



Design (including Heritage) and Access Statement

Submitted as part of Household Planning Application

Project Title: **6 Whidborne Street**

Job Reference: **WDB**

Prepared on behalf of: **Mr & Mrs J Paul**

As owners of: **6 Whidborne Street, London WC1H 8EU**

On: **27th August 2014**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Statement

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. J. Paul, for submission to Camden Council. It relates to a Household Planning and Conservation Area Consent Application for the redevelopment of 6 Whidborne street, whilst retaining its use as a Single Family Dwelling House.

1.2 Client

The client for this application are Mr. Johannes Paul and Mrs. Kate Solomon-Paul.

1.3 Project Team

The project team consists of the following parties:

Moxey Associates - Architects and Lead consultants

Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners - Planning Consultants

Gould and Company Chartered Surveyors - Surveyors / Party-Wall Consultants

Simon Pryce Arboriculture - Arboricultural Consultant

Landers Associates - Agreed Surveyor (Party Wall and Licences)

1.4 Additional Notes

No. 6 Whidborne Street is orientated 30° off the North-South axis. This is an important consideration when referring to the building's solar gain and sun paths. However, for the purpose of clarity each elevation will be referred to in the document and accompanying drawings as follows:

SSE elevation = 'South elevation'
WSW elevation = 'West elevation'
NNW elevation = 'North elevation'
ENE elevation = 'East elevation'

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 Physical Context

2.1.1 Site Location

The site is located to the north end of Whidborne Street, in close proximity to Argyle Street and to the immediate south of Kings Cross St Pancras Station.



Fig. 2.a

 - 6 Whidborne Street

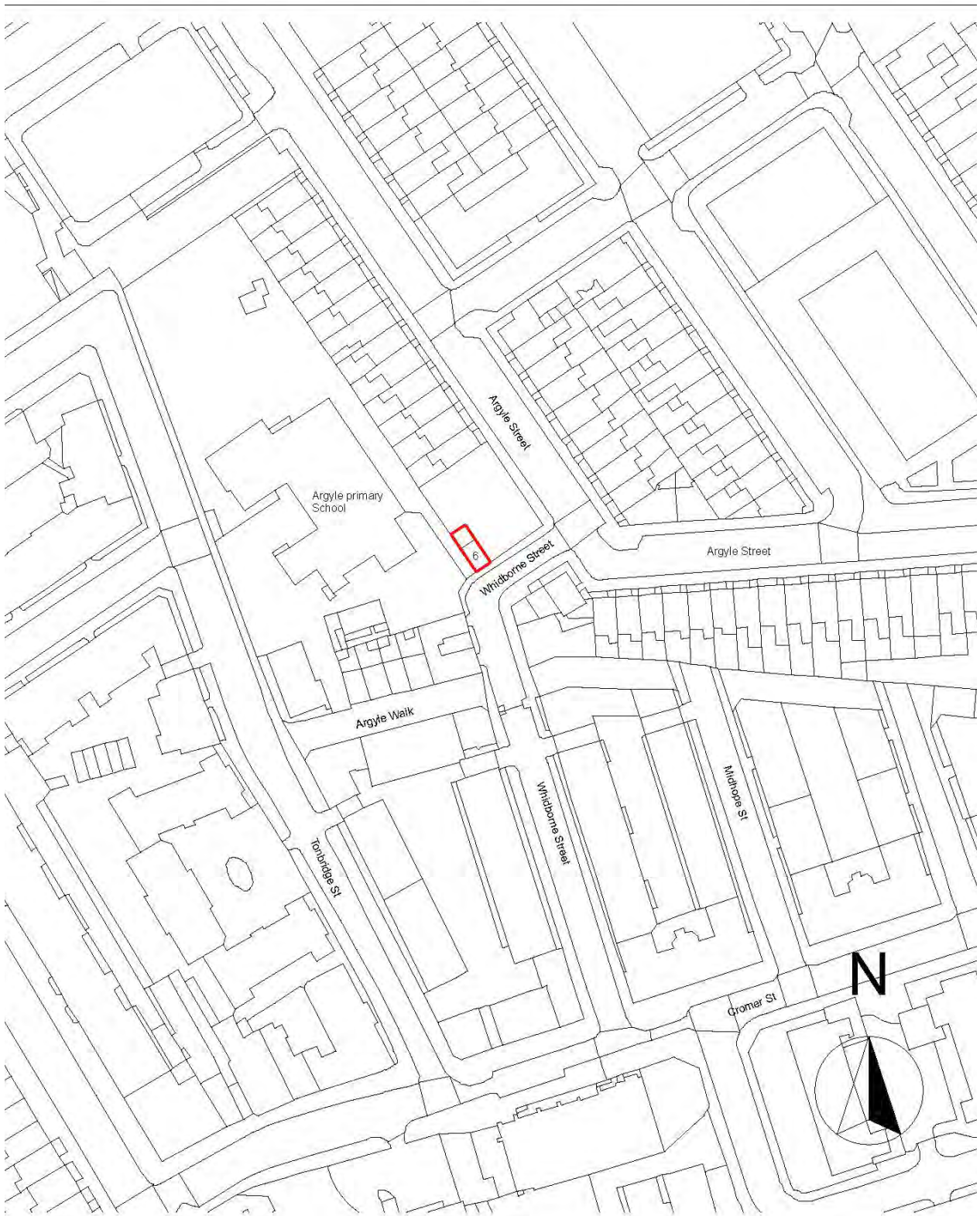


Fig. 2.b
Location Plan -
Not to scale

Fig. 2.c Aerial View from West



Fig. 2.d Aerial View from East



Fig. 2.e Aerial View from South



 - 6 Widborne Street

2.1.2 Bloomsbury Conservation Area: Historical Development of Surrounding Area

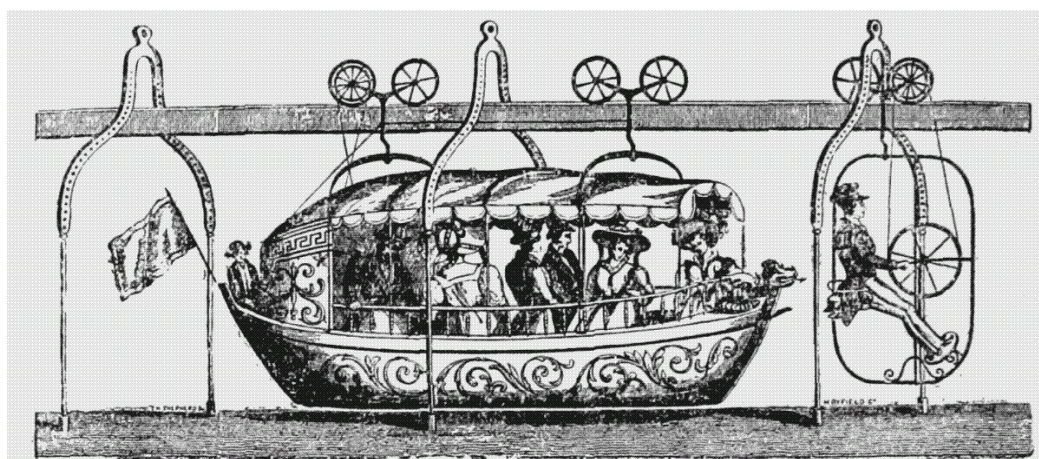
The streetscapes within Bloomsbury Conservation Area were originally developed during the mid-17th century. Following the introduction of Palladian Architecture in 1630 by land-owner and developer the Duke of Bedford, (together with his architect Inigo Jones), much of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area was developed incorporating these motifs. As such development was characterised by placement of intermittent public squares, addressed by a church and arcaded terraces of houses, and surrounded by grids of streets.

No.6 Whidborne Street is situated within Cartwright Gardens/ Argyle Square (sub-area 13) of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Developed mainly by James Burton, the area around Argyle Square was one of the last land parcels to be developed in the 1830s and 1840s. The surrounding streets, however, are likely to have been built earlier: Crestfield Street and Birkenhead Street were laid out from 1825; Argyle Street from 1826 and St Chad's Street from 1827. This phasing of development was due to the construction of the Royal Panarmium Garden project (also known as the Panharmonium Pleasure Gardens). This spectacular and intriguing scheme involved a large complex of gardens, theatres, galleries, a reading room and monorail for the community. Unfortunately however the project was only partially built due to inadequate funding and the remainder subsequently demolished in 1832.

Although the area is strongly influenced by a formal pattern of streets and spaces it was not planned to create distinctive formal vistas to architectural set pieces such as churches. The visual characteristics of the sub-area therefore derive from the experience of moving between streets, squares and other spaces, and the contrast created between enclosure and open spaces.

The earlier 19th century properties tend to be three or four storeys in height, adhering to classical proportions, with taller, grander buildings facing the open spaces. Other common features include timber sash windows with slender glazing bars, which are taller on the first-floor windows at piano nobile level, and decrease in height with each storey above; arched doors and ground-floor windows with delicate fanlights and arched motifs, intricate iron balconies, cast-iron front boundary railings, and roofs concealed behind parapets.

Fig. 2.f
A historic illustration of the Panharmonium Pleasure Garden project c.1830



Bloomsbury suffered notable damage during the second world war, with isolated areas of partial or complete destruction of individual buildings and entire terraces. Occasionally these areas have become open spaces which remain today, but more often these were redeveloped in styles typical of post-war architecture.

The original residential character of the earlier 19th century area in large part disappeared during the 20th century, due to the migration of residents to outer London suburbs. The area became dominated by a mix of hotel and bed and breakfast uses, student accommodation and offices. However, with the coming of the 21st century, a scattering of properties are beginning to be converted back to single family dwellings.

The area today comprises a mix of residential, commercial and tourist uses, with a rich diversity in architectural styles, scale, form and layout.

2.1.3 Site Description

6 Whidborne Street is a detached three storey Victorian period house situated at the northern end of Whidborne Street. It's southern facade faces on to Whidborne street; a road that enjoys a pedestrianised pace of activity owing to the existing bollards which prevent through traffic.

It is surrounded on its remaining three sides by the grounds of Argyle Primary School, with the playground and garden walls flanking the building on the west and east sides respectively. Not only is it completely detached and therefore not part of a discernible 'streetscape', but furthermore its form and mass are quite unlike any other building within the immediate surroundings.

Fig. 2.g
Aerial view of
the site from the
East (2012)



2.1.4 Site History and Planning History

The site historically formed part of Brighton Street, which in 1895 became what is now known as Whidborne Street. The original house was also built at the time of this development. It has always been something of an anomaly, having originally been positioned perpendicular to the back of the western terraces of Argyle Street but bearing no architectural relationship either them nor surrounding buildings in either style or mass. The terrace was bombed during WWII, and the plots of the demolished houses now form the surrounding Argyle Primary School gardens. As such, the building now

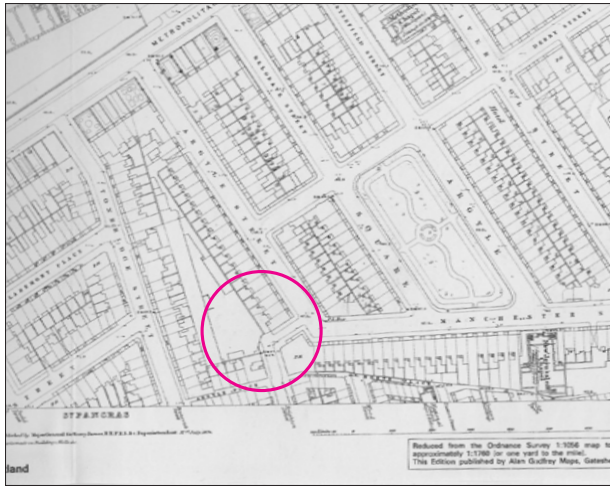


Fig. 2.h Map of the area c.1874 showing no building on the present site of no.6 Whidborne Street.

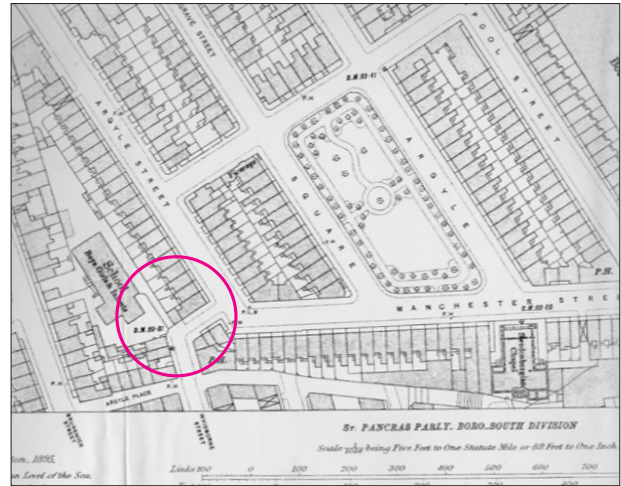


Fig. 2.i Map of the area c.1895 showing no.6 Whidborne Street as a standalone entity; perpendicular to the rear of the Argyle Street terraces.

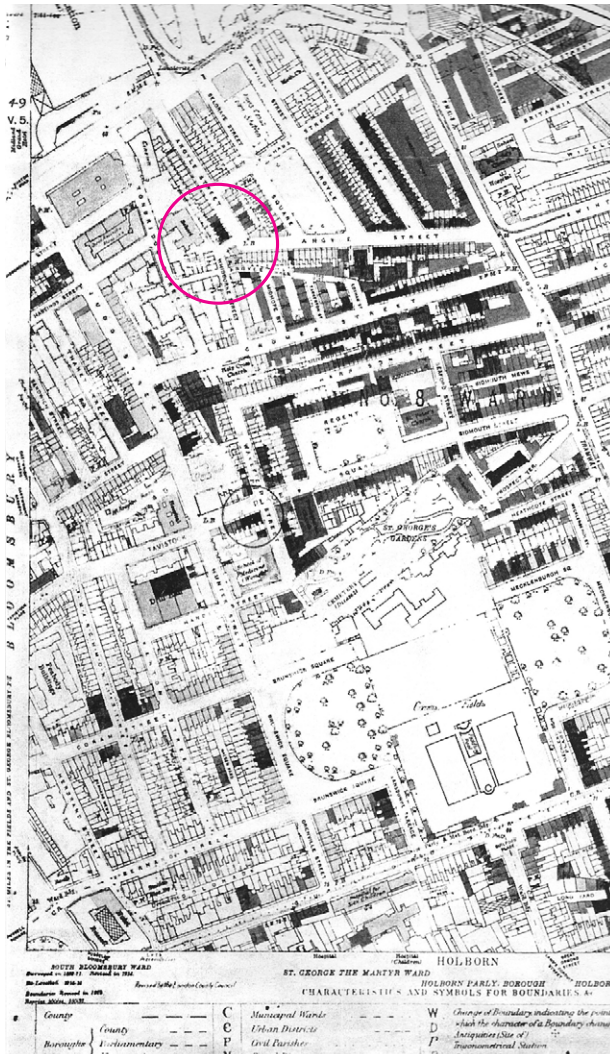


Fig. 2.j Historical Map compiled c.1944 showing levels of bomb damage (black indicating complete destruction, greys indicating partial damage). The area around no.6 Whidborne Street is highlighted, clearly showing the destruction of the southern end of Argyle Street.

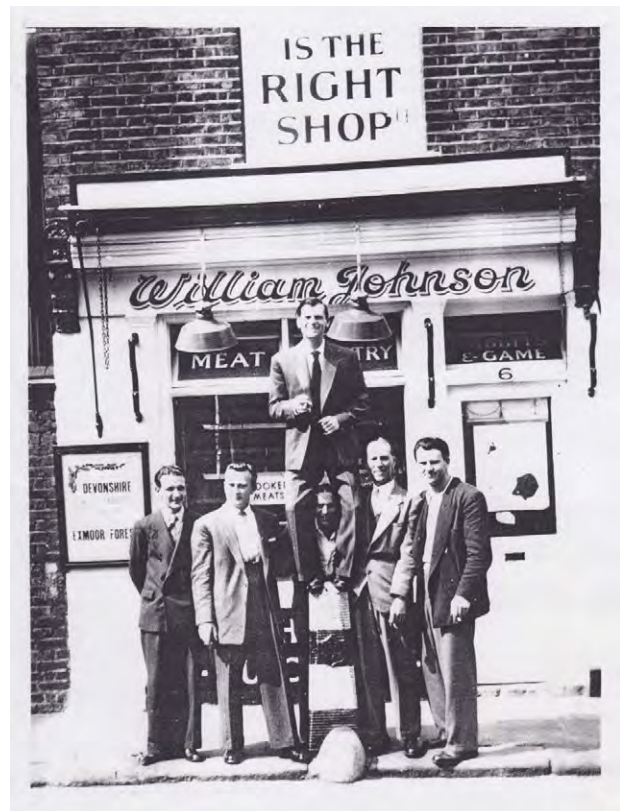


Fig. 2.k 6 Whidborne Street during one of its former uses as a Butcher's shop, with the original shop frontage visible behind.

sits uniquely as a detached entity. While its design is typical of its period (comprising of London stock brick, with small-paned tall timber windows which reduce in height from first floor to second), it otherwise has little direct reference to surrounding buildings. Its narrow width (with only one window bay) and flat roof do not have precedent in the immediate area.

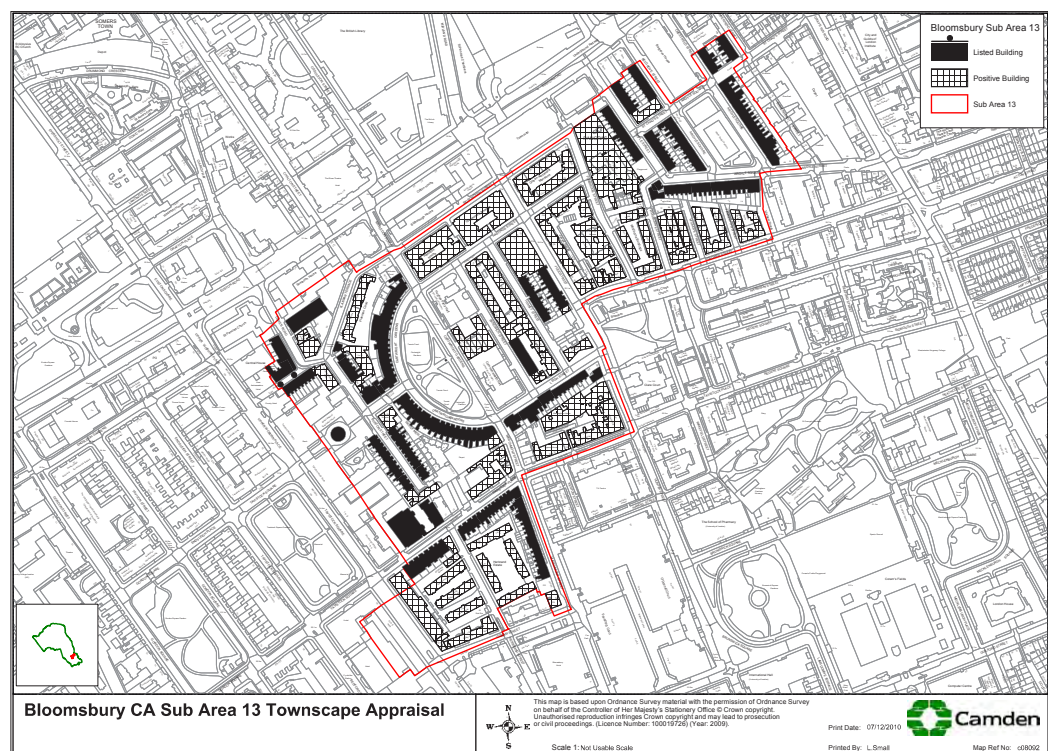
The building has enjoyed numerous functions during its history, including being used as a Butcher's shop. It has also had a long-standing relationship with Argyle Primary School, having been temporarily owned by the London School Board it was used by the headmistress for on-site accommodation. It was subsequently sold together with a small parcel of land on the north side within the school gardens. Part of this plot was built over in 1994 with an extension of the basement and ground floor levels. The existing extension consists of rendered white walls with a flat roof and parapet. The house was also divided into two flats during the 1990s which led to an unsympathetic alteration of the street level frontage into a small window bay with two entrance doors. The current owners have since returned the building to a single dwelling.

2.1.5 Immediate Site Context

On the east side of Tonbridge Street (and facing the north-west corner of Whidborne Street) is Argyle Primary School, a good late Victorian example of a London Board School which stands back from the street behind a high brick wall. Constructed from brown brick with red brick trimmings, it is embellished by small-paned tall timber windows, steep clay tile roofs and feature turrets.

At the northern end of Whidborne Street and on the north side of the western stretch of the pedestrianised Argyle Walk, is a small group of mid-18th century and early 19th century domestic and workshop buildings, which are remnants of earlier development, and provide a mixed-use feel to the sub area. These were most recently used as artists' studios.

Fig. 2.1
Sub Area 13
of Bloomsbury
Conservation
Area: Map
showing listed
buildings
and positive
contributors.



To the east are the four storey terraces of Argyle Street, and beyond those buildings of similar height and mass within Argyle Square, the majority of which are listed. These buildings are characterised by their decorative arches articulating fenestration and reveals, stucco decoration at ground level and mansard extensions at roof level. Despite being listed, the majority of these buildings are currently used as hotels and are advertised as such with modern, sometimes illuminated signage.

The southern end of Whidborne Street is lined on both sides with five storey red and buff brick Victorian apartments, with large arched entrances and decorative ironwork. Beyond these lies the Holy Cross Church, also built at the end of the nineteenth century. However, this view is now back dropped by the fifteen storey twentieth century housing development in ochre render.

2.1.6 Townscape Form, Height and Mass

(Refer to figures 2.m to 2.t)

Townhouses arranged in terraces is the predominant form across the area, reflecting the speculative, (mainly) residential development of the Stuart, Georgian, Regency and early Victorian periods. However, these developments consist of a huge variety in form, height, mass and materials.

The terraced townhouses within the immediate area are generally four or five storeys in height. In addition, the townhouses generally have both basements and attic storeys. Roofs are commonly defined by parapets, giving strong and consistent roof lines within certain individual street elevations. The most widespread roof forms are butterfly roofs behind parapets or mansards where there is habitable attic space.

Argyle Primary School, the Victorian mansion blocks and nearby commercial buildings range from six to twelve storeys. Later 20th century development in the area includes some residential towers of up to fifteen storeys.

2.1.7 Building Materials and Colours

(Refer to figures 2.m to 2.t)

The area comprises a vast array of building materials and colours. London stock facades are prevalent throughout the area, particularly within the Georgian and Victorian terraces. Decorative stucco finishes are common at ground level. Vast red brick facades with black brick toothing and detailing is the prevalent material within late Victorian developments. Also notable are the grey-brick work-house buildings. From the late 19th Century the use of glazed tiling, terracotta and faience began to be seen on public houses and other buildings.

Modern developments in the area constitute an array of materials. Within view of the site are fifteen storey facades in ochre-painted render, as well as the exposed precast concrete structure of the Camden Council library and offices.



2.m



2.n



2.o



2.p

Photographs documenting the vast diversity in massing, materials and building height in the immediate area around no.6 Whidborne Street. (February - May 2013)



2.q



2.r



2.s



2.t

Photographs documenting the vast diversity in massing, materials and building height in the immediate area around no.6 Whidborne Street. (May 2013)

2.1.8 Transport

The area enjoys some of the best public transport within London. The site itself is a two-minute walk from Euston Road and Kings Cross St Pancras station. Between them these major infrastructure axes allow direct access to the Eurostar international train line, express national and regional train services, six underground lines and innumerable local bus services.

It is also situated in close proximity to two of London Cycle Network's cycle routes and one of the recently launched Barclays Cycle Superhighways.

2.2 Social and Economic Context

Kings Cross is an affluent area of mixed-use developments, enjoying excellent transport links. The immediate locale of the site is characterised by offices, hotels, shops and residential uses.

The area is subject to continuous development at all scales, with Kings Cross itself representing one of the largest development sites in London. The area is identified as having a shortage of residential housing and single family dwellings as well as amenity space suitable for families.

2.3 Policy and Planning Context

This section identifies national and local planning policies which have been taken into account in designing the proposed scheme.

2.3.1 National Planning Policy Guidance

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

2.3.2 Mayor of London

- London Plan (2011) including REMA (2013)
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPG (2014)
- Housing SPG (2012)
- London Housing Design Guide Interim Edition (2010)

2.3.3 London Borough of Camden

- Core Strategy (2010) (inc. Plan Map designations)
- Development Policies (2010)

- CPG 1: Design (2013)
- CPG 2: Housing (2013)
- CPG 3: Sustainability (2013)
- CPG 4: Basements and Lightwells (2013)
- CPG 6: Amenity (2011)
- CPG 8: Planning Obligations
- Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)

2.3.4 English Heritage

- PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide
- London Terrace Houses 1660-1860: A Guide to Alterations and Extensions

2.4 Policy Tests

Through consideration of the site context and relevant planning policies a number of 'tests' have been established against which the development proposals can be assessed. Do the proposals:

- Prioritise sustainable, inclusive and secure design (including in existing buildings)?
- Preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area?
- Maximise the supply of homes (particularly family homes) and minimise their loss?
- Protect the setting and special architectural interest of the adjacent and nearby listed buildings?
- Provide 'high quality modern or distinctive design' and 'environment champions'?
- Protect or enhance adjoining occupiers' amenity?
- Take into account views of the local community?

3.0 SITE ANALYSIS & DESIGN PRINCIPLES

3.1 Client Brief

The Clients' brief for the project was to redevelop the existing building as a family home and innovative exemplar of urban agriculture and sustainability within a confined footprint. The redevelopment is to allow more floor area and accommodation for their growing family, but concomitantly to provide sufficient planting and agricultural space in order to be as self-sufficient as possible. This was also to include provision for bird boxes as well as food sources for the clients' existing bee hives in order to promote biodiversity. The design was also to engage the school and surroundings with its ecological brief, and provide amenity through its design.

3.2 Land Use

The building is to retain its use as a residential property (Use Class C3(a)), and expand its currently inadequate floor area to allow for accommodation suitable for a family dwelling in line with the figures and targets set out by London Borough of Camden (LBC) in Core Strategy 6 and Development Policy 2 amongst others.

3.3 Townscape Key Views

BCAAMS-2011 states that 'although the area is strongly influenced by a formal pattern of streets and spaces it was not planned to create distinctive formal vistas to architectural set pieces such as churches. The visual characteristics of the Conservation Area therefore derive from the experience of moving between streets, squares and other spaces, and the contrast created between enclosure and open spaces'.

Furthermore, 6 Whidborne Street does not form part of a terrace or reference any other discernible formal pattern. Likewise its features and proportions cannot be read as a continuation of any neighbouring buildings.

Despite this, views both to and from the site will be considered.

3.3.1 Whidborne Street

(Refer to figures 3.a and 3.b)

Looking north along Whidborne Street the building is dwarfed in foreground by the five storey red and buff brick terraces which line either side of the street, as well as by the modern developments which have been completed in unsympathetic detailing. The blank side-elevation of the southern-most house of Argyle Street (no. 36) is finished with

an untreated cement render, and provides an unfortunate cessation to the view.

As present occupiers, the clients produce seasonal planting schemes in planters at street level and in window boxes on the south facade, which contribute positively to this view and which have been commented upon by various residents and commuters.

The reciprocating view from 6 Whidborne Street to the south has a similarly unfortunate termination: with the Holy Cross Church eclipsed by the blank fifteen-storey facade of a modern development in ochre-painted render. The foreground of this view is more amiable; with the grey brick and soot-washed London stock of the work-shop buildings and McGlynns Public House respectively offering an interesting diversity in material and detailing.

3.3.2 Argyle Street

(Refer to figures 3.c - 3.f for photographic references)

The view from Argyle Street to the east of the site is significantly obscured throughout the year by a combination of plants, trees and wire fencing within the Argyle Primary School Grounds. This even includes the winter months when there is reduced foliage.

At present, the blank side facade of the site provides little interest to either the street or schoolchildren of Argyle Primary School. The existing ground level extension on the north side of the site was completed in an unsympathetic white render, and similarly provides little contribution to the townscape.

3.4 Height, Bulk & Scale

(Refer to figures 2.m - 2.t for photographic references)

Whidborne Street and its surroundings are characterised by an eclectic mix of building styles. This is an inherent characteristic of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The existing building at 6 Whidborne Street is part of this eclecticism.

Although its material palette is characteristic of London's early Victorian architecture, the property has no direct precedent in the immediate area: Its height is similar to few other buildings, being significantly smaller than almost all others in the vicinity. Even if one were to refer to complete terraces in the area, it is uncharacteristic; being only a single bay wide and having a flat roof behind its parapet.

3.5 Frontage Design

(Refer to figure 3.b for photographic reference)

The existing frontage is fairly typical of the historic architectural style; with small-paned timber framed windows (both sash and casement) to the first and second floors. The ground floor has a white-painted render, while original London stock brick is exposed on the upper floors.

The clients produce an array of seasonal plantings throughout the year, which adorn the street around the entrance. This adds a welcomed engagement with the street level (as previously mention in section 3.3.1).

Despite this it should be noted that the original frontage at street level (from its historic function as a Butcher's shop, see figure 2.k) was unsympathetically modified at the time that the building was converted into two flats. An additional (mismatched) door was installed at some point during this development, and this is now redundant and sits at odds with the frontage.

3.6 Amenity

Although the property has no garden space due to its unusual development history, due to its atypical flat roof it has been able to provide a small amount of valuable amenity space in the past. This has been used by the clients for casual relaxation, but also for the care of small plantings and seeding bags, as well as to house their photovoltaic units and bee hives.

As Whidborne Street is not a through-road, the street offers excellent amenity for a family dwelling; enjoying a pedestrianised pace of activity with no traffic apart from the daily trail of commuting cyclists. This, along with the direct relationship between the street and the property entrance, (as well as the aforementioned amenity provided by seasonal plantings), makes for a rare and exciting degree of engagement at street level which should be promoted in order to enhance the ambience of the conservation area.

As such, the site and building evidently cater to the points laid out in DP 5.10, which refers to development particularly suited to families with children, stating that such developments are priority to Camden's housing needs. The features which the scheme provides are:

- The potential to provide space on site where children can play (open space or private amenity space);
- Dedicated children's play space available nearby;
- A number of homes with direct access to the street, private amenity space or open space;
- No direct access to a major road;

The council states that 'there are relatively few opportunities in Camden for housing development that will provide most of these features' (DP5.11). As such the scheme should be seen as something of a rarity in its ability to provide amenity to families with children.



Fig. 3.a View north of Whidborne Street, with five-storey twentieth century developments in the foreground, and five-storey Victorian terraces in the middle-ground (January 2013).



Fig. 3.b View north of Whidborne Street, with the red-brick Argyle Primary School, precast concrete facade of Camden Council Offices and Library, and cement-rendered flank of 36 Argyle Street in the background. (May 2013)

3.c



3.d



Views from Argyle Street towards east flank of no.6 Whidborne Street. The view is obscured throughout the year. December 2013 (Fig.3.c). May 2013 (Fig.3.d).

Fig. 3.e



Fig. 3.f



Fig. 3.g



Fig. 3.e View from the southern end of Argyle Street (Wardonia Hotel in foreground) towards east flank of no.6 Whidborne Street. The view is largely obscured throughout the year by fences and plantings. (May 2013)

Fig. 3.f View from no.36 Argyle Street (The Globe Hotel) towards north flank of no.6 Whidborne Street. The view is largely obscured throughout the year by fences and plantings. (May 2013)

Fig. 3.g View of the WSW facade of no.6 Whidborne Street from within the grounds of Argyle Primary School. (January 2013)

4.0 DESIGN CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Friends of Argyle Square

Following a meeting with representatives of The Friends of Argyle Square, the feedback regarding the project was very positive.

The view looking north along Whidborne Street was identified as an important consideration, and this has subsequently been incorporated into the current design.

The idea of treating the facade using a design which referenced the sites historical context and/or green initiative was warmly received.

4.2 Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Hugh Cullum of BCAAC has been consulted on the design and his comments incorporated.

He suggested that we should be aware of the massing at high level at the front, how it may impact at street level and reiterated how the view north was key. The existing parapet line has been enforced and carried through to the rear extension following his suggestion.

Regarding materials for the extension he was excited by the decorative facade in two respects: Firstly in reinterpreting decorative brickwork in order to address the history and heritage of the area; and secondly in working with engaging the local school pupils in its design and ecological agenda.

4.3 Argyle Primary School

Having met with Ms. Gemima Wade, the headmistress of Argyle Primary School, she expressed no immediate opposition to the proposal.

The idea to engage with the school children was welcomed: whether this be in terms of a visual 'spectacle' or responsive building, or through participation in some decorative activity (e.g. customising tiles etc).

Ms. Wade expressed her satisfaction that the designers would also be overseeing the works in the interest of fostering a continued relationship and reliable point of contact during the project.

4.4 London Borough of Camden Council

4.4.1 Previous planning application

Following the previous planning application submitted in July 2013, and the subsequent feedback in January 2014, the design has been altered to take in the suggestions of the council's planning officers.

During those discussions, It was suggested that the existing parapet line and vertical lines of the flank walls were identified as defining elements which might be emphasised in order to unite the proposed redevelopment. This would give rise to a strong design that enhanced its existing character.

4.4.2 London Tree Officer Association (Camden)

(Site meeting with Mr. Liam Vincent. January 2013)

6 Whidborne Street is surrounded on two sides by the gardens of Argyle Primary School. There are several trees within the garden of notable size that need to be considered in the design and construction methodology, in particular the existing Cherry tree; the largest tree in the garden and one of the closest to the house. Following a meeting on site with Liam Vincent of the London Tree Officer Association, he has advised the following:

- There are no Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) on any trees in the Argyle Primary School gardens owing to the fact that they are council-owned trees.
- An arboricultural method statement will be required in accordance with BS 5837:2012, and this should prescribe working methods around existing trees where necessary.
- The trees to the west (in the school playground) are broadly outside of the area of works and may be ignored.

5.0 SCHEME DESIGN

5.1 Use

The building is to retain its use as a residential property (Use Class C3(a)), and expand its currently inadequate floor area in order to provide accommodation suitable for a family dwelling. This is in line with the figures and targets set out in CS6 and DP2 (amongst others).

In addition to this the redevelopment is to function as a domestic-scale urban agriculture initiative, providing a sustainable supply of food, water and energy to this family unit throughout the year.

5.2 Amount

The proposal sees an increase of net internal floor area that is conducive to providing adequate accommodation for a growing family unit.

5.3 Layout

The layout of the redevelopment is necessarily restricted, with the building already being extended to its boundaries. As such, the footprint of the redevelopment is to be considered largely nonnegotiable. In addition to the mass, scale and character of the existing building (see section 6.4), the resulting layout took into consideration the following factors:

5.3.1 Solar Gain

Following daylight calculations, the south and west facades were identified as those receiving the most solar gain throughout the year.

Together with the smaller south-facing facade, the western aspect receives maximum solar exposure throughout the year, and consequently is most appropriate for the vertical planting schemes. The remaining facades which receive little or no direct sunlight are to be utilised for wildflower plantings in order to encourage biodiversity, food source for bees, and provide visual amenity when seen from Argyle Street and the surrounding area.

5.3.2 Engaging with Argyle Primary School

The site has enjoyed a historic relationship with Argyle Primary School, and it was the wish of the client that this relationship be strengthened in the design of the redevelopment. After consultation with staff and students of Argyle Primary School, it was decided that engaging the schoolchildren with the ecological program of the building was of primary importance. As such, the west facade (which also enjoys the most solar exposure) was to be designed as an active 'planting wall', allowing students to both learn from and enjoy the life of the building.

5.4 Mass, Scale and Character

During discussion with Camden Council's Conservation and Design officer it was decided that, with no adjacent or nearby buildings able to act as a reference with regards to scale or mass, the building may be addressed as a standalone entity. Consequently the parapet line was identified as one of its defining elements.

As such, the new structure to the north of the building was brought up to meet the existing parapet line. This also means that the redevelopment has minimal impact from Whidborne Street. The detailing of materials will create the distinction between the new and historic elements.

5.5 Appearance

The concept for the appearance of the house is that it should be respectful of the historic environment in which it is located and use this to drive its design. The following factors were taken into account when considering the appearance of the building:

5.5.1 Material Palette & Detailing

The fenestration of the redevelopment has been designed to be sympathetic with the architectural features of the conservation area: Small-paned windows are proposed throughout, with arched windows in several instances in reference to the decorative arches seen throughout nearby Argyle Street and Argyle Square etc.

The material treatment of the facade similarly takes into account the history of the area: By reinterpreting the motif of the decorative brick arch on the building's facade to create a 'forest' of arches, the design intends to make an innovative comment on London's historical architecture and its aspirations for a sustainable future.

5.5.2 Views from Argyle Street & Argyle Primary School

At present, the flank elevations are monolithic; consisting of blank expanses of brickwork which have little engagement with either Argyle Street or Argyle Primary School. Furthermore, the existing ground floor extension is unsympathetic to the area and the fenestration on the rear facade in need of maintenance.

The proposal seeks to enhance these views by removing the ground floor extension and replacing it with structure of architectural interest that is also sympathetic with the unique scale and setting of the building. By incorporating an innovative vertical planting wall, as well as a playful facade of brick 'trees', the schoolchildren and surrounding residents will be engaged with the new design. This will be complemented by adding window boxes incorporating an array of wildflowers, vegetables and seasonal plantings.

5.5.3 Views from Whidborne Street

It is proposed that the ground floor entrance be replaced with one more sympathetic to its historic detailing. Other than this, there will be no discernable change in the view from Whidborne Street.

5.6 Landscaping and Planting

Due to its urban agriculture program, the design necessarily incorporates a thorough planting scheme:

- Bee Keeping - The scheme retains space for the owners' existing beehives; producing honey for domestic use and aiding biodiversity in the immediate area.
- Wildflower beds - Providing 'companion flowers' to the vegetable plantings in order to provide a food source to bees, aid pollination, add biodiversity in the immediate area and providing visual amenity.
- Bird boxes - Providing nesting space for small species in order to aid biodiversity in the area.
- Vertical vegetable garden - An innovative way to harvest crops within a dense urban environment with limited planting space. The planting beds will be mounted on the WSW elevation in front of window openings so that they can be tended, whilst also providing amenity and engaging the staff and students of Argyle Primary School.

5.7 Amenity

The scheme enhances the character of the area by providing amenity to the residents of 6 Whidborne Street, the conservation area and its surrounding residents through the design of its extensive planting scheme, points of visual interest and engagement with the street. These attributes are highlighted in the Camden Development Policies DP5.10 as being highly sought after in the borough of Camden.

Furthermore, the site lies within an 'area of deficiency in access to nature' as defined in The London Plan (2011). As such, the function of the proposal in creating a planting scheme which promotes biodiversity and provides amenity should be welcomed all the more.

- Planting - As well as promoting biodiversity in the area, the planting schemes also provide visual amenity to the surroundings.
- Street level activity - The building has direct access onto a no-through road, providing safe activity at street level for a family with children.
- Street level engagement - The proposed street-level frontage engages directly with the street, creating an intimate atmosphere of community involvement.
- Facade - The redeveloped facade elements seek to engage with the surrounding users and inhabitants; using one of its defining architectural motifs as a means of celebrating the presence of nature in the city.
- Crops - The visible presence of domestic agriculture schemes will become a welcome addition in an area identified as having deficiency in access to nature, and will serve as an exponent of ecological urban living.

5.8 Environmental Impacts

5.8.1 Natural Light

The site is detached from surrounding buildings and has a significant distance between itself and its nearest buildings. As such loss of natural light to neighbouring properties is not a major cause for concern. Nonetheless, the scheme has still been designed in order to cause negligible overshadowing to the surrounding open spaces.

5.8.2 Artificial Light

The scheme includes neither floodlights nor significant outdoor lighting.

5.8.3 Outlook and Overlooking

No additional instances of outlook or overlooking arise as result of the design.

5.8.4 Noise

The scheme does not include any technologies or installations that will have an adverse effect on noise pollution.

5.9 Demolition

The scheme involves the demolition of the existing ground floor extension (built c.1992), as well as part of the existing party structure that forms the boundary with Argyle Primary School. The remainder of this wall will be supported by a temporary works structure until the building is in place and the wall restored. Further to this, the party structure will be surveyed and restored in accordance with the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.

5.10 Heritage Impact

The concept for the redevelopment is that it should be respectful of the historic environment in which it is located, but also that it should enhance the area through its architectural design. Although isolated from any terraces the site is within view of several listed buildings, the impact of which should be addressed:

Nos. 3 and 5 Whidborne Street (collectively forming McGlynn's Public House) are Grade-II listed buildings. The proposal would not detract from these buildings, but would rather enhance the streetscape of which they are a part. The Public House enjoys seating on the street itself, and the additional planting would add to the agreeable atmosphere of the street. The additional mass of the building is not discernible from this location.

In conclusion, as an isolated entity with neither a terrace nor direct reference to relate to, the redevelopment of the building does not detract from the character of the area. Furthermore, its special position could and should be used to enhance the diversity of

architecture that characterises Bloomsbury Conservation Area sub-area 13. The existing ground floor extension is unsympathetic to the surroundings, and the fenestration to front and rear in need of refurbishment. Suitable redevelopment of these elements has the potential to significantly enhance the conservation area.

By addressing the history of the area through its design and detailing, and by stimulating the surroundings through the display of its ecological program, it should provide amenity

6.0 ACCESS

6.1 Public Transport

The area enjoys some of the best public transport within London. The site itself is a two-minute walk from Euston Road and Kings Cross St Pancras station. Between them these major infrastructure axes allow direct access to the Eurostar international train line, express national and regional train services, six underground lines and innumerable local bus services.

6.2 Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access is maintained directly off the public pavement from Whidborne Street. Two doors presently exist from the building's former use as flats. The refurbishment of the street level frontage will see this returned to a single entrance-way with provision for inclusive access.

6.3 Cycle Access and Storage

There is provision for cycle storage at street level immediately within the entrance to the property. The design allows for storage for at least two bicycles.

7.0 ASSESSMENT AGAINST KEY DESIGN TESTS

Design 'Test'	Proposed Development Response	Policy Reference
Prioritise sustainable, inclusive and secure design (including in existing buildings).	The scheme seeks to act as an environment champion; exemplifying how sustainable domestic-scale agriculture and ecological living can be achieved in a small family home.	NPPF 11 – 16, 49, 51, 57, 58, 93, 96, 97 London Plan: 5.2, 5.3, 5.10, 7.3 Development Policy: 22.5, 22.9, 22.17, 23.6, 23.7 CPG 1: 2.12, 4.1, 4.14
Preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.	Replacement of existing ground floor extension and reversal of its negative contribution to the area. Replacement with high quality contemporary building which celebrates the historical quality of the surroundings and makes visible its ecological programme.	NPPF 128 - 138 London Plan: 7.8 BCAAMS: 3.14, 3.17, 3.27, 5.225, 6.7 Development Policy: DP24.6, 25
Maximise the supply of homes (particularly family homes) and minimise their loss.	The scheme will retain the building as a single family dwelling and increase its floor area to allow for a larger family home with excellent safety and amenity.	Development Policy: DP2.6, 5.1, 5.10, 5.11, 24.5
Protect the setting and special architectural interest of the adjacent and nearby listed buildings	Scale of redevelopment creates negligible impact on nearby listed buildings. The isolated position of building and its atypical scale and form mean that it does not detract from the surrounding streetscape, but rather adds to its diversity.	NPPF 128 - 138 London Plan: 7.8 CPG 1: 4.8
Providing 'high quality modern or distinctive design' and 'environment champions'.	The proposal takes historic materials and motifs and reinterprets them in a modern design, utilising them to promote the sustainable brief of the redevelopment.	NPPF 56 – 65 London Plan: 7.4, 7.6 Development Policy: DP24.6, 24.9 BCAAMS: 5.70, 6.7, 5.228 CPG 1: 4.7
Protection of adjoining occupiers' amenity	The proposal adds to the amenity of the surroundings by providing dense and attractively planting and actively engaging residents with the building's program.	NPPF 17 London Plan: 7.14, 7.15
Views of the local community	Proposals were subject to the Council's formal pre-application advice process. Local residents and interested parties were visited in order to discuss the proposals.	NPPF 66, 188 – 191