DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed work to:
5 FIRS AVENUE, LONDON N10 3LY



FRONT VIEW OF PROPERTY

INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement relates to an application for building a single storey rear extension with pitched roof which will be partially below ground level. This will necessitate the removal of an existing brick built WC. No other external work is proposed for the property.

CONTEXT

This Edwardian property sits in a street of similar houses built at the same time which now forms part of the Muswell Hill Conservation Area of Haringey. This is an excerpt from the conservation area character appraisal commenting on Firs Avenue:

"The houses along both sides of Firs Avenue have considerable consistency in appearance because of their common roof form, fenestration, materials, detailing and elevation treatment. The houses all have pitched roofs and roof level upstand party walls, some with dormers that add visual interest. There is a pattern of two storey projections with ground floor bay windows and limited use of render at eaves level and on the tops of the bays. A later insertion Nos. 4 & 6 assumed to date from the 1950s, have a similar form and materials and echo the gabled forms seen elsewhere in the avenue. They are a good example of ‘modern’ infill that is appropriate to its context. The roof level extension at No. 8 is an unfortunate alien feature in the streetscape."

There is a slope to the land which means the properties step down from north to south. Most are two-storey plus basement to the street elevation, and generally arranged on different levels providing three stories to the rear. Looking along the rear of neighbouring houses, it can be seen that a number of properties already have rear lower basement extensions.



REAR VIEW

EXISTING PROPERTY

Built of brick with slate roof at the front and rear, this is a terraced property arranged on different levels, both internally and externally to the rear; the back garden is approximately 1m higher than the yard area by the kitchen. There are three reception rooms and five bedrooms. There is a front and rear garden. There is no off-road parking.

The house has retained most, if not its entire original features, both internally and externally. There have been very few changes to the house over the years. The kitchen is relatively small for modern needs.

Houses on either side are identical, albeit in mirror form. The ground level of the neighbouring property to the north is approximately 200mm higher, and the neighbour to the south about 200mm lower. The rear garden backs on to those in Birchwood Avenue.

The owners of No. 3 currently have a planning application under consideration (HGY/2016/0050) which includes an identical rear extension to the one proposed here. Both neighbours have instructed Richard Kaye RIBA to apply for a matching pair of sympathetic extensions.

THE BRIEF

- Provide a larger kitchen with plenty of natural daylight, to accommodate eating and seating, linked to the garden.
- For the extension to be same design and size as that proposed by the neighbours.
- Use similar materials to the existing house.
- Be sympathetic to existing architecture.



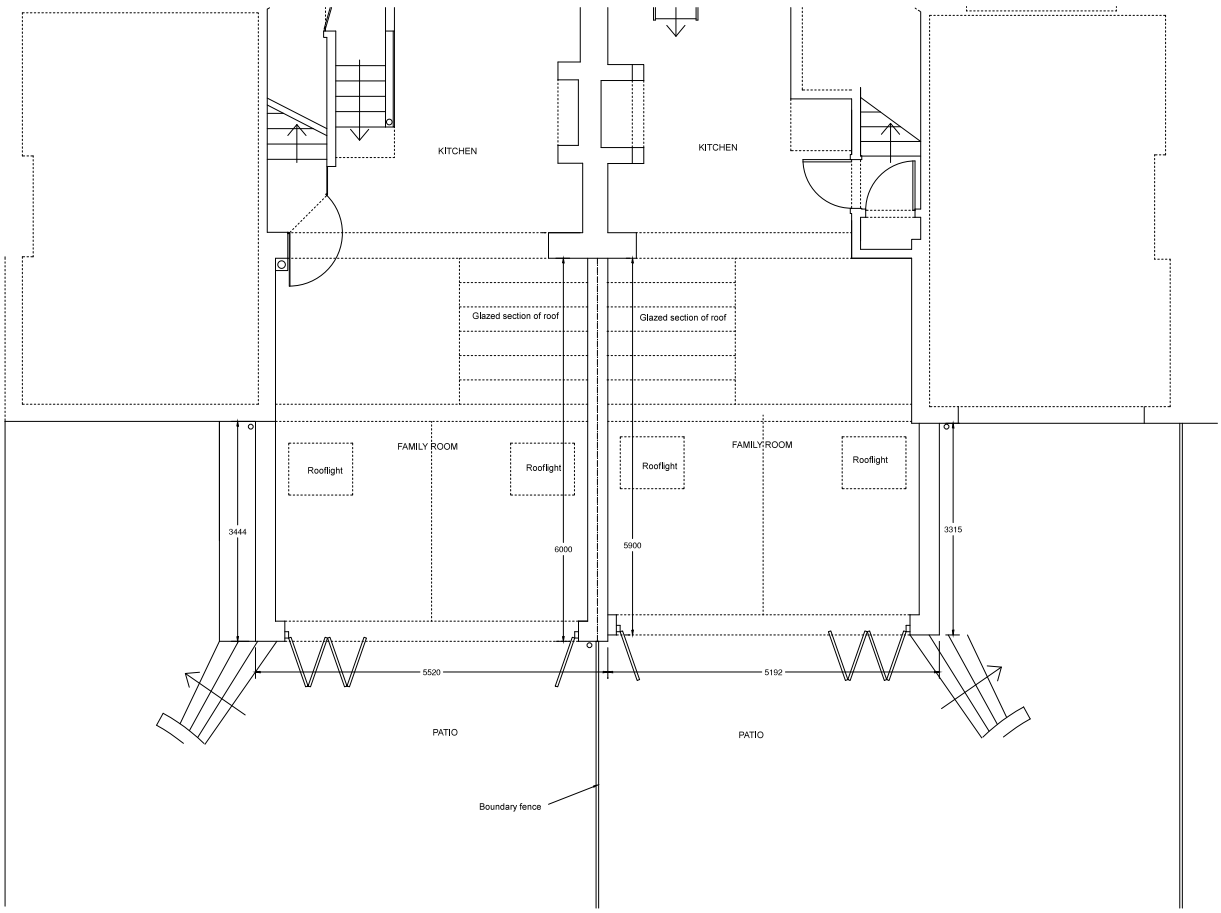
PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION SHOWING MATCHING EXTENSIONS

THE PROPOSAL

- Remove existing outside WC.
- Build a single storey extension with a partly glazed and partly solid pitched roof with two roof lights.
- Set the extensions at basement level, partially below ground level thus reducing impact.
- Extend out to a maximum of 6m from existing kitchen doors (2.1m from face of existing outside WC structure).
- Gable end to face garden which avoids massing on boundary lines and softens the overall appearance.
- Include glazed folding/sliding doors with lights above to echo existing lights above sitting room French doors.
- Share a common wall to both extensions, placed mid-point on boundary/party wall line. This will save space, be cost effective and be more energy efficient. It avoids the possibility of any awkward to maintain narrow gap between extensions.
- Create wide valley gutter to ease maintenance/access to roofs.
- The infill area beside the existing kitchen will have a glazed roof with obscured glass.

ACCESS

Being on different levels, this house is not really suitable for a wheelchair user; the proposed works add little improvement.



BASEMENT PLAN SHOWING MATCHING EXTENSIONS TO NOS. 3 & 5

IMPACT

- There are no changes to the front elevation, nor to anywhere else in the property other than the proposed extension and associated areas.
- The extension is partially below the main ground level, which will reduce its mass and therefore be subordinate in scale.
- The pitched roof means low walls either side, reducing impact and maximising light. The 6m length is in line with current permitted development.
- Style and use of materials will be in keeping with the existing property and that of neighbouring houses.
- Creating two matching extensions will produce a harmonious addition to the rear of these properties.
- Period details elsewhere in the house will not be affected by this project.

CONCLUSION

This is an excellent opportunity to design extensions for two neighbouring properties in the same style and scale, with all the benefits of appearance, scale and practicality. Most importantly it avoids two extensions sitting awkwardly side-by-side of quite different designs and materials with the inevitable narrow gap in between which in time invariably causes maintenance problems. The extension will be an appropriate addition to the back elevation and will have a positive impact in conserving and enhancing the Muswell Hill Conservation Area.

RK - February 2016