



# Child Graddon Lewis

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164 Shaftesbury Ave

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Design and Access Statement  
October 2023





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01

Introduction



# Introduction Statement

## 01.01 Introduction

This design and access statement has been prepared by Child Graddon Lewis on behalf of the owners of the property, as part of a planning application for the proposed refurbishment of 164 Shaftesbury Avenue. The document sets out in detail the proposed changes to retrofit the existing property to better meet the needs of current and future tenants. The proposals include modifications to the internal layouts, ground floor entrance, parking / cycling facilities as well as a comprehensive overhaul of services and plant. Retention of the concrete frame recognises the extent and value of embodied carbon in the existing property, with the replacement of the existing services plant and equipment positively impacting future energy use.

The proposals consider and respond to the setting of the Seven Dials Conservation Area, and recognise the architectural value of the existing building.

This document should be read in conjunction with CGL existing and proposed drawings, and Noise Impact Assessment produced by Clarke Saunders.

## PROJECT TEAM

Applicant/Freeholder	Daejan Investments Ltd.
Project Manager	JLL Group
Architects	Child Graddon Lewis
Structural Engineers	Heyne Tillett Steel
MEP Consultants	Watkins Payne
Planning Consultants	JLL Group
Quantity Surveyors	Core Five
Fire Consultants	Jensen Hughes
Acoustic Consultants	Clarke Saunders
Sustainability Consultants	JLL Net Zero Design Consulting
Heritage Consultants	KM Heritage





02

Application Site





# Location and Context

02.01 Application Site



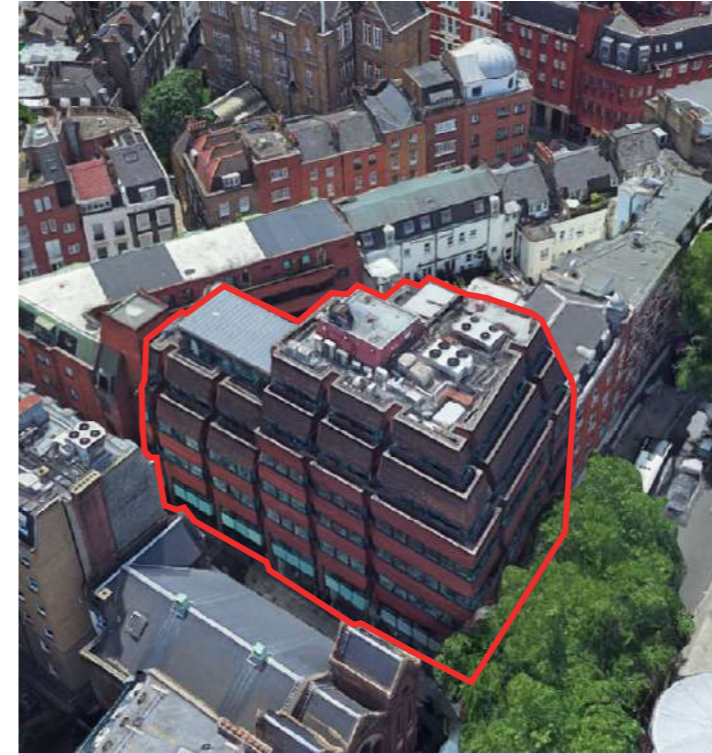


# Location and Context

## 02.01 Application Site

The application site address is:  
164 Shaftesbury Ave, London WC2H 8HL

The site is situated on the corner of Shaftesbury Avenue and Mercer Street, a short distance from Leicester Square, Covent Garden and Tottenham Court Road tube stations. Surrounding buildings vary significantly in age and architectural style although the predominant use is B1 (new use class E) on upper floors with either B1 or a retail use at ground floor. Notable exceptions are the adjacent church, the Odeon cinema opposite and a hotel to the rear of the church on Mercer Street. There are also small elements of residential use adjacent to the proposed site. The existing building was conceived as part of a mixed use development, with our proposals comprising the commercial element. To the southeast, towards Seven Dials, is the residential element which fronts Mercer Street and Earlham Street.





# Site History

## 02.02 Application Site

The land where the Seven Dials has developed was once part of a piece of land known as Cock and Pye Fields. The farmland was at the time owned by the Worshipful Company of Mercers. It is visible from a 1682 map that the only street that still exists today, is White Lion Street, later renamed Mercer Street.

The streets running around the central Seven Dials junction were built during the later part of the 17th and early 18th centuries. Thomas Neale obtained the lease for the land in 1693 and cleverly laid out the area in a series of triangles to maximise the number of houses.

The names of the seven streets were chosen with the intention of attracting wealthy residents, however some of the names have subsequently been simplified, as seen in the historical maps to the right. \*1

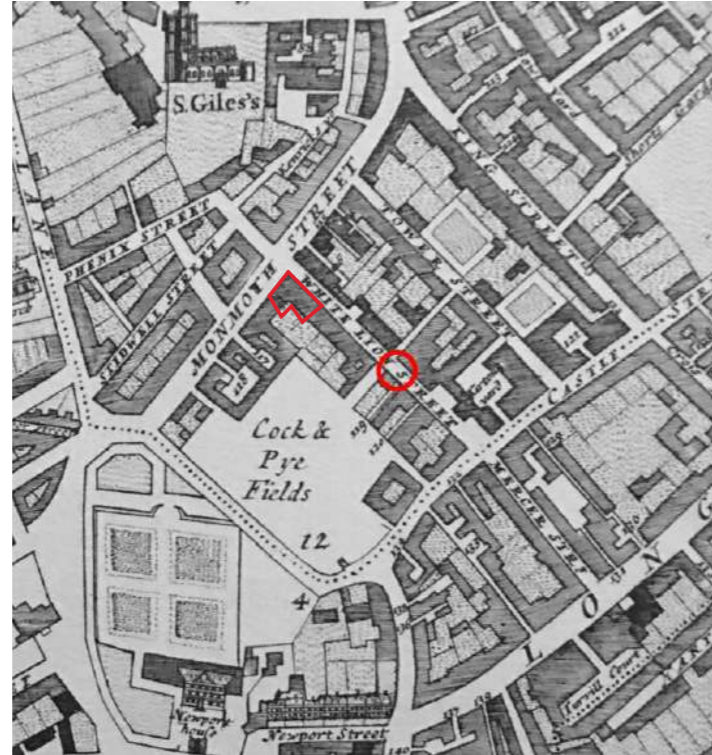
Taking as example the success of the Covent Garden Piazza, Neale aimed to establish Seven Dials as the most fashionable address in London. Unfortunately, the area failed to establish itself as Neale hoped and deteriorated into a slum, renowned for its gin shops and petty crime.

The previous building at the address of 164 Shaftesbury Avenue was known as the Shaftesbury House, and was built in 1887. 'It provided accommodation for 100 destitute boys and 35 working boys, together with a club, institute and offices' for the Society owning the building. Although it had its entrance on Great White Lion Street (now Mercer St), Shaftesbury House adopted the address of 164a Shaftesbury Avenue.

In 1896, part of Shaftesbury House (later also known as Fordham House) was altered so that it can be used as a Technical School for the training of older boys in various trades, most predominantly leather shoemaking and tailoring. When the war started in 1914, the building has taken various usages, from providing shelter to 12 Belgian refugee boys, to becoming an air raid shelter for people in the vicinity. At the start of the second world war (1939), Shaftesbury House had a blast wall erected and the ceiling of the basement propped up'. Due to the economical decline of the Society owning the building, the Shaftesbury House was permanently closed in 1948, and the freehold was sold. It was later used as offices until around 1970, after which it was replaced with a new brick and concrete building, in 1975, the same building that can be seen today.

**Source:** In and Around Covent Garden, Covent Garden Post (John Richardson), The Annals of London (John Richardson), London the Biography (Peter Ackroyd)

1682 historical map (site marked with red outline)  
Red circle indicated Seven Dial Junction



Previous building at the address of 164 Shaftesbury Avenue



(c) childrenshomes.org.uk

1755 historical map (site marked with red outline)



Shoemakers training at Shaftesbury House in the late 1800s.

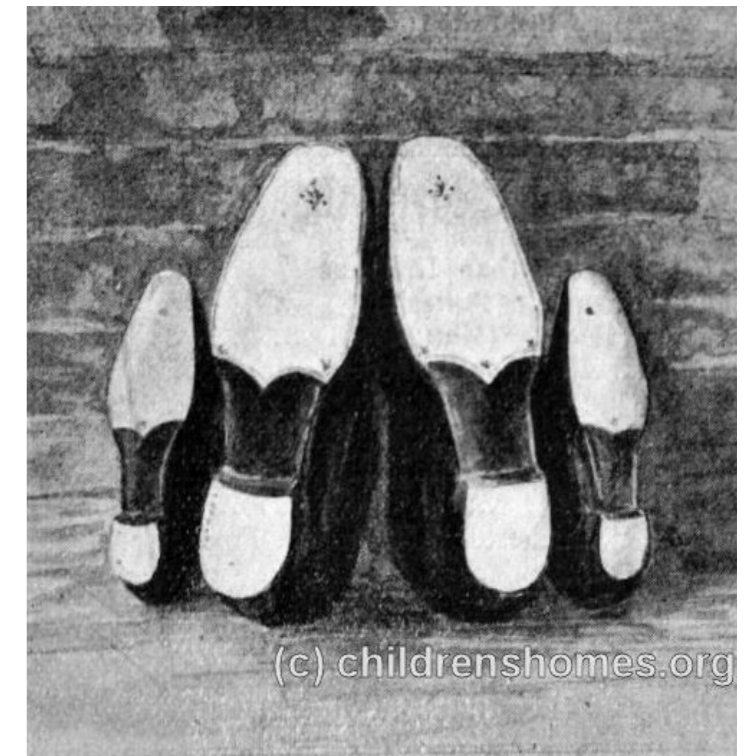


(c) childrenshomes.org.uk

1895 historical map (site marked with red outline)



Shoemakers training at Shaftesbury House in the late 1800s.



(c) childrenshomes.org





# Conservation Area

## 02.03 Application Site

The application site is located within 'Sub-Area 1' of the Seven Dials Conservation Area. The application building is not listed. Whilst settlement in the area goes back to Roman Times the distinctive layout around Seven Dials itself was introduced towards the end of the 17th Century. What was particularly unique at that time was the departure from the more regular grid that typified urban development in the city. Early development from this period was characterised by residential terraces, some of which survive to this date. There is a scale and finer grain to these earlier properties, which combined with the narrow streets helps to shape the overall character of the area. The special character of the conservation area is found in the mix of building types, uses and the radial street layout. Camden's Conservation Area Statement (CAS) identifies this mix of building styles from differing periods and the ensuing combination which defines the overall character, rather than one dominant style.

Shaftesbury Avenue and the northeast corner of Cambridge Circus were formed by the Metropolitan Board of Works in the 1880s by widening the existing street. The greater importance of Shaftesbury Avenue as a central London Avenue, is reflected in the distinctive scale of buildings, with plots wider and higher than the rest of the Conservation Area. For these reasons the CAS describes Shaftesbury Avenue as a natural boundary to the Conservation Area.

Development over the years has led to varied scale and some of the finer grain of the earlier properties has become diluted. The CAS highlights this point and the application site itself forms part of a comprehensive development which originally included Earlham House when constructed in 1975. Whilst the application property is now in separate ownership to Earlham House, the language and materiality is clearly unified.

### Shop-fronts of merit



37 Monmouth Street



50 Neal Street



16 Monmouth Street



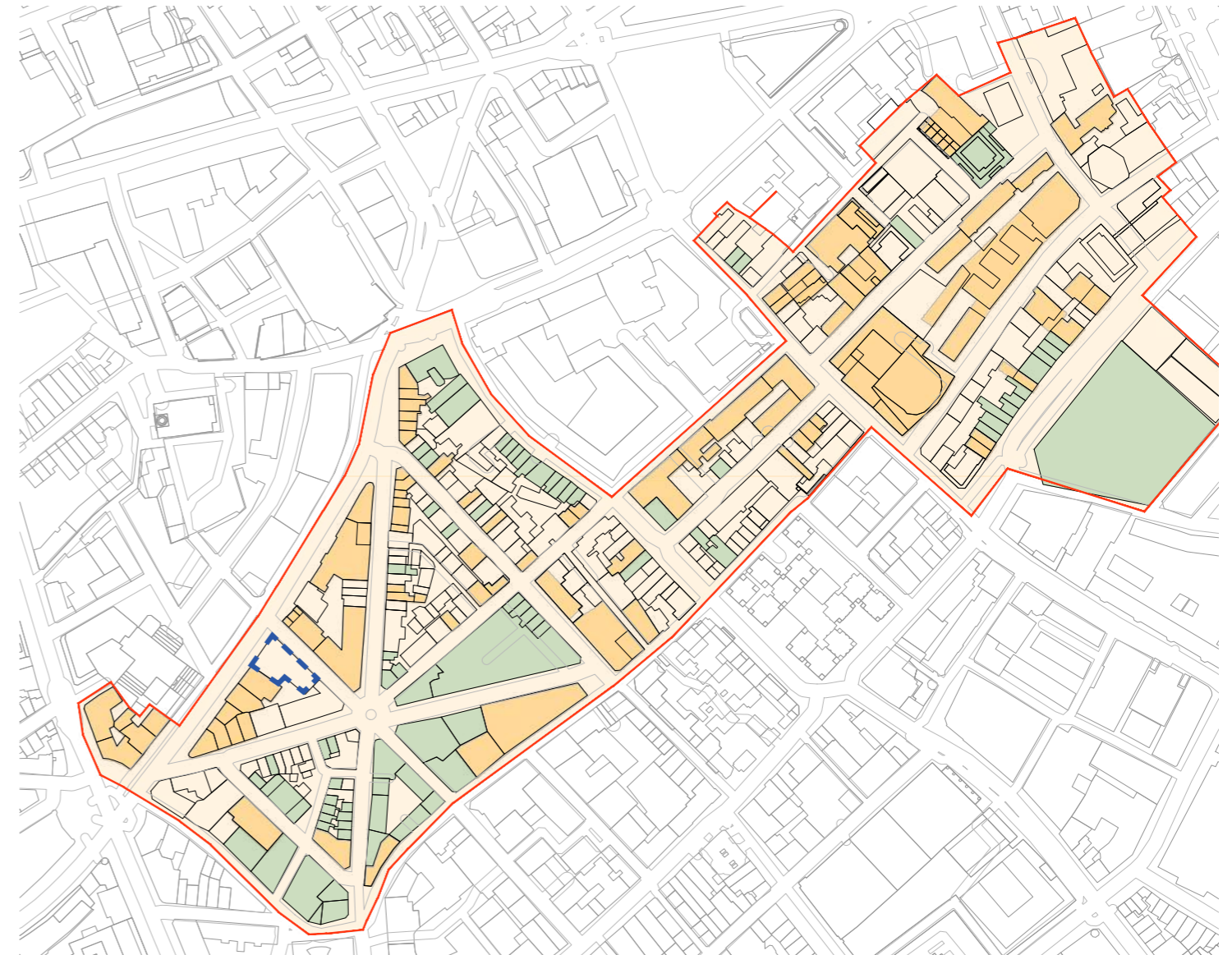
14 Earlham Street



29 Shelton Street



42 Monmouth Street



### KEY

- Conservation area
- Positive contribution
- Listed buildings
- Site boundary





# Surrounding Character

02.04 Application Site



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**KEY**

- Negative impact
- Conservation area
- Positive contribution
- Listed buildings
- Site boundary





# Existing Building Character

## 02.05 Application Site

The existing building was conceived as part of a mixed use development, with our proposals comprising the commercial element. To the southeast, towards Seven Dials, is the residential element which fronts Mercer Street and Earlham Street.

Constructed in 1975 it is predominantly clad in a red brick, with metal framed windows and smaller areas of metal panelled cladding. The building has two distinctive elevations (Shaftesbury Avenue and Mercer Street) where the vertical elevation changes to an angled profile on the fifth and sixth floors. These elevations are given order by a series of projecting bays within which the glazed elements sit. This breaks down at ground and first floor levels. Although information relating to the original planning and building control applications is sparse, it is clear from structural drawings that the original concept for the building differs to the final built solution at ground floor level.

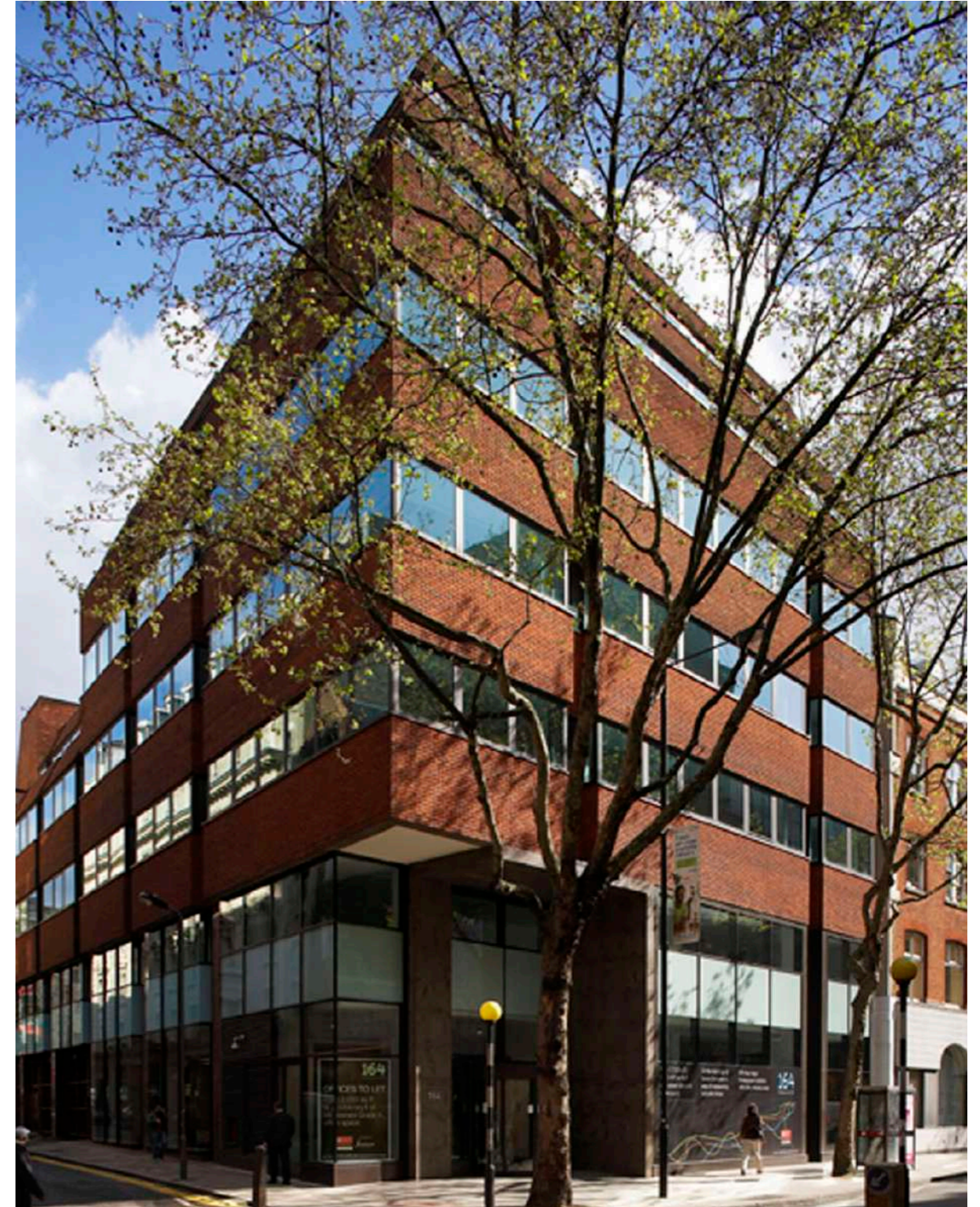
The building rises to seven storeys at the front (facing Shaftesbury Avenue) with the fifth and sixth floor setting back as a result of the angled profile of the building. To the southeast the building is only five storeys high.

Daejan Investments Ltd. House directly adjacent to the southwest is five storeys high, Gower Street Memorial Chapel to the northeast is approximately five and a half storeys high whilst the hotel to the rear rises to eight storeys (two of which are a mansard roof). Other commercial buildings on the opposite side of Shaftesbury Avenue vary from 5 to 12 storeys high.

Whilst the dominant red brick of 164 Shaftesbury Avenue is in keeping with the prevailing materiality within the Conservation Area there are many aspects of the building that differ, hence why it is identified as a negative feature within Camden's Conservation Area Statement (CAS).

Notwithstanding these comments within the CAS the lengthy pre-application process has provided detailed feedback from Camden on the existing building, how it is viewed by the council in relation to the Conservation Area and as a heritage asset itself. Through this process Camden Council have provided clear feedback that they do not wish to see any significant changes to the external appearance and form of the existing building, in particular any changes that would increase the extent of glazing or the existing materiality.

In response, proposed changes to the external facade have been significantly reduced, and are now limited to modifications at the ground and first floors to improve the entrances and gates to the service courtyard and the upper floor terraces. The existing windows need to be replaced due to their age and condition. This will also provide the opportunity to improve their thermal performance, offering a sustainability benefit.



Existing corner view of 164 Shaftesbury Avenue



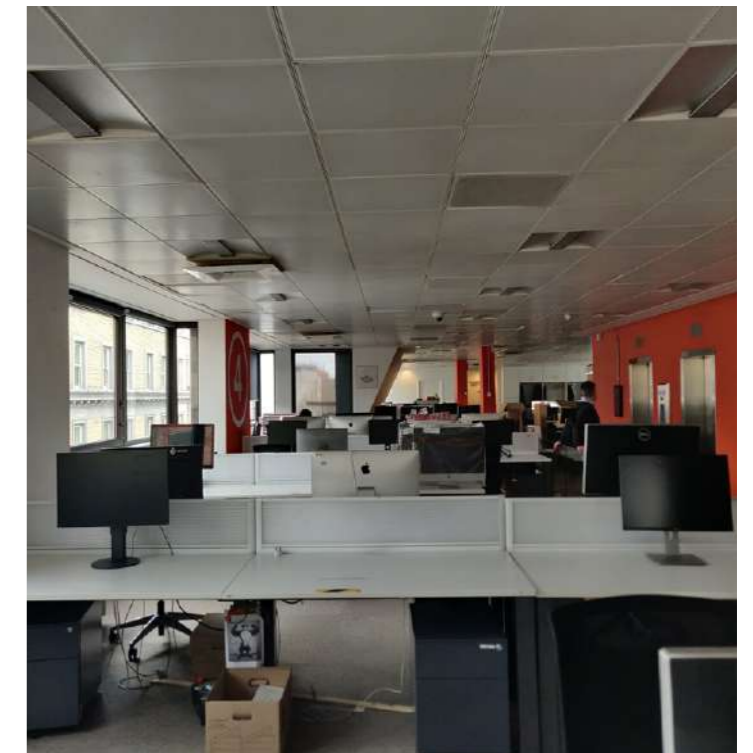
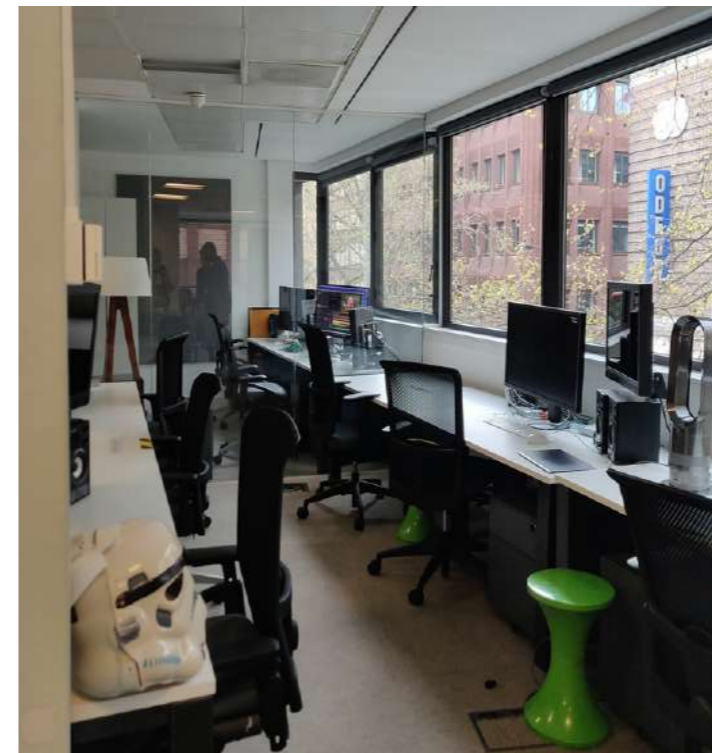
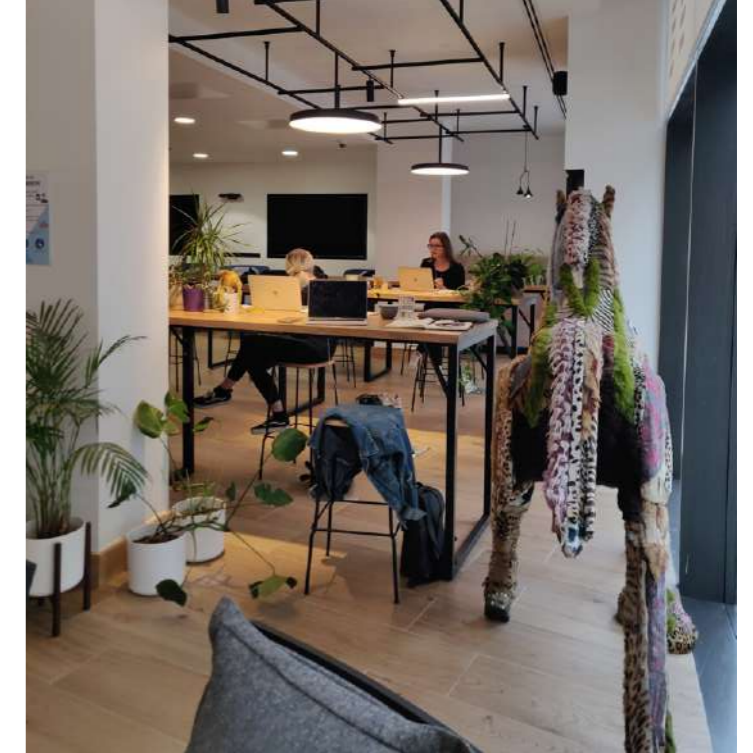
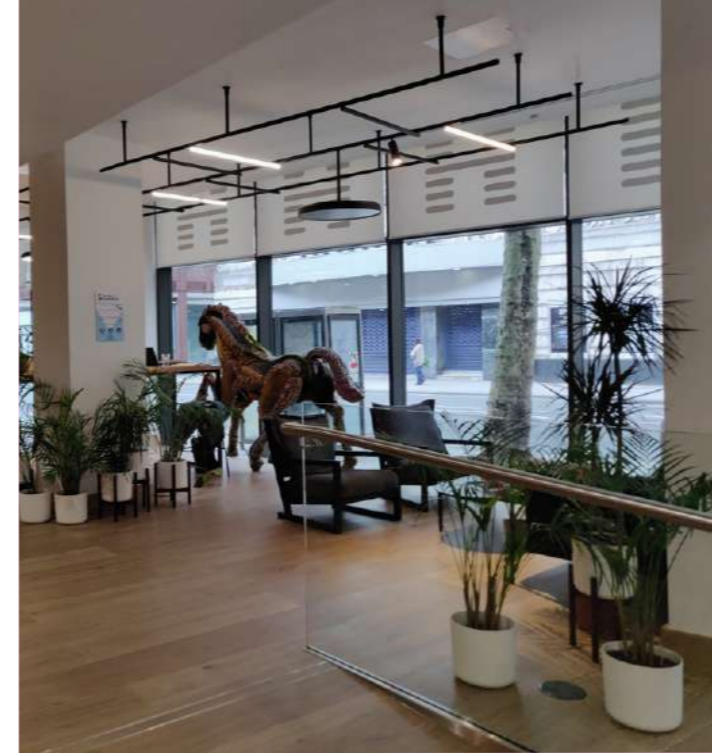
# Planning History

## 02.06 Application Site

In 2005 planning consent was granted via separate applications for a series of modifications and extensions to the property. Three applications were made, covering the following changes to the property:

- 2005/4782/P - A five storey rear corner extension of the existing property, with additional roof plant, safety rail and ducts.
- 2205/3664/P - Extension and modification to the ground floor entrance reception, extension to the office space at ground and first floor, along Shaftesbury Avenue. Flexible use for either A1, A2, or B1 purposes.
- 2005/4784/P - A rooftop extension at fifth floor level and the addition of new plant at floor roof level.

All three applications were fully implemented.





03

Existing Building





# Appearance: External

## 03.01 Existing Building

The existing building is a commercial office property which features a horizontal banding of red brickwork and glazing, with curtain walling at street level across ground floor and first floor.

The existing elevations are predominantly clad in red brick with metal framed windows accentuating the horizontal line and elements of metal panelled cladding accentuating the vertical lines on the elevations. As detailed in the site description, the elevations are dominated by a series of projecting bays which give a formal composition to the façades.

Furthermore the angled setbacks at fifth and sixth floor level also contribute strongly to the building's characteristic appearance. However, at ground floor this ordered composition breaks down disrupting the building's overall architectural rhythm and the deep set back creates a dark space which is unwelcoming for occupiers and visitors.

The building has limited and disconnected outdoor spaces, at 5th and 6th floor. The current lack of outdoor space/ recreational space does not support wellbeing of building occupiers, nor encourage social interaction

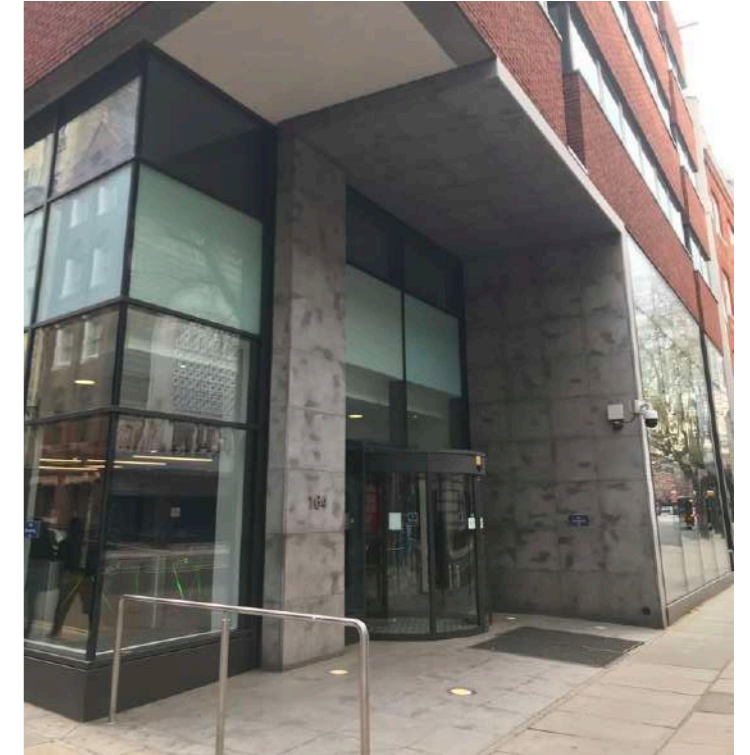
The rear façade was refurbished in 2008 whereby the first to fifth floor plates were extended



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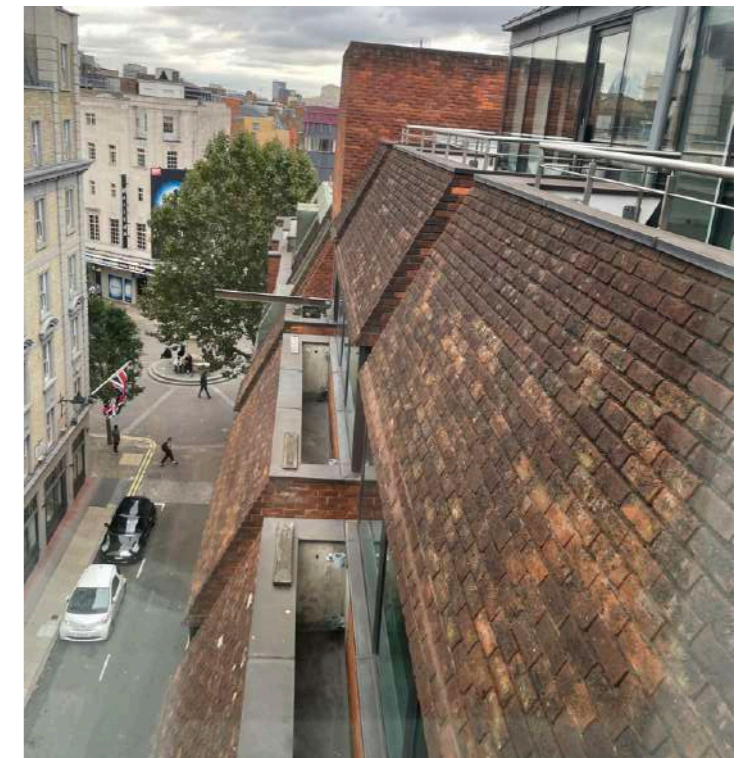
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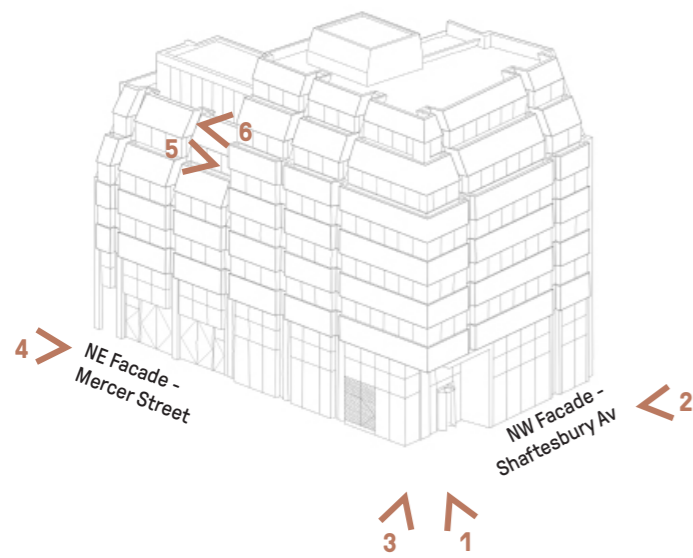
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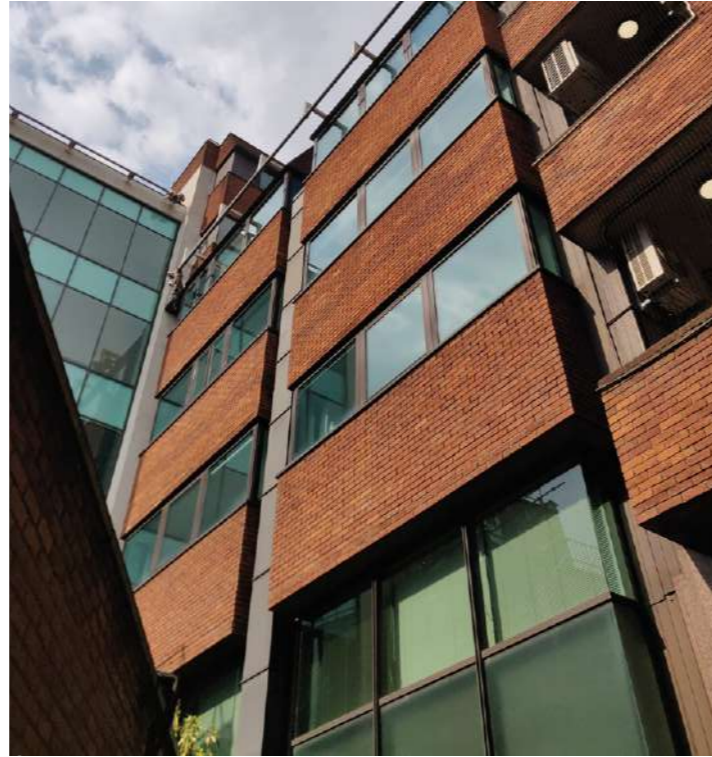
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# Appearance: External

03.01 Existing Building



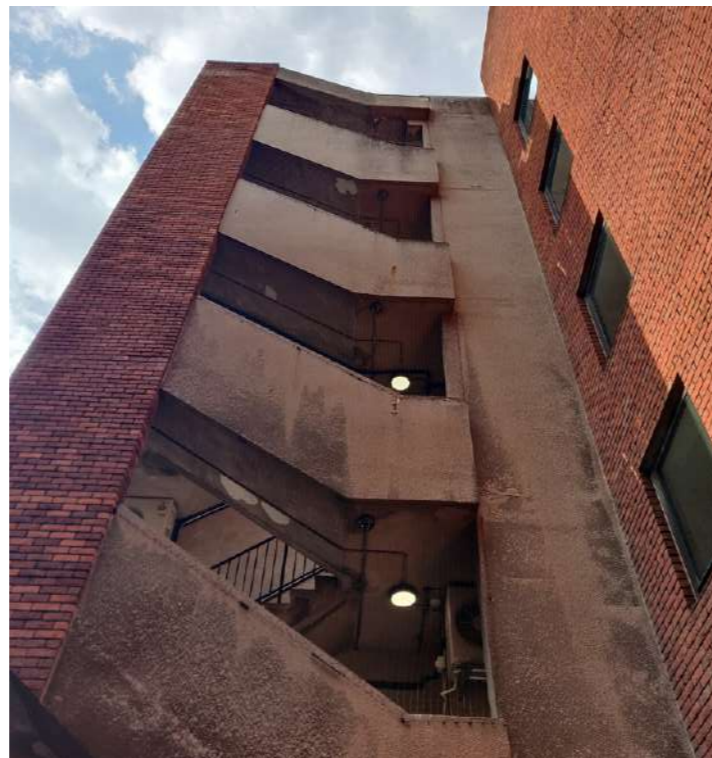
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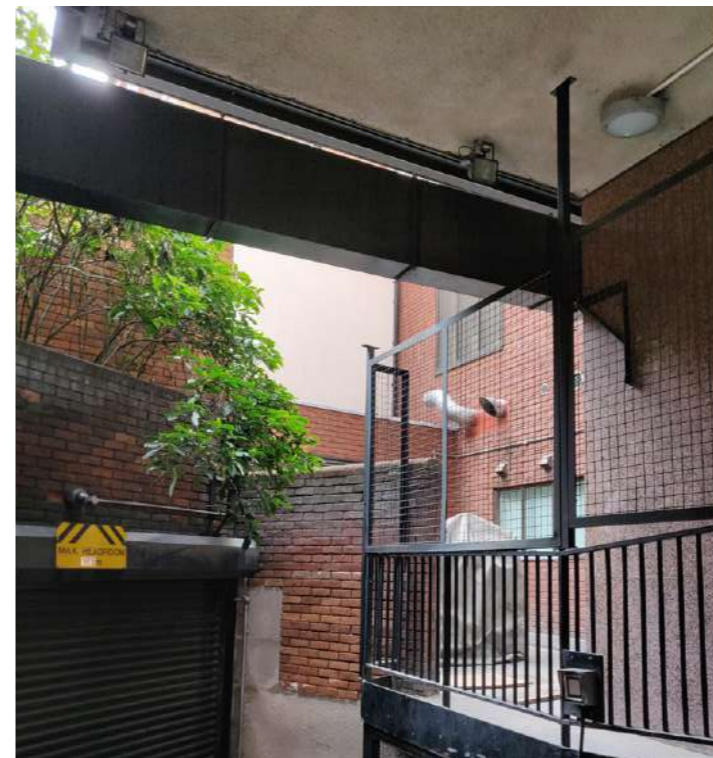
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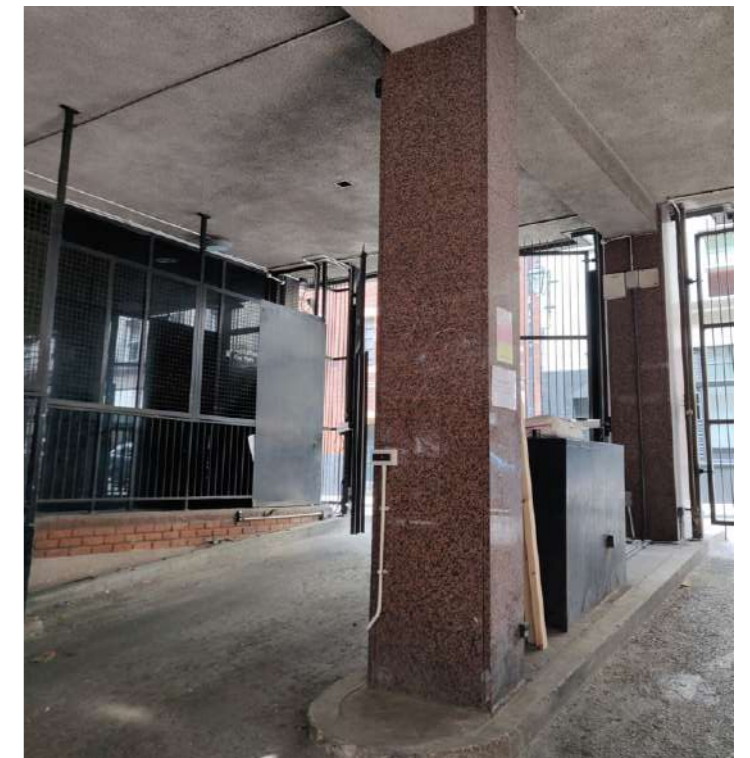
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