

**PLANNING AND  
LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION**

**FOR**

**INTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO  
EXISTING OFFICE ON FIRST FLOOR.  
CONVERSION OF B1 OFFICE ON SECOND  
FLOOR TO 1 NO. X 1 BED  
RESIDENTIAL UNIT. INSERTION OF  
SECONDARY GLAZING.**

**APPLICATION SITE:  
FIRST & SECOND FLOOR TO  
NO. 6 GRAY'S INN SQUARE,  
THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF GRAY'S INN,  
LONDON WC1R 5AZ**

**DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT/  
HERITAGE STATEMENT**

**Prepared by Mark Snook Planning  
on behalf of  
The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement/Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a Planning and Listed Building application by The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn to refurbish and make the most effective use of existing accommodation within the Estate at no. 6 Gray's Inn Square.
- 1.2 The alterations proposed take place across the first floor and part of the second floor to no. 6 Gray's Inn Square. The ground floor is currently in use as a B1 Office (barrister's chambers) and the first floor has been similarly occupied. Until recently, part of the second floor was also let to the firm of barristers who occupy the ground floor, but they have decided they no longer require this.
- 1.3 The second floor can be described as being into two parts, that to the west of the central stair case and that to the east. The western side has long been in residential use as a one bedroom flat occupied by a Member of the Inn. The eastern side has been used as additional office space for the barrister's chambers located on the ground floor.
- 1.4 It is proposed to retain the office accommodation at ground and first floor level, with some minor alterations to the internal layout at first floor, and to change the use of the former office accommodation on the second floor to a one bedroom flat – so that the whole of the second floor is in residential use as is typical of many of the buildings within the Estate.
- 1.5 The Inn is also looking, as part of a wider exercise, to implement measures to improve the energy efficiency throughout the Estate. This application therefore includes for the insertion of secondary glazing to the existing sash windows, a well established treatment to improve the thermal efficiency of single glazed listed buildings.
- 1.6 No. 6 Gray's Inn Square is a listed building, therefore a Heritage Assessment has been provided to accompany the application.
- 1.7 The application is also accompanied by detailed drawings, including large scale joinery details.

## **2.0 THE APPLICANT**

- 2.1 It is considered important in support of this application to provide some background on the Applicant, The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn.

- 2.2 The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn is one of four Inns of Court. The Inns are professional associations for barristers and judges whose function is to support their qualified barrister members and educate and provide support to their student members. To be called to the Bar and practice as a barrister, you must belong to one of these Inns.
- 2.3 Gray's Inn dates back to the fourteenth century and today covers an estate of approximately 13 acres, situated to the north of High Holborn. It is a unique environment. From the time that the Inn was first established it has provided both residential and working accommodation for members and apprentices of the legal profession, this role continues to the present date.
- 2.4 As well as accommodating and supporting its Members and students, the Inn also offers scholarships to support those pursuing a career at the Bar. This is an essential part of the Inn's purpose.
- 2.5 The Estate comprises of a number of buildings (many being listed buildings), generally arranged around open squares and gardens. It also provides a library, a chapel, dining and banqueting services and educational facilities. The Inn is open to the public, but restricts access only to residents and tenants between the hours of midnight and 5.00am.
- 2.6 The Inn is currently re-assessing the overall Estate in order to make the best, most appropriate use of any under-used accommodation, increase its student accommodation, provide enhanced training and support facilities and improve energy efficiency.
- 2.7 As part of this review, a major planning application was submitted by the Inn in 2016, reference 2016/6785/P, for the extension and re-development of Nos. 19-21 High Holborn. Following the grant of permission, the Inn is shortly to commence works to implement this consent which will result in additional retail and commercial floor space, with an increase of 333 sq m of B1 Office accommodation being available for let within the Estate once complete. As part of this application for Nos. 19-21, the Council also sought a land swap to replace the two residential units that were to be lost through the proposal elsewhere on the Estate.

### **3.0 LISTING DESCRIPTION/HERITAGE ASSESSMENT**

- 3.1 No. 6 Gray's Inn Square is Grade II\* Listed and therefore constitutes a 'Heritage Asset' as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 3.2 The NPPF states that any application for proposals affecting a Heritage Asset should provide a Heritage Assessment (HA), this is set out as part of this Statement.

- 3.3 The NPPF states that the level of detail required for a Heritage Assessment should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- 3.4 This application concerns works to the first and second floors of No. 6 Gray's Inn Square. The listing groups together Nos. 6, 7 and 8 Gray's Inn Square and the attached railings. The List Entry number is 1322146.
- 3.5 The listing description is as follows:

TQ3081NE 798-1/101/633 CAMDEN GRAY'S INN (North side) Gray's Inn Square Nos. 6, 7 and 8 and attached railings  
24/10/51

GV II\* Three terraced chambers forming the north end of Gray's Inn Square. c1676, restored (owing to war damage) c1950. Brown brick with red brick dressings. Brick bands between floors. Tiled roof.

Four storeys and cellars. Five windows each. Stone doorcase with consoles and broken segmental pediment with ball in centre. Gauged red brick flat arches and dressings to flush frame windows with boxing and glazing bars. Wood block bracketed eaves cornice. INTERIORS: retain some panelled rooms. Nos. 6 and 8, stairs with turned balusters and column newels; No.7, dog-leg stairs, No.8, carved wood fireplace. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas.

- 3.6 The properties form part of The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn Estate and are located within The London Borough of Camden Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- 3.7 The works under this application are, however, of an internal nature only. NO EXTERNAL WORKS/ALTERATIONS ARE PROPOSED. Therefore, there would be no impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, nor the external facade of the listed terrace as a result of the proposals.
- 3.8 The works proposed to create the amended first floor office layout involve no loss of historic fabric – comprising the removal of more modern stud and metal partitions and the removal of a modern staircase that provided an internal link between the first and second floor accommodation. These alterations would reinstate the original open plan nature of the rooms and the historic floor plan of the building served from a single central staircase. It is also proposed to create an additional w/c to the first floor, this would be to the corner of a room that faces onto Gray's Inn Square and would have less impact than the current partitioning. The w/c is required to improve the function of the office accommodation.

- 3.9 At second floor level, the large room facing onto the gardens would be retained in its current form to provide a living/dining area for the proposed flat. The internal modern staircase would be removed and boxed off to provide a cupboard and the stud partition that subdivides the hall way would be removed to open up this area. The proposed bathroom would be provided by the existing w/c and shower room avoiding the need for any alterations in this regard. Only one new stud wall would be required to provide separation between the kitchen/bedroom. None of the works would have a detrimental impact upon the historic fabric of the second floor.
- 3.10 The proposed new layouts provide for a better use of the internal spaces, in line with the Inn's requirements, without having any detrimental impact upon the listed building. Indeed, the works would assist in re-opening up the rooms allowing a better appreciation of room proportion and character and would re-establish the role of the central staircase.
- 3.11 The Inn is in the process of considering how to best implement more energy efficient measures across the Estate. One of the most simple and well established mechanisms to provide better thermal efficiency is the insertion of secondary glazing units. These also have the effect of reducing noise pollution from external sources, i.e. traffic, air conditioning units etc. For this reason, it is proposed to insert a slim line secondary glazing unit from a company called 'Selectaglaze', who specialise in secondary glazing in listed buildings. Large scale joinery details of this product and its application have been provided to support this aspect of the proposals. When no longer required, or in need of replacement, these units can be removed without any loss of historic fabric or damage to the sash windows or their reveals.
- 3.12 Each unit is bespoke made to fit and would comprise of two glazed sections with a central bar to match that of the central bar of the sash window. The discreet, sympathetic and unobtrusive design makes it the ideal solution to preserve and retain the character of older and more traditional buildings. The product satisfies the requirements of all the UK heritage and conservation bodies for use in listed buildings. A number of listed building applications for this type and make of secondary glazing have been recently consented by your Listed Building department and the units and fixing methods would be identical to those permitted.
- 3.13 To conclude, in our opinion, none of the proposed works would have any form of detrimental impact upon the listed building and would preserve and enhance the building's special character, whilst enabling a more practicable and efficient layout.

## **4.0 DESIGN**

- 4.1 The works proposed are of an internal nature only. The exterior of the building would not alter as a result of the proposals. In terms of design, the works mainly involve the removal of modern partitions and a modern staircase. Where new doors/architraves/skirting are required i.e. w/c, cupboard etc, care would be taken to match those in the existing building. A typical door detail has been provided in this regard.
- 4.2 The proposed residential flat would meet the Nationally Described Space Standard for a 1 bed 1 person flat.

## **5.0 ACCESS**

- 5.1 The access arrangements to the building will remain unchanged by this proposal.
- 5.2 Due to the historic nature of the building, disabled access is not achievable to the upper floors. However, a range of accessible accommodation for use by commercial tenants, enabling them to meet with visitors, is provided elsewhere within the Estate when required.

## **6.0 PLANNING POLICY**

- 6.1 This application involves three distinct elements:
- Installation of Secondary Glazing Units to the First and Second Floor windows;
  - Internal alterations to the First Floor Office Layout, to include removal of modern partitions, removal of inner staircase and insertion of new w/c; and
  - Change of use of part of Second Floor from office (B1) to a one bedroom residential unit, with associated internal alterations.
- 6.2 The first two elements of the proposal do not require planning permission and the reasoning behind these alterations and their impact upon the listed building has already been rehearsed earlier in this statement; as have the physical alterations to the second floor. This section of the Assessment will, therefore, only focus on the planning policy appertaining to the change of use of part of the second floor from an office use to a residential use.

- 6.3 The 'Development Plan' covering the administrative area of Camden Borough comprises of the Mayor's London Plan, The Local Plan, adopted on 3 July 2017 and a number of supporting documents, which include a series of CPG's (Camden Planning Guidance) focussing on individual policy areas.
- 6.4 The London Plan 2016 aims to provide a spatial development strategy for London for the next 20-25 years through an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework.
- 6.5 The plan provides a more general strategic level of guidance, much of its content is not therefore of direct relevance to this particular scheme of alterations/change of use. The most pertinent policies would appear to be Policy 3.3 'Increasing Housing Supply' and Policy 4.2 'Offices'.
- 6.6 Policy 3.3 aims to increase housing supply across London. It requires Boroughs to approve additional development capacity where it exists to supplement housing targets, including surplus commercial capacity and it also encourages mixed use development.
- 6.7 Policy 4.2 concerns office provision. The policy supports mixed use development. It also requires Boroughs to enhance office locations in terms of amenities, ancillary activities, safety and security etc. In allowing some residential use within predominantly office locations this supports ancillary businesses i.e. shops, restaurants and also assists with safety and security in these areas once offices close.
- 6.8 As part of the plan's growth strategy it defines a number of intensification areas, which includes an area in Holborn. Whilst Nos. 19-21 High Holborn fall on the edge of this intensification area, the vast majority of the Inn's Estate sits outside it. The Inn is also located outside the Central Activity Zone (CAZ), an area of strategic national importance for office development. However, even in the CAZ the London Plan states that other uses should be allowed including housing. It goes on to comment that as a general principle, housing and other mixed uses should be permitted near to office development to create mixed use neighbourhood. Gray's Inn has always provided a mix of uses to complement its prime function as an educator and professional body, this includes residential and office accommodation for Members, along with places of worship, dining facilities, library etc.
- 6.9 The Camden Local Plan Adopted Version June 2017 provides more localised planning guidance specific to the various areas within its administration. The plan describes Holborn as predominantly a commercial area, with a small residential community. Within the designated Holborn Growth Area, the Council aspires, amongst other things, to make provision for mixed land uses.

- 6.10 Policy E2 of the Local Plan ‘Employment Premises and Sites’ states that the Council will resist the development of business premises to non-business use unless it can be demonstrated to the Council’s satisfaction that :
- a) the building is no longer suitable for an existing business use; and
  - b) the possibility of retaining, re-using or re-developing the site for a similar or alternative type/size of business use has been fully explored over an appropriate period of time.
- 6.11 As set out earlier in this statement, the Inn is a unique and historic entity that has since its inception provided a mix of offices and residential apartments to support its professional members in carrying out their legal roles. The uses within the Inn are entwined and complementary. A large part of their function today, whilst providing a supportive legal environment, is to provide an income enabling the Inn to offer scholarships to students and maintain the legacy of historic buildings and grounds. A balance of uses has to be struck. The office supply within the Estate will be significantly boosted by the works at Nos 19-21 High Holborn and the Inn has further plans to utilise under used areas to create further office accommodation, conference facilities etc.
- 6.12 The office on the second floor was attached to the lease for the ground floor suite of offices. The occupiers of ground floor, due to the inconvenience of the second floor accommodation, came to the conclusion that they no longer wished to lease this area. It seems logical, due to the flights of stairs and the fact that half the second floor has historically been, and continues to be, in residential use to use this whole floor for residential accommodation. The change of use to residential also avoids any conflict of use in terms of noise, privacy etc. The residential use would not harm the Inn’s interests, as re-balances/adjusts its mix of uses across the wider Estate, nor would it harm the function of the Holborn area.
- 6.13 To conclude, the proposed change of use would not change the function of the Inn. The Inn has a historic role in offering supporting residential accommodation, alongside the provision of offices, educational training facilities etc. The existing offices at first floor level would be refurbished and improved through the removal of unsympathetic partitioning and the reinstatement of the role of the central staircase, and the proposal would lead to a consistent residential use across the second floor, consistent with many of the buildings on the Estate.