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# Design / Access and Heritage Statement

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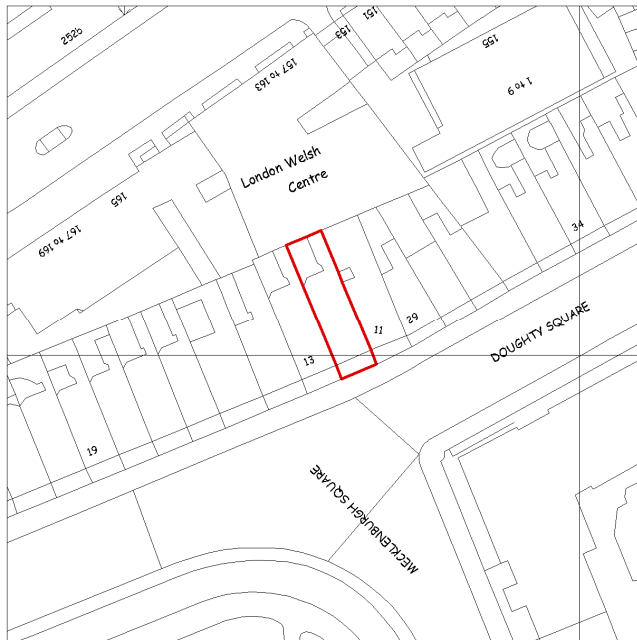
Internal modifications to grade II\* listed building at:  
Flat 3, 12 Mecklenburgh Square  
London  
WC1N 2AD

Jan 2017

## Introduction and Aims:

This design and access / heritage statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant following feedback from pre-application reference 2016/6551/PRE and in support of an application for listed building consent

The works will consist of internal alterations at apartment 3,12 Mecklenburgh Square. After receiving pre-application advice from Camden Council's Conservation Officer it became apparent that unauthorised works had been carried out on the property by the previous owners, since consent for conversion to self-contained flats was granted in 1997. As part of this refurbishment programme the new owner proposes to rectify these unauthorised works and return the layout very close to the original plan that was approved in 1997.



Location Plan



Arial view

### **Heritage Significance:**

Government guidance on listed building control is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This advises that the level of detail provided in the statement should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (para 128). This statement outlines the features of the property and explains how the works impact on the listed building as well as Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

### **Application Site**

The site is located on the east side of Mecklenburgh Square in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The site comprises a four storey property with lower ground level currently in use as five self-contained residential units.

The property is part of a terrace of 24 Grade II \* listed houses forming the east side of Mecklenburgh Square constructed c.1810-20 to designs by the architect Joseph Kay; no. 12 was built by Thomas Penthrin.

Flat 3 (the subject of this application) is located on the first floor of the site, where the principle rooms of the building are located. As stated in the English Heritage publication, 'London terrace houses 1660 – 1860: A guide to alterations and extensions':

*'The domestic plan form of London terrace houses is an important part of their character and special interest. As a general rule the character, proportion, and integrity of the principal rooms at ground and first floor levels...should be preserved. Normally such areas should not be subdivided... Any alterations should be reversible.'*

In addition, a number of buildings in the immediate vicinity are also listed. The closest to Mecklenburgh Square are:

- 1 -8 (consecutive) Mecklenburgh Square and attached railing (grade II).
- 21-25 (consecutive) Mecklenburgh Square and attached railings (grade II\*).
- 43-47 (consecutive) Mecklenburgh Square and attached railings (grade II).
- 29-38 Doughty Street and attached railings (grade II).
- London House, Mecklenburgh Square (grade II).
- 165 Grays Inn Road and attached railings (grade II).

## **Bloomsbury Conservation Area appraisal and management Strategy**

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area covers an area of approximately 160 hectares extending 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 Kings Cross Road in the east.

The initial designation of Bloomsbury as a conservation area in 1968 sought to protect elements of development from the Georgian and earlier eras where there had been significant later redevelopment. There have been numerous subsequent extensions that have mostly reflected growing appreciation of Victorian and Edwardian and high quality 20<sup>th</sup> Century architecture.

In terms of build form, the Georgian townhouses the area form homogenous terraces and tend to be listed. Some terraces have an overall classical composition giving them greater sense of scale and presence.

### **Relevant planning history**

#### **12-13 Mecklenburgh Square:**

**LS9604209.** Listed building consent, granted 09/01/1997, for:

*Internal alterations in connection with the formation of ten self-contained flats.*

#### **12-13 Mecklenburgh Square:**

**LS9704176.** Approval of Details (listed building), granted 24/07/1997, for:

*Approval of details, including new windows, doors, joinery, staircase repairs, plasterwork and partitions, pursuant to additional condition 3(a-h) of listed building consent (Reg.no.LS9704209) dated 9th January 1997.*

#### **Flat 1, 20 Mecklenburgh Square, London:**

**2016/1167/L.** Listed building consent, granted 06/04/2016, for:

*Minor internal alterations including; replace glazed doors on extension with a contemporary design, replace window and door to yard in lower ground floor kitchen with contemporary design replacement, change floor covering of yard from limestone to slate and replace timber cladding on recent extension with render and replace glass balustrade to extension with black metal railings.*

## **Relevant policies and guidance**

### **NPPF (2012)**

Chapter 7 Requiring good design (paragraphs 56-61, 66)

Chapter 12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (paragraphs 128-134, 138)

### **London Plan (2016)**

Policy 7.4 Local character

Policy 7.6 Architecture

Policy 7.8 Heritage assets and archaeology

### **LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies (2010)**

CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

DP24 Securing high quality design

DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

CPG1 Design (2015)

### **Historic England / English Heritage, 'London terrace houses 1660 – 1860: A guide to alterations and extensions'**

## **Current arrangement**

The current layout was established following grant of listed building consent in 1997, where a modern partition was installed in the rear room of Flat 3, in line with the edge of the chimney breast to accommodate a kitchen and bathroom to allow use of the first floor as a one bedroom flat. The subdivision within the rear room is not full height, but approximately 2.65m. The ceiling above the kitchen and bedroom forms a mezzanine level with a height of approximately 1.2m which provides a storage area.

Since the original approval the following works have been carried out by a previous owner (unauthorized).

- Removal of kitchen / Hall partition and door.
- Removal of Hall / rear bedroom door.
- Removal of Bathroom door which has been replaced with a sliding door.
- Introduction of a vertical red slab partition wall to approximately 3.5m in height and 1.6m wide. (see photo 11)

## **1. Proposed Development:**

### **The main aims are:**

1. Remove unauthorised vertical red slab feature used to conceal sliding door between bedroom and bathroom.
2. Re-instate kitchen door and partition (with dog-leg to ensure architrave around original hallway door opening is preserved).
3. Provide separation from hallway to meet fire-regulations as advised by building control.
4. Re-instate traditional timber panelled door and architrave between rear bedroom and hallway.
5. New fitted kitchen and appliances.
6. New bathroom .
7. New plumbing and electrical re-wiring.
8. Redecoration throughout.
9. New flooring with increased acoustic soundproofing
10. Introduce sliding pocket doors to kitchen and bathroom to allow more circulation space in these small rooms.
11. Removal and safe-keeping of mantle-piece of modern replacement fireplace (photo 6) is requested to allow effective placement of free-standing furniture and facilitate easier access to bathroom from bedroom. The mantle-piece will be protected and stored carefully on top of mezzanine and can be re-fitted in future, as required.

### **Relevant drawings:**

- 370-01-P5 – Existing layout and demolition Plan
- 370-02-P5 – Proposed Plans
- 370-03 - Existing and proposed wall elevations and Sections.
- 370-04 – Site and location plan

**Existing Layout:**

The following photos should be used on conjunction with the layout plan 370-01.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8

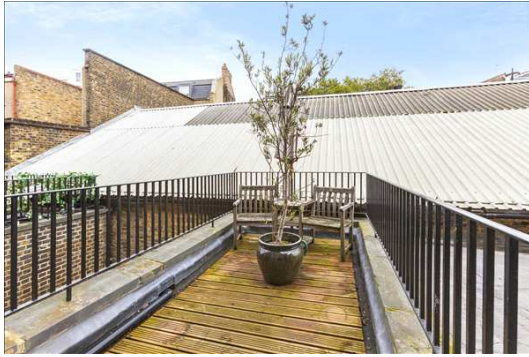


Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11

**Conclusion:**

The proposed works will return the layout close to that of the original permission whilst enhancing the finishes of the kitchen and bathroom areas.

Unauthorised work carried out by a previous owner will be rectified and the restored layout will comply with building / fire regulations by separating the kitchen area from hallway.

It is considered that the proposed works will not have a negative effect on the special historic character or architectural interest of the listed building, the proposals are relatively minor in nature and will not negatively affect the heritage interests of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Therefore the proposals will comply with the provisions of the NPPF and policies CS14, DP24 ,DP25 and CPG1 and approval is requested.