

Cameron Mackintosh Limited - Head Office

No.1 and No.2 Bedford Square

- Second Floor Link between No.1 and No.2
- French Windows to the Basement on No.1 Rear Elevation

Design/Works Statement – 2023/05/10

1.0 Introduction

The scope of works covered by this application are fairly limited. The proposed works comprises two, unconnected, areas of work within the two inter-linked buildings:

- **Project 1** - Creation of an additional second floor link between the two properties
- **Project 2** - Introduction of two sets of French-windows into existing window opening in the rear basement room of No.1.

The two properties, that combined form the offices of Cameron Mackintosh Limited, are 18th century townhouses with a basement level, a ground floor and three upper floors.

2.0 Project/Works Location

The proposed works are located at No.1 and No.2 Bedford Square. These two, now interlinked, former town-houses are the headquarters of Cameron Mackintosh Limited. The house known No.1 Bedford Square was designed in 1775 by Thomas Leverton – and is regarded as one of the finest house in the Square - and one of the finest terraced houses in Georgian London. It has been in office use since the late 1930s. No.2 Bedford Square is attributed to architect Robert Palmer. William Scott and Robert Grews, the builders, constructed the majority of houses in the Square.

2.1 Site Address

Cameron Mackintosh Limited

1-2 Bedford Square

London

3.0 Scope of Proposed Works

The proposed works are limited in scope - and are as follows.

Project 1 - Creation of an additional second floor link between the two properties. The two former town-house are currently linked at basement and attic level only – which is problematic in day-to-day operation. The proposal seeks to create a link at second floor level. Archive photographs, dating from the early 1980s, indicate that there was a link in this location – created at some point in the late 1950s.

Project 2 - Introduction of two sets of French-windows into existing window opening in the rear basement room of No.1. The basement level rear room is now used a ‘green-room’ for staff. It has two full height sash windows, non-original, set into original openings. One of these windows also provides a compromised alternative means of escape through the rear courtyard. The proposal is to provide two sets of French-windows into these openings – facilitating access for staff to the rear courtyard – whilst also improving the escape route.

4.0 The Existing Buildings

4.1 Historical Background

The Square

Built between 1775 and 1783 as an upper middle class residential area, the square takes its name from the main title of the Russell family, the Dukes of Bedford, who owned much of the land in what is now Bloomsbury.

The architect Thomas Leverton is known to have designed some of the houses, although he may not have been responsible for all of them.

The building agreements for Bedford Square were signed by the trustees of the late Duke of Bedford and William Scott and Robert Grews, the builders, in 1776. The first leases, for the entire west side (Nos. 28–39), were granted in November 1776. It seems unlikely that these dozen houses were built within 11 months so building probably started in 1775. Except for No. 46, the south side leases were granted in 1777, the east side in 1777 and 1778 (except Nos. 1 and 10), and the north side in 1781 and 1782 (except Nos. 24–27, granted in 1777). No. 11, which stands in Gower Street but has always been considered part of the square, had a separate building agreement of 1781 and was leased in June 1783. This section was designed and built by Peter Matthias Van Gelder.

The leases were granted by the estate once the shells were built but with internal finishing still to be carried out. No. 23 was the last house to be occupied, its owner moving in during the last quarter of 1784.

The delay in finishing the building of the square can be put down in part to the shortage of money during the American War of Independence. Loans were granted by the trustees of the estate to the builders in order to finance building work from November 1777.

Today, Bedford Square is one of the most recognisable residential squares that were for the three centuries a distinctive characteristic of London's town planning. Leverton built the square as a speculative venture in conjunction with Robert Crews and William Scott. The scheme was one of the most ambitious of the period, in that it planned to create all four sides of the square – and it was carried through in full. The regulatory of elevational treatment unified and concealed elaborately varied individual properties behind. Each side of the square has a central feature with pediment.

No.1 Bedford Square

No 1 Bedford Square is recognised as one of the great Georgian Terrace houses of London. It was design circa 1775 by Thomas Leverton (1743-1824) for Sir Lionel Lyde, a tobacco merchant and director of the Bank of England.

A deal struck by Leverton and the builder of the house two doors down in Bloomsbury Street, enabled No 1 to have a slightly wider plot (+6ft) than that of the other houses in the square. This allowed the creation of the distinctive central entrance that sets it apart from its neighbours.

The house is Grade I listed – being of exceptional architectural interest.

No.1 is almost certainly the work of the architect Thomas Leverton (1743-1824). Leverton also designed the interiors of both Numbers 6 and 13 Bedford Square - and a number of details in those houses are repeated in No.1. Although it sits outside the uniform symmetrical east side of the square, it has always been part of it and appropriately has always been referred to as No.1.

As noted, the house is distinguished by its central entrance, rare for a three bay Georgian terraced house because such an arrangement required an ingenious plan to accommodate the staircase. The front door leads into an entrance hall which is flanked by two separate spaces, an anteroom to the right and the fine stone staircase to the left. With the staircase in the front of the house, Leverton was able to design full width rooms to the rear half which

took full advantage of the view over the, then, established gardens of the British Museum. There is a particularly fine decorative plaster ceiling in the first floor rear room.

The house was threatened with demolition by the British Museum in 1860, along with Nos.2 and 3 – alongside the fourteen houses to the south in Bloomsbury Street, but nothing came of the museum's plans. In the early 1930s a new museum building was planned which would stand only 20 feet from the rear elevation of No.1. The threat of this produced an article in Country Life magazine that heralded the house as "a masterpiece of English architecture" and of "exceptional merit". Support came from architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, a former resident of No.31 Bedford Square, who described the house as a "most interesting house ... of exceptional quality". The British Museum's Duveen Gallery was built shortly before the Second World War and today its plain brick flank wall is the view from the house rather than the gardens of the museum, which was such an important consideration in Thomas Leverton's original designs for the house.

As foreseen by Country Life in a 1932 article, the imposition of this gallery rendered the property no longer suitable as a residence.

In the early 1980s the rear courtyard between the back façade of No 1 and the British Museum's Duveen Galleries was partially infilled. A two storey 'mews' style building was created (basement and ground floor) of fairly shallow depth (approx. 8ft). A single storey link was created at basement level on the south side.

Cameron Mackintosh Ltd acquired the lease for the adjacent house, No 2, shortly after moving into No 1 in 1988. The two houses are interlinked at basement and attic level, but remain substantially independent.

No.2 Bedford Square

No 2 Bedford Square conforms to the more-standard layout of the houses within the Square and underwent substantial alterations prior to the acquisition of the lease by CML. The interior contains less retained historic detail in comparison to No.1.

No.2 is not thought to have been designed by Thomas Leverton – and may be attributed to architect Robert Palmer who is credited with having worked with builders William Scott and Robert Grews on other properties within the Square.

5.0 Summary

The proposed scope of works do not alter the visual character and integrity of these two important former Georgian town-houses. The works are intended improve the operational efficiency within the two buildings.

Sir Cameron Mackintosh has, over the last three decades, invested in the considerable improvement of the 8 historic West End theatres in his ownership - and associated properties. The proposed minor alterations at the head office of Cameron Mackintosh Ltd, continues this work in securing the long term future of these important historic buildings.

The works are not detrimental to the two listed building. The works will support the longevity of the historic buildings.

6.0 Listed Building Description

TQ2981NE BEDFORD SQUARE 798-1/99/75

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: I

List Entry Number: 1272304

Date first listed: 24-Oct-1951

Date of most recent amendment: 11-Jan-1999

List Entry Name: NUMBERS 1-10 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS

Statutory Address: NUMBERS 1-10 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS, BEDFORD SQUARE

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden (London Borough)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

National Grid Reference: TQ 29917 81702

Details:

CAMDEN

TQ2981NE BEDFORD SQUARE 798-1/99/75 (East side) 24/10/51 Nos.1-10 (Consecutive) and attached railings (Formerly Listed as: BEDFORD SQUARE Nos.1-54 (Consecutive))

GV I

Terrace of 10 houses forming the east side of a square. 1775-1786. All built by W Scott, No.6 with R Grews; Nos 1, 6 & 10 known to have been designed by Thomas Leverton, the remainder either by Thomas Leverton or Robert Palmer; for the Bedford Estate. Nos 2-10 form a symmetrical terrace. Yellow stock brick with evidence on most of the houses of tuck pointing. Plain stucco band at 1st floor level. The centre house, No.6, is stuccoed. Slate mansard roofs with dormers and tall slab chimney-stacks. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys, attics and basements. 3 windows each except No.6 with 5 windows. Recessed, round-headed 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. Nos 1 & 5-9 have cast-iron balconies to 1st floor windows. Cornice and parapet, Nos 2 & 10 with 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: No.1: built for Sir Lionel Lyde, tobacco merchant in the City and a director of the Bank of England. Central stucco entrance surround of triumphal arch type with flanking niches containing wrought-iron crossed arrows, enriched impost bands which continue to form a cornice to the door, roundels, fluted frieze with panel and dentil cornice; double panelled doors, with patterned fanlight, approached by curved steps. Gauged, reddened brick flat arches to sashes. Dentil cornice and blocking course with central Coade stone panel of an urn and arabesque. INTERIOR: of unusual plan with hall the width of the house with stair to left. Most original features and decoration in simplified Adam style. 1st floor rear room with fine plaster ceiling with 7 painted panels of Classical scenes after Angelica Kauffmann, probably produced by the mass-production process known as "mechanical painting" promoted by Matthew Boulton, the Birmingham metalworker; a form of colour printing finished by hand. No.2: plaster ceiling with painted panels. No.3: rear elevation with full height bow. Plaster ceiling. No.4: plan of interest; stair rises in the middle of the house between the front and rear rooms. No.5: rear elevation with full height bow. No.6: facade possibly by John Mecluer. Rusticated ground floor; 5 Ionic pilasters rise through the 1st and 2nd storeys to support a frieze, with roundels above each pilaster, and pediment with delicate swag and roundel enrichment on tympanum. At 2nd floor level a continuous enriched band running behind the pilasters. Originally one house, No.6 was divided in 1880 when the centre section was raised; restored to single occupancy 1985. INTERIOR: with good full height staircase compartment rising through the centre of the house. No.7: rear elevation with full height bow having cast-iron balconies to 1st floor

windows. David Hartley fire plates discovered on the 1st and 2nd floors during 1980s restoration. No.8: rear elevation with full height bow. No.9: rear elevation with full height bow. 2 plaster ceilings. No.10: with return to Montague Place. Built for Samuel Lyde, brother of Sir Lionel. Ground floor with 1 sash and 3-window bay. 2-window bay at 1st floor. INTERIOR: has staircase rising between the front and rear rooms. 2 plaster ceilings with painted panels, one the same as that in No.1. Some houses with original lead rainwater heads and pipes. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings to areas with urn or torch-flambe finials. No.4 with wrought-iron lamp bracket and snuffer. Most houses with good wrought-iron foot scrapers. HISTORICAL NOTE: the houses in Bedford Square form an 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.6 was finished for John Mecluer, an unknown architect, and later the home of Lord Eldon, Lord Chancellor (plaque). Nos 2, 4-6 (consec), 8 and 9 were listed on 14/05/74. (Survey of London: Vol. V, St Giles-in-the-Fields (Part II): London: -1914; Byrne A: Bedford Square, An architectural study: London: -1990).

Listing NGR: TQ2991481706

Prepared by Delfont Mackintosh 2023/05/09