# 139 Foundling Court

Heritage Impact Statement

# 1. Introduction

139 Foundling court is one of 320 two-bedroom flats situated in the Brunswick Centre. The lay-out comprises of two bedrooms, a bathroom, and a kitchen with a cut-out panel creating a window into the main living space which holds the iconic glazed wall/ceiling. The Brunswick centre, designed by Patrick Hodgkinson in 1963-68 for Marchmont Properties and LB Camden and completed in 1972 by L Brian Ingram and T P Bennett and Partners, consists of two linked A-framed blocks of flats that incorporate two rows of shops at raised ground level, over basement car parking on two levels and a cinema. Its design represented a new approach to urban living, combining housing and professional chambers within a single complex. Hailed as being the pioneering example of a megastructure in England, the Brunswick Centre was listed Grade II in September 2000 (List Entry Number is 1246230).

It became increasingly run down up until the early 2000s, where restoration and renovation were soon to follow: the development was finally painted in the blue and cream colour scheme originally intended by Hodgkinson and a number of high-profile tenants (including Waitrose and Hobbs) moved into the commercial premises. Hodgkinson himself oversaw the renovation after he was invited back to realise his original design in the late 1990s - a process that was completed in 2006. The most significant thing to take away from its renovation is that it mainly pushed forward with the design that Hodgkinson had originally intended and is now a roaring success.

The excitement of the design lies in contrast between the grandeur of the concrete frame and the intimacy of the flats facing each other over a busy concourse. The famous historian Nikolas Pevsner described the main entrance, "mighty tapering concrete piers curiously reminiscent of the early 20th century visionary schemes of Saint Elia, the Italian futurist. The humanising touch is a box-like entrance to a cinema, tucked in between. Steps lead up to the pedestrian deck between the two A-frames, with shops on either side. A disappointingly bleak upper deck for the use of the residents covers part of the central space."

Reference: The Architectural Review, October 1972, and Historic England Listing (See Figure 1)

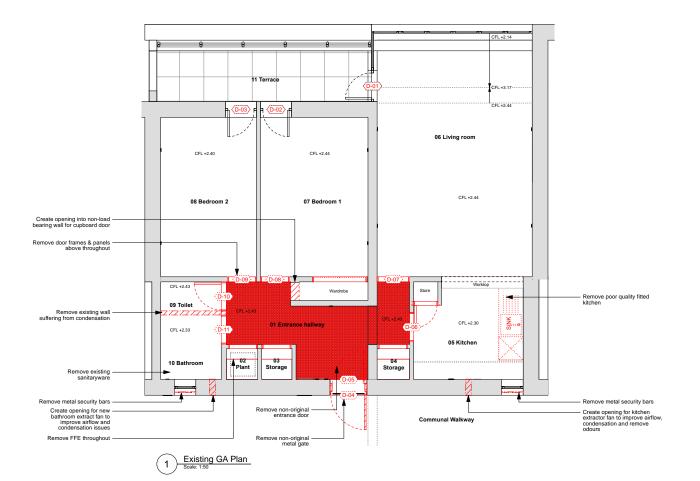
# 2. Proposed Internal Alterations

The state of the flat when acquired by the client in February 2021 is shown in Figure 3. The flat requires refurbishment to restore and enhance the original features including the wall with cut-out panel connecting the kitchen and main living space and the iconic glazed wall/ceiling, and we additionally propose a modernised lay-out to improve functionality of the space.

The proposed alterations are as follows:

- 1. The bathroom provision is currently arranged in two separate rooms. The small bathroom was designed to contains a very small bath and basin and the separate WC contains a toilet with no basin. The existing arrangement offers very little space and it is incompatible with modern living standards. This proposal seeks to provide all the sanitary goods in a single, more spacious room. The demolition of the non-structural wall between the WC and bathroom was approved in a similar application which was granted listed building consent (see Figures 4, 5)
- 2. The bathroom currently has the original 3inch (75mm) hole for venting to the exterior of the flat as per the original construction, which goes through the integral concrete structure. In this proposal we are looking to increase this opening to 100mm to be compatible with a standard modern extractor. Having been advised against increasing the hole in the structural concrete section of the external wall, we propose making a new opening in the blockwork portion of the external wall. We consider this to be imperative to allow air-flow, and thus reduce risk of mould development and internal damage as a result of persistent moisture. Additional grills for ventilation and extraction have been installed in 10 out of the 22 flats on the 6th floor of foundling court (see Figure 6)
- 3. We also propose a similar alteration to the external wall of the kitchen, to create a 150mm hole to allow installation of a modern extractor fan above the cooker with external ventilation. This form of extraction is more efficient than the recirculating cooker hood alternative. 3 flats on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of foundling court, where 139 foundling court is situated, have added 2+ additional holes in the blockwork of the external wall for extraction and ventilation (see Figure 6).
- 4. In the kitchen we propose the installation of modern cabinetry in the original U-shape configuration, made of (lacquered) wood, with composite stone counter tops in marbled effect, using neutral white tones. We believe the natural materials and neutral tones will allow for a clean modern design that is coherent with the foundational elements of the flat.
- 5. We propose the removal of pipework within a cabinet in the kitchen. (see figure 7) These pipes are obsolete as confirmed by the Camden Gas Technical Officer, Michael Hunt.

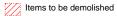
- 6. Similarly in the bathroom we propose the use of stone (or similar) tiling and natural material finishes such as marble (or marble effect ceramics), again in largely neutral white and grey tones, to allow for a modern design that retains longevity and does not conflict with the foundational design of the flat. Further, we propose the reinstallation a small bath in the original configuration of the bathroom as initially designed.
- 7. We propose the installation of white flat door blanks, similar to the original design.
- 8. For the bathroom door, we have planned to create a single pocket door to increase the efficiency of the space, as currently there are 4 doors and 2 cabinet doors that open into the same area of hallway.
- 9. The floors, when acquired by the client, were a wood-print vinyl laid over a 60s tile-print lino floor. Having detected asbestos in the flooring, the current tenant is taking steps to remove the asbestos and restore the flooring.
- 10. As it stands, the flat has no in-built central heating as the previous owner opted out of the communal system. We propose the addition of electric central-heating solutions, which will include a balance of electric radiators and electric underfloor heating.
- 11. The current electrics are out-dated and we plan on rewiring the flat to be in keeping with modern standards. We also propose the removal of the gas supply to the flat, and to use an electric system, to be in keeping with modern sustainability guidance. However, the original connections to the communal services will be kept enabling reconnection at a future date.
- 12. We propose an additional opening in the non-structural wall of the master bedroom to create access to the inbuilt wardrobe from the hallway. This will increase the usability of the space, by allowing for storage of items such as shoes in a manner accessible from the entryway.
- 13. We propose repairing some of the walls of the flat, which have been damaged over time
- 14. Finally we propose the removal of the window bars and the barred gate in front of the entryway, which were added by a previous tenant and not part of the original design.



#### NOTES:

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#### Legend - Demolition:



P1 17/05/2023 Planning REV. DATE COMMENT

0 1 2m

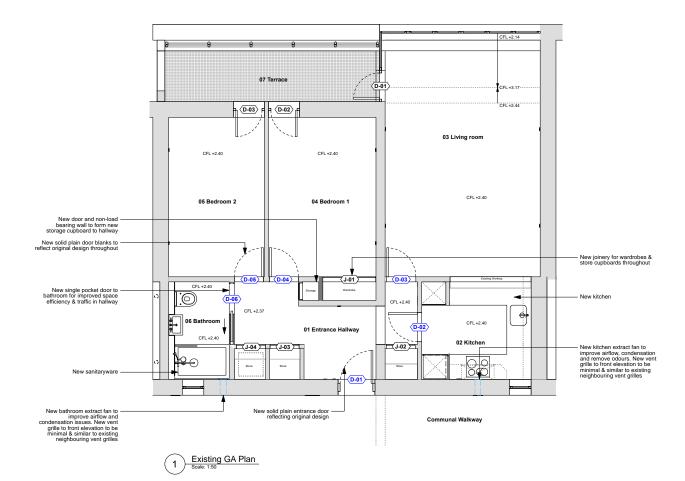
PROJECT ADDRESS 139 Foundling court

DRAWING DEMO Plan

DRAWN BY

STATUS Planning SCALE 1:50 @ A3 PROJECT No. REVISION 009 139FC

DRAWING No. 01 0800



#### NOTES:

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#### Legend - Proposed:

Existing walls

Proposed walls

(D-xx) Existing Doors

(D-xx) Proposed Doors

(J-xx) Proposed Joinery

P1 1705/2023 Planning REV. DATE COMMENT

0 1:50 2m

# PROJECT ADDRESS 139 Foundling court

DRAWING Proposed Plan

DRAWN BY MT

STATUS Planning SCALE 1:50 @ A3 PROJECT No.

REVISION

DRAWING No.

02 0200

# 3. Planning History

139 Foundling Court has had no previous planning applications; however, reference can be made to similar planning applications within the Brunswick Centre that have been granted. This includes Application Number 2004/3467/L (see Figure 5), in which Listed Building Consent was granted for the demolition of both the wall between the WC and Bathroom, and the wall between the living room and kitchen (Figure 4).

# 4. Heritage Impact

This statement of impact references the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which constitutes the Government's current national guidance and policy regarding development in the historic environment. It is a material consideration and includes a succinct policy framework for local planning authorities and decision takers. It relates to planning law by stating that applications are to be determined in accordance with the local plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise. There is additional reference to the National Planning Practice Guidance which provides advice on enhancing and conserving the historic environment in accordance with the NPPF.

Key considerations affecting the design of the flat include that it is part of the grade II listed Brunswick Centre, and lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation area. These matters have been addressed in developing these proposals and we believe that the design would preserve the character and appearance of the listed building whilst improving the functionality of the flat.

The proposed alterations are predominantly internal and not visible from the outside, barring our proposal of creating two openings for extraction in the external wall. Similar alterations have been carried out in just under half of the flats on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor at the time of writing (see Fig 6), and would therefore have negligible additional impact on the historic fabric of the building.

The addition of ventilation will reduce persistent condensation, moisture damage and water ingress to interior structures, which would constitute reduction of risk of damage as well as extending the viable liveability (use) of the flat.

## See NPPG paragraph 020 which states

Works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit and note such heritage benefits to include

- 1. Sustaining or enhancing the significance and the contribution of its setting;
- 2. Reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset; and
- 3. Securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset for the long term.

Moreover, the Brunswick Centre is conserved as a residential setting, and modifications such as facilitating standard modern extraction, or creating a single bathroom space by removing the non-structural wall separating the WC and bathroom, which are adaptions to modern living which improve functionality for its intended use as residence, should be considered in keeping with the original ethos of the Brunswick Centre.

#### See NPPF 190a which states that

Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

## See NPPF 197a which states that

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

As previously addressed, our proposed alterations are predominantly internal, and include:

- 1. Restoring iconic original features of the flat through
  - a. The restoration of the original glazed window/ceiling
  - b. The restoration of the panel cut-out in the wall connecting the kitchen to the main living space
  - c. Reintroducing plank doors throughout the flat
- 2. Increasing functionality of the flat with features such as
  - a. Creating a pocket door in a crowded area of the hall
  - b. Removing a non-structural partitioning wall to create a single bathroom
  - c. Installing modern extraction in bathroom and kitchen to facilitate ventilation and reduce risk of damage to the internal aspects of the flats from persistent moisture and fumes respectively. Will involve the creation of 2 x 4-inch holes in the blockwork of the external wall, as previously executed by other flats on the same floor (see Figure 6)
  - d. Creating access to the master bedroom wardrobe from the entryway to optimise storage
- 3. Improving upon the modern fabric of the flat by
  - a. Installing neutral white/grey toned modern kitchen, using natural materials (such as wood and marble or similar) in a historically consistent U-shaped configuration.
  - b. Renovating the bathroom with natural materials such as stone and marble (or similar) in neutral white/grey tones to create a modern functional single bathroom that doesn't conflict with the original design.
  - c. Restoring flooring throughout the flat following asbestos removal.
- 4. Improving safety of the space through
  - a. Asbestos removal in floors throughout
  - b. Asbestos removal from panels above doors

- c. Asbestos removal from behind shared wall in kitchen
- d. Reinstating a door to the kitchen to meet modern fire safety regulations
- 5. Modernising services by
  - a. Rewiring the flat to modern standards
  - b. Adding central heating in the form of electric radiators and/or electric underfloor heating
  - c. Repairing pipework

Notably, the Historic England Listing (Figure 1) states that "the internal finishes of the flats, shops and cinema have been inspected, and are not of special interest". Therefore, in practical terms, the internal alterations which are not visible from the exterior should have no impact on the heritage asset of the flat.

However, we consider the Brunswick centre flats to be an iconic piece of British architecture, and are passionate about restoring original elements where possible.

We consider alterations which increase functionality of the flat (proposed alterations 2a-d), improve upon the modern fabric of the flat (3a-c), improve the safety of the space (4a-d) and modernise services (5a-c) to be key in conserving the flat for intended use as a residence (by optimising the flat for modern living standards).

### See NPPF 190a which states that

Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

## See NPPF 197a which states that

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Moreover, through restoring the iconic glazed window/ceiling and reinstating the panel cut-out to recreate the intended shape of the living space (proposed alterations 1a-c), we believe the renovations will contribute to conserving the distinctiveness of the flat and protecting the asset for future generations

# See NPPF paragraph 190c which states that

Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

## See NPPF 197c which states that

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

#### See NPPF 189 which states that

These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

The character of the building will remain unchanged and there will be no effect on the Conservation Area. There will be no impact on adjoining properties.

We believe our proposal will have negligible negative impact on the heritage asset of the flat. Taking into consideration the restoration of original features, we consider these refurbishments to have a net positive impact on conserving the historical fabric of the residence.

# 5. Conclusion

The proposal has considered the significance of the heritage asset and will respect the historic fabric of the building.

The proposal includes minimal effects on the external view of the flat, and predominantly involves alterations to the interior finishes which are not considered part of the heritage asset as per the Heritage England Listing (Figure 1).

Nevertheless, the proposal would improve the internal fabric of the flat through restoring the iconic wall/ceiling glazing and refurbishing the original cut-out panel connecting the kitchen to the main living space and reintroducing flat door blanks consistent with the original design. Reinstating original iconic features would contribute to conserving the character and distinctiveness of the property for the future.

The proposal additionally focuses on improving functionality to be compatible with modern living and putting measures in place to protect the internal structures from persistent condensation, water ingress and grease exposure. Alterations to protect the heritage asset from risk of damage, and alterations in keeping with its intended use, in this case as a residence, are coherent with guidance from the NPPF.

The proposal has minimal effect on the exterior view of the flat and thus it will preserve the setting of the Grade II listed building and maintain the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

# **Appendix**

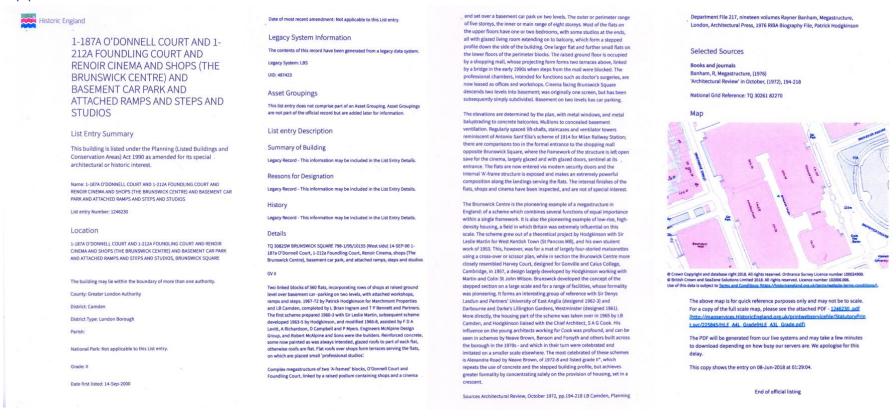


Figure 1: Historic England Listing: 1 - 187A O'Donnell Court and 1 - 212A Foundling Court and Renoir Cinema and shops (The Brunswick Centre) and basement car parks and attached ramps and steps and studios.

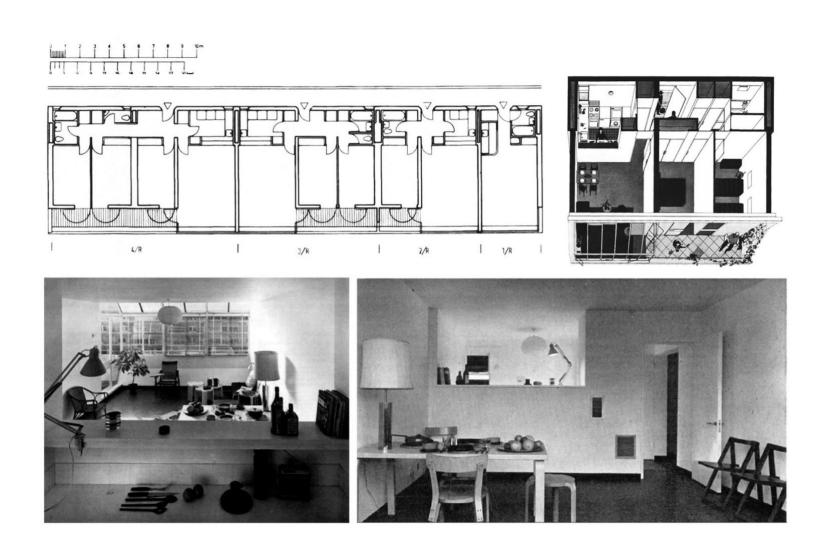


Figure 2: Demonstrates the original design of the flat, with historical images of the interior as intended



Figure 3: The state of the flat when acquired by the client, prior to asbestos removal.

Camden

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Blackwoll + Friend Architects 31 Oval Road Camdon Town London NW17EA Development Control Plamping Services Landon Borough of Cämden Town Hall Argyls Stree: London WC1H BND

Tel 020 7278 4444 Fax 620 7974 1975 Textirik 020 7974 6966

env.devcon@cemden.gov.uk wkw.camden.gov.uk/planning

Application Ref: 2004/3467/L 346+{(iii) f Please ask for: Mortimer MacSweeney Telephone: 020 7974 5786

18 October 2004

Dear Sir/Madam

#### DECISION

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990

#### Listed Building Consent Granted

Address: Flat 40 Foundling Court Brunswick Contre London WC1N 1AN

Proposal:

Internal alterations including removal of partition walls.
Drawing Nos. 001. 002 as amended by Fax dated 18/10/2004, illustrated supporting statement dated 27/07/2004

The Council has considered your application and decided to grant Listed Building Consent subject to the following condition(s):

#### Conditions And Reasons:

1 The works hereby pormitted shall be begun not later than the end of five years from the date of this consent.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Page 1 of 2

Director Beter Bioboo All new work and work of making good shall be carried out to match the original work as closely as possible in materials and detailed execution.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy EN38 of the London Borough of Carndon Unitary Development Plan 2000.

Your attention is drawn to the notes attached to this notice which tell you about your Rights of Appeal and other information.

Yours faithfully

Environment Department

(Duly authorised by the Council to sign this document)

Pane 2 of 9

2004/3467/L

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Please read accompanying notes befo BLOCK CAPITALS. Please answer eve of drawings (as specified in Note 6) an i apply for listed building consent and declare that to the information contained in this form is correct.	ry question. Five copie e required.	FOR OFFICE USE:  Case File C/A	form and five se	ets
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Applicant Name REGRESSA ATVICEY ACTOR TO COLOMA STREET LONDON POST COLOMA I M D Tel No. 07870 880 1	No. All Acceptance of the Policy of the Poli	/st code	rriend u friend	
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Figure 5: Approved application for listing building consent (2004/3467/L) for Flat 40 Foundling Court. Alterations consisted of demolition of dividing wall between WC and bathroom and dividing wall between kitchen and living room.

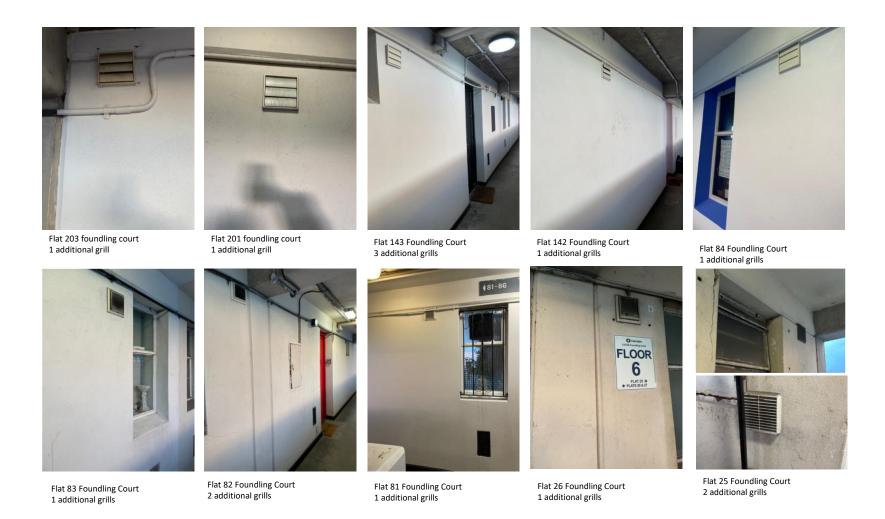


Figure 6: Documenting all flats on 6th floor of foundling court (where 139 foundling court is situated), which have installed additional external grills for ventilation, and how many additional grills are installed per flat. 10 out of 22 flats on the 6th floor have installed additional grills through the block build aspect of the external wall, for extraction for the bathroom and/or kitchen



Figure 7: Obsolete pipework in kitchen cabinetry to be removed.