

BEDFORD HOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE  
*Minor Material Amendments*  
*Ref. 2014/0304/P*



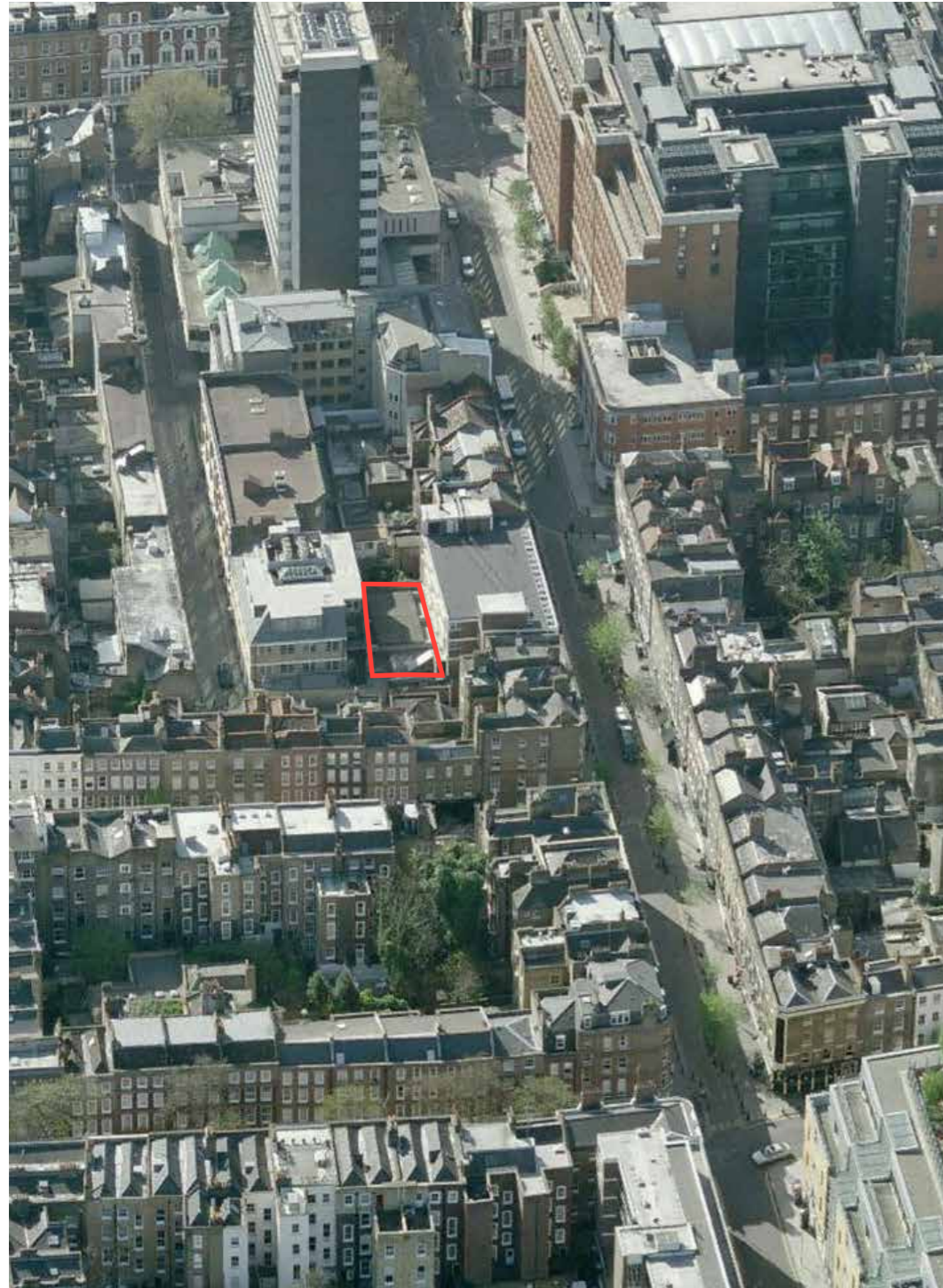
June 2016

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*View from above looking South towards Holborn Police Station*

## 1.0 Introduction

This document has been prepared by 6a architects on behalf of the Holborn Community Association (HCA).

HCA is a community anchor organisation whose activities are based across two sites in Holborn: Bedford House Community Centre and Millman Street Resource Centre. It is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. See <http://www.holborncommunity.co.uk/>.

Full Planning Permission was granted in June 2014 for the redevelopment and expansion of one of these centres - Bedford House, which is located at 35 Emerald Street, London.

Since consent was granted, the neighbouring UCL Estate has uncovered an old restrictive covenant from 1932 that affects the permitted height of the proposal across half of the site.

The Minor Material Amendments described in this report are mostly the result of this constraint on the envelope of the building but also refer to the part of the neighbouring building being incorporated into the building under a flying freehold to allow the community centre to maximise space above and below it; and to the recommendations made by the Highways team at the Council with regards to the ramp for access to the building.

The amendments to the scheme are as follows:

1. The removal of the second storey to the building and its replacement with a roof garden, as a consequence of the restrictive covenant
2. The inclusion of the area to the north east corner of the site as a flying-freehold, widening the building's frontage to the alleyway. The rear of the building was already full width.
3. Amendments to the position of the rear rooflights, and facade windows in response to the widened facade
4. The inclusion of an external ramp to the alleyway to provide level access



## 2.0 Minor Material Amendments

### 2.1 Restrictive Covenant Revised Scheme

*The removal of the second storey to the building and its replacement with a roof garden, as a consequence of the restrictive covenant*

Since the planning submission, UCL Estates, owners of the neighbouring building at 23-29 Emerald Street have uncovered a covenant dating from 1932 that affects the permitted height of development across half of the site. Following discussions with UCL Estates, and Rugby School, with whom the covenant is made, it is likely that the covenant will be annulled or revised in future, however this is a complex legal process and its timeline is as yet unknown.

Currently the project has various funding commitment deadlines and community centre programme dates to meet and in light of this, the submitted scheme was revised to conform to the restrictive covenant as a temporary measure.

The revised scheme will be able to incorporate the top floor seminar room at a later date. It improves the current permission with a small planted rear terrace instead of the current sloped roof. However, if for any reason the covenant were not annulled, the revised scheme offers a very positive long term alternative to the building.

The revised scheme takes the ground and first floor storeys up to the restricted height and takes the lift up to the 2nd floor, which is now a new mesh-enclosed roof garden. The building is not a storey higher, however the lift shaft is higher than the consented scheme.

The roof garden will have deep planters around it with climbers and dense edible, aromatic and seasonal planting that will both maintain privacy and provide therapeutic garden space for the adult and accompanied children.

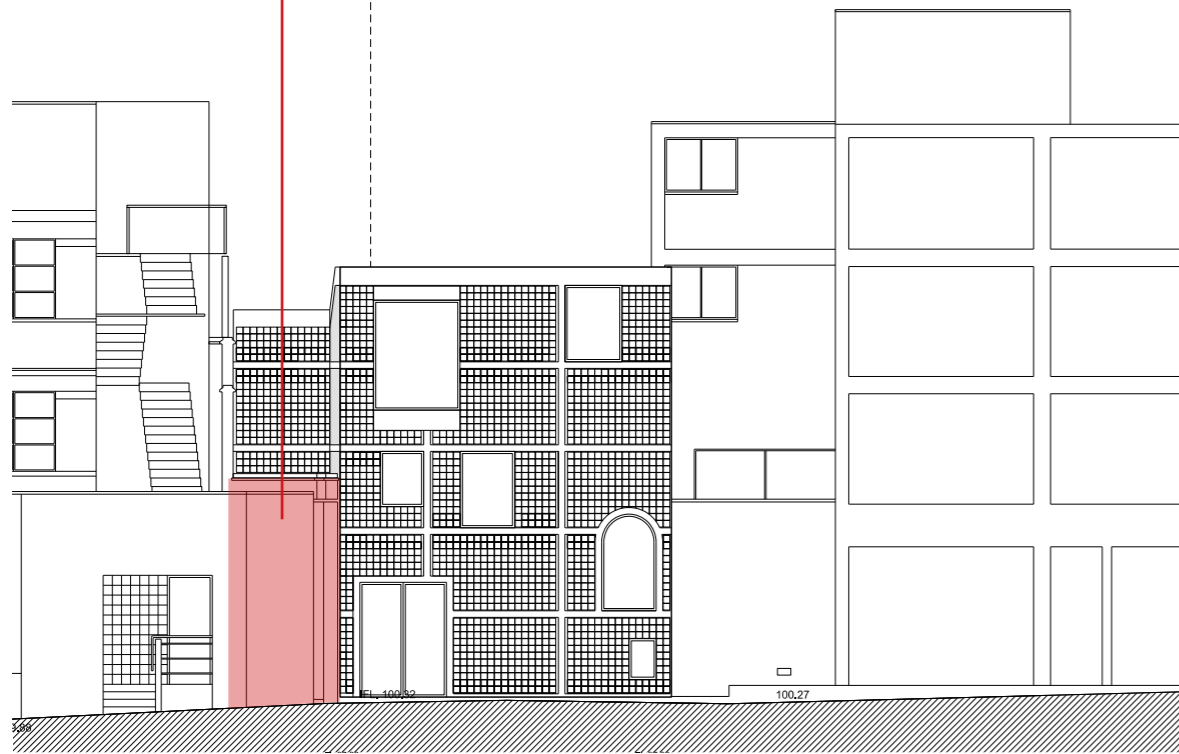
The community centre will programme the space considerably with residents and offices in mind. The roof garden of Bedford House will be occupied during working hours as a quiet activity space. Activities centred around the planting will include gardening and memory and sensory activities. There will also be a programme of activities for the over 55's: meditation, yoga, tai chi, staying-steady exercises and seated exercise classes.

Both immediately adjacent buildings belonging to UCL and GMS estates are supportive of the revised scheme and are working spaces. They are supportive of the planting screen acting as a buffer to the rear of the terrace. The building fronts onto the passageway, small office and work units behind Rugby Street. It is fortunate also to face a gap in the terraced housing on both sides of Rugby street for most of its façade.

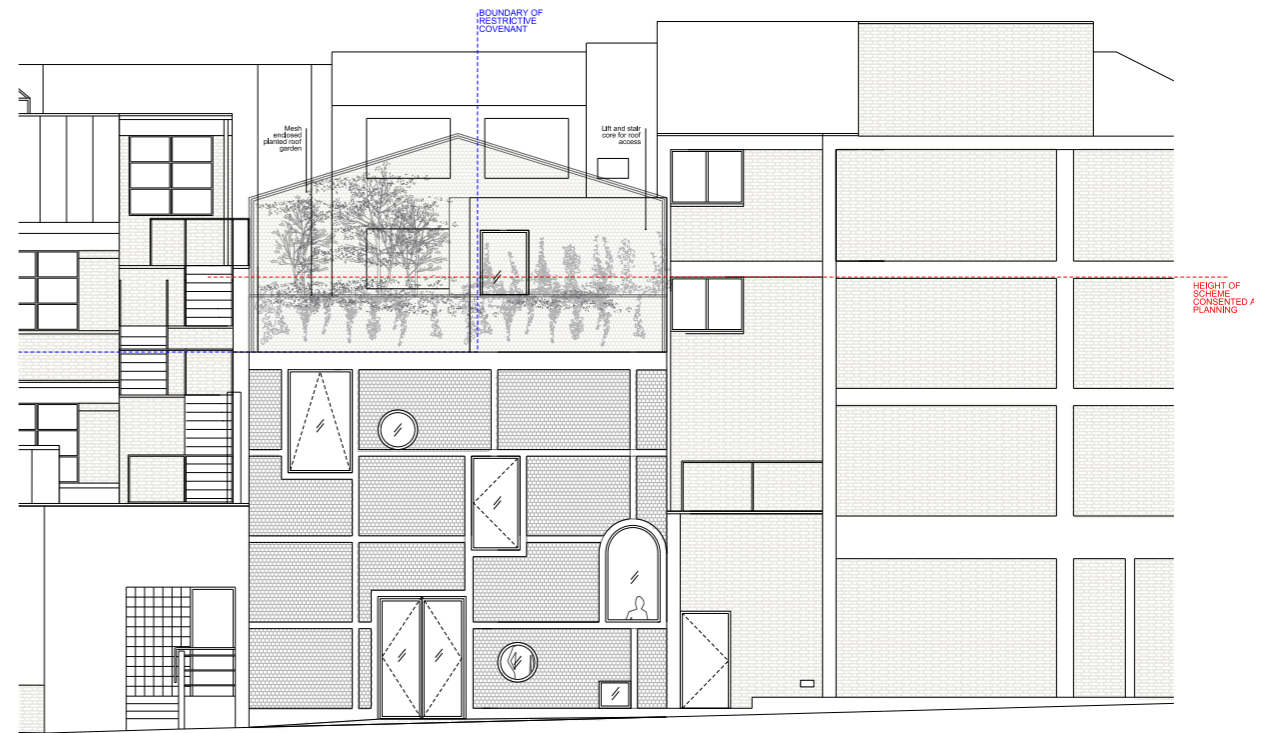
The idea of a mesh garden enclosure was previously supported by Planning when 6a architects discussed a feasibility for the Community Centre to buy Rapier house, and discovered Rapier House had once had a mesh enclosure on it. With this precedent in mind, and the rooftop mesh on the school at Queens Square and rooftop playgrounds across the area, a new garden is felt to be appropriate and adds to and maintains the presence of the building on the alleyway even if it becomes just two tall storeys.

*Precedent of planters as privacy screen on the top floor balcony of Rapier House on Lambs Conduit Street*

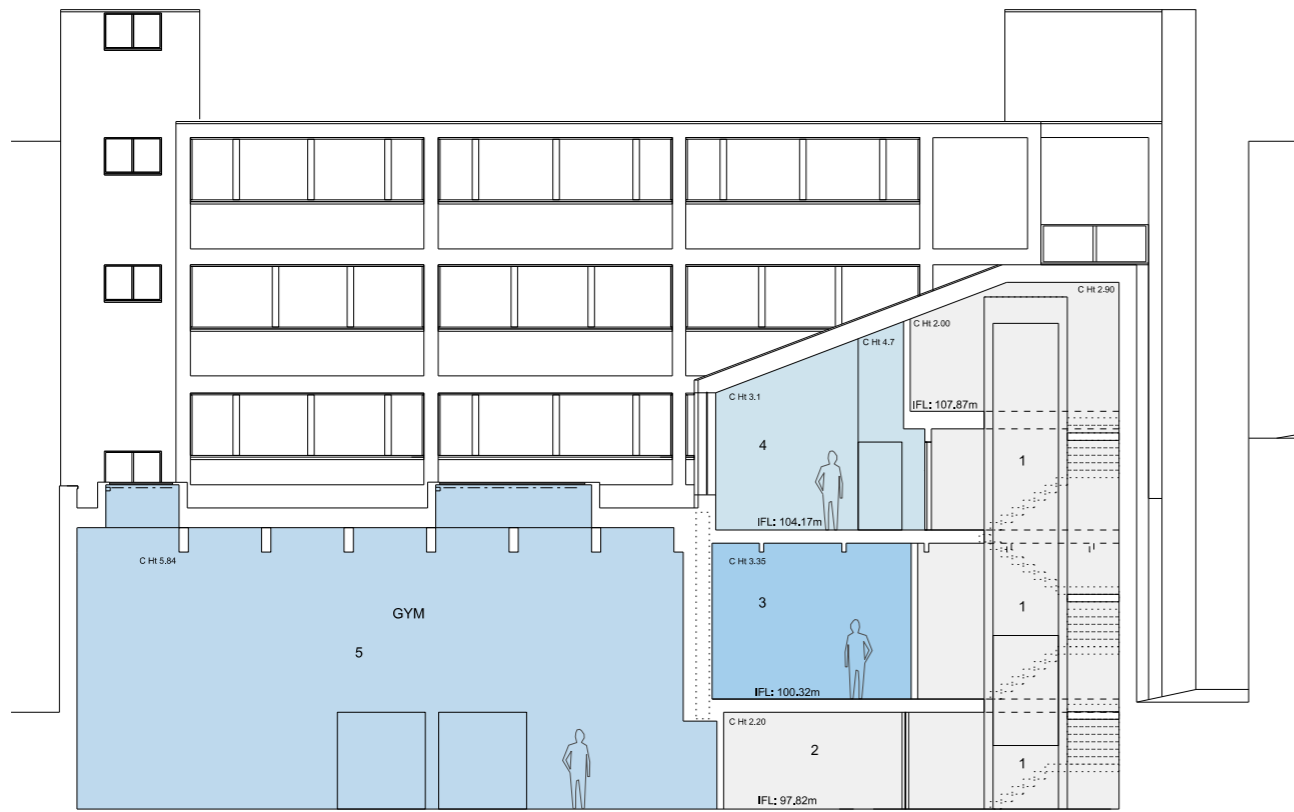
Existing single-storey construction of a WC,  
over which the Flying Freehold will be acquired (Section 2.2)



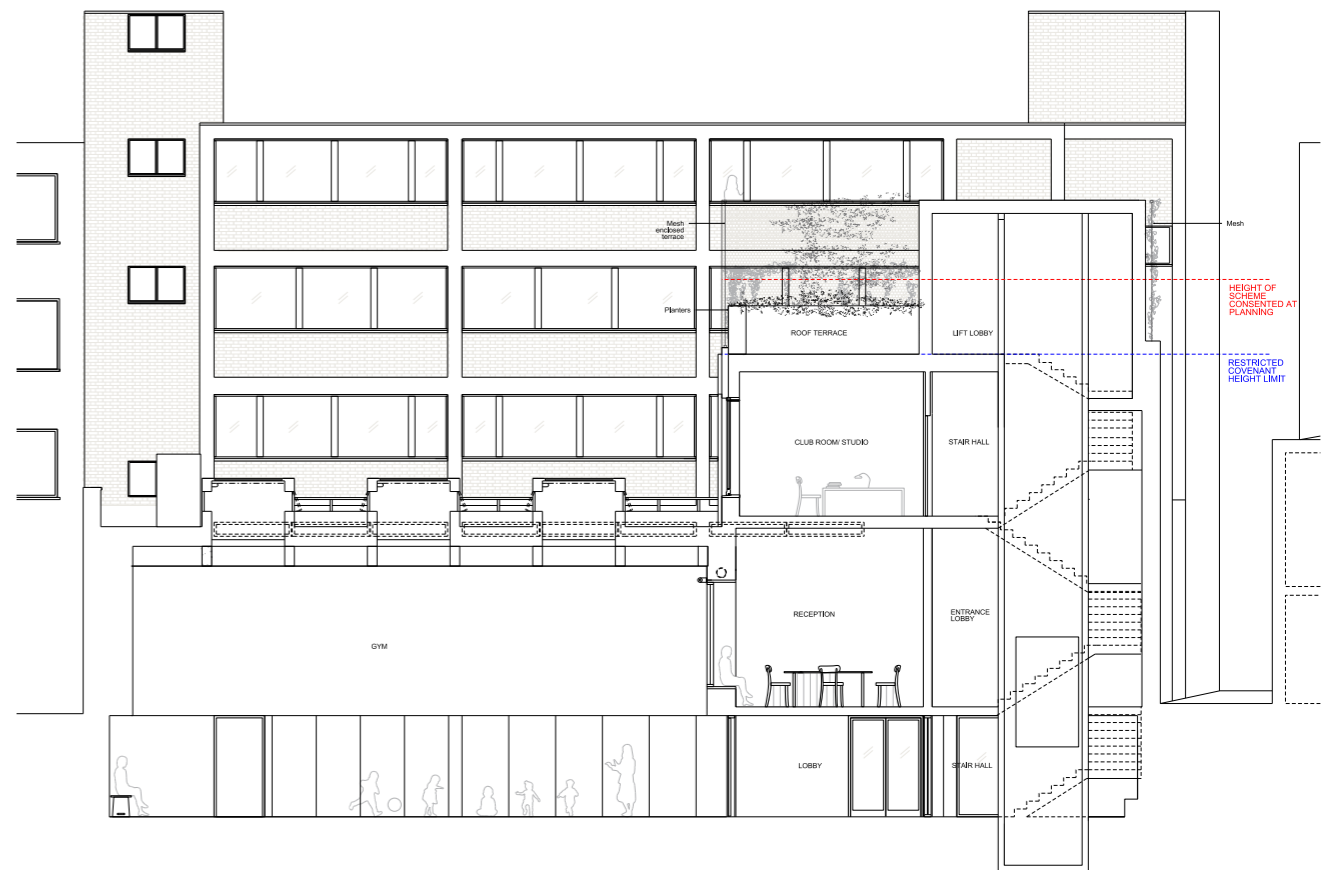
North Elevation as consented



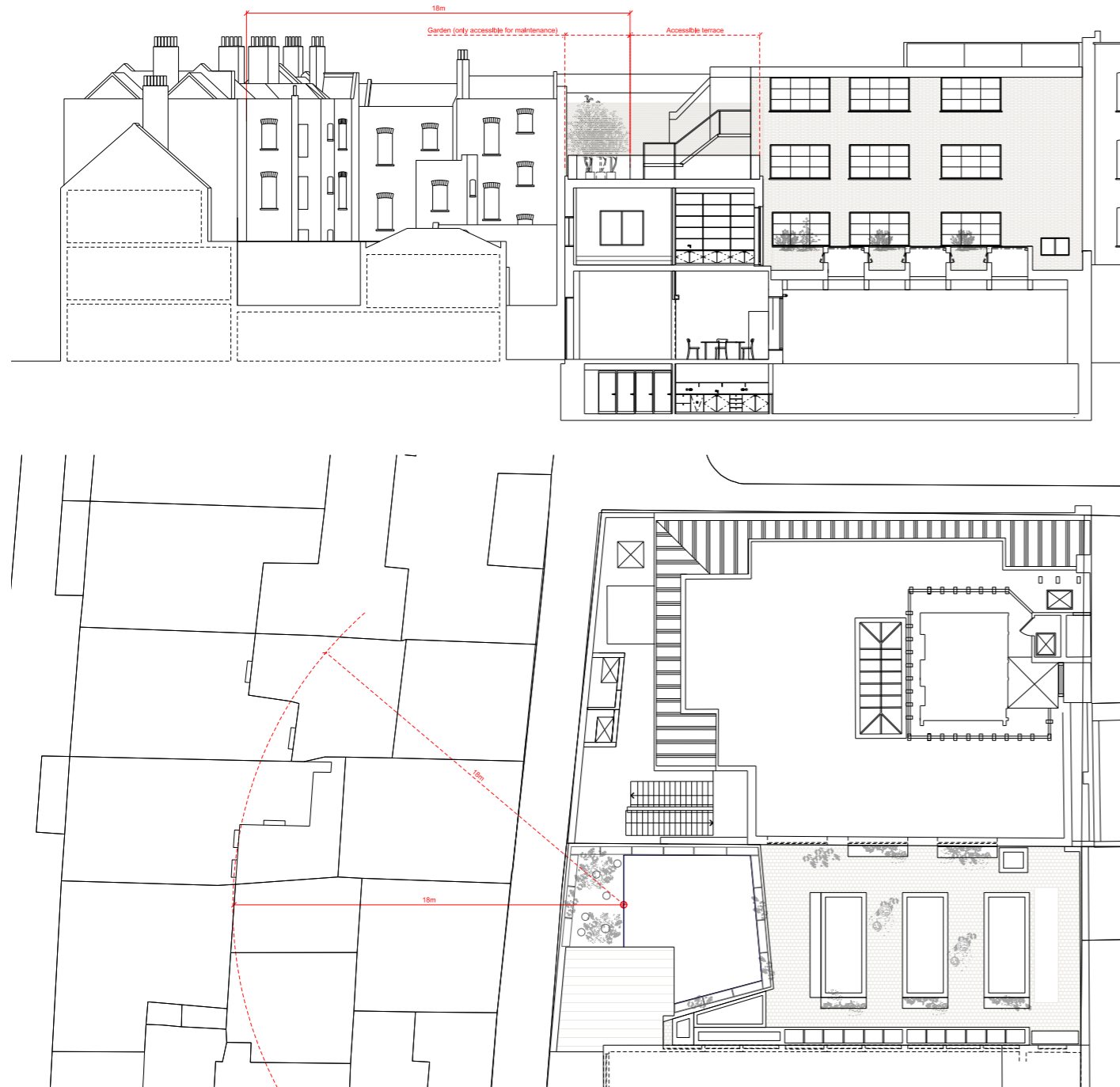
North Elevation as proposed, widened to incorporate the flying freehold (see Section 2.2) also showing the new positions of the front facade windows (see Section 2.3)



Section A as consented



Section A as proposed

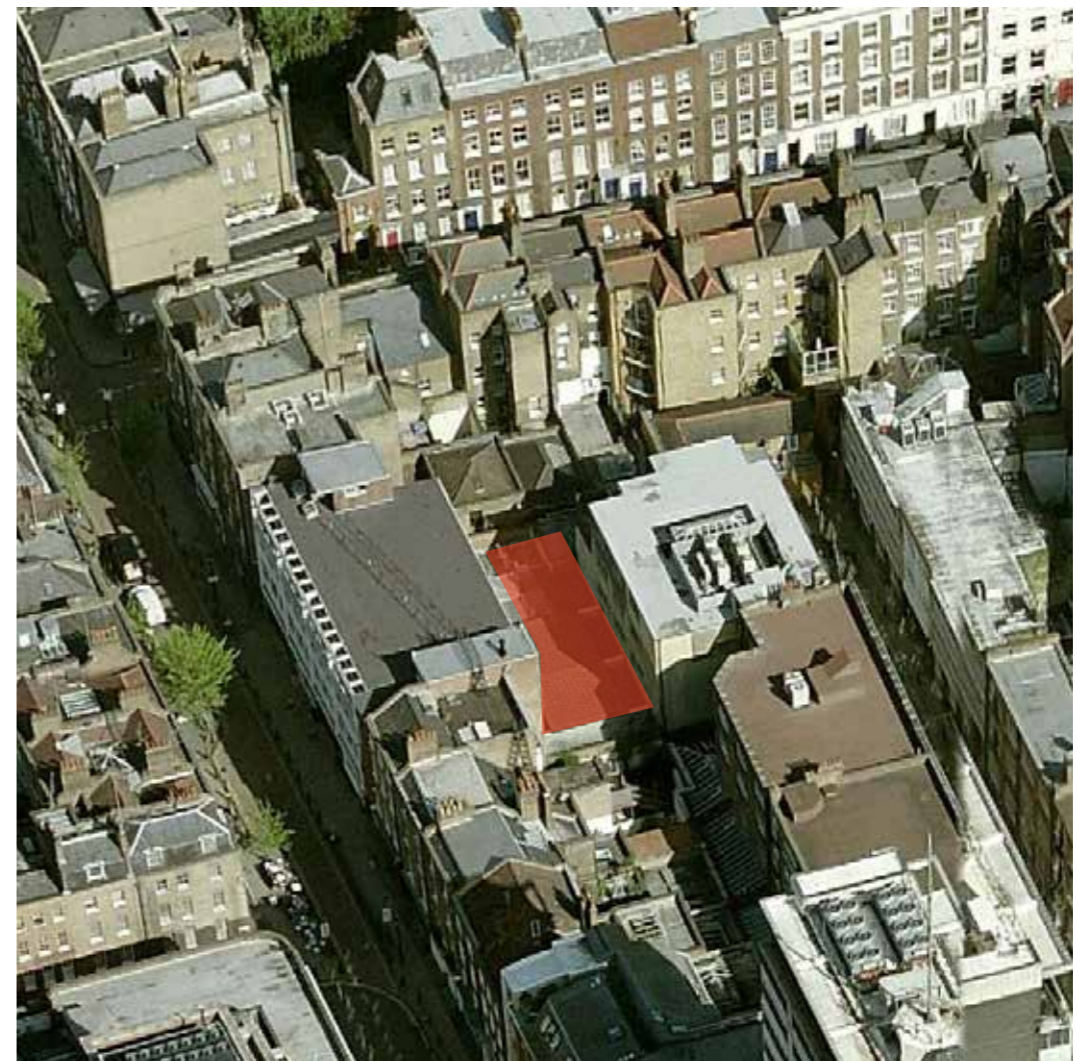


Location Plan and Contextual Section

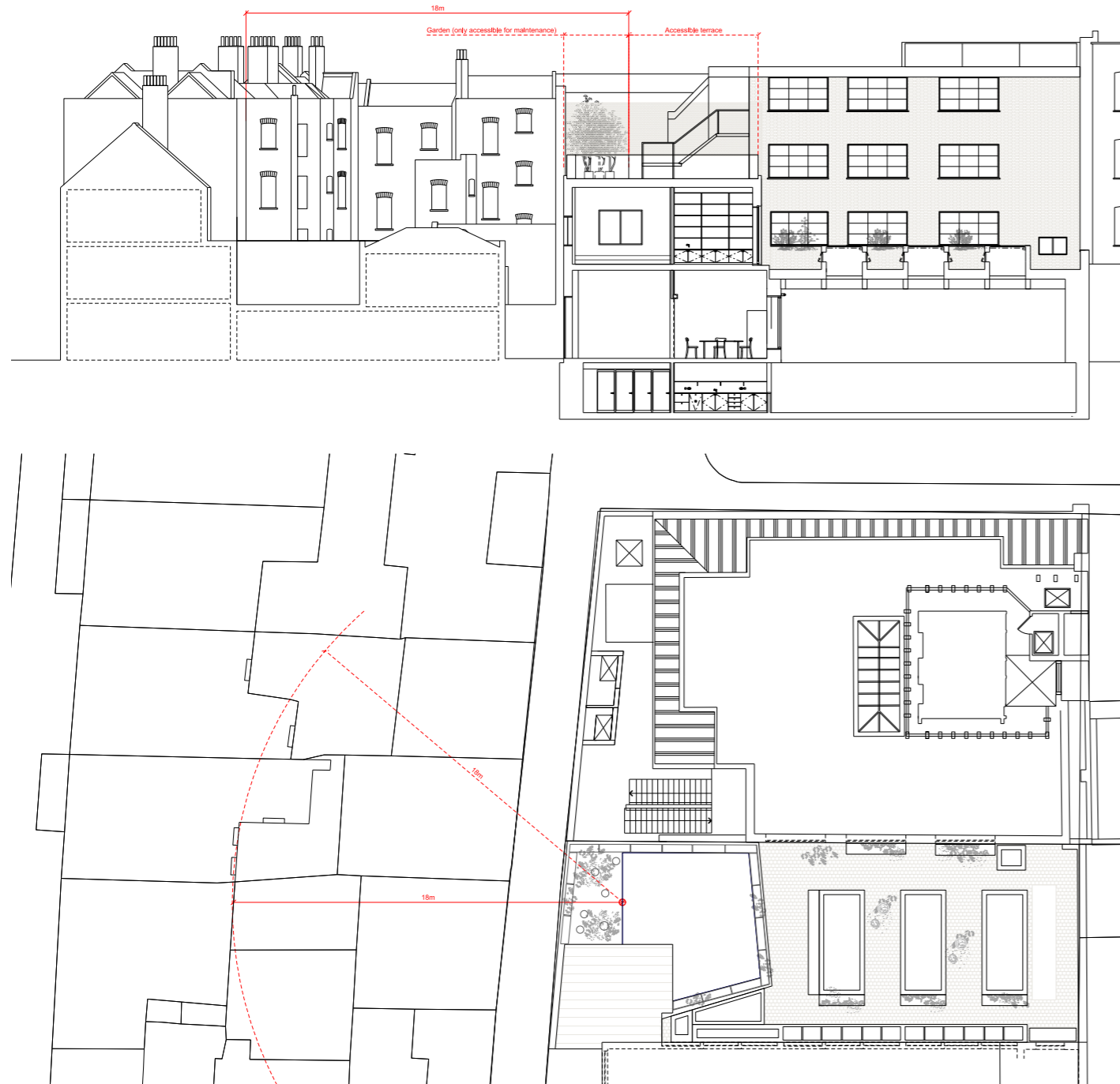
### Revised Scheme and Overlooking

The accessible area of the garden roof is offset by 3 metres from the Emerald Street face of the building. This setback introduces a distance of 18m between the rear facades with windows of the terraced houses on Rugby Street and the new roof terrace, preventing any overlooking between the properties.

Whilst the perimeter climbing plants will obscure the mesh, the 3 metre zone will form a garden with smaller trees and plants. It will act as a densely planted buffer between the terrace and other buildings. This area will be accessed only for maintenance.



Aerial view of Bedford House

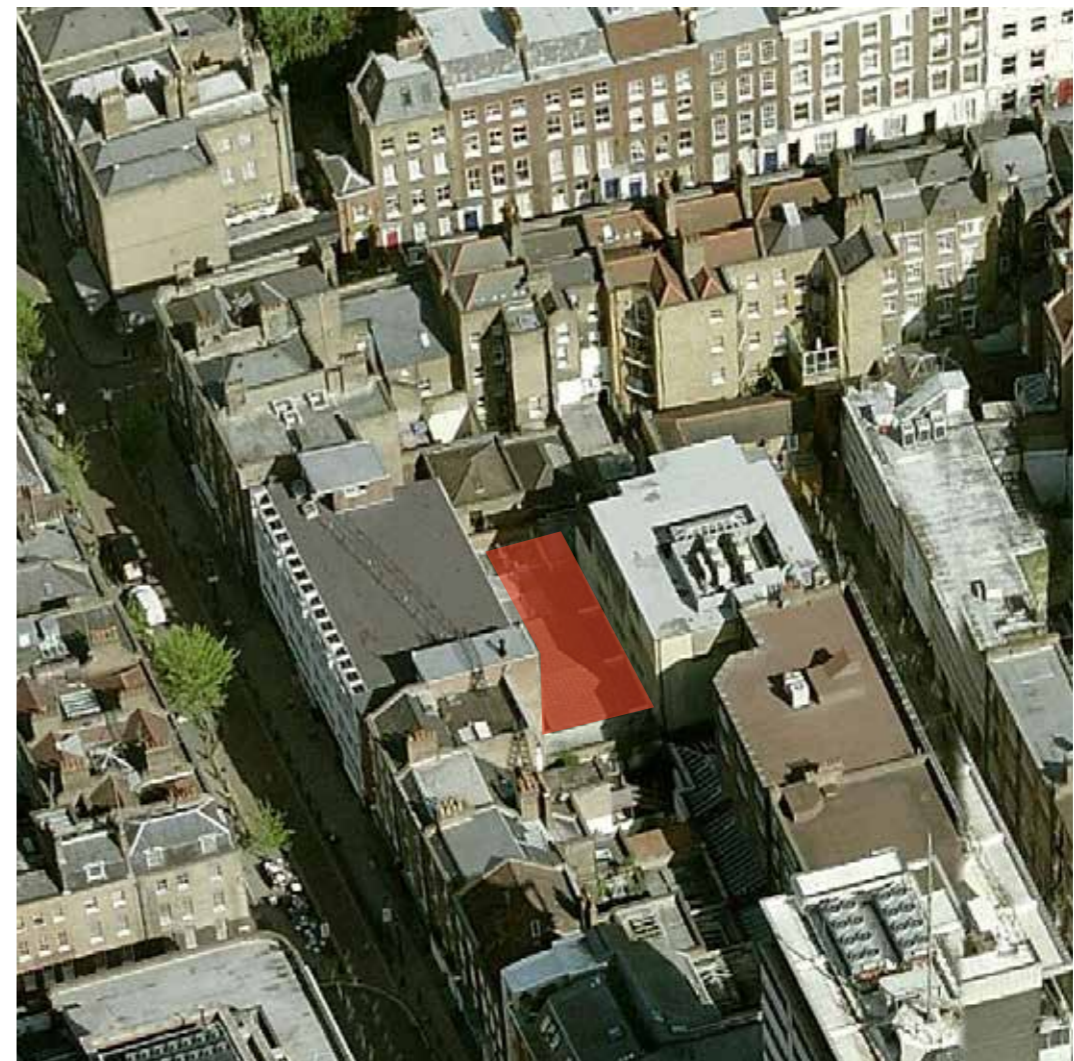


Location Plan and Contextual Section

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Aerial view of Bedford House

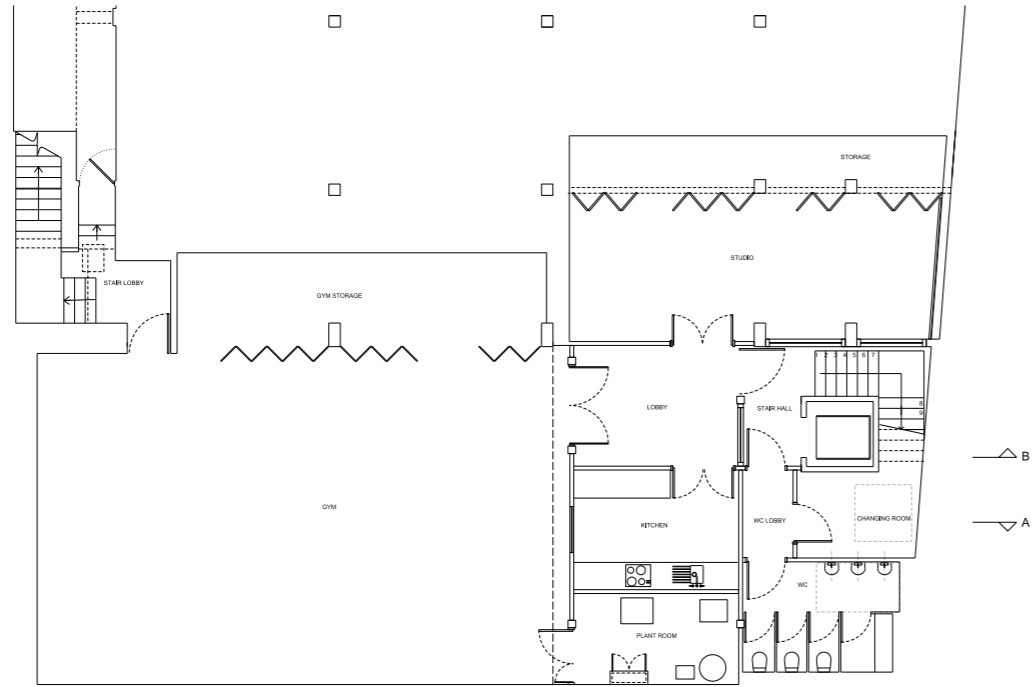


*Latimer Road, 6a architects*

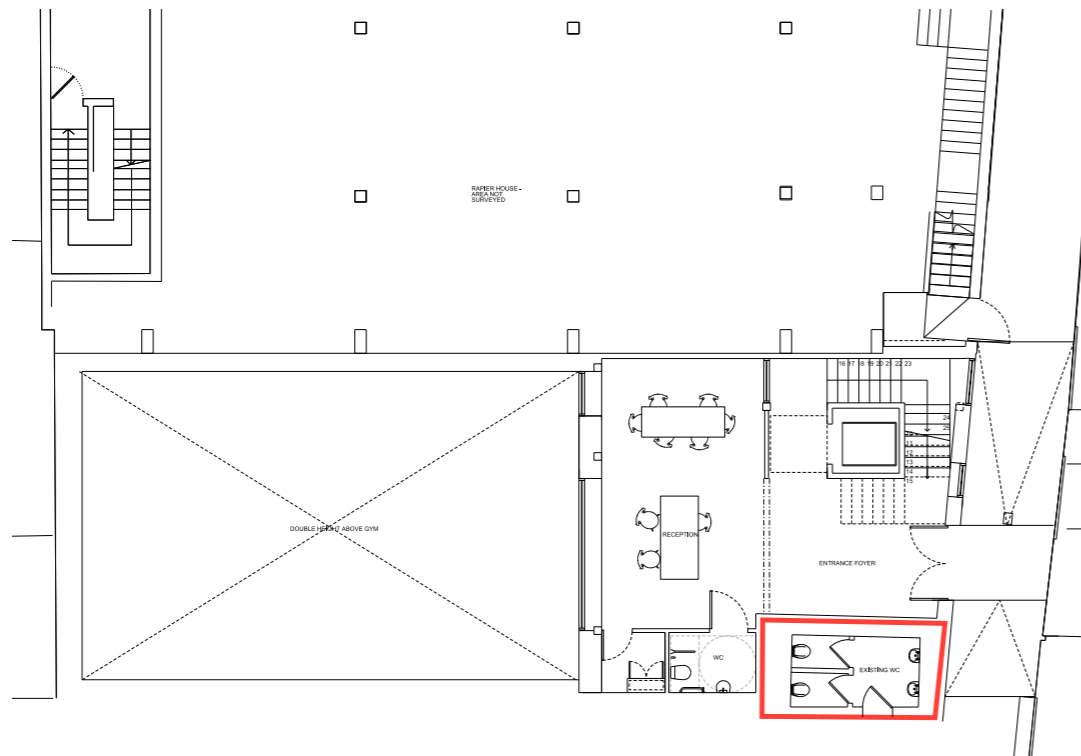


*Latimer Road, 6a architects*





Basement Floor Plan as proposed, including the area acquired through the flying freehold

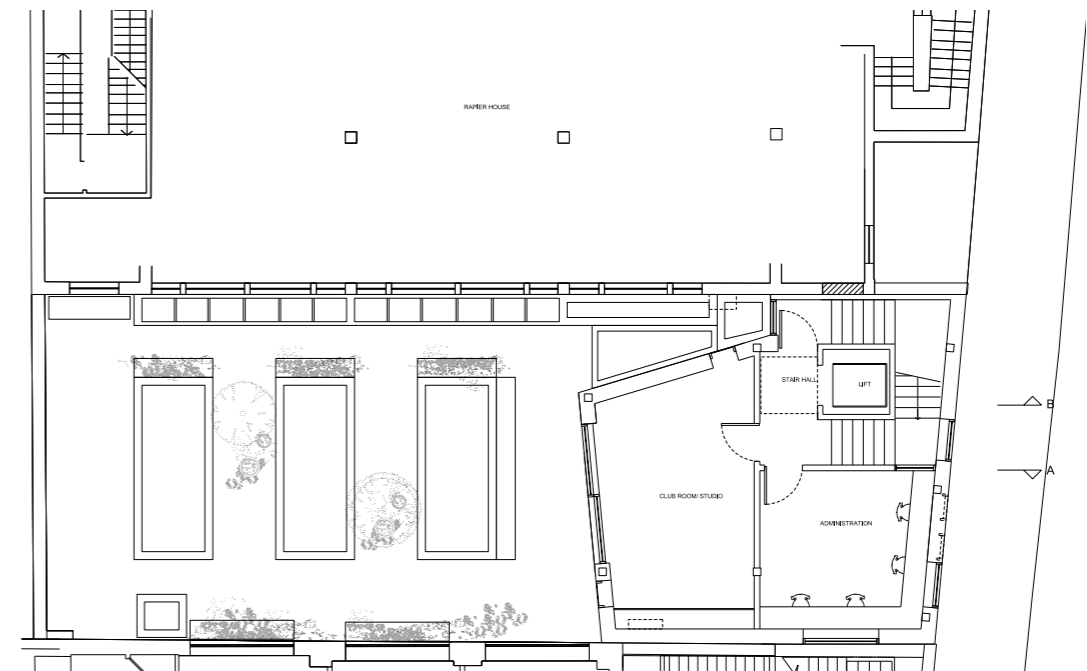


Ground Floor Plan, with the flying freehold area outlined in red, as proposed, and the existing UCL WC retained

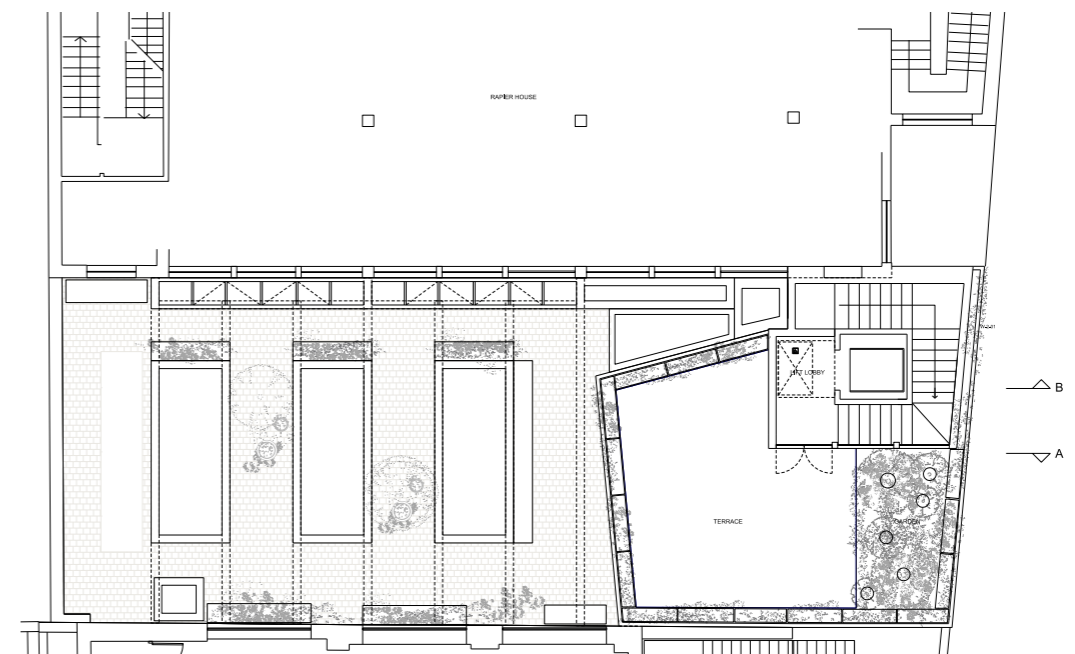
## 2.2 Flying Freehold

The inclusion of the area to the north east corner of the site as a flying-freehold, widening the building's frontage to the alleyway

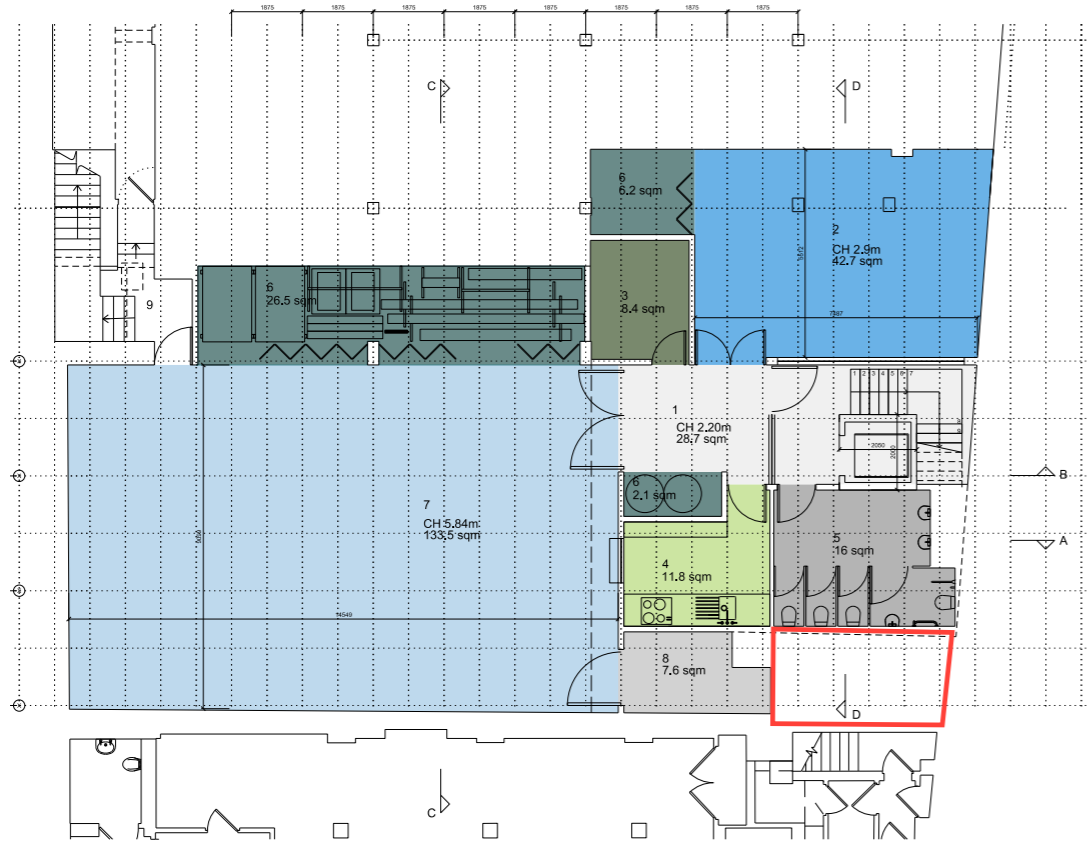
As part of the revision of the covenant with UCL Estates, a flying freehold lease of the area above and below the existing WC to the northeast corner of the building will also be agreed. This will increase the footprint of each floor level to include this area, with the exception of the ground floor, allowing the inclusion of a changing room at basement level and a larger administration room at first floor level. It will also widen the frontage of Bedford House to Emerald Street, improving the buildings presence and proportion (see elevation on page 9).



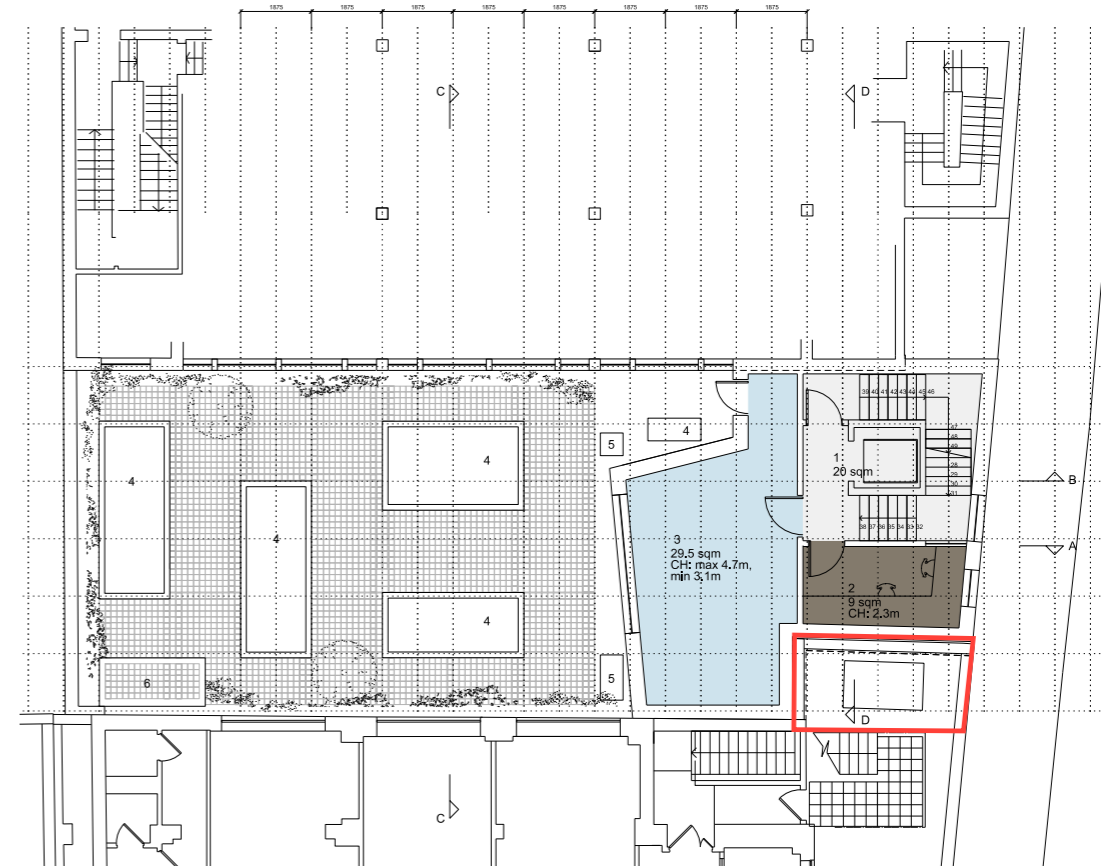
First Floor Plan as proposed, including the area acquired through the flying freehold



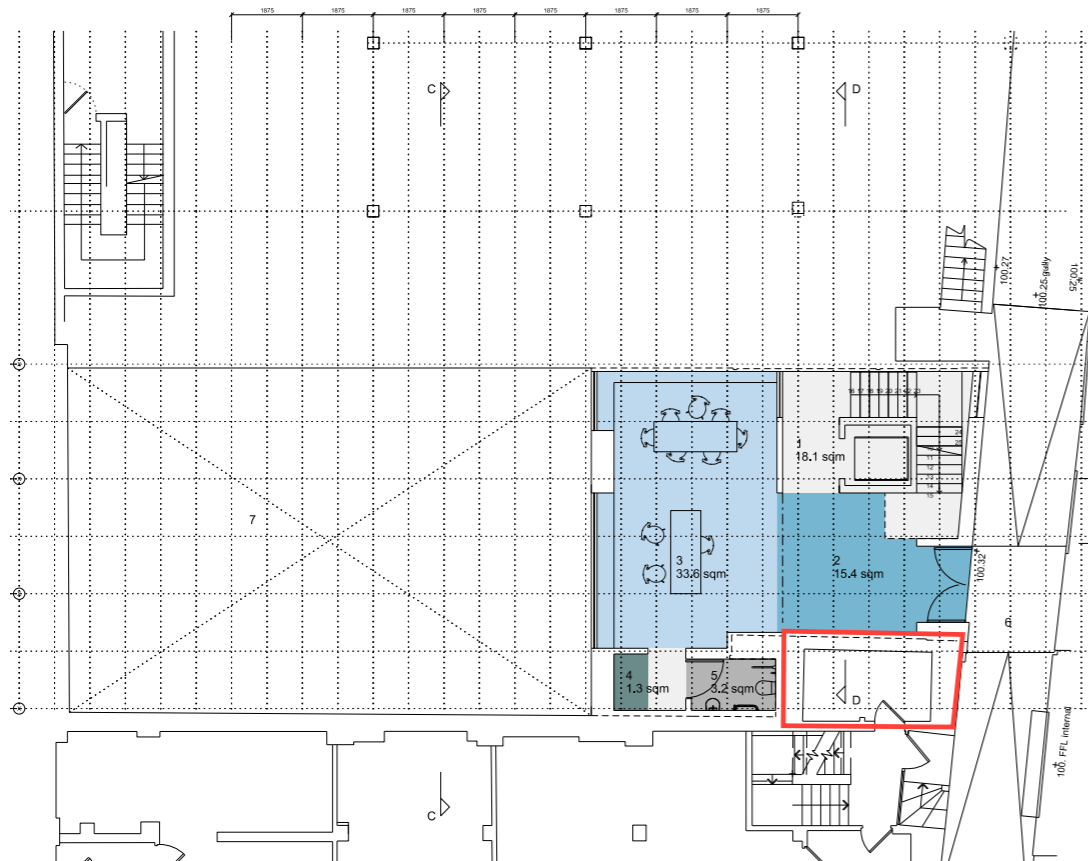
Roof Garden Plan as proposed, including the area acquired through the flying freehold



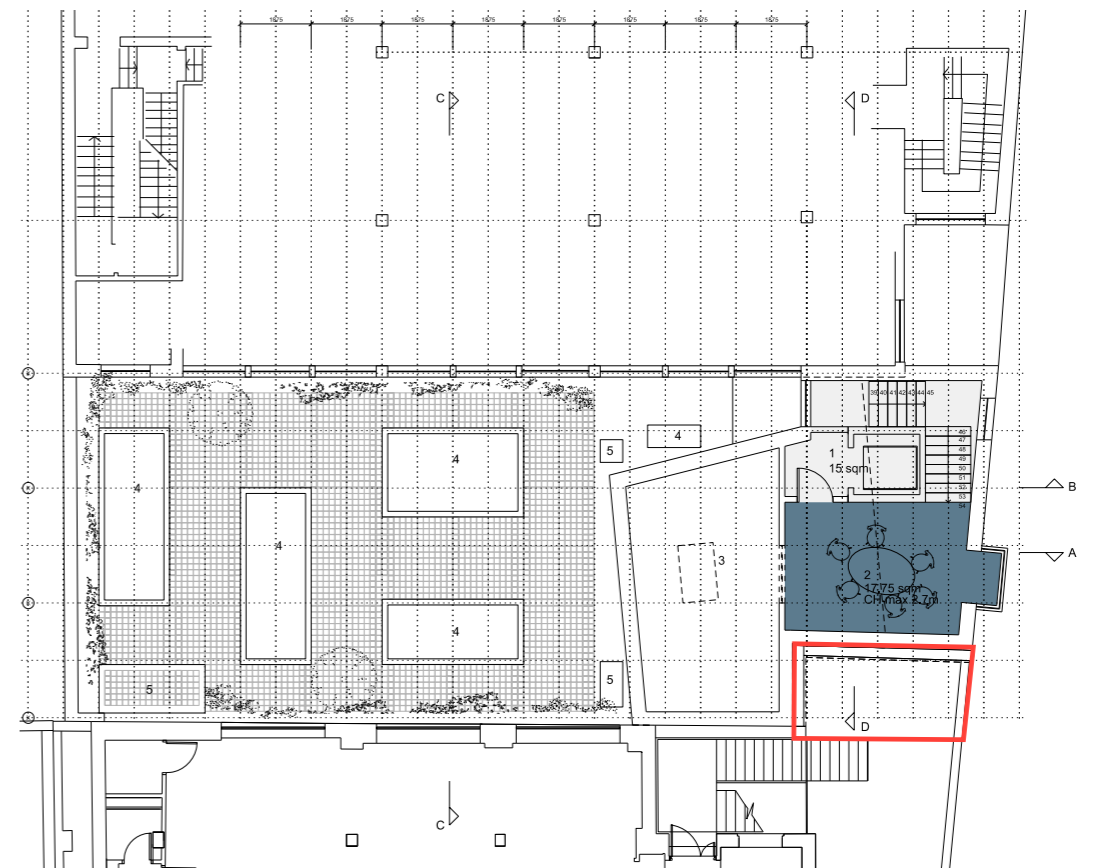
Basement Floor Plan as consented, excluding the area owned by UCL Estates, outlined in red



First Floor Plan as consented, excluding the area owned by UCL Estates, outlined in red



Ground Floor Plan, as consented, excluding the area owned by UCL Estates, outlined in red



Roof Garden Floor Plan as consented, excluding the area owned by UCL Estates, outlined in red



David Hockney's painting of Woldgate Woods, superimposed onto the facade of Bedford House. The land on which Bedford House stands was once forested.



Paula Rego's Hand painted tiles - Palacio Fronteira, Lisbon, Portugal  
Warmer climates have a tradition of engaging, tiled exteriors used to enliven the public realm

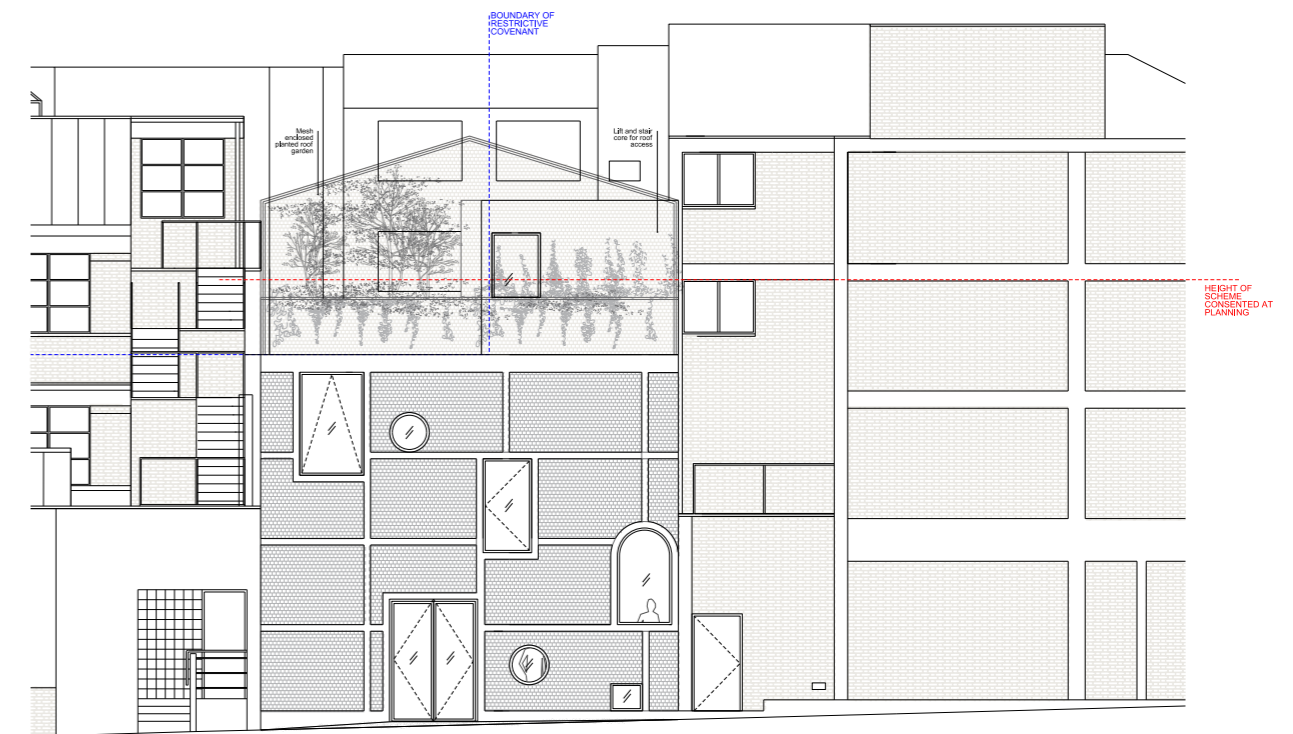
The appearance and material strategy for Bedford House is informed by its relationship to Rapier House and an ambition to give the building a more striking presence on the alleyway. The cladding of the north elevation of the main building will provide a firm indicator of a different set of values and enterprises at play in this area of Holborn. A colourful tiled façade drawing on the narrative history of the centre will give a strong material and visual presence on the alleyway and a robust finish. The facade is intended to be procured as an artist's commission.

### 2.3 Fenestration

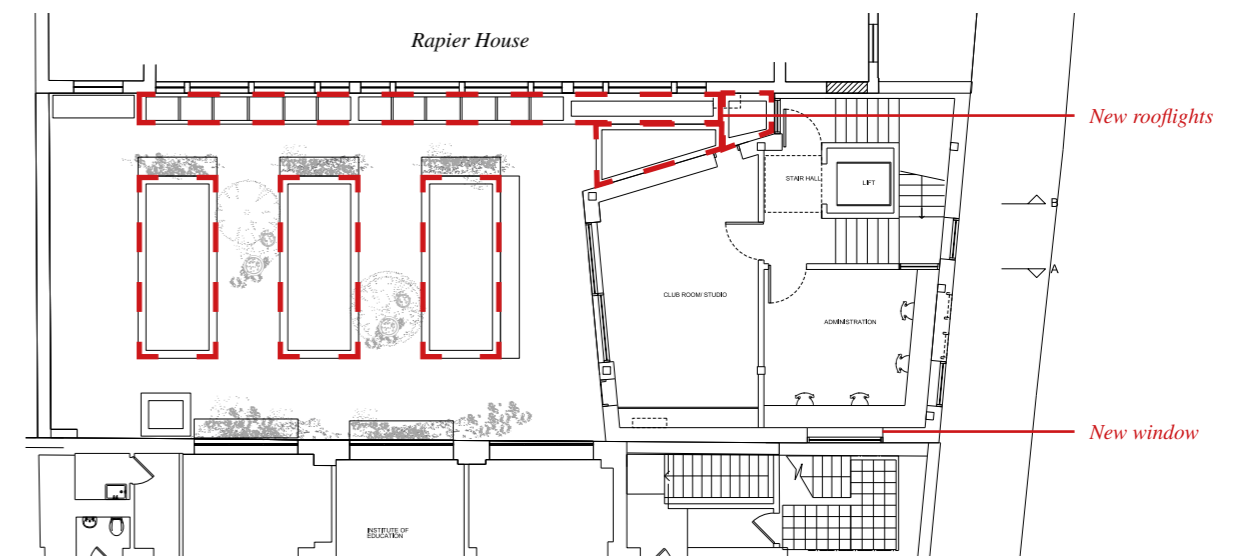
Amendments to the position of the facade windows in response to the widened facade, and the repositioning of the rear rooflights

The front facade of Bedford House has been widened to accommodate the flying freehold area, and as a consequence the positions of the windows to the front facade have been amended. In addition, a new 1 hour fire-rated window to the first floor administration room, on the east return of the facade has been added, (see below) which looks onto the fire escape and inaccessible roofspace of the neighbouring building. This inaccessible roofspace is maintained by the covenant in a setback to its current level.

The rooflights to the gym roof have also been simplified from the previously proposed four rooflights to three. Further roof lights to the ground floor reception have been introduced and a strip rooflight servicing the existing commercial units to Rapier House has been added following consultation with the freeholder.



Adjusted window openings to the facade

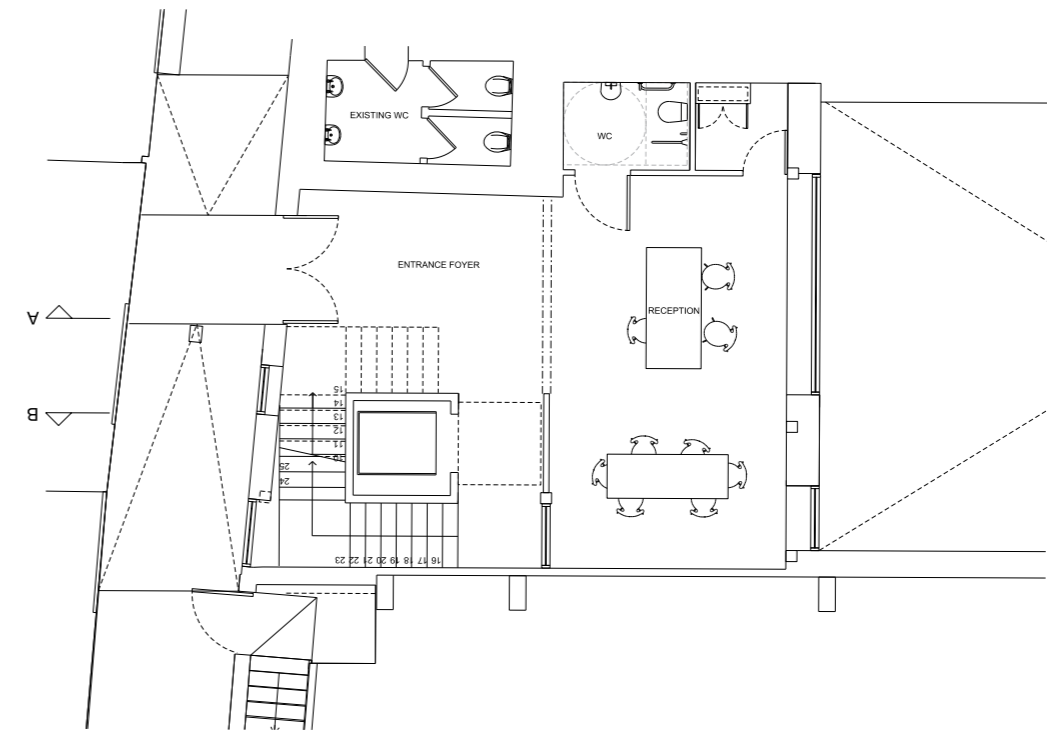


Adjusted rooflight openings, and a new window to the eastern return of the facade.

## 2.4 Alleyway and ramp

The submission of this planning application has been in discussion with the Camden Council Highways Department with regard to the access ramp on Emerald Street and its impact on the adjacent buildings.

It is proposed that the entrance to Bedford House is 1m further up the alleyway to minimize the length of the ramp, and improve its incline. The shorter length of ramp is now at 1:15, and it does not overlap with the threshold to the commercial unit which is level with the alleyway. Crucially, this facilitates level access for all the users of Bedford House, which is constantly in use by families with pushchairs.

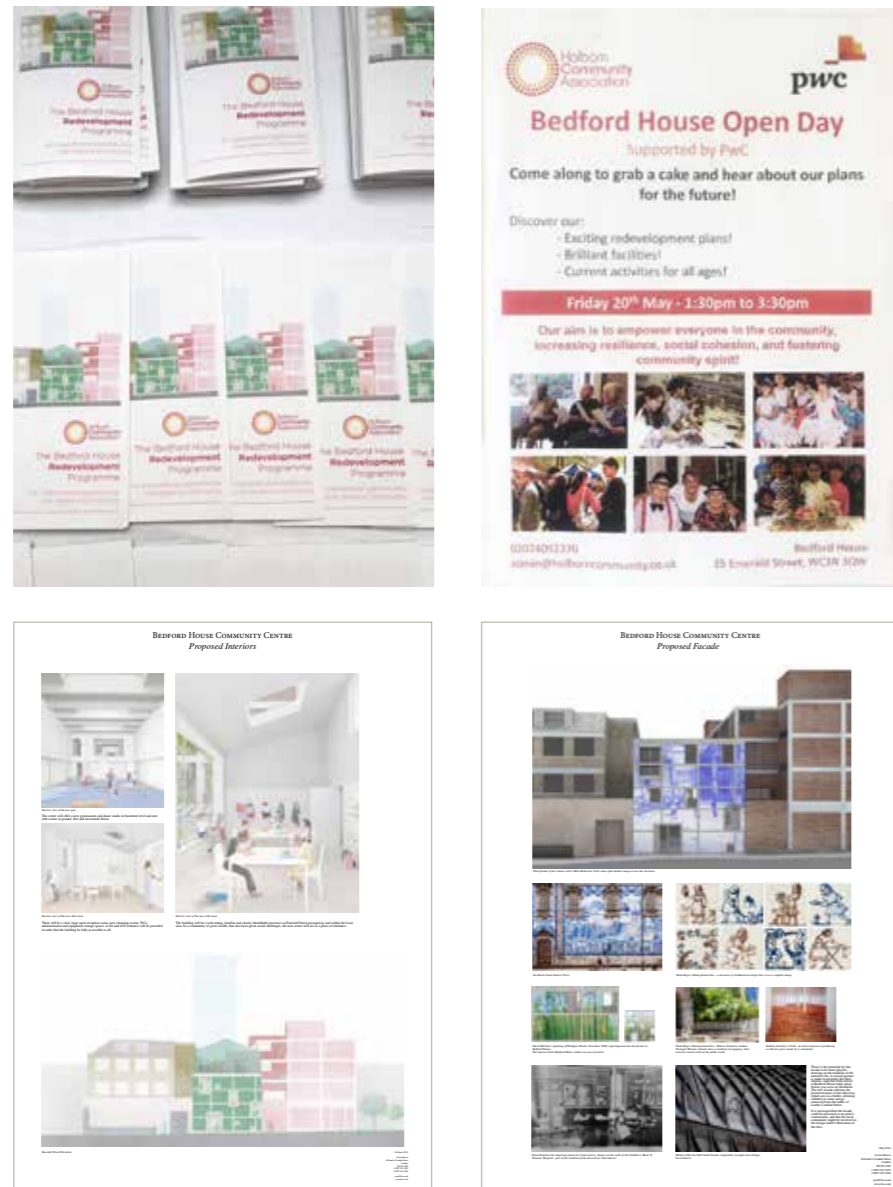


*Ground Floor Plan showing revised ramp and position of entrance door*

## 2.5 Bedford House Open Day

6a architects and Bedford House presented the revised scheme at the last Open Day event. The changes were very well received by the community that attended.

Panels of the revised proposals were presented alongside the consented scheme, so that the visitors could understand the changes.



View of Gym looking north

Photos of the presentation boards and leaflets at the fundraising event at Bedford House, 20th May 2016

### 3.0 Appendices

#### 3.1 Drawings

##### Proposed Drawings

1100 Proposed Basement Plan\_REV.A; 1:100  
1101 Proposed Ground Floor Plan\_REV.A; 1:100  
1102 Proposed First Floor Plan\_REV.A; 1:100  
1103 Proposed Roof Garden Plan\_REV.A; 1:100  
1104 Proposed Roof Plan\_REV.A; 1:100  
1600 Proposed Section A\_REV.A; 1:100  
1601 Proposed Section B\_REV.A; 1:100  
1700 Proposed North Elevation\_REV.A; 1:100  
1800 Proposed Section A; Roof Plan; 1:200  
1302 Proposed Alleyway Ramp; Elevation; 1:100  
1303 Proposed Alleyway Detail; Plan; 1:100

##### Consented Drawings

255\_0001\_Location Plan. Scale 1:1250  
255\_0150\_Existing Plans. Scale 1:200  
255\_0151\_Existing Plans. Scale 1:200  
255\_0200\_Existing Section AA. Scale 1:100  
255\_0201\_Existing Section BB. Scale 1:100  
255\_0300\_Existing North Elevation. Scale 1:100

255\_1100\_Proposed Basement Plan. Scale 1:100  
255\_1101\_Proposed Ground Floor Plan. Scale 1:100  
255\_1102\_Proposed First Floor Plan. Scale 1:100  
255\_1103\_Proposed Mezzanine Plan. Scale 1:100  
255\_1104\_Proposed Roof Plan. Scale 1:100  
255\_1200\_Proposed Section AA. Scale 1:100  
255\_1201\_Proposed Section BB. Scale 1:100  
255\_1202\_Proposed Section CC. Scale 1:100  
255\_1203\_Proposed Section DD. Scale 1:100  
255\_1301\_Proposed North Elevation. Scale 1:100

255\_Proposed Visuals