

# 18 Little Russell Street

Design and Access Statement December 2022

Rev A 27/01/23



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose

- 1.1.1. This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Inglis Badrashi Loddo in support of a planning application for the proposed works at: *18 Little Russell Street London WC1A 2HL*
- 1.1.2. This statement sets out the background to the design proposal and the site context. It analyses the design constraints and describes the subsequent design development process and the final design proposals. It demonstrates that the proposals are policy compliant and shows that the design will make a positive contribution to the local area while minimising any impacts.
- 1.1.3. This Statement should be read in conjunction with the other drawings and documents submitted with the application.

## 1.2. Description of the Development

- 1.2.1. The development proposal is:  
*Conversion from backpacker's accommodation (Sui Generis) to a single residential dwelling (Class C3), together with associated internal and external alterations, including demolition of non-original rear extension and replacement with new extension*

## 2. Process

### 2.1. Site & Context

2.1.1. 18 Little Russell Street is a grade 2 listed building situated in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

2.1.2. Little Russell Street is located in the central of historic Bloomsbury to the south of the British Museum. The area is characterised by Georgian street patterns and is identified as Sub Area 7: Museum Street / Great Russell in the Conservation Area Appraisal, which describes the street arrangement as having “a very distinctive grain and street pattern consisting of a tight grid of streets containing small, intimately-scaled blocks of development. The area was developed in the later 17th century and retains its early street pattern. During the mid 19th century many of the terraces were rebuilt and re- fronted, reflected by a variety of elevational treatments.”

2.1.3. The Appraisal refers to Little Russell Street as follows:  
“Little Russell Street, Gilbert Place, Streatham Street and Willoughby Street are quiet, narrow back streets with generally residential uses that are enclosed by a variety of two-five storey buildings. The character of these streets derives from the combination of materials, ages and styles of the buildings. Facing materials are a combination of yellow brick, red brick and stucco. Along Little Russell Street, between Bury Place and Museum Street all the buildings contribute to the character of the area. Along the northern side development consists of predominantly four-storey terraces. Nos.18-21 (consec) are grade II listed, early 18th century four-storey terraced houses with mid 19th century stucco frontages of the same design. They have classically influenced details including window surrounds, bracketed hoods over the doors, horizontal banding and cornicing. These are seen as part of a group with Nos 16 and 17 to the east and Nos 22-42 (consec) to the west which are also stucco-faced, have similar detailing but are slightly taller.”



Street View

2.1.4. No.18 itself forms part of grade 2 listed terrace dating from the early 18th century, but which was re-fronted in the 19th century. It is a four storey stucco fronted former house with a basement with a small rear courtyard housing a non-original, poor quality single storey extension and a non-original single storey outbuilding housing the boiler for the building.

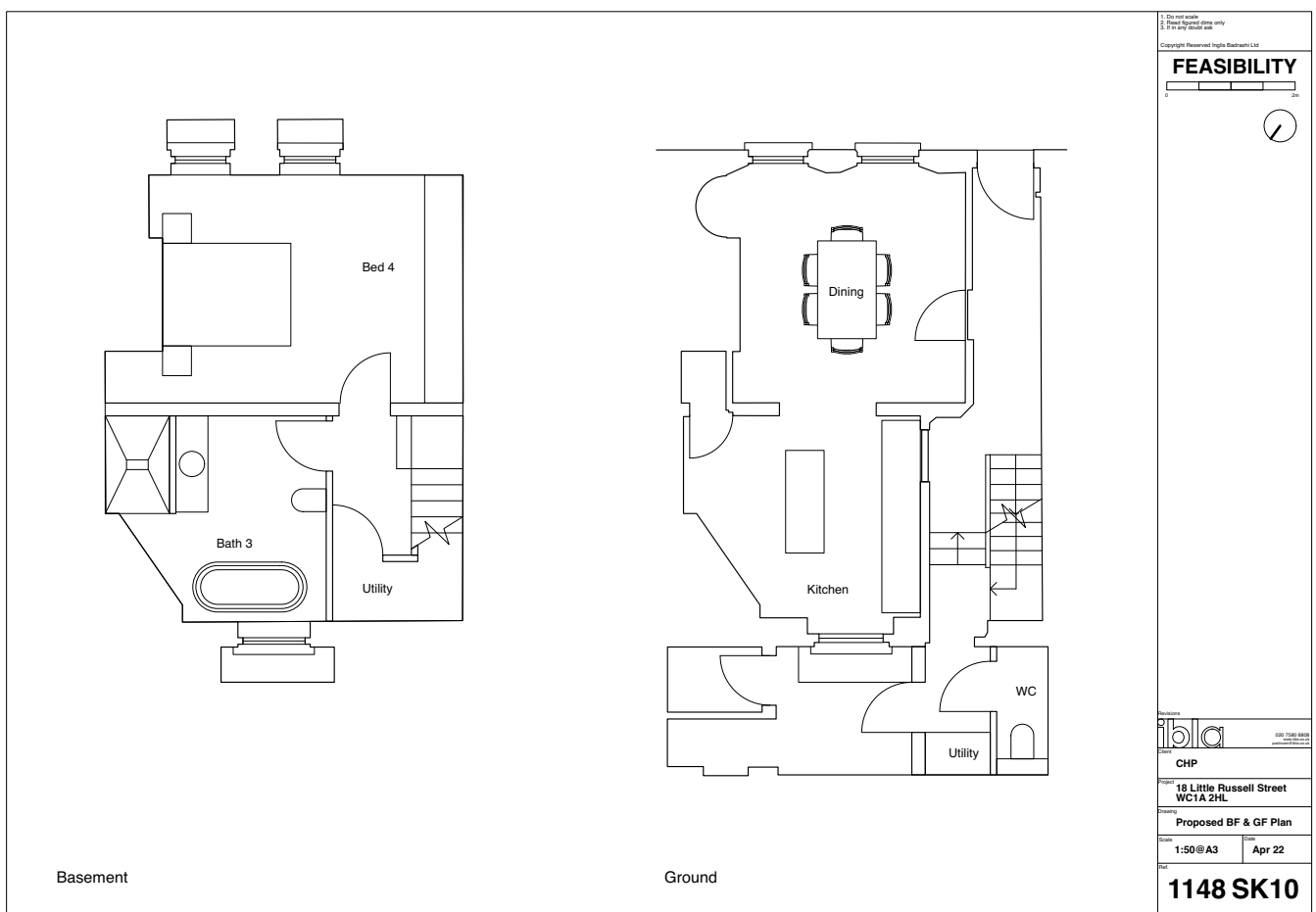
2.1.5. Further details, context and analysis can be found in the Heritage and Planning Statements.

## 2.2. Planning History

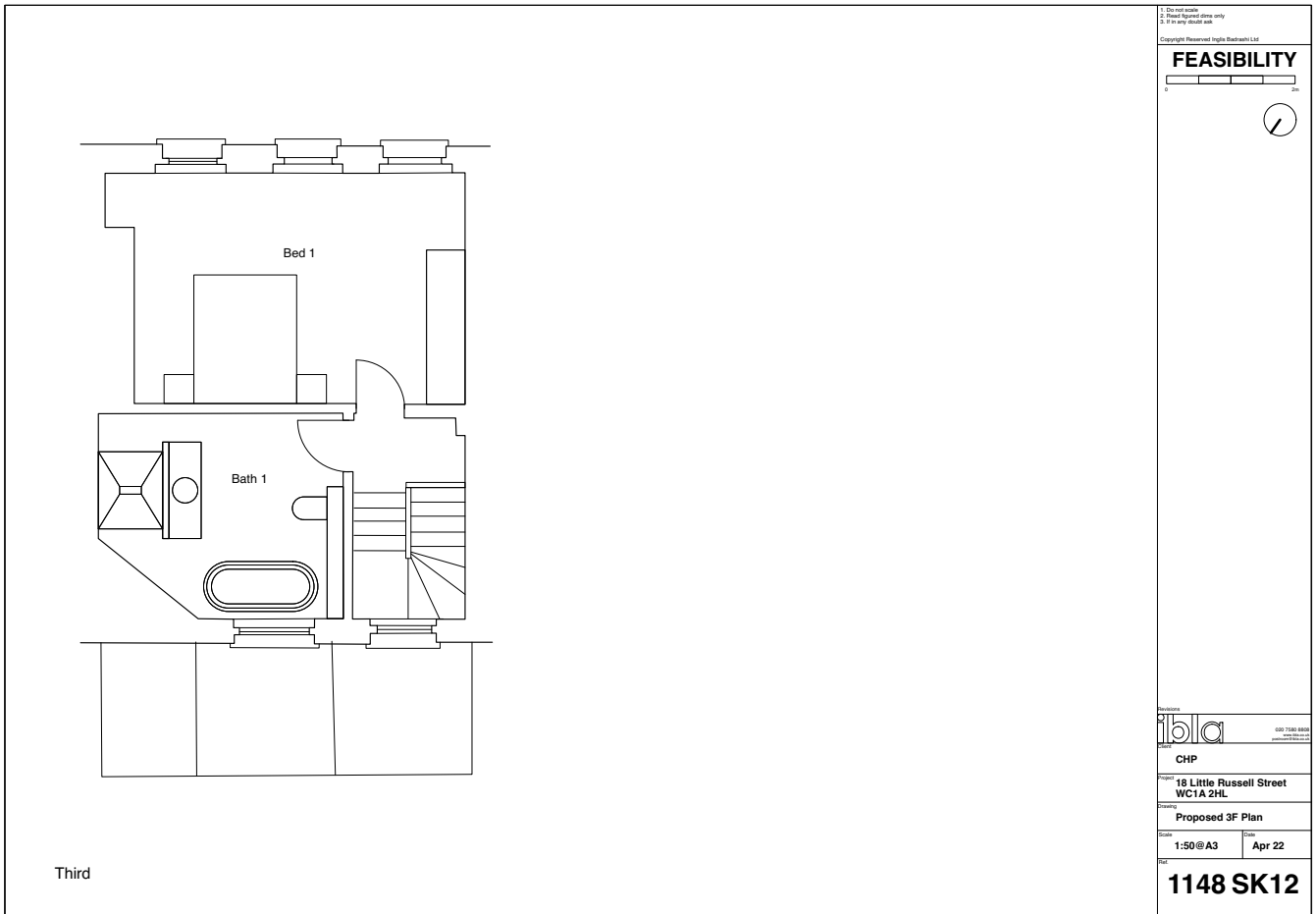
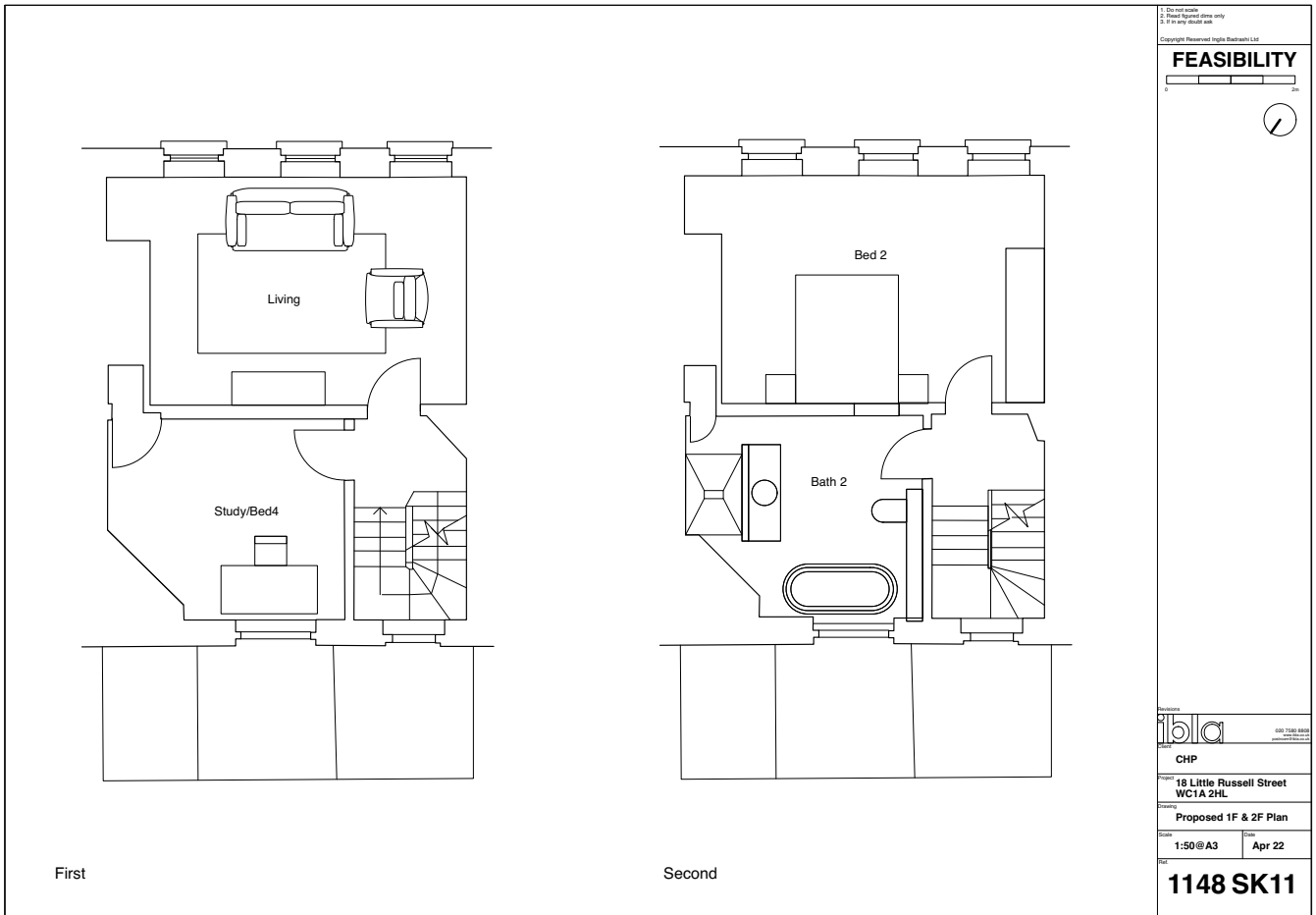
2.2.1. There is no planning history for the property.

## 2.3. Involvement

2.3.1. A Pre App was submitted in July 2022 for the conversion of the building back into a single family dwelling house. The Pre App response was positive with the only requested change being the removal of a proposed bedroom in the basement.



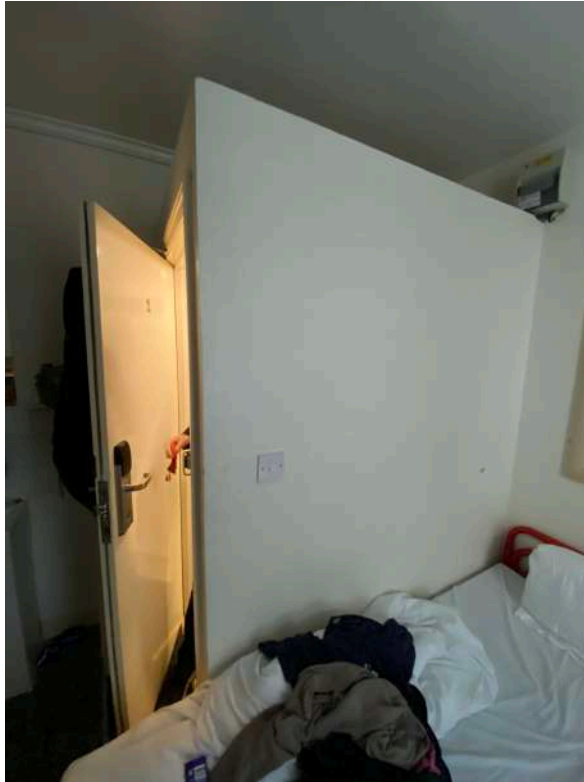
Pre App Scheme



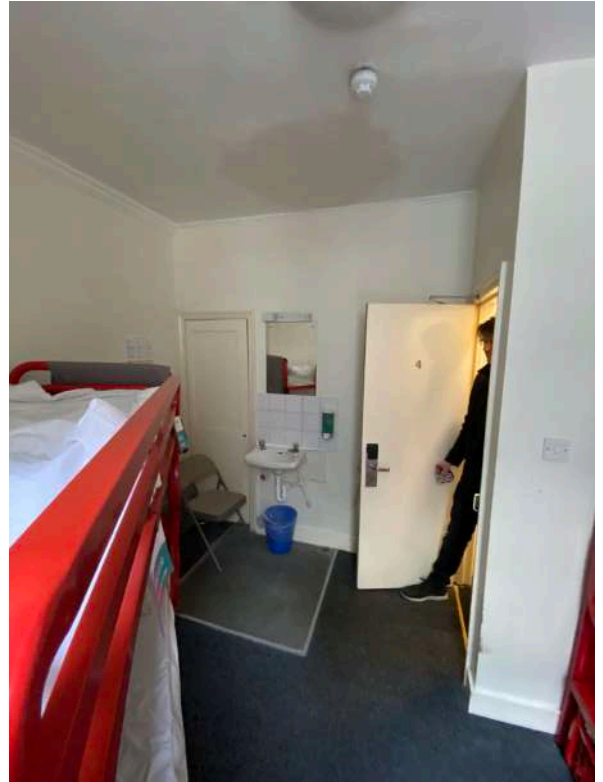


## 2.4. Evaluation

- 2.4.1. The existing building has been used as a backpacker hostel for a considerable period. As a result, while the plan form retains some of its original configuration, poor quality partitions have been added, subdividing the many of the rooms to create lobbies and WC / shower rooms causing significant harm to the original character and fabric of the building.



Ground floor rear room lobby



First floor rear room lobby

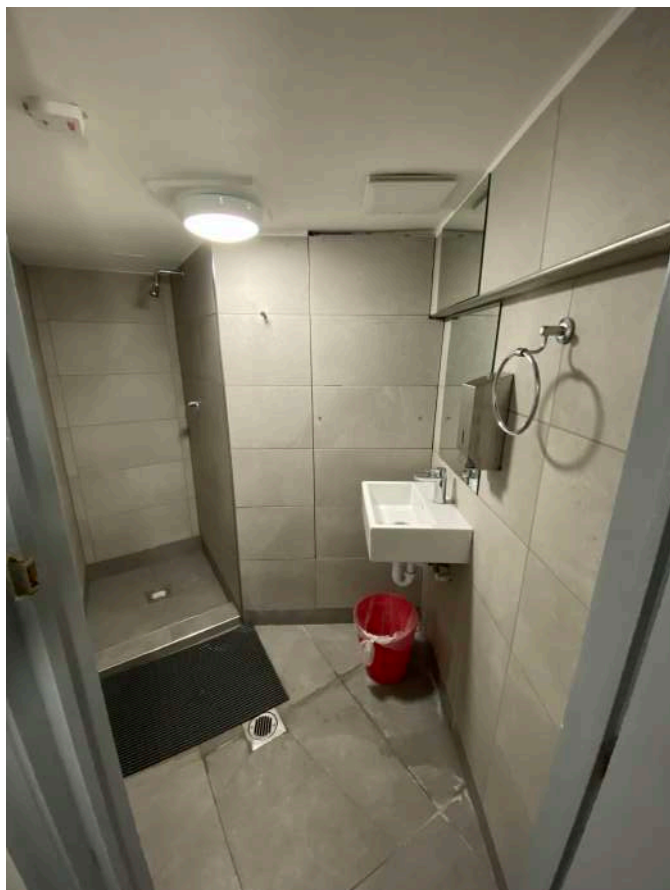
- 2.4.2. A non-original poor quality single storey extension has been built in the rear courtyard along with a poor quality outbuilding housing the boiler for the building.
- 2.4.3. The rear basement area has been substantially altered to accommodate WC and shower facilities. This has resulted in the loss of all original fabric internally in this area and the raising of the floor.
- 2.4.4. While some original features remain such as the main stair, chimney breasts, sash windows and some shutters and cornicing, many features have been stripped out leaving the building with an institutional character that is alien to its original domestic use.



View of rear extension



View of outbuilding



Existing basement rear room shower

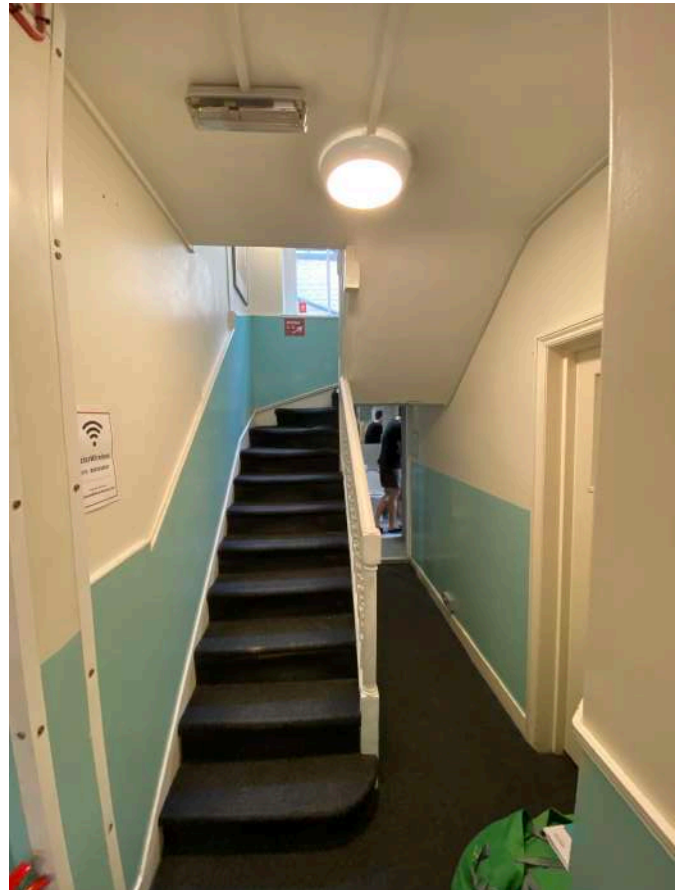


Existing basement rear room fit out





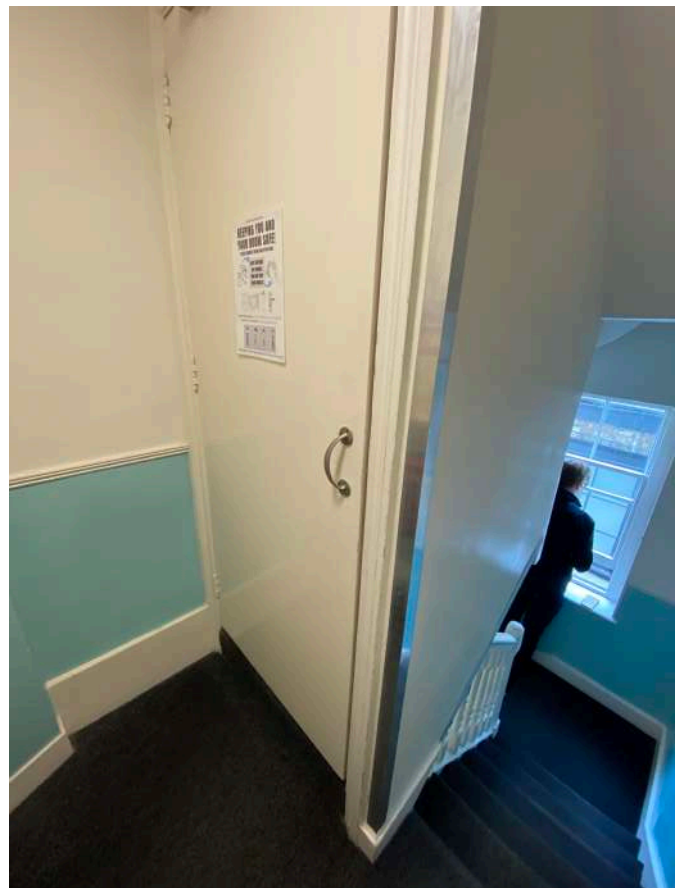
Ground floor hallway



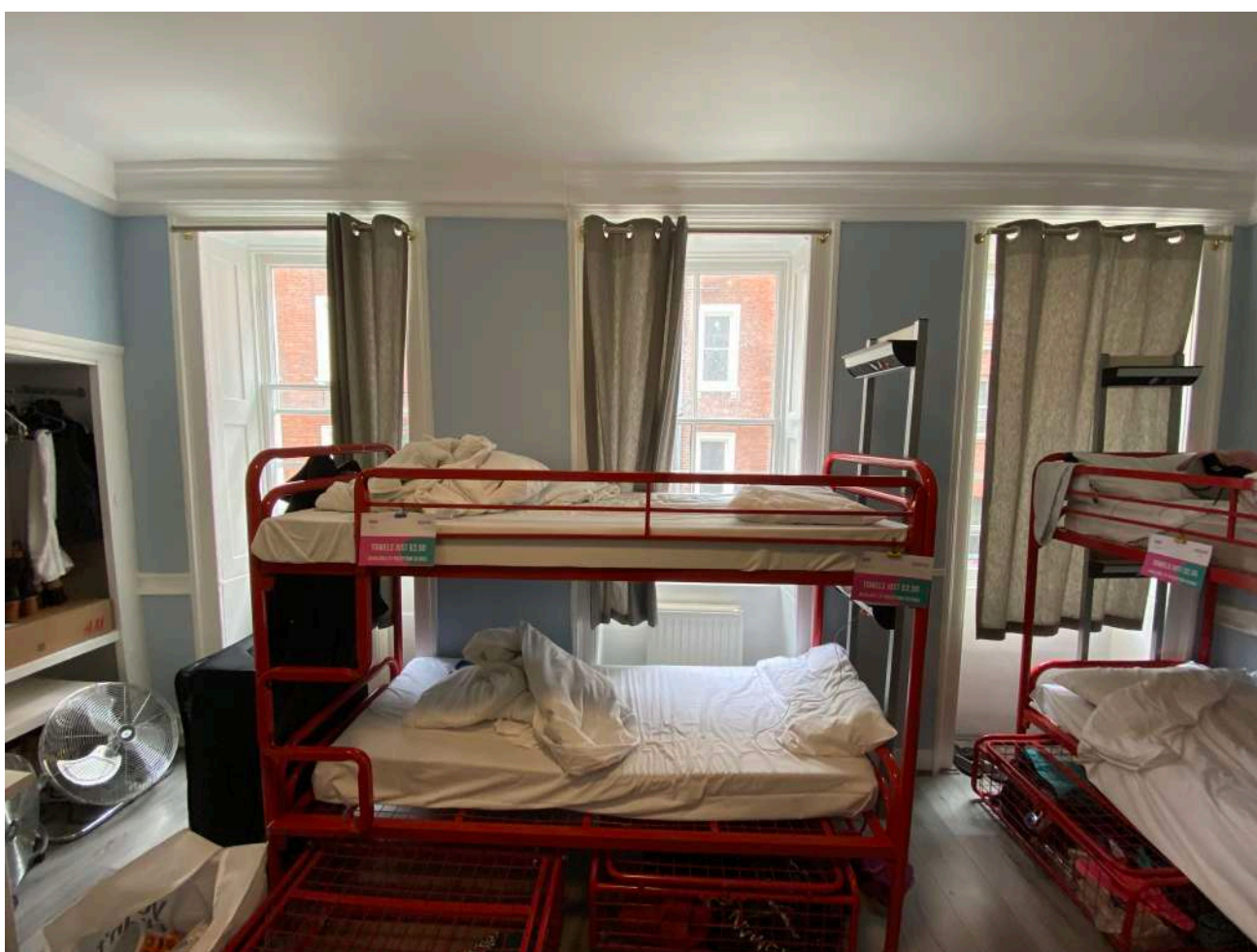
Ground floor stair



Third floor non-original partitions



Third floor non-original partitions

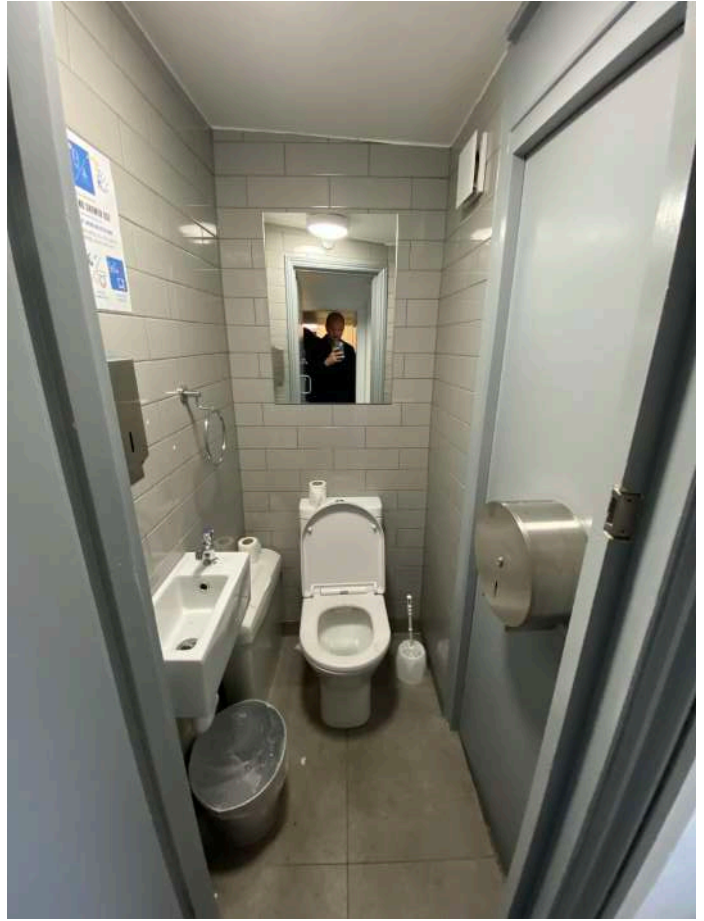


Front rooms at ground and first floors





Existing basement stair



Existing interior of rear extension

### 3. Design Development

- 3.1.1. The design proposal is to revert the building back to its original use as a single family dwelling house. This is inherently sympathetic to the character of the building and allows the removal of many of the non-original alterations that have been added to suit its use as a hostel.
- 3.1.2. Internal changes include the removal of non-original partitions that subdivide the rear rooms at basement, ground, first and second floors. The non-original openings in the spine wall will be infilled at first and second floors and the original circulation routes restored by reopening doors, which have been fixed shut. At ground floor level the door to front room will be reinstated.
- 3.1.3. The rear area of the basement has been raised from its original height. It is proposed to lower this floor back to its original level.
- 3.1.4. The building use as a hostel has resulted in the additional of many non-original elements such as emergency lighting, signage, servicing, alarms etc. It is proposed to remove these as part of the refurbishment works, which will help restore its domestic character.
- 3.1.5. The only external change proposed is to replace the non-original single storey rear extension. This is made of very poor quality fabric and it is therefore proposed to replace it with a similarly sized rendered extension, which will be fit for purpose and provide a highly insulated, low energy element to the building. This will have minimal impact on the character and appearance of the building and will only be visible from the small rear courtyard itself. As such it is considered to have minimal impact on the building. No other external changes are proposed.
- 3.1.6. The scheme has been developed in response to the Pre App response, which requested the removal of the basement bedroom. This room is therefore now proposed to be used as a media room, which will suit its basement location, while maintain a sympathetic refurbishment of this room.



## 4. Design Proposals

### 4.1. Use

- 4.1.1. The proposed use is to revert the property to its original C3 residential use as a single family dwelling.

### 4.2. Amount

- 4.2.1. The amount of accommodation will remain unchanged at 201sqm excluding the rear outbuilding.

### 4.3. Layout

- 4.3.1. The general layout of the existing building is not altered apart from the removal of non-original partitions and the reinstatement of sealed up doorways. The accommodation comprises dining and kitchen spaces at ground floor with a utility / storage room at basement level. A living room and study / bed 3 are located at first floor, with a bedroom and bathroom on each of the second and third floors.

### 4.4. Scale

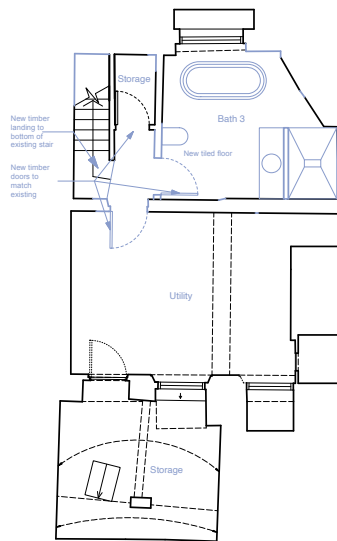
- 4.4.1. The building will not change in scale from the existing.

### 4.5. Appearance

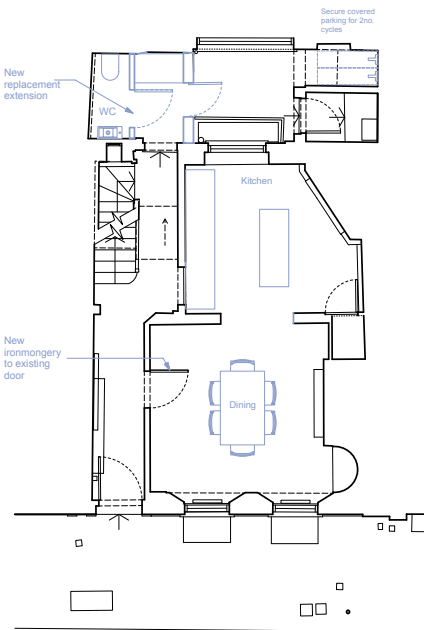
- 4.5.1. The building will be unaltered from the front and the only change to the rear will be the like for like replacement of the single storey ground floor extension to the rear courtyard. This will make minimal difference to the appearance of the building and in any case it can only be seen from the courtyard itself. The building will therefore have minimal alterations to its appearance.

### 4.6. Fire Strategy

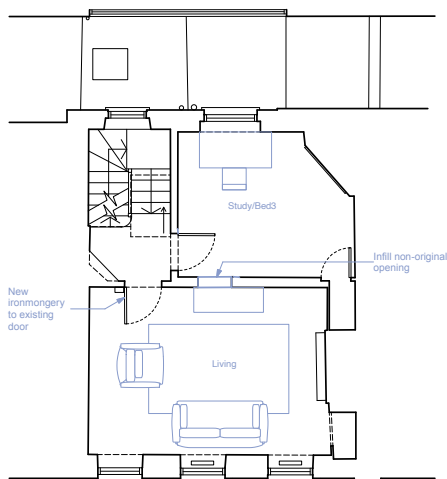
- 4.6.1. The restored house will have a fire protected single staircase, which will provide a safe means of escape from all habitable rooms in accordance with Approved Part B of the Building Regulations.



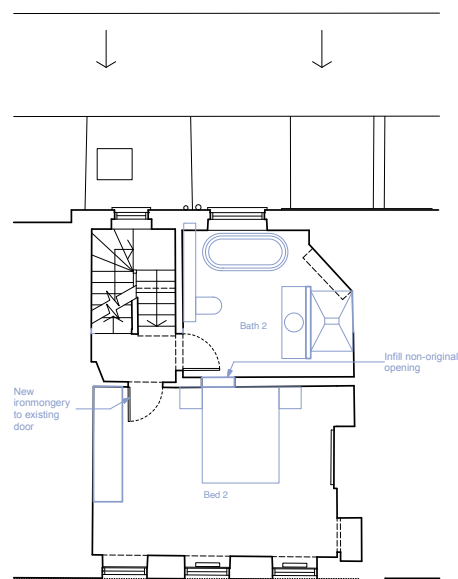
**BASEMENT PLAN**



**GROUND FLOOR PLAN**

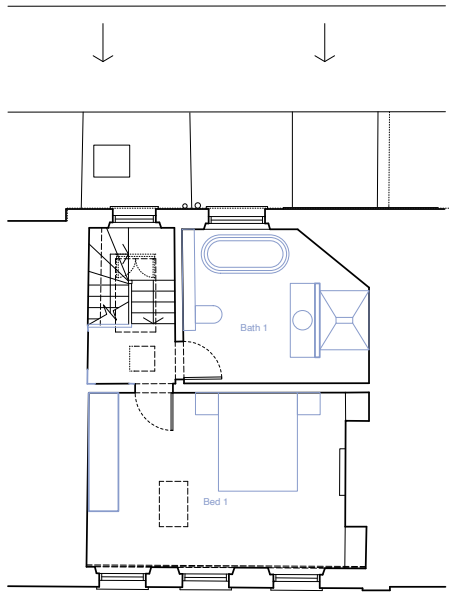


**FIRST FLOOR PLAN**

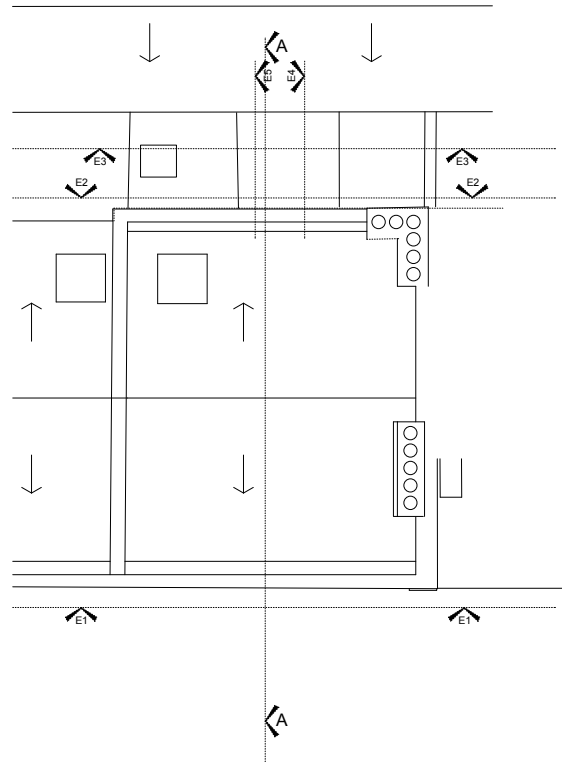


**SECOND FLOOR PLAN**

Proposed scheme



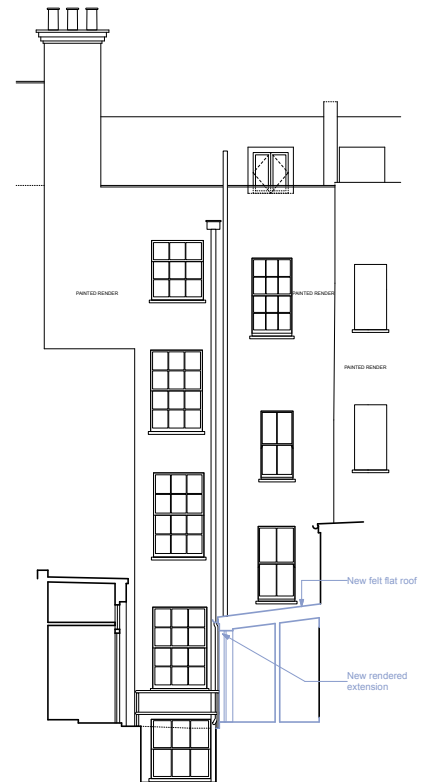
THIRD FLOOR PLAN



ROOF PLAN

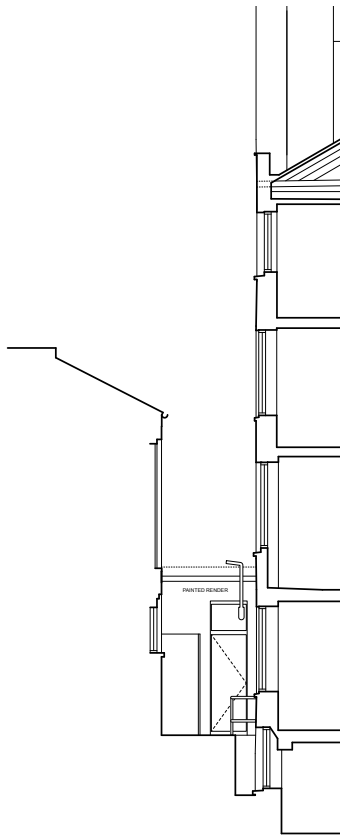


FRONT ELEVATION - E1



REAR ELEVATION - E2

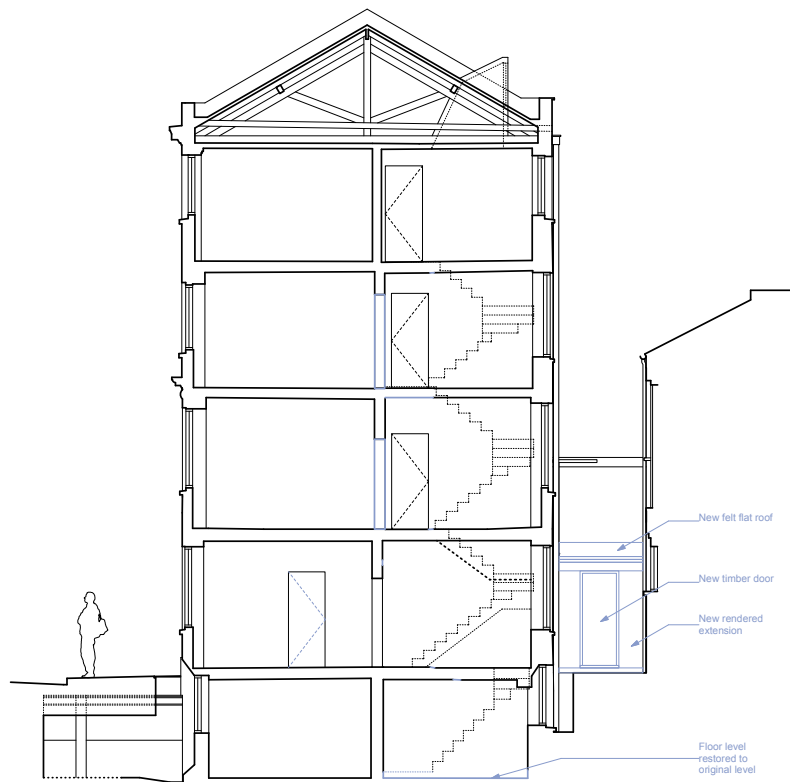
Proposed scheme



**SIDE ELEVATION - E4**



**REAR ELEVATION - E3**



**SECTION A-A**

Proposed scheme



## 5. Access

### 5.1. Vehicle Access

5.1.1. Vehicle access is as existing.

### 5.2. Pedestrian Access

5.2.1. Pedestrian access is as existing.

### 5.3. Cycle Access

5.3.1. Two secure covered cycle parking spaces will be provided in the outbuilding in the rear courtyard in accordance with the London Plan.

### 5.4. Inclusive Access

5.4.1. There is no change to the access arrangements.

### 5.5. Refuse & Servicing

5.5.1. There is no change to the existing refuse arrangements.

## 6. Conclusion

6.1.1. The proposal will create a high quality family home and provide significant heritage benefits to the listed building by returning the property to its original residential use and removing unsympathetic changes that have harmed the character and significance of the property. The proposals will make no changes to the front street elevation and minimal and largely invisible changes to the rear elevation. As such the scheme will have no impact on the character of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. In addition the proposal is in accordance with LB Camden planning policies, the London Plan and NPPF.