

Site Address:	Upper Ground Floor Flat 25 Maresfield Gardens London NW3 5SD
Ward:	Froggnal and Fitzjohns
Application Type:	Full Detailed Planning Application
Development Type:	Householder Development
Proposal Description:	Erection of a timber garden room in rear garden to replace existing outbuilding.
Conservation Area:	Fitzjohns/Netherhall Estate Conservation Area
Flood Zone Risk:	Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone 1 (See Section 7)
Existing Land Use:	C3 Dwelling House
Proposed Land use:	C3 Dwelling House

1.0 Situation:

This application is for a new timber garden room in the garden of the Upper Ground Floor Flat at 25 Maresfield Gardens.

The house was built around 1890 as a residence with a large rear garden and has been subdivided into four flats. At the time of that conversion the garden was split between the Lower Ground Floor flat and the Upper Ground Floor flat and the section belonging to the Upper Ground Floor flat is towards the rear and is reached by a narrow path, bounded by fences. The site of the proposed garden room is approximately 22m away from the house.

The garden is quite secluded and borders at the rear onto the gardens of North Field School, which are used as playgrounds. A single storey dining hall/kitchen borders the site at the rear.

The applicants have found it has become necessary to work from home more frequently and the purpose of the application is to provide a home office space and garden room to enjoy the garden which is quite remote from the house.

2.0 Impact on Neighbours

The garden is in a secluded setting and is very well visually separated from the main property and adjacent gardens by high close-boarded fences and mature bushes and shrubs. See photographs attached in this report.

The existing garden level is higher than the adjacent garden to basement flat (Flat A) which makes for good visual separation between the applicants' garden and the basement flat.

Because of the seclusion and screening described above and the design of the room (with a solid roof and largely solid timbered walls) the proposal does not affect neighbours in terms of light pollution or privacy.

Overlooking

There is no additional direct overlooking caused by the proposal. The site is 22m from the house and nearest windows and views are already visually screened by high timber fences and mature planting and trees.

Light pollution

Light pollution to neighbouring properties is also negligible due to

- The 22m distance to the house
- Screening provided by existing high timber fences, mature planting and trees.
- The use of a completely solid roof and semi-solid walls in the design ensures minimal light pollution.
- The window facing towards the house incorporates a cedar slatted venetian blind

See also planning policies discussed below.

3.0 Planning Policies

Often garden buildings up to 2.5m in height, such as this proposal, are exempt from planning permission, but in this case, as No.25 is subdivided in to flats (and not a single dwelling) planning permission is required. The overriding considerations for this proposal are therefore to do with neighbourly matters such as light pollution and overlooking insofar as they may affect the flats at No.25.

Current planning policies governing garden buildings in Camden are:

Planning Policy:	Response:
Ensure the siting, location, scale and design has a minimal visual impact on, and is visually subordinate within, the host garden.	The proposed building is subordinate to the garden size and is sited inconspicuously in the corner of the garden.
In Conservation Areas, check the Conservation Area Appraisal in relation to outbuildings, to know what you should consider. The works should preserve or enhance the existing qualities and context of the site, and character of the Conservation Area;	The site is within the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Estate Conservation Area. By retaining the existing timber boarded fences, trees and mature bushes (which provide a very good level of visual screening even in winter) the proposal will not detrimentally affect the character of the existing setting.
Not detract from the open character and garden amenity of neighbouring gardens and the wider surrounding area;	By locating the garden room adjacent to the West boundary the conservatory is subservient to the main garden space and allows a significant fully open garden to be retained.
Retain space around the building for suitable soft landscaping;	The proposed building replaces an existing structure and the location was chosen to minimise the impact of the proposal
Ensure the height will retain visibility over garden walls and fences;	The garden building height is kept within 2.5m. Existing views to the rear are blocked by the much higher annexe to the school. To the boundary with No. 23 the majority of the boundary remains open and the location at the back of the garden has the least impact on openness.
Ensure the size will maximise retention of garden and amenity space;	The overall size is within the existing paved area of the site and does not impact on the use of the garden. It is subordinate to the existing house and garden.
Ensure the position will not harm existing trees and their roots;	Environment Agency Flood Risk Zone 1 (See Section 7)
The construction method should minimise any impact on trees, mature vegetation (see CPG Trees) or adjacent structures;	The location of the proposal re-uses the existing concrete slab under the existing garden building and paved area and does not impact on any garden planting or trees.

Use materials which complement the host property and the overall character of the surrounding garden area;	By following a choice of natural timber materials the proposal has a sympathetic design in character with the existing garden which is bordered on all sides by high timber fences and brick walls.
Consider installation of green roof and/or solar panels;	A green roof is proposed.
Address any impacts upon water run-off and groundwater flows, and demonstrate that the impact of the new development will be negated by the measures proposed. Reference should be made to CPG Water and Flooding.	The proposed outbuilding is sited within the paved area of the garden, in the corner which is least favourable for planting. There is no increase in impermeable paved finishes resulting from this proposal. Water run-off from the roof will be distributed to the garden and not to a drain or sewer.
Consider installation of water butts;	It is not considered that water butts are compatible with the green roof system proposed.
Consider installation of bird and bat boxes on the structure or in vicinity.	A bird box is proposed to the structure.

4.0 Planning Precedent

The main precedent for this proposal is the single storey kitchen/dining room extension to the North Bridge School which adjoins the garden at the rear. The proposed garden room site well within the silhouette of this building when viewed from the house.

A similar garden room was consented at No.37B Maresfield Gardens in 2015 [2015/0110/P].

A garden room was permitted (under PD) at No. 21 Maresfield Gardens in 2020 [2020/0913/P].

5.0 Access

No changes to access are proposed under this application.

6.0 Summary

The proposal replaces an existing smaller garden building in the same location. The design and materials are of a high quality and the scale is in proportion and subsidiary to the garden and house. The location is close to the single storey school annexe immediately behind it and will fall within the silhouette of that annexe when seen from the house.

Because the new building is on existing concrete base there is no impact on trees or planting.

By retaining the existing timber boarded fences, trees and mature bushes (which provide a good level of visual screening even in winter) the proposal will not detrimentally affect the character of the existing setting. A green roof and a bird nesting box incorporated into the design.

The applicant will encourage the growth of existing plants adjacent to and on the new garden room itself. The solid timbered walls, and a completely solid roof, minimise any impact of light and views. By following a choice of natural timber materials the proposal has a sympathetic design in character with the existing garden which is bordered on all sides by high timber fences and brick walls.

This proposal has no negative impact on neighbours (eg: overlooking/ light pollution). The garden is sufficiently remote from the house and neighbouring properties and secluded by virtue of the 22m distance from the house, existing high timber fences and existing mature bushes and trees.



Views of the Existing Rear Garden



Views back towards the house from the existing rear garden

