

The Museum Estate is located in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden.

The site is accessed at the south from Great Russell Street and at the north from Montague Place. Both streets have opportunity to improve the public realm and the Museum's relationship with the street.

All three of the Energy Centre Programme sites are accessed off the internal road perimeter network within the Estate. The South-West Energy Centre (SWEC) site, in the south-west corner, off the West Road, and the East Road Building (ERB) and Incoming Substation (ISS) off the East Road. The ISS site also fronts onto Montague Street, though access to the street is blocked by the listed railings at the site perimeter. The Energy Centre Programme also involves services distribution works, including works to the Museums internal East and West servicing roads, which will require excavation.

It is the works proposed to take place on the SWEC site, the West Road, the South West Gate, and the South Forecourt combined that result in the need for temporary noise mitigation measures to be installed in the form of secondary glazing within the West Residence.

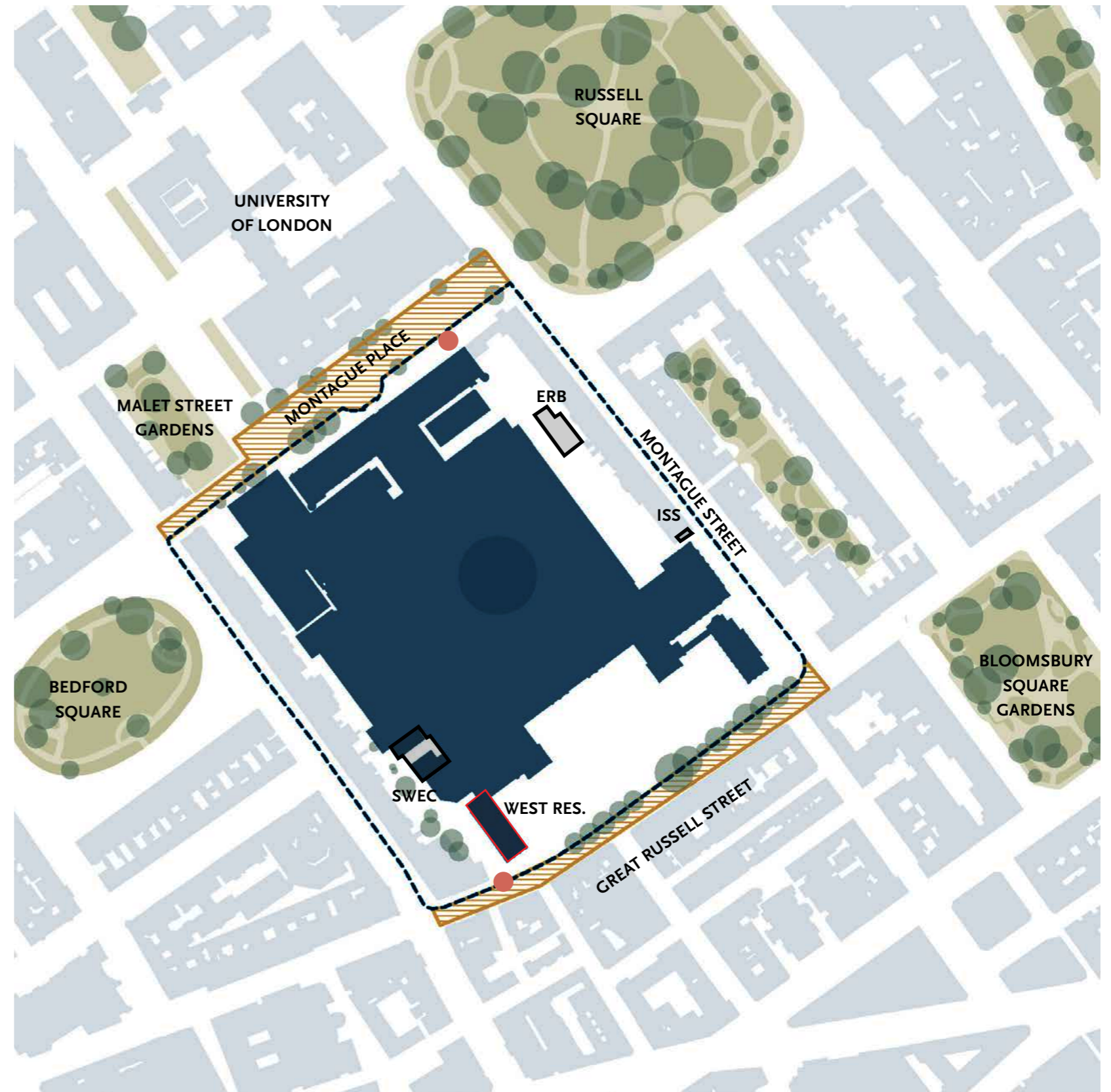


Key:

- Museum Estate buildings footprint
- Perimeter property and wider context building footprints
- Proposed areas of noise mitigation detailed within this application
- ECP proposed building sites
- Location of existing principal back-of-house entrances to the Museum

Right:

Site context plan with wider borough planned improvement locations and proposed ECP building sites and their relationship to proposed areas of intervention contained within this application.



Site Designations



Proposed secondary glazing locations

Right:

London Borough of Camden Policies Map, updated August 2021.

S.38(6) of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) (As Amended) requires applications to be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the development plan comprises:

- The London Plan 2021
- The Camden Local Plan 2017
- The Camden Local Plan Proposals Maps.

Neighbourhood Plans also form part of the development plan but there are none in force which cover The British Museum.

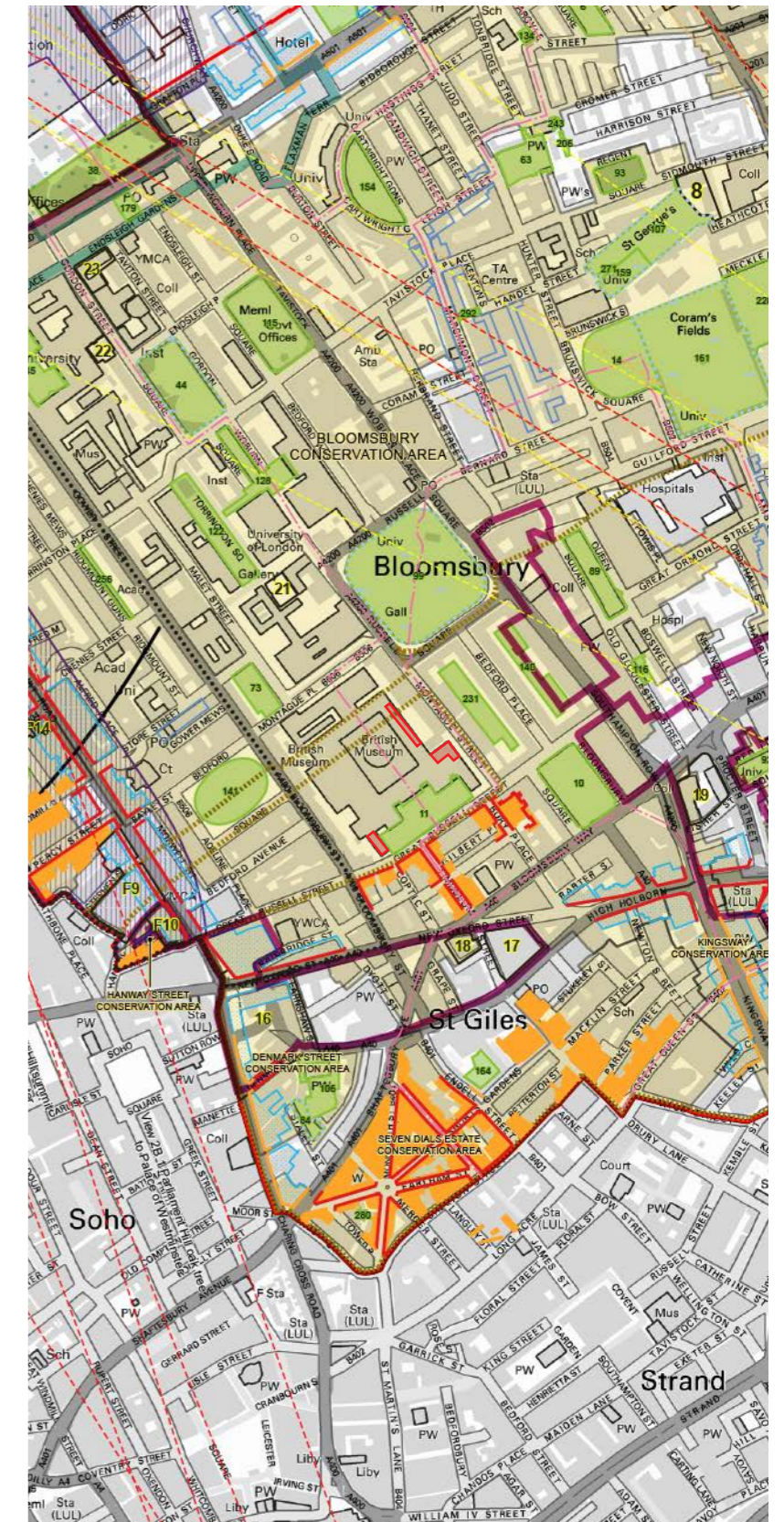
The National Planning Policy Framework sets out Government Policy and approach to planning and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, as is the National Planning Practice Guidance.

The development site sits within the London Borough of Camden, the Central London Area (CLA), Central Activities Zone (CAZ) and the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

It sits outside of any LVMF Protected Vistas, Local Plan Centers, and Local Plan Growth Areas. It does not sit within adopted Site Allocation areas nor areas covered by local Neighbourhood Plans, other specific area Action Plans, or the Crossrail 2 Safeguarding Area.

It also does not sit within or directly adjacent to designated Local Plan Open Space, Local Green Space, or Local Plan Habitat Corridors, though the ISS site within the ECP proposals will become predominantly a small hard landscaped open area. The ECP SWEC site also sits near the rear gardens of perimeter properties which neighbour the garden party wall along the West Road.

The British Museum does provide a connection for a Metropolitan Walk route from Montague Place to Great Russell Street, though this route runs through the front-of-house areas of the Museum which sit outside of the proposed application boundary.



Listed Status & Heritage







The British Museum is a Grade I listed building under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for its special architectural or historic interest. The Museum was first listed in 1951 and lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, which is subject to statutory protection under s72 of the 1990 Act.

The 2023 *British Museum Conservation Management Plan*, authored by Purcell, provides the overarching strategic plan for the Museum’s management as a heritage asset. The following excerpt from the plan provides a summary of its relationship to earlier work and its relevance to any new development work undertaken by the Museum:

‘The British Museum occupies a Grade I listed building and is one of the country’s most popular cultural attractions. The original Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for this site was adopted in 1999 and later revised in 2007. In recognition of the changes that have taken place since the last revision, as well as progresses in conservation management best practice and the constantly evolving challenges and opportunities for improvements the Museum faces, the CMP has undergone a third revision, completed in 2020. The CMP has been developed as a guide for the future development and care of the Museum’s buildings by setting out a framework for their management, maintenance and safeguarding. Understanding the Museum site, particularly what makes it significant, is a central theme of the CMP and draws on the extensive assessments prepared for the 1999 and 2007 Plans.’

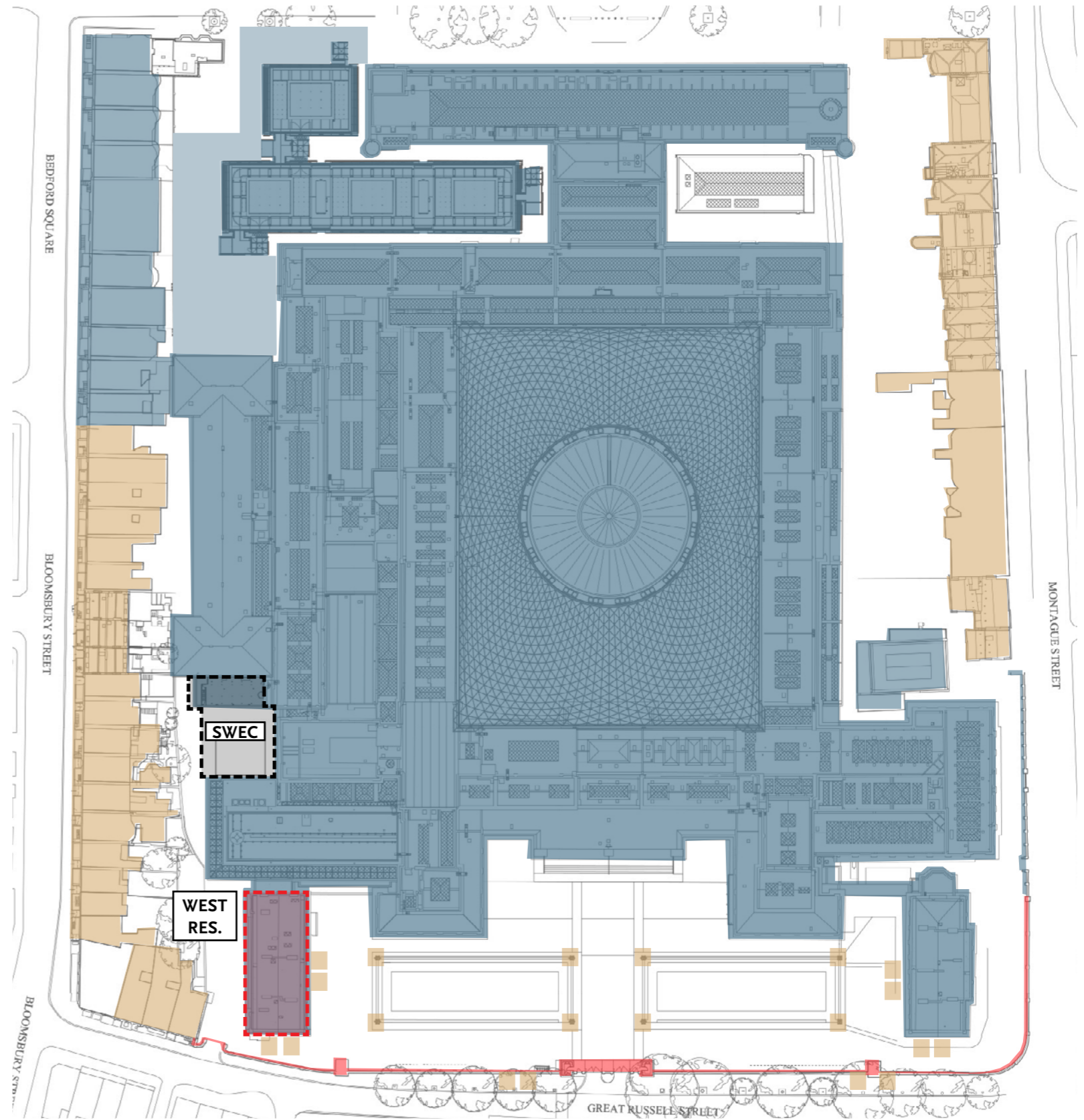


Key:

-  Proposed areas of noise mitigation detailed within this application
-  ECP proposed building sites
-  Grade I Listed
-  Grade I Listed (WCEC Basement)
-  Grade II Listed
-  Grade II* Listed

Right:

Roof plan of the Museum Estate & neighbouring perimeter properties illustrating the Listed status of existing structures.



In addition, the *Heritage Toolkit*, provided in Part 3 of the plan:

‘...is intended for those at the British Museum who are responsible for making decisions that enact change, particularly project managers and Design Teams. It brings together conservation best practice and other guidance documents to set out methodologies for the processes needed to protect the significance of the Museum whilst still allowing it to adapt and evolve.’

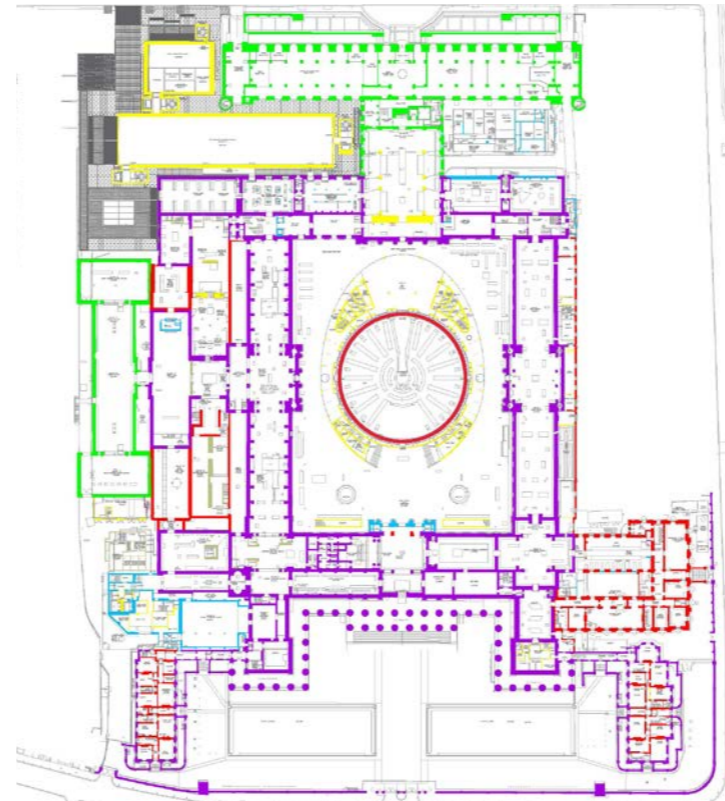
‘This starts with understanding significance, which highlights where there is capacity for change, and ultimately how to balance its impact.’

The Toolkit identifies three principal reasons which will necessitate change:

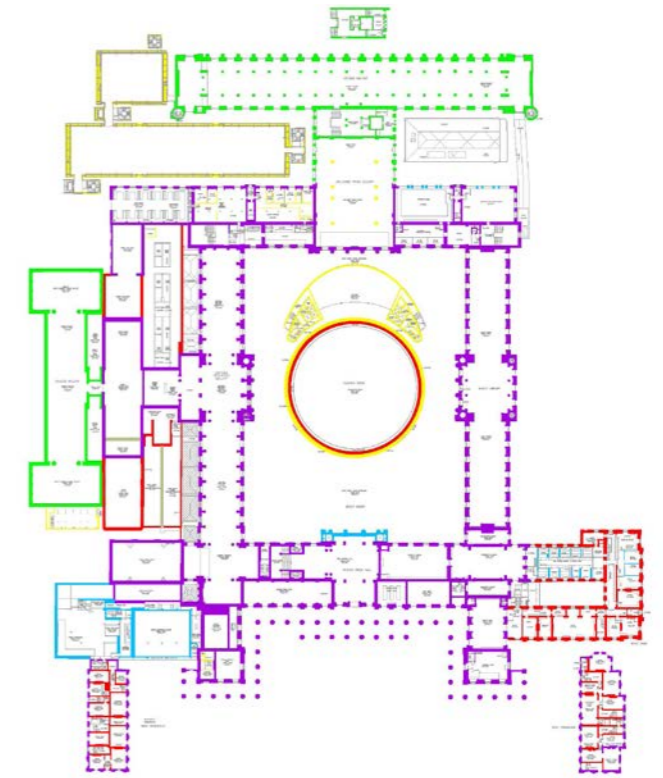
1. The presence of risk
2. A new operational challenge
3. A new opportunity

The proposals within this application fit within the definitions of items 1 and 2 above. Firstly, the interventions are proposed precisely to mitigate a risk of harm and disruption to people of site via high noise levels to associated with the nearby construction work on ECP sites.

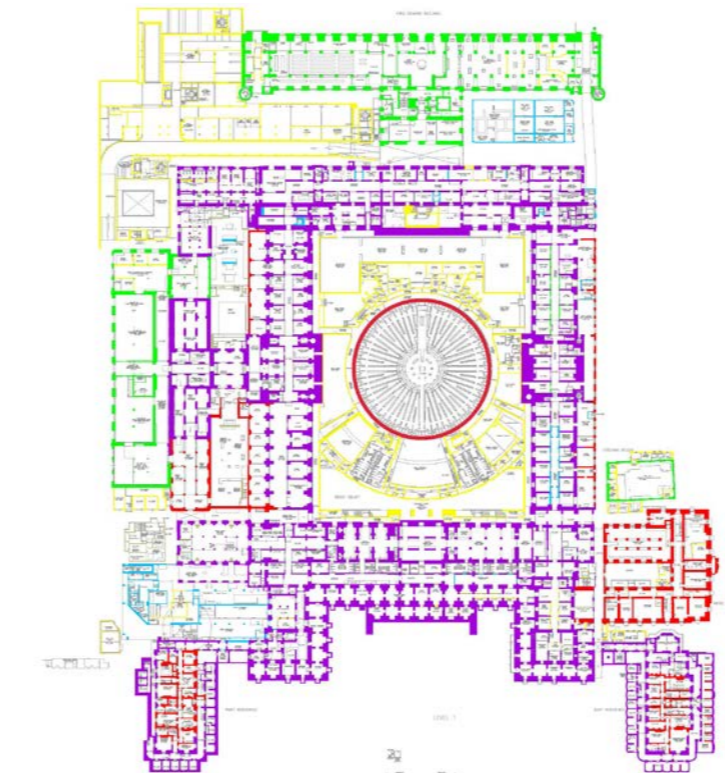
Secondly, the proposals are formed in a direct response to the operational challenge of realising a major capital project on site (which will bring dramatic positive sustainable change to the Estate) and maintaining business-as-usual operations during construction, keeping all public galleries open and ensuring those who work at the Museum can continue to do so effectively.



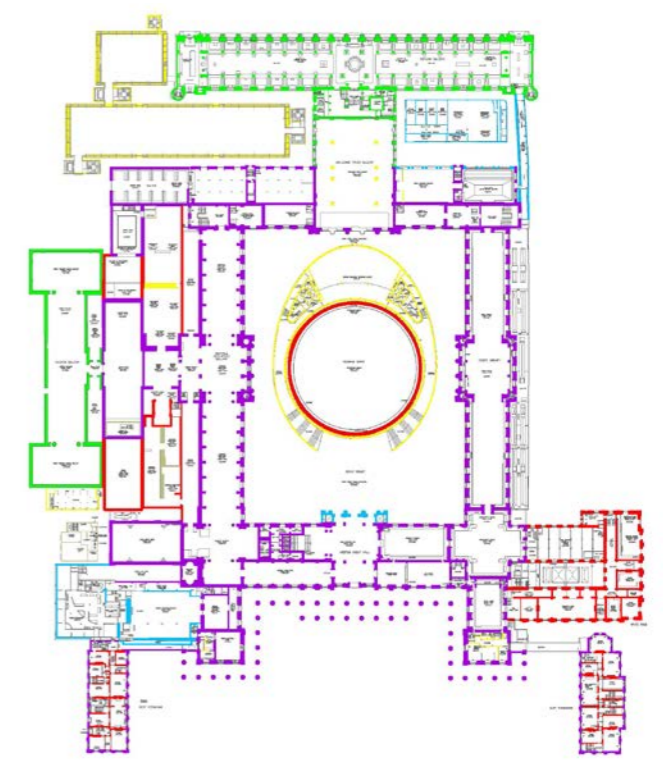
Level 02



Level 04



Level 01



Level 03



Key:

- Very high significance
- High significance
- Medium significance
- Low significance
- Neutral
- Detrimental

Right:

Purcell Heritage Significance Plans from the 2023 Conservation Management Plan.

The plans adjacent and on the previous page, produced by Purcell and appended to the Conservation Management Plan, provide a summary of the assessment of significance as informed by extensive analysis undertaken both in 2019 and 2007.

The areas affected by the secondary glazing mitigations contained within these proposals are:

- The West Residence (Level o5). The CMP assesses the external elevations of the West Residence as being of Very High Significance and original internal wall fabric as High Significance. Later alterations and internal sub-divisions are generally assessed as being of Neutral Significance.

Further narrative from the CMP regarding each of these locations is on the following pages.



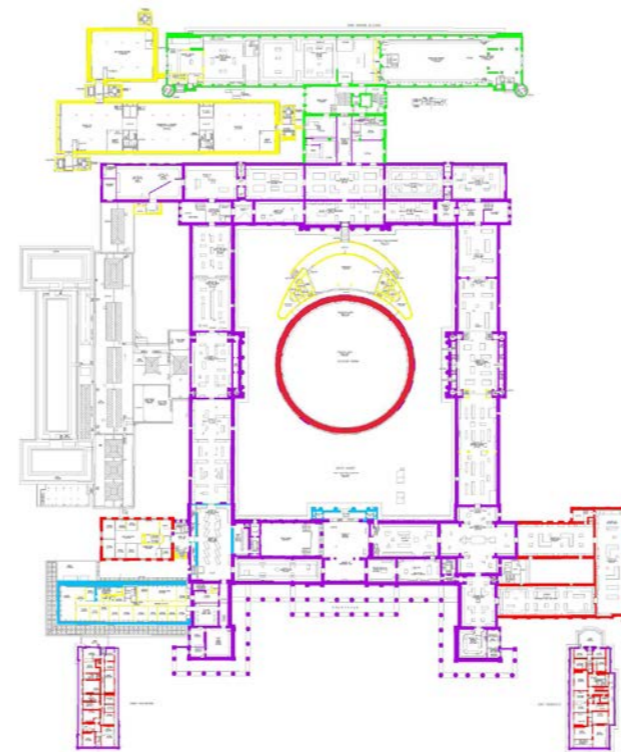
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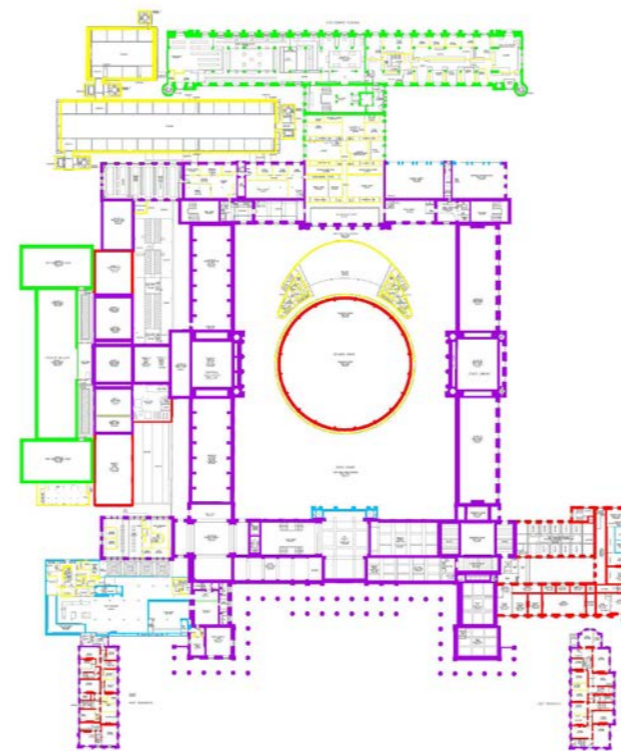
Purcell Heritage Significance
Plans from the 2023 Conservation
Management Plan

Clockwise from top left:

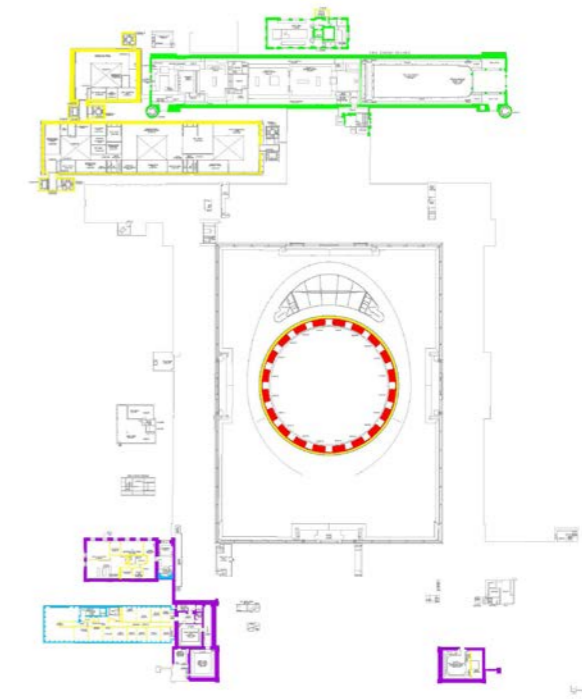
- Level o6
- Level o6A
- Level o5



Level o6



Level o5



Level o6A

The West Residences: Level 05

West Residences (Incl. all rooms at Level 05) ...

The Residences were originally conceived as part of Sydney Smirke’s 1823 masterplan for the Museum and were constructed in c.1848-49. Each Residence contained four apartments for high-ranking Museum officials, the West Residence including the Secretary’s House and an apartment for messengers with its entrance at the back. The ‘party’ walls dividing the houses continued through the full height, although these have now been punctured by connecting doors at various levels. The walls were constructed of brick with exterior Portland Stone ashlar facing, and the floors are supported on cast iron girders carrying timber joists, plastered below and timber boarded or sandstone paved above. The staircases are all of sandstone cantilever construction with cast iron balustrades. The three houses were lavishly appointed; the Messenger’s Apartments (Residence 8) were finished to a basic standard.

Second Floor (Level 5)

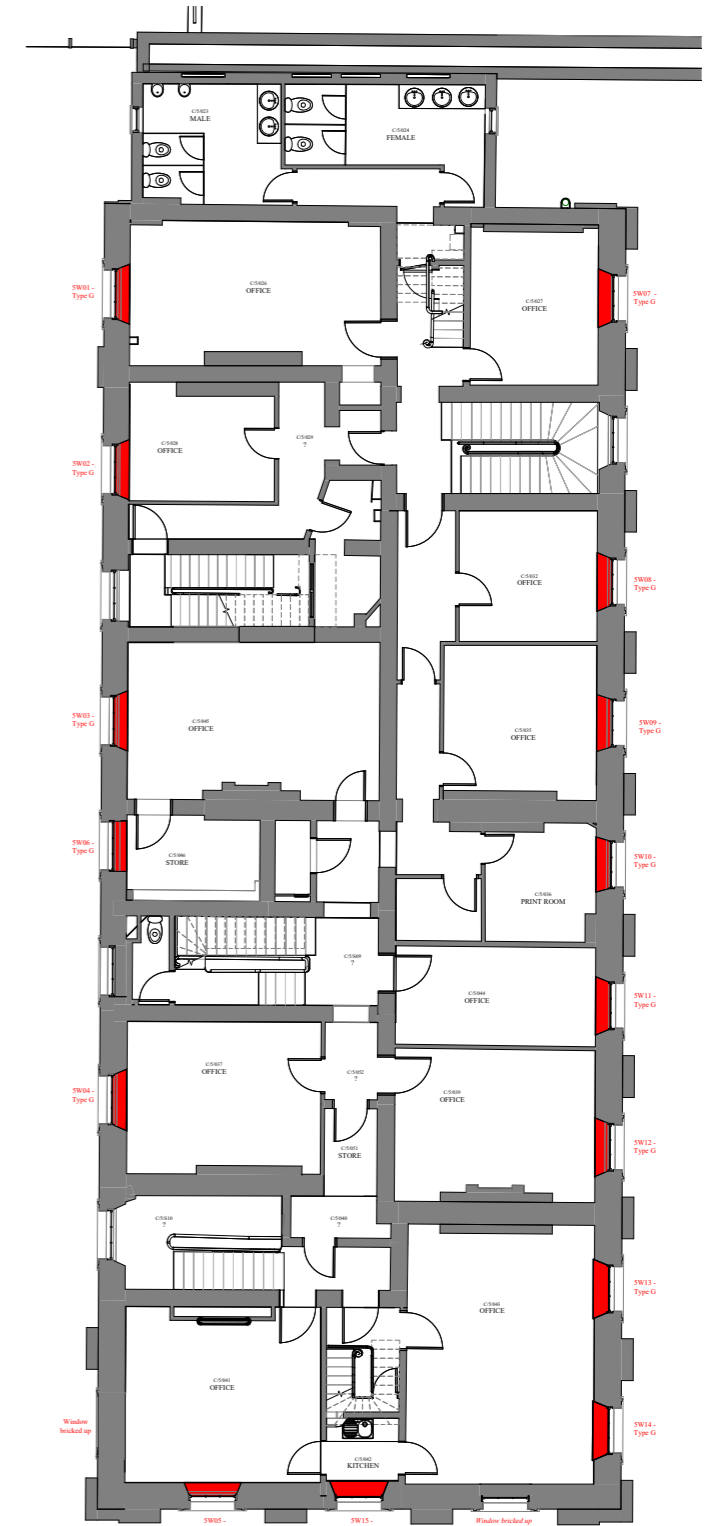
Residence 5 – Former Secretary’s House, Second Floor (Level 5)

The roof of the projecting bay C/5/023, C/5/024, C/5/025 at the north end of the Residence was originally lower than that of the main building, and at Level 5 the walls of the bay are of modern construction and contain toilets.

C/5/026, now the Archivist’s Office (1998): *This retains its original 1843-46 run cornice, moulded skirting, door onto C/5/031 (fire-proofed on the room side with a sheet material) and sash window and shutters. There is no picture rail. An 1844 drawing shows no door at the east end of the south wall, but with an opening sketched in pencil and so this opening is probably early. It is now a cupboard without a door but the linings and architraves appear to be early, including early butt hinges.*

C/5/031: *The landing passageway is divided between the staircase and the passageway. The staircase retains its original stone cantilever treads with cast iron balustrade and mahogany handrail, and sandstone floor. The passageway to the north retains its simple cornice and staircase up to the Attic floor. At the north end was originally a water closet with a small window in the north wall. The present partition and door appear to be early, but are clearly a later insertion beneath the turn of the stairs. The window has been enlarged as a door. The floor here is of timber boarding. Door to former cupboard on the west side of the stair landing retained its original linings and architraves. Original door rehung on new frame to open to the west. A 19th-century cast iron vent over the door.*

C/5/027: *This room retains much of its original 1843-46 interior, including plaster run cornice, moulded skirting, door (now fire-proofed) and the sash window and shutters.*



Key:

■ S.Glazing Type G

Right

Scoping plan indicating the location and number of secondary glazing units proposed to be installed within the West Residence.

C/5/032, C/5/035: *Of the original 1843-46 interior the run cornice (partly renewed), the skirtings, and the windows with their shutters (but including modern secondary glazing) have survived. The north door to C/5/031 is also the original. The south opening to C/5/047 is modern. The fireplace is now missing. The room is now sub-divided by partitions and modern panelled doors. The floor is timber boarded, now carpeted.*

Residence 8 – Former Messengers’ Apartments, Second Floor (Level 5)

The staircase C/5/S08 retains its original stone cantilever treads and cast iron balustrade, wrought handrail, and sash window with linings. The door to the north is the original. On the half landing is a door with an offset window beside it, all early and possibly of original date.

C/5/028, C/5/029: *Now sub-divided to provide an office for the Central Librarian and a connecting corridor. Of the original 1843-46 room the run cornice, the south door onto the staircase and the west sash window, including panelled shutters, have survived. The sub-division is modern, including the opening through to C/5/031.*

C/5/034 is the corridor east of the staircase connecting C/5/029 and C/5/045. It is lit by a borrowed light from the staircase (which has a similar frame to the equivalent at Level 3, but has been altered) and had a water closet in the recess to the east. The northern door retains its original architraves and linings but the door is missing.

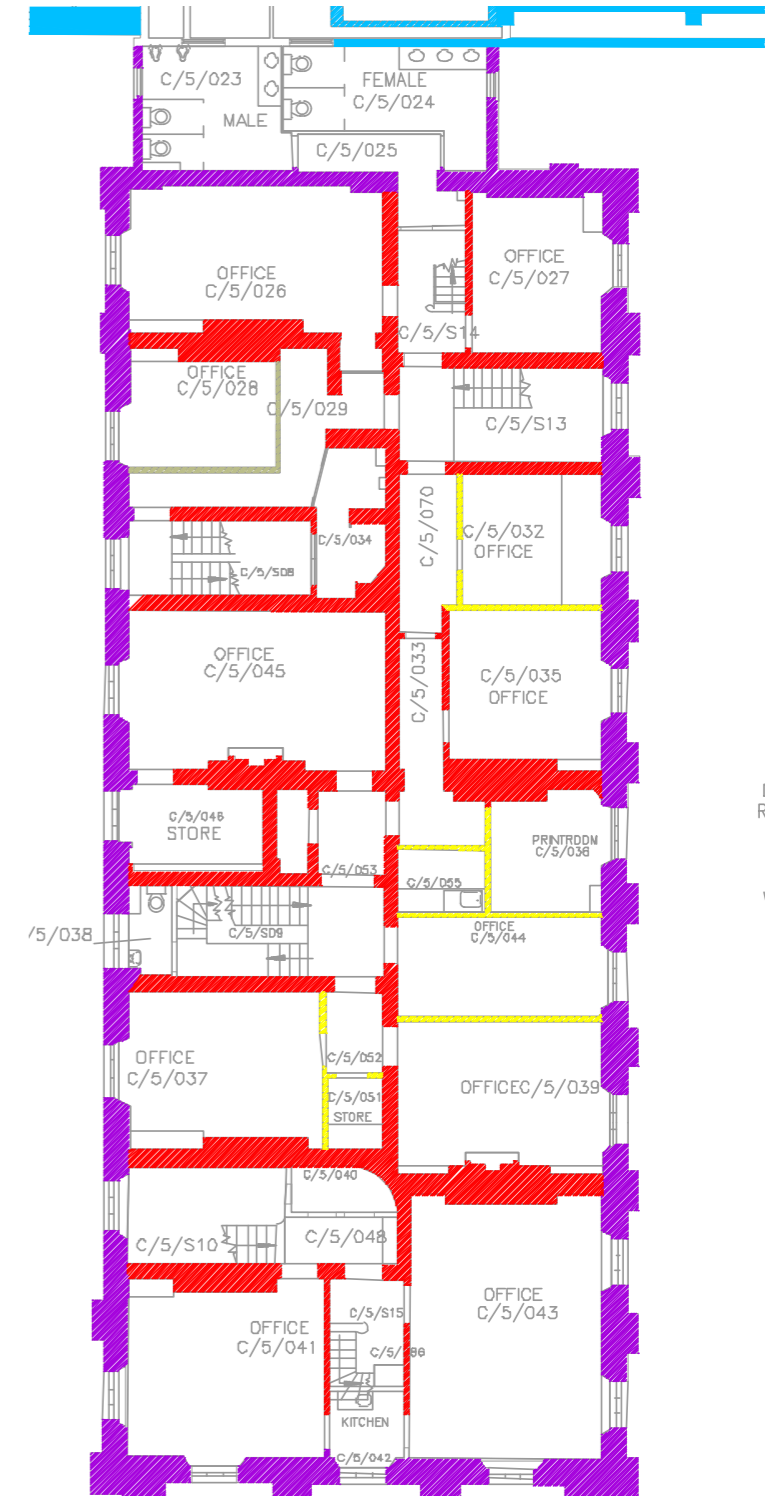
C/5/045: *The former openings to the north are now blocked, and a new door has been formed to C/5/047 to the south. Of the original 1843-46 interior the run cornice, moulded skirtings, the sash window and shutters (with modern secondary glazing) and the architraves of the door to C/5/046 are original. The picture rail is possibly a renewal. The doors are both modern. The floor is timber boarded, now carpeted. The fireplace has a modern surround, but the grate has a cast inscription ‘British Museum’ and a crown, and was introduced from elsewhere.*

C/5/046: *The architraves of the door and the west window sashes and linings have survived. The floor is timber boarded.*

Residence 6 – Former Centre House, Second Floor (Level 5)

C/5/036: *Originally a self-contained room with a door onto the lobby off the staircase landing. This is now missing. The east window is the original. The stud wall to the south is also shown on the 1844 floor plan. The rainwater pipe casing in the north east corner is original.*

C/5/039, C/5/044: *This was originally a single room with a door off the staircase. The door to C/5/037 is modern. Of the original 1843-46 interior little survives apart from the run cornice in C/5/039, the door to the staircase, the east facing windows (including their shutters) and the moulded timber skirtings. The picture rail is modern, as is the ceiling and the dividing partition. The fireplace has a modern surround but the grate has a cast inscription ‘British Museum’ and a crown, and was introduced from elsewhere.*



Key:

- Very high significance
- High significance
- Medium significance
- Low significance
- Neutral
- Detrimental

Purcell Heritage Significance
Plans from the 2023 Conservation
Management Plan

Right:

Level 05 West Residence

C/5/039: This room has been sub-divided. Of the original 1843-46 interior the run cornice, the picture rail and the skirtings have survived, including the sash window and linings, now with secondary glazed inner frame. The floor is timber boarded, carpeted.

Residence 7 – Former Southern House, Second Floor (Level 5)

C/5/041: This room retains its original 1843-46 run cornice, picture rail and moulded skirting, door architraves (but modern door) to the staircase and four panel door and architraves to the lobby C/5/042. The south window has its original sashes and panelled shutters; the west window was designed to be blind. The cast iron fireplace surround of later dated has survived. The floor is of timber boarding, now carpeted.

C/5/042: Now a kitchen, with an original east facing sash window and simple door architraves.

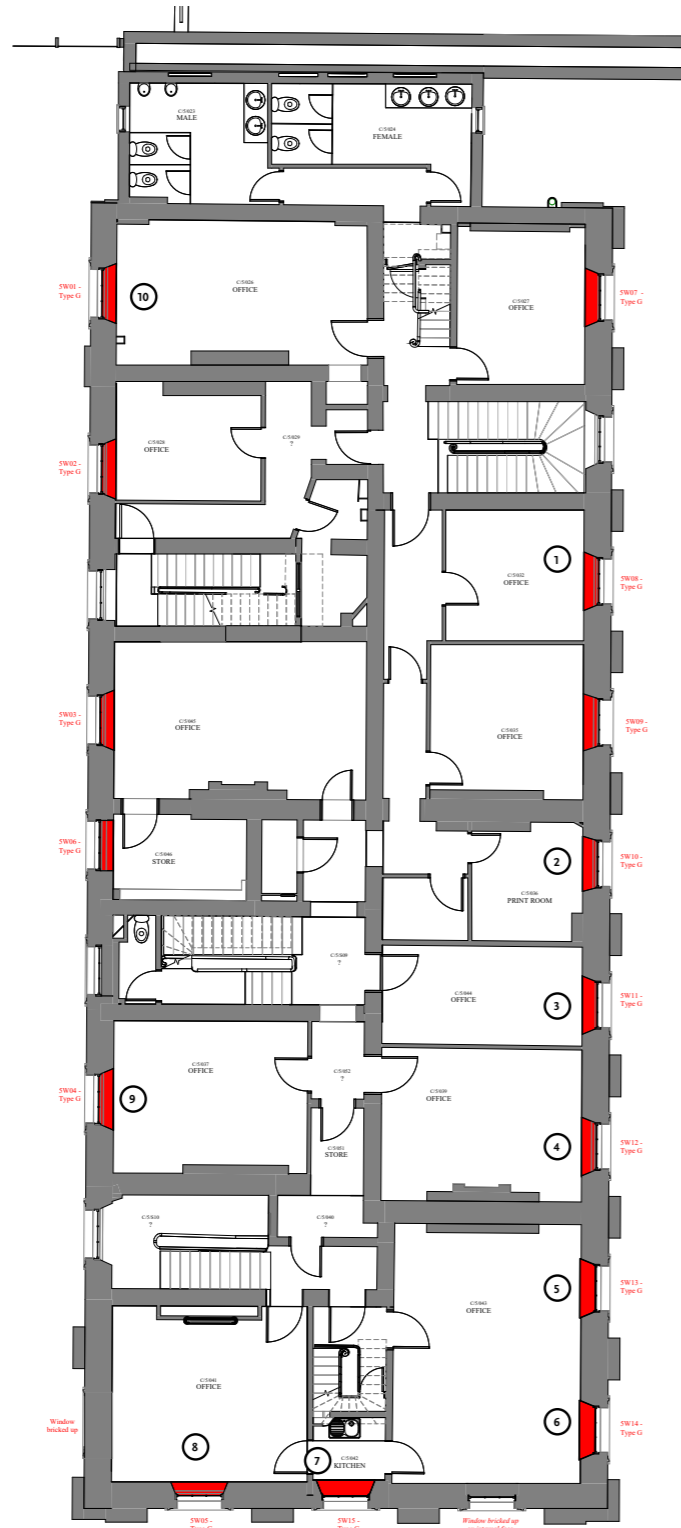
C/5/043: This room retains its original run cornice, picture rail, moulded skirtings, east facing windows complete with panelled shutters (the south window was designed to be blind). The door to the staircase has original architraves but a modern four panelled door, and the architraves and door to the south is the original. The fire surround is missing. The floor is timber boarded, now carpeted.

In summary, Level 05 of the West Residence retains much of the original sash windows, shutters, and surrounds, though the CMP indicates the installation of secondary glazing was present in the building's recent history, though none was observed on site in undertaking photographic surveys of the existing window condition for these proposals. The secondary glazing mentioned must therefore have been removed at some time after the 2007 CMP surveys. This would go some way to explaining why some window surrounds already have shutters fixed in a pinned position, and whilst some windows are in need of repainting.

A photographic survey on the following spreads indicates the character and condition of the the window types within the West Residence where intervention is proposed.

2.5

Photographic Survey: The West Residence

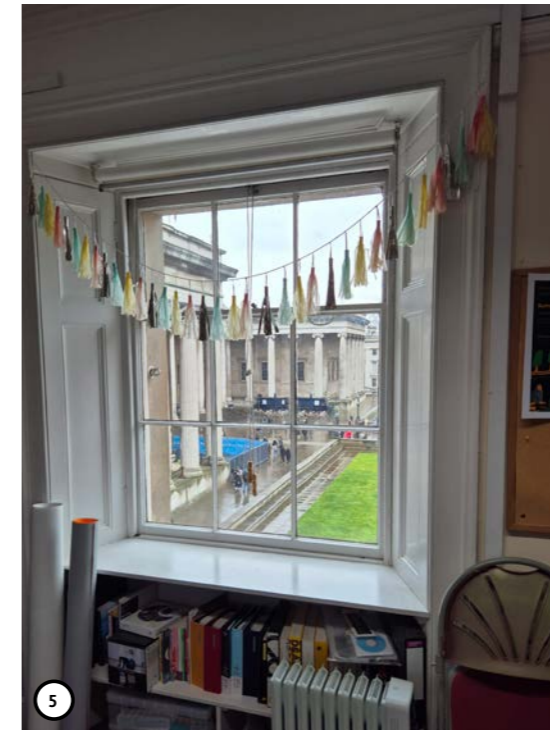


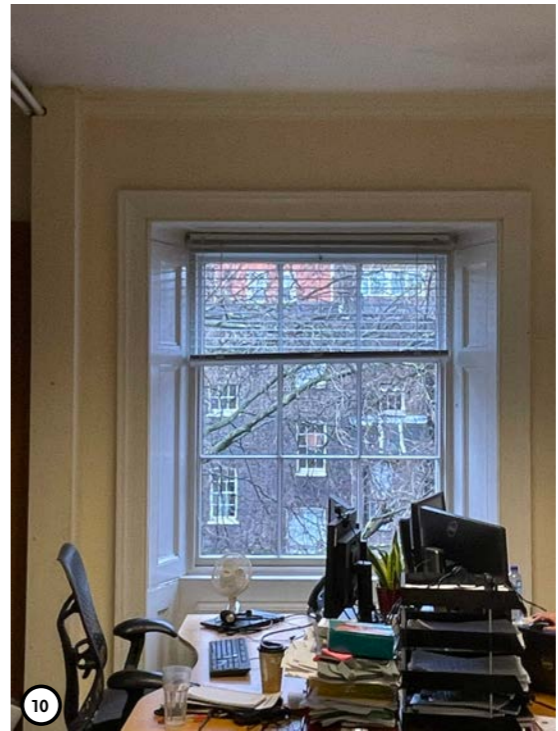
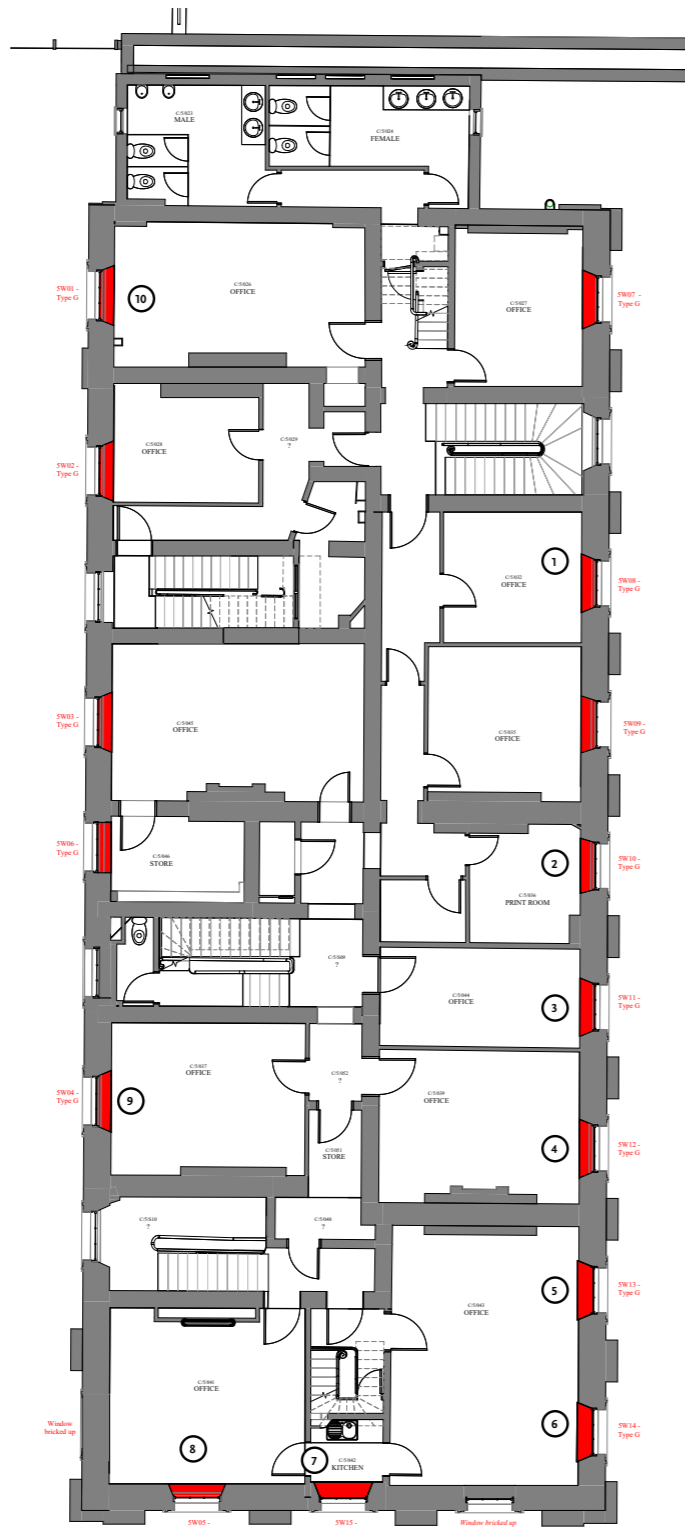
Key:

■ S. Glazing Type G

Right:

Existing photographic survey of windows proposed to have temporary secondary glazing acoustic mitigations installed within these proposals in Level 05 of the West Residence





Key:

■ S. Glazing Type G

Right:

Existing photographic survey of windows proposed to have temporary secondary glazing acoustic mitigations installed within these proposals in Level 05 of the West Residence

