

Design and Access Statement

Location: 10 Sharpleshall St, London, NW1 8YN

Project No: 013/2_Revision B

Date: 05.12.2014

Proposals:

Minor Alterations to a Dwelling House in a Conservation Area, Including:

- 1. Enclosing the Rear Courtyard at Lower Ground Floor Level,**
- 2. Extending a Terrace Over the Roof of an Existing Single Storey Rear Extension,**
- 3. Erecting an Obscured Glass Screen Adjacent to the Rear Terrace,**
- 4. Installing a Bike Store on Front Stair Landing.**

Associated Planning Applications:

2005/4061/P – Approved Application for the Single Storey Rear Extension,

2014/4449/PRE – Pre-Application Advise Relating to Rear Roof Alterations and Bike Store,

2014/6123 - Householder Application for a Replacement Roof and Balustrade to the Single Storey Rear Extension.

Relevant Planning Documents:

Camden LDF, Camden Development Policies (Adoption Version 2010)

DP17 – Walking Cycling and Public Transport,

DP24 – Securing High Quality Design,

DP25 – Conserving Camden's Heritage,

DP26 – Managing the Impact of Development on Occupiers and Neighbours.

Camden Planning Guidance 1: Design (September 2013)

Section 4 – Extensions and Alterations,

Section 5 – Roofs, Terraces and Balconies.

Camden Planning Guidance 6: Amenity

Section 7 – Overlooking, Privacy and Outlook.

Conservation Area Statement: Primrose Hill

PH24 – Roof Terraces

PH30 – Rear Extensions/ Conservatories.

Location and Context:

The property is a late Victorian, brick built, four-storey house with a previous loft conversion and lower ground floor rear extension. It is situated at the end of a terraced row, adjoining no. 9 Sharpleshall St and Primrose Hill Library. The property is on a narrow site that tapers in plan from a 5.5m street frontage to 1.4m width at the rear.

It is located in the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. This is a predominantly residential area, characterised by a dense urban fabric of Victorian Terraces, established streets, mature trees and wrought iron railings and street furniture. The property is typical of the Conservation Area and retains many of its original architectural details on its street frontage.

Significance and Response to Conservation Area:

The property contributes to the street scene in Sharpleshall St and these proposals intend to be sympathetic towards maintaining this appearance as they only relate to the rear of the property and to small store at the front, which aims to neaten the view of the front elevation.

The rear of the property has limited views as it is contained between a high brick wall at the Library boundary, a multi-storey residential development in the Mews behind, and the yards of neighbouring houses in the terrace. The sense of enclosure is made more apparent by the street layout that curves in toward the rear of the properties. These surroundings limit opportunities for daylight, sunlight, cross breezes and planted gardens, therefore the rear of the properties and their yards have been mostly left in poor condition; blighted by damp, mould, bird foul and building debris, and with several un-characteristic materials, alterations and out buildings.

The proposals aim to respond to the problems of the tightly enclosed rear space, enhance the useful open space for the occupants, and provide light touch architectural solutions that are sympathetic to the architecture of the terrace row and subordinate to the original building.

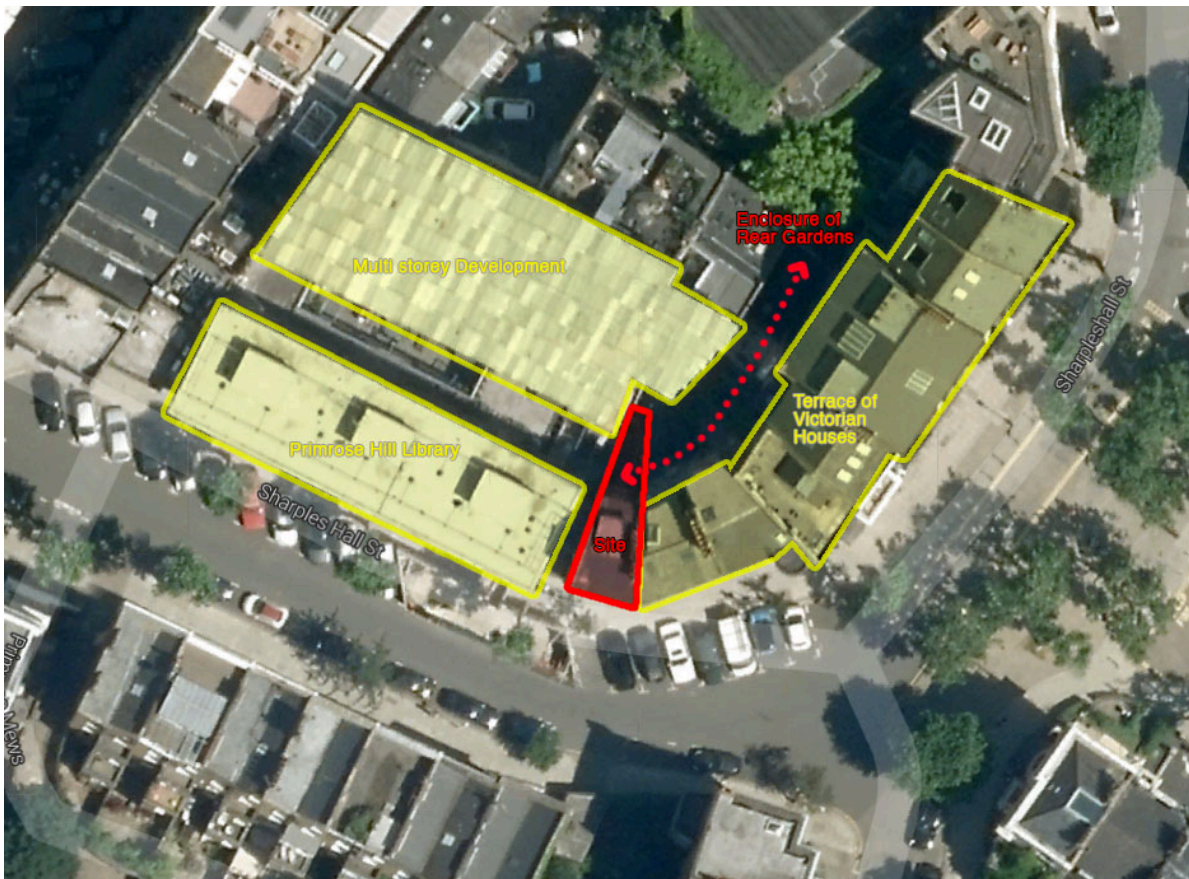


Fig 1: Aerial View Highlighting Enclosure of the Site



Fig 2: Street View of Property



Fig 3: Rear View of Property and Views Out from the Existing Terrace at Ground Level

Proposal 1: Enclosing the Courtyard

The tightly constrained site currently suffers from a lack of open space, and the high-sided courtyard on lower ground level is continuously overshadowed and subject to damp, lack of ventilation and an accumulation of dirt. At less than 3.5sqm the courtyard does not function as a useful outdoor amenity space and therefore has fallen into disuse.

2014/4449/PRE Pre-application advice recognised this and recommended infilling and internalising this floor area due to its 'limited value as an outdoor amenity space'. It was said that this element would not impact the Conservation Area and would comply with policies DP24, DP25, and DP26.

Proposal 2 aims to relocate the outdoor amenity space for this property to the rear ground floor level by extending the terrace on the roof of the rear extension. Meanwhile, the enclosed courtyard space will become useful accommodation for a utility room, with a rooflight above to draw in what little daylight is available at the back corner of the plan.

The newly enclosed area would have a flat roof, finished in a single ply membrane to match the appearance of the existing extension but with a better quality membrane finish. The surface of the roof and the rooflight would still sit below the height of the separating wall to the neighbour at no.9, therefore it will not be seen from the garden of the adjacent property. There would be no adverse environmental or visual impact of enclosing this space. Therefore it responds to the conservation area in a sensitive way and would be subordinate to the original building.



Fig 4: Current view of Courtyard (Proposed Courtyard Roof Shown in Fig. 5 Plans)

Proposal 2: Extending the Roof Terrace

There has been a balcony at rear ground floor level for at least 20 years. Following planning approval in 2005, this balcony became a partial terrace on the roof of the new lower ground floor rear extension. The extension roof has been altered to provide a solid roof structure with single ply membrane finish, which has been approved in application 2014/6123.

Proposal 2 is to extend the existing decked balcony terrace over the remaining area of the existing extension roof so that it can provide a useful and appropriately sized outdoor amenity area for the property.

The current balcony terrace projects 1.3m from the rear face of the building and is accessed via French doors from the main reception room. A metal and timber balustrade similar to the balustrade that existed before 2005 surrounds the balcony, which allows it to overlook the garden of no.9. Once the lower courtyard is enclosed, this 3.5sqm area of terrace would be the only outdoor space for the occupants. This area is currently too small to be meaningfully used and enjoyed.

Extending the area of decking to the edge of the extension roof will add 6.8sqm of useable amenity space, making the overall terraced roof area 10.3sqm. This would come closer to meeting the needs of a four-storey house in a dense urban location.

CPG 6. S7.8 encourages *'design so occupants have a pleasant outlook'*, whilst DP 26.12 and DP24.23 recognises that *'gardens are not always realistic and appropriate, therefore provision of alternative outdoor amenity space e.g. balconies, roof gardens or communal spaces will be expected'*. Extending the terrace at ground level would be a more appropriate location for an outdoor space to serve this property. It would create a more useful and pleasant outdoor environment that is directly linked to the main reception room. It would receive more daylight and views of the sky. It will also allow for easier access to maintain the rear of the property and improve drainage off the flat roof.

Replacing the balustrade with the obscured glass screen described in proposal 3 would enhance the sense of privacy between no.9 and no.10 Sharpleshall St. A 1m high glass balustrade would enclose the new terrace at the rear and prevent occupants walking on the infilled courtyard roof. The glazed screen and balustrade would be a much more 'light touch' replacement to the existing balustrade, which would be more appropriate for the Conservation Area and permit more light through.

The extended decking surface will match the existing balcony terrace and would continue below the boundary wall height so as not to be seen from the neighbouring property.

There are two existing wall mounted external lights serving the terrace balcony. To address DP 26.4 regarding artificial light pollution, these will be replaced with more efficient fixtures in the same locations and no further artificial lighting is proposed.

Overall a terrace at ground level would make a positive contribution to the appearance and general condition of the rear spaces in the street. It responds to DP24.4 promoting good design that *'improves the quality of an area and the way it is used by residents'*.

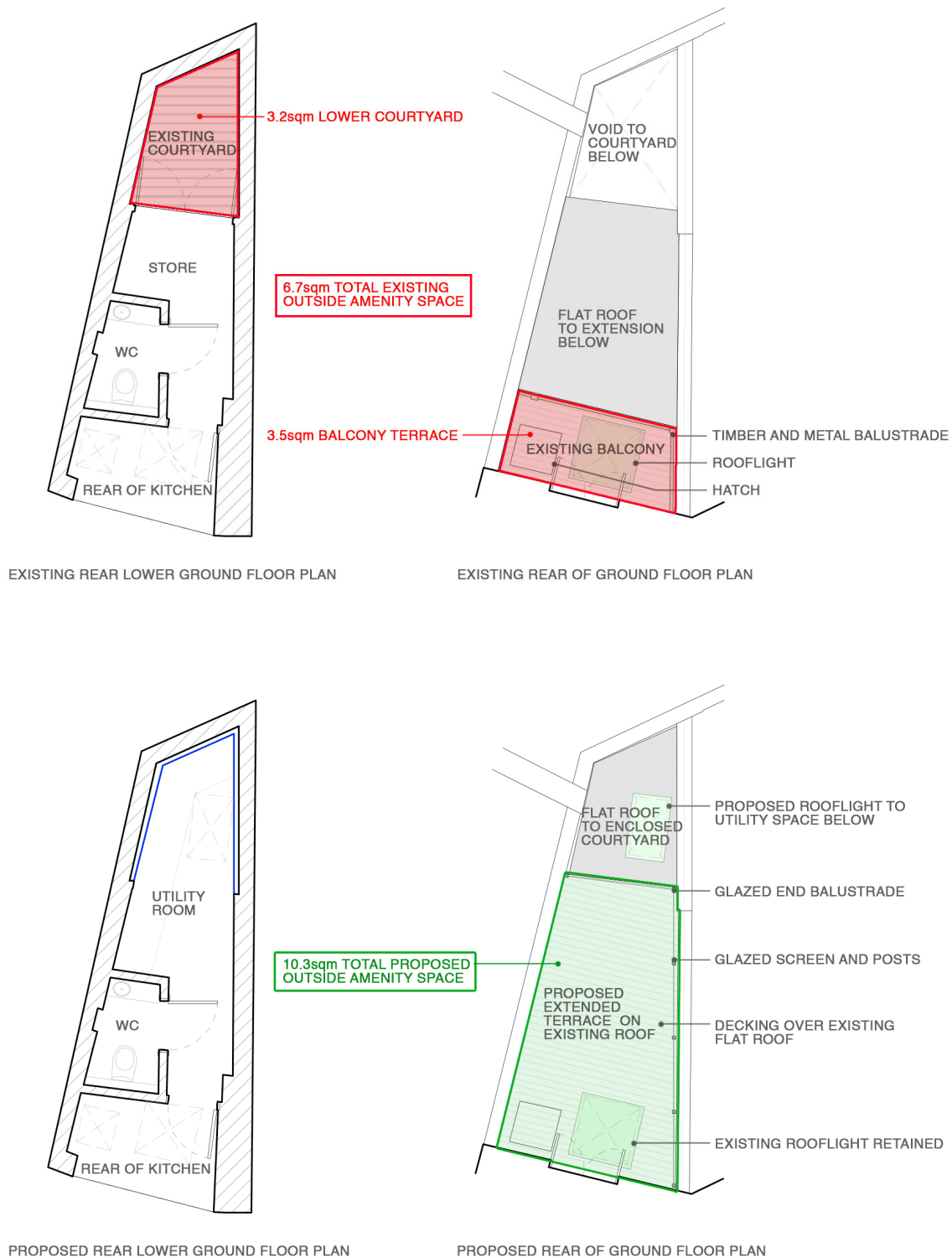


Fig 5: Plans Indicating Current and Proposed Rear External Spaces.

Proposal 3: Screening

A new 1.8m high obscured glass screen is proposed to enhance privacy and prevent overlooking from both the existing balcony terrace and the extended terrace roof.

The glazed screen would be installed along the inside face of the boundary wall with no.9, and would be formed of obscured glass panels supported by galvanized steel posts. It would only extend to the end of the existing extension roof, not to the back wall of the property. Fig. 6 indicates its location overlaid on the existing view and shows the screen modeled as an opaque fixture for the daylight impact assessment.

The pre-application report concluded that the screen would not have an impact on the Conservation Area, but advised seeking a daylight, sunlight and overshadowing assessment in order to prove that the glazed screen would not have a negative impact on the windows and garden of the neighbouring properties. The accompanying assessment carried out by Herrington Consulting Ltd clearly demonstrates that the screen would not cause any significant loss of daylight through the windows of no.9, nor would it noticeably reduce the amount of sunlight or daylight reaching the neighbour's garden. The report even assumed that the screen would be made of an opaque material so that in reality a glazed screen would have absolutely minimal impact.

This is because the rear of these properties are already so tightly enclosed and overshadowed by high surrounding walls that introducing the screen merely hides the no.9's existing view of the higher brick wall to the west of no.10. There are currently no significant outlooks or lines of sight from no.9.

The proposed screening will not block light, views to the sky or exasperate the sense of enclosure. It will actually improve the outlook from no. 9 as the bare brick west wall will no longer be visible and it will enjoy more privacy without being overlooked from the existing balcony. If the screening were to be pulled back by any amount, this would only reveal more of the brick wall to no. 9.

DP26.12 states that outdoor amenity spaces should be designed to '*limit noise and disturbance and so not to unacceptably reduce the privacy of neighbours*'. Following guidance in CPG 6. S7.5 '*to mitigate using obscure glazing and screening walls*', the proposed screen will reduce existing overlooking, increase a sense of privacy for both the occupants and neighbour's outdoor spaces, and attenuate existing and potential noise and whilst permitting daylight.



Fig 6: View Indicating Screening of Terrace and Daylight Assessment Model

Proposal 4: Bike Store

DP17 and DP26 promote sustainable methods of transport in the borough. This property could contribute to the borough's aims by providing a secure bicycle storage that can be easily accessed by the occupants at the front of the property.

The proposal is for a lightweight timber clad structure that measures 1420mm width x 620mm depth x 1300mm height to contain a folding bike, and would be located on the front stair landing. It would be detailed with traditional ironmongery to match the railings, and would be locked with remote access from inside the property, therefore securing it from theft.

2014/4449/PRE Pre-application report welcomed the bike store proposal for sustainability reasons and agreed that it would comply with policies DP18, DP24 and DP25.

The bike store shown in the image below will have minimal visual impact. It was demonstrated to the pre-planning officer on site that the existing bins could still be safely stored next to the bike store without obstructing access.

The current proposal has also followed the pre-application advice to replace the felt roof with a natural shingle roof finish so that its appearance is more in keeping with the Conservation Area and will weather better.

This design responds to the conservation area and DP24 and DP25 by considering its character, setting, context, materials, form and scale in relation to its surroundings. It would improve the street view of the property and Conservation Area by using materials and detailing that are in keeping with the surroundings, and neatening up the front of the property which is currently a bin area that has been frequently subjected to fly tipping by passers by.

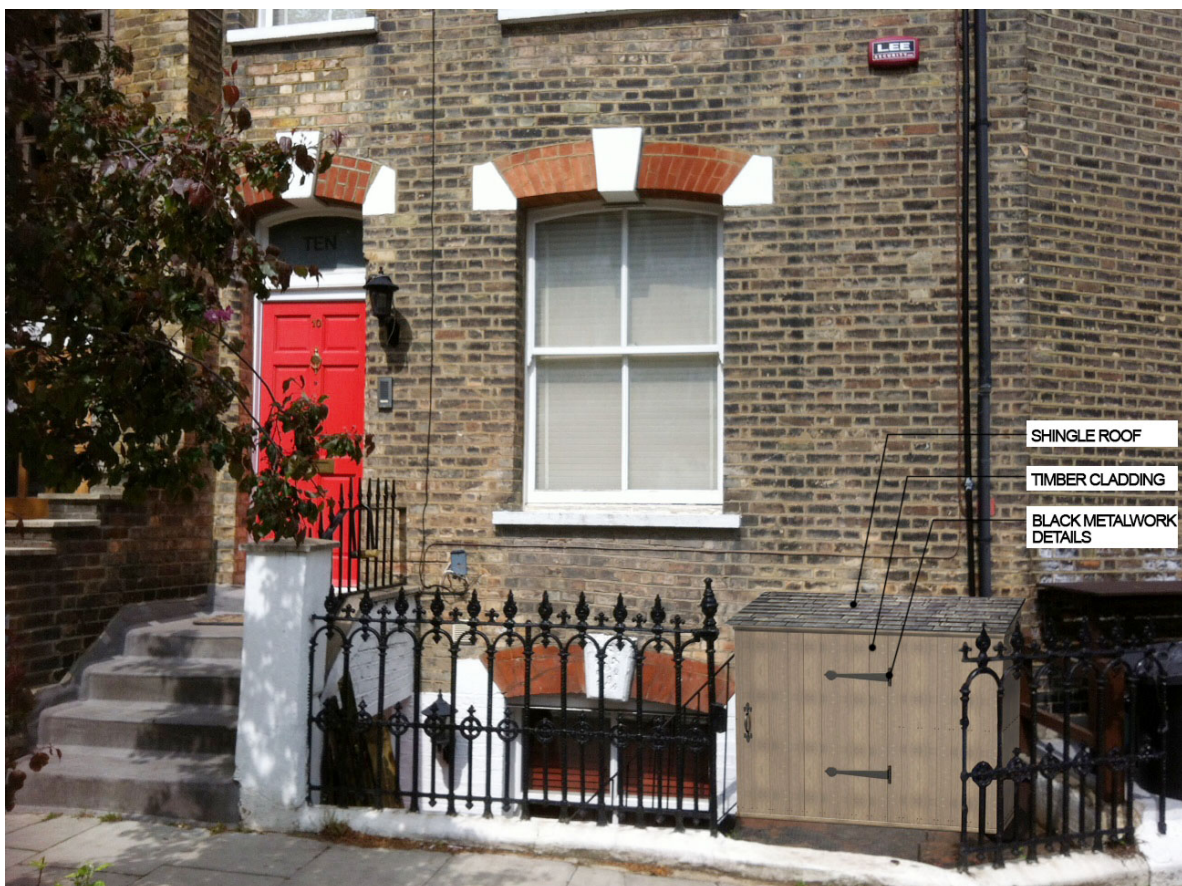


Fig 7: View of Street showing Minimal Impact of Bike Store.

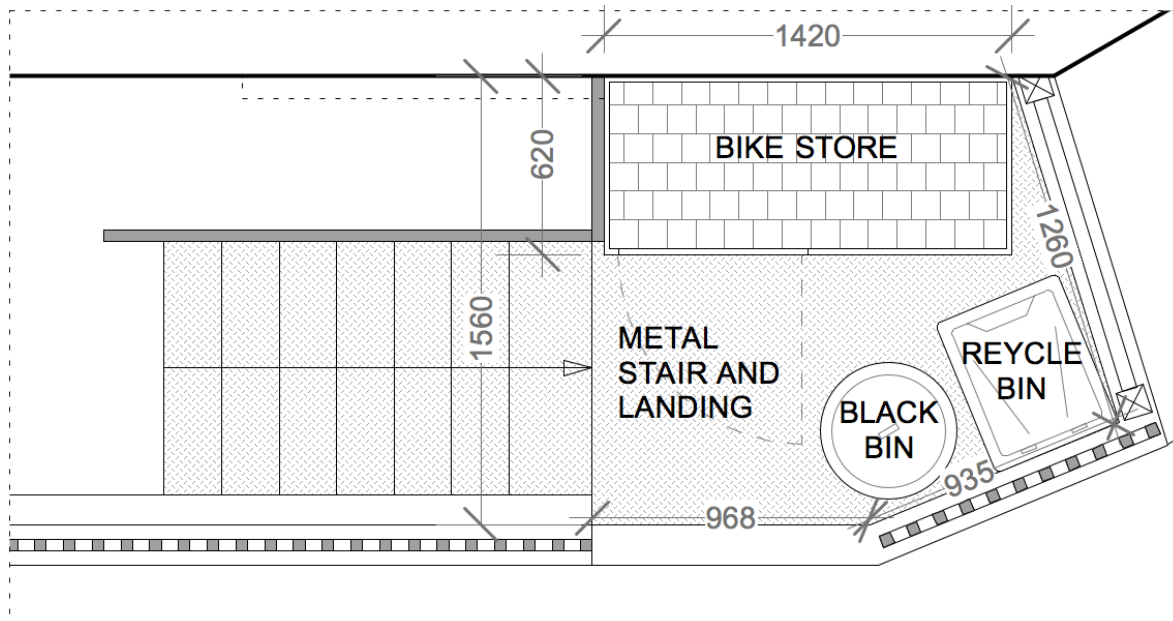


Fig.8 Plan showing Bike Store with Bin Storage Area

Access:

Access to the dwelling will not be affected by the proposals. Access within the property will be improved by bringing cycle storage to the front, and by providing direct access from the main reception to a larger open space at ground level.

Summary

Enclosing the courtyard, relocating the outdoor space to the ground floor terrace, screening the terrace, and providing accessible bike storage will each contribute to the improved use and appearance of the property. The proposals respond to the features of the conservation area and mitigate existing and potential issues of privacy, overlooking and overshadowing neighbours.

In combination, these very minor alterations will enhance the overall dwelling, its outlook, and its contribution toward improving the front and rear aspects of this terrace row.