

Dexter Moren Associates
for
West London Mission Circuit
of the Methodist church (WLM)

King's Cross Methodist Church

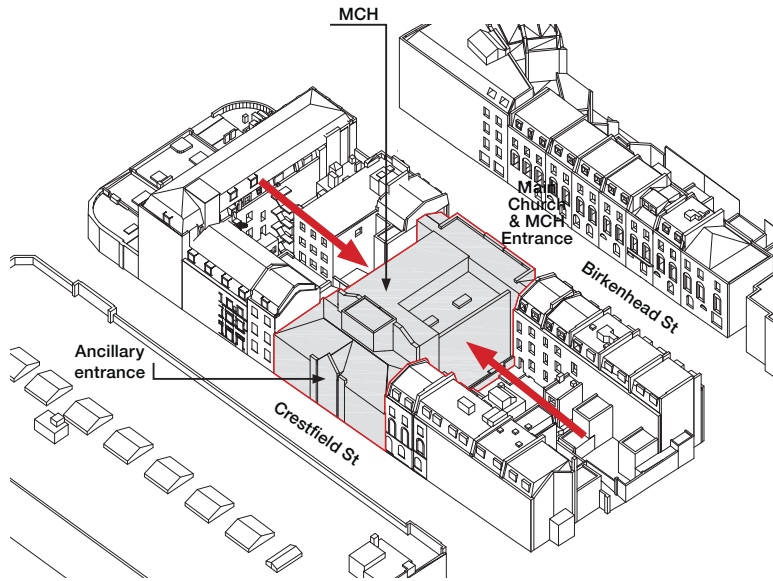
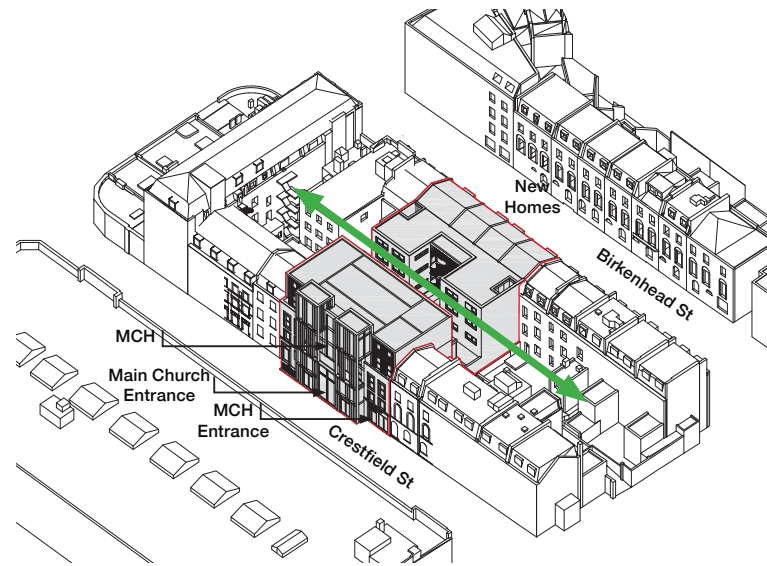
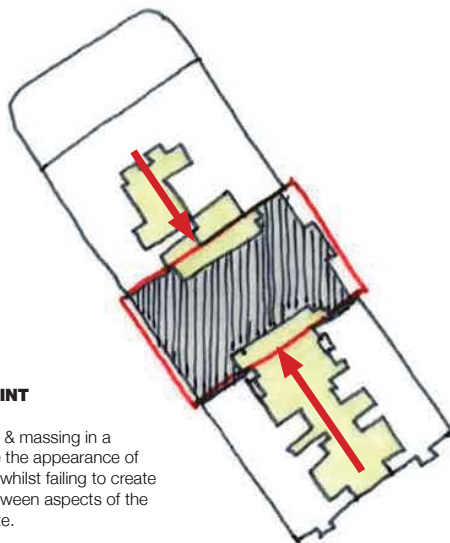
design & access statement

London Borough of Camden
December 2015

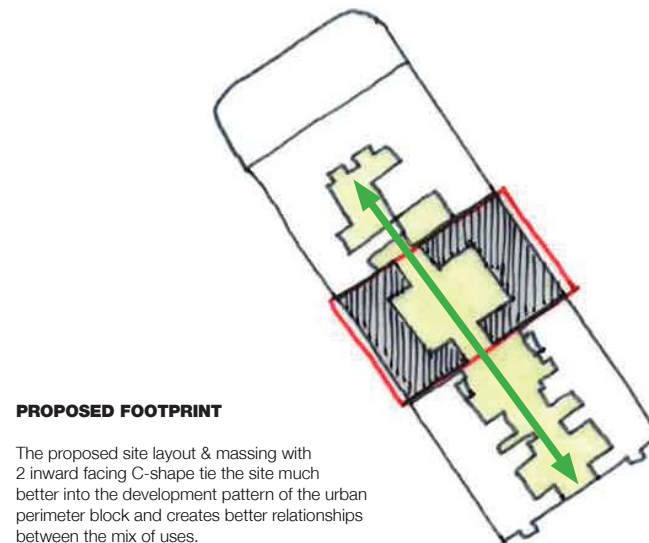
part 02 of 04



04 general concept & organisation

**EXISTING MASSING****PROPOSED MASSING****EXISTING FOOTPRINT**

The current site layout & massing in a H-shape gives the site the appearance of being overdeveloped, whilst failing to create good relationships between aspects of the mix of land uses on site.

**PROPOSED FOOTPRINT**

The proposed site layout & massing with 2 inward facing C-shape tie the site much better into the development pattern of the urban perimeter block and creates better relationships between the mix of uses.

At an urban design scale, the key proposal is to remove the current buildings that congest the centre of the urban block and are incongruous to the surrounding urban fabric in their layout and massing.

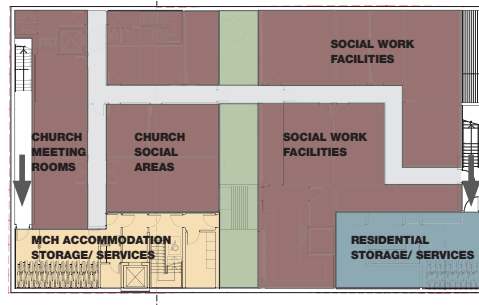
By splitting the building with a central courtyard we reduce the impact of the proposal at the centre of the site fitting in better with the surrounding urban block. This creates a clear differentiation between the various uses, allowing outlook from all habitable rooms and good levels of natural light into all internal spaces, even at basement level.

With the intention of avoiding an excessively tall building on the site the basement accommodation is maximised to accommodate as much of the public areas at the lower floors.

As per diagrams on the left the building massing works and achieves the aspirations of the redevelopment brief whilst improving the relationship with the surrounding townscape and urban fabric.

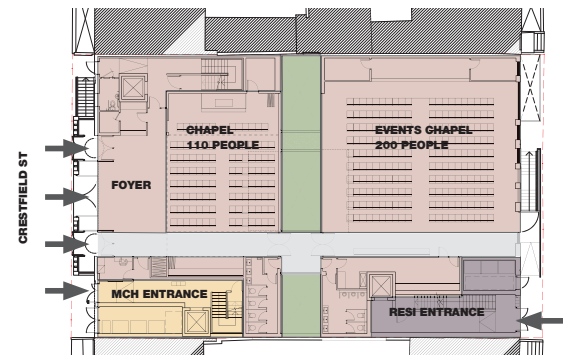
The main Church facade and entrance are relocated from Birkenhead Street to Crestfield Street in order to be visible from King's Cross station and its improved public realm. This is one of the key aims of the redevelopment as KXMC wants to play an active role in the ongoing regeneration of the area.

04a general concept



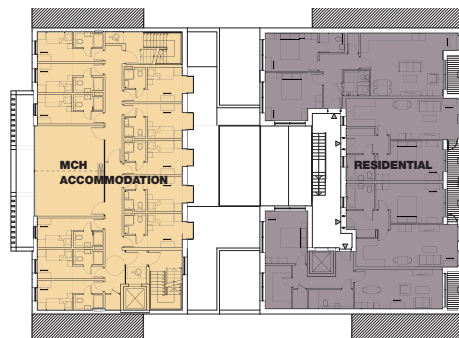
BASEMENT

Functional layout of ancillary spaces, community uses and charity work around courtyards and light wells. Access from both street frontages via light wells for services and cycle parking.



GROUND FLOOR

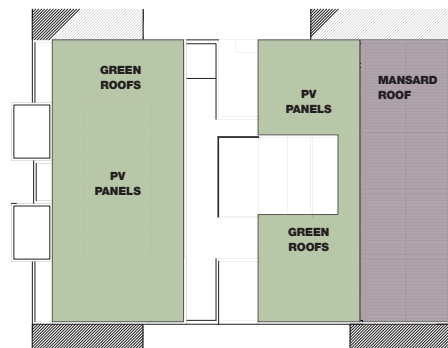
Public functions and entrances are orientated to the street to activate the frontages, whilst private spaces are organised around the courtyards.



TYPICAL FLOOR

MCH accommodation (left) faces Crestfield Street and private apartments (right) face Birkenhead Street.

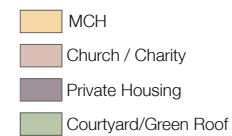
The central split allows air and light throughout the centre of the urban block.



ROOF PLAN

The roof follows the general structure of the building, split on either side of a central courtyard with green roofs above the church and community spaces.

Along Birkenhead Street, a mansard roof is proposed for the residential top floor to match the predominant style of the adjacent Georgian terraces.



Careful analysis of the redevelopment brief, site visits, and meetings with the WLM's Kings Cross Redevelopment Working Group have helped to structure the organisation of the many uses and user groups around architectural themes such as access, circulation, community cohesion, light and views.

We have taken design clues from those aspects of the existing buildings that work well for the community and learnt from those that are less successful at present.

The proposal re-provides all the existing uses and the introduction of new functions that are part of the KXMC's brief. These facilities are now housed in purpose designed spaces that have been shaped by close consultation with the end users of the building.

The various facilities in the proposal are organised to encourage social interaction amongst the different user groups. This is a key aim of the KXMC and WLM to foster a close knit community in King's Cross.

04b development brief user groups, charities & building organisation

The proposal has been developed through the pre-application process and public consultation event with residents and local interest groups.

The following section summarises the evolution of the scheme as a result of the above mentioned consultation process.

05 pre-application consultation process & community involvement

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Invitation to Public Consultation
from the Methodist Church at King's Cross
25th of January 2015 - 5a, Crestfield Street, London, WC1H 8BB
International Sunday Service 11:00 am
Public Consultation Event 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

We formally invite you to a consultation event to seek your views on our redevelopment proposals for a new church building and associated community facilities.

Indicative view of the proposed Bloomsbury Street facade, looking towards King's Cross Station.

Current view of the Crestfield Street facade, looking towards King's Cross Station.

West London Mission
KINGS
METHODIST CHURCH
www.kxmc.org.uk

君英國
王國
十滿
字樓
堂會

dexter moren associates

Plans for Redevelopment: A new church and associated community facilities

Since 1887 the West London Mission has combined Christian worship with pioneering social work among some of the most marginalised members of society in London. Our existing church and buildings at King's Cross are outdated and increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain. They no longer satisfactorily accommodate our growing congregations and community activities.

Our overarching objective for the future of the King's Cross site is to improve and expand facilities and services both to the church congregation and to the wider community.

We cannot achieve this objective in our existing accommodation.

Our design studies have shown that a viable scheme which delivers the amount of floorspace required is not possible within the existing building. So we are progressing proposals to completely replace the existing building and provide a new church together with improved and expanded community facilities, a new on-site residence for our churchminister, and a re-provision of the existing student housing, which is associated with the church. Additionally, the proposal incorporates private residential apartments to finance the re-development.

Our building is located within the King's Cross Conservation Area and next to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. We are confident that a well-designed new building will enhance the Conservation Area as well as provide the improved and expanded facilities that we need.

Redevelopment of the site will achieve the following benefits:

- More diverse and flexible space to accommodate current and growing activities allowing expanded community services and greater collaboration with other bodies to provide local services and meeting space.
- A building with improved accessibility, including lift access to all levels.
- A student house that meets modern requirement.
- Wider community benefits.

Why the consultation event?

We wish to submit a planning application for these new church and community facilities soon but first we want to seek views from our neighbours and representatives of the local community. This is really important to us and your views will help us to finalise our plans. So we want to give you this opportunity to review the initial design, offer your comments and discuss our proposals with our architects and others who have been developing the design with us.

How can you take part?

Come along to one of our consultation events where you will be able to review the details of our proposals, such as the external appearance and floor plans, and hear how the scheme has been developed to date and the reasons behind the approach we are taking.



Indicative view of the proposed Crestfield Street church facade, looking towards King's Cross Station.

What we would like to know?

We want to hear your comments and thoughts on:

- What do you think about the scheme generally?
- The external appearance of the building.
- The internal layout and facilities.
- Any additional facilities that should be included.
- Any other comments you may have.

We are looking forward to meeting you and receiving your comments on the proposals

Comments made during this stage will help us in finalising the design for our planning application. This is not the same as making a formal comment on the planning application to the Planning Authority and you will have further opportunities to do that once a formal planning application has been submitted.



public consultation

Invitations to a public consultation event, held at the church on Sunday 25th January, were distributed to approximately 200 residential and commercial properties in the surrounding streets a few weeks in advance.

West London Mission invited local residents, Ward Councillors, business owners and residents' groups such as Friends of Argyle Square and the King's Cross Conservation Area Advisory Group to the public consultation event. Representatives of the Church and the professional team, were on hand to answer questions and discuss the scheme with the visitors.

Attendees to the public consultation were encouraged to give their feedback. Questionnaires were collated by Pegasus Group and the comments have been fed back to the applicant and design team.

A summary of the consultation event and responses is provided within the accompanying Statement of Community involvement.

05c community involvement public consultation

06 proposed design

section: height & massing

The proposed scheme as submitted for planning application still clearly retains its original concept of repairing the existing rear courtyard character of the urban block. The scale and massing is the result of the iterative pre-application process with LB Camden: a sympathetic new infill development that relates and responds to the conservation area, scale and character of the context.



06a proposed massing & building concept

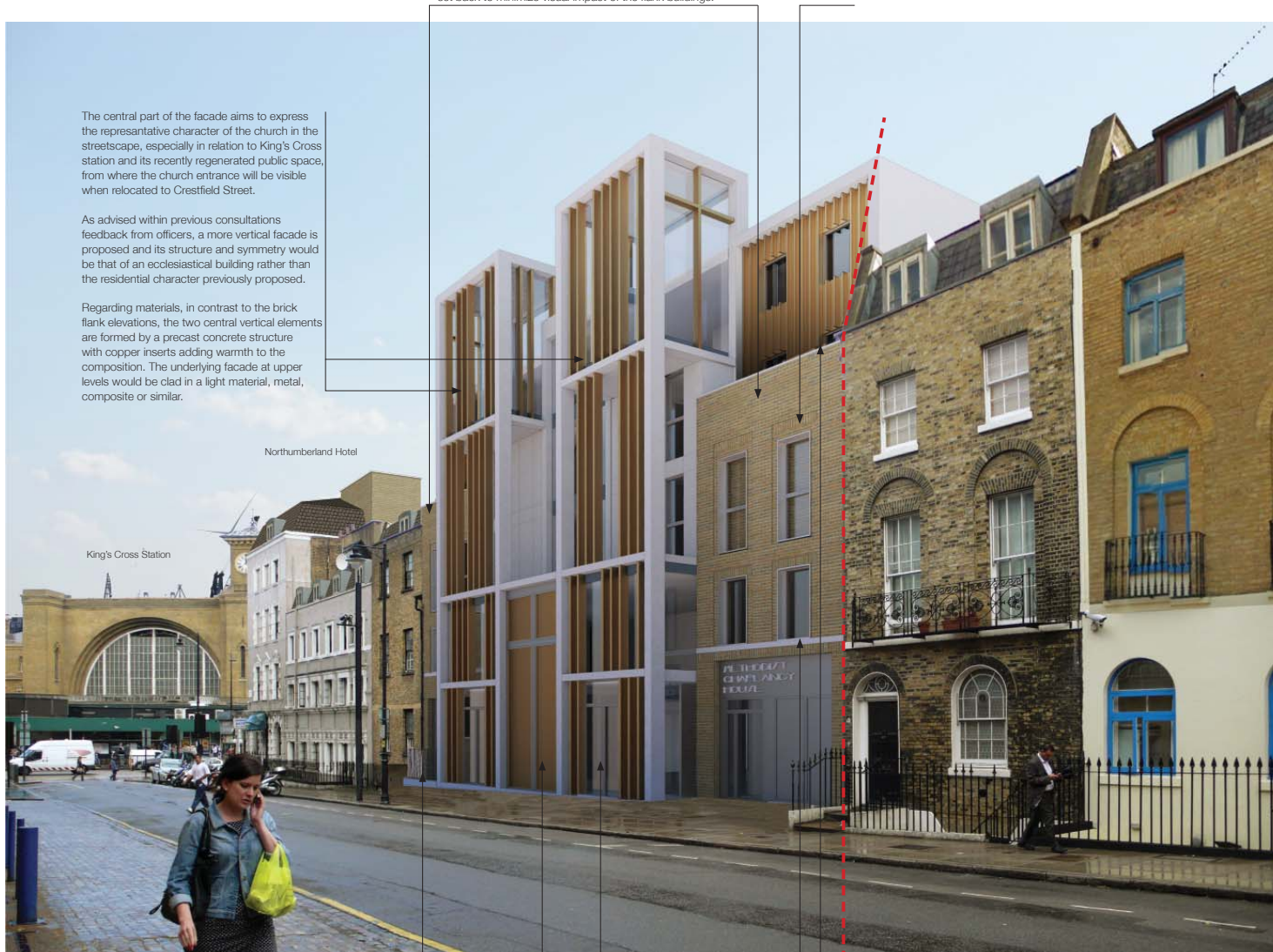
Flank elevations in London Stock brick to create a material transition to adjacent buildings. In addition, the overall massing has been reduced since the previous proposals, the parapet height aligned with neighbours and the upper levels set back to minimize visual impact of the flank buildings.

Fenestration hierarchy responds to adjacent buildings. Proposed windows incorporate features from the listed buildings, such as soldier course lintels and recessed brick surrounds.

The central part of the facade aims to express the representative character of the church in the streetscape, especially in relation to King's Cross station and its recently regenerated public space, from where the church entrance will be visible when relocated to Crestfield Street.

As advised within previous consultations feedback from officers, a more vertical facade is proposed and its structure and symmetry would be that of an ecclesiastical building rather than the residential character previously proposed.

Regarding materials, in contrast to the brick flank elevations, the two central vertical elements are formed by a precast concrete structure with copper inserts adding warmth to the composition. The underlying facade at upper levels would be clad in a light material, metal, composite or similar.



Metal railings at ground floor to match adjacent building.

Representative taller door to reinforce main church entrance.

Parapets, lintels and cills to match adjacent buildings

Glazed entrances and active frontage to reinforce relation with public realm and to produce a welcoming interior space

King's Cross Conservation Area Bloomsbury Conservation Area



Existing Birkenhead St facade



2nd Pre-app design- May 2014



3rd Pre-app design- January 2015

06b crestfield st proposed street view

King's Cross Conservation Area

Bloomsbury Conservation Area

Flank facades in London stock brick to create a transition sympathetic in parapet height, rhythm & width to adjacent buildings
Top floors set back to minimize visual impact

Central elevation allows the church to stand out in the streetscape with a feature entrance & active frontage

Outline of previous proposals
Reduction in height

Parapet height, fenestration and detailing to match adjacent buildings with features such as soldier courses, lintels and inset brick surrounds



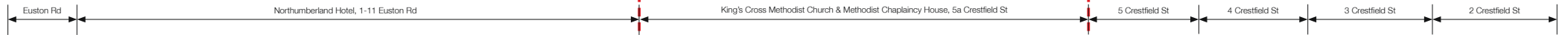
Proposed Crestfield Street Elevation

Metal railings to match adjoining properties

Main entrance to reinforce representative and ecclesiastical presence

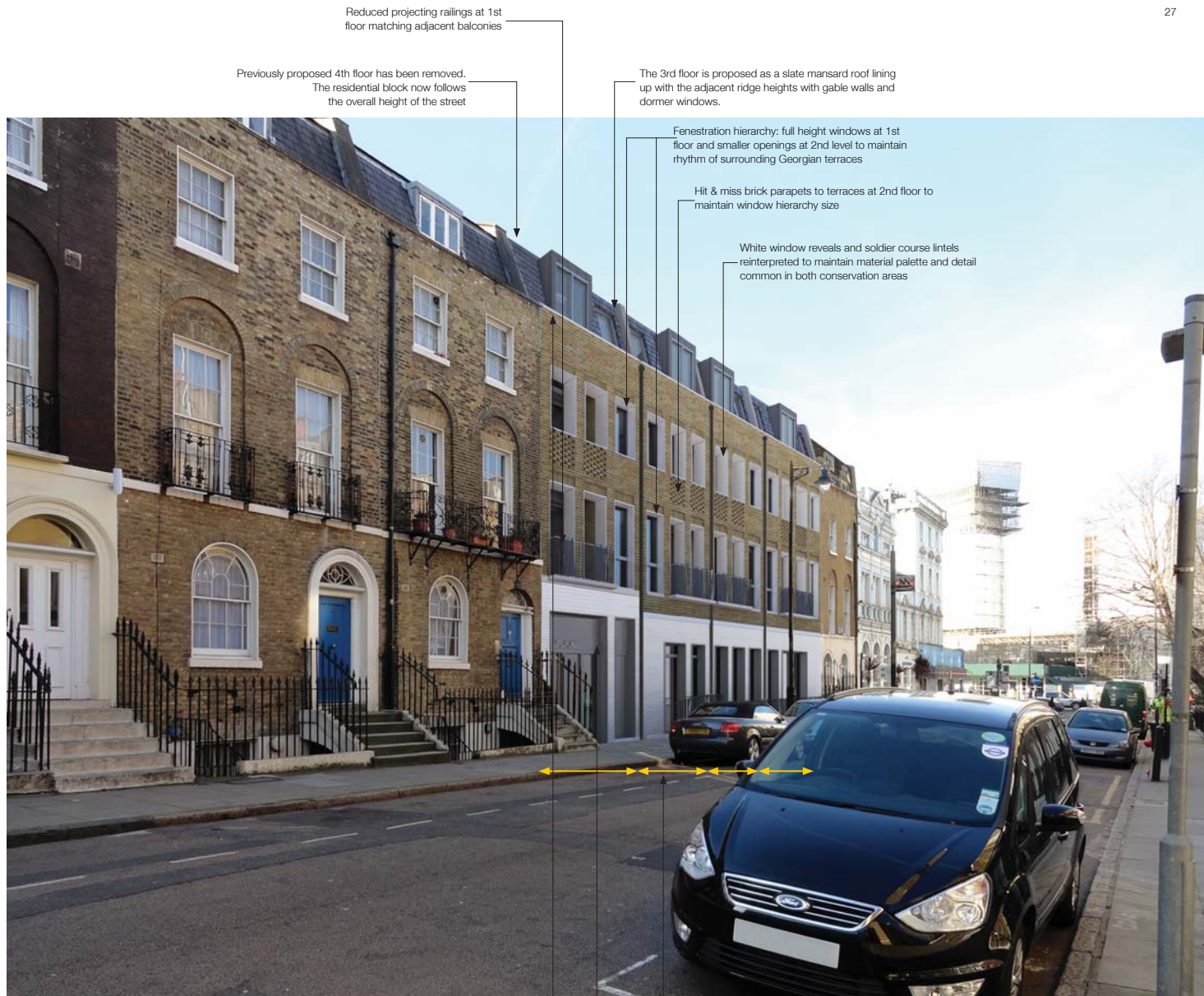
Glazed facade and side entrances to enhance active frontage and welcoming interior spaces

Lintels to match adjacent building



Existing Crestfield St. Elevation

06c crestfield st proposed elevation



Reduced projecting railings at 1st floor matching adjacent balconies

Previously proposed 4th floor has been removed. The residential block now follows the overall height of the street

The 3rd floor is proposed as a slate mansard roof lining up with the adjacent ridge heights with gable walls and dormer windows.

Fenestration hierarchy: full height windows at 1st floor and smaller openings at 2nd level to maintain rhythm of surrounding Georgian terraces

Hit & miss brick parapets to terraces at 2nd floor to maintain window hierarchy size

White window reveals and soldier course lintels reinterpreted to maintain material palette and detail common in both conservation areas

Parapets, lintels and heights matching adjacent properties is reinforced by 3rd floor mansard level.

Ground floor facade treatment has been rationalised to give a more regular and organised response to the public realm whilst maintaining an active frontage open in character

The initial concept of splitting the facade into four vertical 'townhouses' is maintained and further expressed with the rainwater pipes and roof gable



Existing Birkenhead St facade

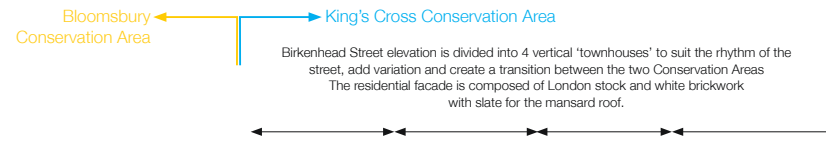


2nd Pre-app design- May 2014



3rd Pre-app design- January 2015

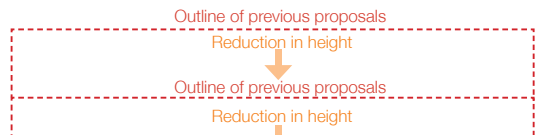
06d birkenhead st proposed street view



Balcony parapet to match adjacent property parapet height

Second floor inset balconies with hit & miss brickwork to maintain window hierarchy

First floor balconies with metal railings to match Bloomsbury CA terraces



Proposed Birkenhead Street Elevation

Variation to ground floor materials to reflect context and introduction of lintels to match adjacent properties

Metal railings to basement lightwells, matching street scene

Mansard roofs separated by gables for 3rd floor to match street predominant style and structure



Existing Birkenhead St. Elevation

06e birkenhead st proposed elevation

General considerations

As part of the Heritage Statement produced by Heritage specialist Chris Surfleet, an impact assessment of the proposals has been undertaken to appraise how the redevelopment design would affect both the neighbouring listed buildings and the character of the Conservation Areas.

This is provided with regard to Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and the NPPF paragraphs 131-135.

It is worth mentioning that the input and recommendations from the Heritage Statement have been carefully considered by the design team during the design process towards achieving a suitable elevational and massing proposal.

1- Impact on setting of listed buildings

Apart from direct adjacency to adjoining properties, the proposed development will not have direct physical impact on the listed buildings by way of alteration. In terms of direct impact, the proposals will therefore result in no harm.

Any impacts arising will be in the form of impact on the setting of the listed buildings. As Historic England clearly states, setting itself is not a heritage designation, so it is important to determine how a proposed development might impact on the way in which a setting contributes to the value of an asset. This is an important distinction, and affects, for example, assessments of whether in fact 'change' in setting necessarily represents 'harm'.

2- Impact on character and appearance of Conservation Area:

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 refers to the need for "special attention" to be paid to the "desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance" of Conservation Areas. Assessment of impact or harm is also set out in the NPPF paragraphs 131-135. Paragraph 137 also refers to the potential for new development to "better reveal" the significance of CAs.

In considering the loss of the non-designated heritage asset in the context of the merits and benefits of the proposed redevelopment, the balance is strongly in favour of the proposed scheme.

In the assessment, the proposed development offers to enhance the streetscene by adopting characteristics which are complementary to this part of both the King's Cross & St Pancras and the Bloomsbury Conservation Areas.

Special attention has been paid throughout the design process to identify those characteristics which contribute to the areas' special character and to ensure that the new building will represent a positive addition to the streetscene.



Crestfield St Elevation

On this elevation, the scheme replaces the rather understated existing frontage with a bold architectural statement which positively expresses the building's purpose and its aspirations as a focus for community use.

The approach to the scheme reflects the advantages resulting from the reorientation of its main entrance. As a wider, more accessible and utilised route, Crestfield Street also offers more opportunities for expressing the architecture of the proposed facility within the townscape.

Impact on setting of listed buildings

The adjoining listed buildings are the terraced properties at 1-5 Crestfield Street.

The proposed frontage has been designed to perform an enhanced townscape role. While the proposed Birkenhead Street frontage provides a calmer response to a context which is more overtly residential in character, the Crestfield Street frontage seeks to positively add to the townscape's existing variety.

The townscape benefit is achieved whilst also being respectful to the adjoining listed buildings by means of a clear visual transition between the consistent lines of the townhouses and the expression of the chapel's glazed entrance.

Impact on character and appearance of the CA

The CA Audit states that *"the buildings on Crestfield Street are inconsistent in terms of height, materials and form"*. This is an accurate reflection of the variety within this street.

The proposed frontage is designed to create a landmark within the townscape and overtly describes the building's function. The new building will therefore be legible as a place of worship and its openness will engage with the townscape in a positive way.

The design is aware of its context to avoid being abrupt. As a result, the composition 'grows' from the scale and pattern of its neighbouring buildings so that the tall central focus is flanked by elements which reinforce the existing parapet lines of the street.



Birkenhead St Elevation

The design re-affirms the residential character of this street replacing the rather ambiguous part-ecclesiastical/ part-residential chapel frontage with an infill which accentuates the positive qualities of the surrounding townscape without mimicking the adjoining townhouses.

Impact on setting of listed buildings

As established in the Heritage Statement, the significance of the assets in Birkenhead Street lies principally in their historic and architectural merit.

A feature of Birkenhead Street is its 'transitional' role between fully ordered townscape (such as in Argyle Square) and the mixes of land uses and building types in the Kings Cross area and therefore, possesses a capacity for change without necessarily representing harm to the setting of heritage assets.

In addition, the existing chapel frontage does not possess architectural quality which supports the townscape as a whole. It appears odd and ambiguous, and the classical elegance it once possessed has been heavily adapted and is no longer apparent.

In this context, it is considered that the setting of the listed buildings in Birkenhead Street would be preserved as the replacement would introduce a building which is both compatible and harmonious with its context without copying the historic buildings. It also brings a more consistent character to the street, in a manner which supports their character - rather than challenging it, distracting from it or otherwise reducing their significance.

The proposed building will be a good neighbour in visual terms and, in those terms, a benefit to their setting over the existing situation.

Impact on character and appearance of CA

Birkenhead Street as a whole shares a predominance of residential character with a largely consistent homogeneity. The existing chapel frontage is something of a contrast to this

With this in mind, it is not the case that the principle of removing the existing building automatically implies harm to the Conservation Area, but that its replacement could, in fact, enhance character and appearance.

The proposed development seeks to reinstate the distinctive characteristics of the street, by reinforcing the parapet height, strong course alignment, rhythm and materials.

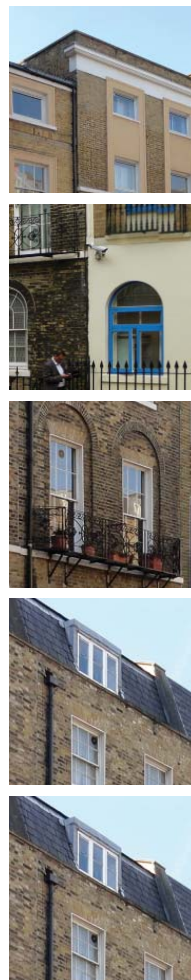
Conclusions

- The proposed development has identified the townscape opportunities at an early stage in the design process.
- The re-orientation of the plan-form recognises the potential for improving and 'healing' the townscape in Birkenhead Street, and the opportunity to enhance the townscape in Crestfield.
- The replacement of Birkenhead Street frontage reinforces the character of the street in a modern idiom, representing an appropriate response as it preserves what makes the Conservation Area significant.
- The design approach along Crestfield Street has been approached very carefully to express the building type and achieve a local landmarking role whilst also respecting its context.

06f heritage impact assessment

Crestfield St Facade/
Internal Courtyard

Birkenhead St Facade

Materials sample, colour
and textureAmenity spaces and
living roof examples

The palette of building finishes has been carefully selected to ensure that the proposed scheme is sympathetic to its adjoining neighbours in the conservation area and will create a high quality and durable development

01 London stock brick to match the adjoining buildings;

02 White brick for central Church elevation and internal elevation to courtyard;

03 Concrete or reconstituted stone cladding for lintels and facade features;

04 Dark grey aluminium on dormer windows cladding, window frames and spandrel panels;

05 Copper seamed metal for vertical fins and upper levels cladding at Crestfield St.

06 Slate mansard roof along Birkenhead St top floor

06g proposed design materials palette