

Heritage Statement

**1-9 Albany Street,
L.B. Camden, NW1 4DF**



April 2025

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1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Statement for 1-9 Albany Street in the London Borough of Camden was commissioned in April 2025 by Courtney Fleming of Brooks Murray Architects Ltd., on behalf of clients and prepared by Neil Burton BA FSA IHBC, a director of The Architectural History Practice Ltd.

1-9 Albany Street, is a 1980s building, building which was re-cast and given a prominent new roof in 2016-2017, The building is not listed but lies within the London Borough of Camden's Regent's Park Conservation Area and immediately adjacent to the Westminster City Council Regent's Park Conservation Area. It also forms part of the setting of several listed buildings

2.0 Brief Background History

Albany Street follows the line of an old track which predated the laying out of Regent's Park in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The road also served a symbolic function in John Nash's masterplan for Regent's Park. To the west of the road lay the park itself surrounded by handsome terraces of private houses for the affluent middle classes; to the east lay the commercial area, originally intended to have three produce markets all served by a basin at the south end of the Regent's Canal. In the event, only the Cumberland Market next to the basin was realised. The two market sites to the south and the surrounding area were built-up with modest stucco-fronted residential terraces.

Most of the original houses in Albany Street were completed in the 1820s. The Diorama behind 18 Park Square East in Albany Mews (now Peto Place) was built in 1823 and Sir John Soane's classical Holy Trinity church at the south end of Albany Street fronting Marylebone Road was completed in 1827. The site of the present 1-9 Albany Street was occupied from the early 19th century by a large commercial building known as The Pantechnicon. The site was redeveloped in the later 19th century with a new commercial building with a flamboyant red-brick front (fig.2), which was itself replaced in the 1980s by a concrete-framed office block with a rendered front to Albany Street designed in an early 19th century style to harmonise with the listed buildings on either side.

By the beginning of the 21st century 1-9 Albany Street was linked to the block of originally residential buildings to the south now numbered 2 Marylebone Road and listed Grade II*. In 2015 the firm of Kohn Pedersen Fox Architects (KPF) was commissioned by Which? The Consumer 'Association, to adapt the building to meet the needs of a modern charity and business. The Georgian building and the 1980s block were already linked internally but communication was improved, the 1980s front to Albany Street was retained and the rear elevation fronting Peto Place was re-imagined. Most strikingly, the scheme utilized the large flat roof of the 1980s building to create an additional story with a roof of complex geometric form. The stepped zinc-covered roof now forms a prominent feature of the building.



Figure 1: The west side of Albany Street in 1974, showing the Victorian building on the site of the present 1-9 (London Picture Archive)



Figure 2: Part of the existing façade to Albany Street. The solar panels would be on the upper slope of the roof, not visible here.

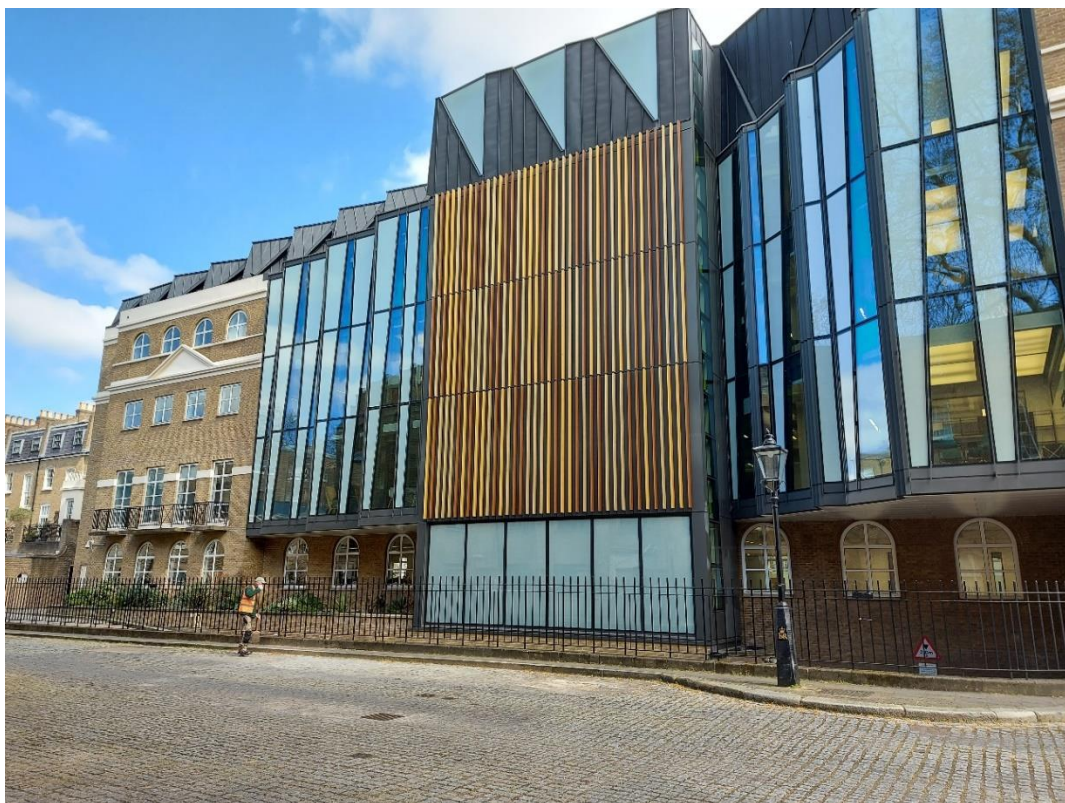


Figure 3: The rear of 1-9 Albany Street seen from Peto Place



Figure 4: A long view of the building from Osnaburgh Terrace with Holy Trinity Church (listed Grade I) to the left and The White House (listed Grade II) to the right.



Figure 5: A long view of the building from the south side of Marylebone Road with 2 Marylebone Road (listed Grade II*) to the left and Holy Trinity Church (listed Grade I) to the right.

3.0 The Proposed Works and their Impact on the Built Heritage

The current proposals for 1-9 Albany Street are detailed in the drawings and statements prepared by Brooks Murray Architects. In sum, it is proposed to install solar panels on the upper slopes only of the modern zinc-covered roof. The panels would be of non-reflective glass, set on a black back-sheet with a black frame. The panels would not be visible from street-level in either Albany Street or Peto Place at the rear of the building. The panels might be visible in longer views, but at any distance would merge into the dark-coloured roof slopes.

Number 1-9 Albany Street is not listed a listed building, although it is linked internally to 2 Marylebone Road which is listed Grade II*. Number 1-9 lies within the London Borough of Camden's Regent's Park Conservation Area and is immediately adjacent to the City of Westminster's Regent's Park Conservation Area. The principal heritage concerns in regard to the proposed works are the possible impact on the setting of adjacent listed buildings, and also on the character of both conservation areas. The Albany Street building forms part of the immediate setting of, and is intervisible with, the following buildings, whose location is shown on fig.6 below.

2 Marylebone Road, Camden. Listed Grade II*; list entry number 1113114. Three early nineteenth century terrace houses (formerly 4,5 and 6 Albany Terrace) now combined into one building, physically linked to the south end of 1-9 Albany Terrace and in office use.

Holy Trinity, Marylebone Road, Westminster. Listed Grade I; list entry number 1322054. A Commissioners' church in the classical style designed by Sir John Soane and completed in 1827. The main front with its tower and cupola faces south onto Marylebone Road. The west side of the church faces onto Albany Street. The building stands in a small railed churchyard planted on the north, east and west sides with mature deciduous trees. It is now in commercial use.

The White House, Osnaburgh Terrace, Camden. Listed Grade II; list entry number 1113231. A tall block, built in 1936 to the design of Robert Atkinson. Formerly serviced flats, it is now an hotel with its main entrance in Osnaburgh Terrace. The block has a star-shaped plan and is 9 storeys high and clad in pale cream faience tiles with slightly darker cladding to the ground floor.

1-17 (odd) Albany Street, Camden. Listed Grade II; list entry number 1378592. A row of 8 modest stucco-fronted terrace houses dating from c1826. The row is physically linked to the north end of 1-9 Albany Street. (NB the street numbering appears to duplicate numbers 1-9 and the list description states – wrongly – that the row comprises 17 houses)

The Diorama and the backs of the houses fronting Park Square East, Peto Place, Camden. Listed Grade I; list entry number 1322054. The former Diorama building behind number 18 Park Square East is listed as part of numbers 13-24 Park Square East. The Diorama is three-storey polygonal building in stock brick with stone capped buttresses between round-arched second floor windows.

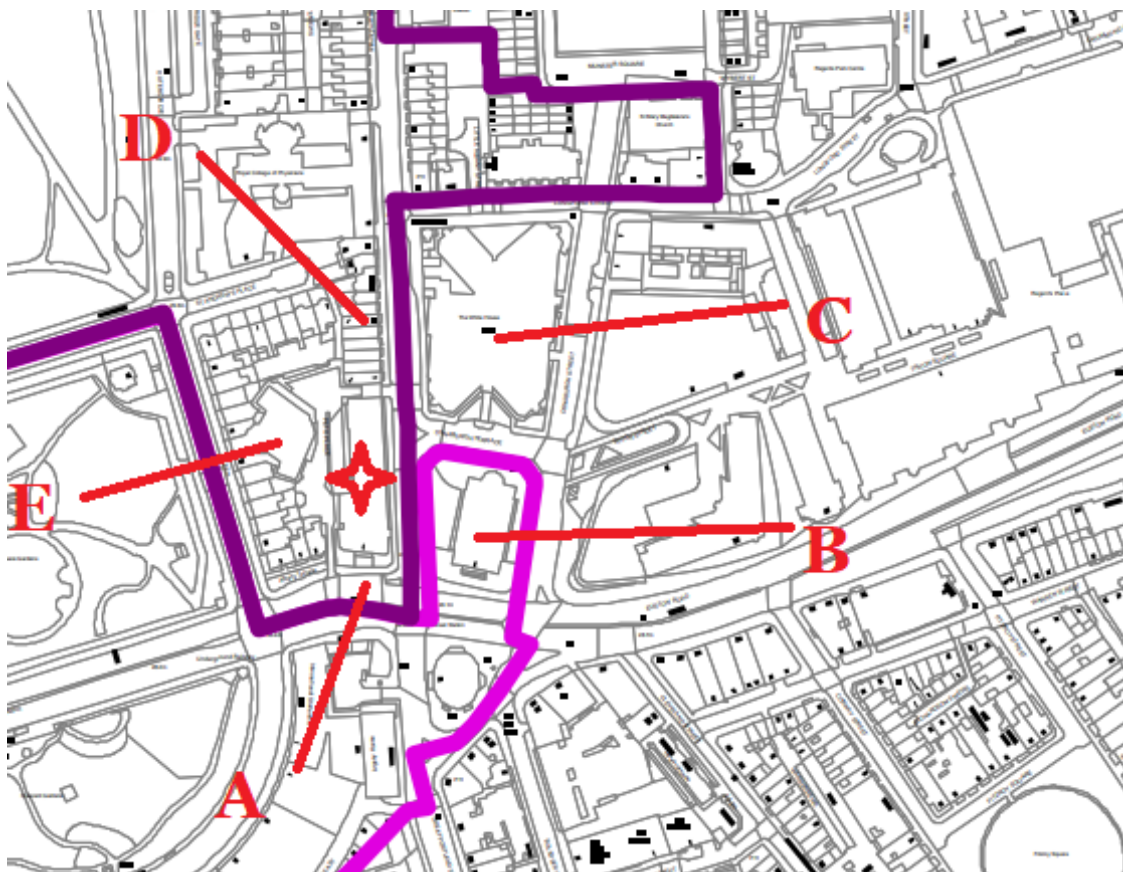


Figure 6: A detail from a map showing the site of 1-9 Albany Street with boundaries of Camden's Regent's Park Conservation Area in purple and Westminster's Regent's Park Conservation Area in pink. (Camden.gov.uk).

Adjacent listed buildings are indicated as follows: A, 2 Marylebone Road; B, Holy Trinity Church; C, The White House; D 1-17 Albany Terrace; E, The Diorama

The impact of the proposal on the settings of these buildings is best assessed under the principal headings suggested in the Historic England Good Practice Advice Note, *The Setting of Heritage Assets*, issued in 2017. The headings are: Location and Siting, Form and Appearance and Wider Effects.

Location and siting

1-9 Albany Street stands just north of the Marylebone Road, and forms part of a continuous street elevation set between 2 Marylebone Road (listed Grade II*) and 1-17 Albany Street (listed Grade II). The front of the building faces across Albany Street to Holy Trinity church (Grade I) and the White House hotel (Grade II). The rear of the building faces across Peto Place to the backs of the houses in Park Terrace East and the Diorama building (all Grade I). The proposed solar panels would be sited on the upper slopes of the modern four-slope roof. They would not be readily visible from adjacent street level, but they might be visible from the upper floors of the nine-storey White House hotel.

Form and appearance

The proposed panels would be rectangular in shape with non-reflective glass surfaces set on a black background with a black frame. The existing roof has zinc coverings which are dark in colour and the panels would merge visually into the existing roof.

Wider Effects

The wider effects suggested for consideration in the Historic England template include change to built surroundings; change to skyline, silhouette; noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc; lighting effects and 'light spill' and change to general character (e.g. urbanising or industrialising). There will be no change to the existing building under any of these headings. The proposed panels will not change skyline or silhouette and will not change the general character of the existing roofs, which are modern and dark in colour.

Conclusion

1-9 Albany Street, is not listed and is not a locally-listed or non-designated heritage asset. The carcass of the building dates from the 1980s and the conspicuous roof storey was added in 2017. The proposed new solar panels laid on the upper slopes of the roof in the same plane will be largely invisible, except in some long views and from the upper storeys of nearby tall buildings. Even when visible the dark colour of the panels will merge visually into the dark coloured roof coverings.

As a result, the proposed solar panels will not erode or detract from the significance of nearby designated heritage assets and will have no adverse effect on the character or appearance of this part of the Regent's Park Conservation Area.

4.0 Sources

Cherry, Bridget and Pevsner, Nikolaus, *The Buildings of England, London 4: North*, 1988

Saunders, Ann, *Regent's Park: from 1086 to the Present*, Bedford College, 1969



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