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DESIGN, ACCESS, AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

12 Scots Hill, Croxley Green, London, WD3 3AD

To accompany a Planning Application for

‘Demolition of existing outbuildings, removal of existing external canopy, extension of the existing building to provide storage to the existing shop at ground floor, extension of existing flat at first floor, new detached dwelling at rear with access off Windmill Drive’

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1. Assessment and Evaluation

1.1 Context

This application relates to a mixed-use building occupying a frontage of the road Scots Hill. The proposal relates to 12 Scots Hill, Croxley Green (WD3 3AD). The building is sited within the Croxley Green Conservation Area (1980). Currently, the existing building comprises of a ground floor shopfront. The shopfront has access to ground floor levels and to a raised rear external covered storage area and outbuildings. The first floor provides for a two bedroom residential flat.

This Design & Access Statement supports a planning application for a new two bedroom detached dwelling, to the rear of the existing property, fronting Windmill Drive; with a part two storey, part single storey rear extension to the existing shop and flat above, to both provide additional shop storage and to provide adequate habitable accommodation to the existing flat.

Our proposal aims to align with Three Rivers District Council's Guidelines and Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Planning Act 1990 (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas). The proposal seeks to maintain and to enhance the street appearance of the property which would have no detrimental visual effect to the Conservation Area. The redevelopment will continue to provide a commercial shop and provide adequate residential accommodation supporting immediate housing needs in the local area serving the existing commercial use.

1.2 Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan

POLICY CA1: New developments

New development should seek to conserve and, wherever possible, enhance the key elements of the character and appearance of the Character Areas described in Appendix B through careful design and massing of new buildings and the protection and enhancement of private gardens and open space without inhibiting innovative design.

To conserve the visual cohesion new development should pay respect to adjoining buildings and the uniqueness of the Character Areas without resorting to pastiche, and pay particular attention to:

- the layout and urban grain, especially in any proposed back-land development
- the building line, scale, eaves heights and ridge heights

□ the dominating architectural scale, detail and use of external materials

When required to support an application, a Design and Access Statement must demonstrate how the development respects the specific characteristics of the Character Area in which it is located.

Generally, where plot sizes are restricted, planning consent for all new development should specifically exclude Permitted Development Rights to contain future development and prevent infilling of amenity space.

POLICY CA2: Extensions to existing buildings and conversions

Domestic extensions requiring planning consent should seek to conserve and enhance the Character Areas described in Appendix B through the careful control of massing, alignment and height. Extensions that have an overbearing or adverse visual effect on the Character Area in which it is located will be resisted. Proposals should take account of the guidelines in Appendix C.

In the case of subdivision of a house into flats the impact of additional parking demand and the shared use of the garden must be considered as well as the social impact on the wider community of wide scale subdivision of dwellings.

Croxley Green Conservation Area Appraisal (1996)

4.0 History and layout of the area

4.7 The maps of the Croxley' Green highlight the historical development of uses and the importance this has on the present day character and appearance of the Green, with large detached houses and their open grounds; farmhouses and accompanying land; other important open spaces such as the orchards. And the open common.

5.0 Character and appearance of the Conservation Area

5.1 The Croxley Green Conservation Area is overwhelmingly green and open in character and appearance. Open space and powerful special quality surrounding many of the predominantly detached houses is of immense importance across the whole area. In the past a number of minor developments have occurred where land has been taken from a detached property and developed. This does not reflect the character of the conservation area and is to be avoided.

5.3 Materials that occur throughout the Conservation Area are mainly local red brick and stock yellow brick, timber, tiles and a little slate, with some stone, in the church.

5.20 Looking into the Conservation Area from Watford Road, the urban nature (buildings in close proximity, a major road, roundabouts, traffic, signage, etc) of this small section is apparent. However, views into the main Conservation Area are important from this position. The surrounding trees and other greenery emphasize this. Some of the buildings in this section do not contribute positively in any way to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

1.3 Location

The application site comprises a property at 12 Scots Hill, Croxley Green (WD3 3AD). The property is situated on a main road that offers a mixture of residential housing and commercial and Institutional outlets. The property benefits from excellent transport links with close proximity to both Croxley Underground and Rickmansworth TFL Station. The location is close to other amenities, including primary and secondary schools, places of worship, sporting venues and local and regional businesses, all accessible by foot, public transport and bicycle. There are main bus-stops on The Green and Scots Hill, less than 5 minutes' walk from the property.

The street scene in this locality is well-maintained and whilst characterized in the main by similar properties with a traditional ground, first and second floor façade, there is a wide mix of incongruous buildings.

There are no designated allocated parking spaces at the shopfront, there is parking available at the rear of the property on Windmill Drive and adjacent forecourt parking off The Green.

There are currently no trees on the site.

1.4 Existing Building Design

The existing two storey property, brick painted white, has a white rendered brick gable wall, with grey hanging tiles; window frames on the façade are painted white, with UPVC elsewhere. The shopfront has aluminium panelling and shutter. Pitched roof with grey tiles.

To the rear, are single storey outbuildings, in block, rendered, with flat roofs, a large area used for storage covered by a polycarbonate corrugated roof, which dominates that rear area of the site.

2. Design

2.1 Pre-Application advice (undertaken by ES Architecture Limited)

Pre - application advice given on the 20 May 2022 raised the following concerns:

In summary, I hold an in-principle objection to the proposed development. I am of the opinion that the proposed development would be of a size and extent that would constitute overdevelopment within the pre - application site. Further, the siting and design of the proposed development would be of excessive bulk, contrived and prominent by virtue of the excessive depth and roof designs and notable siting of the development within a prominent position visible from Scots Hill. Furthermore, there would be an inadequate extent and awkward siting of amenity space to serve the flats. I am of the view that the proposal in its current form would not be considered acceptable. It is therefore my opinion that the proposal would result in demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the pre- application dwelling, street scene and Conservation Area. By doing so, I am of the view it would be contrary to Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM1, DM2 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies Local Development Document and Croxley Green Conservation Area, the Policies CA1 and CA2 of the Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan (2018) and the Croxley Green Conservation Area Appraisal (1996).

It is considered that a significantly reduced two storey rear extension may be more appropriate.

Further, that a reduced overall scale of built form and plot coverage with detached built form may be more suitable.

Pre - application follow up meeting held on 22 June 2022 discussed:

- *Design of the scheme and suitable alternatives (including advice to reduce the scale of the proposal and break up the built form on site, concerns related to layout, privacy, overlooking and taking direction from appeal site no.4 Scots Hill (APP/P1940/W/19/3219890));*

As per the pre - application advice, the following changes were made to the proposal:

- The reduction in scale of the two storey rear extension to existing shop and flat and the new three bedroom two storey dwelling.
- The existing shop would extend at the ground floor to provide a storage area. The storage area now has a flat roof and would extend at the first floor at a depth of 3m to serve bedroom two and bedroom three. It would have a valley hipped roof formation with a ridge height of 6m

(measured from the highest point of ground level adjacent) falling to the existing eaves height.

- The new dwelling at the rear of the property has been reduced in scale. The building now has a hipped roof with a ridge height of 6.9m falling to an appropriate standard eaves height. The rear dwelling to be accessed off the public access walkway to the north.

The response given by the Conservation Officer, as follows:

- The scheme has improved from the initial proposal.
- There is a preference for only one hipped projection to the first floor flat and shop extension.
- There is a preference for a more ancillary appearance to the new dwelling.
- There are concerns relating to the depth of the single storey rear extension (off the new dwelling).

The follow up proposal forwarded to the Planning Officer attended to all the above points provided in the response by the Conservation Officer.

The follow up response from the Planning Officer on 16.08.2022 is as follows:

The follow - up proposal has made some attempt at improving upon the initial proposal, such as the reduction and separation of built form on site which is supported. However, the revised scheme retains some elements which continue to be of concern such as the size of the proposed new dwelling appearing cramped and contrived. In summary, I consider that the new dwelling remains large in size and would appear overly dominate and would appear unduly prominent and overwhelm the pre- application site. I would encourage that the rear dwelling is further reduced in size and you may wish to consider a reduction in the number of bedrooms for instance. I would also encourage that the rear parking space and its relationship between the shop and the new dwelling is re - considered. I therefore retain the view that in its current form the proposed development would not be considered acceptable. It is therefore my opinion that the proposal would result in demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the pre- application dwelling, street scene and Conservation Area. I am of the view it would be contrary to Policies CP1, CP3 and CP12 of the Core Strategy and Policies DM1, DM 3 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Polices Local Development Document and Croxley Green Conservation Area, the Policies CA1 and CA2 of the Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan (2018) and the Croxley Green Conservation Area Appraisal (1996).

2.2 Design Approach – Updated Design – Planning Application

(undertaken by ES Architecture Limited and CHeSS A&D Limited)

In consideration to the pre-application advice received from planning and conservation officers, the proposal submitted under this planning application responds positively to the above mentioned responses, comments and pre-application advice and is designed to meet the requirements of The Three Rivers Local Plan (2014), Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM1, DM2 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies Local Development Document and the Croxley Green Conservation Area (1980), Policies CA1 and CA2 of the Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan (2018) and Croxley Green Conservation Area Appraisal (1996).

The current proposal reduces both the overall scale and building footprint of the new detached dwelling at the rear of the site, providing a modest detached building in keeping with other residential properties adjacent. Access to the new dwelling has been relocated with access now from the rear of the site off Windmill Drive. The new detached dwelling has a ridge height of approx. 6.5m from highest adjacent ground level and 6.9m from lowest adjacent ground level and is set below the ridge height of the existing building, therefore subservient in scale to the existing building at 12 Scots Hill. Planning permission was granted at appeal, at the rear of no. 4 Scots Hill, for a new two bedroom dwelling which has a ridge height of 7.3m from highest adjacent ground level, the proposal at 12 Scots Hill is therefore subservient to the proposal at the rear of 4 Scots Hill which was granted on appeal.

The new detached dwelling at the rear of the property now consists of two bedrooms with shared bathroom on the first floor and a living, and kitchen dining area at the ground floor with access to a rear garden courtyard area.

The new storage space for the shop at the rear of the shop has now been reduced in overall size to 17.8 sqm GIA. The new pitched roof projection on the extension above to the existing flat has been reduced to a single hip roof.

The existing first floor residential flat above the shop at the front of the site off Scots Hill has been redesigned with an improved interior to provide a modest two bedroom flat. The existing kitchen and living room converted to create a better and well-lit open kitchen, dining living area; two bedrooms and bathroom served from the landing. The existing flat is contrived, the two bedrooms accessed off each other or from the main living area, the existing arrangement does not provide for family living and considered sub-standard.

The proposed design improves the living conditions within the existing building and provides for better ventilation and natural light to the building.

The overall site, shown on the ariel view computer generated image (CGI's) provided, clearly shows a proposal that is in keeping with the surrounding

Conservation Area, in terms of scale and bulk, the CGI's provided show that the proposal integrates with its surrounding, providing more space around the site, given that the existing site area at the rear is covered with either flat roofed single storey outbuildings or the polycarbonate corrugated sheet roof forming the storage area, which dominates this external area.

2.3 Materials

The new detached dwelling will consist of yellow stock brick, which is a character of the Conservation Area, balanced with render which is a feature of no. 12 Scots Hill. Windows to match the character of the area. A slate roof.

New walls to form the extension of the existing building at no. 12 Scots Hill, will be either rendered, as the existing structure, or painted brickwork to match. The tiles of the new roof will match the existing roof. All windows and doors will match the existing appearance.

All other materials required will be to match the existing.

3. Access

Access to the shop is retained on the ground floor and as the existing, from the front of the property off Scots Hill. The flat above, accessed from the new courtyard garden, off the side public passageway, which provides access to the existing property.

The new detached dwelling accessed from the rear of the site, off Windmill Drive. There is a secondary access from the rear garden courtyard to the side public passageway.

4. Requirements for the Conversion and Extension of Existing Buildings

As stated in Policy CA2 of the Croxley Green Neighbourhood Plan, domestic extensions and conversions of existing buildings must maintain or enhance the Character Area in which the site is located.

The proposed extension to the rear of the existing building at no. 12 Scots Hill is in keeping with the character of the existing property and the area itself, the proposed extension will not be visible from Scots Hill when front on, nor from Scots Hill when looking down the side public passageway and so will not affect the appearance and character of the street scene.

The new proposal will provide a feeling of more open space when walking along the public side passageway, by reduction in the continuous built form along this passageway.

The proposed extension to the rear of no. 12 Scots Hill, is to a lesser extent than previously approved under planning reference: 15/0913/FUL, approved July 2015.

Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard

Table 1 - Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

Using the space standard guidelines, the dwellings will comply with these requirements. The internal room (and external areas) for the new build comprise of:

Dwelling / AREA	Space Standards in sq. m	Area in sq. m
Flat (No. 12 Scots Hill) Total GIA	2 bed, 3 person, 1/2 storey = 61/70	69.5
GIA Ground Floor		9.2
GIA First Floor		60.3
Bedroom 1	11.5	12.6
Bedroom 2	7.5	10.5
Storage	2.0	2.5

Dwelling / AREA	Space Standards in sq. m	Area in sq. m
New Detached House (off Windmill Drive) Total GIA	2 bed, 3 person, 2 storey = 70	79
GIA Ground Floor GIA First Floor		39.5 39.5
Bedroom 1	11.5	13.5
Bedroom 2	7.5	8.5
Storage	2.0	3.0

5. Environmental Impact

The new detached dwelling and the extension to the existing building at no. 12 Scots Hill would comply with the current Approved Document Part L of the Building Regulations in force at the time of construction.

A Carbon Reduction Report has been submitted as part of the planning application; the Carbon Reduction Report shows that the new detached dwelling will achieve the required 5% saving over the requirements set down within Approved Document Part L of the Building Regulations 2013.

6. Heritage

The existing building, 12 Scots Hill, is sited within the Croxley Green Conservation Area (1980).

The existing main building is positioned at the front of the overall site, it currently comprises of a ground floor shopfront and first floor residential dwelling (flat).

The ground floor shop unit has access off Scots Hill. A secondary access off the public side passage, with an access at the rear off Windmill Drive.

The shopfront has access to the ground floor levels, with access onto the rear raised covered storage area. The rear area is mainly covered between the existing building at the front and the two single storey outbuildings at the rear by a polycarbonate corrugated roof which dominates the external space.

The existing first floor is used as a two bedroom residential dwelling (flat). The first floor is accessed from within the shop unit and also from the raised rear storage area. The existing flat has a contrived layout, with the bedrooms accessed off each other or from the main living area, which is considered sub-standard today.

The building has not been renovated for many years and is not considered to be of historical interest. The Croxley Green Conservation Area Appraisal (1996) states '*Some of the buildings in this section do not contribute positively in any way to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area*'.

The building, originally a stock brick, has been painted over, white, other external walls are rendered, with tile hanging to the prominent gable, which is out of character of the immediate area.

The building at no. 12 historically formed a pair of semi-detached buildings, the adjacent semi-detach consisting of a shop and residential accommodation above, the existing building forming part of a 'row' of houses on this side of Scots Hill, the other houses and shops forming part of the 'row' were demolished (which is why no. 12 Scots Hill has the out of character hipped/gable roof arrangement) to make way for the re-development of Highfield House and the development known today as Windmill Drive, the new estate was constructed during the 1970's.

7. Context

The applicant, and owner of the shop unit resides within the two bedroom flat above with family, the proposal to be considered under this planning application utilises best use of the land, to provide additional family accommodation, the new detached dwelling and extended existing flat above the shop, to be used solely by the owner and applicant as their family residence, to maintain close proximity to the business, enabling a good and sustainable live work life, providing additional security living on site.

With increased property values, the applicant and owner, would need to consider relocating away from the immediate area to provide suitable family residence offsite or to consider relocation of the business. Furthermore, the existing flat does not lend itself to a third-party occupation being above the shop with existing access arrangements, as the internal arrangement is considered sub-standard for family living and current renting criteria.

8. Summary and Conclusion

This statement is provided in support of the planning application submitted for *'Demolition of existing outbuildings, removal of existing external canopy, extension of the existing building to provide storage to the existing shop at ground floor, extension of existing flat at first floor, new detached dwelling at rear with access off Windmill Drive'*.

The proposal would use a previously developed site to provide an additional residential dwelling, retain and extending the shop unit at ground floor, providing space to extend and increase the area of the existing first floor flat to provide a better internal living arrangement.

Whilst it is acknowledged the site lies within the Croxley Green Conservation Area (1980), the buildings within this part of the Conservation Area are not the most prominent and have no historical interest. The Croxley Green Conservation Area Appraisal (1996) states *'Some of the buildings in this section do not contribute positively in any way to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area'*. There were buildings sited to the rear of the adjacent buildings (nos. 4 – 6) prior to the new residential development known as Windmill Drive Estate being constructed in the 1970's, which involved demolition of the shops and houses along Scots Hill which formed a 'row' of buildings which included no. 12 Scots Hill.

The proposed extension to the rear of no. 12 Scots Hill, is to a lesser extent than previously approved under planning reference: 15/0913/FUL, approved July 2015. Planning permission was granted at appeal, at the rear of no. 4 Scots Hill, for a new two bedroom dwelling - 'planning reference: 18/0970/FUL (19/0001/REF – PP-06940200)'.

The proposal to be considered under this planning application, would be undertaken without resulting in any adverse impacts on neighbouring property or the wider surrounding area, existing landscaping or trees, allowing the applicant and owner a sustainable live work arrangement.

For these reasons, we respectfully request planning permission be granted, in the best interest of the wider area, and for the existing business.

We thank the Local Planning Authority for considering the proposal and given the extent of pre-application advice, we look forward to working with you during course of the determination period, to seek a successful conclusion.