



**42 Willow Road
Roof alteration and rear dormer roof**

Planning Statement

March 2019



Background

No 42 Willow Road is a four storey end-terrace property which comprises of a flat on the lower ground floor and a three storey flat on the upper floors. There is a garden to the rear of the property with parts which belong to the upstairs flat and some communal areas which also include the entrance to the lower ground floor flat.

The property is not listed but located in the Hampstead Conservation Area and it is recognised as making a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. Willow Road runs east from the junction of Flask Walk/ Well Walk down to South End Road. The site is located at the upper end of Willow Road at the junction with Gayton Crescent.

Planning history

2018/5507/P -

Erection of rear spiral staircase from upper ground level to lower ground.
Replacement of ground floor rear window with door. Alterations to side boundary wall.
Refused - 04/02/2019

2017/3695/P -

Erection of spiral staircase and rear balcony from upper ground level. Removal of existing sash window to be replaced with double doors. - *Withdrawn 05/09/2017*

8500603-

Change of use including works of conversion to form a self-contained flat and an upper maisonette as shown on drawings No.WR3A and WR4.- *Granted 03/07/1985*

Proposal

It is proposed to convert the loft of the upper flat to a habitable space, featuring a small loft room with study area and shower/WC. To provide high quality living accommodation and upgrade the habitable space to meet the latest thermal requirements it is proposed to introduce a rear dormer roof, significantly set down from the ridge line. The ridge line remains as existing but a slight alteration of the hip is required. The principle form of the hipped roof remains. As part of the roof conversion it is also proposed to reinstate the party wall projection above roof level.

It is further proposed to introduce conservation style rooflights to the front roof slope and the hip.

Use

The applicant Dr Christopher Prior is intending to inhabit the property at his retirement and he is looking to make modest alterations to accommodate his requirements. Unfortunately his recent application for a spiral stair case to facilitate rear garden access was refused; it is therefore that he intends to improve the living quality within the property by adding a study at roof level.

The roof at 42 Willow Road, is in desperate need of repair and this work will require extensive scaffolding. There is considerable seepage coming from several areas. The joists may need repairing and there is a need for insulation. It seems logical in the course of correcting this deteriorating condition to improve the architectural appearance and usage of this space.

Layout/ Scale

It is proposed to increase the angle of the hipped roof from currently 25 deg to 45deg and therefore ensure that the proposed rear dormer roof does not cut across the existing hip.

The proposed dormer roof is set down from the ridge sufficiently to appear subordinate to the overall roof form. It is aligned with the windows below and should therefore be considered as in keeping with the host property.

Appearance

The dormer roof has been designed to comply with Policy 3.5 of the London plan, noting that it *“should be of the highest quality, internally, externally and in relation to their context...”* The dormer roof does significantly improve the quality of living space within the property whilst referencing materials and form of its host property.

In its current state there is an architectural omission that we do not understand. All the buildings in this row have a party wall projecting above the roof line. This separation is missing between nos 42 and 44 and the roof appears continuous. The reinstatement of the party wall projection together with the retention and enhancement of cornices is supported by Policy H33 of the Supplementary Planning guidance, which states that *“the retention or reinstatement of any architecturally interesting features and characteristic decorative elements such as parapets, cornices and chimney stacks and pots will be encouraged.”* Whilst reinstating architectural consistency this application would also address the risk of fire spread in its current condition.

The proposed roof alterations can't be seen from street levels along Willow Road due to the elevated nature of the host property. The view from Flask Walk is sheltered by large chimney stacks of existing houses. It is also barely visible from Gayton Crescent due to the shallow roof and its elevated height. Houses along Gayton Crescent are a sufficient distance away for the proposed development not to have a detrimental impact on their amenities.

The varied roof scape along the terrace of nos 42-48 Willow Road ensures that the proposed development does not stand out or appears overbearing. On the contrary, it could be argued that the proposed rear dormer roof provides a “book end” to the roof developments along the terrace. We consider the dormer very discrete in comparison to immediately adjacent dormers ,see pictures, including the dormer at 29 Gayton Road which was approved in 2017. This dormer is considerably more prominent by being larger than the one in our proposal and with a roof line that goes flush into the ridge. This dormer is very visible from Flask Walk, see pictures. Gayton Road is the immediate cross street at the top of Willow Road and therefore close to 42 Willow Road. The fact that our low profile dormer will be barely visible from all directions leads one to conclude that the proposed loft alteration will have no impact on the varied architecture of the immediate area.



View along Willow Road terraces



Loft conversion in Gayton Road, permitted 2017

Planning policy context

The proposed development should be reviewed in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 which states that the NPPF advises that the primary objective is *to foster the delivery of sustainable development, not to hinder or prevent development.*

Paragraph 17 of the NPPF notes the core planning principles which should underpin both plan-making and decision-making, these include *"Finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives: Seeking to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants..."*.

Policy 31 of the Supplementary Planning Guidance states that because of the *varied design of roofs in the conservation area it will be necessary to assess proposals on an individual basis with regard to the design of the building, the nature of the roof type, the adjoining properties and the streetscape.*

Conclusion

The proposed loft space conversion will make a significant contribution to the improvement of the life quality of the applicant. The high quality design will not be detrimental to the character of the host property or the wider conservation area.

We trust that you will agree, that on balance the social benefit for the applicant and future occupiers will outweigh the modest alterations which are proposed to the shape of the roof.

Should you have any queries or would like to arrange a site visit please contact

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