
234 Shaftesbury Avenue
London
WC2H 8EG

TITLE:
Heritage Statement

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1.0

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been produced to accompany applications for listed building consent and advertisement consent at 234 Shaftesbury Avenue, London.
- 1.2 No.228-234 Shaftesbury Avenue are Grade II listed and situated in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. In line with paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the purpose of this statement is to define the significance of the listed building and its contribution to the conservation area, with a level of detail that is proportionate to the assets' importance. It will describe the proposed works and assess their impact on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area. For the purposes of the advertisement consent application it will also consider the effect of the proposed advertisements on amenity and public safety.
- 1.3 This statement has been produced using desk based and online research, combined with a visual inspection of the site and wider area. Consideration has been given to the relevant national and local planning policy framework as well as an analysis of the building, site and surrounding context. The proposed works consist of:
- Replacement of the existing fascia sign with a new non-illuminated fascia sign;
 - Installation of a new non-illuminated projecting sign;
 - Internal works to re-fit the existing ground floor retail unit for a new occupier.
- 1.4 In accordance with the statutory tests at s.16 and s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, it will be demonstrated that both the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area will be preserved. Furthermore, the proposals will be shown to comply with the relevant national and local conservation policy.

2.0

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site is located at no.234 Shaftesbury Avenue and consists of a five storey mansion block with retail units at ground floor level and residential accommodation above. The building is constructed of red brick with terracotta dressings.
- 2.2 Nos.228-234 Shaftesbury Avenue, known as Queen Alexandra Mansions, were Grade II listed on 11 January 1999. The description indicates that the buildings were listed for group value and reads as follows:
- "Includes: Nos.1-7 Queen Alexandra Mansions GRAPE STREET. Shops with mansion flats over. 1902-8. Almost certainly by C Fitzroy Doll. Red brick with exuberant terracotta dressings, slate roof with tall stacks. PLAN/EXTERIOR: asymmetrical L-shaped plan, with 5-window range to Shaftesbury Avenue and eight windows to Grape Street. 5 storeys, with 2-storey attic remodelled along Grape Street late C20. Massive corner bartizan which rises from a single ground floor column with foliate capital to form tourelle with panels of moulded heads on giant modillion frieze. This is answered by corner tourelle rising from third floor at junction fronting New Oxford Street. 2 more regular square 3-storey oriels face Shaftesbury Avenue, with 2 likewise to Grape Street, all with machicolated frieze. All linked by parapets, modillion cornice and many bands. The main corner bartizan with balconies either side, with terracotta balustrading and behind which the windows have segmental-arched transoms. The other windows are mullion and transom casements in moulded terracotta surrounds with notched lintels that continue as bands across the composition. Shopfronts to Shaftesbury Avenue C20, those to Grape Street to consistent design, all set between moulded terracotta pilasters. INTERIORS not inspected. Included primarily for the quality of its street facades, an exceptionally powerful work in Doll's typically bombastic idiom using fine terracotta."*
- 2.3 The listing description is not intended to provide an inventory of all of the features of significance within the building nor does it define its architectural or historic interest. What is significant in this case is the building's attractive external architectural appearance, as well as its role in the history and development of this part of Bloomsbury. The listing description makes no reference to the interior of the building and indicates that the building is included *"....primarily for the quality of its street facades, an exceptionally powerful work in Doll's typically bombastic idiom using fine terracotta."*
- 2.4 The building forms a group with the terrace at nos.210-226 (evens) Shaftesbury Avenue which were Grade II listed on 7 May 1996. It is not clear why this terrace was listed nearly 3 years earlier than the application site given their age and stylistic similarities. This long block is also of red brick with terracotta embellishment, with an asymmetric facade, unusual projecting bays over the upper floors and a lively and attractive profile at parapet level.

2.0

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.5

The immediately surrounding area is rich in heritage and there are a number of listed buildings adjacent to, or facing the site, all of which are listed Grade II. The relevant listing descriptions can be found at Appendix A.

- Bloomsbury Public House
- 233 Shaftesbury Avenue
- Bloomsbury Baptist Church



Fig 1 Statutorily listed buildings within the surrounding area of the application site, denoted on Historic England's map by a blue triangle.

2.0

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.6

The application site is located in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area which was first designated in 1968 and extends from Euston Road in the north to High Holborn and Lincoln's Inn in the south and from Tottenham Court Road in the west to Kings Cross Road in the east. The conservation area is large and complex and includes a range of buildings from the late 17th century through to the early 21st century, with a multitude of uses, typologies, architectural style and materials.

2.7

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (BCAAMS) was adopted by the Council on 18 April 2011. This provides a detailed assessment of the overall character and appearance of the conservation area as well as its many sub-areas. The introduction to the document gives a useful overview of the evolution, form and character of the conservation area:

"Bloomsbury is widely considered to be an internationally significant example of town planning. The original street layouts, which employed the concept of formal landscaped squares and an interrelated grid of streets to create an attractive residential environment, remain a dominant characteristic of the area. Despite Bloomsbury's size and varying ownerships, its expansion northwards from roughly 1660 to 1840 has led to a notable consistency in the street pattern, spatial character and predominant building forms. Today, the area's underlying townscape combined with the influence of the major institutional uses that established in the district and expanded over time is evident across the large parts of the Conservation Area. Some patterns of use have changed over time, for example, offices and hotels came to occupy former family dwelling houses as families moved out of central London to the suburbs during the later 19th and 20th centuries. However, other original uses have survived and help to maintain the area's distinctive and culturally rich character (the most notable include hospitals, university and academic uses, cultural institutions such as museums, legal uses, and on a smaller scale, specialist retailers including booksellers and furniture shops)."

2.8

Shaftesbury Avenue is located within **Sub Area 8: New Oxford Street/High Holborn/Southampton Row**. The appraisal provides a general description at para 5.124 as follows:

"This sub area is characterised by areas of large-scale, late 19th and early 20th century blocks fronting busy thoroughfares. Development followed the construction of new routes combined with the widening of earlier streets, thereby cutting through the earlier 17th and 18th century street pattern. The narrow back streets in the sub area reflect the earlier layout. The predominant use is commercial, with a range of shops, banks, offices, hotels and theatres. Residential accommodation generally takes the form of mansion blocks."

2.0

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.9

Specifically in relation to the application site the appraisal notes at para 5.130 that (my bold):

"At the junction of Shaftesbury Avenue and Bloomsbury Street, the street layout opens up to create an open space consisting of two linked, triangular paved areas, with a slight fall in level from north to south. The sense of openness and the greenery of a number of mature trees create an element of surprise and a welcome break from the dense urban development characteristic of the area. However, the area is blighted by the heavy vehicular traffic using the surrounding streets..... On the east side of the space are the grade II listed King Edward Mansions and Queen Alexandra Mansions. These ornate five-storey blocks date from 1902-08 and were designed by Charles Fitzroy Doll, Surveyor to the Bedford Estate, and present a lively but consistent edge to the south-eastern edge of the open space. They extend along both sides of Grape Street, a narrow thoroughfare sloping down from north to south from Shaftesbury Avenue in the north to High Holborn in the south. The blocks contain shops at street level with former showrooms and offices above on the Shaftesbury Avenue frontage, and with flats on the upper floors along Grape decoration, including corner turrets with conical roofs which feature in long views."

3.0

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1

The following applications are relevant and relate to no.234 Shaftesbury Avenue:

- Planning permission (2010/5240/P), Listed Building Consent (2010/5283/L) and Advertisement Consent (2010/5272/A) were refused on 23 December 2010 for *"Installation of Automated Teller Machine (ATM) and associated display of an internally illuminated sign on existing shopfront."*
- Planning permission (P9602595) was refused on 24 October 1996 for *"Change of use of the ground floor and basement from retail use to restaurant use within Class A3 of the Town and Country (Use Classes Order) 1987, together with the installation of a ventilation duct and alterations to the shopfront, as shown on drawing numbers DDS/234/SA/D00, /D01 to /D07."*
- Planning permission (P9601425) was refused on 21 June 1996 for *"Change of use of the ground floor and basement from retail use to restaurant use within Class A3 of the Town and Country (Use Classes Order) 1987, as shown on floor plans."*

4.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA

- 4.1 The application site is located on the edge of the historic district of St Giles.
- 4.2 This part of London had traditionally been open fields and agricultural land beyond the fringes of the medieval city. The site of the church of St Giles had been in religious use since the 12th century and a leper hospital was established at this time by Queen Matilda, the wife of Henry I due to its isolated location well away from the City. As leprosy died out during the medieval period and after the dissolution of the monasteries the site became a parish church in 1542.
- 4.3 A settlement began to develop around the church and this expanded rapidly after the Great Fire as new roads were laid out and houses constructed. By the 18th century the area's population had been swelled by new settlers including Irish, Greek and Armenians as well as a large number of French Huguenots fleeing religious persecution.
- 4.4 John Rocque's map of 1746 clearly depicts the extent of central London at the time, which reached as far north as Oxford Street and Great Russell Street, with Tottenham Court Road striking north across open fields. The granting of building leases by the Earl of Southampton to develop Bloomsbury Square in 1661 had precipitated development to the north of High Holborn however along Great Russell Street, the extensive gardens of Montagu House and Bedford House quickly gave way to open fields beyond. The Church of St Giles can be seen, already surrounded by dense development, including the area that now forms the application site.
- 4.5 During the late 18th and early to mid 19th century development expanded rapidly northwards as landowners capitalised on their holdings and began to speculatively develop Bloomsbury with elegant squares and terraces to meet the housing demands of the upper and middle classes. By the 1840s the area between Tottenham Court Road, Euston Road and Grays Inn Road had been entirely built over. Meanwhile, the population of St Giles parish had also expanded rapidly exceeding 30,000 by 1831, becoming firmly established as one of London's worst slums. During this period the area was a maze of gin shops, common lodging houses, prostitutes and filthy, squalid housing of the lowest order, where outbreaks of disease such as cholera were common.

4.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA



Fig 2 Roque's map of 1746.

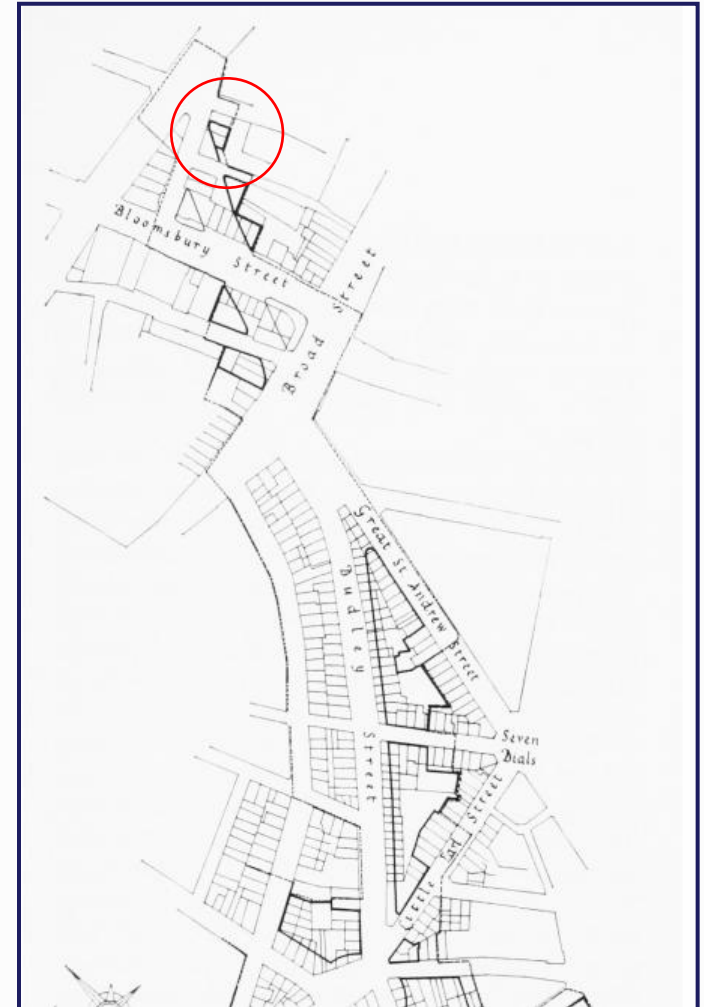
4.0

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA

4.6

With a rising population and ever expanding development came increased traffic on the existing roads. New Oxford Street had been created by 1847 as a new east-west route linking Oxford Street and High Holborn. Later in the 19th century the Metropolitan Street Improvements Act 1877 allowed for the construction of Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road, the former built between 1877 and 1886 by the architect George Vulliamy and the engineer Sir Joseph Bazalgette, creating a north-south traffic artery through Soho and St Giles. The formation of Shaftesbury Avenue also allowed for slum clearance in St Giles resulting in the displacement of its existing residents.

Fig 3 Extract from a diagram showing the route of Shaftesbury Avenue overlaid onto the existing street pattern (*Survey of London: Volumes 31 and 31. St James Westminster Part 2. Originally published by London County Council, London 1963*).



4.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA

- 4.7 The alignment of the road provided new building plots and frontages, including that at nos.228-234 Shaftesbury Avenue, dating from 1902-08 and almost certainly designed by C Fitzroy Doll, surveyor to the Bedford Estate and the local District Surveyor.
- 4.8 Charles Booth's poverty map of 1889 shows the area shortly after the construction of Shaftesbury Avenue and shows the concentration of black in the immediate area, denoting 'Lowest Class. Vicious, Semi-criminal'. This is in sharp contrast to the affluent red areas (Well-to-do. Middle class) and yellow (Upper Middle and Upper Classes. Wealthy) streets of grand terraces and squares to the north of New Oxford Street.

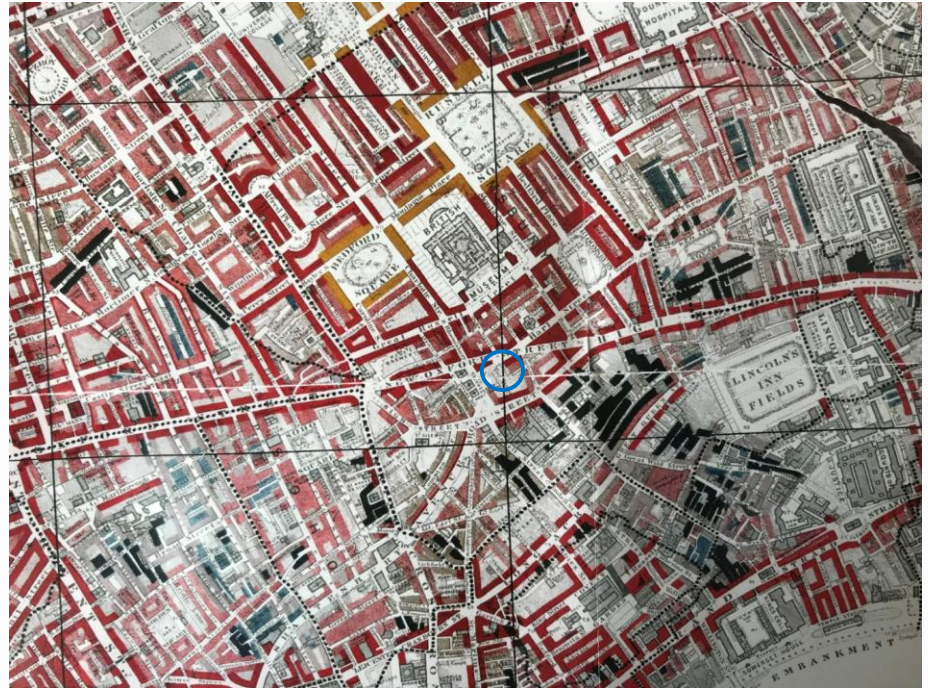


Fig 4 Booth's poverty map of 1889.

4.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA



Fig 5 The Ordnance Survey map of 1874-75.

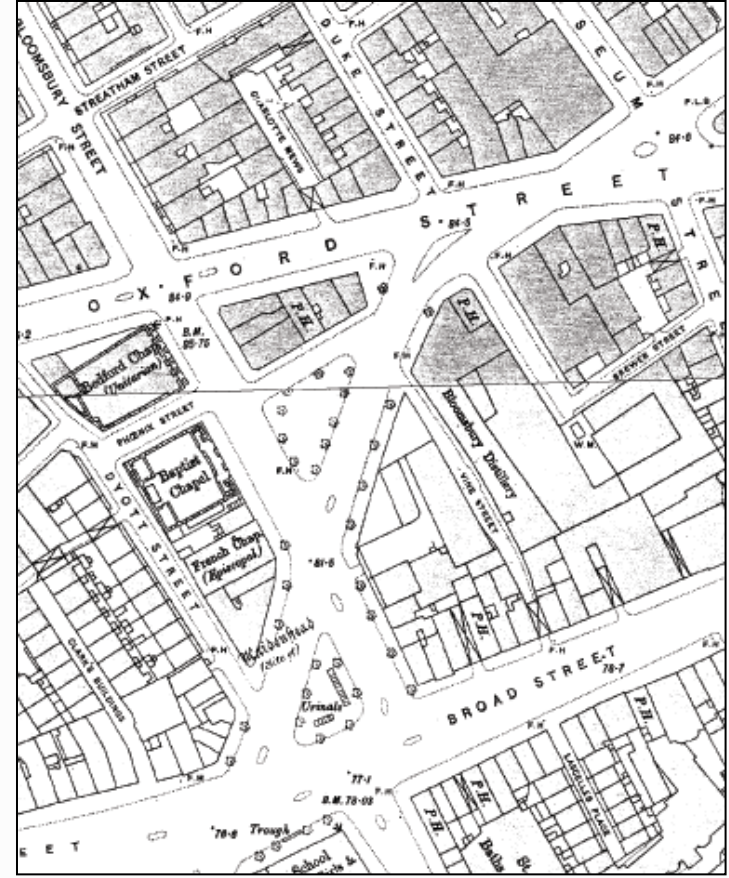


Fig 6 The Ordnance Survey map of 1895.

4.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA

The application site

- 4.9 The 1874-75 Ordnance Survey map shows the application site prior to the construction of Shaftesbury Avenue with a public house to the north and a large T shaped building to the south and west. To the south of Thorney Street (no longer in existence) is a block of buildings with a fine historic grain, particularly facing Bloomsbury Street.
- 4.10 The 1895 Ordnance Survey map shows the area after the construction of Shaftesbury Avenue, with the creation of a triangular open space with trees to the west in place of the former buildings. The application building has not yet been built and it appears that the T shaped building, marked on this map as the 'Bloomsbury Brewery', has simply had its north west corner remodelled to address the new road layout.
- 4.11 The application building appears in place on the 1916 Ordnance Survey map, with York Street immediately to the south now re-named Grape Street. The configuration of the building remains the same on Ordnance Survey maps through the mid 20th century.

5.0

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE

5.1

The National Planning Policy Framework Annex 2 defines significance as *"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."* A heritage asset is defined as *"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)."* In this case the heritage assets are the statutorily listed no.234 Shaftesbury Avenue as well as the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

5.2

The application site dates from 1902-08 and consists of a mansion block with a series of retail units at ground floor level. The upper floors were originally used as either residential or office/showroom accommodation.

5.3

The building is of five storeys including the ground floor, and is set at the back of pavement. Facing Shaftesbury Avenue are a series of ground floor retail units in active use, with a variety of shopfronts, mostly modern and of no architectural significance. These are set within a framework of terracotta fascias and decorative pilasters, although the ground floor frontage to the application site has had these features over painted. The return frontage of the building along Grape Street is less altered and the repetitious pattern of terracotta shop surrounds can be better appreciated here.

5.4

To the application site there is a modern powder coated aluminium shopfront providing access into the ground floor retail unit. At the northern end of the shopfront is a single leaf metal shop door leading into the basement retail unit. Above these modern components are the remnants of a historic painted fascia sign.

5.5

The ground floor frontage to the Shaftesbury Avenue façade has a rather poor quality character with a proliferation of modern shopfronts, roller shutters, modern blinds and unsympathetic signage as well as two highly incongruous condenser units installed on the pavement in front of no.230.



Fig 7 The ground floor frontage of the building.

5.0

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE

5.6

The ground floor retail frontage and the terracotta shopfront surrounds provide a visual base to the upper floors of the building which are an exuberant composition in red brick with extensive terracotta detailing and embellishment. The square oriel windows at 2nd, 3rd and 4th level, the castellated parapet, tourelle to the corner with New Oxford Street and the dramatic bartizan feature to the corner with Grape Street provide significant visual interest, articulation and modulation to the façade. The roof of the building is concealed behind the parapet line of the building, which has a varied and lively profile

5.7

Each storey has a similar floor to ceiling height with no diminishing fenestration, consistent with its mansion block form and layout. The fenestration itself is relatively uniform with stone transoms dividing each window, and a toplight set above a casement beneath, both with leaded lights. Added definition is given to the fenestration through the use of alternating stone quoins around the apertures. The architectural treatment to the Shaftesbury Avenue façade continues around onto the Grape Street elevation.

5.8

Overall the upper floors of the building have a coherent and harmonious appearance. A strong sense of horizontality is created by the aligned bands of windows, decorative terracotta banding and strong parapet line. The overall height of the building, combined with the projecting square and circular bay features and tourelle and bartizan features provide verticality and a sense of scale.

5.9

At ground floor level there is currently a vacant retail unit that was formerly in use as a coffee shop. Internally this has a painted concrete floor and large areas of exposed brickwork which form the shell of the retail unit. To the northern party wall is a brickwork chimneybreast with the scar of a former fireplace. The exposed brickwork generally has a degraded paint finish throughout. Some areas of the structural walls have been clad in modern painted sterling board with service voids behind. There is a modern suspended ceiling and the space retains modern light fittings and a serving area which were used by the previous tenant.

5.10

The ground floor has no demonstrable historic character and retains no features of architectural or aesthetic interest. It is essentially a basic shell of low significance within the overall context of the listed building.

5.0

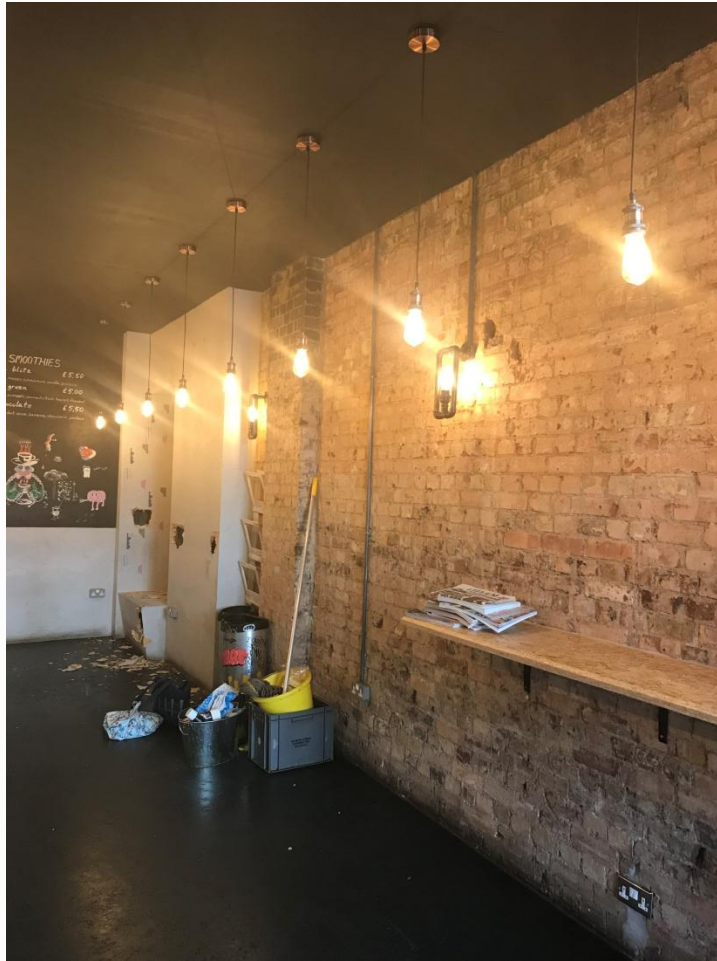
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE



Fig 8 The interior of the ground floor retail unit.

5.0

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE



Figs 9 and 10 The exposed brickwork interior walls and a view into a modern void behind sterling board cladding.

5.0

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE

5.11

Summary

In this case the key significance of the listed building derives largely from its historic, architectural and streetscape value as well as its association with the substantial townscape changes that resulted from the construction of Shaftesbury Avenue in the late 19th century. The building has strong group value with the building at nos.210-226 Shaftesbury Avenue which is also Grade II listed. These buildings share similarities of height, scale, materials and style with only small differences in architectural features and fenestration over the upper floors. The position of these buildings at the back of pavement creates a strong sense of enclosure to this part of Shaftesbury Avenue. The high quality Edwardian architecture, softened by the mature street trees, provides an attractive and positive visual relationship with the triangle of open space to the west.

5.12

Internally the affected areas of the building have been wholly altered over time, reflecting their evolving commercial use and periodic re-fits for new tenants. The ground floor retail unit retains no historic or architectural features of any inherent interest or value.

6.0

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy & Legislation

6.1

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires:

"In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."

6.2

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires:

"...special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

6.3

Section 3(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 outlines that :

"A local planning authority shall exercise its powers under these Regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account –

(a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and

(b) any other relevant factors."

6.4

The revised National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. There is a general presumption in favour of sustainable development within national planning policy guidance. Paragraphs 189, 190, 192 and 193 are relevant to this application.

Paragraph 189

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

6.0

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.4(cont.)

Paragraph 190

Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Paragraph 192

n determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

Paragraph 193

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.

Local Planning Policy

6.5

Camden's Local Plan was adopted on 3 July 2017 and sets out the Council's planning policies. The Local Plan will cover the period 2016-2031 and will play an essential role in the delivery of the Camden Plan, which sets out the Council's vision for the borough.

6.0

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.6

Policy D1 – Design is a key policy and has various parts that are relevant to the proposed development in heritage terms;

“The Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development:

- a. respects local context and character;*
- b. preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with “Policy D2 Heritage”;*
- e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;*
- m. preserves strategic and local views; and*

The Council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Excellence in design

The Council expects excellence in architecture and design. We will seek to ensure that the significant growth planned for under “Policy G1 Delivery and location of growth” will be provided through high quality contextual design.”

6.7

Policy D2 – Heritage has relevant parts as outlined below: :

“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.

Designated heritage assets

The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

6.0

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.7 cont'd

Conservation areas

Conservation areas are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies when assessing applications within conservation areas. The Council will:

e. require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

j. resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and

k. resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting."

6.8

Policy D4 – Advertisements is clear that:

"The Council will require advertisements to preserve or enhance the character of their setting and host building. Advertisements must respect the form, fabric, design and scale of their setting and host building and be of the highest standard of design, material and detail.

We will support advertisements that:

- a. preserve the character and amenity of the area; and*
- b. preserve or enhance heritage assets and conservation areas.*

We will resist advertisements that:

- c. contribute to an unsightly proliferation of signage in the area;*
- d. contribute to street clutter in the public realm;*
- e. cause light pollution to nearby residential properties or wildlife habitats;*
- f. have flashing illuminated elements; or*
- g. impact upon public safety.*

6.0

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.8 cont'd

The Council will resist advertisements on shopfronts that are above fascia level or ground floor level, except in exceptional circumstances."

Shroud advertisements, banners, hoardings / billboards / large outdoor signboards are subject to further criteria as set out in supplementary planning document Camden Planning Guidance on advertisements."

6.9

The supporting text to policy D3 at para 7.83 in relation to **Heritage and conservation areas** outlines that:

"Advertisements in conservation areas and on or near listed buildings require particularly detailed consideration given the sensitivity and historic nature of these areas or buildings. Any advertisements on or near a listed building or in a conservation area must not harm their character and appearance and must not obscure or damage specific architectural features of buildings."

6.10

Camden's Supplementary Planning Guidance: Advertisements (March 2018) has a number of relevant paragraphs.

Paragraph 1.7

Good quality advertisements respect the architectural features of the host building and the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As a general guide, the most satisfactory advertisements are those which take into account the character and design of the property, its surroundings and alter the external fabric of the host building as little as possible. Advertisements will not be considered acceptable where they adversely impact upon amenity and public safety.

Paragraph 1.8

Advertisements and signs should respect the form, fabric, design and scale of the host building and setting. All signs should serve as an integral part of the immediate surroundings and be constructed of materials that are sympathetic to the host building and the surrounding area. Interesting and unique styles of advertisements and signs will be considered acceptable where they are compatible with the host buildings and surrounding environment.

6.0

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.10 cont'd

Paragraph 1.9

Generally advertisements will only be acceptable at fascia level or below. Advertisements above fascia level can appear visually obtrusive and unattractive and, where illuminated, they can cause light pollution to neighbouring residential properties. If an advertisement is required at high level for a specific business use then this will usually be restricted to non-illuminated images on windows.

Paragraph 1.10

Advertisements will not be considered acceptable where they impact upon public safety, such as being hazardous to vehicular traffic (e.g. block sight lines, are more visible than traffic signals, emit glare) or pedestrian traffic (e.g. disrupt the free flow of pedestrian movement).

Paragraph 1.11

Advertisements in conservation areas and on or near listed buildings require detailed consideration given the sensitivity and historic nature of these areas or buildings. Any advertisements, of whatever type, on or near a listed building or in a conservation area must not harm their character and appearance and must not obscure or damage specific architectural features of buildings.

6.11

The London Plan

The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, and it sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2036. It forms part of the development plan for Greater London. London boroughs' local plans need to be in general conformity with the London Plan, and its policies guide decisions on planning applications by councils and the Mayor.

6.0

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.12

In July 2011 the Mayor published the London Plan. This has since been updated to include the Revised Early Minor Alterations to the London Plan (REMA) in October 2013 and the Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP) on 10 May 2015.

Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology applies to this application and the relevant sections are as follows:

“Strategic

A London’s heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.

B Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site’s archaeology.

Planning decisions

C Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.

D Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

E New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes and significant memorials. The physical assets should, where possible, be made available to the public on-site. Where the archaeological asset or memorial cannot be preserved or managed on-site, provision must be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset.”

7.0

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

7.1

This section sets out the proposals and will consider their impact. It will assess this impact in terms of the statutory duties to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. It will also assess the advertisement proposals in terms of their impact upon amenity and public safety. The proposals will also be considered against the relevant local and national historic environment policies.

7.2

Internal works

It is proposed to refit the interior of the ground floor retail unit to suit the needs of the new incoming tenant. This will involve the retention of the existing floor and suspended ceiling although these will be re-painted in order to update the internal appearance of the space.

7.3

The existing brickwork internal walls will be retained. The modern sterling board which forms service voids will either be removed, or retained where required.

7.4

New partitions are proposed for the rear part of the retail unit in order to create a storage and WC area. These are lightweight partitions that are fully reversible and which can be removed to suit a new tenant's requirements in the future. The partitions will be full height and will be situated towards the rear of the retail unit so as not to interrupt views into the space from the public realm. The partitions will enclose only a relatively small area of the footprint of the retail unit and will have no impact upon its general sense of openness or spatial quality. Notwithstanding this, the retail unit is an area of low significance within the overall context of the building, which is primarily listed for the quality of its external facades and significant townscape contribution to Shaftesbury Avenue, and the proposed partitions are therefore considered acceptable.

7.0

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

7.5

A new serving area and counter will be introduced in broadly the same position as the existing counter. A seating area with stools will be provided adjacent to the southern party wall. New lighting will be introduced as required.

7.6

The proposed internal works to the retail unit are considered acceptable and will have no harmful impact upon any areas of demonstrable architectural value or significance. The works are part of the evolving commercial use of the building as new tenants occupy the ground floor units. The space is plain and lacking any historic character and is therefore highly adaptable without causing harm to the special interest of the listed building.

External alterations

7.7

A new non-illuminated fascia sign is proposed for the shopfront. This is constructed of acrylic with a white background and black text. This will be situated in the traditional fascia zone, above the shopfront, and delineated by the original terracotta stepped cornice above, and capitals to the flanking pilasters.

7.8

The existing historic painted fascia sign will be retained and simply covered over by the new fascia sign and is a fully reversible addition to the building which will allow for the historic sign to be revealed if desired in the future.

7.9

A new non-illuminated projecting sign is proposed. This will also be of acrylic with a white background and black text. This will be installed at fascia height, directly adjacent to the capital of the southern pilaster so as to avoid fixing into, and any potential damage to, this decorative element.

7.0

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

7.10

The external facades of the listed building are of high significance and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The proposed signage is well designed and of high quality, durable materials. The signs are situated in traditional and authentic positions which clearly relate to the commercial character of the ground floor of the building. They respect the original terracotta surround to the shopfront and do not obscure or conflict with its architectural detailing. The proposed signage would not visually compete with or cause any harm to the exuberant and highly attractive upper floors of the building and are considered to be wholly appropriate additions. Consequently the proposed signage would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area in line with the relevant statutory duties.

7.11

The proposed signs relate to the new business at ground floor level and are non-illuminated, with a discrete design and choice of colours. They are situated in the correct position on the building, within the ground floor retail 'zone', and are of an appropriate size and scale. For these reasons the proposed signs are not considered to have any adverse impact on public safety or amenity.

7.12

Policy compliance

Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan is an overarching design policy and requires high quality design in development which respects local context and character, comprises high quality details and materials which complement local character and preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets. Policy D2 relates specifically to heritage and reiterates the requirement to preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's heritage assets and their settings. In this case the proposed signage is considered to comply with both policies.

7.13

Policy D4 relates to advertisements and requires these to preserve or enhance the character of their setting and host building. They must respect the form, fabric, design and scale of the host building and be of the highest standard of design, material and detail. The policy also contains a number of criteria for assessing proposals:

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

7.13 cont'd

We will support advertisements that:

a. preserve the character and amenity of the area;

Response – The application site is situated in a commercial area with a significant number of retail premises at ground floor level. The proposed signage is restricted to fascia level, is non-illuminated and of an appropriate size and design. The signage will be in keeping with the character and amenity of the area and will cause no harm.

b. preserve or enhance heritage assets and conservation areas.

Response – The proposed signage will preserve the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of this part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area due to its size, scale, materials, detailed design and position on the building.

We will resist advertisements that:

c. contribute to an unsightly proliferation of signage in the area;

Response – The proposals are for a single fascia sign and single projecting sign. The area is commercial in character and advertisements are an expected and common feature. The proposals are not considered to contribute to an unsightly proliferation of signage, given the context of the individual building and the wider group of retail units.

d. contribute to street clutter in the public realm;

Response – The proposals are for a single fascia sign and a single projecting sign. This is considered to be proportionate to the needs of the business and given the scale, design and position of the signage will not contribute to street clutter.

e. cause light pollution to nearby residential properties or wildlife habitats;

Response – the signs are non-illuminated.

f. have flashing illuminated elements;

Response – the signs are non-illuminated.

g. impact upon public safety.

Response – The proposed signs are a common and traditional feature associated with ground floor retail units and are in a busy, commercial area. Due to their non-illuminated nature, size and position on the building are not considered to have any demonstrable negative impact upon public safety.

7.0

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

7.13 cont'd

The Council will resist advertisements on shopfronts that are above fascia level or ground floor level, except in exceptional circumstances.

Response – the signs are situated at fascia level and will have no impact on the upper floors of the building.

7.14

The proposals are also considered to comply with the detailed requirements of Camden's Supplementary Planning Guidance: Advertisements (March 2018).

8.0

CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This Heritage Statement supports applications for listed building consent and advertisement consent to the ground floor retail unit at no.234 Shaftesbury Avenue.
- 8.2 The proposed internal works to the building affect an area of low significance. The listing description is clear that the building's special interest lies primarily in the quality of its street facades and indeed the interior of the ground floor retail unit is plain and lacking in any demonstrable architectural interest or value. The proposed works are minor in their scope and will apply a light touch approach to upgrading the retail unit for the incoming tenant. The proposed partitions at the rear as well as items such as a new counter and seating are all fully reversible and represent a reasonable adaptation of the space for the new business.
- 8.3 The proposed signage is well designed and appropriate in terms of its size, scale, materials, detailing and position on the building. It will be sited in a traditional location at fascia level, is non-illuminated and will avoid any harm to architectural features such as the decorative capitals to the flanking pilasters.
- 8.4 The proposed works are considered to fully comply with the requirements of Camden's Local Plan (2017) and Camden's Supplementary Planning Guidance: Advertisements (March 2018). They are considered to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building in line with the statutory duty. The proposed works will also preserve the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. With regard to the proposed signage there is considered to be no impact upon public safety or amenity. The proposals also accord with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular ensuring that the significance of the listed building is sustained and enhanced.

Appendix A

Nos.210-226 Shaftesbury Avenue, Sovereign House and nos.2-20 Grape Street, King Edward Mansions

Shops with former showrooms and offices over, flats over shops to Grape Street range. 1902-8. Almost certainly by C Fitzroy Doll, surveyor to the Bedford Estate and the local District Surveyor.

Brick with exuberant terracotta dressings and decorations, slate roofs with high stacks dressed in terracotta. Angled plan of two intersecting ranges with central courtyard serving flats reached under No.210 Shaftesbury Avenue. EXTERIOR: five storeys and attics. Profoundly asymmetrical composition. Angled two-bay range with projecting two-storey oriel adjoins Shaftesbury Theatre (qv), then thirteen-window range to Shaftesbury Avenue. Corner bartizans with projecting turrets, that and its adjoining bay to Grape Street with machicolations, as has a similar turret to right of centre of main composition and two three-storey oriels. These and oriel set over entrance to chambers at right of composition are all mounted on fat columns set between shopfronts and first-floor former showrooms, and with undersides embellished with organic decoration. The other shops separated by fluted Roman Doric engaged columns with dentil cornice, over which are first-floor former showrooms separated by engaged Ionic columns. The shopfronts largely renewed in sympathetic fashion: that to No. 218 may be original; first-floor showrooms, now offices, with large plate glass windows under small-paned toplights, little altered. All windows to upper floors mullion and transom casements in terracotta surrounds, with notched lintels linked as bands across composition, and with many projecting bands, moulded cornice and parapets. Attic dormers inserted mid-C20 and not of interest. Balcony over entrance to offices. Return to Grape Street (King Edward Mansions) similarly treated though with higher stacks, with broad, square bartizan on corner, a round one in the middle and one of each at far end, all with machicolations. Three oriels inbetween, one round on moulded plinth, one canted (both with balustraded tops) and one square which rises to the line of a heavy modillion cornice. Shop fronts to ground floor, some with cast-iron grilles, have simple mouldings and tripartite toplights. First floor former showrooms with small top lights in broad mullion and transom casements. Flats served by courtyard to rear of No. 210 Shaftesbury Avenue, with stone access balconies on cast-iron brackets, sash windows and part-glazed doors.

INTERIORS: not inspected.

Included primarily for the quality of its street facades, an exceptionally powerful example of Doll's work for the Bedford Estate using fine terracotta.

Appendix A

No.235 Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church (Formerly Listed as: SHAFTESBURY AVENUE Central Baptist Church)

Baptist church. c1845-8. By John Gibson. For Sir Samuel Morton Peto on speculation because he considered a church was needed in the area. Grey brick with stone dressings and vertical bands. Early Italian Gothic style. Rectangular plan. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys and attics. West front of 3 windows flanked by rectangular towers. 3 central moulded arch entrances above which a Lombardic frieze and large rose window flanked by 2 round-arched windows. Deep Lombardic frieze beneath arcaded attic windows crowned by a balustrade. 4-stage towers with vertical bands and small windows; 4th stages are belfries with round-arched openings, friezes and cornices having trefoil enriched dies at angles; formerly with short spires, removed due to war damage. INTERIOR: horseshoe-shaped auditorium with curved gallery supported on polygonal cast-iron columns; the gallery with arcaded-patterned front. Decorated square columns rise from gallery to roof. Good curved pews, and stained glass incorporating texts. Balcony reached by winding wrought-iron stairs in angles either side of narrow central entrance foyer refitted c1960s. HISTORICAL NOTE: this was the first Baptist chapel to stand prominently on a London street, looking like a "church", reflecting the improved status of Victorian dissenters. Legend records that when Peto sought to lease the land, the First Commissioner of Woods & Forests told him that Nonconformist chapels were too dull: he liked a church with a spire. "A spire?" exclaimed Peto, "My Lord, we shall have two!".

No.233 Shaftesbury Avenue

Office block. c1929. By Leo Sylvester Sullivan; carved details probably by Henry Poole. Steel-frame faced in Portland stone. Neo Egyptian style. 6 storeys; 6-bay range. Bay to right has vertically set slit lights, grouped in threes, to full height stairwell; Pharaoh's head carved above fluted coved cornice with winged disc (symbol of god Horus) over square-headed doorway with moulded architrave. To left is 3-bay entrance front with cushion capitals to columns, set in slightly projecting portico with winged disc feature set in coved palm-leaf cornice; square-head glazed entrance. Upper floors have metal framed windows and metal spandrel panels, with palm-leaf and Classical detailing, recessed between a giant order of piers continued to flattened palm-leaf capitals set beneath plain frieze with central winged disc feature and attic storey with square-headed windows; palm-leaf carving to boldly projecting cornice. INTERIOR: not inspected.

Thank you for viewing our Heritage Statement.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss anything further with us please don't hesitate to get in contact.
Our details can be found below.