

34 PERCY STREET LONDON W1T 2DG DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for the removal of six (6) AC units and their replacement with three (3) AC units.

By virtue of paragraph 128 of the NPPF, applicants are required to describe the significance of any heritage assets which may be affected by the proposed development, including any contribution made to their setting. This report fulfils these requirements by providing an assessment of the built heritage assets which are located at the site and an assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon them.

This assessment is based upon a site inspection. A summary of the relevant national and local planning policy has also been undertaken to assist in making informed decisions with regards to the proposed development and any impact on the identified heritage assets.

SITE ANALYSIS

The property is located at 34 Percy Street London W1T 2DG within a terrace of Grade II Listed Buildings.

34 Percy Street comprises four storeys over a small basement, with a lower wing to the rear. The buildings sits 4^{1/2} inches in front of its neighbour at 35 Percy Street. The Survey of London records the building as follows:

there is one circular headed window of Adam design and the ground floor has three arched openings with keystones to two windows and the door. Each house has a single dormer in the roof.

The listing noticed for the site reads as follows

4 terraced houses. 1766-70; refronted 1950s. Flemish bond brick; mansard slate roof with brick ridge and end stacks and dormers. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys and attics; 11 window range. Stucco semicircular arched architrave with fanlight to mid-C18 6-

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panelled door to No.34, C20 door to No.35, C20 door framed by pilasters to No.36 and early C19 panelled door set in early C19 reeded architrave to No.37. Gauged red brick flat arches over 12-pane sashes and 9-pane second-floor sashes; plain storey bands. Cornice and blocking course. INTERIORS: No.36 has mid C18 open-well staircase with fine foliated wrought-iron balustrade, mid C18 panelled doors set in moulded architraves, enriched and moulded corncicing to ground and first floor rooms; 1st floor has moulded dado rail to front room which has mid C18 double doors with original hinges opening into rear room with fine mid C18 fireplace having central swag and fluted frieze. No.36 has similar mid C18 doors and corncicing, early C19 marble fireplaces, mid C18 moulded skirtings and dado rails and early C19 open-well staircase with stick balusters. No.34 has similar mid C18 doors and corncicing. No.35, interior not inspected.

The property also lies within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area and laid out over lower ground floor, ground floor, first floor, second floor and third floor.

Records show that consent was issued in 1990 for:

Internal alterations, demolition of staircase, refurbishment of rooms to original state, replacement of internal doors and rear windows

Permission was granted in 2012 for its conversion to residential including ancillary works

Percy Street includes a remarkable diversity of buildings, unsurprisingly in a part of central London which has been built up for several centuries. Incremental redevelopment has generated its special character, and many buildings have been given an additional storey or storeys since their initial erection.

LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND

National Policy

In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy

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Framework (NPPF), which replaced national policy relating to heritage and archaeology (Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment).

Section 12 of the NPPF, 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment', Paragraphs 126-141, relate to developments that have an affect upon the historic environment. These policies provide the framework to which local authorities need to refer when setting out a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment in their Local Plans.

The NPPF advises local authorities to take into account the following points when drawing up strategies for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment:

The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and preserving them in a viable use consistent with their conservation;

- The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that the conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- The desirability of new development in making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;
- Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

These considerations should be taken into account when determining planning applications, and in addition, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality, should be considered.

Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in the NPPF) and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). A Designated Heritage Asset

comprises a: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.

As stated in Paragraph 128, when determining applications, LPAs should require applicants to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected and the

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contribution made by their setting. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the significance of the asset and sufficient to understand the impact of the proposal on this significance.

According to Paragraph 129, LPAs are also obliged to identify and assess the significance of an heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal and should take this assessment into account when considering the impact upon the heritage asset.

Paragraphs 132 to 136 consider the impact of a proposed development upon the significance of a heritage asset. Paragraph 134 states that where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal. Paragraph 137 states that developments which better reveal or enhance the significance of a designated heritage asset and its setting, will be looked upon favourably.

The national policy framework has therefore moved away from narrow or prescriptive attitudes towards development within the historic environment, towards intelligent, imaginative and sustainable approaches to managing change. English Heritage has defined this new approach, now reflected in NPPF, as 'constructive conservation': defined as 'a positive and collaborative approach to conservation that focuses on actively managing change...the aim is to recognise and reinforce the historic significance of places, while accommodating the changes necessary to ensure their continued use and enjoyment.' (Constructive Conservation in Practice, English Heritage, 2009).

National Guidance

PPS 5: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide (Communities and Local Government, English Heritage, DCMS, March 2010)

Guidance is currently being drafted in order to support the recently published NPPF. In the interim period, PPS 5: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide, issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government in collaboration with English Heritage and DCMS in 2010, remains valid, and provides important guidelines on the interpretation of policy and the management of the historic environment.

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (English Heritage, 2008)

Conservation Principles outlines English Heritage's approach to the sustainable

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management of the historic environment. While primarily intended to ensure consistency in English Heritage's own advice and guidance through the planning process, the document is commended to local authorities to ensure that all decisions about change affecting the historic environment are informed and sustainable.

This document was published in line with the philosophy of PPS5, yet remains relevant with that of the current policy regime in the emphasis placed upon the importance of understanding significance as a means to properly assess the effects of change to heritage assets. The guidance describes a range of heritage values which enable the significance of assets to be established systematically, with the four main 'heritage values' being: evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal. The Principles emphasise that 'considered change offers the potential to enhance and add value to places...it is the means by which each generation aspires to enrich the historic environment' (paragraph 25).

Strategic Policy

The London Plan, adopted July 2011

On 22 July 2011 the Mayor of London published the London Plan which replaced the amended version of 2004. This now constitutes the strategic Development Plan for London, and Policy 7.8, 'Heritage Assets and Archaeology' seeks to record, maintain and protect the city's heritage assets in order to utilise their potential within the community.

Policy 7.8 further provides the relevant policy with regard development in historic environments. It requires that developments which have an affect upon heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail

Policy 7.4, 'Local Character' requires new developments to have regard to the local architectural character in terms of form, massing, function and orientation.

This is supported by Policy 7.8 in its requiring local authorities in their LDF policies, to seek to maintain and enhance the contribution of built, landscaped and buried heritage to London's environmental quality, cultural identity and economy, as part of managing London's ability to accommodate change and regeneration.

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The London Plan therefore encourages the enhancement of the historic environment and looks favourably upon developments which seek to maintain the setting of heritage assets.

Camden Development Plan Document (Oct 2010)

For developments including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, policy DP24 requires the Council to consider, among other things, the character, setting, context, form and scale of neighbouring buildings, as well as the character and proportions of the existing building. It also states that, in conservation areas, development should preserve and enhance the area.

Policy DP25 refers specifically to Listed Buildings when it states that the Council will only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building.



View 1 Looking down towards existing AC units

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There are no proposals to remove any original features in the property. The proposals seek to renew, replace and reduce the existing Air Conditioning services at the property. These works are necessary to accommodate the changes to residential and the following the improvements made to the building to facilitate that change.

As a result of the quality of the historic interiors in a number of locations throughout the properties, two approaches are to be taken to replace the existing internal Air Conditioning units throughout the buildings. As such, these proposals present an opportunity to undertake a sensitive upgrade of the existing services which will preserve the special interest of the listed buildings whilst ensuring their continued use.

The Impact of the Proposed Development upon the identified assets

Replacement of the external condenser units

The existing condenser units on the exterior of the buildings do not feature within views towards the properties. Therefore, the replacement of these units with, essentially, like for like equipment will not harm the external appearance of the listed buildings and thus preserve their special interest. The units have been sited on brackets so that the fabric of the Listed Building remains undamaged.

CONCLUSION

The works proposed avoid harmful consequences to the special historic and architectural character of the Listed Building.

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