

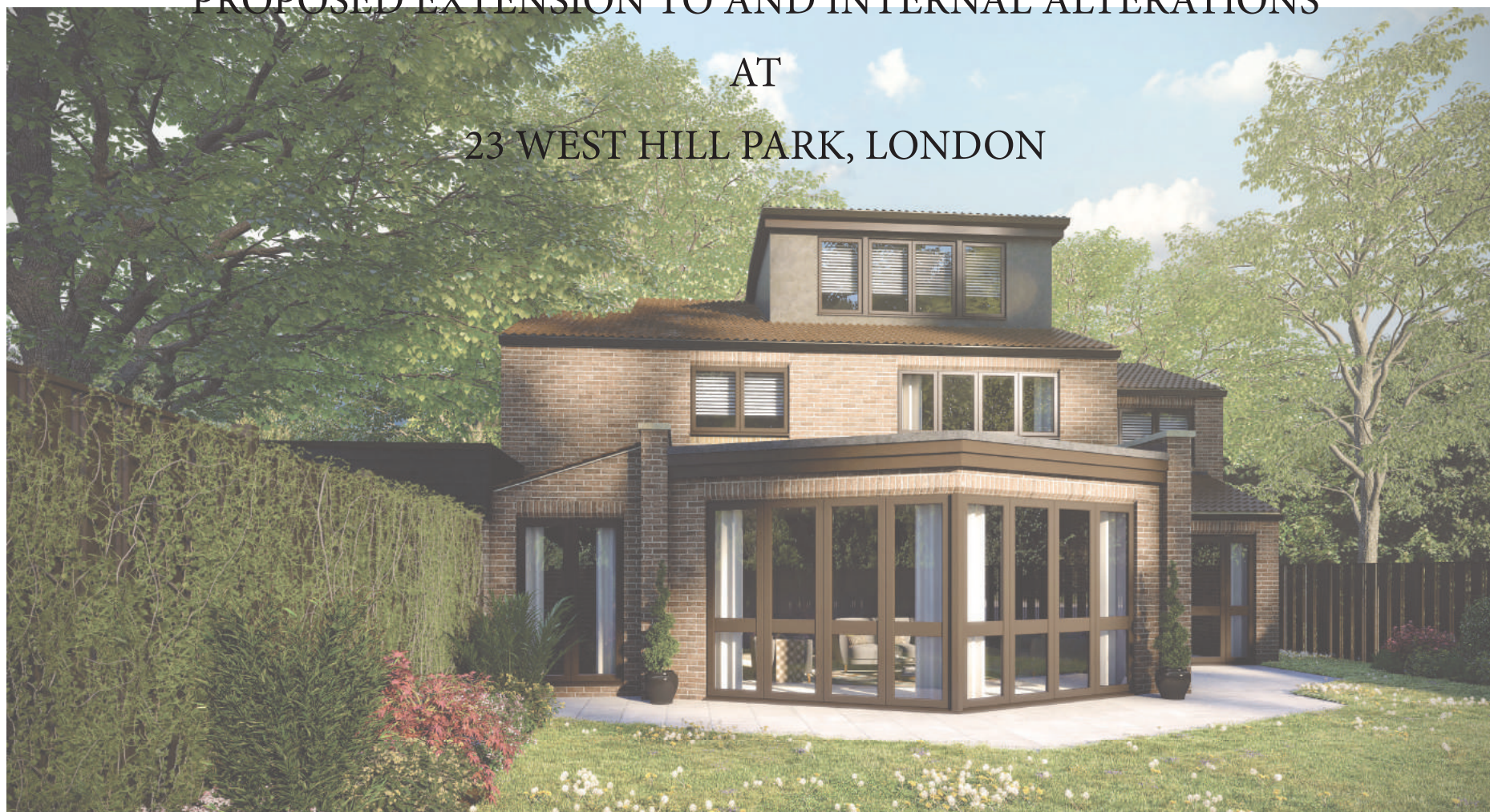
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

FOR THE

PROPOSED EXTENSION TO AND INTERNAL ALTERATIONS

AT

23 WEST HILL PARK, LONDON



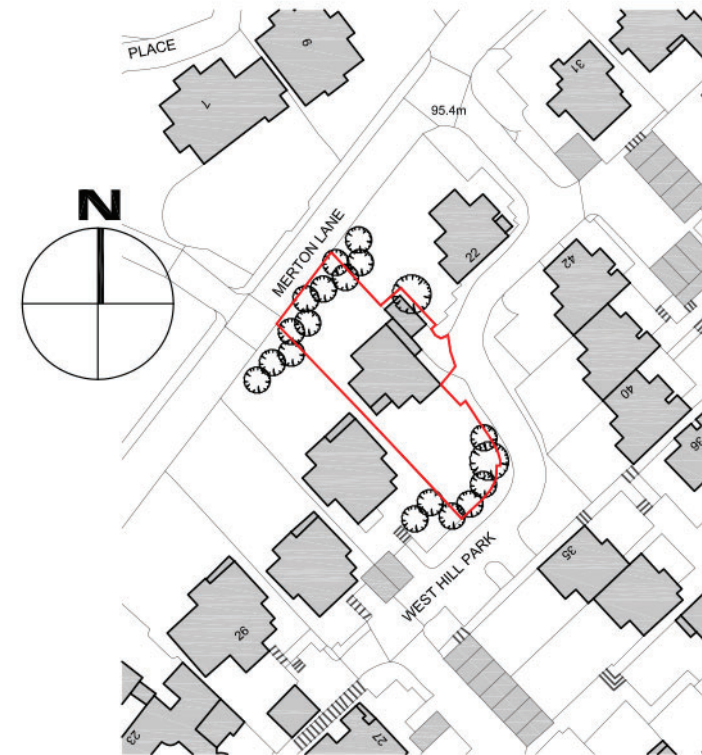
INTRODUCTION

The application site sits within the The Highgate Conservation Area within both Camden Borough Councils.

The proposals include a rear single storey extension, enlarging the kitchen and family room and dining room. It is proposed that the stair and landing also be extended in height to allow for an additional stair to access a second storey bedroom and ensuite as well as providing better access to the dwellings boilers and water tanks.

A first floor extension is also proposed to the side of the property over the existing entrance hall.

Internal rearrangements are also proposed to fundamentally bring the family home into the modern way of living as well as to better allow for the families needs.



THE SITE

The property sits on a well mannered plot of approximately 700 square meters in size with both front and back properties being equal in size; the property sitting fairly centrally between the gardens.

The 'rear' garden backs onto Merton Lane, the vista of which is significantly obscured by matured, well-established planting and trees from the main house, similarly the 'front' garden which faces West Hill Park is obscured with planting and trees.

Locally, the properties are a mixed development of detached and semi-detached properties positioned without strongly aligned frontages. Typically gardens are double aspect with houses facing front and backwards within their plot.

The property, subject to this application sits at a highpoint within the site whereby the road snakes around the plot on a gradient.

As can be seen from the two pictures > , visitors to the street are faced with a reasonably stark viewpoint of the property before heading southwards down the road.

There is no visibility of the property from Merton Lane which sits approximately 2-3meters in height lower than the plot on the street scene, obscured by trees and planting as well as concrete gravel boards and fencing.



The West Hill Park Estate is subject to statutory protection due to the character and nature of the development.

Camden Authority protects the site with the following statement:

“West Hill Park by Ted Levy, Benjamin and Partners is an example of low level high density brick and concrete housing carefully sculptured to the falling terrain and screened in a manner that makes it almost invisible from the surrounding public spaces. The standards of maintenance and control of the buildings and landscape within this estate should be a model to others.”

The properties in the Estate are each unique in themselves and designed to fit into the unique plots which have their own uniqueness.



ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

The design of the Estate and each property was conducted by Ted Levy, Benjamin and Partners and is subject to an enforced statutory protected by Camden Authority and the Management Company. The latter of which have also been contacted to provide comment on this application.

The character of the existing properties is described as a buff coloured modern brick home, concrete features with a 'stepped' architectural style. The windows and timber features are of particular interest; it is proposed that these are to be retained and maintained as part of these proposals.

It is submitted that the proposals pay compliment to the intention of the original scheme and enhance the character by providing a furthering unique identity where otherwise the facade has little detailing. The respect in this design has been drawn out of the following statement:

“the erection of unrestrained extensions as allowed for in the GDO would have an adverse effect upon the overall concept, design and unity of the scheme”.

The context of this protection and the depth of the architectural merit has been highly considered throughout the design and detailing process of the proposed extension and internal alterations.

The exploration of the rational and reasoning behind the extension and how the design solution compliments and enhances the architectural styling of the original building is detailed throughout this statement.

THIS APPLICATION

Layout and Amount

The existing dwelling can be characterised as a family home with a open-play living accommodation, separate dining, kitchen with attached garage.

There are four bedrooms at first floor each with their own ensuites. Bedroom 1 leads onto an external terrace area adjoined also to the landing.

There is limited and hindered access to the boiler room which sits above the Bedroom 1 Ensuite.

The existing property is approximately 227 m² gross internal area, excluding the single garage and external terrace area at first floor.

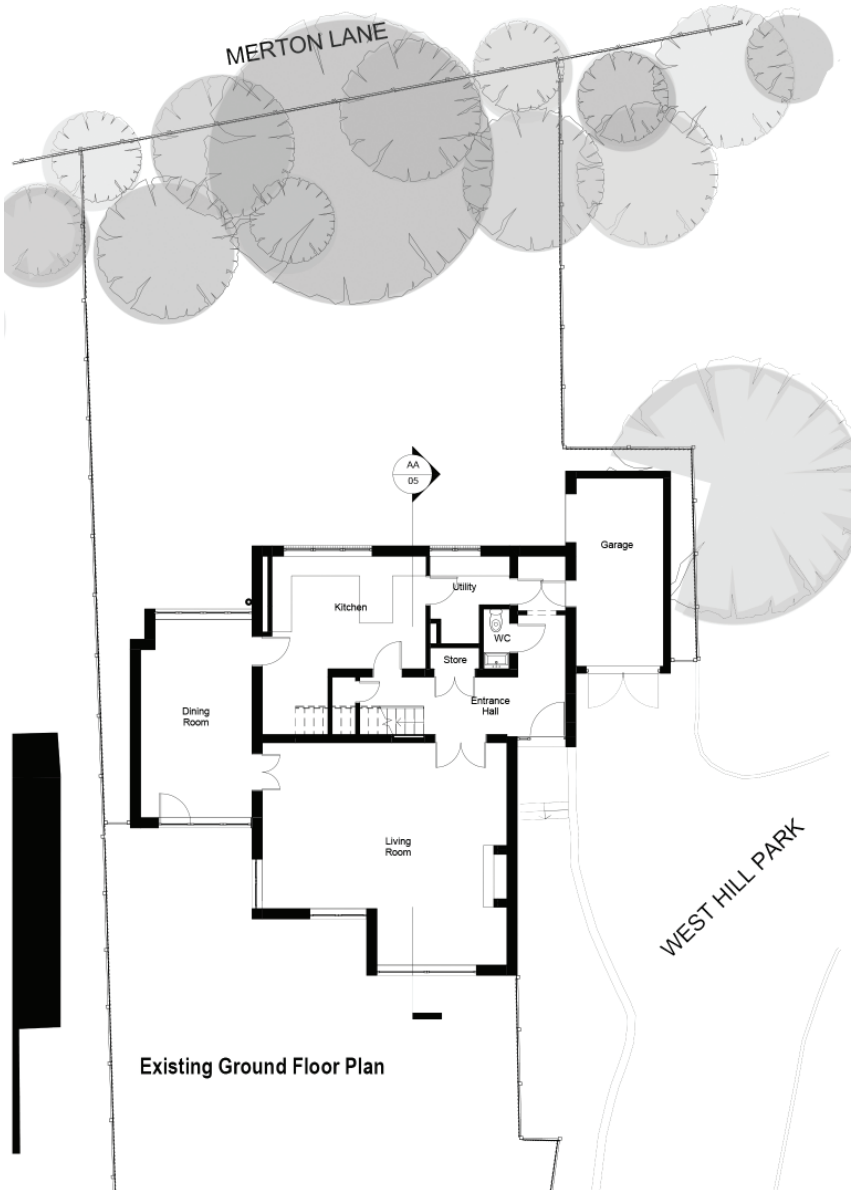
The intention of the design solution is to create an open-plan kitchen and family space which is both more usable in the family context as well as having the benefit of being brighter as well as being more open to the currently less usable garden space to the rear of the property.

The following explanations for the design intent are made:

At ground floor the rear of the property is pushed into the rear garden to provide additional kitchen and family space. While a portion of the garden is to be built over, it is believed that the existing house design is, regrettably, removed from this sheltered garden - the only access being from the entrance hall by a single door.

Consequently, the existing kitchen is dark and less inviting than the clients would like, leading to a single storey design solution which invites the garden into the house providing more light and usable space, both inside and outside.

As a result of the external extension, the internal layout is reconfigured to provide an open-plan kitchen/ family space with more connected spaces internally.



The first floor extension is minimal and has been designed to incorporate the original Architect's styling of 'stepping' the architectural envelope.

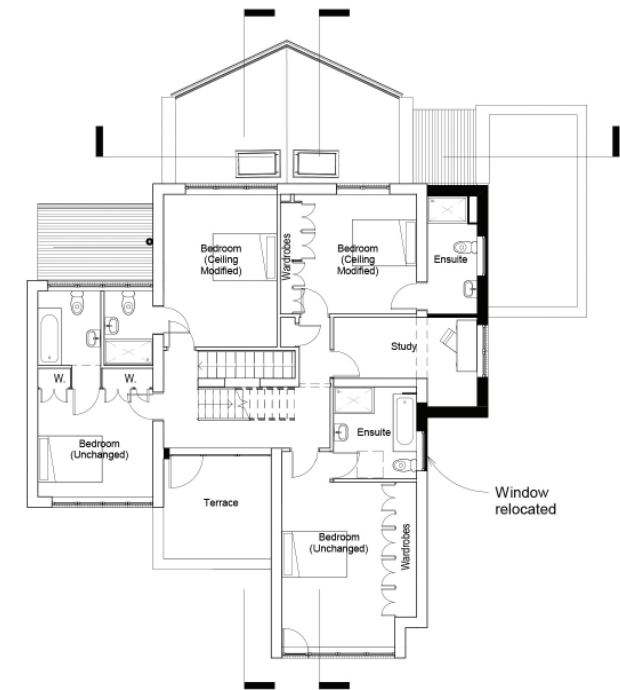
It is felt that the existing porch is underplayed and reasonably less in-keeping with the existing architectural styling, therefore, repeating the concrete cantilever detailing and extending over the entrance hall is believed to be a consistent detail within the design of the property.

While a modest addition to the property, the space created will enable the family to provide an additional study space. This will be particularly necessary due to local restrictions in working from home.

As there is no family bathroom per say, the removal of the existing ensuite into a study space requires the ensuite to be repositioned - the space locally caters for this relocation.



Existing First Floor Plan

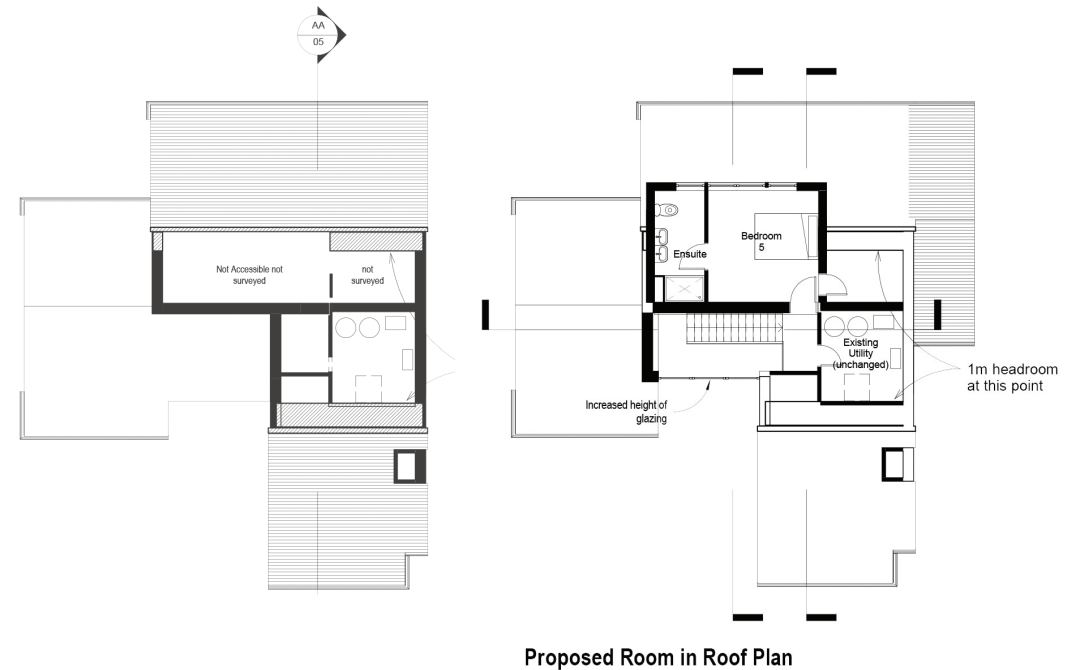


Proposed First Floor Plan

The second floor extension is provided to the rear of the property and accessed via a new stair. the first floor windows which look out over the Heath are extended upwards to allow for the new stair providing additional height and light into the property.

The rear extension is not overlooking or overlooked, nor can it be seen from the Merton Road due to the substantial trees and planting which are well established.

The extension at second floor provides for an additional bedroom space for guests as well as better access to the boiler room for the property.



Appearance

The proposals are to be constructed from similar materials and it is proposed that a matching brick is sourced to ensure comfortity and compatibility of design.

The ground floor single storey extension utilises two bi-fold doors (to be of similar colour and styling to the existing property) to enable connection to the garden. A triangular plan has been detailed so as to make use of the whole garden view and to create a unique architectural styling which is drawn from the original architectural intention.

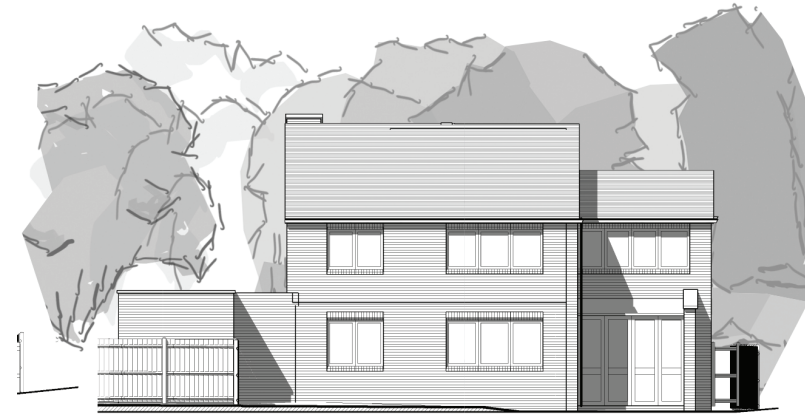
It is believed that the 'stepping' style is also retained and enhanced as shown in the two images > whereby the general philosophy and concept is retained so that the rear elevation is enhanced in form.

The second floor is also intended to feature within the 'stepped' nature. The material intentionally underplayed - lead cheeks and a felt roof will help to provide a more discrete appearance.



The rear single storey extension, as mentioned previously, allows for a whole-garden view from the proposed kitchen/ family room. Previously the spaces (inside and out) were not connected.

The detailing of the architecture, while different from the existing stepped boxes, remains in-keeping with its material pallet. It is also believed that not only the form remains in-keeping, but so do the proportions.



Existing Rear Elevation



Proposed Rear Elevation

Great time and attention has been taken to ensure that the design of the proposal suits the architectural styling of the existing proposal.

It is believed that the enlarged window on the front elevation enhances the character of the dwelling, providing more light in an in-keeping styling.



Existing Front Elevation



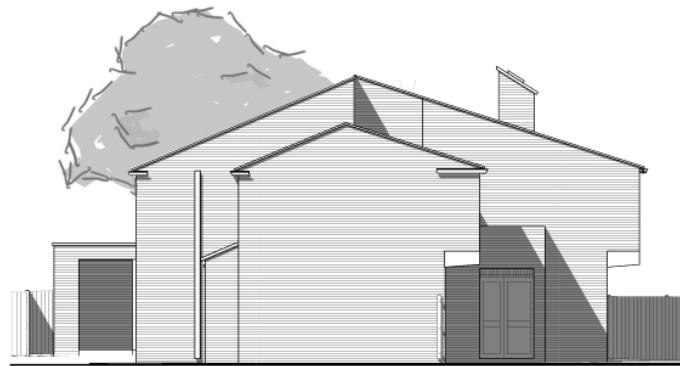
Proposed Front Elevation



Existing North-East Elevation



Proposed North-East Elevation



Existing South-West Elevation



Proposed South-West Elevation

Visibility and Context

While it is acknowledged that the proposals do alter the appearance of the existing property, it is believed that those changes are relatively discrete and in character.

The most notable, but possibly contentious, is that of the side extension which is most prominent on the street scene of West Hill Park.

Previously noted in that the existing dwelling entrance is detailed dissimilarly to that of the rest of the property, the extension provides a design solution to incorporate the concrete cantilever details which provides a cover over the entrance door as well as providing additional floor space at first floor (for reasons previously discussed).

The stepped nature of the styling is also, again, incorporated into the extension and believed to be contextual in this instance.

Similar bricks, again, to be sourced and applied to this extension as well as the same window detailing.

It is believed that the existing trees and planting help in obscuring the extension and while not relied upon, as it is believed that the style is inkeeping, the trees do help to soften the extension.

Note also that the second floor dormer extension is also obscured from this angle and would not be seen on approach of the road.



It is also important to note the obscurity of the trees facing Merton Road, whereby any extension; ground, first or second floor will not be visible from road users or those within the local context.

It is important to note that the street level is greater than 2 meters difference from the properties garden level which gradients significantly (but immediately) as the garden nears the road.



Existing Design Influences

As previously mentioned, the detailing of the proposals will include such detailing as to ensure the property remains in-keeping with the architectural style.

Brick soldier coursing with chamfer edges will be used over new window and door openings.

Dark-painted hardwood timber windows will be included within the extension and subject to approval by the Management Company. The bi-fold doors will be detailed to ensure compatibility of colour and design with the existing and new windows.

A facing brick of similar colouring and shape will be sourced.

Conservation style roof-lights/ lantern will be implemented over the ground floor extension.

Roof tiles will be to match existing including sourcing a matching gutter and soffits.

The concrete cantilever element will also be detailed to closely match the original/ existing.

Access and Use

It is previously noted that the existing property is to be brought into modern home style and use.

It is desired that the kitchen will provide a more modern use in that it also becomes a family space to socialise as a family while food is prepared or to sit informally and eat a meal/ breakfast.

The space is also designed to provide a quiet space separate but attached to the 'core' of the family home.

It is felt that the existing property was also detached from the rear garden which is under-utilised as part of the family home. The extension provides a more connected space to the garden.

External Works and Landscaping

Minimal disruption to trees and hedges are proposed within the scheme.

No shrubbery or hedges above 1 meter in height are to be disturbed within these proposals.

No trees are identified to be disturbed as part of these proposals. The ground floor proposal sits 5.5m approximately from the greatest extent of the proposal. Should it be identified that roots are to be disturbed, appropriate foundations will be detailed to ensure protection to the trees.

The following planning policy is noted:

GARDEN LAND AND BACKLAND DEVELOPMENT (POLICY DH10)

1. *There will be a presumption against the loss of garden land in line with higher level policies.*
2. *Backland development will be subject to the following conditions:*
 - I. *Existing mature trees and landscaping shall be retained wherever possible. Development proposals should allow sufficient space above and below ground to prevent damage to root systems and to facilitate future growth;*
 - II. *Proposals, including conversions that are likely to significantly increase the proportion of hard surfacing on front gardens, should be accompanied by satisfactory mitigation measures such as landscaping proposals which address drainage;*
 - III. *Alterations and extensions should be carried out in materials that deliver high quality design and reinforce local distinctiveness. Other development should use materials which respect the character and appearance of the immediate area;*
 - IV. *New development will be required to take account of existing front and rear building lines.*

The total ground coverage of the rear garden hard surface is intended not to be greater than 35 square meters.



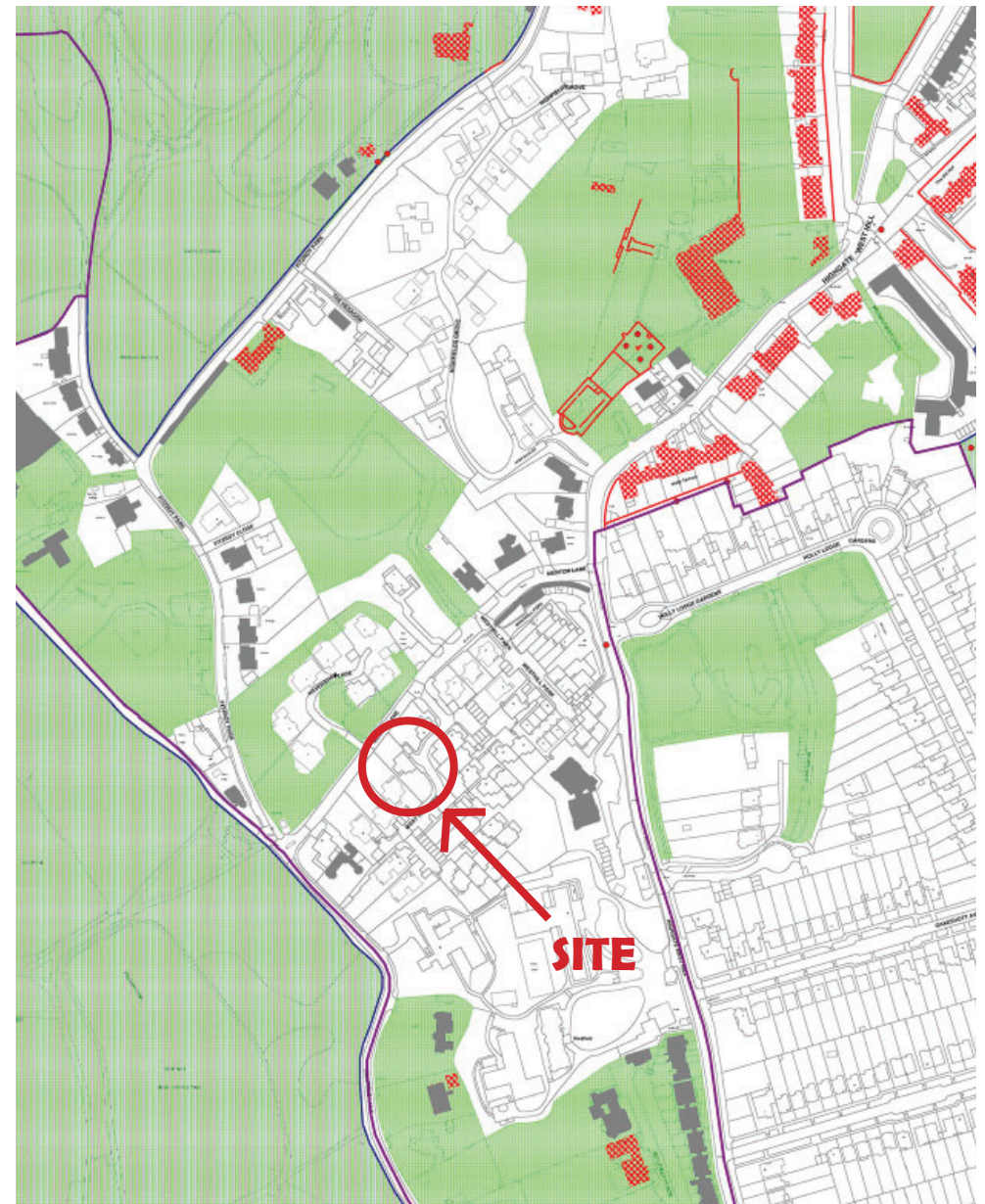
RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

The Local plans do not contextualise the West Hill Park area as being within any specific zone save for the Highgate Village Conservation Area.

With this in mind, the detailing and design of the proposals have been developed with these policies and requirements in mind with the view to ensure that even the “Open Space” areas requirements are complied with.

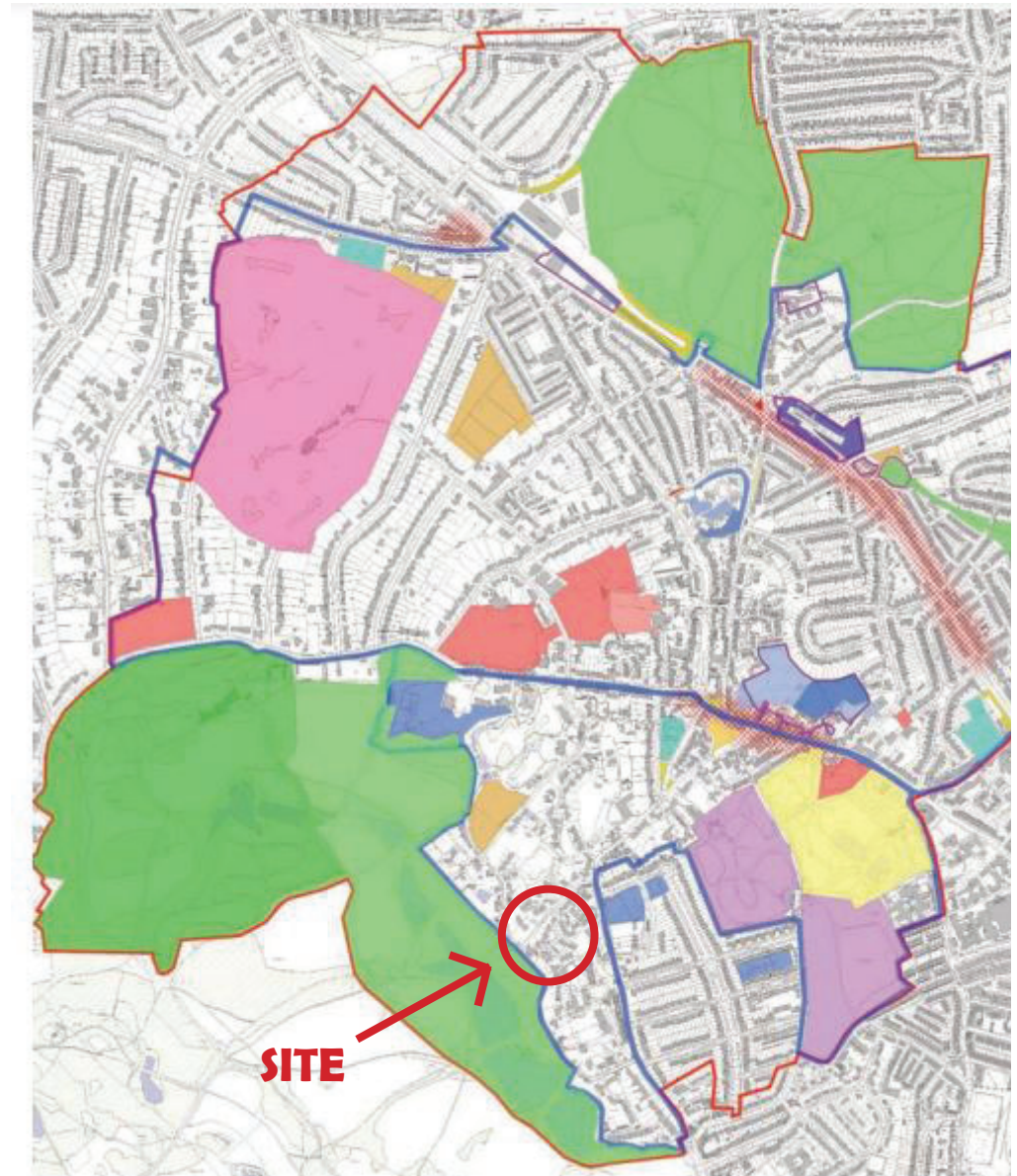
It is understood that permitted development rights are removed in this specific location and as such the designs are provided to be considered as a householder application as well as also being submitted to the Management Company.

It is believed that the proposals have been developed in such a way as to be in comfortmity of the local plan and policies as discussed as follows:



The site lies within 150m of an identifies Major Public Open space and sits within the Conservation Area as shown in the adjacent image.

Relevant policies have been identified and discussed within this document



REAR EXTENSIONS (POLICY DH3)

“Rear extensions on residential properties should be subordinate in scale to the original dwelling, complement its character in terms of design, proportion, materials and detail, should not harm the amenity of adjacent properties, and should retain a significant area of garden or amenity space which is proportionate to that of neighbouring properties in the surrounding area.

Development should respect and preserve existing architectural features where these contribute to local character and appearance, for example projecting bays and decorative balconies. “

The proposals are subordinate to the existing property, forming approximately 50m² of additional floor area. The external envelopes of the proposals are also detailed in such a way as to feel downplayed in the context. The designs and proportions are in-keeping and materials (as previously noted) are to be similar matching to that of the existing architecture.

Garden and amenity space remains largely intact with a reduction of less than 27m² from a garden area of 560m².

SIDE EXTENSIONS (POLICY DH4)

“Side extensions to detached or semi-detached properties, including the enlargement of existing garages, should be sensitive to and respect the character of the streetscape, and not block or significantly infill gaps between buildings, or otherwise disrupt the integrity of the individual architectural composition or group where these contribute to the character of the local area.

They should be subordinate in scale to the original dwelling and complement its character in terms of design, proportion, materials and detail. They should not harm the amenity of adjacent properties. “

It is believed that the side extension has been demonstrated to be sensitive and inkeeping with the existing architectural philosophy of the property as well as ensuring the streetscape is not detrimentally altered by the proposal.

All proposal elements are subordinate in scale of the original dwelling and complement the design and proportions.

Materials and details will be retained and implemented within the proposal as discussed throughout this statement,

ROOFS AND ROOFSCAPE (POLICY DH5)

“Roof extensions, dormers and rooflights should respect the existing roof form in terms of design, scale, materials and detail and be restricted to the rear except where they are part of the established local character and a new extension or dormer would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of the area or the significance of heritage assets; re-roofing materials should avoid use of inappropriate substitute materials that can erode the character and appearance of buildings and areas...”

As noted previously the dormer extension proposal in this scheme continues to ensure that it is sensitive to the existing property and purposefully remains subordinate in both proportion and materiality.

It is believed the dormer is designed in such a way that it does not impact in any way on any amenity or character within the locale. It is this design statements intention also to generate reassurance that appropriate materials are used within the construction that are typical of the properties era - it is not the intention to use substitute lead, for example.

FRONT BOUNDARIES (POLICY DH6)

“Original boundary walls, gate piers or railings should be retained unless their removal is necessary due to the condition of a structure, or replacement provision is proposed which would enhance the character of the area.

In areas where matching and similar boundary walls form a recognizable part of the streetscape, for example clinker walls in Cromwell Avenue, replacements should be reinstated to match the originals. New boundary walls requiring planning permission, and gated developments will not be permitted if they:

- I. Have a detrimental impact on the open character of the street-scene; or*
- II. Result in the unnecessary removal of mature hedges or natural features which have a positive impact on the character of the local area;*
- III. Would result in a loss of visual permeability or public accessibility where this contributes to local character. “*

All boundary walls and fences are to be retained. Any damaged during construction or noted to be replaced will be replaced like-for-like, in both material and colour.

LOCAL PLANNING INTEREST

It is recognised, that while few in nature, there have been a few successful extensive house extensions within the estate.

As with previous approved extensions within the area, 2 key factors, which may relate to this proposal have played a significant role in determining a favourable outcome, namely:-

- (1) Adverse effect upon the overall concept, design and unity of the original estate, currently homogenous and 'as built'.
- (2) Substantial increase in volume of the house.

It is not believed that the proposals for no. 23 West Hill Park will dilute or cause any dissolution of the concept, design or unity of the original property or the estate.

it is felt that the stepping of each element generates a harmonious and balanced extension at the ground floor; unique, but sympathetic and understated with a characteristic detailing. The triangular projection at ground floor allows the client to look out over the under-utilised garden which currently cannot easily be accessed or seen from the main house.

The design has been developed to make the garden more accessible as well as play a more fundamental role as part of the plot.

At first floor, the side extension extends an otherwise flat elevation into a form which performs more similarly to the main house shape. The extension has been designed to relate more intentionally, providing the concrete cantilever details to provide a porch over the main door as well as replicating the window detailing.

At second floor the dormer feature, again, has been designed to 'step' uniformly to relate to the house design, the feature glazing to the 'front' of the property has also been extended seamlessly to give more light into the home.

The proposal increases the internal area from 227m², which excludes the integrated garage and external first floor terrace area. The proposed extended elements equal a total extended internal area of 54m², a 24% increase from the original house.

It is believed that the proposed scheme remains sympathetic to the clear design language of the property and estate, preserving the character of the host dwelling, but yet exploring that unique design further within this proposal, as well as remaining in accordance with the requirements of policies D1 and D2 as well as DH2 and DH4 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

CLIENT STATEMENT

We love the neighbourhood, the privilege of being surrounded by so much green space and the uniqueness of the Ted Levy estate plan.

For this reason, it was important to us that we remain respectful of the design and ethos of Ted Levy, whilst also realising the house (which has not been materially modernised since the 70s when it was built) is in dire need of updating, to better suit a growing, modern family and the modern way in which a family would live.

We have focused on optimising the space and getting light into the property, which, due to the mature trees, can otherwise be very dark on one side of the house with very limited natural light.

We are also keen to future proof our home for the larger family we hope to have, by optimising the mezzanine/attic space and creating a more open plan with a light filled living concept, better suited to young, modern, working family life.

We realise we are also fortunate that our house is somewhat unique and perhaps a little different to other houses on the estate.

We believe the proposed plans, while not directly comparable to existing properties, have carefully been designed to ensure that they are not excessive or intrusive and have been designed in such a way as to not unduly impact neighbours.

CONCLUSIONS

It is believed that this proposal, in its entirety delicately and sensitively extends this unique home while providing the desired modern level of living that has evolved since this property was designed and constructed.

The proposals develop the architectural style and retain the character while enhancing the rear aspect of the property and building on the merits of the front and side elevations also.

It is also believed, and demonstrated throughout this document that the proposals comply with local planning policy and conservation requirements.

