



PROPOSED BASEMENT EXTENSION

**25 JOHN'S MEWS
BLOOMSBURY
HOLBORN
LONDON
WC1N 2NZ**

**PLANNING APPLICATION
DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

FOR: MR. COLIN FRASER

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1.0 Executive Summary

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Smith C-H Architects Ltd., on behalf of Mr. Colin Fraser.

It accompanies a full Planning Application for the extension to the basement of No. 25 John's Mews, London WC1.

- The site is situated within London Borough of Camden.
- The building is Listed Grade II and located within Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- The existing building comprises basement, ground and first floors (Use Class C3).
- The proposed basement extension to the existing building would be Use Class C3.
- This application was preceded by Pre-Application ref. 2020/1402/PRE.
- In accordance with Pre-Application advice, the proposed basement is now smaller than the existing ground floor footprint.
- The character and history of the existing building have been carefully considered during the design development.
- Physical investigation works (by Ground Engineering Ltd.) have revealed deep perimeter walls, which suggests the possibility of a larger historic basement.
- The proposal is set in context with the recently Consented basement extension to No. 27 John's Mews (Planning reference 2016/4582/P).
- If consented, the intention is to construct both basements (no's 25 and 27) simultaneously thus minimising construction disruption to neighbours.

- Savills Heritage Statement concludes "the proposed works will have no adverse effect on the setting or significance of the designated heritage asset and will preserve the setting of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area".

1.1 Design Team

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2.0 Introduction

No. 13 Northington Street

The adjacent No. 13 Northington Street was converted into two maisonettes across a basement and ground floor levels in 1995 (Planning reference 9501052). As a consequence the previous roller shutters in the arched openings were removed (as shown on architectural drawings dated 1959) and the facade recessed inwards to form lightwells to the basement.

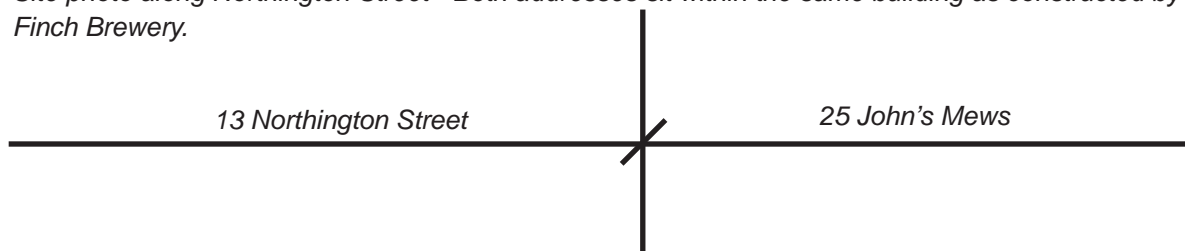
The age of the existing full-sized basement is unknown. We do know that it existed prior to 1959 as it is referenced on drawing dating from this time. The drawing in question, an extract is provided within the Savills Heritage statement, formed part of an application for a new display window on Northington Street only (i.e. not for the formation of new basement but references an access ramp down to basement, accessed at the John's Mews side). Although conjecture, when one considers that the basement to No. 13 existed before 1959, and that deep retaining walls also exist at 25 John's Mews, it is very possible that the building was originally served by a full sized basement.

No. 25 John's Mews

The site is located to the east side of John's Mews, with two principal facades facing onto John's Mews and Northington Street respectively, being surrounded in all directions by the dense built environment of Bloomsbury, within the London Borough of Camden. The site consists of a two-storey red brick mews building constructed c. 1903, with stone quoins and dressings and segmental-headed parapet concealed roof with tall chimneys. A quoin to Northington Street is inscribed "These premises were erected by Henry Finch Esq., JP in AD 1903", and on the return "and this



Site photo along Northington Street - Both addresses sit within the same building as constructed by the Finch Brewery.



2.0 Introduction (continued)

stone laid by H. Finch Rober August 10th 1903". The Finch family were a well known brewery family to the local area.

As referred to within the No.13 commentary, a basement already exists at No.25. This basement was formed by levelling out the bottom of a ramp which historically provided vehicular access to basement when the building (No.13 and No.25) operated as a garage.

The proposals comprise of the extension of this existing basement at No.25. In line with planner comments made during the pre-application process, we are than proposing a new basement size that is smaller that the ground floor footprint.

No. 27 John's Mews

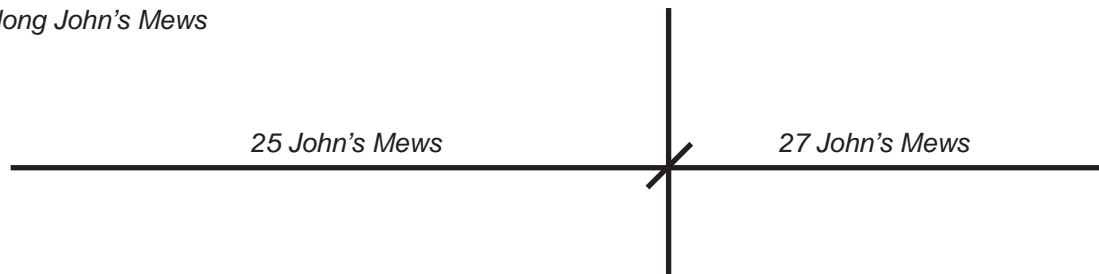
No. 27 John's Mews received Consent for the extension of a basement adjacent to the site (Planning reference 2018/4934/P).

The Proposal

The proposals respond to those works already undertaken at the Grade II listed No. 13 Northington Street (Planning reference 9501052) and reflective of the consented application for the excavation of a basement at the adjacent No. 27 John's Mews (Planning reference 2018/4934/P).



Site photo along John's Mews



3.0 Site Location Context

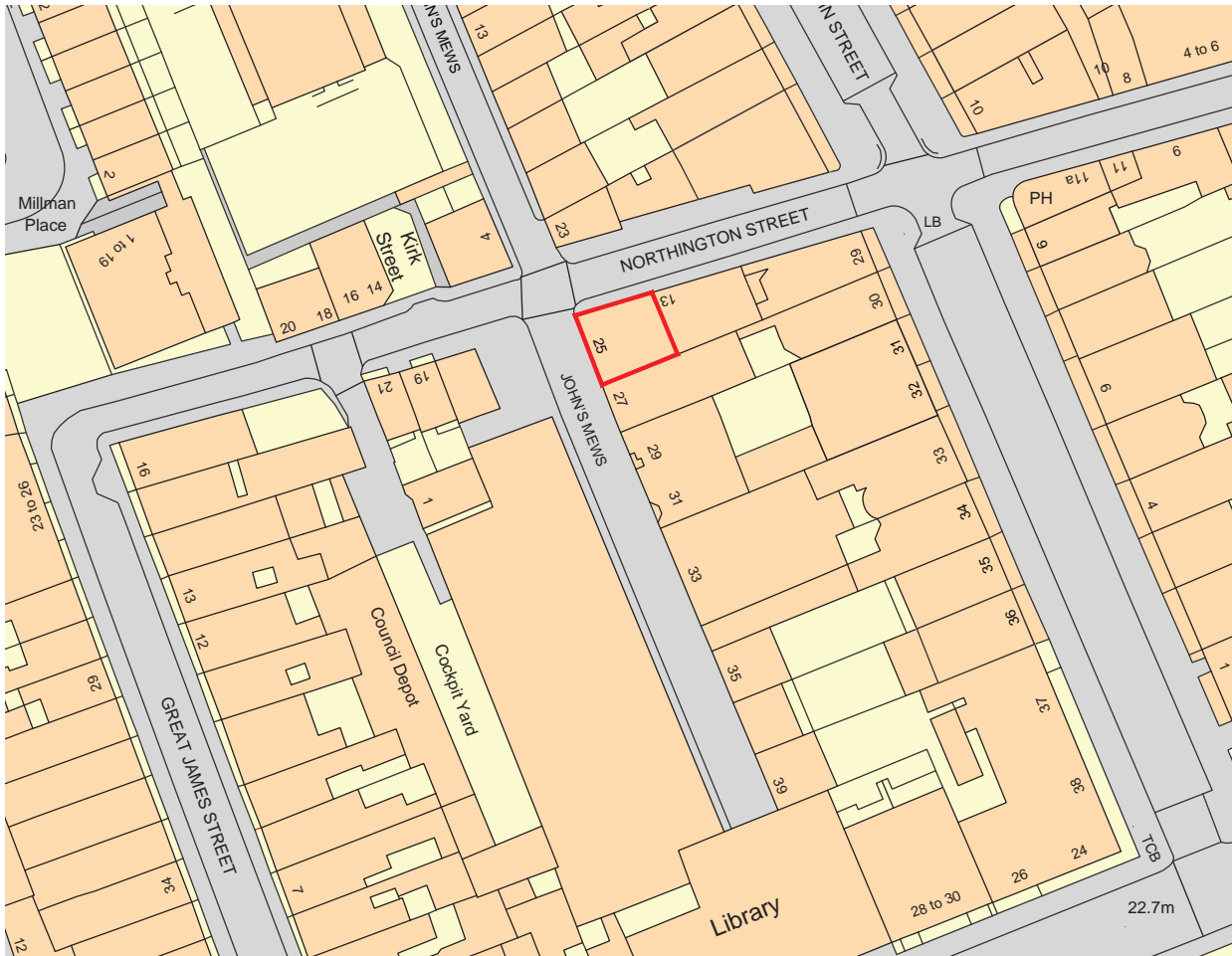
3.1 The Site

The site is located in a predominately residential area at the northern end of Holborn. Situated at the intersection between Northington Street and John's Mews facing the northern and western sides of the road. The site currently comprises of ground and first floor storeys, with access to a roof terrace plus a basement accessed through a floor hatch.

The southern and eastern sides are blind and share the party wall with No. 27 John's Mews and No. 13 Northington Street respectively.

The site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area (see page opposite).

The site is located in Flood Zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding, according to the Environment Agency therefore, a flood risk assessment is not required.



Location plan with 25 John's Mews marked in red and within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area

3.2 Conservation Area

The site is located in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

The townscape in Northington Street has more variety than John's Mews, although flank walls are also visible, including the Grade II listed No. 25 John's Mews. Other buildings of interest including No. 13 Northington Street a former brewery stables and 19th century townhouses at No. 16 and Nos. 19-25 John Street, together with the frontages of the public house and a small number of shopfronts.

The mews were developed as service streets for the larger houses in the principal streets. Their distinctive character derives from the smaller scale of the street, the footprint and scale of the mews buildings, mostly two storeys.



25 John's Mews is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The site is outlined in red and listed buildings shown in blue and purple

KEY

-  Site Location
-  Grade II
-  Grade II*

3.3 Transport

According to TFL, the Public Transport Access Level (PTAL) for the site is 6a which is the second highest level.

Rail and Underground:

Chancery Lane Underground Station is approximately 700m south of the site.

Holborn Underground Station is approximately 850m south of the site.

Bus:

No. 25 John's Mews is directly served by several London buses:

- 17 Gray's Inn Road/ Clerkenwell
- 19 Holborn
- 38 Holborn
- 45 Gray's Inn Road/ Clerkenwell
- 46 Gray's Inn Road/ Clerkenwell
- 55 Holborn
- 243 Holborn
- 341 Holborn





Bike:

There are a number of cycle hire stations located in all directions around the site.



Map 1: Transport in the area (Underground and Cycle Hire Stations)

KEY

-  London Underground Stations
-  Bus Stops
-  Cycle Hire Stations
-  25 John's Mews

3.4 Local Views

3.4.1 Streetscape Analysis

John's Mews and Northington Street are an amalgamation of different building typologies; in height, style, material and historical period.

View 1:

Looking south to No. 27 John's Mews.

View 2:

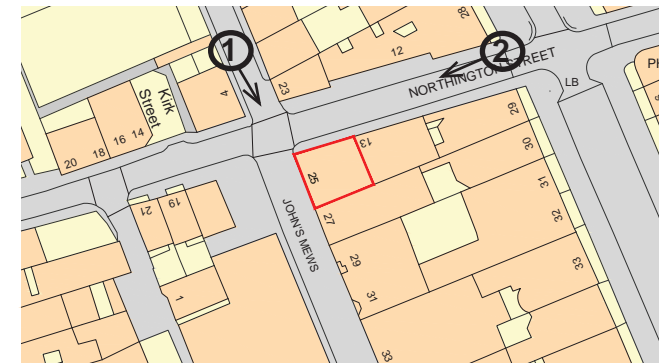
Looking to the west to the facade of No. 13 Northington Street and No. 25 John's Mews are visible.



1: Looking South along John's Mews



2: Looking West along Northington Street



3.4.1 Streetscape Analysis (continued)

View 3:

Looking north showing the variety of styles are present.

View 4:

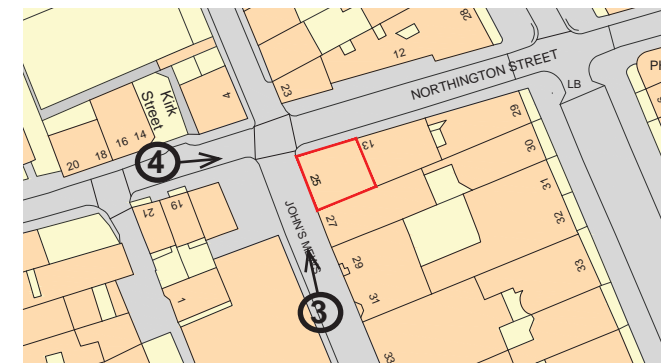
Looking east showing the whole facades of No. 25 John's Mews and No. 13 Northington Street are visible.



3. View looking North along John's Mews



4. View looking East along Northington Street



4.0 Heritage Statement

A Heritage Statement has been prepared by Savills Heritage Planning.

The Statement sets out and provides an assessment of National Planning Policy Framework and any Local Heritage Assets which may be affected by the proposed basement extension at No. 25 John's Mews.

The report concludes that the proposed basement extension of the Grade II listed asset will have no adverse effect on the setting or significance of the Listed Building. The proposal will have no impact on the Conservation Area and will preserve the setting and significance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

For the full report see Savills Heritage Statement which forms part of this application.

5.0 Archaeological Survey

No. 25 John's Mews is situated within the London Suburbs Archaeological Priority Area: Tier 2. However, it is deemed that the previous building activity on the site will have eroded any significant evidence of archaeological activity.

An Archaeological desk top study has not been carried out.

6.0 Ground Survey

An intrusive survey has been carried out by Ground Engineering Ltd.

The accompanying sketches and photographs indicate the presence of 3m deep walls, possibly suggesting that historically a larger basement may have been present. See Section 8 for further details.

A full report investigating a number of subjects in reference to the extension of the basement form part of this application.

- Contaminated Soil
- Historical & Current Uses
- Soil Gas
- Water Environment
- Ground Contamination Outside Boundary
- Geotechnical Considerations

7.0 The Proposals

With the small exception of some localised roof penetrations (not visible from street level) there are no proposed alterations to the existing external facades. The objective of this application is to obtain permission to form a new basement that is set in from the existing building footprint above. The basement would be smaller than that proposed at pre-application stage and would only require underpinning the party wall with no.27 Johns Mews. This particular party wall already has planning permission for its underpinning as part of approval reference 2018/4934/P.

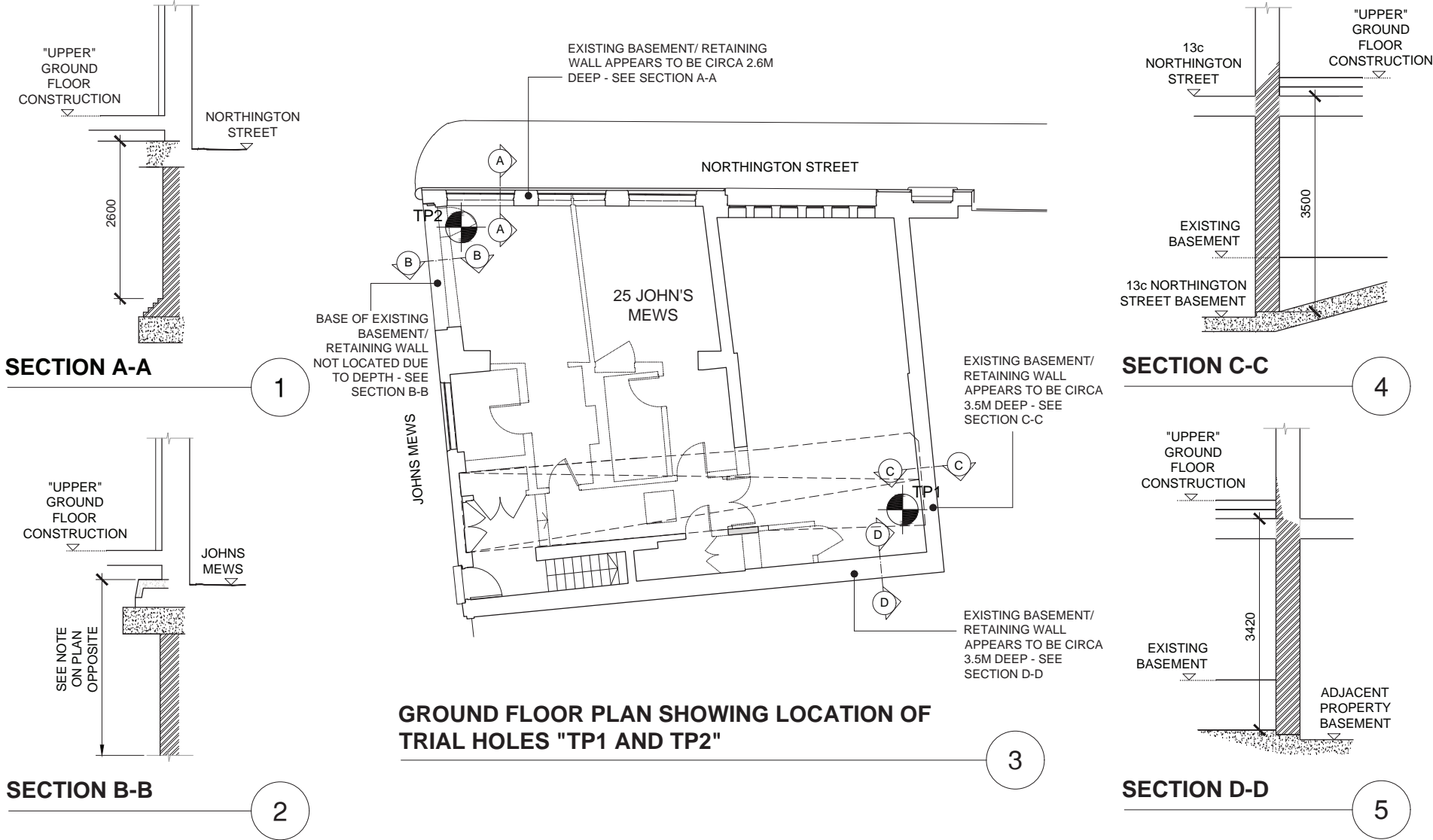
A full Basement Impact Assessment has been prepared by the Structural Engineers, Ross & Partners and accompanies this application.

7.1 Existing Basement

Pre-application stage discussions queried whether or not the building originally had a basement. The Camden pre-application response letter concludes that the building “would not historically be expected to have a basement, especially not one as large as the principle floors.” We respectfully disagree with this statement as many buildings of this era were constructed with basements of an identical size to that of the corresponding ground floor. In the case of 25 John’s Mews, trial holes reveal the presence of brick walls which extends to a depth that strongly suggest an original full-sized basement which possibly operated in tandem with the full sized basement at no.15.

The diagram on the following page describes the findings of the bore holes and shows the above referred existing below ground brickwork walls.

7.2 Trial Hole Discoveries



GROUND FLOOR PLAN SHOWING LOCATION OF TRIAL HOLES "TP1 AND TP2"

8.0 Preservation of Historic Fabric

In the case of 25 John's Mews the only historic internal fabric that remains are some internal brickwork walls which are devoid of any architectural detailing. These existing internal walls can be seen cross hatched on the drawing extract provided on page 18. Therefore, in the case of 25 John's Mews, the significance of the Listed Building is primarily in its external aesthetic. Externally, the proposals only require minor alterations to a small area of roof are proposed for new service vents. This section seeks to clarify the current status of the building in order to reassure Camden that there is no intention to remove any fabric of historic significance.

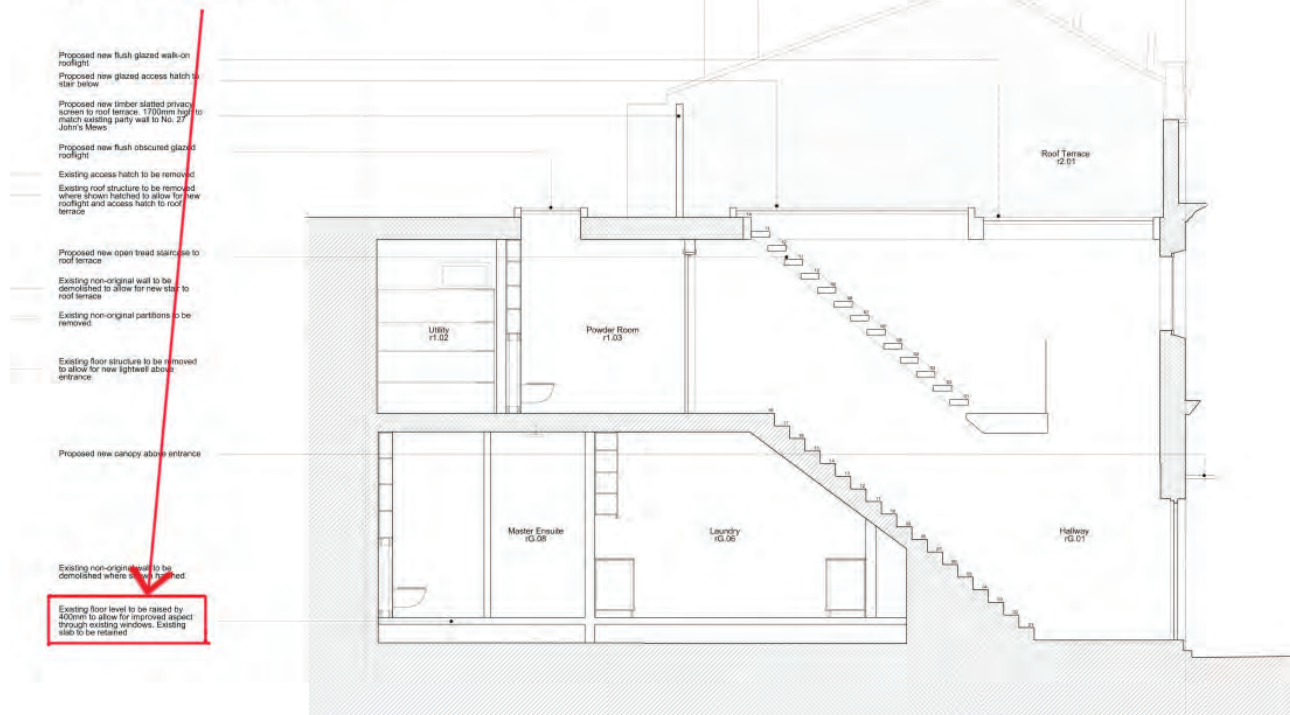
8.1 The Upper Ground Floor Slab

The site currently has two ground floor slabs. The 'upper' slab was added in 2012 as part of the extensive refurbishment works detailed within 2012 Planning Application (Planning RN: 2012/4925/P and 2012/5150/L) formed in timber or concrete depending on location. This upper slab was introduced to improve the viewing aspect from the newly formed bedrooms. Please see planning drawing extract on the following page. We highlight this here in order to allay Camden's concerns that this upper slab was added in order to protect the lower slab for reasons of historic interest.

8.1 The Ground Floor Slab (continued)

As noted on the 2012 planning drawings (extract opposite), the 'upper' slab was not installed to preserve anything of historical importance. It was installed to improve viewing out of the existing windows serving the ground floor which are much higher than 'normal' residential windows. The new 'upper' slab went some way to address this without modification to the external walls. We highlight this simply to allay Camden's pre-application concerns that the upper slab may have been introduced in order to preserve the lower slab for reasons of historic interest.

“Existing floor level to be raised by 400mm to allow for improved aspect through existing windows. Existing slab to be retained”



Extract from 'Cousins Wojciechowski Architects' drawing P_07RevA

8.1 The Ground Floor Slab (continued)

The trial holes referred to in Section 7 reveal that the lower slab appears to be made up of a concrete type that was not available when the building was constructed in 1902. The photo opposite shows the lower slab, complete with a plastic DPM, below the 'upper' slab (which in this location is timber construction). Interestingly a void can also be seen below the lower slab which lends further credence to the possibility that this building once featured a full width basement.

It is reasonable to suppose that when the building was converted to garage use the original ground floor slab was removed and a new slab installed to form a basement access ramp and to provide suitable localised strengthening for the car hoist (both shown on the previously mentioned drawing dated 1959) and for general vehicles access. Alternatively, the car hoist may have been installed to lower vehicles into an existing basement. Unfortunately, we can find no definitive record of either.

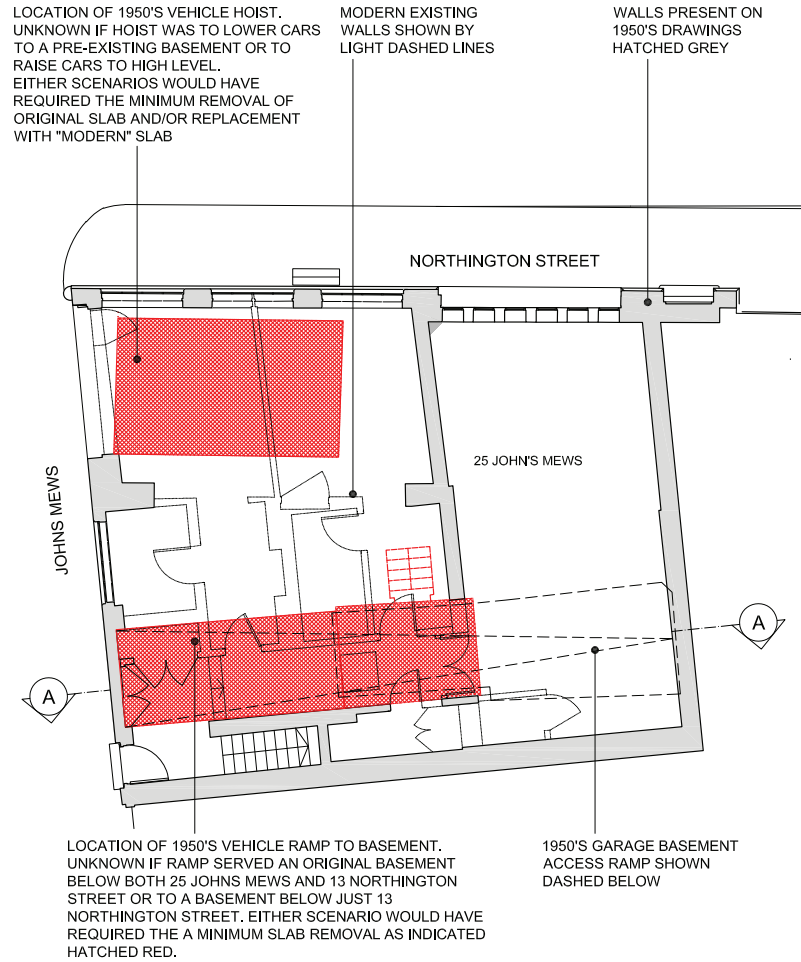
The diagram on the following page shows the minimum elements of slab removal required in order to form the ramp etc as shown on the 1959 drawing. Removal of such large sections of slab would usually entail wholesale slab replacement.

In any case, the ground floor slab originally constructed in 1902 appears to have long since been removed.



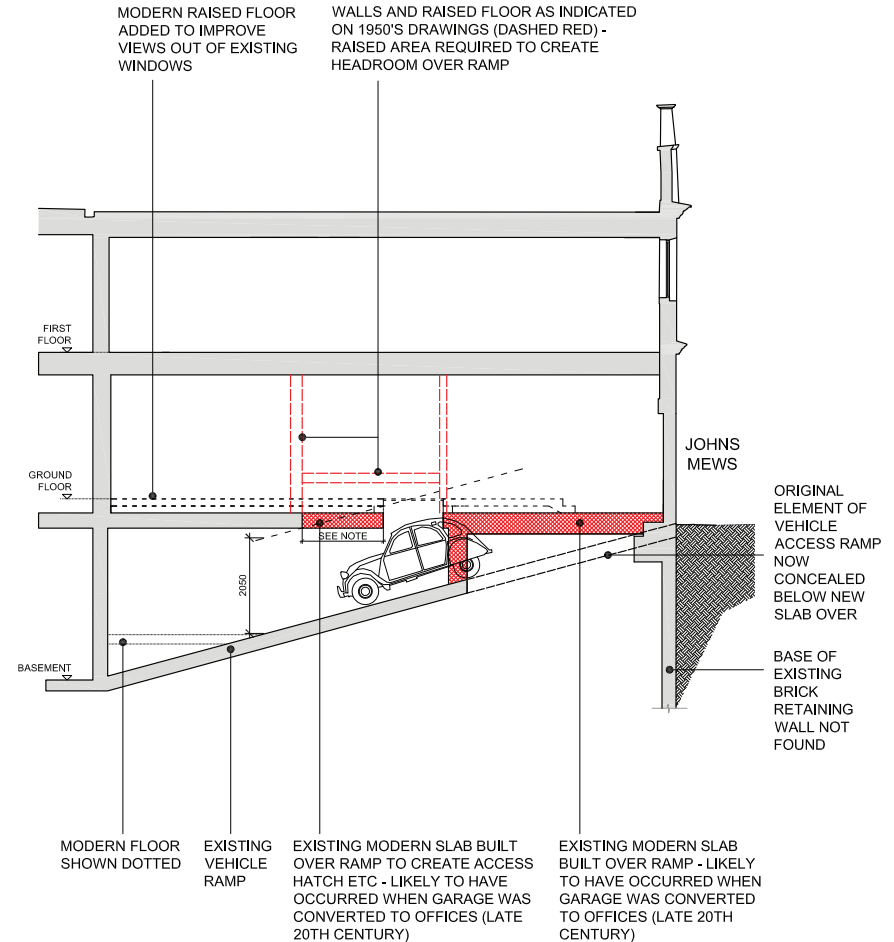
Photograph of "Trial Pit 2". The "upper slab" can be seen in timber construction. The "lower slab" can be seen below with plastic DPM below. A large void is also visible at the bottom of the photograph.

8.2 Ground Floor Slab – Recent Interventions



EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN SHOWING MINIMUM AREAS OF SLAB MODIFIED TO SUIT 1950'S GARAGE USE

1



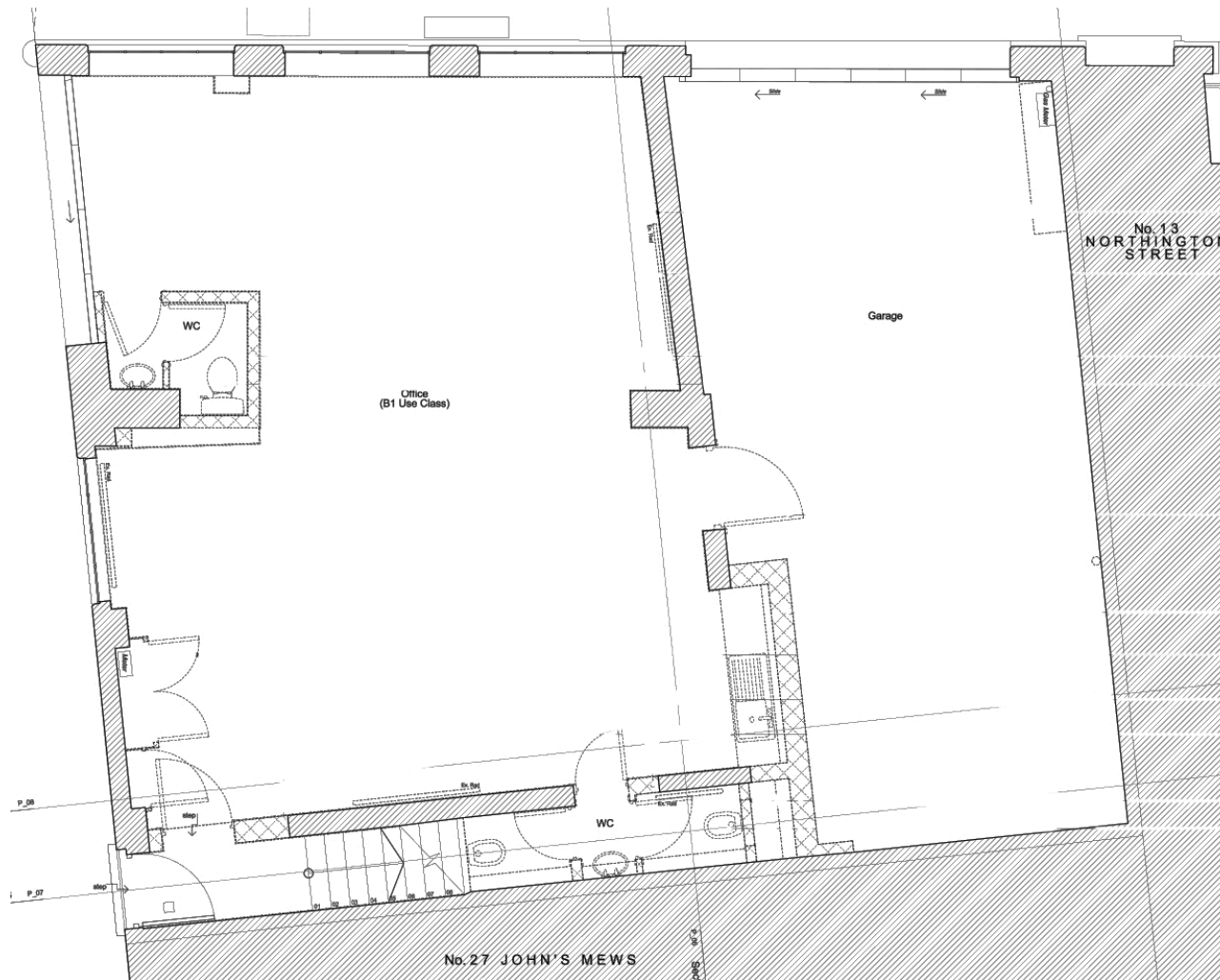
SECTION A-A SHOWING 1950'S VEHICLE ACCESS RAMP ARRANGEMENT

2

8.3 Preservation of Layout

Formation of the new proposed basement would require the removal of both 'upper' and 'lower' ground floor slabs. This would also entail the removal of the recently installed internal partitions at ground floor (post 2012). The remaining internal walls which predate the 2012 scheme are probably part of the building's original 1902 fabric. These will be carefully retained in place and given appropriate protection during the course of the works. These original internal walls are also shown clearly hatched on the SCH A100 series 'proposed' drawings. For ease of reference we include the 2012 drawing of the ground floor which clearly show the minimal extent of 'original' internal partitions and fabric (opposite).

A separate document containing site photographs accompanies this application. These photographs clearly depict the lack of any internal features etc. of historical interest and that there is nothing worthy of preservation from a historical perspective.



The above drawing was included within the 2012 Planning Application (Planning Ref. 9501052). The dotted and cross hatched walls were removed (non-original fabric) and the diagonal hatched walls were retained (original fabric). These original fabric walls that will be retained as part of the proposals.

9.0 First Floor and Roof

The proposal includes minimal works at first floor and roof level.

9.1 Ventilation

A combined supply and extract with heat recovery unit shall supply filtered fresh air to each of the habitable rooms. Vitiated air shall be extracted from the wet areas e.g. bathroom, en-suite, wc, kitchen, utility rooms etc. The supply air shall be pre-heated by the extract air via the integrated counter-flow heat exchanger element. The extracted air shall also be filtered before it reaches the heat exchanger block.

This whole house ventilation strategy allows for full ventilation without the need to open windows, thereby giving comfort to the new basement.



Residential whole house ventilation system

9.2 First Floor Riser

As indicated on the proposed drawings, a small services riser is proposed containing services required for a new basement. The position of this riser is within cupboard which currently contains the majority of the buildings services (hot water cylinders etc.). No original features exist in this area. Please see photo sheets accompanying this application.

9.3 Roof Level

As can be seen on the proposed drawings, some additional roof penetrations are required for the aforementioned basement services. These services would pass through a 'modern' element of flat roof and would not be visible from street level. The photo sheets accompanying this application show the area of roof in question.

10.0 Area Schedule
Existing & Proposed GIA

APPROXIMATE GROSS INTERNAL AREA SCHEDULES

	EXISTING GIA	
	C3 Use Class	
	(sq m)	(sq ft)
Basement	15	161
Ground	110	1,184
First	112	1,206
Roof Terrace	25	269
TOTAL	262	2,820

Existing based on SCH drawings
A002-A005

	PROPOSED GIA	
	C3 Use Class	
	(sq m)	(sq ft)
Basement	99	1,066
Ground	110	1,184
First	112	1,206
Roof Terrace	25	269
TOTAL	346	3,724

Proposed based on SCH drawings
A102-A105

	UPLIFT GIA	
	C3 Use Class	
	(sq m)	(sq ft)
Basement	84	904
Ground	0	0
First	0	0
Roof Terrace	0	0
TOTAL	84	904

11.0 Summary

The proposal presented within the Design & Access Statement, Heritage Statement and supporting drawings is for a basement extension.

- The site is Grade II listed and in Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- There is no negative impact to the neighbouring No. 27 John's Mews or No. 13 Northington Street as there will be no visible physical alterations.
- The proposal is for a basement extension.
- The character and history of the existing building has been carefully considered.
- Physical investigations suggest the possibility of a larger basement than currently exists.
- The proposal accords with the principle of applicable planning policies.
- The design process has been extensive and careful consideration has been given to the challenge of extending this building.
- Savills Heritage Statement concludes "the proposed works will have no adverse effect on the setting or significance of the designated heritage asset and will preserve the setting of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area".

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