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H349\_16 Chalcot Square

## Design and Access Statement

December 2015

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**HÛT**

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## 1.0 Introduction

This report relates to the planning application for the conversion from three dwellings (1x 3-bed and 2x 1-bed flats) to two dwellings (1x 3-bed and 1x 1-bed flats) at 16 Chalcot Square. The proposal includes works to the front entrance doors, insertion of two rooflights, replacement rear glazing at ground and lower ground floors and internal alterations, including the removal of a non-original secondary common staircase. There are no extension works proposed.

The proposal is modest in scope and respects the treatment of neighbouring elevations; consequently respecting the special interest of the listed building and surrounding conservation area. This report should be read in conjunction with the Heritage & Impact Statement, Planning Statement and Existing, Demolition and Proposed Drawings.

## 2.0 Site & Context Appraisal

### 2.1 Site Location

The application site is located on the southeast side of Chalcot Square and is situated within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. The conservation area is bound by London Euston railway lines to the north and east, Regents Park to the south and Primrose Hill to the west (Fig 01).

### 2.2 Property Description

The property forms part of a terrace of town houses dating from the 1850s. The building comprises five storeys, including the lower ground and attic levels, with Stucco front elevation, brick rear elevation and a slate mansard roof. A closet wing to the rear extends up to the first floor across half of the plot width, while a single-storey infill extension dating from the 1960s occupies the remaining plot width at lower ground level. In recent years, a terrace has been approved upon this infill extension at ground level. There is a lightwell to the front and a rear garden. The property is Grade II Listed as a part of the terrace comprising numbers 15-19 (1974).

### 2.3 Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is largely residential and is characterised by similar mid-19th century terraces of townhouses around Chalcot Square, Chalcot Road and Fitzroy Road. Many have undergone extension or fenestration changes at various levels, usually to the rear. Please refer to Fig 03 and Fig 04 for examples of existing conditions in close proximity to 16 Chalcot Square.

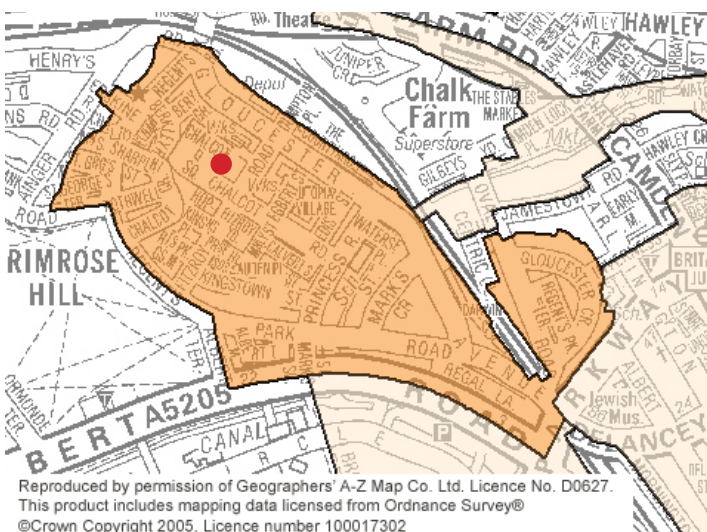


Fig 01. Primrose Hill Conservation Area Map

● Subject Property

## 2.4 Development History

The property was converted into four self-contained units following planning permission in 1964 (H10/11/B/3948).

The lower three storeys were converted from two flats to one maisonette following planning and listed building consent in 2005 (2004/5379/P and 2004/5380/L).

Listed building consent was granted for internal alterations within the maisonette in 2012 (2012/3443/L). These works were completed by the current owner.

Planning and listed building consent were granted in 2013 for works to the maisonette - a rear external staircase between ground and lower ground levels, replacement fenestration to the rear elevation at lower levels, and a front gate to the lightwell steps (2012/6803/P and 2012/6829/L). These works were completed by the current owner.

For further detail please refer to the accompanying planning statement by Firstplan.



Fig 02. Aerial view showing number 16 Chalcot Square

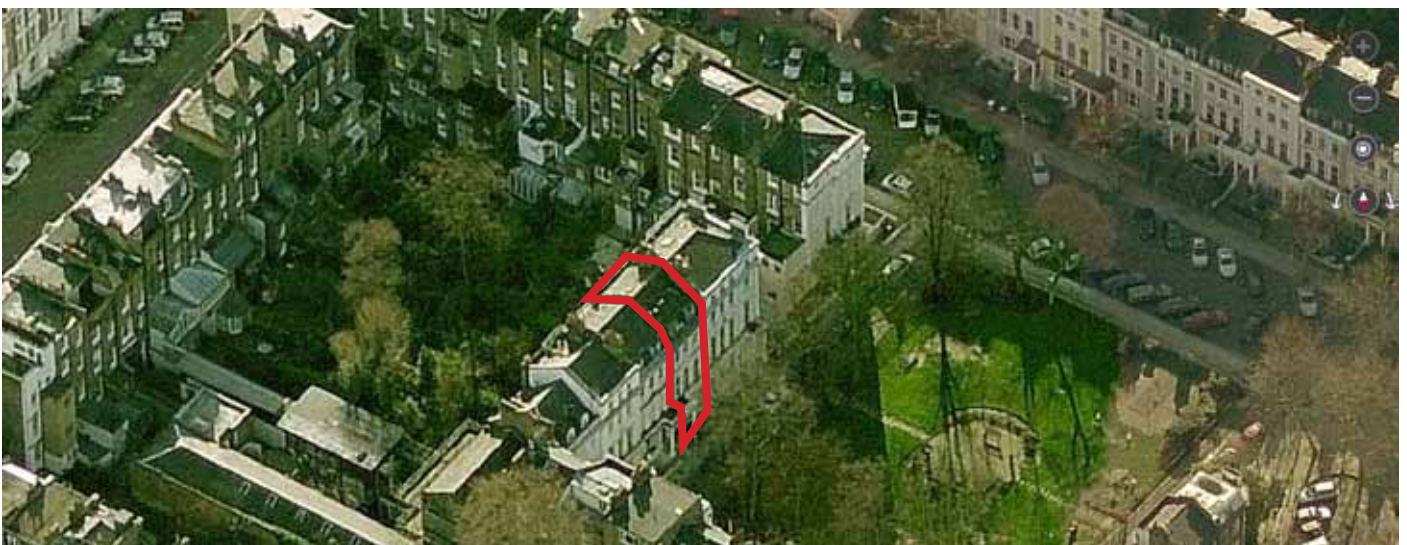


Fig 03. Aerial view showing number 16 Chalcot Square and built conditions surrounding the subject property



Fig 04. Neighbouring rear elevations

### 3.0 The Scheme

#### 3.1 Existing Condition

The subject property is a mid-terrace townhouse. Originally a single family dwelling, the plan of the building has been significantly altered in the past by previous owners to provide four self-contained flats. The original staircase is intact but there has been a secondary common stair added, which negatively impacts upon the plan form. Some internal walls have been removed along with many of the original features such as internal mouldings and fireplaces, and new partitions have been installed. The only extension is the single-storey infill to the rear, completed in the mid-1960s. Existing rear windows and doors at lower ground, ground and first floor levels are recent and modern in design.

#### 3.2 External Alterations

The proposal creates a self-contained one-bed flat at lower ground level and a three-bedroom family dwelling over the ground-to-third floors. The remodelling will respect the host building by largely reinstating its original plan form. Proposed external alterations are limited to restorative works to doors, discussed in section 3.4, and works to windows, discussed in section 3.3, and as such will not bring harm to the conservation area and will improve the existing appearance.

#### 3.3 Works to External Doors

Proposals include the restoration of the main front entrance to its original appearance. The current door sits proud of its original position and is off-centre, having been re-arranged to make a common lobby in the 1960s. The proposal will revise the entrance to match that of neighbouring properties on Chalcot Square, including works to the door position and side panels with glazed lights, and reinstatement of external stone steps (Fig 05). For the main front door, please refer also to the accompanying elevation drawings E030 and 030.



Fig 05. Original main entrance at 17 Chalcot Square (left) and altered entrance at 16 Chalcot Square (right)

The current front door to the lower ground level, accessed via the front lightwell, is non-original and plain in design. It is not used for access at present. The proposal seeks to replace this with an appropriately modest panelled door with equally modest, traditional door furniture in subservience to the primary ground level entrance (Fig 06 & Fig 07). For the door to the lightwell, please refer also to the accompanying section drawings E040 and O40.



Fig 06. Existing front door to lower ground floor in front light well



Fig 07. Preident image for a modest panelled entrance door with upper lights.

### 3.4 Works to Windows

The proposal seeks to replace existing modern fenestration with more minimal products, and to install conservation-style roof lights. All aluminium framing is to be powder-coated white. The proposed fenestration upgrades are minimal and sensitive to the existing character and appearance of the subject property and neighbours. High performance, thermally-broken glazing is to be used in order to produce a high quality project with excellent thermal performance. Changes are as follows:

Lower ground level, rear wall:

Two existing openings were formerly full-height and full-width openings, and the sills have been installed by the current owners in 2013 (Ref: 2012/6803/P and 2012/6829/L). The application seeks to return to the full-height, full-width openings and replace the current modern timber windows and doors with slim-profile, aluminium-framed glass hinged door to the smaller opening and a glass hinged door with fixed side panel to the larger opening (Fig 08, Fig 09 and Fig 15). Please refer to the accompanying elevations E031 & 031, plans E009 & 009 and detail drawing 401.



Fig 08. Lower ground level, rear wall. Existing photo



Fig 09. Lower ground level, rear wall. Proposed elevation

#### Ground level terrace:

It is proposed to replace the existing modern timber double doors from the kitchen with aluminium-framed glass double doors, consistent with those at the lower ground level (Fig 10, Fig 09 & Fig 15). It is also proposed to replace the modern single door from the garden room with a fixed picture window (Fig 11, Fig 12 & Fig 15) and to install a flush, translucent-glass walkover roof light in the existing ground level terrace to increase light to the lower ground floor flat (Fig 13, Fig 14 & Fig 12). Please refer to plan drawings E010 & 010, elevations E031 & 031, sections E040 & 040 and detail drawings 402 & 403.



Fig 10. Ground level terrace. Existing double doors onto terrace



Fig 11. Ground level terrace. Existing single door from garden room

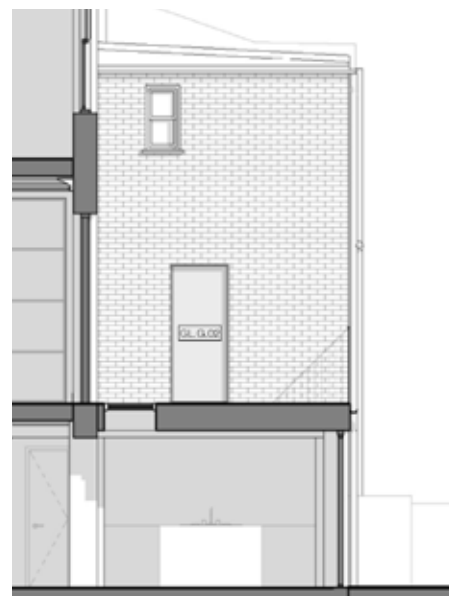


Fig 12. Ground level terrace. Proposed fixed window to garden room and walkover rooflight



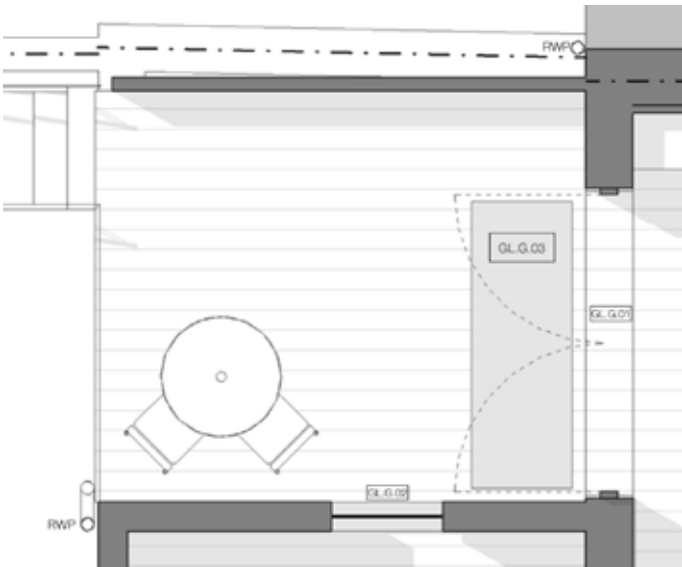


Fig 13. Ground level terrace. Proposed walkover rooflight



Fig 14. Precedent image for proposed walkover rooflight



Fig 15. Precedent images for slim-profile, aluminium-framed glass doors (left) and frameless picture window (right)

Roof level:

It is proposed to install two low-profile conservation-style roof lights to the front roof pitch (Fig 16, Fig 17 & Fig 19). One will serve the master bedroom (see also section 3.6) and the other the master ensuite bathroom, where the ceiling will be boxed-out to allow light to reach the bathroom from the roof plane (Fig 18). Please refer also to the accompanying roof plan drawings E014 & 014, elevations E030 & 030, section 042 and detail drawing 404.

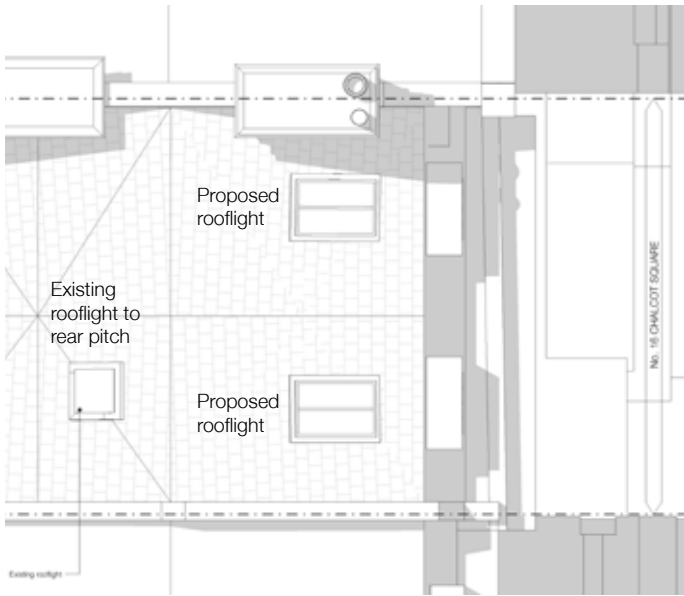


Fig 16. Proposed roof plan



Fig 17. Proposed front elevation

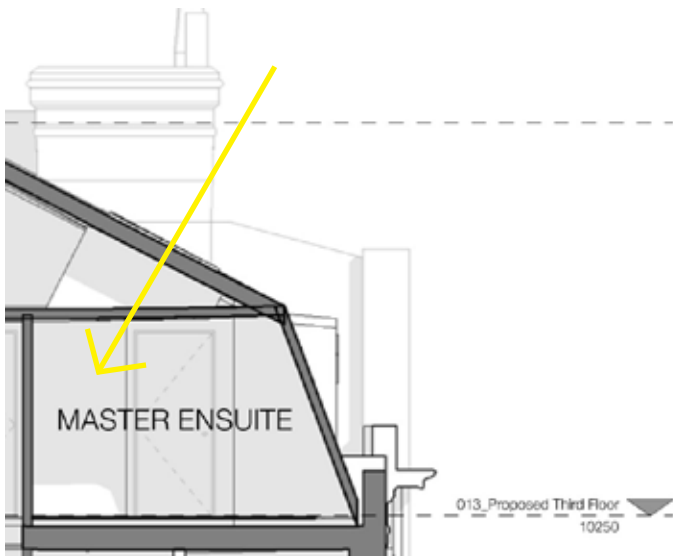


Fig 18. Proposed boxing-out of ceiling to master ensuite to receive light from roof plane



Fig 19. Precedent image for low-profile conservation-style rooflights

### 3.5 Staircases

Internal alterations begin with the removal of the non-original secondary common staircase and reinstatement of the continuous route of the original stair between the ground and third floors (Fig 20 & Fig 21). The original staircase was stopped up at first floor level in the 1960s. This wall will be removed. It is unknown whether this wall conceals the original balustrade. Balustrading will be made good where the original exists and installed to match the original if any balusters or handrails are missing. The lower flight of the primary staircase will be carefully enclosed and retained to separate the self-contained one-bed flat at lower ground and ground floor levels. The stair flight between the second and third floors is currently boxed-in on the inside by non-original partition walls to the second floor flat. These partitions will be removed and a balustrade installed to the inside of the staircase to match the existing. Refer also to section drawings E042 & 042 and the GA plans.



Fig 20. Existing staircase arrangement

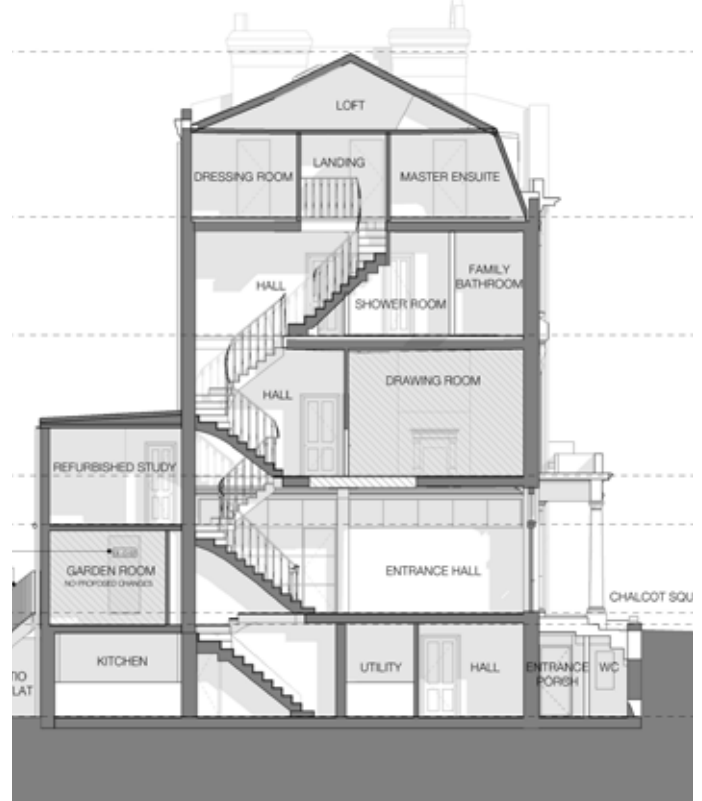


Fig 21. Proposed return to original staircase only



Fig 22. Original staircase photos at ground floor (left), second floor (centre) and stopped up at first floor (right)

### 3.6 Internal Alterations by Floor

Lower ground floor:

The original plan form will be reinstated to the front half of the plan by restoring the complete lateral wall and replacing the partition wall that creates a corridor from the front porch. The front entrance will be bought back into use. The rear half of the plan will be opened up. Existing partitions deliniating the footprint of the original closet wing were infilled by the current owners, having previously been removed (Fig 23). These non-structural parts will be taken out once again to give open-plan living, however all existing posts, nibs and downstands will be retained to ensure legibility of the original plan form. Refer to plans E009, D009 and 009. For information on period features see section 3.7



Fig 23. Existing infill joinery to be removed

Ground floor:

The original open hallway will be reinstated with the removal of the secondary staircase. The proposal replaces part of the spine wall with glazed crittall screening (Fig 24). The front portion of this wall will be shifted to accomodate a new kitchen layout while retaining legibility of the original plan form through downstands and nibs. Refer to plans E010, D010 & 010 and room drawings E300 & 300. The current owner has previously restored appropriate cornicing, skirting and ceiling roses to the ground floor rooms (Fig 25). A fireplace will be installed to the rear dining area of a style suitable for the status of the ground floor. Refer to section 3.7.

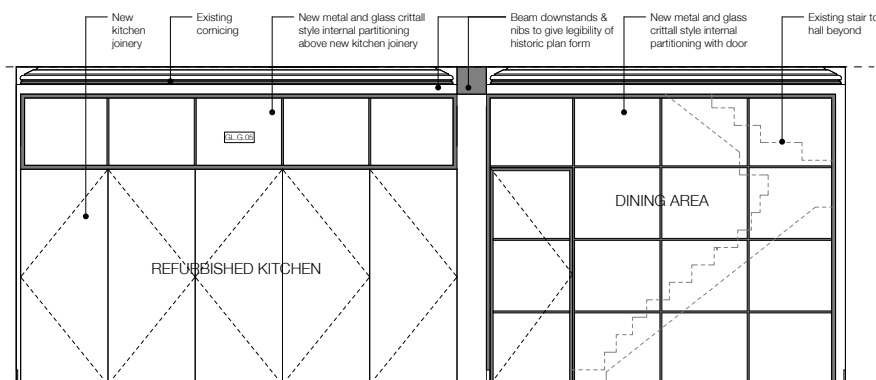


Fig 24. Proposed crittall style glazed screen to ground floor spine wall

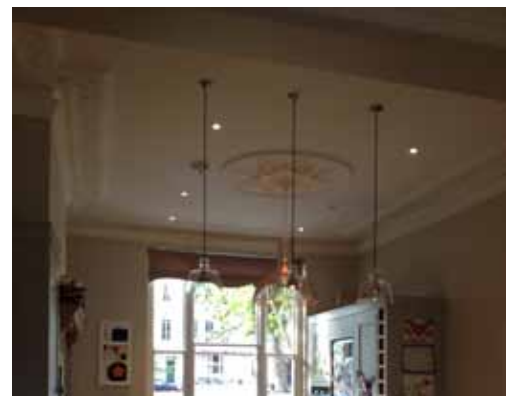


Fig 25. Existing period details

First floor:

The proposal removes the existing modern bathroom and associated non-original partitions to give a study space in the closet wing (Fig 26). The joinery over the existing communal staircase will be removed and the walls and floor at the corner of the drawing room rebuilt (Fig 27 & Fig 21). Refer to plans E011, D011 & 011.



Fig 26. Existing closet wing bathroom to be removed



Fig 27. Existing modern joinery over communal staircase to be removed

Second floor:

The proposal is to remove non-original partitions and reinstate the complete lateral and spine walls to make two traditional bedrooms complete with restored fireplaces, cornicing and skirting. The proposal also involves new partitions to accommodate a modern family bathroom and separate shower room. Refer to drawings E012, D012 & 012 and room drawings E301, 301, E302 & 302. For information on period features see section 3.7



Fig 28. Existing condition of second floor

Third floor:

It is intended to remove non-original partitions and reinstate the four-room plan by completing original partitions, excepting the lateral wall whose non-original opening will be retained along with nibs and downstand for legibility of the plan. The four rooms will be used as a master bedroom, sitting area, dressing room and ensuite bathroom. The proposal removes the non-original plasterboard ceiling to reveal the vault over the master bedroom. Original ceiling joists will be retained, made good and left exposed to maintain sense of the original ceiling level. The original roof rafters will be retained and made good - excepting where rooflights are intended - and the existing insulation between the rafters replaced. An internal layer of insulated plasterboard will be applied to the inside of the vault with skim and paint finish (Fig 29 & Fig 30). Refer to drawings E013, D013 & 013, room drawings E303 & 303 and detail 404. For information on period features see section 3.7

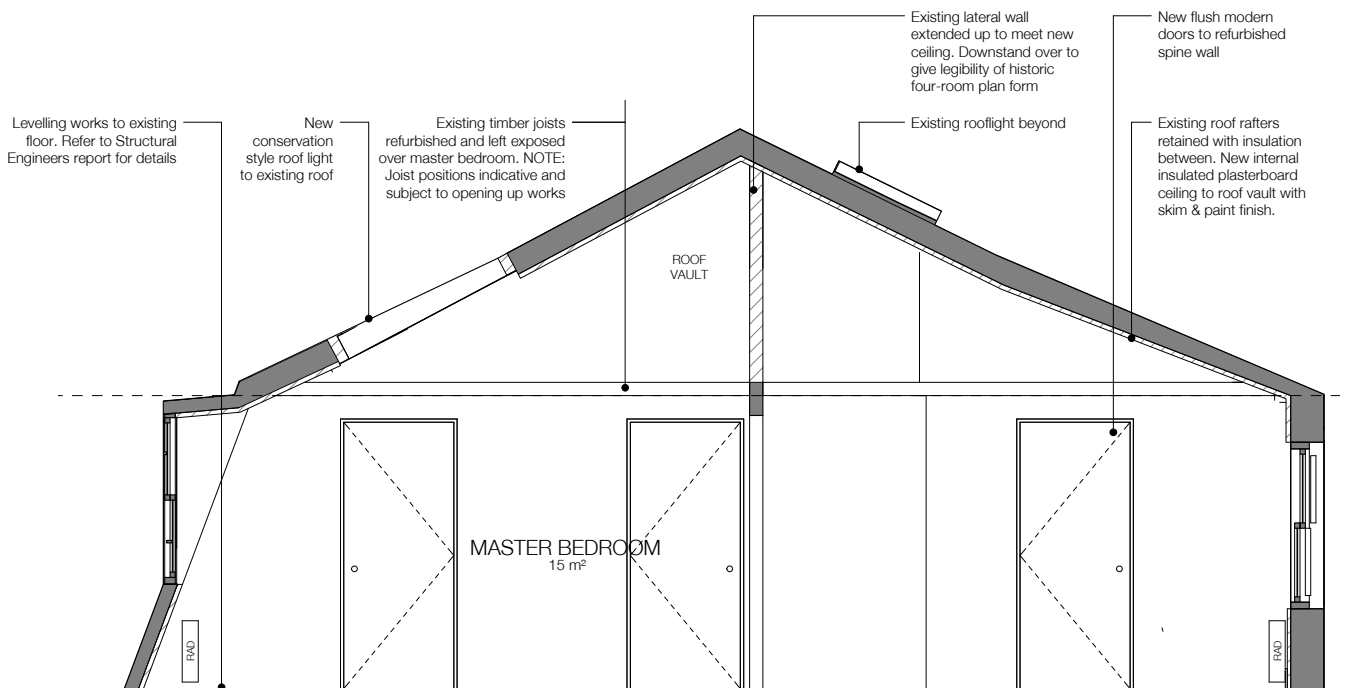


Fig 29. Proposed third floor internal elevation



Fig 30. Existing condition of third floor

### 3.7 Period Features

Cornicing, ceiling roses and skirting will be reinstated throughout in styles appropriate to the traditional status of each room as relevant. The owner has previously carried out such works in the grandest rooms of the ground and first floors (Fig 25 & Fig 31). Slightly less decorative features, including ceiling roses, are proposed the second floor bedrooms (Fig 32 & Fig 33), and yet simpler features, excluding ceiling roses, in the serving spaces of the lower ground and third floors (Fig 34).



Fig 31. Existing period details to first floor drawing room (left) and music room (right)



*Where original cornices have been lost, modern, decorative cornices, as here, are still made in the same way as traditional cornices and can be re-instated. The detailing is usually much clearer, as fewer layers of paint have been applied over the years.*

Fig 32. Style of cornice proposed to the second floor bedrooms



*The original purpose of ceiling roses was to protect the rest of the ceiling from staining from the candle or the gas lamps in a central light fitting below the rose. It means that only the area of the ceiling immediately above the light fitting was discoloured and this was, to a certain extent, disguised by the decorations on the ceiling rose. Ceiling roses were used as a decorative feature in principal rooms of the house to add to the architectural character and status of the room, and tended not always to be found in bedrooms or private rooms on the upper storeys of a house.*

Fig 33. Style of ceiling rose proposed to the second floor bedrooms



*This is a late-Victorian cornice in a less public room than the previous example and is less ornate. Unfortunately the picture rail has been partially removed.*

Fig 34. Style of cornice proposed to the lower ground floor

Source: The Fixtures and Fittings of Period Houses 1714-1939

The same hierarchical logic applies to fireplaces. Surrounds are to be reinstated wherever possible. A carved marble surround - of related aesthetic to that in the existing drawing room - will be installed to the ground floor dining room (Fig 31 & Fig 35). In the second floor bedrooms, matching, simpler marble or stone surrounds are proposed (Fig 36). To the traditional 'secondary' rooms - the lower ground floor living room and the seating area of the third floor master suite - simple, painted wooden surrounds will be installed (Fig. 37)



*This fire surround has brackets supporting the mantle shelf.*

Fig 35. Style of fire surround proposed to the ground floor dining room



Fig 36. Style of fire surround proposed to the second floor bedrooms



*A simple, timber fireplace that has been subtly embellished with ordinary joinery mouldings.*

Fig 37. Style of fire surround proposed to the 'secondary' rooms

Source: The Fixtures and Fittings of Period Houses 1714-1939

Floor-mounted column radiators will replace modern versions throughout, in styles to match those installed by the current owners in the existing maisonette dwelling (Fig 31 & Fig 38). Similarly, traditional panel doors will replace modern products in all but the third floor master suite, whose character is intended as contemporary with flush, 'hidden' doors proposed to the spine wall (Fig 39 & Fig 29).



Fig 38. Existing column radiators to maisonette



Fig 39. Existing panel doors to maisonette





Floor coverings will be contemporary carpet or timber throughout to match existing products in the maisonette, sensitively laid over original floor fabric. For detail on the approach to existing sloping floors at the second and third floor levels, please refer to the accompanying report by Morph Structures. For comment on period character please refer also to the accompanying Heritage Statement by Turley Associates.

### 3.8 General Restoration Works

The existing building suffers from water ingress, apparently resulting from damaged drainage to the front elevation, which has caused significant damage to the second and third floors, and some damage to cornicing on the first floor. As part of the proposed works, this issue will be investigated and making good works carried out (Fig 40-43).

Restoration to the front facade also includes the replacement of a single glass pane which currently hosts an unsightly extract fan at second floor level, and the removal of a nearby boiler flue with associated making good of the facade (Fig 40).

Repairs to the slate tile roof will be conducted as necessary with all materials to match the existing.



Fig 40. Existing water-damage to front elevation. Extract and flue to second storey to be removed.



Fig 41. Existing water damage to second floor



Fig 42. Existing water damage to third floor

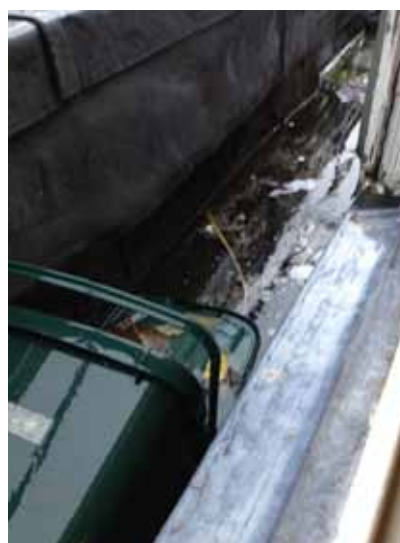


Fig 43. Existing drainage to third floor

### **3.9 Sustainability**

The environmental performance of the building will be improved by the following means:

- High performance, thermally broken double glazed units will be used where fenestration is replaced.
- The thermal performance of the roof vault and walls to the third floor is to be improved with an internally-fixed layer of insulated plasterboard.
- The proposal aims to increase the amount of natural light entering the lower ground and third floors, reducing the need for artificial lighting to be used.
- Water-saving sanitaryware will be installed to new bathrooms.

### **3.10 Access & Parking**

The existing roads and footpaths will not be affected by the proposals. The on-street parking provision will remain as existing. There is to be no dedicated external bicycle storage in order not to affect the primary street elevation. For access information, please refer to the accompanying Lifetime Homes Statements produced for each Flat.

## **4.0 Planning Considerations**

It is considered that the proposal would comply with the National Planning Policy Framework which states that local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for well-designed buildings unless the impact on a designated heritage asset would cause harm to the asset or its setting. It is considered that the development relates sensitively and to the subject property and is of high quality design. The proposal is not felt to improve, and not compromise, its special architectural and historical interest.

For a review of the proposal against relevant planning policies please see the accompanying Planning Statement by Firstplan.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

The proposed scheme has been developed with careful consideration of the existing context and local planning policies. The approach has been to ensure the preservation of the conservation area and special interest of the listed host building whilst meeting the requirements of the current owner. It is believed that the proposed architecture is of a high quality, and that the design and materials have been carefully considered in arriving at the proposed scheme. In summary, we feel the proposal:

- Conforms to the local and national policy guidance, which has informed the design.
- Aims to conserve and build upon the nature of the area in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.
- Is a positive enhancement to the building in accordance with Camden's Core Strategy.
- Compliments the existing fabric through design and detailing and is therefore contextually appropriate.