Donald Insall Associates

Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

1 CRESTFIELD STREET

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Revision

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Contents

Ordnance Survey map with the site marked in red.

1. Introduction

1.1 General

Donald Insall Associates was commissioned by Priscilla Smith in 2019 to develop proposals for 1 Crestfield Street. This statement has been prepared in support of a planning and listed building consent application for internal and external alterations to the Grade II listed building.

This design and access statement should be read in conjunction with the following submitted drawings and reports.

- 1000 Basement Plan Existing
- 1001 Ground Floor Plan Existing
- 1002 First Floor Plan Existing
- 1003 Second Floor Plan Existing
- 1004 Third Floor Plan Existing
- 1100 Section AA Existing
- 1101 Section BB Existing
- 1200 Elevations Existing
- 1500 Basement Floor RCP Existing

- 2000 Basement Plan Proposed
- 2001 Ground Floor Plan Proposed
- 2002 First Floor Plan Proposed
- 2003 Second Floor Plan Proposed
- 2004 Third Floor Plan Proposed
- 2100 Section AA Proposed
- 2101 Section BB Proposed
- 2200 Elevations Proposed
- 2500 Basement Floor RCP Proposed

- 5000 Basement Plan Demolition
- 5001 Ground Floor Plan Demolition
- 5002 First Floor Plan Demolition
- 5003 Second Floor Plan Demolition
- 5004 Third Floor Plan Demolition
- 5101 Section BB Demolition
- 5500 Basement Floor RCP Demolition

- Donald Insall Associates Historic Building Report

2. Site Details

2.1 Site Address

1 Crestfield Street, Kings Cross, London, WC1H 8AT.

2.2 Listing Description, Historical Background and Assessment of Significance

See Historic Building Report for details.

'Numbers 1-5 and attached Railings'
Grade II
Number 1067374

2.3 Existing Site Photographs

See below photographs of key areas later discussed within the document.

For further information please see Historic Building Report for a detailed site survey description.

Fig 1. External view from Argyll Square

Fig 2. External Street (west) Elevation

Fig 3. First Floor Bedroom 2, existing ceiling rose

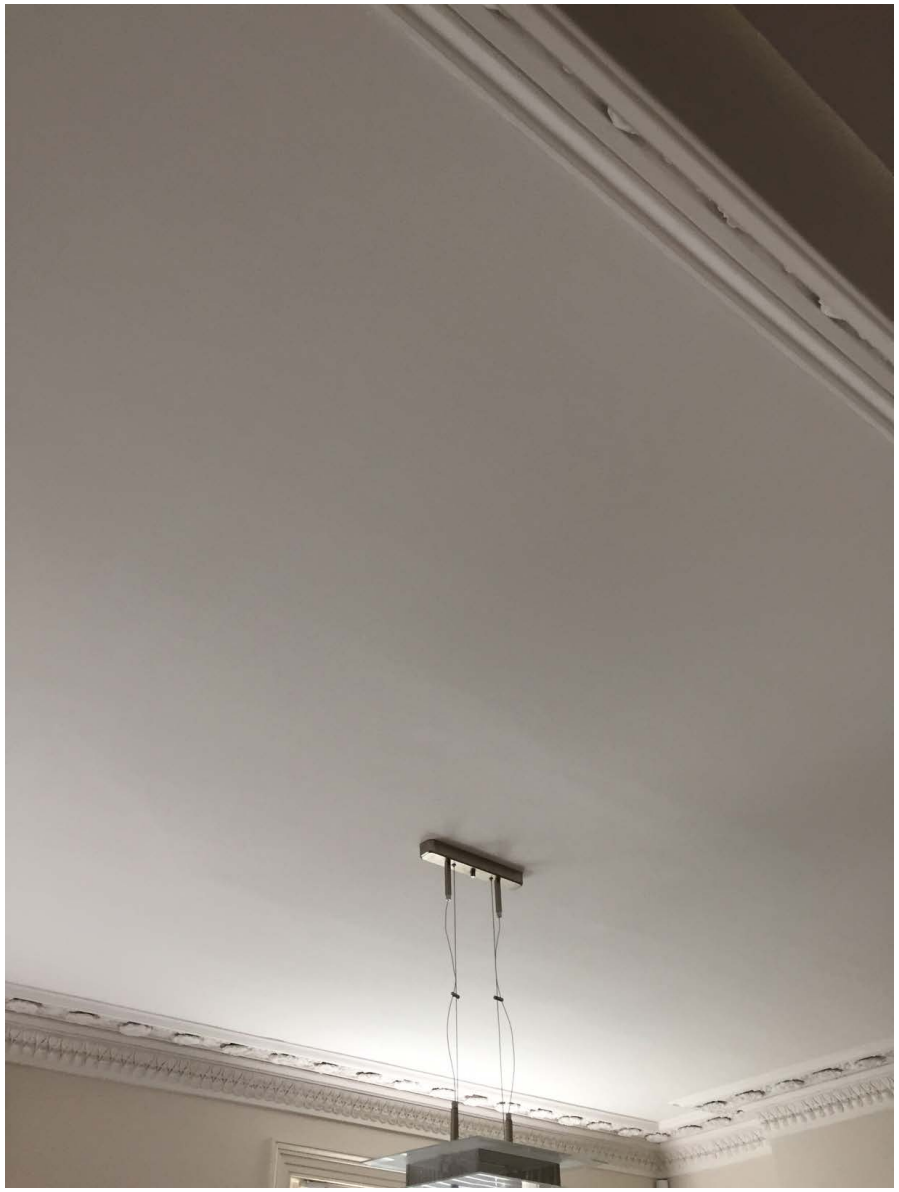


Fig 4. First Floor Bedroom 1, existing ceiling where ceiling rose should be.

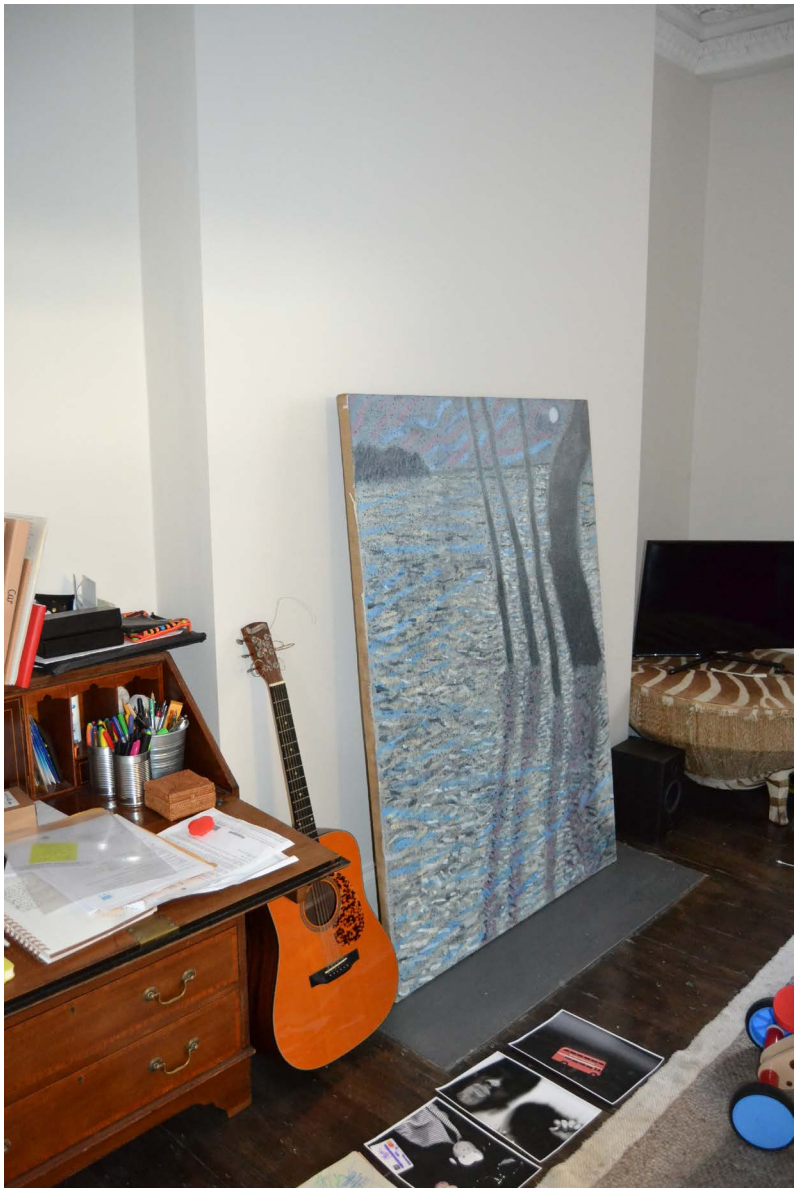


Fig 5. Ground floor, rear drawing room, original fireplace blocked.

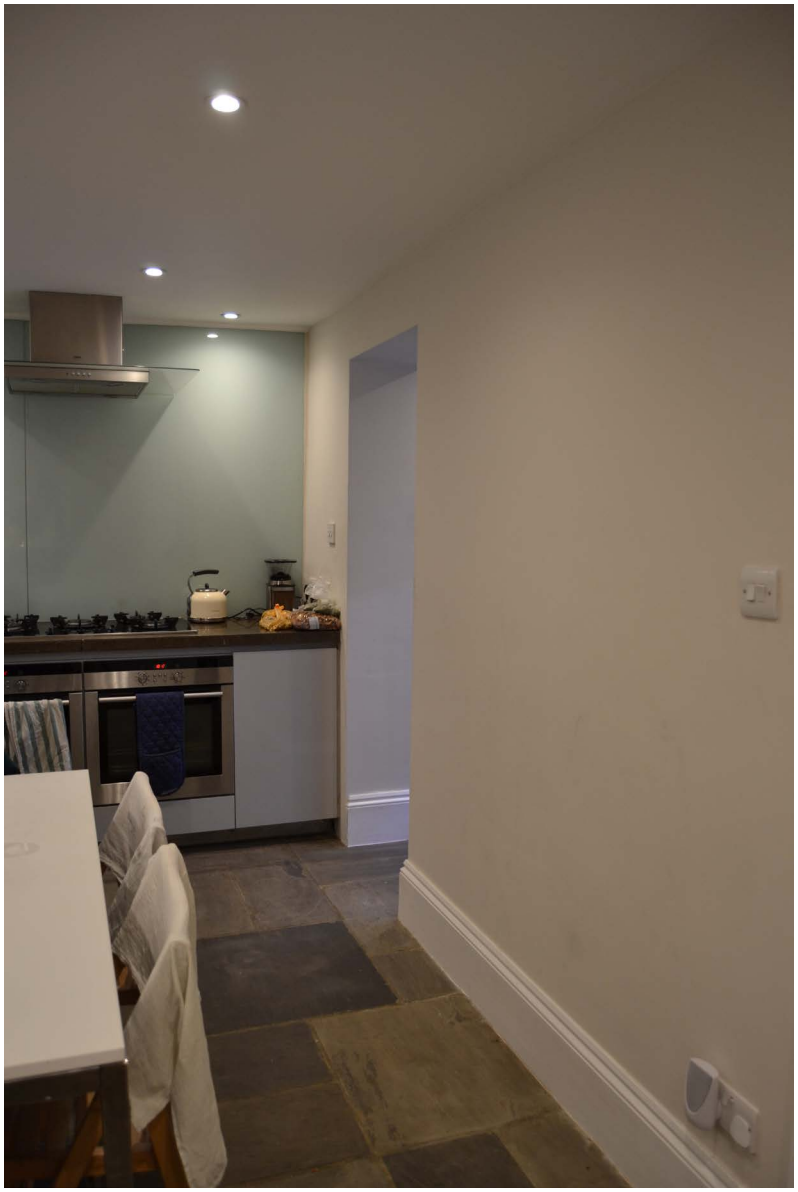


Fig 6. Basement kitchen, modern plasterboard ceiling, new underfloor heating, newly tanked and boxed out walls.

Fig 7. Basement utility room, view of rear wall of building above with modern plasterboard boxed out to conceal services and tanking systems.

Fig 8. Basement utility room, view within access hatch (access hatch visible within Fig 7) showing boxing out, hidden services and contentious tanking system.

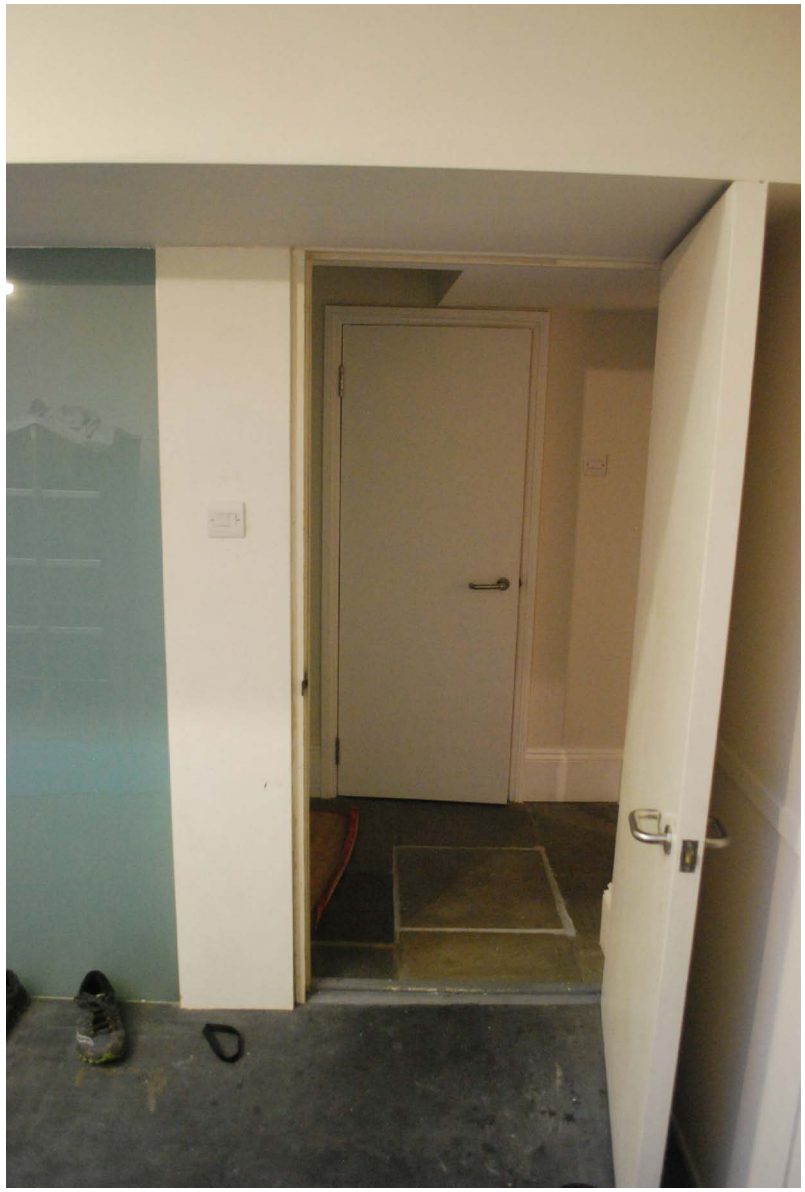


Fig 9. Basement utility, modern flush doors and modern non-load bearing partition wall.

Fig 10. Basement cinema.

Fig 11. Typical vault interior.

4. Proposals

3.1 Brief

The current use of the building is a single family home, which was its original use. The family would like to be able to keep using the building as a single family home by providing key living accommodation on one floor.

3.2 Design Approach

Initially, Donald Insall Associates carried out thorough historic research to clarify the buildings history.

During the research for the Historic Building Report, it was found that the house and particularly the basement had been extensively altered in 1954 to allow for the offices and archives of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association. In the basement, the 1954 works included lowering the floor to the basement, the basement was extended into the rear yard with a concrete roof, a hoist was installed against the north party wall going all the way up through the building, removal of all historic cupboards, doors and frames within the basement and the wall between the basement staircase and rear room was removed. The basement was then altered to allow for a new kitchen, spa, sauna and cinema in 2004. The loft extension was also added in 2004 along with new fireplaces. (See Historic Building Report for further details).

In light of these findings, it was proposed to follow best practice and concentrate the 'high flux' areas of a home over its life, such as the kitchens and living spaces, to this already highly altered basement. This move of locating the highly used living spaces within the basement will encourage any future living space alterations to take place in the least significant area of the listed town house rather than on one of the more significant floors above. Therefore, helping to preserve the significant historic fabric on the floors above.

The basement is also a warren of unusable rooms, such as the once 'spa' and 'sauna' (from 2004 application) which was turned into a workshop, later a make-shift gym by previous owners and currently a washing room by the current owners. These rooms do not have any openable windows and so makes for an unhealthy and unusable living environment (see Fig 7, 8, 9 and10).

These key points have influenced the proposals to enable the basement to become a naturally lit, naturally ventilated, usable family living space.

3.3 Description of Proposals

Firstly, the proposal looks to reinstate a number of missing historic features. These include the missing decorative ceiling rose within the first floor bedroom 1 (see Fig 3 and 4), missing fireplace and surround to rear chimney breast within the Ground Floor Drawing Room (see Fig 5), reinstate the missing chimney breasts within the basement and re-open the currently blocked up vaults under the pavement.

Within the basement it is proposed to remove the modern partition walls (see Fig 7 and 9) and to slightly enlarge the opening within Fig 6 (part of the spine wall) to enable natural light from the front and rear elevations to penetrate the floor plan as much as possible.

The natural light at the rear of the property is proposed to be improved by replacing the existing two leaking fixed rooflights with one large walk on rooflight. Adjacent to the proposed rooflight will be a natural ventilation shaft hidden within the mass of the existing timber bench. This shaft along with the open floor plan will enable cross ventilation to be introduced to reduce the basement's reliance on mechanical ventilation.

Removing the modern partition walls within the basement will enable the original cellular basement floor plan to be read easily while providing a well lit, naturally ventilated open plan living space for the family to live and enable the town house to be sustainably used as per its original use that will not impact the historic fabric in the future.

It is also proposed that the vaults are cleared of the old oil tanks to enable new plant and services to be housed within them (see Fig 11). The modern bathrooms to the upper floors are also proposed to receive minor alterations to include the re-routing of the SVP pipe and RWP.

Finally, it is proposed to carefully form two 600x600mm openings in the modern plasterboard wall and flat ceiling, (dated from 2004) in the third floor bedroom 4. The openings will allow inspection of the roof void and any existing insulation and will be made good following investigative works.

3.4 Pre-planning Application Feedback

2019/5586/NEW
Site visit on 18th November 2019 by Sanchita Raghunathan.

Following the feedback the design now incorporates the spine and rear structural walls within the basement.

In reference to the proposed rooflight, we have chosen the proposed design of the rooflight so that the rooflight can sit flush with the courtyard to enable this space to be usable. This size of the rooflight is desired because the rooflight is north facing and now that the basement structural walls are being retained the basement would benefit from as much light as possible. The rear room of the historic basement originally had a window or a door that opened onto a rear lightwell. The proposed large rooflight enables the original atmosphere of the basement to be reinstated by allowing natural light into the historic areas of the basement.

3.5 Vault Opening Up

The three vaults currently contain 3 oil tanks. A summary of the proposed remediation strategy is listed below:

1/. Contaminated land report
2/. Asbestos report
3/. Listed Building Consent to unblock vault entrances
4/. Remove oil from tanks
5/. Remove metal tanks
6/. Carry out second contaminated land test to floor and walls of vaults.
7/. Further remediation work as required.
8/. Insall services and tanking as proposed.

The proposed waterproofing for the vaults will be a membrane system to following the contours of the vaults while being reversible and not impacting the historic fabric.

The openings of the vaults will reinstate a painted timber boarded door within the original opening. The original opening will be found by removing the modern white render that covers the blockwork infill to the original vault openings to reveal their original dimensions and shape.

5. Further Design Consideration

5.1 Sustainability

The proposals look to introduce natural light and ventilation into the currently artificially lit and mechanically ventilated parts of the basement. The basement is the quietest, most private and most thermally stable part of the building. Enabling the living space to be within the basement will not only improve the well being of the inhabitants but also reduce the energy requirements for the building.

5.2 Accessibility

No Change to the existing.

5.3 Drainage

RWPs and SVPs will be consolidated within the house with improved alternative routes as shown on the proposed drawings.

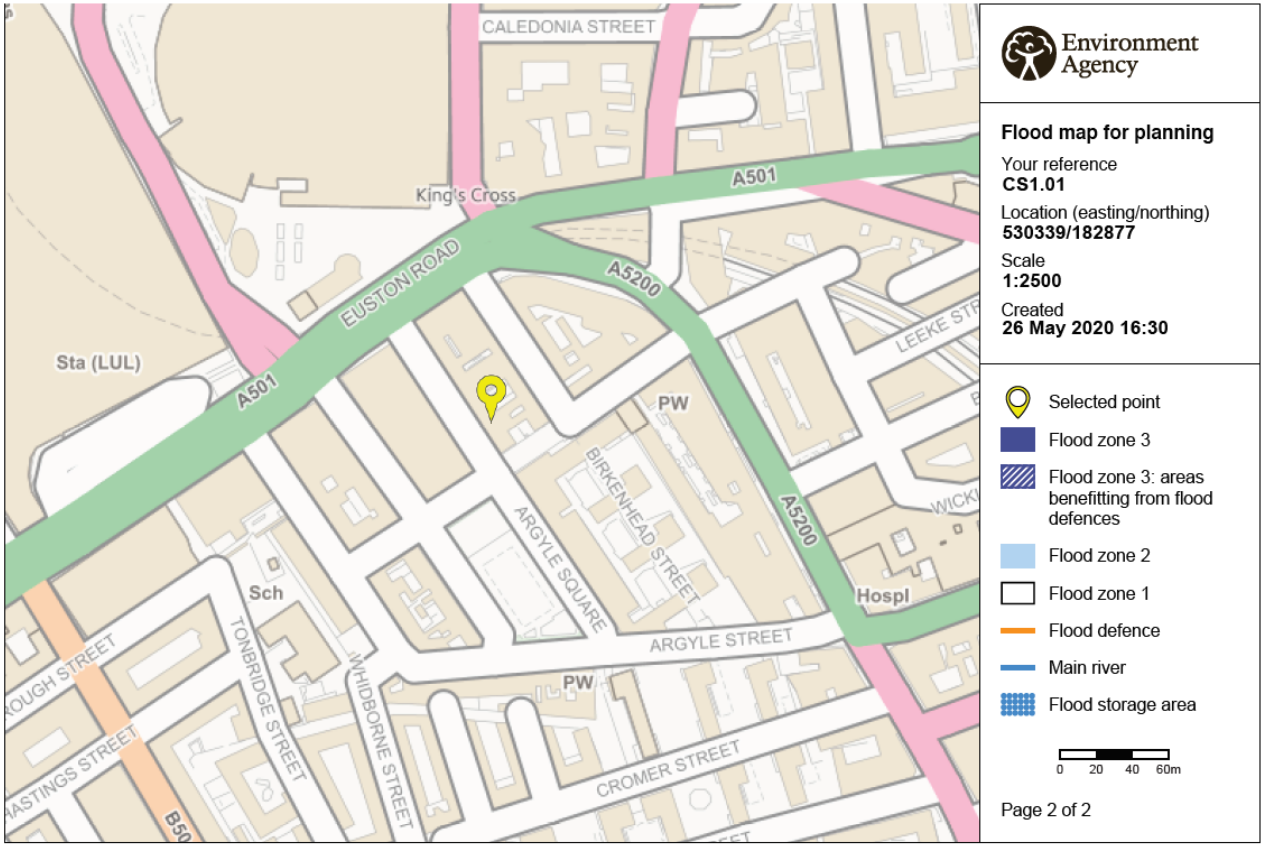
3. Flood Risk Assessment

3.1 Environment Agency

The existing building has been checked against the Flood Risk service provided on-line by the Environment Agency.

The research and report indicates that the building lies in Flood Zone 1.

This means that a flood risk assessment is not needed if the development is smaller than 1 hectare and not affected by other sources of flooding.



6. Justification

Please see Historic Building Report for commentary and justification for the proposals.

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