

Heritage Statement

for

Planning Application at

37 and 38 Museum Street, London, WC1A

Ref: A17809

Dated: Monday 11 August



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This document relates to the listed building and planning application under planning portal numbers PP-03504910, PP-03491925 and PP-03451048.

The subject premises, numbers 38 and 37 Museum Street, form part of an attractive French Renaissance style terrace located to the north of the street between Great Russell Street and Gilbert Place. Constructed 1855-64, the buildings comprise three storeys in Modified French Renaissance style. Notable architectural features include rusticated pilaster strips between each premise and architraved oculi enriched with swags above the first floor windows.

The terrace is notable in that the elevations, particularly the upper front elevation, but also the roofs and general massing, remain largely unaltered. The terrace is also generally in good condition and along with the surrounding terraces to the opposite and south provides a particularly good example of renaissance revival within central London. The ground floors of nos. 37 and 38, whilst not original, also contain good examples of late 19th century shop fronts.

The terrace, along with its aforementioned neighbours, also provides one of the largest and coherent examples of work by Fitch Hill an architect notable for public houses, music halls and theatres including the Museum Tavern adjacent to no.37 Museum Street. The Tavern building (and by extension the subject terrace) are also credited to Edward Lewis Paraire, who often worked with Fitch Hill throughout their partnership during 1856-70.

It is for this reason that the buildings are considered of architectural merit by English Heritage and are therefore grade II listed. The surround terraces by Fitch Hill, including the Museum Tavern, are also grade II listed showing the importance of the street as a whole.

The internal spaces of 37 and 38, whilst not particularly architecturally significant, also contain a number of original features such as cornices and joinery items which benefit the overall appearance of the premises. Of particular note are the windows to both buildings and the staircase within no 37 which are all original. Whilst the fireplaces are not believed to be original they are aesthetically pleasing and generally in keeping with the age of the building having probably been replaced in the late 19th century. Generally, the internal spaces are not in good condition and both premises require repairs, restoration and modernisation.

It is for this reason that we propose a development of the internal parts which would ultimately create three new residential dwellings each within 37 and 38. This would require removal of the dividing wall between the front and rear rooms and creation of partitioned bathroom area. This would of course cause disruption to the cornice-work; however any parts altered or disturbed would be replaced with new to match that removed. Additionally all fire places to the front rooms would be retained in situ and restored to provide a focal point for the dwelling. The windows will be retained and complimented by secondary glazing aligned with the existing frames to reduce visual impact.

At no point will the front elevations or roof be altered, in recognition of the importance of maintaining the elevations and streetscape. The rear elevations will require new openings for drainage, extraction and flues but the impact will be minimised via the use of matching rainwater goods and discrete flue caps etc.