

Heritage Statement



**58 Russell Square,
London WC1B 4HS**

Revision A - 15/11/2014

Heritage Statement - The London Mathematical Society, De Morgan House, 57-58 Russell Square, London WC1B 4HS

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1. Introduction

The proposal being put forward is for a new partition wall with door to divide a large office into an office and lobby.

The building address is 58 Russell Square, London WC1B 4HS. This building is a Grade II listed building within the Bedford Estates and is in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. It is in the Borough of Camden.

The building is one of two buildings that house the London Mathematical Society which comprises 57–58 Russell Square, London WC1B 4HS.

2. Character and Architectural and Historical Interest

58 Russell Square is an imposing 5 storey brick building situated on the western side of Russell Square. It was built in the early 19th century as a private terrace home and is one of a row of terraced houses on the Square. It is of special historical interest because of its situation in this beautiful and well maintained early 19th century terrace.

3. Principles of the Proposed development

The driving principle of the proposed development was to adapt the existing building to serve the requirements of the current inhabitants with an intervention done in such a way as to have minimal impact on the existing fabric of the building where the original configuration and fabric of the building could be reinstated with negligible lasting effects.

This approach is in keeping with English Heritage which states 'Grade II buildings are of special interest warranting every effort to preserve them' but goes on to define preservation as 'not harming' rather than keeping the building completely unchanged. English Heritage in this way recognises that some intervention will be required in listed buildings over time.

4. Minimisation of Impact on the Building and Sources Considered

The new partition wall is proposed to be inserted into a large office in such a way that the original fabric of the building is disturbed as little as possible, and the original architectural details are preserved and can be reinstated in future.

The original, ornate plaster cornice will be retained and protected from damage as will the existing chair rail. The existing landing door is to be rehung in the new partition wall so that this original door is not lost and could be rehung in its original opening at a later date.

By taking this approach, the guiding principles and obligations for works to a Listed Building as outlined by English Heritage will be adhered to. The special interest of 58 Russell Square, a Grade II listed building, arises from its contribution to the architecture and historic interest of the group of buildings of which it forms a part. In this way a minor, sympathetically executed, internal alteration can be considered to respect and maintain this special interest.

5. Methods Statement

The approach to constructing the new partition wall was to devise a construction method that would leave virtually no damage to the original fabric of the listed building. In this way the new wall could be removed at a later date allowing the original plaster and features of the room to remain intact and undamaged. Additionally, the details of the new partition wall will match those of the existing – cornice, architrave, picture rail, dado rail and skirting, so that the new partition wall will appear to be an original feature of the building. The room door is being rehung so that it remains in the space as an original feature.

The new partition wall transverses a large rectangular room. The sole plate will be fixed to the existing floor boards with Sealocrete Grip + Fix, a high strength, high grip adhesive. The carpet and underlay will be locally cut back for the fixing of the sole plate. In future, the adhesive can be removed to restore the floor and in this way mitigate damage to the original building fabric.

In a similar way, a header plate will be securely stuck to the ceiling plaster using adhesive. A secondary header plate will then be screwed to the primary header, and the studs forming the partition will then be mechanically fixed to this secondary header plate. In this way the original plaster of the ceiling will remain intact.

At the walls on either side of the new partition wall, 25mm plywood will be fixed to the plaster using adhesive. These plywood plates will start above the skirting and stop beneath the dado rail, start above the dado rail and stop beneath the picture rail, and start above the picture rail and stop short of the cornice. Into these wall plates the new timber studs adjacent to the original walls will then be fixed in order to preserve the integrity of the original plaster walls, using spacers where these original timber and plaster features project further into the room than the wall plates.

A new door opening will be formed in this new partition wall which matches the original room door opening in size. The original door, along with its door furniture, will be rehung in this new opening. In this way the room door, an original feature of this building, will be preserved.

The original cornice, picture rail, dado rail, and skirting will be protected and remain undamaged. Each of these elements will run through and past the new partition wall uninterrupted. They will be protected, with the new plasterboard scribed around these elements.

A new plaster cornice will be run that exactly matches the existing so that the new partition wall will appear to be an original feature of the building.

The new timber picture rail, dado rail and skirting will match exactly the existing profiles of these elements so that the new wall appears as original, but can be removed in future with these original details, along with the original cornice, revealed undamaged.

The decoration of the new partition wall will be to a high standard and will follow Bedford Estate guidelines.