

Design, Access, and Heritage statement

Project

30 Fitzjohns Ave,
London
NW3 5NB

Prepared by:
Extension Architecture

Description:

PROPOSED INTALLATION OF METAL RAILING BALUSTRADE ON SECONDFLOOR FLAT ROOF TO USE AS ROOF TERRACE.

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1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 This statement provides further background information supporting the full Pre-planning application on behalf of Mr Amor for the proposed use of the second-floor flat roof area as a roof terrace.
- 1.2 This statement will present the site in the context of planning policy of Camden Council.
- 1.3 By assessing the site, its constraints, its situation, and context this statement will demonstrate the suitability of the proposal and how it intersects with the local planning authority's policies and development management guidance.



Fig 1: Existing aerial view, where the red dashed line denotes the site location

SITE IMAGES



30 Fitzjohn Avenue – Front view



30 Fitzjohn Avenue – Rear view

2.0 Site Context and Heritage

- 2.1 This application pertains to 30 Fitzjohns Avenue, a detached unit with four stories and a lower ground floor, situated near the northern end of Fitzjohns Avenue, approaching the junction of Nutley Terrace. The building's roof has been altered from its original design to a crown roof, and the lower ground floor features a small extension. Additionally, the first floor utilises the roof as a compact roof terrace.
- 2.2 The properties along Fitzjohns Avenue exhibit a diverse range of architectural styles and forms. No. 28 shares more similarities in terms of building characteristics and form. These buildings are characterized by redbrick structures and white domestic windows.
- 2.3 The property is located within the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area, a designation established in 1984 and subsequently expanded in 1988, 1991, and 2001. However, it's important to note that the property is not locally or nationally listed.
- 2.4 Fitzjohns Avenue predominantly comprises residential properties, and it has witnessed visible changes in its context over time, including the construction of extensions, loft conversions, and outbuildings. These alterations reflect a clear evolution in the built environment within the existing Conservation Area.
- 2.5 Given that the area itself is not subject to any specific designation or Article 4 direction aimed at preserving historical features, it is determined that the report should focus on assessing the impact of the proposed changes on the Conservation Area, particularly toward the rear of the site.

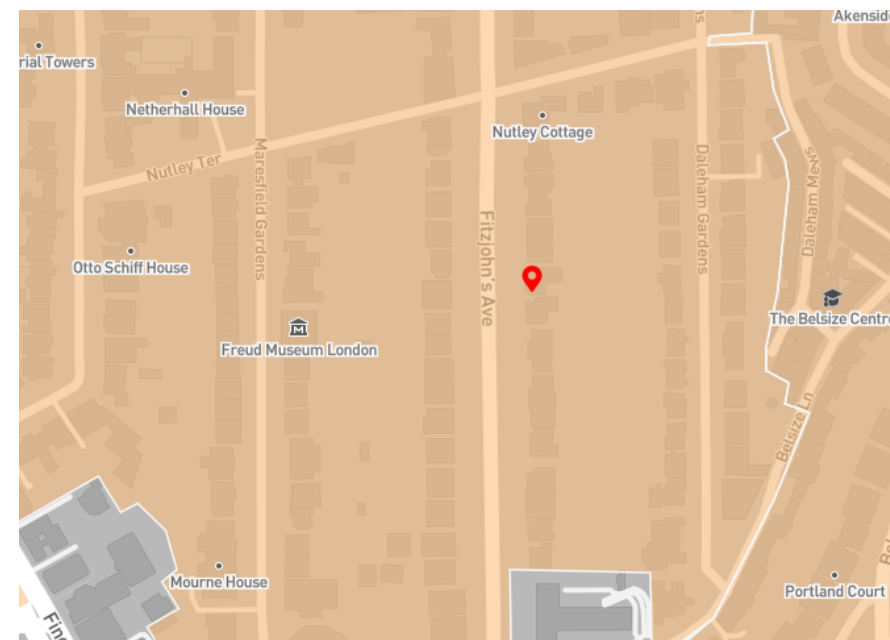


Fig 2: OS Map where the site is denoted by a red drop pin with the conservation area hatched in brown.
*Image taken from Searchland Area map.

HISTORIC MAPS



Fig 3: Historical Map (1894)
*Image taken from National Scotland Library

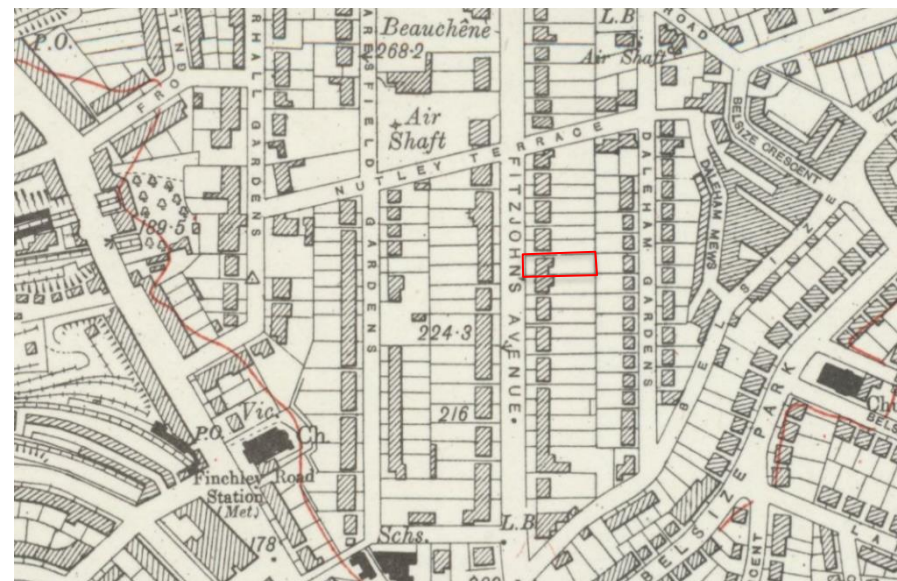


Fig 4: Historical Map (1920).
* Image taken from National Scotland Library

2.6 As previously indicated, the application site remained undeveloped until the early 1920s. The dwellings that now stand on the site were constructed at that time, and it appears that they were initially built as a set of semi-detached units or terraces. The street was adorned with majestic ornamental trees that provided a screen for the houses. This street attracted artists, including some of celebrity status, who, in the 1880s, opened their homes to showcase their artworks to the public on what became known as 'show Sundays.' It is likely that, following subsequent redevelopment or post-war reconstruction efforts, these units were demolished and replaced with spacious detached or semi-detached villas featuring substantial front and rear gardens.

2.7 Significant modifications have been made to the rear portions of the properties on Fitzjohn Avenue. The proposed alterations are situated towards the side and rear of the properties or set back from the street view. The design's intention is to minimize the overall visual impact on the street scene of the development and to reduce any adverse effects on the front facade and the prevailing Conservation Area.

3.0 Planning History

Relevant planning history of the site

- 3.1 The application site lacks any pertinent planning history pertaining to a comparable proposal. The majority of previous applications related to the host building, No.30, primarily focused on reducing the crowns of existing trees within the site boundaries. It's essential to emphasise that the intended development, which involves utilising the existing second-floor flat roof as a roof terrace, will not have any adverse effects on nearby existing trees.
- 3.2 Properties within the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area, including those in the vicinity of the application site, have frequently pursued expansions and alterations to the existing building structure. These alterations have typically taken the form of loft conversions and single-story rear extensions, aiming to augment the building's footprint and living space. Importantly, these structural changes to the rear of the buildings have not been deemed to negatively impact the heritage value of the properties.
- 3.3 Below, you will find examples of similar-scale proposals in the surrounding area that have successfully obtained planning approval. The proposed roof terrace for No.30 aligns with the context of its surroundings and is consistent with previous proposals in the vicinity.

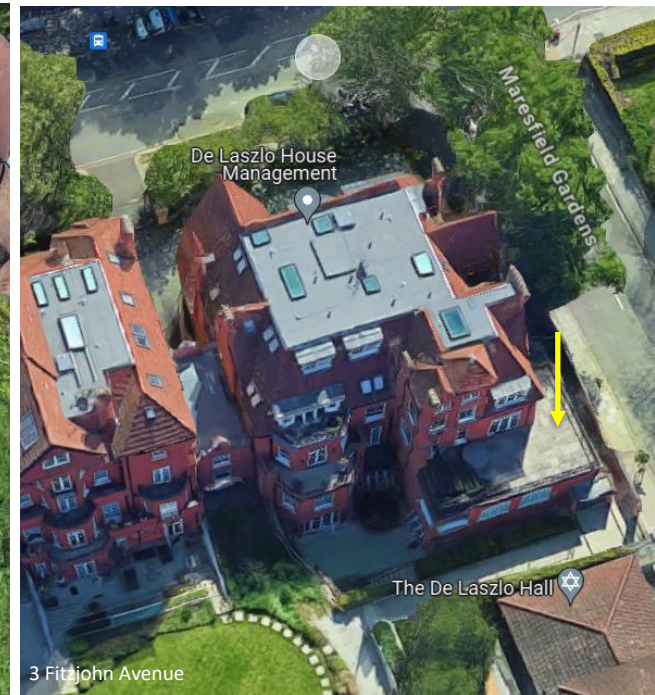
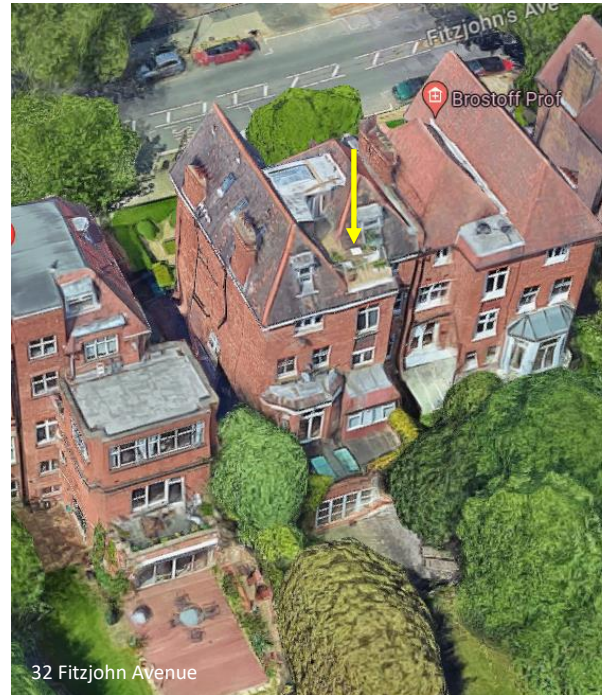
Address	Application Number	Description	Decision	Decision date
24 Fitzjohn's Avenue	2021/3401/P	Change of use of existing 4 bed flat at 3rd and loft floors to provide a 3 bed flat and a 2 bed flat, the erection of an extension to infill the valley roof and installation of two rear dormers, a rear rooflight, replacement french doors and balustrades to form a roof terrace at rear third floor level.	Approved	10-08-2022
18 Fitzjohn's Avenue	2015/0515/P	Erection of a ground floor rear conservatory and new stores with roof terrace above, following demolition of existing conservatory and terrace.	Approved	06-05-2015
19 Fitzjohn's Avenue	2014/2878/P	Erection of dormer extensions on north (side) elevation, new dormer extensions in between the two roofslopes enlargement of existing dormers on south (side) elevation, installation of balustrade associated with proposed rear roof terrace and the installation of 6 new rooflights and 1 enlarged rooflight. rear roof terrace and the installation of 6 new rooflights and 1 enlarged rooflight.	Approved	30-07-2014

PRE-APPLICATION COMMENTS

- 3.4 After receiving the pre-application in November 2023, a proposal for a larger roof terrace was put forward. The council subsequently offered additional comments, particularly regarding the scale, placement, and materiality of the proposal.
- 3.5 Notably, the area features numerous roof terraces with varying scales, placements, and impacts on neighbouring surroundings. It was observed that examples with glass balustrades and larger terraces were seen as incidental and did not contribute positively to the adjacent conservation area.
- 3.6 The pre-application review included feedback on the proposed materiality of obscure glazing, deeming it 'incongruous.' As a response, we have suggested incorporating metal railing around the extension's perimeter, accompanied by a 4-course brick increase to closely align with the existing building materials. The proposed metal railing was preferred for its seamless integration with the building's character, making the revised scheme a positive contribution to both the host building and the surrounding conservation area.
- 3.7 To address concerns about bulk and privacy, it was recommended that the roof terrace be set back. Consequently, the terrace has been adjusted to align with the existing roof terraces in the area and extend towards the rear, especially where neighbouring habitable windows are in close proximity.
- 3.8 Comments regarding the proposed double patio timber-framed doors did not raise any conservation area design concerns. Consequently, the design of the doors remains unchanged.
- 3.9 Following the implemented amendments and revisions, it is perceived that the new application has effectively addressed council concerns where feasible. The alterations to the roof are considered sympathetic and in harmony with the surrounding environment.

PRECEDENTS

3.10 In the vicinity, there are several instances of roof terraces of different sizes that have been suggested to enhance the amenities available to the apartments. The images below serve as illustrations of successful instances of roof terraces that maintain a visual subservience to the primary building.



INCEDENTAL ROOF TERRACES



- The depicted image on the left reveals a notable transformation at 12 Fitzjohn Avenue, involving the entire footprint of the existing flat roof into a roof terrace.
- This modification has been carried out utilising meatal balustrade which is visual from the street scene, however it is set back from the principal elevation.



- The image displayed on the left of No.10 Foitzjohn Avenue illustrates a double-story side roof modification, featuring a metal balustrade.

STREET ANALYSIS

3.11 Fitzjohn Avenue is made up of a series of grand three storey detached housing units with decorative and functional metal balustrades featured on the prominent front and side elevations of these properties. As the location of these balustrades is readily visible, it is believed that such modifications do not result in additional harm to the heritage of the Conservation Area. Consequently, similar proposals to the numerous examples provided should be assessed within the same framework.



4.0 Design

EXTERNAL

- 4.1 The primary objective for the roof terrace is to fashion a vibrant, adaptable outdoor space that enhances the residents' quality of life within the building.
- 4.2 The current flat roof is not fully utilised, presenting an opportunity to establish a roof terrace accessible from bedroom 4 by replacing the existing rear windows and installing timber framed double patio doors.
- 4.3 The proposed modifications would take place at the rear of the property and would be set back from street view with minimal visibility.
- 4.4 The envisioned roof terrace will feature a roof terrace wall raised by 350mm course of brick to match with the existing and metal balustrade, with the rear portion measuring 1.1m. The terrace's interior will incorporate planting to reduce rain water run-off and screen to enhance privacy and enhance its visual appeal.
- 4.5 Given the terrace positioning being set back from the street scene it would not create an adverse impact to the outlook or loss of light to neighbouring flats. The nearest adjoining window is for a non-habitable area so there are no concerns for loss of privacy or outlook.
- 4.6 The terrace's considerable setback from the street minimizes its visual impact on the building's heritage and the surrounding conservation area.
- 4.7 The applicant has conducted an initial structural assessment of the flat roof and the existing property. Following considerations for internal modifications, it has been determined that the existing second-floor roof is suitable for the proposed roof terrace.



Fig 6: Terrace balustrade diagram

NEIGHBOUR IMPACT

- 4.8 The proposed roof terrace due to its location and footprint would not pose an issue to the adjoining neighbours within the curtilage of No. 30 Fitzjohn Avenue.
- 4.9 The planned roof terrace is intended to be positioned around 4.5m from the nearest habitable room window of No.32 Fitzjohn Avenue. Considering the size, location, and orientation of this window, there is no anticipated increase in the loss of privacy or disruption to the neighbouring residences.
- 4.10 Given that the suggested roof terrace is situated adjacent to a bedroom area, it is deemed that its usage would be minimal for the flat occupants, resulting in no additional noise beyond what is already experienced in the surrounding area with existing roof terraces.



5.0 Development Policy Considerations

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF provides the foundations of the planning system at a national level and provides a base for which planners, planning systems and LPA's should work from in regards to informing their decisions as well as forming policy and plans. The NPPF states that the planning system should play a central role in developing a more sustainable society and this forms in three approaches to this role:

- *An economic role*
- *A social role*
- *An environmental role*

When an application is regarded as positively contributing towards the three threads of sustainable development in the context of the NPPF's definition of "sustainable," development, then a local authorities must take the position of presuming that that an application must be given permission. This presumption in favour of sustainable development is therefore the core, fundamental base as from where all local planning authorities must work from.

If a proposal cannot meet the requirements of all three approaches of sustainable development, then the planning balance must be actioned whereby material considerations are weighed against each other using the foundation guidelines of the NPPF, the supplementary guidance of the National Planning Policy Guidance and then the lens of local planning policies which provide a greater, more spatially appropriate framework for which the authority can use.

Local Plans must be drawn up in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure harmony across the system and all spatial levels to ensure delivery of appropriate and sustainable development that is weighed against the positives and negatives that a development may bring about.

Whilst the NPPF places particular attention and detail in regards to the overarching theme of sustainable development, it also provides greater detail for the parts and strands which make up sustainable development and how this should play out "on the ground."

7. *Requiring good design*

This section of the Framework attributes significant weight towards the design of the built environment as part of sustainable development. This due to the importance design can have on the overall built form of an area and therefore inform on its overall potential to sustain the other core strands of sustainable development and is reflected in the introductory section of the Framework, where under part 17 it states:

"[LPAs should]...always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings."

CAMDEN RELEVANT POLICIES: Camden Planning Guidance | Design (January 2012)

Balconies and terraces

General principles

5.16 Balconies and roof terraces can provide valuable amenity space for workers who would otherwise have little or no exterior space. However, they can also cause nuisance to neighbours. Potential problems include overlooking, overshadowing, noise, light spillage and security. Please refer to our CPG on Amenity for more details.

5.17 Balconies and terraces should complement the elevation upon which they are to be located. Consideration should therefore be given to the following:

- Detailed design to reduce the impact on the existing elevation;
- Careful choice of materials and colour to match the existing elevation;
- Possible use of setbacks to minimise overlooking – a roof terrace need not necessarily cover the entire available roof space;
- Possible use of screening (frosted glass etc) to prevent overlooking of habitable rooms in residential properties or nearby gardens, without reducing daylight and sunlight or outlook.

5.18 The following additional matters should be considered for roof terraces:

- Glazed balustrades around balconies or roof terraces are unlikely to be acceptable on traditional buildings because they can appear unduly prominent;
- It should not result in overlooking of habitable rooms of adjacent residential properties;
- Access to sunlight and shelter and the availability of a good aspect;

Camden Planning Guidance | Design

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- Whether the size of the roof terrace provides the ability to combine space both for the amenity of workers and planting for biodiversity, the latter potentially giving workers access to nature;

5.19 Adequate safety and security measures are used to prevent accidents or crime.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 This statement aims to illustrate that the plan for the roof terrace at 30 Fitzjohn Avenue aligns with council policies and will not result in any adverse effects on the existing Conservation Area.

6.2 Additionally, the proposal is expected to have a minimal impact on the historical features of the main building, as the alterations are designed to be discreet when viewed from Fitzjohn Road.

6.3 The proposal draws inspiration from previous successful cases in the area and existing precedents on the street, which have received approval from Camden council in accordance with the council's planning guidelines.

6.4 The application, which includes modifications to the front, rear, and side elevations, will be put forward with careful consideration of its overall influence on neighbouring properties. It is designed to enhance the local character, with the primary aim of providing additional amenity space of excellent quality that contributes positively to the prevailing character of the Conservation Area.

* As part of any application, the proposal will be accompanied by a suite of documents to include full architectural drawings, layouts, site location plans and elevation visuals.