

164-2014-12-05

84 CLEVELAND STREET LONDON W1T 6NG

EXPRESSION OF OPINION

1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1.1 I have been asked to give opinion on the impact of replacement of the pair of double doors at the right of the Cleveland Street elevation of this building, on the heritage significance of this building and the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area.
- 1.2 My credentials to give such opinion are appended.

2 SUMMARY OPINION

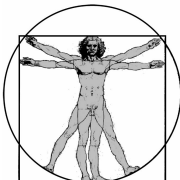
- 2.1 In my opinion the proposal would not constitute harm to designated or undesignated heritage assets and refusal of planning permission for such a change would be for the Local Planning Authority to have applied policy over-protectively and contrary to guidance by DCLG, DCMS and English Heritage in paragraphs 55, 56 and 57 of the Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide 2010.
- 2.2 In brief these paragraphs advise 55 Understanding the *nature of the significance* is important... 56 Understanding the *extent of the fabric* that holds that interest is also important... 57 Understanding the *level of importance* of that interest is important as it provides the essential guide to how protectively the policies should be applied. This is fundamental to decision-making where there is unavoidable conflict with other planning objectives.
- 2.3 My reasons for my opinion are set out below.

3 POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework includes that plan-making and decision-taking on proposals which will affect heritage assets, should only be made following an evidence-based assessment of the factors that confer significance upon such assets.

4 EVIDENCE-BASE

- 4.1 84 Cleveland Street is a former public house, *The Bromley Arms*, in the corner of Cleveland Street and Grafton Way. The pub ceased trading some years ago and change to residential use has been given planning permission, which is in the course of enactment.
- 4.2 The building is part of the *Fitzroy Square Conservation Area* and was assessed in the London Borough of Camden's *Fitzroy Square built heritage audit plan 2008* as being a Positive Contributor to the character and appearance of the conservation area.



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- 4.3 The building would therefore be regarded as an undesignated heritage asset within a designated heritage asset (the conservation area).
- 4.4 However Volume 2 of *The Survey of London* records:
Farther north beyond Maple Street a row of early 19th-century houses still stands (Nos. 66 to 82). The first three are of three storeys, as is No. 82, the remainder having an additional floor. All except No. 76 have shops, those to Nos. 66 and 68 being old. No. 76, which is fronted with stucco on the ground floor, has a door with a semi-circular head and fanlight. All have two windows to each floor except No. 82, which has three windows and a modern cement front. The Bromley Arms at the south corner of Grafton Way is a late building of no interest. [*Cleveland Street*, *Survey of London: volume 21: The parish of St Pancras part 3: Tottenham Court Road & neighbourhood* (1949), p. 40]
- 4.5 The authors of *The Survey* do not define in which way the building was late, since the large scale 1869 edition Ordnance Survey shows a pub with the present footprint on the corner of Cleveland Street and Grafton Street. The Pub History Society on-line archive notes *Lindsey Woolnough* as licenced victualler in the 1856 *Post Office Directory*. Old Bailey Proceedings of 6 January 1868 record a nineteen year old called Susan Phillips as sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment for "Unlawfully uttering counterfeit coin' ("the case of the bad shilling") in The Bromley Arms. The building would therefore appear to be contemporary with its neighbours.
- 4.6 The building has however been substantially altered. Such alteration included what the authors of *The Survey* dismissively refer to as a *modern cement front*. Sixty six years after that assessment we might now look on the building with more interest.
- 4.7 The *modern cement front* is in fact a well proportioned glazed ceramic composition around the corner of the ground floor storey. It is in what was the early 20thc house style of Charringtons, a major London brewer founded in 1700, Bass Charrington Ltd. from 1967. In 1997 the brewer sold off its public houses.
- 4.8 Below the cream glazed frieze are twelve equally spaced deep red and green glazed tile pilasters with tiled stall risers and acid etched windows between. The corner bay is curved. There was a doorway at the end of the Grafton Way frontage (now closed), one at the end of the Cleveland Street frontage and one at the centre of that front.
- 4.9 Mark Girouard has described the evolution of the London pub in the Victorian era and later [*Victorian Pubs*: Girouard M: 1975: 1984 edn.: Yale University Press] with regard to the typical number of bars and the location of their entrances. Public Bar customers used a corner entrance and Saloon and Private Bar customers used other doors at a distance from the Public Bar door. The present door locations are not likely to be where they were in the Victorian era but served first the Saloon and Public bars and the private quarters and then a single bar. The doors in question continued to serve the private quarters.
- 4.10 The doors themselves are timber, a pair with arched half-glazed panels. Unlike the other pair in the elevation, their glass is not etched.

5 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.1 Pubs like churches have a special affection in the British way of life and even when they become redundant in their initial function they retain landmark qualities. *The Survey of London's* assessment that the building is of no interest is not concurred. The *Fitzroy Square built heritage audit plan* assessment that the building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area is concurred.
- 5.2 Although altered, the upper facades have a family resemblance to the residential terraces on each side. The greater height of the building than its neighbours, completes each terrace and turns the corner. The articulation of the corner at street level, the change of materials and graphic indication of the building's former use makes a substantial contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
- 5.3 However, the degree that the pair of doors add to that substantial contribution must be examined. As noted, the doors were for access to the private parts, not the bar, and do not have the etched glass that the former bar doors do. The doors do not indicate a particular function in the liturgy for pub goers in the way, say, that the north porch door does in liturgical organisation for church parishioners.
- 5.4 The *cement front* has now acquired historic significance denied it in the 1949 assessment. This would be coupled with architectural interest not recognised at that time. The primary significance of the *cement front* is the architectural discipline of its modulation around the corner and glazed ceramic tiles and etched glass. The door joinery and arch topped glazing has charm but no greater significance.

6 IMPACT

- 6.1 Policy from the NPPF must be considered in assessment of the impact of the proposal. Paragraph 179 states *The fabric will always be an important part of the asset's [i.e. the conservation area's] significance. Retention of as much historic fabric as possible is therefore a fundamental part of any good alteration or conversion, together with the use of appropriate materials and methods of repair. It is not appropriate to sacrifice old work simply to accommodate the new.*
- 6.2 The proposal is not simply a sacrifice of old work to accommodate new but a response to the obligation of the building owner to make reasonable alterations to give access to people with disabilities. This is a requirement of the Equality Act 2010 (which incorporates the Disability Discrimination Act 1995). The test of compliance is reasonableness and therefore the reasonableness, or otherwise, of refusal must be tested.
- 6.3 Although paragraph 132 of the NPPF refers to listed buildings, registered gardens and parks, and World Heritage Sites, its guidance may be applied to the lesser degree of designation that applies to conservation areas. It says that substantial harm or loss should be exceptional. I would consider the loss of the pair of doors not to be substantial harm. However if that were contested, there is appropriate guidance in the following paragraphs.

- 6.4 Paragraph 133 of NPPF is that a proposal that would cause substantial harm should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. The public benefit of access for people with disabilities would be such a case.
- 6.5 Paragraph 134 of NPPF is that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset [i.e. the conservation area], this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal... In my opinion that should be applied in this case.
- 6.6 In my opinion the small contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area made by the pair of arched topped glazed panelled doors could be replicated in the proposal of a wider leaf with fixed side panel without harm to the significance, character and appearance of relevant designated and non-designated heritage assets.



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In 40 years of practice Stephen Gray's career has ranged across both public and private sectors and has gone beyond his first discipline of Architecture, to include and often combine, the disciplines of Project Management and Historic Building Conservation, as a practitioner, consultant and lecturer. His Master of Science degree is in Historic Building Conservation and he is a full Member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation.

With the *Department of the Environment PSA*, he carried out projects for the *Directorate of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings* (the precursor to *English Heritage*), as well being architect for many buildings for the *RAF*. Subsequently he was appointed as multi-disciplinary group leader in the *PSA Student Training Office*. On promotion to Principal Architect he was project manager for *United States Air Force* projects in the UK.

With the APP Partnership he was design team leader for the *Cornmill Shopping Centre*, the insertion of a major new retail development into the Central Darlington Conservation Area, behind 65 retained historic buildings.

For 20 years with Belgravia based *Weldon Walshe*, to whom he remains a consultant, he was project director for many residential and commercial projects, mainly in Central London's Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. During this time he established his reputation as a heritage consultant to other practices and planning consultants as well as to his own practice. On retirement he established his consultancy practice.

Appointed as a preferred trainer by the *Grosvenor Estate*, to train the Estate's staff in heritage issues, he has also been a consultant trainer to professional staff of *The National Trust* Building Department. He was a visiting lecturer to the *School of Conservation Science* at *Bournemouth University*, and external tutor for post-graduate architecture students at *Oxford Brookes University* and practice-based mentor for undergraduate students of *Brighton University School of Architecture*.

He is a member of *The Pub History Society* and for four years until last year he served as the Institute of Historic Building Conservation's appointed Trustee to the *Covent Garden Area Trust* and on retirement was made a life member of the Trust.

He has undertaken *pro bono* work for local planning authorities and community associations, including drafting the *Hurstpierpoint Village Design Statement*, the first such document to be accepted as a Supplementary Planning Document by Mid Sussex District Council. In *James and Decimus Burton's* Regency town, St Leonard's-on-Sea, on the South coast, he assisted the Save the Archery Ground (STAG) campaign and Hastings Borough Council in giving evidence to successfully defend an appeal inquiry.

Stephen Gray's experience of the historic environment has included work to a medieval castle and royal residences. It ranges from Medieval buildings to those of the 20th Century Modern Movement, including many listed at Grades 1 and 2*. These have included the Whitbread stables, Waterloo Fire Station and the Royal Artillery HQ Mess at Larkhill mentioned in the text, and buildings and interiors by artists, designers and architects such as: *Colin Campbell, Isaac Ware, James and Robert Adam, Angelika Kaufmann, James Wyatt, and Sir Jeffry Wyattville, John Nash, Sir John Soane, Thomas Cubitt, James and Decimus Burton, George Basevi, Owen Jones, Thomas Cundy III, Philip Webb, CFA Voysey, Norman Shaw, Sir Edwin Lutyens, Sir Aston Webb, H P Berlage, Bart Van Der Leck and Oliver Hill.*

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