

THE PAUL MELLON CENTRE
15 & 16 BEDFORD SQUARE

Heritage Statement

March 2023

Replacement Windows

WRIGHT & WRIGHT ARCHITECTS



1.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

1.1 Introduction

16 and 15 Bedford Square are occupied by the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art.

The Centre wishes to replace four existing single glazed timber sash windows to no.16.

The four sash windows are located on the front elevation of the building, onto Bedford Square, and are within the third floor roof dormers.

The proposal is to replace the windows with like-for-like replacements.

1.2 Site Description

The two buildings are D1 use class and are located on the northwest side of Bedford Square. They are Grade I listed for their group value.

The buildings are located within the Sub Area 5 of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

1.3 Listing

List Entry Number: 1244546

Grade: I

Date first listed: 24th October 1951

Date of most recent amendment: 11th January 1999

The English Heritage List Entry defines the importance of Nos.15 & 16 as being within the context of the north east side of Bedford Square (Nos. 12-27 and the associated railings).

1.4 Listing Extract:

The following extract from the Listing Description gives an overview of the terrace as a whole.

The relevant references that directly relate to nos. 15 & 16 have been extracted and are included here for ease of reference:

Overview

Symmetrical terrace of 16 houses forming the north side of a square. 1776-1781. Mostly built by W Scott and R Grews; probably designed by either Thomas Leverton or Robert Palmer; for the Bedford Estate.

- Yellow stock brick with evidence on most of the houses of tuck pointing. Plain stucco band at 1st floor level.
- The 2 centre houses, Nos 18 & 19, are stuccoed.
- Slate mansard roofs with dormers and tall slab chimney-stacks.

Exterior

- 3 storeys, attics and basements. 3 windows each.
- Recessed round-arched entrances with Coade stone vermiculated intermittent voussoirs and bands; mask keystones.
- Enriched impost bands and cornice-heads to doors.
- Side lights to panelled doors, some 2-leaf
- Fanlights, mostly radial patterned.
- Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes,

most with glazing bars.

- The following have blind boxes: Nos 16-19, No.20 to 1st floor only, Nos 21 and 25.
- The following have cast-iron balconies to 1st floor windows: Nos 12-15, 18-21,23-25.
- No.12 has a good early C19 cast-iron balcony with round-arched trellis and tented canopy
- Cornice and parapets, Nos 12 & 27 have balustraded parapets.

Interiors not inspected but noted to contain original stone stairs with cast and wrought-iron balusters of various scroll designs, decoration and features; special features as mentioned:

Subsidiary Features attached cast-iron railings to areas with urn or torch-flambe finials. No.17 with a wrought-iron lamp bracket and snuffer. Most houses with good wrought-iron foot scrapers.

Historical Notes

- The houses in Bedford Square form a most important and complete example of C18 town planning. Built as a speculation, it is not clear who designed all the houses.
- Leverton was a country house architect and may have been involved with only the grander houses; he lived at No.13.
- Palmer was the Bedford Estate surveyor and may be responsible for the vagaries of the square. - The majority of the plots leased by the estate were taken by Robert Grews, a carpenter, and William Scott, a brick maker. No.22 was the residence of Sir J Forbes Robertson, actor (plaque).
- (Byrne A: Bedford Square, An architectural study: London:-1990)."

1.4 Timeline

1775 - Construction of Bedford Square begins. All of the houses are built by individual builders, each of whom had an individual contract with Bedford Estate.

1782 - John Utterton, a plasterer, signed No. 16's original 99 year lease.

1784 - Utterton sold the lease to Joseph Shrimpton.

1785 - Shrimpton then sold the lease to Thomas Wildman, a solicitor, who then lived at No. 16 for 10 years.

1960s - No. 16's original fanlight replaced with modern alternative.

1996 - Paul Mellon Centre moved into No. 16 in June. The property was refurbished by Bedford Estates over a 6 month period without any major structural work needed.

2014 - Paul Mellon Centre acquired the leasehold of no. 15.

2015 - Refurbishment works were completed on No.15 and 16 Bedford Square. Lateral connections were introduced between the two buildings and archive storage rooms were introduced at basement level to house the Centre's collection.

1.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT (CONT'D)

1.5 Proposals

The proposal is to carefully remove the existing four sash windows and replace with new like-for-like timber sash windows.

Some photographs of the existing condition of the windows are included in the Design & Access Statement.

1.6 Significance & Impact

The front elevation of the building facing onto Bedford Square is considered to be of high significance.

The addition of the replacement sash windows with like-for-like units will have no visual impact on the elevation or the appearance within the conservation area.

1.7 Justification for the Works

The existing windows are showing a significant amount of decay in a number of locations, which is causing water ingress which is harming the heritage asset. The replacement windows will conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the building.

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