

Town and Country Planning Act 1990  
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act 1990  
Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 1994

**14 ARGYLE STREET, CAMDEN,  
LONDON. WC1H 8EQ**

**Conservation Statement**



**For:**

Landmark Architecture Ltd.

**By:**

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## Introduction

This application is for the extension and alteration of the above property; listed grade II and for group value.

The works comprise a roof extension to form a mansard with dormers to match the remainder of the terrace, re-establishing the original architectural design intention, and the original architectural status and definition of property, and internal alterations to provide three self contained flats.

This statement is prepared in accordance with PPG 15 paragraph 3.4 - 'Applicants for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals'. This statement shows why the proposed works are desirable or necessary, and provides full information to assess the likely impact of those proposals upon the building and its setting.

These impacts and justification are propounded within relevant points of PPG15.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with drawings and supporting letter prepared by Landmark Architecture Ltd.

## Summary

The property is listed grade II and for group value within the terrace lining the west side of Argyle Street

The house has little or no significance as an individual building, its cultural value lies as a constituent of a terrace and that terrace as one of a number of terraces that define a certain character to a sub-area within the Bloomsbury conservation area.

The front elevation is of highest significance as a constituent of the streetscape.

This is the only building not having a mansard roof and dormers and thus presents an uneven appearance that is to the detriment of the terrace as an element of considered town planning.

The upper floors of the rear elevation are now visible from the public realm although this was apparently not a considered part of the architectural design of the house.

The architect is unknown and there is unlikely to have been one.

The plan form and type of the house is unremarkable, being one of many thousands of a generic type.

The house has suffered alteration and refurbishment in the recent past including recovering and replacement to the roof.

The alterations and additions intend to replace the present roof with a mansard to match the adjoining houses and thus re-establish the architectural design ethos of the street.

The internal alterations are to form flats to create more units at lower individual costs than a single house.

There is little or no demand for single family houses of this type in this location.

The alterations are reversible and have been designed to respect the relevant significance of the elements and areas of the property

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SURVEY OF THE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND CONDITION OF THE HOUSE

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## Background History

The following provides a brief historical outline of the development of part of Battle Bridge, which with St. Pancras were shown on John Rocque's map of 1746 as isolated settlements surrounded by open fields.

King's Cross Station on the Metropolitan Railway, now closed, was situated in the middle of an area which was formerly a small common - waste of the Manor of Cantlowes - extending on the south to within a short distance of St Chad's Place and on the north to the parish boundary along Pentonville Road. The River Fleet, before it became an underground sewer in 1825, flowed along the western side of Pancras Road and then eastward along the south side of the common, crossing the old highway (now Gray's Inn Road) north of St. Chad's Place. Here was, no doubt, the original Broad Ford, which gave its name to Bradford Bridge, corrupted in Tudor times to Battle Bridge. There is no foundation for the stories of a battle here between the Romans and the Britons. The only Roman find discovered near Battle Bridge is the fragment of a tombstone to the memory of Saturninus, private in the Twentieth Valerian Victorious Legion found on the eastern side of Maiden Lane (now York Way) in 1842. The neighbourhood was generally known as Battle Bridge until the erection of King's Cross (a memorial to George IV) in 1830 (see map 4) when the latter name superseded it. But the name of Battle Bridge was attached not only to the hamlet near the ancient bridge (and specifically to the houses at the north-west corner of King's Cross Road), but was also applied to the fields to the south, on both sides of Gray's Inn Road. (*The Survey of London, Vol. XXIV, Kings Cross Neighbourhood, The Parish of St. Pancras Part IV.* 1952. p.102).

Argyle Street is now sited on what was shown as the New Garden, Terrier Number 310, On John Thompson's map of 1801 (see map 1). This had been a part of Battle Bridge Field which gave its name to one of the major estates in the area (see map 2). When the New (Euston) Road was formed it cut off the northern part of Battle Bridge Field and its area was reduced. The remaining four closes shown on Thompson's map were with New Garden: Hollies Field, Cow Lier and the part occupied by Mr Smith.

Prior to the year 1800 the property was owned by William Brock who leased three and a quarter acres (the New Garden) to William Marshall and the remainder, some 12 acres of meadow, to John Smith. The map by John Thompson dated 1804 (map 3) shows the New Garden leased by Mr. Collins and used as a nursery ground. The estate remained in the possession of Brock till shortly before 1823, when it was purchased by Thomas Dunston of Old Street, St. Luke's, William Robinson of Charterhouse Square, and William Flanders of Colebrooke Row, Islington. They decided to develop it and applied for an Act in 1824. The Act recites that the land consisted of fifteen and a quarter acres on the south side of the New (Euston) Road and one and a quarter acres on the north side (on the site of the sloping carriageway in front of St. Pancras Station, and extending slightly further east).

The streets which Messrs. Dunston, Robinson and Flanders planned to create were Argyle Street and Manchester Street (now merged into Argyle Street), Belgrove Street, Chesterfield Street (now Crestfield Street), Liverpool Street (now Birkenhead Street), and Derby Street (now St. Chad's Street). (*The Survey of London, Vol. XXIV, op cit.*). Argyle Street and Manchester Street are shown on AA Survey of the Parliamentary Borough of St. Marylebone dated 1834 by B.R. Davies, (see map 4).

Argyle Street runs southward from Euston Road at a point opposite St. Pancras Station (photograph 40620015) and then turns sharply east to Gray's Inn Road forming the southern boundary of the Battle Bridge Estate. The owners of the land, Messrs. Dunston, Robinson and Flanders, decided to develop it in 1832 and a plan of the houses proposed to be erected was prepared by their surveyor, Ebenezer Perry. The four parallel streets (Argyle Street, Belgrove Street, Crestfield Street and Birkenhead Street) were set at right angles to The New (Euston) Road leaving a triangular strip of land next to the Skinners' Estate and situated behind the theatre.

The building of the original Argyle Street was begun in 1833, when the poor rate books of St. Pancras show the first eleven houses on the western side southwards from Euston Road (photograph 40620021). The same number opposite on the east side were next built and finished in 1839. By 1849 the street of 41 houses had been completed and was numbered consecutively from No.1 at the northwest corner to No.41 at the northeast corner. ( *Survey of London, op cit.* ) It has since been re-numbered (see map 5 of St. Pancras Parish in 1849).

The houses of Argyle Street differ from those in Argyle Square, chiefly by the absence of moulded stucco architraves around the windows, which on the first floor are recessed within brick arches in the external face of the wall (photograph 40610012). This feature they share with houses at the north western extremity of Gray's Inn Road. The smaller houses of Argyle Street had only two storeys, but the larger ones had an attic floor contained within a mansard roof. Virtually all the smaller houses have now been extended with mansards and dormers apart from No.14 Argyle Street, which, incongruously, retains its original or early roof form. The houses on either side of it have had mansard roofs with dormer windows added, and thus at present the original unity of the terraces have been disturbed. The additions of mansard roofs and dormers within the terrace appear to have been carried out over a considerable period of time. The planning register begins in the 1960's and shows permissions for a mansard at No 12 in 1989 and at No's 16 and 18 in 1987. The listing notice indicates that these roofs were without dormers in 1974 (see below) Drainage plans have not yet been consulted.

The present numbering of the street commences at the north end, with odd numbers on the east and even numbers on the west side. (See listed building descriptions). Between Euston Road and St. Chad's Street, Nos. 7 to 19 and, south of the latter, Nos. 27 to 47 remain and are of one design. They are of brick, having the usual basements with railed areas, ground storeys with round headed windows, and doorways and two upper storeys; the first floor windows are square-headed, set in shallow round-arched recesses, and have individual balconies. Nos. 12 to 36 are similar but the doorways have archivolt (photograph 40610017) and some of the ground stories are wholly stucco fronted (photograph.40620016). Nos. 38 to 44, to Whidborne Street have been demolished. Most of these buildings are now hotels and boarding houses.( *Survey of London, op cit.* ) (See map 6, Ordnance Survey, London Sheet VII.33, Edition of 1894-96).

As the character of the area changed due to the development of the railway and the two major railway stations of Kings Cross and St Pancras, so also developed associated freight facilities and hotels. Their construction stimulated the intense development of residential, commercial, industrial and leisure properties in the area during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Argyle Street has since then been a mix of hotel and residential buildings.

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## Planning History

In 1977, Camden Town Hall was extended to the east to form an unattractive stop at the end of the terrace of houses on the west side of Argyle Street.

12 Argyle Street was converted and extended to form flats and two maisonettes in 1989, previously the house had been used as the Camden Chinese Community Centre from 1982 to 1984, two flats between 1980 and 1982 and offices between 1976 and 1980 (photograph 40610014).

16-18 Argyle Street have been used as the Central Hotel for several years leading to pressure to increase the numbers of bedrooms which has been resisted by the local council. In 1990 permission was refused for a three storey extension to the rear, but works to construct a rear extension between ground and first floor were carried out in 1993 and 1994, - after the Current 1990 Act. (map 6 shows the original rear plan form of the houses on the west side of Argyle Street.) Between 1962 and 1987 there was a temporary single storey extension at the rear of the hotel. An Enforcement Notice was issued in 1994 against the extension of the parapet, mansard roof and dormer windows failing to meet the requirements of planning and listed building legislation and guidelines. Planning permission was granted in 1987 for a mansard roof and therefore pre-dates the 1990 Act, and the introduction of PPG15.

### No 14 Argyle Street.

In 1995, 14, Argyle Street (photograph 40610015) was given permission for the demolition of the existing rear extension, internal and external alterations in association with the conversion of the building into three flats including the erection of a new rear extension, but the work was only partly carried out with the division of the second floor rear bedroom to provide a bathroom. A bathroom was also installed in the existing ground floor rear extension. The rooms in the house did not form self-contained flats. An application to install an additional bathroom at second floor level was granted in 2001 together with minor structural works and the external cleaning of the house. The alterations were not carried out, but the front facade has been cleaned and some work done to the facing brickwork on the rear facade. In 2003 permission was given for the installation of secondary windows, these have not been installed.

The rear extension (photograph 40620031) and outbuilding (photograph 40620027) are very poor condition. They are later work that is detrimental to the character and appearance of the listed building. Similarly, the timber structure in the front area also detracts from the character of the house and is detrimental to the setting of the street.

Unlike its neighbours number 14 has not been extended with a mansard roof, but it retains something of its original form, similar to number 11 on the opposite side of the street (photograph 40610027), but has been re-roofed. Original timbers have been replaced, and there is now an additional structure above the roof, purpose unknown, but possibly a crude attempt to provide (ineffectual) shores between the extended party walls of Nos 12 and 16. (photograph 40620024). The listing notice of 1974 (see below) groups the entire terrace together (nos 12 – 36) in one description, and mentions that 7 of the 13 houses have mansards with dormers: a continuous group of nos 20-28; and the individual house nos 32 and 36. The same houses are the only ones in the terrace described as having attics and dormers. Thus, the remaining 5 houses now with mansard roofs and dormers 12, 16-18, 30 and 34, have all been extended after they were listed.

The Listing notice states: "interiors not inspected", as is common in such listings of terrace and groups. However, there is no mention of the rear elevation, and it must be assumed that this was inspected and drew no comment.

### Setting and townscape Issues.

The narrowness of Argyle street prevents any distant views of the entire façade, and it was the intention in the design of these type of dwelling that the parapet line should form the principal horizontal termination of the building against the sky. The roof was not intended to be seen, and the articulation of the front elevation based upon (crude) classical proportions and principles, where, had

the expense been justified, a flat roof would have been correct architectural ethos. The precedents for this form in England are to be seen in the early Renaissance architecture of Inigo Jones' Queens House ( arguably the first of its kind, and the work of Wren. The pattern was developed - and debased - throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, reaching maturity in the grand "Italianate" villas of Banks and Barry; Knowles, Dawber, *et al*; and the Belgravia terraces of Cockerell, and Basevi etc. In this type of house, the roof was not considered an element in the architectural composition, but a mere constructional necessity, of no more aesthetic value than the floor joists.

Where roofs were expressed in vernacular dwellings they generally had little or no architectural value unless picturesque, and that was not generally an attribute found in the dense urban grain of developing London. The concept of roof design as an element of architecture was radically altered by the eponymous Mansart, who developed his dual-pitched form of roof as a highly practical architectural and decorative device in the latter years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It rapidly found favour across the architectural hierarchy, but became firmly established as the medium for extension and adaptation in the latter years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and during the 20<sup>th</sup>. As is the case here, the pressures on land values in central urban localities demanded higher density, and extensions and additions are now an established pattern of character in many streets and terraces.

The terrace form of repetitive homogeny, is of paramount significance in Argyle street. The front elevations are clearly of higher status than the rears. The rear elevations were not intended to be seen as contributing factors in the urban townscape, and it is only due to recent changes that the rear elevation of the this Argyle Street terrace is now visible from the public realm. It is from this view (photos 40620024 and 6) that the discontinuity of the terrace is most apparent as a detrimental element in the townscape. The gap in the roofline is disturbing to the original architectural intention of uniformity and massing that epitomises the terrace form. The front elevation suffers the same defect, now that the dominant roof form is the new mansards.

The rear elevation now consists of a disparate conglomeration of poor quality constructional elements that have no significance. The few elements of interest: joinery. Some pavings etc, contribute very little to the significance of the rear elevation as a whole.

To the North, the street elevation falls within the setting of St Pancras but the setting of both is destroyed by Camden council offices terminating the street. To the south the uniformity of form and massing is continued by other similar terraces.

Internally, the essence of plan form remains, but is not of particular interest. There are very few remaining features of significance, and much of the original structure and construction has been replaced. Of high significance are the remaining original joinery and plasterwork to the ground and first floors.

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**LISTING DESCRIPTION FOR THE EXTERIOR ELEMENTS**
**Listing description****West side, numbers 12-36 (even) and attached railings****Grade: II****Reference number: 1798-1-51 90 1****Date of listing: 14 May 1974.****Description:**

Terrace of 13 houses, now mostly small hotels, c1833-9. Yellow stock brick; Nos 16 & 18 stuccoed. No.22, painted; Nos 24-28, painted ground floors. Plain stucco 1<sup>st</sup> floor sill bands. Nos 20-28 and 32 & 36 with slated mansard roofs and dormers. 3 storeys, Nos 20-28 and 32 & 36 attics, and basements. 2 windows each. Round-arched ground floor openings. Doorways with stucco architraves, pilaster-jambs carrying cornice-heads, fanlights (some patterned) and some panelled doors. Most ground floor windows with margin lights. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes; 1<sup>st</sup> floor in shallow, round-arched recesses with cast-iron balconies. Parapets. Interiors: not inspected. Subsidiary features: attached cast-iron railings with knob and disc finials to areas. (*Survey of London: Vol.XXIV, King's Cross Neighbourhood, Parish of St. Pancras IV: London:- 1952: pp.106*).

**Listing description****East side, numbers 7-19 (odd) and attached railings****Grade: II****Reference number: 1798-1-50 90 1****Date of listing: 14 May 1974****Description:**

Terrace of seven houses, now mostly small hotels. c1833-9. Yellow stock brick. No.7, stucco ground floor; No.9, pebble dash rendered ground floor; Nos 13-19, painted stucco ground floors (No.15 rusticated). Plain stucco 1<sup>st</sup> floor sill bands. Nos 13-19, slate mansard roofs with dormers. 3 storeys, Nos 13-19 attics, and basements. 2 windows each. Round-arched ground floor openings. Doorways of Nos 7-11 with pilaster jambs cornice-heads; fanlights and panelled doors; those to Nos 13-19, C20 reproduction with 1<sup>st</sup> floor in shallow, round-arched recesses with cast-iron balconies. Parapets. Interiors: not inspected. Subsidiary features: attached cast-iron railings with tasselled spearhead finials to areas. (*Survey of London: Vol.XXIV, King's Cross Neighbourhood, Parish of St.Pancras IV: London:- 1952: pp.106*).

**CONSERVATION AREA**

**Argyle Street is in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and is mentioned in the King's Cross Conservation Area Statement for Sub Area 4.**

The Kings Cross Conservation Area is currently undergoing substantial change due to the work associated with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, the new Thameslink station and the London Underground works. The works should be complete by 2007.

It is anticipated that 'Crossrail 2' (formerly the Chelsea-Hackney Line) will include a new station on the south side of Euston Road, at a date after 2016; currently, there is uncertainty regarding the funding and timing of this project.

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## Schedule of significance

### NOTES ON THE SCHEDULE

The schedule below lists the existing elements that are considered to be of significance or are later than 1833-39, but are significant.

Planning Policy Guidance states that the lists are meant to include all buildings which are of importance to the nation for the interest of their architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship; also important examples of building types and techniques and significant plan forms.

The lists include a description of each building above. This is principally to aid identification. While list descriptions will include mention of those features which led English Heritage to recommend listing, they are not intended to provide a comprehensive or exclusive record of all the features of importance, and the amount of information given in the descriptions varies considerably. Absence from the list description of any reference to a feature (whether external or internal) does not, therefore, indicate that it is not of interest or that it can be removed or altered without consent.

In assessing the elements of significance consideration has been given to the staircase, decorative plaster, ceilings, joinery, other elements and the plan form of the house.

Consideration should also be given to the archaeological or technological interest of the surviving masonry structure and surfaces. As most of the floors are covered with oak block flooring, which detracts from the significance, quality and character of the house, or carpet, mainly on the stairs and landings, it has not been possible to confirm the existence of the original floor boards or joists, but any scheme proposals should have regard for the hidden structure of the building. The earlier historic paint schemes may be researched using samples of paint and polished sections taken from surfaces.

The schedule lists some of the existing and altered elements remaining in each room of the house, which are probably original or later work of architectural interest and significance. The elements that are interventions into historic spaces, or are of later unrecorded date or have been removed are noted. Where elements are not mentioned they are considered to be works carried out that have no historic or cultural significance.

The degrees of significance (S) are categorised as follows:-

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Considerable significance                            |
| 2 | Significant  |
| 3 | Little significance                                  |
| 4 | No significance                                      |
| 5 | Buildings and elements that detract or are intrusive |

The degrees of condition (C) are categorised as follows:-

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1 | Good     |
| 2 | Fair     |
| 3 | Poor     |
| 4 | Very bad |

The condition specified in the schedule is for the room or features generally and covers all elements. The inspection is not made in intricate detail and includes a visual examination of the roof space, and roof; but does not include areas that were inaccessible. No finishes or elements were lifted or removed. Flues require inspection and sweeping. This is not a structural survey.

The schedule is not intended to be fully comprehensive, but to give sufficient guidance to be able to test the proposals for the alteration of the house against the tenets of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation areas) Act and the guidance of PPG 15; and local Plan policies. It will also assist future preparation of repair schedules, drawings, specifications for the house.

The schedule has been prepared using drawings numbers: 0562/ADO/1002/P2, 1003/P2 and 1006/P1 prepared by Landmark Architecture Ltd.

The site was visited on Thursday 2 December 2004. The weather was sunny and dry.

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**SURVEY OF THE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND GENERAL CONDITION OF INTERIOR SPACES AND ELEMENTS**


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	Front elevation generally	Brick and dressings, as the listing notice	1	2
	Rear elevation generally	Brick, repaired and reconditioned, extremely poor pointing, damaged the brick	2	3
	Roof	Original central valley form, replacements and repairs new slates	3	2
Bsmt	External store and porch	Not accessible, later brick structure extending to the ground floor. In poor condition. (photograph 40620031).	4	3
	External store	Not accessible, later masonry structure rendered In poor condition. (photograph 40620027).	4	3
	Store under stair	Not accessible original battened door and partition.	2	2
	Stairs	Original plan form. Wooden stair with kite winders, wood outer string and wall string, square wood balusters and softwood handrail, round newel post, carpeted.	2	2
	Corridor	Original plan form. Plaster walls and ceiling; cement skirting to party wall.	3	2
	Front area	Original plan form	2	2
	Front area	intervention of wooden structure under steps to front door and projecting into area.	5	4
	Coal vault	Not accessible.	2	3
	Front room	Original plan form. Wood double hung sash window (8+8), surround, sill and architrave; wood skirting, four panel door with lining; plastered walls and ceiling;	2	2
		Later cast iron fire surround; carpet on floor.	4	2
	Rear room	Original plan form. frame in reveal with sill; cement skirting; four panel door in lining; later plaster to	2	2

		ceiling, walls plastered.		
		Later wood sashes (6+6),	4	2
Gnd	Mezzanine Bathroom	Door and lining in old brick opening with flat arch.	4	3
	Mezzanine Landing	Original wood balustrade, square balusters and round newel.	2	2
	Hall	Original plan form. Front door, frame and fanlight with cast iron glazing bars missing, (photographs 40610002 and 40610010); doors linings and architraves to front and rear rooms; ceiling in three moulded panels; archway with corbels decorated with acanthus leaves, (photograph 40610001);	2	2
		intervention of herringbone pattern oak block floor finish	5	2
	Front room used as living room	Original plan form. Wood sash window (6+6 with margins) round headed externally, square head on inside, shutter boxes removed at sides later splays to reveals, window back, (photographs 40610008 and 40610011); four panel door, lining and architrave (cut at floor level to accommodate the intervention of new oak herringbone floor finish, photograph 40610036), wood skirting; ceiling cornice and band with rosettes, (photograph 40610006); no fireplace.	2	2
		intervention of new oak herringbone floor finish, New opening to rear room and kitchen	5	2
	Rear room now used as a kitchen	Original plan form. Wood double hung sash window, inside of frame grooved for vertical sliding sash shutters, (photograph 40610019), shutters and box missing, hinged sill missing, architrave; four panel door, lining and architrave; ceiling cornice and band with rosettes; no fireplace.	2	2
		later sashes (6+6), New opening to front room. Intervention of new kitchen fittings and tile floor finish	5	2

	Staircase	Original plan form. Wood open string, dog leg staircase with winders, wall string, wood square balusters, round newel and softwood handrail, (photograph 40610003); wood double hung sash window, surround and sill, (photograph 40610020); walls and staircase soffit plaster.	2	2
		later sashes (6+6), carpet finish	5	2
1st	Landing	Original plan form. Skirting, doors, linings and architraves to bedrooms, plaster walls and ceilings.	2	2
	Front room used as a bedroom	Original plan form. Two double hung sash windows (6+6), shutters, box frame and shutter boxes projecting into room, back panel and elbow panels, architrave on inner face (photograph 40610022), picture rail, wood skirting; four panel door, lining and architrave; ceiling cornice with ceiling band decorated with rosettes; part chimney piece, white statuary marble surround with reeding and roundels, the overmantle, grate and hearth missing  on original boards.	2	2
		with modern (photograph 40610023); intervention of modern oak block floor finish	5	2
	Rear room used as bedroom	Original plan form. Wood double hung sash window in box frame, stop and parting beads, back panel, surround and architrave, part old wood skirting and later skirting on party wall; four panelled door with box lining and architrave, cupboard; no fireplace;	2	2
		later sashes (6+6) ceiling replastered with cove, walls plaster; intervention of modern oak block floor finish on original boards.	4	2
	Staircase	Original plan form. Wood double hung sash window in box frame; wood open string, dog leg stair with winders, wood balustrade with square balusters, round newels and softwood handrail, wood wall string;	2	2

		later sashes (6+6); later duct in corner carpet finish	4 5	2 2
2nd	Landing	Original plan form. Wood balustrade square balusters and softwood handrail, wood skirting, door, lining and architrave to front bedroom, lining and architrave only to rear bedroom, door missing.	2	2
		intervention of modern oak block flooring on original boards and cover bead (photograph 40610031); ceiling and walls plastered	5 4	2 2
	Front bedroom	Original plan form. Two wood double hung sash windows(6+6), old glass, surround and architrave on internal face, wood skirting, four panel door, lining and architrave (photograph 40610029), wood cupboard in corner (photograph 40610028); original fireplace removed.	2	2
		Interventions oak block flooring new fireplace.	5 4	2 2
	Rear bedroom lobby	intervention into original plan form of rear bedroom. Box door lining to landing, door missing; interventions with new doors and frames to bathroom and bedroom and new oak block flooring.	5	2
	Bathroom	intervention into plan form of rear bedroom; modern finishes, door and frame to lobby, and sanitary fittings.	5	2
	Rear bedroom	Plan form altered. Wood double hung sash window(6+6), new sash cords, stop bead and parting beads, architrave damaged; original fireplace removed;	3	2
		new skirting, new door and lining to lobby, new oak block floor (photograph 40610035), new ceiling plaster, walls plastered	4	2

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## The works

The proposal involves the conversion of the house into two maisonettes and a studio flat by extending its height by one floor with a mansard roof. It is intended to achieve this through minimum disruption of the existing fabric.

The mansard roof addition to provide the additional accommodation has been designed to match those of neighbouring properties and within the confines of the existing party walls. The dormer windows have been set out to match the positions of the windows below.

The rear out house is proposed to be rebuilt as it is in very poor condition to the same shape as the original but with brick to the ground floor side which is presently plywood and a lead roof rather than felt. A window is to be located in the side at ground floor as would have originally been included.

## Impact Appraisal

Area/room	Works	Impact/justification	Notes
<b>Basement</b>			
Front Room/Corridor: Creation of a new room by expanding corridor (no existing cornices).			
	Demolish part of existing internal wall to create an opening with new lintel projecting down below ceiling, and nib to external wall end.	moderate impact in area of low significance	down stand beam and nibs preserves the archaeology of plan form.
	Remove external door, side panel and lean to roof (all in poor condition) to enclosed area partly below external steps to entrance.	minimal impact to detrimental elements.	Allows beneficial moderate alterations
	Construct new internal stud walls with new door to bathroom. Door and architraves to be to match existing other doors.	Minimal impact to fabric. Reversible construction.	alters plan form but original form is discernable. Area of relatively low significance.
	Form new external brick wall to match existing, with external door and window in line with edge of entrance landing above.	Moderate impact to area of secondary significance.	allows contemporary re-use in spirit of PPG15.
	Form new lower ground floor slab to extent of entrance landing above.	moderate impact in area of low significance	Necessary and contingent works for the conversion.
	Upgrade existing doors to both front and rear rooms to half-hour fire resistance, retaining appearance of door and architrave styles.	Moderate impact. Doors are not of high significance.	Aesthetic appearance remains.
Front External Area: New access stairs down from street.			
	Remove up-stand below railings to width of new gate.	minor incursion to railings, common traditional remedy to allow basement access.	Details of alterations could be conditioned.
	Remove railings to width of new gate.	minor incursion to railings, common traditional remedy to allow basement access.	Details of alterations could be conditioned.
	Form new gate to match existing railing and add handrail to stairs also to support cut end of railings.	minor incursion to railings, common traditional remedy to allow basement access.	details of new gate to exactly match existing railings. Removed sections of railing will be re-used as and where possible.

Area/room	Works	Impact/justification	Notes
	Construct new solid stairs with corner winders up from existing light well lower ground level up to pavement.	Minor impact upon existing fabric to front elevation.	Details of construction and fixing can be conditioned. The new work will be detailed to avoid any damaging impact upon the historic fabric.
Rear External Area: Removal of single storey store and rebuilding of outhouse.			
	Demolish single storey structure down to raised ground level at back and lower ground level by main house and make good.	Store of no significance. Disfiguring to rear elevation.	Consent previously granted.
	Demolish two storey outhouse down to lower ground level by main house.	Moderate impact. Had been altered and is poor condition and appearance.	Consent previously granted.
	Rebuild two-storey outhouse with brick and slate roof to match existing main building, to same size as existing structure, with new door to store at basement and window to WC at Ground floor.	Moderate impact. Will involve some alteration to historic fabric at secondary elevation.	Consent previously granted, for an extension. Will enhance the rear elevation.
Ground Floor			
Front Room: Change of access (Existing Cornices to all but rear hall/stairs)			
	Relocate existing door from living room to corridor side of frame and line inside of frame within room to create required fire resistance, retain existing architraves to both sides and make good to match existing.	minor impact to joinery, with additional material to meet regulations.	Existing fabric retained for re-use as far as possible. Improvement over existing appearance.
	Widen existing opening between rooms and replace lintel.	Moderate impact. Opening already formed, major impact to fabric has occurred in the past.	Improves proportions, little or no substantial damage to the historic fabric. Traditional alteration widely carried out to properties of this age and type.
	Install folding doors into new opening between rooms, and replace existing architraves (not original and too small) with new to match existing doors.	Beneficial impact. Present joinery is not original.	New work will be enhancing improvement over existing.

Area/room	Works	Impact/justification	Notes
Corridor/Stairs: Creation of segregated access to ground floor/basement maisonette.			
	Form new wall to centre of stair well from top of lower flight up to top of string to upper flight and up to first floor to hall around new internal entrance door to Ground floor/Basement maisonette. Door and architraves to be to match existing other doors. New wall is entirely within rear section of hall where there is no cornice to the ceiling. Junction of new wall with existing wall is located so as not to overlap arch which separates the front and rear halls.	Significant impact. Required to form self-contained unit.	Separation proposal has significantly less impact upon historic fabric than other options. Plan form of the hall way is still discernable; alterations can be reversed.
	Refit out rebuilt outhouse to form new cloak-room with WC and washbasin.	No impact. New work	
	Upgrade existing doors to rear room and cloakroom to half hour, retaining appearance of door and architrave styles.	Moderate impact. Doors are not of high significance.	Aesthetic appearance remains.
<b>First Floor</b>			
Front Room: Change of access (Existing cornice to front room only).			
	Relocate existing door from room to stair side of frame and line inside of frame within room to create required fire resistance, retain existing architraves to both sides and make good to match existing.	minor impact to joinery, with additional material to meet regulations.	Existing fabric retained for re-use as far as possible. Improvement over existing appearance.
	Create new opening with lintel as required for new door from lobby. Door and architraves to be to match existing other doors.	Impact. Moderate, but new incursion. Necessary to allow beneficial new use and sub-division.	plan form not adversely affected.
Rear Room: Subdivision of room (coving to rear room not original).			

Area/room	Works	Impact/justification	Notes
	Construct two new walls with new panelled doors to form bathroom and half hour fire resisting to kitchen within existing room. Doors and architraves to be to match existing other doors.	Impact upon plan form. Original plan form still discernible from drawings.	necessary alteration to form new units, ceiling and cornice modern interventions, no major disturbance to historic fabric.
	Upgrade existing door to stair/rear room to half hour, retaining appearance of door and architrave styles.	Moderate impact. Doors are not of high significance.	Aesthetic appearance remains.
<b>Second Floor</b>			
Stairs: Creation of segregated access to second/third floor maisonette.			
	Form new wall to centre of stair well up to third floor, from top of lower flight, to top of upper flight and around new internal entrance door to Second/Third floor maisonette up to underside of third floor. Door and architraves to be to match existing other doors.	intervention of new partitions, impact upon elements of plan form. Secondary to all minor significance. Necessary in order to form a effective separation for new unit.	historic plan form still discernible. Intervention is reversible.
	Upgrade existing door to stair/front room to half-hour, retaining appearance of door and architrave styles.	Moderate impact. Doors are not of high significance.	Aesthetic appearance remains.
Rear Room: Change of access (no existing cornice any of second floor).			
	Relocate existing door from rear room to stair side of frame and line inside of frame within room to create required fire resistance, retain existing architraves to both sides and make good to match existing.	Minor impact to joinery, with additional material to meet regulations.	Existing fabric retained for re-use as far as possible. Improvement over existing appearance.
	Create new opening with lintel as required for new door from front room. Door and architraves to be to match existing other doors.	impact upon the existing partition wall. Moderate intervention in area of lesser significance.	Details to match existing. Historic plan form still discernible.
<b>Roof</b>			
Addition of new storey			
	Remove existing roof finishes, structure and ceiling joists.		
	Construct new floor structure and finishes to proposed third floor.		

Area/room	Works	Impact/justification	Notes
	Construct new mansard roof structure to follow similar profile of front and rear lower roofs to number 12 and 16. Dormer windows to be as properties either side to front and as nos 16 upwards to rear. Finishes to be slate to steep back and front sections and lead to top with vertical sliding sash painted timber windows as adjacent properties.	considerable impact. Existing roof has suffered some alteration in the past and has been re-covered. The roof structure and construction is not historically outstanding, uses common materials and techniques.	new construction in fills a gap in the skyline and re-establishes the homogeneity of the terrace. Particularly enhances distant views where the original close grain and density of the residential area has been altered.
	Form new timber stair and handrail to match existing lower levels.	some impact. Existing stairwell and stair construction will be extended.	necessary and contingent works carried out in acceptable aesthetic and constructional detail.
	Internally subdivide interior with plaster-board stud partitions and half hour fire resisting panelled doors and architraves to match existing.	no detrimental impact of all new work within the new envelope.	

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## PPG 15 issues

PPG15 is the principal policy guidance or interpretation of the Act, and the most relevant criteria for testing of applications for listed building and conservation area consent. The policy guidance it contains acknowledges throughout that changes will and must occur, and that those changes may be necessary for the survival of the building or area and to meet the prevalent social and economic conditions. PPG15 extensively promotes a positive attitude towards change, but is also cautious and exacting in demanding full details of impacts and reasoning.

**PPG PARA 1.3:** *“The Government has committed itself to the concept of sustainable development . . . . This commitment has particular relevance to the preservation of the historic environment . . . and it cannot in practice be preserved unchanged.”*

**RESPONSE:**

**PPG 15 - 3.3:** *While the listing of a building should not be seen as a bar to all future change, the starting point for the exercise of listed building control is the statutory requirement on local planning authorities to “have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”.*

**RESPONSE:** The features of special architectural or historic interest in the building and its setting have been assessed and appraised above. The most significant features of special architectural or historic interest are the external envelope and the building’s contribution to townscape setting. The works have been formulated to preserve these and the building as a whole, within its established historic urban grain. The proposals do constitute a change, and features of special interest have been preserved,

**PPG15 PARA. 3.4** *“...assess the likely impact of their proposals on the special architectural or historic interest of the building and on its setting.”*

**RESPONSE:** The impact upon the building and its setting has been examined in detail above. Such impact is justified in order to preserve those elements of most significance. The most significant change to the building is the addition of the new mansard to the Argyle Street elevation and this, unusually, allows the re-establishment of the original townscape ethos. The special architectural interest of the building and its setting is preserved through the carefully considered sympathetic design.

PPG15 PARA 3.5: *“The issues which are generally relevant to the consideration of all . . . applications are: -*

*Importance of the building, architectural and historic interest and rarity . . .”*

RESPONSE: The importance of the building and its architectural and historic interest has been examined in detail above and in the appendices.

It is clear that 14 Argyle Street is an important building both as a contributor to the streetscape and in the historic development of the Kings Cross area. Its rarity value is more difficult to assess. Although there are many similar houses in the area, the group value of this particular development is of importance. However, the architecture and decoration is not of a high cultural and aesthetic order,

PPG15 PARA 3.5 (II): *“ . . . particular physical features...”*

RESPONSE: These have been detailed in the appraisal of significance above. In summary these are generally:

- The general design aesthetic of the sub-group

PPG15 PARA 3.5 (III): *“The building’s setting and contribution to the local scene . . . where it forms an element in a group . . . or where it shares particular architectural forms or details with other buildings nearby.....”*

RESPONSE: Setting has been dealt with above. The building plays a role in contribution to the immediate environs. Its group value is also of historic significance. The proposal does nothing to harm the setting in any way, nor compromises its relationship with the group of buildings to which belongs. The group value and contribution to the local scene will all be significantly enhanced by this modest roof extension.

PPG15 PARA 3.5 (IV): *the extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community, in particular by contributing to the economic regeneration of the area or the enhancement of its environment*

RESPONSE:

Benefits to the community at large are the enhancement to the streetscape by the reconfiguration of the roof to match the remainder of the terrace; a pleasing and subtle addition to the streetscape that will remove intrusive and discordant roof line seen from a distance .

The area is a “regeneration area” and the use as residential flats rather than low-grade hotel assists in raising the social profile.

PPG15 PARA 3.23: *Local planning authorities should also consider, in all cases of alteration or demolition, whether it would be appropriate to make it a condition of consent that applicants arrange suitable programmes of recording of features that would be destroyed in the course of the works for which consent is being sought.*

RESPONSE: The Applicant would be pleased to arrange for such recording.

*PPG15 PARA 3.8: Ever continuing uses will often necessitate some degree of adaptation... It requires balancing the economic viability of possible uses against the effect of any changes they entail in the historic interest of the building..."*

*PPG15 PARA 3.10: The best use will very often be the use for which the building was originally designed... The nature of uses can change over time... Policies for development and listed building controls should recognise the need for flexibility... to secure a building's survival"*

RESPONSE: Clearly, the use for which the building was originally designed for, i.e. single family occupation, (with servants), is unlikely to occur, although the proposal will ensure that the property remains in residential use. The alterations proposed are those required for continued economic re-use of the building for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this clause, almost above all others, PPG 15 recognises and promotes, that change and adaptation must occur if historic buildings are to survive at all. However, such present-day use does demand re-allocation of some rooms to allow suitable uses and divisions.

The flexible approach is of paramount importance to the survival of this type of house. For that reason; the works are designed to allow occupation to standards now expected within property of this status in this area.

This proposal does incur exactly the modest — enhancing — change that goes to the heart of PPG 15 policies. It allows preservation of such of the historic fabric as survives; and enhances the townscape value. The level of adaptation required has been considered the minimum necessary to provide the economic, socially viable solution, precisely in accordance with this clause.

In the light of this carefully considered architectural solution and of the elements of significance, as propounded above; some flexibility — as required by PPG15 - is essential in assessing the proposal.

## ALTERATIONS, EXTENSIONS

*PPG15 PARA 3.12: In judging the effect of any alteration or extension it is essential to have assessed the elements that make up the special interest of the building in question. They may comprise not only obvious visual features such as a decorative façade or, internally, staircases or decorated plaster ceilings, but the spaces and layout of the building and the archaeological or technological interest of the surviving structure and surfaces."*

RESPONSE: An assessment of the significance of the building and its setting has been carried out above.

It is clear that the later alterations and modern interventions have eroded some of the architectural significance of the house, as an individual building of special status within its townscape group. All the internal elements mentioned in the above clause have relevance here, and are preserved, although the plan form has been adapted to provide the least intrusive solutions to sub-division. Such sub-divisions have in themselves an accepted character and element of historical development of the inner London town house.

However, the design of the mansard roof extension has been specifically formulated as a response to the special interest in the townscape value and setting of the building, and, particularly its historic significance. Thus, the reinterpretation and re-establishment of that historic significance forms an essential part of the design ethos of the proposal.

**PPG15 PARA 3.13:** *“Many listed buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration or extension to accommodate continuing or new uses”... “The merit of some new alterations or additions, especially where they are generated within a secure and committed long-term ownership, should not be discounted.”*

**RESPONSE:** In this clause, PPG 15 - yet again - emphasises the relevance of change and new use in order to sustain the historic fabric. The alterations allow the benefit of new use while not compromising the integrity of the most significant elements of historic significance. The residential use by committed occupiers one of the recognised secure methods of obtaining a sustainable long-term stewardship.

The substantial investment required in occupation of this type of property, will ensure high standards of construction and workmanship, and vigilant maintenance. That not only preserves the integrity of the building and its contribution to group value and setting of the conservation area, but is also essential to safeguard the investment value.

Architects of some renown have formulated the alterations proposed with proper regard to the significance of both individual buildings and its setting. The design elements have merits in their own right, which must be considered in relation to this clause of PPG 15.

**PPG 15 Para 3.15:**

*Achieving a proper balance between the special interest of a listed building and proposals for alterations or extensions is demanding and should always be based on specialist expertise; but it is rarely impossible, if reasonable flexibility and imagination are shown by all parties involved.*

Specialist expertise has been applied throughout the instigation and design of this proposal, and an imaginative – and conservative - response has been formulated. The history and significance of the house has been reflected in the design process and its outcome. It is hoped that the flexibility exhorted in the above paragraph, will be observed in the full consideration of the proposal in respect of the subjective interpretation of relevant policies

**PPG15 PARA 1.5 states:** *“Conservation can itself play a key part in promoting economic prosperity by ensuring that an area offers attractive living and working conditions which will encourage inward*

*investment - environmental quality is increasingly a key factor in many commercial decisions. The historic environment is of particular importance for tourism and leisure"*

This issue deals with the wider elements of significance that go to the heart of conservation area policy. The proposed alterations are intended to allow the continued beneficial use of a building of considerable significance to the local community and wider area. At present, the contribution of this house to the immediate environs has been eroded by the lack of uniformity in comparison to its neighbours in the terrace. As the historic ambience is a key element in townscape enhancement, the proposal is made to reinstate and preserve the significant original contribution of the building and setting, and to the conservation area as a whole.

**PG15 Para. 4.16** states: *"conservation ... cannot realistically take the form of preventing all new development: the emphasis... on controlled and positive management of change. Policies... to allow the area to remain alive and prosperous and to avoid unnecessarily detailed controls over businesses and householders... ensure... development accords with the area's special interest."*

This is guidance highly relevant to the present proposals. The proposal provides positive element of change, by re-establishing something of the original status and hierarchy of the house, and reflecting the present social and environmental conditions prevalent today. The increased accommodation, provided in an area of recognisable urban pressure and demand provides a continuing beneficial use of the property that contributes to the economic and social vibrancy of Kings Cross. The proposal accords with the area's special interest by preserving the special interest of the house, and enhances the conservation area character by the re-establishment of the terrace form. The addition, which has been carefully crafted to accord with the form, aesthetic, materials, massing and detail of the adjoining terrace and the conservation area, causes no harm.

The prevention of such a development would surely fall within the "unnecessary detailed controls" which the Secretaries of State are extorting councils to avoid.

## Conclusion

The significance of the building lies principally in the street elevation.

The interior has been altered and has the benefit of an extant previously granted listed building consent and planning permission.

The rear exterior has been partially rebuilt, and poorly repointed, and has a detrimental outhouse and additions that are in poor condition and not original.

The homogeneity and original design ethos of the terrace has been disturbed by the lack of a mansard on this particular building.

Street elevation is now unrestful and inconsistent.

The rear elevation, now visible from the public realm creates an extremely unfortunate and irregular appearance due to the lack of a mansard upon this highly visible building.

The interior retains few original elements of historic fabric, and these are to be preserved.

The alterations to the historic plan form are relatively minor, and reversible.

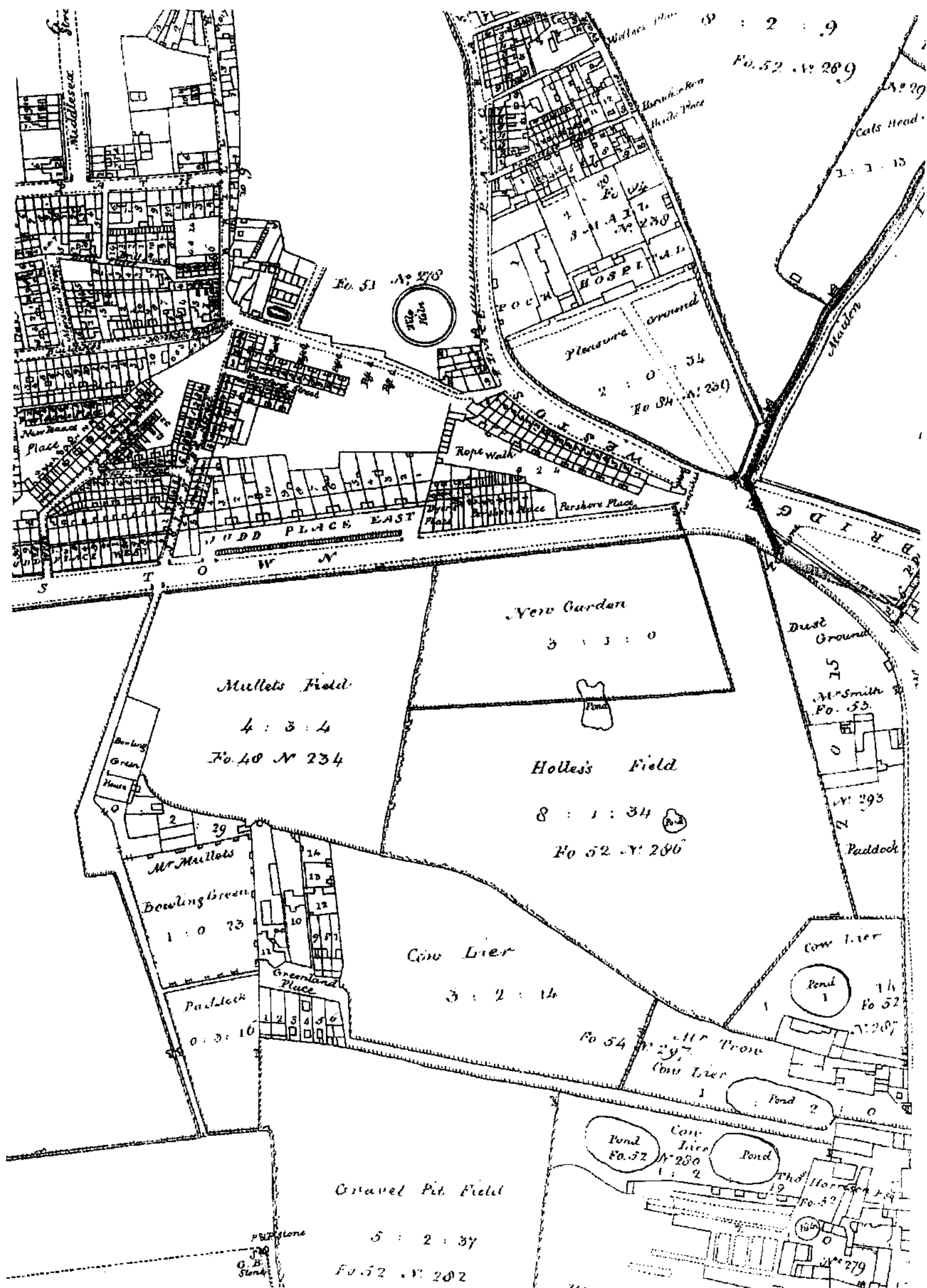
The benefit of the new, smaller units promotes a higher density of development which will not overly dominate the character of the area.

Higher densities assist sustainability and liveability by promoting a more economic use of buildings and land and by achieving a sufficient level of population to support facilities and uses that can change the economic and social profile of the area.

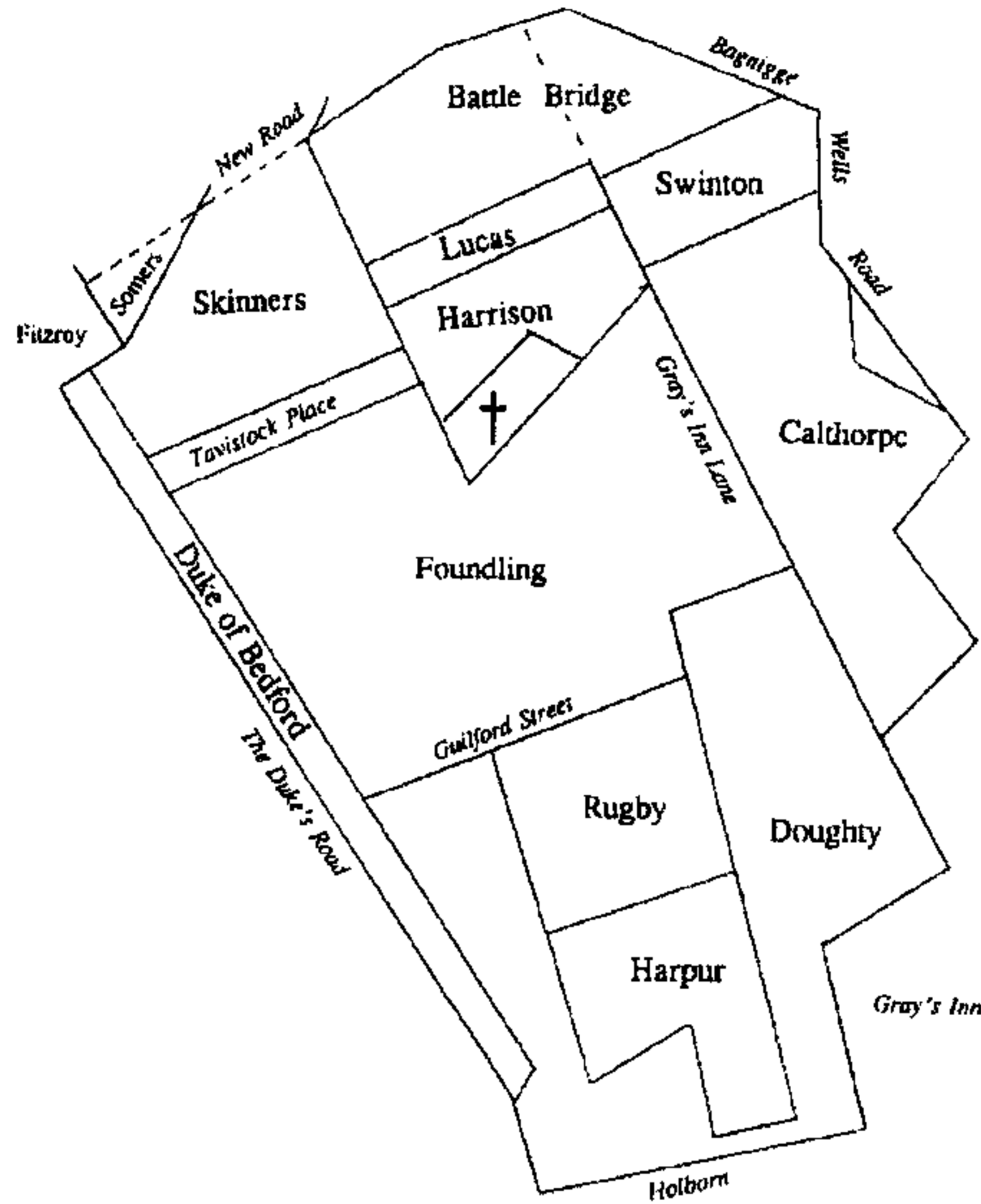
The proposal is generally beneficial and benign, causing no harm. It enhances the conservation area and the building by the re-establishment of a uniform roof line, it preserves the building by allowing a beneficial use that will ensure good stewardship for the future. The conservation area character is preserved by the extension that is in accords with the characteristics of the adjoining and neighbouring properties.

Stephen Levrant  
RIBA, AA Dip, IHBC, Dip Cons (AA), FRSA

## APPENDIX 1 - MAPS

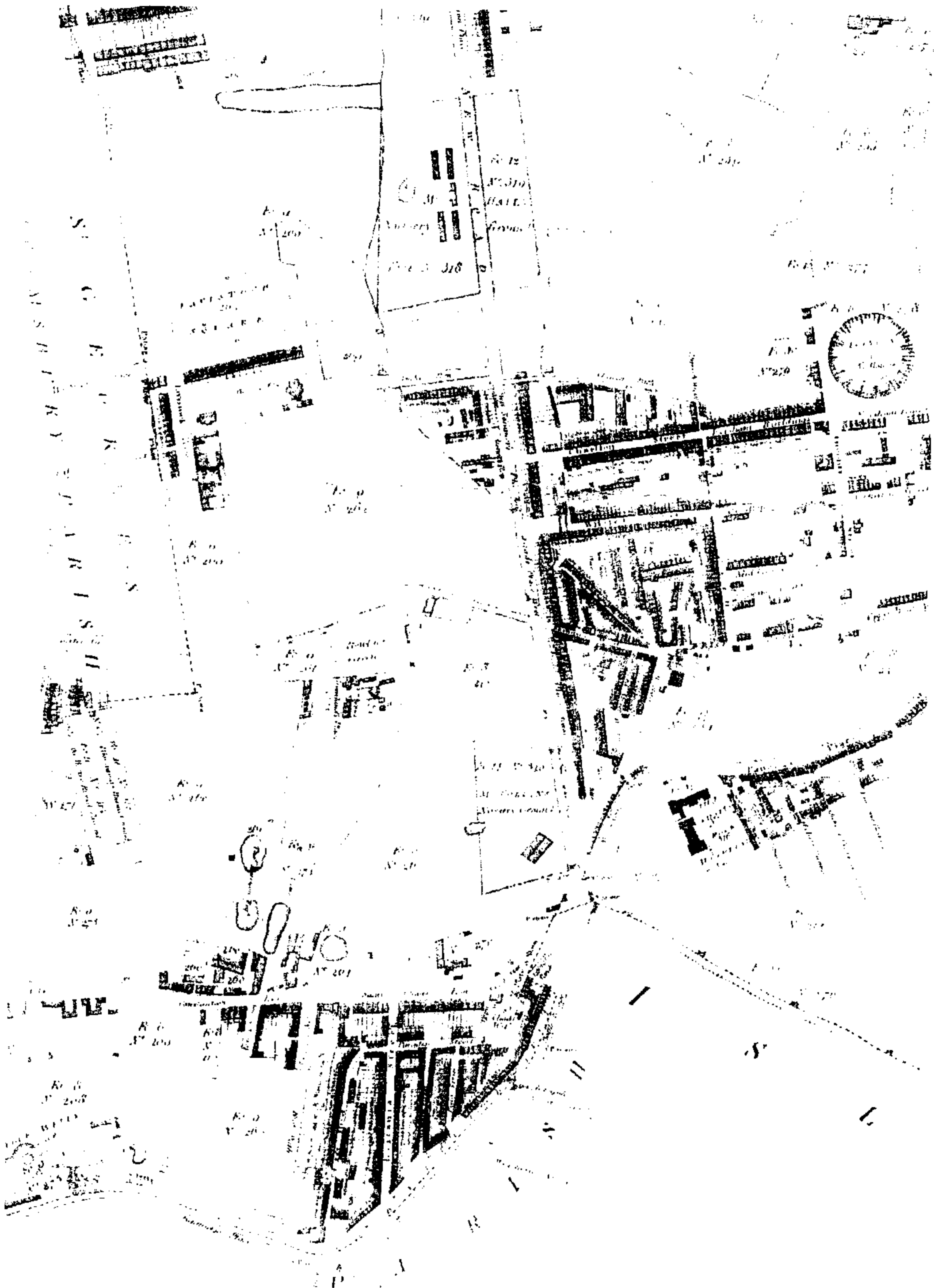


Map 1 – John Thompson 1801

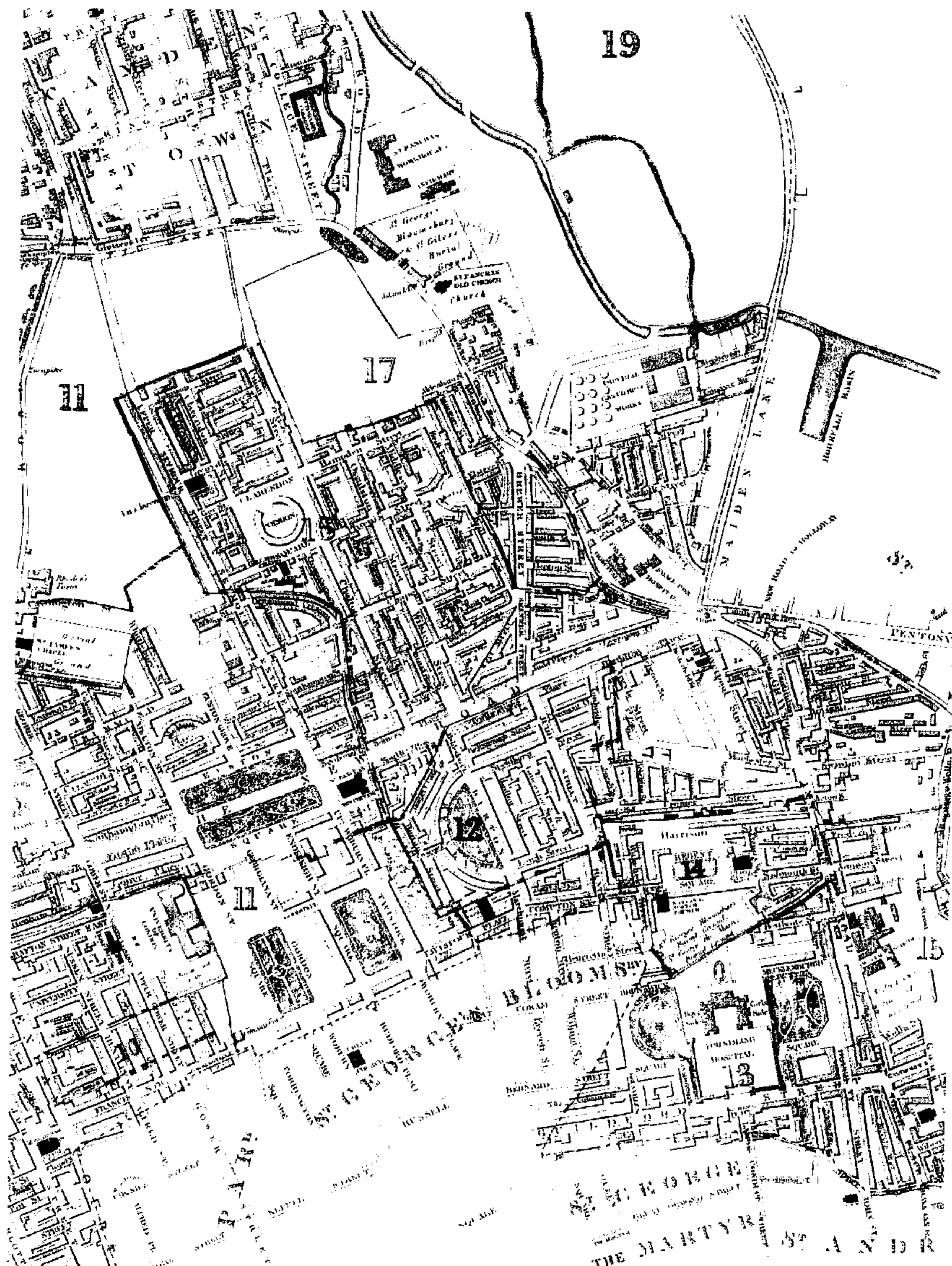


Map 2 Diagram of the major estates underlying the area.

Map 2



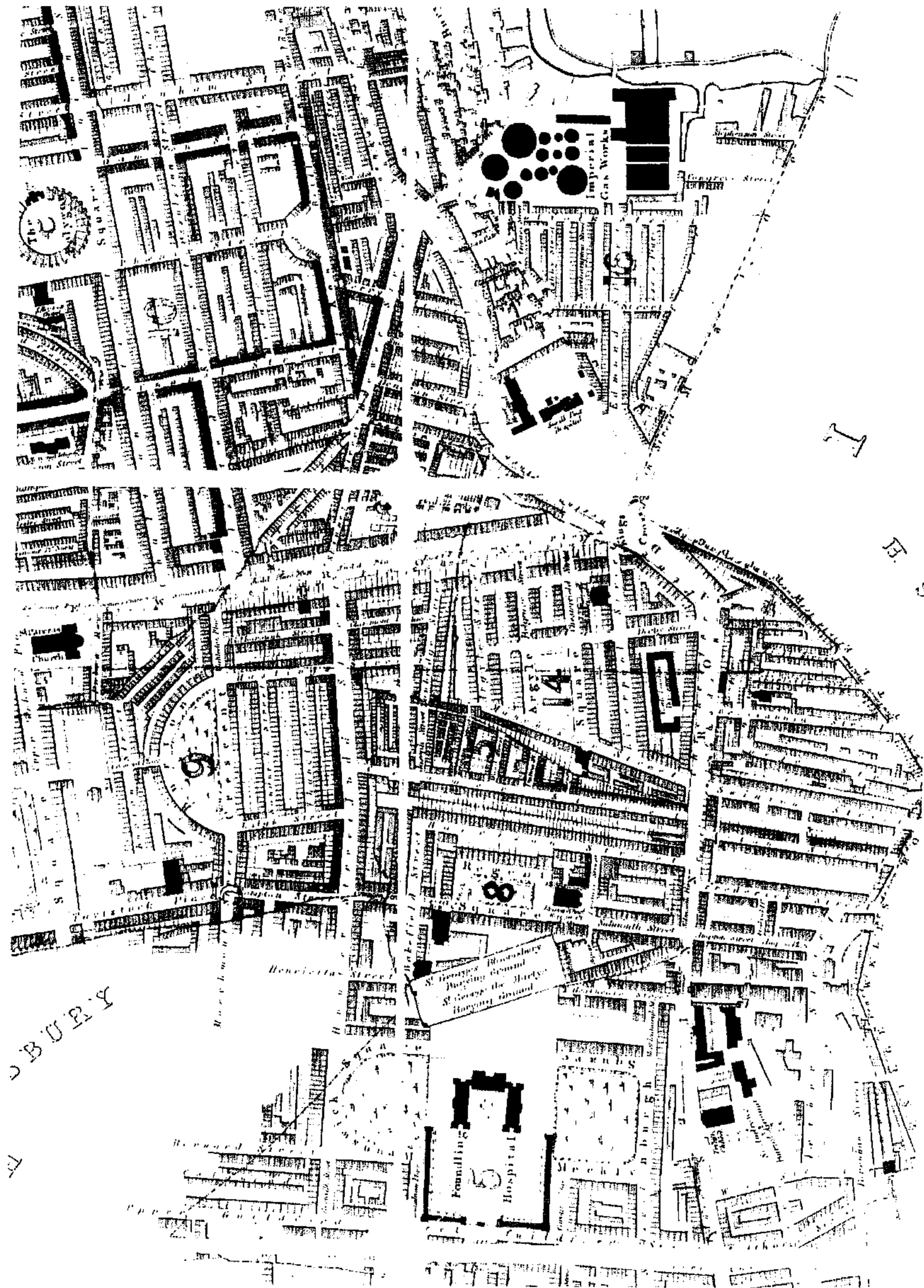
**Map 3 – John Thompson 1804**



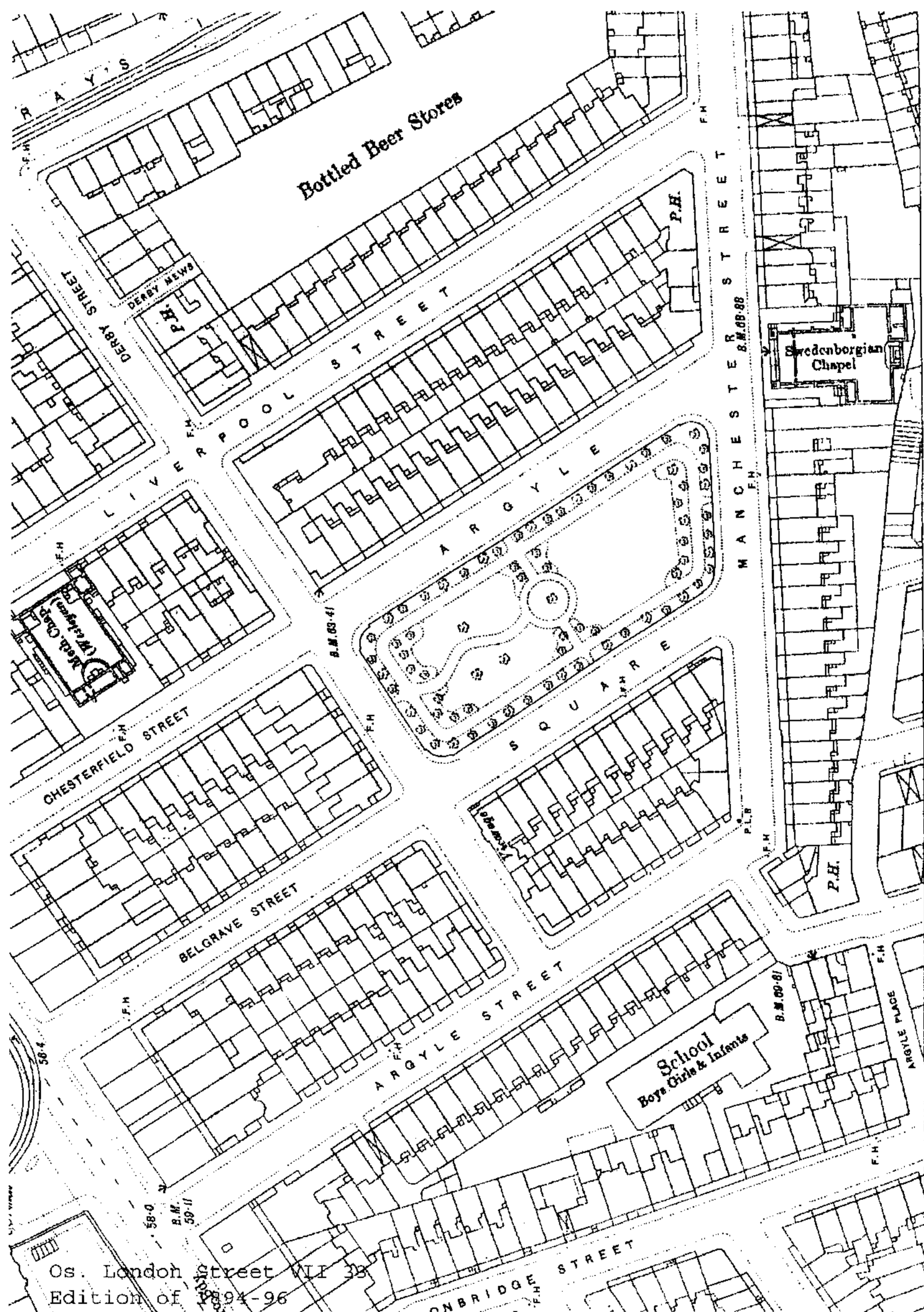
A Survey of the Parliamentary Borough of St. Marylebone

POPULATION & PAROCHIAL STATISTICS, 1833.							
Ward	1831	1833	1835	1837	1839	1841	1843
St. George's	28,918	27,000	27,200	28,200	28,000	28,000	28,000
St. Marylebone	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
St. Marylebone	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
St. Marylebone	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
St. Marylebone	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
St. Marylebone	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
St. Marylebone	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
St. Marylebone	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000

Map 4 – B.R. Davies



Map 5 – St. Pancras (Parish) 1848



Map 6 – London Street VII 33 1894 – 96

APPENDIX 2 - PHOTOGRAPHS



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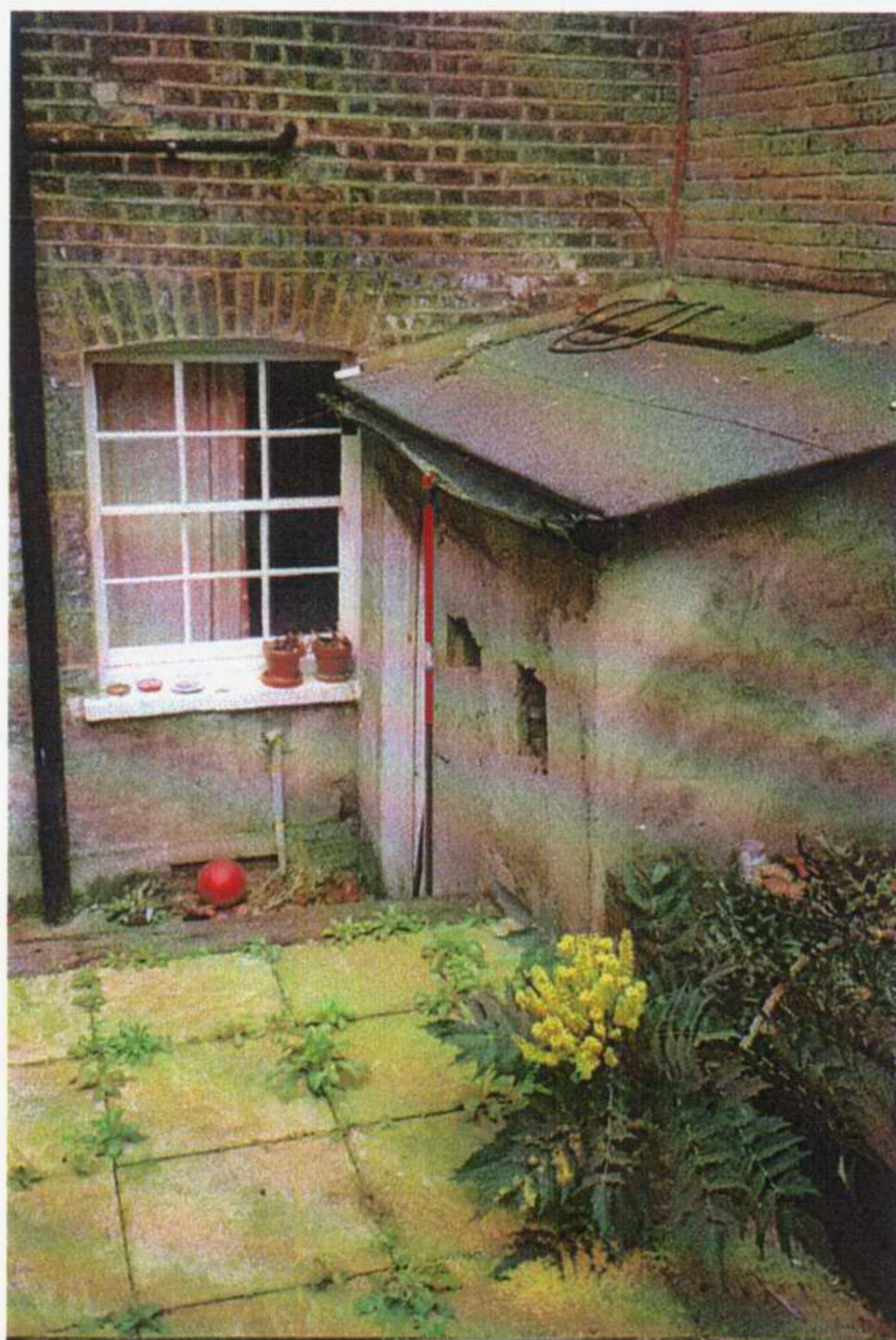
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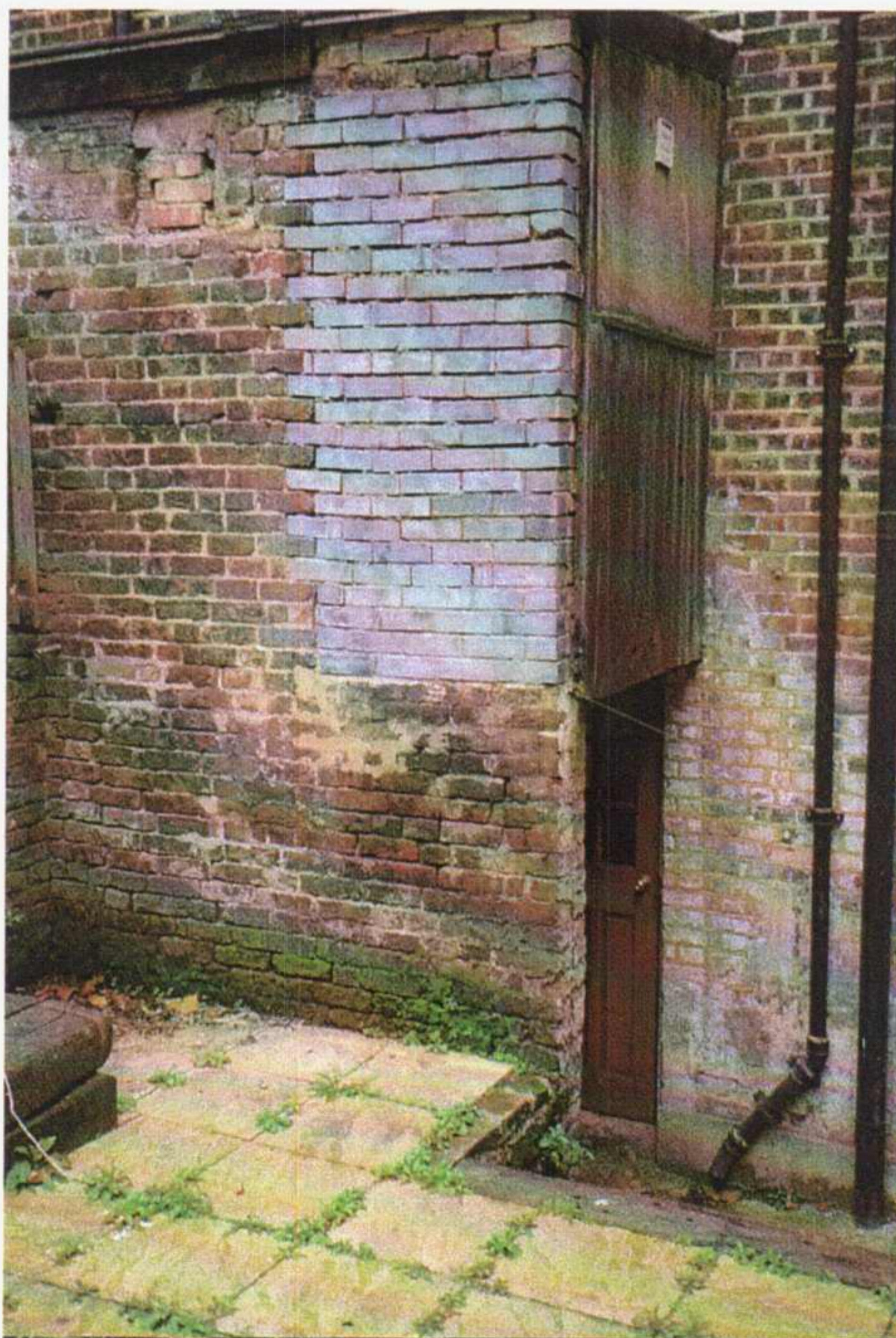
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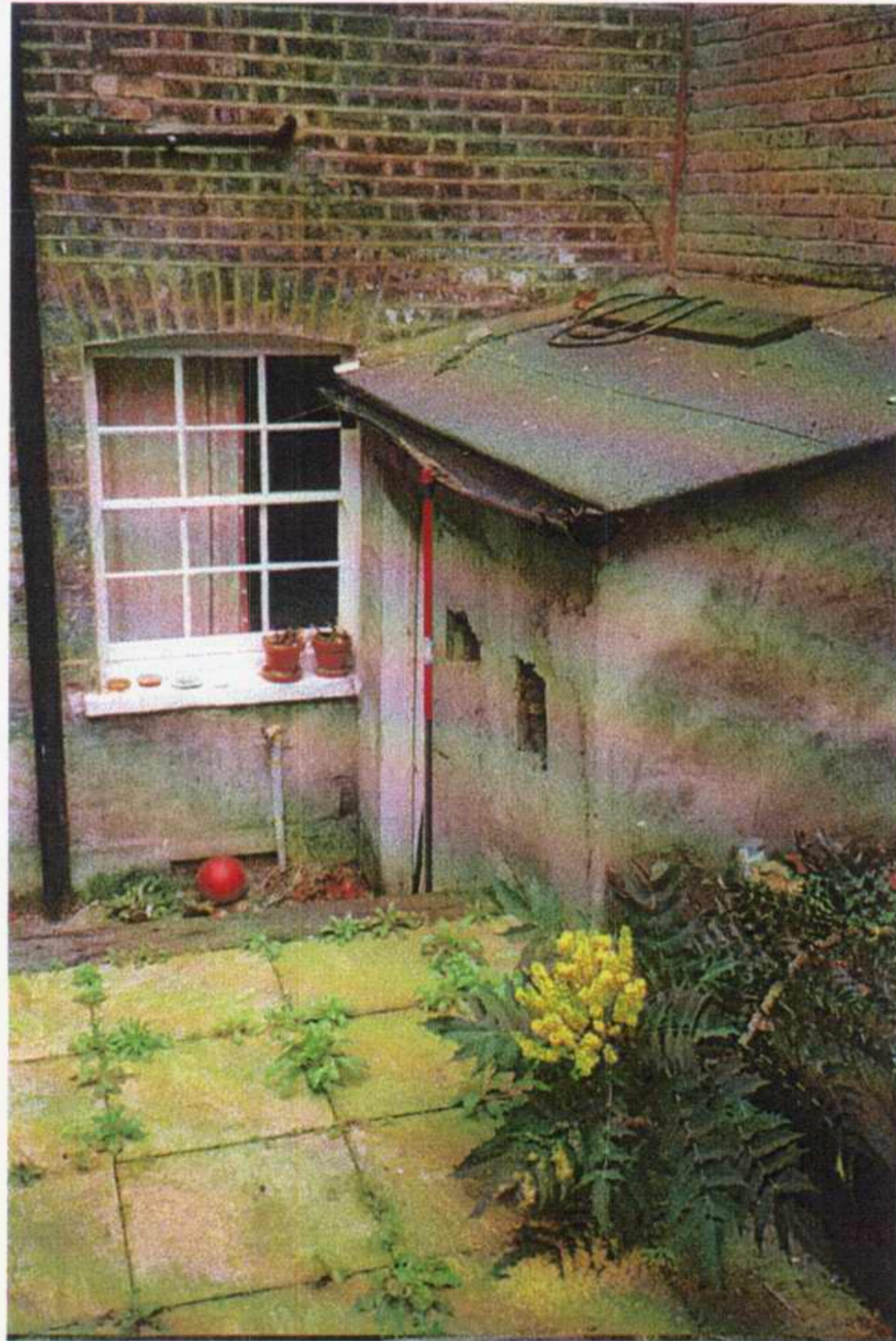
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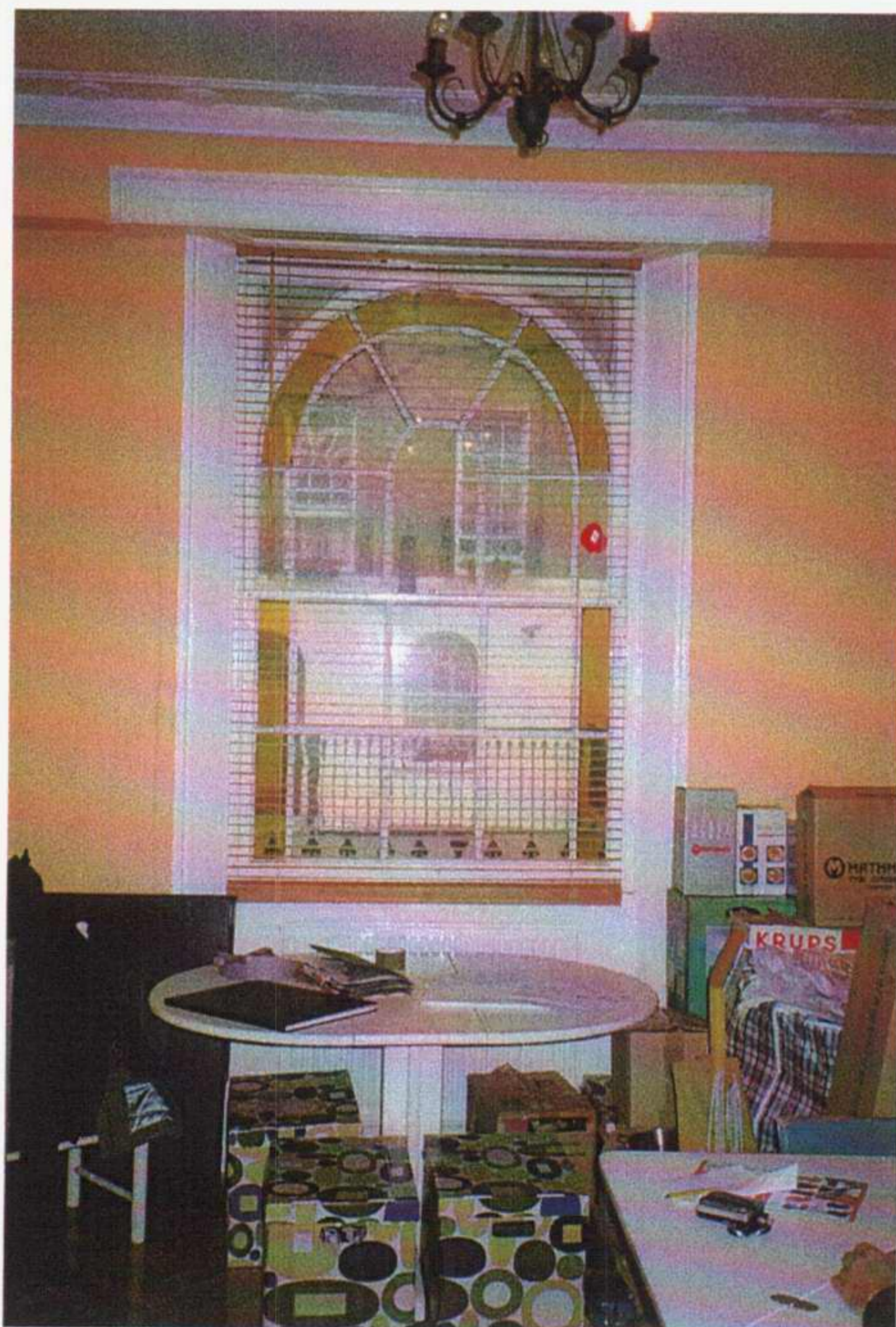
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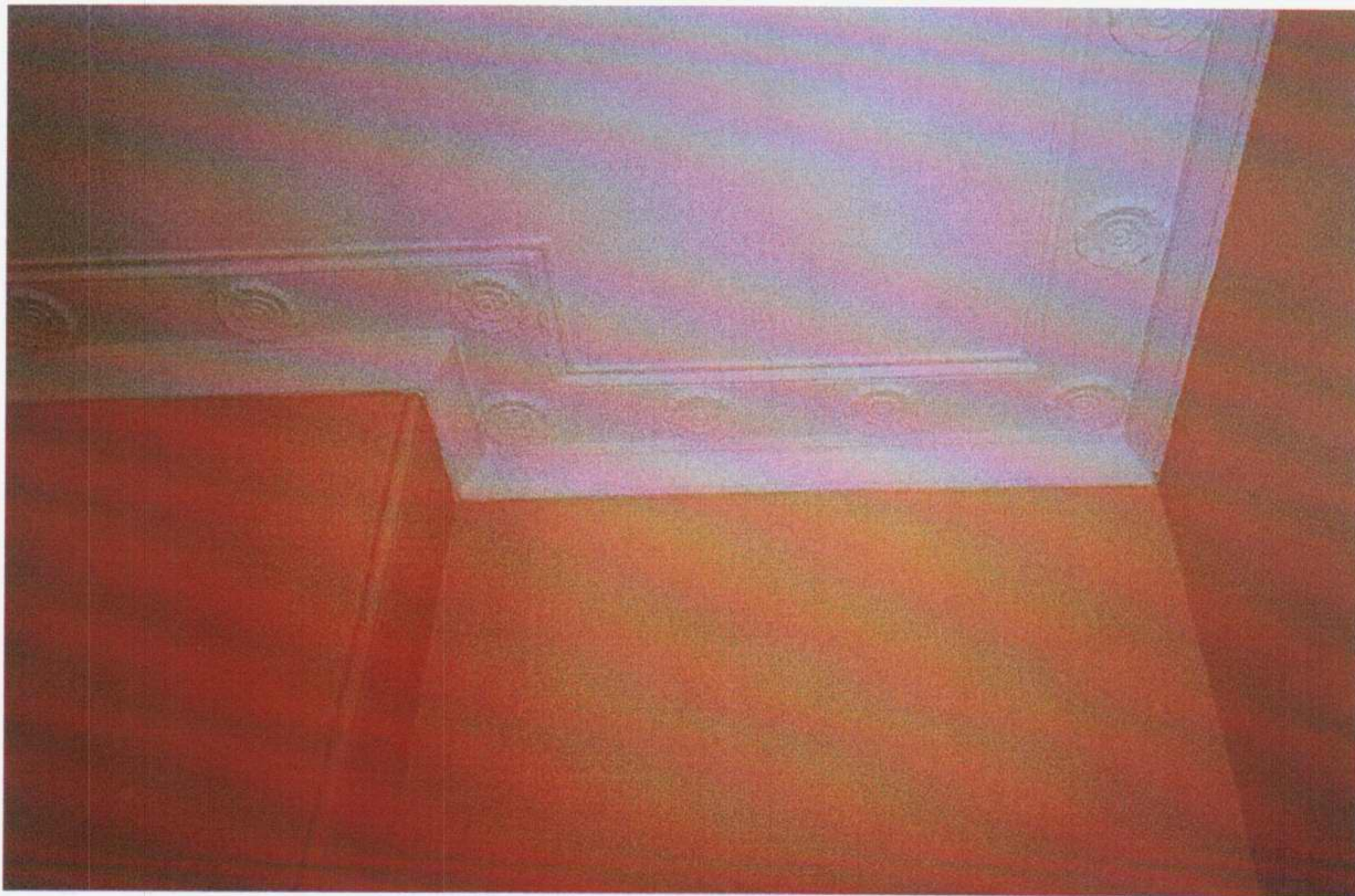
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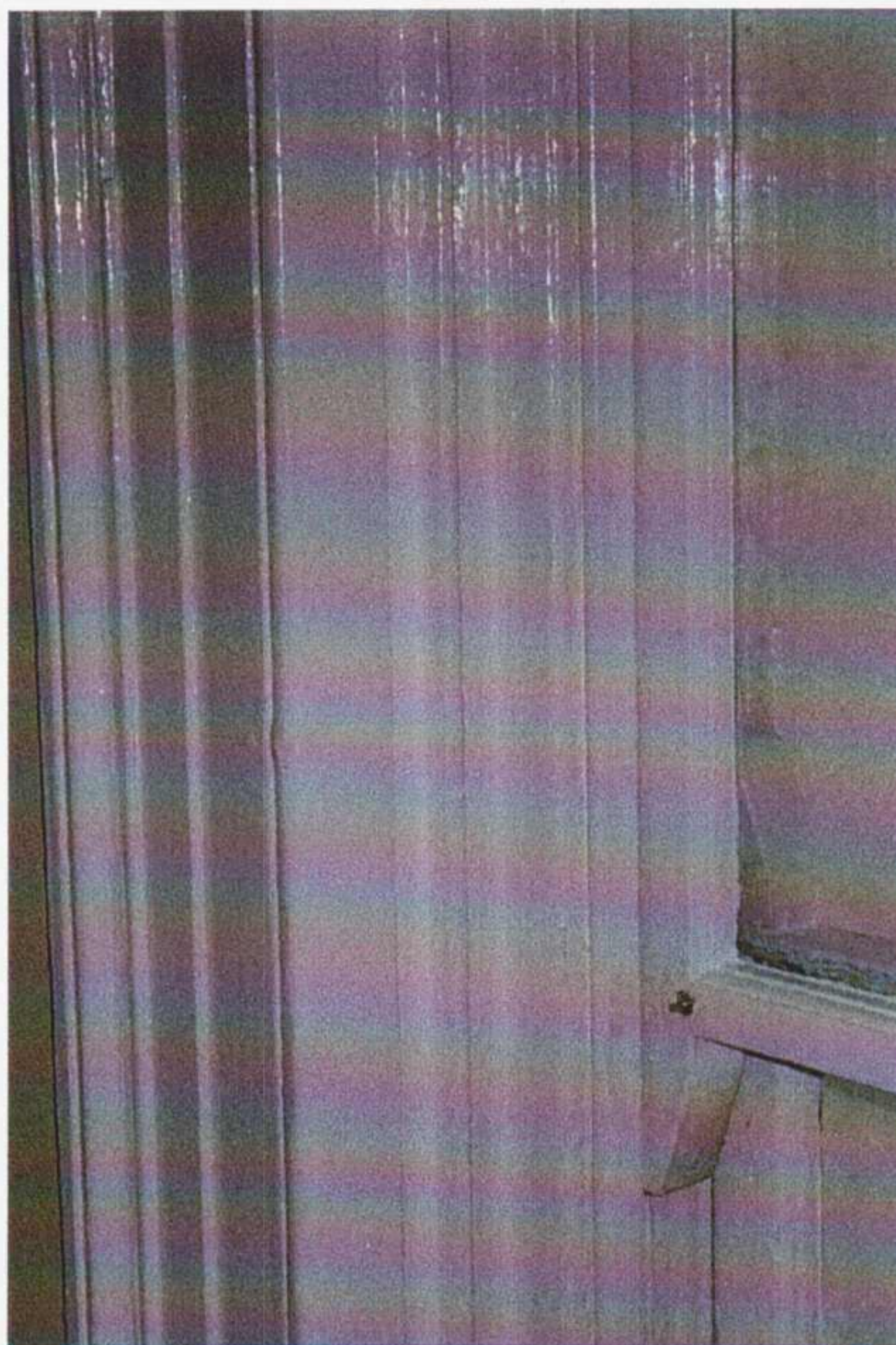
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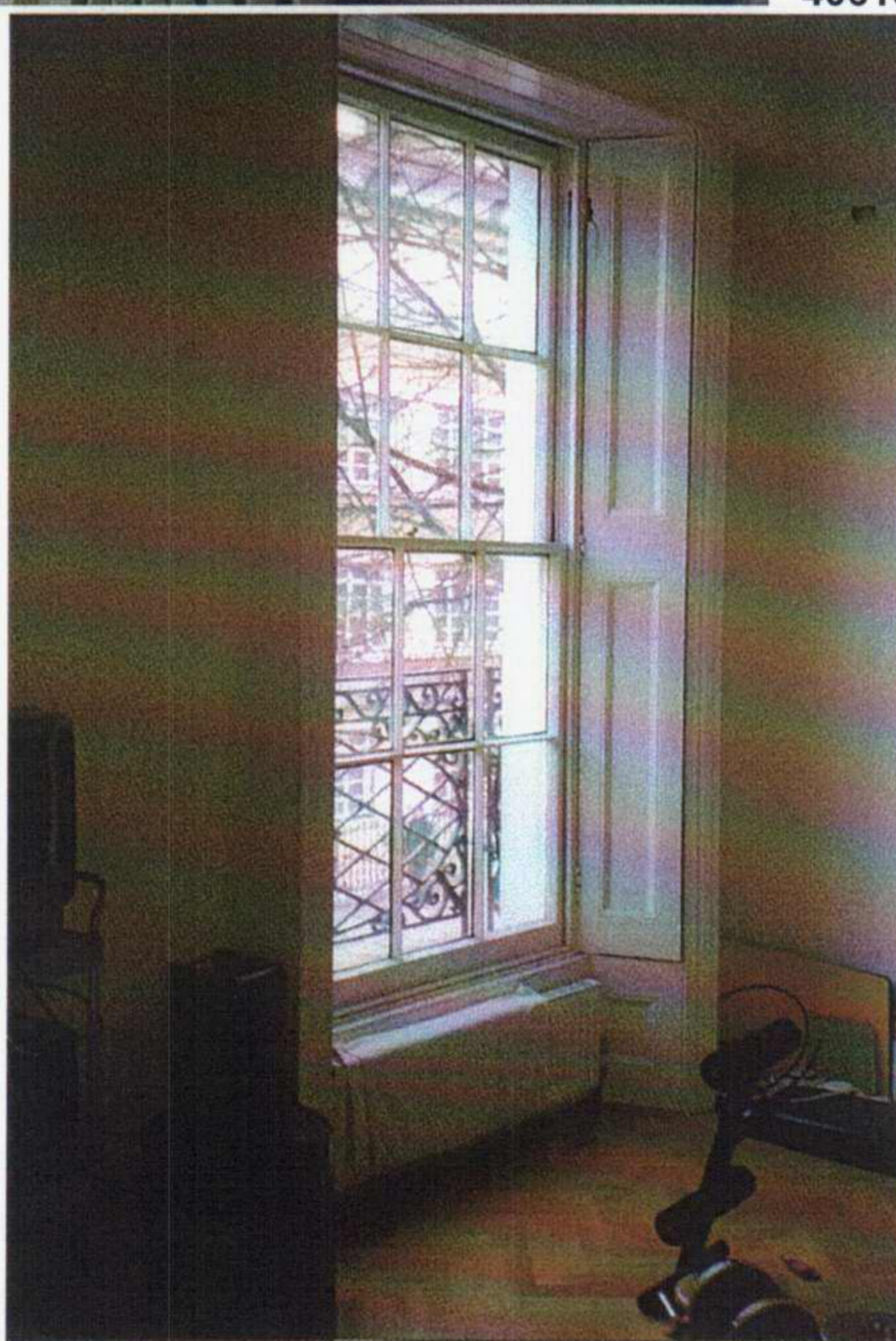
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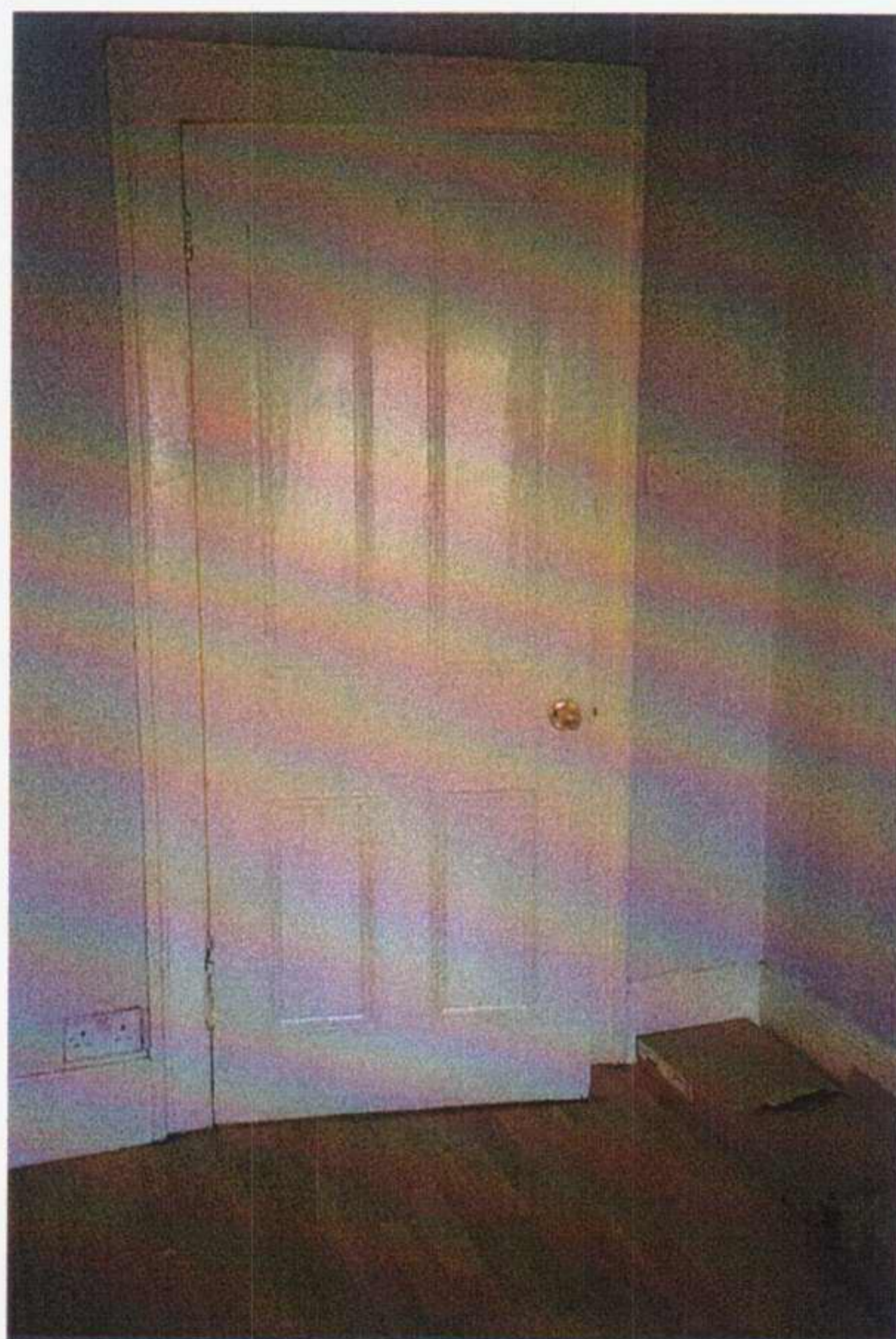
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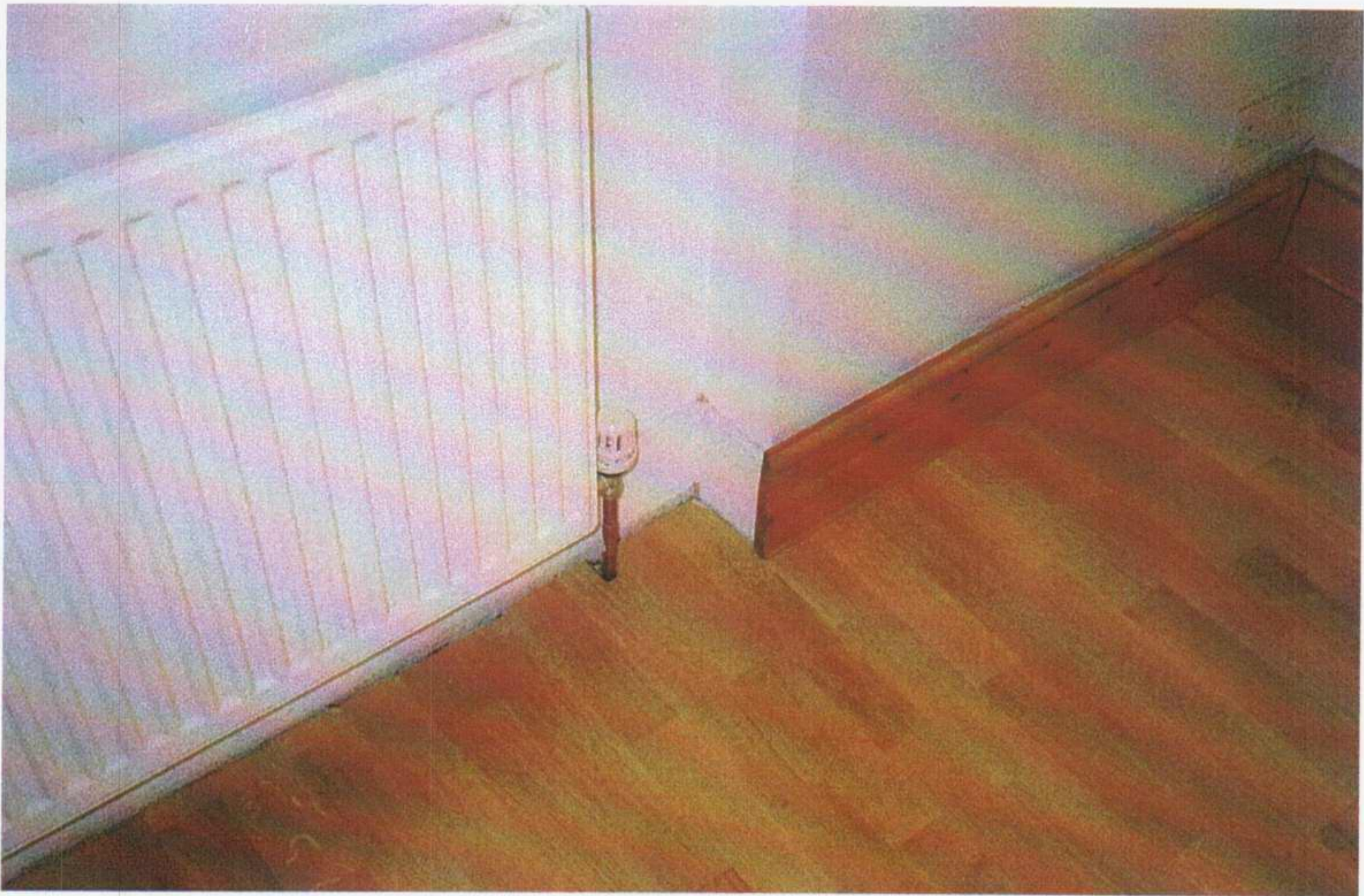
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