

SECTION TWO:
DESIGN PROPOSALS



12.0 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

Pre-application advice was sought for the proposals through a pre-application submission to Camden Council on the 2nd of December 2015. Subsequently a site visit with case officer Alfie Stroud was arranged on the 21st of January 2016, during which the proposals were discussed and feedback confirmed over several emails at a later date. A number of comments were made by the case officer, which have been addressed in the further development of the scheme.

The proposals have been changed from conversion of existing B1 use into 4 no. flats, to conversion into 5 no. market housing units. These are outlined below showing main points of proposals (**in bold**), Planning Officer’s concerns (*italicised*) and associated design responses (**in red**):

12.1 Roof Terrace

*‘Principle of the roof terrace feasible subject to details and the dormer not appearing above the ridge from longer views down John Street
The principle of the roof terrace has planning implications in addition to visibility that will determine its acceptability; from a conservation perspective, the extent of historic fabric to be lost in the roof structure will also matter.’*

The roof terrace has been designed with pre application feedback in mind, seeking to minimise its’ visibility by creating the access point through an inverted dormer and to reduce the amount of existing roof structure to be removed to a minimum.

12.2 Lift Overrun

‘Closet wing (lift overrun extension) contentious due to loss of arched opening. The small closet wing resulted in the partial destruction of the round-headed window on the half landing – any further encroachment will not be acceptable, and so the proposed accommodation of the lift in the rear closet wing will need to be reconsidered.’

Proposals have been reconsidered with regard to the lift and it has been omitted from the scheme. This allows the historic arched window to be reinstated to its original long proportion.

12.3 Louvred Infill Extension

‘Louvred infill extension unusual for a bedroom but transparency/lightweight structure welcomed, subject to detailing. Risk of setting a precedent for infill extensions to the rear and subsequent over development, however noted that majority of the other houses (part of our listing) had been in filled at first floor. Architects approach appears to enhance the existing building (as opposed to previous refusal).’

Noted.

12.3 Ground and Lower Ground Rear Extension

‘The probably Victorian rear extension on lower-ground and ground floors, despite its odd configuration, appears to contain fabric of some historic and architectural interest, including a chimney breast, joinery around sash windows, a brick vaulted pantry with brick and stone shelving, and a doorway with fanlight; in light of this, the layout and

lateral connections proposed for this extension and the new glazed infill will need to be carefully considered to retain as much interesting fabric from this extension as possible.’

Noted, proposals are carefully designed around this existing extension to preserve as much of the historic fabric as possible.

Rear Wine Vaults

‘Lower ground layout seems reasonable; AS would like to see retention of at least 50% of the fabric in rear wine vault (proposed bathroom).’

Noted, 50% of the fabric of wine vault is proposed to be retained.

13.4 Front Vaults

‘The vaults have been tanked fairly recently, and we will consider the additional excavation proposed to accommodate a bathroom; alongside restoring the sense of the front lightwell’s historic arrangement, restoring a door to the neighbouring vault from the lightwell will be welcome if it can be located in the same place as the original.’

The purpose of the front vault has changed from the bathroom as proposed to a utility and a shared plant room in the developed flat scheme. Subsequently the scope of excavation is reduced from that of 1100mm, to a depth of 650mm.

13.5 Other Issues

‘AS would like to see retention of the flag stone in rear light well.’

Noted.

‘Heritage statement to support planning application and to include as many historic drawings/floor plans as possible to ascertain originality of rear façade/fabric/layout’

Noted.





19 John Street
Front Elevation

13.0 PLANNING POLICY

13.1 The London Borough of Camden (LBC) 'Core Strategy' Policy CS8 states that "the Council will consider proposals for other uses of older office premises if they involve the provision of permanent housing". Policy CS8 also safeguards existing employment sites which meet the needs of modern industry/ employers and seeks provision of facilities for small & medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

13.2 Camden Development Policy DP13 provides further guidance on the loss of B1 (office) use, stating that, if it can be demonstrated that a site is not suitable for any business use other than B1(a) offices, the Council may allow a change to a permanent residential uses or community uses.

13.3 Camden Planning Guidance 5 reiterates what is said in CS8 and DP13 above, noting that 'some office stock is not suitable for conversion to alternative employment uses'. It also contains a summary of situations in which the loss of office use may be acceptable, including:

- *age of the premises. Some older premises may be more suitable for conversion;*
- *whether the premises include features required by tenants seeking modern office accommodation;*
- *quality of the premises and whether it is purpose built accommodation. Poor quality premises that require significant investment to bring up to modern standards may be suitable for conversion;*
- *whether there are existing tenants in the building, and whether these tenants intend to relocate;*
- *the location of the premises and evidence of demand for office space in this location; and*
- *whether the premises currently provide accommodation for small and medium businesses."*

13.4 Further, the guidance advises that there are three types of accommodation, category 1 providing the highest quality accommodation, category 2 where the majority of Camden's industrial stock falls into, and finally category 3, which provide the lowest quality accommodation. It advises that normally sites within category 1 and 2 will be protected and sites within category 3 can be released.

Category 3

- *small, isolated premises;*
- *poor access - narrow streets, small doors, steps;*
- *no goods lifts;*
- *little or no space for servicing;*
- *incompatible neighbouring uses (most often residential);*
- *lower ground or basement level"*

13.5 Both neighbouring properties at no.18 and no.20 John Street have a C3 residential use, the application property does not have level access or a goods lift, and has a lower ground floor level. Therefore, we would contend that the application property falls into category 3 and therefore only appropriate for low grade office accommodation.

13.6 We believe that the application site complies with a number of the scenarios listed above, particularly considering the extensive supply of modern B1 office space in the surrounding area thanks to large scale redevelopments such as that underway in King's Cross. Loss of Employment report compiled by Montagu Evans in support of this application states that there has been a net gain of 45,121 sqm of B1 use space over 2008-2013 (section 6.28) and net gain of 54,590 sqm of B1 use in 2013-2014 alone (section 6.29). The supply that is available at King's Cross and Holborn, will be brand new category 'A' office accommodation that will appeal to Corporate Occupiers. It will result in a relocations in the market and freeing up of space elsewhere in the borough.



14.0 IDENTIFYING NEED / CHANGE OF USE

14.1 This section is to be read in conjunction with The Loss of Employment Supporting Statement by Montagu Evans.

14.2 Although set out in the accompanying report, the need for the change of use comes from the general under utilisation of the site, the low standard of office accommodation and high cost associated with refurbishment to office space (which would then expect to yield a low rent).

An extract from Camden Planning Guidance 5 as follows:

“Camden’s Core Strategy sets out the projected demand and planned supply of office floorspace in the borough. We expect the supply of offices to meet the projected demand over the plan period and as a result we may allow a change from B1(a) offices to another use in some circumstances, such as older office premises or buildings that were originally built as residential dwellings. Our priority is for the replacement use to be permanent housing or community use. This approach is in line with policy DP13 Employment premises and sites in the Camden Development Policies.”

The site at No. 19 John Street identifies with a number of these considerations. It is an old premises which would have been built originally as a single family dwelling, and this application proposes to return the property to its original residential use.

14.3 The building is severely constrained in terms of its ability to provide suitable accommodation for B1 uses and is entirely unsuited to other business uses other than office. The building suffers from poor layout and lacks an open office floor plan. Given the significant refurbishment works needed and the listed status of the property, the standard of B1 accommodation that could be achieved through refurbishment is extremely limited.

14.4 Furthermore the framework places emphasis on the need for residential accommodation and states:

“Local planning authorities should ... approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings (currently in the B use classes)”

The demand for housing in the United Kingdom and, in particular, in London is exceptionally high. As noted in Camden’s core strategy, any opportunity to reuse existing buildings to increase the availability of sustainable quality homes should be regarded as beneficial, particularly when it returns a character building to its original use.



15.0 DESIGN STRATEGY

15.1 General Strategy

The scheme was designed following an in-depth site and context analysis, careful consideration of the planning guidance and policies and the Grade II Listed Building status of the property. It was further refined in accordance with pre-application advice received from the council following a pre-planning submission and the comments made in the delegated report from our recently consented Full Planning and Listed Building Application (Consented 2016/2867/P & 2016/3326/L). Our aim is not only to provide an exemplary high standard of accommodation but also to enhance the character of the Bloomsbury Conservation area and the listed building itself through a careful restoration and return to its original residential use.

15.2 Proposal Summary

- The main proposals of this application are as follows:
- Proposed change of use from B1 office to C3 residential with the provision of 5 no. market housing units, 1 x 2B4P, 1 x 2B3P, 3 x 1B2P. (Principle of change of use Consented 2016/2867/P & 2016/3326/L).
 - Internal reconfigurations
 - Proposed infill extension to the rear at ground floor level (Consented 2016/2867/P & 2016/3326/L);
 - Lowering of front vaults floor slab (Consented 2016/2867/P & 2016/3326/L);
 - Proposed First Floor rear roof terrace (Consented 2016/2867/P & 2016/3326/L);5.
 - Proposed demolition and rebuilding of existing closet wing (Consented 2016/2867/P & 2016/3326/L);
 - Proposed roof terrace above third floor level (Consented 2016/2867/P & 2016/3326/L);

15.3 Change of use from B1 to C3

As outlined in the Loss of Employment supporting statement, the need for change of use comes from the general under utilisation of the site, the low standard of office accommodation and high cost associated with refurbishment to office space (which would then expect to yield a low rent).

Furthermore the framework places emphasis on the need for residential accommodation and states:

“Local planning authorities should ... approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings (currently in the B use classes)”

The demand for housing in the United Kingdom and, in particular, in London is exceptionally high. As noted in Camden’s core strategy, Any opportunity to reuse existing buildings to increase the availability of sustainable quality homes should be regarded as beneficial, particularly when it returns a character building to its original use class.

15.4 Deconstruction and rebuilding of existing rear closet wing

It is proposed to carefully deconstruct and rebuild the rear closet wing.

Originally the proposal in the pre-application clashed with an arched window to rear elevation - a feature of merit that the council would like to protect - the proposal for the closet wing was scaled down. The arched window is already encroached upon by the existing closet wing and any further obstruction would not be acceptable from the conservation perspective. Furthermore, the current proposal will see the closet wing stand approximately 1 metre lower than existing and will allow to restore the window to its original tall and thin proportion.

15.5 Ground floor rear infill extension

At the rear of ground floor a glazed infill extension is proposed which would improve the amenity of the property. This would add an area of approximately 10sq.m. and would be directly linked to the existing ground floor rear extension, which, as outlined in the pre application response contains fabric of some historic and architectural interest and would have to largely be retained. A glass infill extension is proposed as a lightweight transparent structure, which would be subservient to the existing extension both by its materiality and physical size, as the glass roof is proposed to be approximately 650mm lower than the parapet of the existing rear extension. As a completely glazed structure is proposed for the new infill extension, solar gain is an issue that would have to be addressed to protect the space from overheating in the summer. This is done through proposed fixed louvers above the glazed roof.

15.6 First floor roof terrace

A roof terrace is proposed above the existing rear extension at ground floor level to provide an external amenity space to one of the housing units. Access to the terrace would be accommodated by inserting a new staircase at ground floor with a hinged roof light at the top of the stairs providing an opening. This has not been commented on during pre application stage suggesting that it is not an item of concern, mainly because the property directly adjacent to the proposed terrace 20 John Street contains a 2 storey mews house at the rear, parapet of which sits approximately 2.4 metres above the proposed floor finish of the terrace, therefore negating any overlooking issues associated with the proposal. Furthermore, the adjacent property on the other side - 18 John Street already has a roof terrace at that level spanning the full width of the property, which is double the width of the one proposed with this application.

15.7 Roof terrace above existing 3rd floor

It is proposed to insert a roof terrace in the valley of the double gable roof at the top of the property. This would be done by appointing an inverted dormer approach and sacrificing some of the loft space to create a flat surface for the terrace along the middle of the property spanning between the two party walls. A key issue from the planning point of view would be the visibility of such proposals from the long views down John Street, which is tackled by not proposing any additions to the existing line of the roof. On the contrary, existing roof line is being cut back to accommodate level space for the terrace and it completely disappears behind the chimney stacks, as well as being

visually obstructed by the mansard extension of 20 John Street.

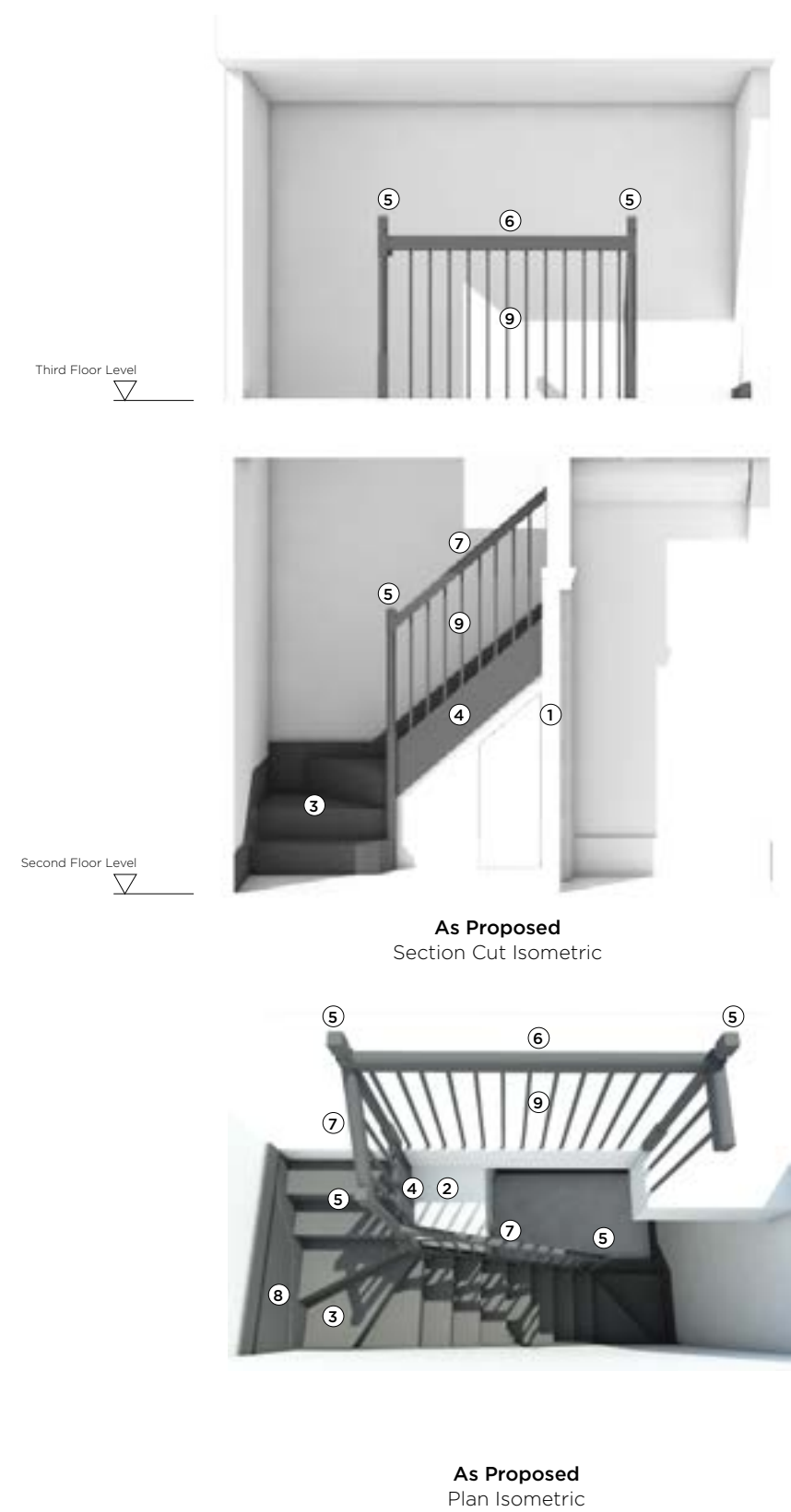
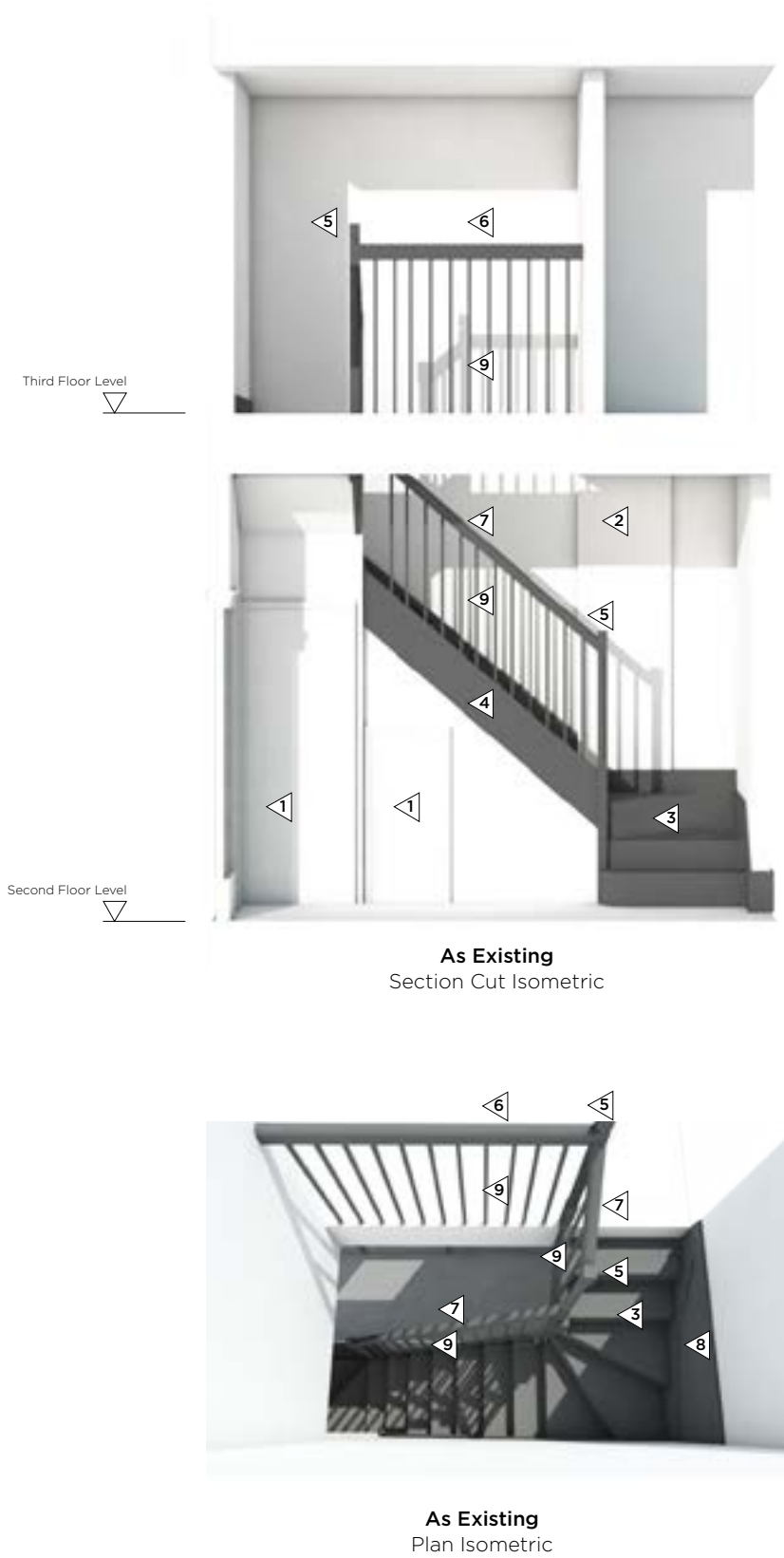
15.8 Lowering of existing front vaults

At the front of the property it is proposed to lower the slab to the existing vaults to provide sufficient floor to ceiling heights. This proposal will create a usable space for utility for 1 housing unit and plant for the whole property.

15.9 Reconfiguration of existing staircase

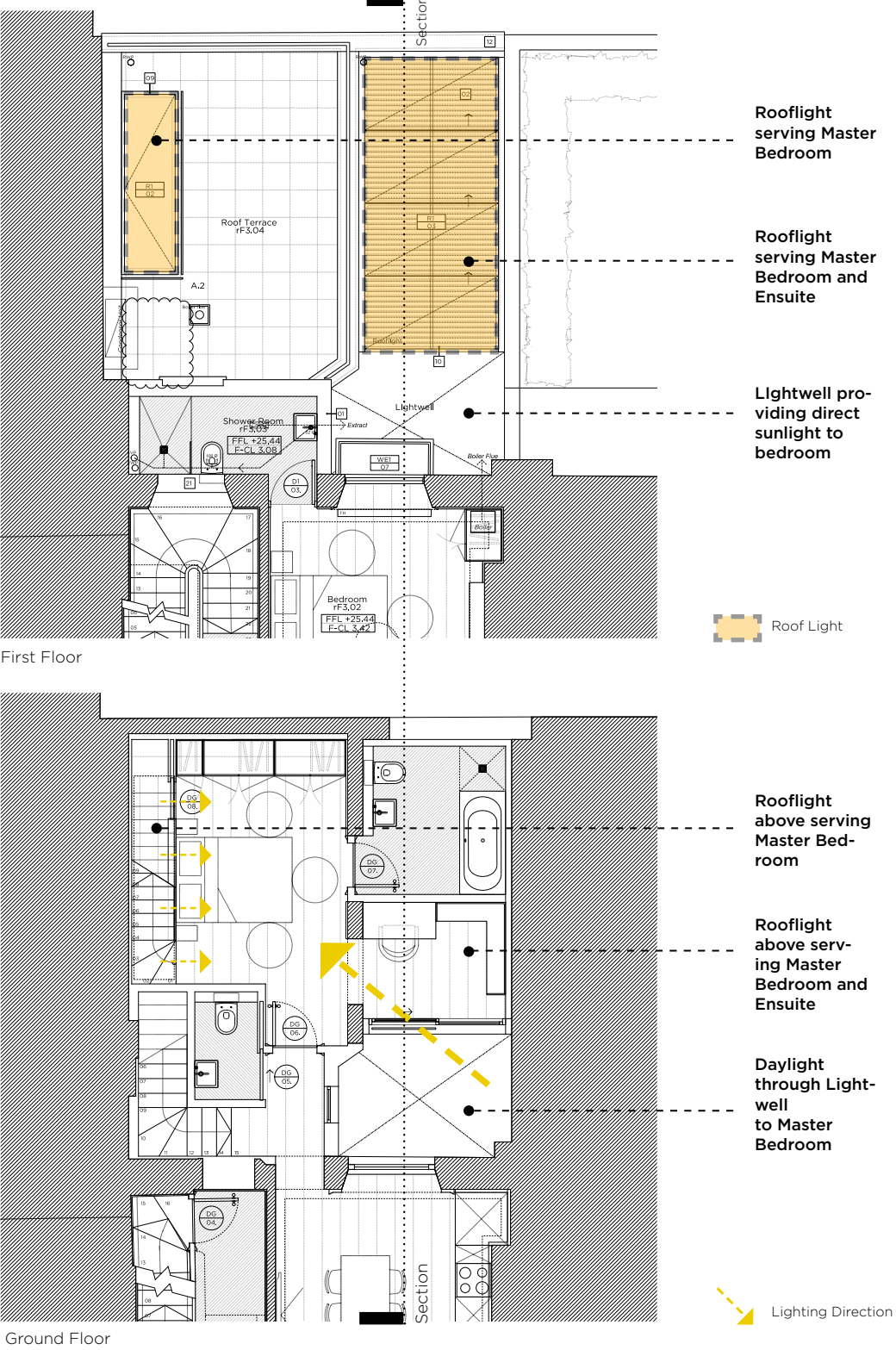
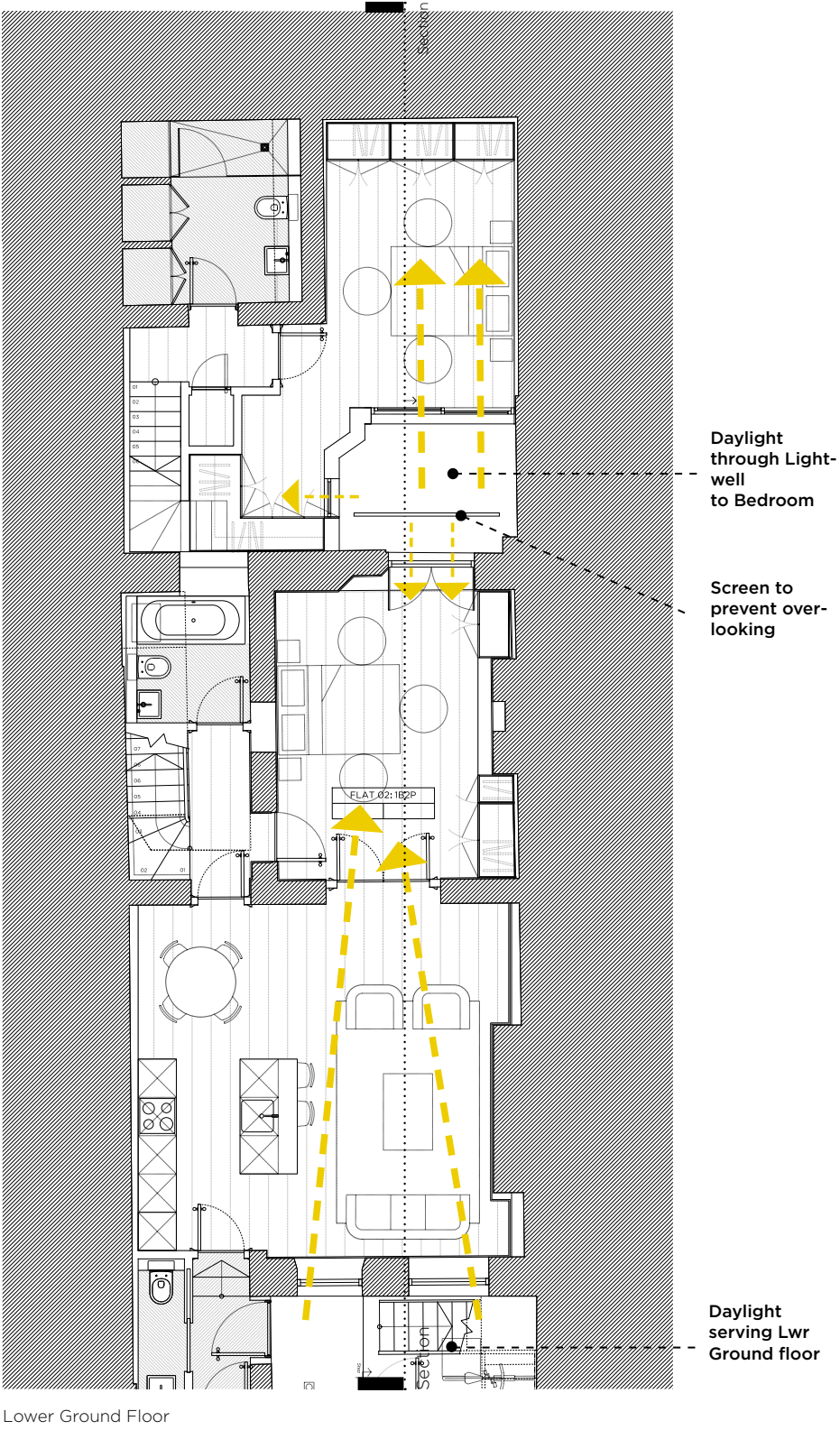
It is proposed to carefully remove and set aside the existing staircase between second and third floor. This includes associated handrail, balustrade and spindles. The staircase will then be reinstated in its mirrored arrangement. This will provide restricted access to the staircase, to the duplex apartment on second and third floor.

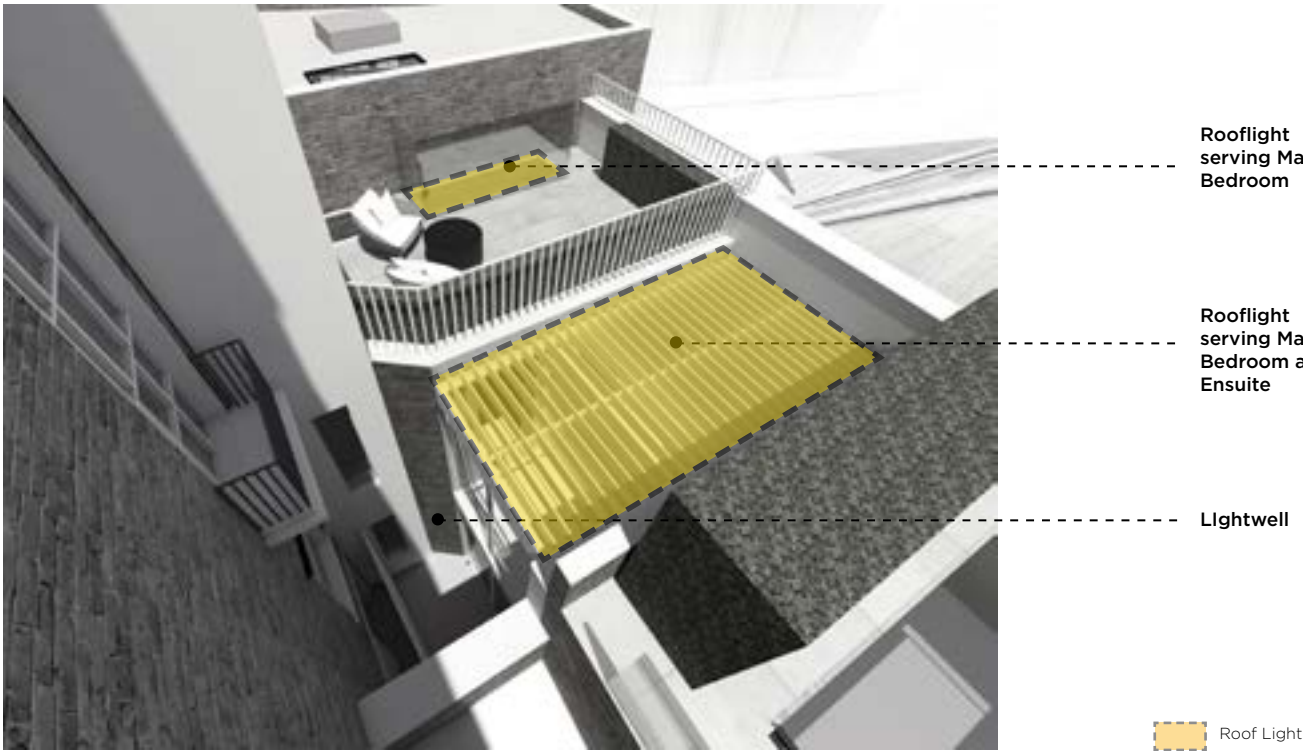




- Legend
- Demolition Notes
- 1 Existing door to be removed
 - 2 Existing projecting service riser to be removed
 - 3 Existing stair treads to be carefully removed and set aside
 - 4 Existing stringer to be carefully removed and set aside
 - 5 Existing newel post to be carefully removed and set aside
 - 6 Existing balustrade to be carefully removed and set aside
 - 7 Existing handrail to be carefully removed and set aside
 - 8 Existing panelling to be carefully removed and set aside
 - 9 Existing spindles to be carefully removed and set aside
- Proposed Notes
- 1 Proposed entrance door and partition to flat 05, door and architrave to be traditionally detailed
 - 2 Partition to communal area
 - 3 Existing stair treads to be reinstated in proposed arrangement
 - 4 Existing stringer to be reinstated in proposed position
 - 5 Existing newel post to be reinstated in proposed position
 - 6 Existing balustrade to be reinstated in proposed position
 - 7 Existing handrail to be reinstated in proposed position
 - 8 Existing panelling to be reinstated in proposed position
 - 9 Existing spindles to be reinstated in proposed position







18.0 DAYLIGHT ANALYSIS

18.1 This section is to be read in conjunction with Daylight / Sunlight Report from Malcolm Hollis.

19 John Street is a listed building with formal front and rear facades. Works proposed to these facades is refurbishment in nature only.

Due to these restrictions and because of the existing orientation of the building, not all rooms can meet the BRE target values and this should be given due consideration when reviewing the results of the above report.

The BRE guide states that the aim should be for all main living rooms to receive a reasonable amount of sunlight, all of which do in this scenario. As such, the overall effects in terms of sunlight are in accordance with the BRE guidance.

Flat 01

Flat 01 (Ground Floor 2 Bed duplex) The ground floor master bedroom is served by windows from the rear lightwell, the roof terrace and the glazed extension. The study adjacent to the master bedroom is not separated from the bedroom and allows daylight to flow through the existing panelled wall to the bedrooms space.

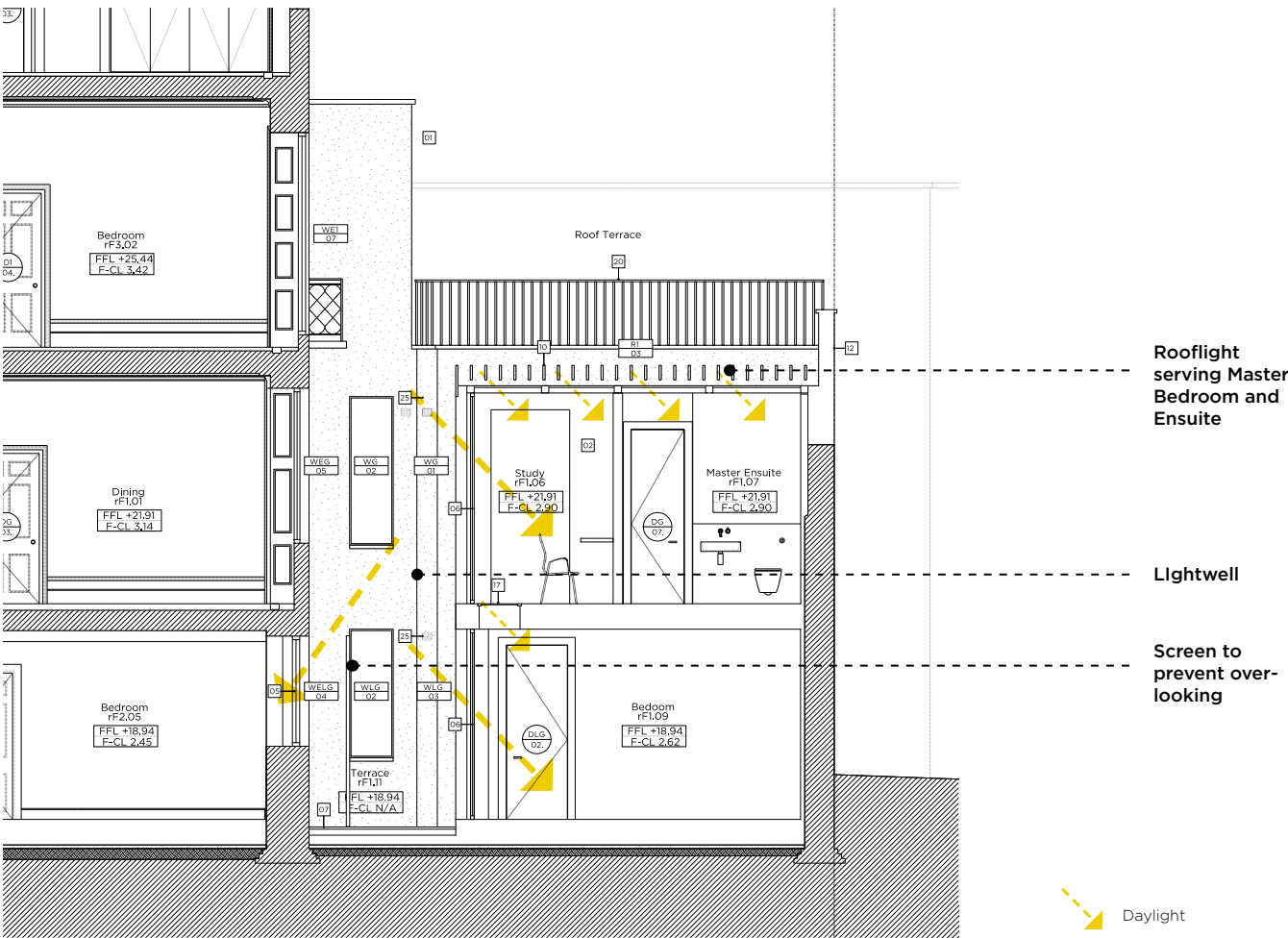
In addition to this, there is a rooflight providing access to the roof terrace which allows additional daylight into the master bedroom

Flat 02

Flat 02 (Lwr Ground Floor 1 Bed) is set out in arrangement to allow the bedroom to benefit from daylight from the rear lightwell and in addition to this via daylight from the main living space (double doors)

The arrangement of this flat protects the historic arrangement of the lower ground floor (primary front room and secondary room to the rear)

Overlooking is prevented between Flat 01 and Flat 02 through the use of screening in the rear lightwell.



Section Through Rear Lightwell



17.0 SUSTAINABILITY AND M&E SERVICES

17.1 Servicing Strategy
Please refer to Appendix B - Mechanical and Electrical Servicing Report for full details of the servicing strategy.

17.2 Heating
Individual boilers will be installed to each apartment to provide wet under floor heating throughout with temperature/time control and fan assisted trench heaters underneath the windows. The bathrooms and shower rooms are to be heated by electric under floor heating and thermostatically controlled towel rail.

17.3 Cooling
2 no. AC condensors are proposed, which would not be visible from the street. One positioned on the first floor terrace and one on the roof.

Refer to Appendix C - Acoustic Report

17.4 Ventilation
The apartments will be naturally ventilated throughout.

17.5 Water
Booster tank and pump located at the lower ground floor and distrubuted throughout the apartments.

17.6 Incoming services/Plant
All incoming services are into the vault below the pavement level. These services will then be delivered to the lower ground floor level meter cupboards and then distributed around the building through vertical risers located alongside the party wall with no. 20.

Please refer to the corresponding Mechanical and Electrical Servicing Report for full details of the servicing strategy.



Existing & Proposed Gross Internal Areas (GIA)

	Existing GIA*		Proposed GIA*	
	(sqm)	(sqft)	(sqm)	(sqft)
Lower Ground Floor	126.1	1,357.3	124.5	1,340.1
Ground Floor	92.4	994.6	105.6	1,136.2
First Floor	72.2	777.2	72.4	778.9
Second Floor	73.4	790.1	68.2	734.5
Third Floor	68.0	732.0	68.1	732.9
Loft**	38.2	411.2	28.8	310.0
TOTAL	470	5,062	468	5,033

Proposed Unit Breakdown (NIA)

Unit	Floor	No. Beds	Proposed NIA*		Amenity	
			(sqm)	(sqft)	(sqm)	(sqft)
FLAT 01 (Duplex)	Grd & Lwr Ground	2	117.7	1,267	20.7	222.8
FLAT 02	Lwr Ground	1	77.4	833	-	-
FLAT 03	1st Floor	1	60.7	653	2.8	29.8
FLAT 04	2nd Floor	1	51.8	558	-	-
FLAT 05 (Duplex)	2nd & 3rd Floors **	2	102.6	1,104	14.4	155.4
			410.2	4,415		

1-Bed	60%
2-Bed	40%

* All areas are based on measured survey information by Mobile CAD Surveying Ltd. Areas are approximate only and subject to the site measure.
** Loft includes area below 1.5m

18.0 PROPOSED USE, UNIT SIZE AND DENSITY

18.1 Proposed Use

As outlined in the Marketing Report, appended to this planning application, the need for the change of use comes from the general under-utilisation of the site.

Following Camden's Core Strategy Policy CS8, it is acknowledged that there is a high concentration of commercial properties in the borough. While the Camden Employment Land Review 2008 forecasts that the demand for offices will increase between 2006 and 2026, the Council will be looking to direct new business development to other areas of the Borough, with the majority being in King's Cross. Consequently, the Council will favourably consider proposals for other uses of older office premises if they involve the provision of permanent housing.

18.2 Unit Mix

It is proposed that the property returns to its original residential use, providing 5 market housing units (1x2B4P, 1x2B3P & 3x1B2P). The units comply with the minimum space standards set out in the London Plan (July 2011).

18.3 Proposed Density

The proposed scheme provides a density of 930 Hr/Ha (habitable rooms per hectare). It is deemed that this is a suitable density given the central location of the site, as per The London Plan; Chapter 3; Table 3.2; Sustainable residential quality.

