in April 2015 to provide a new decorative scheme to the interiors that extended the 'Italianate' character of the building with reference to the newly restored formal gardens.

The building sits as a focus in the Lower Garden, with the surrounding new Tennis Court and Pavilion, Outdoor pool and changing facilities, terraces, gardens and ornamental pool set out in a formal and ordered manner, along a north-south axis with the Courance Fountain at the north end and the Temple of Love at the south end.

Yorkstone paving is set out in a symmetrical fashion either side of this axis, with planting beyond this. Within this paved area are formal arrangements of planters which further reinforce the ordered nature of the Pool area.

#### **Description**

- 3.02 The former tennis pavilion was designed by Harold Peto (circa 1913) as part of Sir Arthur Crosfield's garden and is a brick structure, with stone quoins and dressings, open on the south side to the gardens and terraces through an Ionic screen.

- 3.03 Conservation repairs have been carried out to the Bath stone dressings and window surrounds and the Tudor red brick facing have been sensitively repointed and defective brickwork replaced to match the existing.

The roof has been restored with Cotswold stone slates in diminishing courses, with projecting eaves and carved stone cornice.

- 3.04 Much of the internal plaster work was lost to a combination of water ingress and fire damage and the decorative ceiling, cornice and other mouldings have been carefully replaced using profiles from the remaining elements on site.

The remaining dado wall panelling, doors and window surrounds were all carefully removed for repair and the missing joinery elements replaced with new Oak joinery to match the existing wherever required.

The interior Yorkstone paving (largely lost due to the derelict state) has been replaced to match the existing material and layout, while the existing Sandstone step to the Ionic screen has been repaired and conserved in-situ.

#### **Historical Assessment**

- 3.05 The Peto Pavilion represents a fine example of Edwardian garden architecture in the Italianate style by the renowned landscape architect, Harold Peto, along with the other remaining elements of his work on this estate.

Its restoration and retention as a focus within the ground of this 'Great House' are an important visual and historic element of the whole estate.

- 3.06 The setting of the listed Peto Pavilion is a key consideration in the proposals for this part of the Lower Garden.

The disposal and sale of significant areas of the estate in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century has left very narrow belts of land for planting between the formal areas of the Lower Garden and the adjoining properties to the west.

### **The Setting**

- 3.07 The building is located within in the private ground of 41 Highgate West Hill and cannot be seen from outside of the estate or from the public highway.

It relates doubly to the lawn area to the south (historic site of tennis courts) and to the new outdoor pool on the north side.

The formal layout of the Lower Gardens and the tree planting screen designed to protect the visual amenity of both owners and neighbours are the key aspect of the setting for these proposals.

## **4.00 PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION & PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE**

- 4.01 The Peto Pavilion retains its function as a place for the owners and guests to assemble under cover and enjoy both the grounds and the activities within them, becoming the main focus for the gardens, furnished and used in a style befitting both setting and standing of the House.

These proposals are a response to a number of factors that have become apparent since the interior decorations completed:

1. The open south side is subject to prevailing weather and driving wind and rain is having a negative effect on both the building fabric and contents.
2. As an open shelter, the pavilion offers a home for vermin, with damage arising from bird and animal waste.
3. When in use, it is not possible to close-down the building and afford protection to users or furnishings.

A free-standing temporary weather screen erected across the pavilions open south facing front did not successfully prevent the ingress of weather and vermin without adversely affecting the essential charm and character of this Listed building.

- 4.02 The proposed glazed weather screen is intended to fit discretely within the existing structural opening on the inner side of the row of Ionic columns and pilasters forming the open south side of the Peto Pavilion (See Fig.1). These are indicated on the following drawings:

- 2238-08/00/01 + 02: As Existing Plan and Elevation.
- 2238-08/01/01 + 02: Proposed Plan and Elevation.

The proposed glazed screen is set inboard of the line of structure on the open side of the pavilion so as not to interrupt or interfere with the reading of the pavilion's architecture viewed from the gardens.

4.03 A number of design options have been considered to address this issue, with the frameless glass screen located within the structure, being considered the most sensitive solution.

4.04 The new screen consists of a series of clear glazed sections that run full height as a single element, without subdivision, with the fixed sections behind columns and double doors in each of the 3 openings between the columns that open outwards (largely within the depth of the Ionic screen) to allow the open 'experience' to be enjoyed by the pavilion's occupants.

All glass elements span from top to bottom and have a slim bronze frame section at both head and foot (70x 25mm) to support the glass and in the case of the opening pairs of doors, to allow the operation of the offset pivot hinges which are set into discrete pockets within the contemporary replacement Yorkstone flooring within the Peto Pavilion.

These doors are all fitted with 'hold back' devices in the pivot floor springs, which obviates the need for stays and also protects the glass and, more importantly, the surrounding structure from any accidental impact from an opening door leaf.

The fixed glazing elements are inboard of all the columns/pilaster decorative features and are to be templated to butt up against the existing structural opening without any alteration of intervention into these jambs (See Figs. 2-4). A weather seal will be formed by a discreet glazing sealant between glass edge and structure.

The glass type proposed is non-reflective, so the overall visual appearance will not discernibly change from that of the darker (shaded) interior during daytime use, while with an illuminated interior at night, the effect will also remain the same.

4.05 Fixing to the existing structure will be minimised, and where necessary for overall stability and support, will be located so as not to impact on any historic fabric and be located in existing joints or contemporary elements.

- Base support of the screen is proposed via a continuous downstand 'leg' on the bottom glazing bar into the 12mm wide mortar joint between the existing threshold step and the contemporary Yorkstone internal flooring.
- The use of offset door pivot floor springs will allow the door mechanisms (and support) to be located wholly within the contemporary Yorkstone flooring and modern floor built-up within the pavilion.
- Head support of the screen and doors is to be provided via the head glazing bar, with support brackets fitted back to the wall head plate behind the rendered soffit to the ceiling cornice. Discrete thread fixing set into the joint on the inner side of the restored/replaced entablature will allow resistance to deflection of the head of the screen under use or in high wind load conditions.

All fixings are located into existing joints and are designed to be reversible in the event that the screen is subsequently removed.

- 4.06 The provision of the glazed screen is primarily to provide weathering and protection to the interior of the Peto Pavilion from external elements, mainly weather from the prevailing south-west direction, but significantly from vermin, with birds, and rodents having proved a concern, with fouling of walls, floor and furniture.

The provision of the glazed screen will have the added benefit of providing a more controlled environment in terms of temperature and humidity for the timber elements (dado panelling and door/window surrounds) and reduce the risk of damage due to dramatic changes in environmental conditions on the timber.

The provision of the glazed screen will also allow the pavilions' occupants to enjoy its use during the more 'marginal' times of year, or in the event of a sudden change in weather conditions e.g. rainstorm. The glazed doors can merely be closed and the use of the pavilion continued uninterrupted.

- 4.07 The materials and designs selected are of a contemporary nature designed to allow this addition to be read as a completely new and separate element, not part of the historic structure and one that ultimately is entirely reversible with little or no impact on the historic structure.

#### **Pre-application Advice**

- 4.08 Pre-application advice (2017/3437/PRE) was sought on the proposals during June 2017, with initial feedback from the Conservation Officer during July and August (email dated 22.08.17).

Details of the head junction of the glazing with the entablature were amended to simplify the detail following comments from the Conservation Officer. The new bronze frieze section was removed and the 'frameless glass' detail extended to the head as well as the jamb details. This was re-submitted for further comment, with subsequent confirmation leading to the submission of this formal application for listed building consent.

#### **5.00 DESIGN AND ACCESS**

- 5.01 The following outlines the specific design and access considerations associated with the provision of the glazed weather screen.

It sets out the design process and consideration taken into account to ensure that the proposals have been sensitively designed having due regard to the heritage asset and its appropriateness for the Estate and its occupants.

#### **Use**

- 5.02 The proposals provide a weather screen to an otherwise open, yet covered structure in use for dining and other activities associated with the use and enjoyment of the gardens.

The Peto Pavilion is a single space open area, with an access stair hall at the east end leading to basement plantrooms (adjoining Outdoor pool), but its open south side limits its use and give rise to weather damage, so this weather screen is seen as a measure that will enhance the use of the Peto Pavilion in a role commensurate with a 'substantial' private dwelling.

The proposals will enhance the use of the House and grounds in a manner appropriate to the character and significance of the Listed Building.

### **Amount and Scale**

- 5.03 The proposed screen is located entirely within the existing structural opening and extends the full width of the inner side of the Ionic screen between the existing wall jambs and between the underside of the stone entablature and the Sandstone threshold step (refer to detail drawings).

There is no overall effect on the amount of scale of the existing building.

### **Layout**

- 5.04 The weather screen has been carefully designed to have minimum impact in both visual terms and its effect on the historic structure.

Locating the screen on the inner face helps to ensure that the key architectural elements of the Peto Pavilion remain unaffected and that those within the Ionic screen (columns, pilasters, entablature and step) remain visually unaffected by this new 'backing'.

### **Appearance**

- 5.05 The appearance of the glazed weather screen is designed to be read as a minimal addition, detailed sensitively in contemporary style so as not to detract from the existing dominant architectural style of the historic building.

The use of bronze as a material for plates, handles, etc. is sympathetic with the material used on the existing door and window elements of the pavilion.

### **Landscaping**

- 5.06 There is no impact on the existing landscaping, these proposals being entirely contained within the interior of the listed building.

### **Access**

- 5.07 The proposed glazed weather screen is not designed to affect access to the Peto Pavilion.

The existing access door on the north side of the pavilion remains in use, while the glazed weather screen itself incorporates 3 double doors, which are intended to be in the open position when in use, and closed during periods of inclement weather and when the building is not in use (to help prevent vermin access).

Existing access arrangements to the building and surroundings are not affected in any other way by the proposals.



## **6.00 CONCLUSION**

6.01 The proposal for the glazed weather screen is designed to improve both the weathering and protection for the building and provide a screen that allows the pavilion to function during periods of inclement weather.

It has been carefully designed so as not to have a detrimental effect on either the visual appearance of the pavilion and its setting in the lower garden, or the historic fabric of the Peto Pavilion itself.

6.02 The proposed screen neither competes architecturally with the Listed Peto Pavilion, nor set on the inner face of the Ionic screen, has any adverse effect on the focal points set out on the north/south axis of the pool and Lower Garden more widely.

6.03 The proposals seek to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area, while providing facilities that are commensurate with both the historic use and the proposed use of the house and estate as a significant private dwelling.

6.04 The proposals are considered to sustain and enhance the significance of the heritage assets and facilitate the viable use of the House and gardens consistent with its conservation.

The proposals will not cause harm to the significance of the Listed building or its setting, and will enhance its protection in the longer term.

**APPENDIX A: Site Photographs**



Fig 1. Peto Pavilion frontage from south-west (June 2017)



Fig 2. Peto Pavilion open frontage from interior (June 2017)



Fig 3. Pilaster/entablature head detail (June 2017)



Fig 4. Pilaster/entablature base detail (June 2017)