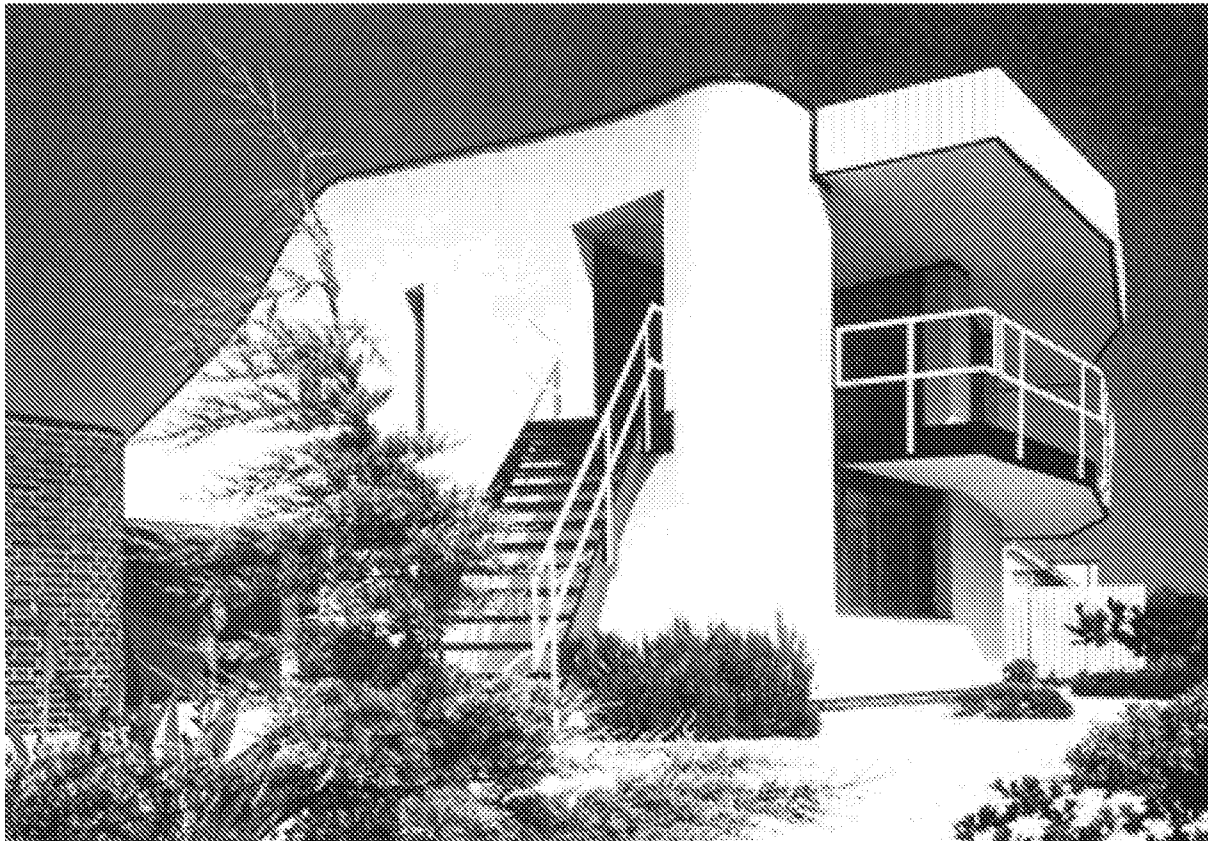


Vista Point, Tamarisk Way

Design & Access Statement & Heritage Impact Assessment



Introduction

Vista Point is a two-storey detached private villa dating from 1969-70 designed by the distinguished architect Patrick Gwynne (1913-2003). It was listed Grade II on 31st July 2006 (Historic England List Entry No. 1396577). It was originally commissioned by the Quantity Surveyor Kenneth Monk and occupies a generous seaside site with several associated structures including garages and a swimming pool. It was designed as a holiday house and is still used for this purpose by its current owner. The proposed works are to the existing garages and to enclose the link that connects the garages to the house. External landscape works are also proposed to improve the safety of the swimming pool and enhance the external garden area. By accommodating the brief and the needs of their growing family in the garage spaces, it reduces the demands on the original house.

Details of the property

Patrick Gwynne's first project—The Homewood, near Esher in Surrey, an outstandingly accomplished modern house for his parents in the mid-1930s, and designed when he was only 24, effectively set the pattern for his ensuing career the greater part of which was devoted to bespoke private house commissions for choice suburban or rural sites. His work is characterised by the extreme sensitivity to setting, lyrical planning often employing playful geometric figures, and an exceptional attention to materials, interior fit-out and domestic details.

Vista Point is typical of his oeuvre in all these respects, occupying a fine seaside garden site and adopting a butterfly plan form whereby the waisted central core fans out to address the principal outlooks on the landward and coastal facades. The main brick shell is rendered in white Mineralite pierced with deeply inset plastic coated metal window openings and rises to a lightly capped parapet containing a sloping roof. As at the Homewood where the piano nobile overlooks an extensive landscaped garden, the principal rooms at Vista Point are placed on the first floor to take advantage of the outward sea view. A generous faceted balcony is ranged symmetrically across the frontage above which the roof plane breaks forward in a dramatic canopy following the geometry of the balcony below, suggesting—in a nautical metaphor—the bridge or superstructure of a small cabin cruiser. Maintaining this association and optimising the uninterrupted seaward views, the balcony guarding is treated in the manner of ship's railings with minimal metalwork and no infill panelling.



View of Vista Point from Tamarisk Way

The garages, plinth and garden walls are built in dark/blue grey brick. The garages sit adjacent to the main house and curve round beneath the fascia. Originally a double car port and a single garage, but now with additional doors added to the car ports. The curved rear wall of the garages express the bays of for 3 cars inside. In front of the house to the south, is a terrace with steps down to the garden. The garage/carports are connected to the main house by a link that originally contained a store and yard and a covered link leading to the side entrance door.

There is a small single storey building to the south that provides supporting functions to the pool, both of which have been added to the property since it was built.



Original photos Vista Point

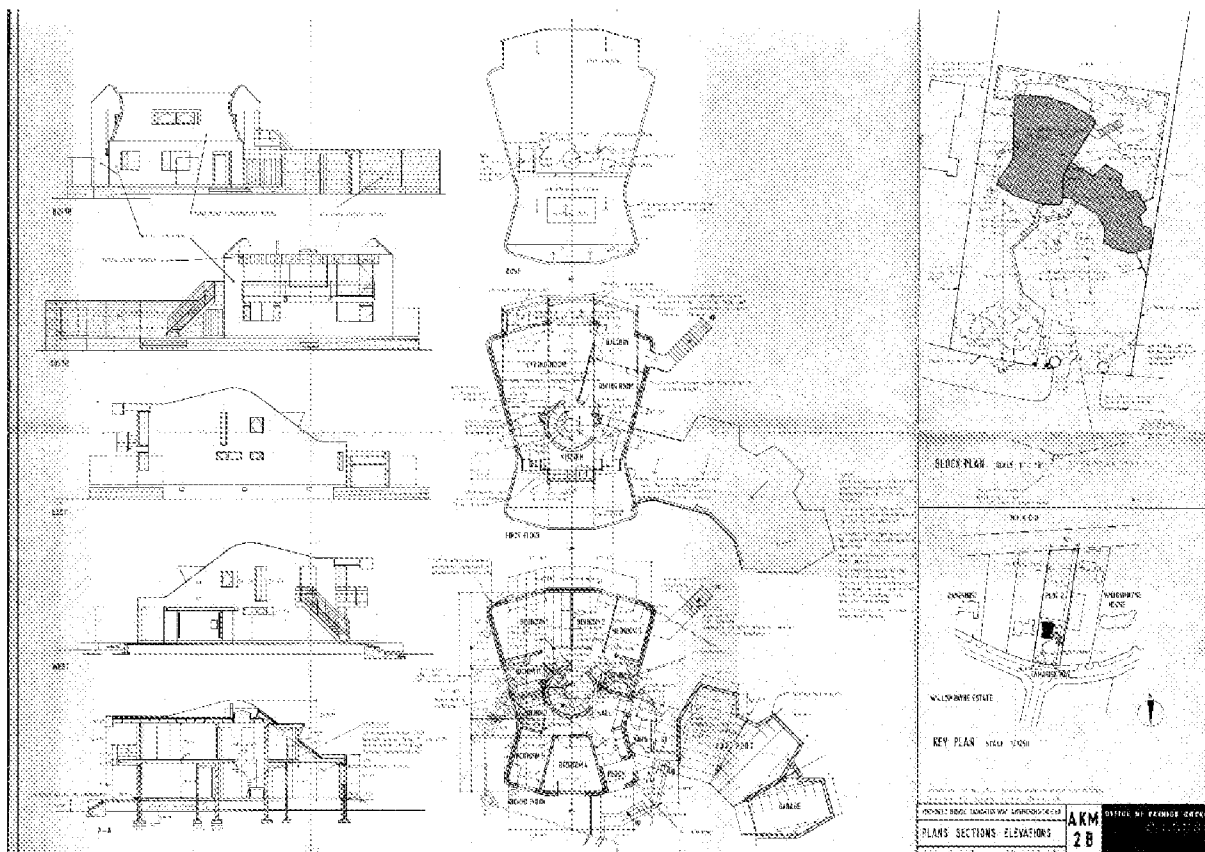
Avanti Architects Limited
July 2012



Existing view of pool and adjacent pool building



Existing view of South Elevation

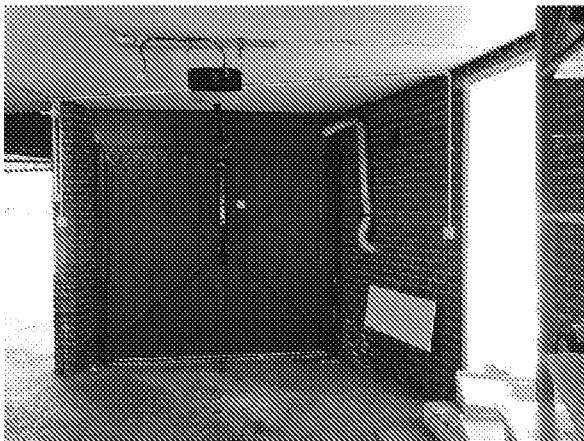


Original Patrick Gwynne drawings of Vista Point

Proposed works

It is proposed to convert two of the three existing garages into habitable accommodation to create a new family living space and enclose the existing outdoor link to form an indoor warm/dry link to reach the new family room from the main house.

Two new sculptural roof lights are proposed to pop up centrally above each of the two bays of the family room to bring in daylight and to relieve the low ceiling height. Whilst carrying out this work, it is proposed to renew the felt flat roof covering to match the original and thermally upgrade the internal face of the external walls. The existing concrete garage floor will be raised to accommodate insulation and a new timber floor covering. The original 'Gwynne' fascia details will be retained.



Interior view towards the garage door



View over the roof of the garages

The original curvilinear south brick wall is to be retained as original avoiding the introduction of any openings to the South.

There is an original covered link that connects the side door from the west of the house to the garages on the garden side (south) and it is proposed to add a full height glazed screen to fully enclose the link so that you can reach the family room from the main house. The full height glazing and fenestration will closely reflect the detailing, materials and colour of the original house.



Curvilinear rear brick wall to the garages



Covered link between the side door of the main house-garage

It is proposed to replace all 3 garage doors, with new matching vertical panelled painted timber side hung doors. Behind the two doors to the family room will sit new fully glazed double-glazed screens. This will allow the new room to be closed off and secure when not in use and opened up when occupied. All three doors will be designed to match the original garage door fenestration, apart from being side hung rather than up and over garage doors. No alterations are proposed to the hard landscape step/planter arrangement up to the front door of the main house. The proposed landscape drawing shows the soft landscaping works in detail. Drawing 547 P00100 P7



Views of Vista Point from Tamarisk Way showing 3 garage doors

In addition to the proposed works to the house, minor alterations are proposed to the landscape to the south of the house to safeguard the area around the pool by separating the pool area off for safety when small children are staying. A new chainlink fence hidden in planting is proposed incorporating gates to access the pool area. There are existing steps that drop from the terrace level of the house to the grassed lawn and pool area. It is proposed to relocate these steps to the east so that they drop down outside the fenced pool area. The new steps will be re-constructed using the reclaimed bricks and match the original steps in all respects.

It is proposed to remove the non original steps to the eastern end of the terrace.



Existing S Elevation – central terrace steps to be relocated



Eastern terrace non original steps to be removed

Impact Assessment of the Proposed Works

Patrick Gwynne's post-war oeuvre is characterised by single villa commissions usually designed as stand-alone geometric structures exquisitely placed on choice greenfield sites, with ingenious internal planning and particular attention to domestic detail and material specification. Vista Point is a notable example of this tradition, and includes another typical Gwynne strategy of locating the principal reception rooms at first floor level, here to take advantage of the fine seaward views to the south.

The attached garage block extends the lyrical geometry of the main plan in a subsidiary form to contain the entrance driveway and clearly separate the front (roadside) and rear (seaside) portions of the plot. The latter area, which includes a pool and pool house (also designed later by Gwynne on an informal geometry) is thus entirely private and virtually unseen from any public viewpoint, the building being set back some 65m from the coastal path and screened by vegetation on the southern boundary.

In the words of the List Entry (Historic England List Entry No. 1396577) , "[Gwynne's] playful style, with its fondness for unusual materials and increasing interest in curves, was well suited to the design of a holiday home, but this is his only example. This is a very successful small house, with interior fittings of excellent quality. It is a good example of Gwynne's favourite centralised plan, given added interest by placing the principal rooms on the piano nobile and separating the ground floor into distinctive areas for owners and guests. It is one of Gwynne's least altered surviving works, and important as an example of his later more anthropomorphic style."

The house is owned by a young family and it is rented as a holiday home during the summer months. The new family room is designed to accommodate the needs of their growing family and support family life, such as tv and games. The interior of the main house is largely as original, and the owners do not want to compromise the key living spaces by introducing modern appliances such as tv's etc. By accommodating the family room in two of the existing garages (originally the carport) allows the main house to remain un-altered.

The List Entry is quite explicit and identifies the most obvious characteristics of the building are its cubature, the piano nobile plan arrangement with living spaces on the upper floor celebrating the views out towards the sea, the discrete hour glass plan form and the un-altered interiors within the main house. These proposals do not alter any of these elements of the house.

The existing covered link is to be enclosed with a full height glazed screen to the south. The use of full height glazing will limit the impact to the South elevation and still appear as open.

No openings are proposed to the curved brick screen wall to the south side of the family room and garage.

When not in use the new doors to the north elevation/street side of the new family room will be closed off and appear as original. To ensure visual consistency in appearance it is proposed to replace all doors.

The proposed form of the 2 new roof lights positioned centrally above each bay of the family room reflects the existing pop out dormer of the existing house and will animate the spaces internally providing daylight when the doors are not open and providing ventilation to the new family room.

The South terrace steps are to be relocated to improve the pool safety when families stay at the house with young children. The new fence will be screened with new planting and the steps will be re-constructed using salvaged materials and match the original detailing.

Access

The proposals do not alter the entrance or internal plan arrangement to the main house. The steps leading down to the pool from the main house are being relocated further east and will be constructed to match the original detail.

The enclosed link from the house to the new family room and the thermal upgrade works to the floor of the family room will improve the current difference in level between the house and the garages.

Conclusion

The proposed works have been carefully designed to limit the impact on the architectural significance of the listed heritage asset. The re-purposing of two of the three existing garages to provide a new family room addresses the needs of the current owners' growing family without altering the main house and its original interiors. The new full height glazing to enclose the covered link limits the impact and retains the appearance of the covered way whilst providing a warm link from the house to the new family room.

The minor adjustments to the external landscape are principally to enhance the planting and improve the safety around the pool to the south side of the house. It is proposed to relocate the 3 steps descending down from the southern terrace to the pool and lawn eastwards away from the pool area.