

Design and Access Statement 72 Albert Street, NW1 7NR
Date - 6th November 2024

Introduction

This application seeks Planning and Listed Building Consent to undertake works in the rear and front garden of 72 Albert Street. Additionally is seeking permission for minor internal layout alterations.

Under previous permissions (Ref: 2022/1376/P and 2022/3427/L), consent was granted for the complete redevelopment of the garden, which included the demolition of all existing garden structures, retaining walls, paving, adjustment of ground levels, including the replacement of all the brick boundary walls.

In addition to the above, an alternative scheme was also approved under an earlier application 2021/5060/P and 2021/5290/L that included a 4m deep terrace, lowered to the level of the existing lower ground floor that required significant excavation and changes of ground levels.

Lastly the most recent approval 2023/0744/P showed a revised configuration of the retaining walls and ground levels.

Before implementing any of the above schemes, the client employed an arboriculturalist to carry out a detailed report, particularly relating to the large protected tree in the neighbouring garden, instructed 21.09.23 that we attached for your information. The report instructed that all excavation, within the tree root protection area needed to be carried out by hand.

Trial excavations were then carried out in order to map out all the roots.

Due to the proximity, size and nature of the tree roots It was soon realised that none of the approvals could be implemented.

Based on the investigations, along with the arboriculturalist report, we are now in a position to regularise the approvals for the garden works.

Although much of the works have been consented under the three previous approvals, this proposal aims to seek a single approval for the garden works.

The proposal carefully balances the heritage considerations with necessary adjustments to the structural design.

The result of the above is that the design protects the three main assets of the garden;

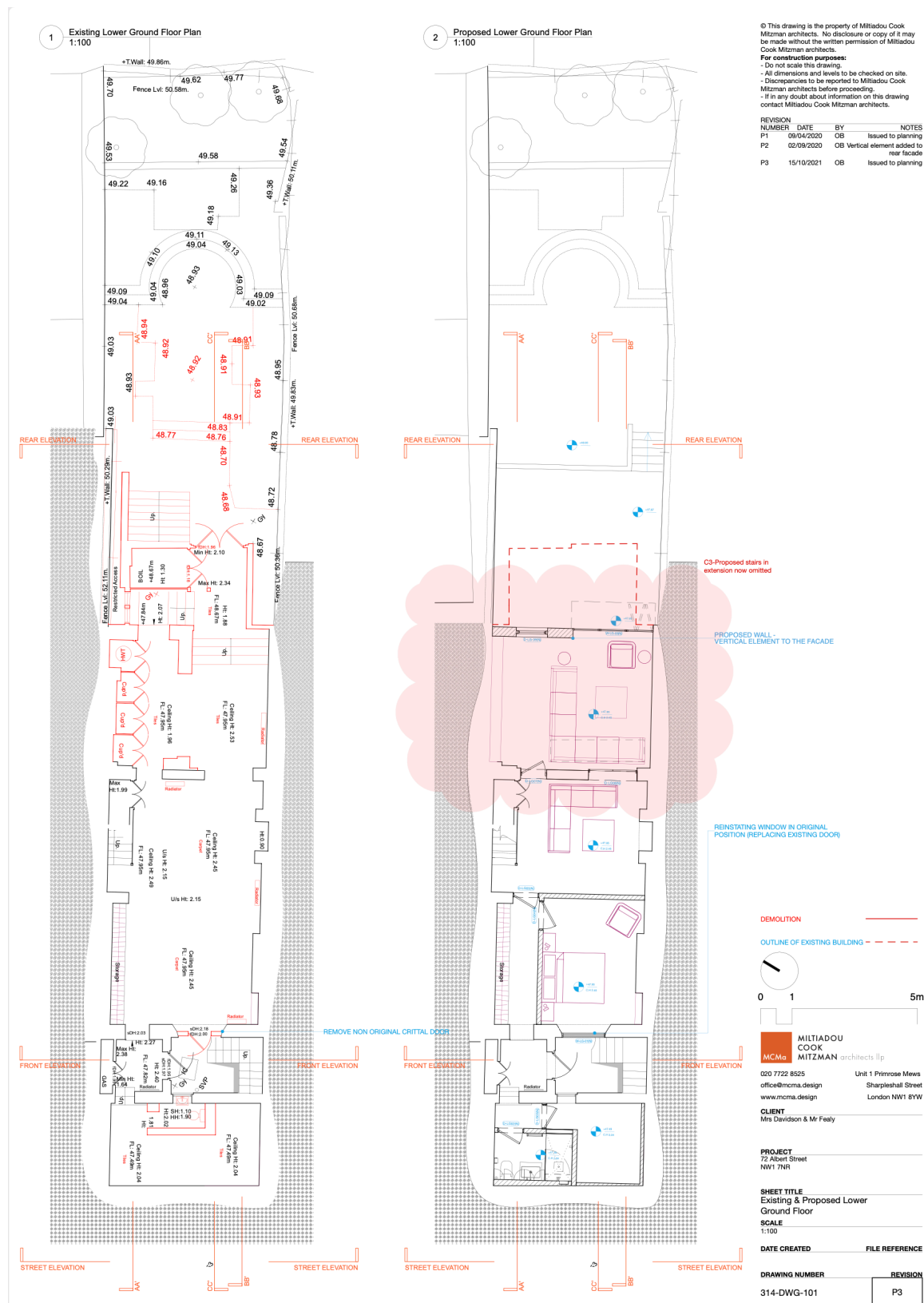
1. The protected tree,
2. The existing ground levels,
3. The brick boundary walls, where possible.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following proposed drawings;

- *314-DWG-600-Demolition Rear Garden_P1,*
- *314-DWG-601-Proposed Rear Garden Walls_P1,*
- *314-DWG-602-Proposed Rear Garden Paving_P1,*
- *314-DWG-603-Proposed Retaining Walls-Detail Section A_P1,*
- *314-DWG-604-Proposed Trellis Garden Wall-Detail Section B_P1,*
- *314-DWG-605-Proposed Trellis Garden Wall-Detail Section C_P1,*
- *314-DWG-606-Proposed Rear Garden Section D_P1,*
- *314-DWG-607-Proposed Rear Garden Section E_P1,*
- *314-DWG-608-Proposed Rear Garden Section F_P1,*
- *72 Albert Street - arboricultural report*
- *314-DWG-614-Demolition Front Garden_P1*
- *314-DWG-615-Proposed Front Garden_P1*
- *Front Garden Elevation view*
- *314-DWG-101-Existing and Proposed Lower Ground Floor_P7*
- *314-DWG-102-Existing and Proposed Ground Floor_P8*
- *314-DWG-104-Existing and Proposed Second Floor_P4*
- *314-DWG-121-Proposed Rear Elevation_P7*

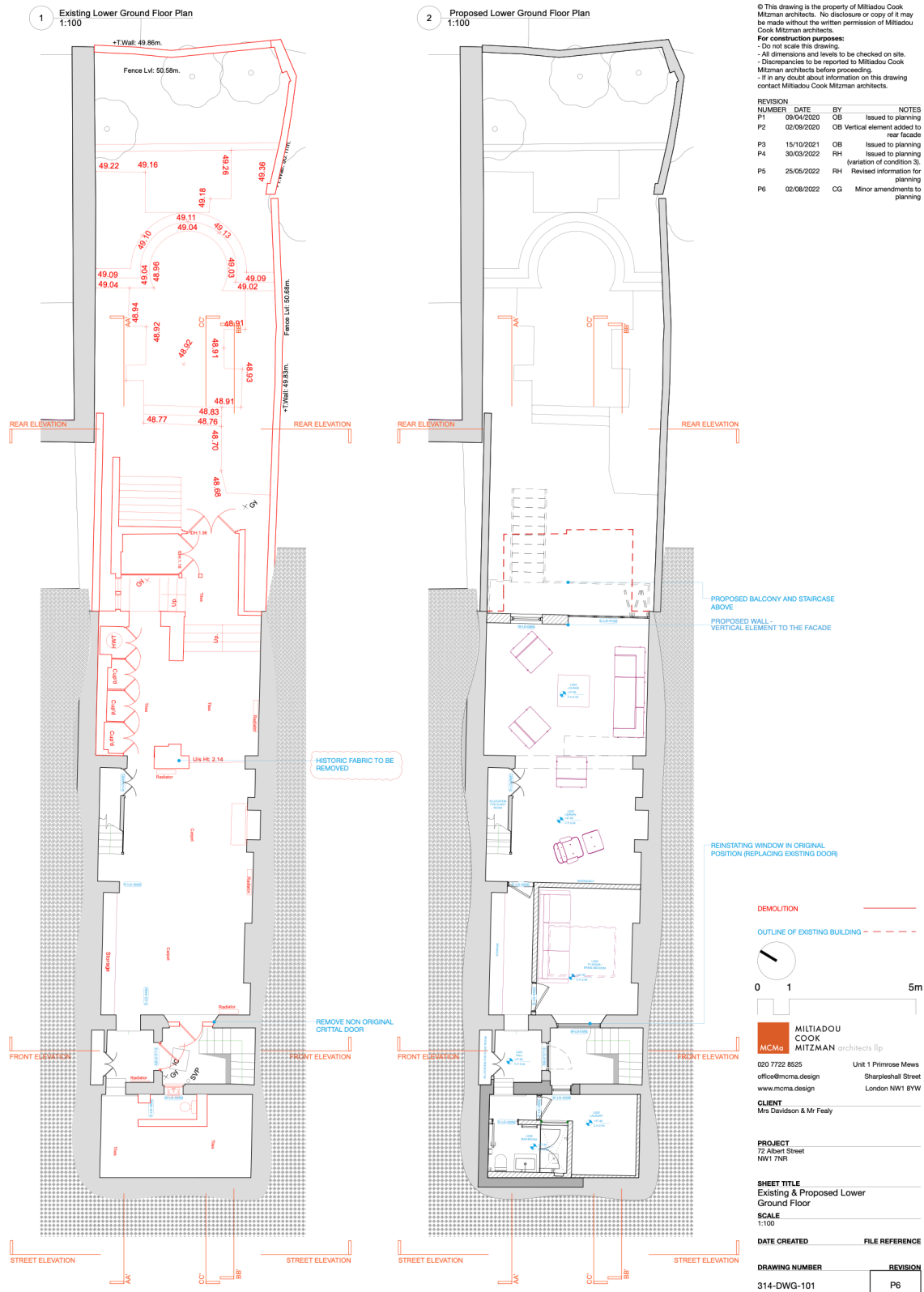
2021/5060/P and 2021/5290/L

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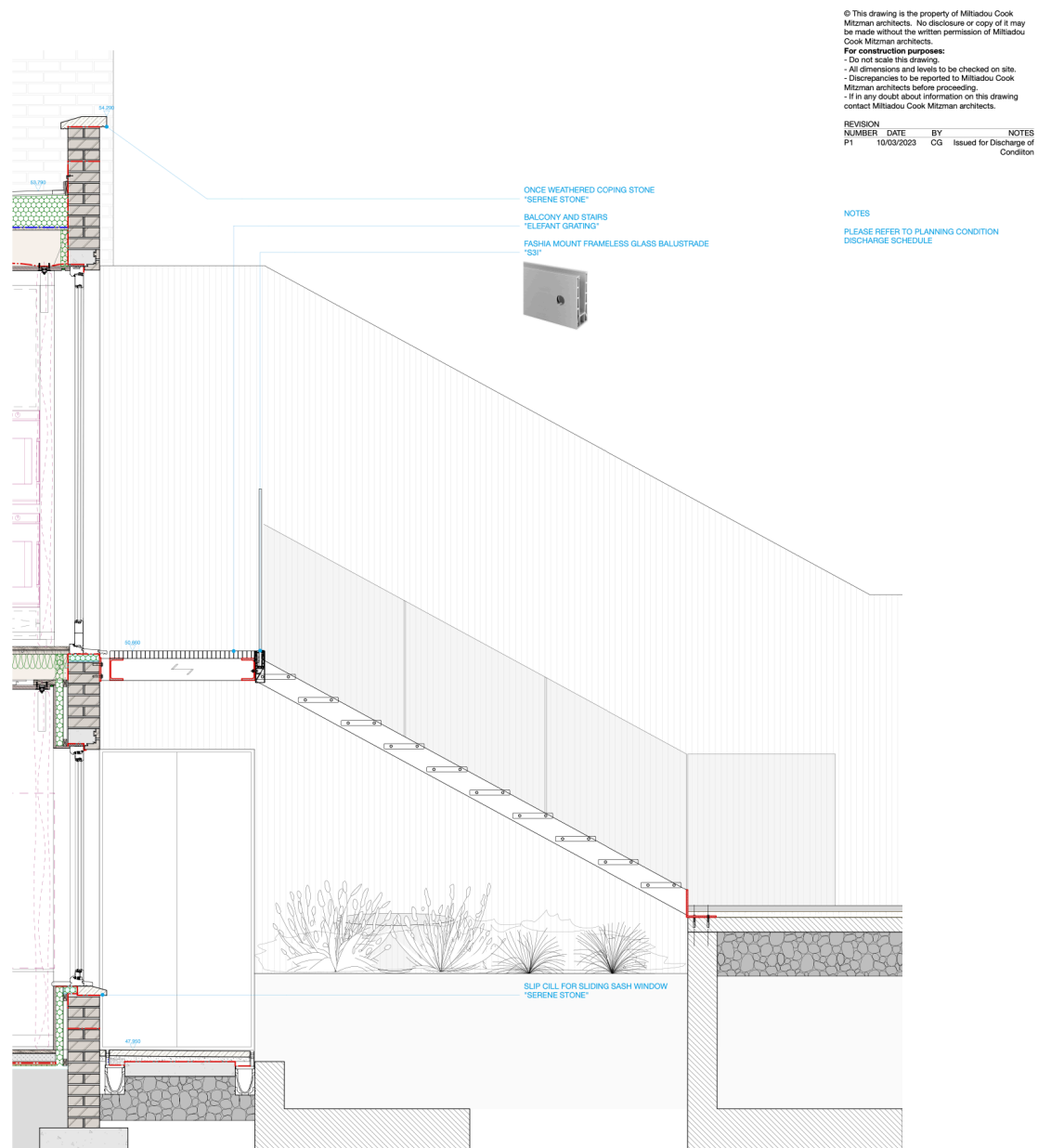
2022/1376/P and 2022/3427/L

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2023/0744/P

Under application (Ref: 2023/0744/P) the council granted permission for the development of two garden levels instead of one, in front of the house. That decision was due to the existence of the protected tree roots.



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CLIENT
Mrs Davidson & Mr Fealy

PROJECT
72 Albert Street
NW1 7NR

SHEET TITLE
Construction Section AA
Extension-Balcony and Stairs

SCALE
1:25

DATE CREATED 15/07/2022 **FILE REFERENCE**

DRAWING NUMBER 314-DWG-255 **REVISION** P1

Relevant Planning Policy

We have reviewed the following documents and believe that these sections and extracts are relevant to this application.

1. Camden Planning Guidance, Design (2021)

Section 4.31 - Hard Landscaping

Section 4.38 - Gardens and Forecourt areas

Section 4.54 - Boundary walls, fences and railings

2. Camden Planning Guidance, Trees (2021)

3. Camden Planning Guidance Amenity (2021),

Section 2 - Overlooking, privacy and outlook

4. Camden Local Plan, 2017

Section 6 - Policy A1 Managing the impact of development

Section 6 - Policy A2 Open space

Section 6 - Policy A3 Biodiversity

Section 7 - Policy D2 Heritage

5. National Planning Policy Framework 2019

Chapter 15 - Conserving and enhancing the Natural Environment

Chapter 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Extract from Camden Planning Guidance, Design, CPG 1

4.32 Hard landscape makes a significant contribution to the character of the Borough. The scale, type, pattern and mix of materials help define different uses and effects the perception of the surrounding buildings and soft landscape and overall quality of an area. To help integrate the development with its surroundings and contribute to the sustainability of the project the Council will expect:

- the selection of materials, patterning and methods of workmanship to consider those already at use in the area;*
- traditional and natural materials to be used, especially in Conservation Areas (Local guidance can be found in individual Conservation Area Statements, Appraisals and Management Plans);*
- the use of salvaged and re used materials, where appropriate; and*

4.33 The Council will discourage the replacement of soft landscaping with hard landscaping in order to preserve the environmental benefits of vegetation identified above. However where hard landscape is unavoidable we will seek sustainable drainage solutions to any drainage (see CPG Water and Flooding for more information on implementing SuDs).

4.38 Front, side and rear gardens make an important contribution to the townscape of the Borough and contribute to the distinctive character and appearance of individual buildings and their surroundings. Gardens can be prone to development pressure and their loss can result in the erosion of local character, amenity and biodiversity and affect their function in reducing local storm water run-off. More guidance on the design and retention of gardens can be found in CPG Altering and Extending your home.

4.39 The design of front gardens and forecourt spaces should:

- consider the relative amounts of hard and soft landscaping., Schemes should seek to minimise the amount of hard landscaping and no more than 50% of the frontage area should become hard landscape. Where parking areas form part of the forecourt enough of the front boundary enclosure should be retained to maintain the spatial definition of the forecourt to the street and provide screening;*
- retain trees and vegetation which contribute to the character of the site and surrounding area;*
- retain or re-introduce original surface materials and boundary features, such as walls, railings and hedges, where they have been removed, especially in Conservation Areas. If new materials are to be introduced they should be complementary to the setting;*
- The potential detrimental effects of new structures in gardens can be reduced by:*

carefully siting structures away from vegetation and trees and designing foundations to minimise damage to the root protection zones of adjacent trees

4.57 For boundary treatments around listed buildings or in a conservation area we will expect that:

- the elements are repaired or replaced to replicate the original design and detailing and comprise the same materials as the original features;*
- the works preserve and enhance the existing qualities and context of the site and surrounding area*

4.58 Planning permission is not required for the erection of a boundary treatment no higher than 1m where it abuts the highway or 2m on any other boundary. These heights are measured from ground level and include any structure that may be attached for example a trellis attached to the top of boundary wall.

Extract from Camden Planning Guidance. Amenity, January 2021

2.2 Interior and exterior spaces that are overlooked lack privacy, which can affect the quality of life of occupants. The Council will therefore expect development to be designed to protect the privacy of the occupants of both new and existing dwellings to a reasonable degree. Therefore, new buildings, extensions, roof terraces, balconies and the location of new windows should be carefully designed to avoid overlooking. The extent of overlooking will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Key notes from Camden Local Plan, 2017, Policy A1 Managing the impact of development

Policy A1 in Camden's Local Plan requires that proposals prioritise reducing any potential negative impacts on neighbouring properties and the environment. Specifically, this involves protecting the privacy, daylight, and outlook of adjacent residences. The policy encourages designs that avoid overshadowing and overlooking to maintain neighbouring properties' quality of life. Additionally, developers are urged to incorporate environmentally sustainable practices, addressing air and water quality and preserving biodiversity wherever possible.

Key notes from Camden Local Plan, 2017, Policy A2 Open space

Policy A2 encourages the protection of open spaces, including private gardens, recognising their importance to the borough's green infrastructure. Works in the garden of a listed building should retain as much of the natural landscape as possible and consider the overall ecological value. Camden will look for efforts to maintain or improve the garden's biodiversity, such as plantings that support local wildlife.

Key notes from Camden Local Plan, 2017, Policy A3 Biodiversity

This policy protects and enhances biodiversity, especially within developments impacting green spaces and protected trees. Since the application involves proximity to tree roots, the policy emphasises safeguarding these roots and minimising disturbances. Mitigating measures, such as construction methods that avoid damage to tree roots, would be encouraged.

Key notes from Camden Local Plan, 2017, Policy D2 Heritage

This policy requires that developments affecting listed buildings or their settings preserve or enhance their historic and architectural significance. Any works to the garden should respect the historical context of the listed building, ensuring that changes do not detract from its character or significance. Any proposed redevelopment should align with this policy by carefully evaluating design choices, materials, and the treatment of historic features, including walls and levels.

Key notes from National Planning Policy Framework 2019

Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

This section sets out policies to ensure that any changes to heritage assets, including listed buildings and their settings, are carefully managed. It emphasises the importance of retaining historic character and requires that any development should minimise harm to the significance of the heritage asset, only permitting change where it is justified by public benefits or other considerations.

Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

This section covers the protection of biodiversity, including protected trees, and promotes development that does not harm local ecology. Given the presence of protected tree roots, proposals must respect and mitigate impacts on these natural features.

The Proposal - Rear Garden

This application seeks permission for the revised landscaping plans for the rear garden at No. 72, designed to preserve the health of a protected tree on site, improve the overall ecological footprint, and enhance residents' enjoyment of the outdoor space. Following an arboricultural assessment and subsequent recommendations, the garden design incorporates several modifications from the previously approvals to address tree root preservation, reduce hard paving, and introduce sustainable materials and increased green spaces.

1. Garden Wall Modifications

To protect the tree roots along the boundary with No. 70, the previously approved brick garden wall will be partially replaced with a timber trellis partition. This adjustment, guided by expert arboricultural advice, minimises root disturbance while maintaining privacy between properties. The trellis structure, supported by carefully positioned timber posts anchored in concrete, allows roots to spread and access nutrients without interference. The trellis partition between gardens also maintains a balanced aesthetic, complementing the natural surroundings.

2. Enhanced Privacy Screen with Trellis at the back of the Garden

A 1.5-meter-high trellis system has been introduced along the rear garden wall facing Arlington Road to ensure privacy for neighbouring properties. This trellis provides a green, visually appealing alternative that enhances privacy without significantly altering the open garden feel. The height is controlled to respect both privacy and visual flow, ensuring a cohesive and respectful design. Additionally planning permission is not required for the erection of a boundary treatment no higher than 2m on any other boundary.

3. Revised Paving and Soft Landscaping

In consultation with the client, we have reduced the total hard paving area from 59 square meters to 39.2 square meters. The reduction in hard surfaces is balanced by a mix of engineered timber and natural stone, which replaces the previous concrete paving. This design choice not only aligns with Camden's water management policies by increasing permeable surfaces but also improves the garden's visual appeal and user experience. The natural stone is loosely laid over a Type 1 sub-base to allow organic movement and flexibility as the garden matures. By introducing more soft landscaping, the garden provides increased soil areas for water absorption, reducing runoff and supporting sustainable water management.

4. Deck Construction with Root-Safe Methods

The garden's new deck is designed for minimal ground impact, supported by a concrete base on screw piles. This construction technique was selected based on arboricultural recommendations to protect root systems by anchoring the structure safely without causing disruption. The base, measuring 4m x 3.8m, is smaller than the existing one, maintaining

structural stability while allowing more green space around the roots. Clad with engineered decking.

5. Planting Proposal

To further transform the space into a green oasis, we have collaborated with a landscape designer to develop a planting scheme. The design prioritises biodiversity, featuring a mix of native plants that enhance ecological value and create a habitat for pollinators. This intentional selection of plant species not only supports local wildlife but also promotes seasonal interest and colour variation throughout the year.

The proposal - Front Garden

This application seeks also permission for the proposed works in the front garden of 72 Albert Street. We are proposing to carry out restoration and enhancement works at the front garden of 72 Albert Street, in a way that respects the property's Georgian style and its visual contribution to the streetscape.

The proposed works are as follows:

1. Removal of Asphalt from Front Steps

The current asphalt surface on the front steps will be removed and replaced with York stone, a material that aligns with the original Georgian style character of the property.

2. Replacement of Concrete Paving

The existing concrete paving within the front garden will be removed and replaced with York stone paving, which matches an existing York stone section already present in the garden. This will unify the garden's appearance and enhance its historical authenticity.

3. York Stone Installation in Light Well

The existing concrete area in the light well will be paved with York stone to improve its visual coherence. Additionally, the light well's concrete steps will be clad with York stone to maintain consistency in materials across all surfaces. The existing garden levels would have to be adjusted accordingly to support the stone installation while causing minimal obstruction.

4. Widening of the Flower Bed

The existing flower bed in the front garden will be expanded to allow for the planting of an evergreen hedge along with small trees. This green boundary will provide a natural sense of privacy for residents while maintaining openness that prevents visual obstructions to the street, thus enhancing the overall appearance of the streetscape.

5. Timber-Clad Bin Store

To replace the plastic council bins currently in place, we propose a custom timber-clad bin store positioned vertically near the door. This vertical alignment will make the bin less visible from the street, displaying only the side of a single bin, thereby minimising visual impact on the garden and surrounding area.

6. Bespoke Timber Bench Installation

A custom timber bench will be installed in front of the newly reinstated railings near the light well area, creating an inviting seating area. This bench will provide residents with a comfortable place to enjoy the garden and interact with passers-by, contributing to the neighbourhood's community-oriented atmosphere.

7. Restoration of Existing Railings and Kerbstones

All existing railings will be inspected and, where necessary, repaired to ensure they are in good condition. Any broken kerbstones will be replaced, preserving the integrity and appearance of the property's boundary.

The proposal - Internal Layout Alterations

1. Reinstatement of Lower Ground Floor Fireplace

The reinstatement of the fireplace in the middle room at the lower ground floor enhances the character of the listed house by restoring a key architectural feature in keeping with the building's historic significance.

2. Preservation of Structural Wall at the Lower Ground Floor

Following the commencement of works, it was discovered that the wall, which had previously been approved for removal, is in fact structural. To avoid causing undue stress to the existing listed building, we have made the decision to retain the wall. As a result of this decision, we have reconfigured the layout to accommodate the structural wall and reallocated the remaining space. The new layout now adjusts the positioning and dimensions of the WC, bathroom, and utility areas accordingly, ensuring the integrity of the property remains un-compromised.

3. Reinstatement of Ground Floor Fireplace

The reinstatement of the fireplace in the front room at the ground floor enhances the character of the listed house by restoring a key architectural feature in keeping with the building's historic significance.

4. Removal of Non-Original Partition Wall at Second Floor

Removal of the non-original, non-historic partition that previously separated the rooms. This decision was made to better align with the client's needs and improve the overall layout of the space. As a result of the removal, we were able to reinstate the original door architrave, as there is now more space between the door and the newly positioned partition. This adjustment restores an authentic architectural feature, further enhancing the character of the listed property.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the revised rear garden scheme integrates sustainable construction methods, natural materials, and an increased emphasis on soft landscaping to improve both the ecological value and aesthetic appeal of the space. The modifications reflect Camden's commitment to heritage conservation, environmental responsibility, and resident well-being, creating a harmonious and sustainable garden environment.

Additionally the carefully planned restoration and enhancement of the front garden at 72 Albert Street seeks to harmonise modern functionality with historical sensitivity. By reinstating York stone features, expanding greenery, and introducing discreet storage solutions, we aim to enrich both the property's character and the experience of the neighbourhood.

Lastly the internal layout alterations are considerate towards the preserving the character and appearance of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area, within London Borough of Camden. By maintaining the architectural and historic interest of this traditional building, we ensure good living conditions for the current and future occupiers.

Therefore, we feel that there are no planning terms that weigh against this proposal.