

# 25 Old Gloucester Street

Design and Access Statement

August 2023



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Overview

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by ATP Architects and Surveyors on behalf of BAPS organisation. The Design and Access Statements supports the drawings material and reports prepared by the design team as part of the detailed planning application. The structure of this document is based on the guidance set out in the CABE publication "Design and Access Statements; how to read and use them". This is to ensure that the design rationale for the project is covered in a comprehensive way, and to provide a familiar format for planning officers and other readers. It is laid out in six main sections; Introduction, Assessment, Design Process, Scheme Description, Conclusion and Appendices. It should be read in conjunction with the other application documents.

### 1.2 Vision

The applicant's ambition for this development is to create an elegant and well crafted building that both makes the most of its site and establishes a positive relationship with its neighbours. It is to be modern in design and outlook but be constructed from traditional and local familiar materials to ensure that it complements its setting and blends in to the context.

The D1 element of the development represents a modernisation of the existing use on the site. A tired and inflexible facility will be transformed into a vibrant and flexible new community centre under this proposal.

The residential element of the development is aimed at the market for high quality well designed dwellings. Rent receipts from the apartments will help fund the whole project and future running costs of the D1 space. The D1 element of the scheme will be for the use of the developer's host organisation. It will contain attractive, useful and flexible space and facilities for a variety of uses and activities.



Charity events hosted and organised by BAPS.



BAPS is involved with various charities and not for profit activities.

### 1.3 Client Brief

The client/applicant is not primarily a specialist property developer but is a company whose purpose is to look after the property interest of the BAPS organisation. As such its brief to the architect is to provide replacement activity space plus some rental apartments and office. Following a previous planning application the brief has been developed to an erection of a single storey office, 2 flats and a cultural centre. The rental returns from these will provide an income for ongoing maintenance and operating expenses as well as to support the building's operations.

### 1.4 The applicant

The applicant, is developing the building for the charity BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha. The BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha is a spiritual, volunteer-driven organisation dedicated to improving society through individual growth by fostering the Hindu ideals of faith, unity, and selfless service.

This charity would like to host the following type of events within the hall and meeting rooms in the refurbished building.

- Education tutorials and seminars
- Yoga classes
- Group discussions
- Indoor sports including tennis and pool
- Writing classes
- Cooking classes
- Interpersonal and life skills training
- First-Aid training
- Various meetings

Currently, the building is dilapidated and needs complete renovation to be used for anything. The residential accommodation is complementary, intended both to fund the initial project cost and the building's future maintenance.

## 2.0 SITE & CONTEXT

### 2.1 Site location

The site is located in the London Borough of Camden within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Old Gloucester Street itself runs adjacent to the busy Southampton Row, but has a very quiet character by comparison. At the northern end of Old Gloucester Street, adjacent to the application site, is the public open space of Queen Square.

Due to the application site's location at the end of Old Gloucester Street, it has an important relationship with Queen Square as well as Old Gloucester Street itself. The square itself is relatively quiet for such a central location, and is an oasis of tranquillity in a busy district.

Ambulances and other vehicles entering and exiting the neighbouring Great Ormond Street Hospital create occasional noise and drama.

### 2.2 Physical context

Located adjacent to the Grade II\* listed church of St George the Martyr, the application structure itself is Grade II listed. Built in a Victorian institutional Gothic style, the former boys' school is one of a pair of buildings on Old Gloucester Street, the other being the girls' school, constructed in a similar manner, at 24 Old Gloucester Street across the road.

The terraced houses on Old Gloucester Street probably date from the early 19th century. The application building, possibly constructed on the site of one of these houses, was built between 1877 and 1878 by J & S Flint Clarkson. The listed dates from 1999. The street frontage building is constructed in a traditional manner using load-bearing London yellow stock bricks with stone lintels. The roof is clad with slate and has a timber structure. 25 Old Gloucester Street is currently disused, having previously been used as a commercial building and before that as a college. Originally it was a school for boys, possible also serving the adjacent church.

Old Gloucester Street was built speculatively as terraced town houses. Most of these are now divided into individual apartments or in a non-residential use. The street also contains the rear of a large hotel fronting onto Southampton Row and a public park. Opposite are local authority flatted blocks.



Site location plan



The Application site is the meeting point between old Gloucester Street and Queen Square.



View looking north up Old Gloucester Street towards Queen Square.

### 2.3 Natural features

Bloomsbury is renowned for its squares and public gardens and Old Gloucester Street is close to Queen Square, Gray's Inn and Brunswick Square Gardens. Large mature street trees are a major feature of the south part of Queen Square and these help to create a special environment directly in front of the application site. However they are not close enough to be affected by works to the subject building or foundation works. They are close enough to have a significant effect upon the outlook from the front rooms of the application building. The site itself has no nature features, being 100% covered in buildings.

### 2.4 Urban built form

The application building is the northerly most building in the terrace of properties that make up the west side of Old Gloucester Street. It is different in architectural treatment from its terraced neighbours, but fulfils the role of maintaining and terminating the terrace very adequately. It is approximately the same height as its neighbours and constructed of the same materials, but with a Gothic flavour rather than classical. Its form and design contrast with that of the church next door but the two co-exist in reasonable harmony, separated by a narrow paved passageway.

The frontage block relates to the building across the street, which is of a similar age, style and character—this building is now a gallery and cultural centre. The rear block consists of the large assembly hall, which is topped with an additional floor and flat roof that was previously in use as a playground. The rear part is surrounded on all sides by other buildings and structures of various heights and is little visible from the street or other publicly accessible areas. The previous planning permission granted for this site had accepted the addition of extra accommodation above the rear part of this building, with no harm to the local urban backdrop perceived by the planning authority.



## 2.5 Public perception

The existing building is listed and the site sits within the Bloomsbury conservation area. It forms part of a mixed fabric of older buildings in this historic district and has an obvious institutional character associated with Victorian philanthropic or religious activities. There is not much evidence in the street of the large assembly space that exists to the rear of the building.

## 2.6 Visual impact

The building has a significant presence in the street due to its imposing Gothic style and distinctiveness, in the context of the plain, flat-fronted buildings further south. On the north side of the application site is the classically styled church of St George the Martyr. The juxtaposition of these architectural styles exacerbates the richness of these buildings.

## 2.7 Local views

Due to the high building density in this part of London, there is arguably only one uninterrupted view of 25 Old Gloucester Street—the view from the southern edge of Queen Square (top and bottom right). Trees obscure the application site from further across Queen Square (centre bottom left) and the narrow nature of Old Gloucester Street provides only an oblique view of the facade of the frontage building when viewed from the south.

Unrestricted views of the application site are confined to southern edge of Queen Square. From here, the application site presents itself as an interesting Gothic anomaly in what is a predominantly Georgian context. It is from this position on the southern edge of Queen Square that the rear, relatively new, extension on the application site can be seen - albeit from an oblique angle.

## 2.8 Social context

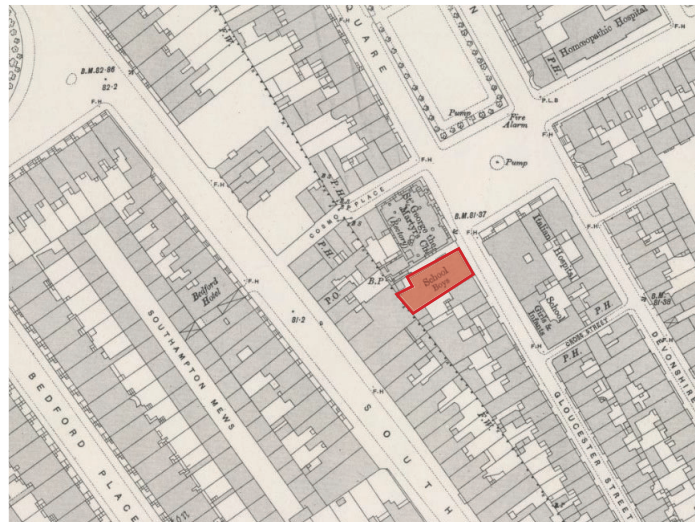
The site currently contributes nothing to the social well-being of the area as it is unused. The refurbishment and modernisation of the building will reinstate mixed-use facilities for the benefit of the local people. The addition of housing is in accordance with Camden's policies promoting the expansion of a residential population in the central area.



25 Old Gloucester Street from the corner of Queen Square.



25 Old Gloucester Street from the corner of Queen Square.



Map dated 1894-96 showing the application site location.

## 2.9 Historical context

The building is the former St. George the Martyr Parochial Boys School, completed in 1878, shown in the map to the right.

The site is immediately to the south of the church in Queen-square, Bloomsbury. The building is in place of that erected in 1859, in Theobald's - road, and taken down by the Metropolitan Board of Works, in the formation of the new main communication from Oxford-street to Old-street, st. Luke's. Compensation having been obtained for the removal, the opportunity was taken to advance another step the scheme forming a complete group of parish buildings, - long in contemplation, but only partially carried out. The parish church, the schools for girls and infants, erected in 1864, and the new schools for boys, bearing a general resemblance to them, are close together. To these, and the different residences adjoining, it was proposed to add hereafter public vestry buildings on the south-west of the church. There were desks for 200 children in the schoolroom, which was also the public hall of the parish, 60ft by 43ft on the floor, 31ft high in the middle, and 21 ft to the eaves, covered with a boarded and panelled hammer-beam roof. A large storeroom, 47ft by 34ft, in the basement, received the platforms as well as the seats for 350 persons, from the schoolroom above it. Caretaker's, master's and assistant master's residences were placed in the tall front building near Queen-square. Mr. John Wells was the builder executing the works under J. and S. Flint Clarkson, architects, of Great Ormond street; the contract price being 4700l.

The area suffered widespread bomb damage during the second world war, after which many larger houses were converted into flats or demolished. The area experienced mixed fortunes during the post war period but has recently experienced a revival in popularity, partly due to the ripple effect of historically high house prices in Central London.

## 2.10 Economic context

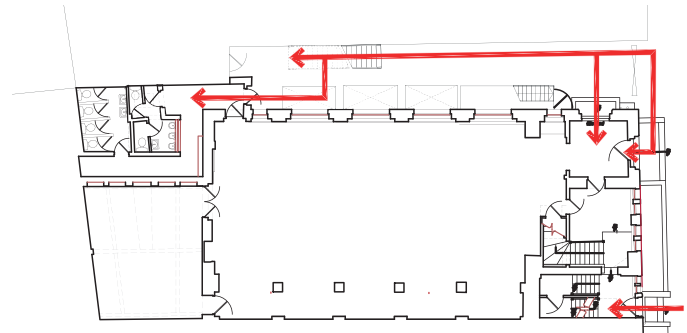
The building has been in various uses since ceasing to operate as a school—commercial, educational and assembly. It has not been in 'community' use, as defined by "not for profit" activities, but in some form of commercial use during this time. This is now proposed to be continued, as the use of the lower levels will be a private use. The residential use above is proposed partly as a means of generating value to fund the whole project.

## 2.11 Access and movement

The application site is currently accessible only from the east, via Old Gloucester Street. There are three points of access along the eastern elevation of the frontage building. The first is a small timber door on the southern edge of the facade that was possibly originally used as the teacher's entrance for the former boys' school. This leads to the upper floors of the frontage building. A second door is present on the northern edge of this facade. This much grander stone entrance is used as the main entry and was the way that the pupils would have entered the school. A third point of access to the application site building is located at basement level, reached via a recently added metal staircase. All three entrances have a stepped access.

The final access point from Old Gloucester Street is via an alley between 25 Old Gloucester Street and the church of St George The Martyr. This alley is split down the middle in ownership between the application site and the church. There are four points of access points into the existing building in this alley. The first is a large door on the corner of the alley and Old Gloucester Street. Adjacent to this is a small closet fire stair that leads down to a basement egress point.

Finally, the third and fourth points of access are at the back of the alley. A metal fire stair leads up to the flat roof at level 2, originally used as the school playground. The final point of access is under this stair, which leads into a small toilet block extension. To access the building from the two points at the back of the alley, one must travel on land owned by the adjacent church. However after many years of use, a right of access has been established in order for those entering the building at 25 Old Gloucester Street to travel over land owned by the church in the alley. The proposal would seek to cease the need for a right of access. All points of access, whether it be directly from Old Gloucester Street, or via the alley, currently have a stepped access.



Existing ground floor plan showing current access arrangements.



Listed buildings in proximity: blue = Grade II building, purple = Grade II\* building.

## 2.12 Site Constraints

The site is a listed building in a conservation area and has limited access from the highway to an otherwise landlocked plot. It is adjacent to a Grade II\* building and has residential neighbours immediately to the south. The site is thus heavily constrained, but not more so than many similar sites in the centre of London.

## 2.13 Site Opportunities

The frontage building has strong character and a domestic scale, making it suitable for residential conversion and use. The space behind this is quiet due to its back-land position and this makes it suitable for the re-development of the hall within a new structure on several levels.

- The site is private, quiet and secluded due to its location
- There is sufficient opportunity to benefit from daylight and sunlight
- There is a picturesque outlook to Queen Square
- Central location and great transport links

## 2.14 Planning policy context

The application is accompanied by an overarching planning statement produced by planning consultant PPM Planning which deals with policy matters in detail and the planning history of this and adjacent sites. The architectural design has been carefully developed to meet the quality standards required in this sensitive conservation area settings. The proposed building will provide high quality residential (C3) units which will be mostly policy compliant, conforming to both Camden's SPGs and Mayoral guidance where possible, given the severe constraints of the existing structure.

### 2.14a National Policy

Significant changes to National Planning policy have occurred in recent times. Most notably, is the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the latest iteration of which was published in 2021.

The emphasis of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. However, the starting point for decision making is the Development Plan and applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. An analysis of relevant policy is set out in the Planning Statement.



### 2.14b National Design Guide

The National Design Guide was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in September 2019. It is a response to the 'Creating Space For Beauty' interim report by the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission published in July 2019.

This guide illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful, can be achieved in practice. It forms part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.

The National Design Guide addresses the question of how we recognise well-designed places, by outlining and illustrating the Government's priorities in the form of ten characteristics. The choices made in the design process contribute towards achieving these characteristics and shape the character of the place.

The 10 characteristics of the National Design Guide

Well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create its physical distinctiveness. The ten characteristics highlighted in the National Design Guide help to nurture and sustain a sense of community and work to positively address environmental issues affecting climate. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The ten characteristics which are set out in the Design Guide and will be extensively considered in the design development of this scheme are:

- Context
- Identity
- Built form
- Movement
- Nature
- Public spaces
- Users
- Homes and Buildings
- Resources Lifespan

Responses to the National Design Guides ten characteristics are noted through this document. A summation of this is included within the Conclusion of this document.



## 3.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1 Introduction

The design process has been developed while considering the previous consented planning applications (ref: 2011/6097/P) and (ref: 2020/4596/P) to ensure that the result is both compliant to the brief and of high quality with a view to an award of planning application.

### 3.2 Objectives

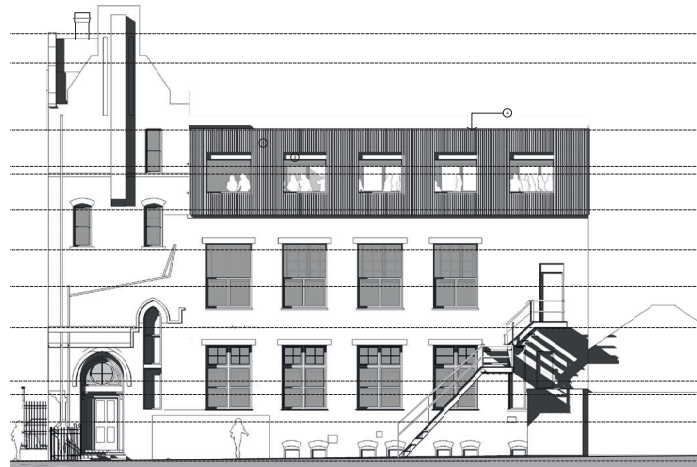
The objective for this project is to provide an office and 2 residential units in order to provide an income for the cultural centre while keeping the original building intact. The cultural centre and residential units are dependent on each other.

### 3.3 Options

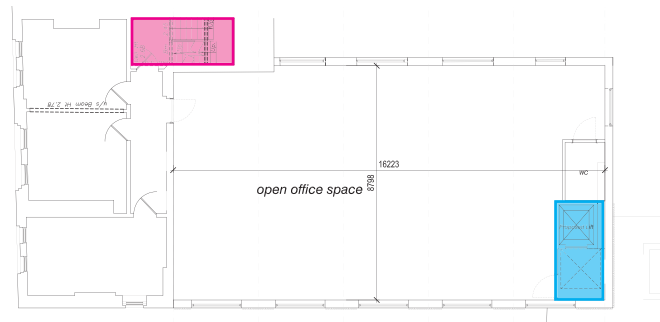
Due to the nature of this site, diverse options are somewhat restricted and hard to generate. The complex character of the relatively high-density context means that the existing envelope and massing will not greatly change.

### 3.4 Involvement

Wider involvement has been limited on this project, due to the client already being determined as the end user. The BAPS community will use the D1 floorspace when the project is completed. The development will not adversely affect the wider community.



Proposed Elevation for planning application in 2013



Proposed second floor plan illustrating existing stairs (pink) and proposed lift (blue) to indicate circulation positions

### 3.5 2013 - Application

In May 2013, the applicant received a full planning permission for a single storey office extension at second floor level, including installation of external stair in front of lightwell from ground floor to basement level with new gates, and installation of lift and housing to existing non-residential institution (Class D1).

The drawing on the left shows the proposed elevation for the 2013 application which shows the single storey extension on the existing building. The design proposal's appearance was to use modern materials and proportion that sit comfortably with varying window heights and fenestration that would complement the existing building's yellow bricks and stone finish.

The 2013 application's proposal also included to provide a lift internally for the disabled in order to access all floors from street level, this is shown on the second floor plan on the left. The proposals aim was to achieve a single storey extension to the rear building to provide a floor of additional space with a circulation system used by everyone.

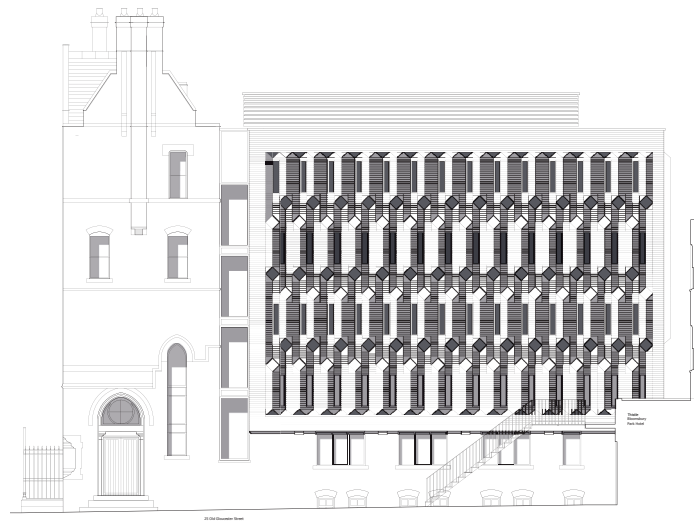
### 3.6 2021 - Application

In November 2021, the applicant received another full planning permission, the proposal consisted of:

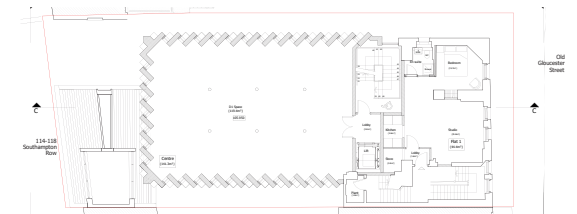
- Alterations including partial demolition of existing building
- Erection of replacement four storey extension
- Extension of basement
- Change of use from Cultural Centre to provide 3x flats and Cultural Centre

The drawing on the right shows the proposed section for the 2021 application. The proposal's facade is a complex combination of brickwork and high quality pre-cast concrete elements. This was highly modelled to give visual interest to what is otherwise a large flat wall on three sides enclosing the replacement hall within. The facade also included fenestration to provide natural light to the hall, but windows on the south flank would have been fitted with obscured glass to prevent overlooking to the neighbours on that boundary.

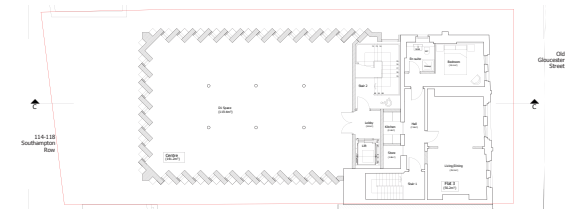
The proposed plans on the right show the residential accommodation at the front, the vertical circulation cores behind and the open floors of the multi level hall at the rear with the zig-zag facade. The residential layouts had been optimised given the severe constraints of the existing historic structure.



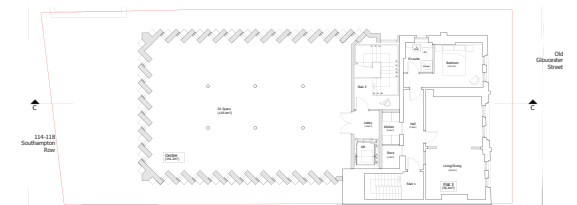
Proposed Section for planning application in 2021



Proposed level 1 showing residential accommodation in the converted frontage building and new hall



Proposed level 2 showing new and original buildings



Proposed level 3 showing two stairs, new and original, serving the two different uses

## 4.0 SCHEME DESCRIPTION

### 4.1 Scheme description

Following the previously consented drawings the application scheme was prepared and described below:

The new proposal will create an additional single storey office extension, a basement extension, 2 x apartment units at the frontage of the building and a cultural centre. The residential units will help aid the running cost of the cultural centre for the BAPS organisation.

### 4.2 Scheme layout

The layout is largely dictated by the current layout of the building on the application site. The three main characters of the building are as follows - the shallow-plan four storey frontage building, the contemporary deep plan three level replacement hall behind this and at the very rear, an earlier transverse hall and modern toilet block.

In this new proposal most of the frontage building will be converted into a residential accommodation, the modern hall behind will be used as a cultural centre. The basement will be extended at the rear of the site under the rear hall.

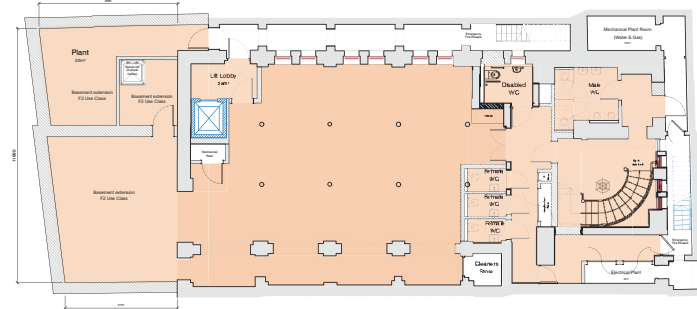
There will be a new stair and lift core, containing dedicated stairs for the use of cultural centre. The residential (C3) space will be accessed by the retained stair of the frontage building serving the two residential units. The appearance of the frontage building will be unaffected by the proposed development, although repairs and refurbishment to the fabric of this part of the structure will improve its contribution to the quality of the Conservation Area.

The drawings on this page show the proposed basement and ground floor plans and the proposed front elevation to Old Gloucester Street. The whole of the basement and ground will remain in F1 use, except for a small area containing the residential entrance and stair.

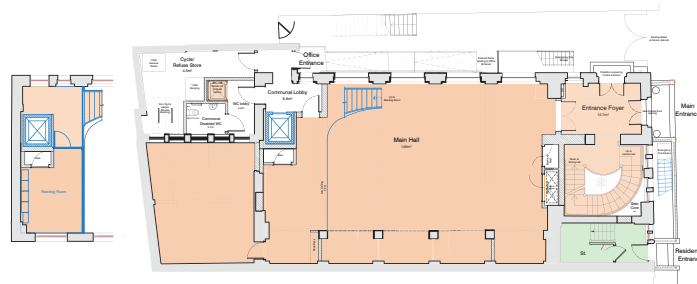
The section drawing on the right show the single storey office extension on top of the existing rear flat roofed extension. The section also shows the new stairs that are to be used as circulation for the cultural centre halls. The drawing also highlights the basement extension at the rear of the existing building and the two apartments at the frontage of the building.



Proposed section showing the single storey office extension, basement extension and residential units at the frontage building



Proposed basement floor stair and lift core, as well as basement extension at the rear building



Proposed ground floor stair and lift core, residential entrance and cultural centre hall.



Proposed front elevation is unaltered



### 4.3 Appearance

Each material is selected to work harmoniously with each other, creating a palette of textures and colours that will sit comfortably within the existing building's yellow stock brick.

**Materials palette:**

Titanium zinc is proposed as the cladding material for the single storey office extension. The rusty red shade complements and creates a variation and texture difference from the existing London yellow stock brick facade.



Proposed elevation showing the single storey office extension



Single storey office extension cladding (Titanium zinc in red)



Existing Yellow London stock brick facade

## 4.4 Sunlight and daylight

The massing of the new proposed building has largely been dictated by the light flow requirements of neighbouring buildings to the rear and sides of the application site and closely follows the envelope established by the implemented planning permission reference (2011/6097/P).

This new accommodation will be naturally lit by means of windows in the south, west and north façades. The south facade is a valuable source of daylight for the new accommodation but there is a risk of overlooking the rear yards of the neighbouring properties in Old Gloucester Street from this direction. The windows in this facade will therefore be configured to prevent such overlooking, whilst still admitting light and air into the application building. Light will also be available for the D1 space from the north flank facing the side of the church, and the west facing facade, where privacy for neighbouring occupants is not an issue.

The proposed apartments are lit by the existing windows in the retained frontage building, with an easterly and northerly aspect. Due to the constraints of the frontage building it is not possible to alter this fenestration to improve aspect. However, the character and outlook of this building compensates for the lack of ideal south and west aspect to windows and it is anticipated that the new apartments will benefit from adequate internal daylight.

## 4.5 Residential amenity

The proposed dwellings are appropriately sized and well planned within the inherent site constraints. There is no opportunity for external private amenity space in this conversion, but all the flats are close to Queen Square, to which the residents will have free access, and which is high quality public amenity space of great amenity value to the residents of the new flats.



Detail of fenestration to frontage building.



Busy traffic on Southampton Row will hardly be noticeable from the site which is shielded by the frontage properties.



Proposed Elevation showing the single storey office extension on the existing building

## 4.6 Noise and pollution

The site is located some distance from the nearest main roads and it is not anticipated that ambient noise will be above acceptable levels. Noise from aircraft will be adequately contained by the type of roof and envelope construction proposed.

Even though Southampton Row is in close proximity, the frontage buildings of this extremely busy road will provide a sufficient shielding for the new residential development to have this arterial road remain unnoticed.

Potential noise between flats within the development (and between the residential and cultural centre floorspace) will be prevented by Building Regulation compliant structure and finishes. There will be a substantial masonry wall between the residential and others uses.

The possibility of noise breaking out from the development and affecting existing neighbours and on-site residents will be minimized by the relatively substantial envelope construction and effective sealing of the building.

In terms of pollution, the development sits in a residential area with no industry or major transport infrastructure nearby. Pollution levels in central London are relatively high, but subject to ongoing measures at City and Borough level to reduce.

## 4.7 Scale and massing

The scale and massing of the scheme has been carefully configured to be appropriate for the setting generally and in particular to avoid any negative impact on neighbouring properties. To ensure that this is achieved, the design of the scheme has been configured to match the existing conditions on the site. In this way the proposed scheme will neither have a greater impact on the adjacent buildings, nor compromise the amenity of the residents in proximity.

## 4.8 Designing out crime

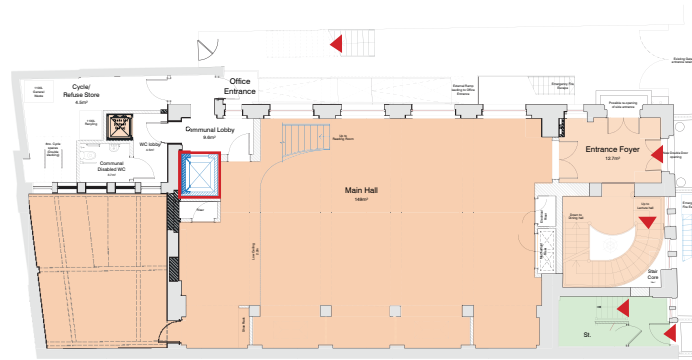
Local Plan Policy requires that the design takes account of crime prevention and community safety. The application scheme complies generally with the provisions in ACPO's 'Secured by Design' suite of guidance documents.

Particularly applicable to this scheme are the new homes guide, plus the multi-storey dwellings and play areas. The Security of the development is enhanced by discouraging casual intrusion by non residents. Public access is restricted. A Proximity Access Control (PAC) system, CCTV, sensor lighting and door entry phone access control system will be provided for the dwellings. The main entrance is very well protected against unauthorised access whilst being easily identified by the emergency services and trade visitors etc. See access section for more detailed layout/information.

## 4.9 Fire strategy

The scheme has been designed to be constructed of non-combustible materials with separation between dwellings to full UK Building Regulations standard. It will also have sufficient separation from neighbouring properties and no unprotected areas in boundary walls. All the accommodation within will be fitted out in accordance with current statutory regulations and be provided with automatic heat, fire and smoke detection and alarm. The layout of common parts takes into account maximum safe travel distances from the accommodation to a place of relative safety (protected stair) from where a place of safety (the highway) is directly accessible via the exit doors to the street.

Should the fire service need access to the application site, this will be via two principal entrances in the frontage building on Old Gloucester Street.



25 Old Gloucester Street serving access diagram, showing the principal street entrances, the rear office entrance, front residential entrance and internal lift serving the cultural centre.

## 4.10 Servicing

Servicing of the development will be by means of the local road network with all servicing taking place via the front entrances of the building. Items brought into the residential part of the building will be via the residential entrance street door and up the stair. Items brought into the cultural centre part of the building will be through the main entrance at the frontage building. Access though each is not step free due to the age of the building but a lift serves all floors of the cultural centre and office, facilitating the movement of goods throughout this part of the development.

## 4.11 Waste strategy

Waste management of the development will be by means of the local road network. The residential waste and recyclables will be placed, in the appropriate sacks and caddy, on the pavement immediately in front of the building on the designated collection day. Should residents want to store these materials prior to collection there is a room at basement level accessible to them for this purpose.

The cultural centre operator will enter into an agreement with a commercial waste/recycling contractor, who will collect material by agreement with the operator. It is currently unclear how much waste/recyclable material will be generated by their use, or where within the building it will be contained. However the basement refuse storage room referred to above will also be available to the cultural centre operator. Commercial waste collection will be programmed so as not to coincide with the residential waste collection carried out by the local authority.

## 4.12 Cycling facilities

It has been agreed with the Council that a commuted sum will be paid by the applicant for the provision of cycle parking facilities nearby, so no cycle storage provision is made in the application scheme.



#### 4.13 Landscaping

The proposed building covers most of the site, leaving little scope for ground level landscaping. However the replacement main hall in the middle of the site has a large flat roof where it is proposed to use an intensive growing roof system to introduce a 'green' element into the development, on those areas not required for the sighting of external plant.

#### 4.14 Flood risk and drainage strategy

Due to the elevation of the site no flood risk assessment has been requested by the Council, so we do not deal with flood risk in this document. In terms of drainage, there is an existing street sewer that receives both the foul and surface water outflow from the building. It is proposed that this situation remains unchanged in the developed site.



Red and blue arrows marking proposed cultural centre and residential access respectively. Both doors face the street and are features of the original design of the frontage building.

#### 4.15 Access

The proposal places residential accommodation alongside D1 space in the same building. These uses will be kept completely separate and this separation begins with the street access.

Residents will access the building from the eastern side of the application site on Old Gloucester Street through a specifically designated entrance that originally served the residential accommodation of the school staff. There is provision for a solely residential stairs core which will lead to the apartments within the upper floors of the frontage building. There is no step free access to any dwelling in the development due to the necessity to retain existing features.

The Cultural Centre floorspace users will access the building through the principle entrance as seen from the street, which was originally the school entrance for pupils. This will lead to a main lobby and stair/lift that will give visitors the option to go up, down or forward into the main hall at level 0.

In terms of internal horizontal circulation, the building layout is clear, simple and reasonably legible, given the inherent space planning constraints of the site. In terms of vertical circulation, there is no possibility of providing step free access from the street due to the heritage constraints of the building. However, once inside the main entrance, there is step free access to all cultural centre levels by means of the new lift.

## 4.16 Transport and parking

The site is located in an area that is provided with excellent public transport and is intended to be car free. Motor vehicles can reach the site for deliveries and servicing as required by Old Gloucester Street. Cycle storage is not provided on site due to building constraints. There is no parking for motor vehicles included in the scheme.

There are three underground stations in close proximity to the site. Southampton Row and Theobald's Road also have several popular bus routes running along them, providing access to the wider London travel network. There are many public provisions for cycling in the locality of the site, such as designated highway cycle lanes, cycle stands and Santander cycle docking stations.

## 4.17 Sustainability strategy

The development is inherently sustainable in terms of the utilisation of previously developed land within an established settlement, well provided with services of all types. The optimisation of the capacity of such land is one of the project goals already described. The building envelope will be thermally insulated to a high standard, helping to minimise the future energy demands of the occupants and to preserve a reasonably low carbon footprint in use. Other features are being considered such as intelligent lighting controls and domestic heat recovery systems that will contribute to the overall sustainability of the scheme.

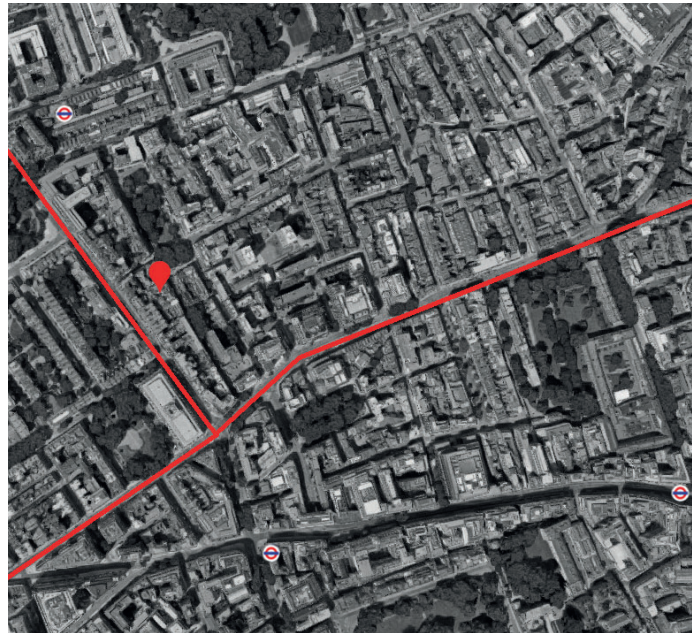


Diagram showing the local tube stations all within 5 minutes walk

## 4.18 Structural strategy

The proposal includes the construction of new basement accommodation at the rear of the site, for which application supporting documents have been produced to deal with various impact assessments. The retained frontage building will require additional structural support due to the loss of original fabric during historic alterations, now being reversed. The proposed single storey office extension would sit on the existing building.

The bearing capacity of the existing foundations and basement structure will need to be assessed to demonstrate that it has sufficient capacity to support the loads of the new cultural centre.

## 4.19 Mechanical and electrical strategy

MEP services consist of the mechanical, electrical and public health services to be installed in the building. All new services will be installed into the refurbished and extended premises in this case. The proposal is to provide the appropriate services in keeping with the overall energy strategy of the project. The apartments will be provided with self-contained electric boilers producing low temperature hot water for both space heating and water calorification. No air conditioning is proposed in the scheme. Mains electricity will be provided for lighting and small power. Mains drainage will be by means of the existing adopted street sewer below Old Gloucester Street. The D1 floorspace will be serviced in a similar manner to the residential space. A area of the flat roof intended for the sighting of any necessary external plant is screened from neighbours with acoustic louvred panels.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS

This document has outlined the previously consented application and the design process of a new proposal that will compliment the existing building. Furthermore the proposal has been achieved through collaboration with the client by an open approach of presenting, discussion, listening and creation. The design team has fully understood, and responded positively to the aspirations of BAPS organisation and the local resident, for the site and the immediate wider surroundings. This is evident by our design approach which has taken in accountability of the running costs for the cultural centre being dependant on the office and residential apartments.

The proposal is strategically placed to not disturb the existing building's nature however, the design still creates a variation between the new and old. The scheme delivers the solution for the BAPS organisation to use the cultural centre to host their activities with the financial aid from the new proposed residential apartments and office.

The proposal process concluded by taking the positive responses from the previously consented applications in 2013 and 2021, and we trust the planning application will continue to receive full support for this scheme.