

Our ref: 792-3-01-003 design and access statement 01
RevA

1st April 2014

18 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3JA

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

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ON BEHALF OF: The Bedford Estate
29A Montague Street
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Application Ref TBC
STATUS For Planning
REVISION A

PREAMBLE:

This Design & Access Statement shall be read in conjunction with the following drawings and statements prepared by Garnett + Partners LLP (G+P), Anthony Walker (AW) and Mason Navarro Pledge Ltd (MNP):

- 792(PL)100 rev A – Location Plan
- 792(PL)101 rev B – Basement Floor Plan as Existing with Demolitions
- 792(PL)102 rev B – Ground Floor Plan as Existing with Demolitions
- 792(PL)103 rev B – First Floor Plan as Existing with Demolitions
- 792(PL)104 rev B – Second Floor Plan as Existing with Demolitions
- 792(PL)105 rev B – Third Floor & Roof as Existing with Demolitions
- 792(PL)200 rev B – Front Elevation as Existing with Demolitions
- 792(PL)300 rev A – Section AA as Existing with Demolitions
- 792(PL)301 rev A – Section BB & Rear Extension Elevations as Existing with Demolitions
- 792(PL)302 rev A – Section CC as Existing with Demolitions
- 792(PL)410 rev A – Existing Historical Fabric Photographic Survey Sheet 1
- 792(PL)411 rev A – Existing Historical Fabric Photographic Survey Sheet 2
- 792(PL)412 rev A – Existing Historical Fabric Photographic Survey Sheet 3
- 792(PL)413 rev A – Existing Historical Fabric Photographic Survey Sheet 4
- 792(PL)414 rev A – Existing Rear Extensions Photographic Survey
- 792(PL)601 rev B – Basement Floor Plan as Proposed
- 792(PL)602 rev B – Ground Floor Plan as Proposed
- 792(PL)603 rev B – First Floor Plan as Proposed
- 792(PL)604 rev B – Second Floor Plan as Proposed
- 792(PL)605 rev B – Third Floor & Roof as Proposed
- 792(PL)700 rev A – Front Elevation as Proposed
- 792(PL)800 rev A – Section AA as Proposed
- 792(PL)801 rev A – Section BB & Rear Extension Elevations as Proposed
- 792(PL)803 rev A – Section CC as Proposed
- 792(PL)901 rev A – Fire Alarm Panel Joinery Casement details as Proposed
- 792(PL)910 rev B – Basement Reflected Ceiling Plan as Proposed
- 792(PL)911 rev B – Ground Floor Reflected Ceiling Plan as Proposed
- 792(PL)912 rev B – First Floor Reflected Ceiling Plan as Proposed

- 792(PL)913 rev B – Second & Third Floor Reflected Ceiling Plan as Proposed
- Conservation Assessment – AW
- Structural Repairs Statement - MNP

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORKS:

This application is for the demolition of the existing non-original rear extensions and proposed construction of a new two storey rear extension at No. 18 Bedford Square. The proposal also includes refurbishment works to the main building including structural repairs.

The works will involve the following:

1. Refurbishment and redecoration of the main building.
2. Demolition of the existing non-original rear extensions.
3. Construction of a new rear extension at basement and ground floor levels.
4. Sections of the garden party walls to the rear raised to contain the proposed development.
5. Reconfiguration and replacement of existing WCs and shower rooms within the closet wing of the main building.

LAND USE:

There is no change of use proposed within this application. The existing building comprises of 914 m² of office use. The proposal is to consolidate rear extensions by providing a new open plan office across two floors with a courtyard amenity space to the rear.

DESIGN:

Existing Condition

No. 18 Bedford Square is a Grade I listed building within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and forms part of the northern terrace of buildings along the perimeter of Bedford Square. The existing building was constructed between 1775 and 1783 as a single town house, but like many of the buildings at Bedford Square, has since been converted into an office. Along with No.19 the façade of No.18 forms the focal point of the north terrace with a pediment arrangement and stucco decoration. Please refer to the heritage statement prepared by Anthony Walker RIBA AABC for further detail.

The site is made up of the main building (fronting Bedford Square) and non-original extensions with a series of light wells to the rear. The existing rear extension buildings are fragmented and in poor condition. Their layout consists of compartmentalised rooms linked by a corridor running along the party wall with No.19. A small central courtyard exists, which is faced on three sides by openings from the extension. In summary, the existing rear extensions are inefficient in terms of office space with an unattractive external amenity space that detracts from the listed building.

Proposed Design

The proposed development provides an opportunity to upgrade the rear extensions to offer desirable office space that meets the requirements of a contemporary office environment and improve the setting of the listed building. The reconfiguration of the rear extensions aims to provide a consolidated open plan floor plate adjoining a pleasant courtyard area at basement level. Whilst the proposals represent an overall decrease in GIA, the layouts seek to create a more efficient layout.

The new rear extension has been considered in order to provide a more appropriate view from the main building enhancing the visual context of the listed building. Further information regarding historical impact of the proposals can be found within the heritage statement prepared by Anthony Walker RIBA AABC.

New rear extension

The bulk of the existing non-original rear extensions at basement and ground floor are to be demolished to enable the new construction. The small rear courtyard and wall forming the rear boundary of this facing the main building is to be retained. This is proposed to preserve the existing relationship to and views from the main building to the rear extensions at basement and ground floor level.

Accessed through the existing lift lobby, the new rear extension comprises contemporary open plan office space at ground and basement, linked by a new internal staircase. A new courtyard to the very rear of the site is formed adjacent to the party wall with Gower Mews forming a private amenity space. The courtyard is to be further enhanced with planting to provide a quality private amenity space linked to the offices.

The existing party garden walls are to be raised in sections with materials to match existing to contain the new development. The new rear courtyard walls will be rendered at basement level where the extensions have previously been removed. It is intended to repair the existing brickwork at ground floor level within the new courtyard subject to the condition of the existing walls.

Materials

Roof

The rear extension is proposed to be covered with a new flat leaded roof with flat conservation style roof lights. The traditional material and method of construction is proposed to enhance views from the main building and improve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Walls

The existing brick wall facing the small rear light well is to be retained and raised to the height of the new development. The wall will be raised in bricks to match existing and the existing concrete lintel at ground floor replaced with brick arches to match the basement. The wall will be capped with a reconstituted stone parapet coping.

Façade

The new North facing rear elevation of the new extension is designed to be contemporary and minimal in appearance. The proposed façade incorporates a painted render surround and full height glazing with glazed timber sliding doors at basement level. This elevation is not visible from the adjoining properties and is only viewed from the courtyard that it abuts.

Party Walls

The rear garden party walls will be raised in reclaimed stock brickwork to match existing where noted on the drawings. Where the existing extensions have been removed to form the new courtyard the walls will be rendered at basement level. The existing brickwork will be repaired and repointed at ground floor level if possible. This is to provide a light and bright amenity space at basement level and retain the character of the brick from ground floor upwards.

Main building

Like for like localised repairs are proposed to the listed fabric of the main building in materials to match existing where required but no wider removal of fabric is proposed.

Structural Upgrading Works

The building has been subject to structural settlement and the structural engineer has recommended upgrading works are carried out. Supporting timber studwork walls at second floor level require to be upgraded with ply linings applied both sides. The plaster in these locations has been previously removed and appears to have been replaced with sand cement render. This would be removed back to the original timber studs, whilst retaining the cornice, and replaced with plasterboard and skimcoat after the ply lining to retain the overall finish thickness.

Where the structural engineer has identified that the spine wall at first floor level requires stiffening this is proposed to be carried out from below. A section of the ground floor ceiling would be removed, carefully avoiding any decorative plasterwork, to enable the upgrading of the timber beam supporting the wall with steel plates. The section of ceiling would then be reinstated in materials to match existing. This approach has been suggested in order to allow retention of the plaster finishes to the spine wall at first floor whilst enabling the structural upgrade.

Likewise the strengthening works required to the ground floor structure would be carried out from below with any damage to ceilings made good after. Please refer to the structural method statement prepared by Mason Navarro Pledge for further details of strengthening works.

Fire Alarm Panel

A new fire alarm system is to be installed throughout. This will include a new fire alarm panel within the entrance of the main building lobby at ground floor (G.01). The fire alarm panel is to be housed within a new sympathetically designed joinery casement, with the appearance of a freestanding piece of furniture. Refer to the fire panel joinery drawing for details.

Internal Changes to the main building

Internal modifications are proposed within the closet wing at Basement, Ground, Second and Third Floors. These modifications include the removal of non-original partitions in order to restore the original relationship between the back rooms and the closet wing. New WCs and a shower room are to be provided within these areas. At Third Floor a small non-original window from an existing WC is to be removed and the opening infilled with brickwork to match adjacent. This will help to restore the original fenestration pattern and enhance the character of the building. An existing riser running the entire height of the building, adjacent to the new WCs on each floor provides a convenient route for services, which will not impact on any of the existing original room proportions.

Entrance and Access Statement

No change to the existing access from street level is proposed within this application. Full compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations is not possible, since to do so would compromise the architectural quality of the listed building.

SUMMARY

The proposal aims to improve the quality of the office space and enhance the character of No. 18 Bedford Square by restoring areas disturbed by building movement and ensuring necessary upgrade works are carried out to prevent further settlement. The development includes the demolition of the existing non-original buildings to the rear and their replacement with a two storey, contemporary extension.

The size and scale of the proposed extension is in keeping with that of the adjacent extensions, which currently occupy the Basement and Ground Floors. The proposed layout is designed to enhance the relationship of the rear extensions by retaining the existing light well and restoring its relationship with the closet wing of the main building. The traditional lead roof and retention of the existing wall facing the light well minimises the potential impact on views from the main building. The contemporary façade of the new extension cannot be viewed from adjoining properties and allows for the creation of a modern office environment without harming the character or appearance of the listed building or conservation area.

These improvements are designed to make the let more desirable to potential tenants, which will help to secure the long term viability of the property. The development has been considered in a way to minimise the impact on the historic character and period features of the existing building and adjacent garden square.