New Family House

13-15 John's Mews
London
WC1N 2PA

Design, Access & Planning Statements

In Support of Planning &
Conservation Area Consent

May 2014

Contents

Site Plan

1.0 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by FT Architects, in support of our application for works at 13-15 John's Mews.

It follows a previous application granted consent in December 2013 (ref: 2013/4967/P).

The approved scheme was for the conversion of the existing property, which spans 2 units, into 2 no. 3-bed mews houses. The approved scheme also included for alterations to the front and rear elevations, and the addition of a new mansard roof.

This application seeks effectively to vary the approved scheme, to include for:

- A new basement
- Rebuilding the single-storey rear extension, to provide a private courtyard behind each house

2.0 Existing Building

The property comprises a mid-terrace mews building, arranged over ground and first floors.

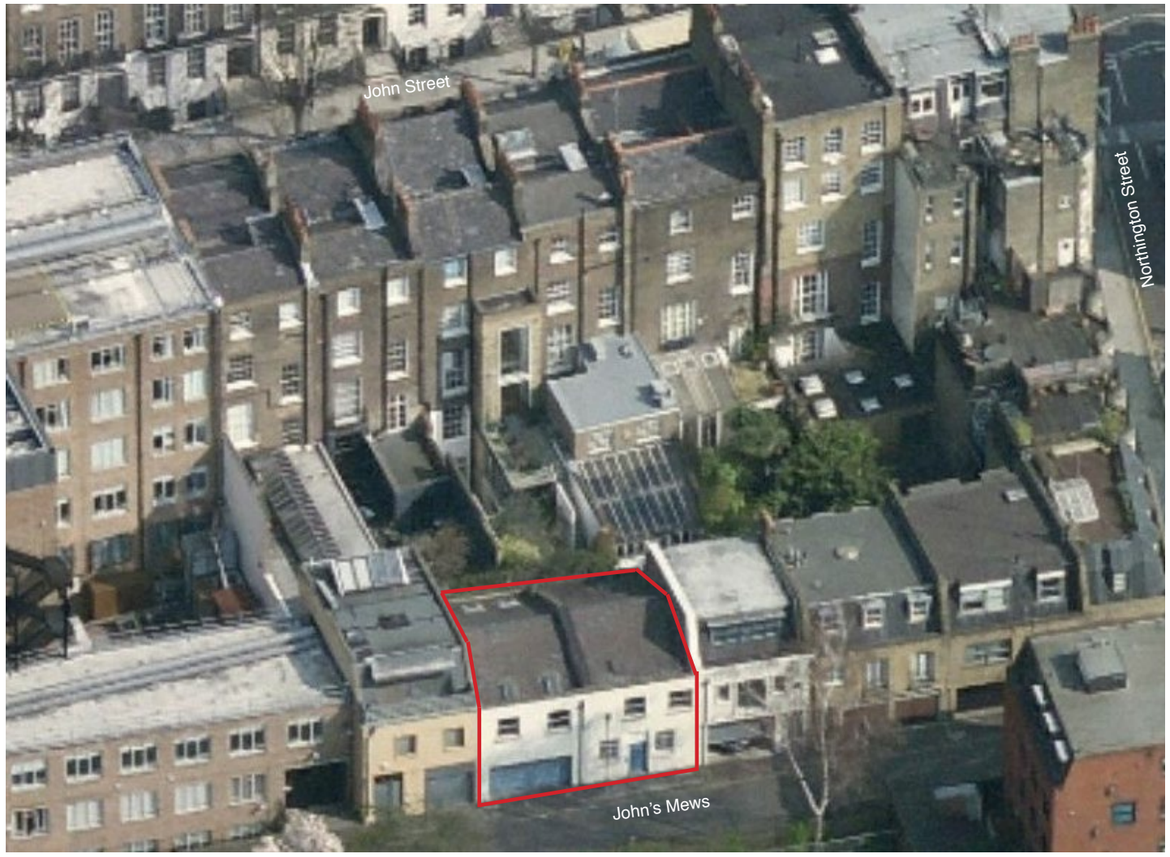
The mews was originally constructed in the early 1800s, to service the houses on John Street.

Historic maps show that it was intact until the 2nd World War, when much of the area was badly bombed. It provides an existing area of approximately 2,000 sq ft, arranged over ground and first floors.

The current building is of post-war construction. It is a purpose built workshop, providing garage space at ground floor level and offices above, all of which are currently vacant and have been intermittently used by squatters.

3.0 Planning Context

The site forms part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, and the existing property is defined by Camden as being a 'Positive Contributor to the Conservation Area'. It backs onto Grade II Listed buildings at 23 and 24 John Street.



Aerial Photograph

13-15 John's Mews

4.0 Site Location

Aerial View Looking North — 13-15 John's Mews

Aerial View Looking South — 13-15 John's Mews

5.0 Existing Photographs

Internal Views - Offices on 1st Floor, Garage/Warehouse on Ground Floor

Views from Rear Windows to 21-24 John Street

6.0 Scheme Amendments - Policy Assessment

The previous, approved scheme (ref: 2013/4967/P) considered and addressed the following policy requirements:

- Land use – loss of B1 accommodation
- Provision and quality of residential accommodation
- Design and impact of development upon the wider Conservation Area
- Transport, access and parking
- Residential amenity of neighbouring properties

The differences between the approved scheme and this scheme are limited to:

- Adding a basement below the approved scheme
- Rebuilding the single-storey rear extension, to accommodate private courtyards behind each house

The main planning considerations that arise as a result of the proposals are therefore considered to be:

- Compliance with the Council's SPG on Subterranean Development
- Design and impact on the Conservation Area
- Impact upon the residential amenity of neighbouring properties

Subterranean Development

The Council's SPG was produced to highlight the key planning considerations to be addressed at the earliest stage of design. We address these points in turn:

Use, Comfort and Safety

The SPG specifies that *"basement accommodation ..... will be subject to the same standards as other housing in terms of space, amenity and sunlight. Suitable access should also be provided to basement accommodation to allow for evacuation."* Our proposals comply with these requirements.

Flooding

The site lies outside of Flood Zones 1 or 2, and is not in an area of recorded historical flooding. Neither is it located in an area coincident with a BGS geological indicator of flooding. However, it is noted that much of the area south of Euston Road has moderate to high susceptibility to ground water flooding, and our detailed design will reflect this sensitivity.

Sustainability

Our application includes a CfSH pre-assessment, which demonstrates that the building could achieve the 'Code 4' standard required, following the completion of the basement.

Construction

This application includes a Construction & Traffic Management Plan, and Structural Method Statement by Trevor Scott Consulting Structural Engineer. These reports set out the sequence for excavating and constructing the basement, and contain details of risk mitigating measures, in compliance with the SPG.

Design

The only manifestation of the new basement above ground level, will be the section of glass floor in the new courtyards. As this is the rear of the building, there will be no impact upon the streetscene.

Landscaping

The work will be limited to below the footprint of the existing building. There will be no loss of garden or trees.

Demolition

The site backs onto Listed buildings, and we have included a Structural Method Statement for carrying out the works, in compliance with the SPG. All construction and demolition processes will be carried out in accordance with the Construction & Traffic Management Plan, to Considerate Constructors Scheme standards.

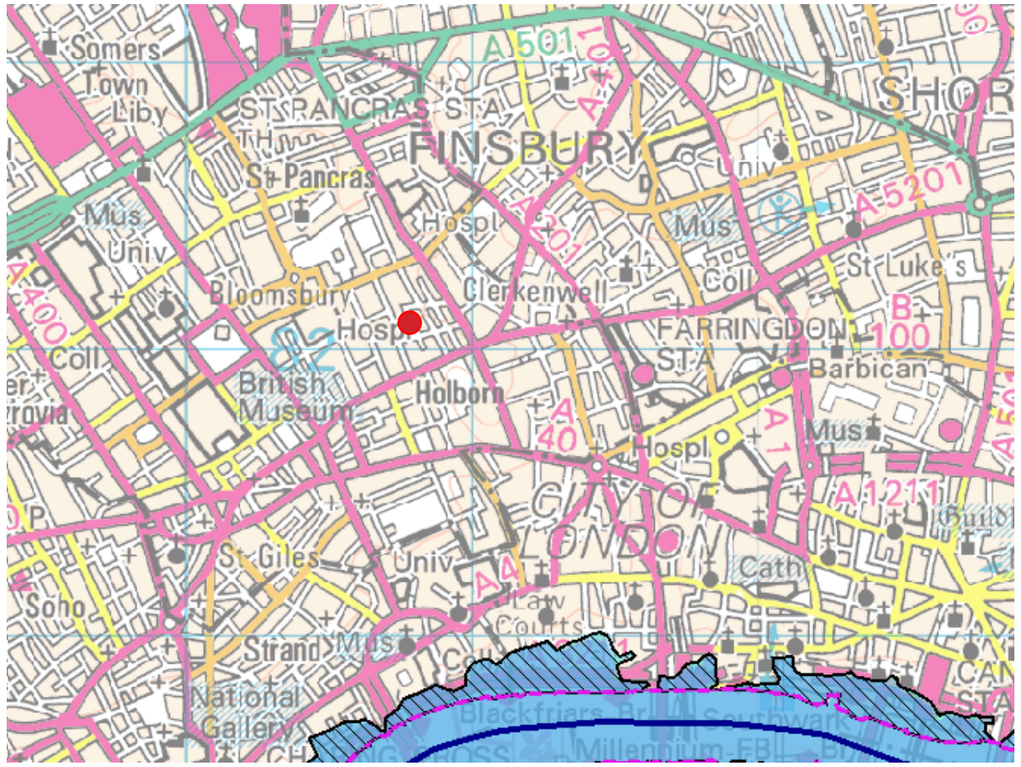
Summary

Paragraph 18 of the Council's guidance on basement extensions states that:

"A basement development that is modest in size such that it does not extend beyond the footprint of the original building and is no deeper than one full storey below ground level (approximately 3 metres in depth) is often the most appropriate way to extend a building below ground, provided that the internal environment is fit for the intended purpose, and there is no impact to any trees on or adjoining the site, or to the water environment".

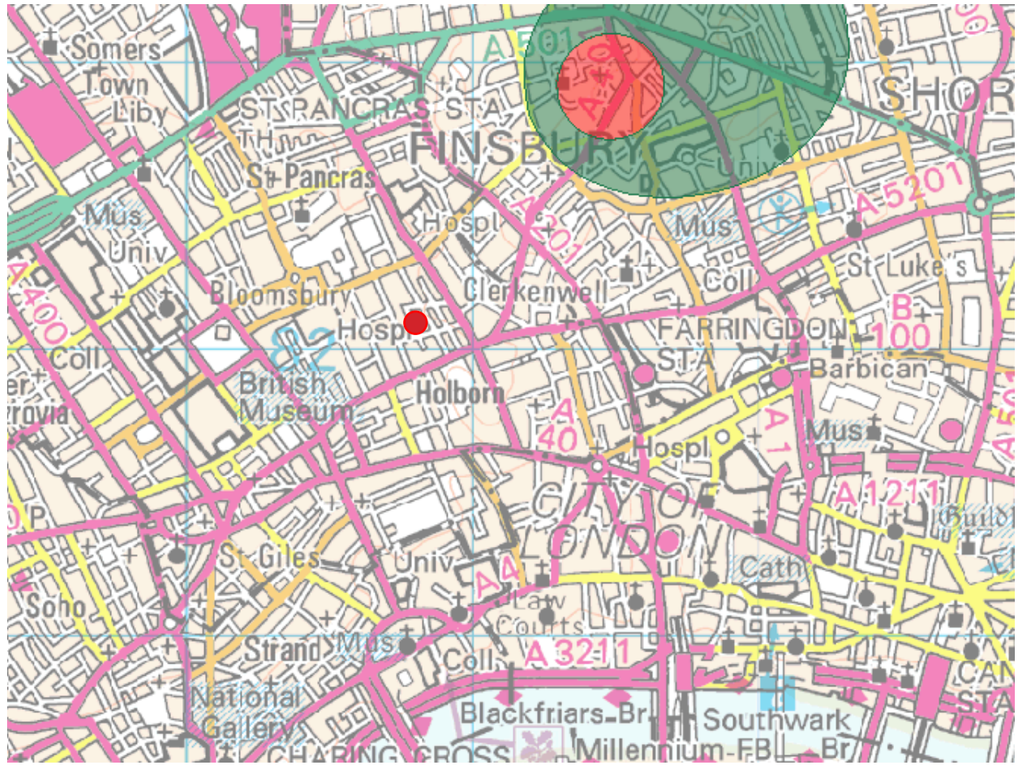
The Basement Impact Assessment and Construction & Traffic Method Statement address these points, and confirm that the new basement will comply with Council's recommendations.

Flood Risk



- Site
- Flood Zone 3
- Flood Zone 2
- Flood defences
- Areas benefiting from flood defences
- Main rivers

Flood Risk from Rivers



- Site
- Inner zone (Zone 1)
- Outer zone (Zone 2)
- Total catchment (Zone 3)
- Special interest (Zone 4)

Flood Risk from Groundwater

Conservation Area

UDP B7 states that the Council will only grant consent for development in a Conservation Area where the special character of the area is preserved or enhanced.

The existing extensions are non-original and of ramshackle condition. Their loss is not considered to be detrimental to the historic nature of the site.

Furthermore, the back of the site is highly enclosed, surrounded by boundary walls and mature vegetation. The existing extension can only be viewed from high level windows, and has no impact upon the streetscene.

The new extension will be equally modest in scale. It will be constructed to the same height as the existing extension, but will allow for a small, private courtyard behind each house.

This will enhance the quality of the ground floor accommodation by creating a sense of openness, with natural ventilation and a view beyond the confines of the building.

As a single storey extension, it will be visually subordinate to the original building and allow the form of the original building to be seen, thereby reinforcing its integrity.

The courtyards will be landscaped with planted containers around a section of glass floor, which will provide natural daylight down into the basement.

Residential Amenity

The new extension will be at ground level, behind existing high level, retained garden walls.

As such, the adjacent properties will be unaffected by a loss of daylight, sunlight or privacy.

In relation to the control of dust and emissions from construction each applicant will expect to sign up to the Considerate Contractors Scheme.

Existing Streetscene

7.0 Design & Access Statement

Use

Consent was granted in December 2013 to convert the existing property to residential use, and to construct a mansard roof extension.

It is now proposed to add a basement and to rebuild the existing rear extension to accommodate a small courtyard behind each house.

The basement will house additional living and ancillary accommodation, to support the principal rooms above.

Amount/Scale

The site occupies a footprint of 143.6 sqm (1545.5 sq ft).

It to proposed to excavate a basement across the whole site, and to reconstruct the rear extension to accommodate the aforementioned courtyards.

The work will result in 2 mews houses, each offering a gross internal area of 194.7 sqm (2095.8 sq ft).

Layout

The new rear courtyards will provide natural daylight and fresh air to the ground floor, while adding a view beyond the confines of the site. This will improve the quality of the ground floor living spaces.

The habitable room in the new basement will benefit from natural daylight via a glass floor in the courtyard above. Some daylight will also penetrate from the large roof light at the top of the staircase.

The ceiling height will be min. 2.4m high, and the room sizes will meet those stipulated in the Housing Standards SPG, 2002.

Integrated storage, including space for refuse and recycling will be accommodated within the scheme.

Landscaping

Aside from the creation of the rear courtyards, there will be no external work. The courtyards will be landscaped with planted containers, to provide a tranquil, restorative outlook, while encouraging bio-diversity in this urban location.

Appearance

There will be no visible changes to front or rear of the house, other than the works approved under ref 2013/4967/P.

The rear extension will be of similar scale and appearance to the approved scheme.

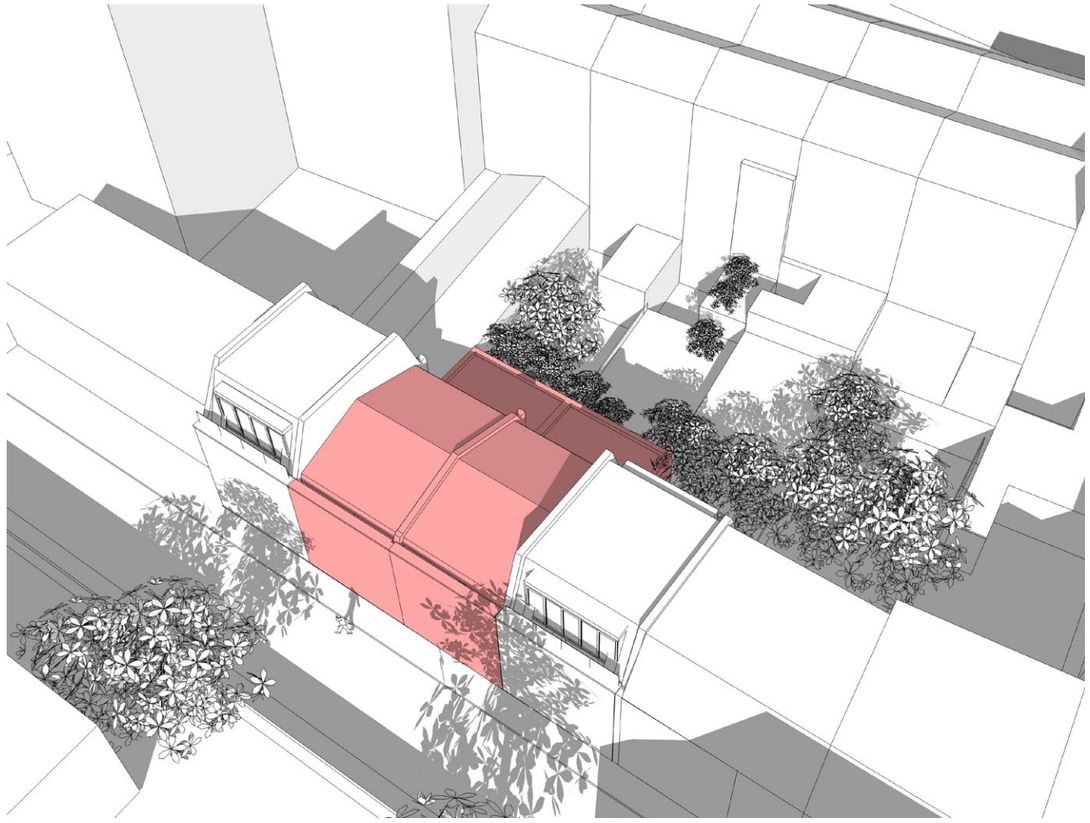
Access

The building is bounded on 3 sides, and as such, the only access is from John's Mews. It is not proposed to alter the existing access arrangements into the property.

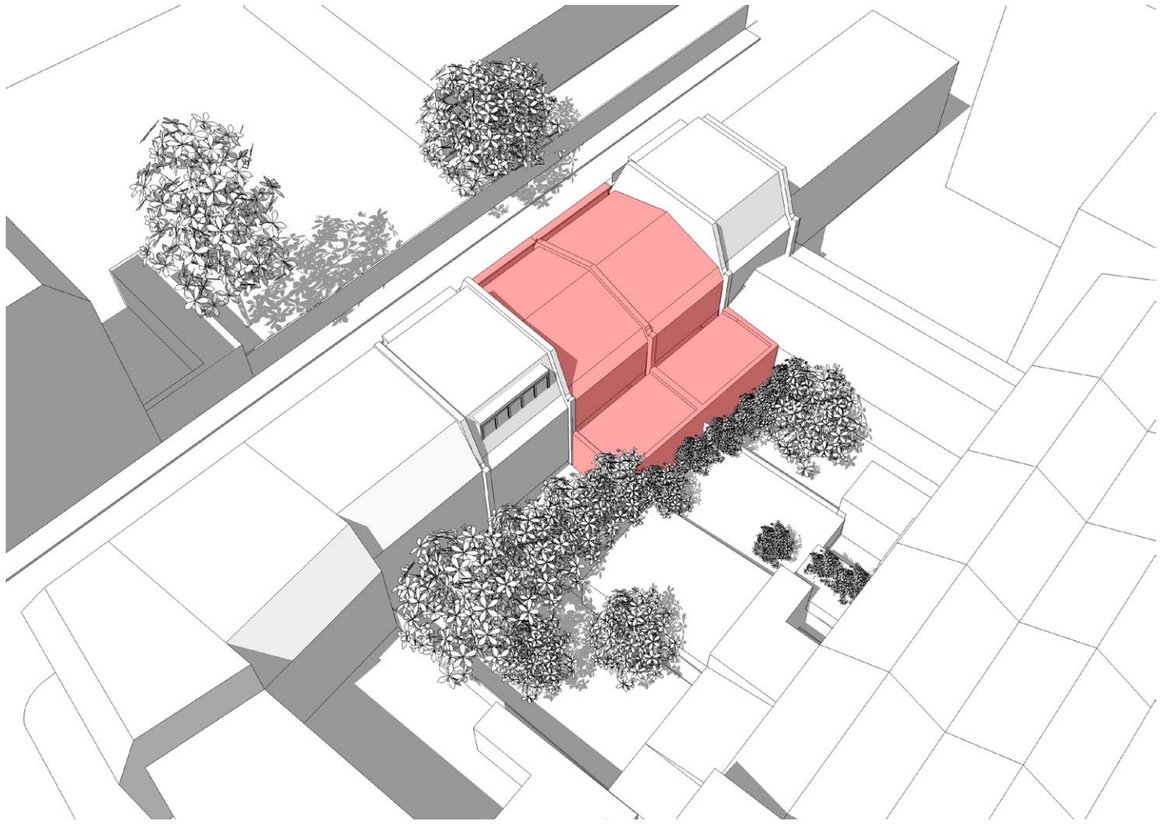
Refuse and Waste Management

It is intended that Camden will collect waste on a weekly basis from the street (location of waste bags to be agreed in due course, to avoid a traffic obstruction).

8.0 Existing Massing

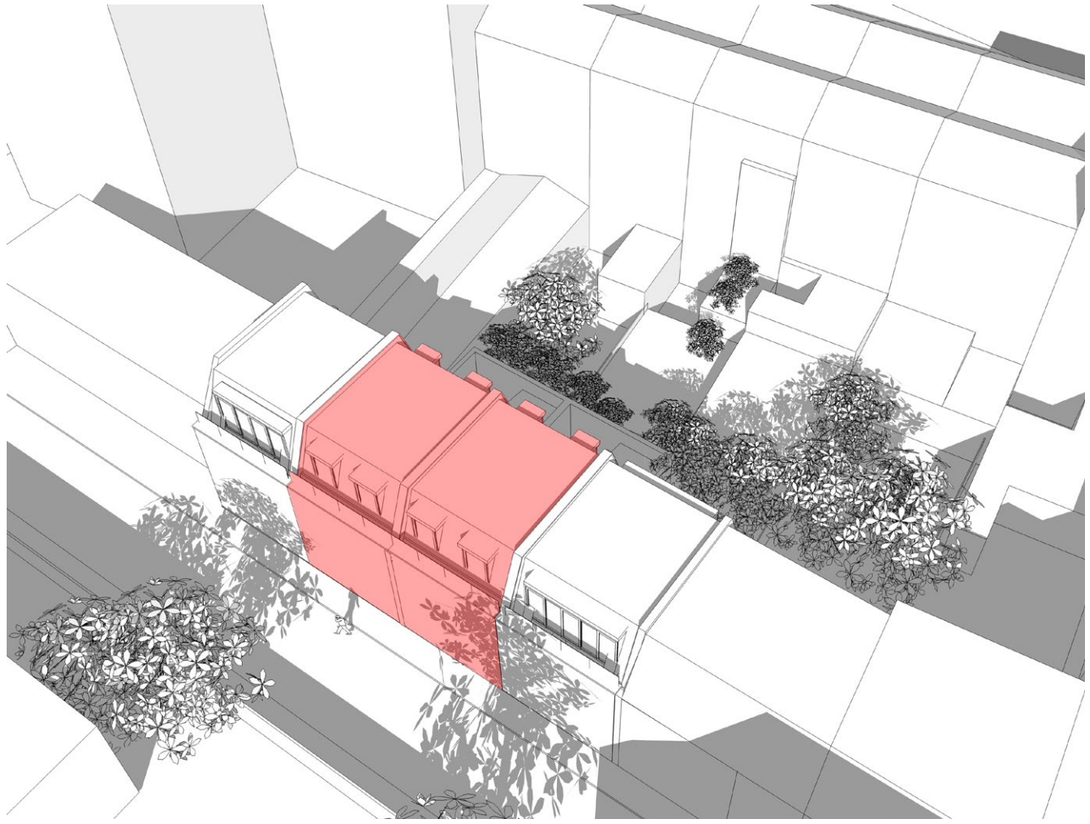


Existing Streetscape - Viewed from Front



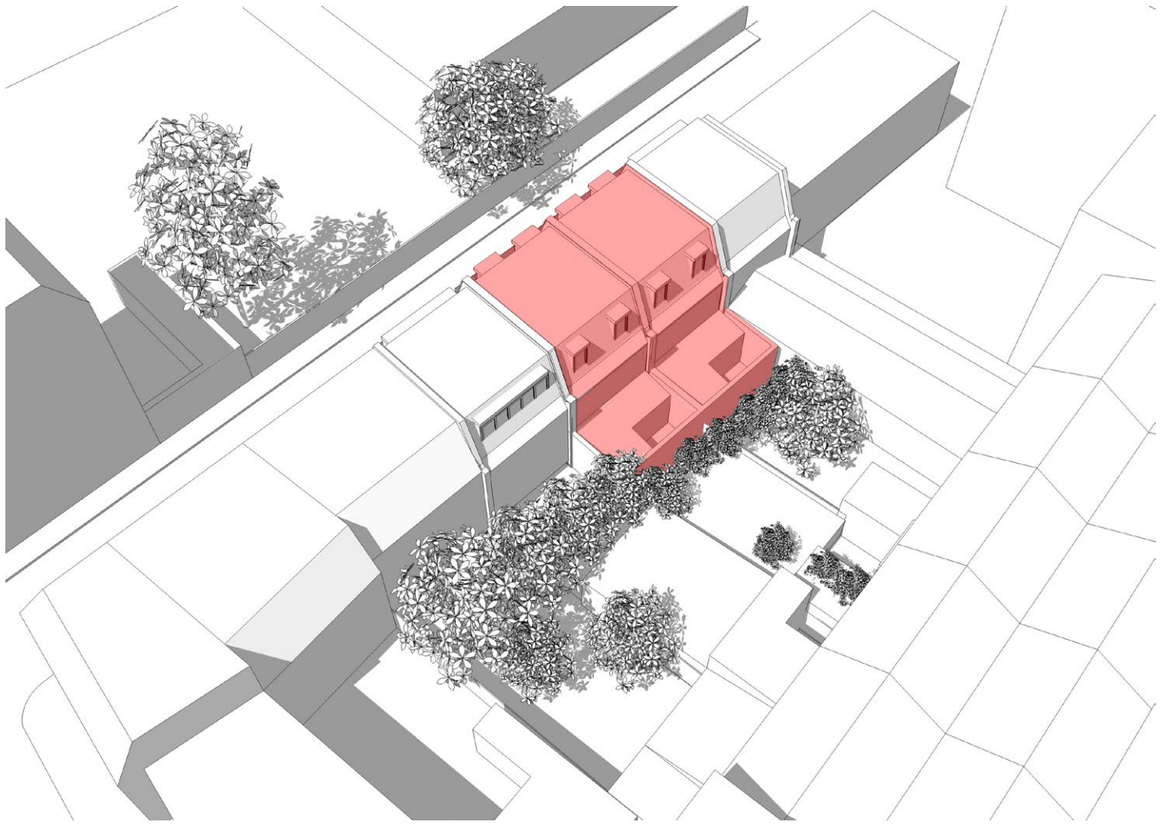
Existing Streetscape - Viewed from Rear

9.0 Proposed Massing



Proposed Streetscape - Viewed from Front

Note: Changes to Front Elevation Approved Under ref 2013/4967/P.



Proposed Streetscape - Viewed from Rear

Note: Changes to Main Rear Elevation Approved Under ref 2013/4967/P.

10.0 Existing and Proposed Areas

	Existing Gross External Area (B8)		Existing Gross Internal Area (B8)		Proposed Gross External Area (C3)		Proposed Gross Internal Area (C3)	
	sqm	sq ft	sqm	sq ft	sqm	sq ft	sqm	sq ft
Basement No. 13					72.4	778.9	56.3	606.4
Basement No. 15					72.4	778.9	56.3	606.4
Ground Floor No.13	72.5	780.4	62.9	677.2	72.4	778.9	56.5	608.4
Ground Floor No.15	72.5	780.4	62.9	677.2	72.4	778.9	56.5	608.4
First Floor No.13	51.8	557.6	44.8	481.8	51.8	557.6	44.8	481.8
First Floor No.15	51.8	557.6	44.8	481.8	51.8	557.6	44.8	481.8
Second Floor No.13					44	473.6	37.1	399.2
Second Floor No.15					44	473.6	37.1	399.2
TOTAL	248.6	2676	215.4	2318	336.4	3620.2	389.4	4191.6

To be read in conjunction with FT Architects's 'Existing' Drawings 200_32_01, and 'Proposed' Drawings 200_32_18 and 19.

11.0 Sustainability Strategy

The new property will incorporate sustainable and energy efficient measures as follows:

1.0 Lighting:

All habitable rooms will be well-lit by daylight and sunlight.
Low energy lighting will be specified throughout.
Roof lights in circulation spaces and the kitchen/dining area will minimise the need for artificial lighting, directing natural light deep into the plan.

2.0 Ventilation:

Passive ventilation will be provided through trickle vents.
Rooms will generally be ventilated by means of opening windows.

3.0 Heating and Hot Water:

A Green Tariff energy source will be selected.
A boiler with a min. NOx4 rating will be specified.
Solar heating panels will be integrated into the design.

4.0 Water Usage:

White goods with 'A+' ratings will be specified
All sanitary fittings will be specified to minimise water consumption, including aerator taps and shower heads, and efficient dual flush toilets
A water meter will be installed

5.0 Recycling:

Dedicated waste and recyling space will be built into the scheme

6.0 Transport:

Cycle storage is incorporated within the scheme.
The site benefits from excellent local transport connections.
There is no parking provision. A S106 Legal Agreement exists - agreed under the previous application - to secure the development as a car-free site.

7.0 Materials:

All materials will be min. B-rated in accordance with the BRE Green Guide to Specification.
All timber used in the scheme will be FSC, sourced from sustainable forests wherever

8.0 Design & Detailing:

The design will prioritise passive methods of minimising energy consumption and heat loss.
Enhanced U-values, acoustic and thermal insulation will be incorporated with high thermally rated windows.
Thermal bridging and air permeability will be kept to a minimum.

9.0 Biodiversity:

The new courtyards will offer the opportunity to bring part of the site into use as a garden environment.

10.0 Construction:

A construction management plan will be prepared prior to commencement to manage any impact on the local transport network

11.0 Summary:

The development will be designed and constructed to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4.
Refer to the separate Code for Sustainable Homes Assessment, submitted as part of this application, for further details of sustainability measures.

Local Transport Routes

12.0 Lifetime Homes Assessment

1.0 Car Parking Width:

Not applicable. There is no parking provided in the scheme.

2.0 Access from Car Parking:

Not applicable. There is no parking provided in the scheme.

3.0 Approach Gradient: .

Any difference between the internal ground and pavement levels will be gently graded.

4.0 Entrances:

The existing front door will be removed and replaced with two separate entrance doors corresponding to the proposed dwellings, accessing the respective properties independently and directly from the street.
External, timer controlled local lighting will be provided. It is not possible to fit a canopy over the entrance, as it would project over the public highway.
The entrance doors will be approached 'head on' and will provide an effective clear opening width of 800mm.

5.0 Stairs and Lifts:

The stairs have been designed in line with Lifetime Homes/Part M recommendations, and sufficient space has been allowed to accommodate a future stair-lift.

6.0 Doors and Hallways:

All internal doors comply with the Lifetime Homes/Part M guidance in terms of effective clear width and approach width.

7.0 Wheelchair Access:

The proposals will allow turning circles of 1500mm dia. within the living spaces. The main bedrooms are each sufficiently sized to accommodate a double bed with 750mm clear space on either side. Bedroom 2 is capable of having 750mm clear space on one side. The kitchens will have a clear distance of 1200mm between parallel runs of units.

8.0 Living Room:

The living rooms for both dwellings are located on the ground floor, as are the kitchens.

9.0 Potential for Entrance Level Bed-Space:

Subject to minor alteration, an entrance level Bed Space can be provided.

10.0 Entrance Level WC and Shower Drainage:
A fully accessible Cloakroom will be provided at the new Basement level, with below ground drain age in place to enable easy installation of a future accessible shower.
The sanitaryware layout will be capable of adaptation to a fully compliant wheelchair accessible layout.

11.0 Bathroom and WC Walls:

Walls in the bathrooms will be capable of taking future adaptations such as handrails.

12.0 Stair Lift / Through-Floor Lift:

The stairs have been designed in line with Lifetime Homes/Part M recommendations, and sufficient space has been allowed to accommodate a future stair-lift, should this be necessary.

13.0 Tracking Hoist Route:

The proposals provide a reasonable route for a potential hoist from the main bedroom to the bathroom.

14.0 Bathroom Layout:

The bathrooms have been designed to ensure ease of access. They are sufficiently sized to allow future conversion to accessible wetrooms, via the stairlift, should this be necessary.

15.0 Windows:

The habitable rooms have good natural daylight and views. Window and roof light controls will be positioned no higher than 1200mm from floor level.

16.0 Controls, Fixtures and Fittings:

Switches, sockets, ventilation and service controls will be located between 450mm and 1200mm from finished floor level.

13.0 Land Use Assessment

The 'Change of Use' was approved under planning application 2013/4967/P, and the new proposals are a variation upon the consented scheme. The case for the change of use is repeated here for convenience:

Under the current policy framework, the Council will protect existing employment sites and premises that meet the needs of modern businesses and employers, but will also consider other uses of older office premises, if they involve the provision of permanent housing.

However, policy DP13 states that unless it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer suitable for business use, the Council will resist a change to non-business uses. The key issues for consideration in this case are:

1.0 The Relationship of The Site To Nearby Land Uses:

The area has had a mixed character for some time. There has been a significant trend towards the reintroduction of residential uses both in the area and in the immediate vicinity of the application site.

Community facilities within a short walk of the site would support the residential use of the site. It is close to the green spaces of Lincoln's Inn Field, Russell Square Gardens, Gray's Inn Fields, and there is a broad mix of educational, retail, cultural and leisure facilities within walking distance.

2.0 Whether The Building Is In A Reasonable Condition to Allow The Use to Continue:

There is no access to the office space on the first floor for wheelchair users and it is unlikely they will be manually working within the workshop/garage area on the ground floor. The toilet provision on the ground floor is unsuitable for both ambulant disabled and wheelchair users, and is insufficient for the size of the total workspace accommodation.

The existing services and facilities need complete renewal before the upper floors may be re-let, the cost of which in the current market is way in excess of anticipated rental revenues.

3.0 Whether The Building Could Be Converted To Other Business Uses:

There is no demand for B1, B2 or B8 use in this location. This property has been vacant for the past 2 years, and has been intermittently occupied by squatters.

4.0 Impact on the Fabric of the Building (within a conservation area):

The current building is of framed, post-war construction. There is little of historic merit on the site, other than the footprint, which follows the form of the original bombed mews. The new proposals will utilise the existing building, which is an environmentally and economically sustainable solution.

5.0 Standard of Accommodation:

The site is ideally suited to residential use, and the principle rooms will exceed the minimum sizes specified in Camden Planning Guidance.

6.0 Parking:

The site is a central location with good public transport links, and within close proximity to shops, services, entertainment and schools. A S106 Legal Agreement already exists, and will ensure the

Existing Former Entrance

14.0 Conclusion

In summary, this application is a variation of the scheme approved in 2013 (ref 2013/4967/P).

The current proposals are:

- To add a new basement
- To rebuild the single-storey rear extension, to provide a private courtyard behind each house

The proposals will deliver a number of planning benefits to the sites and their surroundings by:

- Providing high quality residential accommodation, in accordance with local policy objectives
- Preserving and enhancing the character of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area
- Improving the residential environment for surrounding residential use
- Respecting the amenity of surrounding residential uses
- Complying with the environmental requirements of London Borough of Camden

We consider that the scheme complies with the aims and objectives of the Local Authority Planning Policy and Planning Guidance, and trust that planning consent will be granted accordingly.

Approved Elevation (Planning Ref: 2013/4967/P)