



April 2025

230: Bucklersbury

24a Bucklersbury, Hitchin
Design and Access Statement

Michael Collins Architect LLP

This statement, in accordance with the guidance, will:

- 1. Demonstrate how the proposals relate to the site context and the impacts upon it.
- 2. Explain the design principles and concepts and how they are applied to the proposals, including taking into account the local planning guidance and mitigating measures to minimise effects upon neighbouring amenity and heritage assets.

The content of this statement is proportionate to the scale, complexity and nature of the application. It will tell the story by explaining the design thinking behind the proposal and how issues relating to access have been addressed using images, plans and diagrams to supplement the text.

Note to be read in conjunction with the planning statement.

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Summary

1.0 Summary

The following is the description of the proposals:

- Internal structural alterations to new sitting, WC and kitchen areas at rear part of the application building and ground floor level only.
- New glazings and sliding door are proposed to the walls facing to the existing courtyard, and to the rear elevation.
- New rooflight is proposed at the above of new sitting area at ground floor level

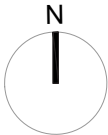
1.1 Site description & use

The site is situated along Hitchin’s historic Bucklersbury, just off Market Place. The street is primarily occupied by commercial premises at street level.

As will be elaborated on in the heritage statement, the site has a rich history and a diverse architectural character, featuring several buildings concealed behind 19th-century frontages.



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24a Bucklersbury

Job No. 230 Location Plan

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Planning Application

001

REVISION: Scale 1:1250 @:A4

1.2 Condition of Existing Building - External

Existing Front Facade



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Existing Rear Facade and Roof



1.2 Condition of the Existing Building - Internal

Existing Library



Existing Kitchen and Courtyard



Statement of Heritage Significance

2.1 Understanding of Place - The Context of the Property

Bucklersbury is a historic street in the heart of Hitchin, linking the marketplace to Tilehouse Street.

The land upon which Bucklersbury is situated was originally part of Hitchin's open-air informal market of moveable stalls that ran parallel to the stream and stretched from Tilehouse Street to Bancroft Recreation Ground. By 1470, there were at least two stalls with continuous tenures (Hitchin Historical Society, 2009). This large space was gradually encroached upon until the 16th century with two blocks of new buildings - creating what is now Bucklersbury, Sun Street, and Churchyard (Hitchin Conservation Area: Character Statement, 2011).

These medieval buildings of timber framed construction hosted a mixture of commercial premises and houses stretching back at right angles to the street, in turn, forming continuous frontages with rear yards, back gardens or courts behind. Inns, such as the Red Hart or The George's, used these back courts for stables - the carriage entrances to these are a defining feature of the streetscape still visible today along Bucklersbury, Sun Street, High Street and Bancroft (Hitchin Conservation Area: Character Statement, 2011). Seen through cartographic analysis, these rear gardens and courts have been infilled by a range of backland developments over the last century.

The property relating to this application, No. 24 Bucklersbury, is situated within Hitchin Town Centre Conservation Area, Character Area 2c, which includes The Market Place, Bridge Street, Tilehouse Street, and Upper Tilehouse. The front façade facing Bucklersbury features contemporary stucco elements at ground-floor level, while the upper floors consist of red brick with flush grey brick quoins. The building was designated as a Grade II listed building in June 1974. Adjacent properties No. 23 and Nos. 25 & 26, as well as No. 15 opposite, are also Grade II listed.

Designations:

No.24 Bucklersbury:

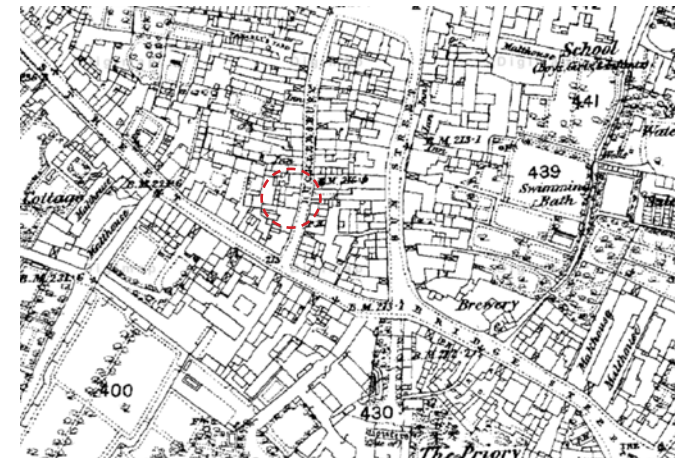
The Grade II Listing NGR: TL1834128937 reads "Mid C19. Low pitched hipned Welsh slated roof. 3 storeys, sash windows. Rusticated stucco ground floor, red brick upper floors with flush grey brick quoins. Included for group value."

No. 23 is described as; "C19 refronting of C17 or earlier building, a continuation of Nos 20-22. Red brick, old tiled roof with corbelled cornice and low parapet. 2 storeys, 2 sash windows with glazing bars and flat arches, central first floor dummy window. Included for group value."

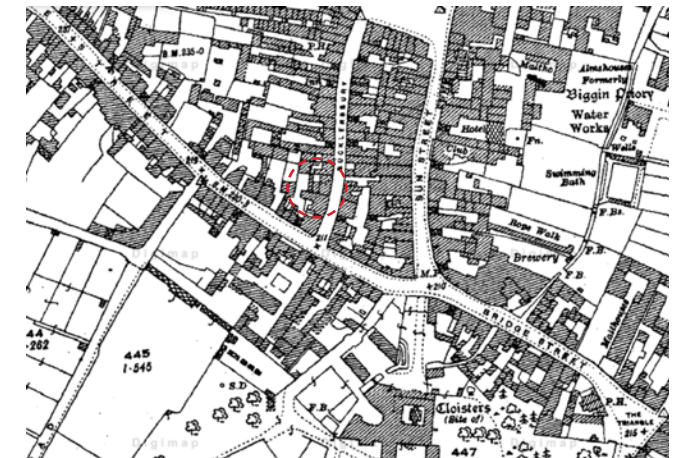
No 25 AND 26 is described as; "C17 altered. plaster front, old tiled roof. 2 storeys and attics, wide eaves, 2 box dormers. C19 shop front, 2 flush first floor casement windows. Included for group value."

Sources:

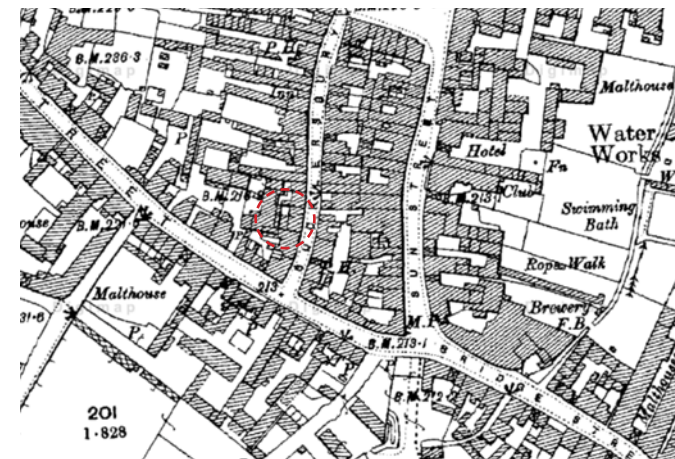
- Historic England Listed Building Register
- Digimap Historic Maps
- 'Brief Guide to Historic Hitchin' Hitchin Historical Society, 2018
- 'The Street Names of Hitchin and Their Origins' S. Fitzpatrick and B. West, 1996
- Hitchin Conservation Area: Character Statement, 2011



The Site c. 1880



The Site c. 1930



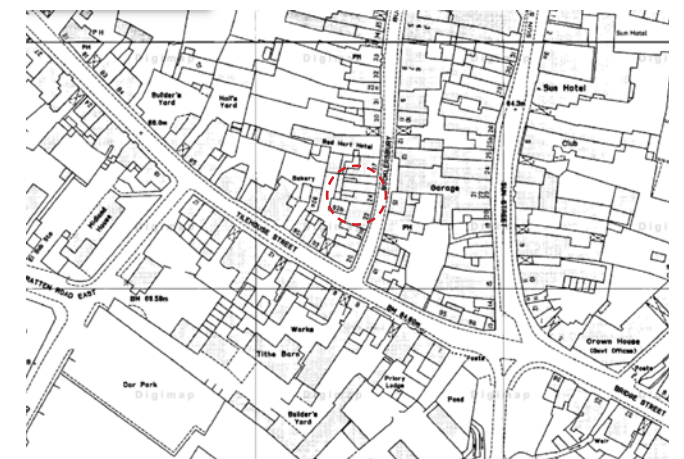
The Site c. 1890



The Site c. 1960



The Site c. 1920



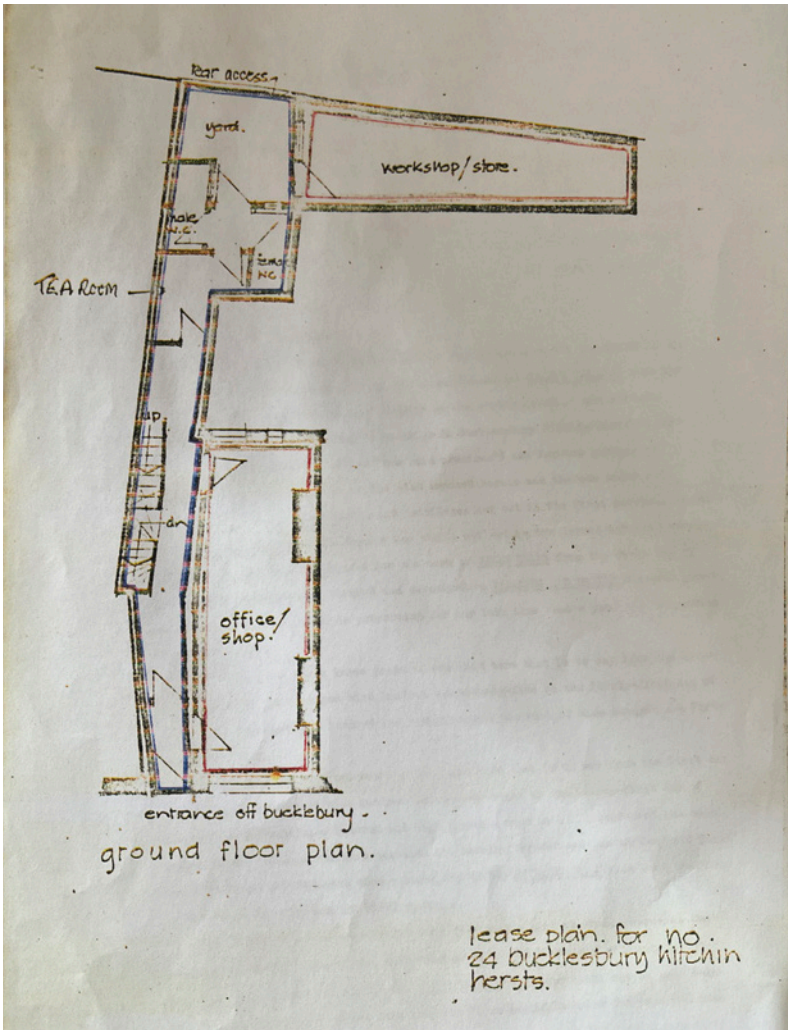
The Site c. 1980

History of uses and occupiers:

The entire building had been occupied by Evans-Pughe Strings of Hitchin Ltd since 1997, operating as a retail shop and showroom alongside a restoration and repair workshop specialising in string instruments, primarily violins, violas, and cellos. The current use is mainly residential (permitted under planning application 13/00174/1LB) with the front ground-floor and basement still a commercial space. After the conversion, it was initially used by E-P Strings as a smaller showroom. Since 2020 it has been used as office space by the owner (under Class E categorisation).

Previous occupiers and uses of this building as follows;

- 1914 Bischof & Brook Yeast Merchant
- 1937 Bishop & Brook Yeast Merchant (Possibly a change of name after 1914-1918 war)
- 1952 Bishop & Brook Yeast Merchant
- 1960 National Farmers Union
- 1965 National Farmers Union
- 1968 Plexdys Ltd
- 1976 A seven-year lease for the 'Shop and Premises situated on the Ground Floor' was granted to Michael John Phillips of Henlow. This lease is included, which shows a yard with rear access to the premises.



A copy of lease plan for no. 24 bucklersbury

2.2 Appraisal

1. The front elevation has a mid 19th-century frontage (with later alterations) rusticated stucco finish at ground floor level, and red brick wall with grey brick quoins to upper floors, and white painted timber framed sash windows.
2. The rear elevation of the single-storey section has a rendered finish, and part of the roofing consists of slate tiling, and modern fibrous cement roofing.
3. The rear elevation of upper floor has red brick wall, and white painted timber sash windows.

2.3 Approach to Significance

The basis of protection for buildings of cultural heritage significance is understanding their unique identity, expressed as a collection of values that can be enshrined by a place – in other words, what is important, and what aspects of the building contribute to that importance.

24 Bucklersbury embodies a range of values relating to historic, cultural, social and associational aspects of its past. An overview of these helps define what makes the building special and therefore what significance the wider site has in relation to this Heritage asset. This is essential to the informed decisions about the proposed interventions upon the site.

The following assessment of significance is laid out in accordance with the documents Historic England Conservation Principles, 2008 and British Standard 7913: Conservation of Historic Buildings, 2013, which acknowledge that understanding both the tangible and intangible significances of this site enables effective decision-making about its future.

Historic England Conservation Principles, 2008, clearly states, “A ‘statement of significance’ of a place should be a summary of the cultural and natural heritage values currently attached to it and how they interrelate, which distils the particular character of the place. It should explain the relative importance of the heritage values of the place (where appropriate, by reference to criteria for statutory designation), how they relate to its physical fabric and setting, the extent of any uncertainty about its values (particularly in relation to potential for hidden or buried elements), and identify any tensions between potentially conflicting values.

2.4 Assessment of Cultural Values

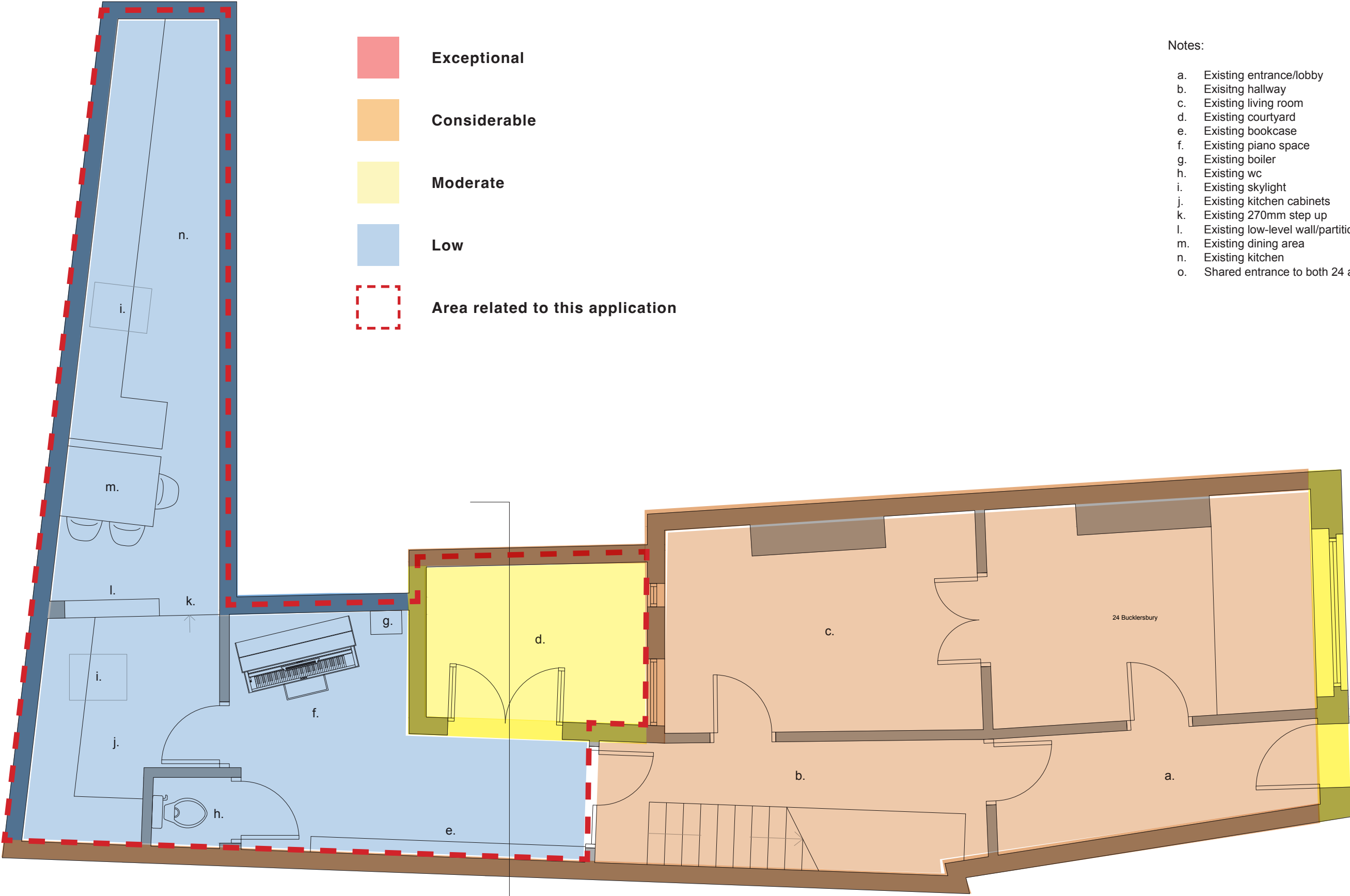
BS Standard 7913 identifies four categories of primary values, paraphrased as follows:

1. Evidential value
An element of an historic asset that provides evidence about past human activity, including standing structures that are easily visible, as well as those that may be hidden below ground or under water. This aspect of value is strongly related to physical remains, but may also include documentary sources, pictorial records and artefacts.
2. Historical value
These aspects of significance are often less tangible than physical evidence, including associations with notable people, or historical events or developments. They often connect past people, events and aspects of life with the present, and are likely to have changed with time of shifting perspectives. Historical values are less vulnerable to change than evidential values.
3. Aesthetic value
This is derived from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from an historic asset, including its appearance and how it lies within its setting. As such, this aspect of value is more subjective than the preceding classifications, being particularly sensitive to change over time and subject to fluctuations depending on many factors.
4. Communal value
This element of value derives from the meanings an historic asset holds for those who relate to it, or for whom it forms part of a collective experience, or memory. This may include emotional links, and aspects of the site that people can relate to their collective history and heritage.

2.5 Summary of Key Significances related to the Proposals

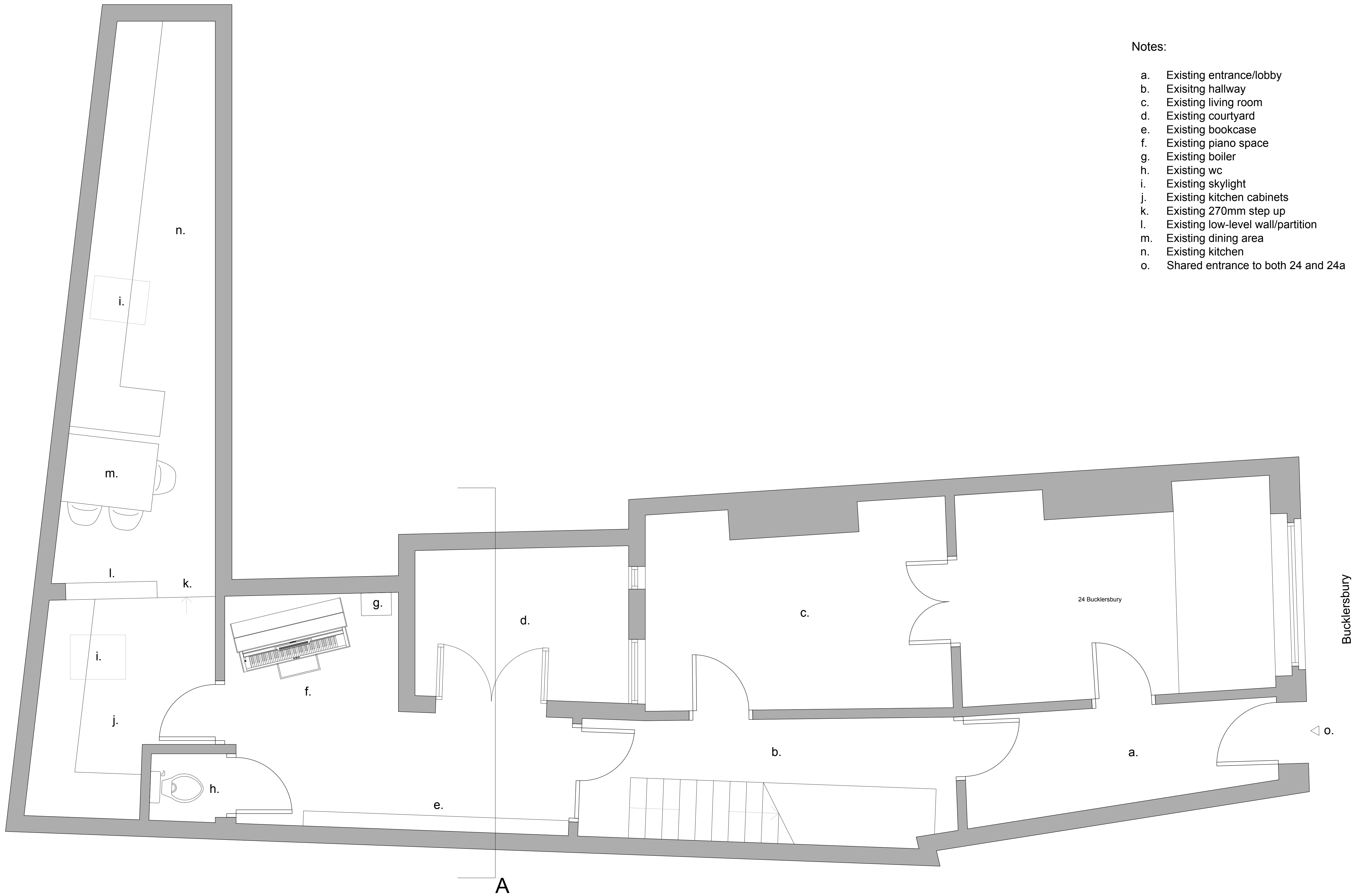
EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS AND ELEMENTS			
AREA	CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE	KEY ELEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE
Front Elevation	Moderate	Moderate	Evidential/Historical/Aesthetic/Communal: 24 Bucklersbury is recognised by Historic England for its C19 rusticated stucco ground floor, red brick upper floors with flush grey brick quoins, and white painted timber sash windows.
Rear Elevation (single storey section at rear)	Low	Low	Evidential/Historical/Aesthetic: The rear elevation of the ground floor single-storey section shows evidence of various alterations made over time, resulting in a degree of heritage loss. Communal: No communal value.
Courtyard	Moderate	Moderate	Evidential/Historical/Aesthetic: The courtyard has undergone modifications, as evident from old maps and the last planning application in 2013. It is in moderate condition, with its size reduced in the past and currently featuring a modern aesthetic, including white render and a white-painted brick wall. Communal: No communal value.
Side wall (party wall to no.25)	Considerable	Considerable	Evidential/Historical/Aesthetic/Communal: The party wall shared with the neighbouring property, No. 25, has remained in its original state, since both buildings have been designated as a listed building.
Side wall (party wall to no.23)	Considerable	Considerable	Evidential/Historical/Aesthetic/Communal: The party wall shared with the neighbouring property, No. 23, has remained in its original state, since both buildings have been designated as a listed building.
Ground floor (proposed area)	Low	Low	Evidential/Historical: The area has undergone modifications and changes in use over time. With the recent floor upgrades, it has been modernised. Communal: No communal value.
Rear roof (Single storey, proposed area)	Low	Low	Evidential/Historical: The roof is in a modern state, consisting of a combination of slate and fibre cement roofing, with two modern rooflights installed in recent work. Communal: No communal value.

2.6 Level of Significance

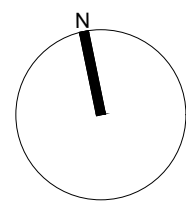


Ground floor plan as existing

Existing Plans



- Notes:
- a. Existing entrance/lobby
 - b. Existing hallway
 - c. Existing living room
 - d. Existing courtyard
 - e. Existing bookcase
 - f. Existing piano space
 - g. Existing boiler
 - h. Existing wc
 - i. Existing skylight
 - j. Existing kitchen cabinets
 - k. Existing 270mm step up
 - l. Existing low-level wall/partition
 - m. Existing dining area
 - n. Existing kitchen
 - o. Shared entrance to both 24 and 24a



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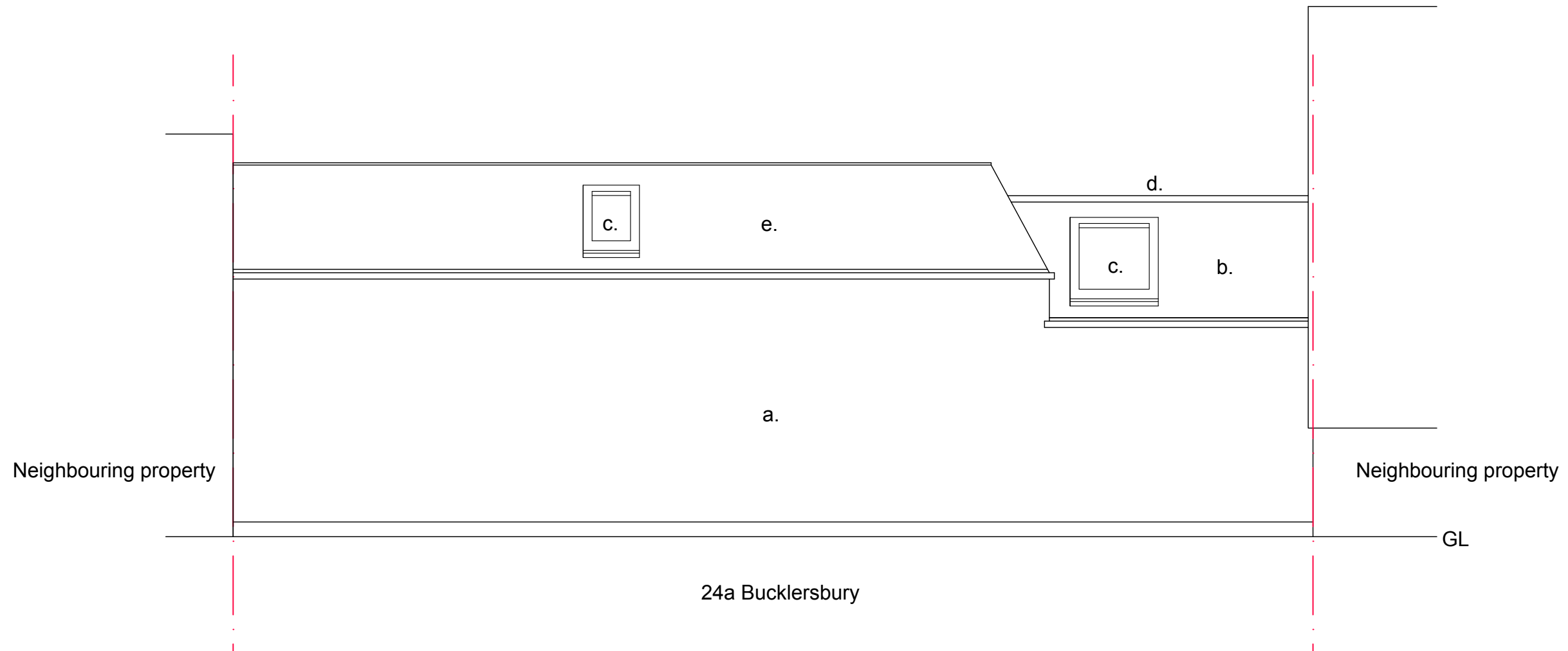
24a Bucklersbury

Job No.
230 Ground Floor Plan
as Existing

Stage: 2
Status: Planning Application

002

REVISION: -
Scale
1:25@A1
1:50@A3



Existing rear elevation

Notes:

- a. Existing render wall
- b. Existing slate roof
- c. Existing rooflights
- d. Existing ridge to remain
- e. Existin fibre-cement roof



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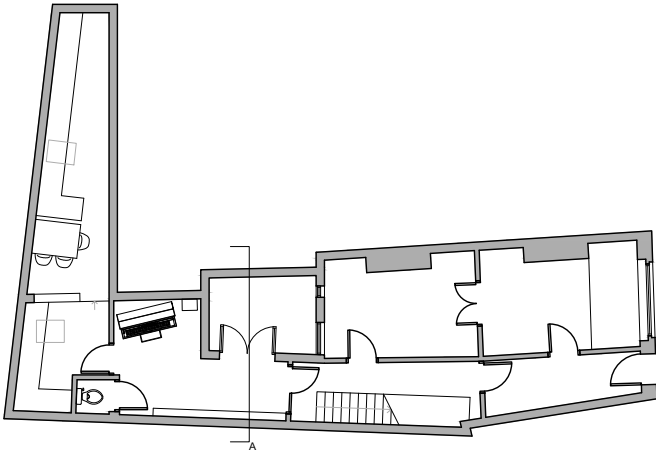
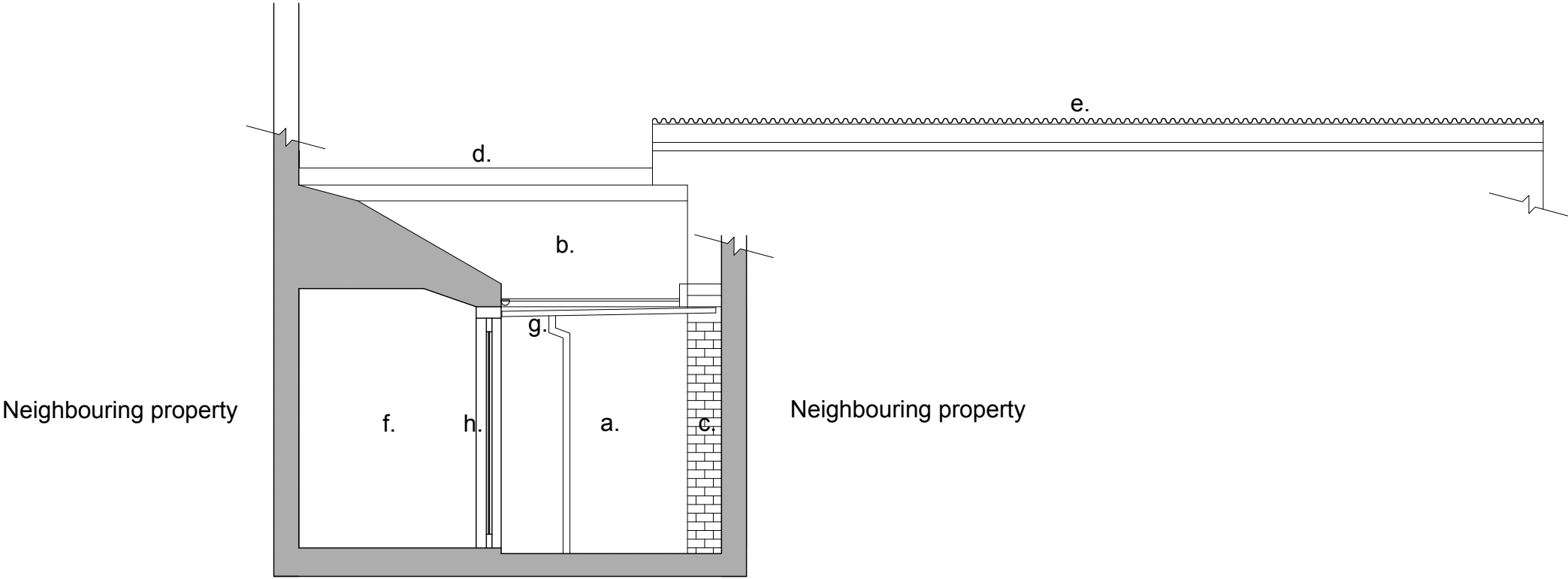
24a Bucklersbury

Job No.
230 Existing Rear
Elevation

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Planning Application

003

REVISION: Scale
1:50 @:A3



Notes:

- a. Existing render wall
- b. Existing roof
- c. Existing brick wall
- d. Existing ridge
- e. Existing fibre-cement roof
- f. Existing internal space
- g. Existing gutter and downpipe
- h. Existing French door



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24a Bucklersbury
Job No. 230 Existing Section A
Stage: Stage 2
Status: Planning Application

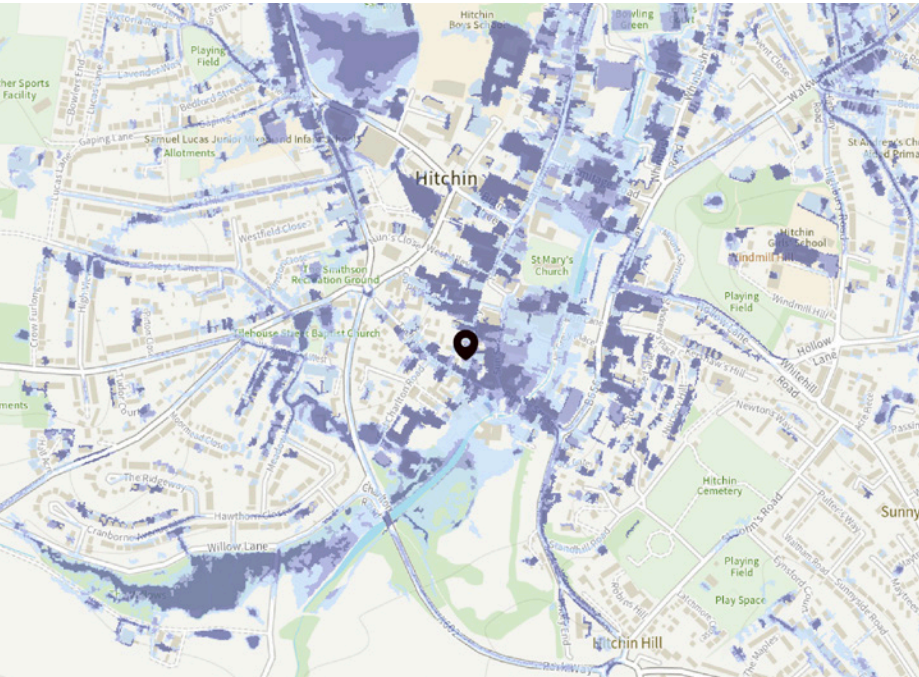
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Relevant Matters

4.1 Flood Risk

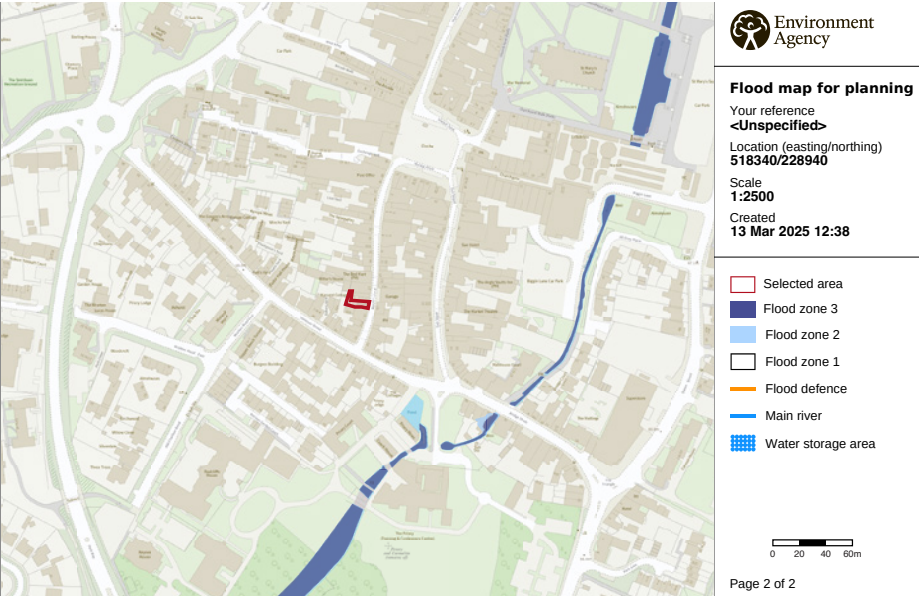
Surface water

The site falls within area with a high risk of flooding from surface water. The yearly chance of surface water flooding is: Medium increasing to High between 2040 to 2060.



Rivers and the sea

The site falls within flood zone 1, therefore there is a very low risk of flooding from rivers and the sea.



4.2 Relevant planning policy considered as part of developing these proposals

- The site falls within the designated Archaeological Area
- The site falls within the Hitchin Conservation Area, Character Area 2c
- The host dwelling is grade II listed

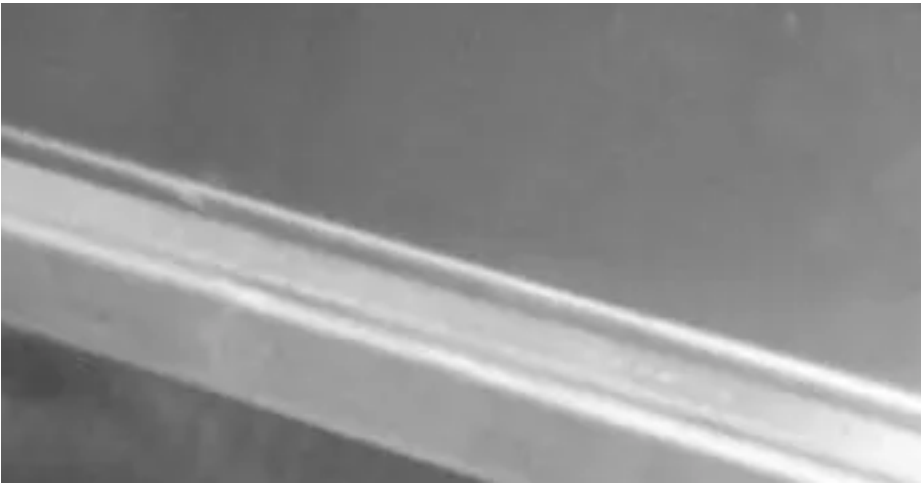
4.3 Design strategy

As will be described in this document, the proposal is driven by the need to adapt the property to suit modern 21st-century living with modest improvements to lighting.

The proposal retains the existing character of the building enclosure while enhancing the internal courtyard in a way that does not impact neighbouring properties or the site's heritage significance.

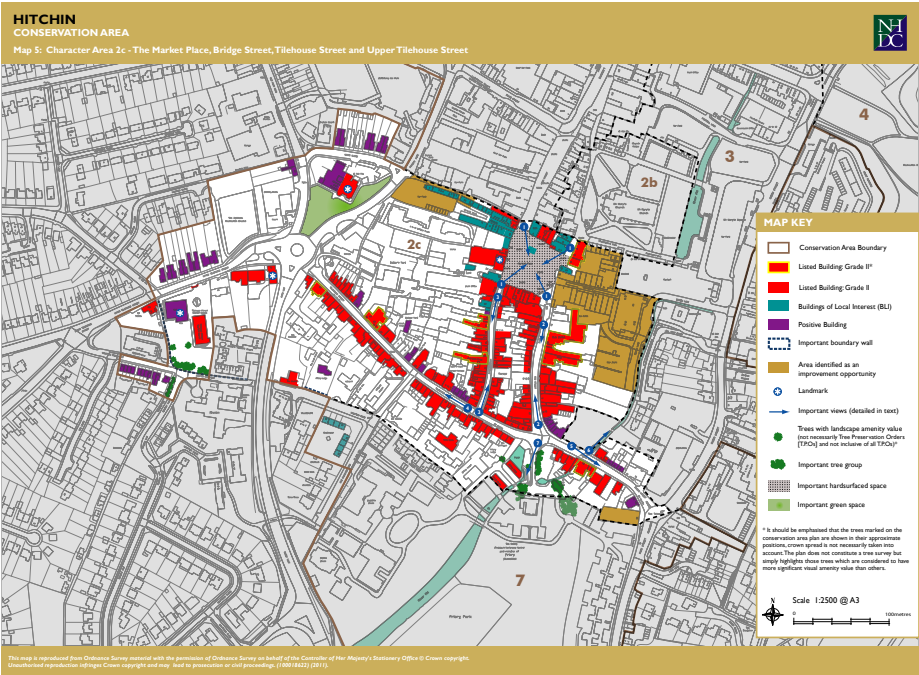
4.4 Amenity & Neighbouring Buildings

Consideration has been given to ensure that the proposed works limit any impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties in terms of a) the scale of the additions, and b) the location and number of any new window openings. Refer to the extraction system designers information for the properties of the ductwork and its acoustic attenuation qualities.

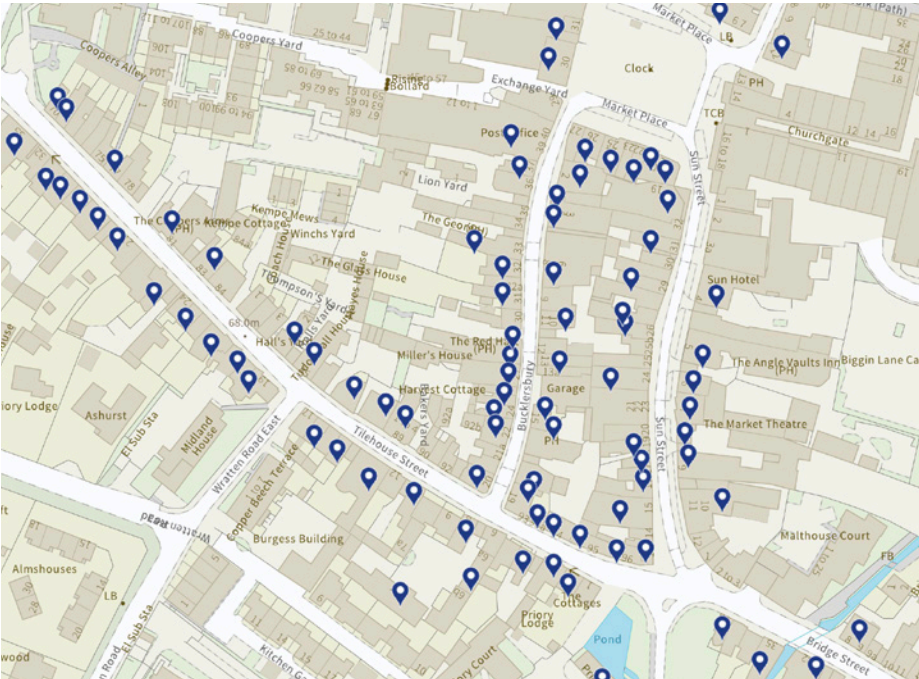


4.6 Access

The proposals enhance the accessibility of the building internally and at the access. Visibility from the street and lighting at night is also improved.



Hitchin Conservation Area Map 5: Character Area 2c



Map showing nearby listed buildings

4.7 Waste

The proposals do not alter the current waste storage strategy.

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

5.1 Introduction

As stated by BS 7913, The purpose of heritage impact assessments (HIAs) is to gain an understanding of the effect of developments and changes on the historic asset, and how the impact of change might be mitigated.

5.2 Overview

The proposals broadly comprise the following:

External alterations:

- Alteration of the existing courtyard, including the removal of the existing wall and existing French doors facing the courtyard, to be replaced with new glazed bi-fold and sliding doors and new column to support existing beam.
- New landscaping for the courtyard
- Installation of a new rooflight to the existing single-storey section at the rear of the building. (Not visible from the public)
- Replacement of existing fiber cement roofing to corrugated metal roof and future installation of solar panels to the rear section of roof.

Internal alterations:

- Relocated and new fitting for WC and boiler
- Removal of the existing internal wall to open the space for new sitting area and kitchen space.
- New fitting/bookshelf alongside of the hallway.

This philosophy identifies the following overarching objectives that form is the driver for intervention within the heritage asset:

1. To safeguard the building and its significance by opening up the interior and creating a series of light interventions internally.
2. To preserve the character of the existing building from the front
3. To retain the special character of the building within its setting.
4. To create well considered, honest, modern and lightweight additions that create a complementary contrast to the existing building.
5. An exemplary approach to environmental sustainability.

To follow is a detailed critical analysis of the proposed changes to the site in the form of an assessment of each major individual alteration or intervention. The purpose of this analysis is to manage the change methodology as advocated within BS 7913 and Historic England Planning Advice Note, “Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment”, 2015.

Alteration to courtyard and new landscape at courtyard

The removal of an existing external wall (render finish) and timber French doors facing the courtyard is to be replaced with new glazed bi-fold and sliding door systems. A new structural column and beams will be introduced to support the existing valley beam. In the courtyard, the floor finish will also be replaced with new stone pavings or similar, and rainwater goods will be upgraded.

Impact: The intervention is considered to have a moderate impact on the historic significance of the building. The courtyard is not visible from any public space, which limits the visual impact of the proposed changes. The original party wall and the external wall of the main part of the building are retained in their existing condition, ensuring that the core historic fabric remains unaffected.

Significance: Moderate

Reversibility: Visually reversible if required to reinstate a similar finish to the original rendered wall.

Mitigation: Although the courtyard is not original, appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented to minimize any potential impact on the heritage asset.

Compensation: The installation of the new glazing system will improve thermal insulation and increase natural light within the living spaces, enhancing the comfort and energy efficiency of the building while preserving its historic aesthetic.

Forming a new rooflight and the local repair of the existing roof (if necessary)

The proposal involves the formation of a new rooflight on the existing slate roof at the rear, which faces the courtyard. This modification will also be invisible from any public space.

Impact: This will require the trimming of a number of rafters and the insertion of new timber rafters. The existing slates where the rooflight is proposed, and felt roof membrane would be stripped. All timbers to the other pitch facing to courtyard and the existing ridge and valley beam would be retained. The form of the existing rear pitch would not be altered as a result of the proposals.

Significance: Moderate

Reversibility: Limited as the alterations will be permanent, the rooflight could be removed and the integrity of the front roof pitch and ridge retained.

Mitigation: The existing roof timbers whilst original do not carry a high level of significance , and there is evidence of last century additions, alterations and repairs.

Compensation: The new roof alterations are not visible from the public space but will be visible from the adjacent property. The characteristic of the building from the public will be retained.

Replacement of existing roof

The proposal involves replacing the existing modern fibre-cement roofing with a new corrugated metal roof, finished in RAL 6007, to match the colour of the new glazing.

Impact: This will involve the removal of the existing modern roofing fabric; however, most of the roofing structure and rafters will remain as existing unless repairs are considered necessary.

Significance: Low

Reversibility: Limited as the roof alteration is partially permanent; however, it is reversible to put back a similar material and visual.

Mitigation: The existing fibre-cement roofing is in modern status, and as there is evidence that the rear part of this building was configured and modified in the last century, this roof does not harm the heritage context.

Compensation: The new corrugated metal roof can be seen in the neighbouring context, and this material is versatile within the heritage buildings. The characteristics of the building will remain within the context.

Internal alterations

The proposal includes the removal of a non-original internal wall located between the hall/library and kitchen area within the single-storey rear portion. This alteration aims to improve internal circulation and spatial efficiency. The principal structural roof elements, including the existing beam and ridge beam, will be retained, ensuring the original form of the slate roof remains unaffected. Hence, a new internal partition will be introduced to accommodate a relocated WC and cupboard for boiler space and integrated library shelving.

Impact: The works are considered to have minimal impact on the historical significance of the building, as they involve alterations to a modern section and preserve key historic fabric and structural elements.

Significance: Moderate

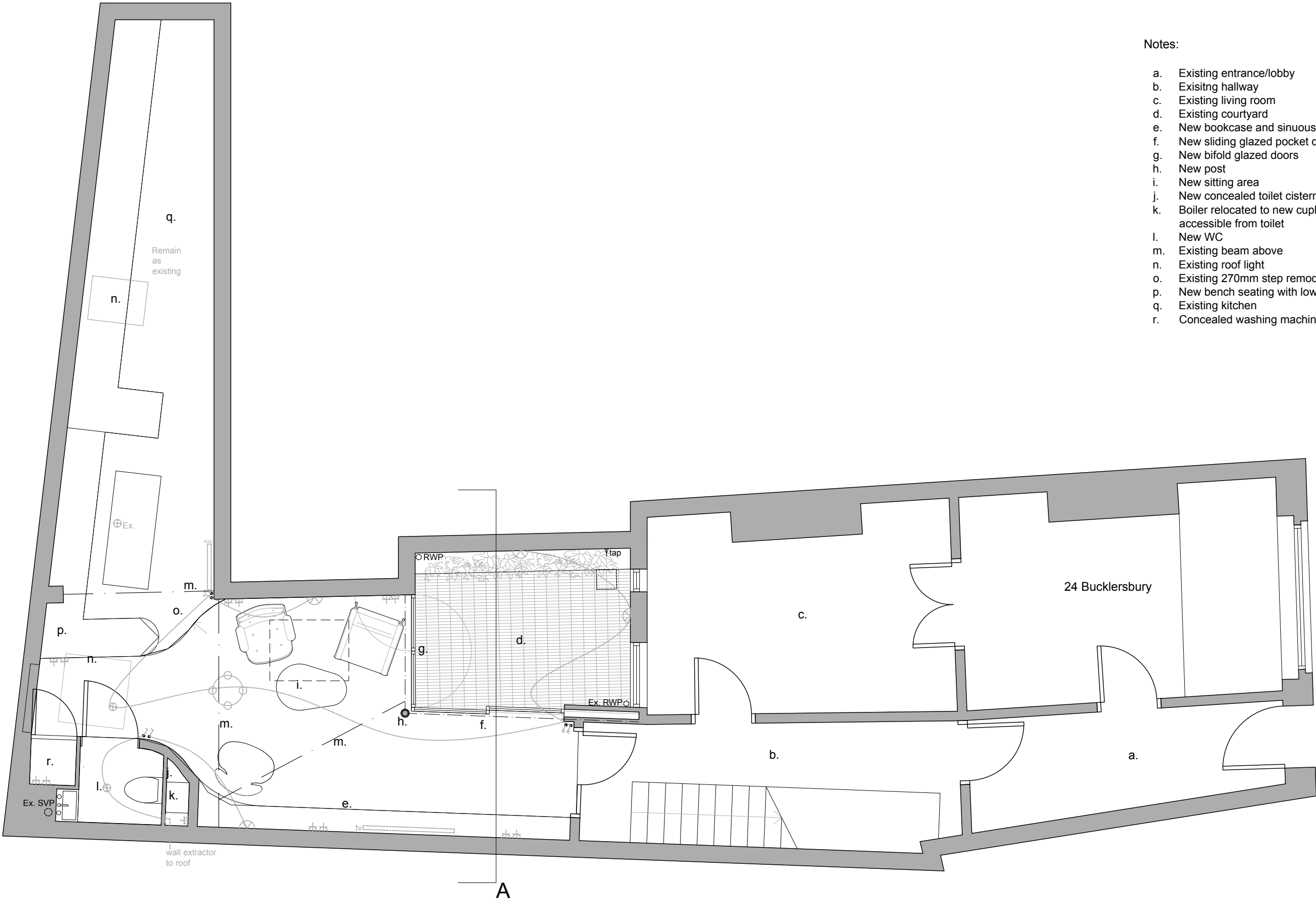
Reversibility: Limited as the alteration is permanent.

Mitigation: The proposed internal alterations are limited to the modern parts of the later addition to the original building and do not involve the removal of the existing rear wall fabric. As this part was added in the last century, the proposed changes will maintain the legibility of the original design and reinstate its original form. The current status of the slate roof will also be preserved in its original condition.

Compensation: The internal alterations will enhance spatial circulation to suit contemporary living without compromising the building's historic character. The proposal also supports upgrading energy performance, contributing to long-term energy efficiency while maintaining architectural integrity.

Proposed Plans

- Notes:
- a. Existing entrance/lobby
 - b. Existing hallway
 - c. Existing living room
 - d. Existing courtyard
 - e. New bookcase and sinuous timber wall
 - f. New sliding glazed pocket doors
 - g. New bifold glazed doors
 - h. New post
 - i. New sitting area
 - j. New concealed toilet cistern
 - k. Boiler relocated to new cupboard accessible from toilet
 - l. New WC
 - m. Existing beam above
 - n. Existing roof light
 - o. Existing 270mm step remodelled
 - p. New bench seating with low level shelving
 - q. Existing kitchen
 - r. Concealed washing machine/tumble dryer



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24a Bucklersbury

Job No. 230
Ground Floor Plan as Proposed

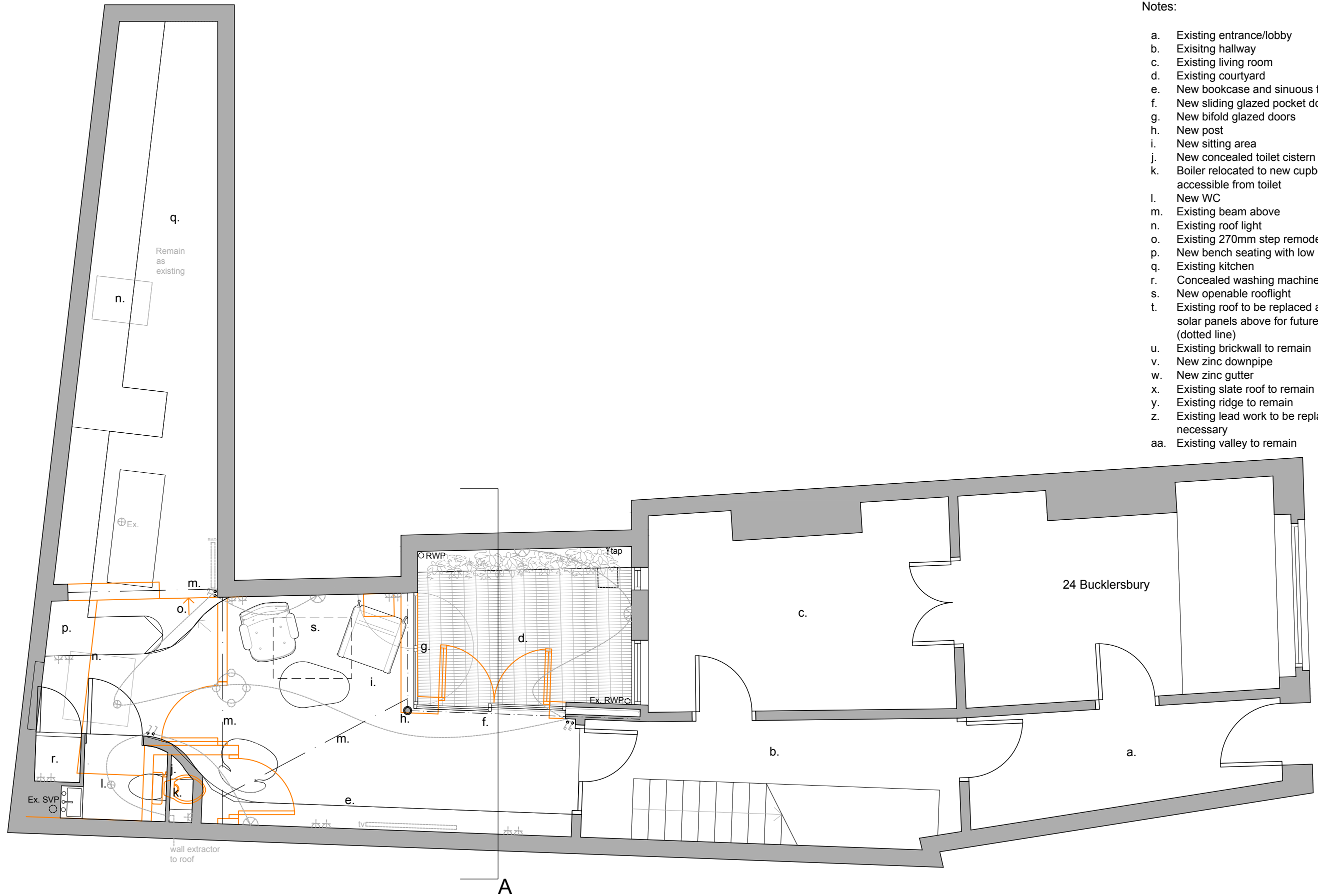
Stage: Stage 2
Status: Planning Application

020

REVISION: Scale 1:50 @:A3

Notes:

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- b. Existing hallway
- c. Existing living room
- d. Existing courtyard
- e. New bookcase and sinuous timber wall
- f. New sliding glazed pocket doors
- g. New bifold glazed doors
- h. New post
- i. New sitting area
- j. New concealed toilet cistern
- k. Boiler relocated to new cupboard accessible from toilet
- l. New WC
- m. Existing beam above
- n. Existing roof light
- o. Existing 270mm step remodelled
- p. New bench seating with low level shelving
- q. Existing kitchen
- r. Concealed washing machine/tumble dryer
- s. New openable rooflight
- t. Existing roof to be replaced and indicative solar panels above for future installing (dotted line)
- u. Existing brickwall to remain
- v. New zinc downpipe
- w. New zinc gutter
- x. Existing slate roof to remain
- y. Existing ridge to remain
- z. Existing lead work to be replaced where necessary
- aa. Existing valley to remain



KEY

Dontakings



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Note: This drawing is copyright.
Note: These layouts are preliminary until further surveys are undertaken.
Note: Scale and boundaries are indicative.
Note: Ownership boundary indicative based on OS data.
Note: Red dotted line is shown as site boundary.
Note: Elevation key plan not to scale.

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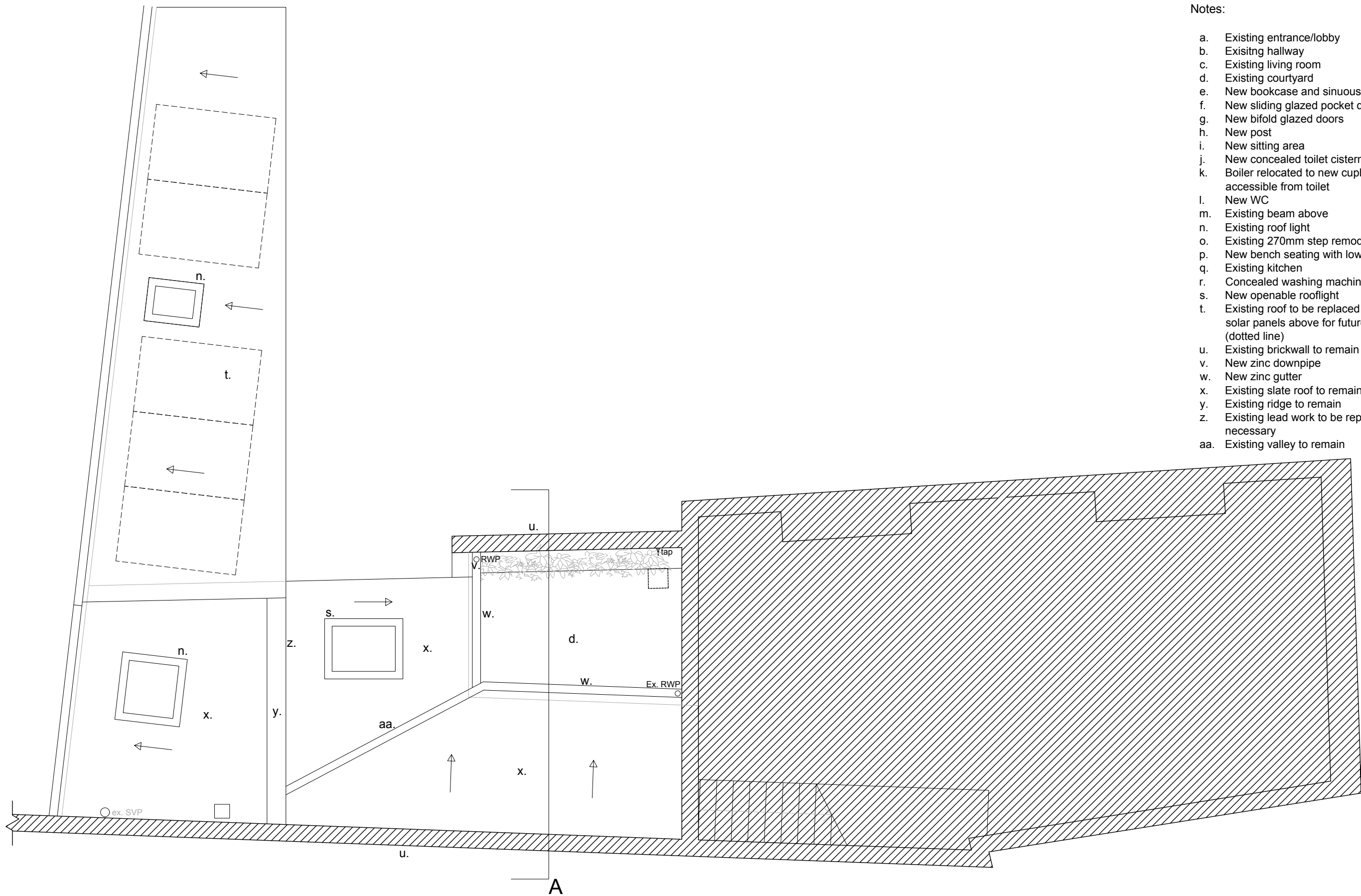
24a Bucklersbury

Job No. 230
Ground Floor Plan
with dontakings
as Proposed

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Planning Application

021

REVISION: Scale 1:50 @:A3



Notes:

- a. Existing entrance/lobby
- b. Existing hallway
- c. Existing living room
- d. Existing courtyard
- e. New bookcase and sinuous timber wall
- f. New sliding glazed pocket doors
- g. New bifold glazed doors
- h. New post
- i. New sitting area
- j. New concealed toilet cistern
- k. Boiler relocated to new cupboard accessible from toilet
- l. New WC
- m. Existing beam above
- n. Existing roof light
- o. Existing 270mm step remodelled
- p. New bench seating with low level shelving
- q. Existing kitchen
- r. Concealed washing machine/tumble dryer
- s. New openable rooflight
- t. Existing roof to be replaced and indicative solar panels above for future installing (dotted line)
- u. Existing brickwall to remain
- v. New zinc downpipe
- w. New zinc gutter
- x. Existing slate roof to remain
- y. Existing ridge to remain
- z. Existing lead work to be replaced where necessary
- aa. Existing valley to remain

KEY

 Indicative existing building (to be remain)



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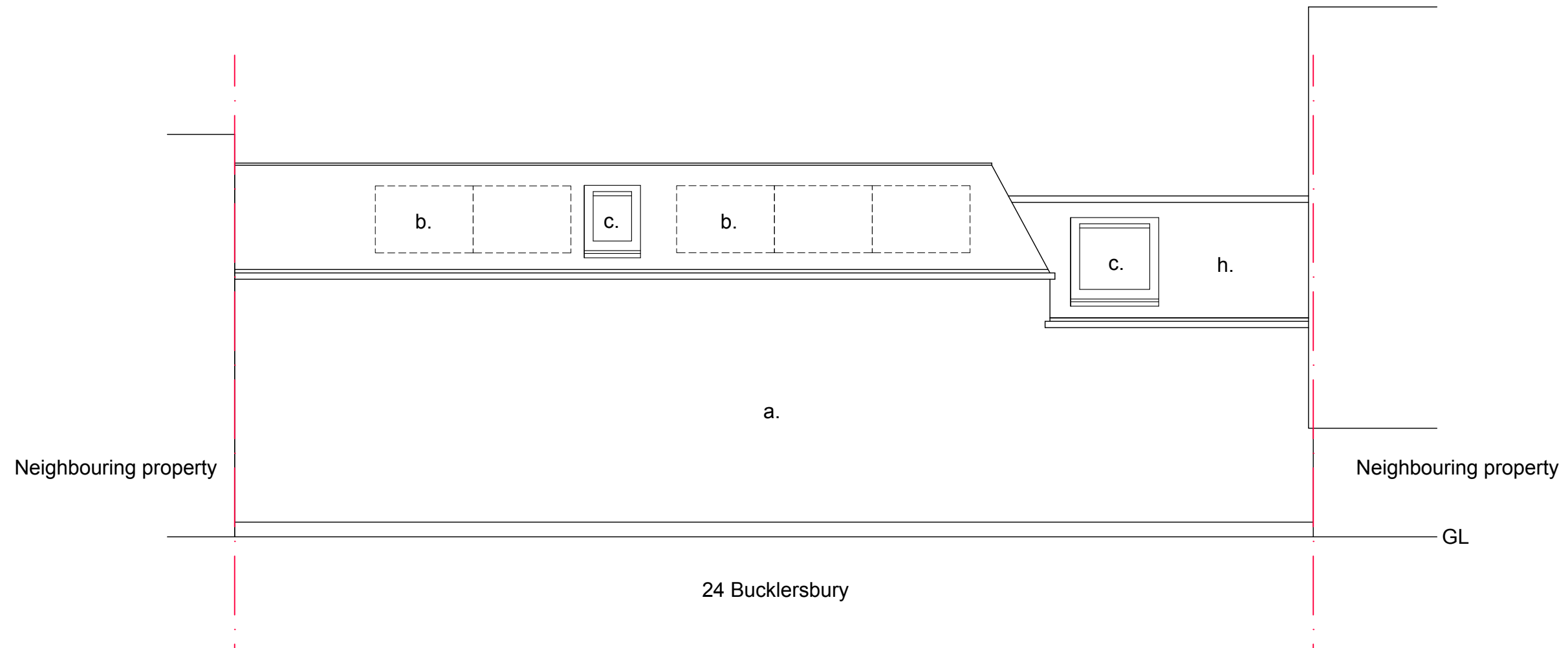
24a Bucklersbury

Job No.
230 Roof Plan
as Proposed

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Planning Application

022

REVISION: Scale
1:50 @:A3



Notes:

Proposed rear elevation

- a. Existing render wall to remain
- b. Existing roof to be replaced and indicative solar panels above for future installing (dotted line)
- c. Existing rooflight to remain
- d. New openable rooflight
- e. Existing brickwall to remain
- f. New zinc downpipe
- g. New zinc gutter
- h. Existing slate roof to remain
- i. Existing ridge to remain
- j. Existing lead work to be replaced if necessary
- k. New double glazed bi-fold door
- l. New double glazed sliding door

0 1m 2m 3m 4m 5m 1:50

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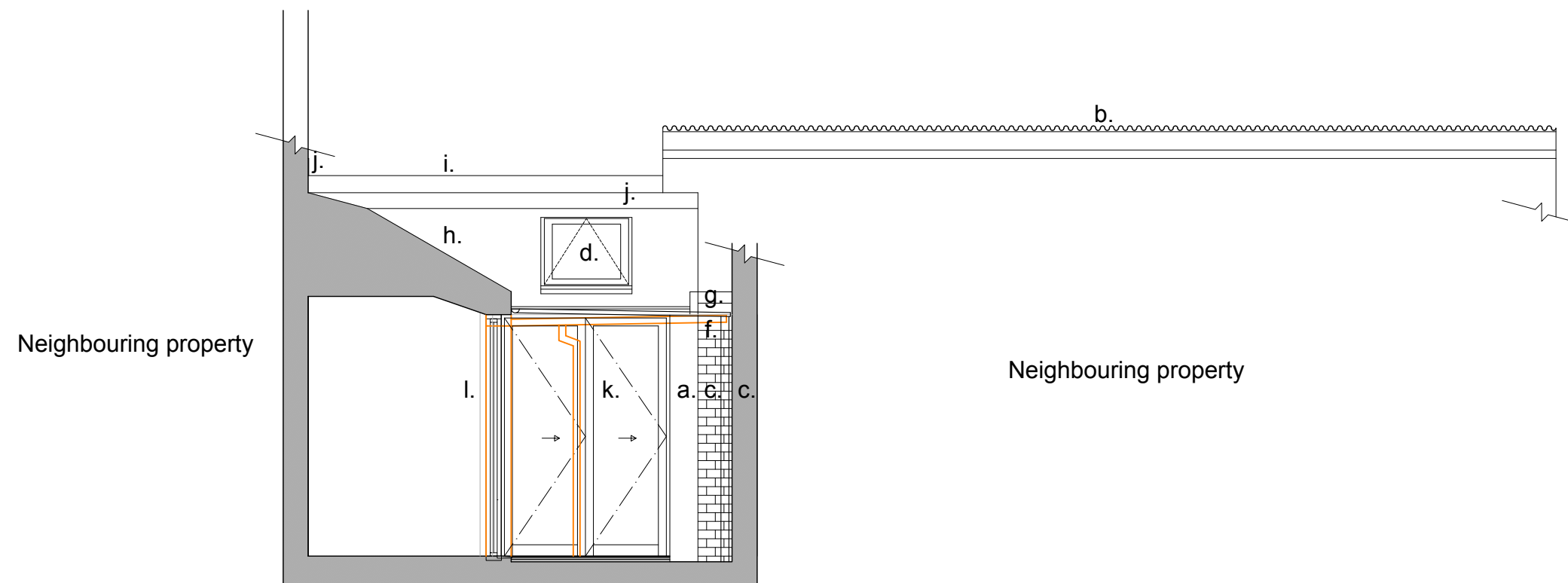
24a Bucklersbury

Job No.
230 Proposed Rear
Elevation

Stage: Stage 2
Status: Planning Application

023

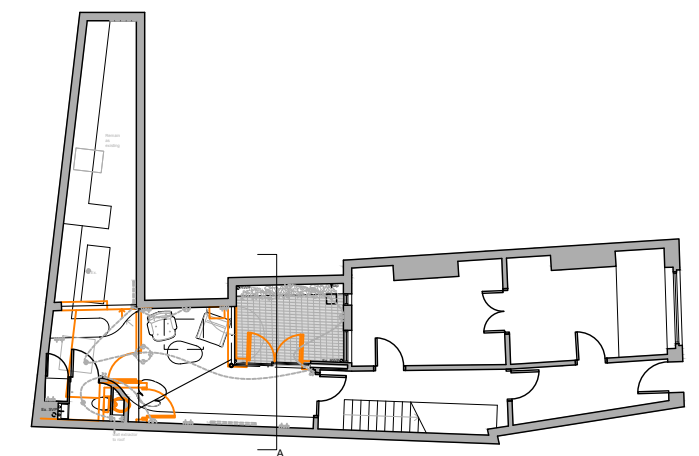
REVISION: Scale
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Proposed Section A

Notes:

- a. Existing render wall to remain
- b. Existing roof to be replaced and indicative solar panels above for future installing (dotted line)
- c. Existing rooflight to remain
- d. New operable rooflight
- e. Existing brickwall to remain
- f. New zinc downpipe
- g. New zinc gutter
- h. Existing slate roof to remain
- i. Existing ridge to remain
- j. Existing lead work to be replaced if necessary
- k. New double glazed bi-fold door
- l. New double glazed sliding door



Key Plan (S=1:200)

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Job No.
230 Proposed Section A
with Downtakings

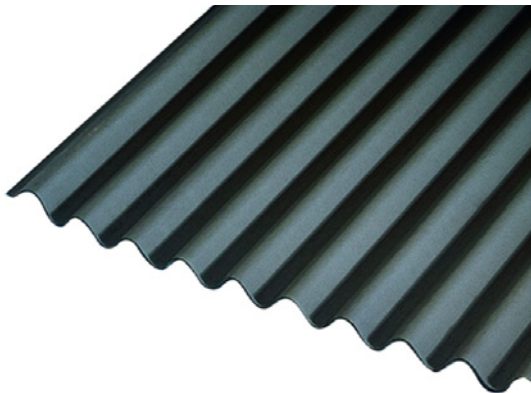
Stage: Stage 2
Status: Planning Application

REVISION: Scale
1:50 @:A3

024

Material Samples

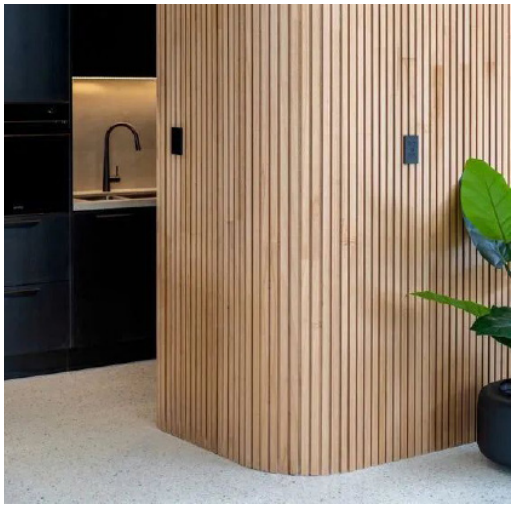
7.1 Design and material precedents



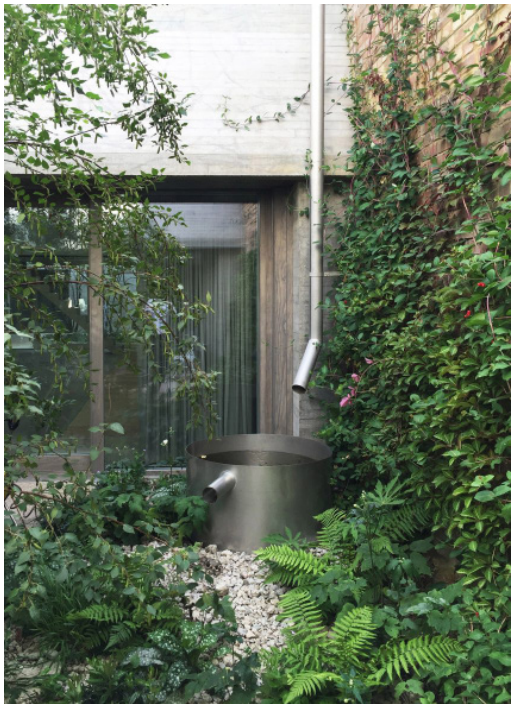
Corrugated sheet metal



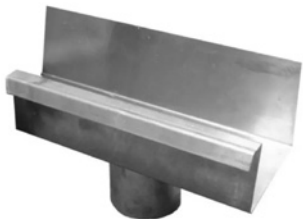
Colour sample for aluminium windows and metal roof



Outdoor stone herringbone paving cobbles or similar



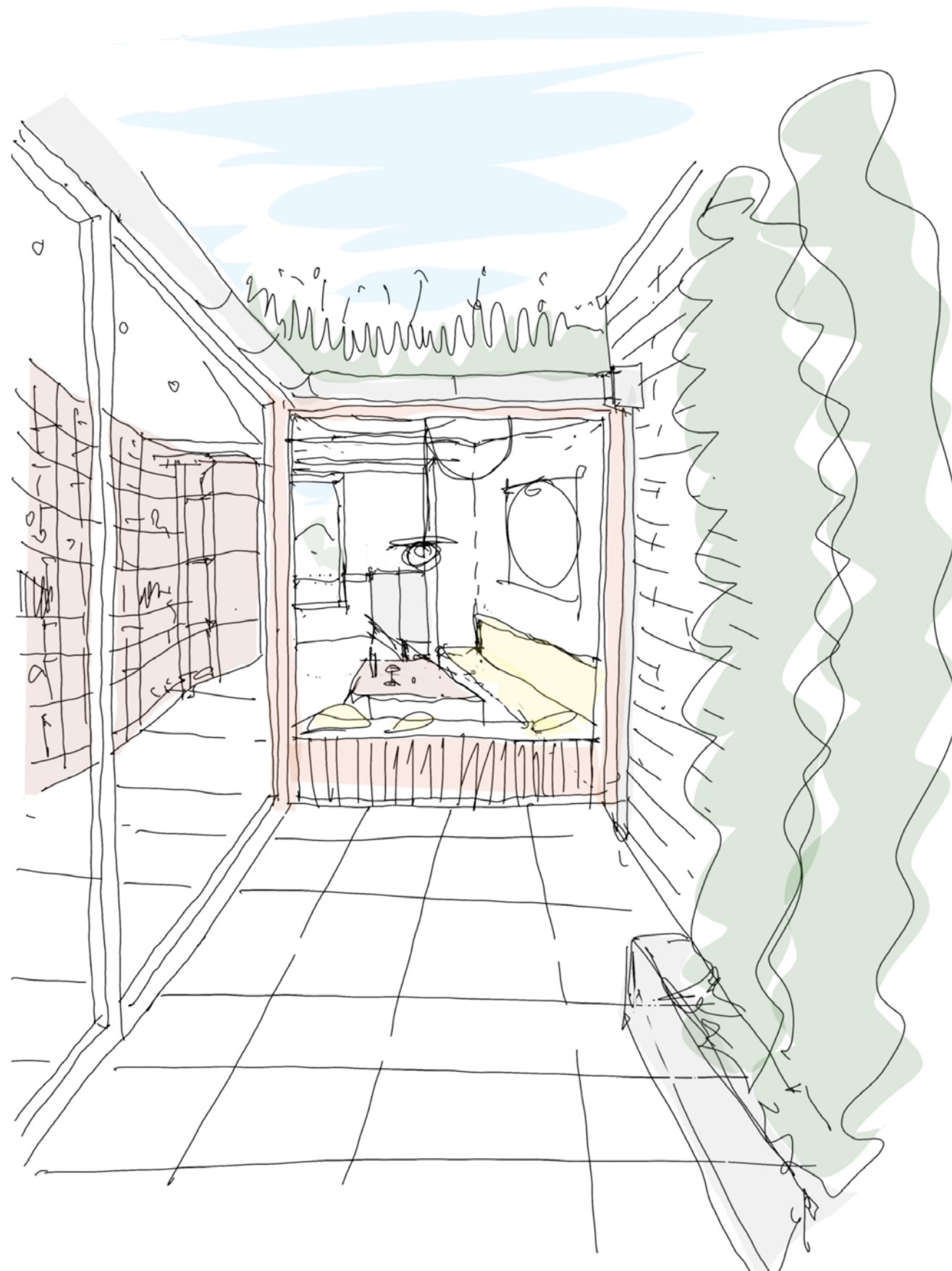
Rainwater goods in Zinc



Zinc gutter

Concept Sketch

8.1 Concept Sketch



Proposed courtyard and sitting area over



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