Preservation Works and Method Statement

This document outlines a meticulous approach to refurbishing a historically significant Grade II* listed apartment. It prioritizes the preservation of the original features while seamlessly integrating modern upgrades for improved functionality and comfort.

Unveiling the Past: Ceiling Restoration

The existing suspended ceiling, a modern addition, will be carefully removed from each room. To reveal the original ceiling in all its glory, the perimeter walls above will be filled, sealed, and finished with a new layer of plasterboard and a smooth skim coat.

Respecting the Legacy: Preserving Original Features

Before any work commences, a comprehensive inspection will be conducted to identify the original features and minimize any impact on the historic structure. Here's how we'll ensure utmost respect for the past:

- **Window Protection:** Existing timber sash windows, a hallmark of the era, will be meticulously protected during the removal of the suspended ceiling to prevent any accidental damage.
- **Meticulous Dismantling:** The dismantling of the ceiling will be done meticulously, room by room, to maintain a clean and controlled work environment, minimizing dust and disruption.

Rejuvenating the Interior: General Repair and Refinishing

Following the ceiling removal, a detailed inspection of walls, ceilings, and windows will be undertaken. This inspection will determine any necessary repairs or restorations:

- **Fixings Removal and Repair:** All existing fixings will be removed carefully. Any resulting holes or cracks in the walls will be filled and sealed with appropriate materials.
- **Damaged Wall Repair:** Damaged sections of walls will be repaired using plasterboard on dabs and finished with a skim coat, ensuring a seamless integration with the existing structure.

New, Yet Classic: New Ceiling Installation

The original ceiling will be meticulously assessed to determine its condition and historical significance. The installation strategy will be tailored accordingly:

- **Timber Ceiling Restoration:** If the original ceiling is constructed of timber, a new plasterboard ceiling will be fixed directly using discreet 40mm plasterboard screws, minimizing visual impact.
- **Concrete Ceiling Enhancement:** In the case of a concrete ceiling deck, timber battens will be installed to create a level surface. The new plasterboard ceiling will then be securely screwed onto the battens.

Safeguarding Steel Columns and Steel Beams on a Construction Site

Steel columns are vital structural elements, and during construction, they're susceptible to various damages like dents, scratches, and even exposure to sparks or flames from welding activities. Here's how to effectively protect them:

Choosing the Right Protection:

The best method depends on the anticipated threats:

- **Heavy Impacts (Falling Objects/Equipment):**
    - **Heavy-duty Polyethylene Sheets:** For situations where heavier objects might strike the column, use thicker, high-density polyethylene sheets. Secure them tightly with straps or clamps for better impact resistance.
- **Welding or Grinding Sparks:**
    - **Flame-retardant Blankets:** When welding or grinding near the column, wrap it with flame-retardant blankets specifically designed to withstand sparks and embers. These blankets often come with wire mesh for added reinforcement.

General Protection Tips:

- **Pre-construction Inspection:** Before installing any protective material, inspect the column for existing damage. Document any issues for reference after construction is complete.
- **Full Coverage:** Ensure the chosen material fully covers the column's circumference, including the base and top. Leave no exposed areas vulnerable.
- **Secure Fastening:** Use appropriate straps, clamps, or ties to secure the protective material firmly around the column. Loose sheeting can flap in the wind and potentially cause damage.
- **Signage:** Consider placing signage on the protected column indicating its presence and the importance of avoiding contact. This serves as a visual reminder to workers.
- **Removal Upon Completion:** Once construction is complete, promptly remove the protective material to avoid trapping moisture or debris against the column.

Additional Considerations:

- **Multiple Columns:** For multiple columns, consider using a pre-fabricated column protection system for efficiency. These systems often consist of interlocking panels that can be quickly assembled around the columns.

By following these steps and selecting the appropriate protection method, it can effectively safeguard both steel columns and steel beams during construction and ensure their structural integrity remains intact.

Final Touch: Final Inspection

Upon completion, all windows will be thoroughly inspected to confirm no damage occurred during the refurbishment process. This ensures the historical integrity of the apartment remains intact.

By prioritizing the preservation of the original features and utilizing sensitive, high-quality materials, this approach ensures the historical character of the Grade II* listed apartment is safeguarded while seamlessly integrating modern advancements for improved comfort and functionality.