

DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

21 WILKES STREET

London E1 6QF
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21 Wilkes Street



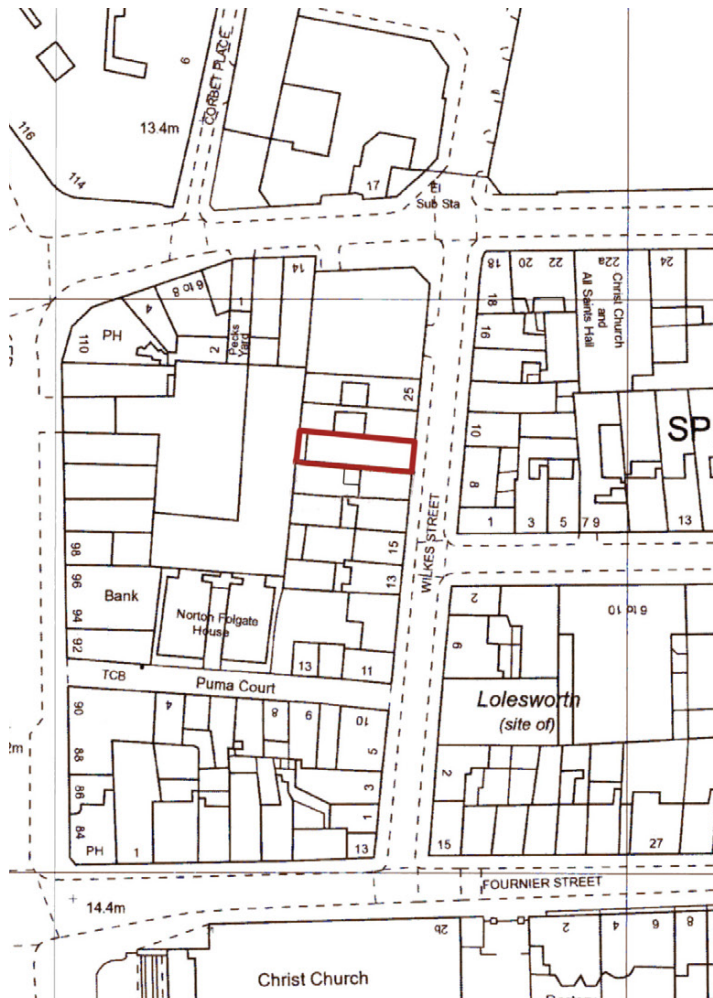
21 Wilkes Street- Front Elevation

1.0 Introduction

This design, access and heritage statement has been prepared by Mackenzie Wheeler Architects & Interiors on behalf of the applicant, Pat Jones, in support of a full planning and listed building application for a new extension to the rear of 21 Wilkes Street, Spitalfields.

This application follows the receipt of pre-application advice and recommendations from Tower Hamlets, the details of which can be found in chapter 5.0 below.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.



2.0 History & Setting

The existing property is a Grade II listed (list entry number 1357532) early Georgian townhouse, part of a well-preserved set of 5 matching houses, built together in 1720 by a local developer called Marmaduke Smith. The house was first occupied by the Vicar (or Rector) of the local church, which is nearby on the corner of Brick Lane and Fournier Street.

Sometime in the mid' 1800's, when Spitalfields was in decline as a residential area, the house became a fur factory and was used as such for about 150 years.

The building was then used as a toy making workshop for a few decades in the early 1900's and then as a banana warehouse in connection with the Spitalfields Fruit and Vegetable market until the market closed in 1986. It then remained unused and decaying for about 10 years.

The building is situated in the Fournier Street Conservation Area, and comprises 4 storeys and a basement.



Photos looking towards the rear of the house

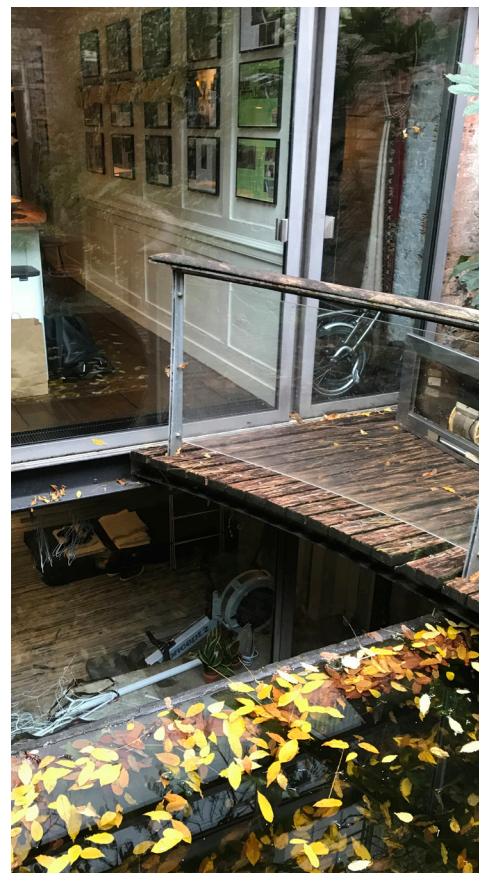


3.0 The Existing Rear Garden & House

The current owner and applicant purchased the property in 1997, with the ground floor factory in a derelict state, but upper residential floors in original state.

In 1998 the owners were granted full planning and listed building consent (PA/97/00740 and PA/97/00741 respectively) for demolition of the rear garden factory building, alterations to the property, and change of use to residential.

Completed in 1998, the approved restoration and redevelopment of the rear of the property included a contemporary sunken lightwell and pond at basement level, and a timber bridge - spanning from a rear sliding door - over a basement lightwell and further pond at garden level.



Photos of the basement and lightwell

In the garden there are 2 existing historic steel beams of note that span between the garden walls, both are covered in vine roses. These beams previously supported the roof of the fur factory and were retained to respect the sites historic commercial use.

Although the two ponds and bridge structure have provided a pleasant setting for the rear of the house and garden, the applicant has recently recognised their limitations given they comprise nearly one third of the garden space, and thus such a large proportion of their external amenity space is effectively unusable.

It has also become clear that the bridge structure at ground floor is blocking much of the available natural light from reaching the basement, as evident in the adjacent photographs.

Internally, the ground floor is currently used as a kitchen and dining space, whilst the living room is located some distance away on the 1st floor.



Photos looking west towards the end of the garden

4.0 The Brief

The applicant would therefore like to:

- Make better use of the available rear garden space.
- Create a well-lit, lightweight glass conservatory for dining.
- Retain the historic factory roof steel beams and climbing plants that now grow over them.
- Retain the availability of natural light in the basement.
- Better connect Dining, Living and Kitchen spaces.
- Retain a garden feel to new internal areas

5.0 Pre-Application Advice

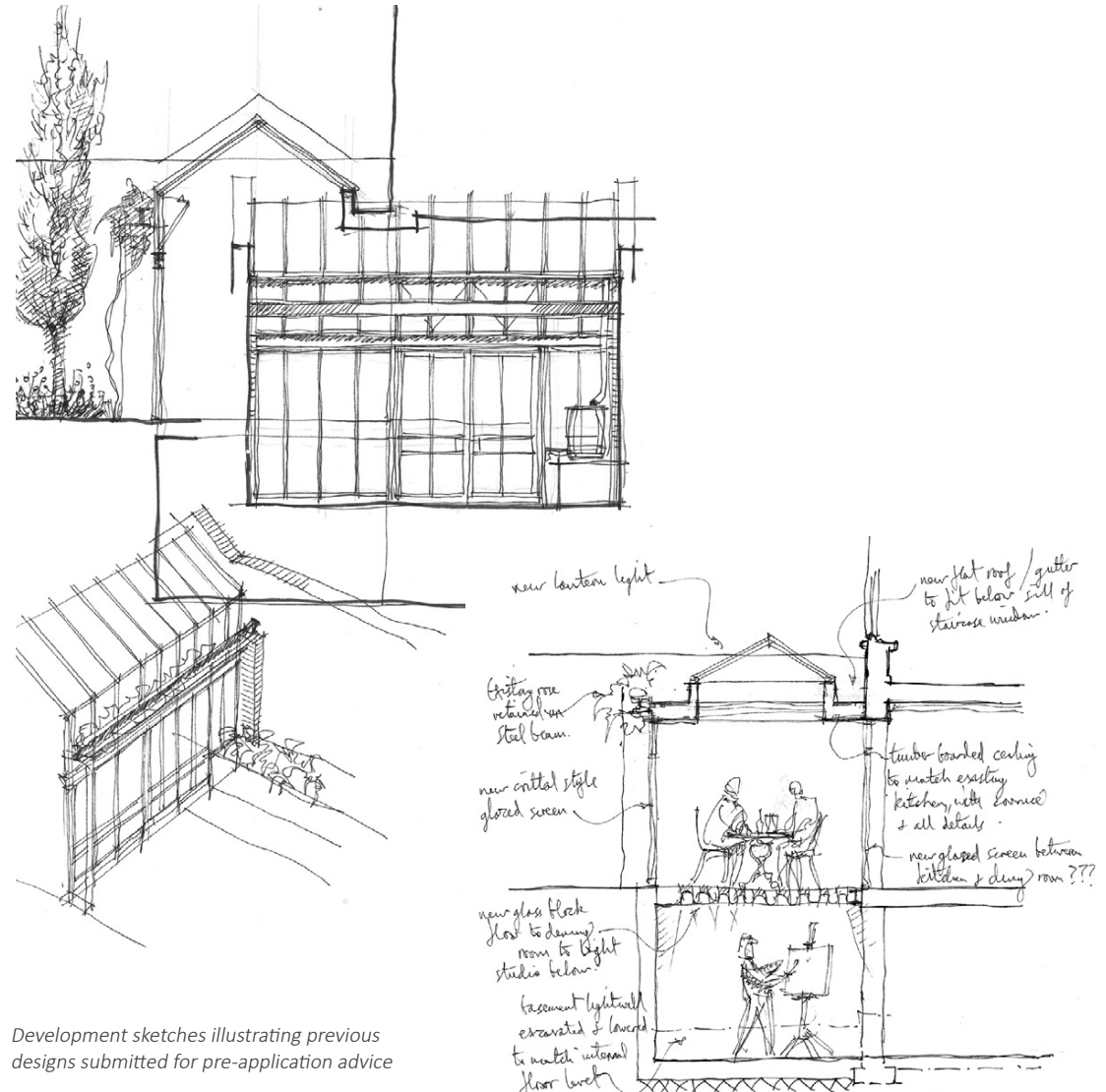
The applicant sought pre-application advice from Tower Hamlets in February 2021, under application reference PF/20/00308.

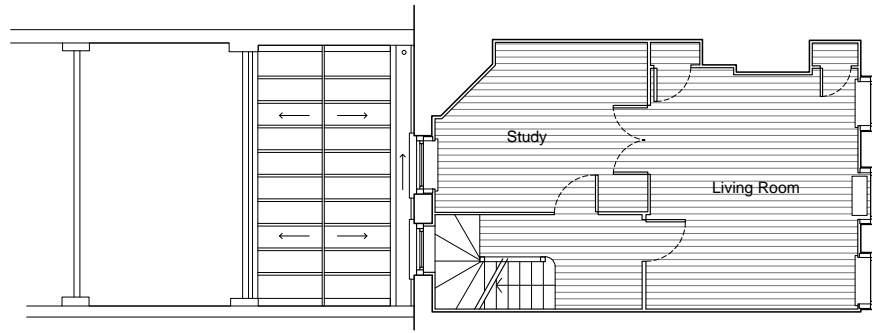
The application proposed a new rear extension, in the style of a traditional steel and glass house.

In a virtual meeting with the council, the officers were generally supportive of a new rear extension but were concerned with the proposal to raise the boundary garden walls in order to accommodate a new roof. It was agreed that the roof form could be revised and lowered, so that the garden walls wouldn't need to be raised, and a drawing was subsequently issued to the council showing a lower roof.

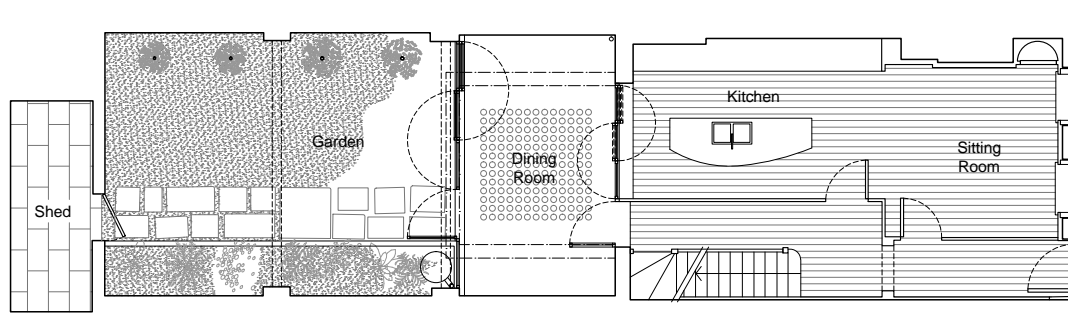
In their follow-up advice letter, the council stated that "no concerns are raised with the amended lower roof form as it would not be higher than the existing party walls" and it was also noted that the "lower pitch of the extension roof would enable an unobstructed view of more of the existing rear elevation".

In summary the letter stated that "the general principles of the proposals are acceptable" but that further design details would need to be submitted as part of a listed building consent".

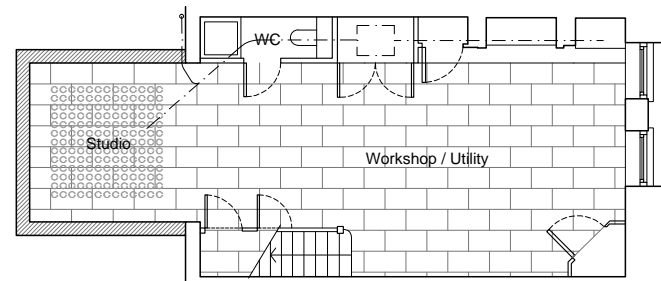




Proposed First Floor Plan - NTS



Proposed Ground Floor Plan - NTS



Proposed Basement Plan - NTS

6.0 The Proposal

In order to meet the requirements of the applicants brief and make better use of the garden space, a new basement and ground floor rear extension is proposed.

The proposed structure will extend 3m from the rear of the house up to the garden wall piers, covering the footprint of the existing pond at ground floor. Therefore there will be no loss of usable amenity space in the rear garden.

At basement level, the new structure will also extend 3m from the rear of the house, which is 1.5m further than the existing lightwell structure.

At ground floor, the extension will comprise a new lightweight steel and glass structure with a pitched roof over a new 15m² dining space, very much in the style of a traditional greenhouse or Victorian conservatory.

The ground floor of the extension will include concrete pavement lights that will provide ample natural light to the new basement extension, and it is envisaged that this will offer more natural light to the basement than the existing lightwell.



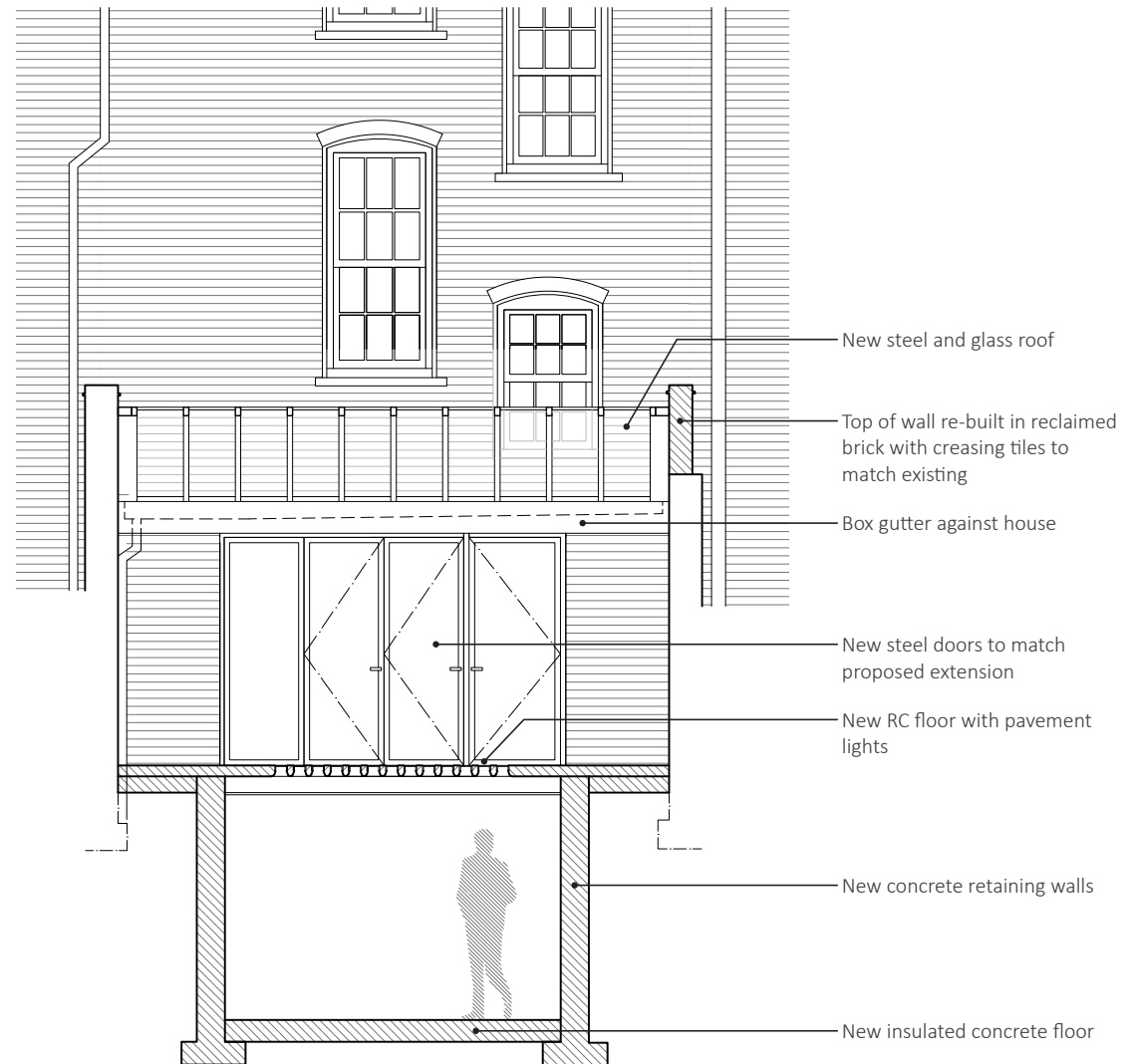
Photo detail of shared garden wall with no19, showing thinner area of brick wall to top section

The steel beams that historically supported the roof of a fur factory will be retained, and the new extension will be set back around 50mm from the beam closest to the house, so that the rose vine can continue to grow over it. Although structurally independent from the extension, the beam will form a key part of the elevation composition, complimenting the traditional greenhouse style of the new structure.

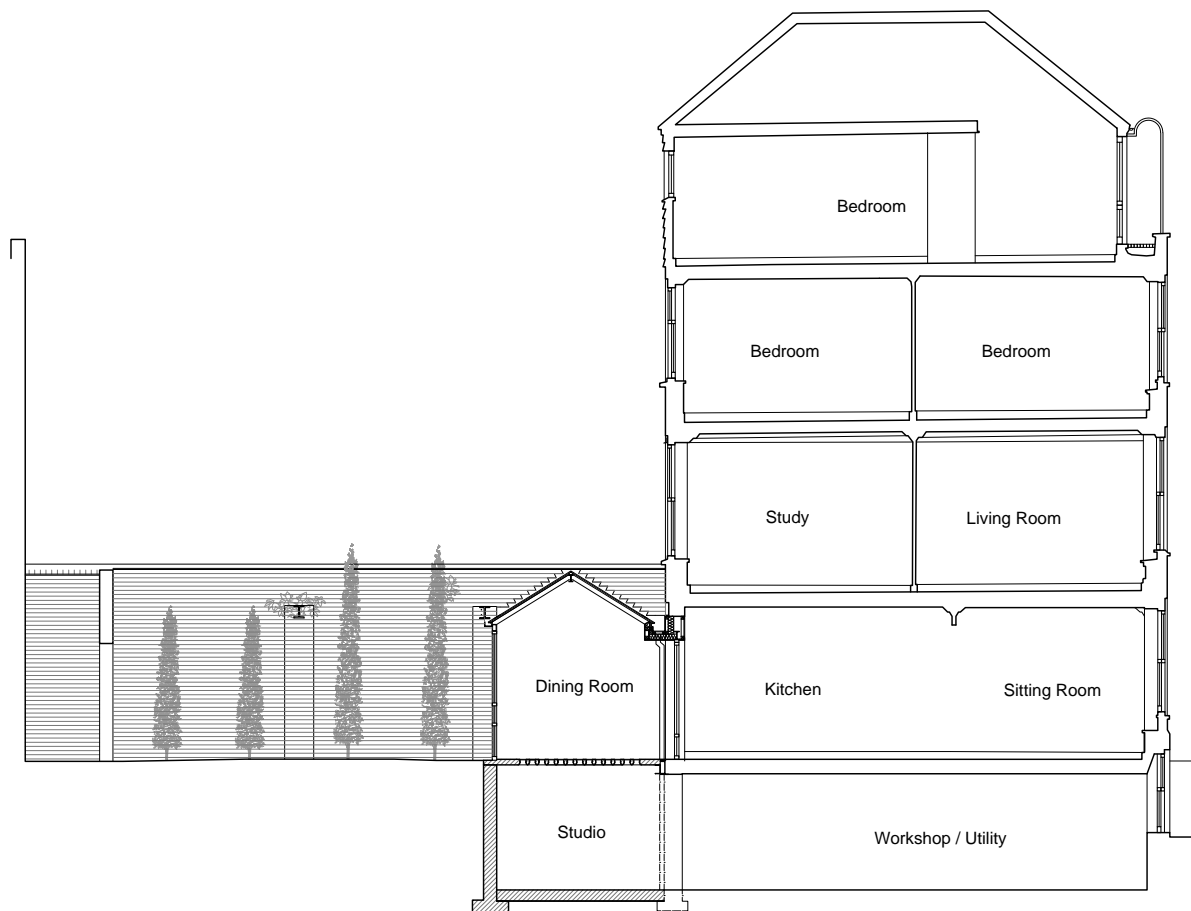
The top section of the garden wall shared with no19 Wilkes St is presently 1 brick thick, and this small area of the wall will be rebuilt in 215mm thick brickwork to match the existing wall (see above photo and adjacent section).

Internally the brick garden walls will be left exposed, creating a traditional conservatory feel to the internal space.

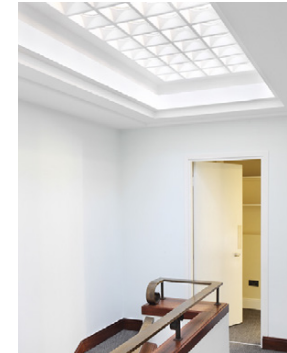
New replacement doors will be installed in the existing ground floor rear openings of the house, allowing the applicant to separate the kitchen and conservatory extension during the colder months.



Section thru' Proposed Extension



Proposed Section thru' House and Extension



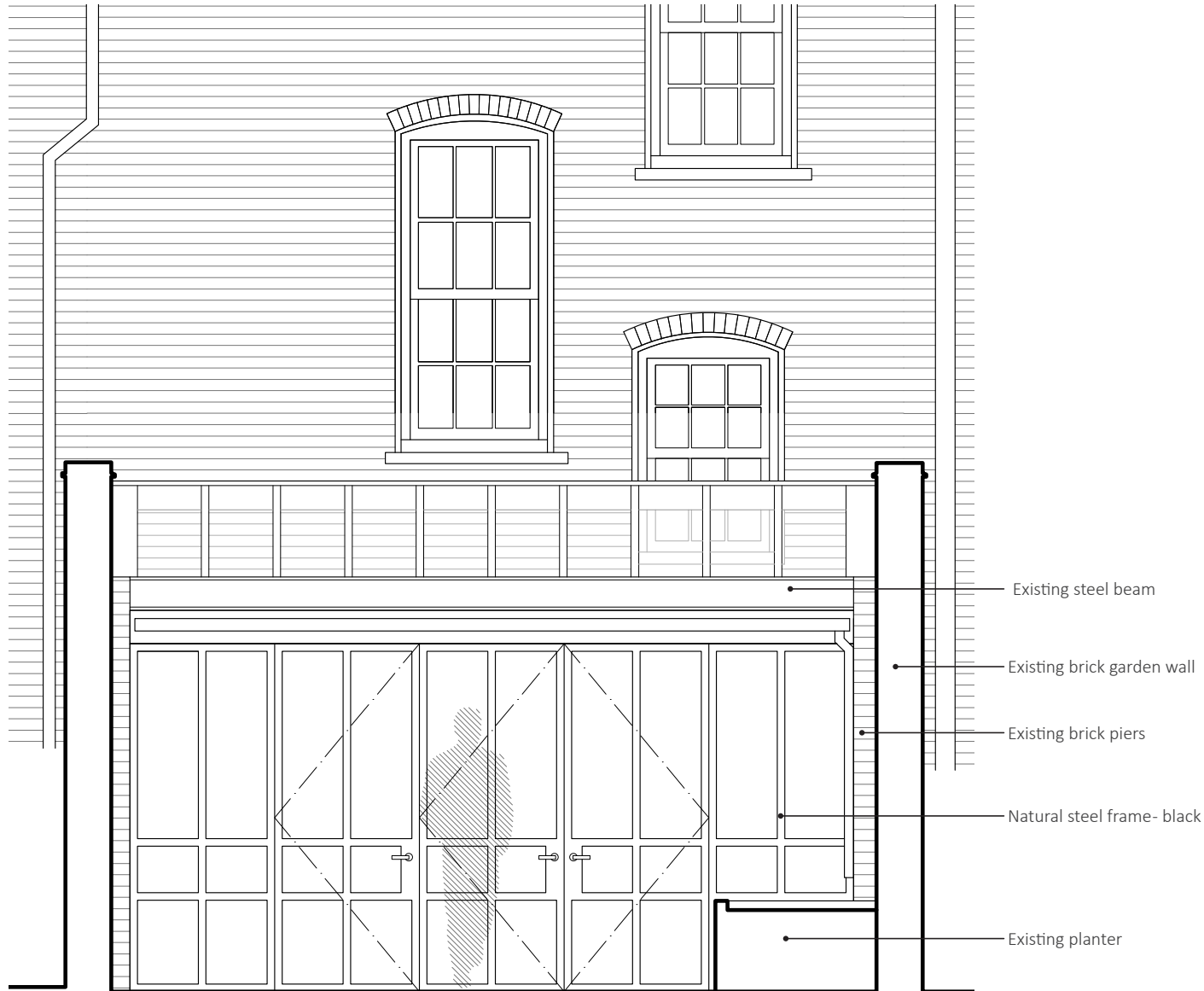
Precedent images illustrating amount of natural light admitted by pavement lights

6.1 Use

The new extension will provide a new Dining Space for the house at ground floor, allowing the existing dining area at the front of the house to be converted into a sitting room.

Therefore, the dining, kitchen and living spaces will be on the same floor and movement between the 3 spaces will be much easier than the existing layout.

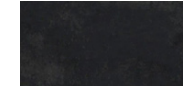
At basement level, the extension will provide a well-lit studio space.



Proposed Elevation



Exposed concrete floor



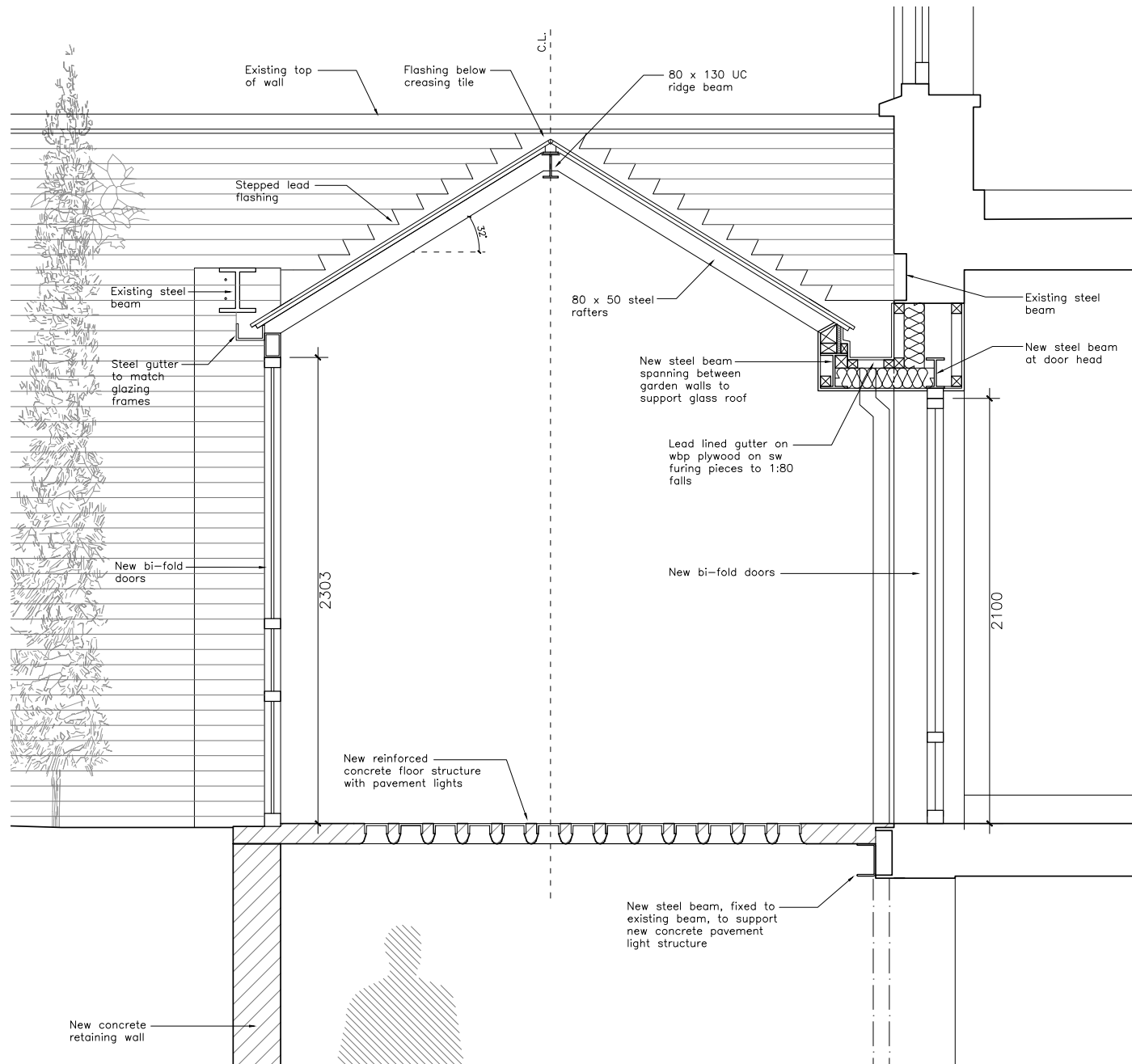
Natural steel frames- black



Example image of traditional steel conservatory

6.2 Materials

The extension comprises a structural frame of black natural steel sections, with glass panels between, that will compliment the retained existing steel beam in the garden. Internally, a new exposed concrete floor will house pavement lights.



Detailed Section Thru' Proposed Extension

7.0 Heritage Statement

21 Wilkes Street is a Grade II listed building located in the Fournier Street Conservation Area and therefore, in accordance with the NPPF, this application should describe the significance of the heritage asset, its contribution to its setting, and the impact of the proposal on its significance.

The building has some historic significance because of its story and varied uses over the last 300 years, and its contribution to the local area. Its story and history, and its significance in this sense, is detailed in chapter 2.0.

The heritage asset has a high level of architectural significance, in particular across all floors internally, where original Georgian features have been sensitively restored or retained. Externally, the front and upper floors of the rear have architectural and historic significance.

Given the proposed extension utilises existing openings in the rear of the house, and because its building footprint extends no further than the existing contemporary ponds, impact to the heritage asset is very minor. It is accepted there is some harm to the heritage asset, as open views of the rear of the house are affected, but this is only minor harm as the glass extension will only partially obstruct views of the house.

The proposed traditional style of the extension will contribute to the setting of the Conservation Area in a positive manner, and it is noted that the extension will not be visible from the public realm.



17 Princelet Street, Spitalfields

8.0 Local Precedent

Approved under applications PA/17/00926/NC and PA/17/00927/NC, 17 Princelet Street - located nearby within the Fournier Street Conservation area - has a recently constructed rear extension that extends across the full width of the house.

The extension has a traditional pitched roof form, but uses steel and structural glass to evoke a more contemporary style. Given its status as a Grade II listed building and its setting in a Conservation Area, the project serves as a useful modern precedent for rear extensions in the local area.

9.0 Construction Management Plan

It is envisaged that the extension will be principally constructed by a local builder, with the steel and glass items by specialist supplier. Resident parking permits adjacent to the house would be used for deliveries and road closures would not be needed.

Any large items, such as new steel beams, would be carefully carried through the house, as there is a relatively straight route from the front door to rear garden.



10.0 Perspective View from Garden



10.1 Internal Perspective View from Extension