



75 Lawn Road, London, NW3 2XB  
Application Ref. (2018/3428/P)

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## RESPONSE TO CONSULTEE COMMENTS

September 2018

This Statement has been produced in response to comments received during the consultation period for the above application, to aid the Council in its consideration of the application.

This document seeks to address the objections which are of material relevance to this application and are separated into the following headings:

1. Extent of proposed demolition
2. Impact of the front/side extensions upon street scene and conservation area
3. Impact of the rear extension upon the character of the property and conservation area
4. Impact of front and rear extensions upon the amenity of no.76 & 74 Lawn Road
5. Conclusion

## 1. Extent of proposed demolition

### Consultee comments:

#### Proposed Demolition

The Belsize Residents Association and members of the public have objected to the development, stating this is: ‘largescale’ and ‘wholly inappropriate and in contrast with The Camden Local Plan 2017’ and the ‘Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, 2011’

### Response:

#### Proposed Demolition

1.1. Policy D2 (f) of the Camden Local Plan states that:

*“the Council will resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area”;*  
paragraph 7.49 states that: *“The Council will resist the total or substantial demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to a conservation area unless circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention.”*

1.2. The parts of the building proposed to be demolished - namely, the garage, the existing rear extension and the roof - are of poor-quality construction and make only a neutral contribution to the conservation area. The front façade and flank wall which make a positive contribution to the conservation area will be retained.

1.3. When complete, the building will substantially retain its existing appearance but will have been improved by appropriate repairs and enhanced with new elements constructed from the highest quality materials to match existing where appropriate.

1.1. Prior to the purchase of the property, a building survey report was prepared by Malcolm Hollis LLP which concluded that the property was in a tired state of repair and required substantial amounts of remedial work to the building fabric and services. All statements within Nash Baker’s Design and Access Statement can be substantiated by this independent assessment of the property and have been corroborated by our own investigations.

1.2. Malcolm Hollis LLP’s report noted the following key issues:

#### Damp and Mould

- An isolated area of raised moisture to the base of the front flank render wall ‘was identified, which is thought to have occurred where the DPC is missing or has failed’;
- The base of both chimneys on the ground floor had raised moisture readings when tested with an [SIC] electrical moisture meter, as did the party wall adjacent to the rear elevation and the garage wall was visibly damp where the gutter is leaking’;

- There is mould staining to the internal timber frame 'of some windows, 'which has occurred as a result of condensation;
- 'rainwater goods are generally in poor order' and 'there is a leaking section of gutter above the garage which is causing penetrating damp to the garage wall and damage to the render finish';
- The render finish to the rear elevation and garage has been extended to finish flush with external ground level. This is a poor detail and can lead to issues with rising damp';
- The painted finish to the windows is starting to deteriorate with flaking paint exposing the timber grain and allowing isolated areas of rot;
- 'Originally the external walls would have been constructed with a lime-based mortar', 'but have been repointed with a cement based system which is not appropriate for a property of this age and type', and 'can lead to moisture being trapped within the brickwork and damage to the brickwork.'

1.4. All building materials have a lifespan and a building which is almost 100 years old requires regular renewals and repairs. For example, a clay tiled roof has a typical lifespan of 50-60 years, with the felts and membranes lasting typically 40 years. This property appears to have had very little in the way of repairs and renewals since its construction, and as such much of the building fabric is currently unsuitable for re-use. However, where materials which are not re-used will be recycled in accordance with good building practice and the Considerate Contractor Scheme.

1.5. The proposed improvements in construction and design will enable the building to comply with current building regulations standards.

1.6. Elements of new construction will be of higher quality, meeting the rigorous modern standards of thermal performance to ensure a reduced future carbon footprint. The works will also improve the living standards of the occupants, reduce maintenance and ensure the building's ongoing occupation.

## **2. Impact of front/side extensions upon the street scene and conservation area**

### Comments:

#### Design and size of front/side extensions

The Belsize Residents Association and a neighbour have objected to:

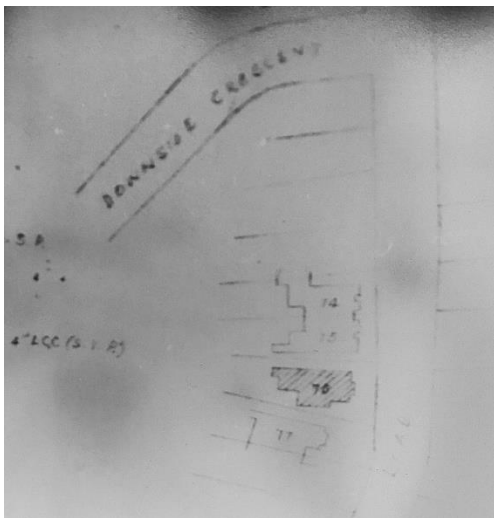
- a) The '*mansard roof on the side extension*', stating it, '*destroys the symmetry of the 2-story side extensions observed from the public highway*' and will '*create the only example along the row of 1920s Arts & Crafts style houses where the 1<sup>st</sup> floor side elements of two adjacent houses are not flush with each other (i.e. in the same vertical plane)*', and '*would look incongruous from the street*'.
- b) The '*front dormer*', as it '*would set a precedent*'
- c) the size of the 2m front first floor extension '*is not a modest extension*'

Response:

- 2.1. 75 Lawn Road was originally conceived as one of four dwellings in two linked pairs (No's.72 & 73 and 74 & 75 Lawn Road), with No. 76 being a detached house.



Microfiche plans from Camden Archives – dated May 1925



Microfiche location plan for 76 Lawn Road from Camden Archives, showing no.76 as a detached dwelling – dated May 1925

- 2.2. It is not entirely clear how it happened, but the design symmetry of these four houses diverged at some point in time, resulting in the current condition whereby No.75's existing two-storey garage block has a flat roof and sits further back from the road than the other garages within this grouping of terrace houses. This is in contrast to Nos. 72, 73 and 74 which have pitched tiled roofs. Consequently, the design symmetry of this group of properties has been eroded.
- 2.3. Number 75 and 76 weren't originally designed as a matching pair and therefore any symmetry between their two side elements is the result of later development.

- 2.4. The proposed development of No.75 Lawn Road seeks to enhance the legibility of this grouping of houses by reinstating a pitched roof design in traditional materials, thus improving the symmetry, balance and rhythm.
- 2.5. The reinstatement of a clay tiled pitched roof (*not a mansard as described by the Belsize Residents Association*), mirrors the characteristic roof form of the property grouping and will enhance the streetscape and broader conservation area.



74 and 73 Lawn Road

72 Lawn Road

- 2.6. An example of two distinct house types meeting with differing side elements can be seen at Nos. 80 and 81 Lawn Road.



*Photograph showing the two-storey side elements with differing roof types of Nos. 80 & 81 Lawn Road.*

- 2.7. The ground floor projection will incorporate garage-style doors to echo the garage doors of Nos.74, 73 & 72.
- 2.8. The forward projection of the ground floor will reflect the precedents set by Nos. 72 and 76 Lawn Road to provide a more congruent elevation along the west side of the street.
- 2.9. The existing two-storey garage blocks at Nos. 72, 73 & 74 are set back from their front elevations by between approximately 9m, 9.2m and 9.3m respectively (see below diagram).
- 2.10. The existing garage block at 75 Lawn Road is set back from the front elevation of the property by 12.28m. The proposed first floor extension is 2m forward of the existing garage, giving a set back of 10.28m. This modest extension will therefore enable No.75 to better reflect the prevailing relationship between side elements and front elevations of both its pair at No.74, and that of its adjacent linked pairs at Nos.73 & 72 Lawn Road.

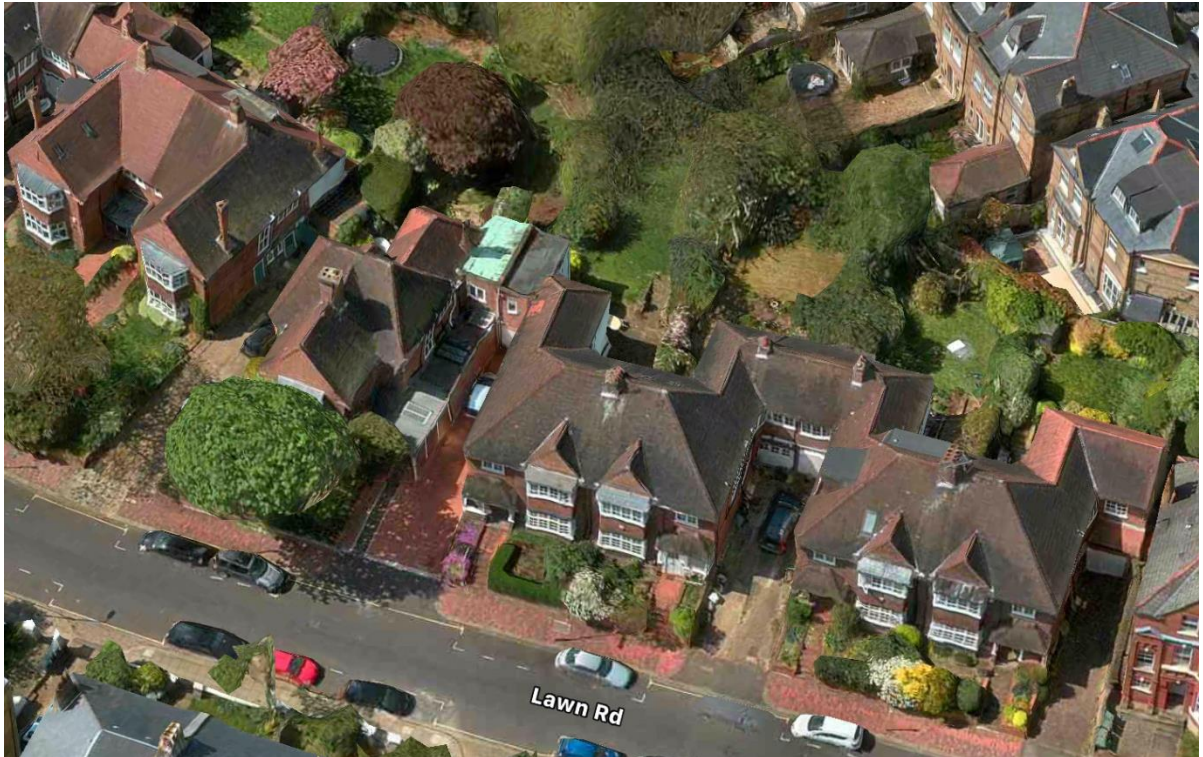




*Comparison between existing garage set back from the front elevation at 72-75 Lawn Road*

- 2.11. The precedent of ground and first floor side elements not being in the same vertical plane has already been set by other properties along the street, most notably at the neighbouring property (No. 76) which has a garage and canopy which project forward of the first floor elevation. Even within this row of 1920's linked pairs (No's.72 - 75 Lawn Road) No.72's garage projects further forward at ground floor than first floor.

- 2.12. 76 and 75 Lawn Road are different house types; the coupling of these properties via similar two storey elements creates an awkward juxtaposition between these distinctly different house types.



*Bird's eye view of 78-72 Lawn Road. Note: the aerial image above predates construction work at no.77 Lawn Road and therefore doesn't show this extension.*

- 2.13. The proposed side roof slope and dormer window which front the highway are on a secondary elevation which is setback more than 10m from the principle elevation. As such a dormer window will not detract from the principle elevation of the house.
- 2.14. Dormer windows are a common architectural feature on Lawn Road and can be seen all along the street and the wider Conservation Area at properties such as Nos. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 83, 84 Lawn Road and No. 35 Downside Crescent.
- 2.15. It should be noted that Paragraph 4.2 of the officer's delegated report for the refused application (2017/6726/P), which also included the side extension towards the front of the property, supported these elements stating the following:

*'The front proposals involve the ground floor garage conversion and extension projecting out alongside the garage with No.76, but would be set back 200mm from No.76's garage and would have a similar flat roof. The first floor extension would be a modest extension which would incorporate a front dormer window within a new pitched roof with lower eaves almost giving the appearance of a cat slide roof.'*



The planning officer continues: *'Additionally, the front projections are set so far back from the front building line, the impact on the street scene would be minimal. It is therefore considered the design, scale and use of materials for these elements would be considered proportionate to the original dwelling and would not be out of keeping within the street scene.'*

### 3. Impact of the rear extension upon the character of the property and conservation area

#### Comments:

The CAAC have stated:

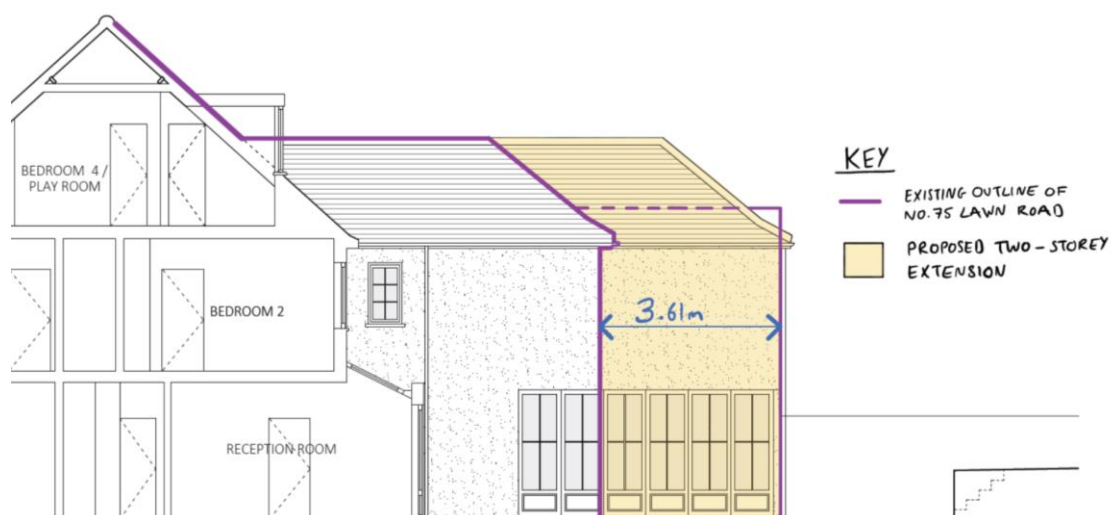
- o 'the proposals are too large and dominate the original house'

The Belsize Residents Association and neighbours have objected to:

- o The *'bulk, scale and mass'* of the rear extension, stating, *'it would not be subordinate to the existing dwelling, and would harm the character of the existing dwelling and the surrounding conservation area'*.

#### Response:

- 3.1. The proposed 3.61m two-storey rear extension is a continuation of the existing rear wing of the house, with matching ridge, eaves and pitch. As such, the proposal remains subservient to the main 'host building'.



*Extract from section B-B showing extent of 2-storey pitched rear extension in relation to existing property outlines in purple.*

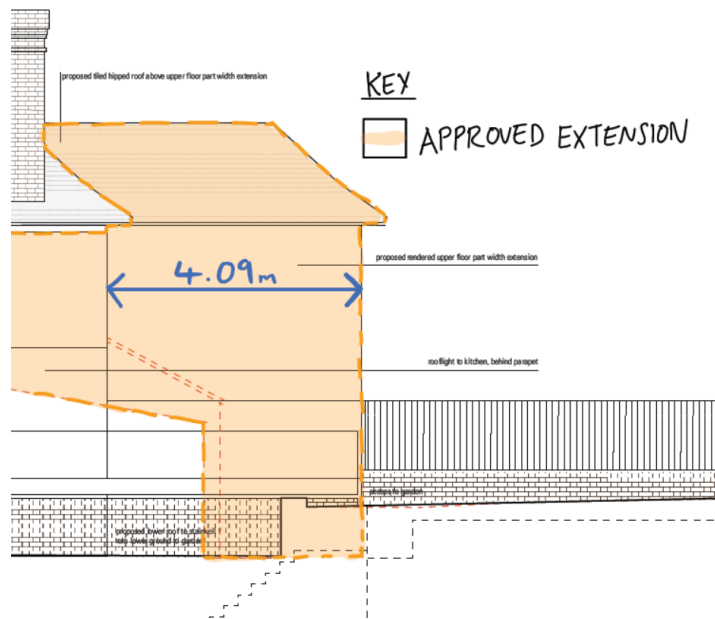
- 3.2. The extension will only be visible from 74 Lawn Road, and not from the public realm.

- 3.3. The proposed extension broadly aligns with the rear façade of No.76's rearmost 2-storey wing.



*Rear building line of No. 76 and approximate location of No. 77's approved (2016/1737/P) 2-storey rear extension façade line*

- 3.4. By comparison, the recently approved 2-storey rear extension at no. 77 Lawn Road extends 4.09m towards the rear garden of the property. The proposed rear extension at No.75 is substantially set back from the approved rear building line of No.77's 2-storey rear extension, as shown in the aerial montage above.



Extract of approved drawing for No.77 rear extension/side elevation (2016/1737/P) with dimensions annotated by NBA (based upon approved drawings)

3.5. The proposed rear extension’s roof will match the existing form and scale and will be covered in clay tiles. The walls below will be in white render, similar to the painted pebble dash currently on the property. Therefore, the character of the rear extension, in terms of both scale and materiality, is entirely in keeping with the host building and the wider conservation area.

#### 4. Impact of front and rear extensions upon the amenity of no.76 & 74 Lawn Road

##### Comments:

##### Impact of front extension upon neighbour’s amenity

The neighbours at Nos. 74 & 76 Lawn Road have objected to the proposed first floor front/side extension on the following grounds:

- being ‘overbearing’
- creating a ‘sense of enclosure’, with the resident at No.76 adding that the new 2 metre projection ‘will create a tunnel effect’.

##### Impact of rear extension upon neighbours amenity

The Belsize Residents Association have objected to:

- the rear extension’ ‘causes a [...] significant loss of amenity to the adjoining neighbour at no.74’
- and ‘causes a regrettable sense of enclosure’

##### Response:

4.1. A review of relevant council policies that address overbearing, outlook and sense of enclosure finds the following:

4.1.1. **Overbearing:** The council has no specific policy on ‘overbearing’. The word does not appear in Local Plan Policy A1 - Managing the Impact of Development and is only used once in CPG 6 in the context of ‘outlook’, where it states:

*7.9 - When designing your development you should also ensure the proximity, size or cumulative effect of any structures do not have an overbearing and/or dominating effect that is detrimental to the enjoyment of their properties by adjoining residential occupiers.*

4.1.2. **Outlook:** CPG 6 describes outlook as follows:

*7.8 - Outlook is the visual amenity enjoyed by occupants when looking out of their windows or from their garden. How pleasant an outlook is depends on what is being viewed. For example, an outlook onto amenity space is more pleasant than an outlook across a servicing yard. You should design developments so that the occupiers have a pleasant outlook. You should screen any unpleasant features with permanent landscaping.*

4.1.3. **Sense of Enclosure:** The council has no policy on ‘Sense of Enclosure’. The phrase does not appear in policy A1 and is only used once in CPG 1 in the context of general principles for rear extensions, where it states:

*4.10 - Rear extensions should be designed to: not cause a loss of amenity to adjacent properties with regard to sunlight, daylight, outlook, overshadowing, light pollution/spillage, privacy/overlooking, and sense of enclosure;*

### **Front/Side Extension**

4.2. The proposed front sloped extension at first floor extends forwards by 2m. Forward of this modest extension, the flank walls of No’s.75 and 76 will remain as existing, which is between 5.38m and 5.91m apart and is a considerable distance when these passageways are arguably a service yard.

4.3. Whilst there is no right to a view in planning terms, the view from this existing front window above the garage of No.76 remains predominantly unchanged as the front extension only partially obscures the view of No. 75 Lawn Road’s flank wall and first floor windows.

The best views from No.76’s first floor front window (above the garage) aren’t of No.75, instead they are across Lawn Road towards the foliage and Italianate style town houses opposite. This aspect will remain unaffected by the development.

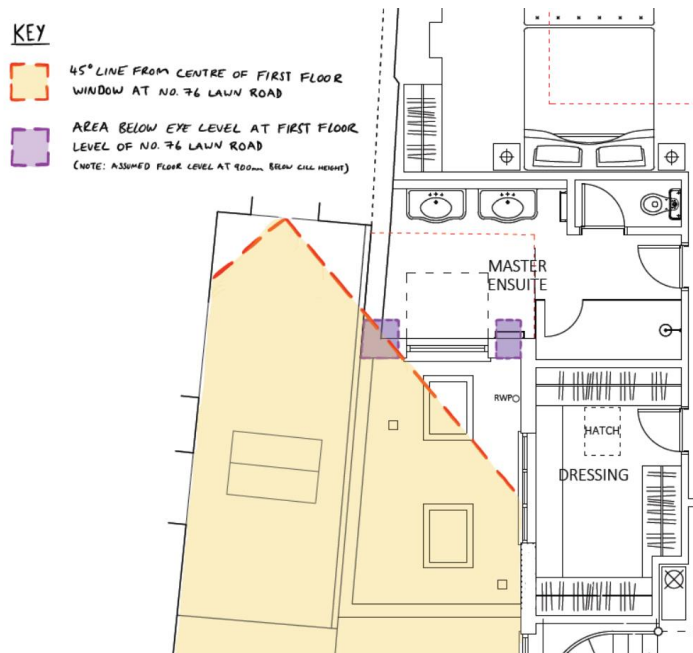
Whilst the proposed side extension will be visible from No.76’s first floor bedroom window, this impact is considered minimal as it will only obstruct views of the flank wall of No.75 Lawn Road (see below visualisation).





*Computer Generated Image of front first floor window above garage at No.76 Lawn Road with window frame shown translucently. This image shows that the extension will not 'create a tunnel effect.'*

- 4.4. Since the bedroom in question is dual-aspect, which is confirmed in the owner's objection letter dated 29.07.2018, the principle views from this room are arguably towards the rear garden from the rear window. This view will remain entirely unaffected by the proposed development at No.75.
- 4.5. The council has no standard test for assessing the impact of an extension on 'sense of enclosure' and 'outlook' or whether it is 'overbearing', but the officer's report for the refused application 2017/6726/P makes reference to a 45 degree visibility zone in relation to the first floor rear extension as measured from the ground floor window. This test presumably comes from the BRE publication 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight' and has been repurposed as a test for 'sense of enclosure'. This test provides a 'rule of thumb' method for assessing the impact of an extension on a neighbour's diffuse skylight levels. It should be noted that this publication warns: *'Like most rules of thumb [the 45 degree approach], this one needs to be interpreted flexibly'* and, a *'VSC calculation (see Sections 2.2.5 and 2.2.6) can be used to quantify the loss of light, if required.'*
- 4.6. Applying a 45 degree line from the mid-point of first floor window above the garage of No.76 shows that the splay does bisect the proposed front extension to No.75 Lawn Road. However, due to its sloped form, this area is almost entirely below eye level (1600mm) as viewed from the first floor level of no. 76 (see sketch below). It is therefore considered that there will be a negligible impact upon No.76's amenity in terms of sense of enclosure.



Plan at first floor showing 45-degree visibility zone from first floor of no. 76 Lawn Road.

### Rear Extension

- 4.7. As noted within the Design & Access Statement, part of the refused application (2017/6726/P), which included the same sized front and rear extensions as this application, specialist consultants Rights of Light Consulting undertook two daylight tests based upon BRE's guidance.

#### Test 1 - Vertical Sky Component

The percentage of the sky visible from the centre of a window is known as the Vertical Sky Component. Diffuse daylight may be adversely affected if after a development the Vertical Sky Component is both less than 27% and less than 0.8 times its former value.

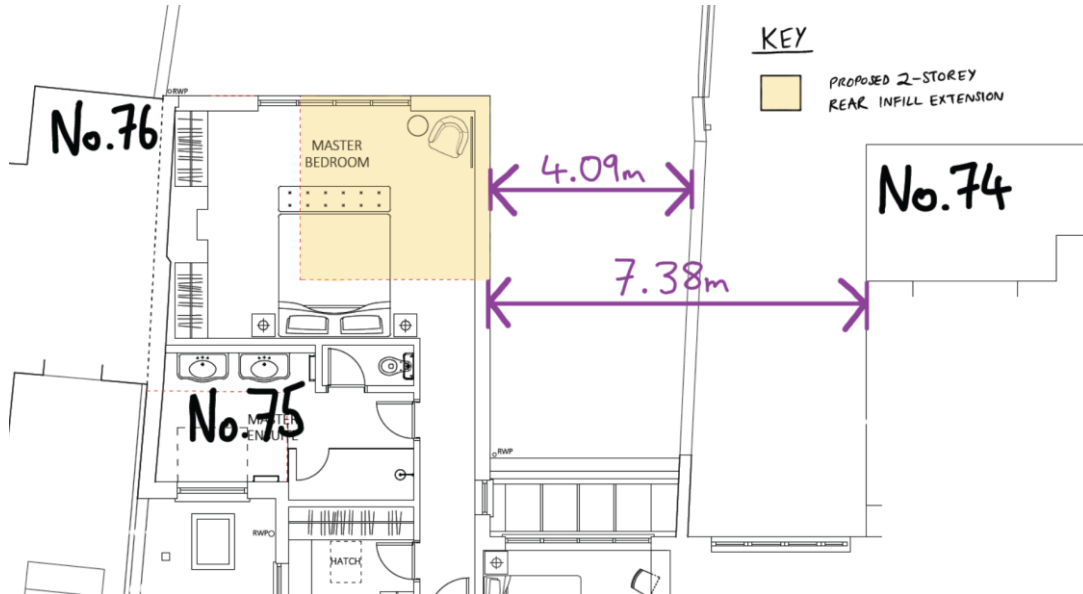
#### Test 2 - Daylight Distribution

The BRE guide states that where room layouts are known, the impact on the daylighting distribution can be found by plotting the 'no sky line' in each of the main rooms. The no sky line is a line which separates areas of the working plane that do and do not have a direct view of the sky. Daylight may be adversely affected if, after the development, the area of the working plane in a room which can receive direct skylight is reduced to less than 0.8 times its former value.

The report by Rights of Light Consulting concluded that: *'All windows pass the Vertical Sky Component test and where applicable, all rooms pass the Daylight Distribution test. The proposed development therefore satisfies the BRE daylight requirements.'*

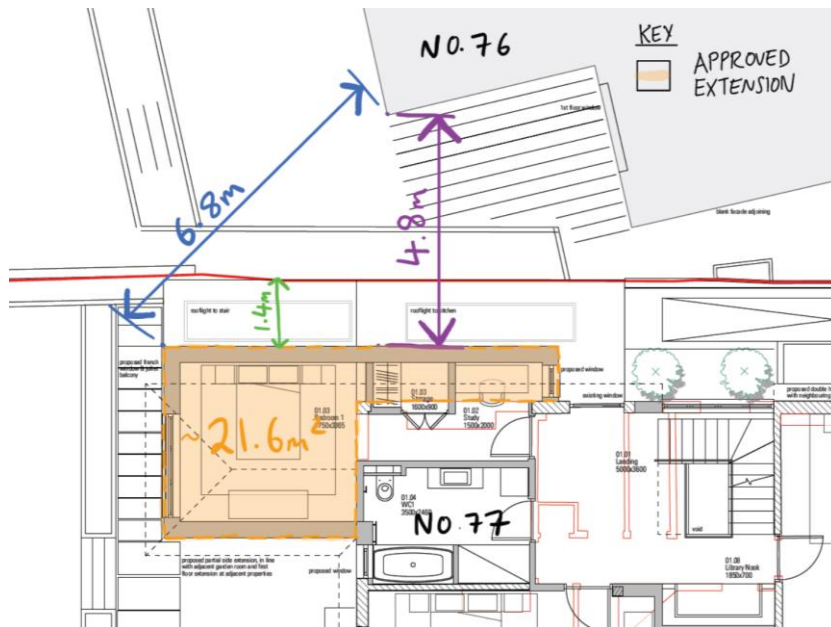
- 4.8. Our visualisations in conjunction with the Rights of Light Consulting's report and their subsequent letter, show that the proposed extensions will have a negligible impact upon neighbouring properties outlook, sense of enclosure and daylight.

- 4.9. The existing flank wall of no. 75 is 4.09m from the boundary wall with No. 74, and 7.4m from No.74's rear flank wall. The position of the flank wall of No.75 is not altered in the proposed development.



Extract showing extent of proposed rear extension which will be no closer to No.74 than the existing flank wall.

- 4.10. By comparison, the recently approved rear extension at no.77 (2016/1737/P) is a two-storey extension which is only 1.4m from the boundary of 76 Lawn Road, and 4.8m from the built form of No.76 increasing to 6.8m as measured to the corner of the extension.



Extract of No.77 first floor plan as approved (2016/1737/P) with NBA annotated dimensions based upon approved drawings

## 5. Conclusion

This application was developed after careful consideration of the officer's previous delegated report and the public's comments received during the previous application 2017/6726/P.

Proposed elements at the front of the property have been reduced in size and the rear has been given a more sympathetic rendered appearance, to protect the amenity of neighbours and preserve and enhance the conservation area.