



Established Experts in Veterinary and Animal
Welfare Design and Building Management

Design and Access Statement

Project: Proposed internal renovations and
extension to existing veterinary practice

Client: Hills Vets



For: Fiona Hill

Site Address: 178 Park Road, Crouch End, London, N8 8JT

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More than  years' experience

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

ACD Projects have been appointed by Fiona Hill, director of Hills Vets to design the redevelopment and extension to their existing practice. This application therefore seeks for permission to erect a single-storey rear extension to the existing veterinary practice and to refurbish the interior of the existing building.

1.2. Hills Vets

The practice is owned and run by vets only, i.e. they have no corporate ties. This allows them to invest in the practice to provide the care that they know is in the best interests of their patients. Hence this decision to extend and renovate the existing practice is one that they are certain will improve the service they offer their clients and the local community.

The independent veterinary practice has been operating out of their existing building since 1972 and the business was taken over by the current owner Fiona Hill in 2003. The vets are well established and popular in their community. Since opening and since the Covid-19 pandemic, which saw a significant rise in pet owners nationwide, the vets' workload has grown dramatically, hence the need to extend.

The philosophy of Hills Vets is to be an independent, local, convenient, trustworthy and an ultimately comprehensive veterinary service to their local community. This is essentially informing one plan for their London branch to provide overnight care – progressing “The Community Vets” vision for the local area. This is subsequently one of the reasons for the proposed works.

This development will also give the practice the opportunity to employ more local people and to provide a more comprehensive service – benefiting existing and attracting new clients.

1.3. Design consultants

ACD Projects has been appointed by the practice to design this extension as they specialise in, and have a proven track record of, designing veterinary and animal welfare facilities that are fit for purpose and sympathetic to the local environment. For more information on ACD Projects' experience in this area, please see www.acdprojects.com

2. Brief

- 2.1. In order for Hills Vets to continue to grow and offer their community the best services for their pets, the vets are in need of more space and better facilities.
- 2.2. The practice needs a general update to improve the environment for staff, clients, and patients. This will also include internal refurbishment.
- 2.3. The client wishes to extend the rear of the existing building in the form of a one storey extension, providing a better pedestrian flow throughout whilst allowing sufficient space for a larger prep area as well as the addition of 2 operating theatres.
- 2.4. Presently, the waiting area for dogs and cats are currently mixed in addition to the cat and dog wards being within proximity to each other. It is now standard procedure, and advisory in all veterinary practices, to prevent dogs and cats from mixing where possible; such as by having separate waiting areas and split wards for dogs and cats. The aim being to reduce stress for the animals at what is already a stressful time. The proposed extension will allow for this separation in both the waiting area and the wards and will assist the veterinary practice in becoming a Cat Friendly Clinic as denoted by the International cat Care (ICC) charity.

3. Site Context

3.1. Site Location

178 Park Road, London, N8 8JT

3.2. Site Description

The existing practice is indicated in figure 1. It can be seen from the figure that the site has clear access from the main road.

3.3. Surrounding area

As can be seen from figure 1, much of the surrounding area is residential.

Hills Vets have always been very considerate to these residential neighbours and there have been no issues or causes for complaint. This proposed extension should not affect this relationship and Hills Vets will continue to be respectful of their neighbours and surroundings.



Figure 1: Site location (Google Maps)

Figure 2 shows the front of the veterinary practice and the main entrance for the public.



Figure 2: Showing the front of the practice (Google Maps)



Figure 3: Showing the Side view to the rear of the practice (Google Maps)

4. Design

4.1. Use

The proposed development will be used for veterinary purposes to provide an exceptional level of care for sick animals. The development of the practice also focuses on improving the health, welfare and comfort of the animals, clients and staff.

Hills Vets currently employs 26 staff (including 11 vets). The initial plan is to recruit an additional 4 staff as part of this development. The practice plan to employ local people who are trained for such positions. This proposal therefore offers to bring more skilled employment opportunities to the area.

The practice will continue to be open from 08:30 – 19:00 on weekdays, from 09:00 – 13:30 on Saturdays and Closed on Sunday.

4.2. Extent of the Built Development

As noted in section 2.0 the proposals involve the internal redevelopment of the existing practice and a single-story extension to the rear of the building at ground level.

4.3. Layout

The flow of a veterinary practice is key to its efficient and practical operation. The client-facing areas, including the reception, waiting areas and consultation rooms, will remain in the existing side of the practice. Separate cat and dog waiting areas are a key provision to gaining Gold Standard Cat Friendly Clinic recognition by The International Society of Feline Medicine, hence their inclusion in this design.

By moving the wards and theatres into the new space offered by the extension to the rear of the building, there will be extra space to open up the client facing spaces of the practice, allowing for a separate cat and dog waiting area. The extension will allow for the integration of two generously sized theatres with a large prep area and separated dog and cat wards, an autoclave, X ray, dental space and an Isolation room can also be integrated as well as a small, enclosed courtyard for dog walking.

This layout can be seen in proposed plans (drawing number 1295-1000-G. A Ground Floor Plan – P1).

4.4. Acoustics

Firstly, it should be noted that it is a fallacy that veterinary practices emit huge amounts of noise and unpleasant smells. ACD Projects specialise in this sector and have designed hundreds of practices, none of which have caused spoiling noise or odours on the local community. The materials that will be used in this extension are made for such facilities and have therefore been tried and tested.

The site is in close proximity to residential buildings and has been for many years. In this time, Hills Vets have not been the subject of any noise and/or odour complaints. The vets are therefore conscious to continue to be good neighbours. However, to ensure that Hills Vets maintain their good reputation, acoustic properties of the design have been carefully considered to maximise the reduction of noise from the building, by proposing tried and tested techniques that include acoustically treating dog kennel wards with sound absorbing ceiling tiles, insulation and double-glazed windows.

Our experience of dog kennels has indicated that dogs are most likely to bark when they are disturbed or are being fed. Dogs and cats will subsequently be kept separate at all times to avoid stress or excitement, reducing the likelihood of barking.

Moreover, it must be noted that animals will only be visiting the premises and kept in the wards if they are very unwell (and often sedated). As a result, the dog wards are unlikely to result in noise levels above existing ambient conditions.

Dogs will occasionally be taken out for walks in the garden, as they are at present. This area allows for a safe and fear free space for the veterinary staff to take dogs out that need rehabilitation and exercise. It is important to note that, as these dogs will be ill or recovering, they will be quieter than dogs would normally be when out for walks.

4.5. Scale

These proposals include for a single storey extension to the ground floor of 98m²

4.6. Landscaping

Landscaping towards the front of the property is to remain untouched.

Toward the rear of the property, a small amount of hard standing surface will be retained for the exterior dog walking area. (drawing number 1295-0801-Proposed external Works-P1)

4.7. Appearance

Materials used for the extension will match those of the existing dwelling.

Horizontal Fibre Cement Weatherboard Cladding will be used to wrap the walls of the proposed extension to add a cleaner overall image.

See figure 4 and 5 below for an artist impression of the proposed extension.



Figure 4: Artistic representation of extension showing the South and East Elevations

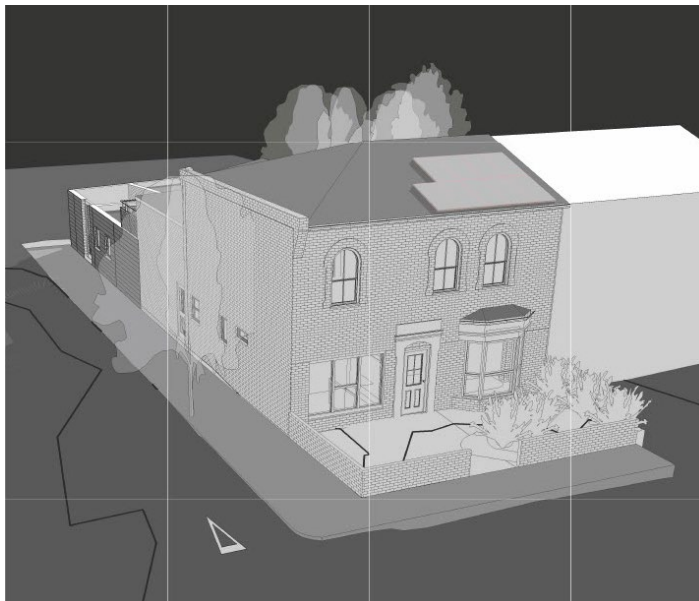


Figure 5: Artistic representation of extension showing the North and East Elevations



4.8. Drainage

Any foul drainage from the building will be connected to the existing main sewer.

5. Access

5.1. Means of Site Access and Traffic Flow

All clients will continue to enter through the existing main entrance at the front. Entry from the side of the building will be reserved for staff and for clients who may wish to exit in peace (i.e. following bereavement), rather than through the reception area. One further door will be introduced to the rear of the extension to allow access to the dog walking area to easily take dogs out into the garden for rehabilitation and exercise.

5.2. Car Parking and Deliveries

There are currently no car parking spaces, however, there is a multitude of public parking space surrounding the property in the form of on street parking. This also encourages current and future staff to cycle to work, promoting green travel and reduced carbon emissions. Hills Vets prefer the practice to function in a steady, calm way and so have appointments available throughout the day rather than the traditional busy morning and afternoon consulting sessions. This means that parking needs are spread throughout that day and as a result, the available client parking is usually adequate.

Furthermore, some staff live close enough to walk in, whilst others get the train or the bus. The practice is within proximity to Hornsey Station and is well placed for bus routes, with a bus stop less than 100 meters from the practice.

Arrangements for waste collection and deliveries will continue as per current practice.

5.3. Site Wide Circulation

Levels around the perimeter of the building already enable level access into the building. There is however currently a 305mm floor level difference internally that demands a 2-step transition. The proposal offers a solution for disabled access in the form of a level floor transition from the existing corridor into the new extension. The exterior door to the east façade allows easy access to the corridor. All surgical areas have been integrated into the extension and the floor heights all correlate to allow trolley circulation. The dog ward sits close to the dog walking area to allow ease when taking them to the walking area.



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