

Smerin Architects have been appointed by the owners of OmVed Gardens to act as Architects for the re-building of the existing glasshouse together with some minor modifications to the entrance area of the site to help improve how the site works. The aim of the Clients is to address the various technical shortcomings that the existing glasshouse structure has to help ensure its continued use as a multipurpose events space for both OmVed Gardens and the wider community and to improve the arrangements for those visiting the site.

Given that the existing glasshouse on the site is not of architectural significance, that the technical shortcomings of the existing glasshouse structure threaten its long-term viability as a multi-purpose events space and that studies undertaken to explore ways of mitigating these issues have been unsuccessful, the only viable strategy is to demolish the existing glasshouse and replace it with a new structure of the appropriate standard to support the activities within. With the footprint area and massing of the new building following that of the existing it should ensure that the proposed new glasshouse does not detract from the predominantly open character of the area in which the building is set as required by Haringey Council's 'Site Allocations DPD' document. Although subtly different, the construction and materials will ensure that the new glasshouse retains the essential characteristics of the existing. The organisation and proposed construction of the new glasshouse also addresses the Clients desire to build a building that as well as being architecturally considered is as environmentally sustainable and responsive as practically possible. This will enable the new glasshouse to provide comfortable conditions for the wide variety of people using it and meets the Clients aim to address the various technical shortcomings that the existing glasshouse structure has to help ensure its continued use as a multipurpose events space for both OmVed Gardens and the wider community and to improve the arrangements for those visiting the site.

The design of the new glasshouse will ensure people with restricted mobility can enjoy all parts of the new building. Wheelchair access into the building is available directly from the surrounding garden areas to the western side and access road to the eastern side and to the various floors of the building via the shallow ramps linking each level within the building. Disabled WC's are also provided to both the public and staff areas within the building. Access to the new glasshouse for pedestrians and vehicles remains as at present along Townsend Yard from Highgate High Street. The existing off-street parking spaces remain in their current location with the addition of designated spaces for bicycles. The new glasshouse will also be provided with a suitably sized rainwater harvesting tank that will collect rainwater from each roof area to provide water for irrigation purposes. This will considerably reduce the surface water run-off from the site and hence the overall level of flood risk to the area within which the site is set in accordance with Haringey Council's Policy DM26.

Taken together the proposals are intended to result in a new building and entrance to the site that is a high quality piece of design that is a positive addition to the Conservation Area and that will not be detrimental to its character or appearance.