



EUSTON FIRE STATION REPLACEMENT REAR GATES

Design and Access Statement

Incorporating Heritage Statement

October 2020

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

This report has been written to support the Planning and Listed Building Consent for new motorised rear gates at Euston Fire Station 172 Euston Road London NW1 2DH. The proposed motorised vehicle gates are required to replace manual vehicular gates and a new manual DDA compliant pedestrian gate is proposed.

The site is located on the corner of Euston Road and Euston Square, North West London, in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The existing building is a grade II* listed Edwardian red brick fire station built by the London County Council Architects Department Fire Brigade Section in 1901-2.

2.0 CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 LISTED STATUS

Euston Fire Station is Grade II * Listed (List entry number: 1342074, Date Listed: 14- May-1974)

SUMMARY: Fire Station, 1901-2, by HFT Cooper of the Fire Brigade Branch of the London County Council Architects' Department. Altered and extended circa 1920.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION: Euston Fire Station is designated at Grade II* for the following principal reasons: * It is widely regarded as the masterpiece of a remarkable group of fire stations built by the LCC between 1896-1914, and stands at the summit of achievement of LCC civic architecture of this rich and prolific period; * A highly original interpretation of the Arts and Crafts style, expressed through its dynamic façades and bold, skillful massing, coupled with high-quality materials and detailing; its romantic silhouette is a prominent landmark; * Well preserved externally, with original boundary walls and ironwork.

MATERIALS: Red brick laid in English bond with Portland stone dressings, basement in yellow stock brick; Portland stone ashlar facing at ground and third floors; Slate roofs.

PLAN: L-shaped block with main frontage facing SE to Euston Road behind forecourt. It comprised ground-floor fire station with flats above and a central well stair. A private entrance and stair on SW corner led to the Third Officer's flat on fourth floor. A passage from Euston Square led to a yard and stables in NE corner (demolished). Plan altered c1920 when passage infilled and single-storey extension added to appliance room on SE side. Original appliance bays now converted as reception area, watch room and offices; the extension is now the appliance room.

EXTERIOR: Principally five storeys rising to six, plus attics. Lively Arts and Crafts domestic style with asymmetrical façades, irregular height and massing, projecting square and canted bays, and oriels. Picturesque roofline with deep eaves broken by projecting gabled bays, dormers and tall stacks. Varied fenestration, combining mullioned-and-transomed and narrower two-light vertical windows, and some oculi. Metal casements with leaded lights. Pitched roofs; that to main SE block steeply so. Main (SE) elevation: Ground floor (from E to W) has 2 appliance bays with patterned frieze with 'L.C.C FIRE BRIGADE STATION EUSTON 1902' in bronze lettering, and a round-arched window with keystone. First and second floors each have four flush-framed mullion-and-transom windows; third floor, faced in stone, has narrower windows set in splayed reveals. Fourth floor has three canted stone oriels of three lights with quoined surrounds, that to left rising to a fifth floor with gable above. The elevation terminates in a canted staircase bay of two lights rising to the third floor; top section is more steeply canted with three lights and stone mullions under a circular roof; above this is a gable with oculus and two small rectangular lights below. In the angle of the canted bay and flank of return elevation is a single-storey porch with segmental-arched doorway and slate roofed.

SW elevation to Euston Square is dominated by projecting rectangular right-hand (*S*) bay and canted penultimate left-hand (*N*) bay; the former gabled and the latter hipped with glazed clerestory. Two large mullion-and-transom bay windows at ground-floor level, between which was entrance to the yard, now infilled. Asymmetrically-placed canted oriel rising through third and fourth floors with diagonal balcony linked to *N* projecting bay.

C1920 single-storey extension to E, now the appliance room, is not of special interest. Modern drill tower to the rear is not of special interest.

INTERIOR: Extensively refurbished in the 1990s. Some original features including doors, dado paneling in groundfloor former recreation room, and fireplaces survive, but generally much altered. Stone stair with plain iron balustrade.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: Walls, gate piers and railings to forecourt on SE side and basement area on SW side. Low brick wall with stone copings and stone piers with gambrel-shaped heads. Gate piers to angle of forecourt have inset geometric panels to head; those to basement entrance torpedo-shaped heads. Wrought-iron railings with flattened sections in portcullis design.

2.2 HERITAGE STATEMENT

2.2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGOUND

Euston Fire Station is located on the north side of Euston Road, North West London adjacent to Euston Station. Euston Road runs from Marylebone to Kings Cross and was named after Euston Hall in Suffolk, the family seat of the Dukes of Grafton who owned land in this part of London during the 19th Century.

Until the 18th Century the parish of St Pancras was mostly common land and the only buildings were the old St Pancras Church and two manors, one at Totenhale and one in Camden Town. In 1756 an Act of Parliament authorised the building of New Road, a route from Paddington to Islington, used for driving cattle to Smithfield Market to avoid central London. The central section of this road ran through what is Euston Road today and after Euston Station was opened in 1837 the name of New Road changed to Euston Road. In the 1860's the Metropolitan Railway, from Paddington to Farringdon, was laid beneath Euston Road using the cut and cover method to prevent legal disputes with tunnelling under properties.



Old Photo of Euston Road

Photo of Euston Arch now demolished

The Act of Parliament that allowed the building of the New Road stipulated that no buildings should be built within fifty feet of the road and subsequent development was wholly residential with long gardens in front of houses. A block of houses opposite St Pancras Church were built during this period of development but were later demolished to make way for Euston Fire Station in 1901.

The first fire brigades emerged after the Great Fire of London in 1666 as a means of insurers limiting damage to property and therefore their risk. Each insurer maintained their own brigade and their services were only offered to those businesses and households that subscribed and paid for these services. Evidence of subscription was a fire mark placed on the front of the building for the insured brigade to recognise. These subscriptions continued until 1865 when an Act of Parliament granted the Metropolitan Board of Works public funds to establish the Metropolitan Fire Brigade to save lives and protect buildings from fire.





Lee Fire Station 1906



Bromley By Bow Fire Station 1909-11

Tooting Fire Station 1907



Southwark Fire Station 1911

The first fire stations were constructed in plain brick, but few examples survive from this period. By the 1890s the fire brigade had been amalgamated into the London County Council with the design of fire stations carried out by the architectural department Fire Brigade Division under Robert Pearsall. The architects of the London County Council used experimental methods and a variety of influences especially the ideas of Philip Webb and the Arts and Craft Movement to create unique and bespoke fire stations around London.

Euston Fire Station was built in 1901-2 and was the headquarters of the North Division of the London Fire Brigade. The decision to house fire officers on site was the invention of Captain Eyre Massey Shaw. He insisted that officers should live on site and that fire stations should be designed to facilitate this. Domestic accommodation at Euston Fire Station was provided for fire staff on the first floor and for the third officer on the fourth floor accessed via a private stair at the corner of the Euston Road and Euston Square.



Euston Fire Station through the years

Euston Fire Station remained relatively unaltered until the 1920's when a single storey extension was built to the east of the main building on Euston Road to house three appliances.

2.2.2 EXISTING BUILDING

Euston Fire station is L shape in plan with the principal elevation, a five to six storey building, on Euston Road and the subservient elevation on Euston Square. The building is arranged over five to six storeys with appliances bays, reception, and watch room on the ground floor and offices, dormitories and recreation rooms on the floors above. The main staircase is positioned centrally and a second stair is accessed from the south west corner and leads diectly to the fourth floor.

The building is constructed in red brick with portland stone to the ground and third floor and the façade is designed in an Arts and Crafts domestic style. The facades are assymetrical with irregular height and massing with projecting square and canted bays. The roofline is a romantic arrangement of steep slate roofs, deep eaves, dormers, gables and high chimneys.



Views of the Euston Square Façade, Euston Road Façade and Gate Pier

The fenestration to the upper levels is varied and combines mullioned and transomed windows, narrower vertical windows, canted and doubled stone oriel windows and some oculi. On the Ground Floor the façade is treated differently from the building above and the importance of the appliance bays and pedestrian entance are implied with the change of facing material to Portland stone.

On the front façade the two original applicance bays are separated by stone piers with a portcullis lintel detail and the lettering 'L.C.C.FIRE BRIGADE STATION EUSTON 1902'. To the left of this is a large arched window, a canted bay with single windows and a single storey entrance to the private stair with small windows and a slate roof. To the right of the original appliance bays is a single storey extension built in the 1920's with a slate roof that houses the three current appliance bays.

The façade to Euston Square is dominated by the left hand projecting rectangular bay, double height stone canted bay to the third and fourth floors and diagonal balcony between. At roof level the projecting canted bay results in a deep eaves detail that provides shelter to the balcony. The adjacent rectangular bay terminates far above this roof with a series of clerestorey windows. At ground level two distinctive mullion and transom bay windows sit either side of the previous entrance to the rear yard. This has since been infilled with a large depressed arch window but the gate post and gates remain. To the far right hand side is the entrance to the private staircase to the fourth floor. This stone porch has a segmented arched doorway and an arts and crafts period slate roof.

The original stone walls, stone gate piers and railings survive to the front and side of Euston Fire Station. The gatepiers to the front corner of Euston Road and Euston Square have an inset geometric pattern to the head and lanterns that read 'FIRE' and protrude from the top of the stone piers marking out the activity of this building. These gatepiers are the exit for appliances leaving the station and are more elaborate as a result. The other stone gate piers on Euston Road and intermediate stone piers are secondary to the corner gate and are have been designed in a more modest gambrel shape. The wrought iron railings that span between these piers have been designed in a portcullis design with spikes on the top and bottom rail.

The rear yard to Euston Fire station is enclosed with a set of modern black powder coated metal gates and railings and a low red brick dwarf wall. The railings and gates are supported by black powder coated square metal piers that sit between sections of the dwarf wall and behind the wall at the junction of the vehicular gates. The railings are arranged so that they are positioned on the centre of the brickwall. The double swing vehicle gates are recessed and open manually taking time and space in the yard. The This dwarf wall is constructed in a plain red brick that is sympathetic with the rear wall of the building on the corner of Euston Square. These recent additions to the fire station are functional but of no historic interest.

2.2.3 DESCRIPTION OF SIGNIFICANCE

The key significance of Euston Fire Station is that it is considered as a masterpiece of a series of fire stations that were designed by the London County Council between 1896 and 1914. The designs of these fire stations were bespoke and greatly admired as an accomplished example of civic architecture.

Although similar to fire stations such as Southwark, Tooting and Bromley By Bow that were designed in the Arts and Crafts style, Euston stands out because it is a highly original interpretation of the Arts and Crafts style and the design skilfully marries asymmetrical facades, massing, high quality materials and detailing.

2.2.4 PROPOSAL

The client wishes to replace the existing manual vehicular gates to the rear yard of Euston Fire Station. The proposed motorised vehicular gates and new manual pedestrian gate will be galvanised black powder coated galvanised steel to replicate the existing. The pedestrian gate is required as it is a safer form of access which separates pedestrians from vehicles and a manual gate will not close on an individual whereas the proposed motorised vehicle gate will automatically close after a set period of seconds. The proposal includes a galvanised black powder coated steel guardrail that separates pedestrians from the swing of the vehicle gate.

Installing the motorised gates will involve the excavation and re-laying of a trench between the proposed gate posts to run cabling ductwork. This trench will be infilled with reinforced concrete so a difference in colour will be visible due to the new concrete. The yard adjacent to the boundary wall has a sharp gradient and will be regraded to allow for a level footpath to the pedestrian gate allowing for DDA access.

The proposed vehicle and pedestrian gates will be released from inside the yard via exit push buttons on a standalone powder coated black galvanised 1000mm high steel post. This post will be located to the left of the pedestrian gate half-way along the proposed retaining wall. This wall will be constructed of three courses of red brickwork to match the existing with a 1100mm high black powder coated galvanised steel handrail above.

Entry from outside the yard will be via keypads on the vehicle and pedestrian gate posts that will be connected to the Station Managers Office, Watch Room, Counselling and Wellbeing Offices. Power for these gates will be via a new black pvc armoured cable that will run at low-level along the dwarf wall then along the perimeter wall and will enter the existing appliance bay at high level. Once inside the fire station, this cable will run within ceiling voids and services trunking routes where possible. On the ground floor the cable will drop from the ceiling in an armoured cable fixed to the wall to the audio door entry handset. The cable will also run surface mounted to ceiling/wall at high level in both staircases to the basement and fourth floor offices as shown in the electrical services layout drawing EBS2050-EU/2.

2.2.5 IMPACT OF PROPOSAL

The installation of the new motorised vehicular gates and new manual pedestrian gate is deemed not to be a deviation from the overall appearance at the rear of Euston Fire Station. The new vehicular gates will the same colour and size as the existing and the pedestrian gate and adjoining full height railing are in keeping with the existing gates and railings.

The proposed motorised vehicular gate will be a motorised bi-fold type and only take up the space between the gate posts, unlike a sliding gate which would need a much greater footprint as it slides open. The leaves of the gate will fold into themselves and back either side of the opening. In this way the vehicular gates will take up only a small footprint. This gate will have a small amber light located on the top of one of the gate posts that flashes when the gate operates to alert drivers.

On the surface of the yard an induction loop will be installed to allow vehicles to exit the gates without having to manually press a pad and thermoplastic white Stop signage will be marked out.

The installation of the pedestrian gate will require the removal of the low-level brickwork and railings to the right-hand side of the existing gates. The existing metal railings and dwarf brick wall are of limited character and the installation of the new pedestrian gate and railing to match the design of the existing metal boundary is deemed to improve the character of the rear entrance to Euston Fire Station yard. The design of these gates and railings is in keeping with the minimal design of the existing gates and railings and will not look out of place as seen from Grafton Place.

2.3 BLOOMSBURY CONSERVATION AREA

Bloomsbury Conservation Area covers an area of approximately 160 hectares extending from Euston Road in the North to High Holborn and Lincoln's Inn Fields in the South and from Tottenham Court Road in the West to King's Road in the East.

Bloomsbury is considered to be an internationally significant example of town planning. The original street layouts, which employed the concept of formal landscaped squares and interrelated grid of streets to create an attractive residential environment remain a dominant characteristic of the area.

The buildings along the Euston Road within the Conservation Area are generally four to five storeys in height. Notable buildings along the Euston Road include the Greek Revival Church of St Pancras (Listed Grade I) which is an important landmark at the junction of Euston Road and Upper Wolburn Place. The distinctive tiered tower, the caryatids holding up the Portico, and the trees in the churchyard are important elements in views along Euston Road. On the north side of the road, the five-storey red brick and Portland Stone Euston Fire Station (listed Grade II*) is the remaining indication of the former smaller domestic scale of the earlier buildings surrounding Euston Square.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

2019/1109/L Listed Building Consent for the installation of an electric car charging point.

2019/0681/P Full planning permission for the installation of an electric car charging point.

2015/3918/L Listed Building Consent for Form new 900mm wide openings in walls between Circulation spaces 04-003 and 04-007, and between Office 1 (04-010) and Office 2 (04-017) and supply and install pair of precast concrete lintels (F30.85A). Make good all surrounds with plaster (M20.47) ready for painting.

2014/5903/L Listed Building Consent for erection of internal walls in shower area following demolition.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

This application highlights national and local planning policy relevant to the replacement of the rear yard gates and the new rear pedestrian entrance to Euston Fire Station.

4.1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 127a: Achieving Well Designed Places

Planning Policies and decisions should ensure that development 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.

National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 127c: Achieving Well Designed Places

Planning Policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 200: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset should be treated favourably.

4.2 LONDON PLAN 2011

London Plan Paragraph 7.8 : Heritage Assets and Archaeology

Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural details.

4.3 CAMDEN COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN: 2017

Camden Council Local Plan : Paragraph 7.43 Enhancing the historic environment

The Council recognises that development can make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, heritage assets and will encourage this where appropriate.

5.0 COMPLIANCE WITH RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

Items 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 above highlight the relevant planning policies in this case. The proposals as described in item 2.2.5 above describe a design solution which is sympathetic to the existing materials, scale and colour. By virtue of the materials, scale and design of the proposed gates we consider that the requirements of national and local planning policies have been met.

6.0 ACCESS AND LANDSCAPING

The replacement of manual swing to bi-fold motorised gates will not affect the current vehicle access. The new pedestrian gate will be fully compliant with DDA access requirements and will be fitted with intercom control with electronic release to allow access. There is currently no segregated pedestrian access.

The existing hard landscaping to Euston Fire Station will alter slightly adjacent to the location of the proposed pedestrian gate. At present there is a sharp gradient from the location of the proposed gate to the boundary wall. The ground level will be regraded and a new retaining wall added to allow a level footpath to the gate.

7.0 LAYOUT AND SCALE

The scale and layout of Euston Fire Station will not change as part of this application.

8.0 APPEARANCE AND CONTEXT

The appearance of the new gates is informed by the existing vehicle opening and railings and the need for a new pedestrian access. The new motorised vehicular gates will be black bi-fold powder coated metal to allow a fast entrance and exit. The pedestrian gate and new side railings will also be black powder coated metal to match the existing. Entry for both gates will be via wall mounted keypads with swipe card readers for authorised personnel and a phone system for visitor access. A ground induction loop will be installed to allow vehicles to exit quickly and a stop sign will be painted in front of the gates to prevent collisions.



Existing Gate from Grafton Place

Existing railings and low wall

Existing railings and gate



Proposed motorised gates with stop sign

Proposed Keypad

Proposed Pedestrian Gate and railings

The installation of the separate pedestrian gate and side railings will require the removal of the existing low brickwork wall and black powder coated metal railings on that side of the yard but pedestrian access will be improved and separated from vehicles by a new guardrail. Power to the new gates will be delivered by means of an armoured cable mounted on the perimeter wall as shown on the electrical drawings and photos below. The proposed cable will run beside the existing cables at lower level on the flank brick wall and at higher level above the windows on the single storey rear painted brickwork addition. These cables will enter the existing appliance bay at high level and once inside the fire station, these cables will run within ceiling voids and services trunking routes where possible.



Existing cables running along the perimeter wall to the rear addition and the flank wall

9.0 CONCLUSION

This statement supports the accompanying application which proposes to sympathetically replace the rear yard metal gates and provide a new pedestrian gate to Euston Fire Station a Grade II* Listed building. The proposal is informed by the relevant planning policies and guidance and proposes a simple high-quality solution in this context.