

Heritage Statement

7 John Street,

London, WC1N 2ES

Prepared by: Palmer Heritage Ltd

Client: B&K Investments Ltd

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support planning and listed building consent applications in relation to the internal and external alteration of 7 John Street, WC1N. The proposed development site is a Grade II listed building located in the London Borough of Camden and is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- 1.2 This document will set out the policy context, describe the history and significance of the site, assess the impacts of the proposed works on the listed building, and provide a justification for the proposed works.
- 1.3 The document is intended to be read alongside the Planning Statement prepared by Hybrid Planning and Development Ltd, and drawings and Design and Access Statement prepared by Glas Architects.

2. HERITAGE POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 2.1 Section 66 of the Act establishes a general duty for a planning authority, in considering whether to grant consent for a development which affects a listed building, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historical interest which it possesses. A building is listed by virtue of its special architectural or historical interest (Section 1(1)).
- 2.2 Section 72 of the Act establishes a duty in the exercise of any function under the Act to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. A conservation area is an area of local interest designated principally by the Local Planning Authority.

Revised National Planning Policy Framework 2023

- 2.3 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2023. Section 16 of the NPPF deals with the consideration of heritage assets and sets out the importance of being able to assess the impact of a development on the significance of heritage assets. Significance is defined as the value of an asset because of its heritage interest. The setting of an asset can contribute to this interest. The setting of a heritage asset is defined as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. A designated heritage asset is recognised by the NPPF to be a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation; of these, World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Grade I and II* Listed Buildings and Parks and Gardens, Protected Wreck Sites and Registered Battle Fields are noted in paragraph 206 as being of the 'highest significance'.
- 2.4 The NPPF recognises that a balance needs to be struck between the preservation of the significance of a heritage asset and delivering public benefit. With regard to designated assets, paragraph 205 states that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be on its conservation. Distinction is drawn between those assets of highest significance and those of a lesser significance.

- 2.5 The NPPF identifies harm as being either substantial or less than substantial. Paragraph 207 states that where the proposal would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset consent should be refused unless the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefit that outweighs that harm. In cases where less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset is anticipated, paragraph 208 requires that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In respect of non-designated assets, paragraph 209 requires a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.
- 2.6 Paragraphs 212 and 213 specifically discuss Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites; paragraph 212 states that opportunities should be sought to better reveal the significance of these assets, whilst paragraph 213 remind the reader that not all elements of a conservation area will contribute to the significance of that area; in this way assessments should take account of the relative value of the element subject to change, and its contribution.
- 2.7 In accordance with the NPPF, this Heritage Impact Assessment sets out the significance of heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposed works. The information provided in this assessment conforms to paragraph 200 of the NPPF, thus the level of detail provided is proportionate to the significance of the affected heritage assets and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on that significance.
- 2.8 Guidance on the application of heritage policy within the NPPF is provided within the Historic England 'Good Practice Guides' and the on-line National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) for the Historic Environment.

National Planning Policy Guidance 2019

- 2.9 The NPPG provides guidance as to the application of policy as regards heritage assets and defines the qualities of a listed building and conservation area, including reference to curtilage structures or features.

London Plan

- 2.10 Regional policy for the London area is defined by the London Plan, with the latest version of the Plan having been published in March 2021. The London Plan, Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (2021) sets out the Spatial Development Strategy for the London region, comprising a fully

integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital for the next 20-25 years.

- 2.11 Chapter 7 of the Plan is titled Heritage and Culture, and policy HC1 relates to 'Heritage conservation and growth'. The policy states at point A that boroughs should be 'identifying, understanding, conserving and enhancing' the historic environment and heritage assets through the creation of policy and in consultation with Historic England. Point B notes that development plans and strategies at borough level should promote the 'effective integration of London's heritage in regenerative change'.
- 2.12 Point C relates to built environment assets during development, and states that:

Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.

London Borough of Camden Policy

Camden Local Plan 2017

- 2.13 The Camden Local Plan was adopted in July 2017, and contains policies intended to steer development in the borough over the period until 2031.
- 2.14 Policy D2: Heritage contains the council's requirements for development affecting the historic environment. The policy requires applicants to 'preserve and, where appropriate, enhance' heritage assets, and states that substantial harm to heritage will not be permitted. Where an asset is subject to less than substantial harm, this will only be permitted when the public benefit outweighs that harm.
- 2.15 In the case of listed buildings, the policy states that proposals will be resisted where they cause harm to special architectural and historic interest. The policy also requires the preservation or enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas.
- 2.16 The policy notes that sustainability and energy efficiency measures will be encouraged where they can be achieved without harming a heritage asset; these measures may constitute a public benefit.

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy

- 2.17 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area was designated in 1968 and subsequently extended, and the Conservation Area Appraisal was published in April 2011. The Appraisal section sets out a history of the development of the area and describes its special interest and character. The Management Plan contains guidelines relating to the maintenance of that character and sets out specific approaches to the management of change.
- 2.18 7 John Street is in sub-area 10 of the conservation area ('Great James Street/Bedford Row'), which is described as having developed during the Georgian and Regency periods and containing three to four storey high townhouses built in terraces with rear mews. John Street is noted to be wide and grand, a main street within the sub-area. The appraisal notes that historically the area was residential, and that currently many properties are reverting to residential use having been in office use for a number of years, as is the case with 7 John Street.
- 2.19 Within the Management Plan, threats to the character and appearance are set out, including inappropriate uses and alteration. It is noted that the best use for a listed building is often its original use.

3. HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 John Street runs from Theobalds Road in the south to meet the southern end of Doughty Street in the north. 7 John Street is located on the eastern side of the road, in the lower of the two street blocks, and is part of a terrace that comprises that block.
- 3.2 The Bloomsbury estate began to be developed on the north-eastern edge of London in the mid to late 1600s, with early buildings enjoying the healthy air of the open countryside. By the 1700s, construction continued north with Rugby Street and St James Street, with John Street itself beginning development in the mid-18th century. 7 John Street, alongside its terrace neighbours of 2 to 9 John Street, was constructed at some time between 1754 and 1759. Blagrave was a carpenter who had worked for the Doughty Estate, and the street is named after him. Horwood's Map of London, dated 1799, shows the terrace on the lower east side of John Street as complete; at this time the street was not developed to the north, and an open area is shown on the map between what was then Little James Street to the north of the terrace, and the top of Doughty Street (then Upper John Street) and the junction with Guilford Street¹. These streets continued to be developed in the 18th century, alongside other terraces of high-status houses across the land owned by the Doughty Estate, with leases for houses in Doughty Street being let around 1792 and the street completed by 1810. Smiths New Map of London, dating from the late 1920s, shows buildings along both sides of John Street and Doughty Street.
- 3.3 The first available Ordnance survey mapping of 1874 (Appendix 1, Map 1) shows that development had continued to the north and east of John Street in the first half of the 19th century in a pattern of straight streets and squares which reflected the earlier type of construction in the area. The terrace at 2-9 John Street has a mews at the rear, King's Mews, and each house has a garden. Whilst it is likely that the houses were built in the same style originally, this map already shows differences to their rear elevations, with some having curved bays and 6 John Street a fairly large outrigger, while 7 John Street is shown with a straight, full width extension. A public house is shown at the northern end of the terrace and is still in existence as the Lady Ottoline (recently renamed after Lady Ottoline Morell, an aristocratic society hostess with links to literature and the arts); however, its previous name was the

¹ Horwoods Map of London 1799

King's Arms. Further north, to the west side of the street just south of the beginning of Doughty Street, is a Baptist chapel dating from 1818.

- 3.4 Little had changed in the terrace itself or in the immediate surroundings by the mapping of 1895 (Appendix 1, Map 2), though a public library is shown to 10 John Street - Holborn's first public library, established in 1891. The mapping of 1916 (Appendix 1, Map 3) is similar, though a bank is shown to the junction with Theobalds Road at the southern end of the 2-9 John Street terrace. World War II brought change to the area however, with bomb surveys noting major damage to the southernmost part of John Street, particularly on the western side and junction with Theobalds Road where buildings were destroyed. 6 John Street suffered general blast damage, and 3 John Street was seriously damaged. The aerial photography published in 1946 (Appendix 1, Map 4) shows the southern site as empty, and though the Baptist chapel still appears to have been in place at this time it is later shown as a cleared site on mapping of 1952 (Appendix 1, Map 5) despite having suffered only minor damage according to the bomb map. There is a suggestion in other mapping of around this date that 6 John Street was cleared following the damage it sustained; the house was rebuilt in a similar style to the rest of the terrace later in the 20th century and certainly by 1963 (Appendix 1, Map 6).
- 3.5 Though changes occurred to buildings around and adjacent to it, 7 John Street remained intact throughout this period. However, internal changes occurred to a great number of buildings on John Street and in the area due to the conversion of the former houses to offices, often associated with the charitable or legal professions, the pattern of which began in the late 19th century. 7 John Street was certainly in office use by the mid-20th century, as shown in photographs from the London Picture Archive dating from 1960 onwards (see Appendix 3), as were other buildings on the street.
- 3.6 John Street remains a wide, tree-lined street of imposing and elegant terraces, notwithstanding the changes brought by wartime bombing and subsequent development. In more recent times many buildings in the street, and those surrounding, have been brought back into residential use, marking a reversion to the original purpose and state of the houses and their character, alongside retained office and embassy use.

4. DESCRIPTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE

Listed Building Description

4.1 The proposed development site, 7 John Street, is a mid-terrace townhouse.

The listed building description is for 'Nos.2-9 (Consecutive) and attached railings', as added to the National Heritage List in October 1951 (ID 1379155). Highlights are added here to clarify sections which relate specifically to 7 John Street:

Terrace of 8 houses. 1754-59. Built by J Blagrove with W Barlow, J Bosworth, S Room and R Meel. No.6 rebuilt in Neo-Georgian style, restored 1989. Multi-coloured stock brick with evidence of tuck pointing and later patching. Plain brick bands to 1st and 2nd floors except No.6. 4 storeys and basements; No.6 with attic dormers. 3 windows each except No.6 with 4. Gauged red brick flat arches to recessed sashes, most with glazing bars. Parapets. No.2: Greek Doric wooden doorcase with mutule cornice; patterned fanlight and double panelled door. Cast-iron overthrow with lamp. INTERIOR noted to retain panelled ground floor and good marble fireplaces on ground and 1st floors. Modillion cornices. Staircase at front of house with cast-iron trellis pattern with continuous balustrade. Iron balustrade to stone stairs. No.3: round-arched doorway with architraved, stucco surround, small head on keystone and panelled door. INTERIOR: noted to retain staircase with curly wrought-iron balusters in panels under continuous timber handrails. No.4: Doric wooden doorcase with open pediment, archivolt with keystone, arched fanlight and panelled door. Original lead rainwater head with lion mask. Large bay to garden front. INTERIOR: noted to be partly remodelled although retaining stairs with turned balusters, shaped ends, column newels and scroll brackets to treads. No.5: wooden Ionic doorcase with modillion cornice and pediment, pulvinated frieze, panelled reveals and panelled door. Original lead rainwater head with lion mask and pipe. Refronted from mid 1st floor. Large bay to garden front. INTERIOR: noted to retain panelled rooms and original fireplaces. Chinese balustrade and scroll bracket to treads of stairs. No.6: slightly projecting. Stone Greek Doric doorcase. Stone band and iron balconies at 1st floor level. Stone cyma bracketed cornice at 3rd floor. No.7: ground floor refaced. C20 reproduction Doric wooden doorcase with triglyph frieze, dentil cornice, open pediment, archivolt with keystone, radial fanlight and panelled door. Wrought-iron lamp-holder on railings. INTERIOR: noted to retain open well stairs with turned balusters and carved brackets to treads. Plain moulded fireplace on 1st floor. No.8: Doric wooden doorcase with triglyph frieze,

*dentil cornice, open pediment, archivolt with keystone, radial fanlight and panelled door. Cast-iron balconies to 1st floor windows. Wrought-iron overthrow with lamp. INTERIOR: noted to retain carved wood fireplace to 1st floor back room; elliptical arch on fluted Ionic columns on ground floor. Stairs with turned balusters and shaped ends. No.9: Doric wooden doorcase similar to No.8. INTERIOR: noted to retain marble fireplaces to ground and 1st floor rooms and egg-and-dart mouldings. Stairs with turned balusters. **SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with torch flambe finials to areas.***

4.2 As the listed building description states, the building dates from the mid-18th century, with its likely construction date noted above as being around 1754. Within the original listed building description, the basic external features of the principal façade of each house are described, as well as significant elements of their surviving interiors. 6 John Street is noted to have been rebuilt, as described in the previous section.

4.3 It is assumed for the purposes of this Heritage Statement that the whole building is listed though as described below there are modern elements within the building which are of limited historic value. The setting of the listed building is the relatively quiet main road of John Street, including its pavement trees, and the surrounding townscape of Georgian houses. More immediately, the rear area of garden provides a setting to the back of the building which contributes to its value, though the historic relationship to the mews behind has been largely lost due to later redevelopment of the mews and modern boundary treatments.

4.4 Photographs of the building are provided within the Photo Directory compiled by Glas Architects.

External description

4.5 Externally, the front entrance façade faces west onto John Street, with the fronts of 6 and 8 John Street adjacent. The rear elevation faces onto a garden behind.

4.6 The front façade is as described within the listed building description and is of a brown coloured stock brick. The elevation has three bays. That to the basement floor is set below the street level, and has two sash windows to the northern bays, and a door to the southern bay which sits below the stairs to the ground floor entrance. There are vaults below the road surface facing the elevation over a narrow passage. The ground floor has two 6-over-6 timber sash windows to the northern bays, both under brick arches, and a timber entrance door to the southern bay which, as noted in the listed building

description is set within a reproduction doorcase dating from the 20th century and not present to the building in 1975 (Appendix 3, Picture 1). The front well has a boundary of iron railings, included in the listed building description, and shallow stone steps lead to the entrance door on the southern end, and steps to the well at the northern end. Above the ground floor is a brick band; the first floor carries three 6-over-6 timber sash windows of a lesser height than those to the ground floor, but also under brick arches. To the third floor, the windows are smaller again, though otherwise match those to other floors. A simple stone cap tops the shallow pediment above.

4.7 The rear elevation is expressed as three storeys with an attic dormer level at third floor, and a basement level below the ground level which sits within a well bounded by modern iron railings and has a single vault facing the elevation. The basement level has a central timber door and two flanking windows. At ground floor level, the southern bay holds a 20th century timber door with a large square milt-paned light above; above this, the three bays of each storey hold 6-over-6 sash windows. To the dormers are simple timber 2-pane windows. The slated roofscape is of a butterfly formation, and to its centre is a large glazed hipped rooflight lantern.

4.8 In general, the external elevations and roof of the listed building reflect its original form and have the simple elegance of this age of building. Though the doorcase to the front elevation is modern, it is in keeping with the style of the terrace and does not detract from the architectural value of the façade. The rear of the building is likely to have been constricted at a later date than that of the building's original development, evidenced by the larger, flat form of the rear on historic mapping in the 19th century when compared to the rear form of the adjacent buildings in the terrace. However, the elevation is still of an early date, probably early to mid-19th century, and replicates the architectural style of the front. The roof and lantern are slightly unusual and not found in the other surviving 18th century buildings within the terrace; however, a similar lightwell existed at 31-32 John Street in 1960² and it is possible that these were part of a slightly later scheme of renovations which may have included the rear extension of 7 John Street in the 19th century, evidenced by the metal used in their construction.

Internal description

4.9 The interior form of 7 John Street is described here by floor for clarity. Each floor except the third floor has a basic plan of a front and rear room, separated by the stair core and inner hallway. There are

² London Picture Archive, record 72809, 'View of stairwell and light at 31-32 John Street, Bloomsbury'.

small half landings above the basement, ground and first floor levels to the northern side of the stair core. The building has been in office use for many years and aspects of the interior reflect that use.

- 4.10 The basement floor is accessed via a partially enclosed timber stair from the internal stair core of the building. There are three doors from the landing below; that to the front room, that to the rear room, and one to a small room under the turn of the stairs. The front room contains two windows and a door to the front basement well. The ceilings are modern with inset spotlights; there is a chimney breast on the northern wall but no fireplace remains. The plaster mouldings to the ceiling cornice are simple, and the majority of the skirting boards have been replaced by modern box skirtings containing office wiring; where they remain they are tall timber skirting boards. The windows have modern radiators below, and the room is fully carpeted. The timber panelled door to the landing is relatively wide and appear to be modern.
- 4.11 The rear room is accessed by a narrower doorway holding a timber panelled door, has two windows and a door leading to the rear well. In the northern part of the western wall is a doorway which leads to an under-stair cupboard. The chimney breast to the northern wall, again holding no fireplace, is flanked by an alcove to the eastern side. Like the front room, the ceiling has inset spotlights and a simple cornice, and the skirting is a modern box type holding office wiring. The floor is fully carpeted. Within the small under-stairs room there is currently a kitchen area with modern fittings. The half landing off the stair above the basement floor holds a toilet area with a timber panelled door and modern fittings.
- 4.12 The ground floor has an entrance hallway leading west to east, from which a door leads to the front room. The hall has a moulded cornice to the ceiling and tall timber skirting boards; there is a narrow dado rail which sits above an iron radiator on the southern wall. The floor is carpeted. An arched opening leads from the hall into the stair core area which is central to the building. This area holds the lower part of the main staircase, which is of timber, carved brackets to the edge faces of the treads, and turned balusters as per the listed building description; the stair continues in this fashion up the second floor level. As above the basement floor, the half landing off the stair above the ground floor contains a modern toilet area.
- 4.13 The front room to the ground floor spans over two windows and has a central ceiling light with no plaster rose. The floor is carpeted; to the southern wall is the doorway into the hall which has a heavily decorated timber surround. This is echoed by the matching doorcase of a door in the eastern wall which leads to a cupboard, and by the decorative fire surround which holds a plain marble fireplace

(Appendix 3, Picture 2). Such doorcases and fireplaces are a feature of the whole of the ground floor and unlike the external front doorcase definitely do not date to any later 20th century renovations as photos of the building from 1960 show them intact (Appendix 3, Picture 3). They are more likely to have been part of a historic interior scheme for the house, and reflect the Georgian styling of the building's architecture. However, the doors themselves, though timber panelled and in keeping with the style of the building, have been changed as evidenced by the photograph taken in the 1960s which shows a Georgian door with glazed elements. This probably took place following the 1975 application for internal remodelling, a condition of which was the provision of details for new doors. Otherwise, the room has a decorative dentilled cornice and simple timber panelling over a dado, and there are small iron radiators beneath the windows.

- 4.14 The rear room spans the full width of three bays and contains carpeting and inset spotlights to the ceiling. There are iron radiators beneath the windows, which have moulded decoration to their edges and shutter boxes. In this room the cornice is deeper and decorated, and the panelling over a deep decorative dado also has an egg and dart detail to its edges. The skirting has been mostly replaced by modern box skirting containing office wiring. The fireplace, as in the front room, has a decorative surround. To the western wall is a doorway, also with a decorative surround, leading to an understairs cupboard.
- 4.15 The first-floor front room has three windows facing to street, inset and with shutter boxes. There are iron radiators below each window. The ceiling is plain with two light fittings; there is a heavy dentilled cornice, and the walls have a narrow dado and picture rail. There are modern box skirtings holding office wiring. To the northern wall, the chimney breast has a moulded fire surround with garland decoration, probably that mentioned within the listed building description, though the fireplace is now bricked in. The eastern wall holds a door with a simple timber surround, which leads to a cupboard. The floor is carpeted. The first-floor rear room is the same, reflected, with the same style of decorative finish and fire surround. The half landing above the first floor, like those below, holds a toilet area with modern fittings.
- 4.16 At second floor level, the ceilings of both the front and back room are appreciably lower, sitting to the tops of the windows. The ceiling to the front room has inset spotlights, and a simple bolection moulded cornice. The inset windows have iron radiators below, and the skirting is modern box skirting holding office wiring. There are narrow dados to each wall, and on the northern wall is a chimney breast and a timber fire surround with simple decoration; this surround is box like and protrudes from the chimney breast. The timber door surround has a simple moulding.

- 4.17 The rear room is similar, though in this case the timber fire surround is even more simple and features a timber back plate. The fireplace itself is of black iron, Victorian in style. Skirting, moulded cornice and spot lighting match those to the front room. However, the room features a lowered section of ceiling to the western side of the room, and a partitioned section which intrudes into the room and holds the doorway onto the stair hall. There is also a simple timber door leading to a cupboard in the western wall. The shape of the room relates to the position of the stair to the third floor, which is set against the southern wall of the stair core, enclosed by a stud partition. It is likely that this stair dates from the 1970s scheme which extended the rear of the mansard roof.
- 4.18 The third floor has been used as residential accommodation. At the top of the stair is a hall, with the lantern above. The older lantern has a more modern glazed structure set below it. The floor of this section sits on top of the stair core of the lower floors; the photograph described earlier of the lantern at 31-32 John Street shows this as open to the stair, and it is probably that the floor at 7 John Street was added at the time of the 1970s scheme. The front room is open to the hall, with three windows facing out to John Street; the room is low ceilinged and carpeted, and has numerous inset spotlights. There is a narrow door to the northern end of the eastern wall which leads to a kitchen area with modern fittings. There are three openings on the eastern side of the hall; the central opening leads to a bathroom, and those to either side to two bedrooms with a partition down the middle, each with a single dormer window facing the rear. This floor contains no historic detailing and it appears to have been refurbished in the 1970s and later.

Statement of Value

- 4.19 The surviving external and internal form of this 18th century house is of historic interest and retains a historic appearance despite the insertion of modern finishes, partitions and fixtures. The interior of the third floor and the stair to this floor are not of historic interest or architectural value, and especially the rear portion of this space is entirely modern. Likewise, where there are modern bathrooms, kitchens, skirting, flooring and lighting to the rest of the house, there are not of historic interest though they serve to provide legibility to the use of the building as office space.
- 4.20 The primary internal feature of value is the floor plan of the ground to second floors, which retains much of its 18th century form despite some later alteration. Alongside this, the original staircase and retained historic doorcases, fire surrounds and decorative detail to walls and windows give the house its historic character and contribute a great deal to its heritage value. The basement is of less interest,

though again its floor plan is intact; the walls and ceilings are plain and utilitarian and the spaces have some tolerance for change.

Bloomsbury Conservation Area

- 4.21 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area is very large and encompasses fourteen sub-areas, each with its own character and appearance. John Street is in sub-area 10 ('Great James Street/Bedford Row) and is noted to be a "wide thoroughfare characterised by larger properties". The area was developed on a grid pattern, and with a hierarchy of street including major roads such as Theobalds Road, down to mews lanes such as King's Mews to the rear of 7 John Street. The key historic form is that of terraces with mews behind, and the architectural language of stock brick, red brick accents and decorative front door cases remains prominent. The office uses of the buildings within the sub-area is mentioned, though it is noted that many buildings are returning to residential use.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

Planning History

- 5.1 There is a limited planning history available for 7 John Street. Two concurrent applications in the 1970s (HB1874 and 26221) granted permission for internal alterations to offices on basement, ground, first and second floor levels, and the provision of a flat on the third floor, as well as changes to the front elevation including the new portico, and the extension of the dormer space to the rear of the third floor. As noted previously, much of the form of the third floor of the building including the stair, and many of the internal fixtures such as doors, may date from the time of this application, though some have clearly been modernised further including bathrooms, kitchens and spot-lighting.
- 5.2 In May 2022, permission was granted under application 2019/6378/P for the change of use from office and residential flat, to a single dwelling.

Extent of the works

- 5.3 Full details of the scheme can be found in the submitted drawings and associated Design and Access Statement.

External works

- Rear basement windows to well to be replaced with timber double doors to external patios.
- Glazed link to be inserted in area of existing rear door to well providing access to existing vault, and door removed.
- Existing sash windows to be repaired (with replacement only if timber is found to be beyond repair, on agreement with the council).
- Front well railings to be refurbished (with replacement only if ironwork is found to be beyond repair, on agreement with the council).
- Rear well railings to be refurbished (with replacement only if ironwork is found to be beyond repair, on agreement with the council).
- New tiled flooring to be installed to rear well, levelled with internal basement floor area.
- Brick rear boundary wall to be repaired.
- Rear hard and soft landscaping to be repaired and refurbished.

Basement Floor

- Radiators to be removed from below windows.
- Insertion of underfloor heating with timber board flooring.
- Refurbishment or when necessary, replacement of skirting, cornicing and other decorative detail.
- Replacement of existing doors with six panel timber doors.
- Door from hallway to front room to be filled in and replaced with new opening to the north.
- Partition wall to be removed from existing kitchen, new lining wall introduced, and room converted to shower room with tiled flooring.
- Partition wall to be inserted within stair hall to create utility area.
- New timber fire surround and stone hearth inserted to chimney breast in rear room.
- Alcove to eastern side of chimney breast to be infilled.
- New timber bar and shelving to be inserted to rear room.
- New lighting and ironmongery including electrical fittings throughout.

Ground Floor

- Radiators to hallway to be removed
- Timber panelling inserted to walls of entrance hallway.
- Tiled flooring inserted to entrance hallway.
- Insertion of underfloor heating with timber board flooring to front and rear rooms.
- Refurbishment or when necessary, replacement of skirting, cornicing and other decorative detail throughout.
- Replacement of modern boxed skirting.
- New kitchen units to be inserted into ground floor rear room, lined and lightly fixed to existing wall finish.
- New lighting and ironmongery including electrical fittings throughout.

First Floor

- Insertion of underfloor heating with timber board flooring to front and rear rooms.

- Refurbishment or when necessary, replacement of skirting, cornicing and other decorative detail throughout.
- Replacement of modern boxed skirting.
- Insertion of shelving to rear room.
- New lighting and ironmongery including electrical fittings throughout.

Second Floor

- Insertion of underfloor heating with carpeted board flooring to front and rear rooms.
- Refurbishment or when necessary, replacement or addition of skirting, cornicing and other decorative detail throughout.
- Replacement of modern boxed skirting.
- Removal of small area of eastern wall around existing opening, and creation of ensuite bathroom including tiled floors with new partitions.
- Creation of new partition wall to the western side of the rear room, incorporating two doorways.
- Insertion of rear room en-suite with tiled floor behind new partition.
- Insertion of built-in wardrobes to both rooms.
- Removal of stair to third floor from southern wall of hall; insertion of new timber box stair behind partition in rear room.
- New lighting and ironmongery including electrical fittings throughout.

Third Floor

- Removal of secondary lantern and refurbishment of original lantern.
- Removal of part of the flooring to the existing inner hall allowing light to stair below.
- Insert new partitions and doorways throughout to create three bedrooms and three ensuite bathrooms with tiled flooring.
- Insertion of underfloor heating with carpeted board flooring to front and rear rooms.
- Removal of ceilings and refurbishment of trusses as a feature.
- New lighting and ironmongery including electrical fittings throughout.

Roof

- Refurbish existing roof finish where required.
- Insert six new conservation rooflights to side and rear roofscape.

Design Justification and Impact Assessment

7 John Street

- 5.4 The alterations to 7 John Street have been designed to meet the clients' brief for a flexible and flowing residential home, which will meet current and future needs. As noted above, the listed building has been subject to numerous changes over the years but has retained the majority of its internal plan form within the 18th century house. The current design has been mindful at all stages of the key architectural and historic value of the house as it stands today and as it was at time of listing, and also of the need to ensure that the remaining group value with the rest of the terrace at 2-9 John Street is retained as per the listing.
- 5.5 The alterations to the listed townhouse are intended to enable the change of use to residential. This use was original to the building, and notwithstanding the long use as office space it presents an opportunity to re-establish a residential character which will contribute both to the heritage value of the building and the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. As noted earlier in this document, permission for the change of use has already been granted in 2022.
- 5.6 External changes to the building have been minimised, and it is intended to retain and refurbish all existing windows and external doors except to the rear of the basement level, where two new doors are proposed in place of existing windows to patio areas, and the door will be removed to allow access to an new glazed link to connect the rear of the building with the existing vault, creating a wine cellar. Though this presents a change at the rear basement level, the amenity of the occupiers will be much improved, and the current rear well which has historically been underused and ill maintained as a result will gain a new purpose and connection to the living space within the house. The changes require minimal intervention to historic fabric beyond the removal of two small areas of brickwork, and the fixing of the glazed link which will be achieved with a lightweight structure. The intervention will not be easily visible except from immediately adjacent within the existing garden and will not affect views towards the rear elevation of the building. In addition, the proposed rooflights to the rear and side roofscapes of the building are designed to be hidden from view, providing additional internal light while retaining the current appearance of the roof, and are considered to be of an appropriate size to provide increased light and liveability to the third floor space. The front of the building will

remain unchanged and will continue to contribute to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area as well as retaining its own special architectural and historic interest as an 18th century townhouse.

- 5.7 The basement area will be repurposed to comprise a home gym and shower room, a utility area, and a snug/cinema room to the rear. The proposed partitions in the basement, and the movement of a doorway to accommodate the utility area, reflect the lower status of finishes and architectural interest at this level. The plan form of the rooms has been respected and largely retained, and the insertion of a fireplace to the rear room is in keeping with the style and character of the house. Flooring at this level is currently assumed to be board; the provision of underfloor heating and new wide boards, or tiles in the bathroom, will retain a traditional character while providing increased comfort and energy efficiency.
- 5.8 The proposals for the ground floor entirely retain the plan form at this level and the existing decorative features already described. The appearance of the ground floor will be greatly improved with the insertion of new flooring, again over energy efficient underfloor heating, including tiles in the entrance hall which are likely to have existed in the original scheme for the building; the panelling also proposed here will create a welcoming and robust entrance to the new family home, whilst retaining a traditional character in keeping with the age and architecture of the building. Wide boards will be sourced for the remainder of the floor, again reinstating a historic appearance which has been somewhat lost during the building's office use. The use of traditional styles of lighting and ironmongery, alongside the retention of important architectural features, will further be of benefit to the heritage value of the building and elevate its special interest. The kitchen proposed to the rear ground floor room has been designed to require low intervention and minimal fixings, with fittings of a height and style to allow the plan of the room to be viewed in full. Where a tall unit is proposed to the western wall, this will be backed by a protective lining ensuring that no damage occurs to the existing wall finish and will again be minimally fixed. It is considered that the use of this room as a kitchen is appropriate to the size and importance of the building, where such a room will be the heart of the home.
- 5.9 At first floor level, there are minimal changes proposed to the rooms, allowing their original form and function as principal living rooms to be legible once more through retention and refurbishment of existing historic features, and reinstatement of timber boards over underfloor heating. New lighting, ironmongery and skirting in a traditional style will further improve the appearance of the rooms, and their historic character will be enhanced. Where built in shelving is proposed, this will be set against a

protective lining to ensure that no damage occurs to the existing wall finish; the shelving will be in timber and of a simple, traditional style in keeping with the historic character of the room.

- 5.10 At second floor level, it is proposed to provide two ensuite bedrooms with built in storage; the storage has been designed as part of the scheme as these rooms have low ceilings and it is considered that many free-standing storage units may be too tall. This has been achieved with minimal change to the basic floor plan, though the provision of an ensuite to the front room involves the removal of part of the eastern wall at its northern end, where there is currently no opening, and the construction of a new partitioned area. Although this intervention does require the removal of historic wall fabric, this is minimal and is restricted to an upper floor of the building where the finishes are of less architectural merit. There is a benefit in the provision of the ensuite in this area, allowing a master bedroom with the modern amenities expected in a house of this status. The bathroom will have a tiled floor with underfloor heating, and the bedroom will be carpeted over underfloor heating; the carpet to bedrooms is intended to reduce noise intrusion between floors.
- 5.11 The rear room of the second floor has previously been compromised by the insertion of the stair to the third floor and associated partitioning; there are also signs within the room that a partition may have existed along the western wall in the past evidenced by differences in floor and wall finish. It is probable that this earlier partition enclosed an earlier version of the stair to the third floor, in the area where it is now proposed to house the new stair. An ensuite is also proposed to utilise the new partition in this area. Though the current floor plan of this room will be disrupted, it is considered that the provision of a straight wall, set away from the chimney breast, in an area that may have previously been partitioned, will not cause undue harm to the character of the room and will allow the primary features of the windows and fireplace to remain. Proposed storage will utilise alcoves, a traditional way of providing storage in many historic buildings and will also allow to continued legibility of historic features.
- 5.12 The removal of the existing stair to the third floor and its replacement with one to the east will reinstate the probably original form of the stair hall at this level. In addition, the proposal to remove part of the third floor hall will reinstate the original purpose of the roof lantern to light the stairwell. This is a benefit to the character and historic interest of the building and will enhance its architectural value. The stair hall and its decorative roundels will be refurbished and re-carpetted.
- 5.13 The third floor is an area of lesser historic interest, much altered and extended. The removal of the secondary lantern and the refurbishment of the hopped lantern above will be of benefit to the

architectural value of the building, allowing the historic feature to be better appreciated. The reconfiguration of the remaining spaces to the third floor are considered to be commensurate with the status of this floor and its 1970s renovation and will provide bedroom space without the need for removal of historic fabric. The removal of modern ceilings, allowing the trusses to become a characterful feature in their own right, will not harm the historic or architectural interest of the building but may enhance the legibility of the attic space and reflect its historic form.

- 5.14 The stair core and historic stairs from ground to second floor will be retained and refurbished. The half landing above the ground floor will remain as a toilet, though refurbished and refitted, and that above the first floor will be an area for storage. Where doors off the stair hall are not six-panelled doors, they will be replaced to match those which are; this will further enhance the historic character of this area of the building.
- 5.15 Utilities and services are currently concentrated in the northern, central part of the house, and the new and retained bathrooms and kitchen have been designed with this in mind, to ensure there are minimal new service runs and avoid unnecessary intervention.
- 5.16 In general, the appearance of the listed building will be improved by works of refurbishment and reinstatement, and the resurfacing of the rear garden area to provide a pleasant outdoor area for the new residential use will further enhance the character of 7 John Street. All of the proposals reflect the original high status and quality of the building, and will provide a functional, luxurious and desirable dwelling house.

Bloomsbury Conservation Area

- 5.17 The only works proposed to the front elevation of 7 John Street involve the refurbishment of iron railings at ground floor, and of windows where required. To the rear, changes are only proposed to the elevation at basement level, which is not visible from the conservation area. The change of use to residential, as the building was historically, is deemed to be a positive change but will have no impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Therefore, it is considered that the works adhere to the guidelines within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and will cause no harm to the special interest of the conservation area.

Conclusions

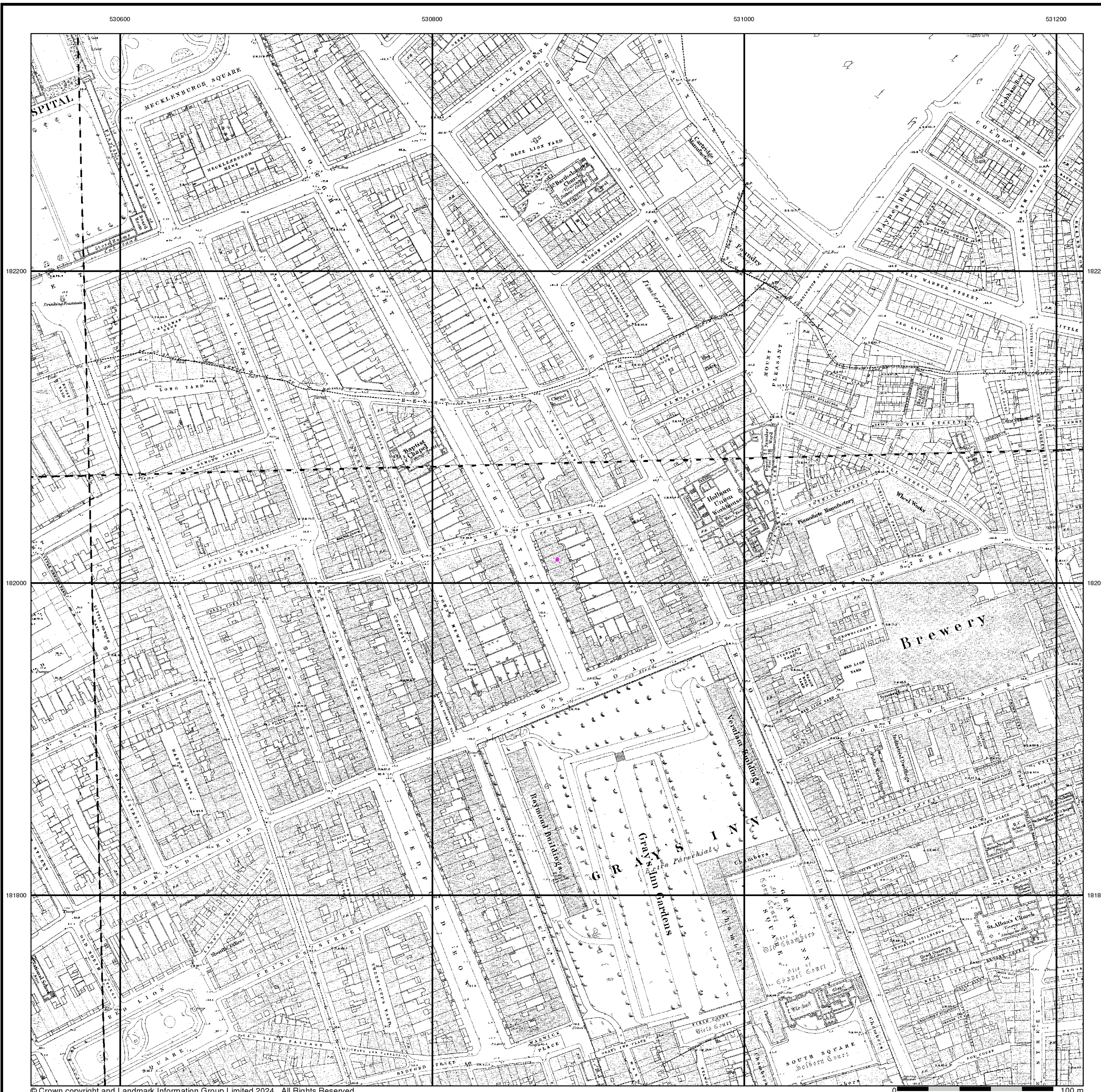
- 5.18 In general, it is considered that the proposals will cause very minimal harm to the listed building due to the removal of small areas of historic building material, and no harm to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The overall character, appearance and value of the building is retained through retention and reinforcement of plan form and character, and the reinstatement of traditional details and finishes in line with the new use of the building. The legibility of the historic building, and the narrative of its use and development, will remain. The removal of elements which are out of character will be of benefit to the building, and overall the increase in sustainable usability of the building will allow 7 John Street to be occupied and understood now and in the future. The key architectural interest of the historic building and its significance and value will not change.
- 5.19 It is assessed that there is no change to the heritage value of the listed building, and some benefit. Several improvements will be made to the appearance of the building, and its historic character will be enhanced by the traditional and sensitive design approach. The overall enhancement of the listed building also provides a benefit through its increased functionality, energy efficiency and user comfort, as well as potential for continued enjoyment and use by future generations.
- 5.20 The NPPF defines 'public benefit' as the 'economic, social or environmental objectives of sustainable development'. Sustainable development is development which 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of existing communities and future generations to meet their own needs'. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, in that it should be allowed unless the harms 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits. The preservation and enhancement of the historic environment is seen as an environmental objective of development.
- 5.21 These proposals are of public benefit due to their retention of the historic form of the listed building, whilst allowing the present and future community to meet its needs. In addition, the history and development of the house will continue to be legible and the appearance and condition of the building will be improved. Change is largely restricted to previously altered areas, and historic areas and features of the building will be enhanced.
- 5.22 The design adheres to Local Plan policy D2 in that it preserves and enhances the heritage asset. The design has taken into account the heritage significance and character of the listed building. Though the removal of historic fabric may constitute minimal, less than substantial harm to the listed building, it is considered that this is outweighed by the many benefits of the scheme, primarily the

reinstatement of its residential use and improvement of its architectural character and appearance, but also its improved energy efficiency as mentioned in the policy. In line with the policy, there will be no harm to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

- 5.23 The proposed works will allow the current and future residents and owners of the building to comfortably continue as custodians for this listed building, caring for it and securing the safe use and maintenance of the building for the foreseeable future, whilst retaining its heritage value and architectural interest.

APPENDIX 1: HISTORIC MAPPING

Map 1: 1874 (on following page)



London
Published 1874 - 1875
Source map scale - 1:1,056

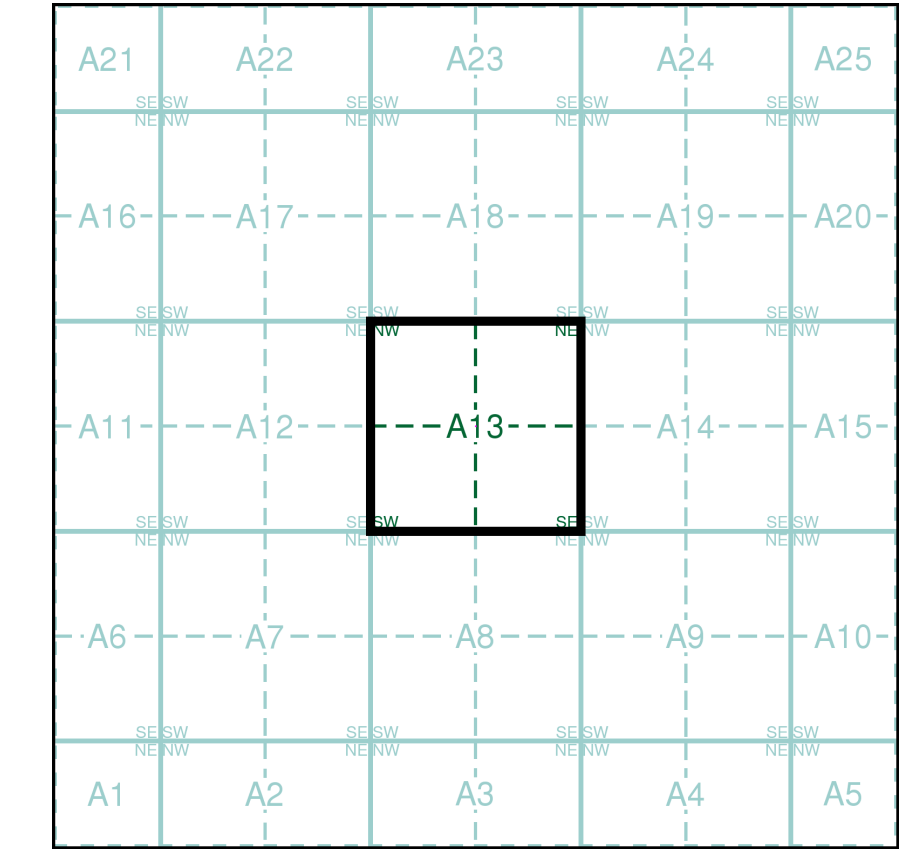
The 1:1056 scale of Ordnance Survey mapping was adopted from Ireland in 1848 and was used to survey towns with a population of over 4000, plus county towns of lesser population, in those counties mapped at the six-inch scale in 1841-55. The scale was the largest scale at which London was mapped by the Ordnance Survey and a 'skeleton' survey of the capital, showing little more than streets, street names, frontages and altitudes, was undertaken between 1848 and 1850. The majority of the 1:1056 surveys were later replaced by 1:500 surveys; although almost all the remainder were revised at this scale, sometimes more than once before 1895. The type of detail shown on the 1:1056 scale is broadly similar to that on 1:500; the apparent omission of minor details such as sewer access points and street lights may be as much a reflection of the generally earlier date of these plans, as of the specification of the map.

Please note: Due to the partial coverage of Historical Town Plans, it is possible that not all segments within an order will contain mapping. Only the segments that have Town Plan coverage will be generated.

Map Name(s) and Date(s)

007_00_043 1874 1:1,056	007_00_044 1874 1:1,056
007_00_053 1875 1:1,056	007_00_054 1875 1:1,056

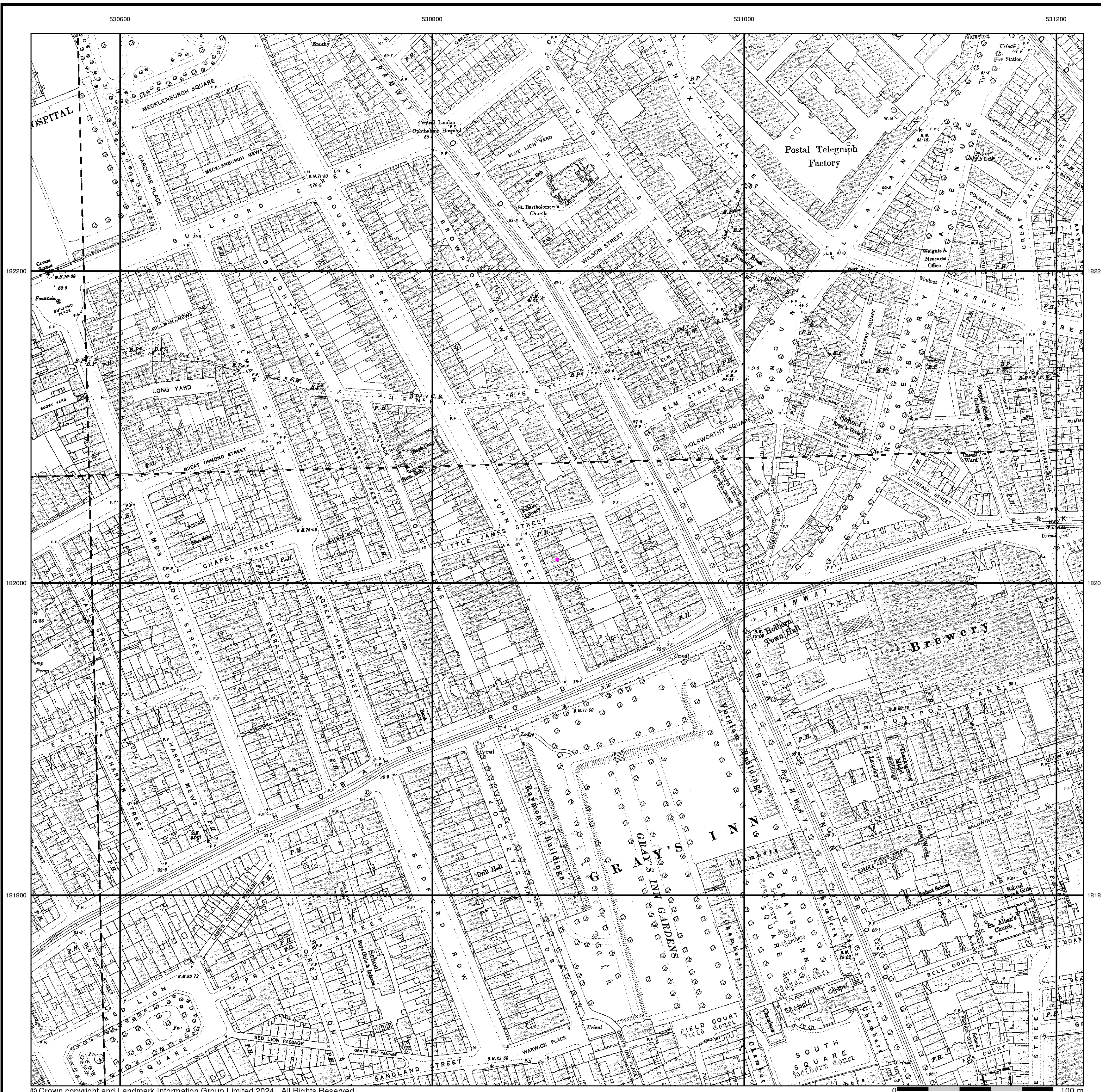
Historical Town Plan - Segment A13



Order Details
 Order Number: 361691403_1_1
 Customer Ref: 7JOHN24
 National Grid Reference: 530880, 182010
 Slice: A
 Site Area (Ha): 0.01
 Search Buffer (m): 0

Site Details
 7, John Street, LONDON, WC1N 2ES

Map 2: 1895 (on following page)



Envirocheck®

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London

Published 1895 - 1896

Source map scale - 1:1,056

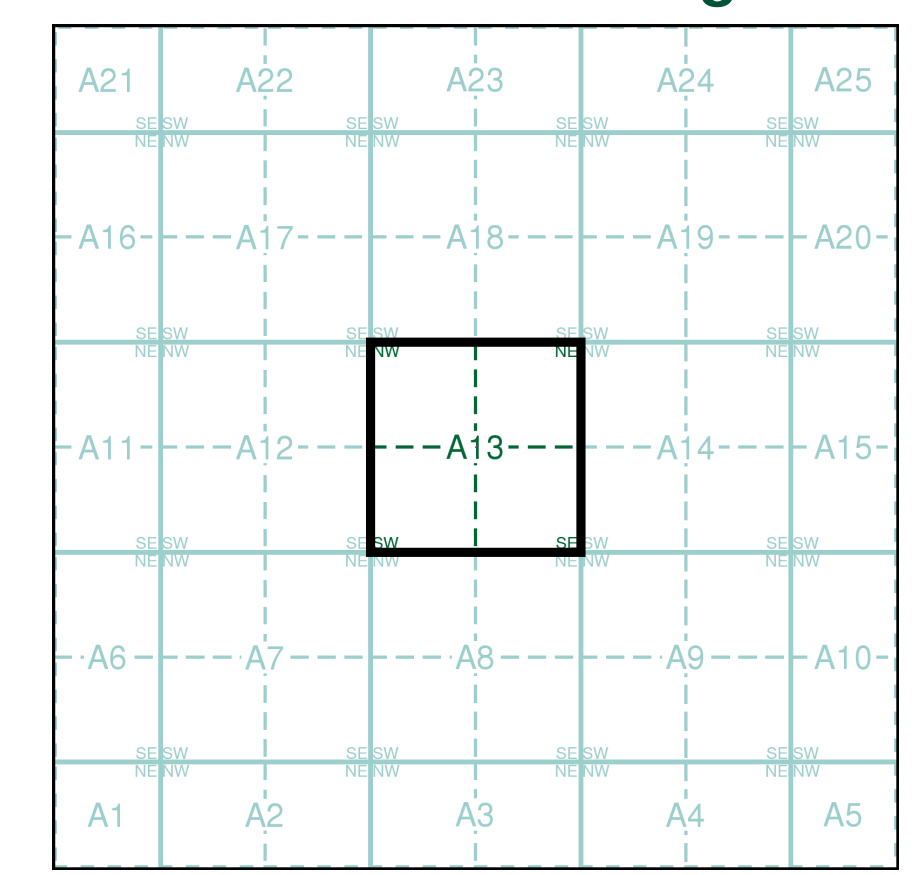
The 1:1056 scale of Ordnance Survey mapping was adopted from Ireland in 1848 and was used to survey towns with a population of over 4000, plus county towns of lesser population, in those counties mapped at the six-inch scale in 1841-55. The scale was the largest scale at which London was mapped by the Ordnance Survey and a 'skeleton' survey of the capital, showing little more than streets, street names, frontages and altitudes, was undertaken between 1848 and 1850. The majority of the 1:1056 surveys were later replaced by 1:500 surveys; although almost all the remainder were revised at this scale, sometimes more than once before 1895. The type of detail shown on the 1:1056 scale is broadly similar to that on 1:500; the apparent omission of minor details such as sewer access points and street lights may be as much a reflection of the generally earlier date of these plans, as of the specification of the map.

Please note: Due to the partial coverage of Historical Town Plans, it is possible that not all segments within an order will contain mapping. Only the segments that have Town Plan coverage will be generated.

Map Name(s) and Date(s)

007_00_043 1895 1:1,056	007_00_044 1895 1:1,056
007_00_053 1895 1:1,056	007_00_054 1895 1:1,056

Historical Town Plan - Segment A13



Order Details

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 Customer Ref: 7JOHN24
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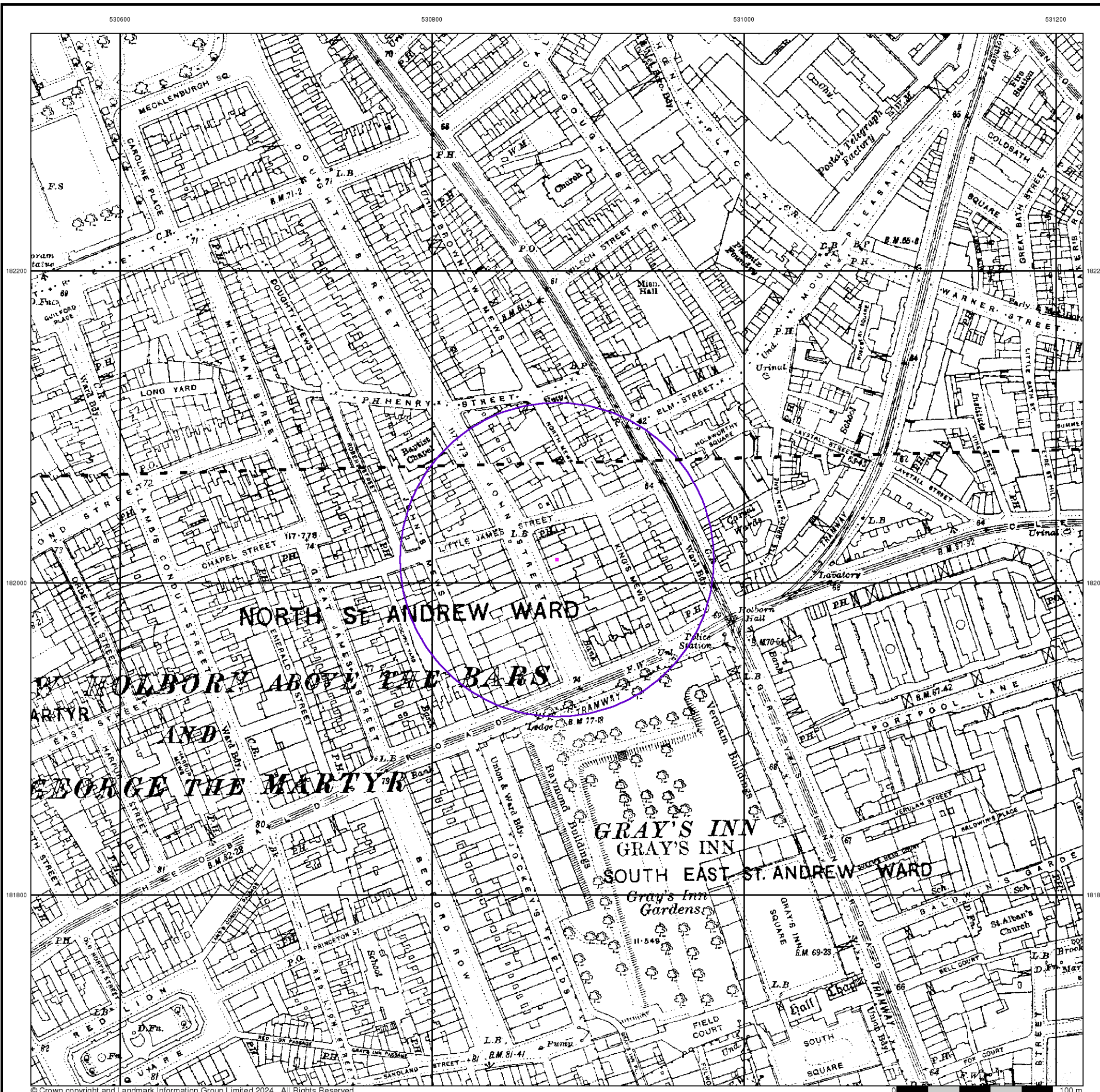
Site Details

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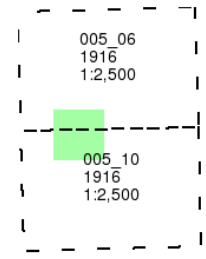
Map 3: 1916 (on following page)



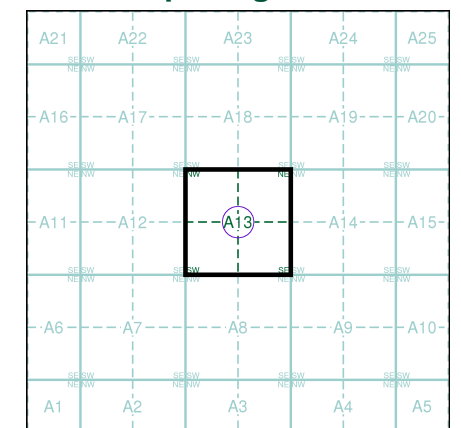
London
Published 1916
Source map scale - 1:2,500

The historical maps shown were reproduced from maps predominantly held at the scale adopted for England, Wales and Scotland in the 1840's. In 1854 the 1:2,500 scale was adopted for mapping urban areas and by 1896 it covered the whole of what were considered to be the cultivated parts of Great Britain. The published date given below is often some years later than the surveyed date. Before 1938, all OS maps were based on the Cassini Projection, with independent surveys of a single county or group of counties, giving rise to significant inaccuracies in outlying areas.

Map Name(s) and Date(s)



Historical Map - Segment A13



Order Details

Order Number: 361691403_1_1
 Customer Ref: 7JOHN24
 National Grid Reference: 530880, 182010
 Slice: A
 Site Area (Ha): 0.01
 Search Buffer (m): 100

Site Details

7, John Street, LONDON, WC1N 2ES

Map 4: 1946 (on following page)

Historical Aerial Photography

Published 1946 - 1949

Source map scale - 1:1,250

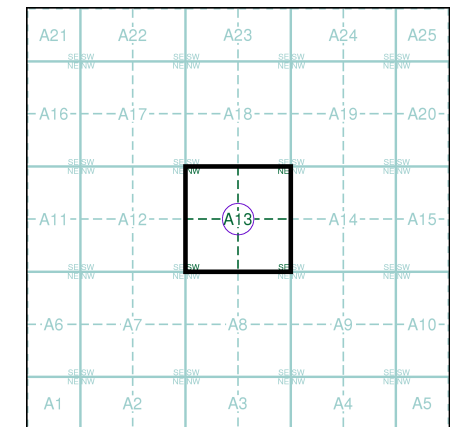
The Historical Aerial Photos were produced by the Ordnance Survey at a scale of 1:1,250 and 1:10,560 from Air Force photography. They were produced between 1944 and 1951 as an interim measure, pending preparation of conventional mapping, due to post war resource shortages. New security measures in the 1950's meant that every photograph was re-checked for potentially unsafe information with security sites replaced by fake fields or clouds. The original editions were withdrawn and only later made available after a period of fifty years although due to the accuracy of the editing, without viewing both revisions it is not easy to spot the edits. Where available Landmark have included both revisions.

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Map Name(s) and Date(s)

TC3082SE 1946 1:1,250	TC3182SW 1946 1:1,250
TC3081NE 1949 1:1,250	TC3181NW 1948 1:1,250

Historical Aerial Photography - Segment A13

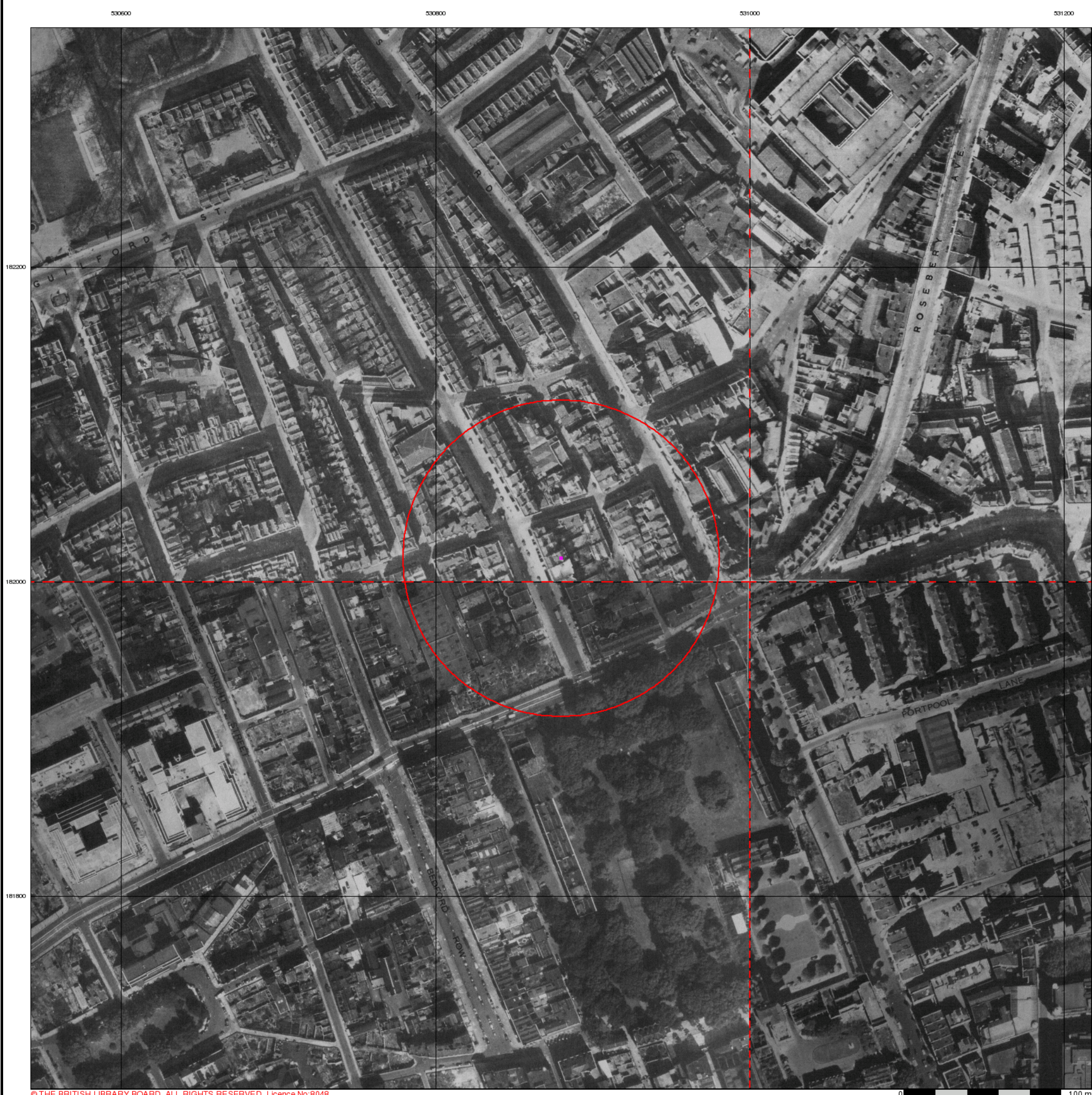


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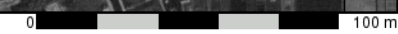
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 Site Area (Ha): 0.01
 Search Buffer (m): 100

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Map 5: 1952 (on following page)

Ordnance Survey Plan

Published 1952 - 1953

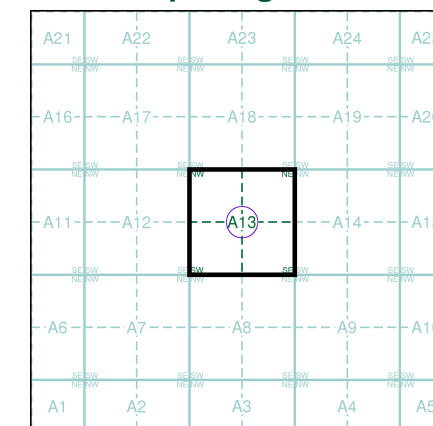
Source map scale - 1:1,250

The historical maps shown were reproduced from maps predominantly held at the scale adopted for England, Wales and Scotland in the 1840's. In 1854 the 1:2,500 scale was adopted for mapping urban areas and by 1896 it covered the whole of what were considered to be the cultivated parts of Great Britain. The published date given below is often some years later than the surveyed date. Before 1938, all OS maps were based on the Cassini Projection, with independent surveys of a single county or group of counties, giving rise to significant inaccuracies in outlying areas.

Map Name(s) and Date(s)

TQ3082SE 1953 1:1,250	TQ3182SW 1953 1:1,250
TQ3081NE 1952 1:1,250	TQ3181NW 1953 1:1,250

Historical Map - Segment A13

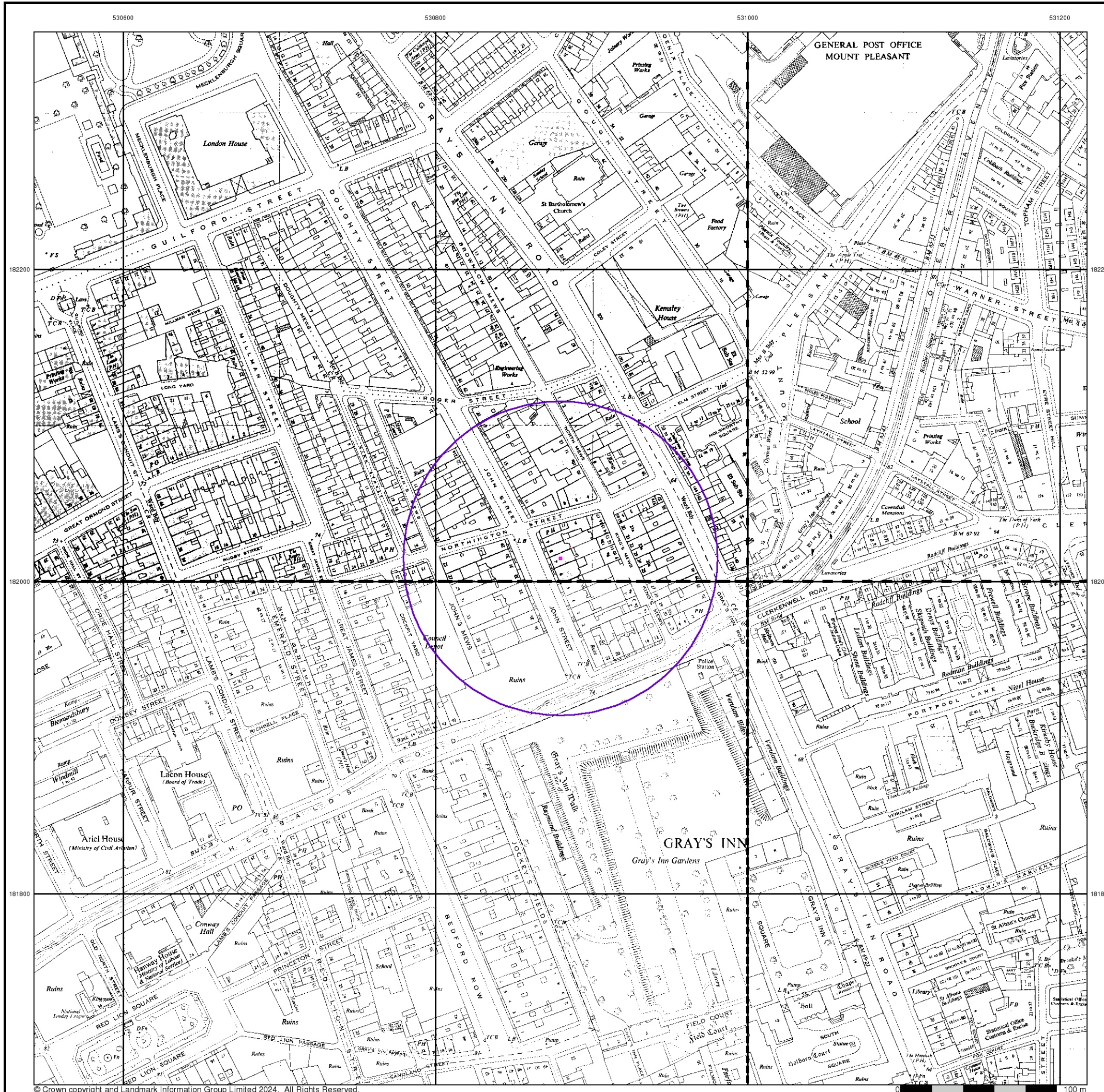


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 Customer Ref: 7JOHN24
 National Grid Reference: 530880, 182010
 Slice: A
 Site Area (Ha): 0.01
 Search Buffer (m): 100

Site Details

7, John Street, LONDON, WC1N 2ES



Map 6: 1963 (on following page)

Ordnance Survey Plan

Published 1963 - 1974

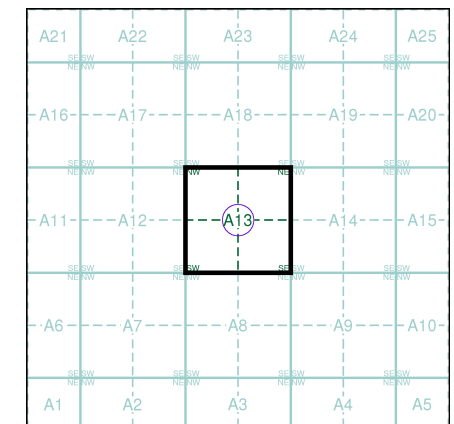
Source map scale - 1:1,250

The historical maps shown were reproduced from maps predominantly held at the scale adopted for England, Wales and Scotland in the 1840's. In 1854 the 1:2,500 scale was adopted for mapping urban areas and by 1896 it covered the whole of what were considered to be the cultivated parts of Great Britain. The published date given below is often some years later than the surveyed date. Before 1938, all OS maps were based on the Cassini Projection, with independent surveys of a single county or group of counties, giving rise to significant inaccuracies in outlying areas.

Map Name(s) and Date(s)

TQ3082SE	
1974	
1:1,250	
TQ3081NE	TQ3181NW
1966	1963
1:1,250	1:1,250

Historical Map - Segment A13

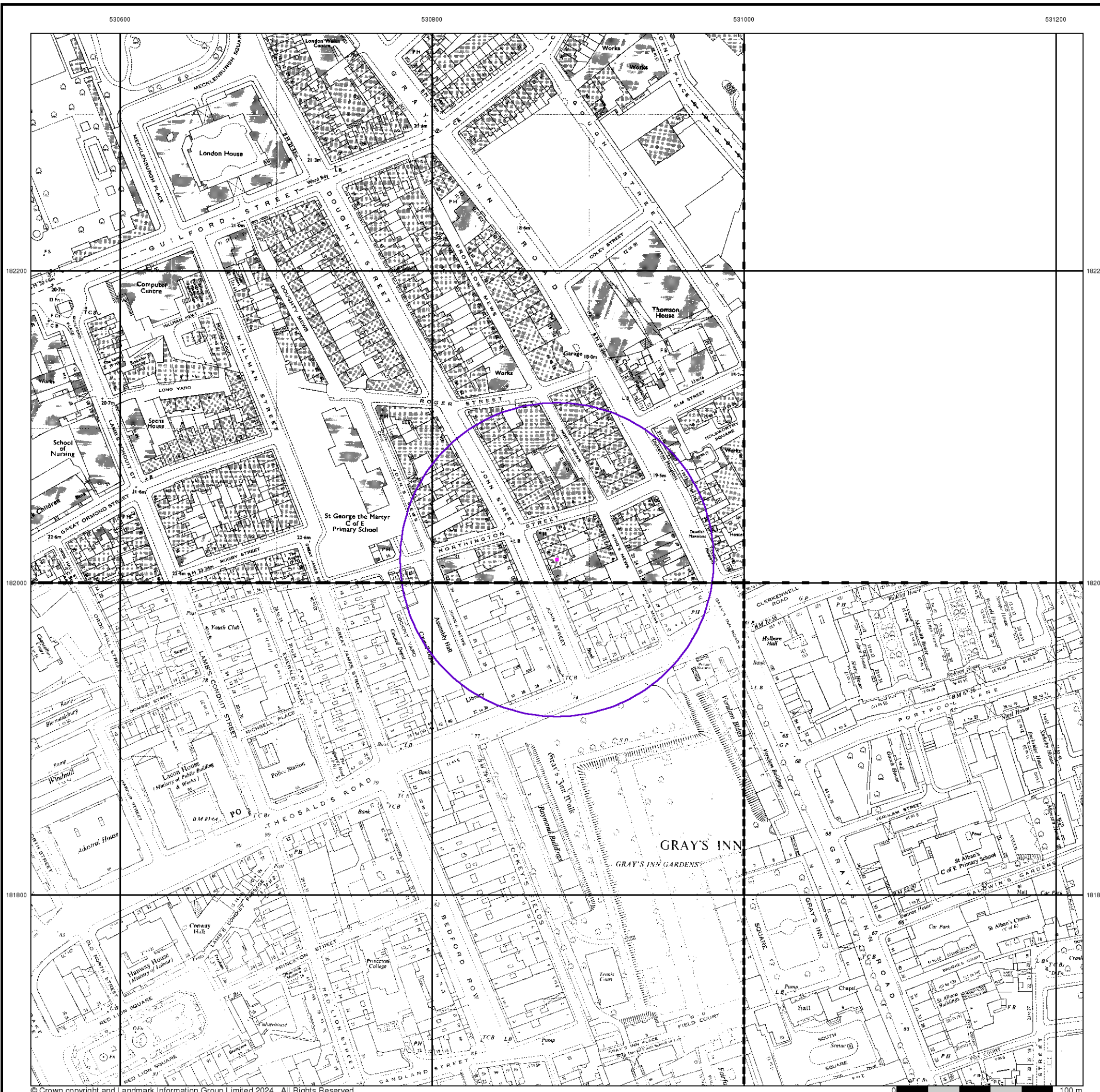


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Customer Ref: 7JOHN24
National Grid Reference: 530880, 182010
Slice: A
Site Area (Ha): 0.01
Search Buffer (m): 100

Site Details

7, John Street, LONDON, WC1N 2ES



APPENDIX 2: ARCHIVE PHOTOGRAPHS

Picture 1:

House in John Street: Front view of a house at 7 John Street, Bloomsbury. The image shows a four-storey house with three windows and basement. Parked cars on the street are visible.

Image source: The London Archives (City of London Corporation). 1975.



Picture 2:

Interior of a house in John Street: View of a ground-floor rear room chimneypiece at 7 John Street, Bloomsbury. The unused chimney is surround heavy stones by an entrance door.

Image source: The London Archives (City of London Corporation). 1960.



Picture 3:

Interior of a house in John Street: View of a ground floor doorway at 7 John Street, Bloomsbury. The wooden glass Georgian style door way is fastened with metal work.

Image source: The London Archives (City of London Corporation). 1960.

