



22 June 2012.

Charlie Rose,
Planning and Conservation Officer,
Camden Council,
Town Hall,
Judd Street,
London WC1H 9JH.

1-3 Goodge Street, London, W1.

Dear Mr. Rose,

I have recently been sent proposals for the proposed redevelopment of the group of buildings forming the corner of Tottenham Court Road and Goodge Street. The group includes one building of particular architectural and historic significance - 1-3 Goodge Street.

I have written much, over the years, about the development of London from the late 17th to the early 19th centuries and have long been an admirer of the terraces of the 1760s to 80s in and around Goodge Street. Many of these buildings, particularly in Goodge Street itself, have been much undervalued, largely because ground floors have been altered and the original dignity and quality of the development obscured. But glimpses through some first floor windows - for example those in a number of houses forming the terrace 27- 41 Goodge Street - reveal fine plaster rococo ceilings of the late 1760s and early 1770s. These ceilings, along with other details such as window shutters, suggest very strongly the quality, interest and ambition of the development of the estate undertaken by Francis and William Goodge after c1766 with the speculating builder and architect Jacob Leroux.

It should be the aim of all with an interest in, or control over, the Goodge Street area to protect, recover and enhance its important architectural and historic character. And this character is formed not just by the surviving elevations but also by early and interesting interior details and plan-forms. It is obvious that historic buildings are more than just facades, more than just stage sets.

Given these views you can understand how distressed I was when told of the proposed redevelopment of 1-3 Goodge Street - and how puzzled I am by the English Heritage decision not to this house to the list of buildings of historic or architectural interest.

I have requested permission to see the interior of 1-3 Goodge Street but have so far not been granted access. But I have recently been sent photographs of the interior of the house and am now able to express my more detailed opinion about its authenticity and interest.

The Exterior.

Research undertaken by English Heritage suggests that 1-3 Goodge Street was - with 5-7 and 9 - built in 1780. English Heritage also points out that, according to Tallis's *London Street Views* of 1838-40 these houses, along with much Goodge Street, were in commercial use from the start with shops fitted within their ground floors. Indeed the substantial remains of a fine late 18th century shop front survive at 35 Goodge Street suggesting the original appearance of the street. The visual problem now is that most of the existing shop fronts in the street are of relatively recent origin or recently altered and are of poor and inappropriate design.

The existing shop front on 1-3 Goodge Street is no exception, except it incorporates elements - notably ornamental console brackets - from a mid to late 19th century shop front. The door to the house is most handsome and appears to date from c 1780. It has possibly been reset.

The brickwork above the shop front is largely original although much patched and repaired. The first and second floor sashes with their large sheets of plate glass appear to be later 19th century, although the absence of horns on a number of upper sashes suggest they may be original frames from which glazing bars have been removed to allow large sheets of glass to be fitted. The third floor sashes, with glazing bars, appear to be of c. 1780.

The view of the house from outside suggests that the interior is of interest and perhaps early because it is clear that the first floor front windows at least retain shutters that - in their moulded details and design - appear to date from c1780.

The interior.

To judge by the photographs shown to me:

The staircase is delicate and of a design appropriate to the house. The newels take the form of elongated Doric columns that swell towards their bases. The balusters are on square or oblong section, English Heritage confirms that this type of staircase originates in the late 18th century but suggests that particular details suggest that this one is early Victorian. This is perhaps a correct assessment, but it is - generally - an elegant and appropriate design that could, in many of its parts, be original.

The photographs suggest that the first floor front room retains a plaster cornice of c1780 as well as early window shutters.

Another photograph - uncaptioned by I assume of a first or second floor front room, - shows what appears to be an fine, very architectural and largely intact interior scheme of c1780. It comprises of a delicately detailed dado rail, flush dado panelling, a bold skirting, fine window architraves and shutters.

In my opinion any house that dates from the late 18th century, and that retains a collection of original or early details should be listed. It is self-evidently of architectural or historic interest and every effort must be made to retain it entire and intact. This is especially the case when the individual building forms part of an important urban group.

Since 1-3 Goodge Street retains much early fabric outside and in, and forms a key part of an important historic street, it should most certainly be listed. I disagree most profoundly with the opinion expressed by English Heritage that the building has only 'considerable local interest' and that it is 'too altered to meet the criteria of listing.'

Surely this assessment contradicts English Heritage's own broad listing policy. Most buildings of pre-1820 date should be listed unless drastically compromised by insensitive alterations and it is now generally recognised that later additions to buildings can add interest if they reflect changing uses and evolving social history. In my view the alterations to 1-3 Goodge Street do not overwhelm the original fabric, are generally respectful and are of interest in their own right enriching rather than demeaning the original building.

I appreciate that the current proposal envisages the retention of the façade of 1-3 Goodge Street and the restoration of the shop front. But the interior is also early, in parts dates from 1780, and appears to be of significant historic and architectural interest. It not acceptable to destroy an historic interior - especially one that appears to be largely or significantly Georgian. In my opinion 1-3 Goodge Street should be listed and its interior retained. I note that this, broadly, was the opinion of the Inspector in August 2007, following an inquiry undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate. The Inspector noted that 1-3 Goodge Street 'contributed positively to the conservation area'.

I find it extraordinary that a building of this age, quality and authenticity, that is on Camden's local list of buildings of historic and architectural interest and which is acknowledged to play a key role in an important conservation area, should be threatened with near complete demolition. The retention of the façade is not enough when so much original and early interior fabric and detail remain and Camden Council must surely make it clear that it will not grant conservation area consent for the current proposal to 1-3 Goodge Street.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Cruickshank