

**Flat 9, Queen Alexandra Mansions
3 Grape Street, London, WC2H 8DX**

**Design & Access Statement
July 2022**

Proposal to provide a metal balustrade to the
roof of Flat 9, Queen Alexandra Mansions



1.0 Introduction

Queen Alexandra Mansions, 3 Grape Street is a Grade II listed building which forms a pair with the similarly designed King Edward Mansions on the opposite side of Grape Street. Both King Edward and Queen Alexandra Mansions sit at the north end of Grape Street. Queen Alexandra Mansions consists of commercial units at ground floor level with the upper floors used as residential accommodation. Grape Street sits within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

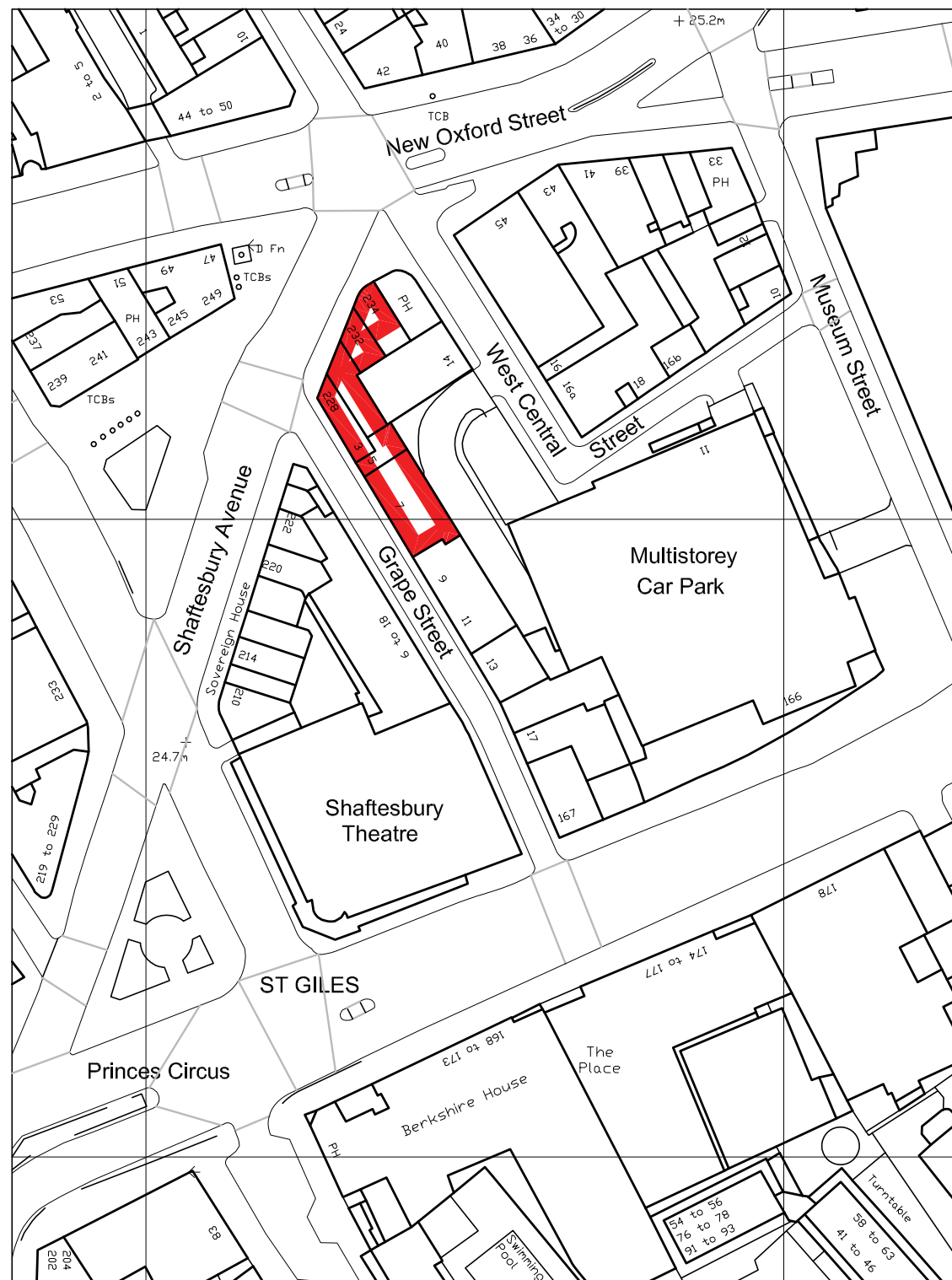
The site of the proposal is Flat 9, Queen Alexandra Mansions which comprises the fifth floor of the building and the associated external roof terrace which overlooks Shaftesbury Avenue at the north end of Grape Street. The current upper floors, both fourth and fifth are not original to the building having been added in two stages, the first in 1961 (fourth floor) and the second addition in 1983 (fifth floor and mansard roof).

In 2005 a replacement conservatory in the form of a 'Victorian' style painted timber structure with glazed sides and roof was added to the roof in place of an existing structure. Glazed balustrades with polished metal handrail were also added to the fifth floor roof edges. This provided the apartment with a roof terrace on the original area of roof.

1.1 Proposal

It is proposed that a metal balustrade be added to the perimeter of the 1984 mansard roof to Flat 9, Queen Alexandra Mansions to allow for safe maintenance access.

Works are currently progressing on the consented refurbishment works to Flat 9 (ref: 2017/4273/P & 2017/5277/L) which allows for the building's stair tower to be extended up to the roof to provide access.



Site Plan

Plan of Site Highlighted
in Red

2.0 Local Context

There is great variation in the urban grain immediate to the subject site. Building mass, style, age and use vary greatly creating a townscape and character of diverse interest. The built fabric is interrupted by pockets of landscaped public space. The space immediately north of Queen Alexandra Mansions between New Oxford Street and Shaftesbury Avenue landscaped with well established London Plane trees.

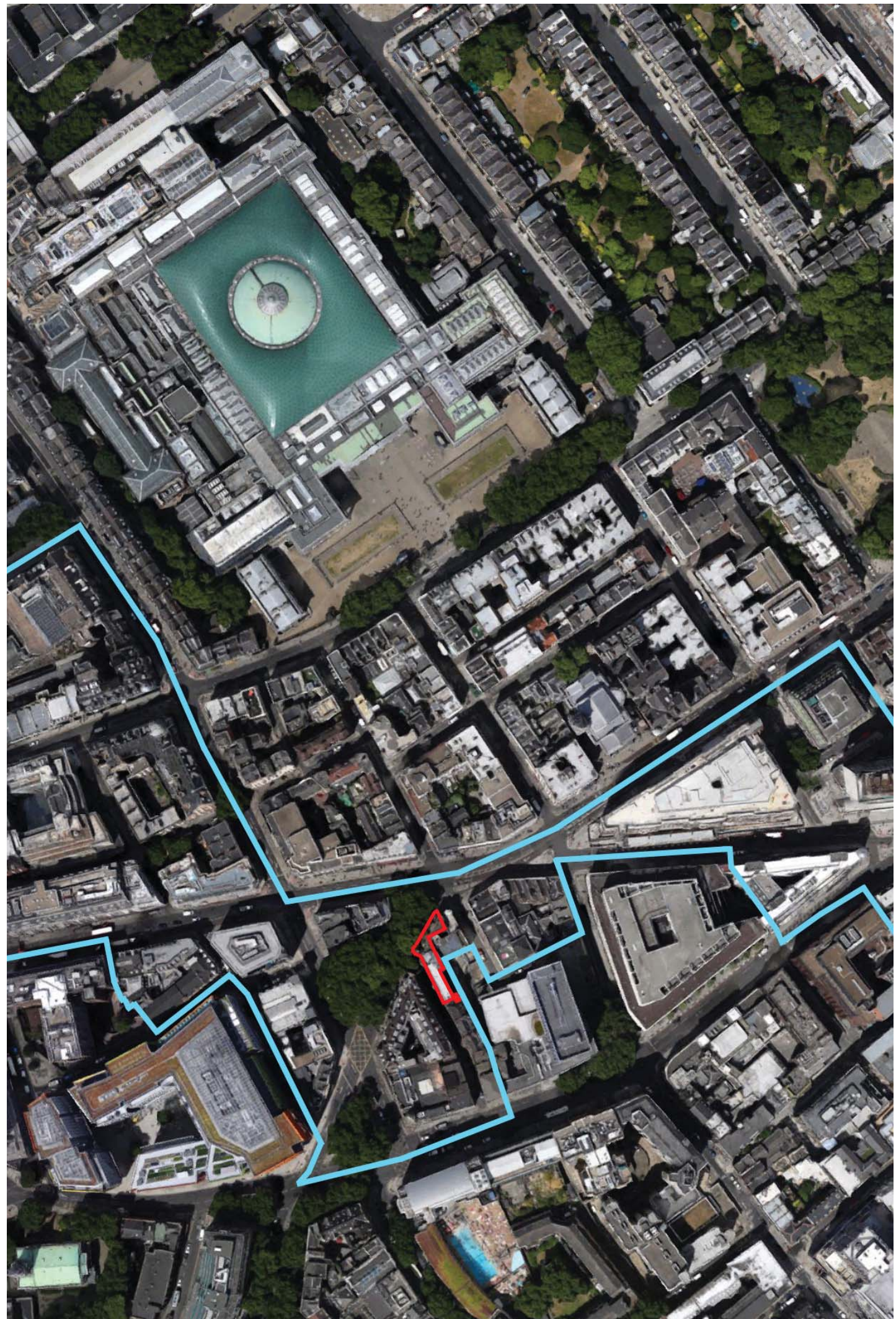
Within the Conservation Area brickwork is the predominant material used, in some cases with a rendered and painted finish, but more contemporary structures have introduced modern construction materials and methods such as large scale flush glazed walls to the commercial property at the south end of Grape Street on High Holborn. Metal cladding used on the high rise hotel building on High Holborn. Steel structures such as that currently being erected in close proximity to the subject site on Museum Street. Many of the original buildings have been altered or extended with more contemporary additions, two of which are shown in greater detail in section 4.0 Relevant Local Precedence below.

The most notable recent additions to the local area are the brightly ceramic clad Central St Giles by Renzo Piano and the contemporary glazed roof added to the British Museum by Architect Norman Foster. The lightweight structure distinct from yet complimenting the original architecture of the British Museum.

Grape Street is a narrow thoroughfare making views of Queen Alexandra mansions from the south limited. The building is viewed obliquely and the upper storeys and new mansard roof are only glimpsed from a steep angle below. The building is most visible across Shaftesbury avenue and the more open spaces to the north. At times of the year the building is obscured greatly by the large London Plane trees.

Image

Aerial View of Queen Alexandra Mansions (highlighted red) with Bloomsbury Conservation Area sub-area 8 outlined in blue.



Top Left

View West along Shaftesbury Avenue with Grape Street to right hand side of the Shaftesbury Theatre



Top Centre

View North East across High Holborn towards the Shaftesbury Theatre. Grape Street seen to the right hand side of the theatre



Top Right

View East across Shaftesbury Avenue and Bloomsbury Street towards the Shaftesbury Theatre. King Edward Mansions building seen to left hand side of the theatre



Middle Left

View West across Shaftesbury Avenue and Bloomsbury Street as seen from northern corner of Grape Street



Middle Centre

View North West across Shaftesbury Avenue as seen from northern corner of Grape Street



Middle Right

View South across Shaftesbury Avenue of King Edward Mansions



Bottom Left

View North along West Central Street

Bottom Centre

View East along West Central Street with The Sorting Office in the background

Bottom Right

View West along New Oxford Street of The Bloomsbury at junction with West Central Street and Shaftesbury Avenue



Top Left
View East across
Shaftesbury Avenue
of Queen Alexandra
Mansions

Top Right
View of Queen Alexandra
Mansions and Grape
Street from North

Bottom Left
View East across
Bloomsbury Street and
Shaftesbury Avenue

Bottom Right
View of The Bloomsbury
and Queen Alexandra
Mansions across New
Oxford Street



Top Left

View of Queen Alexandra Mansions Grape Street facade with 1961 fourth floor and 1984 fifth floor extensions and slate mansard with pitched dormers

Top Centre

View of Queen Alexandra Mansions with non-original slate mansard visible across Shaftesbury Avenue

Top Right

View North along Grape Street with Queen Alexandra Mansions on right hand side of Street

Bottom Left

View of rear elevation of Queen Alexandra Mansions from West Central Street

Bottom Right

View west along West Central Street



Image
View North along Grape Street
Existing



3.0 Design

A simple metal handrail set back from the Grape Street Mansard edge and back from both the north and south facades is proposed at the head of the mansard roof. The roof mansard roof was originally installed in 1984.

Images of the proposal have been submitted with the application to illustrate the positive contribution the upper metal railings have on the composition of the roof as a whole. The railings act to give a considered and delicate, unobtrusive visual termination to the head of the mansard roof.

Access would be provided only for maintenance of the roof area, gutters, existing services such as television aerials and the rooflights consented under earlier planning and listed building consents (ref: 2017/4273/P & 2017/5277/L).

Image
View North along Grape Street
Proposed





Image
View East across Shaftesbury Avenue
Existing



Image
View East across Shaftesbury Avenue
Proposed



Image
View East by South East across
Shaftesbury Avenue
Existing



Image
View East by South East across
Shaftesbury Avenue
Proposed



Image
View South West along
Shaftesbury Avenue
Existing



Image
View South West along
Shaftesbury Avenue
Proposed