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27.09.2023 – REV A 16.11.23

Proposed works at 17a Highgate High Street, London N6 5JT for Lady Gould's Charity

Separation of the existing commercial property at 17a Highgate High Street into two commercial properties.

Heritage Statement

Introduction

This statement accompanies a listed building consent application for proposed minor works to 17a Highgate High Street, which is part of a grade II* listed townhouse (group listing 17, 19, 21 Highgate High Street), located within the Highgate Village Conservation Area. The document should be read in conjunction with existing and proposed drawings and the Design and Access Statement submitted as part of the application.

17a Highgate High Street is currently in use as retail and associate ancillary office and storage space, which spans across the full width of 17 Highgate High Street at ground and lower ground floor levels.

1.0 Outline of the Proposal

1.1 The goal of the project is to separate the existing commercial property at 17a Highgate High Street into two commercial properties. The existing retail unit is to be retained and the attached office space is to be designated as separate, unconnected unit. Full details of the proposed works are set out in the accompanying drawings and Design and Access Statement.

1.2 This statement appraises the significance of the building as a designated heritage asset and the effects of the proposed works thereon. The works are largely internal, and the nature of external works is such that any effects on the character and appearance of the conservation area are minimal and represent an improvement to the existing property.

1.3 Pre-application advice for Listed Buildings was obtained from Camden Planning Solution Team in June 2023 (Ref: 2023/2112/PRE). The advice given in the Pre-application report has been followed in the application.

2.0 Drawings submitted with this application:

Site location plan: HHS-EX-100;

Existing drawings: HHS-EX-01; HHS-EX-02; HHS-EX-03; HHS-EX-04;

Proposed drawings: **HHS-GA-01-D**; HHS-GA-02-C; HHS-GA-03-A; HHS-GA-04-A; HHS-GA-5

Photographs of the site are included with this document.

3.0 List Description

The existing property is located in the Highgate Village Conservation Area and the property is Grade II* Listed. The list entry number is 1378899. The list entry is as follows:

TQ2887SE HIGHGATE HIGH STREET 798-1/6/842 (South side) 10/06/54 Nos.17, 19 AND 21 and attached railings

GV II*

3 terraced houses, No.17 with later shop. 1733. Built by Robert Harrison. Brown brick with red brick dressings, stuccoed semi-basements. Tiled roofs with later dormers. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys, attics and semi-basements. No.17, 4 windows (those over entrance blind); Nos 19 & 21, 3 windows (those over entrances blind). Wooden doorcases with shaped brackets and hoods to entrances approached by steep steps with attached wrought-iron railings. Architraved doorways with fanlights; Nos 17 & 19, panelled doors, No.21, half glazed panelled door. No.17 has later C19 wooden shopfront to left of door with canted bay window and glazed shopdoor flanked by pilasters and fluted brackets. Plain brick bands at 1st and 25nd floor levels. Gauged red brick segmental arches to flush sashes with exposed boxing. Brick cornice below parapet.

INTERIORS: not inspected but interior of No.21 noted to retain original staircase. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings to areas. On the wall of No.17 a stone tablet inscribed L/SM/1745 referring to Harrison's nieces Sarah and Mary Lane who inherited the estate. (Survey of London: Vol. XVII, The Village of Highgate, Parish of St Pancras, part I: London: -1936: 19-21).

4.0 Evidence of Prior Change

4.1 It is understood that No 17 Highgate High Street was completely gutted by fire in the 1980s, leaving it a roofless brick shell with no surviving features. It was totally rebuilt in 1988, with some internal reordering, structural strengthening with steelwork, and the reinstatement of some internal details. The stone tablet mentioned in the listing is no longer visible.

4.2 The internal fabric of 17a shows no signs of original features. Chimney stacks appear to

be intact, however fireplaces have been removed and the openings have been blocked up.

4.3 The property has undergone substantial structural and decorative alteration. The stairs appear to have been completely replaced – and put back in new positions. Partition walls all appear to be new and have been put in new locations. Ceilings are all new and have been constructed in plasterboard with recessed downlight positioned in the ceilings throughout.

5.0 Description of Work Areas and their Architectural Significance

5.1 External

5.1.1 Elevational form

The host building is viewed from Highgate High Street. It is part of a terrace containing 17, 19 and 21 Highgate High Street. The proposed works have no negative impact on the elevational form of the building.

5.1.2 Entrance Area and Lightwell

The railings at street level are mentioned in the listing, however, the railings present on site do not appear to be original. The storage area is similar to those at 19 and 21. This will be carefully opened up, examined, repaired and returned to its original state where possible.

The existing concrete floor slab and substrate will be carefully removed. A new substrate of crushed hardcore and sand will be installed and Yorkstone slabs will be laid down at a level of 100mm lower than the existing external floor level.

The steps from the lightwell up to street level will be carefully uncovered and then replaced with new to give even goings and risers down to the new external floor level. The exposed surface of the steps will be Yorkstone.

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The gate and railings will be renovated and re-painted in black gloss paint to match existing. The associated low wall will be renovated to match existing.

Metal grills over the two lower ground floor windows will be removed and the walls will be made good.

The lightwell will be re-decorated to match existing.

5.1.3 The existing door leading from the lightwell to the lower ground floor space will be replaced with new in a design appropriate to the elevation.

5.2 Internal

5.2.1 To facilitate the use of the internal spaces of the separated-off section at 17b, internal

modifications are required. The modifications involve alterations to existing stud-partition walls and alterations to the existing stair that does not appear to be part of the original fabric of the building.

The interior of the property will be upgraded in general and in line with the application drawings. A new kitchen area and two new WCs are proposed.

5.2.2 Ground Floor Level

The proportions of the main room at the front at ground floor level will be returned to their original state as far as is possible. This will be achieved by positioning a replacement separating wall along the line of the original separating (spine) wall.

The front to back corridor wall will be removed.

A WC will be installed. The final route for drainage is to be agreed after opening up works have been completed. This will allow for the connection to the existing SVP, which is located near to the proposed WC on the rear elevation.

The staircase and surrounding structure is to be opened up and inspected. The staircase is probably not original and is to be replaced in order to provide adequate headroom. Detailed design will be agreed after opening-up works are complete.

5.2.3 Lower Ground Floor Level

The opening in the main front to back wall is to be blocked up and made good. Partition walls are to be removed and room proportions will be improved.

A new WC and new kitchen area are to be installed. The drainage route for the kitchen waste will follow the route of the existing sink located in the same area. The drainage for the WC will be facilitated by the use of a sanitary macerator and pump to take the waste to the existing SVP that is located on the rear elevation near to the proposed new WC.

The iron range located in the fire place at lower ground floor level is to be retained.

5.2.4 Ceilings

Existing ceilings throughout are plasterboard. New plasterboard ceilings to be installed at Ground Floor level to ensure adequate levels of sound and fire separation. Lighting and electrics are to be replaced throughout. Recessed ceiling downlights will be replaced with pendants lights and wall mounted lights as shown on the layout drawings.

5.2.3 Heating, Cooling and Electricity

Heating will be provided by wall mounted electric panel radiators in locations as shown on the

layout drawings. Hot water will be provided by electric instant heater/inline hot water taps. Cooling will be provided by allowing cross ventilation through windows at ground floor level and by allowing ventilation through windows at lower ground floor level. This approach will have minimal impact on the interior setting and on the historic fabric of the building. The consumer unit for electricity can be located in the cupboard under the stairs, which is accessed via the kitchen.

6.0 Occupants and Uses

6.1 17a is currently in use as a retail space, with the space at ground and lower ground floor level below 17 being currently largely empty and used as office and storage space ancillary to the retail space. In general the space that is intended to be designated as office space in this proposal is under-used and essentially forgotten.

6.2 The retail space defined by the area occupied by the entrance to Mail Boxes Etc at ground floor level at 17a is well used, however, the rest of the space at 17a is used as poorly organized storage for the retail space. It appears that the under-used space was previously in use as office space and also a beauty salon and nail bar.

7.0 Proposed Use

7.1 The existing retail space will remain as retail space.

7.2 The proposed separated-off section will be used for office space as it currently is – but with new access and fire escape it will become commercially viable. At present it is not viable as office or retail space because the fire escape provisions are inadequate.

8.0 Benefits of the proposed works

The proposed works will bring an under-used section of the building back into use. The proposed alterations will result in fire escape provisions complying with current building control requirements. And as a result of the re-working of the entrance to the new space, it will become more accessible and more useable.

9.0 Conclusion

9.1 The proposed alterations represent improvements to a much-altered property. In general, the improvements return the internal spaces to a state that is closer to the original layout. New fixtures and finishes will be more appropriate to the setting of an historic environment

9.2 Overall the proposals applied for now are considered to enhance the usability of the spaces while at the same time enhancing the special interest and character of the property.

9.3 It is requested that where the final design of proposed works is subject to the findings of opening up works, these proposals are to be treated as details dealt with by condition.

Photographs:



Front elevation showing the existing entrance to 17a Highgate High Street. (Mail Boxes ETC)

The entrance to 17 Highgate High Street is the grey door at upper ground floor level in the center of the image.



Front elevation showing the lightwell with the security grills over the windows to the lower ground floor of the application site (17b). The existing entrance to the lower ground floor space is located under the stairs which lead up to the entrance to number 17.

The following photographs give a good indication of the way that the space at 17b is currently used and they also give a good indication of the lack of original internal features remaining.



Ground floor level – main room looking onto Highgate High Street.



Ground floor level – corridor looking towards front room.



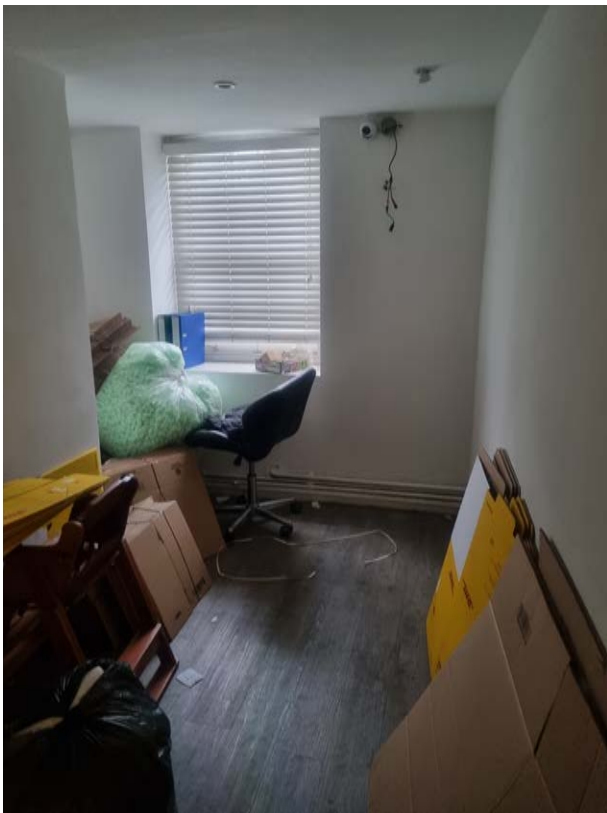
Ground floor level corridor looking towards the rear. The corridor is too narrow to form part of a fire escape route.



Ground floor – top of stairs. The headroom over the stairs is less than 2m.



Lower ground floor – bottom of stairs.



Lower ground floor small office space at front.



Lower ground floor larger office space at front.



Entrance to 17b. The entrance is located below the stairs. Headroom is less than 2m under the stairs and at the threshold.