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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

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Project:

Wedderburn Road

Address:

9 Wedderburn Road
London NW3 5QS

Project Reference: 131

Date: 20.03.2024 Revision: -

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for and on behalf of 4H

INTRODUCTION

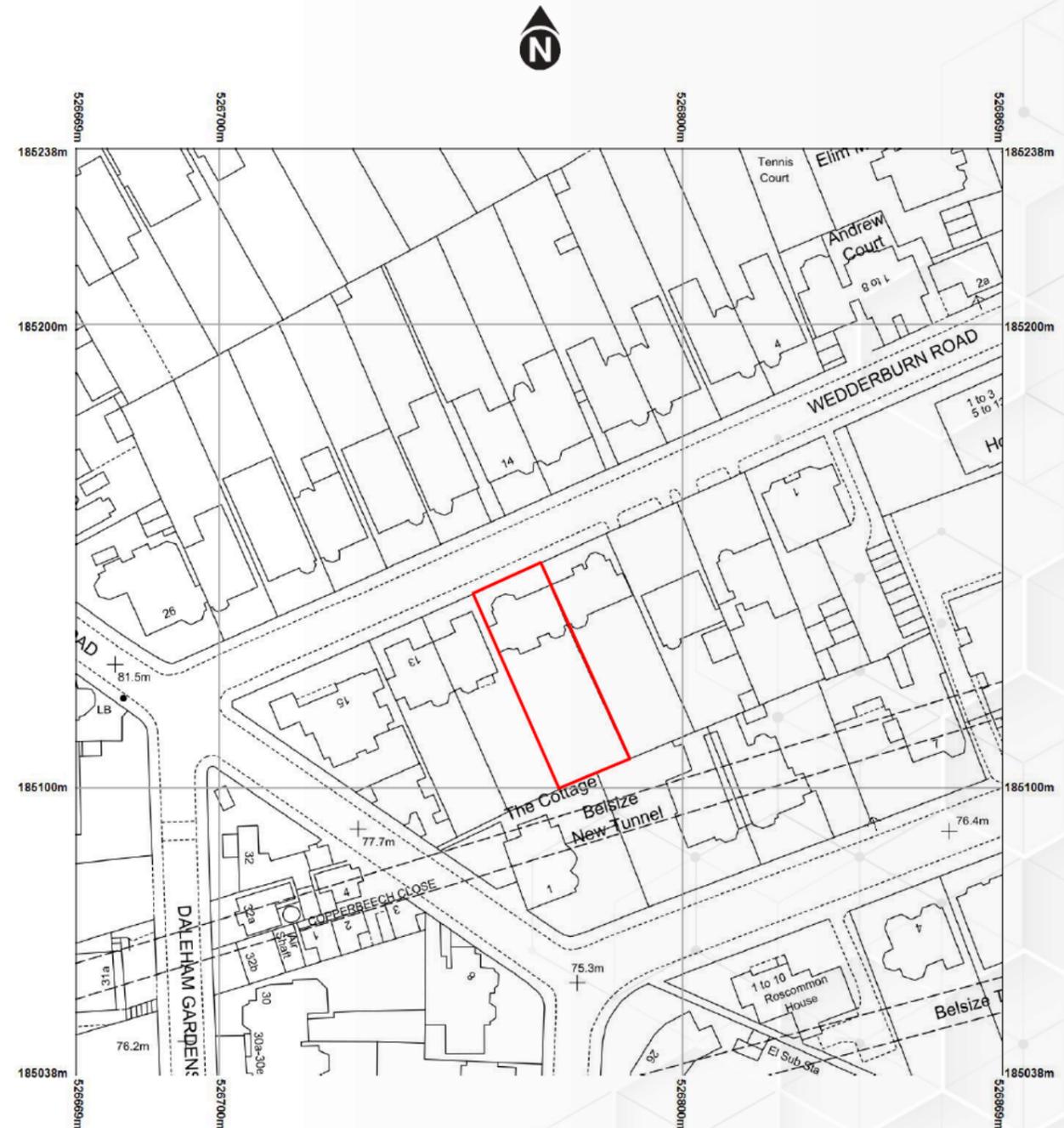
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This document is provided in support of the planning application for 9 Wedderburn Road, London, NW3 5QS, and is to be read in conjunction with the relevant drawing set. The property benefits from Listed Building Approval dated 18.12.2023 for internal alterations.

This application addresses external intervention, namely the introduction of a small rear extension, along with glazing to open arcade at the back of the house, and minor changes to the interior (compared with those already approved).

This document seeks to explain the design and access provisions of the project, whilst the detailed heritage and planning review of the same is provided in the Heritage Statement (by Cogent Heritage) and Planning note (by SM Planning).

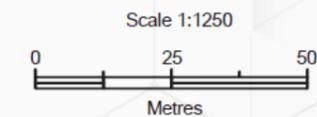


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THE PROPERTY

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The property in question is a grade II listed, semi-detached (pairs with no.7), 1880's built residential property, located along a tree lined, elegant road.

The property comprises two principal floors raised on a semi-basement (lower ground floor) and topped by a double attic storey within a steeply pitched roof. It is situated in the Fitzjohn's Netherhall Conservation Area and is one in a row of listed red brick houses designed in a Freestyle by the Victorian architect Horace Field.

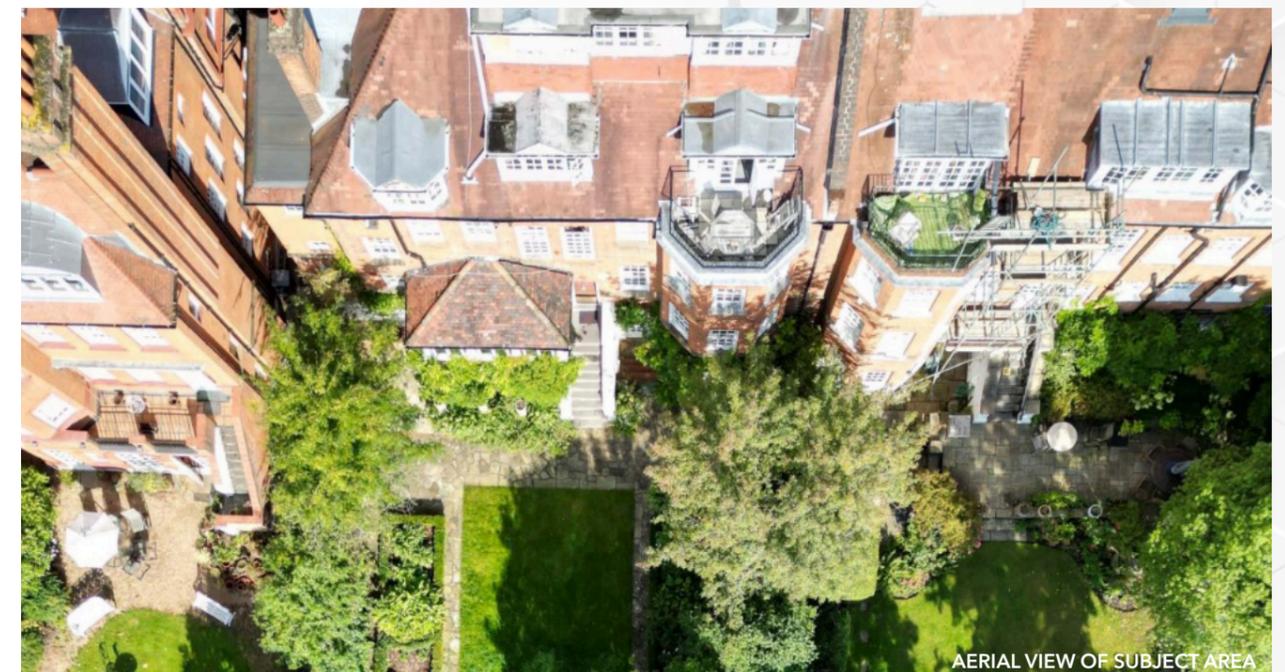
The project contained herein relates to the Ground and Lower Ground Floors only, as the building itself is subdivided.



REAR VIEW



FRONT VIEW



AERIAL VIEW OF SUBJECT AREA

Project Description

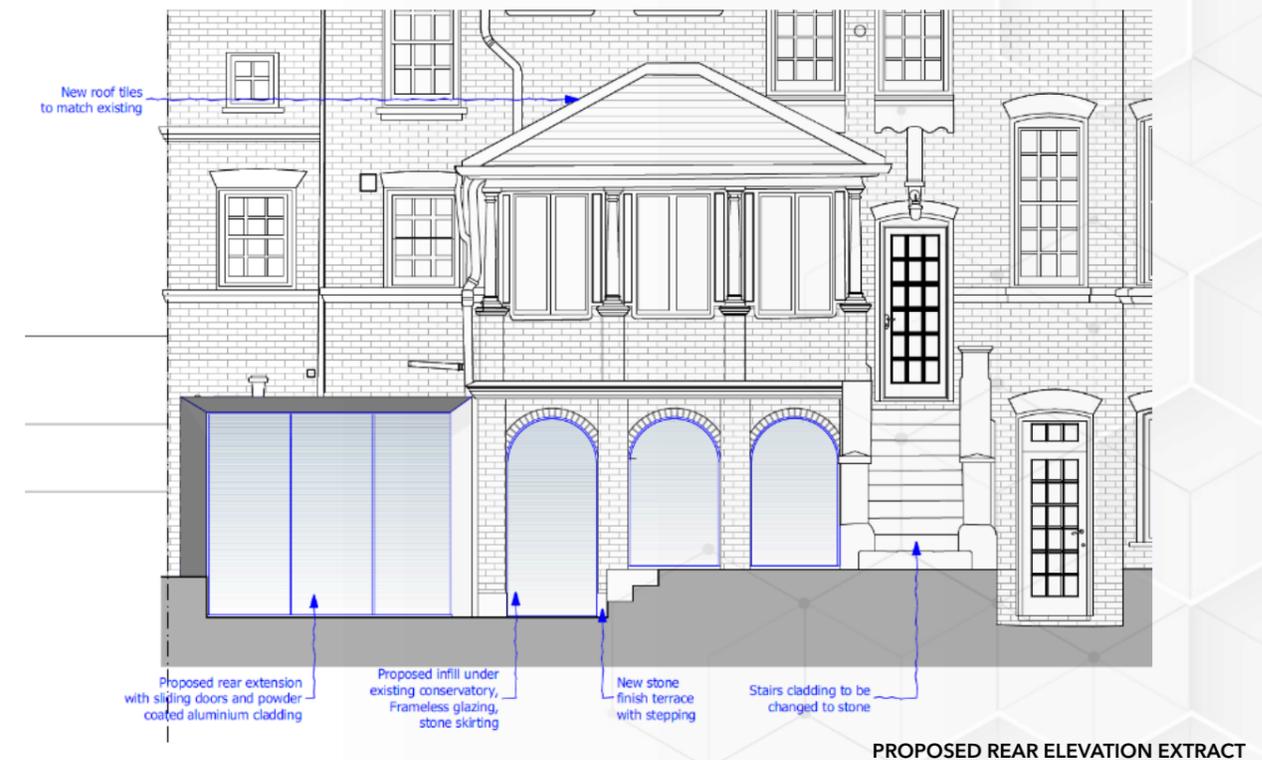
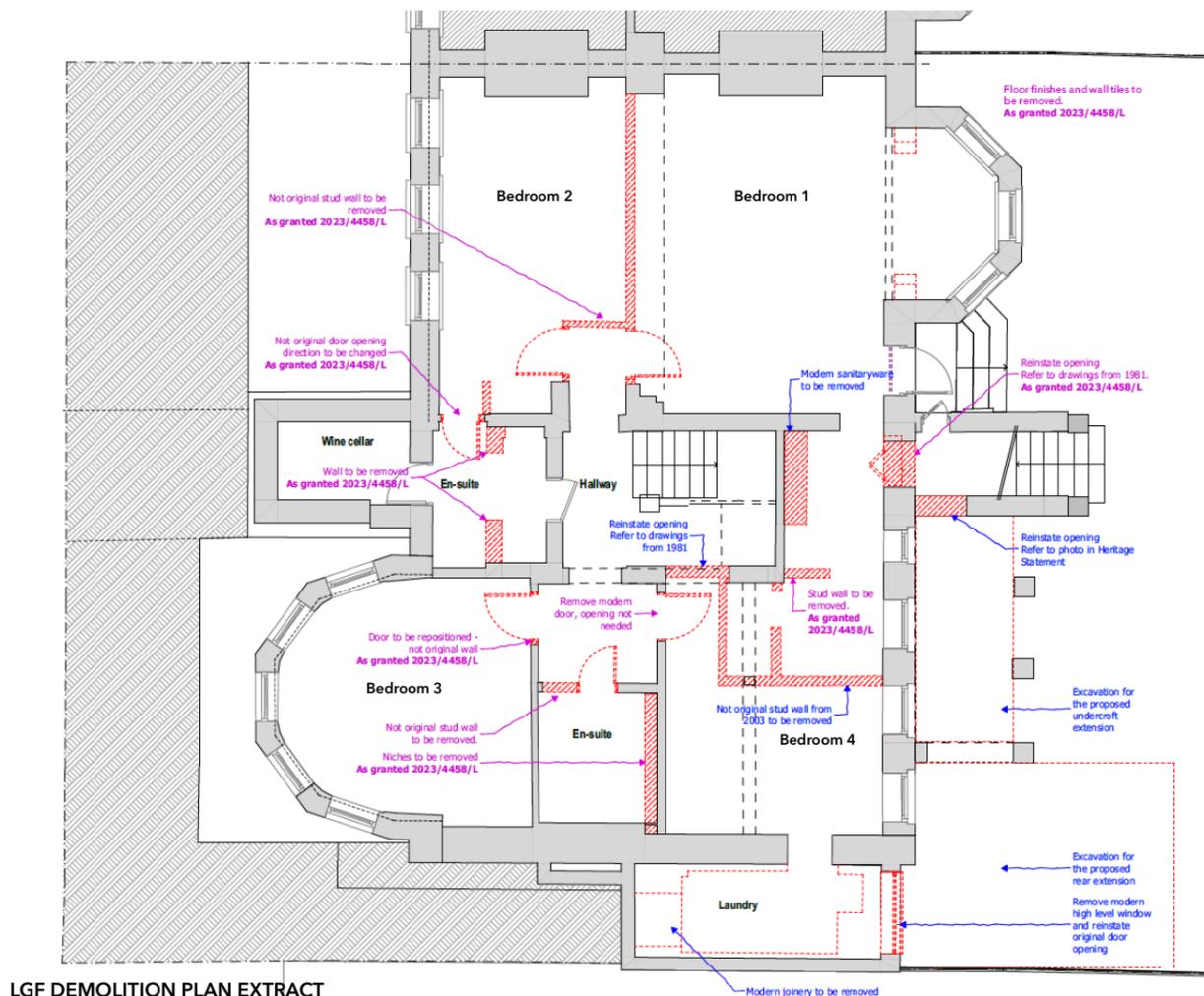
The proposal entails minor works internally (LGF), with the main focus being the external alterations, which in turn are restricted to the rear of the property. Only works noted in blue relate to this submission (pink notes have been approved under a separate application).

Internal alterations include:

- Block off an existing opening between Bedroom 3 wardrobe and corridor
- Reinstate an original opening in order to allow use of the corridor.
- Remove modern plasterboard cladded stud walls between Bedroom and Master En-suite.
- Addition of stud walls to form a new laundry and Master En-suite.
- Reinstate door opening under the external stairs.
- Reinstate a door opening in the existing Laundry to be able to have access to the rear extension.
- Removal of modern sanitaryware. Replacement of dated plumbing and electrical installations.

External proposals include:

- GF conservatory extension: Replacement like-for-like of tiled roof due to poor repair (leaking).
- GF to garden stairs: Replace existing substandard quality cladding with stone.
- Existing bay window undercroft: excavate down and Infill openings to transform unused space into usable internal area.
- LGF extension:
 - New modern design extension enhancing the living arrangements in the property.
 - Sunken terrace, steps and related hard landscape in stone.



Design Principles

The main driver for the design is to retain and enhance the historic fabric of the host building, whilst improving the living accommodation provisions and bringing in modern interest to the scheme.

Pre-application guidance has been implemented, developing the design to respond better to its setting and context. Extensions and alterations must respect the quality, character, materials and scale of the principal building, be subordinate to it, and not overdevelop the site. In addition, the endeavour must respect its setting, neighbours and take into account the impact the proposal might have.

Internal alterations are minimal and limited to the LGF, where the design seeks to enhance the functionality of the plans and integrate the proposed extension into the fold. The provision of the extension allows moving the utility room to a central and accessible location, rather than as it currently stands, adjoining and accessed via a bedroom.

The main intervention refers to the rear extension and the infill of the undercroft.

Rear Extension:

Designed as a contrasting modern concept, with minimalistic lines and composition, incorporating a substantial amount of glazing enhancing the appearance of lightness, avoiding detracting from the main building. The design follows loosely the precedent at number 3 Wedderburn Road.

Its height is limited by lowering it into the ground with the proposed sunken terrace, and stepping the floor down further by 150mm internally. Efficiently designed roof with slim front lines and set back roof buildup furthers the concept.

Modern design and materials provide a clear delineation between the new and historic, aided by a glass link that separates the two contrasting structures. Not only does it add to the lightness of the proposal, the glass link ensures the host building continuity can be experienced from inside and out.

The limited height maintains the hierarchy between the host and the ancillary addition, respecting the existing decorative elements to the rear of the house.

Undercroft Infill:

The modern approach to the design, driven also by the pre-application consultation feedback, extends to the undercroft. The existing arched elements are retained, and filled with modern, minimalist glazing. This approach allows the alterations to the internal functionality, yet retains the focal interest on the existing building fabric and its features.

DESIGN PARAMETERS

Amount and Use (number of units, area per use)

The number and use do not change. The property is currently and will remain a single residential unit.

Layout (proposal in larger context and security)

The proposal does not affect the position of the site or layout in the wider context.

The works to the building do not alter the current security levels of the house.

Scale (dimensional parameters)

The depth of the extension has been decreased from 6 metres down to 4.5m following the pre-application consultation. Width is contained between the existing bay window extension and the boundary fence.

The excavation will be conducted to enable the lowering of the internal floor level in the extension down by 150mm, to aid the limitation of bulk. The extension eaves line will be as low as 2.05m above surrounding ground level, with the set back roof build up being at 100mm higher.

The undercroft infill and extension create 247.60 sq ft of additional gross internal area.

Appearance and Materiality

- GF conservatory roof like-for like clay roof tiles.
- GF to garden stairs to be clad in limestone.
- New terracing and sunken garden hard landscaping to be in limestone.
- Windows to undercroft infill: minimalist glazing, with minimal metal frame, painted dark to blend in with the adjoining building fabric.
- Modern extension in dark, powder-coated aluminium cladding and roofing (Anthracite).

Appraising and Context

The proposal does not alter the context of the property in relation to the local physical, economic or social context.

ACCESS

Pedestrian and Inclusive Access

Main access from the street into the building remains unaltered.

Access Other

All other aspects of access remain as existing.

The proposal has been submitted for pre-application, and a formal response has been received (ref. 2023/3575/PRE, dated 24.11.2023). The feedback letter also lists all relevant policies against which the proposal has been scrutinised, amongst others CLP2017 D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage). The conclusion noted the original design posed too great of an impact on the listed building, and changes were needed to make this acceptable.

The main bulk of this submission's focus falls on the external aspects of the works, which were the main subject of the critique. The relevant drawings denote matters approved and those sought under this application in different colours for clarity.

The below seeks to demonstrate how the original concerns have been addressed in relation to design. The more detailed heritage and planning review of the same is provided in the Heritage Statement (by Cogent Heritage) and Planning note (by SM Planning), forming part of this application.

The following denotes the main concerns in the Officer's comments, and how this has been addressed:

Internal Alterations

Most internal alterations have been approved since under a separate submission (2023/4458/L dated 18.12.2023). Only minor additional alterations are covered in this application; the works also include replacement of the dated electrical and plumbing works. The new intervention is demonstrated on the relevant drawings in different colour to that already approved, and listed on Page 2 herein.

External Alterations

• Lower Ground Floor Extension

Cumulative impact of two extensions (the first being the existing upper ground bay extension/infill, which is noted as potentially unlikely to be allowed in today's planning regime) on the composition of original symmetrical arrangement of 7/9, where no. 7 appears to be generally untouched in original form.

The main issue is the impact of the proposed extension on the listed host building and its opposite pair, rather than upon the setting of other adjacent listed buildings or upon the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The proposal has been carefully considered to mitigate any detrimental impact, and various options reviewed in order to ascertain the best approach to this delicate setting. The original building is appreciated and the design seeks to harmonise with it, not detract from it.

As noted in the pre-application report, the proposal is tucked away to the far side of the 7/9 building. Its design is proposed of low height, additionally sunken into the ground. Its impact has been further decreased by substantially cutting the originally proposed size down to 4.5m in width.

In addition, the design follows a lightweight, modern design, and is separated from the original building with a glass link, ensuring the historic building remains the main protagonist. The design approach seeks to differentiate clearly but without a clash between what is existing and of historic value, from what is new and subservient.

The impact on the symmetry of the buildings is important, though the design seeks to explore the tolerance such interventions carry, and collaborate with the existing site conditions and context.

Although the building itself would have been built as a symmetrical composition, this has evolved organically over the years, not always to its detriment. The symmetry is retained in relation to bulk and overall form, but is not as stringent when it comes to details of the elevations and fenestration, with the most prominent differences being in the roof dormers, fenestration and wing extensions.

Furthermore, the two properties can only be fully appreciated together on paper or from bird's eye view, especially at the Ground and Lower Ground levels. The two properties are heavily separated by abundant greenery and fence.

This design does not see the above as precedents or substantiation for unrestricted modifications, but the above merely seeks to support the notion that, despite a level of changes (some more considered than others, where the existing Ground Floor bay window extension and infill could be viewed as a tasteful and well executed one), the property remains elegant, retains its historical integrity and value. In view of its scale, the property can accommodate a well considered alteration, with inconspicuous siting and thoughtful design, one this submission seeks to achieve.



Disproportionate footprint with 6 metres depth, considered too deep for its context.

The design has been reviewed and the size of the extension has been substantially reduced, losing 25% of the original proposal with the current dimension standing at 4.5m.

Internalising bedroom, will this still as habitable room?

There is no internalisation of habitable rooms. The extension allows for the enhancement of the internal functional programme by moving the Bedroom out and enhancing the space internally, supporting the operation of the property as a large family home without compromising the primary spaces, character or hierarchy of the house.

Preferred lightweight contemporary option, more glazing less impact. Heavy cornice top of the contemporary approach detracts from the lightweight qualities of the design.

The option selected follows this preference. The design has been enhanced to incorporate a minimalistic design approach, with eaves formed to appear light and soft, where the roof build-up is offset from the edges and minimised, allowing for the creation of a lightweight and elegant form.

The contrast of contemporary approach against the historic host building mitigates the risk of pastiche, deduction from the original architectural form and of a heavy composition that would sit dominant in its delicate context.

The extension is further separated from the historic building by a glass link, ensuring the original fabric retains its integrity and can be appreciated from the inside as well as from the outside.

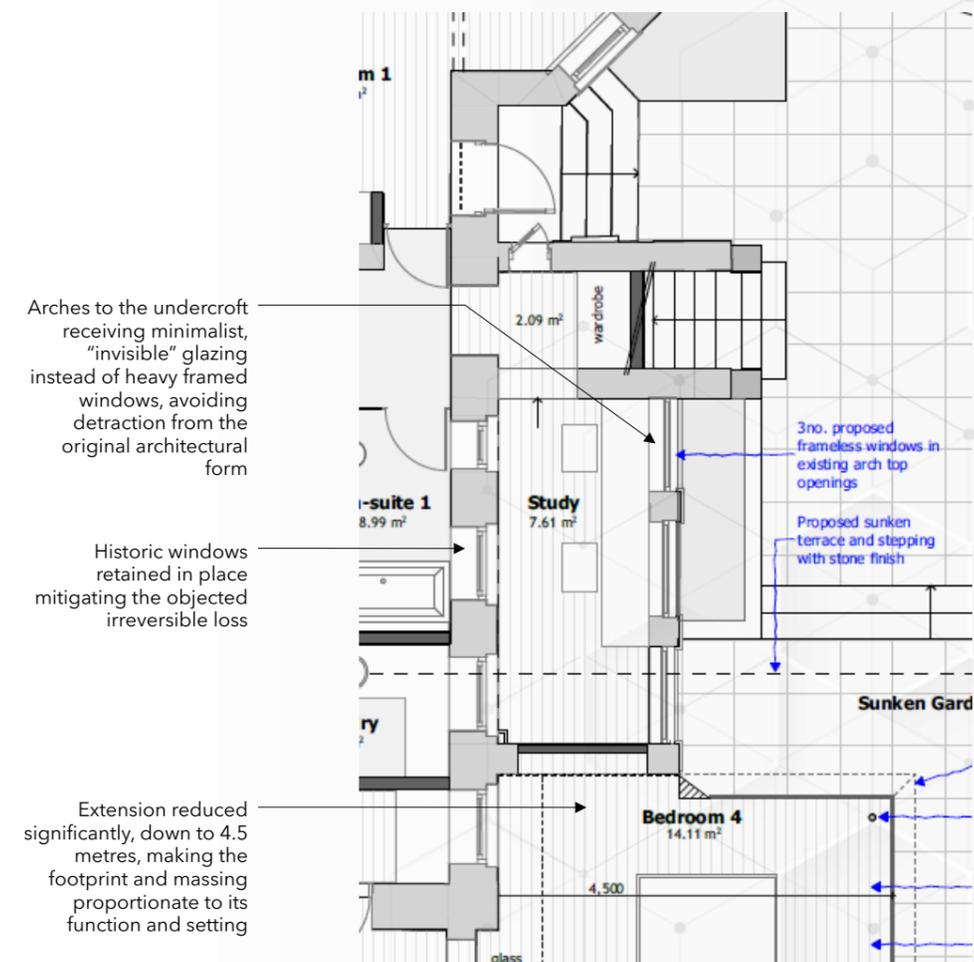
• Infilling the Undercroft

The irreversible loss of existing historic sash windows and their brick aprons in the LGF undercroft is deemed unacceptable.

The scheme has been amended, and the historic windows are retained and designed into the scheme.

Infilling the open arches in the undercroft with arched, small panelled windows and brick aprons, is deemed unacceptable as this would be too solid and detract from the character of this element of the building. An alternative low impact option could be considered, involving the infilling of the arched openings with full-height minimalist glazing, so that the original architecture still reads.

The scheme incorporated the above recommendation, with the arches closed off with glass infills. This ensures the enhancement of functionality is achieved, whilst the perception of the original architecture remains clear and unobstructed.



- **Front Boundary Treatment**

Requires historic evidence based analysis of the original front boundary. To remove the boarded fence will also detract from the uniformity that currently exists at the front of the two properties. Further research is therefore required to justify the removal of the fence and its replacement as currently proposed.

Excluded from this application.

- **Bin Store**

The proposal and location seems fine in principle, but more information needed, tailored to the site, especially in relation to the store's visibility from the street. This will inform on the acceptable bulk, height and materials.

Excluded from this application.

- **Garden Building**

Excluded from this application.

Tree and Landscaping Works, Arboricultural

The front two trees are deemed as contributors to the conservation area, and should be retained and designed into the scheme. Their removal could be considered only if suitable, equivalent or better replacements are provided. Tree protection measures in the report to show these as retained and protected. The loss of the rear garden trees is considered acceptable.

Selected trees to the rear are proposed for removal, deemed acceptable during the consultations due to being out of sight and of low quality (T6 Cat C, T7 Cat U and T11 Cat U). The two front trees originally proposed for felling questioned by the officer are now to be retained (T1 Cat C and T2 Cat C). Refer to the Arboricultural Survey, Impact Assessment & Method Statement from Marcus Foster for details.

Neighbouring Amenity

The consultation concluded the proposal would not have a harmful impact.

OTHER DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

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The design and submission has been developed with consideration to wider aspects of the property. A brief description of such is provided below.

Sustainability

All new envelope building fabric will be designed to the required thermal performance levels to ensure energy efficiency. The proposal is limited and does not affect the overall performance of the property.

Biodiversity

The proposal is limited in its extent and does not pose loss or impact on biodiversity. The area where the extension and relevant sunken garden are proposed is currently covered by concrete paving slabs and is not biologically active.

Landscape

The proposal does not entail intervention with the wider landscape of the site, and is limited to the rear, namely the area around the extension, sunken garden and immediate vicinity of the rear elevation. This area will be hard landscaped with more suitable stone paving, providing the inside-out connection between the extension and the garden, providing an enhancement over the existing concrete slabs.

Environmental Noise

The proposal does not alter the existing conditions.

Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing

The proposal is limited in height and bulk. The extension location is pushed away from the paired property at number 7. The neighbouring property at number 11 projects further forward than the rear elevation of number 9; paired with the orientation of the site and gap between the properties, it has been ascertained that there is no deterioration to neighbouring amenities, as stated in the pre-application feedback.

Flooding

Separate outline flood risk assessment has been provided, denoting the property being in zone 1, with very low risk of long term river, sea and surface flooding.

Conclusion

Following relevant guidance and pre-application feedback, the design has been altered to respond accordingly, leading to a respectful design that does not compromise the character of the host building, conservation area or neighbouring amenities. We trust that by taking all feedback into consideration, we have achieved a design that satisfies the set requirements, respects its context, yet maintains its own character and design merit, leading to your favourable view on the same.

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Thank You