

Application for Planning Permission
for works at: -

82 Twyford Avenue
Muswell Hill
London
N2 9NN

Design Access & Heritage Statement

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1. Buildings Description and Site Context

82 Twyford Avenue is a detached dwelling house on the west side of Twyford Avenue where it runs north for a short distance from its junction with Fortis Green. The site covers an area of approximately 400 square metres.

The house dates to the early 1930s, and was developed at the same time as its immediate neighbours; as such they are a similar scale and share materiality and design detailing. Facing materials to the property are mixed, on the front elevation the lower storey is red/brown and orange/red facing brick, with red clay tiled roof slopes and vertical tile hanging above first floor floor level. Flank walls are primarily in red/brown and orange/red brick, with areas of pale red and yellow London stock. The rear elevation is in yellow London stock with red brick detailing to the lower storey, and natural coloured roughcast render above. Windows throughout are in painted timber.

There are two original chimney stacks located centrally in the property. The front stack is oriented parallel to the street, and appears to be its original height, although the pots have been removed and the flues capped. The rear stack, which is oriented perpendicular to the street, has been substantially reduced in height and as such is not visible from the highway at the front.

The property is not listed, but it is in the local Muswell Hill conservation area, and is described in the Conservation Area Appraisal only in that it forms part of a consistent group of dwellinghouses constructed by an identified person – developer/builder Billy Collins – at this end of the street. As such the property is a 'non-designated heritage asset'. A brief heritage assessment is included in section 6 below.

The property otherwise does not appear to be the subject of any site specific planning policies. The site is in Flood Risk zone 1, denoting a low risk of flooding; a flood risk map download from the Environment Agency is included with the application. There do not appear to be any site specific planning policies or Article 4 directions that would apply to the site.



Aerial view of the site and its surroundings



View from street



View from rear garden



Side passageway to south of building



View of house from northeast, showing part of the north flank elevation

2. Recent Planning History

There does not appear to be any record of recent planning applications made for 82 Twyford Avenue on the Haringey planning applications database.

Some applications on file relating to nearby properties may however be relevant:

HGY/2020/0013	Demolition of existing conservatory, construction of single storey side and rear extension, front rooflight, side and rear dormers, and garage conversion, at 84 Twyford Avenue	Approve with conditions
HGY/2021/0999	First floor rear extension at 84 Twyford Avenue	Approve with conditions
HGY/2021/3256	Demolition of an existing side extension and replacement with a new side extension at 78 Twyford Avenue	Approve with conditions
HGY/2008/0992	Partial demolition of the existing rear conservatory and erection of a new single storey rear/side extension. Side and rear dormer windows, front rooflight, and replacement of garage doors with new window, at 80 Twyford Avenue	Approve with conditions

The first three approvals listed above post-date the Muswell Hill Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted February 2008), Haringey's Local Plan (2013, with amendments 2017) and the London Plan (2020). We assume therefore that they were assessed under the same planning policies as this application will be subject to.

3. The Proposed Development

There are a number of aims of the project the applicants desire to carry out:

1. To remove the existing low quality, unheated, single-storey outbuilding in the rear garden.
2. To construct a new two-storey part width side extension, set away from the boundary, to provide additional living space for the property at ground and first floor levels.
3. Replacement of the existing garage doors at the front of the property with a casement window set into a wall in facing brickwork, and enlargement of an existing window opening in the adjacent flank elevation to accommodate a new door, to suit use of the previous garage as a utility room.
4. To construct a new rear dormer to create additional space at second floor level for a staircase and landing.
5. The addition of four Velux type pitched roof lights to improve natural light levels to the second floor level.
6. Upgrading the energy performance of retained parts of the existing structure.
7. Internal alterations, refurbishment and redecoration works.

The ground floor of the existing house has not been substantially refurbished for decades, and most of the fixtures and fittings, including the kitchen, require renewal/replacement in order to bring them up to current expectations of amenity and quality. The building owners would like to take the opportunity to extend and reconfigure the property, so as to better suit their needs as a family, at the same time as the much needed refurbishment.

4. Planning Policy Framework & Assessment

Reference has been made to relevant Haringey planning policies, as follows:

- Muswell Hill Conservation Area Appraisal SPD (2008)
- London Plan (2020)
 - Policy D6 Housing Quality & Standards
 - Policy HC1 Housing Standards & Growth
- Haringey Local Plan (2013, with amendments 2017)
 - Policy SP11 Design
 - Policy SP12 Conservation
 - Policy DM1 Delivering High Quality Design
 - Policy DM9 Management of the Historic Environment
 - Policy DM12 Housing Design & Quality

The London Plan policies are directed towards ensuring that residential developments are of high quality design and that rooms are adequately sized; and that development proposals involving heritage assets should conserve their significance.

Haringey Local Plan policies SP11 and SP12 support the London Plan policies by requiring the highest standard of design which respects local context, character and historic significance. Policy DM1 requires development to relate to its locality; policy DM9 seeks to ensure that extensions to properties in conservation areas are in scale with the host building and complement its architectural style, proportions, materiality and details. Policy DM12 further requires that extensions and alterations to residential development should be of a high design quality and designed to suit the character, detailing, and existing external features of the property, using good quality matching or complementary materials.

The proposed rear extension is comparable in size to others granted permission at other nearby properties. Specifically, the first floor rear extension at 84 Twyford Avenue granted permission in 2021, which extends rearwards to almost the same line as the extension proposed in this application. Furthermore, nos 84 and 80 Twyford Avenue also have large wraparound single storey rear extensions extending further into their rear gardens.

The proposed extension is three metres deep and five metres wide on plan. It is set away from the south boundary by over a metre. It easily complies with the '45 degree rule' on plan with respect to both neighbouring properties.

The nearest properties to the rear are at least twenty metres away.

As such it is considered that the proposed two-storey extension will not adversely affect the privacy, outlook, sense of enclosure, or daylight levels enjoyed by neighbouring residents.

The extension has been designed with a hipped roof with the same pitch and same eaves line as the existing roof; the ridge line will be 35cm lower.

The proposed rear dormer is comparable in size to the existing one at 86 Twyford Avenue, which was approved in 2016 under application ref. HGY/2016/0156.

The rear chimney stack has already been reduced in height and is no longer a prominent feature in the streetscape. It is not visible from the front of the property, and only glimpsed across rear gardens from a small length of Twyford Avenue to the north. The applicants are intending to remove the chimney breast structure internally, to enable internal reconfiguration, and the proposed rear dormer also overlaps the chimney position. As such it is considered most appropriate to remove the chimney altogether, rather than reinstating the few courses of bricks that would remain on top of the dormer.

Replacement of a garage door with a window to suit conversion of the space behind into living accommodation is an established pattern of development across London. The house opposite, 71 Twyford Avenue, gained permission for identical works in 1994 under application ref. HGY/1994/1476.

At 82 Twyford Avenue, as with most other properties in the street, the front garden already has an area of hard landscaping (sufficiently sized for two cars) and a pavement crossover. The original garage is already in use as a utility room, having been converted by the previous owner. As such, the car parking provision at the property as existing is sufficient for the needs of the applicants and there will not be any adverse effect on street parking.

The proposed extension and alteration works will be carried out in good quality facing materials to match the existing house, as noted on the drawings supplied with the application.

In consideration of the above points, there does not seem to be any reason why the proposed works would not comply with the relevant planning policies.

5. Access

The building faces Twyford Avenue. The public pavement is approximately 2 metres wide with a stepped kerb up from the road. Street parking has residents' parking permit restrictions Mondays to Fridays 11am-1pm, with single yellow lines between marked bays. There is a crossover and driveway on the property with sufficient space for on site parking for two vehicles.

External access to the property consists of a single low step 6cm high up to a covered external area immediately outside the main entrance door, with a raised threshold 9cm high at the doorway itself. The internal floor level is 6.5cm lower than the door threshold. The entrance door is adequately sized at 845mm clear opening width.

It's not proposed to alter the existing access arrangements at the entranceway to the house as part of the project.

The proposed works involve removal of several walls at ground floor level. The resulting accommodation at ground floor level is reasonably generous as proposed, comprising two large reception rooms with an open plan kitchen, separate utility room, and a guest WC. The guest WC will be more generous as proposed than as existing.

The reconfiguration works will have a net positive effect on accessibility within the dwellinghouse.

6. Heritage Statement

Introduction

This section has been added in line with paragraph 189 of the NPPF, which states

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets... the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' significance.

As set out in Historic England's key guidance document 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance', there are four sides to any Heritage Statement: evidential, historical, aesthetic, and communal.

The historic environment is a shared resource. People value this historic environment as part of their cultural and natural heritage. It gives distinctiveness, meaning and quality to the places in which we live, providing a sense of continuity and a source of identity.

Identification of the heritage assets

The heritage assets that may be affected by this planning application are the existing building on the application site, an unlisted detached 1930s dwellinghouse, and the wider Muswell Hill conservation area in which it is located. Unlisted buildings within a conservation area are classed as 'non-designated heritage assets' in paragraph 197 of the NPPF.

Assessment of significance

A brief description of the building's appearance and setting is included in the Muswell Hill Conservation Area Appraisal, as follows:

Nos. 74 to 86 (even) and 63 to 75 (odd) Twyford Avenue is a group of substantial two storey semi-detached and detached houses, built by Billy Collins. Although the house types vary they form a consistent group with steeply sloping, hipped, red tiled roofs with tall chimneys, deep overhanging eaves and small dormers. The elevations are built in dark red brick with tile hanging to bay windows and gables. They have white painted casement windows subdivided into small panes. The front gardens of the properties are defined by a combination of hedgerows, low walls and vegetation.

The house is well proportioned and pleasingly detailed, There is clearly group value in the identified properties. The view across Fortismere School field to the north is also mentioned as a positive feature in the Conservation Area appraisal.

As set out in 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance', understanding the significance of places is vital. Significance is based on an appreciation of the fabric, how and why it has changed over time, and then to consider:

- who values the place, and why they do so
- how these values relate to the fabric
- their relative importance
- whether associated objects contribute to them
- the contribution made by the setting and context of the place
- how the place compares with others sharing similar values

In the case of the Muswell Hill conservation area, this was designated in 1974 by the London Borough of Haringey, and was extended in 1991 and 2008. It is described in the Conservation Area Appraisal as an 'essentially Edwardian suburb' with 'considerable consistency of character and appearance',

It's clear that the heritage asset is valued by residents of, and visitors to, the borough, as an attractive place to live and to visit. The contributions of the setting, topography, and the various buildings are described in detail in the CAA.

In the case of 82 Twyford Avenue, as it is mentioned in the CAA as forming part of a 'consistent group', it can be concluded that it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, but clearly this must be to a lesser degree than the listed and locally listed buildings in the conservation area.

The comparative significance, in heritage terms, of the existing building on the application site is also limited due to the building's unlisted status and its use as a single family dwelling. While the appearance of the building as experienced from the public realm is clearly an important factor to consider, the building itself is not accessible to the general public and so the people that most value the individual property are likely to be limited to the applicants and their immediate neighbours.

Effects of the proposals on the heritage asset

Notwithstanding the relatively modest significance of the property, only minor changes to the street facing elevation are proposed, and the proposed enlargements of the building – a two-storey rear extension and roof dormer – are located entirely at the rear of the property.

The materiality, massing, and design detailing will be consistent with the existing building and its neighbours – of which, most have already been substantially extended.

The proposals include the removal of the rear chimney stack, but as mentioned above this has already been reduced significantly in height – it's barely higher than the roof ridge, and not visible from the front of the house. We consider the stack to be removed does not contribute to the character of the house or the conservation area in the same manner as the much taller and more prominent front stack, which will be retained.

While the additions to the building will be visible from the public realm in oblique views across gardens from further down Twyford Avenue, It's not anticipated that the proposed development will have any significant adverse effect on the street scene and consequently we would submit the character and value of the conservation area will be unaffected.

7. Summary & Conclusions

The proposals provide for a number of alterations to an existing detached dwelling house.

We consider that these have been sensitively designed, following the applicable planning policies and design guidance, to respect the scale, massing, materiality, and design detailing of the existing property and its neighbours.

In accordance with the NPPF, the significance of the heritage asset has been recorded and the effects of the proposals on that significance assessed.

The acceptability of the proposals can be considered against a number of criteria:

- Effect on accessibility
By opening up the ground floor layout and providing more generous living areas, kitchen and guest WC on the same floor level as the entrance hall, the alterations proposed are considered to have a positive effect in accessibility terms.
- Effect on energy efficiency
The ground floor of the house will be fully rewired as part of the proposed work. The lighting scheme will replace existing incandescent bulbs with new, more efficient LED fittings. The new rear doors, new windows and roof lights will be double glazed to current standards. New floor slabs, external walls, and roofs will be insulated to current Building Regulations standards. Energy performance of existing floors, external walls and roofs will be upgraded wherever possible. As such, there will be a net improvement in energy terms.
- Effect on others' amenity
The proposed rear extension while two-storey, is set away from the property boundaries and easily meets the 45 degree rule in respect of neighbours' rear facing windows and doors. It is designed to closely match dimensions of already permitted extensions to neighbouring properties. The heights and positions of the proposed extension walls relative to the property boundaries should mean that there will be no significant adverse effect on natural light levels or privacy of the neighbouring properties.

As such it is not considered that the proposals have any effect on amenity of neighbouring properties.

- Effect on the appearance of the property and the neighbouring area
The proposals have been sensitively designed in accordance with the relevant guidance, and using materials to match the appearance of those to the existing house. As such the works are felt to maintain the character of the property and the surrounding area.

We trust that the enclosed applications will be supported with a positive recommendation to grant Planning Permission. In the event that any further information is required, or you would like to discuss any aspects of this proposal in more detail, please contact Gavin Challand of this office.