# Design and access statement

In support of a planning application at:

## Boulevard House,
## 92 Fortis Green,
## East Finchley,
## London,
## N2 9EY

Prepared by:

## Boulevard Properties

January 2016

# 1.0 Introduction

This 'Design and access statement' has been prepared in support of an accompanying planning application and associated documentation for a proposal at Boulevard House, 92 Fortis Green, London N2 9EY. The proposal subject of the application is described as follows:

> *The demolition of two existing double garages and store, to the rear of the property, and the construction of two number single bedroom mews houses.*

This statement sets out and illustrates the design principles that have been adopted in seeking to establish a proposal that is in keeping with the wider area, whilst responding sensitively to the immediate surrounding context, as detailed in the following content.


1.0 Introduction

2.0 Context

3.0 Planning history

4.0 Conservation area

5.0 Proposal

6.0 Clissold Close

7.0 Access

8.0 Summary

# 2.0 Context

2.1 Originally constructed in 1978, Boulevard House at 92 Fortis Green, London N2 9EY comprises a single terraced building with a primary frontage to Fortis Green, a road running east to west between the suburbs of Muswell Hill and East Finchley.

2.2 The building has been recently converted to provide five self-contained residential units with the addition of a mansard roof on the top of the building to provide a sixth unit.

2.3 At ground level there is an arch through the building that leads to a rear yard which gives access to two double garages with a central store. As part of the recent conversion works from previously office accommodation to residential accommodation the existing garages were retained and refurbished.

2.4 In addition to the two double garages the building benefits from two car park spaces at the front of the building, providing a parking ratio of one space per apartment.

2.5 All of the new residential units have recently been let where only one of the car park spaces to the front of the building has been dedicated to the ground floor flat at the request of the tenant.

2.6 None of the other tenants in the building have requested car parking provision and there is no interest from third parties to rent the garages.



**The recently converted building at No.92 Fortis Green**

2.7 Given the lack of interest in the garages being let there would seem to be sense in converting the garages to residential accommodation.

2.8 The existing garages are accessed via the side arch on the ground floor level of the building.

2.9 Each garage footprint is circa 25 sqm in area which together with the incorporation of the central store and an additional storey would provide good quality residential accommodation in the form of two number single bedroom mews houses, each with a total floor area of circa 55 sqm.



**The existing garages and yard to the rear of Boulevard House, 92 Fortis Green**

2.10 The existing rear yard and the two double garages are contained within the walled boundaries to Clissold Close to the north and east together with the western boundary of no's 1 – 4 Coldfall Lodge to the west. Between the garages there is small store which is set back from the garage building line.

2.11 The existing garages are single storey in height and it is proposed that they are extended upwards by the addition of a single storey primarily finished in zinc to compliment and reflect the new mansard roof that has recently been added to the top of the building.



**The rear yard looking to the east**



**The rear yard looking to the west**

2.12 An extensive amount of the existing boundary condition at each end of the rear yard is either two storeys or storey and a half in height thereby supporting an additional storey to be constructed on top of the existing garages with minimal impact.

# 3.0 Planning history

3.1 The property at Boulevard House, no.92 Fortis Green is located within Conservation Area no.4, designated in March 1974, within the Haringey Local Plan.

3.2 There have been a number of planning applications following the completion of the existing particularly in relation to the addition of a new mansard roof originally applied for in June 1983.

3.3 In April 2014 the present owners and applicants for this pre-application meeting submitted an application for Prior notification for change of use from office to residential accommodation.

3.4 The Prior notification application HGY/2014/0403 was confirmed as being an acceptable change of use under permitted development by way of approval dated 11th April 2014 granted by the Council.

3.5 In June 2014 the present owners submitted a planning application for the 'Replacement and minor alterations to fenestration to front and rear elevations of the existing building' – planning ref: HGY/2014/1780.

3.6 The proposals in respect of the modifications to the fenestration to the elevations of the building were approved by way of notice of planning permission dated 18th August 2014.

3.7 In July 2014 the present owners submitted a planning application for the 'Addition of a mansard roof to the top of the existing building to accommodate a single residential unit' – planning ref: HGY/2014/2227.

3.8 The proposals in respect of the addition of the mansard roof were approved by way of notice of planning permission dated 16th October 2014.

3.9 The works in respect of the planning applications ref: HGY/2014/0403, HGY/2014/1780 and HGY/2014/2227 have now been completed in their entirety, where all of the residential units have now been let.




**Plan illustrating the extent of the Fortis Green Conservation Area**

# 4.0 Conservation area

4.1 The site of Boulevard House outlined in blue on the plan opposite, is within the northern part of the Fortis Green Conservation Area, outlined in red.

4.2 The existing garages are behind the existing building, located immediately adjacent to the northern side of Fortis Green, forming part of a broad range of building types and uses.

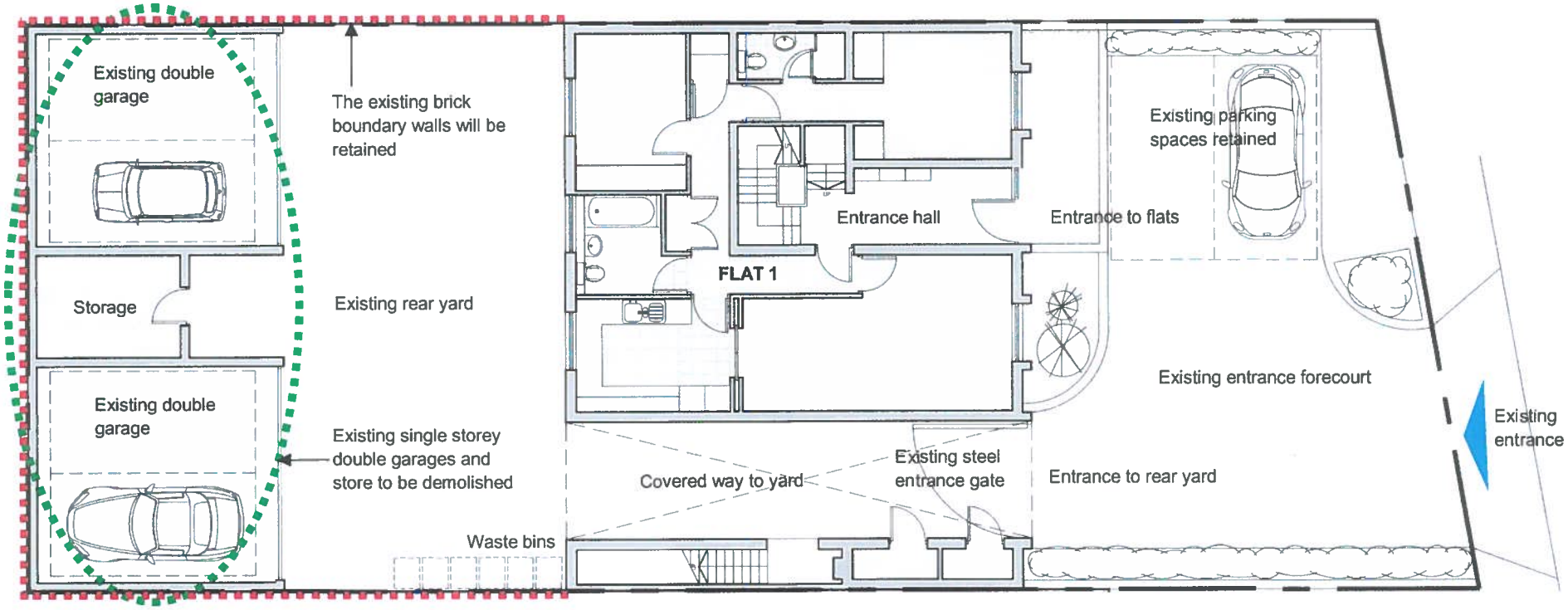
4.3 The surrounding uses comprise car repair workshops, public houses, restaurant, shops and dwellings of various types.

4.4 Surrounding dwelling types comprise a mixture of styles, accommodation and sizes ranging from blocks of self-contained purpose built flats, flat conversions together with large and small individual dwellings.

4.5 This diverse range of building uses and types results in a rich mix of building types and grain in the area immediately surrounding the site.

4.6 The proposals to provide the two single bedroom mews houses, to replace the existing garages, have been carefully considered to ensure that they do not adversely impact on the immediately adjacent residential buildings of the wider nature of the Conservation Area.

# 5.0 Proposal




**Plan illustrating location of the works to the rear of no.92 Fortis Green**

5.1 The proposal involves the demolition of the existing two double garages and central store and the construction of two number single bedroom mews houses on the same footprint of the existing garage structure.

5.2 The two mews houses will be two storeys in height accessed from the recess between the houses reflecting the existing recess between the two existing double garages.

5.3 The existing boundary walls to the north, east and west will be retained to minimise the disruption of any building work to the residents of Clissold Close, located to the north.

5.4 The first floor addition for each new mews house will be constructed using timber frame and zinc cladding to reflect the materials used in the new mansard roof to no.92 Fortis Green, which being lightweight will assist in expediting construction.

5.5 The new mews houses are proposed without any windows to the north and east elevations to Clissold Close thereby avoiding any overlooking.

5.6 Similarly there will be no windows to the west elevation as this is boundary wall condition to the adjacent property.

5.7 The design of the new mews houses provides generous accommodation with a total gross internal floor area of 55 sqm for each house, being in excess of the usual space standard norms.

5.8 Each mews house, being self-contained, is provided with a dedicated entrance door opening on to a generous hallway where the ground floor accommodates the single bedroom and a bathroom designed to accessible standards.

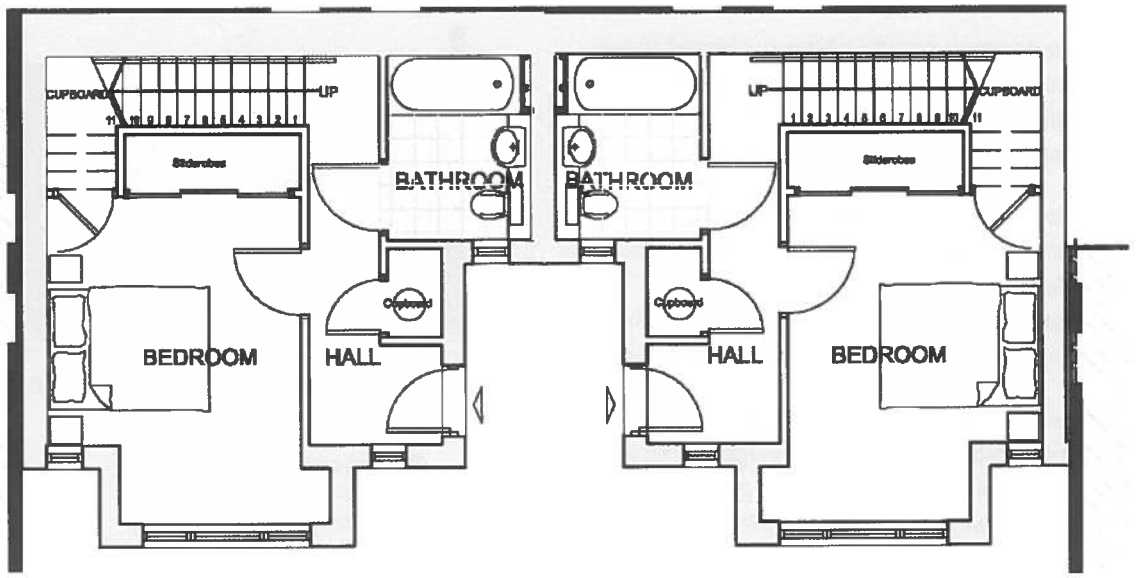
5.9 An internal staircase leads to the first floor comprising a large living / dining room together with a kitchen.

5.10 The habitable rooms of the bedroom and living / dining room benefit from extensive daylight provided by large floor height glazed windows.

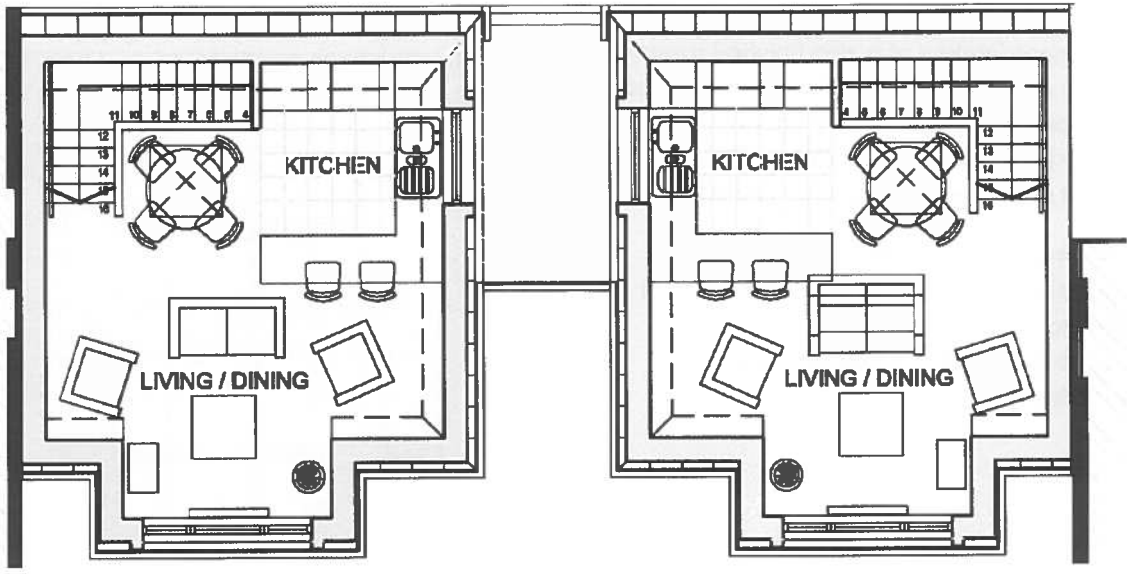
5.11 The entrance hall, bathroom and kitchen all have windows that allow natural ventilation.

5.12 The upper floor living / dining and kitchen spaces further benefit from daylight provided by a single roof light in the roof of each mews house.

5.13 Storage is provided within each mews house through a ground floor entrance hall cupboard, under stair storage and in a large wardrobe in the bedroom.




**Proposed ground floor plan to mews houses**




**Proposed first floor plan to mews houses**

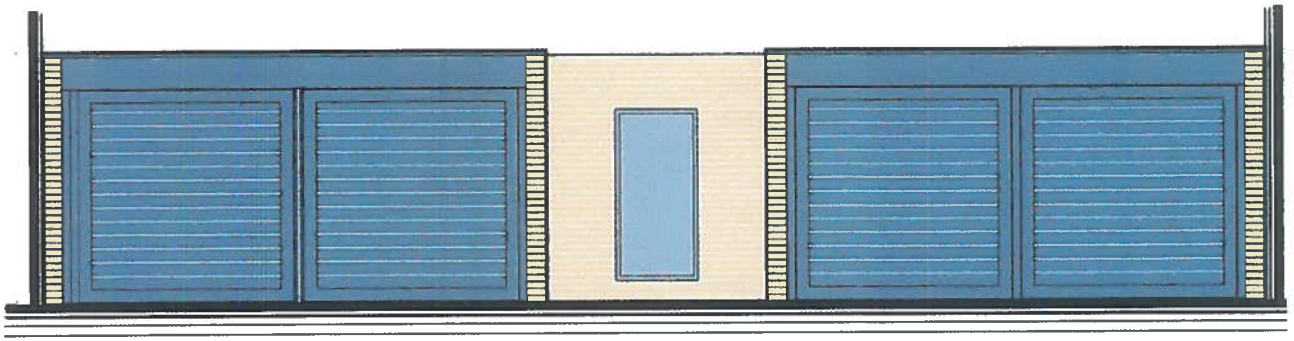
5.14 The southern elevation of the proposed mews houses, facing the existing yard, has been carefully designed to capture daylight to the internal spaces of the new mews houses.

5.15 The front elevation of each of the large bays is treated in a large window sub-divided to provide opening windows, with natural ventilation, in addition to providing necessary means of escape from the new mews houses.

5.16 The houses are designed to reflect the existing footprint of the two garages where the recess provides a domestic point of entry, thereby allowing the southern elevation to have extensive glazing, whilst providing additional windows to the kitchen and bathroom without excessive overlooking.

5.17 The incorporation of a zinc finished treatment to the new mansard roof provides a lightness of appearance that reflects the presence of the existing new mansard roof at the top of 92 Fortis Green, see section 2.0 Context.

5.18 The mansard treatment ensures that the overall height of the new mews houses is kept to a minimum to accommodate the space within, all in a contemporary architectural style.



**Existing elevation to the two double garages and store**




**Proposed front elevation to the new single bedroom mews houses**

# 6.0 Clissold Close

6.1 As the closest existing residential development attention has been given to the impact of the two new mews houses to Clissold Close.

6.2 Clissold Close comprises twenty self-contained residential units of two storeys in height under a pitched roof, similar in form to the proposal.

6.3 However unlike Clissold Close, the proposed mews houses utilise a zinc finished mansard which minimises the built height to two storeys without the need of a pitched roof.

6.4 The light coloured zinc finish, that matches the mansard treatment to the existing building, further serves to reduce the apparent height of the additional mews house storey above the level of the existing garages.

6.5 To avoid a potentially bulkier appearance of a two storey wall in brickwork to the north boundary a zinc treatment to the sloped profile above the existing brick wall reduces the apparent height and volume of the additional storey above the existing garages.

6.6 The presence of the two flanking walls of predominantly two storey, or storey and a half in height ensures that there is no material visual impact to the east or west.



**Clissold Close from Fortis Green**



**View from centre of Clissold Close**



**No's 1 – 4 Clissold Close**



**North boundary of the garages in relation to Clissold Close**

6.7 Following the pre-application consultation meeting the design has been amended to minimise actual and perceived impact on the closest neighbouring properties at Clissold Close, to the rear of the new mews houses.

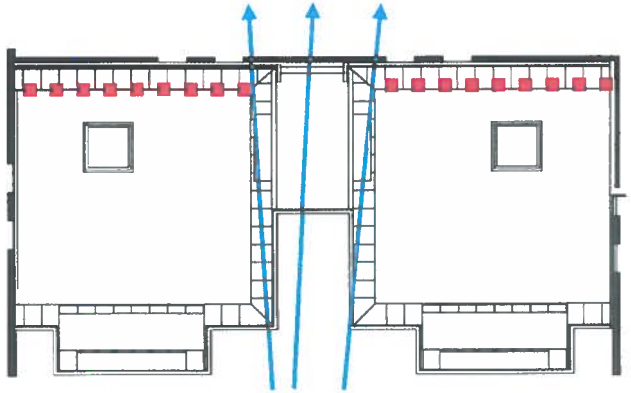
6.8 As suggested at the pre-application consultation meeting the mews have an individual, rather than continuous roof, treatment thereby introducing a gap between each roof thus reducing the apparent built presence of each mews house.

6.9 The use of a light coloured roof finish using zinc as a quality and long lasting material preserves the existing brick wall to the northern boundary at its existing height. The additional zinc mansard treatment to the first floor, which has a shallow pitch to the vertical, results in a seemingly lower building than would be the case with a double height brickwork elevation. The reduced presence of the new mews houses is illustrated on the elevation opposite.

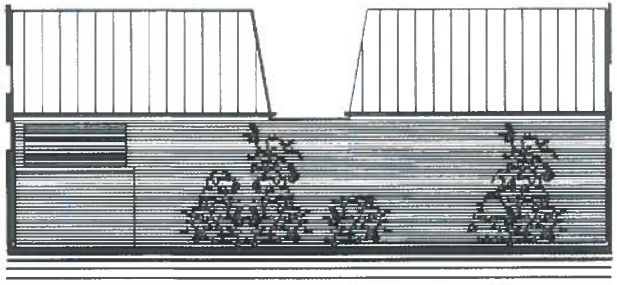
6.9 A 'Sunlight and daylight assessment' has been undertaken by Party Wall and Rights of Light specialists 'David Maycox and Co.'. The assessment concludes that the proposal is compliant with BRE Guidelines as no part of the development subtends an angle of more than 25 degrees to the horizontal from the centre point of the lowest windows, or 2m above ground level at the window wall.



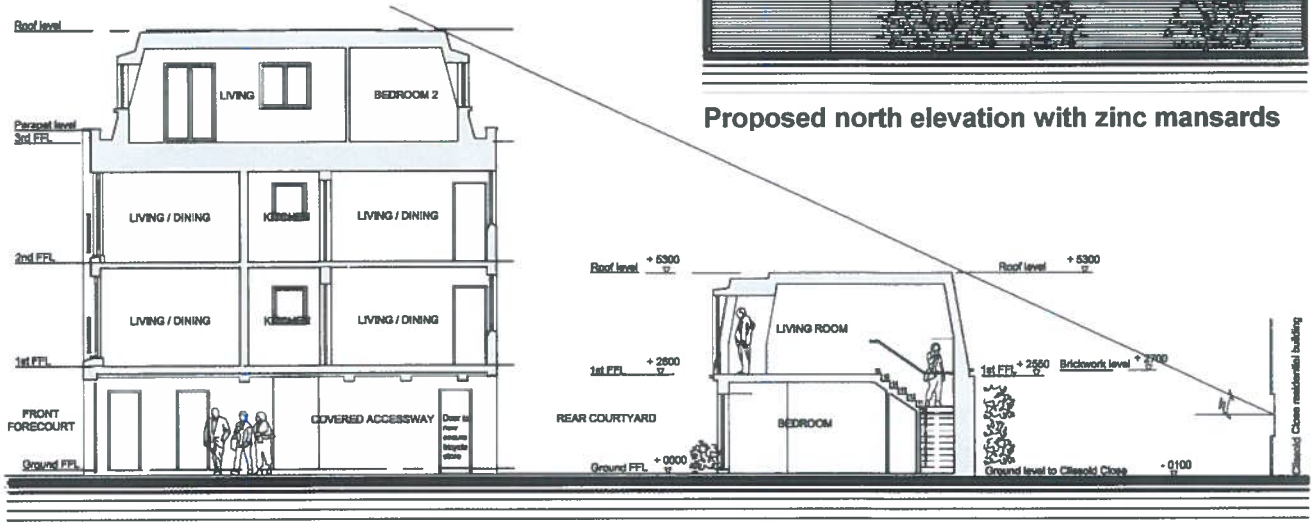
**View from Boulevard House to the closest part of Clissold Close with windows assessed for daylight / sunlight impact marked with an 'X'.**



**Roof plan illustrating how the gap between the roof of each mews house reduces the apparent built presence and daylight impact.**

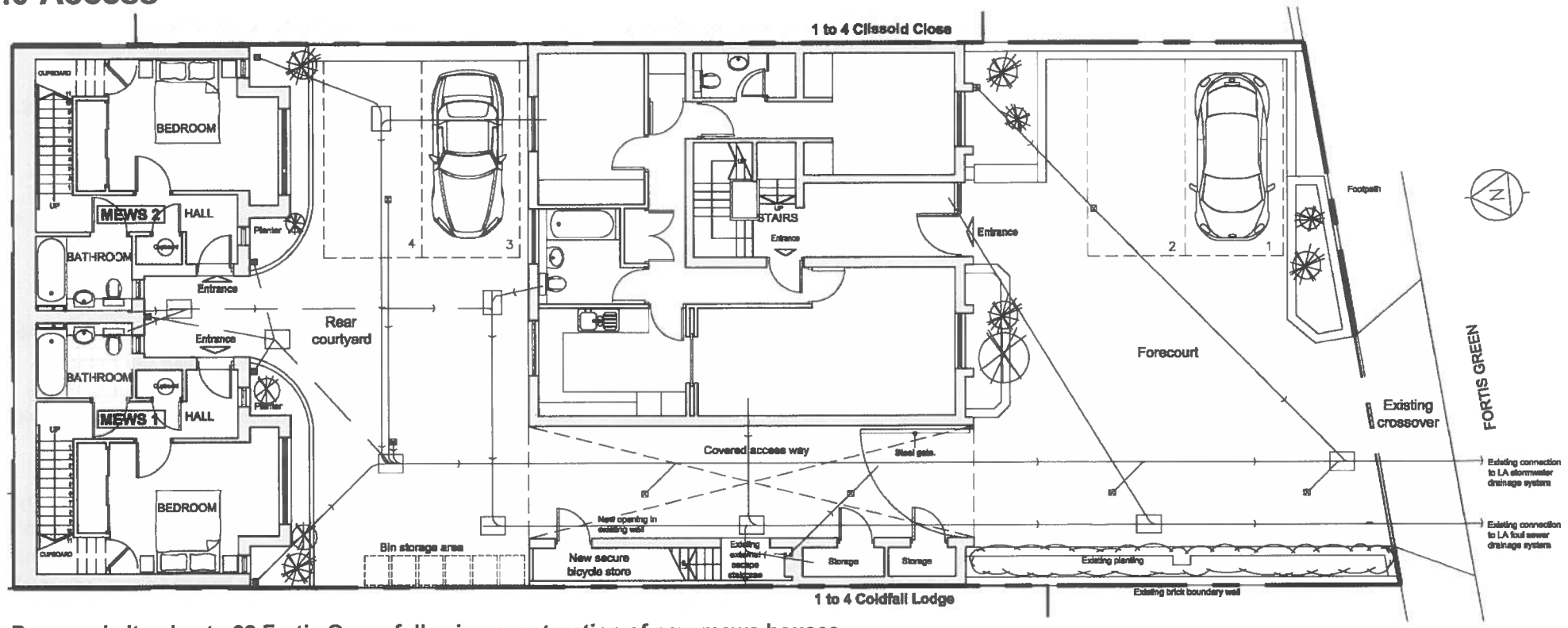


**Proposed north elevation with zinc mansards**




**Section through Boulevard House, the new mews houses and the south elevation of Clissold Close illustrating that the mews houses do not have any adverse sunlight or daylight impact, when assessed in accordance with BRE guidelines.**

# 7.0 Access




**Proposed site plan to 92 Fortis Green following construction of new mews houses**

7.1 The proposal does not involve the alteration of the existing vehicular and pedestrian access directly from Fortis Green, which will be retained.

7.2 The site is located on the southern side of the A504 Fortis Green. To the east the A504 connects to Queens Avenue and the central retail facilities of Muswell Hill.

7.3 To the west the A504 connects to the A1000, East Finchley High Road with further direct connections to the A1 and A406 North Circular Road.

7.4 The site is well located between the centre of Muswell Hill to the east and East Finchley Underground station to the west, where walking to each of these locations is provided by footpath provision to both sides of Fortis Green and beyond.

7.5 Pedestrian access will be as existing, directly from Fortis Green to the front door of each of the two new mews houses at ground level, thereby accessible for people with disabilities and for prams via a flush entrance threshold.

7.6 The location of the proposal is in an area of medium public transport accessibility level (PTAL) of 3, which is defined as a 'Moderate' level of public transport accessibility.

7.7 The present total of six car park spaces within the site, one dedicated space per flat, will be reduced to four car park spaces, two to the rear and two to the front representing a 50% car parking ratio to each of the eight units, six existing flats and the two proposed mews houses.

7.8 'Table 4.1 – Parking standards' within Appendix 1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the Borough stipulates that for two bedroom houses and flats there should be a provision of one space per flat, which would equate to two spaces. For one bedroom flats, car parking provision should be provided at a level of 0.33 spaces per flat, which would equate to a further two spaces.

7.9 The 2011 Census for the Fortis Green Ward confirms that 33% of households have no car requirement and that a further 47% of households have only one car where it is recognised that car ownership tends to be primarily for larger residential units.

7.10 The proposed mix of six no. single bedroom units and two no. two bedroom units is therefore likely to have a less than average car demand being consistent with the proposed provision of 0.5 spaces per unit.

7.11 The proposal therefore meets the minimum car parking standard of the UDP and is within the maximum provision of less than one car park space per flat as directed in the London Plan.

7.12 The site benefits from a close proximity of bus services, at average arrival frequency of 28 buses per hour, as follows:

**102** – Bus stop at 250m distant
Edmonton Green – Palmers Green – Muswell Hill – East Finchley – Golders Green – Brent Cross.

**234** – Bus stop at 250m distant
Barnet – Whetstone – Friern Barnet – Muswell Hill – East Finchley – Highgate Wood.

**263** – Bus stop at 625m distant
Muswell Hill – Archway – Hampstead – Swiss Cottage.

7.13 In addition the site is well served by the presence of a London Underground Station approximately 900 metres or eleven minutes walking distance from the site.

7.14 The Northern Line which runs north / south through London in two central routes serves High Barnet, Finchley Central, Camden Town, Euston, Kings Cross, Bank, London Bridge, Kennington, Elephant & Castle and Morden.

7.15 The Northern Line has an average train arrival frequency of four minutes during the day with direct connections to a number of Central London underground and mainline stations.

7.16 The site further benefits from proximity to many well established amenities including specialist shops, restaurants, cinema, supermarket, pubs, health club, primary schools and a secondary school all within a 700m or eight minute walk of the site.

7.17 The proposals provide adequate secure storage space for one cycle for each unit in compliance with Borough UDP policies.

7.18 Refuse collection will take place in accordance with the operation of the existing flats on the site with refuse collected in a central secure location on the site before being picked up by refuse collection services.

7.19 The combination of the above facilities confirms that the site can be supported by a reasonable level of onsite car parking that is commensurate in meeting the likely demand. In addition the site has good accessibility to non-car modes of transport and surrounding established amenities.

# 8.0 Summary

- The proposed new mews houses seek to realise the potential offered by the present garages, which are likely to be under-used, to provide good quality mews house accommodation.
- The design of the new mews houses provides generous internal planning across two floors that is contemporary in style and in keeping with the architecture style of Boulevard House at 92 Fortis Green.
- The new mews houses have been designed to minimise their volume and impact in the immediate surroundings, particularly in respect of Clissold Close nearby.
- The use of the zinc metal sheet finish to the mansard roof of each new mews house utilises a quality material that serves to minimise the impact of the new houses from the limited points that they can be viewed.
- On site car parking is reduced to four spaces, being a 50% provision for each flat which is considered to adequately reflect the requirements from the occupants in the building and mews houses.
- The proposed mews houses are deliberately designed to complement and easily assimilate into the wider character of the Fortis Green Conservation Area without adverse impact.