



AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW PANEL

WEDNESDAY, 26TH OCTOBER, 2016

At 7.00 pm

in the

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL,

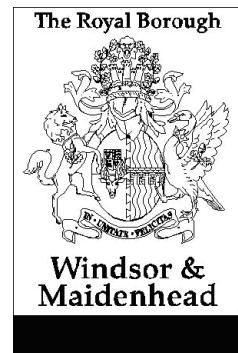
SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

PART I

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
5.	<u>BROCKET HALL</u> To Consider the report.	3 - 38

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Report for: ACTION



Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part 1
Title	The Brocket
Responsible Officer(s)	Russell O'Keefe, Strategic Director of Corporate and Community Services
Contact officer, job title and phone number	Dave Thompson, RBWM Property Company 01628 68 3811
Member reporting	Cllr J Rankin, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Property
For Consideration By	Audit & Performance Review Panel
Date to be Considered	26 th October 2016
Implementation Date if Not Called In	Immediately
Affected Wards	All Wards

REPORT SUMMARY

1. This report reviews the outcomes of the feasibility study into the future use of The Brocket.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION: That Audit and Performance Review Panel:

- i. Note the work carried out and provide any comments.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Brocket in Boyn Hill Avenue is a Grade II listed building displaying arts and crafts influences.
- 2.2 The building was originally designed as a residential dwelling and, as such, the rooms, whilst larger than average for a house, are domestic in their scale. The main feature of the house is its main entrance; panelled reception room and staircase which are both its greatest feature but also its main limitation in terms of usage.

- 2.3 The building came into the ownership of Berkshire County Council in 1950 and has been in public use ever since. More recently it has been used as a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) before being vacated in July 2014 and has been empty ever since.
- 2.4 The property sits within mainly a residential area with the large house next to it converted to flats whilst within close proximity is a guest house, restaurant and the Lady Elizabeth residential home.
- 2.5 A number of uses have been considered including conversion of the property to flats, its use as a Registrar's Office and Council/Community meeting rooms and/or a mixed use of both.
- 2.6 In June of this year the Council commissioned CSK Architects, a specialist practice working with listed buildings to undertake a feasibility study. As part of this exercise the Architects took input from the Registration Service as outlined in the briefing document as attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.7 Currently the Registration Service handles up to 80 weekday weddings and 80 at weekends and weddings can take place at 45 minute intervals. As such it is believed that parking is required for up to 30 cars and possibly more if weddings overrun for any reason.
- 2.8 The Service is of the opinion that the location should be easily accessible by regular transport including train/bus and that a town centre location is ideal for these purposes. It should also be noted that because people can give notice of marriage up to one calendar year in advance any change in location of the ceremony room would require the Council to give the public and other Registration districts one year's notice of any such changes.
- 2.9 The Architects prepared an initial report in June of this year, a copy of which is attached at Appendix 2. The report concluded that given the parking restrictions and the layout of the listed building, in particular, the principal reception room and stairs, the building is best suited to wholly residential use.
- 2.10 In September of this year, following a review of the Architects proposals, Cllr Stretton put forward comments and alternative proposals with regard to the building's use with a continued focus on its use as a Registrar's office and Community use. A copy of this proposal is attached at Appendix 3. These proposals were submitted to the Architects for their review and comments which are attached at Appendix 4.
- 2.11 The Architects are of the opinion that the proposed alternative changes and its use as a public building would not be acceptable in terms of Conservation/heritage policies. The main reception room would not be able to accommodate the needs of large ceremonies (with a maximum seating capacity of 32) given the constraints of modifying such an architecturally sensitive area of the building and the access issues that exist to maximise the use of the building given the central location of the reception room and stairwell as a thoroughfare. Any additional parking at the rear of the building would impact negatively on the building resulting in a loss of the listed brick garden wall which falls within the listed curtilage, the screen of trees and a large part of the garden area for car

parking purposes (at a cost in excess of £30,000). A report by the Tree Officer is attached at Appendix 5.

- 2.12 In conclusion, the Architects consider any proposed interventions to facilitate a Registry Office within the listed building would not be acceptable in terms of Conservation policies. The building was originally designed as a dwelling and as such the rooms are, whilst larger than average for a house, domestic in their scale and not suitable for use as a public building. The Registry Office requires a large dedicated ceremony room which The Brocket is unable to provide. Alternative public uses will have the same issues of having to adapt the building to become fully accessible, with the intervention of ramp/lift etc. The issue of additional parking requirements will also apply leading to further on street parking or the destruction of the rear garden, loss of part of the listed garden wall and removal of important tree screening all of which would be detrimental to the fabric and setting of the building.
- 2.13 Given the above conclusions it is believed that use of The Brocket for residential purposes is the most efficient and effective option. The Council could consider the sale of the building but such an approach would not realise its true potential value. It is therefore proposed to redevelop the building and once redeveloped transfer the building to the Council's wholly owned property management and development company (RBWM Property Company Ltd) for renting to key workers on an affordable basis. This would ensure that the property can be redeveloped at no real cost to the Council, is retained as a long term council asset and is used for the benefit of the community producing a reliable recurring income stream.
- 2.14 The redevelopment of The Brocket for residential use and in particular its use for affordable accommodation requires the approval of the Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee and planning approval would be required for its change of use. This is scheduled to be considered at a November meeting.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Defined Outcomes	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date they should be delivered by
Units Available to Rent	July 2017	June 2017	May 2017	April 2017 2016	June 2017

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS

Financial impact on the budget

- 4.1 An estimate of costs has been received to convert The Brocket into 6 flats and an indicative budget of £495,000 will be required to cover the works, fees and preliminary items. Once the scheme has been approved internally and planning permission obtained a formal quotation process will be undertaken.

- 4.2 The use of The Brocket for key worker/affordable accommodation will allow for S106 monies to be used for the project thus negating the need for the Council to fund any works utilising the General Fund or borrowing to finance the project. It has been confirmed that S106 monies are available from the fund for this purpose.
- 4.3 Based on an affordable rent set at 80% of the market rent it is believed that The Brocket will generate a recurring gross rental income of up to £66,000 per annum as well as generate additional income for the Council through additional council tax receipts. Previously council tax receipts for the building amounted to around £6,000 per annum.
- 4.4 The redevelopment of The Brocket and conversion of the building into flats will significantly enhance its asset value to an estimated £2,300,000.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council can rely upon the general power of competence within the Localism Act 2011 to form a Housing Company to operate a business to let homes for rent.
- 5.2 The Council has a duty to efficiently manage its assets and has legal powers to hold and transfer/dispose of land under sections 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

6. VALUE FOR MONEY

- 6.1 Through the better utilisation of Council assets and the use of existing S106 contributions the Company can develop the building that will not only be of benefit to residents but generate recurring income for the Council.

7. SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT APPRAISAL

- 7.1 None.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
Cost of works exceeds estimate	Medium	The building will be fully surveyed prior to works being undertaken to further assess the building's condition to ensure budget accuracy as far as possible. Quotes will be obtained on a lump sum fixed price basis to cap the level of risk.	Low

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
Collapse of housing market could impact on the value of the portfolio.	Low / Medium	Following refurbishment and revaluation the overall value of the portfolio will have increased significantly and any market collapse will need to be dramatic.	Low
Lack of tenants would impact on any debt servicing and profitability	Low/Medium	Given that the target market is 'key workers' and provision of social support it is envisaged that there will be a continual demand for this type of accommodation and in any economic downturn the requirement may actually increase. In addition given that the residents will be public sector supported this provides an additional level of security in terms of rental income guarantees. In the event that there are insufficient 'key workers' seeking accommodation the units will be marketed to the private rented sector.	Low

9. LINKS TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 9.1 The proposals supports the priority Residents First by providing a facility to attract and retain key workers to the Borough and increasing the amount of affordable accommodation and Equipping Ourselves for the Future through provision of recurring income

10. EQUALITIES, HUMAN RIGHTS AND COMMUNITY COHESION

- 10.1 None.

11. STAFFING/WORKFORCE AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None.

12. PROPERTY AND ASSETS

12.1 Yes as detailed in this report.

13. ANY OTHER IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None.

14. CONSULTATION

14.1 A report will be provided to the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel for review.

15. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

15.1

Date	Activity
November 2016	Regeneration Sub-Committee
18 th January 2017	Maidenhead Development Panel
6 th February 2017	Initial Work to commence on site
30 th June 2017	Units Available

15.2 The timeline above is indicative as it is dependent upon the appropriate internal approvals and planning approvals being obtained.

16. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Registry Service Requirements
- Appendix 2 - CSK Architects Initial Feasibility Study
- Appendix 3 - Cllr Stretton Comments version 3 September 2016
- Appendix 4 - CSK Architects Response to Cllr Stretton Comments
- Appendix 5 - Tree Officer Report

17. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- None.

18. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held and Department	Date sent	Date received	See comments in paragraph:
Internal				
Cllr Rankin	Lead Member for Economic Development and Property	18/10/16		
Russell O'Keefe	Strategic Director Corporate and Community Services	18/10/16		
Alison Alexander	Managing Director/ Strategic Director Adults, Children and Health	18/10/16		
Simon Fletcher	Strategic Director Operations and Customer Services	18/10/16		
Rob Stubbs	Head of Finance	18/10/16		

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?
Key Yes	No

Full name of report author	Job title	Full contact no:
Dave Thompson	Interim CEO RBWM Property Company Ltd	01628 796956

The Registration Service needs:-

- 3 separate private offices for registering birth, deaths, still-births, marriages, and the Joint Passport and Nationality Checking service.
- A central reception area with waiting area for around 15/20 people
- A strong room to house all Registers from 1837-date, and also to house all secure stock and paperwork. It's a legal requirement that we have this. This must be easily accessible from the reception desk as Receptionists cannot leave the desk unmanned to wander round the building to do research for family trees and we frequently only have one receptionist on duty.
- A kitchen
- A ceremony room – large enough to hold 50 people with one separate entrance and one separate exit
- A garden to take photos in - this must be near to the exit door but away from the front door where the next ceremony is gathering
- Parking for guests and staff – can be up to 30 cars – more if weddings overrun and the next one arrives before the last one has gone.
- Large turning circle with separate parking for bridal cars right outside the front door
- Full disabled access, and everything should be on one floor only
- Hearing loop

Other points to note/issues that should be thought through from a Service user point of view:-

The location should be easily accessible by regular public transport – train/bus – particularly for older people registering who can only come in by public transport, or Joint Passport and Nationality applicants who come in by train. The Town Hall is perfect from this point of view.

Because people can give notice of marriage up to one calendar year in advance, if we were to change the location of the ceremony room then we would need to give the public, and other Registration districts one years notice of the changes. But there could be no slippage in this date. It would all have to be up and running otherwise we would run into legal difficulties with the General Register Office/cancelled weddings etc etc.

THE BROCKET . BOYN HILL AVENUE . MAIDENHEAD
FEASIBILITY STUDY



CSK CHARTERED ARCHITECTS
93A HIGH STREET . ETON . WINDSOR . BERKSHIRE . SL4 6AF
01753 840519 info@cskarchitects.co.uk www.cskarchitects.co.uk

Prepared for the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead: 27.6.16

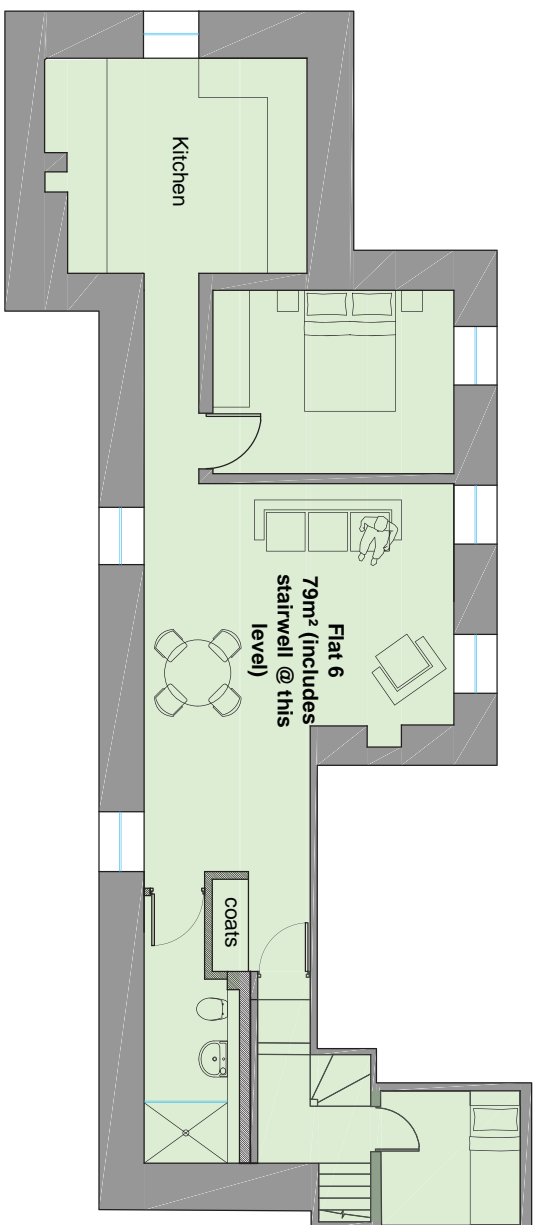
CONTENTS PAGE:

- 1: RESIDENTIAL SCHEME OPTION A (SK01 + SK01 DEM)
- 2: RESIDENTIAL SCHEME OPTION B (SK02 + SK02 DEM)
- 3: MIXED USE SCHEME - SINGLE REGISTRY OFFICE (SK03 + SK03DEM)
- 4: MIXED USE SCHEME - TWO NUMBER REGISTRY OFFICES (SK04 + SK04DEM)
5. PRELIMINARY PARKING ANALYSIS
- 6: ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE
- 7: SUMMARY / CONCLUSION
- 8: APPENDIX OF EXISTING PHOTOS OF SITE

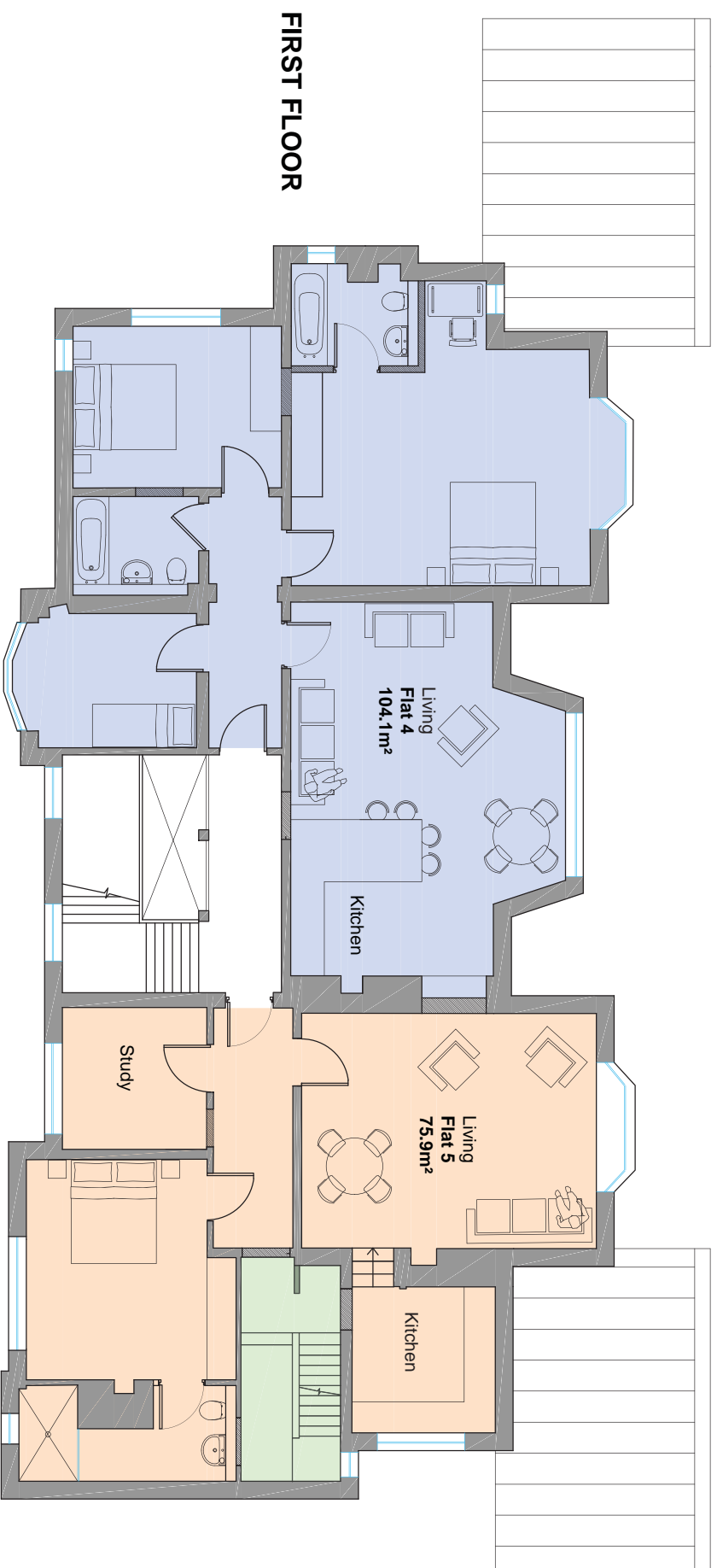
NOTES:

This feasibility study has been prepared on the following basis;

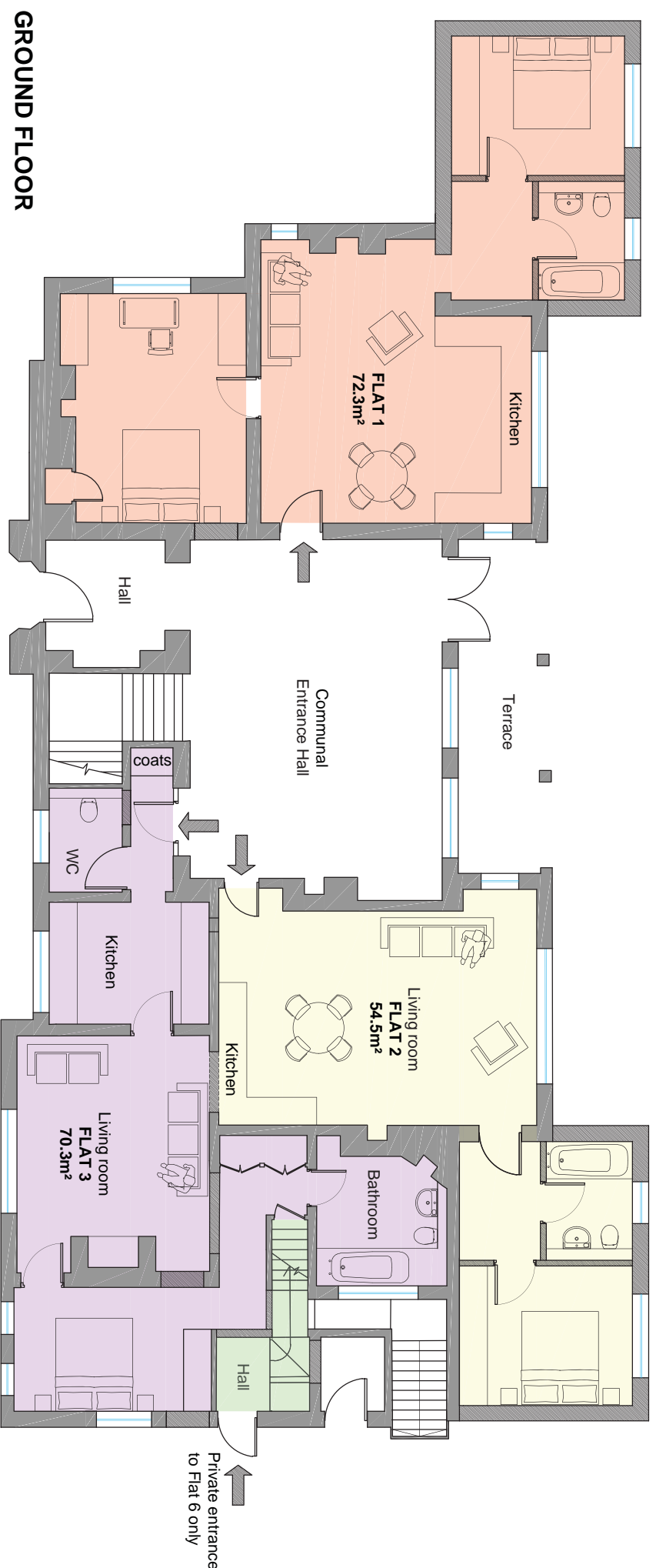
- No detailed survey information of the listed building fabric. Survey quotations have been requested. It is evident in the preparation of the feasibility drawings that there are certain inaccuracies with the current drawings.
- Level information is not known (no topographic survey) when looking at the parking layout. This includes no accurate information on positions of existing gates and dwarf walls in front courtyard.
- It is not known whether there are currently any TPOs which could affect the parking layout. This is specifically relevant to any additional parking along the boundary with Lower Boyndon road. Arboricultural survey required.
- The borough Conservation Officer is yet to be consulted on any of these proposals. She has confirmed that there would be a time charge for a meeting.





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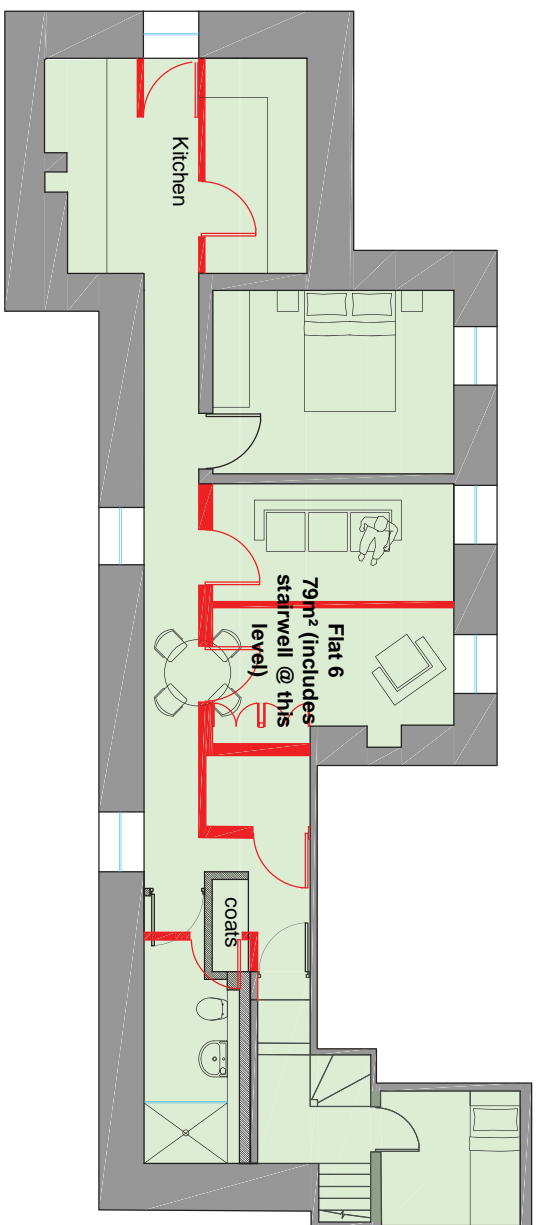
FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

-  Existing
-  New infill walls

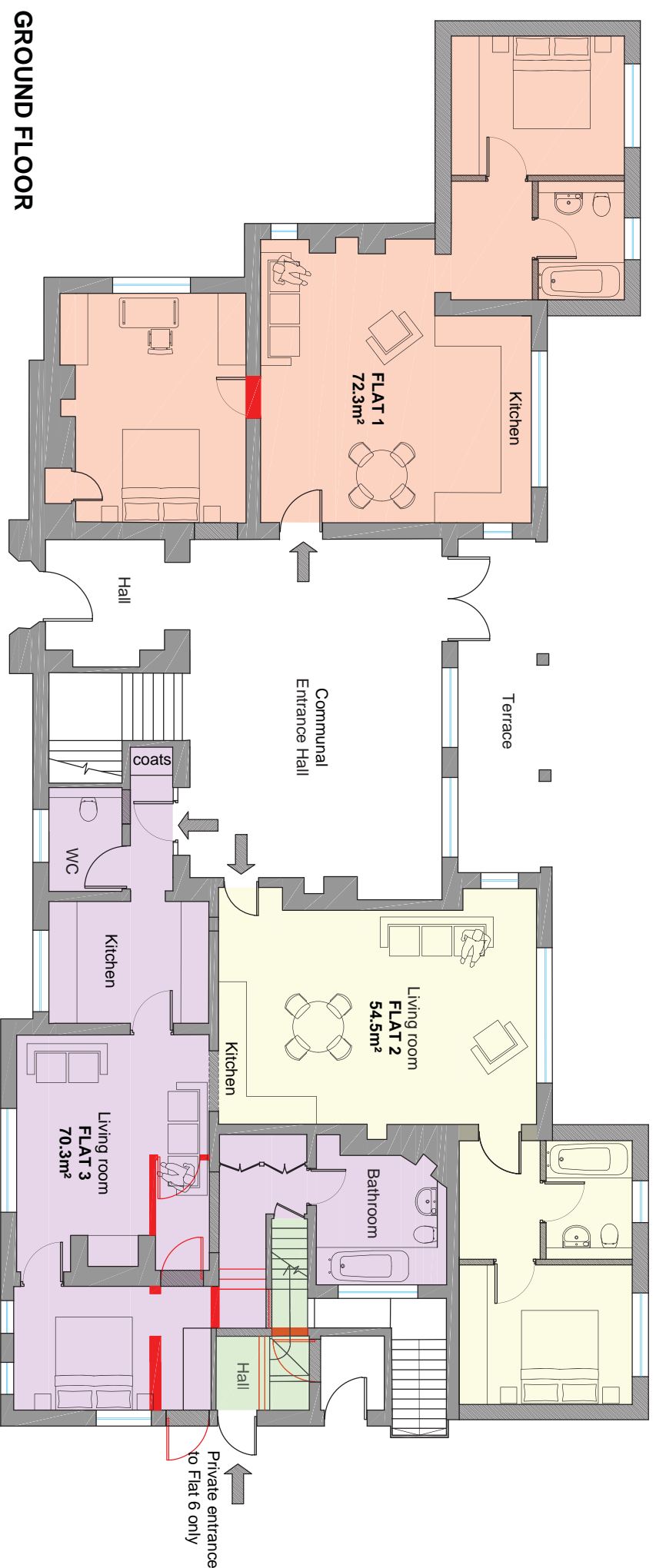
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RESIDENTIAL PLANS OPTION A **1592 / SK01** --
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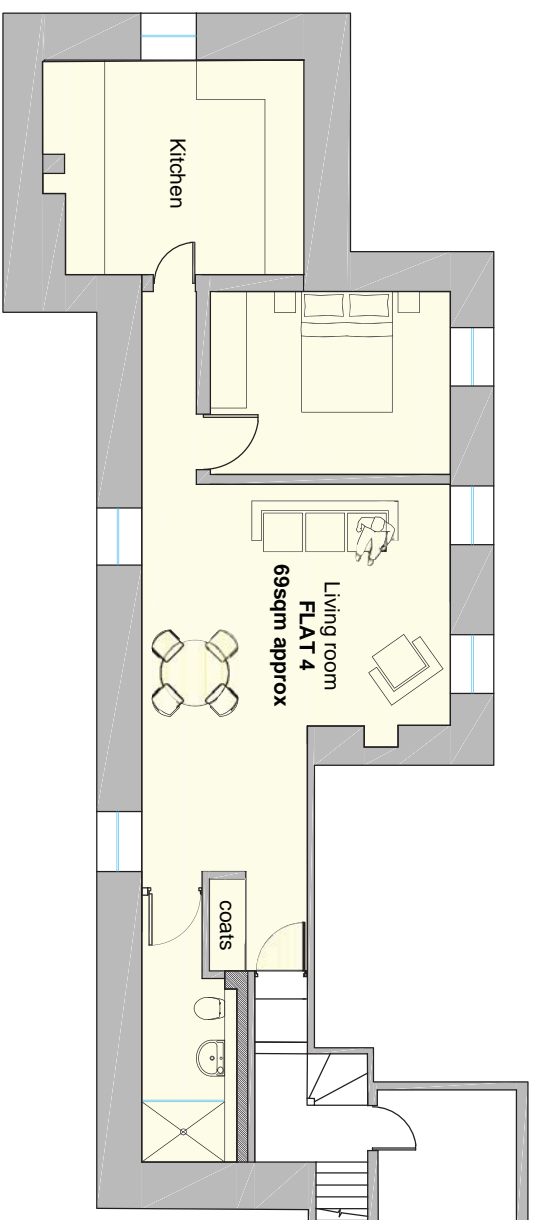


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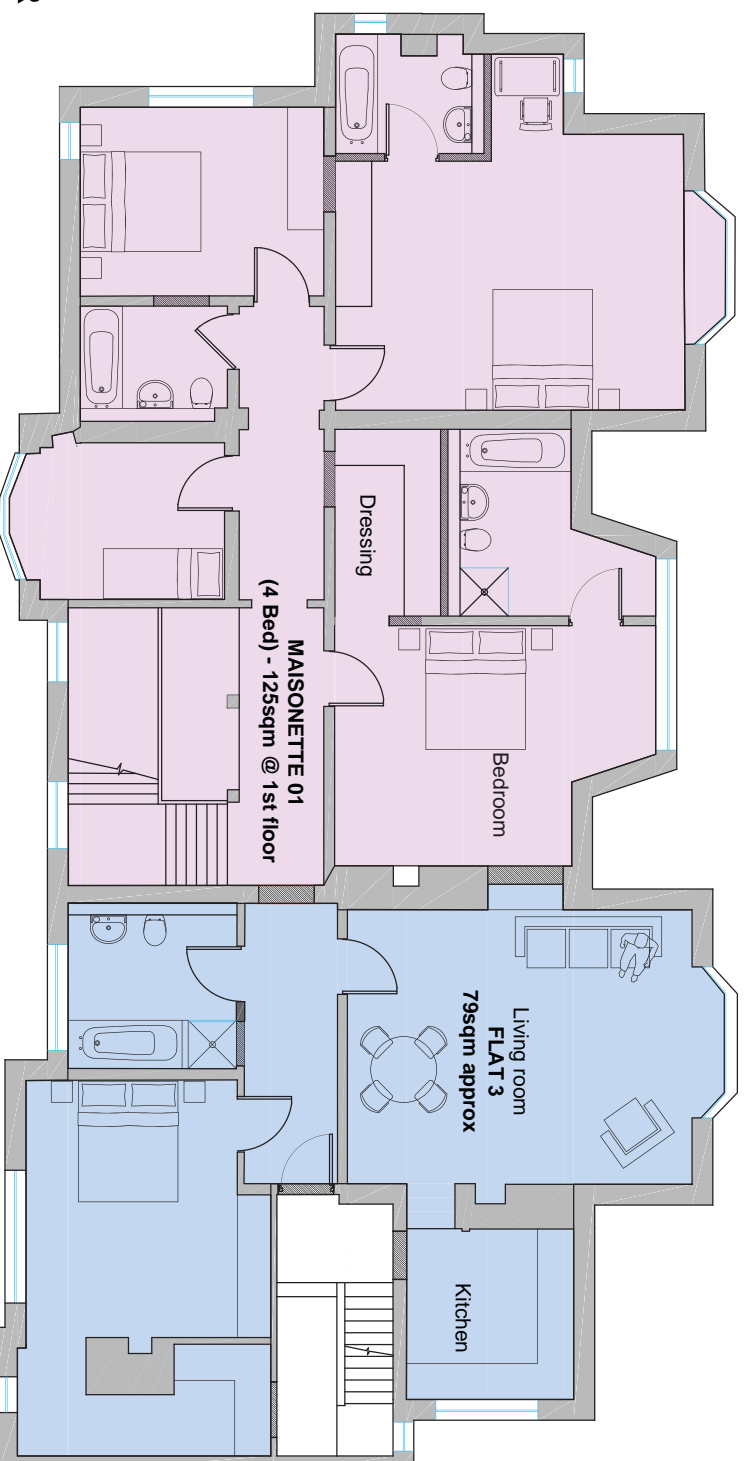
-  Existing
-  Demolition
-  New infill walls

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GROUND & FIRST FLOORS

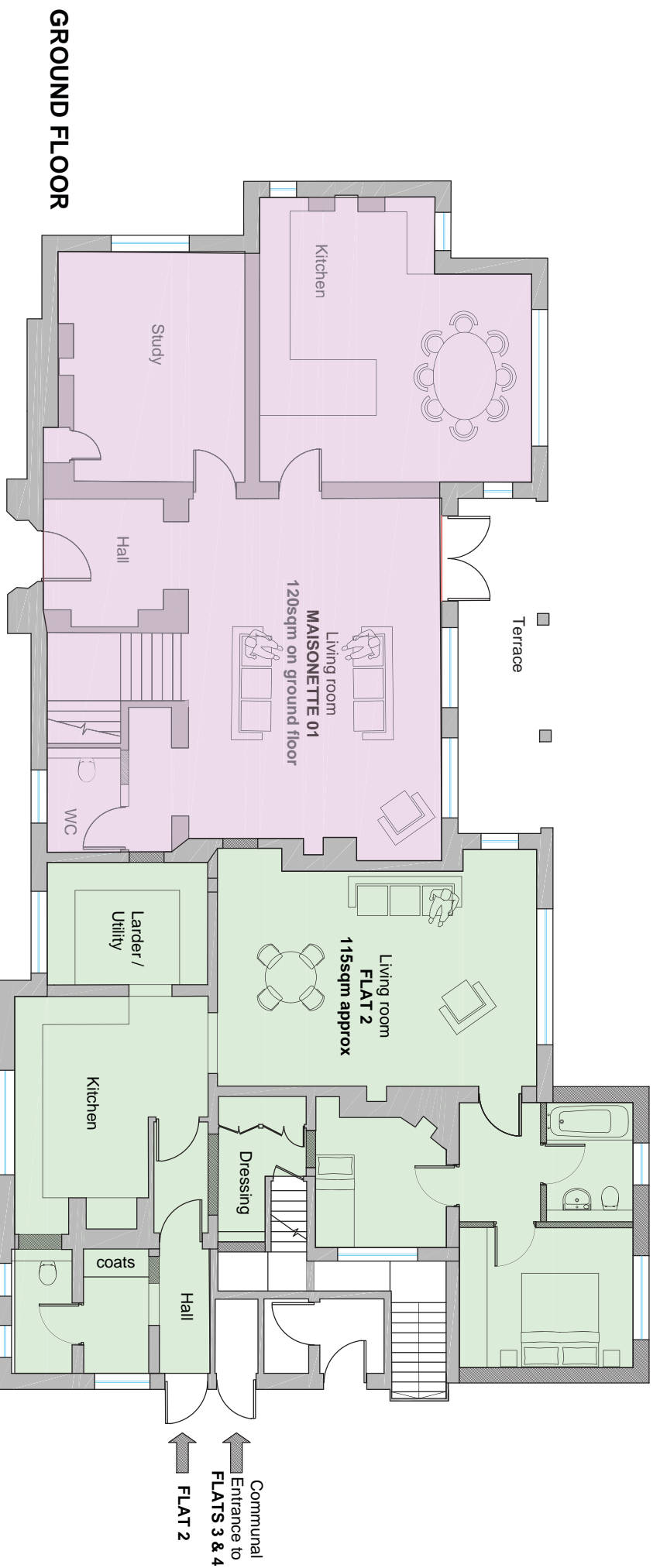
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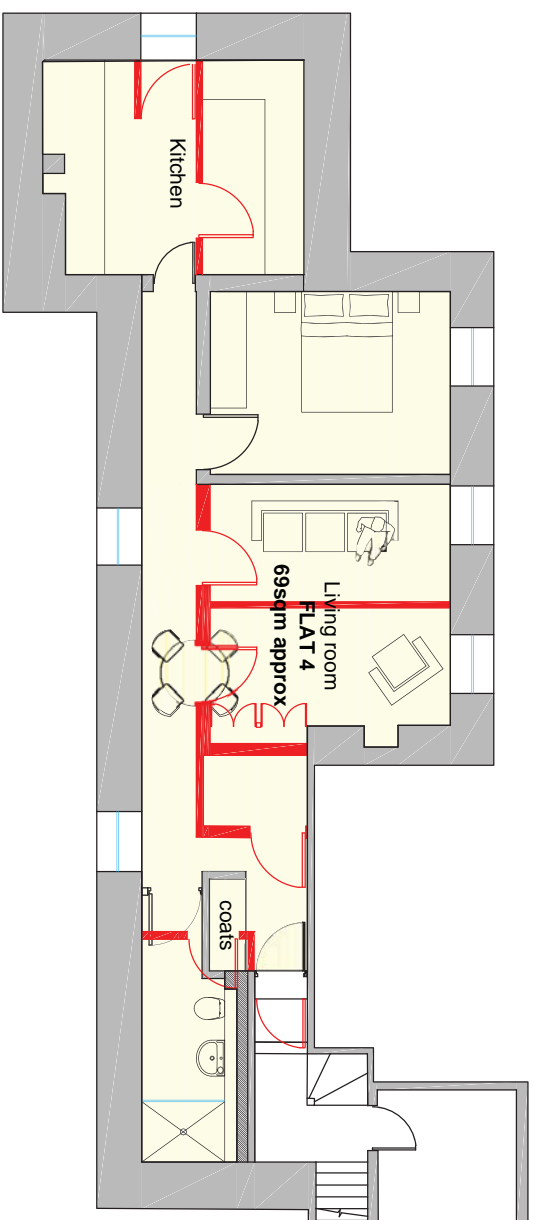


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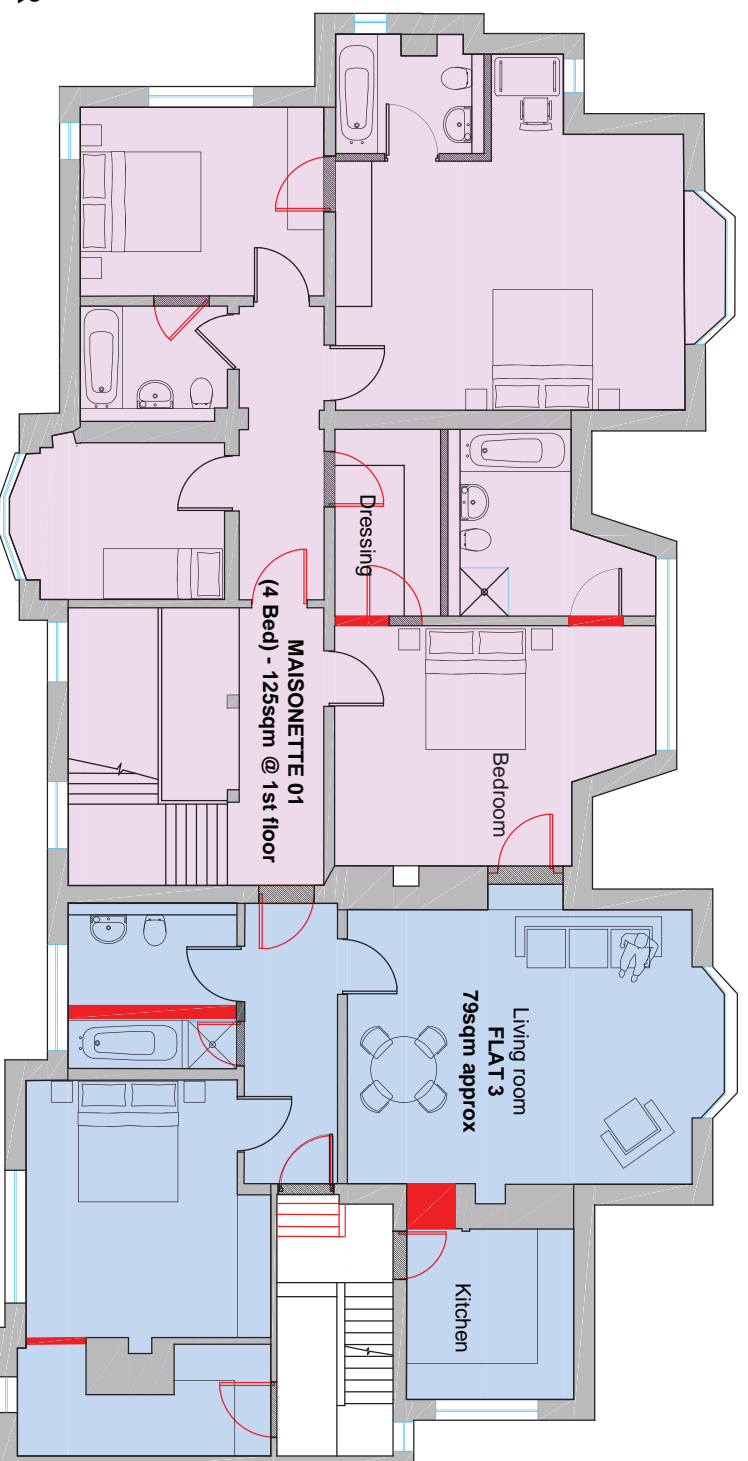
█ New infill walls

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 RESIDENTIAL PLANS OPTION B 1592 / SK02 --

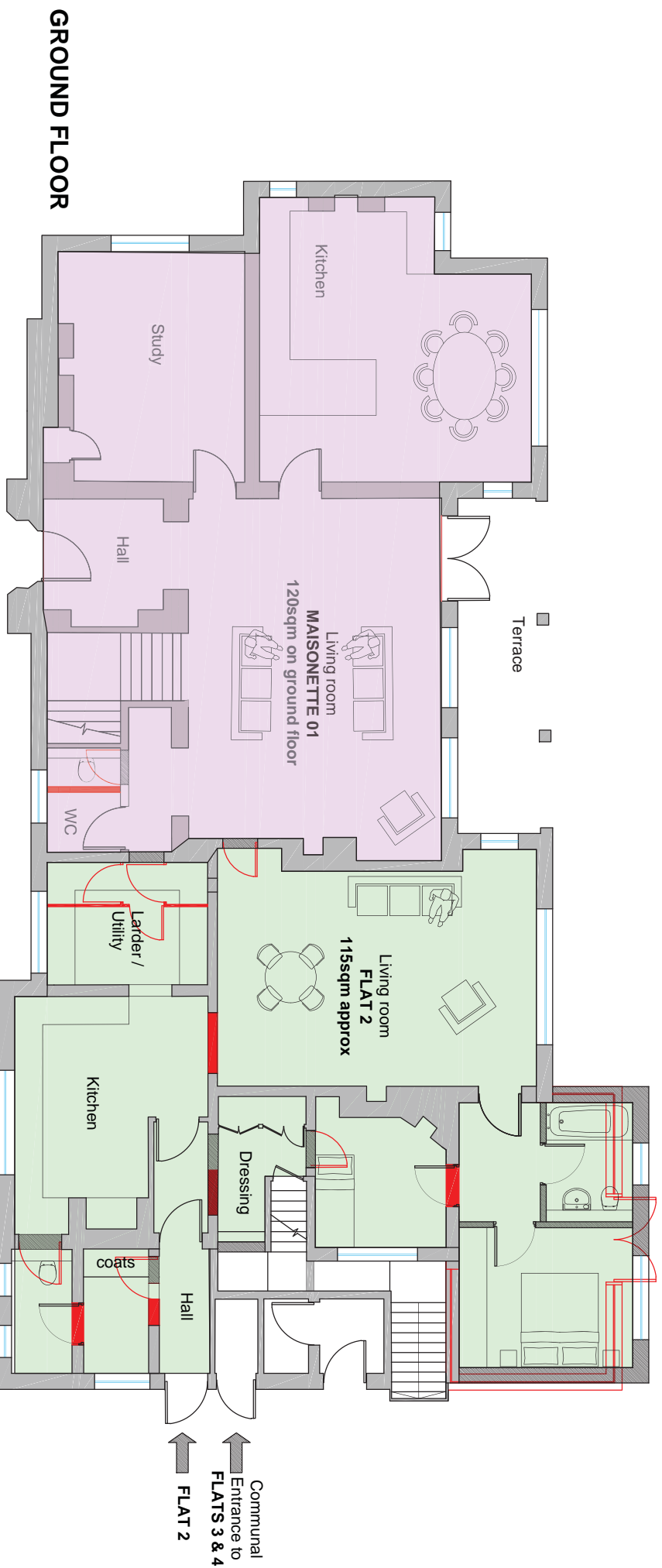
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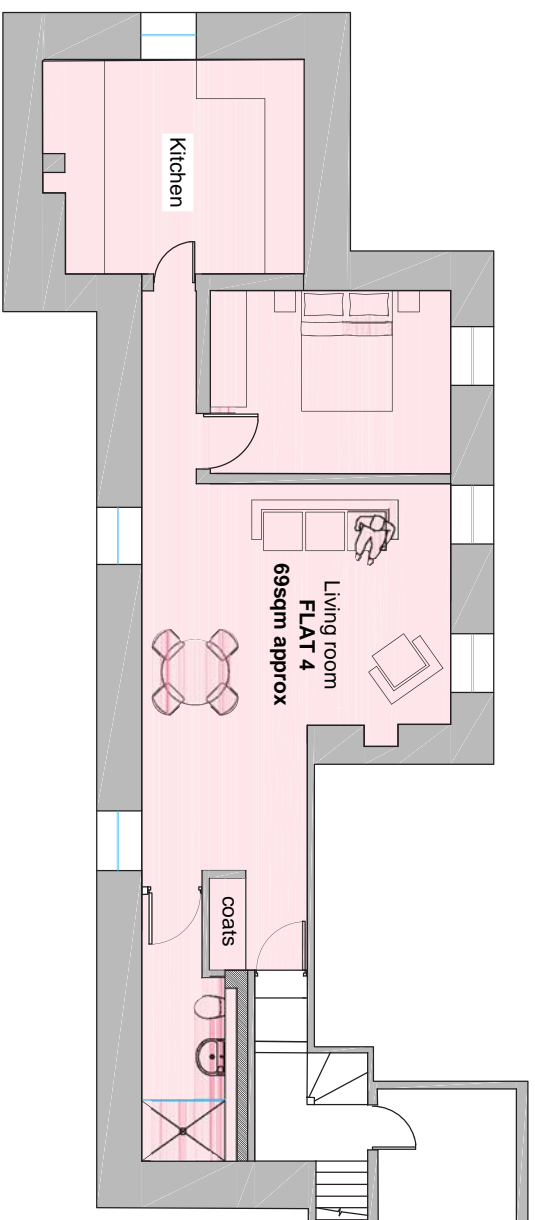
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- Demolition
- New infill walls

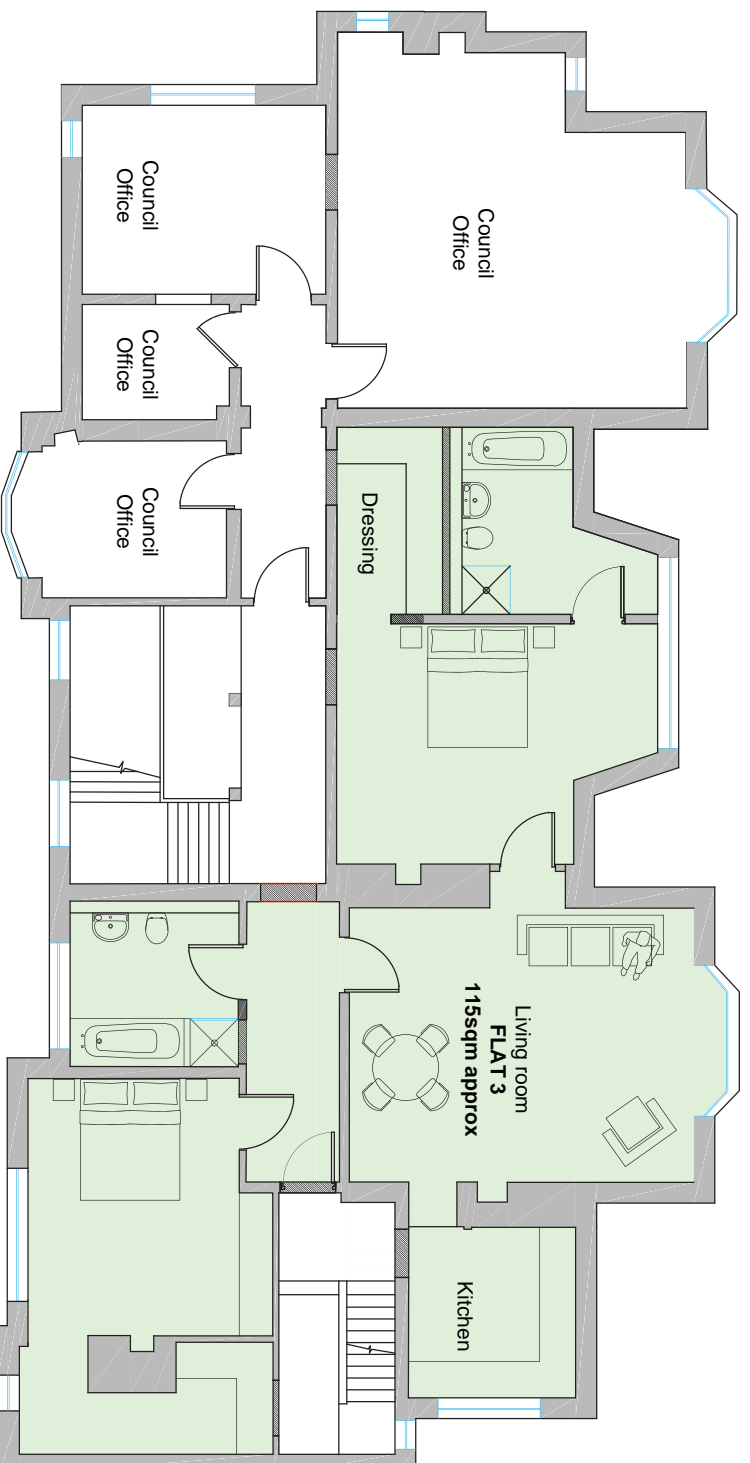
Communal
Entrance to
FLATS 3 & 4
↑
FLAT 2

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GROUND & FIRST FLOORS

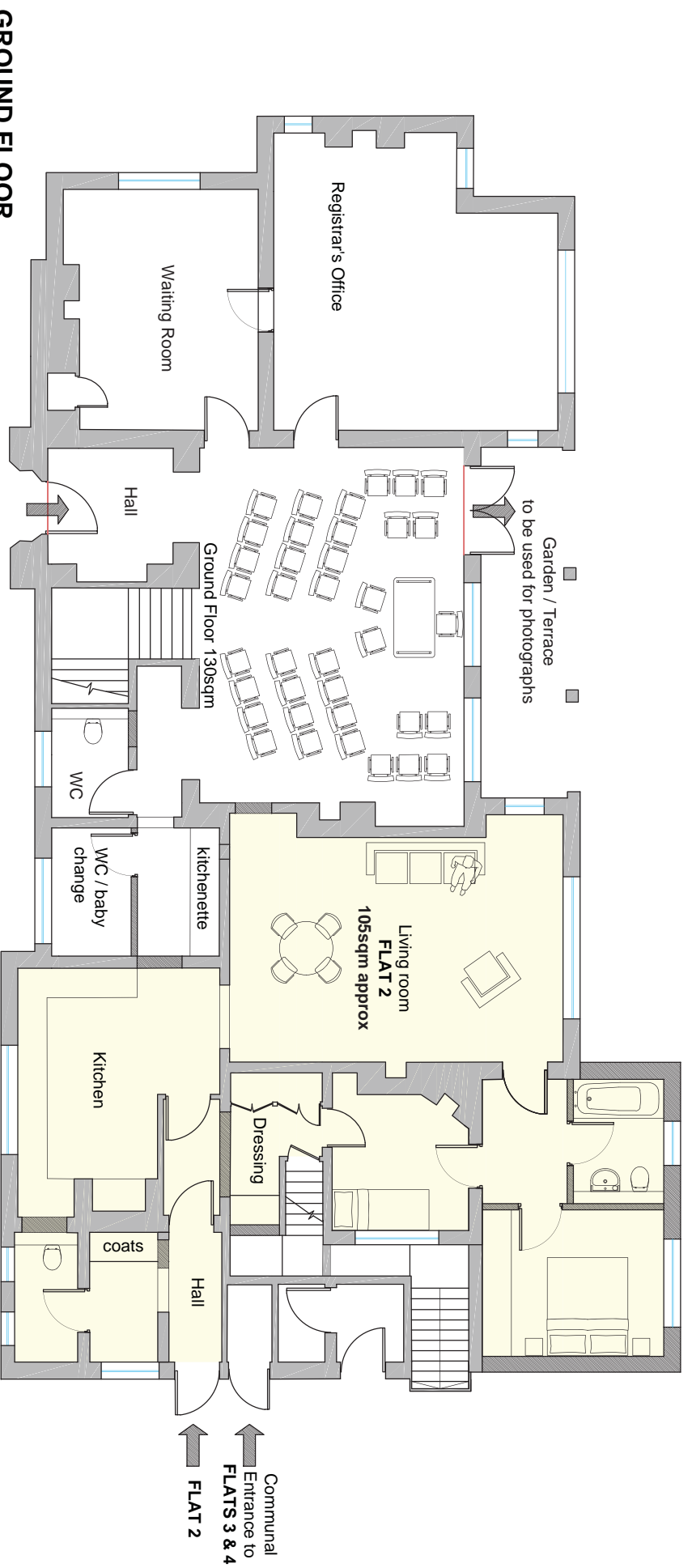
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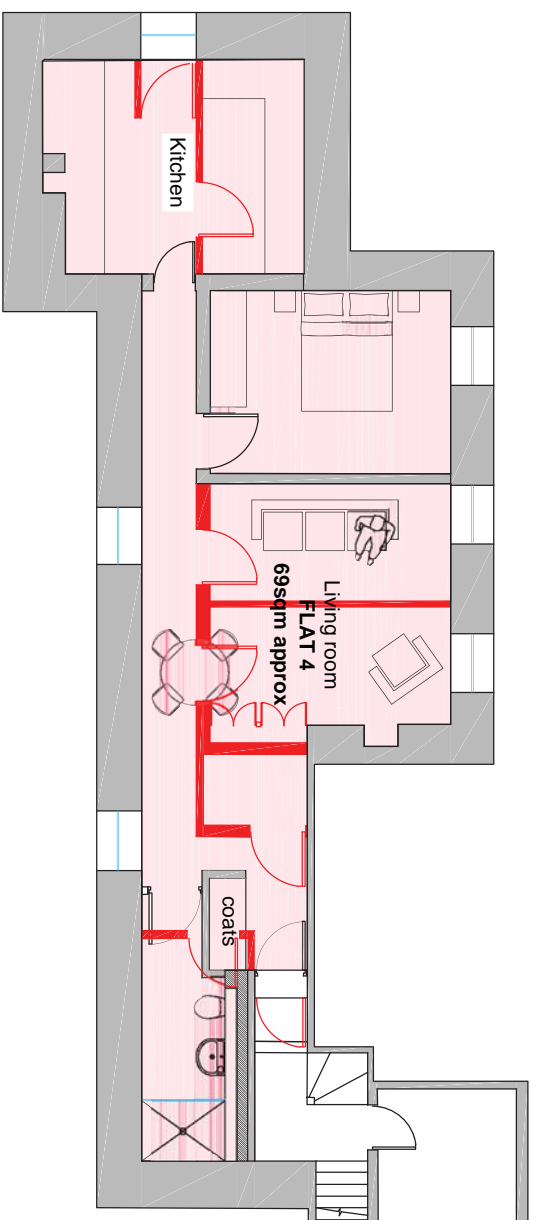


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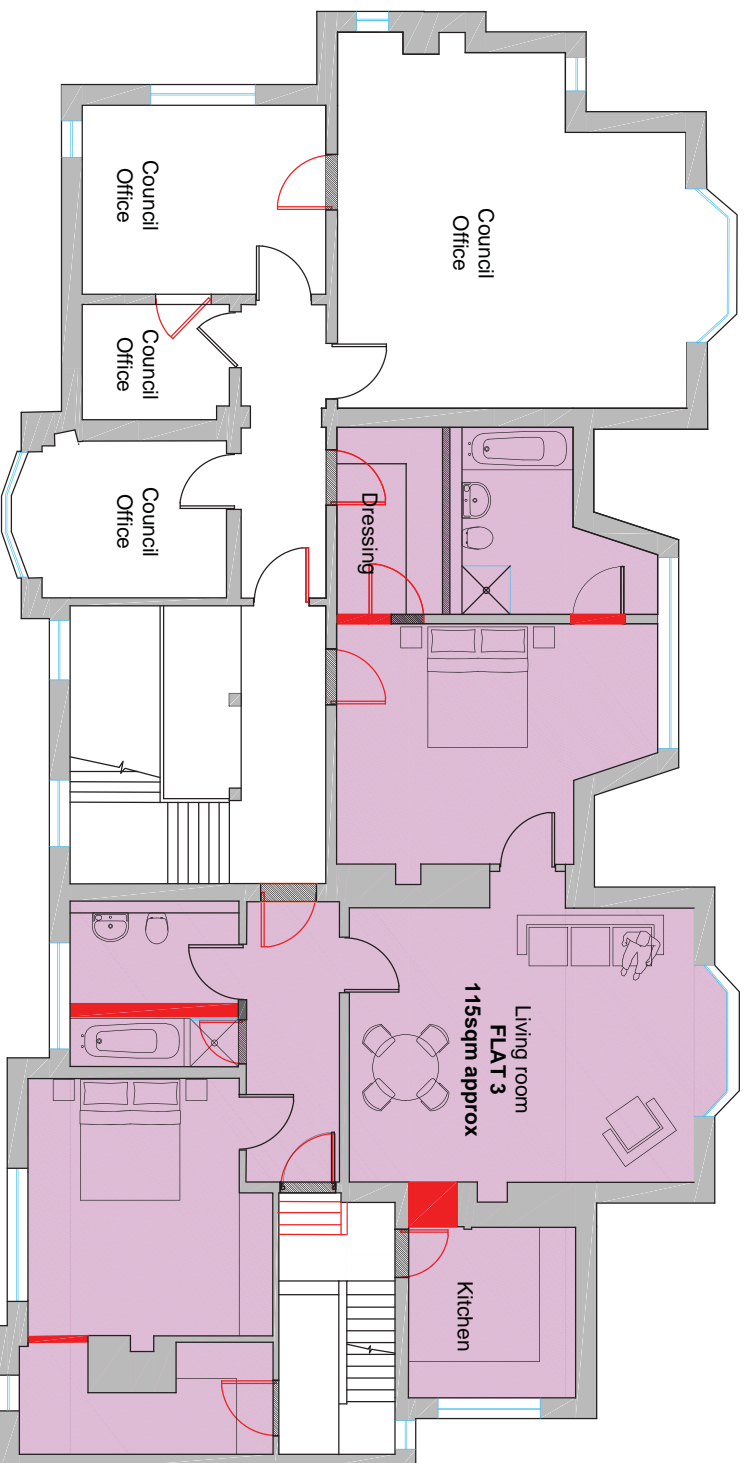
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MIXED USE SCHEME -
REGISTRY OFFICE + RESIDENTIAL **1592 / SK03** --

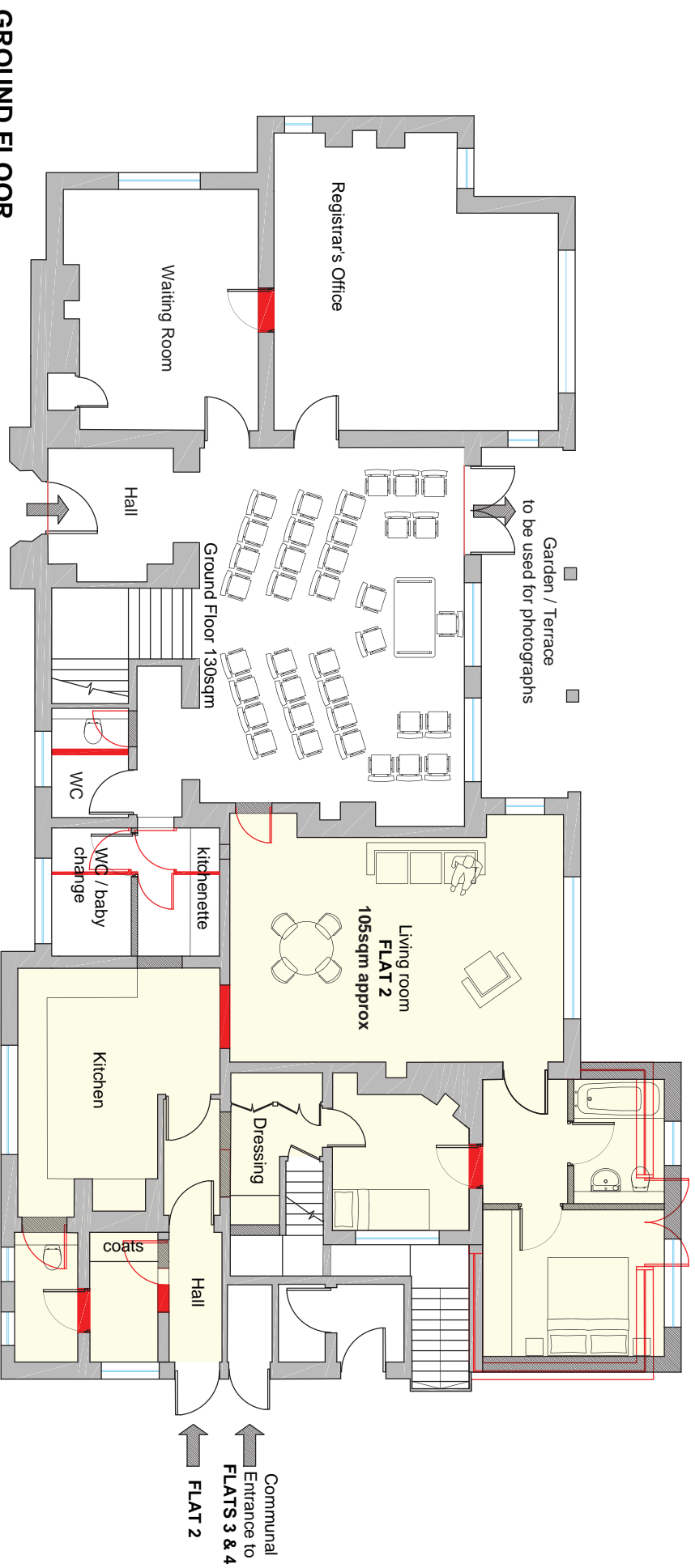
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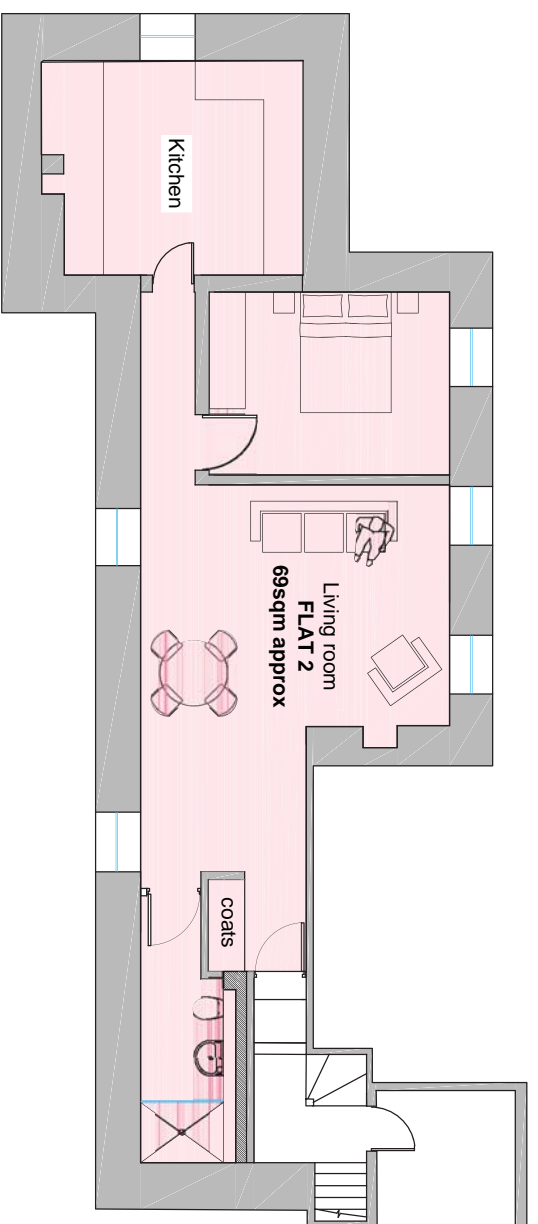


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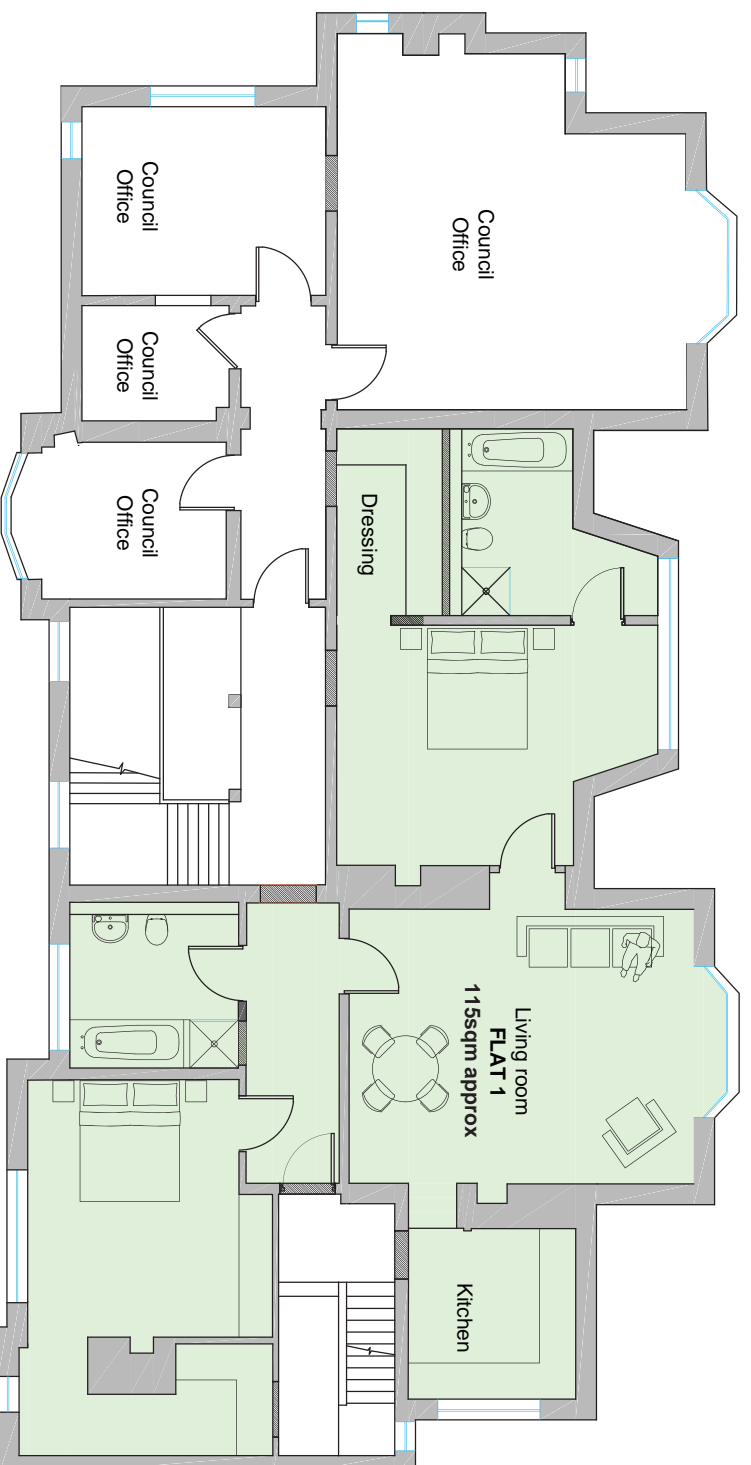


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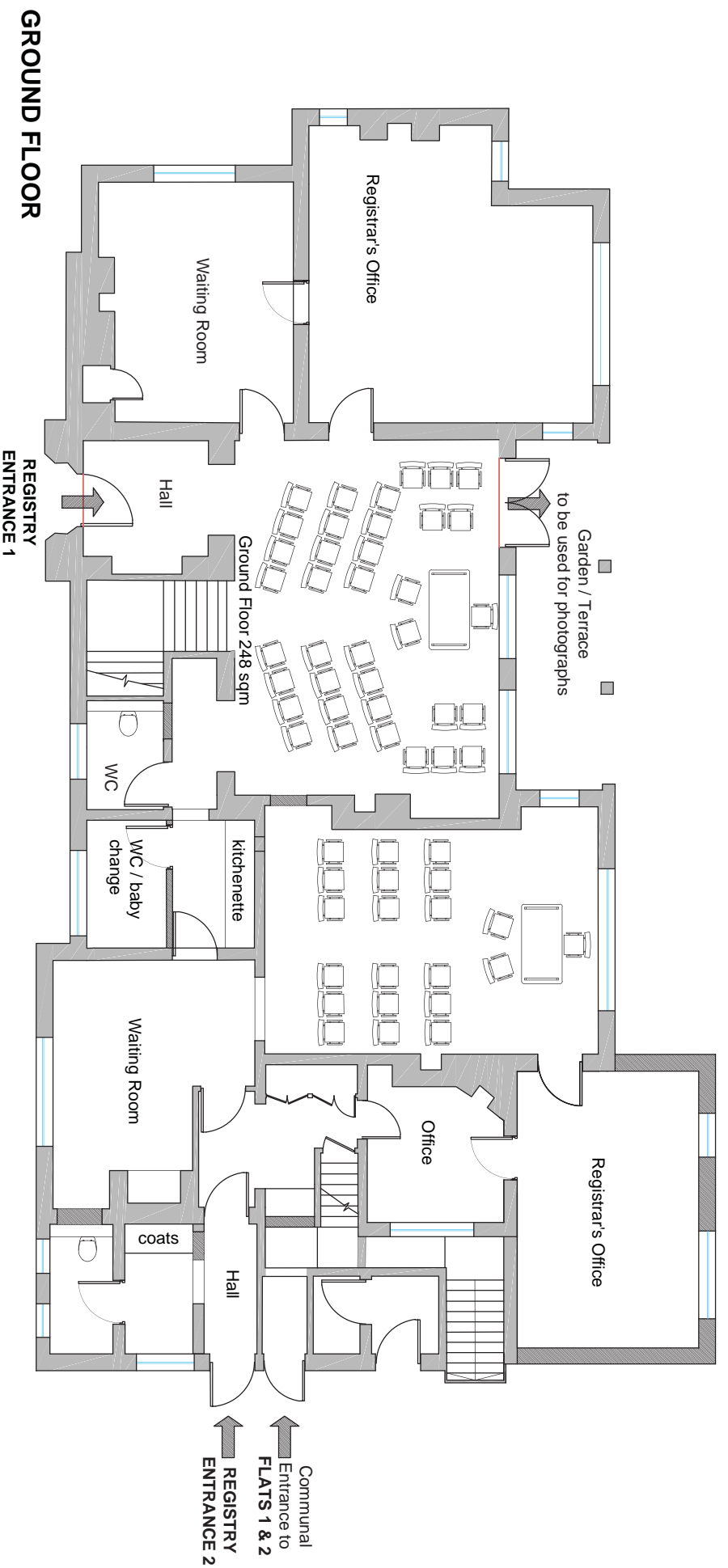
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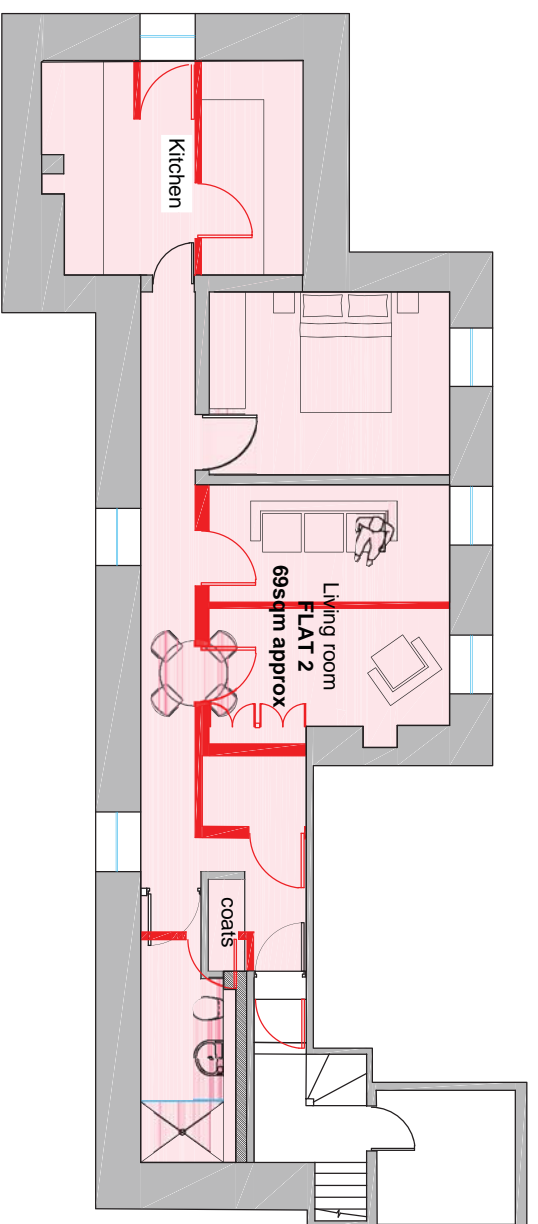


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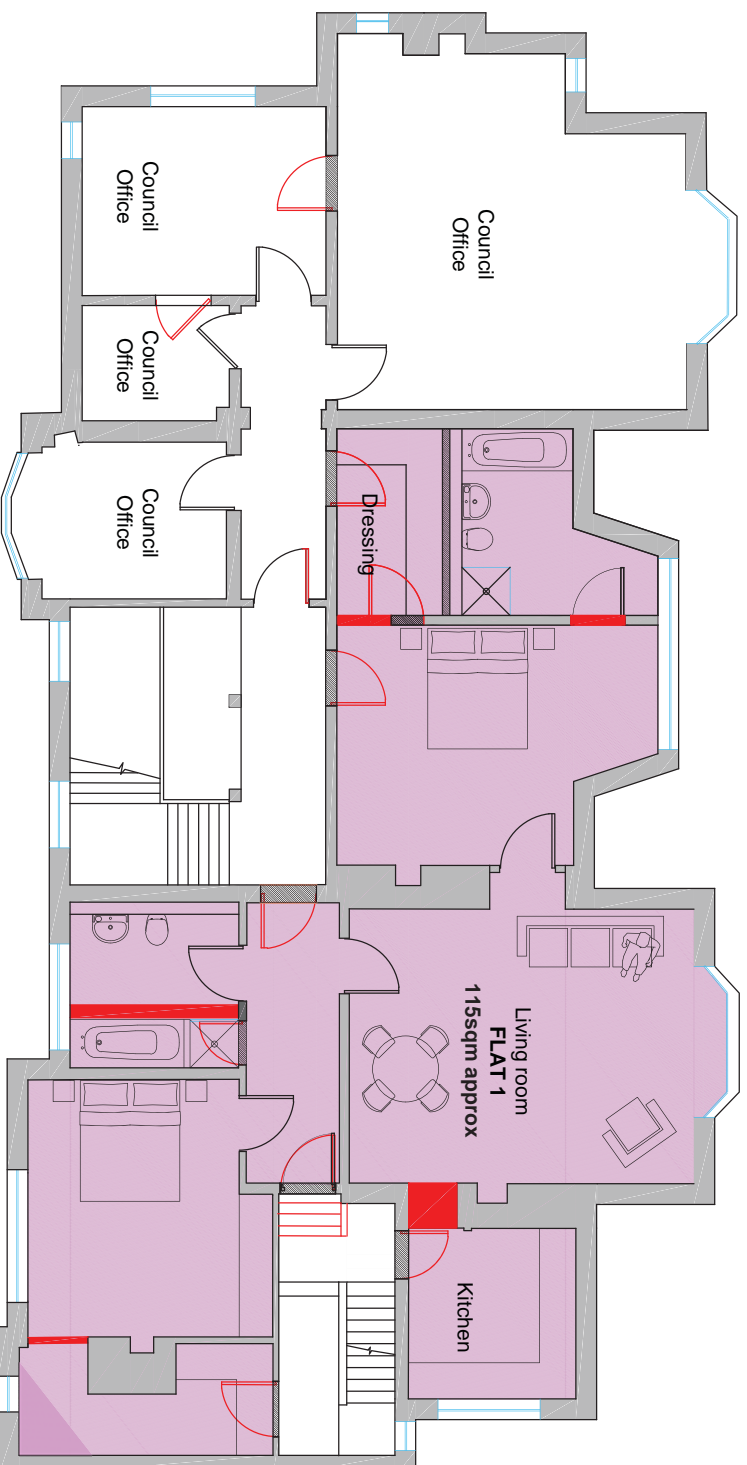
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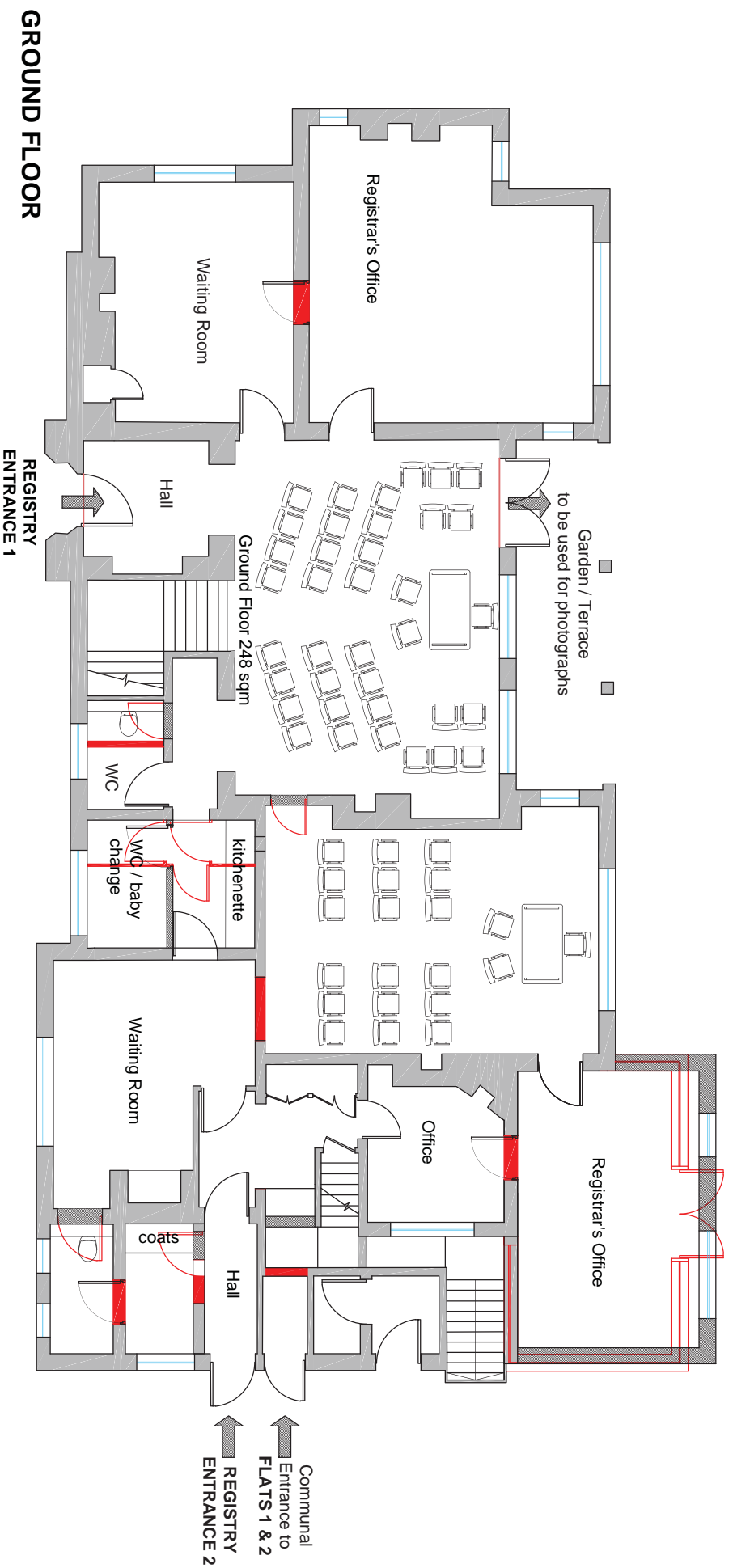
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SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

 Demolition
 New infill walls

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SITE PLAN OPTION 1 - AS EXISTING APPROX 6 CAR PARKING SPACES



SITE PLAN OPTION 2 - APPROX 10 CAR PARKING SPACES

--confirmation required from the Conservation Officer about re-positioning a dwarf wall and gate posts which frame and enclose the front courtyard
 --confirmation required from the tree officer about parking in proximity to retained tree. Tree survey required.

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SITE PLAN - options 1 & 2	1592 / SK05		--

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SITE PLAN OPTION 3 - 12 CAR PARKING SPACES - subject to dwarf wall and associated gate post being re-positioned + subject to tree survey and confirmation of parking beneath retained tree. (Copper Beech?)



Existing pedestrian access to garden to rear which could be replicated



SITE PLAN OPTION 4 - 12 CAR PARKING SPACES - as per option 3. Notional bar/catering facility shown (140sqm) with pedestrian access at rear of garden. Single storey building with glazed facade to garden to allow functions within the garden - associated with marriages at the registry office.

ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE

RESIDENTIAL OPTION 1 – Based on drawing 1592/SK01		
APARTMENT NUMBER	NUMBER OF BEDS	AREA – GROSS INTERNAL APPROXIMATE M²
1	2	72.3
2	1	54.5
3	1	70.3
4	3	104.1
5	1	75.9
6	1	79.0
		456.1 m ²

RESIDENTIAL OPTION 2 – Based on drawing 1592/SK02		
TYPE	NUMBER OF BEDS	AREA – GROSS INTERNAL APPROXIMATE M²
Maisonette 1	4	245
Apartment 2	2	115
Apartment 3	1	79
Apartment 4	1	69
		508 m ²

MIXED USE OPTION 3 – Based on drawing 1592/SK03		
TYPE	Location	AREA – GROSS INTERNAL APPROXIMATE M²
Registry office, plus ancillary facilities	Ground floor	130
Council offices	First floor	77
Apartment 2	2 bed, ground floor	105
Apartment 3	2 bed, first floor	115
Apartment 4	1 bed, second floor	69
		496 m ²

MIXED USE OPTION 4 – Based on drawing 1592/SK04		
TYPE	Location	AREA – GROSS INTERNAL APPROXIMATE M²
2 no. Registry offices, to accommodate 18 & 36 guests respectively	Ground floor	248
Apartment 1	2 bed, first floor	115
Apartment 2	1 bed, second floor	69
		432 m ²

THE BROCKET . SUMMARY CSK ARCHITECTS

Residential Scheme option 1: (SK01)

Summary of Accommodation: 6 apartments – mix of 1, 2 & 3 bed units.

Advantages: This layout makes maximum use of the existing main entrance and panelled reception at ground floor. It allows 5 out of the 6 units to be accessed off this central space which could also be the main access for residents into the rear garden. It allows both first floor flats to use the main staircase for access. This approach is likely to be welcomed by the listed building officer as it retains the use of the principal entrance and principal stair.

The front courtyard can re-landscaped to provide 12 car parking spaces, 2 per flat.

The integrity of the existing rooms are retained with minimal demolition.

The size / mix of units are suitable for key workers.

Disadvantages: There will need to be robust acoustic and fire separation between each flat – at first floor where there are listed features and this will be less straight forward than on the upper floor.

Residential Scheme option 2: (SK02)

Summary of accommodation: 1 x 4 bed maisonette and 3 flats

Advantages: The principal reception room becomes useable floor space as opposed to communal circulation space.

The acoustic / fire separation is slightly easier as it is not needed between ground and first floor where there is a maisonette.

The integrity of the existing rooms are retained with minimal demolition.

Disadvantages: The maisonette is very large and not best suited for keyworker housing. Only the single unit has the benefit of the grand panelled reception room and staircase. This large unit is still blighted in part by a flat at second floor sitting above it.

The first floor flat is now accessed around the side, via very much a secondary stair.

Mixed Use Scheme option 3: (SK03)

Summary of accommodation: Ground floor part commercial / part residential. First floor part commercial / part residential / 2nd floor residential.

Advantages: This layout makes use of the principal reception room as a public space. The panelled room is a handsome room and taken at face value it would appear to suit the function of a registry office.

The integrity of the existing rooms are largely retained with minimal demolition.

Disadvantages: The main room isn't that big – it can't accommodate the 48 visitors usually needed for a large marriage. Because it is a listed building it is not a simple case of knocking two rooms together to create a larger room. The integrity of each of the main rooms with their associated cornice/panelling/skirting etc must be respected.

There is limited options to increase the parking on the site, beyond 12 spaces. Depending on the status of the Copper Beech on site, even this number of spaces may not be possible. For a large marriage with say 30 guests, parking will not be sufficient.

New parking to the rear of the site accessed off Lower Boyn Road is unlikely to be acceptable in planning terms. It would blight the outlook from the properties to the rear.

The existing principal stair must be retained and it must lead somewhere. This necessitates commercial space at first floor.

There is both a vertical and horizontal overlap between commercial space and residential accommodation which complicates both the acoustic and the fire separation.

It is difficult to see how marriages could be run back to back. Access to the main waiting area involves entering the main room where the service would be in progress.

Mixed Use Scheme option 4: (SK04)

Summary of accommodation: Ground floor commercial throughout. (2 no. registry offices able to accommodate different size parties). First floor part commercial / part residential / 2nd floor residential.

Advantages: This layout makes use of the principal reception room as a public space. The panelled room is a handsome room and taken at face value it would appear to suit the function of a registry office.

The integrity of the existing rooms are retained with minimal demolition.

It is possible to accommodate two different size wedding parties. They have their separate waiting areas.

Disadvantages: The main room isn't that big – it can't accommodate the 48 visitors usually needed for a large marriage. Because it is a listed building it is not a simple case of knocking two rooms together to create a larger room. The integrity of each of the main rooms with their associated cornice/panelling/skirting etc must be respected.

There is limited options to increase the parking on the site, beyond 12 spaces. Depending on the status of the Copper Beech on site, even this number of spaces may not be possible. If two wedding services were being conducted simultaneously, as the plan suggests, parking problems will be even more problematic than option 3.

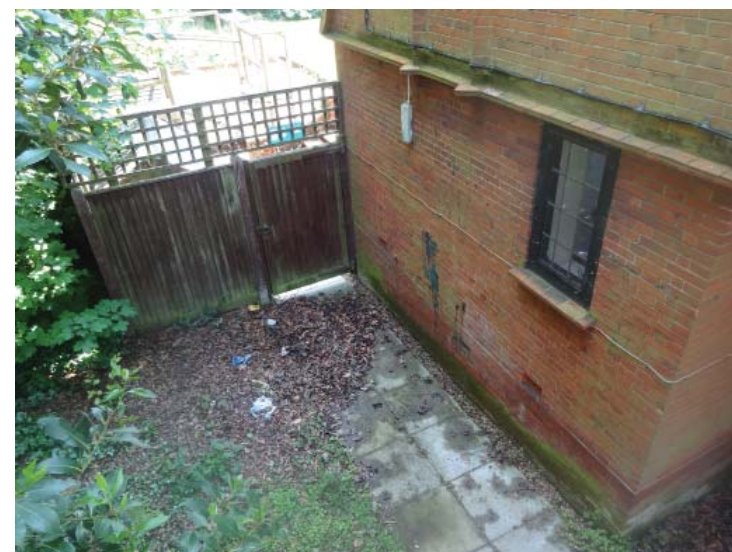
New parking to the rear of the site accessed off Lower Boyn Road is unlikely to be acceptable in planning terms. It would blight the outlook from the properties to the rear.

The existing principal stair must be retained and it must lead somewhere. This necessitates commercial space at first floor.

There is a vertical overlap between commercial space and residential accommodation which complicates acoustic / fire separation.

Conclusion

Due to parking restrictions and the layout of the listed building, in particular the principal reception room and principal stair, we consider this building is best suited to a wholly residential conversion as opposed to a mixed use scheme for the reasons noted above. We also consider residential option 1 as opposed to option 2 to have more benefits to all the users of the building and adheres more to the spirit of the origin design.



APPENDIX: EXTERNAL PHOTOS OF EXISTING . THE BROCKET



APPENDIX: INTERNAL PHOTOS OF EXISTING . THE BROCKET

Brocket, Boyn Hill Avenue, Maidenhead.

Comment by Cllr Claire Stretton on the Feasibility Study conducted by CSK Architects to ascertain its suitability for use as a residential scheme or mixed-use scheme with the Registrar's Office

Version 3 - 26 September 2016

Introduction

Brocket in Boyn Hill Avenue is a public building of great significance to Maidenhead, being recorded as a Grade II Listed Building for the following principal reasons:

- A substantially intact and decorative early C20 house displaying Arts and Crafts influences.
- Evidence for craftsmanship in the quality and use of materials in both the exterior and interior finishes.

It came into the ownership of Berkshire County Council in 1950 and has been in public ownership ever since. Because of its uses over the years, most recently as a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and offices, it has a particularly offensive large fire escape on its eastern side to provide exit from the roof space.

We have very few public buildings with this history and quality in Maidenhead and it is unfortunate that over the past 66 years of public ownership, Brocket has not been seen by any but a select few of the residents who ultimately own it. It is my belief that, if possible, this building should now be restored and made accessible to the public so that its quality can be more widely appreciated, particularly by those recording the important moments of their lives.

Since the PRU moved out, I have been lobbied by local residents as their local Ward Councillor to find out what our plans for Brocket are, and to register a local need for meeting rooms and spaces for local community groups to run meetings and workshops. I believe that Brocket, in conjunction with use by the Registrar, would be most suitable for this purpose. It could also be used by RBWM or hired to local businesses as meeting or reception rooms.

Comment

I note the Feasibility Study conducted by CSK Architects and, I am disappointed that each of the plans requires the demolition of the original "Winter Garden" and considerable reconfiguration of the internal rooms, both of which are specifically mentioned in the Grade II Listing text. I understand that this Feasibility Study was also to ascertain whether the building could provide for "Key Worker Housing". I also note the conclusion drawn, which is: *"Due to parking restrictions and the layout of the listed building, in particular the principal reception room and principal stair, we consider this building is best suited to a wholly residential conversion as opposed to a mixed use scheme"*.

Whilst Key Worker Housing may be a laudable aspiration for the council to seek to provide, Brocket is not in my view best suited for this purpose. If it were to be converted into flats, then how exactly does one decide which Key Workers would be given the privilege of living in this Grade II Listed Building? I suggest that we must accept that this scenario would likely lead to the building being sold.

However the invasive reconfiguration and extension of Brocket can only be described as detrimental to the fabric of the building and I believe it would be far better to work with the building and not against it.

I have read the Needs document supplied by the Registrar and also met with her to understand her requirements. They include: Three Private Offices to discuss the registry of Births and Deaths, Passport and Nationality services; Central Reception for 15/20 people; large Strong Room to store records out of sight of the general public with access from Reception, Kitchen, Ceremony Room for up to 50 with separate entrance and exit; Garden for photographs; Parking c 30 cars; Bridal Car access and parking; access by public transport. She also has an aspiration to hold weddings outdoors in the summer.

I demonstrate in this paper how Brocket can provide everything, and more, that the Registrar requires. By stripping out all the later additions, including the fire escape we can have a public building that local residents can use, enjoy and be proud of for years to come.

Alternative Future for Brocket

Brocket can provide:

- 1 Registrar's Offices including:
 - a. Reception with access to Strong Room
 - b. Ceremony Room similar or potentially larger that is currently available
 - c. Three private offices
 - d. Disabled access and public toilets on both floors
 - e. Several opportunities for photographs
 - f. Drive-through and parking for bridal cars at front
 - g. Opportunity to offer short celebration drinks receptions after weddings in the Drinks Reception/ Winter Garden
 - h. Potential for Summer weddings outside by building a Pergola on the current play area.
- 2 Council/Community Hire Meeting Rooms including:
 - a. Three meeting rooms, two interconnected
 - b. Separate entrance if required
 - c. Public toilets/kitchen.
 - d. Access to the downstairs public rooms in the evenings.
- 3 Caretaker's one-bedroomed flat to enable the facilitation of the Meeting Rooms and provide on-site security.

Supporting Information

The Staircase and Drinks Reception/Winter Garden would also provide an excellent photo venues when the weather is inclement.

The Ceremony, Drinks Reception, Winter Garden and Meeting Rooms could be hired out to local businesses and resident groups. These would all provide income.

Providing a Caretaker's Flat on-site, perhaps for one the RBWM Facilities Team, would keep the building secure and allows for the setting up of hires and access for hirers.

Additional benefits include the opportunity to absorb

the spaces occupied by the current Registrar's Offices back into the Town Hall, perhaps for much needed meeting rooms, or as part of the planned extension of the Desborough Suite to provide an Entertainment Centre in the town centre.

Required Works (page 4)

The major works required to achieve this is significantly less than any of the Schemes suggested in the Feasibility Study. After stripping out all of the later additions, the following is required:

- 1 A new doorway from the Entrance Hall to the Reception and Waiting Area and installation of glass screen or door between the Entrance Hall and the Ceremony Room
- 2 Secure shutter between Reception and receptionists office with wall added to provide a Strong Room behind.
- 3 A small passenger lift to enable disabled access to the first floor, access from the Waiting Area.
- 4 Suitable toilets installed, including for the disabled on both ground and first floors.
- 5 Conversion of the roof space into a one-bedroom Caretakers Flat with suitable fire and acoustic separation in the floor.
- 6 Landscape the Gardens to improve the setting of the Listed building and provide for Photographs.
- 7 (Optional see page 4) Extending the Ceremony Room by moving one wall out to meet the existing roof.
- 8 (Optional see page 5) Make a new parking area at the rear of the garden with access off Lower Boyndon Road.
- 9 (Optional see page 5) Build a Pergola for outdoor weddings in the summer.

Challenges raised by the Feasibility Study

1 - Access and Parking Restrictions

Brocket is a 12 minute walk from the Station. Boyn Hill Avenue is served by Bus and I would recommend that the Bus Stop is relocated from its current position, by the now demolished College, to right outside Brocket. We are currently undertaking a consultation to remove the Commuter all-day Parking from Boyn Hill Avenue, which would mean there would be ample parking in the road.

If however is deemed that additional parking should be provided on site, say for staff, I have shown in the attached plans how the parking could effectively be doubled, from 12 to 24 by utilising the bottom strip of the large garden with access off Boyndon Road.

I have consulted our parking team who do not see any highways issues with doing this. I dispute the assertion in the study that *"New parking to the rear of the site accessed off Lower Boyn Road is unlikely to be acceptable in planning terms. It would blight the outlook from the properties to the rear"*. There is only 1 property at the rear, which would not be able to see any cars parked behind the 6 foot high existing fence. The outlook from Brocket should be improved by both removing the large play area currently there which served the PRU, potentially building a pergola there for outside weddings, and by suitable landscaping of the gardens, which could also screen the parking area. The amount of usable garden would only be reduced by less than a third, but the setting of the Listed Building greatly improved.

2 - Principal Reception room size

I have demonstrated in the attached plans on page 3, that by utilising a more pragmatic layout, how 48 guests (including the bride and bridegroom) can be

accommodated, similar to the 'Ceremony Room' in the Town Hall, which currently accommodates up to 42. However, most weddings are considerably smaller than this number and with a subtle extension utilising the existing overhanging roof, the room could comfortably accommodate c60.

Other "Disadvantages" referred to include:

A - *"It is difficult to see how marriages could be run back to back. Access to the main waiting area involves entering the main room where the service would be in progress."* This is only true because of where CSK Architects have chosen to put the Waiting Room. See Works Required and Plans.

B - *"The existing principal stair must be retained and it must lead somewhere. This necessitates commercial space at first floor."* I agree and this is not a disadvantage. See Works Required and Plans.

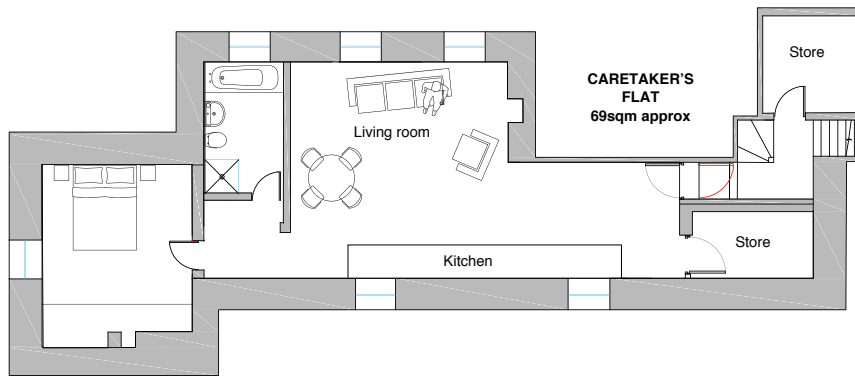
C - Mixed scheme - *"There is both a vertical and horizontal overlap between commercial space and residential accommodation with complicates both the acoustic and the fire separation."* Residential scheme: *"There will need to be robust acoustic and fire separation between each flat - at first floor where there are listed features and this will be less straight forward than on the upper floor"*. By only utilising the roof space as residential, which does not contain any listed features, the Feasibility Study recognises that this would be more straight forward.

Conclusion

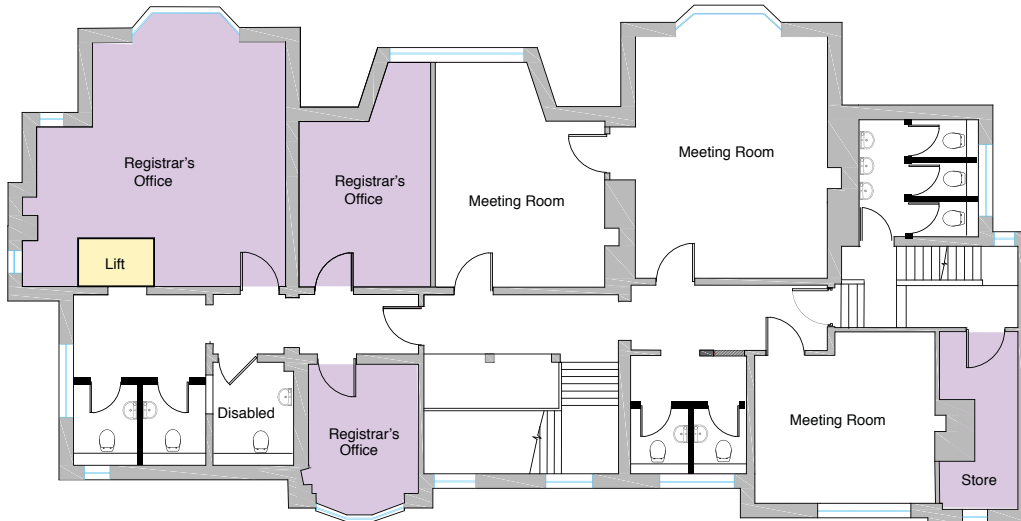
I can see how it might be financially appealing to redevelop this site into entirely residential accommodation, particularly if they were to be later sold on the open market, however either way the building would be lost to the public. This scheme would provide an ongoing income, with the benefit of both keeping this asset in public ownership and opening it up to the public. There is also space to accommodate any expansion of the Registrar's activities.

It has also been proven by other studies that to make use of the Town Hall to deliver the cultural aspirations of the town centre regeneration by redeveloping the Desborough Suite is significantly the most cost-effective solution to deliver an Entertainment Centre in Maidenhead town centre. As this does require the relocation the Registrar to another suitable building, these projects cannot be viewed in isolation. We must seek to make the best use of our resources across the town, both practically and financially. Where would we look to build a new Registrar's Office in Maidenhead that could provide a similar ambiance? On the Waterway? And at what cost? Or would we seek to relocate to another area of the borough, forcing the large population of Maidenhead to travel?

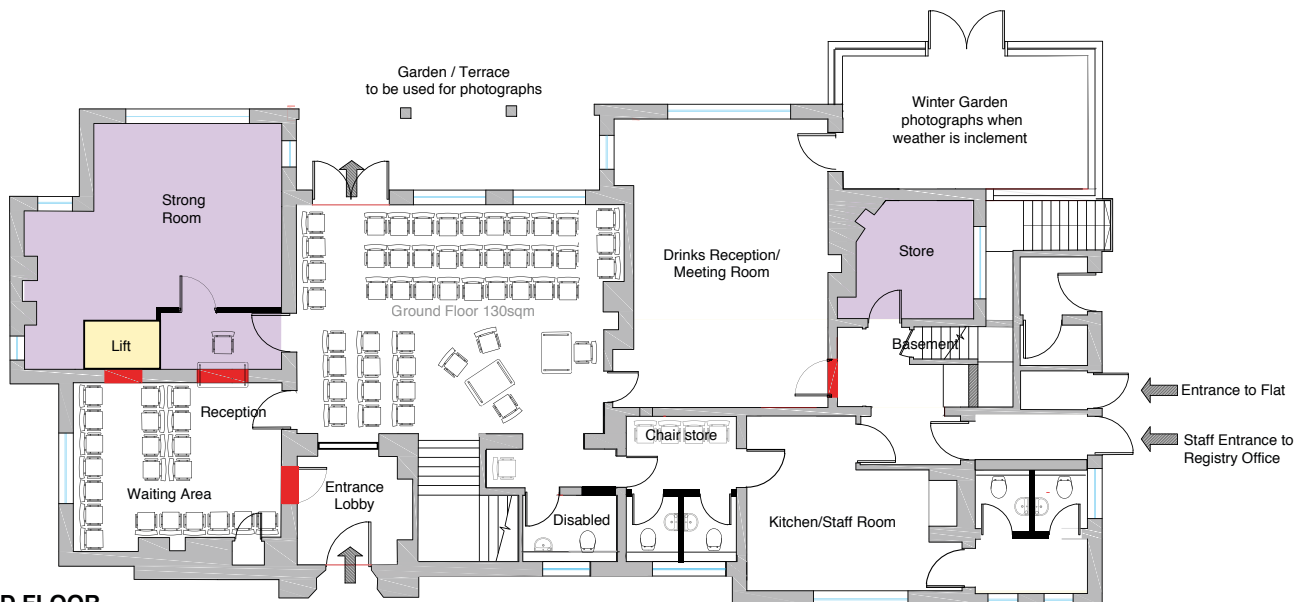
I would therefore ask that this scheme is investigated as suggested on the following pages, which incidentally require neither the demolition of the Winter Garden or a vast invasive reconfiguration of the building. It also would not require additional new extensions variously suggested by the architects, but are achieved solely by respectful internal reorganisation. Not only would this allow the residents of RBWM to celebrate and commemorate the most significant moments of their lives in one of Maidenhead's very few historic public buildings, but provide others the opportunity to meet and hire it for the many various activities that local business and the community undertake.







SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

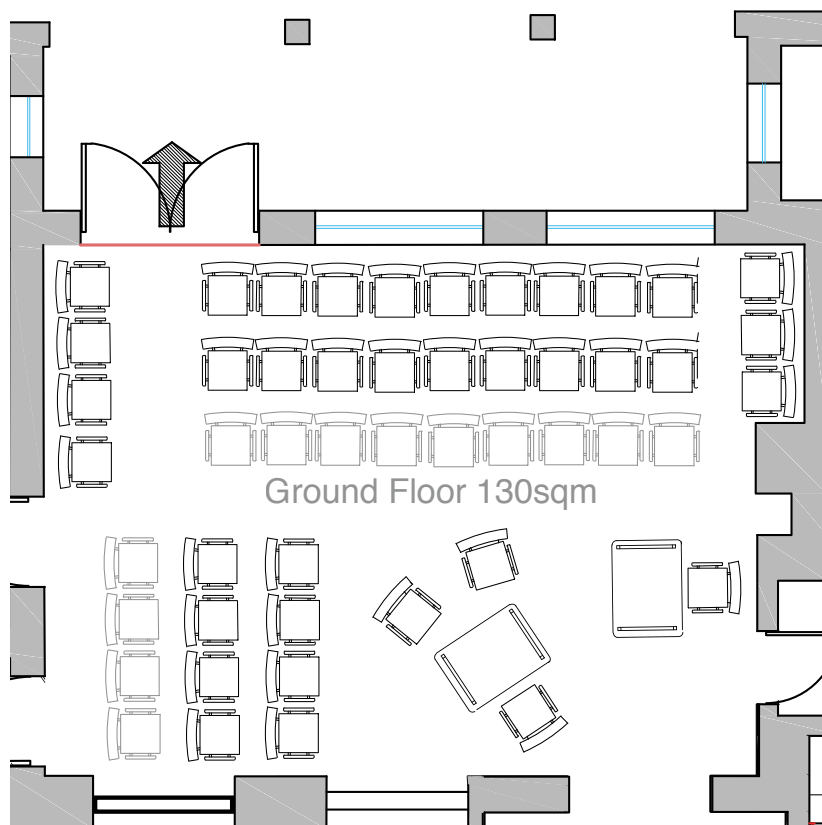
-  Demolition
-  New infill walls
-  Registrar secure areas
-  New glass wall/door

BROCKET MAIDENHEAD	1:125 @ A3	08/2016
REGISTRY OFFICE, MEETING ROOMS AND CARETAKER FLAT		

Optional extension to the Ceremony Room

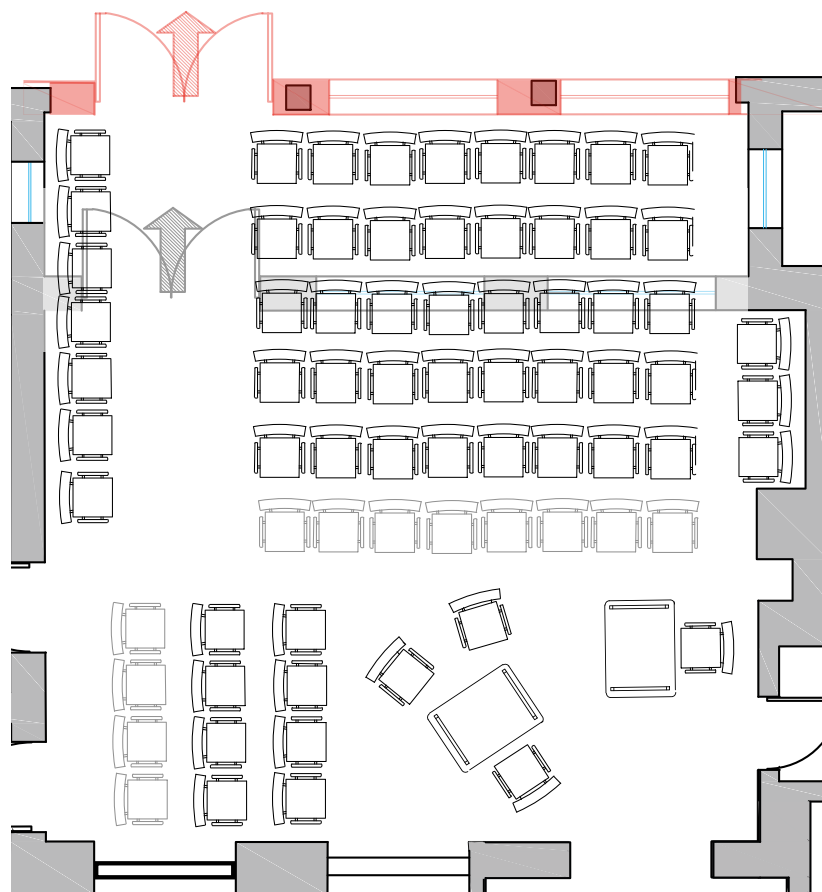
Ceremony Room within the current room

By turning the orientation around from the architects suggested layout, this area could comfortably seat 35 Guests with Bride and Groom, with a maximum of 48, by adding the rows shown in grey. Seating in a Church or similar is unlikely to provide much more leg room than this. The signing of the Register takes place inside this room, as now.



Ceremony Room with subtle extension

If the Conservation Officer felt that, to enable more public use of this building, it could be appropriate to extend by relocating the current wall and windows to where the pillars currently stand which support the overhanging roof, then this area could comfortably seat 60 Guests with Bride and Groom, with a maximum of 72, by adding the rows shown in grey.



Optional additional parking spaces



New vehicle entrance beside the gateway in Lower Boyndon Road, which I believe serves the garden of No 1 Woodcote. This could provide c12 parking spaces.



Optional Pergola in the garden for summer weddings to replace the current play area



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CSK ARCHITECTS

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RESPONSE TO REPORT PREPARED BY COUNCILLOR CLAIRE STRETTON – VERSION 3

PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN LAYOUTS

The report indicates proposed layouts for the building with usage as a Registry office. The plans have been assessed within the context of the listed building in terms of building fabric and likely acceptability of the proposed interventions.

GROUND FLOOR

The proposed usage of the building puts it within the public realm and as such it will then need to be fully accessible. It is proposed that the main ceremonial room and all public access is, quite rightly, via the existing main entrance. This is two steps up from the external drive level to height of 280mm. In order to be fully DDA compliant a ramp length of 3.36m would need to be installed to allow for wheelchair access (assuming a 1 in 12 ramp gradient). This would then obstruct the driveway and result in the loss of parking bays to the front of the building – increasing the pressure for on-street parking and / or a parking area in the rear gardens.

The proposal seeks to block up the existing entrance lobby arch with a glazed screen and to create a new door opening through the existing original panelling of the lobby. This is unlikely to be acceptable in conservation terms as it fundamentally severs the relationship of the main, ornately decorated entrance hall with the lobby and access into the building. It would also involve the loss of some of the entrance lobby panelling which would also not be acceptable in this important part of the building.

Two new openings are indicated in the wall of the room to the left of the main hall – labelled as waiting area and reception. This wall is not so significant in terms of not having any panelling or ornate detailing, in which case this may be seen as being acceptable in conservation terms.

However, the introduction of a lift and also the internal lobby to the 'strong room' is likely to be looked at unfavourably. This is due to both the loss of fabric (due to the floors having to be removed to accommodate a lift), and also by the loss of the proportion and sense of the original room, which features a fireplace within a purpose designed 'nook' with lowered ceiling. This is an 'Arts and Crafts' interpretation of a traditional inglenook fireplace.

The main hall itself is quite fine in its detailing and scale and it is unlikely to be able to be extended into the external verandah area as it will change the proportion of the room. If wedding ceremonies are proposed then they will need to be arranged within the confines of the existing space available. Shown at face value, this looks as quite tight in terms of access and chair proximity. A mock layout has been set up in-situ to establish exactly how many chair spaces can realistically be accommodated in the space – please see attached photos. This indicates that the main hall can only facilitate a maximum of 32 people. This is significantly lower than the required 50 that has been advised by the current Registrar.

WC's are indicated in the location of the current WC and services and in various locations around the building across both ground and first floors. Whilst the numbers proposed would comply with the required standards the receptionist can only access the WCs by passing through the main ceremony room. Similarly, from the drinks / reception room guests can only access the WCs by entering the ceremony room or through the kitchen.

A new opening is shown between the Drinks Reception / meeting room and the rear staircase lobby. There is some panelling in this location defined by timber moulding above and below the dado rail. It may be possible to adapt this to accommodate a new door opening but the Conservation department would need to advise if this loss is deemed acceptable. This room would also need to be acoustically separated from the main ceremony room as it would appear that the intention would be to have two events happening at any one time ie. A ceremony taking place whilst another group is in the drinks / reception room.

FIRST FLOOR

The first floor layout largely indicates the room arrangements as existing. The main exception to this is the introduction of the lift which, as noted previously, is unlikely to be acceptable due to the loss of floor structure and of disruption to the scale and proportion of the room. In a similar vein to the ground floor, there is a fireplace arrangement set out as an Arts and Crafts interpretation of an inglenook. The fireplace itself is an inappropriate 1960's replacement which could be changed to something more in-keeping. However, the introduction of the lift would disrupt the sense of the original room.

SECOND FLOOR

The second floor indicates a single flat to accommodate a caretaker. The layout of the flat and opening up of the walls will need to be agreed with the Conservation officer but in principle, would like be considered acceptable. However the Council will need to assess if it is required to have an on-site caretaker and whether this commercially viable in terms of providing this level of on-site presence for the proposed building usage.

EXTERNAL AREAS - PARKING

As proposed in previous versions of the Councillor's report, it is intended to create a new parking area within the rear garden. As stated previously, a traffic survey will need to be carried out and visibility splays will need to be checked in terms of proximity to Underhill Close opposite and Woodcote, adjacent. This will also involve the loss of important tree screening along Lower Boyndon Road and also further trees within the garden itself.

In order to achieve this parking area it will be necessary to either excavate the land due to the change in levels from the road up into the garden or to have a steep ramp up into the site. The requirement for either a hammer head or turning circle will lead to large areas of the garden being taken up with hard surfaces.

The introduction of parking in this location is not likely to be viewed favourably by the Conservation department as it impacts heavily on the setting of the listed building. The original gardens have historically been significantly reduced due to the sale of the land and construction of housing. A parking area will further negatively impact the building within its landscape context. It will also require the loss of part of the brick garden wall which falls within the listed curtilage. This will further erode the significance of the original dwelling and its walled garden setting.

Further to this it will mean that the intention for receptions to take place in the garden would be compromised by the lack of external space and the negative view of a car park.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, we still consider the proposed interventions to facilitate a registry office within the listed building would not be acceptable in terms of Conservation policies. The building was originally designed as a dwelling and as such the rooms are, whilst larger than average for a house, domestic in their scale and not suitable for use as a public building. The Registry office requires a large ceremony room which the Brocket is unable to provide. Alternative public uses will have the same issues of having to adapt the building to be fully accessible, with the intervention of ramp / lift etc. The issue of additional parking requirements will also apply leading to further on-street parking or the destruction of the rear garden, loss of part of the listed garden wall and removal of important tree screening. All of which would no doubt be of concern to the local residents and also be detrimental to the fabric and setting of the building.

JUSTYN TURNBULL
CSK ARCHITECTS
12th October 2016

Development & Regeneration

MEMORANDUM



Tree Team

To: David Thompson **Date:** 17 October 2016
From: Alan Brier
Location: 15 Boyn Hill Avenue, Maidenhead, SL6 4EY.
Type: Tree inspection

COMMENTS

The purpose of this report is to provide advice, identify obvious structural and physiological defects (from ground level only) and make, if necessary, recommendations for further investigations and/or tree work in accordance with the current British Standard 3998 Tree Work – Recommendations and industry best practice.

The site contains a large number of mature trees growing on the southern, eastern and western boundaries.

The trees on the eastern boundary with Lower Boyndon Road are a mix of maples, lime, beech and yew and that due to their location and size are prominent features in the street scene, softening the built form and making a significant contribution to the appearance of the local area. The loss of these trees through direct removal, inappropriate pruning and/or development activity would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the area. These trees would be suitable for inclusion in a tree preservation order and will need to be retained and protected as part of any development that is undertaken on this site.

The following arboricultural information (in accord with table B1 'Delivery of tree-related information into the planning system' from the current BS5837: 2012 trees in relation to design, demolition and construction) will be required to support the any planning application that could impact the trees on this site.

- Tree survey
- Tree retention/removal plan (finalised)
- Retained trees and RPAs shown on proposed layout
- Arboricultural impact assessment
- Existing and proposed finished levels
- Tree protection plan

- Arboricultural method statement– heads of terms
- Details for all special engineering within the RPA and other relevant construction details

At the time of my site visit the majority of the trees growing on the site appeared to be in a reasonable condition. However I noted evidence of decay around the base of the Robinia (T1). Due to the extent of the decay I would recommend that this tree be removed as soon as possible in the interest of safety.

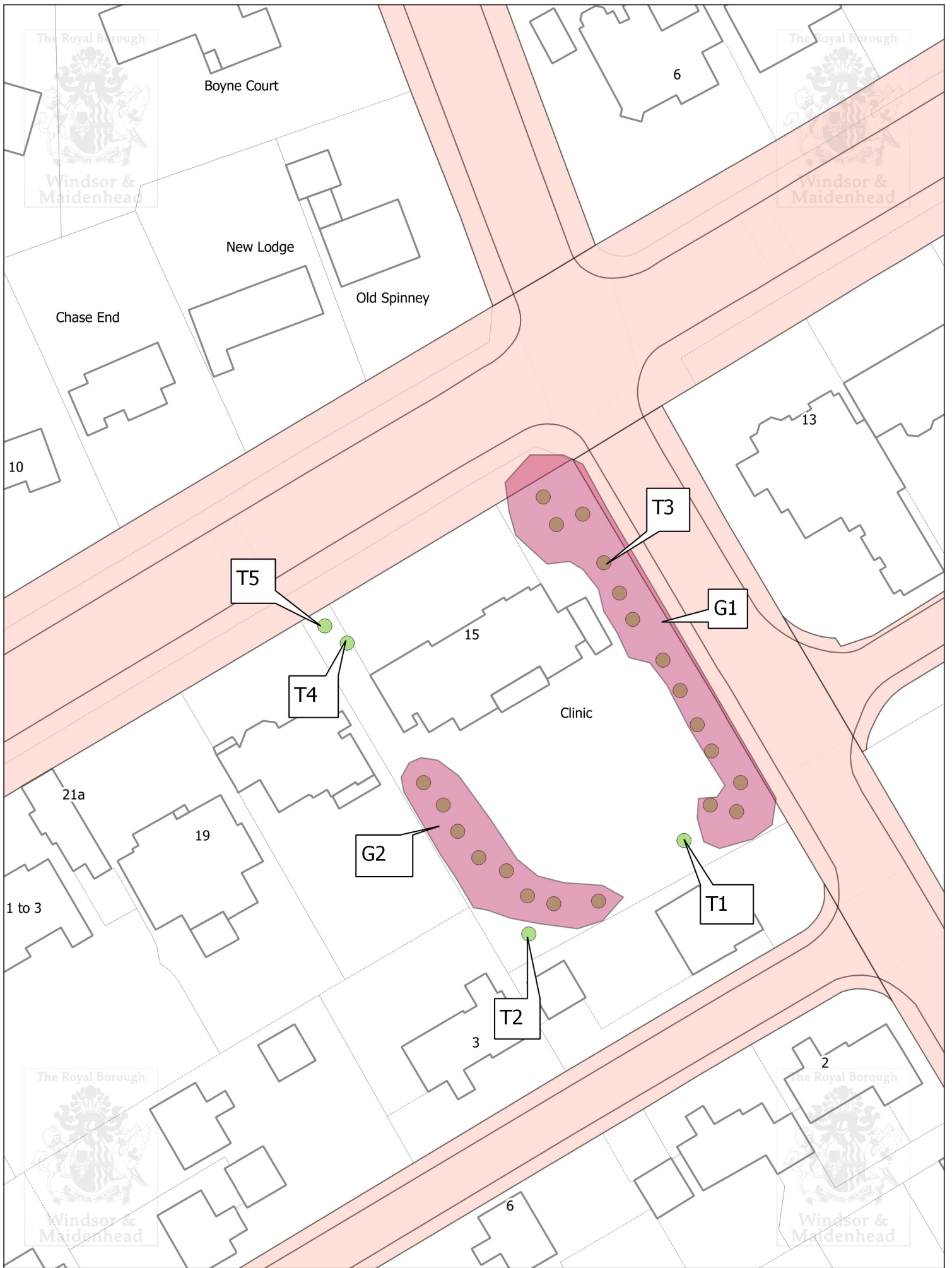
No secondary investigation(s) with internal decay detection equipment and further inspection(s), to assess the tree(s) root system beneath ground level (i.e. below the trees root collar) were carried out.

No assessment has been made in respect of the likelihood of direct/indirect damage to property or the ingress of roots into underground services. These issues are beyond the scope of advice.

TREE NUMBER	SPECIES	NOTES	WORK
G1	Mixed group including 2 yew, 7 maple, 1 beech, 1 lime and 1 holly.	Minor dead wood, low branches overhanging and partly obstructing the footpath in Lower Boyndon Road	Crown lift to a height of 3m over the pavement in Lower Boyndon Road
T1	Robinia	Deadwood and dieback in canopy. Evidence of major decay at base of stem.	Fell to ground level and replace.
T2	Pine	Twin stemmed from a height of approximately 4m	No works.
T3	Copper beech	Growing within the group G1.	Tip reduce branches growing closest to building to give a clearance of 1-1.5m from the building.
G2	Group of 5 maple and 2 yew and 1 holly.	No major defects visible at time of inspection.	No works.
T4	Thorn	Leaning and previously reduced tree.	No works at this time but consider removal and replacement as part of any future works on the site
T5	Silver birch	Semi mature birch	No works.

If you have any further enquires regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me

Alan Brier
Arboricultural Officer



Date: 17/10/2016
 Scale: 1:600
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 Ordnance Survey 100018817

15 Boyn Hill Avenue, Maidenhead, SL6 4EY



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