

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Location: 22 Howitt Rd, London, NW3 4LL

Project No: 037

Date: 27.03.2020

Proposal: Single storey rear extension to a dwelling house, and replacement of rear French doors with a window.

Location and Context:

The property is an Edwardian two-storey red brick terraced house with a basement and an attic storey within a slate-faced mansard. It is located in the Belsize Conservation Area. It is understood that there is an Article 4 direction which relates only to the front and main roof of the property, therefore the permitted development rights relating to rear extensions are still intact (as advised by Duty Planner: John Diver, by phone on 2nd September 2019). At the rear there is a single-storey closet wing with sloped roof, which appears to be part of the original building. The rear garden is laid to paving, and is very much secluded from view by dense vegetation to both side and rear boundaries.



Fig 1A: SW Aerial View Identifying the Site in Red and Various Existing Rear Extensions



Fig 1B: SE Aerial View Identifying the Site in Red and Various Existing Rear Extensions

Pre-Application Advice:

Camden report Ref: 2019/6084/PRE, by Planning Officer Mark Chan, outlines the planning department's response to the original proposals for rear extension, which differs only from the current proposal in that the extension retained an existing stained glass top light above the reclaimed French doors, and in doing so it resulted in a large glazed area to the extension flat roof.

The pre-app report supported the replacement of the French doors on the existing closet wing with a casement window.

The pre-app report also supported the general massing and materials of the rear extension, but recommended the following amendments to the proposal:

- Reduce the size of the glazed roof area to a roof light that covers less than half of the extension flat roof,
- Remove the original stained glass top light from the rear extension façade, and set the French doors within a brick surround, with an uninterrupted soldier course at the parapet.

An alternative sketch option 'A' was submitted to the planning officer during the pre-app, which followed the advice above. The officer supported that option, and the proposal now being submitted in this Planning Application replicates that sketch and follows the Planning and Conservation officers' recommendations precisely.

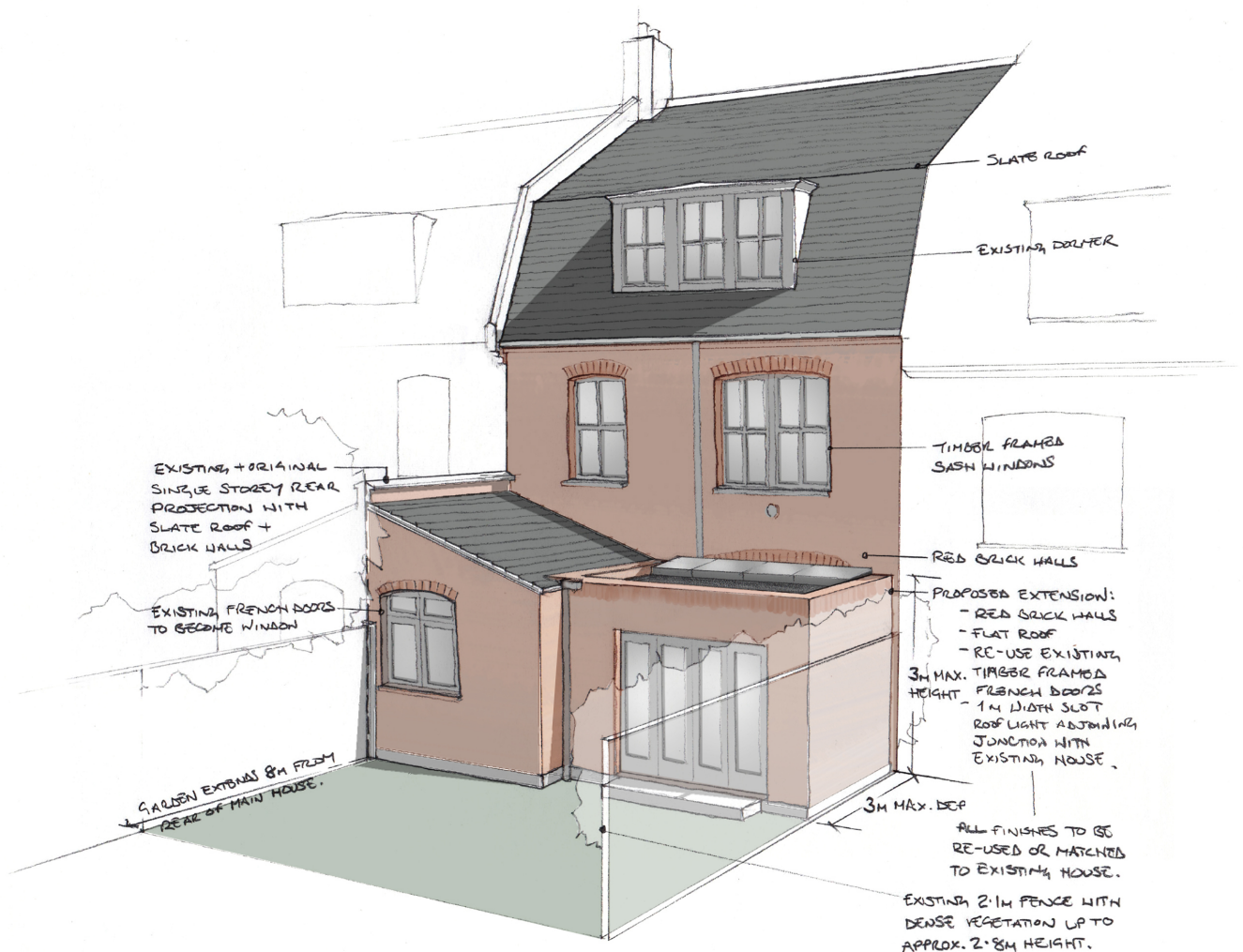


Fig 2: Sketch Perspective View of Option 'A' as recommended in the Pre-application Advice.

Design, Massing and Materials:

The proposal is for a single-storey rear extension, containing 10sqm of additional internal floor area for an extended dining room and living space within this family home. The proposal also seeks to convert the French doors of the closet wing into a casement window of matching materials and opening size. The extension would have negligible impact on the surrounding dwellings and is designed to reflect the character of the Conservation Area and the host property by re-using or matching the existing materials, styles and construction methods, including:

- a) Flat roof with a maximum height under 3m, in line with the permitted development guidelines.
- b) Maximum Depth of 3m, which is set back 0.5m from the 3.5m existing closet wing. This is to break up the volume by articulating the closet wing and extension as separate structures, which are both subservient to the main house. It also meets permitted development guidelines.
- c) Maximum width of 4m, allows the extension to sit wholly within the owner's property so that existing boundary fences and treatments can be retained in their current positions, providing significant cover and privacy from surrounding neighbours.
- d) Covering no more than 27% of the existing rear garden area, which is currently laid to paving, except for border shrubs and climbers that can be largely retained.
- e) All materials employed would be sourced to match the existing building, or reclaimed from the building itself: red brick external walls with soldier course detailing up to parapeted flat roof, cast iron rainwater goods and downpipes, white painted timber framed window, and reclaimed French doors from the rear of the original house.
- f) The slot roof light would bridge the junction between the main house and the extension, with a frameless appearance and un-tinted clear glazing. It would have a maximum clear width of 1m, would cover less than half of the single ply membrane flat roof area, and would have an upstand no higher than 150mm.
- g) The slot roof light design takes its cue from the slot roof light in the rear extension at no.17 Howitt Rd. However our proposal is much more sensitive in that the extension volume is smaller (unlike no.17s full width rear extension), the roof light is narrower, and the materials have been chosen specifically to match the existing house as closely as possible.

Amenity and Impact on Surrounding Properties:

Daylight and Overshadowing:

The proposed extension is situated on the northwest facing rear of the property, in an area of the paved garden that rarely receives any direct sunlight. The existing site is further overshadowed by dense and mature vegetation on both the side and rear boundaries, that extends up and over the height of the proposed extension. The proposal allows for the retention of all existing vegetation and boundary treatments. Therefore the proposal will have little to no impact on the access to daylight of any neighbouring property, and minimal impact even on the main house itself.

Overlooking and Privacy:

Due to the dense and mature vegetation mentioned above, which surrounds the existing paved rear garden, there are very few opportunities to overlook or be overlooked from the position of the proposed extension. The extension would re-use the existing French doors on the rear façade, so the only new glazed area would be in the slot roof light. The roof light has been designed to be narrow enough so that none of the neighbouring upstairs windows would afford a direct view down into the living space. The extension itself would also be secluded from the viewpoint of any neighbouring property due to its position in the infill paved area, set back from the existing closet wing.

Response to the Conservation Area:

The proposals aim to preserve and enhance the character of the property and the Conservation Area by:

- Respecting the size, massing and proportions of the original building e.g. by setting back from the extent of the existing closet wing so as to appear subservient to the host building.
- There isn't a consistent building line at the rear of the street due to: closet wings with varying roof types, conservatories, full width extensions, a basement addition, and several other rear infill extensions that have been added to the original houses over the decades (see aerial view in Fig.1A and 1B). However, to further minimise the impact on an already eclectic rear building line in this street, the extension would be sited in a currently overshadowed, secluded and poorly used rear external area.
- No part of the rear extension would be visible from any point within the public realm.

- Matching and/ or re-using the original materials of the host building, in keeping with the Edwardian period of the street. Careful detailing of brickwork, fenestration, rainwater goods, and an unobtrusive slot rooflight, will ensure that the proposal will reflect the character of the area.

Access:

Access to the dwelling will not be affected by the proposals. Access within the property to the rear garden will be improved by providing a wide and easily navigable step down from the extension French doors to the level paved garden area.

Summary:

The proposed rear infill extension and fenestration alterations have been designed to have minimal impact on the surrounding neighbours and will not be visible at all from the public realm. The revised roof light and rear façade design has addressed all the conditions laid out in the pre-application advice, and therefore should now be an acceptable addition to the local built landscape as it aims to preserve the character of the original house and the Conservation Area. The proposals will provide much needed additional living space for the occupants without compromising the period qualities of the host property.