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Savills Cover Letter



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Dear Ms Quigley

74-77 REAT RUSSELL STREET, 29B MONTAGU STREET, WC1B 3DA

On behalf of the freeholder, Bedford Estates, I submit applications for planning permission and listed building consent for internal and external works of refurbishment including new openings at roof level and replacement plant at Nos. 74 -77 Great Russell Street and alterations to the entrance to 29B Montague Street to enable independent occupation.

These applications follow our pre-application discussions with you in December (Your ref: 2022/3029/NEW) but do not include 29A Montague Street.

The application comprises:

- Application form with Certificate A.
- Site Plan and Location Plan.
- Existing, Demolition and Proposed Plans.
- Design and Access Statement.
- Heritage Assessment.
- Schedule of Works
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Structural Design Report

1. THE BUILDINGS

Nos 74 – 77, Bloomsbury House, is a terrace of four houses, listed Grade 2. The list description is:

“Terrace of 4 houses. c1662-4, altered mid C19. Stucco with rusticated ground floor. 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each. No.77 with 3-window return to Montague Street. Entrances with architraved stucco surrounds, panelled reveals, consoles and cornices; fanlights and panelled doors. Pilasters (rusticated on 1st and 2nd floors) between houses and at angles carry main cornice with balustraded parapet. Architraved 4-pane sashes, 1st floor with console bracketed cornices. Bracketed cornice at 3rd floor level. Return to No.77 with cast-iron verandah, added 1841, with elaborately ornamented cast-iron balustrade, including heads on roundels and foliage, and posts to tented canopy. INTERIORS: No.75 with panelled hall and rooms. Stair with barley sugar twist balusters and wreathed handrail. No.77 has a panelled hall with Corinthian fluted pilasters and door with

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enriched mouldings; original staircase. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached C19 cast-iron railings to areas. HISTORICAL NOTE: No.77 was the home of Thomas Henry Wyatt, architect (GLC plaque)."

They, together with 29B Montague Street have been the offices of Faber and Faber since September 2008 but they are due to leave by September 2023.

Planning permission and listed building consent were granted in 1973 for the renovation and part reconstruction of Nos. 74-77 Great Russell Street and 29a Montague Street and the erection of a four storey link block for office use (known as 29b Montague Street. It is joined to Nos. 74-77.

Planning permission and listed building consent were granted in 2007 on appeal for a new mansard roof top addition on Nos. 74 - 77 to form office accommodation.

Listed building consent was granted in 2015 for sub-division to form two new rooms in the roof space on Nos. 74 – 77 and subdivide a smaller office to provide an additional storage area.

2. THE PROPOSALS

The objective is comprehensive refurbishment and the separation of Nos 74- 77 from No. 29B to enable independent occupation.

Existing and proposed floorspace (GIA sq m) is:

	Existing	Proposed
74 – 77 Great Russell Street		2,201.5
29B Montague Street		728.5
Total	2,940	2,930

The Schedule of Works sets out the proposed alterations in detail and are described in the Design and Access Statement by SPPARC. In summary:

- **Entrances**

The entrance of 77Great Russell St will be redefined as the primary entrance to Nos. 74 – 77.

The entrance to 29B Montague St is maintained in its current location but brought forward to enable access to the new stair.

- **Internal Core**

The modern core will be removed to enable the construction of a new dedicated stair to 29B, and two lifts, whilst reinstating the original party wall alignment between Nos. 74- 77.

Two new lifts are proposed to service each demise separately, whilst a new staircase is proposed to service 29B. Both lifts and new stair have been designed to offer full reversibility should the buildings be reconnected in the future..

New toilet facilities will be located within the core dedicated to No. 29B and changing rooms including showers are proposed at lower ground level in Nos 74 – 77.

- **Roof Level**

At roof level, additional openings to fit new skylights are proposed to increase daylight to the fourth floor. They have been positioned to align with the existing dormers.

This intervention will have no visible impact from the street as the rooflights will be located on the flat portion of the roof.

The proposed lift overrun would be 23 cm taller than existing but set back from Montague Street (away from the British Museum) by 2.8 m compared with the existing.

The existing plant is visible from the public realm. There is the opportunity now to screen the plant and blend in better with the roof. The new plant is set within an existing recessed area in the centre of rear roof pitch, the mansard would be replaced with new plant. An acoustic screen around the plant is proposed of similar height and alignment to the dormer windows so as not to disrupt the proportions of the elevation. The design and materiality of this element will be carefully considered.

- **Ceilings and Lighting**

In Nos. 74-77 GRS, suspended lighting fixtures, designed to reflect the shape of the room, paired with a central feature light will be fitted on the ground and first floor. Unlike the upper levels, most of the existing rooms contain panelling, cornices and fireplaces which will be enhanced by the new light fittings.

In other rooms, the suspended lighting will consist of a series of linear fixtures, which will change orientation between rooms. Externally, there will be the appearance of four terraced houses, each having their own identity.

In the basement, circulation areas, and other amenity spaces, a mix of recessed lights and concealed LED diffused lights are proposed.

In 29B, a series of suspended linear fixtures are proposed, all aligned with the existing windows, complementary to the 1970s building.

- **Cycle Parking**

The flank facade facing Montagu Street would see two changes. The existing louvre at ground floor level would be removed and a rendered window blank to match the existing adjoining blank windows on this façade. A modern window within the lightwell will be replaced with a door to provide dedicated cycle access.

A new cycle store of 10 spaces is proposed in the lower ground floor of No. 77 directly accessible from the Montague Street courtyard via the stairs and rear door leading to the well of No. 77.

3. HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

The Heritage Assessment by the Heritage Practice concludes:

“The proposals affect a group of listed buildings which have sustained a high degree of internal alteration and modification over time. This has been particularly concentrated to the rear parts of no.75 and 76 with the introduction of the new lift and stair core in the 1970s. Much of the proposed work will be located in this area, reconfiguring the layout of these vertical elements of the building and upgrading finishes and fittings for a more modern, harmonious aesthetic.”

The building has also been damaged significantly due to the lateral conversion works and associated corridors, as well as numerous partitions over time which have created a warren of spaces. The proposed layout of the buildings will rectify much of this damage, particularly within nos.75, 76 and 77. The works to no.74 reflect a balanced enhancement, taking account of the particular harm of the partitions within the front rooms.

The proposed rooflights will only affect modern fabric to the later added mansard. The rooflights will be modest in scale and spaced regularly, as well as broadly in line with the dormers, responding to the rhythm of the facades below. Notwithstanding this, the rooflights will not be visible from street level or from the windows of the vast majority of surrounding buildings.

The proposed works will fully comply with the requirements of the London Borough of Camden's Local Plan 2017 and will preserve and in many respects, enhance the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building. The character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area will be preserved. The proposals will also accord with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular ensuring that the significance of the heritage asset is sustained and enhanced."

4. STRUCTURAL DESIGN NOTE

The Structural Design Note by Mason Navarro Pledge

Two main areas of works are proposed, the replacement of the current (modern) core and the local removal of internal loadbearing walls.

The removal of the existing cross wall in No. 74 is proposed to take place over the full height of the building. A new steel frame is proposed to support the floors. Local and global stability of the structure will be maintained.

Removal of cross walls in No. 77 is anticipated to require new local steel beams and adjustment of the existing structure. The removal of the 1970's concrete structure to the rear of Nos. 75 and 76 will require a new steel frame to be inserted on the line of the original rear façade to support the mansard roof and new intermediate floors. Much of the adjacent floor structures are expected to be of modern construction, following the significant disruption caused by the work to form the stair and lift. The proposed cut line in the floors has been determined to minimise the impact on historic fabric. New foundations will be detailed to be compatible with the original construction and to limit the risk of differential movement.

5. NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

It is proposed to replace the condenser units at roof level London with new units.

A baseline noise survey has been undertaken to establish the background noise in the vicinity.

The Noise Impact Assessment by Venta Acoustics concludes that:

"The cumulative noise emission levels from the proposed plant have been assessed to be compliant with the plant noise emission limits, with necessary mitigation measures specified. The proposed scheme is not expected to have a significant adverse noise impact and the relevant plant noise requirements have been shown to be met."

6. CONCLUSION

Nos. 74 – 77 Great Russell Street together with 29B Montague Street have been the offices of Faber and Faber since September 2008 but they are due to leave by September 2023.

This enables the overdue refurbishment of the listed buildings and the 1970's office block. This will allow independent occupation of No. 29B.



The applications for planning permission and listed building consent follow pre-application discussions with you. 29A Montague Street is not included.

The proposed works will fully comply with the requirements of the London Borough of Camden's Local Plan 2017 and will preserve and in many respects, enhance the special architectural and historic interest of the listed buildings.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Dyke", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Dyke
Director