

# Heritage Statement

## 30 Euston Square, Camden

### Introduction

1. This Heritage Statement has been written by Heritage Collective on behalf of The Royal College of General Practitioners. It relates to proposed changes to the existing lighting within the “heritage suites” at 30 Euston Square, Euston in the London Borough of Camden.
2. 30 Euston Square is a listed grade II\* building. A site visit was carried out on 3 February 2017 for a previous proposal when the proposed areas for change were seen and informs this assessment.<sup>1</sup>

### 30 Euston Square Background

3. 30 Euston Square was listed grade II\* on 14 May 1974 (description amended 2 August 2011). It was originally built as the national headquarters to the London Edinburgh & Glasgow Assurance Company, the building was designed by Arthur Beresford Pite (1861-1934) over a series of three phases in 1906-8, 1923 and 1932. Pite was not involved in the design for the last phase which was designed by WH Gunton.
4. The building underwent significant refurbishment works in 2012 following planning and listed building consent being granted in 2011 (LPA Ref: 2010/4901/L & 2010/4900/P). These works involved:

*'Change of use of building from vacant offices (Class B1) to Royal College of General Practitioners Headquarters (Sui Generis), extensions and alterations at 3rd, 4th and 5th floor levels including creation of additional accommodation, plant rooms and rear terrace at 4th floor level, extension*

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<sup>1</sup> The whole building was not inspected at the time of the site visit due to restricted access arrangements, only the areas of the building that had the potential to be affected by the works that were visited.

*into lightwell 1 and enclosure of lightwells 1 & 2 with glazed roof plus elevational alterations.'*

5. In 2017 an application was made for the refurbishment of the heritage suites including new track lighting (LPA Ref: 2017/1329/L). This was granted permission on 2 June 2017.

## Heritage Related Legislation, Policy and Guidance

### Legislation

6. The decision maker is required by sections 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting. There is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm the special interest of the listed building, although in some cases harm can be mitigated or outweighed by public benefits as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

7. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, to a proportionate level of detail.
8. Paragraphs 193-194 of the NPPF introduces the concepts of "substantial harm" or "less than substantial harm" as follows:

*"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

*Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:*

*a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*

*b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.”*

9. Paragraph 195 of the NPPF describes how the balancing exercise in respect of harm and public benefit should be undertaken when dealing with cases involving substantial harm.
10. In this instance it is considered that the proposals could only result in less than substantial harm, if any harm at all. This is described in paragraph 196 of the NPPF as follows:

*“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

## The London Plan

11. The London Plan provides a city-wide context within which individual boroughs must set their local planning policies. A draft new London Plan has been published but this is still emerging. Existing policies of relevance to the historic environment include:
12. Policy 7.4 – Local Character: Buildings, streets and open spaces should provide a high-quality design response that (i) has regard to pattern and grain of existing spaces, (ii) contributes to positive relationships between urban and natural landscapes, (iii) is human in scale, (iv) allows positively contributing buildings to influence the future character, and (v) is informed by the surrounding historic environment.
13. Policy 7.8 – Heritage Assets and Archaeology: This policy seeks to safeguard heritage assets. The policy encourages development that (i) identifies, values,

conserves, restores, re-uses and incorporates heritage assets, where appropriate, and (ii) that conserves heritage assets and their setting.

## Local Heritage Policy

14. LB Camden assesses planning applications against the policy set out in its Local Plan adopted in July 2017. The relevant heritage related policy is:

*'Policy D2 Heritage - The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.'*

## Heritage Significance and Heritage Values of 30 Euston Square

15. The list description summarises the reason for designation as the following:

*'Nos. 1-9 Melton Street is designated at Grade II\* for the following principal reasons: \* Architectural interest: a distinctive Edwardian office building designed in a scholarly and inventive Greek manner \* Authorship: a major work by the distinguished architect A Beresford Pite \* Materials and craftsmanship: fine-quality stonework with carved decoration by Farmer & Brindley, the noted firm of architectural sculptors; elaborate ironwork \* Interiors: the entrance hall is one of the most remarkable tiled interiors in an Edwardian commercial building; good office fittings, chimneypieces and stairs; extensive survival of tiled finishes \* The 1923 extension, also by Pite, is a carefully considered adjunct to the earlier block, with the same high-quality stonework and ironwork'*

16. 30 Euston Square is a building of architectural and historic interest. Since extensive refurbishment works in 2011 the building has been sensitively upgraded. The external elevation of the building with its inventive Greek manner represented in the window dressings, giant fluted Ionic columns and entablature all contribute to the appearance and architectural interest of the building. Internally a number of features survive, these include but are not limited to; staircases, the mosaic

floor tiling in the reception room, the decorative tile finishes throughout the building, timber panelling within the "Heritage Suites", cornicing, joinery - including doors, architraves and skirting.

17. The association with A Beresford Pite, Farmer and Brindley and to a lesser extent WH Gunton and the London Edinburgh & Glasgow Assurance Company also contribute to the interest of the building.
18. The decorative tile finishes, mosaic floor and fireplace in the entrance all reflect the high level of craftsmanship throughout the building and contribute to its architectural interest.

## Effects on the Heritage Significance of 30 Euston Square

19. It is proposed to introduce new lighting to the "Heritage Suites". The new lighting is in a contemporary style of suspended light fittings. To provide the necessary support for the lighting it is proposed to provide a 'ply' raft to which the lighting will be attached and a tension cable will be threaded through a hole in the raft and protected by a steel collar. The existing power cable will be utilised to supply electricity and there will be minimal intervention into historic fabric to support the new 'raft'.

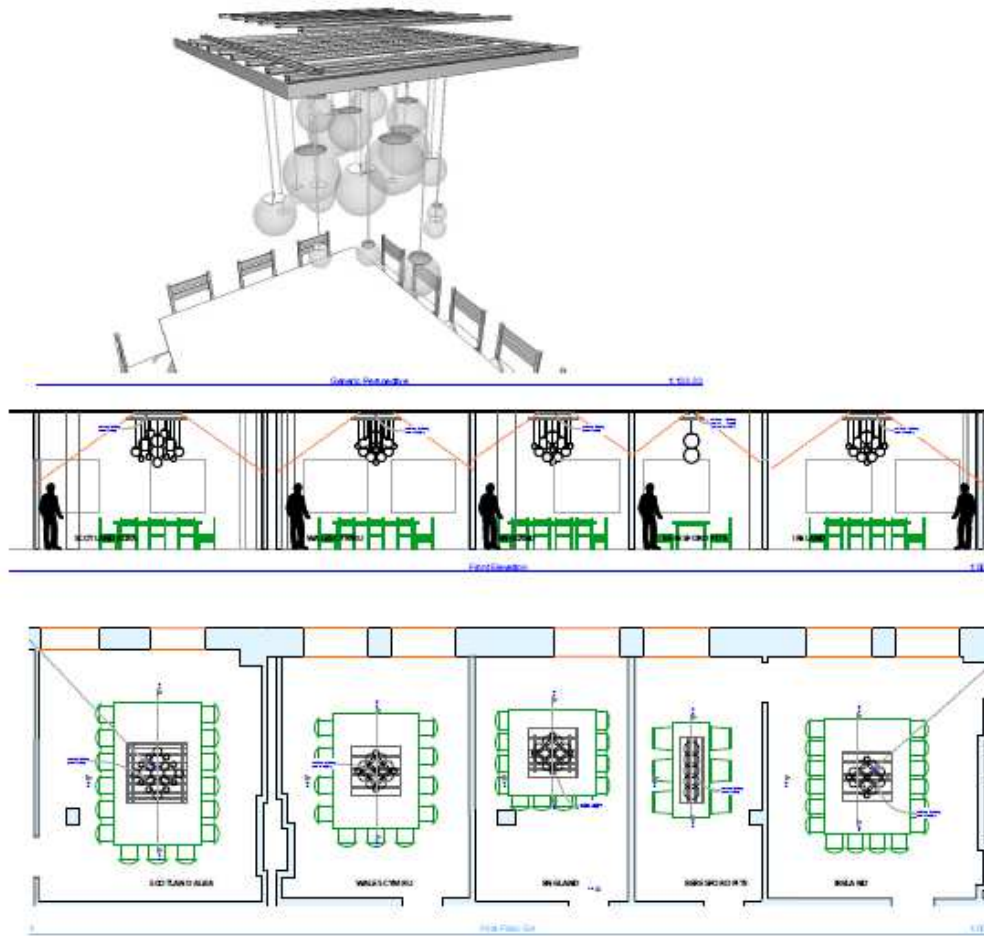


Figure 1: Typical style of lighting for the Heritage Suites

20. The proposed new lighting will preserve the significance of this heritage asset. There will be minimal intervention into historic fabric to support the new 'raft' and the proposed new lighting will have no effect on the architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest.
21. Overall the proposals preserve the heritage interest of the building. This is in accordance with section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires the special interest of a listed building to be preserved or enhanced.

22. The proposed works would not result in any harm to the listed building. Therefore there is no requirement to outweigh the harm caused by the benefits of the proposals as per paragraphs 195-196 of the NPPF.
23. The proposed works respect the heritage assets and have due regard for the special character of the building in accordance with Policy DM2.

## Summary

24. 30 Euston Square is a listed grade II\* building that was built as the national Headquarters for London Edinburgh & Glasgow Assurance Company. It has a number of architectural, historic and artistic features surviving both internally and externally including a mosaic floor in the reception area.
25. The proposed works are for new lighting within the existing Heritage Suites. The works are minor and will have no effect on the significance of the listed building. The significance of 30 Euston Square will be preserved in accordance with the Act, the NPPF and local policy.