

# RUNDELL ASSOCIATES



## Heritage Statement

40 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HX

P4 MAY 2020





## 1.0 Application description

Internal refurbishment and conversion of the Mews House at 9 Bedford Avenue from Office (B1) usage to Residential (C3) usage including the creation of two self contained dwellings.

## 2.0 Introduction

This Heritage statement is written to provide a level of information proportional to the importance of the Heritage Asset and the potential impact of the proposals on its Historical Significance. The information is required to comply with the requirements set out in Policy D2 Heritage of the Camden Local Plan.

The Mews House is attached to (and within the curtilage of) a Listed Building but is not listed in its own right. Both the main house and the mews house stand within the Bloomsbury conservation area.

The existing mews house and the glazed link joining it to the main house were constructed about 25 years after the listing was created and hence no mention of the mews is included within the listing.

The significance of the mews building lies in its proximity to, and in views from, the Grade I Listed main house, other Grade I Listed buildings on Bedford Square, and its location within a Conservation Area.

## 3.0 History

In the late 18th century, John Russell, the fourth Duke of Bedford, began planning an ambitious suburban development within the Bloomsbury Estate. Development of Bedford Square began in 1775 after his death. This was overseen by his wife, Duchess Gertrude and the Estate surveyor, Robert Palmer. The unornamented, uniform facades, partially designed by architect Thomas Leverton, reflect the classical tastes of 18th century London. Leverton was known at the time for his decorative interiors, he later lived at 13 Bedford Square. William Scott (bricklayer) and Robert Grews (carpenter) are also recorded as responsible for building the estate.

The four sides of the square were undertaken as whole units. Their proportion and symmetry are typically Georgian in design. The uniformity & architectural consistency throughout the square was a first for London residential squares and would influence developments of this type for the century to come.



*Existing Mews House from Bedford Avenue*

All houses in the square (1-54) are intact and Grade I listed. As an extensive, intact example of late 18th century architecture, and given their influence on London's built form, they are a valuable piece of English Heritage.

Bedford Avenue, to the south of the square, was developed at a later date as one of three streets of coach house and stables servicing the households on the square (the other two being Morewell Street and Gower Mews). The stables/coach house at the rear of 40 Bedford Square has since been demolished and the building has been redeveloped several times behind the surviving red brick facade. It was most recently rebuilt during the 1980s in a project which involved the retention of the Bedford Avenue facade and the complete reconstruction of the mews buildings behind. The façade facing Bedford Avenue is consistent along the whole northern side of Bedford Avenue between Adeline Place and Bloomsbury Street.

#### 4.0 Planning History

##### 4.1 8470170 - GRANTED (Aug 20 1984)

Refurbishment of main building at 40 Bedford Square, demolition of mews offices bounded by Bedford Avenue and Adeline Place, and rebuilding on site of existing mews offices in Bedford Avenue.



- 4.2      **2008/5278/P - GRANTED Subject To A Section 106 Legal Agreement (Aug 26 2009)**  
**2008/5310/L - GRANTED (Aug 25 2009)**  
Additions and alterations in connection with the change of use of the main building from office use (Class B1) to a single family dwellinghouse (Class C3), and of the rear building from office use (Class B1) to three self-contained flats (Class C3).
- 4.3      **2010/4417/P - GRANTED Subject To A Section 106 Legal Agreement (Apr 26 2011)**  
Alterations and additions including new door to basement, new windows on rear and side elevations, new pipe works on the side and rear elevations and partial removal of connecting walkway and associated alterations to existing dwelling house (Class C3) as revision to planning permission (ref: 2008/5278/P) granted (subject to S106) on 04/03/2010 for (the additions and alterations in connection with the change of use of the main building from office use (Class B1) to a single family dwellinghouse (Class C3), and of the rear building from office use (Class B1) to three self-contained flats (Class C3)).
- 4.4      **2010/4401/L - GRANTED (Jan 26 2011)**  
External alterations including installation of new windows on the rear and side elevations, new pipe works on the side and rear elevations and partial removal of connecting walkway and associated alterations and internal alterations as revision to listed building consent (ref: 2008/5310/L) granted on 18/12/2009 for (the works associated with additions and alterations in connection with the change of use from office use (Class B1) and works of conversion of the main building to a single family dwelling and of the rear building to four flats (Class C3)).
- 4.5      **2011/0993/L - GRANTED (Apr 28 2011)**  
Internal alteration including the replacement of stone slabs in the ground floor lobby and hallway with new Portland slabs on a like for like basis, associated to application 2010/4410/L 04/03/2010 for (the additions and alterations in connection with the change of use of the main building from office use (Class B1) to a single family dwelling house (Class C3), and of the rear building from office use (Class B1) to three self-contained flats (Class C3).
- 4.6      **2011/1419/L - REFUSED (Apr 28 2011)**  
Internal alterations to remove ceiling beams and increase ceiling height at third floor level to dwelling house (Class C3).
- 4.7      **2011/1420/L - GRANTED (May 6 2011)**  
Internal alterations in connection with the strengthening of floor beams on all floors, including alterations to joists at second and third floor levels to dwelling house (Class C3).
- 4.8      **2011/1716/P - GRANTED (Jul 4 2011)**  
**40 Bedford Square**  
Installation of 3 x air conditioning units to basement corridor with associated grilles in flat roof on Adeline Place side of existing house (Class C3)





#### 4.9 2011/3271/P - GRANTED (Sep 28 2011)

##### 40 Bedford Square

Installation of 2 x new timber windows in rear elevation of lift shaft and reconstruction of existing entrance door to existing dwelling house (Class C3).

#### 5.0 Design Proposal

At present the building is empty and not habitable. It is proposed fully to refurbish the building and to create two self-contained residential units: a one bedroom flat on the ground floor and a two-bedroom apartment on the upper two floors. The basement floor will be converted to ancillary residential usage for the benefit of the family which currently occupies the main front building.

It is proposed to replace and reconfigure the staircase and circulation routes throughout the Mews House to better suit the intended residential usage.

It is also proposed to refurbish the roof (which is in poor condition) and to introduce new skylights to suit the proposed new floorplan.

All external windows and doors on the ground, first and second floors are to remain unchanged. On the lower ground floor, it is proposed to replace the windows overlooking the courtyard with doors detailed to match the existing sash windows elsewhere on the facade. The doors would open inwards, and be recessed in the facade so that the thickness of the frame will appear to match the windows on the ground and first floors.

No other external alterations are proposed and the application does not involve the loss of any historic fabric.

#### 6.0 Heritage Value

The mews building is of little historical interest apart from the southern facade fronting Bedford Avenue. This 1890s facade is consistent along Bedford Avenue and is characterised by its red brick, heavy rustication and decorative frieze. The facade is split into bays corresponding to each plot, with a brick column set proud of the brick wall on the line of each party wall. The bay typically has a sash window with low level window beneath and a 6 panel door with fanlight. The facade contributes to the streetscape of Bedford Avenue, however its style and materiality does not relate to the main Heritage Asset, having been constructed over a century later.

The Bedford Avenue facade postdates the original house by at least a Century and was in existence when the listing was created. No mention of the façade was included within the first listing in 1951 or in any recent amendments. Neither the existing facade or the 1980s building behind have any reference to its original function as a stables / mews



house (as recorded on the Insurance Plan of London Vol. VIII: sheet 198, Chas E Goad Limited, 1888).

The Heritage Value of the mews house therefore lies primarily in its setting and its proximity to Heritage Assets that include both the Grade I listed buildings in the surrounding area and the Conservation Area itself.

As a building within the curtilage of the Grade I listed 40 Bedford Square it must be considered:

- as an ancillary structure that is subservient to the Main house, maintaining the historic layout that includes the courtyard between the two buildings
- as a significant view from a Grade I listed building
- as viewed from the street on approach/departure to/from Bedford Square
- as a building within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area

Currently, the interior of the building is sub-divided in a manner consistent with its historical use as an office space. The plan-form has been altered with plasterboard partitions and contemporary office finishes. The internal finishes are of poor quality and of limited historical value.

## 7.0 Impact assessment

### 7.1 Floor-by-floor break-down of works and their impact on Heritage Assets

#### 7.1.1 Lower Ground Floor

- Internal partitions formed to subdivide the floor for office use in the 1980s to be removed, including all office finishes to floor and suspended ceiling
- Replace windows to courtyard with inward opening doors with materials and detailing to match existing windows
- Remove and replace internal columns with concealed steel structure. The columns were added as part of the refurbishment in 1984
- Install new timber stud partition walls and finishes
- **No original fabric will be affected on this floor apart from the removal of the existing partitions where they adjoin the rear façade. A method statement for this work is attached**

No changes to the lower ground floor are visible from the street and therefore the impact of the changes is limited to views from the main house. We believe that the proposed doors to the courtyard are sympathetic in their design and layout, and will appear consistent with the windows on both ground and first floors.

#### 7.1.2 Ground Floor

- Existing internal partitions to be removed, including all office finishes to floor and suspended ceiling
- Remove and replace internal brick columns with concealed steel structure
- Install new timber stud partition walls and finishes



- No original fabric will be affected on this floor apart from the removal of the existing partitions where the adjoin the rear façade. A method statement for this work is attached

No changes on the ground floor will be visible from either the main house or the street and therefore there is no impact to the designated Heritage Assets in the surrounding area.

#### 7.1.3 First Floor

- Existing internal partitions to be removed, including all office finishes to floor and suspended ceiling
- Install new timber stud partition walls and finishes
- No original fabric will be affected on this floor apart from the removal of the existing partitions where the adjoin the rear façade. A method statement for this work is attached

No changes on the first floor will be visible from either the main house or the street and therefore there is no impact to the designated Heritage Assets in the surrounding area.

#### 7.1.4 Second Floor

- Existing internal partitions to be removed, including all office finishes to floor and suspended ceiling
- Install new timber stud partition walls and finishes.
- No original fabric will be affected on this floor apart from the removal of the existing partitions where the adjoin the rear façade. A method statement for this work is attached.

No changes on the second floor will be visible from either the main house or the street and therefore there is no impact to the designated Heritage Assets in the surrounding area.

#### 7.1.5 Roof

The roof is a modern structure in its entirety, having been constructed when the Mews was rebuilt in 1984. The existing flashings, soakers and valley gutters are in poor condition leading to numerous leaks into the interior of the building. It is impossible to remedy the situation without removing the slate covering which will inevitably damage many of the existing slates. Whilst it is hoped that approximately half the original slates can be salvaged and re-used on the façade facing Bedford Avenue, new Welsh slate tiles will be used on the façade facing the Main House. The asphalt crown will be replaced by a traditional lead roof with lead rolls, whilst the flashings, soakers and valley gutters will similarly be formed in lead.

The existing roof lights will be reconfigured and replaced with conservation style roof lights in new locations to suit proposed floor layout. A number of cowls will also be installed on the roof for ventilation purposes so that there will not be any visible grills in the façade of the building.



The vent cowls on the roof will be small and formed in lead to match the roofing and therefore discrete when viewed from the main house. No changes to the roof will be visible from the street further limiting the visual impact to the Heritage Asset.

## **7.2 Structural Impact**

### **7.2.1 Demolition/replacement of stud walls adjoining the rear façade of the building.**

The modern timber stud partitions affixed to the rear wall of the building will be unscrewed from the brickwork to prevent damage to the historic fabric. Where new studs are to be introduced these will be screwed and plugged to the rear wall using brown (size 7) plastic plugs and 80x12mm gauge screws @ 600mm centres.

The Bedford Avenue facade will be monitored constantly throughout construction, and inspected on a weekly basis. If there is any damage found or movement in the facade, a structural engineer will be notified immediately.

**7.3** We believe that the overall impact of the proposals on the significance of Heritage Assets would be positive as it will bring the Mews back into residential usage and prevent further deterioration of the structure that is currently neither waterproof or in serviceable condition.

## **7.4 With reference to specific policies within the Local Plan:**

### **7.4.1 Section D2 "e." of Camden Local Plan D2, page 235**

"Requires that development within Conservation Areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;"

We believe the proposal preserves the character and appearance of the local area, as external changes will be insignificant.

### **7.4.2 Section D2 "f." of Camden Local Plan D2, page 235**

"Resists the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area; "

No demolition is proposed.