



Flat A, 1 New Square, Lincoln's Inn

Works to compartment walls.

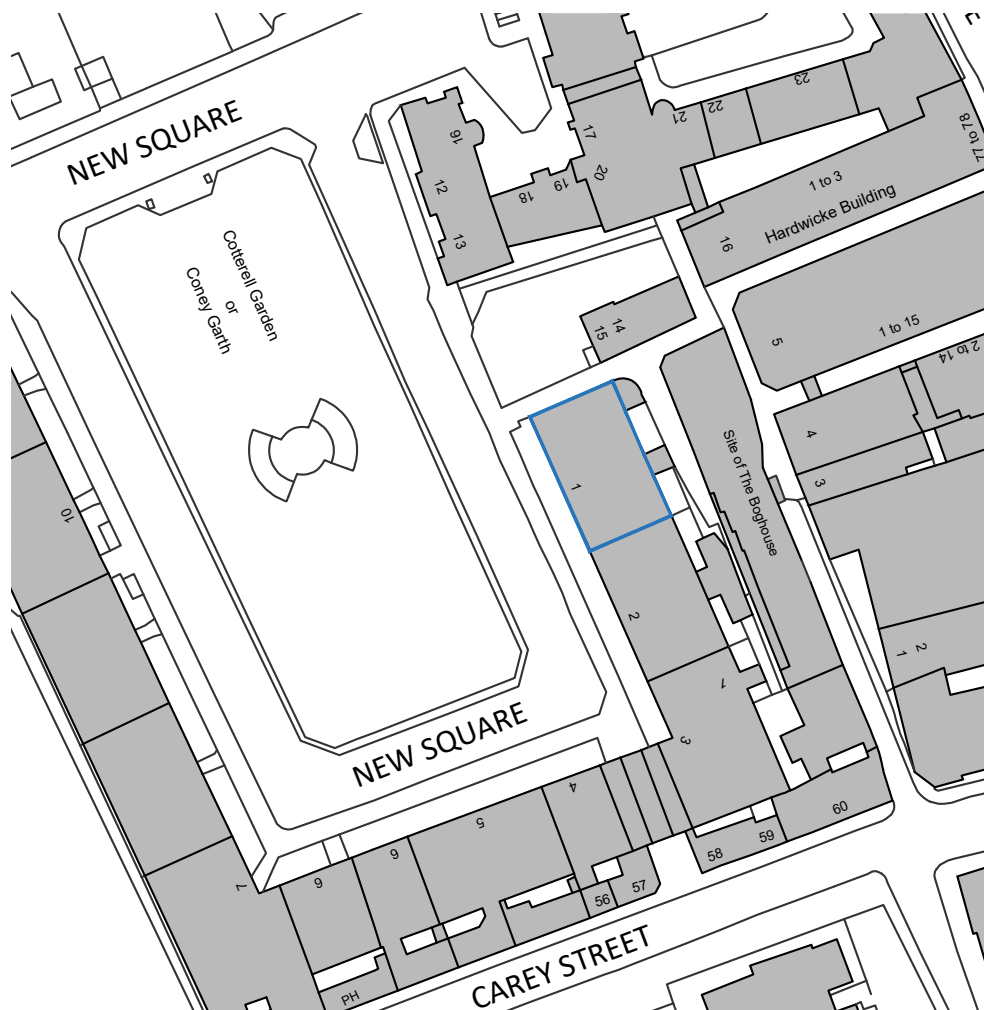
AMENDED DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

February 2019

Version A

Contents

- 1.00 Introduction
- 2.00 Existing Flat
- 3.00 Proposed Floor Plan
- 4.00 Improvements of Compartment Walls
- 5.00 Brief
- 6.00 Access
- 7.00 Pre-application Consultation
- 8.00 Statement of Justification



Location of no.1 New Square

1.00 Introduction

Flat A (the “Flat”) is situated on the 3rd floor of 1 New Square. The Flat is a flying freeholds recently acquired by the applicants. By virtue of the Lincoln’s Inn Act 1860, Lincoln’s Inn and New Square are maintained by the Honourable Society of Lincoln’s Inn (“HSLI”). The Flat is part of 1 New Square. Nos. 1-11 New Square are listed together as a Grade II* listed building. New Square is situated in part of a Conservation Area known as the Bloomsbury and Holborn Conservation Area (see further the Heritage Statement).

Flat A has been in residential accommodation use since its construction at the end of the seventeenth century. However, in the 1970’s and possibly also at other times, the layout of the Flat has been altered and works carried out which have removed most of any internal features of interest. The Flat has now been unoccupied for several years and is currently in a poor condition. It seems that lack of investment by the previous owner allowed the property to deteriorate.

It the applicants’ intention is to re-plan and refurbish the interior of the Flat. The proposals would enable to the Flat to be occupied. Further, the new layout and high quality refurbishment would allow the Flat to replicate its historic function as a residence of modest grandeur and a place for residential entertainment. The proposed refurbishment has been granted planning and listed building consent. We are now applying for listed building consent to improve the fire and acoustic integrity of the compartment walls.

1.01 Proposal

The floor plan included in this application demonstrates our proposal to remove the lath and plaster from one side of the compartment walls and to replace it with insulation and fire-rated plasterboard lining. Where required, the compartment walls will be extended to the underside of the roof to ensure continuity of the compartment wall and to avoid flames from spreading through the loft void. The proposal also includes removing the plaster to perimeter walls where required to repair and/or renew the finishes that are damaged or in need of refurbishment.

2.00 Existing Flat

Site

As noted above, Flat A is located within 1 New Square, Lincoln's Inn. Eleven buildings are located in New Square, each of which face onto a large green. However for purpose of statutory listing they are listed as one building. All eleven buildings, the green and the access roads are maintained by the Lincoln's Inn Estate, with the exception of some floors within the buildings including the Flat that are separately owned outside of the Inn by virtue of flying freeholds (amounting to approximately one third of New Square).

1 New Square is located to the east of the Square and shares a southern boundary with 2 New Square. 1 New Square consists of 5 floors including the basement, ground floor and first, second and third floors. The Site can be accessed by car via the entrance to Lincoln's Inn on Lincoln's Inn Fields as well as by foot via Carey Street, Chancery Lane and Old Buildings.

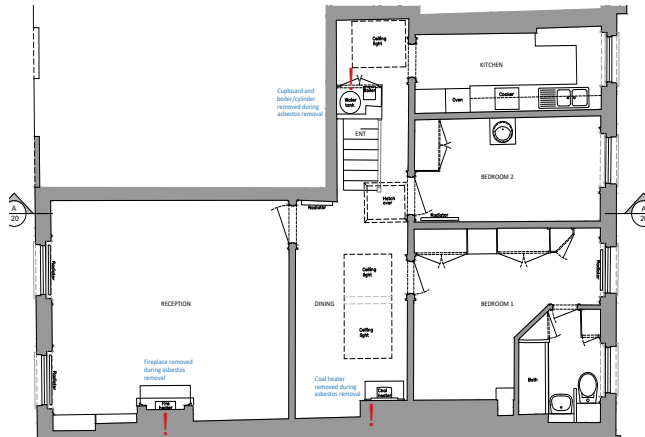
The Flat itself is accessed by entering 1 New Square at ground floor level and making one's way up to the second floor. On the second floor there is a staircase which is separate to the communal staircase. The staircase is situated behind a "front door" to the Flat separating it from the communal staircase and dedicated to accessing the Flat on the 3rd Floor.

The Flat

The staircase on the second floor up to the Flat leads to a large landing area which is lit by two large roof lights and appears to have previously been used as a dining area.

The Flat contains four rooms that lead off the landing area. The layout appears to have been altered in the 1970's to include an en-suite and thereby possibly sub-dividing the

rooms that initially existed when 1 New Square was first built. The alterations carried in the 1970's detract from the building's appearance and no particular respect for its historic character.



Existing Third Floor Plan

Reception Room

The main reception room is adjacent to the top of the staircase and overlooks the green within New Square. The reception room includes a fireplace, bookshelves and two large timber sliding sash windows.

An asbestos survey revealed asbestos lining behind the fireplace. For health and safety reasons this lining has since been removed. The style of the fireplace appliance, gas connection and the asbestos lining indicates that the fireplace is not an original feature of the Flat. The painted bookshelves are also not an original feature of the early 18th century Flat.

A review of the metal brackets that support the shelves indicated that they were a late 20th century addition of no historical interest.

The existing sash windows are in need of repair and proper maintenance. Certain ironmongery on the windows needs to be replaced or re-fixed and the sliding sash window mechanism struggles to operate. The architrave does not fully extend around the window.



Reception Fireplace



Reception Book Shelves

It may be that previously the ceiling has been lowered or else, that the architrave was cut short. The general finishes within the room are worn and beyond repair. Unfortunately, due to the condition of the floor joists under the floor, the floor itself is uneven and the floorboards are loose.

Bedroom 1

This is the main bedroom that includes the only bathroom within the Flat. The built-in wardrobe is in a good condition, however due to the arrangement and construction it is certain that the wardrobe is not an original feature. The en-suite requires complete replacement.

Whilst the fittings are just still functional, the 1970's bath is stained and unsanitary in appearance. There are major repair works required to waterproof it and ensure that it does not cause any water damage to the Flat itself, or the adjoining office space.



Bedroom 1 En-suite



Bedroom 1 En-suite - Ceiling

Bedroom 2

The second bedroom has enough space to fit a single bed. The previous occupant(s) had installed a sink and walk-in wardrobe. None of the fittings and fixtures found in this second bedroom are original features of the Flat. They were not high quality and are now in a tired condition.



Bedroom 2 Sink

Kitchen

The kitchen demonstrates signs of significant wear and in various places such wear cannot even be repaired. The style of decor leads to the assumption that the Flat was last refurbished *circa* 1970's.



Kitchen

The electrical switches and sockets are dated and poorly maintained and are a cause for safety concern and even more so because various switches had been taped by the previous occupant(s). The kitchen units are broken and beyond repair. The flooring is damaged and heavily worn to the structural floor boards above the joists. There are also signs of water damage from spillages. The remainders of the appliances are just barely functional but there is no evidence that they have been fully maintained.



Kitchen Switches



Kitchen Floor Finish

Loft Floor

The loft space above is partially boarded and was previously used as storage. The roof structure is currently made up of trusses and cut rafters, leaving plenty of room for storage. The loft space also provides access onto the roof for maintenance through another hatch and has adequate lighting.

Original Features

As previously stated the Flat was refitted *circa* 1970's, thereby removing most of any original timber decor that may have existed, although this may actually have been removed even before the 1970's. The only remaining original features are the architraves around the windows and the roof trusses. The differing door heights and differing construction of the partitions indicate that not all of the internal walls are original.



Roof Truss

3.00 Proposed Floor Plan



4.00 Improvement of Compartment Walls

The main listed building consent that was approved included demolition of the existing layout and introducing new partition walls to form a new layout.

We have appreciated that the new layout would worsen the means of escape from the flat. The intention to upgrade the compartment walls was included and approved in the previous listed building consent. Our approved inspectors Butler and Young have agreed that the compartment walls are required to be upgraded to achieve a minimum of 1hr fire resistance.

The extent of the works required in order to upgrade the compartment walls is now determined following a series of intrusive investigations. The floor plan accompanying the application indicates the compartment walls that require upgrading.

The application seeks to agree to the method in which the compartment walls can be upgraded. It is crucial that the approved method of upgrading the compartment wall provide a robust solution to achieve the required fire rating.

The following methods were considered and determined to be inappropriate for this particular situation.

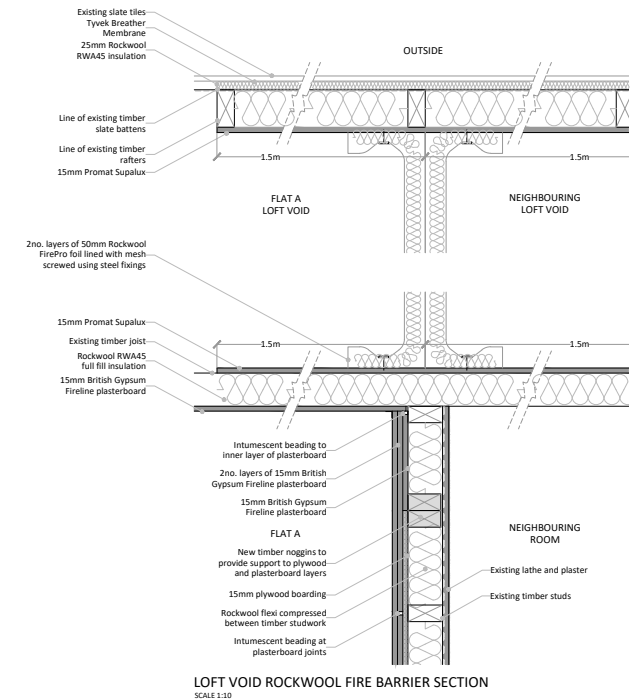
1. Over boarding - Over boarding provides difficulties in ensuring that the fire-rated plasterboard fixings had penetrated the timber structure behind the lath and plaster. The method also leaves concealed cavities within the compartment wall and any holes or imperfections in the lath and plaster lining may assist fire to spread within the concealed cavity. It was considered that the over board would have little impact should fire and smoke finds its way into the cavities within the compartment wall.

2. Intumescent painting the existing compartment walls will not provide continuity in fire resistance from the wall to the underside of the roof. Workmanship concerns and failure of the intumescent paint after a period of time will not provide a robust solution. This method also does not mitigate weaknesses in the compartment wall within the concealed cavities and at junctions.

3. Fire rated plasterboard lining - It is considered that the removal of the lath and plaster obtains access to infill the concealed cavities with a fire rated mineral wool and install fire rated plasterboard in place of the lath and plaster to achieve a 1hr fire resistance. The proposed method provides a robust solution whilst leaving lath and plaster to one side of the wall.

The concealed cavities within the compartment wall are not filled and provides a route for fire to spread into the cavity and potentially attach three sides of the timber studwork. The installation of insulation into the cavity will prevent fire from igniting no more than one side of the timber studwork and weakening the structural integrity of the wall within 1hr. We cannot be certain that no service penetrations, holes or voids existing or may be formed, therefore, we cannot rely on the neighbouring side of the wall being maintained.

During an inspection of the roof void, it was evident that the roof void was not compartmentalised above leaving the residential flat vulnerable from fire spread. It is a requirement to ensure continuity in the fire rating of a compartment wall. It is therefore, consider appropriate to position fire separation in the loft void directly above the compartment walls.



The extended compartment wall into the loft void does not require the removal of any existing materials. The extended compartment walls will be concealed within the loft void and not be visible from any of the spaces beneath.

5.00 Brief

The Flat in its existing form is in need of refurbishment. The worn finishes, loose floorboards, poor electrical wiring, malfunctioning drainage, tired kitchen and *en suite* are beyond repair and require replacement. They detract from the Flat's listed status. The electrics are a cause of safety concern.

The current layout is not original and not conducive to the well-being of occupants, with the kitchen some distance from the reception room rather than adjacent. The non-original heating and hot water systems redundant. Having taken into account the level of refurbishment required to return the Flat to a liveable condition, the applicant expressed an interest in re-planning the layout.

The brief is to create an Flat fit for purpose which will improve the living conditions of the flat and enhance the Flat's quality as part of a building of special architectural and historic importance by inter alia creating (i) an open-plan reception, dining and kitchen; (ii) one master bedroom with *en suite*; (iii) a W/C which is accessible from the open plan reception area and (iv) an additional sleeping area (v) reintroduction of an age appropriate reclaimed fireplace (vi) improved natural lighting (vii) energy efficient sash windows (viii) repairs of water leakages and replacement of possibly unsafe electrical fittings.

In addition to expressing their desired layout, the applicant has shown an interest in introducing by incorporation wooden panelling in various locations throughout the Flat to keep the interior decor relating to the context of the 17/18th century exterior façade. The applicant has no intention of detracting from the character of the building and Conservation area – quite the reverse – and has kept this in the forefront of his mind during the design stages.

6.12 Impact on Neighbouring Properties

The proposed alterations will not adversely impact neighbouring properties. The refurbishment of the Flat provides a wonderful opportunity to improve the structural integrity of the compartmentation between offices and dwellings.

Accordingly, the proposed insulation, fire stopping and sound reducing strategies will benefit both the occupants of the Flat and the neighbours.

6.00 Access

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site have not been altered or removed.

7.00 Pre-Application Consultation

In the present circumstances it was considered that pre-application consultation would not be a proportionate use of local authority time and not necessary.

8.00 Statement of Justification

The works carried out to Flat A in the past did not include any works to the fire integrity of the compartment walls. The large loft void above the ceiling extends across the adjacent offices and provides a significant risk of fire spreading through a concealed void.

The new layout of the flat includes an open plan arrangement which requires the compartment walls to achieve an improved fire resistance in order to comply with the requirements set out by the Approved Inspector.

The approach design is the most efficient and robust in order to achieve the fire rating required. The unusual arrangement of the timber structure to the partition makes over boarding the compartment wall very difficult and offer uncertainty if the fixings had penetrated the structure. The lath and plaster would need to be removed in order to ensure that the plasterboard linings are securely fixed. This is the only method that will secure adequate fire safety protection. This is for the benefit of safety of residents and works in New Square as well as protecting the listed building itself.