

Flat 2, 51 Lambs Conduit Street WC1N 3NB

Design & Access Statement & Heritage Statement 16.1.25

Background

51 Lambs Conduit Street is a Grade II listed terraced property built c1700- 1715 as a house with a later shop. The property owned by our client (The Governing Body of Rugby School) is occupied as a restaurant at ground and basement levels with three flats over 3 floors above. There are further later two storey additions to the rear of the property occupied by the restaurant (tenant currently Noble Rot)

The attached photographs show the current arrangement of the internal parts of the flat and the relevant external elevations.

The Listing for the property states:

“GV II

Terraced house with later shop. c1700-15, refronted c1779. Yellow stock brick. 4 storeys and cellars. 3 windows. Good early C19 wooden double shopfront with Greek Doric attached columns carrying entablature with enriched architrave, inswept frieze and projecting ovolo cornice. Central entrance; shop windows altered, panelled stallboards. House doorway to right with fanlight and panelled door. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes with early glazing bars. Parapet. Lead rainwater head and pipe. INTERIOR: not inspected but noted to retain some early C18 panelling and staircase with twisted balusters and carved brackets to treads.”
(From Historic England’s website)

Relevant Policies & Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

London Plan (2021)

LB Camden Local Plan (2017) D2 Heritage

Supplementary Guidance -Design (2021) & Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)

Previous Applications / history

Last year an application was made for Listed Building Consent and Planning Approval for a more extensive scheme of refurbishment which included structural floor strengthening works and mechanical extract ventilation sited to both the front and rear elevations. Planning (ref: 2024/0889/P) and Listed Building Consent (ref: 2024/1940/L) was refused. We have since submitted a further application for Planning and Listed Building Consent for the installation of a single heat recovery fan to the rear elevation and minor internal alterations. This application is currently being considered having been received by LBC on 5 December 2024 and is ref: PP-13575109.

On the advice of your Conservation Officer, who refused the first application, we approached an alternative specialist firm of Structural Engineers with expertise in Heritage projects (Alan Baxter’s) who were appointed to consider the extent of the structural proposals put forward in the original application which the Conservation Officer felt were unnecessary and advise whether a more sympathetic, less intrusive extent of works could be suggested to address the structural concerns of the floors being overstressed and deflected as suggested by the first Engineering firm. Alan Baxter’s have completed their analysis and their proposals form the basis of this latest application. In their investigations a timber beam spanning from the front wall to the centre spin wall was discovered and considered and works to this form part of the proposals.

Alan Baxter’s review of the existing structure has been summarised in the attached Ref: 2024-12-18 – Structural Engineering Notes on the Existing Floor Construction.

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Proposals

The proposals as outlined in the attached Alan Baxter's drawings and information are to improve the general stiffness of the floors by adding blocking pieces between the existing floor joists and affixing plywood to the top of the floor joists in replacement of the existing water damaged T&G chipboard flooring. Where the original floor boards remain in the bathroom, these will be retained.

The long spanning timber beam in the bedroom which is both overstressed and deflected, Alan Baxter's have recommended and we propose fixing a 12mm thick steel plate on top of the beam to strengthen it.

We also propose minor timber repairs to the floor joists to address splits / cracks in the timbers and where the joists have been previously notched out. Again these repairs have been described more fully in Alan Baxter's drawings.

Access Assessment

The proposals do not change the access into or within the property in any way. The flat is currently entered at second floor level through the flat entrance door from the common part staircase. Entrance into the common parts is from street level to the front elevation.

Heritage Impact Assessment

Internally

Internally the flat retains very little of the original historical finishes as is demonstrated in the attached photographs. The ceiling, wall and floor linings have been replaced with modern gypsum plasterboard and plaster finishes to the ceilings and walls and chipboard has replaced the original timber floor boards. The original layout of this floor comprising three rooms, has been sub-divided to create a one bedroom flat including a bedroom, bathroom, living room and kitchen with a series of storage cupboards / built in wardrobes and a central hallway.

The living room contains some of the original timber panelling to the north elevation, party wall elevation and the south elevation. The panelling to the east and south elevations is not original but has been constructed to imitate the appearance of the original panelling. This room also has the original ceiling coving. There is no intention to disturb these original features. The panelling will be painted with intumescent paints to improve the fire resistance between the flat and the common parts in the interest of life safety.

The reduced scope of structural repairs to the floors is sympathetic to the existing structure and is neither damaging nor detrimental to the existing structure.

Externally

Not affected.

In summary the proposed works to this Listed Building in a Conservation Area will not detrimentally affect the property's architectural significance or the character of its surroundings. The proposed works are deemed compatible with the preservation goals of the council, ensuring that the unique architectural features and historical importance of the property remain unharmed. Moreover, the broader context, including neighboring properties and the conservation area itself, will also remain unaffected by the proposed modifications. This conclusion reflects a comprehensive evaluation aimed at balancing the need for safeguarding and strengthening the existing structure with the imperative to safeguard the cultural and environmental heritage of the property.