

Bradley
VanDerStraeten

Fieldworks
Rooftop Studio B
274 Richmond Road
London E8 3QW

+44 (0)7800 640 456
info@b-vds.co.uk

b-vds.co.uk

Design & Access Statement 21 Christchurch Hill

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1.0 Introduction

This planning statement has been prepared by Bradley Van Der Straeten Architects to accompany our householder planning application for 21 Christchurch Hill, for a front and rear basement extension, the installation of 2 rooflights in association with lower ground floor works and the alteration to rear ground floor balcony balustrade.

The proposed extension will provide an improved family bedroom and bathroom, a better layout of the space with an additional kitchen with sufficient storage space and a new living area.

Similar proposals in the immediate surrounding area have been granted. This document seeks to justify that the proposed works will maintain the character of the existing building and respect the neighbouring context.

The design submitted aims to demonstrate that we have taken a considered approach to the proposed basement extension, through an extensive study of the context including neighbouring developments.

Guidance

The designs comply with the recommendations in the guides below:

- London Housing Design Guide 2010
- Policies in the London Plan 2011 (policies 3.5, 3.8, 7.4 and 7.6.)
- Greater London Authority Housing SPD 2012.
- Camden Local Plan 2017.
- Camden Planning Guidance Design - London Borough of Camden.
- Camden Conservation Area statement - Hampstead
- Core Strategy Policy CS14
- Development Policy DP25 Conserving Camden's Heritage.

2.0 Context

21 Christchurch Hill is a single family dwelling. The property is not listed but is located in the Hampstead Conservation Area.

Hampstead Conservation Area

(Text edit from Camden Conservation Area Statement - Hampstead)

Hampstead is part of the London borough of Camden and it is a Conservation area. The quality and variety of topography and mix of building create its special character.

“Hampstead sits on the sand and pebble-capped hills that extend across this part of North London from Finchley Road to Highgate and are visible from parts of central London. The Conservation Area spans the heights of the hill and rises to Whitestone Pond at 135m above sea level. It also falls to 60m at South End Green. The topography is at the heart of the townscape.”

Its map highlight the urban diversity: in part dense around the High Street and then more expansive and open in Oakhill.

21 Cristchurch Hill lies in the sub area no 3 of the Conservation Area, Willoughby Road/Downshire Hill.



2.0 Context

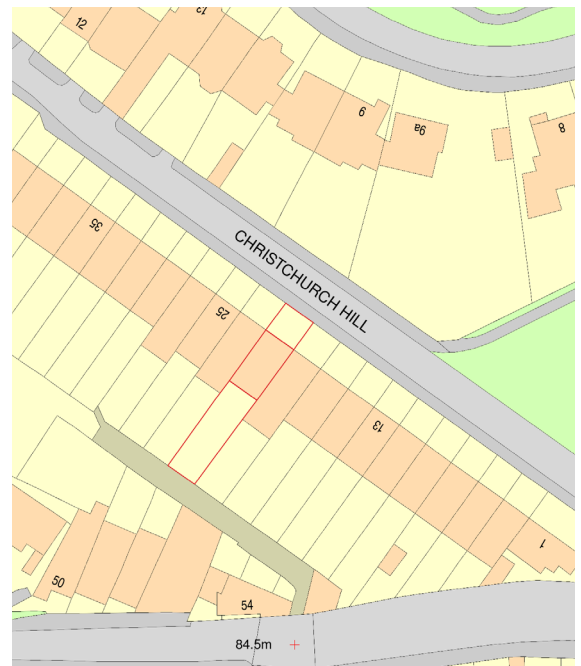
The site

Christchurch Hill is predominantly lined with 3 storey houses with lower ground floor, dormers to the roofs and rear gardens.

As described in Camden Conservation Area Statement - Hampstead about Christchurch Hill:

‘This section of Christchurch Hill, Nos.1-41, forms a continuous terrace on the hill, with the southern part facing the East Heath. It is a flat fronted terrace, three floors and basement, with arched front door and stucco dressings, with sash windows, tripartite at ground floor level. The lintels and doorway have a decorative keystone.’

Many properties along Christchurch Hill have lower ground floor extensions and alteration to the balconies.



Location Plan

Massing

The existing building is 3 storey dwelling with a lower ground floor, dormers to the front and rear facade and a rear garden.

Materials

Walls: London stock brick and white and gray painted render to main building with no cavity or insulation.

Windows: Single glazed white painted timber sash windows to the main building, zinc to the dormers.

Lintels and ornaments: White lintels to the front bricks lintels to the rear, arched front door.

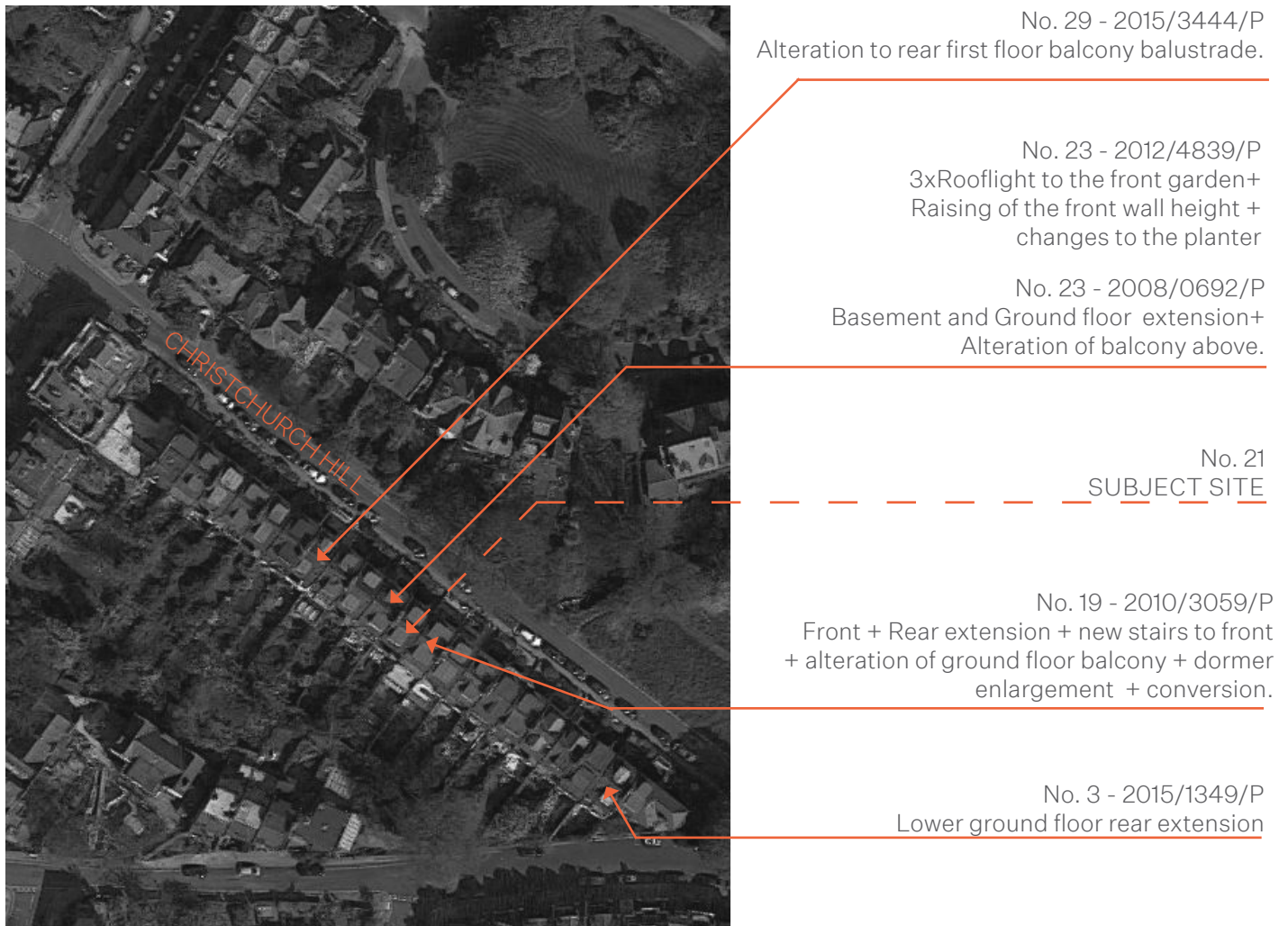
Use

The existing use of the property is a residential dwelling. The proposal will maintain this but improve the amenity of this primary family dwelling.



Rear View

2.0 Context



There are several approved basement extensions with front alteration similar to the proposal for 21 Christchurch Hill where a planning permission has been granted on the same terrace in the immediate area, included No 19 and 23 directly next door.

2.0 Context

Proposed Rear Basement Extension

This application has used planning guidelines at both local and national level to understand the legislative framework informing residential alterations in Camden. Specific reference has been made to;

Camden Planning Guidance Design- London Borough of Camden.

Chapter 3. Heritage

Camden has a rich architectural heritage and the document recognises the responsibility to preserve, and where possible, enhance these areas and buildings.

- The developments permit within conservation areas preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area.

The design is studied to preserve the character and appearance of the area.

Chapter 4. Extensions, alteration and conservatories.

Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings.

Windows, doors and materials should complement the existing building.

Rear extensions should be secondary to the building being extended.

The proposal has been designed with a careful consideration of the character of the property and its surroundings and retaining the amenity of the property and neighbour.

New window and doors complete the existing building and the rear extensions is harmonic and don't dominate the existing building.

4.7. - Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings. A harmonious contrast with the existing property and surroundings may be appropriate for some new work to distinguish it from the existing building; in other cases closely matching materials and design details are more appropriate so as to ensure the new work blends with the old.

- Replaced or new windows/doors should match the original as closely as possible in terms of type and materials.

- In conservation areas original single-glazed windows should be retained and upgraded.

- Use materials that complement the colour and texture of existing building materials. Modern materials such as steel and glass are acceptable but should be used sensitively and not dominate the existing property.

- Alterations or repairs to brickwork or stonework should match the original in all respects.

The design have been developed to preserve the character of the property. Windows and doors are replaced to match existing as closely as possible in materials, types, shape, placement of bars, opening methods, finishing and details. Upgraded where possible.

Materials are sympathetic with the existing building.

The design recognises the importance to keep the existing materials, proposing traditional bricks to the new walls.

Steel and glass are added in small proportions and they don't dominate the main building.

4.8 - Extensions should be subordinate to the original building in terms of scale and situation.

The proposed extension doesn't dominate the original building in term of scale and proportion.

4.9 - Rear extensions that are insensitively or inappropriately designed can spoil the appearance of a property for example in terms of outlook and access to daylight and sunlight.

The proposed rear extension is appropriately designed and doesn't harm the amenity of the neighbouring properties.

4.10 - Rear extensions should be designed to:

- Be secondary to the building
- Respect and preserve the original design, the

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architectural features and the historic pattern

- Not cause a loss of amenity to adjacent properties
- Allow for the retention of a reasonable sized garden
- Retain the open character of the existing natural landscaping and garden amenity.

The rear extension is designed not to dominate the main building in terms of location, form, scale, proportion and dimension. It respect and preserve the original design and its architectural style. It retains a reasonable size of the garden.

4.12-4.14 - Height and width of rear extensions

In order for new extensions to be subordinate to the original building, their heights should respect the existing pattern of rear extensions, where they exist.

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 proposed extension is subordinate to the original building in height and width. The rear basement extension sits under the existing ground floor balcony acquiring basement height and width, it is not visible from the street.

Chapter 5. Roofs, terrace and balconies

5.21 - Rooflight.

- Roof lights can impact the character and appearance of buildings and streetscapes. This occurs where they are raised above the roof slope rather than being flush with the roof profile.

- Roof lights should be proportioned to be significantly subordinate both in size and number and should be fitted flush with the roof surface.

The proposed rooflights don't have an impact upon the character and the appearance of the buildings. They are flush with the roof profile and related with the basement works. The rooflight to the rear allows more light to the basement. The rooflight to the front patio is a porch rooflight which will be barely visible from the street and in similar appearance with the neighbour No.25 (shown at pg.9).

5.23 - Balconies and terraces

Balconies and terraces can provide amenity space. But they can also cause nuisance to neighbours. Potential problems include overlooking and privacy, daylight,

noise, light spillage and security.

The alteration of the balcony doesn't create overlooking or privacy problems, nor does it reduce daylight or security. The proposal is keeping the existing shape, height and dimension. It is only replacing the balustrade and flipping the stairs position.

5.24 - Consideration should therefore be given to the following:

- detailed design to reduce the impact on the existing elevation;
- careful choice of materials and colour to match the existing elevation.

The design has been created with a careful consideration of materials and impact with the existing. The new balustrade will match the existing balustrade in proportion and materials.

Chapter 6. Landscape design and trees

6.25 -Front Gardens

The design of front gardens make a large impact on the character and attractiveness of an area and in particular the streetscene. The design of front gardens should:

- Consider a balance between hard and soft landscaping.
- Retain trees and vegetation
- Retain and re-introduce original surface materials and boundary features, especially in Conservation Areas such as walls, railings and hedges
- Planning Permission will not be granted for hard standings greater than five square metres that do not incorporate sustainable urban drainage.

The design considers the balance between hard and soft landscaping and provides a wider paving to allow wheelchair access to the property.

It doesn't involve the vegetation, and retains original materials, there is not new hard standing greater than 5sqm on the proposal.

6.29 - Rear Gardens

Rear gardens are important as they:

- Form part of the semi public domain
- Form the character of an area in terms of the relationship between buildings
- Provide a sense of visual separation and privacy
- Play a significant role in maintaining the biodiversity

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of the borough.

The proposal will not harm the relationship or the sense of the greenery between buildings, it will not change the visual separation or privacy and it will maintain the biodiversity of the borough.

Only 2.2 meters of the garden will be reshaped to accommodate the stairs to the lower patio, without damaging the character of both building and area.

Camnden Conservation Area statement - Hampstead

-The design has been studied to be in line with the guidance points H25,26,27,28,29,30.

We intend to create improved living spaces in order to better accommodate the family living there.

London Housing Design Guide

- The designs have been developed in accordance with the requirements of the guide.



Existing front extension
at No 25



Existing rear balcony
at No 23

3.0 Proposal

The proposal is for the front and rear basement extension, the alterations to the balcony at ground floor level and the installation of rooflights in association with basement works to front and rear elevations.

The works are to be consistent with other approved application along Christchurch Hill including those on the same terrace at number 19 and 23.

Amount

The new basement extension proposes an additional 13 m². The alterations to the rear balcony will not provide any extra volume.

Layout

The proposal does not adjust the front entry to the dwelling at the ground floor.

The front basement extension provides a new entry to the basement changing in part the appearance from the street and matching in proportion and design the neighbour property at No 25 (refer to image at page 9).

The rear basement extension provides a better layout of the space with an additional kitchen with sufficient storage space, a bathroom and a new living area.

Flipping the position of the stairs of the rear balcony better suits the lower patio area. The proposal will keep the existing shape and dimensions of the balcony.

Scale

The scale of the proposed basement extension is designed to sit sympathetically between the neighbouring properties. To the rear it will be the full width of the property and to the front only provides an additional 1.6 m² to better accommodate the lobby.

The scale of the proposed basement extension is designed to keep the shape of the existing main building and only the small front extension is barely visible from Christchurch Hill and it's matching in dimension and shape the existing basement front extension at the number 25.

The proposal carefully considers the impact on both boundaries and the relationship between the old and the new.

Landscaping

We are proposing to create a new 0.8 m deep sunken patio to the rear basement as well as new stairs that will require minor reshaping of the garden, up to 2.2m away from the new rear elevation of the basement.

We are retaining the amenity of the existing balcony at the rear ground floor. The proposal is improving the existing front access to the dwelling with a slight alteration of the existing steps and paving to the basement.

Appearance

The basement proposal seeks to blend with the adjacent approved extensions.

The basement entrance lobby will be extended up to the return of the existing bay window, with painted render external finish, and a painted joinery panelled front door, to improve access from the front area into the basement. A small lean-to roof below the brick parapet wall alongside the steps up to the main front door will be covered with traditional wood cored roll jointed leadwork.

The ground floor balcony alteration will move the stairs to the opposite side to provide a better layout at the lower patio, and it will be similar to the neighbour at number 23 and made of metal. We are not altering the dimensions or its form.

Accessibility

The property has direct access from Christchurch Hill and there is not proposed alteration to pedestrian access from the street.

There is currently no on-site parking available, and the proposals do not make any provision for new parking arrangements. Street level parking is available.

Privacy

We do not believe the proposed roof extension to the property will increase overlooking of the neighbours or reduce privacy in general.

Summary

It is our opinion that the proposed designs submitted for 21 Christchurch Hill should be awarded planning permission as they are compliant with local planning requirements for residential dwellings and are in line with similar developments in the area.