76 Lawn Road, London, NW3 2XB

Heritage, Design and Access Statement

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CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

76 Lawn Road is a detached[1], two storey family house dated around the 1920s. It is not listed, but it is located withing the Park Hill and Upper Park Conservation Area, where it is considered to make a positive contribution. Its style is described as 'garden suburb house' of the Arts and Crafts Movement[2] .

It is the only detached house in between pairs of semi-detached similar dwellings. It is situated towards the front of its plot, allowing for a large rear garden and a smaller front lawn area. In comparison with its neighbouring pairs, n76 front building line is not as forward as Nos 75/74 nor as recessed as Nos 77/78.

There are a number of trees dispersed in both front and rear green areas, with the two most significant ones currently under tree protection orders; the Sycamore tree (T1) in the front and the Dawn Redwood (T7) at the very end of the plot.

Lastly, the house suffers from severe subsidence, rendering it dangerous at the moment. We will expand further down on the reasons this was caused and the proposal for rectification.

1. It is partly attached to No75, but in comparison to the rest of Lawn Road's paired semi-detached houses, it is the only one that is unpaired, hence detached in this context.

2.'Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy' https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/7873632/Parkhill+and+Upper+Park+CAA+%26+MS+adopted.pdf/182922ac-64f5-d957-9f71-64a5275a9404

Aerial photograph of Lawn Road and the context of its neighbouring streets

Aerial photograph of 76 Lawn Road in its immediate context

1.2 KEY ASPECTS OF THE BRIEF

The new owners, a family of five, is seeking to turn this into their dream family home, with the brief's key aspects as below:

- Make the existing house habitable and address significant structural issues;
- Provide a basement to house the secondary uses and plant room;
- Remove unsightly entrance canopy and seek to re-instate historic glazing patterns on the primary frontage;
- Seek to protect the TPO tree at the front of the property if possible;
- Introduce minor changes at first floor and roof level to enable loft space accommodation.

Front Elevation - shown in the context of the immediate neighbouring properties

Rear Elevation

2 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 CONSERVATION AREA

The context of the site is that of a residential street within the Park Hill and Upper Park Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Appraisal notes that "*Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area is part of the nineteenth century London suburb of Belsize, running along the east side of Haverstock Hill. The area is defined by the busy, urban nature of Haverstock Hill and the quiet residential streets that branch from it.*

The quality of the landscape is defined by the hilly topography, the mature trees and the tranche of back gardens behind the houses lining the streets, a typical characteristic of 19th century residential areas."

Within Lawn Road, No76 is the only detached house within a row of paired semi-detached red brick Victorian dwellings in the west side of Lawn Road. The east side of the street dates earlier, in the 1860s, with pairs of Italianate style brick and stucco villas attributed to William Lund.

Below are some relevant extracts from the Conservation Area Appraisal

4.2 Character and plan form

The curving streets radiate uphill from Haverstock Hill. The character of the area is defined by the detached and semi-detached houses laid out from 1850 in the Italianate style, late Victorian red brick gabled houses, garden suburb style and 1930s modernism. Infill between houses has been incremental, displaying a significant variety of style and quality.

The Mall Studios and the St Pancras Almshouses are included within the area but have their own separate characters: the Mall is a terrace of artists' studios,

PAIR Nos 77/ 78

PAIR Nos 75/ 74

hidden behind a shared gateway; the Almshouses are inward-looking around their own courtyard and are accessed from Southampton Road.

and further down..

20th century

The west side of Lawn Road was started by 1914 and completed in the inter-war years in the Garden Suburb style. The houses are built in a rich red stock brick, with a homely, picturesque character. The properties face those of an earlier Italianate urban style on the other side of the street. At the north western end of Lawn Road are the Isokon Flats designed by the architect Wells Coates in 1934 for Jack and Molly Pritchard.

More specifically for Lawn Road:

Lawn Road

The character is typically of semi-detached pairs of houses with substantial trees in front and rear gardens. Post-1945 flats replace war damage at the corner with Upper Park Road and at the other end with Fleet Road: Troyes House is a Council-owned block at the south end of the street which is set back from the street behind lawns and mature trees and is embellished by a GLC coat of arms, built on the site of a convent bombed in World War II.

On the east side up to No 12 are pairs of 1860s semi-detached brick and stucco villas attributed to William Lund: here there is some loss of railings; on the west side, red brick houses are in the Arts and Crafts style with hedged front gardens. A substantial length of pavement is laid in matching red brick to complement the houses. The area's homogeneous character is being eroded where hedges are removed, mullioned windows are replaced with plate glass, side windows are replaced with large windows breaking eaves lines, inappropriate dormers, and ramped drives that damage gardens.

PAIR Nos 81/ 82

between PAIRs Nos 77/ 78 and 79/80

The application site is a link detached house in the arts and crafts style. Unlike other properties on the street it is not one of a pair. The house is set back from the road with a raised front garden and steep brick lined driveway.

Side dormer on No73

Side dormer on No77

Side dormer on No79

2.2 THE EXISTING SITE – CURRENT CONDITION AND STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

76 Lawn Road is a two storey family dwelling with a pitched roof. It features soft -red brick front and side elevations and a rendered rear elevation.
The building has received a few alterations in its past that have resulted in an ad-hoc appearance, with elements that are not in-keeping with its style and era.
Looking at the OS maps since 1930[3], when the Lawn Road west side development first makes an appearance, we can see that the footprint of the dwelling has not been altered significantly since its construction.

Between 1940 and 1950 it is evident that the small north part, the garage outrigger attached to No75, has been demolished or destroyed. It was later rebuilt, approximately around 1970, with a first floor small addition on top.
It is assumed that at some point in the past 30- 40 years most of the windows have been replaced with unsympathetic and uncharacteristic large pane PVCs and there was also an addition of a rather 'American suburbia' style portico roof (ref. F9/14/1/1582).

At the rear, there is a mismatch of styles, materials and volumes. The north addition is finished in brick, in contrast to the rest that is rendered. The windows have different styles, heights and proportions and there is a small larder outbuilding that adds to this unfortunate morphology.

The house is located towards the front of the plot, sharing it with a rear garden with a mature tree at the very end and a front lawn area. There is a total inclination of approximately 2 meters from rear to front.

3. Please look at the accompanying Basement Impact Assessment report.

Views from rear garden, showing laeder and rear windows

2.3 COMPROMISED STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

76 Lawn Road has suffered severe subsidence in the past 4-5 years. It is evident in the photos below as well as the structural report commissioned by the previous owner. According to Alan Baxter structural engineer there are three main reasons that led to this unsafe condition.

- *The volume change of the London clay due to changes in moisture content. This is caused by variation in rainfall and the presence of the ivy plants and large trees close to the foundations*
- *Water leaking from the collapsed pipe at the rear of the property affecting the moisture content and strength of the clay*
- *The construction of the basement to 77 Lawn Road*[4]

Specifically:

'The main cracking and movement to the property appears to be caused by volume changes of the London clay underlying the property. The foundations to the property are fairly shallow and are therefore more likely to be affected by ground movements than deeper foundations. The ground movements adjacent to the flank wall to No 77 are likely to be mainly related to the construction of the adjacent basement.

The movements in the London clay have been exacerbated by the presence of water leaking from a collapsed drainage pipe at the rear of the property. This appears to have been affecting the clay under the property for many years but during last year's long, dry summer the water supply ceased and the moisture content in the clay under the property reduced significantly.

This was exacerbated by the large trees around the house and the ivy plants on the external walls drawing water through their roots which are present to a

Internal photographs showing extend of cracking

Internal photographs showing extend of cracking

4. 76 Lawn Road, ***Report on the Cracking and Movement of the Structure,*** Prepared for Dr Solomon, April 2019, Alan Baxter Ltd

depth of about 2m at the front of the house. The resultant desiccation in the clay caused considerable movement of the ground, particularly to the rear, close to where the collapsed pipe is located.

The results of the movement monitoring indicate that the rear section of the building moved towards the rear and settled by up to about 20mm. The ground movement and cracking to the front of the building was less severe but was fairly widespread. The movement monitoring also indicated that the building moved slightly towards the basement excavation to No 77 when it was being excavated. The amount of movement appeared to be generally consistent with the ground movements which could be expected for this type of basement construction.

The basement construction works are now complete and the ground movement which affected the property appears to have ceased. There may be a small amount of residual movement as a result of ground heave under the basement but this is likely to be very small and should cease within 6 months or so.

The report concludes with the followings options for addressing the issue and relevant advice.

There are several approaches which could be considered to address the issues relating to the main ground movements under the property caused by the desiccation of the clay. Three options have been described below:-

• Option 1 – Repair the collapsed drain, remove the ivy plants and pollard the trees to reduce the water demand, and then monitor the on-going movement and cracks to the property. Once the movements have stabilised undertake repairs to the walls and redecorate. There will be an on-going requirement to control the size of the trees.

• Option 2 – Repair the collapsed drain, underpin the property to a depth of between about 1.5m to the rear and 2.5m to the front, then repair the walls and redecorate.

• Option 3 – Rebuild the property with deeper foundations or a single storey basement. All drains would be replaced.

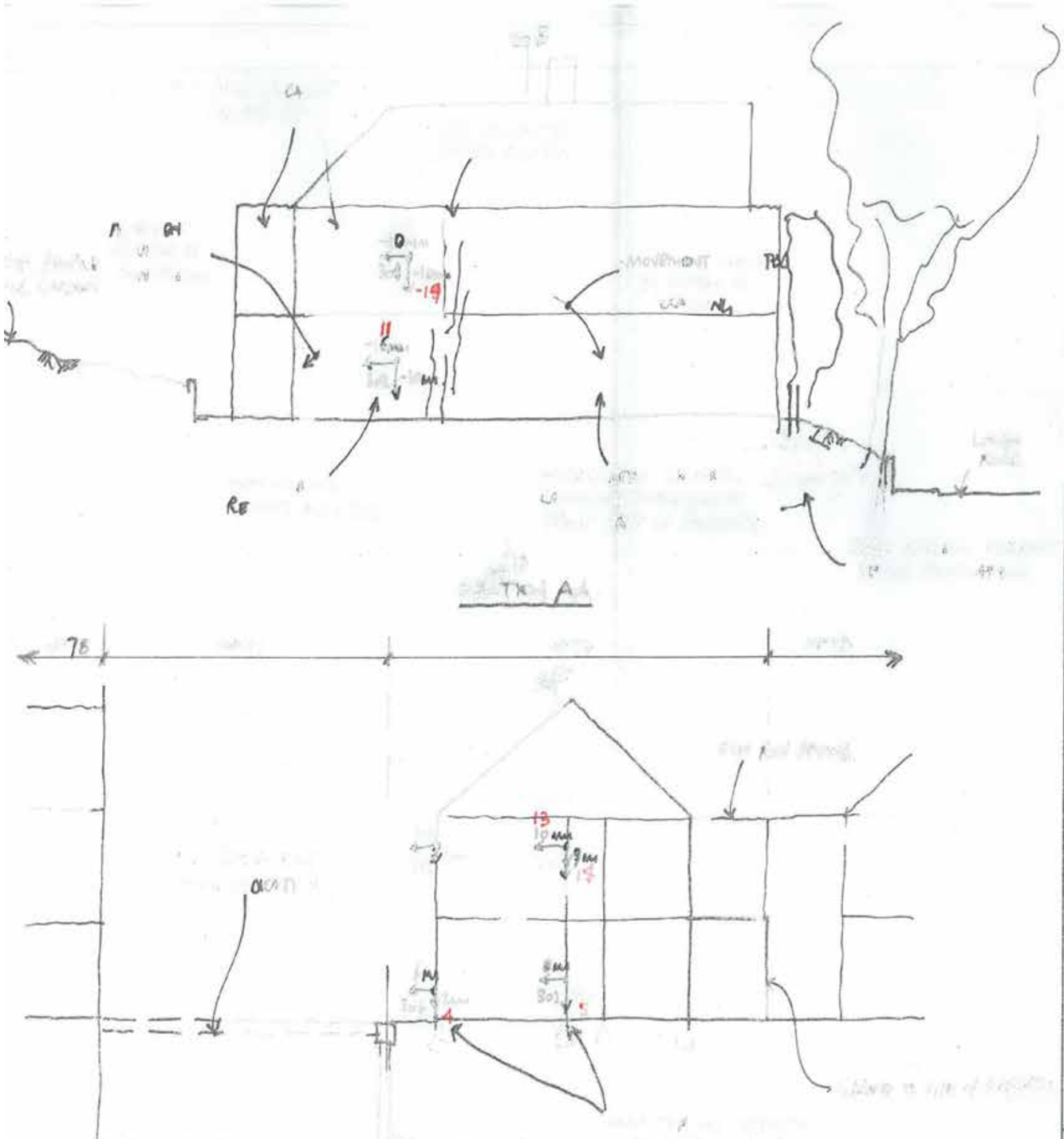
Internal photographs showing extend of cracking, subsidence and ceiling condition

Option 1 involves the least work and is the least costly approach. However, even though the leak from the drain has been addressed and the risk of desiccation from plant/tree roots has been reduced, there is still a risk of some on-going ground movement, particularly during long, dry periods in the summer. It may also take a year or so for the movements caused by the leaking drain to stabilise.

Options 2 and 3 involve the construction of deeper foundations to the building which are then founded at a level below which there is a risk of desiccation in the clay. There is likely to be some initial settlement of the foundations due to new loads bearing on the clay but long term movements of the foundations should be negligible.

This application seeks to follow the advice given in the Structural report and to address the major structural concerns. Having considered all of the options, my clients determined that option 1 contained significant risk that the issues would not be resolved and concerned significant works to protected trees. The loss of the tree to protect the future structural integrity of the house was also discussed and dismissed (see next section).

Option 3, to provide a basement, was considered to be the most viable option as the costs of repair could be offset against the provision of new residential floorspace. It was determined that the basement could be designed in such a way that the tree was protected and that the basement would provide protection from future root damage from the large tree



Sketches from the report showing movement and relevance of tree roots

2.4 FRONT LIGHTWELL AND SYCAMORE TREE DISCUSSION

The Camden Basement Policy asks for any new basement windows in the front facade to be aligned to the openings above and similar in style and fenestration.
This is how Nos 77 and 75 have been approved (or are pending decision) and how it would be ergonomically viable for the spaces at the front of the basement to be naturally lit and ventilated.

On our initial proposal, the front lightwell extended 90cm from the front bay window, which was replicated as the existing above, with similar style but subordinate in height. When the arboriculturist, Richard Parmee (BSc MSc Tech Cert (ArborA) MArborA GradCIEEM) was asked to comment on the draft, his response was that the roots would be harmed and the life of the tree comrpomised.
However given the inclination of the Sycamore tree and likelihood of collapse, there would be an argument in felling and replacing with one further inwards.

''*The extent of excavation required for the basement extension is likely to remove too many roots for the tree to tolerate. It could die as a consequence. Given that the tree already leans towards the road and the retaining wall is cracked, loss of roots could cause the tree to fail.*

However, you may be able to build a case for removal of the tree as it is obviously both leaning over the road and damaging the wall. If it fell, it would land in the road with potentially disastrous consequences. It's not the best tree, with its form already compromised by past reduction that will require regular repetition to prevent failure of regrowth.

The Council will prefer to keep large canopy trees as they benefit the environment (air filtration, temperature moderation, rain water attenuation etc.), but a tree such as this will have its canopy size limited and at some point the damage to the wall will require repair work, which could destabilise the tree. Taking the tree out and providing at least one replacement, set further back from the retaining wall, may be acceptable as part of the application. The new tree(s) would grow roots in response to the basement extension, rather than have roots removed to allow it. This approach would mean the future occupants having to tolerate shading from trees, but they do already.''

The design team, consultants and clients have given a long and thoughtfull consideration on how to proceed regarding the treatment of the front sycamore tree;

- Given the fact that its existence is one of the three main reasons for the severe structural concerns of the house, but if the other two reasons are dealt with, with a robust basement construction that will allow new foundations and drainage system

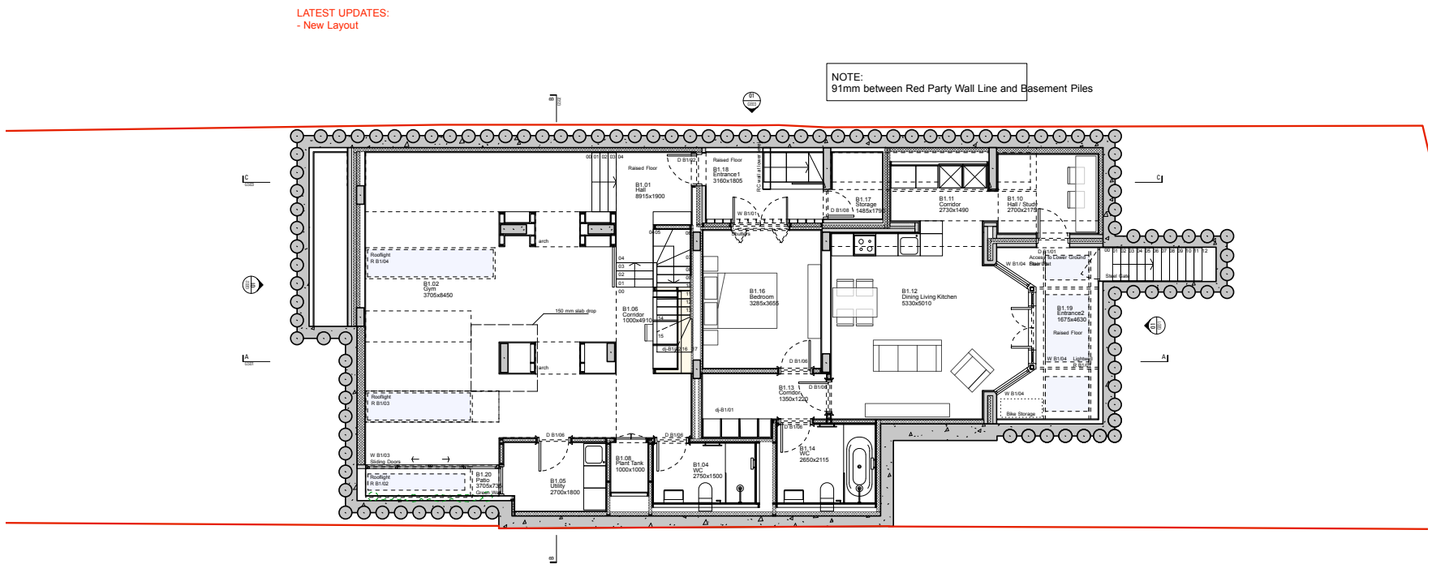
- Added that it is leaning towards the public street, held by a collapsing retaining brick wall, but nevertheless has existed as such and can be treated so as to be stabilised

- Taking into consideration the size, age and significance of the tree within Lawn Road and the Conservation area

and decided that the benefits of keeping the front tree outweigh the benefits of felling it. Even if it means that the front lightwell space and window adjustment will be compromised, allowing only for side windows for light and ventilation and two very small cour anglais rather then actual aligned lightwells.

3 PLANNING HISTORY AND PRECEDENTS

There is significant precedent regarding basements on the east side of Lawn Road.
Both our immediate neighbours, Nos 75 and 77 have applied for one, with No77 just completed and No75 pending decision. Further down the road, No81 also received approval and built one in 2007.

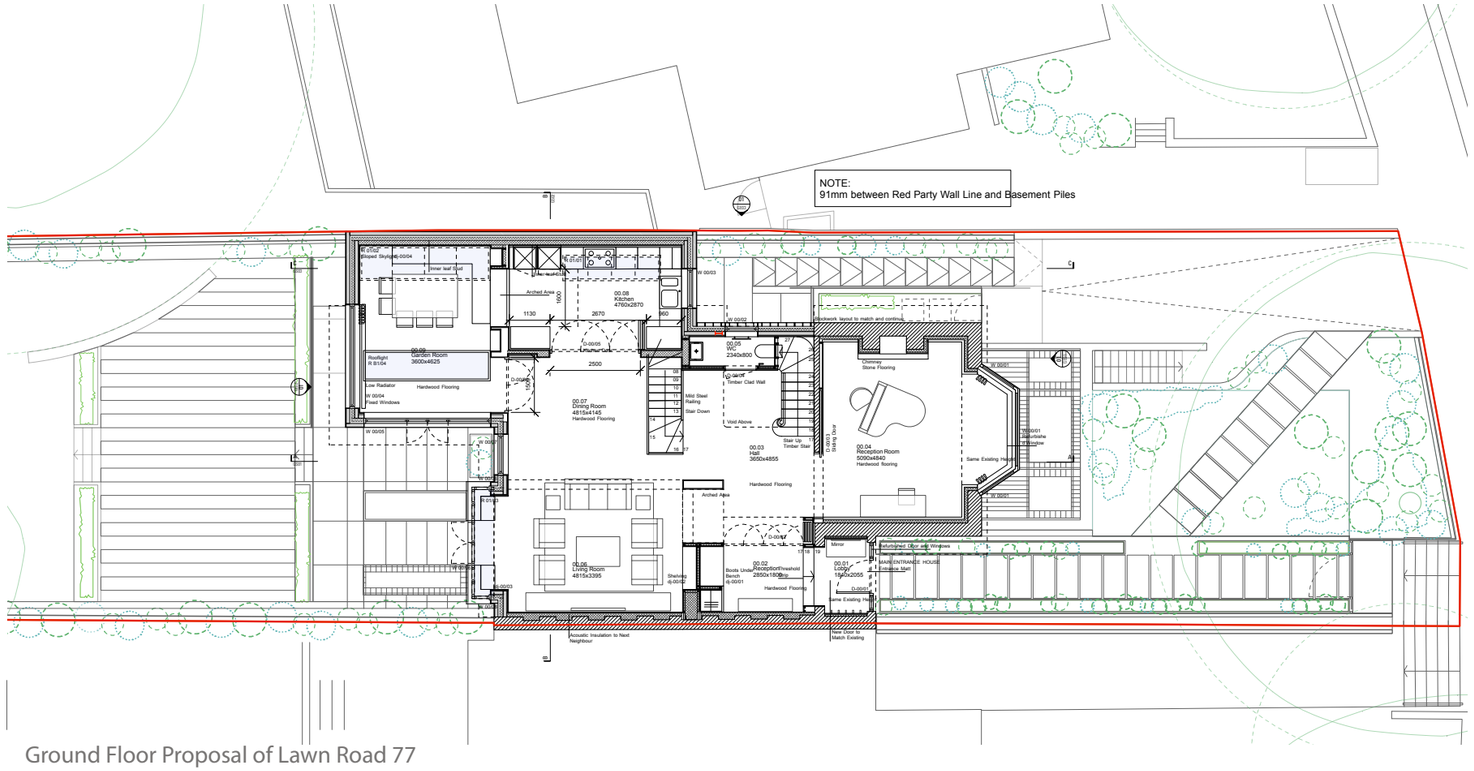


Basement Proposal of Lawn Road 77

3.1 77 LAWN ROAD

2018/4221/P (variation on below) -Pending decision

2016/1737/P - Approved
Creation of basement to form additional living accommodation for existing dwelling and new 1x self-contained 1-bed flat at lower ground floor level; alterations to driveway and erection of new boundary fencing; erection of part two storey and part single storey side and rear extension; alterations to fenestration; and associated works

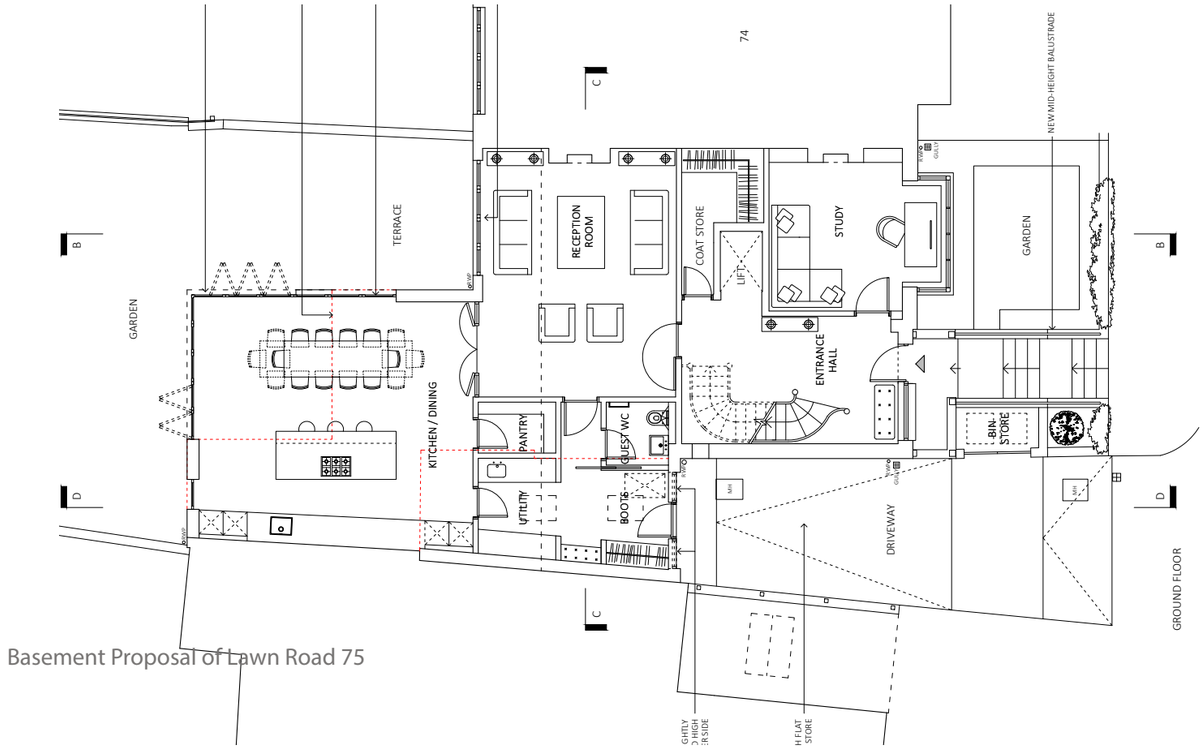


Ground Floor Proposal of Lawn Road 77

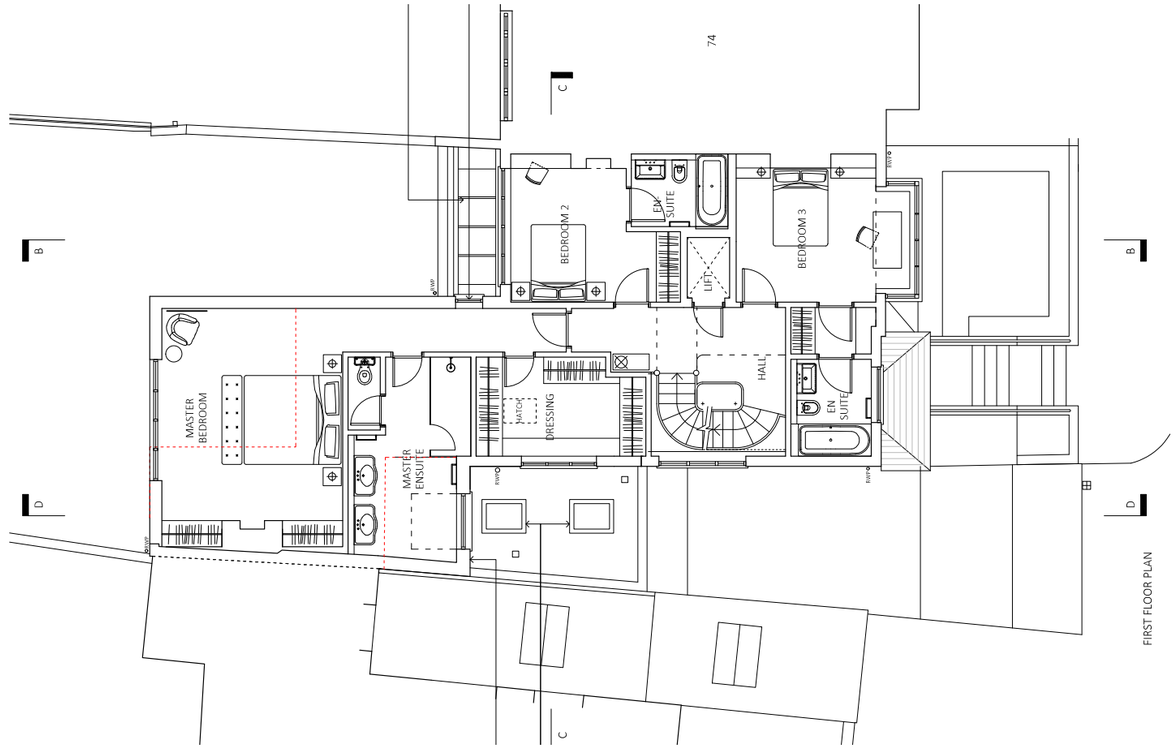
3.2 75 LAWN ROAD

2018/2136/P - Pending Decision

Formation of new basement level with front and rear light-wells, single storey rear infill extension, part single, part two storey side extension, front, side and rear dormer windows, front and rear landscaping, alterations to driveway and associated works



Basement Proposal of Lawn Road 75

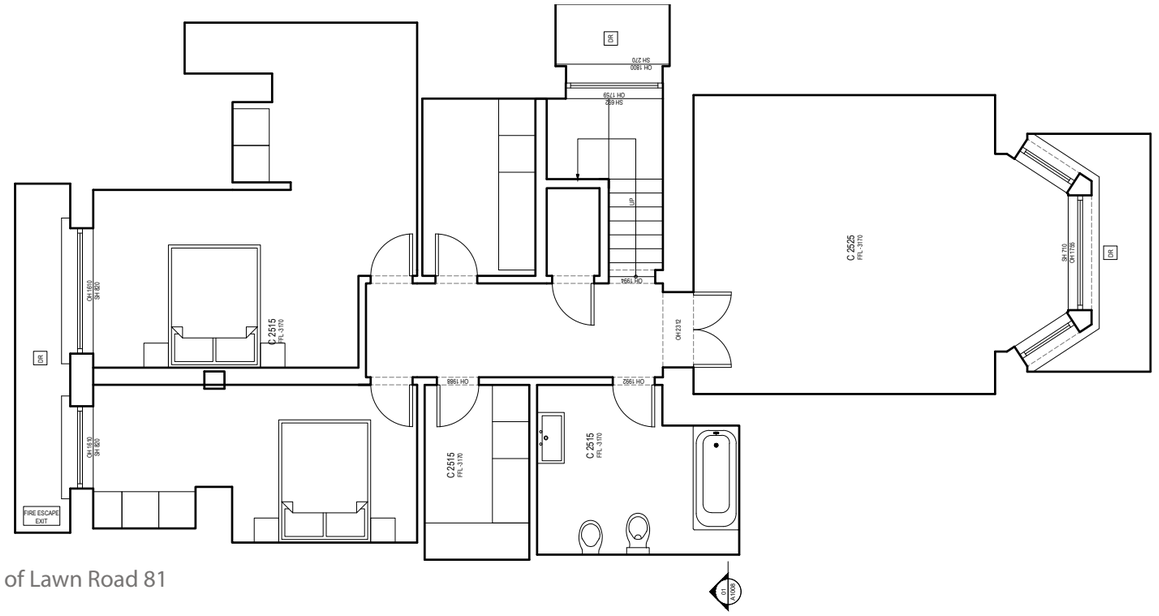


Ground Floor Proposal of Lawn Road 75

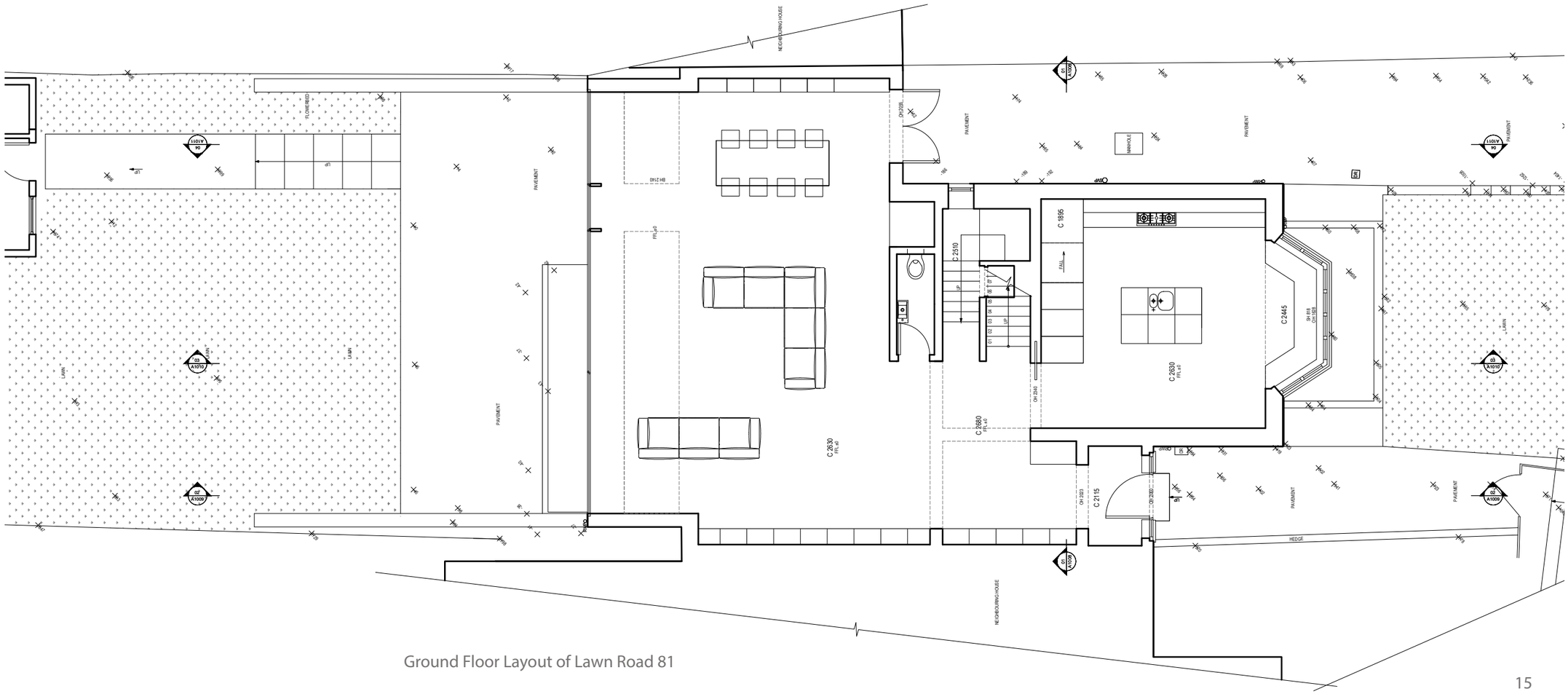
3.3 81 LAWN ROAD

2007/3342/P - Approved

Creation of new basement level with front, side and rear lightwells to single-family dwelling house (Class C3.)



Basement Layout of Lawn Road 81



Ground Floor Layout of Lawn Road 81

4 DESIGN STRATEGY

4.1 PROPOSAL

The new owners are a family with two small children and one on the way and are looking to make No76 their dream family home.

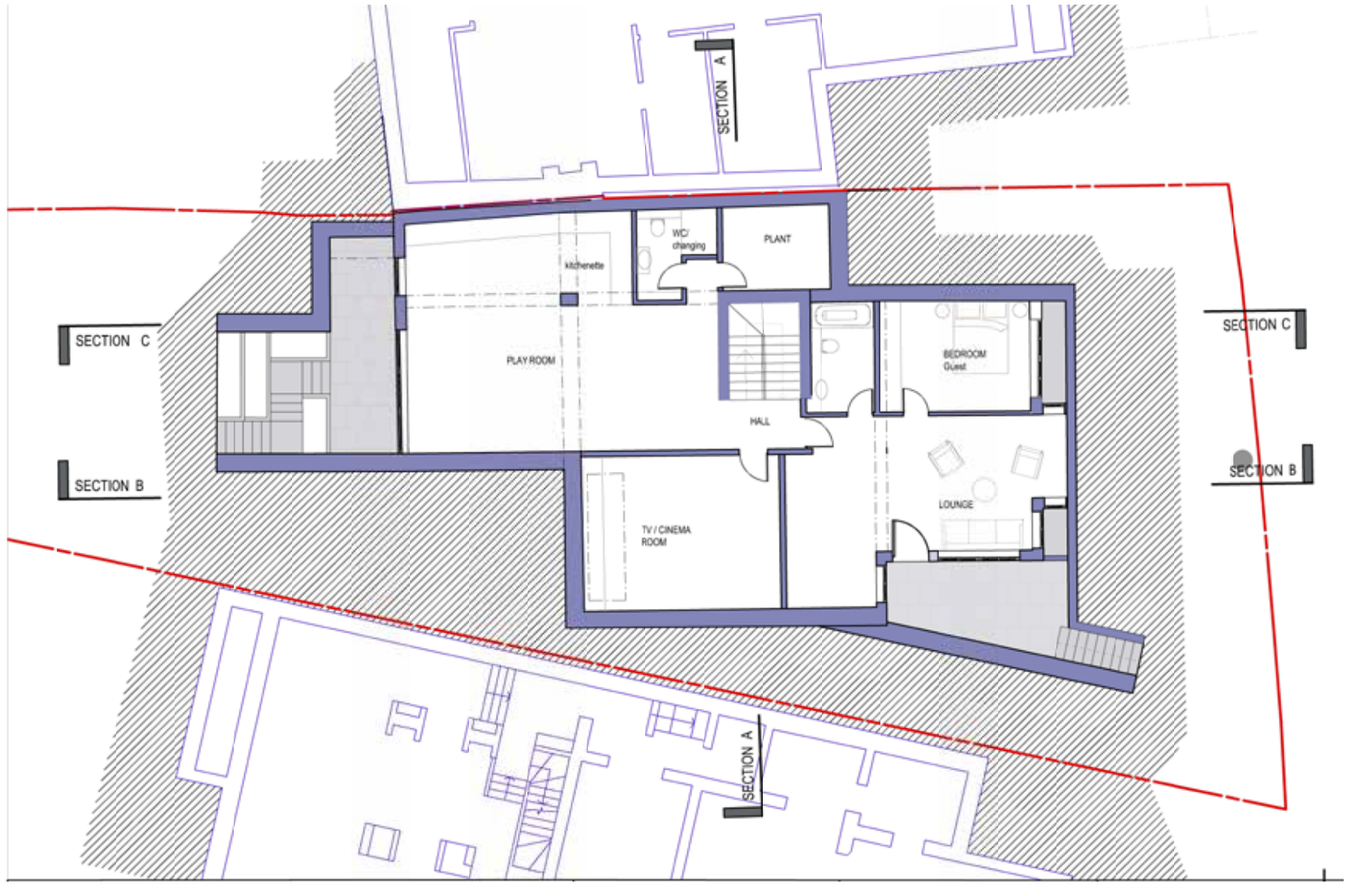
The proposal seeks first and foremost to make this dwelling safe for the family, its little members, as well as the grandparents.

-Basement level

For this reason, and since the necessary underpinning will need to be so deep, we will be looking to introduce a basement level under the footprint of the building, where the secondary facilities, such as playroom, TV den, plant room and guest quarters will be housed.

The initial proposals were for a large lightwell to the front of the property with windows that mirrored the front bay window at ground floor level. After advice from the structural engineer and the arboriculturist, the plans were amended. Due to the need to protect the root zones for the protected tree and to also provide a barrier to the house from further structural damage from the tree roots, the front of the house is required to provide a structural wall, meaning that the proposed lightwells have been reduced in size and provided to the front and the side of the house. The preference would have been to have a larger lightwell at the front of the house, but this would necessitate the removal of the sycamore tree. Permission has previously been granted for the removal of the tree (ref: TP9907002) but my client's preferred scheme retains the tree.

The scheme provides that the front Sycamore tree is not harmed in any way. The health and prosperity of these mature trees are a priority in this proposal. Hence we introduce only a side lightwell, that also forms a secondary front entrance to the house, which in turn doubles as an escape exit. The front two lightwells are reduced to merely light-chimneys and are completely inconspicuous from the front, as is evident in the 3D representations. In addition, they will both be framed by railing and thick shrubbery.



Proposed Basement Plan

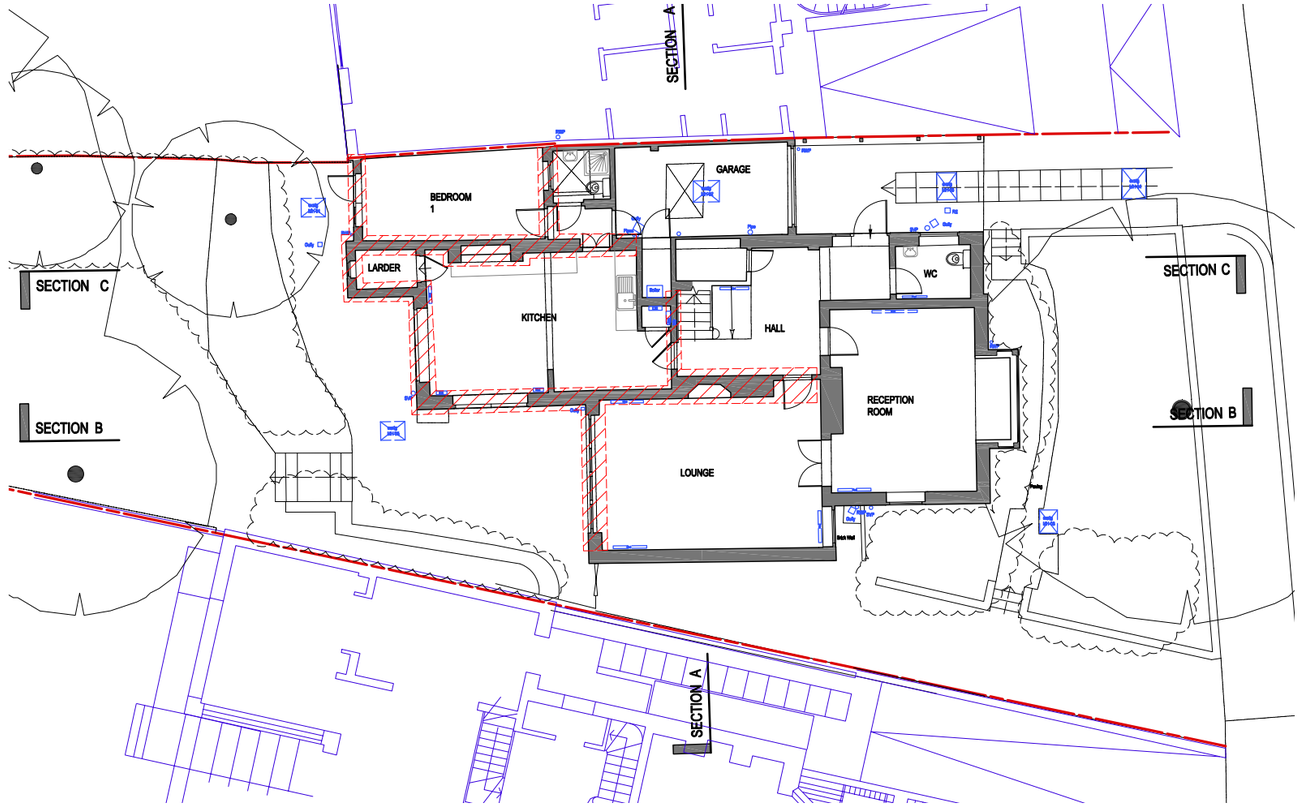
At the rear of the house, the relationship of the basement level with the rear garden is achieved by a 'stepped garden', namely planters that intertwine with the steps that lead down to the small patio and allow for valuable natural light to enter the play area. There will also be a direct link from the ground floor to the rear garden right above.

In accordance with Camden basement guidance, the proposed basement does not extend beyond the building footprint.

-Ground floor

On the ground floor level, we will leave the plan largely intact and will only square off the rear part of the kitchen, so as to allow for better configuration internally and homogeneity to the external elevation. The extension in question is in the area of 5 square meters.

As you can see in the drawings here, as well as the three dimensional representation at the end, the proposed removal of the car port will have a significant beneficial effect on the appearance of the front of the property and the main entrance to the house.



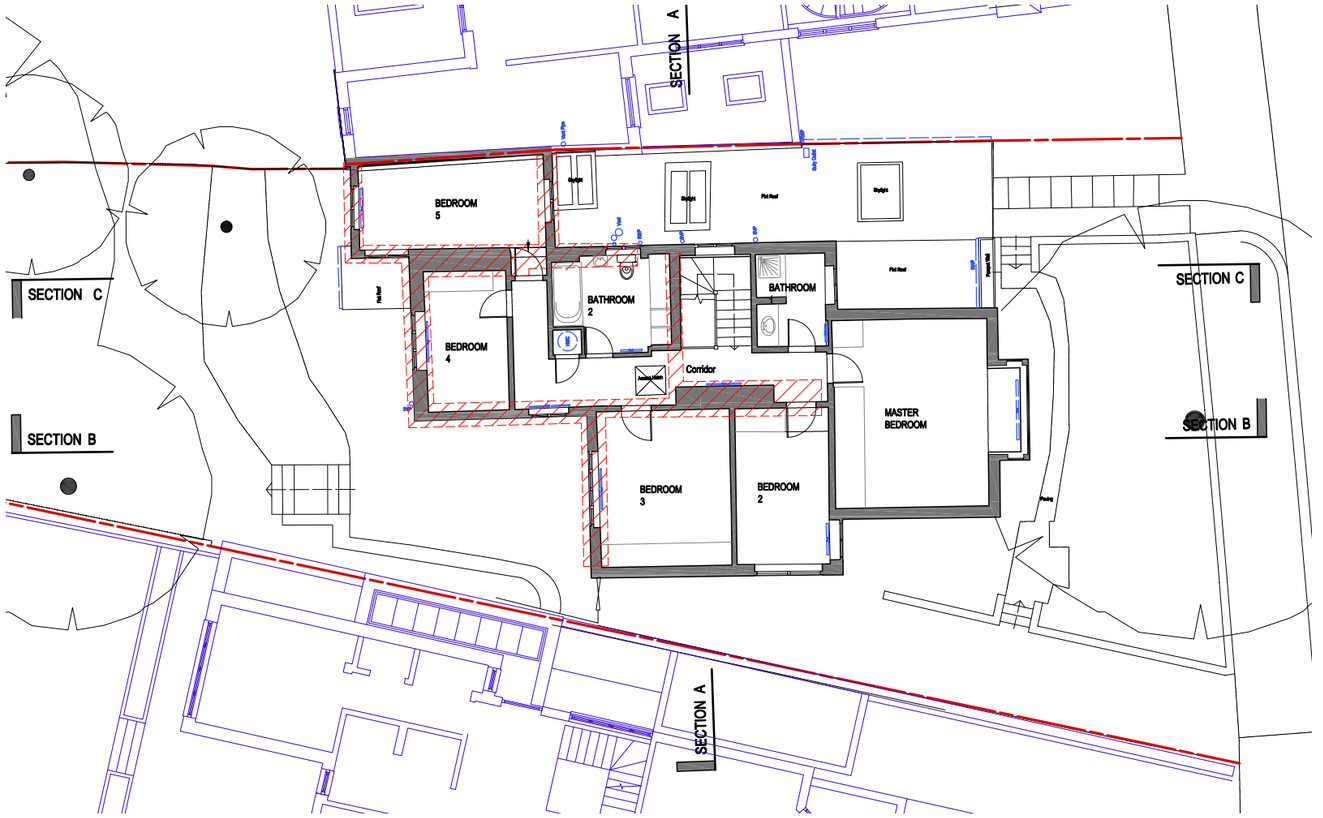
Existing Ground Floor Plan

Proposed Ground Floor Plan

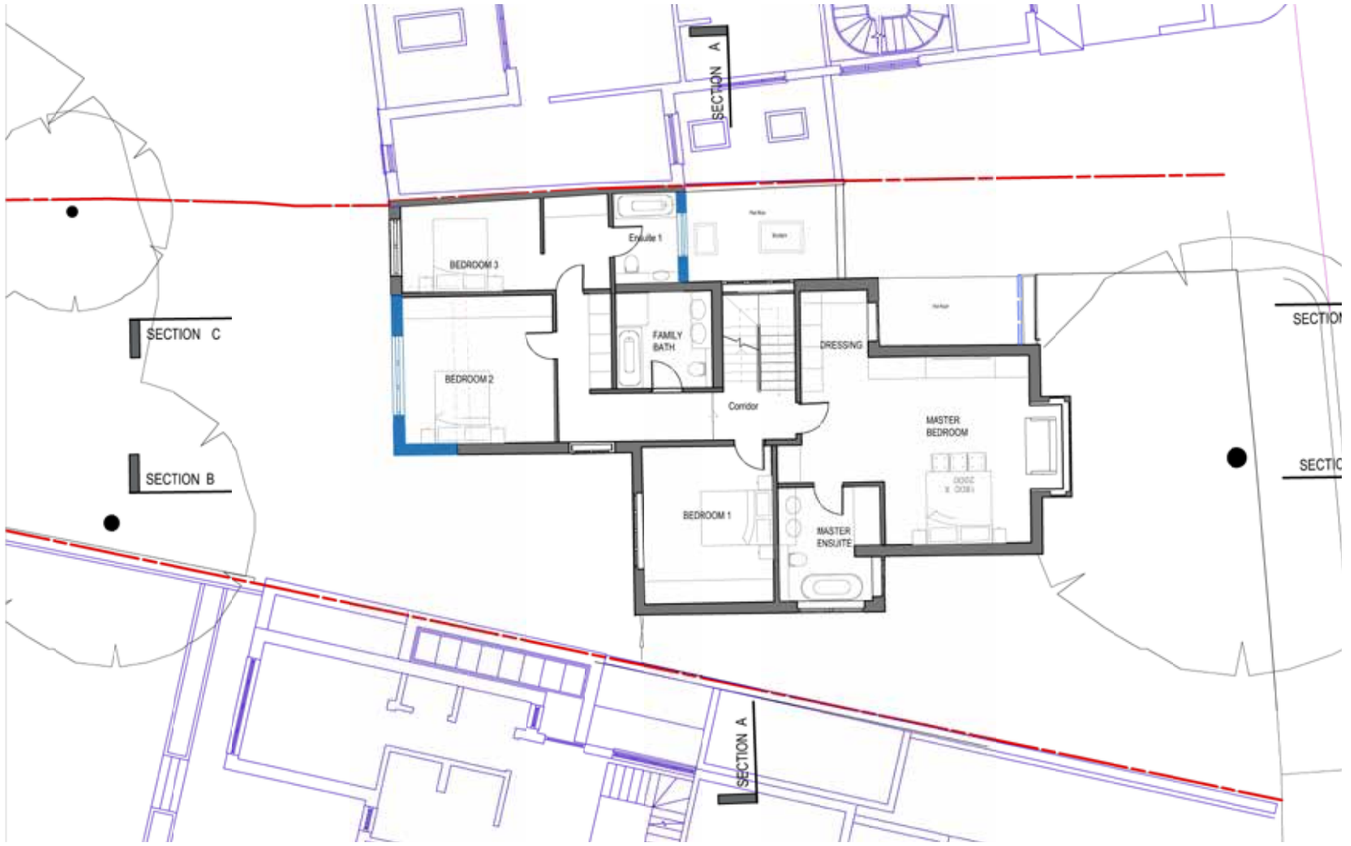
-First Floor

Regarding the first floor, the only extension we will be proposing, apart from the ground floor equivalent, will be a small extrusion on the top of the existing garage.

It is important to note here that the rear extension is very minimal in nature and has no impact on the neighbouring properties. None of the neighbouring windows are affected in any way.



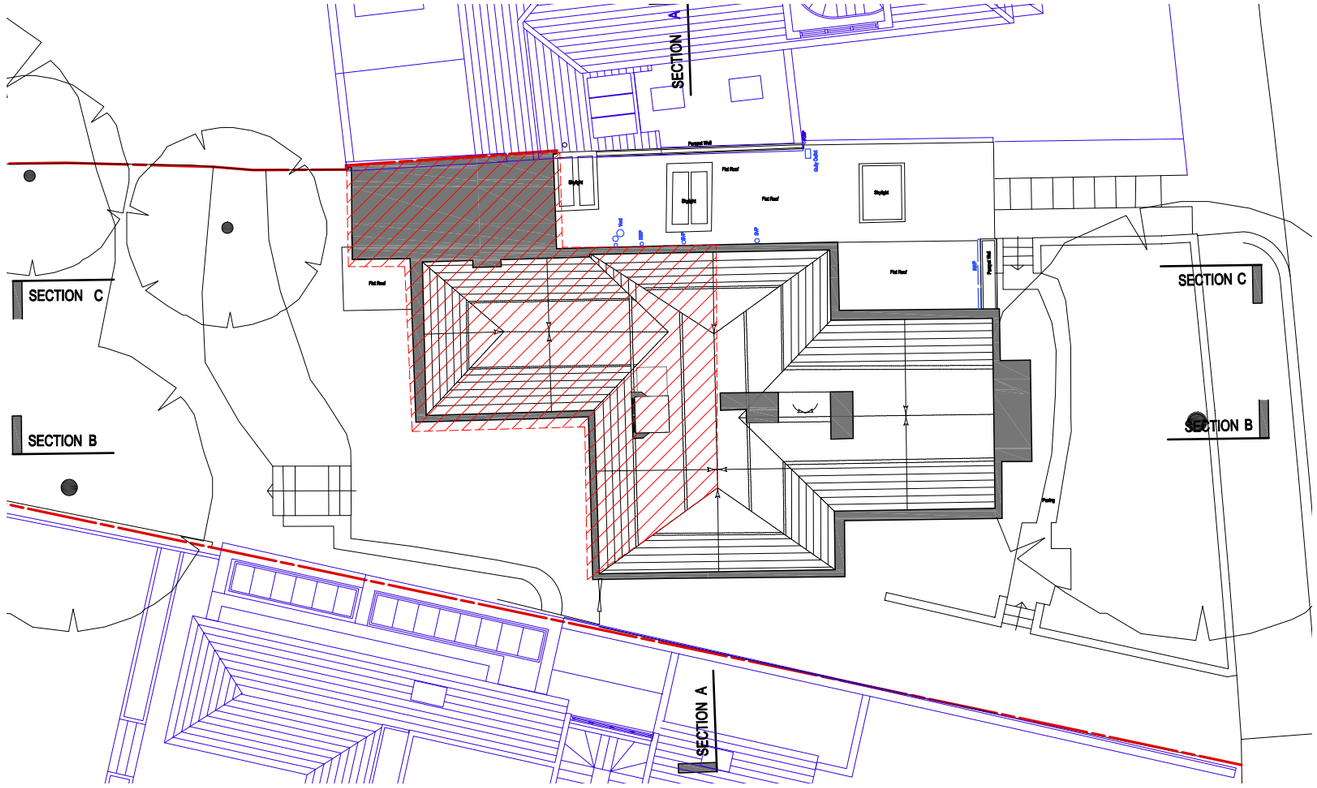
Existing First Floor Plan



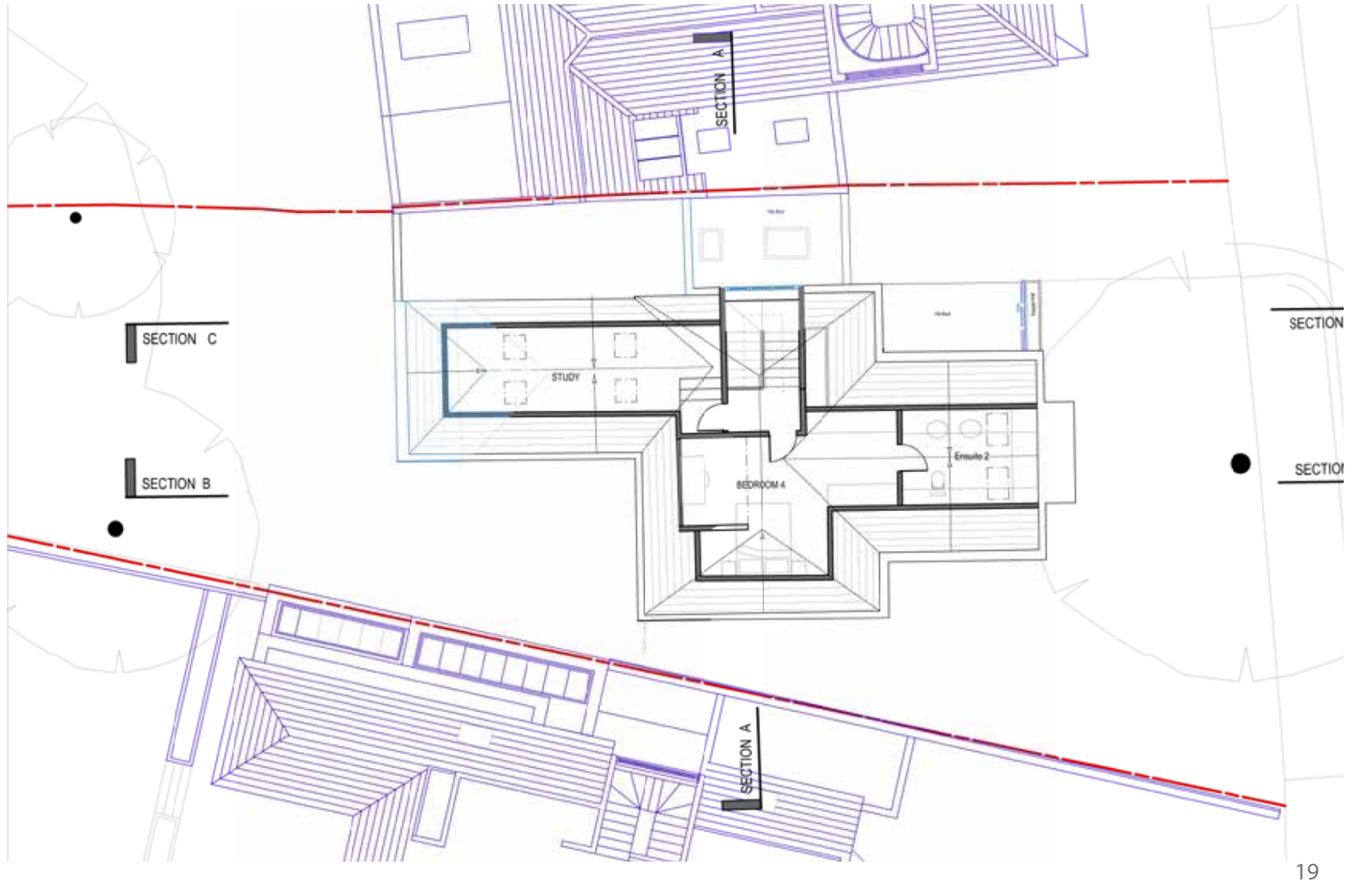
Proposed First Floor Plan

-Loft

Lastly, this proposal seeks to make the loft space habitable. By enlarging the rear dormer and introducing three pairs of conservation style rooflights, we will allow for better natural light and ventilation. The roof will remain as is, except for the stairwell part, where we will follow the example of the rest of the houses in Lawn Road and extend the staircase up with the help of a traditional lead cheeked side dormer and the replacement of the current pvc windows with more in-keeping leaded lights.



Existing Loft Plan



Proposed Loft Plan

-General

This exercise will be applied throughout the dwelling. The new owners are very keen to revive the former charm and character of the house yet modernise it to suit the needs of 2020.

We will be replacing all the windows with painted timber ones, restoring the masonry and repointing where needed, introducing wrought iron railings in the front and rear gardens and removing any out-of-character previous additions/ extensions.

Existing Front Elevation

NOTE:

The proposed drawings in the Design and Access statement show the neighbouring proposal of No75, currently being considered by Camden Council (ref 2018/2136/P). We feel that it is important to show our proposal in this possible future context, as well as the existing one.

Proposed Front Elevation

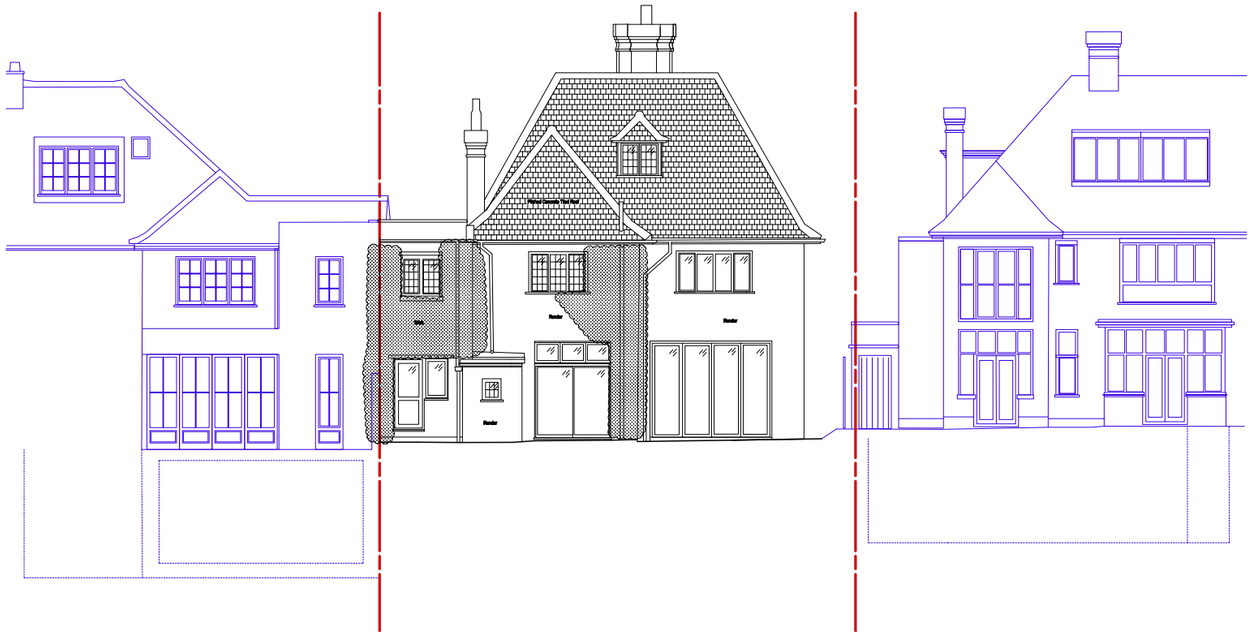
4.2 REPLACEMENT WINDOWS AND IN-KEEPING FENESTRATION

The majority of the existing windows throughout the house are uPVC ones with large panes and without any reference to the style and era of the dwelling.

This scheme seeks to reinstate more traditional fenestration, with white painted timber windows as shown on the drawings.

The side windows in the stairwell will follow the neighbouring examples of leaded lights.

We believe this improvement will be a very positive contribution to the scheme and to the Conservation area in total.



Existing Rear Elevation

Traditional example from Nos74/75

leaded light from No79

Proposed Rear Elevation

Existing South Elevation

Proposed South Elevation

Existing Section C-C

Proposed Section C-C

5 3D REPRESENTATION

View from Lawn Road as existing

View from Lawn Road as proposed

View from rear garden as existing

View from rear garden as proposed

6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this proposal we believe will positively contribute to the restoration and safety of the dwelling and to the enhancement of the Conservation area.

It is not only safeguarding the structural integrity of the building but is additionally bringing back its original features and respects the style and era of itself as well as the whole of Lawn Road. The result will be visually pleasing and will sit comfortably within its context.

Drawings in this document are not to be scaled from. Drawings and images illustrative only. For scaled drawings refer to a separate set of existing and proposed drawings submitted alongside with this document.

This design and access statement for planning application was compiled by Olympia Anesti Architecture & Design for the property at: 76 Lawn Road.

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