



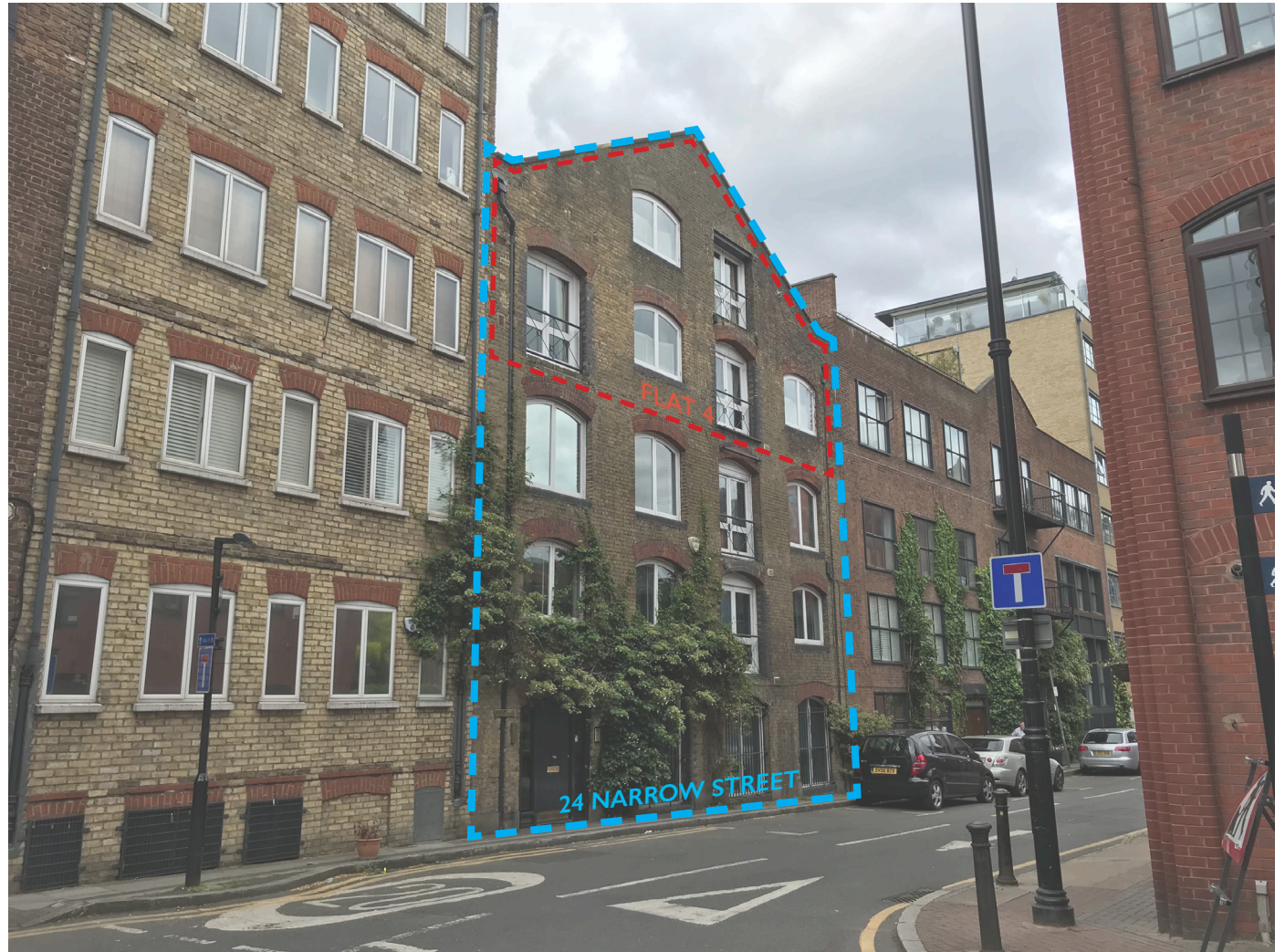
24 NARROW STREET

24 Narrow Street is a four-storey former warehouse set on the north bank of the river Thames, located in Tower Hamlets. The building was abandoned at some point in the mid-20th century after its industrial use had surpassed. In the mid-1970's the warehouse was bought - alongside the 3 adjoining warehouse buildings/plots on Narrow Street - by an aspiring property developer, who converted the building into 2 flats and 2 maisonettes.

Many of the building's original features remain, and repairs and signs of wear are visible where the building has been used for both industrial and residential purposes throughout its lifetime. The building shows wear at its original openings that suggests they were used for hoisting materials from the Thames bank into the building. An old photograph (pictured below) of the Thames north bank also shows a double-height enclosure on the building's south elevation which has since been removed.



NORTH BANK OF THE RIVER THAMES - 24 NARROW ST FAR-LEFT



VIEW OF PRINCIPAL ELEVATION FROM NARROW ST

The property that this design and access statement concerns is Flat 4, the maisonette occupying the third and fourth storeys of 24 Narrow Street. The property is currently lived in by its owner of almost two decades. In this time, they have undertaken essential repair and high-quality improvement work sensitive to the character of the building and its surroundings.

This design and access statement is to be read in support of an application for the replacement of two existing balconies to the rear of the property with a new balcony structure. The new balcony is to occupy approximately the same footprint as the existing two balconies, including an enclosed area over a single bay, in the same location as the historic structure shown on p.2.

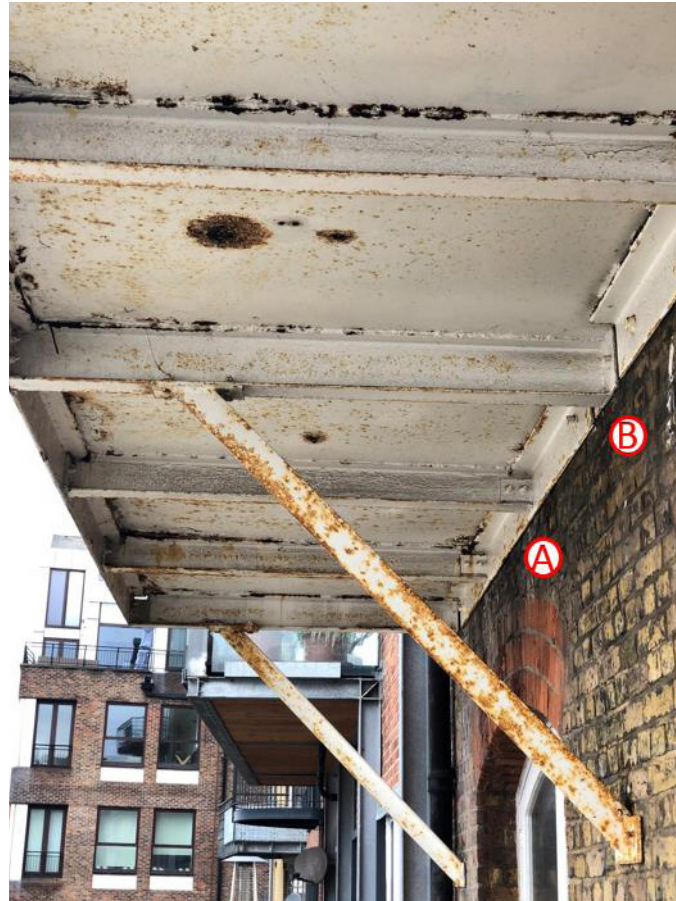
EXISTING BALCONIES

The balustrades of the 70's balconies feature a tubular steel handrail and diagonal bracing with a circular junction to the center of each panel. This low cost system means that infills must be added to the guarding to prevent climbing and protect people from falling through gaps in the structure. This guarding is composed of both a metal weld mesh and a perspex panel. Neither items perform well in external areas and their exposed position in the challenging environment by the river means they are now in poor condition and a blight to the shoreline.

The structure of the balconies relies on struts fixed above and below the balcony which have the effect of cluttering the historic brickwork facade,

The existing balconies to the rear of Flat 4, 24 Narrow Street are badly corroded and have been deemed unsafe for use. A structural condition report of the balcony has been prepared and is attached to the planning application. It demonstrates based on two visits to the property in 2018 and 2020 exactly why the balcony is unsafe and suggesting conclusively that the "only sensible option at this point is to replace the balconies."

The report also states that the 5th floor balcony's fixing to the building's facade has damaged the masonry and mortar at some point - it would be beneficial for the conservation of the brickwork to remove this balcony and repair/repoint.



IMAGES FROM STRUCTURAL ENGINEER'S CONDITION REPORT

PLANNING HISTORY

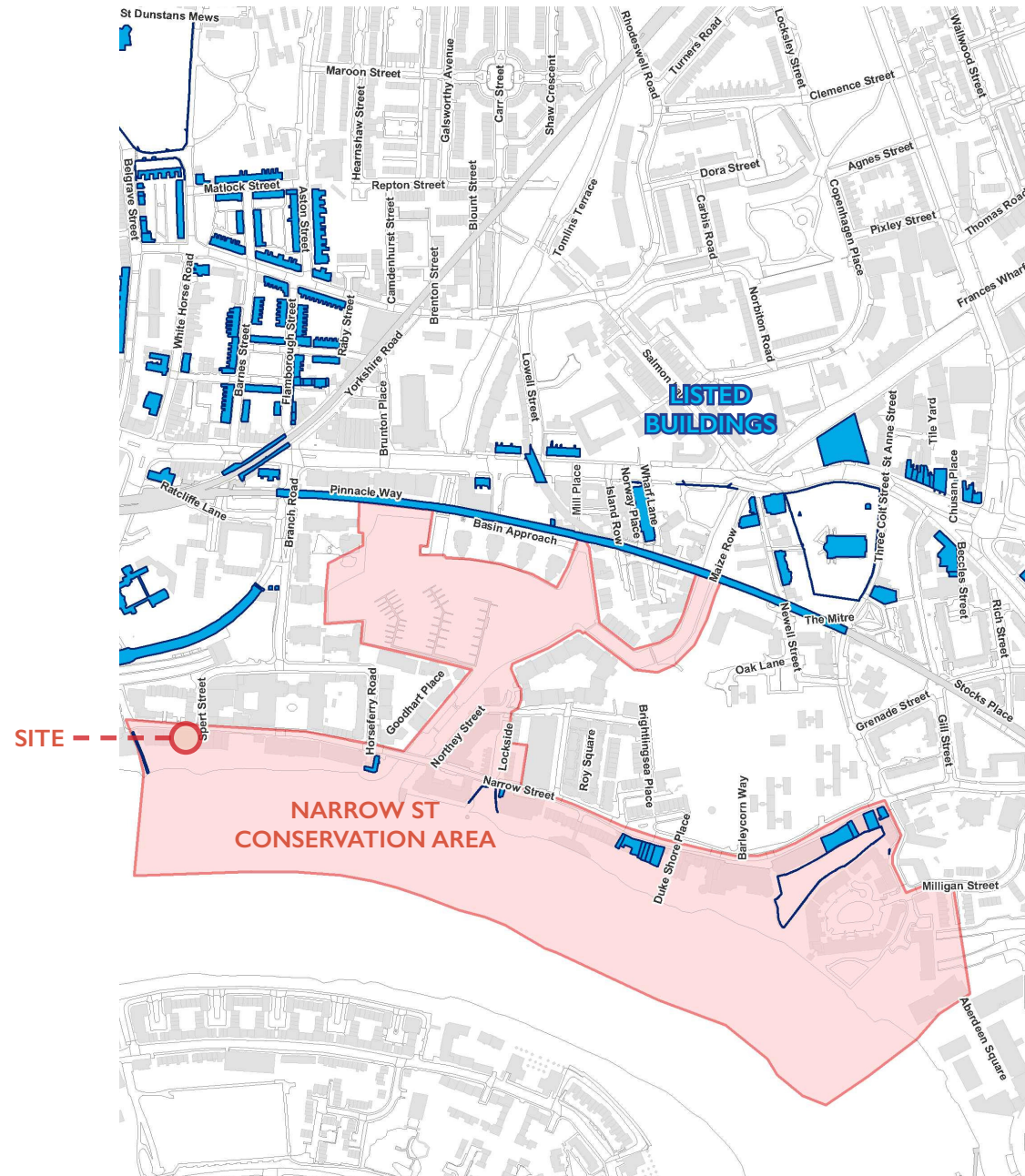
The building received planning permission to be converted from a warehouse into flats and a maisonette in 1975. In 1976, planning permission was granted for 'alterations to elevations' - no further other information is available regarding this application, but one could assume that the visibly later addition to the building of a balcony at each level was included in the consent. The below photo demonstrates the building was the first of the adjacent four to undergo a conversion.



NARROW ST CONSERVATION AREA

24 Narrow St sits within the Narrow St Conservation Area, which has been designated since 1975.

The area is characterised by 19th and 20th century wharf-side buildings relating to the port and other commercial activities. 24 Narrow Street is not highlighted within the conservation area appraisal as of particular interest but forms part of the general historic river front. The surviving industrial heritage contributes to the character and interest of the Thames shoreline, the organic development of the area evidenced in the different projections of buildings on the river face.



Policy S.DH1 - Delivering high quality design

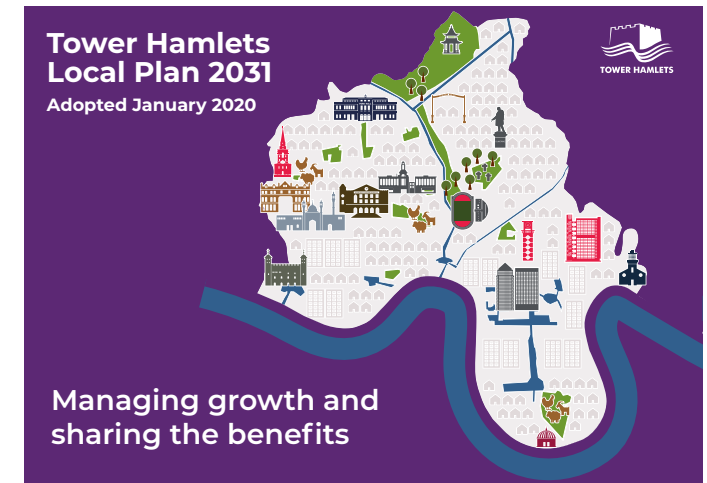
1. Development is required to meet the highest standards of design, layout and construction which respects and positively responds to its context, townscape, landscape and public realm at different spatial scales, including the character and distinctiveness of the borough's 24 places (as shown on Figure 4) and their features. To achieve this, development must:

- a. be of an appropriate scale, height, mass, bulk and form in its site and context*
- b. represent good urban design: provide coherent building lines, roof lines and setbacks, complement streetscape rhythm and associated landscapes (including boundary treatment) and ensure optimal plot coverages to avoid over-development*
- c. ensure the architectural language: scale, composition and articulation of building form, design of detailing, elements and materials applied on elevations, complements and enhances their immediate and wider surroundings*
- d. protect important views of and from landmark buildings and vistas*
- e. use high quality design, materials and finishes to ensure buildings are robust, efficient and fit for the life of the development*
- f. create well-connected, inclusive and integrated spaces and buildings which can be easily adaptable to different uses and the changing needs of users*
- g. incorporate features of positive biodiversity value within the site, where possible*
- h. use design and construction techniques to ensure that the development does not result in unacceptably harmful impacts arising from overheating, wind, air pollution, light pollution and noise pollution and the loss of sunlight and daylight, whilst optimising energy and waste efficiency*
- i. provide a mix and range of publicly accessible open spaces and water spaces that promote biodiversity, health and well-being.*

Policy D.DH8 - Amenity

1. Development is required to protect and where possible enhance or increase the extent of the amenity of new and existing buildings and their occupants, as well as the amenity of the surrounding public realm. To achieve this, development must:

- a. maintain good levels of privacy and avoiding an unreasonable level of overlooking or unacceptable increase in the sense of enclosure*
- b. ensure new and existing habitable rooms have an acceptable outlook*
- c. ensure adequate levels of daylight and sunlight for new residential developments, including amenity spaces within the development*
- d. not result in an unacceptable material deterioration of the sunlight and daylight conditions of surrounding development and not resulting in an unacceptable level of overshadowing to surrounding open space and private outdoor space*
- e. not create unacceptable levels of artificial light, odour, noise, fume or dust pollution during the construction and life of the development.*



In January 2020 the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 set out various policies for development. The policies shown left, relating to 'amenity' and 'delivering high quality design' are most relevant to this planning application.

The proposals that this design and access statement supports align with the objectives set out in the Tower Hamlets local plan and comply with the new policy, ensuring a positive addition to the Borough's built environment.

Given the limited change to the scope of the balcony, the proposal in fact has very little effect on amenity and daylight, though a slight improvement will be achieved with the privacy screens at the end of the balcony as described later in this document.



PLANNING PRECEDENT

Both of the adjacent properties to 24 Narrow Street have undergone alterations to their rear elevations more recently than 24. In both cases this has involved replacements of their balconies, setting a precedent for what may be acceptable at 24.



22 NARROW ST

Significant alterations have been made to the rear of the property. Some form of balcony or terrace has been added to every storey which appear to be designed and constructed independently of one another. The exact planning history concerning these additions is unclear due to multiple applications and alterations to a group of properties.



26 NARROW ST

Balconies have been added to the property at all five storeys. The upper four balconies are modern and uniform in style, appearing to be constructed at the same time and granted permission on 7th August 2006. The steel balcony at ground floor level appears to have been granted permission on 16 Mar 1998.

OUTLINE PROPOSAL

USE

The property will remain a single dwelling with the balcony for its private use.

AMOUNT

The existing balconies project approximately 2m at their furthest point from the rear facade of the building. The proposed balconies maintain a consistent projection of approximately 1.8m from the rear facade of the building.

The existing balconies combined have an approximate area of 23m². The proposed balconies combined have an approximate area of 28m². This includes a new enclosed floor area of 6m² accessible via the existing entrance to the balcony. The increase in overall balcony area is approx 5m².

PRECEDENT

Most properties in the area of the converted warehouse typology have had balconies constructed since their conversion. The balconies on the adjacent buildings can be seen on page 6. This demonstrates that there is no single consistent style.

LAYOUT

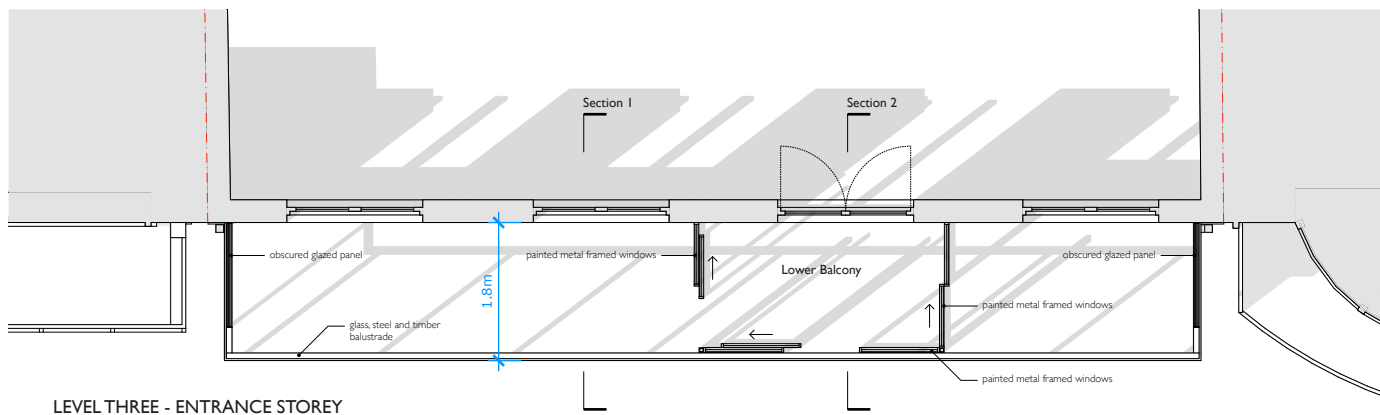
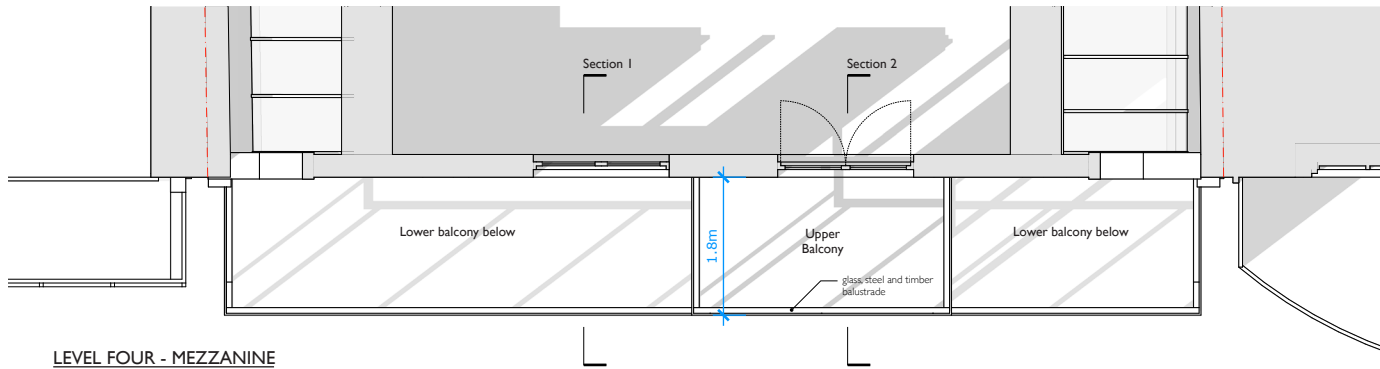
The new balcony does not change the existing layout of the flat, it simply enhances the outdoor space by making it safe to use and creating an enclosed, glazed area outside of the original walls.

ACCESS & PARKING PROVISION

No alterations to access or parking provision are envisaged.

FLOOD RISK

No alterations that affect the building's flood risk are envisaged.



PROPOSED BALCONY PLANS INCLUDED IN APPLICATION

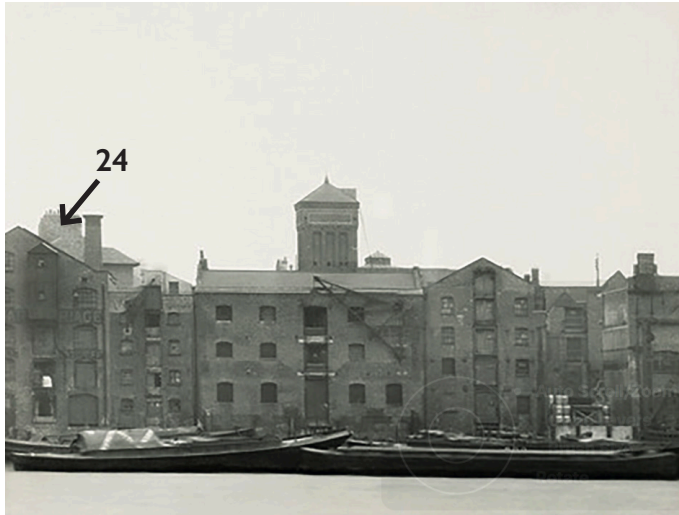
DESIGN & APPEARANCE

The balcony reads as a new and high quality addition to the historic building. The materials used are metal, wood, and glass, in keeping with the materials used in the original building and conservation area.

The glass face to the balustrade provides continuous guarding between a small number of structural stanchions. This protects views across the river and of the building's historic facade by minimising opaque components. It will age better than the more complex steel arrangements below - which feature technologies prevalent in the 1970s when the balconies were first added - due to its simplicity and low risk of corrosion.



SKETCH EXTERIOR VIEW OF BALCONY



NORTH BANK OF THE RIVER THAMES - 24 NARROW ST FAR-LEFT



PROPOSED BALCONY ELEVATION INCLUDED IN APPLICATION

HERITAGE

The wharf buildings on the shoreline of the Thames have featured lifting equipment and structural additions on the river elevation to enable them to properly serve the working vessels of the city since their earliest use. This characteristic has been retained and expanded with the addition of permanent balconies to many of these buildings and is very much consistent with their developing heritage.

The design is contemporary and respects the historic warehouse building by not attempting to mimic its style. Neither does it reference the style of earlier additions to the building that can be seen below and are now constructed in a style which time has shown does not last well.

The balcony will be supported by the building's primary structure as opposed to relying on its facade, which is currently bearing the load of the existing balcony and showing damage to the original masonry and mortar as a result.

There is a historic precedent for a double height enclosed addition to the building's rear elevation (shown left) - the design of this new addition references this structure as a lightweight and discreet interpretation.

Tower Hamlet's Narrow St Conservation Area Management Guidelines state: *"The most effective way to secure the historic environment is to ensure that buildings can continue to contribute to the life of the local community, preferably funding their own maintenance and refurbishment."*

The existing upper two balconies to Flat 4 which are unprotected from the elements are unsightly, becoming dangerous and therefore must be replaced. The proposals set out in this design and access statement - alongside the other work that the owner and occupier of the maisonette has undertaken - will secure the historic environment by ensuring that the additions made to 24 Narrow Street are high quality, enhancing the historic host building and consequently the conservation area within which it sits.

LIMITATIONS

This document has been produced for Moira Clinch to support an application for planning permission to replace two balconies at Flat 4 at 24 Narrow Street. Burgess Architects Ltd. do not accept any responsibility for its use by any other party or for another reason.

This document and the design and drawings within it is copyright of Burgess Architects Ltd and their permission must be sought to distribute or copy any part of it.

Burgess Architects Ltd. are registered in England and Wales

Company No. 9914158

Registered Office: 3 Piermont Green, London SE22 0LP