

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		24/10/2011	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		06/10/2011	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Tina Garratt				2011/3500/L			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
45 Great Russell Street London WC1B 3LU				Refer to decision notice			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Replacement of metal covers with concrete and glass pavement lights to front of existing retail unit (Class A1)							
Recommendation(s):		Refuse listed building consent					
Application Type:		Listed Building Consent					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		<p>A press notice was published on 15/09/2011 and a site notice displayed on 07/09/2011, both for a period of 21 days.</p> <p>No consultation responses were received.</p>					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>		<p>The Bloomsbury CAAC questioned the proposal given the impact on the historic building.</p> <p><i>Officer response: Officers consider the proposals to harm the character and setting of the listed building and are recommending refusal.</i></p>					

Site Description

The property is located on the north side of Great Russell Street, opposite the British Museum, within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. No.43 forms part of a wider terrace (No.43-48 consecutive) of 6 Grade II listed houses. Designed in a modified French Renaissance style they are rendered in stucco with a rusticated ground floor which contains the shop front. Although the façade date from the mid nineteenth century it appears that the previous building on the site was merely modified (rather than being demolished) as a number of earlier features, such as panelling, have been uncovered inside. and have grand stucco elevations with rusticated ground floors in the French Renaissance style. They are 4 storeys high with taller end properties and have strong architectural detailing.

Relevant History

2003/1710/L & 2003/1688/NEW - Removal and reinstatement of 2 chimney stacks. Granted 07/10/2003

PL/9500823/R1 & HB/9570132/R1 – Alterations to first, second, and third floors in connection with conversion to residential use, issued 03/11/1995.

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage

PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment (March 2010)

PPS5: Practice Guide (March 2010)

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (April 2011)

Assessment

The proposed works are to remove the 2 metal covers over the basement vaults, which, it has been suggested, are a trip hazard and to replace them with concrete and glass pavement lights to echo those at No.43 and 48.

No.43 Great Russell Street forms part of a wider group of buildings which have a very strong architectural character and appearance, particularly above ground floor level. The ground floor levels have been converted into shops but no shopfronts have been incorporated; original window openings are used for display purposes. The vaults beneath the pavement are lit by metal grilles which in some cases (at No.42 and 48) have been replaced by modern glass bricks set in concrete. This is a modern intervention which appears unsightly, particularly when there is a need for consistency along the terrace. The existing metal grilles are most likely original to the building and are repeated on the other buildings in the group. Part of the special interest of the building is derived from its group value and the uniformity and repetition of elements. Accordingly, the removal of what appears to be an original or historic detail (and if not original is in the style of an original detail) and its replacement with an unsympathetic modern and incongruous replacement would harm the setting of the listed building.

Recent applications (2011/2850/P & 2011/2851/L) at No.47 Great Russell Street, which included the removal of the pavement grilles, were also refused on the grounds of the loss of historic fabric.

Recommendation: Refuse listed building consent

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