Design & Access Statement

Proposed development at:

Flat A
66 Florence Road
London
N4 4DP

Situated within the Stroud Green Conservation Area

The proposed development comprises of a small conservatory, measuring 3.7m by 2m, just big enough for six people to sit at at dining table, in the side return at the rear of the property.

Care has been taken to ensure the conservatory slopes down to an appropriate height at the boundary wall with the neighbours at 64 Florence Road, following consultation with these neighbours and with Haringey planning officers.

Care has also been taken to ensure that the conservatory will not be visible from the road, and thus does not have an impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

Current problems with the side return
The Local Strategy document says Haringey is looking to maximise the opportunities of each site for development, with incremental development preferred in Conservation Areas.

At the moment, the side return is currently a greatly under-used area of the garden which feels quite oppressively hemmed in by brick walls on the sides and overlooked by neighbours above. Obviously when it was built the entire building was one dwelling, but following the conversion of the building into flats (which we think happened in the 1970/80s), the side-return as an outside space has lost much of the privacy and appeal it must have had for the original Victorian owners. We would use and enjoy the space far more frequently as internal living area and we feel it would better meet the needs of our family today.

Why we want permission
"The lack of family housing in Haringey has resulted in significant overcrowding," according to the Local Plan: Strategic Policies report, and Florence Road in particular has been identified as suffering from a loss of family housing in the Haringey Unitary Development plan. In 2011, we - the owners of the property - were granted permission to add a single bedroom extension and make other improvements to turn the property into a family home. This permission has made a huge difference to our lives and means we have been able to have our first child and

remain in the property when we would not otherwise have been able to do so, and we are very grateful to the planners who made that decision.

We would like to improve the property further by building the conservatory and putting a table in it so that we can eat there with two children and visiting grandparents. This would enable us to utilize the space in the kitchen better and would greatly enhance our family life in our home. We also feel this will ensure the property is a more wonderful, workable family home for many future generations to come.

We value the integrity of the original design of the house and would like to keep the sense of space and light which the side return currently creates. For this reason, we are making the conservatory as small as we possibly can for the function it will perform. For light and aesthetic purposes, we are also ensuring there is still a small patch of garden between the original Victorian dining room (now used as a bedroom) and the conservatory, which we intend to use for a flower or herb garden.

The main access to the conservatory will be through the kitchen. We are proposing to lengthen the kitchen window into a glazed door which will form the opening into the conservatory. This door will be an external door with all the U-values that entails, to ensure that the design is as thermally efficient and environmentally-friendly as possible.

To ensure we have privacy when we eat, we are proposing a solid roof, with two small roof lights to allow as much natural light in as possible, placed in positions where our neighbours at 64 Florence Road will not overlook us.

The walls of the conservatory will be made of glass, with glass doors at both ends to allow natural light and air to flow through it, and to enable us to retain to some extent the vitality of the outside space that the side return currently provides. It is also for this reason that we have opted for the highest ceiling that - according to the planning officer we spoke to - could potentially be permitted. We are keen to create a sense of space in this very small conservatory and we hope that following the Victorian tradition of high ceilings will enable us to do this, without having any detrimental impact on our neighbours.

Further points of consideration

One of the best and most unique features of this property is the fact that it currently offers disabled access directly from the street to a three-bedroom family home on a single, ground floor level, with a walk-in shower and separate bathtub in the bathroom. Such properties are rare in the borough, especially in period buildings, and particularly in the Stroud Green Conservation Area. By enlarging the dining space, the kitchen will become less cramped and ensure there is considerably more space for someone in a wheelchair to both use the kitchen and to sit at a dining table with the rest of his or her family. Building the conservatory would therefore ensure the property is truly worthy of being included in Haringey's most accessible housing stock.

The design as a whole has been developed with the help of Haringey Duty Planning Officers and their input and help has been invaluable in arriving at the proposed design. Neighbours of 66 Florence Road have been consulted and their feedback taken on-board.