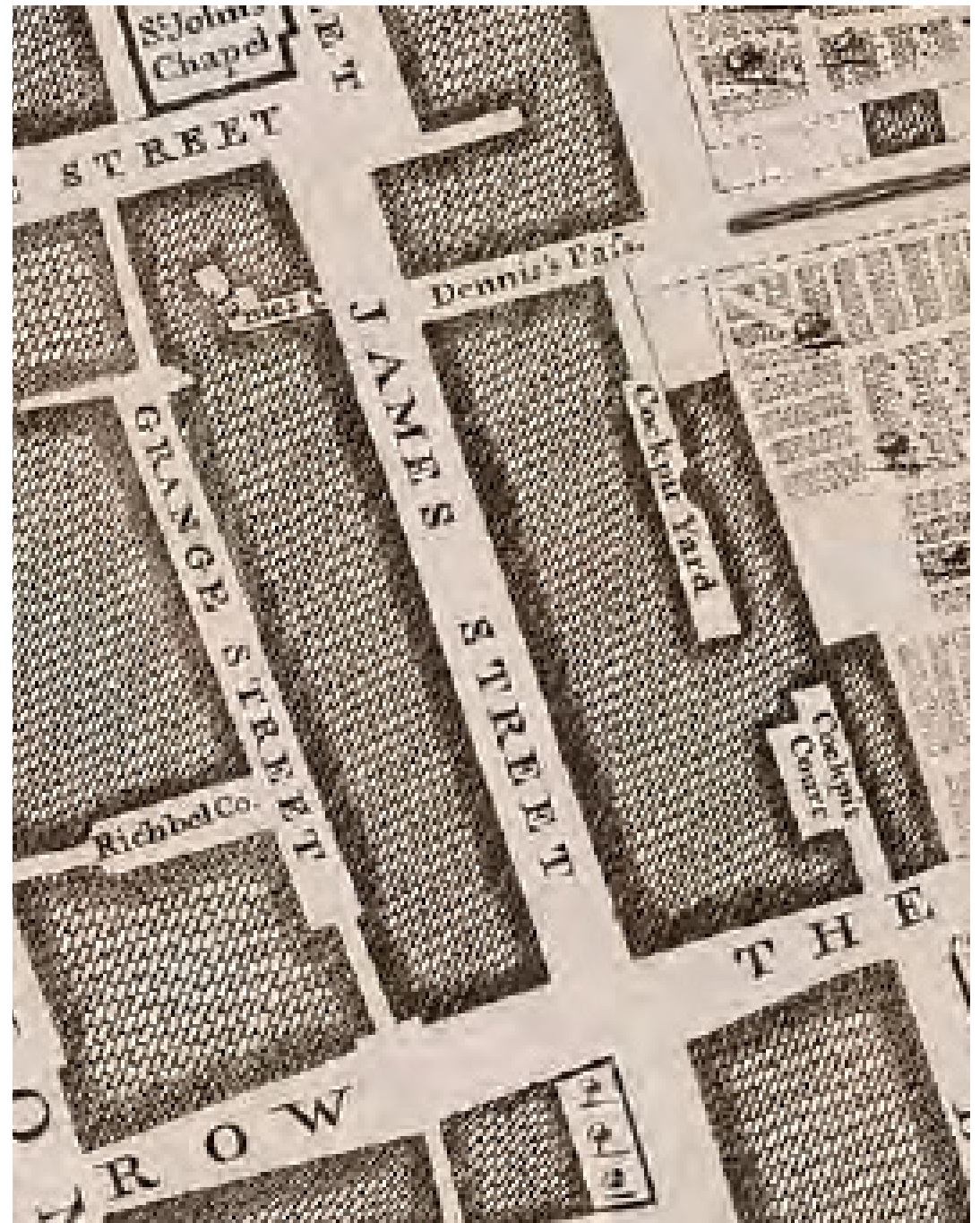


**Design and Access Statement**  
**22 Great James Street**  
**London, WC1N 3ES**

**Section 1 :**  
**Historical Context**



## 1.1 Introduction

22 Great James Street is an early eighteenth-century house on the west side of Great James Street and within the London Borough of Camden. The property is Grade II listed and lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Note : ● Indicates the location of the property in question No. 22 Great James Street throughout the document on maps and pictures for ease of understanding.



Fig 1. Morgan's Map of 1681-2 showing little development north of the King's Way (now Theobald's Road) and west of Gray's Inn Lane. (Source: London Metropolitan Archives).

## 1.2 Eighteenth Century

In the late 17th century the area north of Holborn and west of Gray's Inn Lane (later Gray's Inn Road) was predominately open space with very few buildings as shown on Morgan's map of 1681/2 (fig. 1). On 1st June 1716, Dame Margaret Skipwith (formerly Margaret Brownlow), who had inherited land from her late husband William Brownlow, let the Gravel Pit Field to the north of Theobald's Road to John Metcalfe, a lawyer who seems to have been the previous occupier on a shorter lease. It was Metcalfe who acted as developer and laid out Great James Street.



Fig 2. Rocque's map of 1746 shows the area much built up (Source: London Metropolitan Archives).

Fourteen terraced houses, including No. 22, were built between April 1720 and September 1724. A stone cartouche with the name Great James Street and the date 1721 is located on No. 16.

All of the first leases were taken by building tradesmen; among the lessees were carpenters, joiners, bricklayers and slaters.

The residents log for Great James Street lists No. 22 as being located on 'Lower End Great James Street' or 'West Side Great James Street' intermittently throughout



Fig 3. Horwood's map of 1799 - James Street has become Great James Street and the street numbers are shown (Source: London Metropolitan Archives).

and records its residents over the eighteenth century.

John Fletcher lived there from 1750 until 1778, spending the last 2 years cohabiting with John Bennet. Samuel Powell then took up residence for 4 years, replaced by Henry Parkins who stayed until 1793. Another person with the surname Parkins lived there until the turn of the century.

During the latter part of the 18th century the area was fully-built-up and many of the present street names emerged. Rocque's map of 1746 shows the results of this later development (fig. 2). Despite the cartouche (fig.2) on No 16, Great James Street was first known as James Street and is shown between The King's Way/ Theobald's Road and Dennis' Passage. South of Theobald's Row James Street is known as Bedford Row. The 1794-99 Horwood map (Fig.4) illustrates individual houses along with their house numbers, including No.22. James Street has become Great James Street (Fig. 3).

From the time of building until the end of the century, the houses were in residential occupation.

### 1.3 Nineteenth Century

Residential use of the houses in Great James Street continued in the first part of the nineteenth century.

After 1870 there was a gradual shift to commercial use. A contemporary report on land nearby noted that there had been "an increased demand for building land in this neighbourhood for warehouse and manufacturing premises." Across the whole of this area there was a gradual but steady increase in the number of commercial uses, mostly small-scale, which changed its wholly residential character. Some of the new uses were accommodated in new buildings but existing buildings were also adapted to serve both trades whose activities could be housed in a small units. Great James Street seems to have been a popular address for Architects, Surveyors, and other



Fig 4. A detail view of 16 Great James Street, Holborn, where at second-floor level above the entrance, a stone cartouche inscribed 'Great James Street 1721 can be seen.



Fig 5. Detail from the 1873 First Edition 1:2500 ordnance survey map (Source: London Metropolitan Archives).

associated building trade, as well as the Solicitors for whom it was advantageous to be near the Inns of Court.

Mary and William Smith appear as witnesses to the robbery of a painting in 1833 and list their address as 22 Great James Street. A hairdresser by the name of Bryant George is listed as the occupant in the post office directory of 1880.

The 1873 first edition and the 1873 five-foot Ordnance Survey maps (Fig 5.) show the outlines of all the buildings along the road. No.22 appears still in its original form and is yet to be extended to the rear. It does not seem to have changed between the two surveys.



Fig 6. Detail from the 1937 Ordnance survey map (Source: London Metropolitan Archives).

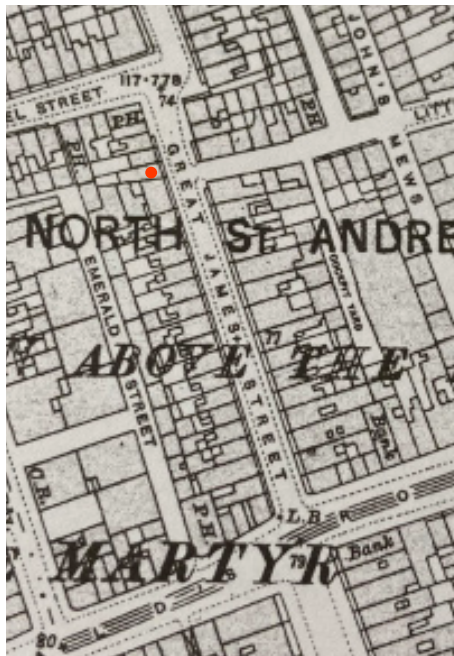


Fig 7. Detail from the 1914 Ordnance survey map (Source: London Metropolitan Archives).



Fig 8. Photograph showing the front door of 22 Great James street from 1960 (Source: London Picture Archive).



Fig 9. Photograph from 1946 depicting the end of Great James Street. This section of the road has since been pedestrianized. From the left we see the end of the Rugby Tavern, No. 20, 21 and then 22 (Source: London Picture Archive).

## 1.4 Twentieth Century

The London Metropolitan Archive is in possession of an original leasehold of the ground floor flat from 1921, the lessor was Walter George Bridgeman, the lessees were The Amateur Boxing Association and the contract was guaranteed by John Herbert Douglas and Thomas George Walker. The two rooms and a lavatory were leased for 14 years for an annual fee of £90 and the lessees was obligated to never require access to the property on Sundays.

The 1937 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig 6.) shows the foot print of the building had still not changed although significantly more of its neighbours have had closet storeys added to the rear.

Fig 8. from 1960 shows the property's doorway as well as the railings which it is listed. The sign to the right of the door reads 'Elek Books' which is assumed to be related to the British publisher Paul Elek.

According to a 1973 book entitled Guide to Literary London, Sinologist Arthur Waley lived at No.22 during the 60s.

Fig 10. Photograph entitled: No.20, 21 & 22 Great James Street (Camden Local History Archives).



Fig 11. Detail from the 1945 Bomb damage map (Source: London Metropolitan Archives).



## 1.5 Bomb Damage

A picture published - but not necessarily taken in - 1965 entitled 'No. 20, 21 and 22 Great James Street' appears to show the complete demolition by bombing of the properties. Behind the site one can indeed decipher the industrial-style building which flanks the western end of No.22's walled garden. However, on closer inspection of the features of the behind building, the site seems to be further south along the road. Given No.22 is Grade II listed it is hard to believe it was ever entirely rebuilt.

The bomb damage map from post-WW2 does not indicate that the property, nor any of its immediate neighbours, suffered any damage from bombing during the war, however the previously mentioned photo does appear to be looking at the site of 23-26, the site next to 22, depicting a completely flattened terrace.

No.s 23-26 are known to have been rebuilt in the 60s, and the Camden Local History Archives do make note of a house on the street that was destroyed by a fire

caused by an electrical fault, although it strangely does not note which number house this was. Given this evidence we will infer that the photo is infact titled incorrectly and depicts the neighboring property No.23-26 after the fire and that No.22 did not suffer any bomb damage. Though if it was infact No.22's neighbour, then one could assume there had been some update or redevelopment to the party wall between the two houses.



Fig 12. Great James Street at present (Source: Digimap).

## 1.6 Great James Street at Present

It is described in Nikolaus Pevsner’s guide as “a gem” and its mostly terraced houses as “unusually uniform for their date”. It is known as historically significant for its literary connections having been home to multiple notable novelists, poets and publishers over the years.

The northern end of the street onto which No.22 faces has been pedestrianised at some point during the latter half of the 20th century, but it has likely been repaved since 2002, as shown by comparison to Fig.13, in a bid to reduce cut-through traffic and improve cycle lanes in the Borough of Camden. To similar effect, the road is one-way northbound from Theobalds Road.

In 2010 there was a bid to introduce a full two-way cycling route on the road but this failed at consultation. The paved area has been planted with large deciduous trees.

Another step towards improving Camden’s capacity for cycling was a 2020 order of which the general nature and effect was to revoke the designation of parking places, or sections of parking places, in order to install bicycle hangars at multiple locations along the road. This was ordered under Sections 45, 46, 49 and 124 and Part IV of Schedule 9 to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.



Fig 13. The northern end of Great James Street taken in 2002 looking south.



Fig 14. The northern end of Great James Street looking north which has been pedestrianised. To the left is No.22

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**Section 2 : Development History**



Fig 15. Photograph from 1946 depicting the end of Great James Street; this section of the road has since been pedestrianised. From the left we see the Rugby Tavern, No. 20, 21 and then 22 (Source: London Picture Archives).



Fig 16 & Fig 17. Photos (1960 and present day) of the front door to No.22 which appears to be original.



Fig 18. The front façade of No.22 in 2020 showing minor cosmetic refurbishment to the brickwork.

## 2.1 Front Façade

There is no specific evidence to confirm that the windows are not original from the 18th century, however, given the likelihood of all the windows on the street being the same at their inception, and some original sash windows still remaining on the street, we can assume that the current windows are more modern replacements.

An archive photo from 1946 (Fig. 15) looks southwards down the street and shows the Corner Pub and its adjoining terraces including No.21 and 22. From this we can see that the windows of the front facade are as per their current configuration, one-over-one pane sash windows.

There is evidence of some rebuilding of the front façade as seen in Fig 18.

The door frame, although repainted and altered slightly to the left hand side to account for the rebuilding of its neighbor No.23 in the 60s, seems to be original.



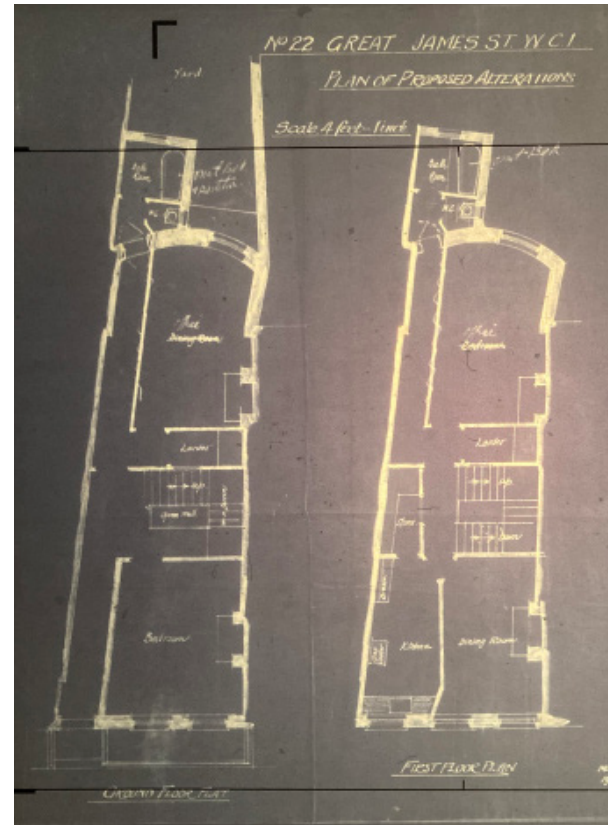
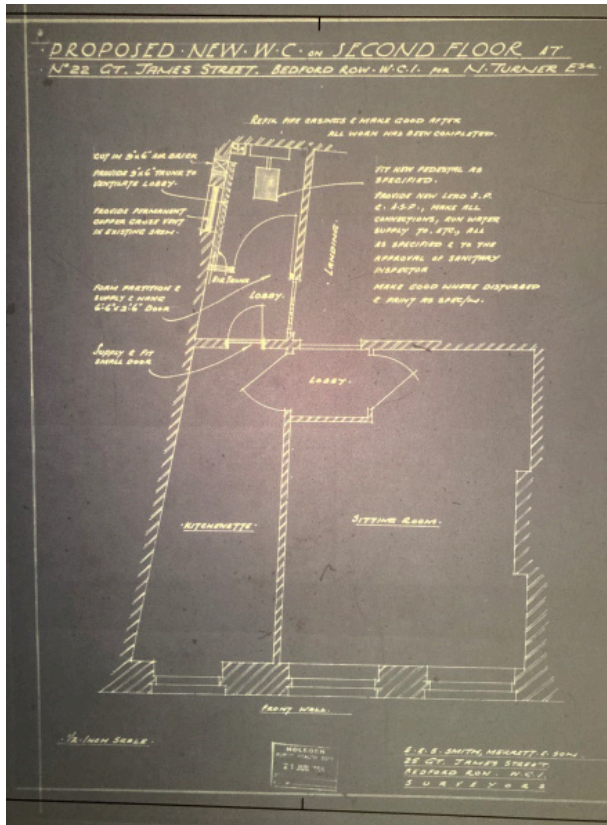
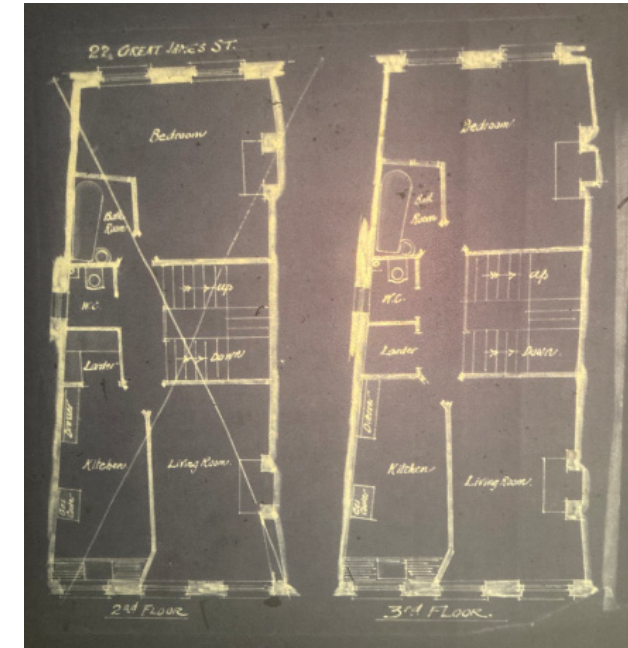


Fig 19, 20 & 21. Photos of negatives of 1959 plans for proposed reconfiguration of the property into separate flats.



## 2.2 Internal Alterations Proposal

These 1959 plans show how a previous planning application had intended to add a new W.C. to the second floor, as well as add some other room divisions and toilets to other floors. The building was being reconfigured for use as multiple flats but, although the current layout is similar, these plans were either not followed through with or have been superseded by the work completed in the 1980s on the following page.

The main differences between these plans and the modern layout is the inclusion of subdividing internal walls to form corridors and in particular the lower ground floor's entire layout.

They do however confirm the presence of the rear extension or 'closet storey' by the 60s. As well as demonstrating the continual update of the interior layout as the building changes occupancy and use over the decades.



Fig 22. Detail from The Goad Fire insurance map of 1901 (Source: Camden Local History Library and Archive).

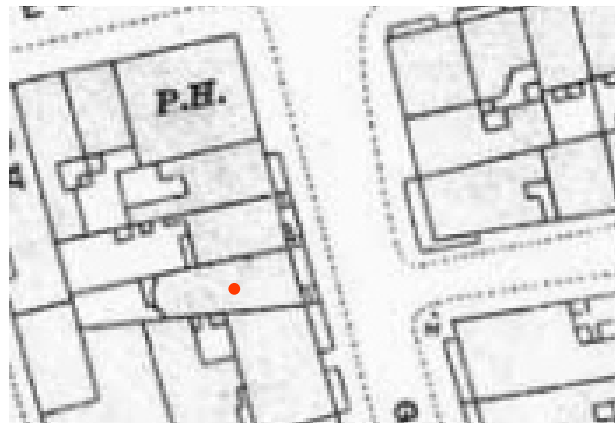


Fig 23. Detail from the 1937 Ordnance survey map (Source: London Metropolitan Archives).

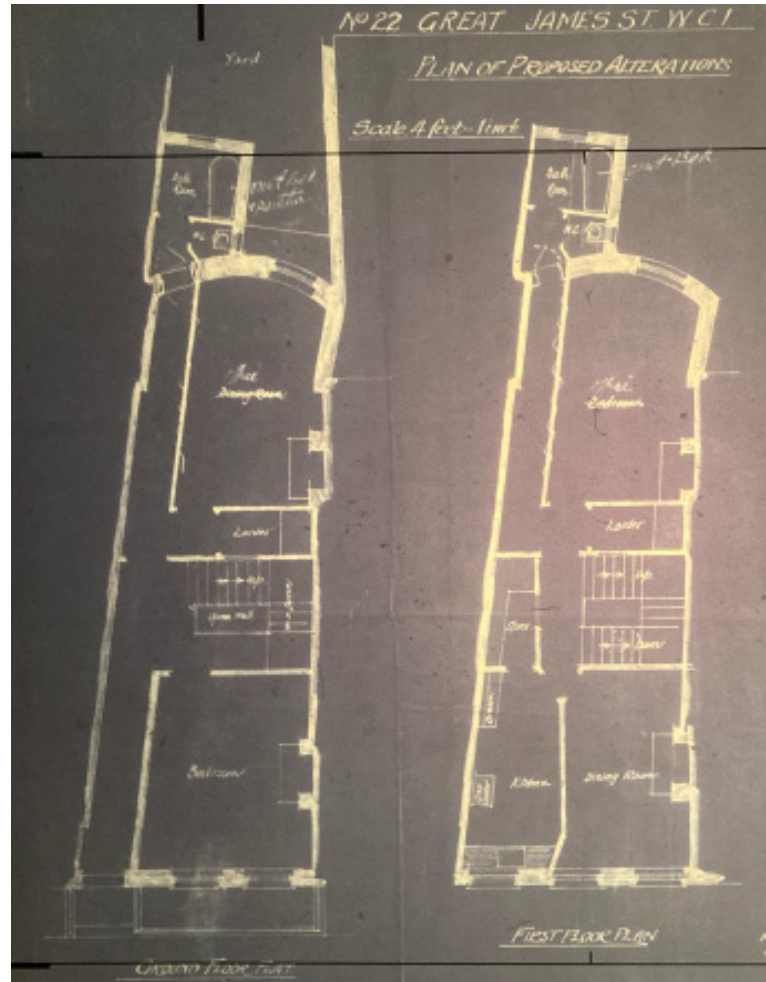


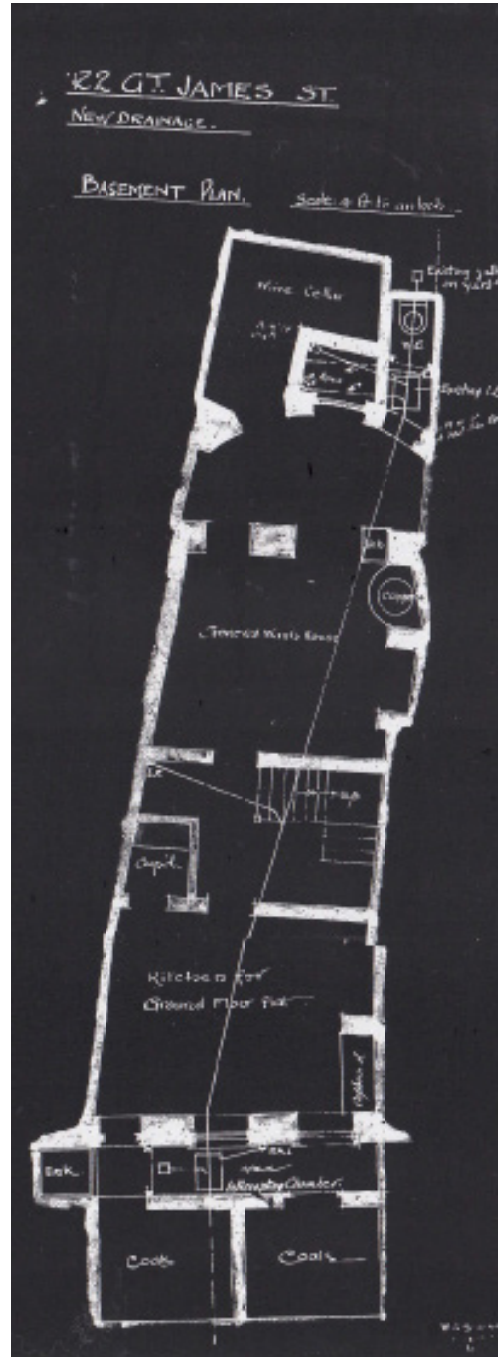
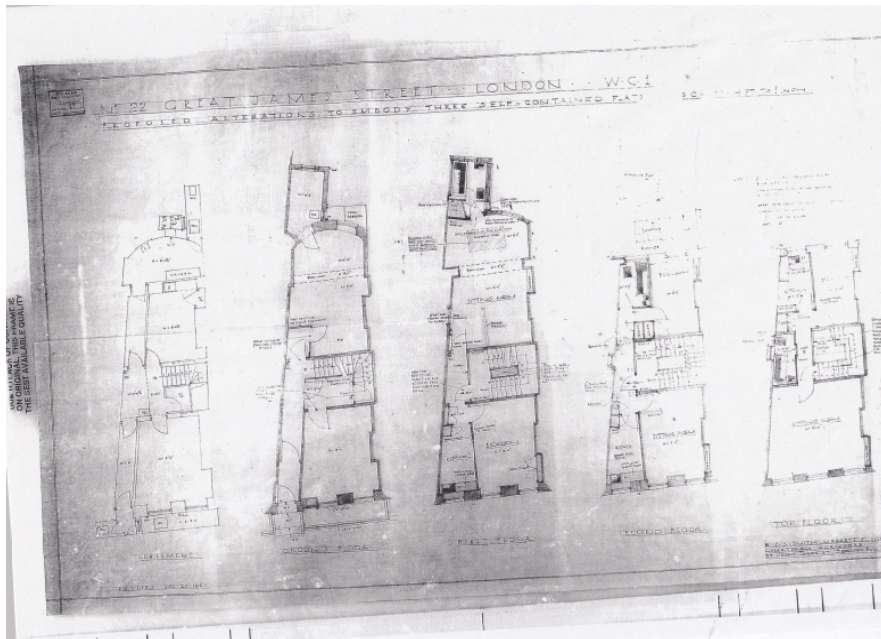
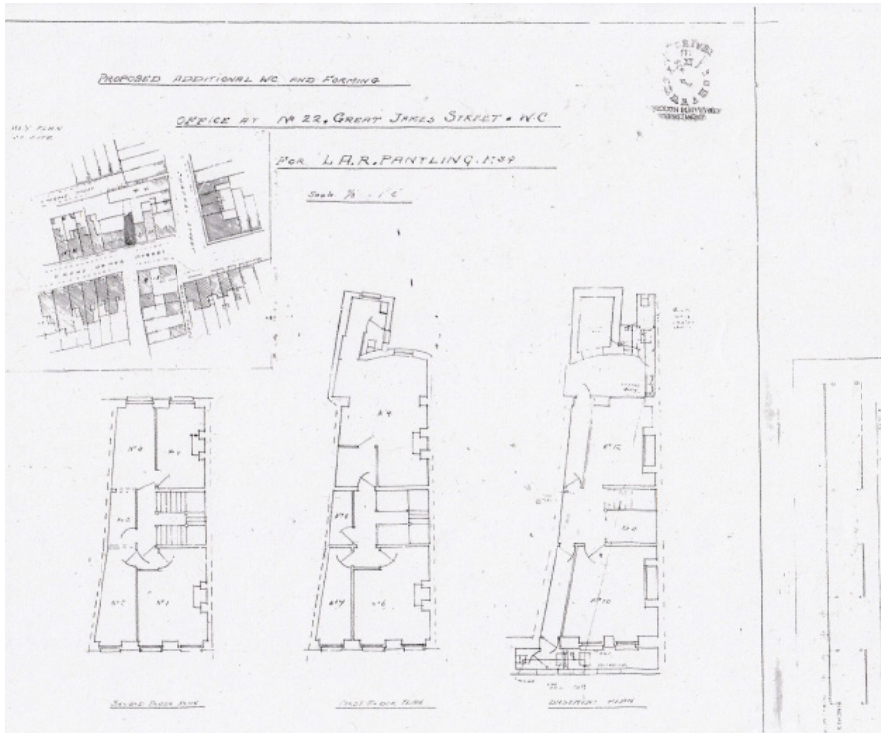
Fig 24. 1959 Plan of No.22 showing the closet storey has been constructed (Source: Camden Local History Archives).

## 2.3 Rear Façade and Closet Storey

The Goad fire insurance map of 1901 shows the property has not yet been extended at the back. In this turn of the century map, the rear outline remains one clean sweeping façade without the closet storey currently located along the south boundary of the property. However it notably does not make indication of the lightwell which most likely did exist at the time.

This is though noted in the 1937 Ordnance survey, which suggests a higher level of detail to this map and therefore one would expect the inclusion of a rear extension, had it been built by this time.

In Figure 24 we can see that the closet storey had been installed by 1959 when further building works were proposed.



## 2.4 1962 Extension and Alterations

These plans begin to look more like the current set of plans for No.22 Great James Street.

The most notable addition here was a basement level toilet and basement extension as seen in Fig. 27. These differences also appear in the next set of planning application drawings as existing features.

Fig 25, 26 & 27. Scans of negatives of 1962 plans for proposed reconfiguration and extension of the property.

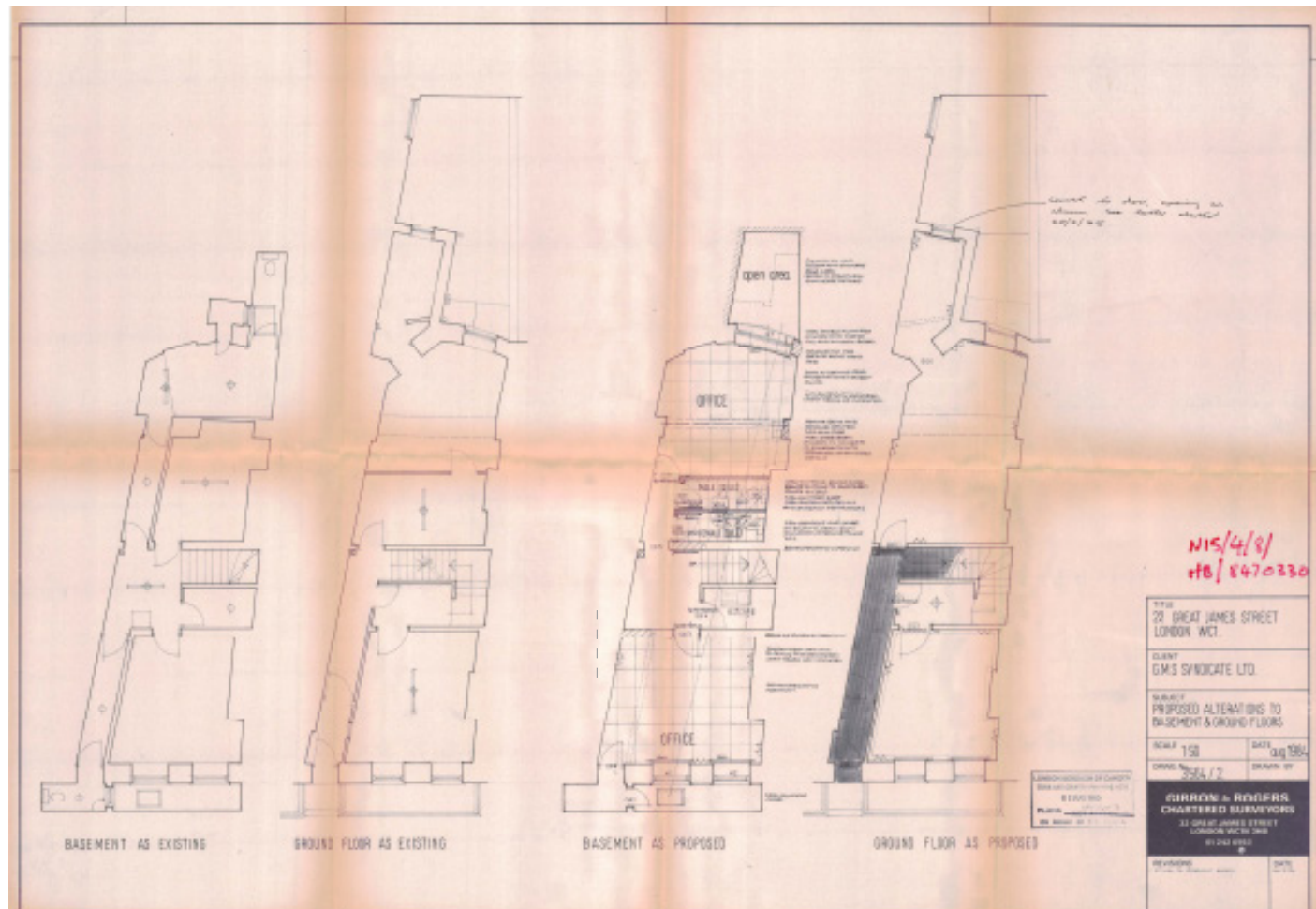


Fig 28. Plans submitted in 1984 showing the existing and proposed plans for the ground and basement floors of No.22.

## 2.5 1984 Ground and Basement Floors

The only planning permission found in the Camden Council planning records is from 1984.

Figure 28 depicts the proposed reconfiguration of the ground and basement levels. We can see by this point there has been the addition of a closet storey at ground level which we can presume extended to the first floor as it does currently, but does not extend into the basement. The proposal adds two bathrooms to the basement and removes multiple partition walls on both floors. In addition, there is a lavatory removed from the rear, which changes the building's footprint and requires the addition of a new window to the rear facade. This has been done in a way which is sympathetic to the historical aesthetic of the building.

The works were submitted to the council by Gibbon & Rodgers of 32 Great James Street on behalf of GMS-Syndicate LTD. The plans were approved on the 9th of May 1985.

Other than some internal refitting we are led to believe, by the lack of any other planning permissions past this date and the similarity of these plans to the current existing plans, that no further work has been carried out to the property since, with the exception of some minor superficial repairs and presumably some cosmetic repairs and/or interior decoration.

## 2.6 Roof

The existing roof is a butterfly roof with a central lantern and access hatch.

The client has commissioned the specialist heritage surveyors Six Heritage to compile a Heritage and Condition Investigation about the existing condition and historical context of the existing butterfly roof.

The different layout of the roof compared to the other examples found on the other properties on the street as well as the findings on the materials used and the addition of the central lantern and access hatch at a later date, suggest that the roof has been probably modified from its original state.

Another clue is its inconsistency with its neighbouring property No. 21 whose roof is significantly different despite the clearly maintained consistency between the two front facades.

The previously submitted planning application for No.20 and 21 in 1983 (Fig. 30) shows the roof of No.22 as it currently is. Given the roof must have been replaced prior to this application, the lack of planning applications specific to No.22 and the unavailability of aerial views of the property in the early to mid-twentieth century, we can only assume the roof was updated during this time.

Please refer to the Heritage Condition and Investigation Survey by Six Heritage for additional historic and condition analysis.

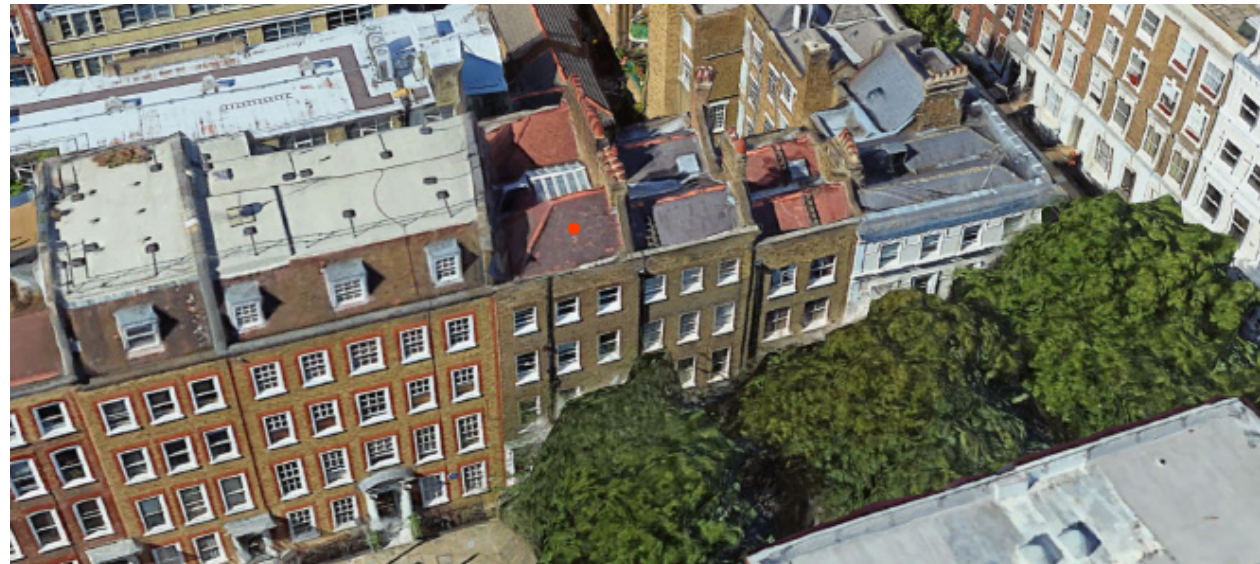


Fig 29. Aerial view of No.22 and neighbouring terraces highlighting the difference in roof structure (Source: Google Earth)

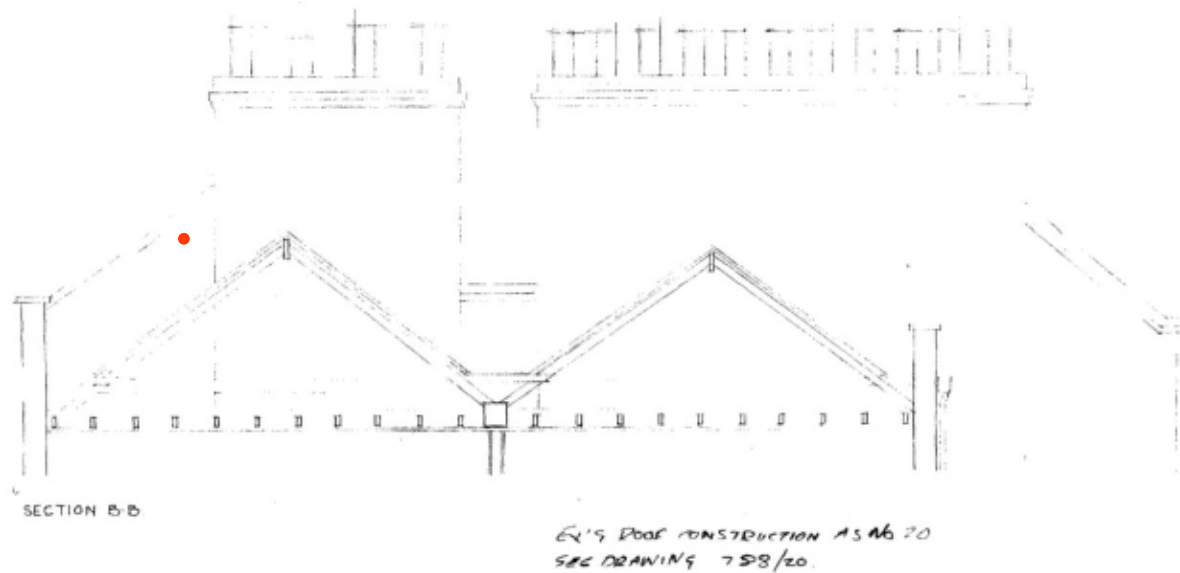


Fig 30. Section from a planning permission sought for No.21 and 20 in which the roof of No.22 can be just deciphered behind the chimneys which mark the boundary between the houses. (Source: Camden Planning Applications)

## 2.7 Historic England Listing Status

No.22 was first listed on 14 May 1974. The listing includes the front railings which connect No.22 and its neighbour 21. The listing (1113200) description goes as follows: *'2 terraced houses. Early C18, refronted c1779, with C19 and C20 (Levitt Bernstein Assocs) alterations. Multi-coloured stock brick. 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed C20 sash windows. Restored parapets. No.21: wooden doorcase with pilasters carrying entablature with dentil cornice, patterned fanlight and panelled door. No.22: wooden architraved doorcase with half pilasters (Tower of Winds), carrying entablature with fluted frieze and dentil cornice, fanlight and panelled door. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas.'*

The listing status has certainly preserved its exterior character, however, given it was never Grade II\* listed (where the interiors are protected as well as the building envelope) the interiors have lost much of their Georgian character, in particular after its - now extremely outdated - fit out as an office in the latter half of the twentieth century.

## 2.8 Summary

22 Great James Street is a three-bay, four-storey plus basement early Georgian terrace house constructed in the early 1720s. The external walls were originally of brown London stock bricks with segment-headed window openings. The front door has timber surrounds with timber canopies supported on carved timber brackets. The front parapet conceals double-pitched roofs. The house was built along with its neighbours on the 'standard' early Georgian terrace-house plan, with two rooms on each floor with a dogleg stair rising against the northern party wall. All the principal rooms would have originally been panelled, probably with timber box cornices and flat plaster ceilings.

The house has been in residential use until the latter part of the 19th century. The changes in occupancy and use throughout the building's lifespan have given rise to a plethora of both major and minor building work to the interior and exterior. The likelihood of its neighbour 23-26 being burnt down and the fact it was certainly rebuilt during the 1960s would suggest the party wall has been altered or restructured.

The original stairs, front door and at least two original windows still survive.

## 2.9 Sources

London Metropolitan Archives

London Picture Archives

Camden Local History Library and Archive

Camden Council Website - 'Recently advertised traffic management proposals'

Camden Records of Planning