

Design, Access & Planning Statement

68 Parliament Hill, London NW3 2TJ

Amalgamation of lower and upper ground floor wholly self contained units into one new wholly self contained unit.
Proposed front and rear remodelling, side infill extension, rear garden studio and internal refurbishment.

Design, Access & Planning Statement - 68 Parliament Hill, London NW3 2TJ

1. Overview & Context.

68 Parliament Hill is a four storey building, located towards the top of Parliament Hill containing multiple separate dwelling flats split over four floors. This application proposes amalgamating two of the wholly self contained units into one new wholly self contained unit with its own access, spread over the lower and upper ground floors. This will reduce the overall number of units but will allow for the creation of a large 3 bedroom family home. Alterations to the front of the house at upper and lower ground are proposed, as well as a new side infill extension creating an improved entrance to the new enlarged dwelling. To the rear of the house a new independent garden studio incidental to the main house is proposed as well as new tiered landscaping, fencing and brick walls where required to replace the existing dilapidated and overgrown inaccessible garden.

This building is jointly owned by two freeholders with our client owning the lower and upper ground floors and the remaining freeholder possessing the first, second floor and roof space. The property is semi-detached and adjoins number 66 Parliament Hill, with direct access to Hampstead Heath through a rear entrance within the garden, similar to other adjoining nearby houses.

Many of the properties on Parliament Hill have been subject to remodelling work that includes side, rear, and roof extensions resulting in a variety of roof heights and more noticeably, rear facades. Planning permission has previously been granted for independent garden studios within the garden curtilage on Tanza Road and Parliament Hill, including the neighbouring no. 70, with the rear garden directly overlooking the heath.

The property is located in Camden's South Hill Park Conservation area, Sub Area 2, and this application concerns the flats on the Lower Ground and Upper Ground Floors, as well as the garden. The house was converted into flats in 1970, with access to the three higher flats gained through the main entrance and the lower ground floor flat accessed separately.

2. Historical Summary

Parliament Hill, as well as the neighbouring Tanza Road and Nassington Road, were developed by Joseph Pickett on farmland he had leased from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The South Hill Park Conservation Area Statement estimates that Parliament Hill was laid out in 1878-90 and the houses were built between 1879 and 1892. The abrupt termination of the road indicates the historical development of the street, as the planned extension was halted by the addition of Parliament Hill Fields to the Heath.

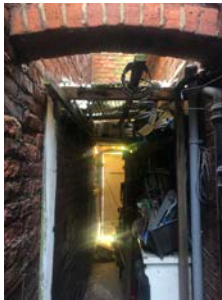
The South Hill Conservations Area Statement describes Parliament Hill as 'characterised by red brick semi-detached villas with prominent front gables, grey slated steeply pitched roofs with stucco surrounds to doors and windows. The Gothic style roof form on these properties is much steeper



Street View



Rear View



Lower ground entrance, side infill and garden views



Aerial Views of 68 Parliament Hill



Location Plan



Rear views from Hampstead Heath

and more conspicuous than the Italianate form used in South Hill Park, resulting in a distinctive ‘saw-tooth’ roof profile. Many of the front gables retain elaborately carved barge boards, which is another characteristic feature of the 19th century Gothic Revival style. Many of the buildings also retain their original doors and boxed sashes within decorative stained glass detailing.’

However, 68 Parliament Hill, grouped with Nos. 56 - 70 Parliament Hill and 29 - 39 Tanza Road, are exceptions to this general style and revert to the Italianate style in red brick. The rear garden adjoins the Heath and so is considered an ‘important green open space within this Conservation Area, and are designated as Public Open Space (POS) in the UDP, although privately owned.’

‘Generally, the character and hierarchy of spaces in this Conversation Area have derived from steep terrain and historic field pattern, the prevailing architectural style and importantly, by the relevant Building Acts and Regulation in force in the late 19th century.’

3. Planning History.

Previous planning applications for 68 Parliament Hill are listed below:

Application Ref: DGNS/1637 - Construction of additional habitable room at basement level under existing forecourt land - approved 17th February 1966

Application Ref: 8375 - The formation of a self contained flat on the ground floor and of two non-self-contained flats on the first floor - approved 6th February 1970.

Planning history for the adjoining property 66 Parliament Hill is as follows:

Application Ref: PW9802962 - Application for certificate of lawfulness for existing use of the property as a residential flat - withdrawn application - revision received 17th December 1998

Application Ref: PW9802962R1 - Use of basement as a self contained flat - granted certificate of lawful existing use 1st February 1999.

Application Ref: PWX0202868 - Development for: alteration of windows and balcony on the rear elevation - grant certificate of lawful proposed use 26th September 2002.

Application Ref: PWX0202744 - Excavation of front basement area and alterations to provide storage space to existing dwelling-house, together with the creation of a hardstanding for a single off-street parking space above the new storage area - granted full planning permission 28th August 2002.

The planning history for the neighbouring property 70 Parliament Hill is as follows:

Application Ref: 2013/3803/P - Erection of single storey outbuilding with roof light in rear garden to provide additional accommodation to the existing second and third floor flat.



View from Parliament Hill, Hampstead Heath



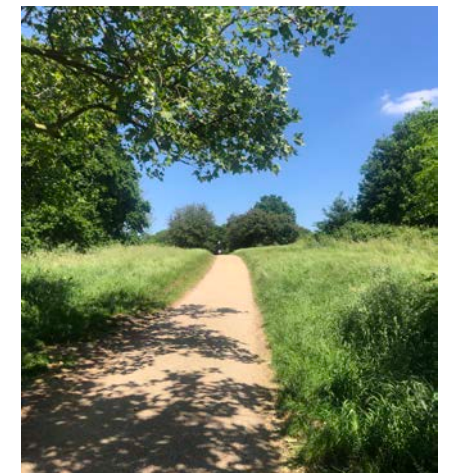
View up Parliament Hill to the entrance of the Heath



View of the house from the Heath



Map of Parliament Hill, 1890



Hampstead Heath

4. Strategic Approach

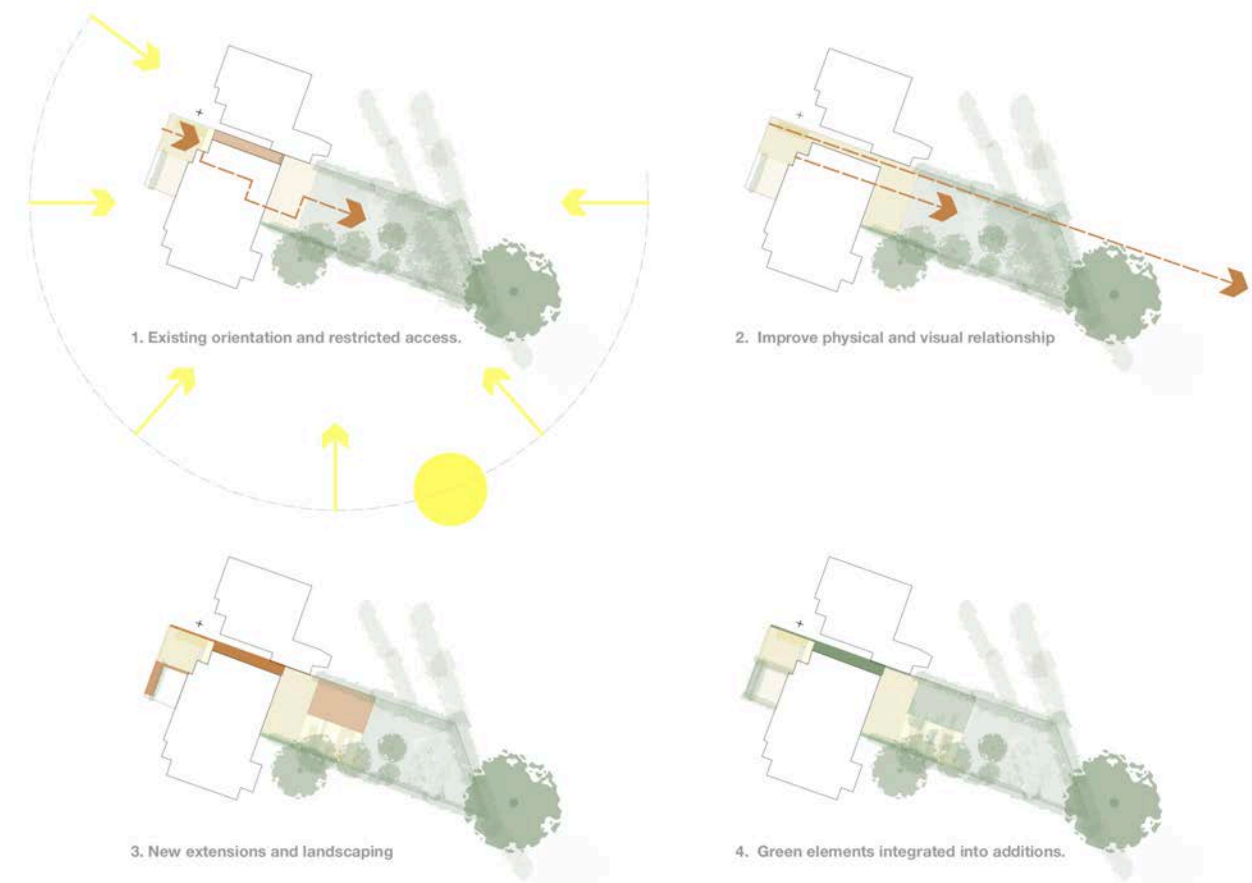
The building has not undergone significant alterations since it was built, but was split into a series of residential flats in 1970. The two existing lower and upper ground floor flats are currently divided into separate residential dwellings that use different entrances with the lower ground having its own separate entrance at lower ground level accessed via a narrow staircase and upper ground accessed from a communal staircase via the main entrance at upper ground level. The lower ground level has limited natural light internally and restricted independent access to the garden via a side gate created within the existing side infill/storage area.

We plan to combine The Garden Flat (lower ground) and the Ground Floor Flat (upper ground) to create a self contained family home accessed through a private side entrance at lower ground level. The primary entrance would be retained for the flats on the higher levels with the current ground floor flat entrance being closed off and a new internal staircase allowing circulation between the upper and lower levels within the new combined larger unit.

The existing lean to lower ground extension at the front of the property, attached to the car parking forecourt containing a WC, will be demolished to increase the size of the entrance area and the amount of natural daylight penetrating into the front entrance/hall. All load bearing openings within this entrance area will also be enlarged. Access and views to the rear garden from the front entrance will be reinstated by the opening up of the existing lean to side extension. The existing brickwork will be retained and the openings fitted with timber framed glazing, in keeping with the character of the conservation area. Similar detailing will also be evident on the enlarged openings within the front entrance area. The existing window overlooking the lightwell of the lower ground bay window in the bedroom underneath the existing forecourt will be slightly enlarged and dropped to the ground creating 'crittall' style doors to the lightwell helping to improve internal daylight levels and forming better amenity space within the front lower ground courtyard.

Internal works to improve the current layout include the removal of structural walls at lower ground level and the installation of new supporting beams. The kitchen will be opened up to the garden by creating additional openings in the rear elevation at lower ground level to take new crittall style doors sympathetic to the period of the property.

We are proposing to introduce a series of stepped planters into the rear sloping garden and construct a new garden studio that utilises the steep terrain of the site. By placing the studio at the lower end of the garden it will ensure that the additional structure has minimal visual impact. This proposal will require minor excavation work to install appropriate foundations all of which will be designed by a chartered structural engineer in accordance with current building regulations. The existing party wall which the new studio will adjoin between 68/70 Parliament Hill is unstable due to a partial collapse and will need to be reconstructed in brick to match existing.



Preliminary Strategic Diagrams



Preliminary Site Plan

5. Design Approach

Street Elevation

A general overhaul of the front is proposed to include repairs to the roof and general decoration such as repainting of all the stonework and timber sash windows. New double glazed timber sash windows will be installed if required all to match existing.

Upper Ground Front Garden

Proposed changes include a new bin storage enclosure clad in black painted steel similar to the existing railings. The steel frame will provide a framework for creeper plants to grow over it from the lower ground floor front garden ensuring that it discreetly embeds itself within the streetscape over time. This will be situated so that it faces the pavement rather than the current arrangement with the bins blocking the entrance into the house, making it easier for bin collections to take place. We intend to install new front forecourt paving similar to existing or a more permeable surface if possible. The existing parking space will be retained and a discrete electric car charging facility installed. New metal railings similar to existing are proposed as well as alterations to the existing lower ground staircase improving access into the lower ground floor.

Lower Ground Front Garden

The enlarged staircase will lead to the new main entrance for the flat which will be improved by demolishing the 1970's lower ground floor lean-to currently containing a WC. The enlarged openings within the framework of the existing brickwork will be discreetly located within the sunken entrance courtyard and will be timber framed with a natural finish to complement the existing timber windows and tone of the brick mortar.

Lower Ground Front Bay Lightwell

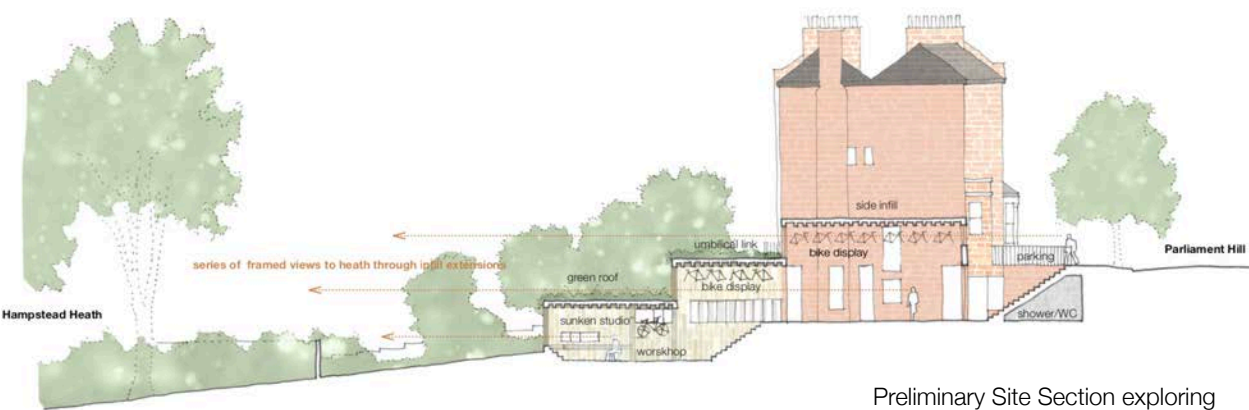
The existing window opening overlooking the lightwell will be slightly enlarged in width and the opening dropped to the new lowered floor level providing access to the light well from the front bedroom. The windows will either be metal framed 'crittall' style or timber framed.

Side Infill Extension

The side infill extension glazing will be split into two timber framed panels embedded within the brickwork at the front. The rear will be formed in full height timber framed glazing with a glazed timber framed door being incorporated within the lower section and an openable section at the top to encourage high level cross ventilation through the side passage. The roof of the side extension will be a flat single ply roofing membrane with a series of roof lights on insulated kerb upstands. The extension will be framed in timber to match the window frames and sandwiched between the existing brick walls either side so that they are subservient to the the existing building and similar in appearance to other infills between properties on the rest of the street.



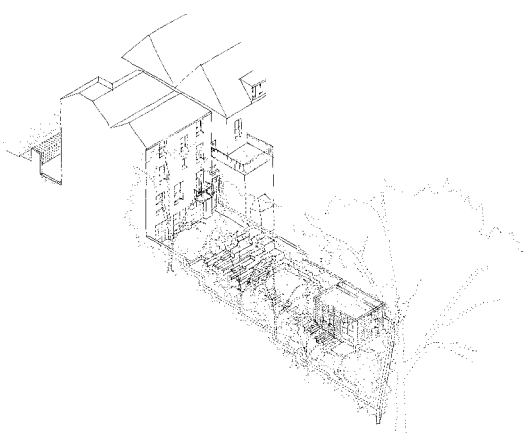
Preliminary Site Section exploring the key design principles



Preliminary Site Section exploring the key design principles



Design Development Sketch of Rear view from garden



Isometric sketch showing the relocation and reduction in the studio massing during design development

Rear Elevation

We are proposing a series of modestly sized openings in the rear elevation at lower ground level rather than one large opening, so that the balance of the existing windows is sensitively maintained in keeping with the character of the conservation area. These enlarged crittall style doors will improve access and internal daylight levels without overpowering the elevation. The side infill extension will be set back from the rear facade and sandwiched between the existing brick walls. It will be detailed with timber framed windows to mirror the timber windows at the front of the house.

Rear Garden

The existing patio will be extended outward slightly to provide an improved relationship with the new kitchen and dining space. This will be clad in paving. The existing dilapidated brick steps and planters will be removed and replaced with new concrete steps and soft planters. The extent of the new steps will be dictated by the root protection areas as identified in the arborists report which accompanies this application. A vertically clad timber fence will be introduced and mainly fixed to the existing brick wall and timber trellis. Excavation and the installation of new foundations will be restricted to areas outside of the root protection zones. All works within the root protection zones will be carefully carried out in accordance with the requirements of the roots of all nearby trees in line with the arborists recommendations. The existing dilapidated small shed at the end of the garden will be removed and replaced.

Garden Studio

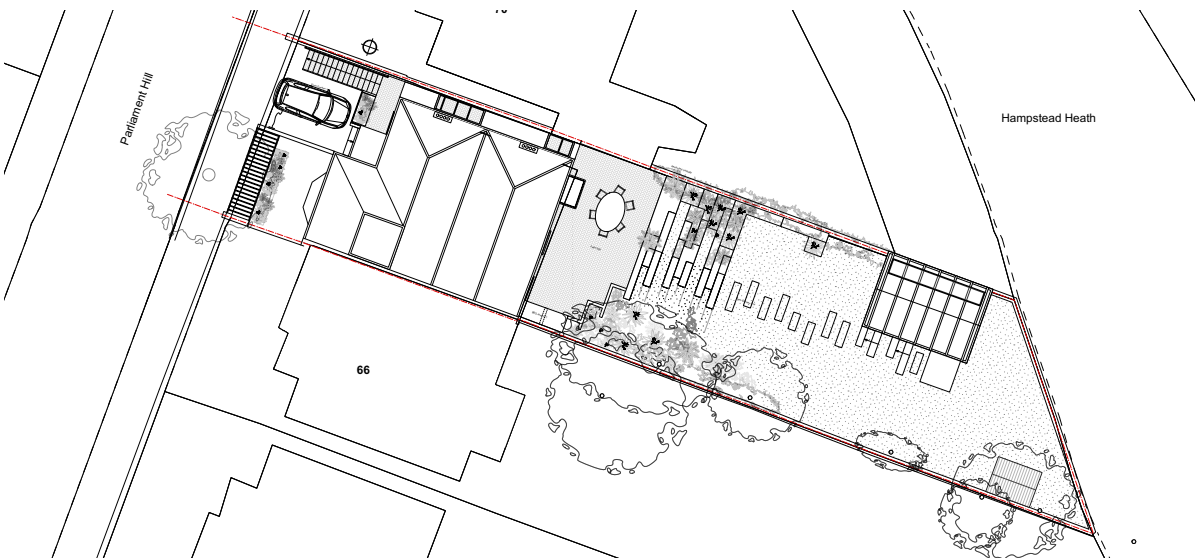
The garden studio will be slightly embedded within the sloping site, ensuring views to the heath from the house and garden are maintained. The timber structure and cladding of the studio mirrors the material language of the timber glazed side infill extension and is reminiscent of similar structures evident in other gardens on the street. Small timber framed windows will be carefully located to avoid excessive heat gain and in the areas where they look back into the house and over the stepped landscaping so that light pollution and overlooking is minimised. A single strip roof light will be included along the edge of the party wall so that soft north light washes the internal north wall. The dilapidated brick party wall that the studio will adjoin will be rebuilt in brick to match existing.



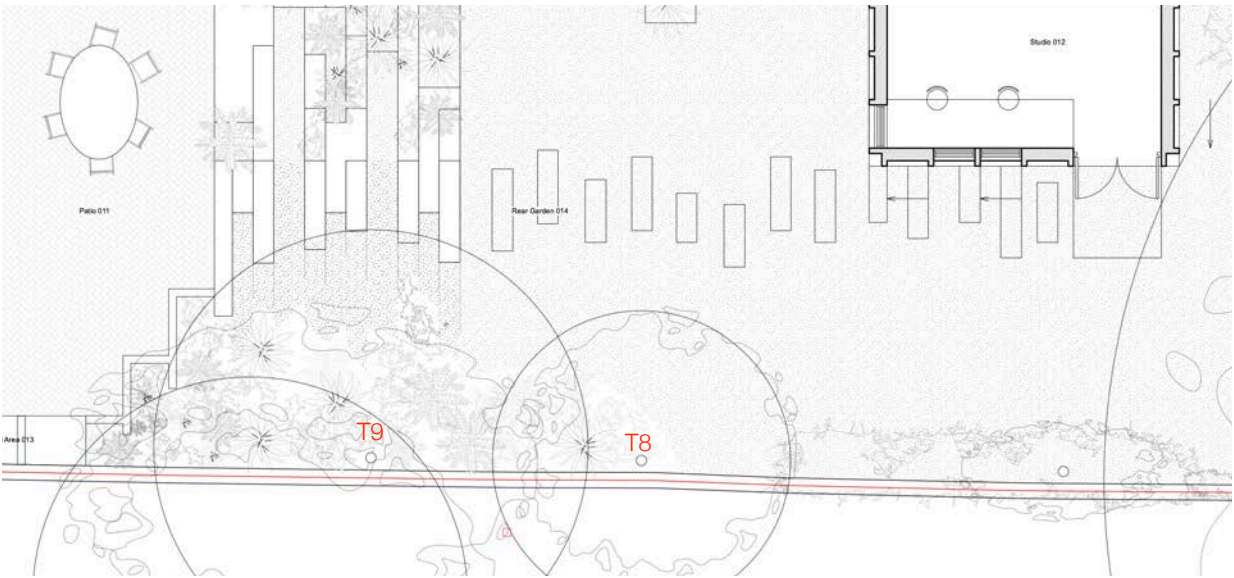
Rear Elevation showing new windows



Design Development Sketch of Rear viewed from garden



Site Plan showing studio and landscaping in relation to rest of garden



Plan showing new garden landscaping blending with existing garden levels in relation to notional root protection areas in accordance with the Arboricultural Report attached. The trees, T8 and T9, have been granted approval to be removed (Ref: 2021/6159/T).

6. Access.

Access into the flat will be via its own separate stair, in the same location as the existing access to the Lower Ground flat. The width of the stair has been increased from approx 900mm to 1200mm and the pitch of the stair reduced improving ease of access. The internal doors and corridors have been increased in size where possible and the rooms kept generous ensuring that the property is wheelchair adaptable.

An approved Inspector and fire consultant will be appointed during the detailed design process to advise and oversee the development of the circulation and escape strategy in line with all relevant building control and fire safety regulations.

8. Summary

The proposed amalgamation and redevelopment of these dilapidated flats will restore this grand property back into a sizeable home suitable for modern family life. The alterations to the front, side and rear of the building have been designed to be discrete, subservient and complementary to the existing building, in keeping with the character of the conservation area. The new garden studio with its sustainable timber frame sensitively integrates itself into the sloping site, reducing its potential visual impact and capitalising on the magnificent views towards Hampstead Heath. The garden landscaping carefully navigates the restrictions put in place to protect the existing mature trees to the rear, putting in place a tentative approach to developing the overgrown and inaccessible garden over time once the work is complete and our clients new home is occupied.

Stephen Hodgen

Associate Director, Hanson Architects.

1st February 2022.



- Key
- ① Steps from upper to lower garden level
 - ② New Garden Studio
 - ③ Planting in Route Protection Zone for trees on site
 - ④ New Openings formed on Rear Elevation
 - ⑤ New Party Wall
 - ⑥ New Shed to replace existing

Isometric view of the proposal showing the new garden landscaping and studio