

Design and Access Statement

Detailed Planning Proposals

195-201 Earl's Court Road
Kensington & Chelsea

170715-DS-240301
1 March, 2024



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01.03.2024

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site: 195-201 Earl's Court Road

1 INTRODUCTION

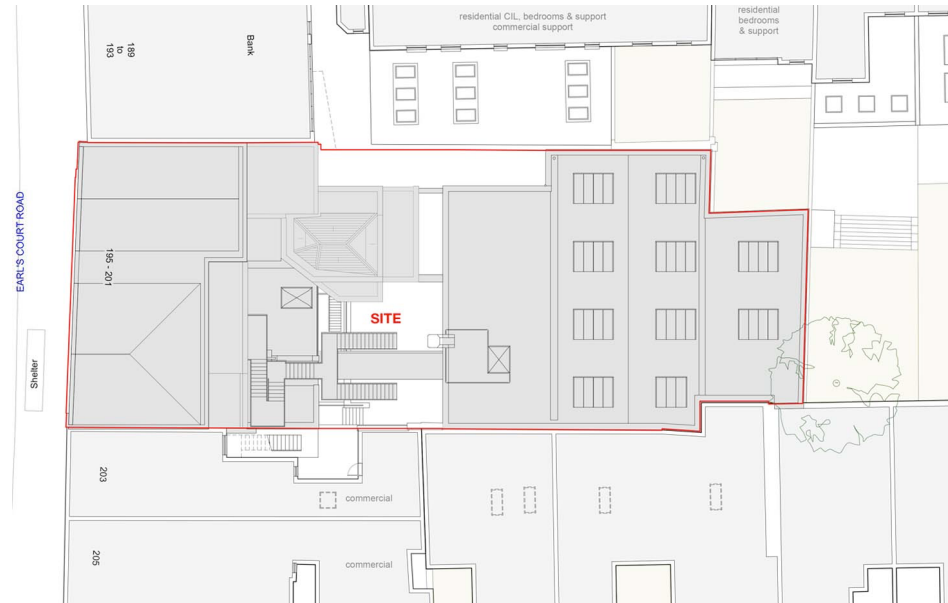
- 1.1 This Design & Access Statement is written under the instruction of Propeller Limited.
- 1.2 The Statement is written in support of Detailed Planning proposals for 195-201 Earl's Court Road, Kensington & Chelsea.
- 1.3 The proposals involve the refurbishment of ground floor commercial areas and replacement of an existing rear support building to accommodate a new 31-room hotel and associated restaurant.
- 1.4 The proposals allow an underused and aging Edwardian bank building a revitalized second life.
- 1.5 Modifications to the main Edwardian building are minor and strengthen the building's interior and appearance at Earl's Court Road.
- 1.6 The existing rear support building is to be replaced with a new 2-storey building containing a healthy mix of hotel room types and sizes.
- 1.7 The proposals cause no harm to surrounding buildings and gardens.
- 1.8 The proposals strengthen and enhance the surrounding Conservation Area amenity.



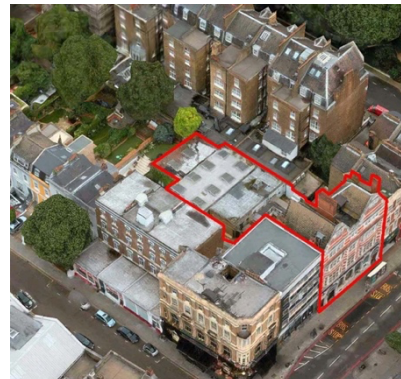
proposal: sustainable redevelopment at rear building site

2 SITE CONTEXT

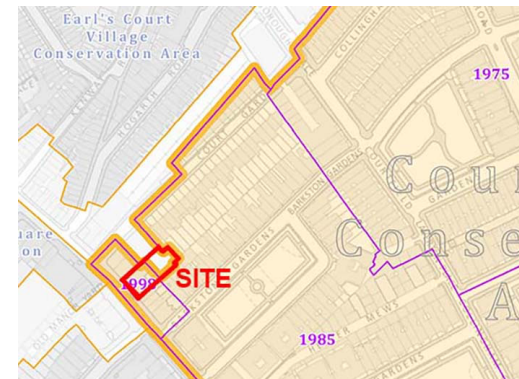
- 2.1 The site is located on Earl's Court Road, within a Victorian terrace directly adjacent to Earl's Court Road Station.
- 2.2 Terraces along Earl's Court Road make up key parts of Kensington and Chelsea Conservation areas.
- 2.3 The site and terrace are located along the western boundary of the Courtfield Conservation Area. The rear of the site falls outside the Conservation Area.
- 2.4 Buildings at the terrace are typical of Earl's Court Road, Victorian period with commercial uses at ground and either commercial or residential use at the upper floors.
- 2.5 Buildings to the west and north contain residential properties at upper floors. A hotel is located immediately south of the site.
- 2.6 Surrounding building heights are typically 4 and 5 storeys, often with occupied roofs.
- 2.7 Surrounding external materials are mainly brick. Masonry frontages have detailed render banding and window surrounds. A small number of buildings have main facades dressed in stone. Sash windows are typical, with a large number converted to UPVC.
- 2.8 Buildings at the terrace are accessed from their frontage. Most properties are landlocked at the rear, without rear access.
- 2.9 Rear gardens typically have brick walls between sites. A few retain original gardens with limited landscape.
- 2.10 A large number of rear gardens have been converted to ground floor extensions.



existing site: Edwardian main building (left) modern rear building (right)



existing site context: Earl's Court Road



plan: Courtfield Conservation Area

3 ECONOMIC CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Earl's Court area is a neighbourhood in transition where the economic context remains strong.
- 3.2 New Development at the former Earl's Court Exhibition Centre will transform the activity and economy of surrounding properties.
- 3.3 Demand for commercial accommodation in the local area remains strong.
- 3.4 The site's location ensures that commercial demand will remain strong.
- 3.5 A sustainable and realistic approach to development is required to ensure that the site's potential is best realised.



economic context: central location at Earl's Court Road



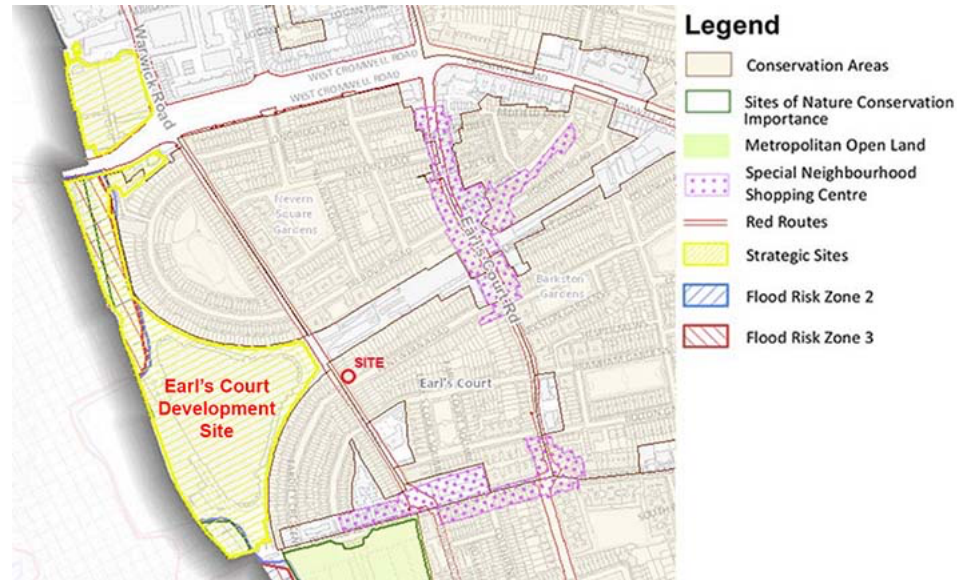
economic context: local hotel

4 PLANNING CONTEXT

- 4.1 Development at the site is under the authority of National, Regional and Local Authority planning policy.
- 4.2 National and Regional planning policy reinforce the need to make best use of sites.
- 4.3 The Kensington & Chelsea Plan (September 2019) in conjunction with and London Plan (March 2016) and Consolidated Local Plan and retained UPD Policy, set out the following planning policies that directly affect development at the Site:
- LP: Policy CL11 Conservation Area
 - LP: Policy CL1, General Townscape CL2. CL9
 - LP: Policy CL5 Living Conditions
- 4.4 The site is partially located within the Courtfield Conservation Area.
- 4.5 The rear of site is within in an isolated area that has been excluded from the conservation area.
- 4.6 Proposed development at the former Earl's Court Exhibition Centre will transform the surrounding area, providing new urban linkages between formerly separated neighbourhoods.

Pre-Application Discussions

- 4.7 Planning permission has been recently granted for refurbishment and reconfiguration of the existing rear commercial support building. (ref: PP/22/03290).
- 4.8 Pre-application discussions were conducted during early 2023. Discussions confirmed the acceptance of the principle of development. A 2-storey development was encouraged.



planning context: urban site location within Conservation Area adjacent to major redevelopment



pre-application proposals: 4-storey development at rear

5 SITE

5.1 The Site is located on the east side of Earl's Court Road and is occupied by a mixed-use building containing commercial uses at ground and basement with 4 residential upper floors. A modern single storey commercial support building is located at the rear of the site.

5.2 The front of the site is located within the Courtfield Conservation Area with the rear of the site falling outside the protected area.

5.3 The rear portion of the site sits approximately 1m higher than the level of Earl's Court Road.

Main Building

5.4 The site's main building is a large 4-storey Edwardian building originally designed as headquarters for the London & County Bank.

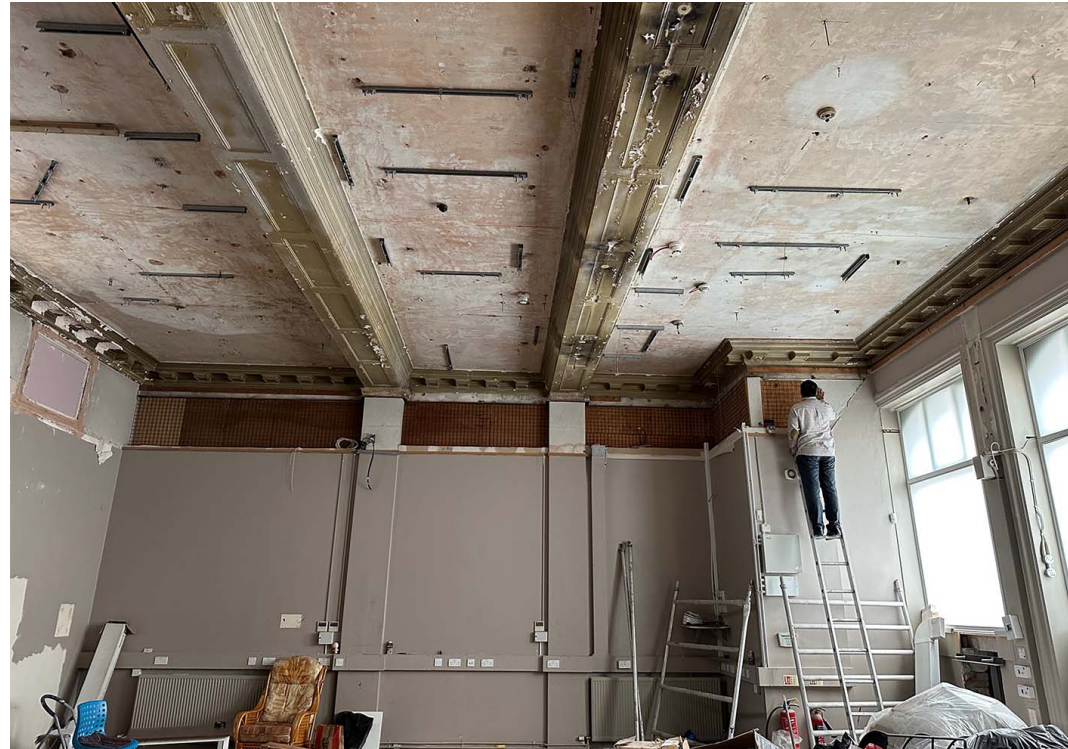
5.5 Completed in 1904, the building is the Dutch style, with a brick body dressed in stone at ground, horizontal banding and detail window dressing. Rear walls are simpler, with yellow brick (London stock) and sloping slate roofs.

5.6 The ground floor extends further back than the upper floors. A small level 1 and 2 rear extension sits above the rear ground extension. The ground floor interior has fine plaster detail.

5.7 Windows are located mainly at the front and rear of the building.

5.8 The main building is approximately 21.41m in height to the top of gables. The rear extension is approximately 2.4m above rear ground level.

5.9 Access to the site is exclusively from Earl's Court Road.



site: main building interior - retained detail at former banking hall

5 SITE (cont.)

Rear Building

- 5.10 A modern, single-storey former industrial building is located at the rear of the site. It is connected to the main building with a modern enclosed passageway.
- 5.11 The building is in 2 parts with a higher, smaller element located centrally on the site and a lower rear element that looks to have been added later.
- 5.12 The buildings are brick construction with flat roofs containing many large rooflights and external plant and equipment.
- 5.13 A perimeter brick wall extends around the perimeter of the site, at times acting as party walls.
- 5.14 Windows and doors are located at the building's western façades, facing the rear of the main building. Roof windows are blocked and provide no natural light.
- 5.15 The rear building is 3.46m and 3.89m in height.
- 5.16 The rear building's external materials are:
 - walls brick: yellow & painted white
 - windows wood @ walls: sash - white
metal at roof: painted white
 - roof flat: membrane
- 5.17 Access to the rear of the site is exclusively from Earl's Court Road.
- 5.18 The site is car free with cycle storage located within residences and commercial units.
- 5.19 Recycle and refuse storage is located at an external bin store at ground.
- 5.20 The rear site is 95% developed at ground.



re-development site area: single storey rear building (light grey roofs)



site: existing rear building west façade (residential and hotel windows beyond – left and right respectively)

6 DESIGN PROPOSALS

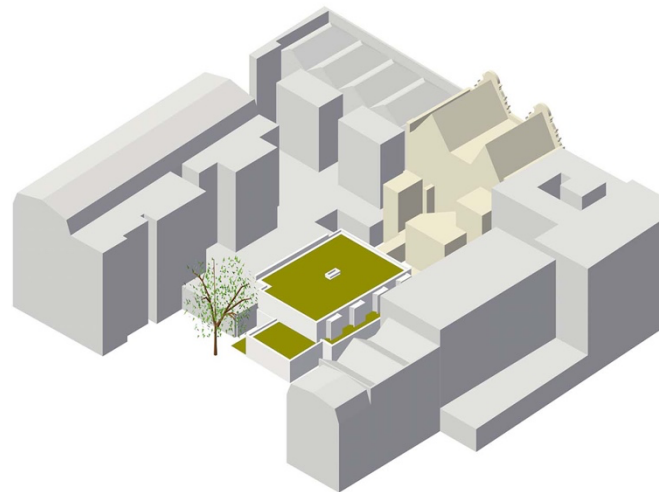
- 6.1 The proposals involve the refurbishment of the ground and basement areas of the site's main building and replacement of the existing rear support building.
- 6.2 Refurbished areas will accommodate supporting businesses: a ground floor restaurant (148sm) alongside new hotel reception with 9 hotel rooms at basement.
- 6.3 The new rear building accommodates a further 22 hotel rooms at ground and level 1.
- 6.4 The proposals repair the building's Earl's Court Road façade. Original detail from a previous automated teller installation is to be fully restored.
- 6.5 The existing residential entry is retained at Earl's Court Road. Original internal detail will be reinstated to restore the entry's secondary commercial access.

Design

- 6.6 At the main existing building, the design intention is to respect and maintain the character and quality of the original bank building.
- 6.7 Original internal detail is to be retained and repaired as required. Key details for retention are the bank's interior plaster columns and high-level internal plasterwork (cornice level).
- 6.8 The new building at rear is to be modern in form and traditional in material. It's stepped level 1 form ensures no harm to surrounding sites.
- 6.9 A new light filled connection between old and new buildings is single storey with wall and roof glazing allowing views of the rear scene.



proposed elevation: Earl's Court Road (west) elevation / repaired and improved



proposed massing: set-back floors at hotel

Design Organization: Hotel

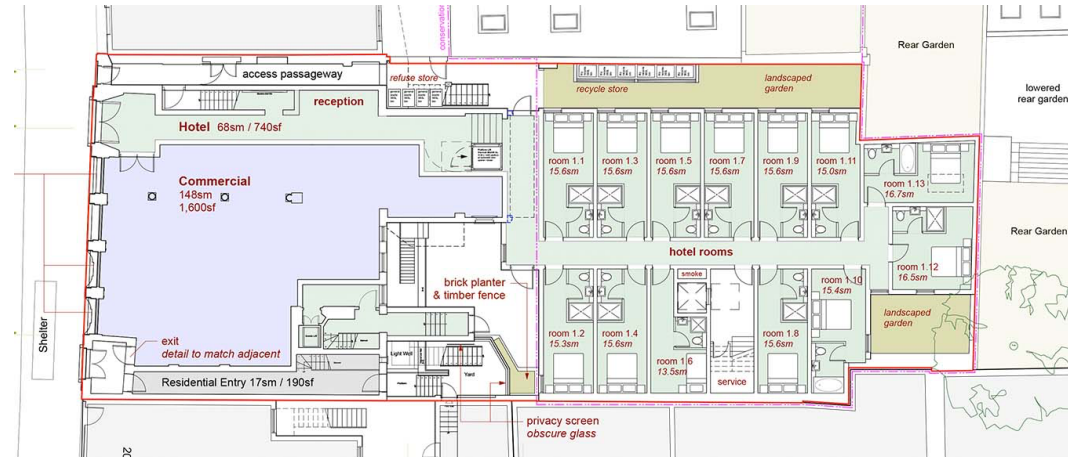
- 6.10 The hotel's entry assumes the former bank's grand main entry. A slim passage and reception area connects the hotel rooms with the adjoining restaurant.
- 6.11 The hotel makes good use of the existing basement. Existing stairs allows direct and private access for hotel guests and staff.
- 6.12 The rear hotel provides a variety of room types aligned both sides side of a centrally located corridor and lift.
- 6.13 Landscaped ground areas provide for both external amenity and required support areas.

Design Organization: Restaurant

- 6.14 A new restaurant unit will occupy the majority of the existing bank area.
- 6.15 Restaurant access is from the hotel's shared entry at Earl's Court Road.
- 6.16 A secondary access is provided at the existing residential entry, allowing necessary escape only, in case of fire or emergency.

Design Organization: Restaurant

- 6.17 Dedicated recycle and refuse bin storage for the hotel is to be located along the site's northern boundary.
- 6.18 The bin stores are directly connected to Earl's Court Road through an existing covered passageway.
- 6.19 Support areas for the restaurant unit will be within the unit and serviced directly from Earl's Court Road.
- 6.20 Support areas for existing residences are unaffected by the proposals.



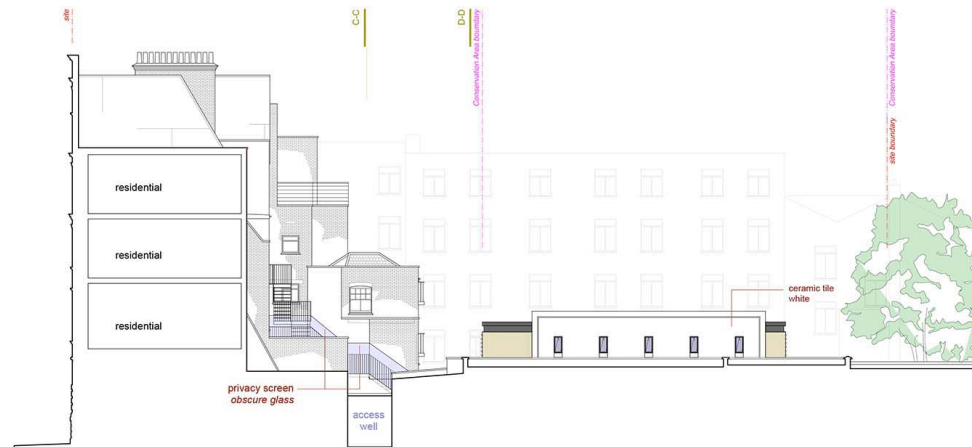
proposed ground plan: mixed and connected uses with new hotel building at rear



proposed section: redeveloped existing ground and basement with new hotel rooms at rear

External Materials

- 6.21 Materials at the proposals have been chosen to ensure robustness, quality and respect for the surrounding Conservation Area context.
- 6.22 Repairs at the Earl's Court Road façade will make use of matching stone and timber to ensure consistent detail treatment.
- 6.23 The external facing material at the new rear buildings will be traditional London stock brick (yellow), matching rear walls of surrounding conservation area buildings.
- 6.24 The site's industrial past is echoed in the new building's simple modern detailing at metal framed glazing and cornice treatment.
- 6.25 The façade facing the neighbouring hotel is provided with a finer external finish to reflect the quality of the neighbouring building. Porcelain tile provides a light, reflective surface that maximises bounced light into the neighbouring hotel's north facing windows.
- 6.26 The new rear building is to be provided with a sustainable and living roof cover. An extensive green / brown roof is to be provided at all levels of the building.



proposed elevation: south façade - facing neighbouring hotel



proposed elevation: north façade - facing neighbouring flats

Protection of Amenity: Conservation Area

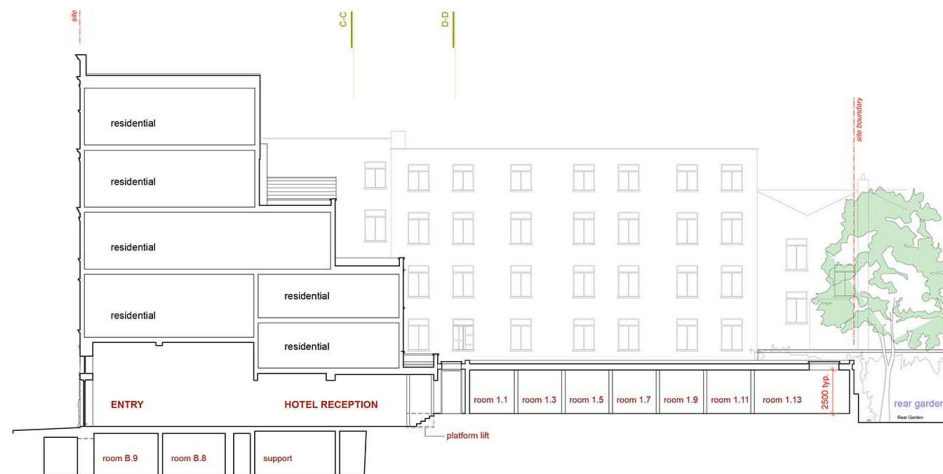
- 6.27 The proposals protect and enhance the Conservation Area.
- 6.28 The proposals improve the building's appearance at Earl's Court Road. Integration of the approved additional commercial entry and repaired detail at former ATM locations will make the building's appearance more consistent and faithful to the original design.
- 6.29 The rear of the main building is unaffected by the proposals, maintaining the quality and grain of the Conservation Area setting.
- 6.30 The new rear building is low in height, maintaining the open spatial quality of the adjoining rear gardens.
- 6.31 The new rear building is designed to harmonise with the form and material of the surrounding Victorian and Edwardian scene.
- 6.32 High-quality materials are provided at the facade facing the adjoining hotel.

Protection of Amenity: Day & Sunlight

- 6.33 The proposals have no material impact on the day and sunlight provision of surrounding properties.
- 6.34 The proposals are careful to protect existing day and sunlight provision at surrounding residential windows to the north and west.
- 6.35 The set-back level 1 ensures no material loss of existing day and sunlight provisions.
- 6.36 White porcelain tile will reflect natural light to the north façade of the neighbouring hotel.
- 6.37 The detailed proposals are accompanied by a supporting Day & Sunlight report.



proposed elevation: retained rear wall with new hotel link to hotel rooms



proposed section: hotel entry, reception, new hotel link & rooms

Protection of Amenity: Overlooking

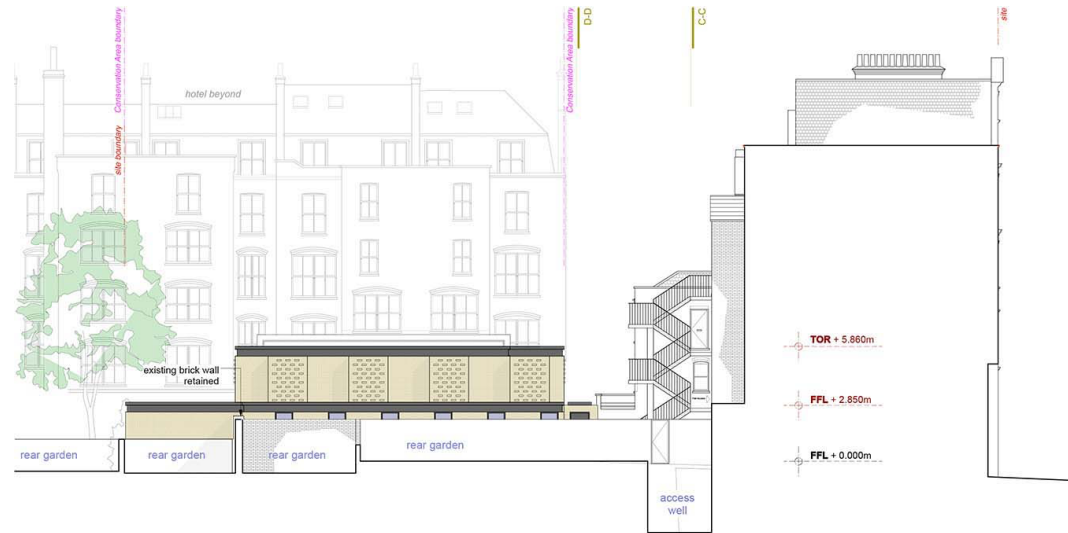
- 6.38 The proposals do not create or cause overlooking of existing properties.
- 6.39 The level 1 set-backs at the north side and northwest corner ensures positive separation between the site and facing buildings.
- 6.40 A major set-back at the building's east side, combined with the use of obscured glazing to +1.7m above floor level ensures no overlooking of commercial or residential windows or gardens.
- 6.41 New north facing windows are steered to ensure no overlooking between hotel rooms and adjacent residential flats and gardens.
- 6.42 South facing windows are reduced in size to avoid overlooking between new and nearby existing hotel windows.

Protection of Amenity: Trees

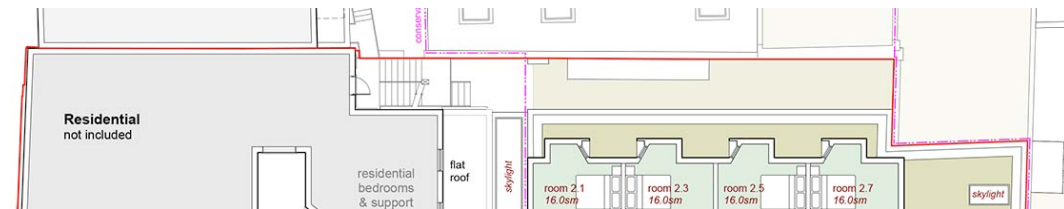
- 6.43 The proposals cause no harm to surrounding trees immediately east of the site.
- 6.44 The detailed proposals are accompanied by an Arboricultural Survey and Tree Report.

Protection of Amenity: Local Residents

- 6.45 A landscape barrier is provided at the courtyard, ensuring a physical separation between hotel guests and existing residents.
- 6.46 Mechanical heating and cooling of the hotel will be by heat recovery units, quietly located within the existing and new buildings.
- 6.47 The detailed proposals are accompanied by an Acoustic Survey and Report.



proposed elevation: north façade - screened sight lines



level 1 plan: protection of amenity / set-back level 1 & steered windows at north elevation

Sustainability

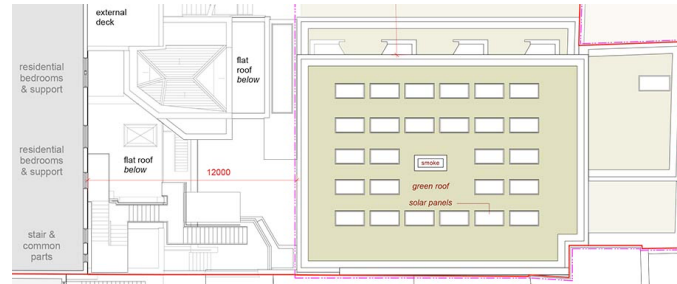
- 6.48 The proposals have been careful to ensure Sustainable Design is achieved.
- 6.49 Sustainable energy features include:
- improved use of a brownfield site
 - enhanced energy performance through use of modern building technology
 - energy efficient heating and cooling technology minimising CO2 emissions, including photo-voltaic panels
 - responsible water usage (110L / person / day)
 - sustainable urban drainage features
 - positive natural light to interior areas

Biodiversity

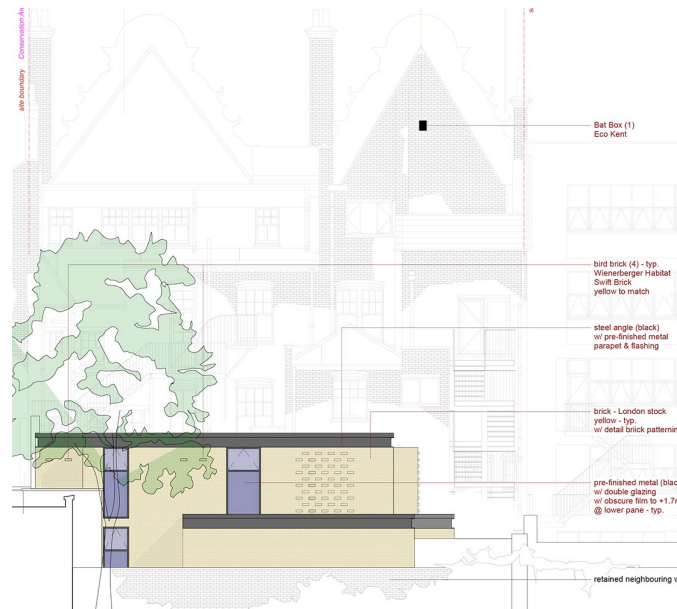
- 6.50 The proposals support enhanced on-site biodiversity.
- 6.51 The proposals incorporate planting at roofs and the incorporation of bat boxes and swift bricks at the building's eastern facades.

Transportation

- 6.52 The proposals take advantage of the site's very strong existing links with London's public transportation network.
- 6.53 The site will remain car-free. Tubes, trains, cycle rental and immediate taxi service are all available on the doorstep.
- 6.54 Cycle rental for hotel guests is available within the immediate area. Staff cycle storage will be within the commercial demises.
- 6.55 The proposals will have no negative effect on the surrounding road network.
- 6.56 The proposals will integrate with existing refuse collection patterns at Earl's Court Road.



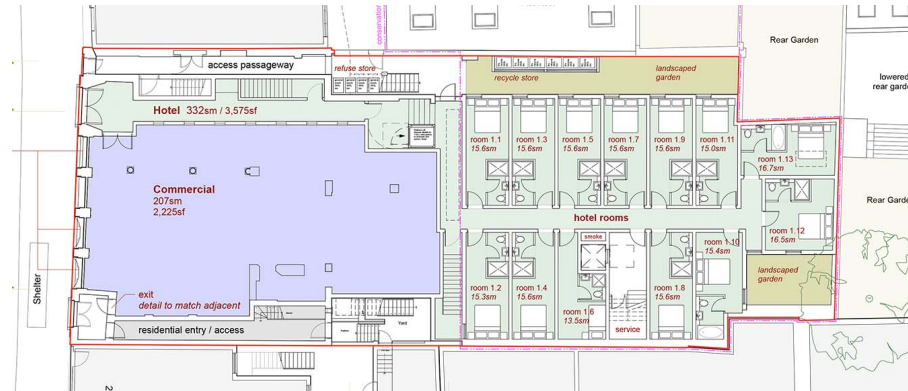
proposed roof plan: sustainable drainage, bio-diverse planting and solar panels



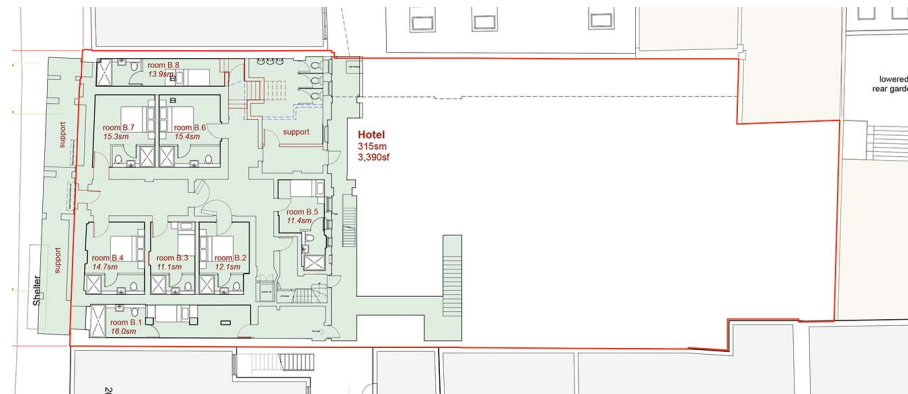
bio-diversity: enhanced natural environment – roof planting, bat boxes & bird bricks

7 OPTIONAL DESIGN APPROACH

- 7.1 Discussions with local stakeholders have both raised concerns and offered opportunity that come together at the sites rear courtyard.
- 7.2 Local residents, particularly at the site's upper floors, are concerned about noise and disruption that might be caused by hotel guests at the open courtyard.
- 7.3 Good quality restaurant operators are concerned by the constrained area of the existing ground floor.
- 7.4 An optional design approach has been explored that extends the proposed restaurant into the rear courtyard.
- 7.5 A larger, more fit for purpose space can be created for the restaurant while at the same time fully occupying the rear courtyard, eliminating the possibility of hotel guest disruptions.
- 7.6 The extension will be at the ground floor only, ensuring no visible harm to the local Conservation Area scene.
- 7.7 Existing residential access is retained at the rear of the main building.



optional ground plan: enlarged restaurant area / fully enclosed rear accommodation



optional basement plan: overflow hotel accommodation

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposals improve underused buildings within a desirable location of central London.
- 8.2 The proposals are positive for the site and surrounding Conservation Area neighbourhood.
- 8.3 The proposals address local concerns and opportunities and offer alternative design approaches at the ground floor courtyard.
- 8.4 The proposals cause no harm to the surrounding amenity, local environment or local infrastructure.
- 8.5 The proposals are a good example of sustainable development within a dense and protected urban setting.
- 8.6 National, Regional and Local Planning Policy support the proposals.
- 8.7 The Local Authority should support by the proposals.



DsC/01.03.24