

Design & Access Statement

**11-12 Grenville Street, WC1**

*Prepared for:*

.....  
**Calabar Properties**  
.....

*Issue date:* August 2016

architects / planners / designers





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### 1.1 SCOPE OF REPORT

This report has been prepared on behalf of Calabar Properties in support of a Planning Application for the extension and refurbishment of 11-12 Grenville Street. As part of this scheme, it is proposed to convert part of the ground floor and the upper storeys of the building from office to residential use.

The aim of this report is to explain the proposals for renovating and partially converting the existing building with the following information:

- A review of the site context and existing buildings
- Outline of the design and planning process to date
- Outline of the use, amount and scale of the proposed building along with the likely appearance
- Preliminary sketches illustrating the mass of the proposed buildings
- Preliminary plans and sections of the proposed building

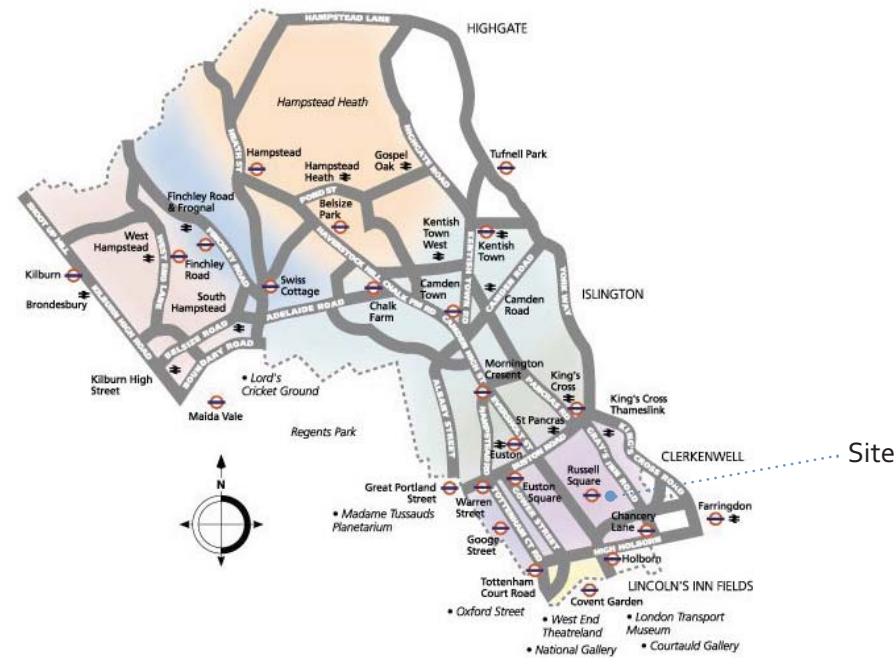
It is intended to commence construction of the proposal as soon as planning permission is granted.

All areas included have been measured from plans produced during the concept design stage and are approximate and illustrative only.

### 1.2 LOCATION OF SITE

Grenville Street is situated within the London Borough of Camden. Camden extends from Holborn and Bloomsbury in the south to Hampstead Heath in the north. The site is located to the East of Russell Square Underground Station with the British Museum, University of London and five major teaching hospitals all within walking distance.

The borough features many main tourist attractions including Covent Garden, Camden Market, London Zoo and the British Museum. It has great transport links including the London buses, 16 Underground Stations and three of London's central railway terminals; Euston, St. Pancras and Kings Cross.



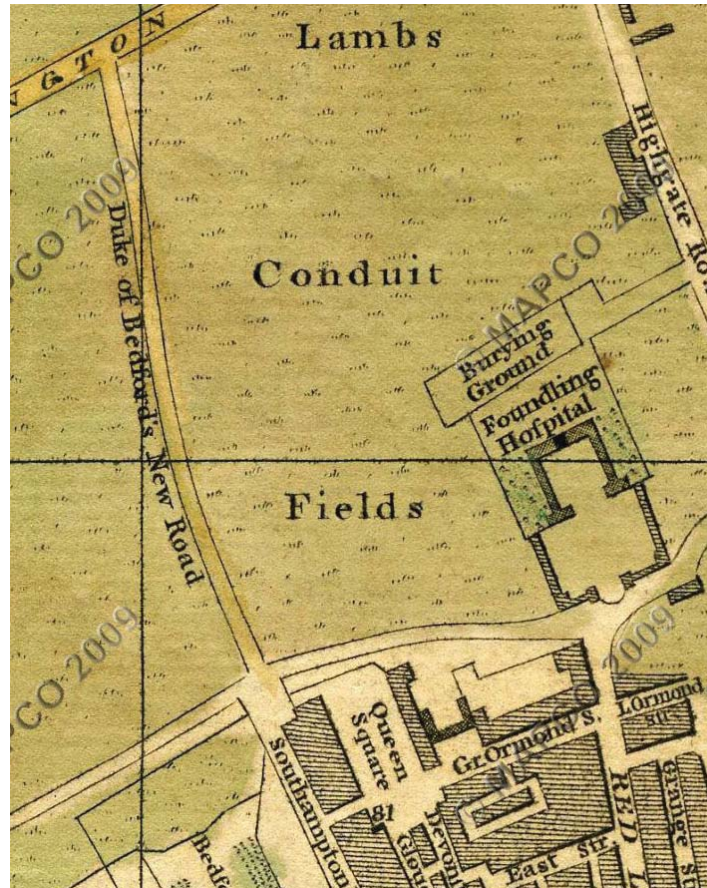
Map of Camden



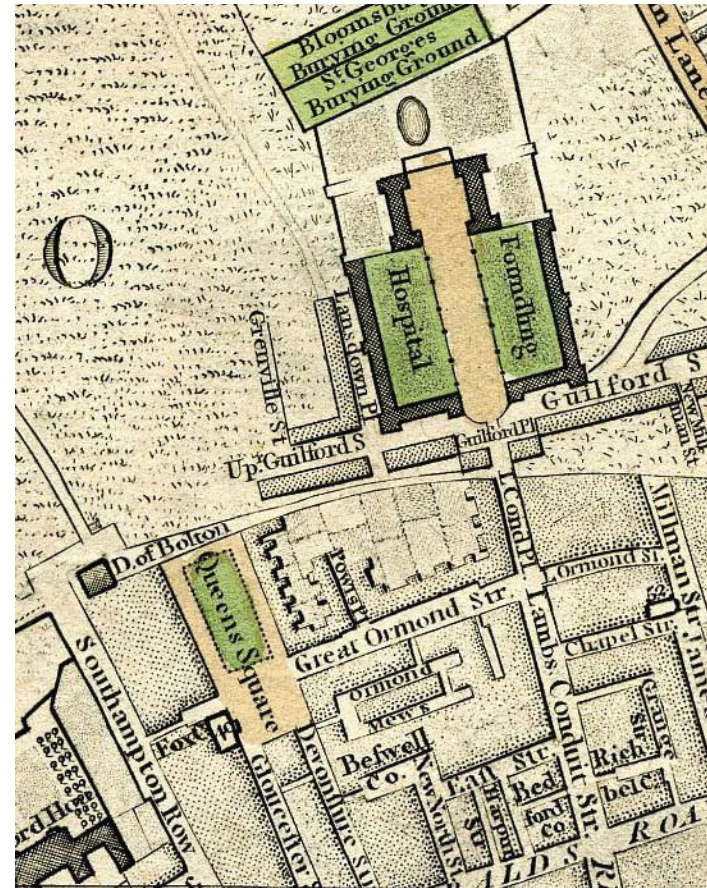
Aerial plan view of site



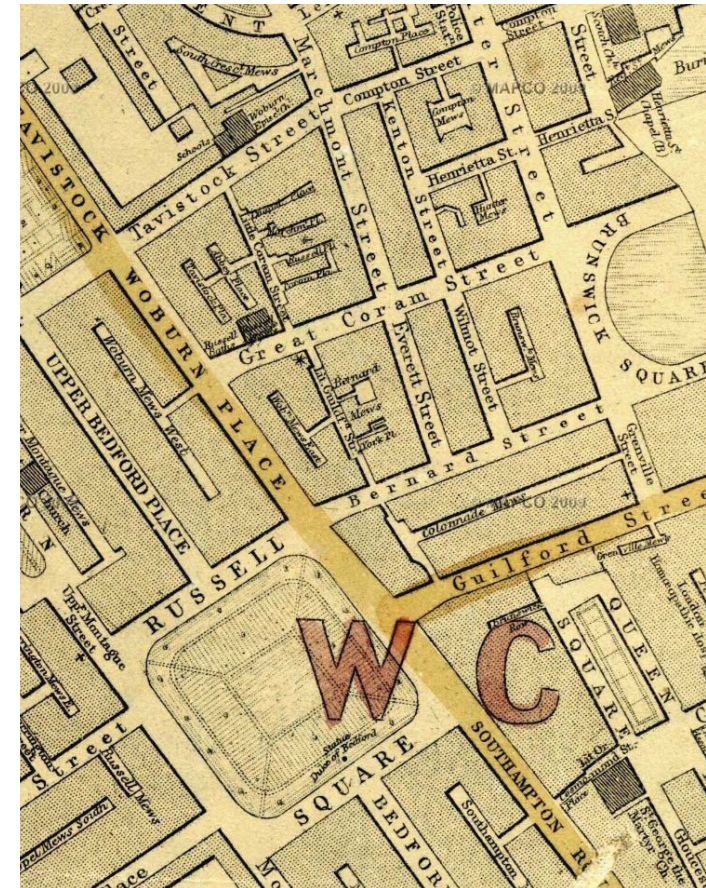
2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



Map of 1767 - Cartographer unknown



John Cary's map of 1795



Edward Weller's map of 1868

Although not listed, Grenville Street falls within the 'Bloomsbury Conservation Area.' Laid out during the 18th Century, Bloomsbury remains a fashionable residential area largely due to its variety of garden squares, literary connections and diverse cultural, educational and health care institutions. The area of Bloomsbury is defined by Tottenham Court Road to the west, Euston Road to the north, Gray's Inn Road to the east and High Holborn to the south.

The area now occupied by Grenville Street was fields until the late 18th Century. Great Ormond St, to the south, appears on maps as early as 1720. Development of the area north of Guilford St known as Lamb's Conduit Fields began with the Foundling Hospital, a children's home funded by philanthropist Thomas Coram in 1741.

Grenville Street itself was laid out in the late 18th Century starting in 1792 and appears unfinished on John Cary's map of 1795. Brunswick Square to the east, the blocks to the north and the mews adjoining Grenville Street were laid out by the time John Wallis's map of 1801 was complete.

The layout of the streets and surroundings remained much the same until the 20th Century. The Foundling Hospital was eventually demolished in 1926, its site now occupied by Macklenburgh Square, Brunswick Square and Coram's Fields.

Downing Court, immediately adjoining 11 Grenville Street was erected in the early 20th Century. Post-war development in the mid-20th Century significantly changed the area with the development of the Brunswick Centre, International House and the extension of the Great Ormond St hospital site.

The latter half of the 20th Century saw further development in the immediate vicinity of the site. Planning permission was granted in 1997 for 13-19 Grenville Street to be renovated for residential accommodation. Within Colonnade, Baker and Chandler House were developed to the back of 12-16 & 19-23 Bernard Street in 1992. The mews properties of 11-23 Colonnade have recently been refurbished and converted to residential use.



Planning application site



## 2.2 CHARACTER OF SURROUNDINGS

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

*"Every local planning authority shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate those areas as conservation areas."*

This conservation led scheme seeks to improve the character of the conservation area on the basis of:

- Enhancing the architectural and historic quality, character and coherence of the building and adding a layer of continuity which will enhance and add interest to the area
- Developing the character and hierarchy of spaces, and townscape quality
- Utilise traditional building methods for the building's walls and surfaces
- Provide further greenspace to increase biodiversity through the use of a green roof to the mews house.
- Enhancing the character of the unlisted buildings to make a positive contribution to the conservation area

Following improvements to the Grade II listed Brunswick Centre, now a major retail destination, the area has seen a significant rise in the number of local shops and restaurants. The surrounding area features several public gardens and squares and benefits from the proximity of Regents Park.

Great Ormond Street Hospital occupies the buildings forming the urban block to the south of the site. The Brunswick Centre forms the block to the north of the site and provides local retail and leisure space with residential accommodation. International Hall, student residences for the University of London, sits immediately to the east of the site with the hotels and academic institutions of Russell Square to the west.

The site forms part of a largely residential urban block which is split into three parts by the Colonnade and Herbrand Street. Colonnade, a small mews adopted as a public highway, connects Grenville Street and Herbrand Street. Herbrand Street links Guilford St to the south with Bernard St to the north and separates the higher density developments of Russell Square from the low-rise character of the eastern section of the block.



Birds eye view from south-east with site shaded in red



Birds eye view from north-east with site shaded in red



2.3 IMMEDIATE CONTEXT



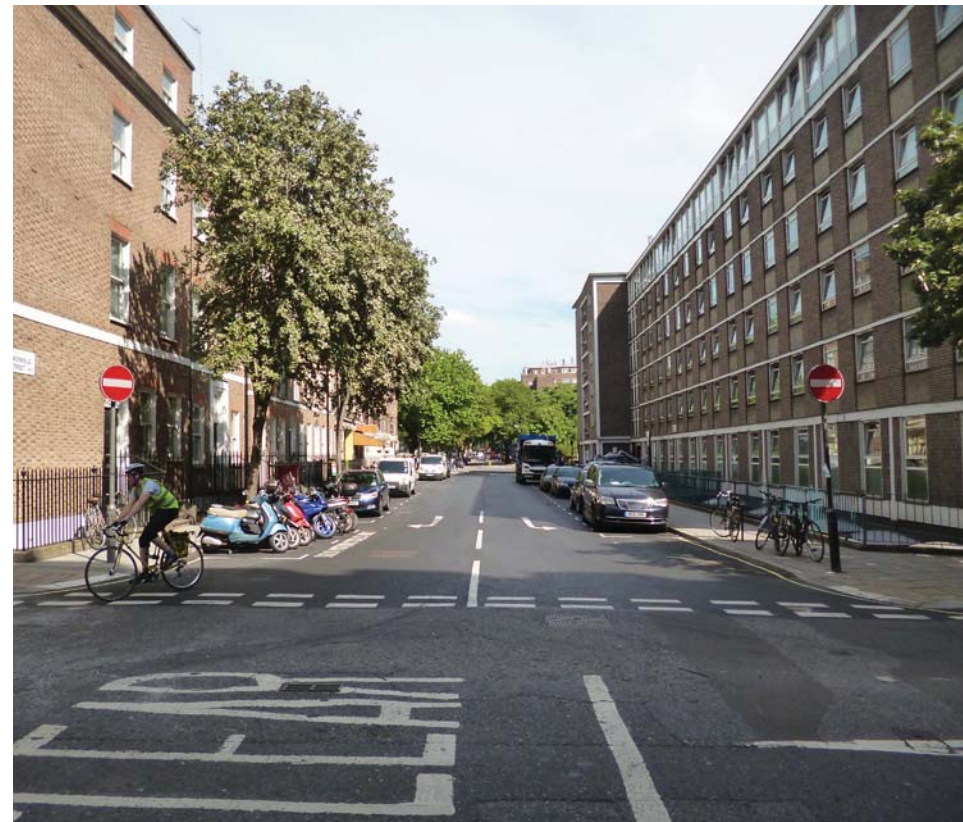
Grenville Street looking south towards the site



Grenville Street looking north towards the site



Colonnade looking east towards the site



Grenville Street looking towards International House (north towards the site)

The west side of Grenville St largely retains its Georgian layout and character. Downing Court, at the junction with Brunswick Square, breaks the terrace in both style and height by being a storey and a half taller. The east side of the street is occupied by International House and is typical of mid-20th century design with a monolithic elevation.

Colonnade to the rear of Grenville Street is a typical London mews with traditional two storey buildings. This contrasts with the larger scale of Guilford and Grenville Street where the buildings range between four and six storeys.

The south side of the mews retains much of its historical fabric and has been converted to provide residential accommodation, small office spaces and commercial units.

The north side of Colonnade has been extensively redeveloped during the 20th century. The public house on the corner of Colonnade and Herbrand Street remains the last surviving fragment of original fabric on the north side. The rear of Russell Square underground station immediately adjoins the public house with late 20th century infill adjacent. Baker House and Chandler House, two new residential terraces, erected in the 1990's to replace the previous extensions to the rear of Bernard Street now occupy the east end of Colonnade adjoining Grenville St.



### 3.1 CURRENT STATE

11-12 Grenville Street forms part of a Georgian terrace of town houses of three storeys above ground. The elevation at street level is composed as a unified portico forming the entrance to Colonnade behind.

The ground floor is occupied by two units with shop fronts flanking the entrance to Colonnade. The ground and basement floor of number 12 is occupied by *Cafe Romano*, a small independent sandwich bar. Number 11 contains a small retail unit at ground floor which is currently vacant. The upper levels of the building are now also vacant but were previously in use as commercial B1 accommodation.

Substantial interventions would be required to bring the existing building up to modern standards. The assessment of the current state of the buildings is as follows:

- Internal floor/ceiling heights are poor within the existing offices and do not meet user expectations.
- The offices are not DDA compliant- do not provide level access.
- The floors and walls are poorly insulated and are not energy efficient.
- Mechanical and electrical services do not meet current standards and require substantial new infrastructure for office use.
- The existing A1 retail unit is small by modern standards and lacks the amenities to function properly.

### 3.2 EXISTING LAND USE

The existing upper floors have been vacant for over 15 years but were last in use as offices (Class B1). The ground floor consists of a cafe (Class A3) and a small newsagents unit (Class A1). There is also a small garage to the rear of the cafe with access from Colonnade.

The proposals include converting the upper floors from offices back to residential use (Class C3) and a new residential extension to the rear. The small cafe unit will remain, with the newsagents converted to provide circulation to the floors above.



Grenville Street facade



View through Colonnade from Grenville Street



West Facade into Colonnade



West Facade into Colonnade



3.3 PLANNING HISTORY

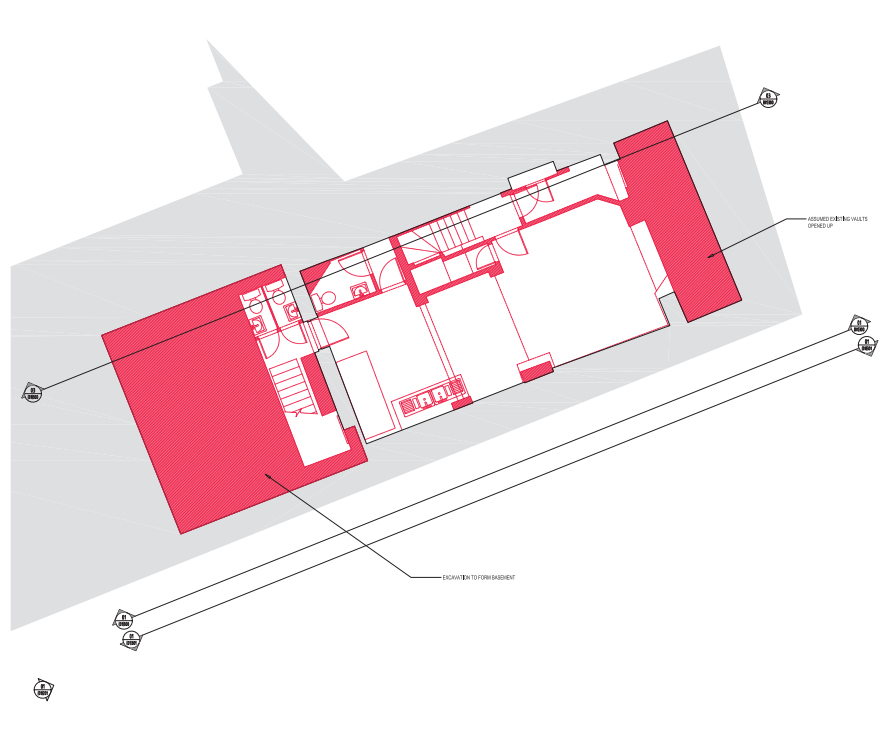
In 2009 planning permission was sought for a proposal to demolish the existing buildings and erect a five storey residential development. The application was withdrawn following advice from Camden that the demolition was not sufficiently justifiable.

In October 2013 planning permission was sought for the conversion of the existing buildings to residential use including the erection of a rear extension and new mansard extension at roof level. The application was refused for a number of reasons including land use, design and massing.

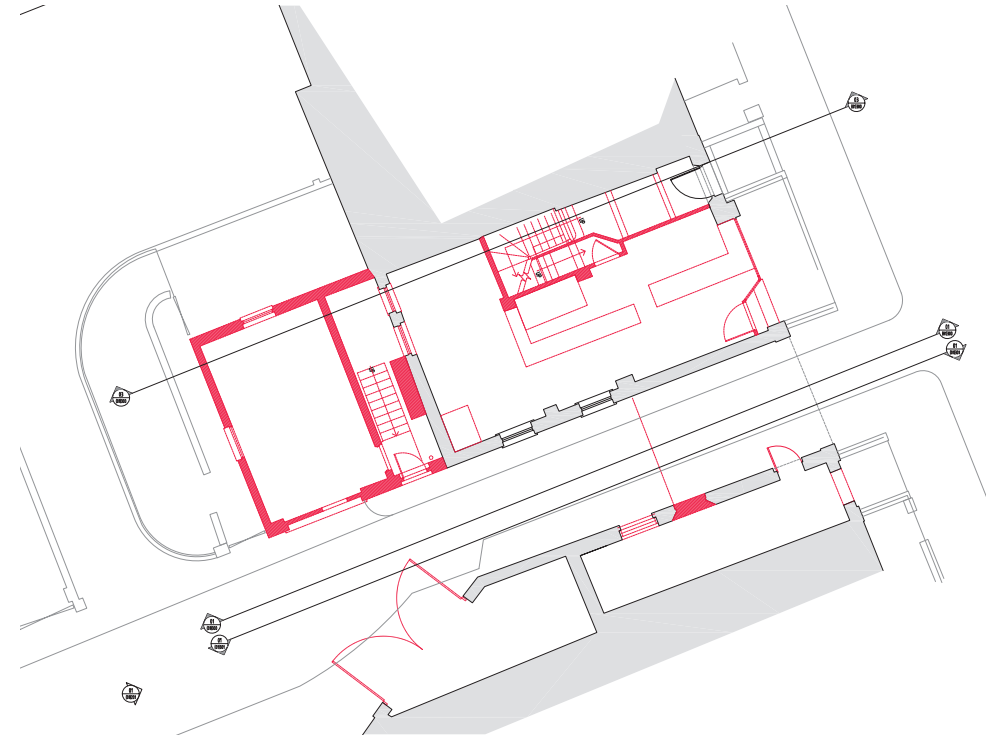
3.4 PLANNING KEY ISSUES

The decision notice for the 2013 application identified a number of key issues as reasons for the refusal of the planning application.

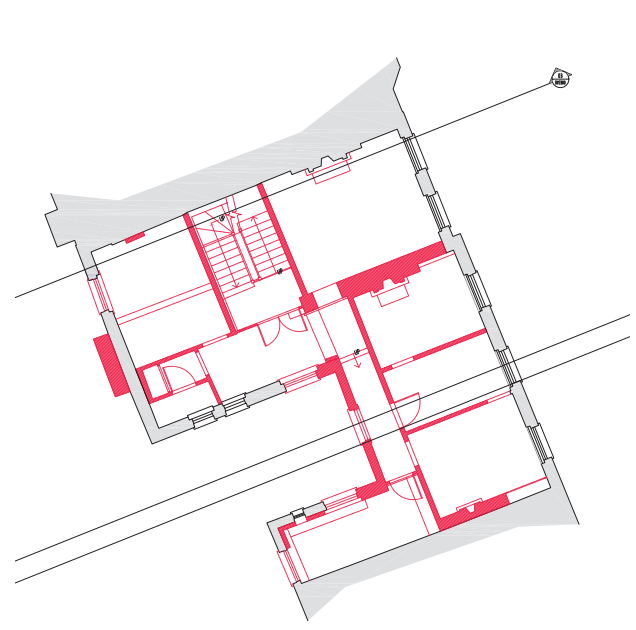
- The conversion of the whole site to C3 residential use and loss of B1, A1 & A3 lead to a loss of employment floorspace and was contrary to Core Strategy policies CS7 and CS8.
- The proposed unit mix contained a high proportion of one bedroom units and did not meet the requirements of Core Strategy policy CS6. A higher proportion of two bedroom units would need to be proposed to meet the requirements of Policy DP5
- The demolition and replacement of the garage building adjoining the rear of 11 Grenville Street was considered acceptable in principle. The extension proposed was not acceptable in design terms due to inappropriate detailing.
- The design of the proposed rear elevation would significantly alter the informal character of the rear elevation and views down the Colonnade.
- Increased sustainability and renewable energy measures would be welcomed.
- Provision of cycle parking and refuse storage would be welcomed.
- The proposed extensions including the mansard would have no significant impact on the adjoining properties amenity.
- It was accepted that the full Lifetime Homes criteria cannot be met due to the constraints of the existing building.



Basement Floor Plan as Existing



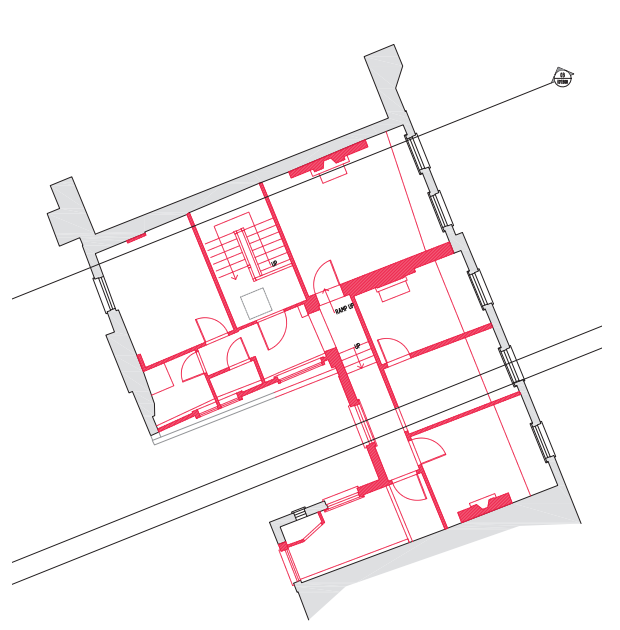
Ground Floor Plan as Existing



First Floor Plan as Existing



Second Floor Plan as Existing



Third Floor Plan as Existing





4.1 PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY

A request for pre-application advice was submitted in July 2014 for a residential conversion comprising:

- Existing A3 unit at ground floor retained, refurbished and extended.
- New shop front with traditional features to A3 unit.
- Grenville Street elevation cleaned and restored including new sashes to windows, structural repairs and refurbishment of stone portico surrounding entrance to Colonnade.
- Part of the existing small A1 unit converted to residential use forming a self-contained two bedroom maisonette.
- Existing first, second and third floors converted to residential use as a lateral conversion and extension to the rear elevation.
- New sensitively designed mansard roof extension to 11 & 12 Grenville St.
- Existing garage building to rear of 11 Grenville Street replaced with new mews style self contained house.



Proposed Grenville Street Elevation

The proposed changes to land use on the site were (GIA):

- A3 (ground and basement): +14 sqm gain
- A1 (ground) : -15 sqm loss
- B1 (first to third) : -288 sqm loss
- C3 (basement to fourth) : +494 sqm gain

The A3 unit would be extended to incorporate the floorspace of the currently vacant A1 unit.

The proposal would provide an additional 207 sqm of gross internal floor space from the basement to fourth floor levels:

- Total Floor space (GIA) existing = 460 sqm
- Proposed floor space (GIA) = 667 sqm
- Net change of floor area = +207 sqm



Existing Grenville Street Elevation





Pre-application Design Proposal

### 4.3 DESIGN

The scheme submitted was for a sensitive redevelopment within the constraints of the conservation area. The elevation fronting Grenville St was to be cleaned and repaired with new timber sashes, new traditionally detailed shopfront and timber entrance doors.

The rear elevation was to be extended in the same style as the existing with a reclaimed stock facade and traditional sash windows within brick reveals.

The new mews house was designed as a sensitive modern interpretation of a traditional mews house to complement and bridge the stylistic differences between the north and south sides of the Colonnade.

### 4.4 ADVICE RECEIVED

A meeting with the case officer was held at LB Camden offices in September 2014 and a letter confirming formal advice received on 21st November 2014.

- Loss of office accommodation would require justification through a marketing and viability report in accordance with planning policy.
- Loss of A1/A3 accommodation would need to be justified with a marketing report.
- Creation of residential accommodation is supported and the mix complies with the Council's requirements, having over 40% 2 bed accommodation.
- The mansard roof extension is not considered appropriate. This would need to be further justified.
- The rear infill extension proposed projects too far beyond the existing building line and would create an increased sense of enclosure.
- The change of use to the garage to residential use is considered to be acceptable subject to justification of any impact on Daylight/Sunlight and amenity of neighbouring properties.
- The design of the roof is considered to be overly dominant and would need to be altered.
- The lightwell to the side is overly large and very visible making the building overly dominant.
- Excavation would require submission of a Basement Impact Assessment.
- Cycle parking should be provided in accordance with Camden policies DP18 and CS11.



### 5.1 GRENVILLE STREET ELEVATION

The front facade to Grenville Street will be sympathetically restored to its former glory with extensive refurbishment. Ad-hoc structural repairs carried out through the years will be replaced with a cohesive structural strategy to repair the existing fabric and maintain the property for the future. The portico around the entrance to Colonnade will be sympathetically restored with missing or damaged detailing reconstructed.

Unsympathetic signage and security shutters will be removed. New traditionally detailed painted timber doors and fanlights will be provided to the residential entrances. A new traditionally detailed shopfront and entrance will be fitted to the A3/A1 unit.

Existing hard surfacing and boundary treatments will be upgraded as part of the works. Paving will be replaced with new yorkstone where damaged. New traditionally detailed railings will be reinstated either side of the entrance to the Colonnade.



Grenville Street elevation - As Existing

### 5.2 MANSARD EXTENSION

The proposed mansard roof development would be traditional in design and detail. Front and rear pitches would be covered in natural slate to match the adjacent properties. The top pitches would be leaded to reduce the impact of the extension on the building line. Party walls would be raised in reclaimed stock brickwork to match the existing with stone parapet copings.

The party wall between nos. 11 & 12 would be expressed on the roof to distinguish the traditional plot boundary between the buildings. New leaded dormer windows are proposed to be in keeping with the mansard roof and designed to reflect the fenestration of the main buildings. Chimney stacks and pots are proposed to the party walls to enhance the character of the roof development.

The new mansard extension has little impact on the adjoining properties and has been designed as a link between the four storey properties of 13-15 Grenville Street and the larger six storey Downing Court. Please refer also to the Daylight/Sunlight assessment and Heritage Statement for further discussion.



Grenville Street elevation - As Proposed



5.3 REAR ELEVATION

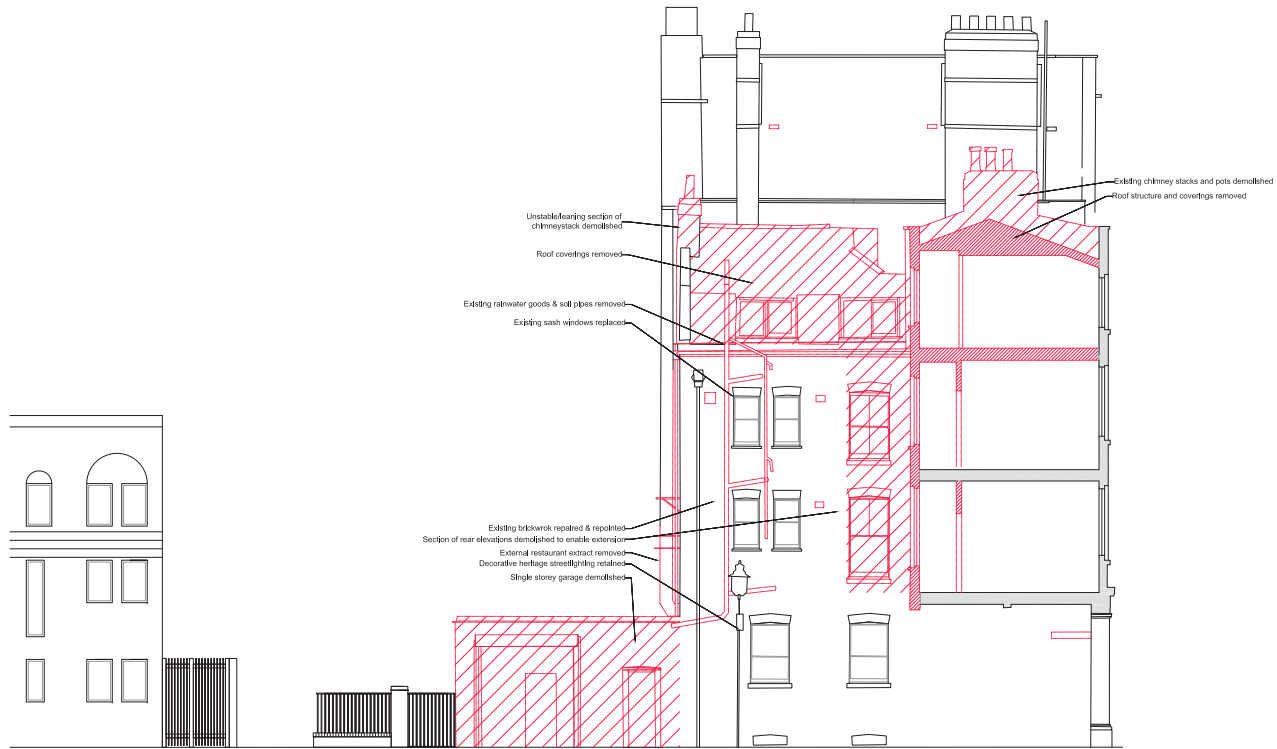
The building line to the rear is extended over Colonnade to create further accommodation but the existing set-back is retained to preserve the traditional demarcation between the buildings. New openings are formed with brick arches over sash windows to match the character and scale of adjacent properties. The degree of extension to the rear has been reduced since the pre-application proposals to mitigate concerns regarding increasing the sense of enclosure. New windows within the ground floor overlooking the entrance to the Colonnade would further reduce the sense of enclosure.

5.4 NEW MEWS HOUSE

A new mews house replaces the existing garage building adjoining the rear of no.11 Grenville St. The design makes use of the change in level between Colonnade and the rear of Downing Court to form a lower ground floor. At street level the façade is stepped in to provide a sense of threshold and reflect the character of the widening street.

Folding timber screens in front of the glazing at street level help maximise natural lighting whilst allowing for privacy and security in the same manner as the units on the north of the mews. Clerestory glazing above the shutters retains natural lighting inside when the security shutters are completely closed. A glazed panel within the ground floor provides daylighting to the basement level.

At first floor level both bedrooms benefit from Juliet balconies providing natural lighting and ventilation and referencing the traditional hay loft doors characteristic of mews properties. Traditional materials such as stock brickwork are used in a contemporary fashion reflecting the character of the surroundings. A flat roof is proposed in order to mitigate the concerns raised in the pre-application advice about the dominance of the roof. A sedum roof covering is proposed to increase biodiversity and aid with sustainable drainage.



Section through Colonnade - As Existing



Section through Colonnade - As Proposed



### 5.5 ACCESS AND SERVICING

The proposal utilises both Grenville St and Colonnade to provide access to the new residential accommodation. Whilst the upper floors are accessed directly from Grenville Street, the mews house enjoys its own private entrance from Colonnade in keeping with the character of the mews.

Residential refuse and recycling storage is created within the retained historic garage unit to the rear of no.12 Grenville Street. The refuse store has been based on Camden CPG 1 section 10 and reflects the total required for the development.

Secure cycle parking has been provided in accordance with the pre-application advice at the density suggested. The 2 bedroom maisonette unit with access directly off Grenville Street has its own cycle storage area within the entrance hall. 5no. communal spaces are provided for the remaining flats and the mews property adjacent to the refuse store. The communal storage would be fitted with proprietary cycle storage racks.

A flat roofed plant area is formed at high level to the rear of the property for use by the A1/A3 unit. This would be screened from view by the top pitch of the mansard roof and gable end of the rear of 11. Grenville Street. The extract duct for the A1/A3 unit is relocated internally to remove the existing unsightly ductwork from the rear elevation. Rainwater and foul drainage is reorganised in a similar fashion to declutter the elevations.

### 5.6 UNIT MIX & ACCOMMODATION

The proposal seeks to retain the existing cafe at 11 Grenville Street incorporating the A1 use from the kiosk to make a flexible A1/A3 unit.

The development provides 6 new residential units comprising 3 no. 2 bed units and 3 no. 1 bed units exceeding Camden requirements for 40% 2 bed accommodation. All units meet Camden and London Plan space standards.



Existing rear elevation



Proposed rear elevation



## 5.7 DESIGN IN CONTEXT - REAR



View from Colonnade east of the new development

The existing buildings will be extended over Colonnade to provide additional accommodation to ensure sufficient sized apartments internally whilst having no detrimental impact on the surrounding properties.

The elevation of the new mews extension will reflect the detailing of the surrounding properties. The scale and design of the new dwelling serves as a link between the modern development of Chandler House and the more traditional buildings on Grenville Street. The new building responds to the surrounding architecture with a contemporary aesthetic but with detailing that reflects the traditional mews houses opposite. Timber shutters can be folded over the glazing at ground floor level, referencing the traditional doors of the original mews properties. Large windows create a desirable and spacious home within a currently under used and neglected space.

The new mansard extension negotiates the change in scale between the properties on Grenville Street creating a sympathetic opportunity for additional accommodation.



**Layout:**

The design of the new residential units was considered against the criteria of lifetime homes. The constraints of existing building walk-up access restricted the feasible inclusion of the majority of the lifetime homes criteria regarding wheelchair accessibility. Addressing each of the sixteen lifetime homes standards, we would comment as follows:

**No.1 - Car Parking Width:**

There is no possibility of providing car parking. Therefore this LTH standard does not apply.

**No.2 - Access from Car Parking:**

See above.

**No.3 - Approach Gradients:**

The entrance to the flats and the maisonette are stepped directly off the pavement. The new mews house has a ramped threshold to provide wheelchair access.

**No.4 - External Entrances:**

Lighting will be provided to the entrances. The entrance is covered, however, as has been discussed above, it will not be possible to provide level access to the main entrance other than the mews.

**No.5 - Communal Stairs and Lifts:**

The constraints of the existing building mean that it will not be possible to accommodate a fully compliant staircase. There is no space for a lift, and so the flats will not comply with lifetime homes in this respect.

**No.6 - Doorways and Hallways:**

All new construction will comply with Part M of the Building Regulations.

New layouts have provided compliant clear openings and nibs wherever possible within the limitations of the existing building

**No.7 - Wheelchair Accessibility:**

As has been discussed under Items 3, 4 and 5, it is impracticable to provide wheelchair access to these properties. However, all living rooms are large enough to provide a full turning circle of 1500 mm.

**No.8 - Living Room:**

In all but one of the units, the living room is on the entrance level of the apartment.

**No.9 - Entrance Level Bed Space:**

In each apartment there is a bedroom at entrance level or area which could be converted to such.

**No.10 - Entrance Level WC and Shower Drainage:**

As has been discussed under Items 3, 4 and 5, it is impracticable to provide wheelchair access to these properties. There is a WC at entrance level in all of the units other than the mews due to restricted space.

**No.11- Bathroom and WC Walls:**

Wall reinforcement will be provided to ensure that the bathroom walls are capable of taking adaptations such as handrails.

**No.12 - Stairlifts/through-Floor Lifts:**

The existing retained stair is not wide enough to install a stairlift and the building is not suitable for the installation of a through floor lift. However most apartments are single level dwellings.

**No.13 - Tracking Hoist Route:**

Ceilings will be built to be capable of having a hoist track fitted.

**No.14 - Bathroom Layout:**

As has been mentioned in Item 3, 4 and 5 above, none of the apartments will be fully wheelchair accessible. Therefore, it was not deemed necessary to provide wheelchair accessible bathrooms.

**No.15 - Window Specification:**

The buildings are historic and in a conservation area. Therefore, the window openings are fixed as existing. The majority of the windows to the living rooms are original sliding sash windows. Therefore, it is impracticable to provide windows that are operable by wheelchair users. It should also be noted (as discussed in Items 3, 4 and 5 above), that only the mews house will be accessible to wheelchair users and the windows within this will be operable by a wheelchair user.

**No.16 - Controls, Fixtures and Fittings:**

All switches, sockets, ventilation and service controls will be located between 450 and 1200 mm from the floor.





Proposed view from Brunswick Square down Grenville Street towards Guilford Street

It is Camden Council's approach, within Conservation Areas, that any proposed developments should contribute positively to their surroundings. As such any new development should be judged against the qualities of the existing townscape and the merits of the proposed scheme.

The existing property is currently vacant which will begin to detract from its surroundings as the building fabric deteriorates. The aesthetic value of the historic architecture is high and would benefit from refurbishment to prevent any further disintegration.

This proposal intends to rejuvenate the existing building with an extensive refurbishment and renovation to residential use. The current office spaces are no longer in demand within this area but creating new high quality residential dwellings will ensure that the building will remain occupied for many years to come. By retaining the commercial use at street level, the proposal retains its employment opportunities and has no adverse impact on amenities of adjoining residents. The new residential use will complement the existing uses within the vicinity and maintain a mix of activities at this location.

Externally the building will be upgraded to respect the scale and character of the surrounding Conservation Area. Internally new spacious residential dwellings will provide light and enjoyable living spaces capitalising on the quality of the existing building. The new mansard extension will provide additional high quality space without detracting from the surrounding properties.

The new extension to the rear embraces and responds to the varying character and proportions of nearby buildings and provides an opportunity to efficiently utilise some currently under used space. The materials and finishes have been carefully considered to be consistent with those historically used within the Conservation Area. This will ensure that the scheme is embedded within its environment and will contribute positively to its context.

This proposal incorporates the necessities of a successful scheme by thoroughly considering the existing uses, quality of the existing fabric and in particular the importance of the surrounding Conservation Area. It has also been developed with full consideration of the planning history and addresses any previous constraints. Combining a considerate refurbishment with thoughtful interventions within neglected spaces, this proposals aims to transform a piece of London's historic urban fabric to provide high quality, contemporary, residential homes for Camden.



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