

HERITAGE AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

3 Well Street
Buckinghamham
MK18 1EW



Prepared: April 2024

Introduction

This statement has been prepared to support the application for minor internal alterations to 3 Well Street, Buckingham to accommodate office space to the first floor for an Architectural Practice, and a ballet studio / shop to the ground floor.

3 Well Street was originally built in 1726 as a Presbyterian Chapel. The property later became a garage in the 1960s and was subsequently converted into a restaurant. The site opened as the restaurant, The Garage, in 2017 but closed in 2020. It later reopened under new operators in January 2022 but only traded for 18 months before it closed again. Since then the property has been vacant.

The proposed use as an office and dance studio/shop would comprise as 2 Class E uses. As the site is currently Class E, change of use is not required, therefore this application is for the approval of the internal alterations from a Heritage perspective only.

This has been written by Andy Ward of AW Architectural Design Ltd, who is also the applicant.

Location

The site is located in the town of Buckingham, in the administrative district of Aylesbury Vale District Council. The National Grid Reference is SP 69599 33866 (Fig 1).

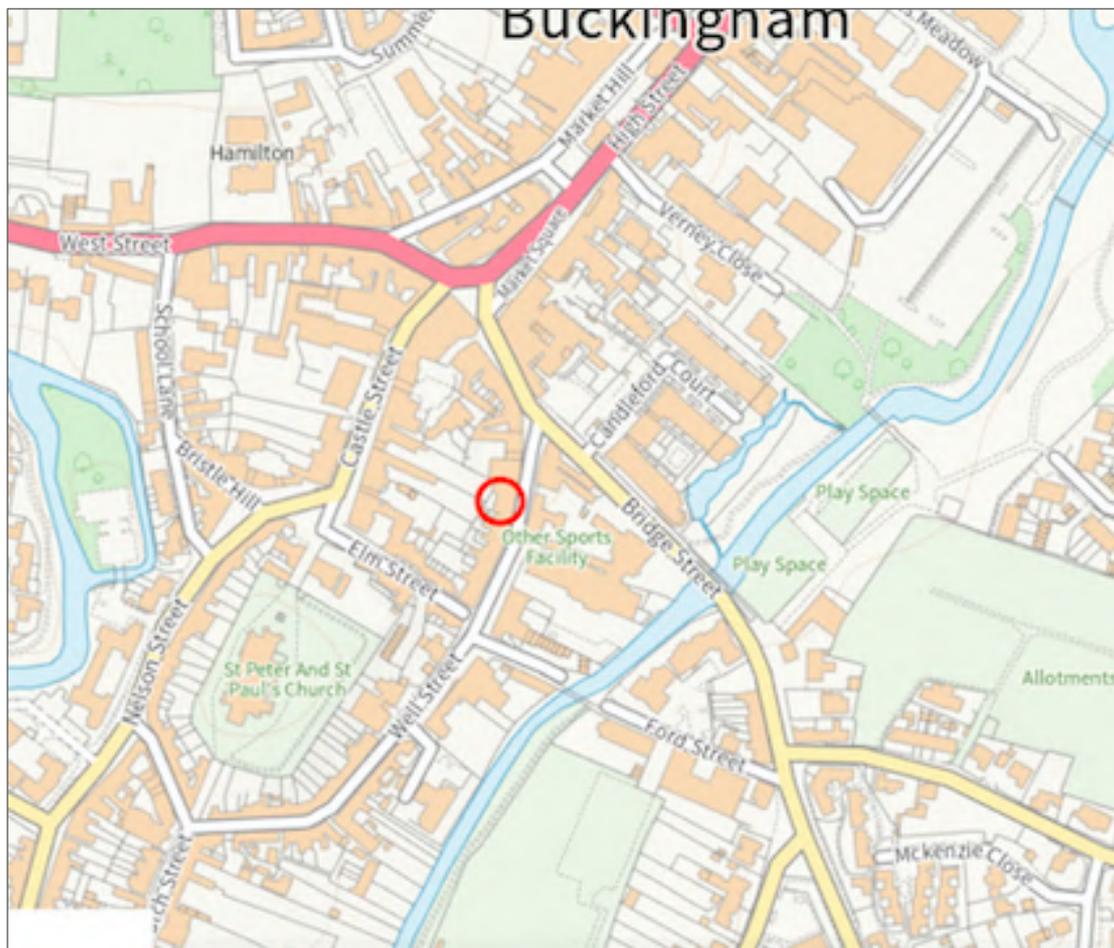


Figure 1: General Location

Site

3 Well Street is a 2 storey building. The ground floor is 150m². The first floor is 125m². Making the total GIA 275m². The property has no external space.

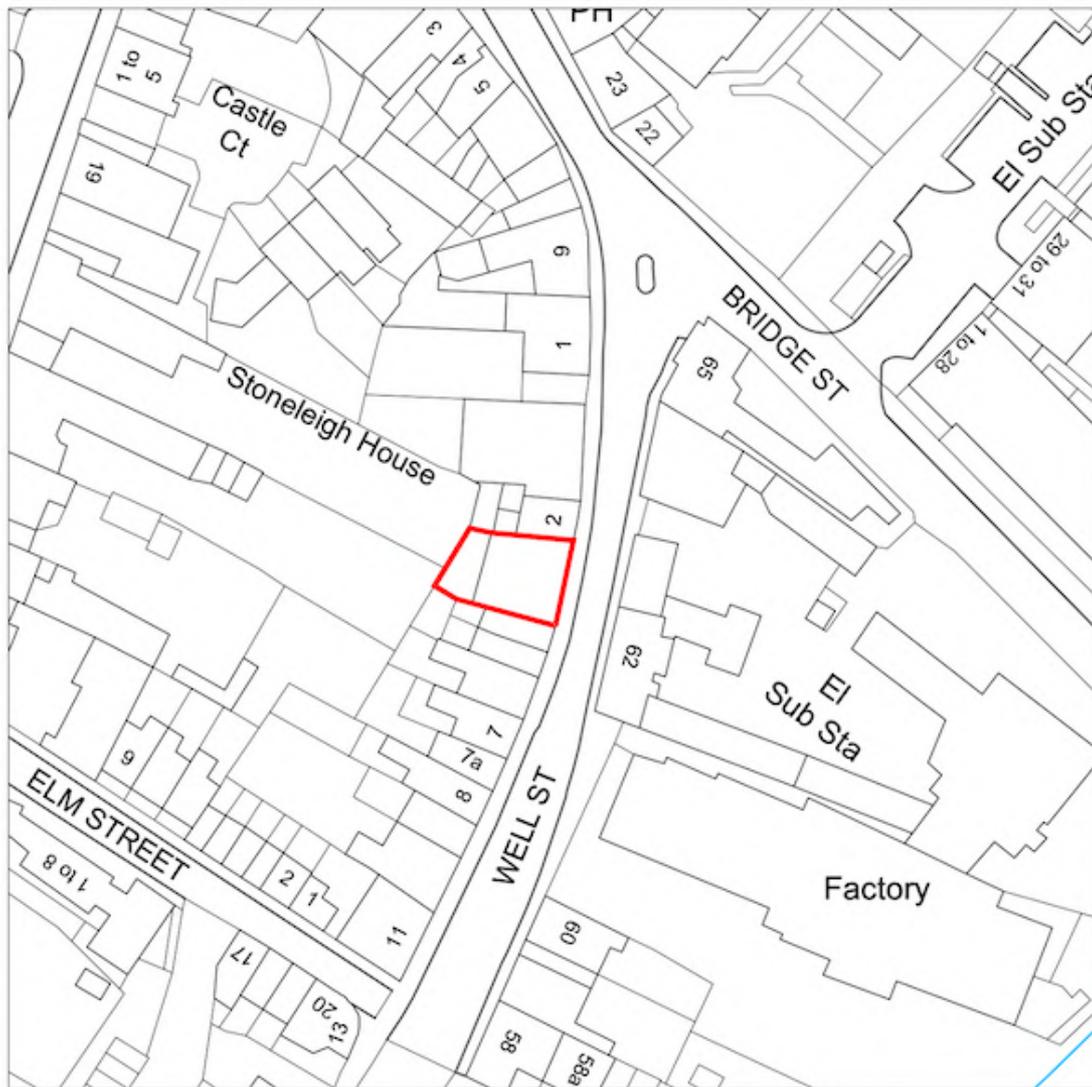


Figure 2: Location Plan

Exterior

The proposed works have no impact to the external fabric of the building.

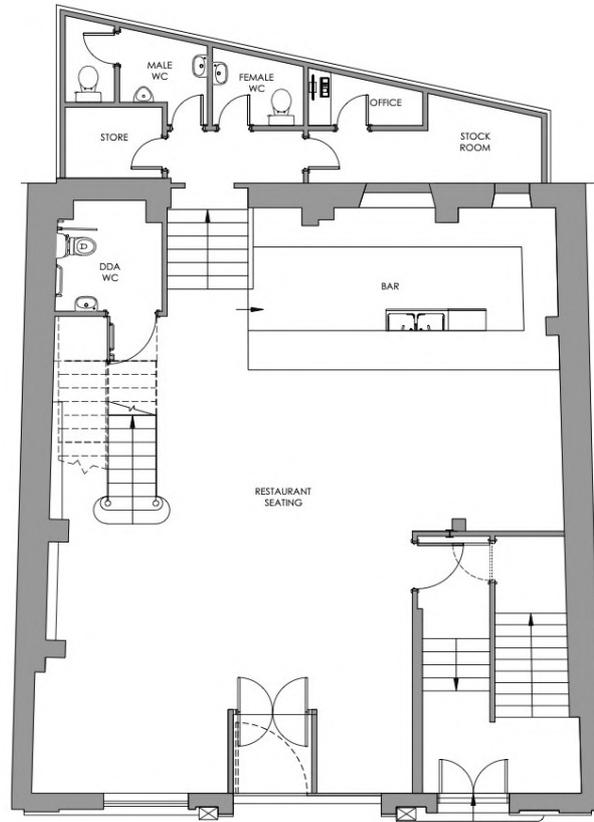
Layout

Following the most recent works carried out to convert the building into a restaurant, the ground floor comprises of a bar, restaurant seating & accessible customer toilet in the main area. To the rear of the ground floor is a raised area that was an external yard which was extended into as part of the conversion works to form an office, customer toilets and stock room.

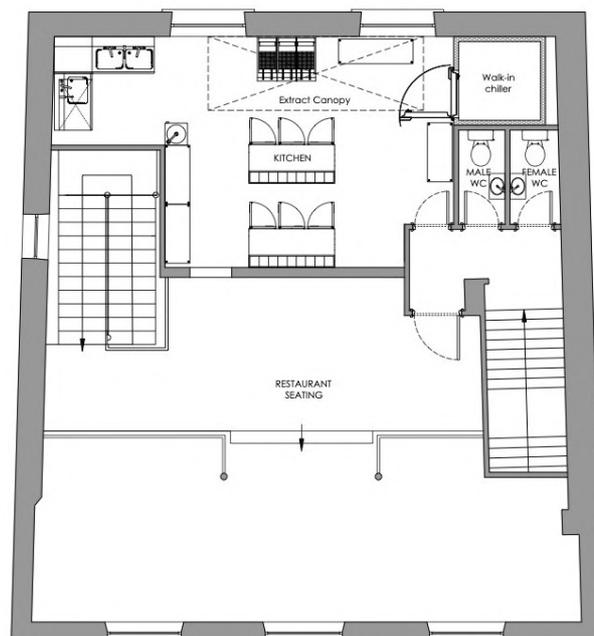
There is a historic staircase that is accessed from both the main area via a lobby and a secondary pair of external doors that front Well Street.

There is an additional open staircase situated in the main open space that was installed as part of the conversion works providing a secondary customer link between the ground and first floor. On the half landing of this staircase is access to a plant room that has been formed above the accessible customer toilet.

The first floor comprises of additional restaurant seating, male and female toilets and the commercial kitchen. The customer toilets and staircase lobby are formed in an enclosed structure to create the required fire compartmentation for means of escape. Due to the vast ceiling height and extravagant roof structure, the walls to form the enclosure are built up to 2.4m with a lid. The seating and kitchen remain open plan with a dividing 2.1m high wall separating the spaces.



01 GROUND FLOOR
1:50



02 FIRST FLOOR
1:50

Figure 3: Existing Plans

Conservation Areas, Archaeological Notification Areas & Scheduled Ancient Monuments

The site is located within the Conservation Area of Buckingham however is not part of an Archaeological Notification Area, nor is it a Scheduled Monument.

Listed Buildings

The site is a Grade II listed building (National Heritage List for England entry number: 1205288), which is described as follows:

Formerly known as: No.3 Meeting House of Plymouth Brethren WELL STREET. Nonconformist chapel, formerly meeting house, now garage. Built 1726, enlarged early C19 and altered C20. Red brick in Flemish bond with limestone dressings to front, body of coursed limestone rubble, and hipped plain-tile roofs concealed by parapet to front. Rectangular plan. 2-storey, 3-window front. Wide central C20 garage entrance with double-leaf doors, flanked by windows with round-arched heads and raised stone surrounds with impost. Small, leaded panes to heads in fanlight pattern. C20 three-light window below stepped stone sill of window to left. Sill of window to right has been cut by C20 glazed door, approached by 3 stone steps. Windows to 1st floor have small, leaded panes, raised stone surrounds with segmental-arched heads with key blocks and stepped stone sills. Partly rendered coursed squared limestone plinth. Central bay breaks forward slightly and has stepped stone 1st-floor string course; full-height brick pilaster strips either end. Hollow-chamfered stone cornice and stone-coped parapet. INTERIOR: now divided horizontally with floor incorporating remains of gallery round 3 sides. Early C19 former gallery staircases to front corners. Roof structure of original core survives complete. Front was brought forward 10ft in early C19 alterations, probably reusing earlier dressings in new front. Built for a Presbyterian, afterwards Independent congregation formed c1700. Last used as a meeting house by Plymouth Brethren who met on upper floor. (RCHME: Stell C: Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels & Meeting-houses in C England: HMSO London: 1986-: 6)..

Heritage and Planning

The AVDC Local Plan contains the following heritage-related clauses:

4.143 There are over 2,800 buildings, bridges, statues and other structures in the District contained in Lists of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Of these listed buildings over 200 are recorded as Grades I or II* and the remainder as Grade II. Buildings in Aylesbury were last surveyed in 1973. Those in Buckingham were surveyed in 1994 and lists for the remaining parishes were revised between 1981 and 1985.

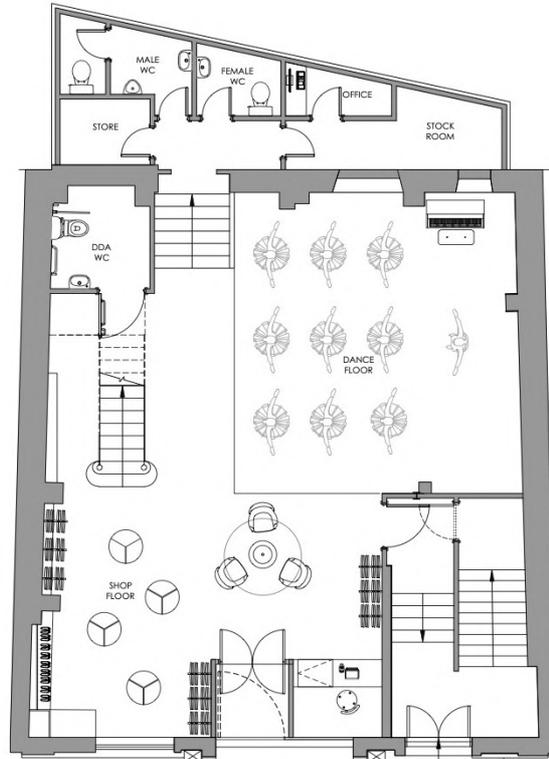
4.144 The objective of listing buildings is to ensure their protection. The Council has a statutory duty to have a special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses. Listed building consent is required for all works that would affect a building's special interest including internal work.

4.146 Many listed buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration or extension without loss of their special interest. Cumulative changes reflecting the history of use and ownership are themselves an aspect of the character of some buildings, but in some cases successive works of indifferent quality can cumulatively be very destructive of a building's special interest. Alterations, even of a minor nature must respect the individual characteristics of the building and ensure the survival of as much historic fabric as is practical. Modern extensions should not dominate the existing building in scale, material or situation, and, in some cases, any extension would be damaging.

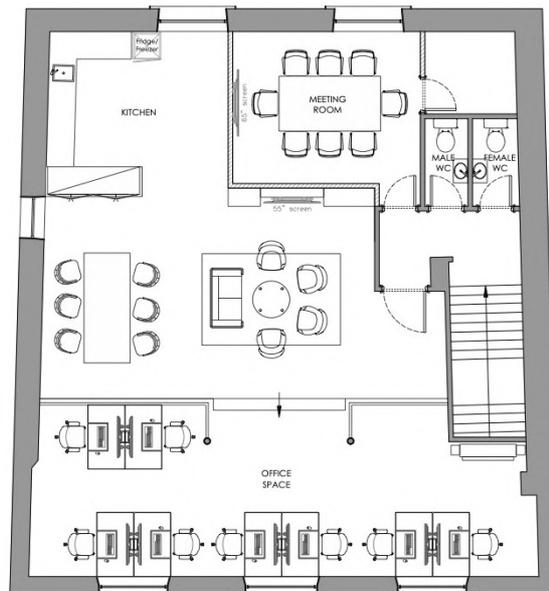
4.147 The objective of listing buildings is to ensure their protection and this is best achieved by retaining them in their original form. However the demolition of inappropriate extensions to a listed building may be permitted, provided the retained section of the building is made good.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for minor internal alterations to adapt the ground floor to facilitate a retail shop and dance floor for a ballet studio, and to create an open plan office with separate meeting room on the first floor for an architectural practice.



01 GROUND FLOOR
1:50



02 FIRST FLOOR
1:50

Figure 4: Proposed Plans

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED WORKS

Ground Floor:

1. Removal of bar and raised floor.
2. Modifications to modern staircase.

First Floor:

3. Removal of stud partitioning.
4. Construction of new meeting room.

Ground Floor

Removal of bar and raised floor.

The bar that was installed as part of the restaurant development sits on a raised timber floor that houses the services and drainage. The bar and raised floor is not part of the original asset and its removal will have no impact on the historical significance of the property.



Figure 5: Existing bar and raised floor

Staircase Modifications.

The modern staircase between ground and first floor will no longer be required as part of the proposal. It is therefore proposed to remove the upper flight of stairs and infill the opening within the floor between the two levels.

The lower rise of the staircase will be retained up to the half landing to maintain access to the plant room. A new steel balustrade to match the existing is to be installed to enclose the half landing.

The staircase is of steel construction which is bolted together, meaning the top flight to be removed can easily be unbolted with minimal disruption.

This staircase is a modern addition to the property and its modifications will have no impact to the significance of the original listed asset.



Figure 6: Existing Staircase



Figure 7: Section to be removed.

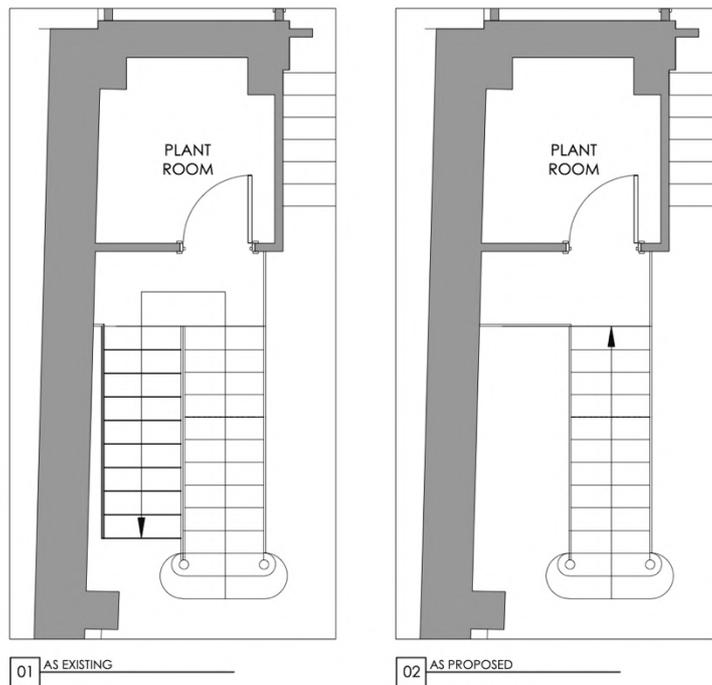


Figure 8: Existing & Proposed Stairs

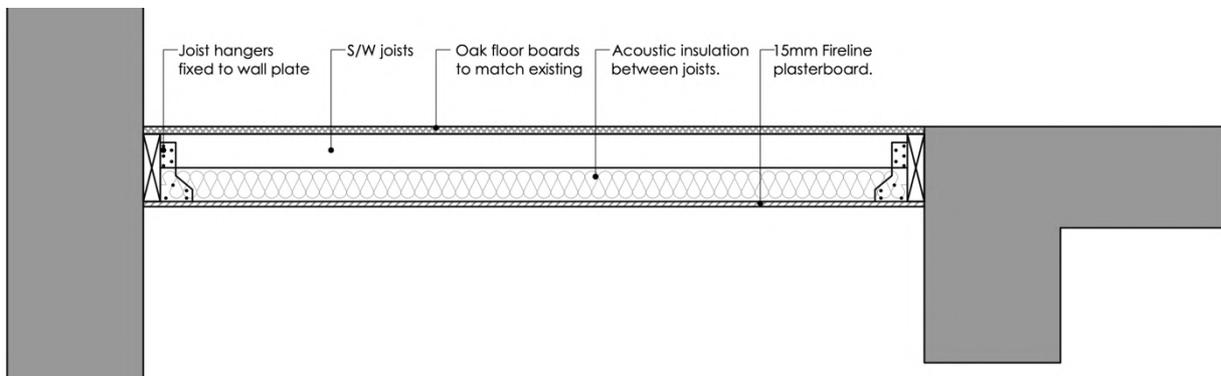


Figure 9: Detail of stairwell infill

FIRST FLOOR

Dividing Wall

The mid height dividing wall between the restaurant seating area and commercial kitchen is proposed to be removed. The partition wall is studwork with plasterboard finish built up to 2.1m off FFL. The wall was constructed as part of the conversion works of the property into a restaurant.

This wall has no significance to the original asset.

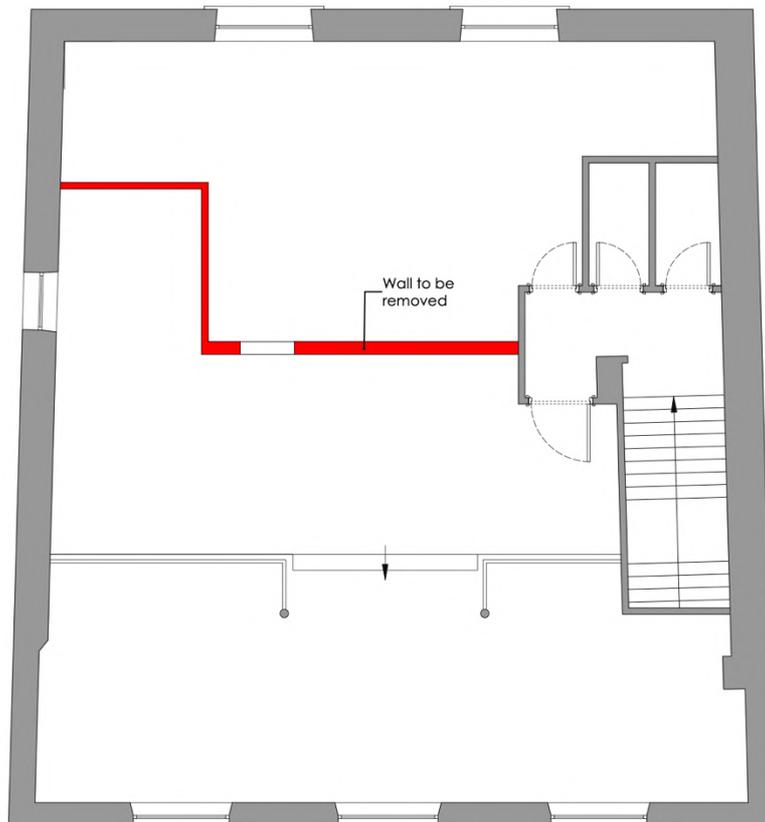


Figure 10: Wall to be removed

Meeting Room

A private meeting room is proposed in the first floor office space. It is proposed for the room to be formed of stud partitioning with plasterboard finish with a 'lid' at 2.4m to match the construction of the staircase and WC lobby. Matching the construction of the existing lobby and WC ensures the visibility of the extravagant roof structure is not hindered, yet provides the required privacy for the room.

The formed partitioning will be independent to the original structure, thus having no impact on the original building.

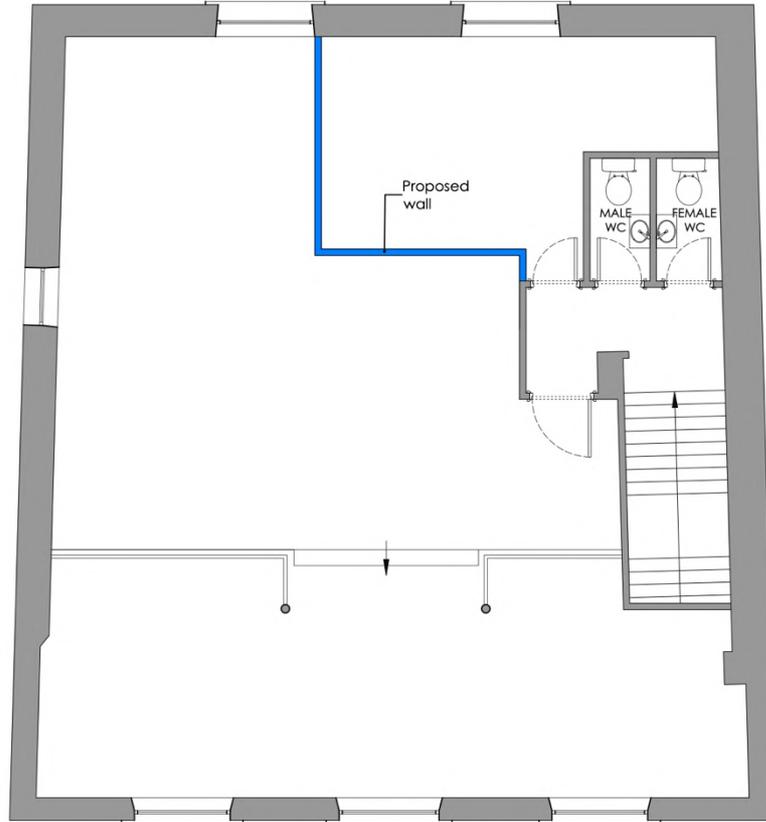


Figure 11: Proposed Meeting Room

ACCESS

The main central entrance doors off Well Street will serve as access to the ground floor ballet shop/studio whilst the double door to the right hand side of the principle elevation will serve as access to the first floor office. No modification to the existing access are therefore required.

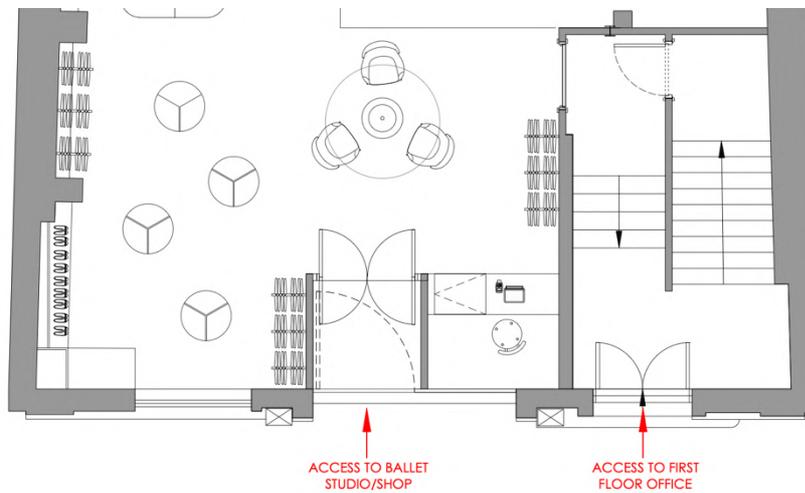


Figure 12: Proposed Access

LAYOUT

The layout of the ground floor will remain as existing with the main open plan space kept as is for the shop area and dance floor, whilst the customer toilets, office and store room also remaining in their current form. The layout of the first floor is also open plan with the addition of the private meeting room with the male and female toilets and historic staircase remaining as existing.

CONCLUSION

The renovation works carried out to 3 Well Street were done to a very high standard leaving the original asset in very good condition. Sadly the use of the property as a restaurant has not been successful leaving the unit vacant. The proposed works are essentially modifications / removal of the modern elements that were added to the property within the last 10 years.

The proposal bears no permanent impact to the property and gives the building a new lease of life for the use of occupants who appreciate its significance which can only be seen as a positive for 3 Well Street.

APPENDIX

Ground Floor



First Floor

