

Conversion of Flats 1 and 3 into One Apartment and
Opening up of Glazed Doors to the Garden at Lower
Ground Floor Level

44 Parliament Hill
London
NW3 2TN



Design and Access Statement

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Introduction:

This statement is in support of an application to combine two apartments into one apartment at 44 Parliament Hill. This would create a larger family unit with access to the rear garden of the property. The flats were formed from a conversion of a large four storey property on the south side of Parliament Hill. As part of the work it is proposed to open up the living areas at garden level using folding/sliding doors. The existing windows of flat 1 would be replaced with sash and casement windows, timber framed with double glazing. The properties are located in a converted semi-detached villa, currently consisting of four apartments – two duplexes at lower and upper ground levels, with two lateral apartments above over 1st floor and 2nd floor/roof.

44 Parliament Hill is situated in the South Hill Park Conservation Area.

Works proposed include:

- Conversion of Flat 1 (duplex at lower/upper ground floors at rear of building) and Flat 3 (lateral flat at 1st floor) into larger single family dwelling with sole access to the rear garden.
- Replacement of dilapidated timber framed windows to Flat 1 with timber framed double glazed sash and casement windows.
- Replacement of door and window at lower ground floor with folding/sliding doors opening to the garden.
- Replacement terrace landscaping to garden, 4m deep from rear elevation.

This statement provides a detailed explanation of the proposed conversion, evaluated in relation to the history of the building, site context and planning policy.



Above: View of two storey bay window to rear elevation Flat 1



The overgrown rear garden is being cleared and maintained by the new owner

Site Photographs:

Below is a photo taken at lower ground floor level in Flat 1. The property is currently vacant and in need of refurbishment. The existing top hung casement windows to the bay at garden level would be replaced with more appropriate sash windows to match those above.



Above: Close up view of rear bay Flat 1 with existing windows



Above: Bay window and stained brickwork to Flat 1



Above: Flat 1 rear door and window to be replaced with larger opening



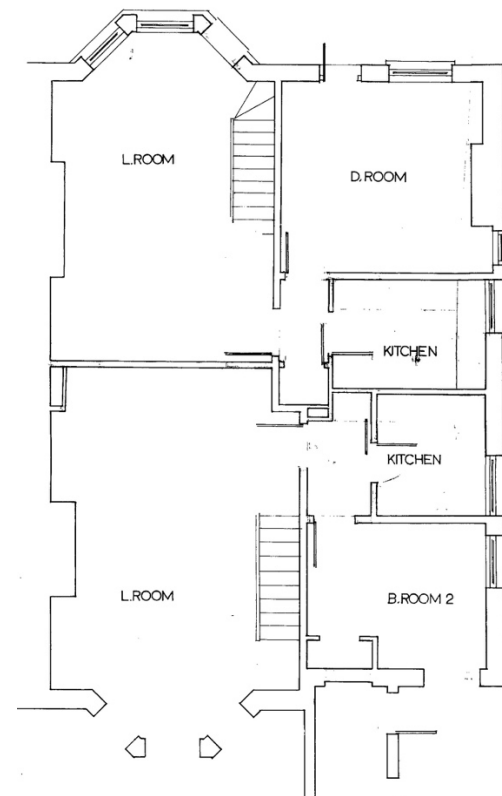
Above: Flat 1 external view showing window and door to be replaced

Planning History:

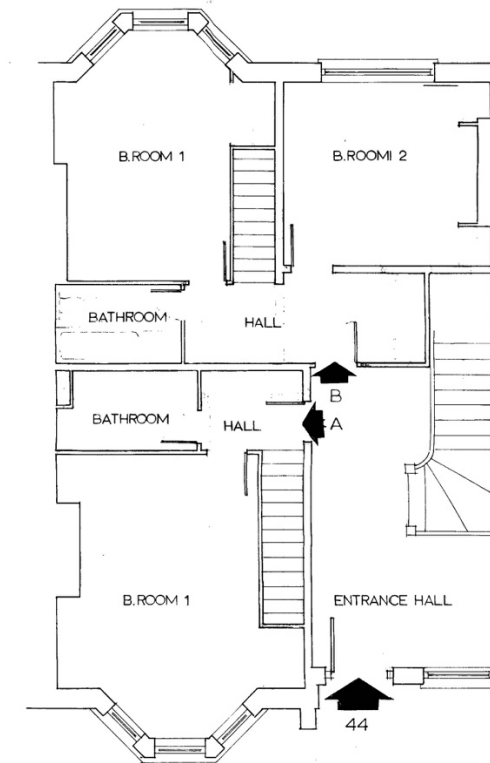
The original four-storey house was converted to flats in the early 1970's. There are two duplex units at lower and upper ground floors (Flat 1 marked as 'B' on plan on right), a lateral flat at 1st floor (flat 3) and a duplex flat to 2nd floor and loft.

On the right are the plans as existing.

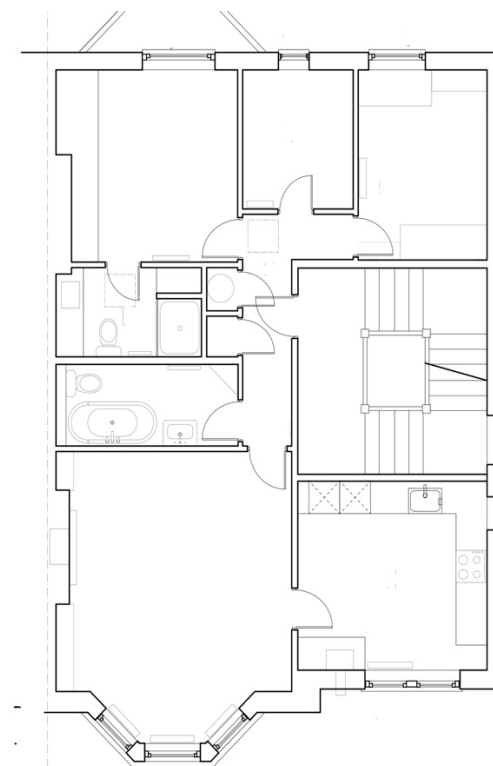
Other than a withdrawn application to insert a folding window at 2nd floor, and tree maintenance applications, there have been no other applications for the property since the conversion was carried out.



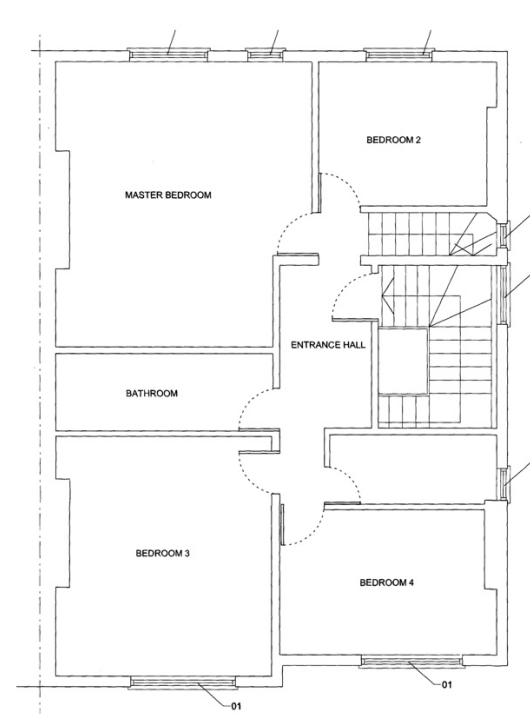
Lower Ground Floor



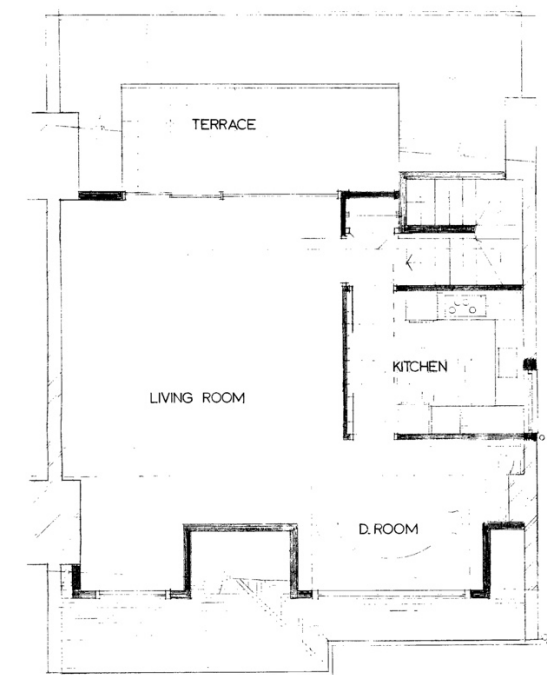
Upper Ground Floor



1st Floor



2nd Floor



Roof Conversion

Planning Policy:

The main Camden Planning Policies which have informed the proposals are those concerning the conversion of two properties into a single larger property, and changes to properties in Conservation Areas.

Policy H3 of Camden's Local Plan (adopted 2017) addresses the protection of existing homes in the borough (page 61). It states:

The Council will aim to ensure that existing housing continues to meet the needs of existing and future households by:

- a. *resisting development that would involve a net loss of residential floorspace, including any residential floorspace provided;*
 - *within hostels or other housing with shared facilities; or*
 - *as an ancillary element of another use, wherever the development involves changing the main use or separating the housing floorspace from the main use;*
- b. *protecting housing from permanent conversion to short-stay accommodation intended for occupation for periods of less than 90 days; and*
- c. *resisting development that would involve the net loss of two or more homes (from individual or cumulative proposals), unless they:*
 - *create large homes in a part of the borough with a relatively low proportion of large dwellings;*
 - *enable existing affordable homes to be adapted to provide the affordable dwelling-sizes that are most needed; or*
 - *enable sub-standard units to be enlarged to meet residential space standards.*

The proposals do not result in any loss of residential floorspace, or any other of the changes listed above.

Paragraph 3.75 of 'Protecting Existing Homes' in the Local Plan also states:

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.

Combining Flat 1 and Flat 3 will form a large family unit with access to a private garden. Flat 1 is currently vacant and in need of refurbishment, as is the rear terrace and garden.

Flat 1 has no frontage to Parliament Hill. It is proposed as part of the works to replace the windows of Flat 1 on the rear and side elevations, and open up a folding sliding door to better connect the living spaces with the garden. The larger door would replace the existing door and window, the bay window would be unaffected. All new windows and doors would be timber framed and double glazed.



Relevant to this determination is the appeal case reference APP/X5210/X/17/3172201 (2 & 3 Wildwood Grove; ref: 2016/5621/P) in Camden, which was allowed on 15/01/2018 for the conversion of two residential dwellings into one. In the assessment, the Inspector considered that the amalgamation of two dwellings into one would not be a material change of use and therefore would not constitute development.

Proposals for conversion of units 1 and 3 into New Dwelling:

The proposed plans for the Lower Ground Floor and Upper Ground Floor show how it is intended to convert and refurbish Flat 1. It can be seen from the layouts that Flat 1 has no frontage to Parliament Hill. (Flat 2 occupies the front part of the lower and upper ground floor spaces.)

The reasons for the proposed conversion are to provide more family space, and access to a garden without having to move away from the area.

The (lower) garden level would be opened up to form an open plan living area, with timber framed folding sliding doors opening up to the new terrace. At upper ground floor level two bedrooms would be maintained.

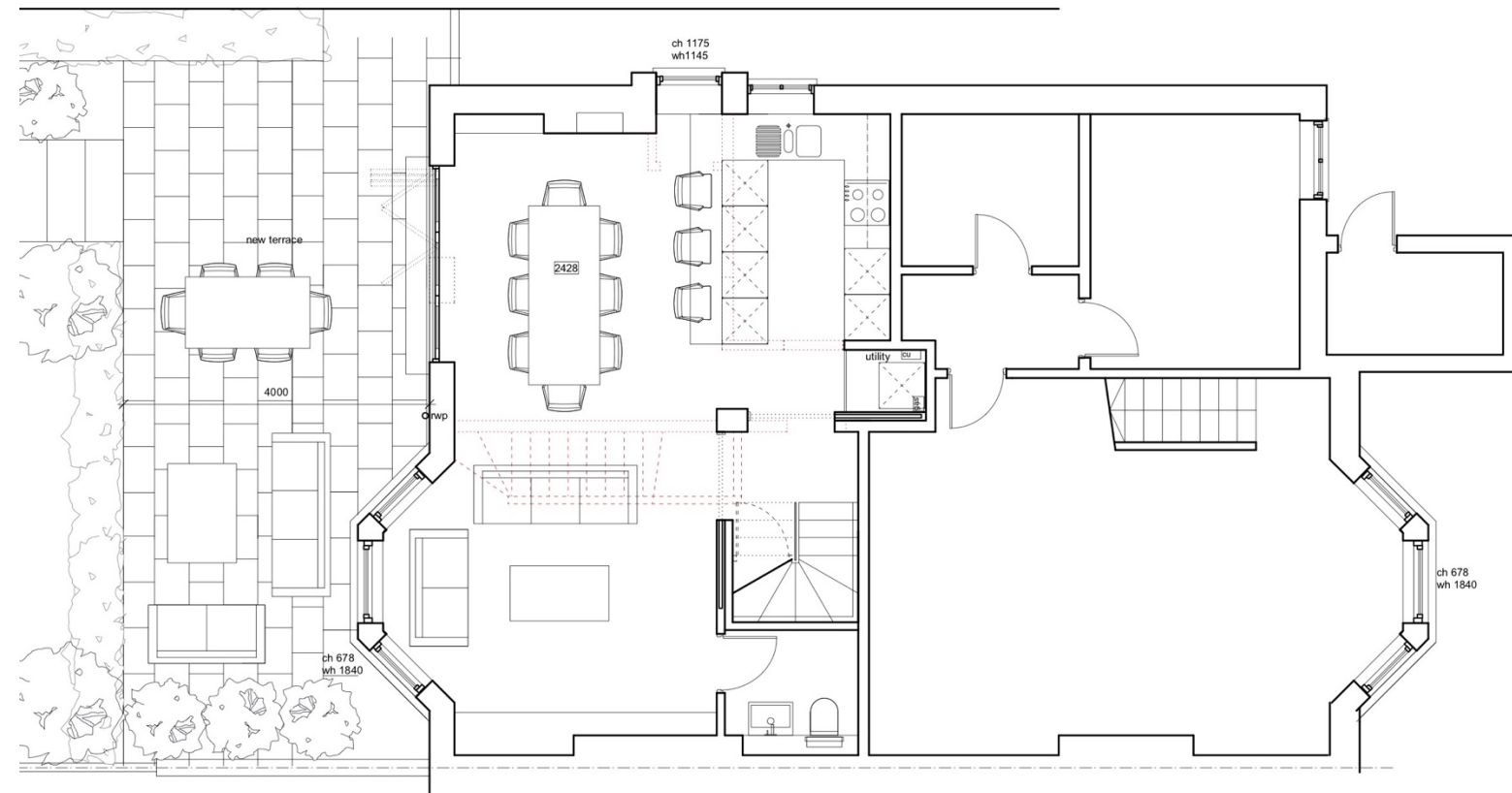
A new stair would be inserted at the rear of the space to connect with Flat 3 above.

The existing spaces would be refurbished with new services, flooring and fittings as part of the work.

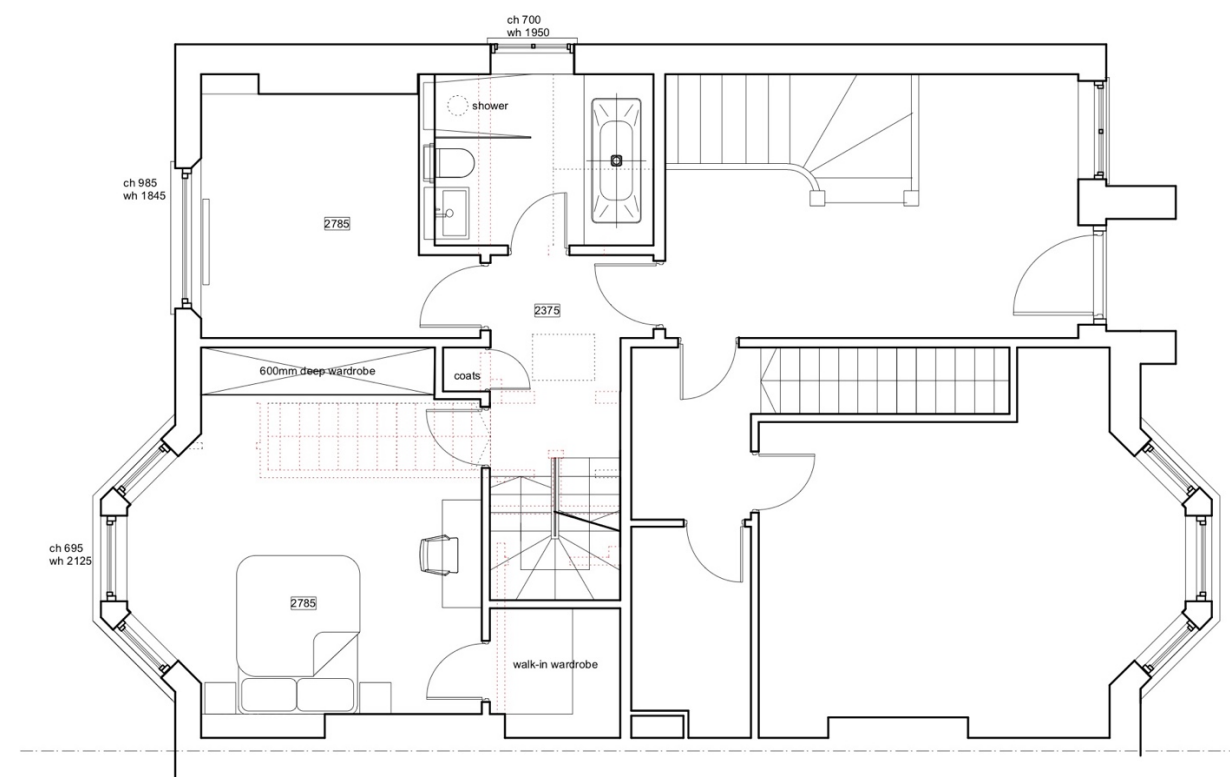
The windows of Flat 1 are also in a poor state of repair. The existing sash windows at upper ground floor level would be replaced with timber framed double glazed versions. At lower ground floor, the existing poor quality casement windows to the bay would be replaced with timber framed double glazed sash windows.

There is an unsightly flue on the rear elevation which has caused staining to the brickwork. The staining would be cleaned off, and the boiler/flue would be moved to vent on the side elevation.

The existing terrace is dilapidated and in need of renewal. There are cracked and uneven paving slabs causing trip hazards. As part of the works a new stone paved terrace and steps to the garden would be laid across the rear of the property.



Above: Lower Ground Floor as Proposed



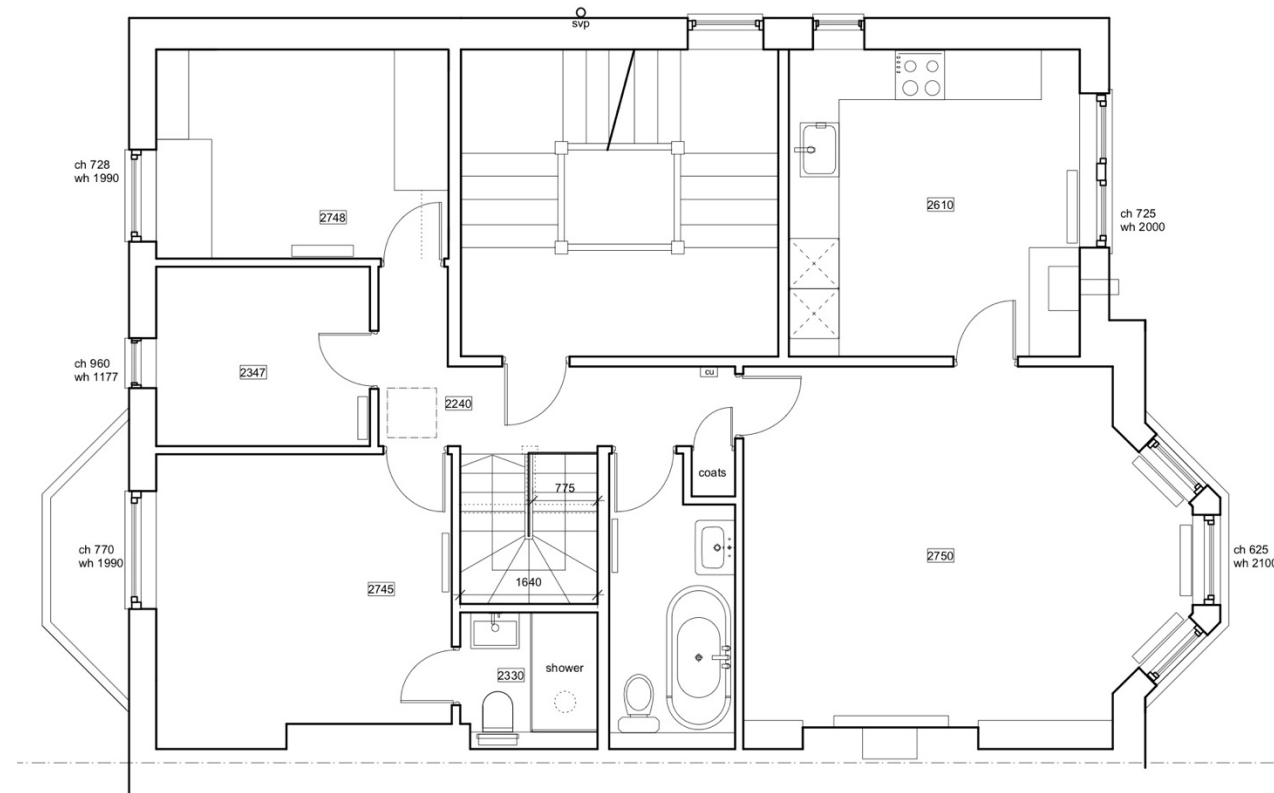
Above: Upper Ground Floor as Proposed

The proposed plan of Flat 3 is shown on the right. The new internal staircase would be inserted at a location to minimise disruption to the layout of Flat 3, and maintain the shape/size of the main living spaces in Flat 1. There is a protected hallway shown at each level of the staircase in compliance with Building Regulations. A full application under Building Regulations will be made shortly.

No external changes are proposed at first floor level.



Above: Rear Elevation as Proposed showing proposed new doors to terrace



Above: Proposed 1st Floor Plan (Flat 3) showing new staircase to connect with Flat 1

Conclusion:

The proposed conversion would result in the loss of only one residential unit, which is considered acceptable in Policy H3. There would be no loss of residential floorspace.

A larger family dwelling would be formed with sole access to the rear garden, and the lower level flat would be refurbished. The larger unit would allow the family to grow and have access to a garden without moving home.

The Conservation Area would not be adversely affected by the proposals, and the appearance of the rear terrace and garden would be improved.