HERITAGE STATEMENT

52 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0PN

1. Introduction

1.1 This statement is submitted in support of the accompanying planning application for the alteration to the existing rear extension flat roof to be used as a roof terrace plus repositioning of the existing rear balcony balustrade.
1.2 The existing photographs of the site are shown in PH-00.
1.3 The site location map is shown in EX_00.
1.4 The existing scheme is shown in drawings EX_01, EX_02, EX_03, EX_04, EX_05 and EX_06.
1.5 The proposed scheme is shown in drawings PL_50, PL_51, PL_52, PL_53, PL_54 and PL_55.
1.6 £150 application fee has been attached due to the application.

2. The Site and Its Surroundings

2.1 No.52 is located on the NE side of Gordon Square. The street comprises of residential buildings.
2.2 The property is a Grade II listed building which is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
2.3 Thomas Cubitt's has originally developed Gordon Square in 1860.
2.4 The designation of Bloomsbury conservation area has been sought in 1968.
2.5 The outstanding character of these Victorian houses created by the consistent use of cast iron railings along frontages to separate the pavement from the basement lightwell.
2.6 The mature trees around the square have a very significant impact in the streetscape. The roadway skirting the square on the east is narrow and quiet
2.7 No.52 is a six storey single-family dwelling house that forms part of a terrace of seven houses and comprising basement and 5 storeys.
2.8 The predominant building material used in the building is Brick because it was the cheapest locally available material. Doorway has arched opening, flat roof timber porch on brackets. Other elevation details include segmented heads, rubbed brickarches, stone banding and delicate cast iron balconies.
2.9 The building has vertically-proportioned windows with the tallest at first-floor level emphasising the piano Nobile (or principal floor), and deteriorating in size on following upper floors. Window openings are box sashes subdivided into small panes by slender glazing bars. The elevation is built in yellow stock brick with a rusticated stucco base, a moulded stucco parapet and decorative iron balconies at first-floor level. Careful consideration was also given to the treatment of flank walls.
2.10 There is a self contained flat at Basement of the property.
2.11 There is an existing flat roof extension at the rear of the property.
2.12 There are numbers of green roof at the adjoining properties at rear.
2.13 There are 2 small- size balconies to the front and rear of the property.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 Planning permission was granted in 2011 for Change of use of basement from non-residential institution (Class D1) to one-bed self contained fl at (Class C3), and infill of an existing window and installation of a new window at rear basement level. (Ref.: 2011/0330/P)

3.2 Planning permission was granted in 1988 for internal alterations in connection with the use for residential purposes for University of London as shown on drawings SVE/528-530. (Ref.: 8870097)

3.3 Planning permission was Granted in 1987 for Retention of a screen door across the hallway at ground floor level as shown on 2 drawings numbered 890/1/A.(Ref.: 8770075)

3.4 Planning application was withdrawn in 1987 for Retention of a screen door across the ground floor hallway to maintain security requirements of University Publications Office.(Ref.: 8700465)

3.5 Planning permission was Granted with conditions, in 1981 for Retention of a screen door across the ground floor hallway, Granted.(Ref.: HB2679)

4. DESIGN QUANTITIES

4.1 The present application proposes to the alteration to the existing rear extension flat roof to be used as a roof terrace with a gross floor area of approximately 18sqm.

4.2 The new roof level will be created by lowering down the existing roof by restructuring the existing roof which is approximately 700mm deep. The new structure will be added from the above of the roof in order to retain the existing ceiling. (See PL_53)

4.3 To the edges of the roof on the existing parapet walls black painted metal balustrades will be fitted to reach the height of 1.1m.

4.4 The accessible area of the roof will be the tiled area of 7sqm, while the rest will be planted in order to prevent overlooking to the neighbour properties.

4.5 The access to the roof will be via the existing balcony and by removing part of the existing parapet wall. (See PL_53)

4.6 To the front of the property, a new raised tiled floor, with an area of 5sqm, will be installed in order to level off the terrace and align it with the door cill. (See PL_54).

4.7 To the existing rear balcony a new raised tiled floor, with an area of 5sqm, will be installed in order to level off the terrace with the door cill. (See PL_51) Existing balustrade will be repositioned in order to enlarge the terrace.

4.8 A Green roof will be installed on parts of the roof with a gross floor area of 6sqm (see PL_50).

4.9 The Green roof, 120mm high, is created using a variety of wild flower/turf plants that will grow and carpet the roof surface which are a mixture of wild flowers and grasses grown in a moisture retentive biodegradable felt. The felt is made from recycled British textiles, retains moisture and acts as a weed barrier. The suggested system is incredibly lightweight.

5. DESIGN

5.1 Our proposal is linked to the spirit of 'Greening London'. It will also, preserve the character of conservation area without altering to the mansard roofline.

5.2 5.2 Relevant policies within the Unitary Development Plan, adopted in 2006:

B6 - Listed buildings b) alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building.

3.57 The Council has a general presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings. Total demolition, substantial demolition and rebuilding behind the facade of a listed building will not normally be considered acceptable. The matters which will be taken into consideration in an application for the total or substantial demolition of a listed building are those set out in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.19 of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 15 -Planning and the Historic Environment.

DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

Core Strategy policy CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development.

5.3 The proposed scheme including balustrades will not be visible from Gordon Square.

5.4 We also strive to add as much vegetation to the roof as possible to help absorb CO2 emissions, insulate the building and absorb rainfall. The green roof will not be disrupting views, as it is composed of low-lying vegetation such as sedum or wildflower mixes. In addition, the suggested system is incredibly lightweight. The urban heat island effect is also diminished in inner city areas as the plants can reduce surface roof temperatures by as much as 50C in summer. In addition, the planted area with indigenous flora can also provide important habitats for native bird and insect populations. Finally yet importantly, the green roof is aesthetically pleasing, providing some welcome greenery on rooftops for everyone in the vicinity to admire!

5.5 The substrate layer is a good quality-growing medium, which can absorb and retain rain, provide anchorage for the plant roots, absorb and supply nutrients whilst remaining lightweight.

5.6 Two visits a year is usually adequate to maintain the planted area.