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## FCDO Services

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# Ground Floor Refurbishment

Design & Access Statement Relating  
to:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

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AR-113

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## Abbreviations

<b>Abbrev.</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

## References

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1	Design and Access Statement	V0.2	22/10/2021

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# 1 Introduction

This statement forms part of the Listed Building Consent application in relation to the remodelling of Ground Floor rooms at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AH (grade I listed).

The purpose of this statement is to provide an overview of strategy for the works.

The area for the works was selected to meet security considerations on location and to create minimal works impacting the original building fabric.

## 1.1 Background

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) require additional secure working areas to accommodate existing and future operational requirements. The brief has been issued by FCDO Estates, Security and Network Directorate (ESND).

The occupation of four rooms is to be changed, requiring the creation of a new entrance lobby and provision of different server room arrangements. The original occupants have been relocated elsewhere on the Ground Floor.

The rooms have a limited Heritage interest, and a Heritage Impact Statement is provided under separate cover.

Use of the rooms and certain configuration is classified at SECRET. Relevant information will be made available to view.

## 1.2 Project Team

Nigel Carter	Project Director
Jon Evans	Heritage Consultant
Will Reed	Project Manager
Chris Donnachie	Lead Designer/Architect
Paul Davies	Structural Engineer
Ole Walton	MEP Engineer
Dave Ellis	Security Engineer
Alasdair Young	Data Engineer
Richard Wright	Quantity Surveyor

## 1.3 Listed Building

List entry number: 1250045

Grade: I

IoE Number: 207600

Ordnance Survey grid reference TQ 2979NE – 91/4 and 9079NW – 92/14

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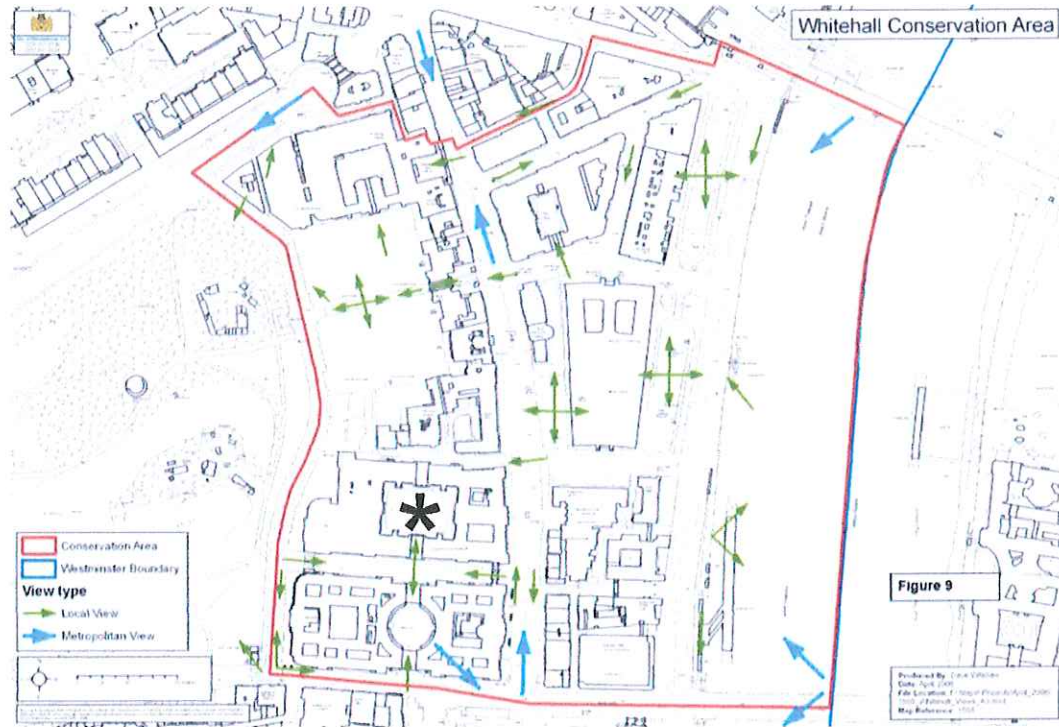
City of Westminster Whitehall SW1 (West side) The Foreign Office (Foreign & Commonwealth Office with Home Office) date 5/2/70

The list description reads as follows:

*“Government Offices. 1861 design, completed 1873 by Sir George Gilbert Scott with Sir Matthew Digby Wyatt for the St James’s Park front composition and the design of the former India Office courtyard. Portland stone with polychrome enrichment of polished granite columns and insets as well as other coloured stones; slate roofs. Italianate opulence (at Palmerston’s insistence) in the Venetian-Genoese manner evenly distributed in bold relief over symmetrical Whitehall and King Charles St elevation but with asymmetry to Downing St and picturesquely composed Park with front tower. Massive building planned around courtyards, the main one entered by triple archways from side streets, 2 smaller ones behind Whitehall front and India Office court (now glazed over) in South West corner. Generally of 3 stages, the upper and lower ones containing 2 storeys. Whitehall front has broad centrepiece and end pavilions. Large semicircular arched portal; arcaded Ground Floor windows with carved figured and spreading out in spandrels; Upper floors have 2 orders of coupled columns, but with pilasters to end pavilions, the upper windows tripartite with granite colonettes; above first floor windows are portrait medallions whilst the spandrels of the First and Second Floor centrepiece windows are enriched with carved figures. Enriched entablatures between storeys and deep crowning entablature with balustrade parapet surmounted by figure sculpture. Pavilions punctuate King Charles Street façade with triple arched gateway in centre, rusticated quoined, pedimented pavilion; more restrained Italianate (sic) elevational details with archivolt arched windows beneath cornices or pediments. Park front distinguished by square tower finished off with a belvedere storey and balustraded parapet; quadrant return to projecting south west portion of front with 2 tiers of orders and tall arcading to its centrepiece; corner pavilion with Downing Street. The latter elevation similar to King Charles Street but asymmetrically composed to west end with a polygonal elaborated bay window above steps down to park. The main courtyard elevations of 2 main storeys and attic storey with 3 storey pavilions, all but pedimented; 4 two storeyed porches; figure sculpture enrichment. The decoration, with majolica friezes made by Minton, Hollins & Co and polished granite column superimposed orders; 4 statues by H Protat in corners, First floor statues by W Nocholls and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor ones by T Phyllers, busts over 2<sup>nd</sup> floor windows by Protat. Rich Italianate interiors and very grand staircase in Foreign Office with Imperial, marble flights and tripartite thermal arrangement to gallery with coffered barrel vaults flanking dome on pendentives over centre of compartment; important collection of C18 and C19 statues associated with the former India Office etc.”*

## 1.4 Conservation Area

The property is in the Whitehall Conservation Area, Westminster City Council. The site is highlighted by an asterisk.



Whitehall Conservation Area - Supplementary Planning Guidance (December 2003)

## 1.5 Context

The area under consideration has been significantly altered over the years with unsympathetic interventions and generally consists of modern finishes.

- The main area was originally four smaller rooms that have been connected by removing large sections of internal masonry walling and a chimney.
  - Support beams have been inserted to carry the weight of the walls and floors above.
  - Large areas of plaster have been removed above the ceiling line
  - Several original quirked corner beads exist as indicated on drawing AR-003
- There is a significant mass concrete pad occupying the main area. It is assumed the original timber boarded floor was removed.
- Other areas of timber flooring have been removed along with plaster, skirtings and doorways.
- Modern partitioning subdivides one of the rooms. This is being removed and will enhance the space.
- The majority of the area has a modern raised access floor

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- The majority of the area has a modern metal pan suspended ceiling that is set below the level of the window heads.
- Original 'jack-arch' ceilings will be exposed in most rooms
- One room has a flat plaster ceiling with ornamental cornice of limited sensitivity
- A ramp from a secondary entrance provides wheelchair access.
- The secondary fire escape has steps to the exit and is not accessible.
- Security screens have been added to all windows.
- Secondary steel braces and beams have been added at high level.
- Original ceilings and walls are painted.
  - Under floor plaster and skirting paint may be the original colour scheme
- Architraves and doors are painted.
- Window frames are varnished.
  - Later additions to the windows include bomb-blast net curtains and security grilles.

The works will have minor impact on frontage to the main courtyard, known as 'the quad'. The removal of security screens will improve the elevation to the quad. Lower ground floor vents will be located in existing window locations and will be behind an existing stone balustrade, limiting any apparent visual impact.

The works will have minor impact to the internal corridor. Two doors will be adjusted and one replaced, all will be designed to match existing panelled doors.

Services routes will require ground floor penetrations and routing of ducts in the lower ground floor.

## 2 Design Proposals

The project will deliver open plan office space, two meeting rooms, a server room and a secure entrance lobby.

### 2.1 Design Options

Earlier design development considered various arrangements to maximise occupancy and the selected design is a hybrid of these.

Consideration may be given to the retention of the existing modern window grilles to the quad if security consider the current arrangement does not require secondary glazing.

### 2.2 Description of Proposals

Strip out;

- Removal of modern internal partitioning
- Removal of modern metal pan suspended ceiling
- Removal of modern window grilles (note three small grilles are to remain)
- Removal of modern tea-point and associated services.
- Removal of one door leaf, lining and architrave to be retained.

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- Removal of all existing services

### Structural intervention;

- Secondary steel to support new walls, small concrete platform and doors.

### Superstructure;

- Walls to form entrance lobby, meeting rooms and server.
- Joisted ceiling over entrance lobby, one meeting room and server.
- Upgrade of a previously sealed-off doorway.
- Sealing off an existing door (door to remain fixed shut).

### Secondary elements;

- Secondary glazing to windows facing the quad.
- Solid infill to windows facing the staircase.
- New entrance door.
- Adjustments to two existing doors
- Chimney flue to be blocked off.
- Raised access flooring refurbished and extended.
- Suspended ceiling rafts incorporating lighting and acoustic treatment.
- New steps in entrance to connect raised access floor to the original floor level.
- New platform lift to provide step-free access to the raised access floor level.
- Existing (modern) slate hearth cut back.
- 2 nr basement vents reconfigured.

### Finishes;

- Carpet floor tiles with vinyl to the server room
- Self finished ceiling rafts providing a better view of original features
- Emulsion paint to walls and ceilings
- Satin gloss to architraves and skirtings.

### Services;

- Small power and data distribution
- LED lighting suspended in corridor and meeting room 2.
- LED lighting surface mounted in entrance lobby, meeting room 1 and server.
- LED lighting uplighters above joisted roof to entrance lobby, meeting room 1 and server
- LED lighting incorporated into ceiling rafts in open plan office
- LED emergency lighting
- Floor mounted heating and cooling fan coil units
- Fresh air ventilation via MVHR unit and ductwork distribution
- Fire detection and alarm
- Security installations



## 2.3 Implication on Building Fabric

The works will have limited impact on the original building fabric with most works removing modern interventions.

- No significant demolition of the original fabric is proposed.
- Penetrations will be required for services runs.
  - Drawings AR-003, AR-006 and AR-010 show where penetration works are required.
  - Service runs are designed to maximise use of existing penetrations where possible.
- New steelwork is being introduced to take the weight of internal partitions.
  - Six padstones will be inserted into the existing masonry wall as shown on drawing AR-010
  - The top of the padstones are set approximately 25mm above the existing concrete sub floor.
  - It is believed the area has already has original plaster and skirting removed.
  - The padstones are 450x215x150 and 450x100x150 deep.
  - Steel beams will bear on the padstone.
  - Any original flooring will be cut back sufficiently to allow the beams and associated trims to be installed.
  - It is understood large areas of the original timber floorboards have already been removed during previous interventions
  - A record of the extent of original flooring will be made before and after the works are carried out.
- New walls and internal roof will require the original plaster to be cut back to allow a direct fixing to the original masonry walls as shown on drawing AR-020
- New secondary glazing will use existing fixing points created when the modern grilles were installed. As shown on drawing AR-031
- The existing modern raised access floor is reused where possible and extended.
- Removal of the suspended ceiling and window grilles will provide better views of the original fabric.
- Two modern doors providing access from the corridor will be removed as shown on drawing AR-003.
  - One door will be replaced with a solid core timber panelled door in keeping with other doors in the area.
  - This door provides the main access and will be power assisted for accessibility.
  - The second doorway is to be sealed and faced with a door leaf similar to the one above.
  - This door will be fixed shut in a similar manner to other doors in the building.
- One modern door leaf connecting the office space as shown on drawing AR-003 will be removed,
  - Modern linings and architraves are to remain as they were carried out in keeping with the original building.
  - Notches for hinges, door closer and locks will be filled and painted out
- The original fireplace will be adjusted
  - The original marble surround has been re-fitted in the past to suit the current raised access floor level with a modern slate hearth introduced
  - Drawing AR-020 detail D(20)04 shows the works proposed

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- The hearth is to be cut back to line with the mantelpiece above.
- The existing fireplace is not to be disturbed apart from blocking off the flue with a concrete plug (vented).
- The existing modern blanking panel will be retained and repainted.
- Lower Ground Floor louvers to be reconfigured to accept new supply and extract vents.
  - AR-006 Lower Ground Floor schematic shows the locations of the windows in question
  - The existing window frames have had metal louvers 'glazed in'.
  - The proposals are to reconfigure these so that new vents can use the same louver as existing vents, avoiding any material change to the external appearance.
  - The louvers will be removed, fitted with a new plenum with new and existing vents connecting.
  - The louvers will be re-fitted in the same arrangement. If the existing modern louvers are found to be deficient, a similar product will be used.
- Lighting and ceiling rafts will be supported on existing secondary steelwork where possible or use fixing points already created in the ceiling. Drawing AR-040 shows lighting locations
- Lighting in the entrance area will include some up lighting to highlight existing cornices.
- Ductwork penetration required through floor slab – 2 No. at 400 x 300mm as shown on drawing AR-010
  - One penetration through previously disturbed flooring
  - The second penetration using an existing penetration
- Ductwork penetrations at high level ranging from 500mmØ to 300mmØ as shown on drawing AR-010
- Pipework penetrations will aim to reuse existing penetrations or go through past sections of walls that have been infilled as shown on drawing AR-010
- New small 50mmØ holes into the entrance area wall for fire alarm and electrical cabling as shown on drawing AR-010
- Support anchors and drop rods for the ventilation unit as indicated on drawing AR-010
- Cables and pipes will use existing fixing points and routes as far as practically possible.

Structural, refer to drawing ST-005 for typical details where the proposed work interface with the existing building fabric.

- New structural steel beams are to be supported on existing loadbearing masonry walls, with concrete padstones.
- New timber ceilings are to be tied into the existing loadbearing masonry walls with galvanised steel straps.
- New service penetrations through existing loadbearing masonry walls are to be formed using pre-stressed concrete lintels.
- New service penetrations through existing floor structure are to be created with new steel beams.

## 2.4 Implication on Accessibility

- Currently,
  - there is rather poor wheelchair access via a ramp that is not in the main entry area.
  - The tea-point is not accessible.
  - The existing secondary fire exit is not accessible.
  - Door and architraves are the same colour, which may impact on visual differentiation.
- The proposals
  - Will remove the ramp and provide a platform lift in the entrance area creating step free access to all areas.
  - Remove the tea-point.
  - The main areas will have no dividing doors. With new doors limited to entry, meeting rooms and server. These will have sufficient tonal difference and be sufficiently wide to facilitate wheelchair use.
  - The entry door from the corridor will be power assisted to facilitate access.
  - No changes are proposed to the existing secondary fire escape and a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will be required should any occupants have impaired mobility.
- Access is greatly improved in general.

## 3 Conclusion

The proposed works are relatively minor in nature and do not significantly change or impact the use of the building.

Accessibility will be significantly improved, with existing managed solutions reduced in scope.