

HERITAGE STATEMENT

42 - 46 Baldwin Street Bristol BS1 1PN

Prepared by

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Description of works

Alterations to building facade including new office entrance and steps to front elevation and direct lift access to the basement

Use

Office (Class E). The ground floor reception area for the building is located well above the street level, as shown by the submitted plans.

Amount:

The scope of alterations to the building will be minimal and will not affect the condition of the building. The removals will also not affect the character or appearance of the City & Queens conservation area.

Scale:

Works affecting the fabric of the building are restricted to creation of a new entranceway and steps to the building, and a rear direct lift access to basement. Materials and glazing are to tie into existing.

Landscaping / Philosophy:

N/A

Designations:

The building is not statutory listed nor is it on the local list.

The building is within the City & Queens Conservation Area.

Access:

Vehicular and Transport Links: No works proposed.

Heritage asset statement:

Name: Royal London Buildings, 42-46 Baldwin Street, Bristol, BS1 1NR

Local Authority: Bristol City Council

Planning Authority: Bristol City Council

Burgh: Bristol City

Grade: not statutory listed, not on local list, but located within the City & Queens conservation area.

Date first listed: N/A

Assessment of Significance

Since the designation of the first Conservation Areas in 1970, Bristol City Council has undertaken a comprehensive programme of Conservation Area designation, extension and policy development.

There are now 33 Conservation Areas in Bristol, covering approximately 30% of the city.

The City & Queens Conservation Area forms the historic heart of the city of Bristol, bounded on the south, east and west by the Avon and Frome Rivers, and on the north by the site of the medieval castle (now Castle Park).

The Conservation Area is centred on two main areas: the core of the medieval city of Bristol to the north and west of Bristol Bridge, and Queen Square that was set out on marshland to the south of the city, beginning in 1700.

The Redcliffe Conservation Area is situated to the south and east of the Conservation Area, the City Docks Conservation Area to the south and west, and the College Green Conservation Area to the west. In addition, there are long views from within the Conservation Area towards the St Michael's Hill and Christmas Steps Conservation Area, and also the Tyndall's Park Conservation Area.

Baldwin Street is located in Area 2 of the City & Queens Square conservation area, between The Medieval City and King Street Areas.

Summary of Character:

The City and Queen Square was one of the first Conservation Areas to be designated as 'of national significance', and although this formal title is no longer in use, it still corresponds to reality. It has distinctively different characteristics in different areas. The Old City is tightly packed, with dense and interconnected development of various historical eras and various styles of architecture. Queen Square is a formal open space with primarily office use but also heavily used for recreation. It is a valuable open space in the heart of the city and is of considerable architectural and historical interest as an example of 18th century town planning.

Although most of the medieval city has now disappeared from the surface, there is much archaeological evidence below ground that requires protection. There is an

extensive network of medieval vaults below the surface that is of national significance.

Outside the medieval city walls, King Street and its servicing streets mark the first postmedieval suburb of Bristol. The street is noteworthy for its rich townscape and traditional paving, and it has rows of generous half-timbered Jacobean period merchants' houses many of which are listed Grade II*, linked to rear warehouses.

To the south, the creation of a broad peninsula in 1240 by the diversion of the Frome at its confluence with the Avon allowed the creation in 1700 of Queen Square and Prince Street. The former is among the largest residential Georgian Squares in the country, while the latter has lost much of its fine character through low quality post-war development.

All around the peninsula, large areas of traditional setted quays survive, and there are many features from the docks such as bollards, cranes, stone kerbs and setted haulingways. The edge of the working quays is marked by impressive Victorian warehouses built in red engineering brickwork and gives a dockside flavour to the streets adjoining the harbour. There are important vistas across the Floating Harbour, including a very significant view of St Mary Redcliffe church.

Area 2 Details: Baldwin Street

Baldwin Street developed in the 17th and 18th centuries as an area for stores and warehouses to service the docks. In the Victorian era the street had many new buildings: The Fish Market, shops and a music hall among others.

In the twentieth century the Victorian buildings mostly survived on the north side of the street, but many of the south side have been replaced, mostly with taller office blocks.

Retail uses have declined somewhat, but bars and restaurants have come in as replacement uses. Wider pavements would encourage more of a café culture along this street.

The street is very heavily used by vehicular traffic, and although there are several crossing points for pedestrians, it can be a problem to cross in the rush hour.

There are several prominent trees along the street, particularly near the Bristol Bridge end. However, the street and pavement surfaces are quite poor both aesthetically and in practical maintenance terms.

Key landmark buildings: Bristol Bridge, St Nicholas Church, the former Fish Market, and the former People's Palace Music Hall (only the façade survives of the original building).

In land use terms the area to the south of Baldwin Street is dominated by the Telephone Exchange. Offices, shops and flats surround this: few of the original small courtyards survive in this area. Many buildings have active ground floor uses such as shops and cafes, including Royal London Buildings which currently houses a cafe. There is a particular Latin character to the shops and cafes on the north side of Baldwin Street at the junction with St Stephen Street.

Baldwin Street Character Area Dominant Characteristics

- Impressive streetscape with best buildings on north side
- Street clutter and poor surfaces are negative Features
- Key Landmark buildings
- Heavy traffic to Baldwin Street
- Trees at key points in Baldwin Street
- Buildings are typically 5 to 6 storeys
- 'Latin Quarter' around St Stephen Street/Baldwin Street Junction

The proposed development will not have any material impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.