

CONSERVATION PLANNING



51-53 Hatton Garden

London

EC1

Summary Assessment of Architectural Interest and Significance

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51-53 Hatton Garden

1.0 Introduction

1.1 51-53 Hatton Garden is a seven storey, stone-faced building standing on the east side of the street within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area. The building was constructed in 1938 in the Art Deco style and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

1.2 I have been instructed by Sheet Street Ltd and Dorrington Midtown Ltd to advise on the architectural interest and significance of the building and how that may be affected by proposals to relocate building services onto the roof of an existing plant room and lift overrun, create a roof top terrace incorporating seating and planting and provide access onto an existing terrace on the front elevation.

1.3 I am a chartered town planner and hold a Graduate Diploma in Building Conservation from the Architectural Association. In all, I have over 40 years' experience of managing change and development within the historic environment, including working with English Heritage (now Historic England), for 27 years, the last 7 as its Director of Planning and Conservation for London. During that time, I have advised Ministers, Central Government Departments, Local Planning Authorities, developers and local communities on the widest range of historic buildings and places. These include World Heritage Sites, numerous Grade I and Grade II* listed buildings, (those of outstanding architectural and historic interest), Grade II listed buildings and Conservation Areas.

In 2013 I left English Heritage to become the Director of Conservation and Planning at architects John McAslan and Partners where I led its conservation projects on Grade I and Grade II* buildings in Glasgow, Derbyshire and St Albans.

In early 2018 I established my own practice, Conservation Planning, advising the architectural and development sectors on the conservation related aspects of managing change and development within the historic environment. Current projects include advising on the impacts of new development on the historic environment and alterations to important historic buildings to facilitate change to new uses.

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2.0 51-53 Hatton Garden

- 2.1 51-53 Hatton Garden stands on the east side of the street, just south of the junction with Clerkenwell Road, within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area. Completed in 1938, the front elevation stands on ground and six upper floors above a basement and is clad in Portland stone. At the rear, an original brick faced extension stands on ground and seven upper floors above the basement. The sixth floor of the main building is set back from the front elevation behind a shallow terrace and sits below a flat roof.
- 2.2 The interior, which was originally designed as two units, was refurbished in the 1980s including alterations to the ground floor elevation. A second refurbishment was carried out in 2000 which included replacing the windows on both elevations. Whilst the refurbishments have resulted in functional but unremarkable interiors, the front elevation has very largely retained its architectural interest and character.

3.0 Hatton Garden

- 3.1 Hatton Garden's early history can be traced back to 1576 when, following the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536, Queen Elizabeth I ordered the Bishop of Ely to surrender Ely House and its surrounding 14 acres to one of her courtiers, Sir Christopher Hatton. Ely House had been the London home of the Bishops of Ely and one of the capital's great medieval mansions. The order was disputed by the Bishops but finally, in 1654, the courts ruled that Hatton's successor, Christopher Hatton III, could inherit the land. In 1659 he laid out a grid of streets for a smart new suburban development and building began around 1680. Much of the mansion was demolished leaving only the Bishop's private chapel to survive and later become the Catholic church of St Etheldreda. By 1694 Hatton Garden was lined with substantial houses, often with a coach house and stables behind.
- 3.2 Hatton Garden's association with the jewellery trade began in the early 19th century after the old houses had ceased to be fashionable residences. Other prominent industries included clock and watchmaking, printing and engraving.

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The 20th century saw the construction of imposing commercial buildings, especially on Hatton Garden and the continued development of the diamond trade. Today only scattered evidence of its domestic past survives.

- 3.3 The Hatton Garden Conservation Area was first designated by Camden in 1999, but a new Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy was adopted by the Council in August 2017. The Conservation Area covers approximately 20 hectares to the west of the Farringdon Road and the introduction to the Appraisal summaries its overall character as follows:

Its historic character derives largely from its many robustly detailed, industrial, commercial and residential buildings of the late nineteenth to mid twentieth centuries, combined with an intricate street pattern that is overlaid on undulating topography. This character is closely related to the history of metal working and other industries that have been carried out here. At the heart of the district is Hatton Garden, well known as the focus of London's jewellery trade.

- 3.4 Also noted is that *the character of the Area is varied, with no single period, style or use predominating. Yet, there is a conspicuously high proportion of Victorian former warehouses and twentieth-century commercial buildings and a smattering of Georgian houses, all of which are a direct result of the history of the Area. Today there are a mix of uses, especially commercial and residential*” and that *“the Area forms a dense network of minor streets connected to four major streets: Hatton Garden is the spine of a grid of north-south streets laid out in the seventeenth century”*.

- 3.5 The Conservation Area Appraisal divides the Area into six sub-areas of which, sub-area 3 is The Trading area centred on Hatton Garden. The spatial character of the sub-area is described as follows:

Sub-area 3 comprises the grid of streets laid out by Christopher Hatton III in 1659 and the adjacent enclaves of Brooke's Market and Ely Place. This fine-grained area accommodates a variety of specialist shops, workshops and offices, many linked with the diamond and jewellery trade....The principle feature is Hatton Garden, unusually straight and broad for a London Street.

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The straight streets of Sub-area 3 rely for much of their visual effect on variation in the frontages which is ensured where the original plot widths survive.

- 3.6 The Appraisal notes that there are an infinite number of interesting views within and into the Conservation Area. Four of these are identified as Key Views of which View 3 is Hatton Garden looking north towards the belfry of the Italian Church (on Clerkenwell Road). The View is described as follows:

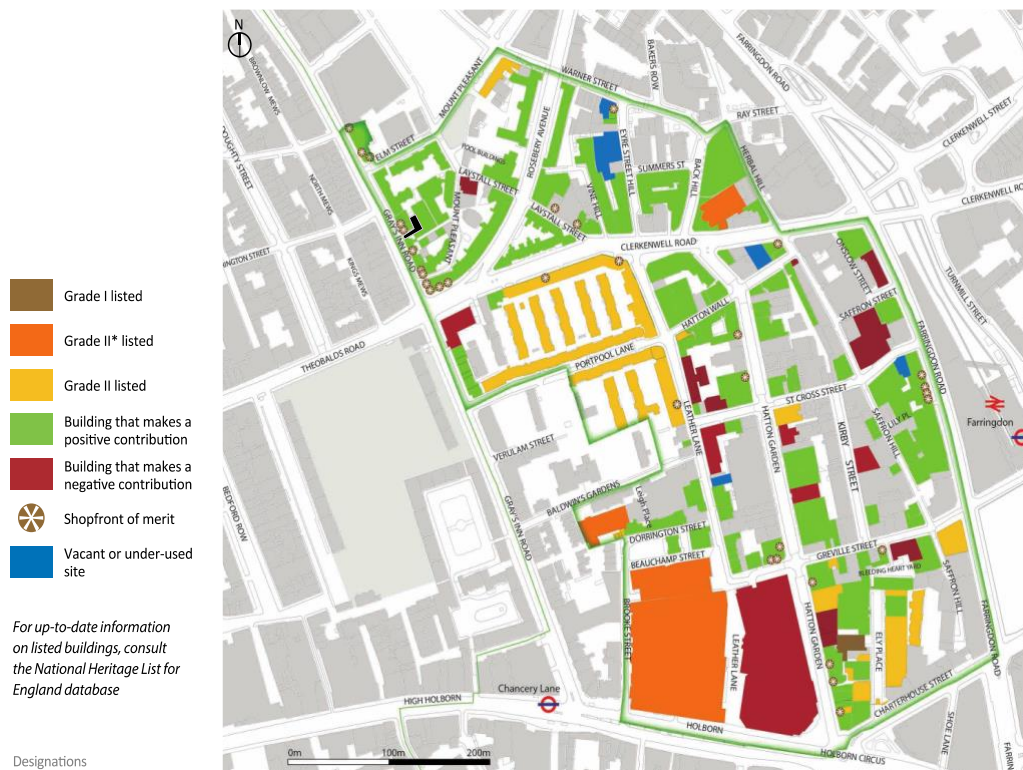
The view northward along Hatton Garden allows an appreciation of this unusually wide and straight thoroughfare and is given further interest by the glimpse of the belfry of St Peter's Italian Church (Grade II). The view possesses a grandeur that stems from the proportions of the street in relation to the heights of the buildings”.*



Key View 3 from Conservation Area Appraisal

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3.7 The Conservation Area contains 30 buildings included on The Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Of these, three are on Hatton Garden, (nos 19-21, 5, 43), towards the southern end of the street. The Appraisal also identifies approximately 150 buildings which are considered to make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Area. 51-53 Hatton Garden is one of those identified as a *positive contributor*.



6.0 Audit

Conservation Area Buildings

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- 3.8 Importantly, the Management Section of the Appraisal contains the following Guideline, effectively a Council policy for the Area, on proposed Roof extensions and terraces:

Planning permission is required for alterations to the external form of a roof, including extensions and terraces. Because of the varied design of roofs in the Conservation Area, it will be necessary to assess proposals on an individual basis with regard to the design of the building, the nature of the roof type, the adjoining properties and the streetscape. The formation of roof terraces or gardens provides valuable amenity and can have a positive effect. However, care should be given to locating terraces so that they are not unduly prominent and do not create problems of overlooking. Roof extensions and terraces are unlikely to be acceptable where:

- *They would detract from the form and character of the existing building.*
- *The property forms part of a group or terrace with a unified, designed roofscape.*
- *The roof is prominent in the townscape or in long views”.*

- 3.9 In summary, Hatton Garden is a well-known quarter of London with a distinct character and sense of place. The wide range of building types reflect a history which can be traced back through confiscation of Church property by the monarch, the industrialisation of a once fashionable residential suburb to a centre for diamond trading and jewellery workshops and finally to a renowned specialist retail area, but one which continues to accommodate many other uses.

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4.0 Architectural Interest

- 4.1 51-53 Hatton Garden is not included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Nevertheless, the street elevation is a well-considered example of the Art Deco style which became popular for smart commercial buildings in the early 20th century. Its Portland stone cladding, steel framed windows and strong horizontal emphasis all contribute to an elevation of considerable character. Whilst the rear elevation and interior are unremarkable, the street elevation is of architectural interest. The existing building services plant on the roof is a disfiguring element which can be seen in street views from the north.



Existing Rooftop Building Services Plant

- 4.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal notes that the building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Area and sits within one of the Key Views across the area.

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4.3 In summary, 51-53 Hatton Garden is a good example of a 20th Century building which makes a positive contribution to the appearance, character and townscape of a distinctive London street.

5.0 **Contribution to The Conservation Area**

5.1 There are a significant number of listed buildings within the area, including 30 within the Conservation Area. However, the visual and functional relationship between these buildings and 51-53 Hatton Garden is sufficiently remote as to make consideration of how it contributes to their setting of limited value.

5.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies 51-53 Hatton Garden as a building which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The Appraisal references the wide variety of building types within the Area, particularly the contribution made by imposing buildings from the 20th century. The high-quality materiality and composition of the front elevation places 51-53 Hatton Garden within that group of buildings and explains why it has been identified as a positive contributor.

5.3 51-53 Hatton Garden sits within one of four key views identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal. The building's contribution varies along the length of Hatton Garden, but towards the northern end of the street it becomes a prominent and attractive feature in the view.

5.4 The Mayor of London's London View Management Framework (LVMF), is adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance to the London Plan. It defines 27 strategically important views across London and sets out guidance on how they are to be managed. The 27 Designated Views include six London Panoramas, one of which is the view from the summit of Parliament Hill to St Paul's Cathedral: Designated View 2A.

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The view is defined by a Landmark Viewing Corridor from the Assessment Point, (Parliament Hill) to the strategically Important Landmark, (the Cathedral), and a Wider Consultation Area either side of the corridor. It also includes a Protected Vista which sets a falling line of sight from the assessment point to the landmark. The sight line defines a Threshold Plane above which any proposed development would be subject to specific consultation procedures to ensure that the Cathedral remained recognisable in the view.



LVMF Landmark Viewing Corridor Diagram

- 5.5 51-53 Hatton Garden sits within the Viewing Corridor of Designated View 2A at a point where the Threshold Plane is approximately 60 m above ground level. At a height of 46.6 m to the top of the plant room and lift overrun, the building is well below the Threshold Plane.

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Existing Building Section. Plant room roof at 46.6 m

6.0 Significance

- 6.1 The concept of *significance* as a way of reaching a wider understanding of why an historic building or place is important was first explored by ICOMOS, (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) for the management of World Heritage Sites. The aim was to provide a more rounded understanding of why a building or place is important by introducing the concept of *cultural heritage* defined through a set of *values* which went beyond architectural or historic interest.
- 6.2 Within the UK, the values-based approach to understanding significance is now firmly established best practice. Of particular note, the Secretary of State's guidance on the care and management of the historic environment is set out in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF). The guidance consistently uses the concept of significance, rather than special architectural or historic interest, as a way of assessing the appropriateness of proposals for change within the historic environment.
- 6.3 The terms *significance* or *values-based approach* are not found in primary legislation and nor do they replace the criteria for including a building on the Statutory List, (special architectural or historic interest).

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The concept sits alongside the statutory system to offer a wider appreciation of importance. Historic England has suggested that the significance of an historic building or place might be understood through one or a number of the following values:

Evidential Value: Relating to the potential of a place to yield primary evidence about past human activity.

Historical Value: Relating to the ways in which the present can be connected through a place to past people, events and aspects of life.

Aesthetic Value: *Relating to the ways in which people derive sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.*

Communal Value: *Relating to the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, and whose collective experience of memory it holds.*

However, there may be other values relevant to a particular building or place.

6.4 It follows that when reaching an appreciation of why an historic building or place is important or assessing proposals for change which would affect its importance, significance must be considered alongside architectural and historic interest.

6.5 In terms of the values-led approach advocated by Historic England, the significance of 51-53 Hatton Garden can be primarily appreciated through its *aesthetic value*. The building is of architectural interest and makes a positive contribution to the streetscape and character of Hatton Garden. The building is also of some *historical value* for the way it reflects change and development within the Area. Taken together, the values associated with 51-53 Hatton Garden mean that it is a building of high significance, although its significance rests almost entirely within the front elevation.

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7.0 Proposals

7.1 The applicant is seeking planning permission for:

- The relocation of building services plant on to the roof of the existing seventh floor plant room and lift overrun, together with appropriate visual and acoustic screening.
- The creation of a landscaped terrace on the existing flat roof above the sixth floor to be used only by the occupants of the building.
- The provision of access onto an existing terrace on the front elevation at sixth floor level.

7.2 The applicant is also seeking to provide enhanced landscaping to ground and lower ground floor areas within an existing yard at the rear of the building. Due to the nature of these works, they would not have any impact upon the architectural interest or significance of the building or on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Whilst fully described in the application and DAS, these works are not included in this report's consideration of the proposals.

8.0 Policy and Guidance

8.1 51-53 Hatton Garden is not included on the Statutory List and nor does it contribute to the setting of any listed building in the area to an extent which makes consideration helpful. Nevertheless, as a positive contributor to the Hatton Garden Conservation Area it is a designated heritage asset. Accordingly, policy and guidance on the historic environment are relevant when considering proposals for change and development. In summary, these are as follows:

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National Legislation

- 8.2 When considering proposals for development within a Conservation Area, Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to pay “*special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*”.
- 8.3 The Court of Appeal has stated that the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area equates to giving the issue “*considerable importance and weight*” in the planning balance. (*East Northamptonshire DC v Secretary of State for communities and Local Government [204] EWCA Civ 137*).

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 8.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in March 2012 and revised in July 2018 and February 2019, sets out Government’s planning policies and how these are to be applied. It begins with the primary objective that, *the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*. Sustainable development is defined as having three overarching objectives:
- an economic objective
 - a social objective
 - an environmental objective

The environmental objective is defined as *contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment*. Achieving sustainable development, as defined in this way, lies at the heart of the Government planning policy, the golden thread that runs through the NPPF.

Section 16 of the NPPF sets out Government’s policy for “*Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*”.

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- 8.5 Para 192 advises that, *in 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 viability; and*
 - *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*
 -
- 8.6 Para 193 advises 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. 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.*
- 8.7 Significance is defined within the NPPF 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.*
- 8.8 Para 195 advises that, *where a proposed 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 of loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.*
- 8.9 Para 196 advises that, *where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.*

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The Statutory Plan

- 8.10 Camden's adopted Local Plan contains a number of policies which aim to safeguard and enhance the borough's historic environment. Policy D2 Heritage is of particular relevance and reads as follows:

The Council will preserve and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed 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 require that development within a conservation area preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area".

- 8.11 The Mayor of London's London Plan, at Chapter 7, contains a suite of policies aimed at achieving good design with the overall aim that *New development should be of the highest architectural quality..... comprise details and materials that complement, not necessarily replicate, the local architectural character.....optimise the potential of sites.....meet the principles of inclusive design.*

- 8.12 London Plan Policy 7.8D states that *development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials, and architectural detail.*

Historic England Guidance

- 8.13 In December 2017, Historic England published its revised Good Practice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets. In addition to general advice, the guidance recommends a stepped approach to the *proportionate assessment of the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal, including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset*. The steps to be undertaken are as follows:

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- Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.*
- Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated.*
- Step 3: Assess the effect of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it.*
- Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.*
- Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.*

9.0 Assessment

9.1 The likely impacts of relocating the building services plant, creating the proposed roof top terrace and providing access onto an existing sixth floor terrace can be considered under the following headings:

- Upon the architectural interest and significance of the building.
- Upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Compliance with the LVMF.

9.2 Consideration follows the *stepped approach* advocated in Planning Note 3, (para 8.26 above) and the general advice at para 19 that *conservation decisions are based on a proportionate assessment of the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal, including development affecting the setting of a heritage asset.*

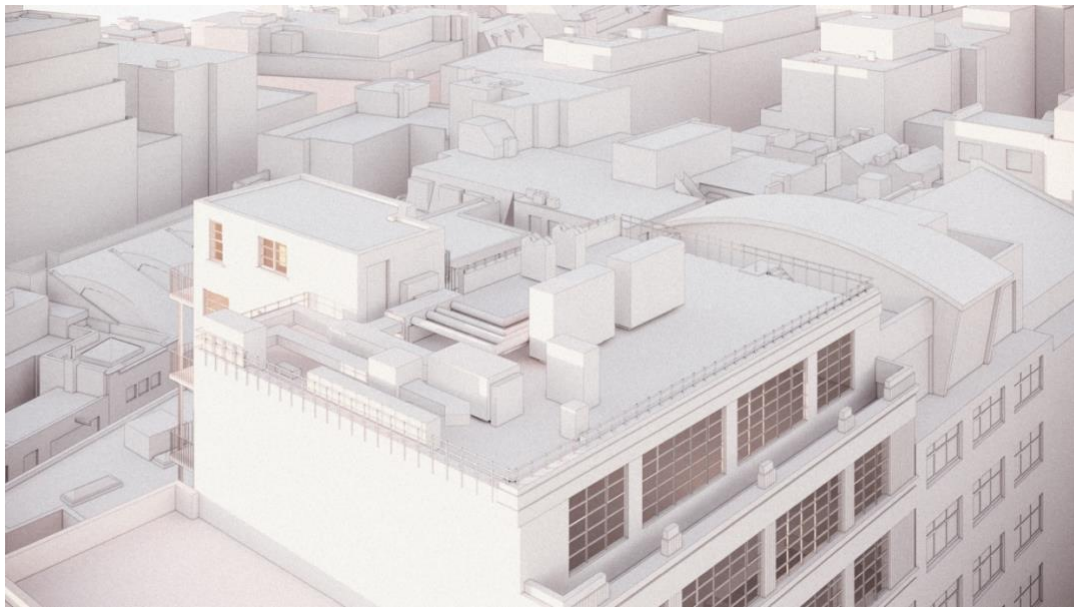
Impacts Upon Architectural Interest and Significance

9.3 51-53 Hatton Garden was designed and constructed with the utilitarian flat roof which exists today. Creating a terrace on that roof would not require any change of profile or loss of historic fabric. The new terrace would simply “float” above the existing structure. The existing metal safety rail would be replaced by 1.1m high, white, powder coated

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railings and perimeter planting in free standing tubs. From street level, the railings and planting would be visible above the set-back sixth floor of the building but the impacts upon the architectural interest or character of the principle elevation would be de-minimus.

- 9.4 Access onto the existing shallow terrace on the front elevation at sixth floor level would be created by changing the two centre sections of steel framed windows. In each case the sill would be dropped to terrace level and a pair of doors provided. The new doors and windows would match the framing and glazing pattern of the existing windows. New white powder coated, slim profile railings would be set on the inner face of the existing stone piers. From street level the new railing would be visible but the new doors would not be discernable. The impact upon the architectural interest or character of the principle elevation would be de-minimus.

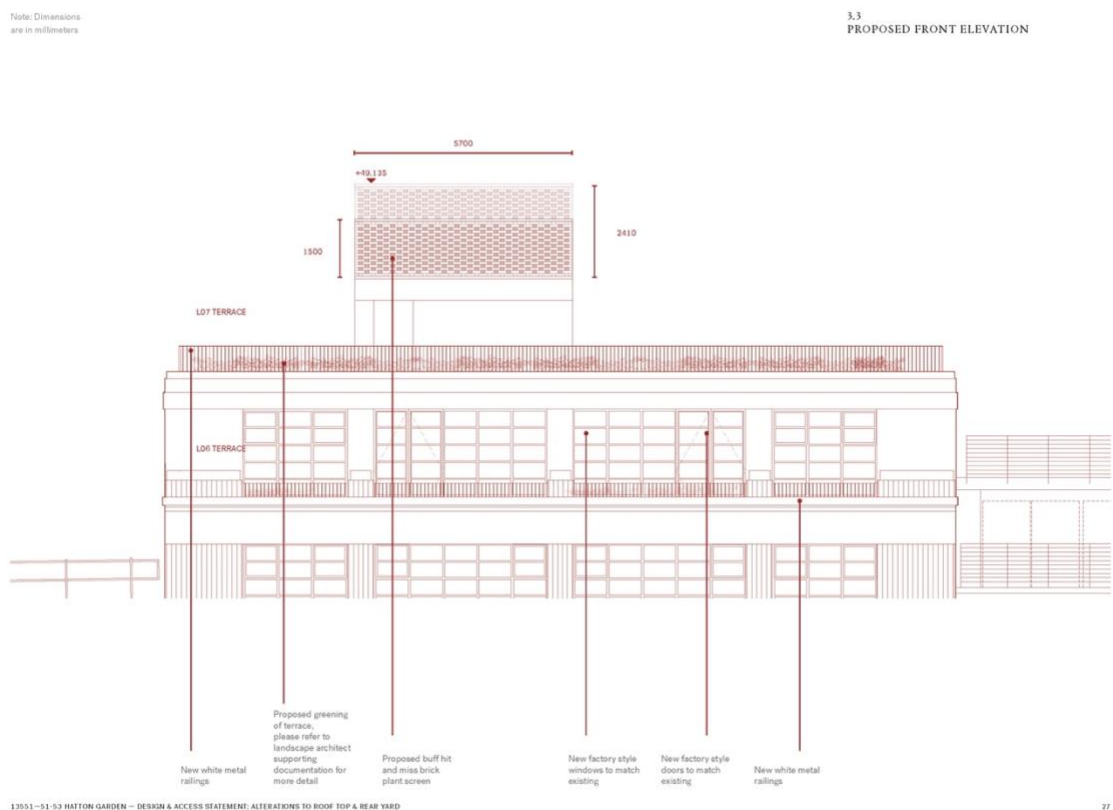


Existing Plant to be Removed

- 9.5 The existing building services plant, which is visible from street level, would be removed so that overall, the appearance and views of the building would be enhanced.

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9.6 The existing plant room sits above the rear extension sufficiently far back from the front elevation for its front edge to be not visible in street views. Neither would the proposed screen wall around the relocated plant and lift overrun be visible in views from the north or south. It would not have any impact upon the architecture of the principle elevation.



13051-51-53 HATTON GARDEN - DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT: ALTERATIONS TO ROOF TOP & REAR YARD

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Proposed Front Elevation

9.7 The architectural interest and significance of 51-53 Hatton Garden rests almost entirely in the front elevation. Since the proposed roof terrace, relocated plant and access onto the sixth floor terrace would not cause any harm to the fabric, architectural detailing or character of that elevation it is reasonable to conclude that there would be no impact upon the architectural interest or significance of the building.

9.8 The proposals would fully meet the requirements for roof terraces set out in the Management Section of the Conservation Area Appraisal, specifically that they should not detract from the form and character of the existing building (para 3.10 above). They would also meet the advice set out in Paragraph 193 of the NPPF that when considering proposals for development, *great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.*

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The proposals would contribute to the building's conservation by helping to secure its future as an attractive commercial building.

Impacts Upon the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

- 9.9 51-53 Hatton Garden is identified as a building which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is an imposing, commercial building in the Art Deco style and part of the wide variety of building types which characterise the Area. The building also helps to frame one of the key views across the Area, looking north along Hatton Garden towards Clerkenwell Road.
- 9.10 As noted above, the relocated services and plant and two proposed terraces would not have any impact upon the architectural quality or character of the Hatton Garden elevation. Both sets of white powder coated terrace railings and edge planting on the seventh floor terrace would be glimpsed from the north, but not the south. The new doors at sixth floor level would not be discernable and no harm would be caused to Key View 3 looking north along Hatton Garden. The impact upon the appearance of the Conservation Area would be *de-minimus* and there would be no impact upon the character of the Conservation Area.
- 9.11 The proposals would fully meet the requirements for roof terraces set out in the Management Section of the Conservation Area Appraisal. 51-53 Hatton Garden is not part of a group or terrace with a unified, designed roofscape and neither is its roof prominent in the townscape or in long views. They would also satisfy the obligation set out in Section 72(1) of the 1990 Act to have *special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that (conservation) area* and the Court of Appeal's judgement that the obligation equates to giving the issue *considerable importance and weight* in the planning balance.

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Key View 3, no change

Compliance with The LVMF

- 9.12 51-53 Hatton Garden sits within the Viewing Corridor of Designated View 2A where the Threshold Plane is approximately 60m. At its highest point, the lift overrun and plant room roof, the building is 46.5 m above ground level. Consolidating and locating the proposed services plant behind a screen wall above that roof would not take the height of the building to the threshold plane of 60m where specific consultation procedures would apply. The tallest section of screen wall would be 2.4m high bringing the highest part of the building to 49.1m above ground level. Similarly, creating a roof terrace on the existing roof which sits at a height of 43.6m above ground level would not take the height of the building to 60m. Providing access onto the existing sixth floor terrace would have no effect on the height of the building. Accordingly, the proposals would not conflict with the guidance set out in the LVMF.

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Street View from the North

10.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 10.1 51-53 Hatton Garden is a substantial and distinctive commercial building which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 10.2 Proposals to relocate building services plant and provide new plant on the roof of the existing plant room and lift overrun, create a new landscaped terrace on the existing flat roof at seventh floor level and provide access onto an existing sixth floor terrace would not have any impact upon the architectural interest or significance of the building. Those attributes rest almost entirely in the Art Deco styled street elevation which would be unaffected by the proposals. Furthermore, there would be no impact upon the character of the Conservation Area or on Key View 3.

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There would be a modest enhancement in the appearance of the Area by the removal of the roof top plant from street views. There would be no impact on the strategic views set out in the LVMF.

- 10.3 The proposals would cause no harm to the significance of the building, including its architectural interest, or the significance of the Conservation Area, including its character and appearance. For these reasons the proposals would fully accord with the statutory obligation set out in Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Policy Framework, Camden Council's Statutory Development Plan and Conservation Area Appraisal, the London Plan and Historic England's published guidance on managing change within the historic environment.
- 10.4 Historic England's Good Practice in Planning Note 2 confirms at para 29 that *change in the historic environment is inevitable but is only harmful when significance is damaged*". That is not the case here and accordingly, there are no conservation related reasons why planning permission should not be granted for the proposed roof top alterations to 51-53 Hatton Garden.

Paddy Pugh
June 2020