

## **Design, Access and Heritage statement**

Project

17 Duchess Mews,  
London  
W1G 9DU

Prepared by:  
Extension Architecture

Description:

**Retrospective application for the installation of PV panels and associated equipment and the replacement/relocation of rooftop AC unit above pre-existing mansard roof extension.**

## **Contents**

1.0 Introduction

2.0 The site context

3.0 Planning history

4.0 Design

5.0 Sustainability

6.0 Development Policy Considerations

7.0 Conclusion

## 1.0 Introduction

### Background

1.1 This statement provides further background information supporting the Planning and Listed Building Consent application on behalf of Mr Brown.

1.2 The property is located at the Southern end of Duchess Mews near the junction of Duchess Street. This statement will present the site in the context of the planning policy of the City of Westminster.

1.3 By assessing the site, its constraints, its situation, and context this statement will demonstrate the suitability of the proposal and how it intersects with the local planning authority's policies and development management guidance.

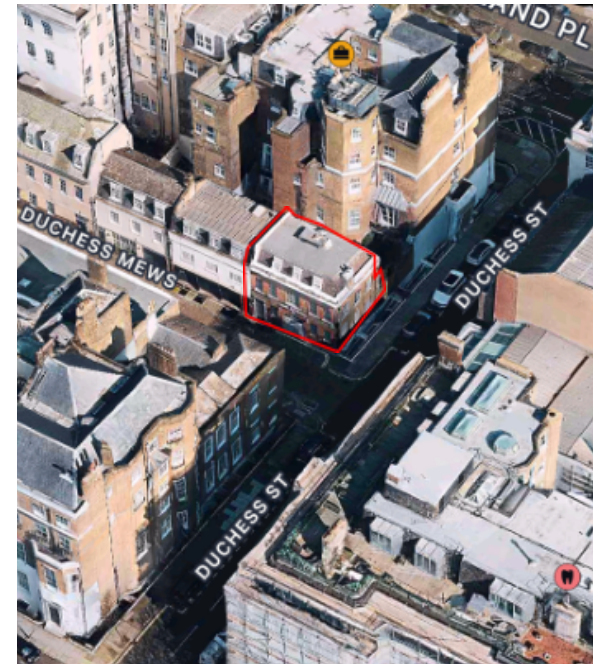
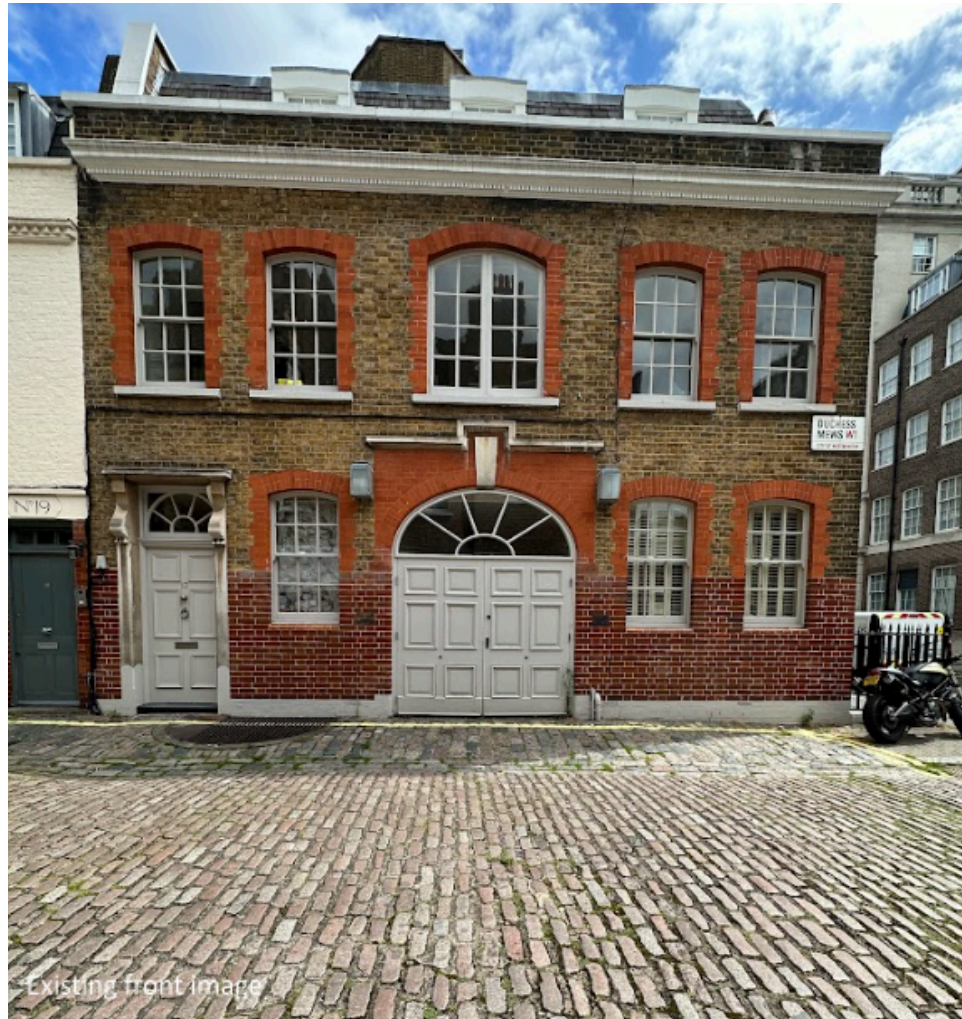


Fig 1: Existing aerial view, where the red dashed line denotes the site location



SITE IMAGES





## 2.0 The Site Context and Heritage

2.1 This application relates to 17 Duchess Mews which is a two-storey dwelling house with mansard roof. The property is a Grade II listed building which forms part of the wider terraces No 17-19 Duchess Mews, the site is also located in Harley Street Conservation Area. The collective of buildings on Duchess Mews are different in scale and aesthetic, as such the proposed alterations to the existing windows would not result in any harm to the existing street scene.

2.2 In the national Historic England Listing it is characterised by its *Stock brick with fine rubbed red brick dressings and stuccoed east front; slate roof. 2 storeys. 5 windows wide with 3 window return to Duchess Street and 3 bay garden front. Entrance front has central semi-elliptical arched doorway with keyblock and label mould over and stone dressed entrance in left bay with bold consoles to cornice-hood. Broad central 1st floor window and smaller windows flanking; recessed glazing bar sashes under cambered gauged arches. Stone dentil cornice and blocking course. Duchess Street return similar, the outer bays with shallow semicircular arched recesses. The rear stuccoed elevation has triple arcading with lunette lights and impost string. Cast iron area railings to Duchess street. Included for group value only.*

2.3 The property is situated on a primarily residential cobbled road, originally constructed as stables and carriage houses, which were subsequently converted into residential dwellings.

2.4 The site is positioned within the Harley Street Conservation Area, a designation dating back to 1968. This area is characterized by a mix of terraced houses from various historical periods and representing different social strata.

2.5 The historical images below illustrate that three windows on the side elevation were sealed off, indicating that they were not part of the original design. In contrast, both the front and side of the building featured windows with a 3 by 2 pane configuration. The reason for blocking these windows remains unclear; it could have been done to mitigate the risk of fire spread or as a response to the window tax, which imposed levies based on

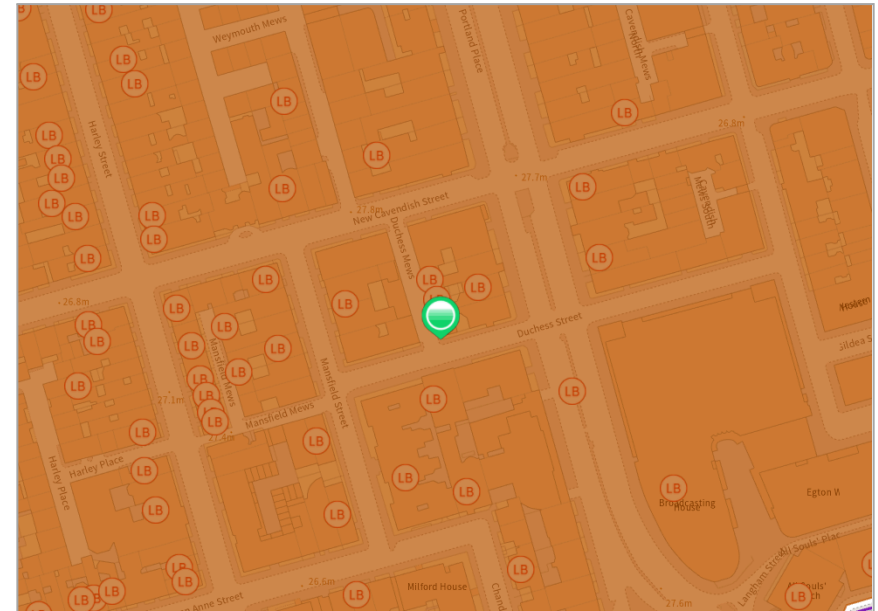


Fig 2: Harley Street Conservation Area (brown opacity) and Listed buildings (solid brown hatch) with the application site is denoted by a red dot.  
\*image taken from Tower Hamlets Interactive map.

HISTORICAL IMAGES



Fig 3: Corner mews building at 17 Duchess Mews, Marylebone. It was Grade II listed in 1987, image taken 1977  
\*images taken from London Picture Archive



## HISTORICAL MAPS

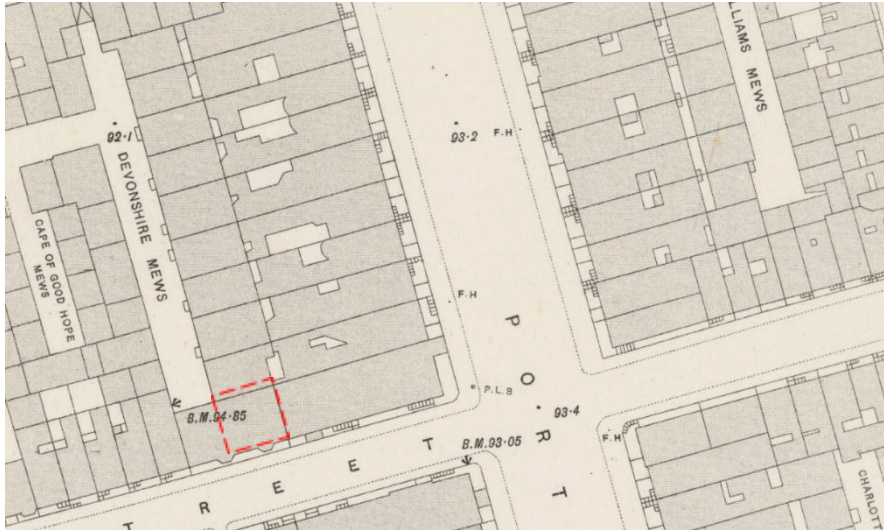


Fig 4: 1895 Map of 17 Duchess Mews outlined in red dotted line; the building was previously attached to No. 16 Duchess Mews.

\*Image taken from National Scotland Library

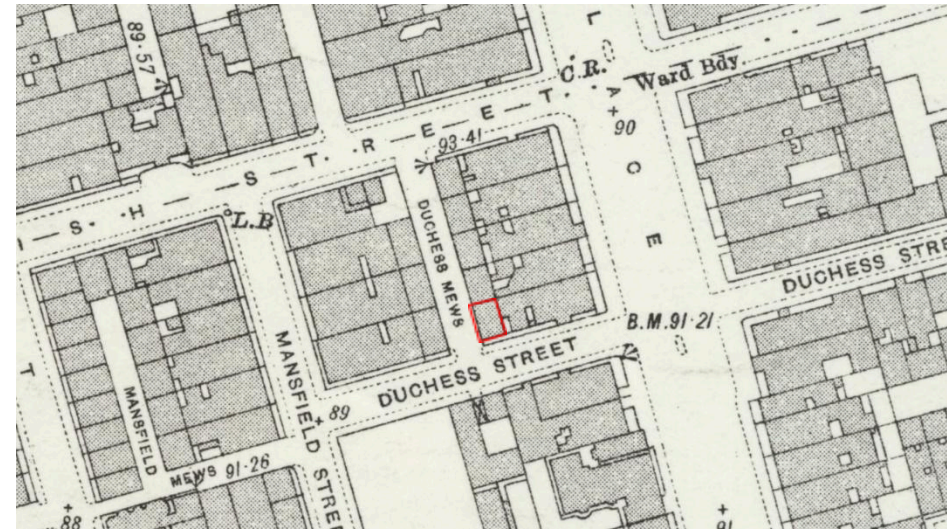


Fig 5: 1915 Map of 17 Duchess Mews outlined in red line; the building was previously attached to No. 16 Duchess Mews.

\*Image taken from National Scotland Library

2.6 Examination of historical images also reveals that the paint on the lower portion of the ground floor frontage has been removed, likely by the current applicant. This suggests that this section of the brick structure is original to the building.

2.7 The historical maps depicted above indicate that initially, the building was connected to No.16 Duchess Mews and featured two bay windows facing Duchess Street. Subsequently, alterations were made to provide additional street access, leading to the redevelopment of many properties in the post-war period, resulting in the current built form.

2.8 The modifications made to the mews during different time periods account for the lack of architectural continuity in the building forms. To align with the historical context, the proposed windows are designed to match those of No.16 Duchess Mews, to which the property was formerly attached.

### 3.0 Planning History

2.1 This property has a planning history of approved alterations being made to the listed structure internally and externally from 1984- 2023. Many of the approved alterations sought to improve existing built conditions to conserve the special architectural and historic character.

#### No.17 Duchess Mews Planning History

(1984) A MANSARD ROOF EXTENSION TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATION TO AN EXISTING TWO STOREY HOUSE: Ref. No: 84/00314/FULL– Granted

(1984) ALTERATIONS TO EXTERNAL WALL CONSISTING OF THE UNBLOCKING OF WINDOW OPENINGS Ref. No: 84/02111/FULL – Granted

(2002) INSTALLATION OF AIR CONDITIONING UNITS IN THIRD FLOOR REAR LIGHTWELL & FRONT BASEMENT LIGHTWELL WITHIN STREET VAULTS OF 17 PORTLAND PL & IN FRONT BASEMENT LIGHTWELL OF 17 DUCHESS MEWS, PLUS ASSOCIATED INTERNAL ALTERATIONS & NEW PARTITIONS. Ref. No: 02/06794/LBC – Granted

(2023) REPLACEMENT OF SELECTED EXISTING WINDOWS WITH LIKE-FOR-LIKE SLIMLINE DOUBLE GLAZING. Ref. No:23/06815/FULL & 23/06816/LBC - Granted

ALTERATIONS TO INTERIOR: Ref. No: 05/07020/FULL - Granted

INTERNAL ALTERATIONS: Ref. No: 05/07022/LBC - Granted

#### Similar Proposals

Address	Application Number	Description	Decision	Decision date
9 Weymouth Mews London W1G 7EA	18/09922/FULL	Alterations to the front and rear elevations; extension of a link at first floor level; replacement of the roof to the rear with addition of solar panels and installation of an air conditioning unit on roof.	Approved	Tue 15 Jan 2019
8 Harley Place London W1G 8QE	14/03688/FULL	Substantial demolition of the property and redevelopment to provide a single family dwelling (Use Class C3) comprising an extended basement, ground, first and second floor levels. Creation of a terrace at rear second floor level and the installation of solar panels with associated balustrading at main roof level.	Approved	Tue 23 Sep 2014
Flat 4 82 New Cavendish Street London W1W 6XR	18/02638/FULL	Erection of an extension at fourth floor level, creation of two new window opening within the rear flank wall facing Duchess Mews and replacement of all the windows at 3rd and 4th floor level, and installation of air conditioning unit at roof level, associated external and internal alterations [Site includes 22 Mansfield Street].	Approved	Wed 23 May 2018



## 4.0 Design and Impact

### Design Considerations

4.1 The alterations, including the addition of solar panels and renewed air conditioning system, are proposed to align with Westminster's core policies surrounding environmental design and meeting climate change targets.

4.2 The proposed solar panels have been set-back from the roof edge in order to shield them from public view. A reduced angle has been specified in order to further reduce the impact on the street scene, as visibility from street level will be minimal.

4.3 The replacement air conditioning unit, by means of its relocation, is further shielded from public view, and this would constitute an improvement from the existing situation.

4.4 Given that similar renovations have been carried out in the vicinity, the impact of this project would be minimal.

4.5 The scheme features x10 2x1m PV panels (20 sqm), capable of producing between 5000-9000 kWh. This energy will be used to power the new AC unit, an EV charger and residual power will be utilised throughout the property. A solar battery has been installed in the ground floor garage, alongside an inverter, to store energy for future use and further reduce reliance on national power. Data sheets of the installed plant have been included in the submission for reference.



Fig 6: Existing & Proposed Front Elevation

## 5.0 Sustainability Statement

5.1 The Westminster City Plan 2019-2040 details design, heritage & environmental policies that the council demonstrates are fundamental in ensuring sustainable development across the borough. This statement will focus on Policy 34 - Green Infrastructure, Policy 36 - Energy, and Policy 39 - Westminster's Heritage.

5.2 Energy Efficiency & Carbon Reduction - The addition of solar panels and an updated air conditioning unit aligns with the council's goal of promoting zero carbon development. The project further follows the energy hierarchy, emphasising the reduction of on-site energy demand and the maximisation of low carbon energy sources.

5.3 The proposed updated energy systems aim to extend the lifetime of the building under the C3 Dwellinghouse use. By means of introducing renewable energy systems, the proposal reduces reliance on fossil fuels and national energy provision.

5.3 Conservation of Listed Building - The completed alterations do not impact the fabric of the listed building, as all additions are located at roof level, above a previously approved mansard loft extension. The original structure of the building remains intact, and only minor works will occur internally.

5.4 Biodiversity and Access to Nature - As the project primarily involves energy system upgrades, the impact on local biodiversity is minimal. Our project's minimal disruption to the environment ensures that the biodiversity of the site remains intact (Policy 34F and 34G).

5.5 Conservation Area - We understand the significance of conserving the character and appearance of Westminster's conservation areas. Our project respects the local conservation guidelines and aims to maintain and enhance the conservation area's overall appearance (Policy 39K).

## 6.0 Development Policy Considerations

### 6.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF provides the foundations of the planning system at a national level and provides a base for which planners, planning systems and LPA's should work from in regards to informing their decisions as well as forming policy and plans. The NPPF states that the planning system should play a central role in developing a more sustainable society and this forms in three approaches to this role:

- *An economic role*
- *A social role*
- *An environmental role*

190. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account: If a proposal cannot meet the requirements of all three approaches of sustainable development, then the planning balance must be actioned whereby material considerations are weighed against each other using the foundation guidelines of the NPPF, the supplementary guidance of the National Planning Policy Guidance and then the lens of local planning policies which provide a greater, more spatially appropriate framework for which the authority can use.

206. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Whilst the NPPF places particular attention and detail in regards to the overarching theme of sustainable development, it also provides greater detail for the parts and strands which make up sustainable development and how this should play out "on the ground."

#### 7. *Requiring good design*

This section of the Framework attributes significant weight towards the design of the built environment as part of sustainable development. This due to the importance design can have on the overall built form of an area and therefore inform on its overall potential to sustain the other core strands of sustainable development and is reflected in the introductory section of the Framework, where under part 17 it stages:

*"[LPAs should]...always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings."*



## 7.0 Conclusion

7.1 This statement seeks to demonstrate that the proposal at No.17 Duchess Mews including alterations to the existing fabric of the building would result in minimal impact to historical aspects of the building.

7.2 Where possible the applicant has sought specialists to replace and reinstate the original key features of the listed building to improve its building life and respond positively to the surrounding Harley Street Conservation Area.

7.3 The proposed additions seek to improve the longevity of the property by means of an improved energy system which will be situated on the roof of an unoriginal mansard loft extension. Impact to the historical fabric will be minimal. The proposal also does not include altering the footprint of the dwelling.

7.4 The proposal seeks to build on the recently approved application for the replacement of existing windows with more energy efficient substitutes.

7.5 The proposed system has been installed by professional craftsmen who are experienced in working with listed buildings. All work has been carried out in compliance with health and safety regulations, and we will take all necessary measures to ensure that there is no risk to the public or to the building during the installation process.

\* As part of any application, the proposal will be accompanied by a suite of documents to include full architectural drawings, layouts, site location plans and elevation visuals.