

## HERITAGE DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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<b>Project:</b>	First Floor Acoustic Improvements 1 Gray's Inn Square London WC1R 5AA	<b>Ref/File No: HK 2253/3.1</b>
<b>Applicant:</b>	South Square Chambers	
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<b>Date:</b>	<b>25<sup>th</sup> November 2019</b>	

### INTRODUCTION

This application is for Listed Building Consent to install a secondary acoustic partition to provide acoustic separation between two adjacent offices at first floor level.

Listed Building Consent for an acoustic partition to be erected on the F3/F4 room side was granted 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019 reference 2019/3152/L. Following review, it has been decided that it would be preferable to erect it on the F1 room side which is the subject of this application.

### BACKGROUND

Whilst the building was originally constructed as Barristers Chambers and thus retain its original use, practice has changed such that whereas originally each set of rooms opening off the staircase was occupied by a single Barrister and their Clerk, chambers now generally comprise large sets of barristers with a centralised Clerk's Room. As a result, individual offices within each set of rooms are now occupied by a Barrister with a requirement to maintain aural privacy between individual offices.

## ANALYSIS

No 1 Grays Inn Square is set within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and forms part of a terrace of buildings on the west side of the Square. No 1 is listed Grade II\* and described thus:

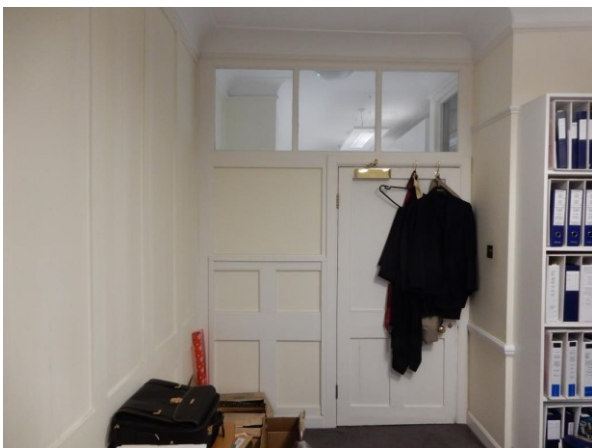
*CAMDEN GRAY'S INN (West side) Gray's Inn Square No.1 and attached railings 24/10/51 GV II\* Terraced chambers. c1676, restored c1948. Brown brick with red brick dressings. Brick bands between floors. Tiled roof. Four storeys and cellar. Double-fronted with eight windows. Stone doorcase with consoles and broken segmental pediment 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.*

*INTERIOR: panelled with wood cornice and turned balusters with square newels to dog-leg stairs.*

*SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with torch flambe finials to rear.*

As with most buildings of this type and age at the Inn, only the external, party and staircase enclosure walls are constructed of brick. Most other internal walls comprise thin, timber panelled, partitions often finished with a painted oil-cloth lining on one side above dado height. As such they provide minimal resistance to the passage of sound from one side to the other (or indeed any fire resistance). Many such walls at the Inn have been previously upgraded by the application of plasterboard to the oil-cloth side although this provides little improvement to the passage of sound.

It is not entirely clear whether the timber panelled wall between office F3/F4 and office F1 is original given the proportions of the panels and lack of original cornice, dado and skirting. Room F1 has clearly been remodelled at a later date and exhibits a coherent Edwardian architectural decorative scheme embracing plasterwork, fireplace and joinery.



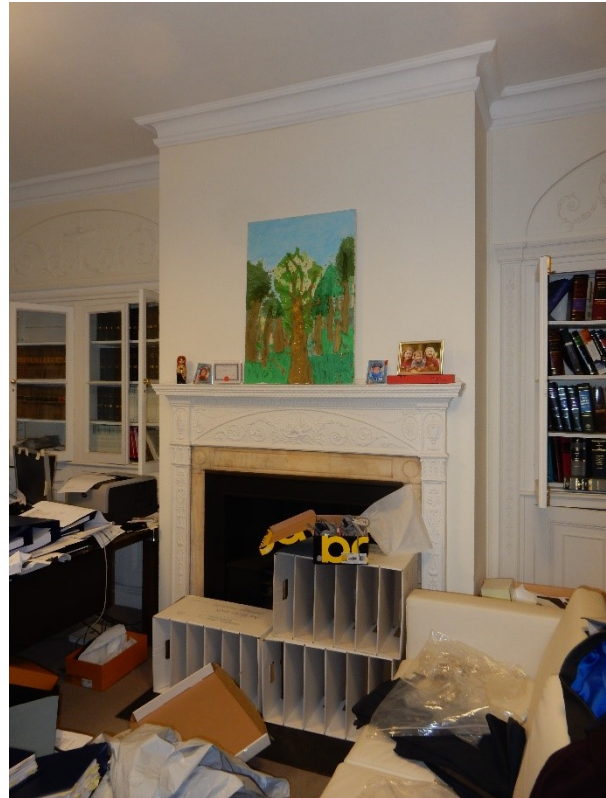
East Wall of Room F3/F4



North Wall of Room F3/F4



SE corner of Room F1



North wall of Room F1

## PROPOSALS

It is proposed to construct an independent acoustic partition in front of the south wall in Chambers office F1. This will be scribed around the existing cornice and skirting. New matching cornice and skirtings will be applied to match the existing and the existing door rehung on an extended lining to maintain the original relationship of the door to the room.

The decision to install the acoustic screen on the F1 side of the existing partition is made on the basis that sound-proofing the wall within Room F1 will be more effective and because it is plain plaster whereas the wall to room Room F3/F4 exhibits an interesting amalgam of panelling alterations from different periods which will thus remain on show to illustrate the history of change.

## ACCESS STATEMENT

The proposed works do not have any DDA implications.

In any event, as a Grade II\* listed building, it is not possible to change the front entrance steps or provide step free access to all levels. Access will thus remain as existing.

Prepared by Richard Young Architect RIBA  
25<sup>th</sup> November 2019