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—ARCHITECTS LLP—

SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM
13 LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS
STUDENTS' ROOM PROJECT

Planning Statement

Alterations to the Colonnade



November 2020

INTRODUCTION

This document is the Planning Statement that forms part of the Listed Building Consent application for minor internal works to the Colonnade of Sir John Soane's Museum, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields.

The Colonnade forms part of the rear area of the museum and is situated at ground floor level directly to the east of the Dome Area. The Colonnade structure partly supports the Students' Room which is a small mezzanine within the main body of the museum. It is proposed that these works are undertaken as part of the upper Drawing Office / Students' Room Project. The reasons and justifications for carrying out this work to the Colonnade is so that this area can be returned to how it was left by Sir John Soane. The proposals involve reversing some of the later curators' modifications and reinstating Soane's arrangement of furniture and artefacts.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Statement, which provides a more detailed analysis of the historical developments in this area, establishes a statement of significance and provides a heritage impact assessment of the proposals, justifying the interventions and establishing their affect on the significance.

The items in this planning statement include all the proposed modifications to the fabric and new elements of construction.

The proposed modifications to the interior of the building include:

1.1 Basement Stairs (north east corner of the Colonnade): Alterations to narrow the stairs and reinstate the splayed linings at the landing. All works will recreate Soane's 1837 arrangement;

1.2 Colonnade (Head of Basement Stairs): Installation of a new stained glass screen (incorporating historic pieces of stained glass and new coloured glass);

- 1.3 Colonnade: Minor repositioning of 6no. timber columns to reinstate Soane's 1837 arrangement;
- 1.4 Colonnade: Modification to 2no. square timber columns to recreate the pair of triangular columns that existed in 1837; and
- 1.5 Cupboard 100 (South side of Colonnade): Reinstated glazed door (incorporating historic pieces of stained glass and new coloured glass).

These proposals have been developed based on extensive archive research culminating in the Deputy Director's historic report on these areas "Students' Room, Research Project, Helen Dorey 2020 v.1" which can be made available to the Local Authority upon request. The proposals would return the Colonnade to its appearance in 1837 (the date of Sir John Soane's death - *The 1833 Act of Parliament state that the building should be preserved as nearly as possible as they were left by Soane*).

The proposals are shown on the Julian Harrap Architects LLP survey and proposed drawings identified on the Drawing Register Sheet at the back of this report.

The proposals in this project align with Camden's Local Plan 2017, in relation to Policy D1b "to preserve or enhance the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage". The works will return the building closer to the final design of Sir John Soane and will allow the museum to display museum objects, including historic stained glass subjects and pieces of furniture in their original locations.

CONTEXT

Sir John Soane's Museum was the house, studio and museum of Sir John Soane (1753 - 1837), one of England's most eminent architects of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The house at No. 13 and its adjoining neighbour (No. 12) were completely remodelled by Soane to display his ever growing collection of sculpture, architectural fragments and paintings. Towards the end of his life, Soane succeeded in having an Act of Parliament passed under which he would gift the houses and his collection to the nation with the proviso that it would be protected as close as possible to the time of his death (1837). Despite this covenant, alterations were made to the building, most radically by the Curator, James Wild, at the end of the 19th century. The works to the Colonnade seek to undo works carried out by Wild in 1892 and return the presentation of the Colonnade to Soane's arrangement of 1837. For supporting historical evidence for these alterations, please also see Deputy Director report "Students' Room, Research Project, Helen Dorey 2020 v.1".

DESIGN PARAMETERS

The aim of these proposals is to restore the Museum to how it would have been experienced in Soane's time. In the late nineteenth century, it was felt that the passageway between the columns and the narrowness of the Basement Staircase restricted access to the visiting public. The Basement Stairs were reconstructed to facilitate a wider passage and the columns at the eastern end of the Colonnade, simply moved apart. In doing so, Wild displaced the folio cabinets that Soane had positioned against the east wall of the Colonnade and the museum objects that hung above them. Similarly, the door and lobbies to the Dressing Room were modified. The Study and Dressing Room doorways and passages were reinstated to their original proportions in restoration works carried out in 1992. The stained glass was re-configured by James Wild in the late nineteenth century, who had a campaign of reorganizing the collection. The screen at the top of the Basement Stairs was removed and the glass displayed in other areas of the Museum. The Colonnade is an exceptionally important public space in the heart of the Museum, other than these alterations, it largely survives unaltered from Soane times. The alterations proposed in this listed building consent application, the repositioning of the historic folio cabinets and museum objects on the east wall will return the Colonnade to how it would have been in 1837.

The alterations will narrow one route within one small area of the building but critically it will not effect the existing strategy for accessibility to the ground floor of the building. The accessible route via the internal passenger lift and New Court Link is restricted (by historic fabric) down to 612mm at the south side of the Dome Area. The narrow passageways and staircase remain wider than this dimension. Critically, the alterations would not affect access to the Picture Room or to the front house via the No. 13 Breakfast Room. Historic items, such as stained glass panels, which have been incorporated within other areas of the fabric of the existing building will be repositioned and re-displayed in their original locations.

DETAILED DESIGN PROPOSALS

The detailed design proposals for all elements of the works are based on the historical report carried out by the Deputy Director, Helen Dorey which provides a detailed analysis of the development of the Students' Room and Colonnade from Soane's construction of this area from 1808 until the present day. JHA's analysis and historical justifications for the proposals have been based on the Museum's report and are summarised in the Heritage Statement, which accompanies this Planning Statement.

1.1 Basement Stairs (north east corner of the Colonnade): Modifications to narrow the stairs and reinstate the splayed linings at the landing. All works will recreate Soane's 1837 arrangement;

The proposals include the dismantling of built fabric to the top two steps and linings of the landing. The existing floorboards will be lifted and local modifications to the hidden structural joinery will be implemented to allow for the repositioning of the steps (further southwards, as Soane's arrangement) and creating the splayed linings adjacent to the landing. In our experience with this building, we feel it is likely that upon opening up the floor it will become clear from the surviving fabric how the staircase was modified in the past. The proposal will maintain all fabric from Soane's period and only remove the later 19th century alterations. Where possible and where appropriate we will reuse this fabric in the new work. The reconfigured steps and linings to the basement staircase will be finished in timber, to match existing and decorated (to follow the historic paint analysis). If possible, we will reuse the treads and risers of the top two steps of the Basement Stairs and cut them down to suit their new positions. The wall between the East Corridor and Colonnade was also affected by the late 19th century alterations (basically shortened to make the staircase wider). This area of wall will be reinstated to Soane's dimensions and the areas of missing timber panelling pieced in and decorated to match the adjacent areas. The stone / rendered steps from the turn of the stairs to the basement will remain unaltered.

1.2 Colonnade (Head of Basement Stairs): Installation of a new stained glass screen (incorporating historic pieces of stained glass);

Historically, at the head of the Basement Stairs there was a stained glass screen with stained glass panels set within panes of yellow and amber coloured glass: this was completely removed in the late 19th century. The arrangement of panels and glazing bars is recorded in an inventory of the Museum's stained glass in 1837. The only elements of historic fabric to survive from the screen are six historic stained glass subjects, which have already been conserved by specialist stained glass workers (Chapel Studios). The screen appears to have been physically attached to the column at the head of the Basement Stairs and the north wall of the building. The frame will be recreated in timber, sustainably sourced modern mahogany and the stained glass will be set within the screen in a mixture of lead comes and moulded timber glazing bars. The bottom panel of the screen will be a triple beaded flush panel, as shown on the record drawing from the 1837 inventory. The screen will be mechanically fixed to the reconstructed column and attached to the wall and ceiling with invisible fixings. New areas of low level glazing will be protected with an invisible layer of toughened glass directly adjacent to the historic panes.

1.3 Colonnade: Minor repositioning of 6no. timber columns to reinstate Soane's 1837 arrangement;

The six existing columns (with circular shafts) will be repositioned to Soane's arrangement of 1837. This will involve a specialist conservator moving them inwards by dimensions set out on drawing no. 506SR/GA102. The columns will be wedged in position, but will remain unfixed (it should be noted that most of the columns are currently loose). The repositioned columns will align with the architectural arrangement of downstand beams and decorated ceiling panels, as Soane's arrangement. The columns survive in Wild's altered positions and are not aligned with the original architecture above therefore undermining the overall design in this

area. Their current position also negates Soane's carefully constructed diminishing perspective vista through the Study and Dressing Room from the Library-Dining Room, a key element in his planning of the ground floor.

1.3 Colonnade: Modification to 2no. square timber columns to recreate the pair of triangular columns that existed in 1837;

In the 1835 *Description*, the columns at the head of the Basement Staircase were shown as being triangular in plan. The existing pair of timber columns that survive have square shafts. These were either modified from the triangular shafted columns recorded in Wild's "as existing" drawing dated 1890 or they were made entirely new at the time of Wild's alterations. Paint analysis should be able to prove their provenance (NB the historic paint analysis has been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic). The proposal included in this application includes the existing columns being modified by a specialist conservator to recreate the triangular shaped shafts. This work will remove the Wild fabric (if we find that they have been modified from Soane's original). The new exposed 'face' of the shaft will be fluted to match the adjoining faces and the plinths will similarly be modified so that they have mitred corners. If possible the new face will reuse Wild fabric. The existing ionic capitals (which are roughly triangular shaped on plan) will be reinstated and the timber elements redecorated in a colour to match the historic paint analysis findings for the 1837 period.

1.5 Cupboard 100 (South side of Colonnade): Reinstatement glazed door (incorporating historic sections of stained glass);

The existing door to Cupboard 100 is a modern flush door which has a grained surface. In 1837 the stained glass inventory records the glazing arrangement designed by Soane with five antique stained glass subject panels set within ruby and yellow glass. Only three stained glass panels survive from this door. It is proposed that the

door will be reinstated in new sustainably sourced mahogany door with moulded timber glazing bars and lead comes to faithfully recreate the 1837 arrangement. The three surviving identified panes of stained glass will be reinstated in their original positioned and coloured glass used to replicate the sketch shown in the inventory. The new glass will be fitted with safety glass in front of the historic glass at least to a height of 1.2 above floor level. The new timber areas will be grained to match the Soane 'rosewood' graining. The historic doorframe will not be altered by the insertion of this new door.



DRAWING REGISTER AND ISSUE SHEET

Job: Sir John Soane's Museum : Students' Room Project

Job No: 506SR DD Drawings (Details Drawings)

We enclose copies of drawings listed below:

Sheet No: 1

Drawing No:	Drawing Size	Drawing Title	21/11/2019	27/11/2019	28/02/2020	23/10/2020	05/11/2020													
506SR/DD001	NTS @ A3	Colonnade: Stained Glass Screen & Cupboard 100 Door as Prop	/	/	/															
506SR/DD002	1:10 @ A3	Cupboard 100: Elevation to South Passage Recess as Proposed				/	A													
506SR/DD003	1:10 @ A3	Colonnade Screen: Elevation as Proposed				/	A													
Distribution:																				
Sir John Soane's Museum			1	1			1	1												
D R Nolans & Co			1	1																
Mann Williams																				
Taylor Pearce Conservation			1	1																
Charles Marsden-Smedley			1		1															
Camden Planning Department			1			1	1													
			1																	
			1																	
File			1		1	1														

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