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WeWork - 3 Waterhouse Square, 138 - 142 Holborn, London, EC1N 2SW

05 July 2016

Design and Access

Introduction

The application site comprises a number of buildings on Holborn, London. These are an office block built in several phases and listed as: HOLBORN BARS 798-1/102/888 (North side), 03/03/72 No.142 Prudential Assurance Building (Formerly Listed as: GREVILLE STREET Prudential Assurance Building) (Formerly Listed as: City of London Holborn (North side) No.142 Prudential Assurance Company Offices)

All the buildings fall within the Hatton Garden Conservation area.

No. 3 Waterhouse Square is part of the complex to which the proposals in this application relate to ground and first floors.

Access is via the public footpath to the building is via the internal courtyard known as Waterhouse Square which is accessed via Holborn, Brooke Street & Leather Lane.

Design Proposals

- 1.0 The subject of this application forms phase 2 of creation of office space for WeWork located on the ground and first floors of Waterhouse Square. Design and construction of the office space will be carried out by LTB, as was the case for the phase 1 works to the second and third floors.

2.0 The works within this phase are highlighted on the plans below.



First Floor Plan



Ground Floor Plan

Design Philosophy and overall objectives

Applicant

- 3.0 WeWork provide a specialist brand of serviced office space. Focussing on small to medium sized, young and start up creative businesses, they provide working environments and spaces tailored to their client's needs. WeWork clients have access to various working environments from hotdesking to cellular offices. Meeting facilities are also made available along with the ability to network with likeminded professionals. Networking and collaboration between creative individuals is central to the WeWork model and as such the design and innovation of the space in which they operate is paramount in attracting clients. High quality office space for WeWork *is* the product to be sold.
- 4.0 Further, Waterhouse Square has been selected as a location for WeWork's rapidly expanding portfolio of London office spaces in part due to the historical value and interest of the space. The ethos of the organisation is to work within the existing architectural features of the spaces they operate from using a 'light touch' approach to work within the existing fabric.

Designers - LTB

- 5.0 "Our objective for the works to the above buildings is to provide, for our client WeWork, collaborative workspaces as part of the group of office space communities. Our approach has been to minimise as much as possible the removal or alteration of existing building fabric and features, using a 'light touch' philosophy." Any removal of elements such as ceilings will be to open up spaces to maximise.
- 6.0 LTBs design team are highly experienced in design and implementation of office interiors. They have a proven track record in delivering interiors which respond well to the host building. The integration of design and construction means that they are well placed to respond to and incorporate any features discovered during strip out works.
- 7.0 Coupled with this, LTB have a long standing relationship with WeWork having recently completed various projects throughout the city. This relationship allows LTB a thorough understanding of the requirements of the end user.
- 8.0 Further, LTB have recently completed fit out of office space within Waterhouse Square for WeWork on the second and third floors, meaning that they also have detailed knowledge of the building, English Heritage's aspirations for the continued use of the building, and the processes required to produce a completed office space which meets the requirements of all involved.

Design intent:

(To be read in conjunction with LTB drawings to support written information)

Ground floor – East Wing:

- 9.0 The East Wing forms part of the more 'historic' element of Waterhouse Square. The distinctive glazed brick to facade facing out to the atrium showing it to be part of the 19th Century buildings. Internally, however, little historical detail remains, with plasterboard partitions and suspended ceilings throughout.
- 10.0 The creation of cellular office and meeting rooms. New timber and tile floor coverings, painted walls, wallpaper coverings, light fittings and exposed mechanical and electrical services. Plaster ceilings made good and painted where required. Exposed brickwork and wall tiles to be retained and any plasterboard edges made good. See below photo for current interior condition
- 11.0 Creating cellular office spaces with the use of glazed framed partitions.
- 12.0 In areas where raised access floors are not in existence, trunking will be installed to provide data and power as is done at present.



View of existing office in the East Wing.

Ground floor – Atrium:

- 13.0 The atrium courtyard space is fronted on one side by the 19th century buildings of Waterhouse Square. The courtyard enclosure is completed on the remaining three sides by the 1990s extension to Waterhouse Square. It was at this time that the glazed roof was installed over the courtyard, enclosing the space and allowing it to be used as ancillary space to the offices.
- 14.0 Creation of a community bar, pantry and social area within the ground floor atrium for all WeWork floors from previous phases and proposed. Each of these interventions will be placed as loose furniture items and will not be fixed to the fabric of the existing building. This will allow the space to be restored to its original state at any point in the future, with minimal work.
- 15.0 Bulkhead with sound absorbing material around the perimeter of the space will create a sense of enclosure, without altering the overall feeling of height within the space. Raised access flooring will be installed throughout the space allowing modern working and allowing level access from adjacent areas.
- 16.0 One wall of the 1990s extension to the building will also be overclad in an artificial moss. This firstly will aid with sound absorption within the area, but will also provide some interest and 'greenery' within the space. This finish requires no maintenance and will be fixed to the walls in such a way that reversion to the existing layout can be achieved with minimal disruption to the existing fabric. Other walls to the 1990s extension will have 'planters' located at the windows. This again will provide 'greenery' and visual interest to the higher levels of the space

One wall of the 1990s extension will be overclad in artificial moss. This will aid with sound absorption, but will also provide greenery and visual interest within the space. Lighting within the area will be achieved by way of festoon lighting strung across at first floor level. Lighting cables will be attached to the historic wall by way of minimal eyebolts as agreed with Historic England.



1st floor – East Wing works:

- 17.0 The east wing to the first floor are within part of the 19th Century buildings of Waterhouse Square. On the first floor, the floor can be viewed as two distinct sections. Open plan office area to the North and enclosed rooms to the Southern section.
- 18.0 Within the Northern section there are few original features of the existing building visible internally with suspended ceilings throughout. Within this area it is proposed that cellular offices are created along with meeting rooms and additional WC toilets. New timber floor covering, painted walls, wallpaper coverings, light fittings and exposed mechanical and electrical services. All existing ceilings will be stripped out to expose the soffit. See below photo for current interior condition.



View of existing open plan space in the East Wing.

19.0 The area to the South of the East wing contains the most historically significant elements of the whole area to be fitted out. However, even here many of the original features have been lost or covered over as part of previous works within the building. These rooms are proposed to be used as cellular offices, therefore requiring no significant work to be carried out to the structure. The existing proportions of the rooms are therefore to be maintained. Further, one room within this space will be investigated on site to look at stripping back to any original features previously boarded over. This to become a “heritage” room. Existing architectural features to remain throughout, as shown in the photographs below. Lowered ceilings are to be stripped out and original soffits exposed.



Existing features in proposed “heritage room”

20.0 Existing access ramp to be removed and new ramp installed for improved access in reception area. See detail drawing for new ramp layout. This will clearly improve accessibility for building users.

1st floor – West Wing works:

- 21.0 As with the ground floor, the works to the first floor west wing are entirely within the 1990s extension to Waterhouse Square. As such the internal fabric of the building has no historical significance with plasterboard partitioning, and suspended ceilings.
- 22.0 Existing plasterboard partitions, ceilings and previous fit out to be removed. Architectural details to be revealed and made good.
- 23.0 The creation of a new lounge, pantry and meeting rooms. New timber and tile floor coverings, painted walls, wallpaper coverings, light fittings and exposed mechanical and electrical services. Plaster ceilings made good and painted where required. Exposed brickwork and wall tiles to retain and any plasterboard edges made good.
- 24.0 The area of floor which does not benefit from raised access floors at present will have this facility installed. This will remove the need for ramp between levels and therefore improve connectivity and access.
- 25.0 The creation of cellular offices, meeting rooms and additional WC toilets. New timber floor covering, painted walls, wallpaper coverings, light fittings and exposed mechanical and electrical services. Metal slab ceiling to be removed to expose soffit. Existing plasterboard edges made good. See below photo for current interior condition.



View of existing open plan space in the West Wing.

26.0 **Access:**

- 27.0 Waterhouse Square has been selected by WeWork as a location partly due to the central location. Access to the building location is very good. Waterhouse Square has PTAL rating of 6b (the highest score possible) It is within minutes of Chancery Lane Underground station and several bus routes have stops directly outside the building to the High Holborn side.
- 28.0 Level access to the building from the street is available as is the case at present.
- 29.0 Where possible, within the constraints of an existing building, alterations have been made to assist access within the office. For example, installation of raised access floor within the Atrium space has allowed level access to this space to be provided from the main circulation core, removing the existing stepped access.
- 30.0 LTB are designing the fit out of distinct areas of floorplates and have no scope to carry out works within the Landlord/ communal areas, therefore, there will be no changes to the existing vertical circulation, stairs and lifts, however, the works described above and on our drawings have been designed to meet Part M and Building Regulations. Our designs have taken into account general circulation, layout, internal signage, lighting levels and colour/tonal contrast in line with the equality act and building control regulations. We are working with Greendoor Building Control to assist us in creating a fully regulated interior.