

Heritage Statement for 23-25 Argyle Square WC1H 8AS

Date: April 2021

1 Introduction.

The following report has been prepared for a Planning application for the reinstatement of original sash windows, a new basement and a ground floor additional area to the existing rear extension at 23-25 Argyle Square. The purpose of the report is to set out the historic development and significance of the building and consider the current proposals.

This desk-based and archival research has been combined with a visual assessment and appraisal of the building. Further sources and evidence that add to our knowledge and understanding of the building and its history may become available at a future date.

2 Site location and description

23-25 Argyle Square is at the south end of the terrace located on the east side of Argyle Square. The primary access points to both 23-25 Argyle Square are located at No. 24 building entrance from Argyle Square which is a pedestrian thoroughfare. The rear of the buildings face the housing block garden where there is no access in or out of either property.

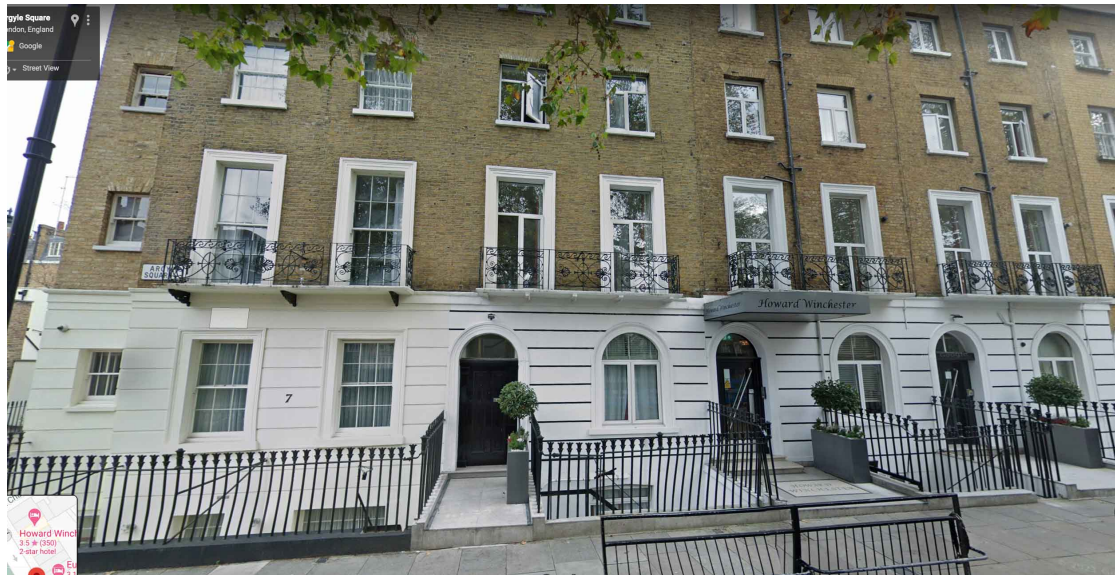
The buildings are typically four stories high over a basement and constructed in stock brick with rendered window dressings. The building continues the two window wide rhythm of the other listed buildings on the Square. The ground and first floors have casement windows and the second floor windows have six-over-six pane sashes, the third floor windows three-over three pane sashes. The first floor windows have moulded architraves whilst the second and third floor windows are recessed with gauged brick flat arches. The first floor windows have a cast-iron balcony. This arrangement is in line with most of the buildings facing the square.

The vertical proportions of the building are typical of a terraced house of this type with windows diminishing in size proportions with each floor of the building. The windows at the first floor of the building are the largest, and intended to emphasise the principal floor of the house, and the windows decrease in size at each additional floor

All of the windows in the main elevation retain the style of the early 19th century sash windows and are single glazed.

2.1 External front elevation (7-25 Argyle Square)

From our visual observations, there has been rebuilding from the original building fabric of the front elevation at the south side to the square where the proposed site situates. This can be seen from the existing bricks on the elevation also the window replacement to PVC windows installed on 8,9,10 Argyle Square and 16,17,18 Argyle Square for reinstated sash windows.

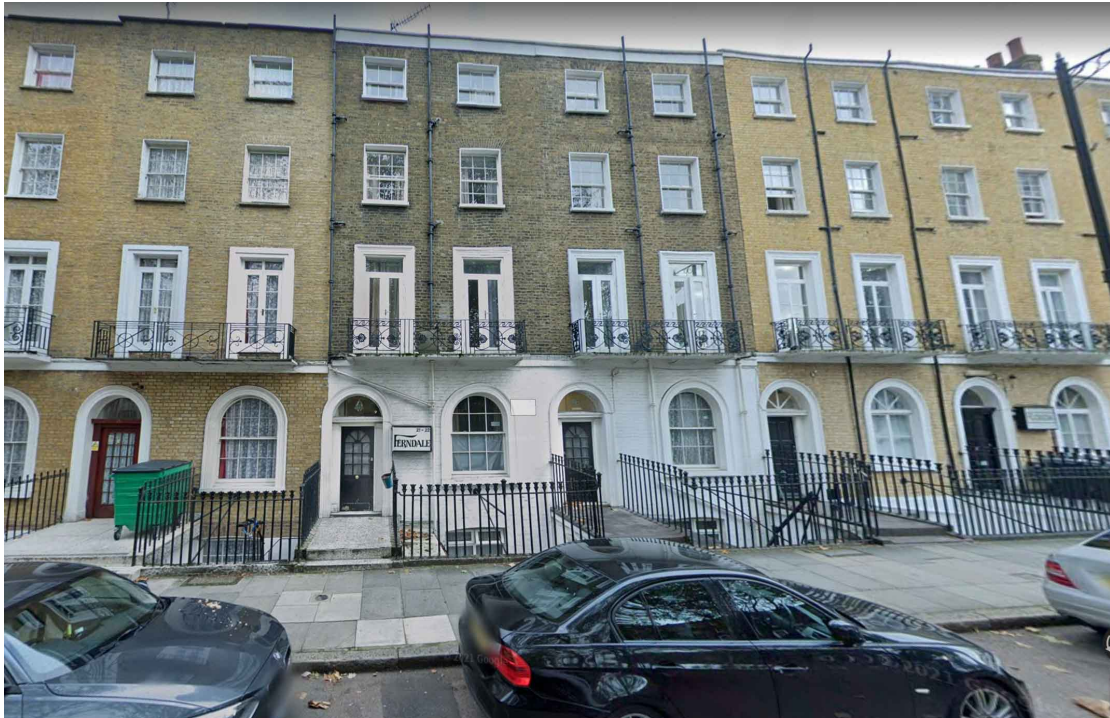


8,9,10 Argyle square with PVC windows



No.16, 17, 18 Argyle Square reinstated original sash windows on all front elevations

Further, from the age of the bricks on the street elevation it appears to be that No. 22 Argyle Square may be the only original Georgian front elevation.



By comparison to the other buildings facing the square, the east side of Argyle Square-7 to 25 Argyle Square appears to have the least intact original fabric on the street elevation.

2.2 External rear elevation photos (23-25 Argyle Square)



On the No.24 to No.25 Argyle Square rear elevations many windows have been replaced with casement windows. No.24 stairwell windows only retains the sash window style and No.24,25 basement has six-over-six pane sash window.





On the no.23 Argyle Square rear elevation, most of the windows again have been replaced with casement windows. Except for the basement which has a two-over-two pane sash window.



No. 23 existing rear extension side view



No. 23 existing rear extension rear wall view



No. 24 existing rear extension side view



No. 25 existing rear boundary wall view



No. 25 existing side boundary fence wall view

2.3 Rear elevation

Looking at the age of the existing bricks, the rear elevation appears to have the original walls. Although at the basement and ground floor level, the rear elevations were modified and had the addition of various exit lobbies and doors, all rain water and soil pipes have been added and replaced.

Many of the existing rear windows are now casement windows and they all appear to have been replaced in the last 25 years.

3.1 Listed building details

Brough: Camden Council

Location: 7 to 25 (Consecutive) and attached railings 798-1/90/47 (East side) Formally listed as Argyle Square No. 7-25, 26-35, 36-47

Grade 2

Date of listing: May 14 1974

Description:

Terrace of 19 houses, now mostly small hotels, forming the east side of Argyle Square. 1840-49, altered.

Exterior:

Yellow stock brick, Nos 7, 9, 10 and 16-18 painted.

Rusticated stucco ground floors,

Nos 7, 9, 10, and 16-18. Painted ground floors,

Nos 6, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 19-25. 4 storeys and basements.

2 windows each. Architraved, round-arched ground floor openings. Doorways, where unaltered, with pilaster-jambs carrying cornice-heads; patterned fanlights and paneled doors.

Entrance to No.7 in single storey stucco extension on left hand return. Nos 7 and 25, square-headed ground floor windows. Gauged brick flat arches to assortment of recessed casements and sashes on upper floors; 1st floors with architraves and cast-iron balconies. Parapets.

Interior: not inspected.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with bud finials to areas.

(Survey of London: Vol. XXIV, King's Cross Neighbourhood, Parish of St Pancras IV: London: -1952: 105).

3.2 Significance

7-25 Argyle Square are clearly buildings of special architectural and historic interest as acknowledged by its grade II listing in 1974.

23-25 Argyle Square is a part of the east side of the Georgian terrace forming the square together with the south and west.

The importance of the listing appears to be in relation to the external elevation and railings forming Argyle Square in the Georgian style. Apart from No.16-No.18, the east side appears not to be in the original style, some windows are PVC or steel framed and it doesn't retain the sense of a Georgian townhouse.

There has been no mention about the rear side of the buildings or the interior of the buildings where the proposal of this application will take place.

The information available and record remains regarding the listed building details

We think that the significance is largely derived from its

- Architectural structure of the principal street elevation
- Intrinsic architectural and historic interest relates to Argyle Square
- Plan form which is legible and coherent
- Continued representation as a good example of an early Georgian townhouse

However, it may have been said that the significance of the properties may have been already lost, relating to the original fabric of the front elevation as well as the internal layout since the properties were listed in 1974.

4. Conclusion:

Our proposal does not constitute any harm to the listed building. It does not alter or modify any of the elements that are noted as significant for these listed buildings.

Instead by bringing back the original sash windows to the street elevation and replacing the existing casement windows, this would contribute largely to the existing heritage asset which has been noted as "lost" from the street scenes.

Our intervention complies with the essence of PPG 15 which is to conserve and enhance the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.