Heritage Statement

Holborn Bars, 138 - 142 Holborn, London EC1N 2ST

Prepared for: The Prudential Assurance Company Limited
c/o M&G Real Estate

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Date: 03 March 2023

Reference: 119351-100/30/HM/STB

HCL00300-1006202792-721\1.0

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

1.1.1. This Heritage Statement has been drafted to accompany the Listed Building Consent application (PP-11913649) and confirm the impact the proposals will have on the asset. The only parts of the heritage asset to be affected by the proposals are the window ledges and parapet walls identified on the drawings appended to the application.

1.1.2. The main reason behind the listed building consent application is to introduce overflow chutes to three parapet gutters due to a recent bout of internal water ingress which has caused aesthetic and physical damage internally within the property. Furthermore, the addition of more pigeon spring tension wire has been proposed due to areas that have significant build up of pigeon guano.

1.2. Designation records for the heritage asset

1.2.1. Holborn Bars is listed on the National Heritage List for England, as entry number 1379064. Additionally, it sits within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area.

1.2.2. The frontage to Holborn was formerly listed in the City of London on 03 March 1972. The frontage to Greville Street listed in the LB of Camden on 14 May 1974. Both parts were included in the LB of Camden following boundary changes on 01 April 1994.

2. The Nature of the Asset

2.1.1. Holborn Bars is a Grade II* listed office building in Holborn, London. The asset was constructed in several phases. The main construction of the property took place in 1885-1901 by Alfred Waterhouse. Additions were made in 1930-1932 which were not entirely replaced by the rebuild in 1989-1993, but that did include fragments of the 1878-1879 construction.

2.1.2. The building is constructed of polished granite, red brick and red terracotta. Detailing of fine ironwork is noted throughout the elevations and to the internal courtyards. The roofs are mostly thick slate covered pitched roofs in diminishing courses.

2.1.3. The construction undertaken to the property in the 1930's did include work with internal steel framing, but the building is made coherent despite the many phases by use of similar materials. This has ensured the property retains the boldly detailed and picturesque Gothic Revival style.

2.1.4. The front of the building is centred around a large carriageway arch, formerly part of the Furnival's Inn building, as later described in this heritage statement. This arch sits at the foot of a tower with a hipped roof and flèche. Three window ranges to either side of this tower which are topped by gabled dormers and each end of the elevation are full height rectangular bays with three windows in a segmental bay, finished with facing gables. Generally to the remainder of the elevations, there is a mixture of three, four and five window ranges in timber and metal frames, both with sliding sash or casement style openings.

2.1.5. Centrally, there are 3 no. interconnecting courtyards with the larger known as Waterhouse Square. Within Waterhouse Square, there is a 1914-1918 War Memorial, as well as bronze memorial plaques towards the eastern carriageway arch.

2.1.6. Internally, there are significant inclusions such as the ground floor area to the left side of the tower and the Director's staircase within that area which is clad in faience tiling/brickwork. The Library is the only room to survive with most of its original fittings, including the lights. Other notable features that remain include mahogany panelling, decorative plaster ceilings and historic fireplaces throughout the building.

3. The Extent of the Asset

3.1.1. The site and its locality can be seen within the site and location plan appended to the Listed Building Consent application. However, in summary the boundary of the asset is typically noted with retaining walls with iron railings/detailing, or the outer face of the façade itself determining the boundary.

4. The Significance of the Asset

4.1.1. Holborn Bars sits on the old site of Furnival's Inn, which is between Brooke Street and Leather Lane. Furnival's Inn is believed to have been on this site from as early as 1377 (British-history.ac.uk/old-new-london/vol2/pp553-576).

4.1.2. The front of the building, mainly 1897-1901 is dominated by the history of Furnival's Inn whereby the elevation of Holborn Bars continues the height of the prior building. The west of the building is where the steel framed additions of 1930-1932 are noted. To the east block and returning along Leather Lane, this incorporates what was the Ridler's Hotel block of 1897-1901. To the north of the site is the Wood's Hotel range of 1895-1896, as well as the Greville Street/Leather Lane block of 1895.

4.1.3. It is clear to see that Holborn Bars and the site it sits on holds a large degree of significance in London's history and, in effect, is a timeline/snapshot of the evolution and development of this specific area of London spanning over 646 years.

4.1.4. The surrounding area is also home to numerous other buildings of significance, including but not limited to;

- Gray's Inn Hall and Gardens (Grade I – II, depending on the individual listing)
- Church of St Andrew (Grade I)
- Staple Inn Buildings (Grade II)
- Barnard's Inn Hall (scheduling)
- Mercer's School Hall and Buildings Adjoining (Grade II*)

4.1.5. Ensuring preservation and sustaining the stature and heritage of this asset is a key measurable that has been considered as part of the application proposal. The presence this property has upon this area of London is notable and should be upheld at each opportunity.

5. The Proposed Works

Ref.	Overflow Chutes
1.0	▪ Via a mobile elevated work platform and from the eye-bolt anchor points. ▪ Core drill of c. 50mm diameter holes from the inside of the parapet gutter through to the external side of the wall. ▪ Line the core drilled bore hole with lead and dress into the inside of the parapet. ▪ The chute will protrude from the elevation c.50-60mm. The variance will depend on any obstructions below the protrusion point to ensure no water runs down the façade.

Ref.	Pigeon spring tension wire
2.0	▪ Via a mobile elevated work platform or abseilers. ▪ Drill small holes at intervals of c. 1.50m and install 25mm masonry rivets for the stainless steel posts to be inserted into and grouted into place. Enough room is to be left at either end of the runs for an anchor point, c. 115mm. ▪ Install the anchor point via a small drill hole and again, a 25mm masonry rivet. ▪ Install the bird wire as per the manufacturer's guidance.

5.1.1. Alternative proposals to prevent internal water ingress and a build-up of pigeon guano were considered prior to the submission of this application and they are detailed below.

5.1.2. Due to more frequent periods of heavy rainfall, which are a likely side effect of global warming, the parapet gutters have been breached and the water is entering the internal fabric of the building. The lead-lined parapet gutters are known to be water-tight as they were reviewed as part of the larger external restoration project which completed in December 2020, but they have minimal falls and have a limited capacity due to their size. The steep roof slopes shed rainwater quickly with the slate providing a small amount of friction, especially since they were cleaned as part of the previous restoration works. This means that in heavy down pours, the gutters fill up quickly and are often overwhelmed. In the first instance, the on-site maintenance team have increased the amount of cleaning cycles undertaken to the gutters but the problem has persisted.

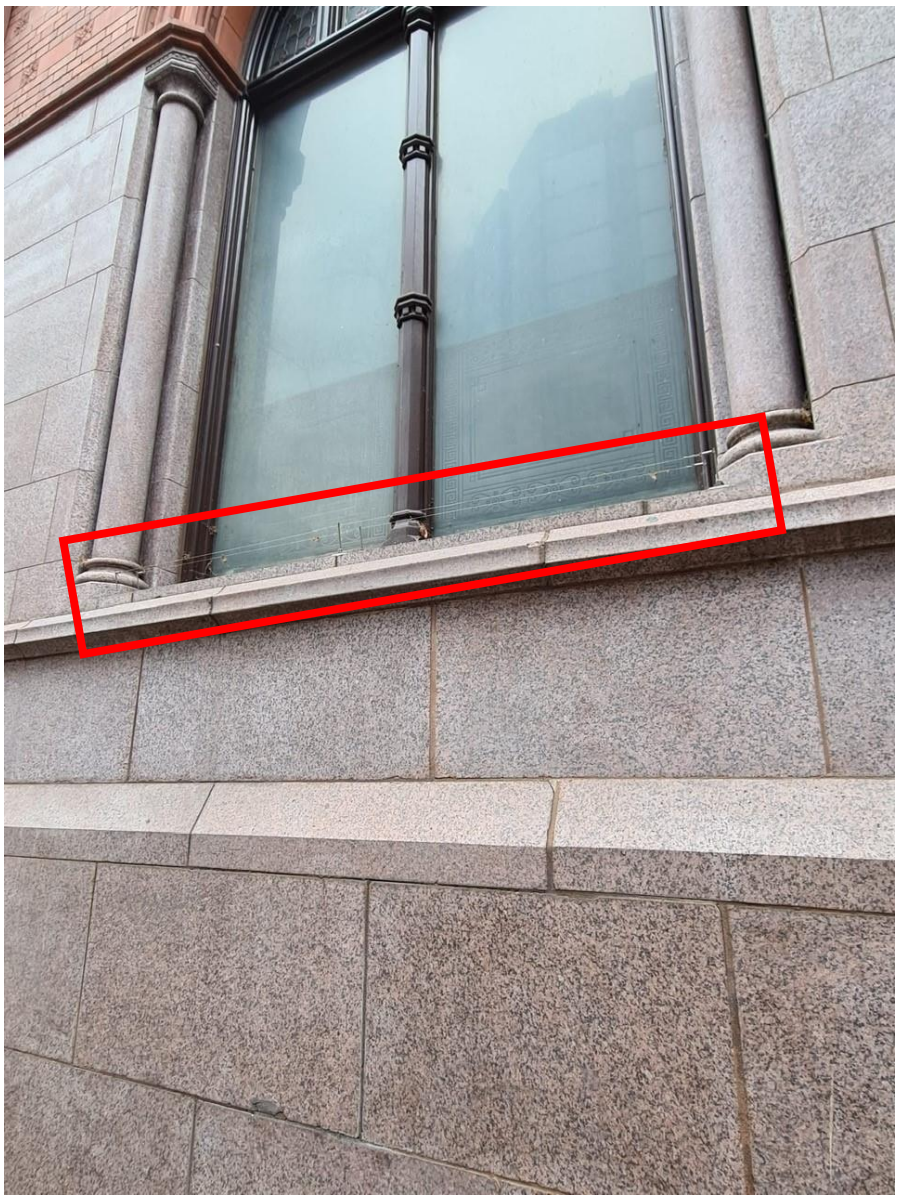
5.1.3. The options presented to the client were to increase the height of the lead upstands/flashings or to install additional outlets with downpipes. In order to increase the height of the lead flashings, the slate roof slopes would need to be removed and reinstalled after the leadwork is undertaken. This would be hugely costly and would likely also result in many of the slates becoming damaged or broken, meaning less authentic replacements would be sought. Additionally, by increasing the height of the flashings would simply increase amount of water that may pool within the parapet which could percolate into the interior of the property. Installing additional outlets and downpipes was discounted as an increased amount of penetrations to the fabric would be required to the façade. Furthermore, to replicate the current installations, bore holes of circa 1-2 metres would be required, as the hoppers do not sit on the façade at the same level as the parapets. By installing an overflow chute, this alleviates the amount of water to be evacuated from the gutters by allowing the water to eject from the parapet as opposed to finding its way into the interior of the building. It can also be used as an indicator for the maintenance team to react and check the performance of the outlet for any blockages. An overflow chute has already been installed on the Leather Lane elevation, which retrospective approval is being sought. We believe this installation to be innocuous and any by passers would need to study the elevation in detail to notice it. A picture of this installation is below.

5.1.4. Varying types of pigeon deterrent were reviewed, including surface mounted spikes and tension wire. The surface mounted spikes were discounted as the spikes are much more visible from ground level as opposed to thin wire, not easily visible from a distance. As for the surface mounting, this will require some form of glue/adhesive which, if at a later stage becomes loose, it may take away some of the surface of the terracotta, leading to freeze-thaw defects with the terracotta or loss of fire skin. For this reason, a more robust solution of dowelled-in posts which are held in place with grouting that will match the colour of the terracotta blocks is proposed, and is also in keeping with other installations on the elevations. The spring tension wire galvanised posts will protrude c. 100mm vertically from the terracotta sills.

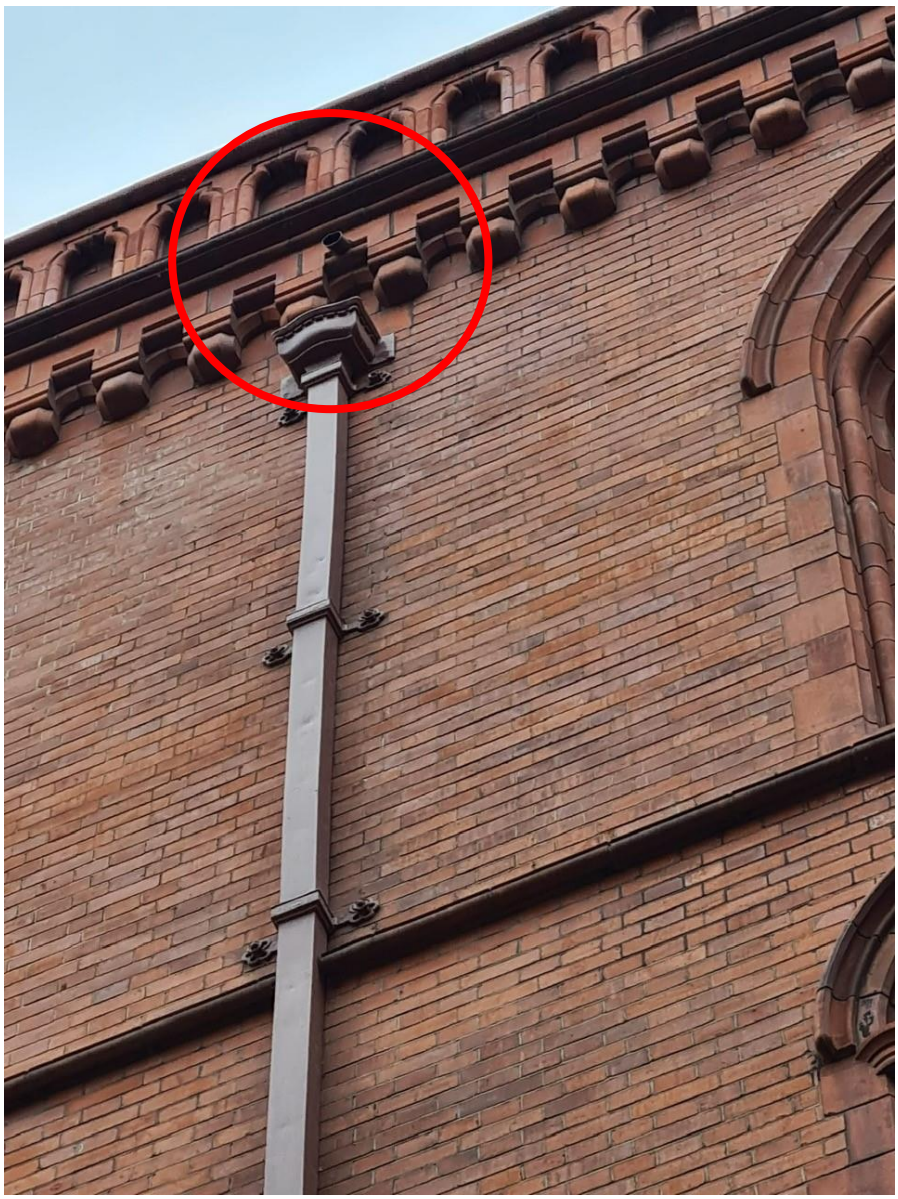
6. The Impact on the Asset

6.1.1. The proposed overflow chutes would have a positive impact on preserving the internal finishes, whilst causing minimal disruption to the original construction externally. The overflow chute routes, will be planned to core drill through the least amount of brickwork and will be seamlessly detailed into the asset with appropriate lead detailing.

6.1.2. The proposed pigeon deterrent will also have a positive impact on the asset by preventing guano staining to the façade and other decorative detailing noted to the elevations.



Existing pigeon wire installation to be replicated under this proposal.



Existing overflow chute to be replicated under this proposal.