

On Behalf of:

Jens Grede

In respect of:

36 Great James Street

London

W1N 3HB

Date:

December 2015

Reference:

EA/AT/15.055/Rpt01

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Emma Adams and Partners Ltd on behalf of Jens Grede in connection with a proposal for the rehabilitation and alteration of 36 Great James Street, London, the works include the demolition and rebuilding of a later and heavily altered rear annexe and internal alterations to the principal building.

1.2 This assessment establishes the proposals in relation to the relevant statutory duties, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the adopted local policy documents including The London Plan and Local Development Framework.

1.3 In particular, NPPF Chapter 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, confirms that:

'Local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting....' (Para 128).

1.4 This assessment should be read in association with all the other supporting documents submitted in support of the application, these include detailed drawings and Design and Access Statement as prepared by Quinn Architects.

1.5 *Section 2.0* of this assessment highlights the heritage assets within the local area and context of the application site. This is followed by *Section 3.0* which sets out the national and local heritage planning policy context relevant to the site and proposals.

1.6 The assessment then sets out and assesses the special architectural and historic interest of 36 Great James Street and assesses the special interest and character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, (*Section 4.0*).

- 1.7 *Section 5.0* then undertakes a review of the application proposals for this site. Finally, at *Section 6.0* is a conclusion, where it is concluded that the scheme proposals maintain and protect the significance of the heritage assets and positively respond to, the history and character of its context, fully according with adopted national and local heritage planning policy.

2.0 Defining the Heritage Assets

2.1 The NPPF defines a 'heritage asset' as:

"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). Heritage assets are described as 'the valued components of the historic environment' and can include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority during the process of decision making or through the plan making process (known as undesignated heritage assets)."

2.2 The application proposals relate to 36 Great James Street which is situated within the Bloomsbury area of London, the context of the site is shown on the location plan below.



Figure 1 – Location Plan (Taken from Design and Access Statement – Quinn Architects 2015)

Designated Heritage Assets

Listed Buildings

- 2.3 The National Heritage List for England was accessed on the 15th December 2015; this confirmed that 36 Great James Street is a grade II* listed building, being added to the statutory list on 24th October 1957. The list description (for identification purposes only) is shown below.

'GREAT JAMES STREET (West side) Nos.26-37 AND 39-40 (Consecutive) and attached railings (Formerly Listed as: GREAT JAMES STREET Nos.26-37, 38, 39 & 40 (Consecutive))

II*

14 terraced houses. 1720-24. For J Metcalfe. Brown brick, upper storeys with some refacing in multi-coloured, yellow (Nos 28, 34 & 40) and brown stock brick (1st floor and above of No.30). 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each. Nos 27-38 and 40, good wood architraved doorcases with enriched, carved brackets carrying hoods with panelled soffits, most with patterned fanlights and panelled doors. No.27, C20 hood with shaped brackets; No.39, architraved doorcase with pilasters, plain cornice, radial fanlight and panelled door. Red segmental arches and dressings to flush framed windows, No.35 upper storeys with glazing bars. Some frames reeded with roundels. Parapets. Some original lead rainwater heads with lion masks. INTERIORS: mostly having fine panelling. Staircases mostly with twisted balusters, column newels and carved brackets to treads. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn or torch flambe finials to areas.

Listing NGR: TQ3071881985'

- 2.4 In addition, the buildings to the east side of Great James Street are also listed at grade II*, however taking note of the very limited external works proposed by way of this application it is concluded that the works do not have the potential to affect their significance and thus they are subject to no further assessment within this Report.



Fig. 5 - Bloomsbury Conservation Area map

Figure 2 – Location within the Conservation Area and Surrounding Listed Buildings

(Taken from Design and Access Statement – Quinn Architects 2015)

Conservation Area

2.5 The site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The conservation area was designated during 1968, and has been subject to various extensions and alteration since this date.

2.6 A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy was adopted for the Bloomsbury Conservation Area in April 2011.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

2.7 The National Heritage List for England was accessed on the 15th December 2015; this confirmed that there are no scheduled ancient monuments in the vicinity of the site.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 2.8 Non-Designated Heritage Assets are often referred to as locally listed buildings, these are either a building, structure or feature which, whilst not listed by the Secretary of State, the Council feels to be an important part of the areas heritage due to its architectural, historic or archaeological significance.
- 2.9 Camden Council adopted a Local List in January 2015, it is confirmed that the proposals will not affect the fabric or setting of any building included upon the formally adopted local list.

3.0 Heritage Planning Policy

- 3.1 The proposals for the application site will need to be considered in light of policy and guidance set out for historic buildings and areas. The statutory duties, national guidance and local plan policies relevant to the proposals supported by this statement are summarised below:

Legislative Framework

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 3.2 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides the overarching statutory framework, it notes within Section 7 that listed building consent is required for:

‘any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest.’

- 3.3 It also notes within Section 16(2) that when considering whether to grant consent the following duty is placed upon the decision maker;

‘In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority, or as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall 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.’

- 3.4 The Act notes within Section 66(1);

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall 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.”

- 3.5 The location of the site within a conservation area, and the inclusion of external works also leads to Section 72 of the Act being relevant, this states:

“In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”

Relevant National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework, 2012

- 3.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) provides an overarching planning framework to which local planning policy must relate. Additional detail is provided by the Planning Practice Guide (March 2014), which provides more practical guidance on how the policies laid down within the Framework should be interpreted and implemented.
- 3.7 There are twelve core planning principles which run through all elements of the Framework, these are held in paragraph 17 and include one with specific relevance to the application:

“Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.”

- 3.8 As noted above the Framework sets out at Paragraph 128 the level of detail that an applicant should supply in support of applications affecting heritage assets, it then goes on at Paragraph 129 to note the assessment that the regulatory authorities must undertake when determining such applications:

“Local planning authorities should 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.”

- 3.9 **Paragraph 131** provides further guidance for Decision Makers and summarises the issues that should be considered:

“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.”***

- 3.10 With regard to applications affecting designated heritage assets, Paragraph 132 confirms:

“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.”

- 3.11 In addition to the above Paragraph 137 identifies the potential for development within Conservation Areas or the setting of heritage assets to better reveal that setting noting:

“Local planning authorities should 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.”

Planning Policy Guide (2014)

- 3.12 The Planning Practice Guide (PPG) provides further guidance that has relevance, specifically with regards to the process that Local Planning Authorities should follow when determining applications which potentially affect the significance of heritage assets.

Local Policy and Supplementary Guidance

The London Plan

- 3.13 The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, and it sets out a fully integrated, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2031. It forms part of the development plan for Greater London. London boroughs' local plans need to be in general conformity with the London Plan, and its policies guide decisions on planning applications by councils and the Mayor.
- 3.14 The London Plans also sets outs policies regarding the protection of the built heritage in London. With regards to Heritage Assets and Archaeology, Policy 7.8 of the London Plan states that:

'London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account;

Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology;

Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate;

Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail; and

New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes and significant memorials. The physical assets should, where possible, be made available to the public on-site. Where the archaeological asset or memorial cannot be preserved or managed on-site, provision must be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset.'

London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework, 2010

- 3.15 The London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework and Core Strategy (together with the Development Policies) were adopted on the 8th November 2010. Together they form the planning framework for development management purposes in Camden. The following policies relate to the proposals, in terms specifically of the design quality of the development and its impact on heritage assets.

Core Strategy

- 3.16 The Core Strategy is the principal document in the Local Development Framework and provides the vision, objectives and spatial policies to guide development in the borough up to 2025.
- 3.17 In relation to promoting high quality places and conserving heritage, Policy **CS14** states that 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) seeking 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.'

- 3.18 It also states within **Paragraph 14.9** of the Core Strategy that the Council has prepared conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies that provide further guidance on the character of these areas. It further states that the council will take these documents into account as material considerations when they assess applications for planning permission and conservation area consent in these areas.

Development Policies

- 3.19 The Development Policies contribute towards delivering the Core Strategy by setting out detailed planning policies that the Council will use for determining planning applications.
- 3.20 With regards to conserving Camden's Heritage, **Policy DP25** states that in order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will:

'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.'

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, 2011

- 3.21 As previously mentioned, this document provides a brief summary of the significance of the conservation area. It is a material consideration of some weight in the determination process. The guidance contained in the document amplifies that contained within the Core Strategy and Development Policies and as such should be considered during the design process.

Conservation Principles (English Heritage 2008)

- 3.22 This document provides a useful basis for completing an assessment on heritage significance and thus attaching value to the significance of a heritage asset. These are based around an understanding of an asset's evidential, historical, aesthetic or communal value. The aim of this document is to:

“Set out a logical approach to making decisions and offering guidance about all aspects of the historic environment, and for reconciling its protection with the economic and social needs and aspirations of the people who live in it.”

- 3.23 According to the document, the value of a place/asset should be assessed according to these four values. These are not discrete, self-contained concepts but overlap and interact to some extent. This assessment will therefore utilise these values when assessing significance within this document.

4.0 Assessment of Significance

- 4.1 In order to consider the potential effects of the proposals it is necessary to complete an assessment of the significance of the heritage assets.
- 4.2 In undertaking this assessment, we refer to the Historic England guidance document *Conservation Principles*¹, as it provides a tested and nationally adopted framework within which to assess the significance of a building and its setting.

36 Great James Street

Background

- 4.3 The principal element of the property dates from between 1720 and 1724 and is located within a substantial terrace of properties which share a commonality in design and proportion, giving the group a strong overall historical and aesthetic cohesion.
- 4.4 The property is located within an area where construction of such terraces boomed during the early 18th century, this expansion of London during the Regency period occurred as land owners identified the opportunity to develop their land for residential purposes, with Great James Street being located in one of the many suburbs which emerged during this period.

¹ English Heritage (2008), Conservation Principles



36 Great James Street

Fig. 4 - Bloomsbury Historic Map, 1827
 (Reference: Greenwood's Map of London, 1827)

Figure 3 – Map Illustrating Wider Townscape in 1827

(Taken from Design and Access Statement – Quinn Architects 2015)

4.5 Whilst the arrangement of properties was often dictated by an imposed street layout, the properties often developed in a piecemeal basis in groups as can be interpreted by the cohesion of the group at Great James Street.

- 4.6 Whilst constructed for residential purposes the use of the property (along with many of its neighbours) has been subject to historic change, with much office and commercial use occurring in later years.
- 4.7 In addition, 36 Great James Street has been previously used as a guest house, however it is now the case that many buildings (of which 36 Great James is an example) are now moving back towards their historic use and function as substantial residential properties.

Evidential Value

- 4.8 The building holds evidential value in a number of ways. It retains much of the external character and form associated with its design and construction as a residential dwelling in the early 18th century. The scale and proportion of the buildings principal elevation provides a strong evidential link to its historical function, also retaining a group evidential value with the wider terrace within which it sits.
- 4.9 The property provides evidence of early 18th century design principles and constructional techniques which allow the viewer to understand and interpret the design and functional intentions of the designer and builder of the property. It provides evidence of the use of Classically inspired design principles within residential property of this period, and their use within substantial terraces where the symmetry of design and detail proved particularly suitable.
- 4.10 In addition, the property holds evidential value within the wider group of property forming part of an 18th century cohesive townscape where uniformity of design and enclosure allow the viewer to interpret the manner in which the area developed to address demand for residential property within a planned street form.
- 4.11 It is therefore concluded that the property holds evidential value due to its architectural form and detailing along with its position within the wider townscape,

illustrating the development of this area within the early 18th century and the manner in which speculative developments incorporated the principles of classical architectural design to deliver uniformity and quality on a grand scale within what is a comparatively tight site, leading to enclose and direct engagement with the pavement rear.

Historic Value

- 4.12 36 Great James Street is a comparatively typical example of an early 18th century town house located within a terrace which engages directly to Great James Street. It forms part of the wider early 18th century development of the area. The development of this part of London during the Regency period is of great historical interest and relevance as it forms part of the rapid expansion which occurred in London during the early 18th century.
- 4.13 The buildings of Bloomsbury also hold some historical significance due to the association of the area with literature (for instance Dorothy L Sayers lived at 24 Great James Street between 1921 and 1929).
- 4.14 It is therefore concluded that the site holds some historical significance, albeit more related to its location and the history of the area, rather than specific to the property itself.

Architectural/Aesthetic Value

- 4.15 The property displays formality and symmetry to its principal elevation, the form of which is common to classically inspired Georgian architecture.

- 4.16 The principal elevation is to the east and engages directly to the pavement rear on the west side of Great James Street. It is four storeys in height with a basement below and extends three bays in width, with the entrance door, detailed with a heavily detailed architrave incorporating bracketed hood and surround.



Figure 4 – Principal Elevation to Great James Street

- 4.17 The engagement with the street incorporates railings which screen a light well with staired access, the basement level is finished in white to bring further light to this well and thus the basement level.

- 4.18 Above this, the three upper floors are illustrated by a window to each bay, the height of the windows diminishing as one moves up the elevation, noting the manner in which historically the function and scale of the interior would have changed the higher one rose within the property.
- 4.19 The elevation is of London Stock Brick, further interest is incorporated within the elevation through the use of contrasting red brick surrounds to the openings, including gauged brick heads to the windows, whilst red brick is also utilised to illustrate the location of the party wall between the building and its neighbour.
- 4.20 The fenestration is plain and utilises vertically sliding sashes arranged in a one over one arrangement, this would appear a later alteration as many of the neighbouring properties retain a multi-light sash arrangement, the present arrangement limiting the aesthetic relationship to the neighbours and thus damaging the cohesion of the terrace as a whole.
- 4.21 The rear of the property is not subject to public view and has been subject to much change and alteration incorporating link extension and a rear annexe (which appears a much later addition, including a modern pitched roof which replaced an earlier flat example² during the early 21st century and thus shares little relationship to the principal building apart from a spatial relationship), linked to the property by way of a modern link.
- 4.22 Due to the extent of change which has occurred to this rear annexe its date of original construction and any potential curtilage relationship to the listed building is unclear apart from being physically attached via a contemporary link structure. However as now encountered it is a modern building that contributes nothing to the significance of the asset.

² A photograph of this can be seen within the Design and Access Statement

- 4.23 The architecture to the rear is therefore somewhat confused and makes a very limited contribution to the architectural and aesthetic significance of the property.
- 4.24 The internal plan form of the property is of a simple double pile with stair being located to the rear, running directly parallel from the entrance hall, this stair provides access to the upper floors of the building.
- 4.25 Internally, whilst the lower ground floor would appear to have been subject to substantive change and refurbishment, in other areas certain features of note remain including the principal stair and areas of panelling in certain rooms, these illustrate the manner in which the classically inspired design of the property was also reflected within its interior detailing and design and thus make some contribution to its significance.
- 4.26 It is therefore concluded that the building is of aesthetic and architectural significance on a number of levels. It is a comparatively unaltered example of Regency Georgian architecture which retains its principal elevation essentially unaltered (except for the later windows, which can be easily rectified), whilst the interior whilst subject to some change can still be read and interpreted.

Communal & Townscape Value

- 4.27 There is a very strong aesthetic and historical relationship between the property and its neighbours within Great James Street. It shares a commonality of design with its neighbours that forms a strong terrace to the west side of the street, the rhythm and symmetry of the terrace making a strong contribution to both the conservation area and the significance of its component parts.
- 4.28 It is therefore concluded that the building has a high communal and townscape significance.

Summary of Significance

- 4.29 36 Great James Street therefore holds significance in a number of differing ways. It is a comparatively unaltered example of an early 18th century town house, located within a substantial terrace of properties, within which it shares much communal significance.
- 4.30 It has aesthetic and architectural significance as an example of classically inspired Regency design which incorporates cohesive detail within both its exterior and interior arrangements.
- 4.31 It also holds evidential and historical significance due to its age, quality of design and arrangement, this allows the viewer to both interpret the property as an architectural composition on its own but also as a component part of a wider townscape that illustrates the development of London during the early 18th century.

Bloomsbury Conservation Area

- 4.32 An appraisal of the significance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area is provided in this section; with specific reference to the application site and its surrounding area. This appraisal is informed by the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy adopted for the Bloomsbury Conservation Area in April 2011.

Background

- 4.33 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area covers an area of approximately 160 ha and extends from Euston Road in the north to High Holborn and Lincoln's Inn Fields in the south and from Tottenham Court Road in the west to King's Cross Road in the east.

- 4.34 The area is often noted as being an internationally significant example of town planning. The original street layouts were planned and then completed with speculative developments, employing the concept of formal landscaped squares and an interrelated grid of streets to create an attractive urban environment, with consistency of townscape being an important element of its significance, this consistency remains a dominant characteristic of the area.
- 4.35 In addition to its townscape and architectural significance Bloomsbury also has significance with regards to its social history, being known as a result of its association with the literary Bloomsbury Group whose main proponents were based in Gordon Square in the early 20th century.
- 4.36 The site is located within the Great James Street/Bedford Row Character Area of the conservation area.

Summary of Special Interest

- 4.37 The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy adopted for the Bloomsbury Conservation Area in April 2011, prepared by Camden Council incorporates at Section 3 a useful and concise description of the Special Interest of the conservation area, this can be summarised as follows;
- The conservation area forms part of the development of London from the earlier settlements of the City of London and City of Westminster to the south, whilst terminated at the north by the later Euston Road which emerged during the 19th century in relation to the erection of Railway Termini on the periphery of the area.
 - Into the 20th century the expansion of hospital, academic and commercial premises continued to reduce residential uses although that process is now being reversed.

- The conservation area is noted for its formally planned arrangement of streets and the contrasting leafy squares. The urban morphology comprises a grid pattern of streets generally aligned running north-west to south-east and south-west to north-east, with subtle variations in the orientation of the grid pattern. The quintessential character of the Conservation Area derives from the grid of streets enclosed by mainly three and four storey development which has a distinctly urban character of broad streets interspersed by formal squares which provide landscape dominated focal points.
- A hierarchy of different scales of streets is evident across the area with clear differences between the wider major arterial routes which define and cross the Conservation Area, the grid of primary, relatively spacious, intersecting streets, narrower secondary streets, rear mews and narrow connecting lanes.
- The townhouses arranged in terraces is the predominant form across the area, reflecting the speculative, (mainly) residential development of the Stuart, Georgian, Regency and early Victorian periods. This gives a distinctive, repeated grain to large parts of the area.
- A range of building types is evident across the Conservation Area although the predominant type is the terraced townhouse. These are generally three or four storeys in height although there are a number of examples of more modest two-storey townhouses built for workers. In addition, the townhouses generally have basements and attic storeys. Roofs are commonly defined by parapets, giving strong and consistent roof lines. The most widespread roof forms are butterfly roofs behind parapets or mansards where there is habitable attic space.
- Brick is the predominant building material used across the Conservation Area as it was the cheapest locally available material. Red brick, stone and stucco are all used as contrasting detailing in the articulation of frontages.

- The predominant architectural styles of the Conservation Area are classically derived, regardless of period or building type. The terraced townhouses have a number of characteristic details in their design including the repeated pattern of windows, reducing in height from the first floor upwards signifying their reducing significance, with properties generally being three windows across. In key locations the elevations were designed as unified compositions to give a grander, palatial scale.

4.38 It is noted that 26 Great James Street displays many of the traits identified as being significant with regards to the wider conservation area, thus potential effects upon this identified significance will be a key element of this assessment process.

5.0 Assessment of Development Proposals.

- 5.1 The Statement will now consider the proposals and their potential effects upon the listed building and wider conservation area.

Works to Existing Fabric

- 5.2 Various remedial works are proposed to both the elevations of the building but also its interior.

Front (East) Elevation

- 5.3 The existing elevation is shown in the photograph at Figure 4 and the plans included below (Figures 5 & 6).
- 5.4 It is proposed to facilitate the re-installation of glazing bars to the existing 1 over 1 sashes to match the existing rear windows and other properties on the street leaving a 6 over 6 light arrangement.



Figure 5 – Existing Front (East) Elevation



Figure 6 – Proposed Front (East) Elevation

- 5.5 This work will reinstate the historic arrangement and also integrate the cohesion of the property with its neighbours, bringing much of the commonality back to the principal elevation of the terrace.

- 5.6 It is therefore concluded that the works will have a positive effect upon both the significance of the listed building but also the wider identified significance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- 5.7 The works also propose amendments to the fan light/glazing panel over the front door to a more decorative/period detail. The existing arrangement (along with that of the neighbouring property) is shown in the photograph below.



Figure 7 – Existing Entrance Doorway Showing Plain Fanlight

- 5.8 However, the surrounding properties are characterised with detailed fanlight designs (as noted on the neighbouring property in the photograph above), it is intended to follow this design lead within the revised design now proposed.
- 5.9 Once again it is concluded that these works will have a positive effect upon both the significance of the listed building but also the wider identified significance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Rear Elevation

- 5.10 No changes are proposed to the rear apart from the erection/alteration of the new link construction abutment and refurbishment of existing painted brickwork/render to the lower ground courtyard, this is discussed below.

Internal Changes/Works

- 5.11 Various internal works are proposed these include certain remedial works which uncover and then repair existing internal details, once again the intention of these works is to respect the fabric and design of the building whilst removing later poorly executed and specified works.
- 5.12 The majority of alterations are to the rear linked outbuilding that has been substantially altered changing it from a single storey building to a two storey building incorporating a modern link to the original house. The basement / lower ground floor has also been subject to substantial alterations leaving little of the original details behind.
- 5.13 The interior (ground floor to third floor of the principal building) retains many features of note, where these remain careful works will be undertaken to rehabilitate the features to retain their significance within the context of the wider heritage asset.



Figure 8 – Existing Staircase

Figure 9 – Existing Panelling
(ground floor)

- 5.14 It is proposed to undertake the full poulitce stripping of paint from existing panelling and staircase to expose original material. Once this is complete all features are to be carefully repaired and painted where applicable.

Figure 10 – Existing Panelling
(first floor)Figure 11 – Cornice and Shutters
(first floor)

- 5.15 As part of the wider refurbishment of the property to meet new occupier requirements it is proposed to undertake the installation of new bathrooms throughout the property, it is confirmed that these works will not affect historic fabric.

- 5.16 In addition, it is proposed to install new floor finishes to Lower Ground, Ground, First, Second Floors, pending opening up works to determine the age of the existing floorboards (it is already clear that no original flooring remains at lower ground floor level). Along with new light fittings throughout and the removal of any unnecessary items to existing ceilings and panelling.

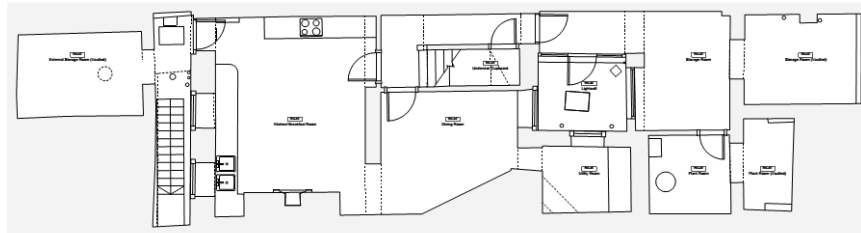


Figure 12 – Existing Lower Ground Floor Level

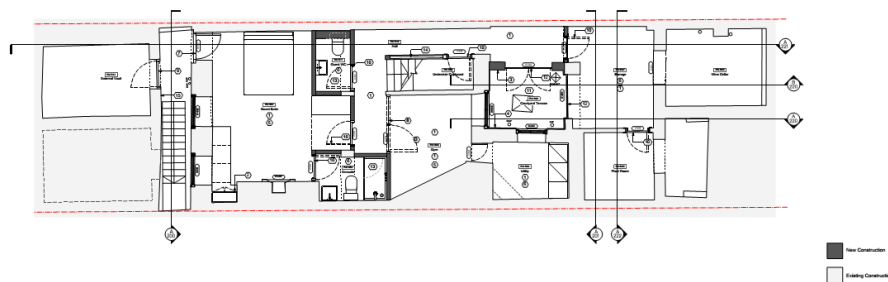


Figure 13 – Proposed Lower Ground Floor Level

- 5.17 The lower ground floor level (basement) has been subject to substantive change leaving little fabric of note, an initial review has shown that any historic cornices, panelling or original flooring which may have been installed have been removed. However, it is equally important to note that when one considers the historic hierarchy of spaces within the house, the basement would have likely been of a very plain character even when constructed, contrasting with the rest of the house.
- 5.18 The revisions at lower ground floor level are limited to the removal of the existing kitchen fittings and revisions to plan form in areas where previous change has occurred. The works retain plan form where appropriate and allow fabric to be retained within the wider remedial scheme.

5.19 The new kitchen will be located in the rear annexe area which is subject to detailed discussion below.

5.20 The works to the ground floor are detailed on the plans below;

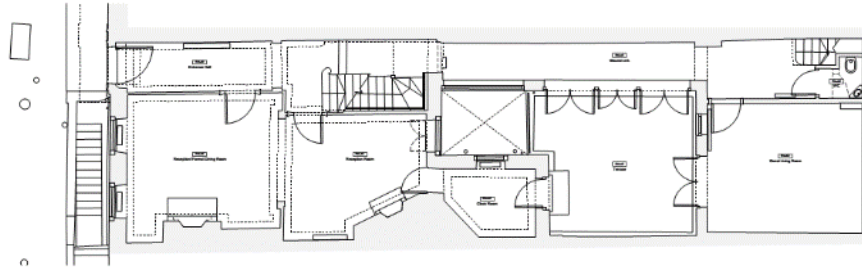


Figure 14 – Existing Ground Floor Level

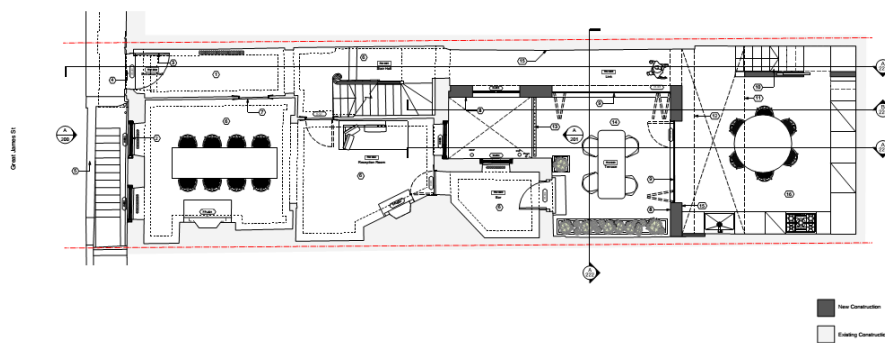


Figure 15 – Proposed Ground Floor Level

5.21 The majority of ground floor works are concentrated to the rear of the property (and associated links) where extensive changes have occurred historically and thus have little potential to affect the significance of the asset, they include removing modern features such as patio doors and modern fittings.

5.22 The relationship between the rooms to the principal element of the house will remain, albeit with a door locked shut to amend the plan form, this will be a reversible change and thus have little detrimental effect to significance.

- 5.23 It is therefore concluded that the works to the ground floor respect the arrangement and fabric of the listed building, maintaining and preserving its significance.
- 5.24 The works to the first floor follow the existing themes and are detailed below, these are limited to remedial works to the principal building and revisions to the rear in association with the additions discussed below.

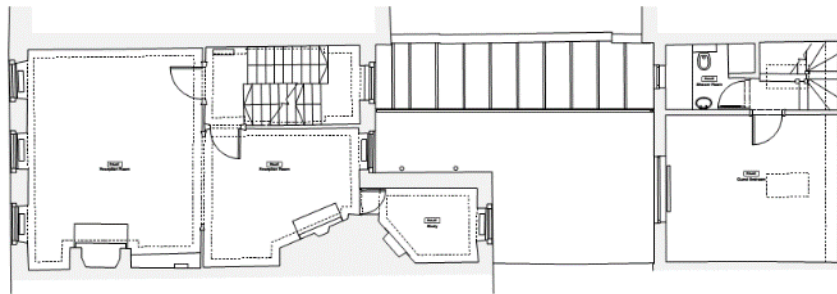


Figure 16 – Existing First Floor Level

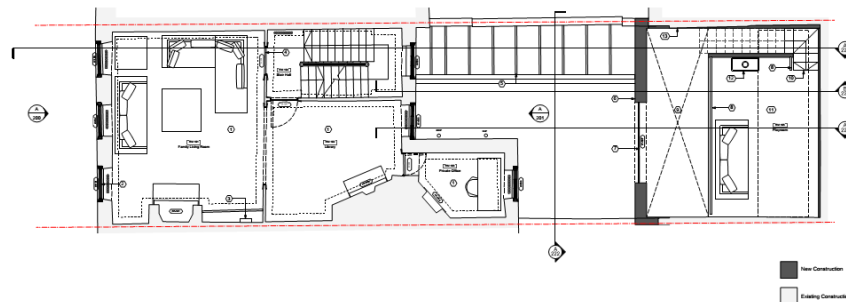


Figure 17 – Proposed First Floor Level

- 5.25 It is therefore concluded that the works to the first floor respect the arrangement and fabric of the listed building, maintaining and preserving its significance.
- 5.26 The works to the second floor once again follow the existing themes and are detailed below, these are limited to remedial works to the principal building and revisions to the rear in association with the additions discussed below.

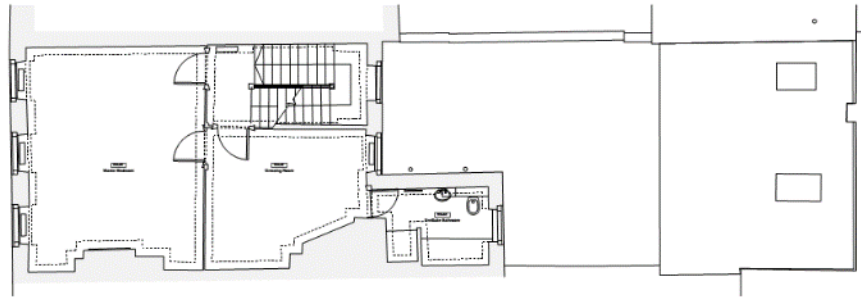


Figure 18 – Existing Second Floor Level

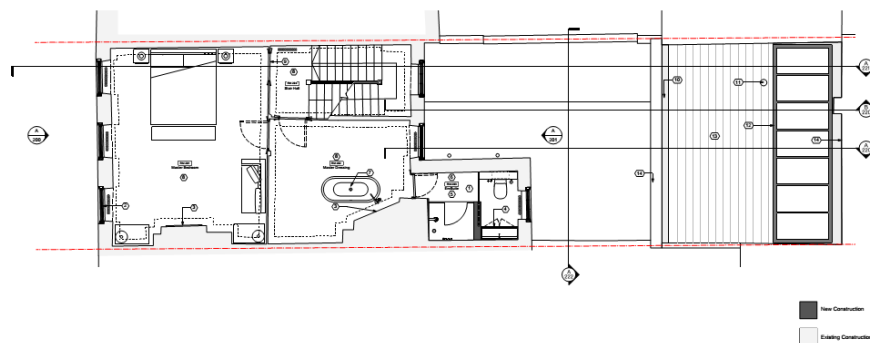


Figure 19 – Proposed Second Floor Level

- 5.27 Once again the works at this level are limited in their scope and mainly relate to remedial works to the historic fabric and works to meet modern occupier standards. Once again modern bathroom fittings are to be removed and where remodelling is proposed it is limited to the closure of an existing door at the head of the stairs.
- 5.28 It is therefore concluded that the works to the second floor respect the arrangement and fabric of the listed building, maintaining and preserving its significance.
- 5.29 The works to the third floor follow the existing themes and are detailed below, these are limited to remedial works to the principal building.

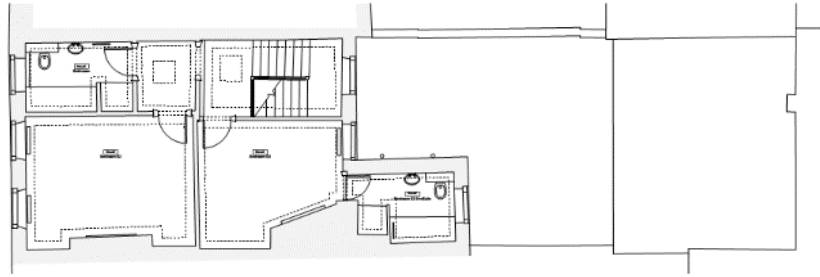


Figure 20 – Existing Third Floor Level

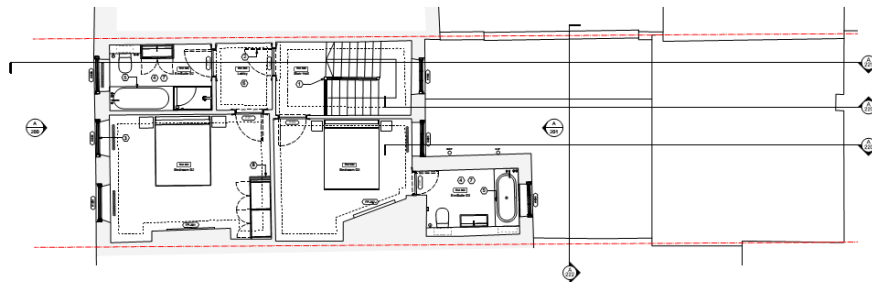


Figure 21 – Proposed Third Floor Level

- 5.30 The works at this level again are based around remediation and repair, with revisions being limited to bathroom arrangements and ceiling hatches. The works will maintain historic fabric and retain the plan form as historically encountered. It is therefore concluded that the works to the third floor respect the arrangement and fabric of the listed building, maintaining and preserving its significance.

Additions

- 5.31 In addition to the above the existing rear annex and link are to be demolished and rebuilt using design and materials which better respect the buildings character and significance.
- 5.32 The existing arrangement is of poor architectural and aesthetic quality which does not match the house or surrounding aesthetic. The arrangement causes some detriment to the rear elevation of the house as the design quality is neither in keeping nor of quality to complement the heritage asset.



Figure 22 – Existing Rear Annexe Viewed from House

- 5.33 The annexe forms one of a number which existing to the rear of the properties within Great James Street. These represent later extensions which have been incorporated to provide additional living space, often (as in this case) leaving a somewhat confused spatial and aesthetic arrangement which does little to complement the asset.



Figure 23 – Context of Existing Rear Annexe – showing neighbouring structures

- 5.34 Consent is therefore sought to demolish the existing arrangement and instead replace with a carefully designed and detailed annexe that better respects its context and the associated significance of the house as a designated heritage asset.
- 5.35 The revised proposal takes a scale and massing theme from the existing arrangement, whilst also seeking to provide an architectural solution which respects the listed building and better reveals its significance.



Figure 24 – Proposed Rear Annexe Viewed from House

- 5.36 The proposal deliberately follows the mass of the existing to minimise effect when compared with the existing, however it also proposes a verticality to the fenestration which reflects that found within the historic building.
- 5.37 The existing arrangement providing links to the house via a lead roofed link maintain the existing spatial arrangement, whilst the wider works also facilitate improvements to the yard and light well area, which will in turn enhance the setting of the rear of both the principal asset but also the neighbouring buildings.
- 5.38 The below photograph illustrates the proposed arrangement in sectional form and better illustrates the subservient nature of the proposed annexe.



Figure 25 – Proposed Section (photograph of architectural model)

- 5.39 The photograph above illustrates the manner in which the annexe will be subservient to the listed building, having a similar mass and scale to the existing but using lighter forms and materials to better engage with the rear elevation of the house.
- 5.40 Taking note of the existing arrangement which is of poor architectural quality and displays little visual and architectural relationship to the house it is considered that the proposal will enhance the setting of the listed building as a designated heritage asset.
- 5.41 The proposal better respects the house in terms of detailing and design, whilst maintaining the amenity of the property and its neighbours.
- 5.42 It is therefore concluded that the works proposed to the rear annexe area will enhance the setting of the listed building, whilst improvements to its plan form will also facilitate the revisions and remedial works to the interior of the building. It is

therefore concluded that this element of the project will have a positive effect upon the significance of the heritage asset.

Discussion

- 5.43 The proposal affects a grade II* listed building and sits within the conservation area therefore a key element of the planning consideration will be to consider potential effects upon the listed building and conservation area, both of which are designated heritage assets for the purposes of the NPPF.
- 5.44 Turning first to effect upon the conservation area, it is noted that much of the significance of the area relates to the townscape form and uniformity of the terraces located therein, the external works are limited in nature and will have little overarching effect upon this significance.
- 5.45 The works to the front of the building include works to reintroduce glazing bars to the principal elevation which will enhance the relationship between the building and its neighbours. The Conservation Area Appraisal specifically notes;
- ‘The townhouses in Great James Street are particularly well preserved; the only notable alteration is the loss of glazing bars from some sash windows.’***
- 5.46 The works will therefore reverse this alteration and thus enhance the cohesion of the terrace, rectifying a defect specifically noted within the Conservation Area Appraisal. It is therefore the case that works to the principal elevation will have a positive effect upon the significance of the conservation area, better revealing its overall significance.
- 5.47 The works to the annexe have very limited visibility within the context of the wider conservation area, they repeat the existing scale and mass, whilst also incorporating

better conceived and detailed design. It is therefore concluded that these also have a positive effect upon significance.

- 5.48 Taking note of the assessment process it is concluded that the works enhance the significance of the conservation area, they therefore fully address the requirements of Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 5.49 In addition, for the reasons outlined above they fully accord with the requirements of the NPPF along with locally adopted Policies 7.8 of the London Plan, CS14 of the Core Strategy and DP25 of the Development Policies document, finally they accord with the requirements of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy.
- 5.50 Turning to the listed building, the external works enhance its significance in much the same way as they do the conservation area, bringing improvements to its principal elevation what will better reveal its significance and relationship to its neighbours.
- 5.51 The internal works are limited in scope and driven by an overarching objective to remediate historic fabric where encountered and reverse poorly executed later changes.
- 5.52 Where change is proposed it is limited and reversible protecting the overarching significance as identified and working with the fabric and plan form to deliver the occupiers requirements. In completing a balanced assessment, it is therefore concluded that these works have a neutral effect upon significance.
- 5.53 The proposals facilitate the buildings return to occupation as a single dwelling, returning the house to the use it was originally constructed for, this will enhance its wider significance and better protect the long term use of the building. It is therefore considered in the balance that overall the works proposed to the house will have a positive effect upon its identified significance.

- 5.54 Taking note of the assessment process it is concluded that the works enhance the significance of the listed building as a designated heritage asset, they therefore fully address the requirements of Section 16(2) and Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 5.55 In addition, for the reasons outlined above they fully accord with the requirements of the NPPF along with locally adopted Policies 7.8 of the London Plan, CS14 of the Core Strategy and DP25 of the Development Policies document, finally the accord with the requirements of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy.
- 5.56 It is therefore concluded that the proposals enhance the significance of both the listed building, its setting and wider conservation area, fully accord with all adopted policy and thus should be approved.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposals relate to 36 Great James Street and incorporate alterations and remedial works to the building and an associated rear annexe.
- 6.2 The building is a grade II* listed building and is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, both being designated heritage assets for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 6.3 Taking note of the identified significance of the assets (discussed at length in Section 4), it is concluded that that the proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area whilst also enhancing the significance of the listed building, thus better revealing their significance.
- 6.4 Therefore, the proposal would comply with national planning policy along with the relevant policies and thus we respectfully suggest that it should be approved.