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1508_17 John Street.

Heritage Statement for
alterations to the ground floor
and lower ground floor, and
installation of a roof light, at
17 John Street, London WC1N
2DE.

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Location

No. 17 John Street is located in the SE section of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area (sub area 10), in the borough of Camden, London. The terrace - of which 17 John Street is part of - is situated on a tree lined street consisting predominantly of late Georgian houses.

House

17 John Street is a 5-storey Grade II listed town house. It is one of 11 terraced houses built between 1799 and 1824 on the east side of John Street. The terrace consists primarily of houses with a rusticated stucco to ground and lower ground floor, and multi-coloured stock brick with yellow stock brick patching to the upper storeys (street elevation). The house has a lower ground floor with a light well to the front and an 'M' shaped double pitched roof. At the rear there is glazed light over the lower ground floor below. Many of the terraces on this side of John Street have undergone alterations to the rear elevation and no longer appear in their original form, however no. 17 John Street remains largely intact to the rear from ground floor upwards.

Condition

No. 17 John Street is in a good state of repair.

Listing Description

(East side) Nos.10-20 (Consecutive) and attached railings - John Street - Grade II

EH list entry: (798-1) 1379156

Date of Listing: 24/10/1951

GV II

Listing NGR: TQ3083982094

Details: "No.17: similar doorway to No.12 with patterned radial fanlight. INTERIOR: noted to retain stairs with square balusters. Marble fireplace, with contemporary iron centre, ground floor rear room. Marble fireplace with sculptured leafwork, 1st floor front room. Contemporary china bell pulls and door plates."

Left: Street elevation of no. 17 John Street.

2) Existing Building



Exterior

The front elevation to 17 John Street is of rusticated stucco to ground and lower ground floor, and multi-coloured stock brick with yellow stock brick patching to the upper storeys (street elevation).

17 John Street has an ‘M’ shaped double pitched roof with an existing Velux roof light above the staircase on the second floor (to the rear facing side of the front roof pitch, facing in toward the valley gutter).

Ground Floor

The entrance to 17 John Street has a “patterned radial fanlight” which is mentioned specifically in the listing for the property. There is an existing (non-original) stone floor to the entrance hall. And a non-original timber floor to the front and rear ground floor rooms.

The ground floor of 17 John Street is characterised by the original skirting boards, architraves and cornices to the front and rear rooms. In each of these rooms there is a grey marble fireplace. The “marble fireplace, with contemporary iron centre” in the rear ground floor room is noted in the listing for the property.

The front room is lit by a pair of tall sash windows with a 6 over 6 pattern. The sliding sashes appear to be original - with panelled shutters in recessed shutter boxes which are splayed from the openings to allow more light into the room. The rear room is lit by a single wider window with a 8 over 8 pattern. Between the two rooms there are panelled timber folding room dividers. The original doorway into the rear room from the hallway has been blocked off, however the original door, frame and architrave still remains in this location and is fixed shut (from the hall side) in front of a infill panel.

In recent years, full height mirrored joinery has been installed on either side of the chimney breast in both rooms, which detracts from the character of these spaces. At ground floor level there is also a small WC which has recent mirrored panels to the walls.

Top Left: View from entrance hall looking towards front door and radial fanlight.

Bottom Left: Grey marble fireplace to rear ground floor room.



2) Existing Building



Above: Original door to front room at Ground Floor.



Top Right: Cornice to front room at Ground Floor.

Bottom Right: Painted skirting and non-original timber floor to front room at Ground Floor.

Note: skirting boards have later kick board planted on to conceal border of recent timber floor.



2) Existing Building



Above: Panelled shutters to sash windows.

Top Right: Six over six pattern sash windows to front room at Ground Floor (overlooking street).

Bottom Right: Wider sash window in eight over eight pattern to rear room at Ground Floor.



2) Existing Building



Above: Mirrored WC.



Top Right: Mirrored joinery units to either side of chimney breast in front room. Grey marble fireplace.

Bottom Right: Mirrored joinery units to either side of chimney breast in rear room. Grey marble fireplace.



Exterior

Installation of a new (Velux) roof light to the rear facing side of the front roof pitch, (facing in toward the valley gutter), to allow access to roof for maintenance purposes.

Interior

All historic fabric to be retained.

Strip-out non-original kitchen to lower ground floor level, terminate services and make good surfaces.

Re-locate kitchen to ground floor front room, with associated services. Retain ground floor rear room as a reception room, now to be utilised as a dining room. New fitted joinery to be lower than ceiling level to protect cornice, and retain character of room.

Replace non-original timber floor to front and rear ground floor rooms with new timber floor.

Re-instate original doorway into rear ground floor room, by removing later infill stud-work. Refurbish and re-use original door and original architrave (to entrance hall side). Re-instate architrave around opening into rear room to match original.

Remove existing sanitary-ware, fittings and mirrors from ground floor WC and replace with new sanitary-ware and fittings.

Impact

The proposed renovations and alterations to no.17 John Street will have a positive impact upon the architectural quality and integrity of the house, with all interventions being designed to compliment the original features of the house and in doing so improving it's value as an historic asset.

As stated in section 3, new fitted joinery at first floor level is to be lower than ceiling level to retain character of room. All fitted joinery is to be scribed around original skirting boards.

Services for the new kitchen (electricity, h+c water, waste and extract duct) will connect from existing runs at lower ground floor level, and rise to the ground floor between joists to protect the existing building fabric. New extract ductwork will be run within the proposed joinery on the kitchen wall and connect to the existing extract duct run within the lower ground floor ceiling void and vent through the existing extract within the front light-well, therefore not altering the external appearance of the building.

Replacement sanitary-ware in the ground floor WC will be positioned in the same location as the existing sanitary-ware with service runs remaining the same, in order to mitigate any impact on the original building fabric.

The light-touch alterations proposed will not detract from any key features, nor will they result in the removal of any historic fabric, with the exception of the installation of the skylight to the main roof which however, will be located carefully to the rear facing side of the front roof pitch (facing in toward the valley gutter), to allow access to the roof for maintenance purposes.

Justification

Installation of an opening roof light will allow for maintenance access to the existing roof. The roof-light will not be visible from neighbouring houses or from the street (sitting on the first rear facing section of the M shaped roof). The roof light will be carefully installed to ensure removal of historic fabric is kept to a minimum. The style of the roof light will match the existing roof light which sits over the staircase.

The relocation of the kitchen from its current location in the poorly lit lower ground floor to the front room of the ground floor will create a lighter more spacious kitchen, which is more suitable to modern family life.

The careful re-instatement of the original door and opening from the entrance hallway into the rear ground floor room, will serve to enhance the circulation at ground floor level and positively contribute to the restoration of the historic character of the building.

The proposed alterations have been designed with minimal intervention to the historic fabric; due consideration has been given to the impact upon the setting of the listed building; and, the proposed materials, finishes, and alterations are all appropriate and should contribute positively to the existing building.

The sensitive restoration of the ground floor and associated works to the lower ground floor will serve to preserve the historic fabric and enhance the quality of the building.