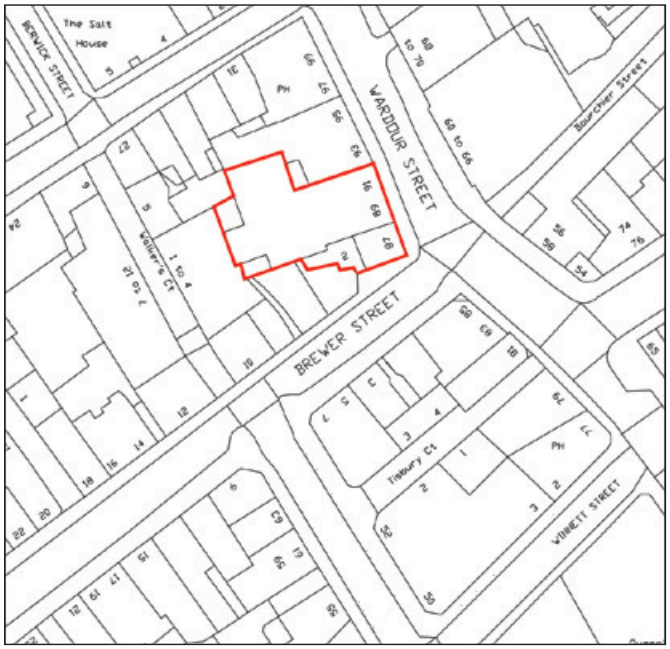
Case Study: Wardour Street

2 Brewer Street & 87 Wardour Street, W1
Soho, London

The amalgamation of two shops over ground and basement levels on a prominent corner site in Soho, London and located within the Soho Conservation Area.

"Mata Architects performed admirably in dealing with a sensitive retail development and reconfiguration, with complex structural aspects, within an occupied commercial building in a densely occupied Conservation Area"

Daniel Liss, Throgmorton Estates (client)



RIBA Chartered Practice

MATA ARCHITECTS

Key Data:

Begun (design work): September 2016
Begun (construction): January 2019
Completed: August 2019
Floor Area: 118m^2 / 1,270 sq.ft
Construction Cost: £330k

Client: Throgmorton Estates
Structural Engineer: Elliott Wood
Fire Consultant: ARUP
Planning Consultant: Savills
Contractor: Westwood Ltd.

Overview

MATA were appointed to amalgamate two small retail units separated by a secondary entrance into the building. The new unit would also incorporate the, previously external, entrance space into the building on Brewer St and the basement space (previously ancillary to the commercial uses) to function as an extension of the ground floor retail unit.

We identified a secondary route of escape (in the event of a fire) elsewhere in the building allowing the incorporation of space previously separating the two units into the new amalgamated unit.

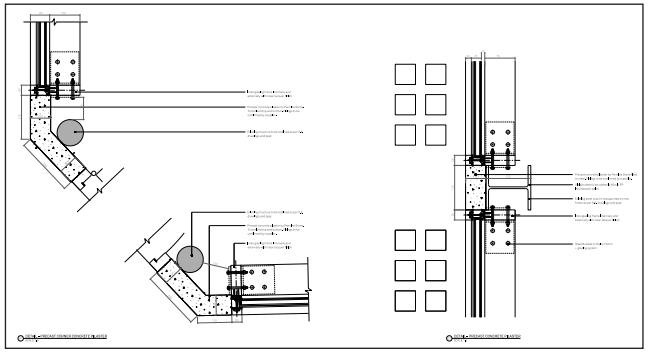
A newly designed glazed facade would re-position the retail unit as a high profile corner site in Soho and ultimately work towards maximising overall lettable retail space.

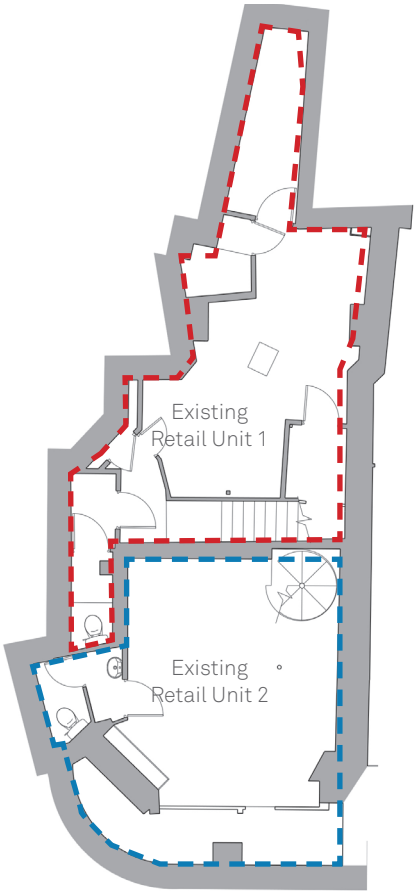
Key Challenges:

- Although situated on a prominent corner, the existing retail units were small and uninspiring. In their current state there was a ceiling to the type of tenant that could be attracted to take on a lease. The primary corner unit (Carphone Warehouse) only featured 5m x 4.5m of prime retail space.
- Integrating new and existing structure in a building that had not been adapted for many years.
- Four stories of offices above the retail unit were to remain in occupation throughout the works with the secondary access/ fire escape route to be maintained at all times.

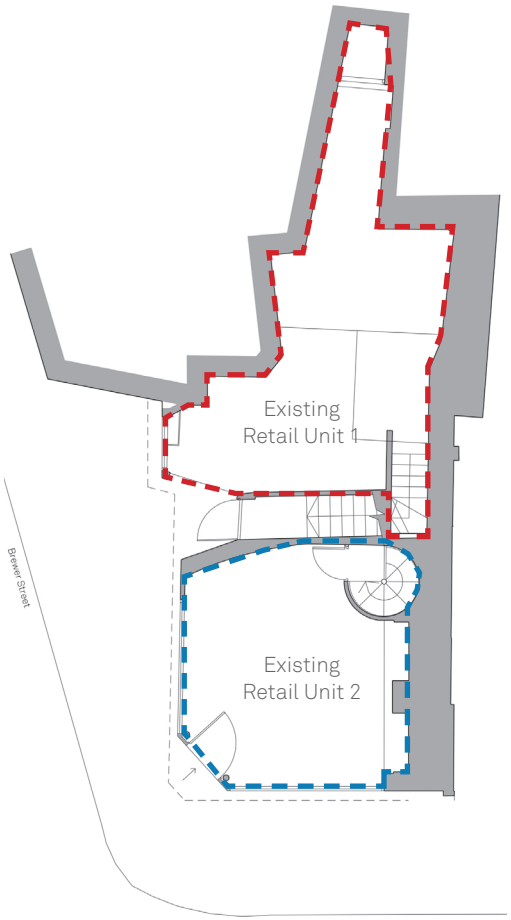
Design:

- Without a specific tenant in mind, the external shop front design is an attempt to be flexible and adaptable without being too generic.
- Pre-cast concrete pilasters concealing structure, are contrasted against the warmth of large format Iroko timber glazing frames.

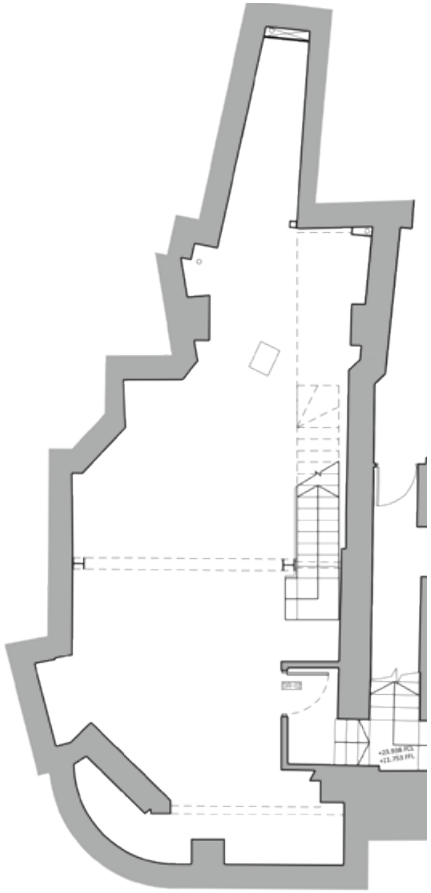




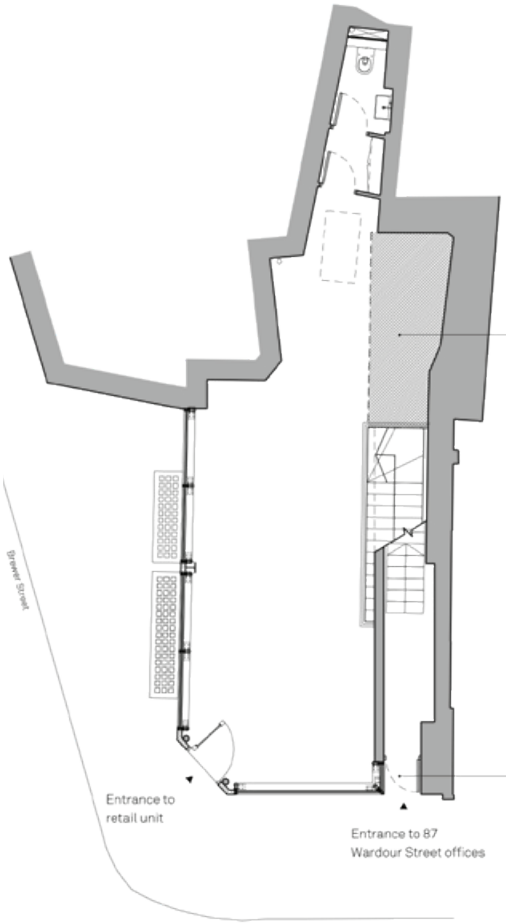
Existing Basement Floor Plan - NTS



Existing Ground Floor Plan - NTS



Proposed Basement Floor Plan - NTS



Proposed Ground Floor Plan - NTS

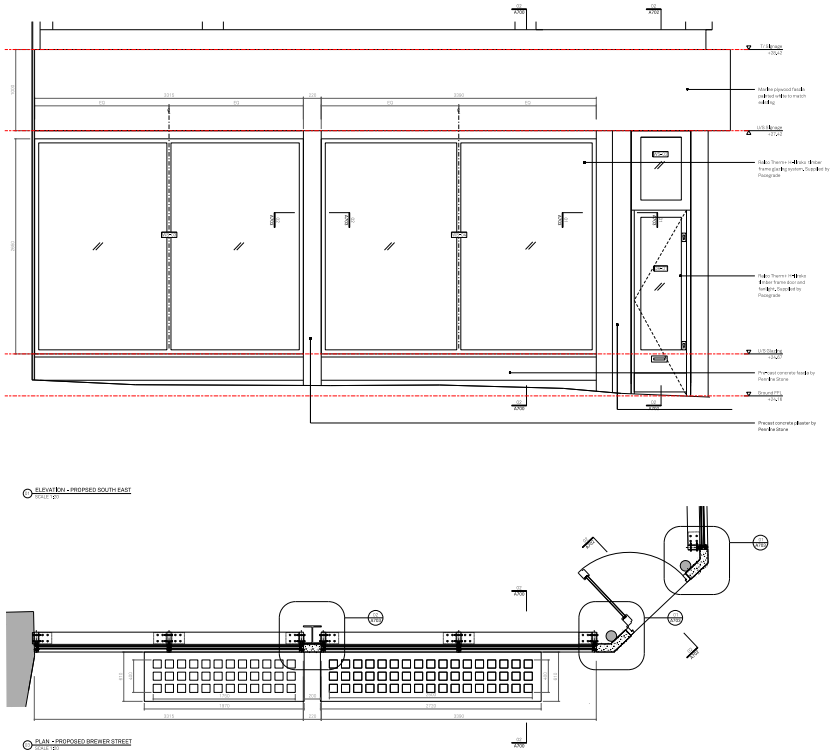
Existing Retail Unit 1 - NIA 29 sq.m/312sq.ft + Basement Storage 38 sq.m/409 sq.ft

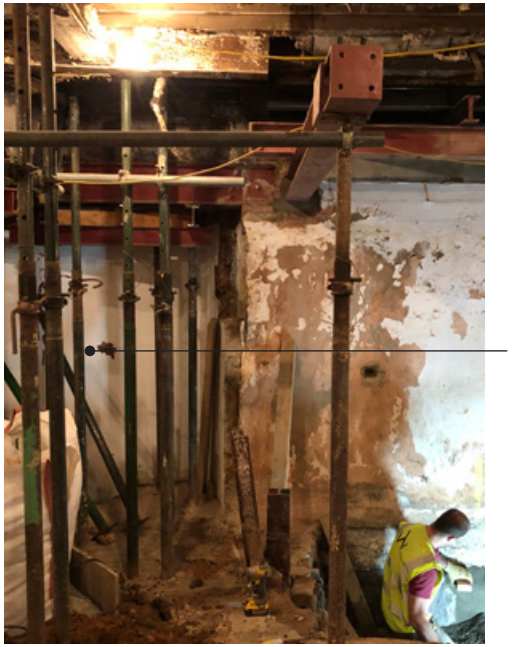
Existing Retail Unit 2 - NIA 23 sq.m/247sq.ft + Basement Storage 27 sq.m/290 sq.ft

Proposed retail unit NIA 118 sq.m/1,270 sq.ft

Construction:

- Following the strip out of the building, we discovered that areas of the primary structure supporting the building above were highly corroded. The structural engineer specified temporary propping,
- Extensive site investigations were required to ascertain the extent of the corrosion.

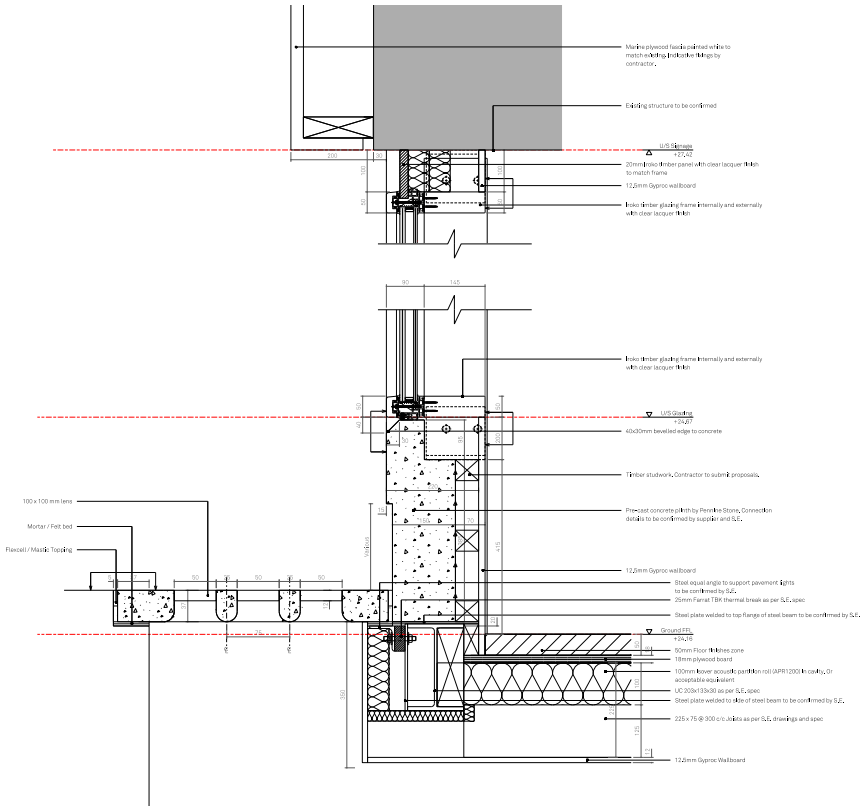




Extensive temporary propping was required to transfer the loading of the building down from first floor to basement floor while replacement structure was installed.

Construction:

- Following investigations, remedial work and extensive replacement of the compromised steel structure was specified by the structural engineer.
- During construction we worked closely with the structural engineer to coordinate the adapted structural scheme with the proposed wall, floors, ceilings and new glazed facade.



Two slender columns at the corner of the building, supporting the occupied four stories of offices above were replaced as part of the works.

Corroded spreader beam encased in concrete at basement level also required to be replaced as part of the works

Conclusion:

- The new retail unit was brought to market prior to it's delivery/ completion of the works.
- A lease was agreed by our client with luxury retailer JW Anderson, store opening 2020.
- The site has now been re-positioned and has received wide press coverage prior to the store opening. Changing artwork on the hoarding has been featured in Vogue Magazine, and other publications.

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