

**PLANNING AND  
LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION**

**FOR**

**INTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO  
FACILITATE THE CHANGE OF USE  
OF A TWO BEDROOM APARTMENT TO  
4 NO. STUDENT LETS WITH  
SHARED COMMON SPACE & FACILITIES.**

**APPLICATION SITE:-  
FLAT 3, 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR SOUTH,  
NO. 2 RAYMOND BUILDINGS,  
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 for internal alterations to an existing residential flat within the Estate to facilitate its use as 4 no. student lets.
- 1.2 The flat is currently vacant, but was previously let to a Member of the Inn. It is proposed to change the use of the flat to increase the number of student lets within the Estate and support a greater number of students seeking a career as a barrister – one of the main functions of the Inns of Court.
- 1.3 The existing flat has been previously partitioned to form the current residential layout, we have worked with the existing historic and stud walls to create a layout to suit shared student accommodation. No changes are proposed to the original wall fabric, but a small amount of additional stud partitioning is required to allow for the new use.
- 1.4 No. 2 Raymond Buildings is a listed building, therefore a Heritage Assessment has been provided below to support the application.
- 1.5 The application is also accompanied by detailed drawings, including large scale joinery details which will be replicated where required.

## **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 Inn is looking to increase student accommodation within the Estate to offer a greater level of support to its student members.
- 2.6 A recent report highlighted the cost of training to be a barrister and a respected QC, Chantal-Aimee Doerries QC, voiced concerns about the huge sums needed for training and how this may affect progress on diversity and social mobility within the profession. It is estimated that prior to the increase in university tuition fees, many were entering the profession owing between £40-60K and this could potentially double in some instances with current, higher tuition costs.
- 2.7 The Inns of Court collectively, of which Gray's Inn is one of four, provide nearly £5m a year in scholarships, bursaries and awards. With annual student living costs within London being estimated by the National Union of Students at £13K per annum, assistance with subsidised accommodation is a crucial factor in encouraging those from less well off backgrounds to access the profession.
- 2.8 As well as providing accommodation, training and access to some of the most influential legal minds in the Country, students also benefit from access to the law library on site and shared facilities with Lincoln's Inn which is a short walk away, dining facilities etc. The site is also in a highly sustainable position with regards to access to public transport, local shops etc.

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

- 3.1 No. 2 Raymond Buildings 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 No. 2 Raymond Buildings is one of a terrace of buildings, listed as part of a group. The listing groups together Nos. 1-6 Raymond Buildings and the attached railings. The List Entry number is 1322151.

3.5 The listing description is as follows:

*TQ3081NE GRAY'S INN 798-1/101/639 (East side) 24/10/51 Raymond Buildings Nos.1-6 and attached railings*

*GV II*

*6 terraced chambers. 1825, restored late C20. Multi-coloured stock brick under a slate roof with dormers. West elevation - 4 storeys, attics and basements. 7 windows each. Entrances of semicircular arches with key-stones and impost blocks. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sash windows. Restored parapet. East elevation - facing gardens, with stone bands at ground and 1st floor. INTERIORS: have stone stairs with square iron balusters. 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 facilitate the student accommodation involve no loss of historic fabric – comprising the minor variation of modern stud partitioning and the addition of a modest amount of further stud walling to create a hallway and additional bedroom.
- 3.9 It would not be possible to create separate private rooms within the existing space without the limited introduction of stud partitioning. However, these walls would not have a damaging level of permanence and could be removed at a later date, if desired, reverting the spaces to their original form. The works need to be balanced against the benefit that additional student accommodation would bring.
- 3.10 To conclude, in our opinion, none of the proposed works would have any form of detrimental impact upon the listed building or its setting, but would enable the Inn to continue its historic role of supporting those looking to enter the legal profession.

## **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 alteration of modern partitions and the insertion of small amount of additional partitioning to create a further bedroom. Where new doors/architraves/skirting are required, care would be taken to match those in the existing building. A typical door detail has been provided in this regard.

## **5.0 ACCESS**

5.1 The access arrangements to the building will remain unchanged by this proposal.

## **6.0 PLANNING POLICY**

6.1 This application seeks consent to change the use of an existing residential unit within the Gray's Inn Estate to shared student accommodation.

6.2 The physical alterations to facilitate the conversion do not require planning permission of themselves and the reasoning behind these alterations and their impact upon the listed building has already been rehearsed earlier in this statement. This section of the Assessment will, therefore, only focus on the planning policy appertaining to the change of use from a residential unit to student accommodation.

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, however, would appear to be Policy 3.8 'Housing Choice' and Policy 3.18 'Education Facilities'.

- 6.6 Policy 3.8 aims to increase housing choice for Londoners, in terms of housing type, size and tenure. Criteria (h) requires LPA's to enable strategic and local requirements for student housing meeting a demonstrable need, whilst working closely with stakeholders in higher and further education and without compromising capacity for conventional homes.
- 6.7 The policy requires student accommodation to be secured by a planning agreement or condition relating to its occupation by members of a specified educational institution. The Inn would accept a condition in this regard to restrict the accommodation to occupation by students associated with the Inn's educational facility only.
- 6.8 Policy 3.18 'Educational Facilities' requires Boroughs to support and maintain London's international reputation as a centre of excellence in higher education.
- 6.8 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.
- 6.9 Policy H9 of the Local Plan 'Student Housing' sets out guidance on the provision of student accommodation within the Borough.
- 6.10 As set out earlier in this statement, the Inn is a unique and historic body that has since its inception provided support to those wishing to enter the profession. The Inn offers a number of scholarships, bursaries and awards to help those less fortunate to follow a career in law and provide the balance and diversity needed in the legal system. As part of this subsidised, and convenient, accommodation is provided on site and the Inn wishes to increase this provision.
- 6.11 On examining the requirements of Policy H9, the proposed change of use meets with the relevant criteria and will assist in '...meeting the needs of students from a variety of backgrounds in order to support the growth of higher education institutions in Camden and Camden's international academic reputation'.
- 6.12 Further details relating to the provision of student accommodation can be provided on request and a site visit can also be arranged by prior appointment to assess the physical alterations.