

2394A/PGW

***DUNSTAN HOUSE
14A ST CROSS STREET, LONDON EC1N 8UN
FOR STEEPARCHES LIMITED***

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Revision B 01/07/16

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose:

This Report is submitted in support of the proposals by Steeparches Ltd for altering and extending the existing building at 14a St Cross Street. It is to be read in conjunction with the drawings and other documentation submitted to the London Borough of Camden with the planning application.

1.2 Document Structure:

We have prepared this report in accordance with published guidance on Heritage Statements by Camden Council. Where the proposed development involves carrying out work on a property located in a conservation area, a heritage statement should include the necessary information to meet the criteria outlined in paragraph HE9 of Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) – Planning for the Historic Environment.(CLG 2010).

1.3 Site Location:

Dunstan House is on the North side of St Cross Street, see location plan 2394A/L1/01.

1.4 Development Objectives:

The proposals have been developed to provide additional office floor space to the roof of this building in order to help meet demand from tenants. The existing flat roof is undistinguished and makes no contribution to the Conservation Area. Based on an analysis of the site context the objective is that the new floor should be almost invisible from street level and will not have adverse sunlight/daylight implications for adjoining properties.

THE URBAN CONTEXT

2.0 Existing Site Context

2.1 The Existing Building:

Dunstan House comprises lower ground, ground and four upper floors in business use (class B1a). The building is of post-war construction c1957 and is not listed. There do not appear to have been any significant alterations since then which have affected the external appearance. The main frontage and pedestrian entrance is on the corner of St Cross Street and Saffron Hill. Constructed with a concrete frame, the building is clad in red brick with a prominent concrete band course at roof level; above this a brick parapet and concrete coping conceal the flat roof (refer to Design & Access Statement for further details).

2.2 Conservation Area:

The property is in the Hatton Garden Conservation Area (designation no. 34 by the London Borough of Camden). The Hatton Garden Conservation Area Statement (1999) contains general guidance relevant to this project. Development within the Conservation Area should preserve or enhance its special character or appearance, and should be of a high quality in terms of design, materials and execution.

2.3 Heritage Assets:

There are no listed buildings nearby. The map in the Conservation Area Statement shows that are not even any 'Buildings of Interest' in St Cross Street between Kirby Street and Farringdon Road, or nearby in Saffron Hill. 8A St Cross Street is the only scheduled historic building in the immediate area, and is situated some way away on the south side of the street at the junction with Hatton Garden.

2.4 *The Street Scene:*

With buildings directly fronting the highway there is a degree of enclosure and the appearance of high urban density in the area; the *Conservation Area Statement* notes that this is particularly the case where taller buildings dominate, such as Saffron Hill, and increases as roads such as St Cross Street descend towards the line of the river Fleet and the buildings reach up to 8 storeys high. *'The character and special interest of the Hatton Garden area is largely defined by the quality and variety of buildings and uses, as well as the unique pattern of streets. The character is not dominated by one particular period or style of building but rather by the combination of styles that make the area of special interest'*.

2.5 *The North Side of St Cross Street:*



St Cross Street north side, view towards Hatton Garden

In St Cross Street, moving away from Hatton Garden, the north side of the street is characterised by a variety of large scale buildings, mostly in business use. On the corner, 44 Hatton Garden is 7 storeys high. The smaller nos. 18 & 19 St Cross Street are unlisted buildings which contribute to the special character and appearance of the area. Nos. 15-17 St Cross Street are two earlier buildings which have been combined behind a more recent elevation with banded brickwork in prominent horizontal stripes.



14 St Cross Street & entry to Hatton Place

Next to nos. 15-17 are the six white-painted storeys of Munro House, No. 14 St Cross Street, which is in residential use. This building spans across the entrance to Hatton Place. The change of use and roof storeys date from c 1997.



No. 14a, Dunstan House (c1957)

The downward slope of St Cross Street increases at this point and, together with the slight bend in the street, reduces the scale of Dunstan House. The contrasting red brick and concrete features of the elevations, the corner feature and rooftop tank room of Dunstan House are discussed in more detail in the Design and Access Statement.



26-29 St Cross Street, the Multi-Storey Car Park

The large bulk of the multi-storey car park stands opposite Dunstan House on the corner of Saffron Hill. It is noted in the Conservation Area Statement as a building which has a negative impact on the character and appearance of the area.

2.6 *The South Side of St Cross Street:*



44 Saffron Hill (Google Maps)

On the south side of St Cross Street, the large bulk of no. 44 Saffron Hill stands opposite the multi-storey car park. In residential use, the upper floors have been altered and extended in the past two years.



20-24 Kirby Street & 9-12 St Cross Street

Opposite Dunstan House on the south side of St Cross Street is 22-24 Kirby Street, an office building which occupies the complete block between Saffron Hill and Kirby Street. The six storeys of red brick and bands of steel windows with precast concrete infill panels were probably constructed at around the same time as Dunstan House. Further up St Cross Street, nos. 9-12 are much older and smaller in scale, unlisted and noted as making a positive contribution the conservation area.

2.7 *Saffron Hill:*



91-94 Saffron Hill, looking towards Dunstan House

Saffron Hill is narrower than St Cross Street and contains a variety of more recent buildings, including the offices at nos. 91-94 immediately adjacent to Dunstan House, clad in a strong linear style with extensive glazing. Opposite is nos. 55-59 (Alan House), an eight storey residential building whose change of use and roof extensions date from 1999. The residential building at nos. 60-66 is taller still.



55-59 Saffron Hill



North view from roof of Dunstan House to Saffron Hill

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

3.0 The History and Character of the Conservation Area

3.1 The significance of nearby assets and the contribution of their setting:

The Hatton Garden Conservation Area has a long history of development. It has a special character and appearance which stems from its topography, its sense of enclosure, its mix of uses, its variety of buildings and its history, which justifies its conservation area status. Despite this the area around Dunstan House has few listed buildings. Some buildings in St Cross Street have been locally listed by Camden, not for their national importance or for special architectural features but for their contribution to the historical mixture of the local street scene.

3.2 The general character and distinctiveness of the local buildings, spaces, public realm and the landscape:

As discussed in the previous section, the local buildings around St Cross Street do not have a unique character; it is the mixture of different periods, different scales, different materials and different uses which, in combination, help to produce the character of the area. The street pattern with its historical variations in width contributes further to this significance.

3.3 Landmarks and other features that are key to a sense of place:

There are no significant local landmarks in the immediate area around Dunstan House.

3.4 The diversity or uniformity in style, construction, materials, detailing, decoration and period of existing buildings and spaces:

The appearance of the street reflects the incremental development which has taken place since the C13th. As a result there is a great diversity of style, materials and detailing. Buildings of different periods, architectural styles and functions exist together, creating contrasts of scale and character.

3.5 Views into and from the site and its surroundings:

Along St Cross Street and Saffron Hill views are tightly constrained by the narrowness of the streets. Buildings are experienced individually as oblique views, not as part of any large vista. The dominance of taller buildings results in roofs and skylines playing only a small role in these views.

3.6 The current and historic uses in the area and the urban grain:

The character of the conservation area derives from a variety of uses and St Cross Street currently contains a mixture of business and residential uses. The street pattern and many original plot widths have survived historic changes in use and extensive second world war bomb damage; the resulting urban grain is distinctive and generally small in scale. Buildings such as the multi-storey car park break this pattern.

4.0 The Impact of the Proposed Development

4.1 On the significance of nearby assets:

Adding two floors to Dunstan House will have a minimal impact when viewed from street level as they are set back behind the existing elevations. Bearing in mind the absence of any specific landmarks or significant historic buildings in the vicinity it is considered that the proposals will have no effect on the significance of local historic assets.

- 4.2 *On the general character and distinctiveness of local buildings, spaces and public realm:*
Adding two floors to Dunstan House will not change the scale or rhythm of the predominant street elevations of the building. The design and materials are sympathetic to the host building and the set-back form is seen on other nearby buildings. The proposals will not affect the mixture of different periods, different scales, different materials and different uses which, in combination, help to produce the character of the area.
- 4.3 *On the diversity in style, construction, materials, detailing, decoration and period of existing buildings and spaces:*
The proposed fifth and sixth floors will have no impact on the great diversity of style, materials and detailing found in St Cross Street.
- 4.4 *On views into and from the site and its surroundings:*
The proposals will not affect existing local views.
- 4.5 *On the current and historic uses in the area and the urban grain:*
Again the proposals will have no effect on uses or urban grain.

5.0 *Justification of the Works*

5.1 *Heritage Benefits:*

According to the PPS5 Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide (CLG 2010) there are a number of potential heritage benefits that could weigh in favour of a proposed scheme. In this case:

1. It will improve the attractiveness of the building to tenants, securing its long-term optimum use
2. It will thereby make a positive contribution to economic vitality and sustainable communities
3. It is an appropriate design for its context and will not harm the appearance, character, quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment

CONCLUSION

- 6.0 We have outlined the applicant's reasons for carrying out changes to improve the attractiveness of the building at ground floor level. We have described the existing building and analysed the historic context, assessing the significance of the history and character of the area before considering the impact of the proposed works in accordance with government planning policy guidance. We concluded that the proposals will not harm the historic environment and that they will bring some heritage benefits to the immediate area. We therefore propose that the application for planning permission should be recommended for approval.