

## **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

### **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR: 'CONSTRUCTION OF A PART TWO-STOREY, PART SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION AND INSERTION OF TWO WINDOWS INTO THE FIRST FLOOR REAR ELEVATION AT 61 WESTCROFT CLOSE, NW2 2RR'**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Design and Access statement accompanies the planning application submitted by Mr. G. Milner for 'construction of a part two-storey, part single storey rear extension and insertion of two windows into the first floor rear elevation at 61 Westcroft Close, NW2 2RR'.
- 1.2. This Design and Access Statement is detailed but must be read in conjunction with the accompanying application drawings and attached document.



Existing Context of 61 Westcroft Close

- 1.3. The application seeks to create a part single storey, part two-storey rear extension to this 1980s council house. The single storey element will occupy the full width of the property and extend roughly 4m from the rear wall of the house at a height of 3m. The first-floor element will be roughly half the width of house, 4.17m and will extend to the same depth as the ground floor extension. The existing rear roof pitch of the main house will be continued over the two-storey element.
- 1.4. The possibility of a two-storey extension in this tight site is only provided due to the lack of first floor windows in the original design of the whole terrace of houses, and the fact that the ground floors of both neighbouring properties have been extended. However, due to this very specific scenario, the first-floor element can be incorporated in the way proposed with little harm to neighbouring amenity. This design does also

provide the potential that if it was continued in an oppositely handed fashion to match the appropriate houses it could provide the opportunity for all of these properties to be extended in a similar fashion, should the owners and occupants wish to do so.

## 2. SETTING

- 2.1. The current use of the property is a residential house (Class C3).
- 2.2. The proposed use of the property is a residential house (Class C3).
- 2.3. The property is a single family terraced house.
- 2.4. The property is not located within a Conservation Area.
- 2.5. The site consists of a two-storey 1980s terraced council house with a garden which backs on to the railway line between London King's Cross-St. Pancras and Bedford.
- 2.6. The existing size of the rear garden is 81.7 m<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.7. The properties to either side of the site have already extended a single storey to the rear with single pitch roofs that terminate at almost eaves level on No. 60 (right hand side when viewed from the garden) and immediately below the newly inserted first floor windows on no. 62.



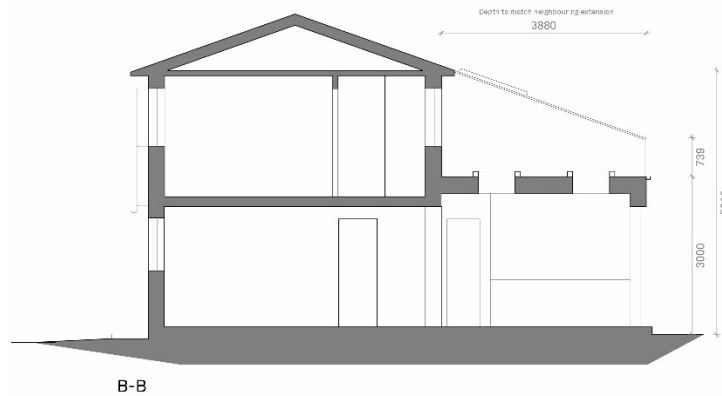
Extensions to the rears of no. 62 and 60 Westcroft Close, left and right respectively.

## 3. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. 61 Westcroft Close has no other planning applications available to view against it on Camden's website, save for the original application for the estates construction back in 1984.
- 3.2. In the design of the extension attention was paid to Camden's Local Plan Policies H3 Protecting Existing Homes, Policy A1 – Managing impact of development and Policy D1 Design, Camden CPG 1 – Design (4. Extensions, Alterations and Conservatories), the Mayor of London's emerging London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 3.3. Due care and attention has been taken to account for the design of the proposed extension and alterations so that:
  - 3.3.1. The extension promotes good modern design principles whilst respecting its setting and the character of the area.
  - 3.3.2. It does not un-reasonably affect the amenity of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties
  - 3.3.3. It improves the quality of the host building for current and future occupiers.
- 3.4. The primary concerns have been addressed in the design of this proposal as described below.
- 3.5. The proposed scheme will be constructed in the highest quality of materials and with exemplary workmanship.
- 3.6. The applicant is willing and eager to work with Camden Council in a pro-active manner to achieve the primary outcomes of this application and as such welcomes the council's feed-back on the proposed scheme. The applicant would like to overcome any issues that Camden may have with the proposal without need for re-submission or appeal.

#### **4. AMOUNT**

- 4.1. The proposed rear extension will add 28.5m<sup>2</sup> of floor space at ground floor level and 9.1m<sup>2</sup> at first floor level. The size of the remaining rear garden will be 52.3m<sup>2</sup>
- 4.2. The single storey element will be flat roofed with a consistent height of 3m.
- 4.3. The two-storey element will have a pitched roof that connects to, and matches the pitch of, the existing house's main roof and will be 3.7m at its lowest point and 5m where it meets the main roof.

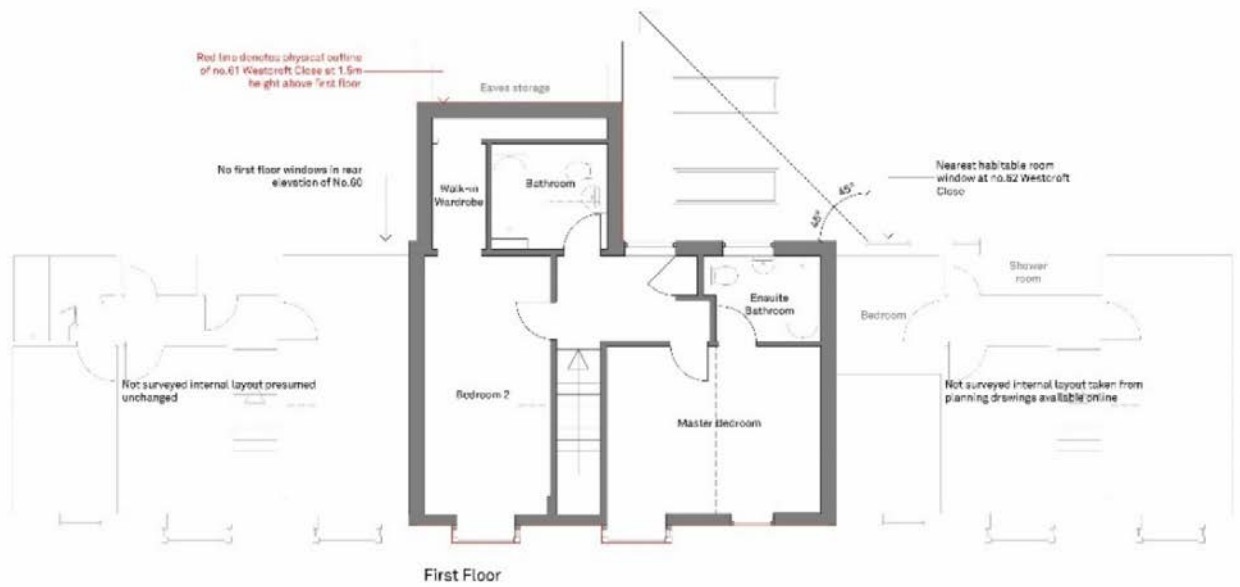


Section through rear of the house as proposed showing levels.

## 5. LAYOUT AND AMENITY

- 5.1. As stated in the introduction - the possibility of a two-storey extension in this tight site is only provided due to the lack of first floor windows in the original design of these houses, and the fact that the ground floors of both neighbouring properties have been extended previously. However, due to this very specific scenario the first-floor element *can* be incorporated in the way proposed with little impact on neighbouring amenity.
- 5.2. The proposal seeks to add an extension as described above. The extension will be entirely located to the rear of the property and extends 3.88m to match the depth of the neighbouring single storey extension at no. 60 Westcroft Close. This is slightly further than the extension at no. 62 (on the opposite side) extends.
- 5.3. The existing layout provides 3 bedrooms, of which the 2 smaller do not comply with existing space standards even for a single bedroom with a floor area of 7m<sup>2</sup>. The first-floor hallway is narrow and the existing bathroom awkward and cramped.
- 5.4. The ground floor provides a reasonable sized living room and a moderate sized kitchen/dining room but it is by no means generous.
- 5.5. The proposed design will add a new combined kitchen-dining area to the ground floor which is made open to the existing living room. The existing kitchen will be turned into a study or guest third bedroom (9m<sup>2</sup> compliant with current Space standards as a single bedroom) and bathroom. On the first floor the 2 smaller bedrooms will be combined to create a master bedroom (14m<sup>2</sup> larger than required as a double) with the existing bathroom turned into an ensuite. The existing Master Bedroom would be retained as a larger second bedroom (12m<sup>2</sup>).

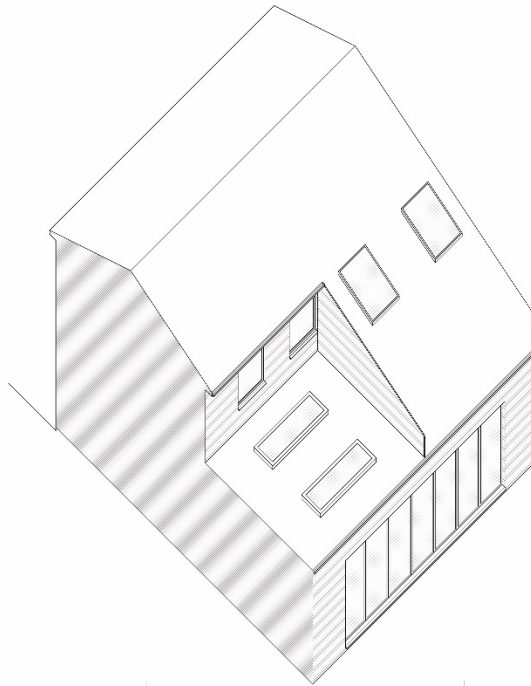
- 5.6. The original design of the houses along this section of Westcroft Close features no windows to the first-floor rear, presumably in the first instance to reduce the impact of the railway line behind. However, the applicants find that this does create other problems such as poor cross ventilation of the first-floor rooms and leaves the first floor feeling rather flat and two dimensional. Since the houses have been built some of the houses have allowed a substantial green border to develop to mitigate the noise from the railway line, including Nos 61, 62 and 63.
- 5.7. No. 62, the property to the right of no. 61 when viewed from the rear garden, has had windows inserted in the rear wall, one to the bathroom (originally just the WC) and one to a new small third bedroom. No. 60, to the left remains as designed.
- 5.8. The proposal has used the 45° rule to establish appropriate massing. This takes a line from the closest edge of the nearest habitable window on a directly adjacent building. If that line is interfered with then this would be considered to have a significant impact on the outlook and sense of enclosure upon this window. The massing proposed does not interfere with that line as shown below.
- 5.9. By removing the separate WC and cupboard from the first-floor landing and providing a window the first floor becomes more spacious and light.
- 5.10. The introduction of windows also allows for cross ventilation and provides a dual aspect to the first floor. Each of the windows can still be separated from the bedrooms by closing doors in order to contribute to the mitigation of noise from the railway.
- 5.11. Whilst there is the potential for over looking from the newly proposed windows, neither is to a habitable room and one will be glazed (bathroom). Furthermore, the relationship with the neighbouring extension and the proposed ground floor extension will restrict the views towards the garden of no. 62 and the first-floor element of the proposed extension will block views towards the garden of no. 60.



Diagrams showing application of the '45° Rule' to, respectively, the proposed ground and first floor plans of 61 Westcroft Close.

## 6. SCALE & APPEARANCE

- 6.1. The scale of the extension is commensurate with the host building.
- 6.2. As mentioned previously the depth of the rear extension matches that of the neighbouring extension at no. 60.
- 6.3. The first-floor element is less than half the width of the property and continues the existing shallow roof pitch downwards meaning that no part of it is higher than the existing eaves. As such it is subservient to the existing building.
- 6.4. An L-shaped footprint is a common typology in housing and in the past 2 decades the ground floor negative space created by this shape (commonly described as a side-return), has been increasingly filled on such houses in a number of ways. As such, in terms of massing the resultant form of the proposal here, is common throughout London and elsewhere.



Axonometric view of house with proposed extension showing the relationship of the existing roof to the first floor element and

- 6.5. The houses along this terrace feature very shallow roof pitches. This shallow roof pitch, peculiar to these houses within the local area, allows for it to be continued a short distance whilst providing just enough space beneath it for added accommodation at first floor level.
- 6.6. Once the roof pitch reaches the furthest extent of the extension the roofing tiles will curve over the edge (as opposed to an immediate change of angle) and descend vertically to meet the height of the single storey element



6.7. The extension will be constructed in bricks to match the existing. As exact identification of the brick may be difficult, bricks will be reclaimed from the existing house during demolition and mixed with as close a match as possible.

6.8. Dark coloured aluminium framed windows and bi-fold doors are proposed.

6.9. The roof will be continued in concrete tiles to match the existing.

## **7. LANDSCAPING**

7.1. The existing garden will be retained and offers opportunities for planting. The row of Leilandii at the rear will be retained but pruned.



## **8. ACCESS**

8.1. Access shall be maintained as existing and there will be no alteration to the parking requirements of the site

## **9. CONCLUSION**

The proposed extension will facilitate a vast improvement to the internal arrangement of this property, transforming it in to a more spacious and exciting family home for the applicants.

Whilst the approach is not at first intuitive when set in the wider context of Camden's usual housing stock and built form, it takes advantage of the opportunities presented by this tight site and the host building's more recent design.

The design integrates well with the existing house and provides an added element of architectural interest. This extension could also provide a prototype for extensions to these council houses which maximises their potential whilst having little impact on the amenity of neighbours, if an 'opposite handed' continuation of the design was adopted.

The proposals as a whole will improve the living conditions for the occupants and neighbours now and into the future.

**James O'Hara,**  
**Director**  
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