

Heritage Statement

1 Wicklow Street, Camden WC1X 9JX

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On behalf of:	Casswell Bank Architects	Ref:	0406

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Ignus Froneman, Director at Cogent Heritage, in consultation with Casswell Bank Architects, The Planning Lab and the applicant, Alex Bank (of Casswell Bank Architects). It supports proposal for planning permission for a vertical/roof extension to 1 Wicklow Street, along with minor alterations, and improvements to the building.

Purpose of the report, site inspection and research

- 1.2 The Heritage Statement assesses the effects of the proposed roof extension on the heritage significance of the King's Cross Conservation Area (see below).
- 1.3 The Heritage Statement was informed by a site visit, in September 2021, and documentary research by Casswell Bank Architects.

Heritage assets

- 1.4 The site and its environs are located within the King's Cross Conservation Area, designated in 1986 and extended in 1991. Camden Council adopted *Conservation Area Statement 22: King's Cross* in June 2004 (the 'Conservation Area Statement' hereafter).
- 1.5 1 Wicklow Street is neither statutorily listed, nor locally listed. However, the Conservation Area Statement identifies it as an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the special character and appearance of the area.
- 1.6 The conservation area boundary is shown overleaf (**Fig 1**, which is an extract of the map on page 7 of the Conservation Area Statement). Because of the relatively minor nature of the proposed roof extension (in townscape terms), coupled with the sensitivity of the conservation area (and the host building) as townscape receptors, the assessment in this Heritage Statement is undertaken on the basis that townscape matters are adequately dealt with by way of assessing the potential effects of the extension on the townscape of the conservation area, within which 1 Wicklow Street is set.

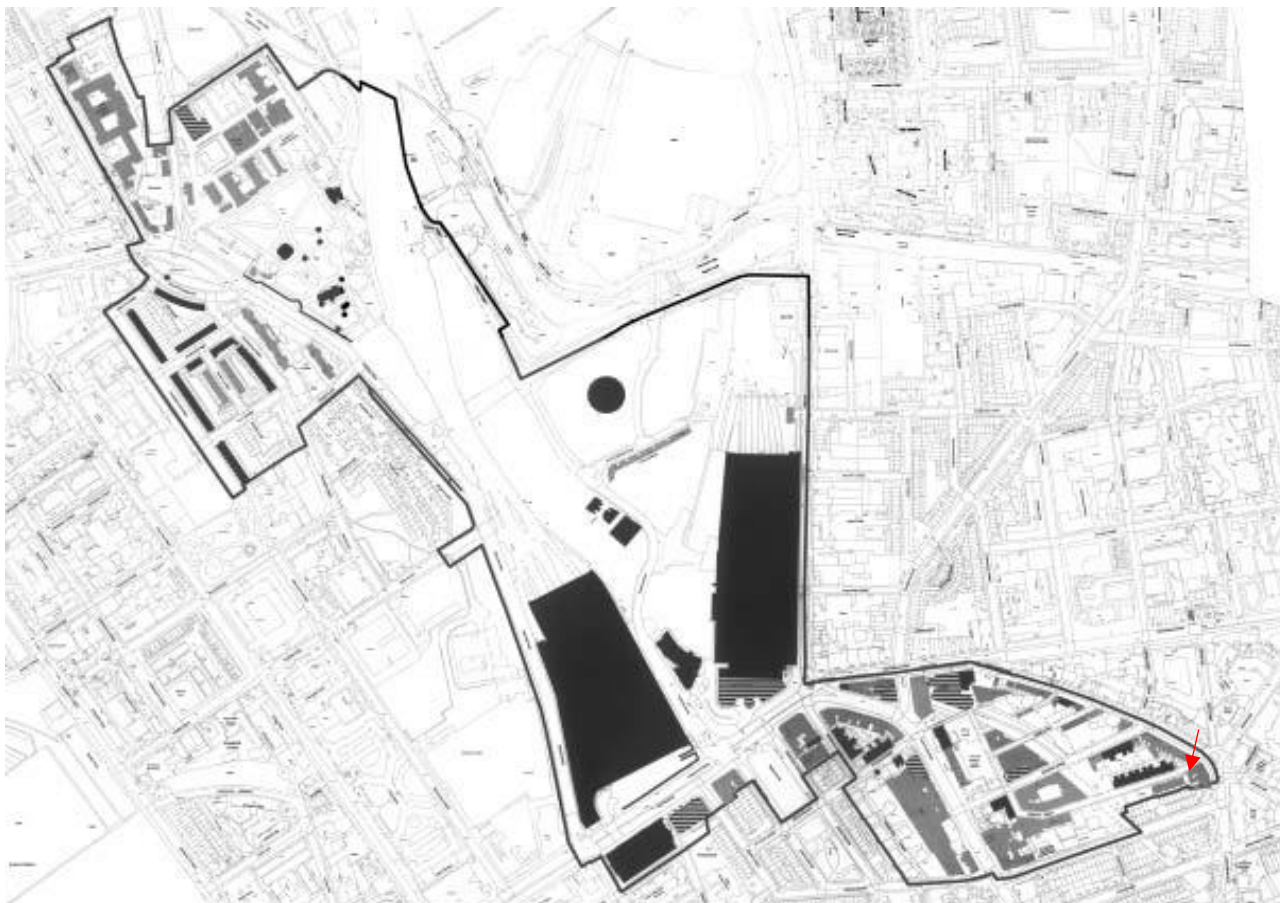


Fig 1: An extract of the map on page 7 of *Conservation Area Statement 22: King's Cross*, showing the approximate location of the application site as a red arrow.

- 1.7 The closest listed building in the vicinity of the application site is the grade II listed Derby Lodge, formerly known as the Derby Buildings, flats 37-102. It is located on the NE side of Wicklow Street and can be seen highlighted blue below on **Fig 2**, an extract of Camden Council's online heritage map, which also shows the boundary of the King's Cross Conservation Area in the vicinity of the application site, in orange. Derby Lodge comprises philanthropic housing, arranged as flats and dating from c. 1865. It was developed by Sydney Waterlow's Improved Industrial Dwellings Company with the help of builder Matthew Allen. It echoes the materials and architectural features of Derby Lodge, flats 1-36 on Britannia Street to the north, also listed grade II and with which the Derby Buildings forms a group. There are further listed terraced houses of c. 1835-44 to the south, on both sides of Swinton Street.

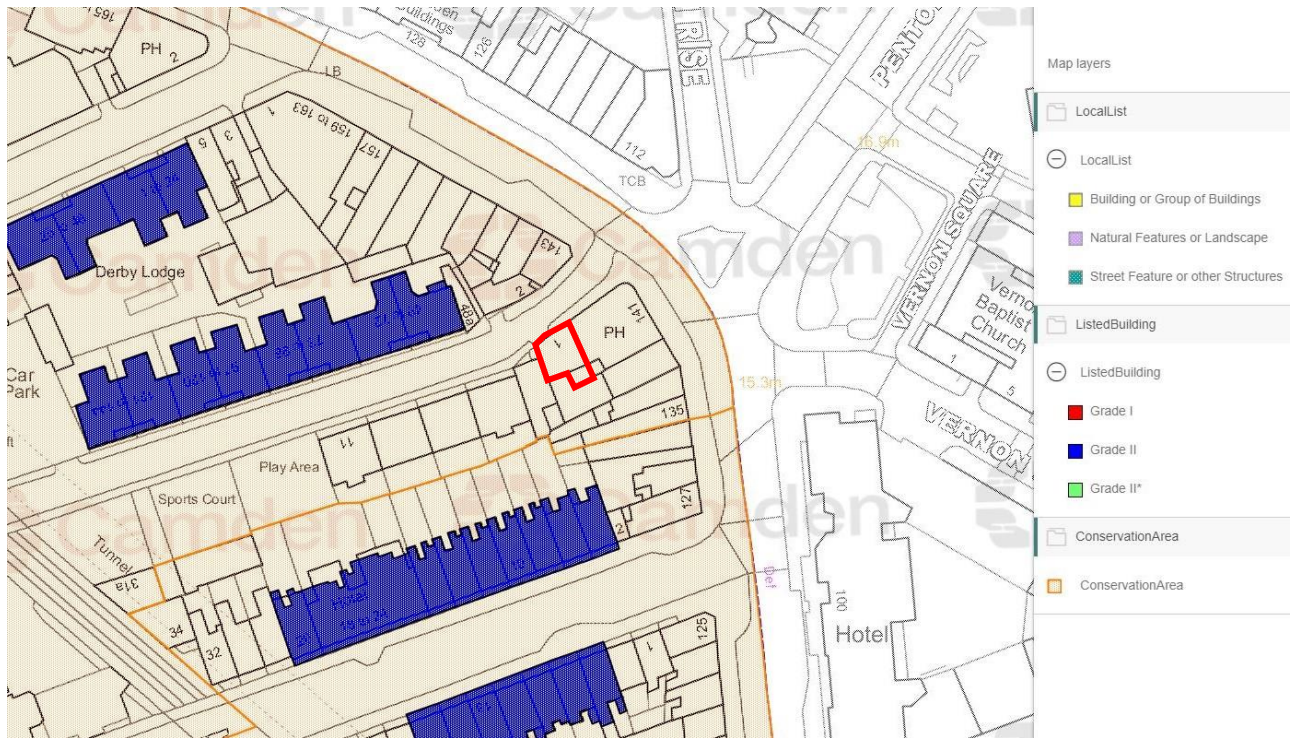


Fig 2: An extract of Camden Council's online heritage map, showing the locations of the closest listed buildings (blue) in the context of the application site (highlighted red).

- 1.8 It is not considered that the proposed roof extension is capable of affecting the significance of any of the nearby listed buildings; given its close proximity to the application site, the Derby Buildings would be the only potential candidate.
- 1.9 Insofar as the setting of the nearby listed buildings (specifically the Derby Buildings) is concerned, the assessment in this report is undertaken on the basis that any proposal that would be acceptable in its effect on the heritage significance of the King's Cross Conservation Area, is likely to also be acceptable in relation to its effect on the setting of the listed building.

Pre-application advice

- 1.10 This application follows a pre-application to Camden under ref. 2021/5309/PRE. The response, dated 24/01/2022, was broadly supportive, but some concerns expressed and there have been addressed in the present submission. A summary of some of the key points in the pre-application is highlighted below, including some commentary of how concerns have been addressed in the submission:
- i. The scale of the roof extension appears acceptable with it being suitably set in from the edges and then further set back on the terrace above.

- ii. Concern was raised regarding the extension essentially having two floors on top of the property, partly as a result of the rooftop balustrades (Note: these have been reduced and rationalised).
- iii. The principle of a terrace on top of the extension could be acceptable; however this element should be reduced in area (Note: the visibility of the terrace in views has been reduced).
- iv. Officers at the Council's Design Surgery support the principle of a 'non-traditional' or creatively designed rooftop extension.
- v. The point in relation to the design rationale and creating a lightweight design instead of a traditional mansard is taken; however it is considered that design does not need to be restricted to just 'lightweight'. The frame's appearance and use of the solar shading system appears quite commercial in character and does not link with the character of the conservation area or the residential use of the property. This aspect of the proposal has been refined and a physical scale 1:1 mock-up of the actual materials proposed has been produced to better show the actual appearance of this element.
- vi. More focus should be on how the materials relate to the character of the conservation area which has a mixture of both residential and industrial-type uses. Officers support the use of materials other than brick; however there needs to be clear justification. Currently the link between the blue colour and the use of terracotta blue pipes appears vague. The colour has been changed to one that accurately reflects bricks on the property (though it is not a traditional 'terracotta' brick hue).

Legislation and policy summary

- 1.11 The section below summarises the key provisions of s.66 & s.72 of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework and the Development Plan policies.
- 1.12 **Legislation:** Legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act). Section 66(1) of the Act sets out the statutory duty in relation to development affecting the setting of listed buildings; and section 72(1) sets out the statutory duty in relation to any buildings or other land in a conservation area.
- 1.13 It is a well-established concept in case law that 'preserving' means doing no harm for the purposes of the 1990 Act. The Court of Appeal's decision in *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northamptonshire District Council* [2014] (EWCA Civ 137)

established that, having 'special regard' to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building under s.66, involves more than merely giving weight to those matters in the planning balance. There is a strong statutory presumption against granting planning permission for any development which would fail to preserve a listed building or its setting (and the same for conservation areas). In cases where a proposed development would harm a listed building or its setting (or a conservation area), the Barnwell decision has established that the duty in s.66 of the Act requires these must be given "*considerable importance and weight*".

1.14 The key legal principles established in caselaw are:

- i. 'Preserving' for the purposes of the s.66 and s.72 duties means 'to do no harm'.
- ii. The desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building, or the character or appearance of a conservation area must be given 'considerable importance and weight'.
- iii. The effect of NPPF paragraphs 199-202 is to impose, by policy, a duty regarding the setting of a conservation area that is materially identical to the statutory duty pursuant to s.66(1) regarding the setting of a listed building (and s.72 in relation to the character and appearance of a conservation area).
- iv. NPPF paragraph 202 appears as part of a 'fasciculus' of paragraphs, which lay down an approach corresponding with the s.66(1) duty (and similarly the s.72 duty).
- v. If harm would be caused, then the case must be made for permitting the development in question, and the sequential test in paragraphs 200-202 of the NPPF sets out how that is to be done. If that is done with clarity, then approval following paragraph 202 is justified. No further step or process of justification is necessary.
- vi. In cases where there may be both harm and benefits, in heritage terms, great weight has to be given to the conservation and enhancement of a listed building, and its setting, and the preservation and enhancement of a conservation area. It is possible to find that the benefits may be far more significant than the harm.

1.15 **The National Planning Policy Framework:** Section 16 of the revised (July 2021) National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment, in paragraphs 189 to 208. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

- 1.16 According to paragraph 194 applicants should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- 1.17 According to paragraph 199, which applies specifically to designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to a heritage asset's conservation (the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This reflects the provisions of the 1990 Act in that it applies irrespective of whether it involves total loss, substantial harm, or less than substantial harm to significance.
- 1.18 Paragraph 200 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. It then deals with substantial harm to, or total loss of significance of, different types of designated heritage assets. Paragraph 201 continues on the subject of substantial harm (this level of harm is not relevant to the present proposals).
- 1.19 Paragraph 202, on the other hand, deals with less than substantial harm. Harm in this category should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) describes public benefits as "*anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress*".
- 1.20 **The Development Plan** is the London Plan (2021) and Camden's Local Plan (2017).
- 1.21 **The London Plan:** The London Plan 2021 deals with Design at Chapter 3. Policy D4 deals with delivering good design and states that the design of development proposals should be thoroughly scrutinised by borough planning, urban design, and conservation officers, utilising appropriate analytical tools. The design quality of development should be retained through to completion by, amongst others, ensuring maximum detail appropriate for the design stage is provided
- 1.22 Policy HC1, entitled "*Heritage conservation and growth*" is the most relevant of the policies in Chapter 7. Parts A and B of the policy deals with strategic considerations/requirements and these are not relevant to determining planning applications.
- 1.23 Part C deals with development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings. This part of Policy HC1 requires development proposals to conserve the significance of heritage assets, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation

within their surroundings. The policy also requires the cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings to be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early in the design process.

- 1.24 **Camden's Local Plan (2017):** Policy D2 deals with heritage and requires development to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings. According to the policy, the Council will not permit development that results in less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm. Specifically in relation to conservation areas, the Council will (amongst others):
- i. require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area; and
 - ii. resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.

2.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION

The King's Cross Conservation Area

- 2.1 The Conservation Area Statement notes at paragraph 1.1.1 that the conservation area contains some of the most important historic buildings and structures in the country, and has areas of great interest and variety. Paragraph 1.1.2 goes on to note that the area has formed a major gateway into central London for over two centuries. The Regent's Canal introduced a major transport system for goods into and out of the area and the construction of Euston Road was an important transport addition. Later, the railways enabled the rapid transportation of people and goods and materials to, from and through London to meet the demands of industry and the burgeoning urban population. The conservation area is heavily influenced by its historically important function as a transport hub/gateway, with associated and industrial and residential development.
- 2.2 The Conservation Area Statement describes the history of the conservation area in some detail and the following is a summary of the most relevant aspects.
- 2.3 St Pancras Old Church, considered one of the earliest Christian sites in the country and originally built to serve the Parish of St Pancras, was rebuilt during the 12th century but

may have been built on the site of a 4th century pagan temple. A small settlement developed in the vicinity of the church, which was situated on a hillock overlooking the River Fleet. Until the mid-18th century the area comprised the two small settlements of St Pancras and Battle Bridge, which remained relatively isolated and were surrounded by open fields.

- 2.4 The construction of the New Road (now Euston Road) between Paddington and Islington in 1756 acted as a stimulus for urban development and the road rapidly became London's northern boundary. King's Cross derived its name from the 60 ft high structure that was erected as a memorial to King George IV in 1830-35. Built at the junction of the New Road, Maiden Lane (York Way) and Gray's Inn Road, it was removed within 15 years.
- 2.5 Residential development in the area intensified during early to mid 19th century. Suffolk Street and Norfolk Street were laid out, expanding on the late 18th century residential areas. To the south of Euston Road, St Chad's Street, Chesterfield (now Crestfield) Street and Liverpool (now Birkenhead) Street were developed from the 1820s onwards with standardised late Georgian 'third class' housing, consisting of three storeys over a basement.
- 2.6 The coming of the railways was a major change to London's morphology. Goods yards were built in the expanse of open land to the north of the Regent's Canal, and King's Cross became the busiest goods handling complex in Britain. A temporary passenger station was constructed in the Great Northern Railway Company's new goods yard in 1850. However, it was the intention of the Great Northern Railway from the outset, to construct a main line station fronting onto the New Road.
- 2.7 In 1859 work began on the Metropolitan Railway, the world's first underground railway, which passed along the Euston Road between Paddington and Farringdon stations. The underground was constructed using the 'cut and cover' method, which required the demolition of several buildings, including those on the triangle of land between Gray's Inn Road and Pentonville Road. Following the completion of the railway line, several new properties were built during the 1870s to replace the demolished buildings. The most distinctive was the narrow 'Lighthouse' tower building, with its prominent cupola, at the junction between Gray's Inn Road and Pentonville Road.
- 2.8 The two rail termini, their associated hotels and freight facilities dominated the area and served as a monument to the industrial power of London and the significance of the King's Cross area during the Victorian era. Their construction stimulated the intensive

development of residential, commercial, industrial and leisure premises within the area during the latter half of the 19th century.

- 2.9 In the 1860s, tenement blocks were built fronting onto Stanley Passage and Clarence Passage to the east of St Pancras Station. This philanthropic accommodation was constructed by the Improved Industrial Dwelling Company in 1864, of which the grade II listed Derby Lodge on Wicklow Street is a surviving example.
- 2.10 Section 4 of the Conservation Area Statement deals with the character and appearance of the area, with paragraph 4.1.3 highlighting firstly that it is dominated by the stations and the area's function as a gateway to central London. However, the same paragraph notes that there is great variety in the character and appearance of the area as a whole. Whilst the stations are major landmarks in the urban fabric of London and major centres of public transport interchange, the streets to the south of Euston Road and to the north and west of St Pancras Garden are more characteristic of the general grain and land uses beyond the conservation area boundary and are largely unrelated to the stations.
- 2.11 Paragraph 4.2.1 describes the subdivision of the conservation area into four sub-areas for the purposes of the Conservation Area Statement. 1 Wicklow Street falls within sub-area: 4 Gray's Inn Road. This area is described as the part of the conservation area south of the Euston Road, bounded by Pentonville Road, King's Cross Road, Swinton Street, and Argyle Street.
- 2.12 King's Cross Road and Gray's Inn Road, the principal roads linking King's Cross to the City, are lined with a mix of early 19th century terraces and larger scale institutional buildings. The area between the main roads contains narrow streets paved in granite setts, predominantly lined with later 19th century buildings of former light-industrial and commercial uses, as well as housing, and several vacant sites currently used for car parking. These streets are bisected by the Metropolitan Line and Thameslink railway cutting. Despite piecemeal redevelopment, they have a characteristic fine urban grain with a broad consistency of building heights and materials.
- 2.13 The above summary correctly describes the character of the area around 1 Wicklow Street, with the exception being the broad consistency of building heights. There is no broad consistency in the context of 1 Wicklow Street, although there are ranges of buildings with consistent heights (e.g. the terrace at 5-11 Wicklow Street and the grade II listed Derby Lodge). This can be seen on **Photo 1** below.



Photo 1: A view east along Wicklow Street, showing the varied heights in the context of 1 Wicklow Street.

- 2.14 Paragraph 4.2.137 of the Conservation Area Statement notes that the Northumberland Arms pub on the corner of Wicklow Street and King's Cross Road, along with the terrace to the south of it, form the south-easternmost corner of the conservation area. 1 Wicklow Street immediately adjoins the Northumberland Arms (No. 141 King's Cross Road – **Photo 2**). It is a 3 storey Italianate building with deep, striking cornice that accentuates its presence and exploits its corner location as a minor landmark, in a manner typical of Victorian pubs.



Photo 2: The Northumberland Arms (No. 141 King's Cross Road) with 1 Wicklow Street just visible behind it.

- 2.15 According to the Conservation Area Statement, the adjoining No. 139 King's Cross Road, a 3 storey red brick house with rusticated quoins and timber sash windows, is 'architecturally linked' to the pub (the same could not be said of 1 Wicklow Street).
- 2.16 Paragraph 4.2.138 of the Conservation Area Statement notes that the area between King's Cross Road and Gray's Inn Road is characterised by narrow streets, generally paved with granite setts and lined with former light industrial or commercial buildings. The buildings front directly onto the back of pavement and create a strong sense of enclosure. This is all an apt description of the context of 1 Wicklow Street, although the strong sense of enclosure is created here by residential rather than industrial properties (i.e. the terrace, and the tall block of Derby Lodge).
- 2.17 At paragraph 4.2.153 the Conservation Area Statement notes that the southern section of Wicklow Street (south of Britannia Street) is lined with former industrial buildings and structures to the rear of the hospital fronting Gray's Inn Road and, further east, residential properties – the latter being the context of 1 Wicklow Street.
- 2.18 Paragraph 4.2.157 of the Conservation Area Statement describes 1 Wicklow Street and its context, as per the full quote below:

"The northern side of this section of Wicklow Street is lined with the long façade to the southern block of Derby Lodge, which is a apartment building identical in form to the

building situated on Britannia Street, also listed at Grade II. On the southern side of the road, nos. 5-11 Wicklow Street comprise a later 19th century terrace of 4 three-storey double fronted dwellings, plus basements, in yellow stock brick and have front areas which are enclosed by cast iron railings and steps to raised front entrances. Their Wicklow Street elevations incorporate tripartite windows with white painted surrounds and recessed arched entrances in a gothic style. The terrace is adjoined to the east by no. 3, which is a two-storey modern infill property plus a mansard level, with a rendered façade. The adjacent property, no. 1 Wicklow Street, is a, two-storey later 19th century dwelling, which is constructed of stock brick with rusticated stucco at ground floor level and a wide vehicular entrance with original timber gates and granite sett paving. Wicklow Street is terminated at its eastern end by the flank wall of the "Northumberland Arms" Public House, which is of three storeys with stucco on the upper levels and brown glazed tile to the ground floor."

- 2.19 Paragraph 4.2.158 notes that Swinton Street forms the southern boundary of this part of the Conservation Area. It is described as a principal road that connects Gray's Inn Road with King's Cross Road, lined with a range of offices and institutional buildings as well as smaller domestic properties. Only the larger buildings on the northern side of the street, between Gray's Inn Road and the railway cutting, are included within the boundary of the King's Cross Conservation Area.
- 2.20 Finally, the Conservation Area Statement notes unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the special character and appearance of the area within Sub Area; these include Nos. 1 and 5-11 Wicklow Street.

1 Wicklow Street

- 2.21 Very little historic information could be sourced about the building, although the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) holds two annotated pencil sketches of 1856, drawn by an unknown artist, simply with the initials 'H.G.' (**Figs 3 & 4**). Comparison with the present-day Northumberland Arms pub shows that the sketches were deftly drawn and well-observed, with accurate depictions of the building. It can therefore be assumed with reasonable certainty that 1 Wicklow Street was also accurately depicted at this time. The following observations can be made:
- i. There was always a pronounced step between 1 and 3 Wicklow Street (the latter having been rebuilt in recent years).
 - ii. 1 Wicklow Street had a good cornice and prominent coping to the rendered parapet.
 - iii. The first floor windows and ground floor carriageway were in place, although there was no entrance doorway off the street at that time, only a single large window.

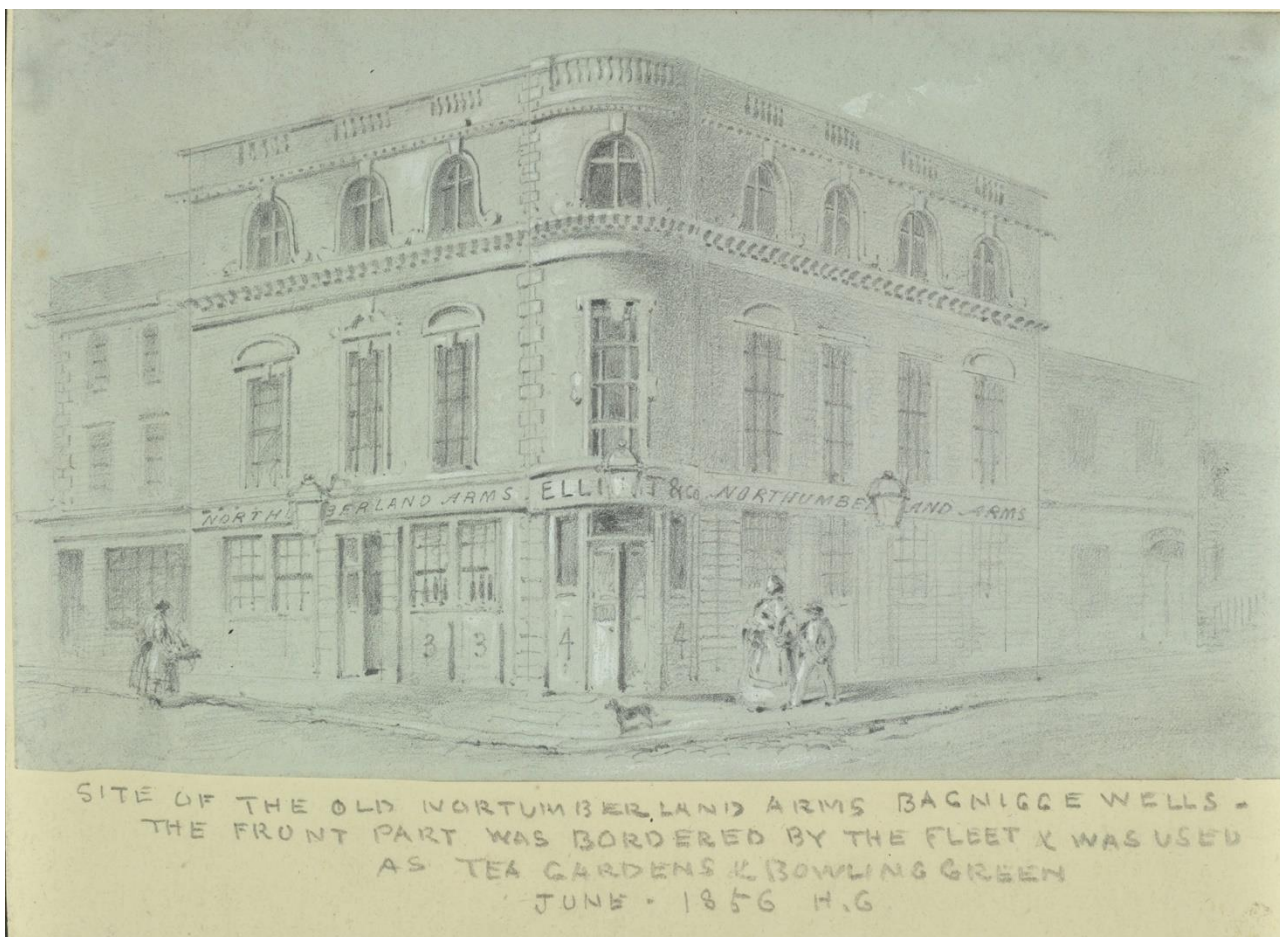


Fig 3: A pencil sketch of the Northumberland Arms pub, drawn in 1856. © London Metropolitan Archives.



Fig 4: A pencil sketch of the Northumberland Arms pub, drawn in 1856. © London Metropolitan Archives.

- 2.22 1 Wicklow Street is located between The Northumberland Arms pub on the corner, and the modern house at 3 Wicklow Street to the west. The pub turns the corner abruptly, with only a short return of the cornice and quoins to the rear; the remainder of the pub's back wall is raised in unadorned plain brick, making for a stark (though not unusual) contrast.



Photo 3: The Northumberland Arms turns the corner abruptly, with only a short return of the cornice and quoins to the rear; the remainder of the pub's back wall is raised in unadorned plain brick.

- 2.23 1 Wicklow Street appears to be an early Victorian ancillary building, most likely originally used by the neighbouring pub as a coach house, as evidenced by the carriageway entrance and the absence of an independent doorway off the street on the historic sketches. It is said that the building and rear yard have also been used as a milk parlour and for other light industrial purposes, though that cannot be corroborated. At some point it was converted into a house and it has remained in domestic use.



Photo 4: The street frontage of 1 Wicklow Street.

2.24 The building retains the appearance of a small industrial/ancillary building, despite its conversion to a dwelling and broadly domestic proportions. The 1856 sketches show that the façade has been subject to a number of changes, some unsympathetic:

- i. The addition of a front door, with the ground floor window perhaps relocated, and with concrete steps added to access the front door.
- ii. The existing aluminium windows at the first floor are replacements of the original sashes.
- iii. The stucco parapet previously had a cornice and pronounced coping course. A modern precast coping appears to have been installed at a lower level, creating a stepped profile at the corner with 3 Wicklow Street.
- iv. Removal of the original chimney pots.
- v. The carriageway doors appear to have been replaced, though in a broadly similar design and the present doors are evidently of some age. The opening above the carriageway doors has been subsequently infilled with planks, but these are broadly in keeping with the plank doors.

2.25 The rear of 1 Wicklow Street is enclosed on both sides by the larger neighbouring buildings and workshop buildings and is not visible from the public realm. The existing

roof has a double pitched form that is hipped at the front, behind a parapet, and with a pair of low gables to the rear. The rear gables have been rebuilt (**Photo 5**) and the roof reclad in concrete tiles. The first floor rear door, seen below, has apparently been inserted. The roof may therefore not be original, and it is in any event not visible from the surrounding public realm.



Photo 5: The rear gables, above the dotted red line, have been rebuilt.

- 2.26 In terms of the broader street scene and context (**Photo 6**), 1 Wicklow Street is unique in its design and bears little or no resemblance to the design or appearance of the other buildings along the street. Perhaps unusually for a building of this age, the façade has a squat appearance, because of the window proportions and height to width ratio. The openings are arranged asymmetrically, with the first floor window over the carriageway not centred on the opening below, and they are positioned unequally from the ends of the building. The most striking feature is the carriageway with its timber doors. Historically, the cornice and coping would have added depth to the parapet that is now absent.
- 2.27 This part of Wicklow Street is characterised by a strong sense of enclosure, given the width of the street and the buildings rising directly from the pavement, or set behind narrow areas. There is a variety and lack of uniformity in the architecture and roofscape

of the street, and the recently developed, very modern house at 2 Wicklow Street, directly opposite the application site, adds further variation (it is a tall two storeys in height).



Photo 6: The street context of 1 Wicklow Street.

2.28 Despite the obviously neglected state of 1 Wicklow Street and the loss of the windows and cornice etc., it is not surprising that 1 Wicklow Street (and the terrace at 5-11 Wicklow Street) has been identified as a building that makes a positive contribution to the special character and appearance of the area. This can be attributed to a number of factors, such as:

- i A traditional, somewhat unusual design that is typical for its period in its general architectural form, traditional style and detailing.
- ii The building clearly has a sense of age and time depth that contributes to the historic interest of this part of the conservation area.
- iii The materials, period, scale and traditional style of 1 Wicklow Street are typical within the conservation area.
- iv The building is contextually in keeping with the broad scale and grain of this part of the streetscape and townscape on Wicklow Street.

3.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Principles

- 3.1 Before considering the proposed extension, this section starts by referencing *Conservation Principles*¹, before briefly considering Camden's design guidance, and the guidance on extensions.
- 3.2 The extracts below, from *Conservation Principles*, are preceded by their paragraph numbers for ease of reference and the broad implications of these are then briefly discussed in the context of the present proposed extension (in all cases emphasis has been added):
44. *The historical value of places depends upon both sound identification and direct experience of fabric [...] that has survived from the past, but is not as easily diminished by change or partial replacement as evidential value. The authenticity of a place indeed often lies in visible evidence of change as a result of people responding to changing circumstances. Historical values are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has obliterated or concealed them, although completeness does tend to strengthen illustrative value.*
- 86 *Many places now valued as part of the historic environment exist because of past patronage and private investment, and the work of successive generations often contributes to their significance. Owners and managers of significant places should not be discouraged from adding further layers of potential future interest and value, provided that recognised heritage values are not eroded or compromised in the process.*
- 93 *A desire to retain authenticity tends to suggest that any deliberate change [...] should be distinguishable, that is, its extent should be discernible through inspection. The degree of distinction that is appropriate must take account of the aesthetic values of the place.*
- 139 *The recognition of [...] heritage values is not in conflict with innovation, which can help to create the heritage of the future. Innovation is essential to sustaining cultural values in the historic environment for present and future generations, but should not be achieved at the expense of places of established value.*
- 140 *The greater the range and strength of heritage values attached to a place, the less opportunity there may be for change, but few places are so sensitive that they [...] present no opportunities for change. Places whose significance stems*

¹ *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* English Heritage/Historic England (April 2008)

essentially from the coherent expression of their particular cultural heritage values can be harmed by interventions of a radically different nature.

- 141 *Quality of design, materials, detailing and execution is obviously essential in places of established value. Conversely, places of lesser significance offer the greatest opportunity for the creation of the heritage values of tomorrow [...]*
- 142 *The need for quality in new work applies at every level [...]*
- 143 *There are no simple rules for achieving quality of design in new work, although a clear and coherent relationship of all the parts to the whole, as well as to the setting into which the new work is introduced, is essential. This neither implies nor precludes working in traditional or new ways, but will normally involve respecting the values established through an assessment of the significance of the place.*
- 144 *Quality is enduring, even though taste and fashion may change. The eye appreciates the aesthetic qualities of a place such as its scale, composition, silhouette, and proportions, and tells us whether the intervention fits comfortably in its context. Achieving quality always depends on the skill of the designer. The choice of appropriate materials, and the craftsmanship applied to their use, is particularly crucial to both durability and to maintaining the specific character of places.*

3.3 The extracts from Conservation Principles highlight, if that was necessary, that:

- i. Change does not equate to harm; the authenticity of a heritage asset, in fact, often lies in visible evidence of change as a result of people responding to changing circumstances.
- ii. The work of successive generations often contributes to the significance of heritage assets. It is only logical that this principle has not ceased at some point in the past, but it continues to apply to changes made in the present-day.
- iii. Adding further layers of potential future interest and value should not be discouraged.
- iv. Deliberate change should be distinguishable.
- v. Innovation is essential to sustaining cultural values in the historic environment, and this may well manifest in ways that contrast with traditional architecture.
- vi. There is greater capacity for change in areas which are less sensitive, and few places/heritage assets are so sensitive that they present no opportunities for change.
- vii. Quality of design, materials, detailing and execution is essential.

- 3.4 In principle, therefore, it must be accepted that the addition of a high quality roof extension at a part of the building that is of lower sensitivity (i.e. a roof that is concealed and which has probably been reconstructed), may well be acceptable.
- 3.5 Turning then to Camden's guidance, the following paragraphs briefly consider *Camden Planning Guidance: Design* (January 2021). The guidance notes at paragraph 1.10 that Camden's objective of achieving high quality design does not just concern new development or large-scale schemes, but also includes the replacement, extension or conversion of existing buildings. Paragraph 2.1 notes that high quality design across the borough contributes to achieving a high-quality, sustainable environment for people to live, work, play and relax.
- 3.6 It might be noted in response (and this is relevant to quality as in *Conservation Principles* above) that Caswell Banks is an award-winning (Architects' Journal Retrofit 2021 Award) small practice, and the house is for one of the founding Directors. Camden has a long and very interesting history of small post-war houses and extensions in modern forms, some personal designs or projects by architects for themselves, many of which are now listed or positive contributors to conservation areas.
- 3.7 Paragraph 2.3 goes on to highlight that high quality design and preserving and enhancing Camden's rich heritage should be at the heart of all development in the borough.
- 3.8 According to paragraph 2.10, development should respond positively and sensitively to the existing context. Development should integrate well with the existing character of a place, building and its surroundings. Paragraph 2.11 lists some of the things in the existing context that good design should respond appropriately to, by:
- i. Ensuring the scale of the proposal overall integrates well with the surrounding area. **Response:** the scale of the proposed extension has been very carefully considered to sit well within an area that is characterised by variety, and it incorporates a deliberate reduction in scale towards the top. This has been further reduced and rationalised following pre-application advice.
 - ii. Carefully responding to the scale, massing and height of adjoining buildings, the general pattern of heights in the surrounding area. **Response:** there is a good deal of variety in the surrounding area, but the proposed extension would generally fit well into its context.
 - iii. Positively integrating with and enhancing the character, history and nature of existing buildings on the site and other buildings in the surrounding area. This is particularly important in conservation areas. **Response:** as can be seen

from the Architect's Design Statement, the design of the proposed extension was carefully considered to reflect its context, albeit not in a traditional or banal way that replicates Victorian architecture, but as a lightweight, modern structure. It was purposefully set in to reduce its visibility, although as a well-designed modern addition it was not intended to be hidden. Given its modest size, this is a remarkably well-conceived structure that would add a high quality contemporary layer and add to the interest of the area, without taking anything away from it. The use of materiality and colour is explored further in this assessment.

- iv. Respecting and sensitively responding to the natural and physical features, both on and off the site. **Response:** as can be seen from the Architect's Design Statement, the design of the proposed extension was carefully considered to respond to the physical features of the site, albeit in a subtle way.

3.9 Paragraph 2.14 of the design guidance notes that materials should form an integral part of the design process and should:

- i. Be contextual – the texture, colour, pattern and patina of materials can influence the impact and experience of buildings for users and the wider townscape. Decisions on the materials used in a development scheme should be informed by those used in the local area. **Response:** as can be seen from the Architect's Design Statement, the material palette of the proposed extension was carefully considered to reflect – though not replicate – the local area. The use of materials also adds texture and a play in light that would change through the day, and seasonally. Because the structure involves the use of unusual materials and forms, a physical model was produced to explore and illustrate the appearance of the colours and the materials in combination.
- ii. Respond to existing heritage assets and features by relating to the character and appearance of the area, particularly in conservation areas or within the setting of listed buildings. **Response:** the response to the conservation area is inherent in the design, form, detailing and materials of the proposed extension.
- iii. Be durable and fit for purpose – it is important that robust materials that will weather well are used. **Response:** as can be seen from the Architect's Design Statement, the proposed materials are tactile and durable.

3.10 *Camden Planning Guidance: Home Improvements* (January 2021) deals with roof extensions at section 2.2. It starts by noting that extending the roof of a building to make it a habitable space is one of the most common and affordable types of

development. The guidance notes that a successful roof extension would consider the overall roof form of the existing building, adjoining buildings and impact in key views (when relevant) and be proportionate to the roof being extended.

- 3.11 The January 2021 home improvements guidance notes that previous guidance from the Council presented a 'hard line' approach of restricting development at roof level on any unbroken roofline. Under the January 2021 guidance, a more flexible approach is now proposed, to give more weight to existing older extensions and to those allowed under permitted development, in the immediate context of the building being proposed for extension – both within and outside conservation areas. This is perhaps most relevant here to the height and roof form of 3 Wicklow Street, which is a relatively recent development immediately adjoining 1 Wicklow Street. As can be seen from the Architect's Design Statement, the ridge height of this building has been used as something of a maximum benchmark for the proposed extension, which would be lower than it.
- 3.12 Importantly, the home improvements guidance notes that not every unbroken roofline is of heritage value, and therefore not worthy of preservation. That is considered to be the case here, where the reinstatement of a cornice and coping would reinforce and accentuate the visual presence of the existing building's 'roofline' and above which the very different, setback modern extension would be seen clearly differentiated, but as a high quality and contextually informed addition in its own right.
- 3.13 The home improvements guidance highlights that, for buildings in Conservation Areas, the Conservation Area Appraisals identify if certain terraces or groups of buildings are significant due to their unbroken roofline, which means they hold heritage value. 1 Wicklow Street is not identified in this way.
- 3.14 Section 2.2.2 of the home improvements guidance deals specifically with the addition of a new roof level. It highlights that extending properties with a new storey at roof level is a well established method to increase the useable space. According to the guidance, a new roof level should:
- i. Be subordinate to the host building. **Response:** the proposed extension is recessed along three sides, and with the roof terrace element set back further to ensure subservience. This has been further reduced and rationalised following pre-application advice.
 - ii. Include features informed by the host building and surrounding context. **Response:** the proposed extension in this instance is designed as a modern addition that is clearly differentiated from the host building, though it reflects

and references its context in the use of materials and colours, as well as local views and visibility.

- iii. Take the form of a traditional mansard, a modern interpretation or a more innovative approach, supported by pre-application advice. **Response:** this is clearly a case of a more innovative approach, which would add a unique a high quality addition to the area; it is of such quality that it might well be an award-winning extension.

Assessment

- 3.15 A great deal of thought and care has gone into the design of the proposed extension, down to the use of high quality materials and muted, complementary colours. Unusually for such a small project, the architect has commissioned a physical scale 1:1 mock-up of an elevation detail, which has been photographed so that the materials and colours can be seen in real life conditions. In part this is because of the use of materials (vitreous enamel) that might be unfamiliar, as well as unusual forms (the enamel is applied to pipes, which form a cladding screen, and which due to their form will add a three-dimensional aspect to the cladding that is difficult to communicate otherwise). The images below, from the Design and Access Statement, show the physical mock-up of an elevation detail as photographed (**Figs 5 & 6**).



Fig 5: A frontal scale 1:1 mock-up sample of timber posts and metal facade. © Casswell Bank Architects.

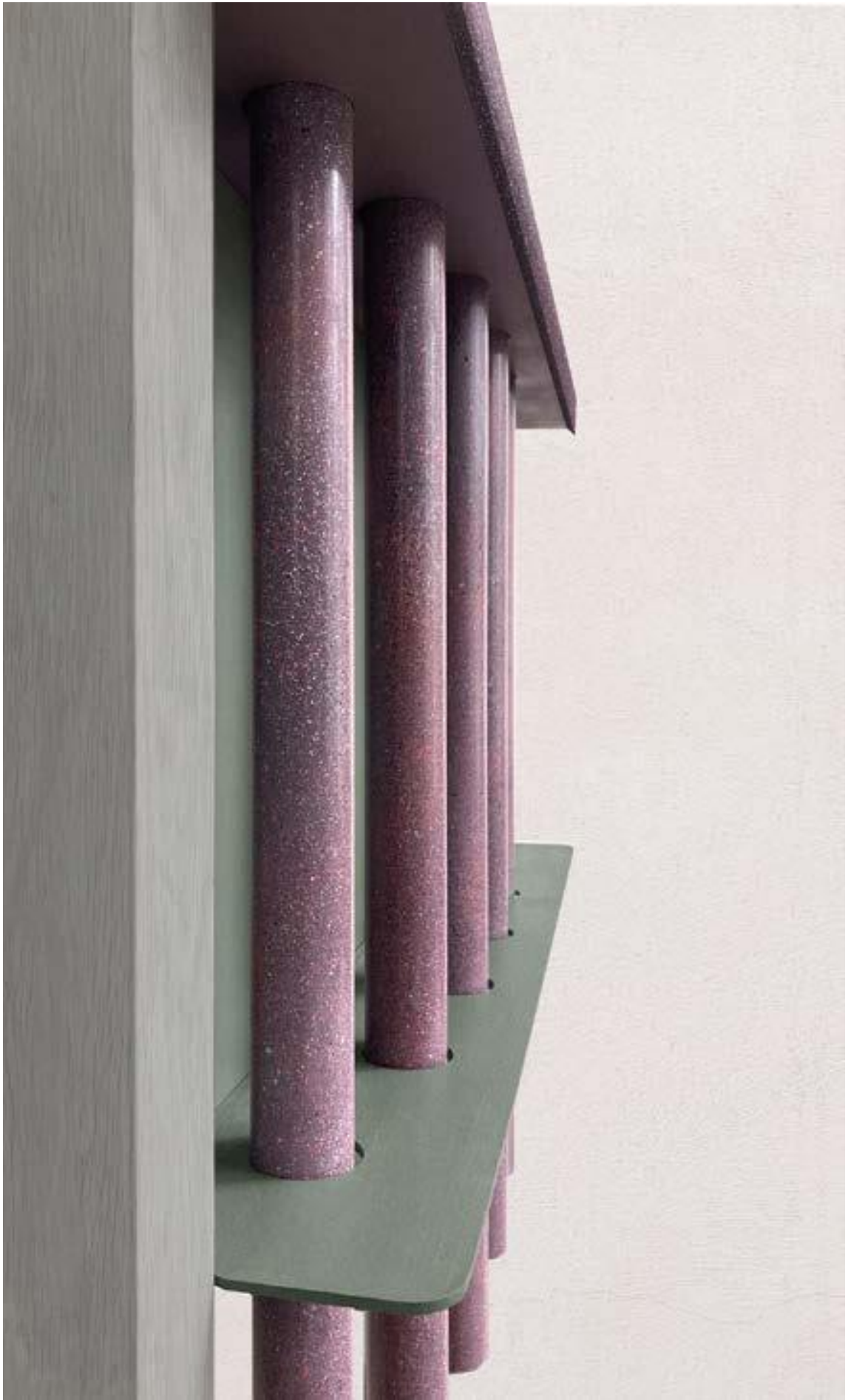


Fig 6: An oblique view of the mock-up. © Casswell Bank Architects.

3.16 The proposed extension would obviously be modern and different, although its design has been informed by, and reflects, its context in a number of subtle and thoughtful ways. It is a structure that delights, without dominating the host building. Part of that is due to the almost translucent, ephemeral quality of the extension. It is, on one hand, plainly a modern addition, whilst on the other hand deferential, and yet subtly and quietly confident as a new structure in its own right. There is a pleasing and somewhat playful tension between seeing this as a strikingly modern addition, but one that retains an ephemeral lightness against the heavy solidity of the brick walls of the host building and the adjacent pub. This can be seen on the visualisation below (**Fig 7**). A good deal of thought went into the colour palette, with the pinkish/purple hue derived from actual bricks on the host building (reminiscent of old purple bricks), though it does not blindly mimic the browns seen in the background of the same view. There is some synergy with the muted and sombre colours typical of the Victorian palette, and with the railings of the listed block in the foreground on the left, the pink granites in the cobbled surface, and the colours of the pub. A striking synergy between the verticality of the railings in the foreground and the hanging pipes of the extension is also observable.



Fig 7: A CGI of the proposed extension in context. © Casswell Bank Architects.

- 3.17 The CGI shows the effectiveness of the proposed extension's setbacks, form and muted colour palette. This is a remarkably well conceived structure, with the cladding detail remarkably already resolved to scale 1:1. It is an addition of the highest quality, that would add to the quality and interest of the local context, without taking anything away from it. It is of such quality that may well in due course be recognised in a design award, should it be permitted; given that it is a personal project by an award-winning architect, the quality is not in question and that is certainly a possibility.
- 3.18 It would add a subtle layer of interest to the area, without removing the contribution of the existing building, or visually overwhelming it. It would be a well-conceived 21st century modification of the building that would on one hand add another layer to the townscape, whilst on the other hand preserving the significance of the building and the interest and quality of the local townscape.
- 3.19 The mock-up photos show the vitreous enamel of the vertical hanging pipes would have a variation in colour (as seen on the physical samples). This would give these a subtle variation and the circular form would mean they would have a three dimensional aspect that is different from the fins of a louvre, for example.
- 3.20 The visualisation below (**Fig 8**) shows the proposed extension juxtaposed with the corner pub. It demonstrates a clear subservience and townscape compatibility, where it acts as something of a subtle transition in scale behind the pub. Whilst recognisably modern and different, it remains recessive and does not visually distract from, or stand out as particularly eye-catching. Instead it subtly adds a layer of interest, without becoming overpowering. The almost translucent, ephemeral quality of the extension where it meets the sky can again be seen. In this view, the synergy between the verticality of the hanging pipes of the extension and the railings of the Victorian house is again observable. The muted colour palette again fits well in, with perhaps just enough of a difference to pique interest and provide a slight accent. There can be no doubt that this would be a subtle, but sublime addition to the townscape.



Fig 6: A CGI of the proposed extension in the context of the pub. © Casswell Bank Architects.

- 3.21 The proposed extension is evidently the focus of this assessment, with the remaining alterations to the rear considered to be minor and uncontroversial. The only additional components of the proposal are the enhancements to the façade; the replacement of the modern metal framed windows with traditional timber sashes, the reinstatement of the missing cornice, and the new stone coping, with the height of the parapet reinstated to the line of truncation (where there is a step, and in line with 3 Wicklow Street.
- 3.22 Suffice it to say that these are all enhancements that would increase the positive contribution of the building to the conservation area.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The proposed roof extension and minor alterations have been very carefully considered, designed and detailed to preserve the integrity of 1 Wicklow Street, and its contribution to the conservation area.
- 4.2 It would be a well-conceived 21st century modification of the building that would preserve the significance of the building and the local townscape, whilst adding a high quality and well-considered new layer to the townscape. The host building itself would also be enhanced through the replacement traditional windows, proposed repairs and cornice.
- 4.3 No harm has been identified to the significance of the conservation area. There are therefore no conflicts with Local Plan policies. Neither does the proposal trigger paragraphs 201 or 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposed development also complies with the statutory duties in s.72 of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act, 1990.