



No.1 Fitzroy Road
Planning Application

Design and Access Statement

On behalf of Greg and Evie Cohen

June 2016

Jamie Fobert Architects

1.0	Project Summary	
1.1	<i>Introduction</i>	4
1.2	<i>The Site</i>	5
1.3	<i>The proposal</i>	6
2.0	Urban context and site analysis	
2.1	<i>Site history</i>	7
2.2	<i>The conservation area</i>	8
2.3	<i>Streetscape</i>	10
2.4	<i>Landscape</i>	11
2.5	<i>Site character and context</i>	12
2.6	<i>Site visibility and views</i>	16
3.0	Proposals	
3.1	<i>Design summary</i>	17
3.2	<i>Massing strategy</i>	18
3.3	<i>Materials and detailing</i>	25
3.4	<i>Critical views: existing and proposed</i>	30
3.5	<i>Plans</i>	36
3.6	<i>Amenity space</i>	39
3.7	<i>Privacy/overlooking</i>	39
4.0	Access	
4.1	<i>Statement</i>	40
4.2	<i>Access to the house</i>	40
4.3	<i>Refuse/delivery</i>	40
4.4	<i>Service/maintenance</i>	40
4.5	<i>Internal layout and inclusive design</i>	41
4.6	<i>Transportation</i>	41
5.0	Landscaping	
5.1	<i>Proposed Garden</i>	42
5.2	<i>Hard Landscaping</i>	43
5.3	<i>Planting: Front Garden</i>	44
5.4	<i>Planting: Back Garden</i>	45
5.5	<i>Planting: Green Roof Areas</i>	46
5.6	<i>Proposed Back Garden View</i>	47
6.0	Sustainability Statement	
6.1	<i>Strategy</i>	48
7.0	Pre-application	
7.1	<i>Discussions</i>	49
8.0	Appendices	
8.1	<i>Planning Drawings</i>	50
8.2	<i>Jamie Fobert Architects relevant experience</i>	

1.0 Project Summary

Introduction

As a young family firmly established within the area of Primrose Hill, Greg and Evie approached me with a brief that sought to fully revive an elegant, yet rather worn, semi-detached villa—1 Fitzroy Road.

In my 30 years of working with the historic fabric of London, in many cases collaborating with Historic England, I have always attempted to find solutions which were neither pastiche nor overbearing to their context. Instead, my proposals have added a distinct contemporary 'strata' to the reading of the building with modesty and beauty. In my proposals for the refurbishment of Greg and Evie's house, I truly believe that I have achieved an elegant addition to the Primrose Hill streetscape as well as creating a home fit for family life.

I have good experience of working within the Borough of Camden, and in 2015 I won a Camden Design Award for Levring House. Recognising the sensitive design approach and careful attention to detail, the jury comments described the house as "an infill building which respects both the scale and character of its mews site, but which introduces sculpted massing carried out in thin Danish brick to produce finely modulated elevations of exceptional quality."

The following document establishes the key principles and rationale behind the design for 1 Fitzroy Road, documenting the care and sensitivity of the proposal towards the Primrose Hill Conservation Area and the improvement this will make to the historic reading of the house.

Jamie Fobert

June 2016



The Site

No.1 Fitzroy Road is located within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area, to the West of the borough of Camden. The site is currently occupied by a three storey dwelling that forms one half of a pair of semi detached villas dating from the 1840's, set amongst later Victorian terrace development and finishing a row of seven houses of a similar age. The area is characterised by residential development, predominantly in the form of three to four storey terrace houses.



OS Plan

The Proposal

The proposed scheme takes a sensitive design approach within the context of the Conservation Area. The proposal seeks to extend the existing building creating a refurbished house that sits seamlessly within its context. Significantly, the design has been developed with a view to constructing a subtle extension of considerable architectural merit. The contemporary interpretation of Georgian fenestration and detailing respects the scale of the existing dwelling, while taking advantage of the existing graded site topography. The design process aims to respect and enhance key characteristics of the conservation area, seeking to fulfill key aspects of Camden's Planning Core Strategy and Development Policies, guided by the following key principles the design seeks -

1. To address its context in terms of mass, materials and views.
2. To find a subtle response within its clearly defined context.
3. To propose a building that fits comfortably in its surroundings and that mediates successfully between old and new.

The existing house has played a fundamental role in shaping the final design and provided the starting point for the development of the scheme. The proposal sits comfortably alongside its neighbours and is informed by a careful contextual analysis, observing the refined and uniform identity of the architecture that characterises the area.

We have carefully considered materials for the proposal drawing on the rich architectural context. We propose to use brick as a material that would subtly mediate between the historic fabric of the existing house and the contemporary form of the extension.

The resulting refurbishment and design are unquestionably modern, rather than mimicking Neo-Georgian architecture or resorting to pastiche. The extension is recognizable as a reinterpretation of the current house, both restrained in its architectural treatment, and subtle as a contemporary addition. This is in accordance with Camden's Development Plan Policy CS14 and Design Guidance CPG1.



2.0 Urban Context and Site Analysis

Site History

An initial appraisal of the building and its context was prepared by Turley in October 2015, the purpose of which was to inform the design team of the key heritage issues and considerations. The following text excerpts present a summary of the key aspects of the historical analysis:

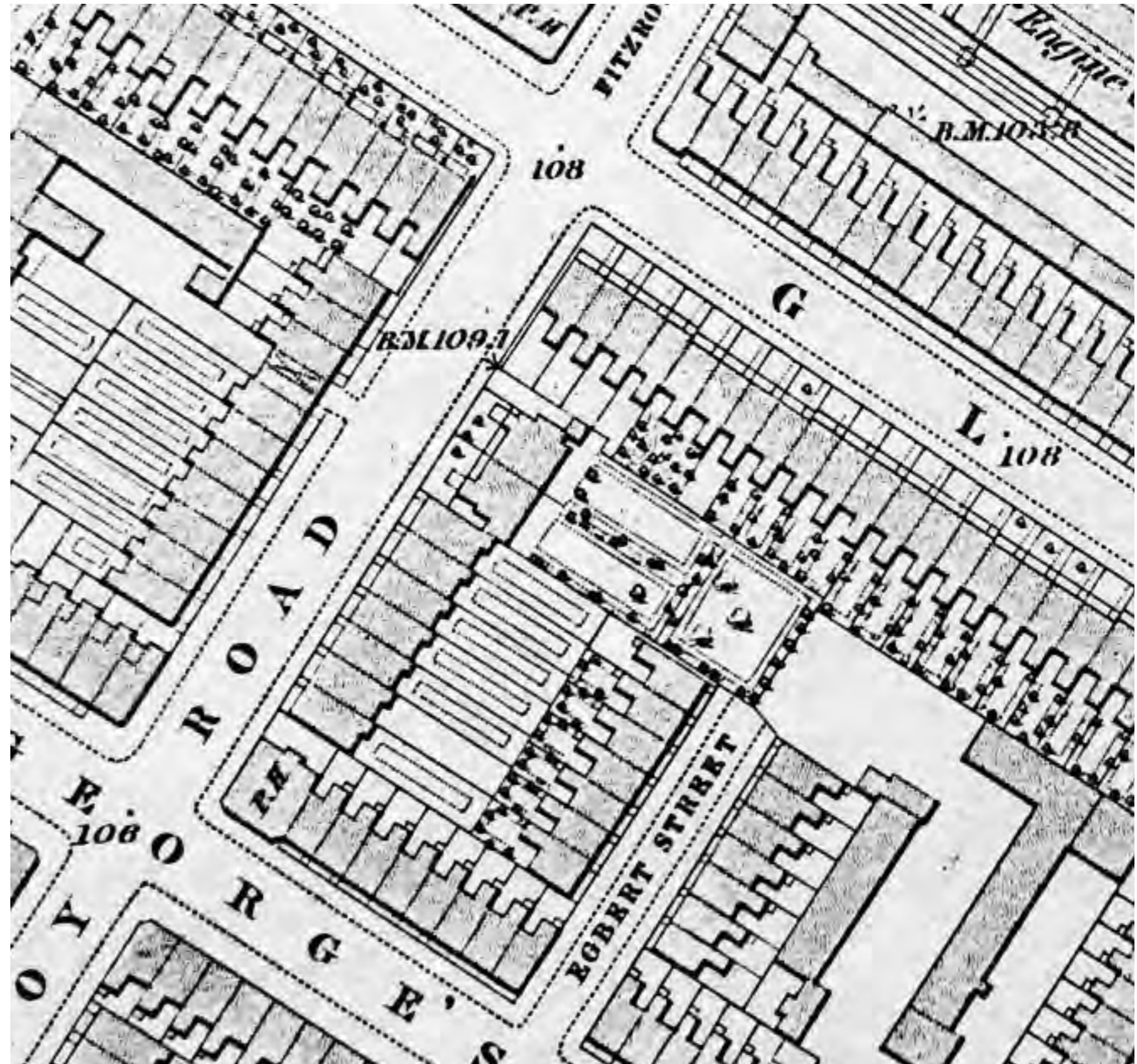
The conservation area is, for the most part, located on land owned by Lord Southampton, while land to the north and west was owned by Eton College, and to the south, by the Crown Estate. It was not until the mid-19th century that extensive development of the area began, in response to the expansion of London as both a trade centre and fashionable place to live. The first major development was the Regent's Canal, which linked the Grand Canal Junction at Paddington and London Docks. The completion of the canal in 1820 was followed by proposals to develop Lord Southampton's land for housing. An estate was envisaged of large suburban villas with substantial gardens.

Development occurred sporadically throughout the 1840s. During this time, the last remaining strip of Crown land to the north of Nash's Regent's Park was developed as villas, involving the purchase of small lots of land from various owners of the Southampton freeholds. Smaller developments had also been completed, and included a pair of semi-detached villas at the north end of Fitzroy Road (the site), and a villa terrace at the north end of Regent's Park Road.

By 1860, the development of properties of a villa typology had extended westwards along Regent's Park Road, opposite Primrose Hill Park. Elsewhere, however, the large villas had been abandoned for more formal terrace compositions, following a variety of styles. The new layout included symmetrical terraces; St George's Terrace and Chamberlain Street; a formal square, Chalcot Square; and, a sweeping crescent, Chalcot Crescent.

By 1870, the land of the Southampton Estate had been largely developed. Whilst the wide roads of the villa layout were retained, the density of development, particularly in the later phases, was significantly higher than originally intended, particularly in locations close to the railway line.

The final built form of the conservation area varied considerably from what was originally intended by the Southampton Estate. The neighbouring railway line had a significant impact upon the physical layout and environmental quality of the area. This was apparent as many of the buildings which were located close to the railway fell into disrepair, during the latter part of the 19th and 20th centuries.



OS Map 1870's

The Conservation Area

The following summary defines the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as identified in the Turley Appraisal:

As defined by the conservation area audit, the site is located within Sub-Area 2: Central Area. This sub area is located to the centre of the Conservation Area and is largely flat with a small incline from south east to northwest. It is neighboured to the north by the railway line and to the south east by Regent's Canal.

The area is urban in character with a high density of development with sporadic areas of greenery. It is dominated by long terraces of mid-19th century houses that are set back from the pavement with small lightwells and railings to basement areas, although there are some earlier and later examples.

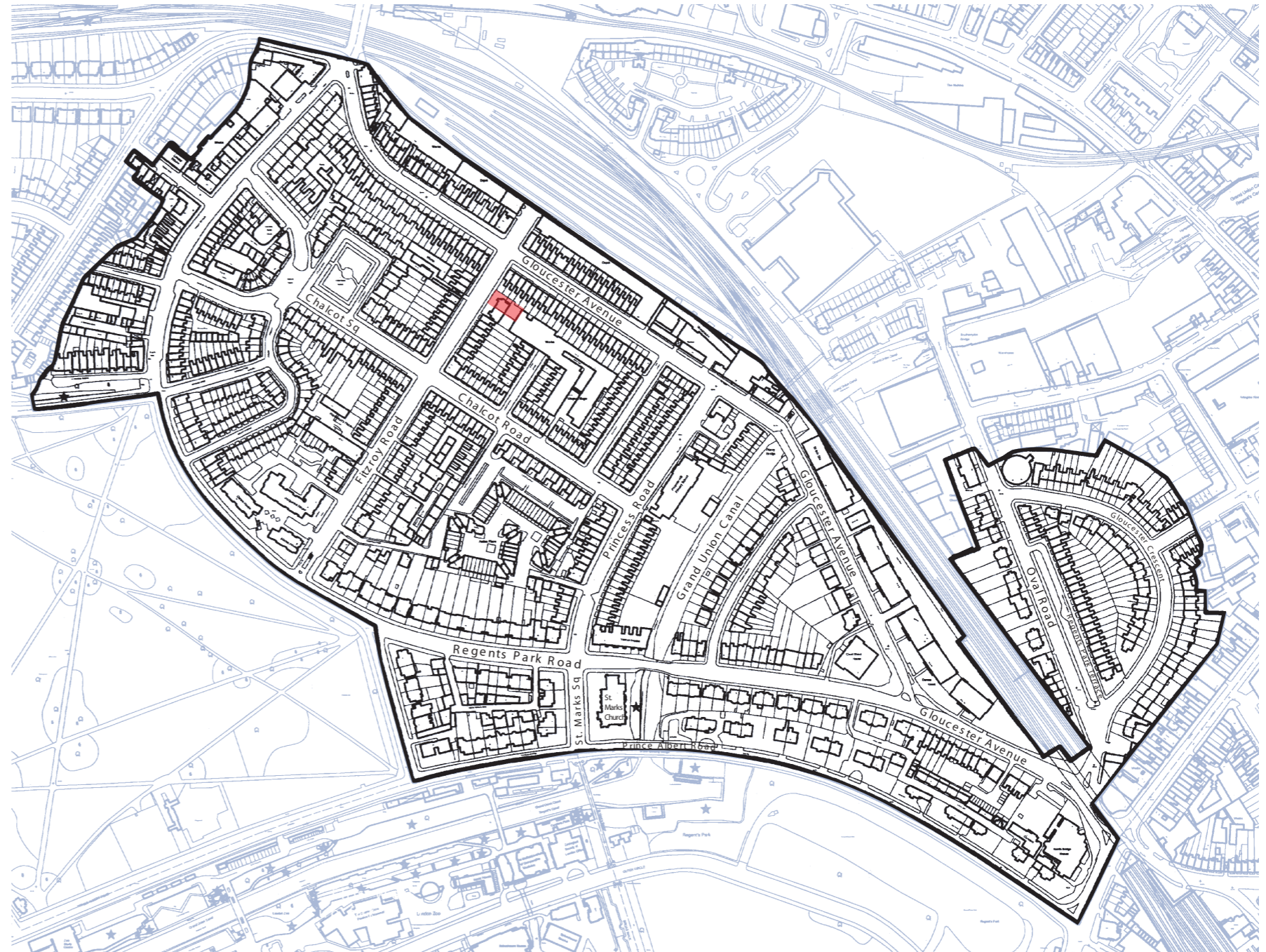
The building stock within this part of the conservation area is varied and consists of the following main typologies:

Mid-Victorian Residential Terraces: normally of at least five buildings in length with a uniform architectural character. Generally, the terraces are three storeys in height with a raised ground floor set over a lower ground floor with a lightwell defined by railings. The terraces are constructed of London stock brick with applied stucco decoration (normally painted white/cream) to the front elevations and plainer rear elevations. The principal elevations are normally flat, with stucco clad ground floor, the principal rooms at first floor and secondary rooms above, terminated by a simple cornice and parapet.

Late Victorian Terraces: these are generally located at the southern end of Fitzroy Road and date from the latter part of the 19th century. These properties have distinctive architectural features to the front elevation including shallow pitched roofs with overhanging eaves, prominent chimney stacks, deeply recessed front doors, and bay windows at ground and basement levels with Italianate column details.

Commercial Premises: A number of terraces were designed to accommodate retail uses, small businesses and public houses on the lower floors, with residential accommodation above. They are located primarily within the small Neighbourhood Shopping Centres to Chalcot Road, Gloucester Avenue, Princess Road and Regent's Park Road whilst the public houses are located on prominent corner sites.

Late 19th century 'Anomalies': these buildings are late Victorian examples of polychromatic brickwork with yellow London stocks enriched with the use of red, brown and glazed bricks to form decorative bands, window surrounds and parapets. Examples of these include Primrose Hill School and Primrose Hill Studios.



The Conservation Area: Character and Context

The following summary defines the character and appearance of the site as described in the Turley Heritage Appraisal:

Nos.1 and 3 Fitzroy Road have their origins c. 1840 prior to the rapid, terraced development of the area from the 1860s onwards. Whether the builder of these properties intended them to form part of a group of similarly designed villas is not clear from the archive information, however, the rapid, urban development of the area soon increased the pressure for development with a shift to the erection of terraced houses. In that regard, the houses contribute positively to the significance of this part of the conservation area as part of an earlier, contrasting phase of development.

As existing, the application site forms one half of a pair of semi-detached mid-19th century villas. The houses are constructed of yellow stock brick with a shallow slate clad hipped roof with a central chimneystack. The existing fenestration to the front elevation takes the form of traditional timber sash windows with margin lights. No.1 retains its original panelled front door. Whilst the two properties are unified as part of a single architectural composition, the division between the two buildings is clearly evident on the front elevation through the central, axially placed recessed channel and the projecting end entrance bays with simple porches. It is this overall character as a pair of domestic villas, which remains strongly legible, and the contrast with the denser, urban character of the adjoining terraces that is the principal contribution of the site to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Both properties have acquired a range of side extensions. Those to No.3 are of seemingly late 20th century date, are painted white and set back from the front elevation in the tight gap with the adjoining terrace. The existing side extension to No.1 is, however, very different in form, appearance and relationship to the parent property. It dates from the mid- 20th century and accommodates a garage at lower ground floor level with ancillary accommodation above. To facilitate access to the garage extension it was necessary to lower the ground levels associated with the side/front garden, which is now a concrete slab. Through these changes in level, the extension is effectively two storeys in height, and whilst set back from the front elevation of the building, extends to the property boundary and incorporates part of the garden wall associated with the terraced properties fronting Gloucester Road. The existing side extensions to both properties and the change in ground levels to No.1 have unbalanced the original symmetrical composition.



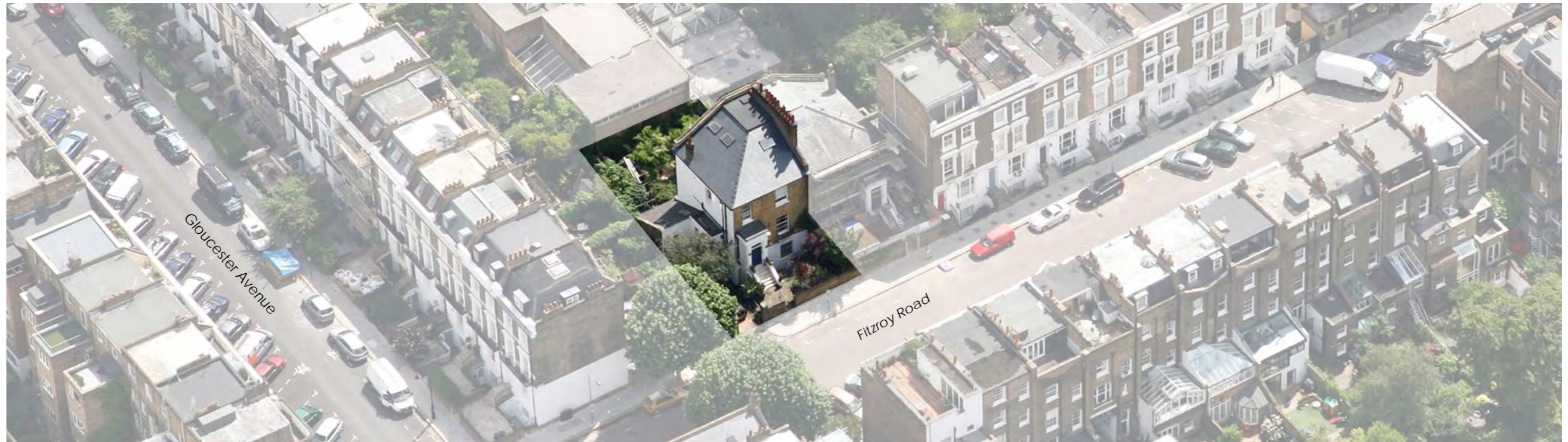
Streetscape

The application site forms one half of a pair of semi-detached villas, situated amongst terrace houses and set back from the street. Due to the urban nature of the site, it is bounded by the following development –

Fitzroy Road - Predominantly made up of 3-4 storey terrace houses with raised ground floors and basements, typically found within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. To the south of the site and adjacent to No.3 the neighbouring terrace is separated by approximately 1m. The majority of these terrace houses have suffered varying degrees of extension at the rear which is also characteristic of the area.

Gloucester Avenue – Running perpendicular and to the north of the site, this street is comprised of predominantly 3-4 storey houses (many with upper storey infill extensions). The building line and garden depths establish a critical distance from the application site with the resulting 6.5m gap creating considerable visual separation. This represents an opportunity to create an appropriate side extension which utilises its unique position within this part of the Conservation Area.

Utopia Village - Located to the rear of No.1& 3 this business complex has been enlarged over the years and acquired a large proportion of previously designated green space. This infill block is lower in height than the surrounding houses but due to the considerable break in urban grain to the north of No.1, the development is clearly visible from the street (a notable irregularity that has a negative impact upon the Conservation Area).



Aerial View looking South



Kinetic View: West Elevation

No.1 Fitzroy Road

Landscape

The front garden currently consists of stone paving, lined with low level planting along the boundary with No.3 and to the street. A flight of steps provide access to the lower ground level at the front of the house.

Hard standing is currently provided to the front of the property while a sloped concrete driveway runs along the side of the house, to the north of the site. It must be noted that this inclined feature is very uncharacteristic of the Conservation Area and represents a later addition to the development. The driveway has fallen into disrepair over recent years.

The rear garden is made up of soft landscaping with a considerable proportion of surface area given over to terracing and single storey canopy that detracts from the restrained nature of the rear elevation.



Rear Garden predominantly hard landscaped

Existing landscape plan



Site Character and Context: Villa Typology



The semi detached villa was abandoned in favour of the terrace house during the mid 19th Century in this part of Primrose Hill. The villa typology was heavily influenced by John Nash who constructed the Village Park West development in Camden. These were built in small groups by various speculative builders, who proved capable of producing original designs of quality.

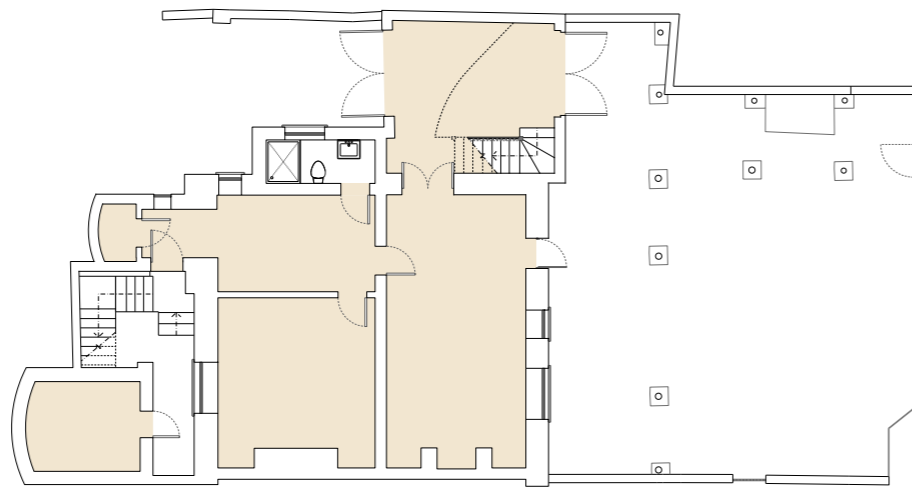


The historic street layout and the relationship of built form to open space define the overall framework of the area. Within this framework, the fine grain of the townscape, including plot sizes and building lines are important in establishing the pattern and density of development. This has a significant impact on the character of an area, dictating the scale of development and level of enclosure or openness.

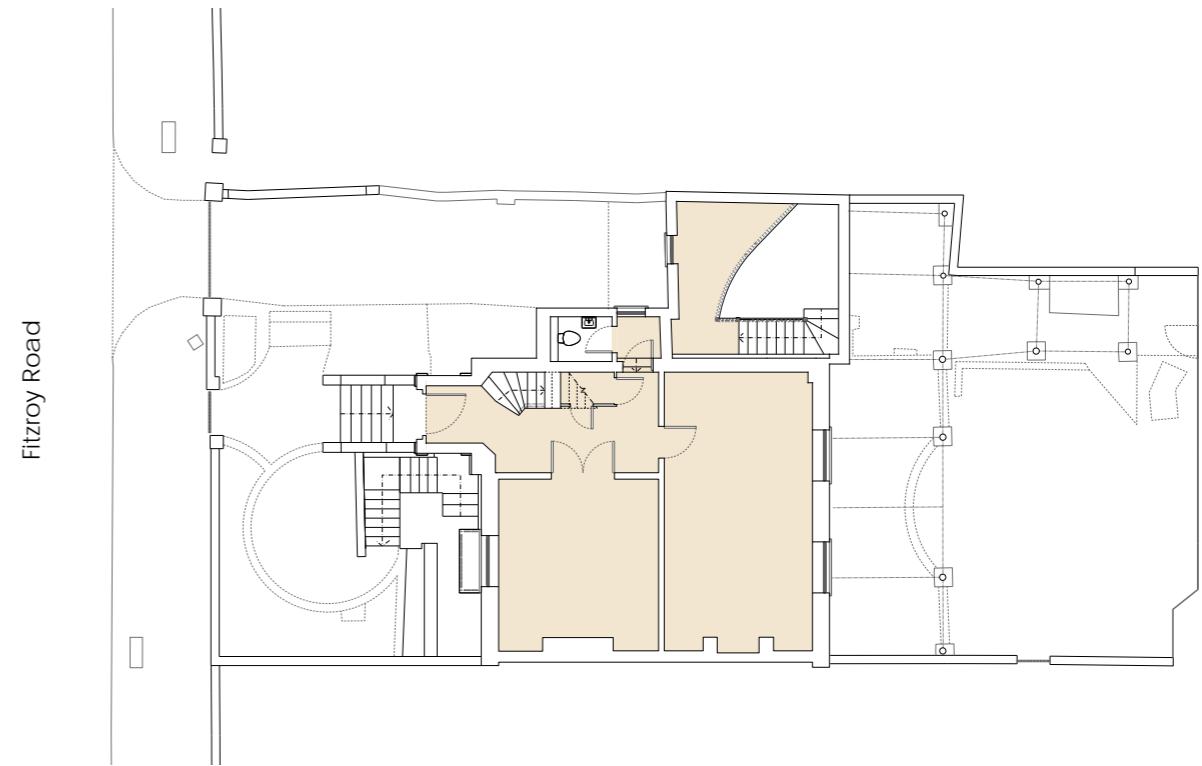


The width of the principal roads, and the numerous intersections, allow long views of buildings within these streets and adjoining streets. Large groups of terraced properties are visible from most vantage points and features such as roof extensions (where they exist) are frequently prominent. Other significant views are of the rears of terraces that face onto principal roads and their small, narrow garden spaces. These gardens often contain mature trees and are bounded by medium height brick walls that side on to secondary roads and alleyways.

Site Character and Context: Existing Building

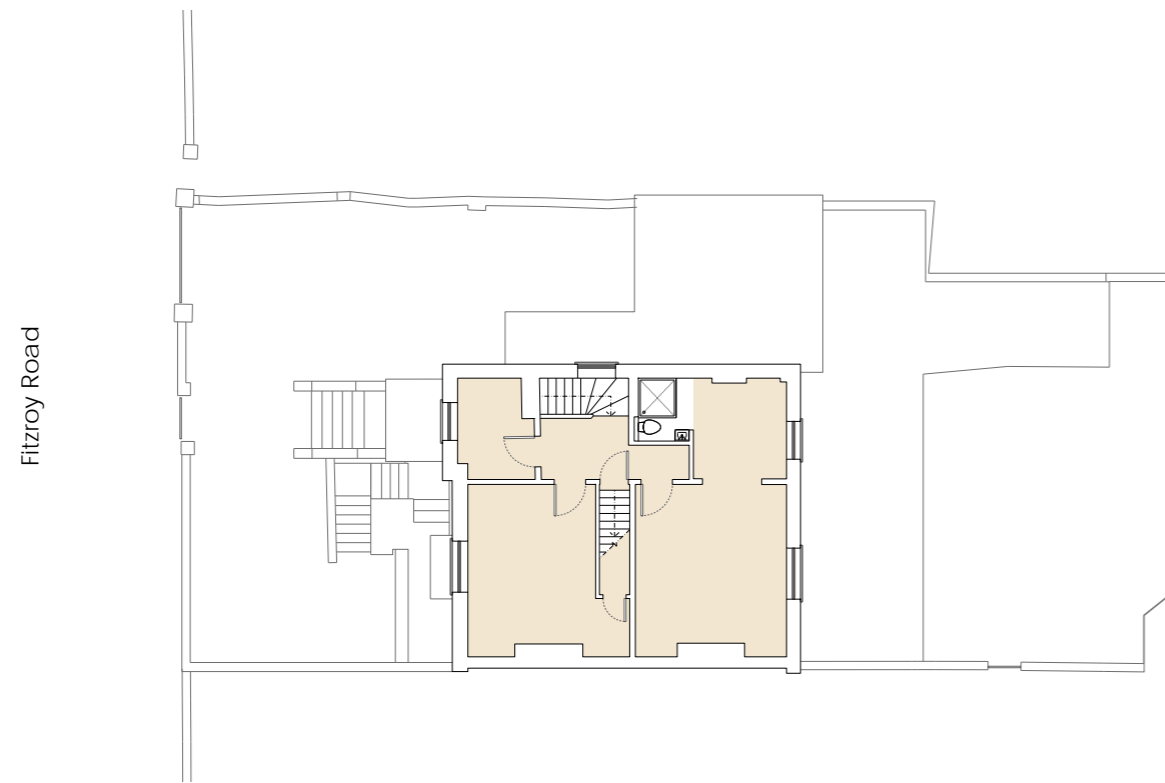


Existing Lower Ground Floor

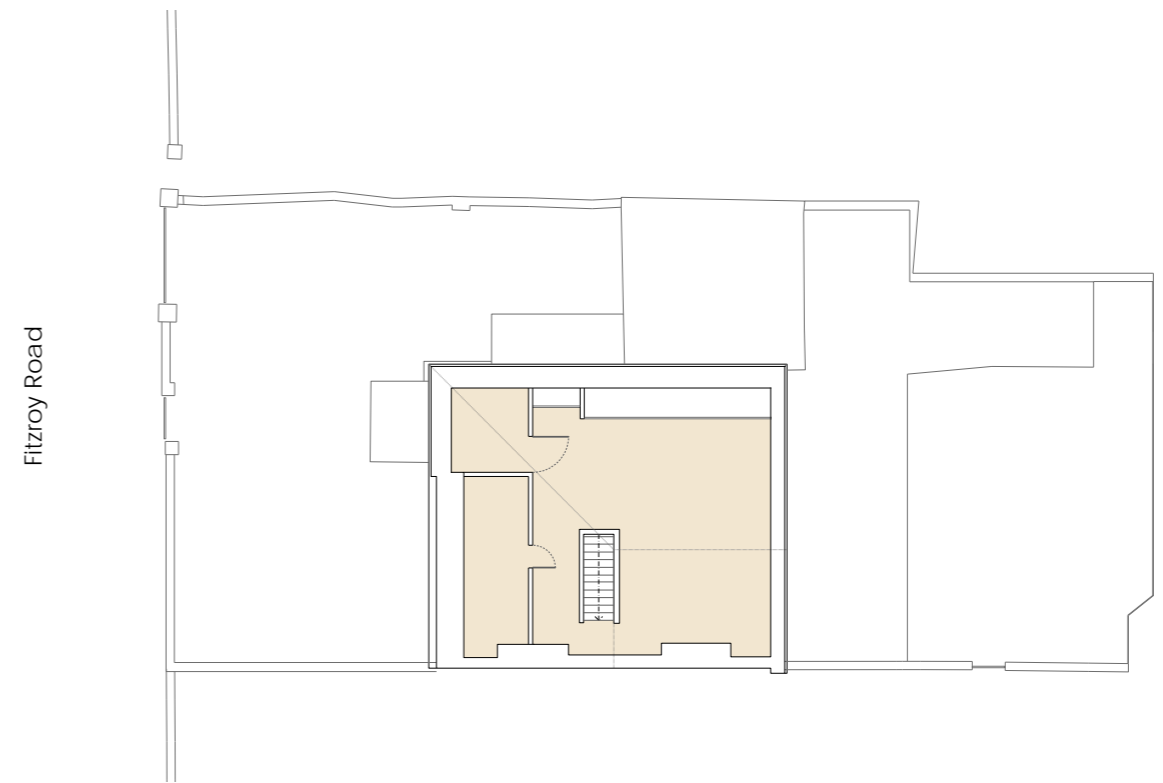


Existing Raised Ground Floor

Site Character and Context: Existing Building



Existing First Floor



Existing Second Floor