



DESIGN + ACCESS STATEMENT

165 ALEXANDRA PARK ROAD, HARINGEY, N22 7UL

January 2023

0.1 INTRODUCTION

This planning application is for a rear ground floor extension of a Victorian terraced building and the alteration of its rear facade. In the following sections, arguments for the new design proposal (aka. "the project") will be clearly stated, together with the reasons why these changes are thought necessary.

0.2 GENERAL LOCATION + ACCESS

The project is located on Alexandra Park Road, which is placed directly north of Alexandra Palace and Park (image 1). The Palace which was built in 1859 forms a large part of the identity of the local area. In the decades following its opening the palace came under financial difficulties due to its size resulting in the need to sale portions of the park on which it sits. These difficulties continued until the palace and park were appropriated by the government through the Palace and Parks Act 1900. The 165 property is assumed to have been built as a result of these sales sometime between 1890 and 1910.

In the decades following the appropriation of the palace further development of the surrounding area into housing continued. Of these developments the property at 165 Alexandra Road is one of the first to have been built, it is therefore understandable that it requires modernisation to cater for the current ways of living, hence the requested alterations on this specific project.

Alexandra Park Road is **not** in a designated conservation area.



Image 01 – Location map of Allerton Road and the project border outlined in red



Image 02 – South facing front facade outlined in red

The project is part of a residential row of terraced houses that have their front facades oriented towards the South. Main access is through the front yard and door and there is a secondary access from the side of the building, as these houses have the particularity of being paired, mirrored and semi-detached only at the front and then connected with a party wall at the back. (image 02)

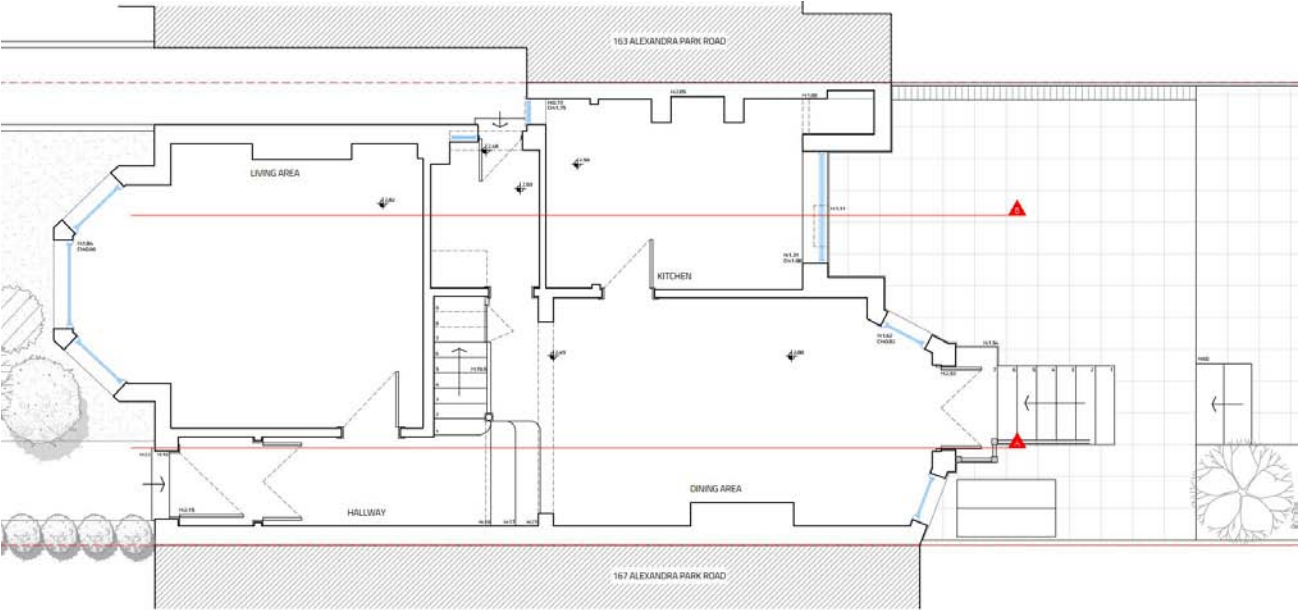
0.3 PROJECT CONTEXT, PLANNING HISTORY + LAYOUT

The project is a two-storey, terraced Victorian house, with a cellar under almost the entire footprint and a roof conversion that resulted in a third storey at the rear of the property. The project has no prior planning history so it is difficult to pinpoint when the conversion was added.

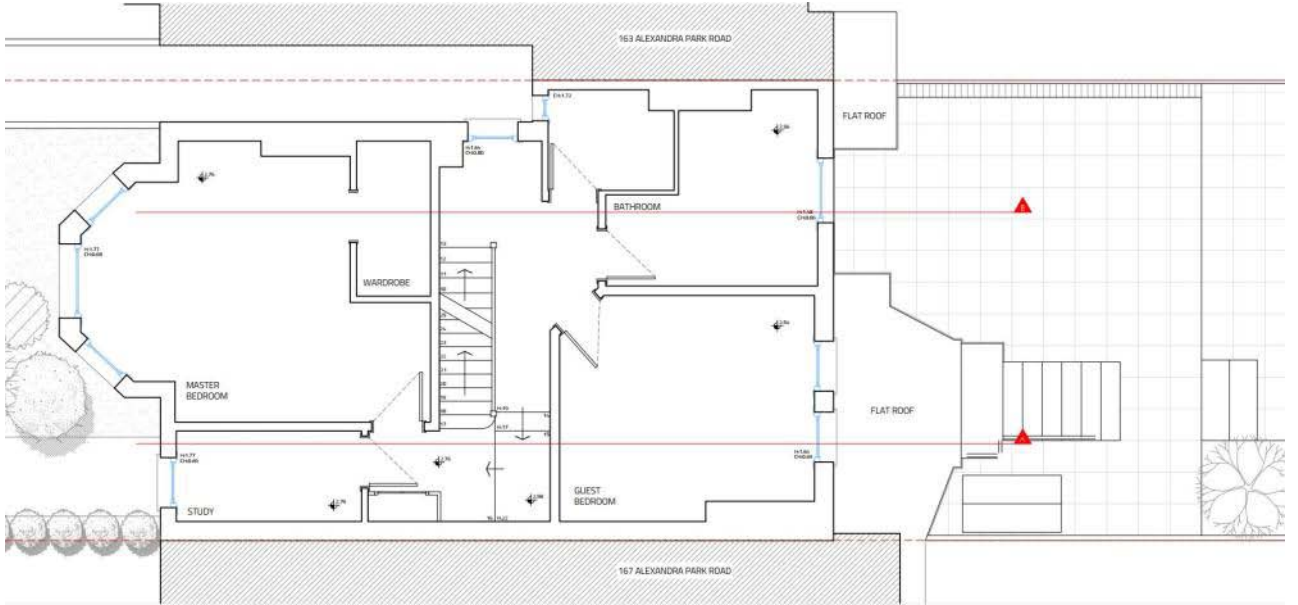
The building layout of all three levels is as follows (image 03):

- The front entrance on the **ground floor** leads to a hallway that connects the main bay window living area to the back where a dining area is located with direct access to the rear garden. Another separate side entrance also comes into the same space. The kitchen is directly next to the dining and a main staircase is placed centrally and perpendicularly to the entrance hall.
- The staircase then leads to a spacious **first floor** landing, which feeds into a utility space, bathroom and bedroom, with the master bedroom and a study a few steps up facing the front of the house.
- The same staircase continues to the **loft floor**, which houses two bedrooms facing the rear of the house, a small WC and a restricted head height loft storage space at the front of the house.

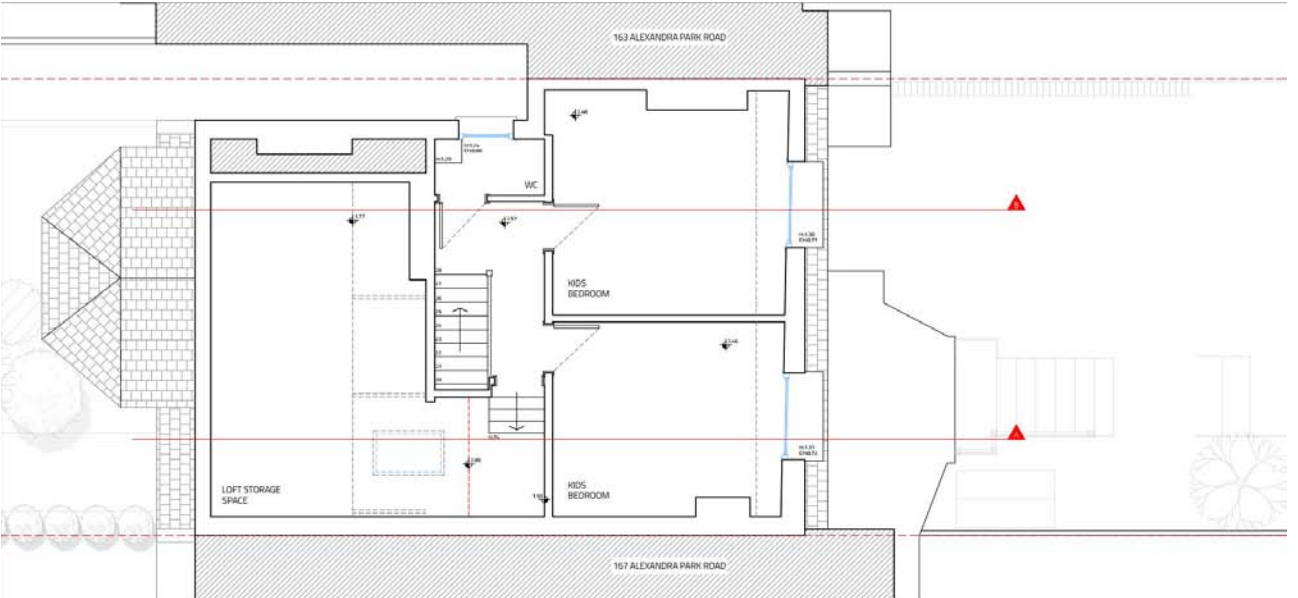
EXISTING GROUND FLOOR

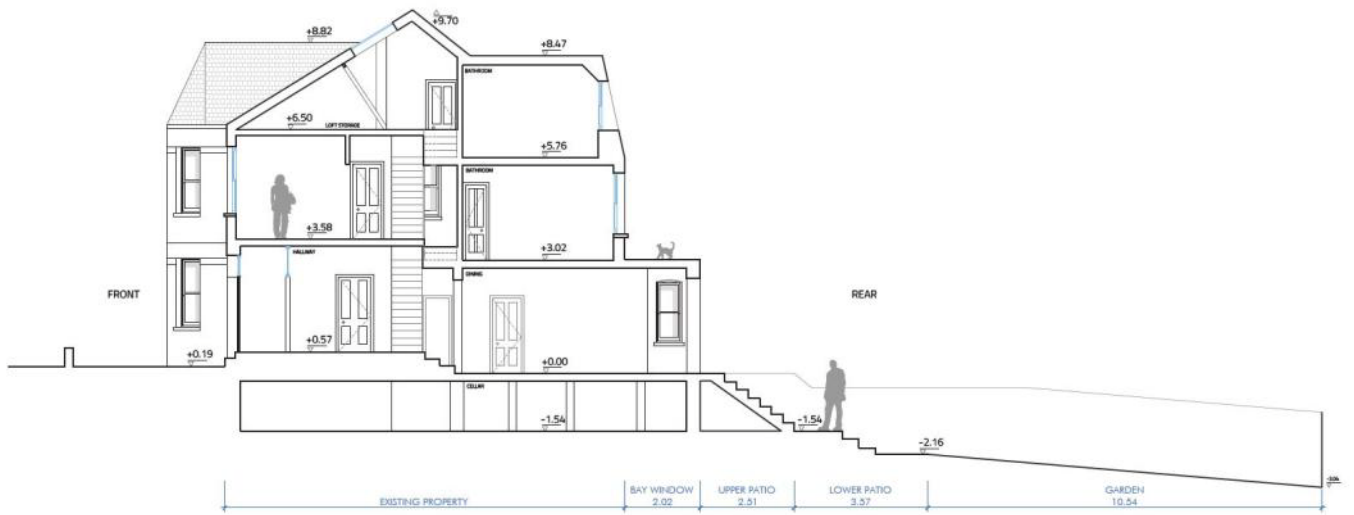


EXISTING FIRST FLOOR



EXISTING LOFT LEVEL





EXISTING SECTION

Image 03 – Existing floor plans and section showing current layout

0.4 NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES

Of the set of the terraces along the north side of Alexandra Park Road many have had either a rear or loft extension constructed, with the majority having had a combination of both.

As part of a set of 4 terrace houses, the project shares boundaries and party walls with No.163 and No.167 Alexandra Park Road. Each of the four properties have had similar ground floor and loft extensions constructed at some point with No.161 and No.167 having the roofs of those rear loft extension converted to roof terraces. The orientation of each property follows the curvature of Alexandra Park Road reducing the possibility of privacy violations and the proposed design similarly does not infringe on this. (image 04)



Image 04 – Rear bird-view of the project together with the adjacent neighbouring properties

0.5 ISSUES + EXISTING MATERIALITY

ISSUES

- The **ground floor is fragmented** due to an internal partition dividing the dining, kitchen and secondary entrance spaces, blocking any south facing light reaching the centre of the house.
- The existing **kitchen layout is very small and impractical** with extremely little worktop space for preparation and cooking, and with inadequate storage for the family needs.
- The **poorly constructed** loft extension is cold, non-insulated and showing visible signs of decay.
- There is a **lack of bathroom** in the loft meaning the family of 4 must share one bathroom.
- There is noticeable **lack of insulation** throughout the property causing constant energy loss.
- There are **dated, poorly installed UPVC windows** in the loft, which also contribute to loss of heat, energy and draughts.
- There are **aging** timber sash windows at the rear of the property on both ground and first floors, also contributing to the loss of heat, energy and increase of draughts.
- There is a **lack of natural light** in the ground floor kitchen and dining spaces due to its north facing orientation, which results in the family keeping the lights on even during the day to be able to perform basic functions and to improve the atmosphere of the space. The small size of the windows in the loft bedrooms also let in very little natural light.
- **Lack of storage** is another major concern for a modern family of four and Victorian properties, although very well designed considering their age, have been lacking the necessary space needed nowadays.

EXISTING MATERIALITY

The rear facade of the project is finished in London stock brick of various ages and colours, where repairs and additions have been made. The windows at the rear facade display a variety of different materials (uPVC, timber), styles (sash, fixed, split modern, French opening) and sizes in an attempt to allow as much light in as possible due to the north facing nature of the project. The walls are poorly constructed, with no thermal or sound insulation, allowing draft and damp to enter the house. The loft cladding is poorly installed and in need of major repair. The cellar level is finished in white render in an attempt to prevent further damp and the lintels above the original house openings are finished in orange brick, making the materiality of the facade too busy and confused. (image 05)

Image 05 – View of the existing rear facade of the project 1.0



Proposal + Planning

The proposal for the project of 165 Alexandra Park Road aims to improve the ground floor, garden layout and usability, while dealing with the problematic loft extension and the lack of natural light throughout. The major problems that are being tackled with the proposed design are the lack of a large, bright kitchen/dining space for the family, lack of garden patio and improvement of living standards. All poorly constructed areas are being modernised, insulated and repaired with longevity and energy efficiency as the main goals.

The proposal follows the Borough's policy requirements for well-designed, high quality schemes and has been respectful of the expectations stated in City of London Local Plan concerning the high quality of architecture and design of new developments in the area.

The proposed space has been carefully designed to fit the needs of the owners, with high quality materials that ensure a sustainable living, ample natural light and better facilities provision. The building fabric will be as highly insulated as possible to reduce energy losses and the proposed architecture suggests clean lines with volumetric separation through materials, hygienic spaces with strong natural light sources and good ventilation.

2.0 DESIGN

The proposed design deals with the aforementioned issues through tailor-made solutions for each affected area, all of them listed in detail below:

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The ground floor part of the house is completely redesigned, with the addition of a modern rear extension that aims to provide enough space for a new large kitchen and dining area together with plenty of storage units and seating. The glazed nature of the proposed extension on the rear facade ensures the project capitalises on much needed natural light and allows for beautiful views across London due to the altitude of the location. The north facing orientation means that overheating will never be an issue and the quality of internal space is substantially improved.

Sliding doors can be tucked behind one another and give the option of connecting the inside of the house to the newly designed external space on a sunny day, which will also provide the much needed cross ventilation for the kitchen. A new platform for seating outside is created, with garden storage space taking advantage of the height difference and new privacy panels are installed at the boundary with the neighbours, ensuring the family is not overlooked but at the same time allowing light to filter through.



Image 06 – Proposed rear extension design

In terms of size, the proposed scheme adds very little new mass to the rear facade and is modest and respectful of its surroundings and neighbours. It is even set back from the original bay window projecting line.

In addition, the existing party wall corner, shared with No.167, is retained in the same location, in order to cause minimal disruption to the neighbours, while the western corner with No.163 is brought slightly outwards to create a continuous line. The extended line is protruding a mere 45cm from the neighbouring property, causes no right of light or privacy issues and in fact improving the currently heavily overlooked rear garden by adding a timber and opaque glass privacy screen on each side.

In consequence, the proposal adds an area of just 3.7sqm to the existing overall footprint of the building, by choosing to only increase the length of the property in a very strategic manner, as displayed in the floorplan and volumetric drawings below (images 07 + 08)

In the garden, the proposed platform is sunken in a way that, while providing the necessary seating area where the family can enjoy the view and entertain guests, it ensures the internal views are not blocked. The difference of height level is utilised for much needed storage above which a new planter will be placed. Having the greenery of the new planter and the further garden visible from most of the ground floor areas gives the space calmness and improves the quality of living by providing fresh air circulation, light and association with nature, all invaluable commodities in an urban environment.

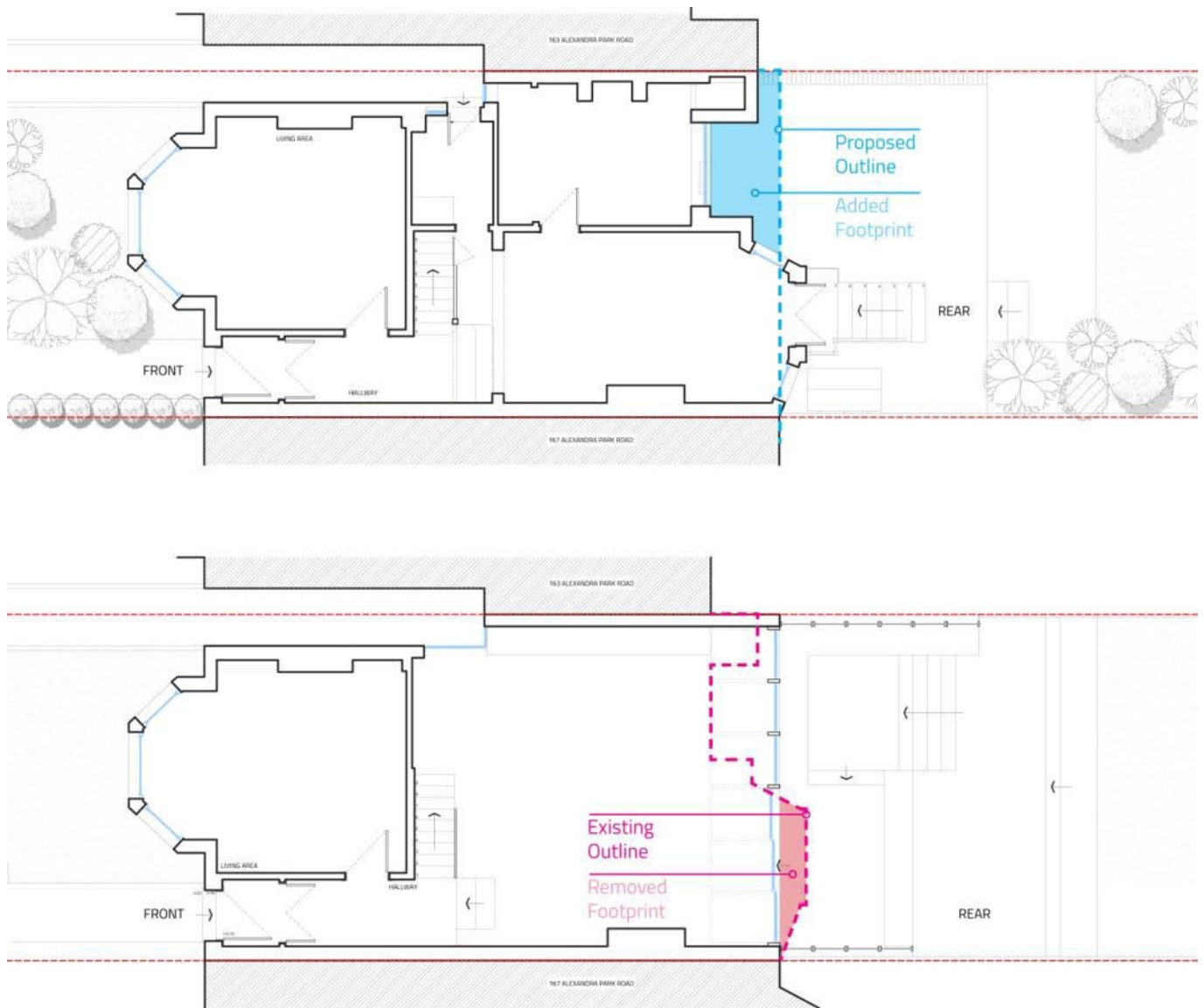


Image 07 – Existing and proposed footprints, highlighting changes + Proposed ground floor with new layout and patio

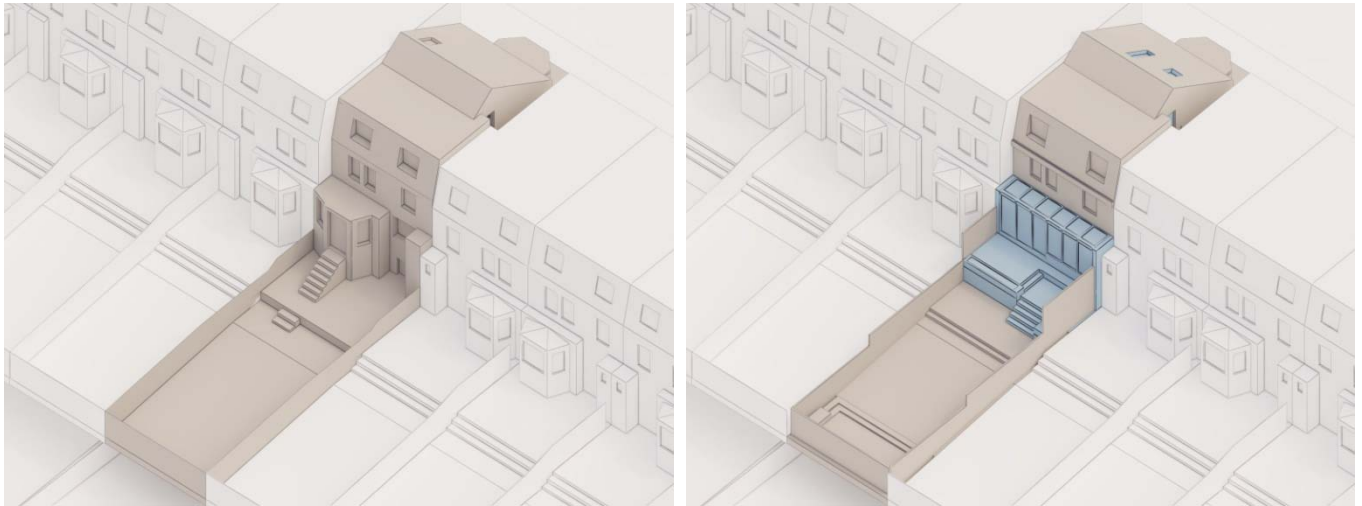


Image 08 – Existing and proposed volumetric drawings of the rear part of the building, highlighting changes

PROPOSED REAR FACADE

The existing facade is being cleaned and treated to give it a new lease of life. Along with the new modern oak extension at ground level, all existing brickwork will be power washed and lime treated in order to lighten and even the colour of the existing bricks.

On loft level, the current aging and deteriorating slate tiles are replaced with new, dark concrete tiles, while the two current openings will be made slightly larger in order to enable the loft bedrooms to be flooded with natural light. Crucially, the size and mass of the loft will remain exactly the same as the existing loft.

The current windows throughout the rear facade will be replaced in order to increase energy efficiency of the project. From ground floor to first, all openings at the rear facade will be replaced with high quality, double glazed oak windows, while at the loft new dark aluminium windows will be installed, colour matching the dark concrete tiles.

PROPOSED FRONT FACADE

As part of this project proposal the work done to the front facade will be minimal and the visual impact of these works should be barely noticeable from the street. At ground and first floors, current windows/openings which open up into the existing kitchen and utility spaces will be vertically enlarged in order to allow the proposed areas to benefit from much-needed direct sunlight, something which is not possible to achieve through other means due to the project's south/north orientation. All openings facing the neighbouring property will be opaque according to regulations, in order to prevent any overlooking concerns with No.163.

At roof level there are two skylights (a new and a repositioned one) in order to allow for the new bathroom and study to be filled with natural south facing light.

BBQ AREA

The newly proposed BBQ area at the end of the garden looks to create a space in which the family can spend time in, while entertaining guests. The new brick and timber patio will have an integrated BBQ, planter and bench seating. The location is chosen as it is the only area to receive direct sunlight in the summer months.

The area is flanked by adequately sized brick fencing to ensure the privacy of the family and their neighbours.

2.1 SUSTAINABILITY + QUALITY OF LIVING

Ample **natural light** is gained on the ground floor with the help of the glazed extension at the rear, with tall slender frames maximising intake, in addition to the slim corner windows in the side entrance alley, which receive direct south facing, warm light during the summer months. Finally, as explained before, windows are strategically enlarged and placed throughout the project to increase the light intake of the project.

Thermal insulation is an absolutely vital element of every modern build. Rigid insulating panels will be added to all new walls floor and roof, so as to improve energy loss and achieve sustainability levels specified in Part L. The proposed windows and doors are double glazed and high performing to avoid cold bridges.

The target values to be reached for all new areas are the following:

0.18 W/(m ² K) for external walls	0.11 W/(m ² K) for flat roof
1.20 W/(m ² K) for windows	5.0 m ³ /(h.m ²) air tightness

Cross Ventilation is an often overlooked but absolutely crucial element of a quality design. The proposed scheme ensures there is air circulating the long ground floor

Sound insulation can be a big issue for most of these older Victorian properties. To tackle this, specific walls, ceilings and floors will be layered with high performing loosely packed fibre boards, which provide excellent sound absorption.

2.2 MATERIALS

On ground floor level, the rear extension is a treated **oak** construction, with **timber framed double glazed fixe window panes** and sliding doors.

The upper patio of the rear garden will be finished in a **light grey microcement** that will be weather treated, with lateral **timber and opaque glass** privacy screens to match the timber of the extension.

Microcement is essentially a very thin coating of concrete render, usually between 4-8mm thickness. The way it is applied makes certain pale lines appear in the product, showcasing the handmade quality and the craftsmanship involved. When treated, it is highly waterproof and resilient, making it a great product for exterior surfaces while also ensuring there is no major colour variation with time.



The lower patio and barbecue area at the back will both feature **brick paving**, and durable, **treated timber storage** to match the rest of the building.

On the first floor, the existing **brickwork** above the extension will be **lime-washed** in order to lighten and fine-tune the exact colour of the existing brickwork. All windows of the first floor will be **oak** matching the new ground floor glazing.

Lime-wash is a great product for subtly changing the colour of bricks and other porous materials, as it gets absorbed effortlessly, retaining the characteristics of the original surface. In its diluted form, the result is non-homogenous, which makes the bricks look and feel natural, retaining the character of the existing materiality.

The mansard roof of the second floor will be clad in **bespoke black concrete roof tiles**, and the windows will be **dark grey aluminium**, to match the colour of the bespoke tiles, for a clean minimal look.

The entire colour and material palette of the proposed scheme aims to be minimal and visually pleasing. All materials, techniques and fittings used in the proposal will be of high quality and will be executed to a high standard to achieve longevity. Where possible, materials will be sourced from renewable/recycle-able sources.

Please see below a selection of images of the proposed materials.



Microcement



Lime-washed Brickwork



Timber Windows



Dark Grey Aluminium Windows



Timber & Translucent Glass



Timber Storage and Render

2.3 RIGHT OF LIGHT & PRIVACY

Right of Light has been considered throughout the design process and has lead to a proposal that doesn't hinder the light of any of its surrounding properties. By keeping the existing line with the party wall neighbours at No.167 and as mentioned previously only coming 45cm out from the rear facade on the No.163 side, neither adjacent properties will be noticing any change in their current natural sunlight conditions.

Timber privacy screens with opaque glass inserts are positioned on the sides of the upper patio, ensuring both privacy and natural light isn't impacted. Through considered materials and architecture, the building manages to have ample, uninterrupted natural light without being overlooked by any neighbouring buildings and without compromising on the privacy of its owners.

3.0 DESIGN IMPACT + CONCLUSION

The submitted scheme has been carefully designed to address the owners' key requirements while respecting the Borough's policies and neighbouring properties. The proposal provides better accommodation and much needed external space for the owners without excessively increasing the square footage of the property. The quality of the existing spaces is hugely improved by introducing better thermal and sound insulation, ventilation and most importantly natural light.

The scheme suggests a modern design, with clear commitment to respect the original identity of the property while improving its functionality in order to be able to provide for the current needs. We strongly believe the above proposal will make a positive impact on the area, providing a platform for better designed extensions and improving the appearance of the building. For the above reasons, we invite the council to consider the above information provided and respond in favour of granting the design planning permission.



Image 11 – Image of the kitchen and dining showcasing materiality and abundance of natural light.