

N I G E L B I R D A R C H I T E C T S
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Heritage Statement

for

**Internal and external alterations to the Grade II Listed Building
(part-retrospective)**

known as

**20 Percy Street
Fitzrovia
London
W1T 1DZ**

in support of a

Full Planning and Listed Building Consent Application

October 2017

Ref.: AW/1562.5

Structural Consultant: Martin Moore BSc CEng MICE MStruct

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Heritage Statement

1. INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Nigel Bird Architects in support of proposals for the works at 20 Percy Street, a Grade II listed building, located in the London Borough of Camden.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 provides the Government's national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements for applications, it sets out that:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance."

This document identifies the relevant heritage asset(s) within the application site that may be affected by the application proposals and provides a statement of significance for the listed building in terms of its special architectural and historic interest. This also includes identification of the relative significance of the different areas or elements of the building.

*** Please note: Although throughout this document some references are made to the alterations made to the 38 Tottenham Court Road retail unit, necessary for a holistic assessment of the proposals at 20 Percy Street, those alterations do not form part of this application and are part of a separate Listed Building Consent application (ref.: 2017/1419/L) submitted by others. ***

2. THE HERITAGE ASSET

The property and heritage asset is '38 Tottenham Court Road / 20 Percy Street'; a four storey (plus basement) end of terrace building with a mansard roof form, occupying the corner plot of Percy Street and Tottenham Court Road. The property was built during 1764-1770, along with the remainder of Percy Street.



Photograph of 20 Percy Street, present day.

'38 Tottenham Court Road / 20 Percy Street' was given Grade II listed status on 22 January 1974. The list description states:

"Includes: No.20 PERCY STREET. Terraced house with later shop; return forms No.20 Percy Street. 1764-1770, altered. Built by W Franks, W Richmond, H Roydhouse and J Pritchett. Multi-coloured stock brick, painted red on Percy Street facade. Slate mansard roof with dormers. 3 storeys, attic and basement. 2 windows (3 at 2nd floor) and 3 window return to Percy Street. Ground floor with late C19 shopfront, returning to Percy Street. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sash windows. To right of Percy Street facade, house doorway with wooden doorcase with pilasters carrying enriched console-bracketed entablature; fanlight and panelled door. INTERIOR: not inspected"

Originally, the property would have been built as a single residence, as were the majority of properties on Percy Street. The ground floor timber and glass shop front was a later Victorian amendment (late 19th Century); the ground floor also sustained damage during the war, requiring 20th Century repair/rebuilding of the shop front.

The basement, ground floor and first floors are currently used for retail and are shared by two units ('iSmash' and 'Opera Opera'), with the second and third floors being a single residential flat.

The property has been configured as the above uses since the time of its listing in 1974, although the tenants have changed on several occasions. As such, the ground floor internal shop layout has been amended a number of times during its lifetime to suit the trade of the retail occupant.

The main access door off Percy Street and the stairs have remained in their original locations. The arrangement of the property at first floor levels remains largely as the original footprint, with the two principal rooms being unaltered in size and layout.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ASSET

The NPPF 2012 defines the significance of a heritage asset as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."

Setting - The property is located at the end of a terrace, consisting of a number of listed buildings of a similar nature to 20 Percy Street. Originally the terrace would have been a row of terraced houses, which have subsequently been divided with many ground floors being converted into retail with shop fronts being added. A number of properties along the street are also now used as offices.

The original property is largely intact externally from first floor upwards; at ground floor level, shop frontages were added when the property ceased to be used as single residence. Although the timber framed glazed fronts shop are a later addition, they are sensitively detailed to suit the prominent corner location of the building. We would deem that the street facing facades are of high significance to the listing, not only in regard to the property itself, but also its setting within the general street scene and the group value of these properties.

Architectural Interest - The plan form of the building has been amended to varying extents at each floor level. At ground floor level, the staircase and communal hall remain in their original locations, although have undergone some minor alterations where walls have been inserted to subdivide the building (prior to listing). However, the shop floor at ground floor level is likely to have originally been two rooms when used as a residence; the original dividing central wall, as well as the original features within these areas, have long been removed (again, prior to the listing of the property).

The general plan form of the communal hallway and staircase appears to remain intact as per the original location and form at all floor levels (as far as inspected due to private ownership of flat above), which is of high significance. The partitions within the shop floors at ground floor level would not have been original and we would deem are not significant to the listing.

At first floor level, the original property is more intact in terms of plan form and original features, with cornicing, architraves, doors and skirting boards appearing to be generally intact and kept in a good state of repair. With the first floor likely being the most intact floor in regard to original form and features, we would deem the plan form and features to be of high significance.

4. IMPACT OF PROPOSALS ON THE HERITAGE ASSET

This application is part-retrospective, as some of the minor alterations have already been undertaken and are noted as such within this document.

The proposal is for the following six aspects:

- i. Removal of existing ground floor partition between the two retail units and replacement with a new separating partition. (Retrospective).
- ii. Replacement of the existing door between the ground floor hallway and the display window serving the 20 Percy Street retail unit. (Retrospective).
- iii. Alterations to the signage of the shop front facing Percy Street. (Part-retrospective).
- iv. Reinstatement of an awning to the shop front facing Percy Street.
- v. Installation of wrought iron railings and gate in front of the 20 Percy Street entrance door.
- vi. Re-instatement of the mosaic floor adjacent to the shop front along Percy Street and Tottenham Court Road.

Ground Floor Partition - At the time of listing, the ground floor retail areas were divided into two sections, the larger main area being the shop floor of the 38 Tottenham Court Road retail unit, with the smaller being a store room (for safes) to serve the 20 Percy Street retail unit, accessed from the communal hallway.

Within the 38 Tottenham Court Road unit, the glazed shop front was entirely separated from the remainder of the shop floor by full height partitions (with access doors) to create display windows.

The small store area serving the 20 Percy Street retail unit was obscured from view from the street by means of back painted glazing.



Photograph of 38 Tottenham Court Road / 20 Percy Street taken in the 1970s (prior to time of listing)

This portioning and display window arrangement has been amended to suit the new demises and uses of the two retail units that currently occupy the premises, in order to give a display window for the 20 Percy Street property. By changing the use of the smaller area from retail storage to retail display and removing the paint from the glass, the full extent of the glazed shop front facing Percy Street is used for display once more.

The partition as installed is constructed from lightweight studwork and plasterboard, a construction type typical of 'temporary' retail fit-outs and easily reversible should the use and needs of the two retail units change in course. The partition purposefully makes very

little connection with the timber framing of the glazed shop front, minimising its impact and potential harm of the partition on the external fabric of the building and, as noted above, making it easily removable/reversible.



Photograph of bottom of partition and relationship with timber framed glazed shop front.

Replacement Door - At the time of listing, the small store room (used for safes) was accessed from the communal hallway off 20 Percy Street via a doorway adjacent to the main entrance door. The door was in poor condition and has since been replaced with a new four panel raised and fielded timber door.

It is likely that there were once two doorways from the hallway into each of the original ground floor rooms (now the shop floor). The precise locations of the original door openings is not clearly apparent; whilst it is possible that the door into the shop window for 20 Percy Street is not in the original location, this opening was made prior to the building acquiring listed status and therefore only the replacement of the door joinery itself requires listed building consent. Whilst the door as installed is currently clearly finished, it is proposed to paint the door and architraves white on both sides to match the finish of the original doors in the building.



Photographs of replacement door to access window display area for 20 Percy Street.

Signage - Additional external back-lit signage is proposed to the shop front facing Percy Street. The proposed signage does not require the existing timber joinery to be altered in design, utilising the existing display panels for previous signage and therefore having minimal impact on the façade of the building.

Above the entrance door, the proposed spectacle signage has minimal fixing locations, being held off and away from the brickwork, minimising the impact on the external brickwork wall behind.

Awning - When the current timber shop front was added, awnings would also have been installed. The awnings first installed have since been removed, but the recesses for the awnings remain clearly visible on the façade. The proposal is to reinstate the awnings, with a sympathetic 'trellis arm' awning mechanism (refer to appendix A). The fixings of the trellis arms are to be sympathetically located on within the composition of the existing timber panelling, with supporting structure added behind the timber if required.



Photograph of existing recess within timber shop front joinery for the awning.

Railings and Gate - It is proposed to install gloss black painted wrought iron railings and gate in front of the entrance door from Percy Street. Railings around original light well openings are typical on the majority of properties on Percy Street; although there is some variation, the railings with elaborate corner finials seen at number 28 are typical of the street and are to be replicated at 20 Percy Street. The railings will be fixed to a low profile rendered masonry upstand, as seen throughout Percy Street.



Photographs of railings with finials on 28 Percy Street, to be matched.

External Mosaic Flooring - There is evidence of where the original external mosaic flooring outside the entrance door of 20 Percy Street has been cut short and replaced with a concrete infill. It is proposed to remove the concrete and restore the external mosaic floor along the external frontage of the property.



Photograph of existing mosaic and surrounding concrete finish.



Close up photograph of mosaic pattern.



Photograph of entire mosaic pattern

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, the heritage asset that may have been affected by the application proposals has been identified and its significance described. Consequently, a clear understanding of the significance of the heritage asset has informed the proposals.

With regard to '38 Tottenham Court Road / 20 Percy Street', we deem its significance is primarily in regard to the two street facades and its contribution to the appearance of the terrace along the road. The internal floor plan arrangement at first floor level, coupled with the intact condition of original features at first floor level, are also of considerable interest and significance.

In order to maintain the heritage value for future generations, flexibility when considering applications for reversible internal shop fits and other arrangements of temporary nature that cause no harm should be considered as acceptable.

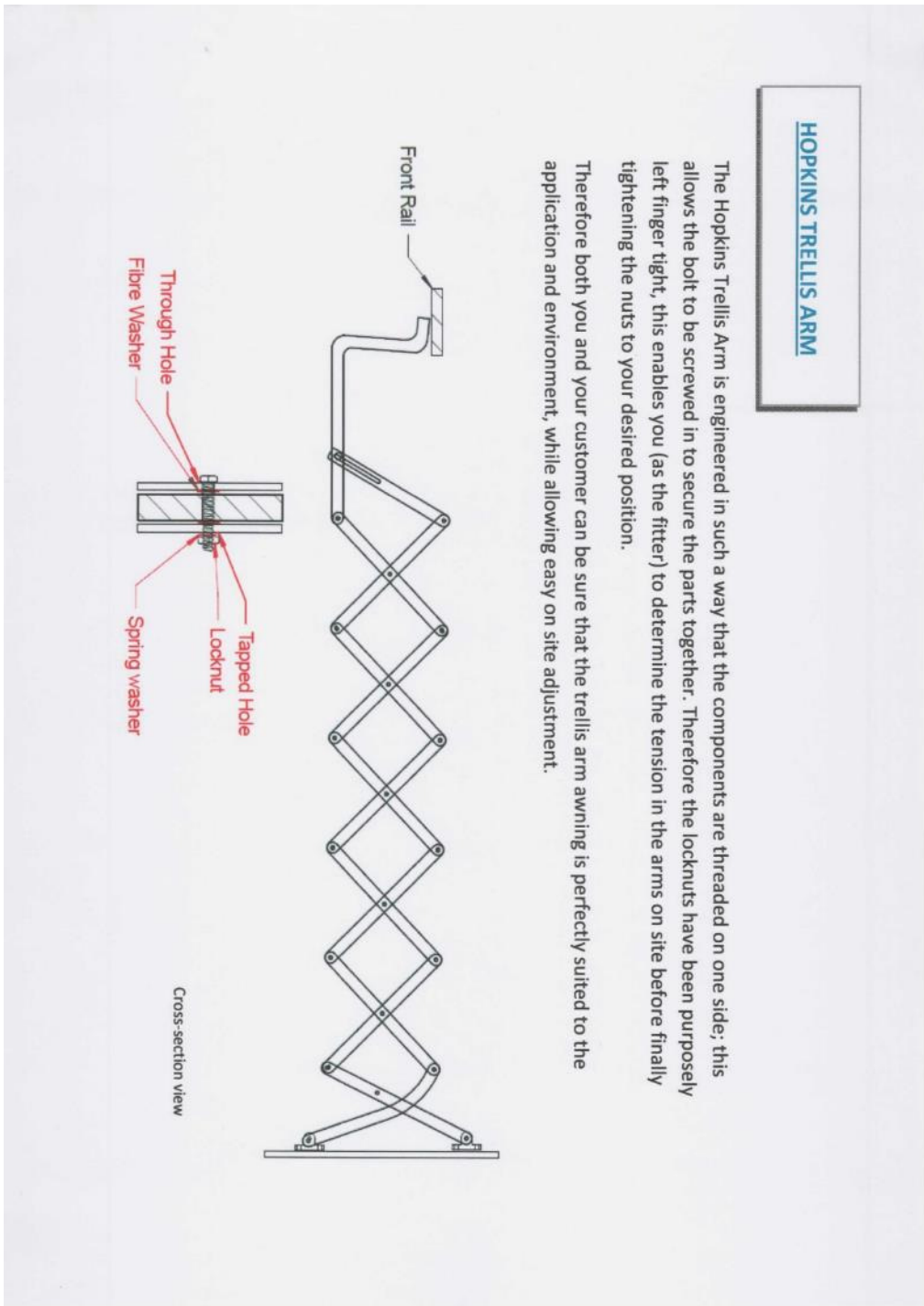
In conclusion, the proposals will preserve the special interest of the listed building and its group value with other properties on Percy Street. The external alterations have been sensitively approached in order to enhance the building within its setting. With minimal internal alterations being proposed, at ground floor only, the potential negative impact of the proposals has been minimised and the significance of the heritage asset has been sustained.

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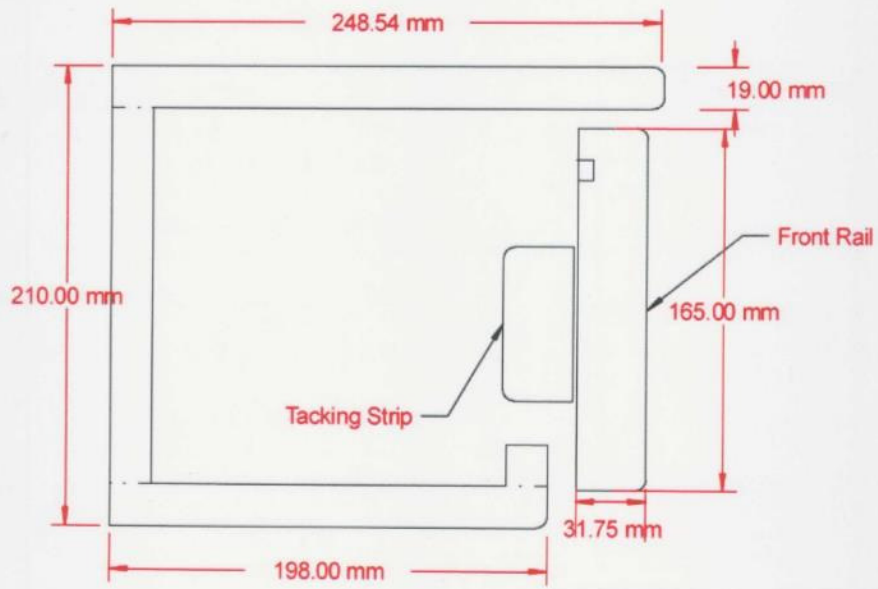
APPENDIX A

Proposed Awning Design Documents

Indicative design of proposed awning



Indicative detail of proposed awning



Indicative photographs of similar installed awning

