



Friends House, Euston Road
8th January 2015

**Design and Access Statement
for Works to the First Floor**

Background

The works are proposed to Friends House, the central offices of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain, which was completed in 1927 and includes offices, meeting halls, a library, café, restaurant, bookshop and worship space along with lettable offices / conference & training rooms. The building is located between Euston Road to the north and Endsleigh Gardens to the south.



image 1_Friends House from Euston Road

Friends House was Grade II listed in May 1996 (LBS no. 477240), however the interiors of the office/meeting suites pertinent to this application have been modernised over the years, with few original features remaining.

Between 2009 and 2012, refurbishment of the café / bookshop along with 2nd and 3rd floor offices was carried out in order to improve the standard of finishes and rationalise layouts.

Outline of Proposals

The proposals described in this application relate to the first floor of the east side of Friend's House. The Religious Society of Friends in Britain wish to refurbish a series of existing multi-function rooms which are individually or collectively lettable for meeting, conference or training purposes.

Detail of Proposals

These rooms require work to improve facilities by incorporating additional storage cupboards, the installation of air conditioning fan coil units and improved sliding/folding acoustic partitions to enable larger rooms to be sub-divided. Power and data installations will be improved with ceiling mounted projectors and drop down screens installed to

further improve the services available to users. Alongside this, power and data services and trunking will be installed. As part of the works to these first floor rooms, ceiling / bulkhead heights and door positions will be rationalised to create a series of uniform spaces.

To the external windows of the Cadbury Rooms and Rowntree Room, the proposals include the installation of an additional secondary glazing system to supplement the existing that is already installed. This is to provide additional acoustic attenuation to Euston Road and in particular to reduce the potential impact of the HS2 construction site which will take place to the adjacent site.

The most significant alterations that will take place relates to the room layout to the North Lobby off the East stair landing. Previously, the historic double doors off the landing have been locked shut and a partition erected behind to form toilet facilities. A new door opening was formed into a re-positioned lobby adjacent to access these facilities and the north corridor rooms beyond. It is the intention of these proposals to reinstate the use of historic doors, removing the adjacent doorset and blocking up the opening. This will allow the existing corner bench seat and table to be reinstated in its intended location adjacent to the stair balustrade, matching that to the South side of the landing. Furthermore the Leckhampton Stone wall cladding up to dado height will be reinstated between the door surround and stair balustrade. See image 2 below showing the doors to be brought back into use on the left hand side and opening to be blocked on the right.



image 2_first floor landing looking north

The North lobby will be reinstated, including opening up the ceiling to the original height, and layouts amended to provide toilet and storage facilities along with a new buttry. A second pair of double doors with side lights to match existing style throughout the building will be installed to the north corridor. It is proposed to install a glass display case along one wall of this lobby to allow for artifacts from the archive to be put on show. To the western end of the North

corridor it proposed to replace the existing double doors to the stair lobby with a new single leaf glazed door. This is being done to ensure DDA compliance in providing access from the corridor to the lobby where a new lift is to be installed (please note that the lift has been approved under a separate application).

Within the South lobby, the proposal is to provide display cases for historic artifacts from the archives. To both North and South lobbies and corridors the windows facing into the courtyard garden are to receive secondary glazing, as has been installed previously on the floors above, and those on the the North corridor solar control film in order to improve the thermal efficiency of the building in these areas.

Effect on Historic Fabric

As with previous projects undertaken at Friends House, the utmost care is taken to ensure that fabric of historic significance is maintained and protected as a matter of course. The proposals described seek to reinstate the historic layout to the north lobby, returning the first floor landing to its as built. As noted on page 64 of the Conservation Management Plan (see Appendix A) prepared in 2009 by Architectural History Practice Ltd, the staircase and landing are of considerable significance. The blocking of the modern doorway, reinstatement of Leckhampton stone cladding to dado height and repositioning of the L-shaped bench to the position indicated on the 1928 plans issued by architect Lidbetter, all serve to place emphasis the historic importance of

The plan also highlights that the meeting and conference rooms have minor significance due to the fact that they have been altered significantly over the years. The original features are noted as being the cast iron radiators and the windows which are to be retained.

Impact on Public Domain

The works proposed relate to re-ordering and refurbishment of internal spaces and as such will not have any impact upon the external appearance of the existing building. The only external elements affected are the windows to the inner courtyard, which are to receive secondary glazing.

Sustainability

The primary reason for our client setting out to undertake these works is to ensure the longevity of use of the meeting / conference / training rooms provided for use to other companies and the general public alike. The income generated by the letting of these spaces serves to ensure that the building as a whole can be maintained. Furthermore, by bringing people into their building, The Religious Society of Friends in Britain are able to promote their own history and work.

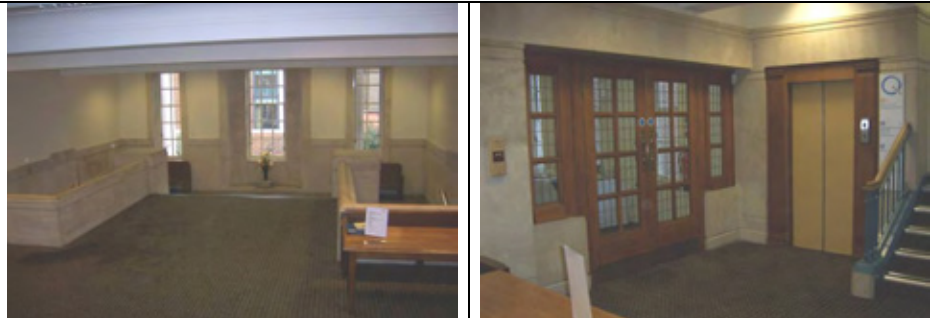
As described above, it is also proposed to improve the thermal performance of windows to the North and South corridors and lobbies. All new sanitaryware and associated fittings will be specified to be low water usage, new light fittings will include low energy LED fittings and where appropriate, material will be from sustainable sources. Furthermore, it is proposed to install insulated dry-lining to the external walls where noted on the proposed plans in order to improve the thermal performance of the structure.


Access


Due to the buildings location on Euston Road, the site is afforded excellent transport links by means of train, underground, bus and car. Existing access to and use of Friends House is by staff along with members of the public. Existing access arrangements will be unaffected by the proposed works.

Appendix A

Pages 64, 65 + 66 of the Conservation Management Plan, prepared by Architectural History Practice, April 2009.

Name: First floor staircase and lobby	Plan ref: EF1
<p>Current Use: Main staircase from east ground floor entrance; landing leading to a series of lettable suites and meeting rooms on first floor.</p>	
<p>Short Description: A carpeted landing, with double copper glazed doors leading north and south to a series of meeting rooms. (The north doors are closed and a more modest entrance has been formed beside it to access a later corridor.) Either side of the original double doors are copper glazed lights. The staircase up to the second floor is described in entry for S1; the principal double staircase (leading to the ground floor) is clad in Leckhampton stone, with half-landing floor and staircase walls covered in the same material. The landing is lit by a steel-framed bay window in the west wall and three long, wooden sash windows in the east wall. The windows and doors have architraves of Leckhampton stone; the central east window also has a recessed stone sill. The landing walls are clad to dado height in the same material. The half-landing is home to two original wooden benches which were originally photographed in the ground floor east entrance lobby. The L-shaped benches tucked into the space behind the staircase voids are marked on Lidbetter's 1928 plan. Other original features include cast iron radiators and radiator covers.</p>	
	
<p>Short history: The principal staircase is as it was originally designed. Alterations on the first floor landing include the addition of a double door in the south wall of the room that was originally the Quaker Institute, beside the original glazed doors leading to the north wing. The new opening leads to a modern corridor, reconfigured as part of large-scale works to the first floor in 1996/7. The original north corridor doors remain but are currently redundant. The original lobby and staircase pendant lights have been replaced with modern lights. The lifts and their surrounds date from 1978, and the floor carpet and signs on the wall are modern.</p>	
<p>Significance: The landing and staircase are original spaces with high quality decoration. The changes to the landing are minor or reversible. As integral, principal and original parts of the listed building, the staircase and landing are of considerable significance.</p>	
<p>Issues/vulnerabilities: None.</p>	

Name: Meeting rooms in south wing	Plan ref: EF2
Current Use: Meeting rooms.	
Short Description: Set of three rooms and a staircase in the south wing overlooking Endsleigh Gardens. The only remaining original features are the windows, cast iron radiators and glazed steel doors leading to the courtyard balcony.	
	
Short history: These rooms were originally designed as committee rooms. They remained in this use until at least 1968, and probably until the early 1980s. In 1985-6, when offices on the first floor were remodelled, rooms 16 and 17 (original committee rooms 5 and 6) were set aside as a quiet, reflective space for visitors. This coincided with the conversion into offices of the Quaker Institute on the north side of F1, where people interested in the Society of Friends had historically been welcomed to the building and others could sit quietly. Now, the 1980s quiet room is let as a meeting space and the adjacent room (beside the stairs) is used for quiet reflection.	
Significance: Although these three rooms are as they were originally planned, they retain few original features apart from their sash windows and cast iron radiators. (The worship room also contains shelves from the Friends House Local Meeting and a cabinet from the Recording Clerk's original conference room.) The spaces are of minor significance , although any new scheme should incorporate the remaining original features.	
Issues/vulnerabilities: Plastic trunking cuts across the sills at the bottom of the sash windows.	

Name: Meeting rooms in north wing	Plan ref: EF3
Current Use: Meeting rooms.	
Short Description: Set of three large meeting spaces, with modern WCs and stores. The only remaining original features are the windows, cast iron radiators and glazed steel doors leading to the courtyard balcony.	
	
Short history: The wing overlooking Euston Road originally housed three committee rooms. These remained (in use and plan) until at least 1968, and probably until the early 1980s. The corridor still runs alongside the courtyard windows, as it originally did, but the room partitions, ceiling, lighting and floor covering are all modern: the space was remodelled in 1985-6 and again in 1996-7. A large room on the corner of Euston Road and the garden was originally the Quaker Institute, where people interested in the Society of Friends were welcomed to the building and others could sit quietly. In 1985-6, the Institute was converted into offices (by way of compensation, a quiet room was set aside elsewhere on this floor). The entire wing was modernised in 1996-7. This is also when the corridor from the first floor landing was moved to provide space for WCs on either side.	
Significance: All the rooms in this wing have been altered significantly, with only windows and cast iron radiators remaining. The space is therefore of minor significance , although remaining original features should not be replaced.	
Issues/vulnerabilities: Plastic trunking cuts across the sills at the bottom of the sash windows.	