

# Heritage, Design & Access Statement

For proposed repairs to the listed building at:

32 Tavistock Square

London

WC1H 9EZ

For: Birkbeck University of London



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## 1.00 Introduction

This Heritage, Design and Access Statement (HDAS) accompanies a Listed Building Application for repairs at the property known as 32 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9EZ. The proposed repairs are intended to prevent ongoing structural movement, stabilise the front elevation facade and make good historic damage resulting from the long-term structural movement.

This Statement will demonstrate that all relevant design and access aspects of the proposed work have been considered fully and it should be read in conjunction with the complete application documentation, drawings and reports.

The proposal is a carefully considered response to the clear and urgent need to safeguard this listed building and prevent further deterioration.

This Design and Access Statement has taken into account the CABE Document 'Design and access statements; how to read, write and use them' 2007, which gives guidance on the content. However, bearing in mind the limited nature of the proposals, many of the headings below are either not applicable or have limited relevance. In these cases, headings have been left in place for completeness but will have a short comment explaining why they are not applicable.

## 2.00 Description of the Site & Heritage Listing

32 Tavistock Square and that the terrace of which it forms a part (29-45 Tavistock Square) is Grade II\* listed and described on the Historic England website as follows:

*TQ2982SE TAVISTOCK SQUARE 798-1/94/1595 (West side) 10/06/54 Nos.29-45 (Consecutive) and attached railings. Connaught Hall, University of London (36-45)  
GV II\**  
*Terrace of 17 houses. c1825-6. Designed by Lewis Vulliamy; built by G Anstey and JA Frampton. Darkened stock brick with stucco ground floors, Nos 29, 32, 35, 39, 43 and 45 rusticated. Slated roof, Nos 34-45 with C20 felted mansard and dormers. EXTERIOR: 4 storeys, attics and basements. 3 windows each. Symmetrical facade, No.37 (centre house) slightly projecting with 4 engaged Ionic columns rising through 1st and 2nd floors; Nos 29, 31, 35, 39, 43 and 45 slightly project with Ionic pilasters through the 1st and 2nd floors. All to support the main entablature at 3rd floor level. Round-arched entrances with pilaster-jambs carrying cornice-heads; patterned fanlights and panelled doors. Doorways of Nos 36-40 and 42-44 converted for use as windows. Entrances to Nos 29 and 45 on the returns, No.45 with pilasters supporting a cornice, No.29 with portico surmounted by a balustrade with vases. Square-headed, recessed sashes to ground floors except No.37 with round-arched ground floor windows. 1st floor casements with cast-iron balconies. 2nd and 3rd floors with gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes, most with glazing bars. Attic storey with pilaster strips above bays with pilasters. Cornice above attic storey except Nos 35-39 with balustraded parapets. The north return of No.29 continues the entablature and pilaster treatment and forms a balanced composition, linked by a low screen wall, with No.36 Gordon Square (qv). The south return of No.45 continues the entablature and pilaster treatment and is similarly linked by a screen wall with No.53 Gordon Square (qv). INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings*

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*with urn finials to areas. No.36 was listed on 14/05/74. (Survey of London: Vol. XXI, Tottenham Court Road and Neighbourhood, St Pancras III: London: -1949: 97-98).*

The terrace containing number 32 (fronting on to Tavistock Square) and the terrace directly behind it (fronting onto Gordon Square) are both wholly owned by the University of London. The buildings are used by various University Departments for educational and administrative purposes, for student accommodation (Connaught Hall; 230 places), as a day nursery for staff and for events and exhibitions (the Peltz Gallery and the Birkbeck Cinema are within the Gordon Square Terrace). In effect, the two terraces form a compact hub for the University of London educational facilities and many of its associated activities.

Number 32 Tavistock Square is the home of the Birkbeck, University of London Department of Geography.

The terrace fronting onto Gordon Square has two separate Historic England listings, covering firstly numbers 26-46 and secondly numbers 47-53. Their listing details have not been reproduced here as the proposed works will not have an impact on these properties, which, while close by, cannot be seen from the front elevation of number 32 Tavistock Square.

### **3.00 Design Process**

#### **3.01 Assessment**

A measured survey of the existing building was commissioned to enable accurate 'existing' plans and elevations to be prepared.

The Camden Council online planning register was consulted to determine relevant planning history. There are two granted consents from 2008 & 2009 relating to roof coverings and signage, but nothing since then of any relevance to this proposal.

The Camden Council online adopted policies map was consulted; the site is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, where the terrace containing number 32 is described in paragraph 5.97 as follows:

*The grade II\* listed 1820s terrace of seventeen townhouses on the west side is the only original development in Tavistock Square. Designed by the architect Louis Vulliamy, it provides an impressive uniform frontage. The townhouses are constructed from a darkened stock brick and comprise four storeys with basements and slated mansard roofs. The ground floors are faced in stucco. Overall, the façade is symmetrical, and subdivides into units of three bays with slight projections to the ends and to the centre to add emphasis to the classically influenced composition. These projections are accentuated by stuccoed Ionic pilasters between the first-floor balconies, which are linked horizontally by a continuous cornice line above the second-floor window*

The site is not within a flood risk zone.

### 3.02 Involvement

The limited nature of the proposal means that no consultation or wider involvement is required beyond the normal planning application consultation process undertaken by the Local Authority.

### 3.03 Evaluation

The fact that the building is Grade II\* listed requires a sympathetic approach to any proposed repair works, in particular to the external appearance and impact on the fabric of the building.

The key issues to consider are:

- Limiting the intrusive nature of repair works
- Use of replacement materials appropriately matched to the existing/original materials
- Sympathetic use of modern repair methods where these will reduce the impact on the structure of the listed building
- Opportunities to remove inappropriate modern materials/repairs and replace with more appropriate materials/repairs
- Open consultation with Camden Council Conservation Officers to determine the best approach for the building and its setting.

## 4.00 Design

Taking the above evaluation items into account, it is proposed to undertake the repairs detailed in sections 4.01 - 4.13. A photographic schedule has been provided in Appendix A. Each **Item No.X** relates to the proposed plans and elevations. This schedule must be read in conjunction with the information contained on drawing nos 210163-1100, 1101, 1300, 1301, 1302, 1303, 1304, 1305 & 1306.

### 4.01 Roof Repairs (Item No.1)

*(Photograph Page No.1)*

**Proposal:** Existing rooflight to be reduced in size to increase clearance between upstand and parapet wall to introduce suitable flashing detail.

**Justification:** To rectify ongoing water ingress at roof level.

**Detail:**

- Poly carbonate dome roof light removed and cleared from site.
- Install narrower polycarbonate dome roof light to match the existing profile and height.
- Infill redundant section of roof to allow min 200mm clearance between roof light and parapet wall.
- Apply new bituminous felt built up roof system to marry in with existing - note roof covering c5 years old. New installation and detailing to suit.

#### 4.02 Parapet Repairs (Item No.2)

*(Photograph Page No.2)*

**Proposal:** Local repairs required to third floor parapet.

**Justification:** Existing flashing, pointing and brickwork in poor condition and are all contributing to internal water ingress.

**Detail:**

- Carefully remove all lead flashing. Replace with new code 4 lead chased into brickwork and pointed in with a lime mortar mix.
- Spalled and missing bricks to be replaced where required with counterparts to match existing composition and size.
- Parapet to be repointed in full with a suitable lime mortar mix. Colour and profile to match existing.

#### 4.03 Repairs to Concrete Coping (Item No.3)

*(Photograph Page No.3)*

**Proposal:** Local repairs required to third floor parapet concrete coping.

**Justification:** To address a number of defects within the concrete, including large cracks, exposed reinforcement and DPC.

**Detail:**

- Resin repairs required to concrete splits to leave weathertight.
- Concrete coping to be decorated in with adjoining buildings with masonry paint - colour: to match surrounding parapets.
- Expose slate DPC to assess completeness. Undertake repairs as required following further investigation.

#### 4.04 Window Repairs (Item No.4)

*(Photograph Page No.4)*

**Proposal:** Local repairs needed to timber window elements.

**Justification:** To address a number of failed or failing timber components within the existing windows.

**Detail:**

- Principal of repair is to retain as much as possible. Scrape back only as necessary until a sound substrate is achieved. Well seasoned hardwood to be spliced in where possible.

- Note it is believed that all windows can be repaired but will require further assessment from scaffold when provided.
- Putty to be replaced where missing with linseed oil product.
- Replace cracked glazing.
- Ease and adjust where required to leave fully operational.

All windows are to be externally decorated with a high quality external timber gloss for further protection.

#### **4.05 Stucco Render Repairs (Item No.5)**

*(Photograph Page No.5)*

**Proposal:** Rebuild existing stucco render detailing across principal facade.

**Justification:** To address various areas of failed, spalled and generally degraded render detailing.

**Detail:**

- Cracks to stucco render are to receive 2 part epoxy resin repairs prior to rebuilding / reshaping the profile with a suitable lime based render mix (build up to be agreed with the conservation officer).
- Detailed survey to be provided by a specialist heritage masonry repair contractor / consultant prior to undertaking works when access is provided.
- Note all previously painted surfaces to be decorated on completion.

#### **4.06 Front Parapet Wall (Item No.6)**

*(Photograph Page No.6)*

**Proposal:** Bituminous waterproof covering to be reapplied to front gutter course and parapet coping.

**Justification:** Existing waterproof coating subject to UV degradation and general weathering.

**Detail:**

- Remnants of existing coating to be removed and substrate prepared for new application.
- New waterproof coating applied to gutter course and parapet coping. Self terminating. Triflex or similar. To be agreed with the Conservation Officer.

#### **4.07 Render (Item No.7)**

*(Photograph Page No.7)*

**Proposal:** Re-render principal elevation from basement to first floor level.

**Justification:** External walls at basement to first floor level, the decorative string course at third floor level and the roof level parapet are finished with a painted render. Large areas of render have been damaged by the

dampness cause by a failing downpipes, and is in poor condition. Principal is to retain as much as possible but a large proportion of render must be removed entirely and replaced.

**Detail:**

- All live, overly saturated or loose render is to be hacked off the external elevation and the masonry behind checked for further damage (note potential need to replace brickwork behind render on a like for like basis) following removal of render).
- Substrate to be prepared accordingly.
- Re apply suitable render mix to external elevations ensuring seamless blend with the existing with a suitable lime based render mix (build up to be agreed with the conservation officer).
- Original details to be replicated with new render.
- Decorate with breathable silicate based mineral paint to match the existing colour.

#### **4.08      Decoration of Previously Painted Masonry (Item No.8)**

*(Photograph Page No.8)*

**Proposal:** Decorate all previously painted external surfaces.

**Justification:** Decorative condition is poor and requires full redecoration to restore the building's appearance and provide protection from the elements.

**Detail:**

- Previously painted non breathable surfaces should be removed before being decorated to match the existing appearance.
- Decorate with breathable silicate based mineral paint to match the existing colour.

#### **4.09      Rebuild Brick Wall Adjacent Front Door (Item No.9)**

*(Photograph Page No.9)*

**Proposal:** Masonry wall adjacent front door should be rebuilt to match original profile and affected surfaces re-rendered.

**Justification:** Prolonged water damage (a result of a blocked downpipes) has saturated the render and damaged the brickwork underneath.

**Detail:**

- Wall to be rebuilt utilising existing bricks where possible, and reclaimed counterparts to match the existing in every respect (where practicable) including a suitable lime mortar mix.
- Re render on completion to blend in seamlessly with existing retained surfaces and replicate original detailing to suit.
- Decorate with breathable silicate based mineral paint to match the existing colour.



#### 4.10 Drainage (Item No.10)

*(Photograph Page No. 10)*

**Proposal:** Repair defective below ground drainage and introduce new hardstanding and drainage to light well.

**Justification:** Below Ground Drainage Survey identified damaged pipework beneath light well hardstanding. Excess ground water is the likely cause of historic movement and should be addressed immediately to prevent further movement.

**Detail:**

- Lift and remove existing concrete base to front elevation light well
- Undertake repairs to defective drains in this area to prevent historic and ongoing settlement;
- Provide new sub-base and stone flag flooring to light well (materials to be agreed with Conservation Officer)
- Introduce surface water gulley to light well to prevent future flooring

#### 4.11 Internal Masonry (Item No.11)

*(Photograph Page No. 11)*

**Proposal:** Rebuild failing pier brickwork beneath modern concrete lintel.

**Justification:** Original bricks and surrounding plaster are saturated and failing underneath modern engineering bricks (previous repair - unknown date) and a concrete lintel to presumably replace the original timber lintel. Structural Engineer has recommended the following urgent remedial works:

**Detail:**

- Lintel be temporarily propped
- Modern engineering brickwork to be retained as disturbing them may cause further harm. Original failing brickwork to be removed (but retained where possible) and the pier rebuilt utilising bricks to match the existing original arrangement (reclaimed or made to suit) in a suitable lime mortar mix.

#### 4.12 Steel Joist - External Staircase (Item No.12)

*(Photograph Page No. 12)*

**Proposal:** External stairs should be repaired including steelwork and finishes.

**Justification:** The external stone staircase to the basement (light well) is supported at its edge by a rolled steel joist which is corroded beyond repair. Movement occurring to staircase as a result. Urgent repairs required to prevent further damage.

**Detail:**

- Carefully remove existing cast iron beam embedded in stairs that is corroding and causing movement
- Provide new galvanised steel beam of same section / dimensions, painted back and bed securely in place with lime based mortars
- Lift and re-form existing steps with new lime mortar
- Repair cracks to wall render below steel beam, using agreed lime render
- Redecorate all wall surfaces with breathable silicate based mineral paint to match the existing colour.

**4.13 Corbelled Brickwork Foundations (Item No.13)**

*(No Photo)*

**Proposal:** Reinstate missing brickwork from foundations - assumed to have been removed in the past for services.

**Justification:** Missing brickwork from the foundations could be contributing to ongoing movement and therefore must be reinstated.

**Detail:**

- Infill section of missing brickwork from the foundations -size and profile to match the existing.

**4.14 First Floor Balcony (Item No.14)**

*(Photograph Page No. 13 & 14)*

**Proposal:** Replace failed asphalt waterproofing to first floor balcony. Further investigations required to establish extent corrosion to cast iron cantilevered members.

**Justification:** Settlement to the front elevation wall has had an impact on the balcony structure and the asphalt waterproofing is failing, resulting in rainwater ingress above the main front entrance and damaged internal finishes. Cast iron structural components within the deck are therefore at risk of failure due to prolonged exposure to water. Further investigation is required to identify extent of damage.

**Detail:**

- Remove roof finishes back to deck to expose cast iron components.
- Re-application of liquid waterproofing system to balcony. Self terminating Triflex or similar system. Colour to match existing. To be agreed with the Conservation Officer.
- Assess condition of cast iron components following further investigations and address as required. To be agreed with the Conservation Officer.

## **5.00 Use**

Proposed land use remains unchanged and the proposal has no effect on existing planning policies.

The proposed repairs have no effect on the surrounding context or existing uses.

Mixed use development is not applicable to the proposal.

## **6.00 Amount**

The amount of development is not applicable, as the application is for repairs only.

Community access is applicable to the proposal in as much as the building is an educational facility (albeit access by arrangement); this has been considered in the 'Design' section of 3.00 above.

Density is not relevant to the proposal as the existing site density is unchanged.

## **7.00 Layout**

The proposed layout is unchanged from the existing.

## **8.00 Scale**

Assessments in terms of size, massing, human scale and skyline impact are not applicable.

## **9.00 Landscaping**

Not applicable.

## **10.00 Appearance**

Assessments of the architecture, materials, elevating treatment, colour and texture of the proposal that are suggested as part of this proposal are considered in the items noted above.

Renewable energy technologies are not an appropriate consideration for this particular proposal, focusing as it does on repairs to the listed building.

## **11.00 Access**

Access in planning terms (to/from the site, parking, within the building etc) is not affected by this application.

Access for the proposed repairs is via the front elevation and the existing lightwell.

## 12.00 Planning Policies

### National

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) and paragraphs 189 to 208 set out a duty for the Local Authority with regard to conservation and considering the potential impact of proposals on the historic environment. Paragraph 190 is perhaps the most relevant to quote for this repairs-driven application:

*Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:*

- (a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- (b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- (c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- (d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.*

It is clear that the proposal is in keeping with the thrust of this policy, in its desire to repair damage to a Grade II\* listed building.

### Regional

The London Plan 2021 is part of the statutory development plan for London, meaning that the policies in the Plan should inform decisions on planning applications across the capital. Boroughs Local Plans must be in 'general conformity' with the London Plan, ensuring that the planning system for London operates in a joined-up way and reflects the overall strategy for how London can develop sustainably, which the London Plan sets out.

Chapter 7 (Heritage and Culture) and Policy HC1 (Heritage conservation and growth) set out the approach that Boroughs should take; whilst the main thrust of this policy relates to making decisions on development proposals that would have an impact on heritage and conservation assets, Paragraph A is mindful of conserving assets (bold emphasis added):

*Boroughs should, in consultation with Historic England, local communities and other statutory and relevant organisations, develop evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of London's historic environment. This evidence should be used for identifying, understanding, **conserving, and enhancing the historic environment and heritage assets**, and improving access to, and interpretation of, the heritage assets, landscapes and archaeology within their area.*

As with national policies, it is clear that the proposal is in keeping with the thrust of this policy, in its desire to repair damage to a Grade II\* listed building.

## Local

Camden Council's adopted 2017 Local Plan addresses Heritage and listed building matters in Section 7 Design and Heritage, specifically within paragraphs 7.39 - 7.69 and Policy D2 Heritage. The opening statement of Policy D2 states:

*The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.*

Clearly, the proposed works are in keeping with the desired intention to preserve this heritage asset and cannot be seen as contentious in this regard.

## 13.00 Design and Access Statement Checklist

CHECKLIST	Y/N	COMMENTS
<b>STAGES IN THE PROCESS</b>		
<b>Minimum requirements for all developments</b>		
Does the statement clearly set out the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development?	Y	
<b>Best practice</b>		
Does the statement demonstrate that the design has evolved through an assessment-involvement-evaluation design process?	Y	
Has the site's full context been assessed to include the physical, social and economic characteristics, and relevant planning policies?	Y	
<b>USE</b>		
<b>Minimum requirements for all developments</b>		
Does the application state the use proposed?	Y	

CHECKLIST	Y/N	COMMENTS
<b>Best Practice</b>		
Does the statement demonstrate how the use complies with land use policies?	Y	
Does it explain the relationship between uses proposed and show how these fit in with the surrounding context and uses?	Y	
Does it demonstrate whether mixed- use development has been considered?	Y	
<b>AMOUNT</b>		
<b>Minimum requirement for all applications</b>		
Does the statement demonstrate how the amount is appropriate to the site and its surroundings?	Y	
Does it show how the development will be distributed appropriately across the site?	Y	
<b>LAYOUT</b>		
<b>Minimum requirement for all applications</b>		
Does the statement explain and justify the approximate locations of buildings and spaces and explain how these will inform the final development?	N/A	
Does it demonstrate how a safe environment is created with measures to design out crime?	N/A	
<b>Requirement for detailed applications</b>		
Does the statement explain the relationships between buildings and spaces and show how the site connects and interacts with neighbouring spaces and buildings?	N/A	

CHECKLIST	Y/N	COMMENTS
Does it show how the site is accessible and easy to move through for all of the community, regardless of mobility or disability?	N/A	
<b>Best Practice</b>		
Does the statement demonstrate that sustainable use of energy, water and waste have been considered?	N/A	
<b>SCALE</b>		
<b>Minimum requirement for all applications</b>		
Does the statement set out the upper and lower limits of the height, width and length of each building proposed and justify the principles behind these?	N/A	
<b>Requirement for detailed applications</b>		
Does the statement show how the buildings and their doors, windows and components are of a comfortable scale for people?	N/A	
Does it show how the scale of the development fits in with the surrounding area?	N/A	
<b>LANDSCAPING</b>		
<b>Minimum requirement for all applications</b>		
Does the statement explain and justify the principles that will inform any future landscaping of the site?	N/A	
<b>Requirement for detailed applications</b>		
Does the statement demonstrate how the landscaping makes the site attractive and does it explain the purposes of the landscaping?	N/A	
<b>Best practice</b>		

CHECKLIST	Y/N	COMMENTS
Does the statement include a schedule of planting and hard landscaping material?	N/A	
<b>APPEARANCE</b>		
<b>Minimum requirement for all applications</b>		
Does the statement explain and justify the principles behind the intended appearance and explain how these will inform the final development?	Y	
<b>Requirement for detailed applications</b>		
Does the statement show how the appearance of the development visually relates to its surroundings?	Y	
Does it demonstrate how works involving a listed building or conservation area preserve the building or area and its features of special architectural and historic interest?	Y	
<b>ACCESS</b>		
<b>Minimum requirement for all applications</b>		
Is the policy approach taken to access explained?	Y	
<b>Requirements for detailed applications</b>		
Does the statement demonstrate that is easy to move around the development?	N/A	
<b>Best practice</b>		
Does it explain how Part M of the building regulations is met?	N/A	



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## Appendices

Appendix A - Photographic Schedule
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# Appendix A - Photographic Schedule



**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 1 -**  
**(Item No.1 - Roof Repairs)**





**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 2 -**  
**(Item No.2 - Parapet Repairs)**





**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 3 -**  
**(Item No.3 - Repairs to Concrete Coping)**





**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 4 -**  
**(Item No.4 - Window Repairs)**





**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 5 -**  
**(Item No.5 - Stucco Render Repairs)**





**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 6 -**  
**(Item No.6 - Front Parapet Wall)**





**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 7 -**  
**(Item No.7 - Saturated and damaged render)**





**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 8 -**  
**(Item No.8 - Existing Previously Painted Masonry)**



**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 9 -**  
**(Item No.9 - Damaged Brickwork and Render Adjacent Door)**





**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 10 -**  
**(Item No.10 - Location of Lightwell Drainage Repairs)**



## PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 11 -

(Item No.11 - failing original brickwork  
Beneath pier)





## PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 12 -

(Item No.12 - Steel joist to  
external stair)





## PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 13 -

(Item No.14 - First Floor Balcony - corroded brackets)



**PHOTOGRAPH PAGE NO. 14 -**

**(Item No.14 - First Floor Balcony - failed waterproofing and up stand)**

