

DESIGN STATEMENT P-DS-01

Proposed Extension and Alterations at 52 Croftdown Road, NW5 1EN Planning Application December 2019

Introduction

AY Architects has been working with applicants Camila Garbutt and Edward Joy on developing the design to renovate and extend their new home at 52 Croftdown Road NW5 1EN.

The Site

52 Croftdown Road is located within the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area - Sub Area 8 St Albans Road. The property is a large single family semi-detached house of Late Victorian Queen Anne Revival Style with a red brick street façade. The front of the house features original decorative brick detailing and stained glass window features in the main entrance and some windows on the east elevation of the house.

The main entrance to the house is on the upper ground level and there is a side entrance along the boundary with 54 Croftdown Road at lower ground level, where there is also external access to the rear garden through an existing bike store.

Summary of Proposal

Camila and Edward completed purchase of the property in July 2019 and are seeking to renovate the house, transforming it into a single-family home for themselves while creating a residential annex on the lower ground floor for a family member.

The design proposal includes the following:

- Creation of a residential annex on the lower ground floor of the house with an approximate gross internal floor area of 73m².
- Extending the lower ground floor level (proposed residential annex) to the rear below the existing conservatory on the upper ground floor.
- Demolition of the rear conservatory on the upper ground floor and replacing this with a slightly wider external balcony incorporating a screen to the adjoining owner at 50 Croftdown Road. The balcony would be accessible from the kitchen / dining via the existing opening and completed with painted timber framed doors and windows.
- Replacement of the existing spiral stair to the garden with a straight flight of stairs. The use of the garden would be shared between the house and newly created residential annex.
- Creation of a openable rooflight on the rear (garden) side of the main roof.
- Renewal of all traditional single glazed timber sash windows with double glazed sash windows to match the existing on the north, east and south elevations. The stained glass windows would remain unchanged.

Site Context

The rear of the row of terraced and semi-detached properties fronting Croftdown Road is

made up of original Victorian closet wings with a mix of extensions and alterations built in different ways and at different scales. Most notably, the adjoining semi-detached property at 50 Croftdown Road, comprised of separate dwellings, has a rear balcony on each floor level and a dormer extension at roof level including an extension located prominently on top of the closet wing.

56-62 Croftdown Road have rear roof extensions of different character and a number of properties have single storey extensions that project beyond the line of the existing closet wing. This is the case at 44 & 42 Croftdown Road where recent flat roof extensions have been developed.

Design Description

Rear Extension and Alterations

The proposed extension to the ground floor residential annex would internalize what is currently a poor quality covered area below the existing conservatory. The extension would create additional space for the dining area with a better connection to the rear garden both physically and visually.

The existing upper ground floor conservatory is considered of poor quality both in terms of its internal space and in architectural design. It currently separates the main living space of the house with the rear of the property and reduces daylight into the upper ground floor. The removal of the conservatory would help improve the quality of the rear of the building and allow more natural light into the interior of the house while improving outdoor amenity for the property.

The lower ground floor extension with its glazed sliding door design would align with the rear wall of the existing closet wing. The design is integrated with balustrading and a new stair to create a high quality improvement that is in keeping with the house and character of the Conservation Area.

Daylight and Orientation

The volume of the existing upper ground floor conservatory overshadows to some degree the neighboring properties at lower and upper ground floor at 50 Croftdown Road. Its removal would improve the levels of daylight reaching the rear elevation of these areas. The proposal includes a 1.8m high painted timber clad screen at proposed balcony level situated along the boundary to provide privacy between the neighboring balconies. The balustrading and screen would be planted, as with the existing condition, to create a soft natural edge between the properties.

The alterations to the rear of the property and the inclusion of the proposed rooflight is designed to improve the levels of natural light that enter the house in the master bedroom, benefitting the internal environment of the house.

Materials

New windows to the main house and the proposed altered window at lower ground floor level of the closet wing are proposed as white painted timber in keeping with the existing property and its context, whereby the lower ground floor extension is proposed as powder coated aluminium frame sliding glass doors with a timber clad surround integrated with the design of the railings in order to differentiate the extension to the main house.

Replacement windows

The existing windows are in various states of disrepair, some double glazed, some single glazed and some with secondary glazing. The proposal includes the replacement of all the existing windows with double glazed sash windows, which will replicate the visual appearance of the existing windows, this will ensure the building's thermal and acoustic isolation performance is improved significantly, enhancing the quality of the interior space.

Outdoor amenity

The garden is proposed to become a shared asset for both flats. The maisonette will gain access to the garden from the stair leading down from the balcony, and the lower ground will gain primary access via the sliding double doors in the proposed extension. There would be paved areas provided for both flats, separated by soft landscaping without any substantial screening.

Sustainability

We are proposing a number of passive measures that, while retaining the historic character of the existing, also aim to increase the energy efficiency of the building. These reference sections 3 and 8 in the Energy efficiency and adaptation CPG.

The removal of the conservatory structure at upper ground level would allow more natural light into the proposed kitchen and enhance the effects solar gain (which can be controlled in warmer months by use of the integrated shutters). This would reduce both the need for heating and artificial lighting.

On the lower ground floor, the existing internal space is heavily shaded by the existing conservatory, making it very dark within the main living space. Removing the balcony and pushing the envelope of the building towards the rear, in line with the existing closet wing will improve the levels of daylight into the flat and also increase the effect of solar gain. This is particularly important in the lower ground flat where the building is much cooler. In the hottest months, excessive solar gain would be prevented by a high volume of natural ventilation through the open sliding door and by an integrated blind.

The replacement sash windows throughout the proposal would increase the thermal performance of the building as a whole, creating a more insulated envelope and draft proofing the existing openings.

The existing boilers would also be replaced with modern, energy efficient versions.

Consultation

Camden Council's Pre-planning advice service provided an understanding of the acceptability of various aspects of the proposal. This advice was received on the 29th of October 2019 from Elaine Quigley (Ref:2019/4399/PRE) and was given subsequent to a visit to the existing building.

A number of points were included, some to which we have specifically responded as below:

- **External amenity space**

"It is not clear how the rear garden would be separated between the garden flat and the maisonette above. Careful consideration should be given to the location of any fencing to ensure that the light and outlook from the lower ground floor flat is not compromised."

There would be no additional fencing as part of the proposal, and the two flats would use the garden as a shared asset. We have proposed some soft landscaping in the paved area to provide some privacy between the users of the garden.

- **Lower ground window in closet wing**
"It is preferred that this window be retained in its current form rather than being enlarged in order to retain this vertical emphasis on the rear façade of the building"
 We have changed the enlargement of the window to be symmetrical and more harmonious with the existing windows on the upper storeys of the cistern block.
- **Privacy screen to 50 Croftdown Road**
"In principle this screen is considered acceptable however details should be provided... as part of any application to ensure its appearance is appropriate on this historic building"
 We have included details of this screen in drawing P14.
- **Roof lights**
"The sizes of the rooflights seem overly large and should be reduced in terms of their length to ensure they remain subordinate within the roof. Any new roof lights should be conservation style rooflights that do not project above the roof tiles."
 We have removed the two previously proposed rooflights and proposed another rooflight above the master bedroom, on the rear elevation of the house. This is a of reasonable size, the same width as the existing window opening in that room and will be a conservation area style rooflight to not detract from the character of the house. The existing small rooflight on the main roof provides some daylight into the attic and would be replaced due to its poor condition.

The neighbors at 50 Croftdown Road have been consulted on various aspects of the current proposal works, including the erection of the lower ground extension and the 1.8M high screen between the two properties at upper ground level. The proposal has been received positively.

END