

HERITAGE, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**28 Priory Gardens, London, N6 5QS**

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Heritage, Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany an application for **Householder Planning Permission and Works in a Conservation Area** at 28 Priory Gardens, Highgate, London, N6 5QS.

The Property

The property is a mid-terrace, two storey plus attic late Edwardian/inter-war house. The property forms part of a cohesive terrace characterised by white painted pebble dash render facades, white window frames, and dark red plain tile roofs.

The Proposal

The application seeks consent for:

1. **Loft conversion with installation of one Velux window**
2. **Solar panels to the front roof slope**
3. **Installation of 3 Velux windows to the rear roof slope**
4. **Conversion of existing glazed rear elevation door to a casement window, with infill wall construction below the sill to match adjacent walls, in order to accommodate a revised open plan kitchen arrangement.**

Design Objectives

These proposals have been designed to:

- Make efficient use of existing roof space without altering the roof profile
- Reduce the environmental impact through solar panel installation
- Enhance the rear elevation through appropriate fenestration

- Respect the architectural character of the Conservation Area
 - Align with precedents within the terrace and wider area
 - Comply with relevant local and national planning policies
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2. SITE CONTEXT & HERITAGE

Site Location & Description

28 Priory Gardens is located on the Northern side of Priory Gardens within the Shepherd's Hill sub-area of the Highgate Conservation Area. The property sits within a consistent terrace of inter-war houses (numbers 10-34) with the rear garden sloping down towards Queen's Wood.

Key Characteristics of the Terrace:

- White painted pebble dash render facades
- White painted window frames (mix of timber and uPVC)
- Dark red plain clay tile roofs
- Two storeys with roof space.
- Front bay windows with gable or hipped roofs. Numbers 28-34 have hipped bay roofs (distinct from numbers 10-26 which have gabled bays)

Conservation Area Context

The Highgate Conservation Area was designated in 1967 and extended in 1990 to include the Shepherd's Hill sub-area. The terrace containing number 28 represents cohesive inter-war development completed by 1936.

Heritage Significance:

- Architectural consistency of inter-war terraces
- Uniform materials palette preserving terrace character
- Contribution to historic development of Highgate village
- Relationship with Queen's Wood to the rear

The property does not have Article 4 Directions restricting permitted development rights. As such, some elements of the proposed scheme have permitted development rights, but irrespective of that, all external alterations have been included so the proposals can be reviewed as a whole.

Pattern of Development

Over recent decades, alterations to properties within the terrace and wider Priory Gardens have included:

- Installation of solar panels (notably number 12 Priory Gardens - same terrace)

- Installation of Velux windows to front and rear roof slopes throughout the street
- Loft conversions with rear dormers on several properties
- Replacement windows (timber and uPVC)
- Ground floor rear extensions

Despite these alterations, the terrace maintains its cohesive character through retention of matching external materials and architectural form.

Relevant Planning Precedent on Priory Gardens

The following applications demonstrate the established pattern of acceptable development:

86 Priory Gardens	HGY/2020/0415	Replacement (larger) rear roof dormer extension and insertion of front roof lights.	Approved
20 Priory Gardens	HGY/2022/0872	Attic conversion with the installation of a new rear dormer with solar panels and access window to the flat roof. Insertion of two Velux windows and solar panels to the front roof slope	Approved
22 Priory Gardens	HGY/2021/1657	Rear extension with metal framed windows	Approved

Velux Windows & Loft Conversions:

Although Velux windows as proposed are permitted development, multiple properties throughout Priory Gardens have been granted permission for Velux windows to both front and rear elevations, as part of more comprehensive works requiring planning permission. These include properties within the same terrace as number 28. These applications demonstrate that Velux windows are considered an acceptable form of development within the Conservation Area.

Key Planning Principle Established:

The planning history demonstrates that modest alterations including solar panels, Velux windows, and rear elevation improvements are acceptable where they:

- Follow established precedent within the Conservation Area
 - Use appropriate materials
 - Do not harm the street scene character
 - Contribute to sustainability objectives
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3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Paragraph 197 requires consideration of *"the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

Paragraph 206 states that proposals *"that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset... should be treated favourably."*

Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change

Paragraphs 157-158 emphasise that the planning system should *"support the transition to a low carbon future"* and *"help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions."*

Policy Compliance:

The proposals preserve the Conservation Area's character through matching materials and sensitive design whilst supporting climate objectives through solar panel installation—balancing heritage and environmental imperatives in line with NPPF guidance.

London Plan (2021)

Policy D3 (Optimising site capacity) encourages efficient use of existing buildings.

Policy D4 (Delivering good design) requires development to contribute positively to local character and respect the form and function of an area.

Policy SI2 & SI3 (Energy infrastructure) support renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements.

Policy HC1 (Heritage conservation) requires development to conserve heritage significance through sympathetic design.

Policy Compliance:

The loft conversion optimises existing building fabric. Solar panels demonstrate commitment to carbon reduction. All alterations are sympathetic to the Conservation Area's significance and follow established precedent.

Haringey Local Plan

Policy SP11 (Design) requires high quality design that relates positively to locality and respects heritage assets.

Policy SP12 (Conservation) requires development to conserve and enhance the historic environment and preserve or enhance Conservation Area character.

Policy DM1 (Delivering High Quality Design) requires development to relate positively to locality, safeguard neighbour amenity, and achieve high design standards.

Policy DM9 (Management of the Historic Environment)

"A. Development that conserves and enhances the significance of a heritage asset and its setting will be supported."

"E. Proposals for alterations and extensions to existing buildings in Conservation Areas should complement the architectural style, scale, proportions, materials and details of the host building and should not appear overbearing or intrusive."

Policy Compliance:

Loft Conversion with Velux Windows: Utilises existing roof space without altering roof profile, ridge height, or eaves. Velux windows are an established and accepted form of development throughout the terrace and Conservation Area.

Solar Panels: Follow established precedent within the same terrace and the wider Conservation Area. Environmental benefits outweigh minimal heritage impact.

Rear Door to Window Conversion: Uses matching materials (white painted render and window frames). Improves thermal performance and creates more cohesive rear elevation. Not visible from street—no impact on Conservation Area character.

Materials: All works use matching or complementary materials that respect the architectural character of the existing building and terrace.

Neighbour Amenity: No adverse impact. Velux windows serve existing/improved roof space without creating new overlooking issues.

4. PROPOSED DESIGN

A. Loft Conversion

Internal conversion of existing attic space **without any external alteration to roof profile, ridge height, or eaves**—the most sensitive approach to creating additional living accommodation.

Front Elevation - 1 Velux Window + Solar Panels:

1 rooflight on the front roof slope, matching style of rooflights on adjacent properties with slate grey framing.

Solar panels (subject to technical survey) with black/dark grey frames with dark cells minimising visual impact.

3 rooflights on the rear roof slope, matching style of rooflights on adjacent properties with slate grey framing.

B. Rear Elevation - Door to Window Conversion

Replace existing glazed door with new double glazed timber casement window at appropriate sill height to match adjacent windows and suit new open plan kitchen/dining room arrangement.

Infill below sill with wall construction to match existing white painted render

New window to match existing style, size, and material.

Materials Schedule

Element	Material	Finish
Velux Windows	Aluminium	Slate grey
Solar Panels	Crystalline silicon	Black/dark frames
Infill Wall	Painted render	White painted render
New Rear Window	Timber casement	Painted
Window Glazing	Double glazing	Clear

All materials selected to match or complement existing building, preserving the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Visual Impact Assessment

Front Elevation:

- Single Velux window: Minimal impact, established precedent throughout terrace
- Solar panels: Modest impact balanced by environmental benefits and precedent at number 12 (same terrace)
- Overall terrace character preserved through retention of materials, form, architectural details

Rear Elevation:

- Three Velux windows: Not visible from street, no Conservation Area impact
- Door to window: Improves architectural composition using matching materials
- Overall enhancement to rear elevation

Street Scene:

- No alteration to building height, form, or massing
- Retention of consistent white render and roof materials

- Follows established development pattern within terrace
- Preserves character and appearance of Conservation Area

Heritage Impact Assessment:

- **Level of harm:** Less than substantial harm (at the very lower end of the spectrum, potentially "neutral")
- **Public benefits:** Renewable energy generation, efficient use of existing building, improved living standards
- **Balance:** Modest visual impact clearly outweighed by environmental and social benefits, particularly given established precedent for identical alterations

5. ACCESS STATEMENT

Access to the Property

Existing: Front door access from Priory Gardens via small stepped approach from pavement.

Proposed: No changes to existing access arrangements.

Internal Circulation

Existing: Original staircases connecting ground floor, first floor, and attic level.

Proposed: Loft conversion accessed via continuation of existing staircase. No changes to circulation routes or dimensions.

Access to Rear Garden

Access to the garden will be the existing dining room door.

Inclusive Design

The proposals do not worsen the existing accessibility situation. The efficient use of roof space reduces the need for more extensive ground floor extensions.

6. CONCLUSION

This Heritage, Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the proposed works at 28 Priory Gardens represent sensitive and appropriate development.

The proposals represent high quality, sensitive development that preserves and enhances the heritage significance of the Highgate Conservation Area whilst delivering environmental and social benefits.

The application accords with national and local planning policy.