

The Freud Museum - 20 Maresfield Gardens, London NW3 5SX

Version 1

Listed Buildings Consent Design Access and Heritage Statement

The proposed works at 20 Maresfield Gardens, a three storey 1920's Grade II listed building, are on the first floor and comprise the careful removal of a partition wall between two rooms.

20 Maresfield Gardens was the final home of Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis and one of the most famous thinkers of the 20th century. The house was converted into a Museum and offices at the wishes of Freud's youngest daughter Anna, herself a pioneer of child psychoanalysis, following her death in 1982. It was opened to the public as the Freud Museum London in 1986, since when it has become a centre for exhibitions, collections and research relating to Sigmund and Anna Freud.

The proposed alterations will be of limited impact. These museum rooms are currently used one as an education and events room and for showing film to visitors, and one for temporary exhibitions. The uses of the rooms will not change but become far more flexible, with the possibility of opening up the space when needed to make one larger room. At present with the current visitor occupancy, and growing numbers of education groups, courses and events, the two separate rooms often become cramped at busy times or during evening functions. The opening up of the wall is aimed to ease this problem and give greater flexibility to the spaces; a simple concertina or folding partition system to the new opening is also proposed, enhancing this flexibility. The design and reference photographs can be seen on drawings 112/03, 04, 05 & 06.

The alterations are simple, we have deliberately kept a down stand from the ceiling at the line of the wall, this maintains the feeling of two separate rooms and also allows the existing cornice to be retained in each room, the skirting will have to be cut and trimmed around the opening and the carpeted floor made good. The existing finishes are plaster and paint and any making good will match these finishes. We have already engaged the services of a structural engineer who has surveyed the proposed area and the floors above and below and prepared calculations and a drawing for the works (drawing 4353/L2A). The works do not affect the rooms above or below.

Removal of the wall will have no impact on the heritage of the house, as neither room is any longer used in the way it was when Sigmund or Anna Freud lived here. Use of these rooms was changed when the house was converted to a museum in 1986, and these uses will remain the same, as temporary exhibition, events and education space. The new partition will be carefully matched to the existing style of the two rooms, and to preserve the current look of this floor of the house.