

No.25 John's Mews,
London, WC1N 2NZ

Heritage Statement for Roof Works



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1.0 Introduction

Project background

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Chris Dyson Architects, with input from Savills, to provide relevant information to assess the significance of the historic building at No. 25 John's Mews ('the Site'), in order to set out the potential impact of the proposed works to accompany a listed building consent application to repair and replace the existing roof finishes that have reached the end of their serviceable lifespan.

The Heritage Statement focuses on the key designated heritage assets of the Grade II listed No. 25 John's Mews and Bloomsbury Conservation Area: Sub Area 10 – Great James Street/Bedford Row, notably the significance of the asset and the impacts that the proposed scheme may have upon its significance.

The Site and the wider vicinity

The Site is located to the east side of John's Mews, with two principal facades facing onto John's Mews and Northington Street being surrounded in all directions by the dense built environment of Bloomsbury, within the London Borough of Camden. The Site consists of a two-storey red brick mews building constructed c.1903.



Figure 1. Aerial image of the indicative Site location (outlined in red). The designated heritage assets are denoted in yellow. ©Google maps. 2020.

The Site is a Grade II listed building (NHLE number 1322077), designated in part for its group value with No. 13 Northington Street. The Historic England List description is as follows:

Includes: No.25 JOHN'S MEWS. Brewery stables, now offices and workshop. Dated 1903. Built for Henry Finch; altered internally late C20. Red brick with stone quoins and dressings. 2 storeys. Main facade to Northington Street has 5 windows; 5 window right hand return with vehicle entrance. Ground floor to left has paired elliptical arched vehicle entrances with keystones and cornices to pillars. To right, a flat arched doorway, a vehicle entrance and then 3 segmental-arched windows, that nearest the vehicle entrance being half-size. Projecting moulded brick cornice at 1st floor and parapet level; 1st floor casements set in stone surrounds forming strips. Deep parapet of segmental-headed sections flanked by tall tapering brick chimneys supported by stone consoles to front and sides and having stone cornices. Angles have smaller stone tapering chimneys on dies. INTERIORS retain some original features. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: quoin to Northington Street inscribed "These premises were erected by Henry Finch Esq., JP in AD 1903"; on the return "and this stone laid by H. Finch Rober August 10th 1903"

There are further statutory listed buildings within proximity of the Site, including the Grade II listed Nos. 29 to 36 John Street and attached railings to the east of the Site (NHLE number 1379158). However, the proposed works have been assessed to have no impact on these neighbouring built heritage assets and they have been scoped out of this report.

The Site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area: Sub Area 10 – Great James Street/Bedford Row and the London Suburbs Archaeological Priority Area: Tier 2.

2.0 Historic Development

Historic development

The present building at No. 25 John's Mews is identified as being constructed in 1903, as denoted by the foundation stone inscribed with "These premises were erected by Henry Finch Esq., JP in AD 1903", and is stylistically accurate for the early-20th century. Earlier maps, including Richard Horwood's 1799 Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster (see Figure 2) show that a building existed on the Site prior to the construction of the present building. It is assumed that the original building was a mews house to the associated residential properties along John Street, which also appear on the 1828 map by John Greenwood, as shown in Figure 3). At this time Norththington Street was known as Little John Street, changing street name sometime after the publication of the 1920 Ordnance Survey map.



Figure 2. Horwood's 1799 Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster. The indicative location of the Site is circled in red and was presumably a mews house to the property fronting onto John Street.



Figure 3. Greenwood's 1828 map of London shows the full extent of development along John Street and the accompanying Johns Mews to the west, including the location of the Site.

The Site is described in Pevsner's Buildings of England, London: North as 'a cheerful coachhouse of 1903, with flamboyant segmental gables and tapering chimneys (erected by Henry Finch, J.P.)'. A 1901 Insurance map shows that the previous buildings on this site were made up of a coach builder and a stable with doors over, as shown in Figure 4. The insurance map also shows that many of the residential townhouses on John Street to the east had been converted into offices, retailers or institutional uses. The present building is assumed to have been constructed as brewery stables, associated with the Finch family, who were a well-known brewing family within the local area.



Figure 4. An extract of a 1901 Insurance map showing the indicative location of the Site (circled in red), which is listed as a coach builder and stables.

By the mid-20th century the building was operating as a car garage, with a number of roller shutters and a car hoist to facilitate the business; a ramp, accessed off of John's Mews, serviced a basement level. However, by 1977 a conditional planning consent was granted for the demolition of No. 13 Northington Street (formerly Little James Street) along with Nos. 25 and 27 John's Mews and redevelopment of the site to erect a four storey building with basement (Planning RN: 16805R). This planning consent was not implemented and by the 1990s No. 25 John's Mews was operating as offices (now Class E) on the ground floor with a residential flat (Class C3) on first floor. Photographs from 1978 show a closed garage business being marketed for sale, having had a number of external alterations to accommodate its operation as a garage (see figures 5 and 6)



Figure 5. A photograph from 1978 looking south east at the corner of John's Mews and Northington Street. The Site is seen here as a closed and for sale Goodliffe Garages Limited. A number of external alterations had been

made by this time to accommodate its operation, including roller shutter openings (seen to the right), which allowed access to a ramp down to a basement.

A change of use was granted from offices on ground floor with residential above to a singular dwelling house (Class C3) in March 2013 (Planning RN: 2012/4925/P and 2012/5150/L). The consents allowed for significant internal works, which saw the removal of the previous internal partitions and the erection of new partition walls to form domestic rooms. As a result, the consented works eroded any remaining historic plan form that may have remained. The 2013 consents also allowed for the creation of a roof terrace.



Figure 6. A photograph from 1978 looking south west along Northington Street. The image shows the building prior to further alterations in forming maisonettes at ground and basement levels, with lightwells created within the archways seen here to the left.

3.0 Heritage assets – Significance and setting

Bloomsbury Conservation Area: Sub Area 10 – Great James Street/Bedford Row

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area is located within central London, its southern boundary around 750 metres north of the River Thames. It covers an area of approximately 160 hectares which extends from Lincoln's Inn Fields and High Holborn to Euston Road and from King's Cross Road to Tottenham Court Road.

Slate and lead are the predominant roofing materials used across the conservation area. New 'modern' rooftop additions forming flat roof areas are often finished in either asphalt or single-ply membrane.

4.0 Proposals and Assessment of Impact

Proposed works No. 25 John's Mews (Grade II listed)

This report accompanies a full architectural drawing pack produced by Chris Dyson Architects.

The proposals relate to the flat and pitched roof area of the building, which was granted full planning and listed building consents in 2013 for use as a roof terrace with associated changes following the conversion of the building from a commercial unit to single residential dwelling. Alterations to the existing roof terrace were approved in July 2022

The proposed works seek to replace the slate roof and flat roof coverings of the building along with the lead flashing around the abutments. The proposals do not represent any material change to the property or adjacent properties.

The proposals comprise of the following improvement works to the fabric of the roof:

- Replacement of non-original asphalt flat roof covering with new asphalt roof covering
- Replacement of the existing slate roof tiles (the originality of these tiles cannot clearly be defined as replacements have clearly been made over a period of time) with new natural slate of a high-quality
- Replacement of the existing lead flashing along the abutments with new Code-5 lead flashing.
- Retain and reuse hip and ridge tiles where possible

Bloomsbury Conservation Area: Sub Area 10 – Great James Street/Bedford Row

The roof terrace at No. 25 John's Mews has been a characteristic feature within the conservation area since it was granted full planning permission and listed building consents in 2013, and has no appreciable view from street level, partly concealed by the 1.5metre tall parapet level and pitched roof. The proposed works seek to repair and replace the existing roofing materials that have reached the end of their serviceable lifespan. Overall, it has been assessed that these works will have no adverse effect upon the setting and significance of the conservation area, being significantly obscured by surrounding built form, and with limited appreciable views from the rear windows of the neighbouring buildings.

5.0 Conclusion

No. 25 John's Mews is a Grade II listed heritage asset that has been assessed to derive its significance from its aesthetic and historic interest. The interest of the Site is primarily derived from its external elevations, with earlier works to the building removing much of the original internal fabric and plan form.

The roof has reached the end of its serviceable lifespan and, as such, the proposals for the renovation of the roof with like for like replacements to the existing fabric is to protect and enhance the historic building. Due care has been taken in seeking the replacements and their suitability to the roof and the historic building. The existing roof materials are of little to no historic interest and the character of the heritage asset will be maintained and preserved.

The proposed works seek to make improvements to the existing roof that will have no appreciable view from the street scene and with limited views from the rear of the surrounding built environment, as currently experienced.

This Heritage Statement meets the requirements of the NPPF and provides sufficient information regarding heritage considerations. The proposals adhere to the guidance set out in Camden's policy on listed building consent.

6.0 Appendix 1 – Photographs

Refer also to exterior and interior condition photos included with Design and Access Statement.



View looking south east towards the principal façades. Access to the Site is from John’s Mews (right), with the other principal façade onto Northington Street (left). The Site is Grade II listed, designated in part for its group value with No. 13 Northington Street. The proposed works will have no impact on the exterior aesthetic or remaining historic internal features.



View looking west across the existing roof terrace at No. 25 John’s Mews. Our proposal plan to remove and replace the flat roof covering (under the concrete pavers) and the slate roof pictured here.



View looking east along the flat roof of No. 25 John's Mews onto the flat roof of No. 13 Northington Street. The indicative boundary line between the two properties is marked in red. The slate roof will be replaced on a like for like basis preserving the historic character of the roof. The flat roof covering will be replaced with asphalt and new lead flashing.

7.0 Appendix 2 - Planning History of No.25 John's Mews

2022/2278/L & 2022/1281/P – Granted

Alterations to enlarge existing 2nd floor roof terrace and relocation of air-conditioning unit at roof level

2022/0428/P – 16 March 2022 - Granted

Details of condition 3 (basement engineer) of planning permission 2020/5883/P dated 19/11/2021 for 'Erection of basement extension and installation of ventilation riser at roof level'.

2021/0122/L – 19 November 2021 - Granted

Erection of basement extension and installation of ventilation riser at roof level. Internal alterations

2020/5883/P – 19 Nov 2021 - Granted

Erection of basement extension and installation of ventilation riser at roof level

2013/5542/L – 10 October 2013 - Granted

Installation of air conditioning plant at roof level

2013/3543/L – 27 July 2013 – Granted

Details of secondary glazing and windows required by condition no. 2 of listed building consent 2012/5150/L granted on 26th March 2012 for works associated with the change of use from office at ground floor and flat on first floor to single dwellinghouse.

2012/5150/L – 20 May 2013 - Granted

Works associated with the change of use from office at ground floor and flat on first floor to a single dwellinghouse, including creation of roof terrace with privacy screen on flat roof, installation of 2 rooflights and external alterations to fenestration and associated internal alterations.

2012/4925/P – 26 March 2013 – Granted subject to Section 106 legal agreement

Change of use from office at ground floor (Class B1) and flat on first floor (Class C3) to a single dwellinghouse (Class C3), including creation of roof terrace with privacy screen on flat roof, installation of 2 rooflights and external alterations to fenestration.

2012/4841/INVALID – Unknown - Withdrawn

(Requested to Withdrawn) Internal and external alterations associated with the change of use from commercial (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) at Ground Floor to create a single family dwelling amalgamating the First Floor flat. Proposed installation to Ground Floor of a new glazed curtain wall to behind existing garage doors and installation of new railings in front. Proposed installation of 4no. conservation rooflights to existing pitched roof, 2no. rooflights to existing flat roof and 1no. access hatch to existing flat roof. Refurbishment of the interior and, removal of non-original internal alterations.

PS9704239 – 17 April 1997 - Granted

Variation of additional condition 2 concerning a personal user restriction of planning permission dated 21st February 1997 (Reg No. PS9604154) to change the named user from “G. Thompson Ltd.” to “Mach 1 Couriers”.

PS9604154 – 21 February 1997 - Granted

Continued use of the ground floor as a courier head office and control centre without compliance with additional condition 01 on the planning permission (Reg. No. PL/9501107)

P9601088R2 – 07 November 1996

Creation of additional residential dwelling by the erection of a mansard roof extension, as shown on drawing numbers 642/P04B, /EL2A and /EL3

C9601089R2 – 07 November 1996 – Refuse conservation area consent

Removal of roof structure, as shown on drawing numbers 642/P04B, /EL2A and /EL3.

P9601088R1 – 15 October 1996 - Withdrawn

Demolition of roof and creation of mansard roof to existing building. (REVISED PLANS SUBMITTED)

C9601089R1 – 15 October 1996 - Withdrawn

Demolition of roof and creation of mansard roof to existing building. (REVISED PLANS SUBMITTED)

P9601088 – 26 June 1996 – Withdrawn

Demolition of roof and creation of mansard roof to existing building, plans submitted

9501108 – 15 December 1995 – Refuse

Use of the first floor as courier head office and control centre as shown on site plan.

16805R – 25 August 1977 -Conditional

Sites of 13 Northington Street and 25/27 John's Mews – Redevelopment of the above-named sites by the erection of a four-storey and basement building comprising ground floor and part first floor offices, twelve residential flats on part first, second and third floors with ancillary storage in the basement.

15441R – 29 May 1973 - Refused

Redevelopment of the sites of 13 Northington Street and 25/27 Johns Mews W.C.1 by the erection of a 4-storey and basement building comprising ground and first floor offices, second and third floor residential (9 flats), and basement storage.

12784 – 08 April 1972 – Refused

Redevelopment of 13 Northington Street and 25/27 John Mews by the erection of a building of basement ground and four floors over for use part as offices and part as residential