Heritage and Design Statement for
11 John Street, WC1N 2EB

Preface:

With this planning we aim to resubmit the project presented in 2016,
planning application N. 2016/0992/P approved on 17/08/2017.

The above planning was a Variation of condition 3 (approved plans) of planning application 2013/7230/P, which has now expired.

The differences from the approved planning 2016/0992/P concern the levels of the basement and ground floor only, and are the following:

1. No excavation work to join the two parts of the existing basements (see drawing A-310 and A-210)

2. The ground floor extension is slightly reconfigured (see drawing A- 211)

3. No changes have been done on the levels 01 to 05.

The following heritage and Design statement is the same presented in 2013 with the sole omission of all the parts relating to the excavation of the basement. There is no variation to the design principles presented at that date.

Listed Building Consent precedents:

This application takes in consideration the comments received in 2013 (re: 2013/7230/P) from the application's case officer Ms. Rachel Miller, and the conservation officer, Mr. Alan Wito
And in 2016 (Re: 2016/0992/P) from the application's case officer Ms Kate Phillips and the conservation officer, Mr. Alfie Stroud.

Basement:

- To separate in terms of both access and vision, was created between the original and the new (extended) areas of the basement.

- To retain Nibs and downstands.

- To retain Structure of the original wall as existing.

Ground Floor

- To separate, in terms of access and vision, between the original house and the rear extension, retaining the separation in the existing layout.

First floor:
- To retain the existing shutters of the window on the rear elevation are to be retained and to reuse them for the enlarged window.
- To retain nibs.

Second floor:
- To retain the The historic spine wall separating the front and rear rooms.
- To enclose the stair landing

Third floor

- No comments were made.

Fourth floor:

- To retain the rear elevation of the non original mansard roof, to preserve the coherence present in the roof forms of the terrace of Listed Buildings number 10 to 20 John Street.

1. Introduction

11 John Street – general principles of design proposal

The building at number 11 John Street forms part of a terrace of Georgian houses built between 1799 –1824 in Bloomsbury, Central London. The building is grade II listed (since 1951) and is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area (designated in 1968). For a period of over 100 years the building was used as offices, and during that time it underwent some significant alterations aimed at adapting it to its demanding commercial use. In 2008 the building's use was changed back to residential. This design proposal is a revision to the first comprehensive proposal to be submitted to Camden Council since the 2008 change of use. The proposal is based on the following principles:

This statement has been arranged to reflect our design process and highlight the considerations given to the different areas of the building: the analysis of each area starts with an attempt to understand the original situation by way of an historic investigation (19th century), continues with an assessment of the alterations made to the area during the time the building was used as offices (20th century), and concludes with the design proposal for the area (the actual works in light of the various design considerations such as layout, scale, landscape, sustainability etc. (21st century).
1.2 The sources considered in the formulation of the associated application
In the process of forming our planning and Listed building consent application we carried out a comprehensive historical investigation, as well as review and analysis of the relevant Planning policies and guidelines in force at the time of the application.
The following list gives the titles of the various sources which assisted us in carrying out the historic investigation and developing our design proposal:

1. Advice provided by Ms. Amy Spurdle, duty planning officer at Camden Council.
2. Advice provided by Ms. Kim Stabler of English Heritage
3. A research into all the planning applications on record which were submitted for the property and for other listed buildings in the area (both online and in paper format files at the Council).
4. Camden's Listed Building Statutory Registrar.
5. Practice Guide relating to PPS5 – Planning for the Historic Environment June 2012[1].
6. Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy.
7. Camden's Local Development Framework (LDF).
8. Camden's Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).
9. The London Plan.
10. Land Registry, title registers and title plans.

The historical search also included the following sources, in which no relevant information was found:

11. The Heritage Gateway.
12. The National Monument Record of English Heritage.

1 In March 2012 the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which superseded Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5). The Practice Guide for PPS5, however, remained a valid and Government endorsed document, and was taken into consideration with this application since it interprets in great detail the policies of PPS5 (which are very similar in terms of nature and intent to those of the newly published NPPF).

2. The application site and its surrounding area

2.1 The 19th century: the site and surrounding area at the time the building at number 11 John Street was built

It is likely that the area of the site, located on the north side of Theobald's Road, was open land until the 18th century. From this period onwards the area of Bloomsbury saw intensive growth and building as part of a general expansion of the City of London.

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal details the historic developments which contributed first to the traditional Medieval Manors being replaced by a variety of land uses, and later on to an increase in grander residential districts for wealthy families[2]. These residential districts were based on a distinctive grid and hierarchy, which is still very much present today.

Greenwood's Map of London, dating from 1827 (see image 1) shows the Bloomsbury area with its characteristic grid of more prominent streets and narrower, subordinated mews (for example North Mews – John Street – John's Mews – Robert Street, or Brownlow Mews – Doughty Street

- Doughty Mews – Millman Street). The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal refers to the clear hierarchy between the street and the mews evident throughout Bloomsbury[3].

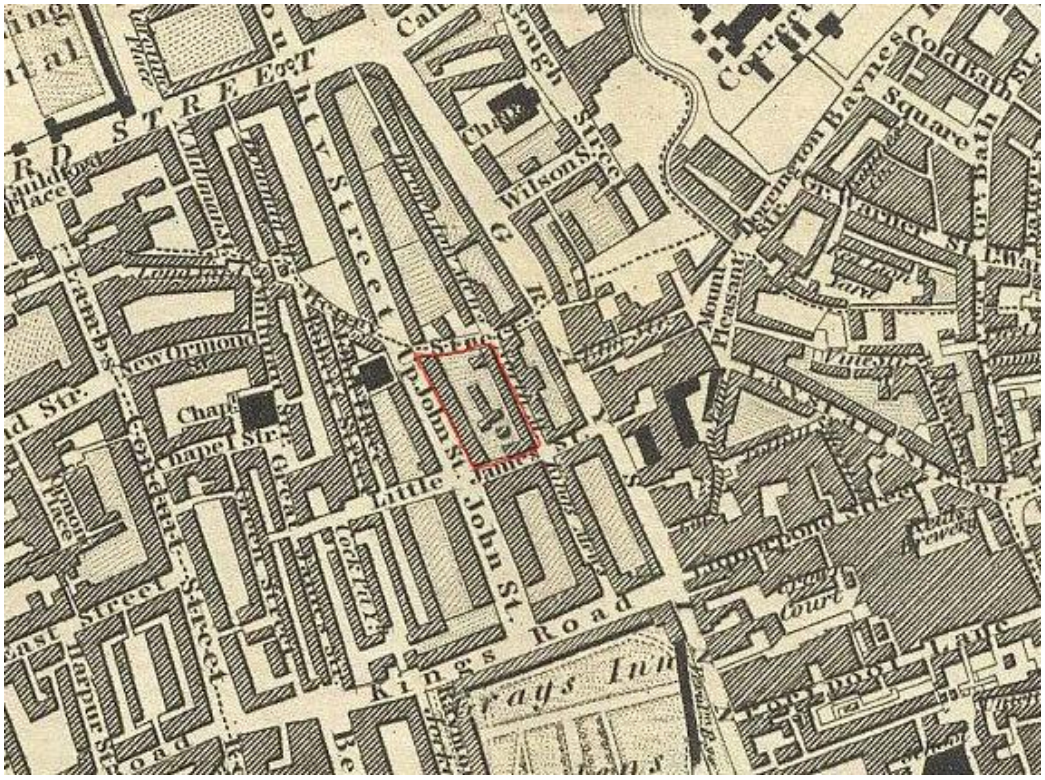

Image 1: Greenwood's map of London, 1827, showing the grid of streets and Mews and the urban block accommodating the application site.

2 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted April 2011), paragraph 3.3.

3 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal, paragraphs 5.175 and 5.189.

As shown on the map, the application site was accommodated within the urban block enclosed by John Street, Little James Street (which later became Northington Street), North Mews and Henry Street (which later became Roger Street). It is evident form the map that this block was originally divided into a terrace of higher townhouses (numbers 10-20 John Street) to the west, and a terrace of lower service buildings / stables on North Mews to the east. The area between these two terraces is shown as an open yard, accommodating two other smaller structures. This typical arrangement, which is repeated in a similar way in many other urban blocks in Bloomsbury, ensured that each family townhouse enjoyed some sort of open amenity space to the rear.

The yard was most probably dedicated to ancillary household functions such as laundry and washing, and provided light and fresh air to the ground floor of the townhouses. This could be regarded as a necessary compromise when designing dwelling houses for wealthy families (which traditionally owned large estates in the countryside) within the dense fabric of the growing city.

2.2 The 20th century: the transformation of the site and surrounding area from residential in character to commercial / office land uses

With the decline in demand for residential properties and the advent of the railways, hotel and office redevelopments began to appear in Bloomsbury around the turn of the 20th century. The change of use of existing family houses completed this trend, in order to fully address the growing need for more commercial land uses in the area. We estimate that the house at number 11 John Street was converted into offices around that time, along with a few other properties in the same terrace.

As part of the effort of adapting the traditional townhouses to their new commercial use, the new occupiers had to resort to extending their ground floors and basements to the rear in order to gain the additional necessary space for their commercial activity. Substantial extensions were built, often infilling the entire footprint of the site to the rear, and where additional floor-space was required areas in neighbouring extensions were bought, resulting in considerable changes to the original, simple division of the open yard to the rear of the terraced townhouses.

In the case of number 11 John Street, the property's plot was enlarged at some stage to both sides, annexing some areas to the rear area of number 10 and 12 John Street. This is evident from the location plan accompanying the January 1974 application, which shows the enlarged site footprint in red (see image 2).

Image 2: The location plan accompanying the 1974 Planning application, indicating the application site together with the annexed areas to the rear of number 10 and 12 John Street.

The rear footprint of the site continued to evolve as portions of rear extensions changed hands. A brief analysis of the site plans accompanying planning applications in following years shows that some of the property's area to the rear was purchased by the owners of the offices at number 10-12 North Mews, along with the thin triangular area to the rear of number 10 John Street (known as number 10 Northington Street).

While in the most part the main building at number 11 John Street preserved, externally, its original character and appearance, its site and surrounding area certainly has not. Not only the open amenity space to the rear has been completely built over by a ground floor rear extension (see Image 3), but it was also modified further, extended and reduced in size, to suit the changing needs of the companies who used the premises as their offices.

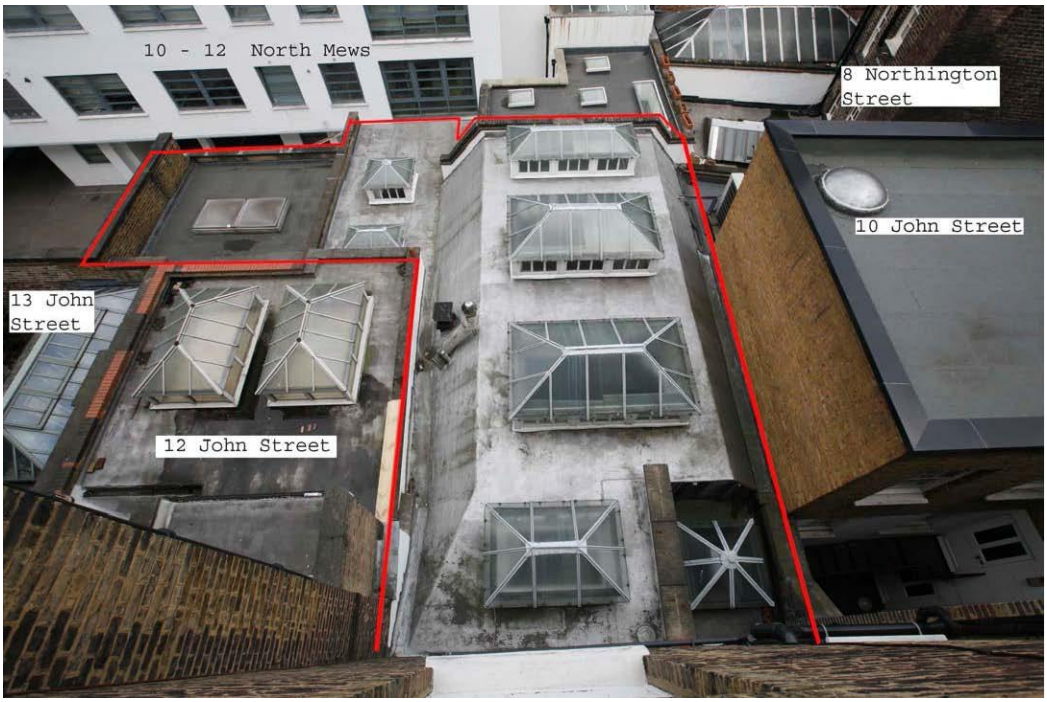

Image 3: A view from the upper rear windows of the property, showing the rear extensions at ground floor level covering the entire area of the site.

In addition, the traditionally lower service buildings / stables along North Mews to the rear have been replaced over the years by two large buildings (one of which is number 10-12 North Mews), which alter completely the traditional height / length proportion and hierarchy between the front street and the rear mews. In 1994 Planning permission was obtained for the conversion of the large property at 10-12 North Mews (overlooking the application site from the east) from offices into 14 residential flats, and for the erection of a roof storey with balconies (see image 4).

Image 4: A view to the roof balconies of the residential flats at 10-12 North Mews, overlooking the application site.

Other, more recent rear extensions and terrace extensions at first floor level of several neighbouring properties within the terrace of numbers 10-20 John Street and Northington Street

indicate the desire of most residents in the area to have their own form of amenity space (see image 5).

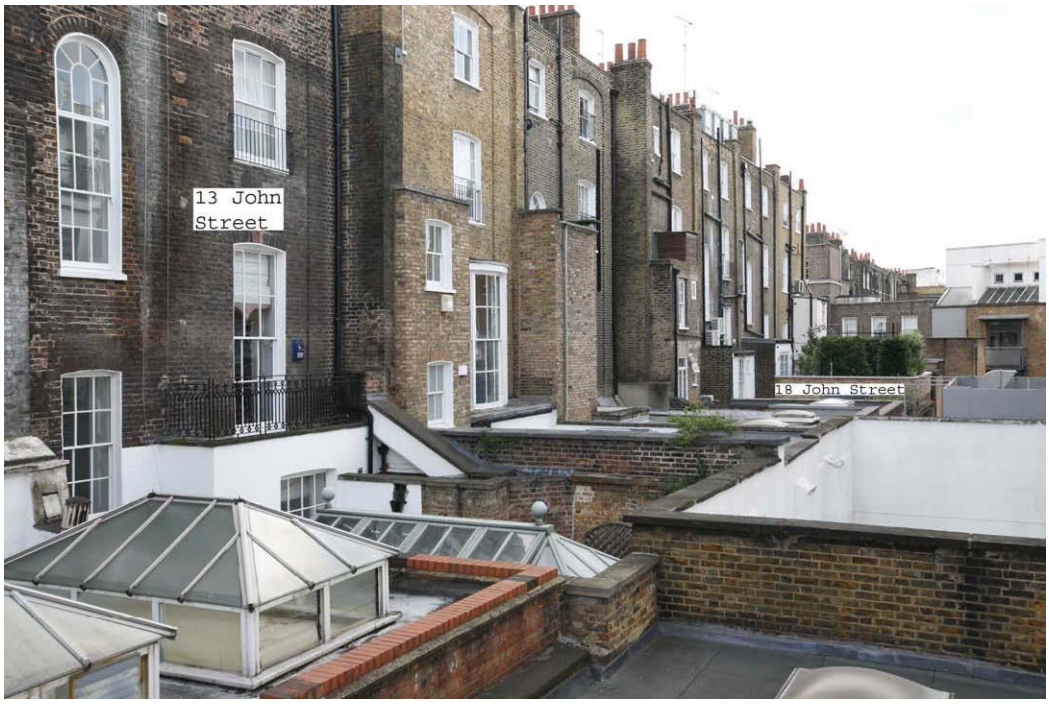

Image 5: A general view to the rear of numbers 10-20 John Street, showing a variety of ground floor rear extensions with skylights and first floor rear extensions / terraces.

In conclusion, the townhouses' rear open yard, which was once used both for ancillary household uses and amenity space, has become a collection of flat roofs -quite unsuitable for the reestablished residential use of most of the properties within the terrace.

2.3 <u>The 21st century: change of use back to residential -implications of proposed works to the site on the surrounding area</u>
<u>Note:</u> this paragraph refers solely to the visual and perceived impact of the proposed site (rear of original house) on neighbouring / surrounding properties. All other proposed works are internal. This paragraph, therefore, could be regarded as a summary of the external modifications of the project and their implications. The implications of the proposed works to the ground floor and basement rear extension in the context of the house itself and the way it functions, are dealt with in following paragraphs.

One of the most important design principles of our proposal was to reinstate
to certain extent the rear amenity space of the original townhouse. In practical terms this meant giving up on built area (parts of the non original ground floor and basement rear extension) in favour of a garden / green light well (a design approach which we carried on to the original building as well, as explained in following paragraphs) and providing a green roof on top of the retained parts of the extension.

We are confident that the neighbouring and surrounding properties would benefit from the proposed green features of number 11 John Street, despite the fact they would not have direct access to them: while the proposed garden at ground floor level and green atrium at basement level would serve as recreational areas for the occupants of the house, the foliage of the trees planted in them would still provide visual amenity to neighbouring and surrounding properties. The proposed semi -intensive green roof at first floor level, on the other hand, would benefit equally the occupants of the house and neighbouring and surrounding properties, as access would be allowed

for maintenance purposes only. The roof (accommodating low plants and bushes requiring low maintenance) would provide visual amenity, in line with the guidance given in Camden's Local Development Framework[4].

Further justification for the formation of a green amenity space in this specific area of Bloomsbury, as means of counterbalancing the lack of green spaces in the surrounding area, can be found in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal[5].

Apart from the green roof, the proposal also includes a small balcony at first floor level. When looking at the current rear window at first floor level from the outside (see image 6), one can see that the original arched window opening (mentioned also in Camden's Listed Building Statutory Registrar) was larger, and at some point it was reduced inside using white render. This suggests the existence of a rear accessible outdoor space adjacent to the door, most likely a balcony similar to the one of the neighbouring number 13 John Street. The proposed balcony reinstates to a certain extent that outdoor space.

Image 6: Existing window of rear room at first floor level, as viewed from the outside.

4 Camden's Local Development Framework, Paragraph 24.23 of Policy DP24.
5 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal, paragraph 5.174.

In addition, the proposed balcony echoes other balconies (see image 7) and small terraces which were added to neighbouring properties in recent years, as part of the trend of converting offices back into residential (the prime example of which is the rear terrace at No. 18 John Street, enlarged as part of Planning permission from 2011 – see image 8).

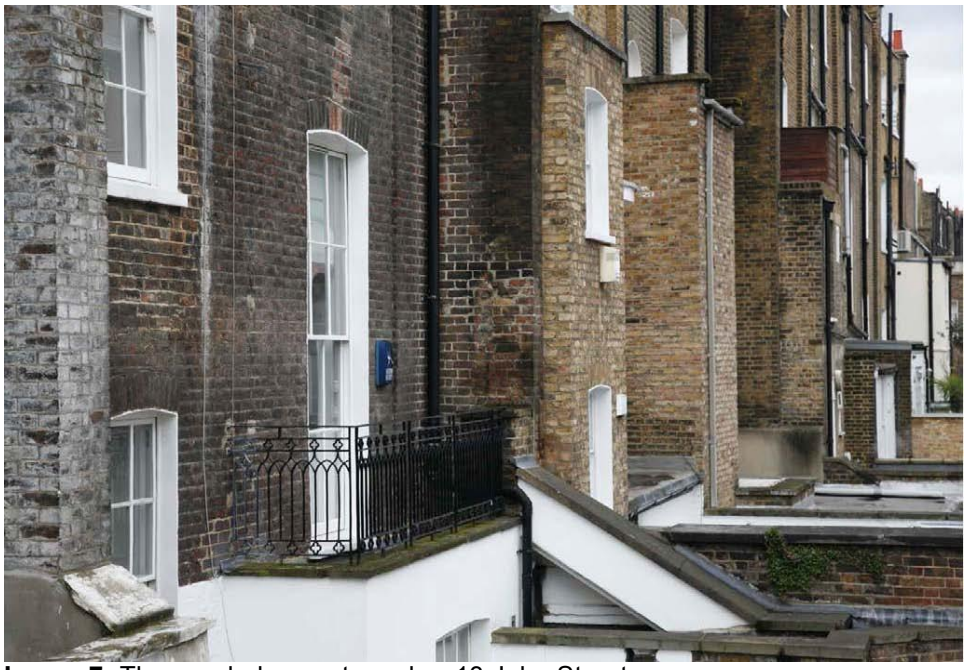

Image 7: The rear balcony at number 13 John Street.

Image 8: A view to the rear terrace of number 18 John Street.

The proposed balcony (2.45 x 4.2m) would be small in comparison to the 18 John Street terrace, and be partially hidden away by the wall of the adjacent small rear extension at No. 12 John Street and the large first floor rear extension of No. 10 John Street. This would also restrict considerably the nature of potentially disturbing activities it would facilitate.
The following summarizes the impact of the proposed site on neighbouring and surrounding properties:

Number 10 John Street – this property would benefit from a visual amenity in the form of a garden at ground floor level and an extensive green roof at number 11 John Street (visible from tits rear upper windows). The main issue in regards to this neighbouring property concerns the level of

overlooking from the proposed rear balcony at number 11 John Street to the void separating the original building at number 10 John Street from its large rear extension. As shown in image 9 below, from the proposed balcony there would be a direct line of vision solely to the door at ground floor level. The external floor at basement level would not be visible, and it should be taken into account that the void between the original building and the rear extension at number 10 John Street is merely a fire escape passage and is not normally
used as an external amenity space.

Image 9: A view down the void separating the original building at 10 John Street from its rear extension (right), and the same area as it will be seen from the edge of the proposed rear balcony of number 11 John Street (left).

Number 12 John Street – this neighbouring property would benefit even more from the proposed green roof provision, as the main section of the roof is located directly below its rear upper windows.

The other surrounding properties in close vicinity to number 11 John Street, namely numbers 10 and 8 Northington Street and the large building facing the site – number 10-12 North Mews, would benefit from its visual amenity of the proposed garden and green roof areas.

In conclusion, despite the fact the proposal retains part of the existing rear extension built volumes, it results in an overall reduction to their existing bulk and height. The green roof covering these volumes, together with the proposed garden at ground floor level and open atrium at basement level, would give the overall impression of an open amenity area. This would make a welcome improvement to the existing landscape of felted flat roofs and different size skylights, which is pretty much the view from most rear windows looking onto this large courtyard.

3. The ground floor and basement

3.1 <u>The 19th century: the original ground floor and basement</u>

The mid terrace townhouse at number 11 John Street is a typical Georgian townhouse built at the beginning of the 19th century as part of a speculative upmarket development designed for the wealthy.

Due to the necessity to accommodate as many houses as possible into one street, the terrace townhouse was tall and narrow with a long narrow garden or court behind and a coach house or stable at the rear of the plot served by a mews.

In specific reference to the lower storeys of the building, the house had a basement which accommodated its kitchen and possibly also a back kitchen or scullery as well as various stores – pantry and / or larder. The coal store extended under the pavement, so that the coal could be delivered without entering the basement. At the front, the basement looked onto a deep void below the street called the 'area', containing the 'area steps', which provided tradesmen with access directly into the kitchen. The ground floor accommodated rooms for socializing and recreation, and opened onto the court at the rear.

Camden's Listed Building Statutory Registrar (from October 1951) lists the original historic features common to the terraced town houses at numbers 10 to 20 John Street, with some specific features unique to individual houses. The following features are located in the lower storeys of the houses, of which one is unique to number 11:

- Rusticated stucco ground floors with band at 1st floor levels.
- Round-arched doorway with fanlight and C20 door (unique to No. 11 John Street).
- Interior: altered but noted to retain wooden fireplace with dentil cornice on ground floor (there are variations from one property to another).
- Stairs with shaped balusters and shaped ends in hallway with cornice formed of paired modillions (the reference is to the stairs from ground to second floor).
- Subsidiary features: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas.

3.2 The 20th century: the transformation of the building from a residential townhouse to offices in relation to the ground floor and basement

See also relevant notes on attached Structural Appraisal.

During the course of the years, as the Bloomsbury area developed and its nature evolved, the townhouse at number 11 John Street underwent some substantial changes and alterations. Arguably, the most significant change in terms of the long lasting consequences was its conversion into offices, which took place around the beginning of the 20th century.

We don't quite know the exact year in which the property started to be used for commercial purposes, however, from 1901 it was the office of the Royal Oak Benefit Society, who remained at the premises until 1980 when it ceased to exist. One of the more evident contributions of the Society to the building is the distinctive large black clock on the front elevation at first floor level, which bears the writing "Royal Oak".

By the time the building was listed, in 1951, it had already been in operation as offices for at least half a century. In these decades it underwent some significant modifications, which affected both its form of plan and original historic features. We were not able to trace any documentation of these early modifications and can therefore presume they were carried out without any Planning permission or other form of consent from the authorities. For number 18 John Street, which forms part of the same terrace and was listed at the same time as number 11, there is evidence showing the building underwent some significant alterations in 1931 in order to adapt it to its 'new' office use.

It is therefore not surprising that the Listed Building Statutory Registrar (mentioned above) refers solely to some specific features such as fire places, arched entrance doors and part of stairs, which are merely the few remains of what were once splendid Georgian townhouses.

In the sixty years since the Registrar was compiled further changes and alterations took place, most of them without any form of documentation. For example, the Registrar makes specific

reference to a wooden fireplace with dentil cornice located at ground floor level, which was probably demolished after the 1975 application was granted.
From the mid 1970s a sequence of Planning applications and land registry modifications can be traced for number 11 John Street, the majority of which were approved. The applications were mostly for alterations to the building to suit the changing needs of the offices which occupied it. The following summary gives a brief review of the applications / modifications relevant to the ground floor and basement and the physical changes which resulted from their implementation (other planning applications relevant to the upper floors are detailed in following paragraphs):

December 1975 -planning application was made on behalf of the Royal Oak Benefit Society for the retention of steel columns and beams with enclosing concrete and plaster for structural fire protection, consequential alterations to joinery, plasterwork and finishes and the removal of fireplaces.

The significance of this application, other than the proposal to remove some historic features (fireplaces), is the presence of steel columns and beams at that time (see image 12). Given the chronological proximity to the January 1974 application for an additional mansard storey to be used as offices (application detailed in following paragraphs), it is reasonable to assume that the steel columns and beams referred to were introduced to the lower floors as part of the strengthening of the original building to enable the construction of the roof (granted in April 1975). The columns and beams are still visible today at all the original storeys of the building, and could be very much regarded as the most alien, obstructive element to have been introduced to the listed building in its long history of changes and amendments.

Image 12: A non original structural column, as viewed at basement level.

July 1978 – the small corner area to the rear of the ground floor rear extension was purchased by number 10-12 North Mews, resulting in an unsympathetic modification to the large space at the rear of the property (see above paragraph 2.2).

February 1995 – planning application was made for numbers 11 & 27 John Street on behalf of Simmons Cohen Fine for erection of inter-building communication equipment at roof level.

The application was accompanied by drawings showing the existing and proposed layouts and elevations of both numbers 11 and 27 John Street. The significance of this application is not so much in the proposal itself, but rather in the presence of layouts and elevations which can be compared to the 1974 drawings and to the situation as it is today. From 1995 to the present day further changes were made to the building, mostly affecting the form of plan (both in the original

and extended parts of the building), all of which carried without Planning permission or Listed building consent.

September 2008 – planning application was made on behalf of Lesley Browne Property Consultants for change of use and works to convert the property from office (use class B1) to residential single family dwelling (C3). The application was granted in January 2009. The application was accompanied by drawings showing the existing and proposed layouts and elevations.

The significance of this application is first and foremost in the acknowledgement of the Council that the office use, which has been in place for more than a century, was no longer suitable for the application site. It is evident that it was the applicant's intention to make the change of use with minimal effort, which was reflected in the manner the conversion was carried out after the planning grant was obtained. The property was formally converted into residential, but its required physical adaptation into residential was not carried out. While no changes to the form of plan were proposed, it should be noted that works were carried out to the property not in accordance with the proposed drawings (or later alterations were carried out without planning permission / Listed building consent). These mainly concern the blocking of the double doors between the entrance hall and dining room at ground floor level, the retention of the kitchen at third floor level, the omission of partitions around staircase at fourth floor level and other dividing partitions as well as the construction of a hot water cylinder enclosure at the same floor level.

In conclusion, it would be fair to say that the ground floor and basement of the property at number 11 John Street bear little resemblance to the Georgian mid terrace townhouse built in the early 19th century. The way the property evolved during the course of the years did little favour to its original character, style, proportions and individual features: it was constantly modified, both internally and externally, to suit the needs and demands of the time, and during this long period very little consideration was given to preserving its historic significance.

When faced with the task of designing a restoration project for the property, the option of identifying, preserving and restoring the remaining historic features, character and qualities of the building, while at the same time adapting it in a sensitive way to the modern lifestyle and needs of its future occupants and society in general, appears to us to be the most suitable direction.

3.3 The 21st century: the proposal -ground floor and basement

See also relevant notes on attached Structural Appraisal.

3.3.1 Ground floor and basement – design principles

Our main goal with the proposed ground floor and basement design was to achieve simple, logical, bright and multifunctional spaces, which are adaptable and in so being provide maximum flexibility to the occupiers of the house.

We wanted to achieve the above by incorporating a green amenity area which would provide natural daylight and fresh air, and in addition allow the family to stay in it for most hours of the day. To this effect we included a lounge, family and restroom at ground floor level.

The existing ground floor and basement could be divided into two distinctive sections: a. the original building on John Street and b. the rear extension.

a. The original building: The original section of the ground floor and basement accommodates a combination of original and non original features, yet still accounts for most of the original features of the house (identified in the above paragraph 3.1). We see value in the meticulous conservation and restoration of the original features, as they provide a meaningful point of reference to the original Georgian townhouse as well as the wider context of the surrounding area and its distinctive character. A detailed indication of the proposed treatment for each feature and an assessment of their impact on the special interest of the listed building is given in paragraph 3.3.8 below (features to be retained, refurbished or completely restored, if missing).

b. The non original features, the result of the numerous modifications which took place throughout the years, have been assessed on the basis of their suitability to the proposed design and its objectives. In particular at ground floor but also at basement level, the non original plain columns will be removed as they prove significantly detrimental to the Georgian character of the original spaces. The introduction of new elements to the section of the original building focuses principally on our main objective of linking together all areas and functions of the house in a harmonious manner. This is achieved by the introduction of a multi level garden / green area, which is assessed in more detail in the following paragraph 3.3.2 -Landscape.

In conclusion, we propose to conserve and restore all the significant historic features present in the original part of the ground floor and basement, both internally and externally. Where changes are proposed, they either regard non-original features (such as the plain columns or partitions introduced to serve the office use), or aimed at addressing significant design issues such as amenity, sustainability and accessibility, which regard all residential developments.

The rear extension: The existing rear extension was built to serve the office use of the building. Due to its generally low suitability for the re-established residential use, the extension appears to allow more freedom in design, which, considering the sustainability objectives of the proposal, calls for a more contemporary intervention.

The challenge of “bringing new life” into existing historic buildings, while at the same time preserving their historic significance, is referred to in the PPS5 Practice Guide. The Practice Guide highlights the need for proactive and intelligent management of heritage assets and acknowledges that introducing required changes to the historic environment as part of its adaptation to modern life would increase the chances of successful, long term conservation[6].

In regards to contemporary design within the historic environment, the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal mentions a few examples of recent developments opting for

The Bloomsbury Management Strategy, basing its recommendations on the Appraisal, claims in addition that a high quality successful modern design can enhance the Conservation Area[8].

The PPS5 Practice Guide makes reference to new buildings within historic areas, but it equally applies to interventions and changes to existing listed buildings. Its general conclusion is that new buildings do not have to copy their older neighbours in detail, but rather form together a harmonious group[9].

In conclusion, taking account of the above guidelines, our design aims to achieve the restoration of the rear section of the property not by the introduction of traditional features which may or may not have been part in the original townhouse, but rather by bringing back the essence of this area to what it originally was: an amenity space for the main house. The open amenity space addresses the guidance given in Camden’s Local Development Framework, which encourages designers to consider the importance of open spaces and gardens in the context of a densely built-up borough[10] . In addition to the garden, the non original section of the ground floor

accommodates a study and a family room, all of which are recreational functions for the whole family which act as closed amenity areas.

6 Practice Guide of Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) -chapter 2, points 6 and 7.
contemporary but contextual design, rather than the traditional approach of meshing sensitively with the older fabric7.

3.3.2 Ground floor and basement – landscape

The landscape aspect is addressed in our design by the introduction of a series of multi-level green areas to the house. Green areas in upper levels are referred to in the following paragraphs.

As mentioned in paragraph 2.1 above, it is quite likely that the townhouse at number 11 John Street never had a garden in the present sense of the word. However, when considered in the context of a modern residential family dwelling, we regard the garden as a highly important necessary amenity without which the re-established use would never be complete. In our design, the garden is a feature which provides a link between the different areas of the ground floor and basement, a focal point and valuable amenity space to the occupiers of the house. As detailed in paragraph 2.3 above, it also provides visual amenity to neighbouring and surrounding properties. In addition, it is an important contributor to sustainability. As such, the garden could be considered as the principal feature of our design, a sort of a spinal cord linking and providing valuable amenity to all internal spaces.

Camden's Local Development Framework refers to the importance of outdoor amenity space for residents living in a dense urban environment, and distinguishes between large development schemes, where the provision of gardens would be expected, and smaller developments where the provision of balconies, roof gardens or communal space could be satisfactory[11] .

7 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal, paragraph 3.5.
8 The Bloomsbury Management Strategy, paragraph 5.31.
9 The PPS5 Practice Guide, point 121 in chapter 3 (relating to policy HE10).
10 Camden's Local Development Framework, paragraph 24.5 of policy DP24.
11 Camden's Local Development Framework, Paragraph 26.12 of policy DP26.

If to go by the recommendation given above, the application site may fall, at first glance, within the category of locations where the provision of a garden would not be realistic. This is merely due to the fact its rear extension covers the whole area of the site to the rear. A roof garden at first floor level could therefore appear to be the most natural and practical solution. However, the original rear open yard made its main contribution in terms of natural light and fresh air at ground floor level, which is also the main entrance level, and in our view this should also be the case today.

The reinstatement of a rear garden at ground floor level implies the demolition of at least part of the existing rear extension. Despite the fact the demolition of existing built spaces in favour of open spaces is rather unusual as far as refurbishment projects are concerned, we believe that in the case of the application site it would be highly beneficial as it would provide, in addition to the valuable amenity space, also a focal point to the two living storeys of the house and a link between their varied functions:

- At basement level, the open green atrium is integrated with the study and provides some natural daylight and visual / functional amenity to these otherwise relatively dark internal spaces. A further open green area is provided at the front 'area' (originally used to access the basement kitchen and service rooms).

- The central location of the main open garden at ground floor level designates it as the main focal point of the house, around which most of the activities the family does together take place.

The highly important role of the basement atrium and ground floor garden is emphasized further by the fact that internal spaces not immediately adjacent are provided with views to them (a principle applied also to the garden areas at upper storeys, as detailed in paragraphs below). This creates a direct connection between internal and external spaces and contributes towards a sense of curiosity induced by the ever changing presence of nature. The garden, in actual fact, is perceived to be larger than what it is.

In conclusion, the proposed garden can be viewed as a new feature, introduced not so much for restoration purposes but rather to provide a much needed, valuable amenity to the house and link its different original and non original spaces.

Further details regarding the contribution of the garden to the layout and sustainability of the proposal are given in the respective paragraphs below.

3.3.3 Ground floor and basement – layout, scale and proportions

When designing the proposed ground floor and basement (which have a larger footprint than the upper storeys) our aim was to retain as much as possible the scale and proportions of the original townhouse at the original areas of the building.
The attached (updated) Basement Impact Assessment deals in detail with the implications of the enlargement of the basement.

The PPS5 Practice Guide highlights the importance of not allowing new work to historic buildings to dominate the original asset or its setting in either scale, material or as a result of its siting, rather than focusing on replicating a particular style[12] . Since our design proposal involves no visible extension from the outside, we aimed to implement the above guidance in the new elements we wish to introduce. At the original section of the ground floor and the external front open 'area' of the basement (referred to in the above paragraph 3.1), we aimed to identify and faithfully restore the character and remaining historic features of the Georgian townhouse, linking, in the case of the ground floor, the well defined spaces accommodating them with the non original spaces to the rear through the use of green features boarded by glass partitions. This way, rather than 'open space' we form a continuous series of well defined spaces, based on the scale and proportions of the original house.

The new elements not only don't compete with the old, but rather serve to enhance the continuity, quality and amenity of the existing internal spaces.

3.3.4 Ground floor and basement – materials

In regards to the new materials used in our design, our general approach was either to match the type, pattern and colour of existing materials, or, where appropriate, introduce glass partitions which on one hand contribute their own unique qualities and on the other hand integrate harmoniously with the existing traditional materials.

The various guidelines and design policies highlight on many occasions the importance of the treatment of materials in regards to historic buildings. The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Management Strategy mentions the negative effect on the appearance of historic buildings caused by the use of inappropriate materials[13]. Camden's Supplementary Planning Document CPG 1 refers to the importance of using durable materials of high quality, particularly in regards to projects in conservation areas or involving listed buildings[14] .

In our proposed design, we aimed to conserve all the original materials of the house (or repair them to the highest level where damaged). The new internal and external materials we propose to introduce aim to achieve the same objective as mentioned in the above paragraph 3.3.3 in reference to layout, scale and proportions.

As a starting point, we made the following classification: -Original and non original external materials, and; -Original and non original internal materials. Externally, most materials currently present at ground floor and basement levels are either original or blend very well with the original materials in terms of texture and colour. Since no external alterations are proposed to the original building at the lower storeys, the treatment of external materials mostly comes down to their conservation and repair.

12 The PPS5 Practice Guide, point 178 in chapter 6 (in relation to addition and alteration).
13 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Management Strategy, paragraph 5.32.
14 Camden's Supplementary Planning Document CPG 1, Paragraph 2.12.

The following list gives a brief review of how each external material at ground floor and basement levels will be treated:

- White stucco on the front elevation – original, mentioned in the Listed Building Statutory Registrar (see above paragraph 3.1). To be retained and repaired to a high standard where necessary.
- Timber main entrance door and fanlight – original, mentioned in the Listed Building Statutory Registrar (see above paragraph 3.1). To be retained and repaired to a high standard where necessary.
- Timber windows on front elevation – original sash windows at basement level and non original windows at ground floor level (no muntins on the two windows next to the entrance door) – see reference in paragraph 3.3.6 – Sustainability.
- Cast iron railing at front – mostly original, to be retained. The non original 'area steps' rail going down to basement level will be replaced with new to match original (as present in some of the neighbouring properties of the same terrace).
- External floor finish at front – original stone finish at front landing leading to main entrance door at ground floor level will be retained and repaired where necessary. The non-original floor finish of the basement 'area' and 'area steps' will be replaced with new to match original texture and pattern ('area steps' in cast iron -as present in some of the neighbouring properties of the same terrace).

Internally, much fewer materials are original. These, however, play an important role in the historic significance of the building, and would therefore all be preserved and repaired with care to match original pattern and colour where necessary. At ground floor level the original internal materials mainly come down to timber (window shutters and panelling, shaped balusters and shaped ends at main staircase, cornice formed of paired modillions at hallway). A few timber doors and architraves are also original, whereas the skirting is not.
Camden's Supplementary Planning Document CPG 1 refers specifically to the introduction of new contemporary materials as means of reflecting present times as part of a general conservation approach. It states that while the use of traditional materials in historic areas would be most appropriate in most cases, modern materials such as steel and glass could also be introduced, in a sensitive and non-dominating manner, as means of distinguishing new fabric from the original[15] .

The main contemporary material present in our design at ground floor and basement levels is glass, used mostly for external partitioning. The transparent nature of the glass allows the opening of views between spaces, as well as the provision of natural light to internal areas. Glass partitioning is present mainly at the non original ground floor and basement rear spaces, in order not to undermine the integrity of the original front spaces.

3.3.5 Ground floor and basement – access

Camden's Supplementary Planning Document CPG 1 highlights the importance of allowing everyone easy access to historic buildings, regardless of their level of mobility[16] .
In this regard, the challenge presented by the house at number 11 John Street concerns mainly the internal layout of the property. The multiple storeys and the relatively small area of each floor result in increased use of the stairs, which inevitably was one of the most important characters of the townhouse since it was built (see following paragraphs relating to the upper storeys).

The split level ground floor adds to the difficulty in adapting the property to users with reduced level of mobility (mainly wheelchair users). In addition, the very limited floor-space at the upper floors does not permit the introduction of a lift.

Given the above restrictions, our aim was to achieve a layout which would allow occupants to stay for longer periods of time at the same floor level, without the constant need of going up and down the stairs. The natural storey to designate for this purpose is the ground floor, which, in addition to being the entrance floor, also has the larger floor-space and enjoys the most direct connection with the outside. In our design, the ground floor accommodates a dining, kitchen (cooking facilities), an open garden, a lounge, a music room / playroom, a family room and a lavatory (added specifically to facilitate a long stay). This way, most of the time dedicated to family life is spent at the ground floor, which contributes towards easier access within the property.

As for the accessibility of the property within its urban context, Camden's Local Development Framework refers to the priority given by the Council to developments that promote walking, cycling and public transport use[17] .

The location of the application site in Inner London means it has excellent public transport accessibility (Chancery Lane tube station is only 7 minutes walk away, and the nearby Gray's Inn Road and Theobalds Road are served by a large number of buses).

3.3.6 Ground floor and basement – sustainability

Given the clear advantages to both future occupants and the environment as a whole, achieving high sustainability and introducing measures of addressing climate change is one of the most important objectives of our design proposal. The fact that the proposal is for works to a historic building presents a challenge on one hand, but on the other hand allows for quite a few targets to be met through the continued use of existing materials and features which already achieve high sustainability standards.

The PPS5 Practice Guide relates to this issue in the context of addressing climate change. In addition to the continued use of existing high quality materials, it mentions the compact layout many historic buildings have. In fact, it finds a very close link between the retention and reuse of historic buildings and sustainability[18] .

15 Camden's Supplementary Planning Document CPG 1, Paragraph 4.7.
16 Camden's Supplementary Planning Document CPG 1, Paragraph 3.27.

The Practice Guide also relates to the sustainability aspect of incorporating contemporary features as part of the restoration of the listed building, highlighting the role of local planning authorities in promoting high quality contemporary designs inspired both by the heritage assets accommodating them and by their local context. In other words, by adapting the heritage asset to modern life and needs an important contribution is made towards sustainability, since the development would be likely to last longer before its replacement is considered[19] .
Camden's Local Development Framework also relates to the contribution made towards addressing climate change by adapting historic buildings in conservation areas, thus preserving their special interest and ensuring their long term survival[20] . It also lists several measures to tackle climate change and improve the sustainability of a listed building[21] . The following summary gives the sustainability / climate change tackling measures addressed in the present proposal in

relation to the ground floor and basement, including measures referred to in Camden's Local Development Framework.

17 Camden's Local Development Framework, Policy DP17.
18 The PPS5 Practice Guide, chapter 3, point 21 (relating to policy HE1).

Some of the measures have been incorporated at the current stage of the design, others will be incorporated at Building Control and Construction stages (and could therefore be conditioned, if necessary):

a) Layout enabling prolonged stays at same floor level: As mentioned in the above paragraph 3.3.5, the fact that the ground floor has been designed to enable prolonged stay would enable keeping the upper storeys of the house unheated or heated to a much lesser extent. This would make a significant saving in energy and therefore contribute towards sustainability.
b) Thermal insulation: The insulation of existing and new elements would make an important contribution towards energy retention and sustainability. In our design proposal, new insulation meeting the standards given in approved document L will be introduced at basement level for the floor and walls of the rear extension excavated area.
c) Open atriums and garden: The open green atrium at basement level and open garden at ground floor level are two new elements which would make an important contribution towards sustainability: they would provide a valuable external recreational space for the occupiers of the house and allow daylight and fresh air (natural ventilation) to enter previously enclosed and less well lit spaces. They would also contribute in the way of biodiversity.
d) Rainwater harvesting: At both basement and ground floor levels, our design proposal allows for a rainwater harvesting system to be provided at the green open atrium and garden. Captured rainwater will be reused within the property for a variety of uses, as suggested in paragraph 23.8 of policy DP23 of Camden's Local Development Framework.
e) Introducing a high efficiency mechanical and electrical systems: The proposed design allows for the inclusion of a high efficiency condensing boiler at the basement and energy efficient light fittings. Further details regarding specific make and model of mechanical and electrical equipment will be given at the Building Control stage.

In conclusion, the sustainability aspect is the most significant design consideration as far as the long term implications of the design are concerned. Meeting the high sustainability targets set above would ensure the house at number 11 John Street would be kept in its re-established, appropriate residential use for many years to come.

Our aim was to meet as many of the 16 lifetime homes standards as possible, as defined in paragraph 6.5 of policy DP6 of Camden's Local Development Framework. The following list reviews how each of the lifetime homes standards relevant to the ground floor and basement was dealt with:

- Criterion 1 – Parking: not applicable.
- Criterion 2 -Approach to dwelling from parking: not applicable.
- Criterion 3 – Approach to all entrances: this criterion is not met as the existing approach includes two steps from street level to internal floor level. Due to the fact the entrance area is an original feature, no alterations are proposed.
- Criterion 4 – Entrances: this criterion is partially met by the fact the entrance will be illuminated, have level access over the threshold and have effective clear opening greater

than 800mm. It will also have adequate weather protection, but due to the existing differences between internal and external floor levels would not have level external landing.

- Criterion 5 – Communal stairs and lift: not applicable.
- Criterion 6 – Internal doorways and hallways: this criterion is met as existing doorways and hallways meet the minimal width given in this standard. Where new doorways and hallways are introduced, they would all meet this criterion.
- Criterion 7 – Circulation space: this criterion is met in the sense that there would be sufficient circulation space for a wheelchair user to turn and circulate within the proposed spaces of the house. However, due to existing changes in level and the lack of a lift, access for wheelchair users would most probably not be possible.
- Criterion 8 – Entrance level living space: this criterion is fully met, since the entrance level was designed to include all facilities to enable the prolonged stay of occupiers.
- Criterion 9 -Potential for entrance level bed-space: this criterion is fully met as the family room could easily accommodate a bed and be used as a temporary bedroom.
- Criterion 10 – Entrance level WC and shower drainage: this criterion is partially met by the fact there is a WC compartment provided, and a shower could potentially be added above the stairs going down from the family room.
- Criterion 11 – WC and bathroom walls: this criterion is fully met and applies to all proposed WCs and bathrooms of the house.
- Criterion 15 – Glazing and window handle heights: this criterion is fully met since existing window openings in the areas designated to be the living space at ground and first floors all have sill level of less than 800mm. At ground floor and basement areas glazed partitions separate the internal spaces from the external, thus creating a very strong connection between the two.
- Criterion 16 – Location of service controls: this criterion is fully met since all service controls will be installed so they comply with the given standards.

19 The PPS5 Practice Guide, point 44 (relating to policy HE3).
20 Camden's Local Development Framework, Policy DP25, Paragraph 25.4.
21 Camden's Local Development Framework, Policy DP22.

3.3.7 Ground floor and basement – Lifetime Homes standards

3.3.8 Ground floor and basement – schedule of proposed works and method statement

The proposed works to the ground floor and basement relate to the analysis given in the above paragraphs relating to the proposal. The following schedule and method statement specify the proposed intervention at the lower storeys of the building, detailing also the proposed treatment of the historic features present at each area:

Basement:

Photos

Image 13: Front basement area: non original columns; out-of –character radiators; plasterboard ceiling with spot lights; moisture on walls.

Image 14: The arched passage to the front area of the basement below the pavement, accommodating a non original kitchen area.

Image 15: Basement staircase enclosure: non original stairs from ground floor; exposed ducts; non original doors; out-of-character ceiling mounted light.

Existing state:

Internally

- Layout: a collection of run down dilapidated rooms, the majority of which are small and lack natural daylight. Basement is served by cheap internal stairs fit for office use.
- Flooring: cheap laminate floor or carpet, both in very bad condition,
- Walls: No cornice; non original / double skirting at places.
- Lighting: spotlights located in ceiling to fit office arrangement – energy inefficient. At other areas bulky out-of-character ceiling mounted lights.
- Heating: cheap radiators with external pipe-work.
- Windows and external door: some are not original; non original metal bars on windows.
- Other features: plain out-of-character columns in the centre of the main space and staircase enclosure wall; a shabby kitchenette and toilets.
- General condition: extensive moisture and condensation problems in walls.

Externally

- an out-of-character metal rail to stairs going down to light-well.
- Non original pipe-work on external light-well walls.

Design objectives for basement:

- To form two separate areas with two separate functions: the area located below the original house will be used as a family room. Adjacent to it, below the street pavement, there will be a small bedroom. This area will be accessed by either the reinstated external ‘area steps’ or by the new internal stairs from ground floor. The rear, non original area of the basement (located below the ground floor rear extension) will be accessed only through stairs leading down from the ground floor rear extension.

- To introduce a small open green atrium at basement level and integrate it as part of the other green areas of the house, thus providing landscape, natural light and ventilation to the darker areas of the basement.
- To find a new, relevant use for the existing spaces below the street pavement so that they form an integral part of the house and contribute towards its sustainability.

Proposed works to front basement area:

- Demolish non original supporting columns and non original stairs from ground floor and make good.
- Demolish non original 'area steps' and rail and make good.
- Provide new floor and wall tanking to the entire basement area, and insulate existing floors to meet Building Regulations requirements.
- Dismantle and cart away all existing radiators and pipe-work.
- Strip existing flooring and provide new wooden flooring with under-floor heating throughout.
- Deepen existing spaces below pavement, convert one of them into a bedroom.
- Provide new water and electric systems throughout.
- Dismantle and cart away existing door and window with bars at basement 'area', and provide a new entrance door and side window.
- Provide new external stairs and handrail to basement 'area', to match original stairs and rail of neighbouring properties. Provide new internal stairs from the ground floor.
- Form a small green external area at the original front 'area'.

Proposed works to rear basement area:

- Demolish all small existing rooms at the rear and make good.
- Excavate by way of underpinning below existing ground floor rear extension to deepen the existing basement (see recommendations given in attached Basement Impact Assessment).
- Construct external green atrium
- Provide soil and plants for external green atrium.

<u>Ground floor:</u>

Photos –

Image 16: The main open space of the existing rear extension, with its dilapidated carpet and office-like light fittings.

Image 17: The existing out-of-character kitchen at the original part of the ground floor.

Image 18: A view to one of the internal spaces within the ground floor rear extension, demonstrating the low level of natural daylight entering from the skylight above.

Existing state:

Internally

- Layout: clear separation between original house and rear extension: the original house retained more or less its plan form and the rear extension is perceived as a random collection of rooms suitable for offices.
- Flooring: red carpet at original area, vinyl of poor quality at kitchen and entrance areas, blue, run down carpet at rear extension areas.
- Walls: original cornice at entrance hall. Non original cornice at front room; no cornice at other areas; non original skirting throughout.
- Lighting: a random collection of office rectangular pendants, modern / contemporary pendant / ceiling mounted light fittings. Exposed electric cables throughout.
- Heating: metal radiators.
- Windows and external door: non original sash windows to the front. The three windows and various size roof-lights at the rear extension are of no historic or other value. The front door and semicircular fanlight above are original; original timber shutters and casings; original timber panelling around windows.
- Internal doors: internal door at entrance area with glass panel above is non original and does not respect the existing original cornice pattern. Most internal doors and architraves are non original and are rather modern in character.
- Plain out-of-character columns and semi columns at original area of house; a cheap, modern out-of-character kitchen.
- General condition: decent at some specific areas of the original house, but generally dilapidated and run down in most ground floor areas. Most fittings are of low quality, to satisfy the minimum requirements for offices.

Externally –

- Front entrance area mostly retained in original condition (entrance door, external stone flooring, black metal rail.

Design objectives for ground floor:

- To create a sequence of continuous (yet well defined) spaces with the external open garden acting as a central focal point linking the various functions of the ground floor.
- To create a single floor which enables a prolonged stay for the whole family, incorporating a combination of internal and external spaces, without the need to go up or down the stairs for most hours of the day.
- To provide a larger kitchen.

Proposed works to original ground floor area:

- Demolish non original supporting columns / half columns and make good.
- Dismantle and cart away all existing radiators and pipe-work.
- Strip carpet and provide new wooden flooring.
- Provide new water and electric systems throughout.
- Provide a new kitchen, simple in character and not over-dominating. Kitchen materials to compliment the character and historic features of the ground floor (timber, natural stone etc).
- Replace non original sash windows to front with new sash windows, to match in terms of design and appearance the original windows of neighbouring properties' original ground floor sash windows. Retain and repair original timber shutters and panelling.
- Strip carpet from original internal stairs to upper floors, repair where necessary and retain original timber finish.

- Retain and repair where necessary original historic features such as cornice and arched passage at entrance hall.
- Demolish non original cornice at front room.
- Retain and repair where necessary external main front door and fanlight.

Proposed works to rear extension area at ground floor level:

- Demolish part of rear extension, including floors, walls, roof and roof-lights to form external garden area and opening to open green atrium at basement level.
- Accommodate in the garden area a rainwater harvesting system for the reuse of rainwater.
- Provide tanking, soil and plants for external garden.
- Demolish existing internal partitions and make good.
- Strip carpet / vinyl and provide new stone / wooden floor finish.
- Strip all existing non original skirting and make it good.
- Demolish and cart away three non original windows at rear, block openings and make good.

4. The upper storeys

4.1 The 19th century: the original upper storeys

It is likely that the plan of the original upper storeys of the house was simple, with one room at the back and one at the front on each floor with a passage and staircase at one side. The party wall of the house with number 12 John Street contained the chimney stacks and pots, which terminated at roof level and added strength to the structure. Window openings on front elevation had rubbed brick arches. The original stairs from ground floor went up to the second floor landing, from which a separate set of stairs continued to the third floor (in line with other neighbouring townhouses in the same terrace). The original roof was a butterfly roof behind front and rear parapet walls, above third floor level.

The original historic features mentioned in the Camden's Listed Building Statutory Registrar in relation to the upper floors of the terraced townhouses (relevant also to number 11 John Street) are the following:

- Multi-coloured stock brick with yellow stock brick patching (both on front and rear elevations).
- Parapets
- Original fluted lead rainwater heads and pipes
- End wall with round-headed niches each side of landing window (at first floor level).

4.2 The 20th century: the transformation of the building from a residential townhouse to offices in relation to the upper storeys

See also relevant notes on attached Structural Appraisal.

During the long period the building was used as offices, many internal alterations and changes to form of plan were made to the upper floors to adjust them accordingly (most of them without any documented planning permission). The internal plain columns mentioned in the paragraphs above in relation to the ground floor and basement, are also present in the upper storeys.

Image 19: Non original structural columns and beam as viewed at first floor level.

It would be an impossible task to try and establish the number and nature of all the internal alterations the upper floors of the house underwent in their 200 year history. The addition and demolition of partitions, including skirting, cornices, internal doors and architraves, was practically common practice during the many years the building was used as offices. As new partitions and doors were constructed, very little care was taken to conserve and restore original skirting, architraves and cornices. In most cases different patterns were introduced, which contributed to the general chaotic and unsympathetic appearance of the upper storeys of the building we see today. Fireplaces, evidently, were originally present at all floor levels to the front and rear of the property on the boundary wall with number 12 John Street. The 1975 application included the removal of all fireplaces except for the marble fireplace at the first floor front room, which is still present today.

In addition to the various internal alterations, a new fourth floor with mansard roof was constructed in 1975 and the original cast iron rainwater pipes were replaced at some point with plastic pipework on the rear elevation. The original timber sash windows at third floor level on the front elevation were replaced with windows of a different design and appearance. The following summary gives a brief review of the Planning applications / modifications relevant to the upper storeys and the physical changes which resulted from their implementation:

January 1974 – planning application was made on behalf of the Royal Oak Benefit Society for the construction of an additional mansard storey to be used as offices, new staircase and enclosure going up from second to fourth floors, new toilet accommodation at basement and third floor and modernisation of basement offices. The application was granted in April 1975. The application was accompanied by drawings showing the impact of the new mansard roof and raised boundary walls on either side, as well as its relation to the original butterfly roof. The negative implications of the construction of the mansard roof (or rather its extensive structural bearings) have been analyzed in the paragraphs above.

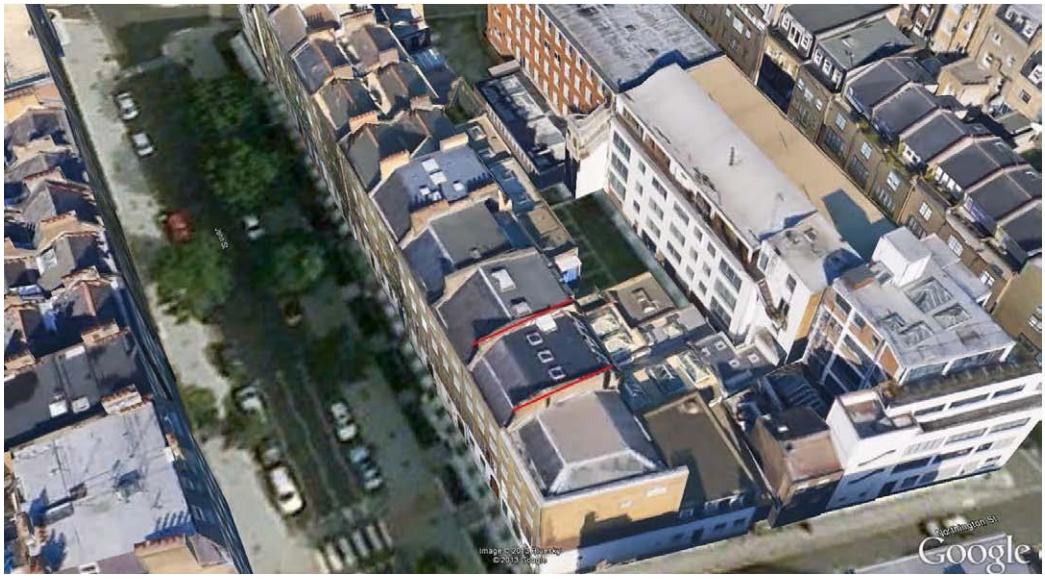

Image 20: The non original mansard roof of number 11 John Street (highlighted in red) in comparison to the original butterfly roof of numbers 15-17 John Street (last three properties on the left).

Another internal alteration included in this application was the provision of a new staircase and enclosure going up from second to fourth floors, which indicated that the existing stairs are not original (see image 21). This is supported further by the fact that the stair flight projects into the top landing of the original stairs coming from ground and first floors (see image 22). It is extremely unlikely that the circulation space of the original building incorporated such an obvious obstacle.

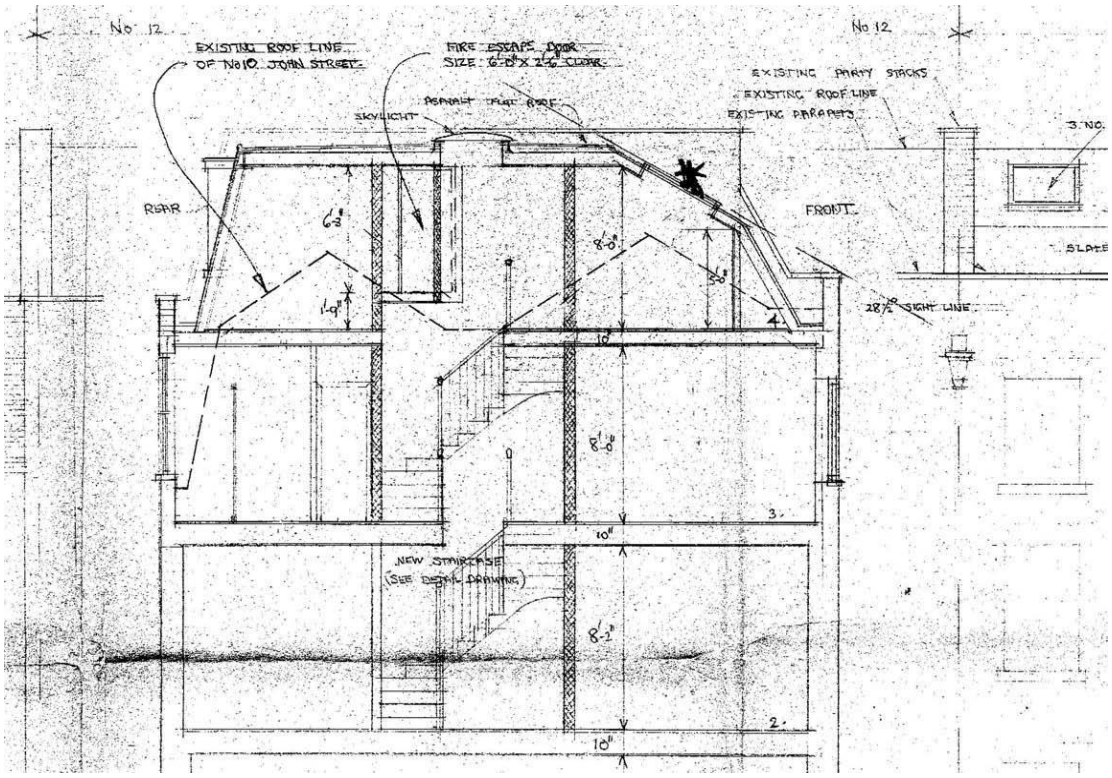

Image 21: A section from the 1974 application, showing the text 'New Staircase' on the stairs from second to fourth floor.

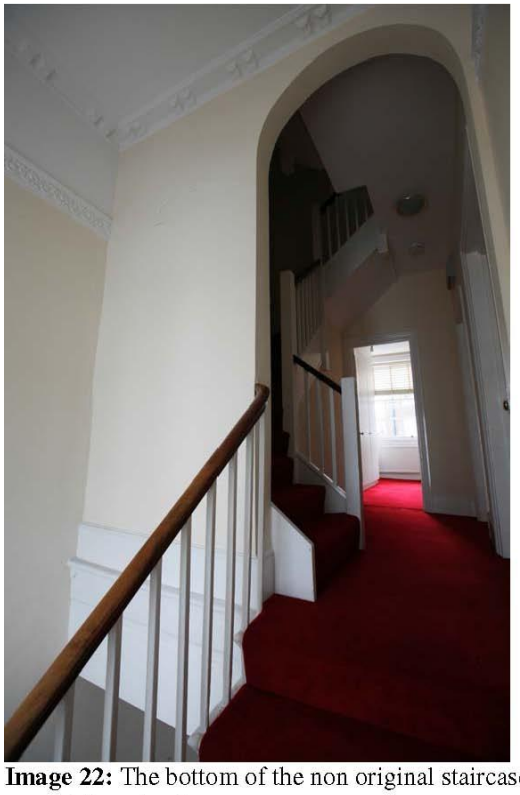

Image 22: The bottom of the non original staircase from second to fourth floors – projecting into the second floor landing.

This application also included other internal alterations which concerned the upper floors, the most eye-catching of which is the removal of a pre-existing WC extension at the rear of the second floor (adjacent to the original stairs) and the reinstatement of the staircase window.

January 1981 -application for certificate of established use was made on behalf of West, Central & Suburban Investment Ltd. The established use (as offices) referred to the third floor only. The requested established use for the third floor was granted in January 1981. At this point the established use of all the floors of the building was offices.

4.3 The 21st century: the proposal – the upper storeys

See also relevant notes on attached Structural Appraisal.

4.3.1 The upper storeys – design principles

Unlike the lower floors of the building, which could be divided into original and non original built spaces, the upper floors are all original with the exception of the new added floor with mansard roof.
The first floor is different from the other upper storeys as it accommodates some historic features of the original townhouse, listed in Camden's Statutory Registrar (namely the marble fire place at the front room and the stairs from ground to first floor). This floor accommodates spaces generally used for hosting.
The original historic features of the first floor will be treated with the same caring approach as those of the lower storeys, in regards to their restoration and repair. A detailed indication of the proposed treatment for each feature and an assessment of their impact on the special interest of the listed building is given in paragraph 4.3.8 below (features to be retained, refurbished or completely restored, if missing).
The second, third and fourth floors have no such features. In addition, their plan form appears to have been altered to a much greater extent than the original areas of the lower storeys. Since they accommodate the more private functions of the house, these considerable alterations allowed us a bit more freedom in regards to internal partitioning, to suit the occupants and their requirements (mainly in regards to the design of the second and third floors).

4.3.2 The upper storeys – landscape

We regard the green areas provided at the upper storeys as a direct continuation of the green areas of the lower storeys. However, at the upper storey the green areas play a different role: rather than being a focal point linking the various functions of the storey, they make their contribution more in the way of visual amenity – a mere reminder of nature's presence at the more private areas of the family house.

The proposed landscape features at the upper storeys are the following:

- First floor level: A semi – intensive green roof will be provided above the remaining closed functions of the ground floor, with access restricted to maintenance only. The green roof would provide visual amenity to surrounding and neighbouring properties (whose rear windows overlook at present a large grey "blanket" of flat roofs dotted with skylights of various shapes and sizes – please see reference in above paragraph 2.2). For the sustainability benefits of the green roof, please see paragraph 4.3.6 below.

- Fourth floor level: Continuing the principle of giving up on built volume in favour of green amenity space (implemented at the lower storeys), a further small green area is provided at fourth floor level, where part of the flat roof area of the non original mansard (referred to in the above paragraph 4.2) will be demolished.

4.3.3 The upper storeys – layout, scale and proportions

Unlike the lower storeys, which in the past saw their overall layout, scale and proportions change dramatically due to the addition of a rear extension covering the entire open yard area they originally had to the rear, the upper storeys stayed very much unchanged as far as their external envelope is concerned.

We know that the original terraced townhouses of numbers 10-20 John Street accommodated a large number of relatively moderate size rooms, with limited accessibility between them due to the large number of floor levels. In our design proposal, we saw high importance in maintaining the humble proportions and character of each room by avoiding large internal open spaces.

The PPS5 Practice Guide states that the plan form is frequently one of the most important characteristics of a historic building, and discourages designers from removing or modifying internal arrangements[22] . However, in the case of number 11 John Street, the numerous changes to the internal layout of the second and third floors carried out over the years posed a challenge to the understanding of their original plan form. As a consequence, in our design we created new subdivisions at second and third floor levels which serve the needs of the occupiers but at the same time eco the upper storeys' original scale

and proportions. In doing so we designated the upper storeys to accommodate the bedrooms of the house (private function) as they would have done originally. In addition, we retained the original townhouse's stairs (the main stairs going up from ground floor to second floor landing), as well as the original plan form of the first floor, as currently present on site. In regards to the non original stairs from second to fourth floor (see paragraph 4.2), we propose new stairs at the same location, thus retaining the original form plan.

22 The PPS5 Practice Guide, point 182 in chapter 6 (in relation to addition and alteration).

4.3.4 The upper storeys – materials

Our approach to materials in the design of the upper storeys remains the same as with the lower storeys (see above paragraph 3.3.4).

As is the case with the lower storeys, we made the classification of original and non original external materials, and original and non original internal materials in reference to the upper storeys. The following list gives a brief review of how each external material at the upper storey will be treated:

- Brickwork and pointing on front and rear elevations – mostly original. Different colour bricks are evident at third floor level on the rear elevation. All existing brickwork (whether original or non-original) to be retained and repaired where necessary using matching bricks and pointing.
- Timber windows on front and rear elevations – front: original sash windows at first and third floor levels and non original sash windows at second floor level (no muntins on upper panels). Rear: original sash windows at first (staircase), second and third floor levels and non original sash window at first floor rear room (original window would have been larger – see reference in paragraph 2.3 above). As is the case with the lower storeys, we shall retain and repair all original timber sash windows. Non original windows will be replaced to new sash windows to match the pattern of original windows. We shall also reinstate the large arched window at rear of the first floor leading to the proposed balcony.
- External pipework on rear elevation – non original plastic pipework on left hand side of elevation. All pipework to be dismantled and replaced with new, traditional cast iron pipework, in accordance with the recommendation given in paragraph 4.7 of Camden's Supplementary Planning Document CPG 1.
- Slate roof tiles and lead cladded dormers – non original since the mansard roof was constructed in 1975. However, the existing roof slate finish and lead cladded dormers match other neighbouring properties and blend well with the original building fabric. All slates and lead on front elevation to be retained and repaired where necessary using matching materials. As mentioned above, part of the flat section of the mansard roof will be demolished to give way to a new green roof above the third floor. The resulting roof terrace would be hidden behind the retained front and rear slopes of the mansard roof.

4.3.5 The upper storeys – access

In regards to the upper storeys, the issue of access concerns mainly the high number of storeys and the limited footprint of each floor, resulting in the lack of possibility to accommodate a lift. The above is a direct consequence of the restrictions which lead to the design solution for the original townhouse, and it will be maintained also in the current design proposal.

4.3.6 The upper storeys – sustainability

At the upper storeys the contribution of the design proposal in regards to sustainability concerns the following points:

a) Layout enabling prolonged stays at same floor level: See reference in above paragraph 3.3.6.
b) Thermal insulation: The insulation of existing and new elements would make an important contribution towards energy retention and sustainability. In our design proposal, new insulation meeting the standards given in approved document L will be introduced at fourth floor level to the remaining front slope of the mansard roof.
c) Green roofs at first and fourth floor levels: In addition to their excellent insulating properties, the extensive green roof at first floor level (above the remaining volumes of the ground floor rear extension) and small green roof at fourth floor level would also contribute by having their waterproofing layers protected from the harming UV rays through the soil they accommodates (an estimated extension to the roof life of between 40% to 60%), the absorption and retention of stormwater (detailed below) and the contribution to biodiversity.
d) Rainwater harvesting: The green roof at first floor level will be the main contributor as far as rainwater harvesting is concerned, as it is the roof with the largest area. Rainwater will also be harvested from the froth floor green roof and existing mansard roof. As is the case with the lower storeys, captured rainwater will be reused within the property for a variety of uses, as suggested in paragraph 23.8 of policy DP23 of Camden's Local Development Framework.

In regards to energy retention, the sustainability aspects of the existing upper storeys should also be taken into account: the building is a mid terrace property and therefore has a reduced envelope area. It also has a relatively low window area on each floor.

4.3.7 The upper storeys – Lifetime Homes standards

An analysis of most of the different Lifetime Homes criteria is given in the above paragraph 3.3.7 relating to the lower storeys. The remaining criteria which regard the upper storeys are the following:

- Criterion 12 – Stairs and potential through-floor lift in dwelling: this criterion is not met as the original retained stairs do not allow the installation of a stair lift, and the available floor-space is insufficient to accommodate a lift, especially when considering the upper floors (see above paragraph 4.3.5).
- Criterion 13 -Potential for fitting of hoists at bedroom / bathroom: this criterion is not met as the bedrooms and bathrooms are mostly accommodated within the original section of the house, where it is proposed to retain most of the ceiling /floor structure of the historic building.
- Criterion 14 – Bathroom: this criterion is fully met and applies to all the upper floors (each accommodating at least one bedroom and one bathroom which complies with the given standards).

4.3.8 The upper storeys – schedule of proposed works and method statement

First floor:

Existing state:

Photos –

Image 23: A view towards the window of the front room at first floor level showing the non original column on the left which proves so detrimental to the original Georgian characteristics of the room. In addition, the non original clock can be seen through the central window.

Image 24: The original marble fire place at front room of first floor level and non original column in wall.

Image 26: A view from the rear wall towards the door separating it from the first floor hall area.

Image 25: Rear room at first floor level with non original columns in wall, projecting beam and missing fire place.

Internally –

- Layout: original plan form has been retained.
- Flooring: red carpet throughout.
- Walls: original cornice only at staircase enclosure. No cornice in any other area. 53cm high moulding on all walls internally, with non original skirting throughout.
- Lighting: cheap chandeliers with plastic candles.
- Heating: cheap radiators with external pipe-work.
- Windows: except for the window of the rear room at first floor level (mentioned in above paragraph 4.3.4), sash windows appear to be original. Out-of-character aluminium internal window installed at original rear window opening. Original timber shutters and casings. Original timber panelling around windows.
- Internal doors: the two doors opening from the staircase enclosure include a fixed timber panel above door opening and could be original (although one of the door leaves does not have traditional raised panels). The third door between the rooms is lower and thinner than the other two, and therefore most probably non original.
- Other features: an original marble fireplace at front room; plain out-of-character columns and semi columns and projecting ceiling beams at front and rear rooms.
- General condition: decent.

Externally –

- Non original clock on front elevation (see reference in above paragraph 3.2).

Design objectives for first floor:

- To restore the first floor as close as possible to its original state.
- To retain the original plan form and proportions while designating the front room as a family area to facilitate activities such as music and art during the day, and entertainment in the evening.
- To conserve and fully restore the principle room overlooking the street with its relatively well preserved historic features, thus maintaining a direct reference to the design and character of the original house.
- To fully restore the rear room while establishing a connection with the external green areas by providing access to a rear terrace overlooking the proposed green roof and external garden below at ground floor level.

Proposed works to first floor area:

Internally –

- Demolish non original supporting columns / half columns and projecting ceiling beams and make good.
- Provide new cornice to match original throughout.
- Dismantle and cart away all existing radiators and pipe-work.
- Strip carpet and provide new wooden flooring with under-floor heating.
- Replace non original internal door with a new door and fixed panel above – design of door and architrave to match original.
- Enlarge opening of the existing window to its original dimensions and replace the rear window with new doors to allow access to the rear terrace – design and appearance to match original. Retain original shutters of existing windows and fit in an enlarged opening.
- Strip carpet from original internal stairs, repair where necessary and retain original timber finish.

Externally –

- Provide new timber decking and rail (to prevent overlooking) at the rear terrace area.
- Provide new green roof accommodating semi -intensive planting with water retention above enclosed sections of rear ground floor areas.
- Install new skylight providing light to ground floor internal stairs to basement and guest toilet.
- Dismantle plastic rainwater pipes on rear elevation and provide new cast iron pipework to match original on right hand side of elevation.
- Retain the clock on front elevation and put it back in working order.

Second floor:

Existing state:

Photos –

Image 27: A view of the non original bathroom at second floor level showing the non original columns and beam which are integrated in the current design proposal.

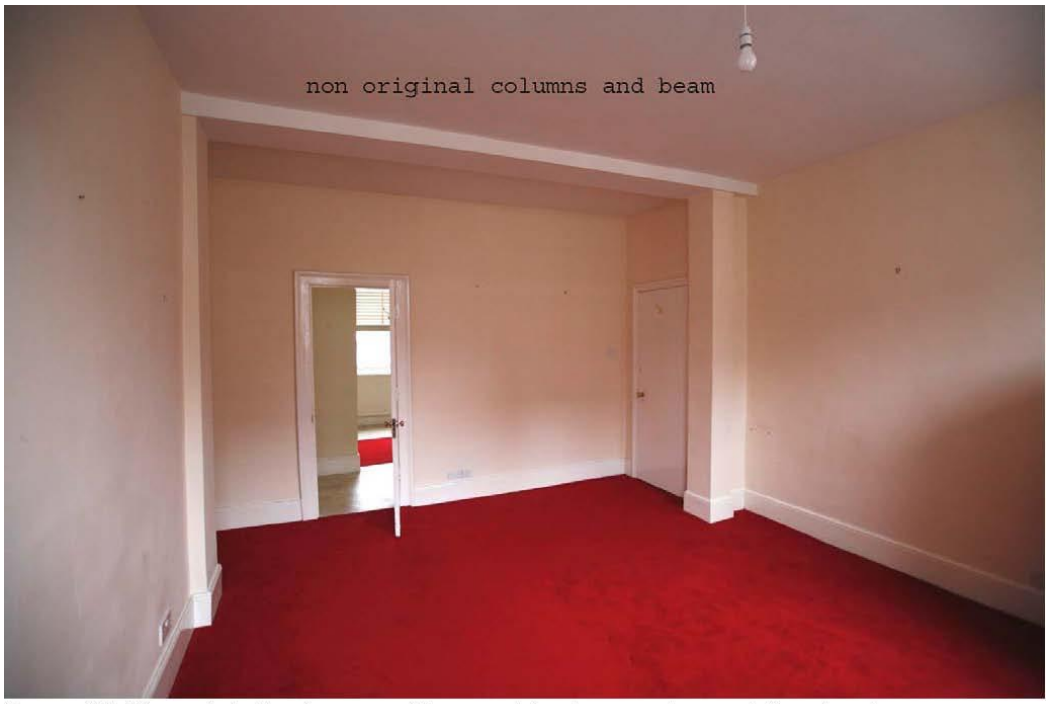

Image 28: Non original columns and beams at front room at second floor level.

Image 29: A view of the built in cupboard partially blocking the window at second floor level, resulting in an inefficient use of space.

Image 30: A view to the top of the original stairs from ground to second floor showing, further in, the dark staircase enclosure of the stairs leading to the higher storeys of the house. This view also shows the junction between the original wall cornice and the non original arched partition which is proposed to be demolished in the current design proposal.

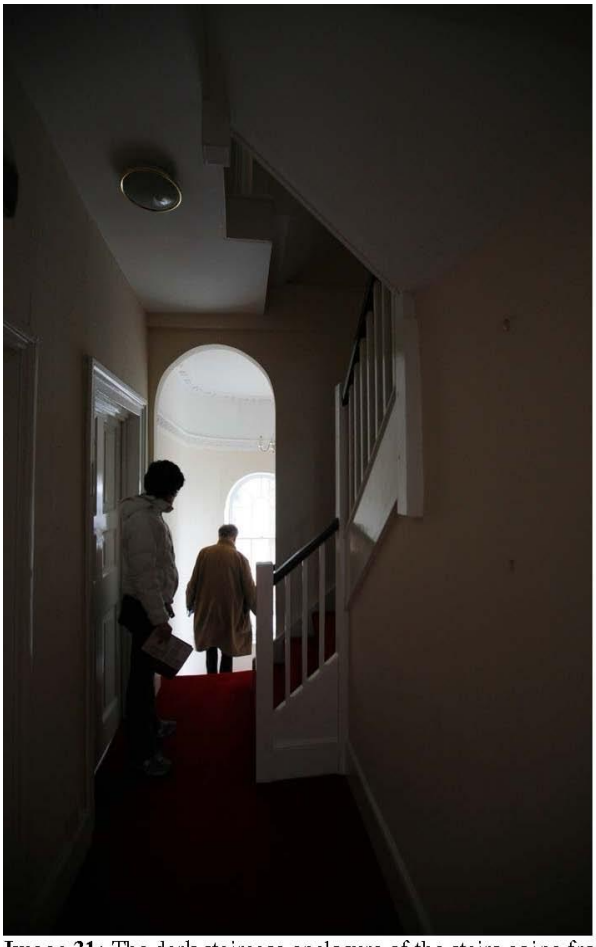

Image 31: The dark staircase enclosure of the stairs going from second to fourth floor is most unpleasant areas of the existing building. This view also shows how the existing non original stairs project into the existing second floor hall.

Internally –

- Layout: evident changes and alterations to original plan form, resulting also in the formation of a small, non functional room to the front.
- Flooring: red carpet at front rooms, vinyl at rear room (shower).
- Walls: original cornice and wall moulding only at staircase enclosure. No cornice at any other area. Non original skirting throughout.
- Lighting: simple pendant and ceiling mounted light fittings.
- Heating: cheap radiators with external pipe-work.
- Windows: front sash windows are not original, as subdivisions are missing from top sections of windows. Original timber panelling around windows.
- Internal doors: some doors are flush, others include traditional raised panels, but it is reasonable to presume that none are original.

- •Other features: plain out-of-character semi columns and projecting ceiling beams at front and rear rooms; plain out-of-character set of staircase has replaced an original
- set of staircase of a similar layout, which used the lead to the third floor; modern shower room. General condition: decent.

Design objectives for second floor:

- To provide a master bedroom accommodating a sleeping area, a dressing area and a bathroom.
- To provide a new set of stairs from second to fourth floor, of a similar form and direction to the original stairs from ground to second floor, which would be better integrated within the hall area.
- To enhance the second floor hall by increasing the amount of natural daylight it receives.
- To make use of the existing non original structure (beams and columns) by integrating them into the design, thus achieving a simpler structural design (see attached Structural appraisal).
- To introduce a more contemporary design style, due to the fact the second floor and floors above it accommodate the private functions and have no surviving historic features.

Proposed works to second floor area:

- Demolish non original partition at front area and built in cupboard at small front room, and make good.
- Replace non original stairs to the third floor with new light structure stairs allowing natural light.
- Dismantle and cart away all existing radiators and pipe-work.
- Strip carpet / vinyl floor finish and provide new wooden flooring with under-floor heating.
- Replace non original doors with new doors – design to match contemporary character of upper floors.
- Strip carpet from original internal stairs, repair where necessary and retain original timber finish.
- Provide and connect sanitary fittings for the new bathroom.

Third floor:

Existing state:

Photos –

Image 32: View to non original kitchen at third floor level showing non original column and projecting beam. As is the case with the second floor, the non original structural elements at third floor level will be integrated into the design.

Image 33: The large open space at third floor level.

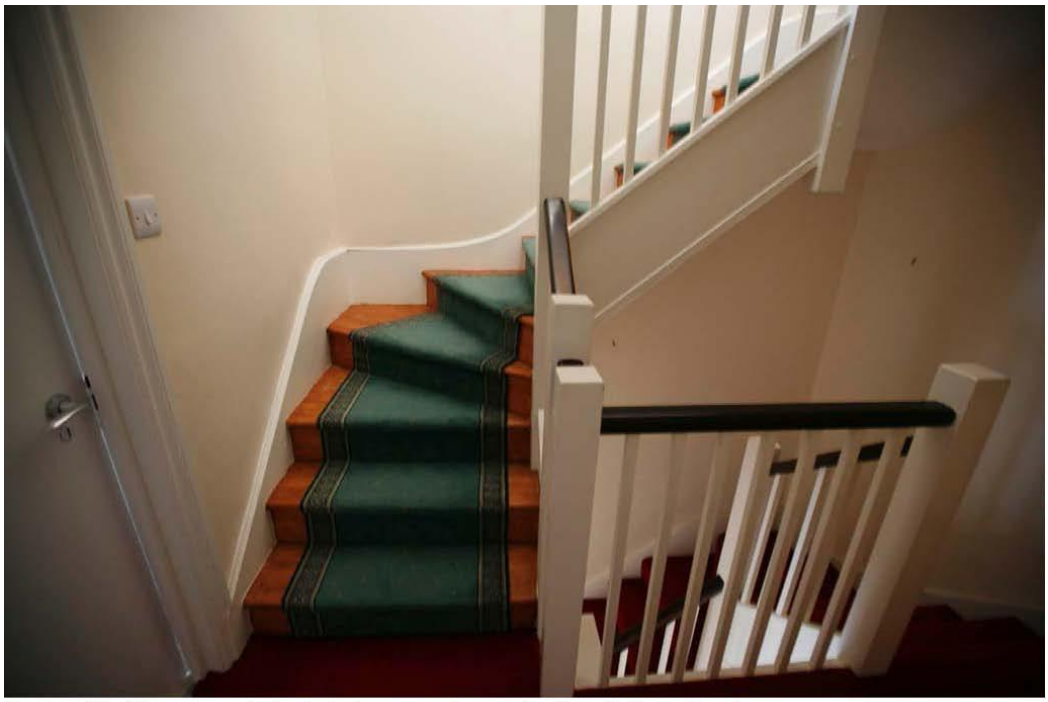

Image 34: The non original staircase going up to fourth floor level.

Image 35: A view to the only existing room at third floor level – a 2.4m wide room with a non perpendicular wall which remained from the time the building was used as offices.

- Layout: substantial changes and alterations to original plan form.
- Flooring: blue carpet at front rooms, vinyl at rear room (kitchen and shower).
- Walls: no cornice in any area. Non original skirting throughout.
- Lighting: simple pendant light fittings.
- Heating: cheap radiators with external pipe-work.
- Windows: original sash windows.

- Internal doors: non original flush doors.
- Other features: plain out-of-character semi columns and projecting ceiling beams at front and rear areas; plain out-of-character set of staircase; modern kitchen, probably installed for use of office.
- General condition: decent.

Design objectives for third floor:

- To provide three simple yet attractive and well lit bedrooms and a shower room with a generous space connecting them to the staircase enclosure.
- To make use of the existing non original structure (beams and columns) in order to achieve a simpler structural design (see attached Structural appraisal).
- To continue the well lit staircase enclosure, enabling views from front to back.
- To continue the more contemporary style of the second floor to the third floor, which equally lacks any historic features.

Proposed works to third floor area:

- Demolish non original kitchen and make good.
- Demolish non original partitions and make good.
- Continue new light stairs structure from second floor level allowing natural light and views to internal green area at second floor level.
- Provide new acoustic glass partitions around the staircase enclosure. Partitions to allow ventilation to rooms at third floor level and have blinds from ceiling for privacy.
- Dismantle and cart away all existing radiators and pipe-work.
- Strip carpet / vinyl floor finish and provide new wooden flooring with under-floor heating.
- Replace non original internal doors with new doors – design to match contemporary character of upper floors.
- Provide and connect sanitary fittings for the new bathroom.

Fourth floor:

Existing state:

Photos –

Image 36: A view towards the front of the new space at fourth floor level.

Image 37: A view to the side of the fourth floor showing the later added beams. The beams are integrated into the current design proposal.

Image 38: A view towards the non original stairs and megaflo enclosure at fourth floor level.

- Layout: non original, one open space. Underwent some changes since it was constructed in 1975.
- Flooring: Vinyl.
- Walls: non original skirting throughout.
- Lighting: down-lights throughout.
- Heating: none.
- Windows: non original sash windows at rear. Non original skylights at flat roof above.
- Internal door: non original door.
- Other features: plain out-of-character projecting ceiling beams at front and rear areas; plain out-of-character set of staircase.
- General condition: decent.

Design objectives for fourth floor:

- To provide a small sleeping area and a shower, with an adjacent open green area at the centre – concealed behind the retained rear mansard roof elevation, thus maintaining both front and rear mansard roof elevations, which are coherent with the rest of the terrace.
- To achieve a well lit staircase enclosure through the provision of a new skylight.
- To continue the contemporary style of the second and third floors.

Proposed works to fourth floor area:

- Demolish rear section of the existing non original flat roof part of mansard to accommodate a green area, concealed behind retained rear elevation of existing roof.
- Construct a new external glazed partition accommodating a sliding door.
- Demolish non original hot water cylinder enclosure and make it good.
- Continue new light structure stairs from third floor level allowing natural light and views to internal green area at second floor level.
- Strip vinyl floor finish and provide new wooden flooring with under-floor heating.

- Provide new internal sliding doors – design to match contemporary character of upper floors.
- Provide and connect sanitary fittings for a new shower room.

5. Conclusion

In this statement we aimed to detail the design considerations which led us to the proposal of the associated revised Planning and Listed building consent application, in light of various relevant Planning policies and guidelines relating in particular to historic buildings, and later in light of the comments received from the Camden Planning Department.

The main objective of our design proposal was to reinstate the open amenity space of the application site in the form of a garden on multiple levels, which, in addition to the benefit it brings to the future occupants of the house, would also make an important contribution to the amenity of neighbouring properties and the surrounding area as a whole.

Rather than adding new extensions to the property, we propose to demolish a considerable volume of built area to facilitate the introduction of open amenity areas. We preserved the character of the historic building by repairing and in some cases restoring its historic features, while at the same time adapting a building used for many decades as offices to its reinstated residential function and to the specific needs of our clients. In so doing, we achieved a sustainable design which would hopefully last for many years to come.