XUL ARCHITECTURE

6 Downside Crescent, London, NW3 2AP | **Design & Access Statement**

Planning Application for Rear Extension and External Alterations, April 2021

Introduction

This Design & Access statement has been prepared to support a planning application relating to 6 Downside Crescent, London NW3 2AP. It sets out to explain the design approach as part of the application for planning permission to carry out the following works at 6 Downside Crescent:

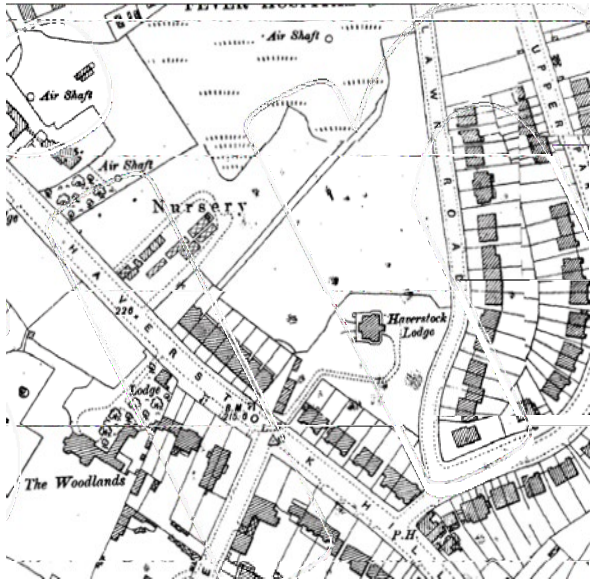
Erection of a single storey rear extension, alterations to front driveway boundary treatment, increase in width of dropped kerb, driveway resurfacing, installation of a timber bin store, rear patio and solar panels.

The proposal includes:

- The demolition of an existing rear extension and replacement with a new single storey ground floor rear extension.
- Front driveway boundary treatment: new low level brick wall with metal railing above and hedge planting behind and new brick piers either side to front boundary and boundary between no. 6/8 to match existing
- New timber clad bin store
- Like-for-like window replacement with double glazed units
- Resurfacing of driveway
- New paving to side path and new extended path to rear of garden
- New rear patio
- New rooflight over staircase
- New utility room door on side elevation
- First floor rear elevation: change two windows into doors with Juliet balcony with metal railing
- Minor alterations to existing exposed pipework on side elevation to adjust for new bathroom layout and airbrick ventilation outlets
- Removal of an Apple tree and a small Yew tree and replacement with a Cherry tree in a different location in the rear garden

Historic Maps

Downside Crescent was constructed upon the demolition of Haverstock Lodge in the 1890s. Most of the houses along Downside were constructed by 1910 as indicated below. The neighbouring property at number 8 was constructed later. Number 6 is a detached house with a gabled front in line with the general pattern of the rest of the street, being detached and semi-detached properties with gabled fronts. The large sash windows in the projecting bay of the Victorian architecture are rather grand and the windows are sashes with multiple panes of glass. The front elevation is of precision red brick. At the rear of the house the elevation has been handled more simply with yellow brick and a single storey rear extension. The property is traditionally constructed for that time, of solid brick external walls under a pitched slate covered roof at high level. The floors throughout are of timber.



1890

1910

1930

Conservation Area

6 Downside Crescent is situated within the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area. This conservation area was designated in 1973 and subsequently extended in 1985, 1991 and 2011.
Downside Crescent was added to the conservation area in 1991.

The Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area is characterised by *'Italianate Victorian semi-detached houses, with twentieth century housing styles ranging from garden suburb to modern movement and contemporary insertions'* (conservation area appraisal).

The character of the conservation area along Downside Crescent is defined by three-storey late Victorian red brick semi-detached villas. The conservation area appraisal identifies the houses along Downside Crescent as typically Victorian red brick with gabled ends and tiled paths and notes the importance of the 'picturesque' views along Downside Crescent.

6 Downside Crescent is identified in the conservation area appraisal as positively contributing to the conservation area character.

There are a number of comparable local approved planning applications including the adjacent neighbouring properties and no. 4 and no. 8. For a summary please refer to the Planning Statement prepared by Boyer Planning Consultants as submitted as part of this application for Planning Permission.

Map of Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area with application site highlighted

Overview

Heritage Value

6 Downside Crescent is a three-storey detached early 20th century dwelling. Although number 6 is acknowledged by the conservation area appraisal as broadly contributing to the character of the conservation area, the appraisal does not attribute significance to specific features of the property.

Form

The existing building is a detached Victorian villa in an area which is predominantly Victorian semi-detached villas; the dominant housing typology along Downside Crescent. However, the neighbouring houses at no. 8 and 10 are Arts and Crafts in style.

Materiality

The front elevation of the existing dwelling is built in red stock brick. The rear and side elevations of number 6 are built in yellow stock brick with intermittent red brick coursing. The roof is finished with slates. The existing windows are white painted single glazed timber sash windows with timber glazing bars.

The front driveway site boundary to 4 Downside Crescent is defined by a red brick wall with a brickwork pier, similar to adjacent properties along Downside Crescent. Boundaries to the front and to number 8 are of low level timber fencing with hedging behind.

Site Context

The rear of the houses along Downside Crescent have been subject to numerous changes over time, including roof additions, rear extensions at ground level, basement extensions and alterations to rear projections. Adjacent properties no. 4 and no. 8 both already have had substantial rear extensions.

Front Elevation

Rear Elevation

Design Principles

Overview

The proposed design involves the demolition of the existing ground floor rear extension and its replacement with a new enlarged single storey ground floor extension to the rear of the existing property. Smaller scale works are proposed to the front of the building including the rebuilding of the front boundary wall and site boundary wall between no. 6/8, the resurfacing of the driveway and the erection of a bin enclosure.

Single Storey Rear Extension

Number 6 Downside Crescent has a limited amount of living, kitchen and dining space for a house of this size. The proposed alterations will therefore make the house much more suitable for modern living, offering an extended kitchen with an informal dining and living space. A rooflight and a high level window illuminate the kitchen and dining space and offer light into the centre of the plan to mitigate the effect of the increased depth of the space. A side elevation window will provide natural ventilation.

Scale and Mass

The extension is designed to be subsidiary in scale and mass to the existing dwelling and does not extend beyond the terraced extension to neighbouring property numbers 4 and 8. The proposed extension would not be visible from public viewpoints.

Upper Floors

Two of the first floor rear elevation windows are proposed to be altered into French door openings with a Juliet balcony formed as a traditional metal balustrade.

Minor incidental alterations and consolidation of the existing pipework and airbrick ventilation outlets to the main house southern side elevation will be carried out in line with adjustments to the internal bathroom layout changes.

It is proposed to install solar panels on the rear and southern flank roof planes of the main house.

A new rooflight is proposed to be installed above the staircase on the southern flank roof pitch to improve natural lighting levels.

Repair works will involve the replacement of the existing windows like-for like with painted timber sash windows with double glazed units and the replacement of the roof tiles matching the existing like-for-like.

Landscaping works

The driveway is to be resurfaced with dark-grey brick setts laid in herringbone pattern and a new patio area is proposed directly to the rear of the property tin a screed finish. The side path is being resurfaced in Yorkstone paving and extended towards the rear garden.

Materials

The proposed extension will be finished in second-hand London stock brick to match the existing building. The extension roof will be finished as an extensive green roof system with vegetation provided as a combination of plug planting, vegetation mat and seeding. The proposed windows and sliding doors are dark-grey powder coated aluminium frames. The replacement gates will be black powder coated steel to match the existing railings. The driveway will be resurfaced in permeable resin bound gravel.

Access

This application seeks an increase in width of the existing dropped kerb for improved access to the driveway. Main access will remain through the front door. A secondary utility entrance door is proposed along the southern side wall accessed from the existing side passageway. The existing side passageway will continue to provide direct access to the rear garden via an existing gate. The proposed alterations to the rear of the house will improve the connection between the house and the garden. This will enable a better use and maintenance of the garden for the amenity of its owners and to the wider benefit of the neighbours

Conservation Area Character

The proposed extension will have no effect on the character of the conservation area as rear extensions are consistent throughout the conservation area in this location. The extension will be in second-hand London stock brickwork to match the rear elevation of the existing property.

Replacing the dilapidated low level timber fence to the front boundary of the property and the front garden boundary to no. 8 with a low level brick wall matching the one on the boundary to no. 4 in conjunction with a metal railing above the brick wall with a hedge behind is in keeping with the exposed railings visible elsewhere on the street.

A variety of choices of driveway hard landscaping are visible elsewhere on the street including concrete paving slabs, concrete block pavers, stone paving setts and bitumen. As there is no consistent driveway finish, the proposed dark-grey setts in herringbone pattern will have minimal effect on the existing character of the area. The proposed surface will be permeable and reduce run-off.

Overlooking, Amenities, Views and Light

The proposed extension will have minimal changes to overlooking, access to amenities, views or light as a result of the proposed development.

The existing site vegetation is recorded in the attached arboricultural survey and Tree Report by Liam McGough Arboricultural Consultants. It is recommended to remove trees T1 and replace tree T3 with a native cherry tree in a suitable location in the rear garden. Protection measures will be followed as described in the arboricultural assessment.

Energy and Sustainability

Sustainable measures will be incorporated as part of the proposed extension and alteration scheme. These measures will include the following:

a) The upgrading of building insulation to meet Building Regulations standard or greater, where practically possible. New windows and doors will be double glazed.
b) The proposed external building fabric will be detailed to avoid cold bridging. Improved air tightness resulting in a reduction in heat loss and energy load.
c) Insulated and airtight walls for the rear extension will help to ensure that heating loads are minimised and that the internal environment is maintained at comfortable room temperature and humidity levels.
d) Improving the efficiency of fabric and services is the most effective way of reducing carbon emissions as these measures will last the lifetime of the building. The thermal performance of the building fabric for this baseline is significantly better than the limiting parameters of Building Regulations Part L, improving overall fabric efficiency and reducing carbon emissions for the development for the lifetime of the building.
e) Reducing air permeability to the minimum consistent with health requirements.
f) Energy efficient services & technologies to be installed where practically possible. This includes temperature control systems and energy efficient lighting.
g) Use of locally sourced or sustainable materials, where practically possible.
h) It is proposed to install solar PV panels to the rear and south facing roof pitches as discreet as possible. The panels are considered to be permitted development.

Planning Policy

The planning framework within which the proposed development is to be assessed has been identified in the Planning Statement by planning consultants Boyer, submitted as part of this application for planning permission.

Conclusion

The proposed works have been carefully designed to improve the interior layout and the exterior aspect of 6 Downside Crescent.

The scale of the new extension is subservient to the host building and has been planned in such a way as to have minimal effect on the amenities to the neighbours at numbers 4 and 8.

The proposal does not affect the underlying character of the building and its impact on the wider conservation area. The alterations externally serve to enhance the existing features of the building.

The proposal as a whole will result in a refurbished and extended house, meeting the needs of the owner-occupiers, and will preserve and enhance the conservation area to which the building makes a positive contribution.

The principle of the proposal of a single storey rear extension has been confirmed acceptable in the council's permissions for rear extensions to the neighbouring properties including no. 4 and 8. We trust that Camden will support the application.