BRUNSWICK CENTRE
LIGHTING SCHEME HIA

ISSUE 01

MARCH 2025

PURCELL

Jon Wright and Tom Goodwin
On behalf of Purcell ®
15 Bermondsey Square, Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 3UN
jon.wright@purcelluk.com
www.purcelluk.com

Issue 01
March 2025
Lazari Properties

PURCELL

242204

BRUNSWICK CENTRE: HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

CONTENTS

SECTION 1.0
INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to set out the history and significance of the Brunswick Centre, a Grade II listed Post-War building, before providing a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for new proposals to introduce external lighting components across the estate for safety, security and visibility.

STUDIO-29 lighting consultants have been commissioned to prepare lighting design improvement for The Coram Arcade, entrances and light installations at the shopping arcade areas

This document assesses the lighting scheme from a heritage perspective and assesses the impact of the scheme on the listed building, the adjacent heritage assets and the conservation area in which they stand.

This report has been written for Lazari Properties 2 Limited, the owners of the Brunswick Centre, by Purcell Heritage Consultancy. Axiom and Cumming Group arent involved in this project.

In planning terms, the purpose of this document is to meet the requirements set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) most recently revised in December 2024.

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF states '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 settings. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals on their significance'.

1.2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The report is structured in the following way, using the industry standard and includes the methodology as set out in Historic England's 2008 publication *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*:

- **Understanding:** Establishing the current state of the site and setting out the relevant local and national framework of heritage legislation
- **History:** Understanding the site's historic development based on archival and secondary research and fabric analysis
- **Significance:** Evaluating the significance of the site and considering the contribution made by setting and context

Assessment of the site has been informed by a number of site visits by the author from which all the recent photographs come.

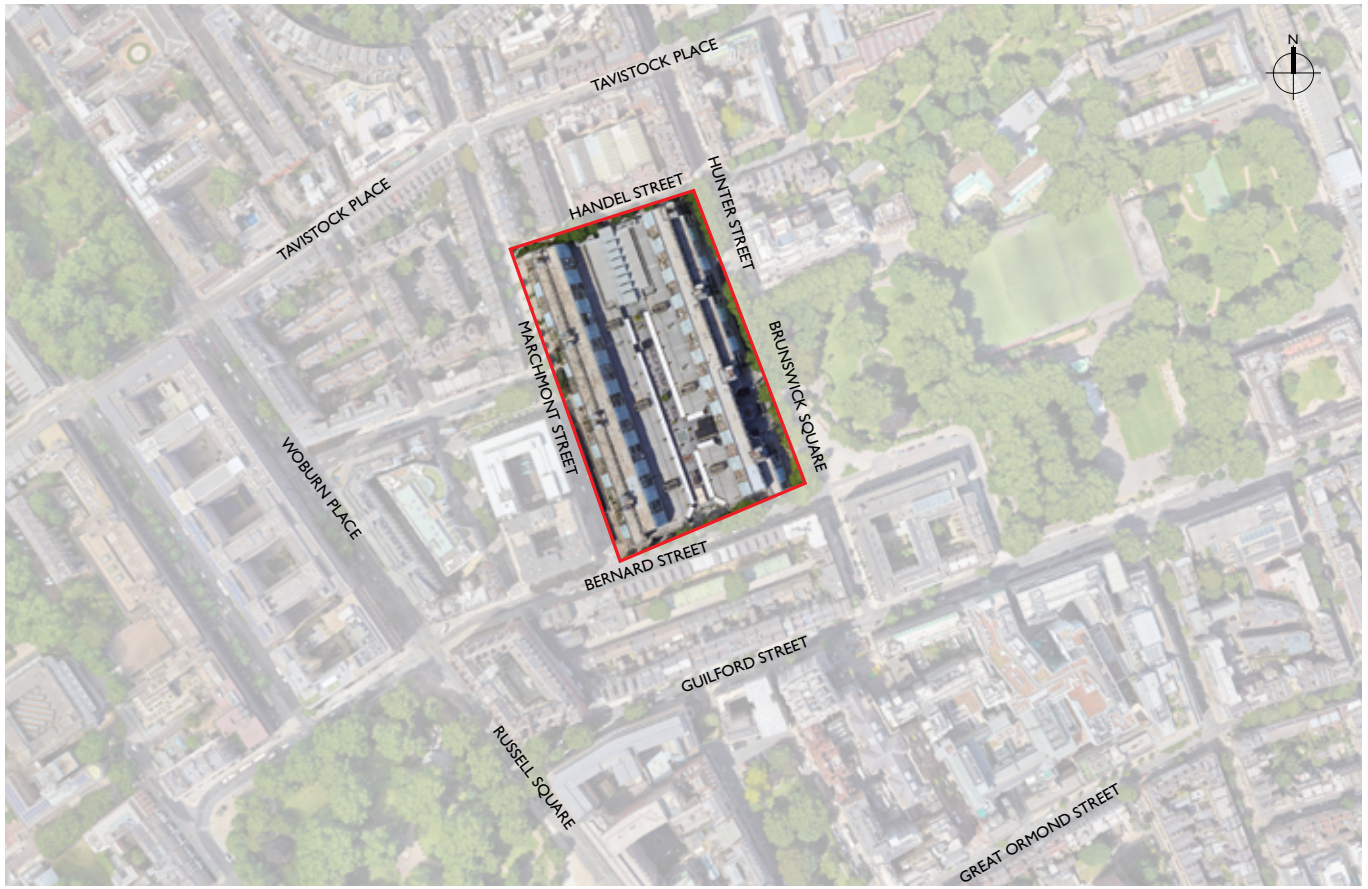
This report has been researched using the following resources:

- RIBA Library
- London Metropolitan Archives
- Collage (Photographic Library)
- Camden Local Studies Library
- Historic Environment Record (HER)
- Cambridge University Architectural Reference Library

SECTION 2.0
LOCATION AND HERITAGE CONTEXT

2.1 LOCATION AND HERITAGE CONTEXT

The Brunswick Centre is located to the south of Tavistock Place and west of Coram's Fields in Bloomsbury. The Brunswick Centre is surrounded by roads on all sides with Marchmont Street to the west and Brunswick Square to the east.



Brunswick Centre location and context (GoogleEarth 2023)

LOCATION AND HERITAGE CONTEXT

The Brunswick Centre is a listed building which sits within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. There are a number of listed buildings in the locale and those that have an intervisiblity with the Brunswick Centre are shown on the accompanying map. The heritage context of the area is rich and varied and includes individual buildings of note, open spaces, landscaped areas and residential streets.

Listed Buildings

All the listed buildings in the immediate vicinity of the Brunswick Centre are Grade II listed. The Brunswick Centre list description is given in Appendix A.

01 The Brunswick Centre - Grade II

02 Nos.39-73 Marchmont Street – Grade II

03 Frames Coach Station and London Borough of Camden Car Park – Grade II

04 Russell Square Underground Station – Grade II

05 Nos.11-28 and Attached Railings (Bernard Street) – Grade II

06 K2 Telephone Box – Grade II

07 The Former London School of Medicine – Grade II

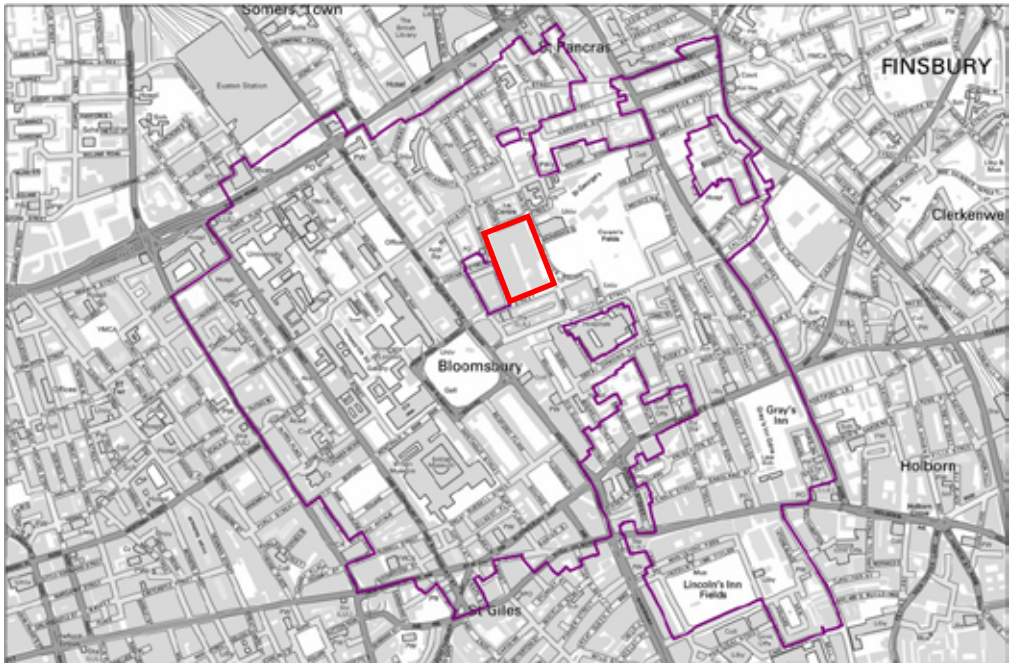
The listed buildings in the vicinity of the Grade II Listed Brunswick Centre (GoogleEarth 2023)

2.2 CONSERVATION AREAS

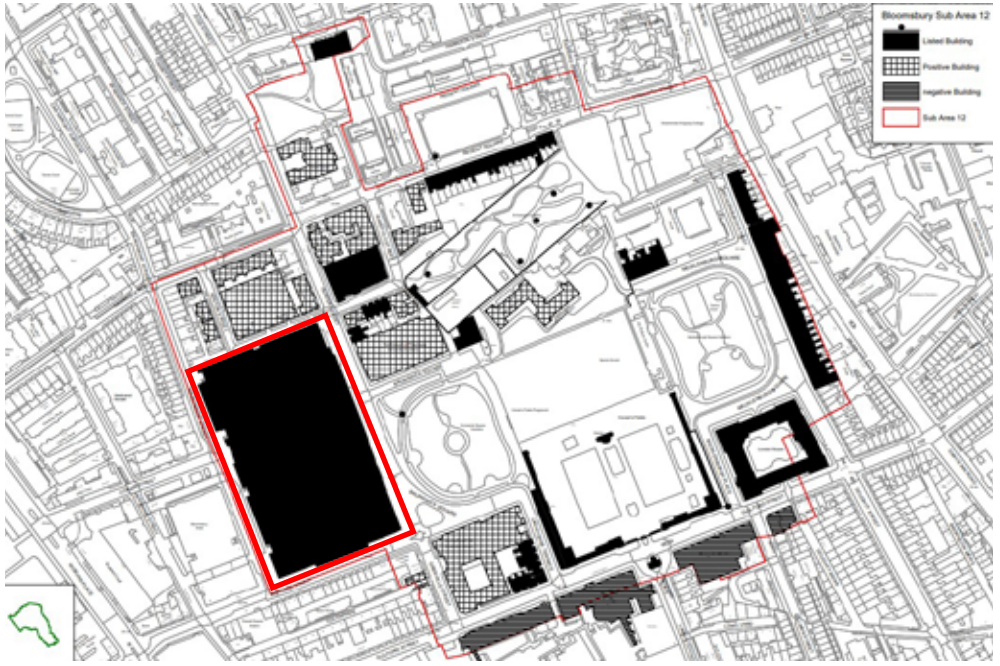
The Bloomsbury Conservation Area covers an area of approximately 160 hectares which extends from Lincoln's Inn Fields and High Holborn to Euston Road and from King's Cross Road to Tottenham Court Road. It is located to the northern periphery of the older areas of Soho and Covent Garden, which had been developed during the second half of the 17th century and now are a focus for leisure and entertainment. To the north-east is Finsbury which extends into the financial district of the City. Clerkenwell lies to the east. To the north of the Conservation Area, the great Victorian railway termini of King's Cross, St Pancras and Euston line the northern side of Euston Road. To the west is Fitzrovia extending to the boundary with Westminster.

The initial designation of Bloomsbury as a conservation area in 1968 sought to protect elements of development from the Georgian and earlier eras but excluded areas where there had been significant later redevelopment. There have been numerous subsequent extensions that have mostly reflected a growing appreciation of Victorian and Edwardian and high-quality 20th century architecture. The Brunswick Centre sits within Sub Area 12: Coram's Fields/Brunswick Centre.

A map of the conservation area with the Brunswick Centre marked is shown below.



A map of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area showing the Brunswick outlined



Bloomsbury Conservation Area sub area 12

LOCATION AND HERITAGE CONTEXT

The Conservation Area Appraisal document was adopted in April 2011 and includes a Management Strategy (relevant clauses are given in Section 3: Policy). The document sets out the history and significance of Bloomsbury generally. The Brunswick Centre is detailed in the document a number of times. It's scale as an element of the conservation area is discussed in section 3.24 -

3.24 The largest single footprint building in the Conservation Area after the British Museum is the sculptural, stepped 'megastructure' of the Brunswick Centre, which embodies the concept of separating pedestrians and cars popular in the 1960s. This form of residential development was popular in the London Borough of Camden and similar developments exist elsewhere in the borough. The British Museum is a linked group of buildings dating from the 19th and 20th centuries, with the largest combined footprint in the Conservation Area, occupying the majority of a street block.

Section 4.35 describes the building and compares it to the Institute of Education on Bedford Way (Lasdun, 1976).

4.35 The University extended further south-eastwards with the development of the Institute of Law and Education on Bedford Way a sculptural, somewhat monolithic modern building designed by Denys Lasdun which replaced Christ Church. This was originally planned in 1965 although only part of the original scheme was built (completed 1976). At a similar time, the Brunswick Centre by Patrick Hodgkinson with Sir Leslie Martin was developed as a mixed residential and retail scheme, replacing earlier Georgian terraces. The architecture of the centre was based on ideas of separating pedestrians from vehicles (1967-72, but not completed to its original design). A number of large footprint hotel buildings were also constructed in the postwar period, particularly in the vicinity of Russell Square, Woburn Place and Southampton Row, which brought more tourist and economic activity to Bloomsbury and to central London. However, these developments led to serious concern about loss of valuable historic buildings and spaces. The listing review of the London Borough of Camden in 1974 prevented similar large scale losses of earlier phases of development.

The Brunswick Centre is mentioned in the following statements on Sub Area 12 -

5.216 This sub area is dominated by large-scale, green open spaces of historic significance in and around Coram's Fields. The spaces act as a green lung, providing a sense of openness which contrasts with surrounding areas. There is a predominance of institutional (hospital, university, education), recreational and community uses with secondary residential and office uses. The area is relatively busy during the daytime as a result of these uses. The Brunswick Centre, in total contrast, is a postwar monolithic concrete megastructure occupying an entire street block on the west side of Brunswick Square.

5.217 The remaining fragments of the townhouses developed on the Foundling and surrounding estates in the late 18th and early 19th centuries are mostly protected by listing. These contrast with the much larger scale footprints of the 20th century redevelopments, such as the Brunswick Centre, which contrasts with the much finer grain of earlier residential development. Whilst the Brunswick Centre occupies several street blocks, elsewhere the street layout and distribution of open space remains as originally developed. Regardless of architectural style or period, there are similarities in the strong parapet lines, use of banding to articulate storey heights, long, continuous frontages of development, a relatively consistent and close relationship to the street and generally rectilinear form of blocks. The prevailing height of development is four storeys, with taller elements up to seven storeys. An exception is the range of smaller buildings on the perimeter of Coram's Fields comprising one and two storeys. Building materials are relatively consistent in terms of their colour and tone: London stock brick and stucco on developments built in the late 18th and 19th centuries, a red brick in many late 19th century and early 20th century buildings, and concrete and glass employed in some later 20th century buildings

Section 5.224 outlines the importance of the Brunswick within the Sub Area and the Conservation Area more generally –

5.224 The 20th century buildings vary in age and style. Several are listed, including the grade II listed 1930s-1960s neo-Georgian London House by Sir Herbert Baker which occupies a block between Mecklenburgh Square and Guilford Street. The grade II listed, sculptural Brunswick Centre is an influential concrete megastructure with a shopping centre and 400 flats on the upper floors, constructed in 1967-72 to the designs of Patrick Hodgkinson and Sir Leslie Martin. It was a precedent for a number of innovative housing estates designed by various architects under Sydney Cook when he was Camden's borough architect. (Since its refurbishment by Levitt Bernstein Architects, the shops and restaurants grouped around its central open-air precinct have become a popular focal point. It should be noted that the building to the west of the Brunswick Centre, fronting Bernard Street, is a building also designed by Hodgkinson and Martin, comprising an office block with shops at ground-floor level, with a hotel behind. However, this building falls outside the Conservation Area as its height and bulk are not in keeping with the established urban grain. To the south, a number of large footprint 20th century university and hospital buildings lining Guilford Street detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a result of their height, bulk and scale. The Westminster Kingsway College campus is situated at the junction of Sidmouth Street and Gray's Inn Road. An earlier highly-glazed 1970s building designed by the Greater London Council (GLC) has recently been replaced by a bulkier but more contextual pale brick-clad college building designed by Bond Bryan Architects. The building sits directly behind the pavement, and comprises four principal floors with a recessed top storey expressed by an angled, overhanging roof. It is fenestrated by vertically proportioned windows with stone surrounds, and has a highly glazed entrance façade onto Gray's Inn Road. The site to the west which, backs onto St George's Gardens, is awaiting redevelopment.

SECTION 3.0
POLICY

3.1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The following section sets out the policy context in which the changes proposed to the Brunswick Centre should be considered

THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF, Updated 2024)

16.Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

202. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

203. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

d the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

e the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

f the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

g opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

204. When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

205. Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to:

a assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and

b predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.

206. Local planning authorities should make information about the historic environment, gathered as part of policy-making or development management, publicly accessible.

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. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

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.

209. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

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

a the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

211. In considering any applications to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining their historic and social context rather than removal.

Considering potential impacts

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.

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional*

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

a the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

b no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and

c conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and

d the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

216. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

217. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

218. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible

However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

219. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

220. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

221. Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

THE NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

On March 6th, 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched the Planning Practice Guidance website which includes the section 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'. The guidance is a live document intended to provide further detailed information about the implementation of the NPPF.

3.2 REGIONAL PLANNING POLICIES
THE LONDON PLAN (REVISED 2021)

The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, setting out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for London's development over the next 20-25 years. The policies most relevant here are:

Policy HC1

A *Boroughs should, in consultation with Historic England, local communities and other statutory and relevant organisations, develop evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of London's historic environment. This evidence should be used for identifying, understanding, conserving, and enhancing the historic environment and heritage assets, and improving access to, and interpretation of, the heritage assets, landscapes and archaeology within their area.*

B *Development Plans and strategies should demonstrate a clear understanding of the historic environment and the heritage values of sites or areas and their relationship with their surroundings. This knowledge should be used to inform the effective integration of London's heritage in regenerative change by:*

1) *setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making*

2) *utilising the heritage significance of a site or area in the planning and design process*

3) *integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings with innovative and creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place*

4) *delivering positive benefits that conserve and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing.*

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.*

D *Development proposals should identify assets of archaeological significance and use this information to avoid harm or minimise it through design and appropriate mitigation. Where applicable, development should make provision for the protection of significant archaeological assets and landscapes. The protection of undesignated heritage assets of archaeological interest equivalent to a scheduled monument should be given equivalent weight to designated heritage assets.*

E *Where heritage assets have been identified as being At Risk, boroughs should identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place-making, and they should set out strategies for their repair and reuse.*

CAMDEN PLANNING GUIDANCE

The Local Plan was adopted by Council on 3rd July 2017. It replaced the Core Strategy and Camden Development Policies as the basis for planning decisions and future development in Camden. The following sections from the Local Plan are important considerations for the scheme, particularly in light of the fact that there are currently no specific management guidelines for the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

DESIGN AND HERITAGE

7.1 Good design is essential to creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well and will adapt to the needs of future generations. The National Planning Policy Framework establishes that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and that good design is indivisible from good planning.

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;

c is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;

d is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses; e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;

f integrates well with the surrounding streets and open spaces, improving movement through the site and wider area with direct, accessible and easily recognisable routes and contributes positively to the street frontage;

g is inclusive and accessible for all;

h promotes health;

i is secure and designed to minimise crime and antisocial behaviour;

j responds to natural features and preserves gardens and other open space;

k incorporates high quality landscape design (including public art, where appropriate) and maximises opportunities for greening for example through planting of trees and other soft landscaping,

l incorporates outdoor amenity space;

m preserves strategic and local views;

n for housing, provides a high standard of accommodation; and

o carefully integrates building services equipment. The Council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

7.2 LOCAL CONTEXT AND CHARACTER

The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

- character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;
- the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;
- the prevailing pattern, density and scale of surrounding development;
- the impact on existing rhythms, symmetries and uniformities in the townscape;
- the composition of elevations;
- the suitability of the proposed design to its intended use;
- inclusive design and accessibility;
- its contribution to public realm and its impact on views and vistas; and
- the wider historic environment and buildings, spaces and features of local historic value.

7.3 The Council will welcome high quality contemporary design which responds to its context, however there are some places of homogenous architectural style (for example Georgian Squares) where it is important to retain it.

7.4 Good design takes account of its surroundings and preserves what is distinctive and valued about the local area. Careful consideration of the characteristics of a site, features of local distinctiveness and the wider context is needed in order to achieve high quality development which integrates into its surroundings. Character is about people and communities as well as the physical components.

How places have evolved historically and the functions they support are key to understanding character. It is important to understand how places are perceived, experienced and valued by all sections of the community. People may value places for different reasons, often reflecting the services or benefits they provide for them. In addition, memory and association are also a component of how people understand a place. All of these values and experiences are part of understanding the character of a place. Planning applications should include a Design and Access Statement which assesses how the development has been informed by and responds to local context and character.

7.5 Design should respond creatively to its site and its context including the pattern of built form and urban grain, open spaces, gardens and streets in the surrounding area. Where townscape is particularly uniform attention should be paid to responding closely to the prevailing scale, form and proportions and materials.

7.6 The Council has two sets of documents which describe the character and appearance of areas and set out how we will preserve or enhance them. Each conservation area has a Conservation Area Statement or Appraisal and Management Strategy. These detailed documents have been developed with the relevant Conservation Area Advisory Committee and are adopted supplementary planning documents.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND DURABILITY

7.7 The Council expects development to be sustainable in design and construction. Development should be consistent with the policies set out in section 8 of the plan on sustainability and also consistent with Camden Planning Guidance on sustainability.

7.8 Design should be durable in construction and where appropriate should be flexible and adaptable for a range of uses over time, a quality known as robustness. Robustness is influenced by factors including the size and shape of rooms, points of access and the depth of floorplates. The overall quality of a building is also a consideration as buildings with character and charm are more likely to be retained and adapted.

DETAILS AND MATERIALS

7.9 Architectural detailing should be carefully integrated into a building. In new development, detailing should be carefully considered so that it conveys quality of design and creates an attractive and interesting building. Architectural features on existing buildings should be retained wherever possible, as their loss can harm the appearance of a building by eroding its detailing. The insensitive replacement of windows and doors can spoil the appearance of buildings and can be particularly damaging if the building forms part of a uniform group.

7.10 Schemes should incorporate materials of a high quality. The durability and visual attractiveness of materials will be carefully considered along with their texture, colour, tone and compatibility with existing materials. Alterations and extensions should be carried out in materials that match the original or neighbouring buildings, or, where appropriate, in materials that complement or enhance a building or area.

RESPONDING TO NATURAL FEATURES AND PRESERVING GARDENS AND OPEN SPACE

7.19 New developments should respond to the natural assets of a site and its surroundings, such as slopes and height differences, trees and other vegetation. Extensions and new developments should not harm existing natural habitats, including in private gardens. Policy A3 Biodiversity sets out the Council's policy on nature conservation, protecting trees and biodiversity.

AMENITY SPACE

7.23 Private outdoor amenity space including gardens, balconies and roof terraces, can add significantly to resident's quality of life and applicants are therefore encouraged to explore all options for the provision of new private outdoor space. The Council also requires that the residential amenity of neighbours be considered in accordance with Policy A1 Managing the impact of development.

VIEWS

7.28 The Council will also consider the impact of a scheme, in terms of the townscape, landscape and skyline, on the whole extent of a view ('panorama'), not just the area in the view corridor. Developments should not detract from the panorama as a whole and should fit in with the prevailing pattern of buildings and spaces. They should seek to avoid buildings that tightly define the edges of the viewing corridors and not create a crowding effect around the landmark.

7.29 The Council will also seek to protect locally important views that contribute to the interest and character of the borough. These include:

- views of and from large public parks and open spaces, such as Hampstead Heath, Kenwood Estate, Primrose Hill and Regent's Park, including panoramic views, as well as views of London Squares and historic parks and gardens;
- views relating to Regent's Canal;
- views into and from conservation areas; and
- views of listed and landmark buildings, monuments and statutes (for example, Centrepoint, St Stephen's, Rosslyn Hill and St George's, Bloomsbury).

7.30 The Council will seek to ensure that development is compatible with such views in terms of setting, scale and massing and will resist proposals that we consider would cause harm to them. Development will not generally be acceptable if it obstructs important views or skylines, appears too close or too high in relation to a landmark or impairs outlines that form part of the view. Further guidance on important local views is set out in our supplementary planning documents, for example in individual conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies.

BUILDING SERVICES EQUIPMENT

7.34 Building services equipment, such as air cooling, heating, ventilation and extraction systems, lift and mechanical equipment, as well as fire escapes, ancillary plant and ducting should be contained within the envelope of a building or be located in a visually inconspicuous position.

HERITAGE

CAMDEN'S HERITAGE

7.39 Camden has a rich architectural heritage with many special places and buildings from throughout Camden's history. 39 areas, covering much of the borough, are designated as conservation areas, recognising their special architectural or historic interest and their character and appearance. We have prepared conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies that provide further guidance on the character of these areas. We will take these documents into account as material considerations when we assess applications for planning permission in these areas.

7.40 Over 5,600 buildings and structures in Camden are nationally listed for their special historical or architectural interest and 53 of the borough's squares are protected by the London Squares Preservation Act 1931. In addition, 14 open spaces in Camden are on Historic England's Register of Parks and Gardens. The Council also maintains a local list of over 400 non-designated heritage assets. Camden also has a generally well-preserved archaeological heritage, with 13 identified archaeological priority areas, although this can be vulnerable to development and changes in land use.

7.41 The Council places great importance on preserving the historic environment. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act the Council has a responsibility to have special regard to preserving listed buildings and must pay special attention to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. The National Planning Policy Framework states that in decision making local authorities should give great weight to conservation of designated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The Council expects that development not only conserves, but also takes opportunities to enhance, or better reveal the significance of heritage assets and their settings.

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

Designed heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

a the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;

b no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;

c conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and

d the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

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:

a require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;

b resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;

c resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and

d preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

DESIGN AND HERITAGE

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:

i resists the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;

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; and

k resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.

ENHANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

7.42 The Council has a proactive approach to conserving heritage assets. In addition to the application of Local Plan policies the Council protects the historic environment through the following areas of work:

- Conservation Area Management Strategies: The Council works with the Conservation Area Advisory Committees to update and support the implementation of the strategies.
- Heritage at Risk: The Council identifies buildings and structures at risk and proactively seeks to conserve and where required put them back into viable use, including identifying sources of funding.
- Local list of undesignated heritage assets: The Council introduced the local list in 2015 and it will be updated annually.
- Guidance: The Council has adopted detailed guidance for the preservation of heritage assets in the supplementary planning document Camden Planning Guidance on design, and Retrofitting Planning Guidance (for sustainability measures in historic buildings).

7.43 The Council recognises that development can make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, heritage assets and will encourage this where appropriate. Responding appropriately to the significance of heritage assets and its setting can greatly enhance development schemes (for example, King's Cross Central).

SECTION 4.0
DESCRIPTION

4.1 EXTERIOR ENVELOPE

The overall form of the Brunswick Centre is comprised of two parallel ranges of stepped terraces with a central avenue of shops between them. At either end of the two blocks of terraces the profile of the terraces is appreciable. The horizontality of these ranges is punctuated on either side by four pairs of vertical pylons that define the staircores and entrances to the building. The terraces themselves feature angular balconies and white-frame conservatories. The roofline is formed of the parapet of the narrow roofs of the terraces, punctuated by the concrete uprights and it gives the building a distinctive and powerful architectural rhythm that is consistent on both sides. On the outer elevations to the east and west on either terrace, the concrete pylons of the interior structural frame are appreciable as a series of concrete fins. On the inner elevations these are not appreciable as the flats rise to the full height of the building. The building has a distinctly different appearance on either side of the terraces as a result and the inner terraces are more uniform, with no vertical punctuation.

The Brunswick Centre, looking north along Marchmont Street

The western block seen from the precinct area between the blocks

The profile of the eastern block seen looking south

4.2 PASSAGE FROM MARCHMONT STREET

There are three open public routes into the Brunswick Centre. The two primary routes are located at the southern and southeastern end of the building. The smallest one is a passageway that links Marchmont Street to the northern end of the inner shopping street. The entrance is defined by three openings in the structural frame formed by four vertical concrete elements. Two of these are free standing and between them there is a gentle slope up to the ground level of the inner shopping street. There are retail frontages on either side of the passageway, inset between concrete piers.

The entrance into the inner street of the Brunswick Centre from Marchmont Street

The Passageway into the centre

SECTION 5.0
HISTORY AND HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

5.1 THE EARLY HISTORY OF BLOOMSBURY

The Roman city of *Londinium* was established c.43 A.D. to the south-east of the application site, following the creation of the first bridge over the Thames. High Holborn to the south perpetuates the line of the westward road from the Roman city, however the suburban settlement which spread along these routes did not reach as far as the site of the Brunswick Centre.

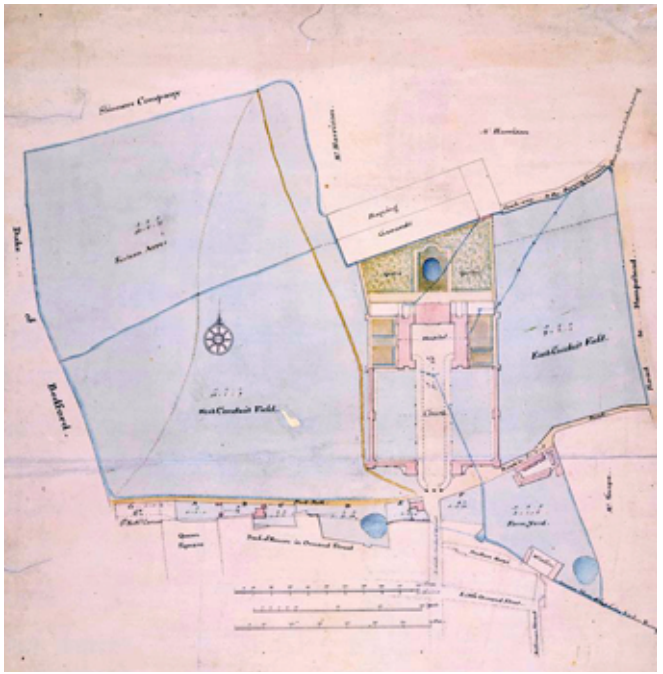
The same was true of the medieval period, High Holborn connecting the City of London in the east with Westminster, the seat to the Royal Court, in the west. The area around the present-day site of the Brunswick Centre was in agricultural and pastoral use throughout the medieval period, and remained relatively far removed from any extramural settlement during the period. Ownership of this agricultural land was split between a number of different manorial landholders. Among the most important of these were the Blemund family, who held the manor of Tames, near the present Bloomsbury Square, from whom the area (Bloomsbury) takes its name.[01]

The Brunswick Centre sits within the historic boundaries of the 'Grete Conduytshote' field, which was located in the Lay Manor of St Pancras. This manor was held in 1491 by the Prior and Convent of the Charterhouse, a Carthusian monastery in present day Farringdon. The Charterhouse was dissolved in 1539 due to the Reformation, its holdings in the modern day Bloomsbury bought by John Baynster, before being leased by Mary I to Henry Partridge, and by Elizabeth I to Edward Vaughan and Thomas Ellis. The estate changed hands a number of times before being inherited by Frances Bennett (1670-1713), wife of James Cecil, the 4th Earl of Salisbury (1666–94). By the mid-eighteenth century it was held by James Cecil, the 6th Earl of Salisbury (1713-80).[02]

5.2 THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL

On the 21st January 1741 the 6th Earl sold the estate to the *"Governors and Guardians of the Hospital for the Maintenance and Education of Exposed and Deserted Young Children"*, otherwise known as the Foundling Hospital. The Foundling Hospital had been established by Captain Thomas Coram, an Anglo-American merchant who found himself so shocked by the numbers of abandoned children when he retired to London that he sought to establish an institution that would house and educate them. It was a popular cause, the hospital granted a royal charter to such ends by George II in 1739. The future site of the hospital – 56 acres of agricultural land – cost £6,500,[03] such a large site procured as the Earl of Salisbury refused to part with only the two fields the governors wanted, insisting that they buy a series of four.[04]

Engraving of Thomas Coram, founder of the Foundling Hospital, executed by William Nutter after William Hogarth (1796) (Metropolitan Museum of Art)



Survey of land belonging to the Foundling Hospital, 1763 (British Library, Maps Crace Port. 14.49), showing its undeveloped, rural setting

01 Camden, *Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy* (2011), p. 12

02 'The Foundling Hospital and Doughty Estates', Walter H Godfrey and W McB. Marcham (eds.), *Survey of London: Volume 24, the Parish of St Pancras Part 4: King's Cross Neighbourhood* (London, 1952);
'Introduction', Walter H Godfrey and W McB. Marcham (eds.), *Survey of London: Volume 19, the Parish of St Pancras Part 2: Old St Pancras and Kentish Town* (London, 1938)

03 D. J. Olsen, *Town planning in London: the eighteenth & nineteenth centuries* (New Haven, 1982), p. 74

04 'Introduction', *Survey of London: Volume 19, the Parish of St Pancras Part 2*

The merchant and architect Theodore Jacobsen was chosen to design the new buildings for the hospital, preferred over George Sampson, George Dance, and John James, as his proposals seemed to 'best answer the Purposes of this Hospital', according to the Building Committee established to oversee the design and construction of the hospital.[05] Jacobsen's plans were realised in phases, the west wing of the three-sided courtyard was started first, with the chapel enclosing the northern end and long eastern range following subsequently.

Engraving of the Foundling Hospital, 1753, by T. Bowles after L.-P. Boitard (Wellcome, V0013444)

Due to the Earl of Salisbury's decision to sell the hospital more land than was necessary for their purposes, the Jacobsen-designed buildings were sat in extensive open grounds. Only piecemeal development was extant to the north of the site in 1746, the rural character of the area overwhelmingly retained. That said, the picture was different to the south of the hospital.

Here dense residential estates were being developed from the late seventeenth century onwards, Nicholas Barbon laying out Red Lion Square with such an eye for conformity and efficiency that even the staircase balusters were standardised across the site, "a remarkable instance of large-scale house production at an early period", as John Summerson noted.[06] These newly built terraces were gradually replacing the grand houses of the nobles who were themselves responsible for the estate development. This meant that the nobles who had previously, as John Strype put it in 1720, 'looked out over open fields, esteemed by Physicians as the most healthful in London' from Great Russell Street, found it desirable to move elsewhere, finding Bloomsbury increasingly unfashionable and densely developed. As such the houses of the Earls of Montagu and Bedford, and Marquiss of Powis were all either demolished or put into alternative uses, Montagu House occupied by the British Museum from the 1750s.[07]

A plan of the cities of London and Westminster, and borough of Southwark, with the contiguous buildings, 1746, showing the Brunswick Centre's future site to the west of the Foundling Hospital, then surrounded by countryside

05 Alan Borg, 'Theodore Jacobsen and the Building of the Foundling Hospital', *Georgian Group Journal*, Vol. XII (2002), pp. 12-53

06 J. Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530 to 1830*, 7th edn. (London, 1983), p. 384

07 G. Worsley, 'The "Best Turned" House of the Duke of Bedford', *Georgian Group Journal*, Vol. VI (1996), p. 71

5.3 FOUNDLING ESTATE

An increasingly pressing need for more funding on the part of the Foundling Hospital pushed them towards seriously considering the development of the surplus land they held from 1785. They were following the lead of the 4th Duke of Bedford, who had laid out opulent unified terraces from the 1760s on land to the west of the hospital. That said, the Hospital's proposals were not without opposition, pamphlets were written claiming the health of the children in the Hospital would be detrimentally impacted by the air pollution new development would bring, whilst others fought to protect the views they enjoyed across open land towards Highgate and Hampstead Heath. The opposition culminated in a spurious case brought before the Court of Chancery in 1792, which accused the Hospital of malpractice in their disposal of land to developers.[08]

In 1790, the prominent architect and surveyor Samuel Pepys Cockerell submitted a plan for the laying out of the estate, one which did not seek to ensure social homogeneity, which would 'comprise all classes of building from the first class down to houses of twenty-five pounds per annum', although Cockerell was concerned to lay out the estate, so the less wealthy were not 'interfering with and diminishing the character of those above them'.[09] Large squares, Mecklenburgh and Brunswick Square, were laid out to the east and west of the Foundling Hospital respectively, creating an open space at the heart of the development. Meanwhile, Guildford Street, Tavistock Place, Bernard Street and Great Coram Street linked the otherwise isolated and unconnected new development with the adjacent Bedford Estate to the west. Cockerell's plans were supplemented by those submitted by the various developers that worked on the Foundling Estate, the most prolific, James Burton, designing and building 586 houses there in the decade between 1792 and 1802.[10]

A plan of the parish of St. Giles and St. George's Bloomsbury by N.R. Hewitt, 1824 (BL 796.g.32), showing the western portion of the Foundling Estate, the site of the Brunswick Centre marked onto it

08 'The Foundling Hospital and Doughty Estates', *Survey of London: Volume 24, the Parish of St Pancras Part 4*

09 Olsen, *Town planning in London*, p. 75

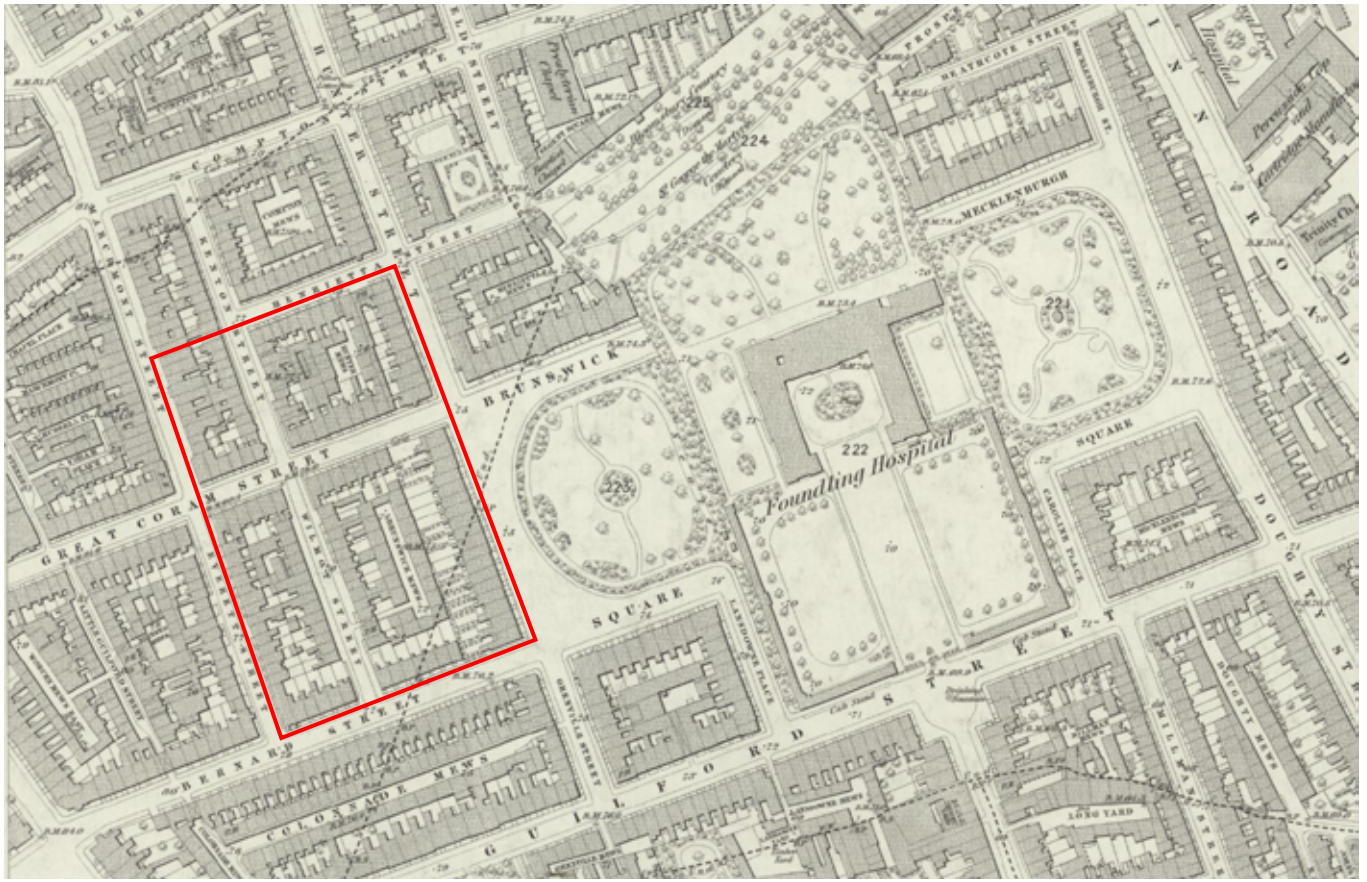
10 Olsen, *Town planning in London*, pp. 75-8

5.4 THE FOUNDLING ESTATE IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

In the nineteenth century, a number of institutional uses were introduced to Bloomsbury, following the lead of the British Museum at the former Montagu House in the 1750s (later rebuilt to Robert Smirke's designs from 1823). Buildings associated with University College London were erected in the 1820s and 1830s, including its training hospital and main building on Gower Street. This followed on from a fall in the popularity of Bloomsbury as a residential area, with St John's Wood and Belsize Park increasingly fashionable destinations for the well-to-do.[11]

Given the Foundling Estate was designed with only residential uses intended a spate of occupants sought to convert their houses into alternative uses to serve the local community, petitioning for permission to convert the ground floor of their houses to shops. Meanwhile, the mews tucked away behind the principal streets were an ongoing source of trouble for the Foundling Hospital. Too many mews buildings had been erected by the developers, these buildings intended to provide stabling converted into housing for working class families, often to the chagrin of the occupants of adjacent houses that backed onto them.[12]

The Hospital was a relatively uninvolved landlord until its hand was forced somewhat in the later 19th century, the St Giles' Board of Works having Russell and Coram Places – two run down mews areas – condemned in 1872, these two areas, alongside Marchmont and Chapel Places bought shortly thereafter from the Hospital by the Peabody Trust, who rebuilt higher quality housing for the poor residents who called these areas home.



Ordnance Survey, London XXVI (1877)

11 Camden, *Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy* (2011), p. 15

12 Olsen, *Town planning in London*, p. 130

In 1925 the Hospital sold its holdings in Bloomsbury entirely, the main Hospital buildings demolished following its departure to Berkhamsted in 1926, a sum of more than £1.6 million commanded by the 56 acres they disposed of. London County Council's preference for the Hospital site to remain an open space in perpetuity won out eventually, although the new owners, Foundling Estates Ltd. initially proposed that it become a new site for Covent Garden, trades exhibition hall, or area of flats.[13] Foundling Estates Ltd. eventually sold their holdings to the former MP Sir Harry Mallaby-Deeley in 1933 for over £1.75 million.[14] From there it was subdivided and parcelled up into small plots, some of which ended up in the hands of Goodenough College, a body established in 1930 to house promising overseas post-graduate students in London, based in nearby Mecklenburgh Square. An arm of the college, Dominion Students' Hall Trust, sought to sell a site of 11 acres and 250 properties in various uses at auction in 1958, but only a week before the auction was supposed to take place the developer Alec Colman swept in and bought it for £2 million via Marchmont Properties. This was a firm that he had established with the leading building contractors, Sir Robert McAlpine & Company, who were said to have invested £3.5 million in the venture as a whole.[15] Almost all of these properties would later be demolished to make way for the Brunswick Centre.

5.5 COLMAN AND MARCHMONT PROPERTIES

The 11 acres purchased by Marchmont Properties covered not only the present-day Brunswick Centre site, but also continued northwards to Tavistock Place, as well as extending across to the western side of Marchmont Street, this part of the site bounded by Herbrand Street to the west, and Coram and Bernard Streets to the north and south respectively.

A number of Grade III (roughly equivalent to local listing in today's system) were lost as a result of the development. These were 11-15 and 19-28 Brunswick Square, 50-55 Hunter Street, 30-36 Bernard Street, and 18-44 Tavistock Place.[16]

The first scheme for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site was put forward in early 1959, with designs made by Ronald Ward and Partners, then also working on the 32 storey Millbank Tower in Westminster (Grade II listed, LEN: 1242617). By this point in time the Foundling Estate was seen to have a somewhat transient population, the houses often occupied by students and nurses being educated at the nearby universities or working in the local hospitals, therefore provision was made in the scheme for student hostel towards Brunswick Square, as well as a recreation hall, single bedroom flats for the elderly, more standard flat types, shops and offices. All of this was to be contained within two 17 storey, 170 foot towers at Coram Street to the west and Hunter Street to the north-east of the site. These were to be ringed with 8 to 10 storey structures.[17]

In sum, this scheme was to provide 250,000 square feet of offices, 900 family flats, and 60 shops, the flats for the elderly included in the scheme so Colman could receive payments under the 1956 Housing Subsidies Act. Such a high density of housing was to be delivered on the site because the 1957 Rent Act meant rent controls were overwhelmingly scrapped and security of tenancy was undermined, making the provision of residential accommodation increasingly lucrative from the standpoint of the developer.[18] That said, this scheme was strongly opposed by London County Council, Ronald Ward replaced by another modernist commercial practise, that of Covell and Matthews. They argued that 'many of the buildings are of a grim institutional barrack kind which do not comply with present day health, sanitation and amenity requirements', with even some of the listed buildings on the site 'looking shabby and uncared for.' In 1959, they urged the LCC to support them, noting that their scheme sought to 'comply with the established principles of Town Planning, but at the same time to secure a development which gives promise of a reasonable economic return from the Developer's point of view. So developed the whole district would be more attractive than would be the case if the Estate were sold piecemeal and developed in penny numbers.'[19]

Their scheme was similarly unsuccessful in currying favour with the LCC, 250,000 square feet of offices, 125,000 square feet of offices, and 185,000 square feet of shops to be combined with 1200 flats on the site. In order to fit all of this onto the site a series of tower blocks were proposed, the largest of which was to be 35 storeys.[20] By January 1960 these plans were withdrawn by Colman following preliminary objections by the LCC.[21]

13 'Too early to fix plans', *Westminster Gazette* (27 August 1925), p. 1

14 'Foundling Hospital Site Sold', *Kensington Post* (14 April 1933), p. 4

15 'Tycoon buys £2m. London estate', *News Chronicle and Daily Dispatch* (21 November 1958), p. 7 ; M. Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning: building the Brunswick, 1958–74', *Town Planning Review*, 84(2), p. 201

16 Report on Area Bounded by Herbrand St, Bernard St, Brunswick Sq, Hunter St and Tavistock Pl' (12 Feb 1963) (LMA, GLC/AR/HB/02/0410)

17 '170 ft.-high flats in £9m. Bloomsbury rebuilding scheme', *North London Press* (3 April 1959), p. 16

18 Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning', *TPR*, p. 202

19 Covell and Matthews, 'The Foundling Estate, Bloomsbury, W.C.1.: Particulars, facts and additional information…' (undated, c. 1959), p. 12 (LMA, GLC/AR/HB/02/0410)

20 Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning', *TPR*, p. 202

21 'Shopkeepers are offered expensive short leases', *North London Press* (26 February 1960), p. 2

At the same time, there was discomfort with the comprehensive redevelopment that Colman was proposing. In the late 1950s and early 1960s there was an acute concern about the nature and availability of housing in London, exemplified by the grave concerns about the activities of the slum landlord Peter Rachman in Notting Hill. This, combined with the new Rent Act described above, made the LCC nervous about what would happen to the nearly 1750 tenants who would be evicted under Colman's proposed scheme.[22] There was also significant opposition locally, membership of the Foundling Estate Tenants' and Residents' Association spiking in 1960 as those that would be displaced sought to resist the proposals. Leslie McCallum, head of the group, stated at a public meeting in the May of that year that 'We are threatened with the wiping-away of our community and its replacement by blocks of concrete and chrome.'[23]

Model of the scheme designed by Covell and Matthews, 1969 (LMA, GLC/AR/HB/02/0410)

22 Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning', *TPR*, p. 207

23 'Foundling Trust tenants are told: Stick together', *North London Press* (27 May 1960), pp. 1, 20

5.6 A NEW APPROACH

The rejection of both the Ronald Ward and Partners, and the Covell and Matthews schemes meant that Colman had to return to the drawing board, the LCC height restrictions on the site meaning that the tower orientated schemes the two firms provided were totally unsuited. Colman had a track record for architectural experimentation and bold patronage, evidenced in the strong relationship he had with the leading Brutalist firm, the Owen Luder Partnership, working with them at Eros House in Catford, Portsmouth's Tricorn Centre and Trinity Square in Gateshead.[24]

Owen Luder Partnership's Trinity Centre, Gateshead for E. Alec Colman

24 R. Gordon, 'Modern Architecture for the Masses: The Owen Luder Partnership 1960-67', Twentieth Century Architecture, 6 (2002), p. 75

This experimentation was tempered with pragmatism in the case of the Brunswick, Colman asking the LCC to suggest a suitable architect, the Council naming their former head architect (1953-6), Leslie Martin, recently established in private practise and head of architecture at Cambridge University.[25] Martin had been working on high-density, low-rise schemes that would be amenable to the LCC, given their was an 80 foot height limit imposed on the Foundling Estate site. This work was advanced by Patrick Hodgkinson, a recent recruit to Martin's office, whose student project was being reformulated for an (unrealised) "groundscraper" council housing scheme near St Pancras, Hodgkinson claiming later that it was this scheme's publication in Architectural Design that drew Colman's attention to himself and Martin.[26] A third version of the story was offered by the architect John Miller, who thought the job went to Hodgkinson as his sister, Joy had happened to strike up a conversation with a stranger in the hairdressers, who turned out to be Colman's wife, who, upon recounting her husband's trouble finding an architect for the Foundling Estate redevelopment, was offered Patrick Hodgkinson's contact details by Joy.[27]

25 'David Levitt interviewed by Susan Jellis at the home of David Levitt, The Brunswick Centre', (Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre) 00:03:40

26 P. Hodgkinson, 'Brunswick Centre, Bloomsbury: A Good Bit of City', *Twentieth Century Architecture*, 6 (2002), pp. 85-6

27 John Miller in 'A Ship Called Patrick Hodgkinson', AA Files, 73 (2016), p. 14

Hubert Bennett, the London City Council's architect was clearly pleased by the change in personnel, noting that Martin's studio had developed a scheme which would achieve high densities of 200 people per acre 'without recourse to building high but rather, in a modern and entirely novel conception, to recapture the scale of the original Bloomsbury area whilst at the same time providing the necessary variety of dwelling types[…], car parking on a generous standard, a pedestrian shopping mall and facilities for cultural and community activities.' He continued, 'In magnitude and significance it may therefore be compared to the Barbican save that the form and architectural conception is on entirely different lines.'[28]

Hodgkinson was taken on to develop a scheme for the bulk of the area owned by Colman – Site A, between Marchmont Street and Brunswick Park, stretching as far north as Tavistock Place, whilst Martin was entrusted with Site B to the west, bounded by Coram and Herbrand Streets, and planned to be the site for a hotel and offices. A joint venture between McAlpine and Colman, the former was to build the entirety of the Brunswick, but was only to act as developer for the commercial portions of the scheme, Colman to independently bankroll the development of the residential parts of the scheme.

1916 OS Map with Site A, of which Hodgkinson was to be architect, and Site B, which Martin was to design marked up

28 Hubert Bennett, 'Report on the Site Bounded by Herbrand St, Bernard St, Brunswick Sq, Hunter St and Tavistock Pl' (23 November 1961) (LMA, GLC/AR/HB/02/0410)

Patrick Hodgkinson (1930-2016)

The son of a wealthy farmer and landowner Geoffrey Hodkingson and Patirica Deeming, from a wealthy Irish family, Patrick Hodgkinson was raised in East Anglia and educated at Charterhouse, a leading Surrey-based public school. His father was resistant to his youthful artistic pursuits, his opposition offset by Patricia's artistic family. One of her sisters, Vere, was a fashion designer and wife of fashion photographer, John French, whilst another was married to the famed furniture designer Gordon Russell. Patrick Hodgkinson sought to become a painter for a time, going to Norwich School of Art before he began his national service in the Royal Navy.[29] On his return to civilian life in 1950 he began his studies at the Architectural Association in a cohort of promising students including Neave Brown, Kenneth Frampton and John Miller, among which Hodgkinson stood out as particularly talented, Brown recounting that his classmate worked independently during supposedly group projects, yet remained *'easily the most influential of our AA student group.' 'He was,'* Brown claimed, *'a sort of genius, partly because there was an aspect of him that was very disciplined, orthodox and traditional, while in another sense he had a totally independent way of thinking about things.'*[30]

It was his fourth-year project for a four-storey 'groundscraper', which provided high density housing without the need for high tower blocks, that was the zenith of his work at the AA, Hodgkinson working on the project alongside the time he spent in the office of the great Finnish architect Alvar Aalto during the latter half of the academic year. He had also worked for the architect Neville Ward and structural engineer Felix Samuely before being taken on by Leslie Martin shortly after the latter's departure from the London County Council Architect's Department. Martin brought Hodgkinson into his studio in part due to the strength of the young architect's fourth year project, which was to be reworked for a site near St Pancras. Hodgkinson also worked extensively on Martin's scheme for Harvey Court, a new block of accommodation to be built for Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. This was, the critic and historian Reyner Banham thought, *'a strange, moving, and quite un-English place'*, the stepped back terraces given the quadrangle *'the air of sacred enclosure'*,[31] whilst the architect Cedric Price thought it a 'a fourteenth-century building with 13-amp plugs.'[32]

Patrick Hodgkinson (right) pictured with his college at the University of Bath, Vaughan Hart (left) (uploaded by Absvh, 21 March 2017)

Work on the Brunswick precluded Hodgkinson from taking on many other contemporaneous projects, aside from a handful of small-scale residential projects. The most significant of these was a house at Trinity College, Cambridge for Lord Edgar Adrian, then President of the College, which was demolished in the 1990s. His dismissal from the Brunswick project in 1970, two years prior to its completion led to a period of inactivity on Hodgkinson's part, until Su Rogers (of Team Four and Colquhoun, Miller and Partners) encouraged him to start teaching at his alma mater, the Architectural Association. His first student there was the future Stirling Prize winning David Chipperfield, before he left to work at Cornell University in Upstate New York for a short while. On his return to the UK he took up a much longer lasting position at Bath University, where he stayed until his retirement in 1995.[33] His only architectural work post-1970 was actually carried out after his retirement from teaching, Hodgkinson brought in to the design team for the redevelopment of the Brunswick Centre in the late 1990s by its then owner, Allied London.

29 Mark Swenarton, 'Patrick Hodgkinson obituary', *The Guardian* (8 March 2016) (https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/mar/08/patrick-hodgkinson-obituary)

30 Neave Brown in 'A Ship Called Patrick Hodgkinson', *AA Files*, 73 (2016), p. 9

31 Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic* (London, 1966), p. 126

32 Peter Carolin in 'A Ship Called Patrick Hodgkinson', AA Files, 73 (2016), p. 13

33 'A Ship Called Patrick Hodgkinson', *AA Files*, 73 (2016), pp. 31, 33, 38

5.7 PHILOSOPHY AND PRECEDENTS OF THE BRUNSWICK CENTRE

As David Levitt, who worked for Hodgkinson, noted in 2017, the Brunswick Centre 'was the concept of one person, Patrick Hodgkinson, and he deliberately selected five young architects, all under 30, who he employed to put flesh on the bones of that concept. We were the artificers who were bringing it about, but the concept was that of one person.'[34]

A housing block on Highcliffe Drive, part of the LCC's Alton Estate in Roehampton, taking inspiration from Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation (Edwardx, Wikimedia, 2014)

As a young man Hodgkinson found himself dissatisfied with what he saw as poor imitations of Le Corbusier by the London City Council at Roehampton, Brixton and Hackney, having seen the Swiss architect's colossal housing block, the Unité d'Habitation in Marseilles, as a student. Therefore, during his degree he drew up designs for the LCC site at Hackney using four storey terraces, having demonstrated that Georgian terraced housing had successfully allowed for high population densities. As such, Hodgkinson thought it was not necessary to build tall, out-of-scale tower blocks to achieve high densities on urban sites. These designs were fleshed out for Leslie Martin, who had been the Council's Chief Architect and just set up his own office, the ideas Hodgkinson established in his 1953 student project reconfigured, but never realised, for a site in St Pancras that Martin had been commissioned to work on.

To Hodgkinson, the scheme for the development of the Foundling Estate, saw him and his colleges impelled to build to reflect and ramify the 'emerging freedoms' of the late twentieth century and not replicate the 'rigid class system… where everyone knew their place, most especially women'. To the architect it was a question of how to 'cut through the outworn shibboleths to find an expression for today's soul?'[35]

In doing so, Hodgkinson drew on a wide range of sources of inspirations. He was interested in the idea of a 'superblock (megastructure if you will)' an idea lodged in his mind since he read Lewis Mumford's *The Culture of Cities* (1938) as a student.[36] Mumford's concern with the superblock as a means to, in Hodgkinson's words 'exclude through traffic and build a community', was key. A similar influence in this respect was Colin Buchanan's 'Traffic in Towns' report of 1964, which suggested 'buildings which generate traffic should be integrated within traffic arrangements in the overall concept of town planning' which could be achieved where necessary 'by positive comprehensive redevelopment'.[37]

The influence of this report was evident in Colman's comments on the scheme made to the Birmingham Weekly Mercury in 1965:

'It will the finest shopping precinct in London on the Buchanan idea with for 2000 cars. It should London's most fascinating development so far. How many people get the chance to redevelop 13 acres in heart of London?'[38] In order to achieve this the traffic was to be fully separated from pedestrians, vehicles confined to the basement level and access roads created to allow the restocking of shops and removal of waste by subterranean service roads, meaning no vehicular access was necessary above ground on the site.

34 David Levitt, 'The Passenger: Panel Conversation with David Levitt & Takero Shimazaki, chaired by Farah Jarral', J. Hill (ed.) Pass-engers (London, 2018), pp. 102-3

35 P. Hodgkinson, 'Brunswick Centre, Bloomsbury: A Good Bit of City', *Twentieth Century Architecture*, p. 84

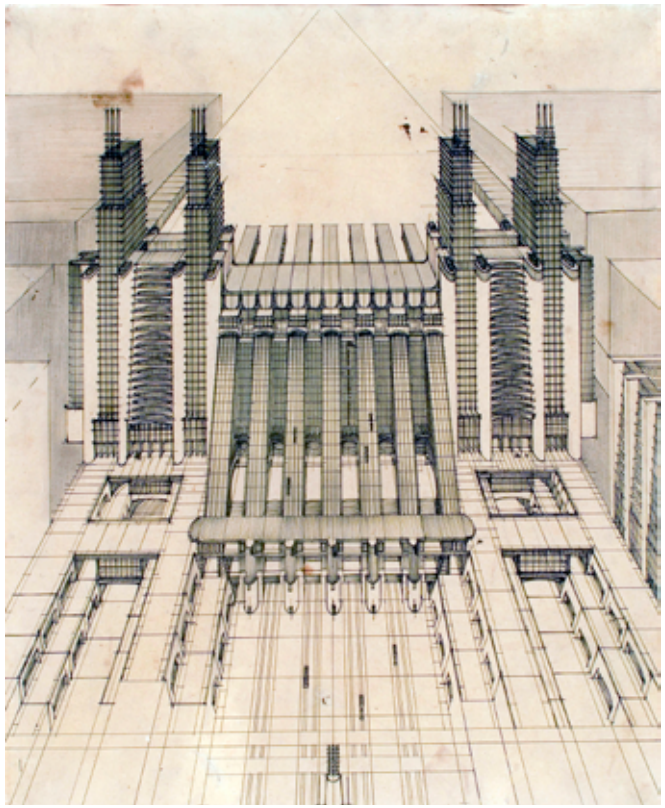
36 P. Hodgkinson, 'Brunswick Centre, Bloomsbury: A Good Bit of City', *Twentieth Century Architecture*, p. 86

37 Reports of the Steering Group and Working Group appointed by the Minister of Transport, *Traffic in Towns: A study of the long term problems of traffic in urban areas* (London, 1963), p. 10

38 'Millionaire who began at 4s. a week in Tipton', *Birmingham Weekly Mercury* (21 March 1965), p. 10

The Brunswick Centre has long been understood and interpreted as a megastructure since Theo Crosby referred to it as such in his *Architectural Review* feature on the building, an idea further solidified by Reyner Banham's in his *Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past*.[39] That said, this was rejected by Hodgkinson on a number of occasions, the architect referring to the latter text as 'Banham's dreadful Megastructure book',[40] showing an element of displeasure with the identification of the Brunswick Centre with this concept.

Hodgkinson was similarly strong in his repudiation of claims that he was inspired by Italian Futurist architect Antonio Sant'Elia. He criticised the Historic England list entry for its mention of a design of Sant'Elia's (for Milan railway station) which he did not know of,[41] whilst another mention of the Brunswick as a Futurist and Brutalist building drew even greater ire from the architect, who stated the writer in question was 'wrong, even stupid, about Sant'Elia, the original building on site, and New Brutalism.'[42]



Antonio Sant'Elia's design for a station for both trains and aeroplanes, included in his 1914 work La Citta Nuova

39 Quoted in Clare Melhuish, *Inhabiting the Image: architecture and social identity in the post-industrial city* (Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy – Brunel University, 2012) pp. 72-3

40 'Letters: A Nonsensical Review of a Flawed Book', *The Architects'* Journal (17 May 2007) (https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/a-nonsensical-review-of-a-flawed-book)

41 'Brunswick-inspired debate on listing legislation', *The Architects' Journal* (5 October 2000) (https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/brunswick-inspired-debate-on-listing-legislation)

42 'Letters: A Nonsensical Review of a Flawed Book', *The Architects' Journal* (17 May 2007) (https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/a-nonsensical-review-of-a-flawed-book)

According to Hodgkinson, inspiration instead was significantly derived from the terraces the building was to replace, noting that 'the main aim was to come up with a contemporary interpretation of the terraced eighteenth- or nineteenth century ideal.'[43] Neave Brown would later note how he, Hodgkinson and their fellow classmates at the AA were greatly concerned with 'how to find a way to accommodate an English culture and sensibility within our ideas about modernism.'[44] At the Brunswick this involved placing shops on lower floors as the Adam brothers did at the Adelphi or Victor Louis' work at the Palais Royale in Paris, the examples Hodgkinson would later invoke as precedents for his work.[45] As his fellow architect on the Brunswick scheme, Anthony Richardson, noted, Hodgkinson's work was illustrative of a more general concern among architects of his generation with large-scale urban design: 'We wanted an orderly world. We wanted a contemporary version of Nash, an architecture for the whole of London imagined from the top down.'[46]

View of the South Front of the Adelphi by B. Pastorini, late 18th century (Rijksmuseum)

43 P. Hodgkinson, 'Brunswick Centre, Bloomsbury: A Good Bit of City', *Twentieth Century Architecture*, 6 (2002), p. 86

44 Neave Brown in 'A Ship Called Patrick Hodgkinson', *AA Files*, 73 (2016), p. 9

45 P. Hodgkinson, 'Brunswick Centre, Bloomsbury: A Good Bit of City', *Twentieth Century Architecture*, 6 (2002), p. 86

46 Anthony Richardson in 'A Ship Called Patrick Hodgkinson', *AA Files*, 73 (2016), p. 17

Ultimately, Hodgkinson hoped it would be a building 'capable of bridging a gap in the town's redevelopment while defining its future shape', the building intended to provide a nucleus for redevelopment in Bloomsbury, the architect suggesting that there was a possibility for its extension 'perhaps in court form, into surrounding sites at a similar height to the existing buildings.'[47] This close attention to the site's surroundings also informed how the building was imbedded within the existing cityscape, Hodgkinson removing one section of the perimeter block from the design in order to create a loggia towards the south-eastern corner of the building, intended to 'provide a visual and physical link' between the centre and Brunswick Square beyond, a link which was unfortunately not further reinforced by the construction of a raised footbridge over Hunter Street, an unrealised part of Hodgkinson's plan.[48]

In the design, permeability was greatly valued, David Levitt recalling that it was planned 'so that it was publicly accessible from everywhere', the public able to walk from Russell Square Tube station in the south-west to Tavistock Place in the north via the raised platform, which gave access to all the upper levels of housing, Hodgkinson taking an even broader view of the site's role within local movement, as 'an interval on a possible future pedestrian route linking the stations of Euston Road with the offices of Holborn.'[49]

The raked terraces, stepping back at each floor level, were desired by Hodgkinson as a means to allow the penetration of midday sunlight into all of the flats. As Clare Melhuish put it, he saw the terraces that emerged as a result of the step back as 'eloquently express[ing] a direct connection with the sky while also retaining a firm link with terra firma: an ideal 'liminal place' – between the homely and the transcendent.'[50] That said, the long "winter gardens" which Hodgkinson envisaged stretched along the frontage of each flat to bring the maximum amount of light into them had been reformulated as they did not count as balconies in line with the Parker-Morris standards, the amount of glazed space reduced in order to achieve compliance.[51]

Cut-away drawing of the showing the planned interior of a flat in the Brunswick Centre before the winter gardens were reduced in size in 1966 (RIBA)

47 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Redevelopment of part of the Foundling Hospital Estate, Bloomsbury, London', *Lotus: An International Review of Contemporary Architecture*, No. 7 (1970), pp. 260-2

48 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Redevelopment of part of the Foundling Hospital Estate, Bloomsbury, London', *Lotus: An International Review of Contemporary Architecture*, No. 7 (1970), p. 262

49 Quoted in C. Melhuish, 'From Futurism to Town Rooms', p. 168

50 Clare Melhuish, 'From futurism to 'town-room': Hodgkinson, the Brunswick and the low-rise/high-density principle', in L. Ciccarelli and C. Melhuish (eds.), *Post-war Architecture between Italy and the UK: Exchanges and transcultural influences* (London, 2021), p. 162

51 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Council Plans', *AR* (1972), p. 218

5.8 REHOUSING AND DESIGN EVOLUTION

Taking a site that only demanded relatively modest rental payments from lower-income groups who lived in the terraces of the Georgian Foundling Estate – predominantly students and nurses – Colman sought to make money by bringing in higher paying tenants into new, higher density housing, which would be 'the first of its kind in London, a good living quarter for professional people who may work at the university or Lincoln's Inn', according to Colman.[52] This plan came under scrutiny as a result of the substantial number of people in need of rehousing, a significant degree of opposition raised by the local authority against the proposals, due to a wide spread concern at the time with homelessness. The Labour party both nationally and locally attacked property speculators and the Conservatives' 1957 Rent Act, which had reduced the tenurial security of tenants of unfurnished flats and abolished rent control on many properties.[53]

That said, the redevelopment of the Foundling Estate also provided an opportunity for the LCC as they began to consider whether it might be possible to use the flats that would be built there as council housing, suggestions made to this effect in 1962 prior to the rejection of planning permission for the first Hodgkinson-Martin scheme in March, and in December the same year.[54] This rejection arose from a displeasure with the significant area of offices and professional suites that Marchmont hoped to build on the site, which went against the council's existing residential zoning of the area, as well as the high density of people that were to move into it, the proposed density per acre 'considerably in excess of 200, for which the area is zoned and therefore [the proposed scheme] would constitute over development of the site.'[55]

52 Quoted in Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning', *TPR*, p. 206

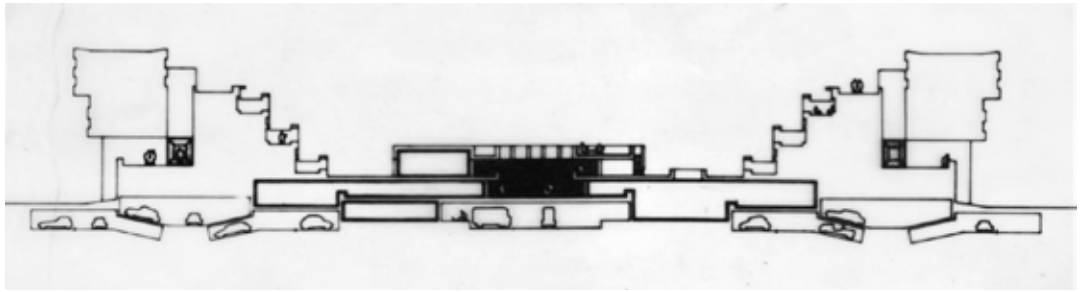
53 Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning', *TPR*, pp. 202, 207

54 Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning', *TPR*, pp. 208-9

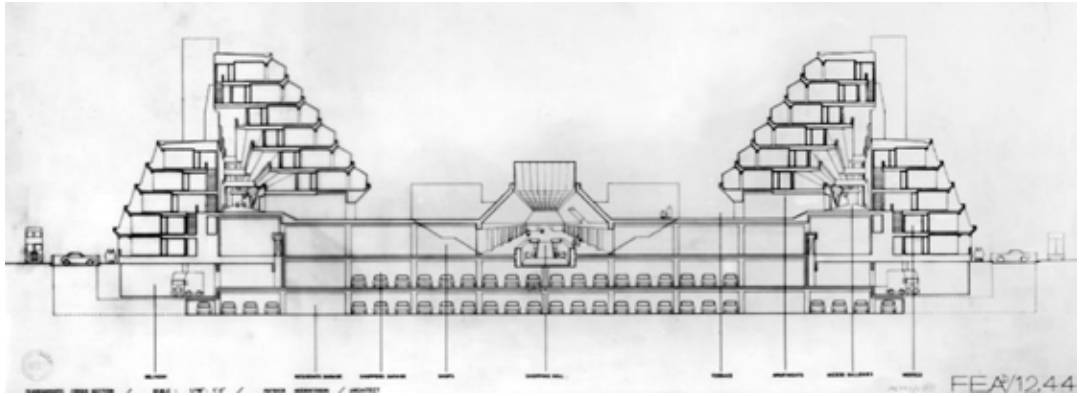
55 'London County Council Town Planning Committee, Foundling Estate Proposed Comprehensive Development – Report by the Architect' (30 Oct 1962), p. 1 (LMA, GLC/AR/HB/02/0410)

The following year there was a major change in the design of the Brunswick Centre, the intervention of the firm of Hodgkinson's former employer, the cutting-edge structural engineer, Felix Samuely (d. 1959), pushing the architect away from designing a load bearing brick structure to one built around a series of large concrete A-frames. This altered the design substantially, the Brunswick no longer a larger-scale précis of Hodgkinson and Martin's work at Harvey Court for Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, becoming less rectilinear and more ziggurat-like.

Harvey Court, a project that Hodgkinson contributed to significantly during his time working for Leslie Martin (Smb1001, Wikimedia)



Section through the proposed Brunswick when brick was intended to be the main building material, as at Harvey Court (RIBA)



Section through the Brunswick Centre following the adoption of the concrete A frames as the main structural element (RIBA)

The year after, in 1964, Hodgkinson devised two alternate layouts for the site, one including more high value residential space, favoured by Hodgkinson, the other an economy version, with 90% of the housing given over to one or two bed flats. The passage of the Protection from Eviction Bill in December, however, put a stop to these schemes, extending greater protections to the existing tenants of furnished flats on the soon to be demolished Foundling Estate, making it no longer wise for Colman to take on the risk of developing the residential portion of the scheme. His withdrawal saw the newly established London Borough of Camden, whose members were focused on cutting waiting times for council housing, make a successful approach to Marchmont Properties in 1965. They agreed to contribute £4 million to the cost of building the Brunswick Centre, £1.23million of this going towards a 99 year building lease for the 1500 homes on the site, many of which would be used to rehouse those displaced by the redevelopment of the Foundling Estate.[56]

The changes made both before and after Camden became involved in the scheme obfuscated Hodgkinson's original intent somewhat. As his former classmate, Neave Brown, noted in 1972, 'the brief has changed many times and the original idea has taken a battering. The 16 varieties of house type have been reduced to local authority flats (all small as it was unaccountably considered an unsuitable environment for family life).'[57] Indeed, only three different housing types were actually used in the Brunswick as completed in 1972.[58]

The change to providing local authority housing also meant that only a handful of small offices, or "professional chambers" were provided, whilst the hostel rooms for nurses and students were scrapped. Similarly altered was Hodgkinson's idea of each flat having its own "winter garden", long, glazed conservatories, almost as wide as each residential unit. They were to have sliding doors to allow the occupant to have either 'a very large balcony, sort of concertina-like' in summer, and 'a genuine winter garden' removed from the elements in poorer weather.[59] This was replaced with a fixed conservatory space without the same adaptability, decreasing the amount of glazing visible across the building.

In 1966 the layout of the flats was agreed after much wrangling between Hodgkinson and Sydney Cook, Camden Borough Architect, eventually meaning that they complied with the 1961 Parker-Morris Standards, which established how large rooms and flats in public housing should be.[60] Planning permission following in June of that year, whilst work progressed in Hodgkinson's office on detailed design drawings, a task which extended well into the following year.[61]

On Site B, to the west of Marchmont Street, Leslie Martin's office had been making designs for an office and hotel complex., however in 1966 he was replaced as architect by McAlpine's favoured architects, Ardin Brookes and Partners. Following the switch of architect work proceeded rapidly, the buildings completed in 1969.[62] That year, Sir Robert McAlpine & Company decided to move their headquarters into the offices completed on Site B, taking up residence in 40 Bernard Street.[63]

56 Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning', *TPR*, pp. 208-14

57 Neave Brown, 'Brunswick Centre and Central Urban Redevelopment', *The Architectural Review*, Vol. CLII, No. 908 (October, 1972), p. 213

58 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'The Eclipse of the Brunswick', *The Architectural Review*, Vol. CCXXI, No. 1321 (March 2007), p. 41

59 David Levitt, 'The Passenger: Panel Conversation with David Levitt & Takero Shimazaki, chaired by Farah Jarral', J. Hill (ed.) *Pass-engers* (London, 2018), p. 99

60 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Foundling Opportunities', *AR* (1972), p. 217

61 Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning', *TPR*, pp. 214-

62 M. Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning: building the Brunswick, 1958–74', *Town Planning Review*, 84(2), pp. 204, 209-10

63 'Notes from here and there', Glass Age, Vol. 12, Iss. 2 (May 1969), p. 50

Design Team

Taking inspiration from Leslie Martin's intimate studio-orientated model, Hodgkinson led a relatively small team on the Brunswick, despite it being a large and complex scheme. He moved from Cambridge, where he had been working for Martin, and, in 1963, established a studio in Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Later he bought 32 Porchester Terrace, the office established in the half-basement beneath Hodgkinson's residence.

His first employee was Sally Odd, working on two residential schemes in Cambridge that had been brought over from the Martin office. She was soon joined by David Levitt, who had been working on the Foundling Estate redevelopment in Leslie Martin's studio whilst finishing his final year of studies at Cambridge, spending 18 months after that working at Arup Associates, before leaving to join Hodgkinson in 1963. Shortly after Tony Richardson, formerly of Lyons Israel Ellis called up Hodgkinson and was offered a job, followed by David Bernstein, who had arrived from America in 1964 and sought work with Leslie Martin, who suggested he join Hodgkinson's team instead. Initially Levitt and Bernstein (who would leave to found their own eponymous architectural practise in 1968) worked on the flats, whilst Richardson worked on the offices and shops at podium level and below, Hodgkinson inputting to all elements of the design

Tony Richardson also brought a number of contemporaries at the Architectural Association into the team, Birkin Haward producing large sectional and perspective drawings, whilst Jeremy Dixon worked on models. Assistance also came from Dugald Campbell, who worked largely on servicing, thanks to his experience on Erno Goldfinger's Balfron Tower. Campbell's friend Peter Myers joined in 1967, having worked on Jørn Utzon's design for the Sydney Opera House. He was largely occupied with the production of detail drawings associated with the concrete frame construction.[64]

64 'A Ship Called Patrick Hodgkinson', AA Files, 73 (2016), pp. 15-28

5.9 CONSTRUCTION AND UNREALISED ASPECTS

There are a number of aspects of the original scheme that were left unrealised at the Brunswick Centre as a result of the choice of the contractor and developer, McAlpine, to dispense with Hodgkinson's service in 1970 and modify his design. The most significant of these is the decision to not build the glazed roof which was to extended over the shopping street, which was intended, as Hodgkinson wrote in 1972, as the 'focal point of the new arcaded street', intended also to 'give a meeting place to the area and allow the terrace above to become one large space: a piece of quiet tree-lined ground (not just a raised 'deck') separating the housing from the street bustle.'[65] Similarly unbuilt was the enclosure that was to protect the upper level deck access to the flats in the perimeter block, which left the access route not only open to the elements, but also meant that the 'proper cornice to the housing blocks' was not realised.[66]

The painting of the concrete which made up the structural frame cream was specified by Hodgkinson, who was both motivated by a desire to make some reference to the painted stucco of Georgian Bloomsbury and because he and his team knew the concrete would rapidly become discoloured and streaky. This was eventually carried out in the early 2000s.[67] Such painting, Hodgkinson wrote in 1970, would have represented the use of a surface treatment 'indigenous to central London' and given a 'continuity of surface in a complex and highly sculptural building form.'[68] Hodgkinson was similarly disappointed when it came to his hope to have 'coloured tiles making a strong paving pattern and facing the circular columns

65 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Speculative Plan (1960-63)', *AR* (1972), p. 218

66 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'The Eclipse of the Brunswick', *The Architectural Review*, Vol. CCXXI, No. 1321 (March 2007), p. 41

67 Steve Rose, 'Scrubs up beautifully', *The Guardian* (23 October 2006) https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2006/oct/23/architecture.communities

68 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Redevelopment of part of the Foundling Hospital Estate, Bloomsbury, London', *Lotus: An International Review of Contemporary Architecture*, No. 7 (1970), p. 262

to the arcade, and gold mosaic and coloured paint to give warmth and glitter at night' to the shopping street at ground level.[69] Similarly unrealised was a bridge that was supposed to stretch over the road from the south-west corner of the site, connecting the building with the park, a separation of cars and pedestrians encouraged by the Buchanan Report.

When studied in 1972 by The Architectural Review, only the first phase of the building, stretching from Bernard Street to just beyond Coram Street, had been completed, the contract signed January 1972 to start work on 'Phase IIA', which was to advance the building north towards Handel Street, another 114 flats built in the two years it took to complete. That said, work never began on 'Phase IIB', the intransigence of the Territorial Army and Ministry of Defence stymying the masterplan of the Brunswick Centre from ever being completed, the Territorial Army not wanting to surrender another building as their government funding was increasingly cut, whilst the MoD was asking for more than Marchmont Properties were willing to pay for it. As such, rather than linking with Tavistock Place in the north to create a thriving shopping street, the Brunswick Centre was stopped, 70% built, at Handel Street, more like a cul-de-sac than a throughfare as a result.[70] This, coupled with the withdrawal of a number of key tenants for the shopping portion of the scheme, displeased by the shift towards council housing in the flats above, rather than expensive private residences, meant that shopping streets were poorly used and neglected.

69 P. Hodgkinson, 'Brunswick Centre, Bloomsbury: A Good Bit of City', *Twentieth Century Architecture*, p. 89 ; Clare Melhuish, 'Visibility Regained', *The Architectural Review*, Vol. CCXXI, No. 1321 (March 2007), p. 44

70 Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning', *TPR*, p. 216

5.10 RECEPTION

Upon completion the Brunswick Centre was met with a mixed reaction. *The Architectural Review* devoted almost half of its October 1972 to the building following the completion of Phase I. There was a sense of disappointment, noted in Theo Crosby's observation that it was the 'more complex' response to Bloomsbury that the original Foundling Estate scheme offered which meant that 'their defeat' – as he saw the final scheme, realised by McAlpine and Camden – 'brings up the need to re-examine the whole direction of our blundering intervention in the city'.[71] To the editors of the AR Crosby's critique was harsh but fair, yet they still sought to strike a more positive note, proclaiming that whilst it may have a 'harsh, impersonal and inhumane' appearance, the building went 'a long way towards getting the bones of the city right. Now for the flesh.'[72] Hodgkinson's close associate, Neave Brown, was similarly complimentary and critical in the AR, celebrating the abstract vision of the scheme, noting that 'the grid, the section and its continuous uniformity have all survived, concepts that have greater urban and cultural validity than the particulars of the accommodation.' He was particularly disappointed by McAlpine not completing the building in line with the planning consents, failing to add the glazed roof to the shopping area, the gallery access to the flats altered substantially, and a number of finishes and details missing from consented drawings.[73]

One of the buildings most influential and vocal supporters was the prolific architectural historian and critic Reyner Banham, who associated the building closely with the work of the early twentieth century Futurist architect Antonio Sant'Elia. The concrete A-frames and stepped housing were said to 'proclaim his paternity', as did the treatment of the entrances to the building and twinned towers which articulated them at the upper level.[74] The *Glass Age* article published on the Brunswick Centre in 1973 was perhaps more closely aligned with Hodgkinson's own perception of the scheme, noting that although the building is 'uncompromisingly up-to-date in its design and construction, it nevertheless respects its Georgian setting in that the basic architectural concept derives from much 18th/19th-century London housing, where unbroken terraced buildings overlook open space.'[75]

The anonymous author of a letter submitted to the Italian architectural periodical *Casabella*, was less complimentary, recognising that whilst the building represented 'a slice of a city', the houses were 'small and dark… without this being compensated by large common structures, facilities for play in common, for meeting, and social interaction.' It left the writer with 'a feeling of emptiness – like that of a cold and empty home.'[76]

Mark Swenarton notes that it was 'the first demonstration at an urban scale of the 'stepped section' that was to become a favoured motif, both in the Camden housing schemes and in the architectural world more generally, notably at the University of East Anglia and other projects by Denys Lasdun.'[77] Of the Camden schemes, Swearton alludes to the closest parallel being Neave Brown's work at the Alexandra Road Estate in Camden, which bears a strong conceptual relationship with the designs of Brown's former classmate at the Brunswick Centre.

71 Theo Crosby, '*Criticism*', AR (1972), p. 212

72 'A Good Bit of City', *AR* (1972), p. 195

73 Neave Brown, 'Brunswick Centre and Central Area Redevelopment', *AR* (1972), p. 213

74 Reyner Banham, *Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past* (London, 1976), p. 188

75 'Living with glass', *Glass Age*, Vol. 16, Issue 1 (1973), p. 31

76 Questa megastruttura e' repressive?', *Casabella*, No. 368 (April, 1974), p. 2

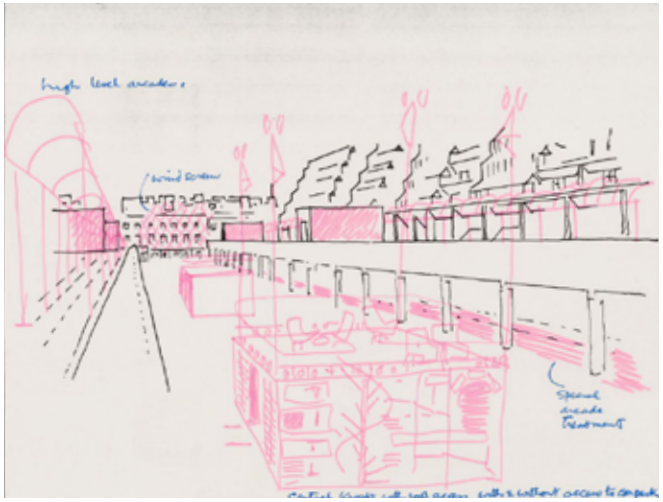
77 Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning', *TPR*, p. 198

5.11 AFTERLIFE

By January 1978 the Brunswick Centre was already in relatively poor condition, an estimated £350,000 needed to fund repairs to leaking windows in the flats, and stop rainwater flooding of open sided access decks and into the homes of residents. Similar complaints about leaking were also made by commercial tenants, although the complex nature of ownership, split as it was between Camden Council and Marchmont Properties, made funding repairs a drawn out and difficult process.[78]

The Brunswick Centre pictured in 1974, showing the water stained, unpainted concrete Hodgkinson had also specified should be painted cream (RIBA)

Plans to alter the building have been proposed over a number of decades, the earliest of these seemingly coming from the office of the self-proclaimed 'anti-architect' Cedric Price, whose designs were, as with many of his projects, unrealised. He worked on a feasibility study which sought to inject a degree of vitality into the building, carrying out design work to this end from 1982 to 1985. These included a wind screen, somewhat similar in conception, due to its cross-braced metal frame, to one of Price's few realised projects – the Snowdon Aviary, designed with Lord Snowdon at London Zoo (Grade II* listed). He also sought to provide more retail space, introducing kiosks to the central of the site, suggesting that they may provide access to the car park beneath them. Additionally, he sought to introduce tall arcades to the roof deck in an attempt to enliven a rather empty and oversized space.



Drawing by Cedric Price showing the architect's plans to renovate the site in the early 1980s, new kiosks to be introduced to the middle of the shopping street, arcades added to the access decks and a lightweight windscreen introduced at the far end of the complex

In the mid-1990s the wide staircase to the south east-corner of the site, featured prominently in Jack Antonini's 1975 film *The Passenger*, was demolished, this link between the main shopping street and the deck above removed in order to open up sightlines into the Centre from Bernard Street, two lightweight bridges between the two podiums to the east and west housing block constructed instead.

Later, the architects Le Riche Maw, working for then owner Tranmec, sought to add two new residential blocks to the site, one infilling the Brunswick Square side of the open loggia, whilst the other was to be built across the Handel Street end of the complex, providing 42 new flats in the process. Hodgkinson was dismayed at these proposals, which took 'nothing from the existing building', and sought to start a campaign against them, at the same time agitating for the extension for the centre, as had been designed all the way to Tavistock Place in the north.[79] Le Riche Maw's design was, as they described it, 'designed to mask the unsightly concrete facades' of the existing building, the conservationist and broadcaster Dan Cruikshank ruminating on whether the threat of these proposals would allow Hodgkinson to put forward a convincing argument for the Brunswick Centre to be listed by the then Department of National Heritage – something the Twentieth Century Society was simultaneously pursuing.[80] This was unsuccessful, a Certificate of Immunity, set to expire in 1998, issued.[81]

78 'Brunswick Centre is Leaking', *AJ* (11 January 1978), pp. 52-3

79 'The battle of Brunswick', *AJ* (15 July 1992), p. 7

80 'Listing rules challenged', *AJ* (22 July 1992), p. 11

81 'Brunswick Centre set for a revamp', *AJ* (22 January 1998), p. 11

The backlash to the Le Riche Maw scheme, which saw their proposals referred to the Royal Fine Arts Commission, saw the firm dropped in the summer of 1992, David Rock appointed as Tranmec's architect.[82] Rock and his studio, Camp 5, proposed the introduction of similarly intrusive 60-unit, 12 storey tower at the entrance to the Brunswick Centre from the eponymous square to the east, which was similarly unpopular, leading to his removal from the scheme by the new owners of the site, Rugby Estates.[83]

Hawkins/Brown, who had collaborated with Rock on the prior scheme, replaced Camp 5, bringing Michael Squires Associates into the team to design new residential spaces. They too were unsuccessful with residents and the Twentieth Century Society objecting to their scheme, which, like Rock's and Le Riche Maw's, would have infilled the loggia which opens towards Brunswick Square.[84] This scheme similarly saw flats proposed for the north end of the building, with the concrete bridges linking the roof decks serving the two blocks of housing to be demolished, to create a greater sense of openness on the central street. The shops and landscaping were also to be overhauled by Hawkins/Brown, new paving laid, and glazed kiosks and a café introduced into circulatory spaces.[85] Permission was granted for Hawkins/Brown's redesign of the shopping centre in January 1998, the more contentious new built residential portions dropped, although Hodgkinson was still opposed to the proposals.[86]

A change in ownership, however, saw these plans left unrealised, Allied London buying the Brunswick Centre from Rugby Estates the following month for £13 million. With this purchase, Hodgkinson made a return to professional practise after over 25 years of teaching, working with Alexander Wright Architects and Stubbs Rich Architects to devise a new scheme.[87] Hodgkinson sought to restore public access to the first floor roof decks, which would be also planted with more vegetation, the concrete to be finally painted cream, as first intended, glass canopies introduced to the shopping street and a new store terminating the Handel Street end of the Brunswick. That said, Hodgkinson and Allied London's proposals were met with trepidation by a number of stakeholders, the Twentieth Century Society, already at odds with Hodgkinson over their second (this time successful) attempt to list the building, writing that his proposals were 'stylistically and perhaps ideologically at odds with the original building.' The infilling of the loggia with a Greek restaurant that would have protruded out towards Brunswick Square was a particularly controversial aspect of the scheme. Hodgkinson was frustrated by the conservationist opposition, arguing 'it's a shopping street, not a monument, and it needs to be kept alive.'[88]

Patrick Hodgkinson's proposals for a new restaurant infilling the loggia to Brunswick Square, 2000

82 'Brunswick plans on hold', *AJ* (12 August 1992), p. 5

83 David Taylor, 'Brunswick Centre set for revamp', *The Architects' Journal* (22 January 1998) (https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/brunswick-centreset-for-a-revamp)

84 'Latest plans for the Brunswick Centre run into trouble', *AJ* (29 August 1996), p. 15

85 'Latest plans for the Brunswick Centre go on show', *AJ* (4 July 1996), p. 16

86 'Brunswick Centre set for a revamp', *AJ* (22 January 1998), p. 11

87 'Brunswick Centre faces a creamy refurbishment', AJ (24 June 1999), p. 5

88 'Brunswick architect accused of 'damaging' own building', *AJ* (3 February 2000), p. 5

That said, the opposition to his plans by Camden Council, as well as the Twentieth Century Society provoked a rethink, and Hodgkinson turned to Levitt Bernstein for help, replacing Stubbs Rich Architects with the firm. The eponymous practise had grown out of Hodgkinson's own office during works on the Brunswick Centre, David Levitt and David Bernstein leaving the Brunswick Centre's architectural team in 1968 to set up on their own. Levitt thought Hodgkinson's proposed plans were 'extraordinarily dreadful' and set about trying to rework them, opposed by Hodgkinson in the process, whose 'ideas for the building continued to be completely nuts,' the two engaged in 'this kind of running battle. Interestingly, he was not trying to recover any aspect of the original design. He'd moved on. But everything he suggested was bizarre.'[89] Instead Levitt said he sought to channel the architect's original intentions and ambitions in the scheme, able to justify the inclusion of a new supermarket at the Handel Road end of the Centre, something Hodgkinson firmly opposed, on the grounds that the building was incomplete anyway, views terminated by a poorly aligned neo-Georgian building, rather than the thoroughfare of Tavistock Place, as was intended.

Before work began on Levitt Bernstein's attempt to revitalise the shopping street in the early 2000s, the Brunswick was 'one of the quietest and emptiest public spaces in central London, neglected, decayed and desolate', their work extending the storefronts to infill the colonnades and introducing a new supermarket to terminate the northern end of the shopping street bringing shoppers into the Centre, although such changes did impact the legibility of Hodgkinson's (albeit only partily realised) original designs for the centre.[90] That said, the magnitude of this impact was also ameliorated by the strong and successful opposition to Levitt Bernstein's designs to infill the loggia linking to Brunswick Square[91] and nascent plans to add additional storey of residential accommodation to the building, which were similarly rebuffed.[92]

89 David Levitt in 'A Ship Called Patrick Hodgkinson', *AA Files*, 73 (2016), p. 38

90 Clare Melhuish, 'Visibility Regained', *The Architectural Review*, Vol. CCXXI, No. 1321 (March 2007), pp. 43-4

5.12 BELOW GROUND SPACES AT THE BRUNSWICK

David Levitt reflected on the history of the scheme in the 2010s, following the refurbishment of the Renoir (now Curzon) Cinema:

'The idea of having a cinema underground was there pretty much from the beginning. I can't remember who came up with that idea to be honest, it was so built in to the original concept.[93] *Anyone who ever uses the car park will know that the cinema intrudes into it and makes it much smaller at one end, but what was much less resolved in the time of 1968 when Patrick lost control was about how much of the cinema was going to be above ground.'*[94]

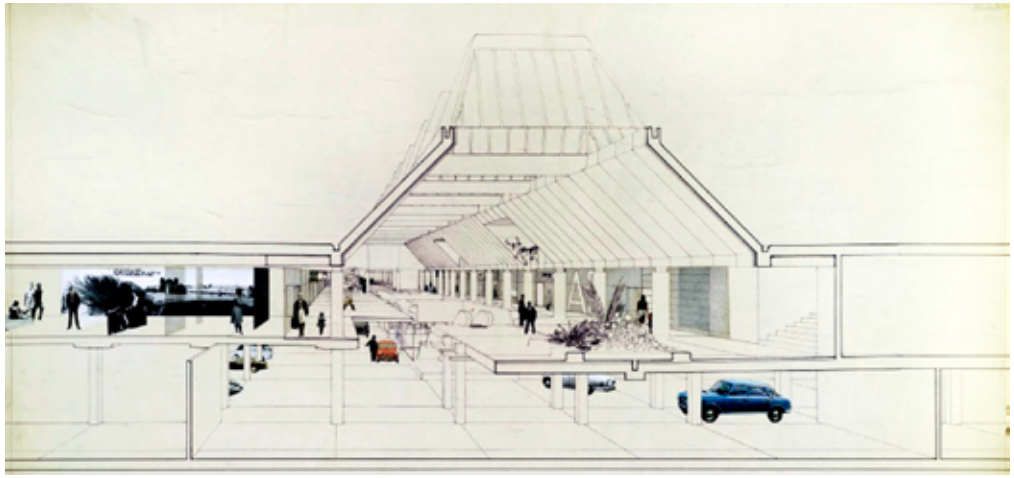
91 'Eyecatcher or Eyesore? Twentieth Century Society backs local campaign against Brunswick Centre extension plans', *Twentieth Century Society* (28/7/2014, https://c20society.org.uk/news/eyecatcher-or-eyesore-twentieth-century-society-backs-local-campaign-against-brunswick-centre-extension-plans)

92 'Brunswick Centre faces possibility of extra storey', *AJ* (13/3/2006, https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/brunswick-centre-faces-possibility-of-extra-storey-image)

93 A concert hall was intended originally, rather than a cinema - P. Hodgkinson, 'Brunswick Centre, Bloomsbury: A Good Bit of City', *Twentieth Century Architecture*, p. 89

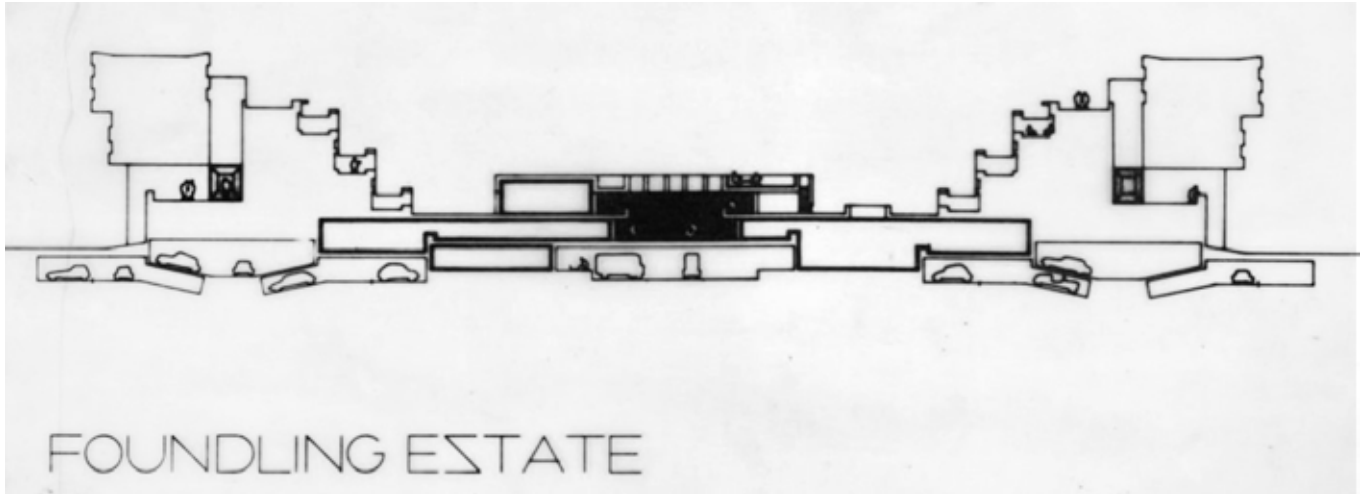
94 David Levitt, 'The Passenger: Panel Conversation with David Levitt & Takero Shimazaki, chaired by Farah Jarral', J. Hill (ed.) *Pass-engers* (London, 2018), p. 104

There was initially meant to be a much stronger relationship between the above and below ground spaces than was realised in the scheme as built, as is shown by the perspective cut-away drawings through the unrealised glazed shopping hall, which give a degree of prominence to the shoppers car park in the basement, which was planned to provide easy access to the shops above via a number of stairs and escalators.

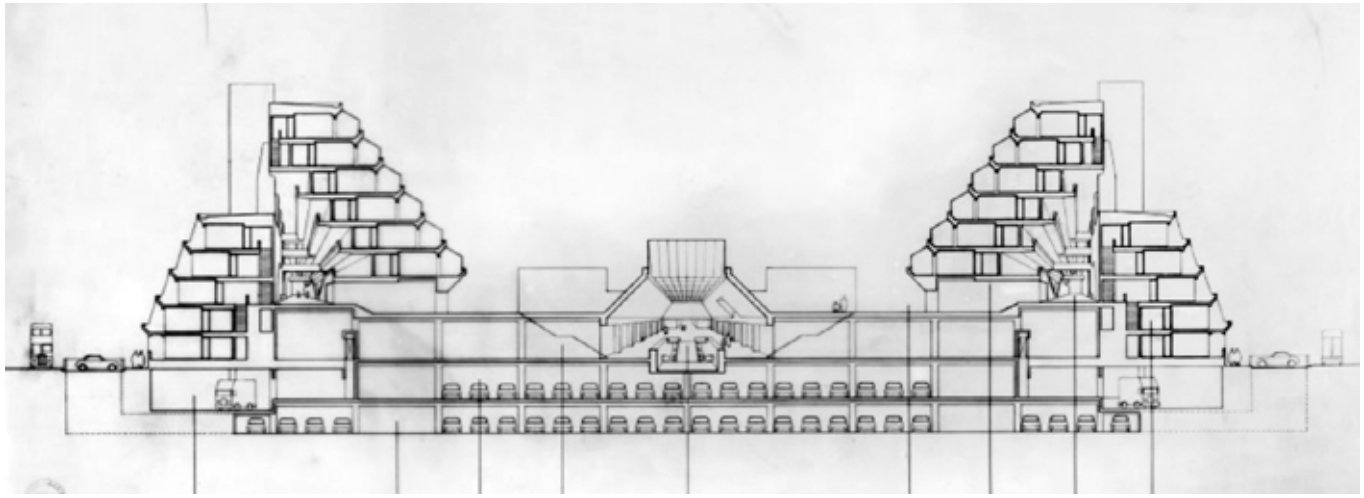


Perspective section showing the unbuilt shopping hall, planned to be easily accessed via the upper basement shopper's car park, shown below

Hodgkinson noted in 1972 that there was an evolution in the design of the car park level between the outline scheme produced up until 1963 and the scheme that emerged in the years prior, the design rationalised, ramped car parking spaces replaced by continuous floor levels to both the upper and lower levels of the car park. This change came from an awareness that 'ramped or mechanical parking would have limited the basement's adaptability for future shop extensions or warehousing.'[95] Even during the late 1960s of the Brunswick Centre there was an expectation that the basement would be the location where new or extended units would be located, a large supermarket planned (but unrealised) for the basement level at the centre of the site, underneath the central shopping street sometime between 1965 and 1968. Discussions with the tenants that were set to occupy the shops on the ground floor shopping street meant that 'shop storage and docking facilities were increased (perhaps too lavishly), as Hodgkinson noted in 1972.[96]



Section through the proposed Brunswick showing the angled parking to the basement (RIBA)



Section through the Brunswick Centre showing the realised layout of the car park (RIBA)

95 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Speculative Plan (1960-63)', *AR* (1972), p. 217

96 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Council Plans (1965-68)', *AR* (1972), p. 217

Instead, the basement was built following the excavation of 20 feet of earth, with garaging for residents on the lower basement – space allowed for one car per flat – and parking for shoppers for visitors to the centre introduced on upper basement floor above. These below ground spaces are accessed by ramps to the east and west sides of the building, connected to the flats by lifts and the shopping street by way of a staircase (three other stairs and escalators were extant until the early 2000s when Levitt Bernstein removed them)[97]. A delivery road runs to either side of the lower basement level, allowing trucks to drive up to the subterranean, double-height shop stores which sit beneath the ground level retail units.[98] Hodgkinson noted that the layout of the garages was substantially altered a number of times in the later stages of design development in order to facilitate the demands of leaseholders, the amount of space for stores associated with retail burgeoning.[99] At present access is gained to the basement via a ramp down from Marchmont Street, egress via a ramp to Hunter Street.

In addition, the entrance and exit ramps to the garages had to be relocated following the grant of outline planning permission by London County Council in February 1963, the LCC imposing a condition of their approval which meant that they had to be resisted 'as not to be closer to the road traffic intersections than 40 feet.'[100]

97 See Clare Melhuish, 'Visibility Regained', *The Architectural Review*, Vol. CCXXI, No. 1321 (March 2007), p. 46

98 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Redevelopment of part of the Foundling Hospital Estate, Bloomsbury, London', *Lotus: An International Review of Contemporary Architecture*, No. 7 (1970), p. 262

99 Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Redevelopment of part of the Foundling Hospital Estate, Bloomsbury, London', *Lotus: An International Review of Contemporary Architecture*, No. 7 (1970), p. 264 ; Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Redevelopment of part of the Foundling Hospital Estate, Bloomsbury, London', *Lotus: An International Review of Contemporary Architecture*, No. 7 (1970), p. 264

100 'Permission Granted on an Outline Application, Ref. 6992' (7 Feb 1963), p, 2 (LMA, GLC/AR/HB/02/0410)

SECTION 6.0
SIGNIFICANCE

Significance can be defined as the sum of the cultural values which make a building or site important to society. When assessing significance numerous aspects are considered including architectural interest, historic interest, group value, social value, former uses and local distinctiveness. These aspects can be grouped under a series of four values outlined in Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008): Evidential, Historic, Aesthetic and Communal. A description of each value is given under the headings below. The significance plans follow this written assessment and give a graphic portrayal of the text.

The significance of the Brunswick Centre will be assessed using a scale of significance ratings ranging from High down to Intrusive:

- High: A theme, feature, building or space which is important at national or international level, with high cultural value and important contribution towards the character and appearance of the heritage asset and its setting.
- Medium: Themes, features, buildings or spaces which are important at regional level or sometimes higher, with some cultural importance and some contribution towards the character and appearance of the heritage asset and its setting.
- Low: Themes, features, buildings or spaces which are usually of local value only but possibly of regional significance for group or their value. Minor cultural importance and contribution to the character or appearance of the heritage asset and its setting.
- Neutral: These themes, spaces, buildings or features have little or no cultural value but do not detract from the character or appearance of the heritage asset and its setting.
- Intrusive: Themes, features, buildings or spaces which detract from the values of the heritage asset, its setting, character and appearance. Efforts should be made to remove or enhance these features.

6.1 EVIDENTIAL VALUE

"The potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity."

LOW SIGNIFICANCE

The Brunswick Centre is of relatively recent architectural origin and consequently the trades and construction methods that built it are well understood. The history of its setting and the surrounding area is likewise well understood and documented. There has been some scholarship on Hodgkinson and his design is relatively well understood from a structural, architectural and conceptual standpoint. There is perhaps a little more to understand about the motivations behind the designs but this is a minor point and does not elevate the evidential value of the building beyond low significance overall.

6.2 HISTORIC VALUE

"The ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present."

HIGH SIGNIFICANCE

The site was originally occupied by Georgian townhouses on the estate of the Foundling Hospital. During the mid-1950s this was bought by a private developer whose plan from the outset was to clear the site to make way for two 25-storey tower blocks containing luxury flats and retail. These proposals were resisted by the borough of Camden and the developer was recommended to consult the renowned post-war architect Leslie Martin. He championed low rise development and maintained that an equal density of development could be achieved on the site with two parallel blocks. At this stage he handed the project to Patrick Hodgkinson to take forward. The involvement of both these figures is of considerable historic value to the building as both men were key figures in the Post-War architectural environment and both were involved in some seminal public and private projects in those years. It holds high significance, therefore, for its association with these two architects and for the involvement of David Levitt, another well-known architect who worked on and lives in the building.

Development commenced in 1967 and was finally completed in 1972. However, the original developer went bankrupt during construction and the project was sold to Sir Robert McAlpine construction. The housing element was bound into contractual obligations and completed as per the original design. After the 1964 general election, furnished tenants were given security of tenure, and Camden Council agreed to rehouse in social housing all existing tenants. In return, Camden took the lease on all the properties for social housing with a 99-year lease and low ground rent. The retail elements were excluded. Another consequence of the change of freeholder was that the building's exterior finish was never properly finished and left as raw concrete. This did not perform well and the situation was only finally addressed during the refurbishment in the early 2000s when the buildings were painted in their originally planned colour. As a result of these alterations, the historic value of the building is as a piece of public housing that was altered during development from the private model and as detailed in the history section the building went through extensive design changes. These changes are of historic interest as they indicate the shifts in private/public ownership of the period.

Conceptually, the Brunswick's design has historic value not just for the evocation of the Georgian street, but also for the stepped terrace – a popular Post-War low-rise, high-density device used elsewhere in Camden's social housing schemes under Sydney Cook by Neave Brown, Benson & Forsyth and others and by architects like Sir Denys Lasdun and Gillespie, Kidd and Coia at Cambridge University. Pioneering in some respects, as a megastructure that included a variety of elements within this stepped terrace structure and which included above and below ground planning is of considerable historic value. For these reasons, the overall historic value of the Brunswick Centre is considered to be high.

6.3 ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC VALUE

"The ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place."

Key structural components and overall form – HIGH

Terrace elevations – MEDIUM including LOW for the conservatories

Street elevations - MEDIUM

Western and eastern terraces – MEDIUM

Concrete stair structures - HIGH

Waitrose - NEUTRAL

All rooftops – LOW

Main street – HIGH with DETRIMENTAL and NEUTRAL elements

Entrance ramps and walls -MEDIUM

Car park levels LOW with MEDIUM circulation routes

The style of the Brunswick is Brutalist and the expression of structural form is a key component both outside and from within the building. The building is on a large-scale and in near views can be imposing but does not overpower the surrounding streetscape in any substantial way. The expressive use of concrete, whether exposed or painted, gives the building its predominant character and this materiality, more than any other aspect of the building, gives a level of consistency and unity to the various spaces. This aspect makes the relationship between inside spaces and outside spaces, broken down to a certain extent and this is certainly true in the areas where the flats are accessed.

Of primary aesthetic value, are the structural components that make up key horizontal and vertical rhythms of the architecture. These include, the high St Elia derived towers, and the profile form of the building on all sides. The terrace elevations on either side, have seen a degree of alteration and can be seen as infill to this primary structural form. For this reason, they are considered to be medium in aesthetic significance. At both ends of the building to the North and South, where appreciable, the stepped profile of the architecture is also considered to be highly significant. These elevations show the overall concept in section and are impressively sculptural in their own right.

There is aesthetic significance in the plan form of the entrances and exits to the central street. This is particularly true around the main entrance where the Renoir cinema is situated and the Main Street through the Brunswick itself. These areas are to be afforded high significance for their expression of an architectural concept that still remains. This concept has been detrimentally impacted by the addition of the Waitrose supermarket; however it is a high quality design in its own right and suitable for its position and so can be considered neutral in aesthetic terms. The rectangular concrete structures on the terrace which house the stair cores are a bold repeating motif and for their contribution both in material and sculptural terms, they are of high significance.

Below ground, both car parks do indicate the importance of the planform segregation of traffic and pedestrians inherent in the original scheme. A wider preoccupation in the Post-War years, the separation of pedestrian and vehicle can be considered a partly social and partly architectural sensibility. This lends weight to the idea that the plan form itself is what is fundamentally important about the subterranean spaces as well as the aforementioned unity imparted by the consistent use of concrete. Based on this assessment the below ground space on both levels carry very little aesthetic significance and they do not contribute to the high significance elements above ground. In conclusion, any value the car parks have is ingrained more in the architectural concept than the aesthetic. The concept itself is now historic and the usage of such spaces has changed since the Brunswick Centre was built. All these aspects mean that the car park areas have some significance but that in light of the various values, it can be considered low.

Extra notes on Aesthetic Significance:

- The design value of the scheme has been undercut to some extent by a number of interventions in Hodgkinson's original vision for the site. The comments he made in the introduction to a 2002 essay on the Brunswick are telling in this respect, making reference to an 'unlikely dream whose reality […] became seriously marred.'[01]
    - Failure to build all the way to Tavistock Place in the north
    - Termination of the northern end of the building by the Waitrose supermarket building in the mid 2000s
    - Removal of the large steps up to roof deck at first floor level in the mid 1990s
    - Poor detailing to the concrete works in a number of areas
    - Infilling of the colonnades
    - Failure to construct the footbridge into Brunswick Square
    - Failure to construct the glazed shopping hall

Detrimental Impacts on Architectural and Aesthetic Significance

The building has suffered a degree of alteration over time and this has meant the unity of the block has been compromised to a degree. The key aspect in this regard has been the substantial loss of plan form above ground, the loss of the stairs to the terraces and the addition of the Waitrose supermarket and associated new elements to the terrace and the northern frontage. These elements were sensitively designed and the impact on the overall

01 P. Hodgkinson, 'Brunswick Centre, Bloomsbury: A Good Bit of City', *Twentieth Century Architecture*, p. 83

form of the building is not substantial. There is a degree of detriment to the existing concrete finishes in some areas whether by spalling or previous repairs, both of which are detrimental to the visual identity of the Brunswick as a structure built predominantly from one material. Other smaller detrimental impacts have been caused by aerials and gantry ladders to the roof.

As part of the conservation area

The visual appearance and architectural identity of the Brunswick makes a significant contribution to the conservation area in which it sits but it is also noteworthy that it is of a character that is not predominant within that area – that being Victorian and Georgian terraces.

6.4 COMMUNAL VALUE

"The meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory."

MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE

Conceived as a megastructure that was meant to contain social, retail and domestic activity, the Brunswick Centre had a sense of communal life in its conception and subsequent construction and use. It will hold particularly important and strong memories and associations for those people who have lived, worked or visited the building

6.5 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Brunswick Centre rests primarily on its architectural and historic values as a Post-War megastructure. Its powerful aesthetic forms, consistent use of materials and repetitive unity make it one of London's most recognisable pieces of Brutalism. It has been significantly altered over time and there are elements of the concept that have been impacted by either later change or changes in the use of the spaces - but the fundamental concept remains legible and intact.

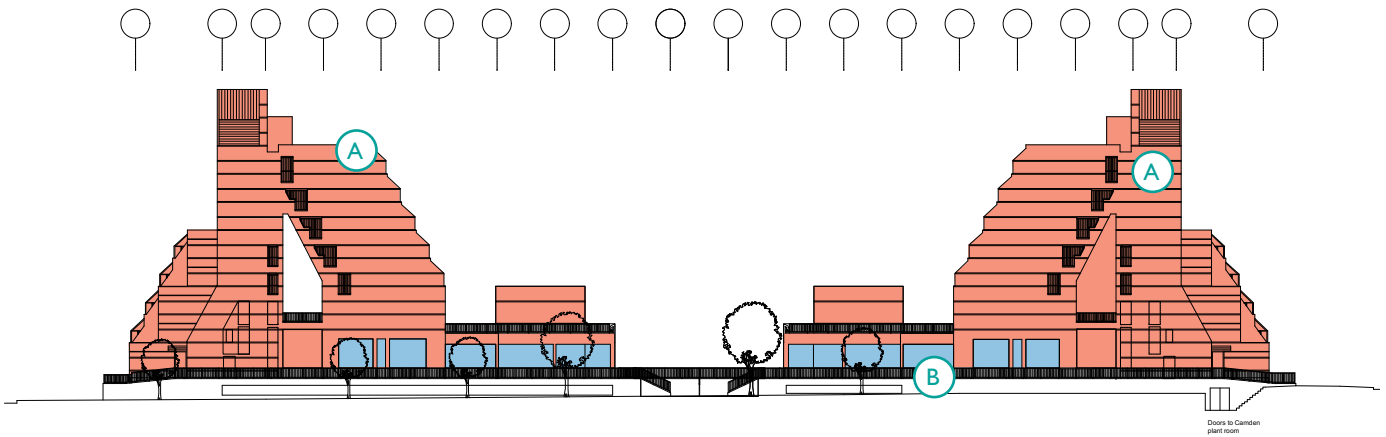
6.6 SIGNIFICANCE PLANS

NORTH AND SOUTH ELEVATION
SIGNIFICANCE

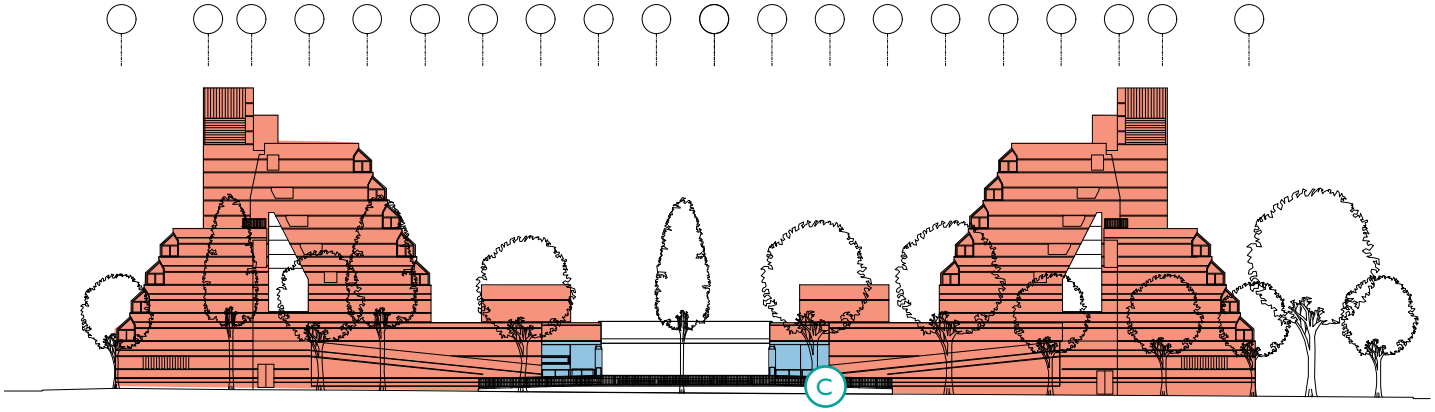
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Neutral
- Detrimental

A Overall massing and form of end elevation - High
B Glazing - Neutral
C Any new shop fit out and glazing - Neutral

This plan is not to scale



NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

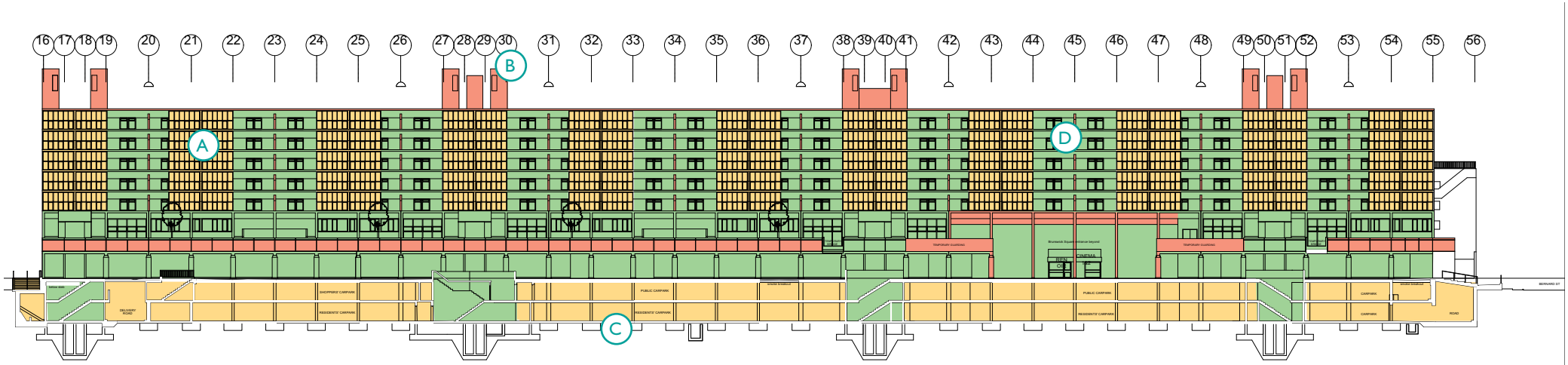
SIGNIFICANCE

BRUNSWICK CENTRE ELEVATIONAL
SIGNIFICANCE

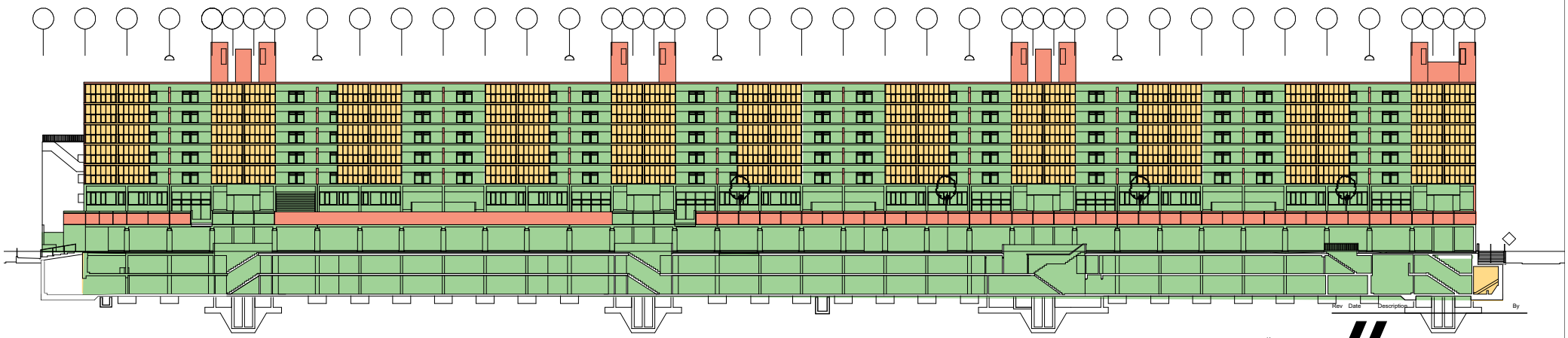
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Neutral
- Detrimental

This plan is not to scale

- A Conservatorys - Low
- B Key Components - High
- C Car Park Area - Low
- D Facades of Flats - Medium



SECTION THROUGH INTERNAL STREET - EAST
(BETWEEN GRID LINES K-L LOOKING EAST)



SECTION B

Key Plan

Rev Date Description By

AXIOM

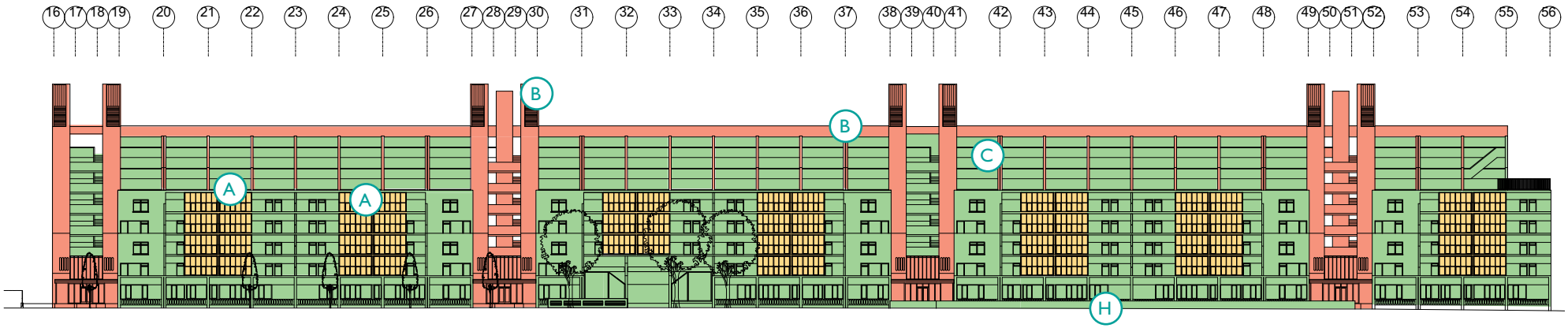
SIGNIFICANCE

BRUNSWICK CENTRE ELEVATIONAL
SIGNIFICANCE

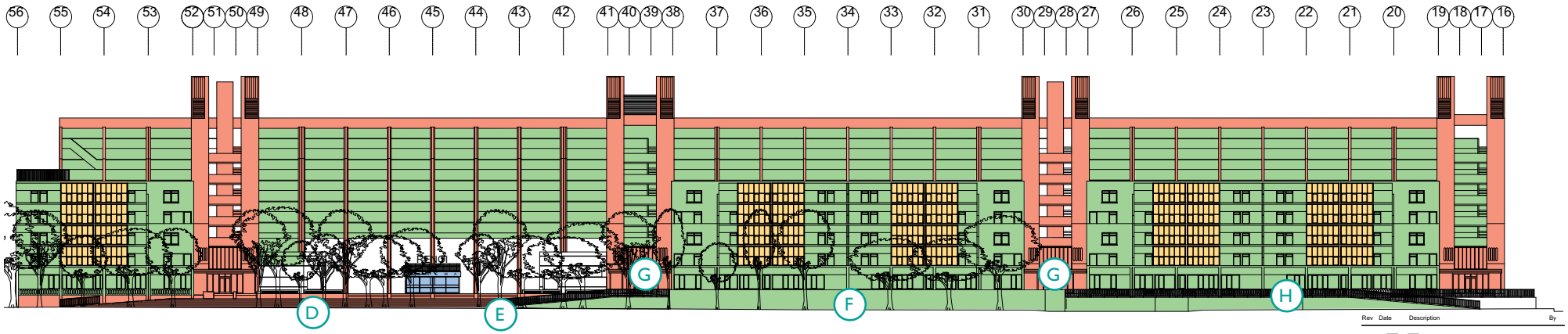
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Neutral
- Detrimental

- A Conservatorys - Low
- B Key Components - High
- C Concrete Walkways - Medium
- D Main Sheds and Landscaping - High
- E Renoir Cinema - Neutral
- F Concrete Walls - Medium
- G Entrances and Stairtowers - Medium
- H All vents at ground level - High

This plan is not to scale



WEST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

Key Plan

Rev Date Description By

AXIOM

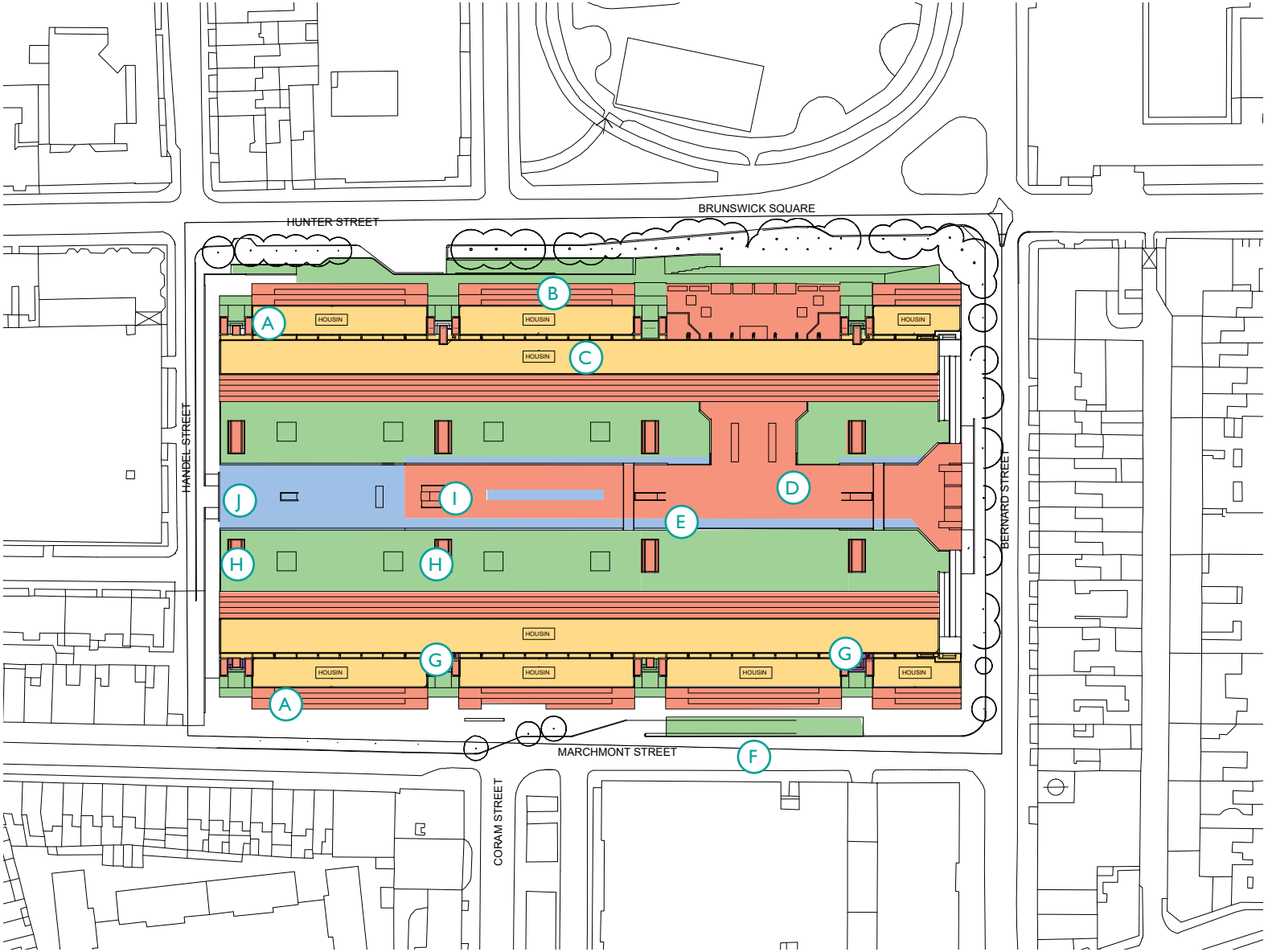
SIGNIFICANCE

BRUNSWICK CENTRE
SIGNIFICANCE

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Neutral
- Detrimental

A Terraces and facades - Medium
B External walls and terraces - Medium
C Roof tops - Neutral
D Main 'street' area - High
E Shops - Neutral
F Entrance ramps and walls - Medium
G Aerials and gantrys - Detrimental
H Concrete structures - High
I Water features and benches - Neutral
J Waitrose development - Neutral

This plan is not to scale



SECTION 7.0
HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY

This section assesses the proposals drawn up by Studio 29 for a series of new lighting interventions at the Brunswick Centre. The overarching aims of these proposals is to

a Create an attractive, welcoming and memorable environment

b Complement and reinforce the architecture

c Create a comfortable and enjoyable space

d Use energy efficient luminaires and light sources for minimised energy consumption

e Minimise light pollution

f Avoid light glare and visual discomfort from the lighting to occupants of the buildings and users of the public realm

g Use automated lighting controls to minimise energy consumption and on-going maintenance requirements

h Consider ease of access for maintenance

i Ensure the daytime appearance is considered, where possible integrating luminaires with the architecture for minimal visual distraction

j Design in accordance with relevant standards and guidance

k Achieve optimum value for money

These aims are not considered at odds with the historic character of the building generally and are seen as part of a range of improvement works to the Centre that are ongoing and being carried out by Lazari Properties. This HIA follows the sequence of proposed lighting designs for the centre as set out in the DAS provided by Studio 29 as part of this application. Each element of the scheme is assessed in its own terms using the magnitude of impact definition given below before a concluding section addresses the combined impact of the scheme on the listed building and the nearby heritage assets.

It is the finding of this assessment that the combined heritage impact of the scheme provides a net benefit to the listed building in terms of functional character and aesthetic value – The Brunswick Centre was designed as a megastructure, with public activity, shopping and amenity below and housing above. These are historic functions that the building still maintains and this scheme supports those functions. It is also considered that there is no harm to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area or any adjacent heritage assets, from the scheme.

7.2 MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT DEFINITION

This report uses the following definitions to express the level of impact on Dale Brow and its setting, from the proposed scheme.

The following criteria are used to assess the impacts of each element of the scheme:

High Beneficial:	The development considerably enhances the heritage values of the identified heritage assets, or the ability to appreciate those values.
Medium Beneficial:	The development enhances to a clearly discernible extent the heritage values of the heritage assets, or the ability to appreciate those values.
Low Beneficial:	The development enhances to a minor extent the heritage values of the heritage assets, or the ability to appreciate those values.
No Harm/ No Change	The development does not change the heritage values of the heritage assets, or the ability to appreciate those values.
Low Adverse:	The development erodes to a minor extent the heritage values of the heritage assets, or the ability to appreciate those values.
Medium Adverse:	The development erodes to a clearly discernible extent the heritage values of the heritage assets, or the ability to appreciate those values.
High Adverse:	The development substantially affects the heritage values of the heritage assets, or the ability to appreciate those values.

7.3 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.3.1 Shopping Street Proposals

Canopy Lighting

This element of the proposals causes little impact in heritage terms as the fabric the lighting is attached to is a later addition to the Brunswick centre that is not part of its original design or fabric. The canopy has a practical function in that it protects the immediate shopfronts from the elements and of course as is set out in the history section of this document the precinct was originally proposed as an enclosed space. The canopy lighting like the bench lighting is a subtle addition to an already existing non original element. There is little real impact on the wider Brunswick centre because this lighting is not attached to any original fabric there is consequently No Harm to the listed building from this element of the proposals and correspondingly No Harm to the surrounding conservation area or the adjacent heritage assets.

Coram Arcade

The proposals for Coram Arcade will impact a space of low significance to the centre – the ceiling void of the arcade itself. The curved nature of the ceiling is of no intrinsic value to the architecture in of itself. The heritage benefits to the listed building from better lighting this area are two-fold. Firstly, the lighting scheme will make the centre more inviting, improving the public offer of the centre and improving visitor and resident experience. Secondly it will enhance the features of the arcade that are of importance, namely the columns on either side that will be more appreciable in the better lighting conditions proposed. There is also the added, heritage benefit of the removal and relocation of the unsightly CCTV mounting and camera currently in the arcade. This element of the proposal is seen as Low Beneficial to the Coram arcade and to the Brunswick centre more generally it will make it more welcoming and approachable and provide a new notable feature.

7.4 CONCLUSIONS

Taken in isolation, each one of these differing, site specific responses to the issues posed by the various conditions at the Brunswick, is sensible and justifiable with the predominant conclusion being No Harm. The combined impact of all of these elements is athat there is no harm caused to the listed building in NPPF terms and there are no impacts on any other heritage assets nearby. Such is the nature of the Brunswick that there is also no impact on the wider conservation area. The minor impact on the listed building is strongly mitigated by the public benefit of enhancing the visitor experience and using the Brunswick Centre's clear architectural qualities as a backcloth for some exciting lighting design responses. The proposals are seen as acceptable to the listed building and justifiable in heritage terms.

LIST OF SOURCES
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alan Borg, 'Theodore Jacobsen and the Building of the Foundling Hospital', *Georgian Group Journal*, Vol. XII (2002)

Camden Council, *Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy* (2011)

Clare Melhuish, 'From futurism to 'town-room': Hodgkinson, the Brunswick and the low-rise/high-density principle', in L. Ciccarelli and C. Melhuish (eds.), *Post-war Architecture between Italy and the UK: Exchanges and transcultural influences* (London, 2021)

Clare Melhuish, 'Visibility Regained', *The Architectural Review*, Vol. CCXXI, No. 1321 (March 2007)

Clare Melhuish, *Inhabiting the Image: architecture and social identity in the post-industrial city* (Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy – Brunel University, 2012)

Covell and Matthews, 'The Foundling Estate, Bloomsbury, W.C.1.: Particulars, facts and additional information…' (undated, c. 1959), p. 12 (LMA, GLC/AR/ HB/02/0410)

D. J. Olsen, *Town planning in London: the eighteenth & nineteenth centuries* (New Haven, 1982)

David Levitt, 'The Passenger: Panel Conversation with David Levitt & Takero Shimazaki, chaired by Farah Jarral', J. Hill (ed.) *Pass-engers* (London, 2018)

David Taylor, 'Brunswick Centre set for revamp', *The Architects' Journal* (22 January 1998) (https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/brunswick-centreset-for-a-revamp)

G. Worsley, 'The "Best Turned" House of the Duke of Bedford', *Georgian Group Journal*, Vol. VI (1996)

J. Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1530 to 1830*, 7th edn. (London, 1983)

Mark Swenarton, 'Patrick Hodgkinson obituary', *The Guardian* (8 March 2016) (https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/mar/08/patrick-hodgkinson-obituary)

Mark Swenarton, 'Politics, property and planning: building the Brunswick, 1958–74', *Town Planning Review*, 84(2)

Neave Brown, Theo Crosby, et al, 'A Good Bit of City', *The Architectural Review*, Vol. CLII, No. 908 (October, 1972)

P. Hodgkinson, 'Brunswick Centre, Bloomsbury: A Good Bit of City', *Twentieth Century Architecture*, 6 (2002)

Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Council Plans', *The Architectural Review* (1972)

Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Foundling Opportunities', *The Architectural Review* (1972)

Patrick Hodgkinson, 'Redevelopment of part of the Foundling Hospital Estate, Bloomsbury, London', *Lotus: An International Review of Contemporary Architecture*, No. 7 (1970)

Patrick Hodgkinson, 'The Eclipse of the Brunswick', *The Architectural Review*, Vol. CCXXI, No. 1321 (March 2007)

R. Gordon, 'Modern Architecture for the Masses: The Owen Luder Partnership 1960-67', Twentieth Century Architecture, 6 (2002)

Report on Area Bounded by Herbrand St, Bernard St, Brunswick Sq, Hunter St and Tavistock Pl' (12 Feb 1963) (LMA, GLC/AR/HB/02/0410)

Reports of the Steering Group and Working Group appointed by the Minister of Transport, *Traffic in Towns: A study of the long term problems of traffic in urban areas* (London, 1963)

Reyner Banham, *Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past* (London, 1976)

Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic* (London, 1966)

Steve Rose, 'Scrubs up beautifully', *The Guardian* (23 October 2006) (https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2006/oct/23/architecture.communities)

Walter H Godfrey and W McB. Marcham (eds.), *Survey of London: Volume 24, the Parish of St Pancras Part 4: King's Cross Neighbourhood* (London, 1952)

'170 ft.-high flats in £9m. Bloomsbury rebuilding scheme', *North London Press* (3 April 1959), p. 16

'A Ship Called Patrick Hodgkinson', *AA Files*, 73 (2016)

'Brunswick architect accused of 'damaging' own building', *The Architects' Journal* (3 February 2000)

'Brunswick Centre faces a creamy refurbishment', *The Architects' Journal* (24 June 1999)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

'Brunswick Centre faces possibility of extra storey', *The Architects' Journal* (13/3/2006) (https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/brunswick-centre-faces-possibility-of-extra-storey-image)

'Brunswick Centre is Leaking', *The Architects' Journal* (11 January 1978)

'Brunswick Centre set for a revamp', *The Architects' Journal* (22 January 1998)

'Brunswick plans on hold', *The Architects' Journal* (12 August 1992)

'Brunswick-inspired debate on listing legislation', *The Architects' Journal* (5 October 2000) (https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/brunswick-inspired-debate-on-listing-legislation)

'David Levitt interviewed by Susan Jellis at the home of David Levitt, The Brunswick Centre', (Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre)

'Eyecatcher or Eyesore? Twentieth Century Society backs local campaign against Brunswick Centre extension plans', *Twentieth Century Society* (28/7/2014, https://c20society.org.uk/news/eyecatcher-or-eyesore-twentieth-century-society-backs-local-campaign-against-brunswick-centre-extension-plans)

'Foundling Hospital Site Sold', *Kensington Post* (14 April 1933), p. 4

'Foundling Trust tenants are told: Stick together', *North London Press* (27 May 1960), pp. 1, 20

'Latest plans for the Brunswick Centre go on show', *The Architects' Journal* (4 July 1996)

'Latest plans for the Brunswick Centre run into trouble', *The Architects' Journal* (29 August 1996)

'Letters: A Nonsensical Review of a Flawed Book', ***The*** *Architects' Journal* (17 May 2007) (https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/archive/a-nonsensical-reviewof-a-flawed-book)

'Listing rules challenged', *The Architects' Journal* (22 July 1992)

'Living with glass', *Glass Age*, Vol. 16, Issue 1 (1973)

'London County Council Town Planning Committee, Foundling Estate Proposed Comprehensive Development – Report by the Architect' (30 Oct 1962), p. 1 (LMA, GLC/AR/HB/02/0410)

'Millionaire who began at 4s. a week in Tipton', *Birmingham Weekly Mercury* (21 March 1965), p. 10

'Notes from here and there', *Glass Age*, Vol. 12, Iss. 2 (May 1969)

'Permission Granted on an Outline Application, Ref. 6992' (7 Feb 1963), p, 2 (LMA, GLC/AR/HB/02/0410)

'Shopkeepers are offered expensive short leases', *North London Press* (26 February 1960), p. 2

'The battle of Brunswick', *The Architects' Journal* (15 July 1992)

'Too early to fix plans', *Westminster Gazette* (27 August 1925), p. 1

'Tycoon buys £2m. London estate', *News Chronicle and Daily Dispatch* (21 November 1958), p. 7

APPENDIX A
LIST DESCRIPTION

BRUNSWICK SQUARE (West side) 1-187a O'Donnell Court, 1-212a Foundling Court, Renoir Cinema, shops (The Brunswick Centre), basement car park, and attached ramps, steps and studios

GV II

Two linked blocks of 560 flats, incorporating rows of shops at raised ground level over basement car -parking on two levels, with attached workshops, ramps and steps. 1967-72 by Patrick Hodgkinson for Marchmont Properties and LB Camden, completed by L Brian Ingram and T P Bennett and Partners. The first scheme prepared 1960-3 with Sir Leslie Martin, subsequent scheme developed 1963-5 by Hodgkinson, and modified 1966-8, assisted by F D A Levitt, A Richardson, D Campbell and P Myers. Engineers McAlpine Design Group, and Robert McAlpine and Sons were the builders. Reinforced concrete, some now painted as was always intended, glazed roofs to part of each flat, otherwise roofs are flat. Flat roofs over shops form terraces serving the flats, on which are placed small 'professional studios'.

Complex megastructure of two 'A-framed' blocks, O'Donnell Court and Foundling Court, linked by a raised podium containing shops and a cinema and set over a basement car park on two levels. The outer or perimeter range of five storeys, the inner or main range of eight storeys. Most of the flats on the upper floors have one or two bedrooms, with some studios at the ends, all with glazed living room extending on to balcony, which form a stepped profile down the side of the building. One larger flat and further small flats on the lower floors of the perimeter blocks. The raised ground floor is occupied by a shopping mall, whose projecting form forms two terraces above, linked by a bridge in the early 1990s when steps from the mall were blocked. The professional chambers, intended for functions such as doctor's surgeries, are now leased as offices and workshops. Cinema facing Brunswick Square descends two levels into basement; was originally one screen, but has been subsequently simply subdivided. Basement on two levels has car parking.

The elevations are determined by the plan, with metal windows, and metal balustrading to concrete balconies. Mullions to concealed basement ventilation. Regularly spaced lift-shafts, staircases and ventilator towers reminiscent of Antonio Sant'Elia's scheme of 1914 for Milan Railway Station; there are comparisons too in the formal entrance to the shopping mall opposite Brunswick Square, where the framework of the structure is left open save for the cinema, largely glazed and with glazed doors, sentinel at its entrance. The flats are now entered via modern security doors and the internal 'A'-frame structure is exposed and makes an extremely powerful composition along the landings serving the flats. The internal finishes of the flats, shops and cinema have been inspected, and are not of special interest.

The Brunswick Centre is the pioneering example of a megastructure in England: of a scheme which combines several functions of equal importance within a single framework. It is also the pioneering example of low-rise, high-density housing, a field in which Britain was extremely influential on this scale. The scheme grew out of a theoretical project by Hodgkinson with Sir Leslie Martin for West Kentish Town (St Pancras MB), and his own student work of 1953. This, however, was for a mat of largely four-storied maisonettes using a cross-over or scissor plan, while in section the Brunswick Centre more closely resembled Harvey Court, designed for Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, in 1957, a design largely developed by Hodgkinson working with Martin and Colin St John Wilson. Brunswick developed the concept of the stepped section on a large scale and for a range of facilities, whose formality was pioneering. It forms an interesting group of reference with Sir Denys Lasdun and Partners' University of East Anglia (desigend 1962-3) and Darbourne and Darke's Lillington Gardens, Westminster (designed 1961). More directly, the housing part of the scheme was taken over in 1965 by LB Camden, and Hodgkinson liaised with the Chief Architect, S A G Cook. His influence on the young architects working for Cook was profound, and can be seen in schemes by Neave Brown, Benson and Forsyth and others built across the borough in the 1970s - and which in their turn were celebrated and imitated on a smaller scale elsewhere. The most celebrated of these schemes is Alexandra Road by Neave Brown, of 1972-8 and listed grade II*, which repeats the use of concrete and the stepped building profile, but achieves greater formality by concentrating solely on the provision of housing, set in a crescent.