

34 Netherhall Gardens- design and access statement

1. Context

34 Netherhall Gardens is a property situated within the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area (see illustration 1). It is listed within the conservation area statement as making a positive contribution.



Illustration 1

The proposed works seek to improve the existing condition of the building whilst minimising any impact on surrounding buildings and the wider conservation area.

The following policies have been considered as part of this application:

CS5- Managing the impact of growth and development

CS14- Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

DP24- Securing high quality design

DP25- Conserving Camden's heritage

DP26- Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

Camden Planning Guidance 2006

Fitzjohn/Netherhall Conservation Area Statement

2. General property information

34 Netherhall Gardens is a Victorian red brick building that sits within a sloped corner plot and is currently divided into flats (see photograph 2).



Photograph 2

The property is neighboured by buildings of a similar age and style, and although its corner position results in a dual street frontage, the principal façade is to the North. The language of the building is Victorian gothic revival and the significant scale of the building is offset by a number of subordinate elements- two storey bays, additions, roof projections etc. The ornate brick banding/details and number of apertures also serve to detract from the overall mass.

Principal access to the flats is via a paved path and raised porch to the front (north) of the property although the lower ground floor flats are accessed directly at garden level.

The main section of the front (northern) elevation remains largely intact with original brickwork and decorative banding details retained. All original timber sash windows were replaced with double glazed UPVC units in 1990 (application no 8804663).

The side (western) and rear (southern) elevations have been gradually altered over time with a two storey side storey extension approved in 1970 (CTP/F6/10/4/8425) and rear metal balconies added in 1997 (application no PW9702445).

Since 2012 the owners have begun to implement a number of changes to the property in order to improve the quality of the accommodation and rationalise the elevations/external areas (refer to approved applications 2012/2638/P and 2013/2753/P).

This application relates to proposed alterations to the rear (southern) elevation at lower and raised ground floor level. The works would involve the creation of a small extension at lower ground floor level and a partial extension over the new footprint at raised ground floor level.

3. Proposal details

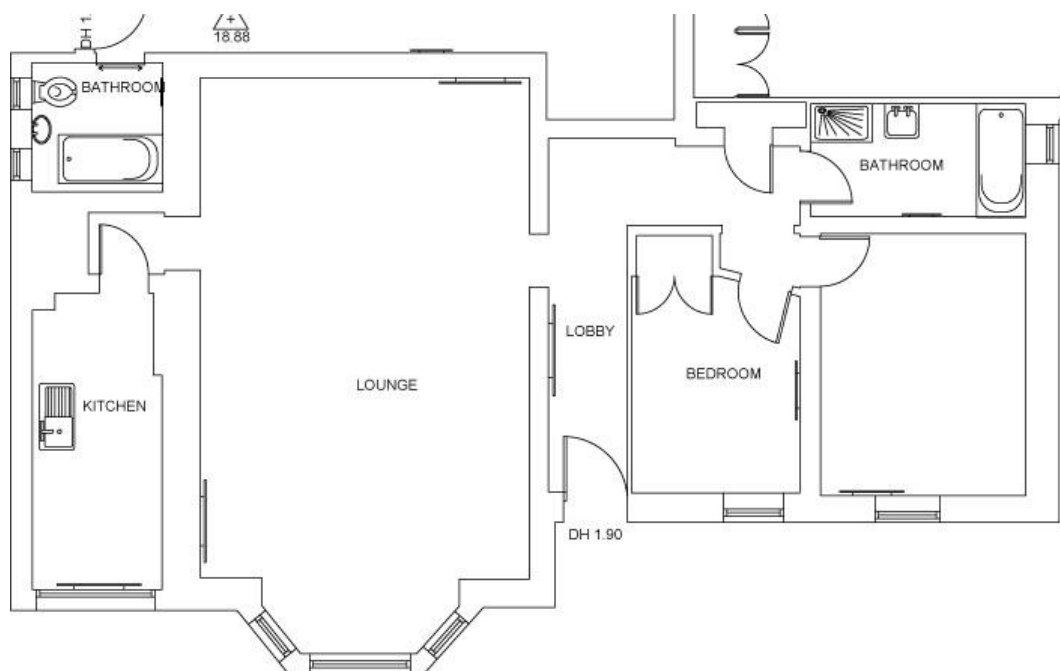
The property at 34 Netherhall Gardens has been gradually altered both internally and externally over a number of years- some of which has had a detrimental effect on the overall appearance of the building. Although the front elevation is well ordered with the window arrangement following a hierarchy and pattern, the rear (southern) elevation is less coherent with a number of different sized and shaped windows to the right hand side together with two later addition doors and balconies which are not in keeping with the original character of the building (see drawing extract 3).



Drawing extract 3

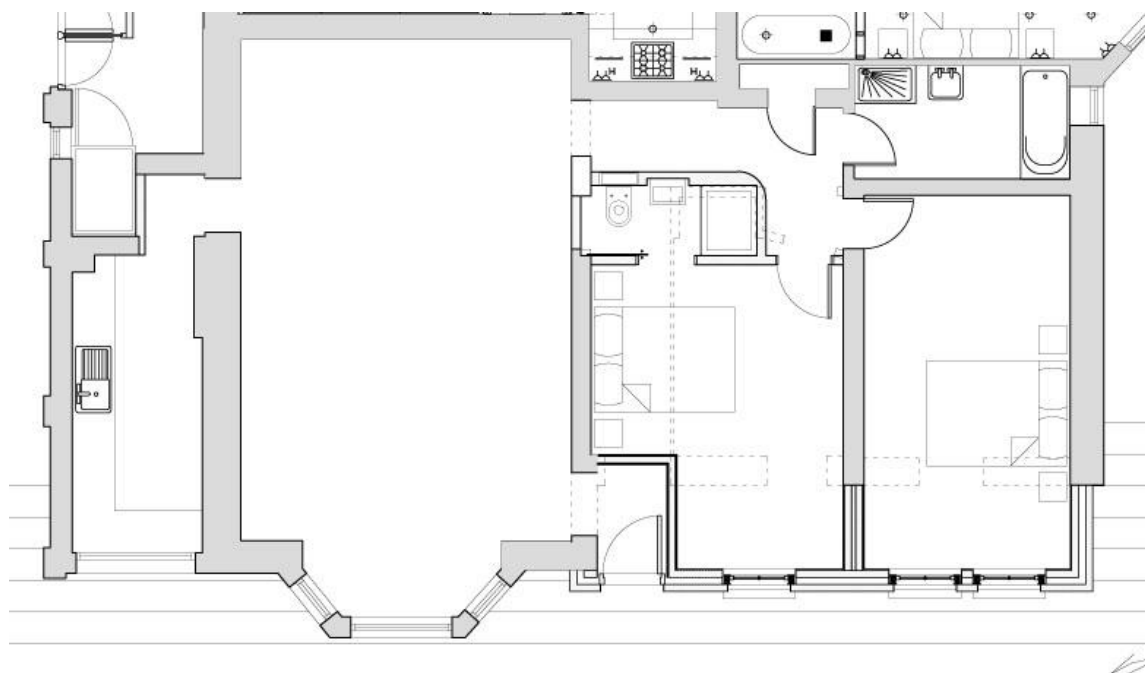
Furthermore the conversion of the building into flats has resulted in the staircase windows being opposed to the direction of the current staircase.

The existing layout of flat 8 (lower ground floor rear) does not provide good use of space due to the point of access and the arrangement of the two bedrooms (see plan extract 4).



Plan extract 4

The proposed extension at lower ground floor level seeks to improve the internal layout of flat 8 by creating a small lobbied area by the front door and enlarging the size of the bedrooms (with one to include an ensuite bathroom). The extension will include evenly proportioned, larger windows to improve daylight levels (to the Southern aspect) in the respective bedrooms and to improve the outlook onto the rear garden (see plan extract 5).



Plan extract 5

Externally the extension will be formed using bricks to match existing and the new windows will be double glazed timber sashes in line with the original character of the building and surrounding buildings of the same age (see drawing extract 6).



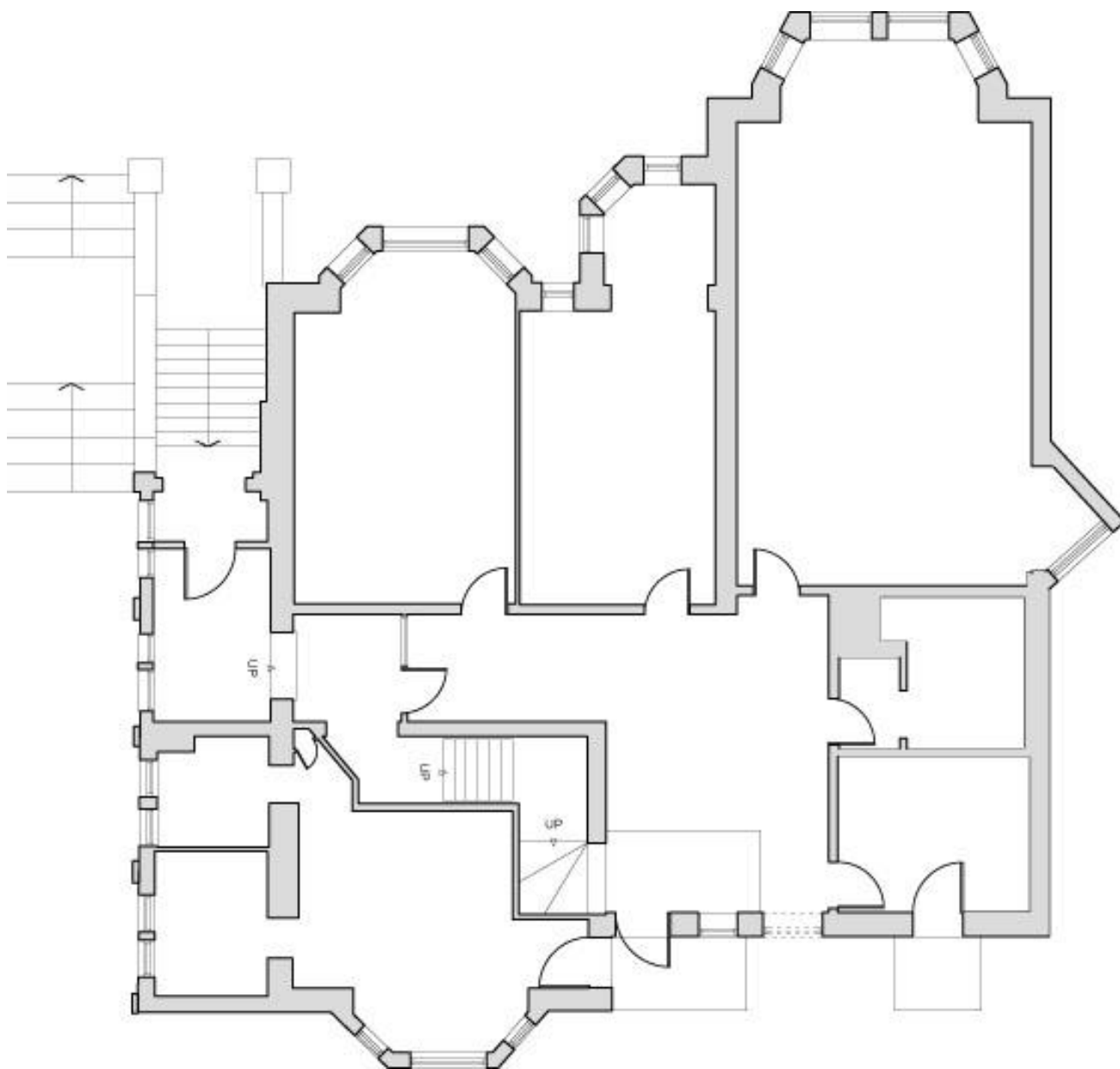
Drawing extract 6

The proposed extension has been designed to improve the balance and proportions of the existing rear (southern) elevation whilst remaining highly subordinate to the significant scale of the original building. It will also serve to soften the sheer vertical plane of this façade by introducing a stepped element in line with the other existing elevations.

The proposed extension has also been scaled to suit the proportions of the original sash windows at lower ground floor level. Care has been taken to consider the junction between the brick banding and the existing building, in particular the return of the decorative banding. The extension projects by 300mm in order to achieve a satisfactory return detail and to maintain the visual massing of the brickwork reveals.

Installing double glazed units and constructing the extension using insulated cavity walls will also result in an improvement of the thermal efficiency of the existing external envelope.

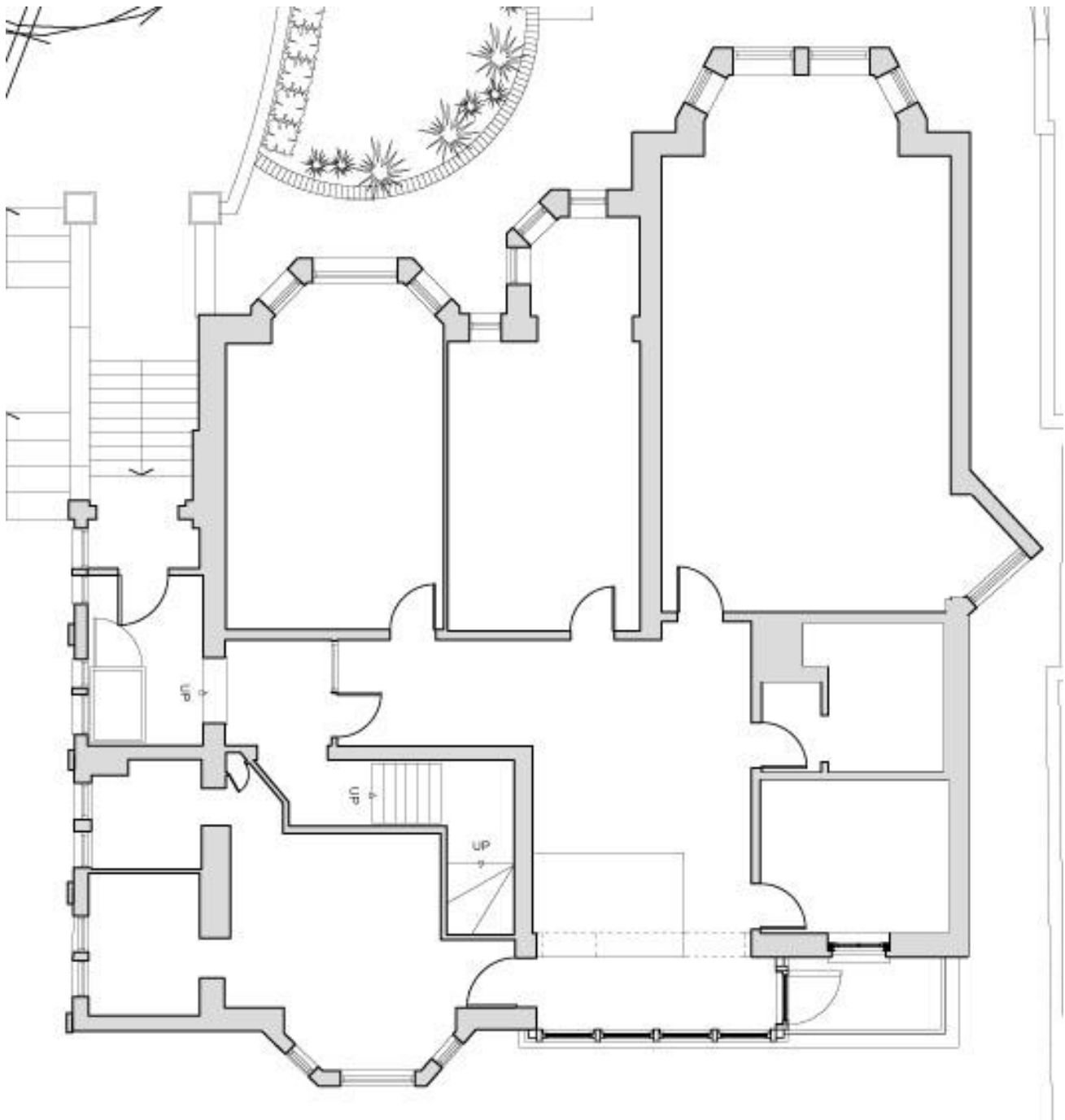
At raised ground floor level, the accommodation is currently linked by an external metal balcony (see drawing extract 7). This arrangement is both impractical and unsightly, and the proposed design seeks to address these issues.



Plan extract 7

The design intent of the extension at raised ground floor level is to minimise visual bulk and unnecessary mass whilst providing improved accommodation and amenity in terms of access and natural light.

The proposed extension will be constructed from timber, painted to match the existing woodwork with the double glazed panels scaled to match the proportions of the original windows. The solid roof will be dressed and capped in lead in line with original detailing elsewhere (see plan extract 8).



Plan extract 8

The extension will be subservient to the original structure and will sit back from the right hand side of the property to allow for a stepped junction detail and the retention of external space (currently provided by 2no. metal balconies). The area of the replacement balcony will be less than the area of the existing balconies and its minimal size will ensure that it cannot accommodate more than a few people at a time, thus limiting the potential for any noise disturbance.

The existing non original door that currently opens on to the right hand balcony will be replaced with a painted double glazed timber sash to match the proposed windows at the lower level of the extension.

A painted metal guard rail will be installed around the perimeter of the terrace in accordance with current building regulations.

Internally, the raised ground floor extension will allow for the enlargement of the existing rear opening to allow more daylight into the deep central plan areas and also connect the current accommodation, which will in turn enable future flexibility of use.

Due to the topography of the site, the presence of mature trees along the boundary wall and the position of 34a Netherhall Gardens, the proposed extension will have low visibility from the street (photograph 9). In terms of overlooking, there will be no change from the existing condition as the building already has windows and balconies on the proposed elevation and the increase in projection is minimal.



Photograph 9

As the proposed extension falls partly within a tree protection area, the foundations have been detailed accordingly. Please refer to the following documents submitted as part of this application for further detailed information:

- Method Statement for foundations in a root protection area
- Letter from Harrison Tree Services
- Drawing no D007.60 Detail Plan showing foundation proposal

4. Accessibility

As identified in previous application (2013/2753/P) the access lift to the raised ground floor cannot be large enough to satisfy current Lifetime Home standards and other aspects of the building limit its use by non-ambulant tenants. However the proposed design will further improve the potential for inclusive use, providing linked accommodation for future onsite care at raised ground floor level if desired.

5. Summary

The proposed alterations seek to improve the internal quality of the living accommodation at both lower ground and raised ground floor level whilst improving the external appearance of the property in line with the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area Statement guidelines and wider planning policy recommendations.