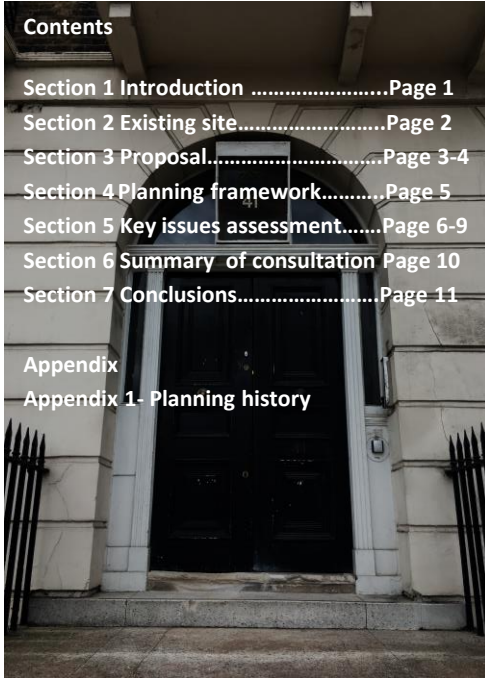




**British Museum | 41 Russell Square  
planning statement  
July 2018**



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## 1. Introduction

This planning statement has been prepared on behalf of The British Museum (the BM), in support of the planning and listed building application for the refurbishment and improvement the existing Grade II listed office (B1 use) building at 41 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DA.

The proposals include internal alterations throughout the property and improvements to the external façade, courtyard, and lightwells. New plant is proposed in the courtyard at the rear. There is a negligible increase in floorspace proposed (6.8m<sup>2</sup>) as a result of the reconfiguration of the lower ground floor. The existing long established B1 office use of the property will continue.

The strategic context for the proposals to sensitively upgrade and reinvest in No. 41 Russell Square (and No.42-43, which forms part of a separate application) is in accordance with the direction provided by the Board of Trustees to vacate the perimeter properties, to generate income revenue streams by continuing the long-established office uses, and letting them to third parties. The income will provide an additional source of revenue generation for investment into the operational activities of the Museum, in the context of ongoing government funding constraints. By investing in the properties, the Museum will continue to fulfill its duty to maintain and upgrade its historic estate and optimise available space in the main Grade I listed building and continuing its role in conservation and education.

### Content of application

This statement provides further information on the proposed works and considers the relevant planning policy that has been taken into account in devising the scheme.

A separate **Design and Access Statement (DAS)** has been prepared by Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (PRS), to explain the existing site context and proposed works in more detail. A **Heritage Statement** prepared by Montagu Evans also assesses and justifies the works in the context of the listed building criteria, set out in national and local planning policy on the historic environment. It explains the sensitive restoration and alterations to the existing listed building fabric with conservation benefits that will be delivered. A copy of the statement of significance has also been submitted with this submission.

Other supporting documentation includes:

- a **Structural Report** by Alan Baxter Ltd, which includes an outline of the structural condition and works proposed;
- an **Acoustic Report** by CST Environmental & Acoustic Consultants containing information on the noise environment surrounding the building and assessing the impact of the proposed replacement roof plant on the nearest sensitive receptors (the Grange Blooms Hotel); the nearest residential property is believed to be at 21 Montague Street – over 70 meters away)
- A **Building Services Strategy** prepared by Frankham outlines the approach to and location of new plant, describing how the proposal will introduce more effective and efficient measures than those existing.

The scheme addresses the pre-application advice received from London Borough of Camden (LBC), dated 26 April 2018 (ref: 2018/1687/PRE). The feedback received is summarised in Section 6. A number of changes have been introduced by the team in response to this feedback.

## 2. Existing site

### Site + area description

**Site** | 41 Russell Square is a 4-storey, plus basement, Grade II listed building, designed by James Burton. It is situated on the west side of Russell Square within a terrace that extends from the corner of Russell Square and Montagu Place and Montague Street. The terrace includes other properties owned and used by the BM as well as the Grange White Hall Hotel at 2-5 Montague Street. The properties date from circa 1800 and the entire terrace (nos 38 to 43) is Grade II listed. The buildings are within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and the Central Activity Zone (CAZ). The full designations relevant to the planning context are set out in Section 4.

The existing floorspace of 41 Russell Square is approximately 620.8m<sup>2</sup>. The listing description describes a terrace of 6 houses of multi-coloured stock brick with rusticated stucco ground floors. Full details of the list description can be found in the Heritage Statement.

Originally built as a single residential dwelling in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the property was converted into an office around the 1921. This remains the current lawful use of the building, as confirmed by the certificate of lawfulness issued in 2011 (ref: 2011/2675/P).

**Surrounding uses** | The property aligns the southwest corner of Russell Square and is situated to the northeast boundary of the BM's Grade I listed estate in the Bloomsbury area of LBC. Russell Square Gardens is a Grade II Registered Park. Surrounding uses include a range of commercial office uses, including at the immediately adjacent properties at 42-43 Russell Square. A number of hotels are also located on Montague Street (including Grange White Hall Hotel at No. 2-5; and Grange Bloom Hotel at No. 7). The nearest residential use appears to be at 21 Montague Street, almost 70 meters away.

**Transport** | The site is located within an area of excellent transport accessibility with a PTAL rating of 6b. It is close to Russell Square, Holborn, Tottenham Court Road and Goodge Street tube stations, several bus routes operate along Southampton Row and Bloomsbury Street. There are cycle networks in close proximity with secure bike stands, including space for 21 bikes immediately in front of the property on Russell Square. There is a Santander bike hire stand towards the junction between Great Russell Street and Montague Street.

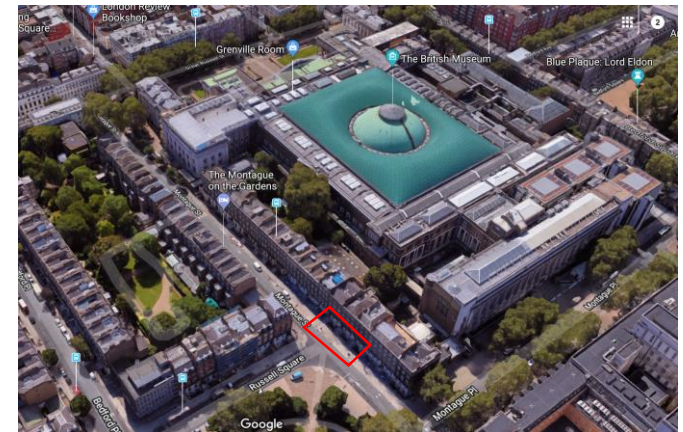
### Planning history

The B1 (office) use of 41 Russell Square was formally established via a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development (CLEUD) in 2011 (ref: 2011/2675/P). There have been various listed building consents and planning permissions for minor works over the last 40 years (please see separate planning history table included in Appendix 1).

There have also been a range of other works to adjacent perimeter properties. Notably, 39 Russell Square, 8, 9, 10, 11 Montague Street; and 1 and 1A Montague Street. The B1 use of these properties has also been established. While other recent consents include proposals for new and replacement plant and a range of internal and external alterations to these listed buildings.



View from Russell Square



Ariel view of BM and perimeter properties

### 3. Proposals

The proposed description of development for the planning and listed building application is:

***Refurbishment of B1 office building, including internal and external alterations throughout, structural works to façade, enclosure of rear lightwell and insertion of skylight to basement, new external plant and associated screen located at the rear of the property.***

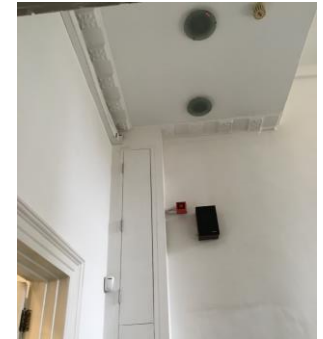
Details of the proposed development are set out in detail in the accompanying DAS prepared by PRS Architects and Heritage Statement by Montagu Evans. A brief overview is provided below.

The proposals are to refurbish and improve the existing Grade II listed B1 office building. The works mostly relate to the interior of property, with minor refurbishment and repair to the external façade in discreet locations and some external plant equipment. There is no change of use proposed. There is a negligible increase in floorspace proposed from 620.8m<sup>2</sup> to 627.6m<sup>2</sup>.

#### Internal works

- Minor internal reconfiguration including removal of modern partitions:** Minor internal reconfiguration at lower ground floor is proposed to create an internal office area in the existing lightwell and installation of new partition to create a new lobby. As a result of the new infill in the lightwell on the lower ground floor, there is a 6.8m<sup>2</sup> increase in floorspace(GEA). There will also be a removal of modern partitions at ground and 2nd and 3rd floors, affecting mostly modern fabric or fabric of neutral or negative significance.
- Flooring:** Existing timber floorboards will be overlaid with plywood to protect and retain the existing floor in the lower ground floor lobby area. The existing stone and mosaic floor in the ground floor will be restored and repaired and made good to match existing in the ground floor lobby area.

- New services strategy :** All existing services will be stripped out and replaced with new. New services will be located within existing risers where possible. Some existing risers will be removed or reduced in size to reflect the new services. New risers are proposed where there are no suitable existing riser or where previously services had been exposed, mounted on walls and floors. New risers will go through the building from ground to third floor, positioned in the least significant areas. The locations have been selected away from principal rooms in discreet locations of lesser significant, where the character of the room will not be affected and/or that have been heavily adapted in the past. The risers are all the minimum size necessary to accommodate the equipment. Locations have been revised (following feedback) to ensure historic features such as chimney breasts, fan lights are not obscured. Other remaining features such as skirtings and cornices will be preserved in situ with risers scribed around these. The redundant services, including unsightly plant and associated pipework throughout the building will be removed. All historic features will be restored and made good to match existing where existing ducts and existing services have been removed.
- Other general improvements:** Include the removal of non-original suspended ceilings; new light fittings (a combination of wall, pendant and spot lighting and feature lighting at ground and first floor). Refurbishment and reinstatement of historic features is also proposed where these have been affected by later alterations. New toilet and shower provision will also be provided on the lower ground floor and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.



Example of existing riser and services



All of the works proposed require listed building consent. However, as most of the works are internal and do not have an external impact (or otherwise comprise 'Development' as defined under s.55 of the Act), the requirement for planning permission relates to the following areas of work affecting the façade or exterior of the property:

**External works**

- **New plant:** The proposed new plant condensers will be located on a lightweight platform at the rear of the garden, located against the boundary wall. Existing portacabins will be removed. A new timber screen of 2200mm high is proposed to conceal the plant condensers.
- **Skylight:** the proposal includes an infill of the lightwell at the rear of the building to create a larger office space on the lower ground floor. The lightwell will be glazed so the impression of the lightwell will be retained. This will also provide daylight into the space enhancing the working conditions for the occupier. The skylight will be made of a slim line metal frame. Obscured glass will be installed to diffuse any light spillage. The proposed skylights will be pitched at approx. 3 degrees to ensure water runoff. The existing modern window and glazed door in the lightwell will be removed to accommodate the change. The existing windows in the lightwell will be removed and the sill be lowered to create an opening.
- **Façade works:** The existing sash windows, railings and step will be retained and refurbished. Structural improvements is required to repair the delamination of the façade (see Alan Baxter Structure Report). The external brickwork and stucco render at ground floor level and the historic metalwork will also be refurbished.
- **Landscaping improvements:** There will be a new hard landscaping proposed with potted planting to enhance the overall rear garden.

**Access | servicing**

- **Parking + access |** There is no additional parking proposed. The site is within a highly accessible central London location and it is expected that all staff will travel to the site by public transport. The lawful use of the property is not changing and there is 6.8m<sup>2</sup> additional floorspace proposed. Therefore, there will be no change to the general operational characteristics that trigger the need for additional parking to be considered. Servicing and deliveries will be completed through the front door with delivery vans temporarily parked in spaces on Montague Street.
- **Cycle parking |** The existing provision is considered sufficient with 21 bike spaces available immediately in front of the property and a Santander cycling racks a few minutes walk away. There will also be 8 proposed cycle parking spaces with a new 'wheel track' in the lower ground vaults, leading to the new cycle store on the LG floor. This will not be visible from the street. Shower space is provided within the building on the Lower Ground Floor.
- **Refuse and recycling |** The front lightwell vaults will be used for waste and recycle storage. Bins will be taken to street level on collection days. As per existing operations.

The key planning issues that arise from the above works are outlined in Section 5.



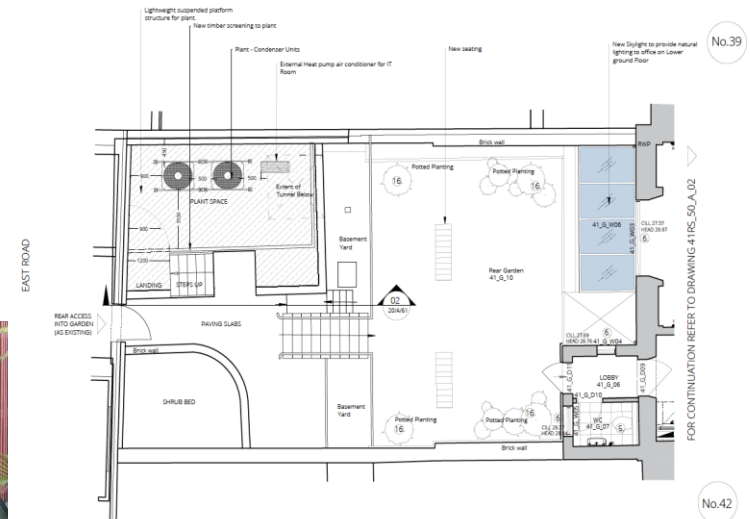
Proposed location for plant



Existing lightwell



Proposed material for acoustic screen



Proposed plan showing the location of the proposed plant and skylight

## 4. Planning framework

The policies in the documents listed below form a material consideration in the determination of this planning and listed building application. Compliance with policy is explained under each of the key issues set out on the following pages.

### **The National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (NPPF) & Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (PPG)**

This is a key part of the Government's reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, and to promote sustainable growth. The NPPF retains a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This applies unless any adverse impacts of a development would 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits. Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the determination of planning applications must be in accordance with the development plan, unless 'material considerations' indicate otherwise.

The NPPF seeks to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. Significance may derive from an asset's archaeological, architectural, historic or artistic value. A detailed understanding of why each asset is significant and the particular qualities and characteristics that contribute to understanding this significance must be the starting point for decision-making and policy. Great weight should be given to the assets conservation. In determining applications, local planning authorities require applicants to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected. Account should be taken of:

- 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.

### **The Development Plan**

- GLA's London Plan (LP), (adopted March 2016) (new draft London Plan 2017 has been through first stage consultation);
- Camden Local Plan (adopted July 2017)
- Camden Site Allocations (adopted 2013)

### **Other Guidance**

- Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal (2011)
- Camden Planning Guidance including CPG 1 Design(2018), CPG 3 Sustainability (2018), CPG 6 Amenity (2018), CPG 7 Transport (2011)
- Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes 1-3 (March 2015)



## 5. Assessment of works

### Design and heritage | Listed building consent works

**Policy reference:** NPPF Section 18; London Plan polices 7.8, 7.9; LBC LP policies D1, D2; Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal

The primary planning policy consideration for the works affecting 41 Russell Square is the impact of the proposals on heritage significance, namely the special architectural and historic character of the Grade II listed building and the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area.

**A full review of the impact of the proposed works in the context of its heritage designations and against the relevant design and heritage polices is provided in the Heritage Statement prepared by Montagu Evans.**

The scheme presented is based on historical research which has identified the background to the existing building and subsequent alterations to it.

In accordance with NPPF terminology the scheme has taken account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the individual significance of the Grade II listed building, while ensuring that it can be maintained in a viable use that is consistent with its conservation. The proposal does not lead to substantial harm to, or total loss of significance of the Grade II listed property. The NPPF advocates that 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 the optimum viable use.

Where possible the approach has been to minimise interventions, focusing change in areas that are of lesser significance, or have been most altered. There are some interventions to significant historic fabric. However these are considered to cause less than substantial harm in accordance with NPPF terminology, and are fully justified in the context of the works. Proposals are also balanced against heritage gains that will be delivered, including the restoration of historic fabric. In places, the proposals will remove existing, detracting elements, such as unsightly plant and exposed services and this will help to better reveal the significance of the heritage asset.

**Services Strategy** | The primary significance of the properties lies in their character and appearance as C19th terrace houses built as part of the planned development of Russell Square. The plan form remains legible in No. 41. However, the property is negatively affected by the very prominent exposed services and excess trunking equipment that have been installed in every room. These elements detract substantially from the character of the listed buildings. The complete removal of this exposed equipment and its relocation in existing or new risers will be a significant heritage gain in accordance with NPPF objectives and Camden LP policy D2. The new services strategy will also ensure the continuation of a viable use, securing vital investment and ongoing maintenance in the listed building.

The services strategy has been revisited by the design team since the pre-application meeting and in direct response to the comments made by LBC Officers. A building services strategy has been provided in support of this application which sets out the technical approach to improving services throughout the building.

Where new risers are necessary to deliver the services, these have been directed away from principal rooms in discreet locations of lesser significance, where the character of the room will not be affected or where rooms have been heavily adapted in the past. The risers are all the minimum size necessary to accommodate the equipment (please see the DAS for details). Locations have been revised to ensure features such as chimney breasts and fan lights are not obscured.

There are no radiators located in front of windows (the existing radiators in these locations will be removed). Other remaining features such as skirtings and cornices will be preserved in situ with risers scribed around these. Risers will be located behind new, high quality bespoke joinery which will improve the appearance of rooms.

Overall the proposed works will ensure the building can be maintained in an active viable use that will help to secure and support its long term conservation.

## Key planning issues | planning application works

The proposed works are mostly within the envelope of the existing established B1 office building. The overall use characteristics of the building will not change, albeit major improvements will be delivered to enhance both the building and the way the space is used.

The key policy considerations relevant to the assessment of the planning application works relate to the:

- Minor increase in B1 office use floorspace
- Minor changes relating to external alterations to the façade
- The visual appearance and impact of new plant
- Amenity of adjoining occupiers
- Other environmental impacts

These issues are considered below against the relevant planning policy context below.

### Minor increase in B1 office use floorspace

**Policy reference:** NPPF Section 6; London Plan policies; LBC LP policies E1,E2,E3

LBC LP policies support and protect the provision of employment premises and site that are suitable for continued business use, especially in the CAZ.

The established use of 41 Russell Square is B1 office. This has been the case for nearly 100 years (since the 1920s) and was formalised by a certificate of lawfulness in 2011 (ref: 2011/2675/P). The proposals will retain the existing lawful use of the building. The minor proposed infill of the rear lightwell will create a larger office space on the lower ground floor, resulting in a small increase of 6.8m<sup>2</sup> of B1 floorspace. The increase in floorspace will improve the layout and function of the offices on the lower ground floor of the building.

The proposal will support the function of the CAZ and the local economy in line with LBC LP policies E1 and E2. The minor increase is insignificant in the context of the operations of the building as a whole, however, it will help to create a more attractive office, through the efficient use of space in a sensitive adaptation of the listed building. This in turn will generate income for the BM to reinvest in the building and the wider estate.

## Design changes to the exterior

**Policy reference:** NPPF Section 16 and 12; London Plan policies 7.8, 7.9; LBC LP policies D1, D2; Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal

The NPPF section 16 states that 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 the setting. Any harm or loss would require clear and convincing justification.

The majority of the external works proposed at the site are relatively minor in planning terms. The proposals include the external and internal refurbishment and repair of the Grade II listed building in a manner appropriate to its significance. This will enhance the appearance of the listed building, its structural integrity and improve the setting of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The design and impact on the listed building has also been assessed in the DAS and Heritage Statement.

Policy 7.8 of the London Plan notes that development affecting heritage assets and their setting should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail. The proposed works respect the character and appearance of the building, they are a light touch and serve to protect, restore and complement its features of special architectural and historical interest. The external works are also appropriate in the context of the setting of the Conservation Area, having a neutral if not beneficial impact on its overall significance.

Similarly, policy D2 of the LBC Local Plan resists development that would cause harm to the significance of a listed building through effect of its setting. The majority of the proposed works to the façade of the existing building include minor refurbishment to the existing sash windows, railings and step and structural improvements to rectify the delamination of the façade. These improvements will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the building, the area and respect the setting of adjacent listed buildings. The works thereby meet the objectives of LBC LP policies D1 and D2.



The alteration of the existing rear windows at lower ground floor will enable the infill of the rear lightwell. This will create a larger office space on the lower ground floor, enhancing the B1 use of the building. The proposal includes a new skylight which will cover the lightwell and provide the office space with natural daylight. The lightwell will also be glazed with a slim line metal frame to retain the expression of the lightwell. The skylights will be elegant and improve appearance in the rear patio and improving the setting and overall appearance of the listed building in accordance with the LBC policies D2.

The proposals are for a relatively small external changes, but will translate to significant gains for the use and operation of the building. The external works will use materials consistent with and that complement the distinctive style and pallet of original materials, respecting the character of the building in accordance with LBC policy D2 and D1.

#### Visual appearance of plant

**Policy reference:** London Plan policies 5.4; 7.14; 7.15; LBC LP policies D1, D2

The visual, amenity and environmental impacts of replacement plant have been assessed, including the physical impact on the historic fabric and setting. The overall strategy for the new plant has been to rationalise the existing equipment which is scattered throughout the listed building and replace with more efficient plant, in discreet locations to minimise the impact on the overall heritage fabric and setting.

The portacabins will be removed to accommodate the proposed external plant. This will improve the appearance of the garden and the setting of the listed building. Two external plant units will be installed at the rear of the property against the boundary wall. A timber screen will be placed in front of the proposed plant. This equipment is necessary to provide sufficient comfort cooling as expected within a modern office. The location chosen will ensure the plant is accessible and able to be maintained.

The removal of redundant services throughout the building will be a heritage gain, improving the appearance of the listed building enormously, in accordance with NPPF principles and LBC policy D2. The placement of plant at the rear of the patio, located behind a sensitively designed timber screen will deliver fewer interventions to listed fabric with the discreet location also ensuring there is no negative impact on the setting of the conservation area.

#### Amenity of adjoining occupiers

**Policy reference:** London Plan policies 5.4; 7.6; 7.14; 7.15; LBC LP policies A1, A4

The B1 use at 41 Russell Square is established. There is a very minor increase in floorspace which is not expected to generate any additional operational impacts other than improving the layout of the lower ground floor office. Following completion of the works there will not be any impacts on surrounding occupiers. The building will still operate as a typical office albeit with a new commercial tenant. The main amenity considerations therefore relate to the noise from plant.

**Plant noise |** The plant has been assessed in the supporting Acoustics Report that accompanies this application. The noise impact was addressed in relation to LBC policy A1, with plant noise limits set in accordance with LBC policy A4. The acoustic surveys have revealed that the dominant noise sources were noted to be the existing HVAC plant located along the rear elevation of the terrace, namely the plant serving the Hirayama Studio located to the south (not located within the red line site boundary for this application). This plant operates 24 hours a day (about 47- 49dBA).

The noise levels from the new plant are predicted to operate at a level of 33dBA at 56.5m from the nearest receptor. This is at least 5dBA below the measured background LA90 during the daytime when the plant will be operational, which meets the requirements of LBC policies.

The plant has been designed to control noise generation and transmission, with attenuation measures integrated to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the nearest sensitive residential receptors. Namely, within the Grange Bloom Hotel at 7 Montague Street – this is over 55m away in any event and is not anticipated to be affected. Of note the external plant at the rear of the building can run 24 hours a day and still fully comply with LBC policy A4.

**Building services strategy** | This document summarises the approach taken by the project team to remove excessive, redundant plant and replace it with more efficient equipment which is not expected to give rise to any potential impacts on air quality on the surroundings (in line with London Plan and LBC’s policies (notably LP Policy CC4).

**Skylights+ light transmission** | The proposed skylights are located at the rear of the building, backing onto the main Museum building. The likely operating hours of 41 Russell Square will be typical office hours. The closest sensitive receptor is the Grange Bloom Hotel which is 55m away from the site. The potential of light pollution and impact on amenity is low and not considered to be a concern.

#### Other environmental impacts

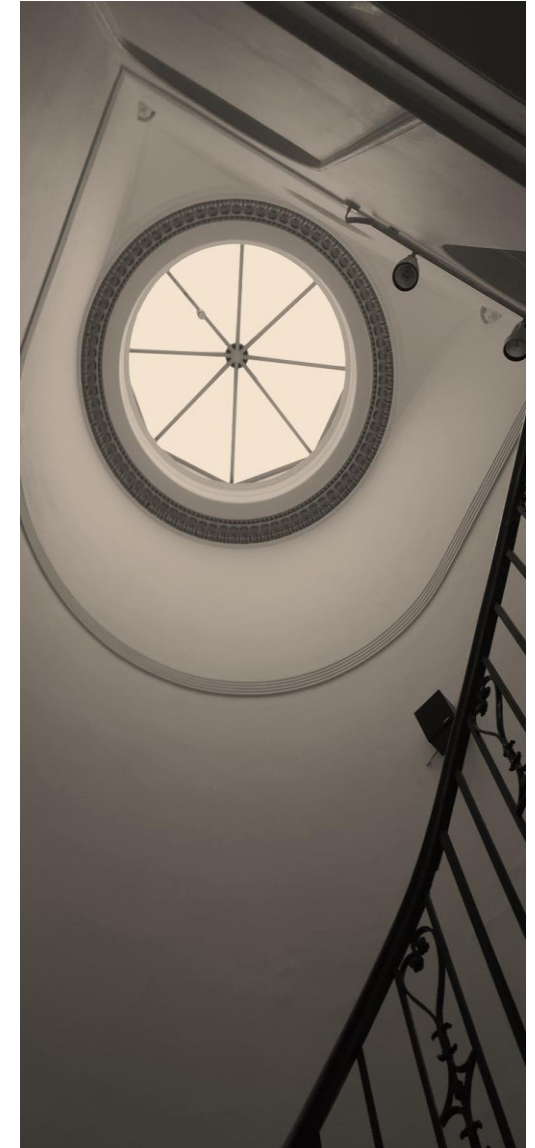
**Policy summary:** NPPF Section 14; London Plan policies 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 7.8; LBC LP policies CC1, CC5, T2

**Sustainability** | London Plan policy sets out that opportunities should be explored to identify potential modifications to reduce carbon emissions and secure sustainable development. Policy 7.8 of the London Plan notes that a balanced approach should be taken, weighing the extent of the mitigation of climate change involved against potential harm to the listed building and its setting.

There is only a 6.8m<sup>2</sup> increase in floorspace proposed as part of the proposed works. The Grade II listed status also imposes constraints on what measures can be introduced, without having a negative impact on listed fabric. The proposals have focused on opportunities to incorporate greater building efficiencies, to retrofit the existing building with measures to reduce the demand for energy through a combination of improvements to the building fabric and increase system efficiency. These proposals are in line with LBC policies for buildings of this nature, notably LBC LP Policy CC1.

**Transport** | The building will not generate significant demand on the transport network, over and above the existing requirements for the site, which retains its current B1 use class. As outlined, there is a small increase in floorspace and the site has a PTAL of 6b, meaning it is highly accessible. There is already ample cycle parking in the vicinity. Staff are expected to arrive by public transport. The proposals are considered to comply with LBC policy T2.

**Refuse and recycling** | Provision has been made for the storage of waste and recyclable materials in accordance with LBC policy CC5. The front lightwell has been dedicated to be the waste storage area as per the existing condition. Collection of rubbish and recycling bags will be by the existing on-street waste and recycling collections run by LBC.



## 6. Summary of consultation

An on-site pre-application meeting was held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2018 with LBC's officer Elaine Quigley and Conservation officer Catherine Bond. This was preceded by a detailed pack of information being submitted (sent on 5 April); and preceded by a further detailed set of plans and information as requested by Officers (submitted on 4 May). Additional drawings and amendments were also subsequently submitted to respond to Officers comments (submitted on 5 July) . Some of the key issues and comments raised by the Officers during and following the meeting include:

**Use** | Officers queried if the BM had considered converting the buildings into residential use. It was confirmed that 41 Russell Square had been in office use for approximately 100 years, longer than it had ever been in residential use. The BM would not be seeking a change of use to its long established lawful use and firmly believes that maintaining a commercial use represents the optimum viable use, given the current layout and condition. A new residential use is likely to require much more detailed amendments to layout and adaptation to make it suitable for habitation. Retaining the current lawful office use also aligns with LBC's planning policies for employment floorspace. Overall the proposed works will ensure the building can be maintained in an active viable use that will help to secure and support its long term conservation.

**Services** | The Conservation Officer confirmed that she was unaware of a similar approach to thread services through a building in a corresponding location on each level, and that she would need to take advice from colleagues on the approach adopted. Officers also confirmed that they would not wish to see risers impede fanlights or other important features, especially in principal spaces. The team maintained that the proposed approach was of lesser harm to fabric because the service routes and exposed cabling were able to be reduced. Existing risers are to be reused and new risers had been placed in areas of lesser significance. The impact amounted to less than significant harm, in accordance with NPPF terminology and should be balanced against the great many heritage gains that would be delivered through the removal of the unsympathetic services, currently in situ in more sporadic locations around the properties. Nonetheless, riser locations were all revisited and the minimum size cabling (and size of riser is proposed). BM has also assessed the proposals to ensure all historic features are not impacted and that the riser strategy uses existing risers where possible. The installation of radiators/air cooling units in front of windows is questioned as being the best location in terms of visual impact on the historic interiors . None of these are proposed.

**Curtilage** | The BM proposed a shortening of the garden to create additional vehicular circulation space on the main BM site to the west. Officers had concerns over the proposed shortening of the original back gardens. This is no longer proposed as part of this scheme.

**Lightwells + skylights** | Officers requested further information on the proposed glazed panels, namely whether they would be flush with the ground or raised. They were interested in the size and the potential for light pollution and spillage at night. Officers considered that the original proposal of rooflights over the lightwells will affect the setting of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area. The location of the proposed skylight has been relocated at no.41. It has been revised so the lightwell is entirely glazed so the impression of the lightwell will be retained. Obscured glass will be installed to diffuse any light spillage – although there are no immediately adjacent sensitive uses.

**Cycle stands** | Officers confirmed that this is not a requirement but provision is encouraged.

**Other information** | Officers also confirmed that she would like to see the following detail to help the further assessment of the proposals:

- Proposal to encase the risers with studies on the sizing of pipework and plant specs, so that LBC can be satisfied that the risers proposed represent the minimum interventions necessary.
- Size of cuts into floorboards and scribing detail around skirtings and cornices associated with new riser locations (The BM team confirmed that a bespoke solution was proposed depending on the location, however, the approach would include the minimum intervention necessary)
- Structural information to demonstrate that the proposals were appropriate in the context of the existing building, including if there was a need for any strengthening work.
- Understanding of room features excluding the storage and other equipment which concealed these in places.

Each of these issues has been addressed in the pre-application response document which was sent to the LBC officers on 5<sup>th</sup> July. The detailed response and justification for the proposals in response to the above issues are also set out in the context of the DAS and Heritage Statement.

**Historic England** | The pre-application package and LBC pre-application meeting note were sent to HE officer, Claire Brady, who was also invited for a site visit. As the building is Grade II listed, the majority of the work falls outside of HE's remit.

## 7. Summary | conclusions

- The proposal is to refurbish the established B1 office building at 41 Russell Square. The scheme will adapt the property to accommodate our client's intentions to let it to a third party. In turn, this will enable the BM to reinvest in the fabric of the Grade II listed building, and its wider estate at Bloomsbury.
- The works seek to conserve the heritage asset in a manner according to its significance. The proposals will sustain and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and setting of adjacent listed buildings. They will help to secure the optimum viable use of the heritage asset and support its long term conservation.
- The minor external refurbishment and repairs that are proposed will have a beneficial impact on the listed building and its Conservation Area setting.
- The new plant will be more efficient, facilitating the removal of unsightly services throughout the building.
- The established use does not generate any negative amenity impacts on surrounding occupiers.
- This proposal meets all other policy objectives at national, London-wide and local levels.



## APPENDIX 1: 41 Russell Square | planning history

Site + development	Reference + dates	Comments
<b>Application site: 41 Russell Square</b>		
<p><b>Planning permission</b> for the formation of a new pedestrian access from the museum to the rear garden, including access steps and a hoist.</p> <p><b>Listed Building Consent:</b> works to convert No.41 for continued office use, including installation of a boiler room under the front area steps and floor strengthening.</p>	<p>8501141 (PP) + 8570201 (LBC) <b>Granted 19.9.85</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DN only available online.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Listed Building Consent:</b> Alterations to the front entrance doors to replace the door leaves and replace doors in the front entrance lobby.</p>	<p>9570185 <b>Granted 21.7.95</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ap form states that alterations will include ‘upgrading for security and replacement of entrance doors in poor condition. Provision of new inner lobby doors with fanlight over.’</li> <li>• ‘Doors gloss painted hardwood facings; invisible green external, white internally.’</li> </ul>
<b>Application site: 41, 42 and 43 Russell Square</b>		
<p><b>CLEUD</b> for B1 office use</p>	<p>2010/4968/P+2010/4971/P <b>Withdrawn in Nov 2010</b></p> <p>2011/2675/P; 2011/2151/P ; 2011/2149/P <b>Granted 8.7.11</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Original ap withdrawn due to insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the legal use of the properties were ancillary to the Museum (D1 use) as opposed to independent office uses (B1 use).</li> <li>• CLEUD granted with sufficient evidence that properties were in independent B1 use and not ancillary to D1 use of Museum.</li> <li>• Council’s opinion confirmed that the planning unit is separate and does not extend to the whole estate.</li> </ul>
<b>Application site: 38, 40, 41, 42, 43 Russell Square</b>		
<p><b>Listed Building Consent:</b> External and internal alterations inc. new external light fittings, replacement skylight lanterns within the lightwell at 4<sup>th</sup> flr of No. 39; installation of new servicing inc dado trunking, service risers, data hubs and boiler flue, fire safety upgrade, installation of suspended ceilings and alterations to boxed in existing electric intake and distribution boards with cupboards at all floor levels.</p>	<p>2017/3182/NEW <b>Withdrawn</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No docs available</li> </ul>



