

69 St John Street, Clerkenwell, London
Historic Asset Assessment

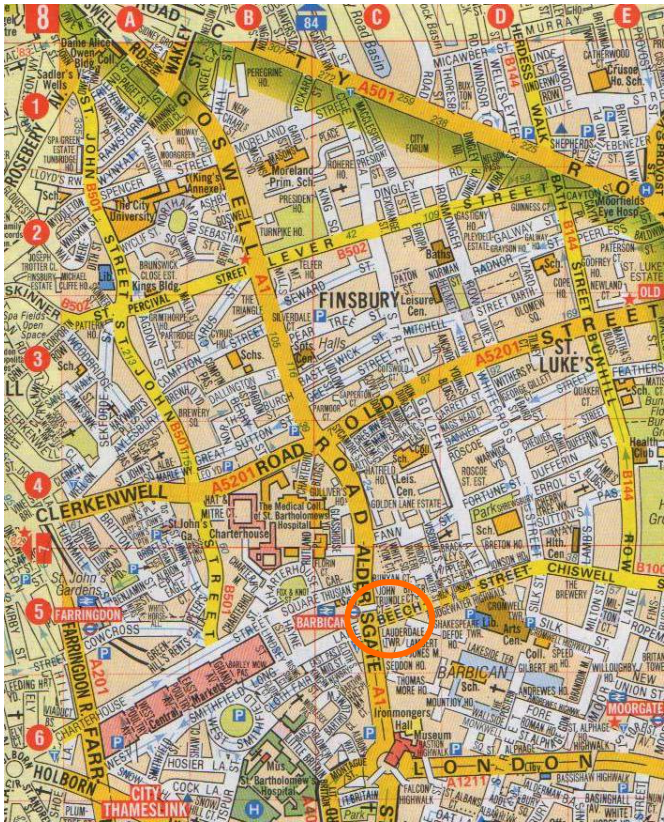
Paul Edwards, Historic Environment Specialist, London and Suffolk February 2015

69 St John Street, Islington
Historic Asset Assessment (Version 1)
Paul Edwards, Dip Arch (Oxford) IHBC
Historic Environment Specialist

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Location Plan

Introduction

Location

National Grid Reference—NGR: TQ3178581987
No 169 St John Street is situated on the west side of the Street which runs north-south from the Angel, Islington to Smithfield. St John's Lane commences at the bifurcation of St John's Street close to its southern end where a short distance to north, No 69 is located between the Street and the Lane.

Seen from the Street, No 69 is on the left of a

group with a dark blue painted stucco shop front, with a gault brick second and third storey, five windows in width. The two second floor, and two attic windows to left belong to No 69. (See photograph on front cover)

Purpose

This report has been written to inform and support a conservation area and listed building consent application for detailed changes to be made to the fabric of No 69 to improve amenities and increase space at attic floor level.

The report has been written for
C K Barlop Esq, 69 St John Street, Clerkenwell

Planning Context

In March 2012 the government withdrew all previous advice on planning and listed consent, replacing Planning Policy Statement 5 Planning for the historic Environment PPS5 with a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Section 12 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment and at paragraph 126 requires that local planning authorities should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Relevant to these proposals, the NPPF directs the authorities when developing the above strategy to take into account tThe desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation



Braun & Hogenburgh map of the northern edge of the City of London in 1572

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The NPPF states at paragraph 128 that

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution made to their setting".

A clear understanding of the architectural and historic significance of a heritage asset and the contribution made by its surroundings is essential to enable owners and local planning authorities to make informed choices when selecting the least damaging interventions made when planning made when planning a new viable uses".

Designations

No 69 St John Street is situated within the Clerkenwell Green Conservation Area. Details of its special character are set out in the Council's conservation area guidance 'CA ONE, CA NINE, CA TWENTYSIX for CLERKENWELL GREEN, CHARTERHOUSE SQUARE AND HAT AND FEATHERS.

Guidance is given in paragraphs 1.1-1.4 on the special character and appearance of the conservation area; in paragraphs 1.5 -1.14, on land use'; in paragraphs 1.15-1.19 on control over demolition, in 1.20 - 1.39 on new development (including policies on height and roof extensions); in 1.40 - 1.32 on environmental improvements in 1.32-1.34 on materials, and the street scene in paragraphs 1.34 - 1.36

St John Street is included in Schedule 1.1 which encourages the provision of new residential floor space; in Schedule 1.2, buildings that should be retained and No 72 St John Street is included in Schedule 1.3, list of shop fronts which should be retained.

Nos 69,71 and 73 St John Street are listed Grade II under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, for their special architectural or historic interest List Entry No 1195730. (See list description in appendix 1

Drawings

This report should be read in conjunction with the following drawings by JAA Studio.Co.UK, 193 Fellows Court, London E2 8LQ

Drawing 69 St John Street. 1st Floor Plan: Existing & Proposed

2nd Floor Plan: Existing & Proposed

3rd Floor Plan: Existing & Proposed
Front Elevations: Existing & Proposed

Author

The author of this report is Paul Edwards Dip arch(Oxford) IHBC. For 10 years he was inspector of Historic Buildings working from Savile Row in the Eastern Region of English Heritage dealing with major projects concerning listed buildings and conservation areas in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire & Essex. Prior to this he had been Director of the Suffolk County branch of CPRE (Council for the Protection of Rural England).

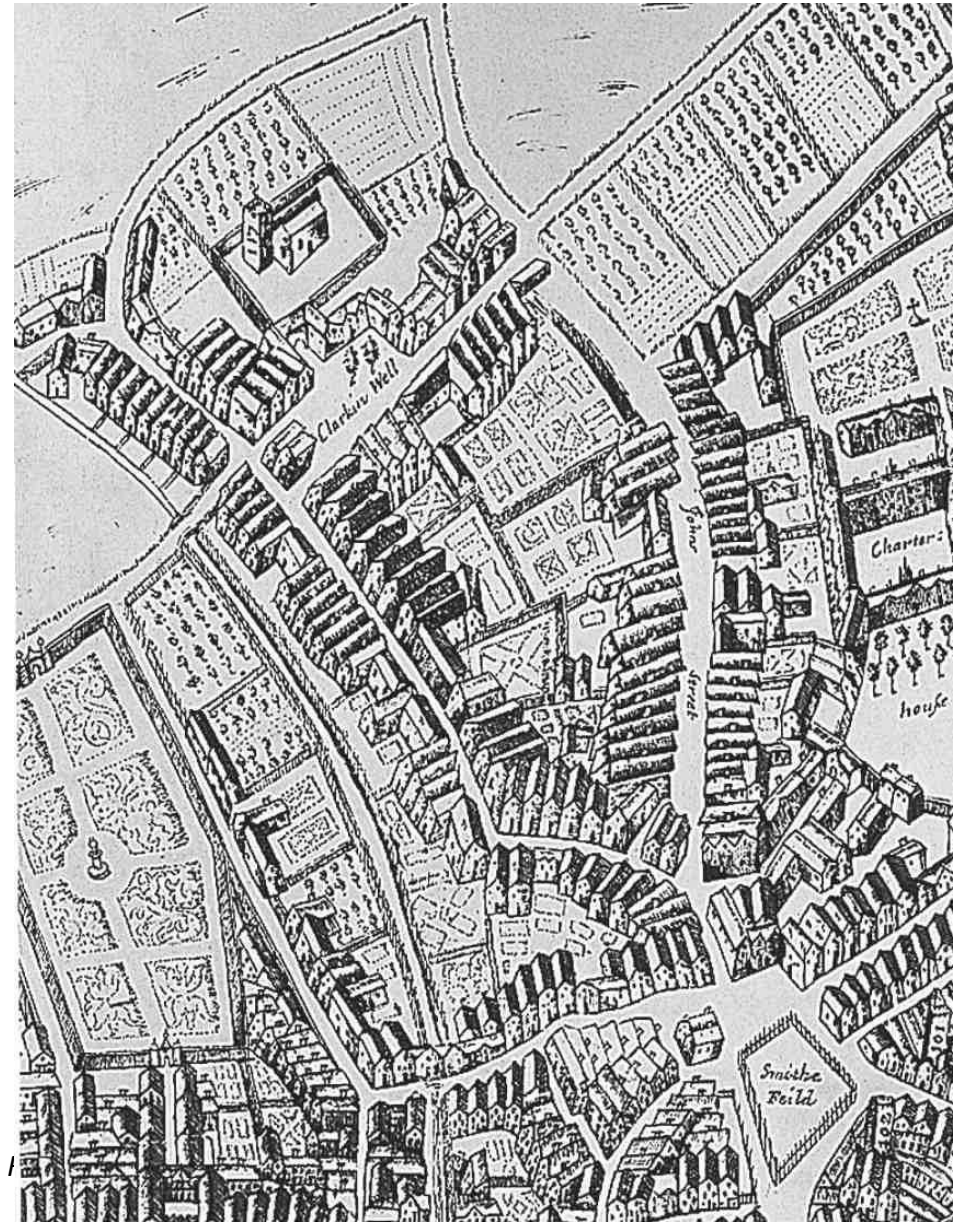
He was conservation officer for the County of Norfolk and for ten years between 1971 and 1982 was a registered architect, a member of the RIBA and a principal in Private Architectural practice specializing in the repair and alteration of historic buildings.

History Medieval

St John Road runs between Islington and Smithfield; It was an ancient thoroughfare used by drovers en route to the meat market in Smithfield and known to have been extant in the early 13th-century. Perhaps the topography here favoured monastic establishments with their requirement for water and good drainage, for there were four such houses in the area, two on each side of the road. To the south-west was St Mary's Nunnery, to south-east, the priory and hospital of St Bartholomew's, to north-east was the Charter House, and to north-west, St John's Priory of the Knights Hospitalier after whom the street was named. It was not until after the Dissolution of the Monasteries and when the Crown had sold the monastic lands, that the area was developed, though by 1555 it was said to have been replete. Contemporary maps show the development of the area, and some detail of their growth and form.

Braun & Hogenburgh map of the northern edge of the City of London in 1572 (p.3) shows St John Road commencing at its southern end from Smythe Field, lined each side by a narrow band of buildings and the precinct walls of the former St John's Priory and the Charterhouse before exiting the north edge of the map through field and in pasture. The buildings appear as having a single width plan aligned with the street, and with gabled cross wings.

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17th-century

Fairthorn & Newcourts map of 1658 (page 5) shows St John Road lined by buildings set end on to the road, with double pitched roofs, closely abutting along their lengths and displaying their gabled end walls towards the street. The etching (illus) depicts sixteenth century houses on the site of Nos 69-73, St John Street, prior to demolition in 1814. They are thought to have been part of the mansion of Sir Thomas Forster on St John's Lane)

The buildings were constructed gable end to the street and 69 and 71 have two storeys and attics and appear similar in form to the buildings depicted on Faircourt & Newby's map. They were timber-framed with rendered walls with moulded plat bands at second floor level and gabled plain tile roofs. Nos 69 and 71 had canted weather boarded two storey bay windows with sash and casement windows. At ground floor level there were shops, that of a cabinet maker to left and a coal merchant to right. The whole of the ground storey of 69 and 71 was open to the street, with a classical arcade and entablature.

No 73 was of three storeys though without an attic storey, and of a lesser scale. It had stucco plat bands at each floor level.

John Rocque's map was drawn in 1746 and depicts a heavily built up townscape, with numerous courts and alleys. It depicts the west end of Georges Court joining St John's Lane close to the subject site in St John Street and acts as a datum for the site on subsequent maps. Here a garden is depicted within the built up area off St John's Lane.



16th-century houses on the site of Nos 69-73 recorded before demolition in 1814



Houses and shops at the lower end of St John Street, Tallis, London Street Views 1838-40

19th-century

James Tyrer's map of Clerkenwell was drawn in 1805 and shows the relationship between St John's Gate in St John's Lane and the subject site. Nos 69-73 are depicted in Tallis London Street View, drawn 1838-1840, towards the right hand end of the top strip. (illus). There were three bays; at the centre an alley leading to an internal yard flanked by buildings of three storeys and attics, each with two windows each side of the alley. The facades had classical Georgian or Regency proportions, with tall sash windows at 1st and second floor levels and continuous small pane shop windows at ground floor level. A gambrel roof was set behind an eaves parapet.

The northern house was leased by John Newton a cork manufacturer,

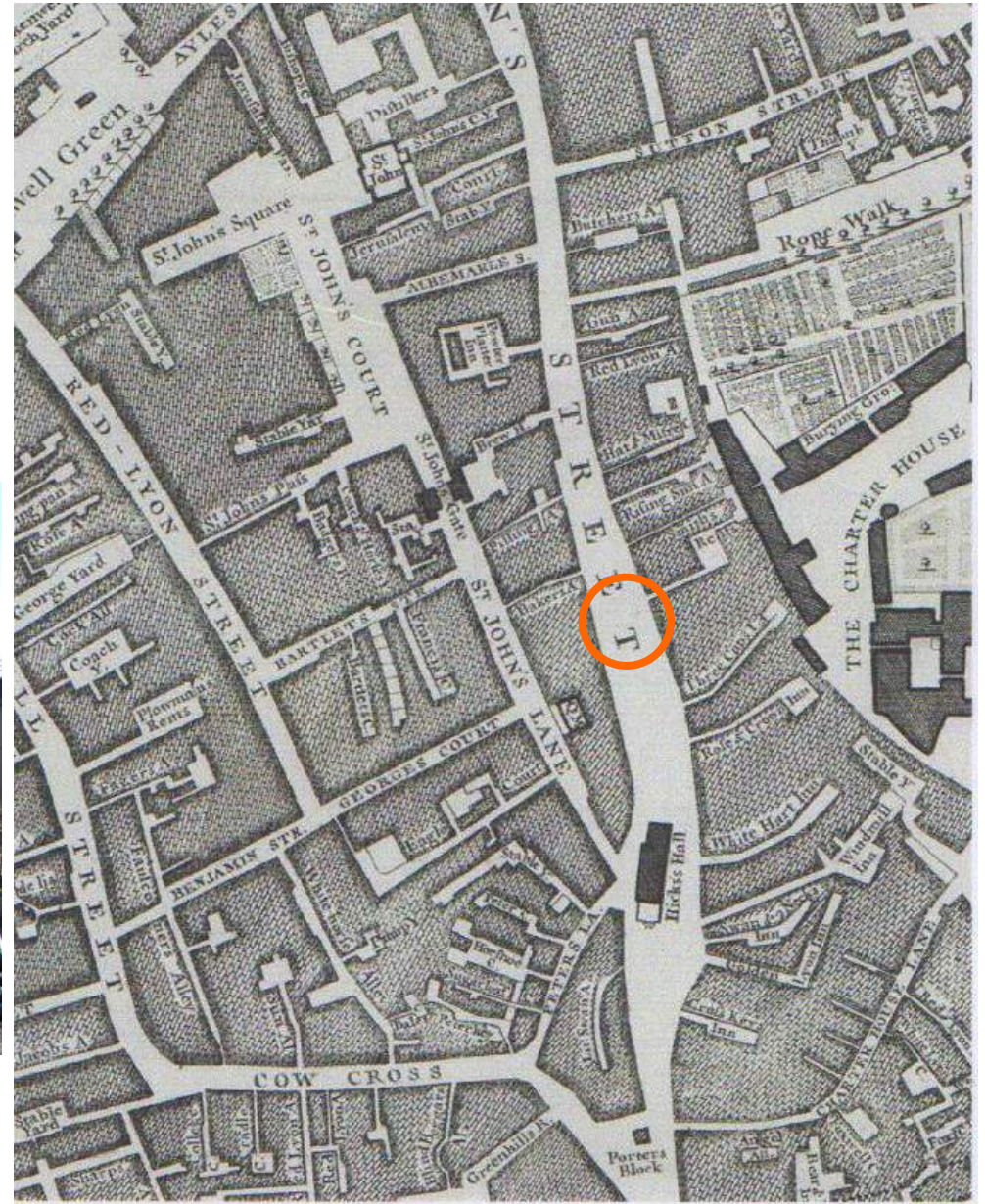
who took over the whole premises and whose *****firm remained there until the First World War

The ground floor front of No 69 was re-modelled in the mid-19th-century with arched openings and Ionic pilasters in stucco. The shop front of No 73 dates from 1884. There had been a fire in the cork warehouse in 1882 which was then partly rebuilt with No 69 being extended over the alley between the two houses. In 1896 the two buildings were made into one. The floors of No 69 appear to have been reconstructed and strengthened using wrought iron girders of the structural system used for reconstruction work and strengthening elsewhere in Clerkenwell. (For example No 36 St John Street, 1868 (Illus) for Farmiloes, lead and glass merchants.



36 St John Street for Farmiloes to the design of Architect Henry Isaacs in Renaissance palazzo style

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John Rocque's Map of 1746

Exterior Photograph East ;Elevation

The building has a rectangular 4 storey plan, between St John's Lane and St John Street and ranged around a central light well. A Photomontage of the Street Elevation (West) is to left. 69-73, have a half gambrel roof profile with a parapet between 69 and 71. There are flat-roofed dormers with glazing bars behind the eaves parapet. The façade is built with yellow brick laid in Flemish bond, the older brickwork, is greyer in tone, has red brick wedge lintels and fine six pane sash windows that probably date back to c.1816-1834.

The newer brickwork, probably dates from 1882 when the alley between 69 and 73 was infilled and the upper floors adapted for warehouse use. The central loading bay to first and second floors has two light, storey height, part glazed casements, and is formed within the newer brickwork which has yellow brick wedge lintels over the sash windows.

At ground floor level is the stucco shop front, shown here with a conjectural representation of its original appearance. It consisted of an entablature resting on Ionic pilasters forming an arcade of round-arched openings. In reality only the two southern



bays to No 69 have survived..

The brick back wall (west) is yellow brick laid in Flemish bond. (see below) .The back of 69 is visible within the light well. There is a single 4th floor window (modern half glazed door to escape stair) There are two windows on the third floor, (5 x 4 panes to left and ? X 3 to right); and two 16 pane cast iron windows under segmental brick arches at 2nd Floor level. (red brick to left & yellow brick to right)

The north exterior is modern. Built in both red and yellow brick, there is a wide two storey high window and a continuous roof light. The range is mid 20th century and the wall is built of yellow and red brick in Flemish bond. Brickwork to west and south is modern and not of special interest.

Right; wrought iron bridging joist, possibly made with the 'Philips Patent Girder System' ca 1882. Straight flight stair with open strings and stick balusters. Its heavy scantling reflects warehouse use. The roll molding at the front of the beam is painted pipe insulation placed to protect the heads of stair users



Exterior-south



Exterior west



Exterior north



Exterior east



Exterior east

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He

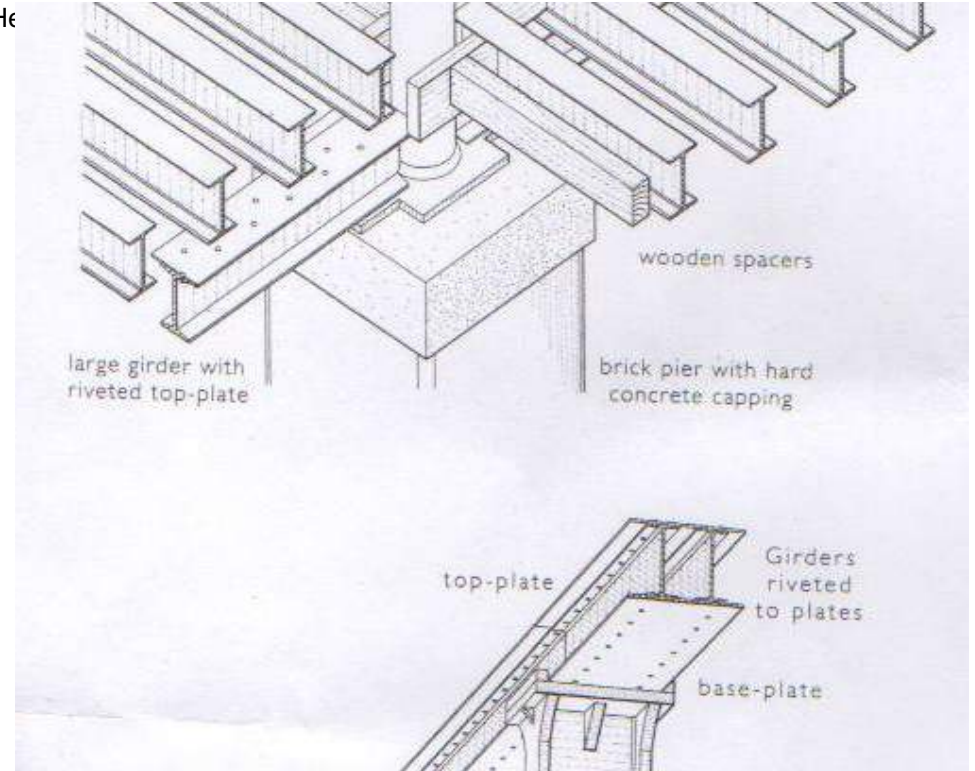


Diagram of the 'Compound' or built up girder system.



Interior

Only the residential accommodation to No 69 was accessible at the time of survey, and there may be items of architectural or historic interest that have not been noted.

No 69 has an Irregular rectangular plan on four stories and with a cellar. There is a restaurant on the ground floor, offices on the 1st floor, and residential accommodation on the second, third and fourth floors. On the ground floor A heavy straight flight staircase with open strings, newel posts, and stick balusters, rises to west against the south cross wall. The south wall appears to have a thicker vertical component which may be flues rising in the cross wall and would predate the C19th adaptation to a warehouse.



Interior photographs

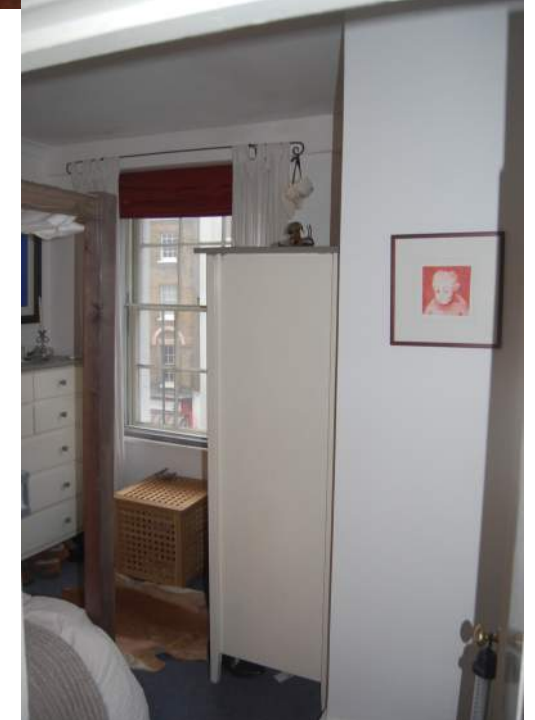
Far left- Stair to ground floor
Possibly the C19th warehouse stair Stair housing, mid-to late C20th.

Left-2nd floor back bedroom
Note the industrial quality cast iron casement window

Above 3rd floor Reception Note 6 pane casement dormers and soft-wood boarded floor

Right-2nd floor bathroom

Note view of the late Georgian façade of No 76 St John Street visible through window and detailed design of 2nd floor sash window



Architectural and Historic Significance

This assessment uses "Conservation Plan" methodology and categorises the elements as follows:-

Very High Significance – elements which are fundamental to the architectural and historic significance of the Grade II Listed building

High Significance – elements which are important to the special architectural and historic interest of the building.

Moderate Significance – original elements contributing to architectural and historic interest; but which may have been subject to considerable alteration diminishing their interest.

Low Significance – original elements of little significance (or significantly altered such that original character has been lost); and later features which broadly support the architectural interest of the original buildings.

No Significance – Later elements making no contribution to the architectural or historic interest of the buildings, or their setting.

There is a good progression of historic maps of St John Road which show how and when it developed. Also there is evidence from documents of the history of buildings on the site now occupied by Nos 69-73 that show the appearance of those buildings prior to demolition in 1814. Its elevation is shown in Tallis Street Views of 1838 which is consistent with the appearance of the extant fabric, particularly the west elevation on St John Street, and the brickwork in the light well at the rear of No 69 in the position of a rear service wing.

The engraving of 1814 shows a three cell timber-framed house built against the edge of the road. In a courtyard garden. This was probably the first building on the site which was replaced in 1838 by two for that demolished in 1814 is shown in the Street views as two 4 storey, two window buildings part of a continuous late Georgian terrace, flanking an opening into a yard. The documentary evidence makes a significant con-

tribution to the historic interest of the building. There is also significant archaeological potential in below ground remains.

The Georgian fabric survives in the façade and possibly the cross wall of No 69 and are considered to be **of high significance**.

The classically ordered façade belonging to the late C19th consolidations of the buildings to form a single warehouse premises, with ordered sash windows under flat gauged brick arches to right and central windows in place of the warehouse loading bays, establishes the Georgian terrace layer in St John's Street where it relates visually to the buildings opposite, and also No 76 and the more extensive terraces further north in the conservation area. The façade is considered to be **of high significance**.

The constructional detail of the building, particularly where the work incorporates the compound wrought iron girders to strengthen the floors described above is of interest because of its constructional innovation associated with a particular use. The use of cast iron casement window, now in a second floor back bedroom provided additional security and are not untypical in a Victorian warehouse **of high significance**

Finally, to complete the cork show room, offices and store, a classical stucco arcade was made to 'dress' the ground floor storey with a form of the Ionic order to dignify the entrance into the ground floor shop. This work is also considered to be **of high significance**.

The additional attic storey is a common feature of the urban terrace where it is almost invisible tucked behind parapet eaves. There is no evidence of any antiquity, or historic interest, though it serves its importance by its very ubiquity. The roof above No 69 is considered to be **of moderate significance**

Conservation Area

St John Street is within the Clerkenwell Green Conservation Area, for which the Council have published guidance to preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the area. The Charterhouse Square and Hat and Feathers Conservation Areas are included in the policies for Clerkenwell Green.

A brief account of the history of the area is given above which describes how the mix of uses, architectural character and the history of the area contribute to the special character which arises from them. To do this, the study relies substantially on the account given in Volume 46 of the Survey of London.

The Survey describes the difference in character between the southern and northern halves of St John Street, where to south, the former warehouses and factories predominate, the result of commercial and industrial activity on a fragmented land holding. The northern half was held by a few estates, and developed in the 18th & 19th-centuries with elegant terraced houses, some of which survived clearance and replacement with Council Flats. No 69, St John Street, the subject of this study, was built between 1814 and 1834 with an elegant classical front, built in gault brick, with three stories and attics, eaves parapets and sash windows with glazing bars, ranged one over another. It survived conversion to warehouse use in the 19th-century and narrowly survived bombing. In World War II. The medieval meat market and other trades flourished on the small and diverse plots in south St John Street. St John's long standing use as a coach road left a legacy of many public houses and Inns, almost all of the larger ones were the product of rebuilding at the end of the 19th-century.

Site of 69-73 indicated. Adjoining buildings each side are of greater scale and out of sync with storey line. There may be an opportunity to raise the roof line of 69-73.

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Looking north in St John Street, a wide straight street of comfortable pedestrian scale and confined courts and alleys' The spaces are formed by buildings of average 4 stories with long views and vistas. A warm red brick predominates, used to construct offices, factories, and warehouses. Many were built in a Manerist revival style, with a significant quantity of curved gables ca. 1900.

Preceding generation of buildings, seen above, are built in yellow brick with opposite No 69 are classically proportioned Georgian facades with flat gauged brick lintels and sash windows which reflect the design of No 69 with a rustic base-ment rising a further 4 storeys See page 13.



Proposed works: The Impact on significance.

Alterations to 2nd floor bedrooms

The external walls contain fabric which dates from the 1st half of the 19th-century. The internal works to convert the warehouse into residential and office accommodation are late 20th-century, flimsy in construction and of **low significance**.

The proposed works envisage the re-arrangement of the bedrooms, bathroom and stairs which are to be moved to improve headroom.



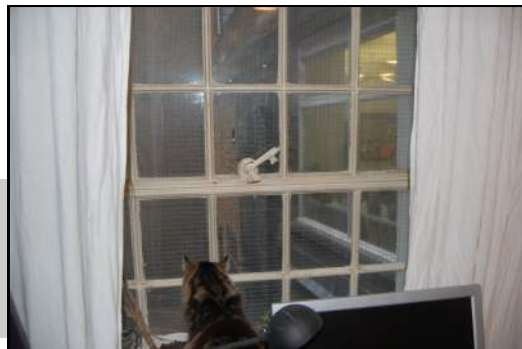
Former warehouse staircase to be moved back to improve headroom under iron trimmer beam



Above Modern ovolo moulded skirting



3rd Floor Open Plan Living



Above right 2nd floor cast iron glazed security window conserved and draft stripped with special; attention to be given to the pivotal point



Above-right; Early 19th-century sash window with slender glazing bar and without lugs. The windows will not be disturbed. Above: flimsy modern studwork partition.



Above, View from staircase into Bathroom and Bedroom 1



Above: Late 20th-century flush door of stud and plasterboard construction.

The façade dates from the time of the fire in the cork warehouse of 1882. when the two parts of the building, No 69 to 73, were united by infilling the alley between 69 and 73 and when a stucco basement storey in the form of an arcade was constructed. What survives now of the stucco work on 69 is a cornice supported by pilasters between segmental arches. The cornice is interrupted under the warehouse window of 71 where there may have been a hoist. It is not clear what occupied the cornice of 73, though probably not the conjectural restoration shown on page 7 where a narrow and a wide arch would fill the space of a window for 73.

Looking at the façade of 69-3 as a whole, there is an eaves parapet which obscures about half the front slope of the mansard roof and half of the flat-roofed dormer windows seen from ground level across the street.

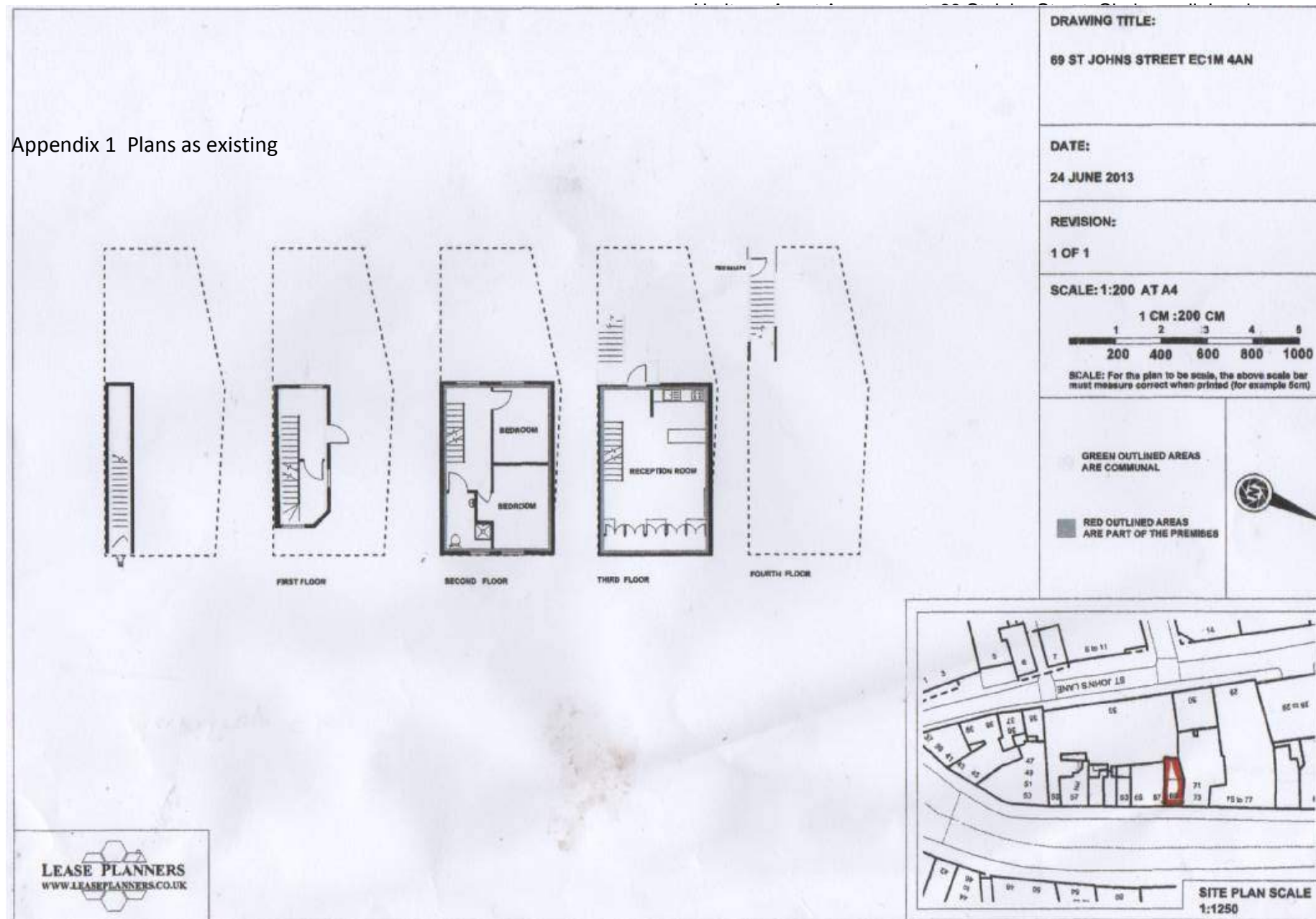
The proposal envisages the retention of the front parapet wall with its coping stone and sash windows below. A new flat roof is to be built behind the parapet at 2nd floor ceiling level (or 3rd floor level) with a new wall set back from the line of the front parapet wall, and with two head height casement windows. The set back position is designed to emphasize the line of the parapet wall and preserve the fine proportion of the façade with its tall sash windows. The height is twice the width. A roof terrace is envisaged for the front half of the building and an additional mezzanine storey for the back half. This is to be provided with a barrel vaulted roof structure, based on the design of the stucco basement storey, though set far back to the extent that most of the structure could not be seen from the street. The building would not be higher than its neighbours, and would relate to the many curved gables in the conservation area.

It is considered essential that the proportion of the ground floor storey is maintained for the extension.

Right: Façade of 69 as proposed set next to the building opposite (BM ADVISORY) which has 5 storeys



Appendix 1 Plans as existing



Appendix 2

List description

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

ISLINGTON

TQ3181NE ST JOHN STREET
635-1/77/786 (West side)
Nos.69, 71 AND 73

II

Terraced houses, now offices and restaurant. Late C18 or early C19. Yellow brick set in Flemish bond with red brick dressings to no 69, stucco, roof of tiles to no 69, slate to nos 71-3. Four storeys, no 69 two-window range, nos 71-3 three-window range. Ground floor of no 69 has an arcade of Ionic columns supporting fascia and scrolled consoles with fascia stops; the arcade extends (without the fascia) across the first bay of nos 71-3; round-arched openings between columns with keystones, now altered; first- and second-floor windows to no 69 are flat-arched with heads of gauged red brick and 6/6 sashes of original design; parapet, two dormers in roof. Nos. 71-3 has late C20 restaurant front to all but left-hand bay; warehouse doors to first and second floors in left-hand bay, the upper with segmental arch of gauged brick; the other windows flat-arched with gauged brick head and 6/6 sashes of original design to all but first-floor right; parapet; two dormers in roof.

Listing NGR: TQ3178581987

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Map

National Grid Reference: TQ 31785 81987

The below map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - [1195730.pdf](#)

CA ONE, CA NINE, CA TWENTY SIX

CLERKENWELL GREEN, CHARTERHOUSE SQUARE AND HAT AND FEATHERS

- 1.1 The Council will operate special policies in the Clerkenwell Green, Charterhouse Square, and Hat and Feathers Conservation Areas, in order to preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the area.
- 1.2 The Clerkenwell and Smithfield area has the longest history of any part of the borough. It has a special character and appearance which stems from its mix of uses, its architecture and its history, which justifies its conservation area status. The Government Office for London has accepted that this area has a special character, which is of importance to London as a whole, and that the Council's conservation policies for the area should be included in the statutory UDP. This section of the Conservation Area Guidelines therefore repeats the policies set down in the UDP - they are included here for the sake of comprehensiveness. The policies in this section apply to the area covered by three conservation areas: Clerkenwell Green, Charterhouse Square and Hat and Feathers (CAs 1, 9 and 26).
- 1.3 The fabric of the area derives from incremental development from Norman times to the present day, with surviving examples of buildings from nine different centuries. The character of the area also depends on its great variety of uses including specialist manufacturing, workshops, wholesaling and retailing activities. The juxtaposition of different activities, cheek by jowl, sets Clerkenwell and Smithfield apart from more homogenous business and residential areas.
- 1.4 Clerkenwell and Smithfield have experienced immense pressure for change. The real threat of large-scale and comprehensive development requires special policies to ensure that the tightly-built and small scale character and appearance of the area, and the variety of land uses are protected and enhanced.