

## **LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION FOR URGENT REPAIRS TO 5 DENMARK STREET LONDON WC2H 8LP**

### **1. The building**

5 Denmark Street is a 4-storey terrace house (plus basement) with a 4-storey rear extension (no basement in extension). The rear extension abuts/overlooks Book Mews, a private courtyard. The building occupies the entire site, with no margin of land around the building. The building was listed grade 2 in 1974. The earliest part is the Denmark Street end of the building. The rear extension was built in the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

A detailed heritage study of the building by KM Heritage dated April 2018 is attached.

### **2. Urgent and necessary repairs for which consent is required**

The necessary repairs to the rear and flank walls of the building require listed building consent.

The part of the building to be repaired is a composite 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century structure which is listed because it is within the curtilage of the 17<sup>th</sup> century building. It does not include any historic building fabric likely to be listed on its own merit. Repair works will be on a “like for like” basis and retain the existing external appearance of the building so its impact on its surroundings is unchanged. Repair works will be minimised to minimise the cost but, until investigatory work and repairs are authorised, repair cannot proceed.

The rear wall and window arches in the rear wall have spread and the arches have failed as a result of the spread which compromises their ability to support the weight above. Additionally, the flank walls at the rear have deflected outwards over the neighbouring properties. Subsidence or other ground movement may be implicated. Urgent repairs are necessitated because the movement in the rear and flank walls is thought to be continuing.

**The attached letter from Engenuiti identifies the structural problems and recommended repair strategy. The attached photographs identify some of the structural problems.**

Although disagreement may have existed earlier this year about whether the rear part of the building is actually a dangerous structure, there is now no immediate risk associated with the condition of the building because, as a result of the concern earlier this year, the rear of the building is now well supported by the massive structural scaffold erected by the neighbouring properties. However, the problem now is that until the repairs to no. 5 are undertaken it cannot be predicted with confidence what will happen if the scaffold is removed. The scaffold will need to be removed for development of the neighbouring properties to be completed and those premises to be brought into use. There is consequently considerable urgency imposed by that 3<sup>rd</sup> party development programme even if the structure is currently secure because of the support from the structural scaffold.

We wish to provide a precise schedule of the proposed works as part of this application. However, identifying a complete schedule of repairs is not possible at present because that will only evolve as repairs and exploratory / investigative works are undertaken. Some works will undoubtedly involve demolition of the interior structure and existing walls but the objective will be to minimise any demolition and repair to save cost. It also has to be borne in mind that the access to the building is from inside and whilst there may be some statutory rights to exterior access at the rear of the premises this may not be of great advantage whilst other works are taking place around the building and the steel supporting frame is in situ.

At present the closest we are able to provide as a description of the works is:

**Rebuild “as is” any unstable elements of the structure comprising the rear extension of 5 Denmark Street on a like for like basis to make that overall structure stable”**

By the nature of the circumstances, detailing a complete detailed schedule of works at the outset is limited to the following statements:

To deal with structural problems, repair will require rebuilding of the affected areas in materials matching the existing. If we are required to demolish the uppermost section of the rear wall (which is constructed in a more modern brick) in order to rebuild sections of the wall below, consent will be sought at the time to rebuild that more modern addition with the same bricks as the lower section. That will be an alteration but we suggest it will be for the better.

If subsidence or other ground movement is determined to be the underlying cause, underpinning may be required which would have to be undertaken from inside the building. Consent is also sought for underpinning if required.

In order to meet current building control regulations, an internal frame may be required to provide adequate lateral restraint to the rear building and tie the flank walls together at the rear of the building. If floors have to be removed to carry out any of the works, we may be required by law to reinstate them with floors that meet current floor loading criteria and fire regulations. Consent is sought for this work.

Investigative work will have to be undertaken initially to determine the areas of brickwork that need to be rebuilt. Without consent for this we cannot undertake investigation or any repair. Full plans of the building are available in .pdf and .dwg formats on request but, because of the nature of the repairs required, those drawings are irrelevant because they do not show any of the constructional detail that would be required for such analysis.

A building notice will be issued before commencement of any works on site.

### **3. BACKGROUND TO THIS APPLICATION**

#### **3.1 Significant redevelopments in the immediate vicinity of the building**

4 and 6 Denmark Street (between which No. 5 is located) and Book Mews behind the building are being extensively redeveloped as part of the St Giles redevelopment. Nos. 4 and 6 are being extended in part and converted to residential use above ground floor level. Parts of Book Mews will be excavated to a depth of two basements behind and to the side of no. 5 and those will be developed for A3 and associated use. The area immediately outside the rear wall of the building is shown on the development plans as an outside seating terrace area for a restaurant.

Crossrail passes close to 5 Denmark Street. The premises at 5 Denmark Street were surveyed fully by the Crossrail team before construction commenced. No comments about deterioration to the rear wall of no 5 were made in that survey report.

#### **3.2 How were the problems identified?**

As a result of the party wall process with the neighbouring properties, a party wall notice was served on the owners/occupiers of 5 Denmark Street by Bradley Burden BSc MRICS of Ten 1 Surveyors on behalf of Consolidated Developments Ltd on 27 July 2017. The Applicant appointed Andrew Bidgood BSc MRICS of CTG Consultancy as the party wall surveyor representing the owner and the occupiers of the building. A report dated 22 December 2017 by Engenuiti, civil engineering consultants to Consolidated Developments, was included amongst supporting information associated with the party wall award document (a multi-page document consisting largely of photographs and schedules of condition) that was agreed.

The 22 December 2017 report by Engenuiti was not read by the Applicant until sometime later in 2018. It questioned the structural stability of the rear extension and identified problems of which the Applicant was unaware but which clearly needed investigation. After contacting other surveyors / engineering consultants who were ultimately unable to assist, the Applicant contacted Engenuiti directly and asked them to survey again and advise the Applicant on what needed to be done to repair the building. They concluded there was no conflict of interest involved as the Applicant's interest was solely to establish the facts and Engenuiti produced their report dated 3 August 2018 which is attached.

It should be noted that, because of the current circumstances, i.e. the surrounding work and structural scaffold, Engenuiti had much better access and were able to inspect the rear section of 5 Denmark Street more closely than had been possible previously.

Under normal circumstances, the owner of 5 Denmark Street is not able to view or inspect the rear or flank walls of their building because it can only be seen from Book Mews which is a private Mews with no public access. The relevance of that is that as late as July 2018, despite a history of planning applications / proposals, the Applicant was unaware of the potentially dangerous structural condition of the rear and flank walls of the building.

### **3.3 Attachments**

Site location plan

Heritage Study by KM Heritage dated April 2018

Report from Engenuiti dated 3 August 2018

Photographs from Condition survey for party wall award

Design projection from party wall award for existing structural scaffold support for rear of 5 Denmark Street during the surrounding works.

### **3.4 Technical advisory team**

The building notices will be issued by and the specified repair works supervised by the technical advisory team: -

Surveyor: Andrew Bidgood BSc MRICS; CTG Consulting

Engineer: John Bailiss MEng CEng MIStructE; Engenuiti