

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

50-56 Brick Lane, London, E1 6RF

Prepared by Clements and Porter Architects

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6. SUMMARY



figure 1: (left) Conversion and extension of existing warehouse, South London by C&PA.
 figure 2 (bottom left):Refurbishment of commercial premise on Commercial Road, by C&PA,
 figure 4+5 (right):Refurbishment and rear extension to commercial premises, Shoreditch East London by C&PA,

1. INTRODUCTION

1.01 Background

This report has been prepared by Clements and Porter Architects on behalf of Epra Fabrics Ltd, the freeholder of the site, in support of the proposal to for an extension to provide improved and additional commercial space.

The document is accompanied by supporting illustrative material in the form of drawings, diagrams and photographs.

1.02 Planning History

This application follows the withdrawal of the application Ref: PA/21/00238 for the Construction of rear first floor extension; re-configuration of existing flats; and change of use of the second floor from Class E to Class C3 to create 1x 3bed, 2x 2bed and 2x 1bed flats.

Whilst the application was deemed acceptable in principle by Tower Hamlets, the proposals were not viable due to the various contributions required and the construction costs relating to the tight urban site.

The applicant is now looking to improve and extend his existing premises to remain on Brick Lane and allow for growth of the business. This will ensure the last of the original historic rag trade operators in Brick Lane remains.

Following discussion with Tower Hamlets it was confirmed the extension of the existing premise was deemed acceptable in principle. Therefore the application was withdrawn with the applicant seeking to re apply with an extension to the commercial space.

1.03 The Proposals

The proposals seek to improve the efficiency and quality of the commercial space by extending to the rear at first floor level. The work will include general improvements to the existing fabric and layout.

The description of the proposal is:

“Erection of rear extension to existing commercial storage space (Class E) with associated internal alterations, at 50-56 Brick Lane, London, E1 6RF.”

1.04 The Architect

Clements & Porter Architects (C&PA) is an RIBA Chartered Practice led by Elspeth Clements.

Established in 1979, Clements & Porter Architects has with a wealth of experience that ranges from conservation, modernisation, re-use, and new-build. Based in Shoreditch since 1995 the practice has built a long-term commitment to London's East End with work in the area that includes offices for graphic designers, a Mosque, a new youth and community centre, a Hindu temple, a hotel, converting an art-deco cinema, an eel and pie shop, ... as well as new homes. The practice prides itself on its ability to deal with difficult back-land and brownfield sites to meet demanding briefs.

Elspeth Clements is an accredited RIBA Conservation Architect reflecting the practice's wealth of experience in working on Listed Buildings and within Conservation Areas. C&PA has worked extensively on and in the vicinity of heritage assets notably in the Spitalfields area of East London with work recommended by both English Heritage and the local conservation officers.

2 LOCAL CONTEXT

2.01 Existing Neighbourhood

The site is located on Brick Lane, which is a key street linking Shoreditch, Spitalfields and Whitechapel High Street. The street is in now a popular touristic destination but still an important part of the diverse local community with a rich history.

Brick Lane, also known Banglatown is at the heart of London's Bangladeshi Community and famed for its many authentic curry restaurants.

It now also has a reputation for its warehouse art exhibitions and trendy clubs and bars. Brick Lane Market runs every Sunday attracting people in search of second-hand furniture, unusual clothes and bric-a-brac. The buildings that surround the street offer a varied and wide variety of galleries, restaurants, indoor markets and festivals throughout the year.

Brick Lane has also become world famous for its street art, which features artists such as Banksy, D*Face and Ben Eine. The backdrop of the painted streets around Brick Lane have been used for many music videos and the scenes of TV dramas. The street art is constantly changing, as new artists come add to the changing scene.

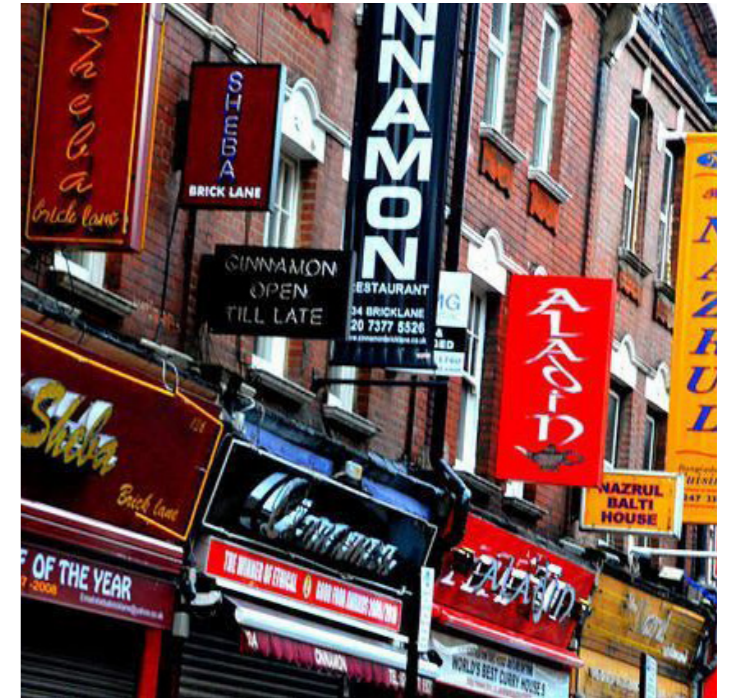


figure 5 : Aerial view with Brick Lane denoted in yellow and the site denoted in red.
figures 6-10 : Graffiti on Brick Lane, Brick Lane Market, Brick Lane Street Sign in English and Bengali, Curry Restaurants on Brick Lane.



2.02 Location History

"The richness and complexity of the area's character today is due to many factors, not least the overlapping cultural legacy of three successive groups of immigrants, each of which has made a unique contribution to the area."

Brick Lane has existed since the 1550's and has had a rich history of diversity. The following summarises the have shaped the current configuration of the streets culture:

- Huguenot refugees from France brought silk-weaving skills from French cities and established it as a centre of the London silk weaving industry.
- The brewing industry was active in the area from around 1666. Joseph Truman purchased what is now the Truman Brewery in 1679. From 1991, it has been redeveloped within its existing form as a major centre for the arts, creative industries and nightclubs.
- A large number of Jews from Eastern Europe and Russia moved to Spitalfields in the 19th century and founded a thriving community. By the middle of the 20th century, the Jewish community was dispersing to the suburbs of London and a new immigrant community from Bangladesh was beginning to establish itself, and grew from the 1970's onwards. Now Brick Lane is known as Banglatown and is at the heart of London's Bangladeshi Community.
- Brick Lane Market was established in the 18th century and was used by farmers selling their livestock and produce.

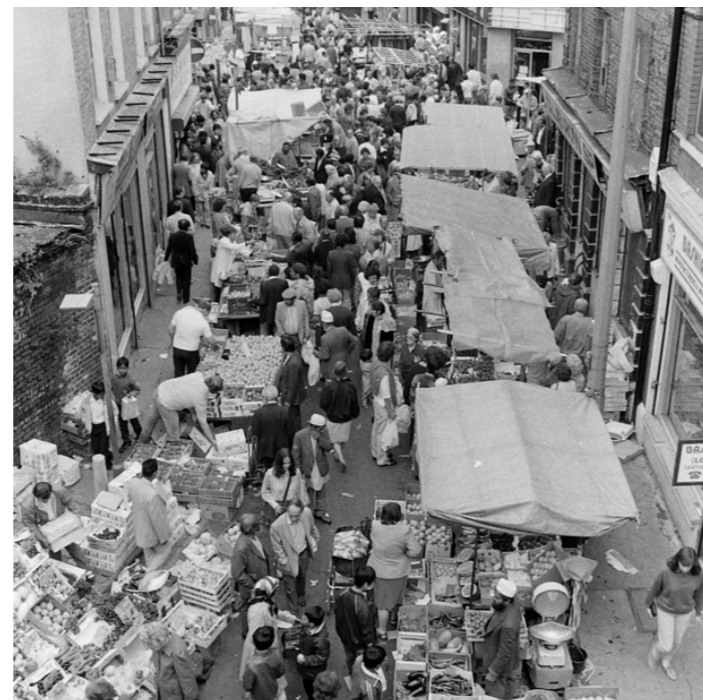


figure 11: (top left) Brick Lane Mosque was originally built in 1743 as a Huguenot Church
figure 12: (bottom left):Truman Brewery. figure 12: (middle top) Poltava Synagogue, Heneage Street, Spitalfields 1947. figure 13: (bottom middle) Brick Lane Sunday market, 1985

figure 14: (top right) Epura Fabrics in 1986.
figure 15 (bottom right):The ICC Cricket World Cup trophy on display on Brick Lane in front of the World Cup declaration mural on the building of Epura Fabrics by London poet Caleb Femi.

2.03 Conservation Area

The site sits within Brick Lane and Fournier Street Conservation Area. The Brick Lane and Fournier Street Conservation area contains some of the most architecturally and historically significant buildings in the Borough. This includes on of the most important early Georgian quarters in England and the Christ Church Spitalfields, designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor.

Brick Lane itself is home to a diverse mix of fashion, art, entertainment, retail and start-up businesses. The richness and complexity of the area's character today is due to many factors, not least the overlapping cultural legacy of three successive groups of immigrants, each of which has made a unique contribution to the area.

Brick Lanes character is created by a general consistency of height and architecture, especially amongst the terraces, and a rich, fine-grain mix of land uses.

The buildings along the middle part of Brick Lane are often arranged in terraces of three to four storeys. The Conservation Area Appraisal outlines these buildings are are mainly shops, cafes, pubs or restaurants at ground level, and offices or residential use above.

The application site follows this configuration and seeks to enhance this use.

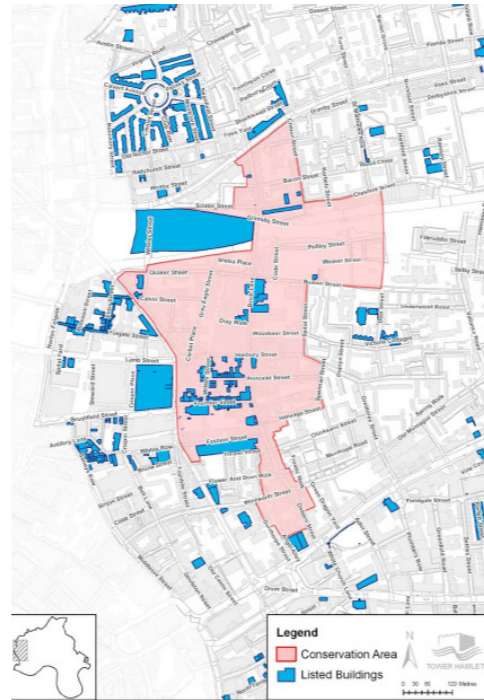


figure 16: (top) Brick Lane and Fournier Street Conservation Area map
figure 17: (bottom): Historical Map 1868

2.04 Conservation Area Design Considerations

This application provides the following information to demonstrate sensitivity towards the Conservation Area:

- Explanation behind the reasoning of architectural design decisions.
- Contextual plans, sections and elevations of existing buildings.
- Detail regarding materials and construction to indicate the nature of the work proposed.
- Photos of the condition of existing building.

In the Conservation Area Appraisal, the street fronting elevation of the application site is identified as a primary frontage of the neighbourhood centre of Brick Lane. There has been a row of terraces in this location since prior to 1868 (see fig 17) and the interesting brick parapet detail to the front is intact (see fig 18). This application remains sensitive to the history of the site by refraining from altering the configuration at the front and instead reinstating and restoring some original features – such as the double hung timber sash windows which have been damage and lost.

The residential block at 2B Heneage Street to the east party wall is not mentioned in the appraisal, however is of some historic value. This building is thought to have been constructed as a synagogue to serve the Jewish Community that was prevalent in the area at the time (Fig 19) shows the street frontage of this from Heneage Street). The date of construction is estimated to be circa 1890's and is Victorian in its aesthetic.



figure 18: (top) Epra Fabrics Front Elevation
figure 19: (bottom): 2B Heneage Street

3 SITE

3.01 Site Description

The site is located on the east side of Brick Lane; a street in the East End of London, in the borough of Tower Hamlets.

To the north and south of the site are a string of plots with commercial units facing onto Brick Lane, with residential accommodation above.

The site sits within Brick Lane and Fournier Street Conservation Area, but site building is not listed. The party wall between the rear of the site and the carpark marks the edge of the Conservation Area.

To the south of the site is a recently converted hotel, which was a HMO. To the north a terrace property with a restaurant at ground level and residential use above. To the rear of no. 50, there is a private car park.

To the east of the site at the rear of 52-56 Brick Lane is a converted three storey synagogue; 2b Heneage Street, which is separated from the site boundary by a metal screen rising 8.4m above ground level and an open courtyard.

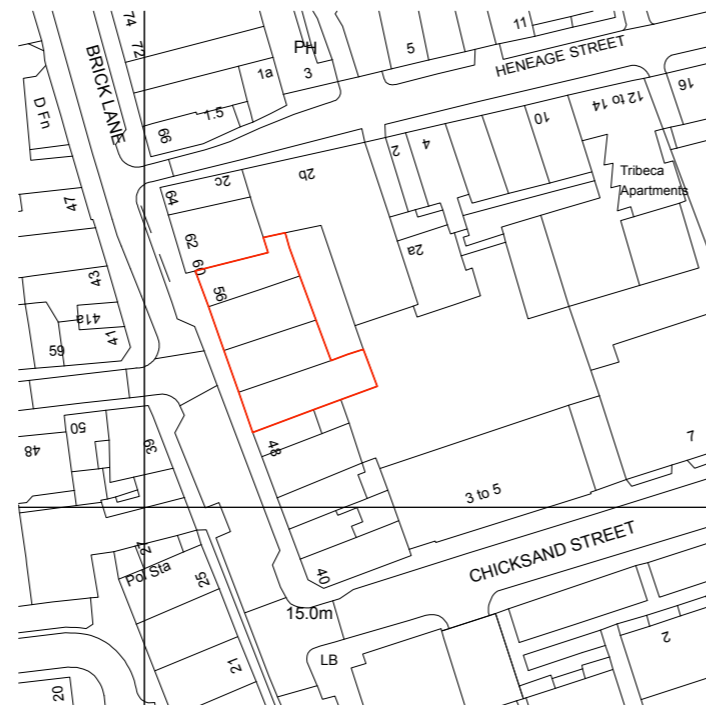
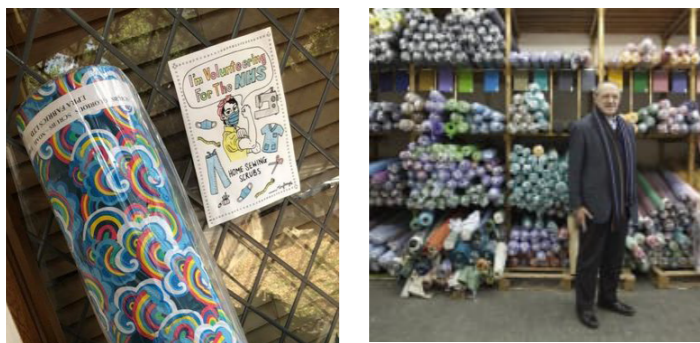


figure 20 (left): Epura Fabrics/ supplying material for Scrubs Glorious Scrubs or our NHS workers.
figure 21: (top) OS Map. figure 22: 50-56 Brick Lane.

3.02 Existing Use and Condition

The premises consist of 4 adjoining mixed use Victorian buildings, 50-56 Brick Lane. This is currently configured as follows.

- The ground floor of the site is currently occupied by a takeaway at no 50 and the shop/ showroom for Epura Fabrics Ltd.
- At first floor level, 52-56 Brick Lane provides storage for the ground floor use. The first floor of no.50 is currently in use as a 1 bedroom flat, which will remain.
- At second floor level, 52-56 is partially residential with an informal one bedroom flat of 24sqm occupying part of no 54, this is current does not meet space standards and will return to storage/ offices space for the shop below. No 50 is residential as the floor below, which will remain as existing.
- The third floor level over 50-52 was granted permission for a new mansard roof extension to provide a 3 bed and a 2 bed flat. This has been implemented.
- The residential accommodation is accessed by separate stairs at no 50 and 54. The storage facilities are accessed by stairs at 52 and 56. The stair at 56 has been removed above first floor level.
- Whilst the flats on the top level have undergone recent refurbishment and are in good condition, the flats above 50 Brick Lane and the existing commercial units would benefit from modernisation and repair.

3.03 Site Area

The total existing total gross external area (GEA) of the building is 344sqm.



figure 22-24: (top) Image of existing rear of 50-56 Brick Lane.
figure 25: (bottom): aerial view of rear of 50-56 Brick Lane.

3.04 Additional Planning History

Following planning approval (PA/15/01732/NC) on 02/10/2015, a refurbishment and extension to the mansard across 50-56 Brick Lane was implemented to include two flats, 1x 2 bedroom and 1 x 3 bedroom, accessed from a common stair for no 54.

An analysis of the site's planning history also shows a planning application for a two storey extension to the storage space at the rear of 52-56 Brick Lane (PA/08/02435). which was refused on 10/05/2011. The reasons for refusal were given as the effect of daylighting on the neighbouring property at 2b Heneage Road and insensitivity towards the Conservation Area. This application seeks to address these reasons for refusal.



figure 26: Approved front elevation Ref: (PA/15/01732/NC)

3.05 Neighbouring Properties Planning History

An application for the neighbouring site to the south at 46-48 Brick Lane (PA/14/01358/A1) was permitted on 22/10/14. This included a change of use of first and second floor from A3 restaurant to C1 Hotel with 19 bedrooms. This is currently under construction with 4 levels.

An application for the neighbouring site to the north at 58/60 Brick Lane (PA/17/02324) was permitted in 2017. This includes a roof extension to create a fourth level for residential use. This is currently under construction.

To the rear, at 2b Heneage Street the three storey



figure 27: Photo of existing high mesh screen with planting.

building (that was originally a synagogue) sits within the Conservation Area but is not listed. This building has an interesting history as it has undergone many changes of use.

In 1947 the synagogue was closed and in 1976 a planning application for the site (PA/75/00148) to be converted to warehousing, light industrial and offices. This is in line with the Jewish community moving to other parts of London and to the suburbs around this time. It is predicted that it was at this point that warehouse style windows were installed in the building. There are contemporary crittall style windows installed today.

In 1984 a planning application for 2B Heneage Street (PA/83/00196) to be partially converted to retail/supermarket was permitted and in 1995 a

further application for change of use was permitted (BG/94/00290). This was for conversion of the building to form five self-contained flats and represents the current configuration of the building.

The owners of the site have installed a high mesh screen along the party wall between the application site and the flats. It has not been possible to locate a planning application for this screen however it is considerable in its mass. It is assumed that the mesh was installed to protect both properties from overlooking. This substantially reduced the daylight to both properties, particularly as it appears that vegetation is now growing on this.

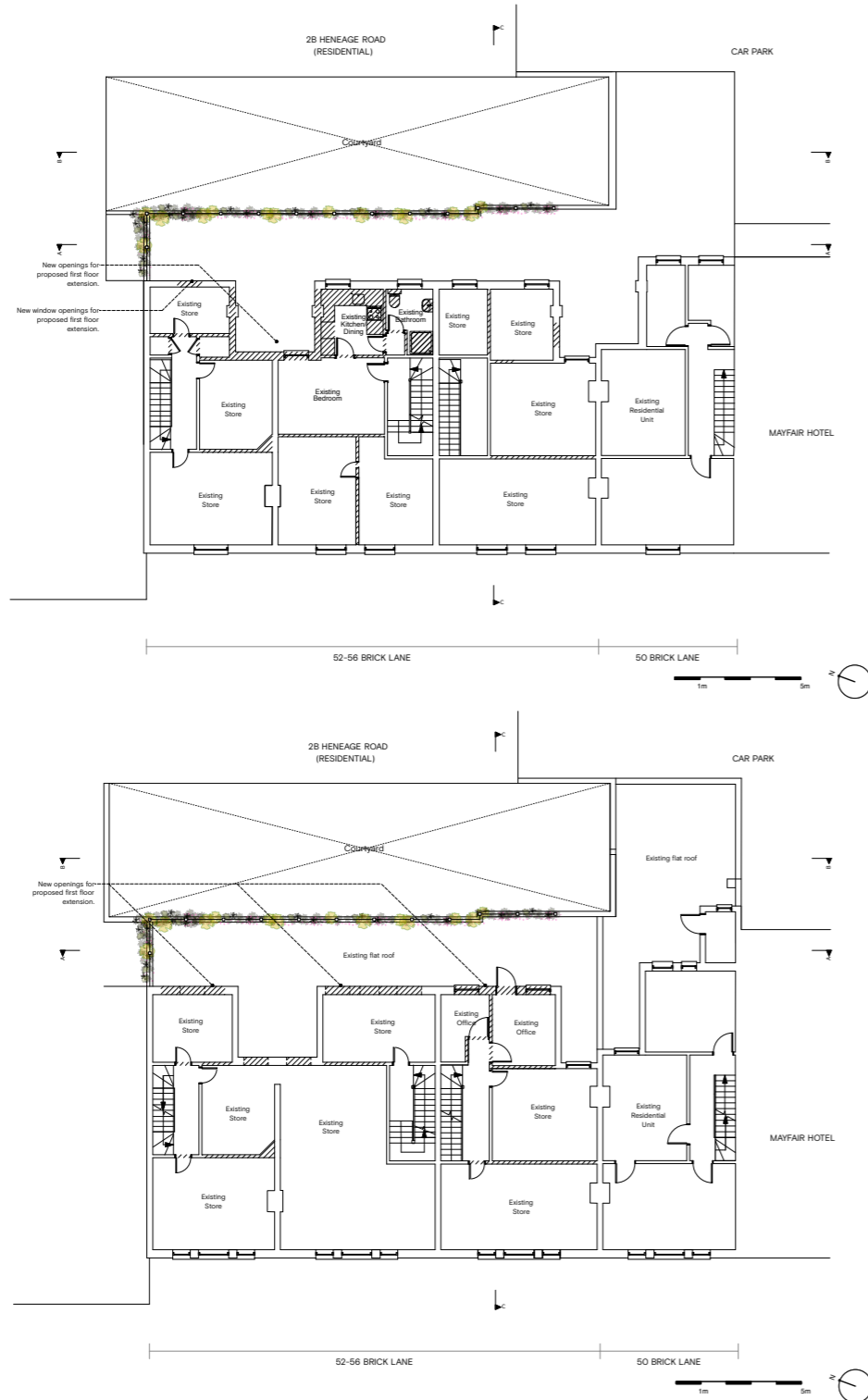


figure 28: Existing first floor plan.
figure 29: Existing second floor plan.

4. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

4.01 Design Brief

The design brief comprises the following key criteria:

- Increase provision of commercial storage/ office space on the site and finish to a high standard.
- Increase efficiency in the configuration of the storage and office space for the commercial unit.
- Integrate proposals with existing building and context.
- Mitigate impact on the surrounding properties.
- Retention of the ground floor commercial use.
- Restore/ repair any existing windows/ doors to front elevation.

4.02 Design Concept

The concept for the design is based upon the re-configuration and extensions to the existing building. This will be achieved through the following proposals.

52-56 Brick Lane:

- Extend first floor to provide enlarged storage area to commercial unit.
- The extension will be finished with a traditional brick on edge parapet, a pitched roof and rooflights, providing natural daylight within. This solution mitigates any impact to adjacent premises and those opposite. The extension also reduces the direct outlook and overlooking between the properties at first floor level. The second floor conditions remains as existing.
- The extension will be accessed from the existing doors on Brick Lane.

5. PROPOSALS

5.01 Massing and Design

The existing building is four storeys and includes a commercial unit, takeaway and residential accommodation.

The proposed massing seeks to increase efficiency and provision of the commercial unit whilst creating minimal additional massing and mitigating impact on the surrounding properties. Other than the infilling between two extensions at second floor level, all of the proposed extension is on the first floor and generally behind walls of a similar height.

- To the front, there are no changes to the massing or form with window replacement where necessary to match original fabric. No work is to be carried out to the shop front.
- Any work to the rear has been designed to avoid adverse impact on the adjacent block at 2b Heneage Street. A pitched roof is proposed, which decreases the massing on the previously accepted proposals withdrawn.
- The boundary between this property and the subject property is currently delineated by a 1.2m high brick boundary high wall with a privacy screen rising 5m above that. This screen, although it is mesh in its materiality, supports planting which severely impacts on the daylighting provision to both properties. It is therefore proposed to remove proposed scheme.
- The proposals are to slightly raise the rear wall of 52-56 Brick Lane and to extend the first floor to the rear boundary. This will enlarge the first-floor space and allow the showroom/storage/offices for the shop below to be concentrated on one level. This will avoid the need to carry heavy

goods up two floors.

- The second floor will remain as existing in terms of massing except for infilling between two rear extensions to create an additional space. This mass will have no impact on neighbouring properties and align the facade at this level.
- All rear windows are to be replaced with traditional timber sashes. This reflects the character and appearance of the existing building, area and scheme at Heneage Street.

5.02 Accommodation

The proposal includes new additional office/ storage space of 58.5sqm.

5.03 Employment

The majority of properties in Brick Lane consist of ground floor commercial with residential above. In this case there are two floors of commercial use above ground floor. The second level usage has become untenable as there is no lift access. This presents difficulties in carrying heavy bolts of cloth over two floors. A rationalisation of the plan has been made and much of the storage at first floor level compensated by extending the first floor to the boundary.

The business currently employs 8 people on site and this figure will be maintained after the works are complete. There will be no loss of employment.

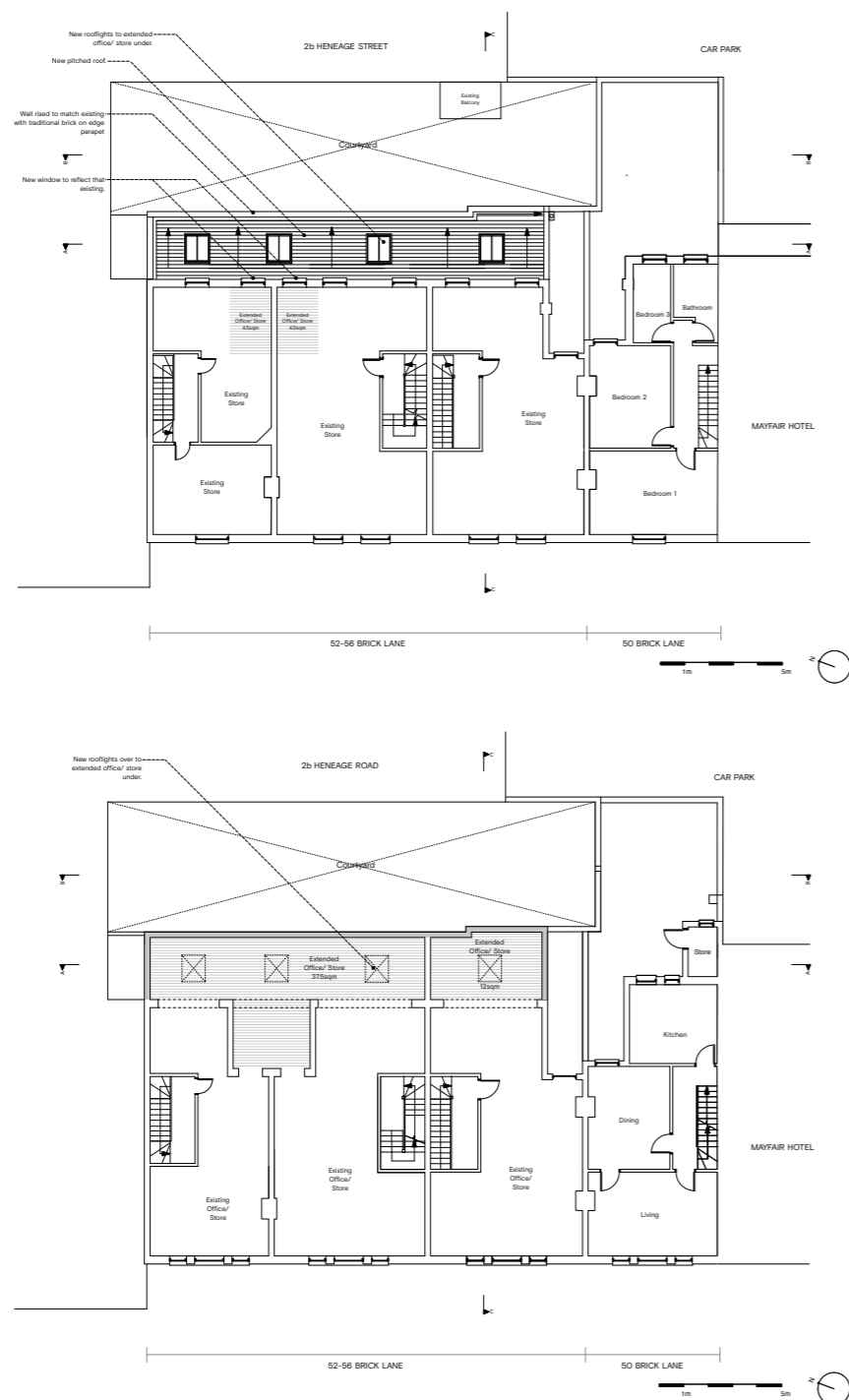


figure 30: Proposed First Floor Plan
figure 31: Proposed Second Floor Plan.

5.04 Materiality

The proposed building will employ materials to match the existing.

The extension to the first floor will replicate the existing materiality of the development and local context with the aim of exhibiting sensitivity to the aesthetic of the conservation area. This will be achieved through selecting brickwork to match, brick on edge parapets and a traditional pitched roof with roof lights.

All new replacement windows will be timber of traditional style.

5.05 Daylighting

Rooflights are proposed to the pitched roof to provide adequate natural daylighting within the extension.

5.06 Overlooking

The flats in the neighbouring building 2b Heneage Street and their associated cantilevered balconies will not be overlooked by the proposed development.

The first-floor extension to the rear removes all windows facing 2b Heneage Street and the rooflights instead provide daylight, which reduces previous overlooking at this level.

The second floor existing windows will remain as existing.

5.07 Impact on Neighbours

The design sought to improve on the previous proposals by reducing the massing further by introducing a pitched roof. This results in a decrease in massing on the previously accepted scheme.

The existing brick wall to the boundary is raised slightly to allow for the new extension and the impact that the increased massing has on daylighting is negligible.

This is demonstrated in the section CC which shows that the extension to the rear is just 1.4m above the height of the existing brick boundary/party wall. This does not impact further that the existing building on 2b Heneage Street, as illustrated by the red dotted line on the section.



figure 32: Proposed materials: brick to match, traditional sash windows and rooflights

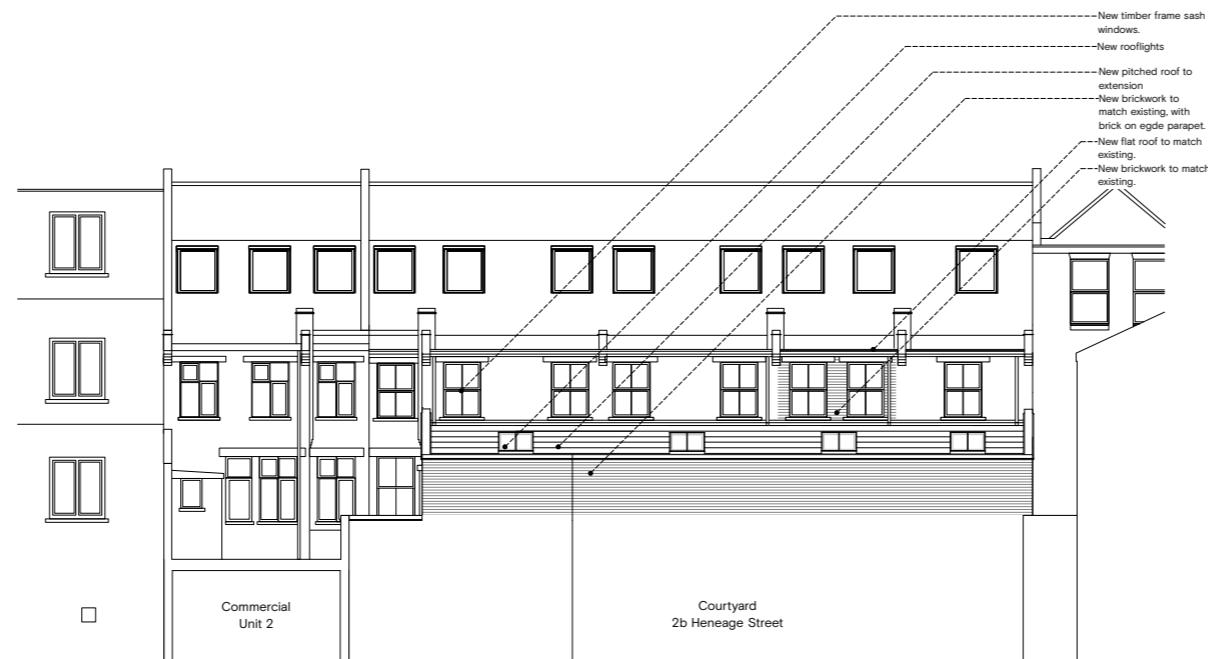


figure 33: Proposed rear elevations.

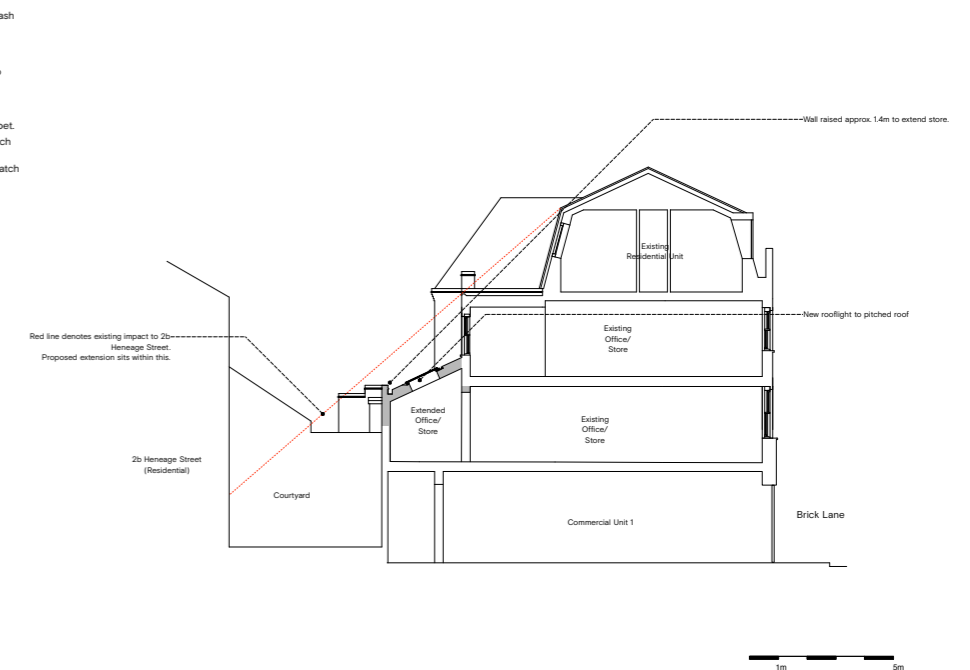


figure 34: Proposed Section

6. SUMMARY

The submitted proposal will create benefits as follows:

- To provide additional commercial space to a long standing business of the Brick Lane community, in Tower Hamlets.
- To save land resources by building within an existing footprint and maximising the space potential of the site.
- To minimise impact on amenity of existing properties
- Rationalise a currently unworkable commercial space

The scale, form, and design of the proposed development is in keeping with the surrounding buildings and will complement the character of the area.