

HERITAGE DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Project:	Creation of Night Security Rest Room within existing basement storage at 12 Grays Inn Square	Ref/File No: HK 2257/3.1
Applicant:	The Honourable Society of Gray's Inn	
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Date:	Revised 14th October 2019	

INTRODUCTION

This application is for Listed Building Consent to create a night security rest room within an existing storage cellar room at 12 Grays Inn Square.

BACKGROUND

Grays Inn has a 24 hour porter /security presence. Security is provided by an outside contractor who carry out regular patrols as well as responding to any alarm activation or other incident within the estate.

At night, on a three-week rota basis, a day security officer will sleep over but remain 'on call' to ensure that there are always two people available to deal with an emergency. At present, rest room accommodation for the 'on call' security officer is met by using a residential flat. However this is an inefficient use of a residential unit which would be better utilised as such to help ease the current housing shortage in the Capital. Hence the application for Listed Building Consent to create a dedicated security staff rest room within the basement of No 12 Grays Inn Square.

LISTING

No 12 Grays Inn Square forms part of a terrace which is listed Grade II* and described thus:

CAMDEN GRAY'S INN (East side) Gray's Inn Square Nos.12, 13 and 14, Gatehouse and attached railings 24/10/51

GV II Three terraced chambers and gatehouse fronting Gray's Inn Road.c1684-88, later restorations. Brown brick with red brick dressings. Brick bands between floors. Tiled roof. Four storeys and cellars. Seven windows each, gatehouse two windows and No.14 plus two half windows. Stone doorcases with consoles and broken segmental pediments with ball in centre. Gauged red brick flat arches and dressings to flush frame windows with boxing and glazing bars. Wood block bracketed eaves cornice.*

INTERIORS: retain some panelled rooms. All with dog-leg stair of turned balusters and square newels.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas. Gatehouse between Nos 13 and 14: brown brick with rusticated stone ground floor. Rusticated stone quoins and stone bands. Flat arch carriage entrance with griffon carved on keystone. Windows with stone architraves and flush frames with glazing bars. Enriched modillion cornice with pediment. Gray's Inn Road elevation similar but windows have red gauged flat arches and dressings. In carriageway, windows and doorway of former C18 bookshop with frame for shutters and panelled surround.

Listing NGR: TQ3106481774

SIGNIFICANCE

The principal historic interest of the building lies in its external architectural form & detailing and the internal arrangement including original stair and some panelled rooms reflecting typical barrister's chambers of the period. Within the basement the corridor retains its original brick floor.

The front basement rooms which are the subject of the application are of little historic interest having been altered and any original fittings and finishes stripped (e.g. some other basement rooms retain stone/brick wine cellar shelving). Original brick floors have been removed and replaced with a concrete slab, the external wall partially rendered and twentieth century timber framed casement windows installed. Projecting steels have been installed to support the ends of rotted main timber beams where these were built into the external wall. The date of these alterations is unknown.



Proposed Rest Room Area looking north



Proposed Rest Room Area looking towards external (west) wall



Modern concrete slab below carpet



Modern timber casement windows

PROPOSALS

The existing rooms at basement level within No 12 are currently utilised as storage and plantroom spaces. Headroom is limited (maximum 1.94m) and the steels added to the ends of the rotted beams project below this presenting a hazard.

Minor alterations are proposed to the existing plan form in order to separate the existing gas meters from the proposed security staff rest room. This entails erection of a new partition and creation of a new doorway into the central corridor. It is proposed to increase the limited headroom within the room by removing the existing non original concrete slab and casting this at a lower level.

JUSTIFICATION

The works are proposed to bring the space into beneficial use. The lowering of the non-original floor is required to create a less oppressive space and provide sufficient headroom for taller staff and avoid risk of collision with the downstand steels.

METHODOLOGY

The proposed excavation will be the lesser of 300mm or the depth of the existing foundations. Trial pits will be excavated adjacent external and internal walls prior to general excavation to determine the depth of the existing foundations and the final floor level agreed. This will avoid the need to underpin the existing walls or excavate into previously undisturbed ground.

The steps to the lowered floor will be within the room to leave the original brick flooring to the corridor untouched.

Services will be run in surface mounted conduit to avoid the need to chase original brickwork and the walls will be left unlined to maintain breathability.

ACCESS STATEMENT

The proposed users of the restroom will necessarily be able bodied in order to fulfil the tasks associated with the job. As such there is no requirement to make the accommodation suitable to accommodate disabled users.

In any event, as a Grade II* listed building, it is not possible to provide step free access to the basement. Access will thus remain as existing.