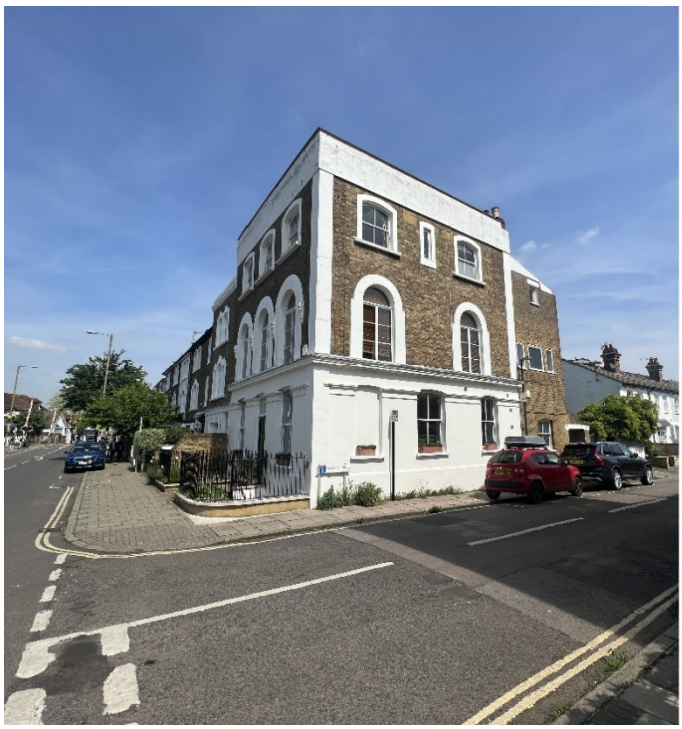
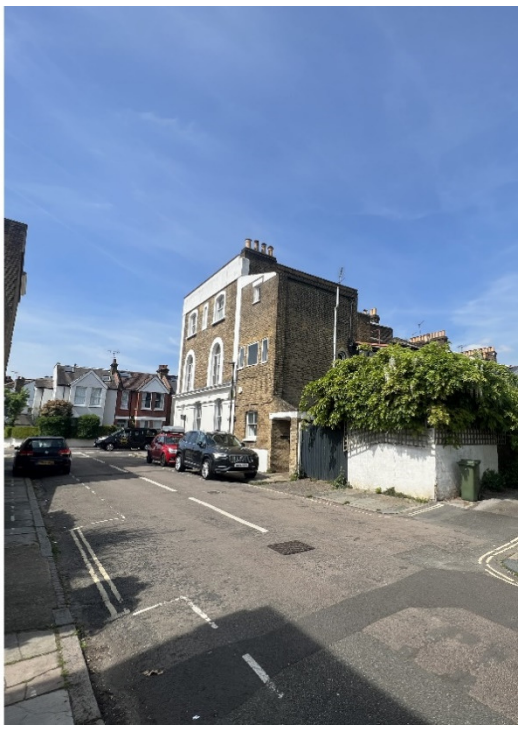
2a **Eleanor Grove** London SW13 0JN

PLANNING, HERITAGE & DESIGN STATEMENT





Installation of two air conditioning units above existing roof terrace; replacement of glazed roof access structure; reconstruction of first-floor rear extension with Juliet balcony railings; replacement of ground-floor rear conservatory extension; replacement of all single-glazed windows with double-glazed equivalents; alterations to rear ground floor façade and fenestration, including new windows; replacement pedestrian and vehicular entrance gates.

PP-13170180
AUGUST 2024

SITE AND DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

Site description

1.1 The application site, known as 2a Eleanor Grove, consists of a three-storey flat with a roof terrace. This flat occupies the second floor, first floor, and part of the ground floor of a building originally known as 115 White Hart Lane, situated at the corner of White Hart Lane and Eleanor Grove. The application site also includes a small garden behind the building.

1.2 The remaining parts of the ground floor, along with the basement, are not included in this application. These areas form a separate flat now referred to as 115 White Hart Lane.

1.3 Access to the application site is through a pedestrian and vehicular gate located on Eleanor Grove.

1.4 The application site adjoins 113 White Hart Lane to the north-west and 2 Eleanor Grove to the north-east. It is bordered by roads on all other sides.

1.5 The application site is located within the White Hart Lane (Mortlake) Conservation Area and, along with 103 to 127 (odd numbers) White Hart Lane, is designated as a 'building of townscape merit'.

1.6 Permitted development rights have not been revoked from the application site via a Direction under Article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended)[1]. Consequently, the applicant can undertake certain types of development (other than those already restricted because the application site is a flat rather than a dwellinghouse) without the need for planning permission, such as the painting of any exterior building materials (Class C, Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the Order) or the alteration of a boundary structure, fence, or gate (Class A, Part 2).

Development description

1.7 The proposed development is for:

(A) The installation of two air conditioning condenser units at roof level, on top of the existing roof terrace;

(B) the replacement of the (non-original) glazed roof access structure;

(C) the reconstruction of the (non-original) first-floor rear extension, incorporating Juliet balcony railings;

(D) the replacement of the (non-original) ground-floor rear conservatory extension;

(E*) the replacement of all single-glazed windows with double-glazed equivalents;

[1] https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/planning/conservation_and_urban_design/conservation_areas/article_4_directions/article_4_directions_conservation_area

(F) alterations to the rear ground floor facade and fenestration, to include the insertion of new windows;

(G*) the replacement of the pedestrian and vehicular entrance gates fronting Eleanor Grove.

1.8 The replacement of the existing single-glazed windows with double-glazed equivalents that maintain the same appearance (item E* above) is unlikely to result in a material impact on the external appearance of the property. Therefore, it may not constitute "development" as defined under Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, at least not beyond the "de minimis" threshold. Nevertheless, the proposals have been included with this application in the interests of record-keeping, certainty, and proper planning.

1.9 Similarly, the replacement of the existing pedestrian and vehicular entrance gates on the boundary with Eleanor Grove with new gates of the same height as the existing ones (item G* above) already benefits from planning permission under Article 3 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015, pursuant to Class A, Part 2, Schedule 2 of that Order.

1.10 Finally, while it is proposed to install walk-on glass on a small part of the existing roof terrace, the alteration cannot be seen from any surrounding vantage points, both public and private, including from the upper storeys of nearby properties. Consequently, the proposals do not constitute "development" under Section 55 of the 1990 Act, as they do not alter the external appearance of the building and have therefore been omitted from the development description.

DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

Replacement pedestrian and vehicular entrance gates

2.1 The existing pedestrian entrance gate is recessed from the site boundary and is therefore largely unnoticeable (see image below). Replacing this unremarkable gate with a new, higher-quality aluminium gate is therefore not considered harmful to visual amenity.

2.2 It is also proposed to replace the existing vehicular swing gates with an electric sliding gate of a similar style, but constructed from more durable materials. The replacement gates will be of a traditional design and made from aluminium (see photographic example below) to ensure durability against wear and to minimise long-term neglect. Crucially, the use of aluminium will facilitate a sliding mechanism, allowing for easier and faster access to the on-site parking space. This will reduce waiting times on the public highway and improve highway safety.

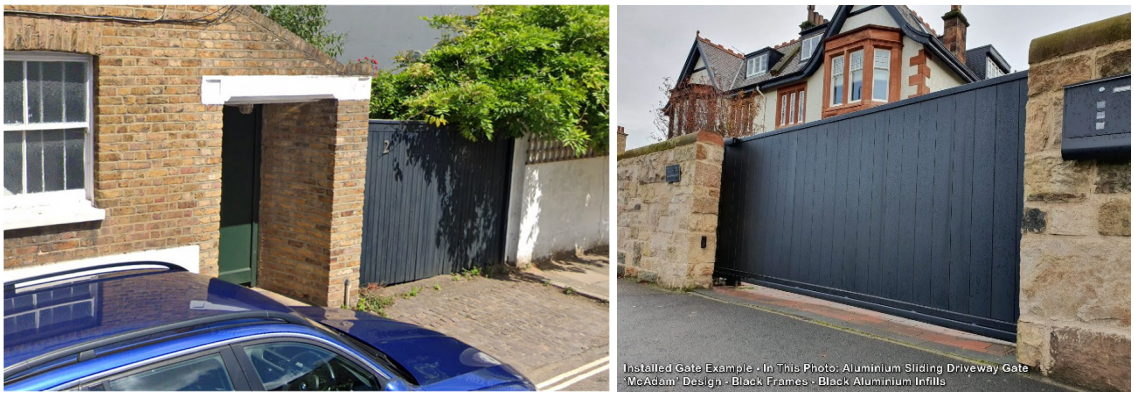


Illustration 1: The existing pedestrian gate (left image) is already recessed and therefore barely noticeable. The existing vehicular swing gates (also in the left image) will be replaced with sliding aluminium gates of a similar overall style, improving highway safety (an example of traditionally styled aluminium gates is shown in the right image).

2.3 The photographic example above demonstrates that the replacement gate, even if constructed from aluminium, would still be of a similar overall appearance as the exiting gates and hence not have a noticeable impact on the appearance of the conservation area.

2.4 Officers are reminded that planning permission for a replacement gate of identical height to the existing gate has already been granted under Article 3 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015, pursuant to Class A (‘gates, fences, walls etc’), Part 2, Schedule 2 of that Order. This permission does not impose any stipulations regarding colour or materials.

2.5 Reconstructed glazed roof access enclosure

2.6 The existing roof access enclosure, located at third-floor (roof) level, is a relatively lightweight, “conservatory-style” structure consisting primarily of glazed elements, framed by white-painted timber components (refer to Section 4 of this document for photographs).

2.7 It is proposed to replace the existing roof access enclosure with a new glazed structure of identical height and length. The only change will be an increase in the width of the replacement structure (facing the side elevation), from 1700 mm to 2150 mm.

2.8 Due to the enclosure's significant setback from the exposed edges of the roof, its elevated position above neighbouring properties, the height of the existing parapet walls, and the absence of neighbouring windows on the flank elevation walls of 117 White Hart Lane and 2 Eleanor Grove, the existing enclosure is largely hidden from view. Only minimal glimpses of the very top of the structure are visible from distant viewpoints along Eleanor Grove and Fitzgerald Avenue, and these glimpses are inconspicuous, going unnoticed unless specifically pointed out.

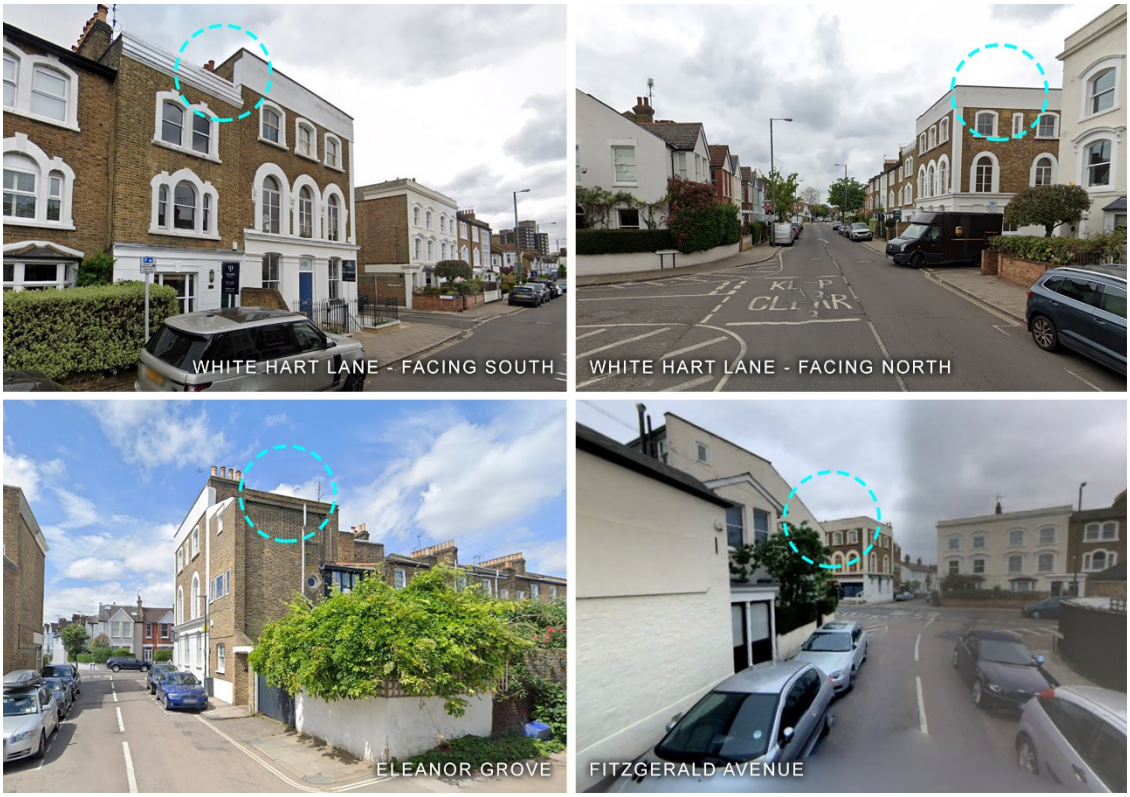


Illustration 2: The existing roof access structure is not visible from the vantage points shown above, nor will the proposed replacement be. While glimpses of the existing structure are visible from very distant views along Eleanor Grove and Fitzgerald Avenue (but not from White Hart Lane), the proposal only includes an increase in the width of the existing structure along the White Hart Lane elevation.

2.9 As the side elevation of the existing structure is not visible from public or private views, and since the width increase only affects this side elevation, the proposals will have no material impact on the external appearance of the building beyond the 'de minimis' threshold.

It is proposed to use powder-coated white aluminium frames instead of the existing timber frames in the construction of the new roof access enclosure. The difference between timber and aluminium frames will be imperceptible from external vantage points, and the use of aluminium will also allow for the construction of a lighter and more refined enclosure.

Reconstructed first floor extension with metal rooflights and Juliet balcony railings

2.10 The existing non-original first-floor extension, located at the side of the brick outrigger, is of a low-quality build and needs to be replaced. It is therefore proposed to demolish the existing first-floor extension and replace it with a new extension of identical dimensions, utilising traditional materials such as brickwork and timber-framed doors.

2.11 The roof of the existing extension, in particular, is of very low quality, consisting of a mélange of zinc metal sheeting and Perspex glass. The new roof, on the other hand, will consist of higher-quality zinc cladding with two metal rooflights inserted flush with the outside surface of the roof. This is considered an improvement over the existing appearance. However, it is also noted that, due to its elevated position above ground level and in the absence of any windows on the flank elevation wall of 2 Eleanor Grove (which faces the rear façade of the application site), the roof surface and associated rooflights would not actually be visible from public or private vantage points.

2.12 The proposed replacement extension will also correct an architectural anomaly, as the existing doors open outwards. This not only creates potentially dangerous living conditions but also forms a distracting feature when the doors are open (which is the only way to ventilate the room). Additionally, cheap, movable plastic balustrades placed on the inside of the doors are visible from the public realm when the doors are open.

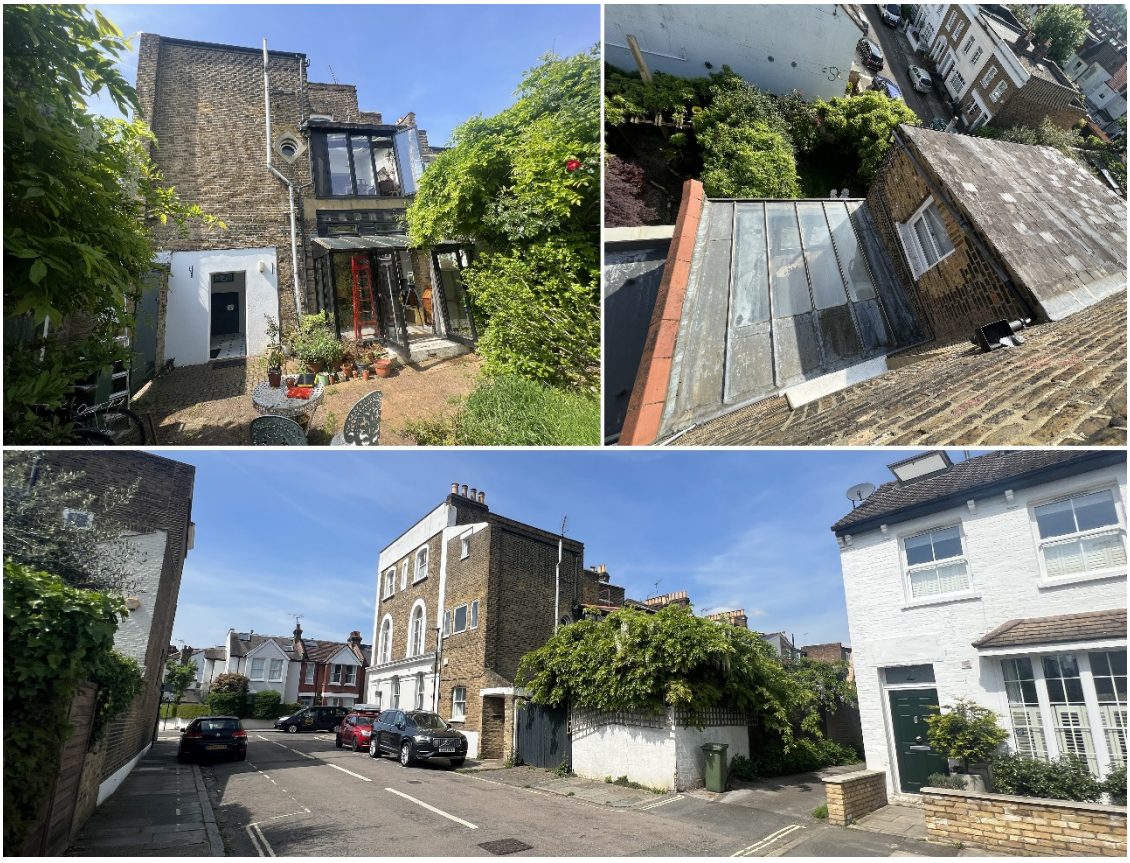


Illustration 3: The existing first-floor rear extension is characterised by outward-swinging doors, which become a distracting feature when open—a frequent occurrence, as this is the only way to ventilate the room. The extension also uses low-quality roofing materials. Additionally, the first and ground floor extensions currently appear as one continuous façade, which detracts from the overall appearance. However, its position at the side of the brick outrigger helps shield it from surrounding views.

2.13 The replacement extension will therefore feature inward-swinging doors. However, this design necessitates the installation of an external safety barrier in the form of a Juliet balcony. This balcony will consist of metal railings painted black, which are considered a more traditional material than, for example, a glazed safety barrier. The use of metal railings will provide an architectural reference to the existing metal boundary railings located at the front of the property while blending with the dark tone of the doors.

Note: The use of a glazed security balustrade, installed on the outside face of the reconstructed extension, was also considered, as it was initially thought to be less noticeable than metal railings. While this may be the case, metal railings were ultimately deemed a more traditional choice of material, better suited to blend with the colour of the doors (which will remain black, as existing) and help break up the rear fenestration, which currently appears continuous across both the ground and first-floor levels. Nonetheless, should the Council find a glazed screen more appropriate, the applicant is willing to consider this option.

2.14 The use of a metal balustrade will also help break up the existing rear façade, which currently lacks any coherent delineation between the ground and first floors, presenting instead as a rather cluttered façade with nearly continuous fenestration.

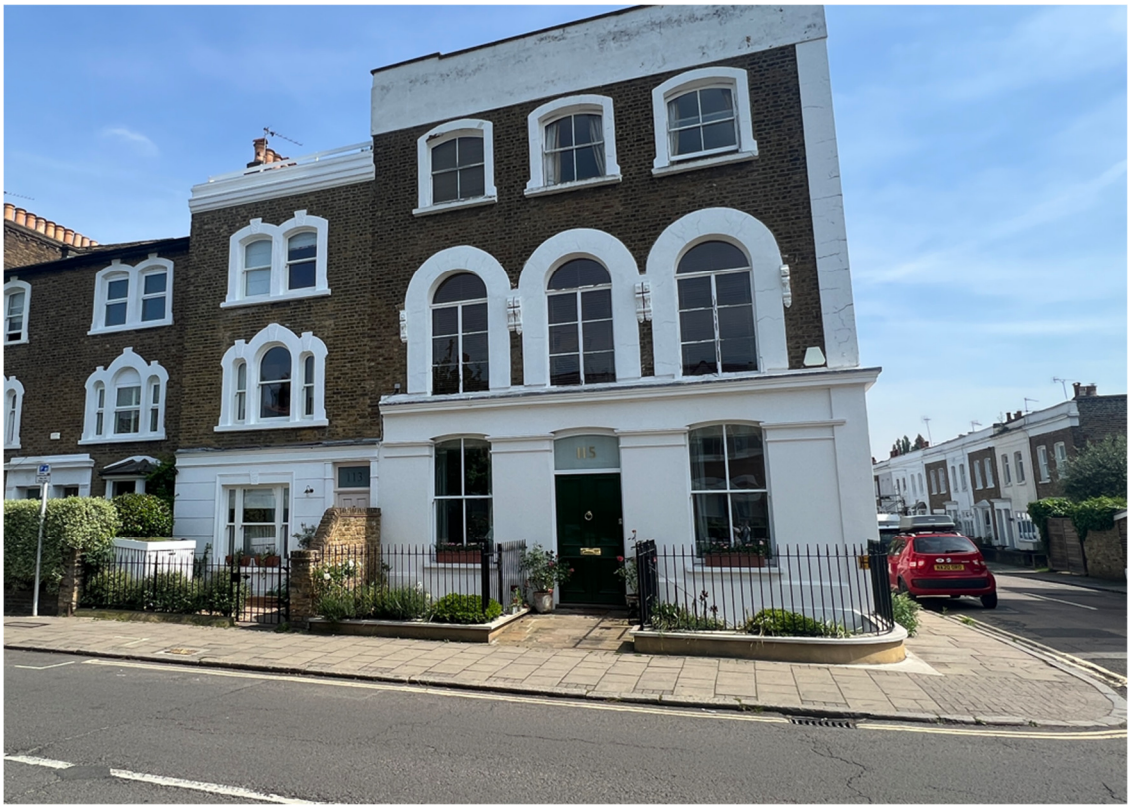


Illustration 4: The use of metal railings for the Juliet balcony is consistent with the materials established at the front of the building and is not considered harmful to the appearance of the conservation area. In fact, it will allow for the removal of the uncharacteristic outward-swinging first-floor extension doors and help break up the rear façade, which currently appears as one continuous surface, detracting from the overall appearance.

2.15 On balance, the use of a Juliet balcony in this unique situation is considered acceptable in visual terms and, in this instance, an improvement over the existing appearance.

Replacement ground floor conservatory extension

2.16 It is proposed to replace the existing non-original conservatory extension, located at the rear of the host building and concealed from surrounding views by the perimeter boundary treatment, with a new conservatory extension of identical external dimensions, constructed from timber painted dark grey.

2.17 Due to the considerable height of the existing boundary treatment, the setback of the proposed replacement extension from the roadside boundary, and the absence of windows on the flank elevation wall of 2 Eleanor Grove, the proposed replacement extension will not be readily visible from either private or public views. Consequently, the impact of the proposed replacement conservatory extension on the character and appearance of the building and the wider conservation area will be inconsequential.

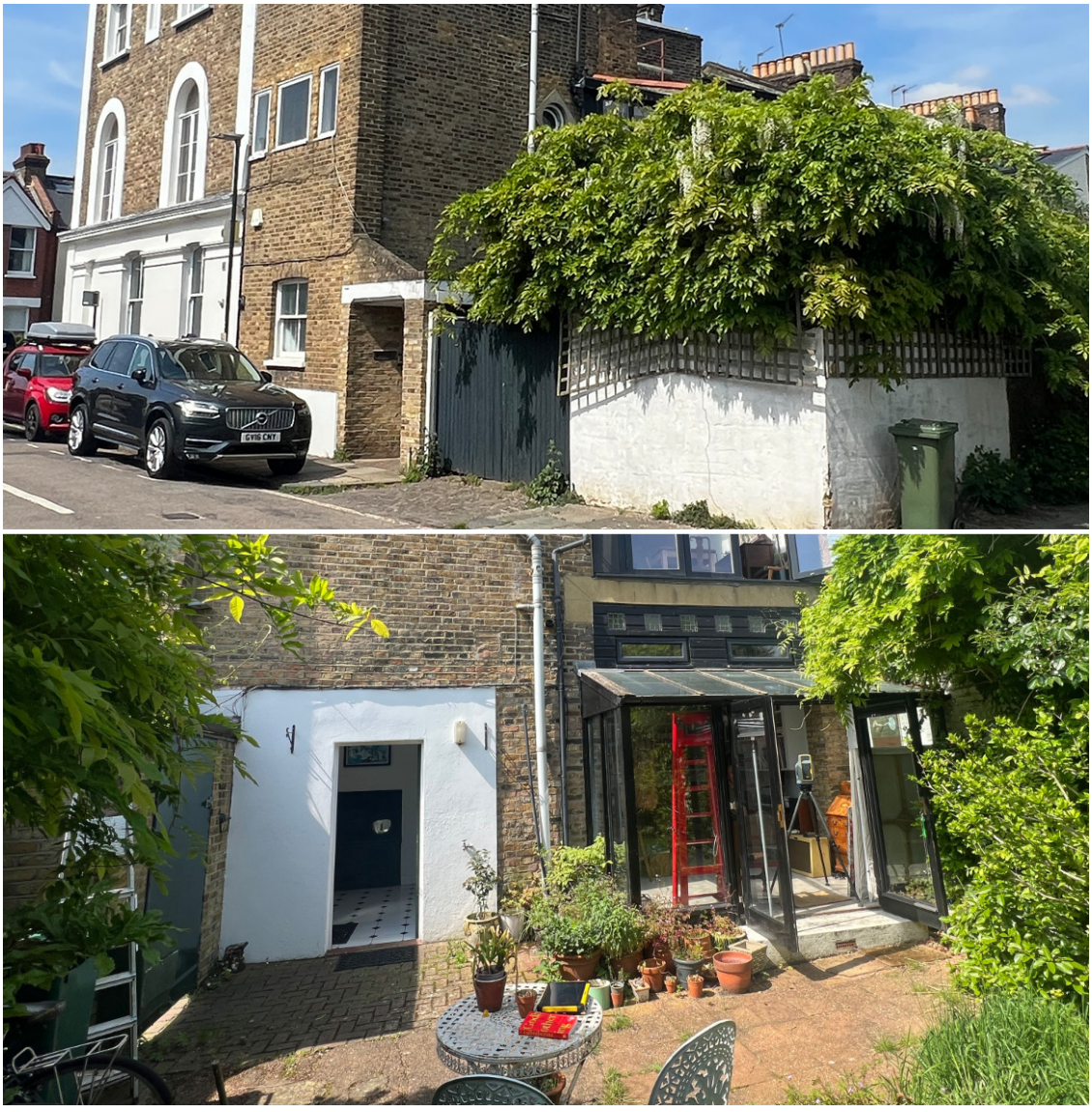


Illustration 5: The existing conservatory extension, which is not visible from surrounding views due to its concealed position away from the perimeter boundary, is a non-original addition that will be replaced with a new timber conservatory of identical dimensions.

Double-glazed replacement windows

2.18 It is proposed to replace the existing single-glazed timber sash and casement windows on the front and side elevations (most of which are in a dire state of repair) with new double-glazed equivalents that will match the appearance of the existing windows.

2.19 The proposed development would also replace the three first-floor windows that currently detract from appearance of the side elevation due to their flush alignment with the façade. These windows will be replaced with new, recessed windows that more accurately reflect the prevailing fenestration design, enhancing the overall architectural coherence.

2.20 Detailed elevational and sectional drawings have been included to support the application. These drawings confirm that, with the exception of the three first-floor windows referred to above, the replacement timber sash windows will incorporate 'slimline' double glazing, maintaining consistent dimensions, framing, detailing, configuration, material, colour, reveal, and recess as the existing windows. Thus, the proposed alterations to the windows will be inconspicuous when observed from outside.

2.21 Consequently, the proposals would not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area or that of the building itself, as they would not be readily observable from external vantage points, except perhaps upon close inspection, which is not feasible due to the elevated position of the flat. Furthermore, the fenestration style of the application site differs from that of the adjoining property, 113 White Hart Lane, making any changes in window construction difficult to discern. The closest other property, 117 White Hart Lane, is separated from the application site by the road and also features a different fenestration style. Consequently, there are limited visual reference points for passers-by to notice any changes. Additionally, the timber sash windows at the front of 117 White Hart Lane may have already been replaced with double-glazed equivalents in the past, indicating that any changes in the current proposal so subtle that distinguishing between single and double glazing would be challenging.

2.22 While the removal of the existing windows from a ‘building of townscape merit’ might initially seem regrettable, the replacement of these windows with like-for-like equivalents, allowing for minor ‘de minimis’ changes in construction that would not be readily observable from exterior vantage points, would not constitute ‘development’ under Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Therefore, such replacement falls outside the scope of planning control. Consequently, the existing windows can be replaced without the need for planning permission. Given the poor condition of the existing windows, replacement would be highly likely even if planning permission were refused, though it is important to note that refusal in this context would be unreasonable and is mentioned only to underscore this point.

2.23 Similarly, the existing windows could be painted any colour under Class C (‘exterior painting’) of Part 2, Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015. To clarify, the proposed development involves replacing the windows with timber-framed versions painted white. This feature could be preserved indefinitely with a suitably worded planning condition.

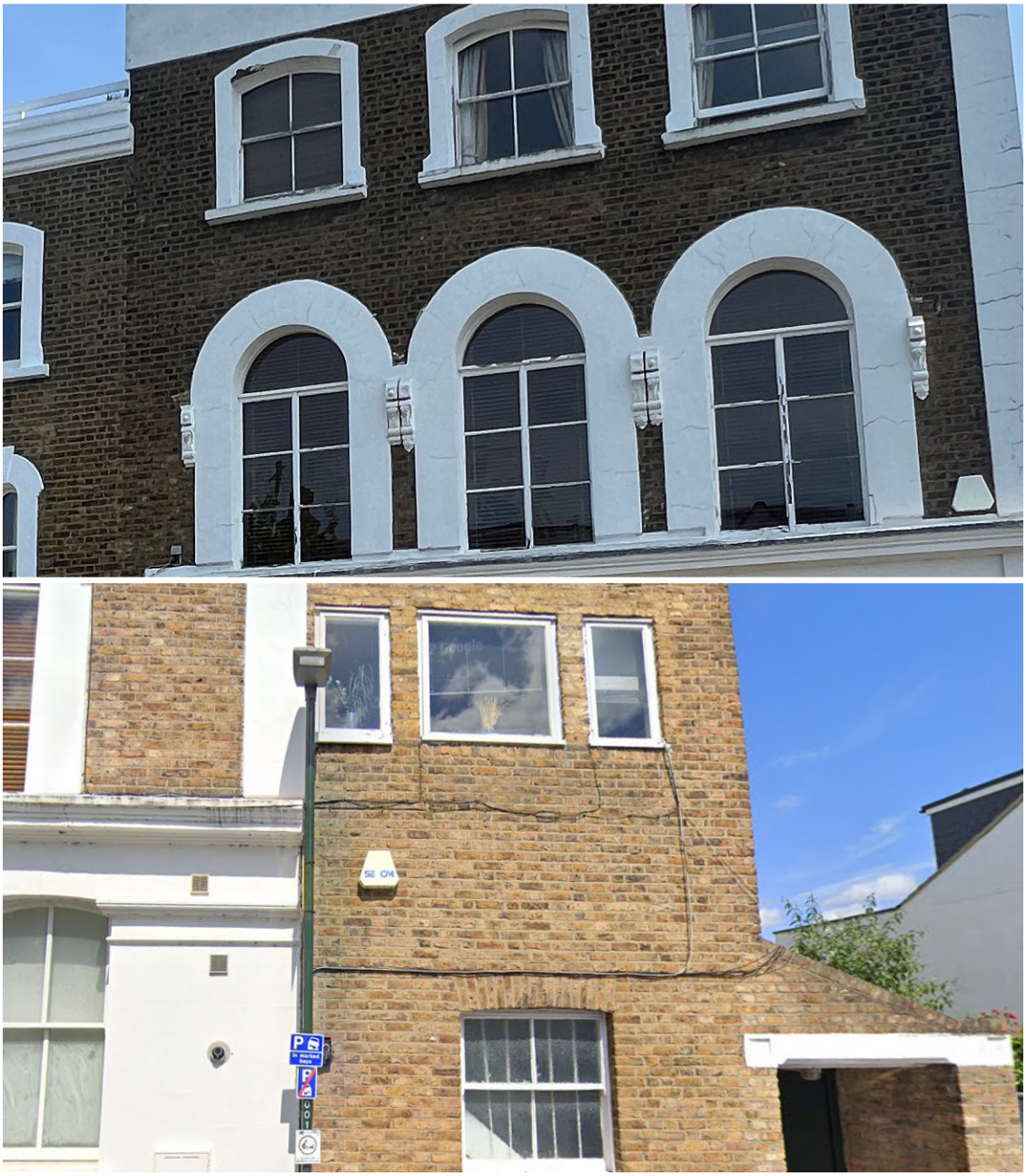


Illustration 6: The existing windows are in a poor state of repair and – in the case of the three first-floor windows on the side elevation – are considered to detract from the building's appearance.

2.24 Replacing single-glazed timber windows with double-glazed equivalents on a building of townscape merit within a conservation area is, in principle, an acceptable form of development. This is supported by previous approvals for similar developments on buildings of townscape merit within conservation areas, such as the most recent cases of 24/0256/FUL (Ground Floor Flat, 42 Priory Road) and 24/1287/HOT (61 Gloucester Road). In the case of the former, officers concluded that:

> *No objections are raised to the replacement of front window and two side elevation windows to double glazed timber windows due to their profile, size, scale and design. It is noted that the windows would simply be changed from single glazed timber windows to double glazed timber windows, but the profile, size, shape and design would remain unchanged. It is no different*

therefore to what can be achieved under permitted development if the property was a dwellinghouse. As it is a flat it requires planning permission for these works. Paragraph 205 of the NPPF states 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 208 of the NPPF states 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal'. In this instance, the proposal would not lead to less than substantial harm to the setting, character and appearance of the conservation area due to its size, scale and design. In view of the above, the proposal complies with the aims and objectives of policies LP1 and LP3 and LP4 of the Local Plan and policies 28 and 29 of the Publication Local Plan as supported by the Kew Green Conservation Area Statement/Study.

2.25 The applicant is prepared to accept a planning condition requiring the development to be carried out only in accordance with the detailed drawings enclosed with the application. This eliminates the need for a pre-commencement planning condition requiring the submission of further details. The Council is reminded that under Section 14(5) of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017, planning permission may not be granted subject to a pre-commencement condition without the written agreement of the applicant.

Alterations to rear ground floor facade and fenestration

2.26 The existing ground floor rear façade and fenestration, although largely hidden from surrounding public and private views by the perimeter boundary treatment, suffer from an overconcentration of different window styles above the existing conservatory. There is also a patchwork of facing materials that do not harmonise with the rest of the building, such as black-coloured cladding, partially exposed stone lintels, and a partially rendered wall. Additionally, the existing ground and first-floor extensions at the side of the outrigger currently appear as one continuous and overly busy façade, lacking a clear delineation between the floor levels.

2.27 Therefore, in addition to the replacement and reconstruction of the existing ground floor conservatory and first-floor extensions with higher-quality structures, it is proposed to make changes to the existing ground floor rear fenestration and surrounding façade as a whole. These changes aim to create a "cleaner" and more refined fenestration pattern, introduce a more apparent break between the ground and first-floor levels, and address the current patchwork of building materials.

2.28 This will be achieved by installing a single timber-framed window above the reconstructed conservatory, similar in style to the conservatory itself, replacing the existing window clutter. Additionally, the entire ground floor façade will be rendered white, rather than just a section of it. This approach will help create a cleaner, more refined appearance, allow for the removal of the existing distracting and

uncharacteristic stone lintel and black cladding, and create a clearer separation from the upper levels.

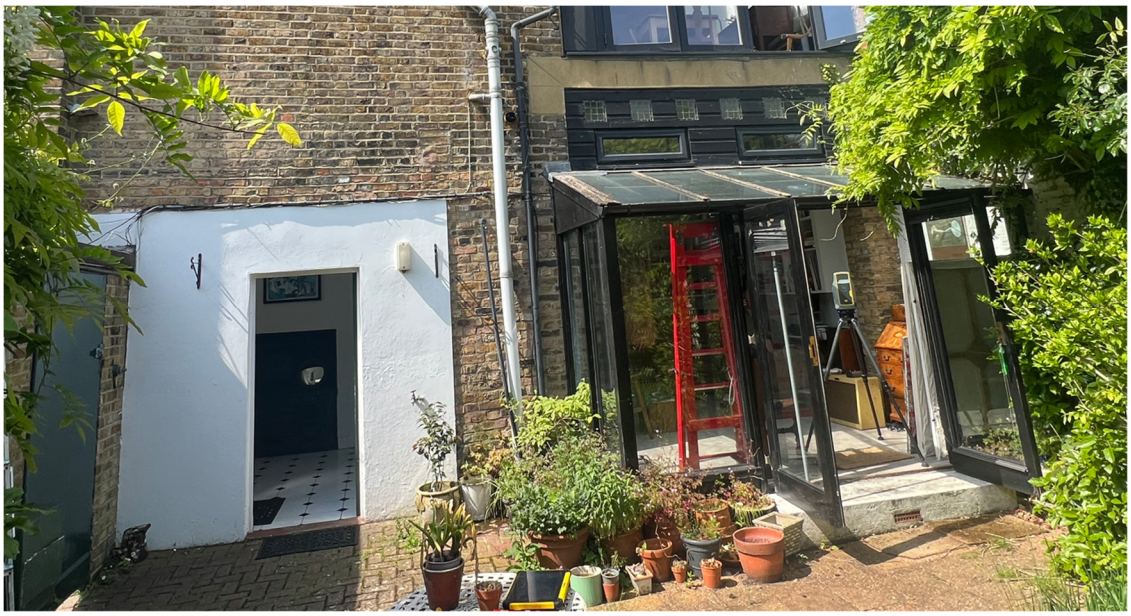


Illustration 7: The existing ground floor façade and fenestration at the rear of the building, while not visible from surrounding views, suffers from an overconcentration of different window styles above the existing conservatory and an incoherent patchwork of facing materials that do not harmonise with the rest of the building, such as black cladding, partially exposed stone lintels, and a partially rendered wall.

2.29 The use of white render is already partially established at the rear ground floor level and, crucially, is a characteristic feature of the public elevations of the building, where the ground floors of the front and side elevations are already rendered and painted white. Therefore, the proposed rendering at the rear ground floor level, which is largely invisible from surrounding views, cannot reasonably be considered an uncharacteristic feature. Additionally, many of the façades on Eleanor Grove are either rendered white or painted white.

2.30 Finally, in conjunction with the aforementioned improvement works, it is proposed to insert a new timber-framed bathroom window at the rear ground floor level. This window will have no noteworthy impact on the appearance of the building and will not be visible from surrounding views, thus not affecting those views materially.

2.31 It is also proposed to insert a small fanlight window above the existing ground floor entrance door located at the rear of the property within the enclosed garden. The proposed materials are timber painted white, matching the overall fenestration style.

2.32 The insertion of a discreet fanlight window will allow natural daylight into the entrance hallway without necessitating the replacement of the existing solid timber door. Due to its location at ground floor level behind the garden boundary walls, the fanlight window will not be readily noticeable from the public realm.

2.33 In any case, even if it were visible, it is not considered a distracting feature, instead matching the prevalent style of the existing fenestration, which includes various curved window reveals.

A/C condenser units

2.34 It is proposed to install two air conditioning condenser units on the main roof, within the area currently used as a roof terrace. The units will be positioned against the inside of the existing raised parapet walls, which extend 1 metre above the finished floor level of the roof terrace. Given that the condenser units are only 823 mm high (as detailed in the technical data sheets provided separately), they will not be visible from surrounding views and will not materially impact the external appearance of the property, to the extent that they might not even constitute “development” under Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

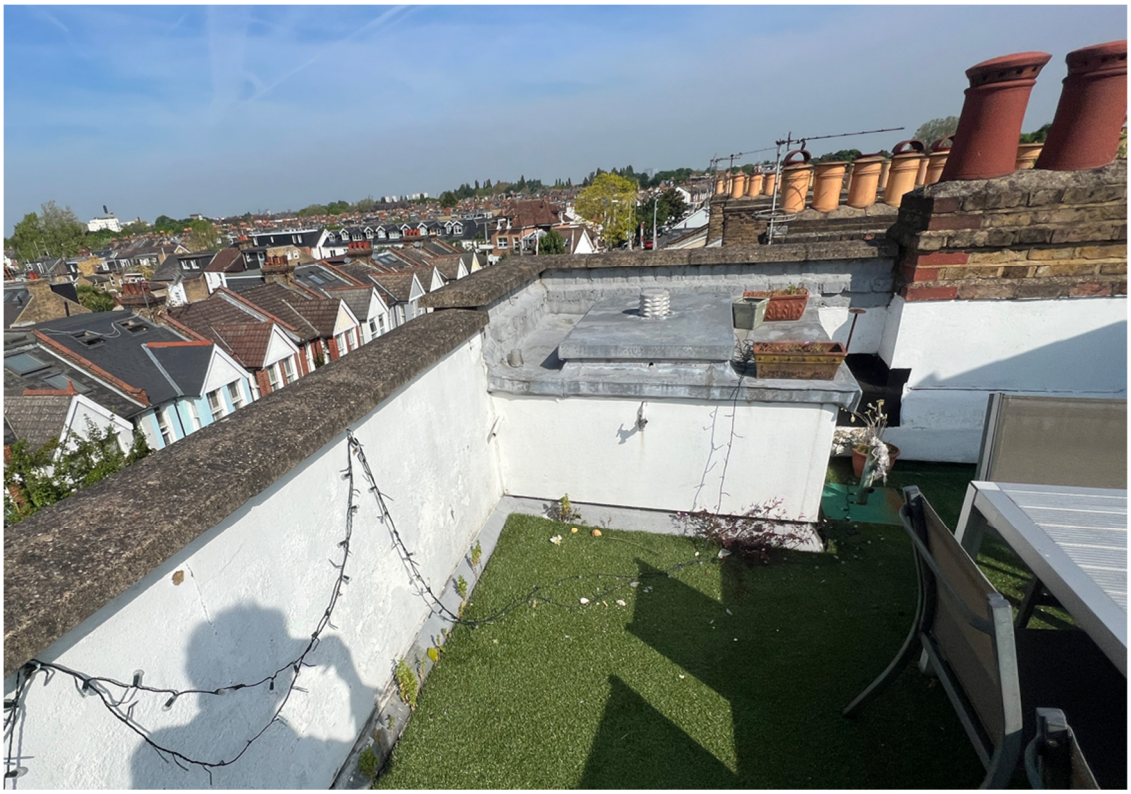


Illustration 8: the proposed condenser units will not project above the top of the existing parapet walls of the roof terrace and replace an existing (redundant) water tank.

IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURING AMENITY

Building operations

3.1 The proposed development will not alter the dimensions of the existing rear extensions. Consequently, it will not materially impact neighbouring amenity regarding daylight, sunlight, overlooking, or sense of enclosure.

3.2 No new window openings are proposed, and none of the existing openings will be enlarged. Therefore, the proposals will not have a material impact on neighbouring amenity concerning privacy or overlooking.

AC condenser units

3.3 A noise impact assessment (enclosed separately) has been conducted in accordance with British Standard 4142:2014 to ensure that the proposed A/C condenser units, which are to be installed on the flat roof of the application site and shielded from surrounding views by the existing raised parapet walls, will not adversely affect neighbouring amenity.

3.4 Background noise levels have been measured over a 24-hour period using equipment placed in the rear garden of the application site, rather than closer to the main road. This approach prevents traffic noise from unfairly influencing the assessment and ensures the lowest possible background noise levels are used, ultimately protecting the interests of neighbouring residents.

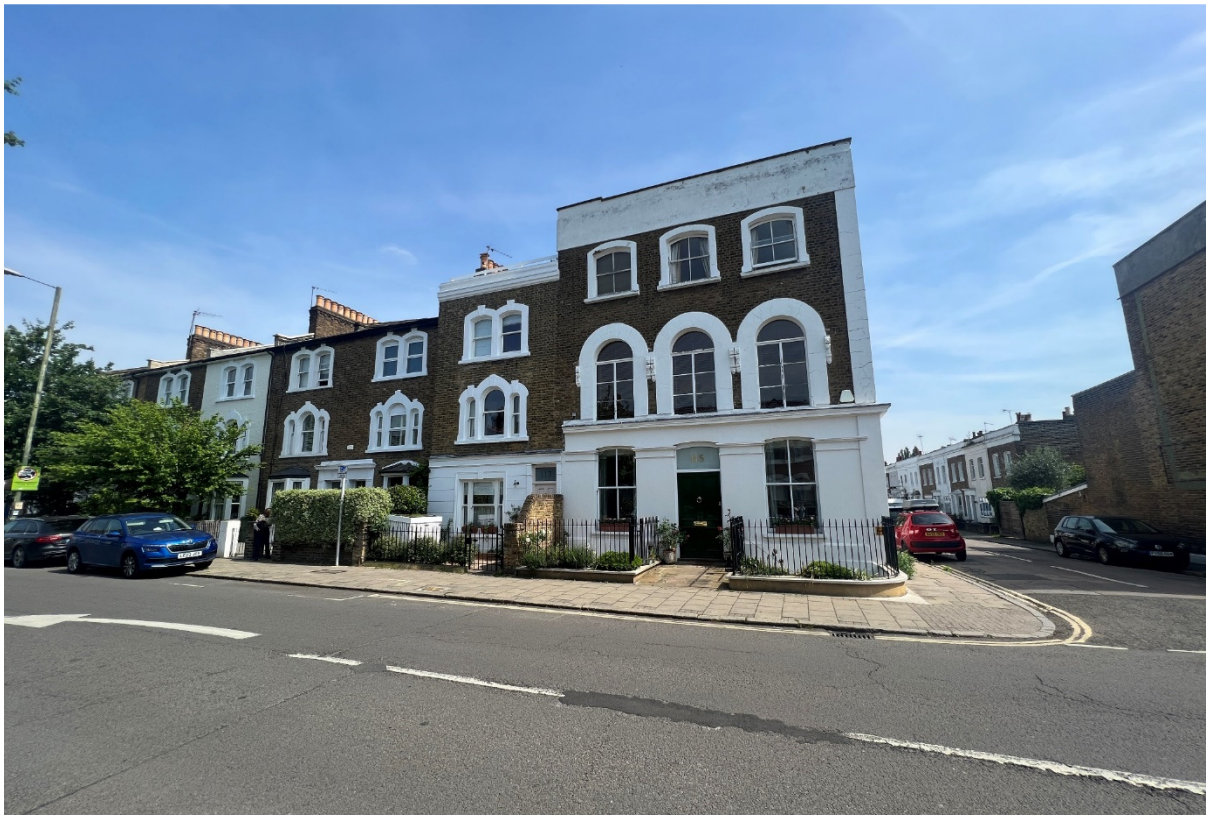
3.5 The proposed plant has been carefully selected to ensure that its sound pressure levels allow for night-time operation without adversely impacting neighbouring amenity, particularly the closest noise-sensitive windows at 113 White Hart Lane. This has been calculated in accordance with the Council's Noise Generating and Noise Sensitive Development SPD, as well as British Standard 4142:2014, which require that plant noise pressure levels be at least 5 dB(A) below the background level (LA90). The acoustic assessment confirms that the selected plant meets this requirement, even during night-time operation, without the need for additional mitigation measures such as acoustic enclosures, as the plant itself has been chosen to meet these standards.

3.6 The submitted drawings have been annotated to confirm that, in accordance with the recommendations of the Noise Impact Assessment, the proposed A/C condenser units will be installed on suitable anti-vibration mounts, such as steel spring isolators or rubber footings, and thereafter retained.

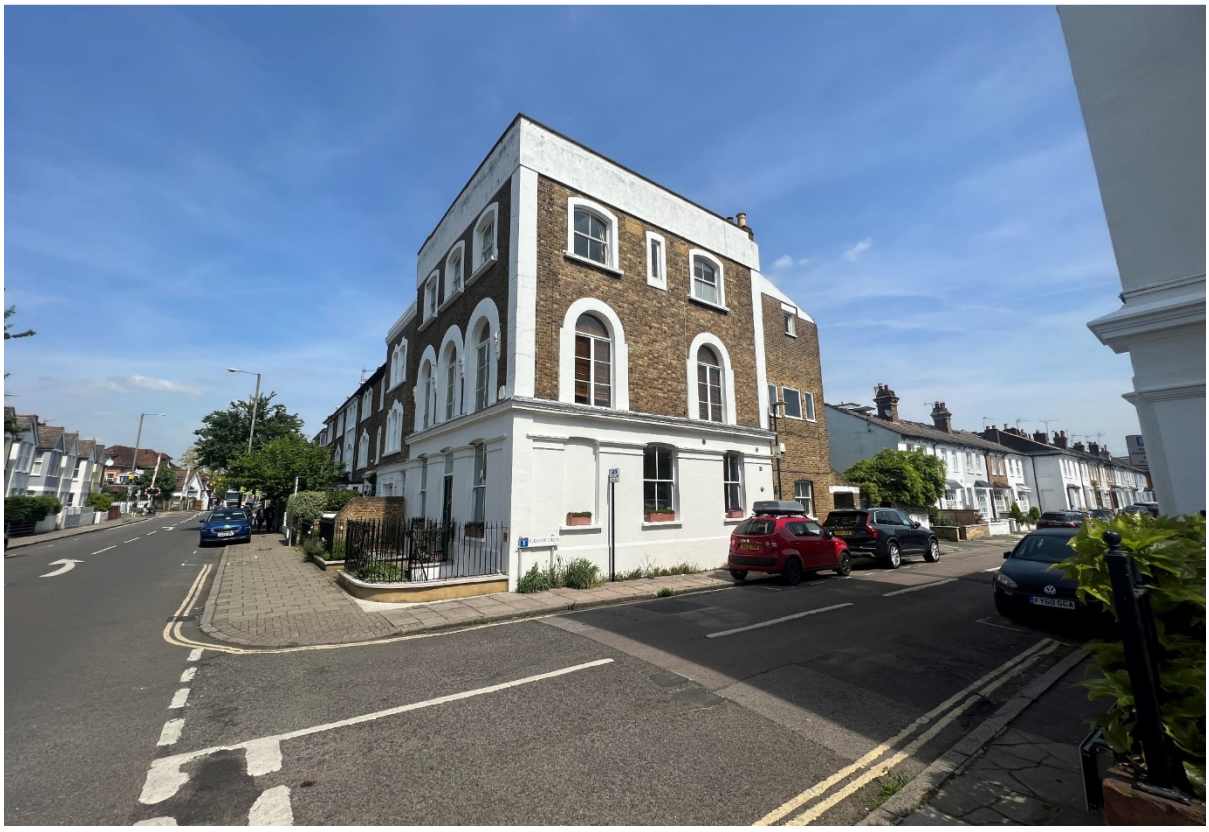
3.7 Overall, the proposals are not considered to materially affect the amenity enjoyed by any adjoining occupants.

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

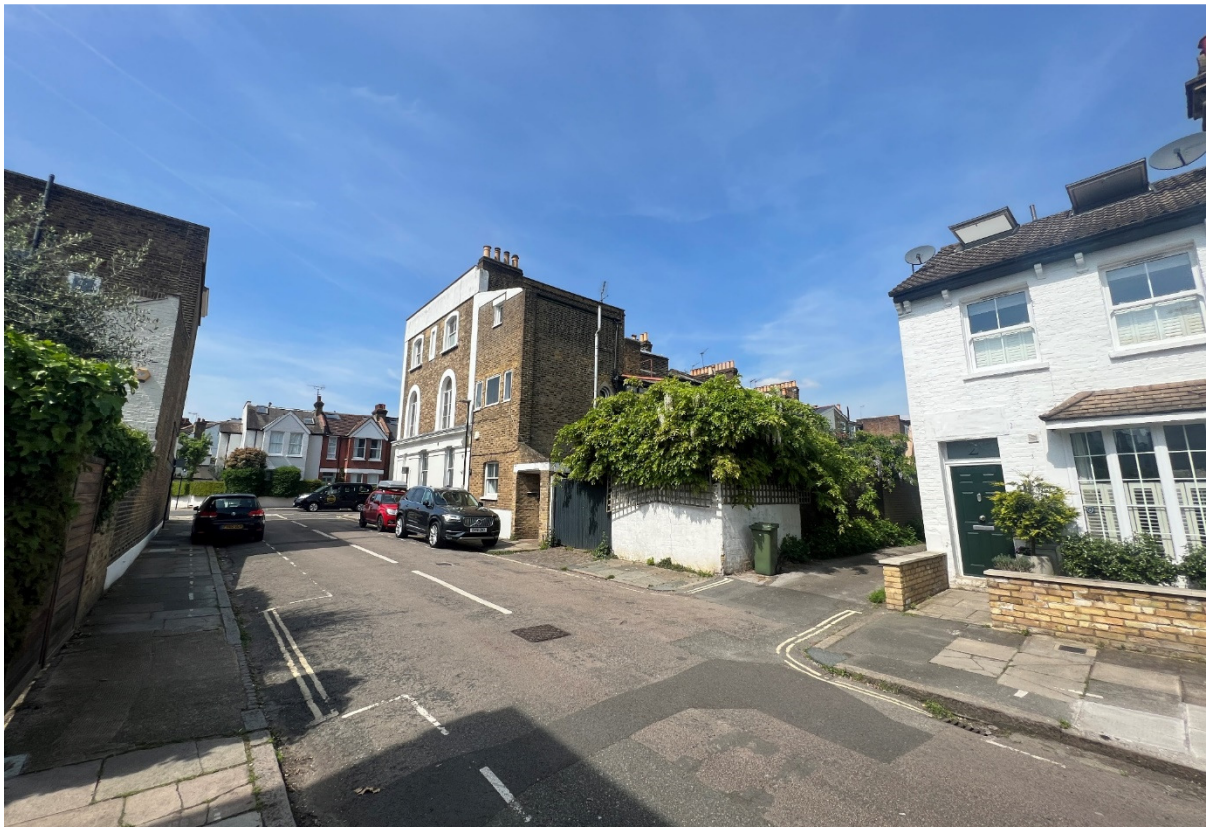
4.1 Overleaf



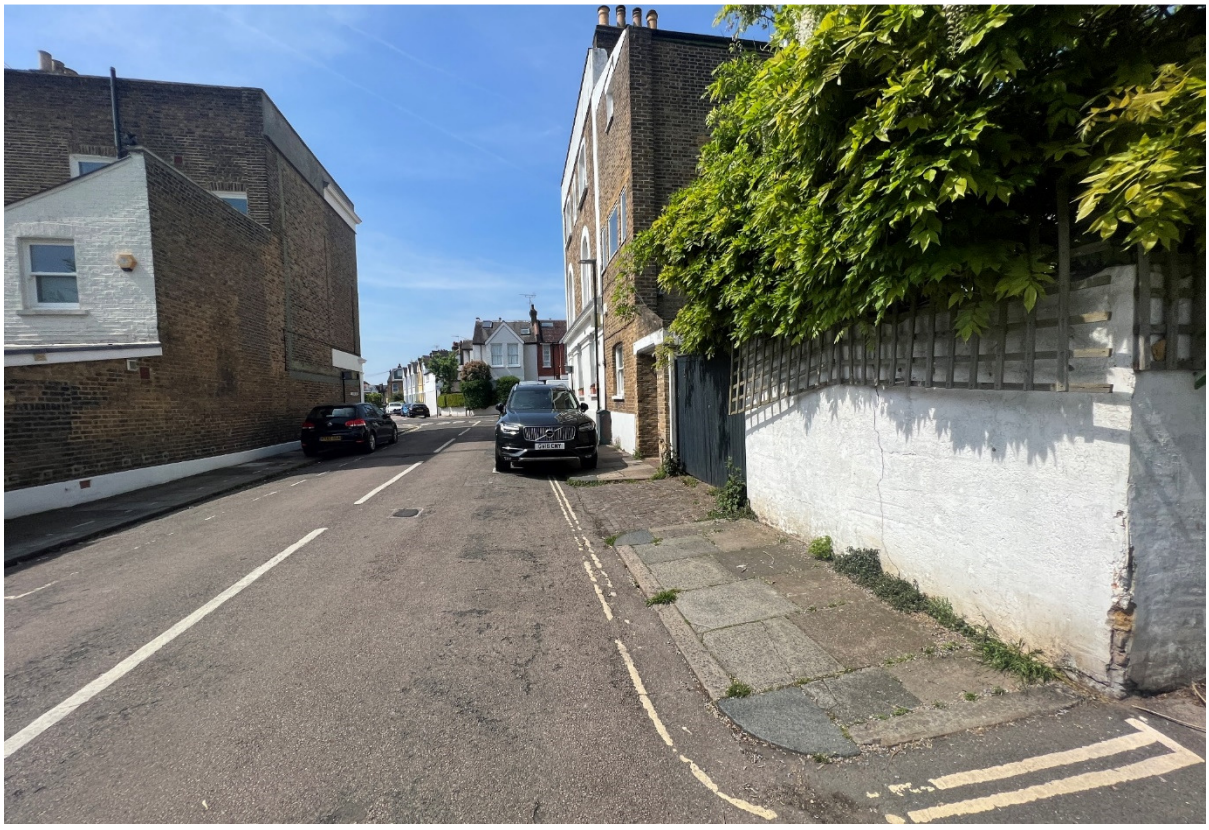
Front elevation (White Hart Lane)



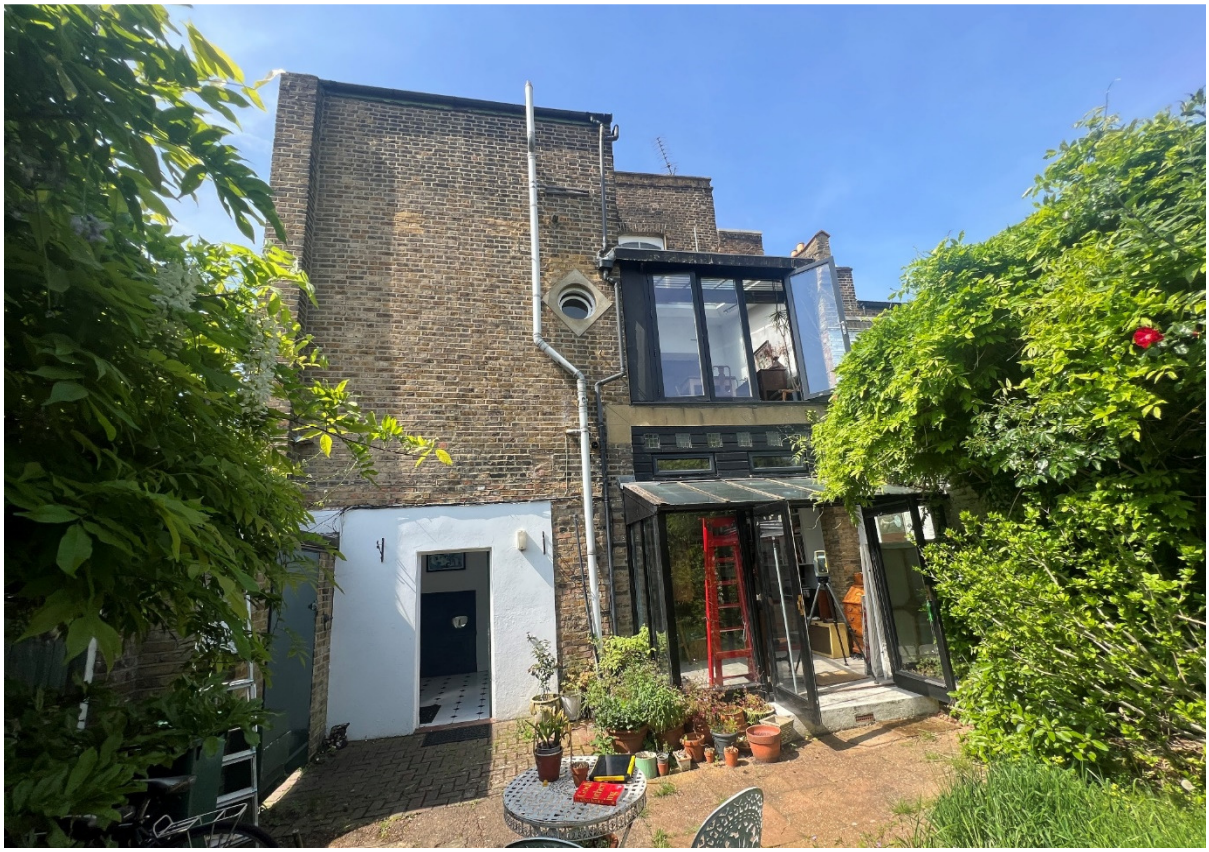
Front/side elevation



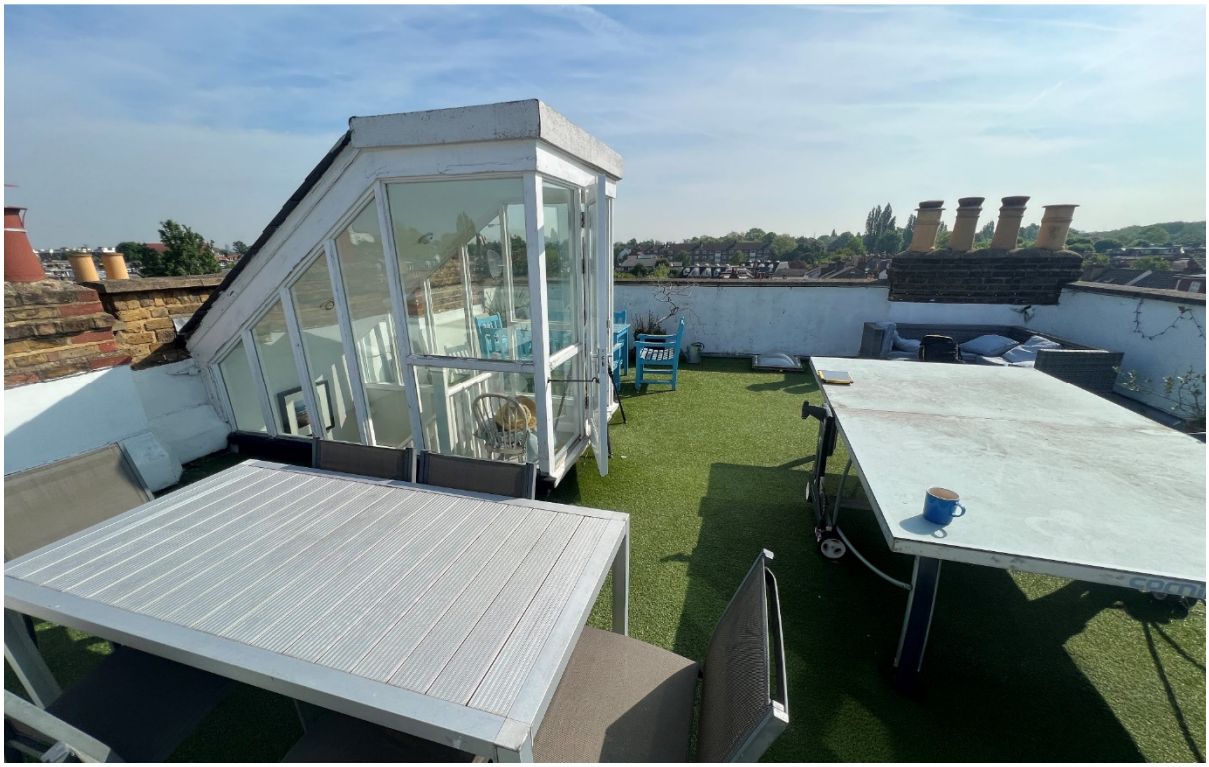
Rear/side elevation (Eleanor Grove)



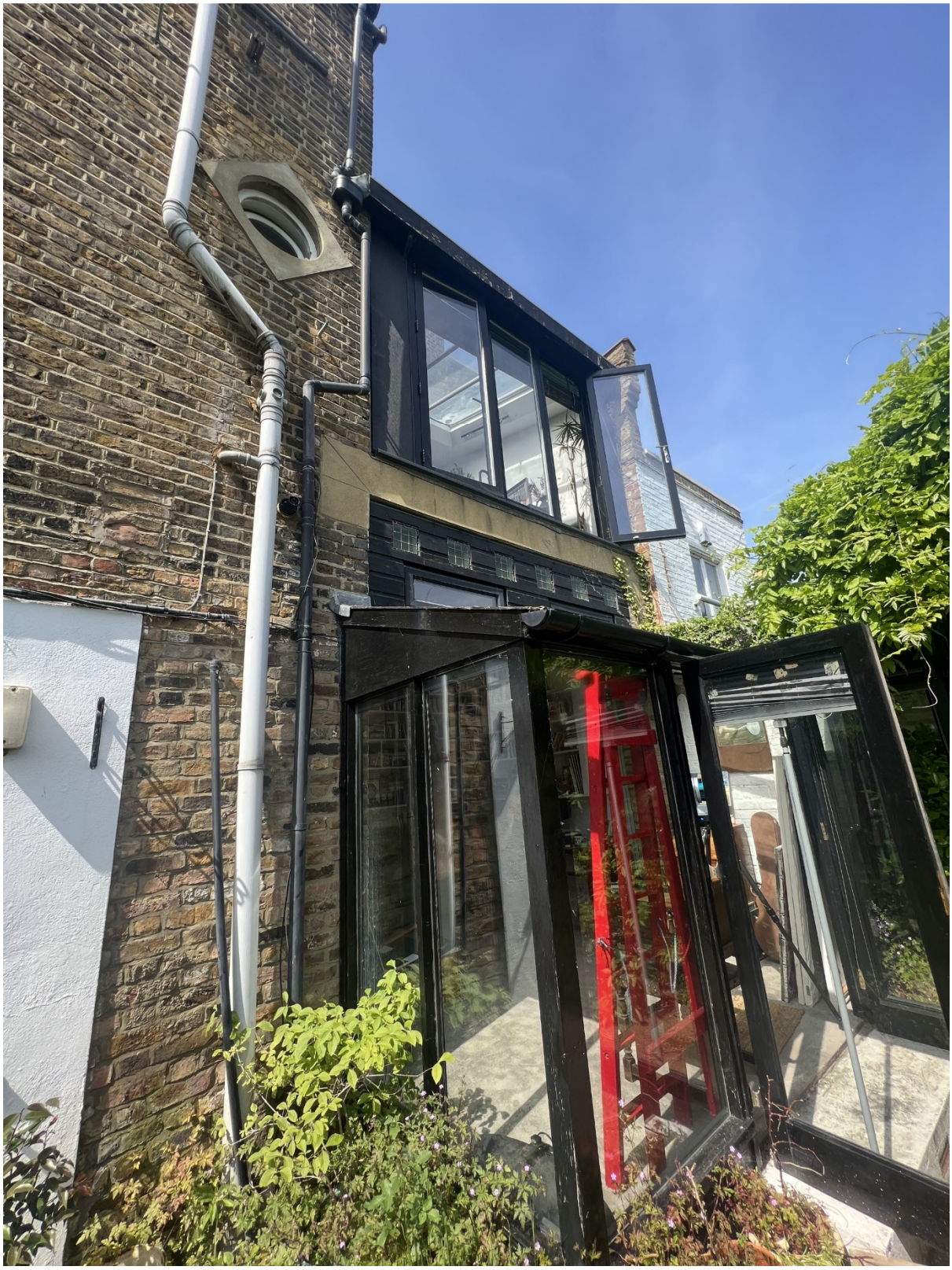
Rear/side elevation (Eleanor Grove)



Rear elevation as seen from rear garden



Roof terrace and glazed access structure



Rear elevation and non-original rear extensions