

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT: 33 BRAMBLE WALK EPSOM

Site and Situation.

This 2 bedroom bungalow occupies a small level plot overlooking Epsom Common, buffered from the narrow road by a small green. With frequent dog walkers, ramblers and limited off road parking the street scene from the common is dominated by cars, vans and SUV's.

There are bus services within 10 minutes walk of the property with access to Epsom town centre providing services, shopping facilities and links by rail and road to central London and the rest of Surrey.

It is situated in a conservation area which is a mostly semi and detached residential homes largely privately owned, mixed in style, age, size and state of repair, some dating back to the 19th century but many post war developments too.

Although in a conservation area, some of the properties have fitted replacement windows, many of which are UVPC and out of keeping with the original sash window-frame design, typical of late Victorian/Edwardian period. Many of the roof coverings too have replaced slate or plain tiles with modern interlocking ones which lack the finesse of its predecessors. Although there are some good examples of conserving original features in the area, along with some council owned property this building has suffered the same fate in its constructional history.

The internal arrangements have not been designed with the disabled in mind with different internal floor levels and few door opening 900mm wide, although some knock-through openings have improved the situation.

Planning history.

Although the original brick building with rendered and dashed elevations dates back to the 1900's, it has been extended to the rear boundary to provide more bedroom and living space with a garage to the side, although there appear to be no planning applications on file, other than the present owners rejected application in 2020. Given the rear extensions are of insulated blockwork with rendered and dashed elevations it may well be 30 or more years old and the garage earlier still.

The present building footprint is just under 100m² with the open space occupying a further 80m². The proposal changes this to 103m² buildings and 77m² open space.

Structure and fabric.

As shown in the plans the original building is solid 225mm brickwork with rendered elevations but the flank wall alongside the garage is single skin and even timber framed in places with a mixture of rendered elevations and even roof tiles along one wall. The rear additions are of basic quality with uvpc windows and there is little evidence of any additional insulation, saving the roof space.

The main roof is covered with interlocking coloured cement tiles and is an asymmetric A-frame with suspended ceilings off the internal walls supporting the roof structure. The ridge runs front to back joining the two original chimneys and leaves the internal ceiling heights very low, just over 2,2m, with eaves reaching the top of window levels. Windows and doors are mostly small and a mixture of aluminium, UVPC and timber double glazed but not to current standards. The limited amount of light and ventilation, with the smallest openings in

the living rooms, creates a rather oppressive living space which the current owner is keen to remedy.

The current use of the rooms, with the kitchen between two bedrooms and opposite the toilet at the rear, isolates it from the living rooms, and needs restructuring.

With solid floors and walls, out of date windows and doors the insulation is poor and the owner is keen to improve this aspect too.

The proposal.

With the removal of the utility room of 5.6m² and the construction of a wc/utility to the rear of the garage of some 8.5m², the increase of 3m² in floor area is very modest, but it allows the present kitchen to be moved and converted into a bedroom away from the living rooms. While constructing the small extension it is prudent to replace the timber frame flank wall element with an insulated one meeting current regulations and to provide the structure to support the load bearing beams implanted to open up the living space.

Owing to the roof structure, it is very difficult to completely vault the internal rooms to gain space and light without rebuilding the roof completely. However, with strategically placed roof lights along in the pitched roof, light and space could be achieved. This together with integrating the entrance passage into the living room with a low profile roof light will improve light and space with no effect upon the street scene.

There are a number of changes of window to door openings and vice versa along the north elevation to facilitate creating efficient kitchen space but these are screened from public view. The choice of French doors and casement style windows in white aluminium keeps the mullions and transoms narrow, specifically Origin OW70 series(see attachments), and will go some way towards redressing the balance to traditional frames away from upvc and is in keeping with the front elevation. Eventually it is hoped to replace even the rear upvc windows in the rear although these are hidden from view.

In a second phase to the planning application the owner wishes to apply to convert the garage to bedroom accommodation. Although she has no desire to effect this change in the near future, being a road user, the present situation is changing for both transport and work and having the option of a third bedroom would give her the flexibility she may well want to exercise.

Finally, coupled with these structural changes, the refurbishment will require and allow improvements to both insulation, light and space and a better living space for her current and future needs.