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# PLANNING, DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

## FULL PLANNING APPLICATION

Rev 00

January 2019

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GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR FLAT,  
3 AKENSIDE ROAD, LONDON NW3 5BS

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Prepared by **AR Architecture Ltd.**

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Nos. 3 is one of a pair of semi-detached residential properties located on the east side of Akenside Road.
- 1.2 During the conversion in the 1980s, No. 3 has been divided into three units of flatted accommodation. The rear garden belongs to the ground floor flat.
- 1.3 The property is not listed but does lie within the Fitzjohns & Netherhall Conservation Area.
- 1.4 This application is for amendment of the full planning permission 2017/4652/P for erection of a single storey rear extension to ground floor flat with a roof terrace above to include the following:



- Amalgamation of the Ground and First floor flats into a single dwelling;
  - Reinstatement of the window on the side elevation with few amendments.
  - Provision of an independent access on the side elevation for the second floor flat.
- 1.5 The parameters and appearance of the single storey rear extension approved under the 2017/4652/P planning consent remain unchanged.
  - 1.6 The Arboricultural Impact Assessment and the Daylight & Sunlight Report have been submitted with the planning application 2017/4652/P and remain fully relevant.
  - 1.7 This statement describes the proposed amendments and explains how they accord with the Council's relevant Planning Policies and other guidance.
  - 1.8 It is set out in the following way:
    - 2.0 Site Analysis
    - 3.0 Planning History
    - 4.0 Relevant Planning Policy
    - 5.0 Analysis
    - 6.0 Summary & Conclusions

## 2.0 Site Analysis

- 2.1 No.3 is one of a pair of semi-detached residential properties located on the east side of Akenside Road. The property comprises three floors of accommodation. In the 1980s, the house was converted to form three separate flats - ground, first and second floor units, and this application relates to the ground and first floor flats.
- 2.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal Statement notes that the building positively contributes to the character of the area.
- 2.3 The surrounding streets are characterised by similar residential properties, some detached but mostly set in semi-detached pairs.
- 2.4 The properties are constructed of brick with render at first floor level and have traditional tiled roofs.



*Aerial view of the site*

- 2.5 The rear of the house and the garden are well screened from public views and from the wider Conservation Area by the property itself and the houses in the surrounding streets, Wedderburn Road and Lyndhurst Road.
- 2.6 The garden is of substantial size and benefits from a reasonable amount of mature landscaping, providing screening and privacy to the area of the house overlooking it, which are therefore pleasant private spaces.





*Rear view of the property*

- 2.7 The garden is accessible from a side lane, adjoining the property No.4, and secured with a metal gate. The lane is about 1.0m wide and enclosed by a close-boarded timber fence that is about 2.7m high, providing enough privacy for both adjoining properties.
- 2.8 Most of the properties in this and neighbouring streets benefit from reasonably sized rear additions at ground floor level. In most cases the extensions are similar to their neighbours in terms of form and depth, particularly where the properties are semi-detached pairs. This assists in retaining balance and ensuring the amenity of neighbours is protected.
- 2.9 The paired houses Nos 2 & 3 are almost symmetric, with few differences in terms of size and location of windows, chimneys and decorative details, some attributed to the staggered position of the pair.
- 2.10 At rear ground floor level both properties had single storey rear wing projections and bay features. No 3 was previously extended to link the bay to the wing, with a balcony added to its first floor at the rear. A full-width rear extension has been recently completed at No 2, as part of a full refurbishment project.
- 2.11 The single storey rear extension to No 3 consented under 2017/4652/P is almost symmetric to the one at No 2, with slightly different glazing details and minor differences in shape determined by the rights of light for No 4.
- 2.12 Previous to the conversion of the property No. 3 into three units in the 1980s, the low window in the centre of the side façade was originally under the landing of the stair. Subsequently, the large window above was significantly reduced and moved higher, randomly changing the original appearance of the façade.
- 2.13 We see our application as an opportunity to enhance the wider Conservation Area by retaining and upgrading the elements that contribute to the character and the appearance of the area.

### 3.0 Planning History

3.1 A few entries in the planning register relate to periodic pruning and coppicing works to site trees.

3.2 The following entries are relevant to the current application:

3.3 **84/01275 - Change of use to create two self-contained flats and one maisonette.**

The permission, granted on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1984, enabled the subdivision of No. 3 to create the three-unit layout evident on site today.

3.4 **2014/1925/P - Erection of Single Storey Rear Extension**

On 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014 planning permission was granted for a single storey rear extension to the existing single storey rear projection at No.3.

3.5 **2015/0851/P - Excavation of basement level and the erection of a single storey rear extension. Conversion of garage for use as habitable residential space and other associated alterations.**

On 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016 planning permission was granted for full refurbishment of Nos 2 & 3. The proposals were initially for basements and rear extensions at both houses; then the basement under No.3 was omitted.

3.6 **2015/1207/P - Erection of a single storey rear extension.**

The permission was granted on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016 for the works to No 3 already applied for under 2015/0851/P, presumably in order to allow their independent procurement.

3.7 **2017/4652/P - Erection of single storey rear extension to ground floor flat with roof terrace enclosed by balustrades above for use by first floor flat; installation of 1 x new ground floor side window.**

This planning application was for amalgamation of planning consents 2015/1207/P and 2014/1925/P, with minor amendments. Full planning permission was granted on 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2017.

3.8 **2017/4653/P - Erection of single storey rear outbuilding in rear garden for use ancillary to ground floor flat.**

Full planning permission was granted on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

## 4.0 Relevant Planning Policy

### 4.1 Camden Local Plan 2017:

- H3 'Protecting existing homes'

### 4.2 Camden Council Local Development Framework:

- DP24 'Securing High Quality Design';
- DP25 'Conserving Camden's Heritage';
- DP26 'Managing the Impact of Development on Occupiers and Neighbours'.

### 4.3 Camden Planning Guidance (updated 2018):

- CPG1 'Design';
- CPG2 'Housing';
- CPG3 'Sustainability';

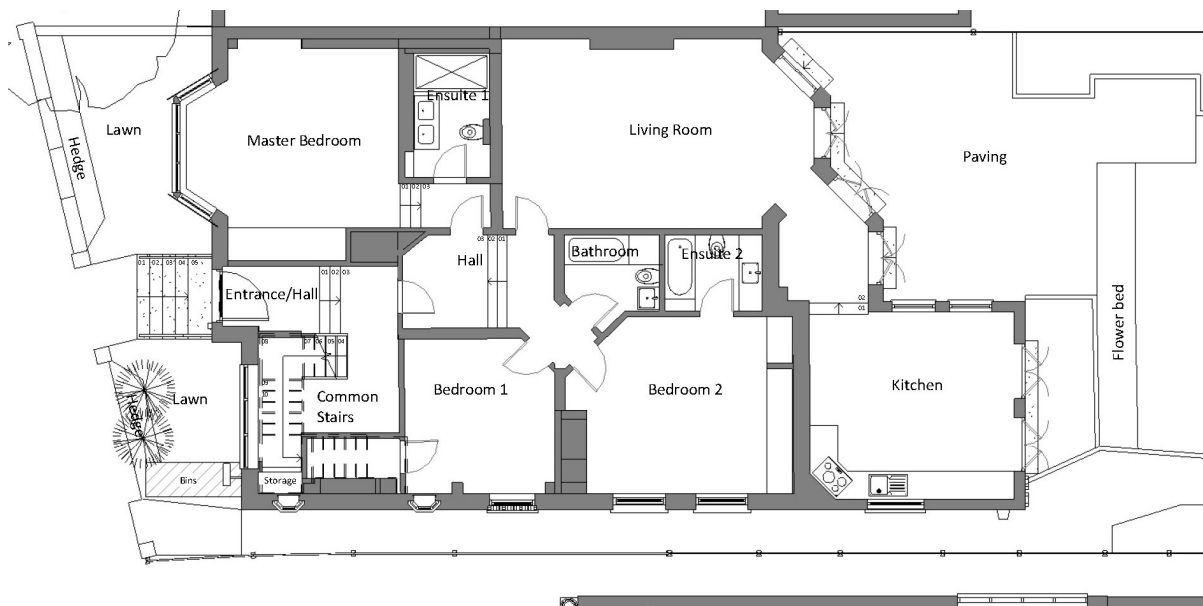
### 4.4 Fitzjohns & Netherhall Conservation Area Statement:

- F/N28-30 'Trees & Landscaping';
- F/N32 'Backland/Rear Gardens'

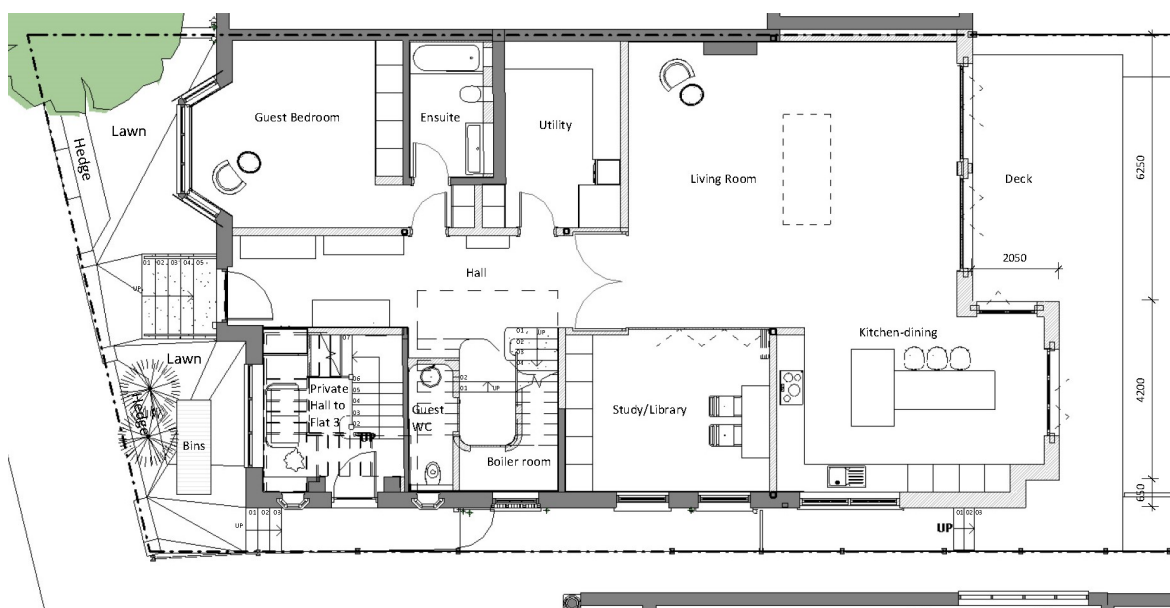
## 5.0 Analysis

- 5.1 The building is currently comprised of two 3-bedroom flats on the Ground and First floors and one 3-bedroom maisonette on the Second and Third floors, accessed through a common stair. This layout is a result of the conversion in the 1980s from a single dwelling.
- 5.2 As established in the previous planning history, the rear facades of Nos. 2 & 3 are hardly visible from anywhere in the public realm and, due to the dense vegetation along the boundaries, there is no viewing point from which the façades of both proposed rear extensions could be seen together in their entirety.

### Amalgamation of ground and first floor flats into a single dwelling

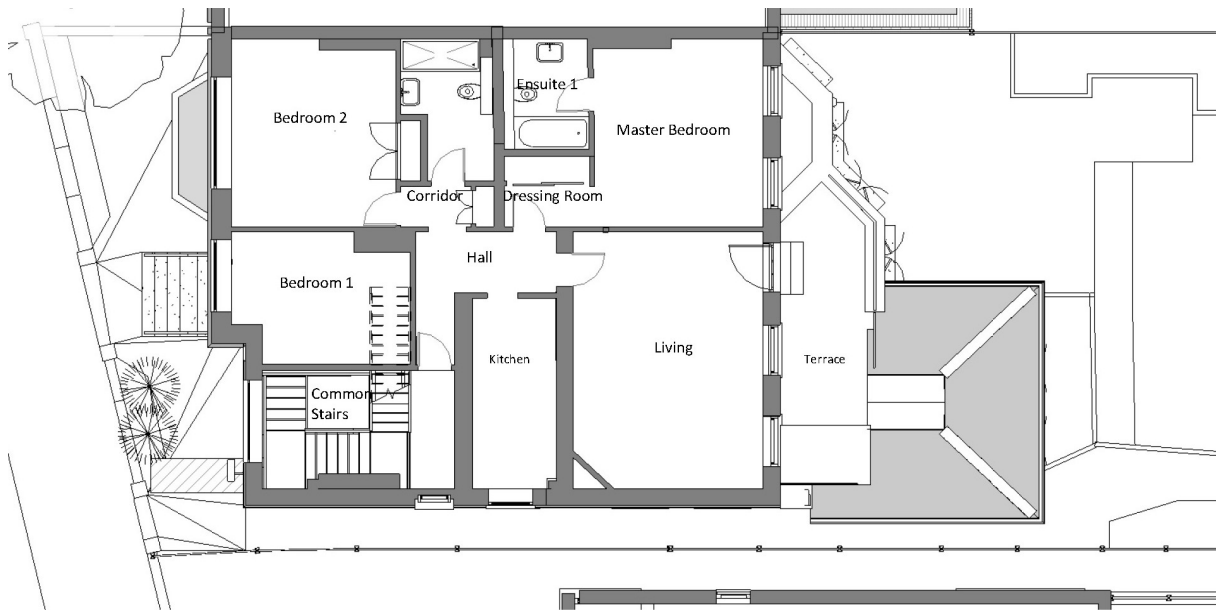


Existing Ground floor plan

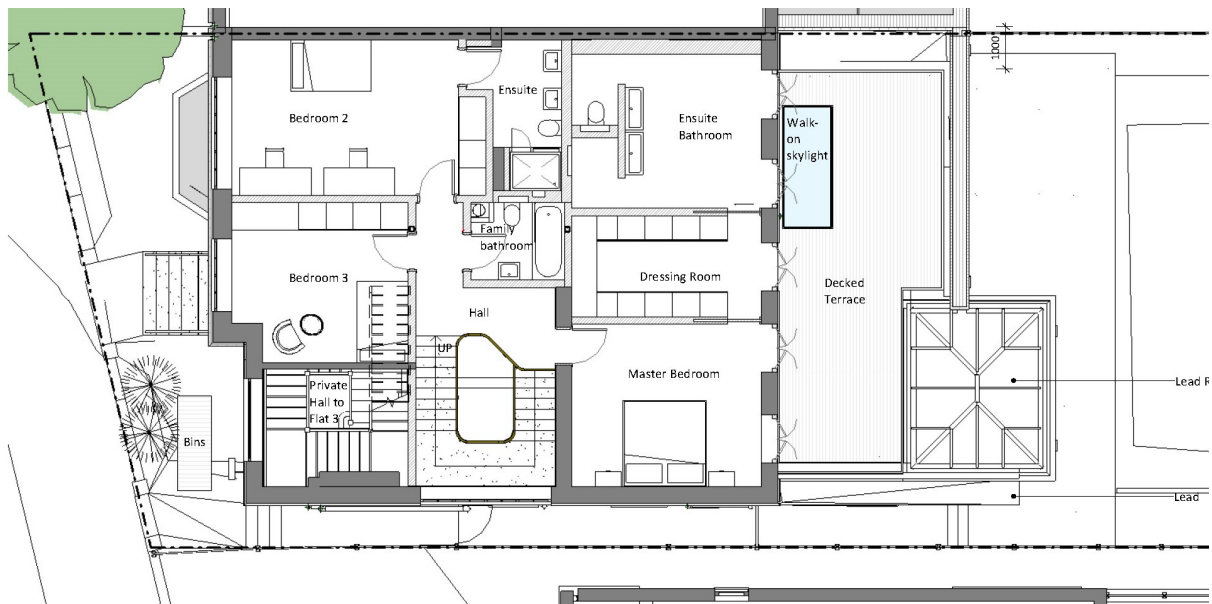


Proposed Ground floor plan

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Existing First floor plan



Proposed First floor plan

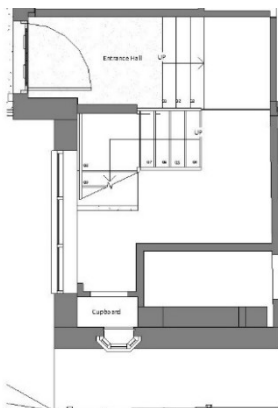
- 5.3 The Policy H3 – ‘Protecting existing homes’ of the Local Plan 2017 and CPG2 – ‘Housing’ expressly allow amalgamation of no more than two units: “H3-3.75 - Net loss of one home is acceptable when two dwellings are being combined into a single dwelling. Such developments can help families to deal with overcrowding, to grow without moving home, or to care for an elderly relative. Within a block of flats or apartments, such a change may not constitute development” and CPG2-6.4 - “The Council does not generally seek to resist schemes combining dwellings where they involve loss of a single home”.
- 5.4 This application proposes the amalgamation of ground and first floors into a single 4-bedroom dwelling, with a net loss of one residential unit. The new layout will provide a high standard of accommodation.

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- 5.5 The existing internal common stair, created during the conversion in 1985, currently provides access to all three flats in the building. As a result of the proposed amalgamation, this stair will become part of the second floor flat, providing private access through the new side entrance.
- 5.6 A new internal stair will be provided in the same location as it was before the conversion of the property, reinstating the original quality of the internal space.
- 5.7 The new dwelling will provide a good quality of accommodation in terms of access to daylight and sunlight, with the unit being dual aspect and with a walk-on skylight above the Living room.
- 5.8 The new proposal would not result in the loss of residential floorspace and would therefore be in accordance with *Policy H3 – ‘Protecting existing homes’*.
- 5.9 The *Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard* (2015) document specifies a minimum GIA (Gross Internal Area) of 124 sqm for a 4-bedroom (8 bedspace) unit over two floors.
- 5.10 The proposed unit would have a GIA of 293 sq. m, far surpassing this standard. The proposed bedrooms will all exceed the minimum space standard of 11.5 sq. m for double occupancy bedrooms, whereas almost 100% of the GIA of the unit would have a minimum internal height over 2.3m, way over the minimal requirement of 75%.
- 5.11 Given the above assessment, we believe the proposed amalgamation will be in compliance with the existing policies.

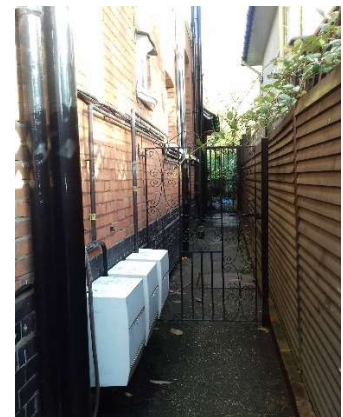
#### New private side access and stairs to the second floor flat



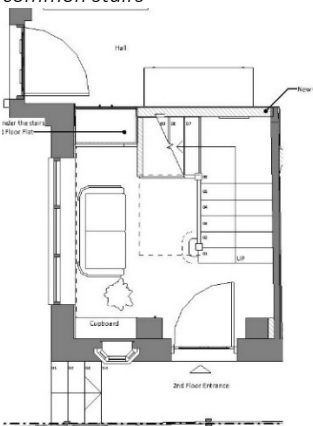
*Existing Entrance Hall and common stairs*



*Street view of the side entrance area*



*View of the side passage*



*Proposed Entrance Hall and private stairs to the second floor flat*



*Proposed stairs and new entrance - Section*



*Proposed new entrance - Side elevation*

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*Views of the new proposed side entrance to second floor flat*

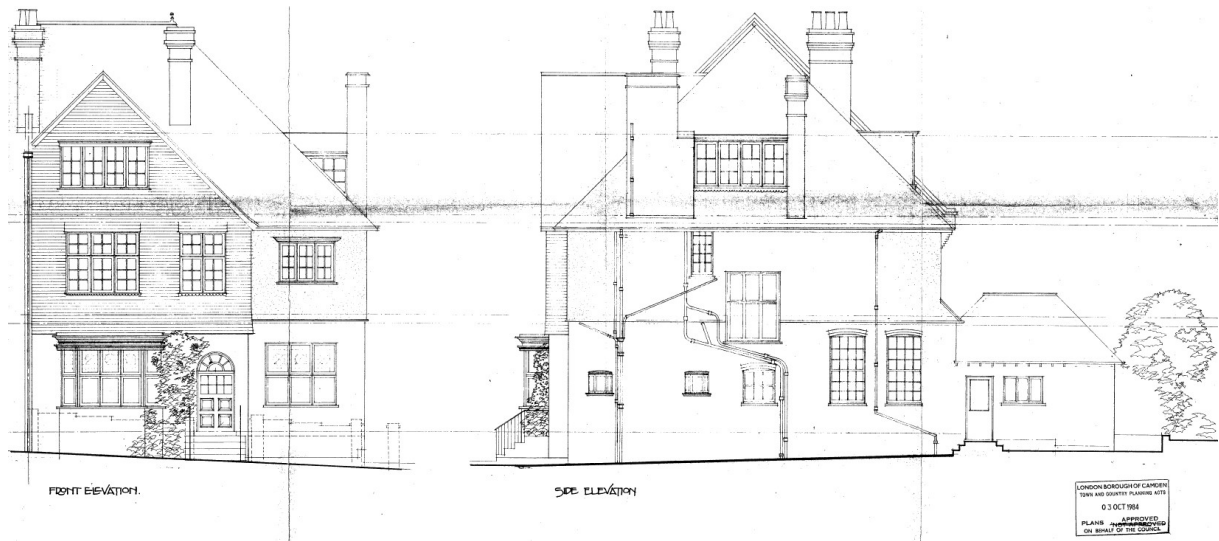
- 5.12 A new entrance door to the second floor flat will be created on the side elevation. It will match the existing front door in terms of style and material, but remain subordinated to it in size in order not to distract from the main entrance.
- 5.13 The new door will be placed centrally between the two existing small stained bay windows to maintain the proportions and the character of the side façade.
- 5.14 The level of the side passage will be raised by several steps. This minor alteration will not be detrimental to the privacy of the neighbouring property (No.4) as the boundary timber fence is high enough (about 2.7m) and prevents overlooking.
- 5.15 The tall boundary fence and the vegetation along the boundary almost entirely obstruct the proposed door from the public realm, thus minimising its visual impact on the conservation area.
- 5.16 The external waste bins enclosure, now facing the side access, will be rotated 90 degrees towards the building, in order to provide a more pleasant access to the new entrance. This will not alter or damage the existing vegetation to the front façade.
- 5.17 Whereas the proposed minor amendments would not impact on the character and overall appearance of the property within the Conservation Area, provision of a separate entrance to the second floor flat would significantly increase its quality in terms of total area, internal layout and privacy.
- 5.18 The proposal has been discussed and agreed with the owners of the second floor flat.

#### **Reinstatement of the original window to the side elevation**

- 5.19 As previously noted (see 2.11 above), the low window in the centre of the side façade was originally under the landing of the internal stairs. During the conversion in the 1980s, the large window above was significantly reduced and moved higher, randomly changing the original appearance of the facade.
- 5.20 We propose to reinstate the original aspect of the side façade, by re-introducing the window that was there before the conversion in the 1980s.
- 5.21 The window will closely match the original in terms of type, glazing patterns and proportions, opening method, materials and finishes.

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- 5.22 Following the principles of the original property, the reinstated window needs to be related to the new stairs. Therefore, we propose a slightly larger window, more suitable for the new internal arrangement. It will provide ample amount of light into the flat, enhancing the quality of the residential accommodation.
- 5.23 The existing window is 1m from the boundary with No. 4. The house on the other side of the boundary is also set back by 1m. The houses are staggered, and the window in question looks towards the street. Therefore, the increased size of the window is not going to cause loss of privacy to the adjacent property. In addition, any overlooking to the neighbouring will be avoided by using stained glass.
- 5.24 The proposal would not harm the character of the building and the conservation area; instead, it would reinstate the original feature, thus enhancing the character of the conservation area.



*Facades of No.3 prior to conversion in the 1980s*



*Existing side elevation of No.3 (as altered in 1984) with No.4 overlaid*

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*Proposed side elevation of No.3 with No.4 overlaid*



## 6.0 Summary & Conclusions

6.1 The subject of this application is:

- Erection of the single storey rear extension to ground floor flat with roof terrace enclosed by balustrades above, as permitted by planning consent 2017/4652/P;
- Amalgamation of ground and first floors into a single dwelling;
- Reinstatement of the original window to the side elevation with minor amendments;
- Provision of an independent access on the side elevation for the second floor flat.

6.2 The proposals have been designed with regard to the site's character, opportunities and constraints and incorporate the observations made by Officers in determination of the previous applications.

6.3 The proposals accord with Development Policies DP24, DP25 and DP26 as well as Camden Planning Guidance Policy 1, 2 and 3, Camden Local Plan Policy H3 and Fitzjohns & Netherhall Conservation Area Statement.

6.4 Officers' support for this application is therefore requested.