



Heritage Impact Assessment

Heritage Impact Assessment

55. This chapter appraises the impacts of the proposed development on the heritage sensitivities identified within the report. It supports the Local Planning Authority in their decision making process.

Development of Proposals Summary

56. The approved development included:
- i. Roof terrace with pavilion, pergola and plant enclosure;
 - ii. Rear infill extension with terrace, small rearward extension at eighth floor level and new external staircase;
 - iii. Alterations to main entrance, surround and lightwells;
 - iv. Alterations to entrance on Tavistock Place elevation;
 - v. New windows on return elevation;
 - vi. Repaving of rear yard and addition of bin store and UKPN enclosure;
 - vii. Internal alterations;
57. The Section 73 amendments vary the design of the external rear facades, rooftop plant together with other associated works. Detail of the amended proposals are presented in the submitted drawing pack and Design and Access Statement. These should be consulted before reading the following section.
58. Any effect on the townscape or identified heritage receptors would arise solely from changes to the external form and appearance of Tavis House, not its interior. External changes in massing or the building's appearance have the potential to affect the building's contribution to the character, appearance and overall significance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, and the setting (as part of the significance) of nearby listed buildings.

59. Accordingly only the following elements of the amended proposals are not assessed:
- Adaptations to front lightwell to accommodate additional plant, including introduction of low level louvres
 - Changes to core and roof layout which have implications for appearance of ninth floor roof pop up
 - Design alteration to rear infill to suit lab-enabled space planning and limit solar gains, namely raising of cill heights, rationalisation of grid, double height opening to allow vehicle turning in rear yard and integrated plant screening to 8th and 9th floors.

- Dedicated plant enclosures to accommodate rooftop plant, resulting in amendments to the approved scheme (which included a rooftop terrace), internal winter garden and terrace proposed at 8th floor.

Adaptations to front lightwell to accommodate additional plant, including introduction of low level louvres

60. The proposal includes greening the lightwell with planters set on covering with plant beneath and low level louvres.
61. These elements of the proposed amendments would be neutral in its effect on heritage and townscape receptors. The lightwell is under

utilised and is physically and visually discrete, contributing little to any heritage significance or townscape character. The retention of the wall and railings would preserve the sense of a lightwell and any contribution it has to the heritage interests and townscape character. The introduction of planters would sustain the offering of the approved development.

Changes to core and roof layout which have implications for appearance of ninth floor roof pop up

62. Internally the core would be expanded in footprint to include larger service risers and an escape stairs. This has two implications to vary the form and external appearance of the approved

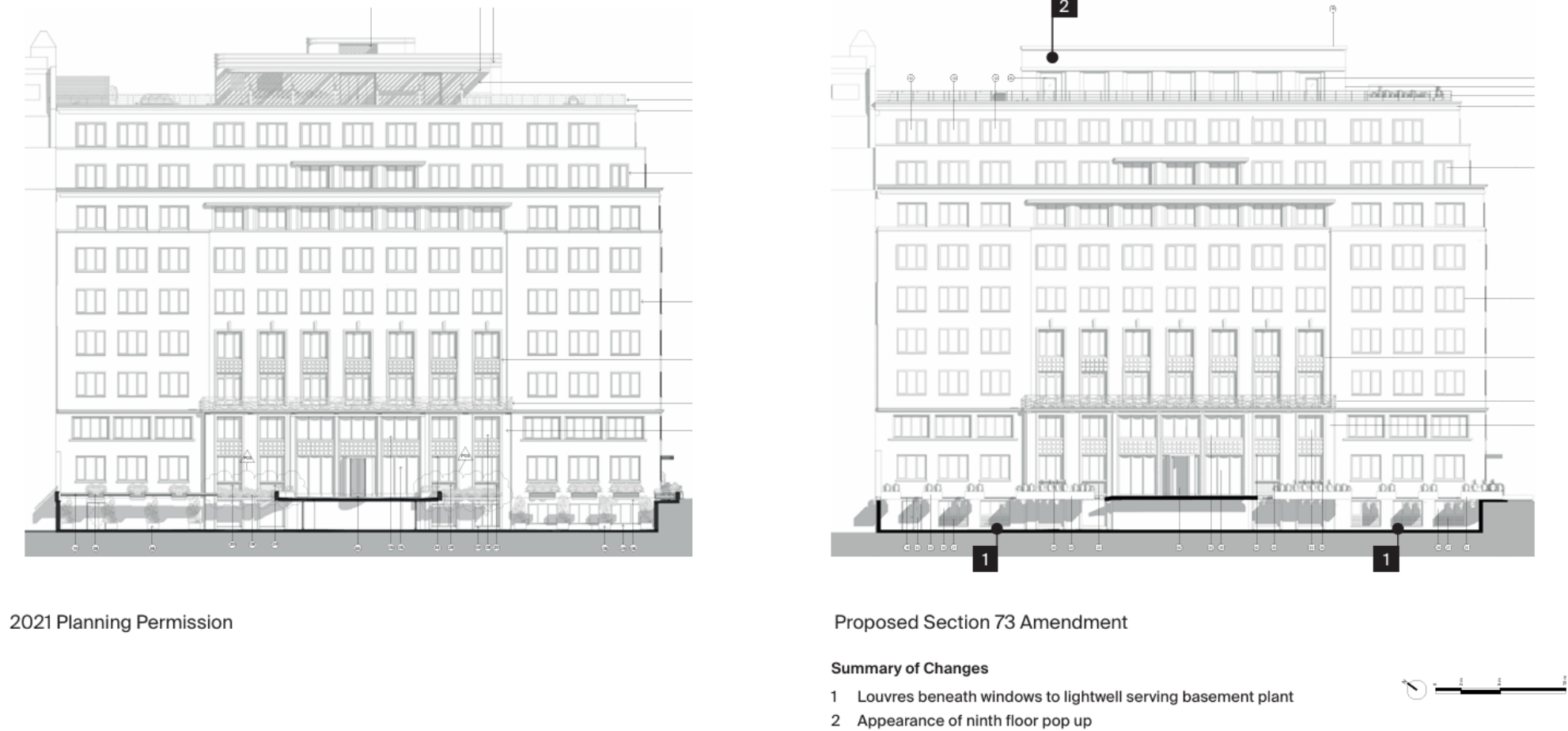


Figure 14: Front elevation as approved (left) and proposed (right)

Summary



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Proposed Section 73 Amendment

Summary of Changes

- 1 New openings to existing flank wall removed, existing condition restored
- 2 9th & 8th floor to accommodate rooftop plant with acoustic screening integrated into facade design
- 3 Strobic fans located on eighth
- 4 Double height opening in structure to allow for services vehicle turning
- 5 Balconies removed, facade grid regularised to optimise structure
- 6 Escape stair brought internally

Figure 15: Rear elevation as approved (left) and proposed (right)

- development; firstly, the avoidance of an external staircase at the north end of the rear elevation, and, secondly, variation to the ninth floor structure and layout.
63. The approved development included retention of an external fire escape at the north end of the rear elevation, adjacent to the external fire escape of Lynton House. The integration of escape stairs into the core allows simplification and improvement to the proposed external rear elevation and a neater overall composition. Whilst the external stairs were considered to have an acceptable effect on the significance of heritage assets and the townscape character, the proposed amended design is considered preferable - it would enhance the architectural

- appearance and rationalise the form, resulting in improved contribution of the building to the setting of the adjacent listed building.
64. At ninth floor level the approved development allowed construction of a rooftop pavilion that occupied a wider footprint than the existing access point. The approved structure was to be taller in height than the existing structure and visible in views of the building from the square. This approved rooftop pavilion was set back from the building's edge and surrounded on its west side by a pergola canopy with terrace amenity space. The proposed amendments would result in a rooftop structure that is wider and deeper in plan, including screened plant utilised for plant. Beneficially the ninth floor would not be served by

- lifts and therefore the height of the proposed amendment design is lower than approved.
65. The massing and appearance of the ninth floor, as proposed by the amended design, is considered to be appropriate to the host building and its context. Its architectural design draws upon art deco references and its lowered height limits any perceived bulk that may arise from its larger footprint. It would remain set back from front and rear elevations and importantly it is to be placed centrally, continuing the strong symmetry of the front elevation.

Design alteration to rear infill to suit lab space planning and limit solar gains, namely raising of cill heights, rationalisation of grid, double height

opening to allow vehicle turning in rear yard and integrated plant screening to 8th and 9th floors.

66. The existing rear elevation is mundane and utilitarian in character and appearance and of minimal heritage and townscape value. Approval has been granted for its removal and replacement with a new façade and enlarged footprint. Grant of approval demonstrates that the special interests of the conservation area and nearby listed buildings can sustain change.
67. The proposed amended design seeks to maintain the quality and character of the approved and offers minimal variation in massing. The design changes and proposed use affect the grid and this principally manifests in varied fenestration. The design process has followed a rigorous process that has evidently had consideration to the townscape and heritage receptors and, as per the approved scheme, there is a commitment to high quality materials and architectural appearance.
68. The proposed amended fenestration remains ordered but with greater horizontal emphasis. The glazed bays are set within characterful and vertically tapering glazed brick piers that give depth and visual interest. Raising of the sills results in a rhythm of profiled and pigmented precast concrete spandrel panels and a tripartite of metal framed windows. The order has a functional aesthetic and regularity that reflects the building's architecture and the proposed use.
69. It is no longer proposed to include balconies nor, as described above, the external stairs. These changes are considered beneficial in their effect on appearance and architectural character as they facilitate a simplified overall composition.

Dedicated plant enclosures to accommodate rooftop plant, resulting in amendments to the approved scheme (which included a rooftop terrace), internal winter garden and terrace proposed at 8th floor

70. The approved scheme provided office

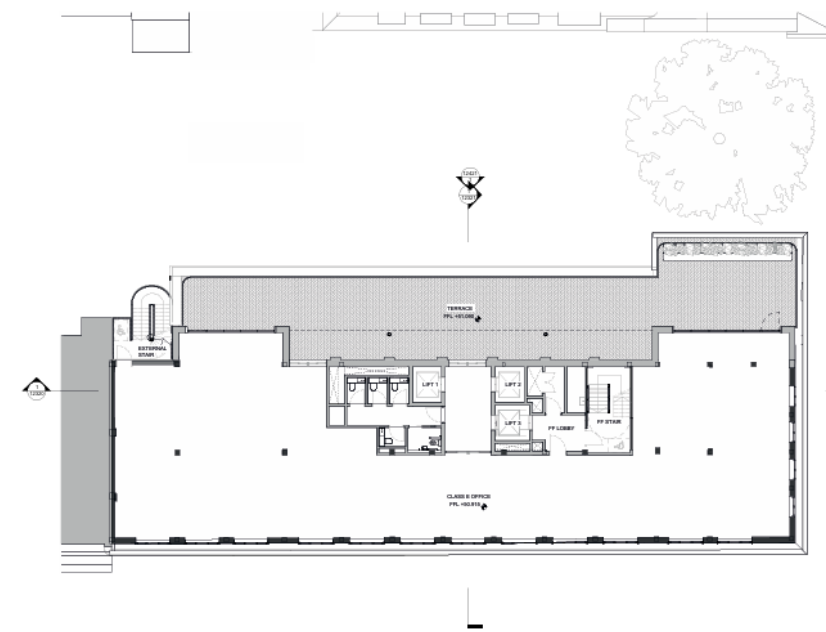
accommodation wrapping around the central core at eighth floor, resulting in a new fenestrated rear elevation. The proposed amended design seeks to utilise much of the northern part of this floor for plant and therefore the rear elevation becomes a solid screen. For design interest the screen is to be formed of scallop profiled and pigmented precast concrete panels serving as a plant screen. These vertically continue the tripartite fenestrative order of each bay with the narrow glazed brick dividing piers. These elements would read as a distinctive termination to the infill rear extension and add architectural interest. These proposed elements of the design would not have any adverse effect on the significance of the heritage assets.

71. To provide amenity space, a winter garden is proposed at the southern end of the 8th floor. Externally any manifestation is limited to a new rooflight where the approved scheme offered roof terrace. The profile and design for the rooflight would not breach the parapet or be visible in any views. Likewise, the internal works would not affect the appearance of the building or change its relationship with its historic context. Accordingly the proposed winter garden is neutral in effect on heritage receptors and townscape character. Any reduction in amenity at rooftop level is not a heritage issue—any townscape effect may be considered beneficial.

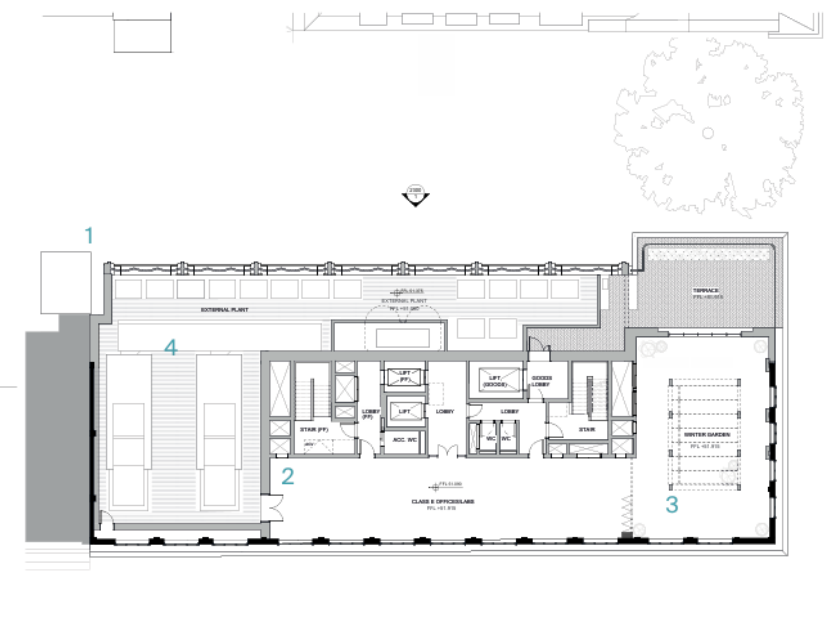
Effect on the Setting of Listed Buildings

72. The setting and significance of nearby listed buildings, in particular the adjacent Mary Ward Centre, would be preserved by the proposals. The Section 73 amendments have carefully considered the importance of the highly graded building immediately to its rear, and its setting. As demonstrated by the approved scheme, Tavis House and the site are capable of sustaining the increased depth to the plan and the significance of the Mary Ward building would not be adversely affected. The Section 73 amended design offers considered detailing and materials that would complement the setting of the listed building. The proposed landscaped gap that separates the Site from the listed building would be enhanced. Overall, the Section 73 amendments would achieve the same high quality architectural response and improvement to the subservient rear elevation of the building offered by the approved scheme.

Eighth Floor



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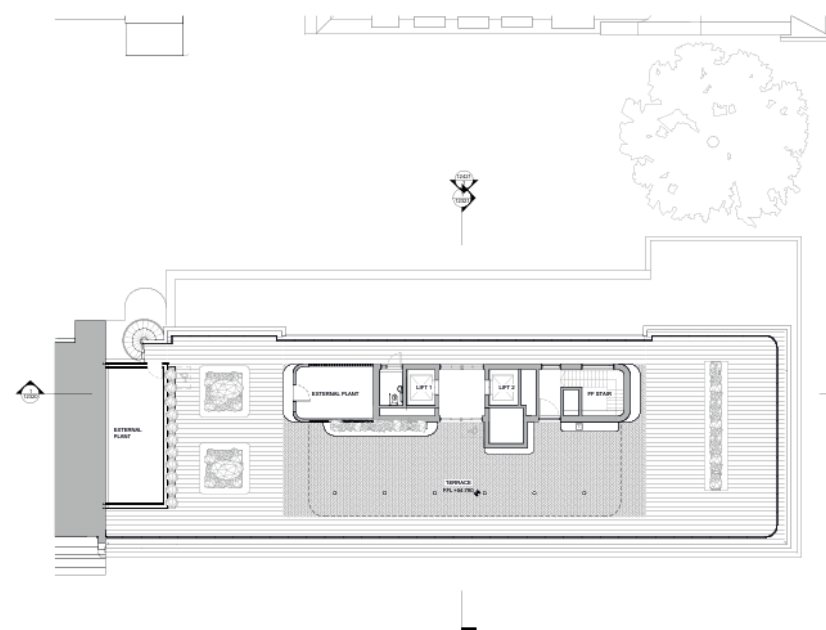


Proposed Section 73 Amendment

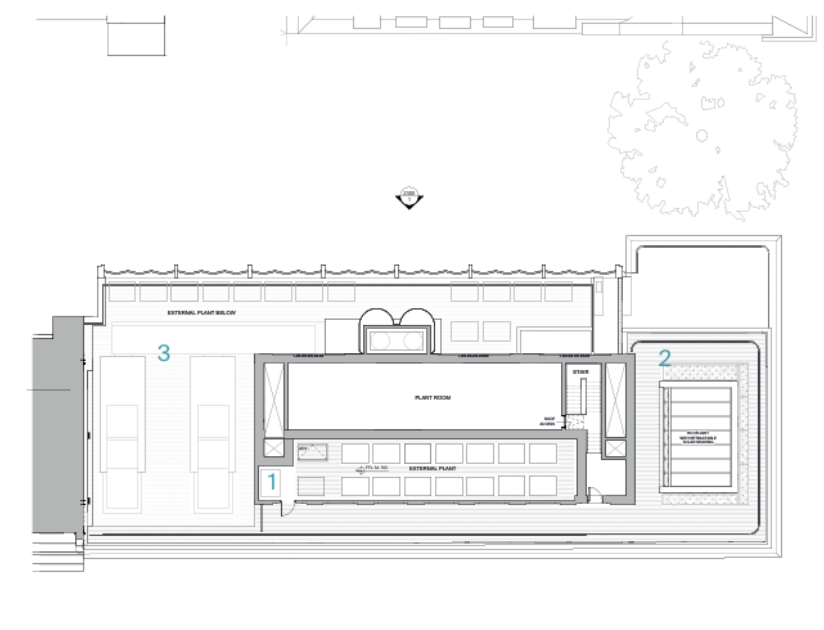
- 1 North east infill - external stair incorporated internally
- 2 Core expanded to include larger service risers and escape stair
- 3 Winter garden amenity space added
- 4 External plant, screened to rear elevation

Figure 16: Eighth Floor plan as approved (left) and proposed (right)

Ninth Floor



2021 Planning Permission



Proposed Section 73 Amendment

- 1 Expanded rooftop 'pop up' containing screened plant and service routes
- 2 Rooflight to winter garden below
- 3 Open to plant area below

Figure 17: Ninth Floor plan as approved (left) and proposed (right)



Townscape Impact Assessment

Townscape Impact Assessment

73. To assess the visual effect of the proposed development on the settings of nearby listed buildings, conservation areas and the local townscape, a viewpoint study was undertaken to review the extent and nature of the building's visibility and contribution to the townscape. It took into account the extent of visibility of the proposed development and the relationship of the building to its context, including heritage assets.
74. The viewpoints identified are not the only views which are likely to be affected by the development but are representative and sufficient to illustrate the urban relationships likely to arise between the proposed development, surrounding heritage assets and within the local townscape context.

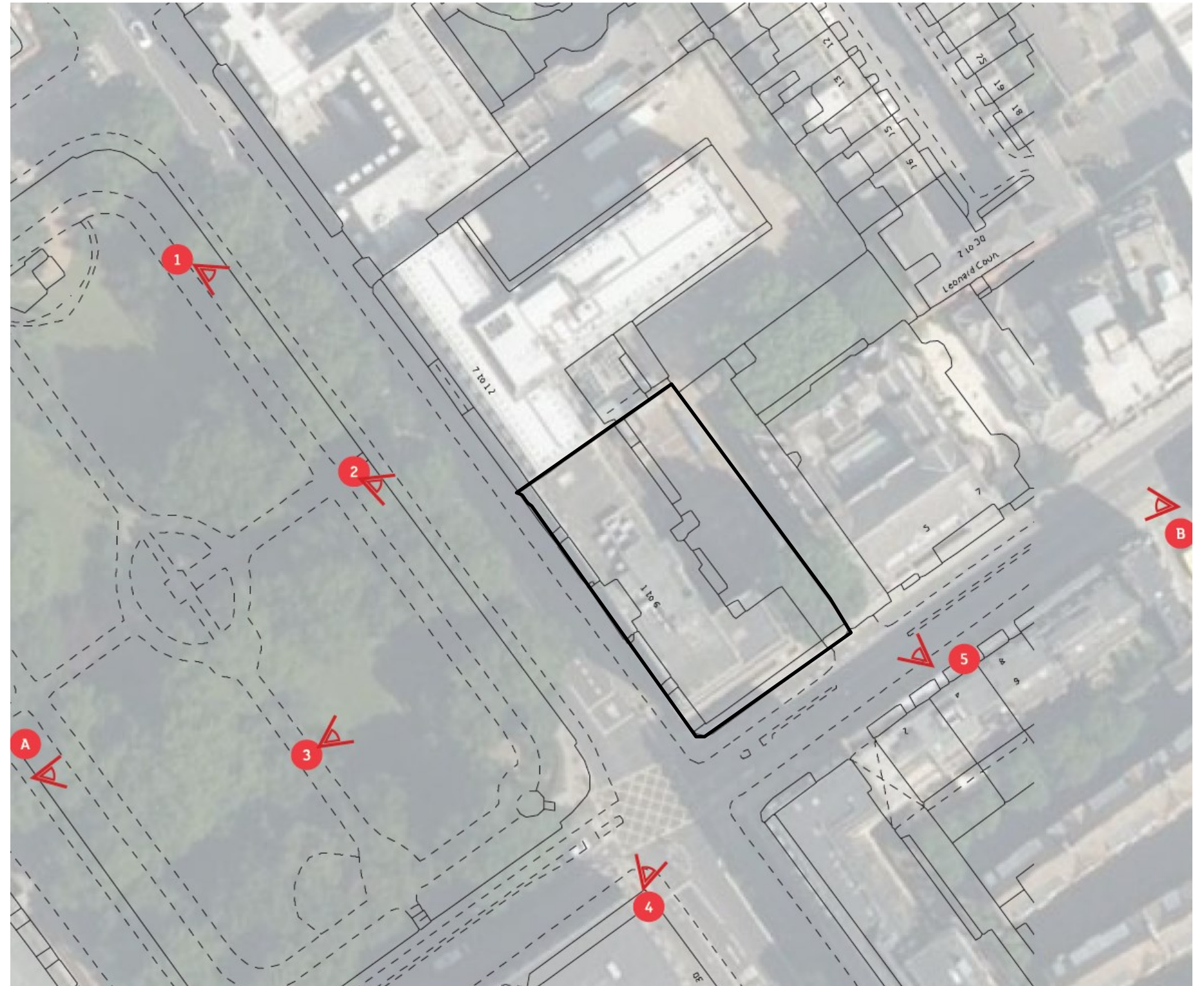


Figure 18: Viewpoint locations

Townscape Impact Assessment: View 1

Existing

This viewpoint is located to the north of Tavis House, near to the north corner of Tavistock Square, and looks south along the eastern edge of the square towards the front elevation of Tavis House. The view incorporates contrasting elements of the townscape: on the left-hand side large, sheer-fronted, multi-plot structures from the early and mid 20th century, including the Grade II listed BMA, predominate, whilst on the right-hand side hard build lines are effectively broken up and screened by the mature trees and vegetation of the late Georgian garden of Tavistock Square.

Approved

The only perceivable proposed changes that would be visible in this view are those affecting the main entrance. There would be no discernible change in massing or scale, and the proposed entrance represents a considered, contextual and high quality addition to the townscape of Tavistock Square.

Section 73 Amendments

The scale and nature of the proposed changes would not result in perceivable change to the asset's massing, scale or contribution to the townscape. The oblique angle of view and distance limit appreciation of any change from detailed design.



Townscape Impact Assessment: View 2

Existing

As with Townscape View 1, this view is defined by the hard build lines of the structures on the left-hand side of Tavistock Square and the contrasting soft edges of the trees and mature vegetation of Tavistock Square gardens on the right-hand side. The viewpoint has moved further south towards Tavis House, which now has greater focus in the view and aspects of the frontage's form and detail become more apparent, though it is still experienced incidentally as part of the wider townscape.

Approved

Again, the only proposed changes that would be readily visible in this view are those affecting the main entrance. High level change to the cornice at eighth floor level may be apparent although this would be barely discernible due to the height and set-back nature of that floor. The magnitude of change in this view would therefore be minimal, and the changes that are occurring represent considered, contextual and high quality additions to the townscape of Tavistock Square.

Section 73 Amendments

The scale and nature of the proposed changes would not result in perceivable change to the asset's massing, scale or contribution to the townscape. The oblique angle of view and distance limit appreciation of any change from detailed design.

