

# **51 Vicars Road**

## Design and Access Statement

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123 Camden High Street London NW1 7J5

## ***Project Details***

Site Address: Flat A, 51 Vicars Road, NW5 4NN

Existing Residential Area: 37sqm

Proposed Residential Area: 78sqm

Proposal: A single storey residential extension to the rear of the garden flat, and associated landscaping works.

Listing/Conservation Status: Not listed nor in a conservation area.

This document has been prepared to demonstrate how the proposals respond to the sensitive context of the local area, delivering a design that is respectful of its surroundings and the existing dwelling.

The document encompasses analysis, design principles, scale, massing, appearance and heritage.

## The Proposal

The proposal is for the reconfiguration of the existing ground floor flat and the construction of a single storey residential extension to the rear of the existing three storey, 19th century semi-detached house to meet modern living standards and to provide dedicated and accessible space for the elderly parents of the residents of flat B above.

The proposals affect Flat A, 51 Vicars Road, NW5 4NN.

## The requirement:

The primary objective of the project is to provide a one bedroom 'granny flat', to allow the elderly parents of the residents of flat B to look after their grand-children whilst remaining self-sufficient, and maintaining privacy for both families.

The residents of Flat B are both partners in prestigious architectural companies, Grimshaw and Rick Mather Architects, both of which have a reputation for sensitive design in heritage areas and existing buildings.



Urban grain around the application site (highlighted in red)

# Site Context

## History



1. The site context 1894 (see blown up versions adjacent)



51 Vicars Road is located at the corner of Vicars Road and Weedington Road in the Gospel Oak area, it is not listed and not in a conservation area. The area is characterised by a mix of buildings where much of the historic fabric of the street has been replaced by modern buildings from the 1960s through to the present.

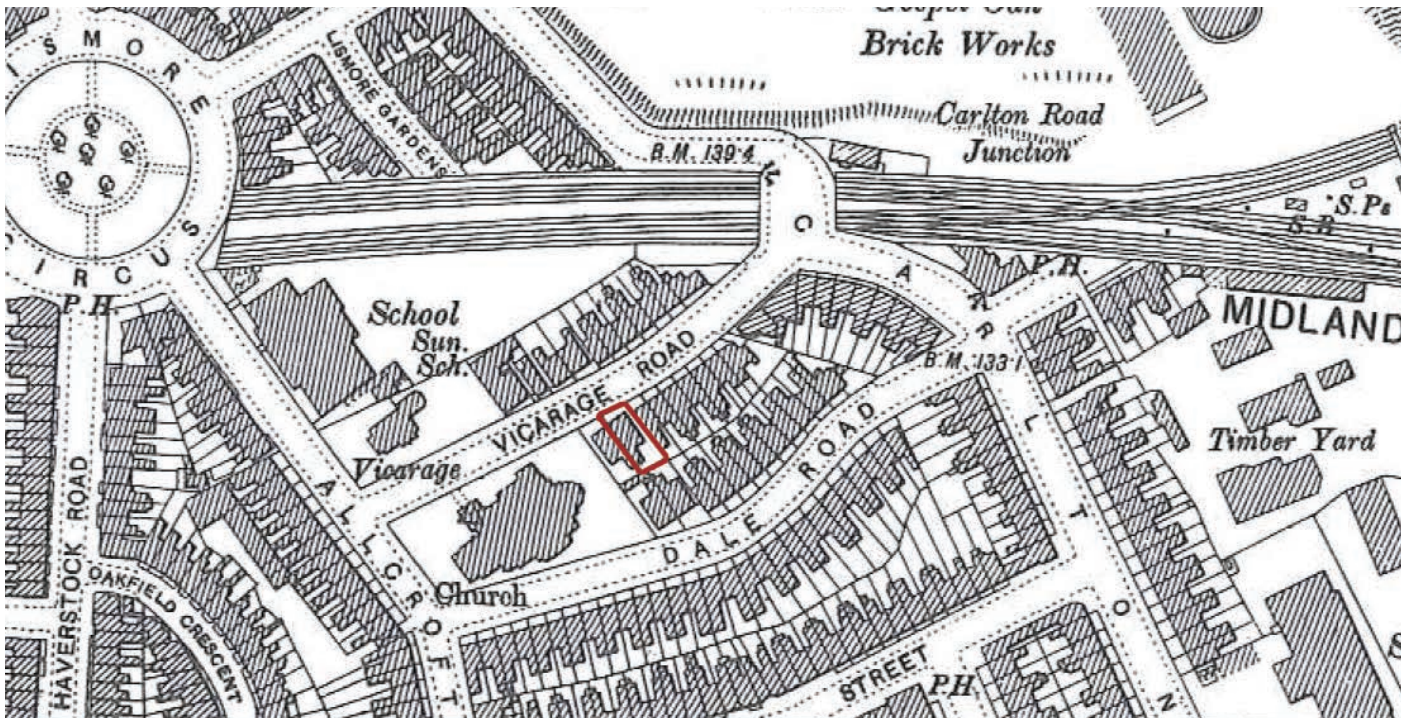
### 1. 1894 Map

51-67 Vicars Road was originally constructed around 1864-1865 as a row of Victorian terrace houses. Properties 51 and 53

formed the end of row terraces, and were built by the adjacent St Martins Church (1864-65) as the Vicar's glebe house most likely between 1870-1880.

### 2. 55-67 Vicars Road Demolished

In 1970's the 19th century terraced houses were demolished by Camden Council to make way for the four storey modern housing blocks. During the same period the original vicarage was demolished and replaced by further housing on Vicars Road. 51 and 53 Vicars Road were saved and acquired by Camden Council



Extract from 1894 map



3. Substantial Redevelopment (Bacton Low rise scheme)

and converted into apartments. Both units are now in private ownership. 51 Vicars Road has remained as a ground floor one bedroom flat (Flat A) and Flat B as a 3 bed maisonette. The applicants own both 51a and b and currently live in 51b.

**3. Substantial Redevelopment**

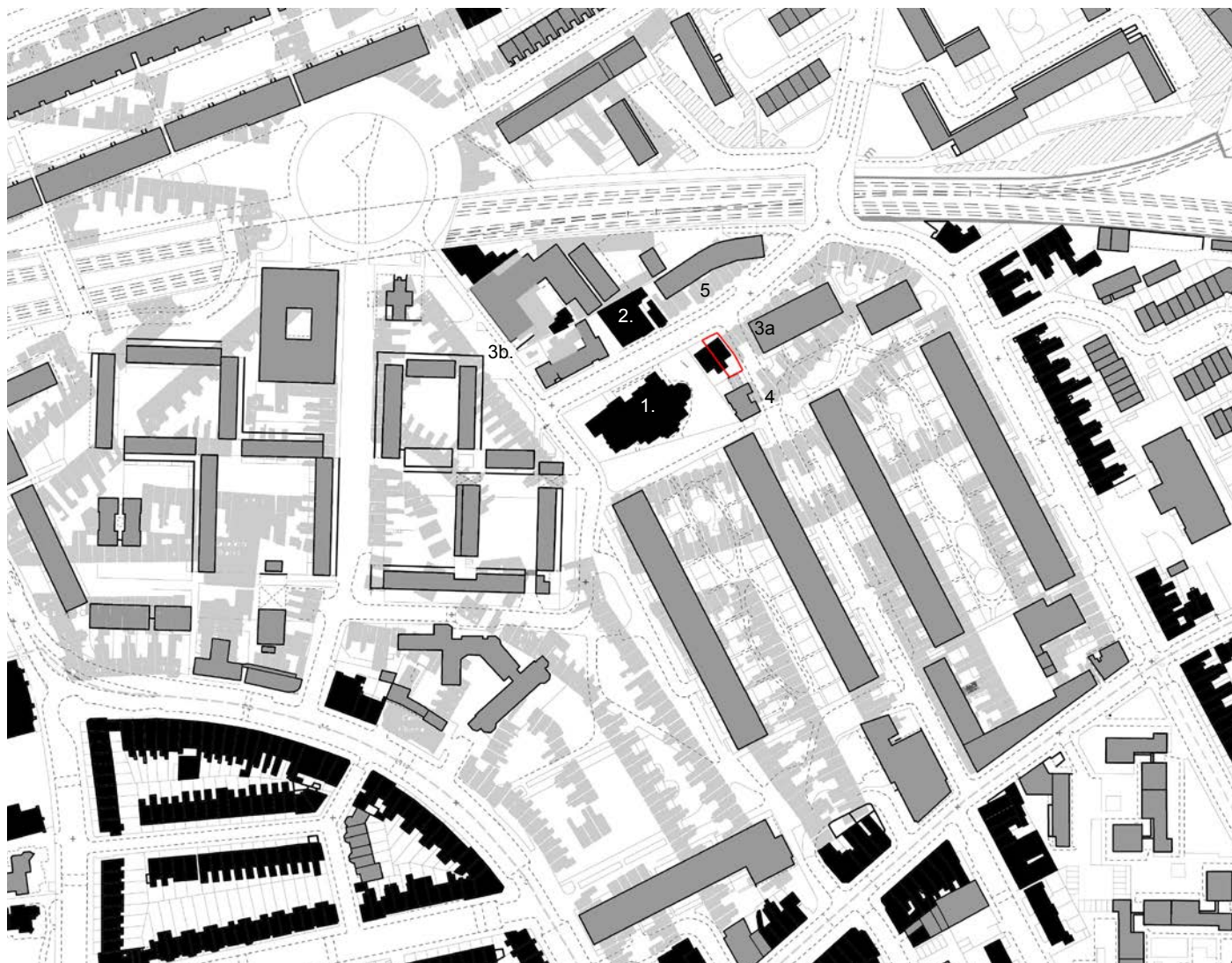
During the same period the council developed industrial units opposite Vicars Road which back onto the mainline from St Pancras. This site is now part of Development Site 45 in Camden's Local Development Framework Site Allocations

Preferred Approach. The Bacton Low Rise scheme is currently being developed following a successful planning application for a change of use to residential. The proposal is effectively doubling the density of the current site and creating some overlooking issues for No 51 & 53.

The comprehensive redevelopment of the area has substantially altered the historic street pattern and the settings for the church and the former glebe house.

# Site Context

## Character



- Original street fabric now demolished
- Original street fabric still in existence
- Late 20th / early 21st century street fabric

The immediate site context of No. 51 is varied and diverse including a Grade I listed church, 19th century buildings, 20th century council built housing, industrial units, a railway and independent school. The surrounding area is predominately modern 4 storey housing. The proposal needs to respond sensitively to its proximity to the Grade I listed church on one side, and 1970/80's housing on the other.

### 1. St. Martin's Church (Grade I)

Cited in the "Buildings of England" as "the craziest Victorian church in London" St Martins Church is a Grade I listed building. It is of high architectural quality, although its original relationship to its environment has been substantially altered and undermined by the comprehensive redevelopment of the area in the 1970's.

### 2. St. Martin's Church Hall (Grade II)

The Grade II listed former church hall of 1904 is used as an independent French school.

### 3. Modern Housing Estates

The wider site has seen a number of different housing estates replacing the historic fabric. These are of varied character and include the now to be demolished Bacton Low Rise to the west and the Weedington Road blocks to the south and east.

The replacement blocks currently under construction are a significant scale increase for the area, rising to 8 storeys near to the application site.

### 4. Industrial Units & Proposed Development

The industrial units opposite No. 51 are to be replaced by a 2 storey residential block with a 7/8 storey tower marking the junction between Vicars Road and Grafton Road.

### 5. Care Home

In 1997-98 the council built the care home on Weedington Road which abuts the rear garden walls to 51 and 53 Vicars Road.



1. St. Martin's Church



2. St. Martin's Church Hall, Vicars Road



3a. Modern Housing



3b. Modern Housing, Vicars Road



4. Care Home, Weedington Road



3. Industrial site & proposed development: Bacton Low Rise



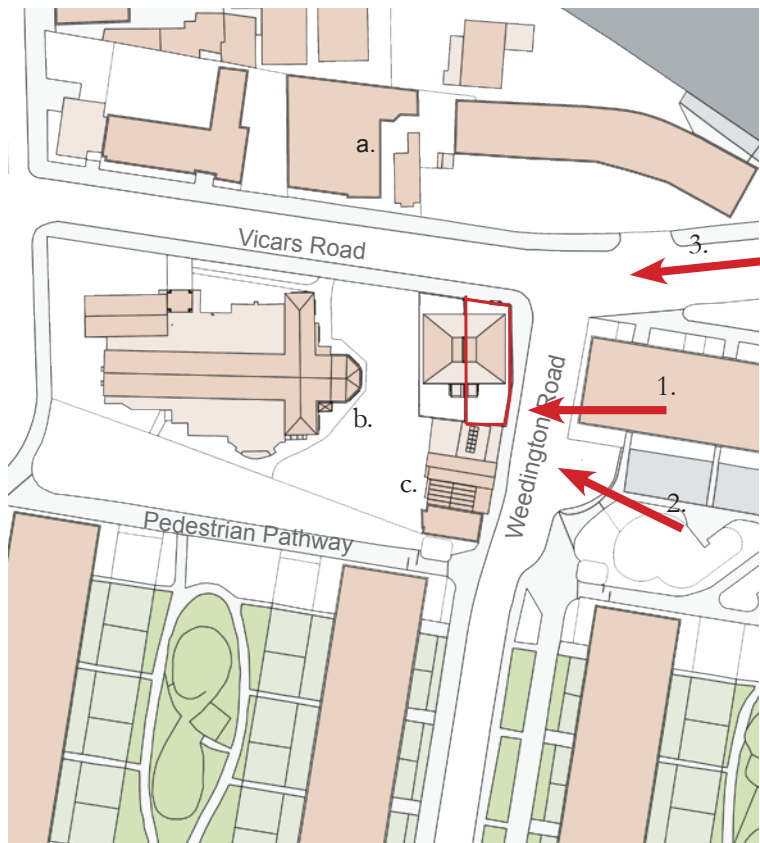
3. Bacton Low Rise (proposed) Showing St Martin's Gospel Oak



3. Bacton Low Rise (proposed) Showing scale of new development facing towards the application site  
51 Vicars Road

# Site Context

## Proximity to listed buildings



1. Vicars Road Church elevation

In developing our proposals we have recognised the significance of St. Martin's Church and the church hall, and its proximity to 51 Vicars Road.

### 1. Curtilage

The property does not fall in the curtilage area of either the church or church hall. Nevertheless the proposal takes into account the setting of the listed building in relation to the proposed works, and the impact of the scale and massing of the proposals on the views to the church.

### 2. St. Martin's Church East Facade (b)

The church's frontage is primarily north, west and south - its eastern facade faces the gable ends of 51 and 53 Vicars Road. Glimpses of the eastern facade can be seen from Weedington Road although the church is set back. The proposed extension will not interrupt this view and it was never historically visible.

### 3. Care Home (c)

Previous modern developments in the area have largely ignored the setting of the church - in 1970 a row of Victorian terraces to the south face of the church were demolished, and in 1997 were replaced by a modern three storey care home with a frontage to Weedington Road. The apse of St. Martin's Church can be seen from some angles in Weedington Road, although its presence on this road has been obscured by the development of the care home. Equally there are large plane trees and shrubs in the church grounds, which when combined with the Weedington Road trees further conceal the presence of the church.

### 3. St. Martin's Church Hall (a)

There are no proposed works to the front elevation on No. 51, therefore the proposal will have no impact on the listed church hall.





2. St. Martin's Church [Grade I]



3. East of Vicars Road looking toward the church

# Context

## Existing Building



1. Front elevation



2. Rear Elevation



Street relationship to the Church



Repairs are needed

51 Vicars Road forms half of a semi-detached, three storey Victorian dwelling constructed of London stock brick, timber sash windows and iron railing details.

### 1. Front Elevation

The northern elevation facing onto Vicars Road, is of three storeys and characterised by large window openings. The front façade plays an important role in adding to the character of Vicars road. No changes are proposed to this façade.

### 2. Rear Context

The south elevation has large openings on the first and second

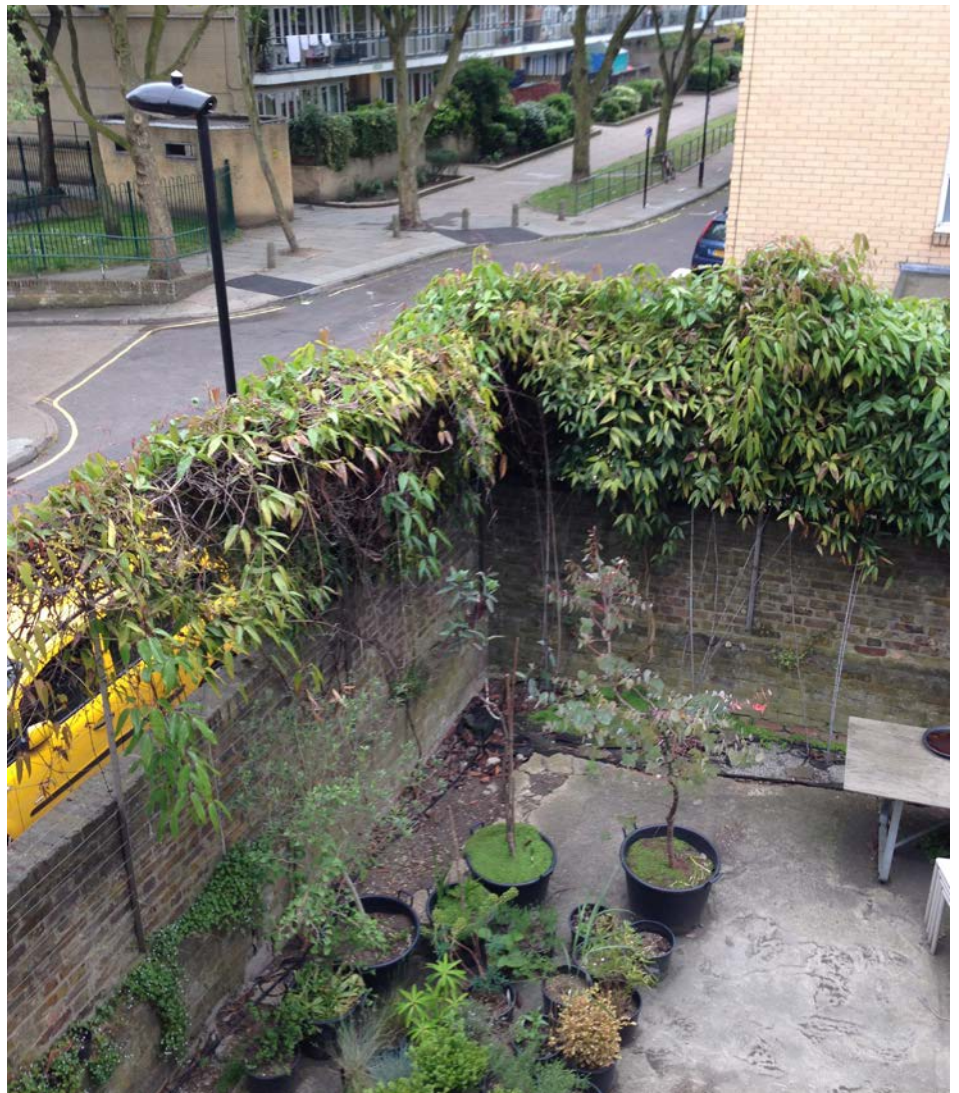
floors. The ground levels of both 51 and 53 have narrow rear extensions into a courtyard garden. There are two smaller south facing windows onto the courtyard space from the existing extension to Flat A. Opposite the south façade is another blank elevation of the care home, of a different typology to the rest of Weedington Road.

### 3. Side Elevation

The eastern elevation faces onto Weedington Road. This is a largely blank brick façade, with three smaller openings, including side access into Flat A, which is to be retained. This is flanked by a brick boundary wall on the pavement edge, rising up from



Right: East Elevation showing the church tower visible from Vicars Road.



780mm on the corner of Vicars Road, up to 2300mm along Weedington Road. On top of the brick wall is a level of trellised planting taking the boundary height up to around 3m. Opposite is a 4 storey, blank side elevation of a 1980s housing block. Thick evergreen planting covers the trellis, to maintain privacy in the existing garden.

Right: The existing garden to the rear of the property

# Design Proposal

## Design Intention

### Flat A

The subject of this planning application is for a ground floor rear extension to Flat A.

The aim of the design is to modernise the accommodation as the bathroom and kitchen are both sub-standard. This will be achieved by rationalising the organisation of the lower flat to provide a large open plan living space at ground level with direct access to the garden, openable in summer to allow the flat to have a better relationship with its outside space.

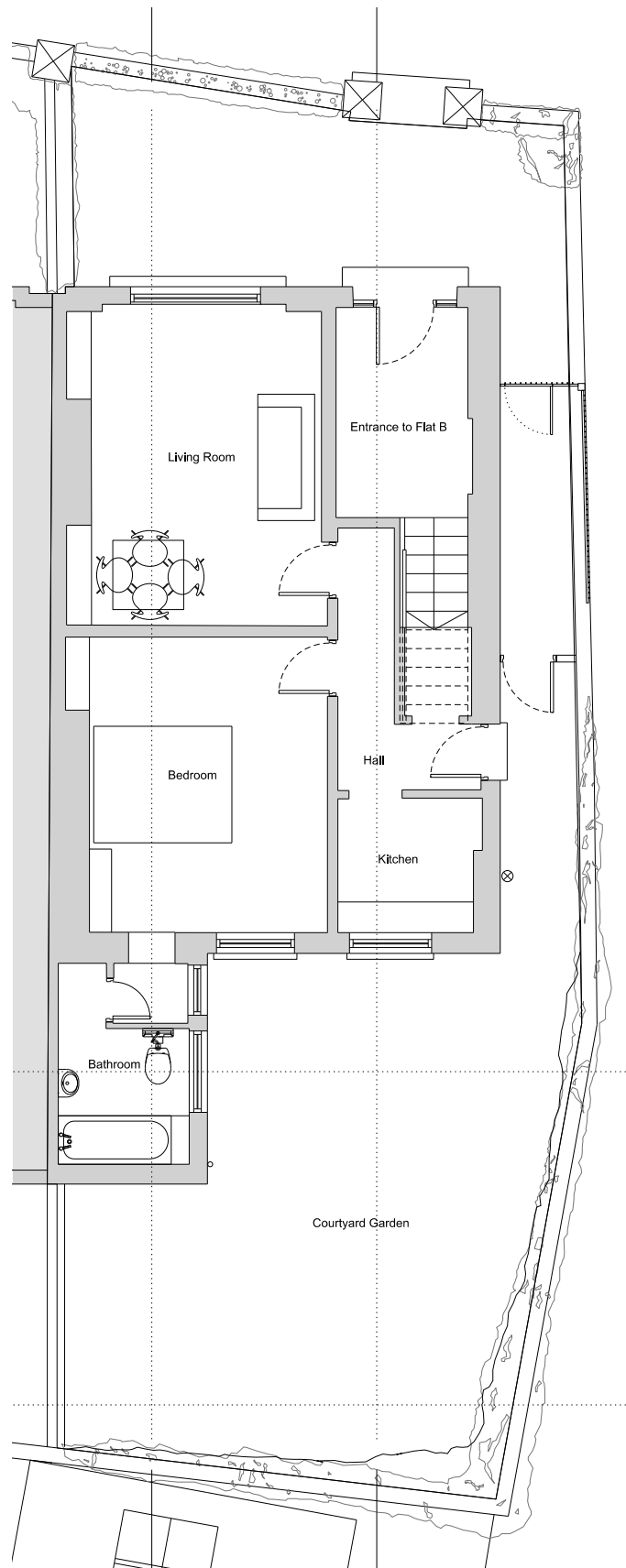
Internally the living room is moved to the rear of the property to make a larger and brighter living space, with a south and east facing kitchen and dining room, and a living room that can open to include the garden in the summer months. The bedroom is moved to the front of the house, and the bathroom moved so that it remains adjacent to the bedroom, but is accessible directly from the living space.

Expanding the living room/kitchen to the south allows for a more generous living space and a better internal arrangement with the bathroom accessible without walking through the bedroom. The design also allows for a dining space, which is difficult in the current arrangement.

A small courtyard garden is also proposed, which although reduces the external space available to the property is considerably more easily accessible to the living space forming an 'outdoor room' with an openable facade to the living/dining space, maximising all year round use.



View of the proposed rear extension in context



Existing ground floor plan