

# A12-008– DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

BFI STEPHEN STREET W1T 1LN  
NOVEMBER 2012



BEN ADAMS ARCHITECTS

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*View from Stephen Mews*

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## 1.0 PROJECT PARTICULARS



*View looking east on Stephen Street*

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

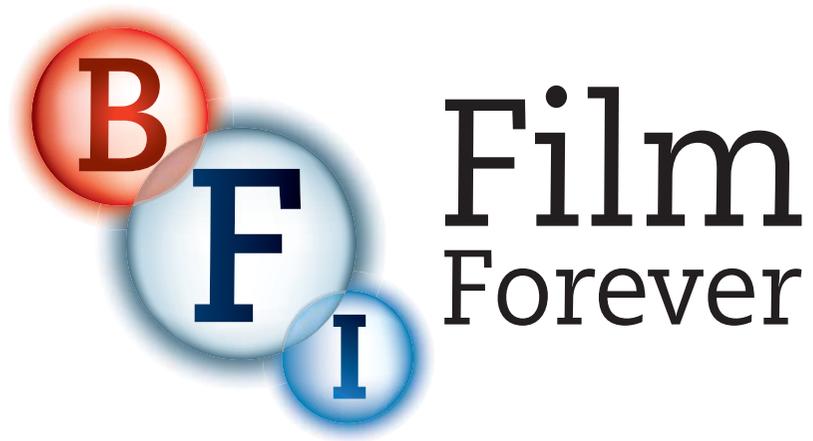
Ben Adams Architects has been appointed to design and develop proposals for the refurbishment of the ground floor of the headquarters of the British Film Institute (BFI), at 21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN.

This Design and Access Statement supports a full planning application proposing the improvement of the street presence of the building and a series of small improvements to the rear of the building. This is combined with an internal refurbishment of the ground floor.

The existing building is located on Stephen Street, Camden and was built in the 1950's.

The works proposed in this Planning Application will propose changes to the front and rear facades at ground floor level only. New windows and doors will be installed to the front and rear.

The proposals are simple in scope and seek to significantly improve the street presence of the building and this national organisation.



## 1.2 THE ORGANISATION

The BFI is a nationally and internationally recognised organisation which promotes British film making to the world. They allocate funding to film projects and promote British films, from their headquarters on Stephen Street. They also operate a successful cultural centre (including cinemas, bars and restaurants) on the Southbank, London SE1.

The BFI is dedicated to promoting British film to film lovers, film funders and film makers. They want their headquarters building to represent this dedication, and to help further this cause.

The BFI has just released its future plan. It outlines the organisation's proposed strategy for the next five years:

*"We believe our role is one of enabler, investing where we can most make a difference, where we see potential for creative excellence, or where we can be a supportive catalyst for change and innovation."*

*We are keenly aware that BFI resources are a relatively modest part of the overall film finance landscape, and so we have determined to focus on three priority areas only:*

- *Expanding education and learning and boosting audience choice.*
- *Supporting the future success of British film.*
- *Unlocking our film heritage."*

These key aims are behind the proposals for Stephen Street, which will see the ground floor developed to reach out beyond that of the current office and library format. It will enable different activities to take place on the ground floor, such as education workshops, press launches, and will deliver much needed extended meeting space for the BFI. The proposals to the front and rear elevations will enhance the internal uses and will indicate an open and accessible organisation.

## 2.0 SITE ANALYSIS



1: View looking east on Stephen Street. BFI on left



2: Adjacent building. BFI on right



3: Stephen Mews



4: Building opposite 21 Stephen Street



5: View towards Tottenham Court Road. BFI on left



6: View of rear of BFI from Stephen Mews

### 2.1 SITE CONTEXT

The existing building is situated just off Tottenham Court Road and was built in the 1950's. The buildings adjacent and opposite are a mix of modern and historic. The building opposite (1 Stephen Street) is to undergo an extensive refurbishment and redevelopment of the ground floor and entrance.

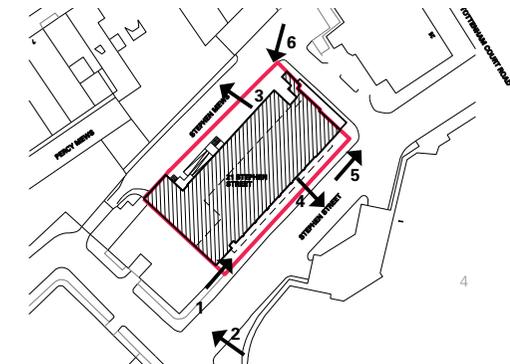
The site is in the centre of a very creative neighbourhood, is at the centre of a very creative neighbourhood, and the BFI wish to ensure their organisation is at the very heart of it.

The building is just north of Soho, the centre of the UK film and television industry. There are many post production houses (including USP Content on Gresse Street), and TV production companies (Freemantle Media is at 1 Stephen Street) located nearby. The Fashion Retail Academy is located at the end of the street.

The street is relatively quiet with little vehicular traffic but many pedestrians utilise the wide pavements. The existing street scape is poor in quality both, in the public and private realm.

To the rear of the property is a short mews (Stephen Mews) characterised by three storey former warehouses.

The building is not in a conservation area.





1. Existing bin store



2. Basement screening room



3. Main entrance: obscured glazing at upper levels



4. Ground floor facade: poor presence in the public realm



5. Roof level



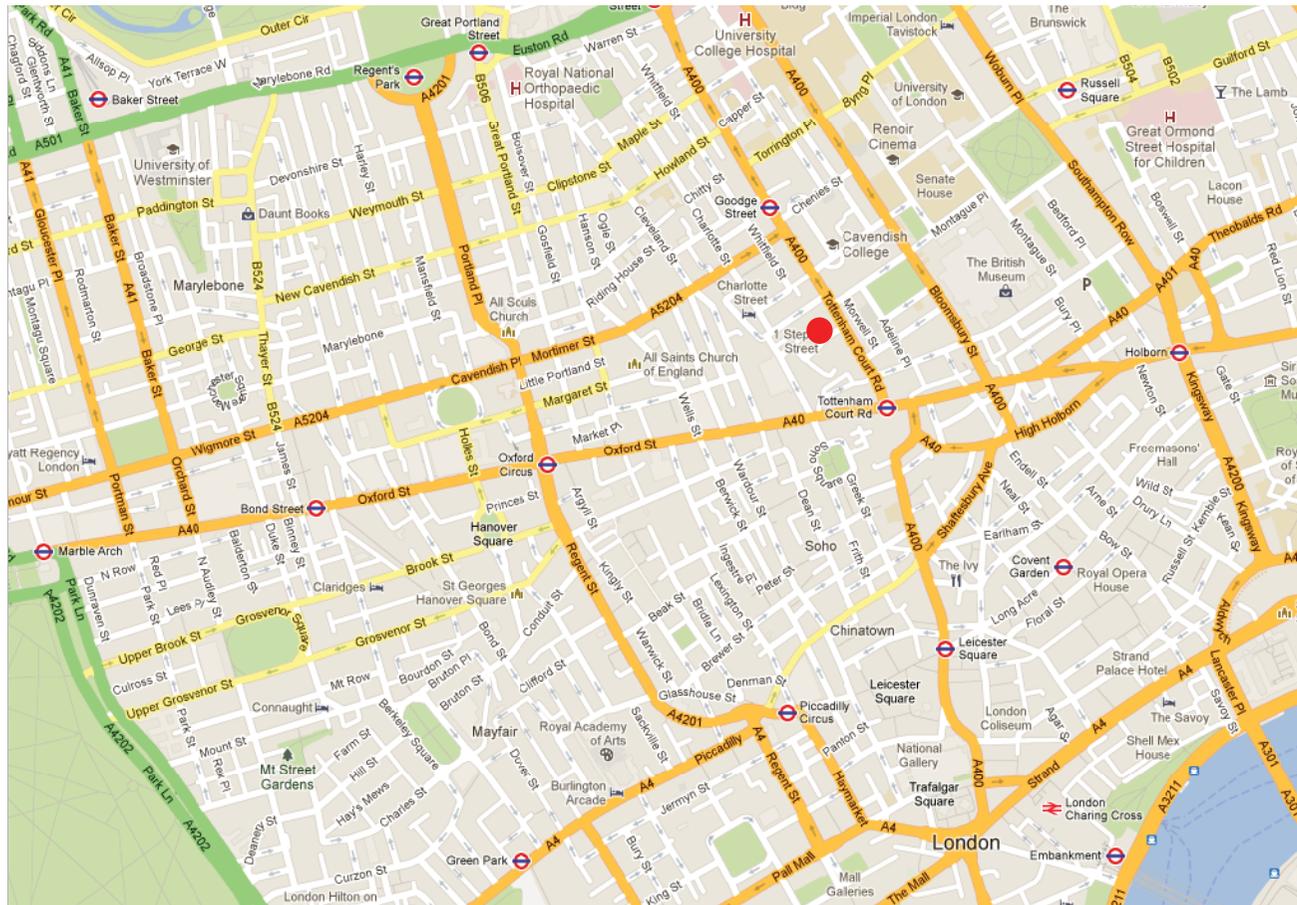
6. Reception

## 2.2 EXISTING BUILDING

The existing building was constructed in the 1950's as a showroom, depot and head office for the stationery and office equipment supplier, Ofrex. The building is six storeys tall (ground + five). It is a concrete framed building clad in brick. The upper levels of the front facade overhang the ground floor and this is formed of curtain walling (3). The rear elevation is flat, and the ground floor extends in part to the property boundary.

The street elevation has poor presence in the public realm (3). The existing reception is very discreet, and not appropriate to the international and national status of the BFI (3 +6). The windows are small and partly obscured (4). The existing library on the ground floor has moved to new premises on the Southbank, and the BFI are seeking to utilise this vacated space to improve the public presence of the building and organisation on Stephen Street.

The internal refurbishment will also make better use of the existing viewing theatres in the basement by improving access to this area.



Transportation Map (nts)

### 2.3 TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT

The site is located in TfL Zone 1. The existing building is located 50m from Tottenham Court Road.

The building is well positioned to allow access to many parts of central London by foot, or public transport.

#### UNDERGROUND

The building is 270m from Tottenham Court Road underground station. This provides access to both the Central and Northern line. Crossrail will soon also be accessible from this station.

#### BUSES

Bus stops are easily accessed and the main bus routes run along Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road.

#### NATIONAL RAIL

Both Euston and Charing Cross rail stations are located within 1.5km giving access to both the north and south of England.

#### ROADS AND PARKING

Stephen Street is a through road, and has on street parking available. Private off street parking is available at the rear of the building.

#### CYCLISTS

Secure cycle parking is available at the rear of the building, other on street facilities are located on Tottenham Court Road, and in other locations as provided by the Local Authority.

## 3.0 PLANNING STATEMENT



Internal view (Stephen Street to left)

### 3.1 PLANNING STATEMENT

#### THE LONDON PLAN

The proposals seek to enhance the reputation of a nationally and internationally renowned organisation in the centre of London (meeting Policy 2.1: London should be encouraged to retain and extend its global and national role as a centre for business, innovation, creativity, education and culture).

The proposals seek to invest in an existing building and streetscape to improve the quality of the public realm within the Central Activity Zone (CAZ) (meeting Policy 2.9: The potential of inner London should be encouraged in ways that sustain, enhance and improve its distinct environment, neighbourhoods and public realm).

The proposals seek to enhance the strategically important role that the BFI plays to the UK film industry meeting Policy 2.11: To ensure development complements and supports the clusters of strategically important, specialised and 'special' uses. e.g film and television industry.

The proposals seek to reinforce the permanence of the BFI in central London by investing in their existing building (meeting Policy 4.1e Developing London's economy. A policy to sustain the continuing regeneration of inner London).

The proposals seek to enhance the BFI's innovative approach to outreach work, by allowing more flexible space on the ground floor (meeting Policy 4.1f Developing London's economy. A policy which emphasises the need for greater recognition of the importance of enterprise and innovation).

The proposals seek to upgrade the existing ground floor accommodation of the BFI head office to improve the existing internal environment and external appearance of the building (meeting policy 4.2c: Offices. A policy to encourage renewal and modernisation of the existing office stock in viable locations to improve its quality, and Policy 4.6: Support for and enhancement of arts, culture, sport and entertainment)

The proposals will improve the thermal insulation and comfort of the existing ground floor by the addition of insulation to the internal face of the rear external walls ceiling voids. New double glazed doors and windows will offer improved u-values to both the front and rear facades (meeting Policy 5.3 Sustainable design and construction and Policy 5.4 Retrofitting).

The proposals seek to improve the public realm around the building, by upgrading the existing building visually and by improving the relationship of the building with the streetscape by improving visibility in to and through the building (meeting Policy 7.5 Public realm and Policy 7.6 Architecture)

The proposals include the improvement of the existing cycle facilities in the building allowing for additional covered cycle parking, a drying room, and showers for the use of cyclists (meeting Policy 6.9 Cycling)

The proposals also respond to the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy which makes clear the Mayor's overall economic development policy objective to promote London as the world's leading international centre of learning and creativity.



3D views of refurbished ground floor and entrance (Stephen Street to right)

#### CAMDEN CORE STRATEGY 2010

The project is located 50m from Tottenham Court Road, where the council will promote appropriate development in the highly accessible areas of central London, meeting Policy CS1 – Distribution of growth and Policy CS3 – Other highly accessible areas.

The proposals will enhance the prominence and importance of the creative sector in Camden, meeting Policy CS8 – Promoting a successful and inclusive Camden economy (which recognises and encourages the concentration of creative and cultural businesses in the borough), and Policy CS9 – Achieving a successful Central London (which supports the concentration of cultural institutions within central London and seek to improve the quality of the area's streets and places).

The proposals will allow for improved access to the existing building meeting Policy CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage (which seeks the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible).

The proposals will improve the external appearance of a building originally built in the 1950's. It will improve the appearance of the building at the front and rear, meeting Policy CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage (which ensures that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character).

#### PLANNING HISTORY

30-11-2004: Display of non-illuminated exterior sign 1150mm x 1150mm over the ground floor entrance. GRANTED

20-05-2004: Minor alterations to provide sliding doors to existing office building. GRANTED

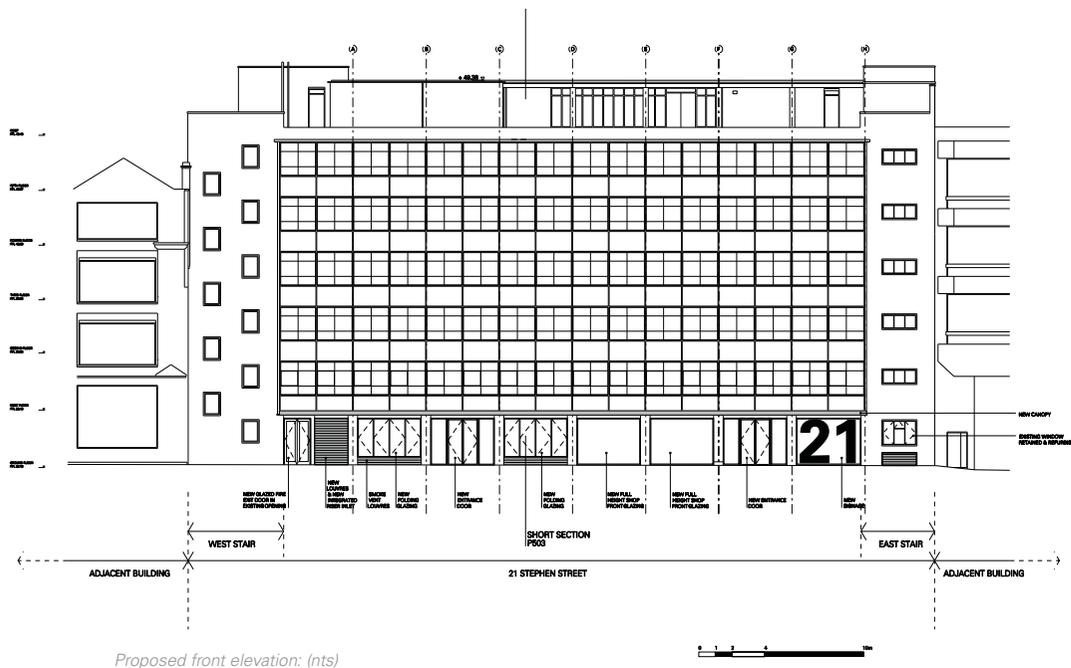
23-05-1997: The display of a vertical flag advertisement between the second and sixth floors of the building, as shown on one unnumbered drawing and an unscaled drawing. REFUSED

21-11-1994: The erection of a ground floor rear extension for office use. GRANTED

26-01-1988: The display of seven internally illuminated projecting box signs measuring 550mm x 550mm positioned beneath canopy as shown on drawings 303/02 and 303/03 (including revision in green). Period of consent 1st April 1988 to 31st March 1993. GRANTED

21-07-1954: Application for erection of building by Douglas + J Wood for Ofrex Stationery Supplies: GRANTED

## 4.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT



### 4.1 USE

The existing building provides office, despatch, and library space on the ground floor.

The proposals seek to retain the existing public access (as per the library) to the building and extend this to a wider audience. The BFI propose to use the ground floor as a multi-purpose function space in the spirit of the former library. The reception would be improved and repositioned in the plan, and a terrace would be installed to the rear of the building. Some existing office space would be retained on the ground floor, and the WCs would be relocated. Other office space on the upper floors will be utilised to house that displaced by the proposals to the ground floor. A new external lift will provide better access for deliveries to the rear of the building.

### 4.2 AMOUNT

The existing building will not be extended as part of the proposals. Externally, improvements will be made to the ground floor facades and a terrace is proposed to the rear. A canopy is proposed above ground floor level.

### 4.3 LAYOUT

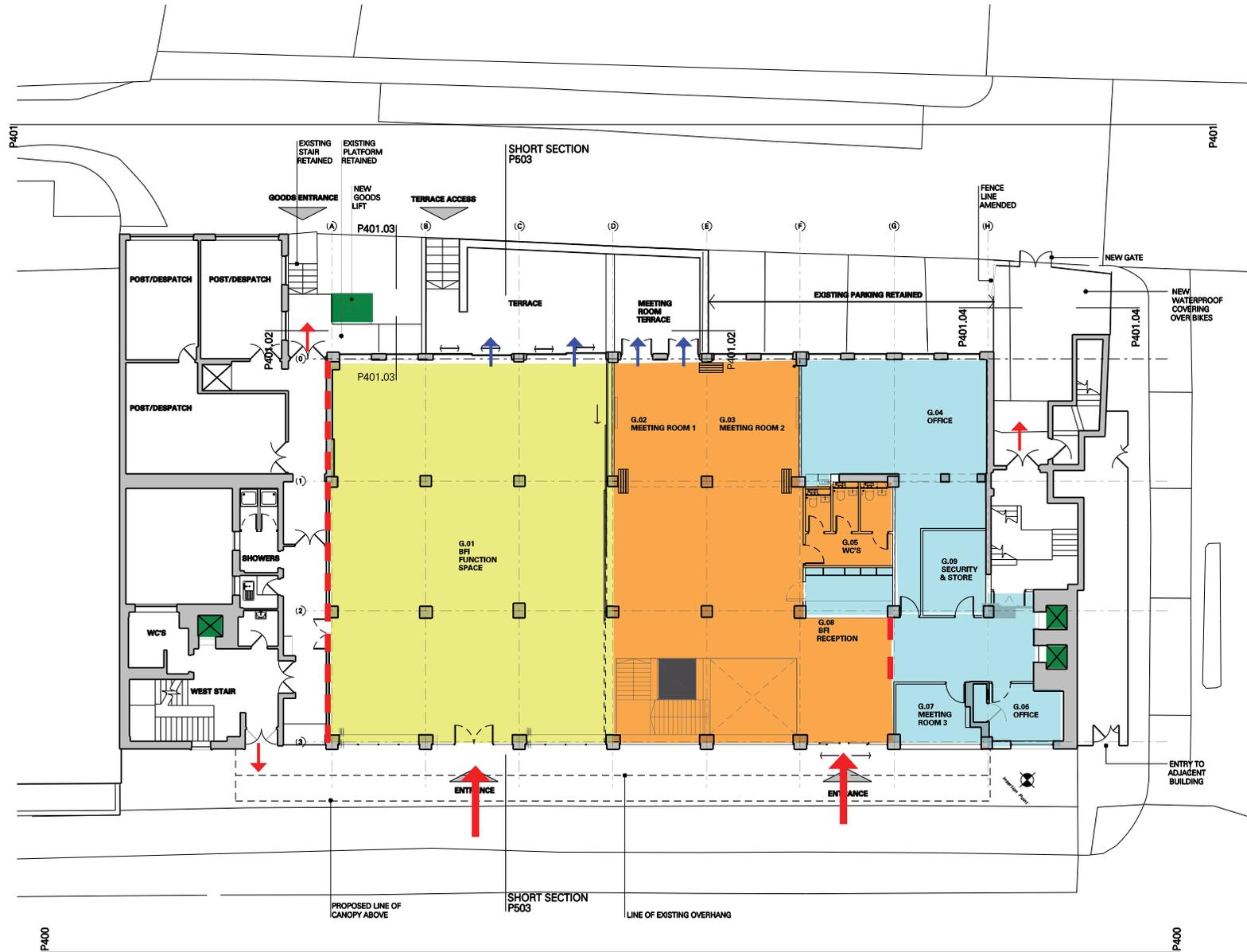
The proposed internal layout is very open with large folding sliding doors allowing several functions to occur simultaneously (e.g an open education event and a press screening). The reception is located to the right of the plan allowing secure access to the upper levels.

A void, stair and lift are proposed to open up access to the basement. This will give easier access to the viewing theatres which are located here.

One new, one relocated, and one retained entrance are proposed to the front elevation. The new and relocated entrances allow for separate access to different parts of the ground floor at the same time. The retained opening is a fire exit and will have new doors installed to match the proposals to the new adjacent fenestration.

### 4.4 SCALE

The scale of the proposals to the fenestration is proportionate to the scale of the building. The large structural bays on the ground floor will be fully utilised for fully glazed openings, doors and windows. This will enhance the streetscape.



Proposed ground floor plan: 1:100@A3

- ➔ Fully Accessible Level Entrance
- ➔ Fire Exit
- ➔ Level Exit to Terrace
- - - Security line
- Lift to Basement for all staff and visitors
- Lift for staff and visitors only
- BFI flexible meeting space and WCs
- BFI function space
- BFI offices and secure areas



## 5.0 SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT



### 5.1 BUILDING FABRIC

The existing building has a poor overall energy performance. Some measures, such as secondary glazing, have been installed at upper levels to improve thermal comfort and reduce energy consumption. At ground floor level, the building is single glazed to the front facade and the rear facade is a mixture of single and double glazing. The double glazing to the rear is dated, but offers some improvement to the original windows that were installed.

The proposals seek to improve the U values of the ground floor area by ensuring that all new fenestration and doors meet the Building Regulations. This will improve the thermal comfort of the ground floor, and reduce energy consumption. It is proposed to upgrade the thermal performance of the internal face of the external walls to the rear of the building. The ceilings to the rear of the building (where external) will be upgraded with the addition of insulation in the existing ceiling void.

### 5.2 LIGHTING

The current lighting within the office and library consists mainly of fluorescent and low voltage dichroic fittings. To improve efficiency and reduce the connected lighting load within the building, it is proposed that high efficiency lamps with high frequency ballast and automatic and/or manual switching facilities will be provided.

The use of photocells (daylight sensors) to control the external lighting will be provided. PIR (Passive infrared) detectors to control lighting in low occupancy areas e.g. WCs are proposed to assist in reduce energy wastage.

The lighting design throughout the ground floor will incorporate high efficacy lamps to ensure compliance with Building Regulations whilst providing the required lighting levels and environment. The use of LED lighting, where appropriate, will be installed within public areas.

The existing surface fixed external light fittings to the rear of the building are proposed to be removed and replaced as part of the works. Simple and efficient modern fittings will be selected.

It is proposed that new light fittings are installed to the underside of the new canopy to the front of the building.

### 5.3 VENTILATION

The existing office and library are naturally ventilated.

It is proposed that mixed mode ventilation is provided to the proposed new layout of the ground floor. Openable windows will be provided to the office and meeting spaces.

The front and rear of the function space will be provided with openable windows. The deeper parts of the plan and the WCs will be provided with mechanical ventilation to assist with the movement of air in the parts of the building furthest from openable windows.

A heat recovery unit is proposed to be included as part of the ventilation strategy.

### 5.4 RECYCLING AND WASTE

The existing bin and recycling store located within the cycle enclosure will be retained. The layout is proposed to be amended to make more efficient use of the space, but no net reduction or increase in bins is proposed.

### 5.5 DRAINAGE

The proposed new WCs are located so as to be able to make use of the existing drainage runs within the building. Any new drainage connections will be integrated back into the existing building drainage system as required.

## 6.0 BAA QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



### 6.1 BAA QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

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