7-11 HERBRAND STREET, CAMDEN

HERITAGE STATEMENT

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Montagu Evans is instructed by LabTech Investments Ltd (the 'Applicant') to provide heritage consultancy for proposals at 7-11 Herbrand Street, Camden (the 'Site'). The building was constructed for Daimler and has a particularly attractive Art Deco design by Wallis, Gilbert and Partners. It is statutorily listed at Grade II. The Site is also located in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

1.2 The Applicant seeks to install reeded glass to the windows on the rear (north, west and south) elevations of the building. The reeded glass would be in lieu of light-scoop window blinds, which were consented under applications PS9804711R1 and L9804813R1. The light-scoop window blinds were a requirement as part of the overarching planning permission to convert the building to office use and were intended to protect the amenity of residents in the adjacent properties, namely Russell Court.

1.3 The purpose of this Heritage Statement is to outline the heritage significance of the listed building and the impact of the proposed development upon that significance.

2.0 PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 A review of the planning history for the Site confirms that consent was granted in 1998 for the change of use to "*offices with a sports health club at part ground and part basement floor levels, together with works of conversion and the erection of a roof extension to accommodate two self-contained residential flats*" (app ref: PS9704201R2 and LS9704202R2). The repair and replacement of the existing glazing to the side and rear elevations of the building was granted under the same consent.

2.2 The detail of the windows was to be provided through condition (subsequently submitted under ref: PS9804711R1 and L9804813R1); this was conditioned was to "*safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building*". The detailed drawing of the replacement windows shows "*renewed crittalll windows*" which are characteristic of the period.

2.3 The drawing also shows "light-scoop blinds" that restrict views out of the building, but which allow light to be refracted up to the ceiling. Condition 4 of the permission stated that these shall be "*implemented and permanently retained as such*". The reasoning for this is stated as "*to protect the privacy of the occupiers of nearby residential premises*".

3.0 FORMER DAIMLER GARAGE: HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

CREATION, 1930S

3.1 The building was created in 1931 for Daimler Hire Limited, a garage for Daimler's hire company. This company provided luxury chauffeur-driven Daimler limousine-hire-service in central London. Daimler Hire was originally a subsidiary company of The Daimler Company Limited. By 1930 the majority of the shares of Daimler Hire was held by Thomas Tiling Ltd.

3.2 Daimler's hire department was created in 1907: at this time a small number of Daimler employees were trained in driving and car maintenance so that the cars could be hired for £5 per week. The initial intention was that the cars and drivers could be used by Daimler owners when their cars needed servicing. The services of the department soon extended to wealthy Londoners who did not want to keep their own car and driver and preferred a hire service. This reflected a general trend of the 1930s and 40s in which the wealthy preferred to be driven in luxury cars rather than owning their own vehicle.

3.3 In 1919 the hire department was transferred to the official Daimler Hire company and 250 new cars were added to the operation. By the 1920s the company was one of the most successful luxury car-hire services in London and in 1923 it was awarded a Royal Warrant.

Figure 1 Image from a magazine article advertising Daimler Hire service, c.1971

Figure 2 Daimler Hire tariff lists for 1970 and 1970

3.4 Being such a prestigious company, and aware of the need to maintain a certain image through their premises, Daimler Hire commissioned a new building in Bloomsbury, central London. This garage was designed as a place in which their fleet of vehicles could be stored and maintained. Other comparable companies and car manufacturers created similar showrooms and garages in the early 20th century (for example Minerva, North Crescent, Camden, 1912-13, listed Grade II and Daimler, Paradise Street, Birmingham, 1911). The external appearance of this relatively new building type was given careful thought in this period, with architects being tasked with creating buildings that would reflect the prestige of the company and their product.

3.5 The first multi-storey car parks in Britain were built in the early 20th century. More were built as the motor vehicle grew in popularity and became more affordable. Very early examples were often located near theatres and used lifts to move cars between levels. In the 1920s ramps on which vehicles could drive in order to reach different levels were introduced in order to provide additional levels to accommodate a greater number of cars: this became a standard feature of the design of later multi-storey carparks. The first split-level parking garage (or ‘staggered floors’) was created at the Poland Street Garage in 1922-25 by W. Gibbings (not listed). Examples of listed multi-storey car parks include Brewer Street in Soho. Other examples of early garages still surviving today include In Cumberland Garage at Marble Arch of 1934 designed by Sir Owen Williams (not listed). The Olympia Garage in Kensington of 1936-7 by Joseph Emberton. Many of these garages contained a generous number of facilities, for example attendants, colour coded floors and ticketing, floors warmed with hot-water pipes in winter, automatic sprinkler systems, escape stairs and fire doors.

3.6 Early examples of multi-storey car parks were often designed in a Classical style; by the 1920s and 30s designs in modern styles such as the art deco became popular. The quality of the architectural execution will frequently contribute to the interest of a building of this type, as will the level of technical novelty and intactness.

Figure 3 Daimler Garage, main frontage, c. 1970s

Figure 4 Former Daimler Garage, c. early 20th century

WALLIS, GILBERT AND PARTNERS

3.7 The building was designed by Wallis, Gilbert and Partners. This architectural practice was established in 1916 by Thomas Walls (1873-1953). Wallis had worked for Sidney Smith (1858-1913) and also in the Office of Works with Sir Frank Baines (1877-1933). Wallis was joined by other architects as partners, including James Warne, Harry Beken, Frederick Button, Douglas Wallis (1901–1968), Frank Cox, Sidney Elliott, Agbolahan Adesegun (1935–2008) and J. W. MacGregor (d. 1994). The company worked closely with US firm Trussed Concrete Steel Ltd (Truscon) to produce a series of factories in the 1920s and 30s (including at Brentford for Pyrene, Firestone, Coty and others). The firm came to be well known for their competent design of factory buildings: their most famous work is the Hoover Factory building and canteen in West London. The firm also designed bus stations, schools, warehouses and garages. Other notable examples of buildings in their signature art deco style include Victoria Coach Station, the Tilling-Stevens Factory (Maidstone), the General Electrical Company Witton Works (Birmingham), the Pyrene Building (Brentford), and the Richard Klinger Factory (Sidcup). The firm also occasionally designed country houses, for example, Limber and Ripley Grange at Loughton. Wallis, Gilbert and Partners was dissolved in 1945.

FORM AND CONSTRUCTION

3.8 The style chosen for the garage was the Art Deco. This style in art and design was popular from the mid-1920s until just before World War Two. It encompassed a wide variety of forms of artistic expression in addition to architecture, including furniture, textiles, ceramic and sculpture. The term ‘Arts Decoratifs’ (later shortened to Art Deco in the 1960s) was coined after the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriel Modernes (International Exhibition of Modern and Industrial Decorative Arts) held in Paris in 1925. It was a decorative style of bold geometric shapes and bright colours, sleek and sophisticated, it featuring smooth surfaces and bold colours in high contrasts (like black and white). The style celebrated the modern world and industry: artists, designers and architects who wanted to create a modern style for a modern age and they purposely avoided echoes of past styles.

3.9 The Art Deco style spread across Europe and was also very popular in the United States. In Britain it was frequently chosen for building types associated with the modern age: garages, airports, ocean liners, cinemas, swimming pools, office buildings, department stores, power stations and factories.

3.10 Art Deco overlapped with Modernism, with the use of clean lines and minimal decoration. The style of the former Daimler Garage also owed much to the Streamline Moderne style. This style grew out of Art Deco: a more pared-down version that removed excess ornamentation and reflected the clean lines of machine-age engineering. Buildings executed in the Streamline Moderne style tended to be asymmetrical with flat roofs. Modern metals like aluminium, stainless steel and chrome were often used around doors and windows (other modern materials in use included glass block and plate glass).

3.11 The building had to function as a garage to accommodate cars, but this functional interior was married with a stylish form. Wallis, Gilbert and Partners devised curving helical ramp at the front corner of the building, which served a series of reinforced concrete decks, providing parking for the Daimler fleet. It is this spiralling ramp that gives the building its unique appearance, the curved walls reflecting the ramp inside and the window line rising as the ramp spirals upwards, forming dramatic ribbons of glass that follow the form of the building. The ramp was originally the main entrance to the garage for cars, providing access to the upper

floors. It was one of the earliest of its type. Today this entrance is closed off with a large window and revolving door entrance and 'McCann' lettering above.

Figure 5 Former Daimler Garage, main frontage, c. 1990s

3.12 Plans of the proposed building were sent to the London County Council for approval in 1930. Copies of these plans are included in Appendix One. The proposals were accompanied by a letter of introduction to the project, stating that the building would be:

> *[u]sed as a garage for cars owned by Daimler Hire Ltd, except on the basement floor, which will be a public garage. Offices, cloakrooms, stores, etc will be placed on the various floors for administrative purposes. Access to the various floors for cars will be by means of ramps, staircases being provided for the staff."*[1]

3.13 The building is of four storeys, with basement level. The first and second floors were parking levels, displaying Daimler Hire's impressive fleet of cars. The basement of the building acted as a servicing area (as well as a waiting-room, attendant's office and toilets). The ground floor was employed as office space. The frontage of the building was recessed in order to accommodate petrol pumps. Each floor had an electrically operated pressure washing plant for the cars.

[1] Correspondence: Wallis, Gilbert and Partners to London County Council, 2 October 1930, London Metropolitan Archives, Building Act Case File, GLC/AR/BR/22/BA/020753.

3.14 To the left of the spiralling ramp is the main block, with a central stairwell and lift core (giving pedestrians access to the building). This central core has a narrow, continuous vertical window intended to omit light in to the space.

3.15 To the left of the central stairwell the building extends for two bays, at this point a projecting block extends forward, this contains the down-ramp to the basement. This block extends further to the left for three bays and at the far right side is a four-storey stairwell core, with a narrow window. This block is stepped in height, with only the final two bays rising to three storeys. There is an entrance below the stairwell at a ground floor level, also with a tiled, recessed doorway featuring a double chevron faience pattern above.

Figure 6 Former Daimler Garage, main frontage, left ground floor entrance, c.2007

Figure 7 Former Daimler Garage, interior staircase, c.2007

Figure 8 Former Dailmler Garage, main frontage, main entrance doorway, c.2007

3.16 The building was constructed with reinforced concrete, which was infilled with brick and then rendered to create the smooth surfaces and lines distinctive of the art deco style.[2] Each of the storeys has transom metal-framed windows, these form distinctive horizontal bands and are painted green. The piers between each window are set with horizontal channels, mirroring those in the windows. The staircase entrance also has art deco ornamentation with a transom central door and green tiles either side. The green and black faience tile surrounds of the central tower window is also part of this aesthetic.

[2] Correspondence, Wallis, Gilbert and Partners to London County Council, 2 October 1930, London Metropolitan Archives, Building Act Case File, GLC/AR/BR/22/BA/020753.

Figure 7 Former Daimler Garage main frontage, central window, c.2007

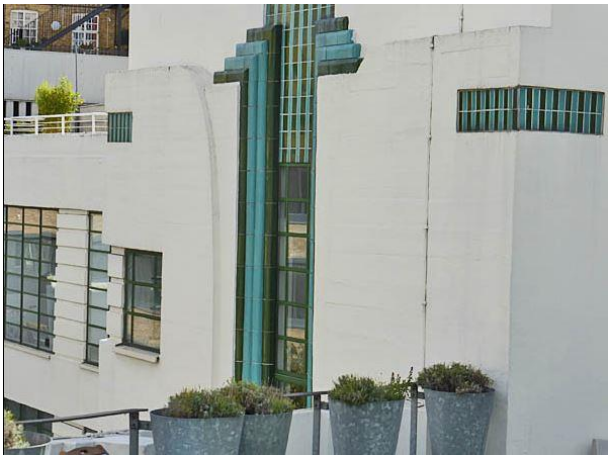

Figure 8 Former Daimler Garage main frontage, central window, c.2007

CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP, 1940 AND 50S

3.17 According to some correspondence preserved in the London Metropolitan Archives, the London Fire Brigade wrote to the Superintending Architect at the London Country Council on 11 March 1941 to inform them that during a recent inspection, the Daimler Garage was found to be occupied by the War Office.

3.18 In 1949 the remaining shares of Daimler Hire Ltd in the possession of The Daimler Company Limited were sold to Thomas Tiling Ltd and in 1958 Daimler Hire Ltd was sold to Hertz. Daimler Hire finally ceased to operate in 1976.

3.19 Once Daimler had vacated the building the upper floors were employed as a parking garage for the London Taxi Centre. The building provided taxi drivers with toilets, a café, car wash and a second-hand taxi sales service.

3.20 The lower floors and basement were occupied by the sightseeing coach company Frames Rickard. This company was formed with the merging of Charles Rickards (Tours) Limited and Frames Tours Limited in the 1960s. The former Daimler garage was referred to as the Hebrand Street Coach Station by the company, who stored and serviced their fleet of coaches here until the 1990s.

3.21 In 1979 an application was approved by Camden Council for the erection of a second floor extension to provide additional toilet accommodation (Camden Planning Department, 29032R, 20 August 1979). The application plans are reproduced in appendix 1.

Figure 9 Former Daimler Garage main frontage, c.1970s

Figure 12 Former Daimler Garage main frontage, c.1970s

Figure 13 Former Daimler Garage main frontage, c. 1970s

3.22 The building was awarded Grade II listed status on 9 March 1982. It was one of the first garages to be listed and is considered an important example of commercial architecture in the Modernist style.

3.23 The significance of the former Frames Coach Station and London Borough of Camden Car Park lies primarily in the quality of its architectural design and Modernist exterior character. The historical association with Wallis, Gilbert and Partner also contributes to the special interest of the building.

2000 ONWARDS, CONVERSION TO OFFICES

3.24 By 1998 the building had been acquired by advertising agency McCann London. Conservation and restoration work was undertaken to remodel the interior of the building into office space. Permission was granted in 1997 to add a fourth floor to the main part of the building in order to provide additional accommodation. The reception area was placed in a large 15 metre atrium with glass roof. The basement level was made accessible and is now a staff canteen and audio-visual studio. A roof terrace was created between the third and fourth floors, now used for meetings and events.

3.25 It is understood that as part of this consent Crittall designed the glazing and steel frame windows which were installed by Anglia Fixing Ltd in 2000. The design aimed to match the aesthetics of the 1931 windows.

3.26 Plans of 1997 are presented in Appendix 2. The application proposed the change of use of the building from a vehicle park (with ancillary washing, repair, canteen and office facilities, with a private coach garage and terminus for coach tours at basement level) to offices with a sports and health club at part ground and part basement floor levels. The application also included works of conversion and the erection of a roof extension to accommodate “two self-contained residential flats” (Camden Planning Department, LS9704202R2 and PS9704201R2, 06-08-1997, granted 25-03-1998).

3.27 In 1999 an additional application was approved to enlarge the fifth floor roof extension and to construct a glazed screen at roof level, as well as the provision of external fenestration within existing openings at ground floor level (Camden Planning Department, PS9905055, 19 October 1999, granted 20 March 2000). Plans for this application are reproduced in Appendix 4.

Figure 10 Former Daimler Garage, main frontage, c.2007

Figure 11 Former Daimler Garage, main frontage, c.2007

Figure 12 Former Daimler Garage, inside atrium, c.2007

Figure 13 Former Daimler Garage, c.2015

4.0 LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, if regard is to be had to the Development Plan applicable to the site for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Relevant documents of the statutory development plan is identified for this assessment as follows:

- London Plan (2016);
- Camden Local Plan (2017); and
- Adopted Policies Map (2017).

4.2 Policy D1 (Design) and Policy D2 (Heritage) of the Local Plan relate to heritage and design.

4.3 The Development Plan is supplemented by guidance, including the Camden Planning Guidance: Design (2019).

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

4.4 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the statutory provisions at sections 16 and 72.

Section 16(2) states:

In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or 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.

Section 72(1) states:

In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

NATIONAL POLICY

4.5 At the national level, the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).

4.6 Chapter 16 of the NPPF sets out the Government's policies relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. In determining planning applications, Paragraph 189 specifies 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."

4.7 Significance' (for heritage policy) is defined in the NPPF (Annex 2) 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."

4.8 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.

4.9 The great importance and weight is consistent with the provisions set out under Section 16(2) and 72(1) of the 1990 Act.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATION

4.10 In addition to legislation and policy, the assessment will take into consideration relevant planning guidance and any material considerations, including:

- National Planning Practice Guidance (online);
- Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015);
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017); and
- Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (2018).

5.0 ASSESSMENT

5.1 The proposals comprise the installation of reeded glass to the windows on the rear (north, west and south) elevations of the building.

5.2 Crittall designed the new glazing and steel frame which was installed by Anglia Fixing Ltd in 2000 under application references PS9704201R2 and LS9704202R2. The replacement windows were designed 'like-for-like' to the original in order to maintain the special architectural interest of the building.

5.3 The existing window openings and Crittall steel frame are to be retained by the proposed development. The proposals comprise the removal of the glazing only, including replacement of the existing secondary pane of glazing to the interior with a reeded pane. This would negate the requirement for a light-scoop window blind as submitted and consented under applications PS9804711R1 and L9804813R1.

5.4 Alternative window treatments are often a contentious issue where they have the potential to impact the special architectural interest of a listed building. There are differing approaches to ensuring the design response is sensitive to the special interest of the building. Considerations regarding the special interest of the existing window may include the materials used, their manufacturing process and their external and internal appearance.

5.5 With regard to steel framed windows originating at the start of the Twentieth Century, Historic England guidance [3] states that:

> *After the First World War firms such as W F Crittall revolutionised the worldwide use of the metal casement. Crittall was responsible for the development of the 'universal suite' of hot-rolled steel sections that formed the basis of what we now regard as the classic metal windows of the I920s and 30s. Residential windows were produced to standard sections known as the 'F-range', first introduced around 1914, and to modular imperial dimensions in a wide variety of designs. Widely used by the pioneering architects of the Modern Movement, these windows were in keeping with the new vogue for healthy, outdoor living that swept Europe in the I920s and I930s. Steel windows were strong, slim, cheap, and fire-resistant, factors that made them highly competitive with traditional softwood sashes. Since steel casements could open wider than traditional wooden sashes, they were preferred in buildings in which plenty of fresh air and light was suddenly a major priority.*

5.6 It is thus the technological advances of the steel casement – allowing a wider opening than timber sashes – that was innovative at the time. In addition, the steel was "*strong, slim, cheap, and fire-resistant".* The glazing within the casement was relatively standardised. In time, the appearance of the windows was also recognised and became synonymous with the Modern Movement.

5.7 In this instance, the potential impact of the intervention to the heritage significance of the listed building must only arise from a change to the external or internal appearance of the building. Mindful of this, it is our judgement that – having consented to replace the windows like-for-like – the proposals represent a heritage betterment over the light-scoop window blinds submitted and consented under applications PS9804711R1 and L9804813R1 by virtue of improving the internal appearance of the building, whilst also satisfying

[3] *Historic England (2017) Traditional Windows: Their Care, Repair and Upgrading*

residential amenity requirements. Equally, relative to the applied film treatment, the interior spaces of the building would benefit from natural daylight and an improved atmosphere.

5.8 To the exterior, the double glazed windows will comprise a clear pane of glass, which will ensure the visual expression of the building is maintained. The external appearance of the building and its Art Deco style would be preserved. Again, relative to the light-scoop window blinds submitted and consented under applications PS9804711R1 and L9804813R1 or the alternative film strategy, the external appearance of the building is likely to be enhanced.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 Our assessment finds that the proposed development comprises a pragmatic and sensitive adaptation to an already altered part of the listed building. It forms the first part of a wider programme of sensitive interventions to secure its long-term conservation through making it fit-for-purpose to future occupiers.

6.2 The proposals would maintain the special architectural and historic interest of the building. As a consequence they satisfy the criteria set out at policies D1 (Design) and Policy D2 (Heritage) of the Camden Local Plan and 7.8 (Heritage) of the London Plan. It satisfies the statutory provisions of Sections 16 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.