

Historic Impact Assessment

Internal Alterations:

5 Great James Street, London WC1N 3DB

Document Ref: 177C-D01-HIA-240108: Historic Impact Assessment
January 2024p



Fig 1 Street View: 5 Great James Street

Project Details:

Site Address:

5 Great James Street,
London
WC1N 3DB

Applicant:

Hatton Garden Properties Limited
c/o MSA Ltd,
Make Space Studios
Newnham Terrace,
London
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Agent:

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This document is to be read in conjunction with the following drawings and documents submitted as part of the application (and added in appendix to the rear of this document for further information):

MSA Drawings:

177C-200	Existing First and Second Floor Plan	1:50	A1
177C-210	Proposed First and Second Floor Plan	1:50	A1
177C-220	Proposed First and Second Floor Demolition Plan	1:50	A1
177C-700	Second Floor Proposed Alterations Rear Kitchen	1:10/1:20	A1
177C-701	Second Floor Proposed Alterations Front Room	1:25	A1

Other Supporting Documents:

- 177C-D01-DAS-240108: Design and Access Statement

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- **Introduction**

This Historic Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the planning application for alteration to 5 Great James Street and should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement 177C-D01-DAS-240108.

- **Camden Historic Impact Assessment**

Details about the character and architectural/historical interest of the associated property or structure:

The Historic England listing describes the property as follows:

*"CAMDEN, TQ3081NE GREAT JAMES STREET 798-1/101/658 (East side) 24/10/51 Nos.3-16 (Consecutive) and attached railings, GV II**

14 terraced houses. 1720-24. For J Metcalfe. Brown brick, upper storeys with some later refacing in multi-coloured stock brick. No.3 refaced in yellow stock brick. EXTERIOR: 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each. Segmental red brick arches and dressings to flush frame windows, some with glazing bars and some with reeded frames with roundels. Parapets. Wooden, architraved doorcases. Nos 3 and 4 with half pilasters, plain pediments, patterned fanlights and panelled doors. Nos 5, 7 and 10-16 with enriched carved brackets carrying hood with panelled soffits, most with patterned radial fanlights and panelled doors. No.6 with engaged columns (Tower of Winds), frieze with festooned urns, dentil pedimented cornice, round arched doorway with fanlight and panelled door. Nos 8 and 9 with pilasters, dentil cornices, patterned radial fanlights and panelled doors. Between the houses, lead rainwater heads with lion masks and lead pipes. At 2nd floor level of No.16, a very worn stone cartouche inscribed "Great James Street 1721". INTERIORS: most houses with good panelling; open staircases with turned balusters, column newels and carved brackets to treads. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings to areas, with urn or torch flambé finials. No.14 was listed on 14/05/74."

An explanation of the principles behind and the justification for the proposed development:

The scheme being proposed will seek to improve use of the second floor flat to provide suitable living areas and an improved kitchen facility.

The proposals to the rear of the second-floor flat will amend the historically subdivided kitchen and bathroom areas which currently provides an over complicated circulation route. The proposed alterations will replicate the plan arrangement of the first floor providing improved kitchen and bathroom facilities without altering the overall historic character of the building.

The proposals to the front of the second-floor flat will remove a non-original partition wall which currently partially blocks one of the windows and provides an undersized living space, by creating a new partition wall in a style to match the existing and providing an increased area to room RM.2.1.

All alterations will be conducted in materials to match the existing, with repairs to the deteriorating lath and plaster ceiling conducted at the same time.

Details of the expected impact that the proposed development will have on the special interest of the listed building or structure and its setting (and adjacent listed buildings):

The proposed alterations are not expecting to negatively affect the special character of the building.

One of the key historical features maintained in the property are the large areas of wooden panelling throughout the building. The new partition wall will be completed in a style to match the existing,

maintaining the appearance of the room will improve the facilities. The existing window shutter boxes will not be negatively impacted, and the original use of window W.2.1 will be restored to full use following the removal of the existing partition wall.

The existing doors DR.2.4 & DR.2.6 will be reused and located in the replacement panelled wall. The overall appearance of RM.2.1 and RM.2.2 will appear the same as the existing with an improved sense of space and facility to RM.2.1 allowing it to be used as a Bedroom.

The proposed alterations to the rear of the building will not impact the special interest of the building. The existing arrangement is non-original and the historic features have been historically removed from this area. The new plan arrangement will replicate the arrangement of the first floor.

The windows W.2.7 and W.1.5 are non-original windows in a style out of keeping with the rest of the building. The proposed replacement windows will be timber sashes in a style to match W.2.6.

An outline of the steps taken to avoid or minimise any adverse impacts on the significance of the building:

The overall appearance of the building will be maintained and improved. The only external visible alterations will be replacement of non-original windows with new to match the adjacent historic windows will be an improvement to the external appearance of the building.

The proposed internal alterations to the rear of the building will be completed within an area where most of the original features have been historically removed. There are no timber panelling within the rear of the building, the fire place has been removed.

The existing timber panelling within the front of the second floor flat has been historically altered with the introduction of a partition wall within the space, dividing the room and partially blocking one of the windows. The proposed alterations and new partition wall will replicate a new partition in a more appropriate location, evening the distribution of space between the two front rooms and removing the awkward junction intersecting into the window. The panel walling which has been historically altered will be amended to match the new arrangement, reusing as much of the existing panelling as practical. The alterations will be a subtle shift in the plan arrangement which will not significantly alter the internal appearance of the larger room RM.2.2 but will significantly improve the appearance of RM.2.1 while maintaining its special panelled wall appearance.

An explanation of the sources considered and the expertise consulted in the formulation of the associated application:

The proposed works have been specified in coordination with specialist plaster contractors, structural engineers with experience in dealing with restoring historic buildings, and through careful consideration of the existing building fabric.

- **Schedule of Works**

To be read in conjunction with submitted annotated drawings for further details. The following schedule gives details of proposed works to 5 Great James Street on a floor by floor basis.

1. First Floor

- 1.1. Rear window

- 1.1.1. It is proposed to replace the existing metal casement window with a new timber sash window in the style of the adjacent window (W.2.6).

2. Second Floor

- 2.1. Alterations to the rear rooms.

- 2.1.1. It is proposed to alter the arrangement of the existing non-original bathroom and kitchen at the rear of the first floor flat. The existing arrangement is non-original and was believed to have been introduced when the property was subdivided into individual floors. The existing arrangement has removed most of the original features from the ceilings and walls and a non-original window.

- 2.1.2. It is proposed to swap the bathroom and kitchen arrangements and to create a straight access hallway between them and the living room. This revised arrangement will allow the occupants clear views through the flat, as well as creating a larger kitchen.

- 2.1.3. It is proposed to replace the existing timber panelled window with a new timber sash window in the style of the adjacent window (W..6).

- 2.1.4. The bathroom alterations will be internal only as the waste pipes will be run internally and will connect into the existing.

- 2.1.5. The existing floor finishes in the rear of the property are laminate flooring and vinyl mats. It is proposed that replacement vinyl tiling is installed to match the existing.

- 2.2. Alterations to the front rooms.

- 2.2.1. Removal of existing non-original partition wall between RM.2.1 & RM.2.2, retaining existing doors DR.2.4 & DR.2.6.

- 2.2.2. Creation of new timber panelled wall in the style of the existing walls, reusing the existing panels, where of sound quality and integrity. Replacement panels will be produced in a style to match the existing. Alterations to the existing panels on the front and spine walls of the building will be done maintaining as much of the original fabric as possible and replicating the appearance and style of the existing. Doors DR.2.4 & DR.2.6 will be reused in the new partition walls.

Repairs will be undertaken to the existing lath and plaster ceilings. The specialist plasterer contractor has given the following method statement for repairs to lath and plaster:
'For isolated cracks; remove any paper lining, rake the crack out to a width of around 5mm, soak strands of jute canvass in a mixture of casting plaster and lime and press into the gap. Using the remainder of the plaster mix fill the crack to a smooth finish.'

For patch repairs, remove paper lining and remove loose material back to the laths and remove as much as possible from behind the laths. Apply a scratch coat of lime, sand and horsehair. Leave for approximately 1 week. Apply a floating coat of lime, sand and horsehair and leave for a further week. Apply finish coat of lime to existing surface and leave to dry thoroughly before painting'.

2.2.3. The existing second floor flat has no heating system apart from a coal burning fire. This is inappropriate form of heating with a great potential for danger to life and the building fabric. It is therefore proposed to install a new gas central heating system, replacing the existing boiler in the rear room, and installing new floor mounted radiators throughout the flat.

2.2.4. Historically installed ceiling lighting and fire detection will be rewired new during the ceiling repairs to provide a tidy appearance and reduce the potential for future deterioration of the lath and plaster ceilings.

2.2.5. Historically installed surface mounted electrics will be replaced with new surface mounted electrics to protect the timber panelled walling within the front and middle rooms.