

No. 4–6 Bedford Place WC1B 5JD

Heritage Statement

For

Nebra Property 2022 Limited

March 2023

No. 4–6 Bedford Place WC1B 5JD

Heritage Statement

March 2023

Contents

Executive summary	3
1. Introduction	5
2. The Site	6
3. Significance	16
4. The proposals and their impact	23
5. Sources	35
Appendix A. Statutory List entry	36
Appendix B. Summary of relevant planning policy	37

Executive summary

This Heritage Statement has been written by Spurstone Heritage Ltd to support a Listed Building Consent application for:

Restoration and refurbishment of the existing hotel (Class C1). Proposed works include:

Internal reconfiguration, ground and lower ground floor rear extensions, repairs and replacement of roof, new lift overrun, alterations to the front and rear façade, installation of plant and landscaping works to the rear garden.

The Site is three adjoining houses in the terrace Nos. 1–20 Bedford Place, a Grade II listed building in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden. They have been a single property in hotel use since 1978, but the hotel is currently closed.

As existing, the building does not provide inclusive access. The accommodation is inadequate and the bathroom provision in particular is unacceptable for a hotel of this type, in this central London location. The services installation is obtrusive, inefficient and no longer fit for purpose. The décor and finishes are shabby and outdated.

It is proposed to extend the listed building, and repair and refurbish its interiors, to reposition it as a high quality, 4* boutique ‘townhouse’ hotel. The hotel will be fully accessible. All rooms will have en-suite bathrooms, and three rooms will have fully accessible bathrooms. There will be a Lounge on the ground floor and communal use of the rear gardens. Comprehensive refurbishment of the interiors is also proposed, to bring the hotel accommodation up to current standards.

The listed buildings and conservation area are designated heritage assets. The significance of the parts of the site that would be affected by the proposals may be summarised as follows:

High significance:	Front elevation, main stair and rooflights over.
Moderate significance:	Historic plan form where this survives; upper service stair in No. 4; historic interior joinery; decorative plasterwork.
Low significance:	Front lightwells and vaults
Neutral significance:	Rear extensions and lightwells; upper service stairs in Nos. 5 and 6, rooflights
Detracts from significance:	Inserted partitions that disrupt the historic plan form; obtrusive and outdated services.

The proposals have been carefully designed to adapt the accommodation to modern requirements and enhance the historic character of the interiors, and they have been amended to take account of pre-application advice provided by the Council.

The impact of the proposals on the significance of the heritage asset is summarised in a table on page 25. Of the 28 proposals outlined in the table, 13 would have a beneficial impact on heritage significance, 8 would have no impact, and seven have the potential to cause less than substantial harm to significance. The overall balance of heritage impacts is positive.

The potential harm must be weighed against the public benefit of bringing a vacant property back into use as a hotel providing inclusive access and accommodation of an appropriate standard for this part of Camden, with sensitive repair and refurbishment of the fabric that will sustain, enhance and better reveal the significance of the listed building.

The proposals will improve the appearance of the exterior of the listed building, and enhance the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

The scheme will have a positive impact on the significance of the listed building. It will support the efficient and sustainable management of the hotel — the optimum viable use of the listed building; it thus supports the long-term conservation of the asset. The proposals will sustain the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. They satisfy national and local policies for the protection of the historic environment. It is therefore requested that the application be approved.

1. Introduction

Purpose of this Heritage Statement

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been written by Spurstone Heritage Ltd for Nebra Property 2022 Limited, to support a listed building consent application for:

Restoration and refurbishment of the existing hotel Class C1). Proposed works include:

Internal reconfiguration, ground and lower ground floor rear extensions, repairs and replacement of roof, new lift overrun, alterations to the front and rear façade, installation of plant and landscaping works to the rear garden.

It should be read alongside the drawings by Studio Moren Ltd.

Heritage planning context

- 1.2 The Site consists of three adjoining houses in the terrace Nos. 1–20 Bedford Place, a Grade II listed building. The terrace opposite, Nos. 21–40 Bedford Place, is also listed at Grade II. The street is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, in the London Borough of Camden (LBC).
- 1.3 The listed terrace, neighbouring listed buildings and conservation area are designated heritage assets as defined in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (the NPPF).
- 1.4 Any application for planning or listed building consent should be accompanied by a Heritage Statement that explains the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage assets, and justifies it in relation to the NPPF and LBC's policies for the protection of the historic environment.

Methodology and structure of the report

- 1.5 The information contained in this report was acquired through desk-based research, a visit to LBC Archives, site visits (10 and 17 May 2022; 22 January 2023) and discussion with the developer and architect.
- 1.6 This Introduction is followed by a summary history of the Site in Section 2. The significance assessment in Section 3 uses the definitions of significance in the NPPF and provides the basis for assessing the impact of the proposals in Section 4. Sources consulted are given in Section 5. Appendix A contains the relevant entries from the National Heritage List, and Appendix B summarises relevant policies.

Scope and limitations

- 1.7 The Historic Environment Record (HER) has not been consulted, as all designations relevant to this report have been obtained from other sources.
- 1.8 The information contained in this report is based on the research described above, understanding of the site acquired on the site visits, and information supplied by the owner. Further research or site investigations may bring to light new information or evidence that may require the assessments or conclusions in this report to be revised or amended.
- 1.9 This report does not deal with structural matters, arboriculture or archaeology. The advice of suitably qualified experts should be sought on these matters as required.

2. The Site



Fig. 1. Site location



Fig. 2. The Site in its urban context (Google Earth, annotated)

Site description

- 2.1 The Site is on the east side of Bedford Place towards the south end. The front boundary is the pavement of Bedford Place, the vaults at basement level extending as far as the roadway. The rear boundary is shared with an open green space, not accessible to the public. The property is bounded to the north by No. 7 Bedford Place and to the south by No. 3. The approximate centre of the Site is at Grid Reference TQ302817.



Fig 3. Nos. 4–6 Bedford Place, front elevation



Figs 4, 5 (L–R). No. 4 Bedford Place, front lightwell: No. 6, front entrance

- 2.2 The property consists of three adjoining terraced houses of three main storeys with basement and attic (Fig 3). The front elevations are of stock brick, well proportioned and with subtly refined architectural detail: the attic storey is set back above a stucco cill band, and the houses in the centre and at each end project slightly to suggest a palace front, an arrangement mirrored on the opposite side of the street.
- 2.3 The basement and ground floors are stuccoed and deeply incised to imitate ashlar, the shallow arches over the front doors being scored with voussoirs and keystones. The first- and second-floor windows have flat arched heads in fine red gauged brickwork. The entire street frontage is well preserved, with intact first-floor balconies and lightwell railings (Fig 4). The only substantial change is the black-and-white geometric tiled paving to the entrance steps of Nos. 5 and 6, probably added in the Edwardian period (Fig 5).

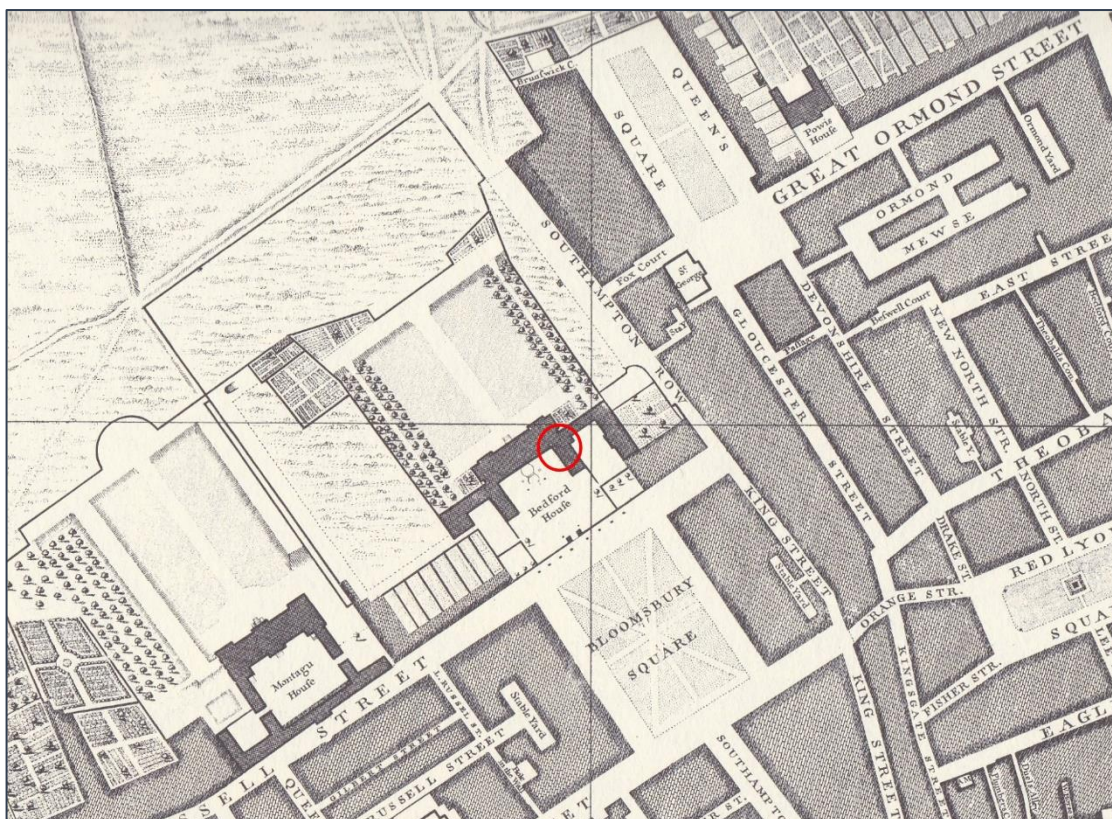


Fig 6. John Rocque, map of London, 1748, detail with approximate site circled

History

The origins of Bloomsbury

- 2.4 The name 'Bloomsbury' is derived from the family name of William de Blemond, who acquired one of several manors in the area in 1201. At the Dissolution in 1545 the area was granted to Thomas Wriothesley, later first Earl of Southampton, as a reward for services to the Crown. Following the Restoration in 1660, further royal patronage and dynastic alliances led to the acquisition of neighbouring landholdings, which consolidated the Southampton estate.

Early development

- 2.5 Until the late seventeenth century most of the land was undeveloped, given over to pasture for the cattle that provided London with milk and meat. Bloomsbury began to be developed by the fourth Earl of Southampton, who laid out Bloomsbury Square and Great Russell Street in the 1660s.
- 2.6 In 1669 the Earl's daughter Rachel married Lord William Russell, who later became the second Duke of Bedford. On Rachel's death in 1723 Bloomsbury — the area now enclosed by Euston Road to the north, Woburn Place / Southampton Row to the east, New Oxford Street to the south and Tottenham Court Road to the west — became part of the Bedford Estate.
- 2.7 Rocque's map of 1748 shows development moving northwards. The aristocratic mansions of Bedford House (1657) and Montagu House (1675–80) at the northern edge of the built-up area, still enjoy the view over open parkland to the north (Fig 6).

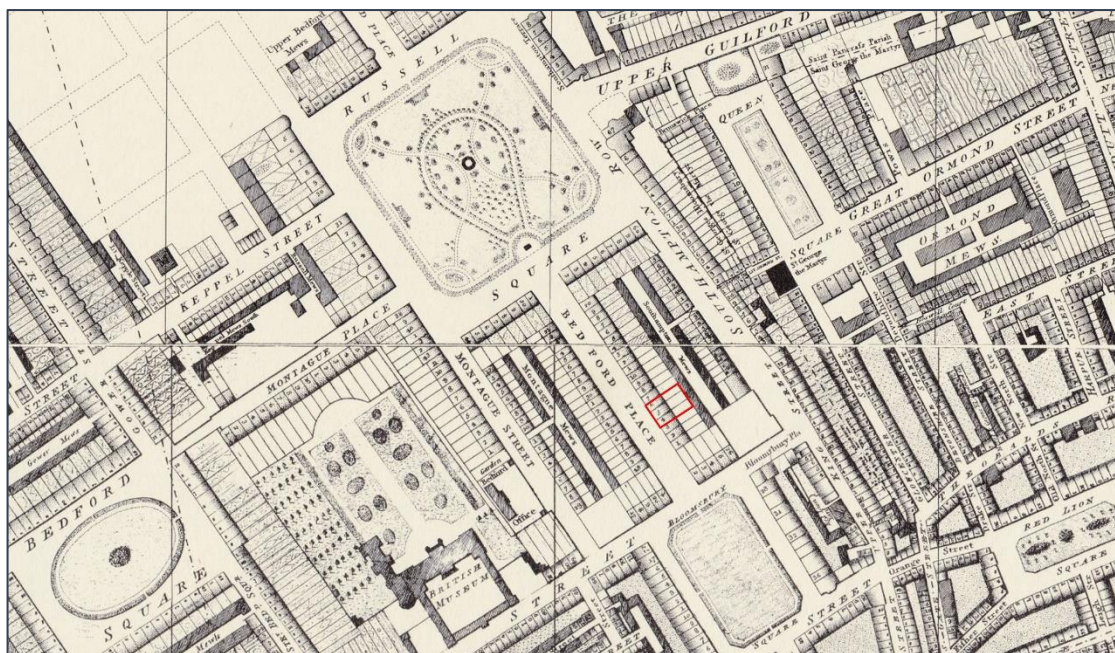


Fig 7. Horwood's map, 1799, revised by Faden, 1813, detail with Site outlined

- 2.8 The outward expansion of London drove the development of Bloomsbury between the mid-1760s and the 1840s. Existing roads and field boundaries were incorporated into the layout, which accounts for the varied size and orientation of some of the streets and squares within the overall orthogonal grid.
- 2.9 Construction of the New (now Euston) Road in 1756 boosted development and contained London's growth within a northern boundary that was more or less respected for the next 100 years. Today the road is the northern boundary of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Russell Square

- 2.10 The Bedford Estate imposed high standards on developers, first signalled by the palace-fronted terraces of first-rate housing in Bedford Square (1765–80). From about 1800 the fifth Duke instigated a more intensive phase of development, under the supervision of his surveyor and architect James Burton (1761–1837), 'the most successful developer in late Georgian London, responsible for some of its most characteristic architecture'. (Bowdler, 2004).
- 2.11 In 1800 Burton ordered the demolition of the old Southampton House, clearing the site of the mansion and its extensive garden ready for redevelopment. Within four years he had laid out Russell Square as the largest and 'most handsome' square in London (Hobhouse, 1971), commissioned Humphry Repton (1752–1818) to design the garden at its centre, and completed the houses on all four sides. Horwood's map shows Russell Square fully enclosed, and Bedford Place to the south (Fig 7).
- 2.12 Over the next 50 years the streets and squares to the north, mostly built by Thomas Cubitt, completed Bloomsbury as far as Euston Road. (Hobhouse, 1995) This spread of genteel housing on wide streets connecting grand set-piece squares effected 'the systematic transformation of the pastures of northern Bloomsbury into a restricted upper-middle class suburb'. (Olsen 1984)
- 2.13 The new houses of Russell Square were quickly occupied by successful professional men and their families. Proximity to several hospitals and the Inns of Court made it particularly attractive to doctors and lawyers. As early as the 1850s, however, many of the larger houses in Bloomsbury were being converted into hotels and boarding houses, and despite attempts by the Bedford Estate to prevent it, this trend continued into the twentieth century.



Figs 8, 9 (L-R). Charles Booth, *Map Descriptive of London Poverty*, 1888–9, detail (LSE, annotated); Ordnance Survey, 1896, detail



Figs 10, 11 (L-R). Ordnance Survey, 1936, detail ; part of the rear boundary of the Site

Bedford Place

- 2.14 Bedford Place — at first also sometimes referred to as Lower Bedford Place — was built from about 1815 on the site of Bedford House. It connected Russell Square to the earlier Bloomsbury Square, and is ‘characteristic of the style of the Duke of Bedford’s new developments of this time by his builder James Burton; absolutely plain, decently proportioned, with stuccoed ground floors’. (Cherry & Pevsner 2002; 326).
- 2.15 If not as grand as Russell Square, Bedford Place was still a most respectable address. Mid-nineteenth-century Census returns show Nos. 4, 5 and 6 inhabited by ‘Mechanists’, clerks, and residents with private means. The area retained its social *cachet* throughout the century: on Charles Booth’s ‘poverty map’ of 1888–9, the houses of Bedford Place and the surrounding streets are coloured red, denoting ‘Well-to-do. Middle-Class’ residents (Fig 8).
- 2.16 The Ordnance Survey taken at the time Booth was conducting his research shows the small houses of Southampton Mews to the rear of the Site (Fig 9). These were later removed, possibly to build mains water or drainage infrastructure. The present rear boundary of the Site has cast-iron railings of c. 1900 appearance (Fig 11), which suggests a date for the change; certainly the mews had gone by 1936 (Fig 10). The land where it stood remains undeveloped.

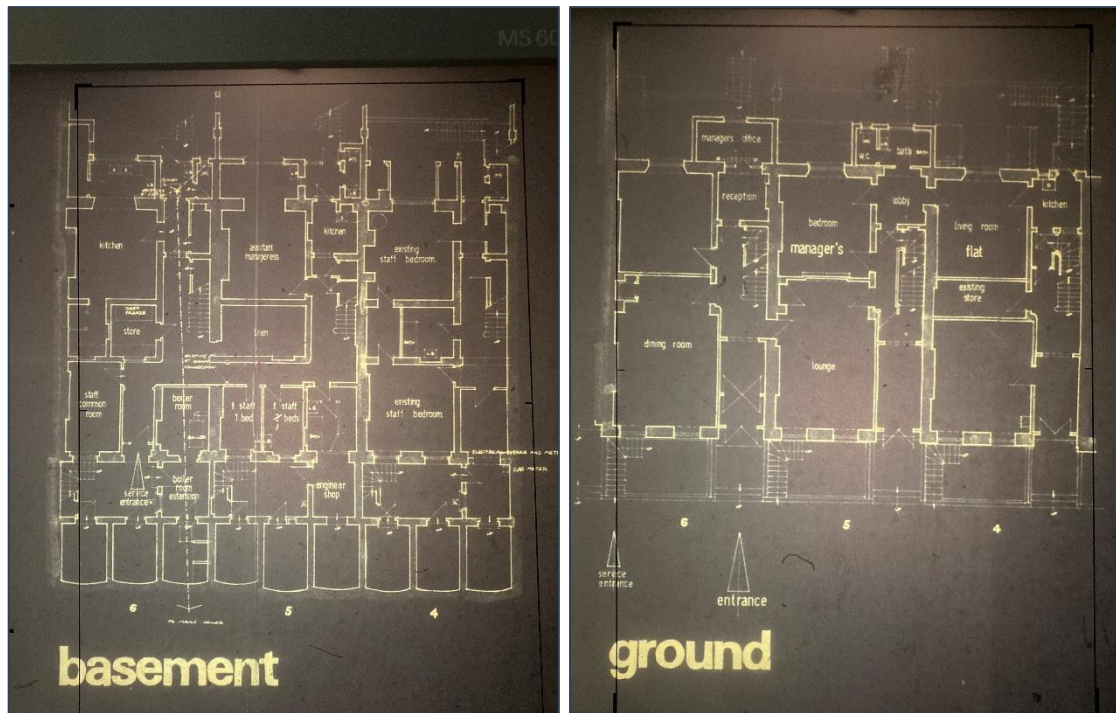


Figs 12, 13 (L–R). No. 4 Bedford Place, ground floor front room; first floor room, 1974 (LMA)

- 2.17 'Pevsner' notes that *'Bloomsbury remained a select residential area throughout the C19, gated at its N end. In the early C20 it fell into gentle decline, and the name became the term for the set of intellectuals and artists who lived cheaply here in those short years around the First World War.'* (Cherry & Pevsner 2002, pp. 320–1)

No. 4–6 Bedford Place: from houses to hotel

- 2.18 Nos 4, 5 and 6 Bedford Place were first built as three separate houses, and apparently remained so throughout the nineteenth century: Camden Archives holds a plan dated 1899 of No. 4's basement, which labels the rooms 'Servants' Hall', 'Kitchen', 'Butler's Pantry' etc., indicating that the building was still a single family residence at that time.
- 2.19 By 1930, according to trade directories, No. 4 was in use as a 'private hotel', sometimes listed as the Sandringham House Hotel, under the proprietorship of George Stangroom. (e.g. Kelly 1930, p. 2534) In 1936 Stangroom applied to install 'new lavatory basins' on the second and third floors, which provided basic private washing facilities for guests who otherwise used shared WCs and bathrooms.
- 2.20 There was some modernisation in the 1950s and 60s. A drainage application in 1952 specified: *'Install 7 lavatory basins (1 in 3rd Floor Front Room, 3 in 2nd Floor front rooms and 3 in 1st Floor front room (sic). Also convert 1 rear bedroom of 1st floor to bathroom'*. (LBC Archives, App. No. 6573 approved 29.01.1953) In 1956 there were further improvements: *'New kitchen and staff [?] room Ground Floor. New Bathroom in Basement'*. (LBC Archives, App. No. 6904 approved 20.03.1956)
- 2.21 In 1965 Mr and Mrs Stangroom were still in residence, operating the hotel under the name of Bonnington Hotels Ltd. They applied for *'conversion of the two ground floor rear rooms into a staff flatlet by the provision of bathroom and W.C. in place of the existing kitchen and the formation of a kitchenette in a new position.'* (LBC Archives, App. No. 212 approved 17.11.1965) The architects for this change were J. H. Sheppard & Partners, whose offices were at No. 38 Bedford Place.
- 2.22 Despite these modernising efforts, the standard of accommodation deteriorated. Photographs taken inside No. 4 in 1975 show shabby and neglected bedrooms (Figs 12, 13).



Figs 14, 15 (L–R). Nellist, Blundell & Flint, existing basement and ground floor plans, September 1976 1978 (LBC Archives)

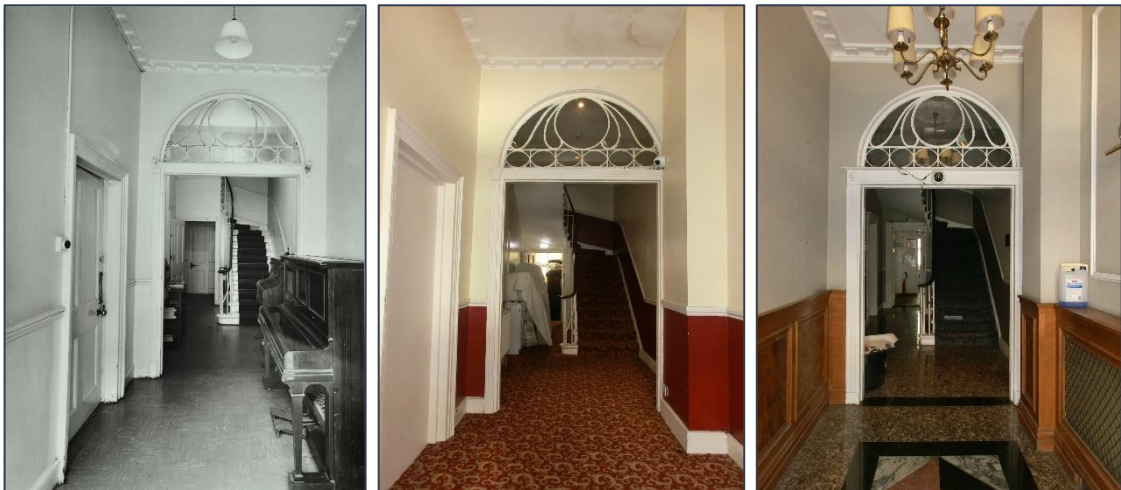
- 2.23 The photographs recorded No. 4 as one house before it was amalgamated into Nos. 5 and 6, which had already been joined to make one premises. Operated as the Wansbeck Hotel, this had 'kitchen, Manageress's office, staff common room, [two] staff bedrooms and stores' in the basement. The hotel entrance was in No. 6, with Reception and manager's office to the rear of the ground floor. The ground-floor front rooms were a dining room and lounge (Figs 14, 15).
- 2.24 Camden Archives hold records of several joint applications for all three houses from 1976. In September 1976 the architects Nellist, Blundell & Flint of Ealing drew up plans showing existing openings in the party wall between Nos. 5 and 6 at every level, and in the party wall between Nos. 4 and 5 at every level except the ground floor.

No. 4–6 Bedford Place today

- 2.25 The street elevation of No. 4–6 Bedford Place, designed in neoclassical style with Palladian proportions and rusticated basements and ground floors, is intact (Fig 2), apart from the change to single-pane sash windows on the ground floor, and minor modifications to the front entrances of Nos. 5 and 6 with front door leaded lights and black-and-white tile paving of c. 1900. No. 4 retains the original York stone landing at the front entrance.
- 2.26 The rear elevations are plain Flemish bond stock brick with the same system of fenestration as the front: large windows denoting the principal rooms on the first floor and successively smaller windows for the lower-status floors. Small windows have been inserted on the second floor, and No. 4 has been rendered (Fig 16). The houses have all been extended to the rear, each to a different design (Fig 17).
- 2.27 The roofs are largely unaltered, having oval glazed lanterns over the staircases, and half-'butterfly' slated roofs sloping up to the party walls. The external glazing to the lanterns has been reglazed with modern wired security glass (Fig 18). Metal ladders and rails have been added to provide secure access to plant rooms in the roof voids. Work is in hand to repair the existing roof structure and replace the natural slate roof covering (Planning ref. 2022/4189/P, approved 28 November 2022).



Figs 16, 17, 18 (L-R). No. 4 rear elevation.; rear extensions, No. 6 at right; No. 6, roof lantern



Figs 19, 20, 21 (L-R). vestibules of No 4, 1975 (LMA); No. 5, 2022; No.6, 2022

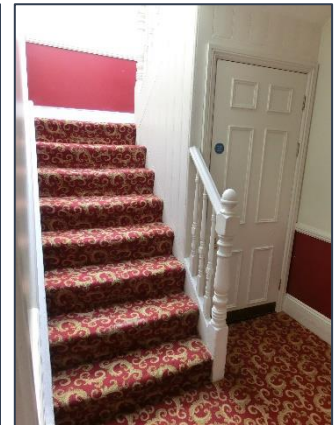


Figs 22, 23, 24 (L-R). No. 5 ground floor front room, lion mask patera detail; No. 6 rear room fireplace, 1815, No. 6 front room, fireplace, c. 1900

- 2.28 Despite extensive alterations, all three houses retain many historic interior features. Nos. 4 and 6 have leaded fanlights in screens between the vestibule and the staircase hall (Figs 17, 18, 19). Doorcases on the ground and first floors of Nos. 4 and 5 have lion mask paterae (Fig 22), a motif that also occurs in historic photographs of several other houses in the street.



Figs 25, 26, 27 (L–R). hob grates: No. 6 Room 108; No. 4 Room 203, No. 5 Room 205



Figs 28, 29, 30 (L–R). Typical shower installation; No. 4 service stair; No. 6 service stair

- 2.29 There is good decorative plasterwork on the ground and first floors. Some fireplaces were modernised in the late nineteenth century, but several grates and chimneypieces survive from the first build (Figs 23–27).
- 2.30 Access from the hall of No. 4 into the ground-floor rooms is blocked, so to move between No. 4 and No. 5 requires a detour into the basement or up to the first floor. At all levels except ground, an inserted partition makes a lateral corridor, reducing the size of the front rooms. Shower cubicles further disrupt the historic plan form in nearly all the bedrooms (Fig 28).
- 2.31 Each first-floor rear room has a curved rear wall partitioned close to the window. The result is an awkward, narrow and asymmetrical plan. Site investigations show that the cornice in No. 4 continues into the void above the suspended ceiling in the corridor. As first built, therefore, this room was wider, with the window centred in the curved of the rear wall.
- 2.32 In Nos. 5 and 6 the existing rear corridor partition is historic, although in No. 5 the position of the door into the rear room has been changed.
- 2.33 The service stair between second and third floor in No. 4 retains its ‘gun barrel’ newels, slender handrail, and plain square-section stick balusters to the upper flight (Fig 29). The same stairs in Nos. 5 and 6 have been rebuilt with a landing on the third floor and replacement balusters and newels in Victorian style (Fig 30).



Figs 31, 32 (L–R). No. 6, entrance; typical third-floor bedroom

- 2.34 Hotel use has required changes to the historic plan form and spatial proportions of the interiors. Openings in the party walls and partitions inserted to make corridors, lobbies and en-suite bathrooms have disrupted the plan and circulation on all floors. Dropped ceilings inserted into the corridors have further changed the proportions of these areas. Services have been inserted above dropped ceilings or boxed into risers.

- 2.35 The current décor is shabby and tired, and in some areas not sympathetic to the age and architectural style of the building (Fig 31). The overscaled, ornate fibrous plaster cornices on the second and third floors are particularly obtrusive where they cut across the heads of the windows (Fig 32).

- 2.36 The existing arrangements do not provide inclusive access.

3. Significance

- 3.1 This section summarises the overall significance of the listed terrace Nos 1–20 Bedford Place, before addressing the significance of No. 4–6 in more detail.

Assessing significance

- 3.2 The assessment follows the advice on assessing significance contained in the NPPF. Significance underpins the definition of a ‘heritage asset’ in Annex 2 of the NPPF:

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

- 3.3 Annex 2 of the NPPF defines significance as:

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.

- 3.4 Significance is usually derived from a mix of the types of interest mentioned in the NPPF, and it is a relative value that depends upon the type of building — so ‘highly significant’ applied to the front elevation of No. 4–6 Bedford Place does not mean that it is as significant as the west front of a medieval cathedral; rather, in the context of No. 4–6, the front elevation has more significance than some other parts of the listed building.
- 3.5 Understanding significance helps owners and others responsible for managing a heritage asset to repair, maintain and develop it in a way that preserves, enhances or better reveals its special interest, character or cultural value. Analysis of the relative significance of different parts of a site can help designers arrive at the most appropriate proposals by identifying parts that can sustain a greater or lesser degree of intervention—those that can be changed without harm to significance, and those that are more sensitive and should not be changed.

Levels of significance

- 3.6 Different levels of significance may be defined as follows:

High significance: makes an important specific contribution to the special interest of the site
Moderate significance: makes a specific contribution to the special interest of the site
Low significance: makes a general contribution to the interest of the site
Neutral: makes no contribution to special interest, but does not detract
Detracts: obscures or harms significance.

Designations

Listed building

- 3.7 The significance of No. 4–6 Bedford Place is officially recognised by its inclusion in the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest as part of the terrace Nos. 1–20 Bedford Place, at Grade II (NHL No. 1244591; Appendix A). This confirms that the terrace is considered to be a building of national importance, warranting every effort to preserve it.

Setting of listed buildings

- 3.8 The Site is within and forms part of the setting of several listed buildings, including the terrace Nos. 21–40 on the opposite (west) side of Bedford Place (NHL No. 1244593; Fig 33).



Fig 33. Listed buildings: blue triangles denote Grade II listed buildings and terraces; orange triangle denotes Grade II* (HE, annotated)

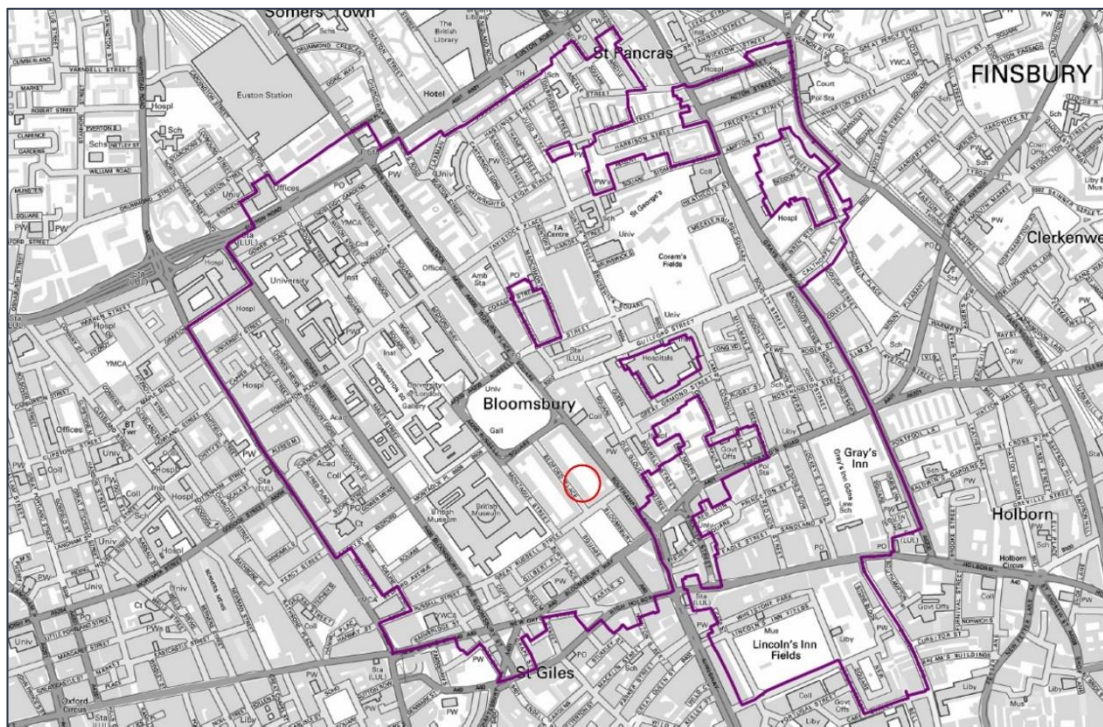


Fig 34. Bloomsbury Conservation Area, approximate Site circled (LBC 2006, annotated)

Registered parks and gardens

- 3.9 Russell Square Gardens and Bloomsbury Square Gardens are both listed at Grade II in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest (NHL Nos. 1000213 and 1000210).

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area

- 3.10 The Site is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, in Residential Sub Area 6: Bloomsbury Square/Russell Square/Tavistock Square. The *Conservation Area Appraisal* notes that 'there is strong consistency in the architectural vocabulary of the original terraced development.' (LBC 2011; 5.80)

- 3.11 In describing Bedford Place, the *Appraisal* notes that the terraces on both sides are identical, and similar to other Burton developments in the sub area; they provide ‘a strong sense of enclosure and a horizontal parapet line on each side’. (LBC 2011; 5.90) The Site makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 3.12 The listed buildings, registered park and garden, and conservation area are designated heritage assets as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF.

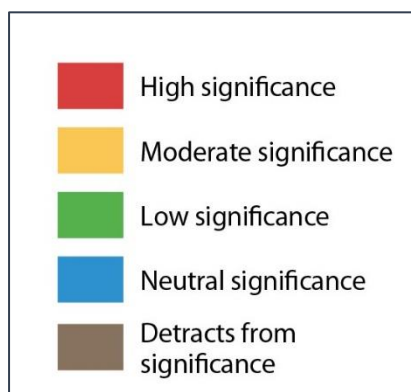
Significance of No 4–6 Bedford Place

- 3.13 The terrace Nos. 1–20 Bedford Place has historic interest as part of the substantial phase of development of the Bedford Estate that took place from 1800, following the creation of Russell Square. It exemplifies a style of town planning and domestic architecture established by the Bedford Estate in the late eighteenth century and continued in the early nineteenth-century until Bloomsbury was a complete high-class suburb, a ‘*world of ... squares and terraces, pleasant leafiness in alternation with equally pleasant architectural restraint, an ideal example of the right mixture of formal and informal.*’ (Cherry & Pevsner 2002, p. 321)
- 3.14 Bedford Place was laid out and built up by James Burton, an important figure in the development of this part of London. It was conceived as a connection between two of the principal architectural set-pieces of the estate, Bloomsbury Square and Russell Square.
- 3.15 The terrace has architectural and artistic significance for its restrained and refined Palladian design, in which modest projections at the centre and both ends suggest a palace front. The stuccoed and rusticated lower storeys, and the detailed design of the upper storeys, denote the respective status of different parts of the house. Details such as the iron railings and balconies are typical designs of the period.
- 3.16 The street frontage is well preserved along the full length of the terrace (on both sides of the street), which adds to its architectural and artistic interest. It has **high significance**.
- 3.17 The rear elevation is generally well preserved. Its design is plainer than that of the front, appropriate to its lower status and private aspect. It has some architectural and artistic interest, and **moderate significance** generally. The rear extensions retain some historic fabric (at No. 4) but accretive development has resulted in a mismatched assemblage of extensions to the basement and ground floor, having at best **neutral significance**. The little windows added to the second floor disrupt the historic pattern of fenestration across the terrace, and **detract from significance**.
- 3.18 The roofs of all three houses, with their half-butterfly format and party wall upstands with chimney pots, are generally well preserved, and have **moderate significance**. The lanterns are important elements of the staircase design, and have **high significance**. Their wired security glass and the recent metal stairs giving access to the roof voids are not particularly sympathetic but do not actively detract: these elements have **neutral significance**.
- 3.19 The historic plan form has been disrupted to some extent at all levels, notably to make lateral corridors connecting openings in the party walls, and corridors to shared toilets at the rear of the building. Lesser disruption has been caused by the insertion of partitions to make en-suite bathrooms, showers and shared toilets. These changes **detract from significance**.
- 3.20 The historic plan form is preserved in the main circulation spaces of the vestibule, staircase hall, stairs and landings, and in the ground-floor rooms of Nos. 5 and 6. This has **moderate significance**. The main stairs are architecturally interesting: side hung around an open well, toplit by the roof lanterns, with open strings and wreathed balustrades, they illustrate the persistence into the nineteenth century of the toplit staircases of Georgian townhouses, and have **high significance**.

- 3.21 The basement stairs and the upper service stair in No. 4 are plain designs appropriate to their lower status. They are well preserved, and have **moderate significance**. The upper service stairs in Nos. 5 and 6 are twentieth-century replacements with **neutral significance**.
- 3.22 The surviving elements of historic architectural decoration on the ground and first floors, including tall skirtings, large panelled doors and doorcases, ornamental plasterwork and chimneypieces, all contribute to the high status of these interiors. Some fireplaces were fitted with new grates or chimneypieces in the late nineteenth century, and have historic interest as evidence of technological change. The historic, architectural and artistic interest of these elements gives them **moderate significance**.
- 3.23 Particularly notable features that survive from the first build are the fanlights in the vestibule screens in Nos. 4 and 6, and the fireplace in Room 204, which retains an early hob grate of striking Regency design. These items have additional artistic interest, and **high significance**.
- 3.24 The dropped ceilings and elaborate cornices introduced into the corridors, and the cornices in the second- and third-floor bedrooms are inappropriate in scale and design. Modern finishes in the entrance and hotel reception areas on the ground floor are unsympathetic in design, materials and finishes. Bathrooms, showers and handbasins introduced into the bedrooms are poorly arranged, disruptive to the historic plan form and visually obtrusive. These elements all **detract from significance**.

Significance plans

- 3.25 The plans on the following pages show the initial assessment of significance, and may be revised in the light of future site investigations. The different level of significance are coloured as follows:



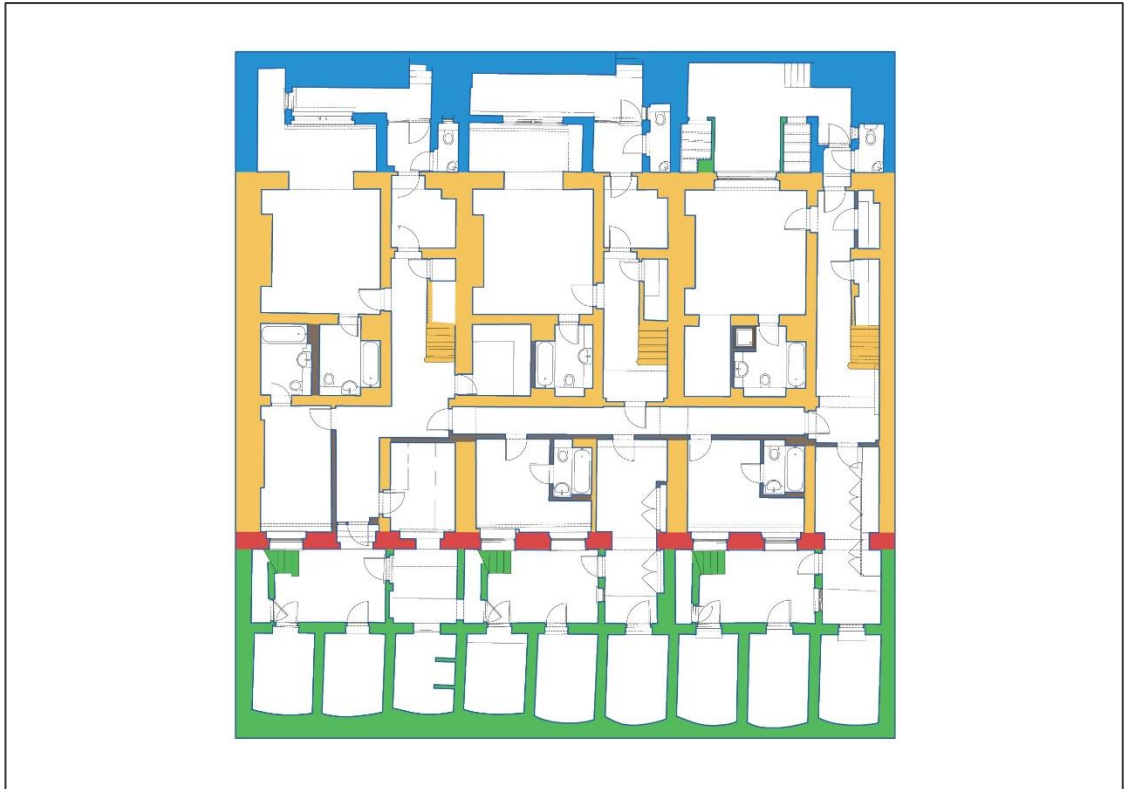


Fig 35. Basement: significance



Fig 36. Ground floor significance

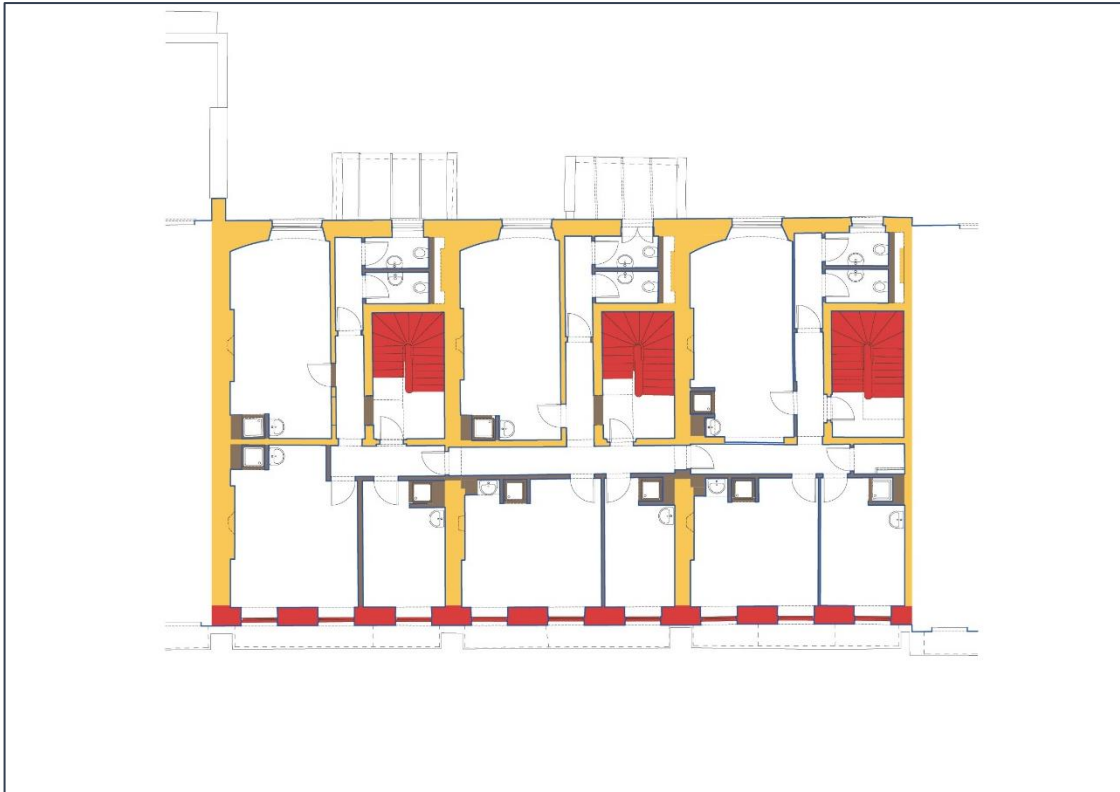


Fig 37. First floor significance

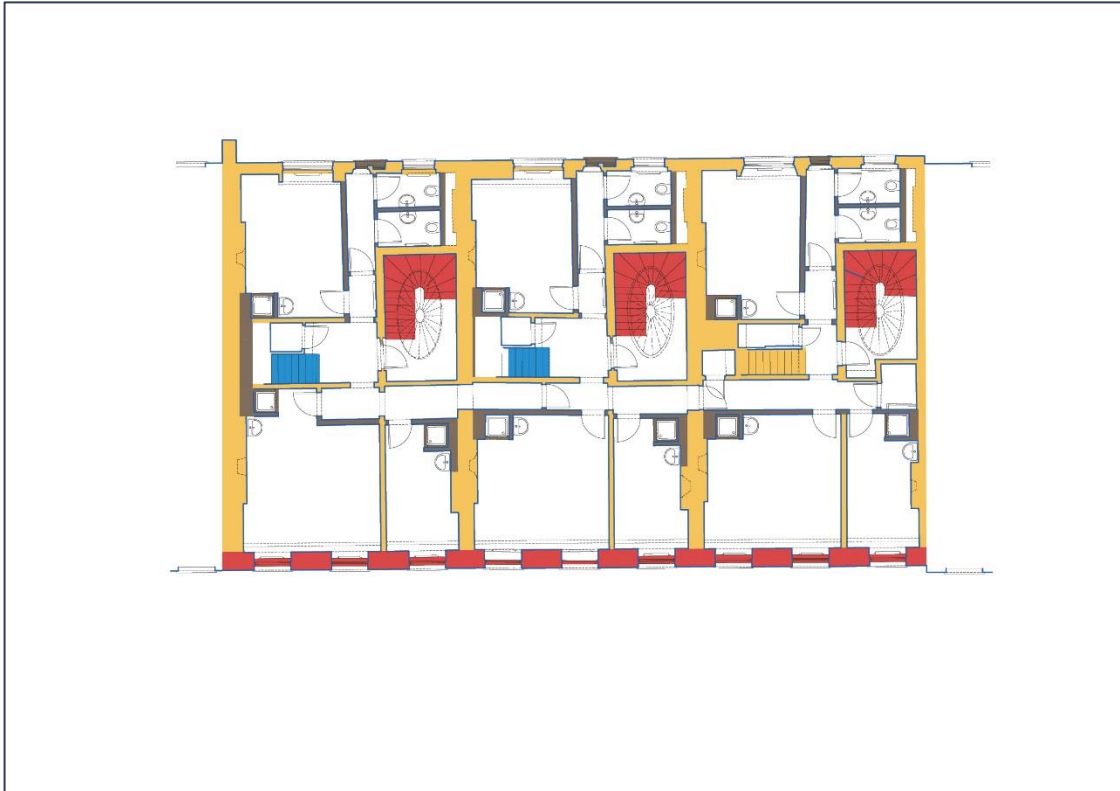


Fig 38. Second floor significance

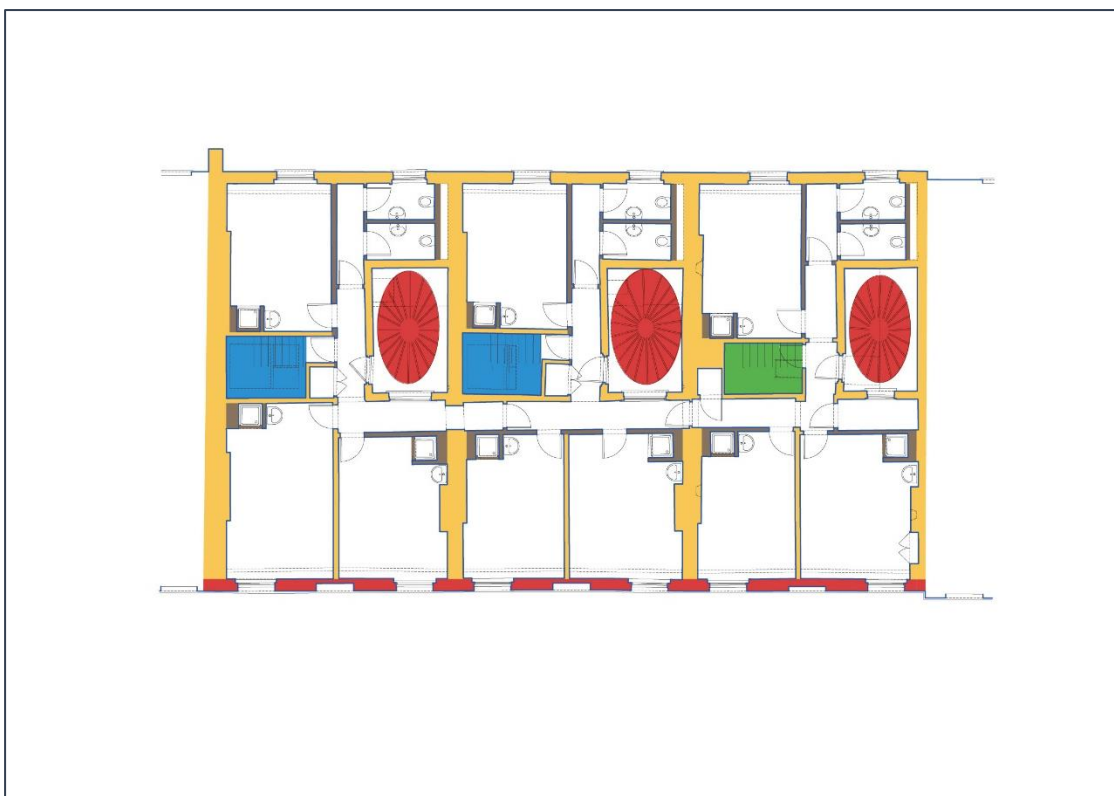


Fig 39. Third floor significance

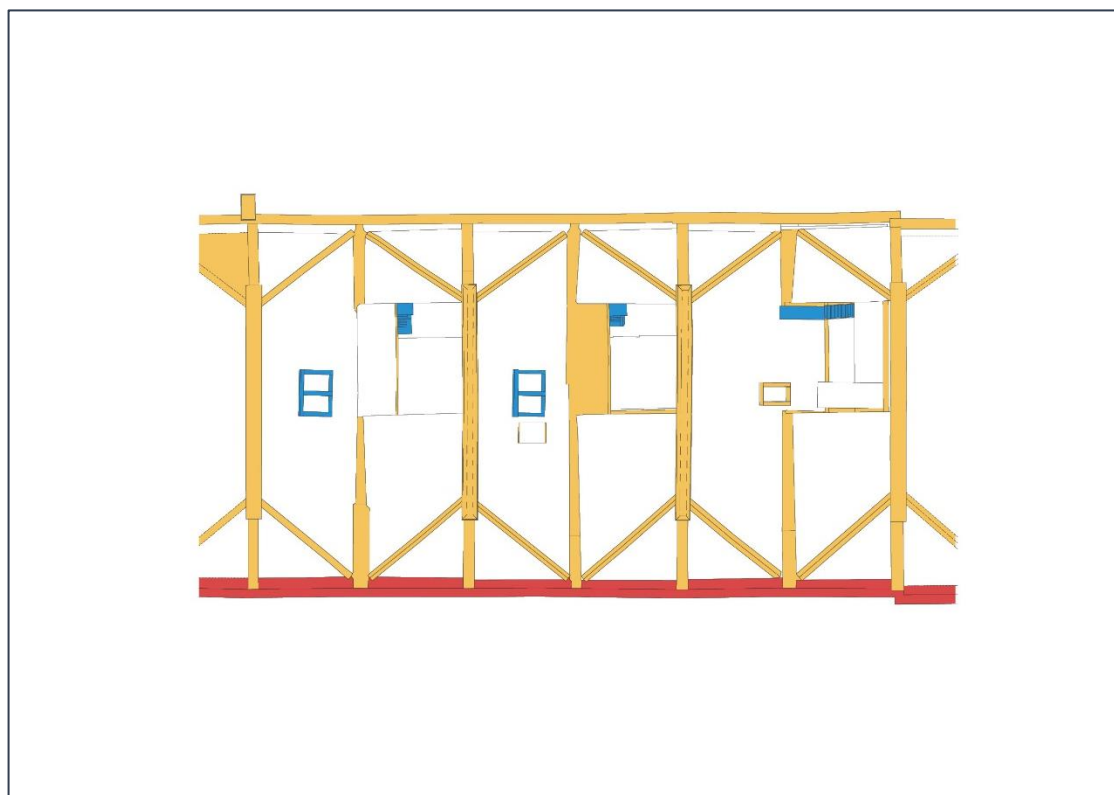


Fig 40. Roof significance

4. The proposals and their impact

Background to the proposals

- 4.1 Nos. 4, 5 and 6 Bedford Place have been a single property in hotel use since 1978. The property is currently vacant. It does not provide inclusive access. The accommodation is inadequate and the bathroom provision in particular is unacceptable for a hotel of this type, in this central London location. The services installation is obtrusive, inefficient and no longer fit for purpose. The décor and finishes are shabby and outdated.
- 4.2 Work is currently in hand on basic maintenance and repairs to the existing fabric to make the building weathertight. Listed building consent has been obtained for essential works to repair the roof across all three houses (Planning refs. 2022/4189/P and 2022/4723/L, approved 28 November 2022) and to replace some of the windows (Planning refs. 2023/0450/P and 2023/1095/L, awaiting decision).
- 4.3 This application is for the main works: extension of the listed building, and the repair and refurbishment of its interiors, to reposition the now defunct Lancaster Grange Hotel as a high quality, 4* boutique 'townhouse' hotel.
- 4.4 The hotel will be fully accessible. All rooms will have en-suite bathrooms, and three rooms will have fully accessible bathrooms. There will be a Lounge on the ground floor and communal use of the rear gardens. A limited food offering will be available to guests. Comprehensive refurbishment of the interiors is also proposed, to bring the hotel accommodation up to current standards.

Development principles

- 4.5 The proposals have been designed in the light of the requirements of the NPPF and Camden's Local Plan policies for the protection of the historic environment (Appendix B).
- 4.6 The project team have carried out extensive research into the history and construction of the existing building. A detailed understanding of the fabric, and this assessment of the Site's heritage significance, have informed the design of proposals that will as far as possible preserve, enhance and better reveal the significance of the designated heritage asset.
- 4.7 The proposals have been designed with the benefit of advice from LBC officers. For details of pre-application consultation advice, and design response, please see Studio Moren, *Design & Access Statement*, which forms part of this application.

The proposals

Front elevation

- 4.8 There is no proposal to change the highly significant front elevation. General maintenance and redecoration will improve its appearance and better reveal its significance, as well as enhancing the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The impact of this light-touch refurbishment will be **beneficial**.

Rear elevation: windows, extensions and conservatory

- 4.9 It is proposed to infill the three small bathroom windows on the second floor. These modern additions disrupt the fenestration of the rear elevation and detract from the significance of the listed building. They will be infilled with brick to match the surrounding wall (rendered at No. 4), if possible reusing brick salvaged from elsewhere on the rear elevation (see below, 4.14). This will restore the historic appearance of the rear elevation and will have a **beneficial impact** on the listed building and the conservation area.

- 4.10 The rear elevations of all three houses have different arrangements of extensions and fenestration at lower ground and ground levels, some of which are of unsympathetic design or poor-quality construction. They have neutral significance. It is proposed to replace the existing disjointed and inconsistent structures with a new closet wing to each house, at lower ground and ground levels. The design of these extensions is based on the classic London terraced house format, which was successfully deployed in the recent extensions to the houses adjoining to the south, Nos. 1,2 and 3 Bedford Place.
- 4.11 The new extensions will be built of London stock brick. Following officer's advice, the details will match the historic work on the host building, with gauged brick arches to the window and door openings.
- 4.12 The proposed extensions will make the rear elevation consistent from its southern end as far as No. 6. They will restore the historic rhythm of closet wings and setback elevations in this part of the listed building, and enhance the appearance of the conservation area. The impact on significance will be **beneficial**.
- 4.13 It is also proposed to build a structural glass enclosure to the rear of No. 5. Access to this conservatory will be via the rear window of the hotel Lounge, which will be enlarged by removal of a small area of brickwork under the sill. The opening will be fitted with part-glazed timber double doors of traditional four-panel design. The change to the appearance of the rear elevation will be minimal; the bricks removed will be retained and re-used, for example to close the small windows on the second floor. The brickwork of the rear elevation will remain exposed within the conservatory so that the extent of the historic house can be easily appreciated, and the simple glazed structure will have minimal visual impact. The proposal would cause **less than substantial harm** to significance.
- 4.14 Metal railings will be installed to the new ground-floor terrace, and an external stair will connect the conservatory to the garden.

Rear garden

- 4.15 The proposed closet wing extensions require the existing lightwells to be extended approximately 1m further into the garden, behind new retaining walls.
- 4.16 The three existing rear gardens are to be fully refurbished and landscaped for communal use by guests. Currently there is one opening within the brick wall between Nos. 5 and 6, and no connection at garden level with No. 4. The proposed closet wings and external staircase will render the existing opening unusable. It is therefore proposed to close the existing opening and make two new openings, one in each wall, to connect all three gardens.
- 4.17 Bricks reclaimed from the new openings will be used to infill the old opening, matching the bond and pointing of the existing masonry as closely as possible. The new openings will be carefully formed within the existing brick courses and the reclaimed bricks will be toothed in; no existing bricks will be cut to form the openings. Brick arches to the head of the opening will be formed to match the existing opening.
- 4.18 Existing paving and brick planters will be removed, and reclaimed bricks will be retained for future use within boundary walls where required. The paving will be reclaimed York stone slabs, which is the traditional paving material for townhouse gardens.
- 4.19 The sustainable servicing strategy for the hotel requires the use of Air Source Heat Pumps. These will be installed within freestanding louvred enclosures close to the rear boundary in the gardens of Nos. 4 and 6. The ASHP enclosures will be painted dark green to blend visually with their garden surroundings and screened with planted trellis.

- 4.20 Planting will be introduced in borders and free-standing planters, increasing the amount of greenery in the garden. For further information, please refer to the landscape drawings that accompany this application.
- 4.21 The loss of space to make deeper lightwells is negligible, and any harm will be counterbalanced by the provision of useable and attractive lightwells to three rooms at this level.
- 4.22 The ASHP enclosures are the minimum size required for the efficient and sustainable operation of the hotel services, and has sustainability benefits. L
- 4.23 Linking all three gardens requires the removal of a small amount of historic fabric, and will alter the ground plan of formerly discrete garden plots. However, the harm to significance, if any, is trivial: the link between Nos. 5 and 6 will replace an existing link, and the historic garden boundaries will remain legible. High quality landscaping and attractive planting will enhance the setting of the listed building, and the ability to use the garden will better reveal the significance of these former townhouses to guests and visitors.
- 4.24 On balance, therefore, the overall impact of the garden proposals will be **beneficial**.

Roof

- 4.25 The lift installation (see below, 4.17–19) requires a small overrun to the rear of the roof of No. 5. This will involve the removal of a small amount of the historic roof structure. The enclosure will project slightly above the rear parapet. However, it will not be visible in public views from the street. Within the conservation area it will be discernible only from the upper rear windows of buildings on Southampton Row, more than 50m to the east. It will be clad in lead with rolled and lapped joints, to give a high-quality traditional finish and visually reticent appearance. The change would cause less than substantial harm to significance. However, it is the minimum necessary to achieve the public benefit of inclusive access. It will support the continued operation of the hotel, which is the optimum viable use of the heritage asset. For these reasons, the overall impact of the proposal is adjudged to be **neutral**.
- 4.26 Photovoltaic panels will be installed on the south-facing slope of each roof. The slopes are well concealed by the party walls and parapets, and the panels will not appear in any views. The panels will have no impact on the significance of the listed building; furthermore, the installation is reversible. The panels will provide a useful public benefit by enhancing the environmental performance of the building and improving the sustainability of the project. This will help to sustain the heritage asset in its optimum viable use as a hotel, and is therefore **beneficial**.
- 4.27 The roof refurbishment work will include replacement of existing mismatched chimneypots with new clay chimneypots of consistent historic design.

Inclusive access: lift and chair lift

- 4.28 Policy D5 (Inclusive Design) and Policy C6 'Access for All' of the Camden Local Plan (July 2017).
- 4.29 An options appraisal has informed the choice of location for the proposed lift (see Studio Moren, *Pre-application /design Statement*, August 2022, p. 18). The choice of location and design of the lift was also informed by Historic England's guidance *Easy Access to Historic Buildings* (June 2015). This document stresses the importance of understanding the significance and vulnerabilities of historic buildings and having a good knowledge of users.
- 4.30 The chosen location, to the rear of the main stair, requires the removal of historic floors and ceilings at all levels to make the lift shaft. It requires the removal of some historic wall to provide access to the lift doors at lower ground and ground floors. On the upper floors, the existing corridor provides access to the lift, and only the modern toilet partitions and fittings

would be removed. This loss of historic fabric would cause **less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building**; the change to historic plan and circulation is a negligible further alteration. The harm must be weighed against the considerable public benefit of the proposal in providing equal, dignified and inclusive access to all levels of the building and better revealing its significance to all guests and users, regardless of their levels of mobility.

- 4.31 The fire safety and inclusive access strategies require the installation of a chair lift on the stair between basement and ground floor in No. 6 Bedford Place. This is a minor intervention to a feature of moderate significance, which provides the benefit of inclusive access to all levels of the hotel. It is a reversible change, which will have a **neutral impact on significance**.

Plan form: general

- 4.32 Most of the changes proposed to the plan form are to create new en-suite bathrooms, to meet the standard of guest accommodation required in a 4* hotel. The existing arrangements were clumsily inserted with little regard to their impact on the proportions or symmetry of the rooms. The proposed new arrangements are carefully designed to sit more comfortably within the historic plan form, either occupying smaller rooms or in 'pods' that reveal the proportions and architectural decoration of the interior. The impact on significance is either **neutral or beneficial**, depending on location.

Plan form: first-floor rear rooms

- 4.33 The first-floor rear rooms were designed as high-status spaces, with high ceilings, good fireplaces and elaborate decorative plaster cornices. The insertion of the lateral corridor having reduced the size of the front rooms on this floor, the rear rooms are the only guestrooms that potentially preserve the full proportions of principal rooms. An important feature of these rooms is the curved rear wall, which introduces variety into the plan and frames the large rear window. Corridor partitions abut the right-hand side of the window in all three houses, creating a lopsided plan and asymmetrical internal rear elevation (Figs 41, 42).
- 4.34 In No. 4 the partition is a modern insertion. The historic plaster cornice survives above the corridor suspended ceiling. It is proposed to remove the corridor partition and restore the room to its original plan, proportions and decoration. The existing cornice will be revealed and repaired. This will be a **substantial heritage benefit**.
- 4.35 In No. 4 the existing plan will be retained in order to maintain corridor access to the lift, and a 'pod' bathroom will be installed.
- 4.36 In No. 6 it is proposed to remove the corridor partition. This is either original or of some age because it carries the same plaster cornice as the rest of the room, and there is no evidence of this cornice above the corridor. However, the current work provides the opportunity to mirror the historic plan and proportions of No. 4, and create a room with plan form, proportions and symmetry commensurate with its status as one of the principal rooms in the house. The existing cornice and the historic fabric revealed in No. 4 provide compelling evidence for a scholarly installation. The proposal is the same as that permitted in the equivalent rooms of Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Bedford Place (see Studio Moren, *Design & Access Statement* for details). This proposal would have a **neutral impact on significance**.



Fig 41 (left) First-floor rear room, No. 6. Fig 42 (right). First-floor rear room, No. 4

Interior decoration

- 4.37 The proposals for the interior are based on analysis of the existing fabric, taking into account the assessment of significance. As far as possible, historic features will be retained *in situ* and repaired. Existing historic fabric will be used to provide compelling evidence for scholarly restoration of missing features. Where existing historic fabric has to be removed, it will be carefully dismantled and where possible reused in new locations on the same floor, so that it remains within the building in a location that preserves the decorative hierarchy. The sympathetic refurbishment and redecoration of the historic interiors will have a **beneficial impact on the significance of the listed building**.

Services and plant

- 4.38 Provision of new services to meet current standards for hotel accommodation is a particular challenge. The existing installations provide ample evidence of the difficulty of integrating bathrooms and showers convincingly into historic interiors. In the most significant rooms with high ceilings, therefore, the designers have adopted an honest approach, and propose the insertion of 'pod' bathrooms and storage that are independent of the historic architecture. The pods are clearly modern insertions, which allow the full height and proportions of the rooms to be appreciated and the continuous cornices (restored as necessary) to be read.
- 4.39 In rooms with lower floor-to-ceiling heights, partitions are reconfigured to make en-suite bathrooms. These are arranged back-to-back and moved away from the fireplace walls as far as possible, to minimise the number of routes and openings required for new services, to better reveal the symmetry of the chimneybreasts, and restore the significance of the historic fireplaces as the focal point of each interior. The impact on significance will be **beneficial**.

Impact assessment table

- 4.40 The impact on heritage significance of the proposals is summarised in the table on the following pages.

Location	Proposal	Significance	Impact on significance	Comment
Exterior: front elevation				
Front elevation	Repair and redecorate	High	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses maintenance deficit Improves appearance of listed building Enhances appearance of conservation area
Exterior: rear elevation				
Rear lightwells	New lightwells to rear guest rooms; new retaining walls	Neutral	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing mix of inconsistent, mostly non-original structures reduces useable space Proposal provides consistent appearance to lightwells and attractive, useable external spaces
Rear elevation	Remove existing rear extensions and replace	Moderate (elevation as a whole); Low (remnant historic fabric No. 4); Neutral (all other fabric)	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing extensions a mix of inconsistent, mostly non-original additions. Proposed closet wings in keeping with age and style of listed building Improves rhythm and proportions of rear elevation: consistent with recent rear extensions to Nos. 1, 2 and 3, and consistent across No. 4–6
Rear elevation	Remove second-floor small windows; reinstate brickwork	Moderate	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restores historic appearance of rear elevation Enhances significance of listed building Enhances character and appearance of conservation area
Rear elevation	Ground floor: drop No. 5 rear window cill; provide new double doors, glass enclosure and metal stair to garden	Moderate	Less than substantial harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances amenity for guests using Lounge Addition to historic floor plan Minimal loss of historic fabric Structural glass minimises external visual impact Rear elevation brick masonry not rendered; historic form of listed building remains readable New metal stair replaces existing garden access
Exterior: rear garden				
Rear garden	Provide enclosures for ASHP: 1no. at No. 4; 1no. at No. 6	Low (historic plot) Neutral (design and planting)	Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required for implementation of more sustainable servicing strategy Incorporated into new landscape scheme for rear garden Painted green and screened with planted trellis as part of considered landscape design Supports efficient and sustainable operation of hotel, which is optimum viable use of asset.

Location	Proposal	Significance	Impact on significance	Comment
Rear garden	Close existing opening between Nos. 5 and 6; make 2no new openings to link all three gardens	Low (historic plot)	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permits communal use of all garden space by guests and visitors Landscape design will improve the appearance of the garden as setting for the listed building Minor enhancement of the appearance of the conservation area Increases access to and better reveals the significance of the listed building.
Exterior: roof				
Roof	Build lift overrun in centre of No. 5; install Photovoltaic panels	Moderate	Less than substantial harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lift required for inclusive access and efficient operation of hotel. Overrun not visible from street and rear garden; preserves character and appearance of conservation. Photovoltaic panels to be installed on south-facing roof slopes; not visible in public views Mismatched chimneypots to be replaced Public benefits: access to listed building
Interior: throughout				
Throughout	Servicing strategy: remove existing plant and services and replace with new	Detracts	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required for efficient and sustainable operation of hotel Existing plant and services outdated and no longer fit for purpose Horizontal distribution achieved at lower ground floor, to minimise interventions at more significance upper levels Existing voids, ducts and risers reused where possible
Throughout	Interior decoration strategy	Moderate (surviving historic decoration); detracts (all modern decorative elements)	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern, unsympathetic mouldings and other decorative elements removed Where historic timber and plaster mouldings exist, they will be retained and restored / reused. Restoration of historic interior decoration will be based on compelling evidence of existing elements; these will be used to provide models for scholarly restoration of interior decoration The hierarchy of decoration is respected New elements (e.g. bathroom pods) will be of modern design, easily readable as modern insertions. Where floor to ceiling heights allow, pods will be at a height permitting the historic proportions of the room to be appreciated, and the retained / restored cornice to be seen.

Location	Proposal	Significance	Impact on significance	Comment
Interior: all levels				
Rear room of No. 5	Remove existing floors and internal walls in lower ground and ground floors; remove toilet partitions upper levels; insert lift to rear of main stair	Moderate (historic fabric at basement, ground, roof) Detracts (partitions ground, first, second, third floors)	Less than substantial harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lift required for inclusive access and efficient operation of hotel. • Options appraisal shows this to be least intrusive location. • Removes detracting inserted partitions at first, second and third levels. • Permits retention of moderately significance service staircase from second to third floors • Provides inclusive access; better reveals significance of listed building through inclusive access to all levels
Interior: lower ground floor				
Rear of main stair in No. 5	Remove existing floor slab; strengthen lift pit foundations	Neutral	Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lift required for inclusive access and efficient operation of hotel. • Options appraisal shows this to be least intrusive location. • Provides inclusive access; better reveals significance of listed building through inclusive access to all levels
Basement stair No. 6	Install surface mounted chair lift	Moderate	Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for the provision of inclusive access and fire safety • Reversible
Front rooms No. 4 and No. 6	Remove existing masonry; insert steel beam and stud wall	Moderate	Less than substantial harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of historic fabric • Historic plan form retained • Improves internal proportions of guestrooms
Various	Reconfigure internal plan form	Moderate (historic plan); detracts (inserted partitions)	Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for insertion of lift and to improve circulation • Required to provide 4* guest accommodation, including 1no. fully accessible bathroom. • Basement is former low-status service area; no surviving historic features • Limited removal of historic fabric; mostly inserted modern partitions • Impact of new openings balanced by closing non-historic openings • Provides inclusive access and efficient operation of hotel.

Location	Proposal	Significance	Impact on significance	Comment
Throughout	Remove existing services and replace with new	Detracts	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required to provide 4* guest accommodation Required to provide staff accommodation Existing services outdated, in places obtrusive, no longer fit for purpose; replacement required for efficient and sustainable operation of hotel Horizontal transfer of services concentrated in basement to minimise impact on more significant historic fabric and interiors at upper levels
Spaces under front entrance steps	Convert to guestroom and plant room	Low (historic plan form)	Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required to provide 4* guest accommodation New plant required for efficient and sustainable operation of hotel Historic plan form is retained
Interior: ground floor				
Front and rear rooms No. 5	Enlarge opening between front and rear rooms	Moderate	Less than substantial harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider opening in partition required to improve circulation and efficient operation of Lounge Minimal loss of historic fabric Substantial nibs and downstand retained; historic plan form remains readable Existing architrave with lion masks retained and reinstated, extended to match existing
Front rooms Nos. 4 & 6	Reconfigure existing plan; insert bathrooms	Moderate	Less than substantial harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required to provide 4* guest accommodation, including fully accessible bathrooms. Required for circulation Some disruption to historic plan form (further to previous alterations) Minimal loss of historic fabric Bathroom 'pods' sustain historic proportions within rooms and reveal architectural decoration
Rear rooms Nos. 4 & 6	Reconfigure existing plan; re-provide bathrooms	Moderate	Less than substantial harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required to provide 4* guest accommodation, including 2no. fully accessible bathrooms. Some disruption to historic plan form (further to previous alterations) Minimal loss of historic fabric Bathroom 'pods' sustain historic proportions within rooms and reveal architectural decoration
Interior: first floor				
Front rooms Nos. 4, 5 & 6	Reconfigure existing plan; insert bathrooms	Moderate	Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required to provide 4* guest accommodation. Existing corridor partitions are modern. Further disruption to previously altered plan form Restores symmetry to chimneybreasts; better reveals fireplaces

Location	Proposal	Significance	Impact on significance	Comment
Rear room No. 4	Remove corridor partition & toilets; make en-suite bathroom	Moderate	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required to provide 4* guest accommodation Reinstates historic plan form Reinstates spatial proportions and symmetry of rear principal room Existing cornice, currently disrupted and partially concealed within corridor suspended ceiling, will be revealed and restored Enhances and better reveals significance of high-status interior
Rear corridor and WCs No. 5	Retain existing plan form; remove WCs to provide lift	Moderate (historic plan form); Detracts (WCs)	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required to provide inclusive access to all levels Minimal loss of historic fabric; chimneybreasts retained within lift shaft Retains historic plan form Removes detracting WCs
Rear room No. 6	Remove corridor partition & toilets; make en-suite bathrooms	Moderate	Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required to provide 4* guest accommodation Reproduces historic plan form found in No. 4 (and other houses in Bedford Place) Improves spatial proportions and symmetry of rear principal room Provides access to en-suite bathroom in rear room, minimising disruption to historic plan form Existing cornice provides compelling evidence for scholarly reproduction of decorative plasterwork to complete architectural decoration of interior
Interior: second floor				
Front rooms Nos. 4, 5 and 6	Reconfigure existing plan; insert bathrooms	Moderate	Neutral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required to provide 4* guest accommodation Existing corridor partitions are modern. Further disruption to previously altered plan form Restores symmetry to chimneybreasts; better reveals fireplaces
Rear rooms Nos. 4 & 6	Remove corridor partition and toilets; make en-suite bathrooms	Moderate	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required to provide 4* guest accommodation Reinstates historic plan form, spatial proportions and symmetry of rear rooms Restores symmetry to chimneybreasts; better reveals fireplaces reinstates plan form of rear small rooms
Interior: third floor				

Location	Proposal	Significance	Impact on significance	Comment
Front rooms Nos. 4, 5 & 6	Change partitions; insert bathrooms	Moderate	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required to provide 4* guest accommodation. • Existing corridor partitions are modern. • Restores symmetry to chimneybreasts l; better reveals fireplaces
Rear rooms Nos. 4, 5 & 6	Remove corridor partition and toilets; make en-suite bathrooms	Moderate	Beneficial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required to provide 4* guest accommodation. • Reinstates historic plan form, spatial proportions and symmetry of rear rooms • Restores symmetry to chimneybreasts l; better reveals fireplaces • reinstates plan form of rear small rooms

Conclusion

- 4.41 Of the 26 proposals outlined in the table above, 12 would have a beneficial impact on heritage significance, seven would have no impact, and seven have the potential to cause less than substantial harm to significance. The overall balance of heritage impacts is positive.
- 4.42 Any potential harm must be weighed against the public benefit of bringing a vacant property back into use as a hotel providing inclusive access and accommodation of an appropriate standard for this part of Camden, with sensitive repair and refurbishment of the fabric that will sustain, enhance and better reveal the significance of the listed building.
- 4.43 The scheme supports the efficient and sustainable management of the hotel, which is the optimum viable use of the heritage assets. The proposals are in accordance with national and local policies for the protection of the historic environment. Accordingly, it is requested that the application be approved.

5. Sources

Books and journals

Camden History Society, *Streets of Bloomsbury and Fitzrovia*, 1997

Cherry, B. and Pevsner, N. (2002), *The Buildings of England. London 4: North*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Gibson, P. (1988) *The Capital Companion: A Street-by-Street Guide to London and its Inhabitants*, 2nd edn London: Webb & Bower

Hobhouse, H. (1995), *Thomas Cubitt. Master builder*. London: Macmillan

Kelly (1930), *Kelly's Post Office Trade Directory*

Kelly (1940), *Kelly's Post Office Street Directory*

Olsen, D. (1984), *Town Planning in London*, 2nd edn. New Haven and London: Yale University Press

Walford, E. (1878). *Old and New London*. Cassell, Petter & Galpin.

Ward, L. (2015), *The London County Council Bomb Damage Maps 1939–1945*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Weinreb, B. and Hibbert, C. (1995), *The London Encyclopaedia*. London: Papermac

Policy and guidance

Historic England (June 2015) *Easy Access to Historic Buildings*

LB Camden (2011), *Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy*

LB Camden Archives

Drainage application plans for Nos. 4, 5, and 6 Bedford Place, 1891–1971 (microfiche)

Appendix A. Statutory List entry

Numbers 1–20 and attached railings, 1–20 Bedford Place

Overview

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1244591

Date first listed: 28-Feb-1969

Date of most recent amendment: 11-Jan-1999

Statutory Address 1: NUMBERS 1-20 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS, 1-20, BEDFORD PLACE

Location

Statutory Address: NUMBERS 1-20 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS, 1-20, BEDFORD PLACE

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden (London Borough)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

National Grid Reference: TQ 30249 81820

Details

CAMDEN

TQ3081NW BEDFORD PLACE 798-1/100/63 (East side) 28/02/69 Nos.1-20 (Consecutive) and attached railings (Formerly Listed as: BEDFORD PLACE Nos.1-20 AND 21-40 (Consecutive))

GV II

Symmetrical terrace of 20 houses forming the east side of Bedford Place. c1815. By James Burton. Multi-coloured stock brick with rusticated stucco ground floors. Stucco 3rd floor sill band. 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each. Slightly projecting end bays (Nos 1-3 and 18-20) and central bays (Nos 8-12). Wide segmental-arched doorways with some patterned fanlights, sidelights and double half-glazed doors. Gauged brick flat arches (painted red) to recessed sash windows, some with original glazing bars. Continuous cast-iron balconies at 1st floor level, No.11 with arched trellis balcony with tented canopy. Parapets. INTERIORS not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas, some houses with area overthrows.

Listing NGR: TQ3024981820

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: 476645

Legacy System: LBS

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

End of official list entry

Appendix B. Summary of relevant planning policy

- B.1 As No. 4–6 Bedford Place is Grade II-listed, works that affect its significance require listed building consent and will be assessed against Government guidance contained in the NPPF and the online NPPG, which gives useful guidance on public benefits. Historic England has produced relevant guidance on *Easy Access to Historic Buildings* (HE, 2015). In regional policy, the London Plan (GLA, 2021) contains policies for the historic environment. Local policies in the Camden Local Plan (LBC, 2017) are also relevant.

National: Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- B.2 Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 require local planning authorities, in considering whether to grant listed building consent, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- B.3 Section 72 of the Act requires local planning authorities, in considering whether to grant planning permission with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

National: NPPF 2021

- B.4 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England. Section 16 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* contains guidance on how local planning authorities should assess proposals to alter listed buildings. Paragraphs 197, 199, 200 and 202 are relevant to the present application.

Paragraph 197. *In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

Paragraph 199. *When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. [...].*

Paragraph 200. *Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification [...]*

Paragraph 202. *Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*

National: Planning Practice Guidance

- B.5 Additional guidance for local planning authorities determining planning and listed building consent applications is available online. It contains the following advice on 'Decision-Taking: Historic Environment':

[...] sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation. (Paragraph: 015)

The guidance discusses the term ‘public benefits’ as follows:

Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits. Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:

- *sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting*
- *reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset*
- *securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation. (Paragraph: 020)*

[National: Historic England, *Easy Access to Historic Buildings* \(2015\)](#)

- B.6 The Historic England guidance, *Easy Access to Historic Buildings* deals mainly with public buildings and sites. However, it contains the following statements that are relevant to the proposals for No. 4-6 Bedford Place:

[Heritage assets sometimes] need to be modified to meet the changing needs of their occupants. The survival of most historic buildings depends upon their continued, viable use and this may, among other things, require alterations to improve access. (Section 1.1)

It is important that each feature is properly understood, both in its own right and in the context of the whole building. Every effort should be made to leave features unchanged and visible if they contribute to the building’s significance, character or composition. In some circumstances a reasonable adjustment may involve avoiding a feature rather than making an alteration. (Section 2.2)

The best way to provide accessible circulation between different floors of a building is to install an integrated and suitably sized passenger lift [...]

Passenger and platform lifts are best located in the less-sensitive parts of historic buildings, for example secondary staircases and light wells or in areas that have already been disturbed or altered. (Section 3.3)

[Regional: The London Plan 2021](#)

- B.7 The London Plan 2021 is the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London. It sets out a framework for how London will develop over the next 20–25 years and the Mayor’s vision for Good Growth.

- B.8 Chapter 7 of the London Plan, *Heritage and Culture*, contains policies for the protection of the historic environment. Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth states:

[...] (C) Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets’ significance and appreciation within their surroundings. [...]

[Local: Camden Local Plan](#)

- B.9 The Local Plan was adopted on 3 July 2017 and is the basis for planning decisions and future development in the borough. Chapter 7 *Design and Heritage* contains the following policies that are relevant to the proposals.

Policy D1 Design: *The Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development:*

- a) respects local context and character;*

- b) preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage;*
- c) is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;*
- d) is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses;*
- e) comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character; [...]*
- g) is inclusive and accessible for all;*
- h) promotes health; [...]*
- n) for housing, provides a high standard of accommodation; and*
- o) carefully integrates building services equipment.*

The policy detail on local context and character is contained in paragraph 7.2: *The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:*

- character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;*
- the prevailing pattern, density and scale of surrounding development;*
- the impact on existing rhythms, symmetries and uniformities in the townscape;*
- the composition of elevations;*
- the suitability of the proposed design to its intended use;*
- inclusive design and accessibility;*
- its contribution to public realm and its impact on views and vistas; and*
- the wider historic environment and buildings, spaces and features of local historic value.*

Policy D2 Heritage states that *the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.*

The Council's policy on designated heritage assets repeats the NPPF guidance on proposals that would harm significance.

The Council's policy on conservation areas states that the Council will: *(p) require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area; [...]*

Paragraph 7.61 specifies the Council's expectations in respect of access in listed buildings:

Where listed buildings and their approaches are being altered, disabled access should be considered and incorporated. The Council will balance the requirement for access with the interests of conservation and preservation to achieve an accessible solution. We will expect design approaches to be fully informed by an audit of conservation constraints and access needs and to have considered all available options. The listed nature of a building does not preclude the development of inclusive design solutions and the Council expects sensitivity and creativity to be employed in achieving solutions that meet the needs of accessibility and conservation.

[Local: Camden Planning Guidance](#)

- B.10 The Council has issued planning guidance documents. CPG1 Design (July 2015 updated March 2018). Section 3 Heritage sets out the following Key Messages:

Camden has a rich architectural heritage and we have a responsibility to preserve, and where possible, enhance these areas and buildings.

- *We will only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area [...]*
- *Historic buildings can and should address sustainability and accessibility.*

Under the heading ‘Inclusive access to listed buildings’ paragraph 3.27 states: *It is important that everyone should have dignified and easy access to and within historic buildings, regardless of their level of mobility. With sensitive design, listed buildings can be made more accessible, while still preserving and enhancing the character of the building.*

Local: Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2011

- B.11 The *Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy* is concerned with the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area, and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Section 3 ‘Maintaining Character’ outlines the general approach to maintaining the special interest of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, and includes:

applications for development will be determined having regard to the special interest of the Conservation Area and the specialist advice of conservation officers; (Paragraph 3)

in undertaking its development control function the Council will ensure that that the historic details which are an essential part of the special architectural character of Bloomsbury Conservation Area are preserved, repaired and reinstated where appropriate; (Paragraph 6)

In Section 5 ‘Management of Change’ , under ‘Maintenance and Repair of Listed Buildings,’ the *Appraisal* says:

Owners will be encouraged to keep listed buildings occupied and in an appropriate use. [...]. (Paragraph 5.18)

In all cases the Council will expect original architectural features and detailing to be retained, repaired, protected, or refurbished in the appropriate manner [...].(Paragraph 5.33)

Author: Kit Wedd
Draft issued: 15 March 2023
Draftv2 issued: 20 March 2023
Final issued: 21 March 2023
© Spurstone Heritage Limited 2023

This document concerns the Site identified in the Introduction and is written for the purpose described in the Introduction. Its contents may not be copied or reproduced in whole or in part without the prior written consent of Spurstone Heritage Limited.