

Rosewood Hotel, 252 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7EN

Full planning and listed building consent application for external and internal alterations to install fire escape door within existing louvres to Whetstone Park elevation and internal rearrangements to loading bay and storage area of hotel.

Design & Access Statement May 2024



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is to support the full planning and listed building consent application for external and internal alterations at the Rosewood Hotel, 252 High Holborn. The building is Grade II listed and is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. It forms part of the setting of several listed buildings nearby.
- 1.2 In this statement we discuss the site, surroundings and the proposals.

2.0 Site and surroundings

- 2.1 The Rosewood Hotel, (former London Head Office of Pearl Assurance PLC), is located on the south side of the High Holborn, to the east of the Broadway and Holborn underground station. It is in a predominantly commercial area.
- 2.2 The building was first listed in May 1974 (list entry 1378890). The list entry describes the building as follows:

“Office block. Central block, 1912-19 by C Newman; east block, 1929-30 by P Moncton; south-east extension, 1954-6 by Bates & Sinning; west block, 1959-60 by Bates & Sinning. Portland stone with granite, rusticated podium. Steep slated roof. Irregular plan ranged round central courtyard. EXTERIOR: main facade 5 storeys, attics and 2 storeys of dormers in Edwardian Baroque style. Symmetrical design with projecting end and central bays, windows 1:7:1:7:1. Engaged Ionic columns and pilasters rise through 2nd-4th floors carrying entablature. Round arched entrance with console-keystone and flanked by elaborate bracketed lanterns in 2 groups of 3; bronze gates. Ground floor windows architraved with rusticated keystones, 1st floor round-headed architraved, 2nd square-headed architraved, 3rd with cartouche keys and cast-iron balconies, 4th are oculi. Central entrance bay flanked by paired columns with broken segmental pediment; 2 stage tower above with leaded dome carried by Ionic engaged columns. End bays with smaller leaded domes. INTERIOR: has good features including ground floor cash hall and marble balustraded staircase. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached balustraded parapets to basement areas.”

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal is for the construction of a new internal mezzanine to the delivery area and a new fire exit door within the existing louvre door on the external elevation.
- 3.2 At present, there are two large delivery doors with roller shutters that are in frequent use by delivery drivers and employees of the Rosewood Hotel for stock intake/exports.
- 3.3 The doors, when fully opened, are near full height roller shutters which provide floor to ceiling access to the delivery area.
- 3.4 The construction of the mezzanine in the delivery area will allow additional storage space and additional delivery area space for the hotel. Access to the upstairs of the mezzanine will be via a new staircase, accessible from ground floor level of the delivery area.
- 3.5 The mezzanine will be fully enclosed with new partition walls, which will be placed up to the full height external doors. These walls will be white in colour. The proposal will mean that the white walls will be visible externally – to reduce this impact, we propose that the existing roller shutter doors will have a smaller opening height and will open to approximately half way. This will still allow pedestrian deliver access up to the door, allowing the current activities of unloading/delivery to continue as at present.
- 3.6 The new fire door that is to be created within the existing louvre is to allow an additional fire escape route to be created, now that the existing double doors within the delivery area are to be blocked up. Access to the existing fire escapes will be eliminated, therefore a new fire escape will be required. The reasoning behind blocking the opening is to separate out the delivery areas and services room.
- 3.7 The proposed mezzanine is the new staff facility following the removal of existing office within the loading area. The mezzanine is to create a larger staff facility and allows the existing office to be used for much needed storage.
- 3.8 Noise and pollution mitigation measures haven't been taken into consideration, due to the fact that we are only moving the staff facilities from ground to a larger mezzanine area above.

- 3.9 The main purpose of creating the new mezzanine area is to allow larger staff facilities and also to segregate staff working facilities away from day to day back of house activities that take place within this area.
- 3.10 Planning was previously granted for the exact same proposal in 2019 (2018/5174/P) – this application is a resubmission due to the fact that the works were not undertaken following the previous planning approval. The applicant seeks to reapply to undertake the works.

4.0 Summary

- 4.1 The proposal is for the full planning and listed building consent application for external and internal alterations at the Rosewood Hotel, 252 High Holborn.
- 4.2 The proposal is designed to maximise internal space and to allow additional storage/delivery space for the hotel.
- 4.3 The proposal is within the back of house areas which do not affect the listed areas and visual impact on any guest facilities.
- 4.4 The proposal has been designed to minimise visual impact to the surrounding street. At present, the doors provide a very open view into the delivery area, and with the creation of the new mezzanine, it will reduce this impact to a much smaller area and will allow the street scene to be enhanced by reducing the visual size of the opening, therefore the application should be approved.