

Redevelopment, Wilmslow Road, Manchester

Design Statement

363-RT-0020a

May 2020



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1.0 Overview

This document provides a summary of the design principles and access measures for the proposed redevelopment of 363 Wilmslow Road. The Applicant is seeking planning permission and listed building consent for the proposals.

The document should be read in conjunction with the drawings and other information provided as part of the current Planning Application, including Savill's 'Heritage Statement' of May 2020.

Further context is provided by the Planning Applications of 2015, when the Applicant received Full Planning and Listed Building Consent for a two storey extension to the rear (107449/LO/2014 & 107448/FO/2014) (the "2015 Scheme").

2.0 Context

2.1 Physical Context

The site at 363 Wilmslow Road forms the south end of a Grade II listed terrace row of three houses, Norton Place, built in the mid-19th century. The immediate environment of Wilmslow Road is characterised by large plots containing detached or semi-detached mansion blocks. Modern developments have followed the pattern of large standalone building. The trend of converting the large Victorian mansion blocks has resulted in a predominance of surface car parking in front of the properties, with poor landscape quality and a weak street edge.

Norton Place (including No363) consists of four stories including attic and lower ground floors. The plan is double depth with (in 2014) a robust, unremarkable rear extension. The street facade has a range of eight timber windows arranged almost symmetrically, with a two window gabled centre, banded and vermiculated corner pilasters, first floor sill band and bracketed eaves. The materials of the facade are white painted stucco with sandstone dressings painted black.

Behind the site there is a housing development constructed in 2015 consisting of two and three storey detached houses of buff brick. To the south lies 365 Wilmslow Road, a 19th century block converted into flats with an extension added by the Applicant in 2005.

Opposite the terrace, on Wilmslow Road, lies a former two house terrace and a modern extension, currently occupied by the Willow Bank Hotel. The original house is two storey, red brick with an attic and gabled ends. The extension is a flat roof 3 storey dark grey brick building.

The wider area of Fallowfield has a large transient student population in HMOs and university halls of residence, with a commercial area concentrated on Wilmslow Road between the end of Platt Fields Park and Egerton Road. It is regarded as one of the most popular student areas in Manchester.

2.2 History

Until mid-19th century Fallowfield was a loosely-defined suburb north of Withington.

In the 1850s houses were built in the area for the upper middle class, including Egerton Lodge, Oak House and Norton Place.

At the beginning of the 20th century the university began to build halls of residence in the area, the first being Ashburne Hall in 1910. Since then, the residential campus extended, including Owens Park, housing over 1000 students - the largest student hall owned by the University of Manchester.

2.3 Works already undertaken

During 2014-17, the existing front facade, side (gable) facade and roofs were repaired and restored. In the same period, the modern interior was removed, and the building adapted for residential use (seven flats within the original building). A rear extension of three stories, containing three flats, was added. The rear extension is currently (May 2020) being demolished.

This is the current condition of the building at the time of this 2020 Planning Application.

2.4 Summary

Changes to the area have harmed its character, as the distinctive Victorian heritage has steadily been eroded. Key buildings have been lost with their places being taken by undistinguished modern structures.

Nevertheless, the group of buildings comprising Norton Place have a distinctive character, largely intact since their construction. Details of the Heritage Assessment of the building are provided in Savill's document accompanying the Application.

3.0 Relevant Technical Matters

3.1 Works already undertaken

During 2014-17 the building adapted for residential use (seven flats), with a rear extension of three stories, containing three flats added. Principal changes were those relating to fire safety and acoustic compliance. These works were granted Building Regulations Approval by Manchester City Council, and the works undertaken to date therefore stand technically complete with respect to this legislation.

This is the current condition of the building at the time of this 2020 Planning Application.

3.2 Summary of Technical Condition of the Building in 2014

As mentioned above, 363 Wilmslow Road had been subject to unregulated ad hoc changes in its transition from a residential family home, via a Doctors Surgery, into offices. During the survey of the property, alterations noted as visually intrusive that damaged the historic fabric included:

- Original timber doors upgraded to a higher fire performance by overboarding, or replacement;
- Installation of surface mounted fire alarm cabling, trunking and junction boxes;
- Installation of surface mounted computer network cabling and boxes;
- Fitting of surface mounted plumbing pipework.

A sample of some of these instances is included in Appendix A.

There was no evidence in 2014 of any alterations to the floors and walls to meet modern sound insulation or fire rated construction standards. Since the building is thought to have been in a single tenancy for the entirety of its life there was no provision for the necessary protections for multiple tenancies.

The application seeks to improve upon the technical performance of the building and its supporting services over its 2014 state, to meet safe, modern standards for the tenants in residence. As standard for this type of project the client had requirements for the integration of electrical cabling, TV & Sky cables, burglar alarm cables, water pipes, flow and return heating pipes, small (40mm) waste pipes, and gas mains pipes.

Therefore, apart from the visual appearance, the key parameters for performance are fire, acoustics and servicing. These are used for the important matter of evaluating the different ceiling options reviewed in Appendix B, forming the basis for the design solution proposed in the application.

3.3 The Building Regulations 2010

The proposed use of the building once adapted will be C3 Residential Use. It is important to acknowledge that the Building Regulations impose standards for technical performance, subject to an assessment of the potential impact on the historic fabric - and to meet the regulations "as far as is reasonable and practically possible".

What follows is a commentary on the principal Approved Documents, with comments that weigh the impact of change against achieving an appropriate technical solution. As will become apparent, the most significant challenge to the maintenance of the historic fabric are the requirements for Fire Safety (Approved Document Part B), where the original construction cannot be relied on to perform to the required standard.

We will take each part of the Approved Documents in turn.

3.4 Approved Document A: Structure

2014 Condition

Engineers Studio One assessed the structure and recorded that in a number of areas it was found wanting:

1. The existing outrigger was found to be unsafe and could not be adapted to the original layout as designed;
2. The rear wall of the main building (including the part connected to the rear outrigger) was found to have been constructed in a rough and ready manner, with inadequate toothing of brickwork, bowing in the wall, all leading to doubts about its structural stability;
3. The timber beams spanning the bay windows (and supporting the first floor and roof above) were found to be rotten beyond repair;
4. The second floor structure whilst in 2014 supported a floor, was found to be undersized and inadequate for modern purposes.

Design Response

1. The design replaces the outrigger to match its original form and construction, replicating those to the rear of Nos 359 and 361. The approved design of 2015 embedded the outrigger in the larger extension, and this principle will be followed in these proposals.
2. The rough brickwork and modern blockwork in the upper levels of the wall has been cut out and replaced with brick reclaimed from the site, so as to match the original rear wall construction adjacent.
3. The failing beams have been removed and replaced with twin steel beams on concrete pad stones in the walls at the beam ends.
4. The second floor structure has been made safe by introducing deeper timber joists in place of the original members, set at a lower level to improve headroom in the converted top floor spaces.

This application seeks consent for these alterations.

3.5 Approved Document B1: Fire Safety (Dwellings)

2014 condition

At the time of taking over the building the construction consisted of timber floors - 18mm pine floorboards on 225mm timber joists, some sand pugging between the joists, with this construction underdrawn with a lath-and-plaster ceiling facing the room below. The fire separation performance of the lath-and-plaster construction cannot be reliably determined, but may achieve approximately 15-20 minutes¹. Similarly, the original doors were not certified fire doors, with an indeterminate but certainly inadequate performance in fire. Existing widths of the common stair and hallways have been assessed as adequate for the intended use and occupancy.

The ADB1 requirements that have requirements most challenging in a historic building:

1. In accordance with ADB1 (B1 Section 3), emergency exit provision is required from each flat, either through a protected internal stairway, or a door/window directly to the outside (Para 3.16). The common stair requires smoke ventilation.
2. The building will require adaptation to ensure there is 60min fire separation ('FR60') between dwellings. This applies to the walls between dwellings, and the floors.

¹ BRE Digest 208 Guide (1988), cited in ADB and LABC literature (eg. <http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/content/15953/24595/24598/27-GN-Fire-Resistance-of-Floor-Lathe-and-Plaster-Ceilings-Dec2013.pdf>)

Design Response

1. The walls to the protected stair have been lined with one layer of 12mm plasterboard to ensure FR30 performance applied to the accommodation side of the wall. This required any remaining skirting and cornicing on the affected walls to be removed and replaced. The lower ground floor accommodation has been fitted with escape door/window units direct to the outside, and the UPVC units will be replaced with painted timber. The doors onto the common parts have been replaced with certified FR30S fire doors, self-closing in accordance with ADB. Their design is a four- or six-panel Victorian-style timber door (see 363-OD-0112). An automatic smoke ventilation window has been provided in the roof plane above the common stair at the rear.
2. In considering the horizontal separation between adjacent flats, the design team carefully weighed the different options to create FR60 performance, as follows:
 - (a) Introduce fire protection on top of the floor construction. This is the least invasive technique for the ceilings below, but alters all floor levels, throwing out the relationship between the retained staircase and the floors it serves.
 - (b) Apply plasterboard to the underside of the existing lath-and-plaster ceiling, in the manner of BRE guidance. This would require the removal of all remaining cornice at the ceiling-wall junction, due to the increased thickness of construction, so is invasive. New recessed services would violate the fire line.
 - (c) Introduce a mineral wool fire blanket (or wire reinforced plaster pugging) to the ceiling void. Though this can be accommodated within the existing construction, it does not guarantee fire separation required due to the continued exposure of the joists. New recessed services would violate the fire line.
 - (d) Construct a suspended ceiling below the existing ceiling, keeping the latter intact as far as is possible.
 - (e) As (d), but with the inclusion of a services zone for the items listed in 3.2 above.

To assist with explaining the technical parameters, sometimes conflicting, diagrams of the options appraised are included in Appendix B. Following this process, Option E was selected as being optimum, and furthermore the only guarantee of meeting the onerous ADB Fire (and ADE Sound, see below) requirements for residential use whilst retaining the character of the space.

This application seeks consent for these alterations.

3.6 Approved Document C: Site Preparation

2014 condition

The lower ground floor paving stones were inadequate for resisting the passage of moisture for residential use.

Design Response

The paving slabs have been removed, and replaced with a DPM and concrete ground slab construction. This are set at a level so as not to undermine the existing foundation levels and jeopardise the building integrity, so necessitating the raising of the floors in the ground floor rooms.

This application seeks consent for these alterations.

3.7 Approved Document D: Toxic Substances

Not specifically applicable.

3.8 Approved Document E: Resistance to the Passage of Sound

2014 Condition

The existing wall and floor construction has already been described above. The requirements of ADE for residential use are that the spaces are separated by construction with appropriate sound attenuation. As a rule of thumb, heavyweight construction is required to prevent the passage of airborne sound, especially at the low-frequency end of the spectrum. Section 4 deals with existing buildings; the existing construction fails to meet the required standards:

1. Impact sound is transferred directly into the floor construction, and transmitted to the spaces below.
2. Airborne sound travels through the gaps in the existing floorboards, and through the gaps in the construction at the junctions of floors and walls.

Design Response

1. Existing floorboards retained, with impact sound transmission prevented through acoustic bars in the suspended ceiling construction. The building was subject to post-completion tests, and the form of construction passed and was certified compliant.
2. To avoid the use of heavyweight construction – say, to take an extreme example, by replacing the timber floors with precast concrete – the Applicant has introduced a suspended ceiling to the ground and first floor rooms, using sufficient layers of mineral fibre batts in the ceiling void to minimise sound transmission – c. 400mm ceiling void. This follows the good practice of *ADE Diagram 3.1 Floor Type 3*. As mentioned above, the decision to use this construction balances the requirements of ADB and ADE with the historic fabric to find an optimum construction method. The building was subject to post-completion tests, and the form of construction passed and was certified compliant.

This application seeks consent for these alterations.

3.9 Approved Document F: Means of Ventilation

2014 Condition

The existing rooms were naturally ventilated throughout. The conversion of the offices to residential use is a material change, and ADF requires that all spaces in the home are adequately ventilated for the comfort of occupants. The relevant regulations are as follows:

1. Kitchens must be mechanically ventilated to ensure an appropriate level of air changes per minute.
2. Bathrooms must be ventilated to ensure an appropriate level of air changes per minute.
3. 'Purge ventilation': Openable windows must be provided to enable rapid ventilation to be undertaken.

Design Response

1. Extract ventilation: Intermittent as required for kitchens is installed as a 'recirculation' type, avoiding the need for vents to be taken through the external wall. This minimises the otherwise intrusive impact of the new kitchens' vent grilles on the external appearance of the historic building.
2. Extract ventilation for bathrooms (mechanical) has been led to the rear walls where possible, to minimise impact on the principal external elevations. Just two are taken to the gable wall, with discreet terminators to match the surrounding wall finish.
3. Openable windows or doors have been provided for all habitable rooms. In the case of the original building, where replacement of the original sliding sash windows was required replica double-glazed units were installed. Openable windows to the rear extension will be spring sliding sash windows (refer to drawings). Rear multipane sash windows in the existing facade will utilise a thin sightline framing with special 'Pilkington Spacia' insulating glass. The top floor accommodation has been provided with roof lights – in front,

conservation grade and will be arranged to align with the tripartite facade composition; to the rear, more informal, to suit the internal arrangements. See 363-OD-0113 and 0114 for window details.

This application seeks consent for these alterations.

3.10 Approved Document G: Drainage & Waste Disposal

Not specifically applicable, except in regard to hot water (see ADJ below).

3.11 Approved Document H: Drainage & Waste Disposal

2014 Condition

The existing building had over time accrued a range of external pipework. On the front elevation, modern plastic pipework was previously installed. The requirements are that pipework needs to be installed at an adequate size and configuration to maintain the safe and hygienic disposal of surface and waste water.

Design Response

The installation of cast iron pipework on the front elevation will be done on a like-for-like basis, so as to preserve the visual integrity of the front elevation. All plastic pipework will be routed internally so that there is no obtrusive pipework on the principal elevations. The elevations show any external pipework, existing or proposed.

This application seeks consent for these alterations.

3.12 Approved Document J: Combustion Appliances

2014 Condition

The provision of hot water for heating and sanitary purposes was provided of late by local electric hot water heaters. The requirement remains for C3 Residential use, though with the appropriate flexibility for multiple tenants.

Design Response

The adaptation of the building to residential use will require the introduction of modern, independent installations, the most appropriate of which is the combi boiler. This uses a balanced flue to draw air for combustion into the building, and extract through the same aperture.

This application seeks consent for these alterations.

3.13 Approved Document K: Protection from Falling

2014 Condition

The existing stair balustrade functions as an adequate barrier to falling internally, albeit that sections of it have been over-boarded and subject to alteration.

Design Response

The adaptation of the building at lower ground floor level requires the introduction of doors to the outside (refer to ADB and ADF above). This in turn requires small wells to be formed, and these will require the provision of balustrades around them. The design of these is simple and unobtrusive, black in colour to match the colour scheme of the existing front facade.

This application seeks consent for these alterations.

3.14 Approved Document L1A: Conservation of Fuel & Power

2014 Condition

The building is solid brick (single skin) construction, uninsulated in any of its faces - lower ground floor, walls, and roof. The requirement of ADL is to improve the thermal performance of the envelope (where feasible). The bay window construction (the 'cheeks') was found to be only a half-brick thick, seemingly to allow a void for the window shutters. Regarding the requirement for efficient heat producing appliances the physical impact of the measures required in ADL are covered by the comments on ADJ above. Technical calculations for the performance of the building (existing v proposed) were undertaken by WECE Engineers.

Design Response

The adaptation of the fabric has involved the introduction of a thin thermal lining to the inside of the external walls. For this and the other technical reasons given here, the loss of any remaining existing cornice and skirting is unavoidable. The bay window panelling has been removed and will be reinstated as a surface-mounted feature on the wall, with the necessary thermal insulation retained behind (see 363-OD-0113).

This application seeks consent for these alterations.

3.15 Approved Document M: Access to and Use of Buildings

2014 Condition

The existing building consists of a raised ground floor, and a lower ground floor accessible from a lowered rear yard area. The former means that the front door was only accessible via a short steep flight of stairs with inadequate top landing. The requirements of ADM (for historic buildings) "should be balanced against preserving historic buildings or environments."

The principal requirement then is to review the building configuration to see if level access to the front door will be possible. Alternatively, an improvement to the approach could be explored.

Design Response

The front steps have been rebuilt to provide safe, improved access to the front door by making the rise/going more comfortable, and to unify the front facade appearance by co-ordinating the handrail/metalwork with that of the front lightwells. (See drawing 363-OD-0115 and 0116).

This application seeks consent for these alterations.

3.16 Approved Documents Q&R

Not specifically applicable.

3.17 Regulation 7: Materials & Workmanship

Not specifically applicable.

4.0 The Proposals

4.1 Design

A schedule of the changes to the Listed Building, including repairs and restorations, is set out in Schedule 363-SE-0006 'Comparison of Proposed Works'. This tabulates the changes from the 2015 Scheme (107448/FO/2014 & 107449/LO/2014 granted 22 May 2015) and the revised scheme for which approval is now sought.

Table of Proposed Accommodation

Floor	GEA (m ²)	Flat number	Description	GIA (m ²)	Comments
Lower Ground	194	5	2 bed	69	In new extension
Ground floor	194	1	1 bed duplex	44	
		2	1 bed duplex	42	
		3	1 bed duplex	38	
		4	1 bed duplex	43	
		6	2 bed	57	In new extension
First floor	113	7	1 bed	45	
		8	1 bed	39	
Second floor	88	9	2 bed	74	
TOTAL	589			451	

The design of the flats is unchanged in principle from the 2015 layouts, and the relevant space standards applied from that time.

The building works that are the subject of the planning application and application for listed building consent concern the refurbishment and conversion of 363 Wilmslow Road to flats and the erection of a new two-storey extension at the back of the building, subordinate to the main listed structure.

The building proposal is for four one-bed duplexes on the ground level and basement, two one-bed flats on the first floor, a two-bed flat in the attic and two two-bed flats in the extension – making a total of nine flats.

Each duplex will occupy one of the original rooms on the ground level and the corresponding space in the lower ground floor. By removing all the modern partitions from the ground floor rooms, the original spaces can be better appreciated. The first floor flats will each occupy two rooms, front to back, while the 2-bed flat will occupy the three existing rooms on the upper level.

The rooms located towards the front of the building on the ground and first floor have been refurbished and returned to close to their original size. The number of partitions introduced have been kept to a minimum throughout the existing building.

The extension has two storeys and a floorplate of about 60m² per floor. The increase in floor area and mass brings with it a number of benefits. Primarily, it ensures the economic viability of the project, which will lead to the refurbishment and maintenance of the listed building, and the optimisation of the use of the site in providing new residential accommodation.

The works to the Listed Building are set out in Schedule 363-SE-0006. However, generally the extension will be constructed traditionally, with loadbearing brick-faced cavity walls (salvaged from the boundary wall on site), slate roof. Windows and doors are made of painted timber.

4.2 Works already undertaken

During 2014-17 the building was adapted for residential use (seven flats), with a rear extension of three stories, containing three flats added. Changes already undertaken by April 2020 include the raising of the ground floor, and lowering of the second (attic) floor, formation of the lightwells to the lower ground floor, and the construction of the extension (in part). The rear extension is currently being dismantled.

This is the condition of the building at the time of this 2020 Planning Application.

4.3 Design Strategy

Schedule 363-SE-0006 sets out all the works to the listed building. There are however a number of specific areas of the building that require explanation, some with the benefit of enhanced drawing detail (refer to drawings 363-OD-0110 to 0116 inclusive).

Front Rooms (See 363-OD-0110 and 0111)

The living rooms in the ground floor flats will occupy the three rooms with bay windows. Originally they had rich Victorian cornices, however much of them were irreparably damaged or lost by pre-2014 adaptations, and the detail blurred by extensive overpainting. Any original picture rails were also lost during this period.

As with the cornice work, so the 10" skirting was damaged and cut by the addition of surface wiring, partitions and fixed furniture.

The bay windows to the Wilmslow Road facades had six-panel full height window shutters, opening out from each bay cheek to provide privacy.

The proposal is to restore the lost details to the principal rooms (those ground floor rooms with the bay windows) as follows:

- To replace the lost and damaged joinery with replica feature panelling, skirting, cornice and picture rails, as shown on drawing 363-OD-0111 'Interior Details Sheet 1'.
- Furthermore to introduce an appropriately simple replica cornice to the first floor front rooms and first floor landing.

Other details pertaining to the interior alterations are shown on drawing 363-OD-0112.

External elevations (See 363-OD-0109)

Care has been taken to restore the front and side (gable) elevations to their original state. The quoins, exposed timber work and parapet gutter were found in a poor state, and have been repaired or replaced like-for-like. The existing parapet gutter needed particular care to perform an important technical role in shedding water away from the historic fabric long into the future.

The rear elevation is typical for this type of Victorian property - secondary and of lower constructional and architectural quality than the front elevation. Nevertheless it has a distinctive character and charm, and the proposals will seek to replicate this informality in both the repairs to the rear wall, and the new extension. A

comparison of the 2015 Scheme elevations and the proposed elevations demonstrate how the Applicant intends this to be achieved.

Windows (See 363-OD-0113, 0114)

Where windows in the existing main building were irreparably damaged by poor maintenance and rot, and cannot be salvaged, they will be replaced by replica traditional timber sliding sash windows. Where there are windows to the rear elevation (a mix of sliding sash and casement windows), the windows will be replaced with timber sliding sash windows, matching those immediately adjacent in No361. New windows in the new extension will be timber sprung sliding sash windows to visually match the sliding sashes.

The proposal is to replace the lost and damaged windows as shown on drawing 363-OD-0113 and 0114 'Window Details'.

5.0 Concluding remarks

In bringing forward these proposals, the Consultant Team have had careful regard to the comments and observations of the Inspector determining the Appeals in July 2019, and to further productive pre-application discussions with Officers of Manchester City Council. The result is the proposed design presented in this Planning Application.

The application adopts the approved 2015 Scheme as a guide as to how to extend the building to the rear, retaining its informal, subservient character, and incorporating features to replicate the outrigger in a manner similar to neighbouring properties in Norton Place. However, in order to enhance the external quality beyond the 2015 Scheme, we have proposed sliding sash windows throughout, and high quality replicas of the existing multipane sashes to restore the rear elevation in its entirety.

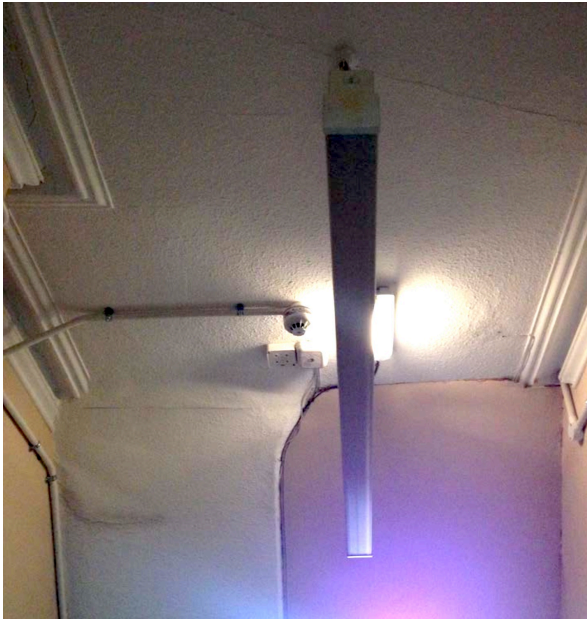
Internally, we have adopted a pragmatic approach to the reinstatement of historic features, with care to meet stringent fire, life safety and acoustic standards with selection of well-established construction solutions with predictable performance success.

This Victorian house was converted using ad hoc alterations into a Doctors Surgery, with little regard to the integration of modern electrical and plumbing services, nor to the historic value of decorative details. This crude adaptation continued during the building's conversion into an office building. Forming nine flats restores residential use to the property, but brings with it requirements for modern standards of comfort and convenience, and not least, life safety.

We believe that the scheme presented here balances these competing - sometimes conflicting - interests to represent the historic Norton Place to the public on Wilmslow Road, and to restore lost features of the building for future generations.

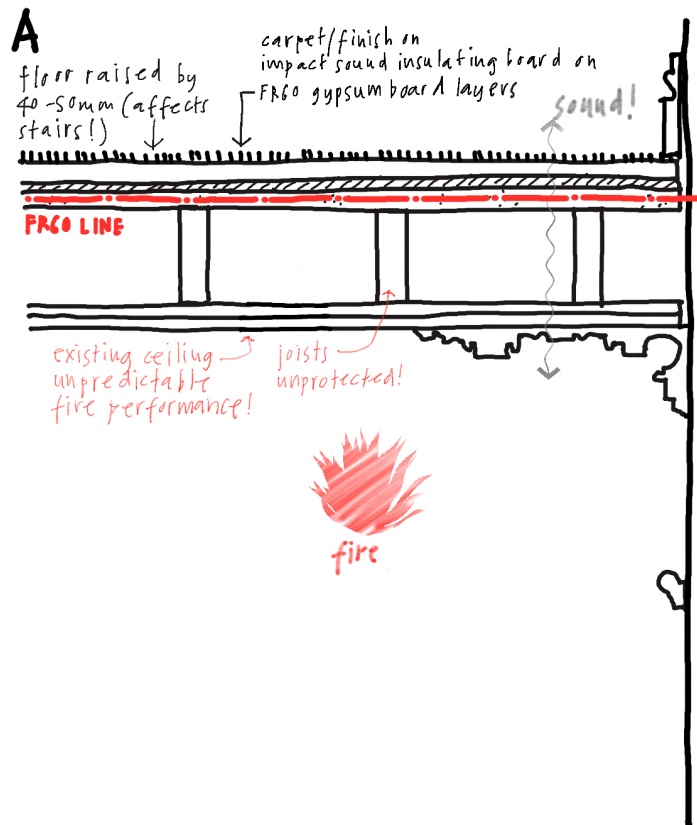
Appendix A

Sample photos of ad hoc technical adaptations (electrical, plumbing) as at 2014

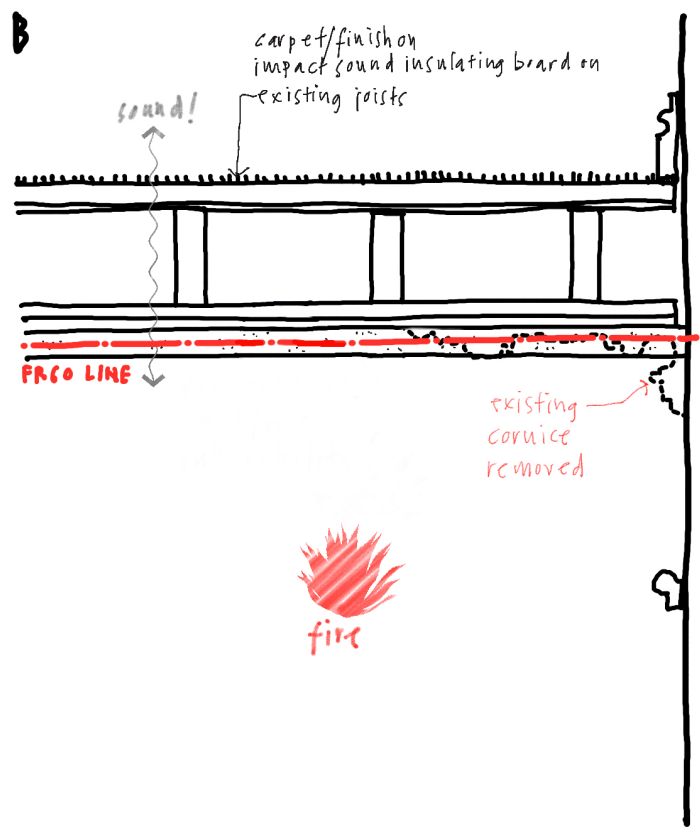


Appendix B

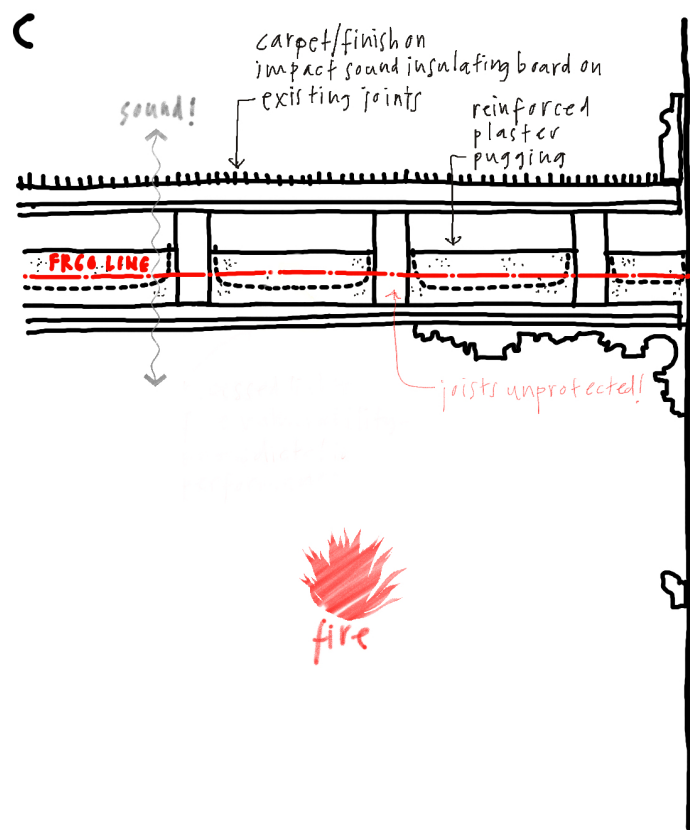
Drawings of construction options A-E for the ceiling construction, with brief option appraisal comments.



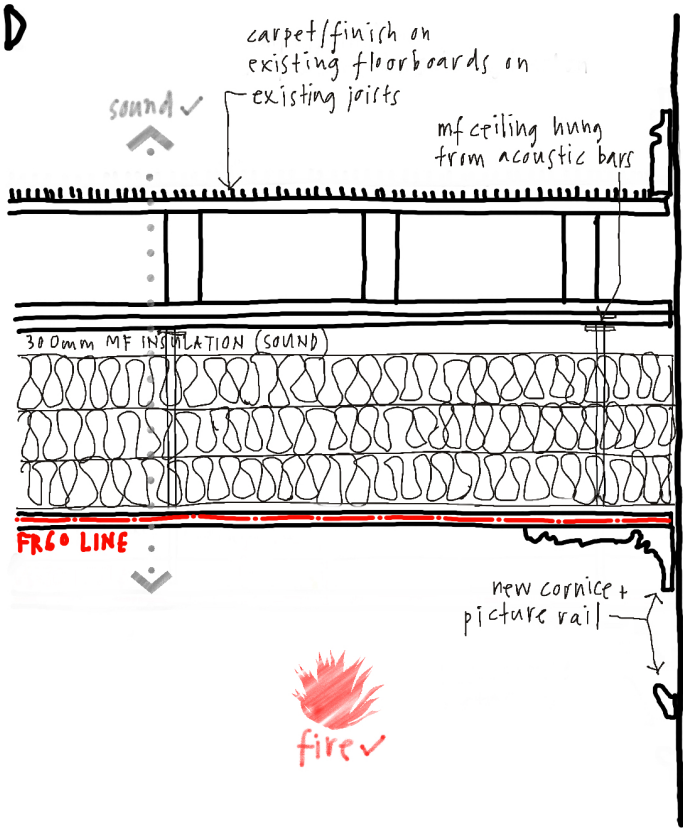
Performance requirement	Comment	
60min fire separation	No protection to structure	X
Impact and airborne sound insulation	Unlikely to meet ADE acoustic performance for sound transmission modes (post completion test required)	X
Services	Some surface mounting/ducting/boxing of electrical, plumbing and ventilation services necessary	X



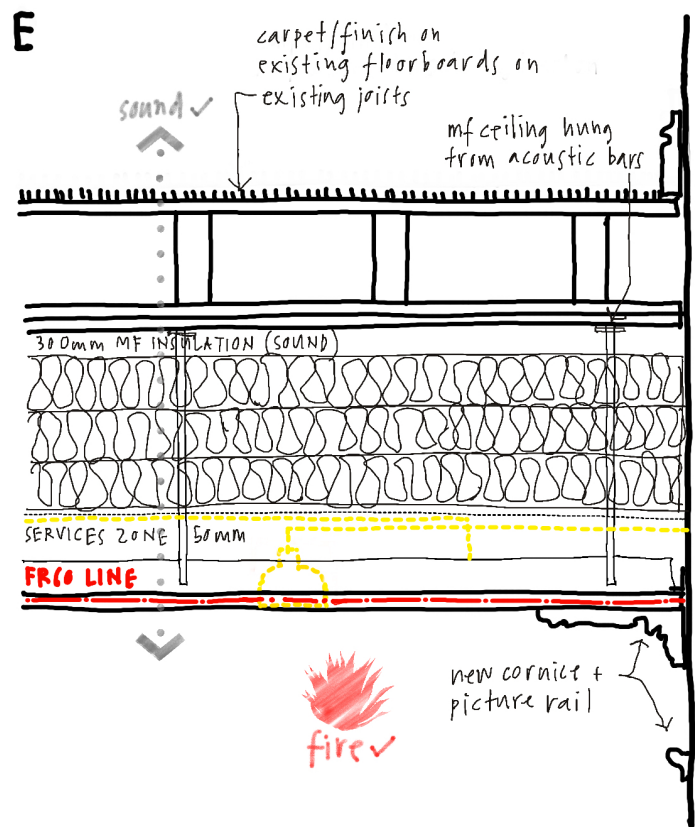
Performance requirement	Comment	
60min fire separation	Structure fully protected from fire from underside	✓
Impact and airborne sound insulation	Unlikely to meet ADE acoustic performance for sound transmission modes (post completion test required)	X
Services	Some surface mounting/ducting/boxing of electrical, plumbing and ventilation services necessary	X



Performance requirement	Comment	
60min fire separation	Not guaranteed due to lack of integrity in ceiling construction. Structural members (joists) offered some protection from pugging, but exposed to fire.	X
Impact and airborne sound insulation	Unlikely to meet ADE acoustic performance for sound transmission modes (post completion test required)	?
Services	Some surface mounting/ducting/boxing of electrical, plumbing and ventilation services necessary	X



Performance requirement	Comment	
60min fire separation	Structure fully protected from fire from underside	✓
Impact and airborne sound insulation	Proven method of construction, verified by site test (2016)	✓
Services	Some surface mounting/ducting/boxing of electrical, plumbing and ventilation services necessary	X



Performance requirement	Comment	
60min fire separation	Structure fully protected from fire from underside	✓
Impact and airborne sound insulation	Proven method of construction, verified by site test (2016)	✓
Services	Fully hidden, giving clean interior wall and ceiling surfaces	✓