



Design and Access Statement

In respect of

Hotel Russell, 1-8 Russell Square
London WC1B 5BE

On behalf of

The Principal London Limited

RPS CgMs Ref: JCG22081

November 2017

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Report Status:

FINAL

CgMs Ref:

JCG22081

Issue Date:

21 November 2017

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by CgMs Heritage, part of the RPS Group, on behalf of The Principal London Limited. It accompanies applications for non-material amendment (under Section 96A (4) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) to Planning Consent ref 2017/3323/P and listed building consent for the installation of a canopy on the Guildford Street elevation of the Hotel Russell at 1-8 Russell Square, WC1B 5BE, henceforth known as the Site.

The Site has been identified on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) as a Grade II* listed building (Appendix A). The Site therefore constitutes a designated heritage asset under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In addition, the Site falls within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset under the jurisdiction of Camden Council (Appendix B).

Presently, the Hotel is undergoing 'a once in a generation' overhaul by its owners as part of an overall masterplan for its conservation and enhancement. Accordingly, a number of 'Applications for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent' have been submitted and subsequently approved by Camden Council. These planning applications are to better reveal the Hotel's significance and secure its long-term future as a high-end hotel establishment. These planning applications included:

- Mock Up Room (LPA Ref. no. 2014/7634/L). Approved Feb 2015 (works completed);

- Hard Refurbishment of Guestrooms (LPA Ref. no. 2015/0052/L). Approved March 2015 (works commenced on site);
- Works to Lower Ground Floor and Lifts (LPA Ref. nos. 2015/1031/P & 2015/1344/L). Approved June 2015 (works commenced on site);
- Ground Floor and External Works – (Ref 2015/1673/P subject to a S.106 agreement & 2015/2013/L). Approved April 2016; (works commenced on site) and,
- Amendments to Lifts and Reception Area – (LPA Ref Nos. 2016/2177/P & 2016/2182/L). Approved June 2016.

The extent of works included within this application involves the installation of a projecting canopy above the new restaurant entrance and approach steps on Guildford Street. The latter already have approval under 2015/1673/P and 2015/2013/L referred to above. These consents included various internal and external alterations to the building, fenestration, roof plant and the internal courtyard. Subsequent applications have been submitted in response to new variations to the proposals such as 2016/4951/P & 2016/4981/L for the Installation of keg lift to existing external stair to north-west corner between Russell Square (south-west) and Bernard Street (North-west), approved February 2017. As indicated works have commenced in relation to these various permissions, several having been fully implemented. The canopy proposals come forward on

the basis of those permissions being fully implemented.

The accompanying non-material amendment (Section 96A) and listed building applications correspond closely to the existing approvals 2017/3323/P and 2017/3330/L but differ in respect to the means of support for the canopy and a slight increase in the overall dimensions of the canopy on account of the supporting steel columns.

As per the above approvals the canopy consists of a galvanised steel frame fitted in front of a round arched opening and shaped to correspond to this opening. The projecting element is also arched and forms a sloping barrel vault that is consistent with the gradient of the newly installed approach steps (cf. 2015/1673/P). The steel frame supports a black 'Fytotextile' membrane or 'living wall' to the outward faces consisting of an under-sheet covered by series of pockets. The pockets contain a small amount of soil and are planted with ivy which will grow to cover all the exposed surfaces including the front vertical face of the canopy. The soffit of the canopy structure and inner vertical face will be covered by light coloured canvas that has a striped design. The ivy 'cladding' is a living element that will be sustained by an integrated water supply fed from a central reservoir and pump. This will be housed within the basement lightwell and located in a former coal drop alcove beneath the pavement of Russell Square (east side). The integrated water supply also serves the planter tubs affixed to the perimeter light well railings. The canopy will be supplied by a short branch of pipework that is concealed within the right hand of the two



Figure 1: Hotel Russell from the West. The building was designed by Charles Fitzroy Doll and completed in 1898. The Hotel's front façade evidently demonstrates its Late Victorian opulence and grandeur.



Figure 2: 1:2,500 OS Map with Hotel boundary indicated in red.



Figure 3: Aerial view of Russell Square where Hotel Russell is in a prominent location at the north east corner and facing onto Russell Square Gardens.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

supporting steel columns and will therefore not be visible.

This report responds to requirements under Article 4c of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (the "DMPO") for most planning applications to be accompanied by a Design & Access Statement that explains the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and how issues relating to access within the development is dealt with.

The following Design and Access Statement explains the processes which have led to the proposed works at the application Site. Each of the required processes takes into account the design intentions and how they have due regard for the application Site's significance as a Grade II* listed building, in addition to its wider context within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Accordingly this Statement will ascertain what impact the proposals will have upon the significance of the Grade II* listed building based on an assessment informed by historical research, a site inspection and an exercise of professional judgement.

The Statement is prepared in accordance with the relevant legislative and national, strategic and local planning policy and guidance specifically with regard to aspects concerning works carried out to statutorily listed buildings and within conservation areas. In accordance with paragraph 128 of the NPPF sufficient information has been provided in proportion the proposals to allow the council to reach a decision as to their suitability.

All photos, maps and plans are for illustrative purposes only.

All photos are the author's own, unless otherwise stated.

This Design and Access should be read in conjunction with other the documents and detailed plans submitted with this Non-Material Amendment application and application for listed building consent.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE & PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 LEGISLATION & NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The current national policy system identifies, through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), that planning applications should consider the potential impact of development upon 'heritage assets'. This term includes: designated heritage assets, which possess a statutory designation (for example Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and Registered Parks and Gardens); and non-designated heritage assets, typically compiled by Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and incorporated into a Local List.

Legislation

Where any development may affect designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure proposed works are developed and considered with due regard for their impact on the historic environment. This extends from primary legislation under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The relevant legislation in this case extends from Section 16 of the 1990 Act which states that in considering applications for listed building consent, the LPA shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the Listed Building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Section 66 further states that special regard must be given by the LPA to the desirability of preserving or enhancing listed buildings and their setting. A particularly appropriate example of upholding a S66 is in the case of West Coast Energy's proposal for five wind turbines to be installed within the setting of the Grade I listed Barnwell Manor, Northamptonshire. The National Trust advocated that the proposals would have an adverse impact upon the heritage asset's setting and, reinforced by local opposition, the proposal was rejected by East Northamptonshire District Council in 2010. The developers won an appeal for four turbines, however, this was overturned at the High Court. A subsequent Appeal to overturn the High Court ruling was dismissed in February 2014.

In addition, Section 72 of the 1990 Act states that in exercising all planning functions, LPAs must have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing Conservation Areas.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), March 2012)

The NPPF is the principal document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It has been purposefully created to provide a framework within which LPAs and the local populace can produce their own distinctive Local and Neighbourhood Plans, respectively. Such Plans consequently reflect the

needs and priorities of their communities.

When determining planning applications, the NPPF directs LPAs to apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development; the 'golden thread' that is expected to run through the plan-making and decision-making process. Nonetheless, NPPF Paragraph 14 states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is only applied unless certain specific policies indicate that such development should be restricted; these include policies protecting sites identified as: designated heritage assets; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs); Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs); and the Green Belt.

The NPPF defines a heritage asset as: "A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest". The definition of a heritage asset includes 'designated' heritage assets: "A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation". In addition, other 'non-designated' heritage assets identified by LPAs are included in a Local List.

Section 7 *Requiring Good Design* reinforces the importance of good design in achieving sustainable development, by ensuring the creation of inclusive and high quality places. NPPF Paragraph 58 affirms the need for new design to: function well and add to the quality of the area in which it is built; establish a strong sense of place; and respond to local character and history, reflecting the built identity of the surrounding area.

Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* contains NPPF Paragraphs 126-141, which relate to development proposals that have an affect upon the historic environment. Such policies provide the framework that LPAs need to refer to when setting out a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment in their Local Plans.

The NPPF advises LPAs to take into account the following points when drawing up strategies for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and preserving them in a viable use consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that the conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development in making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic

environment to the character of a place.

These considerations should be taken into account when determining planning applications and, in addition, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality.

In order to determine applications, NPPF Paragraph 128 states that LPAs should require applicants to demonstrate the significance of any heritage assets likely to be affected by development proposals, including the contribution made to their setting. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to each heritage assets' significance and sufficient to understand what impact will be caused upon their significance. This is supported by NPPF Paragraph 129, which requires LPAs to take this assessment into account when considering applications.

NPPF Paragraphs 132-136 consider the impact of development proposals upon the significance of a heritage asset. NPPF Paragraph 132 emphasises the need for proportionality in decision-making and identifies that, when a development is proposed, the weight given to the conservation of a heritage asset should be proportionate to its significance, with greater weight given to those assets of higher significance. NPPF Paragraph 134 states that, where less than substantial harm will be caused to a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the development proposals, which include securing the heritage asset's optimum viable use.

Paragraph 136 stipulates that LPAs should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

In addition, Paragraph 137 notes that LPAs should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Adding, proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

In relation to Conservation Areas, it is acknowledged in NPPF Paragraph 138 that not all aspects of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. This allows some flexibility for sustainable development to take place in or near Conservation Areas, without causing harm to the overall heritage asset's significance.

2.2 NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE

National Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (DCLG)

This guidance has been adopted in support of the NPPF. *Chapter 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment* reiterates the importance of conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance as a core planning principle.

Last updated in April 2014, this chapter outlines that conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change; requiring a flexible and thoughtful approach. Furthermore, it highlights that neglect and decay of heritage assets is best addressed by ensuring that they remain in an active use consistent with their conservation.

Key elements of this guidance relate to assessing harm. It states, an important consideration should be whether the proposed works adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset's special architectural or historic interest. Adding that it is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development, that is to be assessed.

The level of 'substantial harm' is stated to be a high bar that may not arise in many cases. Essentially, whether development proposals meet this high threshold or not will be a judgment taken in the decision-making process, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the NPPF.

Critically, it is stated that harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. Setting is defined as:

'the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may be more extensive than the curtilage'.

A comprehensive assessment of the impact of development proposals upon a heritage asset's setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to its significance, the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance, and the ability to experience it.

The guidance states that if complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim should then be to capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance, and make the interpretation publically available.

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (English Heritage, April 2008)

Historic England (formerly English Heritage) outlines the approach to sustainable management of the historic environment within this document. While primarily intended to ensure consistency in their own advice and guidance through the planning process, the document is commended to LPAs to ensure that all decisions about change affecting the historic environment are informed and sustainable.

This document was published in line with the philosophy of PPS5, yet

remains relevant with the NPPF and PPG, with emphasis placed upon the importance of understanding significance as a means to properly assess the effects of change upon heritage assets. Guidance within the document describes a range of 'heritage values' that constitute a heritage asset's significance to be established systematically. The four main heritage values include: aesthetic, evidential, communal or historical. Paragraph 25 of this document emphasises that:

'considered change offers the potential to enhance and add value to places...it is the means by which each generation aspires to enrich the historic environment'.

Overview: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes

In March 2015 Historic England (formerly English Heritage) withdrew the PPS5 Practice Guide document and replaced with *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes* (GPAs).

These GPAs provide supporting guidance relating to good conservation practice. The documents particularly focus on how good practice can be achieved through the principles included within national policy and guidance. As such, GPAs provide information on good practice to assist LPAs, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties when implementing policy found within the NPPF and PPG relating to the historic environment.

GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

This document provides advice on the numerous ways in which decision-taking in the historic environment can be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to its significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, this document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged, stating that:

'development proposals that affect the historic environment are much more likely to gain the necessary permissions and create successful places if they are designed with the knowledge and understanding of the significance of the heritage assets they may affect.'

The advice suggests a structured staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information, this is as follows:

1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;

2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change; and,
6. Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

The advice reiterates that heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Assessment of the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting at an early stage can assist the planning process resulting in informed decision-taking.

This document sets out the recommended steps for assessing significance and the impact of development proposals upon a heritage asset, including examining the asset and its setting and analysing local policies and information sources. In assessing the impact of a development proposal on the significance of a heritage asset the document emphasises that the cumulative impact of incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change.

Crucially, the nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording which may be necessary. This document also provides guidance in respect of neglect and unauthorised works.

Overview: Historic England Advice Notes in Planning

In addition to the above documentation, Historic England has published Heritage Advice Notes (HEANs) that provide detailed and practical advice on how national policy and guidance is implemented.

HEAN 1: Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (February 2016)

This document forms revised guidance which sets out the ways to manage change in order to ensure that historic areas are conserved. In particular information is provided relating to conservation area designation, appraisal and management. Whilst this document emphasises that *'activities to*

2.2 NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE

conserve or invest need to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected, it reiterates that the work carried out needs to provide sufficient information in order to understand the issues outlined in NPPF Paragraph 192, relating to the assessment of any heritage assets that may be affected by proposals.

There are different types of special architectural and historic interest that contribute to a Conservation Area's significance. These include:

- Areas with a high number of nationally designated heritage assets and a variety of architectural styles and historic associations;
- those linked to a particular industry or individual with a particular local interest;
- where an earlier, historically significant, layout is visible in the modern street pattern;
- where a particular style of architecture or traditional building materials predominate; and,
- areas designated on account of the quality of the public realm or a spatial element, such as a design form or settlement pattern, green spaces which are an essential component of a wider historic area, and historic parks and gardens and other designed landscapes, including those included on the Historic England Register of parks and gardens of special historic interest.

Change is inevitable, however, this document provides guidance in respect of managing change in a way that conserves and enhances areas, through identifying potential within a conservation area. This can be achieved through historic characterisation studies, production of neighbourhood plans, confirmation of special interest and setting out of recommendations. NPPF Paragraph 127 states that *'when considering the designation of conservation areas, LPAs should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest,'* this document reiterates that this needs to be considered throughout this process.

Section 71 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Area) Act 1990* places on LPAs the duty to produce proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. This document provides guidance for the production of management plans, which can *'channel development pressure to conserve the special quality of the conservation area'*. These plans may provide polices on the protection of views, criteria for demolition, alterations and extensions, urban design strategy and development opportunities. Furthermore, it includes information relating to Article 4 Directions, which give the LPA the power to limit permitted development rights where it is deemed necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of an area.

HEAN 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets (February 2016)

The purpose of this document is to provide information in respect of the repair, restoration and alterations to heritage assets. It promotes guidance for both LPAs, consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties in order to promote well-informed and collaborative conservation.

The best way to conserve a building is to keep it in use, or to find an appropriate new use. This document states that *'an unreasonable, inflexible approach will prevent action that could give a building new life...A reasonable proportionate approach to owners' needs is therefore essential'*. Whilst this is the case, the limits imposed by the significance of individual elements are an important consideration, especially when considering an asset's compatibility with Building Regulations and the Equality Act. As such, it is good practice for LPAs to consider imaginative ways of avoiding such conflict.

This document provides information relating to proposed change to a heritage asset, which are characterised as:

- Repair;
- restoration;
- addition and alteration, either singly or in combination; and,
- works for research alone.

2.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

Strategic Policy

The London Plan: The Spatial Development Strategy for London Consolidated with Alterations since 2011 (Greater London Authority (GLA), March 2016)

Adopted in March 2016, policies set out in this document are operative as formal alterations to the London Plan; the Mayor of London's spatial development strategy and form part of the development plan for Greater London. In particular, this document encourages the enhancement of the historic environment and looks favourably upon development proposals that seek to maintain heritage assets and their setting.

The importance of local character outlined in Policy 7.4 *Local Character* states that:

'Development should have regard to the form, function, and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings.'

Policy 7.5 *Public Realm* states that:

'Development should make the public realm comprehensible at a human scale, using gateways, focal points and landmarks as appropriate to help people find their way.'

Policy 7.6 *Architecture* states that:

'Architecture should make a positive contribution to a coherent public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape. It should incorporate the highest quality materials and design appropriate to its context.'

This policy also sets out a list of requirements of new buildings and structures, the most relevant to heritage, townscape and visual assessment are listed below:

- *Be of the highest architectural quality;*
- *be of a proportion, composition, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm;*
- *comprise details and materials that complement, not necessarily replicate, the local architectural character; and*
- *not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings, in relation to privacy, overshadowing, wind and microclimate. This is particularly important for tall buildings; and optimise the potential of sites.*

Policy 7.8 *Heritage Assets and Archaeology* provides the relevant policy with regards to development in historic environments and seeks to record, maintain and protect the city's heritage assets in order to utilise their potential within the community. It states that 'Development affecting

heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.' Policy 7.8 also further supports Policy 7.4 by requiring LPAs to formulate policies that seek to maintain and enhance the contribution of built, landscaped and buried heritage assets to the environmental quality, cultural identity and economy, as part of managing London's ability to accommodate change and regeneration.

Local Policy

Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 (Camden Council, 2010)

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a group of documents setting out planning strategy and policies in the London Borough of Camden. The principle LDF document is the Core Strategy, which sets out key elements of the Council's planning vision and strategy for the borough and contains strategic policies. The following Core Strategy policies relate to development concerning the historic environment in the borough:

Policy CS14 *Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage* seeks to ensure that places and buildings are attractive, safe and accessible by: requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character; preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens; promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces; seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible; protecting important local views.

Camden Development Policies 2010-2025 (Camden Council, November 2010)

As part of Camden Council's LDF, Development Policies 2010-2025 set out detailed planning criteria that are used to determine applications for planning permission in the borough. Policies pertinent to the historic environment include the following and are to be read in conjunction with the Core Strategy document:

DP24 *Securing high quality design* states that the Council require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect proposals to consider: the local character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings; the quality of materials to be used; the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level; the appropriate location for building services; the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments; the provision of appropriate amenity space; and

accessibility.

DP25 *Conserving Camden's heritage* emphasises that where development is proposed within a conservation area the Council will: take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications; only permit development that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area; prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention; not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area it is in; and preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

With regard to the setting of Listed buildings this policy states that the Council will not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of Listed buildings. Additionally, the Council will seek to protect other designated or undesignated heritage assets including: Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and London Squares.

Local Guidance

CPG 1 Design (Camden Council, April 2011, amended September 2013)

To support the policies of Camden's LDF, Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) forms a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), an additional "material consideration" in planning decisions, which is consistent with the adopted Core Strategy and the Development Policies. Following statutory consultation the Camden Planning Guidance documents (CPG1 to CPG8) replace Camden Planning Guidance 2006.

The Council formally adopted CPG1 Design on 6 April 2011, which was subsequently updated on 4 September 2013 following statutory consultation to include Section 12 on artworks, statues and memorials. This guidance applies to all applications which may affect any element of the historic environment and therefore may require planning permission, or conservation area or listed building consent.

With regard to proposed development within, or affecting the setting of, conservation areas in the Borough, Council will only grant permission that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area. When determining an application, guidance on such matters are set out in the Core Strategy policy CS14 and Development Policy DP24, as well as that in conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans. Totally or substantially demolishing a building or structure in a conservation area is deemed a criminal offence without first getting consent from the

2.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

Council. Also, demolition would not normally be allowed without substantial justification, in accordance with criteria set out in the NPPF.

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (Camden Council, April 2011) - Appendix B

This appraisal has been prepared by Camden Council and adopted on 18 April 2011 to define the special interest of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and ensure that its key attributes are understood and can be protected, with suitable measures put in place for appropriate enhancement.

The initial designation of Bloomsbury as a conservation area occurred in 1968 and sought to exclusively protect buildings dating to the Georgian and earlier eras from development. Subsequently there have been numerous extensions to its boundaries that have predominately reflected a growing appreciation of Bloomsbury's Victorian and Edwardian architecture, in addition to high quality twentieth century architecture.

Bloomsbury Conservation Area covers an area of approximately 160ha, 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 King's Cross Road in the east.

3.0 UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

3.1 URBAN AND BUILDING CONTEXT

Urban Context

The Hotel Russell is prominently located on the north-east corner of Russell Square within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The conservation area is divided into 14 sub areas. Hotel Russell is located in Sub Area 6: Bloomsbury Square/Russell Square/Tavistock Square (Appendix B, figures 5-7). The hotel's four key external elevations face Russell Square, Bernard Street, Guilford Street and Herbrand Street.

A diverse spectrum of architectural styles now exists around the square with a mixed business & residential usage. The prime business usage includes The University of London, a number of other hotels, banks and some supporting retail. It is also close to and overlooks the British Museum. The Hotel Russell is the most eye-catching building overlooking Russell Square on account of its impressive scale, architectural treatment and roofline which provides a highly elaborate silhouette. The Hotel's most notable feature is perhaps the extent and lavishness of its moulded terracotta detailing which is nationally outstanding.

Building Context

The Hotel Russell is a Grade II* Listed Building, designed by the Architect Charles Fitzroy Doll and opened by Frederick Hotels in 1898.

It was one of the first purpose built hotels in London with en-suite bathrooms, and was originally considered to be high-end luxury, although of 'conservative architectural taste'.

The architecture is an adaption of the German renaissance style and a rare example of late renaissance architecture in London. The building occupies a rhombus shaped island site with streets on four sides and three principal frontages. The most successful composition is that facing Russell Square, owing to its perfect symmetry. The Guildford Street and Bernard Street elevations present a unified architectural treatment that sustains the grandiloquence of the main frontage, making this one of the great nineteenth century hotel buildings in London.

The hotel interior designs were replicated by Doll in his work for the RMS Titanic's first class lounge and dining room. The hotel was damaged during the war and has since undergone several refurbishments, most noticeable in the 1970's and most recently in 2005.

[Refer to RPS CgMs Built Heritage Statement of March 2015 included within the submission for full consideration of the significance of the building and further historical context on the area. An assessment of the Conservation Area can be found in supplementary RPS CgMs reports that formed part of the other previously submitted and approved planning applications.]



Figure 4: Hotel Russell - Russell Square Elevation



Figure 6: Russell Square House, Russell Square. Noted for being a positive building within the Sub Area 6: Bloomsbury Square/Russell Square/Tavistock Square conservation area (Source: <http://russellsquarehouse.london/>)



Figure 5: Nos.44-49 Russell Square, Grade II listed within the Sub Area 6: Bloomsbury Square/Russell Square/Tavistock Square. (Source: Google Maps)



Figure 7: Brunswick Shopping Centre located to the north west of Hotel Russell in Sub Area 12: Coram's Fields/Brunswick Centre of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. (Source: <http://modernarchitecturelondon.com/buildings/brunswick-centre.php>)

4.0 ANALYSIS

4.1 EXTERNAL

External elevations

Prominently located at the north eastern corner of Russell Square, the external appearance of the Hotel displays a grand and imposing symmetrical façade of Dutch gabled bays vertically articulated by ogee capped octagonal corner turrets and lavishly decorated with terracotta, rubbed brick and other motifs such as horizontal banding. This banding detail is also evident on the tall slab chimney-stacks at roof level (Figure 8). At eight-storeys high, plus attic and basement, the main façade fronting Russell Square features terracotta and cast iron balconies between the projecting polygonal and square bays to the principal floors and horizontal banding above the main cornice; The roofs and turrets have copper-lined fish scale tiles and there was formerly a copper-lined square dome and lantern to the central roofspace. The dome was replaced with a tiled Mansard roof in the Post War era.

The Hotel has a rhombus shaped plan and its four ranges enclose a rectangular courtyard at the centre. The main façade has a central, projecting three-bay porch with a round-arched entrance flanked by single window bays. The three bay central feature rises to fourth floor level before terminating with a wide arch flanked by circular turrets and surmounted by a scrolled pediment and an entablature featuring a datestone of '1894'. The circular turrets have copper clad conical roofs with lead finials.

At ground floor level, windows are round-arched and set within shallow, arcading defined by three-quarter Ionic columns and console brackets supporting the first floor balcony above. All windows above ground floor are predominately the original mullion-transom casements or paired sashes separate by a mullion of orange terracotta.

The first floor level is distinguished by continuous projecting balconies featuring round-arched arcading with the coats of arms in the spandrels and balustrades which repeat the round arch arcading in miniature. This is all of orange terracotta and creates the effect of a highly ornate veranda. Also at this level are four stone figures, representing notable Queens of England, set within corbelled niches over the main entrance. The second floor also has continuous balconies with terracotta balustrades whereas the continuous balconies at third and fourth floors have cast-iron railings. There is a projecting modillion cornice at fifth floor level above an enriched frieze, which follows the contours of the octagonal turrets.

The façade returns on Bernard Street and Guildford Street are in a similar style although each is asymmetrical. The restaurant entrance where the canopy is to be located is to the third bay in from the left on the ground floor of the Guildford Street elevation. The principal site boundaries are defined by ornamental cast-iron railings to the back of the pavement above a terracotta plinth with terracotta piers spaced at regular intervals. A series of small, cast-iron lamp standards that are set on the piers which coincide with entrances or at the corners of the site. The lamps feature Classical figures at their bases.



Figure 8: Russell Square Facade

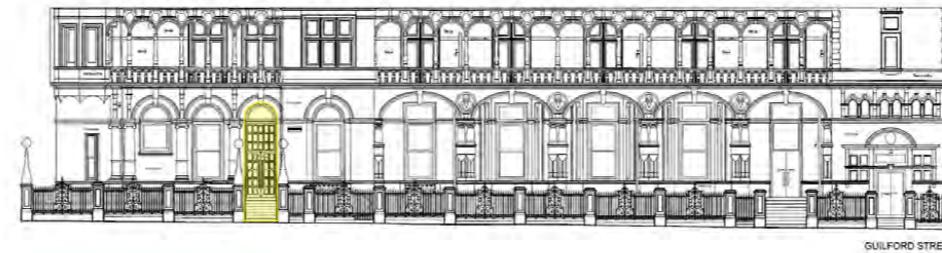


Figure 9: Existing Banqueting Entrance - Bernard Street Existing Staff Entrance - Guildford Street featuring original joinery which has been retained as part of the hotel refurbishment works.

Figure 10 (left): Detail of the approved Guildford Street elevation, changes to which are currently being implemented. The position of the entrance where the canopy is to be located is highlighted in yellow. For the purposes of this application, the proposals take for their starting point these consented drawings as the 'existing' drawings.

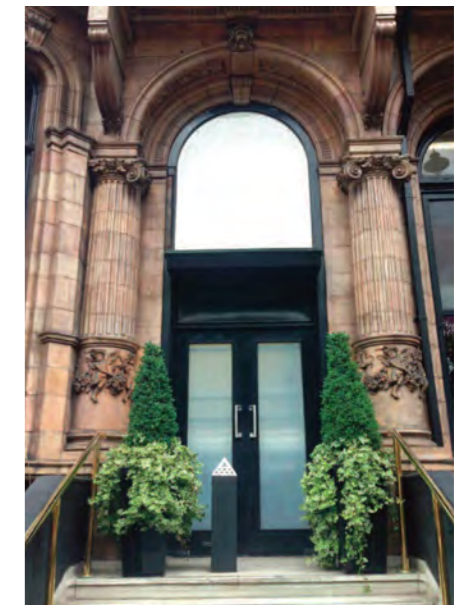


Figure 11: Examples of previous external treatment of entrances to the Hotel from left to right: Former Main Entrance (Russell Square) prior to refurbishment, Former Cafe Entrance (Russell Square) with projecting canopy (now removed), Former Restaurant Entrance (Guildford Street) with projecting canopy now removed and, Former Redundant Entrance (Russell Square)

5.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

5.1 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Design Process

The canopy consists of a galvanised steel frame supported on two slender steel columns and cantilevered out from in front of a round arched opening. The opening is on the ground floor to one of the building's secondary elevations facing Guildford Street. The canopy will be visible from the southern part of Russell Square but is not considered to be an unduly prominent addition to the building. The intention from the outset was to create a 'living' canopy using natural foliage to cover a traditional entrance arbour. This will serve as an attractive marker for the new restaurant, providing a point of welcome and shelter for those entering the restaurant from Guildford Street.

The shape of the opening determines the form of the projecting element which is likewise arched but sloped in sync with the gradient of the approach steps. The steel frame is cantilevered from an arched steel framework that is supported immediately adjacent to the façade by a pair of slender steel posts which rise from the concrete sub-structure of the approach steps to which they are securely bolted in place (see fig. 13). The proposed means of support avoids the need for any fixtures directly into the original or repaired terracotta facing of the listed building.

To achieve a suitable habitat for the ivy cladding the steel frame supports a black *Fytotextile* membrane to the outward faces. This consists of a base layer covered by series of pockets which, in the fashion of a tent cover, will hug the steel frame and accurately reproduce its shape. The pockets of the membrane contain a small amount of soil and are planted with ivy that will cover all the exposed surfaces including the front vertical face of the canopy facing Guildford Street (see figs 14 & 15).

The soffit of the canopy structure and inner vertical face will be covered by a canvas lining printed with an attractive striped design.

The ivy 'cladding' is a dynamic element of the proposal that will be sustained by means of an integrated water supply via a central reservoir and pump. This will be housed within the basement lightwell located in a former coal drop alcove beneath the pavement of Russell Square (east side). The integrated water supply also serves the planter tubs affixed to the perimeter lightwell railings. The canopy will be supplied by a short branch of pipework that is concealed within the right hand (east) supporting steel column (see Proposed Designs (Section 5.3 & fig. 12)). The supply will then branch to feed drippers installed above each pocket. The modules have an inner layer that allows the water to distribute evenly across the entire surface, thus allowing all plants to receive the same amount of water.

The proposed irrigation for the canopy is a remote controlled 'Hydrawise' system. This device allows the irrigation system to be monitored and controlled remotely via Internet and/or mobile App. By logging in to the account, the user can monitor water flow rates and add/reduce the amount of water the canopy gets.

Drainage of excess water will be limited by carefully regulating the water supply. Where excess is created this will run into the adjacent lightwell by means of chains suspended from the lower corners of the canopy.

Use

There are no proposed changes to the hotel's use or indeed the existing front of house and back of house areas to the ground floor and lower ground floor. The proposed canopy would enhance the restaurant use in line with the approved consents by improving the character and amenity of the restaurant entrance at Guildford Street.

Amount of Development

The development proposals are to be limited on the exterior to a small section on Guildford Street. The conversion of a window into a new entrance with a stairwell has previously been consented (2015/1673/P and 2015/2013/L) and the proposed development comprises the installation of a new entrance canopy with integrated water supply to maintain the proposed ivy cladding.

Layout

The proposed ivy canopy will not affect the current and consented changes to the hotel layout and restaurant use associated with the entrance where it will be installed.

Scale

The proposed canopy has been carefully designed to reflect the scale and form of the restaurant entrance and to complement its ground floor location in front of which there are several London Plane trees. The entrance can be easily seen from the south part of Russell Square (east side). The canopy relates well to the building's existing scale and proportions, being the appropriate shape and of suitably limited extent. In terms of scale the canopy is a considerable improvement on those formerly attached to the building in conjunction with café and restaurant uses (see fig. 11). Thus the scale of the canopy would not harm the heritage significance of the application site or the Conservation Area.

Landscaping

The development proposals involve no associated landscaping measures beyond the provision of carefully managed vegetation within the extent of the proposed canopy. The proposed ivy plants will be varieties of *Hedera*

helix and will be container-grown plants in 1.5—2lt pots. These plants are of sufficient size to ensure the canopy has full coverage from the date of installation.

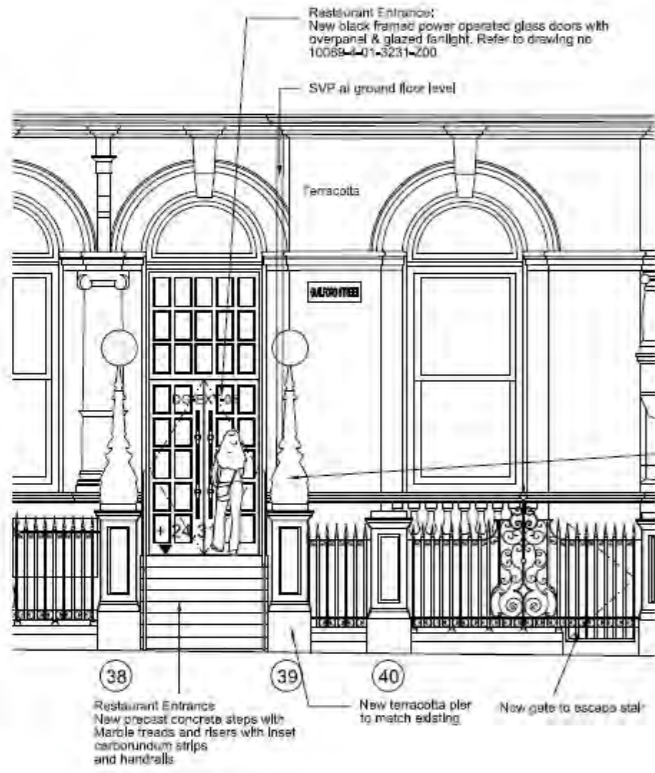
Appearance

There will no significant change to the Hotel when viewed from the public realm, thereby ensuring that its significance, which primarily derives from its external appearance, is preserved. The shape and texture of the canopy, created by the dark green ivy foliage, will complement the ground floor location of the entrance which has several London Plane trees immediately in front of it and can be seen from the south part of Russell Square (east side). Its overall appearance will be a significant improvement on the canopies formerly affixed to the café and restaurant entrances to the building facing Russell Square and Guildford Street respectively (see fig. 11). The latter was of similar form (although segmental) but covered in a black canvas and crudely placed against a taller straight headed opening and beneath a three centred relieving arch. The result was visually inconsistent and unsatisfactory. The café entrance canopy facing Russell Square took the form of a stilted arch that projected horizontally from the building. Its post-modern design consisted of a glazed steel frame with radial glazing bar pattern to the arch which did little to enhance the building's special architectural or historic interest.

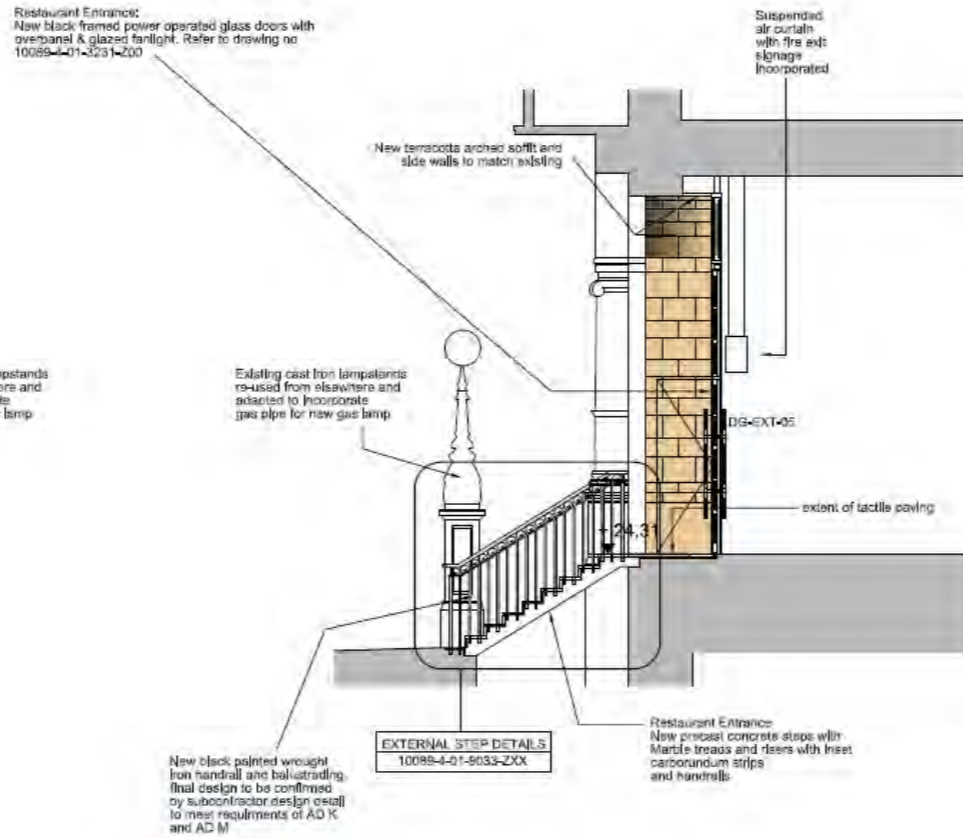
Access

The proposed canopy does not affect access arrangements to the building approved under consents 2015/1673/P and 2015/2013/L and which are in the process of being implemented. The provision of a canopy will improve the amenity of the restaurant entrance on Guildford Street by providing greater clarity and a degree of shelter from inclement weather.

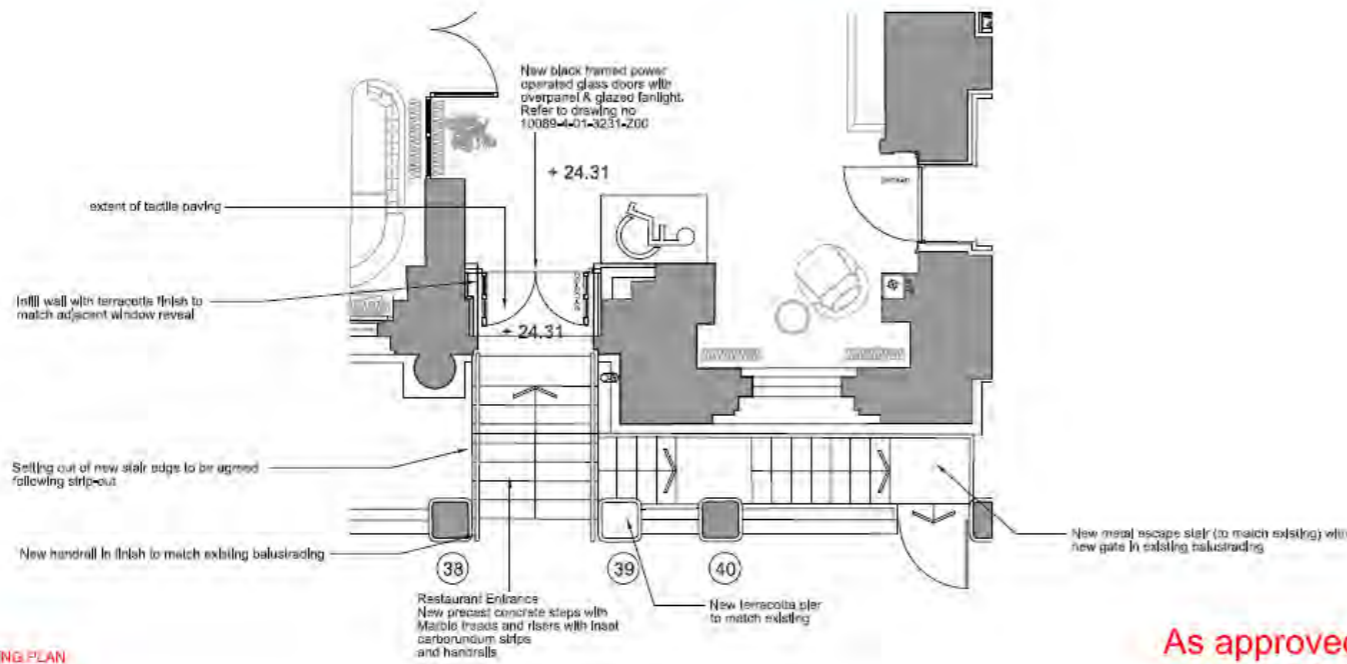
5.2 EXISTING DRAWINGS



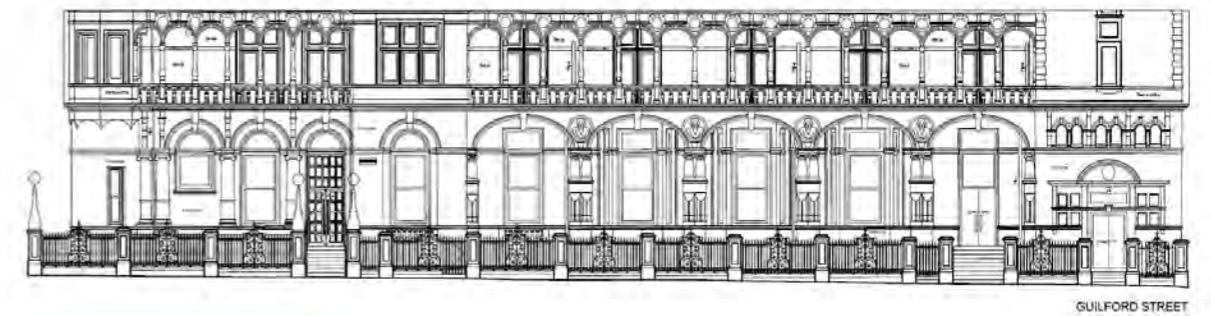
EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION
scale 1:40



EXISTING SECTION
scale 1:40



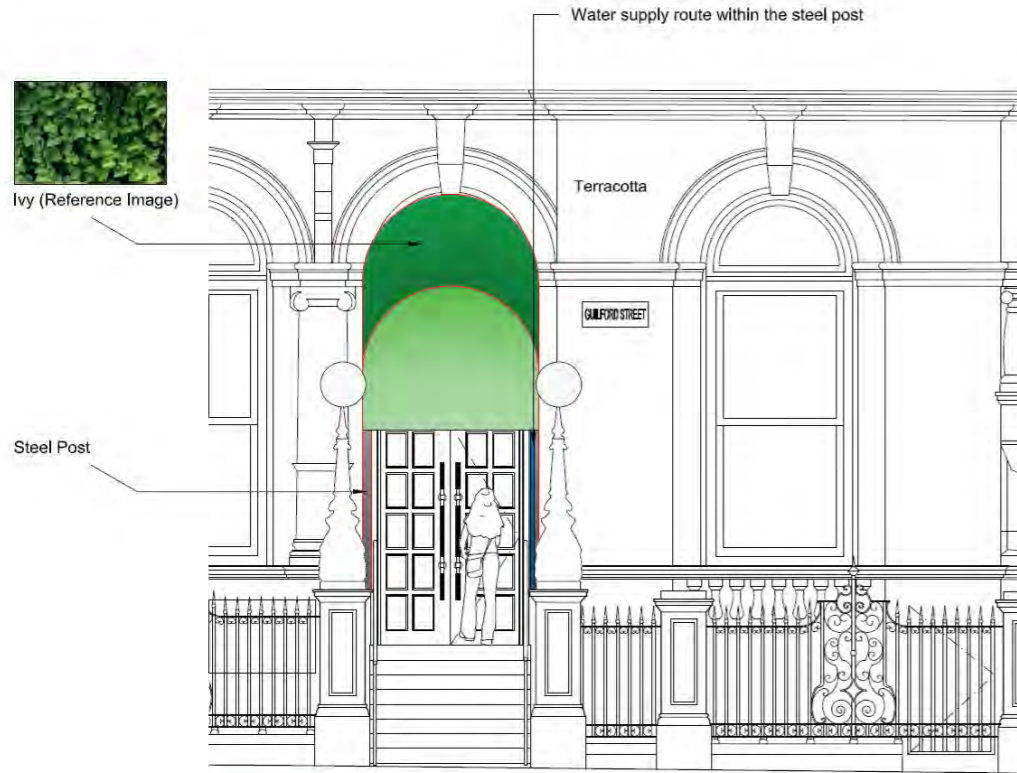
EXISTING PLAN
scale 1:40



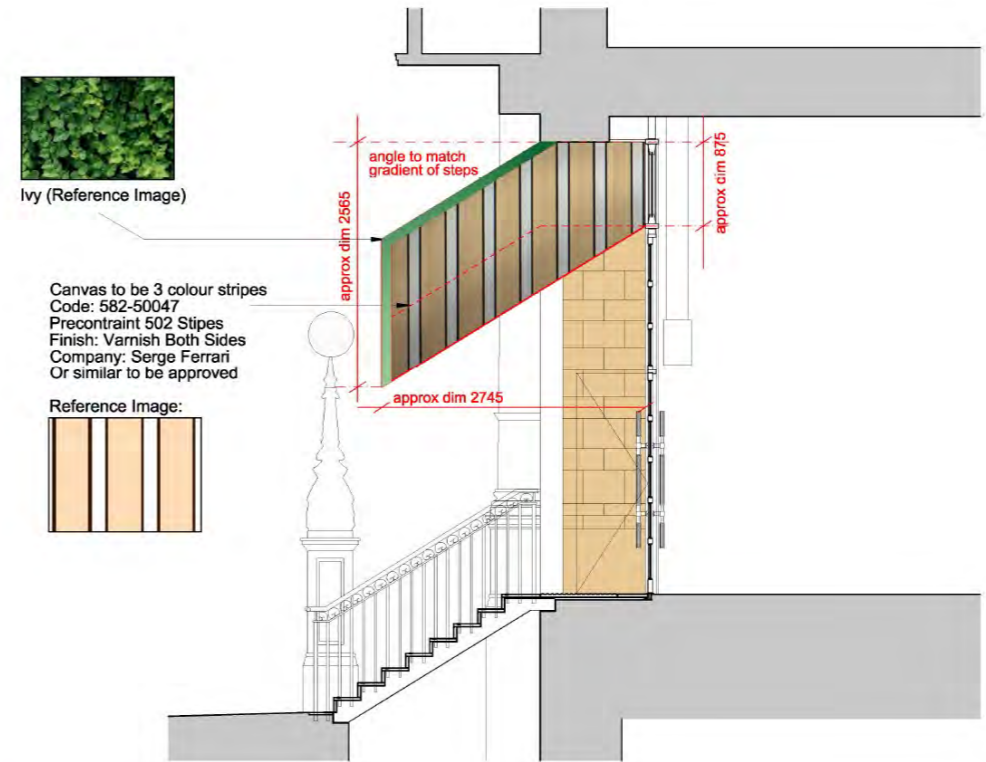
EXISTING EXTERIOR ELEVATION
scale 1:100

As approved under:
2015/1673/P & 2015/2013/L

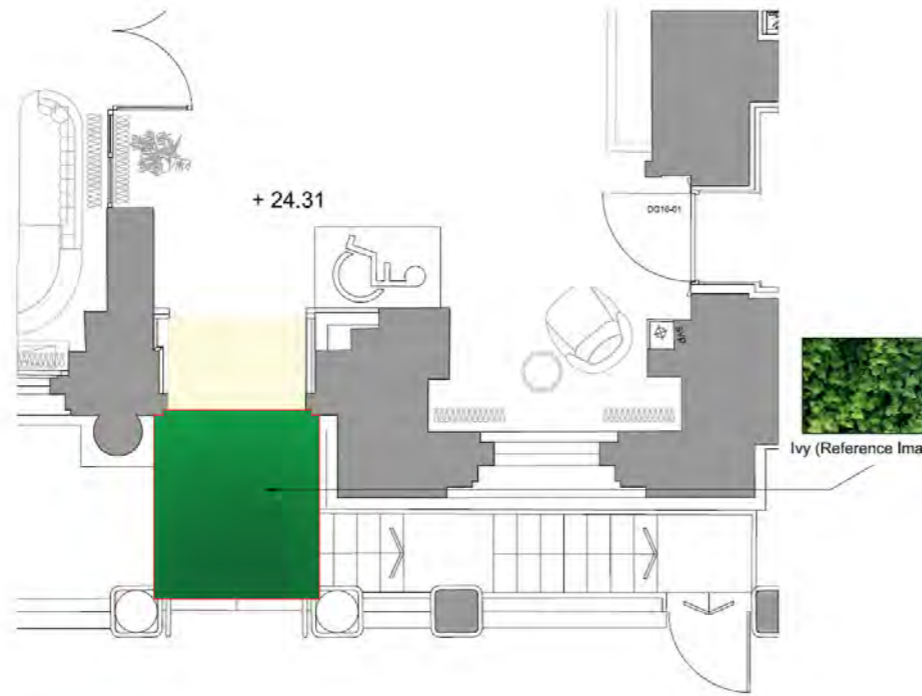
5.3 PROPOSED DESIGNS



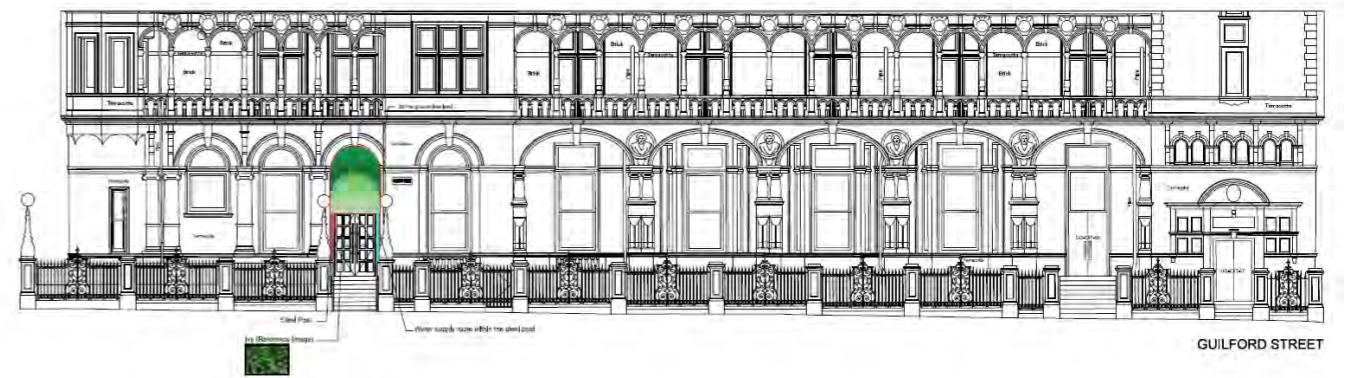
2 PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION
scale 1:20



3 PROPOSED SECTION
scale 1:20



1 PROPOSED PLAN
scale 1:20



2 PROPOSED EXTERIOR ELEVATION
scale 1:100

5.3 PROPOSED DESIGNS—TECHNICAL DETAILS

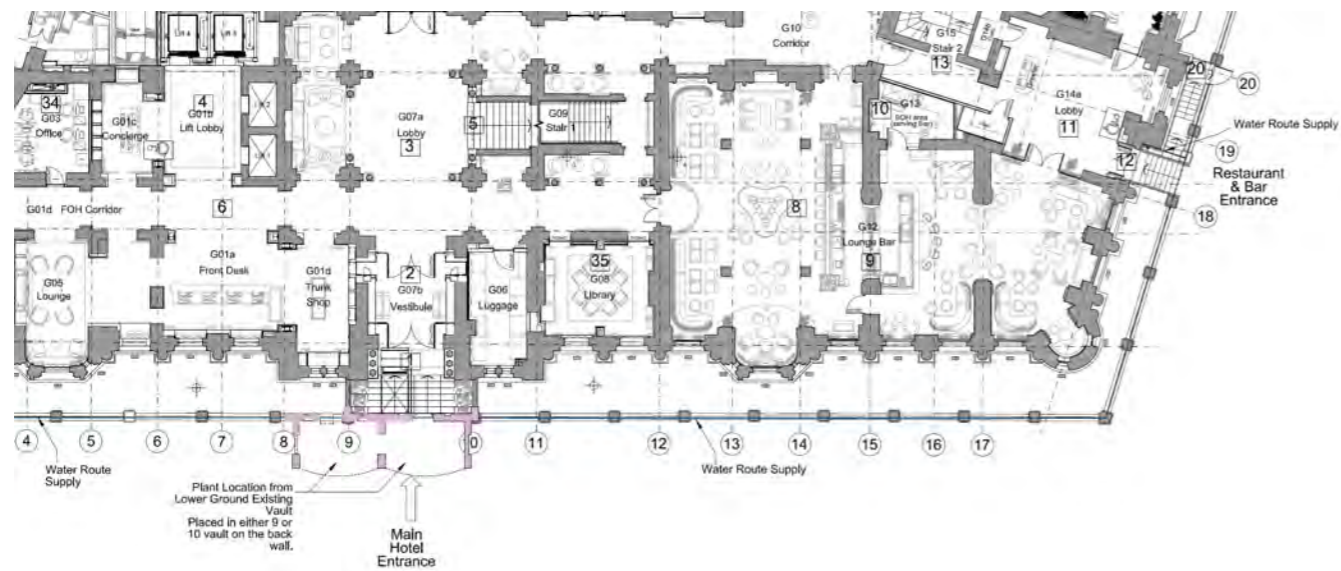


Figure 12: Detail from plan showing the route and source of the water supply / integrated irrigation system

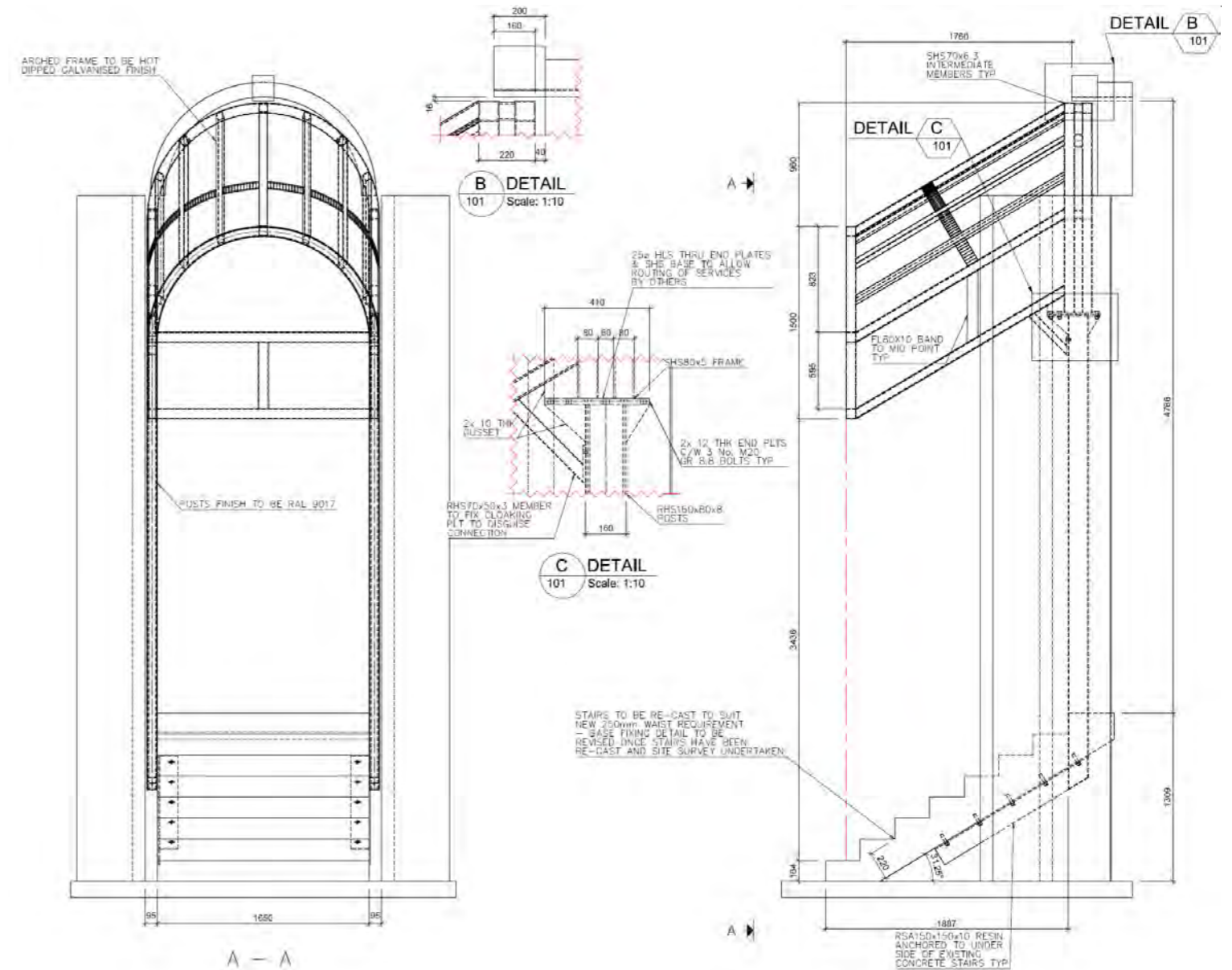


Figure 13: Details of the structural steel frame, supporting posts and fixings into the concrete step sub-structure

5.3 PROPOSED DESIGNS



Figure 14: Indicative CGI of the projecting canopy and ivy cladding from Russell Square



Figure 15: Indicative CGI of the projecting canopy and ivy cladding from Guildford Street

5.4 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

Summary of the Hotel's significance

From our findings, the Grade II* listed Hotel retains more than special architectural and historic interest due to its flamboyant design and high-quality materials used in its construction during the final decade of the nineteenth century. As expected, while the Hotel's exterior has undergone a degree of material change, its principal façades remain essentially intact. The main elevations comprise a key component of the asset's heritage significance. Although Fitzroy Doll's interiors survive in the main, these areas differ according to their front of house or back of house use and also where plan form configurations have had to alter due to ever-changing Hotel operations to meet modern clientele requirements. Nevertheless the Hotel's front of house areas on its ground floor, which have undergone a degree of alteration to their plan form configuration and historic fabric, also form part of its primary significance. Conversely, the significance of the back of house areas on the lower ground floor is considered to be more modest and where considerable alterations have occurred, of low significance.

Exterior — Ground Floor

The proposed restaurant canopy will affect the building's exterior appearance to a very limited extent. The exterior has been identified as an area of high significance. The canopy has therefore been carefully designed to reflect the scale and form of the restaurant entrance and to complement its ground floor location. To the front of this part of the building the pavement widens to accommodate several London Plane trees.

The restaurant entrance on Guildford Street can be easily seen from the south part of Russell Square (east side). The canopy has been designed to take advantage of this by serving as an attractive marker for the new restaurant, providing a point of welcome and shelter for those entering the restaurant. The design of the canopy framework together with the colour and texture of the ivy cladding is considered to integrate successfully into the surroundings and fully respects the building's scale and proportions. It is the appropriate shape and of suitably limited extent, whilst fulfilling its practical function of providing shade and shelter.

In terms of its impact on the building's special architectural interest the canopy is a considerable improvement on those formerly attached to the building in conjunction with café and restaurant uses prior to 2015 (see fig. 11). Furthermore, the provision of a canopy will improve the amenity of the restaurant entrance on Guildford Street by providing greater clarity in terms of highlighting the position of the entrance in addition to shelter from inclement weather.

The means of support for the revised canopy design differs from the approved planning and listed building consents which introduced a large steel bracket within the semi-circular reveal of the former window opening. It was secured by means of a large number of paired steel bolts which

penetrated the original terracotta finishes and potentially would cause some damage to the high quality facing material. The revised application under section 96A provides a more sympathetic means of securing the canopy to the building and does not involve any fixture into the terracotta facing, but rather is cantilevered from a pair of slender steel posts which are bolted into the modern concrete sub-structure supporting the new approach steps. Long term damage to the historic fabric is thereby completely avoided and the appearance of the supporting posts is suitably discrete by virtue of their attenuated dimensions and dark grey recessive colouring. The posts furthermore provide a means of concealment for the water pipe supplying the canopy's irrigation system.

Exterior — Lower Ground Floor

The perimeter lightwells to the three sides of the building where the water supply is to be routed has undergone alterations in several areas. The impact of the pipework will be minimal as it will be largely concealed from view by the planter boxes hung from the railings and vegetation growing from them. The water supply pipe will also be coloured to match its immediate surroundings. The water supply reservoir and plant will be located within an alcove beneath the pavement on Russell Square that is completely hidden from the street level. This will only be visible from within the lightwell itself and its immediate vicinity due to the inherent width and depth of the lightwell. The proposals will not alter the Hotel's external appearance at lower ground floor level and thus will have no impact upon the Hotel's significance.

In summary there will be no significant change to the Hotel when viewed from the public realm. Its significance, which derives primarily from its external appearance, will therefore be preserved. In view of the removal of the previous canopies and their replacement with one of more appropriate design and location, together with the novel flourish of its ivy cladding, the proposals are considered to have an overall beneficial impact on the building's appearance. Thus the significance of the listed building and Conservation Area will be preserved in accordance with section 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and enhanced in accordance with paragraph 131 of the NPPF.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the architectural and historical development of the Hotel ascertained through archival research, various site inspections to appraise the Hotel's extant fabric and the application of professional judgement, this Statement provides a proportionate assessment of the Hotel's heritage significance. It also provides a detailed explanation of the proposed restaurant canopy including the rationale for its design, proposed maintenance and management and an assessment of its impact on the building's identified significance.

This Statement has ascertained that the impact of current proposals upon the Hotel's significance will be minimal, but overall beneficial. The canopy affects the building's exterior appearance to a very limited extent, however, the exterior has been identified as an area of the asset that is of high significance. The canopy has therefore been designed to reflect the scale and form of the restaurant entrance and to complement its ground floor location. To the front of this part of the building the pavement widens to accommodate several London Plane trees. The canopy will furthermore serve as an attractive marker for the new restaurant, providing a point of welcome and shelter for those entering the restaurant via Guildford Street, thus enhancing its public amenity. The design of the canopy framework together with the colour and texture of the ivy cladding is considered to integrate successfully into the surroundings and fully respects the building's rich architectural quality and character.

In preparing this Statement, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with the relevant national and local planning policy and guidance. As there will be no substantial change to the Hotel when viewed from the public realm, its high significance, which derives primarily from its external appearance, will be preserved in accordance with section 16 of the LBA. In light of the removal of the previous canopies and their replacement with one of more appropriate design and location, the proposals are considered to have an overall beneficial impact on the building's appearance. The significance of the listed building and Conservation Area will therefore be enhanced in line with paragraph 131 of the NPPF and section 72 of the LBA. Accordingly we submit that there are no planning or heritage reasons why the amended proposals cannot be supported and invite the Council to consider them favourably.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: STATUTORY LIST DESCRIPTION

RUSSELL HOTEL AND ATTACHED RAILINGS WITH PIERS AND LAMPS

List entry Number: 1246152

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden

Grade: II*

Date first listed: 03-Dec-1970

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Details:

CAMDEN

TQ3082SW RUSSELL SQUARE 798-1/95/1423 (East side) 03/12/70
Russell Hotel and attached railings with piers and lamps

GV II*

Hotel. 1892-98. By Charles Fitzroy Doll, surveyor of the Bedford Estate. Red brick with terracotta dressings. Roofs and turrets with green fishscale tiles. Tall slab chimney-stacks with horizontal brick and terracotta bands. Originally with central copper dome and lantern, now with tile mansard roof.

STYLE: flamboyant French Renaissance style derived from engravings of the Chateau de Madrid, with elaborate decorations.

EXTERIOR: 8 storeys, attics and basements. Symmetrical facade of 7 gabled bays with octagonal corner turrets. Return to Bernard Street, 12 windows; return to Guilford Street, 8 windows and attached rectangular tower at the right-hand angle. Facade articulated vertically by octagonal turrets with ogee roofs at angles, penultimate gabled bays with canted bay windows rising from ground to 6th floor terminating in half ogee roofs with 2-light windows, and a 3-bay central, projecting porch with round-arched entrance flanked by single window bays rising to 4th floor level with recessed bay windows forming the central bay above the entrance. Projecting modillion cornice at 5th floor level above which flanking bays become 3 storey semicircular turrets surmounted by conical tile roofs with gablets and linked across the now flat, recessed central bay by a wide arch surmounted by a scrolled pediment with 2 round-arched, paired windows, an entablature with the date 1894, above which a rectangular gabled dormer. All with elaborate terracotta decoration. Round-arched ground floor windows in shallow, arcading with attached Ionic columns. Other windows square-headed, mostly mullion and transom casements. 1st floor with continuous projecting arcaded terracotta balconies with round-arched balustrade and coats of arms in the spandrels. At 1st floor level flanking the balcony over the entrance, figures wearing historical costume in corbelled niches. 2nd floor continuous balconies with terracotta round-arched balustrades. 3rd and 4th floor windows with cast-iron continuous balconies.

Projecting modillion cornice at 5th floor level above an enriched frieze, following the contours of the bays. Shaped gables with horizontal brick and terracotta bands and small windows. Returns in similar style.

INTERIOR: entrance hall lined in pink and red marble divided into 3 by grey marble round-arched arcades on grey marble columns with gilding. Frieze and spandrels with sumptuous plaster moulded females of proto art-nouveau character. Marble staircase rises to right. Ceiling in Jacobean style. Chandeliers, and some stained glass. Woburn Suite beyond a large hall now with low partitions, with black and white marbled pilasters, heavy modillion cornice and coved ceiling with lavish swags under false ceiling. 'Victorian Carvery' with grey marble panelling to frieze height and grey marble clad hexagonal columns which culminate in alternating little Ionic columns and sculpted figures. Similar columns in frieze around walls. Projecting fireplace in matching marble. Chandeliers. King's Bar panelled to frieze height with some organic capitals to pilasters, doorcases (one now a bookcase) with giant Jacobean keystones under plaster friezes of chubby putti. Marble fireplace. Trabeated ceiling with a variety of mouldings. Virginia Woolf room with art nouveau plaster spandrels and plaster ceiling cornices. Bedford Suite with pilasters and plaster ceilings.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached wrought-iron railings with terracotta piers and cast-iron lampstandards with figures at the bases on piers.

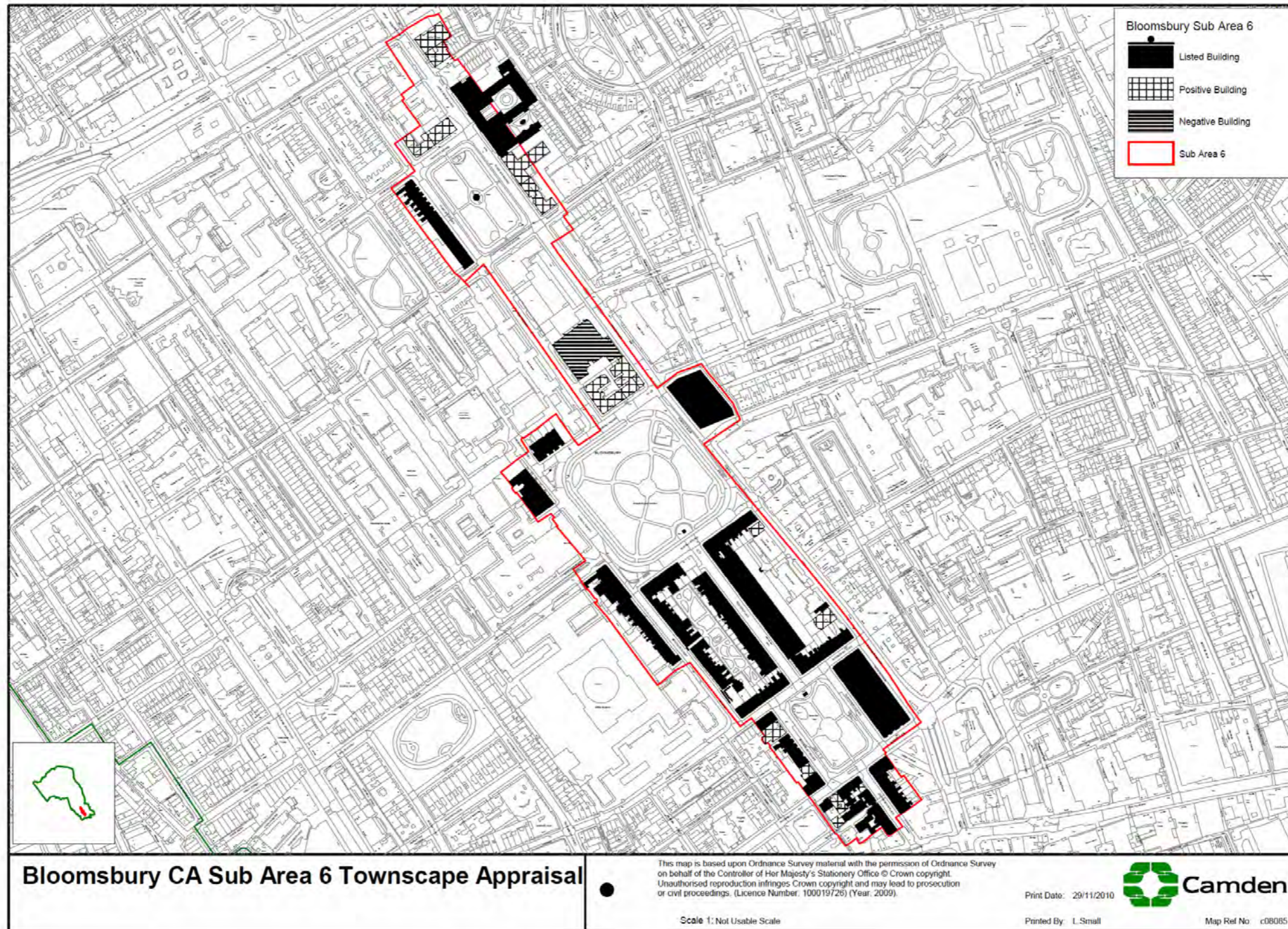
HISTORICAL NOTE: Doll's flamboyant use of terracotta is a distinctive feature of the Bedford Estate; this is his finest remaining building and the survivor of two extravagant 1890's hotels that imposed a fin-de-siecle character on Russell Square.

Listing NGR: TQ3017882085

National Grid Reference: TQ 30178 82085

APPENDICES

APPENDIX B: BLOOMSBURY CONSERVATION AREA - SUB-AREAS 6 MAP (CAMDEN COUNCIL, 2010)



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