

289 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8QH

Heritage Statement 29.11.21



General street view from Gray's Inn Road

Significance of the Heritage Asset

Located in the Kings Cross St Pancras Conservation Area the building forms part of a group of nine similar properties forming part of a continuous terrace: 251-309 Gray's Inn Road.

Of early-mid nineteenth century construction, the architectural style and detailing is not especially distinguished and the development of both shopfronts, façade and window materials and mansard roofs varies very considerably along the terrace. However number 289 does contribute towards the homogeneity of the group terrace.

No changes are proposed to the front elevation.

The building is not Listed. The terrace of nine buildings is not identified as making a positive contribution to the special character and appearance of the area in the Conservation Area appraisal.

The rear additions to these properties vary enormously in height and character and they cannot be seen from the rear because of the high wall

separating them from the Hand Axe Yard development. Because of these factors the significance of the rear elevation for the Conservation Area is limited.



4.2.118 Further south, nos. 279-295 are 9 three-storey buildings, part of the original terrace. The buildings are constructed of stock brick with timber sash windows and recessed blind arches at first floor level. They have been variously altered, mainly at ground floor and roof level. All but no. 291 have shopfronts which are of a poor design quality and which detract from the

appearance of the terrace. Most original detailing at ground floor level has been lost; the shopfront and surround of 279 is an exception. Timber windows remain at nos. 279 and 291 with the remainder having been replaced with unsympathetic modern alternatives. The roofline has been significantly altered, with steep mansard roofs to all but 279 and 289. Most of the properties have also been painted and only nos. 281, 291, 293 and 295 retain unpainted brick façades. No. 291 is unique in not having a shopfront at ground level, and has rusticated stucco with two timber sash windows and a door at ground floor.

Extract from Kings Cross St Pancras Conservation Area Statement

Proposals and Justification

The proposal is a retrospective application for the demolition and subsequent reconstruction of the rear ground floor extension.

There are no drawings or photographs of the existing rear extension however by reference to the vestiges of the enclosures now demolished and aerial photographs it is apparent that the whole of the rear area of the property up to the boundary with Hand Axe Yard was entirely enclosed at ground floor level. Please refer to planning photographs.

This enclosure appears to have been in 3 co-joined parts with a main higher, slightly better constructed extension adjoining 287 Gray's Inn Road, a more ad hoc extension adjacent to 291 Gray's Inn Road and a lower smaller enclosure containing a WC adjoining the boundary with Hand Axe Yard.

Although no photographs of the existing condition have been found, the remaining evidence of the method and materials of construction suggests that the extensions were of inferior construction. Their replacement with an extension constructed in accordance with current Building standards and in conjunction with replacement of inadequate timber beams will ensure a

Impact of the Proposal on the Heritage Asset

The extension is bounded on 3 sides by the high brickwork boundary walls with neighbouring properties, there are therefore no new elevations.

No changes are proposed to the rear elevation above first floor level. At ground floor level the original rear elevation of the property was historically masked by rear extensions, now demolished.

The only visible change to the proposed reconstruction will be a birds eye view of the roof, where 3 disparate accretions of roof will be replaced with a single flat roof of proprietary dark grey roofing membrane with 2 'flat' rooflights.

The proposed reconstruction of ground floor extension is to the rear of the property and is not visible from the public domain. The effect on the significance of the Heritage Asset and the wider Conservation Area therefore would be negligible.

DVM Architects Ltd

4A Murray Street London NW1 9RE
Telephone 020 7485 2121
email studio@dvmarch.com