

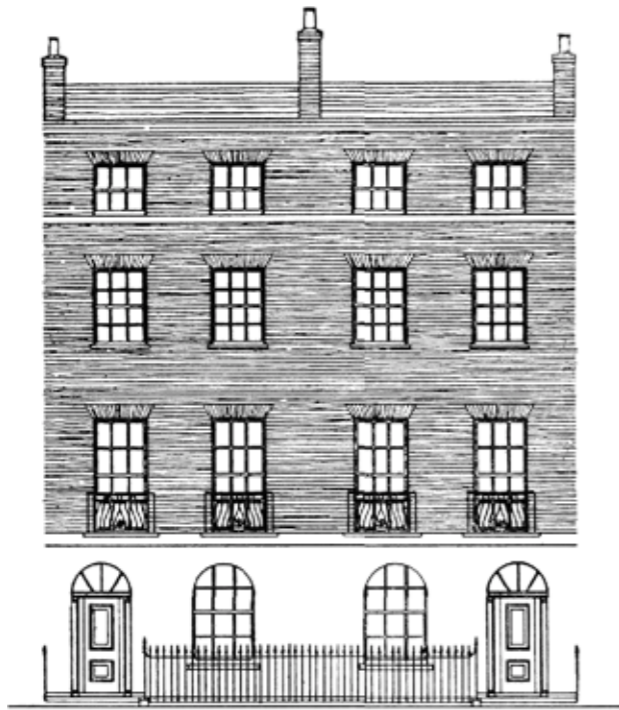
P. Joseph

No. 4 & 4a Regent's Square

Saint Pancras, London WC1H 8HZ

Design & Access Statement Rev A
20th November 2018

Application for Full Planning and Listed Building Consent for the excavation/
lowering of rear lightwell in connection with the conversion of 1x 1B flat
and 1x3B flat into 1x studio and 1x3B flat, fenestration alterations, front/rear
landscaping alterations, erection of replacement side boundary walls and
installation of solar panels to the roof



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Aerial View of Regent's Square



Regent's Square Terrace Front Elevation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning Application

This Design & Access Statement accompanies the Listed Building Consent & Full Planning Applications for the refurbishment of a Grade II listed late Georgian Townhouse, the refurbishment of its lower ground floor self contained flat and associated landscape works at No. 4 & 4a Regent's Square, London WC1H 8HZ.

The purpose of this particular report is to highlight the key parts of the proposal in more detail and explain their context, development and response to the Heritage Asset.

Beginning with the requirement for much needed repairs and upgrades to the fabric and services of the house, the applicants are seeking to make a number of alterations in order to bring the house up to the standards of modern family life, and thus ensure the future of this important heritage asset.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Heritage Statement, Scope of Works Document, and associated drawings that accompany the applications.

1.2 P Joseph

P Joseph are an emerging Architecture and Design practice based in London, specialising in the refurbishment of unique private homes in protected historic environments and have extensive experience in high-end retail projects.



Aerial View of Regent's Square

2.0 SITE ANALYSIS

2.1 Site Location

Regent's Square is located south of Kings Cross & St Pancras. Its central location is close to many amenities and major transport links. The square is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and part of the Borough of Camden Council.

The building forms part of a Grade II listed terrace situated on the southern side of the square. The terrace is a typical example of its late Georgian era.

The remaining 3 sides consist of housing, blocks of flats and tenement blocks of varying ages. A number of these are post-war social housing blocks to the east (Sidmouth Street) and north with higher quality Edwardian tenement blocks and housing to the south.

Directly to the south of the site sits St Georges Gardens (previously a 18th century burial ground), the Foundling Museum and Coram Fields.



Front Elevation (North Facing)



Rear Elevation (South Facing)



Rear lightwell



Front lightwell with crittal window to lower ground floor



Rear closet wing

2.2 Building Assessment

The building is set over 5 storeys with a lower ground self contained flat, ground and 3 upper floors. To the rear it has a single storey closet wing extension and small garden. No.4 consists of the ground and upper floors and at No.4a a self contained flat occupying the lower ground floor.

Current access to the No.4 is directly from Regent Square. No.4a is accessed via the front lightwell via a modern metal staircase. There is currently no internal access between the upper house and the lower ground floor flat however the original opening still exists and is currently boarded up.

The terrace is of darkened London stock brick with render to the lower ground and ground floor at the front and rear of the property. The closet wing is built in brick and is painted white. The windows are mostly original single glazed timber sashes and are painted black. The main roof is typical for its time and is a butterfly roof. It is clad with synthetic slates and the flat roof to the closet wing has a dilapated cold water tank and metal coverings.

Condition

The house is in very poor condition and in need of extensive modernisation throughout. It is currently vacant.

Externally there are areas of delaminated brickwork, cracked cement render, failing leadwork, roof coverings and copings to the main house and closet wing and insufficient PVC rainwater goods. All windows are in need of refurbishment and replacement where necessary.

Internally there are damp problems causing damage to large areas of the fabric especially to the lower ground floor annex which is currently insufficiently ventilated. Damage has also been identified within the roof to some of the rafters. The roof has been insulated previously but is deteriorating.

Much of the internal finishes are also in poor condition with many areas of original lath and plaster ceilings damaged with previous crude repairs that have been undertaken. Many of the original plasterwork and mouldings still exist hidden behind layers of paintwork

and coverings. The original floorboards to the ground and upper floors are in good condition in comparison to the rest of the house.

The building is currently serviced with two main supplies each for both gas and electricity - one to the ground and upper floors of the house (No.4) and then another servicing the lower ground annex (No.4a). The house requires new plumbing and wiring throughout, both for safety and in order to bring it up to modern standards.

Paving areas to the front and rear suffer from cracking and most of the metalwork rusting. The boundary wall to no.5 is in poor condition and to no.3 is in stable condition but in need of significant repair.

A selection of site photos overleaf identify a number of these issues.



Butterfly roof and chimney stack



Cracked brickwork to first floor window lintels



First floor front room



Second floor bathroom



Cracked render on front elevation



Cracked cement render to rear elevation



Ceiling to first floor rear room



Cold water tank to closet wing roof



Rot to roof timbers



Window to front right bedroom at fourth floor



Boundary wall to no.5



Existing shallow lightwell in rear garden & Boundary wall to no.3

2.3 Planning History

Prior to its acquisition the property had been in the same family ownerships since the 1950's . Very little has been done in terms of renovation work apart from the conversion of the lower ground floor into a self contained flat which was permitted in the 1980's.

HB / 8400583 (Permitted 30.03.1984)

Change of use and works of conversion to provide a self-contained flat in the basement including the formation of a new staircase to pavement level.

HB / 8470087 (Permitted 31.05.1984)

Works of conversion to form a self-contained flat in the basement together with the formation of a new staircase to pavement level.

There are no other previous planning applications available online.

2.4 Planning Context

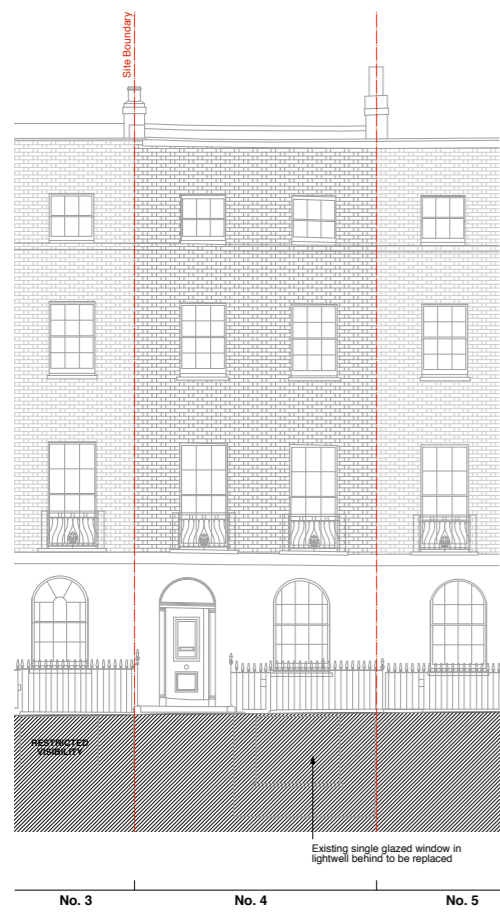
The following policies and guidance set out by Camden's Local Plan and NPPF have been particularly relevant.

- The London Plan (2016)
- Camden's Local Plan (2017)
- Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)
- NPPF Chapter 8 (2018)
- NPPF Chapter 16 (2018)

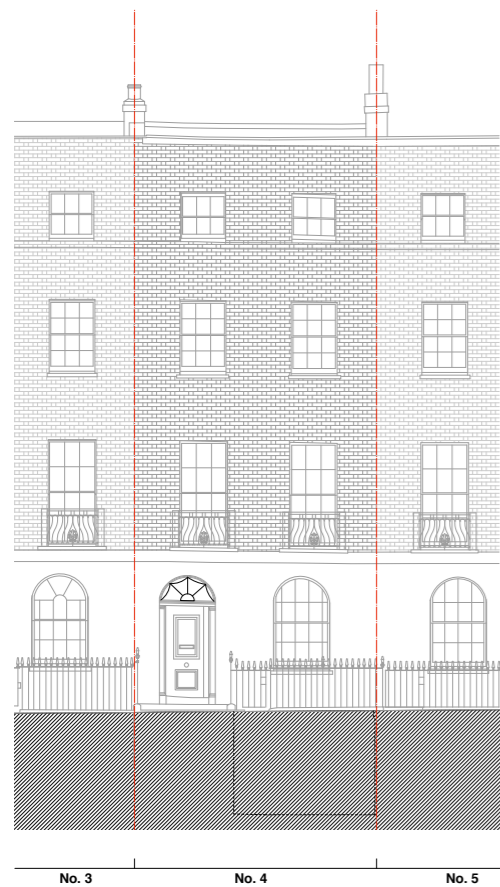
The Council have a number of adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) which are considered to be relevant to this application; these include:

- CPG 1 Design
- CPG 2 Housing
- CPG 6 Amenity
- CPG 7 Transport

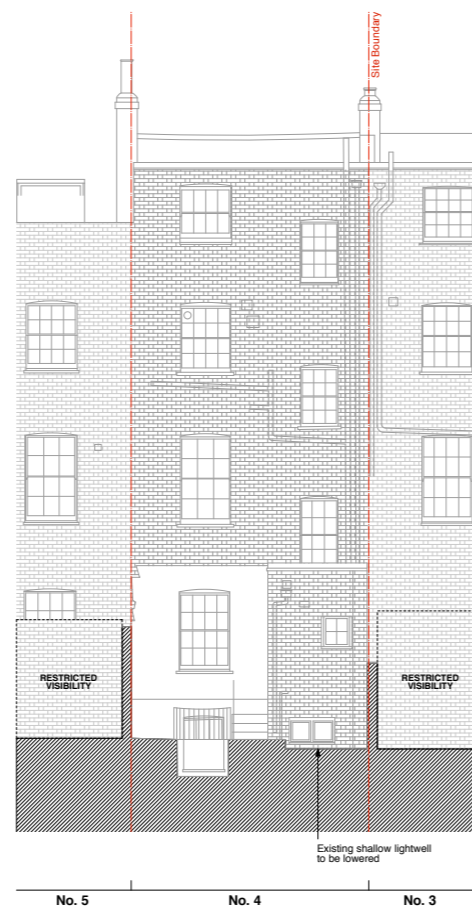
In addition technical guidance from Historic England (HE) has also been consulted with regards to all the works in relation to the restoration of the property.



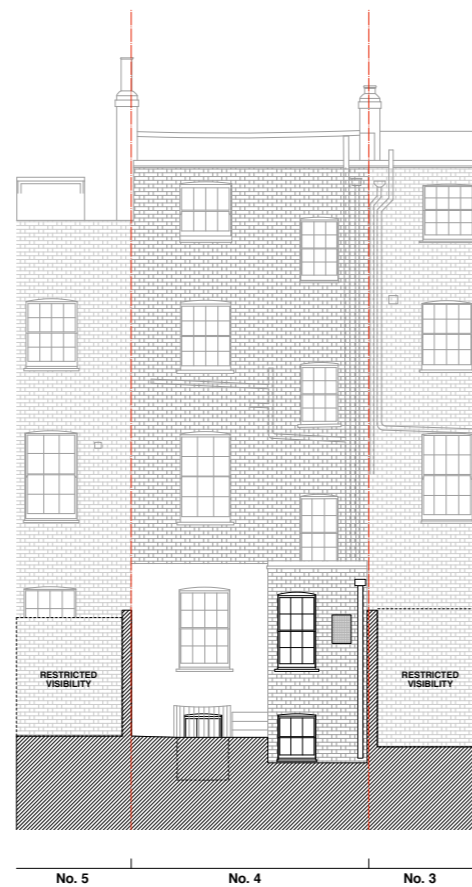
EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION (NORTH)



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION (NORTH)



EXISTING REAR ELEVATION (SOUTH)



EXISTING REAR ELEVATION (SOUTH)

3.0 DESIGN

3.1 Use

The site is currently a 2 residential properties (C3) and we do not propose to change this use.

The proposals seek re-introduce the stair access from upper ground to lower ground floor levels in order to improve the relationship between house and garden and to provide access to a soak tub/utility room to the rear for No.4.

Other parts of the proposal seek to bring the house up to the standards of modern family living and are outlined in more detail below, and in the scope of works document accompanying this application.

3.2 Amount

The gross internal area of the overall property will remain unchanged. No.4a will reduce in area from 50sqm to 37sqm. This reduction will still provide suitable living accommodation in form of a studio rather than flat but provide the required additional area to No.4 and internal access required to the soak tub/utility room. The new area for the studio is inline with minimum spaces standards outlined in the London Plan Policy 3.5 (Paragraph 3.36) as the studio has a shower room.

3.3 Layout

Much of the existing layout of the house will remain unchanged.

Lower Ground Floor (Studio flat)

As mentioned this application seeks to revise the self-contained flat layout into a studio at lower ground floor and re-introduce stair access in its original location from ground floor to provide access to the soak tub/utility room for No.4.

The existing WC under the front patio will be enlarged and converted to provide an additional shower. The studio at No.4a will remain accessible via the front lightwell. A new partition between the kitchen/dining and the reinstated stair will form the new hallway and access for No.4 to the soak tub/utility and WC. The soak tub/utility room will have a new timber double glazed window in an enlarged existing opening. This will overlook the lowered existing lightwell in the rear

garden to provide light and natural ventilation.

Ground Floor

Entry into the house at No.4 will remain the same. The reintroduced staircase will be accessed under the stair in its original location.

The kitchen currently housed in the rear closet wing will be moved into the front room of the ground floor to provide a larger open plan kitchen/dining room suitable for the size and occupancy of the house.

A new partition within the rear closet wing will form a small WC. Garden access through the closet wing will be retained.

First Floor

The layout of the first floor with the living room in the front and snug to the rear will remain unchanged. The proposal seeks to re-connect the two spaces via an existing opening which currently boarded up.

Second Floor

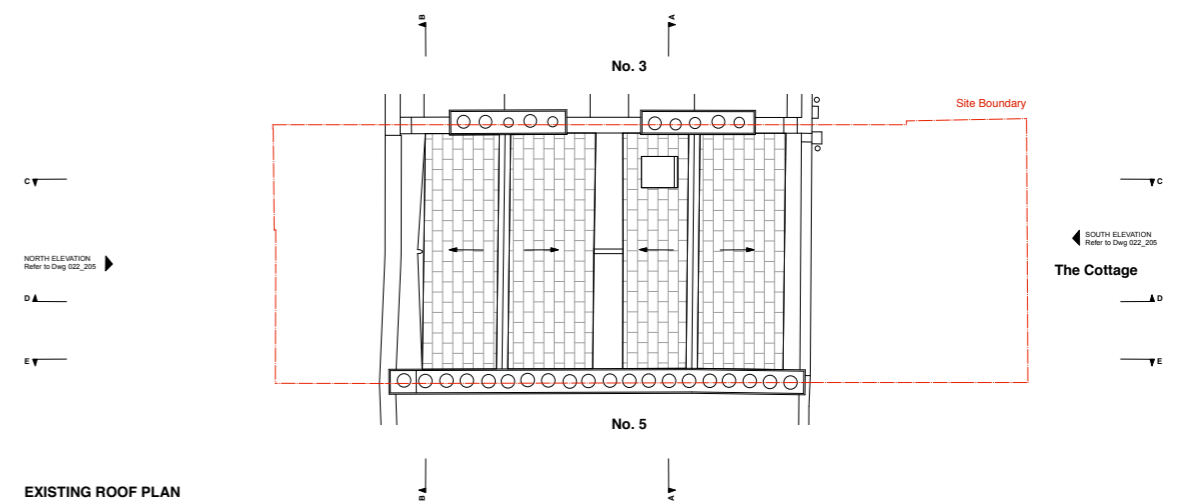
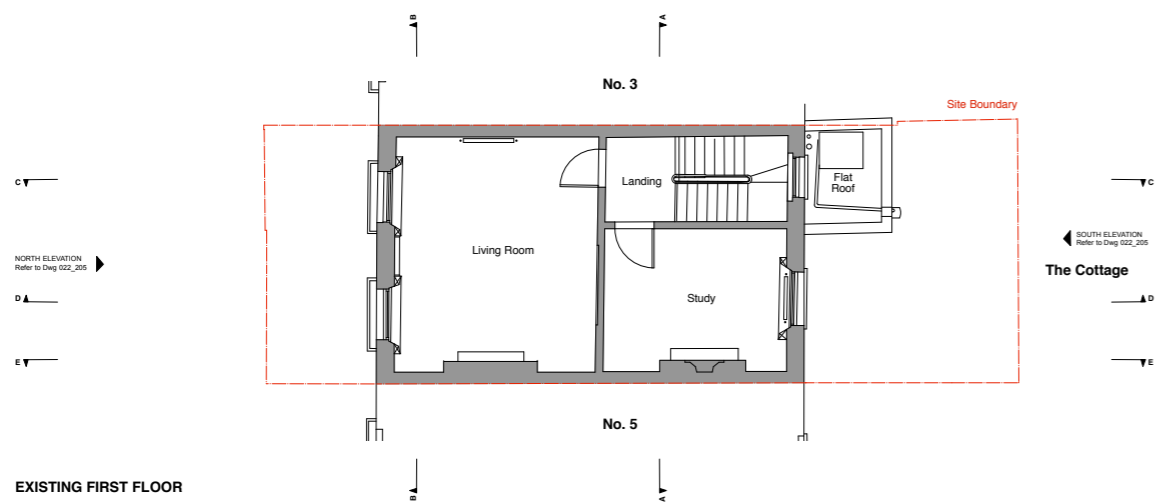
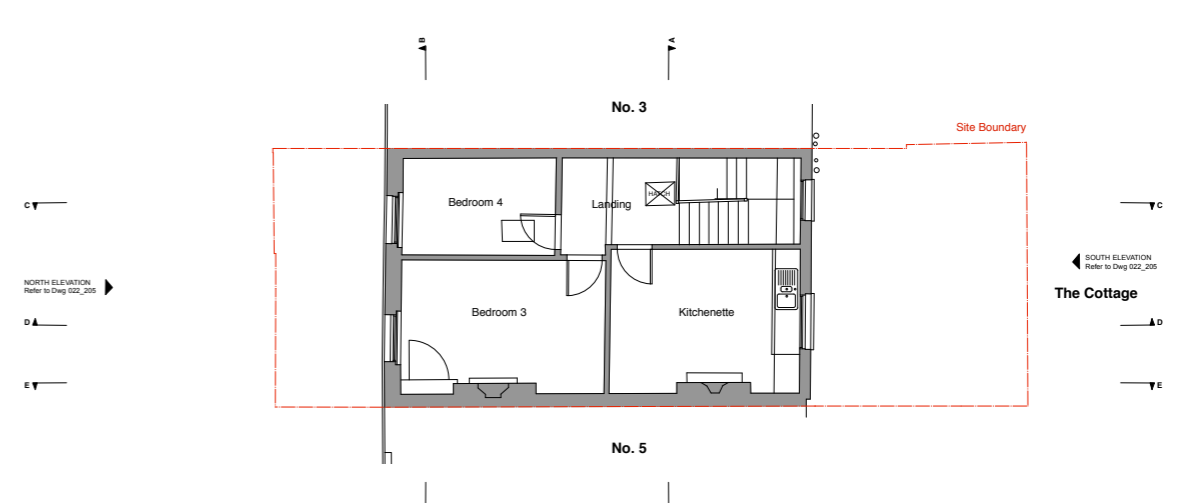
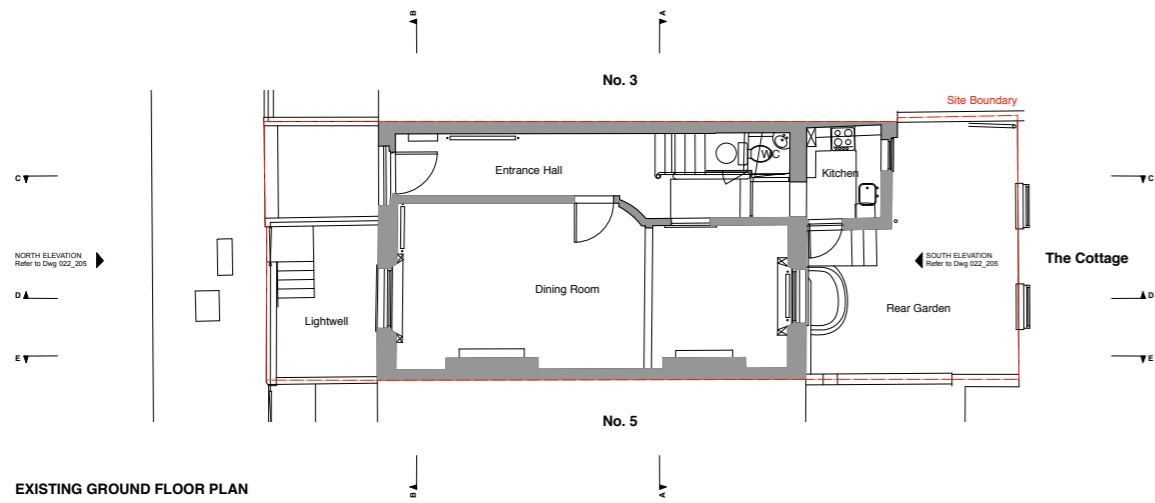
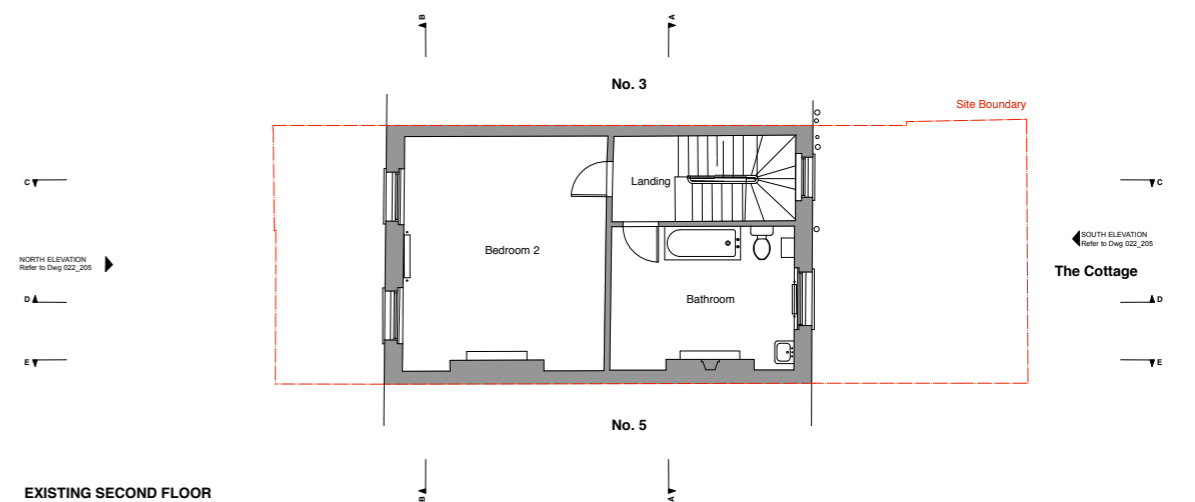
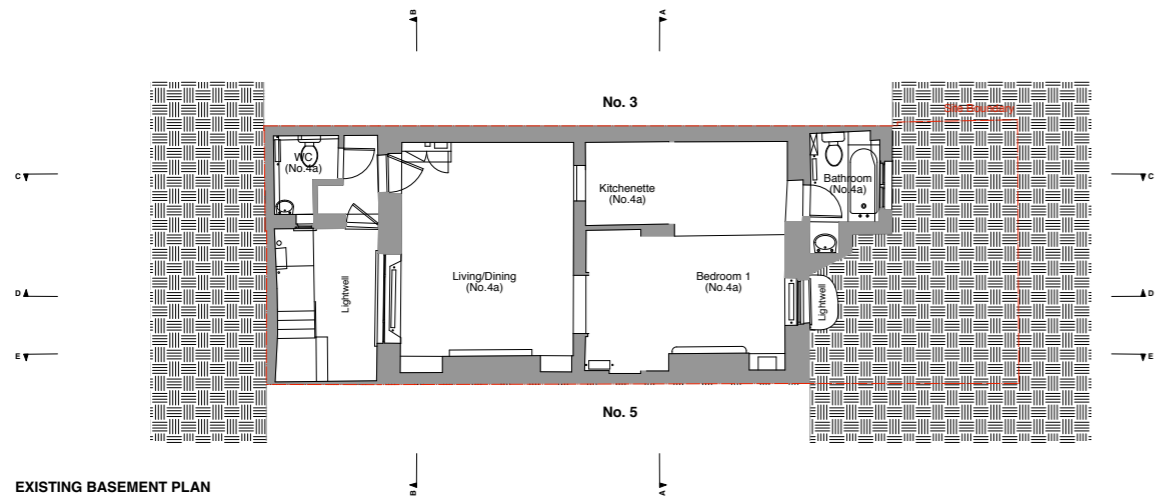
Again, the layout of the second floor will also remain unchanged to provide the master bedroom in the front and bathroom to the rear. To provide en-suite access for the master bedroom a new jib door is proposed to connect the spaces within the existing partition.

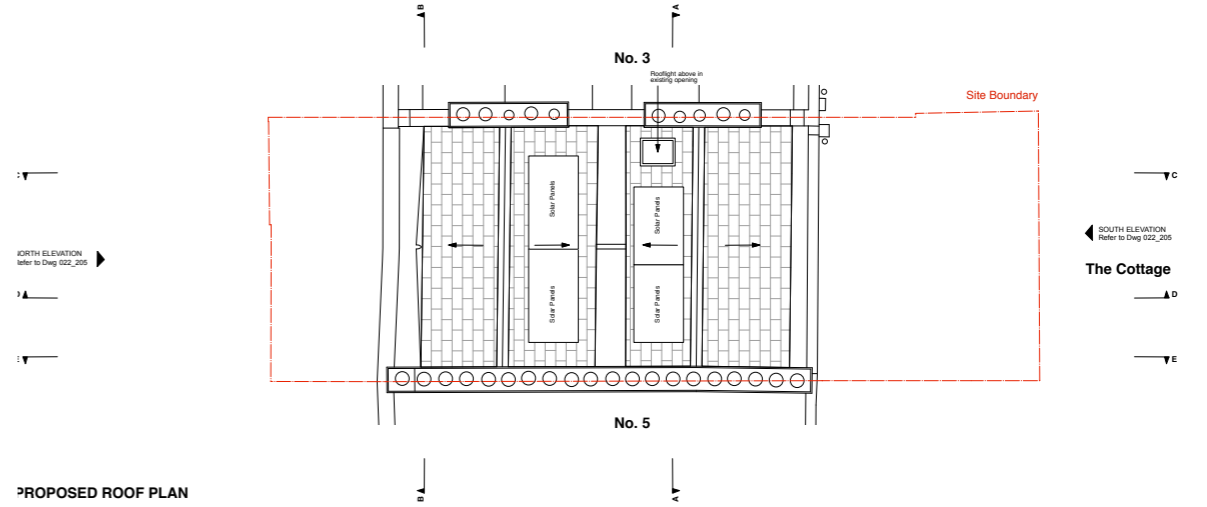
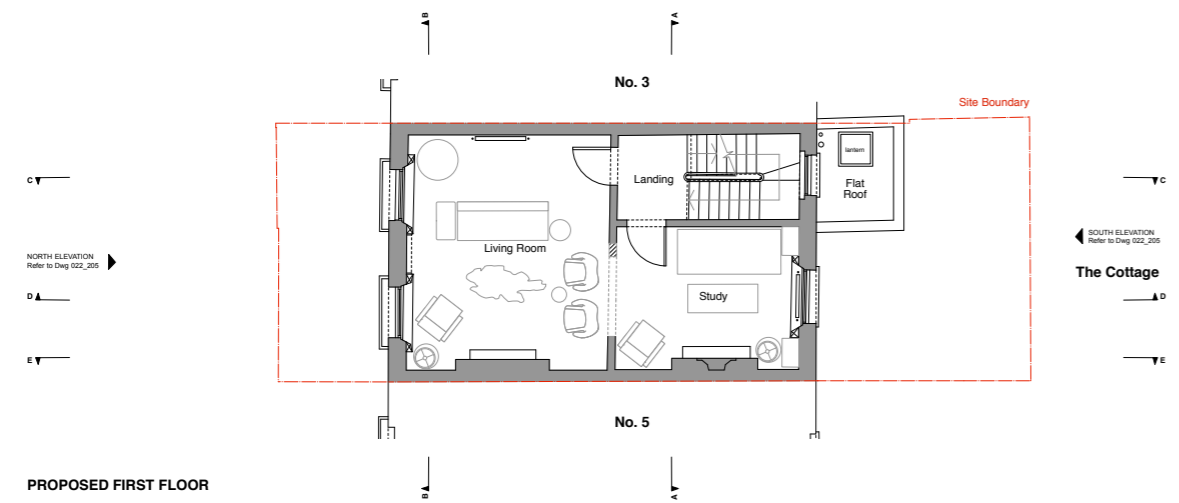
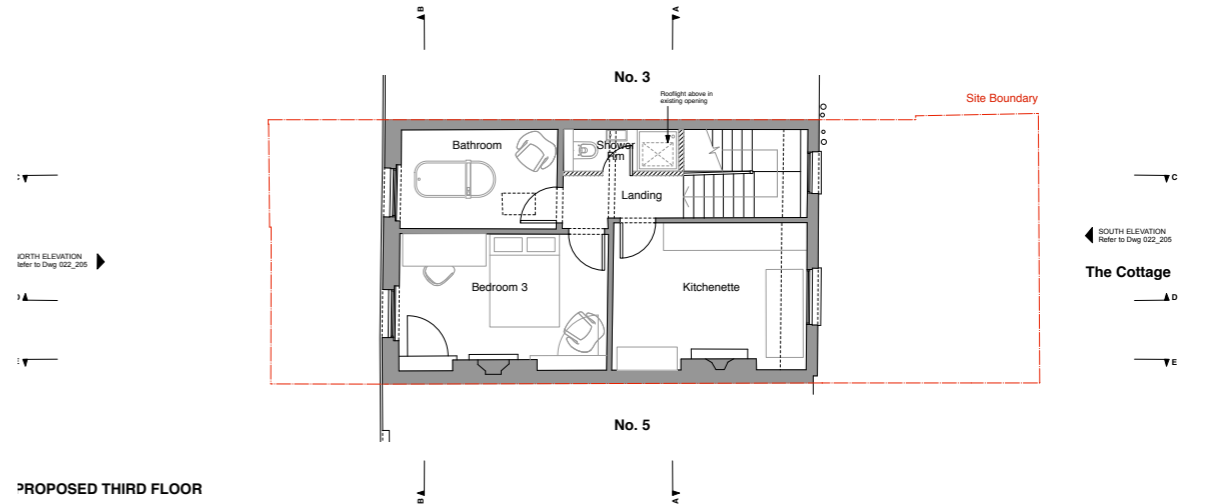
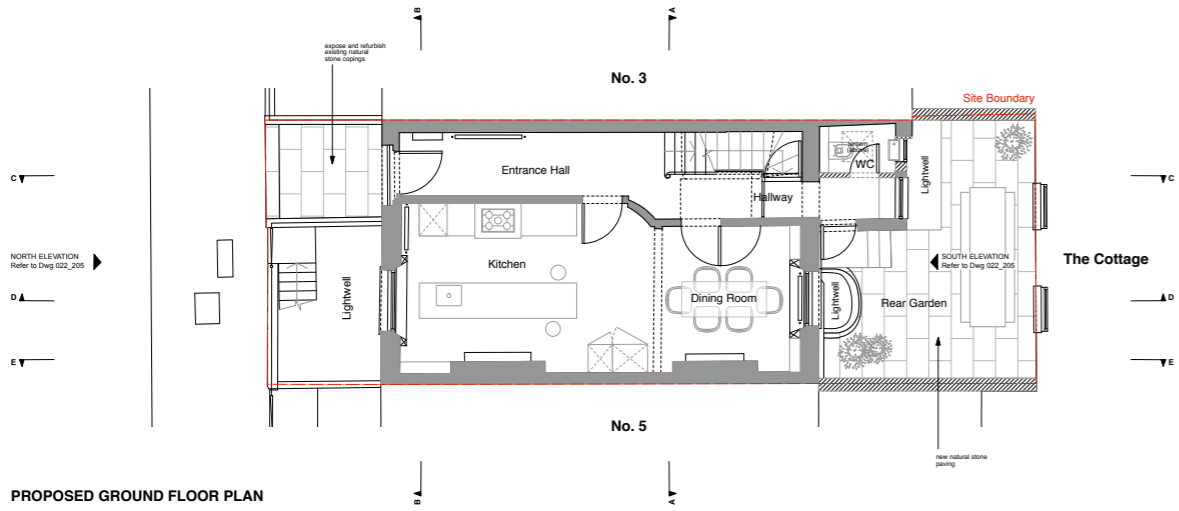
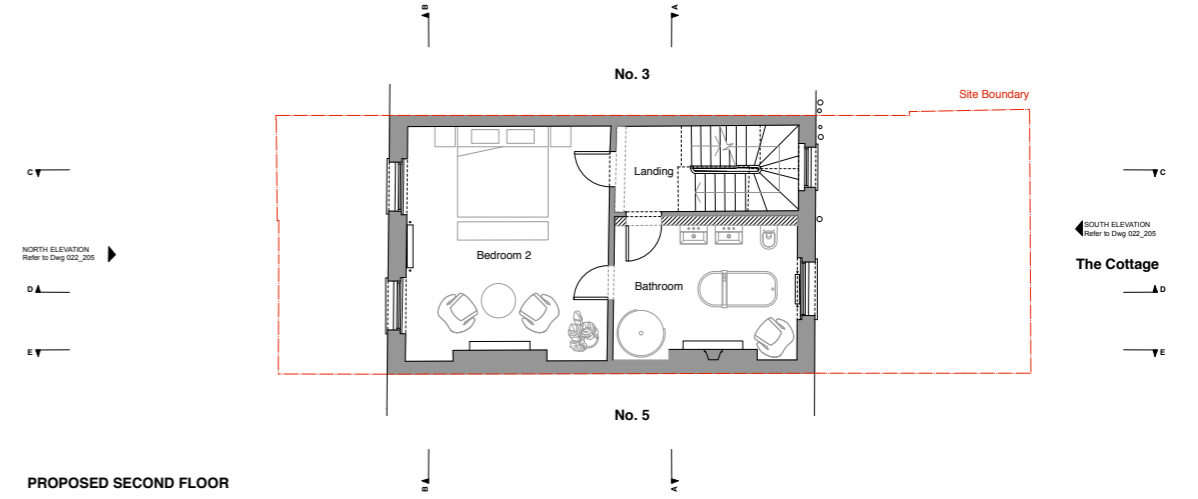
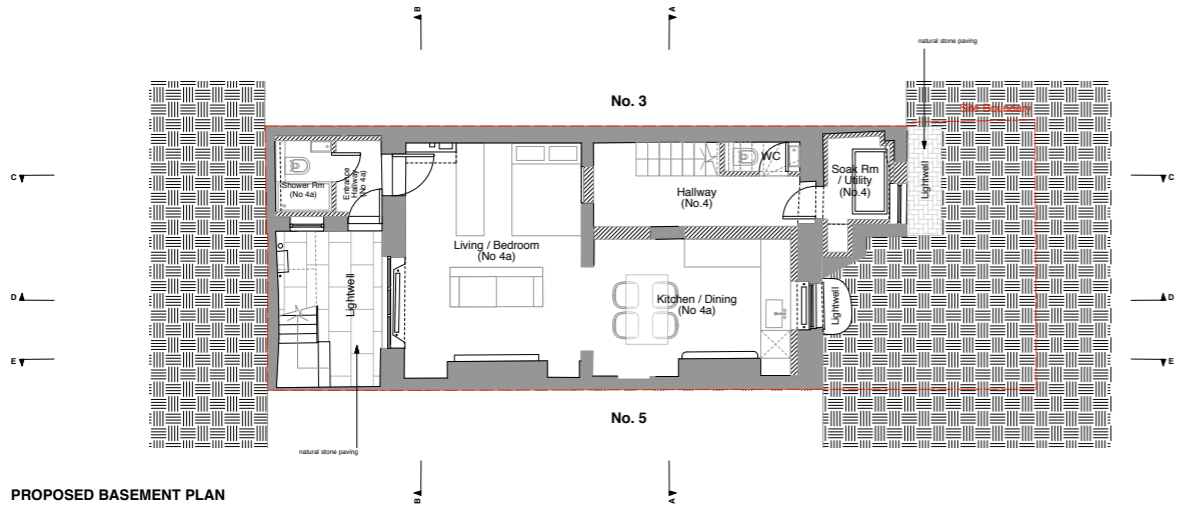
Third Floor

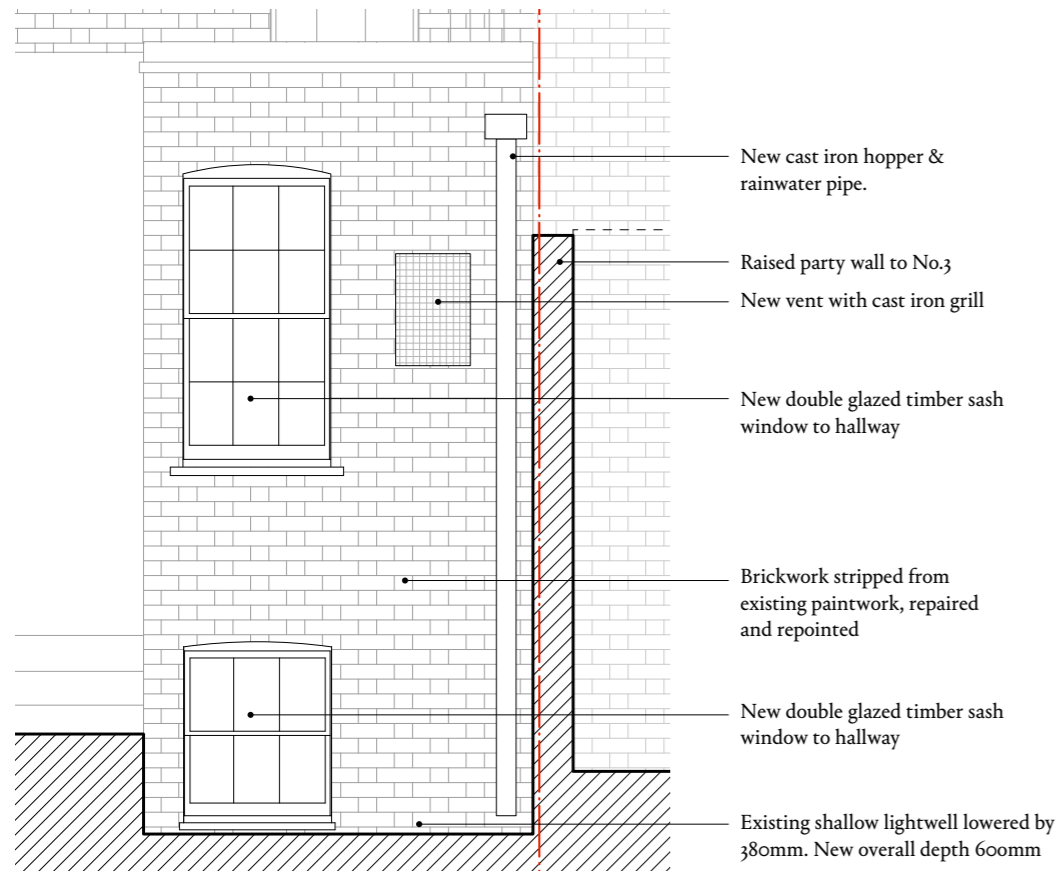
The main partitions to the third will remain the same, with a new shower room introduced on the landing. The access to the roof via the existing hatch will be retained and converted into an openable rooflight. The proposed shower room will service the bedroom on this floor with a separate bathroom located in the front right room. The rear room will retain its kitchenette facilities.

Rear Garden

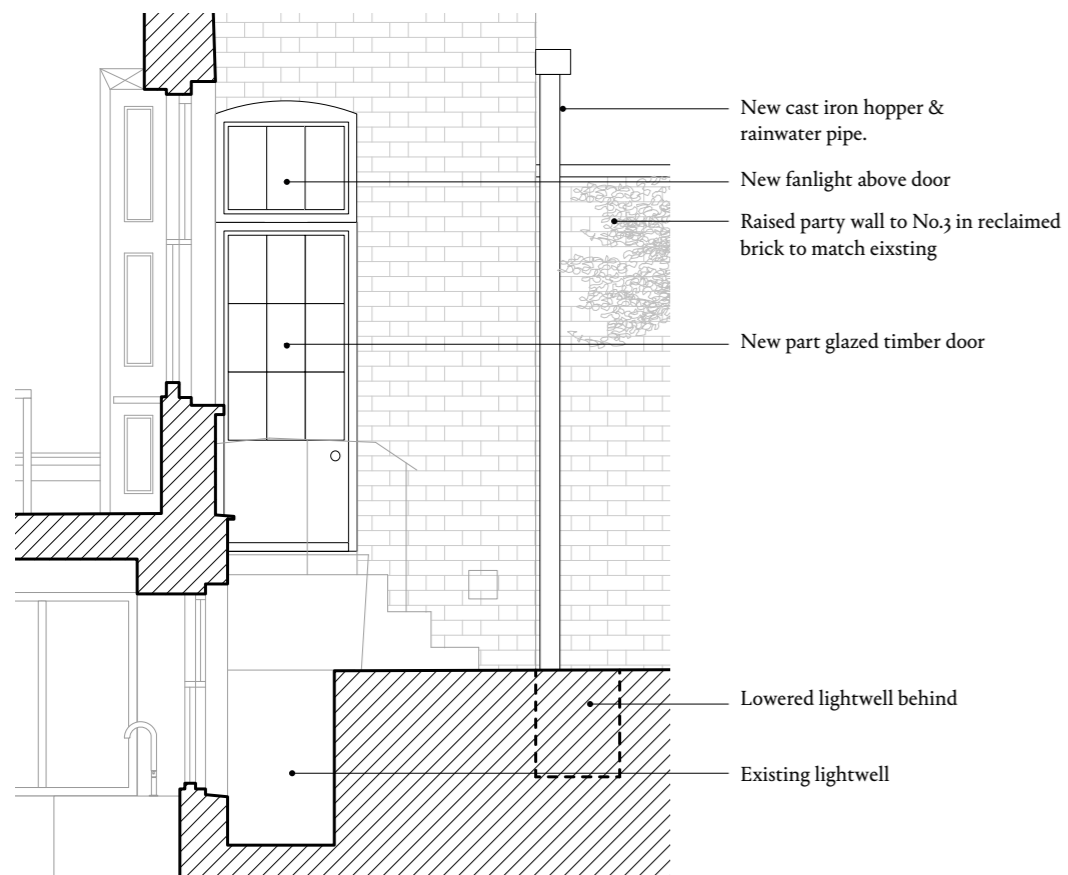
Access to the garden will remain the same. The existing shallow lightwell to the rear closet wing will be lowered by 380mm as mentioned previously to provide light and ventilation to the lower ground soak tub/utility room.







Closet Wing Rear Elevation



Closet Wing Side Elevation

3.4 Proposals

Closet Wing

The proposal seeks to repair and repoint the existing brickwork and strip the existing paintwork.

To provide adequate ventilation and light to the new WC within the closet wing the proposal seeks to introduce a small vent in the existing window opening and a coloured glazed lantern in the roof hidden behind the roof parapet. By introducing a vent faced with a metal grill where the current window is will provide privacy from the garden.

A new full height double glazed timber sash window is proposed on the rear elevation to provide a vista view from the entrance hallway out into the garden. This new visual connection will provide a better relationship between the house and the garden and bring in much need light to the hallway.

Directly below a similarly proportioned in width, a new double glazed timber sash window to the soak tub/utility room within the proposed lowered lightwell. The depth of the lightwell will not exceed 600mm below garden level in accordance with building regulations so that a balustrade is not required.

The proposal seeks to replace the modern door on the side elevation with a more suitable alternative and increase its lintel height to introduce a fanlight above. This will align as much as possible with the height of the existing dining room window.

These new additions will be in keeping with the existing aesthetic of the house and will keep to the same proportions as the existing windows as much as possible.

Windows

Generally all the windows are in need of a complete overhaul and new draught proofing. The applicant is in favour of restoring the original single glazed windows where possible and sees replacement only as a necessity.

A window condition survey by a reputable timber sash window company was procured and it identified the following only two windows in need of replacement:

- Lower Ground Floor - Front Room (existing crittal window replaced with new single glazed timber sash windows as per elevations)
- Third Floor - Rear Room (modern timber sash replaced with new single glazed timber sash window to match existing)

Rooflight & Lantern

As mentioned previously, a glazed coloured glass lantern is proposed in the rear closet wing to the WC and a rooflight proposed in the shower room at third floor in the existing hatch location to the roof. This will be a low profiled conservation openable rooflight. Both will be not visible to the street or to the rear garden.

Services

Due to the state of the current services, the house requires fully re-wiring and re-plumbing to bring it up to current standards. All services will be concealed where possible and all external services will be replaced with cast iron casings. Any historic features will be maintained where possible or replaced to match existing where works are required. The proposal also seeks to discuss with the conservation officer the possibility installing solar panels to the roof. These of course would not be visible to the street.

Damp Strategy

A timber and damp survey has been commissioned and submitted as part of this application. The applicant intends to introduce the appropriate measures to resolve the damp issues previously identified whilst respecting the historic nature and ensuring long-term breathability to the existing fabric of the building.

The survey has been undertaken by Heritage House Consulting who are chartered surveyors & historic building consultants. Their timber and damp surveys follow the guidance of the BS 7913: 2013 - Guide to the conservation of historic buildings. They take a holistic view of the building - looking at the environment, the way it sits in its context, the materials it is built with and the various interventions already made over the years.

Where possible the recommendations suggested in this document will be applied subject to the Council's approval due to the listed nature of the property. Please refer to 'o22_Timberanddampsurvey.pdf'



3.5 Landscaping

The amount of amenity space to the house will remain unchanged as a result of the proposals.

The relationship between the house and garden is much improved by way of the proposed full height timber sash in the closet wing and new door. New planting and hard landscaping to the rear will create a softer and more diverse garden environment.

The boundary walls to the rear garden are both in need of significant repair and repointing. Where possible any new walls will be constructed in reclaimed brick to match the existing London stock.

- No.5 - The boundary wall to no.5 is in particularly bad condition and will potentially need to be rebuilt due to its stability. The proposal seeks to re-build this boundary wall and raise the height to 3m from ground to provide increased privacy.
- No.3 - The boundary wall to no.3 is in better condition although still needs repair to its existing copings. The proposal seeks to raise this boundary wall height as well to 3m from ground level.

These works will of course be fully agreed by standard party wall award procedures with both neighbours at no.5 & no.3 prior to any commencement of works.

The proposals will re-establish all metal railings in accordance with the recommendations of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal.

4.0 ACCESS

4.1 Vehicle & Transport

The existing house has no provision for off-street car parking and the proposals do not change this.

4.2 Universal Access

The proposed works make no change to the access to and from the house, but the internal alterations will create a better flow around the spaces of the house, and an improved relationship to the garden.

5.0 SUMMARY

This document seeks to illustrate that the proposed works at No. 4 & 4a Regent's Square have been sensitively considered, taking on the national and local planning policy, as well as carefully considering the amenity of the neighbours, and responding with a well crafted design.

The proposed scheme remedies existing problems with the house, and improves existing security, privacy and daylight.

The proposals to the closet wing respects the existing architecture and character of the house and provides new views out at lower and upper ground floor levels in a sensitive and distinguished way.

The existing amount of garden space will be retained and landscape improvements will enhance the natural environment of the house.

The refurbishment of the property will result in a full restoration and preservation of its historic asset.

We thank you for considering this proposal and trust it will meet with the approval of Camden Council.

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