

34 Birchwood Avenue

Applicant: Russell & Sandra Levene

Architect: MALIN+LYNN

1 Proposal

- 1.1 The application is for the demolition of an existing dormer loft conversion, replacing it with a new rear dormer, larger in footprint and scale and contemporary in appearance; Introduction of two new roof lights.

2 Physical Context

- 2.1 34 Birchwood Avenue is an Edwardian single family house dating from the turn of the 19th/20th Centuries.
- 2.2 It is within the Muswell Hill conservation area/ Sub area 4/ Midhurst Avenue to Hillfield Park.
- 2.3 It is situated at the lower end of Birchwood Avenue and is part of a terrace of similar houses part of the same original development and all sharing similar characteristics.
- 2.4 The house occupies three stories including a small cellar.
- 2.5 It is constructed from red brick with white timber fenestration.
- 2.6 Predominant features include a bay window at ground floor level, covered porch area to the front and a hipped roof.
- 2.7 It is set back from the road with a small front garden and there is a larger garden to the rear.
- 2.8 To the front the majority of existing features remain intact.
- 2.9 To the rear there have been some changes from the original including a rear extension which houses the kitchen, and a roof extension that houses a bedroom on the second floor.

Design Summary

3 Use & Amount

- 3.1 The principle use of the house will remain residential as a single family home.
- 3.2 The change that has an impact on the overall volume of the house is the replacement of the existing dormer with a new dormer which exceeds the existing by 13.7 sqm. This is due to an increase in width of the footprint by 1.7m, and an increase in length of the footprint by 2.8m.

4 Layout

- 4.1 The overall arrangement of the spaces within the house will remain much the same.

5 Scale

- 5.1 The new dormer height will not exceed that of the original roof. The neighbours will not be affected by the dormer through overlooking or overshadowing.

6 Appearance and Detail

- 6.1 The new loft extension will be contemporary in appearance setting a contrast with the existing house.
- 6.2 The relationship of the new loft extension to the existing roof will be as a light elegant structure that contrasts with and is subservient to the solid masonry structure of the host building.
- 6.3 The rear windows will be made up of two aluminium framed sliding windows, with a surrounding timber frame structure clad in zinc standing seam. A chamfered border will surround the windows.
- 6.4 The two new roof lights will be a simple Velux roof lights. It will sit behind the ridge line and be out of the line of sight from the street.

7 Access

- 7.1 Access from the street remains the same.
from the street.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The main works are to the rear of the property and in large part replacement or adjustment of non original parts of the house.
- 8.2 With respect to the interests of the conservation area this work at the rear does not impact on any coherent terrace wide pattern or form along the street. The rear of the houses on Birchwood Avenue and the surrounding streets stand in contrast to their street frontages with many idiosyncratic changes that have occurred over time.
- 8.3 The scale of the new loft extension is sympathetic to the host structure.
- 8.4 Materially the structure and design of the new loft extension is in contrast to the host building with a light zinc and timber structure in contrast to the heavier masonry of the main house. This creates a positive dichotomy that retains the dominance of the host structure but allows the new intervention to be transformative.
- 8.5 The new rooflights will transform the interior of the house bringing light into the loft but will remain invisible to the street as it is situated behind the main ridge line.
- 8.6 All the proposals have been considered in a way that respects the current building but provide changes that will greatly improve the house for future occupation. All the works will be carried out to the highest standards to produce changes that genuinely enhance the building and provide a positive legacy.