33 BEDFORD PLACE
LONDON

Heritage Assessment of Proposed Air Source Heat Pumps

April 2022

1.0 Scope

This assessment has been prepared to accompany a listed building application for the replacement of the existing gas fired central heating system with Air Source Heat Pumps and associated internal heating / cooling units to 33 Bedford Place.

This report has been prepared by Sean Emmett who is a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. It is based on a desk-top study of the building, the listing description, the Bloomsbury Conservation Area draft statement.

2.0 Site & Surrounding Area

The site is in an excellent location in terms of public transport. Bedford Place is located between two main thoroughfares, Gower Street to the west and Southampton Row to the east. Both Gower Street and Southampton Row Road have numerous bus services. The site is also located within walking distance to Russell Square and Holborn tube stations linking the site to one of London's Premier shopping districts along Oxford Street, Regent Street and Bond Street to the south west.

33 Bedford Place is Grade 11 listed and forms part of a terrace of 20 properties within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The building is situated on the western side of Bedford Place where they form the southern block of a significant terrace linking Bloomsbury Square and Russell Square.

The wider surrounding environment is comprised of a mix of uses - commercial, retail, education and residential uses. The site is placed in close proximity to other key locations in the capital, for example, the British Museum on Great Russell Street.

33 Bedford Place was constructed around 1815 and represents the work of James Burton. The architectural style of the buildings and surrounds is Georgian.

The original building was built with basement to third floor levels and was historically in residential use as a single family townhouse. However, over the years there have been various alterations, including a rear extension and is now a commercial office building.

The listing details are as follows:

Symmetrical terrace of 20 houses forming the west side of Bedford Place. c1815. By James Burton. Multi-coloured stock brick with rusticated stucco ground floors. Stucco 3rd floor sill band. 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each. Slightly projecting end bays (Nos 21-23 & 38-40) and central bays (Nos 29-32). Wide double half-glazed doors. No.27 with window in place of doorway. Gauged brick flat arches (painted red) to recessed sashes, some with original glazing bars. Continuous cast-iron balconies at 1st floor level. Parapets. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas, some houses with area overthrows.

3.0 Proposals

The proposal to replace the exiting gas fired boiler with Air Source Heat Pumps are set out in the Design and Access Statements.

The work entails the removal of the existing gas fired boilers, radiators and redundant pipework combined with the installation of new units internally in purpose made free standing joinery units. The condenser units will be installed within the rear garden, housed within an acoustic enclosure, with a small unit housed within the vault to the front of the building. As confirmed in the Design and Access Statement, the acoustic enclosure will be located in the rear of the garden and will be hidden behind the existing boundary wall and therefore not visible from any public realm.

The pipework serving the internal comfort cooling units will be routed within existing service routes. Vertically, the pipework will run within an existing riser located in the rear corner of the main house where the redundant central heating pipework will be removed. Horizontally, the pipework will be routed within the existing floor voids. Generally, the internal units have been located in the same position as the redundant radiators, which will allow pipework to run in existing service penetrations/notches within the timber joists.

Thus the proposals do not affect the external appearance of the building as seen from Bedford Place or the wider area.

5.0 Assessment

The proposal will not have an adverse effect on the exterior of the building which, as, described above, is of particular significance. They therefore do not adversely affect the significance of the exterior of the listed building, nor the adjoining listed buildings or the Conservation Area.

The proposals for internal distribution of services keeps these concealed using existing voids for the purpose and thus they do not adversely affect the significance of the interior features.

The new services will be run in existing routes to mitigate the impact on the fabric of the building, the risers, etc will be cleared of redundant pipework and cabling to make space for the new services.

The installation of Air Source Heat Pumps will ensure the sustainability of the existing building, allowing the building to be heated and cooled with renewable energy. The Air Source Heat Pump will also be considerably more efficient than the original outdated gas fired boiler, further improving the sustainability of the building.

In summary, it is considered that the proposals comply with both national and local guidance on the protection of designated heritage assets and the conservation area while ensuring that the building provides a sustainable asset.

Sean Emmett
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