

Heritage Statement

(Appendix A of the Design & Access Statement)

School of Arts, Birkbeck College
42-44 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PD



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ARCHITECTS AND URBAN DESIGNERS

June 2012

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1.0 Understanding the site and the building

Please note that a separate LBC application (ref: 2012/2594/L) has been made relating to the proposed internal changes to 42-44 Gordon Square.

This section is to be read in conjunction with the existing photographs (Appendix D) and the BFF existing drawings AP(0)001, 002 & AP(32)001 (Appendix F).

1.1 Introduction

The buildings at 42-44 Gordon Square form part of a terrace of houses on the east side of the square developed by Thomas Cubitt during the 1820's. The buildings are owned by the University of London and are tenanted by The School of Arts, a key academic department of Birkbeck College and are listed Grade 2. (see Appendix A) The buildings have suffered from a series of unsympathetic developments and piecemeal alterations that have resulted in a significant loss of original internal fabric and a lack of historic clarity between the original 'houses' of the terrace and the 20th century extension to the rear.

1.2 Historical Context - The Square

The rectangular area comprising Gordon Square and Tavistock Square with the streets lying between them and Euston Road, was originally part of Tottenham Manor, the major part of which was a 17 acre field called Oatfield (Otefield). By the year 1709 it was in the possession of the Russell family who owned the property to the south of it and its southern limit reached the old parish boundary of St. Pancras and St. Giles

The development of this area by the Duke of Bedford followed what had already been built to the south in Russell Square and its neighbourhood. The latter had been designed and carried out by James Burton who built on the east side of Tavistock Square and Woburn Place. Gordon Square and Tavistock Square and the streets to the north were the work of Thomas Cubitt, whose enterprise and novel business organisation were responsible for the success of this piece of town planning. The square was known as Rothsay Square when originally planned (Rowland Dobie, The History of the United Parishes of St Giles in the Fields and St George, Bloomsbury, 1830) but was eventually named after the wife of the sixth Duke of Bedford, who was the daughter of the Duke of Gordon.

The houses on Gordon Square were amongst the earliest work undertaken by Thomas Cubitt, but their building history went on well into the Victorian period. Having already leased some land in the area, Cubitt began construction of Tavistock Square, Woburn Place and part of Gordon Square in 1821. With his own permanent paid craftsmen and workshops his houses represented a level of style and quality unprecedented among other speculative builders of the period. Despite this, Cubitt struggled to sell the properties and the plans drawn up for Gordon Square in 1829 were not completely carried through until 1860, when the work was finished by Cubitt's brother Lewis, (the designer of Kings Cross railway station) five years after his brother's death.

In the early 20th Century Gordon Square was to become famous for its literary associations. A stronghold of the Bloomsbury Group, it would count among its residents the Stephen family (including Virginia Woolf), Vanessa and Clive Bell, and Lytton Strachey. Strachey wrote his books *Eminent Victorians* and *Queen Victoria*, the latter dedicated to Virginia Woolf, while living at No. 51. The economist John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946) lived at 46 Gordon Square, the house subsequently used by the Bloomsbury Group before Keynes moved in when Vanessa Bell lived there. Following the death of Keynes in 1946, many of the houses in the terrace were acquired by the University of London. There followed a period of unsympathetic conversion, when 42-47 Gordon Square was converted for the use of a new Institute for Computer Studies. The houses were subsequently leased to Birkbeck College from 1974 and, since then they have housed members of staff and lecture/teaching rooms for the College's Department of History of Art and Screen Media.

1.3 General Description of 42-44 Gordon Square

The terrace in its current form consists of the original row of 5 storey terraced houses (Nos 39-46) together with two 2 storey additions constructed to the rear of the terrace in the mid 20th and early 21st centuries respectively. The first of these additions, completed some time during the mid 20th Century is a flat roofed 2 storey concrete frame, masonry faced extension extending over the original garden spaces of 42-45 Gordon Square. The extension contains teaching spaces, offices and stores of varying size and layout and has itself been subject to much internal remodeling since its construction. The second addition constructed soon after the millennium, is the new Birkbeck Cinema set at the rear of 40 & 41 Gordon Square. This is also a 2 storey structure set at basement and ground floor levels containing archive storage, offices and teaching spaces as well as the cinema itself.

2.0 Significance of the building and its heritage merit

This section is to be read in conjunction with BFF drawing AP(0)010 (Appendix G).

2.1 High significance externally

Although repairs and renovations of the external fabric of the terrace have taken place over the years, the façade facing the Gordon Square has remained largely unaltered since its construction in the early 19th Century and is considered to be one of the key remaining visual elements of high heritage significance. The proposals described in this Listed Building Consent application do not include any works to the exterior of the terrace and these elements will therefore not be commented on further.

2.2 High significance internally

Considerable internal remodeling works were carried out in the terrace at basement and ground floor following the transfer of ownership to the University of London in the mid 20th Century. As a result, many elements of original or otherwise historically significant internal fabric have been removed, and virtually none remain in the areas specifically affected by this application. As indicated in AP(0)130, much of the high significance fabric is therefore the original masonry party walls and some of the internal partitions.

A notable exception to this is the teaching room G.01 and the adjacent entrance hallway that form the ground floor of 44 Gordon Square where the plan layout, ceiling heights and level of original or historically significant detailing is much as would have been when the terrace was originally constructed, although there has been some loss of original joinery and plaster finishes as a result of 20th Century alterations.

Following a brief visual inspection, we can confirm that areas of high significance fabric can be found at first floor level, in particular to the grand rooms facing Gordon Square. In addition, some rooms such as the Keynes Library (No. 46) have been sensitively restored and refurbished by the department. As this application does not propose any alterations to areas of the building at first floor or the floors above a detailed analysis of this is not provided.

2.3 Low significance internally

As confirmed above and verified in BFF drawing AP(0)010 much of the original internal decorative fabric has been lost through successive, accumulative and unsympathetic adaptations to the original building. For example, there is no evidence of the original hallway and staircase to the ground floors of 42 & 43 Gordon Square. Original joinery, plaster finishes and floor finishes have also been lost.

3.0 New proposals and impact of proposed alterations

Please note that a separate LBC application (ref: 2012/2594/L) has been made relating to the proposed internal changes to 42-44 Gordon Square.

3.1 Demolition/Strip Out

The proposal is to strip out the existing windows WG.15 & WG.16 from the external wall of existing room EG.11 (IT Room) together with the infill masonry pier between the two windows. The existing mid 20th Century extension within which these windows sit is a concrete frame construction with (assumed) cavity infill for the external walls. No other works are proposed to the remaining windows, wall or roof of the rear extension.

3.2 Structural Opening

A new structural opening is proposed where the existing head, cill and RH jamb (as viewed from within EG.11) are retained as existing. The LH jamb is to be infilled by approx 400mm using salvaged masonry brickwork from the removed 'pier' to ensure that the new window sits centrally in the room (G.12 Cafe).

3.3 Existing & Replacement Window

The existing window frames are timber casements with a varnish/stain finish. Due to the sliding action of the proposed replacement window, the proposed window will need to be aluminium framed with a PPC finish to a standard RAL colour.

It is considered that the proposal is of medium impact in an area of low heritage significance and would therefore not have a detrimental effect on the overall heritage asset.

4.0 Bibliography

Books:

'Gordon Square', Survey of London: volume 21: The parish of St Pancras part 3: Tottenham Court Road & neighbourhood (1949), pp. 93-95.

Cruikshank, Dan and Wyld, Peter London: *The Art of Georgian Building* (London architectural press 1975)

Reid, Richard *The Georgian House and its details* (London: Bishopsgate 1989)

Websites:

'History of Russell Square' (incorporating Gordon Square and other areas of Bloomsbury) www.camden.gov.uk.

'Bloomsbury Group/J M Keynes Connection' www.bbk.ac.uk/art-history/about-us/Gordon-square.

List entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: NUMBERS 36 AND 46 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS AND WALL ON ENDSLEIGH PLACE RETURN SCREEN WALL LINKING NUMBER 36 TAVISTOCK SQUARE

List entry Number: 1113031

Location

NUMBERS 36 AND 46 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS AND WALL ON ENDSLEIGH PLACE RETURN, 36 TO 46, GORDON SQUARE
SCREEN WALL LINKING NUMBER 36, GORDON SQUARE
TAVISTOCK SQUARE, 29, ENDSLEIGH PLACE

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County	District	District Type	Parish
Greater London Authority	Camden	London Borough	

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 28-Mar-1969

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 477358

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

CAMDEN

TQ2982SE ENDSLEIGH PLACE 798-1/94/594 Screen wall linking No.36 Gordon 28/03/69 Square & No.29 Tavistock Square

GV II

See under: Nos.36-46 and attached railings and wall on Endsleigh Place return GORDON SQUARE.

CAMDEN

TQ2982SE GORDON SQUARE 798-1/94/594 (East side) 28/03/69 Nos.36-46 (Consecutive) and attached railings and wall on Endsleigh Place return

GV II

Includes: Screen wall linking No.36 Gordon Square & No.29 Tavistock Square ENDSLEIGH PLACE. Terrace of 11 houses. c1825. Built by Thomas Cubitt. Yellow stock brick with rusticated stucco ground floors (No.46 plain). Balanced composition of 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each. Entrance to No.36 on return to Endsleigh Place. Square-headed, recessed doorways with fanlights and panelled doors. Nos 36, 38, 43 and 45 slightly projecting with 4 Corinthian pilasters through 1st and 2nd floor carrying entablature, continuing across the rest of the terrace, at 3rd floor level. Continuous cast-iron balconies to 1st floor casements, No.46 with cornices. 2nd and 3rd floor, architraved sashes. 3rd floor with plaster strips above the pilasters. Cornice and blocking course. Return of No.36, with balustraded entrance porch, continues the entablature and plaster treatment and forms a balanced composition, linked by a low screen wall (along Endsleigh Place), with No.29 Tavistock Square (qv). INTERIORS: not inspected. HISTORICAL NOTE: No.46 was the residence of John Maynard Keynes, economist (GLC plaque). (Survey of London: Vol. XXI, Tottenham Court Road and Neighbourhood, St Pancras III: London: -1949: 92).

Listing NGR: TQ2979582311

Selected Sources

1. Article Reference - Title: Volume 21 Tottenham Court Road and Neighbourhood St Pancras Part 3 - Date: 1949 - Journal Title: Survey of London - Page References: 92

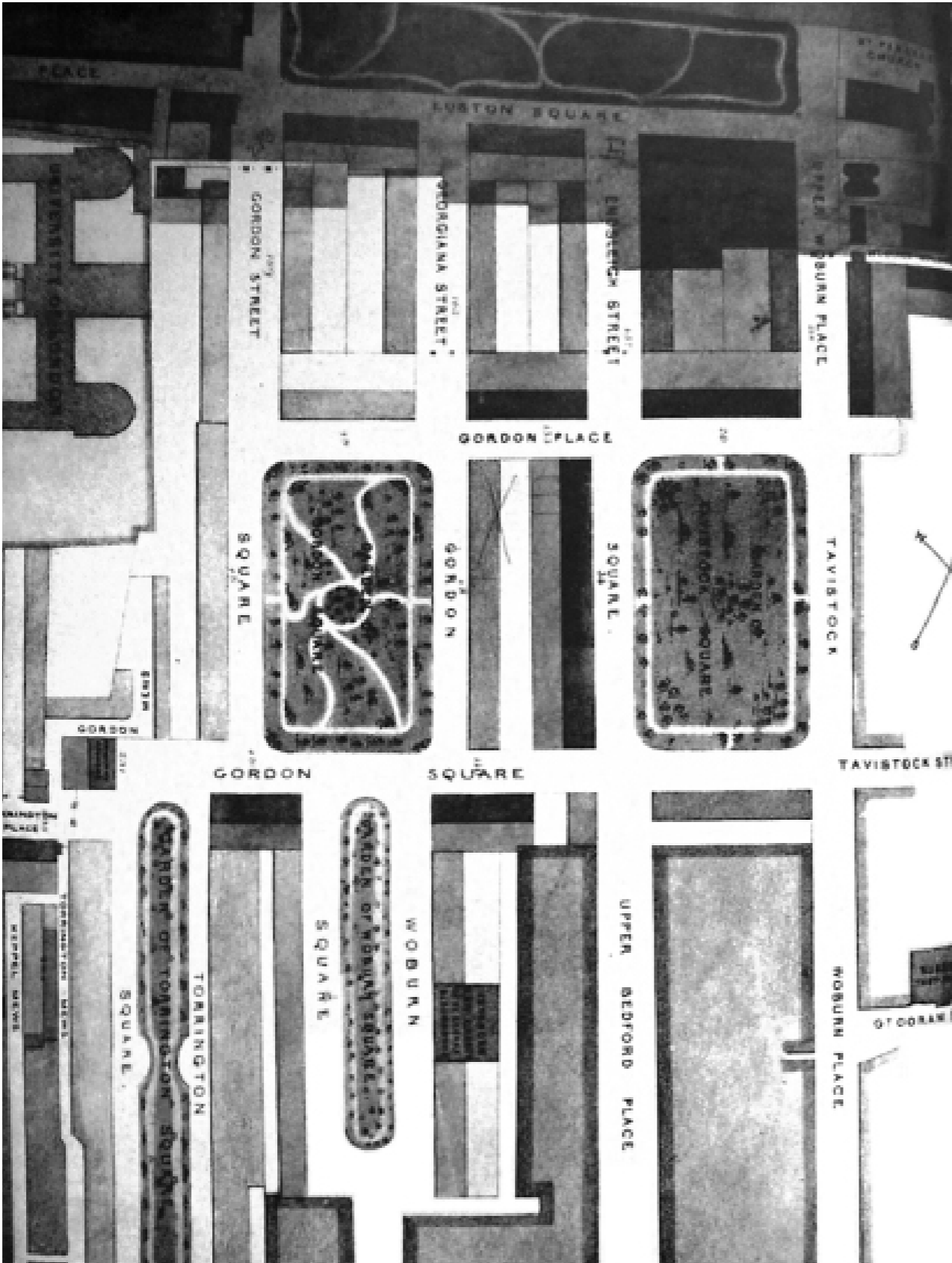
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Map

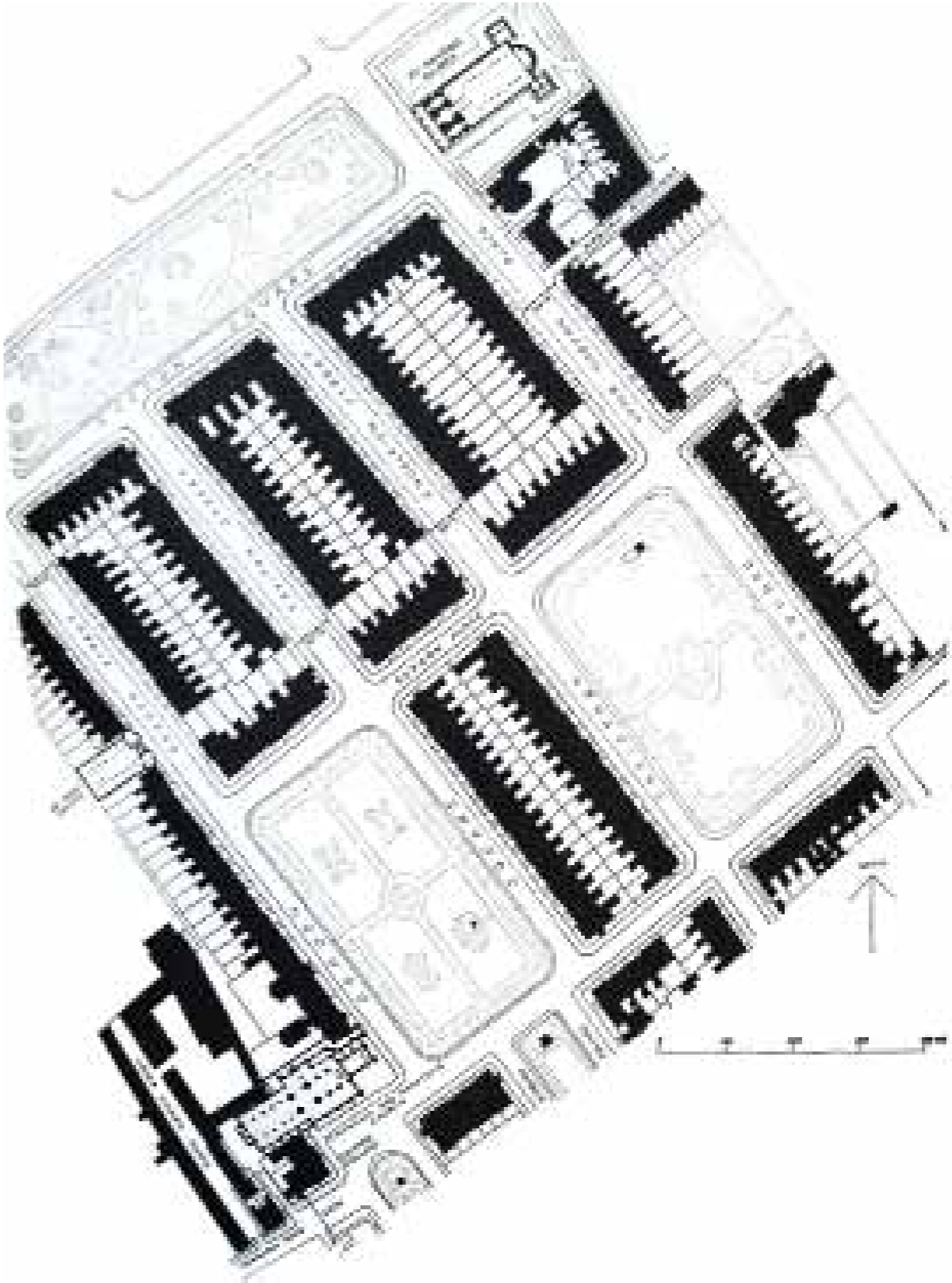


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APPENDIX 5b
HISTORIC MAPS AND PLANS



Bedford Estate in 1824 (Hobhouse, 1971)



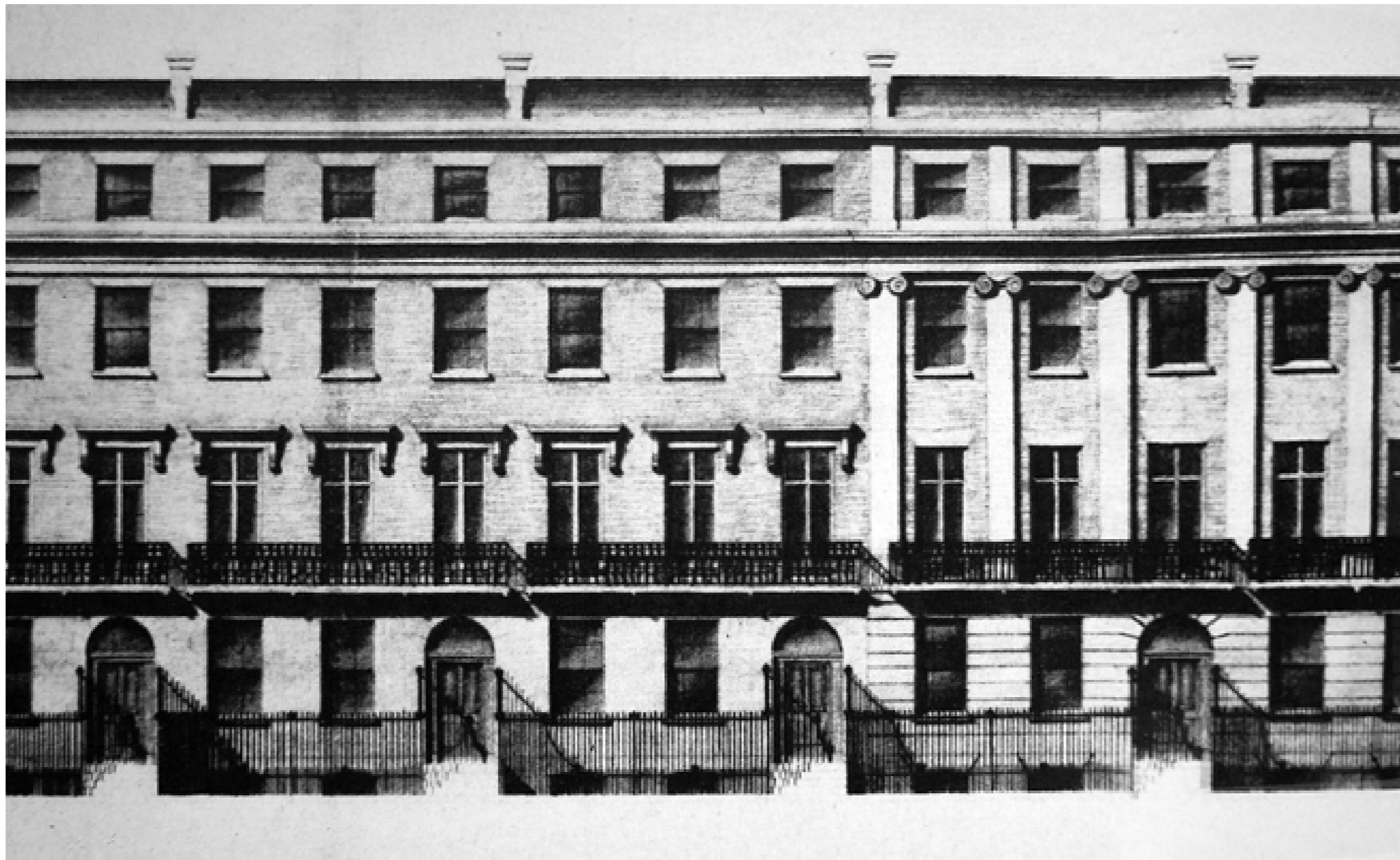
Northern Bloomsbury in 1860 (Hobhouse, 1971)



Gordon Square, 1921



Gordon Square, 1965



Contract elevation, 1824 (Hobhouse, 1971)

APPENDIX 5c
HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD



36-39 Gordon Square, 1937



Rear of 46-42 Gordon Square, 1965



36-42 Gordon Square, 1970

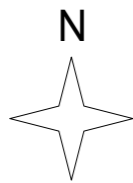
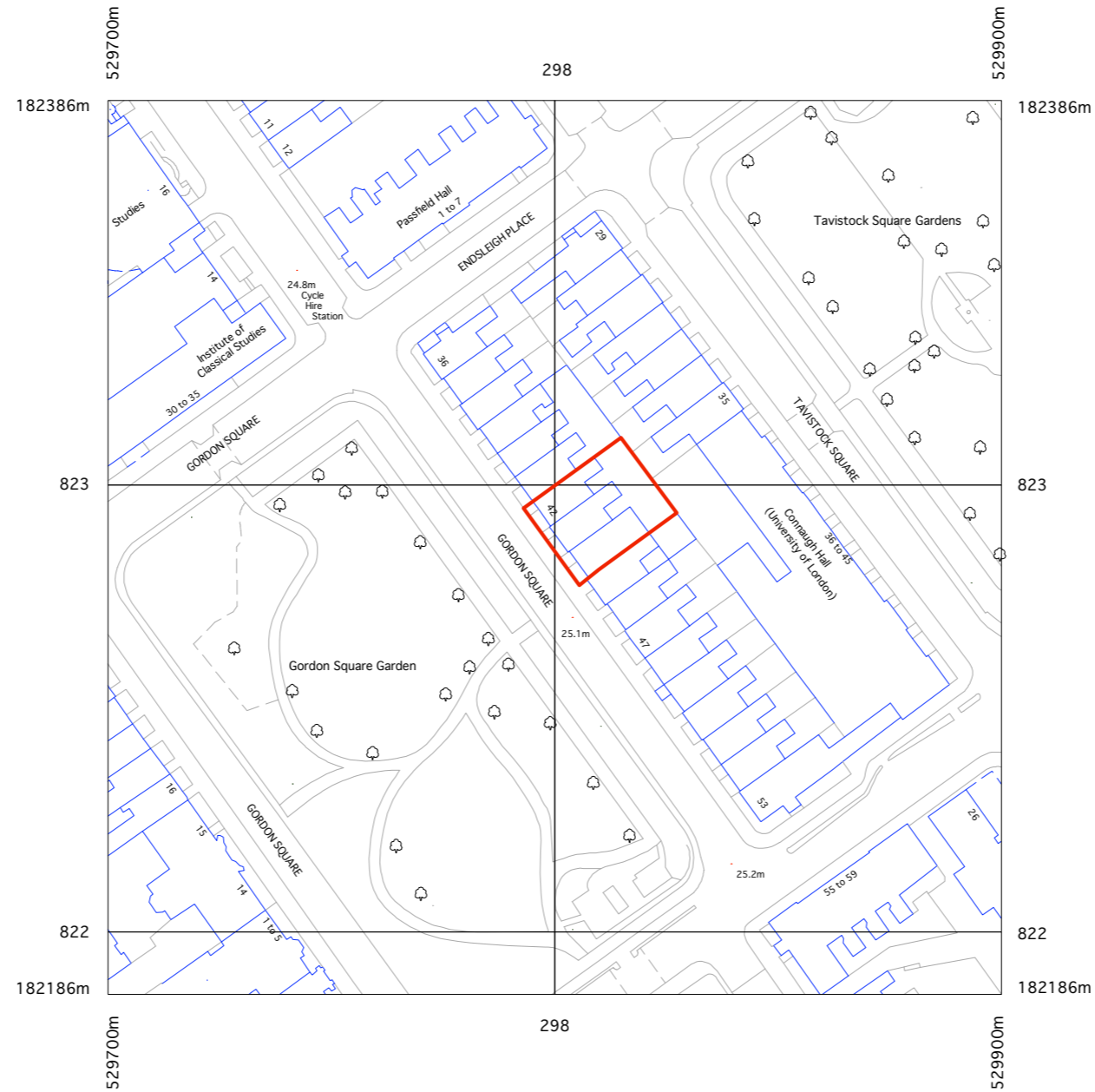
APPENDIX 5d
AS EXISTING PHOTOGRAPHS



Rear elevation of mid 20th Century extension showing existing windows in the foreground (Photo taken from rear garden of 35 Tavistock Square)

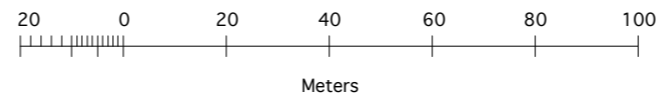


Rear elevation of mid 20th Century extension showing existing windows in the foreground (Photo taken from rear garden of 35 Tavistock Square)



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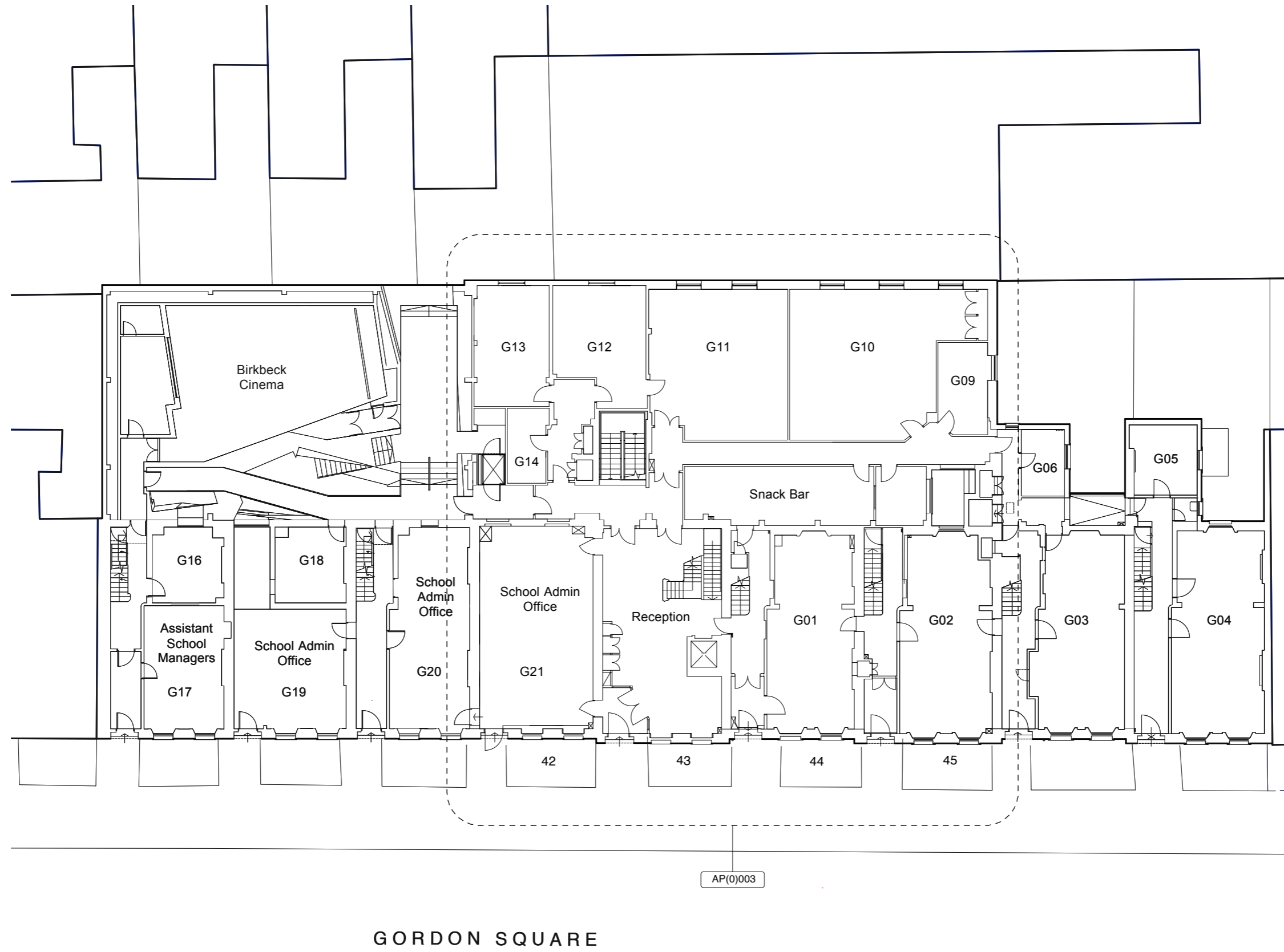
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**APPENDIX 5f
AS EXISTING DRAWINGS**



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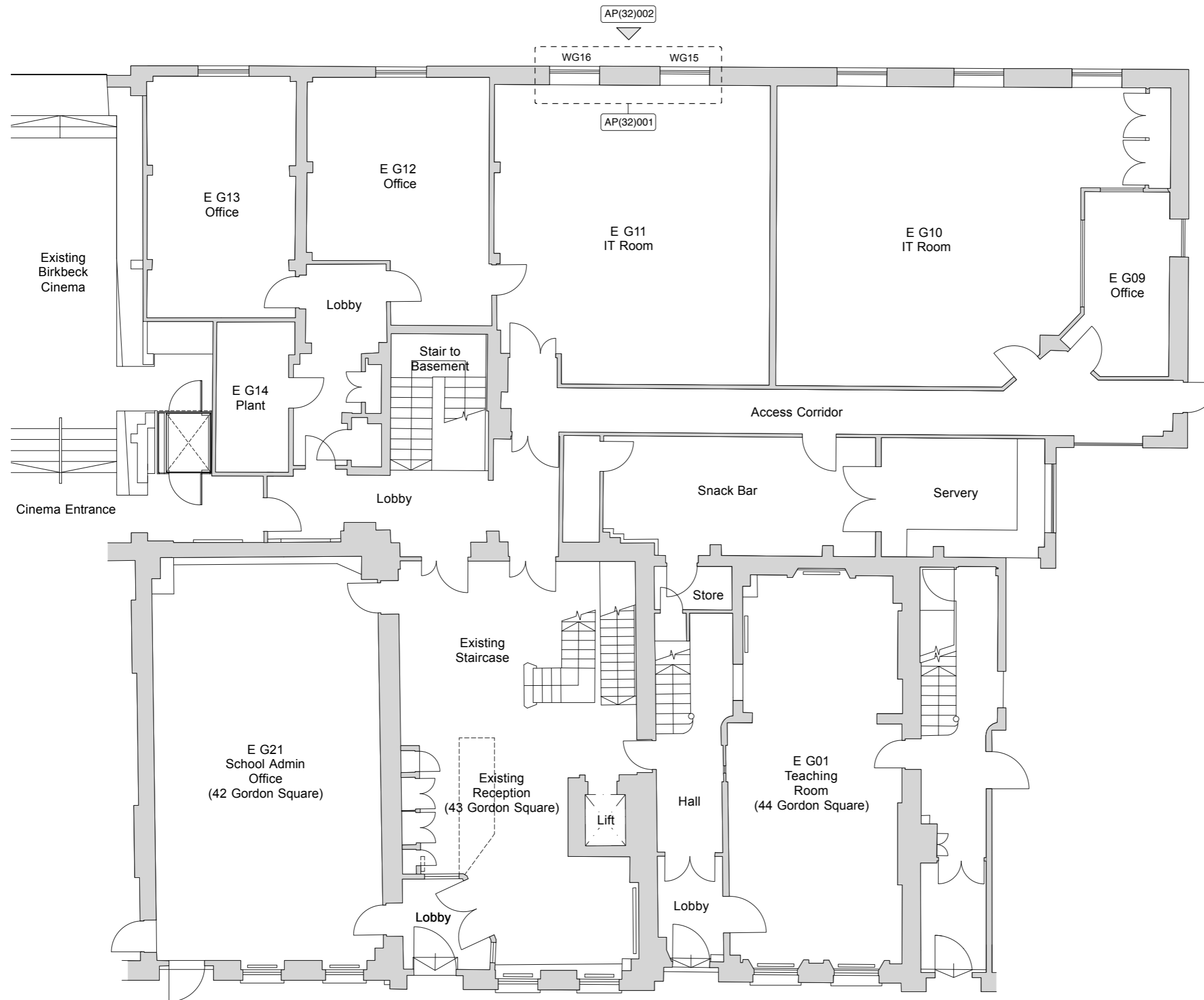
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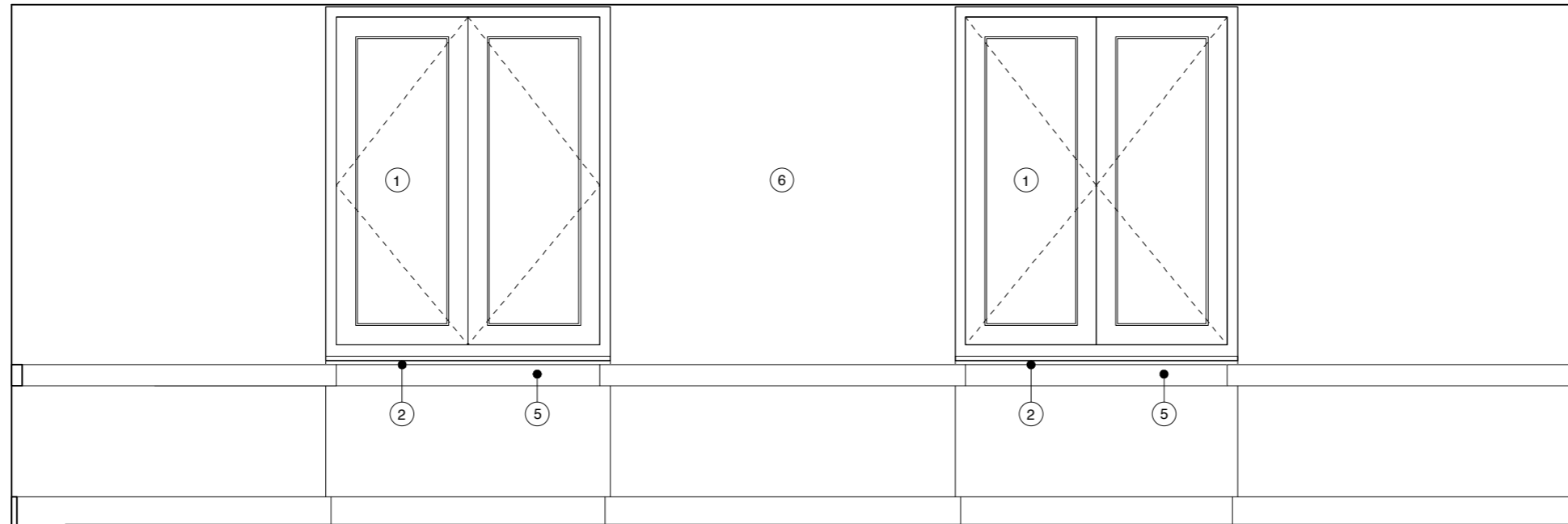
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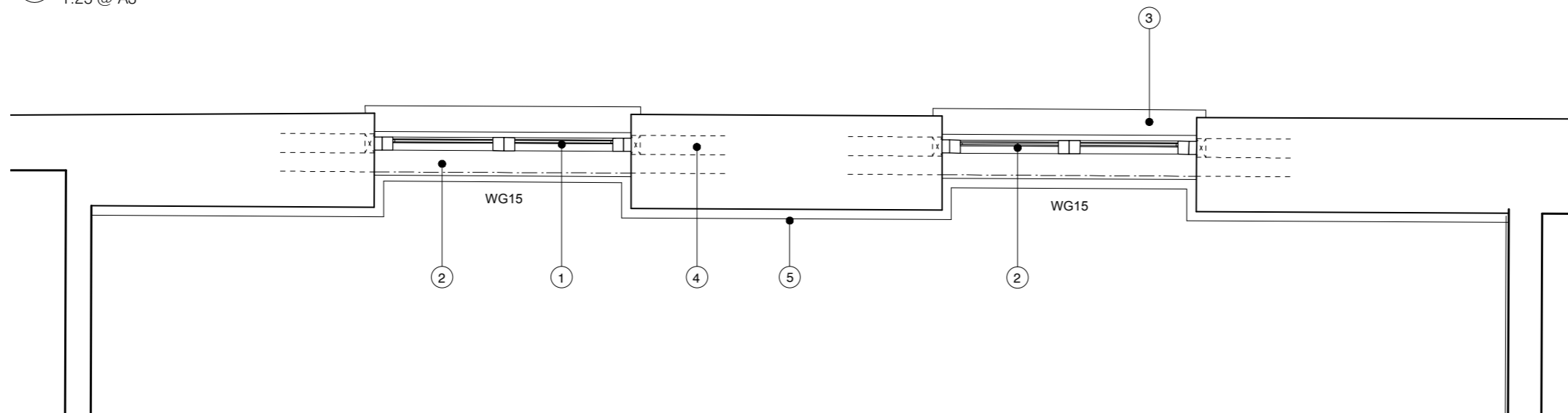
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1. Existing timber framed casement windows.
2. Existing timber internal cill.
3. Existing external painted timber cill.
4. Existing (assumed) cavity wall construction to RC frame building.
5. Existing Dado trunking.
6. Existing masonry pier between existing windows.

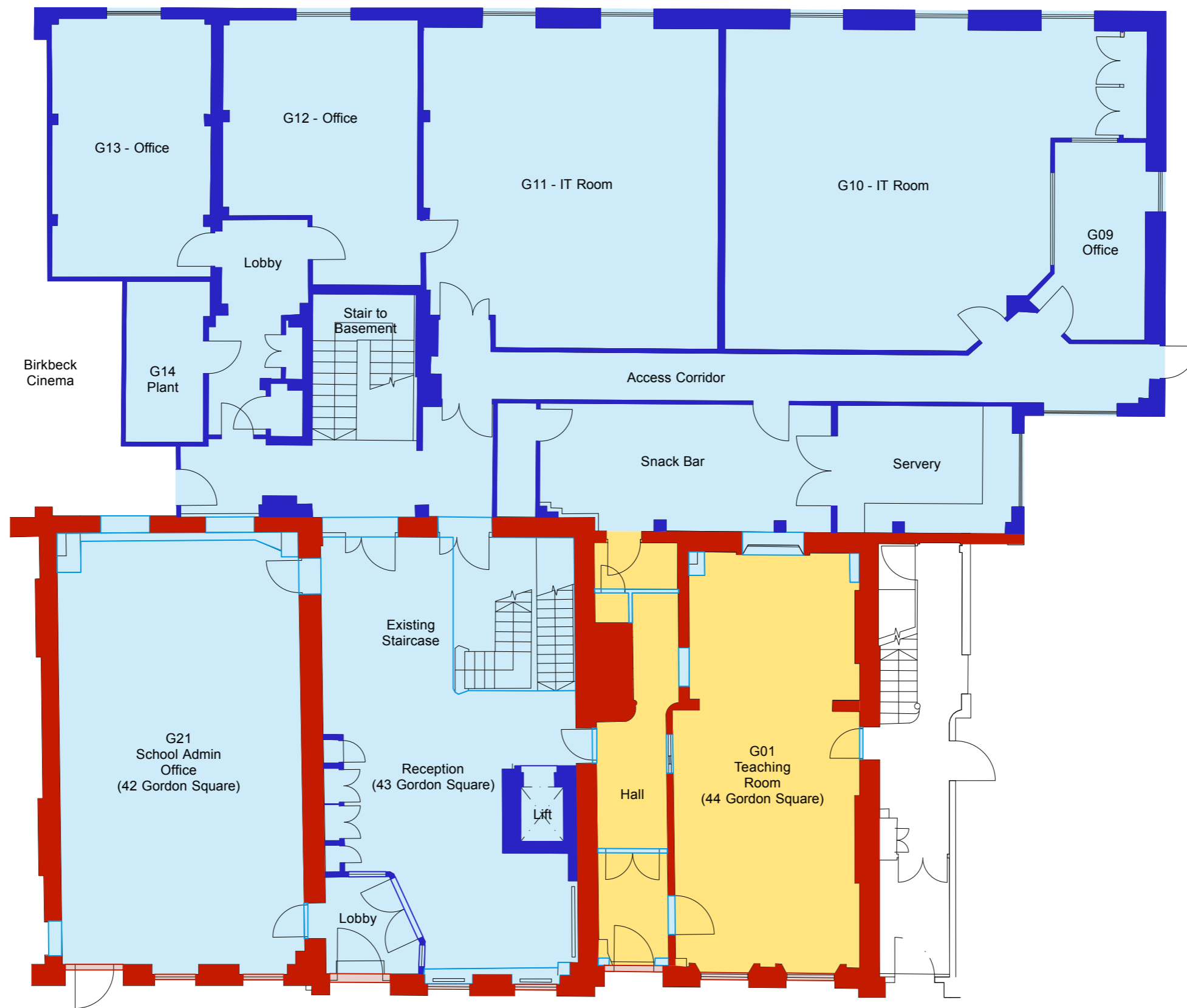
1 Elevation looking from G12 Cafe
1:25 @ A3



2 Plan
1:25 @ A3

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APPENDIX 5g
PLAN SHOWING INTERPRETATION OF BUILDING SIGNIFICANCE



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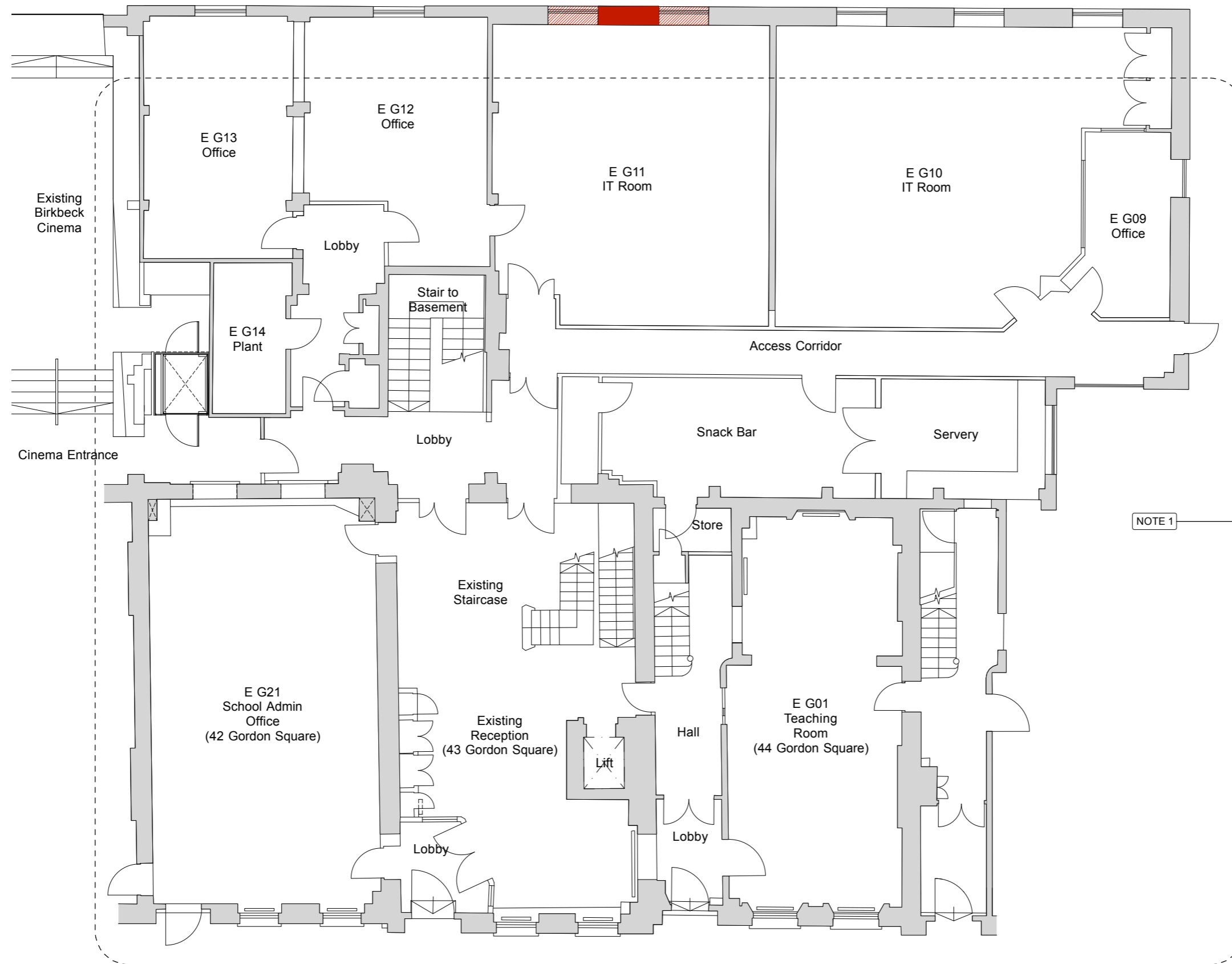
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- KEY**
- Building fabric/structure of low historic significance
 - Building fabric/structure high historic significance
 - Finishes, fixtures & fittings of medium historic significance (while some original joinery & plaster cornices remain the room has been subject to significant alterations)
 - Finishes, fixtures & fittings of low historic significance
 - Fixtures & fittings high historic significance

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APPENDIX 5h
PROPOSED DEMOLITIONS/SOFT STRIP



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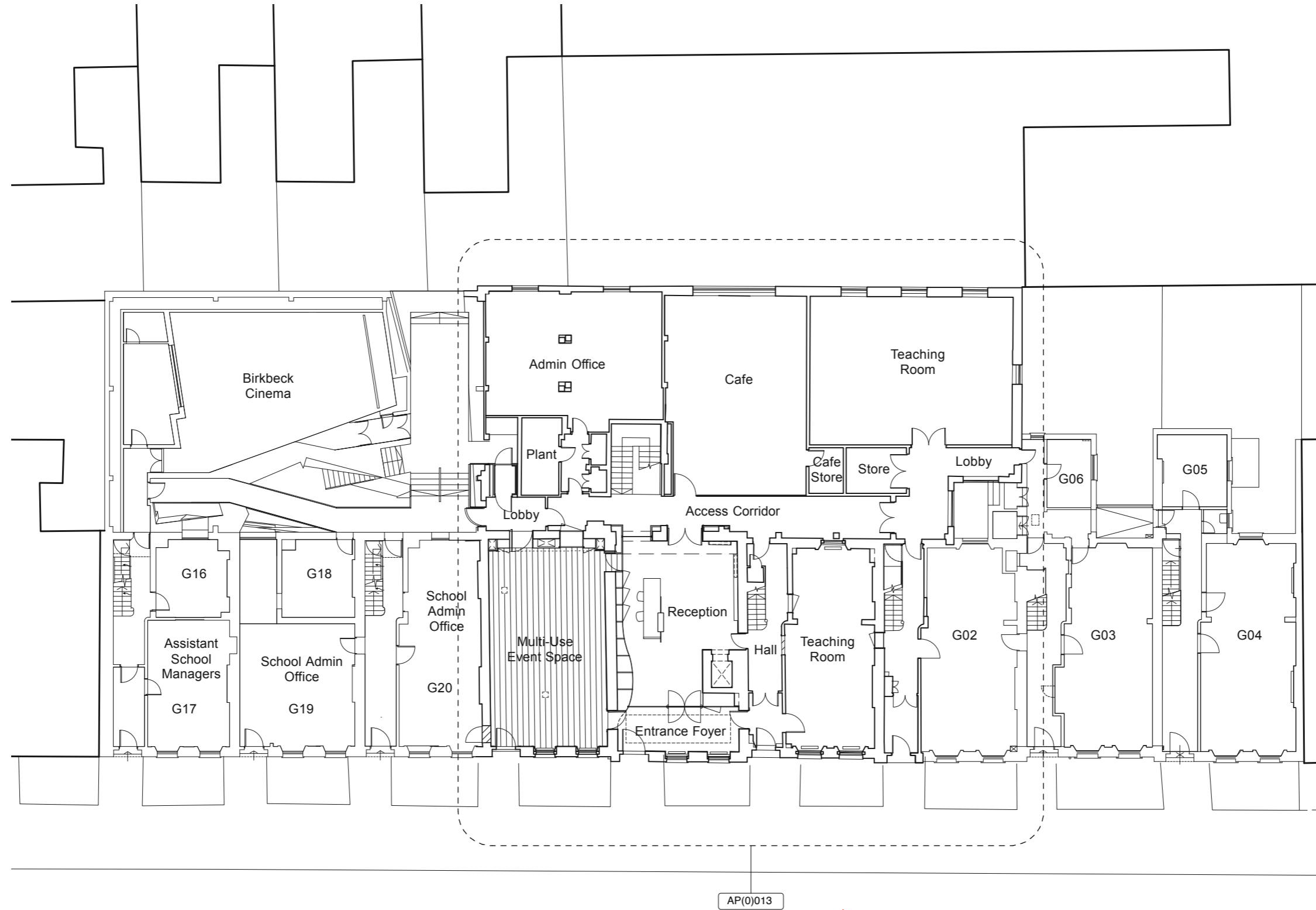
- KEY**
- Demolition involving elements of structure
 - Demolition assumed to involve non-structural elements and soft strip. Contractor to verify prior to strip out
 - Areas of proposed soft strip & demolition covered by another application (See Note 1)

NOTES:

NOTE 1 Demolition and soft strip works proposed within zone indicated is subject to an alternative Listed Building Consent application (App Ref: 2012/2594/L)

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<small>TEL 020 7765 6888 FAX 020 7361 0548 E-MAIL: info@bfa.co.uk</small>				
<small>WEB: www.bfa.co.uk</small>				
JOB: SCHOOL OF ARTS BIRKBECK COLLEGE				
FOR: BIRKBECK COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON				
AT: 42-44 GORDON SQUARE LONDON				
DRAWING TITLE: GROUND FLOOR PLAN DEMOLITION / SOFT STRIP				
DATE:	27.04.2012	SCALE:	1:100@A3	
DRAWN BY:	MC	CHECKED BY:	MC	
JOB NO:	BFF/1115	DWG NO:	AP(0)004 P1	
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APPENDIX 5i
AS PROPOSED DRAWINGS



GORDON SQUARE

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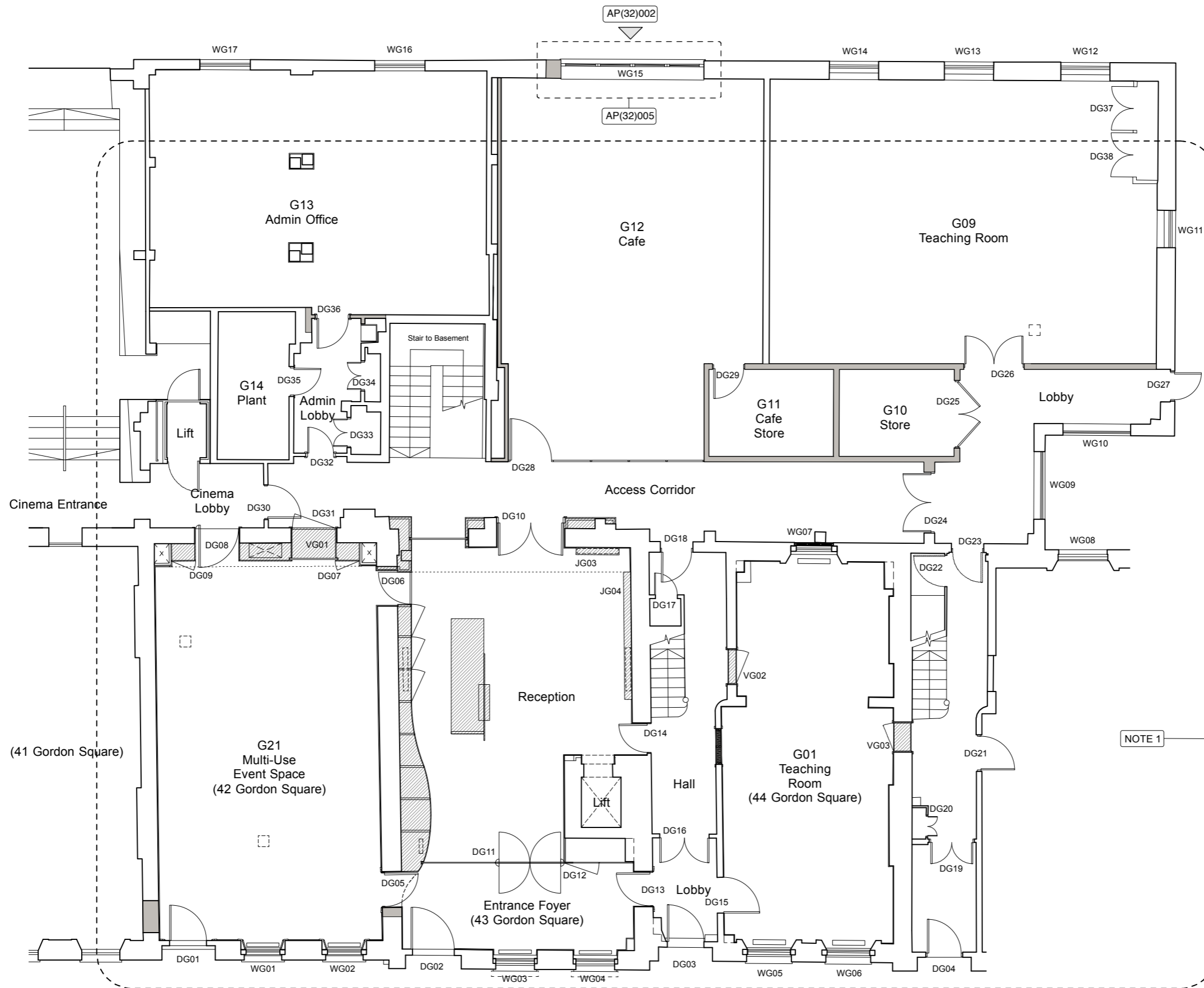
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WEB www.bfff.co.uk				
JOB:	SCHOOL OF ARTS BIRKBECK COLLEGE			
FOR:	BIRKBECK COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON			
AT:	42-44 GORDON SQUARE LONDON			
DRAWING TITLE:	GORDON SQUARE GROUND PLAN PROPOSED PLAN			
DATE:	27.04.2012	SCALE:	1:200@A3	
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JOB NO:	BFF/1115	DWG NO:	AP(0)012 P1	
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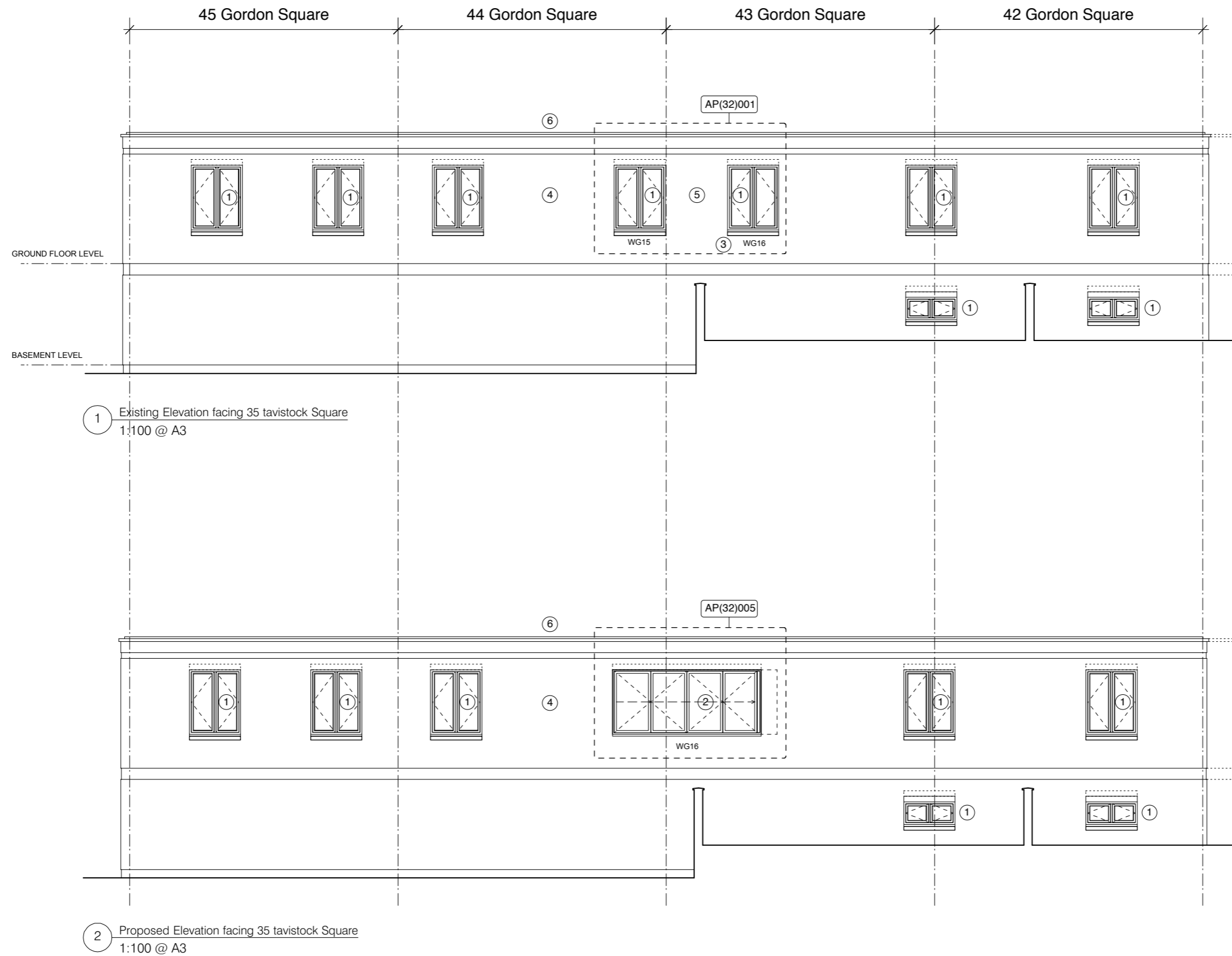
KEY

- Existing construction
- New wall construction
- New joinery construction

NOTES:

NOTE 1 Demolition and soft strip works proposed within zone indicated is subject to an alternative Listed Building Consent application (App Ref: 2012/2594/L)

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AT: 42-44 GORDON SQUARE LONDON	
DRAWING TITLE: GROUND FLOOR PLAN PROPOSED	
DATE: 27.04.2012	SCALE: 1:100@A3
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1 Existing Elevation facing 35 Tavistock Square
1:100 @ A3

2 Proposed Elevation facing 35 Tavistock Square
1:100 @ A3

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1. Existing timber framed casement windows.
2. New PPC finish aluminium framed sliding window set within widened opening.
3. Existing external masonry cill.
4. Existing (assumed) cavity wall construction to RC frame building.
5. Existing masonry 'pier' between existing windows.
6. No works proposed to external elevations or roof coverings other than those associated with the installation of new window WG15.

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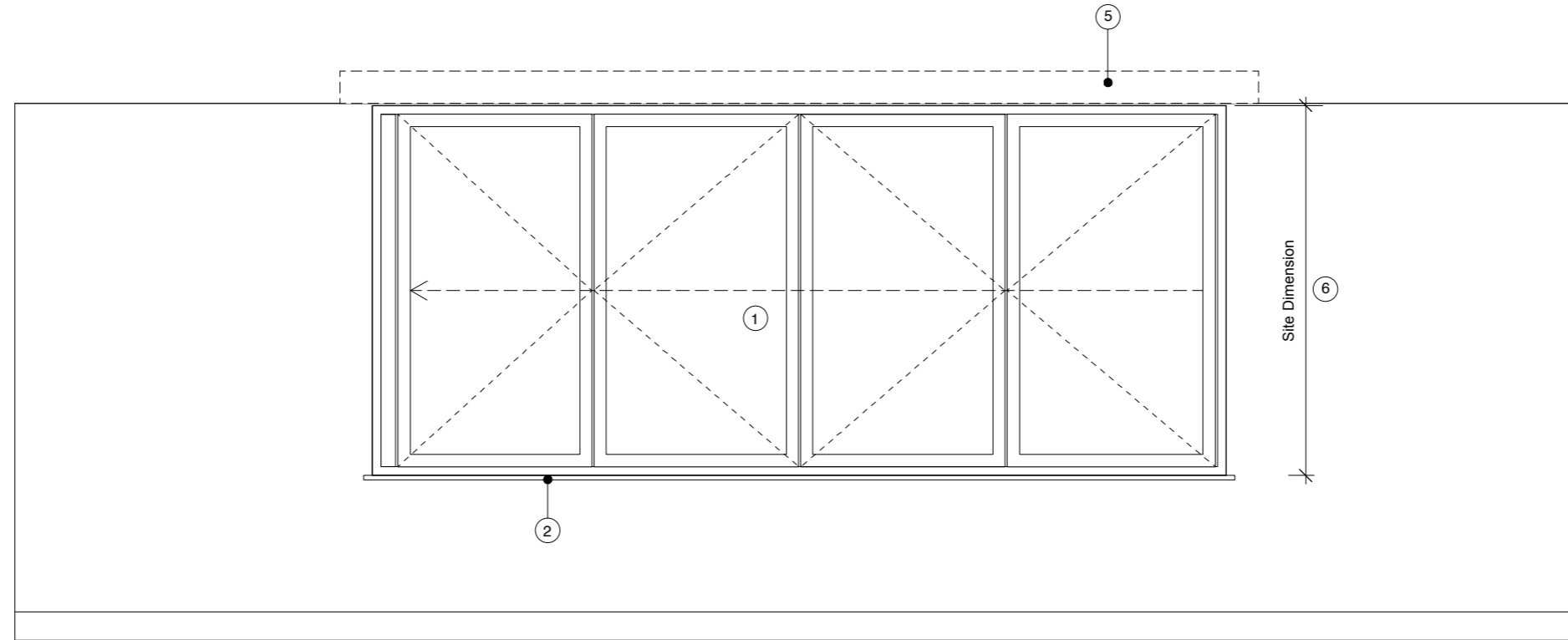
FOR: BIRKBECK COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

AT: 42-44 GORDON SQUARE LONDON

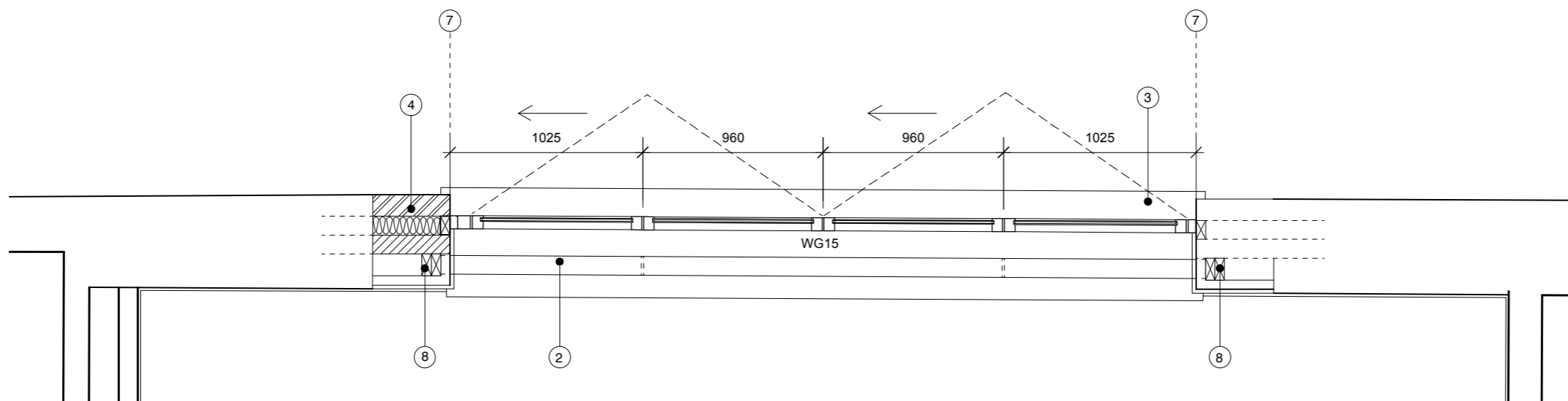
DRAWING TITLE: EXISTING & PROPOSED ELEVS FACING 35 TAVISTOCK SQ

DATE: 26.06.2012	SCALE: 1:100@A3
DRAWN BY: MC	CHECKED BY: MC
JOB NO: BFF/1115	DWG NO: AP(32)002 P1

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1 Elevation looking from G12 Cafe
1:25 @ A3



2 Plan
1:25 @ A3

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1. New PPC finish aluminium frame sliding 'door' system.
2. New painted moisture resistant MDF internal cillboard
3. New external PPC finish aluminium cill
4. New masonry infill to the existing (assumed) cavity wall construction
5. New Catnic type insulated steel lintel to widened opening in (assumed) cavity construction Lintel will not be expressed externally
6. Height and vertical location of new window to match the levels of the existing windows
7. Line of existing window reveal
8. New timber frame support structure to receive jamb fixings for the metal handrail

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AT: 42-44 GORDON SQUARE LONDON

DRAWING TITLE: CAFE WG15 FOLDING SLIDING WINDOW DETAIL

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