

4 Percy Street Heritage Statement

December 2017



Built Heritage
Consultancy

4 Percy Street Fitzrovia Heritage Statement

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1.0 Introduction

The Built Heritage Consultancy has been asked to prepare a Heritage Statement to inform and support an application for Listed Building Consent for proposed internal alterations to the third floor of 4 Percy Street, London. The application site is a Grade II listed building, which forms part of a terrace in the Charlotte Street Conservation Area.

This Heritage Statement briefly sets out the development of the building. It describes the alterations previously made to no. 4 and assesses the listed building's significance and sensitivity to change. The latter part of the report assesses the acceptability of the proposed internal alterations against the relevant guidance and policy.

This report has been based on site visits in December 2017, as well as archive research. This report has been written by Melanie Adamson and reviewed by James Weeks.

2.0 Understanding

2.1 The Site

The building is statutorily listed Grade II. The building was listed on 25 July 1989. The list description is as follows:

House, now shop and offices. c1766-70, refronted and heightened c1900. Built of brick with c1900 front of faience having coloured patterning. Slate mansard roof with brick end stacks. 4 storeys and attic. 3 windows. Moulded cornice over altered shopfront of c1900 with 4 semicircular arches over late C20 shop windows and late C20 door to right. 1st and 2nd floor square-headed windows, including 2 C19 sashes to left, are set beneath coloured faience semicircular arched tympanum arches; horned 9-pane 3rd floor sashes are set beneath similar segmental headed tympanum arches and coved cornice. Flat roofed dormers with coloured 9-pane sashes and moulded cornices. Sashes to rear. INTERIOR: fine mid C18 open-well staircase with wreathed handrail and turned balusters set on open string, with moulded wall string and dado rail. Fine enriched cornicing to stair hall and 1st floor rooms.

The building forms part of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area. This was first designated on 20 March 1974, and subsequently extended in 1981, 1985 and 1999. The area is known as “Fitzrovia” and was developed speculatively as a primarily residential area between the 1750s and 1770. There is therefore a predominant Georgian character of three and four storey town houses.

The Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted on 24 July 2008. In this document, paragraph 6.30 the building is described as “*decoratively refaced building at number 4 with its unusual faience detailing.*”

2.2 Photographs of the third floor



Entrance into Room A viewed from within the eastern part of the room, showing the cross-wall of which part would be removed.



Room A cross wall viewed from by the doorway.



Corridor leading to fire escape door. On the left is the cross-wall with Room A into which a large opening would be made.



Corridor leading to fire escape doors, showing the wall which would be removed. This wall, which separates the corridor from Room B at the rear of the property, is a later addition to the plan form and was presumably added when the fire escape door was inserted.



Wall to be completely removed, as seen from within Room B.



Wall separating Room B and C, seen from Room B.



Wall between Room B and Room C as seen from within Room C. This wall would have a large opening made in it, but would retain a downstand with picture rail. Nibs either side of the wall would also be retained.

3.0 Significance

3.1 Introduction to Significance

The need to take an informed approach to works which might alter the significance of heritage assets is at the heart of the planning process. Significance is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012) 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.

In statutory terms, the importance of 4 Percy Street has already been recognised through its listing at Grade II, recognising it as 'nationally important and of special interest'. However, this statutory designation does not set out what features are important, or to what degree – aspects that are essential to inform decisions when proposing any alterations to the building, so that its special interest can be conserved where appropriate. The purpose of this section is to provide a summary assessment of significance as it relates to the areas affected by the proposed scheme, so that the effects of any changes can be fully evaluated.

This Heritage Statement adopts the 'heritage values' criteria for assessing significance set out in English Heritage's *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (2008). There are four broad values, some of which consist of more than one type. These are:

Evidential value – relating to physical evidence on the site, i.e. archaeology.

Historical value – how an asset can connect us to the past, usually through *illustrating* aspects of the past, or by *association* with noteworthy people, movements or events.

Aesthetic value – which can derive from the *design* of an asset, or perhaps through more *fortuitous* occurrences over time.

Communal value – relating to what a place means for people, whether it is the *commemorative* or *symbolic values* of a place that people derive part of their identity from or have particular memories of, or the social value that accrues to a place which performs a community role through its distinctiveness or function as a place of interaction, or the *spiritual value* such as can be found in places of worship.

This assessment draws upon the historical understanding set out in Chapter 2, and follows established conservation practice in using the following terms:

Highly significant – elements which make up the principal historical and architectural interest of the building/site.

Significant – original elements which contribute noticeably to the site's overall architectural or historic interest; or non-original features of particular interest.

Some significance – original elements of rather minor importance, or non-original features which contribute to maintaining the site’s character (e.g. appropriately designed replacement windows).

Neutral or Detracting – features which do not contribute positively to the historic and architectural interest of the site, and in some cases may even detract from an appreciation of its significance. This can include original fabric where it is of minimal special interest, and is located in an area that has undergone notable change.

These terms are used in a purely relative sense within the context of the site, and should not be taken as descriptions of the absolute significance of elements compared to those of other listed buildings.

3.2 Significance of 4 Percy Street

The national significance of 4 Percy Street as a designated heritage asset is already established through its listing at Grade II. This significance can be attributed to both its historic and its architectural interest. This interest resides primarily in the building’s role as part of the wider Georgian terrace, and the original features which remain on the lower storeys including the generous staircase, as well as from the interesting front elevation of c.1900 and the external appearance of the building.

The original Georgian elevation of the building dating from 1760s was refronted c1900 in coloured patterned faience. Windows were also replaced around this time. In the 20th century a shopfront was added. The attractive façade which stands out in the street scene is very unusual and of high significance.

The interior of the building retains its original Georgian form at first and second floor, including a fine mid C18 open-well staircase with wreathed handrail and turned balusters set on open string, with moulded wall string and dado rail. The stair case compartment to the lower floors retains fine enriched cornicing and this is also in the first floor rooms. The first floor appears to have been remodelled at the same time as the façade was replaced, through the creation of a large opening between the front a rear rooms which has typical c.1900 joinery including a richly moulded picture rail. Despite their alteration these interior areas of the building are of high significance.

The present third and fourth floors of the building were added at the same time that the building was refronted in c.1900. These floors by virtue of their later date and commonplace character are of lower significance compared to the overall special interest of the building. The surviving historic plan form on the third floor reflects the lower storeys but is not Georgian but much later. It is evident from on-site appraisal and from the available planning history that the third floor has been the subject of much alteration over the years, particularly with the creations of the fire escape corridor leading to the fire escape. The planning history (appendices) shows that there have been alterations to the walls either side of this corridor with the insertion and then blocking up of doorways. These alterations to a later addition of the building further reinforces the view that this part of the building makes a minimal contribution to the overall significance of the building. Other

alterations to this floor include the replacement of most of the original skirtings, the insertion of modern firedoors, and the lining of some walls with modern plasterboard.

4.0 Legislation, Policy & Guidance

As 4 Percy Street is Grade II listed, any proposals which would affect the building's special architectural or historic interest will require listed building consent. The proposals are therefore subject to a range of national, regional and local authority heritage policies in addition to normal planning policy, and where relevant these are set out below.

The building does form part of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area, however there are no external alterations proposed other than redecoration and there will thus be no impact on the conservation area.

4.1 Legislation

Listed buildings and conservation areas are subject to the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, as amended by various Acts, most lately the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013. Section 7 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act* provides that listed building consent is required for:

Any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest ...

Section 16(2) of the Act states that:

In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority ... shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

4.2 National Heritage Policies

National heritage policy governing the application of the primary legislation is contained within section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012). Paragraph 128 of the NPPF requires applicants 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 Heritage Statement meets these requirements at an appropriate level of detail.

The relevant sections of the NPPF are as follows:

129. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when

considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

131. *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
 - *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*
132. *When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. [Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building should be exceptional.]*
133. *Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply*
- *the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
 - *no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
 - *conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
 - *the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*
134. *Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.*

4.3 Regional Heritage Policies

The Greater London Authority's *London Plan* (July 2011) contains heritage guidance in Policy 7.8, the relevant parts of which are as follows:

- C Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.*
- D Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.*

4.4 Local Planning Policies

Camden's Local Plan was adopted by the Council on 3 July 2017 and has replaced Core Strategy and Camden Development Policies documents as the basis for planning decisions and future development in the London Borough of Camden.

Policy D2 Heritage

The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance 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 and locally listed heritage assets.

Designated heritage assets

Designed heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;*
- b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;*
- c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage

assets'. To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- i resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;*
- j. resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and*
- k. resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed*

5.0 Assessment of the proposals

5.1 Relevant Planning History

Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent were previously granted for *“Works of general restoration and refurbishment to No.4 Percy Street including the replacement of the existing shopfront together with works of alterations to the existing access to the upper floors.”*

The Listed Building Consent attached below includes existing and proposed plans for the third floor. This shows that the third floor has previously been altered.

5.2 Proposals

The proposed alterations are confined to the existing third floor offices. There are no external alterations proposed. The current occupiers of the building wish to open up the third floor area to create a more open plan layout. At present the floor is subdivided into 3 separate offices accessed from a narrow communal landing which makes for a difficult layout for users.

The alterations proposed are as follows:

- Full removal of the modern wall separating the corridor leading to the fire escape from the rear room,
- The creation of a new opening, retaining both a downstand and nibs either side, in the central cross wall of room A
- The creation of a new opening, retaining the picture rail, a downstand and nibs either side, in the wall separating rooms B and C.
- The relocation of the existing door into room B into the new room entrance position.

It is apparent that the building has been the subject of alterations to the plan form over the years. The creation of a corridor leading to a fire escape is a modern addition. The wall separating the corridor from room B is modern plasterboard although some care has been taken to match the cornice to original cornice seen elsewhere. The removal of this wall would not result in the loss of any historic fabric. Its removal would go some way to reinstating the historic c.1900 plan form at this level, and would therefore be a minor enhancement.

The creation of a large opening in Room A has been proposed, so that a substantial downstand and nibs either side of the opening are retained, and therefore the existing plan form would still be discernible. The cornice would also be retained. However the planning history (see above) shows that this wall is not actually original. Part of it has been the subject of alterations over the years, with previous doorways blocked up. Given these past alterations there would be only a modest loss of historic fabric but the contribution that this fabric makes to the overall significance of this listed building is minimal. The creation of an opening in this wall would not be out of

character with the building as a whole, as it would bring the third floor layout much closer to that on the much more significant first floor, which was heavily altered in c.1900.

The wall separating rooms B and C appears to have been less altered than the other walls. It is not proposed to remove the whole wall but simply create a large opening that would allow a larger usable office space. Room C at present is small. The opening created would again retain a significant downstand to below the picture rail height. More substantial nibs would be retained either side of the opening. The opening would appear centrally located in the wall when seen from Room B. There would be some loss of historic fabric of relatively low significance, but the historic plan form would still be discernible.

Finally, the relocation of an existing door into a new position would reinstate in part the original position of the doorway into Room B.

In listed building terms the proposals would have a minimal impact on the overall significance of the listed building. The works are all confined to the third floor which is a later addition of c1900 to the 1760s original Georgian townhouse, of lower significance than the original fabric.

For these reasons the works would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and comply with local and national policies.

6.0 Conclusion

The works proposed are minor in nature. They are confined to the third floor area of the building which was added in c.1900 when the building was refronted and the decorative fascia tiles added. This floor makes only a very limited contribution to the overall significance of the listed building compared to the lower floors. In addition, in the planning history it is evident that there have been previous alterations to the plan form at this level, particularly to the walls either side of the fire escape corridor.

The works would allow for the continued and improved use of the building as more open plan offices to suit the occupiers' business.

For the above reasons the works are proposed to comply with Camden's heritage policy D2 as well as relevant national heritage policies and guidance.

7.0 Appendix

Listed building consent for 4 Percy Street dated 31st July 2000.

ENVIRONMENT
Development Control
Planning Services
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Angile Street
London WC1H 8ND
Tel 020 7278 4444
Fax 020 7974 1975

Montagu Evans
(AHW/AP/PD.5549
Premier House
44/46 Dover Street
London
W1X 4JX

Application No: LS9905205/R3
Case File:N13/28/C

31st July 2000

Dear Sir(s)/Madam

DECISION

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations
1990

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT - Subject to Conditions

Address : 4 PERCY STREET, W1

Date of Application : 10/07/2000

Proposal :

Works of general restoration and refurbishment to No.4 Percy Street including the replacement of the existing shopfront together with works of alteration to the existing access to the upper floors,
as shown by drawing numbers 100, 101, 102a, 103, 104, 106, 111, 112a, 113, 114, 3-4/121, 3-4/120a, location plan ME1, photographs and schedule of works.

The Council has considered your application and decided to grant consent subject to the following conditions:

Standard condition:

The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of five years from the date on which this consent is granted.

Standard Reason:

In order to comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990



Director Mark Gilks BA(Hons), M.Soc.Sc., MRTPI

Website Address: <http://www.planning.camden.gov.uk>
Email Address: env.devcon@camden.gov.uk



ENVIRONMENT

Development Control

Planning Services

London Borough of Camden

Town Hall

Argyle Street

London WC1H 8ND

Tel 020 7378 4444

Fax 020 7974 1975

Additional conditions:

- 1 All new work and work of making good shall be carried out to match the original work as closely as possible in materials and detailed execution
- 2 The works hereby approved are only those specifically indicated on the drawing(s) referred to above.

Reasons for additional conditions:

- 1 In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy EN43 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2000.
- 2 In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy EN43 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2000.

Informatives (if applicable):

- 1 This letter relates only to works to No.4 Percy Street. The works shown on drawing 120a to No.3 Percy Street are not permitted by the letter.

This application was dealt with by Scott Bailey on 020 7974 2257.

Your attention is drawn to the notes attached to this notice which tell you about your Rights of Appeal and other information.

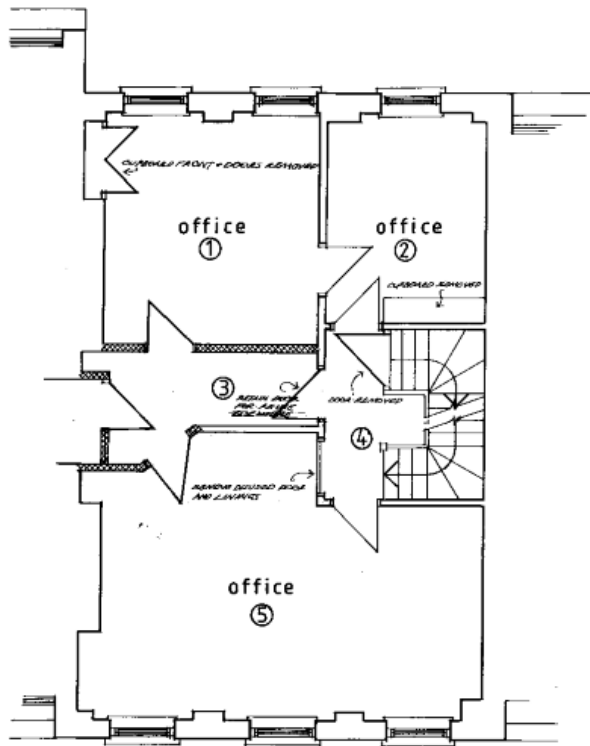
Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "M.W. Lythgoe".

Environment Department

(Duly authorised by the Council to sign this document)

Dec1bWC/LBC



THIRD FLOOR

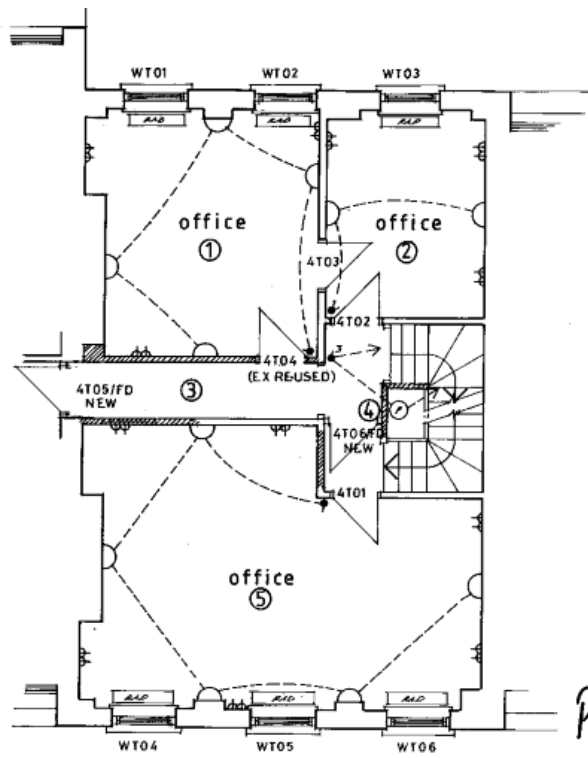
To be read in conjunction with
Schedule of Works

AS EXISTING

PS9905204²²



21A Rotherham Place, London W1X 7AB
Tel: 0171 429 3993 Fax: 0171 429 3913
4 Percy Street, London W1
City West End Property Investments SARL
Date: 11/01/2020 Drawing No: 10/10 Scale: 1/500 Rev:



- Office ① = Area 1
 Office ② = Area 2
 Corridor ③ = Area 3
 Staircase ④ = Area 4
 Office ⑤ = Area 5

To be read in conjunction with
 Schedule of Works

AS PROPOSED



21A Stoken New, London W1X 7AD
 Tel: 0171 429 2991 Fax: 0171 429 2953
 4 Percy Street, London W1
 City West End Property Investments EARL
 Date Drawing No Scale Rev
 15/11/00 11/15 1/50 0

P39905204²²

THIRD FLOOR

8.0 Sources

The sources noted below have been used in the preparation of this report.

Camden Local Development Framework 2010

Camden Planning Guidance 1 - Design

Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan July 2008

Department for Communities & Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework*, March 2012

Historic England/English Heritage *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*, 2008

Historic England, *National Heritage List for England*

Greater London Authority, *London Plan*, July 2011

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