

# Section 4.0

Design Evolution

## 4.0 Design Evolution

### 4.1 Summary of Responses to Planning Advice

Over the period of the last 16 months extensive engagement and consultation with the London Borough of Camden (LBC) has been undertaken in preparation for submitting this planning application. Through this collaborative process the proposal has evolved to respond to a number of the Council's comments around the design.

This has culminated in this submitted proposal which strikes a balance between delivering a contemporary and high quality new dwelling that meets the owner's requirements while taking careful consideration of the character and setting of the conservation area.

A summary of the process is outlined in the following pages.

#### **Pre-Application Engagement**

Camden planning officers reviewed the early design stages of the scheme at a pre application meeting in July 2019. The proposed design at pre-application stage was based on the principals defined in the concept design section of this report and refined in volume and form.

#### **Pre-Application advice 23/07/19**

Written advice was received from officers following a presentation of the initial scheme.

*'The site presents an opportunity to provide a property of real architectural interest and every opportunity should be taken to explore this.'*

*'The bulk/massing and layout of the proposal is largely considered to be acceptable in its overall approach.'*

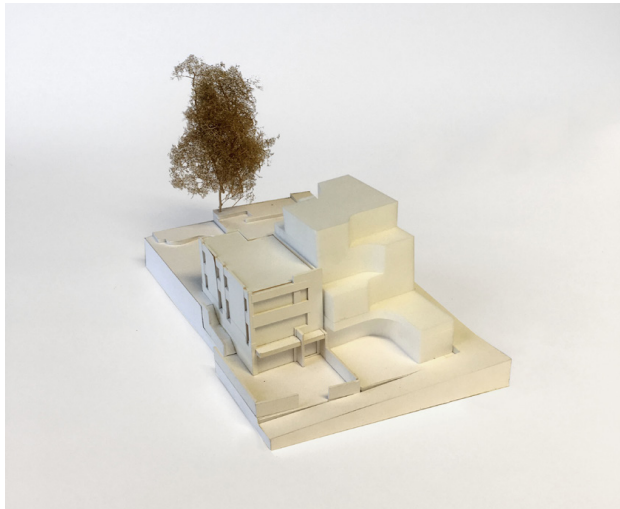
*'The scale of the proposed building may be considered to be acceptable in principle subject to further work on the detailed design. It is acknowledged that an additional floor has been incorporated into the design, however the existing building is notably lower than the surrounding context. Given this arrangement and the corner location of the building, in principle the additional height may be acceptable.'*





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### 4.2 Summary of Responses to Pre-App Advice



#### Pre-Application Comments

##### Terraces

Reduction in scale of roof terraces, particularly to reduce the accessible area. The incorporation of Green Roofs would be strongly supported by the council.

##### Front Projection

Reduction in scale of the ground floor front projection to allow for further planting/landscaping and provide a softer frontage along the edge of the pavement.

##### Side Elevation

The side elevation requires as much consideration as the rest of the building. Add interest to reduce its mass. This wall could be emphasised further with an alternate material finish.

##### Basement

Extension of the ground floor is considered a basement excavation and needs to comply with relevant policy. *'It is acknowledged that the proposed depth of the property (taken from the principal front and rear elevations) is 11m, thereby allowing a maximum depth of a rear basement projection of 5.5m. The proposed basement measures 6.8m beyond the principal rear elevation and therefore requires reducing by 1.3m in order to be policy compliant in this regard.'*

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##### Rear Windows

*'Some possible overlooking may incur as a result of the first floor side facing window which would serve to overlook no.18B. Whilst it is acknowledged that by their nature as semi-detached houses, the properties currently overlook one another, you should avoid direct overlooking such as this.'*



#### Response to Officers Comments

##### Terraces

Following pre-application feedback, the façade was adjusted to respond to the building line of 18b. Careful testing of the governing geometry was explored to reduce the depth of terracing in the façade without undermining the lyricism of the form as follows:

- The stepping bays brought into alignment with the primary façade and projecting first floor balcony of 18b.
- Balcony depths were reduced by 650mm
- The top floor was set back to be subordinate to the primary façade of 18b.

The narrow balconies that are retained in the scheme are considered ornamental elements that will bring more greenery, rather than people/adornments, onto the façade.

The larger areas of flat roof have been replaced with green roofs. The area of terrace to the front of the house has been replaced with a green roof and planting beds. A small accessible area is retained in front of the kitchen to connect the interior with the landscaping. This is screened from the street with taller planting.

At the rear the first-floor terrace has been replaced with a green roof which is accessible only for maintenance.

##### Front Projection

The front projection forms part of the composition of protruding and receding volumes, reflecting the typical bay windows, conservatories, garages and porches attached to historic buildings in the Conservation Area. It creates a landscape threshold and retaining wall. The planted roof of the front projection acts as a raised front garden. The front projection was pushed back from the pavement edge to produce a 1.75m planting zone.

By integrating a considered landscape design and continuous planting from the pavement edge, covering the first floor projection and extending across the façade, the intention is to extend the verdant qualities of this prominent corner location, replacing and enhancing the quality and diversity of planting seen from the street.

##### Side Elevation

The east elevation forms a gable end to the street and is secondary to the primary southern street facing elevation. The façade has been partially cut back to reduce the massing and add relief to the elevation. This move is emphasized by a change in material finish.

##### Basement

The area of excavation was reduced in line with requirements outlined by policy A5 of Camden's Local Plan.

##### Rear Windows

The side facing window was removed and an area of solid wall prevents any direct overlooking into the garden of 18b from the master bedroom. Views into the garden may only be seen obliquely from the dressing room area.

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### 4.3 Summary of Responses to DRP

The LB Camden Design Review Panel (DRP) reviewed 18a Frognaal Gardens on Friday 27th March 2020. The notes from this meeting are included as an appendix to this document.

The following pages summarise Alison Brooks Architects' (ABA) design changes in response to the advice from the DRP and subsequent comments from the London Borough of Camden (LBC).

The DRP reviewed the scheme with significant praise:

*“a particularly interesting scheme, with architecture of a potentially very high quality”*

*“the opulence and originality of the materiality is impressive, and the finished house will be a special building”*

*“The panel accepts that the character of the Hampstead Conservation Areas includes significant architectural variety, including examples of progressive architecture. It considers that the proposals form an appropriate contribution to this aspect of the area’s character.”*

*“The panel considers the proposed façade material to be delightful, with the green colour an appropriate reference to design influences. The interpretation of these influences is interesting, with the curvature and detail of the cornicing particularly effective.”*

The DRP’s comments and ABA’s design responses are summarised in more detail in the table overleaf. ABA’s design response reduces the overall height of the building, while also re-planning the second floor to reduce its impact from the street, in addition to a number of other changes, detailed in this report.





## 4.0 Design Evolution

### 4.3 Summary of Responses to DRP

#### Summary of Design Responses to DRP

Planning Authority's views			Design Response
1	<b>Materiality</b>	Further detail on materiality/design	ABA provided a DAS Addendum submission. DRP commented: "the opulence and originality of the materiality is impressive, and the finished house will be a special building... [the DRP] supports the proposed use of green faience material for the façade, and enjoys the detail of the design, including the façade curves and chimneys."
2	<b>Ground Floor Projection</b>	Reconsideration of the depth of the ground floor front projection (to reduce visibility and encourage landscaping)	DRP satisfied with this element as long as overlooking is managed. The projection was set back by 1575mm creating an increased planting zone of 3320mm.
3	<b>Roof Terraces</b>	Removal of accessible front roof terraces	Depth reduction made following Pre-App and accessible area restricted and screened by planting. The rear terrace was replaced with a green roof - accessible only for maintenance.
4	<b>Side Elevation</b>	Further consideration to the design of the side elevation (such as a 'scooped' approach, as on the front elevation) as the side is entirely visible in views of the property	This is a secondary facade and does not require the same level of articulation as the primary frontage. However windows have been carefully arranged across the facade in the spirit of neighbouring Queen Anne Revival Villas. Following Pre-App advice, part of this facade was recessed, and a material change incorporated. In the revised proposal, a new setback on the top floor introduces a lower scale to this elevation and further contributes to its overall articulation.

Design Review Panel's views			Design Response
5	<b>Massing</b>	Mass of the building to be reduced in small ways to prevent it from seeming over-dominant. Design to be carefully examined to identify areas where its mass can be subtly reduced, particularly:	Height reduced by 350mm, and setbacks introduced on top floor: new curved setback from the west party wall, new setback to the east and increased setback to the south
		A. Around the roofline	Height reduced by 350mm, and setbacks introduced on top floor: new curved setback from the west party wall, new setback to the east and increased setback to the south
		B. Chimneys	Chimneys reduced in height, width & depth
		C. Where front elevation projects beyond building line of No. 18b Frogna Gardens	150mm reduction in height to this element
6	<b>Massing</b>	New building could eventually, or theoretically, form one half of a semi-detached pair of houses, and its design and massing could reflect this	Height reduced by 350mm, and setbacks introduced on top floor: new curved setback from the west party wall, new setback to the east and increased setback to the south. Proposed 'dormer' arrangement of 2nd floor in particular. Bay window articulates the entrance and introduces the vertical rhythmic sequence of bays.
7	<b>Massing</b>	Adjustment to the height of the right-hand side recessed element at top floor would lessen the dominance of this elevation. The left-hand side of the top storey also feels dominant in relation to the adjoining house, and could also be reduced in height	Height reduced by 350mm & setbacks introduced to the east and increased setback to the south, gable with curved transition aligning the parapet with 18b
8	<b>Windows / Overheating</b>	Scope to refine the scale of the fenestration, particularly given the south facing aspect	The reduced building height reduced some upper ground floor windows. 2nd floor windows reduced by 50mm. Windows decrease in size from ground to top floor. External blinds to mitigate heat gain
9	<b>Ground Floor Frontage</b>	Any opportunity to pull the left-hand area of the ground floor frontage further back towards the building line of No. 18b.	The bay window at upper ground floor announces the house entrance and introduces the rhythmic alternating sequence of bays. The window proportions have been modified to relate more clearly to the horizontality of 18b
10	<b>Ground Floor Projection</b>	Mixed views about projecting ground floor element, including the view that its size creates impression of overdevelopment. May be possible in context of the boundary planting, but relationship of this element to No. 18b should be managed carefully to avoid overlooking, as it provides a sweeping view of the neighbouring frontage.	More visually opaque planting strategy adopted for driveway boundary with 18b. Minimal overlooking into 18b from this room due to obliqueness of view. Length of extension reduced to increase planting.

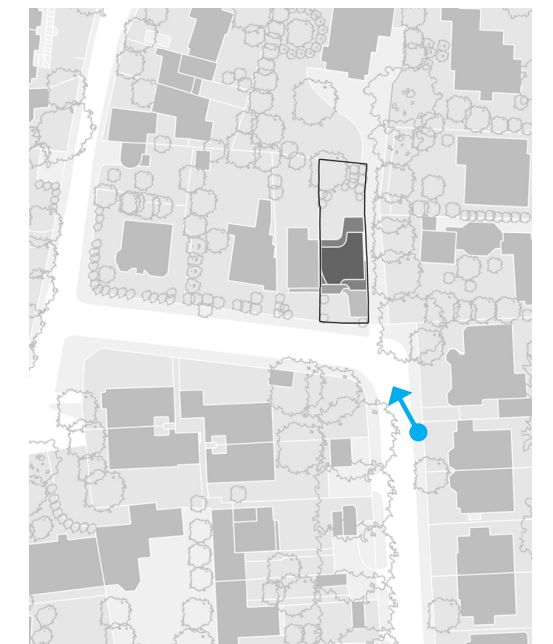


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### 4.3 Summary of Responses to DRP



1. Height to top of chimney reduced by 750mm
2. Height to top of roof reduced by 350mm
3. Curved 1220mm setback to east gable wall
4. 230mm setback to top floor front wall
5. 450mm top floor setback from west gable wall
6. 1st & 2nd floor levels reduced 150mm
7. Window height reduced by 650mm
8. Front extension reduced by 1575mm and planting zone increased to 3320mm.
9. More opaque planting to boundary with 18b





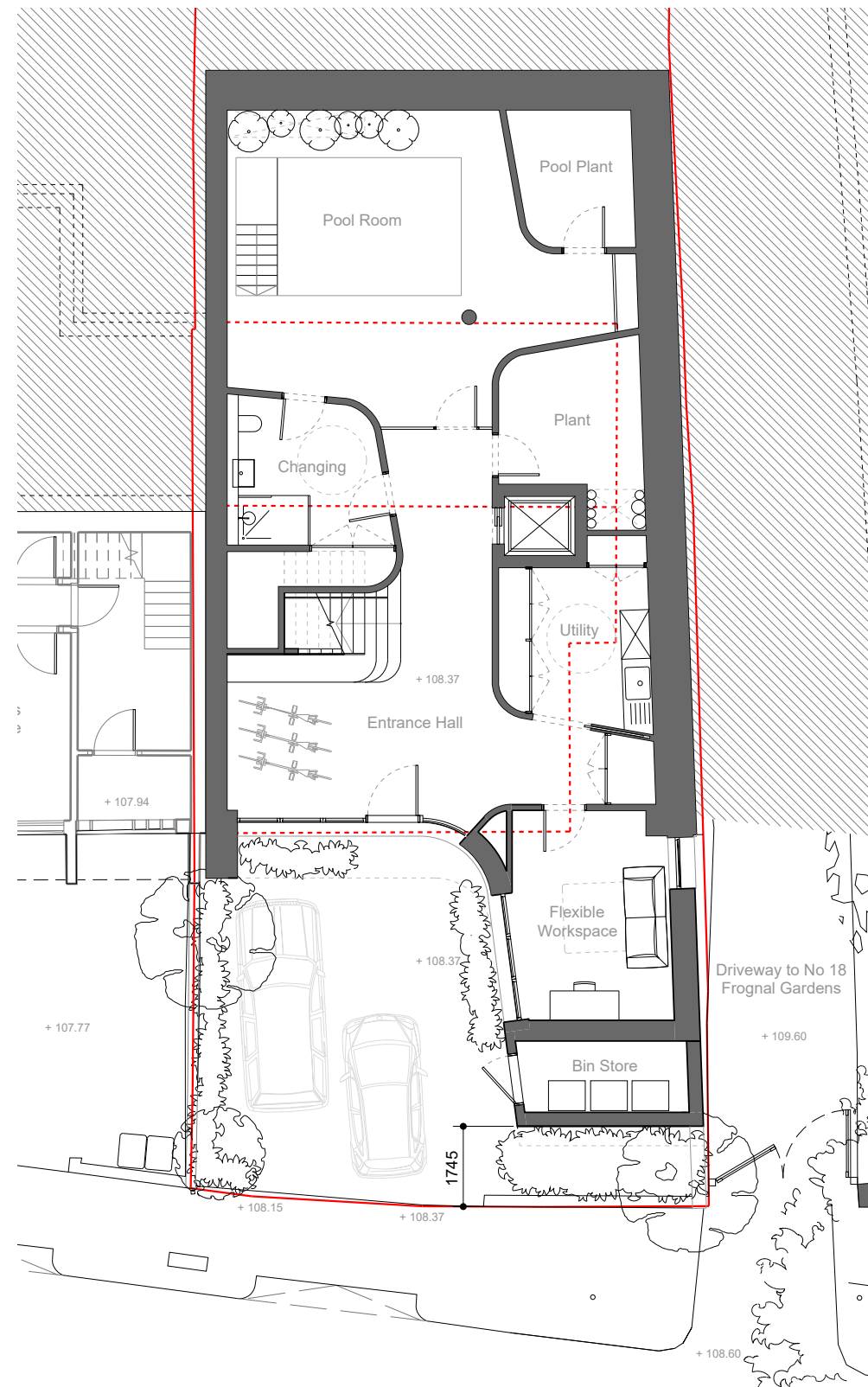
## 4.0 Design Evolution

### 4.4 Further Set back of Front Extension

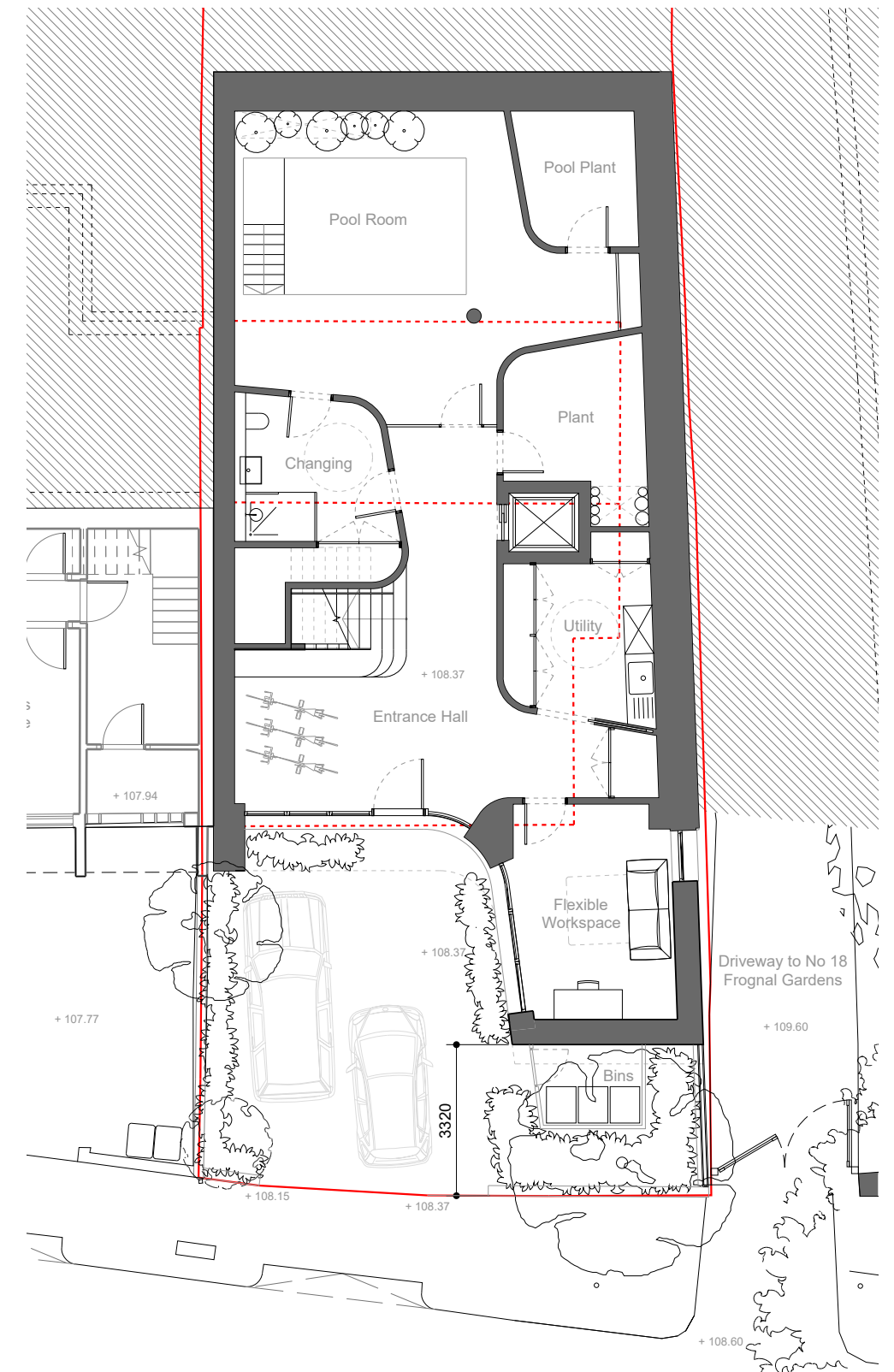
In response to LBC's request to set the projection at least 3m back from the back of the pavement, ABA have introduced a 3.32m setback to the lower ground floor projection, to provide a more generous area of planting. Together with landscape architect Jo Thompson, ABA have further developed the planting scheme in this area to ensure that it forms a meaningful landscaped frontage as a contribution to the verdant street-scene. In particular, we have provided additional detail about the proposed tree and its planned growth and management. See the proposed landscaping section of this report.

In order to allow the mass of the house to be reduced at the lower ground floor projection, we have removed the bin store from the house, and integrated it into the landscape.

We propose to conceal the bin store area within a planted bed that follows the level of the adjacent topography. The upper part of the bins will be hidden behind a mirror-polished stainless steel screen. This in turn will be concealed by low and mid height planting and a significant new Acer, which will be reflected in the screen.



Second Floor Plan - Previously Submitted Scheme



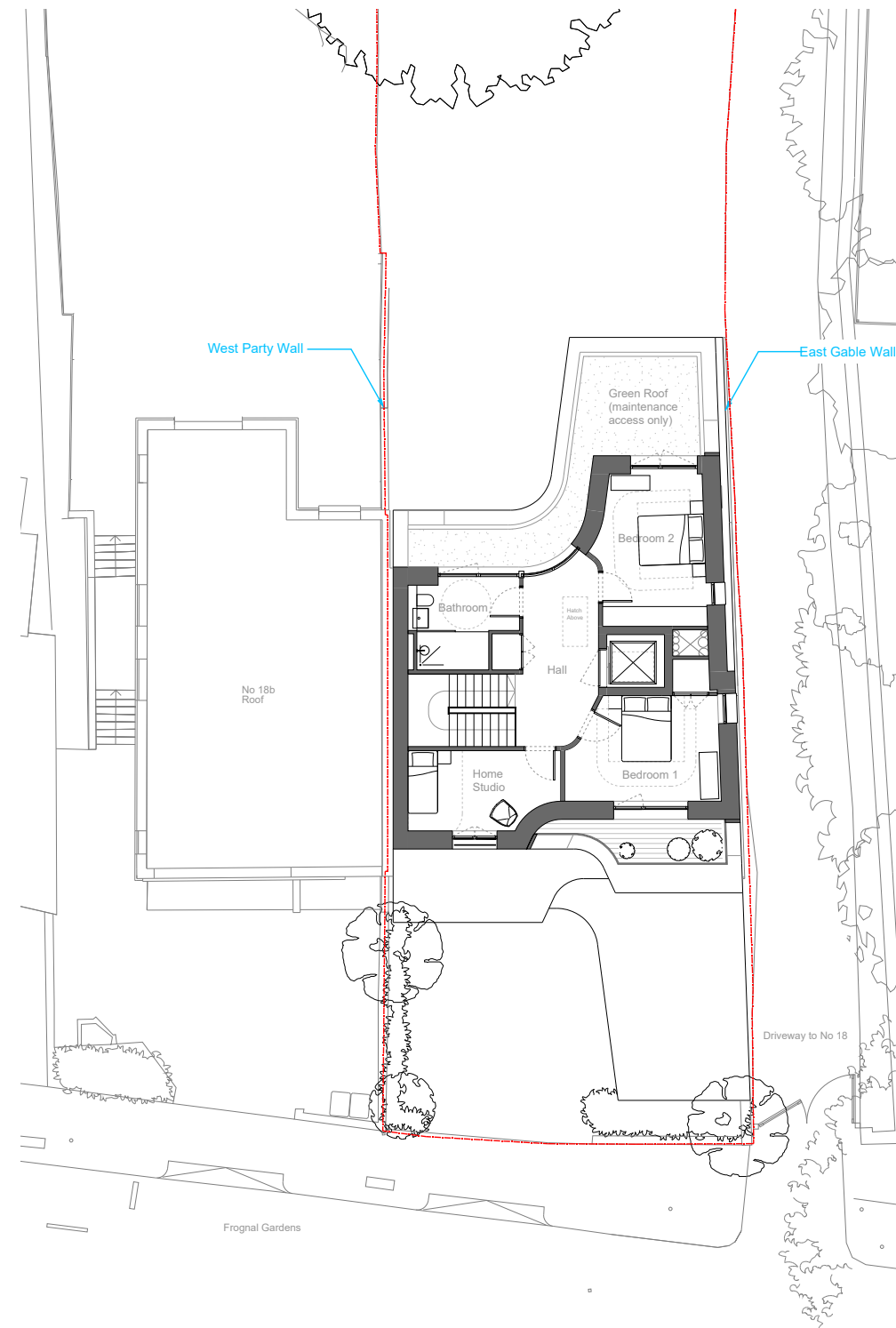
Second Floor Plan - Revised Scheme

## 4.0 Design Evolution

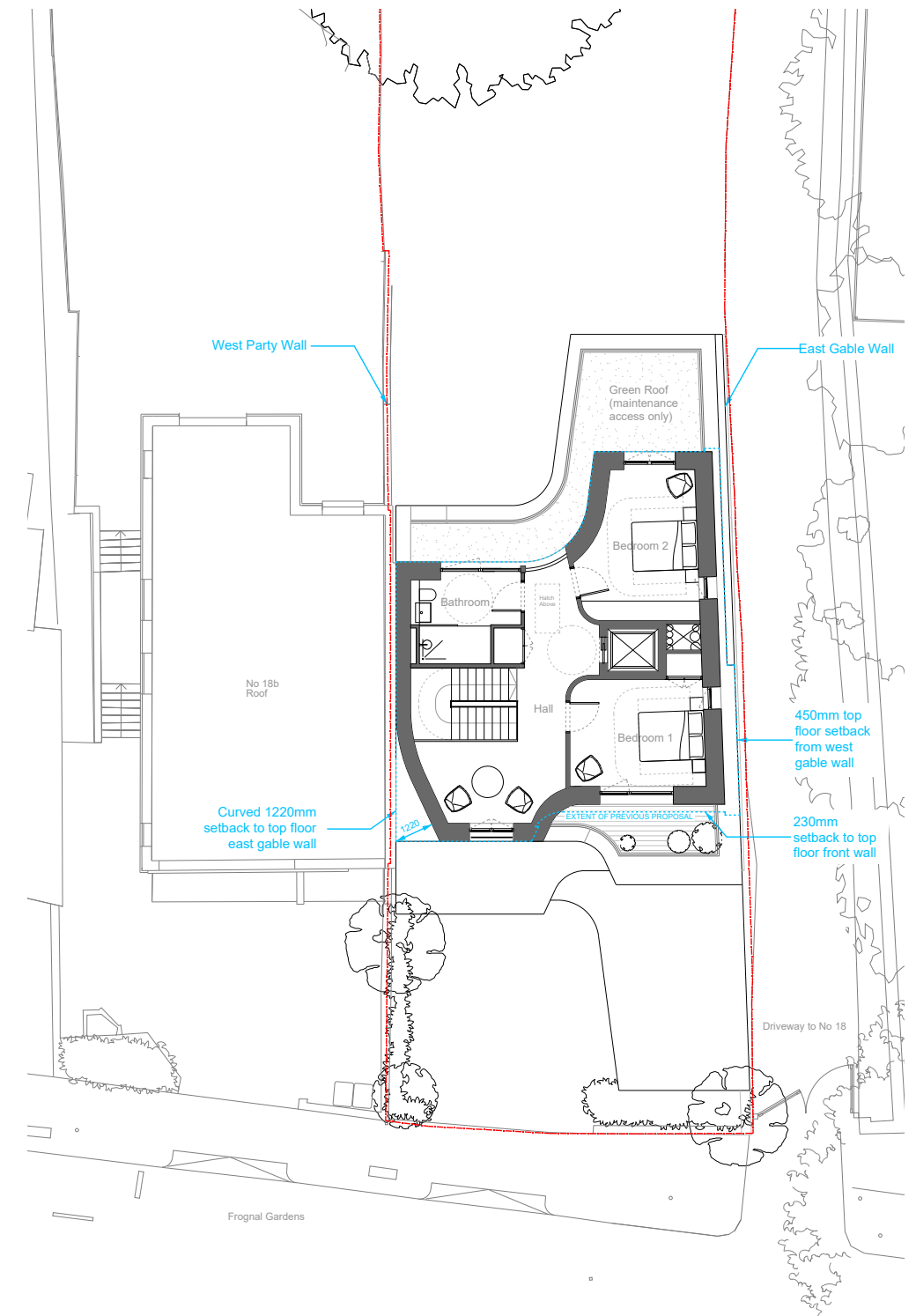
### 4.5 Replanning the Second Floor

With its new curved setback from the west party wall, new setback from the east gable wall and increased setback from the south, the top storey is now intended to read more like a roof with a dormer window. This reference to the dormer brings further resonance with many Arts & Crafts villas in the area with similar features. The new curved transition of the south-western corner of the top floor relates to the stepping roofline of 18b. Along with the overall change of proportions, this step also introduces a horizontality to the scheme that brings the proposal into greater harmony with its neighbour.

The revisions to the design not only reduce the appearance of mass, but also allow the 'weaving' language of the facade to make its way to the roofline. This gives the building's silhouette a level of articulation that enhances the lyrical character of the building's architecture.



Second Floor Plan - Previously Submitted Scheme



Second Floor Plan - Revised Scheme

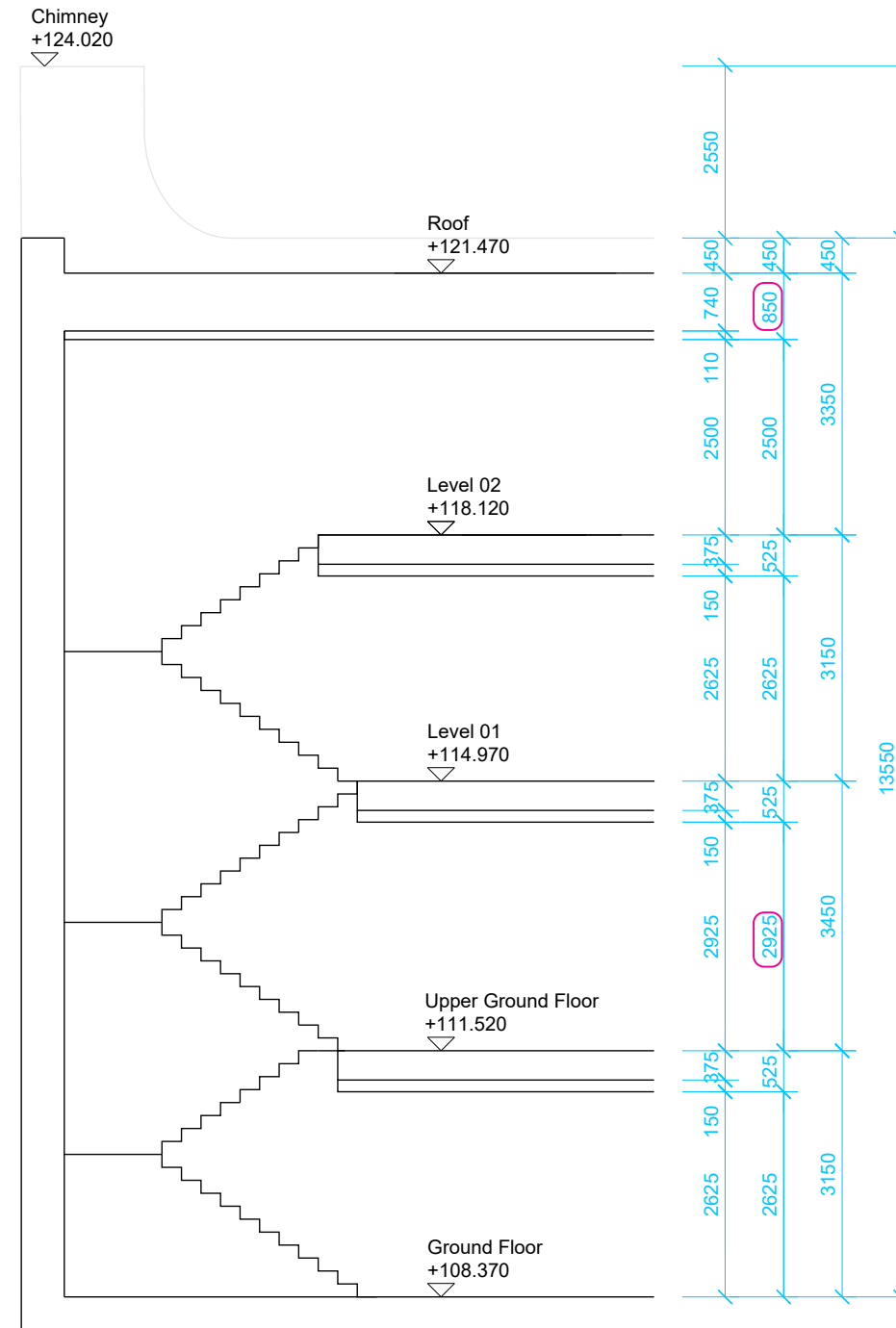


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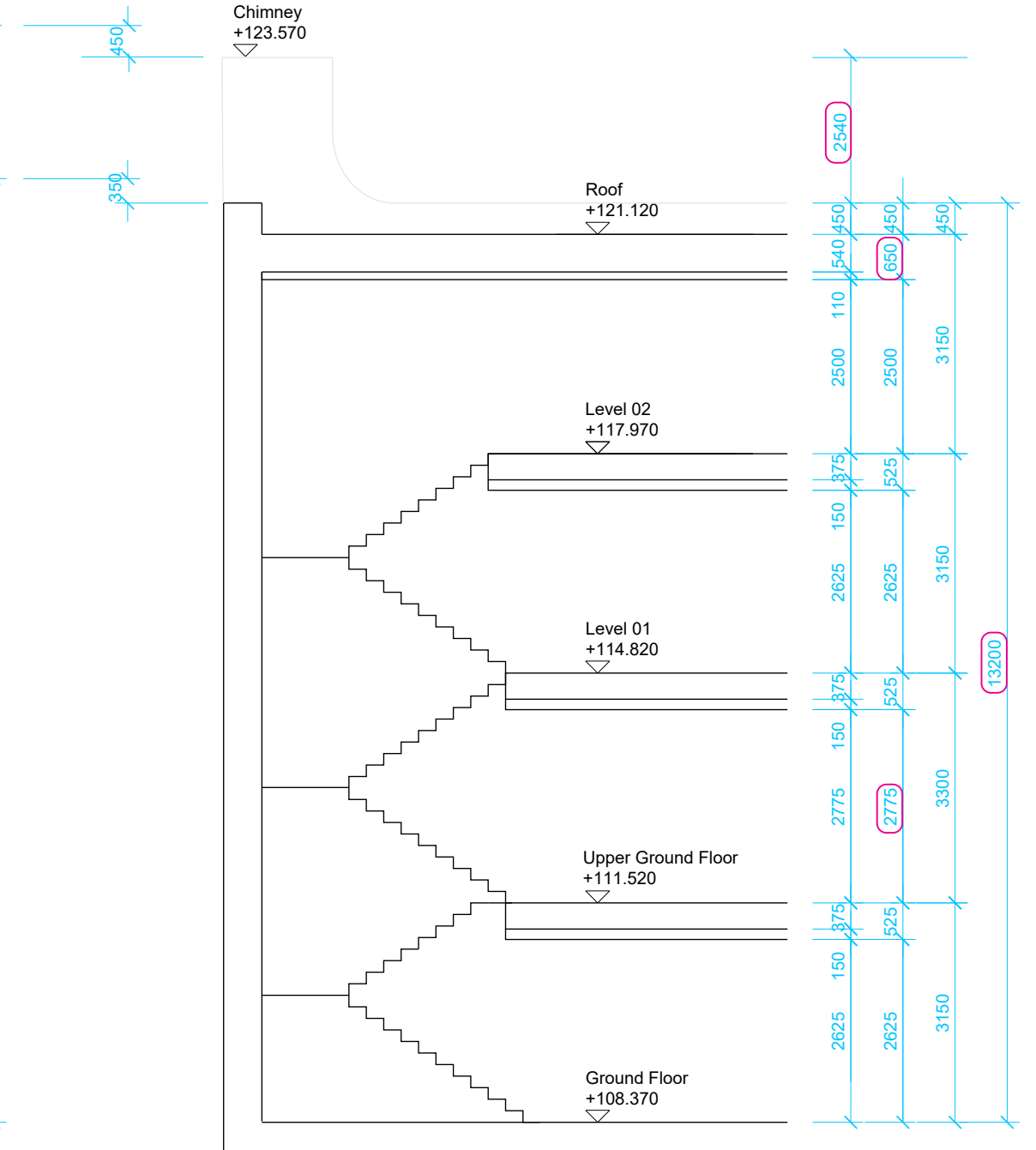
### 4.6 Reduction of Overall Height

350mm has been taken off the overall height of the building from the previous application by making the following reductions:

- 200mm from the height of the parapet
- 150mm from the floor - ceiling height of the main living floor



Section Diagram - Previously Submitted Scheme



Section Diagram - Revised Scheme



## 4.0 Design Evolution

### 4.7 Summary of Design Responses to the DRP and LBC Comments

From the outset, the applicant has aspired to achieve a very high quality design which reflects the tradition of innovative design and architecture in private commissions in Hampstead. This document sets out the evolution of that design.

In summary, the scheme has been subject to extensive consultation with officers of the Council and the Design Review Panel. While the general concept and approach has been supported by officers since the first pre-application, the applicant has engaged positively with both and amended the design in an iterative manner to address points of detailed design and provide further justification for the proposed materials.

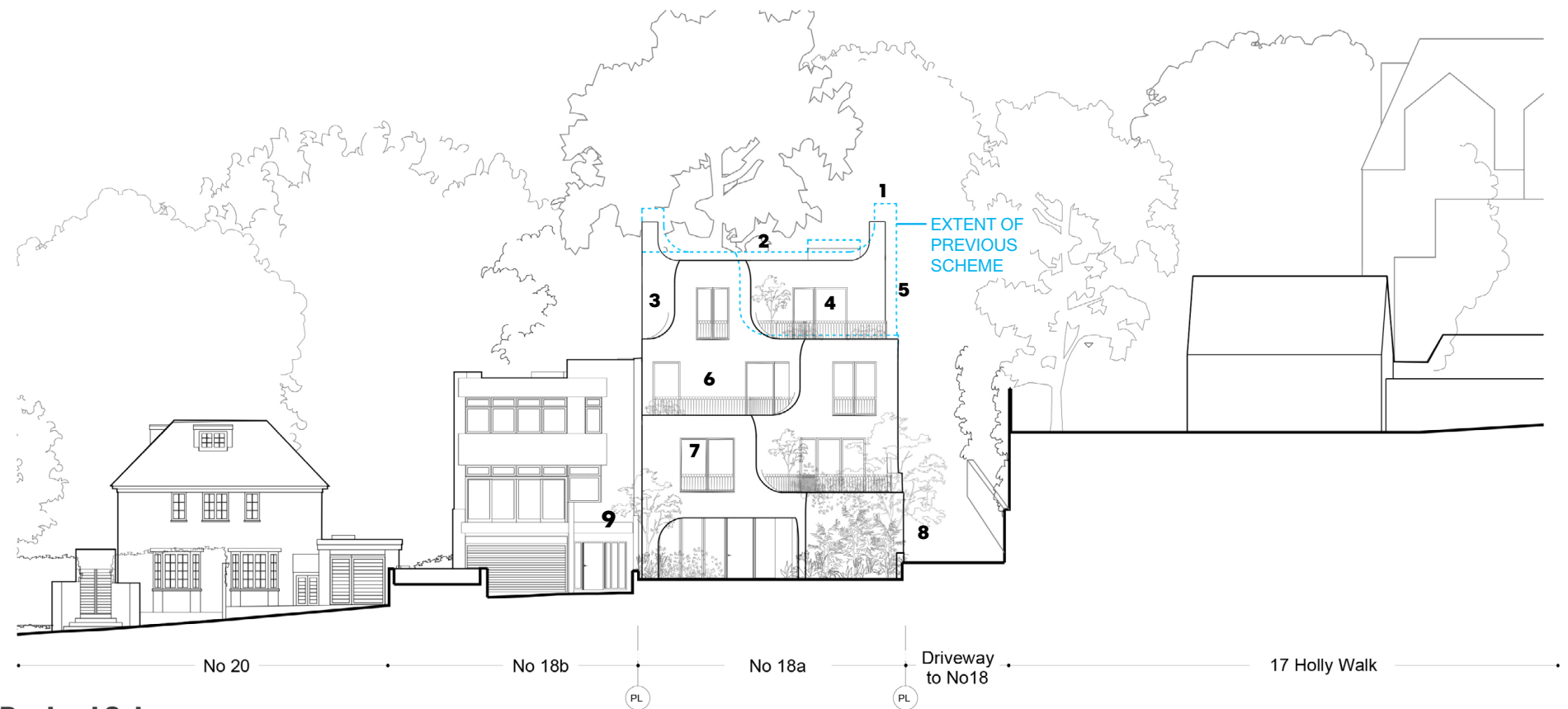
The applicant's forensic approach to design development has been recognised by the Design Review Panel who have praised the form of the building, the materiality and detailed design. Most importantly, the Panel determined that the proposed house upholds the architectural heritage and tradition of Hampstead - simultaneously respecting and enhancing the character of the conservation area as a whole, the immediate locality in a manner which respects the surrounding context in terms of scale, mass and rhythm.

Key:

1. Height to top of chimney reduced by 750mm
2. Height to top of roof reduced by 350mm
3. Curved 1220mm setback to east gable wall
4. 230mm setback to top floor front wall
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**Previously Submitted Scheme**



**Revised Scheme**