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# Heritage Statement

No. 39 Marchmont Street,  
Camden, London W1D 4HT

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On behalf of Fortune Green Capital Limited

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December 2023 | Project Ref. 00541 | V.2

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# Introduction

## Instruction

1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Jon Lowe Heritage Ltd under the instruction of Fortune Green Capital to accompany an application for Listed Building Consent relating to proposed works at Nos. 39 Marchmont Street, Camden.

## The Site

2. The site is located on the west side of Marchmont Street, between Tavistock Street (to the north) and Coram Street (to the south). No. 39 is part of the terrace of Nos. 39-73 Marchmont Street, which were built as townhouses in the early 19th century and are Grade II listed (added 14 May 1974, list entry number 1113112). The site is also located in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and is experienced within the setting of a number of other listed buildings.
3. No. 39 Marchmont Street is a four-storey terrace property currently in mixed use, with a hardware shop located at ground and basement levels and three flats located at first, second and third floor levels. It suffered bomb damage during the Second World War, with the neighbouring property at No. 33-37 Marchmont Street being completely destroyed and redeveloped, and it is evident that parts of the building have been rebuilt

## Proposed Changes

4. Insofar as built heritage is concerned the proposed works are minor in nature and involve internal works and repairs to stabilise the building in light of recently discovered structural defects. The proposals are described in detail within the drawing pack submitted as part of the full suite of documents associated with this application.

## Purpose of the Statement

5. The purpose of this heritage statement is to assist Camden Borough Council with their consideration of the proposed works, with

regard the effects of development on the historic environment. Value judgements on the significance of the heritage assets affected are presented and the effects of the proposals on that significance are appraised.

6. Specifically this statement assesses the capability of the site to absorb change without negatively impacting on its significance and will highlight and describe the heritage benefits of the proposed scheme. Consideration is given to the effects of the proposed alterations on the significance of the heritage assets affected, namely the listed building.

## Methodology

7. The author has undertaken an internal and external inspection of the building. This has been complimented by a programme of documentary research.
8. Consideration is given to the statutory duties imposed by sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and policy set out within the London Plan (2021) and Camden's local development framework.
9. In accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 194) this statement describes the significance of the heritage assets potentially affected. It goes on to appraise the effects of the proposals upon that significance and concludes that the proposed works are sympathetic in their effects, sustaining the significance of the heritage assets.

## Pre-application & Design Evolution

10. Prior to the submission of the proposal a pre-application meeting was held with Camden Borough Council London. Changes to the design of the scheme were made in response to design comments raised by the officers as part of the pre-application process.



Figure 1: No. 39 Marchmont Street's front elevation



Figure 2: Plan view of the Site, delineated in red, and its surroundings.





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## Historic Background

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# Historic Background

## Area Development

11. The land on which Marchmont Street was built forms part of the estate purchased from James Cecil, sixth Earl of Salisbury, by governors of the Foundling Hospital in 1741. The original intention of the governors was to buy two fields to the north of what became Guilford Street, where the Foundling Hospital would be built. However, Lord Salisbury refused to part with such a small site, instead insisting that the governors purchase four fields, a total of 56 acres.
12. The surplus land was disposed of through building leases from 1764, with building accelerating from 1785 when revenue for the hospital dwindled. Development of the land initially proved divisive, with the wealthy residents of Queen Square and Great Ormond Street reluctant to have their rural views spoilt by new houses.
13. The estate architect and surveyor was Samuel Pepys Cockerell (1753-1827), who submitted plans for the estate in 1790, including a mixture of residential housing of different classes. The plans included two grand squares which would form the heart of the estate, Brunswick Square and Mecklenburgh Square. James Burton (1761-1837) took building leases on large parts of the estate and began building from 1790s onwards.
14. As well as his work for the Foundling Estate, Burton also built houses on the Bedford, Somers and Skinners' Estates. He was a prolific builder, and according to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* he was responsible for almost 600 houses built between 1792 and 1802.
15. Marchmont Street isn't shown on Horwood's 1799 map of London though this map does show a proposed street layout. Buildings along

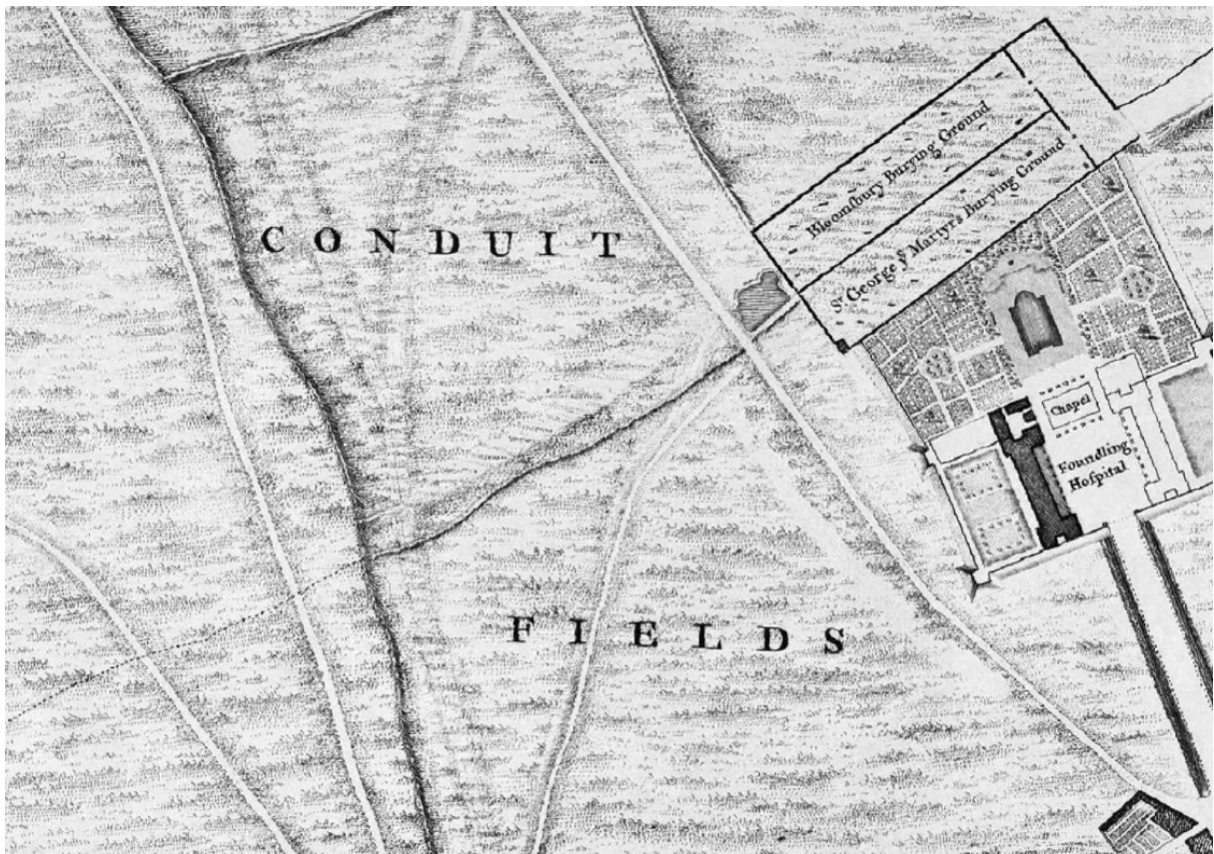


Figure 3: 1746 Rocque Map of London





*Figure 4: 1792-99 Horwood Map (left) & Faden's 1819 revision of the Horwood Map (right), with the site delineated in red*

Marchmont Street are shown as far as Tavistock place on Horwood's revised plan of 1807, indicating building work began between 1800 and 1806. Horwood's later revised map of 1819 shows the initial numbering system used in the street, with the west side noted as numbers Nos. 1-22, running south to north.

16. Marchmont Street began as a predominantly residential neighbourhood in the early 1800s but by 1840 developed into a typical early Victorian 'High Street'. The majority of properties would have had shopfronts at street level, with the shop occupying the ground and basement levels and dwellings on the levels above.

### No. 39 Marchmont Street

17. Insurance records indicate that in the 1820s No. 39 Marchmont Street was home to Thomas Chambers, a grocer and oilman. By the 1840s George Saunders was listed as living there, also a grocer. The shop on the ground floor of the building continued to be used as a grocer until 1880, when tailors George Henry Squire & Sons were occupying the premises until c.1888. From then the shop

appears to have changed function every 10 years or so. In the 1890s Harry Goldberg, a wardrobe dealer was living there, and between c.1908 and c.1923 the shop was a confectionery.

18. One of No. 39 Marchmont Street's notable residents was Charles Fort (1874-1932) who lived at the property between 1921 and 1928. Fort was an American writer and researcher who specialised in anomalous phenomena. When he was living at No. 39, he was gathering data and researching journals at the British Museum Library. A plaque commemorating his residence there can be seen on the exterior of the building.
19. By 1930, Pearks Dairies had acquired No. 39 Marchmont Street and it is possible that by this time the floors above were in multiple residential occupancy. In 1938 three individuals were listed as registered to vote at No. 39. By 1947 however multiple individuals are listed at '39a' Marchmont Street. This may indicate that the house had been divided in some way. Given that the site sustained some bomb damage during WWII, it would make sense that the conversion took place at the time of repairs.



20. During the Second World War Marchmont Street suffered extensive bomb damage. A bombing raid in 1940 damaged Nos. 33-37 beyond repair, with No. 39 suffering general blast damage. From inspection of the building's fabric and review of historic images, areas of the exterior appear to have been rebuilt or substantially repaired though it is not known when these works were undertaken. The neighbouring properties was likely rebuilt in the late 1950s or 1960s.
21. Pearks remained at the premises during the war, with drainage plans dated 1948 and produced for 'Pearks Dairies Limited' showing the addition of a W.C. on the ground floor. Shortly after the business moved out was or was renamed as a 1956 photograph shows the shop at No. 39 occupied by *Henry's High Class Fruitier and Grocer*. The ground and basement levels remained in use as a grocer until the late 20th century when the current occupier, a hardware store, moved into the premises. It is likely that around this time the original shopfront was replaced by the existing frontage.

22. At ground and basement levels the arrangement of rooms has been historically altered to accommodate retail use (at least by 1948). These two levels have also been separated from the levels above. The traditional front/rear room arrangement has also been lost at ground floor and a series of infill extensions added at the rear. At first floor levels and above there has been significant alteration to plan form and proportions, with original partitions removed and historic rooms subdivided. The building also retains few original or historic decorative items. Review of documentary evidence and planning history does not reveal when these alterations occurred though the building is known to have been in multiple occupancy since at least the 1930s.
23. Externally the most obvious change has been the lost of the historic shopfront at ground floor level. Historic photographs also reveal sections of the front elevation, that adjoining No. 37 Marchmont Street, have been rebuilt. It is also likely the rear elevation has been rebuilt above ground floor level, evidenced in the variation in brickwork.



Figure 5: 1893-96 OS Map, site delineated in red



Figure 6: 1939-1945 Second World War bomb damage map, site delineated in red



Figure 7: C.1930s photograph of No. 39 Marchmont Street



Figure 8: 1956 photograph of No. 39 Marchmont Street



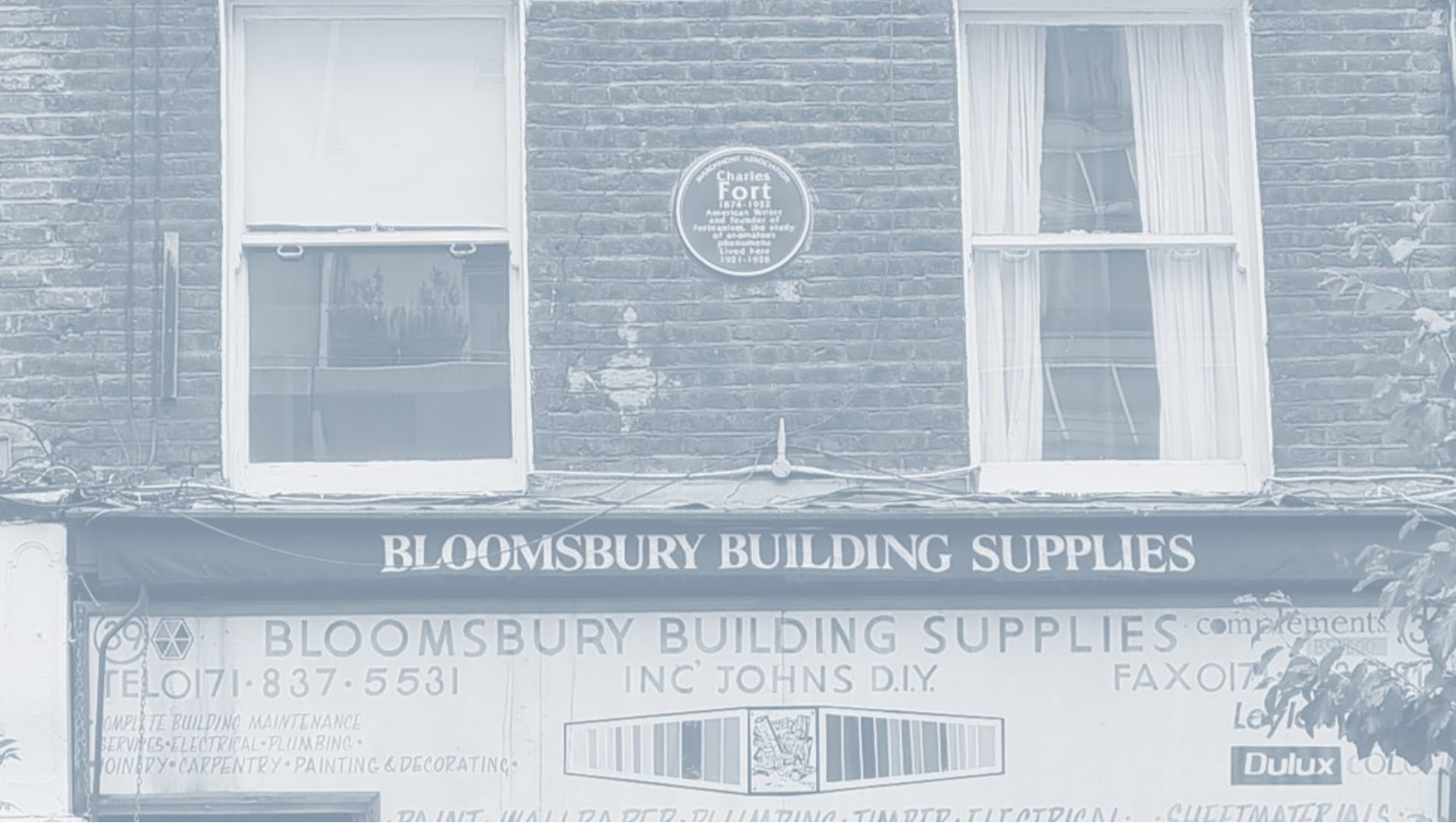


*Figure 9: 1948 aerial photograph, No. 39 Marchmont delineated in red*



*Figure 10: 1970s photograph of Marchmont Street, looking south, No. 39 delineated in red*





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## Significance

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# Significance

24. An assessment of the building's significance has been undertaken to inform the proposed scheme. The purpose of this was to identify the asset's sensitivities and opportunities and to support design development that minimises or avoids adverse effects.
25. Historic buildings undergo change to sustain use and adapt to the needs of users. It is widely recognised in the process of managing change to historic buildings that not all aspects of a listed building may be of equal interest and therefore understanding an asset's significance lies at the heart of informing the nature and detail of change and any assessment of the effects of a proposal on what makes an asset important.
26. The proposed works that have the potential to effect the significance are contained to the building's interior. As such the Bloomsbury Conservation Area would not be affected by the proposed changes and it is not assessed in this instance.

## List Description

27. No. 39 Marchmont Street, along with Nos. 41-73, was added to the statutory list on the 14 May 1974. An excerpt of the list entry is detailed below:

*Grade: II*

*List Entry Number: 1113112*

*Details*

*Terrace of 18 houses with later shops. c1801-6. Yellow stock brick; Nos 45, 61 and 63 stucco. 4 storeys and cellars. 2 windows each. Mostly altered later C19 and C20 shopfronts. Gauged brick, (mostly reddened), flat arches to recessed sash windows, some with original glazing bars. Parapets. No.43: original wooden shopfront with pilasters and brackets carrying projecting cornice. Shop window altered. Round-arched house doorway with fluted*

*jamb, lionhead stops, cornice-head, fanlight and panelled door. Shop doorway with fanlight and panelled door. No.45: architraved, recessed sash windows. Stucco cornice and blocking course. Nos 57 & 59: mid C19 wooden shopfronts with pilasters carrying entablature with dentil cornice flanked by enriched consoles. Shop window of No.59 with segmental-arched lights. Square-headed house doorways with overlights and panelled doors (No.57, C20). No.57 with wrought-iron sign bracket at 1st floor level. Nos 61 & 63: recessed sash windows with architraves and cornices. Bracketed stucco cornices at 3rd floor. Nos 65-73: with enriched fascia consoles. No.69: with plaque "St. G.B. 1817". No.71: with plaque "S PP 1791". INTERIORS: not inspected.*

## Architectural Interest

28. **Elevations:** No. 39 Marchmont Street's architectural interest principally stems from the composition of its front elevation, though this has been subject to modern alteration. The ground floor façade comprises a mid-to-late 20th century shopfront that replaced a late Victorian frontage, though elements of this earlier arrangement, such as the moulded corbel brackets, appear to partially survive. Investigation works carried out to expose the defective beam over the shopfront revealed a number of mid-to-late 20th century shop signs (see Figures 15 and 16). Above ground floor level the frontage is typical of the flat, unadorned late Georgian properties in this part of London.
29. Despite the extent of change the frontage retains its late Georgian character. The frontage is an important element in terrace composition and in the wider townscape and it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

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30. The rear elevation is stylistically and architecturally subservient and has been subject to extensive alteration and was likely partially rebuilt in the post-war period. At lower levels the rear elevation has been subject to historic extension associated with the shop use and has been internalised. Overall the quality is poor and its condition detracts from the building's architectural interest.
31. **Plan Form** - At ground floor the historic plan form has been completely lost, likely through the introduction of shop use in the 19th century and the existing shop floor has nothing recognisably historic. At first floor level and above it would appear that non-original changes to the building have introduced partitions to subdivide historic rooms rather than completely remove original walls. Accordingly, the original plan form and original wall fabric appears to remain partially intact at these upper levels, albeit confused by subdivisions, suspended ceilings and new or infilled openings.
32. The original configuration would have likely consisted of large front and rear rooms to the ground and first floors. At second and third floor level the front would have likely comprised two rooms to the front and a single to the rear. The original lower ground floor plan and the degree of change is not known based on the evidence assessed here but it would have been cellular.
33. The extent of subdivision, loss of original partitions and disruption of historic circulation routes at first floor level has diminished the building's interest and whilst the original plan form is somewhat legible the existing arrangement is harmful to the building's significance.
34. **Decorative Fabric** - Much of No. 39 Marchmont Street's original internal decorative fabric has been lost, eroding its architectural value and overall significance. What survives does so in a piecemeal fashion. The best surviving feature is the staircase between ground and third floor levels. Cornices survive within the ground floor entrance hall and at first floor level though these have lost detail through over painting and have been abutted or truncated by non-original partitions.
35. Where decorative fabric does survive it forms part of the building's interest. Some original architraves survive but most appear to be a mid or late 20th century detail and relate to the subdivision. All internal doors appear to be modern fire doors, save for a landing door between the ground and first floor that has been heavily altered, and are not of interest. Original windows appear to survive on the front elevation and form an important part of the architectural interest. All of the original chimney pieces have been removed, with fireplaces infilled, blocked or bisected by later partitions.
- ### Historic Interest
36. The building has some illustrative historic value in its architecture which identifies it as contemporary with the area's original phase of development as part of the Foundling Hospital Estate. Its architectural style illustrates the tendency for each period of change to reflect the predominant styles of their time.
37. Modern retail and residential adaptations and conversions of the building have in places diminished the physical evidence of the social hierarchy experienced and typical of a traditional early 19th-century house. However, the introduction shop use at ground and basement levels of was illustrative of Marchmont Street's transformation to a Victorian High Street in the mid-19th century and the building derives some interest from this.





Figure 11: Front elevation



Figure 12: Rear Elevation



Figure 13: Rear Elevation



Figure 14: Rear extensions and lightwell





Figure 15: Shopfront elevation showing previous sign.



Figure 16: Exposed beam above shopfront opening,





Figure 17: Ground floor hallway



Figure 18: Staircase, ground floor



Figure 19: Ground floor shop



Figure 20: Infilled doorway, first floor landing

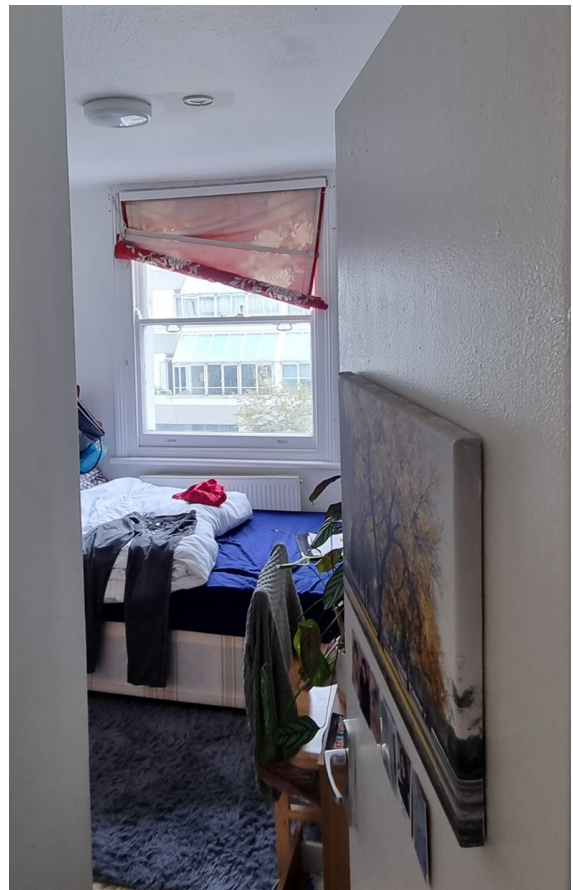




*Figure 21: Historic cornice to front room, first floor*



*Figure 22: Infilled fireplace, first floor*



*Figure 23: Front room, second floor*



Figure 24: Third floor entrance hall



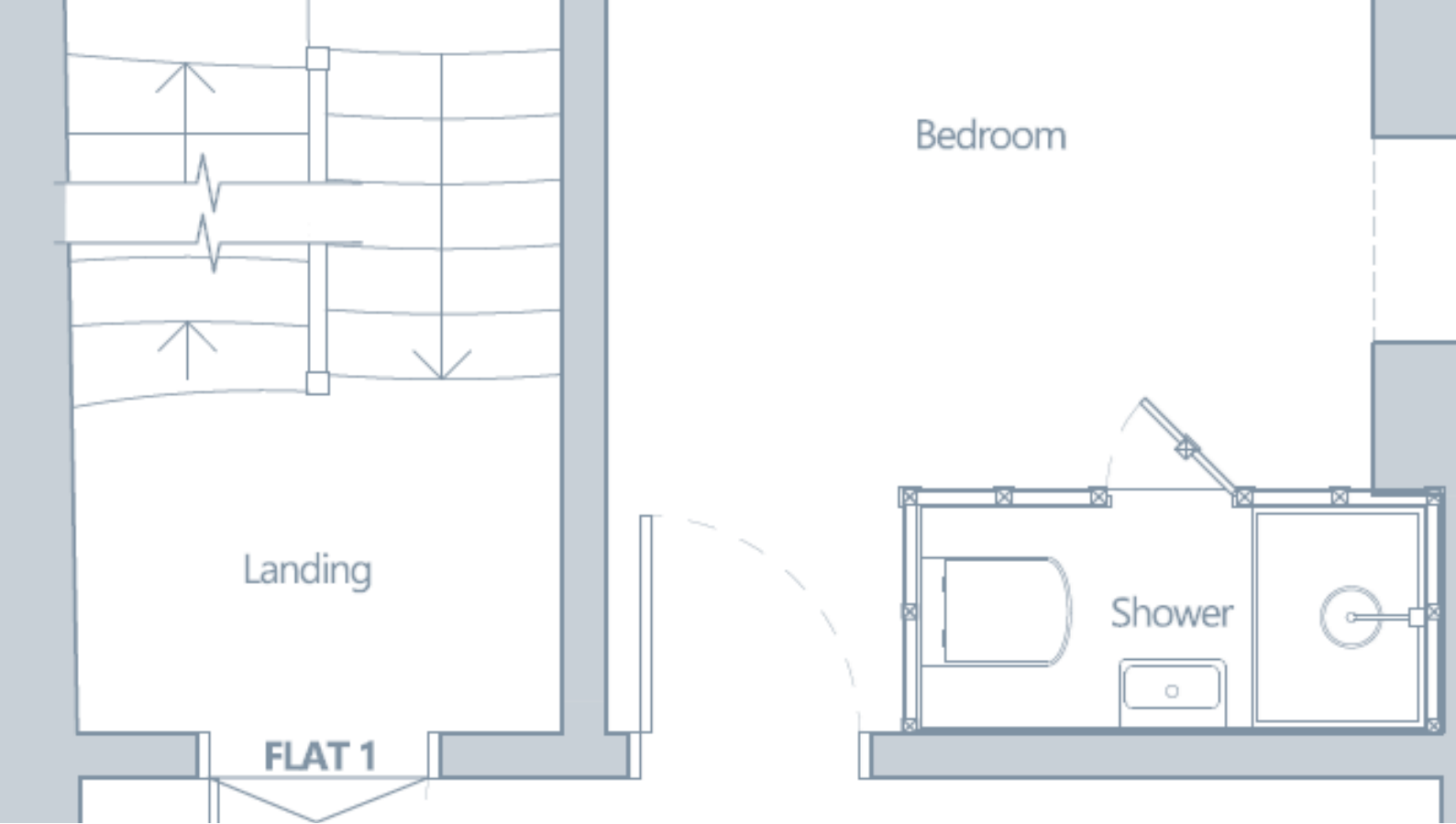
Figure 25: Third floor rear window



Figure 26: Ground floor rear



Figure 27: Basement



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## Assessment of Effects

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# Assessment of Effects

38. The following paragraphs appraise the impacts of the proposed alterations on the heritage sensitivities identified within the report. It supports the Local Planning Authority in their decision making process.

## Design Proposal

39. A description of the proposed development is contained in the accompanying supporting documents and drawings. In brief, the proposals will involve a minor internal alterations as well as structural repairs across the building.
40. Internally the works will be limited to the first floor of No. 39 Marchmont Street. Works that have the potential to affect the character of the building would include removal of later partitioning and the introduction of a more sympathetic layout. Also proposed are structural repairs throughout the building that seek to consolidate the building and prevent further damage to its fabric.

## Internal Changes

41. The principal changes will be undertaken at first floor and will comprise removal of a number of partitions and suspended ceilings and the introduction of a shower 'pod' to the rear room and a small kitchenette in the front room.
42. The partitions and ceilings proposed to be removed are modern and of no heritage value. The presence of these modern partitions and suspended ceilings at first floor has greatly disrupted the legibility of the building's principal floor and harmed its significance. As such the removal of this fabric presents opportunities to reintroduce more sympathetic proportions and plan form, improving the quality and experience of the building.
43. To form the proposed layout, as well as removing the modern partitions, the spinewall will have to be partially reinstated and the existing doorway shifted across. The proposed layout would effectively be a reinstatement of the first floor original plan form, comprising a large front room and smaller rear room adjacent

to the stair compartment, with chimney breasts located on the north party wall. The doorway between the landing and rear room is currently infilled and it is proposed to retain it in this form.

44. Reinstatement of the original plan form and proportions to the building's principal floor would greatly improve its architectural value and enhance No. 39 Marchmont Street's overall significance.
45. The proposed shower pod would be located in the rear room against the spine wall, relocated from the front room following advice received in pre-application feedback. The pod would comprise lightweight partitions and would sit lower than the ceiling, allowing the rear room's full proportions to remain legible. The design of the shower pod would be sympathetic to the building's internal character, allowing it to be read as a modern yet contextual addition. A similar proposal was recently accepted at No. 49 Marchmont Street (2018/0268/P) demonstrating the acceptability of this type of development and the ability of the building to absorb this type of change without adverse effects to significance.
46. New services associated with the kitchenette and WC/shower pod would be sensitively located so as to avoid disruption of the building's historic fabric. Between ground and first levels there is an existing floor void, likely formed as part of the ground floor commercial unit, where services can be placed without loss of historic fabric, preserving the building's significance.

## Structural Repairs

47. Structural repairs are required throughout the building. The works would be undertaken with a full understanding of No. 39's special interest and where possible would utilise traditional techniques and materials. The proposed structural repairs would ensure the longevity of the building and its continuing contribution to the terrace and conservation area.



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## Policy Compliance & Conclusions

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# Conclusions & Policy Compliance

- 48. The significance of No. 39 Marchmont Street has been fully assessed and understood. This report has undertaken an assessment of the significance of the site and this has been followed by an appraisal of the effects of the proposals on the significance of the heritage assets, with consideration given to local and national policy and guidance.
- 49. In accordance with the NPPF this heritage statement addresses the potential effects of the proposed changes on the significance of the listed building. In doing so it supports the local planning authority with their statutory duties at Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.
- 49. Given the minor nature of the proposals it is concluded that the proposed alterations and the refurbishment proposed are entirely within the building tolerance for change. The important historic and architectural aspects of the building would be retained, with all proposed modifications being consistent with the identified significance.
- 50. The proposed scheme seeks to undo harmful past change and reintroduce the original plan form at first floor. Whilst the shower pod would be non-traditional in its form, it would be a respectful and contextual addition, undertaken as part of a beneficial scheme of change, that would allow the proportions of the affected room to remain legible.
- 51. Repair and redecoration is proposed at second and third floor levels though this has not been assessed as part of this statement as the works here would not affect the character of the listed building and as such would not require consent.
- 52. The impacts and effects of the proposed development have been fully assessed. It is concluded that there would be no harm to the significance of the listed building. As such paragraphs 200, 201 and 202 would not be engaged.
- 53. The proposals accord with the relevant policy set out within the London Plan 2021. There is no compromise of local character and the heritage assets affected are conserved. The proposed alterations will allow for continued and appropriate use of the building for its current use.
- 54. Regarding Camden's local policy, the proposals would deliver changes that would maintain the significance of the listed building. This would preserve the listed building in line with policies D1 Design and D2 Heritage of Camden's Local Plan (2017).