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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE & HERITAGE STATEMENT

in connection with

No.2 Percy Street, London W1

for

**Internal refit within the existing retail unit with proposed air conditioning
units at rear of building**



Ref: DGC21943
Date of Issue: 22nd Nov 2019
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Table of Contents

Overview and Summary3

Heritage Policy and Guidance Summary3

Methodology9

Statement of Significance 11

Historic Overview 12

Significance Assessment 13

Proposed Development 16

Impact Assessment 17

Conclusion 18

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Overview and Summary

No.2 Percy Street is a Grade II listed, three-storey Georgian terraced townhouse within Fitzrovia, Central London. Although forming part of a single terrace encompassing the south side of Percy Street, No.2 is considered to form a group with Nos. 1 and 3. The property is also included within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area.

No.2 Percy Street has a mix of uses throughout the building, the ground floor and basement forming a single retail unit. The application is for the refurbishment of the existing shop space, the insertion of a new ceiling substructure to facilitate a suspended ceiling and the reconfiguration of the space at basement level to provide new dressing and storage rooms. It is also proposed to include new air conditioning units, to be positioned inconspicuously on the flat roof of the existing single storey rear extension.

This report considers the heritage value and significance of No.2 Percy Street as a Grade II listed designated heritage asset, and the impact the proposals will have on the Charlotte Street Conservation Area and the setting of the adjoining listed buildings.

Heritage Policy and Guidance Summary

Legislation

The primary legislation relating to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66(1) reads:

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, 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.”

In relation to development within Conservation Areas, Section 72(1) reads:

“Special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”

The Courts have determined that “preserve” in the context of the Planning Acts, means the minimum requirements of the Act would be met if there is an absence of harm. This statutory requirement relates to designated heritage assets.

The NPPF and Historic England’s Good Practice Guide in Planning No. 3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England) [GPA3] makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset in the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced, is a material consideration.

“The Courts have held that it is legitimate in appropriate circumstances to include within a conservation area the setting of buildings that form the heart of that area (R v Canterbury City Council ex parte David Halford, February 1992; CO/2794/1991) and NPPF paragraph 80, for example, makes it clear that historic towns are regarded as having a setting.”¹

And

“In primary legislation, the setting of conservation areas is not a statutory duty. However, the NPPF states that the setting of a designated heritage asset can contribute to its significance.”²

¹ GPA3, ‘The extent of setting’ Box 1, page 2

² GPA3, ‘The extent of setting’ Box 2, page 2

Revised National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on July 2018, revised in February 2019 and revoked all past Planning Policy Guidance and Statements and now embodies national policies and objectives.

Under the heading 'Achieving sustainable development' we are advised in paragraph 8 that

"Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways."

Under an "economic objective" this is defined as:

"to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure"

Under "a social objective" we are advised that this involves:

"to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being;"

Under "an environmental objective" this is referred to as:

"to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."

Although there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, footnote 6 makes it clear that it is not an automatic presumption where designated heritage assets are concerned. Paragraph 124 sets out that *"good design is a key aspect of sustainable development" and that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield), provided it is not of high environmental value, conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.*

Chapter 16 relates specifically to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' with paragraphs 184 – 202 being relevant to the consideration of proposals affecting heritage assets. Paragraph 189 indicates that:

“ 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.”

The definition of a heritage asset as set out in the NPPF Glossary includes:

“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).”

Attention is drawn to paragraph 192 which requires, inter alia:

“the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets ...

the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of place.”

Paragraph 193 states that:

“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.”

Paragraph 195 indicates that where a development

“will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and

c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and

d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use. “

Paragraph 196 refers to cases that will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm is to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including where appropriate securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 197 requires that consideration be given to the impact of development proposals, directly or indirectly on non-designated heritage assets. This would include unlisted buildings in conservation areas. Again, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Paragraph 198 specifically states that LPAs should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

It is noted that Paragraph 200 indicates development is not prohibited within the setting of heritage assets where proposals would enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of the asset are to be treated favorably.

The NPPF therefore recognizes the need to clearly identify relative significance at an early stage and then to assess the impact of development proposals in that context.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in March 2014 as a companion to the NPPF, replacing a large number of foregoing Circulars and other supplementary guidance. In respect of heritage decision-making, the PPG stresses the importance of determining applications on the basis of significance and explains how the tests of harm and impact within the NPPF are to be interpreted.

The PPG also notes the following in relation to the setting of heritage asset:

“A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.” (Ref I D: 18a-014-20140306)

Historic England Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance 2008

Historic England sets out in this document a logical approach to making decisions and offering guidance about all aspects of the historic environment, including changes affecting significant places. It states that:

“New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if: a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place; b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed; c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future; d. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future” (page 59).”

Historic England Making Changes to Heritage Assets Advice Note 2 (February 2016)

This advice note provides information on repair, restoration, addition and alteration works to heritage assets. It advises that:

“The main issues to consider in proposals for additions to heritage assets, including new development in conservation areas, aside from NPPF requirements, such as social and economic activity and sustainability, are proportion, height, massing, bulk, use of materials, durability and adaptability, use, enclosure, relationship with adjacent assets and definition of spaces and streets, alignment, active frontages, permeability and treatment of setting.” (page 10)

Historic England Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice (GPA) in Planning Note 2 (March 2015)

This advice note sets out clear information to assist all relevant stake holders in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related

guidance given in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). These include:

“assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.” (page 1)

Historic England The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice (GPA3) in Planning Note 3 (July 2015)

This document presents guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas and landscapes. Bullet point 4 on page 2 of GPA3 states that:

“Setting in urban areas, given the potential numbers and proximity of heritage assets, is therefore intimately linked to consideration of townscape and urban design and of the character and appearance of conservation areas. The character of the conservation area, and of the surrounding area, and the cumulative impact of proposed development adjacent, would suggest how much impact on the setting should be taken into account.”

Under the heading ‘Views and setting’ we note that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views which can be static, dynamic, include a variety of views across or including that asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset.³ At the same time it is noted that one does not need to be in direct view of a heritage asset to be within its setting. It does not depend on public rights or the ability to access it.⁴

GPA3 sets out a stepped approach to assessing setting and the role that it plays in contributing to the significance of a heritage asset/s. This process requires one to have an understanding about the significance of the asset/s in order to be able to determine if harm would arise. It is advised that the following steps are undertaken:

- Step 1 - identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
- Step 2 - assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
- Step 3 - assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;
- Step 4 - explore the way of maximizing enhancement and avoiding or minimizing harm;
- Step 5 - make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

It is acknowledged that this is not the only method of assessing setting, the role that it plays and if a site falls within that setting. It has however stood the test of time and has been accepted by Inspectors at appeal and public inquiries.

³ Appendix 3: GPA3, ‘Views and setting’ paragraph 5, page 3

⁴ Appendix 3: GPA3, ‘Setting and the significance of heritage assets’, page 4

Local Policy

The London Plan, 2016

- Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology

This strategic policy seeks to identify the various forms of heritage assets and the historic environment within London, to ensure that these assets are sustained and enhanced, and the positive role assets can make in place shaping is fully utilised. Development within London should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, and development affecting heritage assets and their setting should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

Draft London Plan 2019

- Policy HC1

This strategic policy retains the conservation principles of the 2016 Plan, however there is a new emphasis on the need for the London Boroughs' to provide evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of the historic environment. This is combined with the requirement to provide plans and strategies which will inform the effective integration of London's heritage in regenerative change.

Camden Local Plan 2017

- Policy D2: Heritage

This extensive policy relates all aspects of the historic environment. The policy states:

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

Designed heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
- b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
- c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

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.

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;
- f. resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;
- g. resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and
- h. preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

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:

- i. resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
- 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.

Archaeology

The Council will protect remains of archaeological importance by ensuring acceptable measures are taken proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset to preserve them and their setting, including physical preservation, where appropriate.

Other heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets

The Council will seek to protect other heritage assets including non-designated heritage assets (including those on and off the local list), Registered Parks and Gardens and London Squares. The effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, balancing the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Methodology

The aim of this Heritage Statement is to identify and assess the value or significance of the identified heritage assets including their settings and to consider the sensitivity of the assets and their settings to accommodate change.

Beyond the criteria applied for national designation, the concept of value can extend more broadly to include an understanding of the heritage values a building or place may hold for its owners, the local community or other interest groups. These aspects of value do not readily fall into the criteria typically applied for designation and require a broader assessment of how a place may hold significance. In

seeking to prompt broader assessments of value, Historic England's Conservation Principles categorizes the potential areas of significance (including and beyond designated assets) under the following headings:

Evidential value

*'derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity...Physical remains of past human activity are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them...The ability to understand and interpret the evidence tends to be diminished in proportion to the extent of its removal or replacement.'*⁵

Evidential value therefore relates to the physical remains of a building/structure and its setting, including the potential for below ground remains, and what this primary source of evidence can tell us about the past.

Aesthetic Value

*'Aesthetic values can be the result of the conscious design of a place, including artistic endeavour. Equally, they can be the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time. Many places combine these two aspects... Aesthetic values tend to be specific to a time cultural context and appreciation of them is not culturally exclusive.'*⁶

Aesthetic value therefore relates to the visual qualities and characteristics of an asset (settlement site or building), long views, legibility of building form, character of elevations, roofscape, materials and fabric, and setting (including public and private views).

Historic value

*'derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative... Association with a notable family, person, event, or movement gives historical value a particular resonance...The historical value of places depends upon both sound identification and direct experience of fabric or landscape that has survived from the past, but is not as easily diminished by change or partial replacement as evidential value. The authenticity of a place indeed often lies in visible evidence of change as a result of people responding to changing circumstances. Historical values are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has obliterated or concealed them, although completeness does tend to strengthen illustrative value.'*⁷

To summarize, it relates to the age and history of the asset, its development over time and the strength of its tie to a particular architectural period, person, place or event. It can also include the layout of a site, the plan form of a building and any features of special interest.

Communal Value

"Commemorative and symbolic values reflect the meanings of a place for those who draw part of their identity from it, or have emotional links to it... Social value is associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence. Some may be comparatively modest, acquiring communal significance through the passage of time as a result of a collective memory of stories linked to them...They may relate to an activity that is associated with the place, rather than with its physical fabric... Spiritual value is often associated with places sanctified by longstanding veneration or worship, or wild places with few obvious signs of modern

⁵ Conservation Principles (2008) page 28

⁶ Conservation Principles (2008) pages 30-31

⁷ Conservation Principles (2008) pages 28-30

*life. Their value is generally dependent on the perceived survival of the historic fabric or character of the place and can be extremely sensitive to modest changes to that character, particularly to the activities that happen there.*⁸

Communal value therefore relates to the role an asset plays in a historic setting, village, town or landscape context, and what it means to that place or that community. It is also linked to the use of a building, which is perhaps tied to a local industry or its social and/or spiritual connections.

Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008) also considers the contribution made by setting and context to the significance of a heritage asset.

“Setting is an established concept that relates to the surroundings in which a place is experienced, its local context, embracing present and past relationships to the adjacent landscape.

*Context embraces any relationship between a place and other places. It can be, for example, cultural, intellectual, spatial or functional, so any one place can have a multi-layered context. The range of contextual relationships of a place will normally emerge from an understanding of its origins and evolution. Understanding context is particularly relevant to assessing whether a place has greater value for being part of a larger entity, or sharing characteristics with other places”*⁹

In order to understand the role of setting and context to decision-making, it is important to have an understanding of the origins and evolution of an asset, to the extent that this understanding gives rise to significance in the present. Assessment of these values is not based solely on visual considerations but may lie in a deeper understanding of historic use, ownership, change or other cultural influence – all or any of which may have given rise to current circumstances and may hold a greater or lesser extent of significance.

Once the value and significance of an asset has been assessed, the next stage is to determine the ‘magnitude’ of the impact brought about by the development proposals. This impact could be a direct physical impact on the assets itself or an impact on its wider setting, or both. Impact on setting is measured in terms of the effect that the impact has on the significance of the asset itself rather than setting being considered as the asset itself.

Statement of Significance

Significance is considered to be the sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, as defined by its evidential value (the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity); historical value (the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present), aesthetic value (the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place) and communal value (the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory) (Historic England, formerly English Heritage, Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance 2008).

⁸ Conservation Principles (2008) pages 31-32

⁹ Conservation Principles (2008) page 39

Historic Overview

Prior to the mid-eighteenth Century, Percy Street and the land within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area formed agricultural land on the edge of London and was within the Manor of Tottenham (see Fig.i). The area of land was recorded in the Domesday Book as being owned by the Canons of St Paul's Cathedral but changed hands a number of times in the following centuries. After the Restoration, the land was leased in 1667 to the Earl of Arlington, who then passed it onto his daughter and her husband, Henry Fitzroy Earl of Euston and Duke of Grafton. (LBC:2008:pg 14)

During the early 18th Century, areas surrounding the conservation area were developed, with the establishment of the formally planned Cavendish Estate to the west and Bloomsbury Estate to the east. However, with the construction of New Road (now known as Euston Road) as a bypass to Oxford Street in the 1750s, suburban development spread rapidly between Oxford Street, to New Road in the north. In the space of 20 years, the existing urban grain was established and whilst due to numerous landowners and developers, the quality and architectural finishes vary within the streets, the four storey townhouse was the predominate building form.



Figure i: John Roque's Map of London 1746. The approximate position of Percy is indicated in red.

Whilst the development of the land occurred rapidly, the decline in the popularity of the area was also rapid. By the turn of the 19th Century, the wealthy were moving to more fashionable areas in west London. This led to a change in the character of the area during the 19th Century: the Camden Conservation Area Appraisal for Charlotte Streets states that *"the large grand houses were subdivided and rented out. The large rooms made good studios and as a result, the area attracted many artists. The area continued to become poorer during the 19th Century and a range of artists, artisans and craftsmen established businesses in the area, attracted by low rents"* (Camden:2008:pg15). It was also during this time that the area became popular with migrant communities from Europe, particularly France and Italy, who established businesses, shops and restaurants in the area.



Figure ii: Extract of Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map: London XXXIV. Surveyed 1870. Published 1875.

By the 20th Century, Tottenham Court Road became a focus for the development of large, purpose built shops for furniture and other goods being made locally. The name “Fitzrovia” for which the area is still known, is believed to have been coined in the 1930s as a result of gatherings of writers and other talented people at the Fitzroy Tavern.

Significance Assessment

Designated Heritage Assets

This section identifies heritage assets which surround the development site. In the case of this application the following designated heritage assets are local to the proposed development and have been identified as they may be affected by the current proposals. The identification of these assets is consistent with ‘Step 1’ of the GPA3 The Setting of Heritage Assets.

In the case of this application, an assessment has been made as to whether the proposed development will have the potential to impact upon the significance of the surrounding designated heritage assets. Where the assessment has determined that there will be no impact the heritage assets have not been documented. Those deemed to have the potential to be affected by the works are discussed below:

1. No 2 Percy Street

No.2 Percy Street was listed in a group with Nos. 1 and 3 Percy Street at Grade II on the 14th May 1974. The list description succinctly describes the architectural features of the front facades. It states:

3 terraced houses with later shops. 1764-1770, altered. Built by W Franks and W Reeves. 3 storeys, attics and basements; No.1 with later C19 4th storey. 3 windows each. No.1: reddened brick with slated mansard roof and large dormers (centre dormer segmental headed with tripartite window. Later C19 ground floor restaurant frontage with stucco pilasters carrying entablature flanked by consoles with lions masks. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed 2-pane sashes. Continuous 3rd floor sill band. Parapet. INTERIOR: not inspected. No.2: multi-coloured stock brick with rusticated stucco ground floor. Slate

Assessment of Significance & Heritage Statement: No.2 Percy Street, London W1

mansard roof with dormers. Stone 1st floor and 1st floor sill bands and cornice. C20 plate glass shop window. House/shop entrance round-arched with panelled jambs with lion-mask stops, cornice head and panelled door. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes. Parapet. INTERIOR: not inspected but noted to retain hall with dentil cornice. Open tread stair with foliated wrought-iron balusters and wreathed wooden handrail. No.3: reddened brick with slated mansard roof and dormer. Rusticated stucco ground floor with stone 1st floor and 1st floor sill bands and cornice. C20 bowed shop window. House/shop entrance round-arched with pilaster-jambs carrying cornice head; fanlight and panelled door. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes. Parapet. INTERIOR: not inspected. (Survey of London: Vol. XXI, Tottenham Court Road and Neighbourhood, St Pancras III: London: -1949: 7-11).

Despite the list description being written over 40 years ago, there appears to be very few changes to the architectural features of the three townhouses. The only elements of renewal would appear to be the shop fronts within No.2 and No.3.



Figure iii: Nos 1-3 Percy terrace (No.1 is on the right-hand side)

The rear of the properties contrasts greatly in character with the front elevation; all three display a functional character with differing styles of windows. No.1, as a corner property encompasses its entire plot with only a small lightwell providing amenity space to the rear. No.2 maintains its original M shape roof, and the elevation from 1st floor upwards displays a canted bay which extends across two of the three window bays at the rear. There is a single storey rear extension which extends the full depth of the plot and has a frontage onto Percy Mews to the rear of the terrace. No.3 also maintains its original M-shape roof form and appears to only have a single storey rear extension. However, the plot depth is half of that of No.2, as a two storey mews house (fronting onto Percy Mews) is positioned to the rear.

Assessment of Significance & Heritage Statement: No.2 Percy Street, London W1

The group of townhouses has been identified as having a strong townscape value; the Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal identified a key view along Charlotte Street, to the south, which is terminated by Nos. 1-3.



Figures iv and v: iv) Front elevation of No.2 Percy Street. v) Rear elevation of No.2 Percy Street which fronts onto Percy Mews

1. Charlotte Street Conservation Area

The Charlotte Street Conservation Area was designated on the 26th March 1974, and subsequently extended in 1981, 1985 and 1999 to form its current extent. The conservation area covers 8.9ha from Tottenham Court Road in the east, to Cleveland Street in the west, and Gresse Street in the south and Chitty Street in the north. Both the south and west boundaries of the conservation area adjoins the London Borough of Westminster.

The Charlotte Street Conservation Area is situated within an area known as Fitzrovia. The Conservation Area Appraisal which was adopted in 2006, encapsulates the significance of the area in its origins as a speculatively developed residential area of Georgian townhouses which was constructed within 20 years from 1750. However, by the late 18th and into the 19th century, the area declined in popularity for the wealthy, and as a result artists, craftsmen and immigrant communities took up residence in the large houses which were subdivided and charged at low rents. Furthermore, shops, businesses and public houses were developed or inserted into older properties at ground level. It is the varied, mixed use of the area which gives it a distinct character and appearance.

No.2 Percy Street is typical of the conservation area, as it is a typical Georgian townhouse with a mix of residential and business use, incorporating a retail unit at ground and basement.

2. Designated Heritage Assets within the Setting

As Figure vi demonstrates, the majority of the terraces on both the north and south side of Percy Street are listed Grade II. This includes:

- No. 4 Percy Street
- Nos.5-9 Percy St (consecutive)
- No. 12 and 13 Percy Street
- Nos.32 and 33 Percy Street

Whilst the outlined designated assets are considered to create a formal street scene and as such, have a shared urban setting, the proposed scheme at No.2 is considered to have a nil to negligible impact on the setting of the adjacent listed buildings. This is due to the fact that there will be no change to the existing use of the building and no material alterations are proposed to the external elevations. As such, the existing character and use of the terrace will remain as existing, as well as the external appearance and therefore the appearance of the street scene will be preserved.

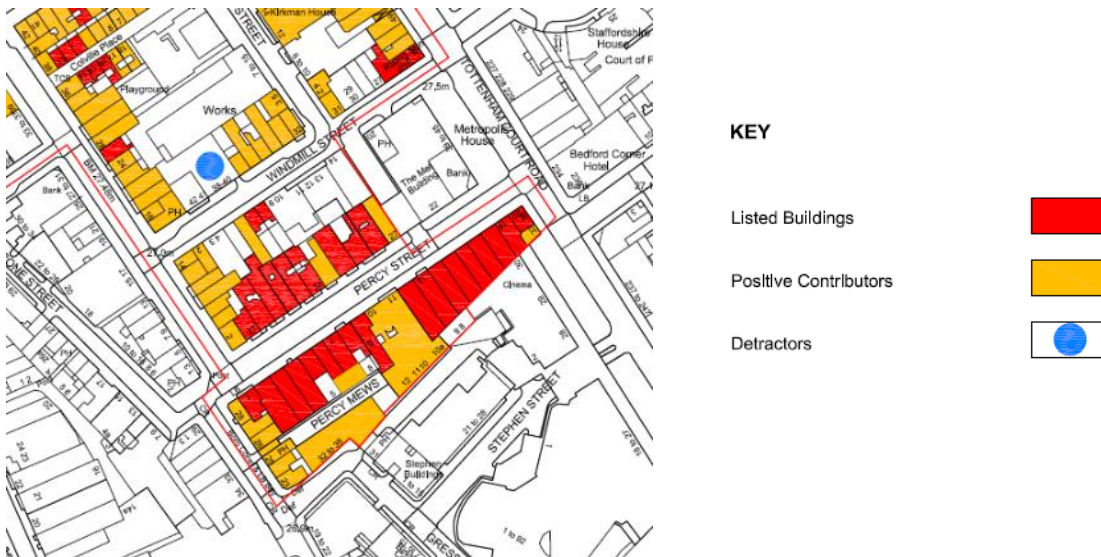


Figure vi: Extract of Map produced by LB Camden: Built Heritage Audit Plan for Charlotte Street Conservation Area

Proposed Works

The proposed works are for the internal refit of the existing retail unit.

The proposed scheme is for the internal refit of the shop to provide a bespoke interior to the retail unit. The interior includes a number of changes to existing partition walls at ground and basement level, the replacement of the existing modern rear stair, the creation of a new doorway into the existing lightwell, and the strengthening of the existing ceiling structure at ground floor level to allow for the erection of a suspended ceiling.

The existing shop is largely devoid of historic or architectural features which are of significance and has previously been adapted largely through the use of stud walls and has modern plasterboard ceilings throughout. At ground floor level, it is proposed to strengthen the existing ceiling structure with a new substructure of steel beams to ensure the proposed suspended ceiling does not cause structural issues to the historic fabric of the designated heritage asset. The strengthening will take the form of the insertion

of new steel beams which will run from the front to the rear of the property, connecting with the four existing beams which run horizontally across the property, from party wall to party wall. It is also proposed that the central timber beam, which runs centrally across the historic core of the building will be strengthened by being clad on both side by PFC steels. This beam is the only timber beam within the existing ceiling structure, which although does not look to be 18th Century in origin, must have an element of age. The remaining cross beams are modern steels, including one which supports the rear elevation and the bay window of the townhouse. From the new ceiling substructure, it is proposed to suspend a new ceiling, consisting of wooden bricks which will be hung in an arched configuration.

Also at ground floor level, it is proposed to reposition the doorway in an existing stud wall, and to increase the width of the existing doorway to the rear stairwell and lift to ensure the lift is fully accessible. It is proposed to replace the existing rear stair, which is modern in construction and of no historic interest.

The property does, on the party wall with No.3, display 5 recesses in the brickwork. It is proposed at ground and basement level, to insert a stud wall lining the eastern party wall, to create a uniform line to the wall.

At basement level, it is proposed to insert a number of stud partition walls between the remaining brickwork piers to create new dressing rooms and a series of storage rooms. The layout has been positioned towards the western party wall, so the principle retail area reflects the size and positioning of that at ground floor level.

As part of the alterations, it is proposed to insert an internal window within a section of the brickwork which currently forms a corridor. It is also proposed to replace the front window and glazed door on the front elevation with a new fixed window. Furthermore, it is proposed to insert a new door to gain access to the lightwell from the western side, by removing a section of the brickwork.

The proposals also include storage and display units throughout both floors. All storage and display units will be demountable or will be fixed to the proposed stud walls. It is also proposed that some decorative elements, such as timber bricks and metal cladding will be added to the space- whilst it may change the perceived space, they are not structural and all is demountable.

As part of scheme, new signage taking the form of a black metal fascia panel with the shops logo formed in white plexiglass, is proposed to be erected at the head of the existing shopfront. The fascia, which measures 58cm in height, will be positioned within the existing reveal ensuring it is flush to the front elevation of the heritage asset. A black vinyl sheet will be applied to the lower levels of the glass, which will appear like a stallriser.

Finally, it is proposed to mount three air conditioning condenser units, on the flat roof of the building adjacent to the parapet wall shared with No.3. The condenser units will be housed within an acoustic enclosure and will be set 2m back from rear elevation to ensure they are visually inconspicuous from within Percy Mews.

Summary of Impact

The national and local policy requires the impact upon the significance of a designated heritage asset shall be preserved or enhanced.

It is considered that the proposed works to ground and basement will have a neutral impact on the significance of the designated heritage asset.

The ground and basement are largely devoid of historic or architectural features, therefore the proposal to insert a stud wall lining against the existing brickwork on the eastern party wall at ground and basement

level is considered to have a neutral impact; no architectural features of note will be obscured whilst the works are entirely reversible in nature, therefore preserving the historic fabric in situ.

The proposed insertion of a ceiling substructure is considered to have a neutral impact on the significance of the heritage asset; the proposed works will result in no loss of historic fabric, and will not affect the integrity of the structure as it has already been heavily modified as the building has been adapted to and extended as a retail unit. This is evident by the fact that three of the existing ceiling joists, including that is supporting the rear elevation of the townhouse are modern steels. Therefore, the new ceiling beams will clearly be a modern addition to an altered ceiling structure but will ensure the structural integrity of the building. As such, there will be a neutral impact on the significance of the asset.

The proposed suspended ceiling is also considered to have a neutral impact; the existing ceiling is modern therefore the insertion of a suspended ceiling will not obscure any historic or architectural features within the heritage asset. The proposed ceiling is also considered that whilst making a strong a design statement that alters the spatial qualities of the space, it is essentially a decorative finish, which is fully reversible as the original ceiling height will remain as existing. Therefore, the significance of the asset is preserved.

The proposed new stair at the rear of the building is considered to have a neutral impact on the significance of the heritage asset; the rear stair is modern and of no intrinsic historic or architectural interest and as such does not contribute to special character of the listed building. Its replacement, which will be in the same location, will therefore no affect the significance of the asset.

All the changes to the existing partition walls, including repositioning of doors, is considered to have a neutral impact. The existing fabric is of no historic or architectural interest and therefore does not contribute to the significance of the heritage asset.

The proposed stud partition walls will also have a neutral impact; they will be inserted around the retained historic fabric, and along with the proposed new doors will read as a modern intervention within the historic building. As such, the morphological development of the building will be evident and as stud walls, these works are deemed fully reversible should it be desired. As such, the significance of the heritage asset remains unaffected.

The proposed replacement window on the front elevation at basement level is considered acceptable; it is a modern window of no intrinsic interest, therefore replacing it with a contemporary window will have a neutral impact on the asset. The proposed new doorway to gain access to the lightwell is considered acceptable; whilst some brickwork would be lost, the proposed position is reflective of a servants' entrance and will be visually unobtrusive in views of the listed building and the street scene. As such, it would preserve the significance of the heritage asset.

The proposed signage on the front elevation is considered to have a neutral impact on the heritage asset; the fascia is appropriately scaled and stylistically minimal and as such preserves the architectural character of the designated heritage asset. It is considered to have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, as the scale and positioning of the fascia is in keeping with the adjacent buildings which form a group with No.2 and the terrace as a whole.

The proposal to erect three air conditioning units within acoustic housing on the flat roof of the single storey rear extension is again, considered to have a neutral impact; this roof is functional in character so no historic fabric or architectural features will be affected. The positioning of a minimum 2m set back from the rear elevation will ensure they will be visually inconspicuous, therefore preserving views of the rear of the listed building, and the street scene of Percy Mews. As such, the impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area is negligible.

Conclusion

The proposed alterations have carefully considered the significance of the designated heritage asset and have been sensitively detailed to ensure a neutral impact on historic fabric and retained features. It is considered that the proposed works, which are largely internal, will not affect the significance of the asset, the setting of surrounding listed buildings or the contribution it makes to the Charlotte Street Conservation Area.

The works therefore are deemed to accord with national and local policy, preserving and enhancing the significance of the designated heritage assets, and as such, there is no reason why the local authority should not favourably consider the application.

Sources:

London Borough of Camden: Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. 2008.