

Bedford Court Mansions Heritage Statement for Proposed Porter's Lodge and enhanced access



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Revised to relect layout updates			

Introduction

BPR Architects have been appointed to prepare a proposal for a Porter's Lodge and enhanced entrance arrangements to Bedford Court Mansions, in order to improve access and security to common areas.

This statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application submission in order to provide additional information on the proposed works in relation to the historical character and significance of the building.

The proposal follows consultation with the residents of Bedford Court Mansions, members of their management committee and building control. This submission follows an earlier successful application made in 2006 (reference 2006/4496/P).

The photographs used in this statement were taken in July 2012. Please also refer to BPR Architects 1124-01-sch06 design and access statement and drawings ref 1120-01-01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 08 and 09 whilst reading this statement.



1. Bedford Court Mansions from Adeline Place

Existing Context

1.0 Architectural and Historical Character

Bedford Court Mansions was constructed in the 1890's and represents a fine example of late Victorian architecture. Located in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, many of the original features have been lost, but the buildings still retain much of their original character.

The buildings occupy about a third of the block situated between Bedford Avenue and Great Russel Street, which rises up to seven storeys from street level. The red brick and cream stone facade is consistent across Bedford Avenue, wrapping round to Adeline Place and Bloomsbury Street on either side. The facade facing the internal courtyard comprises cream coloured glazed bricks with sash windows.

The remainder of the block is occupied by commercial, residential and hospitality uses and architecturally shows a variety of scales, styles and materials. On the opposite side of Bedford Avenue is a low rise Victorian block behind a row of mature trees.

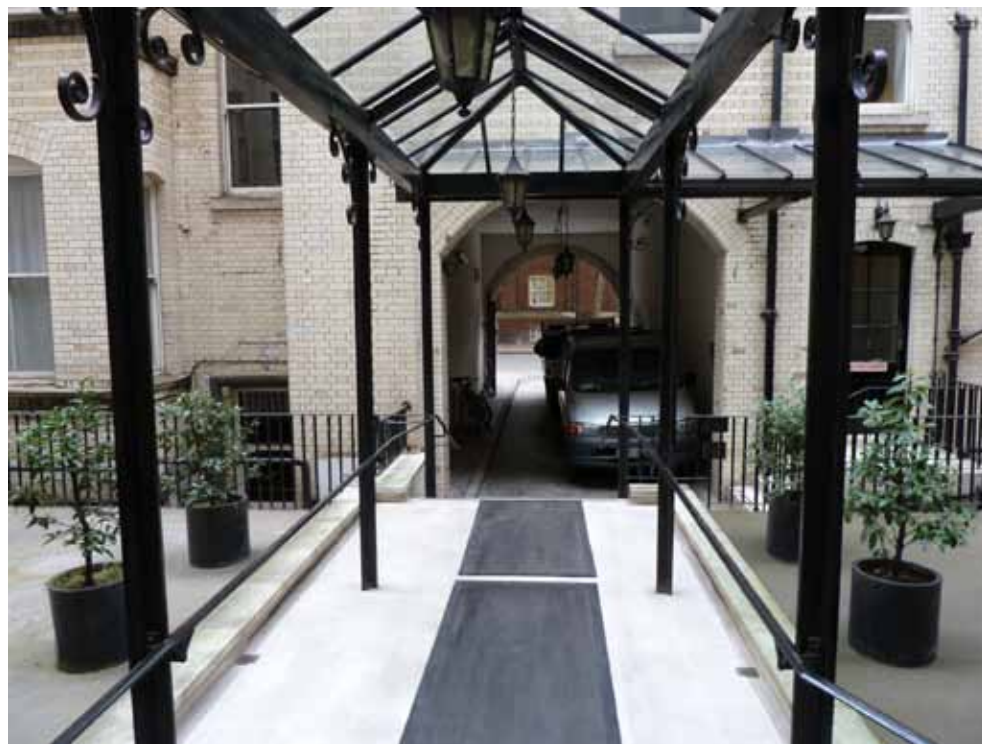
The archway from Bedford Avenue has full height decorative wrought iron gates. Each Block has a communal lobby. The interior styles are not uniform, and Block B front in particular is due for upgrade.



2. Bedford Avenue



3. Archway from Bedford Avenue



4. View towards Bedford Avenue from covered walkway



5. Block B Front Lobby

Heritage Statement

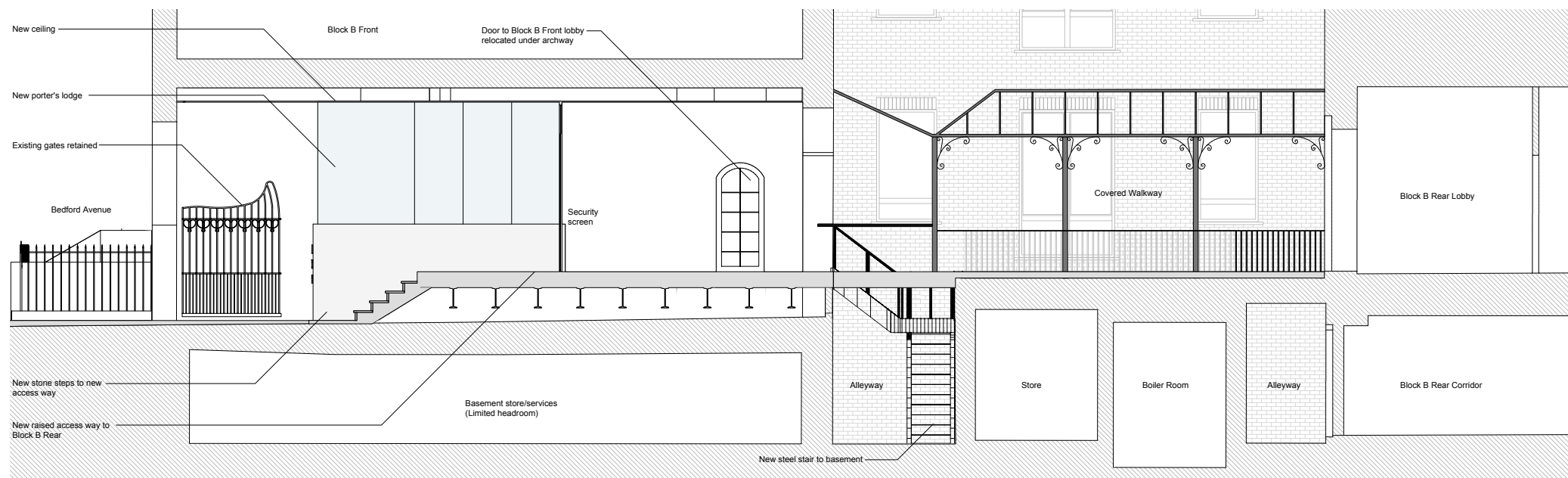
Proposal

2.0 Principles and Justification for Proposed Works

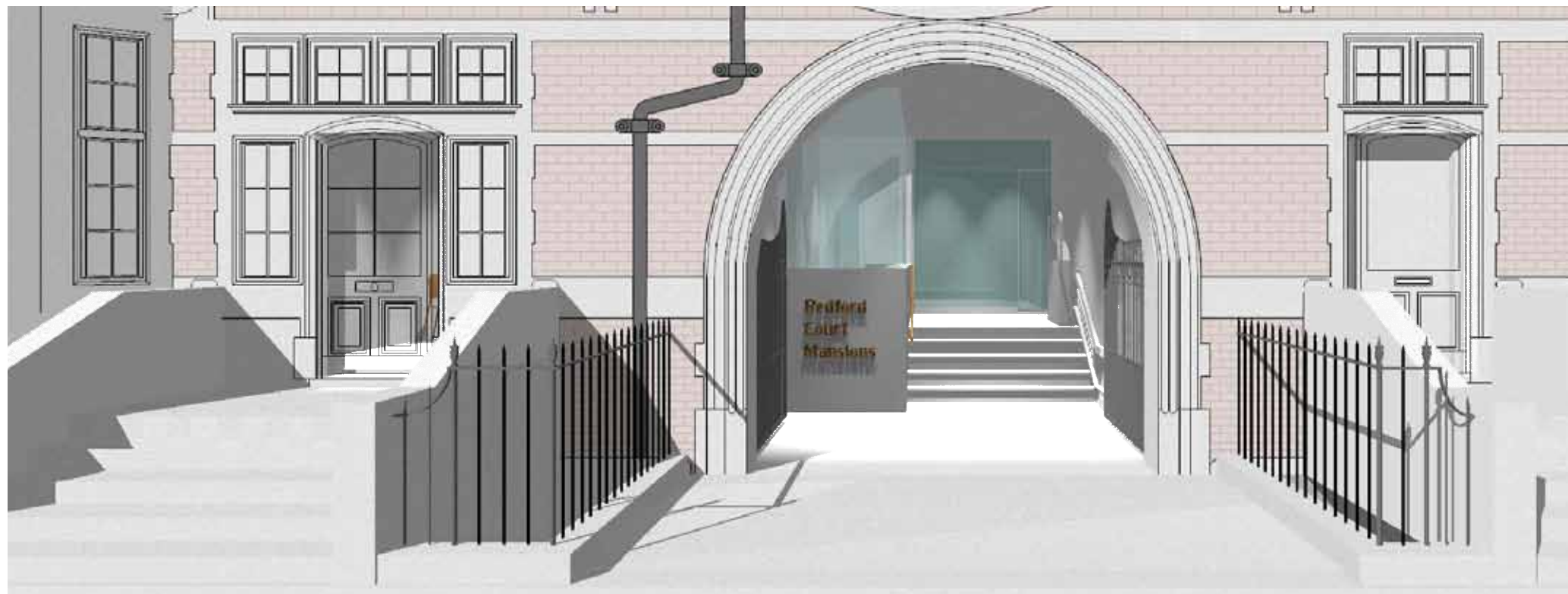
The intentions of the proposal are to provide enhanced access to Bedford Court Mansions and a new Porter's Lodge. These improvements will allow the building to function better for the residents and visitors and protect its future use.

The proposed works affect the external area under the archway and its access points from Bedford Avenue and the basement courtyard, and the communal lobby in Block B. The new location of the Porter's Lodge will provide a more secure face to the building which will enhance public safety and continued use of the archway.

The stone plinth and glazed screens for the lodge and entrance doors are chosen to be contemporary with minimal details, designed to elegantly compliment the historic character of the mansion block. The floor surfaces will also be upgraded to a new stone finish. The choices take into account the feedback from the previous application, ref 2006/4496/P, and are intended to provide enhancement to rather than contrast from the existing building.



Section through archway and boiler room



Porter's Lodge from archway

Heritage Statement

Proposal

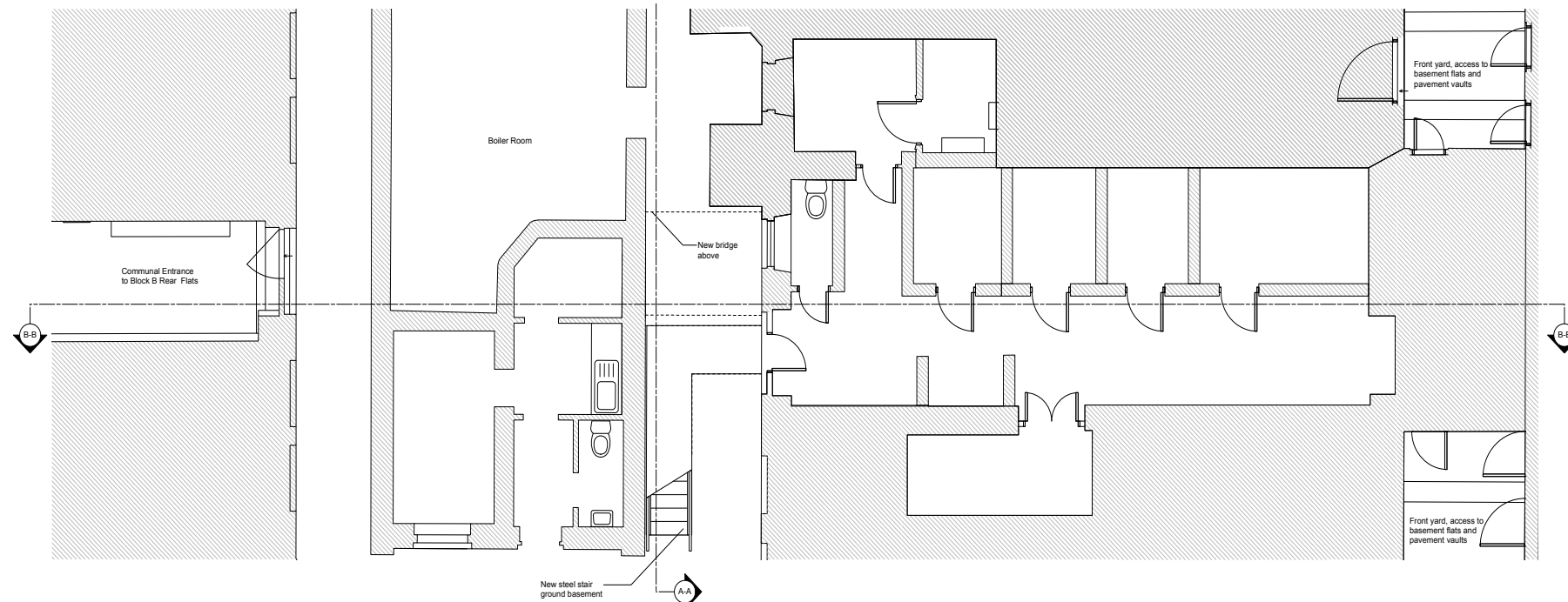
3.0 Impact on the building

The proportions and location of the proposed accommodation are intended to minimise disruption to the existing fabric.

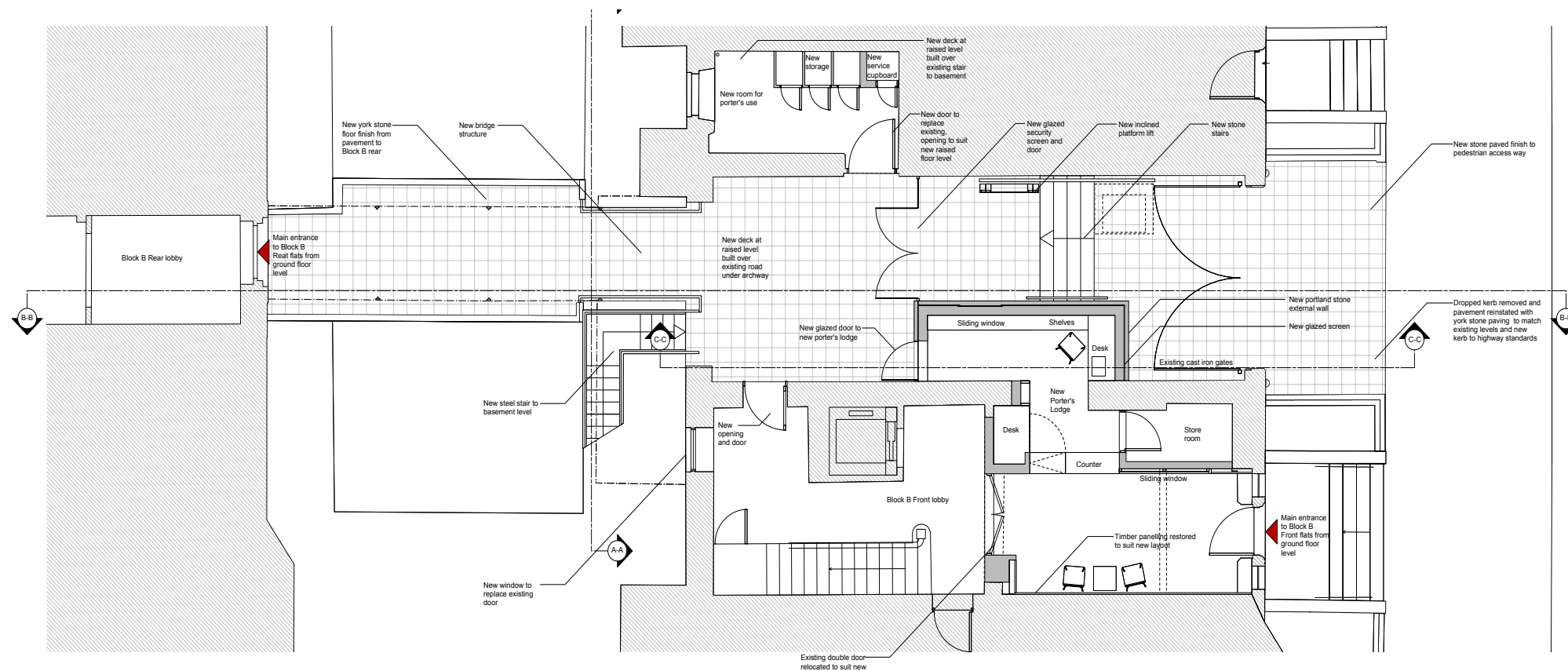
The new Porter's Lodge is located centrally within the length of the archway, set back from Bedford Avenue. It occupies approximately a third of the width and the full height (single storey). It is partially located in the interior lobby of Block B Front and will therefore have a minimal impact on the existing facade and surrounding properties.

The facade facing Bedford Avenue will not be altered by the proposal, and the existing decorative gates will be retained.

The existing courtyard concrete staircase is a later addition to the building and does not add to the historic character. In this proposal it is demolished and replaced with a new compliant stair, which will be concealed between the boiler room and Block B Front, not visible from the road. The existing bridge link will also be demolished and replaced with a new bridge structure at the raised floor level. This will improve head height at basement level and will have minimal impact on the existing fabric.



Proposed Basement Plan



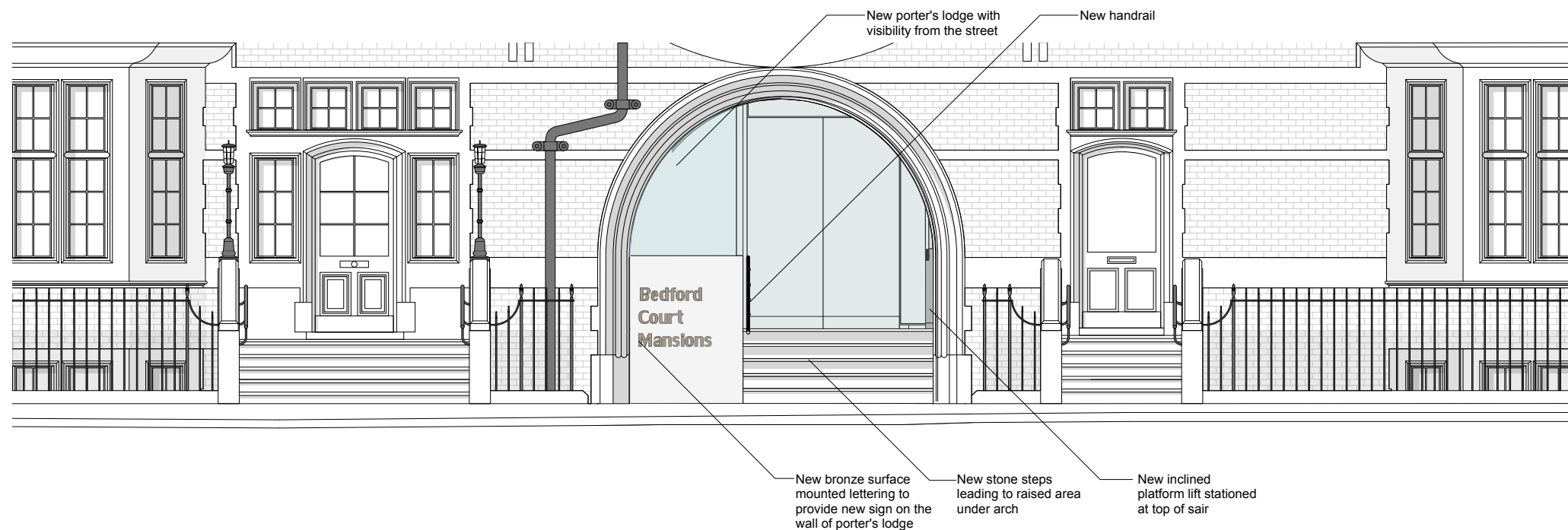
Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Conclusions

4.0 Conclusions

The proposed new Porter's Lodge and access arrangements to Bedford Court Mansions will provide high quality new accommodation and improved facility for the benefit residents across all four of the blocks.

The proposal will not significantly impact the neighbouring properties, and has been designed to enhance the fine quality and historical character of the area.



Bedford Avenue elevation