

VIEW 01 (QUEEN SQUARE LOOKING WEST) (SPRING/SUMMER)

EXISTING VIEW (SPRING/SUMMER)



EXISTING

Approaching the Site from the east and to the south of Queen Square, the Mercure Hotel starts to come into view to the end of Cosmo Place. Framed here by the Grade-II* listed St George the Martyr Church, to the left, and the Cosmo Place terrace, to the right, which directs the view towards the Site at the end of this narrow and pedestrianised route. From here the viewer experiences the more simplified elevation of Cosmo Place from quite an acute perspective, seeing mainly the first 4 floors and part of the upper levels at the corner with Southampton Row, just visible is the lower part of the dome of the cupola.

PROPOSED VIEW (SPRING/SUMMER)



PROPOSED

As the upper levels of the existing building and the area proposed for development is occluded by tree foliage during Spring and Summer months, the area concealed from here has been depicted by a red wireline in this AVR. The wireline demonstrates that the overall proposed massing will only minimally increase from what already exists on the Site, remaining a contextual urban block along the northern part of Cosmo Place. What is visible here is part of the side extension, floors 1-3, where floors are extended to the east and additional fenestration to the end of the existing elevation.

EFFECT

The overall massing of the proposed development is contextual to that of the existing building, only seeing an incremental increase and retaining the status it enjoys along Southampton Row, being one of the large hotel developments historically located along here. The side extension visible within this view, strengthens the northern edge along Cosmo Place, infilling the existing void in townscape along here and introducing more consistent frontage.

--- Site



VIEW 01 (QUEEN SQUARE LOOKING WEST) (AUTUMN/WINTER)

EXISTING VIEW (AUTUMN/WINTER)



EXISTING

Approaching the Site from the east and to the south of Queen Square, the Mercure Hotel starts to come into view to the end of Cosmo Place. Framed here by the Grade-II* listed St George the Martyr Church, to the left, and the Cosmo Place terrace, to the right, which directs the view towards the Site at the end of this narrow and pedestrianised route. From here the viewer experiences the more simplified elevation of Cosmo Place from quite an acute perspective, seeing most of the existing building with some of the upper floors, in particular the east elevation, screened by the branches of the trees, even at a time of lighter foliage during winter months.

PROPOSED VIEW (AUTUMN/WINTER)



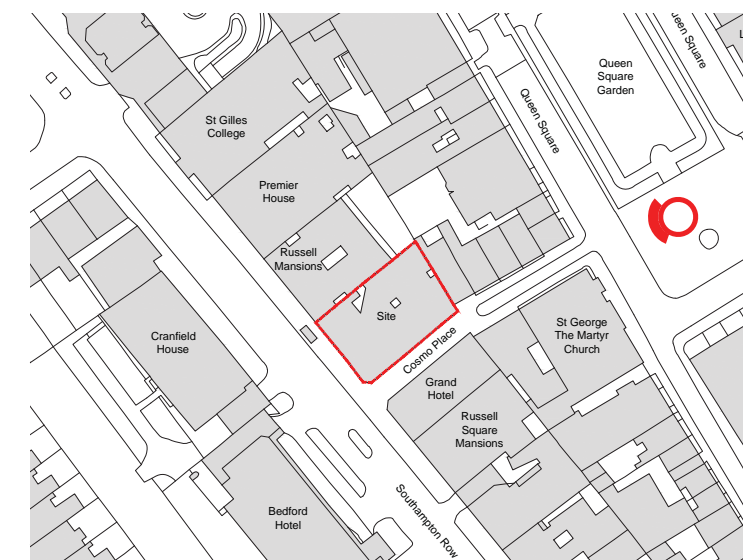
PROPOSED

Although some of the upper levels are occluded by the branches of the trees of Queen Square, even during winter months, much of the detail of the proposed side extension is apparent from this approach, in particular the enclosing of the external stairwell and now continuous street frontage.

EFFECT

Any perceived increase in massing is minimal and remains contextual to its surroundings. The eastern extension of the existing building completes the streetscape to the north along Cosmo Place, better organises external utilities which are currently exposed, and makes possible a greater appreciation of the neighbouring Cosmo Place terrace, in particular the Grade-II listed 9 Cosmo Place, through enhancement to its setting. Overall, the side extension completes the form of the existing building and through the use of the architecture of the host building would integrate seamlessly within the current context.

--- Site



VIEW 02 (QUEEN SQUARE LOOKING WEST) (SPRING/SUMMER)

EXISTING VIEW (SPRING/SUMMER)



PROPOSED VIEW (SPRING/SUMMER)



EXISTING

Moving closer towards the Site from View 1, these viewpoints illustrate the kinetic experience of the Site, approaching from the east along the western side of Queen Square. The majority of the building is visible from here, only a small portion of the upper level and roofscape concealed by tree foliage. What becomes more evident in this view is the prominence of the black cast iron external fire escape stairwell at the eastern elevation of the building, making it more evident that this is the secondary and service parts of the building and contributes little in terms of having a relationship with the Cosmo Place street scene.

PROPOSED

As in View 1, part of the upper level and roofscape of the existing building and proposed development is occluded by existing vegetation from here, the same method of illustration has been employed here, rendered where visible and a red wireline depicts the area occluded. More of the side extension is apparent from here, extending the Cosmo Place frontage further east and enclosing the fire escape stairwell. There is a minimal increase in massing of the overall building, mainly by the newly introduced hipped gabled completion of the mansard roof.

EFFECT

By designing the newer elements to the building in the same materials and architectural style of that of the existing building, they are subtle in addition and celebrate the hotel building rather than compete with it. It is evident in this view that the concealment of the external fire escape stairwell and building associated utilities is a major improvement to the building, enhancing the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area in which it stands. The Site forms part of the setting of the Grade-II listed 9 Cosmo Place and The Queen's Larder Pubic House in this view, both of which it would introduce a more holistic backdrop to and make a positive contribution to.

--- Site



VIEW 02 (QUEEN SQUARE LOOKING WEST) (AUTUMN/WINTER)

EXISTING VIEW (AUTUMN/WINTER)



EXISTING

Moving closer towards the Site from View 1, these viewpoints illustrate the kinetic experience of the Site, approaching from the east along the western side of Queen Square, gaining higher visibility along Cosmo Place as the site is approached. Under winter conditions the existing building is fully visible from here, a small portion on the upper level is occluded by tree foliage during summer season. What becomes more evident in this view is the prominence of the black cast iron external fire escape stairwell at the eastern elevation of the building, making it more evident that this is the secondary and service area of the building and contributes little in terms of having a relationship with the Cosmo Place street scene.

PROPOSED VIEW (AUTUMN/WINTER)



PROPOSED

The proposed development can be seen from here during months of less foliage. Evident from here is the side extension, part of the rear extension and eastern extension of the roof. The external fire escape stairwell and external clutter from utilities added over time is now internalised and the roof completed by a hipped mansard.

EFFECT

This increase in massing is minimal and where it extends to the rear, establishes a stronger connection to the footprint of the overall building, acknowledging the status held by it along Southampton Row, while strengthening streetscape along Cosmo Place. The building is more effectively completed by the proposed development, which celebrates the existing architectural style, and results in an enhancement to the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, in which it sits, through concealment of visually detracting clutter and better appreciation of other designated heritage assets along here through enhancement to their setting.

--- Site



VIEW 03 (COSMO PLACE LOOKING WEST)

EXISTING VIEW



PROPOSED VIEW



EXISTING

At this eastern point of Cosmo Place and standing north of St George the Martyr Church, the Site is now in full view. The change in building heights, lower scale of Queen Square transitioning to the higher developments along Southampton Road, is more apparent here and guides the viewer down towards the anticipated more major route. In addition to the clutter of the external fire escape stairwell and less formalised openings, the most eastern chimney stack sits uncomfortably within the existing hipped gable mansard, as does a secondary flue output to the north, collective detracting from the quaint character of Cosmo Place.

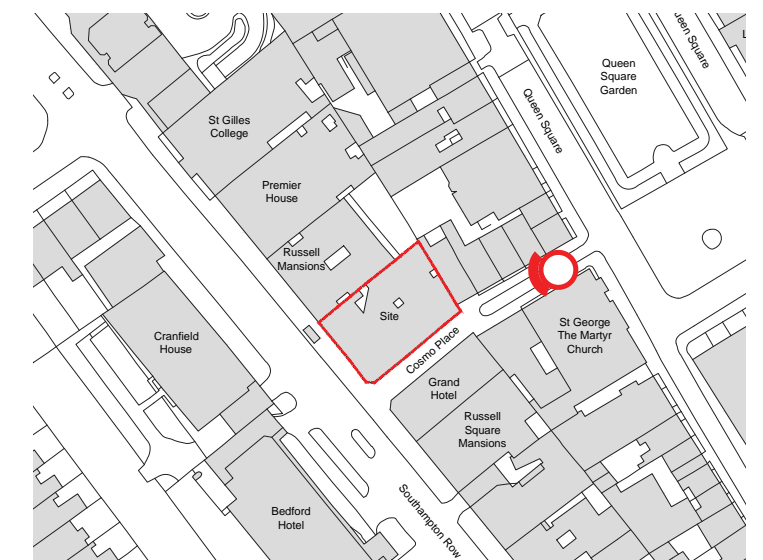
PROPOSED

The proposed development will extend the building to the east, introducing a stepped addition in matching materials and architecture to that of the existing, internalising and reorganising the fire escape stairwell and building associated utilities. The mansard roof would also be extended east, albeit without interference with the existing chimney stacks, remaining a roofscape feature of the building. The fenestration would be more regularised along Cosmo Place with the addition of fenestration to the eastern end of the building and that of the side extension.

EFFECT

Overall the proposed development better completes the building along Cosmo Place, decluttering the detracting elements existing at this part of the building and engaging more positively with the surrounding townscape. The proposed and more complete mansard roof form with dormers, the continuing pattern of fenestration, string course and bicrome materiality combine in a more holistic design solution for this part of the hotel building, acting as more of a complimentary element within the townscape and thereby enhancing the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

--- Site



VIEW 04 (QUEEN SQUARE (EAST SIDE) LOOKING WEST)

EXISTING VIEW



EXISTING

Standing to the east of Queen Square and looking across Queen Square Park and Garden, through this gap in tree planting and towards the Site, just visible above 1 and 2 Queen Square is the most eastern chimney stack, the eastern end of the mansard roof, two secondary flue outputs and part of the chimney stack attached to the rear of the Southampton Row elevation. There is little organisation of the existing building, appearing in the backdrop of these two designated heritage assets here, and is untidy in appearance. The Site is not an element to be appreciated within this view, detracting from the experience of the two Grade-II listed buildings from here and, therefore, detract from the contribution made by the setting to their significance. Furthermore, the Site is considered to be contributing negatively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

PROPOSED VIEW



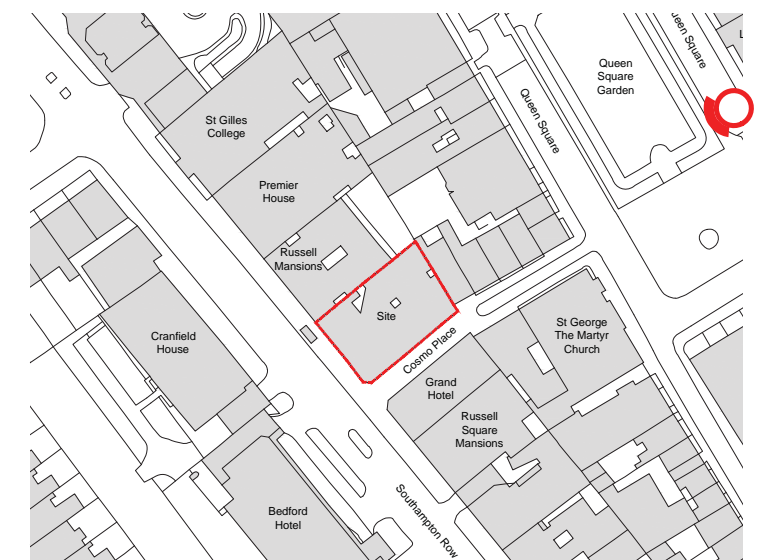
PROPOSED

The eastern extension to the existing building, at upper level would be visible above 1 and 2 Queen Square where it appears already to the left. The new and more complete roof form of the Proposed Development would remain a discreet background element to the listed buildings, effectively arranged and in keeping with the existing character within this view and internalise much of the associated utilities which are currently visible externally.

EFFECT

By better defining the envelope of the hotel building, it can be more clearly identified as a separate element within this view, relating better with its backdrop role and thereby making a more positive contribution to the setting of the two designated heritage assets, whereby their significance can be better appreciated. Although there is a marginal increase in massing, the mansard of the north section is raised minimally in order to level the roofscape, it is a more simplified form which replicates the architecture of the existing building, reaffirming the host building's status and providing a form in keeping with the existing roofscape.

--- Site



CONCLUSION

A full Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Icení as a separate document which is summarised below.

Through a detailed understanding of the historic development of the Site and wider area, the relative significance of the Site and surrounding designated heritage assets has been identified, as required by NPPF Paragraph 128.

Of the identified designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site, the proposed development would not result in any harmful impact on their significance or setting. In addition, the proposed development would not result in harm to the architectural quality or historic interest of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and would in fact, result in an overall enhancement to the designated heritage asset. This enhancement should be granted considerable importance and weight in the planning process, as it achieves the statutory duties outlined within Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The impact of the proposed development on the surrounding townscape is minimal, being works to less prominent areas of the building and benefiting from the narrow streetscape along Cosmo Place. The proposals should be viewed on balance as a whole, the improvements made to the character and appearance along Cosmo Place and the overall sympathetic, contextual and high quality design considered enhancements to the overall character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

It is therefore clear that the proposed development meets the requirements of NPPF paragraphs 131 and 137, as well as the statutory duties set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990, and as such the development, in our view, should be viewed positively in design and conservation terms.