

**6 BAYLEY STREET**

**LONDON**

**WC1B 3HH**

**Heritage Assessment of proposed alterations**



August 2017

## **1.0 Scope**

- 1.1 This assessment has been prepared to accompany a listed building application for 6 Bayley Street to include reinstating an opening between the two ground floor principle rooms.
- 1.2 This report has been prepared by Sean Emmett who is a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. It is based on a desk-top study of the building, the listing description, the Bloomsbury Conservation Area draft statement.

## **2.0 Location**

- 2.1 The site is located on the north side of Bayley Street on the corner of Bedford Square.
- 2.2 It lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and is described as being within Sub-Area 5. Bedford Square/Gower Street is described as follows:

5.62 Dating from 1775, Bedford Square is one of the most significant and complete examples of a Georgian square in London. Its national importance is acknowledged by the grade I listed status of all the townhouses fronting the square. Furthermore, a sizeable number of original streetscape elements remain (many of which are grade II listed) The private gardens in the centre of the square are included in the English Heritage *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Greater London* at grade II\*.

5.63 The square is the centre piece of the Bedford Estate's planned development which includes a series of interlinked streets and spaces and is a major focal point both along Gower Street and within the wider Bloomsbury area. Despite the impact of traffic along Gower Street the square remains a relatively intimate and secluded space. The landscaped oval gardens at its heart green the space, and the iron boundary railings and group of mature trees heighten the sense of enclosure. The gardens are entered through gates under ornate wrought iron arches. Originally of a purely residential nature, the square now contains several office and institutional uses. However, a small number of properties are now being returned to single family dwellings.

5.64 The terraces comprise three principal storeys with a basement and attic level. The frontages are of particular note because they were designed as a whole in a neoclassical style to give a sense of architectural unity and harmony to the square. The front facades are constructed from yellow stock brick with tuck pointing. Each of terraces has a central, stuccoed pediment as a centrepiece, with rusticated bases. The doorways have distinctive intermittent voussiors of Coade stone (a type of artificial stone) and each key stones is decorated with a human face. It should be noted that five townhouses in Bayley Street extend the northern side of the square to the west, all of which are listed grade II.

### **3.0 Background and description**

- 3.1 The five townhouses on Bayley Street extend the northern side of Bedford Square. Bedford Square was conceived during the building boom which followed the Peace of Paris in 1763. A lull from 1767-1771 was followed by an upturn between 1773 and 1777 which led to a further down turn in 1778 when France entered into the American War of Independence. Loans to builders from the Bedford Estate however allowed the scheme for the Square to be completed by the end of 1783 as part of the spread of development north of New Oxford Street. It is understood that the properties on Bayley Street shortly after Bedford Square as a continuation of the expansion of the area.
- 3.2 The Estate had considerable control over the form of the development and the Square is unique in having four complete sides of 'palace-fronted' terrace houses surrounding a central garden which is oval in shape.
- 3.3 The building facades had to keep to a regular format with an emphasis on the central properties. This uniformity has been broadly maintained although careful inspection reveals a wealth of detailed variations.
- 3.4 The coherent appearance, combined with some very good interiors, has justified the listing of all the buildings as Grade II.
- 3.5 A lease to number 6 Bayley Street was granted to Ed Victor Limited for 25 years in 1994.
- 3.6 6 Bayley Street is of a standard layout on four main floors with a basement below. The main frontage faces the Square and is three bays wide.
- 3.7 The listing for the north side of Bayley Street describes the terrace as a group of five houses from the 18<sup>th</sup> century of three storey with attics and basements. Multi coloured stock brick with stucco surrounds to the doorways and cornices.
- 3.8 Archive planning drawings from 1992 show major refurbishment works, separating 26-27 Bedford Square and 6,8,9 & 10 Bayley Street into separate demises. At this point a rear toilet block was added and the lightwell was reconfigured.

### **4.0 Significance**

- 4.1 The building in common with the group of 5 similar properties on Bayley Street are listed grade II The listing description states that:  
*Terrace of 5 houses. Late C18. Multi-coloured stock brick. Slated mansard roofs with dormers. 3 storeys, attics and basements. 3 windows each. Stucco surrounds to doorways with pilasters carrying bracketed cornices; rectangular fanlights and panelled doors. Gauged brick arches to recessed sash windows, 1st and 2nd floor with bracketed sills and cast-iron window guards. Parapets. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with torch flambe finials to areas.* The building is clearly of significance as part of the complete range of terraces round Bedford Square, and as an example of this type of development.
- 4.2 Internally the joinery items, such as the doors, architraves, skirting boards and windows & associated shutters are of significance. The decorative items, such as the cornices are of decorative and of importance, although they appear to be replicas and not original.
- 4.4 For the Conservation Area the significance of the building is, as noted in 4.1, its relationship to Bedford Square.

### **5.0 Proposals**

- 5.1 The proposal included within this application is limited to the opening up of a former opening between the two principle rooms on the ground floor and widening the opening.

- 5.2 This opening between the two principle rooms will be set at the same common height as the existing door to ensure the plan form and ceiling details are still legible.
- 5.3 The design and materials of the joinery framing the reinstated opening will be informed by the existing details within the property and therefore in-keeping with other similar openings at 6 Bayley Street.
- 5.4 There are no other alterations under this application, and a separate application encompasses the majority of the refurbishment works.
- 5.5 The proposal does not affect the external appearance of the building as seen from both Bayley Street and the wider Square.

## **6.0 Assessment**

- 6.1 The proposal does not have any adverse effect on the front elevation of the building which, as described above, is of particular significance: therefore they do not adversely affect the significance of the exterior of the listed building, nor the adjoining listed buildings, nor the Conservation Area.
- 6.2 The reinstatement of the former opening between the front and rear room is a traditional introduction, and although marginally wider than the original opening, it will not result in loss of significant historic fabric.
- 6.3 It is apparent from inspection of the neighbouring contemporaries to 6 Bayley Street, similar door openings have been introduced, such as 8 & 9 Bayley Street and more recently a planning permission was granted for the reintroduction of a similar opening at 10 Bayley Street. There are also similar opening on the upper floors of the property.
- 6.4 In summary it is considered that the proposals comply with both national and local guidance on the protection of designated heritage assets and the conservation area while ensuring that the building provides a sustainable asset.

**Sean Emmett**  
**August 2017**