

24 September 2018

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**SUBJECT: 240 Grays Inn Rd (2018/2011/L, 2018/1788/P and 2018/1783/A)**

Dear Nora,

We respond on behalf of our client, the leaseholder of the shop at 240 Gray's Inn Road, to your request for additional information as outlined in your 11 September 2018 email which we itemise as follows:

1. Revised drawings to include:
  - Cowl lamps to illuminate the fascia
  - Shopfront and fascia colour information
  - Fascia lettering colour information
2. Technical specifications for the proposed shutters
3. Clarification regarding the basement support structure to:
  - Identify the previous planning drawings referenced in the structural report,
  - Explain why Acrow props were installed in the first place, and
  - Justify its impact on the listed building.

### Revised Drawings

Please find attached revised drawings 1521-06C and 1521-05B by W&M Architects which now include the above-mentioned details.

### Shutter Specifications

The proposed internal brickbond shutters are comparable to the technical specifications for the A900 model by Syston Doors Ltd. Please find attached their brochure with technical specifications, grille aperture measurements (230 x 60mm), and example images of the A900 model. The full height of the shutters will employ the A900 brickbond links (with no solid nor glazed laths). The proposed internal brickbond shutters will have a standard mill finish (i.e. not coloured nor 'antiqued') to minimise visual impact and will be consistent in appearance with brickbond shutters found elsewhere in the Bloomsbury and neighbouring conservation areas.

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The design of these shutters comply with Camden policy and guidance (specifically *Local Plan* paragraph 4.94 and *CPG 1: Design* paragraphs 7.27 - 7.29) in the creation of an 'active frontage' that balances security concerns while being sympathetic to the character of the shopfront and conservation area. Further detail on the rationale for the shutters and shopfront design can be found in section 5.0 of the submitted Heritage Statement (Fuller Long 12 April 2018), specifically paragraphs 5.5.8 and 5.5.9.

## Clarification Re: Basement Support Structure

The previous planning drawings referenced in the structural report by HLN Engineering refer to Drawing No. 02 B, Existing Basement Floor Plan from the previously refused Listed Building Consent Application no. 2004/1164/L. A copy of this drawing can be found in Appendix 3 of the submitted Heritage Statement.

Photographic evidence for the installation of temporary Acrow props was found as part of the same listed building consent application (2004/1164/L) on Drawing no. 24, "Basement Stairs and Space Below Shop" (dated 28/02/2004) within the *Photographic Views* document (entitled as "INCLUDES PHOTOS" on Camden's online planning database). A copy of the cropped image can also be found on page 50 (Figure 33) of our submitted Heritage Statement.

It is not clear from the 2004/1164/L application when the Acrow props were first introduced. We can only surmise that it was sometime before 28 Feb 2004.

Our deduction as stated in the Heritage Statement aligns with the findings and opinion of the Structural Report which is that additional support was required due to a compromised original beam. My estimation at the time (see paragraph 5.6.7 of our Heritage Statement, 12 April 2018) was that it may be the result of decay or damage to the beam. However, the structural report clarifies that the reduced strength of the original beam is due to it being an historically salvaged and reused timber member with mortices previously carved out of it which has reduced the tensile strength of the beam. As stated in the Structural Report:

*"An original timber beam was visible in the trapdoor opening directly above the support feature. Interestingly the timber beam had been morticed horizontally, which could suggest that it had previously been used elsewhere in the structure. The horizontal mortices would reduce the strength of the timber in bending and deflection, and this might in turn have given cause for concern, resulting in the installation of a support structure, initially using Acrows, and subsequently in the current form. (Paragraph 3.7, Structural Report for 240 Gray's Inn Road by HLN Engineering, August 2018)*

The impact of the subsequent basement support structure is that it affects a minor change to the listed building. The support structure does not alter, harm, nor interfere with the historic ovens, vault door and access, or curved wall found in the basement. There are no other historic features remaining at basement level. The structure has been considered fit for purpose as stated in the structural report by HLN Engineering. Being in the basement with access only via the trapdoor, there is no visibility of the structure from public sightlines. Furthermore, the plan form of the basement level remains legible even with the structure in place. Therefore, based on criteria set by Historic England as published in *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (March 2015), the basement support structure, consisting of a partially embedded steel beam at floor level, four vertical timber columns and a timber cross beam, is considered to affect only a minor change to the listed building while contributing a beneficial impact upon the listed building as a whole due to the structural support it provides. The use of timber columns and cross

beam also makes the structure, in part, to be reversible and modifiable, which further reduces the impact on the special interest of the building.

To reiterate paragraph 6.2 of our Heritage Statement:

*“We conclude that the proposals to regularise minor alterations to the interior of the shop unit and basement accommodation do not cause any harm to the special interest of the listed building due to a combination of their minor impact, reversible nature, and the low significance of the affected areas.”*

We trust this additional information further clarifies the proposals for the above-mentioned applications.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



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**Heritage Consultant**

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