



City of Westminster

PLEASE NOTE

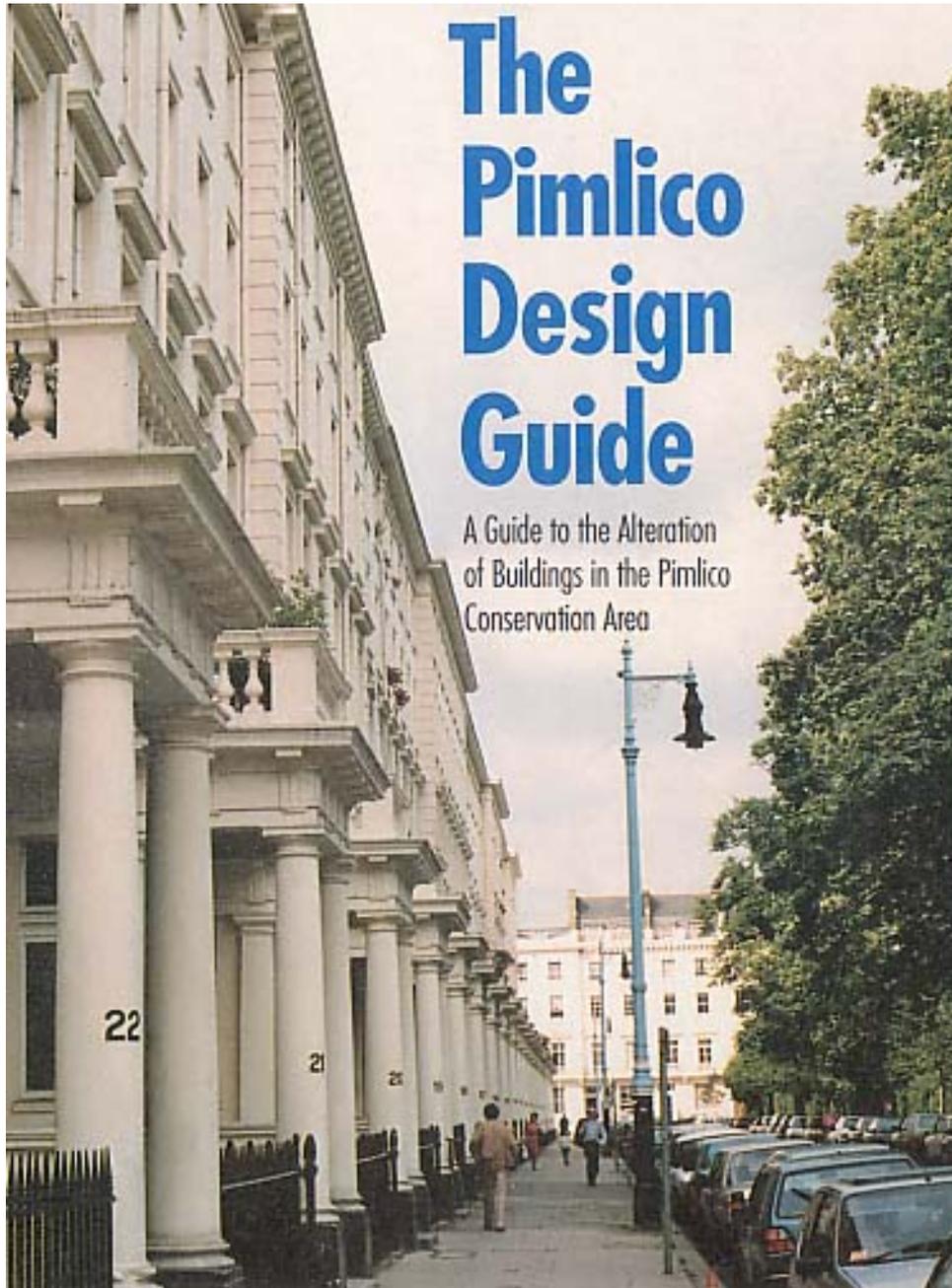
The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies and planning, building control and other legislation and regulations referred to in the text of this guide were current at the time of publication. Because this guidance is an electronic version of the printed guidance as approved and adopted, these references have NOT been changed. For ease of contact; names, telephone numbers and locations have been regarded as non-material editorial changes and have been updated.

As UDP policies and government legislation may have changed over time, before carrying out any work, it is recommended that you consult the current UDP

<http://www.westminster.gov.uk/planningandlicensing/udp/index.cfm> for policy revisions and you may wish to check with planning and/or building control officers about your proposals.

THE PIMLICO DESIGN GUIDE

A Guide to the Alteration of Buildings in the Pimlico Conservation Area



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Further Information

1. Purpose of the Design Guidelines

1.1 These Design Guidelines are intended to help people who are planning to make alterations to buildings within the Pimlico Conservation Area. The area covered is shown on the map below.

1.2 The Guidelines cover the more common alterations to Pimlico properties. If you are unclear about how these general Guidelines apply to your property or want more detailed advice please contact the South Area Team of Development Planning Services. Contact details can be found at the end of this guide.

2. Consents Required

2.1 Alterations which affect the external appearance of a building will normally require **planning permission** unless they are deemed to be permitted development under the General Development Order 1988. In addition **listed building consent** may be necessary for external and internal alterations to listed buildings. Any material demolition of parts of unlisted buildings within a conservation area may require **conservation area consent**.

2.2 If you are not sure if permission or consent is necessary you should enquire from South Area Team of Development Planning Services, tel: **(020) 7641 2681** or Fax: **(020) 7641 2339**.

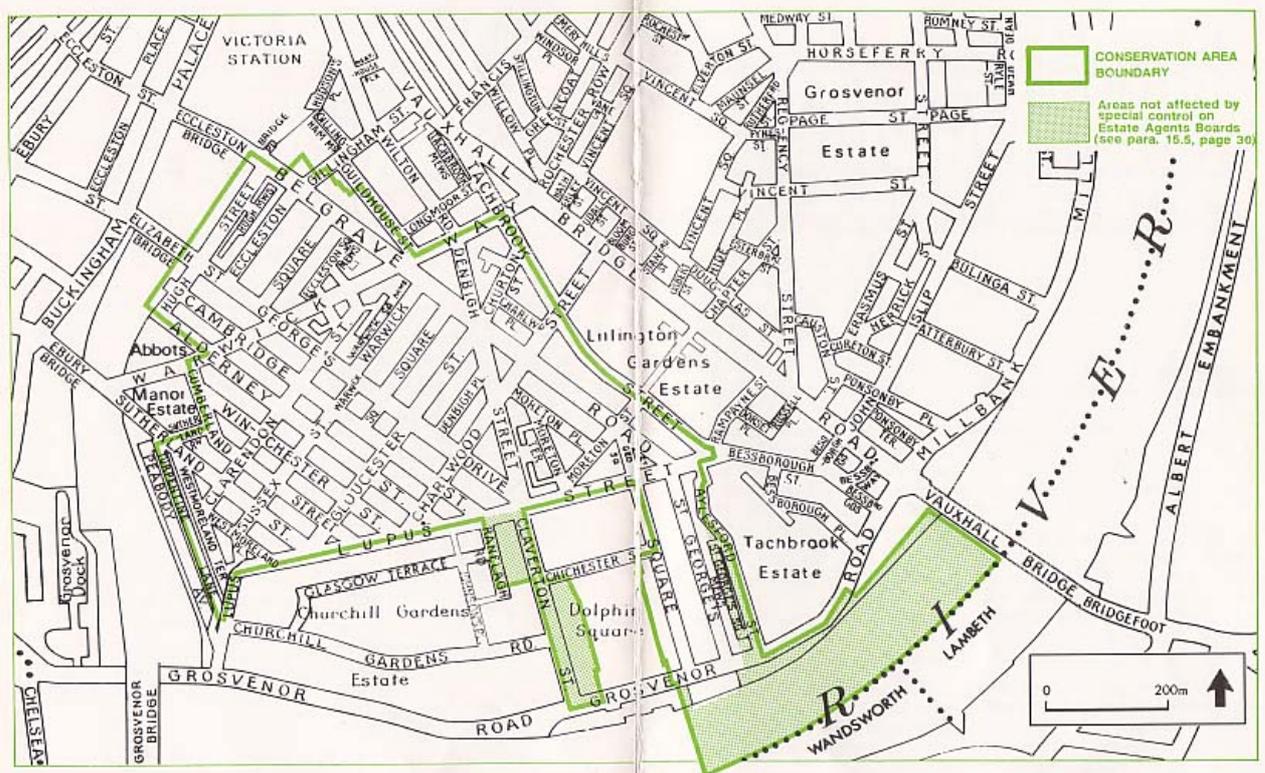
2.3 Most new building work to the inside or outside of properties needs **building regulations approval**. Advice and application forms can be obtained from the District Surveyors Service, South Westminster, tel: **(020) 7641 7230** or Fax: **(020) 7641 7116**.

2.4 For commercial properties, including hotels, additional consents may be required from The Community Protection Department. Phone the Consultation Team on: **(020) 7641 1331** or Fax: **(020) 7641 1221**. You are advised to check any requirements at an early stage.

2.5 Starting building work without the necessary consents can render the property owner liable to prosecution and/or enforcement action by the City Council.

2.6 Even in cases where permission or consent is not required for building works, you are advised to consider the advice in these Guidelines and to apply them wherever possible, in order to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Map of Pimlico Conservation Area



Typical Pimlico terrace

3. Historical Background of Pimlico

3.1 Pimlico is generally considered to be the triangular area of land bounded by Vauxhall Bridge Road, the River Thames and the railway into Victoria Station.

3.2 The origin of the name is unknown; it has been suggested that it is that of a local drink, the recipe of which has been lost. The name's first recorded use was in 1626 when it referred to a group of mean cottages called Neat Houses around Ranelagh Gardens.

3.3 When the nearby Buckingham House had been sold to George III the low lying land of Pimlico had been little developed apart from a brewery which was to become Watney's Stag Brewery. So it remained until the middle of the 1830s when Thomas Cubitt obtained leases from the Grosvenor Estate, into whose hands much of the land had passed, and began to build here in the same style as he had done in Belgravia, though in a less grand way.

3.4 Like Belgravia the area was developed with stucco-fronted terraces of mid-nineteenth century classical design built along straight streets and there are three squares.

3.5 The largest and most opulent houses were built along St. George's Drive and Belgrave Road, the two principal streets, and Eccleston, Warwick and St. George's Squares.

3.6 A newspaper article in 1877 described Pimlico or 'South Belgravia' as: 'genteel, sacred to professional men... not rich enough to luxuriate in Belgravia proper, but rich enough to live in private houses - for this is a retired suburb'. Its inhabitants were: 'more lively than in Kensington... and yet a cut above Chelsea, which is only commercial.'

3.7 By the 1890s Pimlico had declined to such an extent that the sociologist Charles Booth could describe it as being perhaps the most deplorable middle-class neighbourhood in London.

3.8 Although it has been redeveloped around the edges with modern housing estates, most of the original nineteenth century core of Pimlico still remains and is protected by conservation area status. Numerous houses, particularly along the main streets and squares, have been 'listed' as buildings of special architectural or historic interest. During the past 20-30 years, and with the City Council's encouragement, the area has greatly improved, and the improvements are continuing.

4. Front Elevations

4.1 General

4.1.1 Over the years many of the original architectural features of Pimlico buildings, such as mouldings, cornices and window architraves, have been altered or insensitively replaced so that the original integrity of a street or square has been lost. Wherever possible, therefore, the original features of front elevations should be restored or reinstated.

4.2 Painting

4.2.1 The City Council encourages owners of properties in Pimlico to choose traditionally-based colour schemes when redecorating at both the front and the rear and to consider the overall effect their choice may have on the street scene.

4.2.2 Brickwork should not be painted. Window frames should be painted to match the prevailing pattern, generally gloss white. Doors are normally painted a dark colour. Railings and other external metalwork should be painted in black. Street numbers should be painted black in a traditional style, on columns or pilasters.

4.2.3 Stucco-faced buildings need regular repainting to preserve their appearance and weather resistance. The recommended colours for external stucco are British Standard Colours, BS10B15, BS 08B17 and BS 08B15, the choice depending on the predominant shade of a particular group or terrace. 'Brilliant white' should be avoided except where it is the established colour for the terrace. The paint finish should be gloss or eggshell, never a textured surface. Excessively glossy finishes should be avoided and moulded stucco features should not be picked out in different colours.

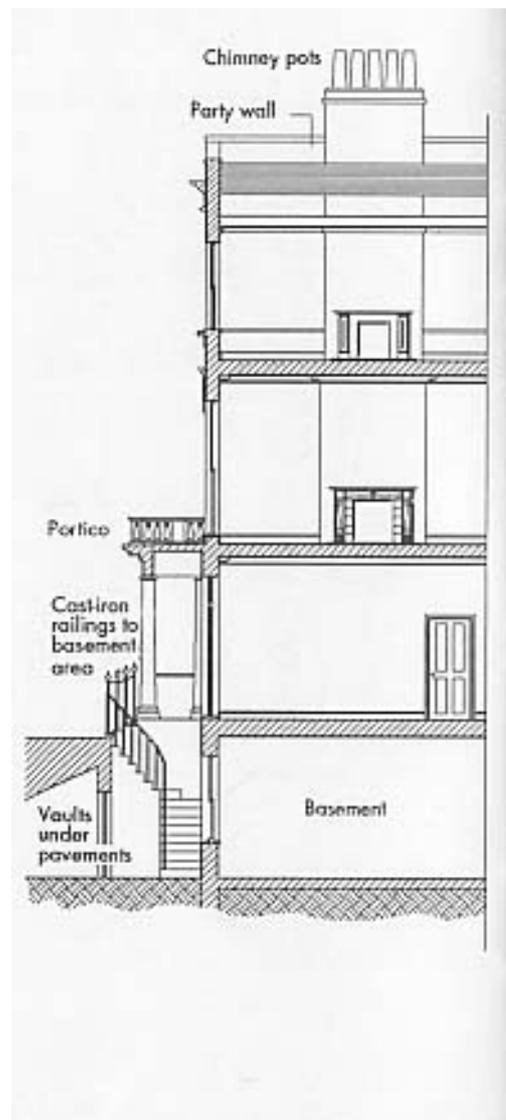


Fig. 1.1: Section through front of a typical Pimlico house.

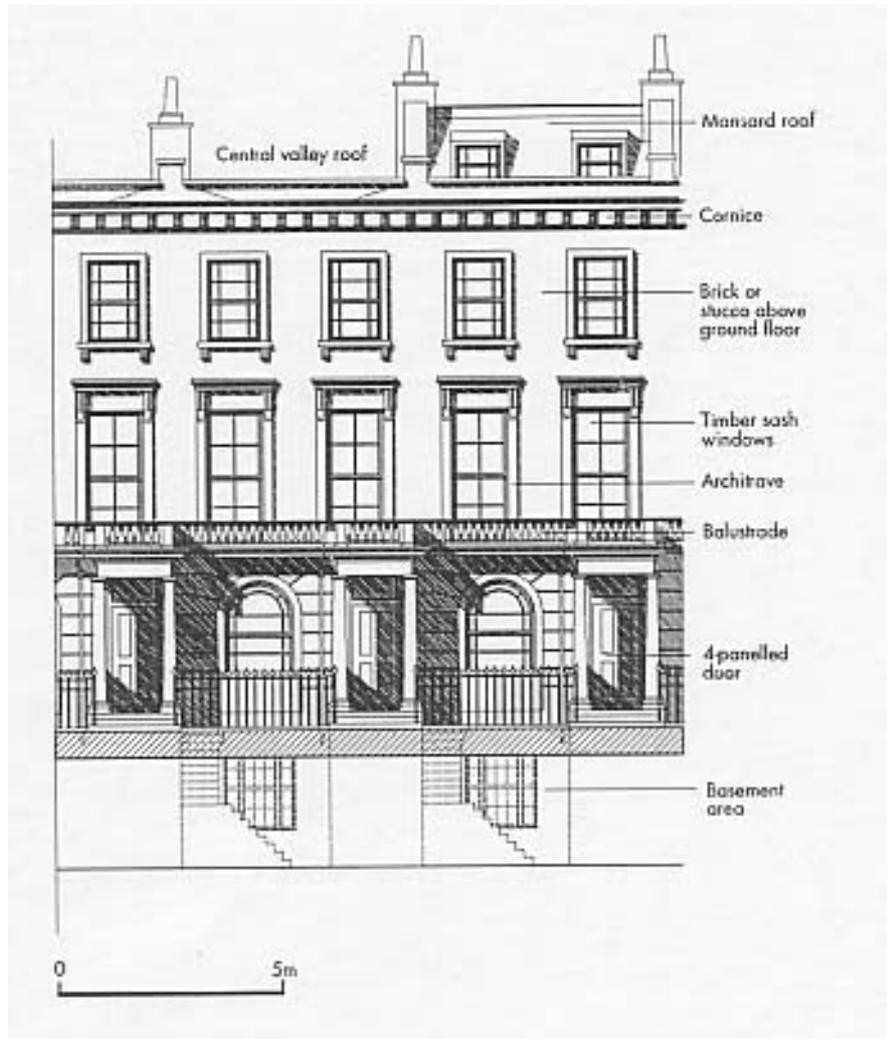


Fig. 1.2 (right): Front elevation of typical houses (Alderney Street). Scale 1:100.

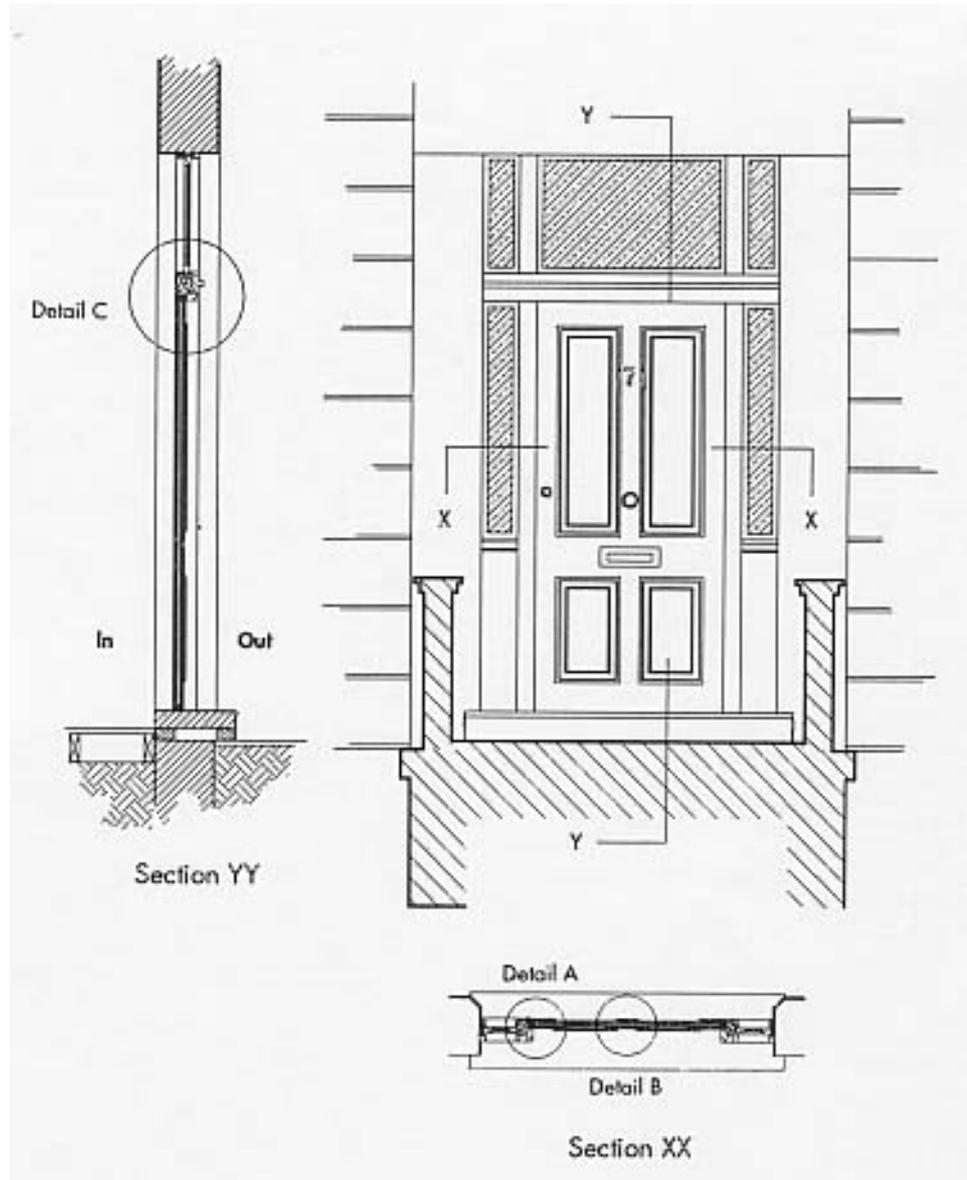


Fig. 2.1: Front door elevation and sections. Scale 1:40 (see also Details A, B C)

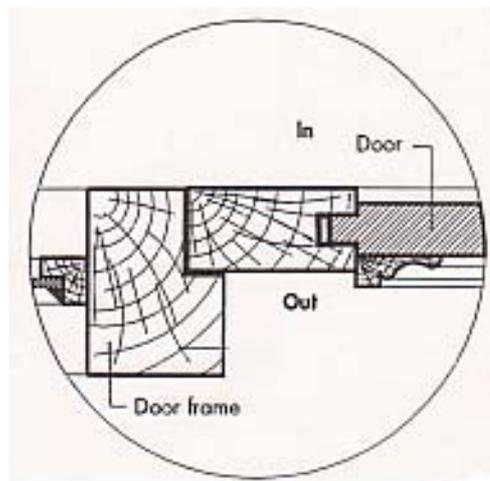
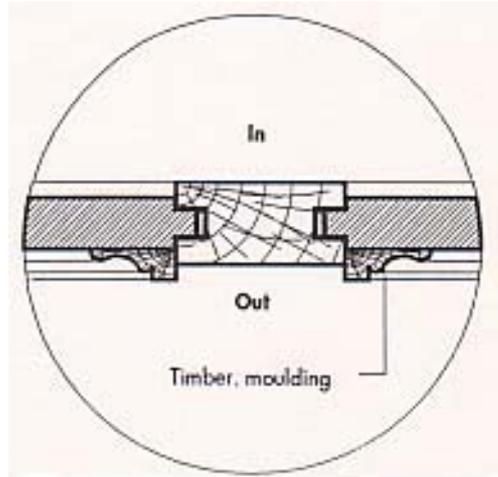


Fig. 2.3: Detail A (see section XX). Scale 1:5

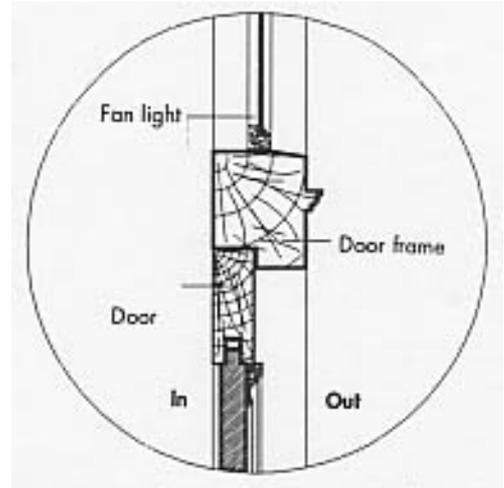
5. Front Doors

5.1 Original mid-nineteenth century front doors and door furniture should be retained and, where they have been inappropriately replaced, replicas of the originals should be installed. Doors should be painted in a dark colour to match the prevailing pattern.

5.2 Front doors which are no longer used as such should be retained and fixed shut (for example in some hotels which incorporate several of the original houses).



**Fig. 2.4: Detail B (see section XX).
Scale 1:5**



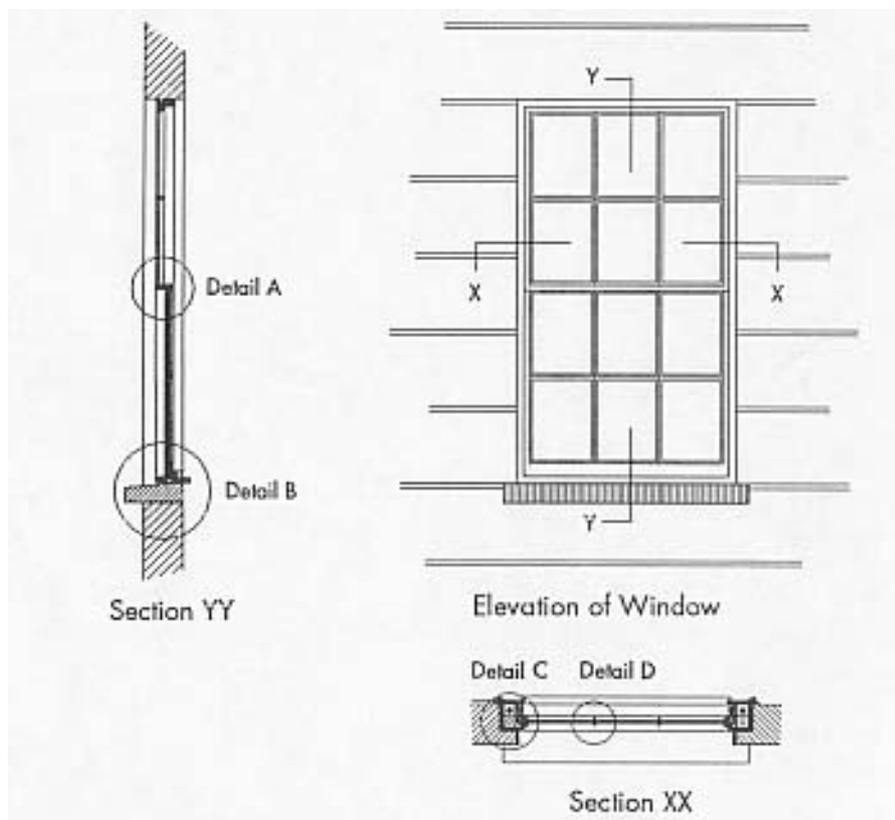
**Fig. 2.2: Detail C (see section YY).
Scale 1:10**

6. Front Windows

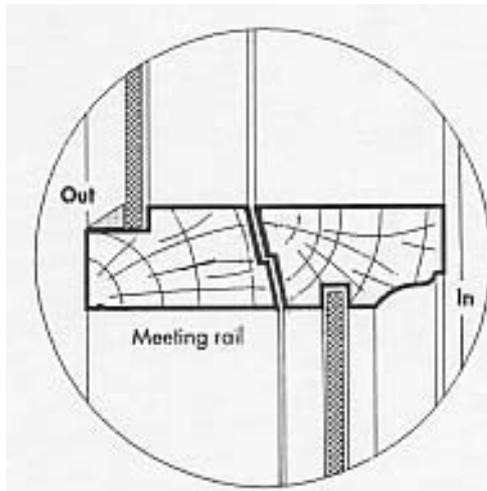
6.1 Some terraces have been split because windows inappropriate in design, material and detailing have been installed. Any replacement front windows should copy the original timber window design, taking particular care that the detailing of the frames and glazing bars are exact facsimiles and that the windows are set at the same depth within the window openings as the originals.

6.2 Double or secondary glazing does not have to alter the appearance of the original window from the outside. Secondary glazing can be installed behind the external windows.

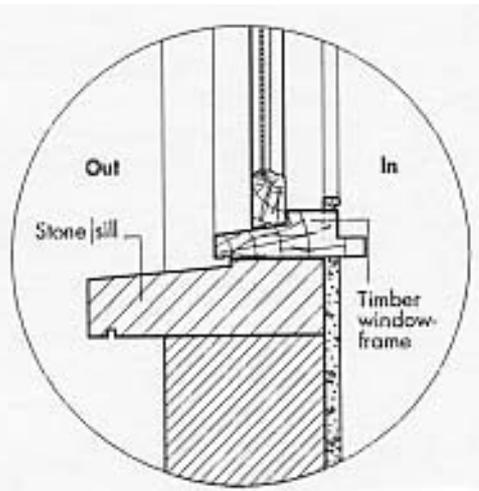
6.3 Modern UPVC, or aluminium windows will not normally be acceptable.



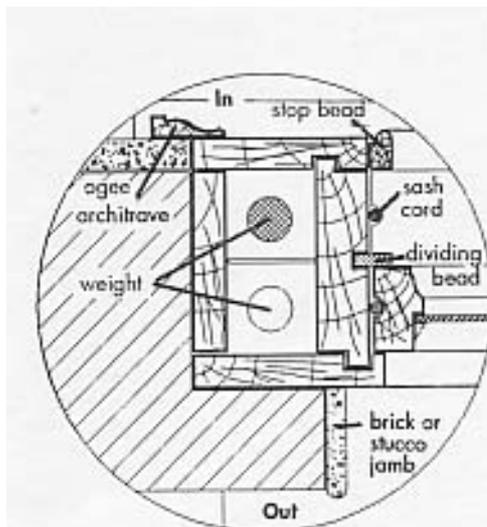
**Fig. 3.1: Front windows - elevation and sections. Scale 1:40
(see also Details A, B, C, D)**



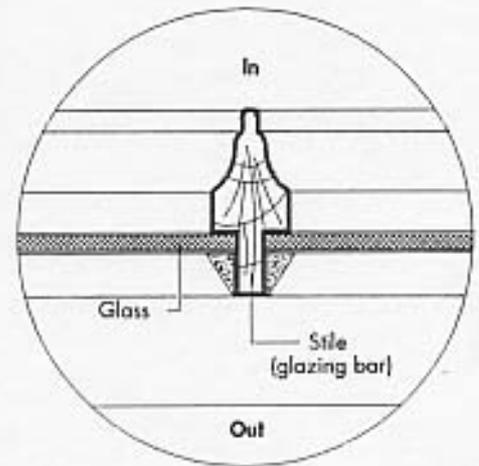
**Fig. 3.2: Detail A (see section YY).
Scale 1:2**



**Fig. 3.3: Detail B (see section YY).
Scale 1:10**



**Fig. 3.4: Detail C (see section XX).
Scale 1:5**



**Fig. 3.5: Detail D (see section XX).
Scale 1:2**

7. Basement Areas

7.1 General

7.1.1 The infill of front basement areas will not normally be permitted.

7.1.2 Original steps and railings to basements should be retained whenever possible. Where original steps have been removed in the past, metal strips may be acceptable in some circumstances.

7.1.3 Any rearrangement of basement rooms should, whenever possible, be planned to avoid the need to alter or enlarge the original basement front windows or to relocate original external doors.

7.2 Bin Stores

7.2.1 Bin store should normally be located in the vaults below the pavement (see Fig. 4.1).

7.3 Basement Front Doors

7.3.1 The entrances to basement accommodation is normally by timber doors of four panels, the uppermost of which can be glazed, set below the front doorstep, facing the area and at right angles to the front elevation.

7.3.2 Projecting porches over external basement doors are not normally considered acceptable.



Cambridge Street

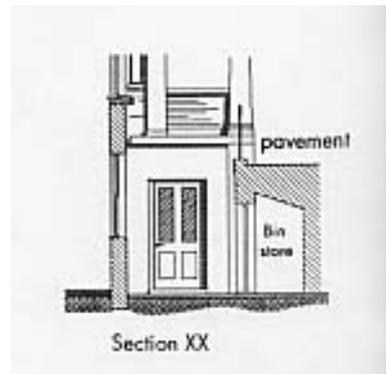


Fig. 4.1: Basement door.
Scale 1:150

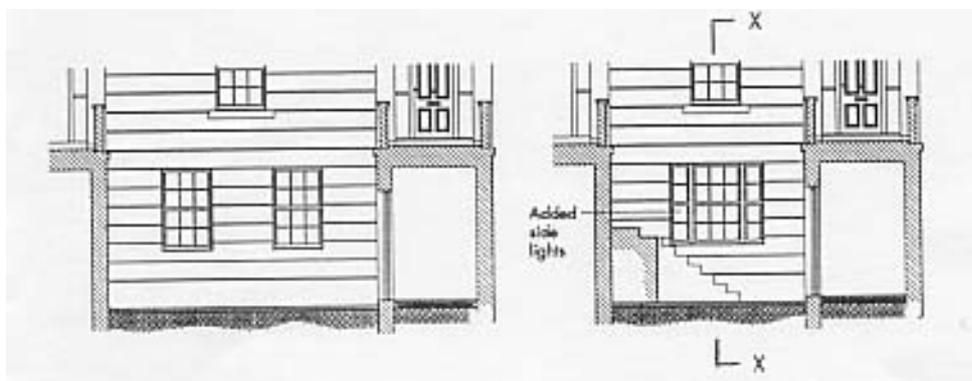


Fig. 4.2: Basement windows. **Scale 1:150**

7.4 Basement Front Windows

7.4.1 When daylight to front rooms is improved, traditional timber sash windows with added sidelights may be used (see Fig. 4.2, right).

7.4.2 Whenever structurally possible the middle basement window should be aligned with the windows above, and should retain the traditional proportional relationship to it. The side-lights should not exceed a third of the width of the central window.

7.4.3 Alternatively, two windows of traditional design, matching the original basement window, may be acceptable. Again where structurally possible they should be symmetrically aligned with the windows above (see Fig. 4.2, left).

7.4.4 The basement windows should be designed and detailed to match the existing original windows.

7.5 Railings

7.5.1 Existing original railings should always be retained and be painted gloss black. Where they have been removed they should be reinstated to match the original pattern.

8. Porches and Balconies

8.1 Some Pimlico terraces have balconies at first floor level, either formed above porches to the main entrances or as shallow balconies running the width of each house. These features are particularly conspicuous in the facades and the reinstatement of the original detailing is an important aspect of restoring the architectural integrity of the area.



Gloucester Street



Warwick Way

9. Awnings and Blinds

9.1 These are likely to be considered acceptable only on shopfronts; not on residential buildings.

9.2 Where they are proposed, careful consideration should be given to their fixings, boxings, etc. to ensure that they are sympathetic to the detailing of the building.

10. Shopfronts

10.1 Where original shopfronts exist they should be retained. The City Council has produced a design guide entitled: 'Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs' (1990) to give general guidance on this issue.

11. Hotel Signs

11.1 Hotels are a long established feature of Pimlico, especially on the main streets close to Victoria Station. They are one of the main non-residential uses in the area and their signs can appear as discordant commercial intrusions in mainly residential areas, unless they are carefully designed.

11.2 The City Council has produced a pamphlet called: 'Guidelines for Signs on Hotels in Pimlico' which represents the formally-approved policy of the City Council as a basis for the determination of applications for consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations.

11.3 Those guidelines are incorporated into a general Guide to Advertisements, published by the City Council in 1992.



Belgrave Road

12. Rear Elevations

12.1 General

12.1.1 Most buildings in the Pimlico Conservation Area were built with projecting extensions at the rear. The width of these projections is generally less than half the width of the property. They vary in height from two storeys, basement and ground (see Figs. 6-9) to full height i.e. up to the parapet or eaves level.

12.1.2 The rear elevations are mainly of brickwork pierced by door and window openings with shallow brick arches above them.

12.2 Rear Extensions and Alterations

12.2.1 The form of existing rear extensions varies from terrace to terrace. In some cases the rear extensions may comprise two storeys. In others it may rise the full height of the main building, perhaps four or five storeys.

12.2.2 Additional extensions may be acceptable if:

They do not cause unacceptable reductions in daylight or other amenity standards to adjoining properties.

They follow the pattern of existing rear extensions in terms of depth, width, height and detailed design where a clear pattern exists.

They do not rise above the penultimate storey level unless the prevailing pattern is for full height projections (see Figs. 8.1, 8.2).

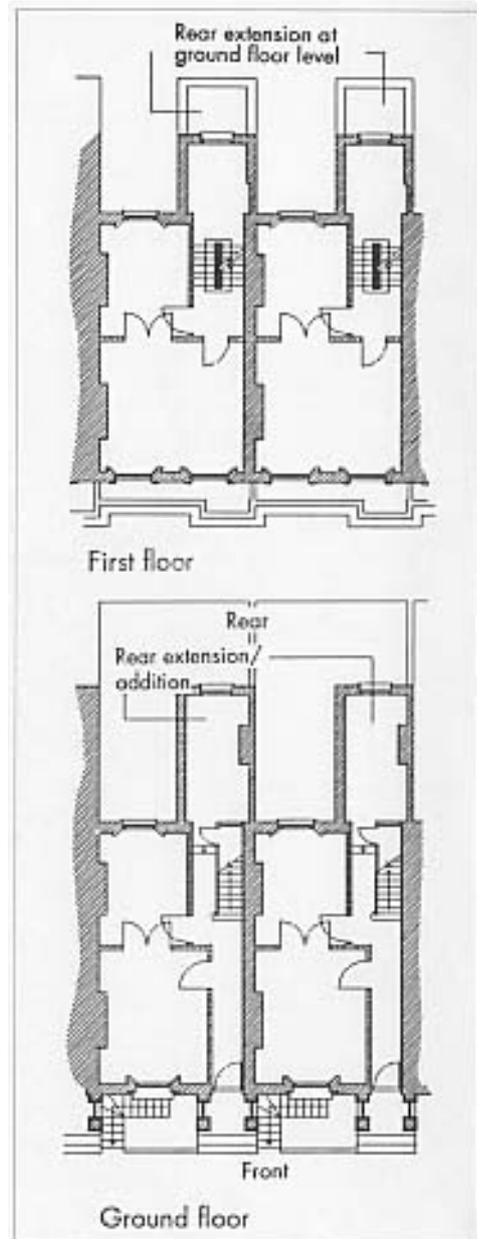


Fig. 5: Floor plans. Scale 1:250

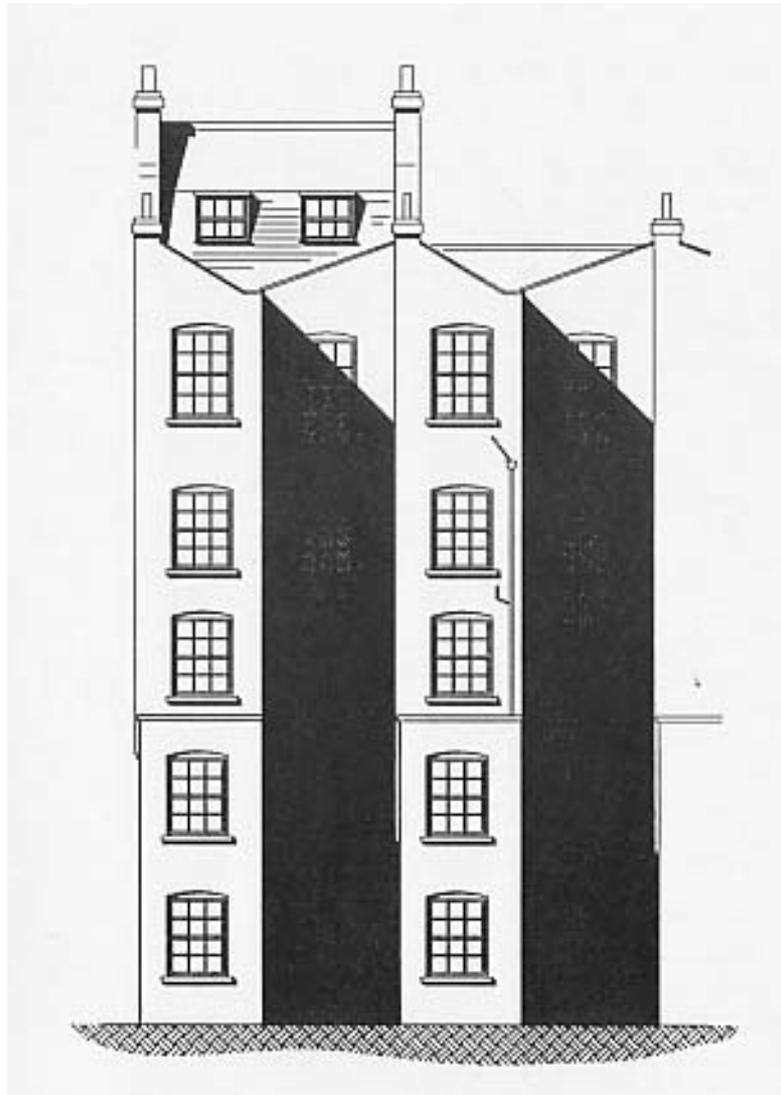


Fig. 6: Typical rear elevation. Scale 1:150

12.2.3 Infilling of the lightwell at the rear may be acceptable if:

It does not cause loss of amenity to adjoining properties.

It does not comprise more than two storeys (unlisted buildings only).

12.2.4 On listed buildings the infilling of the lightwell should be limited to basement level only. A fully-glazed conservatory-type extension may be acceptable in principle at ground floor level. The City Council wishes to see the original plan form of listed buildings maintained above basement level. The pattern of solid and void created by the projection and lightwell should be retained and respected.

12.2.5 A terrace on the flat roof of the infill extension may be acceptable provided this does not cause any amenity problems. High-level roof terraces are generally unacceptable. Where a terrace is created it should be surrounded by a brick parapet. Balustrades of other materials are unlikely to be acceptable.

12.2.6 Conservatories should generally be located at basement level or ground floor levels. At higher levels they may cause amenity problems and may be inappropriate in design terms.

12.3 Detailing

12.3.1 The design, detailing and materials of any extensions should respect those of the original buildings. This usually means that weathered, yellow London stock bricks should be used with gauged arches. Traditional four panelled doors are appropriate. Windows should be traditional timber hung-sliding sashes

set behind 115mm (4½") reveals. Traditionally designed French windows may be acceptable where access to the garden or roof terrace is required.

12.3.2 Rendering or painting of brickwork will not be acceptable.

12.4 Gardens

12.4.1 Garden space must be left at the rear to maintain a reasonably-sized private amenity area. Garden walls should be retained. If rebuilding is required this should be carried out to match.

12.4.2 Trees should not be removed or pruned without first taking advice from the City Council's Arboricultural Officer, Tel: **(020) 7641 2618** or Fax: **(020) 7641 2959**.

Figs. 7.1-7.4: Examples of existing rear extensions.

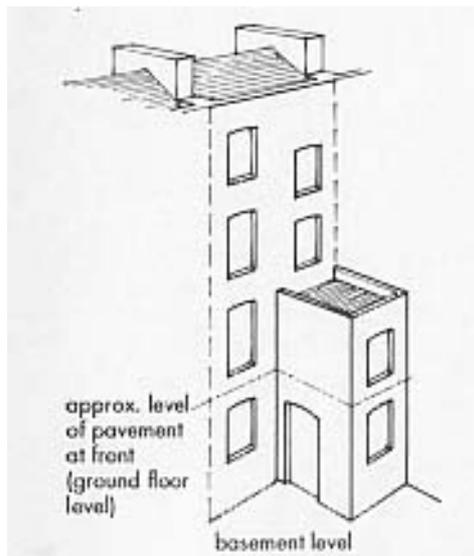


Fig. 7.1: Two-storey rear extension with flat roof.

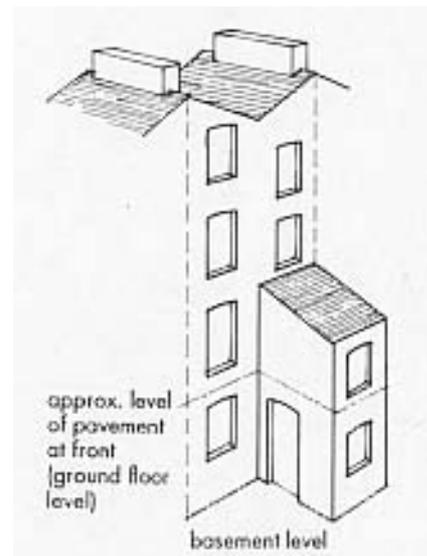


Fig. 7.2: Two-storey rear extension with pitched roof.

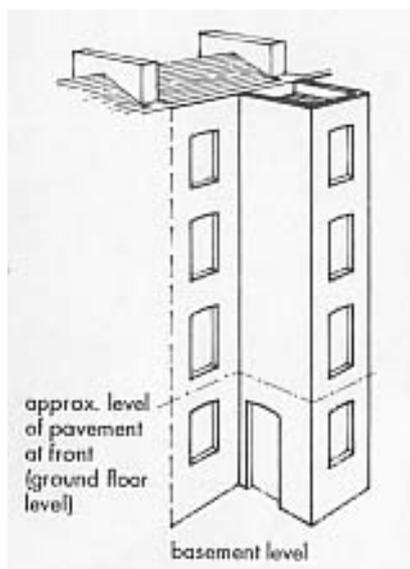


Fig. 7.3: Full height rear extension with flat roof.

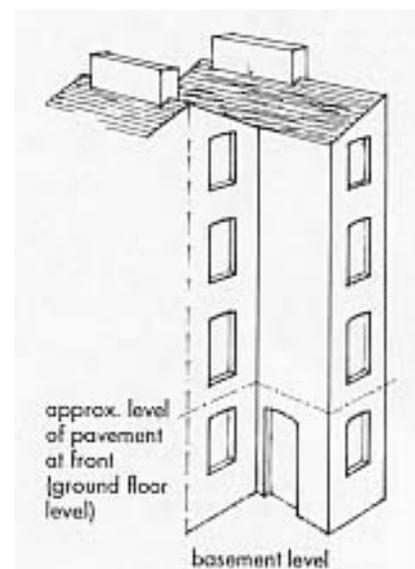


Fig. 7.4: Full height rear extension with pitched (valley) roof.

Figs. 8.1-8.2: Examples of rear extensions up to the penultimate storey

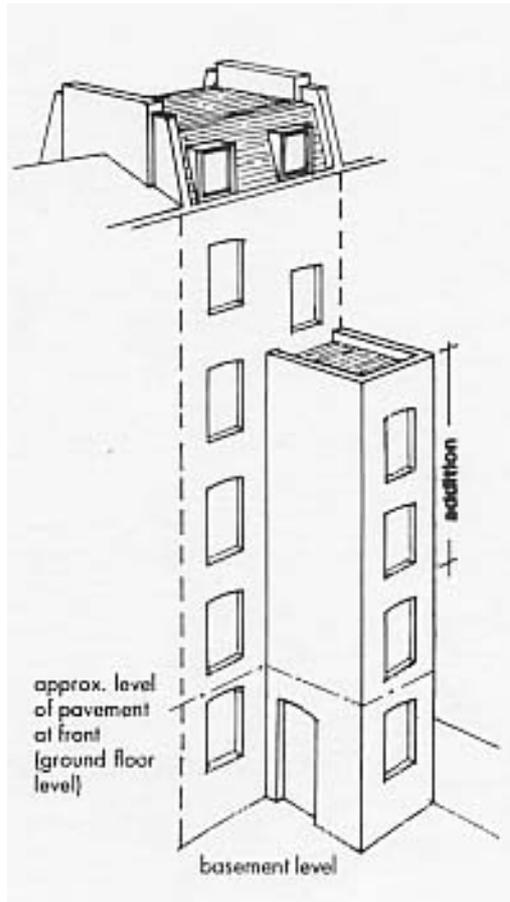


Fig. 8.1: Two storeys added to rear extension where original building has four storeys and basement.

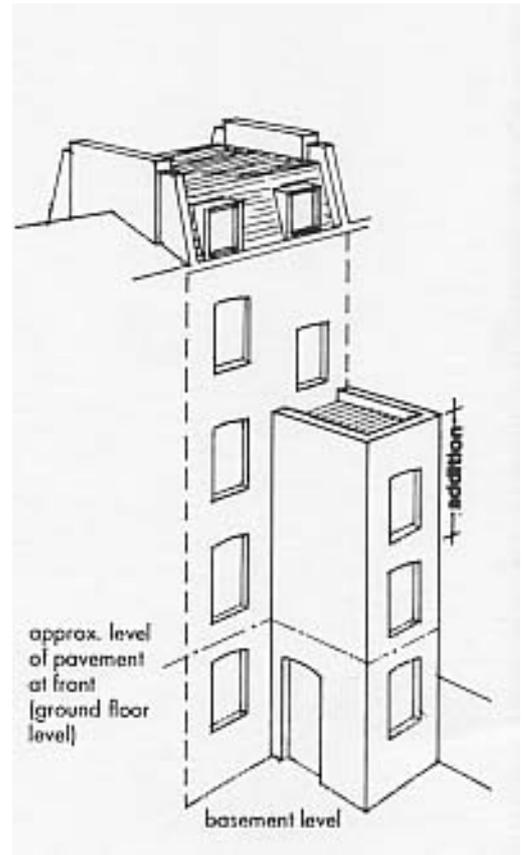


Fig. 8.2: One storey added to rear extension

Figs. 9.1-9.2: Examples of rear extensions that could be acceptable on non-listed buildings.

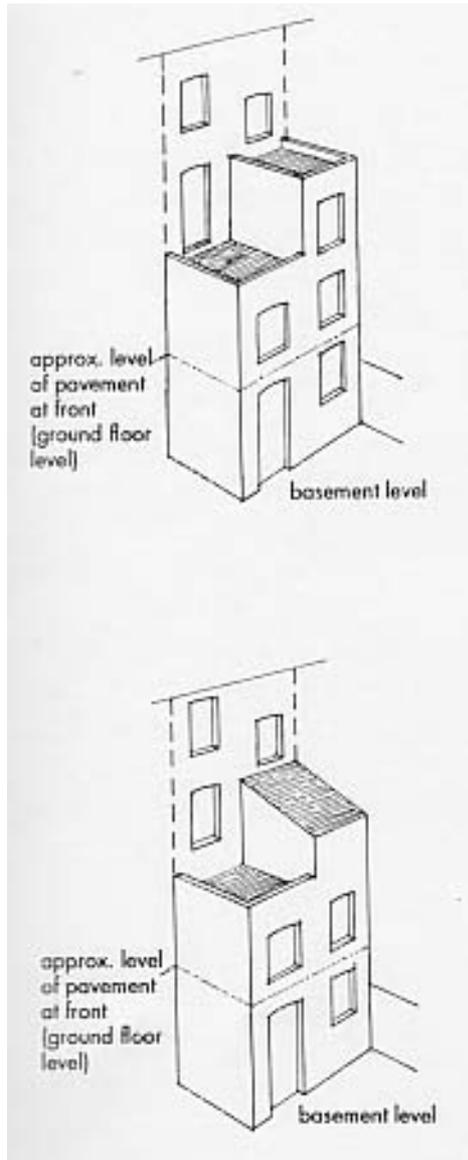


Fig. 9.1: One storey added to rear extension plus infill

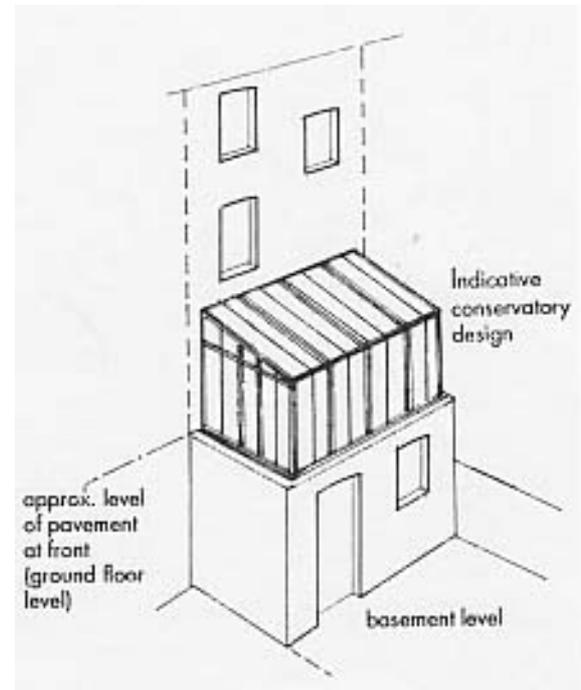


Fig. 9.2: Basement with conservatory. A traditionally designed conservatory could be acceptable on non-listed buildings.

13. Infill at the End of Terraces

13.1 The return frontages to the principal Pimlico terraces are often separated from the smaller scale properties on the side streets by a gap (above ground floor level). This feature is very typical of Pimlico and the City Council seeks to retain these features.

13.2 Infill these gaps can spoil the deliberate original separation of the terraces. Individual 'gaps' should be discussed with the City Council's design officers. Where some infilling is acceptable in principle it should not rise above first floor level (see Figs. 10.1 and 10.2).

13.3 The design of any infill should be sympathetic to the character of the principal terrace.



Winchester Street

Figs. 10.1, 10.2: Infilling a gap at the end of the terrace.



Fig. 10.1: Elevation. Scale 1:300

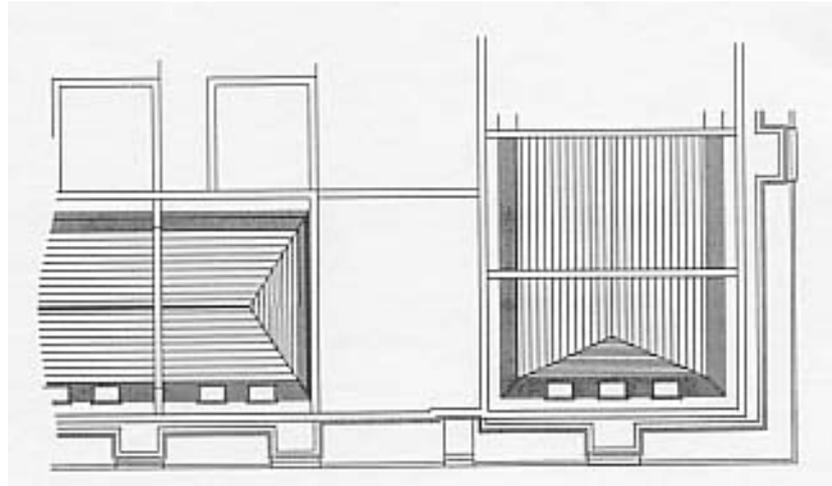


Fig. 10.2: Roof plan. Scale 1:300

14. Alterations at Roof Level

14.1 Mansard Roofs

14.1.1 Roof extensions should normally be in mansard form and should have a principal slope of 70° pitch, and be finished in slates.

14.1.2 Mansards may be flat roofed (Fig. 11), or double-pitched (Fig. 12). Where double-pitched mansards are proposed, the angle of the upper pitch should not be more than 30° , and where the pitch is more than 26° , blue-black slates should be used to clad the upper pitch.

14.1.3 Double-pitched mansards are generally preferred, except where a terrace is already characterised by flat-roofed mansards.

14.1.4 When roofs are altered the party wall parapets and chimney stacks must be carried up in a form similar to the original, and the chimney pots should be replaced. The party wall parapet should follow the roof profile at the minimum distance permitted under the bye-laws, 375mm (14½") and should rise from behind the front parapet wall (see Figs. 11 and 12).

14.1.5 At the end of terraces the mansard roof should be pitched on the return facade as well as on the front.

14.1.6 The City Council has produced a leaflet called 'A Guide to Roof Alterations and Extensions' to help people who are considering such work. Copies are available from 'One Stop Services' at Westminster City Hall.

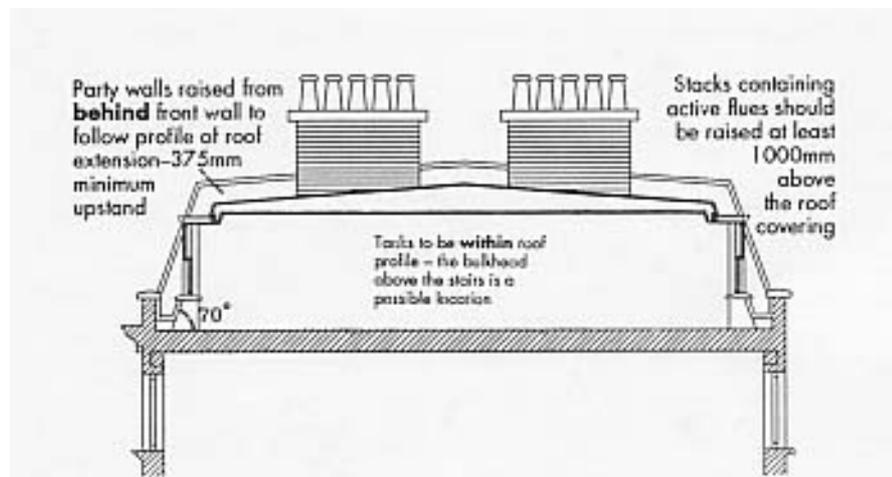


Fig. 11: Preferred section of flat-topped mansard roof. Scale 1:150.

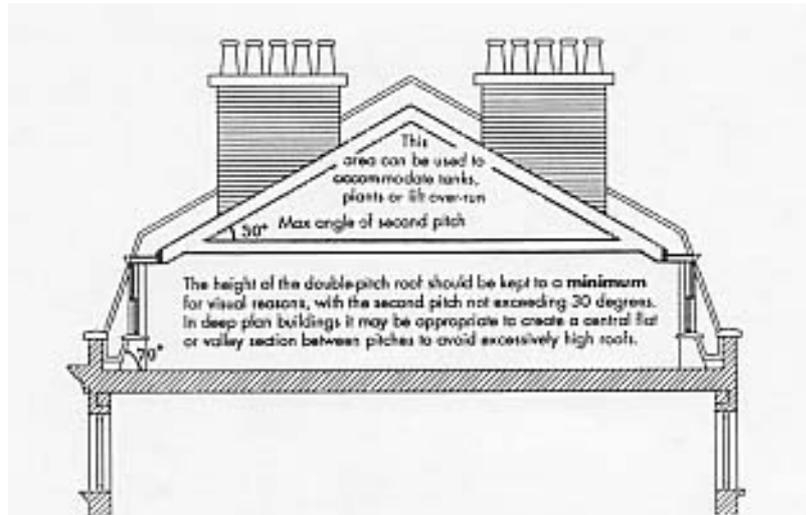


Fig. 12: Preferred section of double-pitched mansard roof. Scale 1:150.

14.2 Valley Roofs

14.2.1 Brickwork parapets to valley roofs should normally be retained. If a valley roof has been used as a means of escape, the sloping parapet should be retained. A simple metal rail, painted black, may be fixed behind the parapet to form a safety barrier (see Fig. 13).

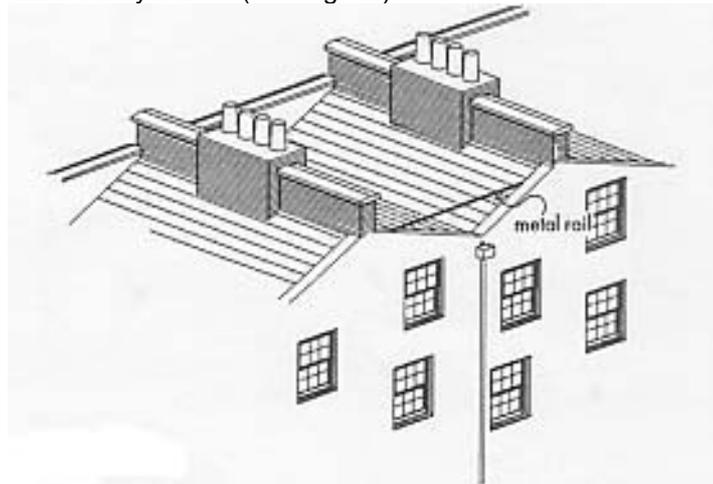


Fig. 13. Scale 1:200

14.2.2 Where a mansard roof has been constructed on a property with a valley roof, the brickwork parapet should be retained at the rear (see Fig. 14).

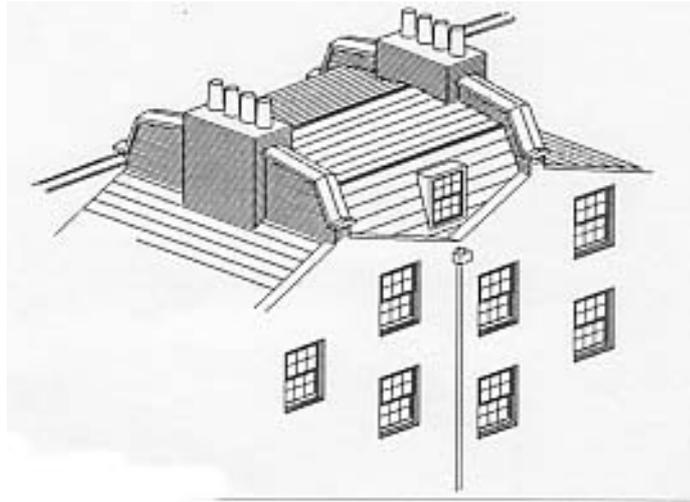


Fig. 14. Scale 1:200

14.3 Roof Terraces

14.3.1 Terraces at roof level are not normally permitted except in locations where permitted precedent has been set, for example St. George's Square, Warwick Square and Eccleston Square. In such locations the front roof slope should be set back 1.8m (6'0") to allow a terrace behind the parapet (see Fig. 15).

14.3.2 The roof alterations at the rear of these properties should however conform to the traditional mansard pattern (see section 14.1 on mansard roofs).

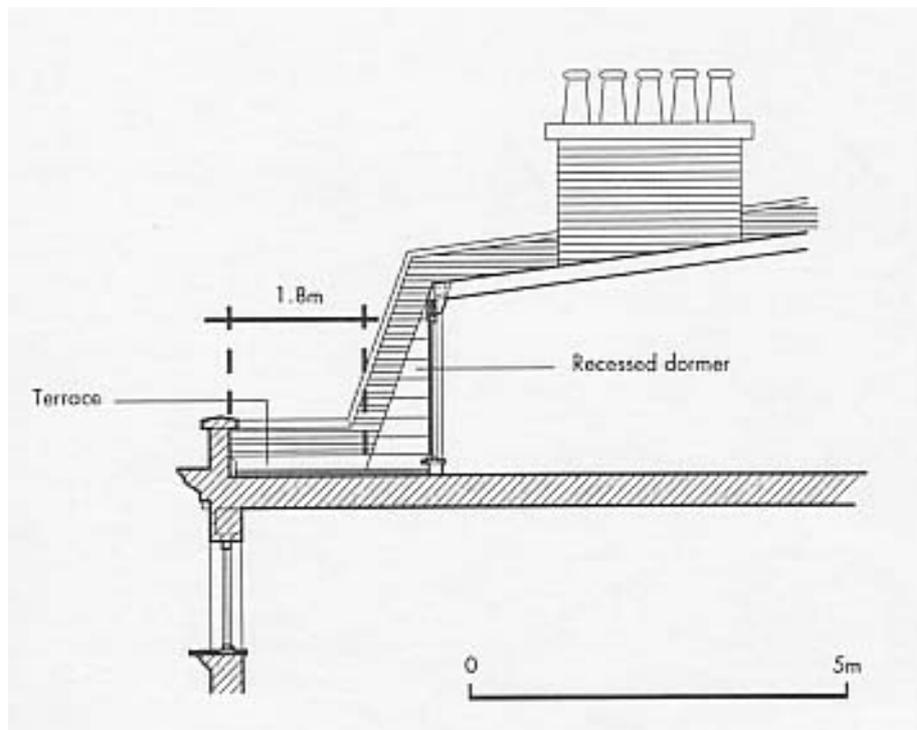


Fig. 15: Section through mansard showing roof terrace. Scale 1:100.

14.4 Dormer Windows

14.4.1 Windows in mansard roofs should take the form and proportions of traditional dormer windows appropriately sub-divided and detailed and should usually line-up with windows in the lower storeys.

14.4.2 The overall width and height of dormer windows should be no greater than the dimensions of the openings of the windows below them (see Fig. 16). The slope above the dormers should be finished in a material to match the roof.

14.4.3 The cheeks of the dormers should be faced in lead. On narrow-frontage houses it may not be possible to place the dormers over 450mm (1'6") from the party walls and still align them to the windows below. In some very narrow frontage houses, a single dormer placed centrally may be preferable.

14.4.4 Windows placed on the same Plane of a sloping roof may be used in lieu of dormers at the rear. In such circumstances they should be placed symmetrically about the centre line of the facade, and set in as the bye-laws require from the party walls.

15. Other Structures and Equipment

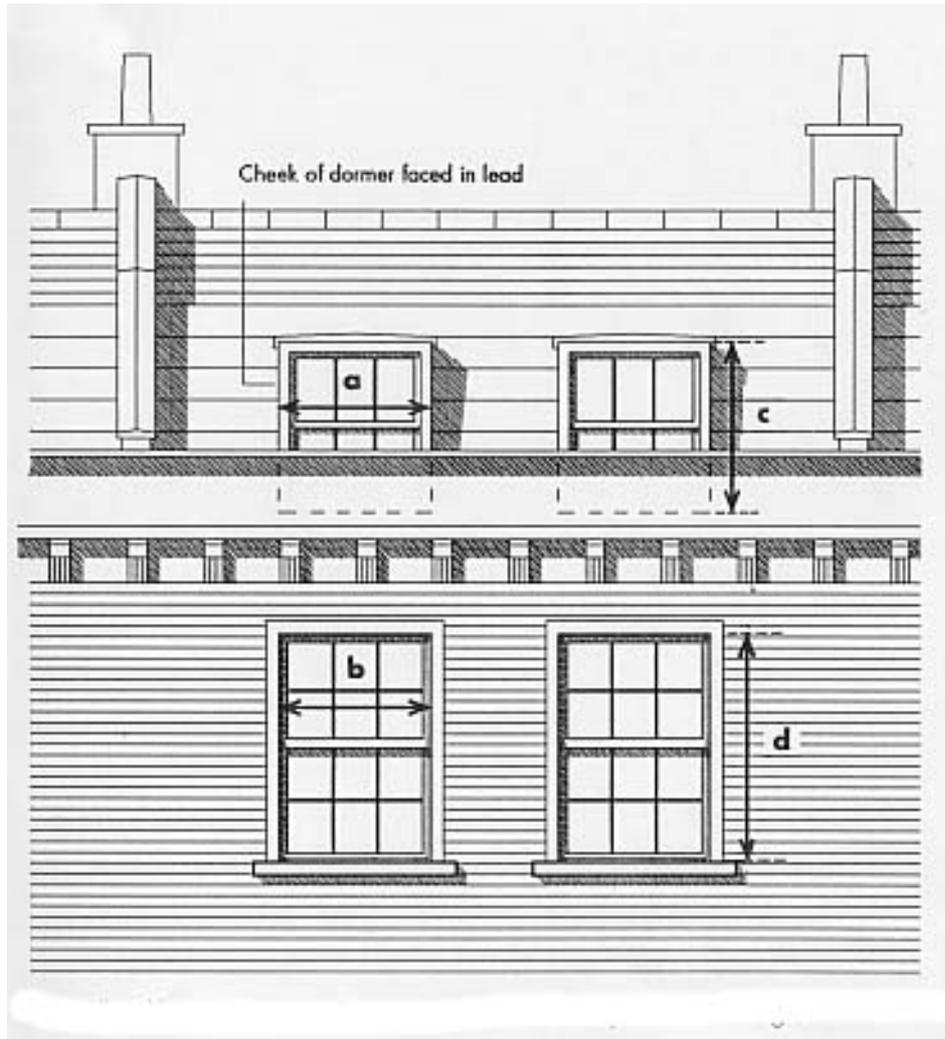
15.1 Lift motor rooms and overruns must be contained within the roof profiles. The double pitched type is especially convenient for this. It may be necessary to put a lift motor room in the top storey, thus not serving the top floor, or in the basement. Where a lift shaft is constructed outside the main rear wall in the rear extension, it must not rise higher than the rear parapet level.

15.2 External fire escapes, safety balustrades, flues, vertical ducting, drainage pipes, air-conditioning units and other additions to the outside of properties can spoil their appearance.

15.3 In designing alterations to buildings these features should be accommodated internally (provided they do not damage valuable interiors of listed buildings). When they cannot be avoided on an external wall, they should be carefully positioned and designed to be as visually unobtrusive as possible.

15.4 Fire escapes on the front facade are not normally acceptable.

15.5 From the 9 July 1990 the display of Estate Agents boards in the Pimlico Conservation Area (as defined by its boundaries before the 3 July 1990) requires the Council's express consent.



Overall width 'a' not to exceed opening width 'b' and height 'c' not to be greater than 'd'.

**Fig. 16: Front elevation showing mansard roof and dormer windows.
Scale 1:60.**

Further Information

These guidelines supplement the policies for the alteration and preservation of buildings set out in Chapter 9 of the City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan (As Placed on Deposit, November 1991).

For further information about buildings in the Pimlico Conservation Area, contact South Team, Development Planning Services. Click below for details

[CLICK HERE FOR LINK TO WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL CONTACTS LIST](#)

Development Planning Services, Department of Planning and City Development, March 1992