



MARCH 2020

Planning Statement

50 Menelik Road, London, NW2 3RH

Iceni Projects Limited on behalf of
Mr & Mrs Riechert

March 2020

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ON BEHALF OF MR & MRS
RIECHERT

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr & Mrs Riechert ('the Applicant') in support of a householder planning application for external alterations and extensions at 50 Menelik Road, London, NW2 3RH ('the site') including a rear dormer and two storey rear extension.

1.2 Specifically, this application seeks planning permission for the following development:

“Erection of a rear dormer window, rooflights to the front and side and a two-storey rear and side extension, alteration to rear facade, installation of double glazed windows to the front and new windows to the side elevation”

1.3 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Icen Projects Ltd and provides the planning case in support of this application. It assesses the proposal in the context of the relevant adopted and emerging planning policy and guidance at national, regional and local levels.

The Submission

1.4 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the other drawings, plans and documents submitted in support of this Application. The submission comprises:

- Application Forms and Certificate of Ownership;
- Cover Letter
- CIL Form 0;
- Site Location Plan;
- Existing and proposed drawings, including plans, sections and elevations; and
- Decision Notice for permission 2019/5825/P.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The site is located at 50 Menelik Road, in the Fortune Green ward within the administrative boundary of the London Borough of Camden. It comprises a two-storey plus unused roof space, semi-detached residential dwelling. It is currently in use as a 5 bedroom family-sized residential property (Use Class C3).
- 2.2 The house is a typical family-sized dwelling with living spaces on the ground floor, bedrooms on the first floor, and access to a large private rear garden. The current plan form is somewhat clunky and impractical with each floor subdivided into numerous rooms. It consists of the house core, and a side two storey outrigger which houses a garage at ground floor and a bedroom at first floor level. This has led to an internal layout on the first floor resulting in a very small fourth bedroom that is not particularly functional or fit for purpose, as well as a cramped single bathroom and separate WC to serve all 5 bedrooms on this floor.
- 2.3 The property forms a semi-detached pair with No. 52 Menelik Road. No. 52, benefits from a dormer extension to the rear as well as a single storey rear extension. The adjacent semi-detached pair of No 48 and No. 46 to the north of the site, benefit from larger two storey outriggers than that at No. 50.
- 2.4 The surrounding area is residential in nature with Menelik Road itself characterised by similar semi-detached two storey properties. To the rear of the site is Hampstead Cemetery, to the east. The boundary with the cemetery to the rear of the property has significant tree coverage and is heavily wooded, thus public views of the rear of the property are significantly obscured. The A5 runs north to south, around 200m to the west of the site. This also provides the main thoroughfare and shopping and amenity provision for the area.
- 2.5 The property is not listed nor is it within a conservation area.

Planning history

- 2.6 The site itself does not have any significant planning history other than the recent permission granted on 9th March 2020 (LPA ref. 2019/5825/P) for:

“Erection of a rear dormer window, rooflights to the front and side and a ground floor rear and side extension, alteration to rear facade, installation of double glazed windows to the front and new windows to the side elevation.”

Background

2.7 50 Menelik Road is a semi-detached two storey family sized property located within the London Borough of Camden. It is owned by Mr & Mrs Riechert, who are seeking to make alterations to the property with the intent to optimise it for family living and to rectify the irregular plan form and internal layout.

2.8 As part of this intention, a planning application (LPA ref. 2019/5825/P) for several external alterations including dormer windows and extensions was made on 19th December 2019 and granted permission on 9th March 2020 at the site. During the consideration of this application by officers, a number of changes were made to the scheme in order to address officer comments and concerns. As such, following discussions with officers and interrogation of the design options, a position was reached where permission was granted for the below description of development:

“Erection of a rear dormer window, rooflights to the front and side and a ground floor rear and side extension, alteration to rear facade, installation of double glazed windows to the front and new windows to the side elevation.”

2.9 Following a site visit by officers on 14th February 2020, comments on the design were received and discussed with officers on multiple occasions throughout February and early March 2020. A summary of the key changes that were made, as requested by officers, during this period is detailed below:

- The dormer was reduced in size and moved further from the hip to be at least 0.5m away, in line with the CPG
- The timber cladding was lowered to below eaves height
- Proposed rooflights to protrude from the roof slope by no more than 150mm
- Reduction of the window on the side on first floor
- Obscure-glaze the new first floor side elevation window facing No. 52 Menelik Road
- Rear extension to outrigger to be ground floor only, removal of first floor extension.

2.10 Whilst all the above changes were made in line with officer comments, thus securing a grant of approval for the application, it is the Applicant’s belief that a two storey rear extension is entirely appropriate in this context.

2.11 Officer’s comments in relation to the acceptability of the rear extension at first floor level included:

- An extension at ground floor only would bring symmetry and balance with the extensions at No 52, thus improving the character and quality of the area.
- “a single storey rear extension would still allow for the retention of the garden and would have less impact on amenities”

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- the existing two-storey rear outrigger at neighbouring No. 48 is deeper and wider than the outrigger at No. 50 and should not be used as a reference

2.12 The Applicant does not agree with this assessment and the comments made by officers during the determination of the previous application. As such, the current application seeks permission for proposals that are identical to the consented proposals, incorporating all previous officer feedback and agreed design changes, with the only difference being an additional storey on the rear extension, as originally proposed but later removed at officer request.

2.13 A full case setting out the Applicant's justification, and response to officer's comments, in the context of local planning policy, will be set out later in the assessment section of this statement.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 This planning application seeks the alteration and extension of the property at 50 Menelik Road to provide a more functional and optimised house that better serves the needs of the occupants and their family.

3.2 The design of the proposals has followed extensive design discussions with officers during the consideration of permission ref: 2019/5825/P.

3.3 The proposals respond to all officer comments from this previous application and the external changes are identical to the consented proposals in every aspect other than the addition of a first floor to the rear extension. As a result, the proposals are considered to demonstrate a high-level quality of design.

3.4 The key features of the proposals consist of:

- Rear dormer window extension
- Conversion of the roof space to provide additional functional living space
- Two storey extension to the rear of the property to expand the existing two storey side element
- Reconfigured internal layout accordingly to maximise floorplate and provide a more functional living space.
- Installation of new windows, double glazing and rooflights

3.5 The proposals have been carefully designed to create additional floorspace, maximise interior space and provide a more functional family dwelling, whilst also externally complementing the existing building and wider area, resulting in no visual impact.

3.6 Overall, the proposals would result in the addition of 63sqm (GIA) of floorspace to the family dwelling, as listed in the table below.

Table 1 Floorspace and land use schedule

Use	Existing sqm (GIA)	Proposed sqm (GIA)	Net Change sqm (GIA)
<i>Residential (Class C3)</i>	262	325	+63

3.8 The proposed materials have been carefully considered as part of the design. The brickwork which faces the garden will be high-quality facing brickwork with lime mortar. The vertical timber cladding at first floor level has been chosen to complement the wooded and tree lined context. The cladding will be untreated, allowing the wood to silver with age, blending with its wooded location. The replacement windows will be aluminium on the outside and timber on the inside.

3.9 In summary, the proposals have sought to deliver a number of planning and design benefits including:

- Provide additional functional living space in line with the needs of the applicant and provide an improved much needed family dwelling
- Increase the internal floorspace of the house to allow for bedrooms to align with nationally prescribed minimum space standards;
- Achieve high quality design that follows traditional design criteria and materials selection to complement the host building;
- Provision of extensions that are subordinate to the host building and have no impact on the character of the surrounding area; and
- Maintain a good level of residential amenity for surrounding residential properties.

4. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 This section of the Planning Statement defines the Development Plan and assesses the proposed development against the relevant adopted and emerging planning policy and guidance at national, regional and local level.

Planning Policy Framework

4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.3 The updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019 and sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies. The NPPF outlines a presumption in favour of sustainable development as being at the heart of the planning system.

4.4 The relevant Development Plan for the site consists of:

- The London Plan (2016);
- The Camden Local Plan (2017).

4.5 Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) as well as a number of supplementary planning documents, Camden Planning Guidance (CPGs). In the context of this application CPG 'Altering and extending your home' (March 2019) is of particular relevance.

4.6 The Mayor of London is in the process of preparing the New London Plan, which was subject to Examination in Public (EiP) from January to May 2019. The Inspectors Report has since been received and published in October 2019 with the Mayor publishing his Intend to Publish in December 2019. The Secretary of State responded on 13th March 2020 requesting further amendments in line with specific directions.

Planning considerations

4.7 The relevant planning considerations associated with this application include:

- Principle of residential extension;
- Design; and

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- Neighbouring amenity;

4.8 Each consideration is assessed in turn below

Principle of residential extension

- 4.9 The principle of providing residential extensions at the site has already been established under the extant consent granted under planning permission ref 2019/5825/P. However, it is clear that policy at national and local levels encourages the optimisation of existing housing stock where possible, and proposals to improve under-utilised buildings that can help meet identified needs for housing. It is considered that the current proposals achieve these aims.
- 4.10 The NPPF (2019) seeks to promote the effective use of land to help significantly boost the supply of housing. Paragraph 118c and paragraph 118d states that substantial weight should be given to the use and development of brownfield land and under-utilised land and buildings, particularly where it would help to meet identified needs for housing.
- 4.11 London Plan Policy 3A.5 Housing choice requires local authorities to ensure that new development offers a range of housing choices.
- 4.12 The draft London Plan Intend to Publish version (2019) policy D3 notes that all development must make the best use of land by following a design- led approach that optimises the capacity of sites, whilst also responding to the existing character of a place. Policy H9 also notes that boroughs should promote efficient use of existing housing stock to reduce the number of vacant and under-occupied dwellings. These policies have been updated in line with Inspector comments or accepted by Inspectors and therefore although not yet adopted, are not considered contentious and can be attributed significant weight accordingly.
- 4.13 At a local level, Camden's Local Plan notes under Policy H3 'Protecting existing homes' acknowledges that there is a need to enable sub-standard units to be enlarged to meet residential space standards. The supporting text to Policy H7 'Large and small homes' also notes the shortfall and need to protect larger homes within the borough that are suitable for families, due to a higher need and lower provision.
- 4.14 The proposals are considered to represent an optimisation of an under-utilised building to provide more functional living space that would suit the needs of a modern family, thus meeting an identified local need.
- 4.15 The provision of additional living space through the dormer and conversion of the redundant loft space, and a full two storey rear extension would allow for a better utilisation of space with minimal external changes. The inclusion of a first floor storey on the rear extension would further maximise

the potential floorspace of the property to allow for good sized bedrooms and bathroom facilities befitting of a 5-bedroom family house. As such, each bedroom provided would be of adequate size for family living and further WCs and ensuites are proposed to meet the modern living needs of a family.

- 4.16 It is clear that there is a planning obligation at both national and local level to optimise existing housing stock to make better use of it, subject to other planning considerations including design and amenity. The principle of these extensions, in particular the optimisation of the rear extension is therefore considered acceptable in order to provide an improved and functional family-sized dwelling to meet identified local needs, subject to a sensitive design-led approach.

Design

- 4.17 The majority of the design considerations of the proposals have previously been considered acceptable by officers as part of the consented application reference 2019/5825/P. The outstanding principal design consideration for the proposed development is the first floor storey of the rear extension.

- 4.18 Officers previously expressed concerns that the design would be harmful to the surrounding character, and that it would be harmful to the symmetry of the building and semi-detached pair.

- 4.19 Camden's Local Plan Policy D1 'Design' notes that the Council will seek high quality design in development, with several criteria, notably including requiring development to respect local context and character, comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character, preserves strategic and local views; and for housing, provides a high standard of accommodation. It further notes that the Council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

- 4.20 Further specific design guidance in relation to household extensions is provided within the Council's CPG 'Altering and extending your home' (March 2019). This notes good practice principles for extensions including:

"The addition or alteration must compliment the property without eroding or harming its character and the surrounding area or having a negative impact on neighbouring amenity." (Para 2.2)

- 4.21 Specifically in relation to extensions, it notes several criteria in order to achieve these above aims. An extension should:

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- a) *be secondary to the building being extended, in relation to its location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing;*
 - b) *be built from materials that are sympathetic to the existing building wherever possible*
 - c) *respect and preserve the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style;*
 - d) *respect and preserve existing architectural features, such as projecting bays, decorative balconies or chimney stacks;*
 - e) *respect and preserve the historic pattern and established townscape of the surrounding area, including the ratio of built to unbuilt space;*
 - f) *not cause a loss of amenity to adjacent properties with regard to daylight, sunlight, outlook, light pollution/spillage, privacy. Please ensure the extension complies with the 45 degree test and 25 degree test as set out in the CPG for Amenity – or demonstrate BRE compliance via a daylight test.*
 - g) *allow for the retention of a reasonably sized garden;*
 - h) *retain the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity, including that of neighbouring properties, proportionate to that of the surrounding area.*
 - i) *allow for the retention of wildlife corridors, in particular at the end of streets*

(para 3.1)

4.22 Furthermore, in relation to rear extensions, it notes additional guidance including:

- A single storey rear extension is generally preferable to those at higher levels due to potential impacts on neighbouring amenity (Para 3.3)
- Extensions that are higher than one full storey below roof eaves/parapet level, or that rise above the general height of neighbouring projections and nearby extensions, will be strongly discouraged. This is because such extensions no longer appear subordinate to the building. (para 3.3)
- The width of a rear extension should be designed so that it is not visible from the street and should respect the rhythm of existing rear extensions in neighbouring sites (Para 3.5)

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- 4.23 Officer comments in their report accompanying the decision notice for application ref. 2019/5825/P notes that the single storey extension proposal is considered to meet all these requirements as:

“The extension is at the north-western side of the rear elevation and is 2m wide and 4.5m deep and considered to be relatively small compared with the size of the host dwelling... Given its design, scale, materials and location at the rear of property, it is considered the rear extension would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the host property.”

- 4.24 Based on this assessment, it is considered that the same considerations would apply to the additional storey on the extension at first floor level. The proposed minor addition is not considered to unduly add significant bulk or massing that would alter this assessment, given the extension’s small size and location to the rear of the property on an existing outrigger.

- 4.25 The key design considerations, in line with policy guidance and officer comments are assessed in turn below.

Subordination to host property

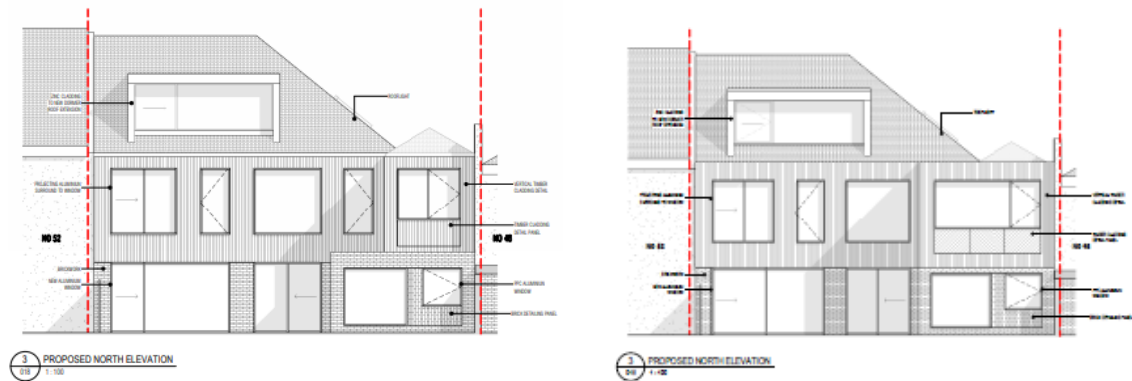
- 4.26 The minimal width of the proposed extension is considered to remain subordinate to the host building, in accordance with criteria a and c of para 3.1 of the CPG guidance.

- 4.27 Furthermore, the limited addition of space at first floor level on an existing two storey outrigger is considered to respect the original design and proportions of the host property (in line with criteria e of para 3.1 of the CPG guidance).

- 4.28 It is noted that at paragraph 3.3 of the CPG guidance, it notes that extensions that are higher than one full storey below roof eaves/parapet level, or that rise above the general height of neighbouring projections and nearby extensions, will be strongly discouraged. However, it notes that this is due to the potential for the extension to no longer appear subordinate as a result. In the circumstances of the current proposals, which involve an existing two storey element, this guidance is not considered applicable as the proposed extension is clearly so minimal in width that it can not be considered to cause the two storey element to no longer be subordinate to the host building.

- 4.29 To demonstrate how this additional first floor element would not create significantly additional mass as to be no longer considered subordinate to the host property, a comparison is shown below of the rear elevations for the ground floor extension on the proposed scheme and the proposed two storey extension in current proposals.

Figure 1: Rear elevation of consented scheme, rear elevation in current proposals

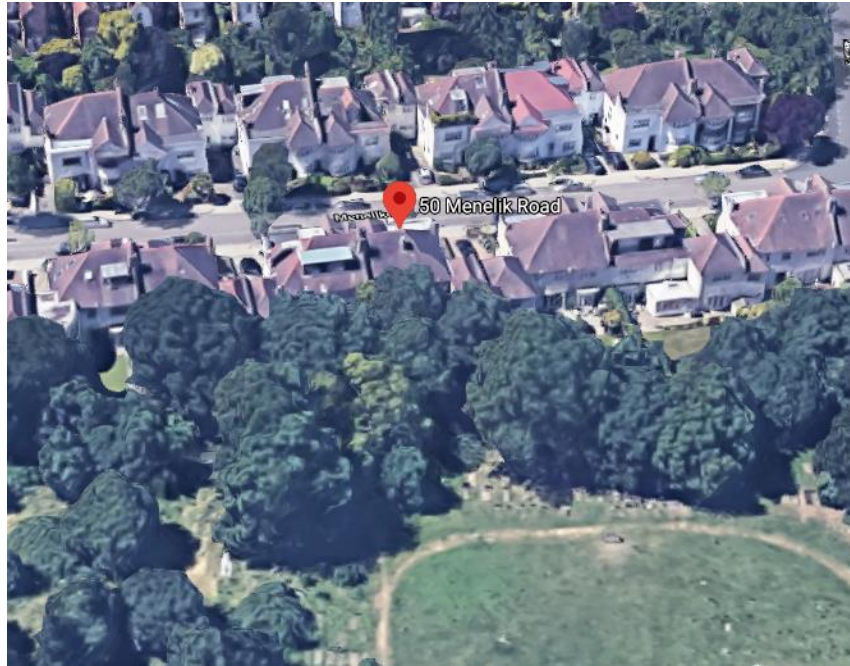


- 4.30 Furthermore, it is noted that the proposals would also complement the host property and would not be harmful in line with criteria b of para 3.1 of the CPG guidance, as the extension would be built with sympathetic materials to the host property. Furthermore, the neighbouring properties at Nos 46 & 48 also have two storey elements of this nature which are clearly subordinate to the main building.

Respecting character of surrounding area and townscape

- 4.31 The proposal is not considered to have any significant effect on the surrounding area character and townscape, given its location to the rear of the property.
- 4.32 Officer comments in relation to symmetry with No. 52 are noted, however there is currently no existing symmetry with the buildings given the dormer and rear extension at No. 52 and therefore the proposals are considered to restore symmetry more so than the current position.
- 4.33 Furthermore, whilst it is acknowledged that No 50 and No 52 are a semi-detached pair, the size of their rear outriggers cannot be considered to characterise the area, given the larger outriggers located immediately adjacent at Nos. 48 and 46. The Applicant rejects officer's previous assertions that these cannot be considered as reference, as the properties must be considered within their wider townscape context, as noted in point e of paragraph 3.1 requirements of the CPG guidance, and not merely as pairs. The CPG guidance goes on to consider the rhythm of existing rear extensions in neighbouring sites at paragraph 3.5, and
- 4.34 Finally, the location of the proposed extension must also be considered, as noted by officers in their report accompanying the decision notice. The location of the proposed extension to the rear of the property results in the only views being from Hampstead Cemetery. Given the heavily wooded aspect of the landscape and heavy tree coverage here, there are no significant views in which the rear of both properties No. 50 and No. 52 are visible together, and therefore the 'symmetry' of these properties is not unduly affected.

Figure 2: Aerial view of the rear of the properties from Hampstead cemetery (Google Maps)



Neighbouring amenity

- 4.35 Camden's CPG 'Altering and extending your home' notes at paragraph 3.1 points f and h, that extensions must not cause a loss of amenity to adjacent properties with regard to daylight, sunlight, outlook, light pollution/spillage, privacy and must retain the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity, including that of neighbouring properties, proportionate to that of the surrounding area.
- 4.36 It also further specifies at paragraph 3.3 that a single storey rear extension is generally preferable to those at higher levels due to potential impacts on neighbouring amenity.
- 4.37 The proposals for the single storey rear extension and the dormer extension have already been assessed by officers as having no impact on neighbouring amenity. Due to the location of the proposed additional first floor level on the rear extension, there would be no further amenity impacts.
- 4.38 As such, it is considered that the guidance at paragraph 3.3 that puts preference on single storey rear extensions is not applicable in this situation, as this guidance is aimed at those instances where no second storey element already exists and directly relates to mitigating impacts on neighbouring amenity, of which there would be none in this circumstance.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application that seeks external alterations and extensions to provide more usable floorspace and a more functional family dwelling at the property at 50 Menelik Road, London, NW2 3RH. Planning permission would allow for the current dwelling to be optimised to better suit the needs of the Applicant and their family whilst having no further impact on the host building, character of the townscape, surrounding views, or amenity.
- 5.2 The proposed extensions and external alterations would deliver a number of planning benefits. These include:
- Provide additional functional living space in line with the needs of the applicant and provide an improved much needed family dwelling
 - Increase the internal floorspace of the flat to allow for bedrooms to align with nationally prescribed minimum space standards;
 - Achieve high quality design that follows traditional design criteria and materials selection to complement the host building;
 - Provision of extensions that are subordinate to the host building and have no impact on the character of the surrounding area; and
 - Maintain a good level of residential amenity for surrounding residential properties.
- 5.3 The proposals have been assessed and considered to comply with the relevant adopted and emerging planning policy and guidance.
- 5.4 Overall, the proposed development presents an opportunity to optimise an existing residential dwelling to provide excellent quality family accommodation that responds to local need, and planning consent should thus be forthcoming