

The Perseverance Public House, 63 Lamb's Conduit Street

WC1N 3NB

D&A and HERITAGE STATEMENT

Introduction

This Listed Building Consent application relates to internal alterations to the building affecting the ground floor only. There are no alterations externally and the use of the building as a public house 'pub' will remain. Therefore, there is no requirement for a standalone full planning application and only Listed Building Consent is required.

This is a revised application to take into account comments and advice received from the Council's Senior Conservation Officer following a site visit last year. This application seeks to overcome previous concerns regarding the internal appearance of the pub by providing two separate fire curtains that follow the existing ceiling bulkheads.

This application follows detailed discussions with the London Fire Brigade and specifically the London Fire Borough Support Team for Camden. During routine and regular visits to the pub the fire officer has requested that separation procedures between ground and first floor be put in place in case of a fire. Emergency exit routes must be kept clear for persons using the first-floor dining room.

If a fire were to break out in the bar area then a dedicated escape route would be required down the existing internal staircase and out through the nearest exit being the side door on to Great Ormond Street. Presently there is no fire lobby protecting this route.

This situation is now being assessed throughout public houses across London and the Fire Brigade are seeking alterations to many pubs whether listed or not for public safety reasons.

Heritage Asset

The pub was listed in May 1974 during the then English Heritage drive-by listing event and its list entry number is 1379274. Accordingly only a detailed entry is made relating to the external features of the building. The property is Grade II Listed and the following description is noted on the list:

The Perseverance Public House GREAT ORMOND STREET. Public house. Early C18, refronted early C19. Contains cellars of early C18 building. Yellow stock brick with curved stucco corner treatment. Four storeys and cellars. Two windows and three window return to Great Ormond Street. Wooden ground floor public house frontage with pilasters carrying entablature with enriched architrave and projecting cornice. Entrance on corner with half glazed doors. Main entrance on Great Ormond Street with marble pilasters with bands, supporting a shaped top with keystone. Part-glazed doors. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed two-pane sashes; first floor in round-arched shallow recesses linked by stucco impost bands. Stucco cornice and blocking course.

The above description would remain unaltered following the proposed alterations. In terms of the internal list description only limited information is provided by Historic England. The following is provided:

INTERIOR: much altered but retains cast-iron column.

This column would remain unaffected by the proposal and indeed its integrity as a standalone feature internally would be preserved.

Given the lack of detail in the list the architects have provided detailed annotation on the submitted plans noting the modern construction of the features. Features such as the staircase, panelling, radiators, bar partitions etc all being of relatively modern alterations likely around the 1970s but certainly not of historic, architectural or social interest.

The Proposal and Assessment

The internal appearance of the pub has altered significantly since its original internal layout as a pub. The internal dividing partitions, snob screens, spittoons and original bar have all been removed over the centuries as social acceptances change of the years and segregation is no longer required. However, a fire screen is now required, and the design has been very carefully considered. A complete enclosure as a corridor is not preferable as it would restrict space and light within the ground floor area. An automated fire curtain integrated with some minor structural alterations is preferred and agreed with London Fire Brigade.

The details supplied in this application follows the withdrawal of the previous application (Planning Reference: 2020/1501/L) to provide a more aesthetically sympathetic fire protection system. Previously there was concern that a fire curtain attached to the ceiling at an angle, that did not follow the lines of the ceiling, would detract from the character of the ground floor room. This has now been redesigned and two fire curtains are proposed. One that drops down to the bar countertop and one that falls down to the floor. The non-original column would be enlarged to accommodate the rail for both curtains. The channel at either end is accommodated within smaller studwork than previously proposed and the stairs are no longer boxed in.

Although this represents alterations to a listed building this has to be taken very seriously. Alterations such as this cannot be taken lightly as they are a direct response to the insistence of the Fire Brigade who are aiming to save lives in case a fire were to break out.

The fire curtain itself is concealed within a box attached at the ceiling. This would be painted to match the surrounding décor so that it would not appear obtrusive. In case of fire, the bottom of the box drops down to the floor and the curtain runs down the rails creating a fire proof seal between the upstairs and downstairs.

Conclusion

Without this minor internal intervention, the pub would not be able to continue operating. This proposal allows the building to remain in use and the use that it was originally intended. It is vitally important that listed buildings remain in occupation to prevent degradation and placing them on the at-risk register. The fire brigade is monitoring the pubs during this transitional period to ensure compliance with fire regulations. Partial compliance is the interim procedure until such time that Listed Building Consent is given, and the works can progress. It is considered that these alterations would preserve the character of the building as they would allow the use to continue. They are therefore not considered to be of more than substantial harm to the heritage asset.