

THE PAUL MELLON CENTRE
15 & 16 BEDFORD SQUARE

Design & Access Statement
to assist a Listed Building Consent Application

April 2019

WRIGHT & WRIGHT ARCHITECTS



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art was founded in 1970. It is located in Grade I Listed buildings at no.15 and 16 Bedford Square. The buildings house the Centre's library, archives, public study room, teaching facilities and staff offices.

It is an educational charity which promotes and supports the study of British history of art and architecture and is a member of the Association of Research Institutes in Art History. It has two complementary purposes: to contribute to the study and understanding of British art and architecture and to act as a research centre for scholars working in this field.

1.2 Site Description

The two buildings are D1 use class and are located on the northwest side of Bedford Square. They are Grade I listed for their group value.

The buildings are located within the Sub Area 5 of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

1.3 Summary of Proposals

As part of the Paul Mellon Centre's 50th Anniversary in 2020, the Centre would like to make the following upgrades to the building, submitted in this application:

1. Repairs to the entrance hall stone flooring of no.16.
2. Repairs and draught proofing to external windows and doors
3. Replacement lower sash to rear window of no.15
4. New handrails to stairwells in no.15 and no.16 to improve accessibility.

1.4 Pre-Application Advice

Although formal pre-application advice has not been sought, an informal meeting with Conservation Officer, Antonia Powell, at London Borough of Camden, was held on the 14th of February 2019. The following principles were discussed:

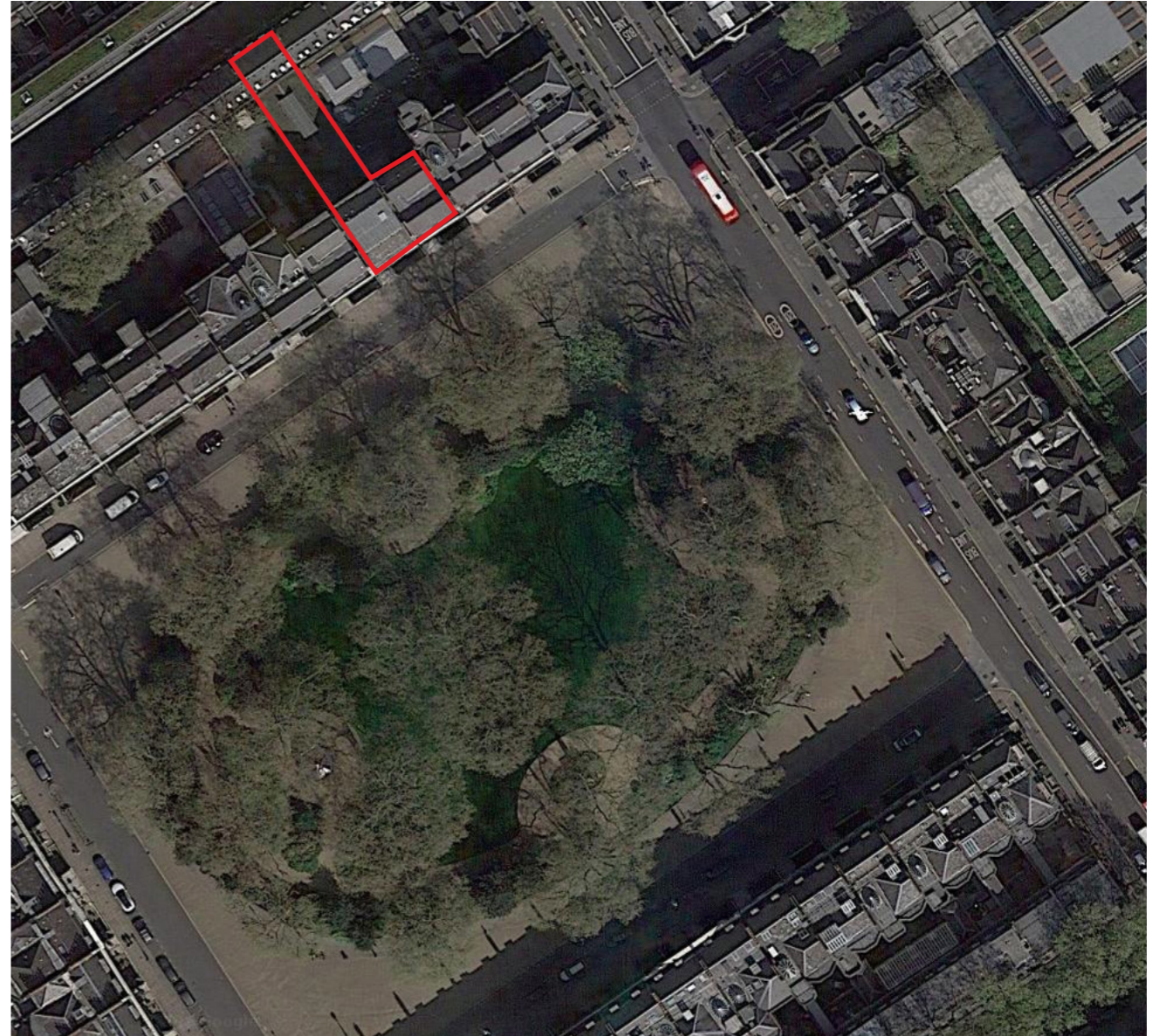
- **Stone Flooring Repairs:**
It was agreed that a proposal which re-uses as much of the existing stone as possible, rather than a complete floor renewal, should be adopted. Our proposals, presented in this application, follow this approach. A gentle cleaning method to the floor was recommended and sample areas of this have been prepared.
- **Draught Proofing**
The strategy for the draught proofing system were discussed and were accepted informally, and subject to details.



2.0 LOCATION PLAN & BLOCK PLAN



2.0 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



3.0 ENTRANCE LOBBY FLOORING REPAIRS

EXISTING

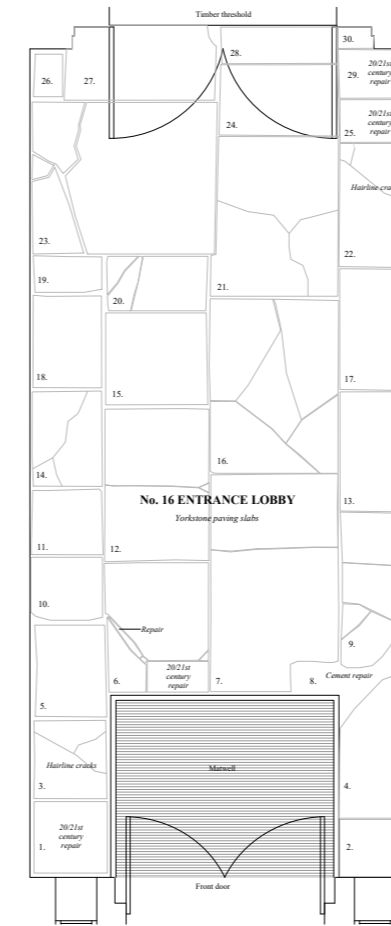
- The existing stone lobby to no.16 is badly damaged. It is believed that the cracks in the flagstones have been caused by general wear and tear and not by recent building movement.
- Most of the Portland stone slabs are thought to be original – dating back to 1775, when Bedford Square was constructed – though there is evidence of poor 20th century repairs with new stone slabs and mortar.

PROPOSED

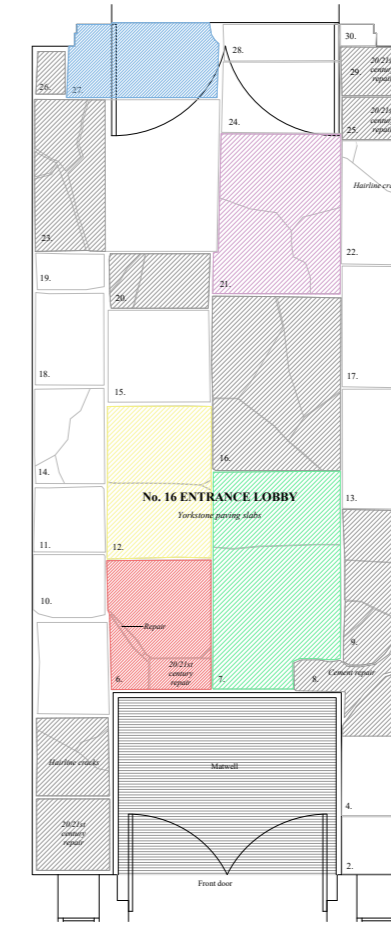
- Following our informal pre-application meeting with the Conservation Officer, advice was sought from stone specialists (registered with the Stone Federation) on the proposals to re-use as much of the existing stone and cut existing large damaged flagstones and re-use.
- Sample areas of cleaned stone have been prepared by a specialist contractor and a full clean will follow once the repairs have been made.
- The stone specialists are procuring samples to carefully match the new stone with the existing. The stone appears to be Portland stone in origin but some Purbeck samples are also being considered.



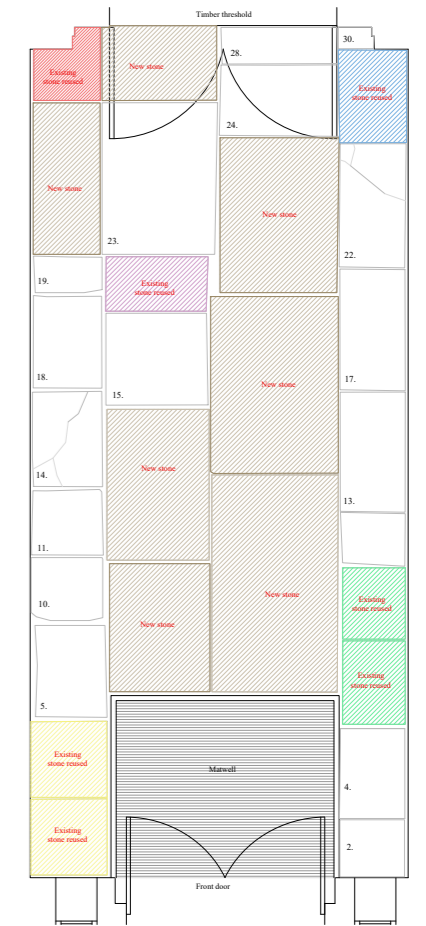
Photograph of existing floor



Existing floor



Demolition




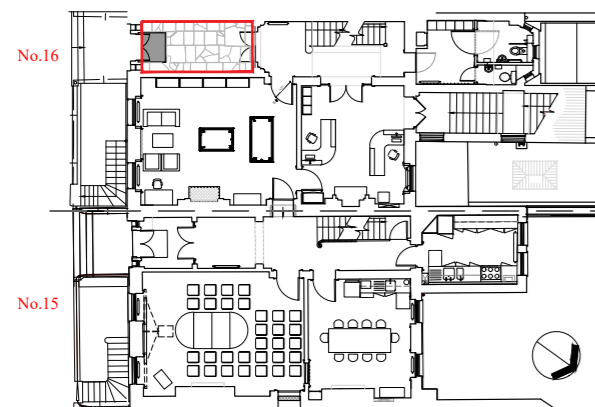
Proposed

Note: full size drawings accompany this application

KEY

 New floor slab

 Existing stone cut and reused



Ground floor plan

4.0 REPAIRS & DRAUGHT PROOFING TO EXTERNAL WINDOWS

PROPOSED

- The existing timber sash windows of nos. 15 and 16 need urgent repair and upgrading. The existing windows are draughty and some cannot be opened without difficulty. Air gaps around the sash windows cause rattles, dust ingress and reduce the building's energy efficiency.
- A sash window repair specialist has been consulted and their advice is captured in our proposals presented in this application.
- A draught proofing system to the sash windows, such as the Ventrolla system or equivalent, is proposed with timber parting beads.






Front elevations



Rear elevations

KEY

-  Draught proofing and overhaul of window
-  Draught proofing and overhaul of window, with new internal hardwood sill
-  Draught proofing and overhaul of window, and new lower sash window to match existing

5.0 REPLACEMENT SASH TO REAR WINDOW OF NO.15

PROPOSED

- A lower sash window to the rear of no.15 is in poor condition and cannot be opened.
- A timber sash window specialist has inspected and has advised that it requires a full replacement.
- The proposed replacement sash window will match the existing.



Aerial view of rear of no.15 and 16



Rear elevation

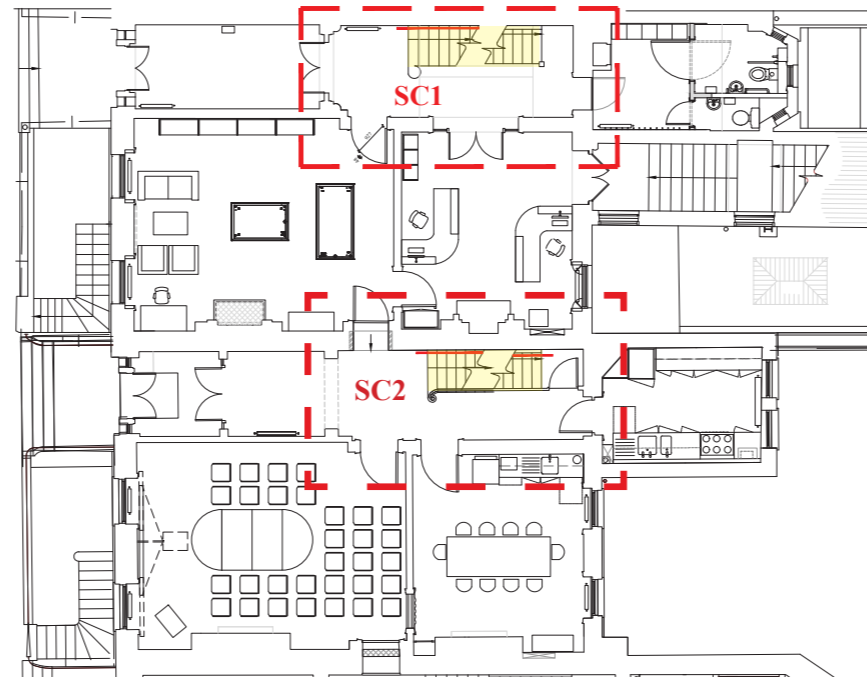
6.0 NEW HANDRAILS TO STAIRWELLS IN NO.15 AND NO.16

EXISTING

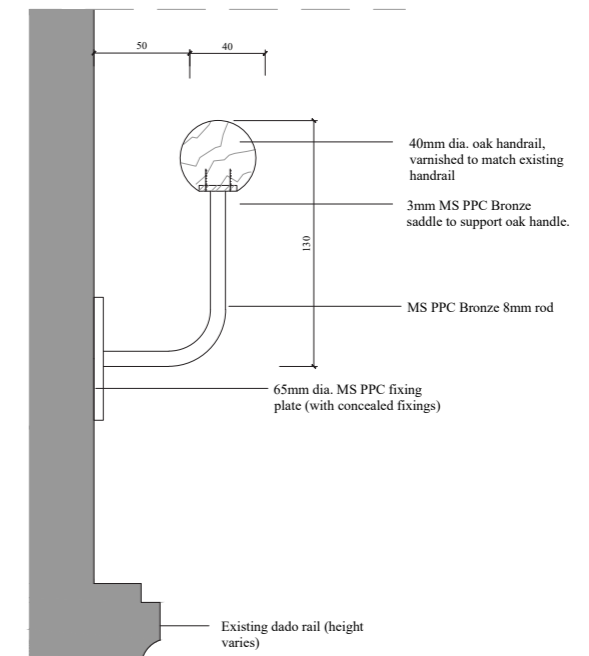
- An accessibility audit has recently been carried out at the Centre and it advised adding additional handrails, which comply with Part M of the Building Regulations, to the stairwells of no.15 and 16 to improve accessibility.

PROPOSED

- New timber handrails are proposed to the outer wall of the stairwell, and are proposed to match the existing varnished handrail in both buildings.
- The existing dado rails that wrap the perimeter walls will be retained. In no.16 the handrail will sit below the dado, and in no.15 it will sit above.
- The handrails will be fixed to the walls so that they can be easily removed if no longer required.



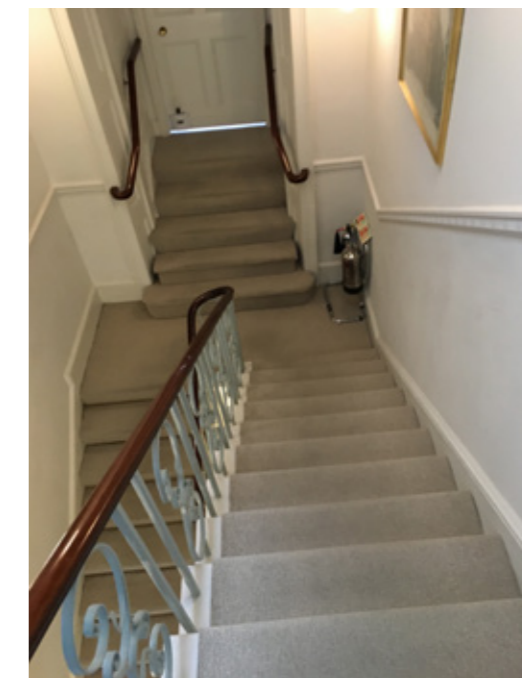
Ground floor plan with stairwells highlighted



Typical handrail detail



*Existing stairwell of no.15: sc2
(first floor looking down)*



*Existing stairwell of no.16: sc1
(first floor looking down)*

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