



FITZROY SQUARE GARDEN
DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

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Introduction

The project involves alterations to two Grade I listed Georgian town-houses, which are part of symmetrical terrace of eight on the south side of Fitzroy Square. The square and its east and south façades were designed by James and Robert Adam in 1790-4 and constructed from 1792-8.

The owners of 34 and 35 Fitzroy square purchased the properties in 2009 following use as an educational facility. The properties had been subject to years of neglect and unsympathetic alteration, some images of the state at this time accompany this text to the right hand side. The owners have subsequently sympathetically refurbished the properties back to residential use which were the subject of previous Listed Building and Planning applications, from 2006 until 2010. Part of the works at this time included the demolition of three storey 1970's extensions to the rear and there replacement with new three storey extensions which exercise modern detailing to provide a rational between the new and the historic elements of the buildings. The plan form of each of the buildings which had been largely lost was reinstated and careful detailing of new elements alongside sensitive reinstatement of original details was meticulously followed through by the project to create historical building appropriate to modern living.

Overview of Proposals

The owners have subsequently enjoyed living in the refurbished properties since there completion in 2013. The purpose of this new application seeks to add an additional roof terrace in order to improve amenity and address some minor alterations which have subsequently been identified as required by the occupants.

The main purpose is the addition of a roof terrace over a section the modern rear extensions to the rear of no 35. The current properties suffer from a lack of external amenity space. The existing roof to the rear is a flat lead roof which is the main outlook for no's 34 and 35 and also provides a backdrop for the densely constructed area to the rear of the buildings. Part of this area is proposed to be converted to a new green garden and terrace which will be screened to provide privacy. This will greatly improve the setting for all inhabitants of Conway Mews to the rear.



Cornice Stripped back to repair and reveal detail



Cornice layered in paint prior to refurbishment

Detailed Proposals

The following section is to be read in conjunction with the drawings.

First Floor

New spiral stair from garden in no. 35 adjacent to lift links up to new roof terrace.
Spiral stair to be mild steel painted black, details to be agreed.

Second Floor

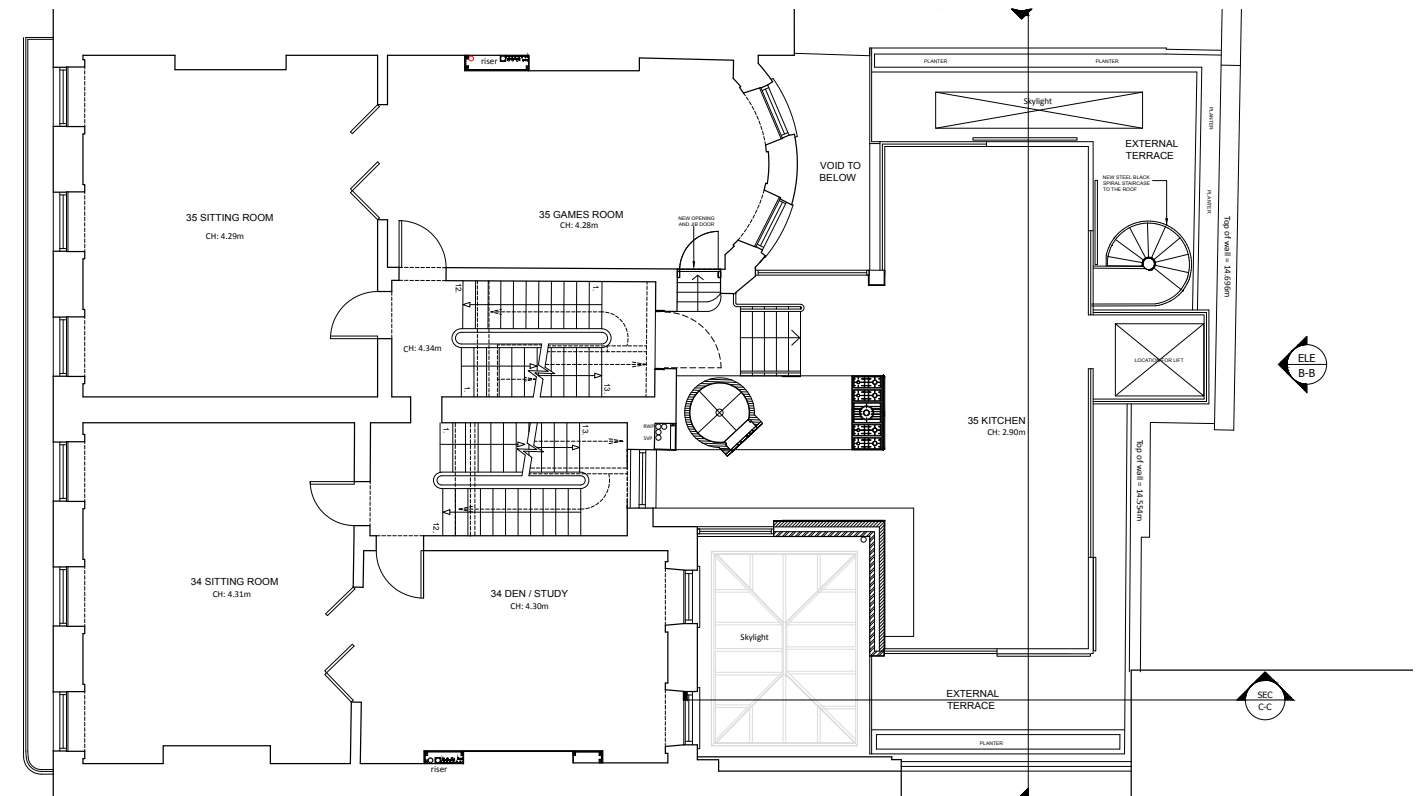
New spiral stair from garden in no. 35 adjacent to lift links up to new roof terrace.
Spiral stair to be mild steel painted black, details to be agreed.

Existing glass lift and overrun extended to service the new roof terrace.

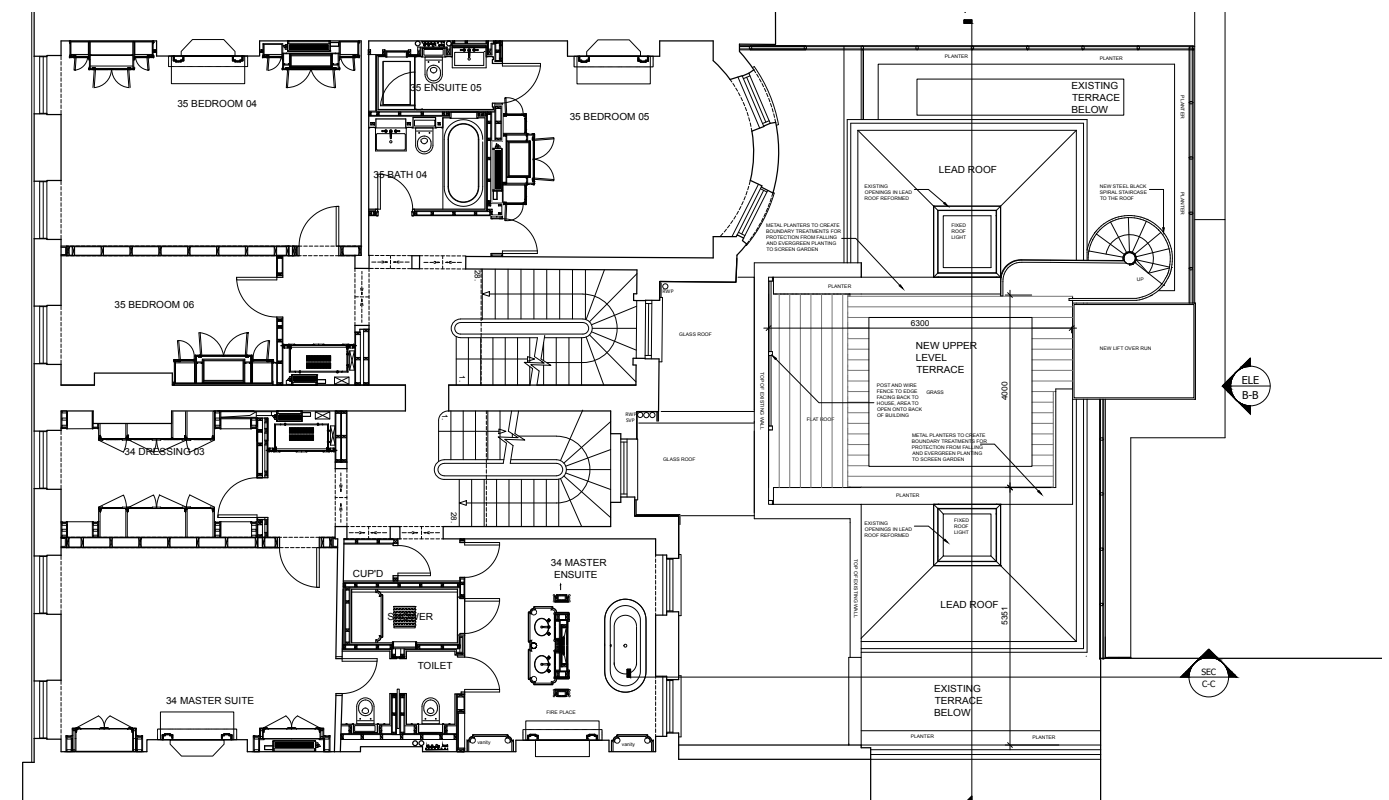
Existing roof lanterns removed and new flat glass double glazed skylights installed,
existing lead roof made good.

New 6.3m x 4m raised terrace with timber decking and grass installed to the centre of roof area, to be bordered with dark grey stained aluminium planters and evergreen planting to detail to create edge barrier and screening on three sides of the raised terrace. The fourth side of the new terrace are to face towards no.34 and no.35 to be open as a garden towards the rear of the original buildings. Cable wires and post at this edge create a minimal boundary along the edge of the garden improving the setting of the listed rear facade and allowing it to be appreciated fully from the new terrace and the terrace appreciated from within the listed building.

The evergreen planting will screen views in and out of the terrace. Although the terrace will be overlooked by the neighbours but in much the same way the existing lower restricted terraces are overlooked. The new terrace will be 25sqm in size which will double the amenity space of the current property. By its higher position it will enable the garden and its inhabitants to appreciate sunlight during the summer months.



Proposed First



Proposed Second

Second Floor

By setting the terrace away from the edges of the roof, overlooking is further restricted and distances from neighbouring windows are retained. As is indicated in the sketch to the right the high level evergreen planting (spike metal internal to planting) further restrict overlooking from the terrace.

Its worth noting that generally the area to the rear of Fitzroy square at the rear of 34 and 35 is not particularly private, the way the buildings have extended and been reconstructed over many years has created a series of courtyards which are all overlooked to some degree by the surrounding buildings, terraces and balconies.

Several of the terraced houses on Conway Street and Maple street have terraces at second floor level which face into Conway Mews, as well as the terraces at no. 33 Fitzroy Square and existing terraces at no.35 Fitzroy Square, these are all overlooked by the flats in Conway Mews, which towers over the rear of the buildings with balconies around the full structure up to 6 stories higher than current terraces.

The installation of the terrace reinstates lost amenity to the rear of the properties, all be it at a higher level and frames the heritage assets, allowing it to be enjoyed and appreciated further by the owners and others within Conway Mews. The outlook will be greatly improved for all by the installation of a green space, including improved biodiversity.

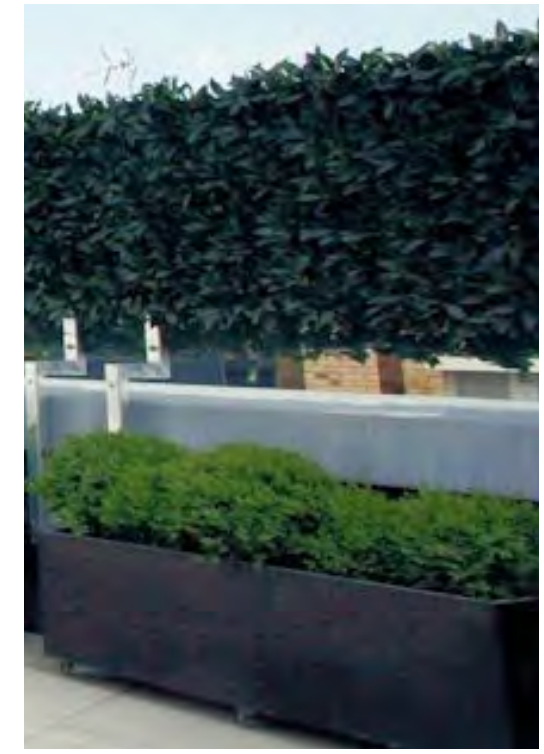




Concept Image of screening and planters, small terraces



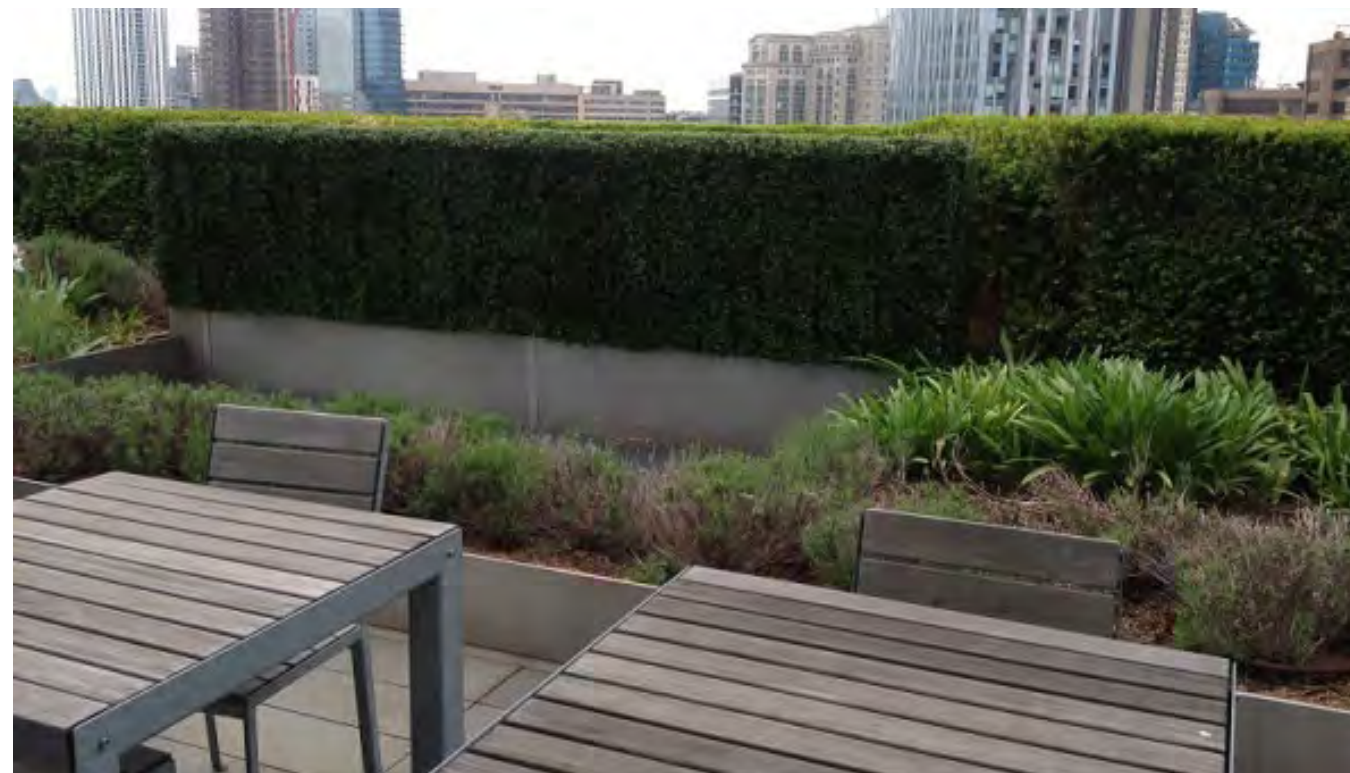
Concept Image of metal planters and screens



Concept Image pleach trees



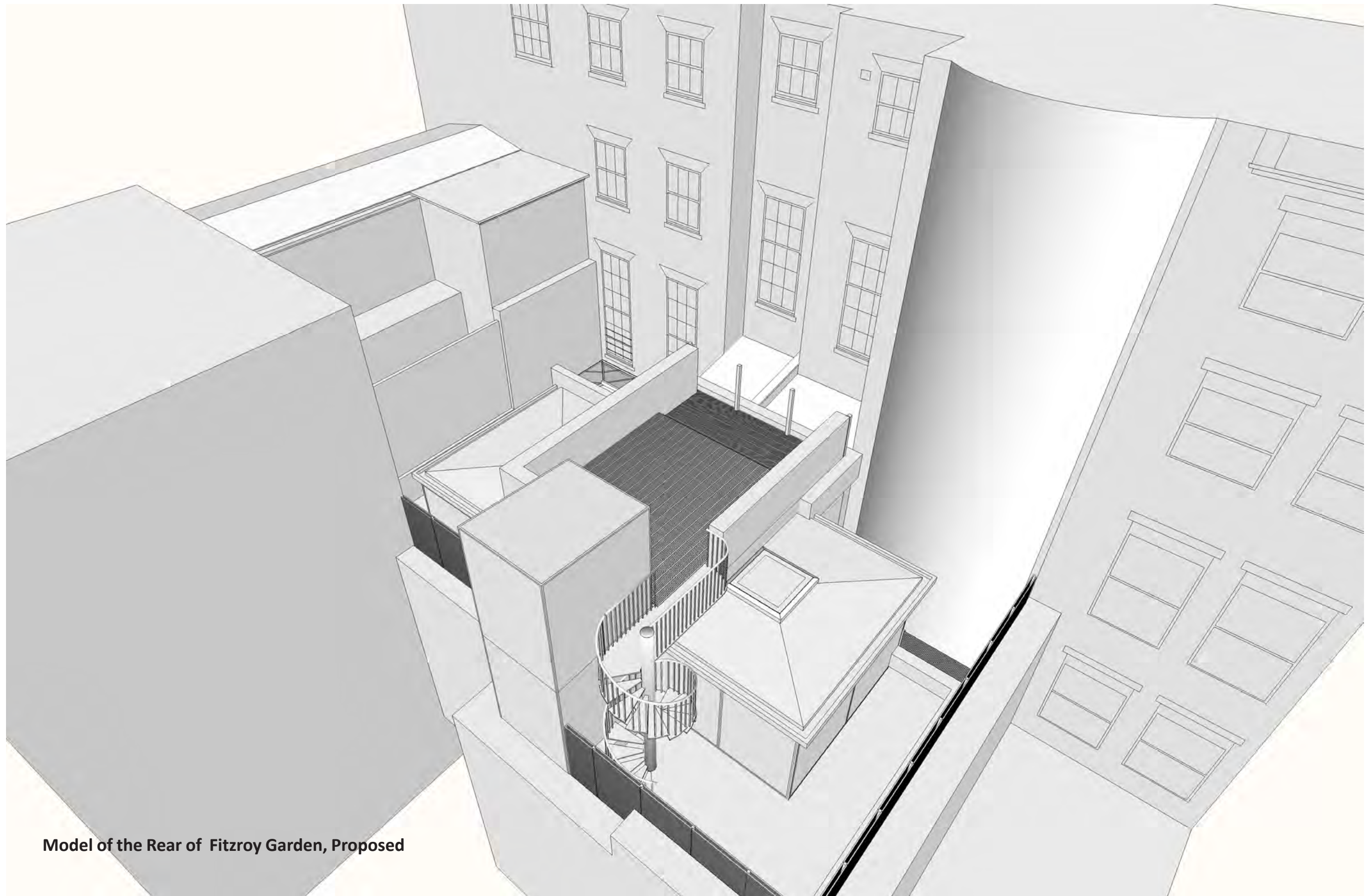
Concept Image of screening and planters



Concept Image of hedging and edge planting



Model of the Rear of Fitzroy Garden, Existing



Model of the Rear of Fitzroy Garden, Proposed



Photograph of the Rear of Fitzroy Garden, Existing,
Taken from Conway Mews top floor



Photo montage of the Rear of Fitzroy Garden, Proposed,
Taken from Conway Mews top floor

Heritage Impact Appraisal

Introduction

No's. 34-35 Fitzroy Square form part of a group of eight grade I listed buildings on the south side of Fitzroy Square, built by James and Robert Adam c. 1792-8. Most of the terrace was listed at grade I in June 1954 as the 'London Foot Hospital and attached railings.' No's. 33, 37 and 40 were added to the list in 1974. The buildings also form part of the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area.

As noted in the Design and Access Statement, the proposed alterations now involve the provision of a roof terrace and minor internal works. The purpose of this section is to consider the effects of these proposed alterations on the existing buildings and their significance against relevant historic environment policy considerations.

The proposed scheme has been prepared for the current owner and occupier of the building who has fully restored and refurbished the dwellings as high-status Adam terraced houses since the change of use application in 2006. The work has made a substantial difference to the quality of the houses and has significantly enhanced their special interest. The works now proposed are comparatively minor following the major refurbishment resulting from the 2008 and 2010 approved schemes as described in outline below.

The history of no's. 34 and no's. 35 Fitzroy Square have been explored under these earlier applications and will not be reiterated in full here, only as necessary or relevant under certain discussion in relation to specific alterations described below.

Planning History

No's. 34-35 are now in residential use. An application for the change of use was approved in 2006. Since 2006, applications for the full repair, refurbishment and use of the buildings as residential dwellings have been submitted and approved in 2008 and in 2010. The 2008 application involved:

Alterations to windows at third floor level to no. 34 and new fanlights over entrance doors to both houses to the front, alterations to lower ground floor windows and the first floor addition and the creation of terraces to the rear, installation of new and alterations to existing windows to top floor of front facade and lower ground floor of rear facade to match original, and alteration of windows to addition at rear.

Following much negotiation and discussion with LB Camden, this scheme for the refurbishment, repair and return of the building to residential use was approved in 2008. The previous use of the building had removed much of the buildings' character, features and legibility and the 2008 scheme sought to reinvigorate the properties for the use for which they were originally intended. The officer's delegated report for the scheme noted that 'the overall scheme is considered to improve the special character of the building(s) whilst preserving its architectural and historic integrity and providing high quality residential accommodation fit for buildings of this status.'



Photo's of the ceiling upon acquisition 2008



Photo's of the ceiling upon acquisition 2008

The 2008 application also allowed for the removal of a large 1970s rear extension and its subsequent replacement (the design of this extension was refined in the 2010 application as described below). In 2010, applications for planning permission and listed building consent (2010/4962/P and 2010/4967/L) approved further alterations and amendments to the 2008 scheme. These are described in the officer's delegated report as:

Additions and alterations including installation of air conditioning units and solar panels on roofs of both houses, erection of a rear extension with roof terraces at first floor following demolition of existing rear extension at that level and alterations to third floor windows on front elevation of No 34 and new fanlights over entrance doors to both houses (in connection with partially implemented planning permission (ref: 2008/1117/P) granted on 17/04/2008).

The delegated report for the 2010 scheme noted that the earlier applications had been part implemented. The report set out that 'The applicant seeks to make various changes to the properties in connection with combining the two residential properties into a single dwelling.' These included minor reconfiguration of partitions and other lesser alterations. The 2010 scheme also involved the demolition of the existing rear extension and its replacement with a new lightweight kitchen extension. The link between the new rear extension and the listed house was redesigned during the application to provide a contemporary structural glass link which allowed for distinguishing between new and historic fabric. The roof of the link was glazed in order to maintain light to the stair compartment. The delegated report summaries its findings by stating that 'The proposed residential conversion and refurbishment is considered to improve the special character of the building while preserving its architectural and historic integrity.'

The building has undergone a degree of change since the change of use application in 2006 but this has resulted in a dwelling that has had much of its historic character and appearance restored and its significance substantially enhanced. The property is in single ownership and used a single family home but each individual terraced house is strongly legible with floor hierarchy, layout, circulation and historic fabric and detailing retained and enhanced. New elements have been added to the site in a contemporary way but these have been cleverly detailed so as to sit sympathetically with the host building and its fabric and have obviously been considered alongside the very extensive heritage benefits and refurbishment of the Adam houses that resulted for the 2006, 2008 and 2010 applications.



Photo's of the fireplace following 2013 refurbishment

The current scheme - 2018

The scheme now proposed is intended to work with the existing buildings and their recent history of refurbishment and alterations. Many of the changes now proposed involve alterations to new partitions or layout and are therefore limited in their effect. Improvements to circulation within the buildings are also proposed as is a new small garden terrace to the rear of the historic buildings, on the roof of the modern kitchen extension. The works are described in full elsewhere in this document but in summary include:

- Alterations to existing steam room and modern bathroom insert at lower ground floor level;
- The blocking of an existing opening in panelling and new opening to the rear room at ground floor level providing access into the glazed link to the rear extension; and,
- A new small roof terrace above the first-floor extension to be accessed via a staircase from the rear of the property thus ensuring the continued separation of the new addition from the core of the historic building.

The proposals are assessed in more detail below following the identification of the key historic environment policies against which the alterations will be assessed.

Policy context

The following paragraphs briefly set out the range of national and local historic environment policy and guidance. The relevant statutory provision for the historic environment is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66(2) of the Act sets out, in relation to the general duty to listed buildings, that ‘a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, listed buildings.’ Section 72(1) writes that with regard to conservation areas, ‘special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.’

The National Planning Policy Framework

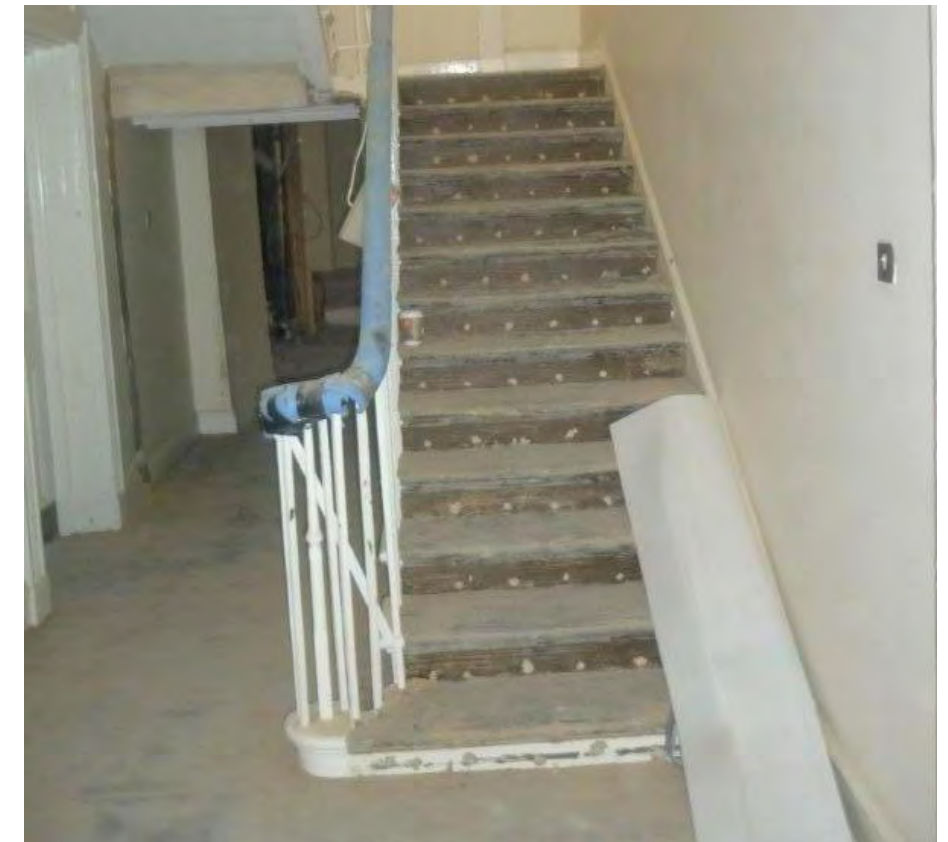
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and sets out the government’s approach to the historic built environment. Section 12 of the NPPF deals specifically with this area of policy. Policies relevant in this particular case are as follows.

Paragraph 132 states that ‘when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.’

Paragraph 133 of the NPPF deals with the issue of substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset. Paragraph 134 deals with cases where a proposal causes less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset such as a listed building or conservation area. It states that any such harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals. It follows that if harm is not caused then proposals will be acceptable.



Photo's of the fireplace upon acquisition 2008



Photo's of the staircase upon acquisition 2008

London Borough of Camden's Local Plan

LB Camden's Local Plan replaced the Core Strategy and the Camden Development Policies document in July 2017.

Policy D2 of the Local Plan relates to heritage. In relation to Designated Heritage Assets, the policy sets out that the Council will not permit the loss or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and listed buildings. It also sets out that the Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

With regard to conservation areas, Policy D2 (part e) sets out that the Council will require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character and appearance of a conservation area.

With regard to Listed Buildings, part l and k of the policy note that the Council will:

- Resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and,
- Resist development that would cause harm to the significance of a listed building through and effect On its setting.

Assessment

The proposals as they currently stand should be seen in the context of a sensitive and scholarly refurbishment of two grade I listed houses that has taken place over the last ten years. This is particularly pertinent giving the downgrading of the significance of the listed buildings and their fabric through institutional use and intensive occupation at odds with the original purpose of the houses and a lower-key residential use. Works over this period have also included the removal of 1970s alterations which were not sympathetic to the principal listed buildings and the provision of new development that has been designed so as to sit comfortably alongside the quality and character of the historic buildings. All work has been carried out to an exceptionally high standard and the legibility and significance of the original Adam houses has been much enhanced.

The proposed minor alterations at lower ground floor level relate to recent works and are not considered to cause harm to the significance of the listed building. They would not have a fundamental effect on the existing layout of the lower ground floor and are therefore not considered to be contentious and would align with historic environment policy.

At ground floor, an opening that historically provided access into a later addition to the building (no. 35) within panelling will be sensitively blocked. In the context of alterations to the building over recent years and as a whole, this is a minor alteration that will not affect the significance of the listed building overall. In an effort to improve circulation, it is proposed to provide a new opening within the rear room of no. 35 close to the angle with the bay window. This will be detailed as a well designed jib door that works both with the aesthetics of the ground floor rear room and the language of the new link block to which it adjoins. The new opening and its detailing will



Photo's of the staircase following 2013 refurbishment

be entirely historically appropriate while being a subservient addition to the room. The sense of two individual historic houses is maintained as is the relationship between the 'old' and the 'new' – both clear and rational principles established under the earlier applications.

A similar opening is proposed at first floor level so as to enable better access from the rear room of no. 35 to the modern rear extension. This will take the form of a modest opening with simple but high-quality detailing that relates to the fabric and aesthetics of the historic house. Again, the opening would not effect the legibility of the historic space and is intended to improve connectivity with the main house and the modern extension to the rear. At first floor level a small roof extension is also proposed above the modern rear extension. As noted above, this would be accessed via a new stair from the rear of the site at first floor level adjacent to the lift location. It is not unreasonable to expect small roof terraces in urban locations and they do form part of local character. No historic fabric would be affected as a result of the proposals and there would be maintained a degree of separation between the main house and the new extension and necessary access arrangements. The envelope of the listed buildings, in so far as they relate to the roof terrace at second floor level, would remain unaffected. While this aspect of the proposals would not have a direct effect on historic listed fabric, it would form part of the setting of a listed building(s) and should therefore be considered in this regard.

The proposed roof terrace is modest and would not compromise the lightweight nature of the modern extension to the rear of the listed properties. Its access would be simple and restrained with no obvious or overt physical presence on the site and would not be read alongside the rear elevation of the listed houses. The roof terrace can be designed and detailed in such a way as to reduce prominence and also to address any privacy or amenity concerns in relation to neighbouring properties.

Given that the proposed roof terrace is modest in form and takes advantage of existing structure, it is considered that the small garden would not cause harm to either the significance of the listed building or to its setting. Again, the vast improvements to and investments made in the property by the applicant have significantly enhanced the listed building(s) at no's. 34 -35 Fitzroy Square and it is therefore of some relevance to take this into account in the assessment of the proposals.

In relation to the conservation area, the proposals would not be seen from the public realm. As already noted, privacy screening and/or planting can be used to ensure that neighbouring amenity is protected.

Taking local and national historic environment policy into account, which seeks to ensure that harm is not caused to designated heritage assets or that harm can be balanced against public benefit, it is considered that the proposals would not cause harm to the significance of no's. 34 and 35 Fitzroy Square particularly given the context in which the current proposals have emerged. The Council has found under two separate applications that the proposals preserve the special interest of the listed building and represent alterations appropriate to high-status residential dwellings. It is considered that the scheme currently proposed also reflect this objective and are therefore consistent with past decision-making and compliant with relevant local and national historic environment policy.



Photo's of the doors upon completion 2013



Photo's of the doors upon acquisition 2008