

DESIGN AND ACCESS/HERITAGE STATEMENT (including photographs)

Flat 1, Windsor House, 5, Eton Avenue, London NW3 3EL

INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access/Heritage Statement relates to a single-storey garden room within the rear garden serving Flat 1 Windsor House 5, Eton Avenue, London NW3 3EL

APPLICATION SITE

5, Eton Avenue is a three storey detached Victorian dwelling. It is located at the eastern end of Eton Avenue and lies within the Belsize Park Conservation Area. The dwelling has been divided into 5 residential units with the flat subject to this application located over the first and second floors. The property is neither a statutory nor locally listed building.

The footprint of the building is typical of the area with the main bulk of the house comprising front and rear rooms at each level. The garden is relatively secluded and sited adjacent to residential gardens either side and to the rear. There are a number trees in both the applicant's and neighbour's gardens.

With regards to neighbouring sites, an outbuilding has been erected within the rear garden of No. 3 Eton Avenue to the east approved under 2011/1475/P – (Retention of shed with pitched roof and timber decking in rear garden in connection with existing residential flat (Class C3)) and there was a more recent approval at No, 9, Eton Avenue under Council reference 2017/4061/P for a single storey garden room of a similar size to that proposed here.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks approval for the erection of a garden room with a subordinate footprint of 6.8m wide by 3.5m deep, finished with a flat roof height of 2.8m. It would sit comfortably at the end of the garden, set away from the rear and both side boundaries by 400mm. It would replace the existing climbing frame and be set approximately 15m from the rear of the flat. The generous depth of the garden ensures that the garden room would not appear cramped when viewed from the surrounding area.

This modestly sized outbuilding would enhance the garden's appearance whilst providing additional modern living accommodation incidental to the main use of the dwelling.

Were it not for the fact that the building serves a flat, the garden room is only 300mm higher than that which would fall under class E of the General Permitted Development Order 1995 as amended. In principle therefore it would be of a size that is considered to generally represent an acceptable addition within residential gardens.

The total area of the existing rear garden is approximately 195 square metres. The footprint of the proposed garden room would be 23.8 square metres. This would ensure that a rear garden area of approximately 171 square metres would remain. Due to the modest size of the garden room, in percentage terms, just under 88% of the garden area would be retained which is considered more than sufficient for a dwelling of this size and would still be commensurate with the rear gardens serving the adjacent properties.

DESIGN

Policy

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Local Planning Authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of a conservation when determining applications for planning permission to any building or land within the Conservation Area.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2018 updated 2019) Chapter 15 Preserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment (Habitats and Biodiversity)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2018 updated 2019) Chapter 16 Preserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

London Plan 2016 Policy 7.8 'Heritage Assets and Archaeology' requires that development affecting heritage assets and their settings to conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale and architectural detail.

London Plan 2016 Policy 7.21 'Trees and Woodlands' seeks to ensure that existing trees of value should be retained.

Camden Local Plan (2017) Policy A1 – 'Managing the impact of development' seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours.

Camden Local Plan (2017) Policy A3 – 'Biodiversity'

Camden Local Plan (2017) Policy D1 – 'Design' seeks to secure high quality design in development.

Camden Local Plan (2017) Policy D2 – 'Heritage' seeks to ensure that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.

Camden Planning Guidance Design (2019)

Camden Planning Guidance Altering and extending your home (2019) Paragraphs 5.21 – 5.23 Sheds and other garden buildings (outbuildings)

Camden Planning Guidance Amenity (2018)

Belsize Conservation Area Statement (2003)

Scale

The proposed garden room would be of modest scale and style, and of appropriate materials in keeping with the existing built form around the site. Given its discreet location, size and materials, it would have minimal impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding Conservation Area and would not detract from it. The development cannot be seen from within the public realm and will be of a contemporary design that would complement the existing buildings.

As stated above both Nos 3 and 9 Eton Avenue benefit from similar sized outbuildings within their rear gardens.

Layout and Use

The proposed garden room would consist of one area providing additional ancillary living space for the applicants.

Materials

The garden room will be a single storey, low profile, subordinate structure constructed out of timber with a living sedum roof. Fenestration would be constructed from powder coated aluminum.

Careful detailing along with quality materials would ensure that the garden room enhances the existing private amenity space and would complement the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Sustainability

In keeping with the character of the area and whilst respecting the design of the original building, the materials and fittings to be used for the garden room will be of a high quality. The works would be carried out to a high standard. No trees of any particular merit would be affected by the proposal as is demonstrated by the Arboricultural Impact Assessment submitted with the application.

Access to the property will remain as existing.

The proposal is considered therefore to comply with chapter 16 of the NPPF, London Plan Policy 7.8 'Heritage Assets and Archaeology', policies A3 'Biodiversity', D1 'Design' and D2 'Heritage' of the Local Plan.

Living Conditions

The London Plan (2016) Policy 7.6 Architecture states that development must not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings.

Camden Planning Guidance Amenity (2018) and Local Plan Policy A1 relate to managing the impact of development and aims to ensure that the potential impact of development on the privacy and outlook of neighbouring properties and their occupiers is fully considered.

Given the modest scale of the proposal, acceptable design (including materials), form and discreet location to the rear of the existing garden area, it would appear neither unduly overbearing nor visually intrusive to surrounding residents and would not result in an unacceptable loss of light or privacy thereby preserving the existing living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

ACCESS

The site benefits from excellent public transport links through being located within close proximity to numerous bus routes and rail links.

There is no on-site parking and the proposals do not make any provision for new parking spaces. The proposals do not impact on the demand for on-street parking.

The proposed outbuilding will be accessed from the host flat to the rear of the garden.

HERITAGE (including photographs of site)

In March 1973 the Council Committee agreed the designation of the Belsize Park Conservation Area subject to consultation. The area was centred on Belsize Park, Belsize Park Gardens and Belsize Village. The report to Committee stated:

...Belsize Park is an area of large scale, imposing semi-detached Victorian Villas of distinct yet uniform appearance. They show elaborate and consistent architectural detail and within the designated boundary there is little to detract from the unity of appearance. Belsize Village is also an area of considerable charm, the particular character of the village being one of the main justifications for designation.

Subsequently, the Conservation Area has been extended on a number of occasions with in 1985, enlarged to include Eton Avenue/ Fellows Road/ Lancaster Gardens to protect “distinctive groups of large detached houses and some terraces.”

5, Eton Avenue is within sub area 3 of the Belsize Conservation Area named The Eton Avenue Area. This is a consistent area of predominantly late Victorian housing with some Edwardian pockets, built on land primarily in the ownership of Eton College. The dwellings along Eton Avenue were developed over a period of approximately fifteen to twenty years starting in 1885 with much of the development at the eastern end of the area being undertaken by William Willett and Son.

The Conservation Area Statement focusses largely on the public frontage and describes in detail the varying designs of the properties within this sub area.

Although located within a conservation area, given its location to the rear of the garden and modest, height and massing, the garden room proposal is considered to be acceptable in design terms and would be in keeping with the property and surrounding streetscape and would not affect the integrity of the building when viewed from within the streetscene.

The two approvals at Nos 3 and 9 Eton Avenue demonstrate that with a sensitive design along with quality materials outbuildings can preserve if not enhance existing gardens and can be considered appropriate forms of development that preserve the character and appearance of within conservation areas.

Photographs

Rear of south east section garden showing rear of properties neighbours (December 2019)



Rear of garden showing area where the garden room would be sited taken from patio area to rear of flat (December 2019)



CONCLUSION

The proposed garden room has been purposely designed in terms of scale, form and materials to enhance its environs and not to detract from the Belsize Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with relevant National and Local policy and guidance.