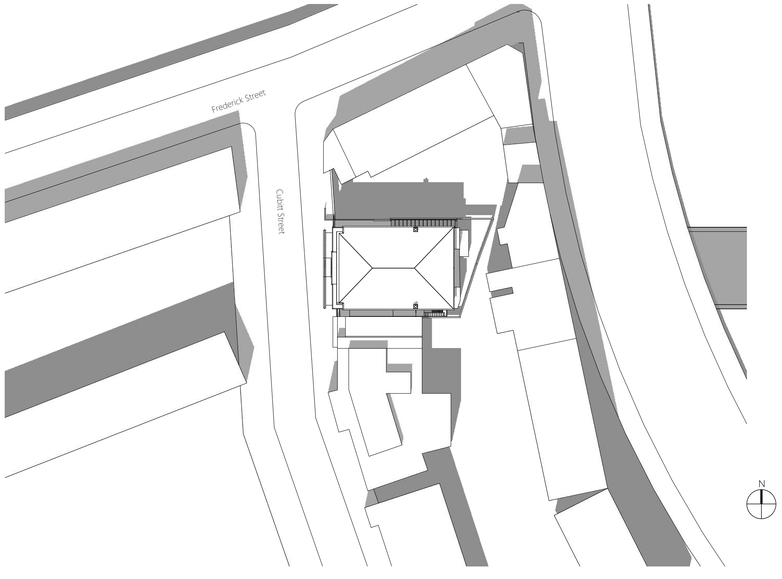
32 Cubitt Street, London, WC1X 0LR

Design and Access Statement
Planning Proposal for roof modification and repair

32 Cubitt Street is a Grade II listed former Baptist Chapel in London, which needs significant repair work and limited modifications to enable effective ongoing maintenance.

The building is currently used as a collaborative working and meeting space for small enterprise and charity organisations. The owner wishes to apply for planning permission and listed building consent to install a roof access hatch and to undertake repair works to the western roof slope, gutter and rear of the parapet wall. For several years minor repairs (predominantly to the roof and windows) have been sufficient to prevent significant damage to the interior features of the building.



Maintenance and Preservation Challenges:
Following investigation of the condition of the roof structure, slates, flashings and gutters, a scope of works has been prepared.

In addition to replacement and repair where required, a strategy for enabling ongoing maintenance has been designed and is proposed. The critical problem, which has caused significant water ingress over the years, is the problem of access to the box gutter behind the west parapet wall for clearing and inspection.

The problem occurs regularly and is caused by the falling leaves, seeds and branches of mature sycamore and plane trees in very close proximity to the building. The accumulated debris regularly causes blockages of the return gullies at each end of the box gutter. This causes rainwater to discharge more slowly than the gutter lining overlap can contain. Consequently, during heavy rain, the rainwater level exceeds the inboard edge of the liner allowing water to seep into the timber structure below and ultimately into the ceiling and plaster mouldings of the building's interior.

Regular monitoring and clearing of debris would eliminate this problem altogether however, access to the gutter is currently only possible form an external scaffold or cherry-picker. The cost and disruption of access in this manner are undesirable and unsustainable both economically and logistically.

Existing:
The existing western roof slope is predominantly original although the slates may have been replaced many decades ago. The condition of the remaining 'original' slates is generally poor with many showing signs of complete failure. Numerous repairs using modern fibre cement slates have been made over recent years to patch-up where original slate failures have become problematic.

The box gutter has been repaired and re-covered using some form of modern bituminous felt and waterproofing paint which is showing signs of failure at certain joints and stress points.

Proposed Works:
The proposal includes the installation of an access hatch into the western roof slope to facilitate safe and regular access to the gutter for clearing, maintenance and inspection.

The slates on the western roof slope will likely require replacement including new battens and felt. If any slates are reuseable, they will be salvaged and refitted. Further investigation of the existing sarking will be undertaken during the installation.

The box gutter needs replacing and it is proposed that the existing covering layers of lead, felt and waterproofing paint are removed completely to be replaced with a new liner.

In this proposal we have specified to create a continuous liner running the full length of the east side of the parapet wall, with an upstand, and returning to the roof slope run-offs on each side. The new liner would be flashed into the backside of the parapet wall and underlap the render coat. At the roof slope junctions it would be fixed over the level of the roofing battens and under the new slate covering. Its projection distance up the roof slope would be to a vertical height of 150mm from the gutter floor to match the height of the upstand on the parapet wall.

This would ensure that in the unlikely event that either one of the outlet pathways became blocked, the retained water in the gully would never exceed the containment capacity of the gutter. In the more likely event that accumulated debris were to restrict discharge during a heavy rain shower, the capacity of the seamless gully would be sufficient also to prevent an overspill into the building.

A conservation style, top-hung rooflight, with recessed and flush-fitting flashings, by Velux is proposed to be installed under the lower purlin level within the western roof slope behind the existing parapet wall. Neither the proposed window nor gutter liner will be visible from the street or surrounding buildings.

Access to the roof and gutter will be from an external scaffold erected on one of the access slopes up to the existing front door of the property.

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