



Victoria House, Camden

Application for Listed Building Consent

Level 8 lift parapet works, Level 8 external lighting, Riser Access Alterations,
B1 additional containment & Level 7 alterations.

Corstorphine & Wright

Revision Log

Revision	Date	Notes
00	21.06.2023	First Issue

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview & Summary

Victoria House is located within the heart of the Knowledge Quarter on Bloomsbury Square, London.

In August 2022 applications for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent were submitted to the London Borough of Camden and were approved in November 2022 for the adaptation of the building into a centre for life sciences. Reference Listed Building Consent (2022/3419/L) and Full Planning Permission (2022/3480/P). In addition, amendments have been secured to parts of the building at basement level 2 to upper ground floor level under permission ref. 2023/0926/P and listed building consent ref. 2023/0973/L both dated 13 June 2023.

This combined Design & Access Statement (DAS) & Heritage Statement document supports proposals that have arisen over the detailed design of the approved works and are being submitted to ensure the right permissions are in place for the works being carried out. The scope of the application focuses upon the Level 8 works including removal of parapet walls to the top of the central lift shafts constructed in 2003, amendments and builders work required to certain risers within the building, additional electrical containment within the north stair core at level B1, external lighting to Level 8 terraces and alterations to level 7.

This DAS document has been prepared by Corstorphine & Wright (the Architects) with a Heritage Statement addition by Montagu Evans on behalf of the applicant in order to describe the design alterations to Victoria House, Bloomsbury Square, London.

Listed building consent is sought for the following:

Level 8 - Parapet walls to the top of the central lifts

Within the North and South atria we have previously been granted permission to locate Air Handling Units (AHUs) on top of the central lift cores and an enclosure in front of the new units. To provide more space in these areas and not to impact the final approved appearance it is proposed to remove the current parapet structures down to a level with the concrete top of the lift shafts. The existing parapet wall was used to enclose existing plant equipment. This plant equipment is being replaced and we are covering the new MEP equipment with a screen. The parapet walls are no longer required and we propose to remove these walls to enable more room for the new MEP equipment and associated structures.

Riser access alterations

The proposals relate to the existing risers within the building and, the information details the work required at each riser and level to allow for the MEP installations. This involves the

temporary opening of certain areas of risers to enable ducts to be installed and then sealed around. There are also a few additional access doors required and locations of some riser doors will require moving to enable efficient use of the riser space within.

B1 - Electrical Containment within North Stair Core.

To facilitate the electrical connectivity within building as granted within the original applications for new lab enabled building. Additional service containment is required to be constructed at high level adjacent to existing containment already installed.

Level 8 - Terrace External Lighting

The previous application have granted permission for two external terraces from level 8 facing Bloomsbury Square and Southampton Row.

The proposals are for the replacement and additional external lighting to the level 8 facades adjacent to these two terrace areas.

There is existing external lighting at this level on all four sides of Level 8 and 9 providing illumination. Our proposal only looks to change the lighting to the two sides quoted above and retain the external lighting to the North and South sides.

Level 7 - Layout Alterations

There are two elements to the proposals. We have previously gained approval for the layout of level 7 for incubator and grow on laboratory facilities. The first group of alterations are focussed around certain walls and doors that have been changed following detailed discussions with the client around using the spaces and connectivity. The second group of alterations is the introduction of columns to help with vibration levels on this floor. Level 7 was constructed as part of the 2003 works and has different characteristics that the original building. These proposed columns help reduce the vibration within this part of the building.



The proposed adaptation of Victoria House is being promoted by The Pioneer Group and Oxford Properties

1.2 The Pioneer Group

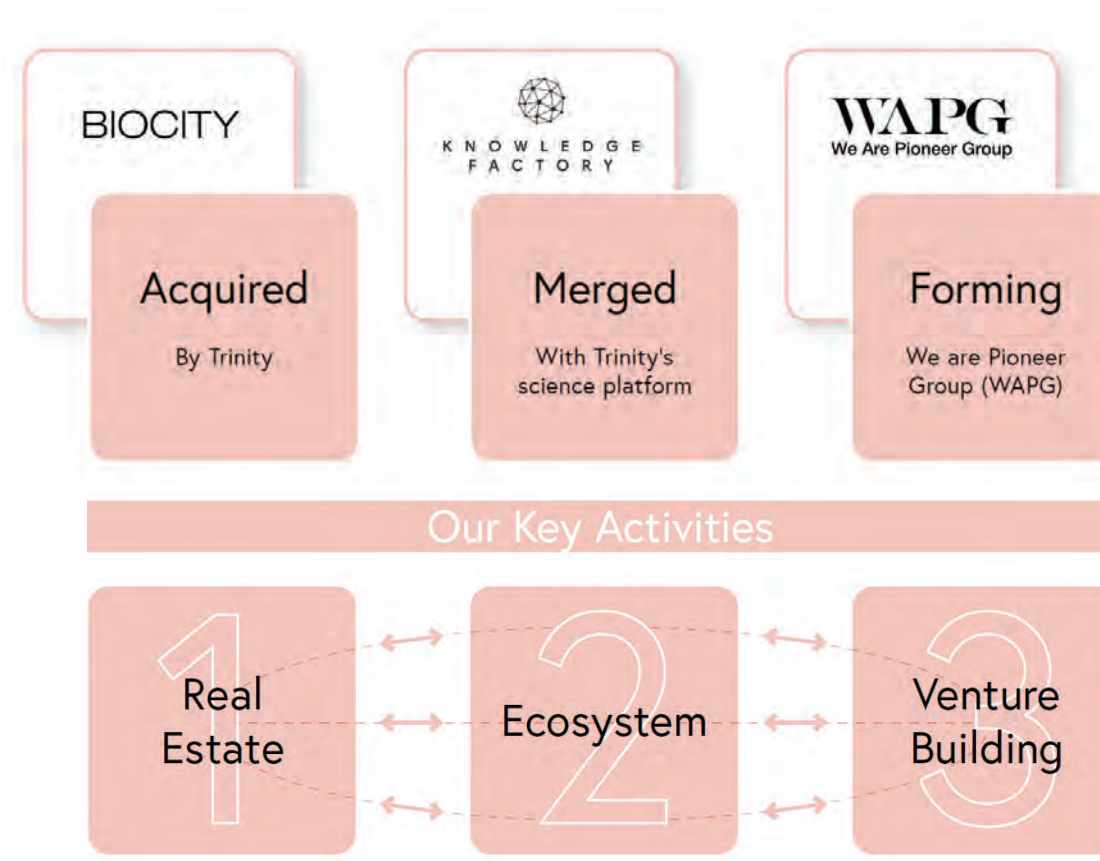
Overview

The WAPG operate and manage thirteen science parks across the UK and Ireland. WAPG have previous experience of listed buildings having delivered new laboratory and write-up space within a Grade 1 listed building in Nottingham.

The team also successfully oversaw the refurbishment and repositioning of the Grade II listed Royal Exchange in Manchester

We are

- A leading operator and developer of multi-tenanted life sciences and technology facilities.
- Curating and supporting ecosystems with fit for purpose facilities and associated amenity.
- Facilitating community interaction and enabling access to academia and capital delivering events programmes utilising the latest technology.
- Connecting businesses across our pan-EU portfolio of facilities.
- A venture builder that runs the EU's largest life sciences accelerator programmes.
- An internal VC fund supporting our venture building activity.



Manchester Royal Exchange

1.2 The Pioneer Group

Why Are We Different?

Venture Building

01

Scale & Track Record

From the largest Accelerator programme in the UK tailored to life science start-ups to a dedicated scale-up programme for our most promising tenants, our venture building teams work directly with scores of businesses across the UK every year at all stages of development to improve their success.

VC Investments

02

Pre-Seed Investments

Crucial to the success of start-ups and scale-up business is access to investment.

Pioneer Investments helps companies grow providing a close working relationship and easy access to investment.

Expert Network

03

Sector Knowledge

Underpinning all our activities is the expert network we have curated over decades.

It helps venture building activities, VC investments as well as sourcing occupiers.

Operate Laboratories

04

Practical Lab Experience

Real world practical knowledge operating laboratories informs our master planning and design process rather than being led by architects or consultants.

We also own and operate specialist science equipment's crucial to early-stage companies.

'Delivering true ecosystems for start-ups to multinationals with unrivalled sector knowledge'

1.3 Oxford Properties

Overview

Founded in 1960, Oxford Properties is a leading global real estate investor, developer, asset manager and business builder. Owned by OMERS, one of Canada's largest defined pension funds, our purpose is to create economic and social value through real estate. Oxford Properties manages a diversified, global property portfolio of over C\$60 billion of assets, combining a patient, evergreen approach to investment with a strong entrepreneurial drive and hands-on approach to real estate. Oxford Properties' portfolio encompasses office, life sciences, industrial, retail, residential, alternatives and credit assets, spanning more than 100 million square feet in global gateway cities across four continents. Oxford Properties takes a long-term view to real estate investment, with a proven track record in transformational, world-class developments, creating smart, sustainable and healthy communities, that are future-proofed, flexible and put people first.

The logo for Oxford Properties, featuring the word "OXFORD" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are spaced out, with vertical lines of varying heights behind each letter, creating a stylized, architectural feel.

Life Sciences

Oxford Properties is a thematic investor and life sciences is one of our highest-priority sectors, with conviction in the underpinnings which have driven growth in the North American market. Within Oxford Properties and OMERS, the life sciences investment appetite not only includes a full spectrum of real estate assets, but also includes an established life sciences investment vehicle within the Capital Markets business.

Oxford Properties currently owns a 3 million sq. ft. portfolio of life sciences assets across the US, Canada and the UK, including income-producing assets and developments from GMP to R&D lab.

In 2021, Oxford Properties acquired 14 assets with a combined value of £2.9 billion, including Oxford Properties' first European life sciences acquisition at 310 Cambridge Science Park. We believe Europe (and especially the London market) is primed for growth that will follow the US precedent and expect our AUM to double by 2025, with 5-15% of our global book earmarked for the sector.

UK Development

Across sectors and around the world, Oxford Properties focuses on understanding what helps customers and communities thrive – a global view, made better by local team members and partners. Every day, Oxford Properties makes decisions on capital improvement and redevelopment planning, leasing opportunities, ongoing operations and programming. All in the pursuit of providing the best customer experience and returns. In the UK, Oxford Properties own, operate and developed a number of iconic buildings through partnering with global and local stakeholders.



Royal Exchange London

1.3 Oxford Properties

Life Science Projects



Boren Lofts, Seattle USA

- Life Sciences conversion
- 135k sqft



125 Lincoln, Boston USA

- Life Sciences development
- 340k sqft



Foundry31 – San Francisco CA

Our other developments include:

- Emeryville Public Market – Emeryville CA
- 33 NY Ave – Framingham MA

Central London Projects



The Post Building

- Transforming a Royal Mail sorting office in central London, bringing back into use a prominent site which had been derelict for over 20 years.
- Reconnecting the building to the city with a new mix of office, retail, residential and community uses, completed 2019



St James's Market with the Crown Estate

- Regenerating c.550k sqft of mixed-use space and half an acre of public realm in central London with placemaking at the fore.
- Phase 1 was fully leased in 2018, including the largest letting in the West End for 10 years
- Planning consent has been secured for Phase 2 with The Crown Estate choosing to extend the relationship with Oxford Properties



1.4 Design Team

The design team is comprised of architects, engineers, specialist laboratory designers, historic building consultants, cost consultants and other specialists. The members of the design team have been selected for their specialist experience and are all leaders in their field.



SANDY BROWN



Corstorphine & Wright

Corstorphine & Wright is an award-winning architectural practice ranked number 22 in the prestigious AJ100 (2022). We design spaces with that elusive 'must-have' quality, translating requirements, constraints and opportunities into places that are more than the sum of their parts. That way, you get intelligently-designed places – places that invigorate communities and maximize the long-term civic and commercial value.



Gerald Eve, are one of the UK's most-respected planning and development consultancies, working with leading private, public and third sector clients on some of the most high profile and complex projects in the country.



KJ Tait Engineers is a professional practice of Mechanical and Electrical Building Services Engineers with offices in Aberdeen, Birmingham, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow and London. The Company has been successfully trading since 1973. In addition to traditional core M&E Engineering Services disciplines, the Company has in-house expertise in several areas including Low and Zero Carbon Design, Renewable Energy Generation and Application, BREEAM, Energy and Sustainability, Specialist Lighting Design and Facilities Management.



Montagu Evans are our heritage specialists and an independent property consultancy, owned and run by a group of partners that are leaders in their respective fields and who are committed to leaving a legacy of quality work that benefits clients, the built environment and society as a whole.



The **Buro Happold** studio is comprised of dedicated architecturally trained professionals who are passionate about designing technologically sophisticated projects. For us, we combine craft with design, from the most complex laboratories to inspiring public-realm spaces to sensitive heritage buildings. Although technical, we are creative. We are collaborative whether leading the Design Team or assisting other practices. We strive to optimise the balance between form and function.



Gardiner & Theobald is an independent construction and property consultancy working across all sectors of the built environment.



Heyne Tillett Steel is an employee-owned structural and civil engineering practice with a reputation for intelligent design and innovative, practical solutions. Established in 2007 by directors Andy Heyne, Mark Tillett and Tom Steel, the practice now has over 140 staff members and works with many of the UK's leading developers and architects.



Third London Wall is a specialist project management consultancy firm run by experienced industry professionals with an unparalleled track record in the successful delivery of property developments in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Corstorphine & Wright Architects: About Us

Corstorphine & Wright is an award-winning architectural practice with design studios nationwide. We have a unique reputation – we're known both for creative excellence and commercial edge.

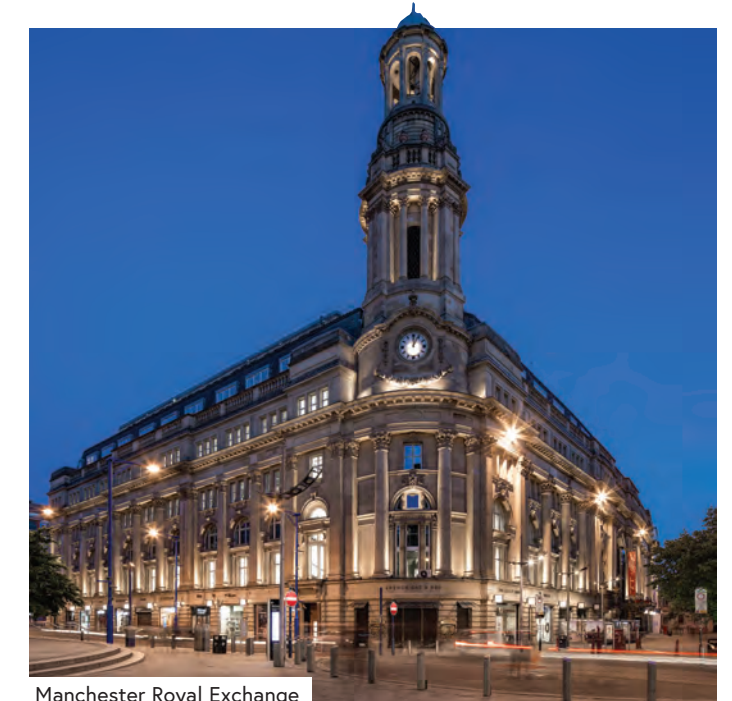
We design spaces with that elusive 'must-have' quality, translating requirements, constraints and opportunities into places that are more than the sum of their parts.

Using our insight-led approach and drawing on experience from our 250+ strong team, we help invigorate communities, excite stakeholders and maximise long-term value.

For further insight into our practice, please visit our website at www.corstorphine-wright.com



East West, Nottingham



Manchester Royal Exchange

In Numbers:

11 Studios across the UK and Ireland

135 leading UK property PLCs and developers have worked with us

280+ strong team of experienced professionals who share learnings from across the practice

40 years' of industry experience

85% of projects have been for repeat clients over the past 3 years

URBAN DESIGN GROUP REGISTERED PRACTICE

AJ 100 2022 MEMBER



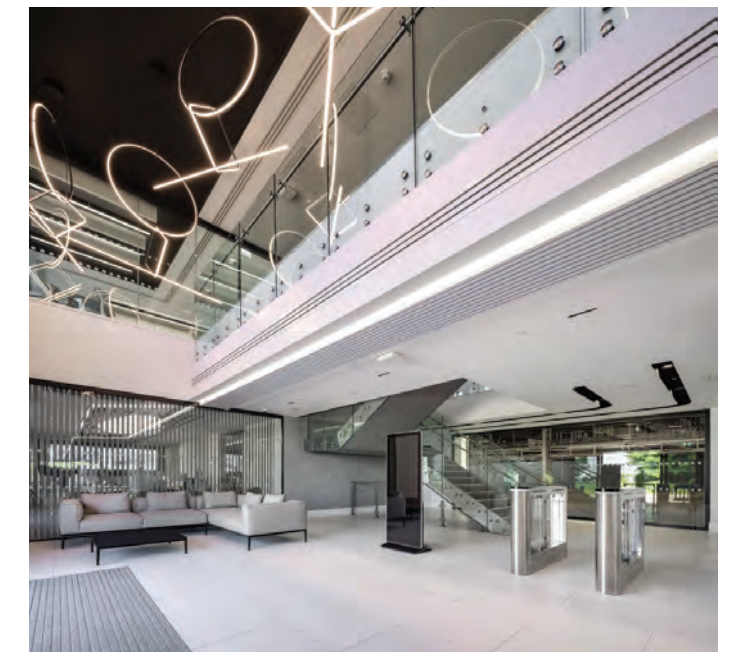
Plummer House, Newcastle



St Marks, Lincoln



Royal Liver Building, Liverpool



UKBIC, Coventry

2.0 Setting

2.1 Location & Wider Context

The site is located on the East side of Bloomsbury Square.

It is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and part of the London Borough of Camden. It is well connected, with Holborn Underground Station to the South, and a number of bus routes that run past the building.

A notable feature of the area is its Central London location and historic nature and the building's relationship with the formal green space of Bloomsbury Square.



Aerial view showing Site Location

Site Location 

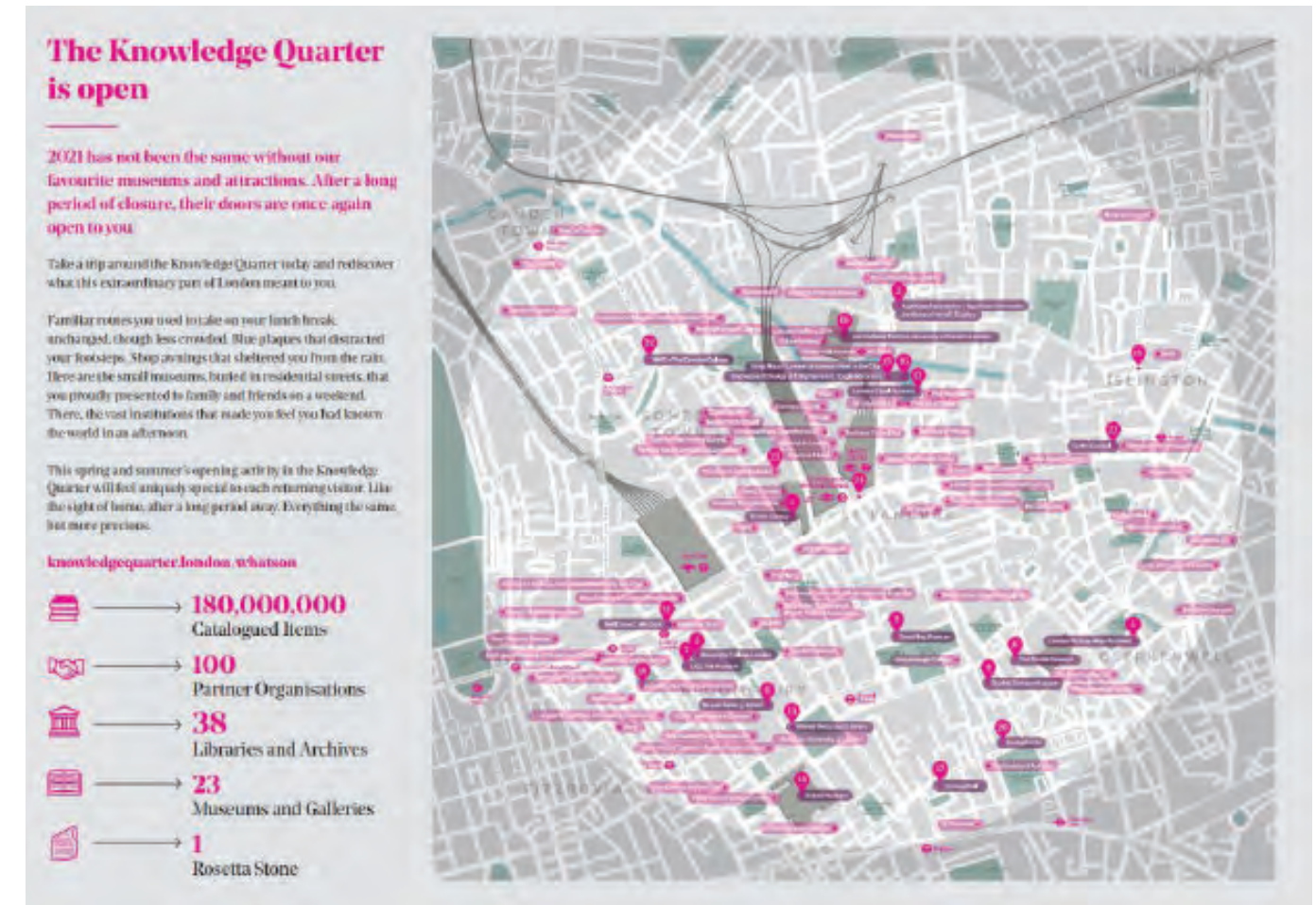
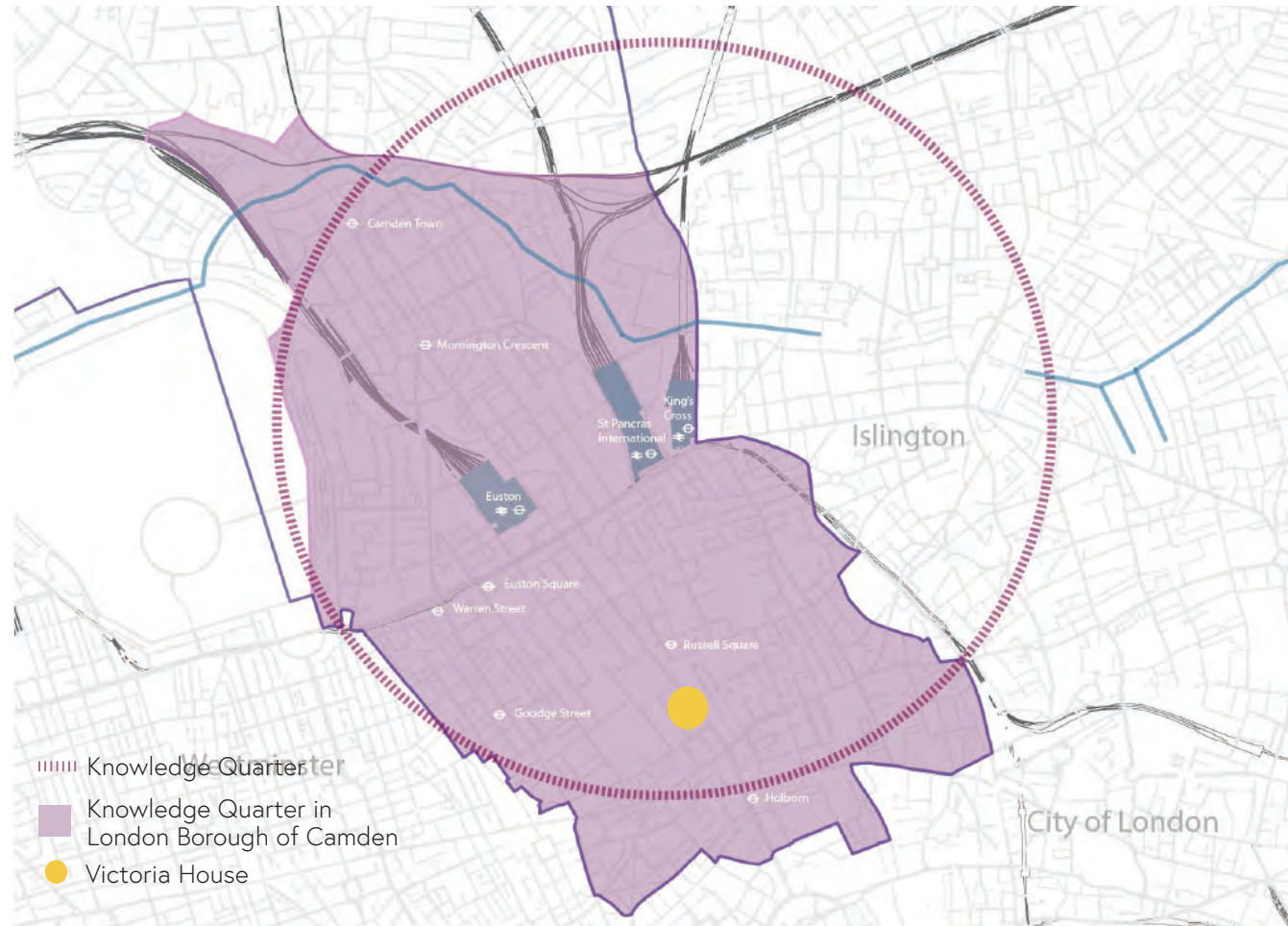


Aerial Photo (existing)

Key

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. British Museum | 5. Euston Station | 10. Brunswick Centre |
| 2. Bedford Square Garden | 6. British Library | 11. Russel Square |
| 3. UCL Cruciform Building | 7. Francis Crick Institute | 12. Great Ormond Street Hospital |
| 4. University College Hospital | 8. King's Cross | — 13. The Site (Victoria House) |
| | 9. St Pancras International | |

2.2 Knowledge Quarter



The Knowledge Quarter is the focal point for one of the greatest knowledge clusters anywhere in the world located in a small area around Kings Cross, Euston Road and Bloomsbury.

The vision is to transform lives through knowledge and innovation.

The Knowledge Quarter Today

1. Demand for laboratory enabled space exceeds supply.
2. At present, there are only three incubator facilities in London totalling 84,000 sqft which is half the provision in Nottingham.
3. There are a number of proposed developments coming forward but most of these will not be delivered until between 2027 and 2030.
4. Victoria House could deliver laboratory enabled space in 2024.

2.2 Knowledge Quarter



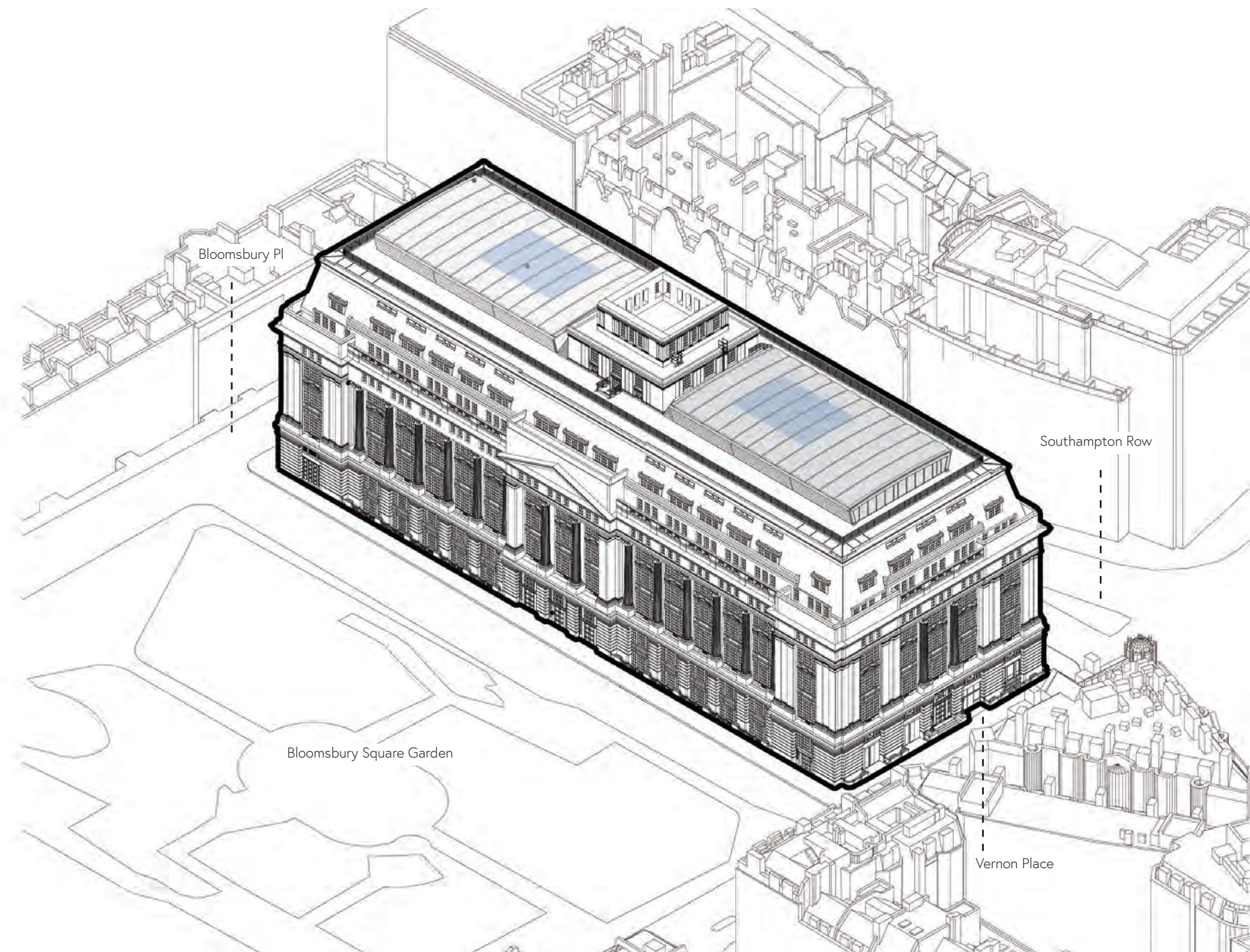
Victoria House is located within the heart of the Knowledge Quarter where there is an opportunity to address the shortfall in flexible laboratory enabled and incubator accommodation.

The iconic presence and profile of Victoria House will attract large pharma/healthcare, venture capital and start-ups. Collaboration between these complementary disciplines in the heart of the largest city in Europe is directly in line with the aims and objectives of the Knowledge Quarter. This provides the environment for innovation of national and global significance.

2.3 Site Context

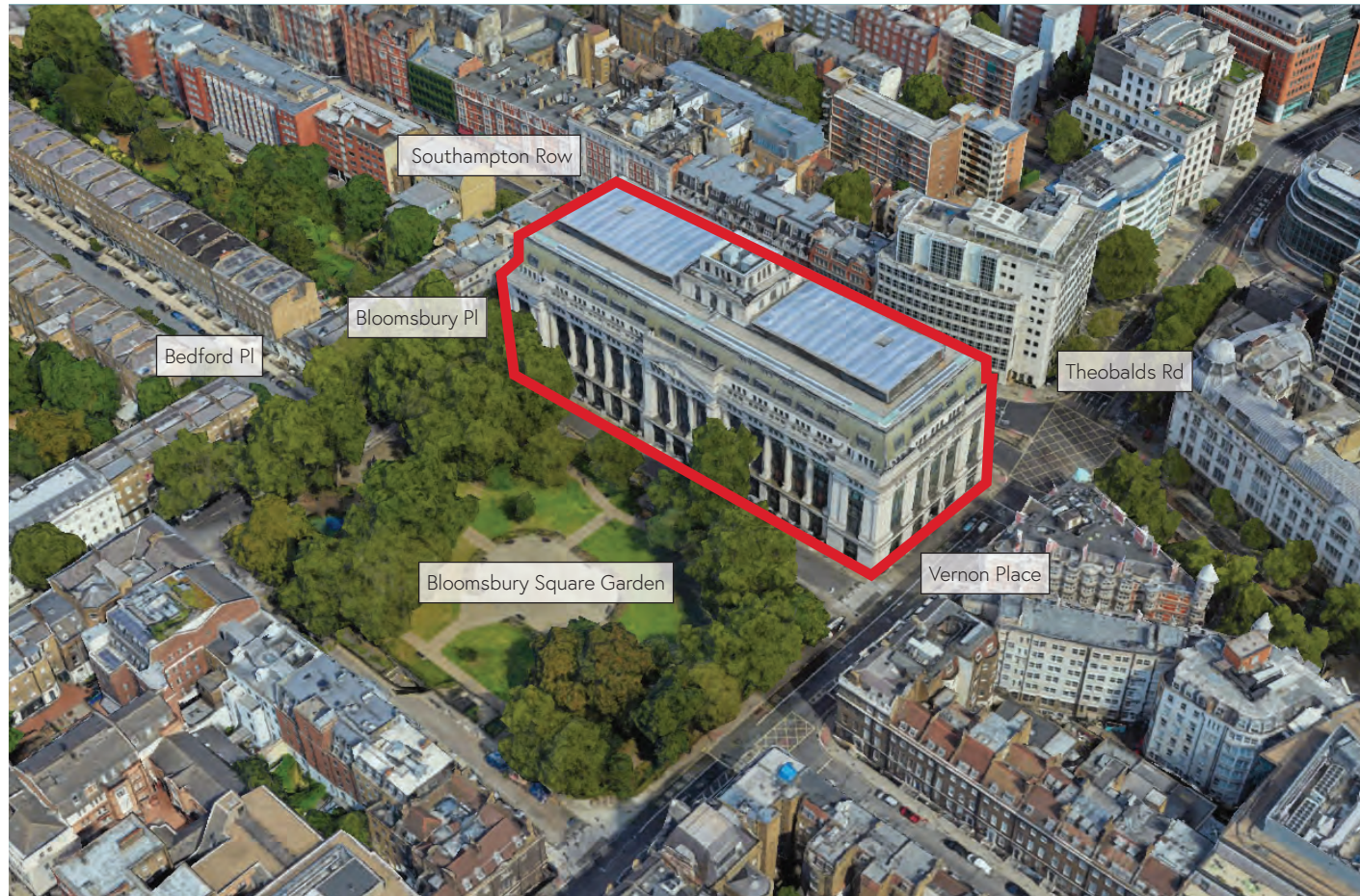
2.3.1 Overview

The building occupies an island site facing Bloomsbury Square (West), Vernon Place (South), Southampton Row (East), Bloomsbury Place (North). Victoria House is the tallest of the buildings surrounding Bloomsbury Square the historic façade forming the backdrop to the public gardens. The scale of the footprint and the height combine to make Victoria House a significant addition to the city.

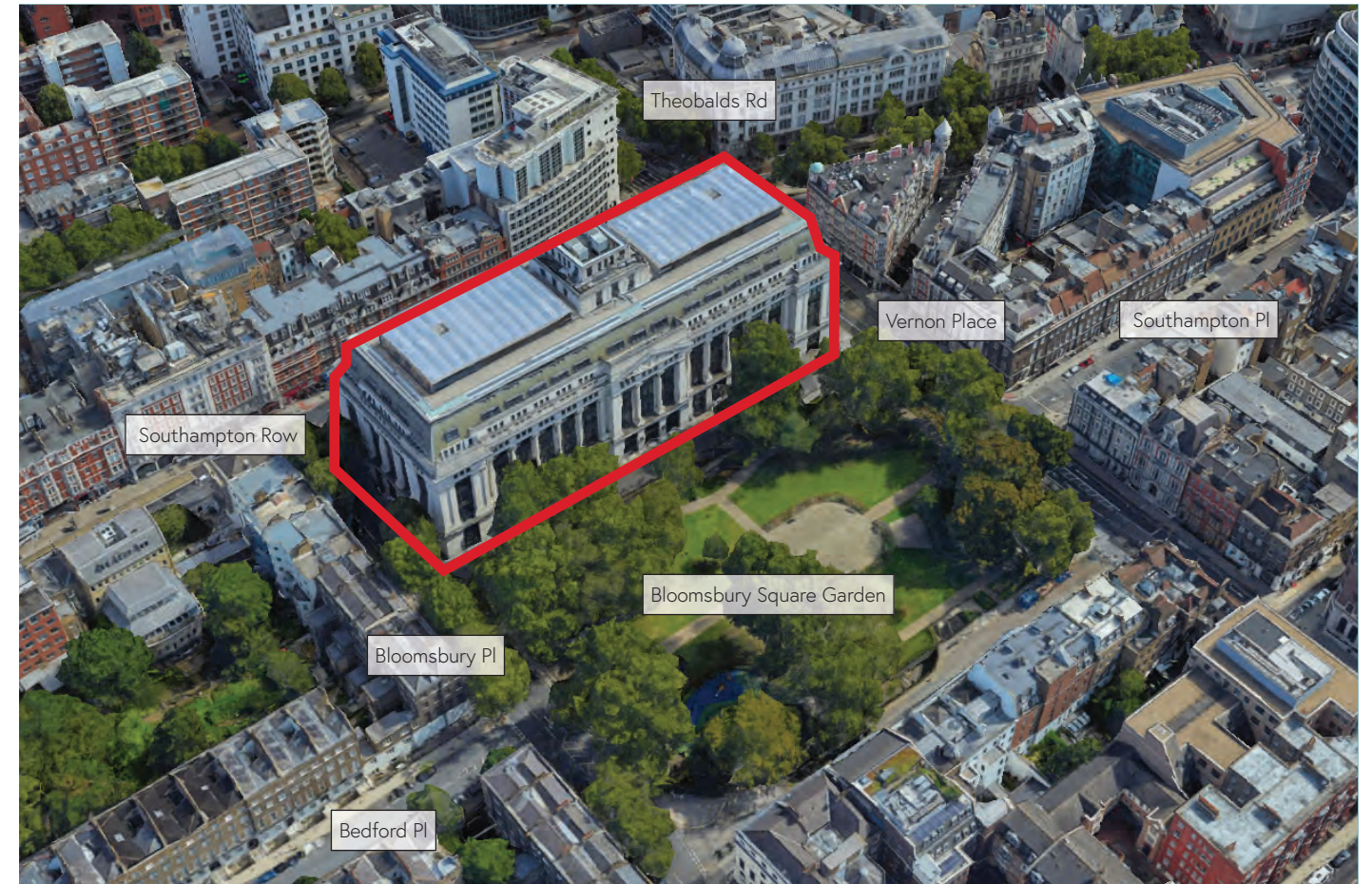


2.3 Site Context

2.3.2 Aerial Views



Aerial View Facing North East



Aerial View Facing South East

The building's relationship with the formal green space of Bloomsbury Square is of particular note. The building, at its tallest point, is 9 storeys high plus central roof plant enclosure.

2.4 Existing Photographs

2.4.1 Collection of external photographs



Aerial View looking South



View from Southampton Row & Theobalds Rd corner looking North

2.4 Existing Photographs



View from Bloomsbury Square looking South East



View from Bloomsbury Square towards building entrance

2.4 Existing Photographs

Level 8 - Lift Shaft Parapets

The following set of photographs show the existing top of the lift areas where the parapets are proposed to be removed. The proposals are for both the north and south atria and are only above the central lift core of eight lifts that were constructed as part of the Alsop intervention works in 2003.

The parapet to be removed is just the top part of the walls and will be screened when the new plant is installed as per the previous approvals.



01. Lift Parapet - Existing lift cores showing parapets at the top.

02. Lift Parapet - Top of lift shafts showing plant to be removed and the extent of the parapets that are to be removed.

03. Lift Parapet - Top of lift shafts showing plant to be removed and the extent of the parapets that are to be removed.

04. Lift Parapet - Top of lift shafts showing plant to be removed and the extent of the parapets that are to be removed.

05. Lift Parapet - Top of lift shafts showing plant to be removed and the extent of the parapets that are to be removed.

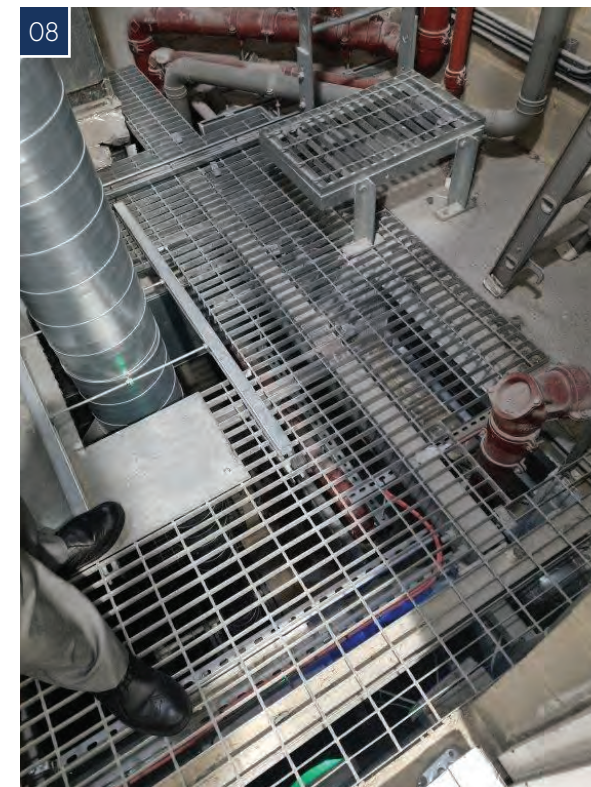
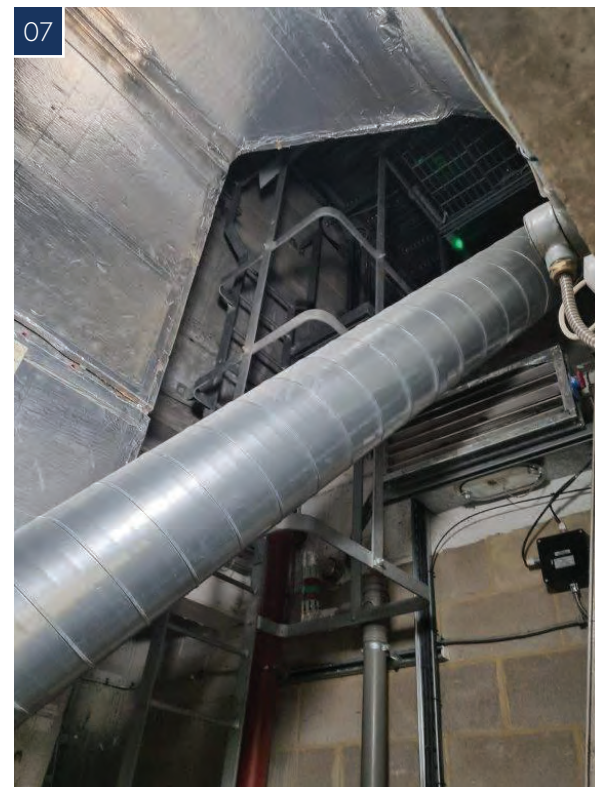
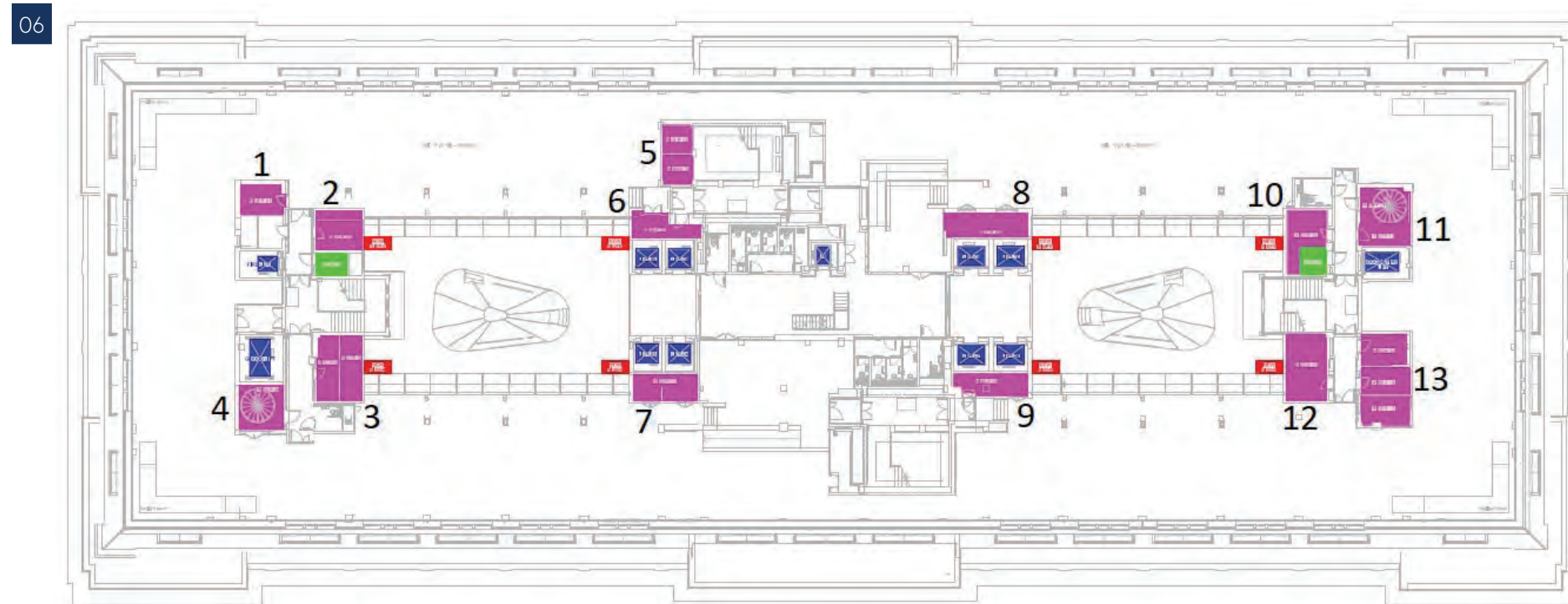


2.4 Existing Photographs

Risers

The following set of photographs and plan shows the existing risers within the building. They are mainly concealed and located near corridor areas and the central parts of the building as can be seen upon the plan.

The photographs show the restrictive nature of the MEP equipment that is located within a typical riser. The proposals show what modifications are proposed to facilitate the approved MEP design.



06. Risers - Plan showing the existing risers in pink with their associated numbering.

07. Risers - Typical internal view.

08. Risers - Typical internal view.

09. Risers - Typical internal view.

2.4 Existing Photographs

Level 8 - External lighting

The following set of photographs show the existing external lighting at Level 8. It is proposed to replace and add to these lights along the Southampton Row and Bloomsbury Square Elevations.



10. Bloomsbury Square, Level 8 elevation showing the current lighting.

11. Bloomsbury Square & South Facing Level 9 elevation showing the current lighting.

12. Level 9 elevation showing the current lighting.

13. Level 9 elevation showing the current lighting with corner of Level 8.

14. Southampton Row, Level 8 elevation showing the current lighting.

2.4 Existing Photographs

B1 - Services Containment in the North Stairwell

The image to the right shows an area of B1 at the landing of the North stairwell. There are doors accessing different areas of B1 along with the main goods lift for the building.

Within the space is an existing electrical containment tray suspended from the ceiling. The proposals are to add an additional containment tray to allow for the proposed building services to be integrated into the building.



15. B1 - North Stair - Landing

3.0 Pre-app Consultation

A pre-application document was published in April 2023 for the London Borough of Camden to consider and comment. We met on site with Colette Hatton from the London Borough of Camden on 19th April to run through some of the proposals. The comments from the pre-application are as follows:

Level 8 - Lift Parapet Removal

Listed building consent should be applied for. Proposals appear to be acceptable from description within the pre-application document and site visit.

Service Risers and Associated Works

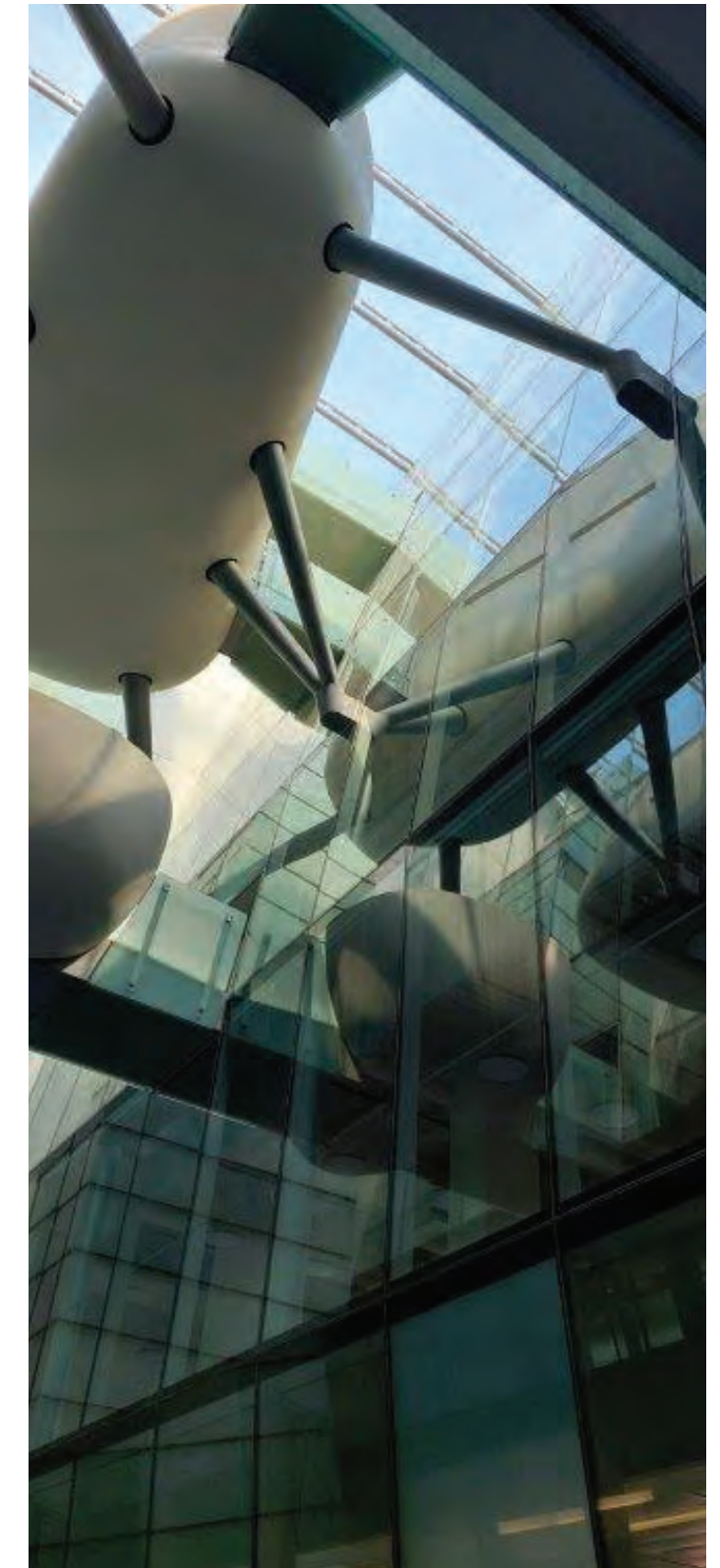
Listed building consent should be applied for. Proposals appear to be acceptable from description within the pre-application document and site visit.

Level 7 - Layout Alterations

Listed building consent should be applied for. Proposals appear to be acceptable from description within the pre-application document and site visit.

Since the meeting on site and the pre-application comments, two additional areas are included within the Listed Building Consent application. At B1 level within the north stair core, can additional services containment route through this area adjacent to an existing services containment. At Level 8, external terrace down lighting solution to replace the current lighting.

In addition to this Listed Building Consent application, a planning application is also being submitted to Camden to secure permission for the external lighting proposed at level 8.



4.0 Design Proposals

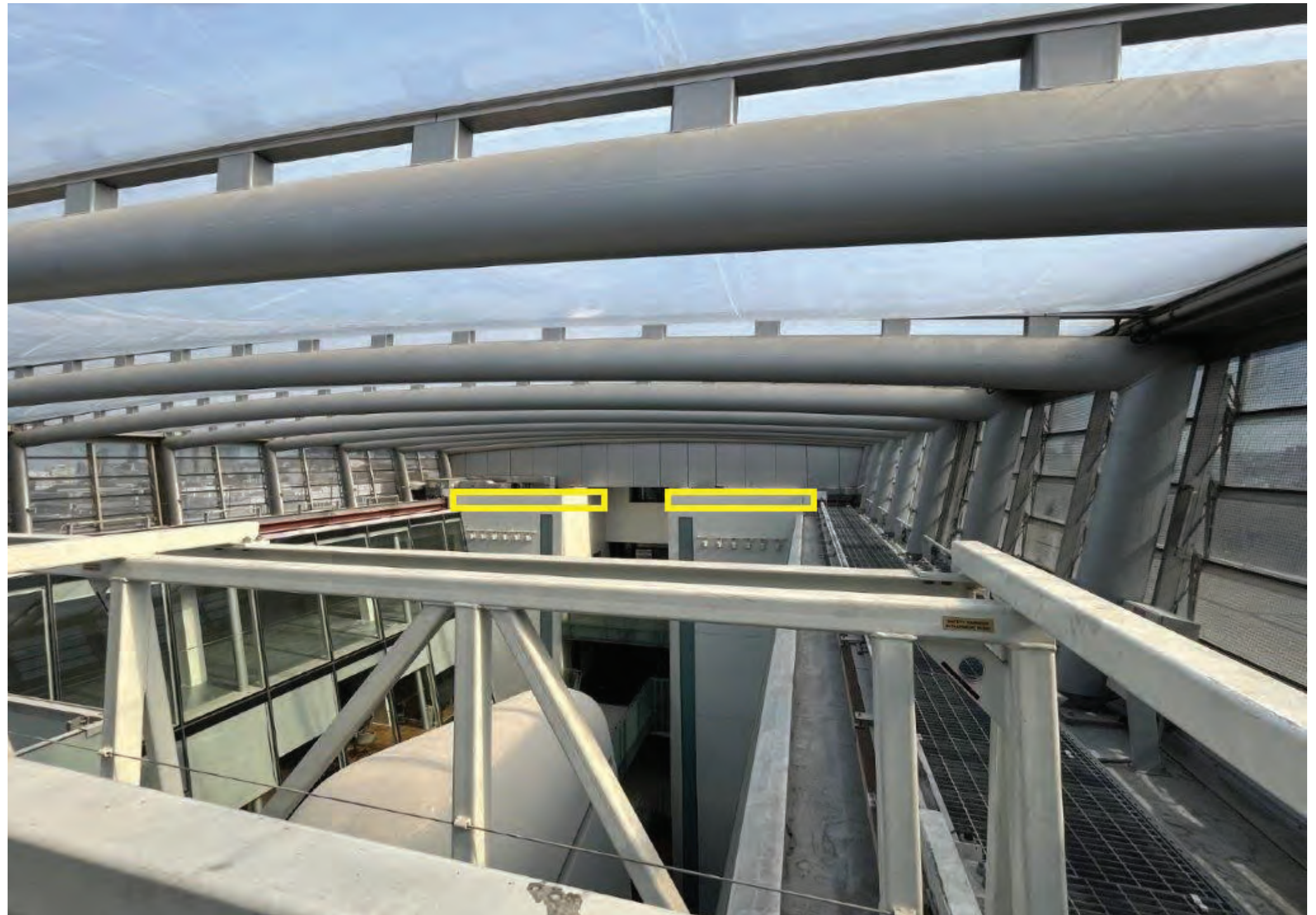
4.1 Level 8 - Lift Top Parapet Removal

Within the North and South atria we have previously been granted permission to locate new Air Handling Units (AHUs) on top of the central lift cores and box in the new units with a steel framework and plasterboard clad surface.

To provide more space in these areas and not impact on the final approved appearance it is proposed to remove the existing parapets leaving the concrete top of the lifts as the finished level. These parapets were previously designed to enclose plant equipment.

As the plant equipment is being replaced and we are covering the new MEP equipment, the parapet walls are no longer required for screening and we propose to remove these walls to enable more room for the new MEP equipment and associated structures.

Lift Parapets - Area of proposed parapet removal shown with yellow rectangles. Mirrored for both North and South Atria. See drawings for details.

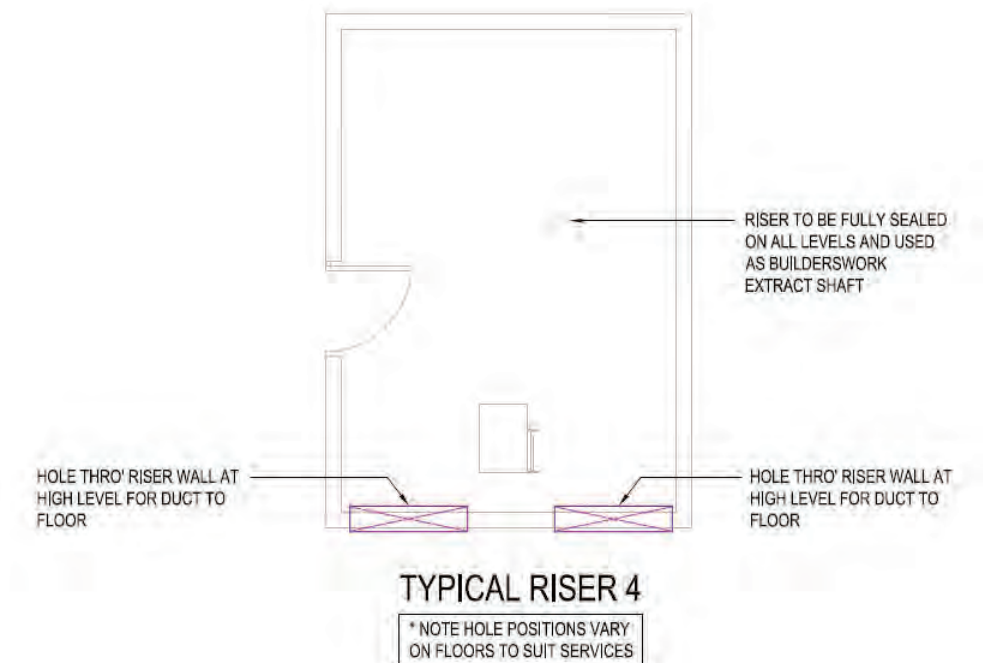
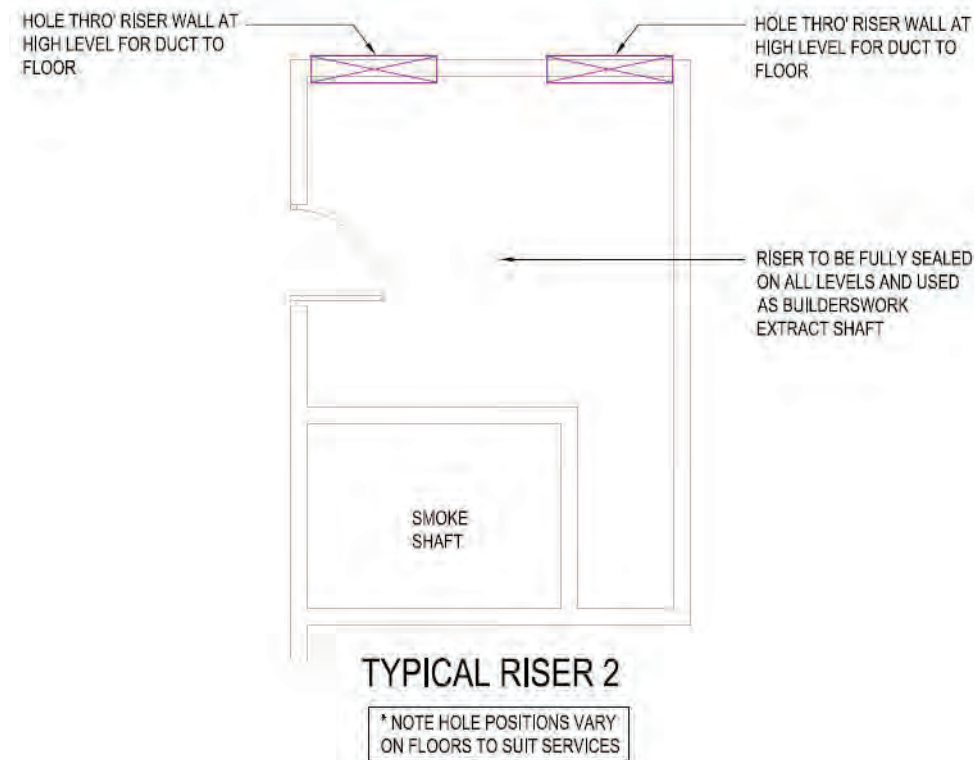
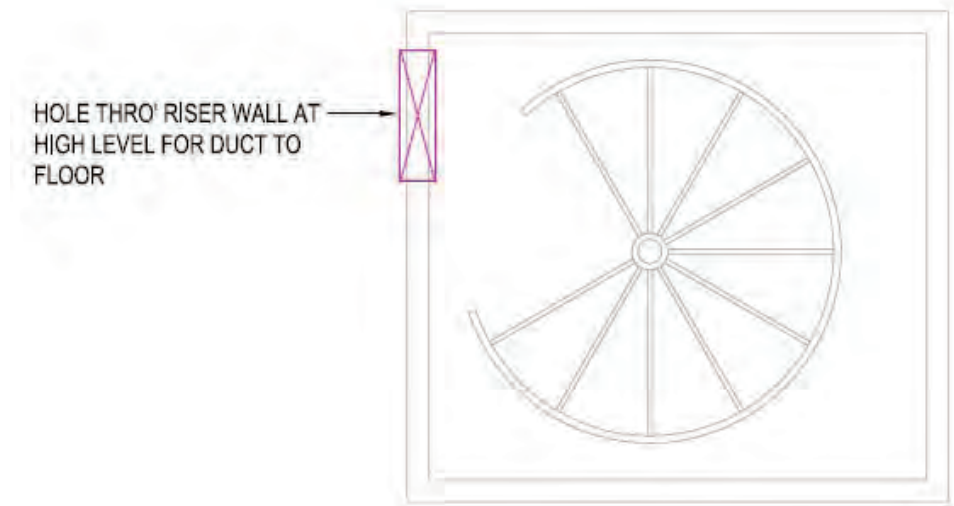
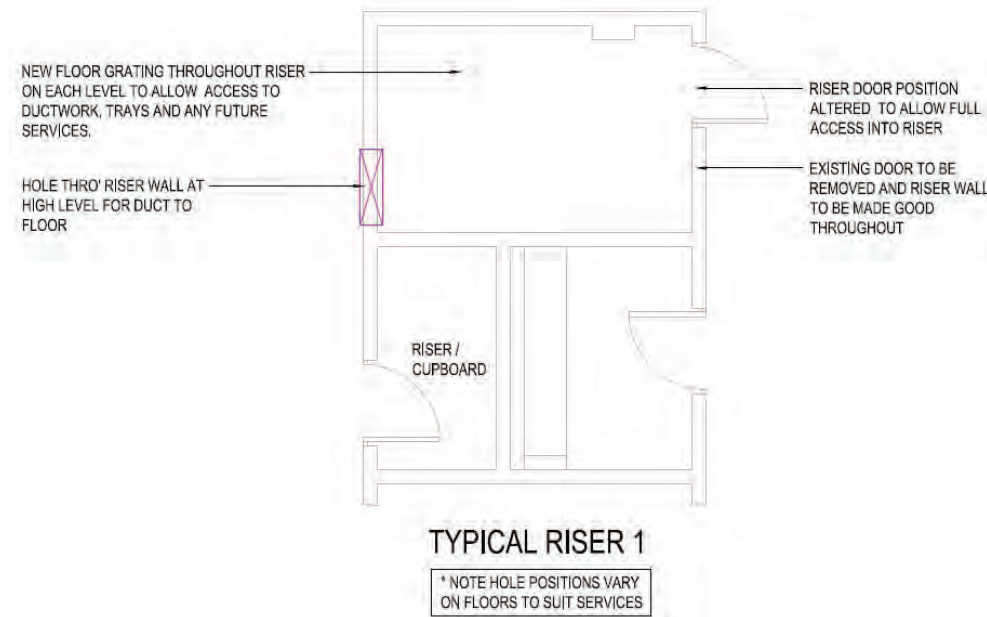


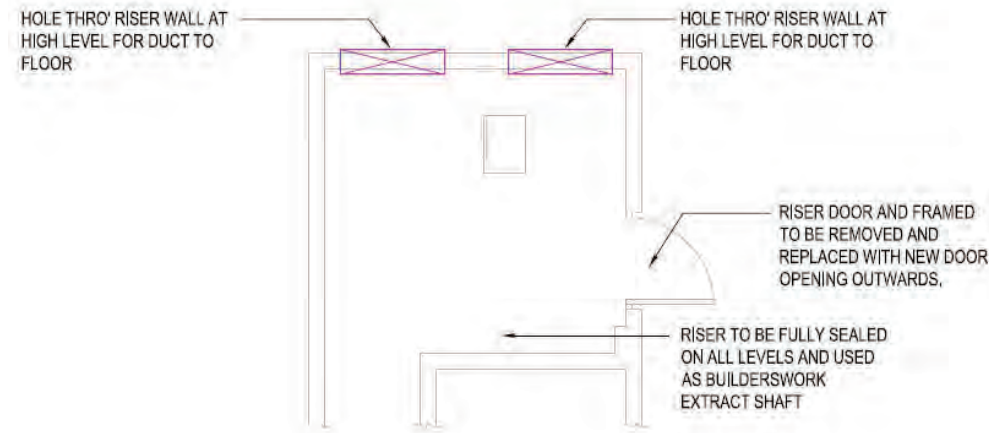
4.2 Riser Access and Associated Works

Within the previously permissions the new MEP installations were identified and approved, however as the detailed design has evolved the access requirements to the existing risers have become clearer.

The proposed works are to risers 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12 & 13 upon all floor levels of the building.

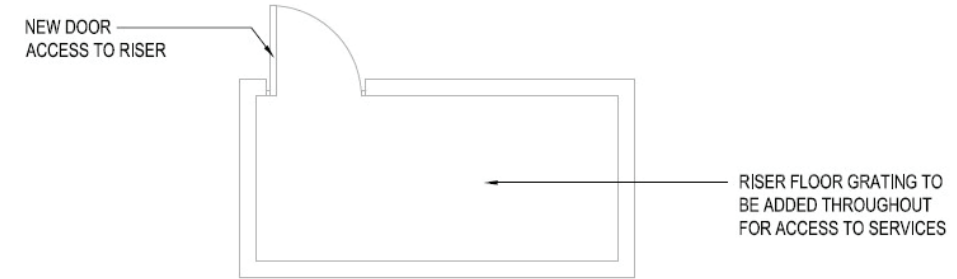
The information submitted shows the work required to the risers at each floor, the works include openings to be formed to enable MEP duct runs to be located through the building. These drawings also show where doors are to be moved and where a new access would need to be formed. The areas highlighted in pink on the MEP drawings are openings to be created then reinstated around the duct or cable that penetrates the space to form a fire rated wall and junction.





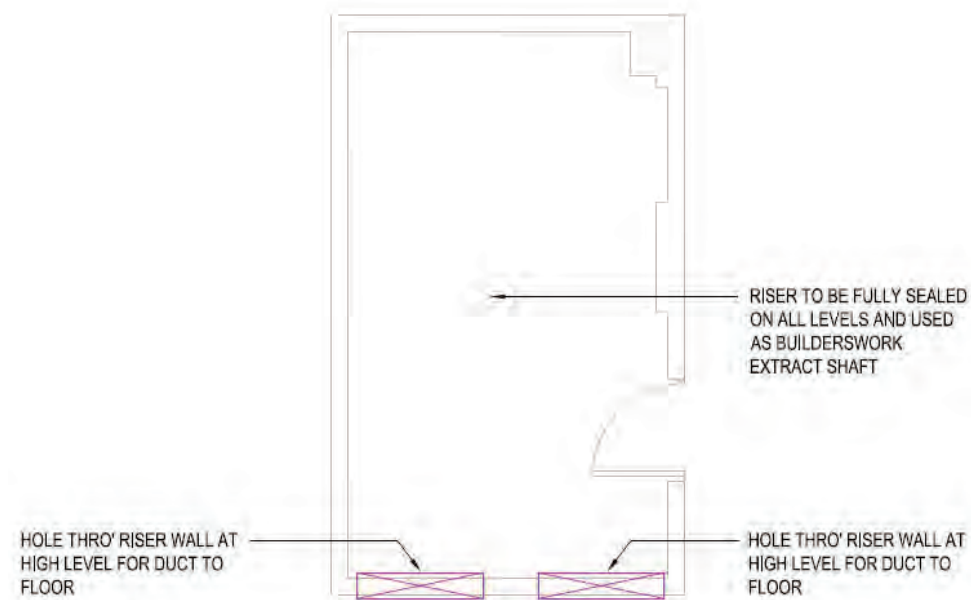
TYPICAL RISER 10

* NOTE HOLE POSITIONS VARY ON FLOORS TO SUIT SERVICES



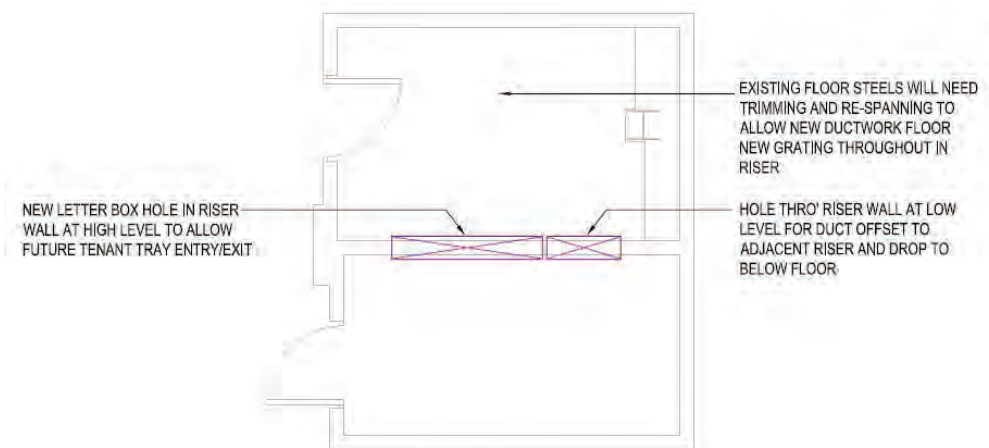
TYPICAL RISER 11

* NOTE HOLE POSITIONS VARY ON FLOORS TO SUIT SERVICES



TYPICAL RISER 12

* NOTE HOLE POSITIONS VARY ON FLOORS TO SUIT SERVICES



TYPICAL RISER 13

* NOTE HOLE POSITIONS VARY ON FLOORS TO SUIT SERVICES

4.3 Level 7 - Layout Alterations

Following the previous approval for the layout of Level 7 as Grow on and Incubator facilities, the client has requested a few alterations to the design to allow for greater flexibility and use of the space. The client requested changes are highlighted in red.

During the design process the structural engineer has been assessing the construction of the building and its suitability for specific requirements of the laboratories. Earlier in the design phase general calculations were carried out and within the current phase more detailed investigations have been completed. The results are that level 7's response factor (The measure of how much a floor vibrates during use) has higher levels than required. The proposed solution is to fix narrow section columns between the floor and ceiling of level 7. This will help tie in the two structures and improve the response factor of the floor. These proposed columns have been incorporated within proposed walls wherever possible, they do however need to be installed along existing beam lines. Where it has not been possible to locate the columns within a wall they will be required within the open space of the level. These locations are shown highlighted in green.

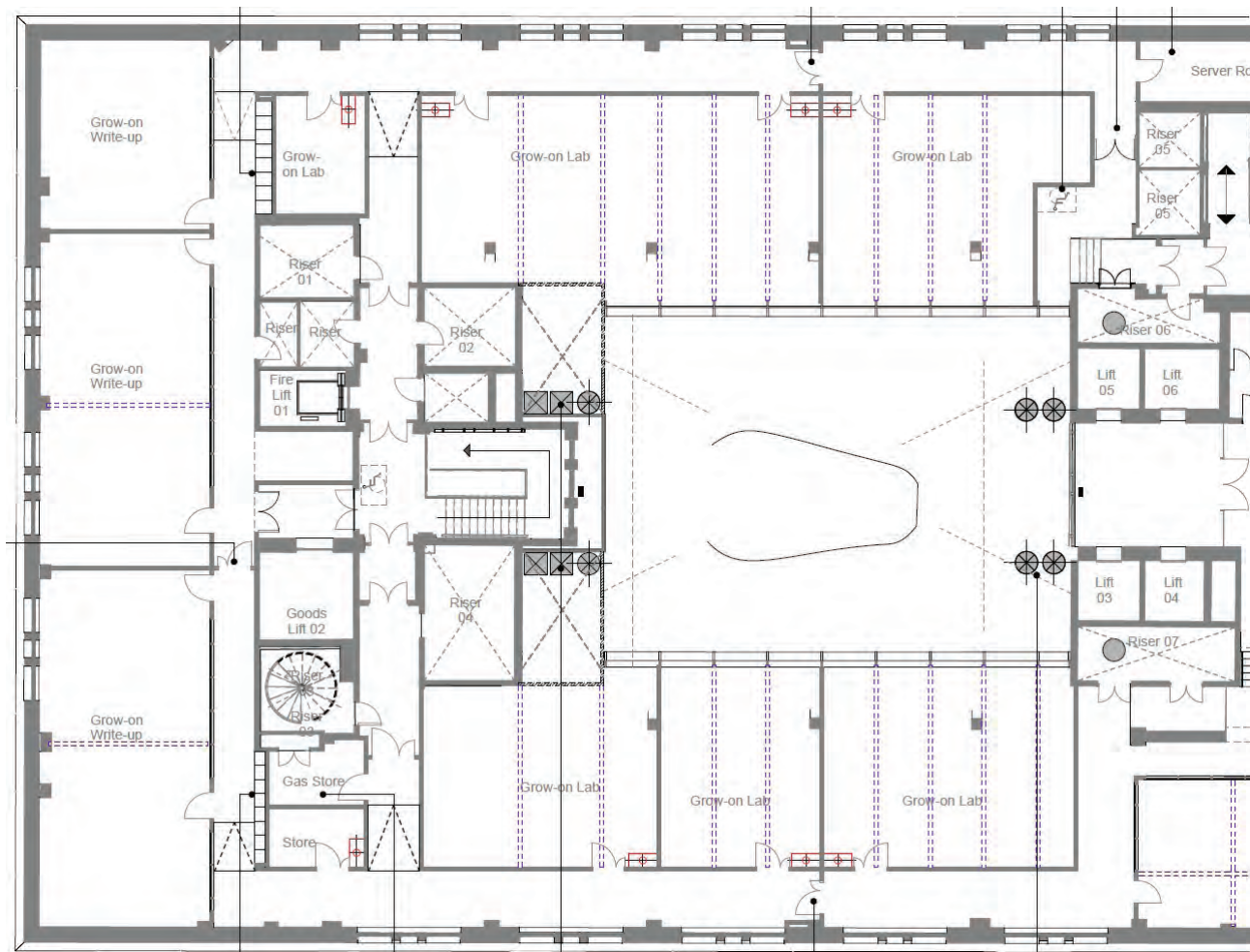
The proposed red items for the northern section are as follows.

Item 1 - Wall and door added to create a new store.

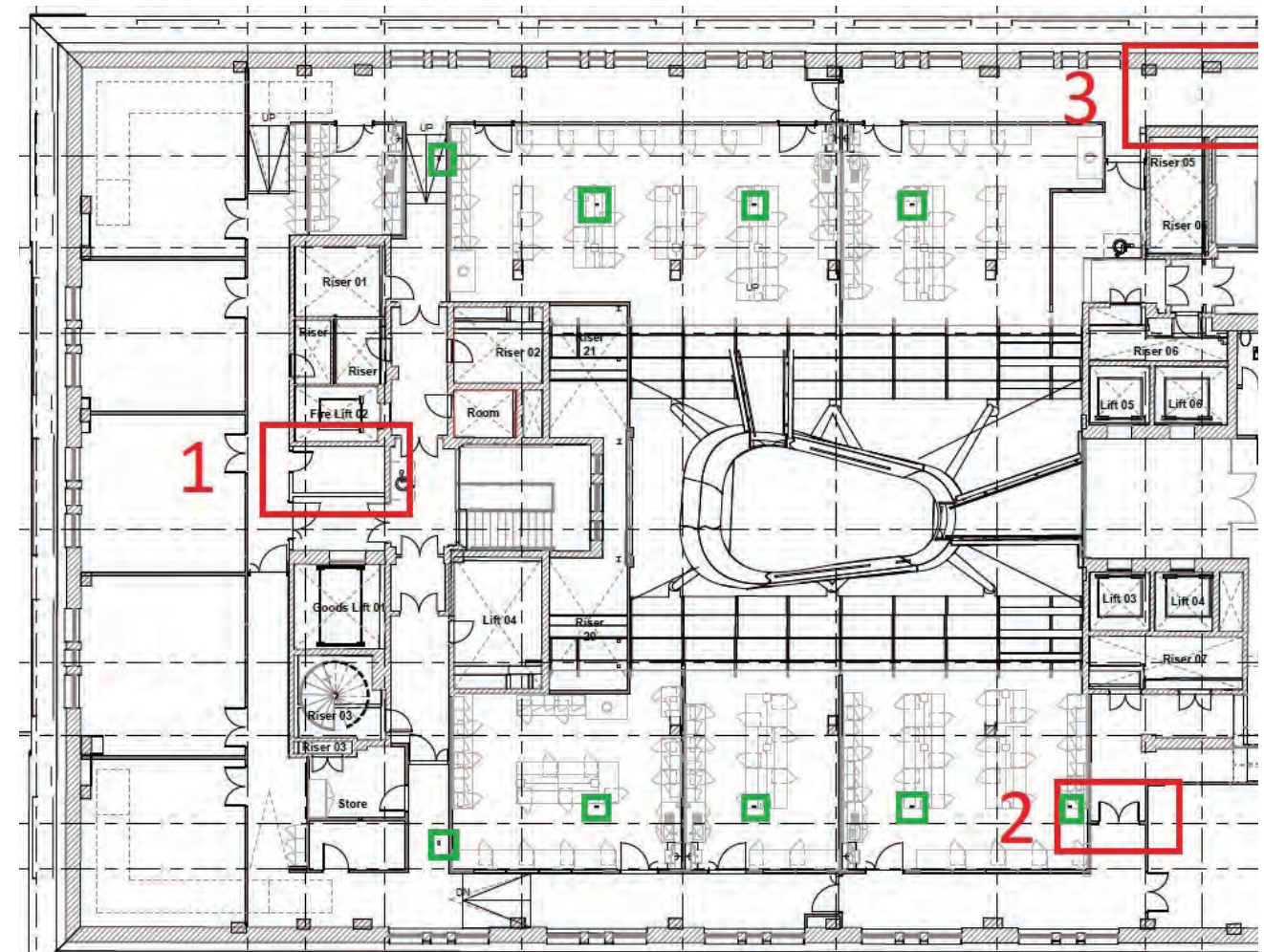
Item 2 - Secure line access doors to grow on unit to allow for more open reception area and access to level 8 while restricting the laboratory areas to authorised people.

Item 3 - The details are within the central section information on the following page. This drawing shows part of the creation of a new corridor.

The proposed columns are highlighted in green for visual identification and do not reflect the proposed column size. Each column will be 120mm x 60mm Rectangular Hollow Section steel, painted white. It is proposed the laboratory furniture will be designed around these columns in the final design.



Level 7 - Current Approved Layout - Northern



Level 7 - Proposed Amendments - Northern

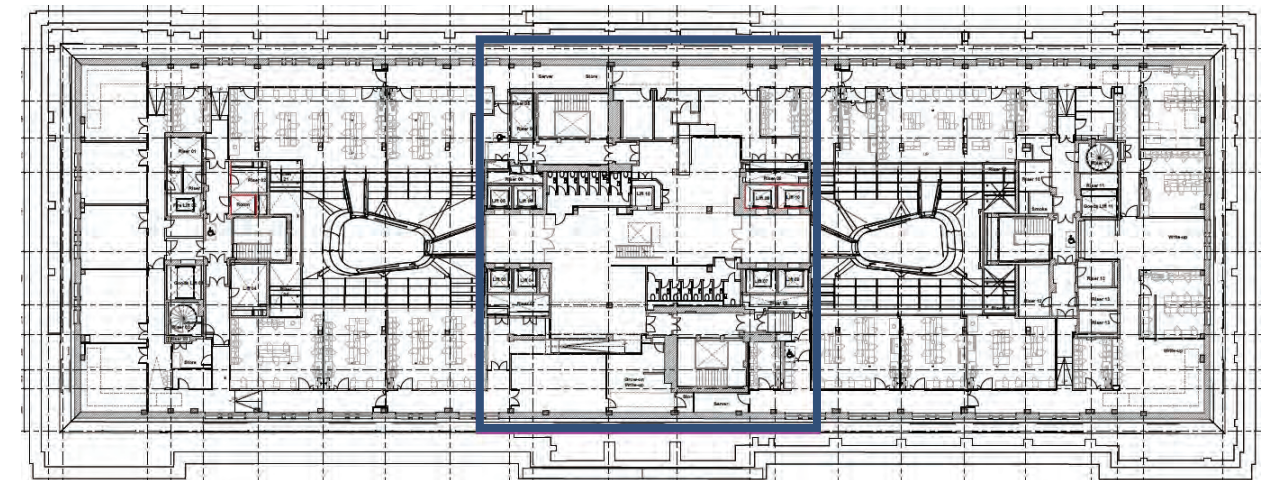
The proposed red items for the central section are as follows.

Item 2 - Secure line access doors to grow on unit to allow for more open reception area and access to level 7 to be for authorised personnel only.

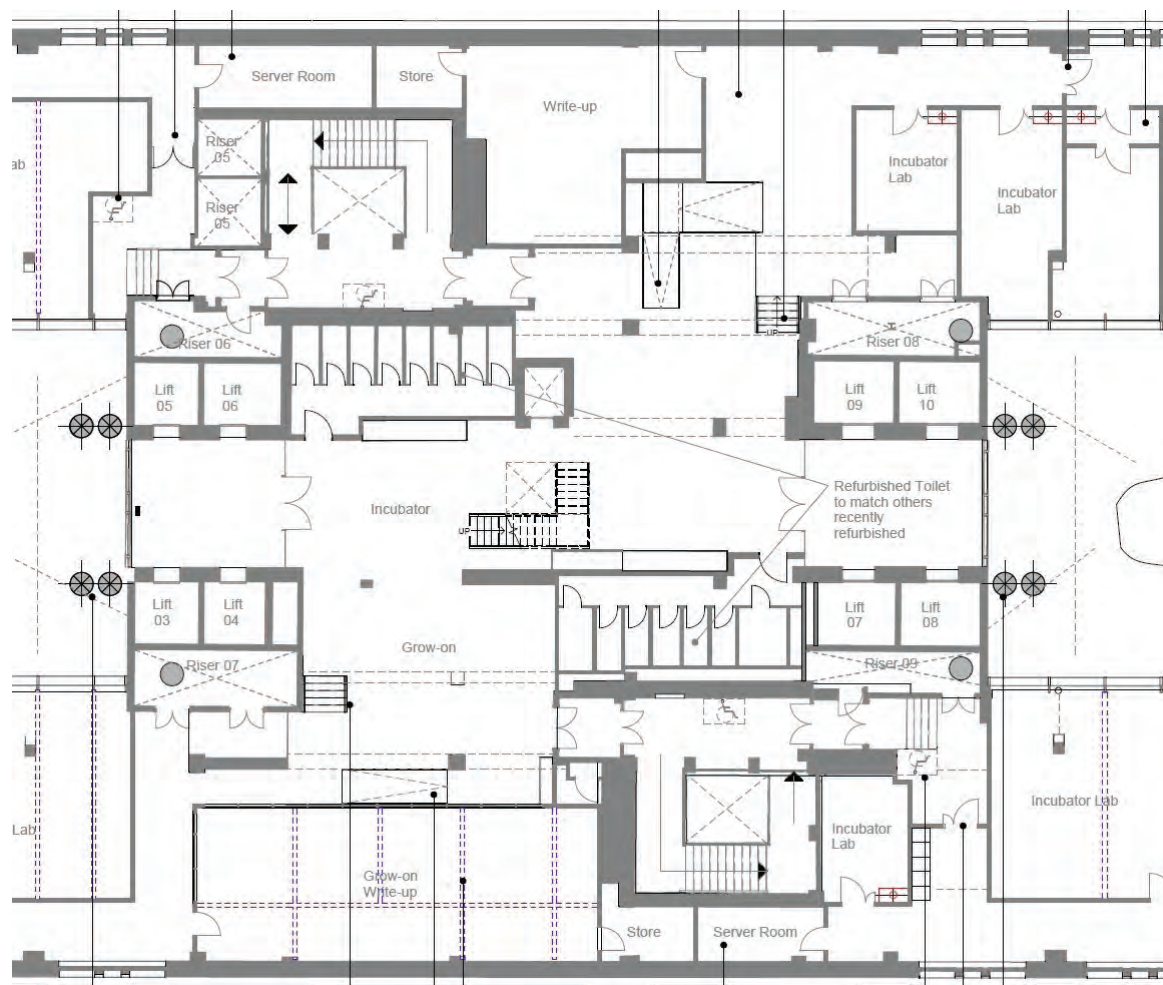
Item 3 - Create a new corridor connection between the incubator and grow on spaces. This allows for greater collaboration without having to pass through the main reception areas. The original write up space to be divided in to two rooms to serve the new store and server room locations. Secure line access doors to the incubator unit to allow for more open reception area and access to level 8.

Item 4 - Slight change to the store wall and door location.

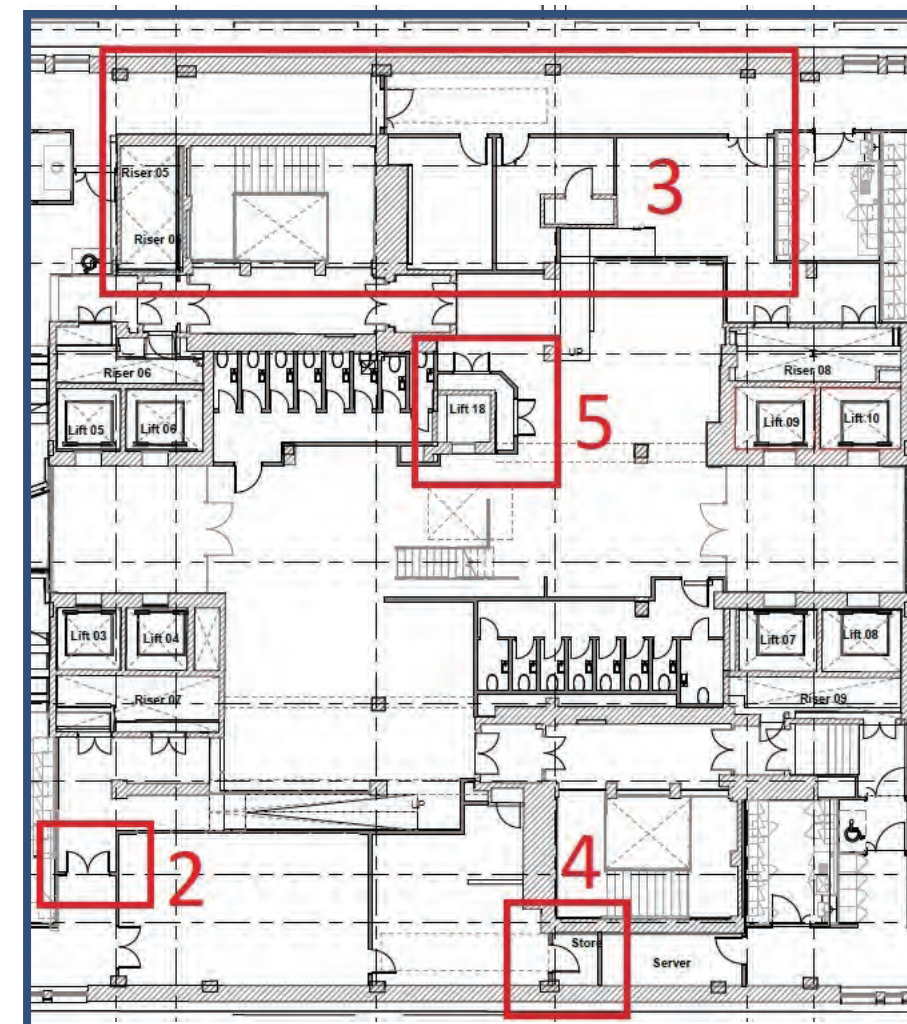
Item 5 - Introduction of a new electrical distribution cupboard around the shaft wall of Lift No. 18.



Level 7 - Central Area Location



Level 7 - Current Approved Layout - Central

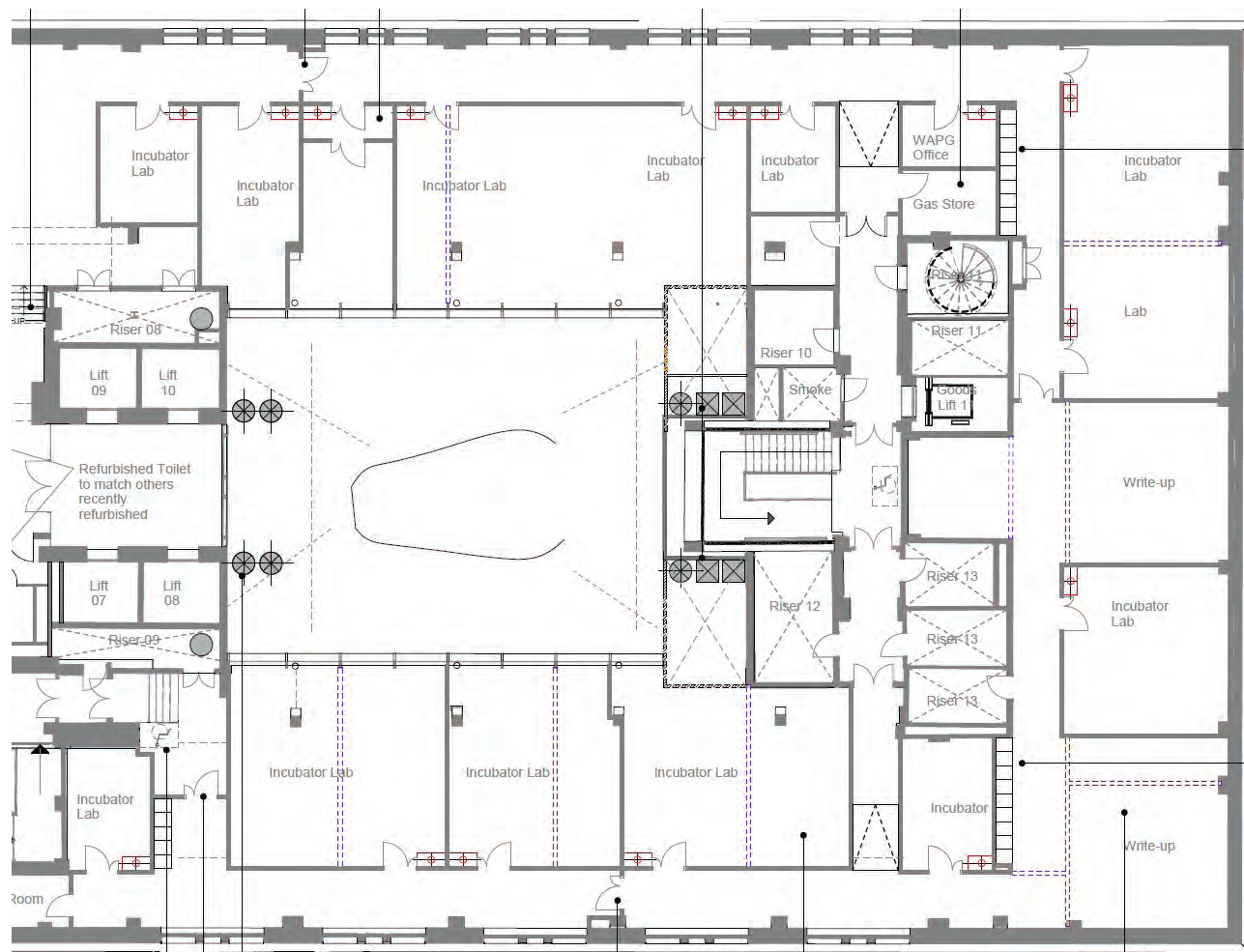


Level 7 - Proposed Amendments - Central

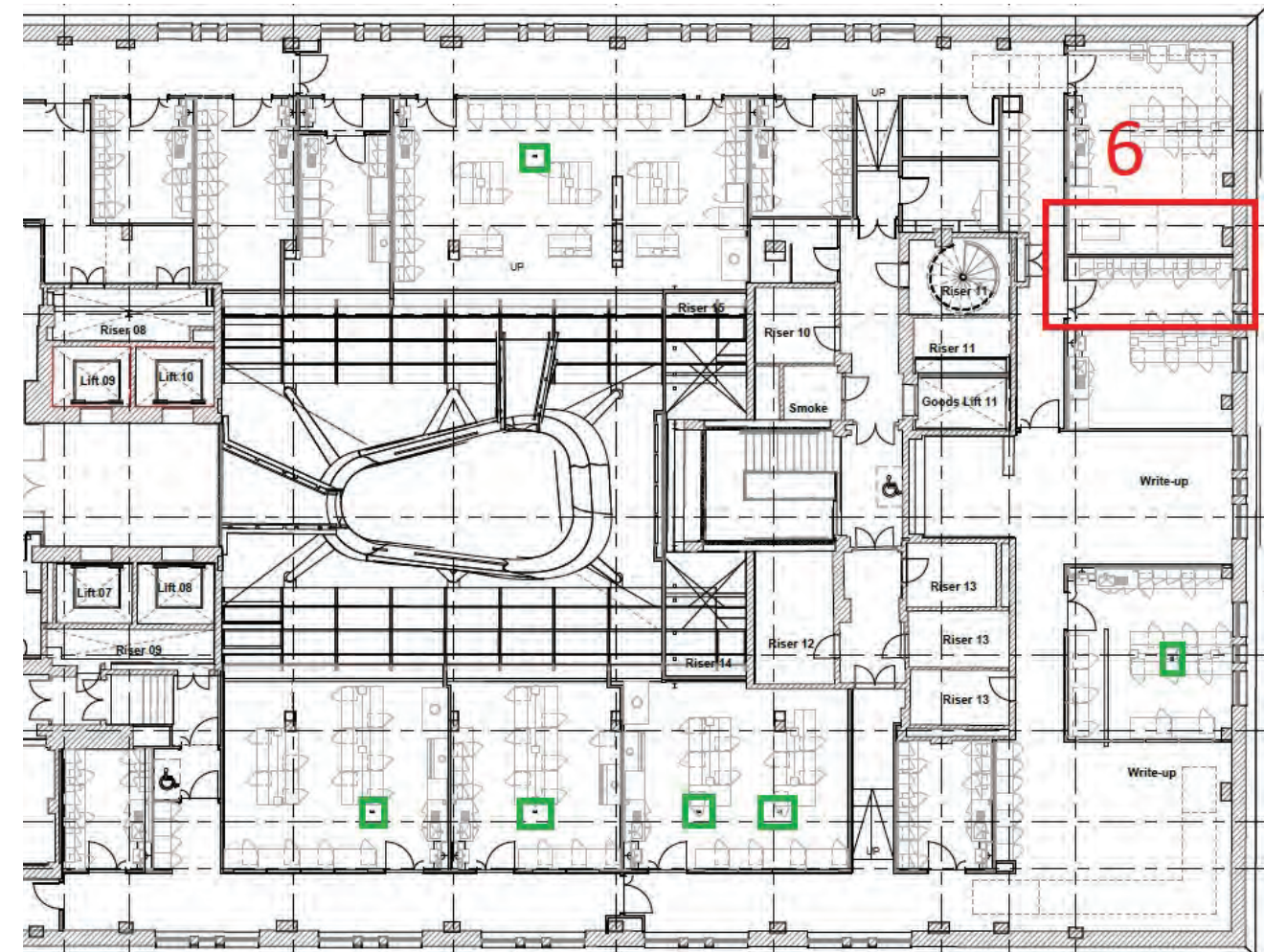
The proposed red items for the southern section are as follows.

Item 6 - Minor change to the location of the proposed wall between two laboratories. This is a permanent wall and does not conflict with the windows.

The proposed columns are highlighted in green for visual identification and do not reflect the proposed column size. Each column will be 120mm x 60mm Rectangular Hollow Section steel, painted white. It is proposed the laboratory furniture will be designed around these columns in the final design.



Level 7 - Current Approved Layout - Southern



Level 7 - Proposed Amendments - Southern

4.4 Level 8 - External Lighting

The existing lighting at level 8 requires to be upgraded to provide better and safer lighting for the roof terrace areas to Bloomsbury Square and Southampton Row.

The new light fittings although more numerous are more appropriate for the building by replacing standard bulkhead lighting with specific down lighters. Formal drawings accompany this document.

These new lights produce a better light and are specifically designed to work with the previously approved terraced areas.



Level 8 - View from the opposite side of Bloomsbury Square. The line of existing lights are not visible from the street level. The new lighting therefore will not be directly visible from the same location. Whilst more fittings, lower lighting levels and light directed downwards have a lower impact..



Level 8 - Zoomed in view from the opposite side of Bloomsbury Square. The line of existing lights are not visible from the street level. The new lighting therefore will not be directly visible from the same location.

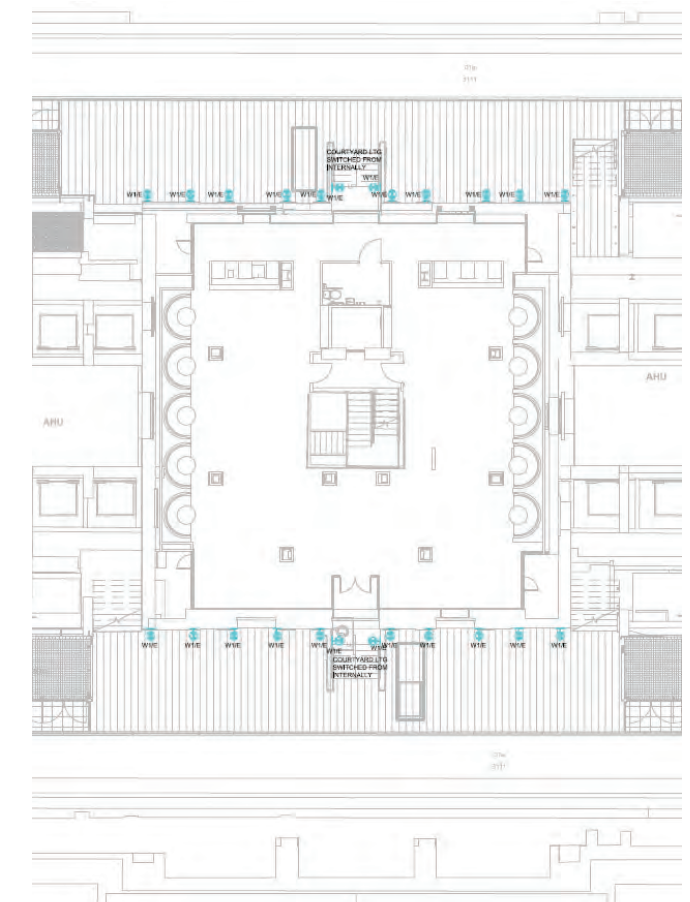
Spectre WX

Wall mounted conical luminaire for outdoor applications.

IK07 IP65



Level 8 - Proposed Light Fitting



Level 8 - Extract of formal drawing showing the location of the proposed light fittings.

4.5 Level B1 - Service containment within landing of the North stair.

As part of the electrical works proposed for the building to enable the laboratory use, additional cabling needs to be routed through level B1, north stair area.

The photographs opposite show the current arrangement of containment previously installed. The new proposals wish to install additional containment to allow for the new service runs.

The ceiling as you can see have previously been stripped back to the concrete shell, and multiple containment installations have previously been installed.

The application is supported by formal drawings showing the proposals for the area.



Level B1 - North Stair - Landing ceiling. Showing current electrical containment.



Level B1 - North Stair - Landing ceiling. Showing current electrical containment.

5.0 Heritage Statement

The following Heritage Statement has been produced by Montagu Evans.

The impact of the proposals for listed building consent on Victoria House (Grade II) is assessed in this section in light of relevant legislation and planning policy. The proposals are described elsewhere in this pre-application document. This assessment will consider the following aspects of the proposals in turn:

- Level 8 – Parapet walls to the top of the central lifts;
- Service risers access alterations;
- Level 7 – Layout Alterations
- Terrace External Lighting
- B1 Service Containment

The proposals follow the grant of Listed Building Consent (2022/3419/L) and Full Planning Permission (2022/3480/P) in November 2022 for works to the upper levels of the building and the more recent grant of Listed Building Consent (2023/0973/L) and Planning Permission (ref. 2023/0962/P) for amendments to the lower levels of the building in June 2023. The principal consideration is whether the additional proposals would continue to preserve the special interest of the listed building.

Level 8 - Parapet Walls to the Top of the Central Lifts

Within the north and south atria, it is proposed to remove existing parapets to the modern concrete lift cores. This is to create more room above the lift cores to facilitate the installation of previously-consented Air Handling Units. The parapet walls were used to screen the existing plant equipment, which is due to be replaced. As the new MEP equipment is to be covered by a steel-framed enclosure clad in plasterboard, the parapets are now redundant. Their removal would impact modern fabric only.

The proposed additional works at Level 8 would have no impact on historic fabric and would preserve the approved appearance of the interiors of the modern atria. Therefore, it is our view that the special interest of the listed building would be preserved.

Service Risers Access

These proposals relate to the provision of access to the existing service risers, including new openings to facilitate MEP duct runs through the building, the relocation of riser doors and, in some cases, the formation of new access.

As proposed, the alterations to existing service risers would impact fabric of no significance. The proposals would facilitate the reuse of existing risers to improve the efficiency and performance of the building and ensure full provision of all required services and of safety/security measures. As a result, the special interest of the listed building would be preserved.

Level 7 – Layout Alterations

The alterations to the layout of Level 7 are intended to provide greater flexibility and use of this space. The proposed alterations seek to build on the principle of flexible office space at this level, as per the 2022 consent. For the most part, these alterations relate to the relocation or insertion of additional doors and partition walls. However, the proposals for layout alterations also include the insertion of narrow floor-to-ceiling section columns at various points on the east and west sides of the floor. These columns are intended to reduce floor vibration during use. While the majority of columns have been incorporated within proposed walls, it is proposed to install several columns within open spaces.

Level 7 was created as part of the 2003 works and comprises a modern open plan office space with exposed structural columns and full-height glazing to the central atria. As a result, these spaces make no contribution to the special interest of the listed building's interiors. The slight variations to the proposed layout consented in 2022 should, therefore, be acceptable and would preserve the special interest of the listed building.

As proposed, the narrow floor-to-ceiling columns would cause some disruption to the proposed plan form and create visual clutter that is not necessarily congruent with the rest of the building interiors. However, as discussed above, this is an area of neutral heritage significance and already possesses a distinctly different character to the lower floors. Furthermore, these columns are necessary to improve the performance of the proposed lab spaces in Level 7 and could, thereby, be considered beneficial to the viability of the listed building.

External Lighting

The proposed external lighting would replace existing lighting on Level 8 of Victoria House. The existing light fittings are bulkhead and are not visible from street level on Bloomsbury Square or Southampton Row. The location of the light fittings are obscured by the parapet roofline. The design of the bulkhead lights means that some light is projected upwards.

The proposed lighting would be located in the same location as the existing lighting; however, there will be a greater number of light fixtures than there are currently. The proposed light fittings are downward facing lights, designed to illuminate the walkways of the Level 8 terrace. The installation of the proposed lighting would be fixed to an external wall on the ninth storey, within the roof terrace area. This area has already been much altered and is of limited heritage

significance. The additional light fixtures would not have a discernibly greater impact on fabric than the existing light fixtures.

The proposed external lighting would not be visible from street level, where the architectural significance of the building's exterior is best appreciated. Where it is visible, from within the terrace area, the proposed light fittings would be more neutral in colour and design than the existing bulkhead lighting, thus reducing the wider visual impacts of the existing external lighting at this level.

The replacement of the existing light fittings with downward projecting lights would also reduce the visibility of the external lighting and light pollution from within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, especially at nighttime. Due to the limited visual impact of the proposed light fixtures, it is considered that the proposed external lighting would have no impact on the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Overall, the proposed external lighting at Level 8 would not cause harm to the special interest of Victoria House, the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, nor the setting of nearby heritage assets.

B1 Service Containment

The proposals seek to install additional cabling and electrical containment in B1 landing of the north stair hall. The historic fabric of this area was removed during historic alterations, such that the decorative plaster work was stripped back to a concrete and breeze block shell. In this area, existing modern wiring, brackets and containment is exposed and where historic fabric still exists, it is utilitarian in appearance, consistent with the existing service use of this part of the basement level.

The installation of further wiring and containment will have no discernible impact on historic fabric and will be distinctly separate from the adjoining stairhall, which is of high architectural and historic significance. It is therefore considered that the additional service containment at B1 level would result in no harm to the special interest of the listed building.

Conclusion and Policy Compliance

This assessment has followed the approaches set out in legislation, policy, and best practice guidance, namely the 1990 Act, the Development Plan, the NPPF, and guidance published by Historic England. Furthermore, it is mindful of the great weight that should be given to the preservation of heritage assets which has been confirmed in Court judgements. To preserve the significance of a heritage asset has been defined as 'to do no harm'.

Overall, the works proposed in this document, both internal and external, would help to facilitate the delivery of the consented schemes of November 2022 and June 2023 and would build on the associated material and significant heritage benefits, namely improving

the performance, experience and functionality of the listed building. In accordance with the statutory duties outlined in The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, we conclude that the special interest of Victoria House (Grade II) would be preserved by the proposals.

In accordance with the terminology of the NPPF (2021), it is considered that the proposals would result in 'no harm' to the listed building. While we do not consider Paragraph 202 to be engaged, if elements of the proposals are perceived to cause some harm to the special interest of the listed building, such as the insertion of floor-to-ceiling columns at Level 7, it must be at the low end of less than substantial harm and is more than capable of being outweighed by the material and significant benefits outlined above.

On this basis we consider that the proposals also comply with Policy HC1 of the London Plan, Policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan and policies 194, 199, 202 of the NPPF. As such, the decision maker will be able to discharge their legal duty under sections 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and listed building consent is capable of being granted.

6.0 Access Statement

Victoria House is located on the East side of Bloomsbury Square, with Southampton Row to the East of the building, Vernon Place to the South, and Bloomsbury Place to the North.

Points of Access

The principle point of access to the site for vehicles, i.e. taxi and service vehicles, will be from Bloomsbury Square, on the West side of the site.

Pedestrian access is via:

Bloomsbury Square:

The main entrance to the building is on the West side. This is a quiet road, and it only provides access to Victoria House. This entrance leads to the main reception and two sets of four lifts. One of these lifts will be reprogrammed to provide access to Basement level B1 which will be in addition to the existing lift that currently connects the reception to Basement level B1.

Southampton Row:

This entrance to the building is on the East side of the building. The road is busy as it connects traffic from the Strand, Euston Station and Camden Town. This entrance leads to the main reception and lifts, but is currently exit only.

Units 1 and 6,7,8,9 will have level access from their own entrances to Southampton Row along with the internal access points.

Vernon Place:

This entrance to the building is on the South side of the building. The road is busy as it connects traffic coming from Oxford Circus and Old Street. This entrance leads to a reception with a single lift serving from Basement level B2 to level 7. Again, this entrance is currently exit only.

Bloomsbury Place:

This entrance to the building is on the North side of the building. The road is moderately busy secondary route in the area. This entrance is generally used as a runner's entrance where access control manages entry. Existing stairs connect throughout the building, providing links to the cycle stores and shower facilities.

General Access:

The loading bay in the Northwest corner provides access for goods in and out as well as a pedestrian access to a cycle store at Basement Level 1. Retail units along Southampton Row are each accessed directly from the street.

Circulation within the Site

From Bloomsbury Square either a central stair or a dedicated lift transfer you from street level to the central area and main lifts. Two blocks of lifts (4 lifts in each block) and two large historic stairs provide vertical circulation from the chamber to the building, this arrangement forms the central core. One lift from this central core will be extended to basement level B1. There are two further cores North and South with stairs, goods lifts and firemans lifts.

Public Transportation Links

The site is served by excellent public transport links, with both the London Underground and a series of nearby bus stops. The site is therefore easily accessible from local areas and further afield. Holborn Underground station is located a five minute walk (250m approx.) to the South of the building. The station is served by the Piccadilly (serving all routes on the line) and Central lines, serving all routes on the line. The station, at present does not have step free access from street level to platform levels.

Wheelchair & Mobility Scooter Access

There is ground floor level access to the site from all directions. Surfaces along each side of the building vary from granite sets to brick with small changes in level.

7.0 Conclusion

The items below are all minor variations to the previous approvals.

This application follows on from previous discussions and site tour carried out during April 2023 with The London Borough of Camden. The works proposed within the identified parts of the building are summarised as level 8 - parapet walls to top of central lift shafts, riser access details, minor changes to the layout of Level 7, replacement lighting to Level 8 terraces to Bloomsbury Square and Southampton Row and new containment run within north stair landing at B1..

Level 8 - Parapet walls to the Top of Central Lift Shafts

Within the North and South atria we have previously been granted permission to locate Air Handling Units (AHUs) on top of the central lift cores and screen the new units from the main atria. To provide more space in these areas and not to impact the final approved appearance of these areas, each of the existing central lifts require their parapet walls to be removed down to the level of the top of the lifts shafts concrete cap. These lift top will not be visible as they are behind previously approved screens.

Riser Alterations

The proposals put before you are for the existing risers within the building, the information details the builders work and modifications required at each level and riser to allow for the MEP installations. This involves the temporary opening of certain areas of risers to enable ducts to be installed and then sealed around. There are also a few additional access doors required and locations of some riser doors will require moving to enable efficient use of the limited riser space within.

Level 7 - Layout alterations

We have previously gained approval for the layout of level 7 for incubator and grow on laboratory facilities. These alterations are focussed around certain walls and doors that have been changed following detailed discussions with the client around using the spaces and connectivity. There is also the introduction of columns to help with vibration levels on this floor.

Level 8 - External Lighting.

We have previously been granted approval for the proposed external terrace areas accessed from Level 8 and fronting Bloomsbury Square and Southampton Row. Our proposal is for the replacement of the current lighting to the terraces with a better solution.

B1 - North Stair - Landing - Services Containment.

The proposals are for additional containment with an area of the building that already has containment installed. The existing requires an additional solution to enable the routing of services to fulfil the previously approved proposals.

Corstorphine & Wright

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