

Vernon-Sicilian House & 21 Southampton Row

Design and Access Statement - **Section 3 of 8**

July 2022

Part 1

halebrown

3.0

Activating the Ground Floor

3.1

Activating the ground floor Existing Site Overview



The existing ground floor street frontage is weighted towards provision of retail frontage with the pedestrianised Avenue.

- There are key views from both Southampton Row and Bloomsbury Square into and through the retail Avenue.
- As previously noted most of the existing retail units are vacant.
- The retail awning, signage and al fresco seating provision sees the office entrances become over looked and the above grade building use become obscured.
- A holistic strategy is needed to be delivered and promote both the office entrances and the retail opportunities along Sicilian Avenue.



Vernon-Sicilian House & 21 Southampton Row

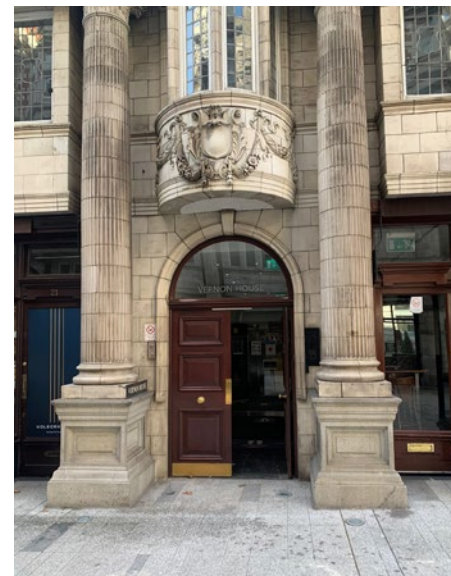
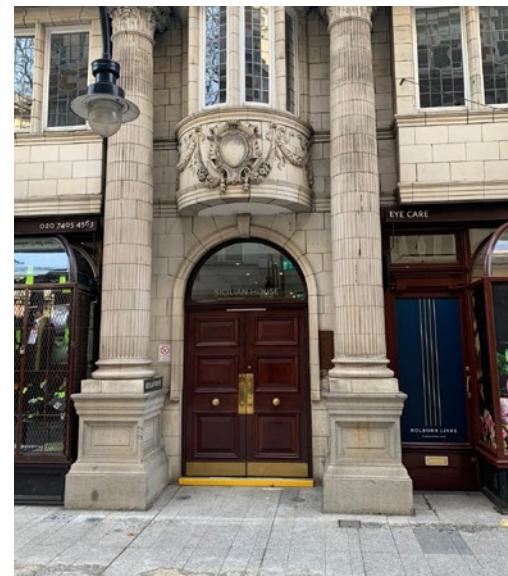
Design & Access Statement - July 2022

3.2

Activating the ground floor Existing Site Overview



3.3



Activating the ground floor

Existing entrance arrangement

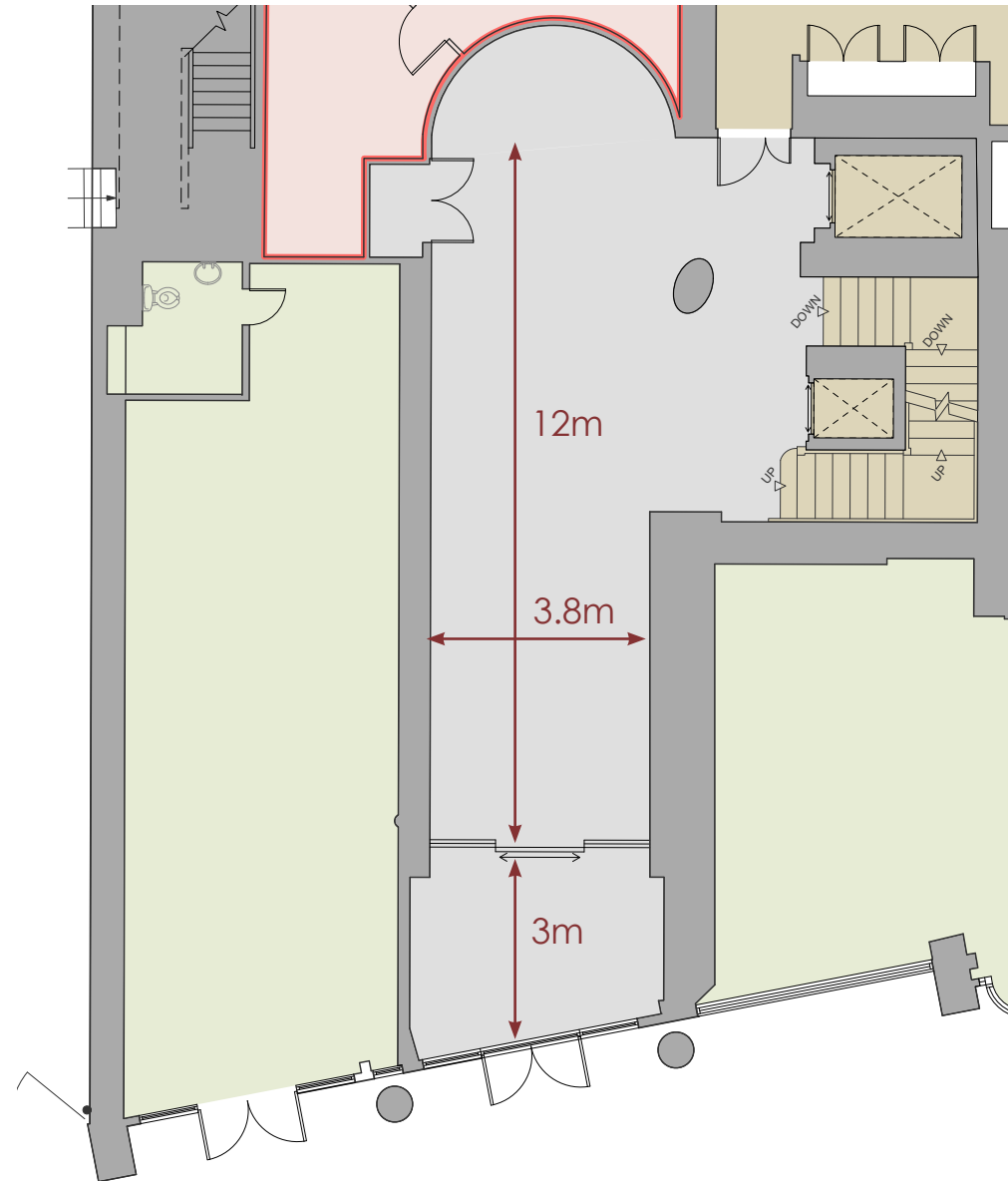
As noted previously the office entrances are underwhelming in the current arrangement, though with great potential:

- 21 Southampton Row entrance positioned within two storey portico entrance with large glazed windows at first floor.
- Vernon & Sicilian House entrances flanked by two large Corinthian columns with ornate overhanging bay windows above.
- Entrances are surrounded by grand architectural language but appear lost within it.



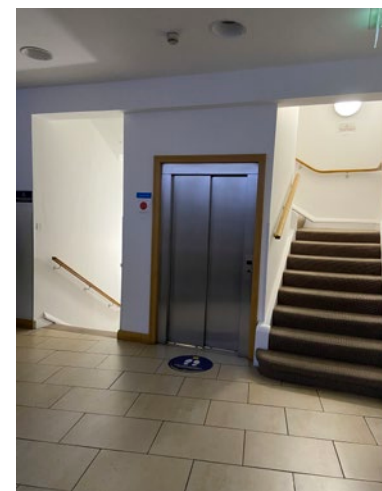
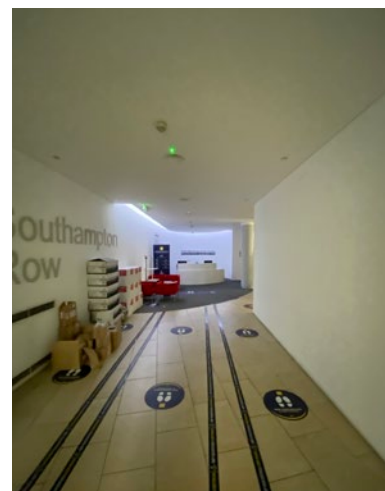
Sicilian Avenue

3.4



Activating the ground floor 21 Southampton Row existing entrance

- Large building number signage looks out of keeping with decorative timber door and surround.
- Heavy timber entrance doors led onto a modern automatic glazed sliding door lobby.
- The long reception corridor was accentuated by a lack of decoration to the walls whilst the reception desk and stair lobby lacked character or focus.
- The entrance and reception felt unwelcoming for a building with so much external character.



Internal photos taken prior to agreed strip out works

3.5

Activating the ground floor 21 Southampton Row proposed entrance



21 SR - Retail entrance



21 SR - Retail bay



31 SR - Historic entrance



31 SR - Retail bay

Reviewing the existing detailing within the facades along Sicilian Avenue and Southampton Row there is a language of protruding curves, domes and fluting. Specific examples of these can be found in:

- Retail unit to the right hand side of 21 Southampton Row office entrance, which defines the unit through the curved glass entrance and domed.
- The domed and fluted stone work above the historic entrance doors to 31 Southampton Row.



Dome retail canopy precedent

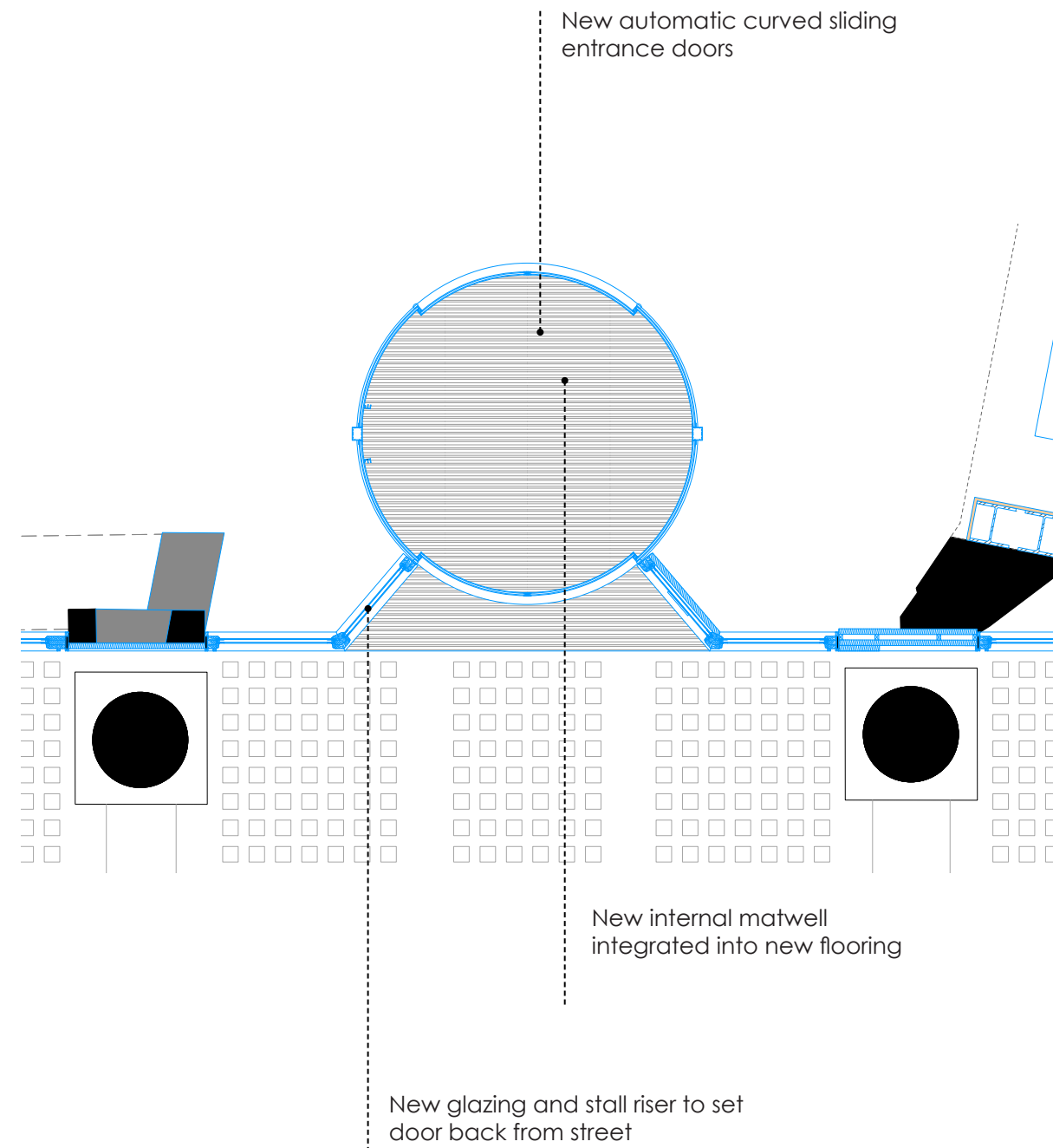


Dome retail canopy precedent

3.6



No 1 New Oxford Street



Proposed entrance doors plan

Activating the ground floor 21 Southampton Row proposed entrance

- Access into 21 Southampton Row will be improved through the addition of new automatic curved sliding entrance doors.
- New doors remove the need for secondary lobby doors, opening up the reception by bring people into the space sooner.
- The new doors will be set back within the facade to maintain the existing external pavement area.
- New internal mat well integrated into new flooring defines 'entrance lobby' area breaking up the appearance of the long reception corridor.

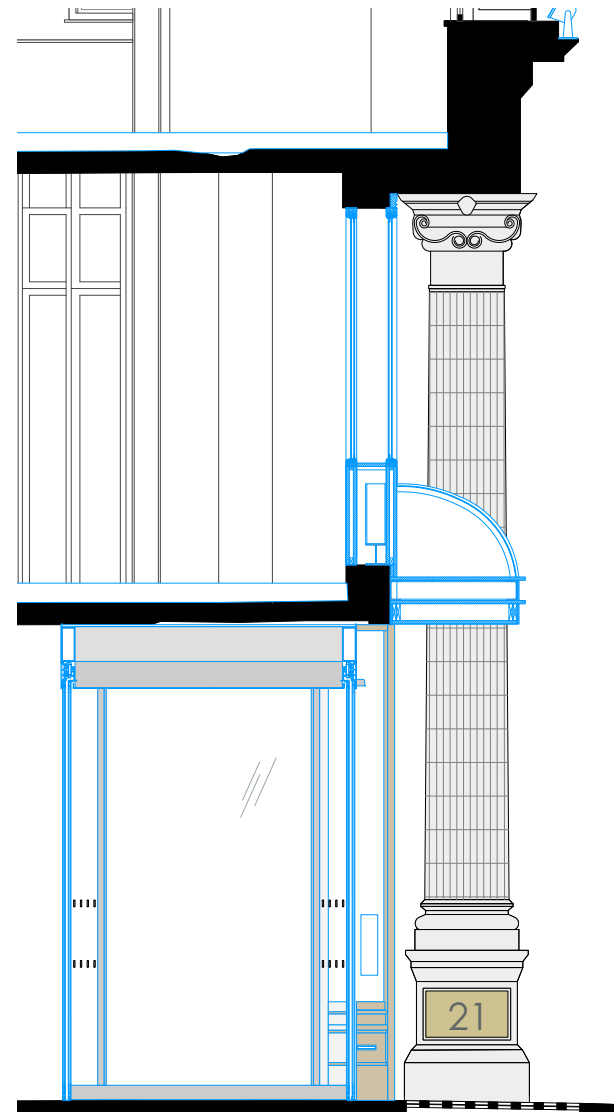


The design for the new curved sliding door draws influence from the adjacent retail glazing forms

3.7



Proposed entrance doors elevation



Proposed entrance doors section

Activating the ground floor 21 Southampton Row proposed entrance

- A new domed and fluted canopy is proposed above the new entrance doors to help define the entrance centrally within the glazed frontage.
- Constructed in dark metal panels the canopy will compliment the materiality of the adjacent domed retail frontage, while picking up on the detailing on the fluting within the stone faced columns either side.
- Within the ground floor bay to the left hand the existing swing door will be replaced with new glazing incorporating a timber stall riser similar to the existing.
- At first floor a new timber panel will be fitted to reduce the proportion of glazing and increasing the visual weight of the ground floor detailing.
- The first floor panel will also help to conceal future internal office fit out such as desks and bags that might be placed close to the glazing.
- The design of this left hand bay will be replicated within the design of the right hand bay by, providing symmetry to the overall entrance framed by the existing columns, frieze and cornice.

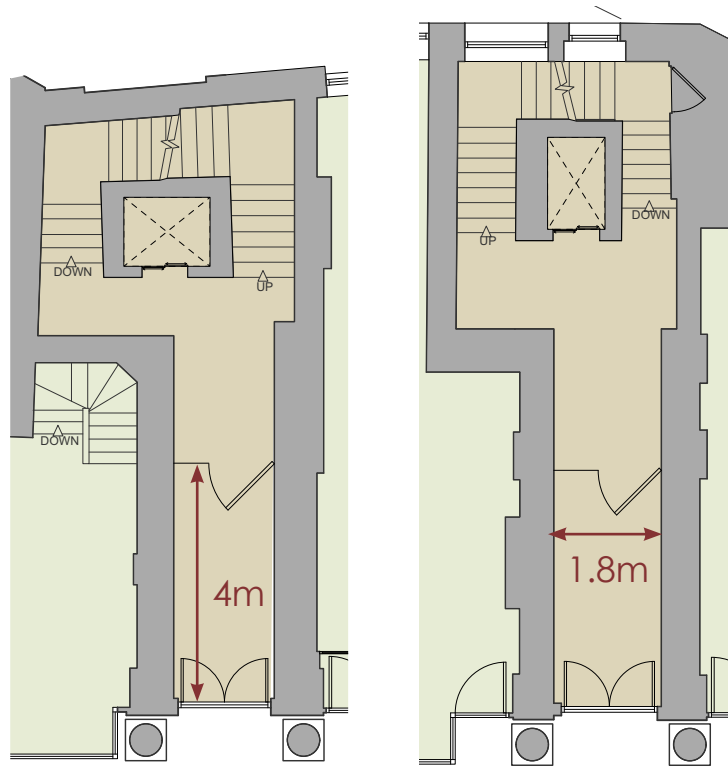


Activating the ground floor

21 Southampton Row proposed entrance

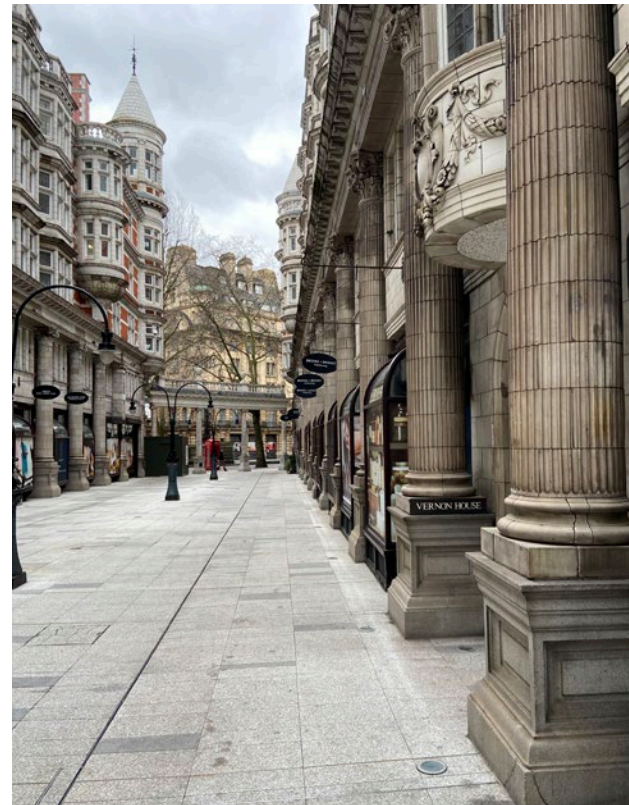


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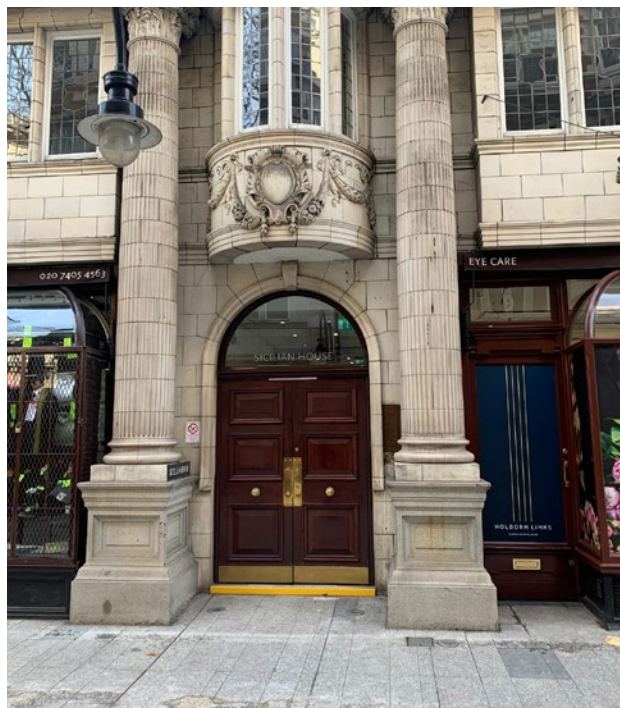
Sicilian House

Vernon House



Activating the ground floor Vernon & Sicilian House existing entrances

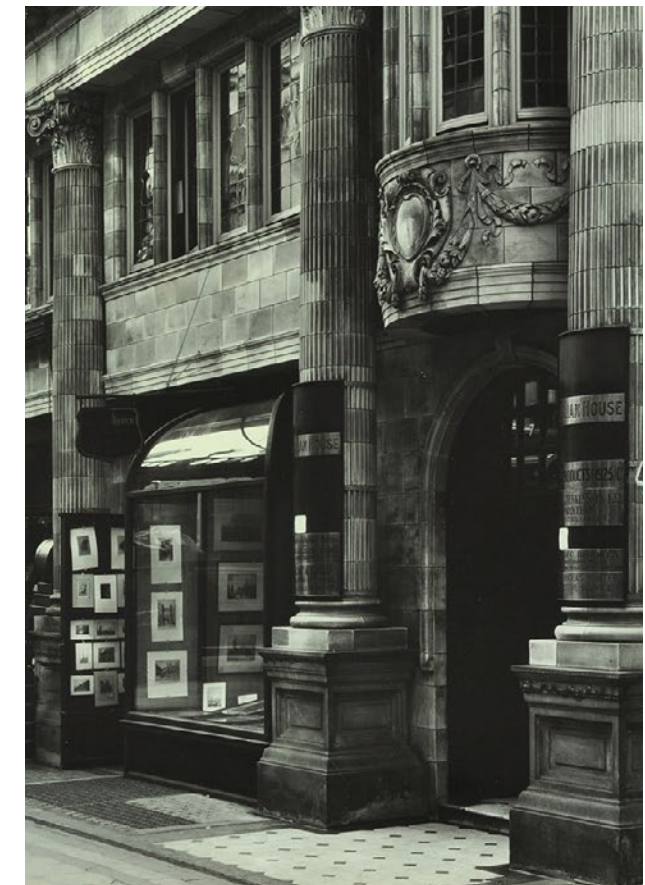
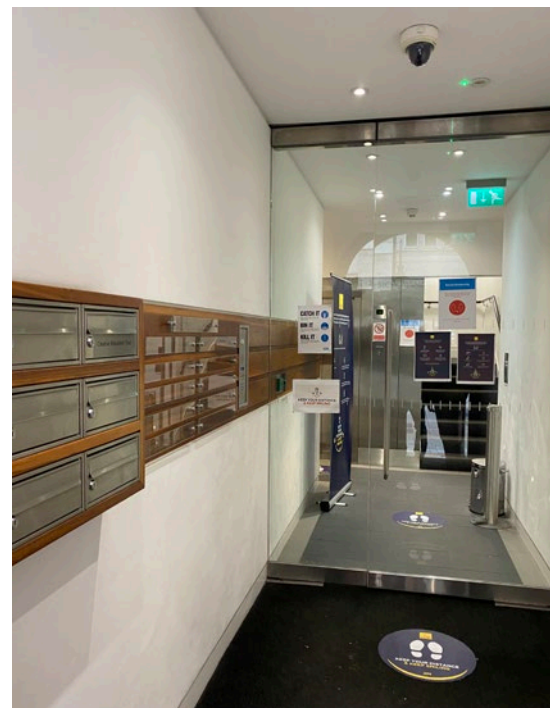
- Vernon and Sicilian entrance lack presence within the shop front parade suffering from poor wayfinding signage.
- Solid heavy timber entrance doors give the impression of inaccessibility and therefore remained held open when the entrances were in use.
- Modern glazed lobby doors with access control were set back 4m from the timber doors creating odd lobby area.
- Historically the columns either side of the entrance doors had additional signage and wayfinding attached to them to help define the entrances within the shop parade.



Sicilian House

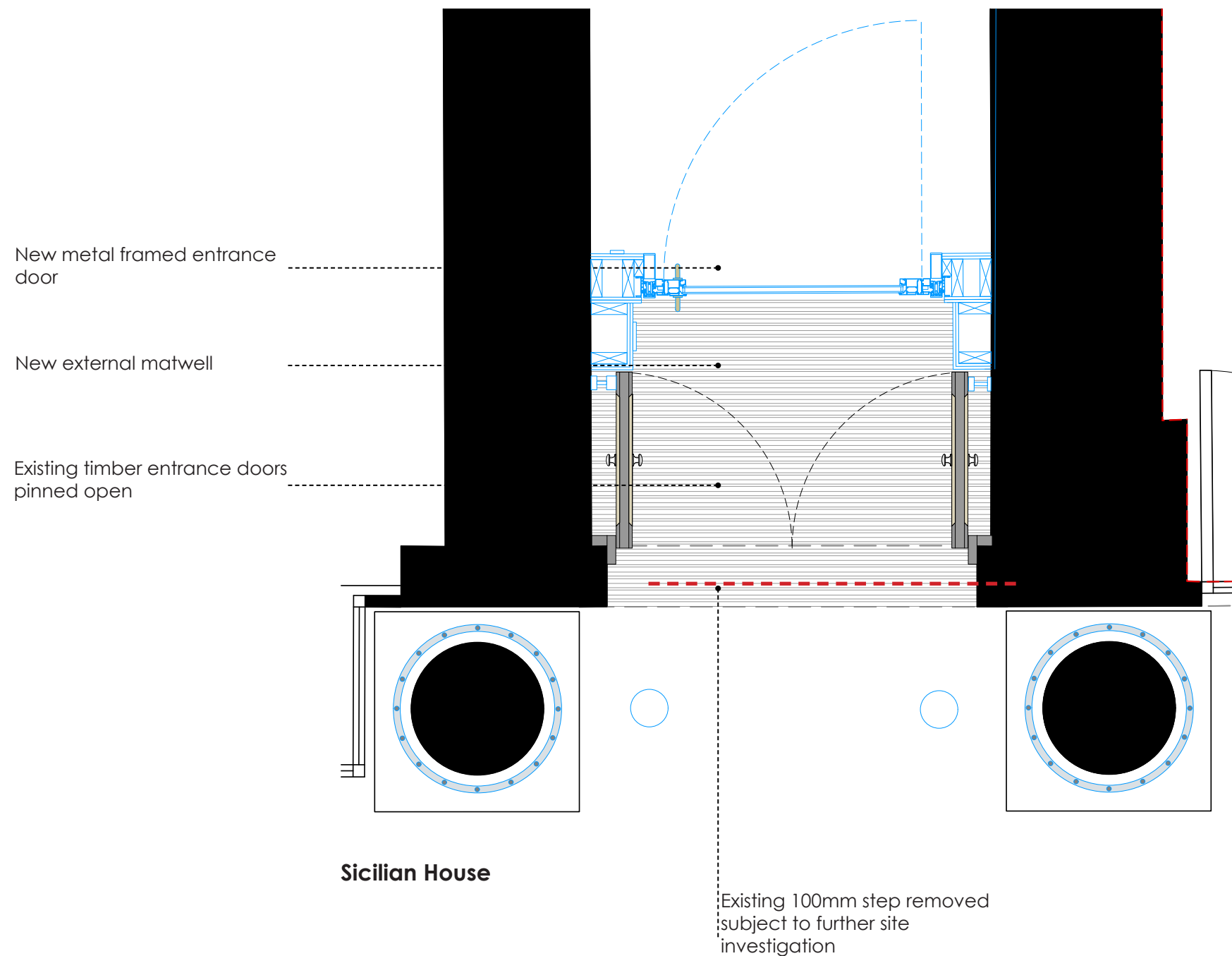


Vernon House



Historic signage

3.10



Activating the ground floor Vernon & Sicilian House proposed entrances

- Under the proposals the existing timber doors will be retained but pinned open flush within a new panelled surround.
- This will allow the existing doors to retain the ability to be closed out of office working hours for security purposes when required.
- New metal framed glazed entrance doors will be positioned closer to retained timber doors to reduce the depth of the entrance lobby and provide a large internal reception space, which will create a more welcoming first impression.
- The new glazed entrance door will be fitted with an automatic opener allowing it to open inwards for means of escape.
- Subject to further site investigation the existing 100mm external step at the entrance to Sicilian House will be removed and a shallow ramp introduced within an external matwell zone, in order to provide step free access into the reception.

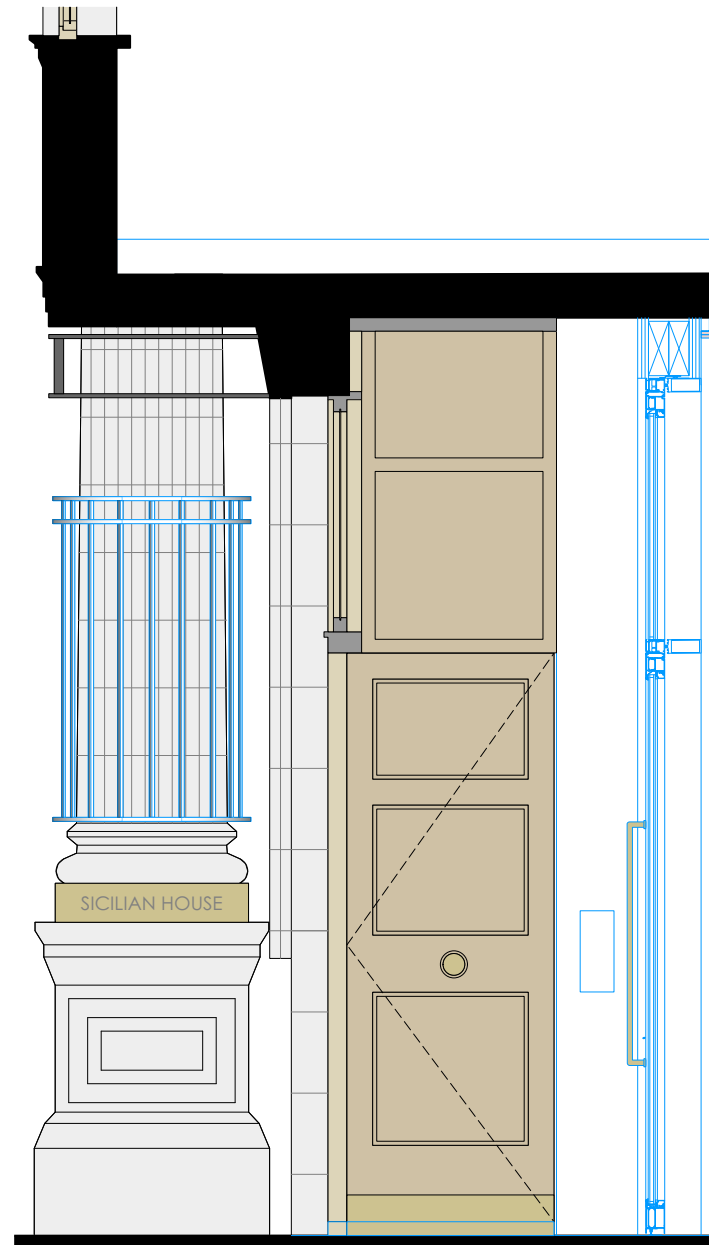
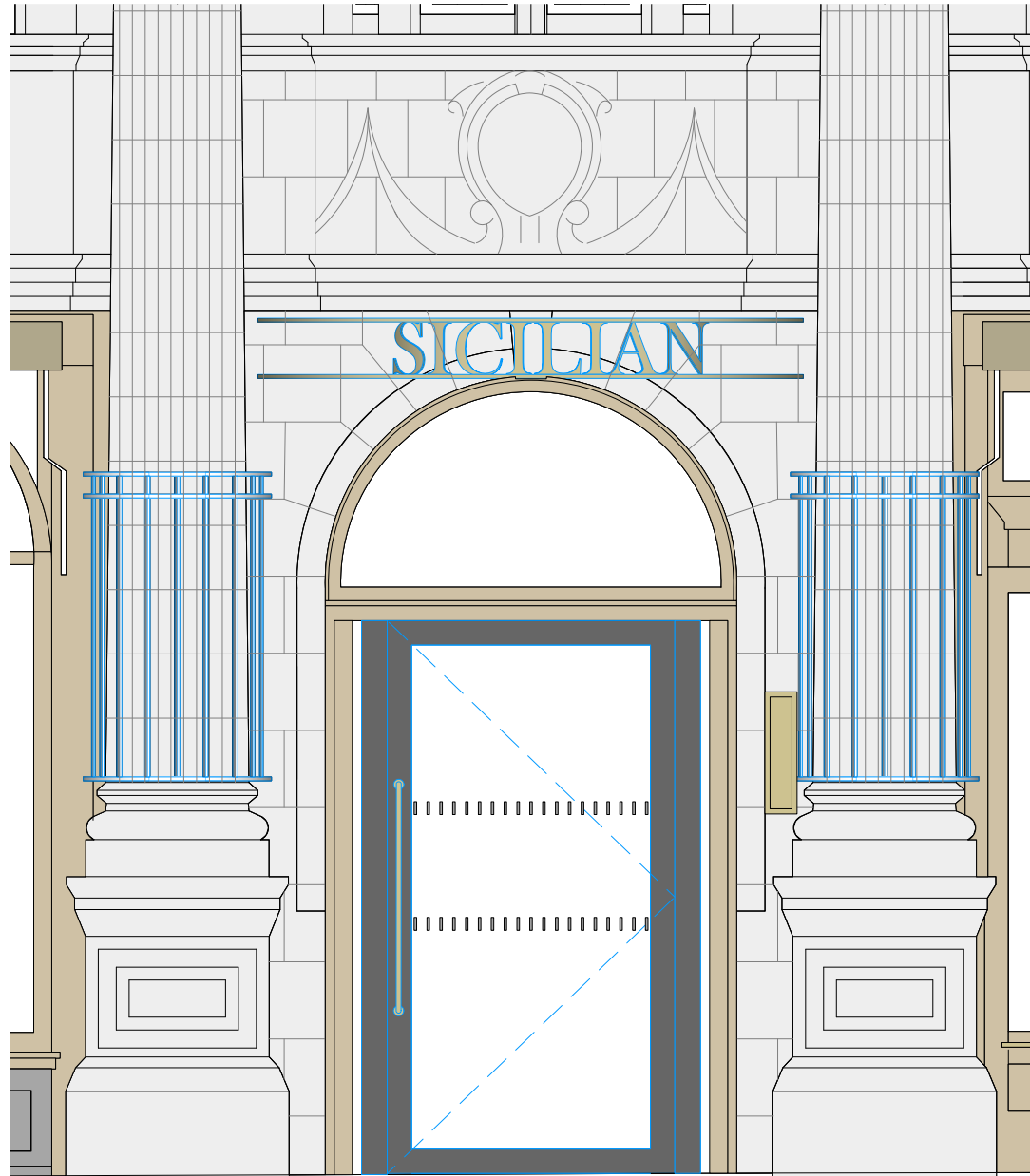


HBA - Paul St reconfigured entrance doors



HBA - Lower James St reconfigured entrance doors

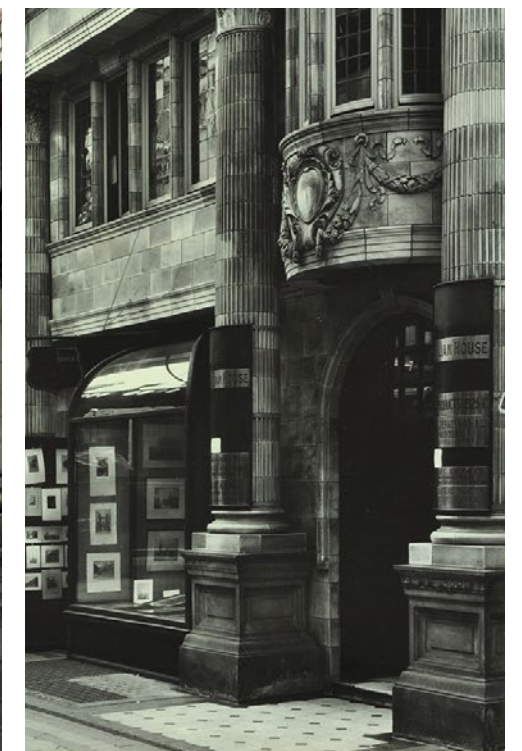
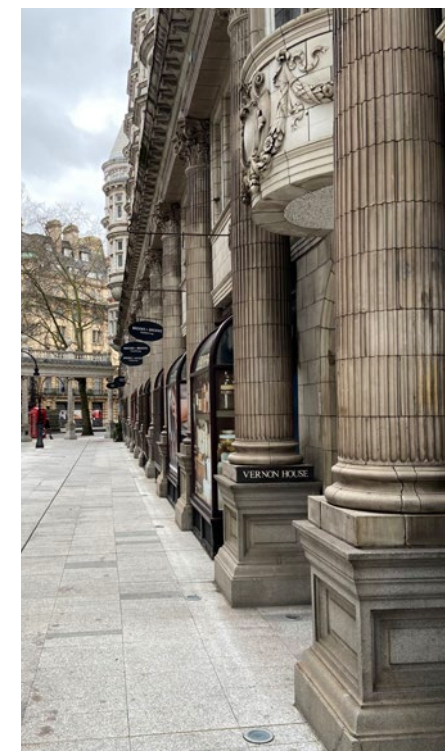
3.11



Activating the ground floor

Vernon & Sicilian House proposed entrances

- Externally new brass coloured metal signage is proposed to be fitted to the underside of the existing decorative oriel window.
- New lighting within the bay window soffit panel will further define the entrance at night and help prevent antisocial behaviour.
- To subtly define the entrance further during the day, decorative brass coloured metal collars are proposed to the bases of the fluted columns above the pedestals either side of the entrance doors.
- Positioned at eye level similar to the historic applied signage these collars will help pick out the set back entrance to people walking past at an acute angle at street level.
- Integrated lighting within the collars will also provide definition to the columns fluting at night time.
- The design of Sicilian House will be replicated with Vernon House entrance as well.



Sicilian House Entrance elevation

Sicilian House Entrance section

Activating the ground floor
Sicilian House proposed entrance



New building signage fixed to underside of oriel with integrated lighting for visibility and security purposes.

New feature pendant lighting within coffered lobby

New collars to existing column, with integrate lighting to enhance fluted features

New recessed glazed entrance door

Existing timber doors held open within new coffered surround

New external matwell

Activating the ground floor

Vernon House proposed entrance



----- New building signage fixed to underside of oriel with integrated lighting for visibility and security purposes.

----- New feature pendant lighting within coffered lobby

----- New collars to existing column, with integrate lighting to enhance fluted features

----- New recessed glazed entrance door

----- Existing timber doors held open within new coffered surround

----- New external matwell