

37-41 Gower Street
London WC1E 6HH

Planning, Design and Access Statement



September 2019

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1.0 Introduction



37-41 Gower Street. Gower Street elevation

This Planning, Design & Access Statement forms part of Planning Application and Listed Building Consent submission for proposed works to 37-41 Gower Street, London, WC1E 6HH.

The proposed works are limited to the lower ground and ground floor levels and will upgrade the existing building by-

- relocating the existing office units by way of a use swap to 2 Bloomsbury Place to provide additional high-quality residential accommodation in line with the existing residential accommodation at first, second and third floor levels
- Providing 3 new 1 bed dwellings and 2 new 2 bed dwellings
- refurbishing the existing interior of the building to allow provision of new residential accommodation, including replacing and upgrading the services installation
- Adapting 4 No. windows to the lower ground floor rear accommodation to provide full height door openings to rear. These will be aligned with the existing door openings/balconies on the upper floors

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this statement:

- Photographic Survey
- Heritage Statement (by Anthony Walker)
- Acoustic Assessment Report

The following drawings should be read in conjunction with this statement:

- 282.00 001 Location Plan [1/1250]
- 282.00 002 Site Plan [1/500]
- 282.00 100 Existing & demolition drawings [1/100]
- 282.00 200 Proposed drawings [1/100]



1



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- 1. Aerial view of 37-41 Gower Street from east
- 2. 37-41 Gower Street front elevation

2.1 Site and context

Site and existing building



0 10 000 50 000
Millimeters (mm)

1:1250 @a3



37-41 Gower Street form part of a Georgian terrace of townhouses that runs from 15a Gower Street to 49 Gower Street. Numbers 15a to 39 were built in 1783 and numbers 41-49 in 1785. They were generally of 3 storeys with a basement and attics and were listed grade II in March 1969.

The building is currently divided between office B1 use at lower ground floor and ground floor levels and residential C3 use on the upper floors. There is also a small residential C3 unit at lower ground floor level.

The front elevation of the Gower Street terrace have a little-altered coherence and symmetry and the list entry focuses solely on the front elevation -

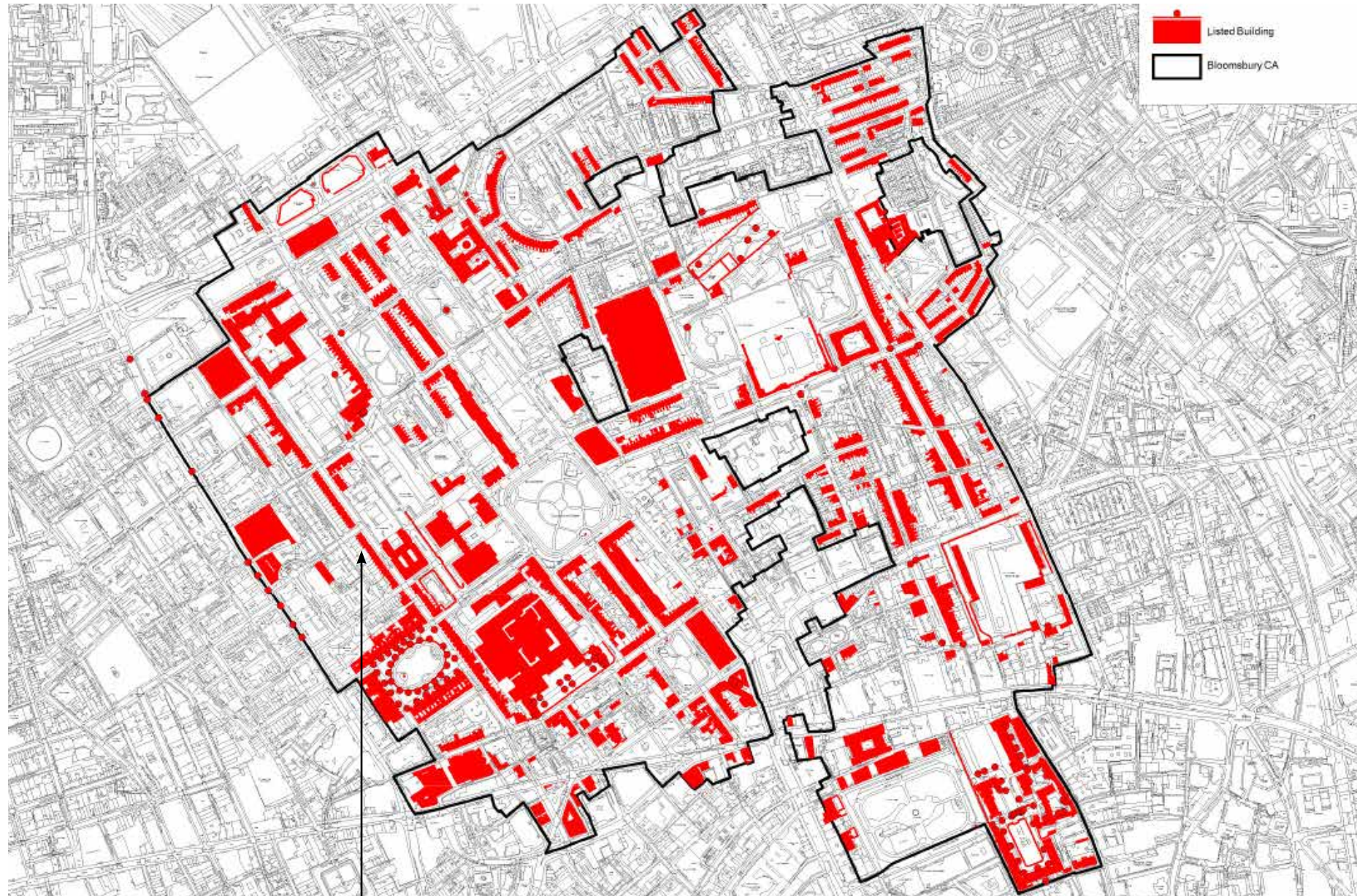
Terrace of 18 houses. Nos 15A-39 built 1783; Nos 41-49, 1785. Nos 37-41 frontages rebuilt in facsimile but having only one doorway (that to No.39). Darkened yellow stock brick. Stucco 1st floor band with guilloche pattern. Slated mansard roofs with dormers. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys, attics and basements; Nos 25 & 39, 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each, No.49 with unfenestrated return to Chenies Street. Round-arched doorways with fluted pilasters, cornice-heads, fanlights and panelled doors; most with panelled reveals and some with radial patterned fanlights. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sash windows, some with glazing bars. Ground and 1st floor windows with bracketed sills and cast-iron guards. Parapets. No.15a: entrance in arched porch extension with return to Store Street. 4 windows in ground floor extension, 2 at 1st floor level. Nos 19 & 21: early C20 stone entablature with bracketed cornice and fluted frieze. No.21: stone entrance surround with Doric half columns carrying entablature. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas.

The rear of the properties on the other hand have undergone substantial development over time which lends it a varied appearance in great contrast to the front elevation.

A fuller history of the terrace and the property is included in the accompanying Heritage Statement.

2.2 Site and context

Bloomsbury Conservation Area and listed buildings map



37-41 Gower Street

2.3 Site and context
World War II bomb damage



The relative value of the front and rear elevations as a heritage asset can be illustrated by the manner in which the building was rebuilt following World War II bomb damage. The Gower Street elevation was rebuilt to match the style of the original Georgian facade, including the additional storey to 39, which balances the symmetry of the terrace with the extra storey at the opposite end, 25 Gower Street.

The rear elevation on the other hand was rebuilt with a contemporary composition and details including metal casement windows, full height glazing with walk-out balconies and a two storey glazed wall to the stair. These are in marked contrast to the neighbouring properties and adds to the assorted appearance to the rear elevation where varied extensions and closet wings have been docked to the rear of the terrace.

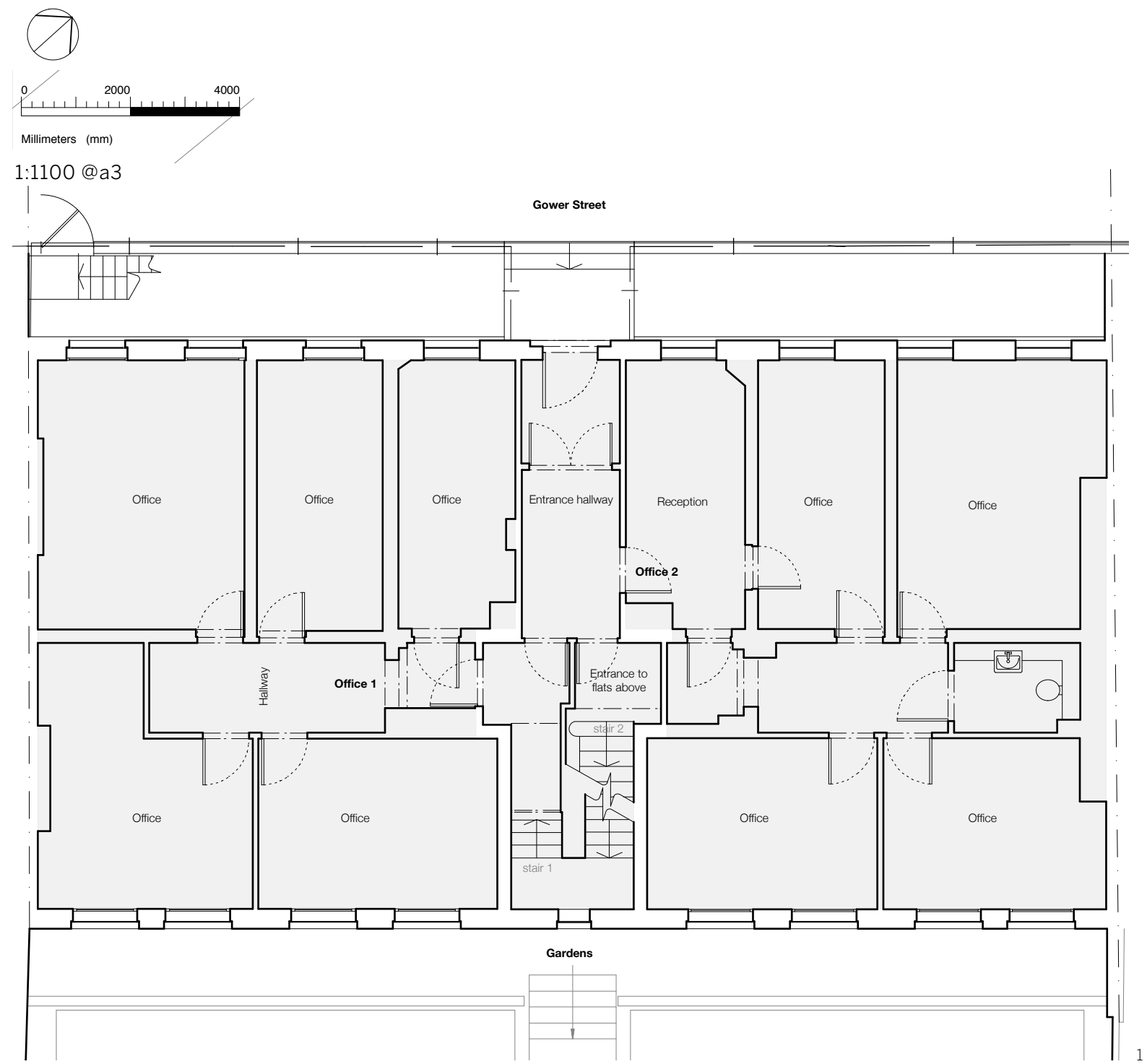
The rear gardens of 37-41 Gower Street have similarly been landscaped in a manner which do not reflect the gardens of a Georgian terrace. The characteristic feature of this garden and the gardens of the overall terrace are the mature trees that form a visual screen between the Gower Street buildings and 10-40 Ridgmount Street behind.



1. 37-41 Gower Street bomb damage with Ridgmount Street bomb damage in foreground
2. 37-41 Gower Street rear elevation rebuilt after bomb damage
3. 37-41 Gower Street front elevation rebuilt after bomb damage
4. 37-41 Gower Street rear garden

2.3 Site and context

World War II bomb damage



The internal layouts of the property have similarly lost their historic plan form. When rebuilt, the properties were combined with a single entrance door from the street and a single central stair/circulation core. Corridors lead off from the core to allow access to the internal rooms.

Following the reconstruction, no original georgian fabric remains and since its 1940s reconstruction, further refurbishments following Listed Building Consent in 2002 mean the interiors are all recent and have no fabric of historic interest.



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- 37-41 Gower Street. Existing ground floor plan showing non-historic internal floorplans following 1940s reconstruction
- Entrance hall with access to central staircase providing access to residential flats on upper floors (left) and ground/lower ground offices (right)
- Lower ground floor circulation space
- Staircase from ground to lower ground
- Ground floor office space showing face fixed services and non-historic fabric

2002	LSX0204111
Listed building consent granted for changes to lower ground and ground floor layout. Listed building consent granted.	
1998	PS9805155 / PS9805155R1
Planning permission for change of use of lower ground and ground floor from office to hostel. Application withdrawn	
Relevant planning permissions granted to neighbouring properties include -	
2007	43-45 Gower Street 2007/0590/P
Planning permission for change of use of lower ground and ground floor office to residential. Planning permission granted	

Relevant national and local legislation that has been used as guidance in the development of these proposals for 2 Bloomsbury Place.

The National Planning Policy Framework

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development

Camden Local Plan

The following policies have been used as guidance

- A1Managing the Impact of development
- D1Design
 - preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2
 - Heritage
 - comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character
- D2Heritage

Technical Housing Standards - nationally described space standard

The dwelling layouts have been developed using nationally described space standards for unit sizes and room sizes

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy

37-41 GOWER STREET

Existing GIA (m2)				Proposed GIA (m2)			
Level	C3	B1	Total	Level	C3	B1	Total
Lower Ground Floor	31	123	154	Lower Ground Floor	164	-	164
Ground Floor	-	171	171	Ground Floor	171	-	171
First Floor	174	-	174	First Floor	174	-	174
Second Floor	174	-	174	Second Floor	174	-	174
Third Floor	161	-	161	Third Floor	161	-	161
Total	540	294	834	Total	844	0	844 *2

The following pages set out the proposed works to the lower ground and ground floors of 37-41 Gower Street.

The key feature of the proposal is the change of use of the office space to residential space. The proposal forms part of a use swap with 2 Bloomsbury Place where a similar area of residential space will be converted to office space.

The areas associated with the use swap are shown in the area schedule which shows

- 37-41 Gower Street will lose 294m2 of office B1 and gain 304m2 of residential C3
- 2 Bloomsbury Place will lose 274m2 of residential and gain 310m2 of office C1 (including 36m2 rear extension at ground floor level)

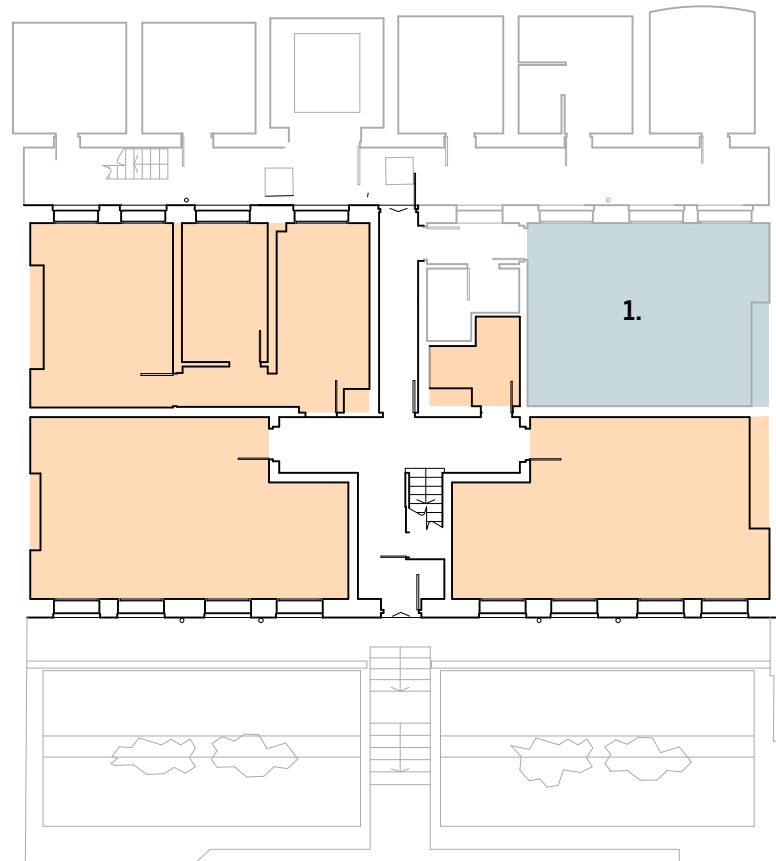
2 BLOOMSBURY PLACE

Existing GIA (m2)				Proposed GIA (m2)			
Level	C3	B1	Total	Level	C3	B1	Total
Lower Ground Floor	113	-	113	Lower Ground Floor	-	113	113
Ground Floor	-	119	119	Ground Floor	-	155	155 *1
First Floor	-	112	112	First Floor	-	112	112
Second Floor	-	118	118	Second Floor	-	118	118
Third Floor	117	-	117	Third Floor	-	117	117
Fourth Floor	44	-	44	Fourth Floor	-	44	44
Total	274	349	623	Total	0	659	659

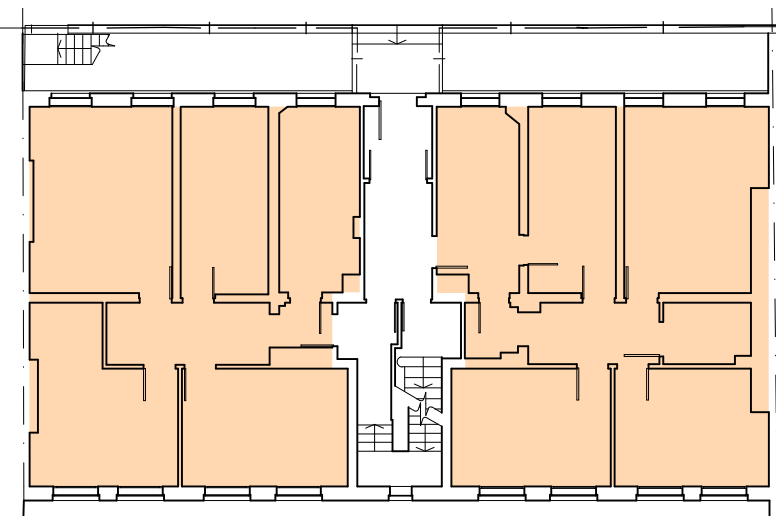
4.1 Design proposal

Use class plans - existing and proposed

EXISTING PLANS

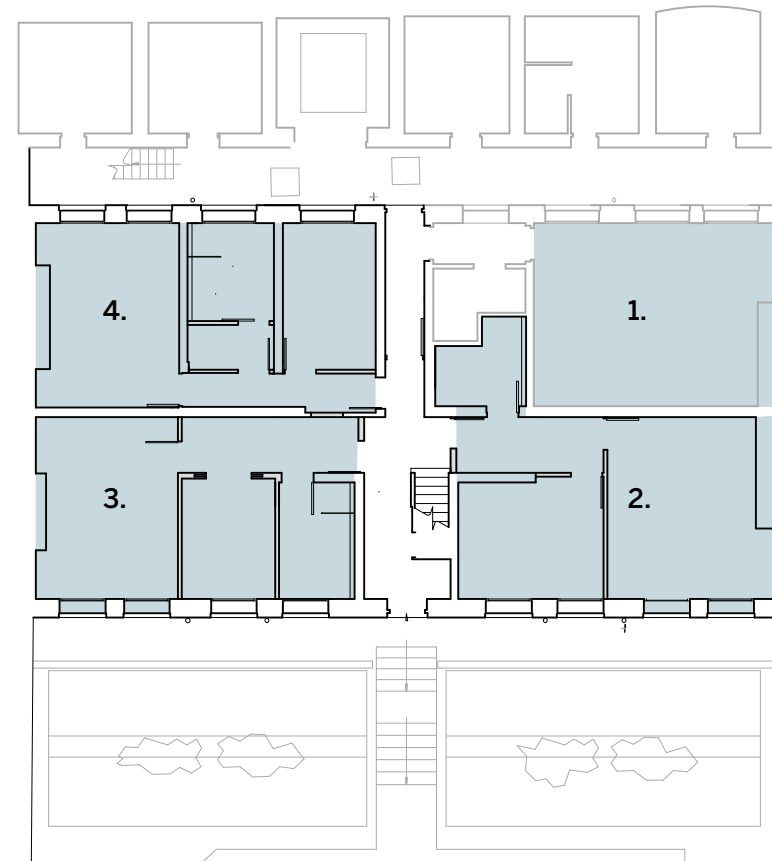


Lower ground floor plan

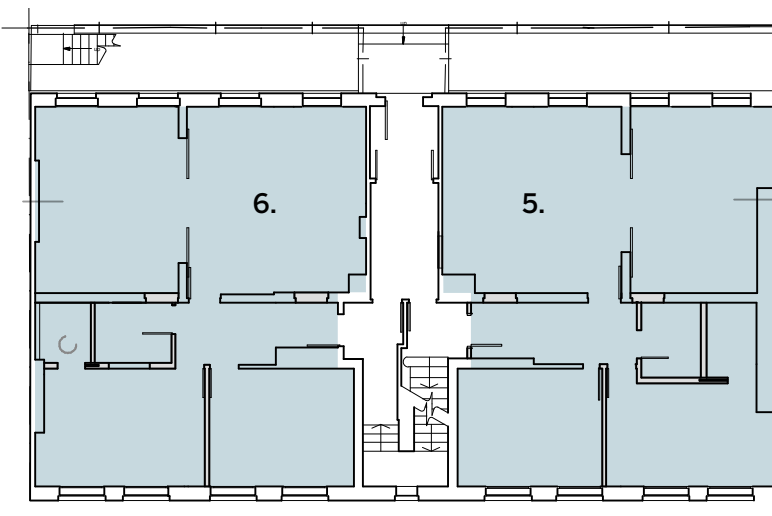


Ground floor plan

PROPOSED PLANS



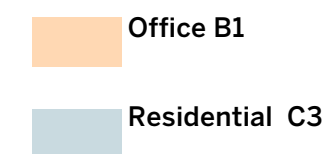
Lower ground floor plan



Ground floor plan

The new residential units have been designed in line with Technical Housing Standards in terms of space provision. All dwelling units, bedrooms and living areas are in line with the described space standards.

The unit mix provision is also in line with Camden's Local Plan policy H7 regarding dwelling size priorities. Developments are required to include some homes that have been given a medium or lower priority level which in this case is 2 bedroom market accommodation. These units are provided at ground floor level.



1.	existing unit	31m2
2.	new 1 bed unit	47m2
3.	new 1 bed unit	42m2
4.	new 1 bed unit	44m2
5.	new 2 bed unit	86m2
6.	new 2 bed unit	85m2

4.2 Design proposal

New openings to rear elevation



The proposed works convert the outer pair of windows to each side of the rear elevation at lower ground floor into door openings.

This will allow direct access to the shared rear garden from 2 of the new lower ground floor units. The new openings will align with door openings at the upper levels which lead out onto balconies. The new doors will be metal framed units with profiles to match the existing glazing.

The doors will have slimlite double glazed and the existing windows will be replaced with slimlite double glazed windows to match.

Existing rear elevation



Proposed rear elevation



1. Lower ground floor windows to '37' Gower Street to be converted to door openings below windows above
2. 37-41 Gower Street rear elevation showing door openings/ balconies to upper levels
3. Lower ground floor windows to '41' Gower Street to be converted to door openings below windows above
4. Existing rear elevation (proposed openings in red)
5. Proposed rear elevations with crittal windows to match existing glazing

4.3 Design proposal

Internal changes, layout and access

Internal changes

The application drawings outline the demolition works and locations of new partitions.

Having been fully refurbished in 2002, the existing fabric and finishes are of no historic or architectural interest. A full internal refurbishment is proposed, including a full re-placement of the services installation, internal doors, floor/wall finishes and architectural details such as skirtings and secondary glazing.

Layout

The proposed dwelling layouts are shown in the proposed drawings submitted and conform to nationally described space standards.

Access

No changes are proposed to accessing the properties from Gower Street.

To conclude, the Design and Access Statement sets out the proposals for changing the use class of the existing office B1 accommodation at lower ground and ground floor to residential C3. The change of use will be offset by a reverse change of use of residential C3 accommodation to office B1 apce at 2 Bloomsbury Place.

The existing building, whilst Grade II listed is of architectural merit due to its location in a relatively unspoilt Georgian terrace. Rebuilt after wartime bomb damage and refurbished again in the early 21st century, the interiors currently provide functional office accommodation of no historic or architectural merit.

The new residntial units are designed in-line with Technical Housing Standards and the 2-bedroom residential accommodation proposed at ground floor level is a high priority dwelling type in the borough.

Chnages to the rear elevation will improve amenity to the new lower ground dwellings, providing direct access to the rear garden. The new door openings will be aligned with and sypathetic to the materiality and the composition of the existing rear elevation.

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