



Listed Building Application

16 April 2019

LBC - DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

**Blue plaque: Lilian Lindsay (1871-1960)
at 23 Russell Square, WC1H 0XG in the London Borough of Camden.**

Site Analysis

Number 23 Russell Square is in Bloomsbury Conservation Area and Grade II listed (entry ref.1246375). Its present occupier is the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), the freeholder the University of London.

The building has been renovated and restored, and the façade remains in essence much as it was when Lilian Lindsay lived and worked here for the British Dental Association (BDA) from 1920 to 1935.

The current building history:

Number 23 Russell Square lies within a short terrace, nos. 21-24 (consecutive), laid out in c.1808 by James Burton, architect and builder, on the north side of the square, for the Duke of Bedford estate. Number 23 is of yellow stock brick with later 19th century terracotta surrounds to windows and entrance door, this decoration echoed in the architectural detail across all four terrace buildings. Number 23 is three bays wide; four storeys and basement area, the basement painted white; the entrance door is set with a large arched fanlight; full-width balcony on scroll supports at first floor level with decorative cast-iron railings; the cornice band between second and top floor storey continues across the façade of number 22; the roof parapet has a decorative cornice of engaged terracotta balusters that also extends across number 22. The present use of the building is by the head leaseholder SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies), with freeholder the University of London. There is one other plaque on this section of terrace, to commemorate Sir Samuel Romilly, law reformer, an early and distinctive bronze plaque erected by the Bedford estate in 1919, and adopted in the blue plaques scheme by our predecessor body, the Greater London Council in 1983. The many varied and remarkable past residents of the Bloomsbury and Holborn area, commemorated by plaques, complement the historical narrative, and raise the cultural significance of the area.

Design Process Components

It is proposed that English Heritage erect a blue ceramic inset mounted plaque, of 19.5-inch diameter, inset into the brickwork by a depth of 50mm. To be located centrally between the two ground floor windows, height centred vertically on the main transom bar of the sash windows, and symmetrically within the brick courses; positioned as shown on the attached plan orthophoto, scaled 1:50 photogrammetry

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image, along with the geospatial surveyor annotation detail dimensions, these images take the role of architect drawings. The decision to locate the plaque here is so as to be as appropriate as possible to the design of the façade of the building, to align with the bronze plaque at number 21 Russell Square, and to be easily visible to the average passer-by.

The exterior elevation of the building will be slightly adapted to accommodate the blue plaque (please also see separate Installation note). The Conservation Architect from Historic England has confirmed that the solid brick masonry of this building should well be able to carry a recessed plaque.

There will be no change to the use of the building, no floor space will be added or subtracted, and no new homes will be built on the site. The layout of the building will not be changed, nor will the scale of the building be affected. There will be no landscaping undertaken.

Access

No new access points and routes are proposed. No changes are proposed in relation to pedestrian and cycle routes, road layout, local services and public transport provision. The blue plaque will be visible from the public highway and therefore no new access is required. There is no new need for provision of access for emergency services.

Design Solution

The above information has explained and justified the proposed development, and the lack of necessity for good access into and through the site in relation to the proposed works. The English Heritage blue plaque design has been developed over 150 years in sympathy with the character of London buildings. The plaque is hand crafted and is thought to respond positively to most local contexts. The freehold owners of the building, the University of London, and the leaseholders, SOAS, have both approved the project, have given their consent. The architectural character of this listed building will only be affected in a minor way, and the historical and cultural interest of the property and area will be enhanced within the local and wider community.

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