

Contents

1	Introduction	3
	Purpose	3
	Organisation.....	3
	Author	3
2	The site and its context	4
3	The heritage significance of the site and its context.....	11
	The heritage context of 34-35 Fitzroy Square.....	11
	The heritage significance of the site and its context.....	11
	The relevant heritage assets	11
	Assessing heritage significance	12
	‘Historic interest’, ‘Historical value’ and ‘Evidential value’	12
	‘Architectural interest’, ‘artistic interest’ or ‘aesthetic value’	13
	Summary	14
4	The policy context	15
	Legislation	15
	The National Planning Policy Framework	15
	Camden’s Local Development Framework	18
5	The proposed scheme and its effect	22
6	Compliance with policy and guidance.....	25
	The level of ‘harm’ caused by the proposed scheme.....	25
	The National Planning Policy Framework	25
	Camden’s Local Development Framework	26
8	Summary and conclusions	27
	Appendix A: List Description	28
	Appendix B: Main Archives and Libraries consulted	29

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Appraisal is submitted in support of an application for Listed Building Consent for the installation of gates to the front of 34-35 Fitzroy Square, London, W1T 6EY.

Purpose

- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to assess the proposed alterations to the listed buildings at 34-35 Fitzroy Square against national and local policies and guidance relating to the historic built environment.
- 1.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the architects' drawings.

Organisation

- 1.4 This introduction is followed by a description of the history of 34-35 Fitzroy Square. Section 3 analyses the heritage significance of the listed buildings and its context. Section 4 sets out the national and local policy and guidance relating to the historic built environment that is relevant to this matter. The effect of the proposal on the significance of the heritage assets is provided in Section 5. The Appendix contains the list description.

Author

- 1.5 The author of this report is Nick Collins BSc (Hons) MSc MRICS IHBC. He has been a Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings & Areas in the London Region of English Heritage. Most recently he was a Director of Conservation at Alan Baxter & Associates. Nick has extensive experience in dealing with proposals that affect the historic environment and a background in understanding historic buildings and places.

2 The site and its context

- 2.1 The following section provides a description of the existing building and its context. It also sets out the relevant heritage designations that apply to the site and its context, including any nearby listed buildings. This section provides details of the site's history and the significance of the site and its context.

Site Location and description

- 2.2 34-35 Fitzroy Square are located on southern side of Fitzroy Square, which links to Grafton Way running east west that, in turn, links to Tottenham Court Road to the east and Cleveland Row to the west.
- 2.3 The buildings comprise a mid-terrace of two now-joined townhouses of four storeys plus basement and attic space.
- 2.4 The houses form part of a palace-fronted terrace built in 1794 by the Adam Brothers which stretches the entire length of the southern side of Fitzroy Square. The principal elevation of each town house is three bays wide to the Square. Faced in Portland stone, the ground floor is rusticated, with a cast iron balcony running the entire width of the properties at first floor.
- 2.5 At ground floor, impost bands link round arched windows with shallow recessed sash windows. The upper floor windows are square headed openings with recessed sash windows. The doorways have pilaster-jambs carrying cornice heads with ornate fanlight patterned fanlights above.
- 2.6 The main cornice with an enriched frieze is at third floor level and stretches the length of the whole terrace.
- 2.7 All of the properties are fronted by iron railings shielding passers by from the basement stair.

Designations

- 2.8 The term 'designations' relates to the level of statutory protection that applies to a site or building. A designated heritage asset can be a listed building or a conservation area.

- 2.9 The list description is intended to provide sufficient detail for identification purposes only. It does not for example provide the history of the building or identify any particular features as having a greater or lesser significance.
- 2.10 34-35 Fitzroy Square was listed Grade I in June 1954. The list description is attached in Appendix A.
- 2.11 It is also located within the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area. Fitzroy Square was originally part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, designated in September 1968. In 1980 the streets surrounding Fitzroy Square were designated as a conservation area and included within the Bloomsbury CA. Subsequently it was proposed that owing to its physical separation from the main part of Bloomsbury and its distinct character and evolution it should be separately designated. This new Fitzroy Square conservation area was adopted in March 2010.
- 2.12 The character of the conservation area is typified by distinctive and consistent 18th and early 19th century speculative development. The buildings vary in size and status, with the grandest overlooking the central formal, landscaped squares and the humblest located within the rear mews areas.

Historic Development of the Site

Fitzrovia & Fitzroy Square

- 2.13 Before 1760 this area of London was part of the manor of Tottenham, whose manor house, Tottenham Court was located at the modern day junction between Euston Road and Tottenham Court Road. Events such as the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London led to a movement of people out of the City of London and encouraged development of surrounding areas. The 'New Road' (Euston Road today) was built in 1756 to enable livestock to be moved to Smithfield without passing through the crowded areas of Oxford and Holborn. Development such as Fitzroy Square began to spring up to its south.

- 2.14 In 1768 Charles Fitzroy (later Lord Southampton), brother of the then prime minister, sought to maximise the value of his estate through speculative development with the gaining of an Act of Parliament which enabled the development of the Square¹.
- 2.15 Fitzrovia typified the late eighteenth century interest in neoclassical urban planning. Bath provided an English precedent for the use of the geometric forms of squares, circuses and crescents to impose order on the city.
- 2.16 Whilst a number of grand schemes around London were abandoned before being built, most of the plans that came to fruition were less ambitious, relying on the tested earlier eighteenth century ingredients of a square surrounded by service streets.

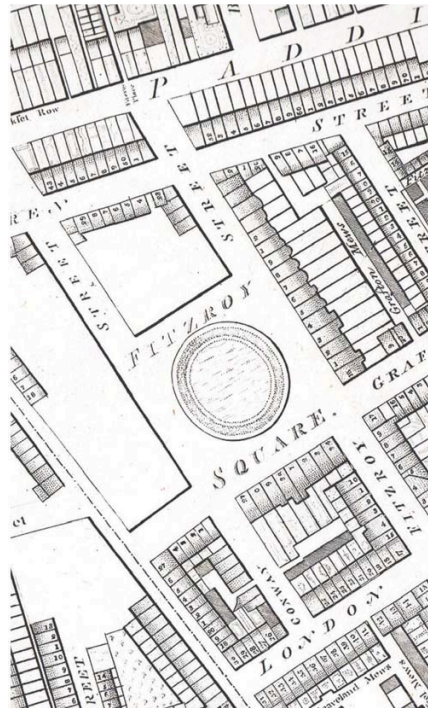


Figure 1: Fitzroy Square in 1799

¹ LB Camden, Fitzroy Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2010)

- 2.17 Conceived as a planned estate on the lands of the Southampton Estate, Fitzroy Square was laid out in 1789 and two sides – south and east – built behind decorative elevations by Robert Adam. The square had been built in anticipation of the growth of the town northwards from Oxford Street although the other two sides of the square were not completed until about 1828². This delay was, in part, due to the Napoleonic wars which caused a rise in the cost of building materials and a scarcity of credit.
- 2.18 The development included Fitzroy Market (now Whitfield Place) and surrounding streets.
- 2.19 The Fitzroy Square scheme has sometimes been compared with that in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh. The London blocks are longer and an attic storey has been added³.



Figure 2: Fitzroy Square façade by R. Chantrell

- 2.20 By the end of the 1830s the development was complete and was resided in by the elite and aristocracy of the time. However, by the end of the nineteenth century Fitzroy's desirability had declined and there was an increase in non-residential uses including hotels.
- 2.21 The availability of cheaper housing, however, attracted artists and writers who added a Bohemian element to the area – including George Bernard Shaw and Virginia Woolf at No.29 Fitzroy Square.

² Summerson, J. *Georgian London*, (1945) pp189-191

³ Beard, G, *The Work of Robert Adam* (1978), p.53

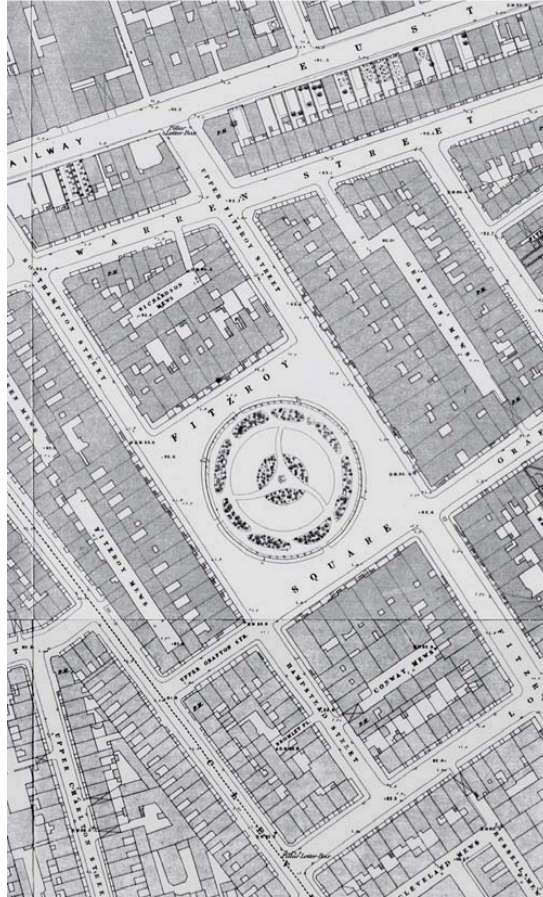


Figure 3: Fitzroy Square in 1870

- 2.22 After the First World War many of the buildings turned to commercial, office and institutional use.
- 2.23 Wartime bomb damage south of Fitzroy Square had most impact on terraces on either side of Fitzroy Street, south of Fitzroy Square. The south side of Fitzroy Square was reconstructed as a replica in terms of its street façade, but modern offices were constructed behind.
- 2.24 The trend for change of use continued after the War. Residential and hotel uses were replaced with offices for professionals, charities, educational establishments and diplomats.

34-35 Fitzroy Square

- 2.25 34-35 Fitzroy Square form part of the southern palace fronted terrace designed by the Adam Brothers as part of their overall masterplan for the Square and planned estate. Built in 1794, the houses' history reflects that of many in the area. By 1911, already joined, Nos 34-35 was known as Swiss House and was in use as a home for foreign governesses and maids.



Figure 4: 34-35 Fitzroy Square, known as Swiss House, in 1911 © Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre

- 2.26 At least from the 1930s the terrace of eight houses was occupied by the London Foot Hospital and School of Podiatry, which was founded in Fitzroy Square in 1913.
- 2.27 The central three houses of the south terrace were entirely destroyed by German bombing in 1942. The adjoining properties would have suffered some damage from the blast and vibrations.

- 2.28 At the end of 2004 there was a vacancy before 34-35 Fitzroy Square became the Bell Language School. Permission was granted in 2006 for conversion from educational back to residential use as they didn't live here anymore.
- 2.29 The house has more recently been sympathetically re-converted to a single family dwelling, restoring it back to its original use, for the very first time.

3 The heritage significance of the site and its context

- 3.1 This section of the report describes the heritage significance of 34-35 Fitzroy Square and its surroundings.

The heritage context of 34-35 Fitzroy Square

- 3.2 34-35 Fitzroy Square were listed Grade I in June 1954; the list description is contained in Appendix A. At that time, the properties were part of the London Foot Hospital and the list description specifically references the 'attached railings'.
- 3.3 The listed building is located in the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area. The London Borough of Camden has produced a Conservation Area Appraisal for the Area, adopted in 2010.
- 3.4 The remainder of the terrace is also listed Grade I. Nos. 20-32 Fitzroy Square and attached railings (west terrace) are listed Grade II*. Nos. 11, 12 & 15-19 and attached railings (north terrace) are listed Grade II*; Nos. 9 & 10 and attached railings are listed Grade II* and Nos. 1, 1A and 2-8, attached railings and lamp holders are listed Grade I (east side). The Indian Young Men's Christian Association on the corner of Fitzroy Square, Grafton Way and Fitzroy Street is listed Grade II.

The heritage significance of the site and its context

The relevant heritage assets

- 3.5 In terms of the assessment of the proposals for 34-35 Fitzroy Square the heritage assets within Camden most relevant to considering the effect of the scheme are the listed building itself (comprising all that was the London Foot Hospital in 1954), the nearby listed buildings, and the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area.
- 3.6 The effect of the proposed scheme on these assets will be first and foremost on the special architectural and historic interest of 34-35 Fitzroy Square as listed buildings in themselves, and then secondly on the character and

appearance of the conservation area and the setting of other listed buildings.

Assessing heritage significance

- 3.7 34-35 Fitzroy Square, the listed buildings in their vicinity and the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area are ‘designated heritage assets’, as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF). Other buildings and structures that make a positive contribution to the conservation area - such as unlisted buildings of merit - would be considered as ‘non-designated heritage assets’.
- 3.8 ‘Significance’ is defined in the NPPF as ‘the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic’. The English Heritage ‘Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide’ puts it slightly differently – as ‘the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest’.
- 3.9 ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’ (English Heritage, April 2008) describes a number of ‘heritage values’ that may be present in a ‘significant place’. These are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value.
- ‘Historic interest’, ‘Historical value’ and ‘Evidential value’
- 3.10 34-35 Fitzroy Square, the listed and unlisted buildings nearby, and their relationship to one another and the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area collectively illustrate the development of this part of London. They tell us about the evolution of Fitzrovia from its origins as the location of homes for the aristocracy, its more ‘bohemian’ period as the home to artists and writers through to its commercial and institutional use and finally reverting in part back to its original residential occupation. Fitzrovia has, throughout its history, exemplified the life of aristocratic London in its various land uses, buildings and associations. The area and its buildings are a record of social and economic change and lifestyles in various periods, and illustrate the effect these things had on the historic building stock and urban grain. The wider

Fitzrovia/Bloomsbury area reflects the westward expansion of London in the 18th century, the suburbanisation of previously open land by means of estate development to the west of the late 17th century development around Covent Garden.

- 3.11 The railings outside 34-35 Fitzroy Square form part of the historical significance of the building. Most iron railings that did not form barriers for safety were removed during the Second World War. This is also true of the railings around Fitzroy Square Gardens. Whilst it is not known whether these are the original railings, they would have survived the wholesale removal of iron railings due to their requirement to protect the basement open area.
- 3.12 In terms of English Heritage's 'Conservation Principles' 34-35 Fitzroy Square, other listed buildings and the conservation area provide us with 'evidence about past human activity' and, by means of their fabric, design and appearance, communicate information about its past. Subsequent alteration, demolition and redevelopment around the buildings has had little impact on the ability of the older townscape and intact historic buildings to do this; the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area and its listed buildings contain considerable historic character and appearance to convey the area's historical ethos.
- 'Architectural interest', 'artistic interest' or 'aesthetic value'
- 3.13 It is clear that the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area and 34-35 Fitzroy Square have 'architectural' and 'artistic interest' (NPPF) or 'aesthetic value' ('Conservation Principles'). In respect of design, 'Conservation Principles' says that 'design value... embraces composition (form, proportions, massing, silhouette, views and vistas, circulation) and usually materials or planting, decoration or detailing, and craftsmanship'.
- 3.14 The part of the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area in the vicinity of Nos. 34-35 possesses these heritage values in great quantity. The contributing elements of the aesthetic significance of the area as a piece of historic townscape are the nature of older (listed and unlisted) structures and their contribution to the historic streetscape, and that

streetscape itself. In particular the two original Adam fronted terraces within Fitzroy Square.

- 3.15 The special architectural and historic interest of 34-35 Fitzroy Square as a listed building lies both in its front elevation and the plan form and remaining detailing of the interior. The Adam design is an imposing range of buildings four storeys over basement. The buildings were executed largely as originally drawn and were evidently intended from the first to give a special architectural treatment to the square itself, irrespective of the planning of the houses behind. The railings form part of this architectural significance – carefully designed with spearhead stanchions and a top band of open lozenge ornament, the design is typical for this style and status of house.
- 3.16 Listed buildings adjacent to 34-35 Fitzroy Square – which form part of the same listed entity as Nos. 34-35 – suffered considerable bomb damage and rebuilding during and after the Second World War, however they have, by definition, special architectural and historic interest and in respect of proposals for 34-35 Fitzroy Square that might affect their setting, that special interest has to do with their external architectural design, their scale and massing and their boundary treatment to Fitzroy Square. Their internal special interest would clearly not be affected by this proposal.

Summary

- 3.17 34-35 Fitzroy Square and their attached railings clearly have historical and evidential value, and this value is expressed in the narrative of the building's history and how it has changed. The recent restoration and re-occupation of the property for residential use is a positive enhancement of the historical significance of the asset – returning it to its historical use.
- 3.18 In terms of architectural or aesthetic value, Nos 34-35 retain considerable architectural integrity as well as much original plan form and some internal details. The attached railings in front of the building form part of this value.

4 The policy context

- 4.1 This section of the report briefly sets out the range of national and local policy and guidance relevant to the consideration of change in the historic built environment.

Legislation

- 4.2 The legislation governing listed buildings and conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66(1) of the Act requires decision makers to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses' when determining applications which affect a listed building or its setting. Section 72(1) of the Act requires decision makers with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area to pay 'special attention... to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.3 In March 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 4.4 The NPPF says at Paragraph 128 that:
- In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant 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.
- 4.5 A description and analysis of the heritage significance of 34-35 Fitzroy Square and its context is provided earlier in this report.
- 4.6 The NPPF also requires local planning authorities to 'identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence

and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal'.

4.7 At Paragraph 131, the NPPF says that:

In determining planning applications, local planning 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.

4.8 Paragraph 132 advises local planning authorities 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'.

4.9 The NPPF says at Paragraph 133 'Good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning.' Paragraph 133 says:

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

- no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

- 4.10 Paragraph 134 says that ‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
- 4.11 Further advice within Section 12 of the NPPF urges local planning authorities to take into account the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset when determining the application. It says that ‘In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.
- 4.12 Paragraph 137 of the NPPF advises local planning authorities to ‘look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets 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’.
- 4.13 Paragraph 138 says that:
- Not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative

significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

Camden Council's Local Development Framework

4.14 Camden Council adopted its Core Strategy and Development Policies on 8 November 2010. Core Strategy Policy CS14 deals with 'Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage' and says:

'The Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

- a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;
- b) preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens;
- c) promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;
- d) seeing the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible;
- e) protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites inside and outside the borough and protecting important local views.'

4.15 The commentary to the policy says:

'Our overall strategy is to sustainably manage growth in Camden so it meets our needs for homes, jobs and services in a way that conserves and enhances the features that make the borough such an attractive place to live, work and visit. Policy CS14 plays a key part in achieving this by setting out our approach to conserving and, where possible, enhancing our heritage and valued places, and to ensuring that development is of the highest standard and reflects, and where possible improves, its local area'

4.16 It goes on to say

'Development schemes should improve the quality of buildings, landscaping and the street environment and,

through this, improve the experience of the borough for residents and visitors’

4.17 Regarding Camden’s heritage, the Core Strategy refers to Policy DP25 in Camden Development Policies as providing more detailed guidance on the Council’s approach to protecting and enriching the range of features that make up the built heritage of the borough.

4.18 Policy DP25 is as follows:

Conservation Areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden’s conservation areas, the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;
- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;
- c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and
- e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden’s architectural heritage.

Listed buildings

To preserve or enhance the borough’s listed buildings, the Council will:

- e) prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- f) only grant 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; and

g) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

Other heritage assets

The Council will seek to protect other heritage assets including Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and London Squares.

4.19 The Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Guidelines. This makes specific reference as follows:

Alterations and extensions have had a detrimental impact cumulatively and individually on the character and appearance of the area. Examples within the area include:

- Inappropriate external painting, cleaning and pointing of brickwork.
- The replacement of historic fabric with inappropriate materials or details such as inappropriately detailed or proportioned doors, windows, downpipes or railings.
- Inappropriate roof level extensions- particularly where these interrupt the consistency of a uniform terrace or the prevailing scale and character of a block, are overly prominent in the street, including the addition of prominent roof level ventilation plant.
- Satellite dishes and aerials
- Inappropriate replacement shopfront elements, that are unsympathetic to the proportions and scale of the building or street into which they have been added such as overly large fascias, plastic canopies, replacement of historic shopfronts, box roller shutters fixed to the exterior of the building

- Loss of original details such as windows, doors, traditional shopfront elements, frontage railings, chimneys and chimney stacks and elements of the streetscape.
- Inappropriate, excessive and illuminated signage.

5 The proposed scheme and its effect

- 5.1 This section of the report briefly describes the proposed schemes and their effect on the heritage significance described earlier. This section should be read in conjunction with the architect's drawings.

The proposed scheme

- 5.2 It is proposed to install gates at the front of 34-35 Fitzroy Square.
- 5.3 This is due to the personal circumstances of the current occupier who has been harassed and disturbed by members of the public 'camped out' on the steps of the property. This is largely due to his 'celebrity' status and that of his often-visiting friends.
- 5.4 The gates have been drawn up using exact historic details from the existing railings; designed to be fixed open when not in use and the house not occupied, and ultimately reversible so as to cause little harm to the special interest of the building.
- 5.5 The gates replicate the spearhead stanchions and open lozenge ornament in order to blend more seamlessly into the surrounding streetscape.
- 5.6 When pinned open, the gates are designed to be barely visible within the Square, and when closed, not to draw the eye - due to their similarity to the adjacent railings (which also include similar usually-closed gates that lead down to the basements of each property).
- 5.7 The railings along the front of the whole terrace are simple in their design, and the architectural significance of the whole building remains in the set piece architectural design of the Adam Brothers. When open the intention is that they will barely register.
- 5.8 Even when closed, the gates' are designed to appear to run seamlessly along the front of the terrace.
- 5.9 Inspiration has been taken from other sensitive locations where railings across the front entrance have been