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Heritage Statement

Rev. /

Flat 3, 34 Museum Street, London, WC1A 1LH

To accompany a planning & listed building application.

Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been developed in conjunction with the Schedule of Work and Design & Access Statement which maps design development and the historic alterations previously undertaken at the property. In summary, the property was converted from residential and B1 Class use to three self contained flats in early/mid 1990's. The proposed changes resulted in the loss of a lot original internal features and fabric. It should also be noted that the property falls under two separate listings - Nos. 43-48 Great Russell Street & The Plough (No. 27), 27-34, Museum Street.

Site Address

Flat 3, 34 Museum Street, London, WC1A 1LH

Heritage Asset

Grade II Listed Building - List Entry Nos.: 1130381 & 1322088

Within a conservation area - Bloomsbury

Significance

Nos. 43-48 Great Russell Street.

Nos 43-48 Great Russell Street, a row of six houses with shops at ground-floor level. Nos. 44-47 date from around 1720 with refronting and outer buildings (Nos. 43 & 48) by William Finch Hill, probably with E L Paraire, added mid 19th century displaying lively French Renaissance influence. This layered group of buildings is reflective of the development of this part of Bloomsbury providing significant historic interest.

The Plough (27) Nos. 27-34 Museum Street.

This is a public house and 7 terraced houses with shops build 1855-64 by William Finch Hill. The building is Stucco fronted with rusticated pilaster strips separating each house and at angles in a modified French Renaissance style over 4 storeys with 3 windows to each house.

The main historical and architectural significance of both listings refers to the external manifestation and detailings of both groups of buildings. While the interior of Nos. 44-47 Great Russel Street is of special interest, the later corner buildings (Nos. 43 & 48) were only inspected at ground floor shop level and were deemed that no significant historic features have been retained. Similarly with Nos. 27-34 Museum Street, only the interior of The Plough have been deemed to be of significant historic interest.

Proposed Works

External

- Demolition of existing roof top structure deemed to have been added after 1993 as part of the developments approved under application 9301257.
- Remove existing timber decking added after 1993.
- Erect new timber-framed structure with rendered finish with painted plane timber door & frame, and heritage slimline double-glazed timber windows similar in scale and location as existing - structure to line-through with existing at No. 33 Museum Street approved in 2006 (Application 2006/3458/L).
- Add standing seam zinc roof to new roof structure finished in a natural zinc colour - fascia, soffit and rainwater goods finished to match.
- Re-flash existing roofing membrane with new structure and repair primary roofing membrane to match existing.
- Sustainably sourced natural finish ash timber decking - proposed to be sourced from tress felled to protect against forests from ash die-back.
- General making good and redecoration of parapet walls using same materials and building techniques as existing.

Internal

- Repair of existing finishes forming stair walls from flat 3 to roof level - stairs wholly with flat 3 and do not form any part of the communal stairwell. It is understood that all finishes have been replaced after 1993 as part of the developments approved under application 9301257.
- Making good of existing stairs to the roof added after 1993 as par of the developments approved under application 9301257.
- Redecorating of walls and ceiling within stairs from flat 3 to roof level.

It is intended that all materials are transported to and from the site via a crane or external access tower (permits pending) in a bid to eliminate risk of damage to the common parts of the building - the existing parapet will be enclosed in plywood to protect it in this location.

Full details of the proposed works and justification for have been document in the accompanying Schedule of Work and Design and Access Statement.

Impact on Significance

External

- The proposed roof extension will not be visible from the street and therefore not impact on the setting of any surrounding listed buildings.
- The proposed roof extension will be of timber construction and therefore easily removable without impacting or damaging original building fabric.
- The proposed timber structure has been designed to be easily removed at any time without impacting on the original building fabric.
- The materials have been carefully selected and detailed so-as to remain sympathetic to the host building while reflecting existing materials and finishes. The existing structure is in a poor state of repair, therefore the proposed changes are considered to be a positive contribution to the building and surrounding area as a whole when viewed by the occupants of flat 3.
- General making good of existing parapet walls is deemed to be good maintenance and repair helping to preserve the original fabric.

Internal

- The proposed internal works will have no impact on the setting of this or any other neighbouring listed building.
- The flat was created after 1993 as part of the developments approved under application 9301257. As a result of these works, a lot of original fabric would have been lost with quite a lot of replica architectural detailing added. These evolutionary changes have not been accurately documented or recorded. However, as the stairs to the roof top are a modern addition and are deemed to be a secondary space, the architectural detailing in this area should be modest and subservient to the principal rooms. All internal changes will be modest and will not impact on the character of the flat.

Enhancement & Public Benefits

The proposed roof top structure will not be visible from the street and may only be viewed from neighbouring rooftop structures or roof terraces. The current roof structure is in a poor state of repair and is not in keeping with the current roof scape. The proposed structure in terms of bulk, style and architectural detailing has been meticulously designed to harmonise with surrounding structures and remain subservient to the host building. The resulting proposal preserves and enhances the roof scape with some public benefit - albeit limited to neighbours with similar roof top access and provisions.

While the above is intended to benefit the public, all of the proposed alterations have been carefully curated so-as to enhance the enjoyment of this building. One of the core design principles we identified at the outset was to prevent decay and damage to any original building fabric. The existing roof structure presents opportunity for damp and mould growth so it was determined that the existing structure should be replaced rather than carryout simply patch-repair. By doing so the applicant will be able to more effectively manage heating and ventilation of the flat and roof structure reducing the chance of damp or mould occurring and ultimately protecting the original fabric. By responding in such a manner, we feel that the resulting changes greatly enhance the enjoyment of the building ensuring it remains as-is for the foreseeable future.