

Historic Impact Assessment

Alterations and Repairs to Third Floor Flat:
5 Great James Street, London WC1N 3DB

Document Ref: 177A-D01-HIA-180501-Historic Impact Assessment
May 2018



Fig 1 Street View: 5 Great James Street

Project Details:

Site Address:

5 Great James Street,
London
WC1N 3DB

Applicant:

Hatton Garden Properties Limited
c/o MSA Ltd
70 Hatton Garden
London
EC1N 8JT

Agent:

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This document is to be read in conjunction with the following drawings and documents submitted as part of the application (and added in appendix to the rear of this document for further information):

MSA Drawings:

177A-100	Site Location Plan	1:1250	A3
177A-200	Existing Basement and Ground Floor Plan	1:50	A1
177A-201	Existing First and Second Floor Plan	1:50	A1
177A-202	Existing Third Floor Plan	1:50	A1
177A-210	Proposed Basement and Ground Floor Plan	1:50	A1
177A-211	Proposed First and Second Floor Plan	1:50	A1
177A-212	Proposed Third Floor Plan	1:50	A1
177A-710	Construction Details – Ceilings	1:10	A1
177A-711	Construction Details – Timber Panel Wall	1:10	A1
177A-712	Construction Details – Window	1:10	A1
177A-713	Construction Details – Door	1:10	A1

Other Supporting Documents:

- 177A-D01-DAS-180501- Design and Access Statement
- Engineers Drawings
 - o 2018 039-R01A
 - o 2018 039-R02A

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- **Introduction**

This Historic Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the planning application for alteration and repairs to 5 Great James Street and should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement 177-D01-180501- Design and Access Statement.

- **Camden Historic Impact Assessment**

Details about the character and architectural/historical interest of the associated property or structure:

The Historic England listing describes the property as follows:

“CAMDEN, TQ3081NE GREAT JAMES STREET 798-1/101/658 (East side) 24/10/51 Nos.3-16 (Consecutive) and attached railings, GV II"*

14 terraced houses. 1720-24. For J Metcalfe. Brown brick, upper storeys with some later refacing in multi-coloured stock brick. No.3 refaced in yellow stock brick. EXTERIOR: 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each. Segmental red brick arches and dressings to flush frame windows, some with glazing bars and some with reeded frames with roundels. Parapets. Wooden, architraved doorcases. Nos 3 and 4 with half pilasters, plain pediments, patterned fanlights and panelled doors. Nos 5, 7 and 10-16 with enriched carved brackets carrying hood with panelled soffits, most with patterned radial fanlights and panelled doors. No.6 with engaged columns (Tower of Winds), frieze with festooned urns, dentil pedimented cornice, round arched doorway with fanlight and panelled door. Nos 8 and 9 with pilasters, dentil cornices, patterned radial fanlights and panelled doors. Between the houses, lead rainwater heads with lion masks and lead pipes. At 2nd floor level of No.16, a very worn stone cartouche inscribed "Great James Street 1721". INTERIORS: most houses with good panelling; open staircases with turned balusters, column newels and carved brackets to treads. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings to areas, with urn or torch flambé finials. No.14 was listed on 14/05/74."

An explanation of the principles behind and the justification for the proposed development:

An enforcement notice has been served on the property owners to improve the fire resistance, safety and protection between the existing commercial offices in the basement and ground floor from the shared common areas and residential areas above.

The proposals seek to improve the compartmentalisation and fire resistance of each of the units without negatively affecting the historic features of the building. It is intended that most works are completed within the structure of the building fabric and will therefore not be noticeably visible once complete.

Details of the expected impact that the proposed development will have on the special interest of the listed building or structure and its setting (and adjacent listed buildings):

The historic features noted in the listing are primarily the materials used on the facade of the property and the architectural features around the windows, which will remain unaltered. Internally the wood panelling around the common staircase is listed as a specific feature and the proposed internal works will help to protect and restore these special features while providing the necessary separation.

The timber panelling on the ground floor will be dismantled to allow an internal fire barrier to be installed and to stabilise the current structure as the wall has the potential for significant movement when pressed. The original timber panelling will be carefully removed and reinstated following the repair works.

These works will therefore have no negative impact on the special interest of the timber panelling.

The external brickwork in the rear lightwell has become unstable and needs to be re-built. The existing bricks will be reclaimed where possible and used in the rebuild with mortar to match the colour of the existing. The finished appearance will therefore match the existing and not affect the historic character.

The ceilings are to be repaired where possible to help restore the historic fabric. In rooms with the original lath & plaster ceilings visible and in place, the plaster will be sympathetically and appropriately repaired with matching materials to help restore the original appearance of the rooms. The historic cornices will not be altered.

The two rooms RM.B.6 and RM.O.4 are currently lath & plaster ceilings with plasterboard applied over the top. Due to the structural works required in these areas, the plasterboard ceilings will be fully removed and the lath & plaster will be restored. It is likely the existing lath & plaster may be in poor condition and may become unstable with the removal of the plasterboard, and therefore the whole ceiling may need to be replaced with new traditional three coat lath & plaster. These works will therefore help to restore the traditional plaster ceilings. There are no proposed works to cornices in these rooms.

The ceilings with plasterboard currently installed will be improved with an additional layer of plasterboard. The locations with plasterboard ceilings do not have historic cornices installed. The additional plasterboard will therefore provide the additional fire resistance required without further damaging the historic fabric of the building.

The remaining fire resistance will be completed with the application of intumescent paint to give the necessary 60 minute resistance.

An outline of the steps taken to avoid or minimise any adverse impacts on the significance of the building:

The historic features where visible will be maintained. Where partial removal is required to enable the improvements, the historic features will be maintained, carefully removed, stored and reinstated in place. It is therefore intended that the works will not have any adverse impact on the significance of the building.

An explanation of the sources considered and the expertise consulted in the formulation of the associated application:

The proposed works have been specified in coordinated with specialist plaster contractors, structural engineers with experience in dealing with restoring historic buildings, and through careful consideration of the existing building fabric.

- **Schedule of Works**

To be read in conjunction with submitted annotated drawings for further details. The following schedule gives details of proposed works to 5 Great James Street on a floor by floor basis.

1. Basement

1.1. Structural work to rear of building

- 1.1.1. Repair unbonded brickwork to basement level of rear lightwell. Carefully remove all bricks of outer skin of existing wall, remove timber bracing and remove damaged lead flashing as per structural engineer's drawings 2018 039/R01A. Re-build brick wall with reclaimed bricks from site where possible, prioritising exterior bricks and match existing mortar colour. Tie new brick skin into existing as per engineers drawings.
- 1.1.2. Existing windows to be carefully removed before demolition works and stored to be re-instated following structural repairs. Replace existing blown lintels above windows with new precast concrete lintels using reclaimed bricks as pistol slips in arch pattern to match the existing. The existing windows must then be reinstalled and repaired to match existing.
- 1.1.3. The basement ceiling joists in room RM.B.6 will be bonded to the internal brick wall as per details in engineer's drawing 2018 039/R02A. Galvanised steel straps will be secured to the underside of the existing joists, and anchored to the brickwork. The installation of the straps will damage the ceiling and it is anticipated the ceiling will need to be fully repaired as a lath and plaster ceiling as per architect's details 177A-710-04.

1.2. Ceiling fire separation

- 1.2.1. Existing ceilings in rooms RM.B.1, RM.B.2, RM.B.3, RM.B.4, RM.B.5, RM.B.7, RM.B.8 are existing plasterboard and need to be upgraded to provide 60 minutes fire separation. This will be completed as per architect's drawing 177A-710-02 with a new layer of plasterboard applied over the existing.
- 1.2.2. Existing ceiling in room RM.B.6 is existing plasterboard over lath and plaster. The existing finishes will be removed to expose the joists and allow the installation of structural straps. Fire batts will be installed between joists and secured in place with wire mesh, and new three coat lath and plaster will be installed as per drawing 177A-710-04.

- 1.2.3. All existing ceiling penetrations by surfaces will be fitted with intumescent collars

1.3. Doors

- 1.3.1. Door DR.B.4 is a non original lightweight door which needs to be replaced with an 30 minute fire resistant solid door.
- 1.3.2. Door DR.B.8 has an asbestos panel fixed to the surface which will be removed. The door will be repaired and reinstalled following removal of asbestos panel. All works to asbestos to be completed according to HSE requirements.

1.4. Electrical Cabinet fire resistance

- 1.4.1. Existing non original MDF electrical cabinet will be replaced with a fire resistant cabinet to match the existing in appearance and size. The cabinet is required to be upgraded to provide 30 minutes fire resistance. The replacement cabinet will match the existing in size and appearance and be made from fire resistant MDF.

1.5. External Front Lightwell

- 1.5.1. The existing timber treads to the metal fire escape staircase are rotten and need to be replaced. New timber treads will be installed in to match the existing.

2. Ground Floor

2.1. Structural work to rear of building

- 2.1.1. The ground floor ceiling joists will be bonded to the internal brick wall as per details in engineer's drawing 2018 039/R02A. Galvanised steel straps will be secured to the underside of the existing joists, and anchored to the brickwork. The installation of the straps will damage the ceiling and it is anticipated the ceiling will need to be fully repaired as a lath and plaster ceiling as per architect's details 177A-710-04.

2.2. Ceiling fire separation

- 2.2.1. Existing ceilings in rooms RM.0.2, RM.0.3 are existing lath & plaster ceilings with cornice details and need to be upgraded to provide 60 minutes fire separation. The existing plaster will be assessed by a plaster specialist and will be stabilised and repaired. All works will be completed as per architect's drawing 177A-710-06.

The specialist plasterer has given the following method statement for repairs to lath and plaster:

'For isolated cracks; remove any paper lining, rake the crack out to a width of around 5mm, soak strands of jute canvass in a mixture of casting plaster and lime and press into the gap. Using the remainder of the plaster mix fill the crack to a smooth finish

For patch repairs; remove paper lining and remove loose material back to the laths and remove as much as possible from behind the laths. Apply a scratch coat of lime, sand and horsehair. Leave for approximately 1 week. Apply a floating coat of lime, sand and horsehair and leave for a further week. Apply finish coat of lime to existing surface and leave to dry thoroughly before painting'.

Once the ceilings have been locally repaired and made good, the ceilings and cornices will be painted with intumescent paint to achieve 60 minutes fire resistance.

- 2.2.2. Existing ceiling in room RM.0.4 is existing plasterboard over lath and plaster. The existing finishes will be removed to expose the joists and allow the installation of structural straps. Fire batts will be installed between joists and secured in place with wire mesh, and new three coat lath and plaster will be installed as per drawing 177A-710-04.

- 2.2.3. All existing ceiling penetrations by surfaces will be fitted with intumescent collars.

2.3. Timber panel wall fire separation

- 2.3.1. The existing timber panel walls in rooms RM.0.2 and RM.0.3 facing onto the common hallway RM.0.1 are thin timber stud walls with decorative timber panelling to either side. The panelling in RM.02 has historically been removed and asbestos panelling has been installed. Additionally the timber wall is unstable and has significant movement when pressed.

It is proposed the timber panelling is carefully removed (fully labelled and stored for re-use), the asbestos appropriately removed and the structure stabilised. Once the wall has been

stabilised, the studs will be fully filled with fire batts and a plasterboard layer installed to the office side before the original timber panelling is reinstated and made good.

All works to be completed according to architects drawing 177A-711.

- 2.3.2. The partition wall below the staircase on the ground floor is a thin timber structure which needs to be upgraded to provide 60 minutes fire separation. New timber studs will be installed on the inside of the wall to provide a secure frame and lined with 15mm fireline plasterboard to provide 60minutes fire separation.

2.4. Door

- 2.4.1. There is currently no door between the entrance lobby to the ground floor office and room RM.0.2. A new FD30 panelled door will be installed to provide fire resistance to the lobby. The door will be completed as per architects drawing 177A-713.

3. First Floor

3.1. Ceiling fire separation

- 3.1.1. Existing ceilings in rooms RM.1.1, RM.1.2, RM.1.3 RM.1.4, RM.1.5, RM.1.6 and RM.1.7 are existing lath & plaster ceilings with cornice details and need to be upgraded to provide 60 minutes fire separation. The existing plaster will be assessed by a plaster specialist and will be stabilised and repaired. All works will be completed as per architect's drawing 177A-710-06.

The specialist plasterer has given the following method statement for repairs to lath and plaster:

'For isolated cracks; remove any paper lining, rake the crack out to a width of around 5mm, soak strands of jute canvass in a mixture of casting plaster and lime and press into the gap. Using the remainder of the plaster mix fill the crack to a smooth finish

For patch repairs; remove paper lining and remove loose material back to the laths and remove as much as possible from behind the laths. Apply a scratch coat of lime, sand and horsehair. Leave for approximately 1 week. Apply a floating coat of lime, sand and horsehair and leave for a further week. Apply finish coat of lime to existing surface and leave to dry thoroughly before painting'.

Once the ceilings have been locally repaired and made good, the ceilings and cornices will be painted with intumescent paint to achieve 60 minutes fire resistance.

3.2. Doors

- 3.2.1. The interior doors to the first floor flat are non-original panel and blank doors which do not provide any fire resistance.
All interior doors DR.1.2, DR.1.2, DR.1.4, DR.1.5, DR.1.7 will be replaced with new solid 4 panel timber FD30 doors as per architects drawing 177A-713.

3.3. Window

- 3.3.1. The existing window to the ground/first floor half landing W.1.8 is a non original timber sash window formed with the extension to the rear of the property which has a very low window sill. The lower sash glass will be replaced with single pane toughened safety glass in the existing window.

3.3.2. A new glass fall protection barrier will be installed to the inside of the window reveal to help prevent falls from height. The glazed barrier will be fixed in position to the window reveals with metal channels. All works to the window to be completed as per architects drawing 177A-712.

3.4. Kitchen

3.4.1. The existing kitchen RM.1.6 will be replaced with new cabinets and appliances in the same arrangement as existing. There will be no alterations to the historic features in this room.

3.4.2. A new electrical point will be added adjacent to the existing.

3.5. Bathroom

3.5.1. The existing bathroom in RM.1.7 will be replaced with new fittings in the same arrangement as the existing. There will be no alterations to the historic features in this room.

4. Second Floor

4.1. There are no proposed changes to the second floor.

5. Third Floor

5.1. There are no proposed changes to the third floor.