

Design & Access Statement

(INCORPORATING HERITAGE & PLANNING STATEMENTS)

81A BELSIZE LANE, NW5.

The following statement sets out the case in support of our proposals to carry out works to the basement flat at No.81 Belsize Lane, which forms part of a Grade II listed terrace. It should be read in conjunction with the live Planning (Ref: 2014/5127/P) & Listed Building Application (Ref: 2014/4665/L), relating to the raising of the ceiling/floor within the rear closet wing), as well as drawing nos. ED-81bl-102, 302 & 303.

Currently the flat occupies what would originally have been the service quarters of a five storey mid-nineteenth century terraced house and which has since been subdivided into four separate dwellings. The sub-division works involved the removal of the stairs from within the rear closet wing connecting raised ground and basement floors, with the resultant gain in floor area being converted to a bathroom within the basement and a communal cupboard accessed via the raised ground floor hallway. Elsewhere, a kitchen has been installed within part of the front room of the flat and the garden, inevitably, now falls within its demise. This accommodation is however, by current standards, of a low quality with dark interiors, some particularly low ceiling height, an oppressively narrow circulation and a poor relationship to the outside spaces. Our proposals take the form of three main steps to remedy the above deficiencies, with all having taken careful consideration of planning policy and guidance relevant to the property's listed status. Firstly we are seeking to re-configure some areas of the existing layout, secondly to construct an extension to the rear providing more spacious & light living accommodation and thirdly, establish a more clear relationship to the garden at the rear.

The proposed changes to the existing internal layout are informed by Section 12, paragraphs 133 & 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which stipulates that alterations do not amount to '*substantial harm*' to the heritage asset, in this case the listed terrace. More specifically, the cross referenced Planning Practice Guidance document defines substantial harm as development that '*seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest*', in this case the plan form, and that '*moderate or minor*' works are unlikely to cause substantial harm. Given these parameters, we propose to maintain the strong aspects of the original plan whilst inserting a new bathroom to the front of the flat and removing the kitchen. The kitchen is intended to be re-sited within a proposed new extension within the space adjacent to the existing wing. In order to establish a better connection between the living areas, we are seeking to open up the existing window of the rear living area down to floor level allowing access between kitchen & living rooms. As the changes we are proposing are restricted to the basement level, we believe that they meet the requirements of English Heritage Guidance¹, and that appropriate steps are taken to balance the need to provide improved living accommodation whilst preserving the integrity of the existing structure.

The proposed extension work, given the unique nature of the basement level within a terrace of this sort, seeks to significantly enhance the living accommodation, whilst taking a very sensitive approach to the connection between new and old. Again, particular attention has been paid to English Heritage Guidance and in particular passages relating to the integration of new works into existing². We are proposing an extension that is both subservient and respectful of the existing structure, using thin framed metal doors within a simple brick surround. The brickwork is intended to be of brickwork & mortar to match the existing building, although in line with accepted good

¹ English Heritage 'London Terrace Houses 1660-1860 – A Guide to Alterations and Extensions' states that '*As a general rule the character, proportion, and integrity of the principal rooms at ground and first floor levels.....should be preserved. Elsewhere a greater degree of flexibility may be possible, although the original plan form and features should remain clearly discernible.*'

² '*Extensions should never dominate the parent building in bulk scale materials or design*'.

practice in conservation, it will be distinct by its un-weathered finish. At roof level, between new and existing we intend (as far as is possible) to use structurally bonded glass, a modern and highly precise technology in line with another paragraph in the guidance which states '*.....there may be some occasions where a more modern design approach may be acceptable*' in order to make a clear distinction of new and old. The original back walls of the building will be easily read given the minimal connections of the proposed new structure. The lowering of the ground floor levels within the new-build parts reduces the roof level, helping to reduce the impact of the extension on the neighbouring property at No.79.

Given the scarcity and desirability of private amenity space within Camden, a major motivation for implementing our proposals is to maximise the enjoyment of the garden which is currently accessed only through a small side door at the end of a long corridor. A large door opening between the inside and an external patio on the same level relates specifically to the width of the patio currently laid between the flank wall of the closet wing and the boundary with No. 79, and in so doing references the proportions of the existing building.

Figs. 1 & 2 below show a modelled representation of the proposed extension within its immediate context. Fig.2 in particular, shows the adjacent extensions at nos. 83 & 85 modelled in white, to the west of our site (above in the photo). It can be seen from this, that the extension to no. 83, is of a roughly similar massing to our proposal, whilst no. 85 is significantly larger.

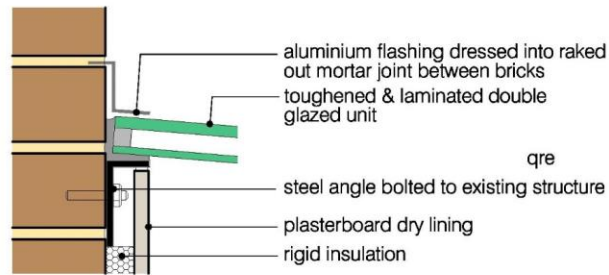


Fig. 1. Model of proposed rear extension.



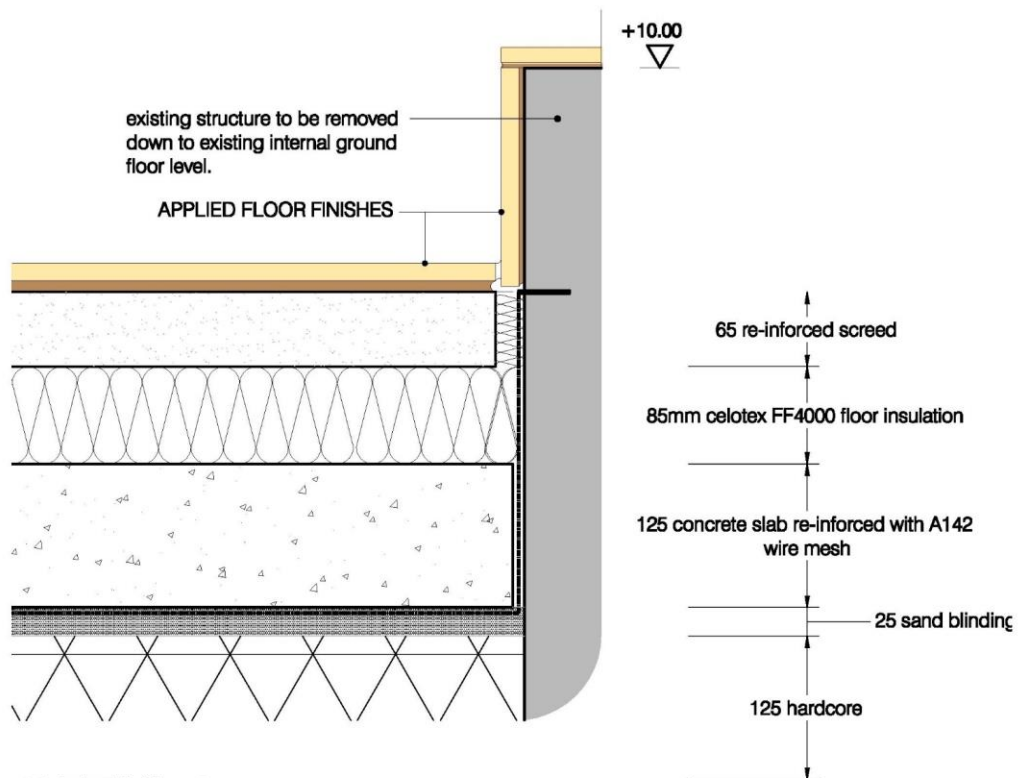
Fig. 2. Birdseye view of proposal from South-East.

The following drawings, Figs. 3, 4 & 5, show specific connection details between our proposals & the existing structure, demonstrating how we intend to preserve, as far as is possible, the integrity of the existing listed building. The references for the locations of the details can be found on drawing number ED/81BL/302.



DETAIL 1

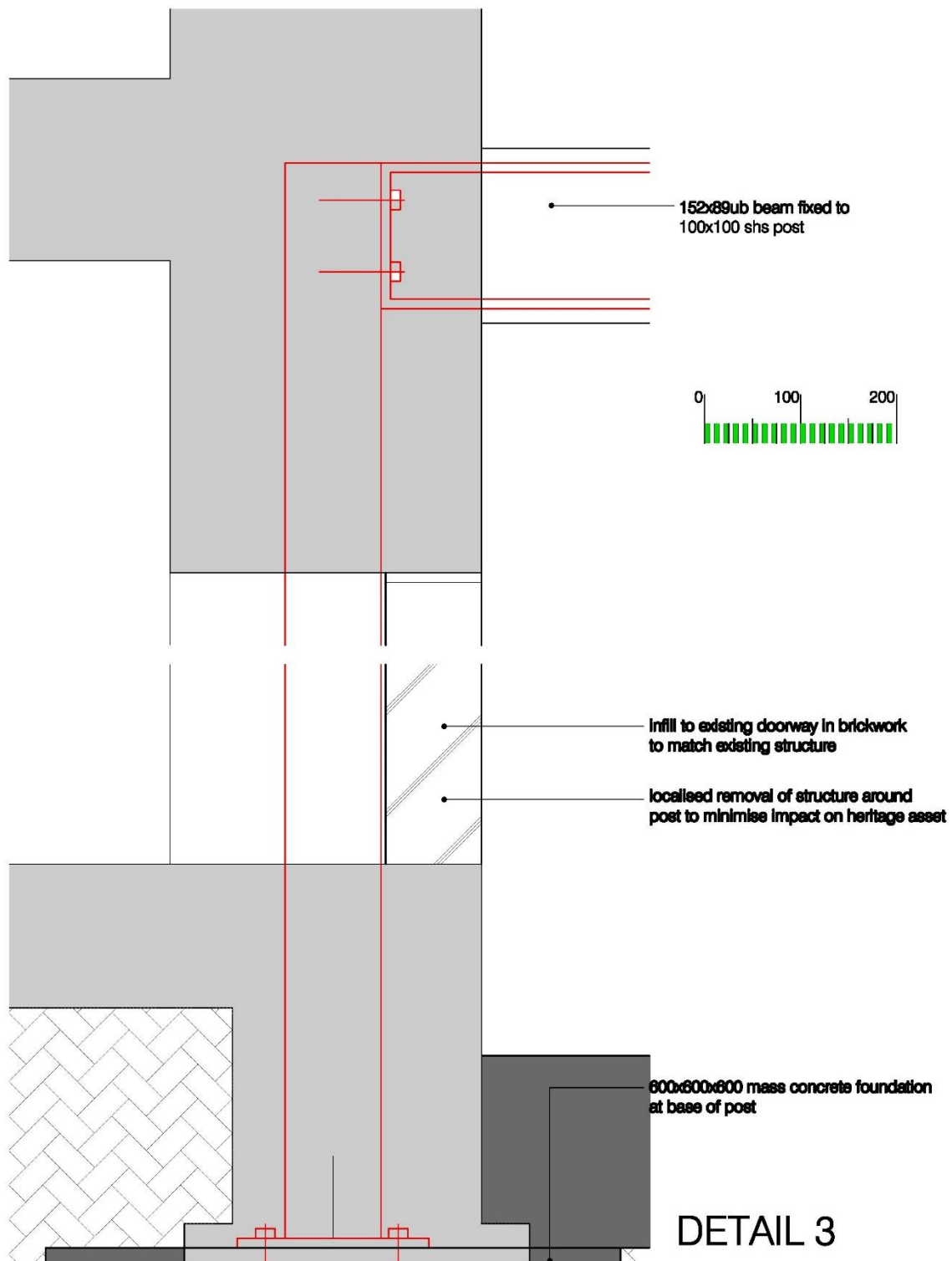
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DETAIL 2

scale 1:5

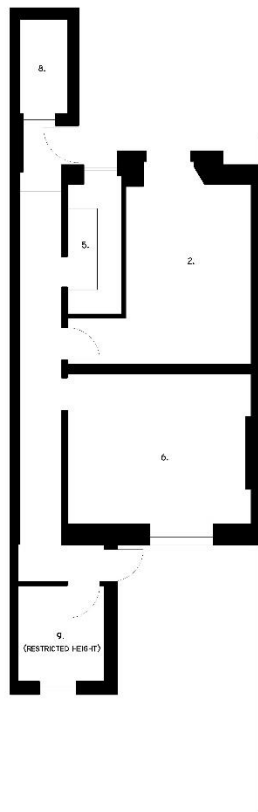
Figs. 3 & 4. Connections between existing building and the proposed extension. Detail references are marked on drawing ED/81BL/302



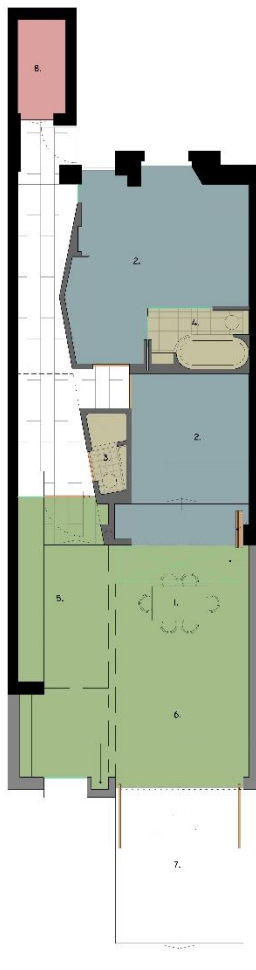
Figs. 5. Detail references are marked on drawing ED/81BL/302

Appendix A.

Initial Consultation for Pre-Application Advice from Camden Council.



EXISTING LAYOUT
(NOT YET SURVEYED)



POSSIBLE LAYOUT

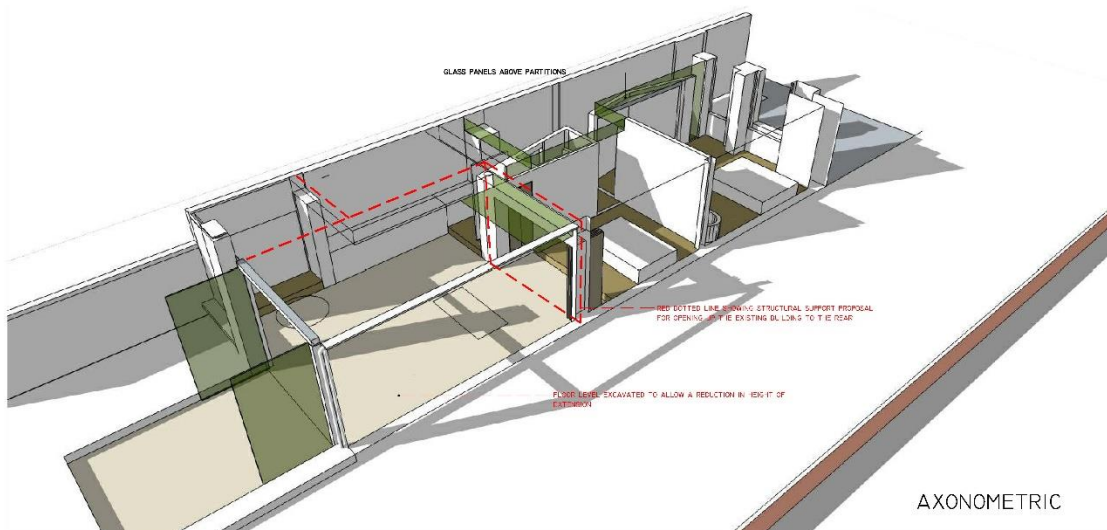
KEY:

- 1. - DINING AREA
- 2. - BEDROOM
- 3. - SHOWER ROOM
- 4. - ENSUITE
- 5. - KITCHEN AREA
- 6. - LIVING AREA
- 7. - TERRACE
- 8. - UTILITY
- 9. - BATHROOM

POOR SLIDE HOLDING PARTITION TO ALLOW BEDROOM TO BE USED AS EXTENSION TO LIVING ROOM/STUDY

LARGE SKYLIGHT OVER TO ALLOW LIGHT INTO BEDROOM

FIRE PLACE TO DOUBLE AS A STRUCTURAL SUPPORT



AXONOMETRIC

Initial plans as submitted.



Rear View as submitted for initial pre-application consultation.

Initial response to our proposal received from Victoria Pound, on behalf of Camden Council via email on 14th April 2014:

“Listed building impact:

The building dates from the mid C19 and takes the two-room plan traditionally found in terraced houses of this age. This domestic plan forms a part of the building’s special architectural and historic interest. In considering alterations to a building of this type, we would seek to retain remaining historic fabric, and would usually seek to retain this sense of the cellular room arrangement, in order to preserve the building’s special interest. This is in line with English Heritage published guidance “London Terrace Houses, 1660 – 1860.”

In this case, it appears that internal alterations have made when the building was converted into flats, notably the removal of the ground to basement level secondary stair, and the narrowing of the corridor. Some widening the corridor area would therefore not seem to involve the loss of original fabric, and would be of benefit to the use of the flat. However the formation of an angled partition in its place would not in my view preserve the historic plan form arrangement. We would also expect that the original chimneybreast is retained, and the spine wall. Facilitating an additional or relocated bathroom within the position shown in the front room is considered acceptable.

The principle of a modest extension to the building’s rear elevation at this level is acceptable, and the proposed simple, lightweight detailed design, with slim framed glazing and a small amount of

brickwork and leadwork, is an appropriate approach. However I consider that the impact of the size of the extension, and its open relationship with the interior of the existing building, would cause harm to the building's special interest. We would usually advise that a lightweight lower ground extension of this type be positioned within the space adjacent to the existing wing, and not to sit forward of the wing. Again this is in line with EH guidance, above. Any addition should clearly read as an add-on to the building, and therefore the existing rear and side walls of the building should remain intact, with only a minimal connection made, in order to retain a distinction between the existing house plan and the modern addition. Where a connection does not exist at present, a door opening in place of the rear window can be made, within the width of the window opening.

Amenity impact:

From an amenity perspective, the additional depth may also be considered to cause harm to the amenity of the LG floor at no 83, adjacent, in terms of overshadowing and loss of outlook."

Appendix B.

Follow-up Consultation for Pre-Application Advice from Camden Council.

Submitted

17th July 2014

“Draft Planning Statement

81 Belsize Lane, London, NW3

5AU

The following statement sets out the case in support of our proposals to carry out works to the basement flat at No.81 Belsize Lane, which forms part of a Grade II listed terrace.

Currently the flat occupies what would originally have been the service quarters of a five storey midnineteenth century terraced house and which has since been subdivided into four separate dwellings. The sub-division works involved the removal of the stairs from within the rear closet wing connecting raised ground and basement floors, with the resultant gain in floor area being converted to a bathroom within the basement and a communal cupboard accessed via the raised ground floor hallway. Elsewhere, a kitchen has been installed within part of the front room of the flat and the garden, inevitably, now falls within its demise. This accommodation is however, by current standards, of a low quality with dark interiors, some particularly low ceiling height, an oppressively narrow circulation and a poor relationship to the outside spaces. Our proposals take the form of three main steps to remedy the above deficiencies, with all having taken careful consideration of planning policy and guidance relevant to the property’s listed status. Firstly we are seeking to reconfigure some areas of the existing layout, secondly to construct an extension to the rear providing more spacious & light living accommodation and thirdly, establish a more clear relationship to the garden at the rear.

The proposed changes to the existing internal layout are informed by Section 12, paragraphs 133 & 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which stipulates that alterations do not amount to ‘substantial harm’ to the heritage asset, in this case the listed terrace. More specifically, the cross referenced Planning Practice Guidance document defines substantial harm as development that ‘seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest’, in this case the plan form, and that ‘moderate or minor’ works are unlikely to cause substantial harm. Given these parameters, we propose to maintain the strong aspects of the original plan with some widening of the rear section of the corridor³, in addition to the integration of a new bathroom to the front of the flat and removal of the kitchen. The kitchen itself is intended to be re-sited within the existing footprint of the closet wing, where the existing ceiling height of 1.85m is to be increased by raising an area of floor within the upper hallway⁴. In order to establish a better connection between the living areas, we are seeking to open up the flank wall of the rear closet wing⁵, whilst maintaining piers at each corner to preserve the sense of the existing plan form, which is further re-enforced by the layout of the kitchen and the change in level between this area and the new living spaces. Existing window openings to the rear of the existing building are intended to be widened slightly, and extended down to floor level to allow walk-through access. As the changes we are proposing are restricted to the

³ The basement corridor may well have originally been wider given the layout of the upper levels

⁴ Subject to approval of the current Listed Building Application

⁵ Permission was granted for removal of the corresponding wall at No. 85 Belsize Lane in August 2013, Application Ref: [2013/4092/L](#)

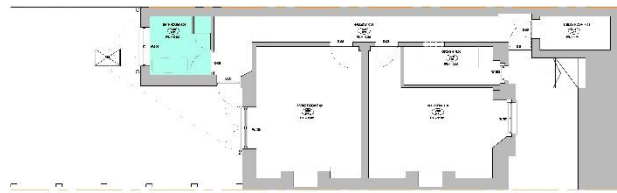
basement level, we believe that they meet the requirements of English Heritage Guidance⁶, and that appropriate steps are taken to balance the need to provide improved living accommodation whilst preserving the integrity of the existing structure.

The proposed extension work, given the unique nature of the basement level within a terrace of this sort, seeks to significantly enhance the living accommodation, whilst taking a very sensitive approach to the connection between new and old. Again, particular attention has been paid to English Heritage Guidance and in particular passages relating to the integration of new works into existing⁷. We are proposing an extension that is largely glass beyond the rearmost wall of the existing building, and in order to make a clear definition between new and old we are proposing to use, as far as is possible, glass at roof level. Given the technical difficulties of achieving this, we intend to use structurally bonded glass, a modern and highly precise technology in line with another paragraph in the guidance which states '.....there may be some occasions where a more modern design approach may be acceptable', and this low impact and sensitive modern approach is followed through in the rest of the design. The glazed extension extends 2.4m to the rear which is a measurement to match the full width extension at No.85, and which accords with another paragraph from the EH guidance '...a proposed extension should be subordinate to the main building. In general, rear extensions should not extend rearward beyond the line of any neighbouring extensions, or intrude on any garden space of amenity value or above the general height of neighbouring extensions.' The original back walls of the building will, we feel, be more easily read given the minimal connections of the proposed new structure, which specifically in the case of the rear closet wing allows the form to be read as a singular element. These structural distinctions can become confused when a rear wall is extended across to the garden to create an infill, as is the case at No. 83. The lowering of the ground floor levels within the new-build parts reduces the roof level, whilst the gap maintained between the proposed extension and the boundary with No.83 further minimises the impact on neighbouring properties.

Given the scarcity and desirability of private amenity space within Camden, a major motivation for implementing our proposals is to maximise the enjoyment of the garden which is currently accessed only through a small side door at the end of a long corridor. A large door opening between the inside and an external patio on the same level relates specifically to the width of the patio currently laid between the flank wall of the closet wing and the boundary with No. 79, and in so doing references the proportions of the existing building.

⁶ English Heritage 'London Terrace Houses 1660-1860 – A Guide to Alterations and Extensions' states that 'As a general rule the character, proportion, and integrity of the principal rooms at ground and first floor levels.....should be preserved. Elsewhere a greater degree of flexibility may be possible, although the original plan form and features should remain clearly discernible.'

⁷ 'Extensions should never dominate the parent building in bulk scale materials or design'.



EXISTING LAYOUT

KEY:

- 1. - RECEPTION AREA
- 2. - OFFICE
- 3. - MEETING ROOM
- 4. - BEDROOM
- 5. - BATHROOM
- 6. - LIVING AREA
- 7. - KITCHEN
- 8. - HALLWAY
- 9. - ENTRY

0 1 2 3 4 5 6



POSSIBLE LAYOUT

Revised Layout proposed.



Birdseye view of model from South-East



Rear view of model



Proposed Internal View.

Subsequent response to our revised proposal received from Victoria Pound, on behalf of Camden Council via email on 3rd September 2014:

“The revised internal plan form and layout would seem to be appropriate, and is mindful of the building’s original domestic plan form.

The proposed extension is elegantly designed, and this type of design approach would be a lightweight, considerate addition to the building. However, I still have concerns over its scale (the depth beyond the rear elevation of the wing, combined with the element which wraps around the rear of the existing wing) in relation to the host building. There appears to be no planning record for the similar arrangement at no. 85. The adjacent timber framed conservatory at no. 83 was the subject of an appeal, and in considering it to be acceptable and granting permission, the planning inspector noted that it did not project rearward of the wing.

The widening of the existing window aperture in the rear room would lead to a blurring the distinction between the original internal space and the conservatory extension which is not considered to preserve this aspect of the building’s special interest. Whilst it is noted that, internally, the lower floors may be of lesser significance than the principal floor levels above, the early paragraphs of the EH guidance (‘General advice’) note that alterations should not impact upon the shape, design and appearance of window and door openings. As advised previously, the removal of the portion of masonry below the existing window is considered acceptable in providing a door opening between the rear room and conservatory.”

Appendix C.

Site Photos

Taken

June 2014



Front of listed terrace (No. 81 is second left behind tree)



View towards Window W. 103 from garden.



View towards back door from garden.