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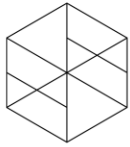
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Heritage Appraisal

18 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2NS

February 2025





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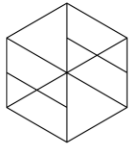
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1 Introduction

1.1 The following Heritage Appraisal has been prepared in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consent at no.18 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2NS.

1.2 The building is Grade II listed and situated in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The proposals are for the removal of later added partitions at 1st and 2nd floor level and minor changes to the closet wing at ground floor level. An Air Source Heat Pump will be installed to provide heating and cooling to the building, alongside five condenser units within the rear garden of the property.

1.3 This appraisal has been produced using desk based and online research, combined with a visual inspection of the site and wider area. Consideration has been given to the relevant national and local planning policy framework as well as an analysis of the building, its setting and wider context.

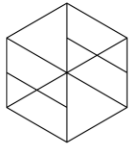
Research and report structure

1.4 In line with paragraphs 207 and 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, the purpose of this appraisal is to define the significance of the listed building, in so far as it will be affected by the proposals, as well as its contribution to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. This assessment has been made in line with the heritage values set out in Historic England's 'Conservation Principles' (2008).

1.5 The appraisal will describe the proposed works to the listed building and quantify their impact upon its special architectural and historic interest and the character and appearance of the surrounding Bloomsbury Conservation Area. They will then be assessed in relation to the relevant statutory, national, regional and local heritage policy framework.

1.6 This Heritage Appraisal has been prepared by Hannah Walker (BA (Hons) Oxon

MSc IHBC) who has extensive experience in dealing with proposals that affect the historic environment. She has 15 years of local authority experience, including 10 years as a Principal Conservation & Design Officer at the London Borough of Camden. She also has a wide range of experience in the private sector, preparing heritage statements and appraising the significance of historic buildings. She has trained as a historian, has a specialist qualification in historic building conservation and is a full member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC).



2 Site location and context

2.1 Bloomsbury Square is a traditional London garden square, located in the heart of Bloomsbury. It was first laid out in 1665, although the buildings which now surround it are varied in terms of their age, form and character. These mostly consist of 18th and early 19th century yellow stock brickwork or stucco faced townhouses on the north, south and west sides of the square, interspersed with a small number of late 19th and early 20th development, faced in red brick and embellished with stone or terracotta dressings. The entire eastern side of the square is filled with Victoria House, a monumental composition in Portland Stone, built in 1926-32.

2.2 The application building forms part of a terrace of early 19th century houses on the north side of the square. The building is built of darkened yellow stock brickwork and is of four storeys, set above a semi-basement.

Heritage Assets

Statutorily listed buildings

2.3 Nos.18-22 (consecutive) Bloomsbury Square were Grade II listed on 28 February 1969. The description indicates that the buildings were listed for group value and reads as follows:

5 terraced houses. 1800-1805. Designed and built by James Burton. Multi-coloured stock brick. 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each, No.22 with 4-window return (mostly blind) to Bedford Place. Round-headed entrances in recesses with reeded pilaster jambs carrying cornice-heads; fanlights (No.19 radial) and panelled doors. Gauged red brick flat arches to recessed sash, and 1st floor casement, windows, some with original glazing bars. Continuous 1st floor cast-iron balconies, Nos 19 & 21 with tented verandah roofs on cast-iron column supports. Continuous 3rd floor sill band. Parapet. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn

finials to areas. No.22 with attached garden wall to Bedford Place return. Wall with square-headed stucco surround to panelled wood door with reeded architrave with roundels. To left of door, a glazed oculus with small leaded panes of stained glass forming a pattern around the rim. Stone capping to wall with cast-iron railings. HISTORICAL NOTE: this terrace is on the site of Bedford House (formerly Southampton House), demolished 1799.

2.4 The wider area surrounding the application site contains a wealth of listed buildings, however only a small number form part of the setting of no.18 Bloomsbury Square. These include the Grade II listed 18th and early 19th century terraced houses at nos.74-77 Great Russell Street, the houses along the western side of Bedford Place and the eastern side of Montague Street, the late 18th century terrace on the south side of Great Russell Street and the townhouses which line the north, west and south sides of Bloomsbury Square. The Grade II listed Victoria House fills the eastern side of Bloomsbury Square.

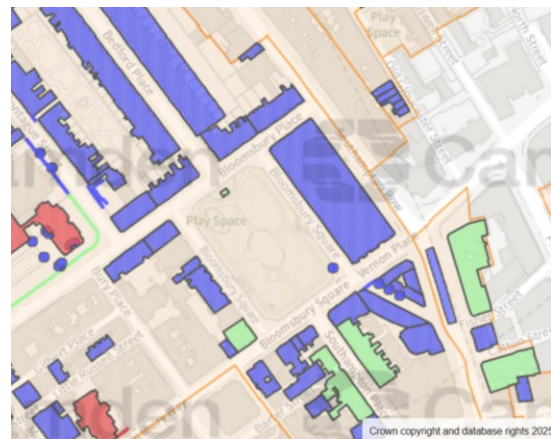
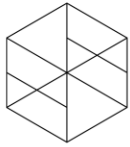


Figure 1: LB Camden's interactive map showing Grade II listed buildings in dark blue and the Bloomsbury Conservation Area shaded in buff. The application site is marked with a red dot.

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area

2.5 The application site is located in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area which was first



designated in 1968. The conservation area is notable as an exemplary example of Georgian town planning with its layout of garden squares and inter-related streets and mews. Despite its size, it also displays a notable consistency in terms of its street pattern, spatial character and predominant building forms.

2.6 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area is very large and consequently is divided into 14 separate character areas. Bloomsbury Square is located within Sub Area 6: Bloomsbury Square/Russell Square/Tavistock Square.

2.7 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted on 18 April 2011. In relation to the overall character of Sub Area 6 the Appraisal notes that:

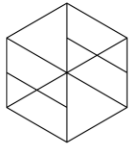
This sub area is largely made up of three- and four-storey late 18th and 19th century terraces surrounding a sequence of linked formal spaces, namely Bloomsbury Square, Russell Square and Tavistock Square. A series of north-south vistas visually connect the three squares. Moving through the area, there is a transition between the enclosed, urban nature of the streets and the more open squares which are softened by trees and green landscape. In places, the original terraces have been replaced with 20th century development, mostly of a larger scale and urban grain; this is particularly noticeable around Tavistock Square, Bedford Way and Upper Woburn Place (para 5.79).

Like Sub Area 5: Bedford Square/Gower Street, there is strong consistency in the architectural vocabulary of the original terraced development, albeit here it is some decades newer. Terraces in the sub area are either of three or four storeys in height with a basement below street level with iron railings to the frontage and small dormer windows set back in a mansard roof. The first floors of the townhouses which act as the piano nobile, are emphasised by banding and decorative iron window balconies. The terraces occupy standard plot widths, resulting in three-bay house widths, with windows of vertical proportions. Window openings generally have

brick heads, with window frames recessed behind deep reveals containing sliding sashes which have been sub-divided into small panes by slender glazing bars. Doorways generally have semi-circular arches containing fanlights with decorative radiating glazing bars. The architectural and historical importance of these terraces is reflected in their listing, mostly at grade II (para 5.80).

2.8 Specifically in relation to Bloomsbury Square, the Appraisal outlines that:

Bloomsbury Square is so-called because it is the oldest square in the district, laid out in the late 17th century by Lord Southampton to the south of his residence Southampton House (re-named Bedford House). The square is thought to have been inspired by Inigo Jones' piazza at Covent Garden. Today, the entire east side of the square is dominated by the enormous, six-storey, neo-classical 1920s Victoria House fronting Southampton Row, which was designed by Charles William Long for the Royal Liverpool Insurance Company.....Otherwise, the buildings surrounding the square, and leading into it from Southampton Place, are of a smaller-scale, terraced form. The range of architectural styles reflects the differing dates of construction. Nevertheless, there is general consistency in building heights: four storeys to the north and west sides, and three storeys to the south and along Southampton Place. The buildings are predominantly constructed from yellow brick with stucco decoration, although there are some fronts which are entirely stucco-faced. Window openings are vertically-proportioned, diminishing in size above large first-floor openings, with recessed sliding sashes subdivided with slender glazing bars. The majority of properties have iron boundary railings around basement areas (para 5.83).



3 Relevant planning history

1996

Listed Building Consent (L9602942) was granted on 24 October 1996 for 'Alterations to rainwater drainage facilities on main roof, as shown on drawing Nos, 3546/01A.'

1986

Listed Building Consent (8670378) was granted on 3 December 1986 for 'Erection of nameplate as shown on drawings 5409 and SK1.'

1979

Listed Building Consent (HB2323) was granted on 27 December 1979 for 'Display of a brass name plate at entrance level.'

1973

Listed Building Consent (HB674) was granted on 13 November 1973 for 'Construction of a suspended ceiling in the front basement room of 18 Bloomsbury Square, W.C.1 and the installation of a service duct in the basement corridor.'

4 Historic development of the site and area

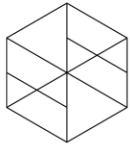
4.1 Bloomsbury Square forms part of the Bedford Estate, which began to be developed in the mid 17th century by the 4th Earl of Southampton. Bloomsbury Square was laid out by the Earl in 1665 as a piazza for his mansion, Bedford House, which sat on its northern edge. The estate was passed to the Russell family in 1669 through the marriage of the Earl's daughter to William, Lord Russell, later the 1st Duke of Bedford. In 1673, Montagu House was built directly to the west of Bedford House by the Duke's brother-in-law, Ralph Earl of Montagu.

4.2 Roque's map of 1746 (Figure 2) shows Bloomsbury Square and the two grand mansions of Bedford House and Montague House, set to the north of Great Russell Street and Bloomsbury Square. Beyond this, development gives way abruptly to open fields. The square was developed piecemeal during the late 17th century, however none of the original houses survive.

4.3 Horwood's map of 1799 (Figure 3) still shows open land to the NW of Bedford House and Montague House, the latter now marked as the British Museum, despite new streets of housing stretching all the way to the New Road (Euston Road) to the west of Tottenham Court Road and reaching as far north as Guildford Street to the east.

4.4 Bedford House was demolished in 1800 and two terraces of five houses each were constructed to form the north side of Bloomsbury Square. Bedford Place was also laid out, a wide axial route linking Bloomsbury Square with Russell Square to the north. Both sides of the street are lined with terraced housing, designed and built by James Burton in around 1815.

4.5 Greenwood's map of 1828 (Figure 4) shows the expanded British Museum to the west and the completion of the Bedford estate to the north. This was developed with swathes of good quality terraces and set piece compositions, in



the final decades of the 18th and early years of the 19th centuries.

4.6 The 1871 Ordnance Survey map shows the north side of Bloomsbury Square and Bedford Place with their uniform pattern of terraces, creating a highly cohesive repetition townscape in public views.

4.7 Bloomsbury Square was a prestigious address during the early 18th century, with its central gardens laid out by Humphrey Repton. By the time of Charles Booth's poverty map, produced in 1889 as part of his *Inquiry into Life and Labour in London (1886-1903)*, Bloomsbury Square was marked in red, denoting (Middle Class. Well to do' along with Bedford Place to the north. Only Russell Square and Bedford Square remained the preserve of the upper classes. There were areas of poverty in relatively close proximity to Bloomsbury Square, around Red Lion Square and to the south of Queens Square.

4.8 The context to the site altered little during the later years of the 19th century, however by the time of the 1912 Ordnance Survey map, changes can be seen. Most notable is the removal of Montague Mews to the north of the property. This is shown as a blank space on the 1912 map but would eventually become Montague Street Gardens, creating a new, verdant setting to the rear of the houses on the north side of Bloomsbury Square.

4.9 The most significant change to Bloomsbury Square came in 1926-32 when the houses along its eastern side were demolished and Victoria House was constructed as the headquarters for the Liverpool Victoria Insurance Company.

Development of the application site

4.10 The 1871 Ordnance Survey map shows the group of houses at nos.18-22 Bloomsbury Square. No.18 has a rear projecting closet wing set to the east along with the other houses in the group. These are not of a consistent width or

depth. The map also shows a lightwell to the rear and two flights of steps adjacent to it.

4.11 The 1912, 1952 and 1968 Ordnance Survey maps show a similar picture in terms of the layout of the site. The 1968 map shows the mature landscaped context to the rear of the house on Montague Square Gardens.



Figure 2: Roque's map of 1746.

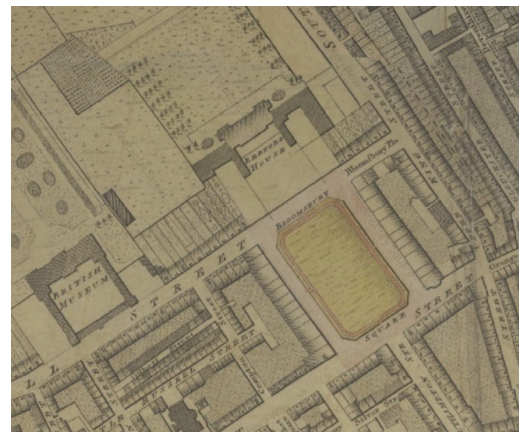
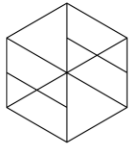


Figure 3: Horwood's map of 1799.

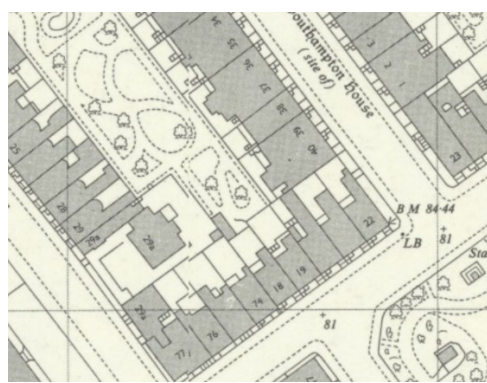
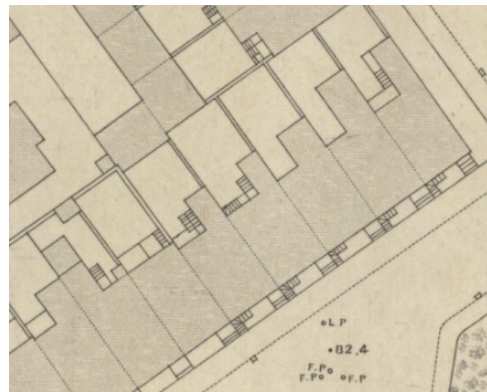


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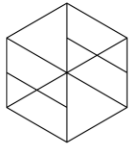
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Figures 4 & 5: Top left to right: Greenwood's map 1828 and the 1871 Ordnance Survey map.
Figures 6 & 7: Middle left to right: Booth's poverty map 1889 and a detail of the 1871 Ordnance Survey map.
Figures 8 & 9: Bottom left to right: The 1912 Ordnance Survey map and the 1968 Ordnance Survey map.



5 Significance of the site

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework Annex 2 defines significance as *“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”*

5.2 Historic England’s document *‘Conservation Principles – Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’* (2008) identifies a series of values that can be attributed to a heritage asset, and which help to appraise and define its significance. Paragraph 3.3 of the document outlines that:

“In order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:

- *who values the place, and why they do so*
- *how those values relate to its fabric*
- *their relative importance*
- *whether associated objects contribute to them*
- *the contribution made by the setting and context of the place*
- *how the place compares with others sharing similar values.”*

5.3 In assessing the significance of no.18 Bloomsbury Square it is therefore necessary to examine its origins, history, form, architectural design, layout, materials and relationship with surrounding buildings. In making this assessment, consideration has been given to its intrinsic architectural merit, completeness, the extent of any alterations and their impact, the contribution of the buildings to the character of the area and the degree to which the buildings illustrate aspects of local or national history.

5.4 The application site forms part of a terrace of five houses on the north side of Bloomsbury Square. The building is of four storeys, above a semi-basement. It is setback

from the pavement behind an open lightwell, bounded by cast iron railings.

5.5 The front façade is three window bays wide, lighting the front room at each floor level, with the entrance bay to the east. Here the timber 6 panelled door is set within a wide arched brickwork opening with a plain arched fanlight. The upper part of the façade is a well-ordered composition of aligned window bays, with fenestration which diminishes in height as it rises over the façade, creating a traditional sense of hierarchy and proportion.

5.6 The windows on the front façade are painted timber sashes in a variety of configurations, set within plain openings with flat, gauged brick arches. There is a shallow projecting balcony beneath the 1st floor windows, with a painted metal railing in a simple geometric pattern. A flat stucco cill band runs beneath the 3rd floor windows.

5.7 The roof of the house is concealed behind the front parapet, which has a simple capping stone. This has an ‘M’ profile, with the ridges running parallel to one another between the party walls.

5.8 The building shares common characteristics with the other houses within the small group at nos.18-26, including their height, scale, building line and consistent parapet level, as well as the repetition of features such as arched surrounds to the main entrances. The darkened yellow stock brickwork to their front facades provides a strong cohesive character to the group, albeit that there are slight differences in the shade of the brickwork which helps to define the individual houses.

5.9 Overall the front façade of the building is of high significance and makes a strong positive contribution to the character and appearance of this part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

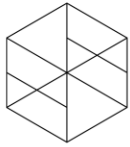


Figure 10: The front façade of no. 18 Bloomsbury Square.

5.10 The rear façade of the building is also faced in darkened yellow stock brickwork. There is a bay of aligned windows which light the rear room at each floor level, with each one set beneath a curved brickwork head. These are of cruder execution than the high-status gauged brick arches to the front façade. The windows are later added painted timber sashes, with a variety of different glazing patterns. There is a lightwell around the basement window and a set of original steps rising from the lightwell to the garden level and up to the rear door into the house.

5.11 To the eastern bay is a projecting closet wing which occupies just under half of the rear façade. The brickwork to the upper floor of the closet wing is of a lighter shade and indicated either an additional storey, or the rebuilding of this part of the structure. Above the closet wing there is a shallow projection in the same position at 2nd and 3rd floor levels, housing WC facilities accessed off the main staircase. The closet wing

has painted timber sash windows in its rear and flank facades.

5.12 Overall, the rear façade is of modest significance. It formed an element of lower status within the overall hierarchy of the listed building and is plainer and less embellished. It does however have some architectural value, due to its coherent darkened yellow stock brickwork finish and the proportions of its fenestration.

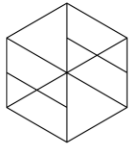


Figure 11: The rear façade of no. 18 Bloomsbury Square.

5.13 Views into the rear garden of the house from neighbouring properties and from the private Montague Street Gardens is limited due to the presence of high walls and mature vegetation. There are no public realm views of the rear of the house.

Interior

5.14 The layout of no. 18 Bloomsbury Square conforms to the typical London terraced house typology, where a two room deep plan form is arranged off a stair compartment situated



adjacent to the party wall. Consistent with the hierarchy of status within houses of this period, the principal spaces are situated at ground and 1st floor levels with areas of secondary importance for servants and children's bedrooms within the basement and to the top floors. The main staircase rises up to 2nd floor level where there is a secondary staircase linking the 2nd and 3rd floors. These upper floors have a slightly different layout to the principal floors, with an additional small room to the front, lit by one of the three windows, and at 3rd floor level a small rear room which sits above the footprint of the main staircase below.

5.15 The original plan form of the house is intact at lower ground floor level, where there is access beneath the front landing and via the lightwell into the under-pavement vaults. There are two storage rooms in the centre of the plan, between the front and rear rooms. The original plan of the house also survives at ground floor level where the front room has attractive curved walls.



Figure 12: A view into the subdivided front room from the 1st floor landing showing the modern suspended ceiling to the lobby area.

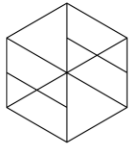
5.16 At 1st floor level the original front room, which spans the width of the house, has had partitions added, creating a lobby and smaller room accessed off the main staircase. A suspended ceiling has been installed into the lobby space which undermines the otherwise impressive floor to ceiling height of the 1st floor rooms. Furthermore, the position of the partitions blocks original views from the stair compartment through to the front windows and reduced light levels. Together, the partitions significantly detract from the original character, plan form and spatial quality of the building, severing the visual and architectural relationship between the original front room and the three windows in the front façade, as well as the chimneybreast on the party wall.

5.17 At 2nd floor level partitions have been added into the larger front room, creating two small spaces and a lobby. This too has had a seriously detrimental impact upon the plan form at this floor level, resulting in a maze of rooms and a lack of legibility.

5.18 The closet wing provides accommodation at lower ground, ground and 1st floor levels. To the lower ground and ground floor there are small WC spaces and an adjacent room. This is fitted out as a kitchenette to the ground floor.

5.19 The main staircase is an attractive feature within the building which rises from ground to 2nd floor level. This has an open string, plain square balusters and turned newel posts, with a moulded hardwood handrail. The secondary staircase has a closed string and plain balusters, with panelled detailing beneath it to the 2nd floor landing. There are simple stone steps from ground to basement level, with wrought iron balusters and handrail.

5.20 The interior of the building retains a wealth of decorative features. These include historic joinery such as architraves, skirtings, doors and window shutters, as well as marble fireplaces with typical early 19th century roundel



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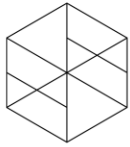
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Figures 13 & 14: Internal views of the front and rear rooms at ground floor level showing cornicing, decorative plasterwork, window shutters and roundel detailed fireplaces.



Figures 15 & 16: The narrow space formed by modern partitions to the front space at 2nd floor level and the very obvious suspended ceiling to the lobby formed within the front 1st floor room.



detailing, and plaster detailing including corning and ceiling roses.

Values and significance

5.21 As referenced at paragraph 3.16 above, Historic England's 'Conservation Principles' identifies four values that can be attributed to a heritage asset. These have been examined in turn below.

Evidential Value

This value is derived from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity (para 35) and is generally closely associated with archaeological sites and remains, with age being a strong indicator of evidential value.

The building dates from the early 19th century and was built to a fairly standard plan and layout and thus provides little unique insight into human activity in an archaeological sense. It does provide us with some insight into the lives of the upper classes during the early 19th century and reflects social hierarchies of the period, with service and ancillary accommodation servants in the lower ground floor and bedrooms for children and servants over the uppermost floors.

Historical value

Paragraph 39 of the Conservation Principles document outlines that *"Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place*

to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative."

The building forms part of the historic local scene in this part of Bloomsbury and has been a feature of the townscape for around 220 years. The building has historical value in terms of illustrating the development of London beyond the City confines and as an integral part in the development of one of the great aristocratic land holdings, the Bedford Estate. The building retains significant elements of its original setting onto Bloomsbury Square, including the landscaped garden at its centre.

The building has no obvious documented associations with any local or national figures of note, nor any clear or demonstrable relationship to notable historic events.

Aesthetic value

Aesthetic value is defined as *"...the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place."*

The building is a good quality, early 19th century house. Its front façade is of high significance and has townscape and group value, due to its shared height, building line, cohesive darkened yellow stock brick finish and the repetition of simple detailing, such as the arched entrances and 1st floor balconies.

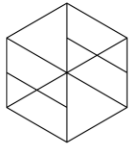
Internally it retains significant elements of its original plan form, particularly at ground and lower ground floor levels. Modern partitions have been added into key spaces, including the front rooms at 1st and 2nd floor level which significantly detract from the plan form and spatial quality of the building.

The house retains a wealth of original and historic features, including joinery, fireplaces and plasterwork.

Communal value

This value is derived from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience of memory. In this case, any communal value would be 'social', defined at paragraph 56 as *".....places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence."*

The building has communal value in so far as it has been part of the local scene for around 220 years and has thus featured in the day to day lives of those who live, work and pass through the area. However, there is little to distinguish this building from many other similar buildings of the same age and character and it is its contribution to group value that is most important. This communal value however is local



in its focus and the building does not have any particular regional or national symbolism or value.

Conclusion

5.36 In this case the key significance of the building relates to its historic and architectural contribution to the development of this part of Bloomsbury and reflects to a small degree the early phases of the development of the Bedford Estate and the gradual expansion of London beyond the confines of the City.

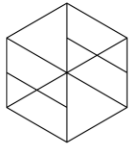
5.37 The building has a high degree of architectural value to its front façade, reflecting the prevailing style, materials and detailing of the period, and making a demonstrable aesthetic contribution to the coherent and harmonious character of Bloomsbury Square and this part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

5.38 The rear elevation of the building is of less significance than the front façade, due in part to the original lesser status accorded to the rear façade, and the difficulty in achieving any private or public realm views of it.

5.39 The building retains much of its original plan form and spatial quality, although this has been overlaid with modern partitions which detract from its special interest.



Figure 15: The attractive main staircase.



6 Assessment of the proposals

6.1 This section will set out the proposed works to the building and will consider their impact. It will assess this impact in terms of the host building, its special architectural and historic interest and the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The proposed works will also be considered in relation to the relevant local and national historic environment policies.

Internal alterations

6.2 It is proposed to remove the later added partitions from the front room at 1st floor level. These unsympathetically subdivide the space, blocking views through to the front windows from the stair compartment and detracting from the original spatial quality of the front room. The partitions are modern, and their removal will not result in the loss of historic fabric. The original character and plan form of the room will be reinstated, thus enhancing the special interest of the listed building.

6.3 At 2nd floor level the larger front room has been subdivided with partitions, creating a series of a lobby and two smaller spaces. The removal of these partitions will reinstate the original spatial quality of the room, lit by two windows within the front façade and focused upon the chimneybreast. This will enhance the special interest of the listed building.

6.4 At ground floor level it is proposed to remove the modern bathroom fittings and modern kitchen fittings from the closet wing. These are of no intrinsic interest or value. The existing WC area will be slightly enlarged. This will have a very minor impact upon the plan form of the house, within a secondary space at the rear.

Air Conditioning

6.5 It is proposed to install an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) system into the building. This will provide both heating and cooling and is

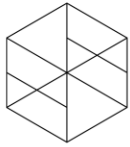
considerably more efficient than the existing gas boiler system. Modern radiators will be removed from their current positions beneath windows at all floor levels.

6.6 Six condenser units will be installed into the rear garden of the property. These will be fixed to the party wall with no.74-77 Great Russell Street in a stacked formation. The position of the condensers will rise no higher than the existing brick wall.

6.7 The condensers will be located discreetly at the rear of the site. They will be set away from the main rear façade of the listed building, avoiding harm to its setting. Given the secluded character of the rear garden and the effect that mature vegetation has upon limiting views into the site from neighbouring properties and Montague Street Gardens, the proposals will cause no harm to the wider character of the terrace or conservation area.

6.8 Individual VRV Units will be installed into each room within the building. In some cases, these will be positioned beneath windows in the same location as the existing radiators. In others they will be located in the alcoves adjacent to the chimneybreast or affixed against plain sections of painted wall. The units will be modestly scaled (1000mm x 600mm x 222mm). They will be concealed within bespoke timber housings. These will be plain at basement, 2nd and 3rd floor levels, and with a moulded skirting and dado to match features within the rooms at principal floor level. The plinth to the housing will be scribed around any existing skirtings to avoid harm to historic fabric.

6.9 Pipework from the external condensers will follow the route of pipework removed from the existing heating system, or will utilise voids within the ceiling. They will rise via an existing riser against the party wall within the rear room.



Assessment of the proposals against the relevant policy framework

Statutory duties – The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

6.10 The main issues for consideration in relation to this application are the effect of the proposals on no.18 Bloomsbury Square as a listed building and the impact of external changes to the building on the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

6.11 This appraisal has shown that the proposals will have no harmful impact upon the defined significance of the listed building. Indeed, it will be demonstrably enhanced by the removal of later added partitions to the front rooms at 1st and 2nd floor level which have had a harmful impact upon its character, plan form and spatial quality.

6.12 The proposed VRV units will be concealed within sympathetically detailed, bespoke cabinetry which will minimise their visual impact upon the internal character of the listed building. Pipework will utilise an existing riser within the building as well as ceiling voids for vertical and horizontal distribution.

6.13 External works to the listed building are limited to the installation of the five condenser units within the private rear garden. These are located discreetly and will be well concealed within the space, with no public realm views possible and only very limited views in from the surrounding area.

6.14 Taken as a whole, the proposals will preserve the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area in line with s.16 and s.72 of the Act.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

6.15 The NPPF requires the significance of heritage assets to be described and for planning applications to take account of the desirability of

sustaining and enhancing this significance. New development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Great weight should be given to the conservation of the heritage asset when considering the impact of a proposed development. The more important the asset the greater the weight should be.

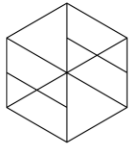
6.16 This Heritage Appraisal has provided a thorough analysis of the significance of the listed building and the relative contribution of the various parts to its special architectural and historic interest. The proposals will conserve and indeed enhance the significance of the listed building and will avoid harm to the surrounding conservation area. Interventions have been carefully considered so that the character of the listed building will be preserved. Consequently, the proposals are considered to comply with the requirements of the NPPF.

The London Plan 2021

6.17 The proposals are considered to comply with the adopted London Plan (2021). The thrust of **Policy HC1 - Heritage conservation and growth** is that heritage assets should be conserved and that enhancement opportunities should be identified early on in the process. Here there will be demonstrable improvements to the layout of key spaces within the building, removing later partitions which carve up the front rooms at 1st and 2nd floor level. Overall, the affected heritage assets (the listed building and the surrounding Bloomsbury Conservation Area) will be conserved.

The London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017

6.18 The proposals will comply with Policies D1 – Design and D2 – Heritage. The proposed internal works are modest and the works to remove incongruous later added partitions will demonstrably enhance the special interest of the listed building, reinstating key elements of its character, plan form and spatial quality.



6.19 The installation of an ASHP will provide cooling and heating to the building in an energy efficient manner. The condensers will be located to the rear of the building in an area which will not harm the setting of the listed building or the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Pipework will be routed sensitively through existing voids and via a carefully positioned riser. The individual VRV units will replace existing radiators to each room and will be concealed within bespoke joinery which will maintain the period character of the affected spaces.

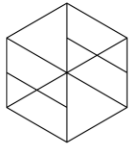
7 Conclusion

7.1 This Heritage Appraisal has been produced to support applications for planning permission and Listed Building Consent at no.18 Bloomsbury Square. The proposals are for the introduction of an ASHP system alongside the removal of later added partitions and minor changes to the layout of the rear closet wing at ground floor level.

7.2 The proposals will have no effect upon the high significance front façade of the listed building. The proposed condenser units will be positioned within the private rear garden of the house and set away from the original rear façade of the building. The effect of trees in screening views of the condensers from both Montague Street Gardens and from surrounding buildings will ensure that they have no harmful impact upon the setting of the listed building or the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

7.3 Internally the proposed removal of the modern partitions to the front rooms at 1st and 2nd floor level will reinstate the appearance, plan form and spatial quality of the listed building. This will enhance its special architectural and historic interest and will be particularly beneficial at 1st floor level which is one of the principal rooms within the house.

7.4 The proposed works will comply with the s.16 and s.72 duties within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. They are also in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, the London Plan 2021 and the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.



Appendix A – Relevant historic environment policy

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

A1 Section 16 requires that:

"In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."

A2 Section 72 requires that:

"...special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

The National Planning Policy Framework 2024

A3 The revised National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. There is a general presumption in favour of sustainable development within national planning policy guidance.

Paragraph 207

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

Paragraph 208

Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of

a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Paragraph 210

In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

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

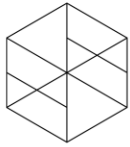
Paragraph 212

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The London Plan

A4 The London Plan 2021 is the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London. It sets out a framework for how London will develop over the next 20-25 years and the Mayor's vision for Good Growth. Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth part C is relevant.

C Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. 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.

Local Planning Policy

The London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017

A5 Camden's Local Plan was adopted on 3 July 2017. The relevant policy sections have been cited below.

Policy D1 – Design

The Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development:

- a. respects local context and character;*
- b. preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with "Policy D2 Heritage";*
- e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;*

Policy D2 – Heritage

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

Designated heritage assets

The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

Conservation areas

Conservation areas are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies when assessing applications within

conservation areas. The Council will:

- e. require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;*

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- j. resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building;*

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement

A6 The Conservation Area Statement has a small number of relevant paragraphs relating to new development within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Para 5.28

Development proposals must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. This requirement applies equally to developments which are outside the Conservation Area but would affect its setting or views into or out of the area.

Para 5.29

High quality design and high quality execution will be required of all new development at all scales. It will be important that applications contain sufficient information to enable the Council assess the proposals.