

15 Priory Road, NW6

March 2025

Design, Access & Heritage Statement



Context

This is a resubmission of the granted and long lapsed application 2011/1548/P of May 2011, with some alterations.

The subject of this application is a semi-detached house set within the Priory Road Conservation Area, a good example of mid 19th century suburban development. The Victorian Italianate style is prevalent in the area, with stuccoed facades and some classical decorative motifs. Despite some unsympathetic interventions the area retains its homogeneous architectural character.

Nº15 comprises three storeys – a two storey dwelling over an independent basement flat. All three facades are stuccoed, with hardwood sash windows. The frontage presents an arched pilastered porch and large ground floor and basement bay window, with decorative ironwork to balustrades and sills, and substantial cornices. A roof parapet renders the shallow pitched slate roof almost invisible from street level. The side and rear elevations are less ornate, without the roof parapet.

On the ground floor of the existing house are located the lobby, living room, dining room, and an open plan kitchen. A wrought iron balcony and metal stairs provide access to the garden from the kitchen – not an original feature. A small toilet is allocated under the main staircase.

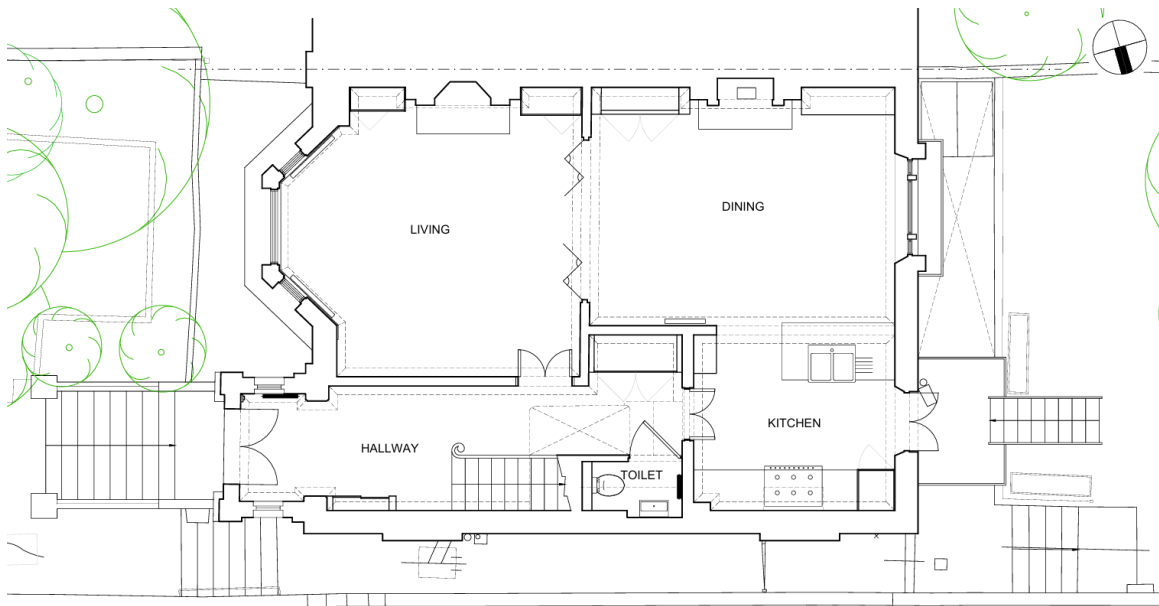


Fig 1. Existing Ground Floor Plan

On the first floor there are two main bedrooms, a bathroom to the front, a small independent WC, and a smaller bedroom to the back.

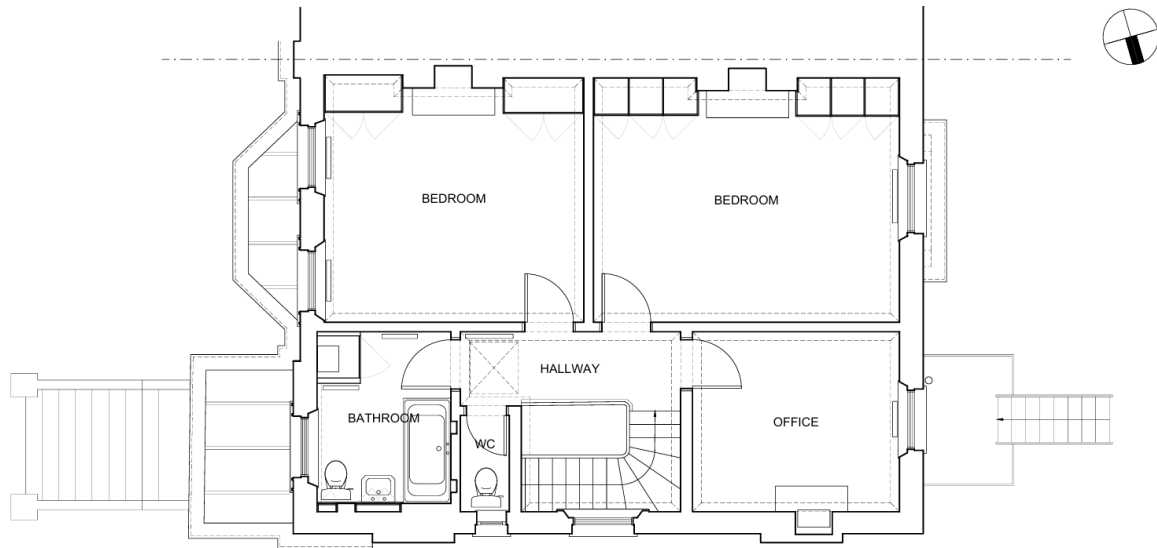


Fig 2. Existing First Floor Plan

Scope of work

The proposal is to convert the roof space into an additional bedroom with an en-suite bathroom.

Due to the shallow pitch nature of the roof, dormer windows are proposed to the front and rear, traditionally detailed and fully clad in lead, with wood rolls on the roofs (as existing over the bay window and porch). The new windows will be constructed from painted hardwood, with double glazed casements and fixed panels.



Fig 3. Proposed Front Elevation

The bulk of these dormers was deemed acceptable back in 2011, having been reduced from a previous refused proposal. The dormers were at the time reduced in width, with a .9m gap between the cheek and the boundary line with the adjoining house, so that they would sit within the roof slope and completely detached from the party wall. The dormers were also reduced in height by 10cm to diminish their visual impact from below.

An additional lead clad arched dormer is now proposed onto the hip, centred with the ridge. This not only provides headroom for the repositioned stairs but also floods the 1st floor landing with natural light. The arch motive picks up on existing arched window below, and minimises the bulk of the dormer, making it almost invisible from the street level, as it's perched behind the chimneys.

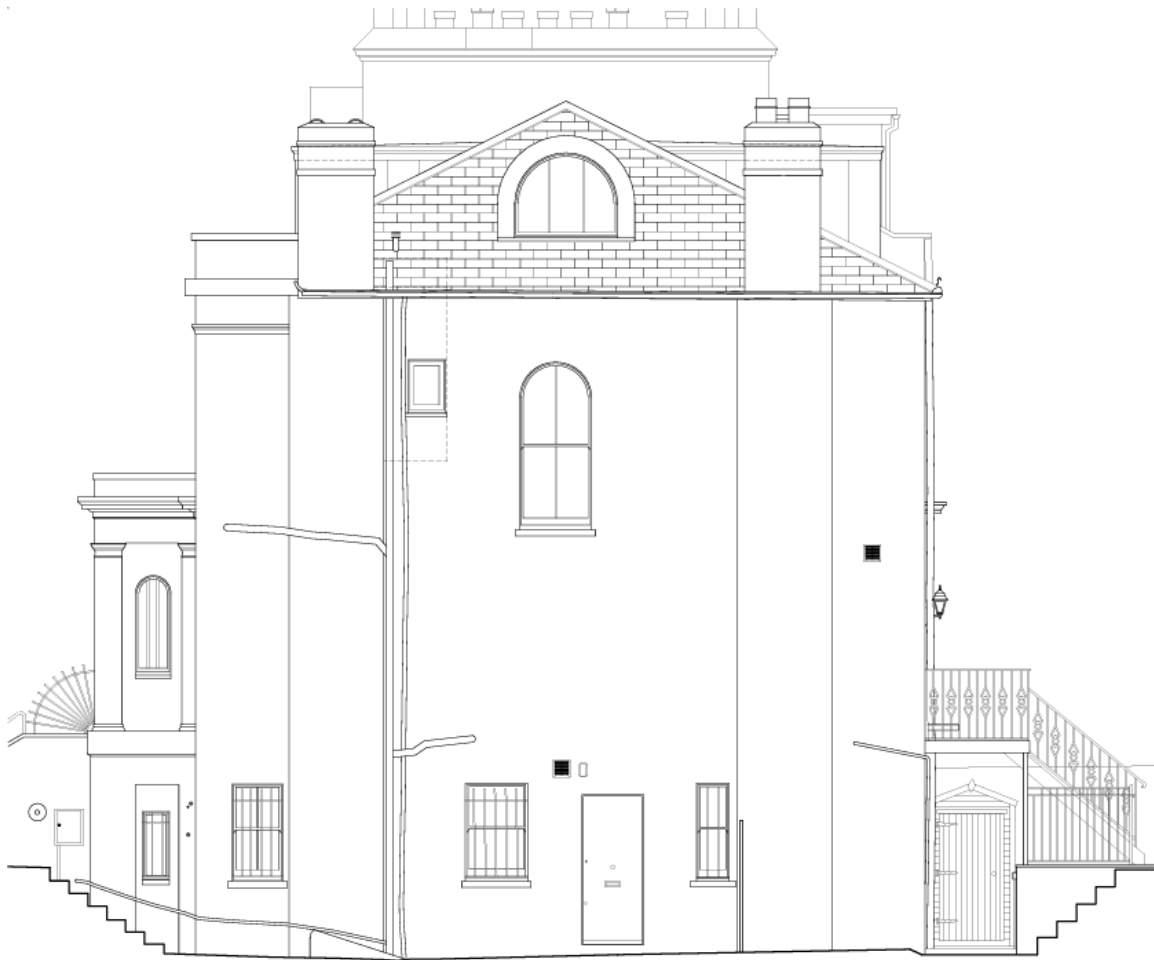


Fig 4. Proposed Side Elevation

Access to the attic is proposed to be via an L shaped stair with winders, occupying part of the existing WC footprint and floor void at 1st floor level, and over the landing as a bridge. An arched double door will be located at the top of this stair, slightly set back from the adjacent walls.

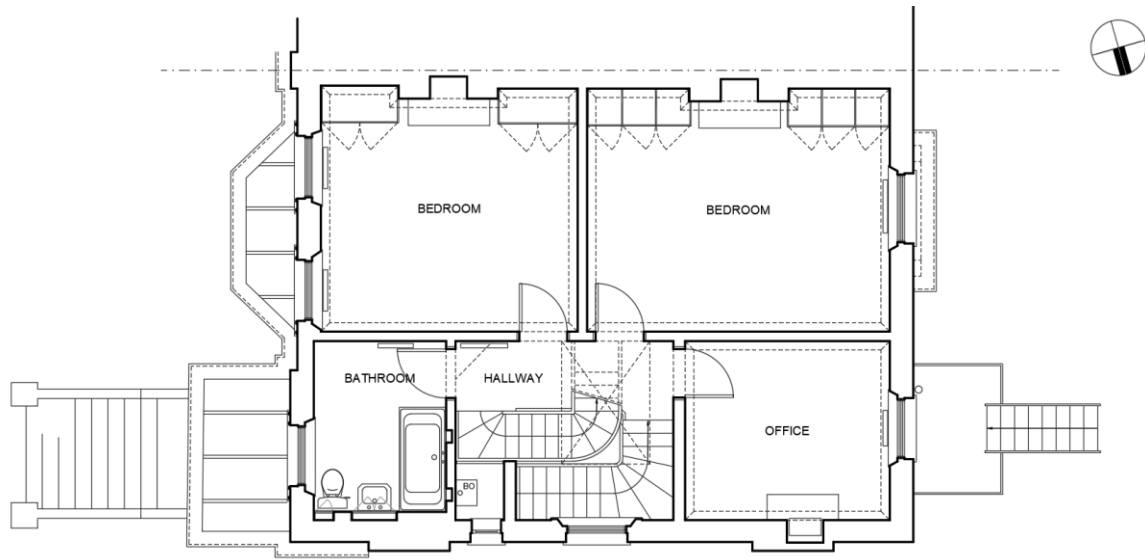


Fig 5. Proposed First Floor Plan

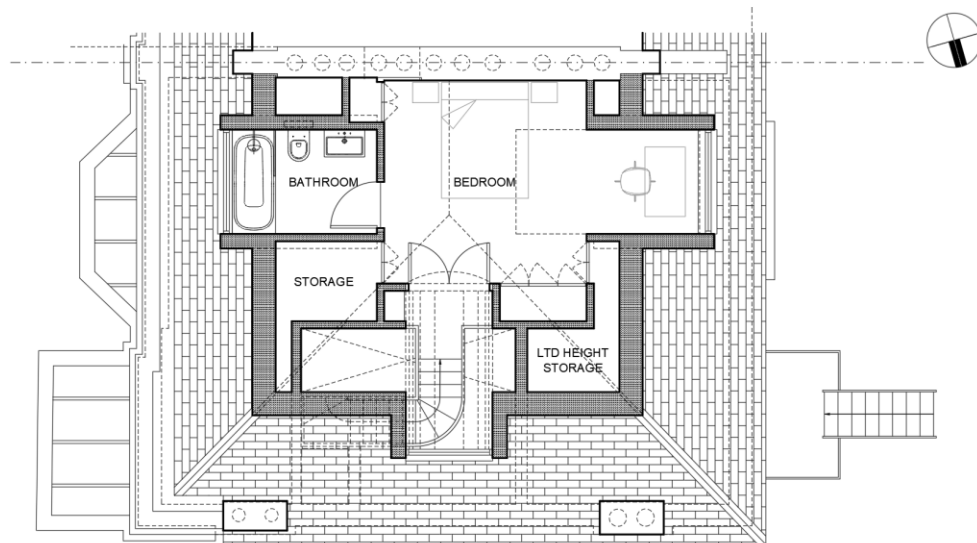


Fig 6. Proposed Second Floor Plan

Access statement

As no works are proposed to the front entrance of the house, the current stepped entrance will remain as is. The house will thus not be fully wheelchair accessible, though the alterations will not provide any further hindrance.

The proposal includes no on-site parking provision. Bins/recycling will remain located as currently on the front courtyard.

Heritage

The Priory Road conservation area statement was adopted in 2000.

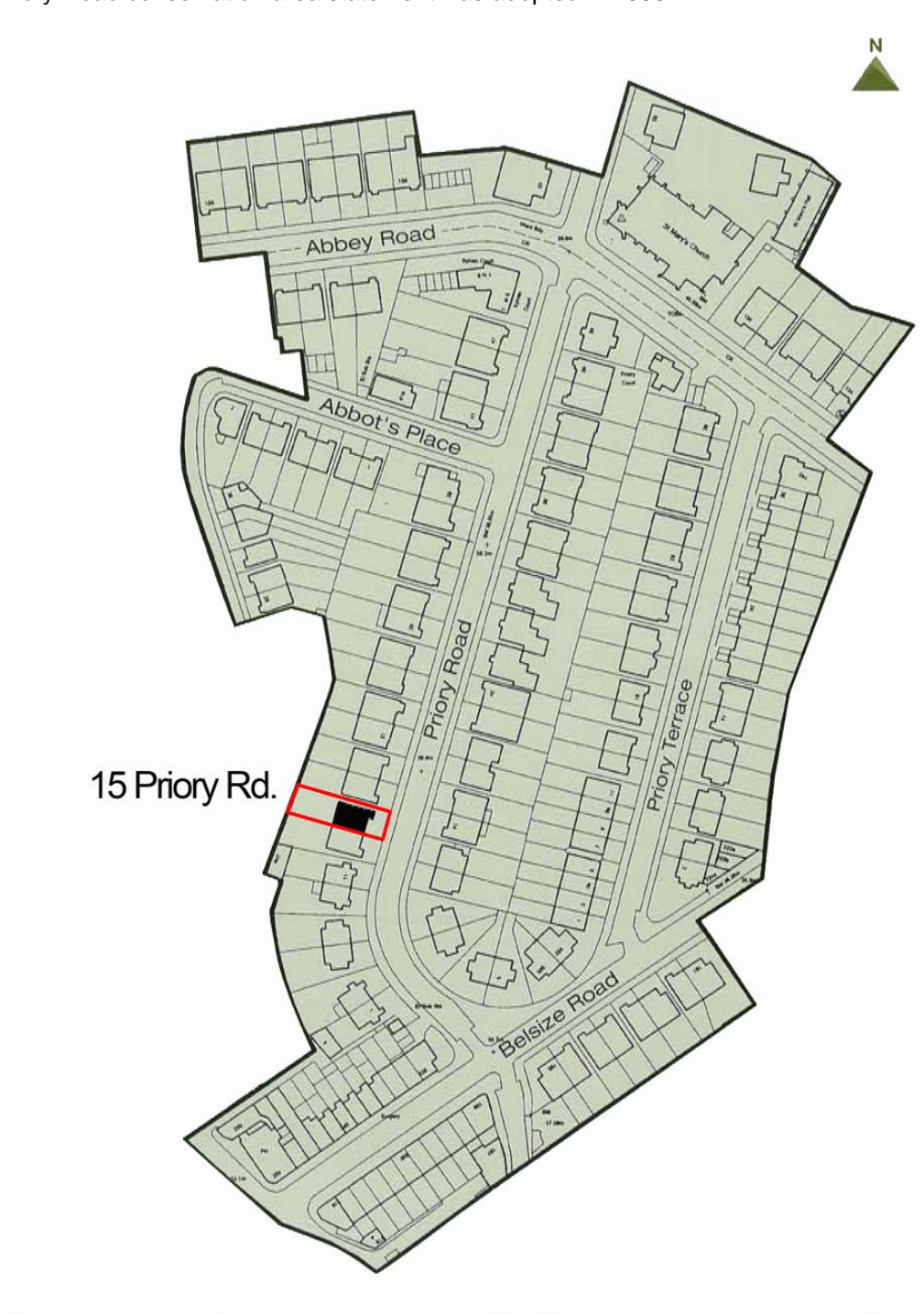


Fig 7. Priory Road Conservation Area Map

"The Priory Road Conservation Area has a cohesive architectural quality that has changed remarkably little over the last 150 years. Built over a twenty year period with few later additional buildings it stands as a distinct example and reminder of the Italianate fashion on the mid 19th century."

It remains a “small pocket of the Victorian, Italianate style inspired by palaces of Renaissance Italy and influenced by Osborne House built for Queen Victoria in 1849. Variety of detail is inherent to the style, added to this area by a number of builders involved. The style gave the opportunity for either elaborate or little decoration. Semi-detached villas predominate, mostly with three storeys and a basement.”

The main elements are; visible shallow pitched roofs with overhanging eaves supported on brackets, horizontal string courses, rounded or Romanesque arches, double arcaded windows, campanile, window casement capped by various pediments, sash windows, campanile, window casement capped by various pediments, sash windows with margin lights, porticos, stucco, stuccoed rusticated quoins, decorative ironwork at windows and railings up front steps, decorated cornices.



Fig 8. Priory Road perspectives

The alterations are small in scale and confined to the roof slopes only, which in this case are concealed from view behind a raised parapet. The proposal is subservient to the original building and does not infringe upon the amenity of neighbouring properties. The proposed dormers are smaller than that of the adjacent building and other existing precedents on neighbouring properties, and we believe will have a limited but positive impact on the streetscape, by reestablishing the symmetry with No.13.



Fig 9. Priory Road perspective (opposite direction)

The choice of materials in new work will be most important and will be subject of control by the Council. Original, traditional materials should be retained wherever possible and repaired only if necessary. Generally the use of the original (...) natural materials will be required...

The new dormers will be traditionally clad in lead in a similar manner to the bay window and porch below, and the windows will be painted timer.

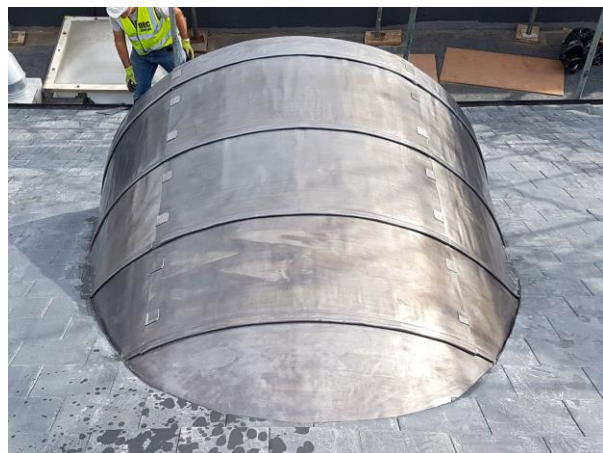


Fig 10 & 11. Proposed lead clad dormers details references

“Planning permission is required for alterations to the roof, at the front, rear and side, within the conservation area. Extension in the roof space should respect the integrity of the existing roof form. Existing original details should be precisely matched.”

The proposed dormers respect the integrity of the existing roof by detaching themselves from the edges, as previously agreed with the Council.

“Dormers at the front and the side will not be allowed where a cluster of roofs remain largely (...) unimpaired.”

Dormers are already present in the adjoining property and there is a considerable number of precedents of front, side and rear dormers along the street. The importance of this feature is reflected in the appraisal:

“The variety between the properties is well expressed and is an important feature of the street. Roofs are either hipped (with and without dormers), or gable, there are parapets, some have campanile. Side dormers have been introduced on some hipped roofs.(...)”

Conclusion

This application proposes a front, a rear and a side dormer, of which the former two had already been consented by application 2011/1548/P of May 2011.

These are attractive, well-designed additions to the building which will provide high quality residential accommodation and complement the character and appearance of Priory Road Conservation Area as a whole.

The proposed dormers have been designed to fit in with the appearance of the existing building and have limited visual impact on the surrounding area and the appearance of the street scene.

Accordingly, the application proposal is entirely acceptable in all respects, and we anticipate a favourable decision.