

MANAGEMENT GUIDE LINES FOR CENTRE POINT 2000

Issued by Camden Council as a general guide for tenants/owners May 2000

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The building was added to the Department of National Heritage's statutory list of buildings of special architectural and historic interest on 24 November 1985; a copy of the listing is annexed at Appendix 1.

2.2 These management guidelines are drafted in the context of legislation and Government guidance existing at the time; accordingly it is intended that as changes are made to both legislation and non-statutory guidance, consideration should be given to making corresponding amendments to the guidelines, and that they should be regularly reviewed. It is suggested that in the first instance, a review should be undertaken after two years, to assess the effectiveness of the guidelines, with reviews every five years thereafter at a minimum.

2.3 It is further intended that whenever proposals are being considered which are likely to require listed building consent and/or planning permission these should be discussed at the earliest opportunity with Camden Council (to include the Conservation Officer and Planning Officer) to ensure that any complex or difficult issues are identified at the earliest opportunity.

2.4 This guidance has been prepared and its content agreed in principle by English Heritage, Camden Council and the Company.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

3.1 The primary objective of these guidance notes is to establish a mutual understanding of the special architectural and historic interest of the building which can inform the management and maintenance strategy for the building, and offer a degree of certainty about the scope for change in respect of the building.

3.2 These guidance notes cannot be inclusive of all the works that may at some time be contemplated, rather they seek to identify in broad terms those proposals which are likely to affect the special architectural and historic interest of the building and those which are not.

4.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

4.1 Listed building consent is required for any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. In general it should be noted that listed building consent is not normally required for minor necessary repairs or small-scale replacements on a 'like for like' basis. There is, however, no specific de minimis provision. It is acknowledged that every effort should be made to ensure that any works undertaken do not detrimentally affect the character of the building.

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4.2 The Company has let the building to a number of different tenants and it is to be expected that, as the nature of the Company's and its tenants' activities change, further proposals for internal and external alterations are likely to come forward. If these proposals are such as to require listed building consent, then they will need to be carefully considered within the context of the original design philosophy, listed building legislation and policy, and the owner's and its tenants' business needs. Further alterations to the building will need to reconcile these requirements wherever possible.

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 Applications for listed building consent and/or planning permission will be made to Camden Council who will notify English Heritage of any application for listed building consent and applications for planning permission relating to the building or affecting its setting in respect of applications for listed building consent, where Camden Council is minded to grant consent for an application, it is unable to do so until the application has been formally authorised by English Heritage. Such authorisation must have been referred to the Secretary of State for the Environment.

6.0 DESCRIPTION AND DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

6.1 The list description at Appendix 1 provides an initial description of the building for identification purposes only. The following is a guide to the features of the building considered important.

6.2 The Exterior

6.2.1 This includes not only the office block, but also the glazed link and the attached block of flats and businesses behind, defined at the beginning of these guidelines as 'the tower block', 'the Public House Shops and Bank', 'the Centre Point Maisonettes', 'the Zaphar Wing' and the 'Bride Link'. The external form and cladding of all of these is part of the special interest of the building. Particularly notable is the sculptural shape of the tower block with its convex sides and its details with the cladding canting directly outwards and then inwards to the centre of the short ends, where there is a window to the lift landing at each floor level. The strong shadow-line created by the canopy and gallery at the top of the tower is also visually important. The projecting screen at the base of the tower above the entrance is important in the composition and the projecting staircase beneath this is also important with its pre-cast concrete screen with a distinctive 'scot' separating each pre-cast tread/riser element in the middle of the riser. A similar

staircase emerges at the rear of the tower block at an angle, between the distinctive sculptural supporting piers, and variations on this form of staircase, several with non-orthogonal alignment, occur throughout the public areas of the Building and give it aesthetic unity. They all contribute to its special interest.

6.2.2 The fountain in the forecourt is an integral and significant part of the design, with its 'Y' shaped elements. It is enclosed by a mosaic-clad wall with radiused corners. There are three flag poles. The fountain, its enclosure and features form a focal point in front of the building and contributes to its special interest.

6.2.3 The Bridge Link with its huge expanse of glazing forms a dramatic contrast to the dense rhythm of the Tower Block and is a very significant feature of the Building, contributing to its special interest. The glazing was also innovative, since a special etched glass assembly had to be devised to make it possible, and its internal detail is also of interest, where it is supported by rows of green-tinted glass fins. The floor of office accommodation at the upper level of the Bridge Link has a very shallow pitched roof clad in copper, with the ridge running across the narrower dimension of the link. This also contributes to the special interest of the building.

6.2.4 The Centre Point Apartments are of interest, with their projecting balconies, glazed ceramic mosaic cladding of an unusual trapezoidal form and glazed staircase at the southern end. The apartments form a part of the special interest of the Building.

6.2.5 The Earnshaw Wing also contributes to the special interest of the building. The heavy concrete screen of rectangular pattern, which forms the part of the Earnshaw Wing above the ground level shops is a significant feature of the Building's design. Although the street frontages of the shops have been altered, they continue to form an integral part of the Building.

6.2.6 Because the external appearance of the ground floor of the Public House at 15 St Giles High Street has been altered, it does not at present contribute to the special interest of the building. As, however, it is an integral part of the building, any future changes to the external appearance of the Public House should seek to be more sympathetic to the character of the Building as a whole.

6.2.7 The Bank is also an integral part of the Building, with a prominent street frontage, and similarly, any future changes to the external appearance of the Bank should seek to be more sympathetic to the character of the Building as a whole.

6.3 The Interior

6.3.1 Certain internal features of the Building are of special interest. The most important interiors are the entrance hall of the Tower Block and the principal spaces inside the Bridge Link. The interiors of the Earnshaw Wing, Centre Point Mansions, the Public House, Shops and the Subways and Subway Unit have not been inspected.

6.3.2 The entrance hall of the Tower Block, together with its principal circulation spaces form part of the special interest of the Building. The entrance hall retains many original features, including the very striking floor, which comprises white stone-like material set in a black background (marble in terrazzo). The sculptural mosaic-clad piers are also important features of the space, as are the fully glazed walls. The original fibre-glass sculpted panels flanking the eastern entrance also contribute to the character of the space.

6.3.3 The north and south staircases which rise the full height of the Tower Block at its north and south ends are distinctive features which contribute to its special interest. They have thick, cast glass balustrades and chunky black-painted handrails. The windows to the staircases have frosted windows (small clear spots on a frosted ground). Between the 1st and 3rd floors is a further original staircase with a vertically ribbed cast glass balustrade. The toilet areas adjoining the staircases where they have been altered do not contribute to the special interest of the Building. However, the lift lobbies which are part of the public circulation space form part of the Building's character.

6.3.4 The interior of the office floors of the Tower Block have been altered several times following changes of tenancy and are not considered to form part of the special interest of the building. Any further alterations to these areas should, however, respect the external character of the Tower Block, in which the windows remain unobstructed.

6.3.5 The interior of the Bridge Link comprises a grand, double-height space with the central upper part of the floor set back so as to create an unimpeded full-height space adjacent to the glazed walls (either side). The balustrade to the edges of the upper area having a very 'chunky' timber rail and glass 'fin' supports. Staircases lead down

to the lower level of this floor.

6.3.5 The interior of the Bank also contributes to the special interest of the building with its mezzanine floor, including a glazed balustrade, and a sculpture in relief fixed to the end wall of the banking hall as part of the original fitting out.

7.0 THE CURTLAGE OF THE BUILDING

7.1 The curtilage of the building is shown on the drawing at Appendix 2, and includes those areas below ground level comprising the subways and subway unit, as indicated on the drawings.

8.0 USE OF THE BUILDING

Currently the building comprises the following accommodation:

8.1 The Tower Block Bridge Link and the mezzanine level of the Barnshaw Wing comprise a mixture of cellular and open plan office accommodation let to a number of different tenants. Leases have been granted of areas being not less than a complete floor although a few sublettings of part of a floor have been created.

8.2 The Centre Point Mairnesettes comprise 2 bedroom residential accommodation.

8.3 The Public House, Shops and Bank and Subway Unit comprise a mixture of leisure, retail and licensed accommodation.

8.4 The remainder of the site comprises various ancillary uses including car parking, plant rooms, pedestrian walkways and landscaped areas.

9.0 GENERAL WORKS TO THE BUILDING

9.1.1 Floor Coverings

With the exception of the original patterned floor in the ground floor entrance hall, the floor surfaces to the circulation areas, including the staircases in the Tower Block and elsewhere, and any surviving terrazzo floors in the lift lobby, it is recognised that the floor coverings throughout the building do not contribute to its special interest and hence replacement with alternative floor coverings which may differ in colour, specification and texture would not affect its character.

9.1.2 Car Parking areas in Basement

The basement is an area of little intrinsic special architectural interest. It is therefore considered that works within the basement car park and ancillary plant rooms in the basement can be carried out without affecting the special interest of the building.

9.1.3 Plant and plant rooms

It is recognised that from time to time plant and equipment (including air conditioning and heating systems and lifts) must be renewed, replaced, improved or installed to ensure the proper functioning of the building. In view of the location of such plant and equipment within the building such works would not be likely to affect the special interest of the building. However, if any new installations or alterations to plant and equipment are visible from the outside of the building, such works are likely to require listed building consent.

9.1.4 Exterior

(i) Works to the exterior of the building may well require planning permission in addition to listed building consent. Like for like renewal of damaged glass would not affect the special interest of the building or materially affect its external appearance. However, alterations to the pattern of glazing or to the detail or fixing and the introduction of new doorways or other apertures are likely to require listed building consent. Adjustments of this nature would however be considered sympathetically by Camden and English Heritage provided the detailing matches the original.

(ii) Whilst reflective film which changes the appearance of the building is likely to require listed building consent, the installation of clear film used for insulation reflection of sun glare, bomb proofing or other related uses similar to that currently installed would not affect the building's character.

(iii) Any alterations to the colour of glass in the external windows to the building are likely to require listed building consent.

