

Design & Access Statement

**24 Downs Hill
Beckenham
BR3 5HB**



Part demolition of the existing two-storey building and remodelling to construct a two-storey, residential dwellinghouse, with second-floor accommodation in the roof and basement accommodation to the rear; to contain seven bedrooms and three reception rooms with associated refuse storage, secure bicycle store, existing front and rear gardens, amenity space and off-street parking spaces

Planning Portal Reference: PP-05845110

Date of Submission: 21 February 2017

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 This Design and Access statement is to be read in conjunction with the planning application which has been submitted by Indigo Blue Works Ltd on behalf of William and Nicola Bloomer, who are the freehold owners of the above-mentioned property.

1.2 This Design and Access statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr and Mrs Bloomer, to support the planning application submitted on 21 February 2017 (Planning portal reference PP-05845110) for the proposed part demolition of the existing two-storey building and remodelling to construct a part two-storey residential dwellinghouse, with second-floor accommodation in the roof space and basement accommodation to the rear; to contain seven bedrooms and three reception rooms with associated refuse storage, secure bicycle store, existing front and rear gardens, amenity space and off-street parking spaces.

1.3 The proposal is to reuse the original foundations of the existing house, and some of the external walls, to form a new Class C3 residential dwellinghouse. The remodelled building will be drawn in at the sides (compared to the wider existing building) to create a separation gap at the north and south boundaries and create a house that sits comfortably and distinctly in its own plot (the existing building runs the full width of the plot, including a side extension to the north and garage to the south). By reusing much of the existing property and extending rearwards, a more sustainable, modern home can be provided that will create much improved and more flexible accommodation and will make a far greater contribution to the Downs Hill Conservation Area.

1.4 Mr and Mrs Bloomer bought the property in late autumn 2016 with the express intention of remodelling it as a permanent home for their own young family.

1.5 The proposal, including the design element of the development, is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), regional planning policies in the form of the London Plan and the London Borough of Bromley's local planning policies and documents, as set out in this Design and Access Statement. The proposal also responds well to the pre-application feedback and advice received in February 2017.

1.6 In addition to a remodelled building, the proposals will also excavate a new basement level. The new basement will be formed in the rear half of the proposed footprint and extend rearwards below the existing garden terrace. Because of the fall of the land from west to east the effects of the new basement will not be seen from the front of the house or in the street scene. From the rear, it is possible to set the new lower accommodation into the folds and terraces of the landscape so that the ground-floor accommodation can still be accessed at the existing level and the new basement accommodation can also come out onto a lower terrace and also make full use of the topography of the sloping garden. Neither of these terraces, or the basement accommodation itself will be seen from any neighbouring properties, neither will the terraces overlook any part of the neighbouring houses or their gardens. The redevelopment currently taking place at 28 Downs Hill (two doors away) makes similar use of the local topography, albeit on a grander scale in that case.

1.7 Following helpful pre-application advice from the Local Planning Authority (LPA), the submitted design has been modified to better blend with its surroundings and immediate neighbours and makes an improved contribution to the heritage asset of the conservation area. The design steps back at the sides to create new separation gaps at the boundaries and also creates an interesting and varied roofscape

borrowing both pitched and hipped forms typical in the area, and incorporating dormers to the front and roof-lights to the rear as is common throughout the area.

1.8 The remodelled house adds a part second-floor, master bedroom suite of accommodation, incorporated into the roof space. The three houses to either side of 24 Downs Hill (numbers 26, 28 and 30 to the north and 20, 18 and 16 to the south) all contain part second-floor accommodation in their roof spaces. The overall height of the proposed building follows the existing ridge height, rising only slightly at the centre of the new property. The proposal is no taller than its northern neighbours, and is smaller in both scale and height to the new property under construction two doors away at 28 Downs Hill. The new house has also been designed to meet its neighbours either side without 'cramping' them as maybe the existing house does and by lowering and hipping the roof the design does not appear in anyway overbearing.

1.9 By substantially reusing the existing building, as well as introducing many environmentally-friendly and energy-saving features, the new house will make a very positive contribution to the Council's sustainability aspirations. The remodelled building will sit on the existing foundations to the front and north elevations – drawn in slightly at the sides and extended rearwards into the landscape of the garden at basement level. Although all the houses in the area are unique buildings, the proposed new rear elevation does not extend beyond the neighbouring building lines.

1.10 It is acknowledged by the pre-application advice, that the existing house (built in 1951) does not contribute to the conservation area and that its replacement maybe worthwhile. By following the advice, the applicants have sought to create a modern house, with flexible accommodation, in a contemporary, but complementary design that can provide quality family living and make a positive contribution to the local built and natural environment.

2.0 Introduction

The purpose of this statement is to explain the design and land use context of the proposal and to then deliver an impact assessment of these under a brief examination of applicable planning policy in light of the received pre-application advice.

2.1 A remodelled home

2.1.1 After initial thought and design work to create the perfect home for the Bloomer family, the applicants submitted a pre-application enquiry in late 2016. Following dialogue and internal consultation, feedback and advice was received from the LPA in early February 2017.

2.1.2 Planning permission is now sought for the redevelopment of 24 Downs Hill to include the part demolition of the existing two-storey building and remodelling to construct a part two-storey residential dwellinghouse, with second-floor accommodation in the roof space and basement accommodation to the rear; to contain seven bedrooms and three reception rooms with associated refuse storage, secure bicycle store, existing front and rear gardens, amenity space and off-street parking spaces.

2.1.2 Although based on the existing foundations and reusing much of the external structure of the existing house, the proposed development will create a substantially new and remodelled home. The proposed accommodation will range over the ground and first floors as present, extended to the rear, with the addition of a master bedroom suite in the roof space and a new basement to the rear. The submitted plan drawing and front and rear elevational drawings (drawing number 2720-0) show the proposed building with the existing house, superimposed in red, to show the comparison of footprint, height and scale.

2.1.3 The proposed redevelopment will maintain the same amenity space in both front and rear gardens, with the addition of external rear terraces at both ground-floor and basement levels to replace the existing external ground-floor level terrace area. All existing trees, shrubberies, screens and boundary treatments will be maintained.

2.1.4 Secure bicycle storage and refuse and recycling storage is provided within the development and with easy external access. A minimum of two onsite car parking spaces are provided within the development.

2.2 The site and surroundings

2.2.1 The site is located on the eastern side of Downs Hill, opposite its junction with The Avenue, and forms part of the Downs Hill Conservation Area. The current house has been on this site for 65 years.

2.2.2 The topography of the land in the local area slopes quite steeply from west to east and more gradually from north to south. As a result, the houses on the west side of Downs Hill are considerably elevated compared to the subject property and its neighbours on the east side. To the rear of the property, the hillside affords dramatic views over the wooded valley and railway, towards Bromley and Chislehurst to the east.

2.2.3 The position of the property, together with established building lines and mature landscape, means it is not overlooked and neither does it overlook any of its neighbours. The remodelled house has been carefully designed to preserve this privacy in all directions.

2.2.4 The Downs Hill Conservation Area SPD and the pre-application advice, have helped shape the redesign of the submitted proposals. The applicants' original design was an unashamed modern house which borrowed contemporary design features from others in the conservation area and from the one locally listed building, the flat-roofed, art deco design in nearby Foxgrove Road. It was helpful to understand that contemporary design is not ruled out by the LPA in this location and it is acknowledged that both the designs and materials vary across the conservation area. However, in responding to the pre-application advice the applicants have nevertheless sought to radically overhaul the proposed design to better blend with the immediate neighbours and avoid being over dominant in the street scene. The pitched and hipped roof is now more typical of the others in the immediate vicinity, including features such as accommodation in the roof space, incorporating dormer windows. The overall scale and height is in keeping with number 26, next door and less than the redevelopment under construction at number 28. The buildings to the south follow the sloping nature of the natural topography of the land and appear lower than the subject property, just as the houses on the opposite side of the road are much higher.

2.2.5 The detail of materials and finishes can be a matter controlled by condition, but it is the applicants' intention for the external walls to be finished predominately in white render, again in keeping with many other houses in the conservation area.

2.2.6 The proposed redevelopment has been designed to replace the unremarkable existing building, blending in scale and height with its neighbours to make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

3.0 Proposal

Part demolition of the existing two-storey building and remodelling to construct a two-storey, residential dwellinghouse, with second-floor accommodation in the roof and basement accommodation to the rear; to contain seven bedrooms and three reception rooms with associated refuse storage, secure bicycle store, existing front and rear gardens, amenity space and off-street parking spaces.

3.1 This application seeks planning permission to replace the existing house with a better designed, more modern and flexible accommodation, which will involve the part demolition of the existing two storey building, the reuse of existing foundations and some external walls and the excavation of a new basement space to the rear.

3.2 The proposed redevelopment will reuse the existing footprint of the current house and extend it rearwards. As requested by the pre-application advice, the applicants have drawn the remodelled building in at the sides and reduced the overall width compared with the existing building. The new house does however reuse the existing north wall and the foundations on which it sits so the overall position of the redevelopment cannot vary any further from that which is now proposed.

3.3 The proposed design will be an improvement to the current bland appearance of the existing house which, it is acknowledged, fails to make any significant contribution to the conservation area. Please see below photos 1 and 2 of the present house and diagram 1 – 4 of the proposed redevelopment.



Photo 1 Existing building at 24 Downs Hill



Photo 2 Rear view of the existing house

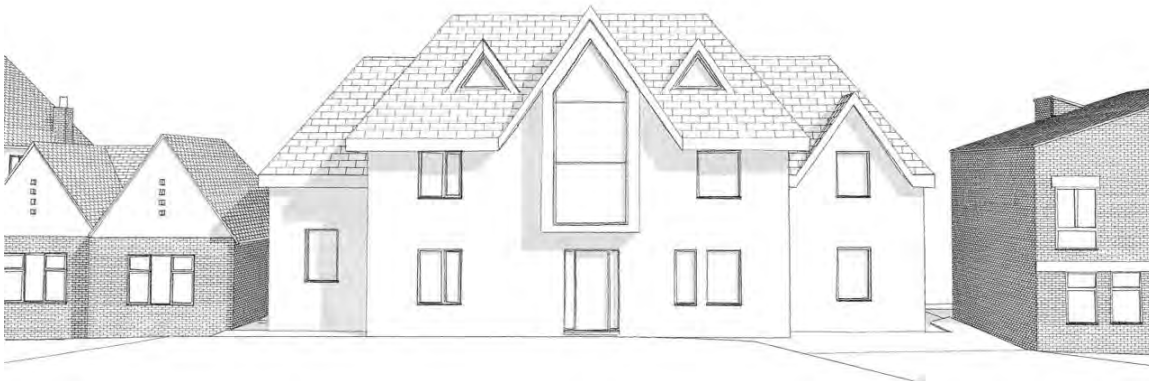


Diagram 1 Proposed redevelopment seen from the front



Diagram 2 Proposed redevelopment seen from the rear



Diagram 3 Comparison front elevation showing the proposed redevelopment in relation to its neighbours



Diagram 4 Comparison rear elevation showing the proposed redevelopment in relation to its neighbours

3.4.1 The proposed development is empathetic to its surroundings, respecting its neighbours in both height and scale, and will complement the local conservation area. Diagrams 5–8 below show perspectives of the proposed redevelopment seen looking in both directions from the front and the rear. It is important to remember that these perspectives are for architectural and scale comparisons purposes only. The diagrams do not show any of the existing trees (all of which will be retained) or any other landscaping features or boundary treatments. As a result, these diagrams do not represent actual views. In reality, the mature trees and landscaping on the subject site and in the surrounding plots affords only glimpses of any one house and very little of an actual street scene when seen from the public highway.



Diagram 5 Perspective of the proposed redevelopment in relation to its neighbours as seen from the front looking south from 28 Downs Hill (currently under construction)



Diagram 6 *Perspective of the proposed redevelopment in relation to its neighbours as seen from the front looking north from 18 Downs Hill*



Diagram 7 *Perspective of the proposed redevelopment in relation to its neighbours as seen from the rear looking south from 28 Downs Hill (currently under construction)*

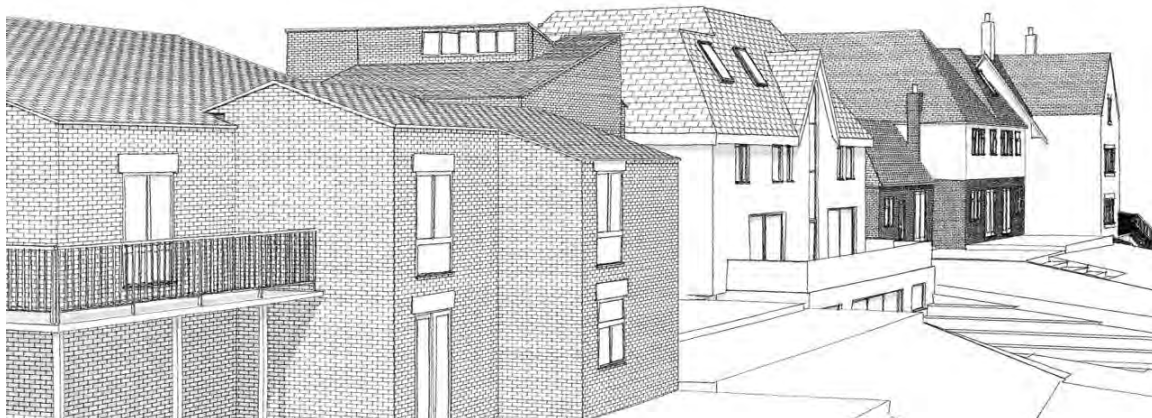
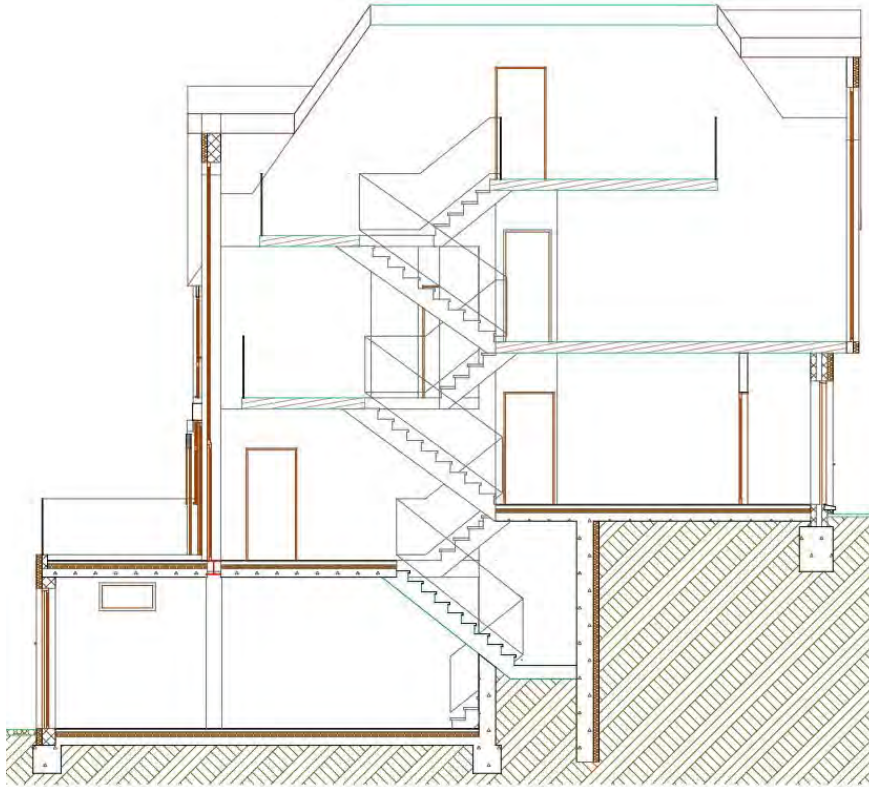


Diagram 8 *Perspective of the proposed redevelopment in relation to its neighbours as seen from the rear looking north from 18 Downs Hill*

3.4.2 As can be seen from Section 1 below each floor in the proposed redevelopment has a split level and accommodation at the rear of the redevelopment is 1m lower than accommodation at the front. This provides greater design interest within the new house and also ensures that the extended rearward section of the redevelopment, and its ground-floor terrace, cannot overlook neighbouring properties on either side.

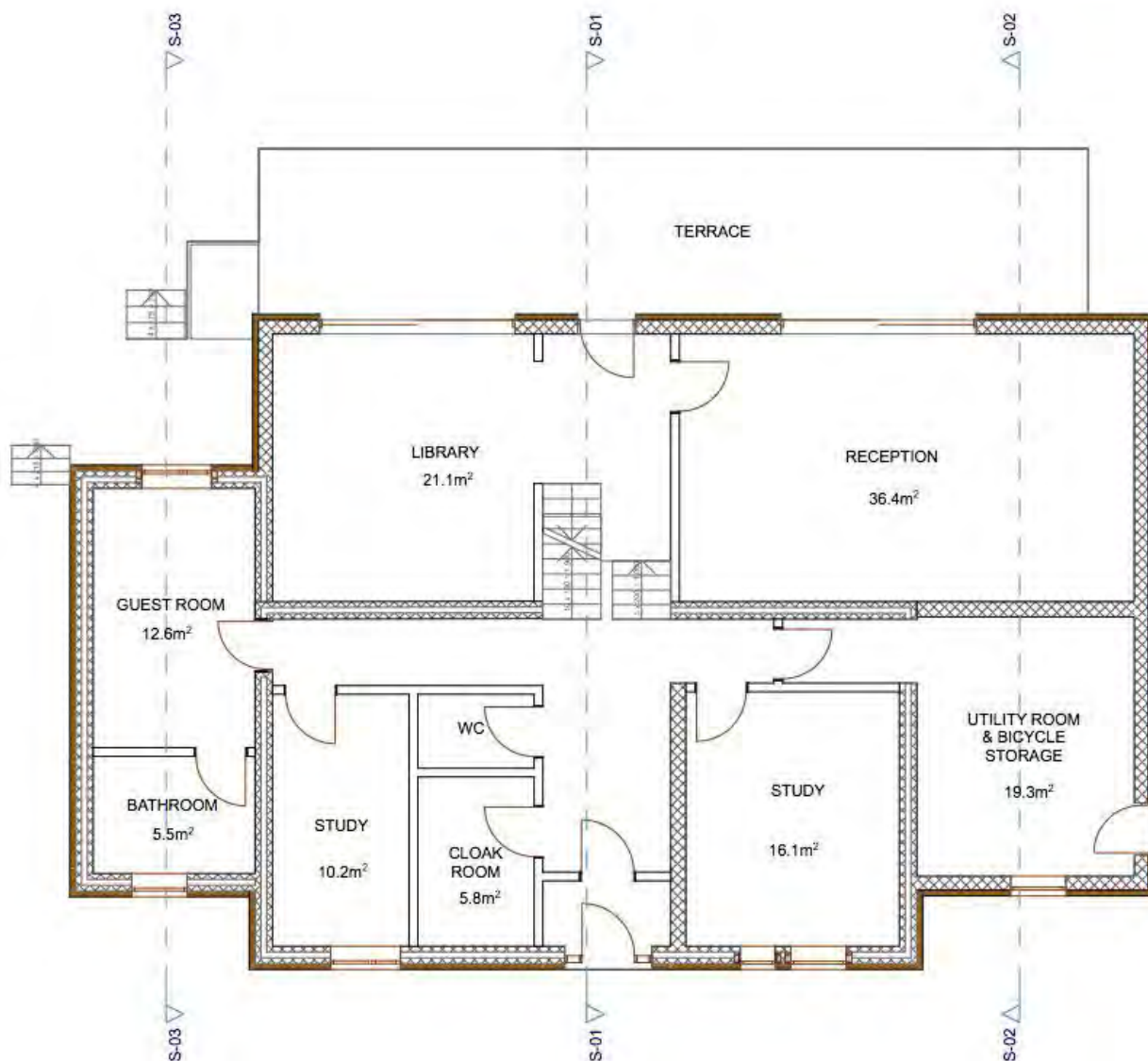


Section 1 Showing the proposed rear accommodation in the redevelopment 1m lower in relation to the front of the property

3.5 Schedule of proposed accommodation by floor

3.5.1 Ground floor

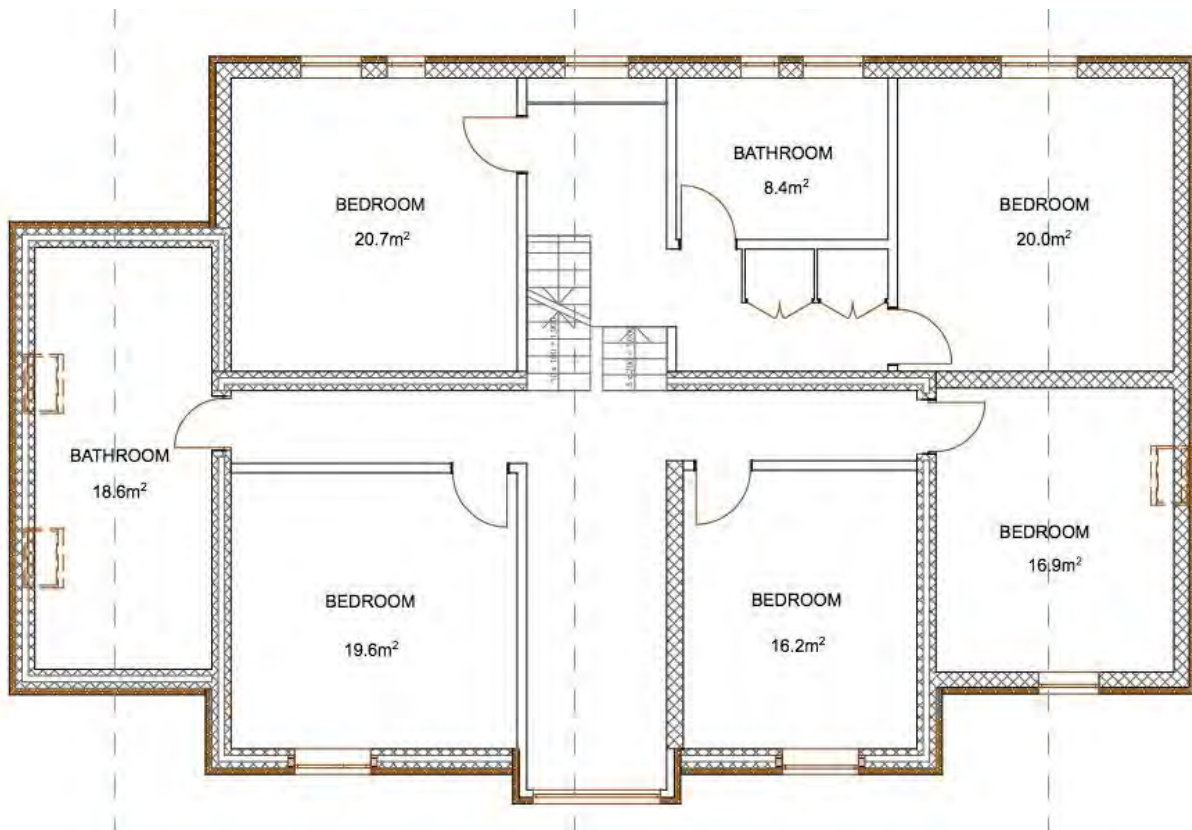
- Reception 36.4m²
- Study 1 16.1m²
- Study 2 10.2m²
- Library 21.1m²
- Guest Room 12.6m²
- Bathroom 5.5m²
- Cloakroom 5.8m²
- Utility Room and Bicycle Store 19.3m²



Plan 1 Ground floor accommodation

3.5.2 First floor

- Reception and kitchen (approx. 4.48m² – 7.17m²)
- Bedroom 1 20.7m²
- Bedroom 2 20.0m²
- Bedroom 3 16.9m²
- Bedroom 4 16.2m²
- Bedroom 5 19.6m²
- Bathroom 1 8.4m²
- Bathroom 2 18.6m²



Plan 2 *First floor accommodation*

3.5.3 Second floor

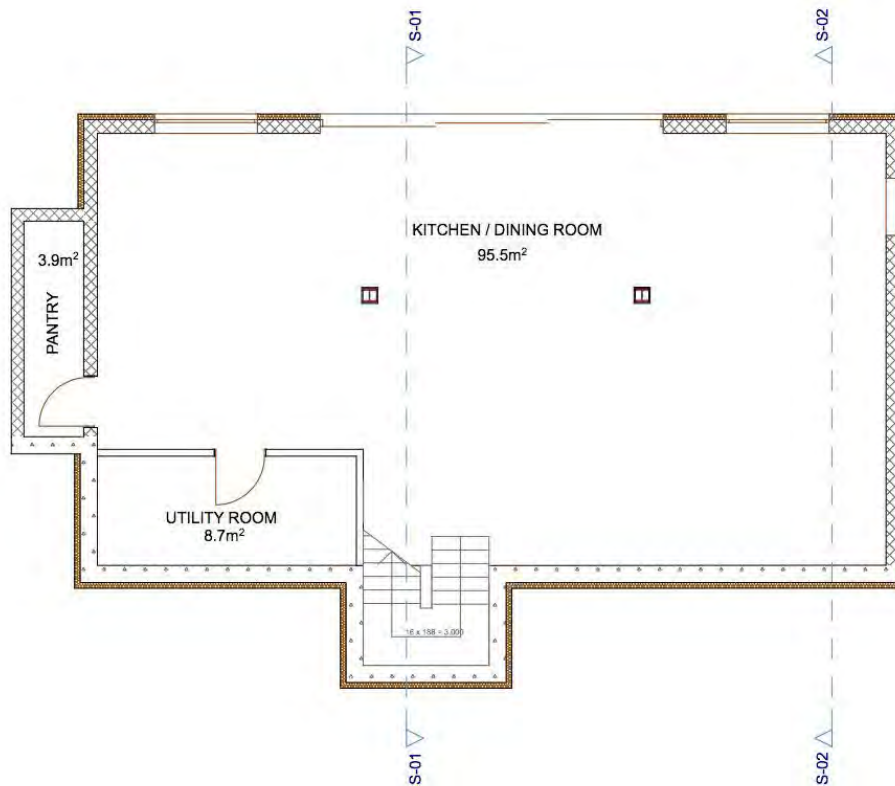
- Bedroom 21.1m²
- Bathroom 15.3m²
- Master Suite
 - o Bedroom 21.8m²
 - o Bathroom 12.6m²
 - o Dressing Room 10.1m²



Plan 3 *Second floor accommodation*

3.5.4 Basement

- Dining Room/Kitchen 95.5m²
- Pantry 3.9m²
- Utility Room 8.7m²



Plan 4 Basement level accommodation

The total gross internal floor area of the proposed accommodation, combined with bicycle storage, refuse storage, utility, lobby and ancillary space is **546 m²**

3.6 Proposed demolition and reconstruction

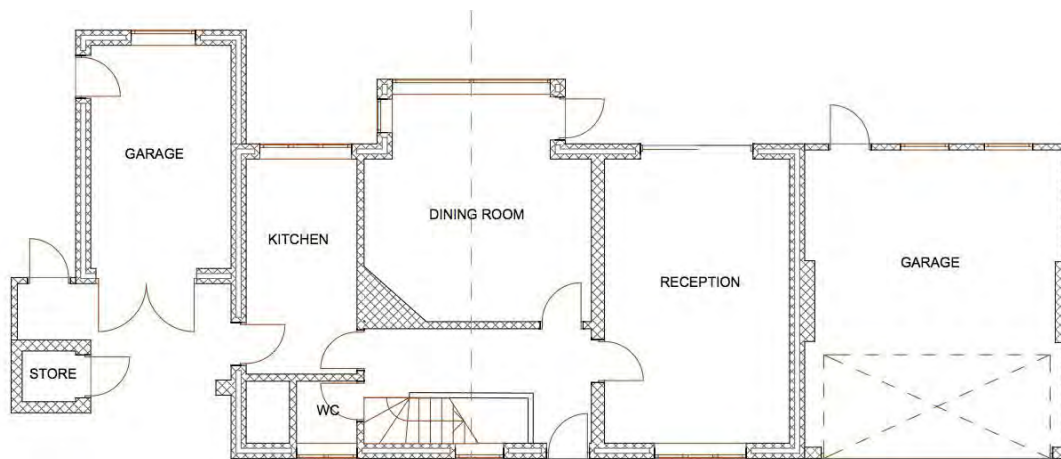
The proposed remodelled house will be built reusing much of the existing property. In order to reconstruct the proposed building, it will be necessary to demolish the garage, on the south side of the of the existing building, the storage area on the north side, the bay to the rear, the roof and chimneys, most of the internal walls, and the first-floor deck will also be removed. The external walls and foundations are to be retained and incorporated into the new building.

See submitted drawings for details.

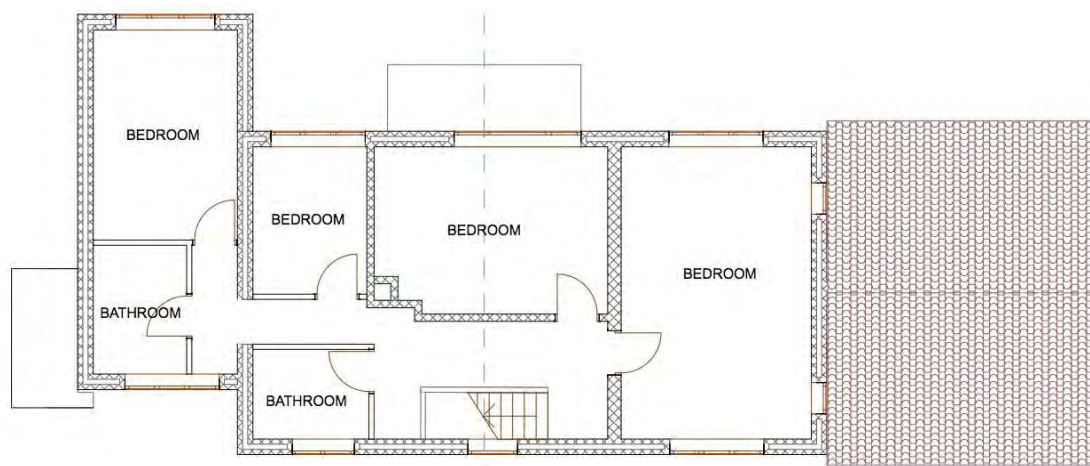
4.0 Layout and design

4.1 The property currently comprises a two-storey, four-bedroom house with accommodation at ground and first floor levels. The building appears to have been extended from its original 1951 form with a two-storey side extension to the north taking the property to that boundary with number 26, and with the addition of a garage to the south, again extending the built form across the whole site to the boundary with 20 Downs Hill (a house that was built in the 1960s). The proposal is to partly demolish the existing building and construct a two-storey, building, extended rearwards, with accommodation in the roof space, reusing the existing foundations and some of the external walls, together with a newly excavated basement area to the rear. The new house will provide seven bedrooms and three reception rooms, with study rooms, a library, and with associated utility spaces, refuse storage, a secure bicycle store and with onsite parking space for at least two cars.

4.2 The existing property is unremarkable in its design, finish and features. The pre-application feedback acknowledges that it fails to make any significant contribution to the conservation area or the local street scene. The ground floor is currently poorly laid out with two reception rooms, a kitchen, store room and garage, as shown in plan 5 below. The proposed ground floor layout of the redevelopment makes far better use of available space for modern family living.



Plan 5 Ground Floor - Existing



Plan 6 First Floor - Existing

4.3 The existing external ground-floor terrace, to the rear of the house, will become a balconied terrace sitting above the proposed basement area to be excavated below. It will be at a lower level than the existing terrace however, so there can be no overlooking to, or from, neighbouring properties.

4.4 A new general utility and storage space is created at ground-floor level with easy internal and external access. This will be used for secure bicycle storage, as well as for refuse and recycling arrangements. Adequate off-street parking is provided on the driveway for at least two cars.

4.5 Design approach

4.5.1 The applicants still desire a unique house that fully meets the developing needs of their family. The design approach has been to deliver their internal space and layout requirements; respond to the pre-application feedback to better blend with its immediate neighbours; meet the requirements of the Downs Hill Conservation Area SPD; and for the building to sit comfortably in its plot without over-dominating the street scene. The applicants trust all these criteria have been successfully achieved.

4.5.2 The applicants have also been keen to achieve a sustainable, energy-efficient and environmentally friendly home. To that end the remodelled house will incorporate several features to significantly reduce the site's carbon-footprint, its dependency on fossil fuels and help conserve water. Excavating the new basement space may facilitate the installation of a ground-source heat pump and the practicalities and cost-effectiveness of such an installation are being investigated. The design also gives possibilities for the inclusion of green roofs, roof tile photovoltaic arrays, and grey-water recycling. The applicants are evaluating a range of sustainability measures and will report further, in consultation with the LPA, during the planning process.

4.5.3 Throughout the redevelopment, the floor areas of all the rooms comfortably exceeds the minimum standards required by both regional and local planning policies.

4.5.4 Following the recent pre-application advice from the LPA, the applicants conducted a local design study of neighbouring and nearby properties in the Downs Hill Conservation Area (DHCA) . The photographs below show the range of designs and materials in this immediate part of the conservation area. Borrowing from many of these design features, the applicants have developed the submitted proposal. It is both a high-quality contemporary design and compatible with the local character, as required by the pre-application advice and the policies contained in the Downs Hill Conservation Area SPD and the local plan.

Neighbouring and nearby DHCA properties showing the range of design features and finishes adopted for the redesign of the proposed remodelled house.



Substantial properties opposite 24 Downs Hill showing pitched, hipped and gabled roofs



Downs Hill Conservation Area (DHCA) property showing white render and feature window



14 Downs Hill showing pitched and hipped roof with feature gable and white rendered finish



16 Downs Hill with second-floor roof space accommodation



A building of more modern design and finish at 18 Downs Hill



Another modern design next door at 20 Downs Hill



DHCA property showing roof space accommodation and a feature gable



More roof space accommodation and white rendered finish

5.0 Relevant Planning Policies

5.1 Development plan policies and standards

The Development Plan for the purposes of S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is the London Plan 2011, the London Borough of Bromley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and emerging Local Plan, a suite of planning documents that outline the borough's planning policies, including various supplementary planning documents.

5.2 The London Plan

Consolidated with Alterations since 2004 includes the objective: *To accommodate London's growth within its boundaries without encroaching on open spaces.* This proposal will meet the above objective, by only providing housing on land that has already been built upon and will not extend beyond established building lines, or infringe on any public space.

5.3 London Borough of Bromley UDP and emerging Local Plan

5.3.1 Relevant Policies

The submitted application will be determined in accordance with the following UDP policies:

BE1 Design of New Development

BE12 Development in Conservation Areas

BE14 Trees in Conservation Areas

NE7 Development and Trees

H7 Housing Density and Design

H9 Side Space

T3 Parking

T18 Road Safety

5.3.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance

The following are also likely to be relevant to the application:

SPG1: General Design Principles

SPG2: Residential Design Guidance

Together with the Supplementary Planning Document for the Downs Hill Conservation Area.

5.3.3 LB Bromley emerging Local Plan

We understand that the LPA's Local Plan is still to be submitted to the Secretary of State, these are nevertheless documents of material consideration and the draft policies will be given appropriate weight.

Draft Policy 4 Housing Design

Draft Policy 8 Side Space

Draft Policy 30 Parking

Draft Policy 32 Road Safety

Draft Policy 37 General Design of Development

Draft Policy 41 Conservation Areas

Draft Policy 43 Trees in Conservation Areas 3

Draft Policy 73 Development and Trees

All the relevant policies of the UDP and the emerging Local Plan have been considered and the proposed development has been designed with these in mind.

5.3.4 Internal space, layout and baseline standards

As demonstrated in this document, the footprint of all proposed rooms generously exceeds the minimum standard requirements.

5.3.5 Refuse and recycling

As shown in the proposed drawings in this document, adequate refuse and recycling storage is provided.

5.4 Design quality

5.4.1 At every level of planning policy, from the NPPF to the emerging Local Plan, requires good design and the integration of new development into the natural and built environment. With the guidance of local policy and the helpful advice of the pre-application feedback, the applicants believe that the proposed remodelled development recognises and responds to the distinctive local character and will contribute to creating a high architectural standard of quality urban design. The character of the subject property, in both its immediate and wider setting, has been examined in depth and the proposed development is considered to be in keeping with policy.

5.4.2 In particular, the DHCA SPD states:

The Council will expect all proposals for new development to conform to the character of the area, especially in regard to scale and height of construction, location within a plot and the design and materials used. It is

hoped that all improvement works will take into account the character of the buildings and alter them as little as possible.

Following the pre-application advice and the design study set out at 4.5.4 above, believe that the key point and objectives of the DHCA SPD have been met in the proposed redesign.

5.4.3 Although a larger building than the existing house, the proposed redevelopment does not stray beyond the established building lines of neighbouring properties. The proposals will not cause the loss of sunlight or daylight to adjoining dwellings or gardens. As requested, the applicants have taken the opportunity of redevelopment to improve the setting of the dwelling with its plot by creating space at the boundaries and drawing the proposed new building in at the sides.

5.4.4 Design conclusions

- It is accepted that the impact of the loss of the existing building on the character and appearance of the conservation area will not be great and indeed its replacement may be beneficial
- The proposed replacement building will now enhance the character and appearance of its setting and the wider conservation area
- The scale, height and footprint of the proposal is in keeping with the area in general and its impact on the visual and residential amenities of neighbouring properties will be minimal
- Overall, the applicants believe that submitted application represents an improvement on the existing building to compliment the heritage asset of the conservation area and its setting

6.0 Flooding

As supported by the Land Registry in association with the Environment Agency, 24 Downs Hill does not fall within a floodplain and is more than 500 metres from the nearest floodplain. The land is in an area which falls outside the extent of a floodplain, at the time of the Environment Agency's assessment of the likelihood of flooding. Generally, this means that the chance of either pluvial or fluvial flooding each year from rivers or run-off is 0.1 percent (1 in 1,000 or less).

7.0 Sustainability Appraisal

It is proposed that as part of the proposed works an efficient gas central heating system and a low energy lighting system will be installed together with high levels of insulation to all walls, including at basement level and in the roof. The applicants are very keen to create the most sustainable home practical and to this end they are exploring modern options that may be included into the construction. These include, the possibility of a ground-source heat pump that could be installed as part of the basement excavations, together with photovoltaic roof tiles that can blend with the conservation area setting, green roofs, and water efficiency and recycling options. These sustainability features will be reviewed with the planning authority as the application progresses to ensure that the LPA's sustainability checklist is met.

8.0 Drainage Strategy

Where practical, rainwater will be reused within the development and drained naturally into local aquifers using green roofs and garden soakaways. The foul drainage systems will discharge to existing sewers as required by building control.

9.0 Refuse Disposal Details

The proposal shows sufficient refuse and recycling storage and disposal arrangements required by local policy.

10.0 Other issues

The following reports and considerations are not deemed relevant given the nature of the proposed works and the specific application site factors:

- Landscaping comments
- Geotechnical Report
- Utilities Statement
- Air quality Assessment
- Sound Insulation Assessment
- Lighting Assessment
- Energy Statement
- Nature Conservation and Ecological Assessment
- Historical and Archaeological Assessment
- Transport and Highways Assessment
- Noise assessment

11.0 Conclusion

11.1 This design and Access Statement has been prepared by Indigo Blue Works Ltd on behalf of William and Nicola Bloomer, who are the freehold owners of the subject property, to support and explain the contents of an application for the redevelopment of 24 Downs Hill to include the part demolition of the existing two-storey building and remodelling to construct a part two-storey residential dwellinghouse, with second-floor accommodation in the roof space and basement accommodation to the rear; to contain seven bedrooms and three reception rooms with associated refuse storage, secure bicycle store, existing front and rear gardens, amenity space and off-street parking spaces.

11.2 This statement has examined the design and access aspects of the proposed scheme and concluded that it is an appropriate form of redevelopment in this location and should be supported.

IMPORTANT NOTE

PLEASE DO NOT REFUSE THIS APPLICATION. Should anything other than permission be considered, please allow us notice of any issues or objections prior to the eventual decision date and we will endeavour to review the current proposals further in discussion with the planning department, or withdraw the application if this is not considered an option.