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# DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

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**ERECTION OF FIRST FLOOR SIDE AND REAR EXTENSIONS,  
CONVERSION OF ROOF SPACE TO HABITABLE USE TO INCLUDE A REAR DORMER,  
INCREASE IN RIDGE HEIGHT AND  
ERECTION OF A PORCH**

**at**

**12 NORTH DRIVE  
RUISLIP  
HA4 8EZ**



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## **DOCUMENTATION**

This report is to be read in conjunction with drawings 23/12ND(A)/10 and 20.

## **BACKGROUND AND OUTLINE PROPOSAL**

The proposal is for a first-floor side and rear extension, conversion of the enlarged roof space and a front porch extension.

The property is located within the Midcroft Ruislip Area of Special Local Character and borders on the Ruislip Village Conservation Area to the rear. The rear of the property is visible from the public recreation ground at the rear, Church Field Gardens Park, albeit, partially screened by foliage.

Planning Approval was obtained in 2020 (planning reference 69045/APP/2020/837), which was never instigated. A pre-application enquiry was made for an enlarged scheme in 2022 (reference 69045/PRC/2022/241) and this was resisted, broadly on the basis that the proposal was for a full width rear extension facing out onto the Conservation Area. Concern was also raised regarding mix of different roof forms, where a traditional lead style flat roof with lead rolls was proposed on the central part of the extension. The intention was that this would be undertaken using a fibreglass system that for all intents and purposes, would have the appearance of a traditional lead roof. A similar lead style flat roof was proposed to the side extension at the front, where no objections were raised during the consultation.

The scheme was subsequently reduced in scale and while the proposal still involved a full width rear extension, the central part was set back considerably from the two projecting side wings and with the traditional lead style flat roof omitted. The scheme was approved on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 under planning application 69045/APP/2023/646.

The current proposal seeks to reinstate the central lead style flat roof to the rear, although with a 450mm set-back.

## **PRINCIPAL OF DESIGN**

On both applications 69045/APP/2020/837 and 69045/PRC/2022/241, the principal of raising the roof has been accepted and this has not changed on the current proposal. With both these schemes, the property is extended across the full width at the rear, albeit, to different extents and the principal of a full width first-floor rear extension is established in principle.

One of the concerns raised during the Pre-Application Planning Advice is confirmed as follows:

***The full width, full depth rear extension would not be subordinate and would have an adverse impact on the appearance and proportions of the original dwelling to the rear as there would be nothing retained of the original.***

It is evident from the two applications that have been approved that the principle of the full width extension is deemed acceptable by the council and can only conclude that the matter is then one of design. It should also be stressed that while the properties fronting the highway express a high degree of detail and character incorporating many design traits from the arts & crafts period, the original rear elevations are more simplistic in form and add little to the historic nature of both the Conservation Area and Area of Special Local Character (ASLC). This is illustrated by the photograph below.



***View of Existing Rear Elevation***

When these properties were designated, they were not directly included within the Conservation Area, or conversely specifically detailed in any Character Appraisal of the ASLC. There were also no Article 4 Directions put in place controlling permitted development rights under the GPDO. The officers designating these areas clearly placed little importance on controlling development that faces the rear of North Drive. Had this been the case, they would have been included and restrictions put in place.

In terms of massing, scale and bulk, the principle of the size and depth of the extension has already been established under application 69045/PRC/2022/241, with the two projecting wings and associated hipped roofs. The proposed additional in-fill will be screened by the two opposing wings and cannot be harmful to the either the adjoining properties or general views along the street scene.

The infill will of course be visible from directly behind the property from within the rear garden, along with restricted views from the park. The issue from this perspective will be one of design, rather than massing.

The Pre-Application Planning Advice continues as follows:

***In addition, the proposal appears at odds as it is all on the same plane but with a mix of roof profiles on a singular first floor roof extension.***

Following through on the planning history, it is the provision of the lead style flat roof linking the two projecting wings at the rear that was the contended part of the development. The remainder of the scheme has since benefitted from Householder Planning Approval. It is not quite understood where the concerns lie, as the roof profiles remain the same, albeit with a flat roof linking the main defined pitched areas of roof.

The Pre-Application Planning Advice report further refers to the resistance of flat roofs to two-storey extensions, as detailed under Policy DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan. However, this isn't explored any further in the report and the acceptance of the flat roof to the front that was approved on the subsequent planning application appears to accept the suitability of flat roofs where the principles of good design are employed. This is of course a situation where good design should take precedence over policy and it is reassuring that this principle was applied on this application.

The principle of full width rear extensions is generally accepted under Policy DMHD 1: Alterations and Extensions to Residential Dwellings, except in designated areas or as extensions to Listed Buildings or Locally Listed Buildings. The main point of contention would appear to be the property's location at the fringe of the Conservations Area. There does not appear to be a Character Appraisal published for the ASLC on Hillingdon's website and in the absence of any Article 4 Directions, enforcement of this can only be guided through the Local Plan (Development Management Policies). Policy DMHB does provide some general guidance for ASLC's, but nothing specific to the Midcroft Ruislip Area. Irrespective of planning policy, the test, is of course whether the development would be harmful to the historic asset.

## **DESIGN IN THE HISTORIC CONTEXT**

As discussed previously, the original properties fronting the highway express a high degree of detail and character with design traits from the arts & crafts period, with the original rear elevations being more simplistic in their design, adding little to the historic nature of both the Conservation Area and ASLC. While there is a desire from a conservation perspective to retain a status quo, there is also an argument for allowing development that is not only sympathetic to the historic asset but enhances it. Other properties have been extended in close proximity and while they are perfectly acceptable in terms of policy compliance and conservation, they add very little to the vistas enjoyed from the public space behind.



The use of carefully considered areas of flat roof using high quality materials, finished in lead with lead rolls was commonplace in the arts and crafts movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Roof designs were organic, using such areas of flat roof to link more discreetly designed pitched roofs and was a means to limit the scale and bulk of the roof whole providing visual containment.



***Marsh Road, Pinner***

The photograph above is just one example of such detailing used on Marsh Road, Pinner. The photos below show further examples, giving arial views of properties in the Four Oaks Conservation Area, Sutton Coldfield.



***Ladywood Road, Sutton Coldfield***



### ***Four Oaks Road, Sutton Coldfield***

The current design seeks to replicate this format, which was used extensively during the arts and crafts period, reflecting good quality design and craftsmanship. The proposed extension will therefore sit comfortably in its' surroundings where it faces out onto the Conservation Area. Rather than being harmful, it will enhance and complement the historic nature of the neighbourhood in which it is located.

With the current proposal, to introduce some texture into the rear elevation the infill at the rear has been set back by 450mm from the main rear elevation. This will allow a more natural intersection between the pitched and flat roofs, while allowing the extension to read as being more subservient. The original proposal that formed part of the pre-application consultation carried through straight across the rear with no set-back. The result of this has been to soften the appearance of the rear elevation.

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

The principle of a full width rear extension has been established following the two previous planning applications that have been approved. The proposed additional first floor in-fill at the rear will not increase the perceived massing of the extension with the low-level flat roof providing a sympathetically designed link between the two opposing wings of the property. The set-back at the rear will also assist in softening the appearance of the elevation.

The question is then one of design, where the detailing adopted will reflect a practice that was commonly implemented during the arts and crafts period. Given the historic context, the extension will sit comfortably within its' environment.

Given the forgoing, we consider the design of the extension to be sympathetic to the historic context of it's setting and do not believe that the proposals will be harmful to the street scene or indeed, the historic setting of the Conservation Area.