

26/26A Argyle Square

London WC1 8AP

Heritage Appraisal

24th March 2014



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1 Introduction.

1.1 The following report has been prepared by **beside design** in connection with listed building consent and detailed planning applications for the alteration and refurbishment of the grade II listed building at 26A Argyle Square and the conversion and renovation of the 1960's building at the rear of the listed building at 26 Argyle Square. Both buildings will be residential buildings.

Purpose

1.2 The purpose of the report is to set out the historic development and significance of the building and consider the current proposals for alteration and conversion against the relevant policy context.

1.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the relevant drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Architects Office for Architectural Culture (OAC).

Note on research, analysis and sources

1.4 It should be noted that in common with many historic buildings and sites, it is not always possible to provide a truly comprehensive analysis of the historic development of the building. The analysis set out in this report is as thorough as possible given the type and number of archival resources available.

1.5 This desk-based and archival research has been combined with a visual assessment and appraisal of the building. Further sources and evidence that add to our knowledge and understanding of the building and its history may become available at a future date.

Structure

1.6 This introduction is followed by a section describing the building's location and its immediate context. Section 3 sets out the building's historic development and the significance of no26/26A Argyle Square Section 4 sets out the relevant national and local historic environment policy. An outline of the current scheme and its impacts on the building is included in section 5.

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Author

1.7 The lead consultant and editor of this report is Roger Whiteman FRSA, Dip Arch. RIBA. He is an architect and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, with a great wealth of experience in the renovation and preservation of listed buildings and the design and integration of modern buildings within historic urban environments.

His works include the recent renovation of 6 Knaresborough Place in the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the renovation and extension of 100 Ludgate Hill, and whilst in the employment of Architects SOM the renovation of Alison and Peter Smithson's iconic Economist building

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2 Site location and description

2.1 The following section describes no26/26A Argyle Square (the building) and its immediate context. It also sets out the relevant statutory historic environment designations relating to the site

Description

2.2 The building comprises two distinct units with independent access and egress. No 26A Argyle Square facing directly onto Argyle Square and no 26 Argyle Square located of Loxham Street.

26A Argyle Square is an end of terrace located on the southern side of Argyle Square.

26 Argyle Square is a 1960's extension at the rear of 26A Argyle Square. This was in use as a private gallery.

The primary access points to both 26 and 26A Argyle Square are located on the eastern side of the building from Loxham Street which is a pedestrian thoroughfare.

The lower ground floor residential unit to 26A Argyle Square is accessed via an existing staircase on the northern side of the site located within a light well directly off Argyle Square

There are two additional access points to 26 Argyle Square from Argyle Walk at the rear of the property. These provided service access to the gallery at upper ground level and the other to the lower ground level

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Fig 1 Site location plan with site outlined in red

Designations

2.3 The property is formed of two buildings, numbers 26a Argyle Square and 26 Argyle Square. 26A Argyle Square was built in around 1846.

The 1869 London Plan shows a single building fronting onto Argyle Square (Manchester Street) and reaching back to Argyle Walk.

These plans show the rear extension abutting the Swedenborgian New Jerusalem Church which was later demolished after the Second World War.

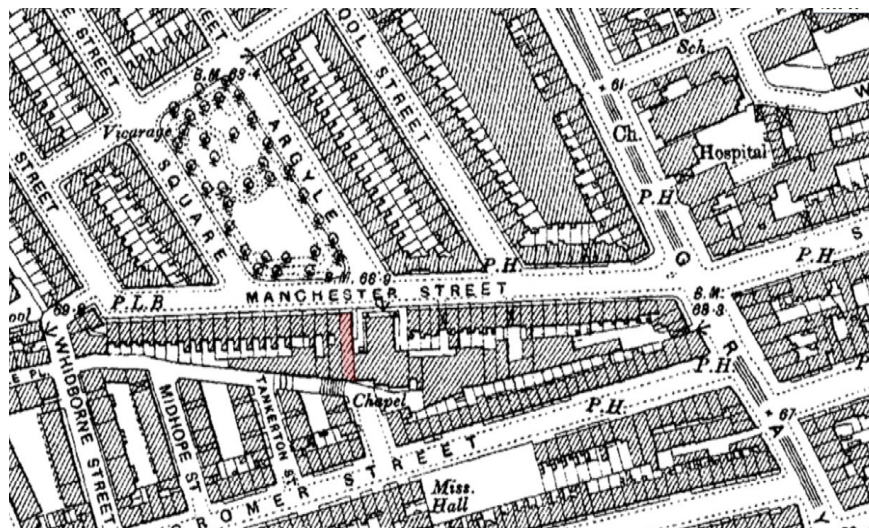


Fig 2 1869 London plan

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No. 26/26A Argyle Square were built as part of a terrace of houses on the south side of what was then known as Manchester Street which ran along the southern side of Argyle Square (see London Plan from 1869 above).

The buildings are typically four storeys high over a basement and constructed in stock brick with rendered window dressings.

The building continues the two window wide rhythm of the other listed buildings on the Square. The ground, first and second floor windows have six-over-six pane sashes, the third floor windows three-over-three pane sashes. The first floor windows have moulded architraves whilst the second and third floor windows are recessed with gauged brick flat arches. The first floor windows have a cast-iron balcony. The entrance to No. 26 is on the left hand return.

The vertical proportions of the building are typical of a terraced house of this type with windows diminishing in size proportions with each floor of the building. The windows at first floor building are the largest, and intended to emphasise the principal floor of the house, and the windows decrease in size at each additional floor

All of the windows in the main elevation retain the style of the early 19th century sash windows and are single glazed.

The brickwork shows some signs of repair and mortar patching. These stand out from the existing age darkened façade of the building.

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Fig 3 Front elevation 26A Argyle Square

The rear elevation is now only visible from second to third floors as the 1960's extension at the rear of the site extends fully into the rear yard. The rear windows are of similar design and size to those on the Argyle Square frontage.

Any openings below cannot be seen due to the later infill of the light wells at lower ground and ground level.

A door to provide access from 26A Argyle Square to the roof of 26 was constructed as part of the 1960's work.

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Fig 4 Rear Elevation 26A Argyle Square

The brickwork fronting Loxham Street is varied in colour with 26A Argyle Square constructed in yellow stock bricks which show signs of darkening with age. The 1960's extension, was also built with yellow stock but is lighter in colour and shows less sign of darkening with age.

The building has been amended internally over many years and shows signs of multi residential occupancy to No 26A facing onto Argyle Square. The clarity of the original layout at the rear of the building has been lost through the illegal infill's of the rear light wells to create additional floor space.

No 26 Argyle Square

2.4 The 1960's extension at the rear of the building has a more pragmatic industrial quality in its architectural style with windows

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and concrete lintels emphasising the period in which the building was extended.



Fig 5 Rear Elevation 26 Argyle Square

The building is single storey with a lower ground level storage area.

Its eastern elevation was opened up prior to 1954 with the demolition of the Swedenborgian New Jerusalem Church was converted into a 'social club' in the early 1900's and subsequently an art gallery in the early 2000's



Fig 6 1954 London plan

It is unknown whether the existing 1960's extension bears any resemblance to the original building on the site.

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On the side elevation of 26A Argyle Square at the junction between the two buildings the profile of the original lean to at the rear of the property is visible suggesting the rear extension was modified in the 1960's.



Fig 7 Interface between buildings

Internally

2.5 The ground floor and upper floors of **number 26A** are accessed via the main door on the flank elevation from the street and the original dog-leg stair in the south-east corner of the building.

The staircase is in good condition although warped in places. Recent development in the property show signs of fire rated walls separating individual floors suggesting multi occupancies in the building. This is borne out by the Council Tax records.



Fig 8 Upper floor staircase

There is no direct access to the lower ground residential floor unit from the existing staircase which was removed to create a

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separate residential unit in the basement. This unit is accessed from the steps down in the light well on Argyle Square.

The plan form of the building and its rooms is highly legible with front and rear rooms leading from the main stair landings.

The front and rear rooms on the first and second floors are linked by an approx. 2.4 m wide opening.

The third floor retains its original plan form but at some stage in the early 2000's a bathroom has been added within the front room.



Fig 9 Third floor bathroom addition

There are no chimney breasts in any of the front or rear rooms of the buildings as might be expected

No historic features such as dadoes, picture rails etc remain to the interior of the building.

The existing flat ceiling to the third floor has been removed and the existing roof structure has been exposed.

The internal arrangement of **number 26** comprises two largely open plan areas each with a service area at the northern end and a toilet/kitchenette.

There is no direct staircase access between the floors. Access is via a staircase that sits between the two buildings and is accessed off Loxham Street.

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3.0 Designations

The building falls within the London Borough of Camden planning jurisdiction and is a Grade II listed building (see listing details below)

3.1 Listed building details

Location: (South side) Nos.26-35 (Consecutive) and attached railings

Street: Argyle Square

Grade: II

Reference No: 798-1-4891

Date of listing: May 14 1974

Description

Terrace of 10 houses, forming the south side of Argyle Square. c1840-49, with some alterations.

Yellow stock brick with later patching, Nos 29 and 31 and 32 have painted ground floors.

PLAN: Each house is of 2-bays, and 4-storeys plus basement, with a raised parapet.

EXTERIOR: The ground floor doors and windows are round-headed and have moulded architraves. Nos 26 and 35, have flat arch ground floor windows. The ground to second floor windows is six-over-six pane sashes, the third floor windows three-over three pane. The first floor windows have moulded architraves whilst the second and third floor windows are recessed with gauged brick flat arches. The first floor windows have a cast-iron balcony, missing on No. 35, a continuous sill band runs beneath these. The doorways, where unaltered, have pilaster jambs carrying cornice-heads, with fanlights and panelled doors.

The entrance to No. 26 is on the left hand return. There are attached cast-iron railings with bud finials to some of the areas. The 1960s extension to the rear of Nos. 26 and 27 is not of special Interest.

INTERIORS: These have not been inspected.

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HISTORY: A church once stood to the east of this terrace, with another terrace (probably also of the 1840s) continuing to the east along what was previously called Manchester Street. The church and section of terrace were damaged in WWII, and a council estate now stands in their place. Nos. 7-25 and 26-35 are the western continuation of the terrace (c1840-1849), and are also listed Grade II. No. 26 housed St Pancras Conservative club from the early C20 until 2002, with 27 providing staff accommodation.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANCE: Nos. 26-35 (consecutive) Argyle Square, are of special interest as part of the remaining 1840s terrace which forms the south side of Argyle Square. Terraces of the same date also survive to the west and east.

SOURCES: Survey of London: Vol. XXIV, King's Cross Neighbourhood,

Parish of St Pancras IV: London: -1952: 105; Survey of London (Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England), Volume XXIV, King's Cross Neighbourhood, Parish of St Pancras IV: London: -1952:105;

3.2 Association of Squares and Gardens set up in 2012 refers to Argyle Square as follows

Argyle Square garden appears on an estate plan of 1832, although the garden itself was probably laid out in the 1840s when the first buildings were built around the square. The original layout had 4 entrances, perimeter trees / shrubs and a perimeter path, a line of 3 trees at either end of the garden and a central tree. By 1877 an east-west and a north-south path were added, dividing the garden into 4 plots, and 2 semi-circular beds around the central tree. The current layout dates from 1995, albeit with some later changes. Access was originally restricted to the residents of Argyle Square and a few adjoining houses, but it is now a public garden. Six mature London plane trees from the earlier layout survive and it is overlooked by surviving C19th terraces along most of three sides. Enclosed by reproduction cast iron railings, it has been redesigned to incorporate a tarmac sports pitch, children's playground and landscaping with shrubs and planting.

Bloomsbury is above all famous for its squares. With their linking streets, these are thought to follow the line of its ancient pathways. It was laid out as a grid based on terraces and formally landscaped squares to create an attractive residential environment in a rapidly expanding London. Although this process

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of expansion to the north and west went on for many years, from roughly 1660 to 1840, it kept a consistency of street pattern and building type. It was all done in a very English style, the squares subtly differing in shape and character in a way quite different from continental planning. Despite later changes, these streets and squares remain its dominant characteristic and it is rightly considered to be a very important early example of town planning

3.3 The Bloomsbury Conservation area

Appraisal and Management Strategy adopted 18 April 2011, Sub area 13 Cartwright Gardens and Argyle Square refers to the area specifically as follows.

Argyle Square

The area around Argyle Square was one of the last land parcels to be developed in the 1830s and 1840s having been previously the site of the failed Panharmonium Pleasure Gardens, an over-ambitious and short-lived project from 1830-32. The surrounding streets, however, are likely to have been built earlier, Crestfield Street and Birkenhead Street were laid out from 1825; Argyle Street from 1826 and St Chad's Street from 1827

The architectural and historic interest of this area is reflected in the fact that the majority of the buildings are listed. The conversion in the 20th century of a number of properties to hotel use, has given rise to a plethora of signage, painted brickwork, additional downpipes and unsympathetic replacement of sash windows and front doors that detract from the homogeneity of the terraces.

Four-storey townhouses around the square have a restrained classical appearance with consistent parapet lines, decorative stucco banding, large first-floor windows with stucco surrounds, arched ground-floor doors and a parapet concealing the roof. The east and west sides are almost intact, but the south-east corner was destroyed in World War II.

Postwar housing blocks were built on this site, which lie outside the Conservation Area, but are highly visible in views from the square. These nine-storey blocks dating from 1949-51 were designed by Hening and Chitty and are of note as early postwar social housing solutions with blocks placed at right-angles to the street to allow for landscaped communal gardens. Along the

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streets the buildings are slightly older, and tend to have plainer detailing but are of a smaller scale, consisting of three storeys with a mansard roof, party wall up-stands and predominant chimney stacks and pots.

Most properties have consistent iron railings and delicate balconies.

Although unlisted and altered, Nos 45-47 Argyle Square date from the early 19th century and use consistent materials and themes. There are relatively few 20th century interventions.

3.4 Investment and Maintenance

The appraisal has indicated that the character of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area is vulnerable to negative change through incremental deterioration of built fabric arising from neglect and lack of maintenance of buildings. Some of the streets in which this is particularly evident are the areas dominated by hotels, student accommodation and hostels and also areas dominated by heavy traffic, where residential and hotel uses may be less attractive:

- *Swinton Street*
- *Guilford Street*
- *Gower Street*
- ***Argyle Square and surrounding area***
- *Cartwright Gardens*
- *Bedford Place/Montague Street*

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3.5 Significance

No 26A and 26 Argyle Square are clearly buildings of special architectural and historic interest as acknowledged by its grade II listing in 1974.

Number 26A is a good example of an early 19th century end of terrace townhouse in this location and an important contributor to the Georgian character of the street and of the area more generally.

Number 26 Argyle Square, the 1960's rear extension, is mentioned in the listing as having 'no special interest' although its presence has been part of the fabric of the area for many years.

In terms of the layout and appearance of the building, it does retain a sense of a Georgian townhouse despite 20th century internal alterations.

With such buildings and in determining the significance of its constituent parts it is important to consider the existing layout of the building, its surviving historic fabric and in the readily identifiable hierarchy of floors and individual spaces. The aesthetics of its rooms and elevations and its overall composition are also important.

Whilst the Listing citation does not refer to the interiors of the building these are considered important in the proposed refurbishment of the building.

In summary, the significant areas of interventions are

- external repairs only where required
- refurbishment of the existing windows
- replacement windows will follow existing designs
- darkening of brickwork to 26A and differentiation from lighter bricks at rear
- demolition is minor and removes non-original structures
- the addition of a new entrance lobby to the Loxham Street elevation
- the introduction of windows to the flank wall to provide natural daylight to the staircase

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- the ceiling at top floor of 26A is reinstated
- the staircase within 26A is improved as far as possible back to the original through the removal of walls, partitions, doors etc. above the ground level
- the roof extension is to the part of the building that is not of historic importance and will be an enhancement.

Integrity of external fabric

The main elevation is carefully composed and is unusual for its symmetrical, appearance (having its entrance door on the side elevation) and relatively narrow frontage.

The elevation has the proportions and aesthetics of the original building, the fabric has been repaired and repointed but retains the existing single glazed timber sash windows, some of which are original.

The integrity of the external fabric of the building will be enhanced through minimum intervention and limited repairs.

Front elevation; Mortar joints will only be repaired locally, painting of stucco surrounds to windows and window reveals will be undertaken to improve the longevity of the building fabric and the existing single glazed sash windows will be renovated.

Side elevation; The side elevation was originally not seen as one of the primary facades of the building. Despite having the front door to the building on this elevation the doorway is simple and does not match the existing quality of other doorways facing onto the Square. The side elevation has no openings with the exception of a small doorway, in what can be understood to be the original rear 'lean to'.

A new entrance lobby will be created on the side elevation constructed in masonry and rendered to match the existing rendering at the lower ground level. New windows to match the height of those on the front elevation will be cut into the brickwork to bring light into the existing staircase. The first floor window has been included at the same height as the second floor as the proportions of the existing first floor windows onto Argle Square could not be matched due to the size of the staircase landing.

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The existing elevations to 26 Argyle Square have no significant interest.

The proposals for the alterations and extension of the building however, will bring a balance between the classical symmetrical elevation fronting Argyle Square and the modernity of the renovations to the 1960's building

Four oriel windows will project from the existing brickwork giving a symmetrical three dimensional quality to the façade either side of the consolidated new entrance to number 26.

Within these rendered projecting bays cast iron balustrades, replicating the first floor balustrades of 26 Argyle , bring the small scale detail of the front elevation to the side of the building, uniting the visual quality of the two buildings.

A new entrance to a cycle store is created on this elevation and reinforces the shape of the original lean-to.

Rear elevation; Although never intended to have the same treatment as the main elevation and therefore of less architectural significance from the outset, the rear elevation has been repaired, potentially extended/in-filled, in parts and had all but two of its windows replaced and altered.

This has further diminished the significance of the rear elevation.

The proposals look to enhance the rear elevation as a key elevation of the building, retaining the more industrial feel to the elevation and the rhythm of the windows, removing the existing doors and lowering the window heights to enable a cast iron railing to be added to the façade.

The first floor extension is set back at roof level on Loxham Street to minimise the visual impact of the building when viewed from Argyle Square. On Argyle Walk the extension is engaged with the existing building by the use of yellow stock brick cladding and a brick frame which reflects the scale of the other recent developments on Argyle Walk. Daylight studies have shown that the roof top extension do not have a detriment effect on the daylighting requirements of the existing buildings.

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Timber cladding is used on the south and east elevations of the rooftop extension to reinforce the form of the existing building and to define the proposed roof top extension as a lighter structural elevation treatment.

The external treatment will typically comprise of rendered window surrounds to the oriel windows, accentuation of the horizontal concrete lintels and the addition of a new concrete band at parapet level to provide the safety heights required and timber panelling at the roof setback floors.

The integrity of the plan form

This legibility in plan form is of significance to recreating the historic quality of the building

Internally, the building layout of 26A Argyle Square is in good order but retains little of its historic fabric with the exception of the main stair.

The integrity of the building's plan form is retained at ground, first and second floor levels and the volumes of individual rooms and their relationships to each other are clear and legible. So too is the hierarchy between the floors which emphasises the Piano Noble level and the lesser status of the upper floors.

The integrity of the plan form is further emphasised by the removal of the unlawful infill's to the ground and first floor light wells and their increase in size to their original length.

The historic fabric of the principal rooms including original or historic floorboards are of interest and will be retained as part of any proposals.

The roof profile is of some interest as it appears to have a historic form. However, it is evident that the original roof structure has been replaced and altered in places. The roof is therefore not in its original state.

Overall, 26A Argyle Square is today a building with architectural and aesthetic interest and value, providing evidence of the history of the development and continuity of uses of Argyle Square

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The building is not in its original form as light wells have been filled in, ceilings and walls removed and it has been adapted and altered to suit its various users and uses.

With the conversion of 26 Argyle Square from its organisation as a Club to (a now former) Art Gallery the link between 26A Argyle Square and 26 Argyle Square has become blurred. The original plan does not currently retain the same building clarity as the elevations but this is addressed in the proposals.

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4 Planning Policy Context

4.1 Heritage Policy Context

The proposals take into account the current adopted relevant national and local planning policy guidance which deal with the issues related to the historic environment. This is summarised as follows.

4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and has revoked the guidance previously set out in the Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs).

Section 12 of the NPPF deals specifically with the historic and heritage policies, in particular:

Paragraph 126 sets out the approach which local planning authorities should follow when developing their strategies, taking into account:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

Paragraph 128 states that LPAs should require applicants to **describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting**. The level of detail should be **proportionate** to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient **to understand the potential impact** of the proposal on their significance.

Paragraph 129 requires local authorities to identify the particular significance of a site and use this assessment when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise

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conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Paragraph 131 states that in determining planning applications, local authorities should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and,
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 132 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional.

Paragraph 133 requires LPAs to refuse any development leading to substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset.

Paragraph 134 deals with cases where a proposal does cause less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset such as a listed building. Any such harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals.

Paragraph 127 sets that LPA should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

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4.3 The London Borough of Camden Policy Framework

Relevant policy from the **Core Strategy 2010** is set out within **Policy CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage**, which requires developments to preserve local heritage and character including conservation area and listed buildings, providing high quality and accessible buildings.

Development Policy 2010 DP25- Conserving Camden's Heritage allows for development in Conservation Areas only when this preserves the character and the appearance of the area. It also **permits change of use and alteration or extension of Listed Building** where no harm to the special interest of the building is issued.

In particular, the LBC aims to **protect the character of its Conservation Areas** through:

- taking account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas.
- only permitting development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

Listed Buildings shall be preserved and enhanced and LBC seeks for preventing the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;

- only granting 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;
- not permitting development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

4.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance

The application property is also subject to **the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy SPD** adopted by LBC in April 2011.

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This defines the special character of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area BCA, including Argyle Square, and sets out LBC's approach for its preservation and enhancement, including lists of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and the procedures for managing, monitoring and enforcing changes and development proposals.

Paragraph 5.4 relates to alterations to existing buildings and sets out that alterations and extensions can have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area through inappropriate roof level extensions.

Paragraph 5.32 refers to the removal or loss of original architectural features and the use of inappropriate materials which can be harmful to the appearance of all buildings of historic interest (listed or unlisted).

Paragraph 5.33 accordingly states that the Council **will expect original features and detailing to be retained, repaired, protected or refurbished in the appropriate manner and only replaced where it can be demonstrated that they are beyond repair.**

The property is listed within the SPD as part of the **Cartwright Gardens/Argyles Square Sub Area n.13** which describes the area as being dominated by a mix of hotel and bed-and-breakfast uses, student accommodation and offices, with a recent scattering of properties being converted back to single family dwellings (see paragraph 5.227 of the SPD).

Argyle Square's architectural and historic interest, as stated, is reflected by the majority of the buildings being listed. However the guidance states that the conversion in the 20th century of a number of properties to hotel use, has given rise to a plethora of signage, painted brickwork, additional downpipes and unsympathetic replacement of sash windows and front doors that detract from the homogeneity of the terraces (paragraph 5.230 of the SPD)..

The SPD's appraisal recognises the **vulnerability** of the BCA due to neglect and lack of maintenance of buildings, and this is particularly evident in areas **dominated by hotels and hostels** including **Argyle Square** (paragraph 5.9)

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5.0 The proposals and their impacts

5.1 This section sets out an outline of the proposed scheme and describes the impact of the proposals on the significance of no. 26 and 26A Argyle Square. The proposals have developed in response to comments made at pre-application stage in October 2013 and February 2014.

Outline of the proposed scheme

5.2 The proposed scheme allows for the provision of two residential units within 26A Argyle Square together with the additional provision of two residential units within 26 Argyle Square and the addition of a set-back roof extension providing an additional residential unit.

The proposed scheme retains the existing structure of the two listed buildings but brings the buildings back to life through sensitive and considerate design

Within 26 Argyle Square the proposed accommodation comprises a two bed maisonette unit and a three bed maisonette unit at ground floor and lower ground floor of the existing building.

Within 26A Argyle Square the proposed accommodation comprises a two bed unit at lower ground and ground floor levels and a three bed unit over the first, second and third floors.

On the roof of 26 Argyle Square a new two bed unit is created.

These uses support the London Borough of Camden's priority housing needs.

5.3 Schedule of Works resulting from the proposals insofar as they impact on the listed building is as follows

External –

- Local minor repairs to the brickwork to no 26A Argyle Square and the darkening of the brickwork to give a uniform aged appearance as suggested in the Pre application meetings on site.

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- The retention of the existing painted timber single glazed window units and their over-hauling and maintenance
- The reinstatement of two old windows to the rear of 26A Argyle Square brought about by the removal of the unauthorised light well infills.
- The enlargement of the existing light wells to reinstate their original shape and to reinforce the clarity of the zone between the two parts of the building.
- The painting of the balustrading to the first floor.
- The provision of a new entrance door to the side elevation of 26A Argyle Square similar to those approved and constructed on Saint Chad's Street.
- The addition of three new windows, designed to match the windows on Argyle Square frontage, to light the staircase on the side elevation of 26A Argyle Square.
- The creation of two new light wells to the side elevation of 26A Argyle square to provide light and ventilation to the lower ground floor accommodation.
- The creation of a new entrance vestibule to no 26A.
- The change of the existing door to the side elevation of 26A Argyle Square to create a new window to match the front elevation.
- The addition of a new door at the junction of 26 and 26A Argyle Square to help differentiate the form of the original lean to at 26A Argyle Square.
- The addition of 4 new 'oriel' windows and an entrance doorway to the east elevation of 26 Argyle Square, designed with rendered stucco window surrounds balconies, which draw on the Argyle Square façade window details fronting onto Argyle Square, and cast iron railings to match those on the first floor fronting onto Argyle Square.

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- The blocking up of two existing doorways on the south elevation of No 26 and the creation of a new window.
- The addition of a roof extension to 26 Argyle Square which is setback on the east and west elevations and has no new openings on the south elevation.

Note. From the preplanning comments received the balcony on the south elevation has been removed and the windows to the street elevation have been relocated to the west elevation set back from Argyle Walk.

Internal

The internal works to number 26 are as indicated in the accompanying drawings and schedules and as described above.

The following focusses on 26A Argyle Square

- The removal of illegal infill's to the light wells between 26 and 26A Argyle Square to reinstate the original layout of the building and enable the rear façade to be reinstated with timber sash windows to the ground and first floors for daylighting and ventilation.
- The addition of a new staircase beneath the existing staircase in 26A Argyle Square to reinstate circulation to link the ground and lower ground level accommodation.

Note. From the preplanning comments received the building has been separated into two units, ground and lower ground floor and first floor and above. In order to provide fire separation and individual entrances to each individual unit it has not been possible to remove the walls at ground floor level. Wall other walls, doors etc have been removed from the staircase.

- The reinstatement wherever possible of the major room structure of the building.
- The introduction of a new bathroom to level 3.

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- The introduction of new cloakrooms to the ground and first floor levels, designed not to be full height but as pieces of free standing furniture.
- The replacement of the ceilings at No 26A Argyle Square, level 3 to reinstate the original ceiling heights.

Overall, the proposal represents a sensitive scheme led by the overarching objective to retain and enhance the historic character and appearance of the building and its significance and to improve the quality of the industrial unit and its relationship with the historic building no 26.

Clearly, in making alterations to an appropriate standard in terms of overall quality and meeting the requirements of building regulations, some intervention into the historic fabric and plan of the building has been necessary. The overall intention in managing these aspects of the works is to do so in a conventional and sensitive manner and work with the existing grain of the building in order to best locate and design any new interventions

5.4 The impact of the works on the building

As set out above, much of the 26A Argyle Square's significance is derived from the integrity of its historic fabric and plan form. While the proposals do have an impact on the plan form of 26A Argyle Square at first and second floors, through the construction of a dressing room and bathroom at second floor level and the introduction of a fire lobby to the first floor landing to separate the two residential units in the building, it is considered that this work has a minor impact on the significance of the building as the main circulation space. The plan of the front and rear rooms and associated staircase wing will continue to be legible. The character and appearance of the stair well on these floors will remain unchanged.

New partitioning to the rear rooms at ground and first floor level of 26A Argyle Square to create cloakroom/wet rooms will be treated in a contemporary manner, intended to appear as a bespoke piece of furniture and will not involve structural works.

The reinstatement of the lightwells will clarify the original structure of the rear of the building.

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The elevational treatment to the east elevation of no 26 will enhance the visual quality of the building and its use of common metalwork details with No 26A will help visually unite the two buildings.

In townscape terms, the introduction of a setback roof is a benefit as the building forms part of a group of buildings along Argyle Walk where three storey brickwork buildings form part of their architectural structure and built character.

In listed building terms, proposals of this nature are inevitably more difficult as the intrinsic historic interest of the roof form and fabric have to be taken into account when considering proposals for roof alterations.

The listing refers to the industrial building as *having 'no special importance.'* The proposed works, however, will enhance the visual streetscape, and improve the architectural and physical quality and also the security of Loxham Street and Argyle Walk.

6.Statement of Justification

6.1 Overall, the proposals for No 26 Argyle Square represent a sensitive design approach in updating this 1960's rear extension. The design and choice of materials make reference to those used in the listed building and new materials are sympathetically integrated into the designs.

The design draws upon and enhances the special architectural historic interest and significance of 26A Argyle Square.

This significance is largely derived from its

- architectural structure of the principal street elevation
- intrinsic architectural and historic interest
- plan form which is legible and coherent
- its continued representation as good example of an early Georgian townhouse

The proposals for 26A Argyle Square represent a desire to reinstate the historic quality of the listed building through considered reinforcement of the original plan form, reinstatement of the historic staircase and sensitive modifications to the Loxham Street elevations.

The general thrust of national and local policy is to ensure unacceptable harm to this significance is not caused by any aspects of the proposals. The proposals allow for the overall legibility and coherence of the building to continue to be

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understood and its historic fabric and features to be protected and retained. This is a sensitive approach to an important listed building that has evolved through a detailed consideration of the building and through pre-application proposals with Camden Council. As a complete package of works, the proposed scheme is compliant with national and local policy and presents a sensitive and benign refurbishment of the building where improvements to its character and appearance are provided to all areas.

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