

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT:
10 NEW SQUARE, LINCOLN'S INN, LONDON WC2A

26 SEP 2011

Repairs to sub-pavement vaults under Serle Street

1. Property and Historical Significance

- 1.1 10 New Square is one of a group of eleven buildings originally built between 1693 and 1697, in what was originally known as Serle Square. Initially it had three floors over a basement under a pitched roof with a central valley. There were vaults under the roadways on both sides (the present New Square and Serle Street). After 1720 the roof space was colonised, and dormer windows were added to create a third floor, which was progressively enlarged to occupy the full footprint of the building when the external walls were raised in the mid/late C18th, probably after the fire of 1752. The main stair was rebuilt in masonry in the early C19th following further fire damage. A fourth floor was added to the central bays. When first built, the southernmost bay at ground level formed a passageway through to Serle Street. This was made redundant by the construction of the gateway to Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1846, and the space was absorbed into the ground floor chambers by 1870; this also affected the basement area below.
- 1.2 The building is occupied by Payne Hicks and Beach, who have been present since the mid C18th. During their long period of occupancy, they have periodically updated the building to meet their evolving needs. Payne Hicks and Beach own part of the basement affected by the proposed works, though the rest of the basement and the corresponding rooms on the ground floor above are now in the ownership Lincoln's Inn.
- 1.3 The present arrangement of the area adjoining the vaults is a consequence of the most recent modernisation of the area; the modern ladies cloakroom fills what should be a lightwell, and direct access to two of the vaults is, consequently, blocked [photo 3]. A hatch from the cloakroom leads to the tenanted remains of the lightwell, from which the northern of the three vaults may be reached. The three vaults are linked together by C20th holes formed through the cross walls between the vaults. There are further vaults south of those affected by the proposed works.
- 1.4 The key significance of the building lies in being part of the urban fabric of New Square (NB much of the Serle Street sub-pavement vault structure dates from the late C17th original build); and in the surviving C18th fabric including the structure, interiors and part of the roof, and lastly for its place in the development of the legal concept of flying freeholds.

2. Need for Repairs

- 2.1 Following a burst water main in Serle Street, Payne Hicks and Beach recorded damage to the vault's structure, and asked their property insurers to investigate further. Angell Thompson Consulting Structural Engineers and Surveyors were appointed to carry out investigations and then to report on the cause of the movement and, to provide recommendations for repair. Their underpinning drawing 10142D/01, survey record drawing 10142D/02 and statement explaining their design solution accompany this application.

The repairs, which will re-support the foundations to the vaults on firm ground, will arrest further movement. The rear wall of the centre vault (vault 2) [photo 1] is now in such poor condition that it is necessary to place a retaining wall in front of it, as is that of the south vault (3) [photo 2]. Angell Thompson's statement explains why this solution is the best one.

3. Appearance

- 3.1 The external appearance of the vaults will remain unchanged as a consequence of the works. The finishes of the vaults internally will also be the same, except the rear walls of the central and south vaults (numbered 2 and 3 on drawing 10142D/01) where additional retaining structure will be inserted. This can be finished to retain the present rendered finish which was previously applied to vault 3 [photo 2].

4. Temporary Works

- 4.1 These are indicated on drawing 10142D/01, and include the careful removal and reinstatement of the existing area railings along Serle Street, which will be put back into the rebuilt rendered plinth wall. The grating over the remaining basement area will likewise be removed and reinstated. The existing vent cap over the cloakroom will be temporarily removed. The existing blockwork infill to the openings to vaults 2 and 3 [photo 3] will be removed altogether to allow access to these vaults and rebuilt on completion.

The construction of a secure hoarding round the site and diversion of the pedestrian pathway will be agreed separately to local authority approval.

5. Landscaping

No changes.

6. Access

No changes.

7. Alteration Impact Assessment

- 7.1 Ground floor to roof elevation: none.
- 7.2 Basement: the whole of the basement will remain unchanged, except the ladies WC and the three vaults, areas 10B NS/B6, B7, B8, B9 as indicated on DIA drawing 2010. The present ladies WC is a late C20th fit out and will be refurbished after the proposals with new decorative finishes.

The plan layout of all the vaults will remain as at present, and the finishes will remain as at present, except for the rear walls of vaults 2 and 3, which will be rendered on the new concrete retaining structures, and the floors which will be consolidated where they have presently subsided, and given a new floor slabs which will be entirely supported off the new foundations underpinning the vault walls.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The proposed alterations are part of a necessary programme of repair which will safeguard the future of the structures which form part of the Grade II* listed New Square. As such they are in keeping with the Conservation Area Legislation and PPS5 guidelines, and are thus of benefit.

**10 NEW SQUARE: SUB-PAVEMENT VAULT UNDER SERLE STREET.
Photographs to accompany application for Listed Building Consent for repairs.**



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1: Middle vault (Vault 2), rear wall, showing dip in bed joints, and newer brick to crown of vault.



2: South vault (Vault 3), with old water-proof render finish.

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3: Middle vault (Vault 2), infill to historic opening to the original area, which will be temporarily removed in order to undertake the repairs.