

78 South Hill Park

Planning Feedback Response

Content

1.0 Background

2.0 Lower Ground Floor

2.1 Kitchen

3.0 Ground & First Floor

3.1 Master Bedroom

3.2 Ground Floor Bathroom Door

3.3 Reuse & Salvage

4.0 External Works

4.1 Garden Doors

1.0 Background

Planning Feedback

The house was designed by Brian Housden and purpose-built for his own family, so has a number of specifically tailored fittings for his own family, some original and some later but all pre-dating the listing. It should be noted that the built-in beds and kitchen island fittings are mentioned in the list description. However, not all these fittings are seen to work for the new owners. Many of them, including sofas, beds and kitchen units, are rigid concrete and tile structures which provide little flexibility and dominate room layouts. Several of the later fittings are constructed from timber, and were designed and/or made by Housden who is believed to have developed an interest in joinery whilst living in the house. Such fittings include doors, shelving and cupboard units.

The current proposals involve the removal of a number of fittings as outlined above, to be found in bedrooms, bathrooms, the living area and the kitchen. The proposals do not fully take into account our advice given at pre-application stage which accepted the need to remove a limited number of items from the interior to allow the house to adapt to new occupiers but to retain say one example of each type.

Response

The proposals submitted balance how best to maintain the buildings overall design philosophy and special interest whilst making careful interventions to enable it to be functional and inhabitable by the current residents.

Wherever possible the key components of the listed building's significance that make up the buildings character have been retained. No changes have been proposed to the following key building fabric items:

- All primary concrete has remained untouched
- All tiling has been retained
- All services (electrics / radiators / exposed water pipes etc.) have been retained
- All primary room functions and locations have been retained.

Where proposals have been made for the removal of fixed furniture in all cases it has been for reasons of practicality. In all cases proposal have been made to retain at least one of the more prominent pieces in either the existing or a new location such as the retained kitchen island, retained master bed and retained joinery items.

Where new pieces have been introduced these have been designed in the spirit of the house drawing direct reference from existing pieces whilst making clear their new status through subtle changes to materiality.

Below we have outlined our response to each issue raised and where possible adopted the proposals made. Where we have not we have outlined and explained the thinking behind the choices made to try and clarify all the work that has gone into developing the design suggestions.

2.0 Lower Ground Floor

2.1 Kitchen

Planning Feedback

In the kitchen area, whilst the retention and adaption of the existing sink unit into a hob is welcomed, it had been hoped that a higher proportion of original fittings could be kept in conjunction with the reconfiguration of the former larder wall and damp elimination works, including the wall shelving and one more element of the tiled island elements/below worktop storage.

Response

The kitchen is the area in a house where design needs have changed most significantly over time and this has been the case since the design and building of the kitchen at 78 South Hill Park.

This is evident in that even Brian Housden was forced to compromise his original design through the introduction of appliances such as fridges and ovens for which no adequate provision was made.

The oven is perched on top of an island with no enclosure leaving the normally built in appliance exposed as modern ovens can not be made to fit under the islands. In addition, the location of the oven means that there is no access or view of Housden's shelving design located behind the oven and island. The island itself also makes it impossible to walk around to access the shelving, which then requires access to the shelving to occur over the hob.

The existing fridge is located in the centre of the plan. The height of a full family fridge freezer of 1800mm blocks the view of the kitchen from the dining space and limits access to the kitchen. The opening of the fridge further restricts access making the movement around the kitchen extremely restricted.

The kitchen currently has no provision for a dishwasher and it is not possible to locate the dishwasher under or on top of the existing island units. The existing dishwasher sits in the middle of the floorplan once again further restricting movement and access to the shelving and appliances and making for less than optimal use of the appliances. There is no direct relationship between the sink and the dishwasher as one would normally expect and no surface on which to place the dirty dishes prior to loading the dishwasher.

The house also makes no allowance for a laundry area and the washing machine has to be located in the kitchen as there is no other provision for this appliance. This is therefore currently also located in the middle of the kitchen plan further restricting the use of the kitchen.

The addition of all other smaller kitchen appliances such as microwave, toaster, kettle, coffee machine etc. means there is no work surface available. Indeed, many of these appliances have to be located in unsafe locations such as on the timber shelving.

As illustrated by the pictures of the kitchen in use, access is severely limited and it is nearly impossible for the kitchen to be occupied by more than one person. There are frequent breakages of items that are accidentally knocked off the shelving and worktops when moving around.

The original kitchen, even without kitchen appliances and contents, was designed significantly below current build regulations minimum distances of 800mm between surfaces. Diagram 1 shows the kitchen in its empty state. All dimensions in red are below building regulations requirements.

Once the appliances and contents required for a modern family of five people are inserted it is clear that the kitchen in its current format is inadequate and represents a safety hazard. Diagram 2 shows the addition of the appliances currently in place and the restrictions these impose on the users.

The kitchen electrics do not meet modern building regulations and require replacing.

In addition to the safety and functional issues, the current arrangement is detrimental to the overall appreciation of the design of the house. It is not possible to appreciate the original shelving design or original wall tiling through the sheer volume of content and appliances. It would be fair to argue that if Brian Housden were to design the kitchen afresh with the current requirements he would almost certainly not design the kitchen as it is currently used.

2.1 Kitchen

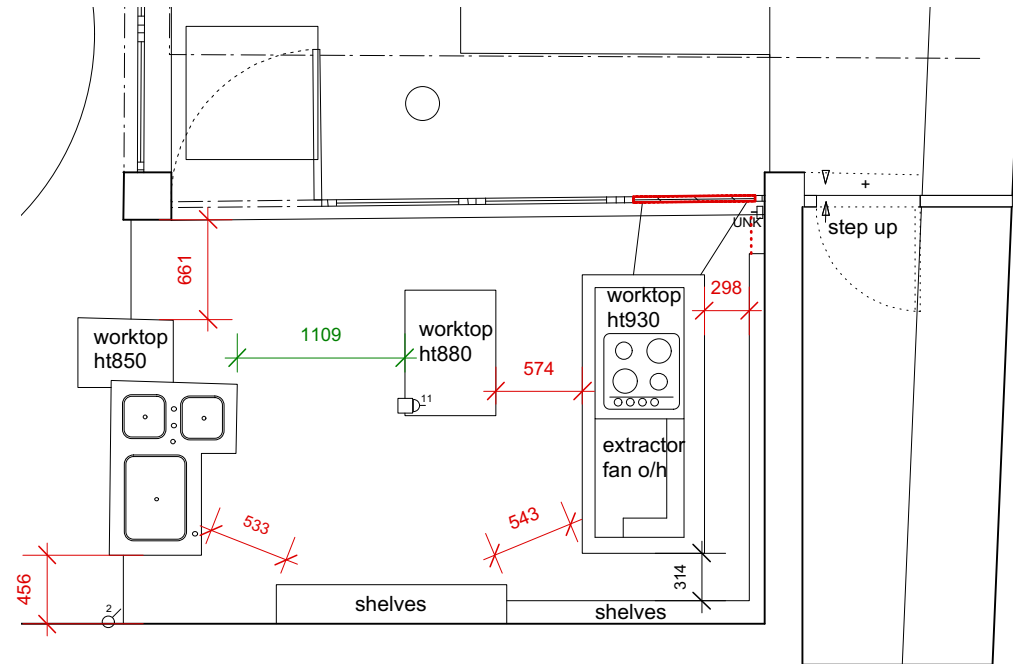


Diagram 1
Existing kitchen without all appliances

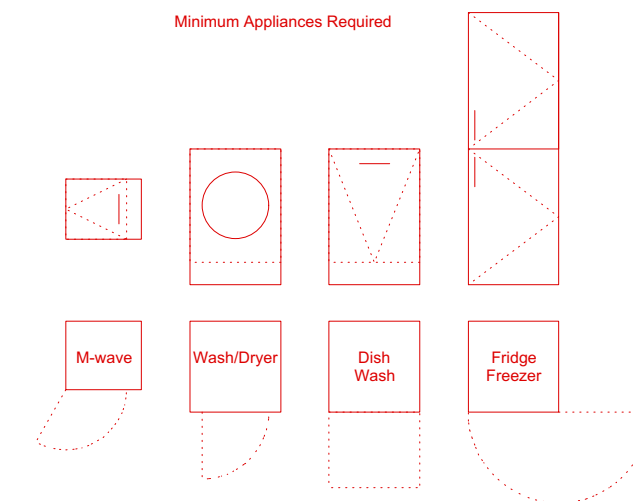
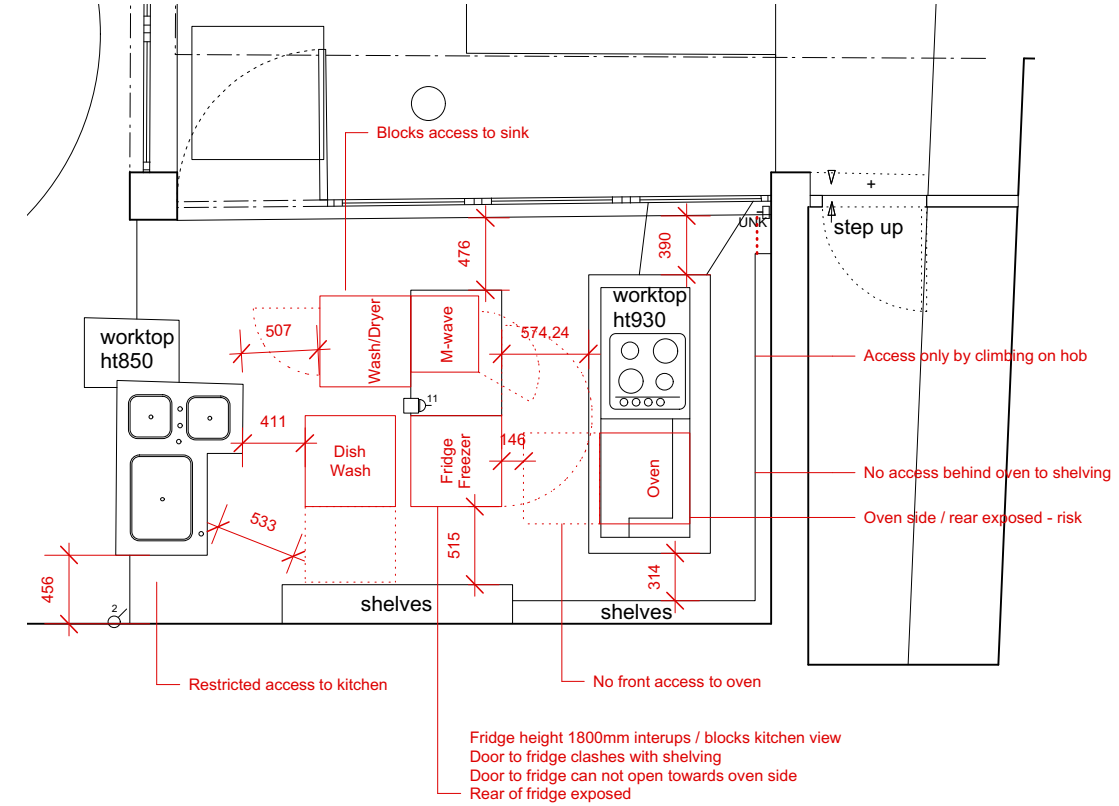


Diagram 2
Existing kitchen with all current appliances

2.1 Kitchen



Image 1
Access to shelving only possible to side of oven and is severely restricted



Image 2
Side of oven and electric cables to rear visible
Limited worktop surface / risk of items falling off and breaking

2.1 Kitchen



Image 3
Restricted access to shelving behind oven / side of oven, which is hot and poses a safety risk as it can not be built in



Image 4
Existing electrics do not meet modern building regulations and represent a safety risk. See separate report.

2.1 Kitchen



Image 5
Not possible for two people to pass in kitchen



Image 6
Rear of fridge visible and dishwasher blocks movement / access to shelving

2.1 Kitchen



Image 7
Fridge opens on to oven / oven exposed



Image 8
Access to shelving behind hot oven with exposed sides

2.1 Kitchen



Image 8
Islands restrict movement in kitchen



Image 9
Fridge location restricts movement in kitchen and views of kitchen from dining space



Image 10
Frequent breakages occur with items falling off narrow shelves when passing through kitchen as not possible to pass without knocking things on shelving or worktops.



Image 11
Existing hob surface is disintegrating and needs replacing.

2.1 Kitchen

Retention of Islands Considerations

When developing the proposed design the following key criteria were considered to ensure the proposal carefully balanced Bernie and Roo's desire to respect the House and its design as well as developing a kitchen that is fit for purpose, safe and beautiful.

The key design criteria identified:

- The celebration of Housden's shelving design language and ensuring that this shelving is visible unlike currently as this is not currently the case. The islands block access to the shelving making it inaccessible.
- The celebration of the tiled wall with tiling being a constant design feature of all levels of this house.
- The intention to liberate the kitchen and celebrate the principal island unit (currently sink unit). The retention of this unit in a new relocated position further celebrates this key island unit by giving it enough space to breathe and be used.
- The ability to see across the entire space by moving the fridge freezer to ensure no visual blocking of the kitchen space. The design aimed to create a clutter free horizon above island level with no appliances above 900mm island datum.
- Ensure the fridge freezer did not block the continuity of the tiling to the walls above worktop level and hence the decision to use the unused storage area to liberate the kitchen design.

During the design process a number of design iterations were carefully explored. This included a design review of a new island unit design. It was quickly concluded that given the space restriction and modern appliance requirements it was not possible to create a user friendly kitchen and meet our design aims.

The diagram opposite shows that the retention of the island units makes the use of the rear storage area as a pantry and WC area impossible to access. This in turn means that the large fridge freezer needs to be located either in the centre of the kitchen or against the wall which we strongly feel is

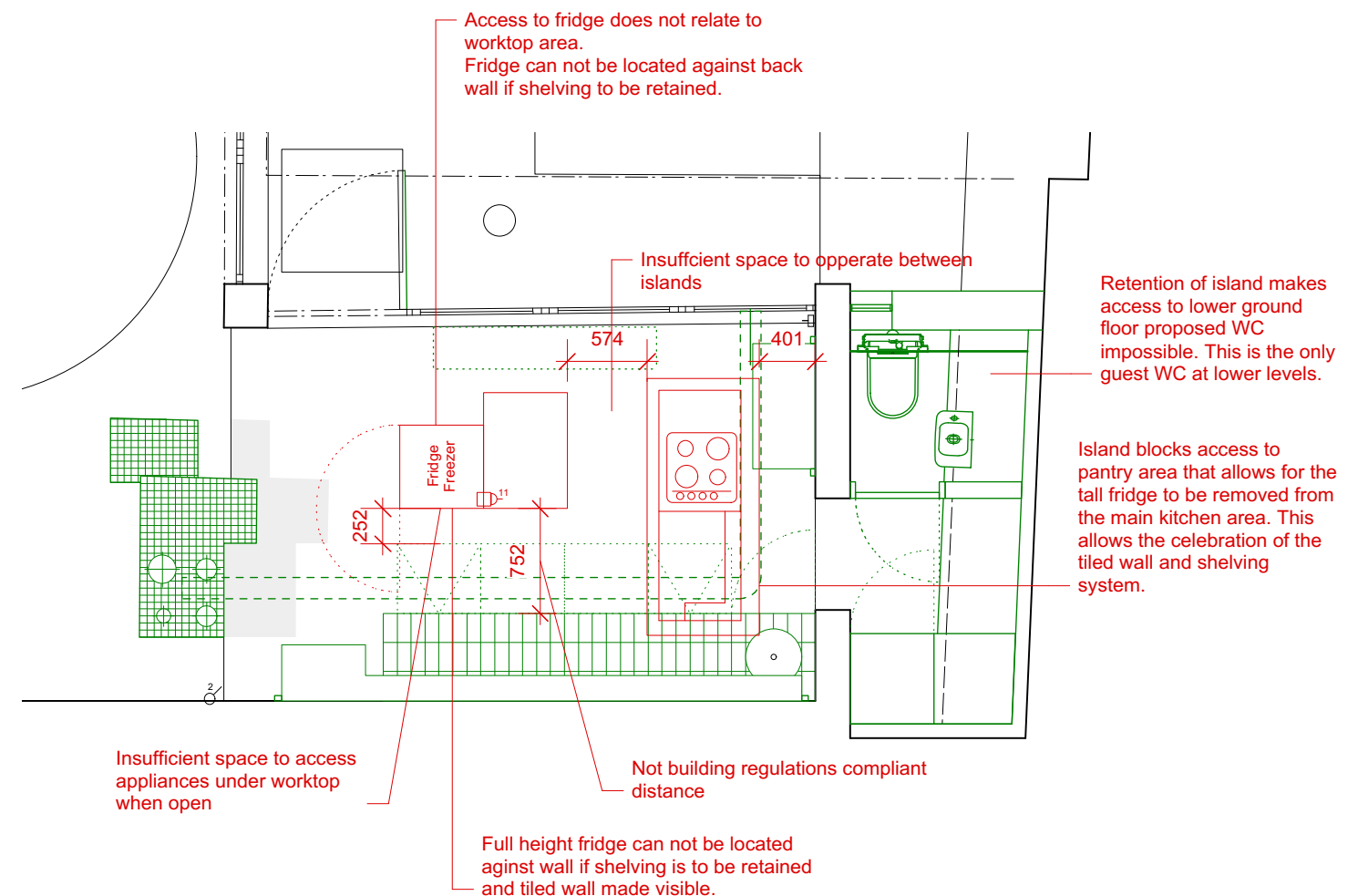


Diagram 3
Proposed kitchen with islands retained overlay

2.1 Kitchen

detrimental to the design of the house. In addition the retention of island units further restricts the distances between surfaces making this non building regulations compliant in key areas.

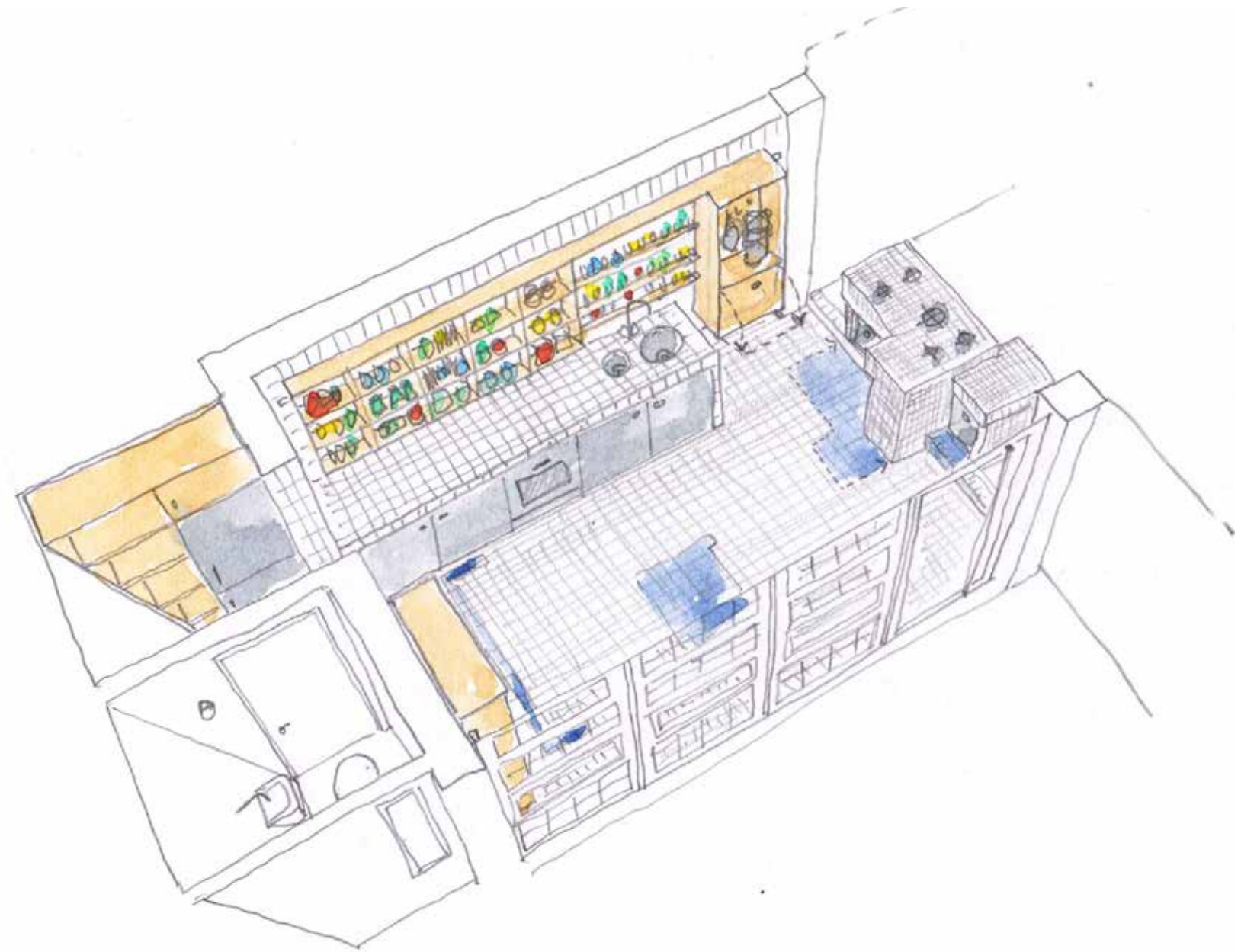
We do not believe it is possible within the existing footprint of the kitchen to generate a kitchen layout that accomodates all the required functions without significantly impacting on both functionality and the aesthetic impact of the kitchen and adherence to the principals we identified as design drivers to ensure the kitchen maintains qualities approriate to this house.

Given the importance of the shelving design and legibility of the tiled walls it is proposed that the design is amended to retain the existing shelving units and adapt these where required. The final design therefore retains the following key items:

- Remodelling of the central tiled sink unit in to a hob area
- The retention and minor adaption of the existing shelving units
- The retention of the tiles to the wall
- The retention of the mosaic floor tiles
- The rentention of the island footprint as a record of the previous design.

If at all possible we would very much welcome an in person site visit to walk the kitchen and get a real feeling for both the space and functionality of the kitchen and proposed design which has been developed whith care and much thought following a signifcant period of living in the existing space.

The current experience is also the shared experience of Brian Housden's own family who recall in the attached letter their view of the original kitchen and Brian's intentions.



Sketch 1

Proposed existing shelving is retained and adapted where required to allow reuse and retention of original fabric.

3.0 Ground & First Floor

3.1 Master Bed

Planning Feedback

The removal of the existing concrete beds within the children's bedrooms to allow for greater flexibility as the children get older is accepted, especially given the issues with damp to Bedroom 3 which is located above the car port. However, the removal of the existing bed in the Master Bedroom is not accepted. The Master Bedroom is the principal bedroom and key to the special interest and character of the house. It is also a more spacious room than the children's bedrooms, and the flexibility from repositioning the beds required for the children's bedrooms is not a relevant consideration here. The existing bed to the Master Bedroom should therefore be retained, and adapted if necessary.

The scheme proposes the removal of noticeable amounts of Housden's own joinery work at ground and first-floor levels, in particular the well-crafted cupboard and shelving units above and adjacent to the bed in Bedroom 1, albeit to be substituted with more generous storage solutions tailored to the applicants' needs. The existing joinery is of value and should be retained as an example of Housden's work. It is noted that a new cupboard proposed to the wall opposite the bed and has been designed to appear similar to the existing shelving and cupboard. However, rather than removing the existing joinery above the bed, can the proposed cupboard opposite the bed be extended further to provide further storage? We would rather see a more standard looking cupboard on this side than lose the existing shelving and cupboard above the bed.

Response

Master Bed

It is agreed that the Master Bedroom bed will be retained as existing and that this is an important part of the building

Bedroom Joinery

The existing house has very limited storage throughout. The Master Bedroom is no exception and has very limited storage.

The proposed additional storage on the bathroom side of the Master Bedroom is designed to borrow from the existing joinery language throughout the house. The house is

remarkably consistent from a joinery perspective and it is our strong opinion that the new cupboard should borrow from this established language and not introduce a different design aesthetic or construction language.

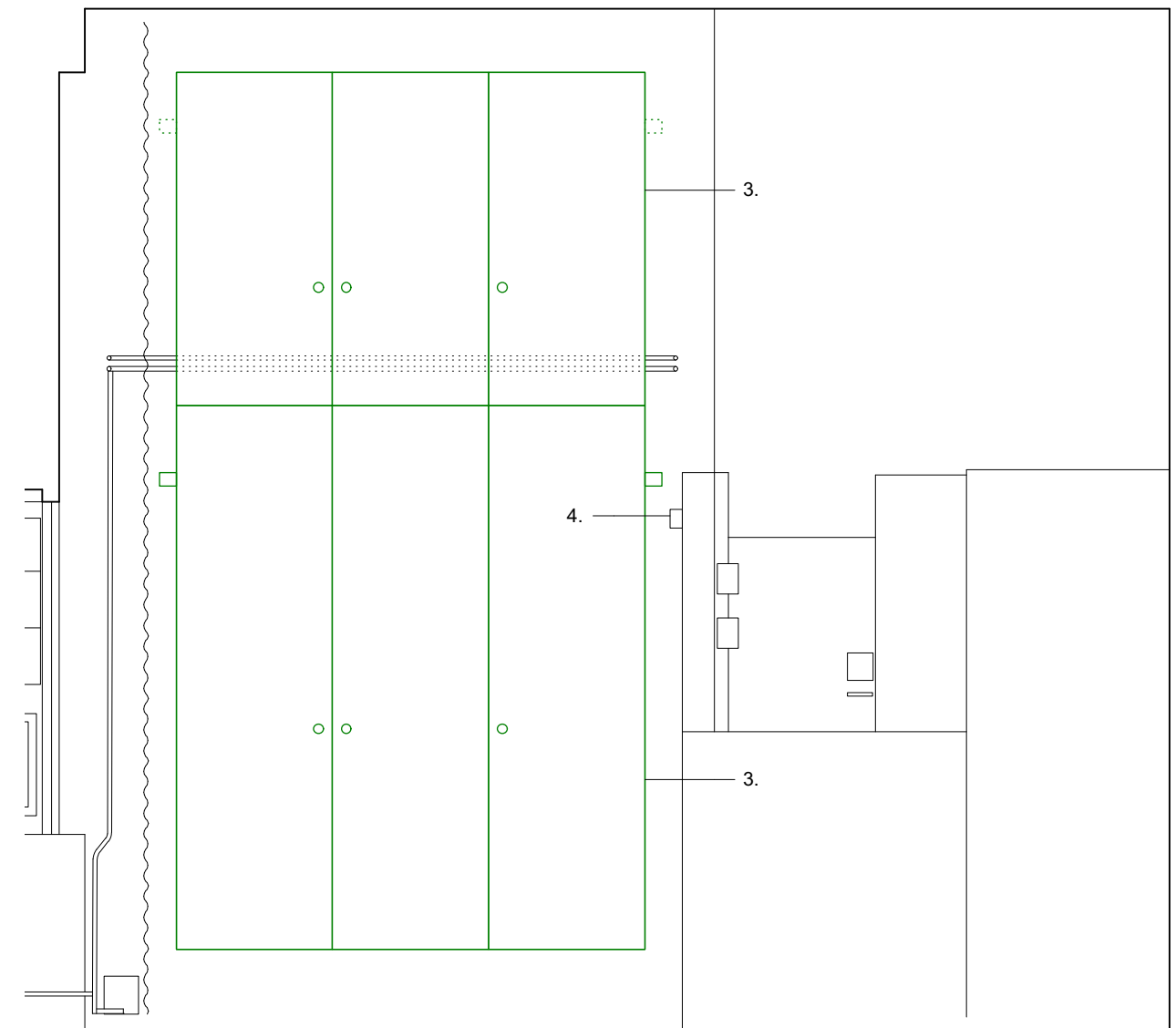
During the design process a taller cupboard idea was investigated in this location but was rejected for two reasons. The house is characterised by the free flowing services that are exposed on the wall. A taller unit would require the cupboard to hide the exposed pipes that run along the wall above. There is no location where joinery covers exposed services and we believe this would be an inappropriate detail to introduce that would disrupt the flow of the services visually. It was also felt that such a large cupboard would visually dominate the room and also not offer much practical storage given how inaccessible this would be. Please see attached the sketch produced during the design stages. We are keen to retain this new cupboard as originally submitted.

The existing joinery above and to the side of the Master Bed is part of Brian Housden's interest in amateur joinery and as we understand was built by Brian. The joinery work is of an amateur level and whilst the design language is of interest the quality and craftsmanship is clearly of a lesser value. Attached are a series of pictures showing the hobby nature of these items of joinery. Our position on these items of joinery is that they do not represent a high value part of the building fabric. When noted that all the concrete, tiles, services and windows are being maintained along with one example of all fitted joinery this shelving would be low on the list of elements that make up the special character of the house. We would argue that an improved and refined version of these removable joinery units will add to the overall experience of the house and would retain the valuable component of these joinery items namely the design intent and configuration in the room.

3.1 Master Bed



Image 1
Photo showing services crossing wall that prevent any new cupboard being taller than the services.



2 As Proposed Elevation 2
1:25@A3

Image 2
Sketch of early study looking at taller unit crossing services that was rejected as a proposal.

3.1 Master Bed



Image 3
The Master bedroom cupboard was part of Brian Housden's later dabbling in cabinetry making and is of relatively low workmanship quality.



Image 4
The Master bedroom cupboard was part of Brian Housden's later dabbling in cabinetry making and is of relatively low workmanship quality.

3.1 Master Bed



Image 5
Crude screw fixing details and split wood with heads not properly countersunk



Image 6
Metal fixing plates added to keep the unit together

3.1 Master Bed

The proposed new shelving and cupboards in the Master bedroom are designed to continue the buildings ethos of free floating joinery elements that do not touch the ground or side walls. They pick up explicitly on the existing joinery details whilst improving on both the quality and, crucially, the functionality required for a 5 person family house.

As illustrated by the subsequent images and diagrams, the existing design is placed at an awkward height making it difficult for Bernie to walk under the shelving and access the shelves from the side or back of the bed. By lifting the height of the cupboards and softening the corners to match the existing joinery in the other bedrooms the shelving will be easier to access with less risk of hitting her head.

The proposed new cupboard has been designed to increase storage over the existing unit, which provides minimal storage capacity due to the size and the design.

It is proposed that instead of retaining this example of joinery by Brian Housden, the existing wall hung joinery unit in Bedroom 2 is retained as an example of Brians work. It would be acceptable for us to review alternative locations in the house for this item to be kept as a compromise as it currently does not allow sufficient storage.



Image 7
Height of shelving in relation to Bernie head height hence proposal to lift the height

3.1 Master Bed



Image 7
Lack of storage means boxes are hidden behind bed and creates clutter in the house



Image 8
Access of shelving from bed which is currently the main storage in the bedroom

3.2 Ground Floor Bathroom Door

Planning Feedback

The proposed increase in the height of the bathroom doorway at ground floor level is acceptable in principle; however, the replacement of the existing door leaf designed by Housden is not appropriate. The existing door is ornamental in style and is part of the historic fabric of the building. Options should be explored for the retention and extension of this door rather than replacing it. This could include adapting the door by taking it off its hinges and adding a horizontal band at the bottom of the door to increase the height to match the proposed increased height of the doorway.

Response

Agreed that this is possible and can easily be achieved. We accept this suggestion.



Image 1
Existing bathroom door to be retained and adapted to suit marginal increase in height.

3.3 Reuse & Salvage

Planning Feedback

It is noted that it is proposed to extensively photograph the existing kitchen prior to demolition and removal. A programme of recording at minimum of all the principal rooms and bedrooms affected by such change will need to be stipulated by condition on any consents to be granted. However, little detail is provided of a re-use and/or salvage strategy within the submission. It is accepted that the concrete and tile elements will be difficult to remove in one piece, but the joinery items appear to be constructed and fixed to the building envelope in a reversible manner. Before a final officer assessment can be made, we require evidence that you have fully considered our pre-application advice, that you have explored relocating Housden's joinery work elsewhere in the building which may be a feasible option, and supplied us with details of reuse and salvage (which would be the subject of a condition).

With regard to the introduction of new bespoke fittings and fixtures to the building, we consider the designs to be of a high quality, seeking to address the sensitive context of the existing house, so do not wish to raise any objections per se.

Response

As part of the submission we have already undertaken the following salvage and relocation proposals:

Lower Ground

- Reuse and repositioning of multi directional seat module
- Reuse and repositioning of the kitchen tiled sink island

In response to the planning feedback the additional reuse and salvage items have been proposed:

- The reuse and adaption of the existing kitchen shelving joinery
- The reuse and retention of the bedroom joinery to Bedroom 2 as an example of Brian Housdens bedroom joinery.

The only items therefore being removed that are not being reused and relocated are:

- The beds to the kids bedrooms. It is proposed that these can not be salvaged.
- The Master Bedroom shelving
- The Master Bedroom cupboard

Of these items the clients are happy to propose the Master Bedroom cupboard be relocated to the proposed roof extension at a later stage. In the interim this item can be stored securely off site.

This would therefore mean that there are no other items to study potential reuse and salvage given that our scheme has gone to great length to retain as much fabric as possible whilst adapting the building to meet the needs of a modern family.

4.0 External Works

4.1 Garden Doors

Planning Feedback

We have no objection to the loss of the ground floor white-painted timber folding doors at the back of the property which have proven to be cumbersome and difficult to open. Two options have been given, and our preference is for thicker-sectioned steel doors with a powder-coated finish in white, as it will aesthetically be a closer match to the existing whilst providing a higher specification and more efficient folding door system. We have no objection to these doors incorporating double-glazed sealed units as they will read as separate to other fenestrations in the rear elevation and the proposed frames are large enough to take the extra thickness without impacting on their visual appearance.

We have no objection to the replacement of the timber decking as proposed for the rear first-floor balcony.

We have no objection to the replacement of the side door within the front lightwell with a window.

The proposed incorporation of storage under the front lightwell steps involves the insertion of access panelling to the flank of the steps. The panels will be barely visible from the street, if at all, and they are designed to read as a new element against the concrete. However, it is recommended that the panels are recessed back from the main edge of the steps to allow their jagged sculptural appearance to continue to be read. As the house as existing offers very little storage space, this proposal is welcomed as it will help to relieve the main areas of the house.

Response

Rear Doors

All exterior windows and doors are metal other than the rear garden doors that are timber. Our proposal to change these to a metal frame window has been made to ensure a consistency of material finish to the facades. Our concern with a white powdercoated metal finish is that there is a risk that a modern white powdercoated finish appears as PVC from a distance. Given that all major entry point doors are a natural metallic finish we would prefer a metallic finish to these doors. The proposed door system is a very high quality window system that most faithfully replicates the existing window frame system whilst achieving modern thermal performance.

The debate around white metal window frames and their resemblance to PVC windows is echoed by the decision at the grade II* listed Balfron Tower where the metal window frames were changed from white timber to grey metal.

Under Stair Storage

Our intention is to have both a shadow gap to the underside of the stair and a recessed face to the storage area to ensure the concrete stair reads as the primary element with a new addition that is separate from the concrete.



Image 1
Both the front door and the kitchen door (all operable doors) are a natural metallic finish.

4.1 Garden Doors



Image 2
Door at ground floor level to terrace on rear elevation is also metal to match the front door

Thank you.

Outpost
Purple Studio, Old Paradise Yard
20 Carlisle Lane, London SE1 7LG
+44 (0) 20 7928 2481

outpostlondon.com

