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**somner  
macdonald**  
architects

## **SUPPORTING, DESIGN & HERITAGE STATEMENT**

### **16 LEVERTON STREET LONDON NW5 2PJ**



Figure 1: 16 Leverton Street, front elevation

### **Details**

**Application:** Removal of rear extensions and erection of new extension. Reinstatement of traditional sash and case window to rear bedroom. Internal alterations to ground floor.

**Relevant Planning Details:**

Grade II Listed – reference number 1379296  
Kentish Town Conservation Area

**Relevant Planning Policies & Guidance:**

Design CPG1  
Kentish Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy

## Context

No 16 forms part of the late Georgian, early Victorian terraced row on the East side of Leverton Street. These matching, petite terraced houses retain much of their original external Greek influenced details from when they were first constructed in circa 1845. The houses are brick built with timber internal walls and floors as were typical of the time and area.

While No 16 retains much of its original character from the street, the same cannot be said of the interior, in particular the ground floor. The building has been significantly altered in the past, prior to the current owners taking possession. The semblance of the original plan can still be seen but many of the original features have been sadly lost. The changes made have opened up the ground floor to create an open plan kitchen-living-dining space by removing the wall between the front and back room, as well as substantially removing the walls, which would have formed the entrance hall.

To the rear a modern extension has been built which has dated badly. Weathering, coupled with poor detailing and low quality materials have meant that this construction has substantially deteriorated and is now in a poor state.

In summary, most of the ground floor area is devoid of significant original features. Being positive, the upper floor is largely intact and the works do not propose to change this, only enhance it. The rear upper bedroom has had an ill-conceived terrace door fitted in place of the original sash and case window.



Figure 2: View of rear extension from garden.





Figure 3: Views of the rear of the terrace.



Figure 4: Views of the rear of the terrace.

As can be seen in the above figures, many of the houses along the terrace have been substantially altered and added to at the rear. The original pattern of V shaped roof profiles is still very evident but many of the original windows and even the fenestration pattern has been replaced or disrupted. Rear extensions; of varying architectural quality have become proliferate.

## Proposal



Figure 5: 3D image of rear extension.

The proposals have been developed, acknowledging the context of the existing building, not just in terms of its current condition but also its architectural character and that of the terrace and the wider conservation area. Careful thought has been given to the design, its massing, fenestration and material choices.

Cognisance has been given the guidance in CPG1 and also the commentary of the Conservation Area Appraisal.

The main aims of the proposals are to:

- Improve the internal spaces
- Improve the access to the garden
- Improve the light and connection between the main spaces
- Retain original details
- Bring high quality design to the fore
- Distinguish new interventions from the existing
- Use high quality materials that will harmonise with the existing fabric

Starting at the front entrance door, a new nib wall is proposed to pick up on the fact, that the original hall walls have been removed. This nib not only references the old layout but serves to screen the front door from view and helps avoid draughts.

A new wet floor shower room is proposed, located at the altered foot of the stairs. This would allow for the owners to live solely on the ground floor should they become infirm. Locating the shower here, retains a greater semblance of the original rooms, we think.

The current kitchen is refitted with kitchen and storage furniture opening onto a new rear extension. The extension replaces the current construction. It creates a modern space open to the garden, full of light. The kitchen and dining space are located here.

The extension lines through with the extensions on each side, extending no further into the garden than it does now. The massing references the roof profile on the main house.

The use of glass-to-glass joints; frameless glazing and standing seam zinc cladding will mean the new extension stands as something obviously modern but of high quality. These materials will not deteriorate as the current extension has. The zinc and glass visually work well together but also harmonise with the London brick and slate on the rear elevation and roof.

The terrace door on the first floor, which has been installed in the back bedroom, is to be removed and a traditional sash and case window, matching the details of what would have been original, installed.

## Design Precedent



Figure 6: Extension in Islington by Denizen Works



Figure 7: Extension in Tower Hamlets by Studio Gil





Figure 8: Extension in Hampstead Heath by Hayhurst and Co.

The culture of high quality, architecturally rich and contrasting contemporary rear extensions has really come to the fore in recent years, especially in the London Boroughs where Victorian houses, originally designed as modest homes for artisans and professionals of the lower middle classes, are now highly sought after.

These houses often require updating and extending to meet the demands of modern living where connection to the garden is much more desirable than it was in the Victorian era. Kitchens are now the hub of the home rather than the domain of house servants.

There are numerous excellent examples of the rear extension typology, both single and two storey. What is obvious is that these extensions are well designed, often contrasting in their massing or material palette. Above are but three examples, which demonstrate the richness of precedent available to any perspective client or homeowner – this is a well-trodden path.

Our proposals, pick up on many of the same themes as the many of the other extensions, and employ many of the same architectural devices.

- The extended rooflight to allow light to enter deep into the plan
- A simple palette of contrasting but complimentary materials
- Large areas of glass and doors to create flow and connection with the rear garden
- Respecting the height and building line of the adjacent extensions

## Conclusion

Our proposals for this property have come together from an extended design phase, paying close attention to the requirements of not just the clients but also the local planning guidelines, local context and precedent.

We believe the proposals are sensitive yet characterful in their own way, adding to the conservation area character; the contrast between old and new only serves to heighten ones awareness of the old, although in this case, it is only visible from the rear garden.

The massing has been adjusted to reference but not replicate the existing building, projecting no further than the existing extension and those on both sides.

Materials have been chosen which will age well, requiring little maintenance over the years while retaining their high quality finish. Zinc and glass, it is a simple, restrained palette, which will marry well with the London brick on the rear of the terrace while being obviously modern, it will not overpower or dominate.

The specific context of this property must also be remembered. Many of the original details, including the basic layout of the rooms have been lost through historic alterations by previous owners. This presents both a question and an opportunity. What to do next?

There are two routes, to reinstate or not. Our proposals do not try to reinstate pastiche but rather accept the now open plan arrangements and make the most of the through connection between the garden, extension and main house.

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