

Design & Access Statement

Prepared by
Urbanist Architecture

Our Reference

200 - NW3 4JL

Report Date

29/04/2022

Address

49a&b Belsize Park Gardens, London, NW3 4JL

Proposal

Amalgamation of two flats and associated internal alterations

Introduction

Urbanist Architecture Ltd. has been appointed by the applicant to prepare the necessary drawings and supplementary documents for pursuing planning consent. The intended development seeks to amalgamate units 49a and 49b Belsize Park Gardens, London, NW3 4JL into one large, family sized flat.

The amalgamation will be facilitated by internal alterations: namely, opening up the properties through the kitchen wall and consolidating the necessary utilities.

The purpose of this Design and Access Statement is to provide significant justification for the proposed alterations to the flats that will help to facilitate their amalgamation into one self-contained unit. This statement should be read in conjunction with the set of planning drawings associated with this application.

The proposal has been designed to comply with relevant planning policies at a national, regional and local level. These policies include the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), The London Plan (2021) and the Camden Local Plan 2017.

This document forms part of the Planning Application for the development of the site and should be read in conjunction with the following supporting information:

- Existing Drawing Set
- Proposed Drawing Set

Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

2021

Chapter 2 Achieving Sustainable
Development

Chapter 4 Decision-making

Chapter 5 Delivering a sufficient
supply of homes

Chapter 8 Promoting healthy
and safe communities

Chapter 11 Making effective use
of land

Chapter 16 Conserving and
enhancing the historic
environment

The London Plan

2021

Policy D2 Optimising site
capacity through the design-led
approach

Policy D4 Delivering good
design

Policy D6 Housing quality and
standards

Policy H9 Ensuring the best use
of stock

Policy H10 Housing size mix

Policy HC1 Heritage
conservation and growth

Planning Policy Context

Camden Local Plan

2017

Policy H3 Protecting existing homes

Policy H6 Housing choice and mix

Policy H7 Large and small homes

Policy D1 Design

Policy D2 Heritage

Design Guidance

2021

Chapter 2 Design Excellence

Chapter 3 Heritage

Chapter 8 Storage and collection of recycling and waste

Planning Considerations

The main planning consideration for this proposal is whether it meets Camden's policy concerning the protection of existing homes. Policy H3 states that development which involves the net loss of two or more homes (from individual or cumulative proposals) should be resisted.

As our amalgamation only results in the loss of one unit, we feel that it is not a proposal which would be resisted under Local Plan Policy H3. It should therefore be permissible in principle.

The proposal results in no substantial external alterations except the sealing of the entrance to Flat 49a. As we will demonstrate, the door to Flat 49a is not visible from the streetscape – that entrance is from the side elevation.

This, coupled with the fact that there is no mention of these particular doors in the Belsize Conservation Area Appraisal, makes us confident that the alteration will not impact upon the character of the area.

In summary, the following considerations will be assessed by the council:

- Meeting minimum space standards;
- Layout and density of the building;
- Impact on the character and appearance of the Belsize Conservation Area.

Planning History

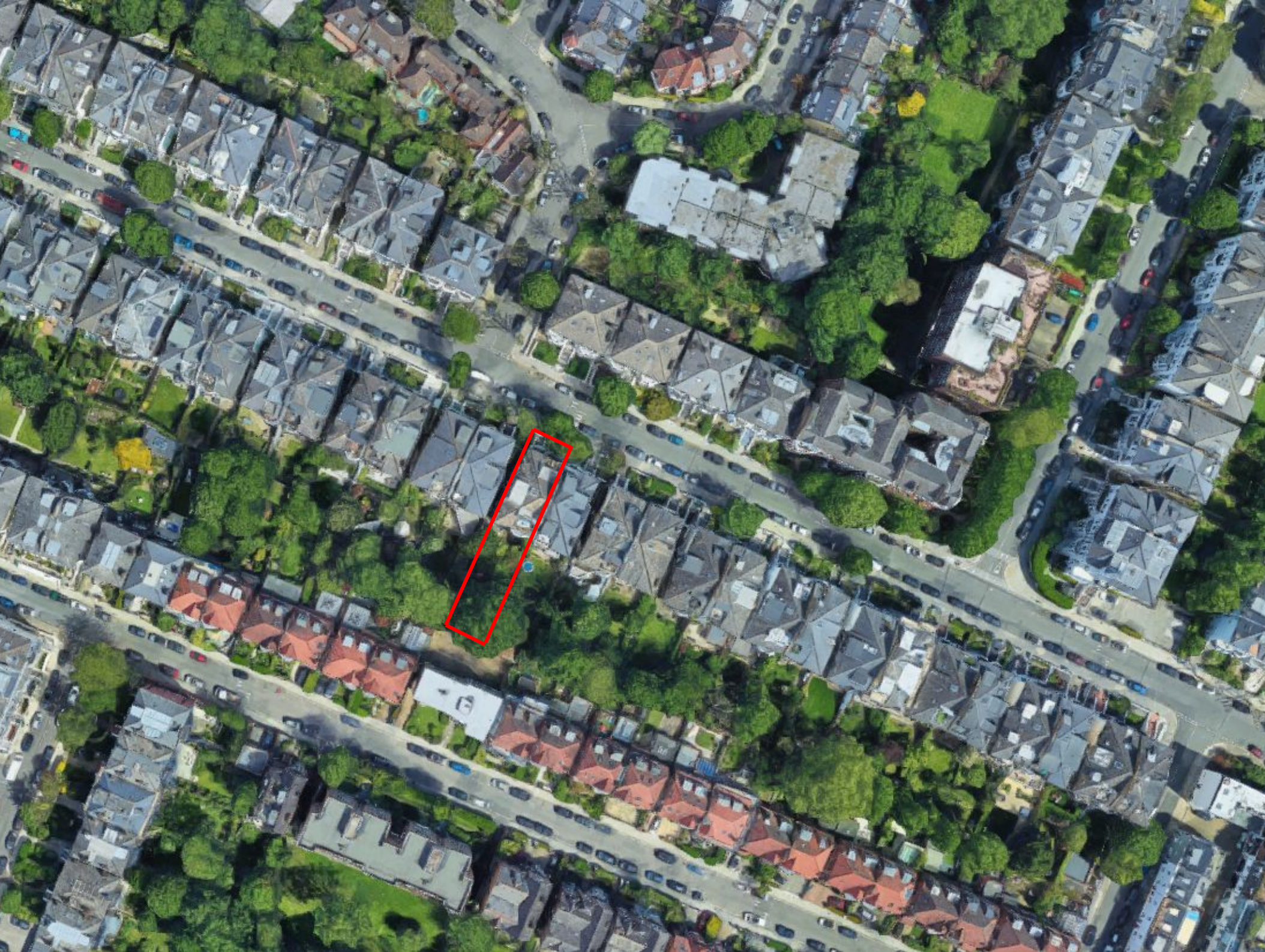
2020/5998/P

Approved



2021

Erection of a single storey pergola to rear at lower ground level.





Location & Setting

49a and 49b Belsize Park Gardens, London, NW3 4JL is located within the Chalk Farm area of the London borough of Camden. The property is on a residential street.

Belsize Park Gardens sits within a well-established residential area and the surrounding area forms part of a dense and compact urban grid.

Additionally, the application site sits within the Belsize Conservation Area.

Setting

Conservation Area

Designated in 1973, the Belsize Conservation Area is characterised by mid-19th century Italianate villas.

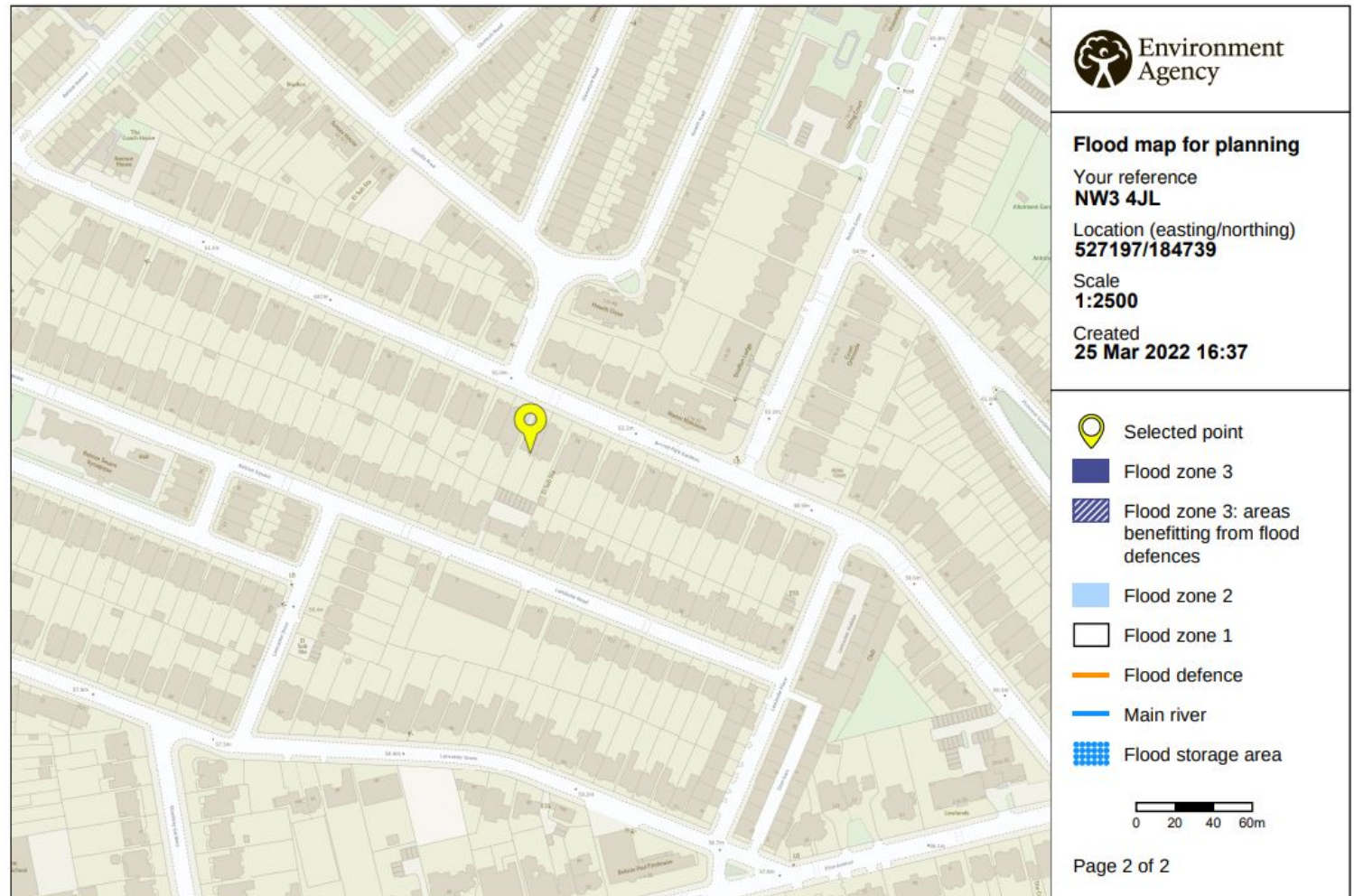
Belsize Park Gardens falls within the Belsize Park sub area, characterised by mid 19th-century villa development that has a strong consistency in building height. Most residential structures are three storeys tall, complete with a lower ground and attic level. Additionally, villas are symmetrical about their slab chimney stacks and have hipped, slate roofs with overhanging eaves that are supported on brackets.

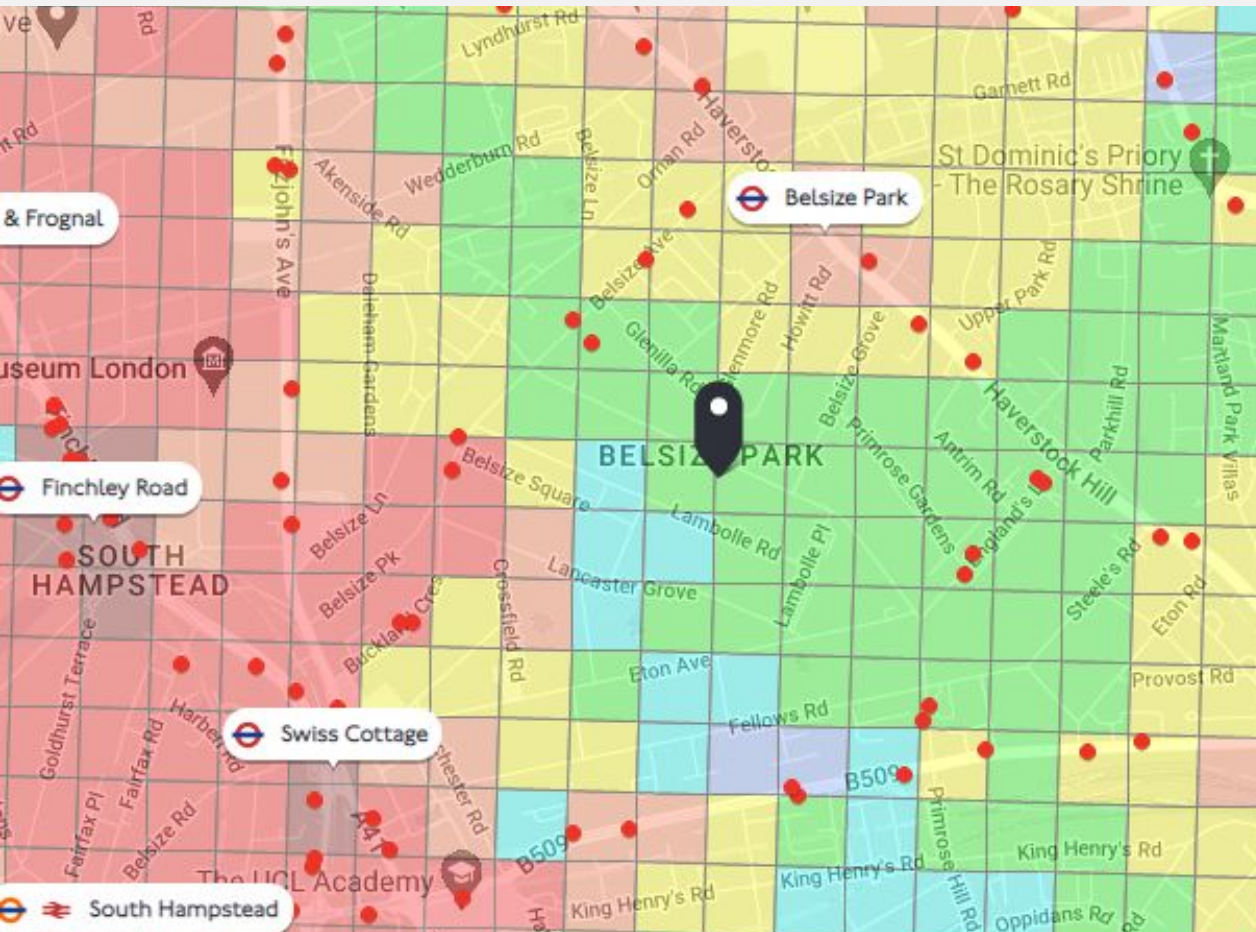
Our proposal will not impact upon the character or appearance of the conservation area. The only external alteration proposed is the removal of the entrance to Flat 49a. There is no mention of its particular door typology in the Belsize Conservation Area appraisal. Additionally, the entrance to Flat 49A is off the side elevation and as such not visible from the streetscape. It should therefore have no impact upon the street scene.



Flood Risk

The site is in Flood zone 1 so no detailed assessment of the flood risks is required for this development .





Transport

49a&b Belsize Park Gardens, London, NW3 4JL has a PTAL rating of 3.

The site is a 5-minute walk from Belsize Park station, which provides Northern Line services to Edgware, Battersea Power Station, Morden and Moorgate.

The closest bus stop is at Belsize Village, a 3-minute walk from the property. Services can be accessed that provide connections to South Hampstead.

These transportation links support the site's suitability for residential use.



Use

The property is currently used as 2 distinct flats (C3 residential), both owned by the applicant. Flat 49a accommodates one bedroom along with a living room, kitchen and bathroom. Flat 49b accommodates two bedrooms - one of which has an en-suite. It also has an additional bathroom, along with a kitchen, living area and dining area.

The proposal does not seek to change the use of the property. However, it aims to allow the property owner to pursue internal renovations that facilitate a flat amalgamation in order to accommodate the needs of a growing family. The proposal should be acceptable in terms of continued residential use. It only results in the net loss of one unit, while Camden is resistant to proposals that result in the net loss of two or more units.

While there will be a loss of a small unit, this loss will be counteracted by the widening of choice and availability in the local housing market - as it results in the creation of a large family-sized unit.

Amount & Layout

The existing gross internal area (GIA) of the property **49A** is **48.67 sqm**.

The existing gross internal area (GIA) of the property **49B** is **103.26 sqm**.

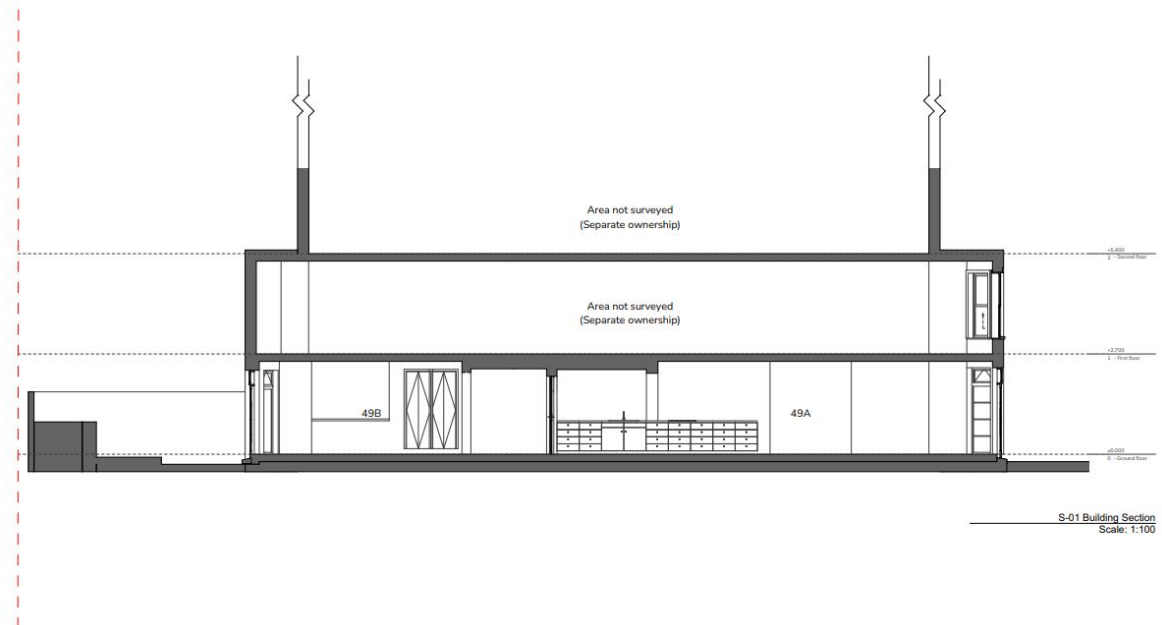
The proposed scheme, an **amalgamation of 49A and 49B** through an opening, will result in a total area (GIA) of **155.07 sqm**.

The overall height of the property will not be altered.

Other than the sealing of the entrance to Flat 49a, there will be no external changes.

The proposed unit complies with and exceeds Minimum Space Standards set out in the London Plan (2021). It should be assessed as achieving a high standard of accommodation.

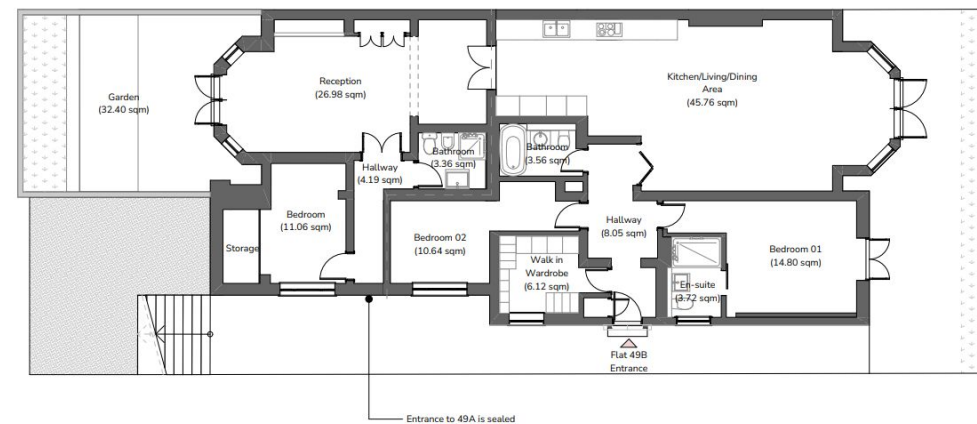
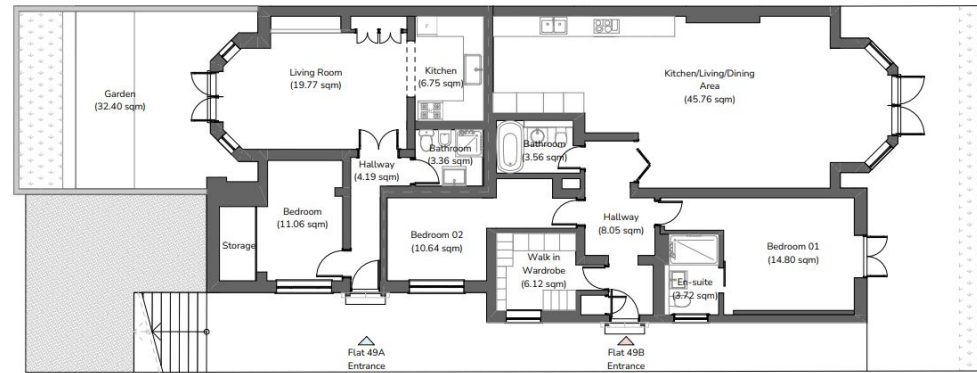
All individual rooms meet and exceed minimum space standards.



Lower Ground Floor Plan

Existing

Flats 49a and 49b are distinct units



Proposed

The amalgamation will be facilitated by an opening through the kitchen



Scale

No changes are being made to the building height or footprint through the amalgamation.

While the proposal prompts the loss of one small unit, it facilitates the creation of a large, family-sized unit.

Access

Access to the property remains through a side entrance that is not visible from the streetscape. This proposal seals the entrance to Flat 49a.

Removing the existing door to Flat 49a will direct flow throughout the amalgamated property from the existing entrance to Flat 49b.



Sustainability

The National Planning Policy Framework states:

“The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future [...] It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.”

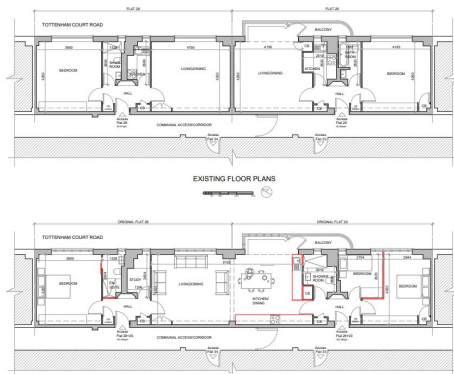
The amalgamation creates an opportunity for an updated configuration of internal utilities that will be more energy efficient. Works will also be carried out with awareness of circular economy principles.



Precedents

01

2021/6264/P



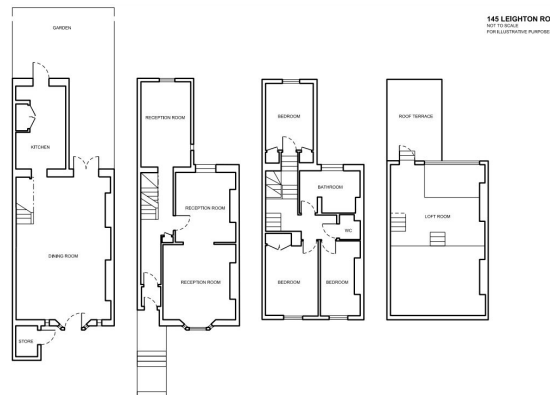
Flats 28 & 29 Paramount Court University Street London WC1E 6JP

Amalgamation of 2 flats into a single residential unit (Class C3).

Granted 4 April 2022

02

2022/0322/P



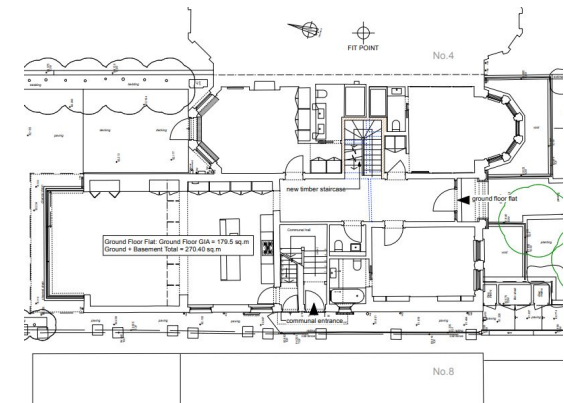
Flat 145 and Flat 145A Leighton Road London NW5 2RB

Amalgamation of two flats into one residential unit.

Granted 6 April 2022

03

2022/0140/P



6 and 6A Wedderburn Road London NW3 5QE

Amalgamation of 2 flats into a single family dwelling.

Granted 10 March 2022

Summary

The proposal seeks to amalgamate units 49a and 49b Belsize Park Gardens, London, NW3 4JL into one large, family-sized flat, in compliance with Nationally Described Minimum Space Standards.

Local Plan Policy H3 states that proposals that result in the loss of two or more units should be resisted. As our proposal just results in the loss of one, we consider it to fall within the constraints of Local Plan policy. Moreover, it offsets the loss of a small flat by contributing to the variety of housing stock in the borough with the creation of a large, family-sized unit.

The amalgamation will not have an overall impact on the character or appearance of the host building.

The new residential unit proposed within the development scheme will provide high quality living conditions for current and future residents.

Should there be any additional information or clarification required in order to progress this application, please do not hesitate to contact Urbanist Architecture Ltd. We are more than happy to make amendments to the scheme that the planning department may suggest.



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