



JON LOWE
HERITAGE

Heritage and Townscape Statement

34 Belsize Lane, London,
NW3 5AE

On behalf of Mr Charlie Green

March 2024 | Project Ref. 00567 | V.3





Contents

Introduction	Page 3
Understanding the Site	Page 4
Historic Background	Page 8
Assessment of Significance	Page 20
Assessment of Proposals	Page 26
Policy Compliance and Conclusions	Page 30
Appendix 1: Legislation and Planning Policy	
Appendix 2: List Description	
Appendix 3: Historic Photographs	

Heritage and Townscape Statement

34 Belsize Lane, London, NW3 5AE

Mr Charlie Green

Report Version: V3

Project Reference: 00567

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Introduction

1. This Heritage and Townscape Statement has been prepared by Jon Lowe Heritage Ltd under instruction from Mr Charlie Green. It supports householder applications for full planning permission and listed building consent for proposed works to 34 Belsize Lane, London, NW3 5AE.
2. 34 Belsize Lane was built as a residential property in 1975/6 by architect Georgie Wolton (1934-2021), for herself. The building and garden were subjected to extensions and alterations during her occupation and the property has been vacant and is in a dilapidated state since her death in 2021. In 2023 the building was assessed by Historic England and added to the National Heritage List at Grade II. The building lies within the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation area.
3. This report presents Camden Borough Council, the decision makers, with a statement of significance on the heritage assets potentially affected by the works applied for, together with an assessment of the impacts and effects of those works upon identified significance. In doing so it supports the statutory obligation on decision-makers to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas and to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings.

Proposed Scheme

4. The proposals seek to restore the house in a manner consistent with its special interest, to preserve its character, and to enable its continued use as a private residential dwelling. It is proposed to provide an additional bedroom in a first floor extension, erect a new corridor link extension in the courtyard, and undertake very minor internal and external works to the existing building. The poor state of the building's fabric and unsympathetic later alterations are not desirable to preserve. It is proposed to renew the building fabric, replace unsympathetic materials

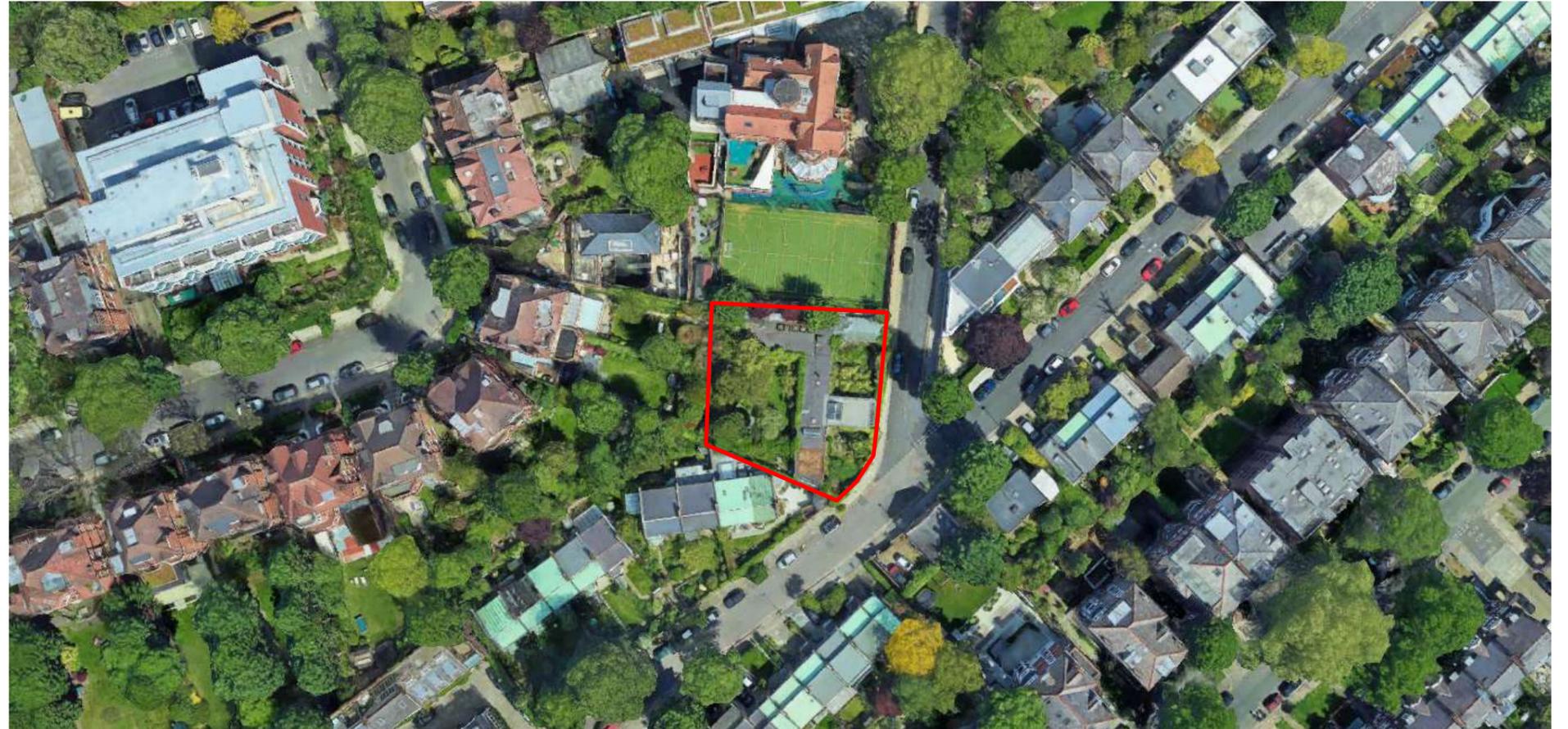


Figure 1: Aerial view of 34 Belsize Lane, shaded red, and environs.

or finishes that have deviated from the simplicity of original detailing and deliver a high quality scheme of refurbishment that secures its optimum use and long term conservation.

5. The proposals have evolved following a pre-application process with Historic England, Camden Borough Council and consultation with a former colleague and contemporaries of Georgie Wolton. Designs have evolved as a result of advice received with the proposed changes set out within the Design & Access Statement prepared by EBBA which accompanies the applications. In March 2024, pre-application discussions also took place with the 20th Century Society. They stated that they are pleased that a new owner has come forward who is committed

to the restoration of the house in order to make it their permanent home. They are also encouraged by the nature and extent of the proposed refurbishment and restoration works and expressed their support for the first floor extension and other internal alterations.

Methodology

6. The Site and its relationship to context and the wider area have been observed by the author during site visits conducted between November 2023 and February 2024. The findings have informed design development.
7. Value judgements have been made based on observation of the building fabric, form and features. This was further supported by documentary research. Observations sought to

better identify the overall sensitivity of the building and site to change, together with opportunities for enhancement. Through collaborative working with the design team proposals are put forward that offer improved and heritage sensitive residential accommodation.

Report Structure

8. This report presents an understanding of the application site, surrounding heritage assets, and townscape before setting out the history and evolution of the subject building. This is followed by a proportionate description of the significance of the heritage assets potentially affected by the proposals and an assessment of any impacts and effects upon the significance of the heritage assets and townscape.



Understanding the Site

Understanding the Site & Context

The Site

9. 34 Belsize Lane was built in 1975-6 with a studio addition in 1981, and was designed by Georgie Wolton for herself and her family. Wolton lived in the property until her death in 2021. It is a single-storey building with a flat roof and in terms of plan, the house can be seen as a core (containing the main living space) with three wings coming off it—the bedroom wing and two studio wings.
10. The footprint of the house in relation to the boundary wall effectively divides the site into three courtyard gardens, although prior to the construction of the 1981 studio addition, there would have been just one courtyard and a larger informal rear garden. This original courtyard plays an important role in the use and experience of the building—the entrance to the property is via a small doorway in the brick garden wall which opens onto a covered path that runs down one side of the courtyard. The courtyard and covered path act as a threshold between public and private space, and lead on to the front door of the house.

Visibility and Views

11. Located at the junction of Belsize Lane and Orman Road, the house is situated behind a garden wall in what was once the back half of a large garden belonging to a detached Victorian property that still sits at 16 Lyndhurst Gardens.
12. The house can barely be seen from the street—it is screened from view by the surrounding garden wall. The only part of the building that can be glimpsed from Belsize Lane is some of its

conservatory windows, and even then it will be unclear to the viewer that these represent part of a domestic building. The house sits low in its plot, which is itself at the bottom of a slope that runs to the north. This gives the impression that surrounding properties tower over low-slung No.34.

Heritage Context

13. The site was listed at Grade II on 25th October 2023 (List Entry Number 1487795). It has an extensive list description that details its history and reasons for designation—this has been reproduced in full at Appendix 2.
14. No.34 is also experienced within the setting of a number of designated and undesignated heritage assets—these are primarily confined to Grade II listed buildings along Lyndhurst Gardens, but also includes a pair of locally listed buildings, Nos.17a Belsize Lane and 40 Orman Road, which are situated on the opposite corner of Belsize Lane. The location of these heritage assets in relation to the study site is laid out in Figure 2.

Conservation Areas

15. The property lies within the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area, towards its south-eastern border, and opposite the north-western border of the Belsize Conservation Area, which starts at the rear of a number of 20th century properties on Orman Road and includes Belsize Court Gardens. As a consequence of No.34's positioning, it plays a role within the setting of both conservation areas, although this role is slightly reduced with regards to the Belsize Conservation Area due to the buffer created by the undesignated sections

of Orman Road and Belsize Lane. The layout of these conservation areas in relation to our site are laid out in Figure 2.

16. The Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area was designated in 1984 and extended in 1988, 1991 and 2001. The updated conservation area appraisal and management plan was adopted on 19th December 2022.
17. The special architectural and historic character of the conservation area is summarised in its appraisal as follows:

- **Landscape:** The landscape infrastructure is characterised by smaller front gardens and extensive rear gardens, many containing mature trees. The streets often have grass verges and rows of street trees.
- **Townscape:** The associated townscape characteristics, based on residential buildings set-back behind small front gardens or front courts, with low front walls or hedges. There are also some

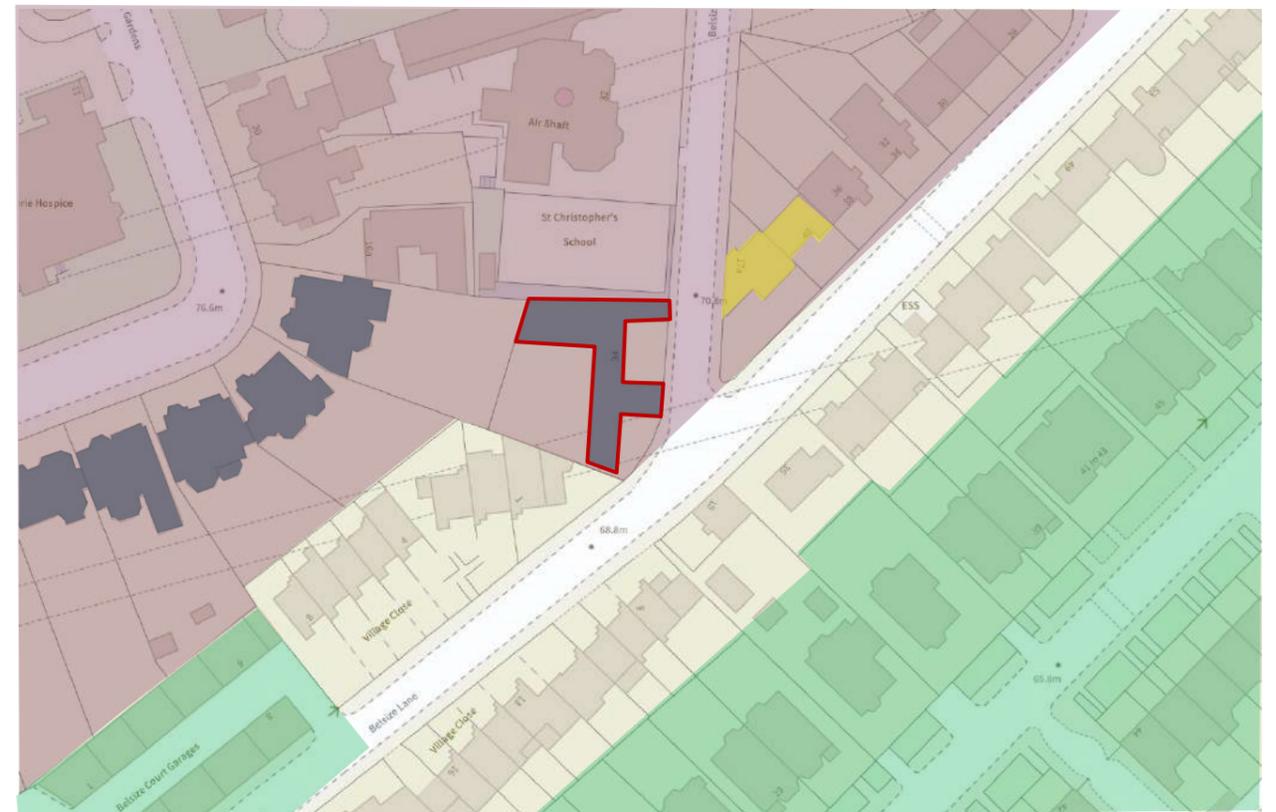


Figure 2: Map showing 34 Belsize Lane (delineated in red) and surrounded designated and undesignated heritage assets. Area covered by the Fitzjohns Netherhall Conservation Area is shaded pink, and the Belsize Conservation Area is shaded green. Listed buildings (all Grade II) are highlighted in dark blue, and locally listed buildings are highlighted in yellow.

Understanding the Site & Context

larger-scale mansion blocks. The scale of buildings varies greatly, from 2 storeys to six storeys or more.

- **Architecture:** Buildings tend to have common features, reflecting their time of construction in the late 19th and first half of the 20th century. These are stylistically diverse, but predominantly draw on Queen Anne Revival and Arts and Crafts influences. In addition, there are a small number of individual buildings of distinctive design quality, sometimes contrasting dramatically with surrounding buildings.

18. Although 34 Belsize Lane is not typical of the properties generally seen within the conservation area in terms of its architecture, landscaping and townscape qualities, it can still be deemed to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is referred to only once within the conservation area appraisal, in a list of locally listed buildings—the appraisal was written before No.34’s statutory designation in October 2023.

19. The Belsize Conservation Area was designated in 1973 and extended on a number of occasions, most recently in 2002. The conservation area is made up of a number of different character areas, and 34 Belsize Lane is most likely to be experienced in relation to sub-area 2, Belsize Village, which incorporates part of Belsize Lane, including Belsize Court Gardens, to the south-west of our site.

20. The special architectural and historic character of sub-area 2 is summarised in the conservation area appraisal as follows:

This is an area of principally terraced development, built on a south-facing slope and

dating largely from the 1850s to the 1880s. There is a variety of residential and commercial uses within the area. The principal shopping area focuses on the triangular space at the junction of Belsize Lane and Belsize Terrace. Some of the mews retain a variety of smallscale business uses mixed with residential. The area has a tight urban grain and views within the area are contained

either as a result of the short lengths of the mews and streets and the shallow bends in their alignment which reflect earlier routes and field boundaries. There is general consistency in the use of London stock brick with stucco moulding.

long views from and into it—primarily along Belsize Lane itself. As a consequence it plays a role in Belsize Conservation Area’s setting and changes to the building may have the potential to impact upon its special interests.

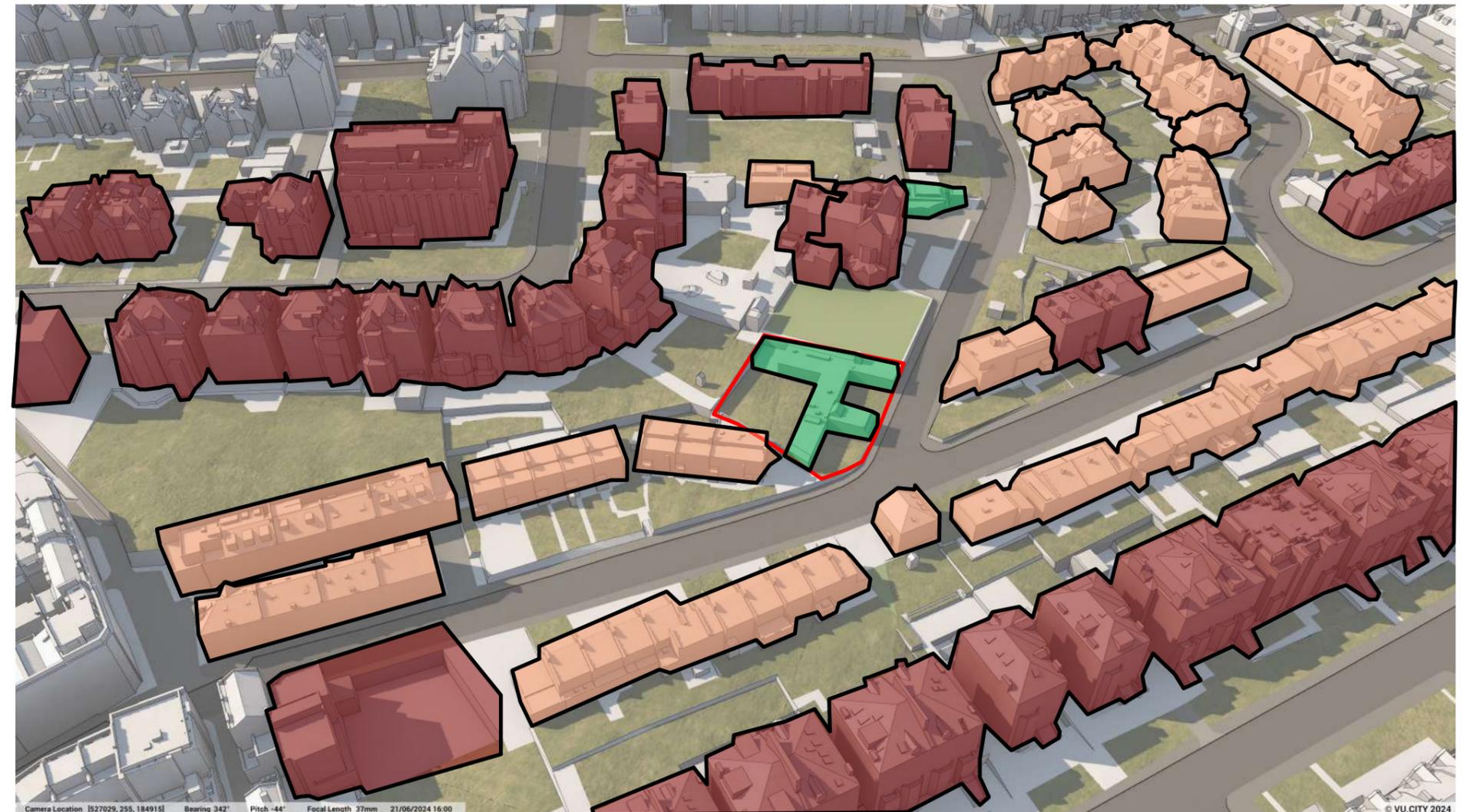
21. Although not situated within this conservation area, 34 Belsize Lane may be experienced in



Figure 3: Townscape analysis — period of development

Understanding the Site & Context

22. The townscape within which No.34 is experienced is primarily late-19th to mid-20th century in date. Much of it followed a clear pattern of development—large detached and semi-detached properties were built on generous plots in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (see townscape period analysis map on the previous page), and in the mid-20th century many of these garden plots were subdivided for development.
23. This mid-20th century development was generally smaller in scale and formed of terraced housing. No.34 is unusual in that it sits within a much larger individual plot than many of its contemporary buildings, and it has made full use of that plot with its expansive but single-storey plan.
24. The adjacent plan illustrates relative building heights in the vicinity of 34 Belsize Lane, and shows clearly its comparatively low height. Despite being one of a number of buildings constructed within garden plots in the 20th century, it has taken on a very different form and scale when compared to neighbouring buildings of a similar age and its single storey form is out of character.
25. In addition to its low height, No.34 was also constructed on a low-lying plot of land that sits at the bottom of a hill, and its surrounding 19th century garden wall almost entirely shields it from view. 34 Belsize Lane is atypical of buildings in the vicinity in its form and scale. The surrounding 20th century developments, mostly two storey, were typically built within the rear parts of formerly large gardens.



One storey
 Two storey (plus mansard in places)
 Three+ storeys

Figure 4: Townscape analysis—number of storeys



Historic Background

Historic Background

Georgie Wolton—Biography

26. Georgie Wolton (nee Cheesman) was born in East Horsley, Surrey, in 1934. After attending a convent school, Georgie moved to a college in Guildford to study English, Latin and French at A Level, and in 1955 attended Epsom School of Art for an art foundation course.
27. It was at Epsom School of Art that Georgie began a relationship with Richard Rogers—this was the start of an important and mutually influential friendship that would last her entire life. After some time at Epsom Georgie convinced her younger sister Wendy to take up architecture at The Bartlett, and soon decided to apply to study it herself at the Architectural Association.
28. It was at the Architectural Association (AA) that Georgie was surrounded (and tutored by) some of the most important and influential designers of the 20th century. Rogers was also studying at the AA at the same time, and would go on to write in his biography that *'She was a great intellectual influence, and her help with my drawings was probably the only thing that stopped me being thrown out of the AA (and was not the last time she would rescue my career).'*
29. Georgie graduated in 1960 and worked briefly for Middlesex County Council, then in 1962 she formed Team 4 with Norman Foster and Richard and Su Rogers. She was the only qualified architect in the group at that stage and consequently was an integral founding member; without her the practice would not have been able to run. Georgie left Team 4 after only a few months, however, as she preferred to work alone, and her younger sister Wendy took her place in the group.

30. In 1962 Georgie married publisher David Wolton and gave birth to the couple's only daughter, Suke. The couple bought their first home at 3 Camden Square and Georgie designed an innovative kitchen extension for the home—a hanging glass box that was part kitchen and part conservatory (see figure 6). This extension remained in place in 2022, and may still exist now. This was perhaps a prelude to her first building—in 1969 Georgie's mother gave her land at Crocknorth Farm where she built Fieldhouse, a glass and steel weekend retreat. Fieldhouse was the first house in the UK to use CorTen as a primary structural material, which Georgie chose as she wanted it to blend into the

terrain as it developed its distinctive rust-like texture. Fieldhouse was eventually dismantled in 1993.

31. Georgie's largest project was 5-7 Cliff Road Studios in 1970-71, a project on which her husband David acted as developer. These studios still stand, and it was while living here that Georgie began to design 34 Belsize Lane. Georgie designed one other barn conversion (Southrop Barn. Figure 7), but thereafter moved almost entirely into landscape design. Georgie's belief in the importance of landscape and the way it interacts with the built environment is plain to see in the design of 34 Belsize Lane, with its

quiet transitional courtyard entrance, but her reasoning for moving into landscape design appears to have been multifaceted. In later interviews Georgie would express her deep desire for the autonomy and independence that the discipline of landscape design offered—being a 'lone wolf' was something she stated that was simply not possible in architecture.

32. Georgie continued to work on multiple landscape projects throughout her life, ranging from small private gardens to much larger projects such as at River Café and Oxford University's Keble College. She and David separated in 1992 but remained close friends, and Georgie lived at 34 Belsize Lane until her death in August 2021.



Figure 5: Georgie Wolton, 1960



Figure 6: Conservatory-style kitchen extension to 3 Camden Square.

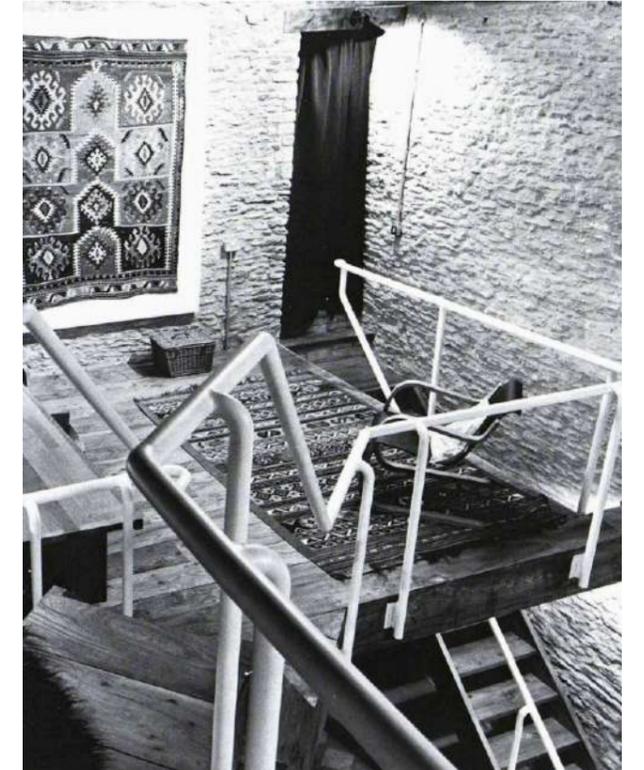


Figure 7: Interior view of Southrop Barn

Fieldhouse

33. Wolton designed Fieldhouse in 1969. Located at Crocknorth Farm in Surrey which was previously owned by Wolton's mother, the building was intended to be a weekend retreat for Georgie and her family.
34. The location was bucolic—a meadow surrounded by pine trees, on a site in an open, windswept position on the Surrey Downs, 600ft above sea level. The house was constructed of corten steel which was at the time relatively unused, and Fieldhouse appears to have been the first project in which it was used as a main structural element. The corten steel frame held large clear or brown 'Spectrafloat' glass panels.
35. Wolton was influenced by sites such as Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House in Plano, Illinois and The Glass House by Philip Johnson in New Canaan, Connecticut. The property's interior was designed to be a flexible space—sliding partitions allowed for the reorganisation of the interior depending on the needs of the occupants.
36. Fieldhouse was dismantled in 1993 a three bedroomed house constructed in its place. The location of the constituent parts of Fieldhouse is unknown, although they may still be in storage somewhere.

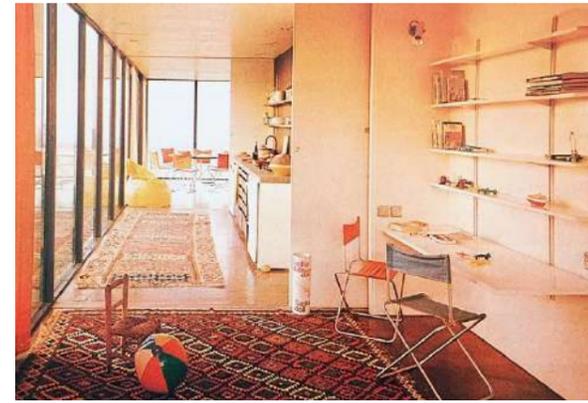


Figure 14 (above and right): Fieldhouse, interior and exterior

Cliff Road Studios

37. 5 Cliff Road Studios (1970) and 6-8 Cliff Road Studios (1971) were Georgie's largest project, and her only commercial design. Her husband David took on the role of developer for these live/work artists' studios, and each of the six studios within 5 Cliff Road was sold for £9000 each. This money enabled them buy the neighbouring plot where the second set of studios was completed in 1971.
38. A typical studio within these buildings was designed with an impressive 33ft tall double height studio/living space with canted skylights over, and a mezzanine level with an open-plan bedroom, dressing room and bedroom. These studios were the first project in which Wolton had the opportunity to fully play out her fascination with the working home, a subject on which she based her final year architectural thesis.



Figure 15 (above and right): Cliff Road Studios, interior and exterior

Historic Background

34 Belsize Lane

39. Historic mapping indicates that the site upon which 34 Belsize Lane now sits used to form the rear half of the large garden to 16 Lyndhurst Gardens. Wolton bought this piece of land in 1974, presumably using proceeds acquired in the development of the Cliff Road Studios. Planning consent for the construction of three houses on the site had already been obtained, but Georgie's intent was for a single, spacious, three bedroom, two bathroom house with a studio.
40. 34 Belsize Lane can be read as a built expression of the concepts and interests that preoccupied Wolton, and any established spatial hierarchy was subverted. Her interests in gardens and landscapes, particularly English designed landscapes of the 17th and 18th centuries, informed her approach to architecture as well as landscape design. Georgie wanted to create a building with a strong relationship between inside and outside—glazed walls were intended to offer views from one garden into the other. The winged layout of the site initially split the plot into a courtyard and a larger main garden area, and since the construction of a studio extension there are now three separate courtyard garden areas.
41. Wolton's extensive collection of Turkish kilim rugs also influenced the design of the house. Large expanses of wall were needed to hang this evolving collection, and Georgie used them to, in her words, 'command' the spaces. Much of the collection was concentrated in the hallways and studio rooms—the corridor which runs the length of the bedroom wing could accommodate the very longest of the kilims, and the generous 1.8m width of the corridor allowed the viewer to stand back and appreciate their designs. The

angled rooflight above, and similar ones in her studio spaces, were designed to flood these kilim displays with natural light. Without the kilims to justify some of these very large expanses of horizontal or vertical wall, the house loses some of its unique qualities.

42. Wolton also had very defined ideas about how a kitchen space should function within a modern building. She placed the kitchen at the very core of the house, and stated that where possible they should always overlook the main entrance—as is the case at Belsize Lane. This elevates the

status of the kitchen in comparison to a more traditional hierarchy in which the kitchen is relegated to the rear of the ground floor or basement. Even in modernist buildings this was a radical concept, which reflects the gendered nature of kitchens and the dominance of men in the discipline of architecture well into the 20th century.

43. Further exploring the concept of one of her main interests, 'the working home', was also important. Wolton had a long-standing interest in houses designed to function as both domestic

and work spaces, which she had also put into practice in another of her key buildings, Cliff Road Studios. At Belsize Lane one of the ways she developed this was through the use of conservatory-like antechambers that acted as a 'pause' between living and working spaces. Level-changes were also utilised, which allows the user to step down into her working space. The concept of the 'working home' as interpreted by Wolton at 34 Belsize Lane is all the more significant when we remember that Georgie was balancing running an architectural practice with



Figure 8: 34 Belsize Lane seen from the garden, 1976.



Figure 9: Entrance hall, 34 Belsize Lane

Historic Background

Figure 10 (top left): Covered walkway through entrance courtyard, 1976.



Figure 11 (top right): Living room, 1976.



Figure 12 (bottom left): View through dining room.



Figure 13 (bottom right): Double-height studio space, 1976.



having a family. In the property's design, she was subverting the traditional hierarchies of a house with its gendered spaces, and creating a home that allowed her to lead the life she wished to lead.

44. Although 34 Belsize Lane remained Wolton's home until her recent death, the building was inevitably the sum result of a slow process of evolution (figure 22). In 1981 Georgie designed an extension to the property—this was to serve as the new studio, and documentary evidence suggests that the original studio then began to be used as another bedroom (figure 18). The approved plans relating to the 1981 extension differed slightly from the as-built drawings in a number of ways—for example, the new conservatory antechamber leading to the new studio was meant to project outwards into the garden on either side, but it was not built this way. Other, minor differences can even be seen between the original approved plans of 1976 and the first phase as-built drawings. The landscaping around the property also evolved over the years, as Georgie made alterations to the originally ordered, formal front garden.
45. These and a number of other small, incremental changes in the way the building was used and lived in are analysed at figure 22. This evidence indicates that the property was never static, but gently evolved to suit Georgie's needs. The property has been unoccupied for over two years now and its current condition is very poor. It is in dire need of repair and restoration; some aspects of the building are failing and damp has unfortunately become a serious problem. It is hoped that this new scheme of works will be the catalyst to securing its future for many generations to come.

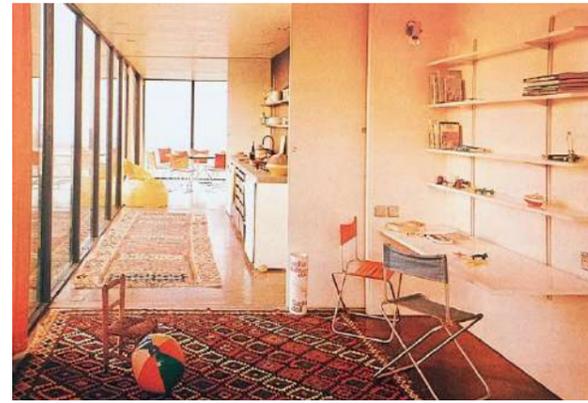


Figure 14 (above and right): Fieldhouse, interior and exterior



Figure 15 (above and right): Cliff Road Studios, interior and exterior

1975-77 Plan

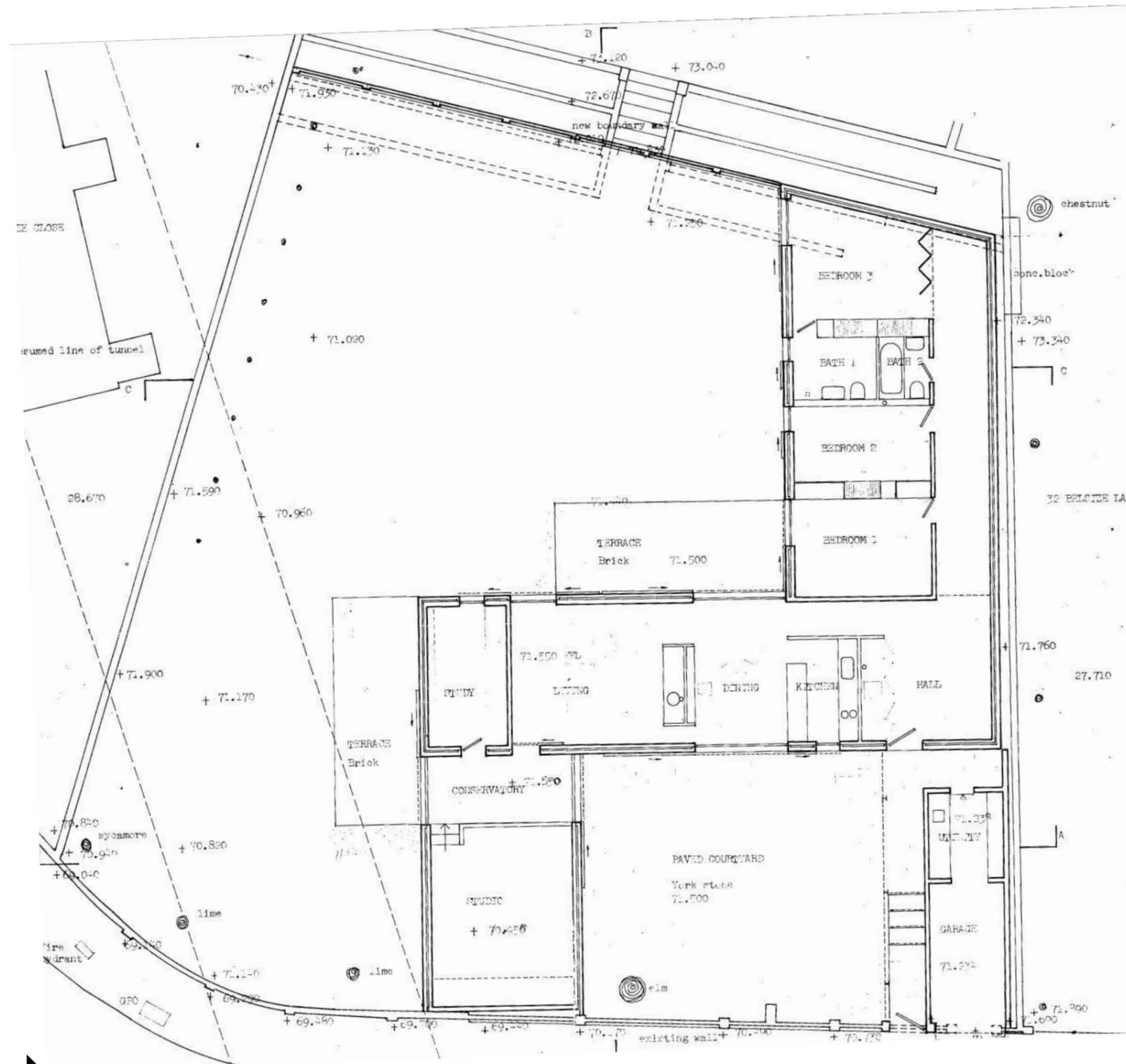


Figure 16: Original proposed plan, approved by Camden 11 March 1975

Note: Bedroom corridor extended to western boundary, kitchen was open to dining space, and garage divided to house a utility room

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN
 PLANS APPROVED
~~DISAPPROVED~~
 11 MAR 1975
 ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL

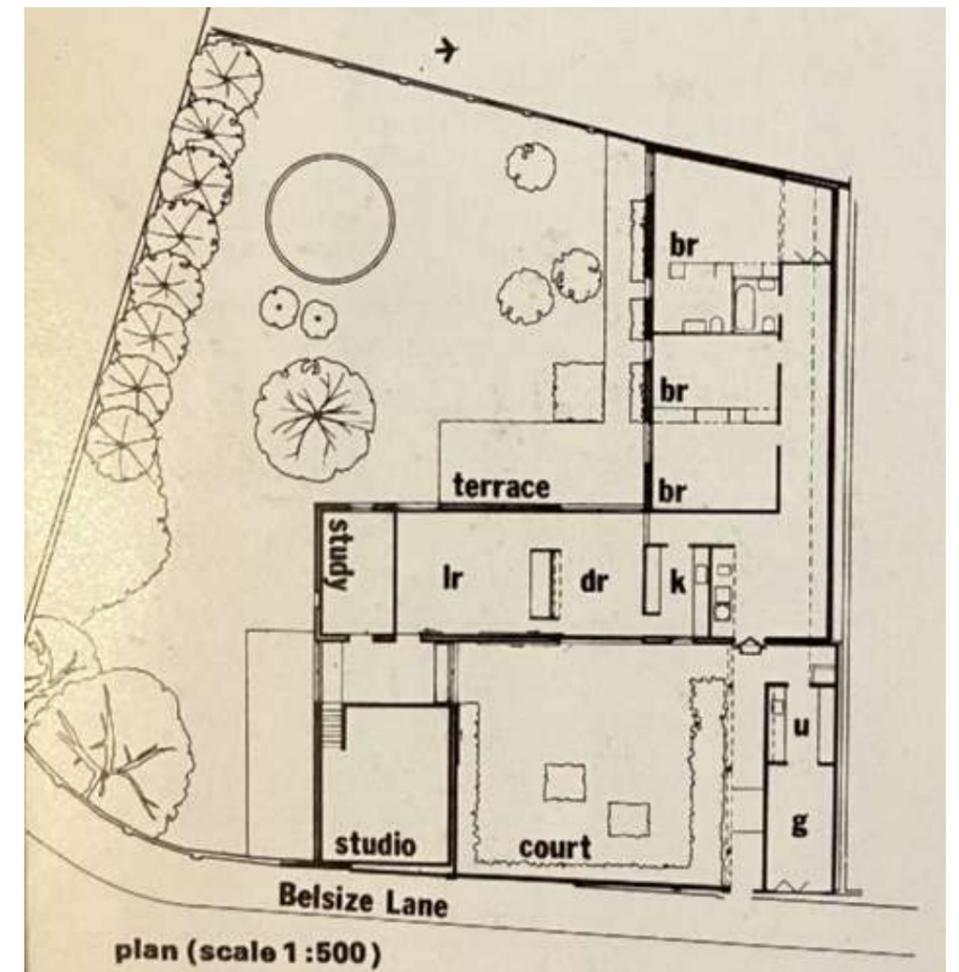
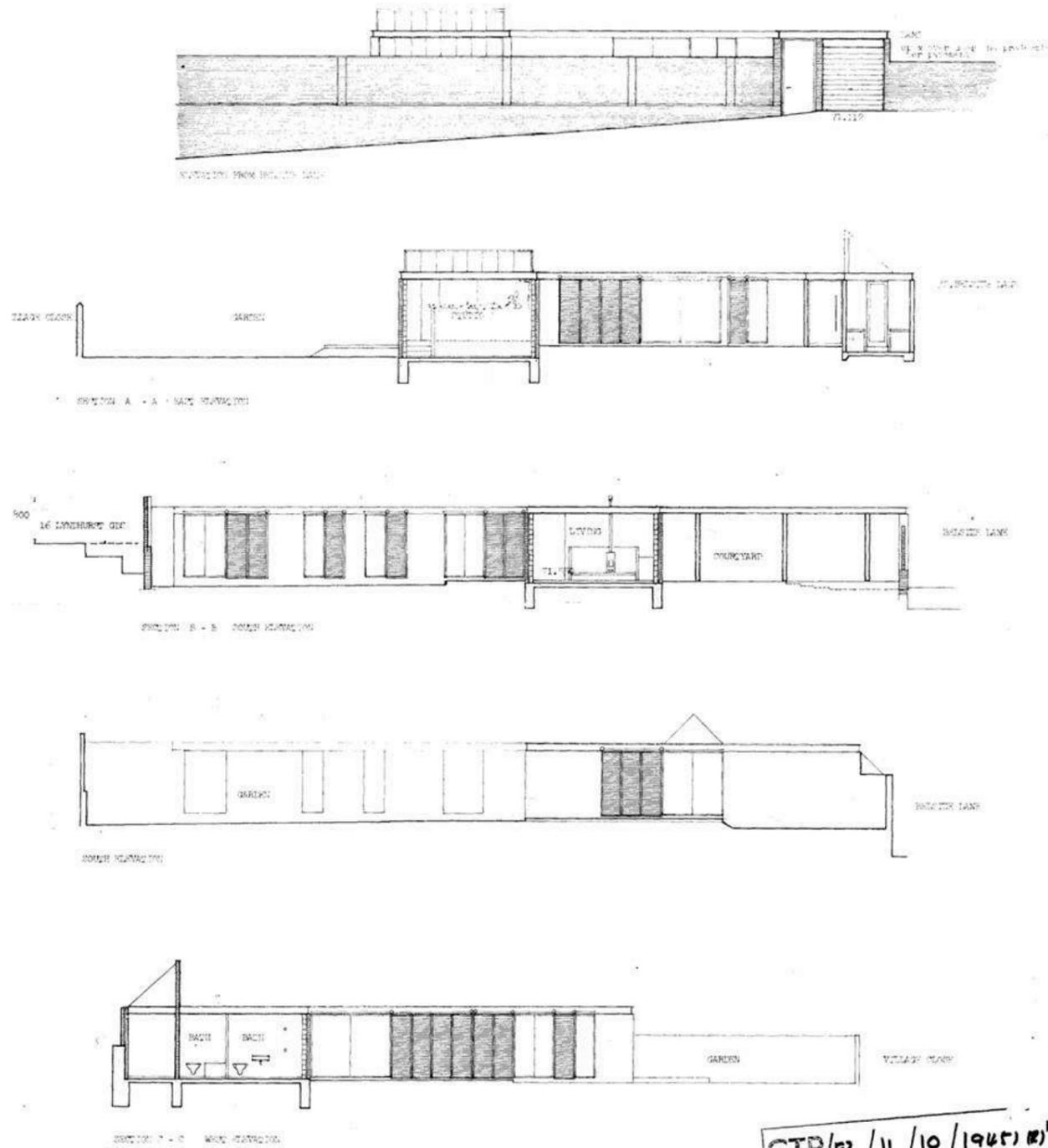


Figure 17: As built plan (Architectural Review, 1977)



CTP/F7/11/10/1945 (R)

This drawing is not to be scaled. All dimensions should be verified on site and any discrepancies notified to the Architect

Job: 34 BELSIZELANE, NEW EXTENSION, NW3

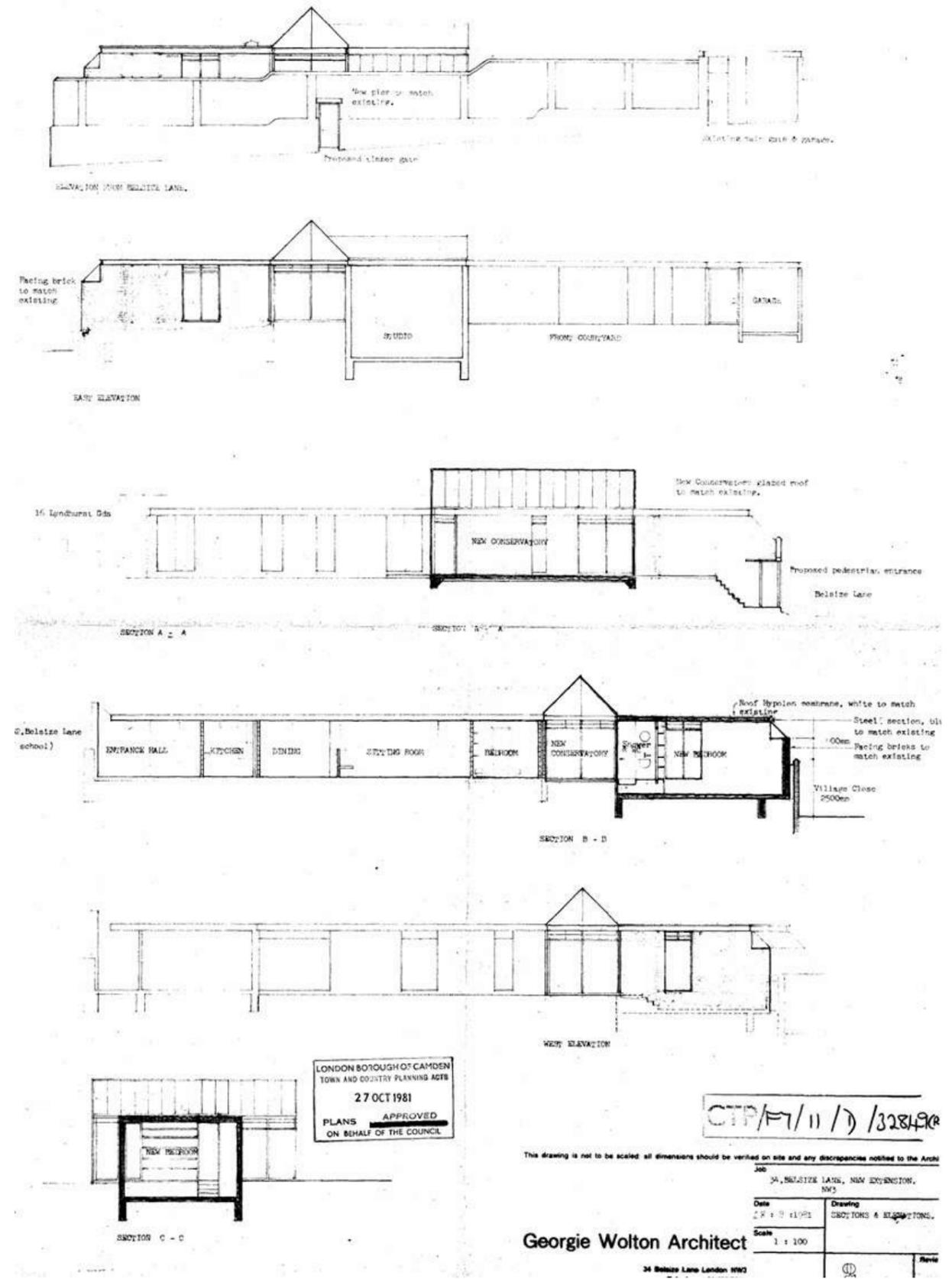
Date: 11/10/1945

Drawing: SECTIONS & ELEVATIONS

Scale: 1:100

Revision:

Georgie Wolton Architect
10 Cliff Road Studios
Cliff Road London NW1



LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS
27 OCT 1981
PLANS APPROVED
ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL

CTP/F7/11/10/32849R

This drawing is not to be scaled. All dimensions should be verified on site and any discrepancies notified to the Architect

Job: 34 BELSIZELANE, NEW EXTENSION, NW3

Date: 27/10/1981

Drawing: SECTIONS & ELEVATIONS

Scale: 1:100

Revision:

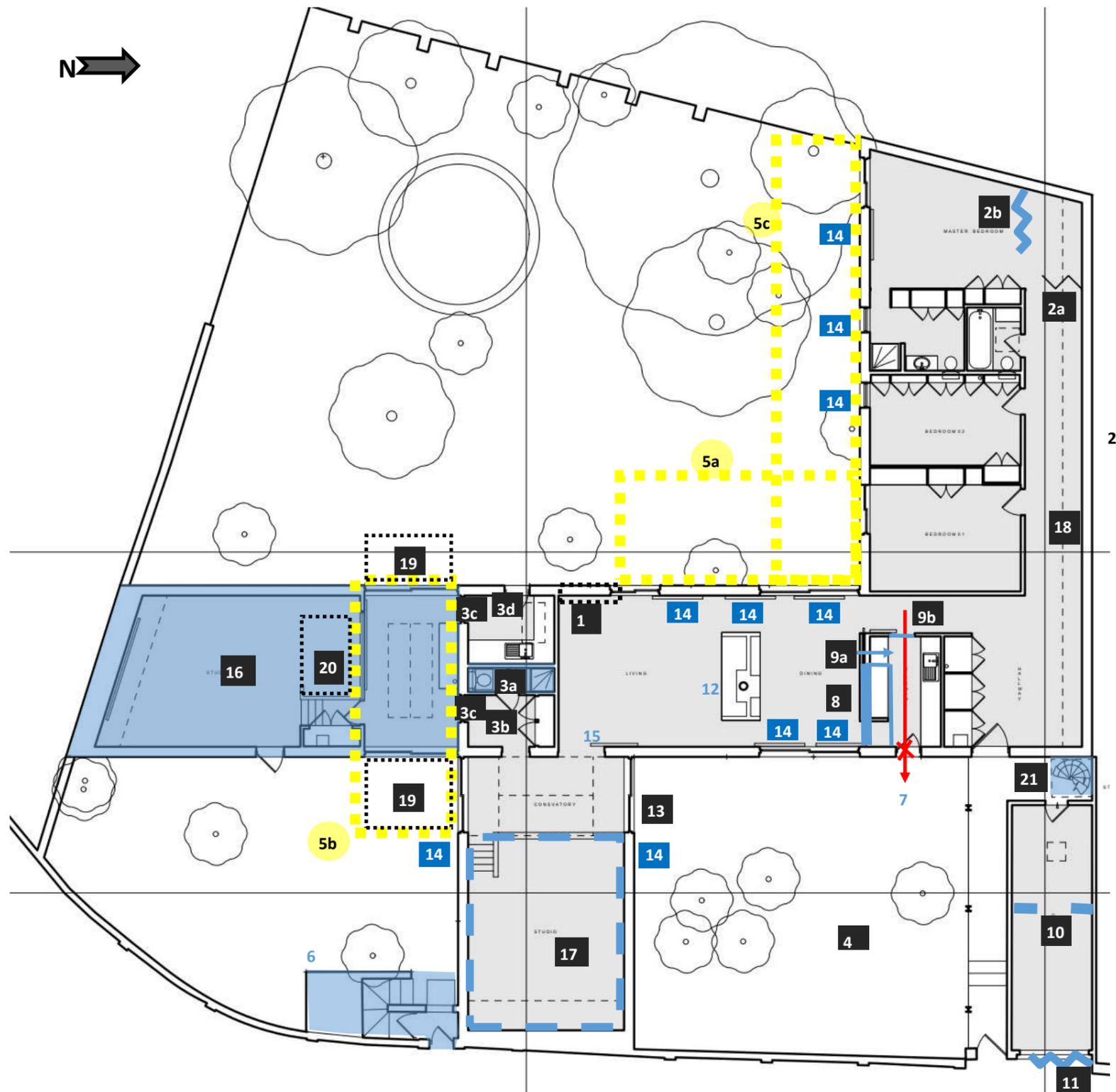
Georgie Wolton Architect
34 Belsize Lane London NW3

Figure 20: Original proposed plan, approved by Camden 11 March 1975

Note: Building originally designed to feature external shutters and a taller north facing clerestory window to the bedroom range

Figure 21: Proposed extension, approved by Camden 27 October 1981

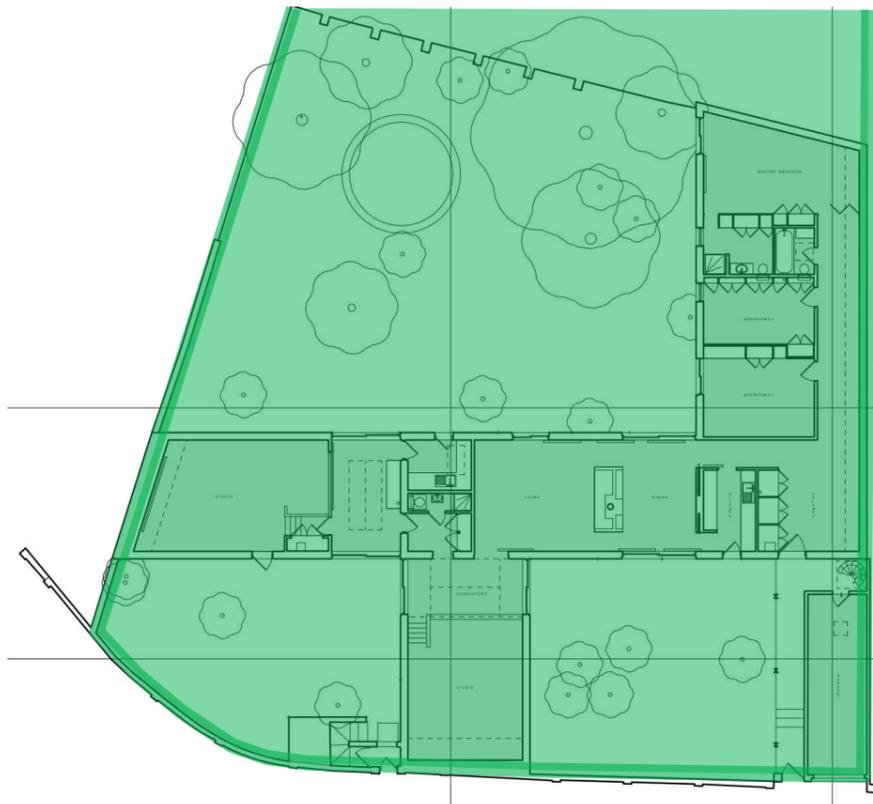
Variations to Design



- 1) Living room window originally intended to abut the cross wall.
- 2) Concertina screen installed in this position in 1981 (2a), position originally intended to align with corridor (2b).
- 3) Former Study, compromised by subdivision to form a WC (3a), linkage to extension (3b) after 1981. Works included forming two new internal doorways within a former external wall (3c), and a single external door in place of a window to the garden (3d). Note: This space was allocated as a bedroom in the 1981 permission with shared bathroom (20) to an additional bedroom within the extension used as a Studio.
- 4) Courtyard was intended and originally built as a fully brick paved area with occasional planting. There has been an increase in soft landscaping and reduction of hard land landscaping.
- 5) Prior to 1981 there were two brick terraces on the garden side; one on west side of living room (5a) and the other (5b) on the south side of the former study. Brick paved terraces are shown to have extended along the southern front of the bedroom wing (5c) on the 1981 plan.
- 6) Introduced breach in boundary wall and steps to provide separate access to studio extension
- 7) Door access to garden not originally intended
- 8) Kitchen intended to be open to living room—division provided by units only
- 9) Access to kitchen was intended to be on north side (9a) with no doorway from hall (9b). It appears the approved design was not executed in favour of the existing arrangement.
- 10) Garage had been divided so that the rear part provided a galley utility room
- 11) Garage doors originally built as concertina doors.
- 12) Fireplace altered
- 13) Conservatory designed to have single window, not doors
- 14) Sliding shutters originally conceived to be external
- 15) Doorway between living room and conservatory designed to be smaller and was intended to be set directly opposite equally proportioned window
- 16) Later extension; designed as a bedroom with ensuite; built and used as a studio without ensuite.
- 17) Floor raised
- 18) Roof light intended to be whole width of corridor.
- 19) 1981 conservatory originally designed/approved to project forward of the build line at both ends (built form varied this)
- 20) Intended location for bedroom ensuite (never built)
- 21) Roof access provided by addition of spiral stairs post 1980s.
- 22) Rear boundary formerly lined and screened by mature trees

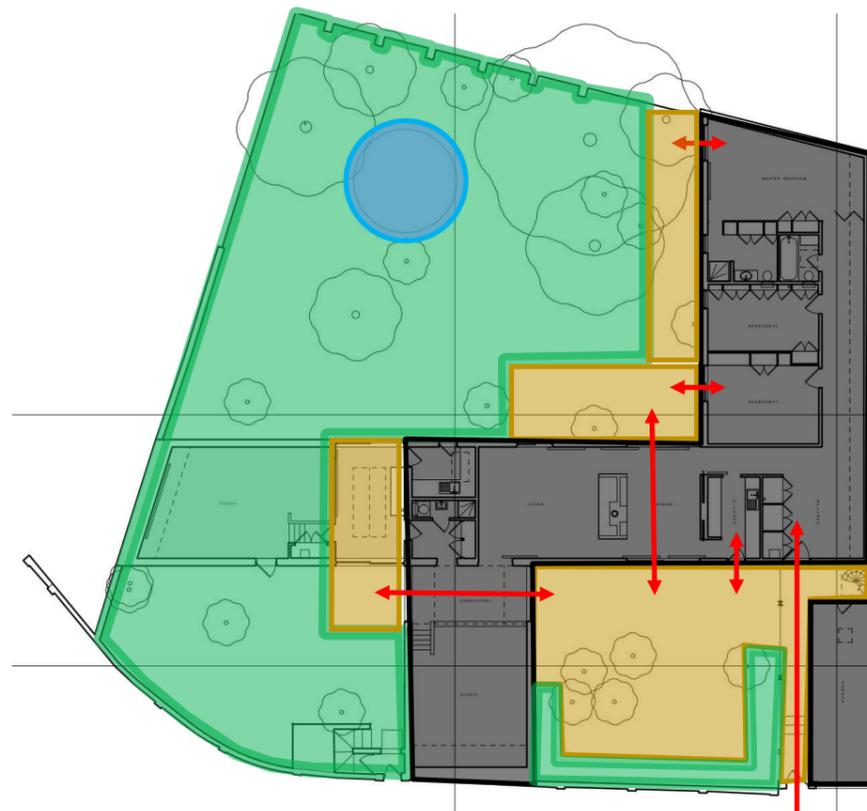
Figure 22: Current plan annotated to show variations

Landscape Change



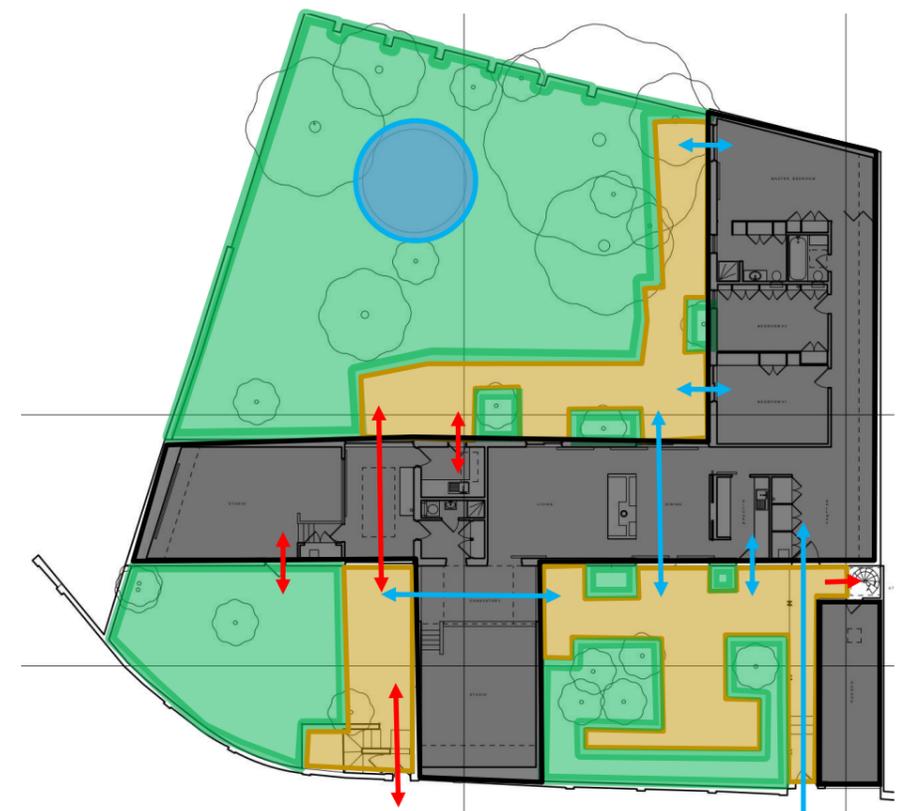
Pre-1976

- Plot formed the lower part of the garden to 16 Lyndhurst Gardens.
- Western extent of present site delineated by brick retaining wall.
- Land to the north was open, occupied by a tennis court (later replaced by playground).



1976

- Two external spaces; an informal garden and a courtyard.
- Courtyard relatively formal, paved in brick with minimal planting.
- Courtyard character defined by impenetrable Victorian boundary wall (offering security), semi impenetrable new house (controlled permeability by means of large openable doors), and cloister like permeability offered by entrance pergola frame.
- The garden was evidently natural in style with retention of elements of planting from the Victorian garden.
- House positioned against north boundary to maximise garden area and afford plan configuration with southerly aspect.
- Movement between external spaces and into external spaces via glazed doors (red arrows).
- Paved terrace on south side of the former study since removed.
- Pond added.

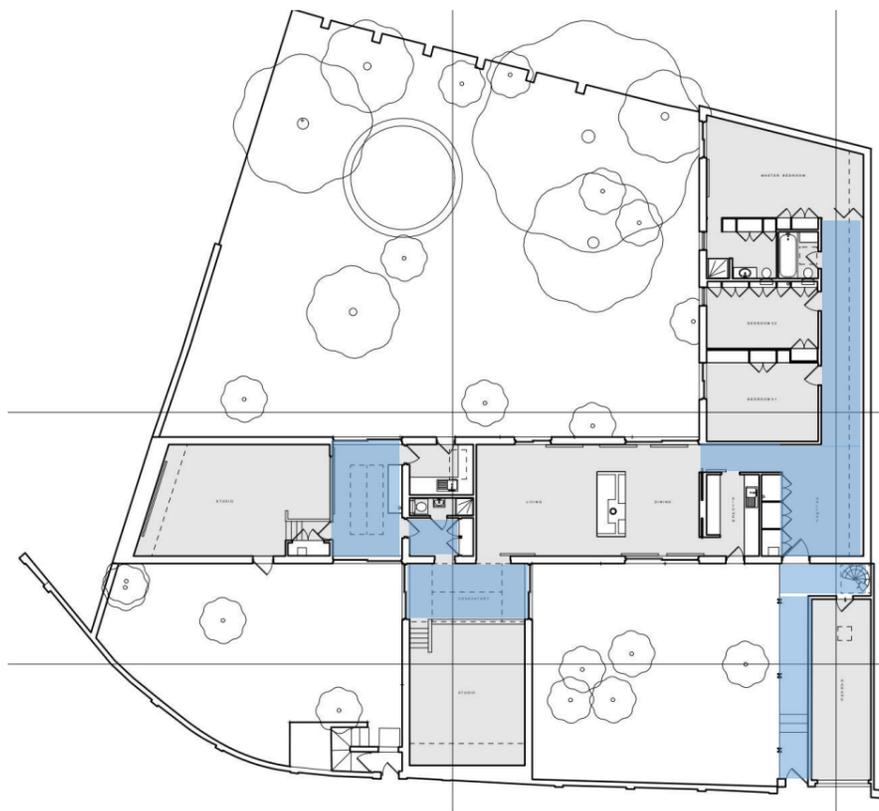


Post 1981 to Present

- Studio extension (added at southern end of building) divided garden into two and created a third external space.
- Second through passage/conservatory added and south end of original house, linking the separated gardens.
- New garden access provided (red arrows) alongside established access points (blue arrows).
- Secondary independent access introduced from Belsize Lane increased permeability between site and context.
- Roof access introduced and roof used for herb/vegetable beds.
- Extent, formality and orthogonal nature of paved terraces reduced

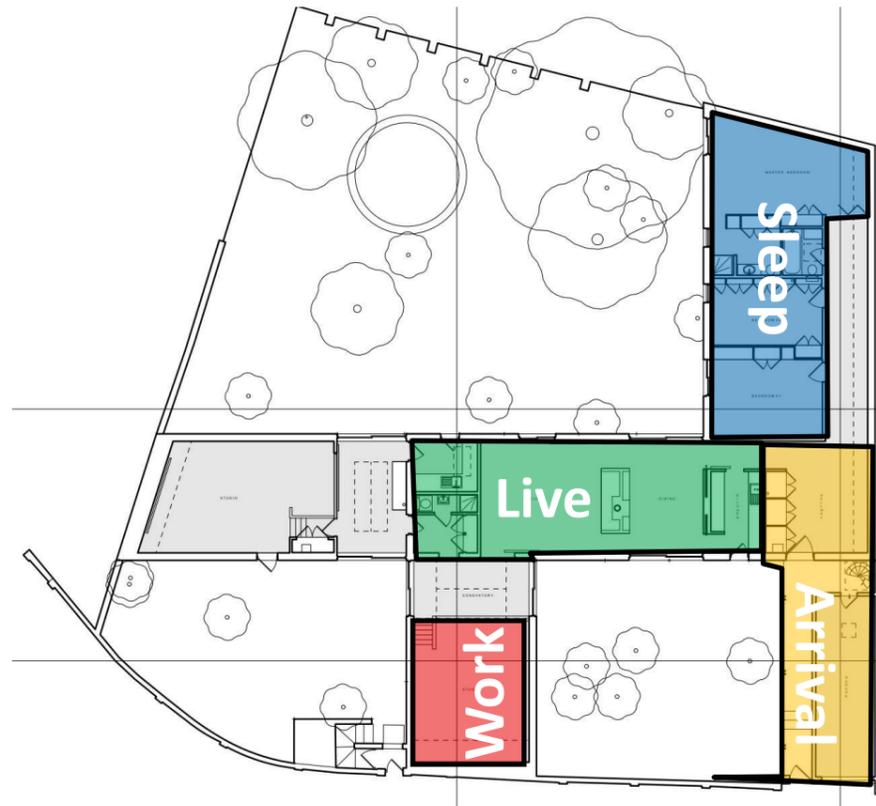
Figure 23: Landscape and circulation changes

Zonal Change and Circulation



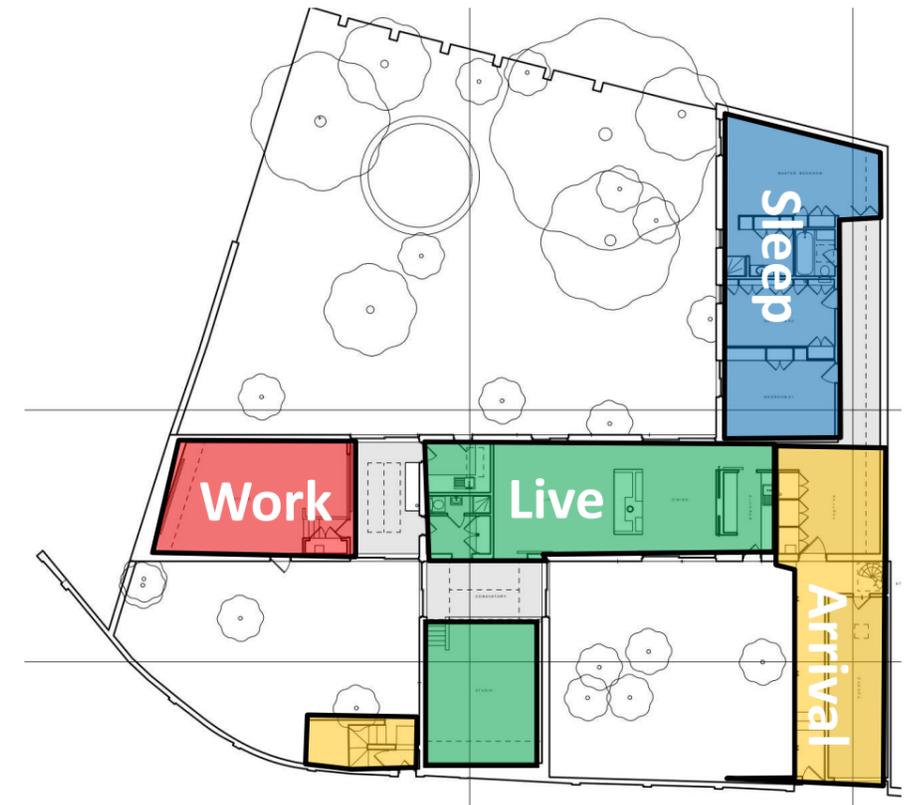
Circulation

- Circulation areas are generous, typically utilising top-light as a distinguishing feature.
- The link between the two southern conservatory spaces, via a room formed within the former study, is uncharacteristic of the design principles.
- Circulation areas served as rooms or spaces with secondary purpose. The bedroom corridor housed a collection of rugs, the conservatories separated functions/uses and increased the connection between inside and outside.



Activity/Use 1970s

- Plan form organization was zonal.
- Single conservatory used as transition between 'Live' and 'Work' spaces



Activity/Use 1980s

- Variation to zonal organization
- Greater living accommodation achieved by re-use of former studio
- New separate entrance for work/studio extension.
- Conservatory as a design form maintained as a transitional space.
- Documented evidence that former studio was utilised as a bedroom, thus breaking the zonal definitions.

Figure 24: Zonal changes

Historic Maps



Figure 25: Historic Maps



Assessment of Significance

Assessment of Significance

46. As a Grade II listed building 34 Belsize Lane is recognised as a building of special interest. Significance, for heritage assets, comprises the asset’s architectural, historical, archaeological and artistic interests, and these aspects will be assessed in the following section
47. It is widely recognised that historic buildings undergo change and that not all aspects of a listed building are of equal interest. Interpreting and defining what contributes to the significance of an asset is therefore key to understanding the potential for or nature of appropriate change or management. Buildings of special architectural or historic interest are given special protection in planning law, most notably by the Planning

(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

34 Belsize Lane

48. 34 Belsize Lane’s significance derives from its architectural and historic interest, not from any archaeological or artistic interests. The property’s list description provides a detailed summary of its significance (see Appendix 2), and these summaries are expanded on below.

Historic Interest

49. 34 Belsize Lane derives significance from its historic interest: it is the work of Georgie Wolton, a talented female architect who practiced

independently for only a relatively short time in the post-war period. The building captures many of the ideas that influenced her practice and is an expression of her own personal ideals on how she wished to live her life.

Architectural Interest

50. **Plan Form & Proportion:** The building’s form is of high significance, although its current as-built plan does not necessarily reflect Wolton’s initial vision—rather, it is the product of a slow evolution in the way the building was used. The consented drawings for each of the building’s two phases (initial build and 1981 extension) do not precisely reflect what was actually built, and

discussions with some of Wolton’s peers indicate that the house was originally intended to be two-storeys in height.

51. Although the sum result of a process of evolution as opposed to a single-phase design & build, the property’s plan form is still of considerable significance. The property’s distinct separation of spaces for sleeping, living and working is particularly important. Wolton used a number of methods to articulate this separation—for example the use of individual wings and level changes. The conservatory-like antechambers between living and working spaces are also important, although this separation was not fully articulated originally; the consented 1981 plans



Figure 26: View of 34 Belsize Lane from Ornan Road



Figure 27: Courtyard garden

for the southward extension which became Wolton's studio described this room as a 'new bedroom', and one of the rooms in the bedroom wing as a study.

52. The sequential arrangement of rooms within the property is therefore key to its significance, although it is not something that has remained entirely static since the building's initial construction. This arrangement is particularly apparent in its entrance sequence; the building is barely visible from the street and is only visible in glimpses from behind a tall garden wall, further away from the property in isolated views. Upon entering through a small, screened gate, the house is slowly revealed. The covered entrance path that runs through the smallest, and historically (but not currently) formal courtyard leads to the generously-proportioned entrance hall, which is lit by full-length toplighting. There is an axial view towards the bedroom wing, while the living areas reveal themselves to the left.
53. The sequential arrangement of 34 Belsize Lane's spaces can be linked to Wolton's study of 17th and 18th century English landscape design. Wolton noted these parallels herself, and stated in an interview that *'My approach to architecture has parallels with seventeenth century landscapes in England, with their axial layouts and geometric parterres, which developed into the episodic and serpentine layouts of the eighteenth century. It is this period of transition, the cusp between the classical and romantic, which has long been my main preoccupation in both architecture and landscape.'*
54. The connection between the house and its gardens is also important, and once again reflects an important aspect of Wolton's interests. The existing plan of the property has created three separate courtyard gardens, each with their own distinct landscape character, and each with different relationships to the rooms within the property. These three courtyards do

also represent a second phase of the building's development, of course—prior to the construction of the 1981 extension, the site had just one formal courtyard garden, and a larger informal garden to the rear.

55. The expression of Wolton's ideas and ideals in the built form of this house do endow the house with special interest, but as discussed, the house is still the product of a slow process of evolution, as opposed to a single-phase work. The house was adapted to suit the needs of its sole occupant (and original architect) - alteration, extension and piecemeal adaptation all took place in response to Wolton's changing needs and practical or fiscal challenges. These changes all adhered to Wolton's vision and design ethos, but demonstrate that the site has capacity for change.
56. There are also significant problems with its detailing and construction—for example failing materials, a lack of sufficient insulation and damp. Wolton herself applied to install a clerestory window and flat roof over the rooflights above the entrance hall in 2021, but these works were never carried out. The property is consequently in a very poor condition and requires significant and careful investment in order to make it habitable once more.
57. **Internal Fittings & Features:** Internal joinery and flooring, etc, within the building is of significance, as it represents an important element of Wolton's scheme and design intention. The kitchen cabinets were thoughtfully designed and echo those designed by Georgie and installed within her earlier projects. Decorative features are minimal, as a vital element of the property's aesthetic treatment was Wolton's extensive collection of Kilim rugs. Many aspects of the building's design, such as its large areas of blank wall and canted toplights, were designed specifically to showcase the collection. Now that this collection has been removed, the decorative



Figure 28: Living room



Figure 29: Bedroom



Figure 30: Bedroom hallway, 1976



Figure 31: Living room, 1976



Figure 32: Courtyard, 1976



Figure 33: Bedroom hallway, 2024



Figure 34: Living room, 2024



Figure 35: Courtyard, 2024

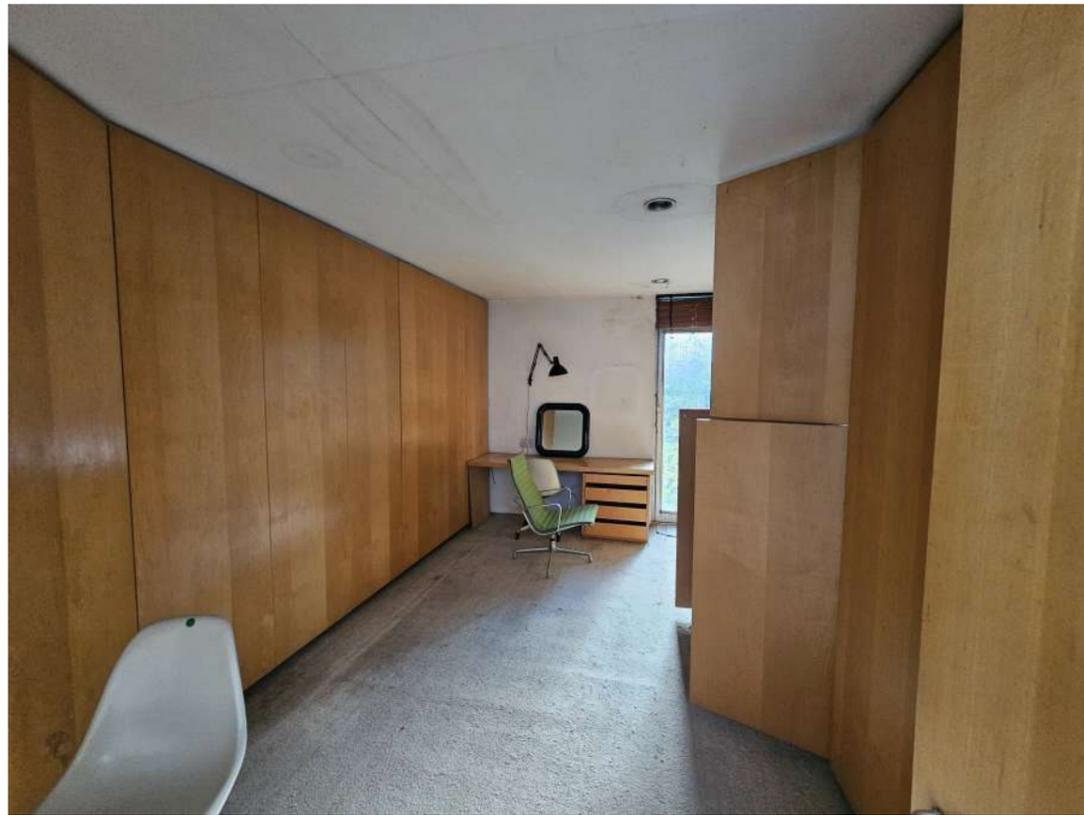


Figure 36: Bedroom



Figure 37: Studio (1981 extension)



Figure 38: Studio antechamber



Figure 39: Studio (original 1976 build)

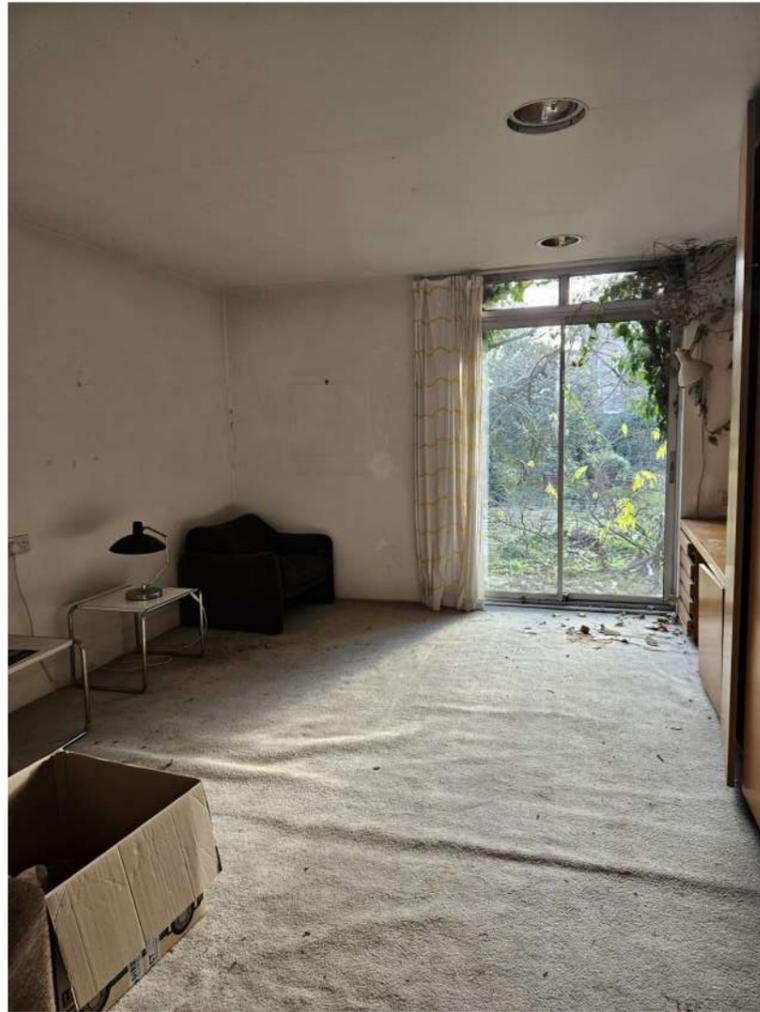


Figure 40: Bedroom

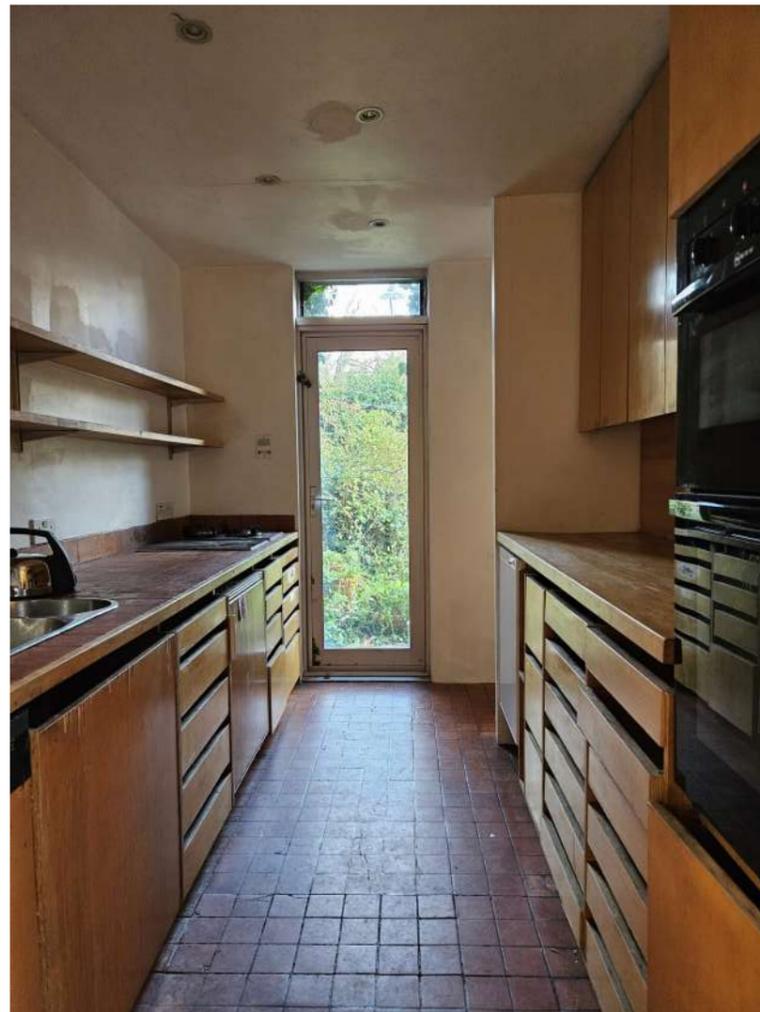


Figure 41: Kitchen

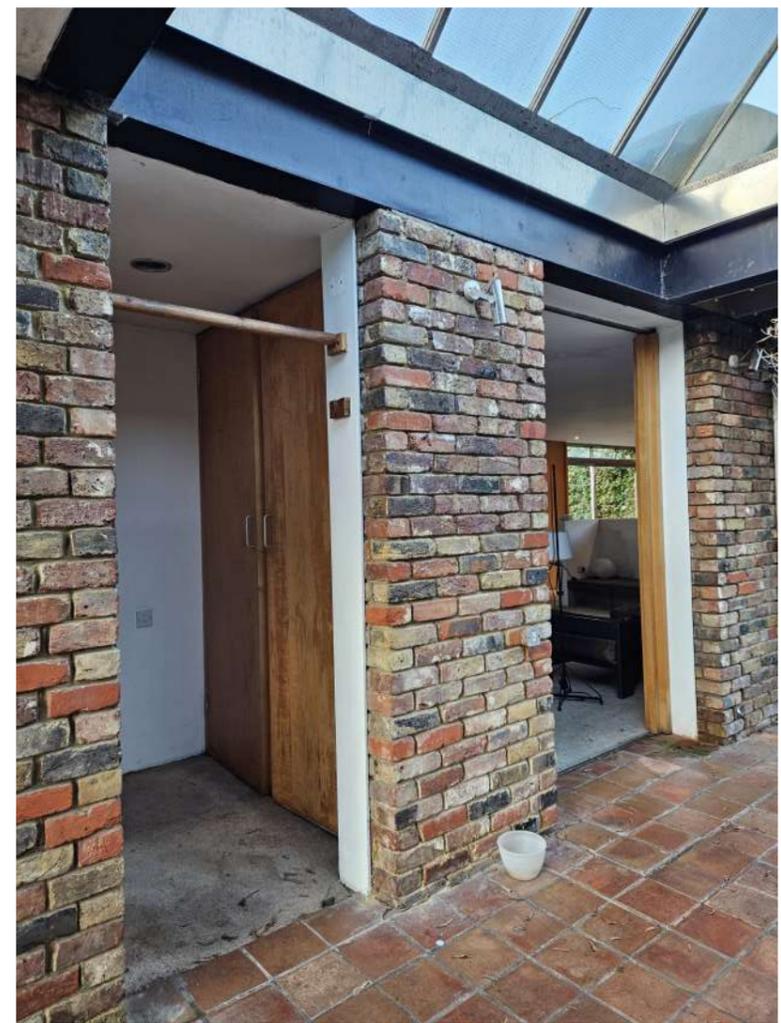
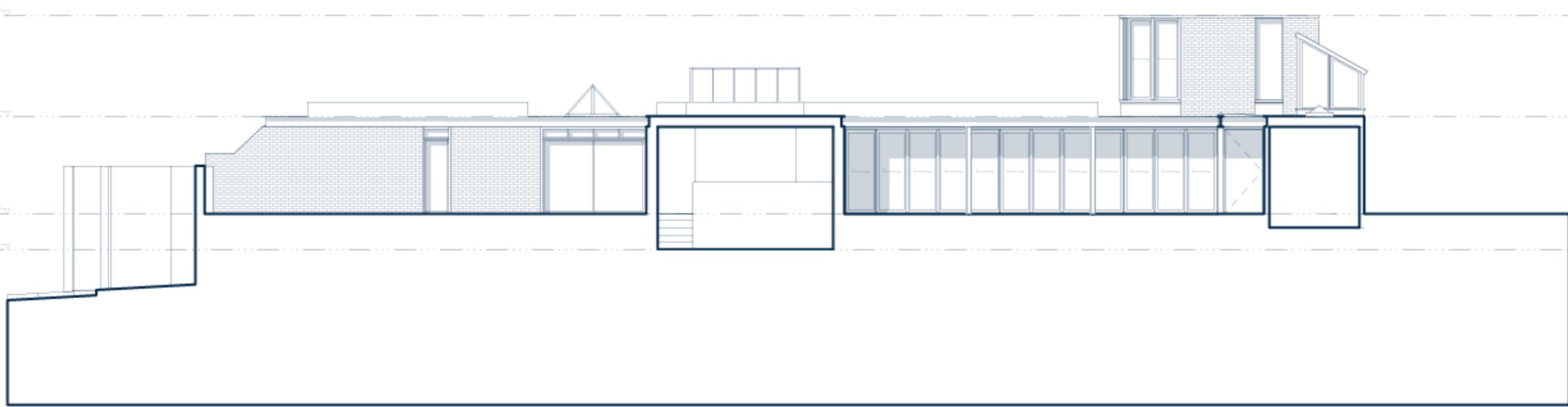


Figure 42: Studio antechamber



Assessment of Proposals

58. The proposal appraised here is put forward in the interest of returning and restoring the listed building to a habitable state to secure the reoccupation of a vacant building in very poor condition. The proposed works include conservation that is commensurate to its special interests as a Grade II listed building. Considerable capital investment is required due to the poor condition and lifespan of the original materials and the proposals therefore include modest alteration and extension.
59. The proposals have evolved in consultation with Jon Lowe Heritage Ltd, Historic England and planning officers at Camden Council, in order to avoid or minimise adverse impacts and effects on the listed building and its significance, and to maximise opportunities for enhancement. Consideration is being given to what is desirable to preserve in the interest of achieving these objectives.
60. Full details of the proposals are set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement and submitted drawings. The impact assessment should be read in conjunction with those documents.

Repair, replacement and restoration

61. A condition survey has been carried out to better understand degradation of fabric, structural condition and extent of insulation. The existing building is in a very poor condition due to minimal maintenance and low quality or ad-hoc repairs and interventions that have been carried out. Much of the building fabric and materials are of relatively low quality and some are reaching the end of their lifespan. There has not been the investment that may otherwise be typically expected of a building of this construction type.
62. Water ingress and vacancy has accelerated deterioration. Arresting further degradation and maintaining the architectural qualities of the building that contribute to its special architectural

and historic interest is a primary objective of the proposed refurbishment.

63. It is proposed to locally replace the concrete floor slab and install sufficient insulation. It is possible to achieve this without altering the finished floor level and therefore once executed, there would be no experiential change and no effect on character or appearance. The existing concrete slab does not have any inherent historic or architectural value and this element to the proposal is therefore deemed beneficial for delivering improved environmental performance while sustaining historic character.
64. It is proposed to retain the perimeter I-beams and existing historic walls. To achieve improved U-values the internal concrete block work walls would be replaced like-for-like with the addition of insulation. One would continue to experience a plastered wall with any perceived increase in the thickness of the wall having little or no effect on the overall spatial qualities and character of the rooms. Any increase in wall thickness is minimal. Externally there would be no visible difference. This element of the proposal is considered neutral in its effect on heritage values.
65. The existing roof has a low quality and retrospectively added asphalt roof covering that is poorly detailed and it visually disrupts the simplicity of the I-beam termination to the walls. It is proposed to maintain a flat roof design but achieve increased insulation and a better detail to the I-beam—this would achieve improved insulation, avoid cold bridging and future associated issues, whilst maintaining the external and internal appearance and original design intent. This element of the proposal is considered neutral in its effect on heritage values.

Garage

66. The proposed works to the garage include a minimal widening and replacement of the garage door. The original design comprised a horizontally

sliding concertina door that was later replaced with a generic up-and-over garage door. The existing door and its frame are not original, nor are they contributory to the special architectural interests of the building. Their replacement and any minor adjustment required to the wall nibs offer would improve the current appearance of this visible part of the property from the public domain.

67. The original internal configuration comprised a utility room that was separated from the garage by a partition. It is proposed to reinstate this partition and plan form, and adjust the position at

the rear of the garage. Reinstating the utility room and historic plan form would have a beneficial effect on the overall significance of the listed building.

Extension to the living range

68. A new gallery/link structure is proposed along the east elevation of the building, providing the occupants with improved transition from the entrance to the main living spaces. The design is lightweight, framed, largely glazed, and distinct from the existing building. Its design draws upon Georgie Wolton's approach for extensions to

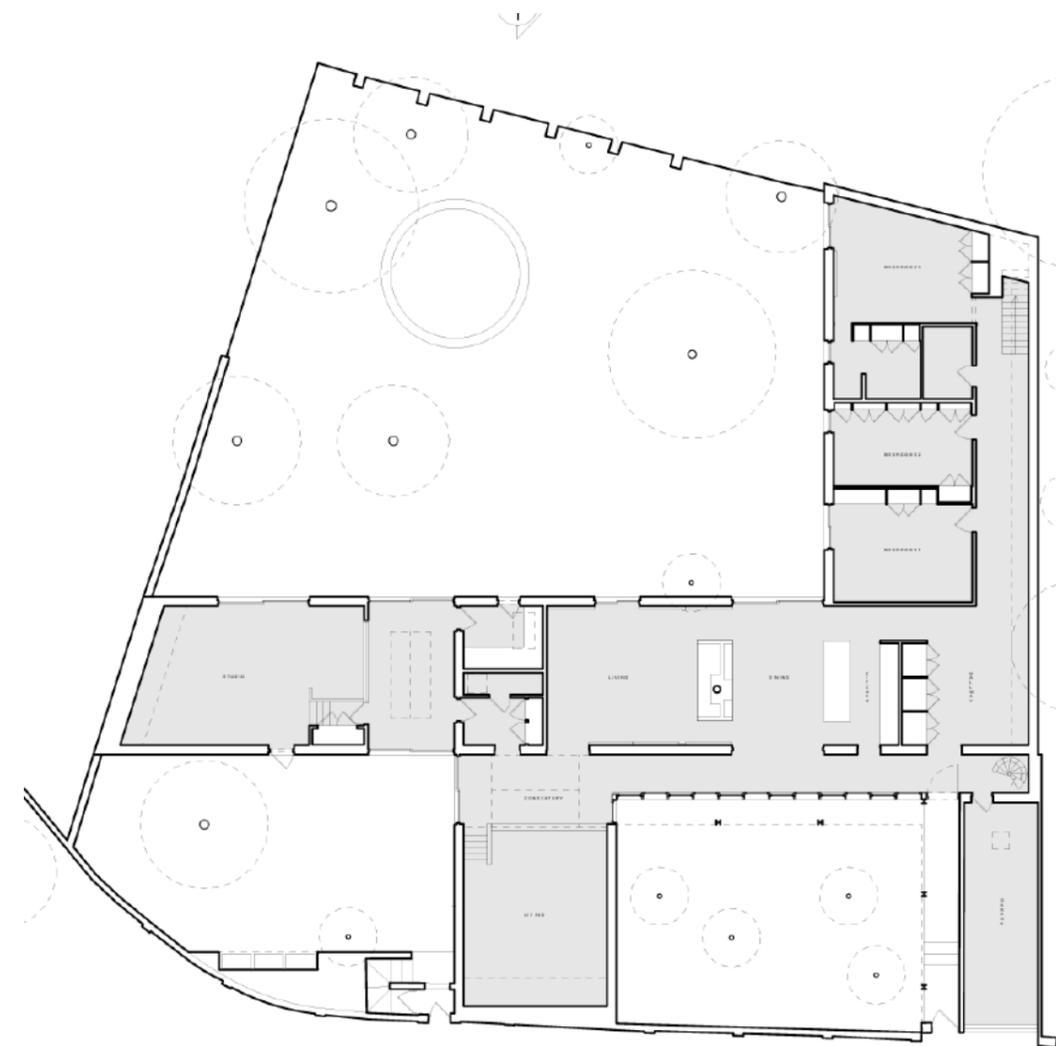


Figure 43: Proposed plan



Figure 43: CGI showing proposed gallery/link



Figure 44: CGI showing proposed 1st floor extension

- existing buildings.
69. The extension would internalise the original east elevation. It would present a new front entrance and provide linkage to the kitchen, living room and conservatory link beyond. Externally its design echoes the pergola approach flanking the garage.
 70. This proposal supplements rather than alters the existing plan form and circulation, and openings, including the important relationship between the interior and exterior, are retained. There would be continued legibility of the historic footprint and all features of the existing house, and the different phases of the buildings evolution would be clear. The use of extensive glazing relates well to the conservatory link at the southern end and the use of an I-beam to cap the pergola posts unifies the extension with the existing building and

71. Overall, the proposed extension is considered to complement the historic footprint, respect the architectural design language, maintain the building's and historic and architectural integrity, and preserve its significance.

Kitchen

72. The original design for the kitchen utilised the southern counter as an island, providing openness between kitchen and dining spaces. The kitchen was to be entered via the dining room, not the corridor, and there was no direct access to garden. The as built and amended layout placed connection to the dining room at the eastern end and opted for high level wall mounted cabinets rather than openness.

73. The proposal seeks to revert to the openness and connectivity originally envisaged by removing the wall dividing it from the dining space and corridor. The door to the garden would be removed to enable access from the proposed gallery link. The remaining kitchen cabinets would be restored, with localised repair and like-for-like replacement where necessary, and with like-for-like replacement of the ceramic tile counter tops.
74. The loss of the wall would alter the as built configuration but would reflect the original design intention for visual connection and openness between the kitchen and dining spaces. The proportions of each room would be maintained and the strong visual design of the kitchen units would remain present as the dominant and element of design character. The effect of these works on the significance of the listed building are

considered to be neutral in effect on the asset's significance.

Bedrooms and Bathroom

75. The two central bedrooms will remain unaffected by the proposals. The master bedroom would be altered by two changes. Firstly, a section of built-in wardrobes and wall separating the bathroom from the bedroom will be removed and replaced with a plastered wall to enable enlargement of the bathroom. Secondly, the width of the room is to be reduced to enable the proposed staircase to be positioned at the end of the corridor.
76. The bathroom's small scale is inadequate and its fittings tired. The proposals maintain the room's rectangular proportions, direct access from the corridor, and its relationship to the ensuite and other bedrooms. The proposed alterations are minimal in their effect on significance as the

original built-in wardrobes are to be relocated against the new stair wall and the resulting proportions of the room are as per the original consented layout. The character of the master bedroom and the adjacent bathroom would be preserved and their condition improved. The resulting plan form would execute the original intended design and maintain the intended and established geometries and the important connection with the garden. These works would have a neutral effect on the asset's significance.

First floor extension

77. Achieving an additional bedroom is necessary for the development and the investment that would safeguard the asset's future. To avoid physical disruption to the existing plan form, a first-floor addition is proposed over the bedroom wing. This would sit far back in the north-west corner of the site, pushing the massing away from the front boundary of the site so that it would be almost invisible from the street.
78. The proposed structure would be lightweight, formed in timber, and set back from the ground floor elevation plane to give it subservience and distinction from the existing house. The proposed structure is designed with reference to the architecture of Georgie Wolton, in particular referencing the details of her Fieldhouse project, with its fine lines, simple structural form with glazed openings, achieving a perceived lightness. The exploration of the first-floor massing and materials has resulted in a design

that will be clearly subordinate to the original house; its delicate framework and glass composition would complement the simplicity and visual weight of the brick, glass and steel that define the elevations of the original house.

79. Access to the proposed first floor will be via a new staircase discreetly placed at the western end of the bedroom corridor. The siting of the staircase has been influenced by the original design intent for the circulation space/corridor to extend to the western party wall. By returning to that design the awkward relationship between the concertina door and the clerestory would be resolved.
80. As a result of the first floor addition the south facing clerestory glazing, which along with the northern party retain wall (which is in a very poor condition) would be replaced. The proposed design continues the design intent of top light and retains the stepped ceiling profile of the corridor, but orientates the glazing to the north. Internally the form of the corridor would be largely preserved, together with continuation of the positive effect and attribute of natural light washing over the northern party wall. It is of note that the 1975 approved design orientated the clerestory to the north and occupied the full width of the corridor (see figure 20).
81. Whilst the addition of a first floor extension would deviate from the as-built single storey form that was present at the time of listing, the extension would only result in relatively minor alteration to

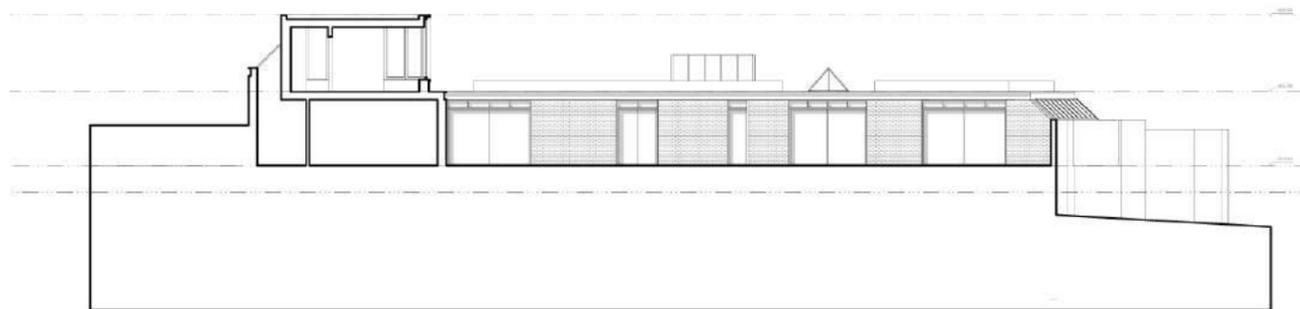
plan form and circulation, as well as a change to the appearance and massing of the building. A degree of harm to the assets significance is found, but this would be at the very lowest level of less than substantial harm (in NPPF terms). Any perceived harm or consideration of the scale of harm must consider the following key factors:

- Because of its considered design, appropriate lightweight appearance, set back nature and retention of a top light to the corridor, the proposed first floor extension would be sympathetic to the heritage values of the building.
- It is material that the original design concept, as reported by Georgie Wolton's contemporaries and collaborators, was for a two storey bedroom wing, a proposal that did not manifest its self on account of cost.
- Wolton's designs for extensions offered clearly distinct framed and glazed constructions and the proposed design is sympathetic to the design philosophies employed by her and would enable legibility, understanding and distinction between the original and added elements.
- The building's condition and vacant state is not desirable to preserve. The proposals taken as a whole would arrest the deteriorating state, restore the building in a scholarly and appropriate way, secure its use and therefore its long term conservation.
- The extension is distinct and would allow clear legibility of the original design and later extensions. Furthermore, the lightweight construction and design of the extension is such that it would be capable of removal at a future date to return the building to its pre-existing state.

82. It is proposed to install a window in the west wall of the 1980s studio. The room has top light glazing at the southern end, borrowed light from the link conservatory to its north, and a window in its eastern elevation. The proposal would result in localised loss of external wall and a modest change to the external appearance of this part of the building. Provision of a dual aspect outlook and allowing visual connection with the garden is a strong characteristic of the building and the addition of the proposed window maintains this. The window's position would be discrete and any effects on the listed building are not considered to be of a scale or nature that would cause harm. On the contrary, the proposals would be appropriate and would complement the space and one's experience of the building.

Landscape Enhancement

83. The original design, and executed build, created two external spaces; a courtyard that was predominantly hard landscaped and a rear garden that included hard landscaping at the building's perimeter, where doors opened into the space. Each had a different character but played a part in one's experience of the architecture, whether from within or without. A third space, or second courtyard, was created by extending the building but aside from the junction of the conservatory links this was not overlooked by living or sleeping spaces.
84. During her lifetime Georgie Wolton's interests veered from architecture towards landscape design and gardens. This resulted in the garden and courtyard being adapted with reduction of hard landscaping in favour of planting, soft landscaping and creation of a beautiful and calm space.
85. The proposed landscape design for soft and hard landscaping continues what Georgie started and introduces subtle changes that would enhance the setting of the building and maintain the important relationship between the inside and outside. There would be minor change to the



Studio Window

Figure 45: Proposed section /Elevation



Policy Compliance and Conclusions

Policy Compliance and Conclusions

86. Since construction the house and garden have evolved and been adapted to serve the needs of its sole occupant, and original architect, Georgie Wolton. There has been alteration, extension and piecemeal adaptation, each deviating from the original build but maintaining the building's fundamental character, its design philosophy, and organizational arrangement as a private live/work environment.
87. Research and oral testimony from Georgie Wolton's contemporaries, colleagues and friends, has illustrated how her vision and design ethos were adhered to, or adapted in response to practical or financial influences. The evolved and adapted house and garden met the statutory criteria for listing, because or despite of considered change. The current form illustrates that the site has had a capacity for change. Executing further changes that are in the spirit of the original design intent, as proposed, would be fully capable of maintaining and respecting the asset's significance and would sustain a history and process of adaptation to suit the changing environment and circumstances of its occupant.
88. The proposed changes to the existing building are minor in nature and do not alter the established circulation, spatial proportions of key rooms, and preserve the existing elevations. By locating the proposed first floor extension over the bedroom wing, all bedrooms are maintained within the allocated zone for that use. The minor changes to the existing bedroom plan form are closer in configuration to the original consent. The proposed changes also reflect the original consent with reconfiguration of the kitchen to improve circulation and connection with the dining space. The addition of the corridor would internalise an elevation but preserve the structural openings and offer an architectural element designed to complement the original architecture. The first-floor extension is intentionally a lightweight addition would read as a distinct but complementary element so as not to detract from or visually dominate the original building. Its form and design, and framed nature, draw upon Georgie Wolton's Fieldhouse and her use of rhythmic framed glazing on other projects. The designs proposed are informed, carefully considered, contextually responsive, and fully capable of preserving the architectural integrity of the house.
89. The character and appearance of the conservation area would be preserved. It has been demonstrated that the existing building is not consistent with the established and predominant character of the area. Its low-profile nature, and its partial concealment by a retained Victorian boundary wall, result in minimal contribution to the area visually and this would be maintained. The proposed first floor addition is set back, away from the public domain, and would not introduce visible massing.
90. Accordingly, the proposals are considered to offer an appropriate level of change without harming the significance of designated heritage assets. The design process and response to the building, together with our assessment, support the decision maker in adhering to the statutory duties imposed by S.16, S.66(1) and S.72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
91. In accordance with paragraph 200 of the NPPF (2023) this report provides a proportionate description of the significance of the heritage assets affected by the proposed development. It follows a full inspection of the site and its environs, along with a proportionate study of available documentary sources and oral testimony. Qualitative judgments have been made based on knowledge and experience of designated heritage assets of this type and period.
92. It is an important consideration that the building is in a very poor and vacant condition, a factor that is not considered by the statutory listing process. The simplicity of design, the aesthetic achieved by details, and the overall character of the design are of value and desirable to preserve. The late 20th century materials are of limited inherent heritage value there is a greater value and benefit to securing the long term the future of the building in a habitable and energy efficient way. The proposals deliver the necessary safeguarding and improvements in a way that sustains heritage value and secures the long-term future of the building. These are considered heritage benefits.
93. The scheme submitted has evolved in consultation with Jon Lowe Heritage Ltd, Historic England and planning officers at Camden Council to ensure that opportunities for enhancement are maximized and any impacts are reduced. The very low level of less than substantial harm that arises from the addition of a first floor does not erode the overall significance of the listed building or prevent an understanding or appreciation of its special interests. In response to the tests imposed by paragraph 210 of the NPPF it is concluded that the heritage benefits of securing the building's future through repair and restoration would outweigh the perceived harm. The proposals offer sympathetic and well-considered restoration and design that would improve the building's condition, enable its future use and secure its long term conservation. These heritage benefits neutralize any adverse effects.
94. It is concluded that the proposed works for refurbishment, alteration and extension, would preserve the significance of the Grade II listed building. Its form, fabric and features that have been identified as being of special architectural and historic interest within the recent list description are to be retained and would remain legible and appreciable to this and future generations. The low level of less than substantial harm that could be perceived to arise from the introduction of a first floor are out weighed by the heritage benefits of the proposals.

Appendix 1:

Legislation and Planning Policy

Legislation

- 1) The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the current legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas and is a primary consideration.
- 2) In respect of proposals potentially affected listed buildings, Section 66 states that *“in considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”*.
- 3) In respect of conservation areas, Section 72 of the Act places a duty on the decision maker to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

National Planning Policy Framework (revised 2023)

- 4) The Government’s planning policies for England are set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (revised 2023). It sets out a framework within which locally prepared plans can be produced. It is a material consideration and relates to planning law, noting that applications are to be determined in accordance with the local plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5) Chapter 16, ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’, is of particular relevance.
- 6) Heritage assets are recognised as being a irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. (Paragraph 195) The conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is also a core planning principle.
- 7) Conservation (for heritage policy) is defined at annex 2 as: “a process of maintaining and

managing change in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.” It differs from preservation which is the maintenance of something in its current state.

- 8) Significance (for heritage policy) is defined at annex 2 as: “The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting...”
- 9) As a framework for local plans the NPPF, at paragraph 196, directs that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, taking into account four key factors:
 - a. “The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b. The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - c. The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - d. Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.”
- 10) This approach is followed through in decision making with Local Planning Authorities having the responsibility to take account of ‘a’ as well as ‘The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality’ and ‘the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness’. (Paragraph 203)
- 11) Describing the significance of any heritage asset affected, including the contribution made by its

setting, is the responsibility of an applicant. Any such assessment should be proportionate to the asset’s significance. (Paragraph 200)

- 12) Identifying and assessing the particular significance of any heritage asset potentially affected by a proposal, taking into account evidence and expertise, is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authorities. The purpose of this is to ‘avoid or minimize any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal’. (Paragraph 201)
- 13) In decision making where designated heritage assets are affected, Paragraph 205 places a duty of giving ‘great weight’ to the asset’s conservation when considering the impact of a proposed development, irrespective of the level of harm.
- 14) Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 as: “A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).”
- 15) Harm to designated heritage assets is categorized into ‘substantial harm’, addressed in Paragraphs 206 and 207 of the NPPF, or ‘less than substantial harm’, addressed in Paragraphs 202.
- 16) The effects of any development on a heritage asset, whether designated or not, needs to be assessed against its archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interests as the core elements of the asset’s significance.
- 17) The setting of Heritage Assets is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: “

“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting

may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 19) National Planning Practice Guidance relating to Chapter 16 of the NPPF was last modified on 24 June 2021.
- 20) In respect of levels of harm paragraph 018 recognises that substantial harm is a high test. Case law describes substantial harm in terms of an effect that would vitiate or drain away much of the significance of a heritage asset. In cases where harm is found to be less than substantial, a local authority is to weigh that harm against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 21) Proposals can minimise or avoid harm to the significance of a heritage asset and its setting through first understanding significance to identify opportunities and constraints and then informing development proposals.
- 22) A listed building is a building that has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest and includes the building, any object or structure fixed to the buildings, and any object or structure within the curtilage of the buildings which forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948. (Paragraph 023)
- 23) The term ‘Special architectural or historic interest’ as used in legislation are used to describe all parts of a heritage asset’s significance.
- 24) Paragraph 007 of the NPPG states: *“Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.”*

25) Paragraph 013 states:

26) "The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each."

London Plan (2021)

26) The London Plan (2021) provides a city wide framework within which individual boroughs must set their local planning policies. It is not a revision but offers a new approach from previous iterations of the London Plan. While policies are generally strategic and of limited relevance the policies relating to the historic environment are detailed within Chapter 7 Heritage and Culture. These have been aligned with the policies set out in the NPPF, key of which is Policy HC1: Heritage Conservation and Growth. This policy provides an overview of a London wide approach to heritage and in doing so requires local authorities to demonstrate a clear understanding of London's historic environment. It concerns the identification, understanding, conservation, and enhancement of the historic environment and heritage assets, with an aim to improve access to, and the interpretation of, the heritage assets. It states that:

Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by

being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process

Camden Council's Local Plan

Policy D2 Heritage

27) The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.

Designated heritage assets

- 28) Designed heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
- a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
 - b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
 - c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
 - d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

29) The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

Conservation areas

30) Conservation areas are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies when assessing applications within conservation areas.

31) The Council will:

- e. require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;
- f. resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;
- g. resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and
- h. preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage

Listed Buildings

32) Listed buildings are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- i. resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
- j. resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and
- k. resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.

Archaeology

33) The Council will protect remains of archaeological importance by ensuring acceptable measures are taken proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset to preserve them and their setting, including physical preservation, where appropriate.

Other heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets

- 34) The Council will seek to protect other heritage assets including non-designated heritage assets (including those on and off the local list), Registered Parks and Gardens and London Squares.
- 35) The effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, balancing the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Appendix 2:

List Description

List Description

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1487795

Date first listed: 25-Oct-2023

List Entry Name: 34 Belsize Lane, including boundary wall to Belsize Lane

Statutory Address 1: 34 Belsize Lane, London, NW3 5AE

Summary

House and studio, 1975-6 with 1983 addition. Designed by Georgie Wolton for herself and her family.

Reasons for Designation

34 Belsize Lane, 1975-6, designed by Georgie Wolton, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Architectural interest:

- as a meticulously conceived studio house which creatively integrates into its sensitive urban setting;
- for its ranging, axial plan, articulating the garden spaces around the volume of building as well as the living and working spaces within it;
- for its interior, characterised by a subtle handling of spatial proportion and natural light, with full-height sliding doors and window shutters controlling the flow of space and views through the site;
- for its bespoke joinery, and straightforward palette of materials and fittings which contribute to the elegant, understated quality of the building.

Historic interest:

- as the work of Georgie Wolton, a little-known but talented woman architect working in independent practice in the post-war period; the building, designed for herself, captures many of the ideas which influenced her practice as well as her skill as a designer.

History

34 Belsize Lane was built in 1975-6 to designs by the architect and landscape designer Georgie Wolton for herself and her family.

Wolton and her husband David bought the empty plot on Belsize Lane in 1975. It had been part of the garden of 16 Lyndhurst Gardens behind and already had outline permission for a development of three houses. For the Woltons, however, it was to be the site of just one. Wolton described the house as the 'last of the English follies' because of its very low site density given its proximity to central London.

Wolton's self-imposed brief was for a three bedroom, two bathroom house with a studio from which she could work. As well as wanting to bring natural light into the principal spaces and to create a strong relationship between inside and outside, Wolton needed plenty of wall space to display her collection of Turkish kelim rugs. Part of the solution was the use of rooflights, employed to most dramatic effect in the contiguous entrance hall and bedroom wing. This top-lit space was inspired by the gallery at Creek Vean, Feock, Cornwall, (1964-67, listed at Grade II*). Creek Vean was an early work of the practice Team 4, of which Wolton had been a founding partner.

Wolton's design for 34 Belsize Lane is structurally simple, employing single-storey cavity brick walls, all below 2.4m high and the house is planned on a 5m wide bay with the roof spanning between the external walls. The plan is expansive and largely sequential, with rooms arranged in three main ranges in a Z-like plan and circulation space is kept to a minimum. Large, sliding timber shutters enclose the rooms and provide added insulation at night. The joinery was built to Wolton's designs by two Architectural Association students.

Georgina Wolton (née Cheesman), 1934-2021, attended Epsom School of Art before studying architecture at the Architectural Association (AA),

London between 1955 and 1960. She married publisher David Wolton in 1962 and had her daughter, Suke, that same year.

In 1963, after a brief stint working for Middlesex County Council, she joined with Richard Rogers, a former boyfriend whom she had met whilst studying at Epsom, Su Rogers, Norman Foster and Wendy Cheesman (later Foster), Wolton's younger sister, to form Team 4. It was Wolton who allowed the practice to function, being the only member of the group who was at that time a fully qualified architect. She moved on very swiftly however, partnering for a short time with Adrian Gale, formerly of Mies van der Rohe's studio, before spending the rest of her career as a sole practitioner. Her architectural oeuvre is small, spread across the 1960s, 1970s and into the early 1980s and includes only three entirely new buildings. Her focus moved increasingly to landscape design and she committed most of her working life to this field.

Wolton had a long-standing interest in what she termed 'the working house', houses designed to function as domestic and work spaces; her AA thesis was on the late C19 studio houses of the group of artists known as the Holland Park Circle. Two of her three key buildings were designed as working houses: Cliff Road studios, Camden, phases I (1969) and II (1971-2) and 34 Belsize Lane. She was also interested in the idea of ambiguous spaces, those with an abstract rather than functional purpose, and those which were neither inside nor outside. This is explored in the Belsize Lane house through its use of conservatory-like antechambers, illustrating the concept of what Wolton termed 'pause' spaces separating the living and working parts of the house.

Wolton commented that her interest in English designed landscapes of the C17 and C18 informed her approach to both architecture and landscape (Lorenz, p138). She spoke of the transition from axial layouts and geometric

parterres to episodic, serpentine layouts. 34 Belsize Lane appears to reference these ideas. The ranging plan is formed of articulated wings which traverse the site, breaking it down into a series of outdoor spaces, framed by low, rectilinear elevations. The plan defines the quality of the spaces around the volume of the house as much as those contained within it. The play between interior and exterior, positive and negative space, is further explored by the use of glazing to create axial vistas directly through the building from one garden space to another.

Wolton's architectural work was firmly rooted in modernism but each of her buildings takes a distinct approach to materials. Fieldhouse, East Horsley, 1968 (demolished), was built as a weekend house for herself and her family. A Cor-ten steel frame and glass pavilion, it was one of several of houses designed by British architects in the 1960s and 70s which were heavily influenced by Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House, Illinois, USA (1945-51). Fieldhouse appears to have remained unpublished until the early 1970s so despite it being a contemporary of John Winter's Cor-Ten-clad 81 Swain's Lane, London, 1967-69 (listed Grade II*), it is the latter which has often been credited as the first domestic use of Cor-Ten in the UK. The precise geometries and white-rendered elevations of Wolton's Cliff Road studios, her best-known work, drew admiration in architectural circles for its reference to early European modernism and Parisian studio houses of the 1920s. 34 Belsize Lane was her last completely new building, and this has a discrete contextual presence, showcasing traditional, reclaimed, materials alongside industrialised components.

As a landscape designer Wolton worked for private, public and commercial clients. Projects included a scheme at Dartington Hall, Devon (registered on the National Heritage List for England at Grade II*) and gardens for Lord Hoffman in London and Gloucestershire. She designed a private garden for the

property developer Stuart Lipton and collaborated with the architect Rick Mather for Keble College, Oxford and the University of East Anglia. One her most significant and long-standing collaborations was with Richard Rogers. She designed a scheme for 22 Parkside, Wimbledon (1968-70, listed Grade II*), a house designed by Rogers for his parents. She also undertook the landscaping for three phases of development at Thames Wharf, Hammersmith by Richard Rogers Partnership, including a planting scheme for The River Café (1988).

Details

House 1975-6 with 1983 addition. Designed by Georgie Wolton for herself and her family.

MATERIALS: reclaimed mixed yellow and red brick; glazing held in aluminium frames; felted roof.

PLAN: the house has no street frontage but stands behind a high wall on an irregular trapezoid plot on an obtuse corner opposite where Belsize Lane meets Oman Road.

It has a single storey with a flat roof. The original accommodation is housed within a Z-plan comprising a north/south range with entrance hall, kitchen, and living area; a bedroom wing to the north running westward; and a studio room, reached via a conservatory-like antechamber to the south running eastward. A covered entrance path and garage to the north of the plot connect the east side of the house with the boundary wall, opening onto Belsize Lane.

In the early 1980s the north/south range was extended southwards by Wolton to add a second studio/office, reached through a second conservatory antechamber.

The footprint of the house in relation to the boundary wall divides the site into three discrete courtyard gardens.

EXTERIOR: the building is approached through a perforated steel gate in the boundary wall which screens it from Belsize Lane. The path is laid in brown brick pavements and forms the northern edge of a brick-

paved courtyard garden. The path is sheltered by a glazed canopy which projects from the blind side wall of the garage and is supported on steel I beams. The building is entered through a wide, full-height flush-panel timber door.

The elevations principally comprise panels of brick laid in stretcher bond with raked joints, interspersed with full-height glazed openings of various width, opening onto paved terraces through hinged or sliding doors with louvred transom lights. The wall plate is an exposed steel I beam. Triangular prism roof lights held in aluminium frames emerge above the roof line, lighting the two conservatory spaces.

INTERIOR: the interior is characterised by a limited palette of natural materials set against the flat white planes of plastered walls and ceilings. Fitted joinery is principally of thick, maple veneered plywood; doors are a mixture of side-hung, folding and sliding, set in full-height openings. Circulation spaces are floored in Spanish pink-buff clay tiles.

The front door opens into a generous entrance hall which extends into the bedroom wing. This continuous hallway space is enclosed to one side by the long north end wall of the house and is top-lit to architectural effect: the ceiling is cut back from the wall face to accommodate a full-length angled roof light. At the far end of the space the master bedroom is reached through folding doors which open to the full proportions of the hallway. The bedrooms have original fitted ply storage units in various configurations.

To the south of the entrance hall the kitchen and open-plan living area is reached through sliding doors. The galley kitchen is fitted with plywood units, mainly in the form of drawers, Wolton's preference over hinged cupboards. The living area is divided into a dining and sitting area by a free-standing fireplace, the raised hearth facing south towards the sitting area. Large, full-height sliding shutters screen French windows which overlook the courtyard gardens to either side of the room.

The conservatories act as glazed links, or antechambers, between the main house and the studio and office spaces to the east and south. Within these conservatories the walls enclosing the main house are of exposed brick, matching the exterior elevations, and the adjacent walls are entirely glazed with sliding doors opening out onto the courtyard gardens to either side. Both spaces are top-lit by triangular prism skylights.

The conservatory to the east is original to the house. It has a larger skylight, carried on exposed steel I beams and directly overlooks the lower level studio room; the original tubular balustrade between the two spaces has been replaced with plywood planters. The stair down to the studio was replaced when the floor level was raised slightly. The studio is lit by a canted clerestory window at the far end.

The conservatory to the south is part of the 1980s extension but is very similar in character. It gives access to a small, top-lit utility room in the footprint of the original house, and to the later office from which it is partitioned by a glazed timber screen.

Door handles are U-shaped, in brushed stainless steel and may be from the range designed by Knud Holscher for the Danish brand 'd line'; taps and spouts have various finishes and appear to be from the range designed by Arne Jacobsen for VOLA.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: the site is entered through a high wall bounding Belsize Lane. It is of red and yellow stock bricks over a plinth of brick burr (fused and misshapen kiln waste).

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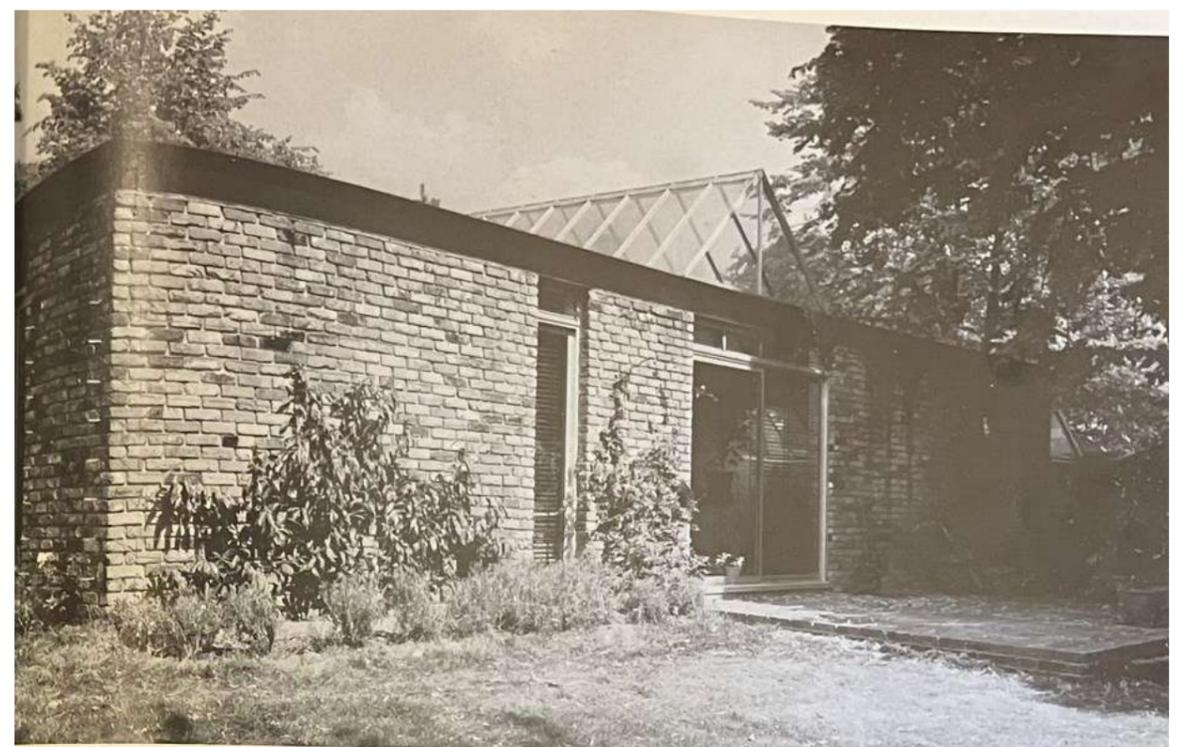
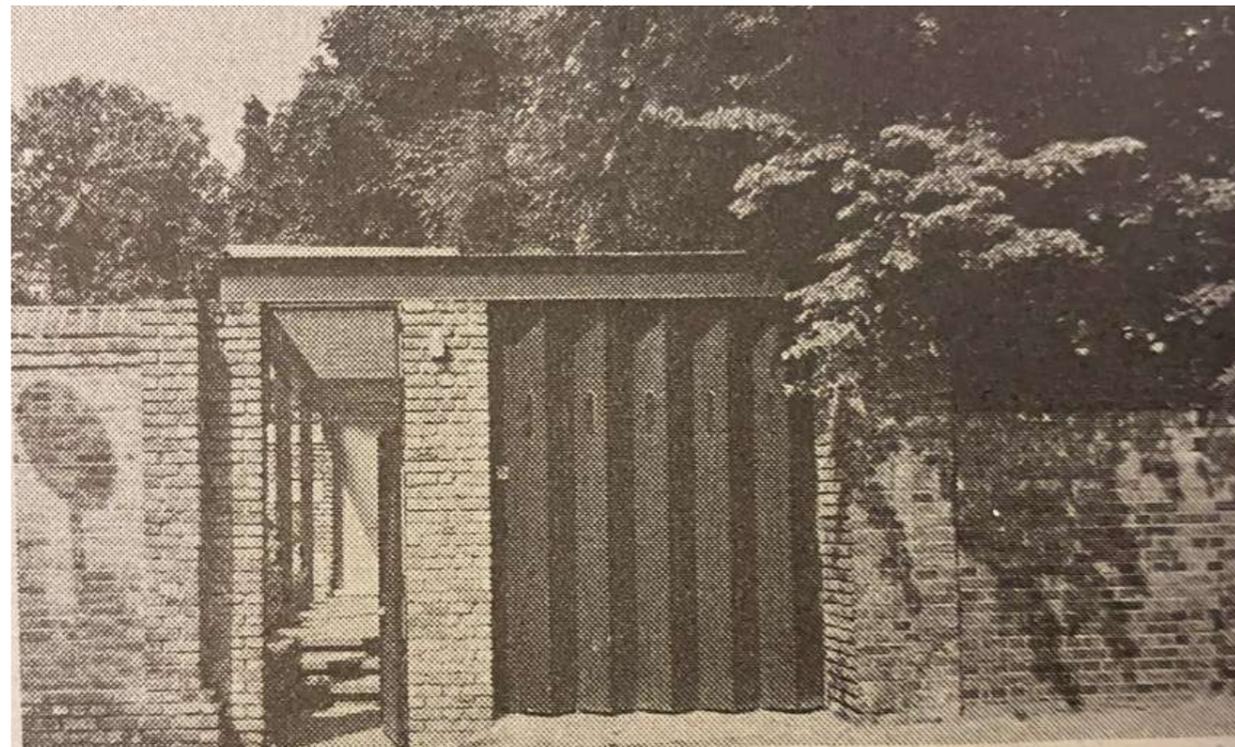
Appendix 3:

Historic Photographs

1976 Photographs



1976 Photographs



1976 Photographs

