

# Heritage Statement

**Repair of Masonry to Front Entrance  
and West Tower Façades, Freemasons'  
Hall, 60 Great Queen Street, London  
WC2B 5AZ**

For

United Grand Lodge of England



**heritageplaces**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose of this document

This heritage statement provides an assessment of the significance of built and/or cultural heritage at and in the environs of the application site at Freemasons' Hall, 60 Great Queen Street, London, and of the impact of the submitted development proposal on that significance. It has been prepared on behalf of the United Grand Lodge of England to accompany a full planning and listed building consent submission to the London Borough of Camden. As noted, the statement covers built and/or cultural heritage, but not archaeology.

The development proposal comprises repair works to the masonry façades of the front entrance and tower of Freemasons' Hall to ensure that both health and safety risks and the need for maintenance and repair of the façades suffering from Regent Street Disease (RSD) are met.

The National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF], which since 2012 has incorporated the Government's heritage policy and is now in a third edition (published in June 2019), recognises that the historic environment is an irreplaceable resource whose fragile and finite nature is a particularly important consideration in planning. The Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 (entitled 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' and published in July 2015), states:

*'Development proposals that affect the historic environment are much more likely to gain the necessary permissions and create successful places if they are designed with the knowledge and understanding of the significance of the heritage assets they may affect. The first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and, if relevant, the contribution of its setting to its significance.'* [HEGPA 2, paragraph 4]

It also notes in introduction that:

*'...the information required in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consent should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision, and that activities to conserve or investigate the asset needs to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected and the impact on that significance'* [HEGPA 2, paragraph 3]

The Good Practice Advice advocates a logical step-by-step approach to dealing with heritage assets during the planning and design of development and subsequently in making a planning application – namely:

- *'Understand the significance of the affected assets*
- *Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance*
- *Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF*
- *Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance*

- *Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change.*
- *Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.’ HEGPA 2, paragraph 6]*

This heritage statement has been prepared to fulfill this brief established by the NPPF and the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2. It has also been prepared to accord with guidance set out in Historic England's 2019 Advice Note 12 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets'.

## 1.2 Methodology and sources of information

This statement has been based on:

- Visits carried out to Freemasons’ Hall by the author between 2016 and 2020;
- Various original and modern documentary sources available for inspection in the Library and Museum in Freemasons’ Hall;
- Diverse published and unpublished evaluations of the local area, the site, its architecture and architectural features and its historical associations;
- The local Historic Environment Record;
- Historical documents available on line;
- Other website information, including local newspapers and other information from [www.findmypast.com](http://www.findmypast.com) and material from a range of record sources made available at [www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk) and from Historic England’s National Heritage List for England;
- Historical maps and plans;
- Examination of national and local policy documents and other relevant material produced by Historic England and the local planning authority (LPA).

## 1.3 Format of this statement

In line with the guidance set out in ‘Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2’, as cited in section 1.1 above, after this introduction, section 2 provides an outline description and history of Freemasons’ Hall in Great Queen Street, before section 3 identifies potential heritage impact receptors and provides an assessment of their significance. Section 4 sets out relevant local and national heritage policy, while section 5 assesses the effects of the proposals contained in the planning submission on the significance of the heritage asset and provides a justification for any harm caused thereto.

Annexes I and II contain, respectively, historic maps/plans and photographs of the building.

## 2 FREEMASONS' HALL

### 2.1 The application site

Freemasons' Hall [NGR: TQ 30470 81244] lies on the south east side of Great Queen Street at the southernmost tip of the London Borough of Camden and on the eastern edge of Covent Garden.

The present day Freemasons' Hall is the third such structure on the site and/or adjoining land, the first being completed in 1775-76. It occupies a substantial part of Sub-Area 2 of the Seven Dials Conservation Area, which, designated in 1971 by the GLC, was the first of the five constituent sub-areas to be recognised as being of special architectural and historic interest in this way.

As the London Borough of Camden's adopted Conservation Area Appraisal of 1999 notes, Great Queen Street was built in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, forming a continuation of the north side of Lincoln's Inn Fields until the construction of Kingsway in 1905. Its character and built form were shaped by the development of the first Freemasons' Hall, constructed to the design of Thomas Sandby, a watercolour artist-turned-architect, in 1775-76.

The site of today's Freemasons' Hall is of irregular polygonal shape, covering 2.25 acres and is entirely taken up by the Grade II\* listed building, designed by architects Ashley & Newman and completed in 1933 [Map 1; Figures 1, 2]. Its principal entrance occupies the south west corner of the site and faces roughly west northwest. The site and building are bordered by Great Queen Street to the north west, Wild Street to the south and Wild Court to the south east.

### 2.2 Outline history

In 1774, the Moderns' Grand Lodge bought a house on the south eastern side of Great Queen Street, with a garden and further house behind, for the purpose of erecting the first Freemasons' Hall to the rear of the plot. Until then, the Grand Lodge had been forced to meet in Livery Company halls and rooms or in various local taverns. Designed by Thomas Sandby, the new building was opened with great ceremony on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1776, while the front house was subsequently converted as the Freemasons' Tavern in 1786. In addition to its Masonic use, the Hall rapidly became an important venue for London Society, hosting concerts, balls, plays, literary evenings and meetings during the Season. In 1815, Sir John Soane purchased and gave additional land occupied by two adjoining houses and on which he designed and by 1820 had built a further hall, standing alongside Sandby's, providing much needed extra accommodation.

The second Freemasons' Hall was designed by Frederick Cockerell and was completed in 1869 [Map 2]. It replaced everything on the Great Queen Street site except Sandby's original structure, which was retained and incorporated as a secondary hall, before being damaged by a serious fire in 1883. Cockerell's building – termed a 'showy pile' by the respected architectural historian, Professor James Stevens Curl – had a severe and heavy classical feel, much enriched with symbolic sculptures by William

Nicholl (renowned for his work on the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge (1848) and St George's Hall, Liverpool (1854)). However, with the burgeoning growth of Masonic membership in the last quarter of the 19th century, accommodation in the second Freemasons' Hall rapidly came under pressure. Extensions to the Hall were built in 1906 (designed by H L Florence and Brown and Barrow), 1910 and 1915/16 (Brown and Barrow), but the pressure continued unabated. As Calderwood (2013) noted:

*'The [later] Victorian age...had witnessed a constant struggle between the accommodation needs of the growing body of London freemasons and the inadequate capacity of Freemasons' Hall in Great Queen Street. During the nineteenth century, several attempts were made to resolve this tension, but with no more than short term success. Thus, the rebuilding of the Hall between 1864 and 1869 and its enlargement in 1899 and again in 1910 proved to be no match for the growth of the masonic population meeting in the capital. In 1919, a bold plan was announced for a new building which would be a marriage between the need for more accommodation and the desire to commemorate those who had died in the First World War.'*

[...]

*The insufficiency of masonic accommodation in Great Queen Street was further highlighted in 1920 at the annual festival of UGLE, when the Grand Master observed that 'The scene they had witnessed that evening when from two to three hundred had been turned away because of the inability to find room was proof of the necessity for such a home. Additional proof was seen when the choice of site for the new building was debated in Grand Lodge and the attendance was so large that the meeting had to be moved to the nearby Kingsway Hall.'*

The 1919 'bold plan' by the Grand Master, HRH Duke of Connaught, was to create a new building that would 'provide adequate central headquarters for the Craft' and would be able to accommodate 2,000 Masons rather than the 720 of Cockerell's second Hall. It would form 'a perpetual memorial...to honour the many brethren [it is now known, numbering 3,225] who fell during the war'. A campaign aiming to raise £1 million in subscriptions for the proposed Masonic Peace Memorial was established in January 1920. In December 1922, the Times, along with other national and local newspapers, reported on the decision taken by Grand Lodge about the site for the new building – the extended Great Queen Street site being chosen over another in Adelphi 'facing the river [and] regarded as being the finest available in London at the present time', which would have cost another £300,000 to £350,000 to develop over and above the £1 million estimate for the Great Queen Street site.

An open international architectural competition was held in 1925, attracting 110 entries. These sketch designs were whittled down by a small judging committee chaired by Sir Edwin Lutyens to a shortlist of ten architectural practices for a second limited (and paid) competition of 'elaborate sets of [worked up] drawings', run early in 1926. The June 1926 edition of the 'Architect and Building News' reported in detail on the submitted designs, which were exhibited at the RIBA, commenting critically that only two (including the selected winner) were 'planned even approximately on the same lines, while the remaining schemes exhibit the greatest degree of diversity conceivable and resemble each other only in the negative quality of differing in most essential particulars from the design which was placed first'.

The article is useful in explaining the brief for this, the third Freemasons' Hall for the Great Queen Street site, for otherwise this does not appear to survive in the Library and Museum of Freemasonry or elsewhere in the public domain. The ten competing designs were required to provide:

*'...a great meeting hall or temple. In association with this were to be administrative and executive rooms, Grand and Past Grand Officers' Rooms and offices of the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution. Besides a number of smaller lodge rooms, there were to be a library, museum, reading and writing rooms for visitors from the provinces and overseas. In addition, there was to be a licensed restaurant, to replace the existing Connaught Rooms and Mark Masons' Hall.'*

The winning design, again chosen by Lutyens' judging panel, was submitted by the London based architectural practice of H V Ashley and Winton Newman. Ashley & Newman established their partnership in 1907. Their first major commission was an extension to the Council House in Birmingham, a competition won in 1907 although the extension was not completed until 1919. By the time they won the Masonic Peace Memorial competition in 1926, they had also designed and seen built an extension to Birmingham's Art Gallery and Museum (completed 1917), the out-patients' department for the Royal Free Hospital (1914), significant new housing commissions in Hampstead and Totteridge (1913-14), Clive House (the Passport Office) in Petty France (c1925), London and Cheltenham Technical College, and Schomberg House between Page Street and Vincent Street, Westminster (1926).

As the Architect and Building News article tartly, but correctly, identified, Ashley & Newman had the advantage (along with the designer of the second entry *'planned even approximately on the same lines'*) of themselves being Masons and therefore had *'an intimate acquaintance with the needs of their own institution'*. Despite this carping, the writer of the article acknowledged that *'Messrs Ashley and Winton Newman have been fortunate enough to provide for these needs in a more convenient and economical manner than the other competitors'* and *'...the fact remains that their scheme was far the best when judged on purely architectural grounds and they are to be heartily congratulated upon a very fine achievement'*.

In reality, the irregular polygonal shape of the extended development site made fulfilment of the brief in a suitably resonant piece of architecture very challenging and, in this respect, the analysis provided by the contemporary article is very useful:

*'Most of us who ourselves have in the past entered for architectural competitions in which practical requirements were complex and exacting will have every sympathy with the architects who have prepared schemes for the new Masonic Peace Memorial and will realise that some of the aesthetic problems put forward were as nearly insoluble as any such problems can be...The two most important things about this building are that it contains a large hall or temple and that it is designed for the use and meeting place of a secret society [as UGLE was regarded at the time]...*

[...]



*...In the case of the design placed first [that is, that of Ashley & Newman], what must have influenced the assessors in no small degree is the fact that the architects grasped a very important fact, namely, that the corner between Great Queen Street and Wild Street presented the only opportunity for a great architectural display. It so happens that neither Great Queen Street nor Wild Street are of sufficient width to enable a really good view to be obtained of a very long façade. On the other hand, the above-mentioned corner is being opened up to view from Long Acre as the block of buildings at the corner of Drury Lane and Wild Street is due to be removed. Consequently, it was a masterly stroke on the part of Messrs Ashley and Winton Newman to put their great tower or cupola in this position. When once the maximum note of emphasis was placed on this point the main disposition of the [internal] plan followed therefore, for with the main entrance at this corner it seemed a fairly logical procedure to make the main access of the temple on the line bisecting the angle between these two streets, so that from the entrance portal one should proceed straight to the main chamber of the building with subsidiary apartments arranged symmetrically on either side of it. But having, with good reason, adopted such a scheme it follows immediately that the temple itself was as it were buried from view and could on no account receive external expression...To a certain extent, therefore, the design suffers on this account, but there is no doubt that the practical convenience which resulted from the central position of the temple and the extremely skillful planning of the rooms adjacent to it were well worth the sacrifice of architectural expression.'*

The foundation stone weighing almost two tons was laid by the Duke of Connaught on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1927 by 'synchronisation', using an electrically operated model of a crane from the stage of the Royal Albert Hall. Demolition of some of the existing houses on the newly acquired section of the site commenced soon afterwards [Figures 3, 4] and was followed in July 1928 by the commencement of a 'vast' foundations contract let to Messrs Holloway Bros for £71,000. Once this was complete, the main building contract was let to contractor, Sir Walter Lawrence of Finsbury Square for £637,000 and work commenced in October 1928 [Figures 5, 6, 7]. According to national and local newspaper articles at the time:

*'The memorial will be finished in Portland stone in a restrained and dignified style, combining the beauty of the classic tendency with the needs of modern utility in the elevation.*

*[...]*

*The memorial will be notably British as regards the material which we are using in its construction.*

*Practically the whole of the wood will be from British Empire trees. There will be Australian and Tasmanian oak, English oak, Honduras mahogany, as well as laurel wood, teak, 'silver grey' and padauk from India.*

*Five thousand tons of British steel, 6000 tons of British cement, 75,000 cubic feet of British [Portland] stone, and 5,000,000 bricks will be needed for the structure.*

*We shall be employing 800 men altogether on the work...'*

This was, of course, a major building project being announced just as the global economy was about to be shattered by the Wall Street Crash that month and the ensuing Great Depression, although the importance of that could not have been foreseen at the time.

Sandby's badly fire damaged Hall was demolished in 1930, as construction progressed, and by the time the Masonic Peace Memorial was complete, of Cockerell's second Freemasons' Hall, only part of the façade together with the former tavern portion remained – both today being part of the Connaught Rooms.

The building [Map 3], which in total cost in the region of £1,300,000, was dedicated by the Duke of Connaught on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1933, although it had been in use for many months. It remained known as the Masonic Peace Memorial until the outbreak of war in 1939, when its name reverted to Freemasons' Hall.

## 2.2 Description

A London Open House leaflet has helpfully set out a reasonably detailed description of the building:

*'The building is constructed on a steel frame and faced with Portland stone. The principal ceremonial rooms are located on the first floor. Three vestibules form a ceremonial approach to the Grand Temple and are of increasing richness in architectural treatment and design.*

*In the Second Vestibule there are displays about Freemasonry and further information about the history of the site and this building. The First Vestibule lies above the ceremonial entrance to the building below the tower at the junction of Great Queen Street and Wild Street. The stained glass windows on either side represent the six days of the Creation. On one side these are shown with the five orders of architecture and on the other side with five Masonic symbols.*

*The Shrine was designed by Walter Gilbert (1871-1946). In bronze, its design and ornamentation incorporate symbols connected with the theme of peace and the attainment of eternal life. It is in the form of a bronze casket resting on a boat amongst reeds; the boat is indicative of a journey which has come to an end. In the centre of the front panel a relief shows the Hand of God set in a circle in which rests the Soul of Man.*

*At the four corners of the Shrine stand pairs of winged Seraphim carrying golden trumpets and across the front are four gilded figures portraying (from left to right) Moses the Law Giver, Joshua the Warrior Priest, Solomon the Wise and St George.*

*The Roll of Honour of the 1914-1918 War is guarded by kneeling figures representing the four fighting services (Navy, Army, Royal Marines & Royal Flying Corps). The bronze Pillars of Light flanking the Shrine are decorated with wheat (for resurrection), lotus (for the waters of life) and irises (for eternal life). At the base of each pillar there are four panels of oak leaves.*

*The theme of the stained glass over the Shrine is the attainment of Peace through Sacrifice. The figure of Peace is holding a model of the Tower façade. Fighting men and civilians are shown in the lower windows ascending a winding staircase until they arrive with the pilgrims through the ages at the feet of the Angel of Peace.*

*In the ante chamber to the Grand Temple (the Third Vestibule) the pattern of the richly coloured ceiling painted with gold is echoed in the elaborate floor pattern executed in marble and mosaic. The central multi-pointed star is inlaid with lapis lazuli. The four blue panels represent heaven and the rose in each corner reflects the connection between England and Freemasonry (the Grand Lodge of 1717 formed in London was the first Grand Lodge in the world).*

*The Grand Temple is at the centre of the site but the design and use of internal courtyards is such that it has external walls on three sides. The Temple is 120 ft long by 90 ft wide by 62 ft high, and holds approximately 1700 people including balcony seating. On ceremonial occasions access to the Temple is via the bronze doors, the design of which incorporates historical and symbolic themes. The walls of the Temple are lined with various types of marble.*

*The central panel of the ceiling is a representation of the celestial sky. Surrounding it is a deeply coffered and richly decorated border with the arms of the United Grand Lodge of England at each corner. The decoration of the cornice, which is 15 ft deep, is entirely in mosaic and took 22 months to complete. The allegorical groups in the design each incorporate columns of a classical order of architecture.*

*On the eastern side (opposite the bronze doors) in between two Ionic pillars (representing Wisdom) is a representation of the Ark of the Covenant and Jacob's Ladder. Resting against the Ladder is the Volume of Sacred Law (any holy book displayed at a lodge meeting). Jacob's Ladder bears the symbols for Faith (a cross), Hope (an anchor) and Charity (a burning heart), ascending towards the Hebrew character of YOD (Jehovah). To the left stands King Solomon, to the right King Hiram, the builders of the first Temple at Jerusalem.*

*On the western side (above the bronze doors) two Doric pillars (representing strength of knowledge) are flanked by Euclid and Pythagoras on either side of the 47th Proposition (the symbol worn by a Past Master of a Lodge). The pillars support the Moon around which is an ancient symbol of wisdom, the serpent.*

*On the Southern side are two Corinthian pillars (representing beauty) with Helios, the Sun God, driving his chariot across the heavens to mark the Sun at its meridian. The pillars support the All-Seeing Eye below which is a five pointed star.*

*On the Northern side between the two pillars of the Composite order are the arms of the Duke of Connaught and Strathearn (Grand Master when this Hall was built). On one side is St George and on the other the Dragon. The celestial globe on one pillar and the terrestrial globe on the other represent the universal nature of Freemasonry. At the base of the pillars are two blocks of stone (ashlars). One is rough representing Man entering Freemasonry and the other is smooth representing how Man is improved through Freemasonry.*

*In the corners of the cornice stand four angelic figures portraying the four cardinal virtues Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude and Justice. The inscription commences in the north east corner and is taken from Chronicles I xvii 12-14. The frieze on the four splay walls carries the twelve signs of the Zodiac. These have no Masonic significance but are a link with the first Freemasons' Hall on this site which featured them in its decoration.*

*The organ console is situated in the centre at the end of the dais. The organ is a three manual Willis instrument with over 2000 speaking pipes.*

*The Library and Museum of Freemasonry houses one of the leading collections of Masonic artefacts and books and is open to the public.'*

Despite the masonic emblems explained in the foregoing, as Curl notes in his paper on 'Freemasonry and Architecture' in the 'Handbook of Freemasonry' (edited by Bogdan and Snoek (2014)), *'apart from a few allusions, [the building's] 'masonic' aspects are subtle'*. Generally, the building externally is seen as pared down, dignified classicism. As already mentioned, the building has long facades, emphasised in its external detailing, and culminates across the west angle in its corner tower, which echoes the form of the Temple entrance beneath. The effect defies the diagonal axis the Temple is set on, as well as its processional access route. In his Buildings of England series, the notable architectural historian, Nikolaus Pevsner called this exterior, *'...bewilderingly self-possessed...with a corner erection like the Port of London Authority and all the detail in a kind of classical revival'*.

The fine detailing of the interior is markedly Art Deco influenced, with symmetry and balance of design. It is generally held to be the only Art Deco major building interior in London that remains substantively 'as built' and in use for its original purpose. The importance of the interior's symbolism of peace is of great importance and is well explained in Saunders and Cornish's 2009 'Contested Objects – Material Memorials of the First World War':

*'The single largest, most impressive and enduring of the many Masonic artefacts which can be judged material legacies of the Great War is the Freemasons' Hall, funded entirely from members' subscriptions, in exchange for which...a medal or jewel was produced....Over 53,000 of these jewels were issued, and they became a strong visual indicator of the fundraising appeal for the lifetime of their owners...*

*[...]*

*The symbolic importance of the peace memorial at the time may be judged by the fact that King George V, although not himself a freemason, kept a model of the tower on his writing desk until his death.*

*Elements of war and remembrance are incorporated into key parts of the building's fabric. The architectural space of the main ceremonial rooms begins with an area termed 'the shrine', whose focal point is the casket for the scroll of remembrance. This takes the form of a biblical reed boat which incorporates Masonic and nationalistic imagery: at each corner kneels a figure representing one of the forces...The panels are filled with foliage of plants that grow in Flanders – a reference to the landscape of this particularly bloody battle zone of the Great War. The main stained glass*

*window of the shrine area shows pilgrims ascending to their rest, including soldiers from the war...The bronze cast doors of the main temple also feature two soldiers as emblems of the virtue of sacrifice among the otherwise classical iconography...'*

Over recent years, the Grand Temple, just as with Sandby's Hall, has increasingly been used for non-Masonic events such as concerts and musical theatre – having an almost perfect acoustic and clear sight-lines.

## 2.3 The building since completion in 1933

Freemasons' Hall continues to be used for its original purpose. It has been maintained to a very high standard since completion and, as a visit to the building powerfully demonstrates, its management has always focused on best practice care rather than 'economical' maintenance.

With the knowledge, approval, and where necessary consent of London Borough of Camden, in recent years, significant investment has already been made in combating and repairing the effects of progressive corrosion in the building's structural steel frame. Allied to this, two vertical light-wells have been infilled and incorporated into the accommodation, creating additional space at each floor level. Recently, a lavatory at first floor level (not originally one of the formal toilets) has been refurbished and extended into the adjacent infilled light-well in order to create additional toilet facilities, for use by male and female visitors. This reflects an important management responsibility – namely, ensuring that the building remains suitable for its present day use and future demands. The Ashley and Newman design did not incorporate female WCs: today, the building is used by many thousands of women every year.

The management challenge facing the UGLE Board is not only to maintain Freemasons' Hall's built fabric, but also to adapt it to meet the needs of Freemasonry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, while maintaining and enhancing its suitability for non-Masonic functions, including international fashion shows, use as a film set and a multitude of other events that now represent an ever-increasing demand and a vital income generator, assisting in safeguarding the designated heritage asset and its significance for future generations. The recently consented and completed new Museum Gallery within the building is a good example of the changing need which UGLE is committed to managing, while retaining the building's important original use.

### 3 THE IDENTIFICATION OF HERITAGE ASSETS BEING POTENTIAL RECEPTORS OF IMPACTS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS & ASSESSMENT OF THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

#### 3.1 Introduction

##### 3.1.1 Heritage assets and their potential to experience impacts from the development

The NPPF defines a heritage asset as being *'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest'*.

From a heritage perspective, built and other assets in the environment are either heritage assets or ordinary assets. Those that are classified as heritage assets may be designated (for example, a listed building or conservation area) or non-designated. The National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF], which contains the Government's national heritage policy, defines 'designated' heritage assets (being World Heritage sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, protected wreck sites, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or conservation areas), but not non-designated heritage assets. However, in defining the term 'heritage asset', it does by implication determine that those assets which are non-designated are *'assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)'*.

More helpfully, under the heading *'What are non-designated heritage assets?'*, paragraphs 039 and 040 of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's 2019 'Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' states:

*'Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.'*

*A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets. [Paragraph 039]*

*There are a number of processes through which non-designated heritage assets may be identified, including the local and neighbourhood plan-making processes and conservation area appraisals and reviews. Irrespective of how they are identified, it is important that the decisions to identify them as non-designated heritage assets are based on sound evidence. [Paragraph 040]'*

Once its definitions are drawn together, the NPPF identifies heritage assets as being components of the historic environment that can be positively identified as having a degree of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest meriting consideration in planning decisions. Simply being old, being part of an ensemble or area that is - as an assemblage - recognisable as a heritage asset,

having a history of use, bearing a similarity to components in the locality that are heritage assets, or conversely being physically distinctive within its setting or wider context does not *per se* transform a built (or other ordinary) asset into a heritage asset. Building on the definition of ‘heritage’ set out in English Heritage’s ‘*Conservation Principles*’ (2008) (being ‘*all inherited resources which people value for reasons beyond mere utility*’), heritage assets can be distinguished from other components of the environment by the meaning for society that a heritage asset holds over and above its functional utility. So to be regarded as a heritage asset, a building or structure must have some meaningful archaeological, architectural, artistic or historical interest that gives it a value to society transcending its functional utility.

The NPPF makes the point that significance (which it defines as ‘*The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest*’) derives ‘*not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting*’. It defines the setting of a heritage asset as being:

*‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.’*

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF demands that:

*‘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...’*

Moreover, as has already been explained, the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 reiterates this requirement in its advocated approach to dealing with heritage assets, which begins ‘*Understand the significance of the affected assets*’.

Accordingly, by extension, this heritage statement is required by this policy and associated guidance to identify:

- Designated heritage assets within or (if a designated area-wide asset) including the site, which might potentially receive direct impacts from the development of the application site;
- Non-designated heritage assets within the site, which might potentially receive direct impacts from the development;
- Designated heritage assets beyond the boundaries of the site, whose settings might potentially receive indirect impacts from the development, leading to harm to significance of the heritage asset;
- Non-designated heritage assets beyond the boundaries of the site, whose settings might potentially receive indirect impacts from the development, leading to harm to significance of the heritage asset.



In the following subsections, the heritage assets likely to be affected one way or another by the development proposal are examined and identified for further consideration in a way and to the extent that is proportionate to comply with Paragraph 189 of the NPPF. It should be emphasised that this section of the statement for the application site identifies the built/cultural (that is, non-archaeological) heritage assets that might fall into these four categories and which must therefore be considered to be potential receptors of impacts from the development. Below ground archaeology is not covered in this heritage statement.

### 3.1.2 Types of impacts

The NPPF notes that harm can be caused to the significance of a heritage asset by its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting. Put another way, impacts – whether beneficial or adverse – that might affect the significance of a heritage assets will either be:

- Direct physical impacts on its built fabric or character; or,
- Indirect impacts on the contribution made by its setting to its significance.

### 3.1.3 Assessing significance

The NPPF defines the significance of a heritage asset as being *‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’*.

As noted above, Paragraph 189 of the NPPF demands that:

*‘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...’*

The significance of heritage assets that are identified in this section as being potential receptors of impacts from the development proposals will be described below to the extent and level of detail that might be considered proportionate to comply with NPPF Paragraph 189 – that is, *‘proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance’*. In addition to describing their significance in words, it is useful and desirable to give some idea of their relative heritage interest by using a form of weighting.

Various hierarchies to ‘quantify’ or ‘measure’ the comparative significance of heritage assets have been utilised in recent years. They all have strengths and weaknesses, given the inevitability that such comparisons will always be somewhat subjective in their nature.

However, at present, the only such hierarchy sponsored from within central Government is that set out within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB; HA208/07, Volume 11 Section 3 Part 2) jointly published the Highways Agency, Transport Scotland, the Welsh Assembly Government, and the Department for Regional Development Northern Ireland (2013 edition). It has the added benefit of



having been subjected to scrutiny within the planning system, including Public Inquiries. It is this hierarchy of significance that has been adopted for use in this statement of significance, as a result.

With minor adaptation under 'negligible' to bring the 2013 hierarchy into line with the NPPF, across two Annexes, DMRB provides the following terminology and definitions for a cultural heritage hierarchy of significance:

Level of Significance	Criteria
Very high	<p>World Heritage Sites;</p> <p>Assets of acknowledged international importance;</p> <p>Assets that can contribute significantly to acknowledged international research objectives;</p> <p>Historic landscapes of international value (designated or not) and extremely well preserved historic landscapes with exceptional coherence, time depth, or other critical factor(s).</p>
High	<p>Scheduled Monuments and undesignated assets of Schedulable quality and importance;</p> <p>Grade I and II* Listed buildings (Scotland category A);</p> <p>Other Listed buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or associations not adequately reflected in their Listing grade;</p> <p>Conservation Areas containing very important buildings;</p> <p>Undesignated structures of clear national importance;</p> <p>Designated and undesignated historic landscapes of outstanding historic interest (including Grade I and Grade II* Registered Parks and Gardens); undesignated landscapes of high quality and importance of demonstrable national value; and well preserved historic landscapes exhibiting considerable coherence, time depth or other critical factor(s);</p> <p>Assets that can contribute significantly to acknowledged national research objectives.</p>
Medium	<p>Designated or undesignated assets that contribute to regional research objectives;</p> <p>Grade II (Scotland category B) Listed buildings;</p> <p>Historic (unlisted) buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical association;</p>

Level of Significance	Criteria
	<p>Conservation Areas containing important buildings that contribute significantly to their historic character;</p> <p>Historic townscapes or built up areas with important historic integrity in their buildings, or built settings (for example including street furniture or other structures);</p> <p>Designated landscapes of special historic interest (including Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens); undesignated landscapes that would justify such a designation; averagely well preserved historic landscapes with reasonable coherence, time depth or other critical factor(s); landscapes of regional value.</p>
Low	<p>Designated and undesignated assets of local importance including those compromised by poor preservation and/or poor survival of contextual associations;</p> <p>Assets of limited value, but with potential to contribute to local research objectives;</p> <p>Locally Listed buildings (Scotland category C(S) Listed Buildings) and historic (unlisted) buildings of modest quality in their fabric or historical association;</p> <p>Historic townscape or built-up areas of limited historic integrity in their buildings or built settings (for example including street furniture or other structures);</p> <p>Robust undesignated historic landscapes; historic landscapes with importance to local interest groups; and historic landscapes whose value is limited by poor preservation and/or poor survival of contextual associations.</p>
Negligible	<p>Assets with very little surviving archaeological interest;</p> <p>Buildings of little architectural or historical note;</p> <p>Landscapes with little significant historical interest.</p>

Table 1: DMRB Hierarchy of Value

Whilst, inevitably, some subjectivity is at times involved in making value judgements, this hierarchy of values has to be appreciated as a continuum and there may be ‘shades’ of interpretation where, for instance, an asset lies close to the borderline between the descriptions of ‘high’ and ‘very high’ significance.

## 3.2 Designated heritage assets within or including the application site

### 3.2.1 Introduction

As has been discussed above, the application site comprises the Grade II\* listed Freemasons' Hall and it lies within the Seven Dials Conservation Area. There are no other designated built or cultural heritage assets within or including the application site.

### 3.2.2 Freemasons' Hall

Freemasons' Hall forms the core of the application site and has been described already, in terms of its historical development and present day form and appearance, in section 2. It is nationally designated as a Grade II\* listed building and was first listed on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1982. The list description for the asset reads:

*'Central headquarters of English Freemasonry. 1927-33. By HV Ashley and Winton Newman, whose ingenious fitting of the plan to the irregular. polygonal site won them the commission as the result of a competition. Steel frame construction faced with Portland stone. Massive building in stripped Classical style. Long facades (with slightly projecting entrance bays) emphasised by string courses and heavy cornice above 1st floor. 2 attics stepped above, culminating across the west angle in the corner tower, which echoes the form of the Temple entrance beneath, flanked by 2 giant fluted columns in antis. This defines the diagonal axis along which the Temple itself lies, as well as its associated processional access route. Metal-framed windows. Decorative lamp brackets. INTERIOR: principal halls, meeting rooms and staircases all marble lined, richly detailed but austere neo-Grecian in pattern. Set on diagonal axis. Grand entrance hall and museum collection on ground floor. The principal rooms on the first floor, with Grand Temple, Grand Officers' rooms, library and reading room. Grand Temple of double height with gallery, dias and organ. Walls lined with Ashburton and Botticino marbles, surmounted by cove decorated with mosaics, coffered and decorated ceiling. Bronze doors in neo-Egyptian style by Walter and Donald Gilbert. Boardroom panelled in hardwood, and with stained glass. Fine bronze and wrought-iron work throughout the building. HISTORICAL NOTE: built as the "Masonic Peace Memorial Building" and a memorial to Freemasons killed in World War I.'*

### 3.2.3 Seven Dials Conservation Area

Seven Dials Conservation Area was designated by the local planning authority in November 1971 and was subsequently variously amended and extended in 1974, 1991 and 1998.

The London Borough of Camden's adopted 1998 Conservation Area Statement summarises its character and special interest as being:

*'The special character of the Conservation Area is found in the range and mix of building types and uses and the street layout. The character is not dominated by one particular period or style of building but rather it is their combination that is of special interest.'*

*Most buildings appear to spring from the footway without physical front boundaries or basement areas. In this tightly contained streetscape, changes of road width, building form and land-use give dramatic character variation, narrow alleys and hidden yards provide unforeseen interest and the few open spaces provide relief and a chance to pause and take stock of one's surroundings. Apart from Seven Dials there are no formal open spaces but some significant informal spaces occur in the form of yards and street junctions.'*

Freemasons' Hall lies in and dominates Sub-Area 2 (Great Queen Street) of the Conservation Area. The CA Statement notes that:

*'Great Queen Street was built in the first half of the 17th century begun by the speculator William Newton with the adjacent Lincoln's Inn Fields. Named after James I's Queen, Ann of Denmark it has its origins in a royal private way to James I's favourite residence in Hertfordshire. Great Queen Street formed a continuation of the north side of Lincoln's Inn Fields until the construction of Kingsway opened in 1905.'*

The CA Statement defines the local character around Freemasons' Hall as follows:

*'Great Queen Street is located between two distinct areas and is influenced by both. To the east is Kingsway, an Edwardian development, which has higher buildings some with multi-dormered storeys. To the west is Covent Garden with its generally lower and smaller scale buildings. There is a mix of offices, pubs, shops and restaurants. Great Queen Street has a number of listed buildings within it, including six early 18<sup>th</sup> century houses at Nos.27,28,29 and Nos.33,34,35 of three storeys, basement and dormers. All the houses have similar characteristics of red brick, heavy wooden eaves, cornices and pilaster orders rising from the first floor level to the cornice. The street has great importance in the development of street design. Sir John Summerson in 'Georgian London' says that it 'put an end to gabled individualism, and provided a discipline for London's streets which was accepted for more than two hundred years'. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was known as the 'first regular street in London'. The front basement areas and railings are unusual in the Conservation Area.*

*The Freemasons Hall is a prominent steel frame construction faced with Portland stone. The Hall fits into an irregular polygonal site and was built as a memorial to Freemasons killed in World War I. It dominates the view eastwards along Long Acre and is widely considered to be an over development of the site by virtue of its scale and bulk in relation to its surroundings.*

*Townscape: Great Queen Street is made distinct by the generous width of the western end of the street set out in 17<sup>th</sup> century. The street combines the domestic scale of the 17<sup>th</sup> century terraced buildings on the north side of the street and the later buildings by the Freemasons on the south side; the Freemasons Hall and the New Connaught Rooms.*

*Views: Along Great Queen Street, from Kingsway and from Drury Lane.'*

In this instance, taking into account the nature of the development proposals, which relate to like-for-like repair/renewal only plus the incorporation of concealed cathodic protection, it is not considered

that Seven Dials CA will experience any direct impacts from the development proposals that will result in either positive or negative effects on the special character and significance of the CA.

### 3.3 Non-designated heritage assets within or including the application site

None.

### 3.4 Designated heritage assets within the wider environs of the site

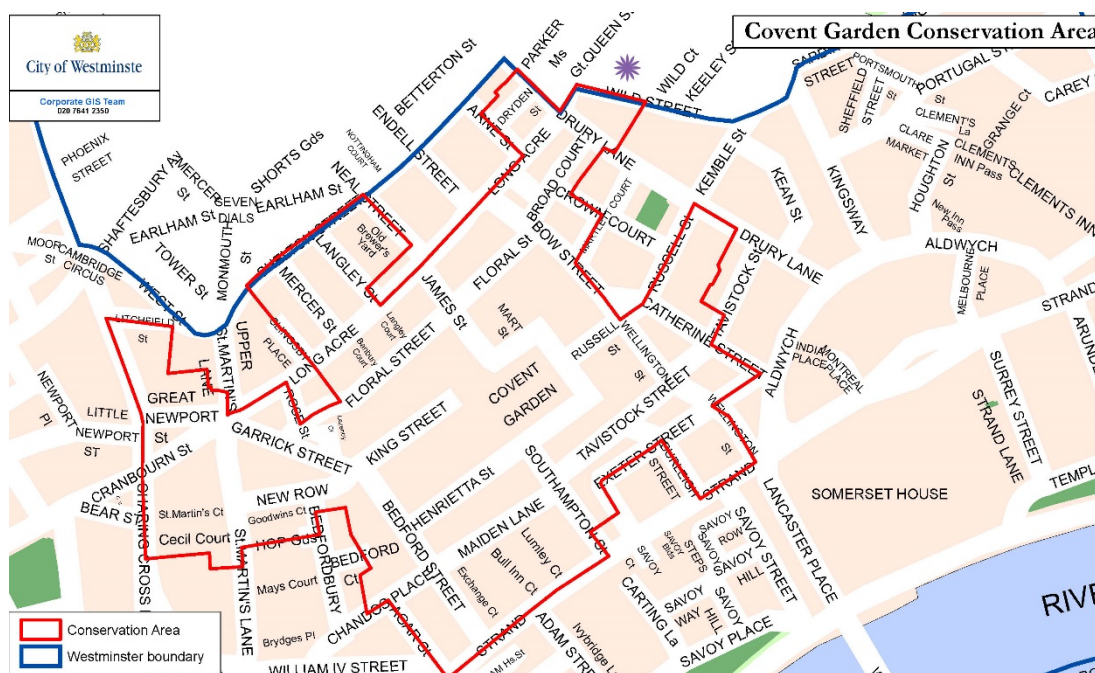
The identification of designated heritage assets lying within the setting of the site and its wider environs that might experience positive or negative impacts from the application's development proposals has primarily relied upon examination of the National Heritage List for England [NHLE] maintained by Historic England, together with an understanding of the nature and extent of the proposed works, as set out in section 3.2 above. The NHLE database is the '*official list of buildings, monuments, parks and gardens, wrecks, battlefields, World Heritage Sites and other heritage assets considered worthy of preservation*' and so provides information on the location of all designated heritage assets in England, with the exception of conservation areas (which are regarded as being the preserve of local planning authorities).



DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS (LISTED BUILDINGS - BLUE TRIANGLES; SCHEDULED MONUMENT – SHADED RED) IN THE VICINITY OF THE SITE SHOWN ON THE NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST FOR ENGLAND (BASE MAP ©HISTORIC ENGLAND)



The results from an NHLE search covering the present study area are illustrated above. This reveals that there are at least 8 listed buildings in the vicinity of Freemasons' Hall with a close inter-relationship with or substantive view of the application site. Additionally, although not shown on the NHLE map, the application site abuts, but does not lie within, Covent Garden Conservation Area, making this a further designated heritage asset within the wider environs of the site.



COVENT GARDEN CA BOUNDARY WITH LOCATION OF FREEMASONS' HALL SHOWN BY PURPLE ASTERISK (©CITY OF WESTMINSTER)

The NPPF and related guidance is clear that heritage assets outside the application site can only be affected by indirect impacts from the development proposals which will have a positive or negative effect on the contribution their setting makes to significance. Taking into account the nature of the development proposals, which relate to like-for-like repair/renewal only plus the incorporation of concealed cathodic protection, it is considered that none of the settings of these designated heritage assets can experience impacts from the application proposals that will result in either positive or negative effect on the contribution made by setting to significance.

### 3.5 Non-designated heritage assets within the wider environs of the site

As has already been seen, non-designated assets are essentially those that have been identified by the local planning authority as having some meaningful archaeological, architectural, artistic or historical interest that gives the asset a value to society transcending its functional utility, making it a material consideration in the planning process. It has been observed in section 3.1.1 that Government guidance is clear on there being:

*'...a number of processes through which non-designated heritage assets may be identified, including the local and neighbourhood plan-making processes and conservation area appraisals and reviews.'*

In this instance, the 1998 CA Statement for Seven Dials CA identifies various unlisted properties facing Freemasons' Hall in Great Queen Street that are regarded by the London Borough of Camden as being 'buildings which make a positive contribution' to the CA – namely, 'consec:19-21, 24-26, 32, 39, 40 [Great Queen Street]'. These must be considered as being non-designated heritage assets. The City of Westminster's far older 1974 Conservation Area Directory for Covent Garden CA does not make a similar assessment for unlisted buildings along the relevant parts of Wild Street and Drury Lane. There is no local list of non-designated heritage assets for Westminster in the public domain.

Irrespective of the foregoing, in this instance, there is an argument that all buildings identifiable as prospective non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the application site are already being considered in a coherent and appropriate way for their presence within and their positive contribution to the two designated conservation areas and that their separate identification as individual non-designated heritage assets in the impact assessment process in this heritage statement would thus result, essentially, in 'double counting'. For that reason, for the purposes of this heritage statement and its impact assessment, impacts on the settings of non-designated heritage assets will be considered as constituting part of the assessment of impact from the development proposals on Seven Dials or Covent Garden Conservation Area (and it has already been concluded in section 3.4 that there will be no indirect impacts affecting the latter from the development proposals).

## 3.6 Assessments of significance

### 3.6.1 Introduction

As noted in section 3.1, the NPPF defines significance as being:

*'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'*

In this section, the significance of Freemasons' Hall (being the only heritage asset identified as potentially experiencing impacts that could affect significance) will be considered in terms of appreciable historical, architectural, archaeological, and/or artistic interest.

### 3.6.2 Freemasons' Hall

The description of the building and the story of its development, as described above in section 2 indicates that its primary significance can be summarised as lying in the following:

- It constitutes the latest in a 240-year progression of important Masonic buildings on the same site, representing a fundamental and highly important continuity of ownership and use in this central London site.
- The building dominates Great Queen Street and Wild Street and influences profoundly the present day character and built form of this sub-zone of the Seven Dials Conservation Area.

- It is a landmark and focal point structure within the local built environment, providing critical visual closure to the view eastwards along Long Acre from the Bow Street/Endell Street junction.
- Freemasons' Hall is the central headquarters of the United Grand Lodge of England, an organisation of long standing influence within British society.
- The building has had extensive associations with people of historical note and influence from completion in 1933 to the present day.
- The building has been identified as the '*single largest, most impressive and enduring of the many Masonic artefacts which can be judged material legacies of the Great War*'.
- It has been identified by the Twentieth Century Society as one of London's important memorial structures. It also held very high value to contemporaries as a symbol of peace and remembrance.
- Its Art Deco-influenced interiors remain substantively 'as built' and in use for their original purpose. It is believed that this is the only such instance in major London buildings.
- The building contains fine mosaics, memorials, stained glass, sculpture, and bronze and wrought-iron work by some of the most talented and influential designers working in the inter war period.
- It is arguably the most important work by Ashley and Newman, a respected national architectural practice.
- Today, it is an important heritage and cultural destination and facility, receiving visits from an international audience and hosting key cultural events.
- The Library and Museum and UGLE's archive, maintained within the building, are important cultural heritage resources.
- As a Grade II\* listed building, Freemasons' Hall has been given national recognition as being a '*particularly important building of more than special interest*'.

In summary, Freemasons' Hall has very considerable historical, associational, artistic, architectural and townscape value. On this basis, using the DMRB hierarchy of value set out in section 3.2 (Table 1), it is considered to be a designated heritage asset of **high significance**.

### **3.6.3 The contribution of the front entrance and west tower facades to the significance of Freemasons' Hall**

The tower entrance is an integral and key component of Ashley and Newman's vision for the site and their resolution of the particular site constraints that shaped their building. The design of the entrance thus makes a very considerable contribution to the asset's overall significance, as does the quality of its ashlar masonry.



## 4 HERITAGE LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

### 4.1 National and local policy context

In England today, Government policy is framed around the principle that the care and conservation of individual heritage assets and the wider historic environment must involve:

*‘Managing change...in ways that will best sustain...heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations’*

[English Heritage (2008) *Conservation Principles*]

Accordingly, in the Ministerial Foreword of the original edition of the NPPF, the Government stated that:

*‘Sustainable development is about change for the better, and not only in our built environment. .... Our historic environment – buildings, landscapes, towns and villages – can better be cherished if their spirit of place thrives, rather than withers.’*

In terms of legislation, Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Act) 1990 states that:

*‘...in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority...shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of architectural or historic interest which it possesses’.*

Section 72 of the same Act requires that requires that, in a conservation area, *‘special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area’.*

The crucial point that is made forcefully in the NPPF [paragraphs 7-10] is that, to be sustainable, development must consider and involve the protection and enhancement of our natural, built and historic environment.

Of particular significance are Government policies for the historic environment set out in paragraphs 192-197 and 200-202 of the NPPF which variously require the local planning authority in determining applications for development to consider:

- *‘The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and,*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness [paragraph 192];*

while dictating that:

- *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 [paragraph 193];*
- *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 [paragraph 194];*
- *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...[paragraph 195];*
- *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 [paragraph 196];*
- *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 affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset [paragraph 197];*
- *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 [paragraph 200].*

In addition to these national policies, in terms of heritage, the London Borough of Camden's own Core Strategy and Development Policies are relevant.

*London Borough of Camden Core Strategy, 2010: Policy CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage*

'The Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

- a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;
- b) preserving and enhancing 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;
- c) promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;
- d) seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible;
- e) protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites inside and outside the borough and protecting important local views.'

*London Borough of Camden, Development Policies, 2010 - DP24: Securing High Quality Design*

'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:

- a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;
- b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;
- c) the quality of materials to be used;
- d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;
- e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;
- f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;
- g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;
- h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and
- i) accessibility.'

*London Borough of Camden, Development Policies, 2010 - DP25: Conserving Camden's Heritage*

'Conservation areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;

- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;
- c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and
- e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

#### Listed buildings

To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- f) prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- g) only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building; and
- h) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

#### Archaeology

The Council will protect remains of archaeological importance by ensuring acceptable measures are taken to preserve them and their setting, including physical preservation, where appropriate.

#### Other heritage assets

The Council will seek to protect other heritage assets including Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and London Squares.'

[NB. The original document incorrectly uses the label '(e)' twice and so has been renumbered above]

## 5 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

### 5.1 Introduction and general observations

As has been noted at the start of this statement, it has been prepared to comply with paragraph 189 of the NPPF, which requires an applicant whose proposals may affect one or more heritage assets ‘to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting’ to a level of detail that is ‘sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance’. This concluding section of the statement reviews likely impacts on relevant heritage assets in the light of the foregoing analysis and findings.

### 5.2 Potential receptors of impacts

The heritage assets that may be affected by the development proposal have been identified in sections 3 of this heritage statement as being limited to:

*Designated heritage assets within or including the site, which might potentially receive direct impacts from the development of the application site*

- Freemasons’ Hall (Grade II\*).

*Non-designated heritage assets within or including the site, which might potentially receive direct impacts from the development of the application site*

- None.

*Designated assets within the wider environs of the site, which might potentially receive indirect impacts from the development of the application site*

- None.

*Non-designated assets within the wider environs of the site, which might potentially receive indirect impacts from the development of the application site*

- None.

### 5.3 Introduction to impact assessment and mitigation

This and the following sub-sections of the heritage statement set out to:

- Identify impacts resulting from the application proposals and to quantify their magnitude and significance of effects, and,
- Identify appropriate mitigation measures for any significant adverse effects on heritage assets.

The heritage impact assessment process has been guided by the NPPF and based around 'Environmental Impact Assessment: a Guide to Procedures' issued by the former DETR and the National Assembly for Wales (2000). The assessment of impacts and significance of effects follows the guidance given by the Highways Agency in 2013 in the DMRB, Volume 11, Section 3, Part 2: Cultural Heritage. Specifically, the magnitude of any change/impact on a heritage asset or its setting has been assessed using the criteria set out in Table 2 below. This is based on Tables 5.3, 6.3 and 7.3 of Annexes 5, 6 and 7 respectively of HA 208/07.

Magnitude of Impact	
<b>Major</b>	Change to key historic building elements, such that the asset is totally altered  Comprehensive change to the setting.
<b>Moderate</b>	Change to many key historic building elements, such as the asset is significantly modified.  Changes to setting of an historic building, such that it is significantly modified.
<b>Minor</b>	Changes to key historic building elements, such that the asset is slightly different.  Changes to setting of an historic building, such that it is noticeably changed.
<b>Negligible</b>	Slight changes to historic building elements or setting that hardly affect it.
<b>No Change</b>	No change to fabric or setting.

**Table 2: Factors in the Assessment of Magnitude of Impact**

Using the assessment of the value/significance of the heritage asset (see section 3.4.2) for weighting purposes and the magnitude of the impact determined from the table above, the significance of the effect after mitigation has been assessed using the matrix shown in Table 3 below, which is based on Table 5.1 of HA 208/07. Where two alternatives are given in this table, professional judgement has been used to decide which best reflects the significance of the effect of the impact identified.

Heritage Value	<i>Very High</i>	Neutral	Slight	Moderate / large	Large or very Large	Very large
	<i>High</i>	Neutral	Slight	Moderate / slight	Moderate / large	Large / very large
	<i>Medium</i>	Neutral	Neutral / Slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate / large
	<i>Low</i>	Neutral	Neutral / slight	Neutral / Slight	Slight	Slight / moderate
	<i>Negligible</i>	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral / Slight	Neutral / Slight	Slight
		<i>No Change</i>	<i>Negligible</i>	<i>Minor</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Major</i>
		<b>Magnitude of Impact</b>				

Table 3: Significance of Effects

The significance of effects from impacts read from Table 3 can be positive or negative.

Thus, for example, where proposals affect the setting of a heritage asset of *high* value (say a Grade II\* listed building) to the extent that that setting is significantly modified (a *moderate* magnitude of impact), the significance of the effect of the proposal on the setting of the heritage asset is deemed to be *moderate* or *large* (with precise determination being dependent upon professional judgement) and *positive* or *negative* depending upon circumstance.

## 5.4 Assessment of potential impacts

### 5.4.1 Introduction

This sub-section makes an assessment of the impact of the submitted development proposals on the significance of the designated Freemasons' Hall.

### 5.4.2 Impacts on the significance of the designated Freemasons' Hall

In section 3.6.2 above, it has been determined that Freemasons' Hall is an asset of high significance due to its considerable historical, associational, artistic, architectural and townscape interest, with its heritage value being derived from the fact that:

- It constitutes the latest in a 240-year progression of important Masonic buildings on the same site, representing a fundamental and highly important continuity of ownership and use in this central London site.
- The building dominates Great Queen Street and Wild Street and influences profoundly the present day character and built form of this sub-zone of the Seven Dials Conservation Area.

- It is a landmark and focal point structure within the local built environment, providing critical visual closure to the view eastwards along Long Acre from the Bow Street/Endell Street junction.
- Freemasons' Hall is the central headquarters of the United Grand Lodge of England, an organisation of long standing influence within British society.
- The building has had extensive associations people of historical note and influence from completion in 1933 to the present day.
- The building has been identified as the '*single largest, most impressive and enduring of the many Masonic artefacts which can be judged material legacies of the Great War*'.
- It has been identified by the Twentieth Century Society as one of London's important memorial structures. It also held very high value to contemporaries as a symbol of peace and remembrance.
- Its Art Deco-influenced interiors remain substantively 'as built' and in use for their original purpose. It is believed that this is the only such instance in major London buildings.
- The building contains fine mosaics, memorials, stained glass, sculpture, and bronze and wrought-iron work by some of the most talented and influential designers working in the inter war period.
- It is arguably the most important work by Ashley and Newman, a respected national architectural practice.
- Today, it is an important heritage and cultural destination and facility, receiving visits from an international audience and hosting key cultural events.
- The Library and Museum and UGLE's archive, maintained within the building, are important cultural heritage resources.
- As a Grade II\* listed building, Freemasons' Hall has been given national recognition as being a '*particularly important building of more than special interest*'.

In section 3.6.3 above, it has been found that the tower entrance is an integral and key component of Ashley and Newman's vision for the site and their resolution of the particular site constraints that shaped their building. The design of the entrance thus makes a very considerable contribution to the asset's overall significance, as does the quality of its ashlar masonry.

The development proposals within the application comprise the conservative repair of the damaged masonry to the facades of the front entrance and west tower and renewal of associated weatherings, like for like replacement of upper tower windows, installation of a cathodic protection system to prevent further steel corrosion, and overhaul of rainwater goods. On that basis, reading from the DMRB 'Magnitude of Impact' table set out in section 5.3.1 Table 2, the direct impact on significance-bearing fabric within Freemasons' Hall that would arise from the development proposals is considered likely to amount to '**no change**'. Using DMRB's matrix in Table 3 (section 5.3.1), this indicates that a **neutral effect** on the significance of the designated heritage asset will result from the repair proposals within the application.



## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The proposal to repair the masonry façades of the front entrance and tower of Freemasons' Hall, to install a cathodic protection system, to carry out limited like for like replacement of windows in the upper tower, and overhaul the rainwater goods will have no effect on the significance of the Grade II\* listed building, while safeguarding the future retention of its significance bearing fabric.

**Stephen Bond MA HonDArt FSA MRICS GradDipConsAA**

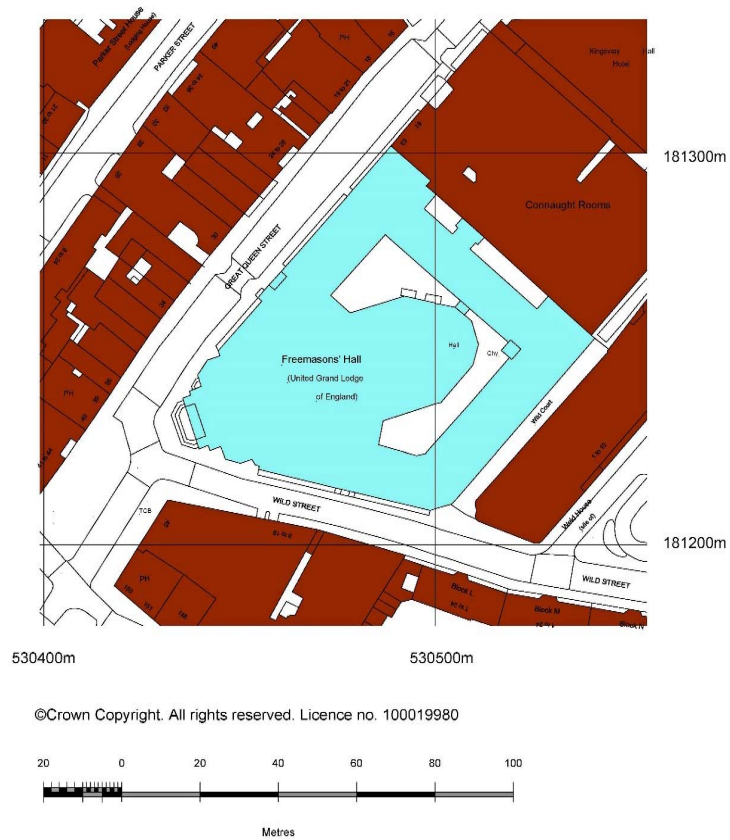
**Heritage Places**

e: [sbond@heritageplaces.co.uk](mailto:sbond@heritageplaces.co.uk)

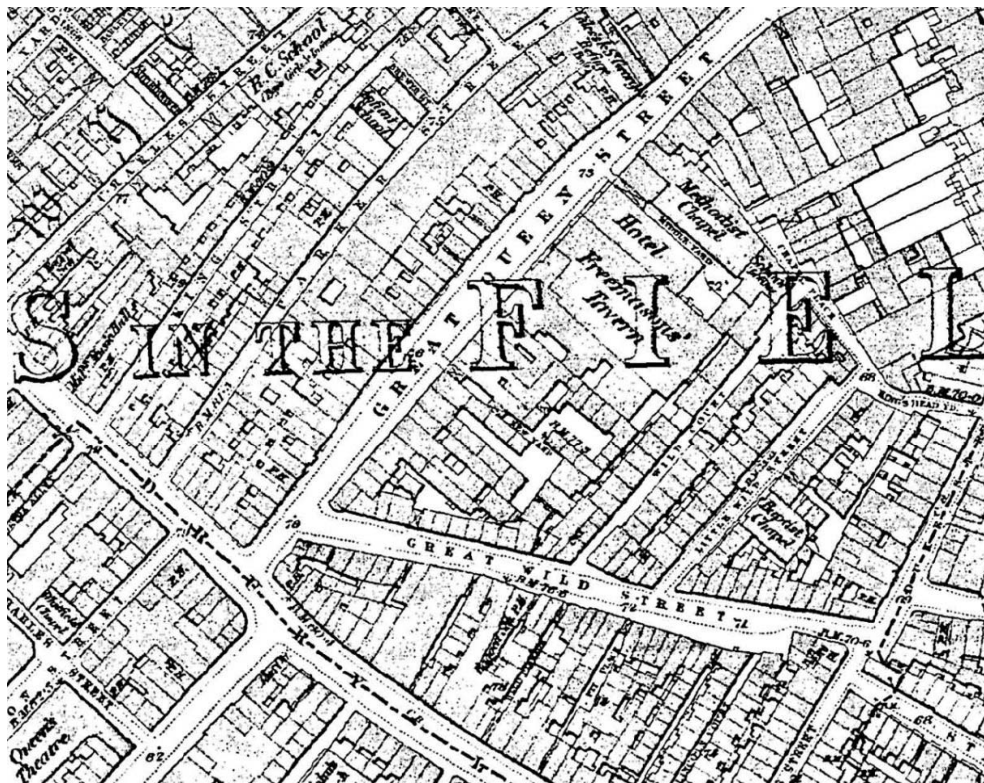
16<sup>th</sup> April 2020

# Annex I: Maps & Plans

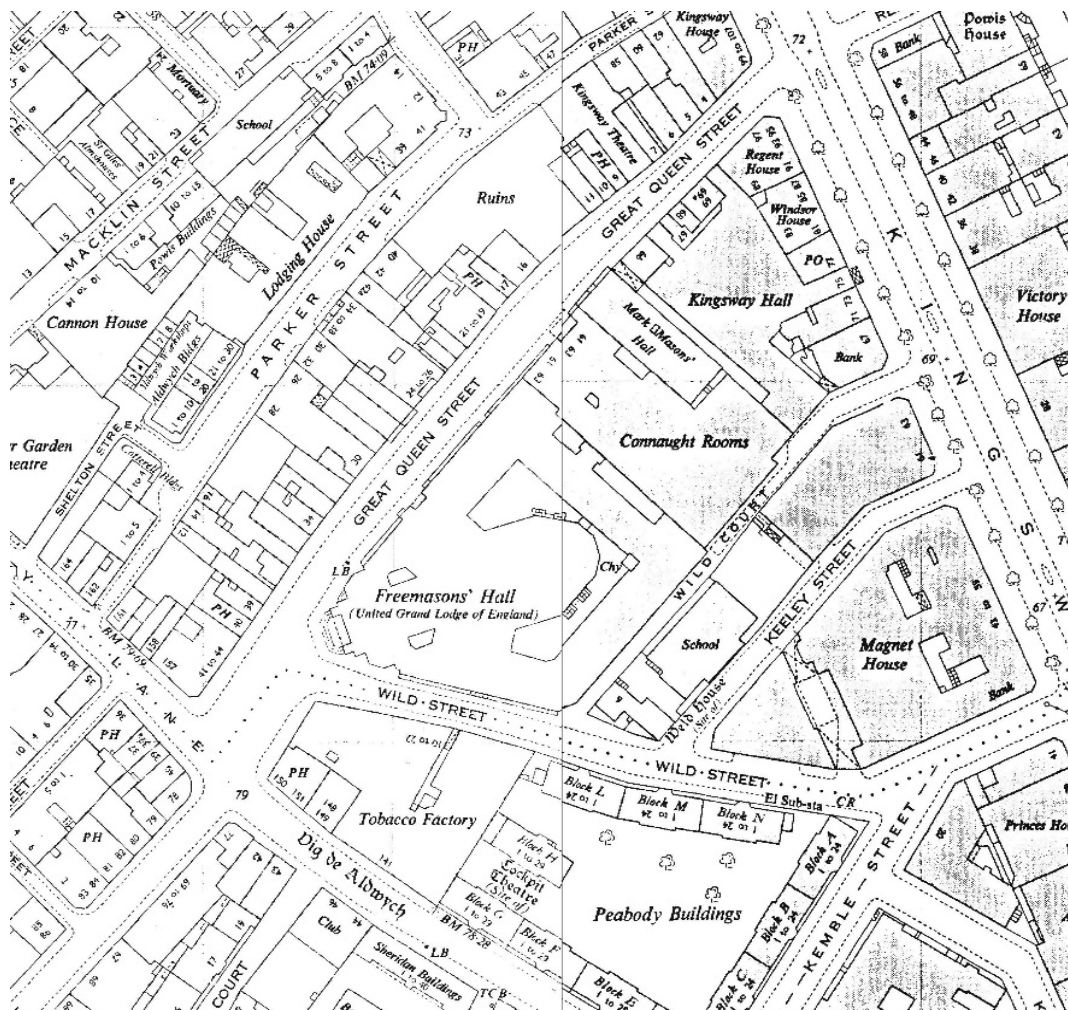
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Map 1: Freemasons' Hall - site plan (©Abbott & Associates)

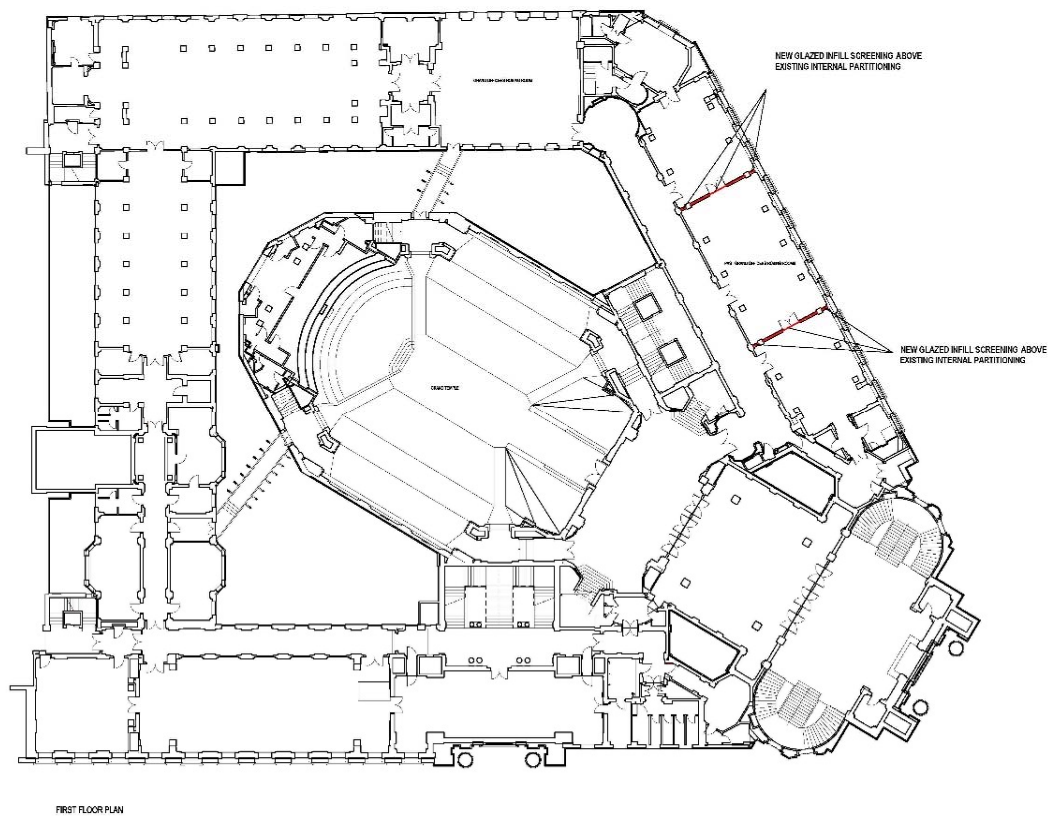


Map 2: 1875-78 First Edition 25" map of the Great Queen Street area (©Cassini Maps)



Map 3: 1925 1:2500 OS Map – the first large scale post-completion map (©Landmark Information Group)





**Map 4: Freemasons' Hall – first floor plan showing location of two hardwood screens in the Past Grand Officers' Robing Room (©Abbott & Associates)**

## Annex II: Figures

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Figure 1: View of western tower looking along Great Queen Street



Figure 2: Ashley & Newman c.1930 design for Freemasons' Hall (©UGLE)



Figure 3: 55 & 56 Great Queen Street in 1908 – examples of buildings demolished to make way for Freemason’s Hall in 1927 (© Historic England)

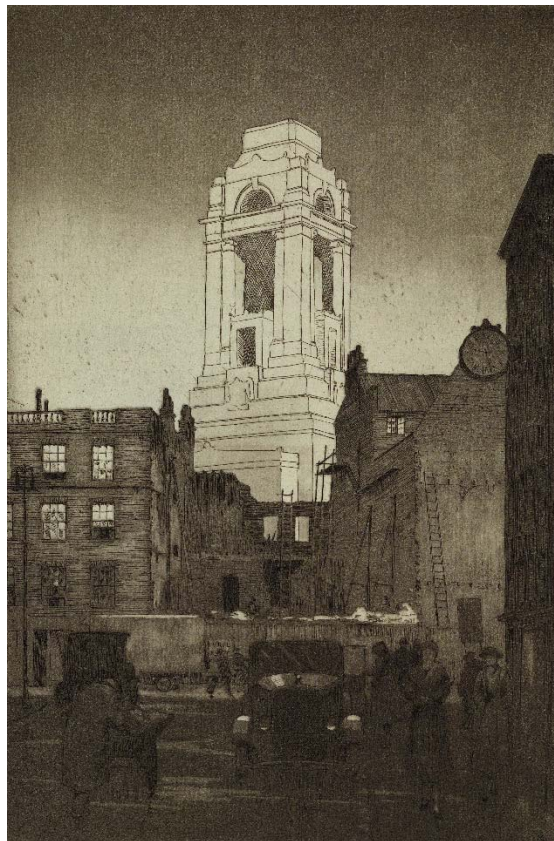


Figure 4: View of tower beyond partly demolished buildings c.1931 – see also (7) (©RIBA)



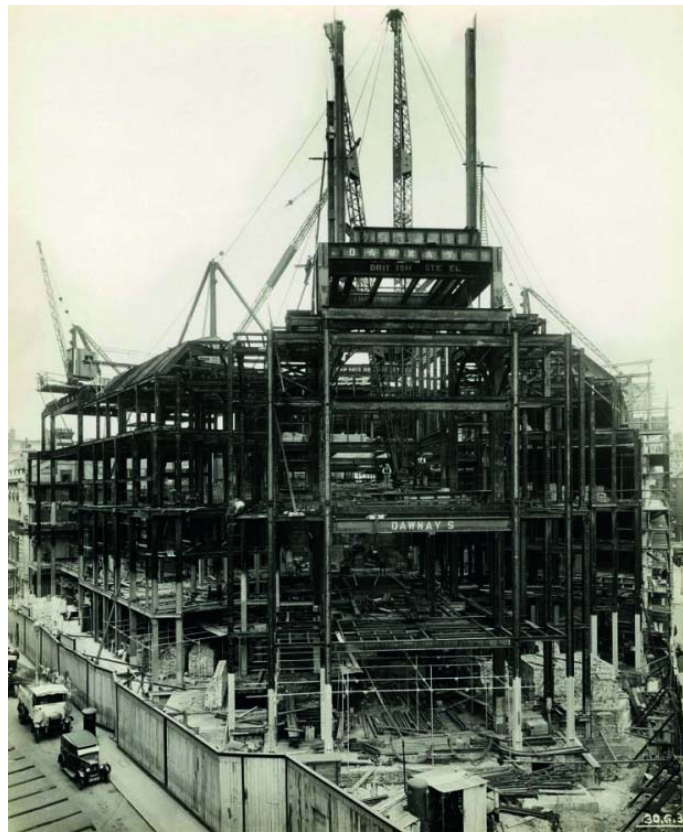


Figure 5: Western end in construction c1929 (©UGLE)



Figure 6: Great Queen Street elevation in construction c1930 (©UGLE)



Figure 7: View over partially demolished buildings 1931 (©UGLE)