



Design and Access Statement
Remodelling and Renovation with 5 New Mews Houses
Ashton Court, Camden
August 2015



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Origin Housing
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1.0 Introduction/Client Brief

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Archadia in support of the application submitted by JLL on behalf of Origin Housing. It should be read in conjunction with the overall planning submission and supporting documents indicated in the appendix.

Origin Housing provides essential affordable housing, and care and support services in north London and Hertfordshire, with the aim of improving communities and the lives of customers.

Origin Housing is looking to upgrade Ashton Court which offers retirement housing with support in Camden. The scheme caters for people over 60, or over 55 with support needs. The existing accommodation comprises predominantly of bedsits with a few one and two bedroom flats, there is a communal hall on the ground floor also a shared garden at the rear.

In its current state the building does not meet current housing standards and is in need of significant amount of alteration work to make it fit for purpose. The proposed development will include increasing the size of existing units to meet current standards and improving the living accommodation on offer. The communal facilities will be rebuilt and new apartments will be provided above. To fund this Origin will be creating 5 new town houses on Camden Mews for market sale to replace the current apartments.



2.0 Site Context



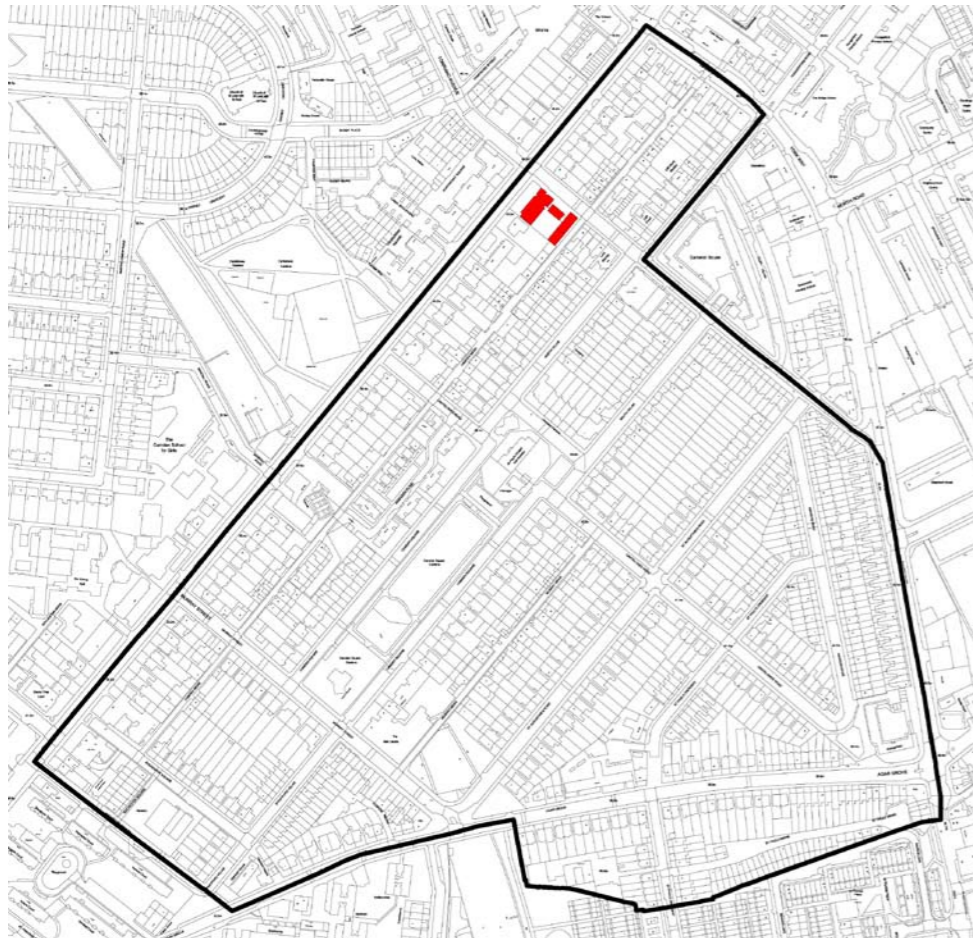
1. Aerial views of Camden Mews with Ashton Court highlighted



Ashton Court is situated on a plot enclosed by three roads, Camden Road, Camden Park Road and Camden Mews. The scheme falls within the boundary of the Camden Square Conservation Area, a primarily nineteenth century inner London suburb with a gridded street layout running parallel to and perpendicular from Camden Road, the layout is focused around Camden Square.

The scheme is located on the east side of the Borough of Camden on the boundary of Islington and falls within the Canteloves Ward. It lies half a mile north east of St Pancras Old Church and Somers Town, half a mile north east of the centre of Camden Town and is situated south east of Kentish Town. The conservation area is not adjacent to any other conservation areas in Camden and has a self-contained identity centred on Camden Square. In plan it is a blunt triangle shape laid from north east to the apex in the south west closest to Camden Town. The area is defined by Camden Road to the north west, York Way to the north east and Agar Grove to the south east.

The majority of the buildings surrounding Ashton Court on Camden Park and Camden Road are from the Georgian/Regency period dating back to around 1800's. The immediate area is predominantly residential with the buildings being mostly three stories with some four stories. Common features of these buildings include an entrance level at upper ground accessed via grand steps allowing for an additional semi- basement level. The existing buildings have a simplistic grandeur providing a strong rhythmic frontage to the streets; these are arranged in either terraces or in clusters of semis. The street facades have a strong repetitive pattern of windows and bays with materials varying from London yellow stock brick with either stone moldings' around windows and doors, to rendered facades.



2. Camden Square Conservation Area with Ashton Court highlighted



3. Examples of regency villas along Camden Road and Camden Park Road



4. Examples of mews house along Camden Mews

Camden Mews is one of two mews streets behind Camden Square, historically Camden Mews continued beyond York Way into Islington and is believed to be one of the longest mews in Britain. The mews properties follow the historic pattern of being subservient to the taller houses in Camden Road and were originally stables and coach houses. The current mews contains many inventive building developments including some from prominent Architects that have also evolved over time, they are a mixture of two storeys and three storeys with third floors usually disguised in the roof or set back from the street. This has resulted in a distinct character that is a unique mix of nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first century ideas of the mews concept, from functional service areas to exemplars of urban living (mews study).

The scheme is popular with older residents as it is close to amenities and has good transport links. There are also a number of services and community centres which cater for older people in the area.

2.1 Existing Building

Ashton Court comprises of three distinct parts:

1. A four storey brick building fronting Camden Road which contains the majority of the living accommodation, the design incorporates protruding bay windows as a distinct feature.
2. A single storey block facing Camden Park Road containing the communal social facilities, which opens up to an external decking and shared garden.
3. A two storey block to Camden Mews, the design reflects the bay windows from the main block and contains a small number of flats with 4 parking spaces housed in an undercroft.

The main building at Ashton Court has been identified as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Camden Square conservation area, however the link building and mews do not have this classification. All 3 elements were constructed at the same time by the same architect using London yellow stock bricks, however poor foundation meant the link building had to be reconstructed at a later date. The general massing and external envelope is considered to successfully respond to its context.

The main entrance to the building is on Camden Road although there are other secondary entrances into the building used by the residents. The four storey block has a single lift and staircase which does not meet current travel distances for a single stair access. The corridors generally are too narrow with low floor to ceiling heights. There is no lift in the block facing Camden Mews which also has only a single fire escape stair. Furthermore, there is no level access to the communal facilities and garden from this block.



1. Ashton Court main building

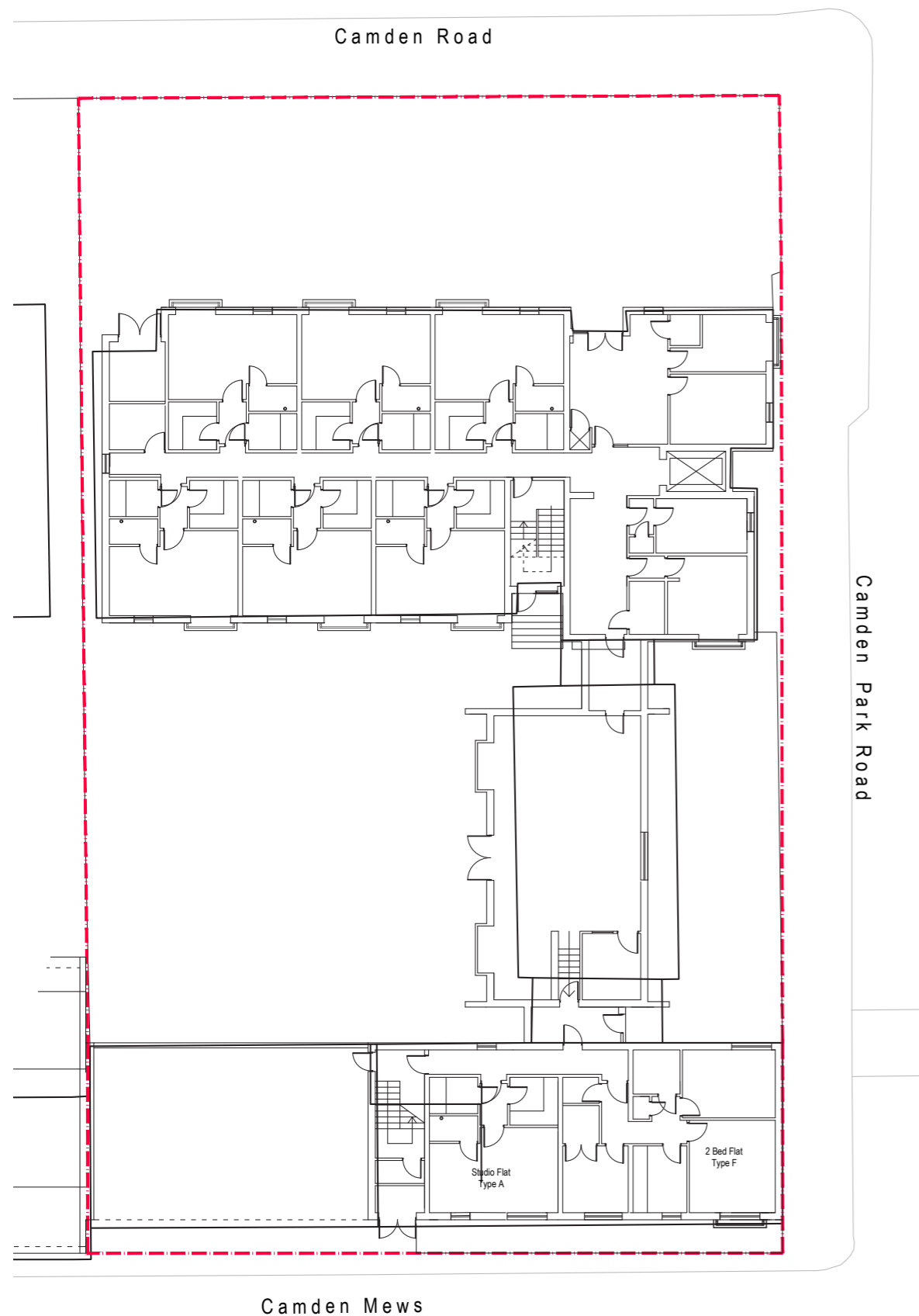


2. Ashton Court link building



3. Ashton Court apartments on mews and undercroft





Existing Kitchen



Existing Corridor



Existing Bathroom

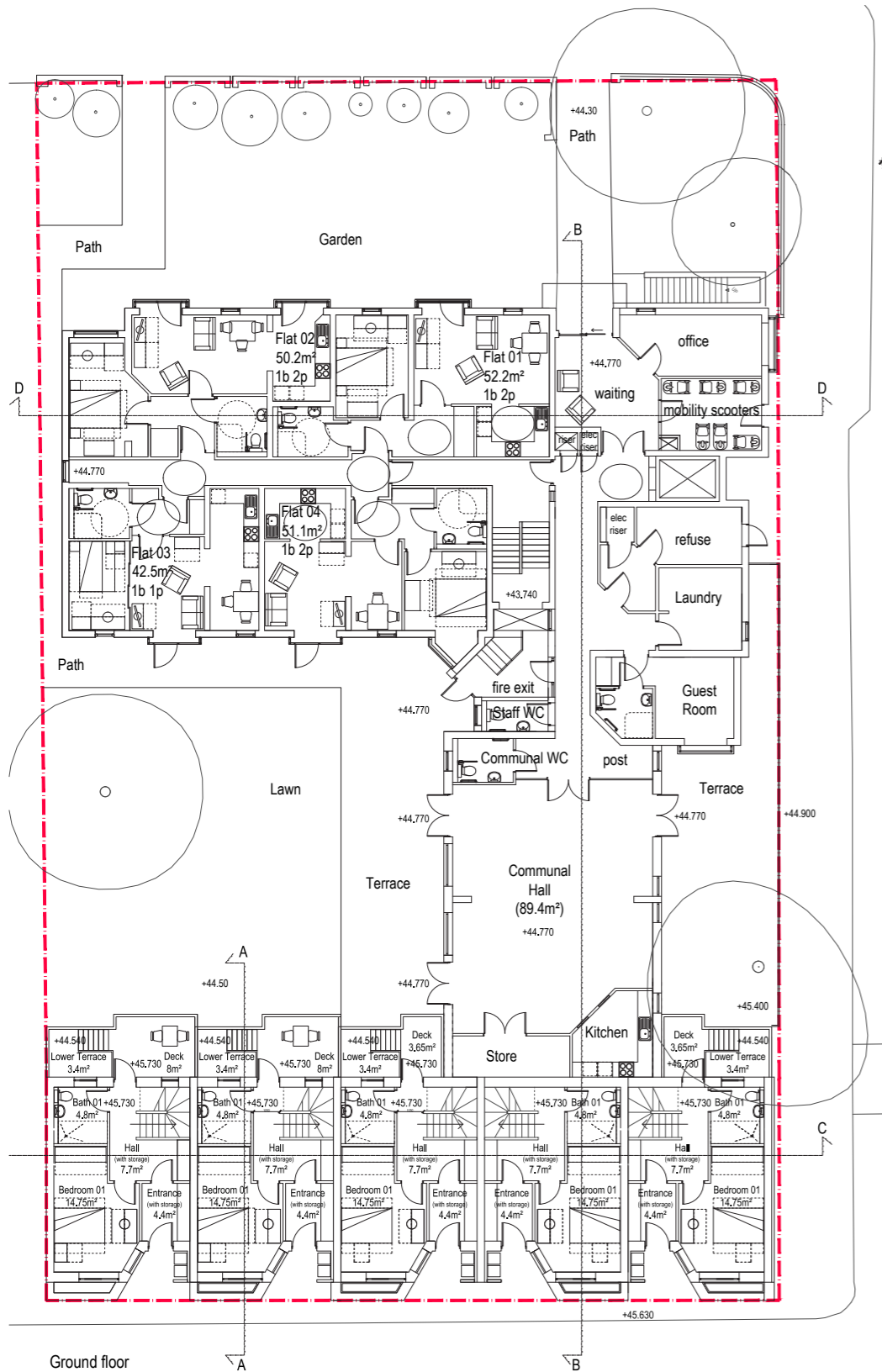
3.0 Existing Accommodation

The existing building has 29 studios (no separate bedroom), 6 one bed flats, and 1 two bed flat giving a total of 36 flats. The studios are very small and do not meet the current space standards for older person housing or lifetime homes standards.

All communal facilities are located on the ground floor. The common room with associated kitchen is within the single storey block, with office, laundry, guest room, storage & WC located near the main entrance. There are two refuse chutes in the building. One located within the Camden Road block and the second is located in the Camden Mews block at half landing level (access to it the latter is not step free).

The apartments facing Camden Mews have a separate entrance at a higher level and residents access to the common room is via a flight of stairs.

4.0 Proposed Accommodation



3D Flat Plan



Living space with Juliet Balcony



Kitchen with Juliet Balcony

In the main block changes to the bedsits are dictated by existing load bearing walls and windows which would be finalised once a full structural survey is carried out with input from a structural engineer. 24 one bedroom flats will be provided in Ashton Court. Flat sizes have been based on the London plan where possible with a large percentage over 50sqm for a one bedroom flat that could accommodate 2 people.

The current communal hall will be demolished and rebuilt to a higher standard with a new kitchen and storage, also an accessible WC. Two new apartments will be built above the hall and look out over the shared garden. An extension to the rear that steps back over the upper floors allows for more accommodation and the provision of a guest room for visitors.

The 5 new mews houses range from 143 - 148sqm (GIA). These will be for market sale and have no link with Ashton court.

The planning statement that accompanies this document outlines the change in affordable housing provision.

5.0 Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Access

The 16 Lifetime homes standards and wheelchair access have been considered in the remodelling of Ashton Court and the new Mews properties. In Ashton Court 10% of the apartments could be adapted to meet Habinteg wheelchair standards, others could be adapted to accommodate wheelchair use for shorter periods and all are designed with older people in mind. A checklist for lifetime homes for Ashton court and the Mews has been included in the appendix.

External Access;

The extension of the bay windows above the entrance space has created a covered external area to protect residents from weather and better lighting will be provided and aesthetic enhancement of this space including new signage and a video entry system for visitors. The current entrance door will be replaced with an electric sliding door which will increase the clear width of the entrance. Access controls will comply with wheelchair standard and the threshold will be level.

The other external entrances are located at the rear and to the communal area, these have also been designed to accommodate level thresholds and accessibility features.

The entrance door for the mews have been set back and are under the cover of a balcony above. The dwelling will have a level access threshold however the street surfacing and the narrow pavement does not make the approach ideal for people with mobility issues.

Internal Access and Corridors;

It is anticipated that the existing corridor walls are loadbearing, therefore there is not much scope for widening the full corridor however the doorways to the new flats have been set back to accommodate a wheelchair turning circle and to also indicate the entrance threshold. An existing 8 person passenger lift provides access to all floors with a clear landing over the minimum 1500X1500mm requirement. The proposal includes increasing the size of the lift to allow for greater ease of access.

On the first floor the corridor ramps up to deal with the change of finished floor level of the apartments above the communal hall, this gradient is 1/20

The communal hall and WC are fully accessible for wheelchair users with a straight run from the main entrance and external access from Camden Park Road.



Plan showing external and internal entrance configurations in Ashton Court

5.0 Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Access

Apartment Design;

Internal circulation within flats meets the lifetime homes standards. Kitchens will be installed to cater to the needs of residents. A fully accessible bathroom with level access shower, grab rails and non-slip surface will be installed in each flat.

The bedrooms and living spaces have been designed to accommodate furniture and storage to allow for circulation of 750mm minimum along necessary routes. Additional storage has been provided in the hall.

Mews House Design;

The layout of the mews homes has a main bedroom and accessible bathroom on the ground floor with a stair down to a large living space and utility room at basement level. This bedroom could also be used as an entrance level living space if required. The main living space is on the first floor accessed via the main stair with a 900mm clear width, the second bedroom is on the second floor with an en-suite bathroom and balcony access. The bedrooms and living spaces have been designed to accommodate furniture and storage to allow for circulation of 750mm minimum along necessary routes. Additional storage has been provided in the ground floor hall and under the stairs in the basement space.

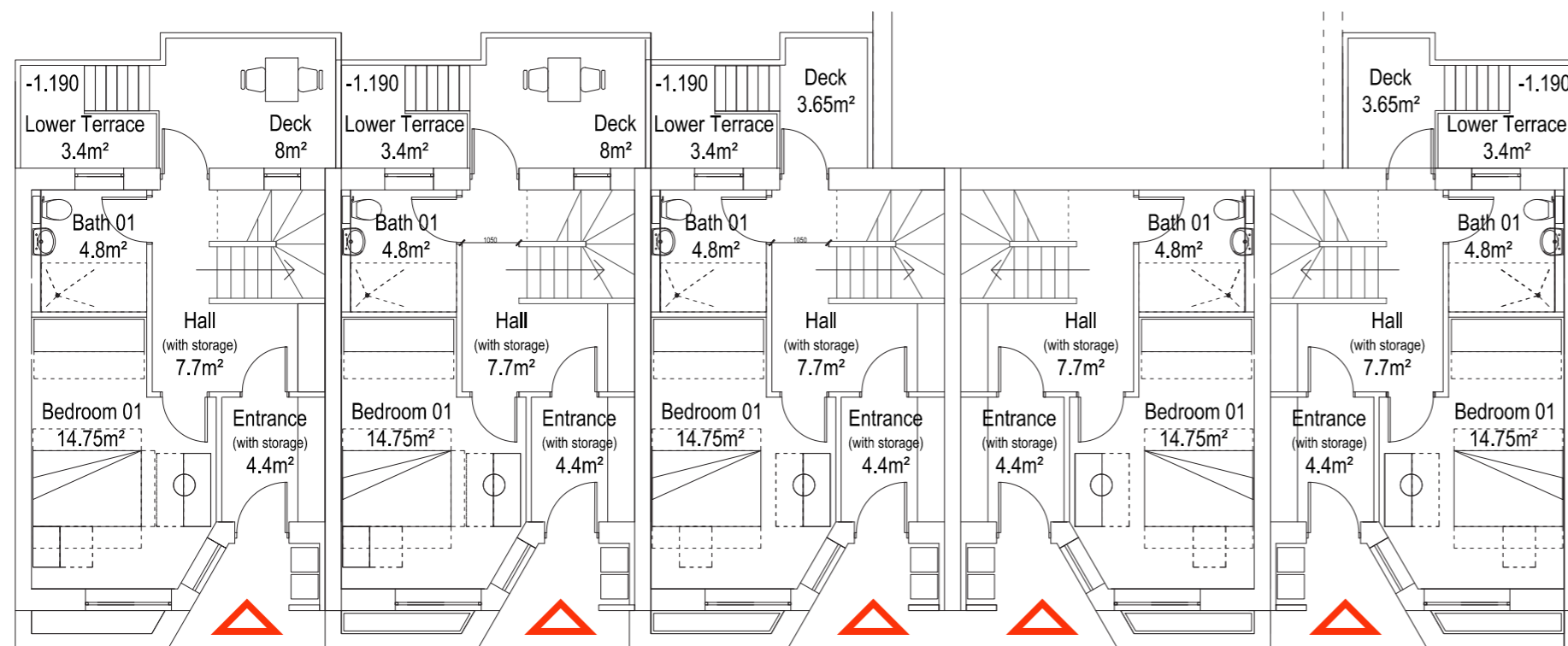
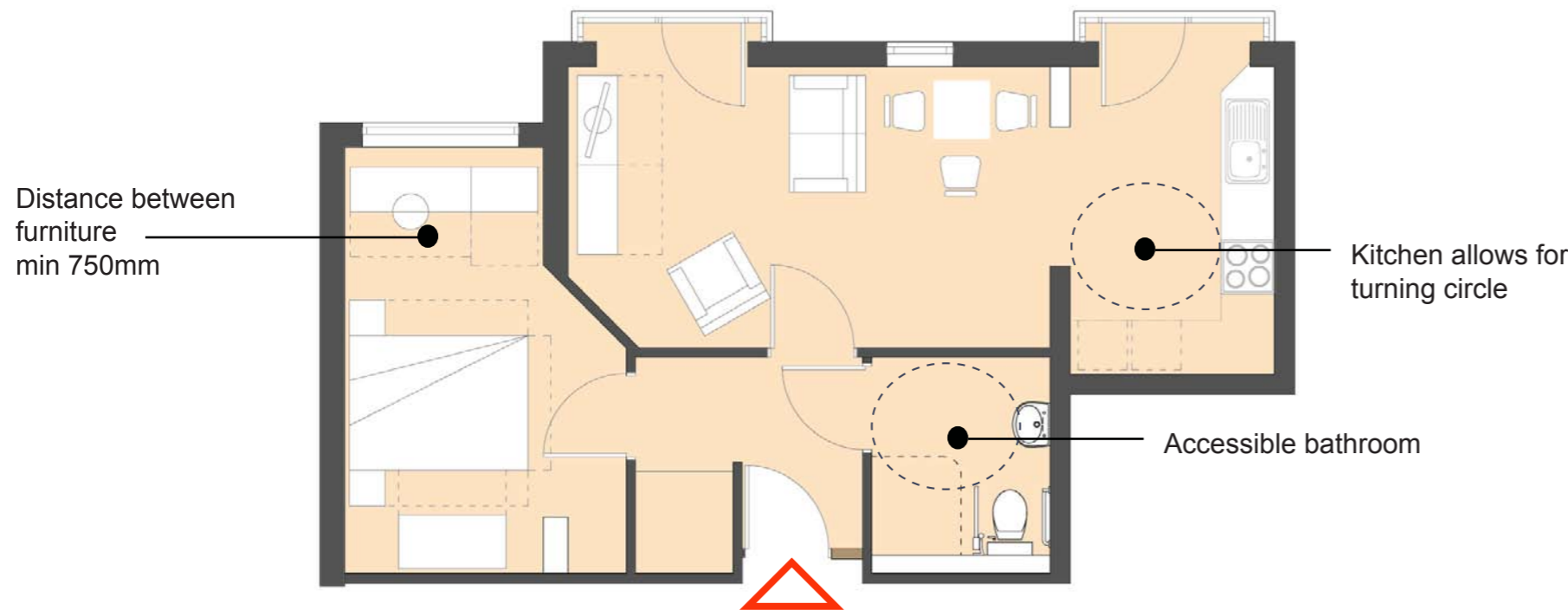
Outdoor Amenity Space and Landscape;

The communal garden will be re landscaped to allow for greater access as currently the incline of the lawn is very steep and there are some difficult level changes. Raised planters will be incorporated into the rear garden to give residents with mobility issues the opportunity to engage in gardening.

The outdoor spaces in the mews properties consist of a deck at the rear with steps down to a lower terrace and two balconies that will incorporate a level threshold.

Habinteg Wheelchair Housing Criteria

Habinteg design principles have been followed in three of the flat layouts, requirements have been met but not all recommendations given the constraints of the existing building. The wheelchair units would be for a single user as the space provision will only accommodate a single bed within the dwelling. There are currently no full time wheelchair users at Ashton Court however these properties will be fully adaptable with elements such as door handle heights, socket positions, flexible kitchen worktop heights taken into consideration.



6.0 Consultation

6.1 Planning (Pre App)

The design team sought pre application advice from Camden Planning department on three separate occasions, below is a record of the design progression of the proposal based on advice given;

Meeting 01, 2nd October 2013

Key comments;

The proposal for the link block was too prominent and would not only occupy a large area of the rear garden and was too tall at 3 floors. The proposal for the mews houses did not respect the character and scale of the mews, the width of the properties was too broad and the third floor was too clearly visible. The proposal had no depth to the façade thus failed to breakdown the elevation in a meaningful way. The material palate with large amounts of glass and render were not sensitive to surroundings.

The council recommended exploring the option of renovating or extending the existing mews building with financial appraisals to make a stronger case for the development.

Design Team Response;

The design team reduced the height of the link building

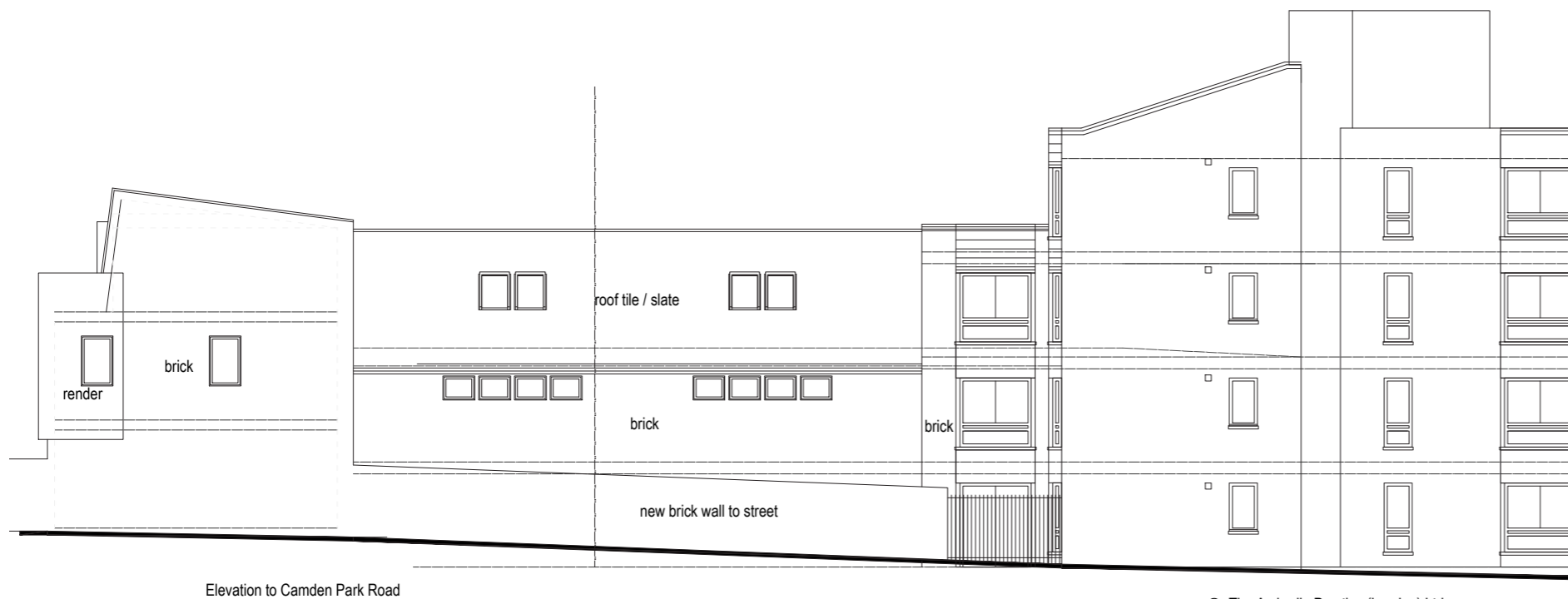
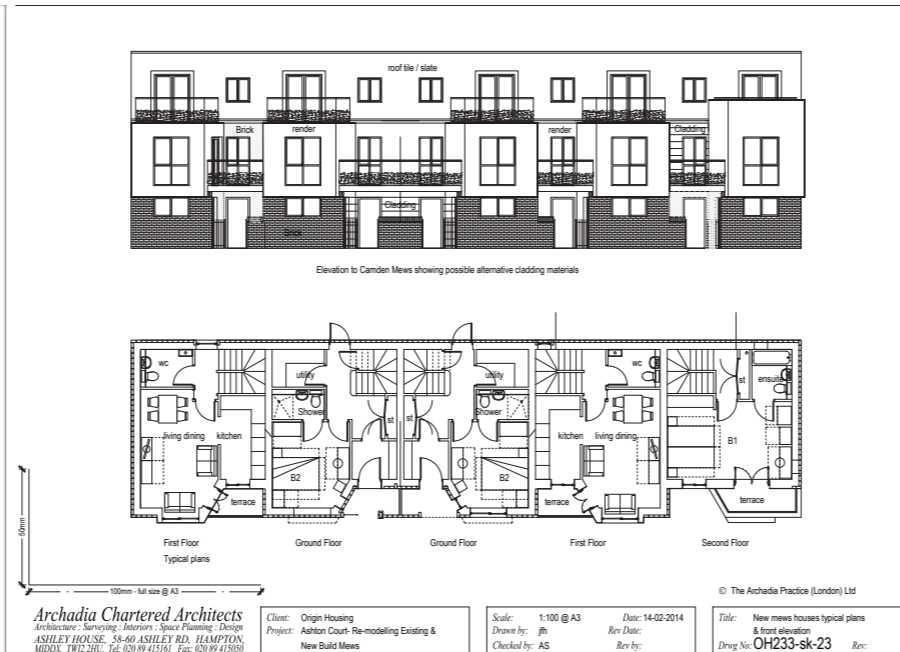
The Mews were redesigned to meet the comments, the design changed from 4 to 5 houses reducing the widths and the façade was changed to have less glass and render to be more in keeping with the rest of the street.

A study was undertaken on remodelling the existing block but as the properties would be for market sale it was difficult to get the design quality and layout required with the existing restraints and budget.

Meeting 02, 29th September 2014

Key comments;

Explore potential of a setback roof extension on the main block
The additional mews house and reduction of the width of the houses is acceptable. The design team should take more guidance from the typical appearance of the Mews homes. A basement could be included subject to surveys/assessments such as Arboricultural. Removing the setback could be explored however the main roof should be set with greater recess from the frontage.



6.0 Consultation



Camden Mews Proposed Front Elevation Option 01



Camden Mews Proposed Front Elevation Option 02



Camden Mews Proposed Front Elevation Option 03

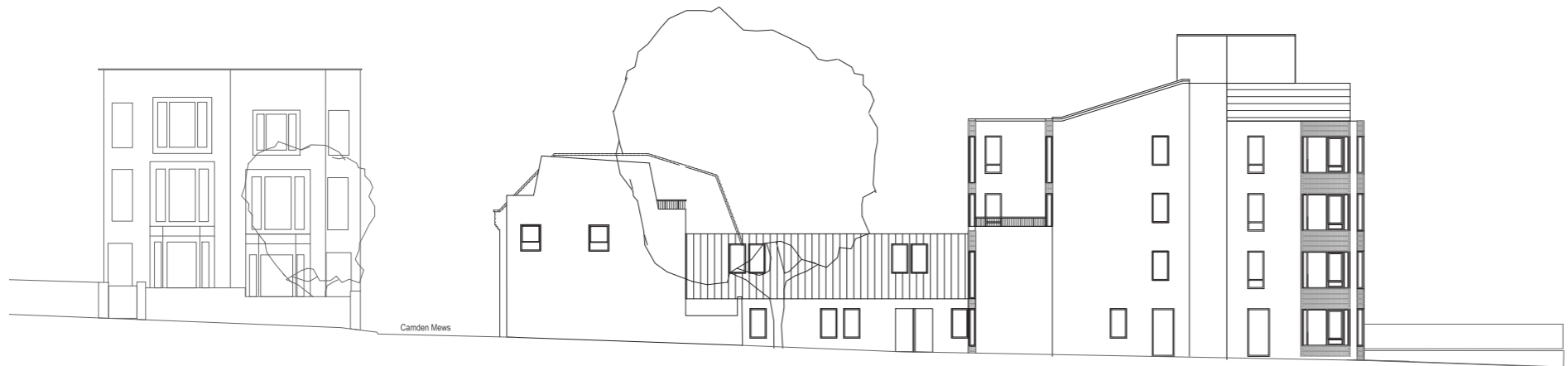
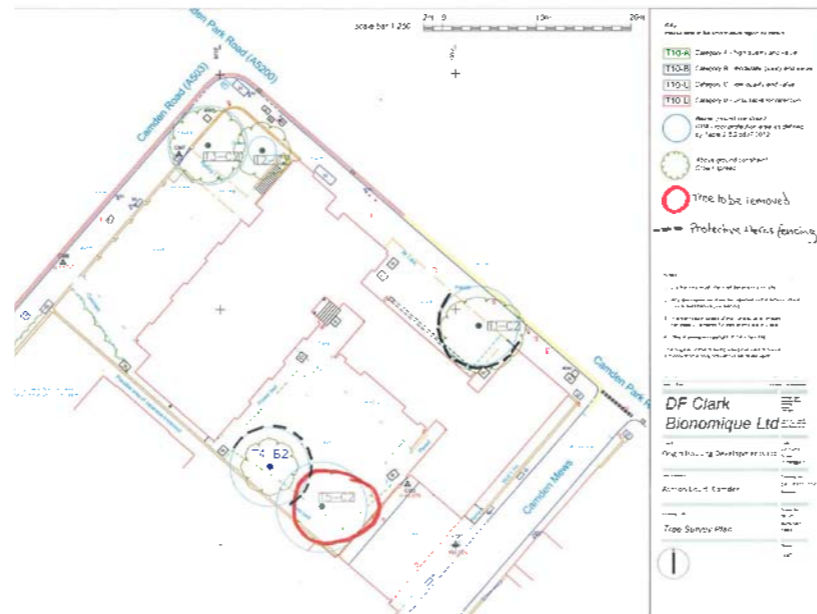
Mews Elevation options



Camden Mews Proposed Rear Elevation Option 01



Camden Mews Proposed Rear Elevation Option 02



Camden Park Road Final Elevation

The link building is still a concern, even with the third floor in the roof space it is too tall. The TPO tree along this elevation should be considered, the loss or damage of this tree would not be acceptable. Units should be CPG and London Plan compliant

A tree survey needs to be undertaken and CMP's with regard to a possible basement construction should be sought for feasibility.

Design Team Response;

The front and rear façades were redesigned based on a more detailed study of the different mews on the street in regard to the material palate and rhythm. A basement was included in the mews supported by a basement impact assessment.

A tree survey was conducted

The link building was reduced in height by one storey with the first floor in the roof, avoiding the crown of the tree on Camden Park Road

Email 26th January 2015

The final pre app advice was given in the form of an email in response to a set of mews elevation drawings submitted. The conservation officer selected the middle elevation out of three proposed shown opposite to be the preferred design.