

# DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Rev F

November 2023



## Royal Mail Sorting Office, London NW11 0LS

External Alterations to Building at 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Level to Include the New Window Openings and Installation of Render on Side & Rear Facades Together with Roof Extension at 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor to Provide Office Accommodation (Class E)

## INTRODUCTION

A full planning application is being made by the new owners of the development to regularise a suite of minor alterations previously consented under other consents and also including a consented proposal to form a rooftop extension which would provide office accommodation in place of the previous residential plan in the London Borough of Barnet. The 3 storey building replaced an existing Royal Mail sorting office and provides accommodation for a mixture of uses. This application follows consents granted for conversion of the Ground & 1<sup>st</sup> floors of the same building under an application submitted in 2021 (Ref 21/5452/FUL) and of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor in 2020 (Ref 20/3095/FUL) and formation of the new 3<sup>rd</sup> floor in 2023 (Ref 23/0757/FUL). This Design Statement is appended to the application to explain the relevant planning considerations in its support.



*Aerial photo with plot outlined*

## PROPOSAL

A full planning application is being made for a proposal to form an extension on the flat roof area of a recently built building in Temple Fortune (Ref 17/5013/FUL). The existing 2<sup>nd</sup> floor roof area of 324m<sup>2</sup> would provide the base for a new 3<sup>rd</sup> storey set back from the perimeter on all sides and provide 178m<sup>2</sup> of new office accommodation (Class E). The existing lift, stair core and services risers would be extended to serve the new accommodation.

The building is located on St George's Road just to the west of Finchley Road (A598) at the southern reaches of Temple Fortune approximately 1km north of Golders Green Station with its extensive bus and tube services on the Northern Line of the London Underground. The extensive local shopping of Temple Fortune is located just 400m north up Finchley Road. The site is situated on the boundary between a residential neighbourhood to the West and the mixture of commercial and residential buildings facing the main arterial road. The new owners of the building intend to retain the original use for the development as Class B1/E offices and extend this into the new storey.

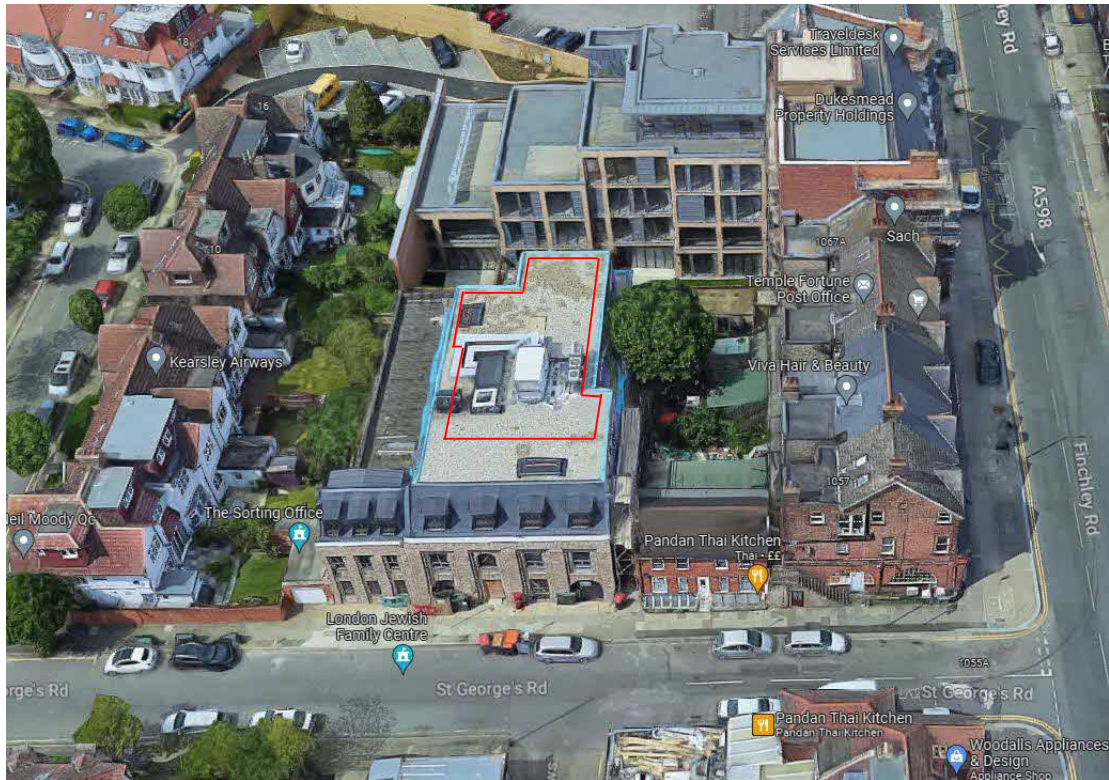


*Existing front elevation to St George's Road*

The 3 primary floors of the building have previously been granted consent for change of use to provide C3 residential accommodation with only minimal external alterations. Multiple window openings, particularly to the South, East & West, combine with an existing courtyard on the north side and rooflights on a flat roof to the West provided abundant natural light to the spaces. Privacy to existing neighbours was assured through careful placement of any new overlooking windows set at high level or fitted with obscured glass up to 1.6m above floor level. The existing lobby provides access to the building's main central circulation core which includes a lift and a ventilated staircase which can be readily extended to the new occupiers at third floor level.



*View of front elevation to St George's Road from West with neighbouring 5 storey scheme to North*

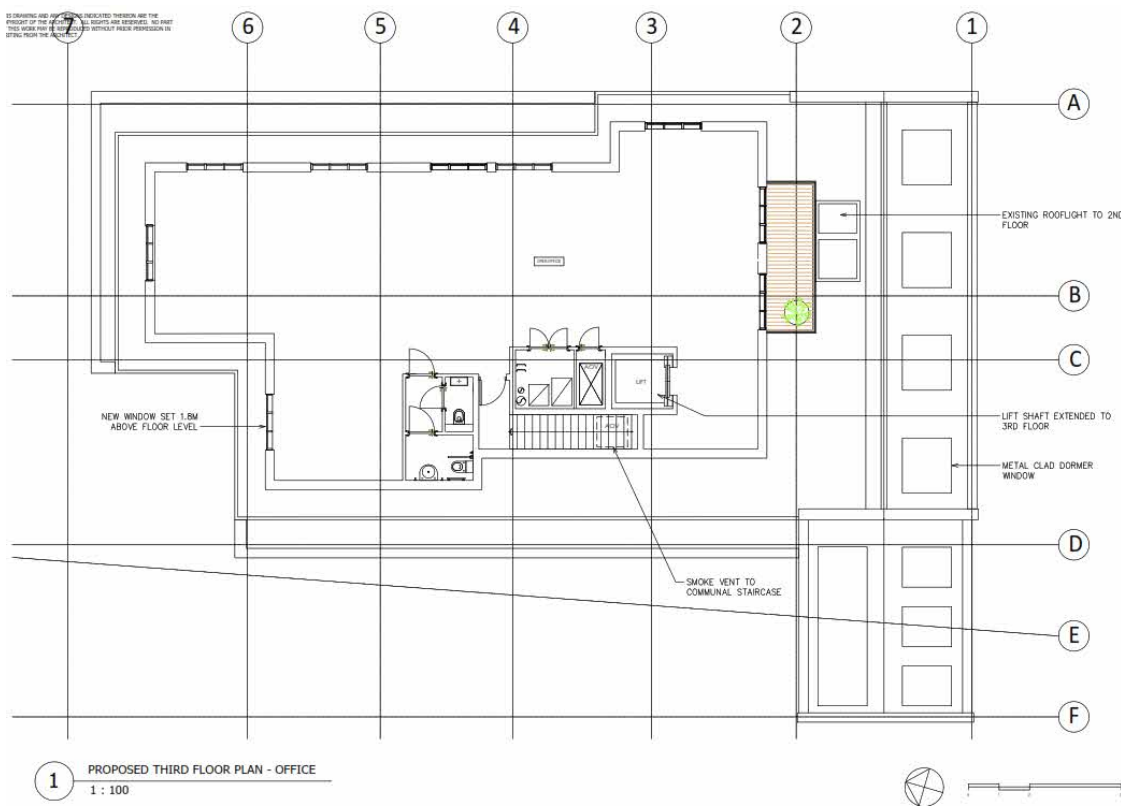
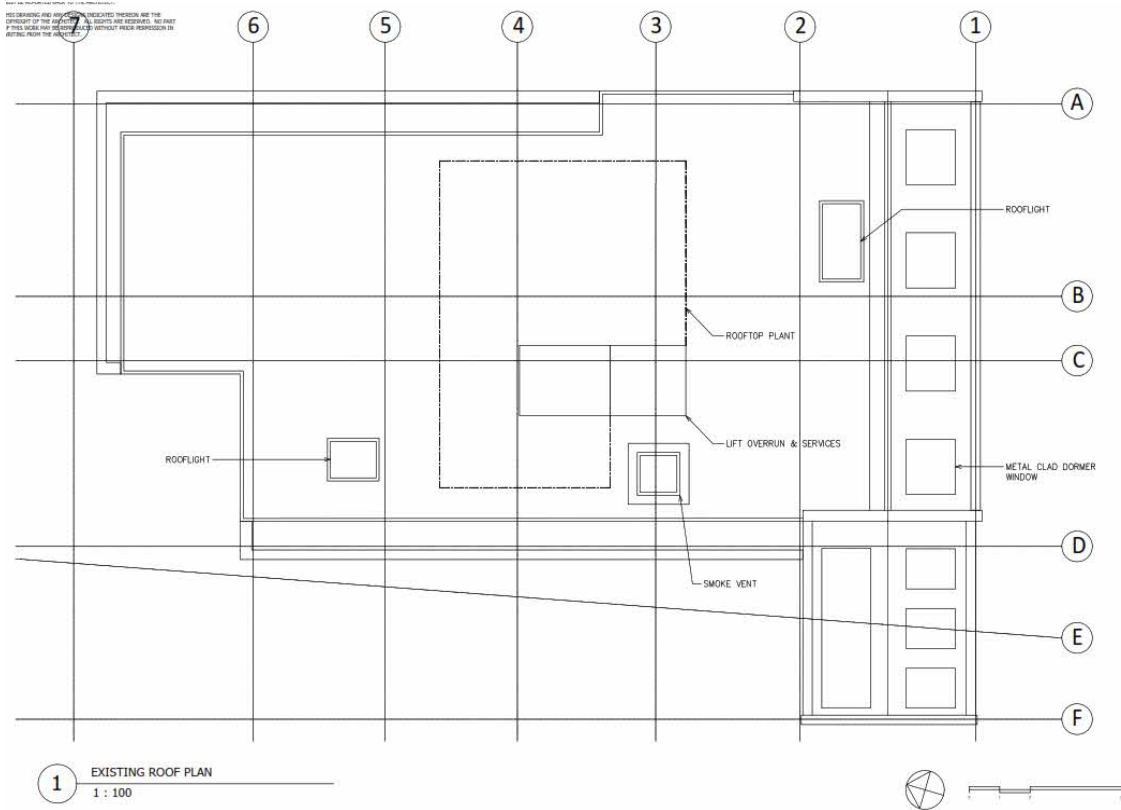


*Aerial view with 3<sup>rd</sup> floor extension footprint shown in red*

The existing Sorting Office building must be considered in the context of neighbouring structures including the grand parade forming 1057-1067 Finchley Road to the East of the site which are 3 stories with steeply pitched roofs and The Templars, a recently completed residential scheme set behind the old Finchley Road police station providing 9 flats in a block rising to 5 stories immediately to the North. The main block of the Sorting Office incorporates significant setbacks to its western and northern sides so that the main flat roof rises 6.6Metres away from the shared boundary with the dwellings of Temple Gardens. The main elevation facing St George's Road features a primary 2 storey brick façade with a pitched roof and dormer windows. The western end of this façade has a gable faced end elevation adjoining the boundary and serves to obscure the main flank elevation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor beyond as it would the proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> floor extension sited above. The mass of the new storey would itself be set back from the perimeter of the main flat roof: by 1Metre to the North and East, by 4Metres to the South (St George's Road) and by between 1-2Metres to the West. These setbacks would ensure minimal visual impact on both the street scene and neighbours while ensuring light and views would be protected. Similar to the previous consents granted in the block, the accommodation would be restricted to views facing East and South with no windows facing West and only 2 high level openings facing North.

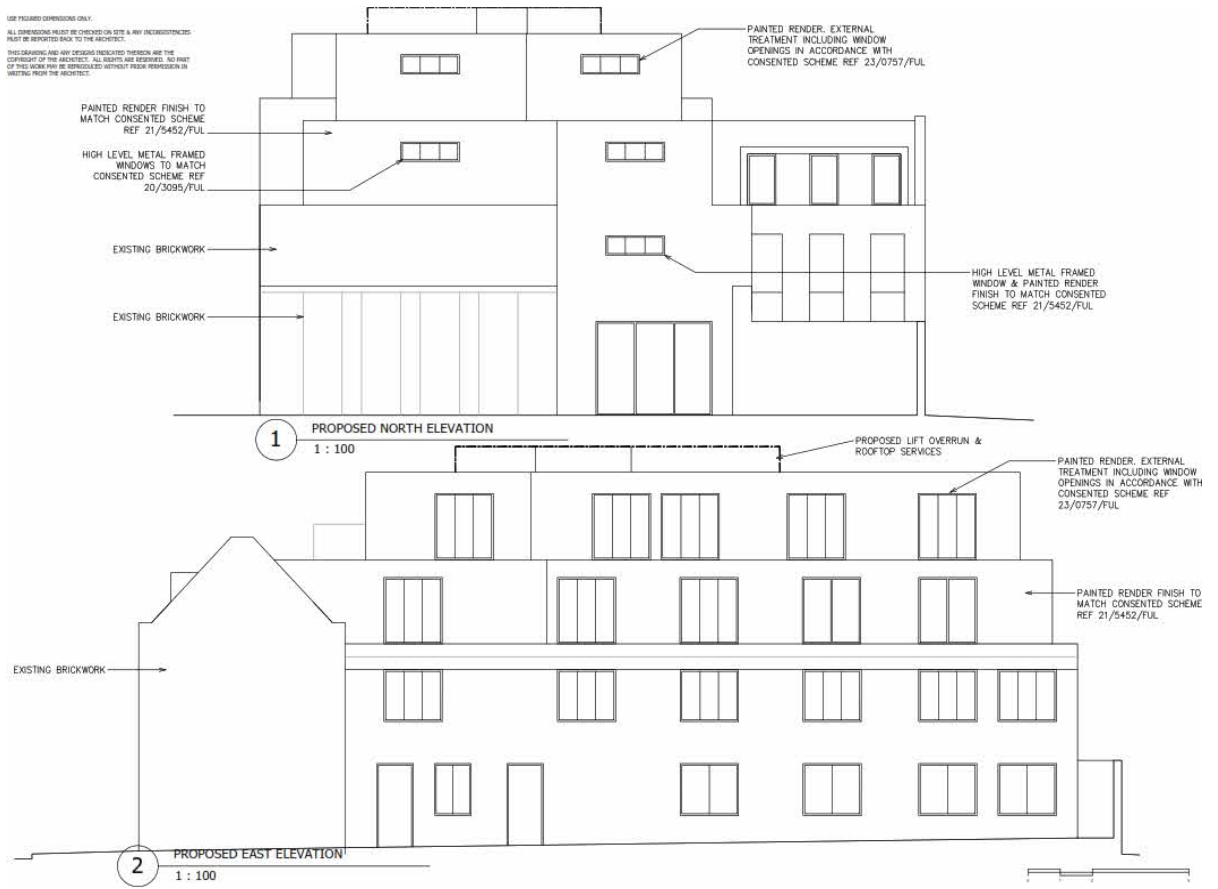
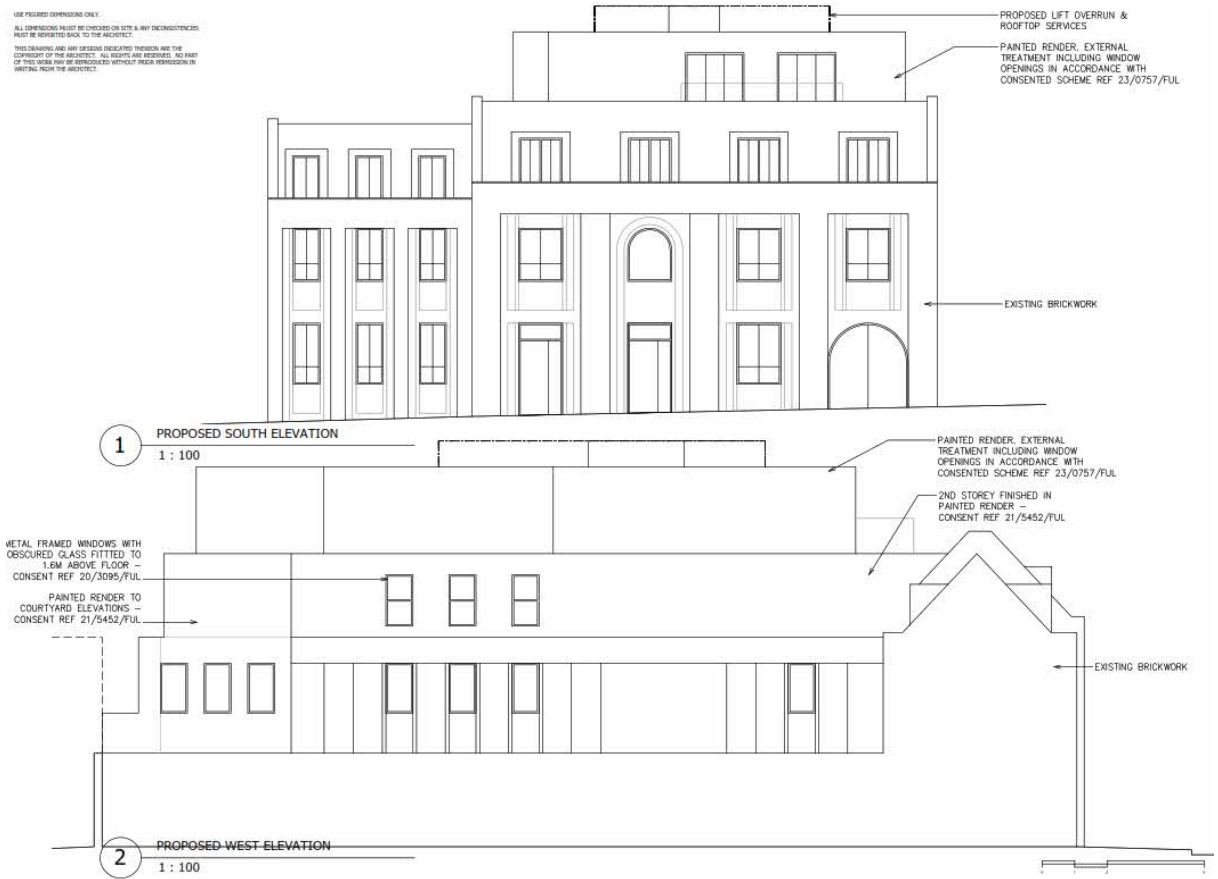


*Views of neighbouring development to the North, The Templars*

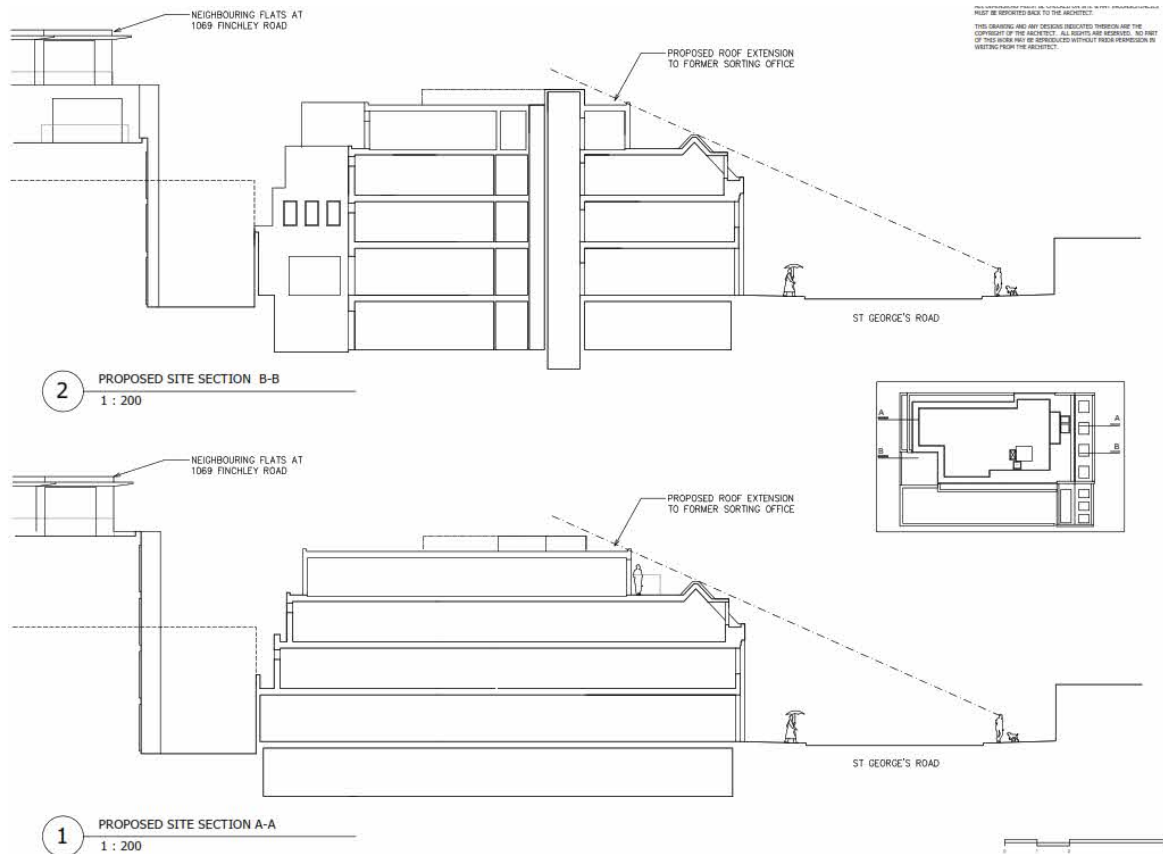


Plans of existing roof & proposed layouts for 3<sup>rd</sup> floor offices

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*The new windows included in the current application match those of the consented schemes*



*Site sections illustrating impact of 3<sup>rd</sup> floor extension*

## PREVIOUS PLANNING

The current planning application combines alterations and the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor extension previously consented through a series of applications:

Ref 20/3095/FUL – 3 No. windows at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor on the West Elevation partially fitted with obscure glazing; 2 high level windows at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor on the North Elev  
 Ref 21/5452/FUL – 1 No. high level window on the North Elevation at 1<sup>st</sup> floor; external finish to portions of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor elevations and courtyard amended to painted render

Ref 23/0757/FUL – 3<sup>rd</sup> floor extension set back to all sides with windows to South (2 No.), East (5 No.) & North (2 No.) Elevations; exterior finished in painted render to match 2<sup>nd</sup> floor approved at consent Ref 21/5452/FUL

The first two of these consents included change of use of the existing accommodation from B1/E to C3 residential while the third consent proposed the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor extension to provide additional C3 residential. Since these consents were granted, the property has been transferred to new owners who intend to retain the B1/E use originally granted for the upper parts of the building. The current application will allow the alterations and extension to be assembled into a single consent with the retained B1/E use.

The alterations to the ground, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> floors are identical to those previously granted consent under the applications referenced above. The proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> floor extension maintains the footprint, height and window position, size, style and colour of the scheme recently granted consent. The potential impact of both the alterations and extension have been carefully considered within the previous applications to provide no unacceptable impacts on either the visual context or on the privacy, outlook and light of neighbouring properties. As such the design proposals in this application should be deemed acceptable based on the Council's prior considerations.

## **ACCESS STATEMENT**

The existing development's internal and external spaces have been planned and detailed to take into account the needs of all users and to comply with Building Regulations. The Lift and staircase, internal space standards, lighting, fittings and sanitary accommodation will comply with Part M of the Building Regulations & relevant environmental standards. Suitable complying lighting and electrics will be provided.