

APPENDIX 1

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy

Adopted 18 April 2011



Sub Area 7: Museum Street/Great Russell Street

- 5.102 The Museum Street area has a very distinctive grain and street pattern consisting of a tight grid of streets containing small, intimately-scaled blocks of development. The area was developed in the later 17th century and retains its early street pattern. During the mid 19th century many of the terraces were rebuilt and re-fronted, reflected by a variety of elevational treatments. The differing character of the area relates to the hierarchy of streets of a range of widths, uses and levels of pedestrian and vehicular use.
- 5.103 The predominant building type is the terrace although there are a number of areas where larger scale mansion blocks and hotels have been introduced, replacing original development. The terraces have consistent plot widths of two or three bays and many have ground-floor shopfronts, which were inserted in the 19th century. They are generally of three or four storeys in height and have continuous parapet lines. The windows above ground level are vertically proportioned diminishing in size on successive upper floors with recessed sash windows. The late 18th and early 19th century terraces are faced in stock brick, often with rubbed brick window heads and simple contrasting stucco banding. Those built or refaced in the mid 19th century tend to have a more decorative treatment being stucco faced with classically influenced ornamentation such as rusticated quoins, window surrounds, corncicing and balaustrading at parapet level. Many of the Victorian timber shopfronts are retained, providing interest at street level.
- 5.104 The late 19th and early 20th century mansion blocks and hotels have decorative elevational treatments, mostly in brick with contrasting detailing. These buildings have a greater degree of variation at roof level, introducing elements such as steep roof pitches, gables, turrets and domes to give visual interest and focal points in the streetscape. The elevations are given a vertical emphasis by the use of projecting bays. Many of the frontages tend to have ground-floor shopfronts. There is a notable concentration of specialist antiquarian bookshops and souvenir shops associated with the presence of the British Museum, which add to the character of the area.

The Principal Streets

- 5.105 Great Russell Street is a relatively busy east-west route which changes in character along its length. It is predominantly fronted by earlier four-storey terraces, interspersed with some larger later 19th century mansion blocks.
- 5.106 On the northern side, between Montague Street and Bloomsbury Street, the street is dominated by the British Museum (located in Sub Area 3). Its imposing classical frontage is set back from the road. Its forecourt gives a sense of openness to this part of the Conservation Area and is a focus of activity. Mature trees and the grade II* listed gates, railings and gateposts define the frontage, and filter views towards the entrance

portico. At the junction with Bloomsbury Street is a group of three grade II listed terraces, dating from the late 18th to early 19th centuries, all faced in a darkened stock brick with a stuccoed parapet cornice. These properties have three principal storeys and are three bays wide. Nos 90 and 91 have late 19th century shopfronts, whereas No 89 has a rusticated stucco base and arched doorway. They read as a group with Nos 92 and 93, an adjacent mid 19th century corner building, four-storey block built in yellow stock brick with stone detailing. Notable elements are curved glazing to the upper-floor windows and a high quality shopfront at street level. This group results in a strong sense of enclosure around the street junction.

- 5.107 The south side of Great Russell Street is largely four storey terraces stepping up to a group of five storey mansion blocks between Bury Place and Museum Street. The height and bulk of these buildings create a sympathetic transition between the smaller scale of the built form to the south and the British Museum to the north. To the east of Bury Place, Nos. 66-71 (consec) is a grade II listed, four-storey stucco-faced terrace built in 1777 to the designs of John Nash. These townhouses have basements with front boundary railings and simply decorated facades, including at Nos 67-70 (consec) a plain band at first-floor sill level, a projecting cornice below the upper-floor windows and ionic pilasters on the door surrounds. To the east of Museum Street is a group of five-storey late 19th century mansion blocks constructed in brick with decorative elements; Museum Mansions has yellow stock brick with classically-influenced stucco detailing including horizontal banding, whereas Nos 50-61 (consec) continue the banding but are constructed in red brick with contrasting stone decoration. This group has a strong vertical emphasis defined by the projecting gabled bays, and is expressed at street level by arched openings. Nos 52-58 (consec) have decorative cast-iron boundary railings. Nos 62 and 63 have high quality shopfronts.
- 5.108 Adjoining this block is a grade II listed corner landmark, the Museum Tavern (No 49), which is part of a distinctive group of four-storey 1860s stucco terraces designed by William Finch Hill and possibly E L Paire, with ground-floor shops extending along Great Russell Street and Museum Street. The group also includes the grade II listed Nos 43-48 (consec) Great Russell Street, Nos 37-47 (consec) and Nos 27-34 (consec) Museum Street. The buildings share common features including a continuous parapet (partly balustraded), rusticated quoins and a bracketed fourth-floor sill-level cornice. Nos 43-49 (consec) Great Russell Street have a symmetrical frontage to the street stepping up in height at each corner. This frontage is emphasised due to the slight bend in the alignment of the street. The two corner blocks and Nos 27-41 (consec) Museum Street have arched windows at first-floor level with roundels above. Several interesting shopfronts survive with late 19th century detailing (of particular note are Nos 29-33 (consec) and Nos 37 and 38). However, there are instances of unsympathetic signage that detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 5.109 Nos 39-42 (consec) Great Russell Street is a uniform terrace of four townhouses; the windows facing Great Russell Street are grouped in threes and there is strong horizontal banding. Nos 35-38 (consec) are also of similar scale and materials with classically influenced detailing. The consistency in height, mass, materials and detailed elevational treatment gives a very distinctive and consistent mid-19th century character to this part of Great Russell Street.
- 5.110 Bloomsbury Street is a relatively wide and busy south-bound one-way street. To the south of the junction with Great Russell Street, the buildings are of a variety of ages, architectural styles and materials. No 10, located to the south of the junction with Streatham Street, is a grade II listed building in yellow stock brick with a stucco ground floor, red rubbed brick heads, and decorative cast-iron balconies. It reads as a group with Nos 2-8, all of which share the same building height; however, Nos 2-8 is a recent redevelopment whose elevational treatment of three bays of vertically proportioned windows with horizontal stucco banding ties in with the stucco terrace facing New Oxford Street. To the north of Streatham Street is a five-storey, late 20th century redevelopment, which despite some clumsy detailing reflects the architectural treatment of the Edwardian hotel building opposite with its red brick and gables.
- 5.111 New Oxford Street is a relatively wide street developed in 1889 to ease congestion on St Giles High Street. It is part of a major east-west route running from Clerkenwell Road in the east to Tottenham Court Road in the west. The stretch of the street within the sub area is characterised by stucco terraces with classically-influenced detailing at upper-floor level and shopfronts at street level, all of which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Nos 44-56 (even) New Oxford Street is a simple, classically designed terrace which has been extended at roof level. It shares common characteristics in terms of architectural treatment with the somewhat more ornate terrace at Nos 64-72 (even) to the west, which is situated in Sub Area 8. Common themes include the use of horizontal banding and cornices, rusticated pilasters and arched windows.
- 5.112 In Bloomsbury Way, the most notable building is the grade I listed St George's Church, which has recently been fully restored. Built in 1716-1731 to the design of Nicholas Hawksmoor its unusual spire, topped with a statue of George I, acts as a local landmark. At street level the building does not dominate its surroundings; the frontage, comprising a stone portico with Corinthian columns topped by a pediment, is set back from Bloomsbury Way and reached via a flight of steps situated behind a set of cast-iron railings. The steeple of the church is embellished by lions and unicorns. Either side of the church are two, large red brick buildings with horizontal stone banding dating from the turn of the 20th century. Tavistock Chambers, to the west, is a five-storey mansion block with ground-floor shops. The Kingsley Hotel, to the east, rises to six storeys and has a prominent corner turret, a notable element in views along Bloomsbury Way.

Between the hotel and Bury Place are Nos 34 and 35, two yellow stock brick terraced townhouses, which form a notable group with the neighbouring corner public house which also faces Bury Place. These buildings have strong parapet lines and vertically proportioned openings above the ground-floor shops and bar. The public house has stucco decoration, and the timber shopfronts have high quality details although No 35 is in a poor state of repair.

The North-South Routes

- 5.113 Bury Place, Museum Street and Coptic Street connect Great Russell Street to Bloomsbury Way and New Oxford Street. They are characterised by a combination of shopping and residential uses, and are narrower and quieter in nature than the principal streets. Looking north along these streets, there are important glimpse views of the British Museum.
- 5.114 The northern end of Museum Street has considerable visual consistency derived from the four-storey, stucco-faced mid 19th century terraces which turn the corner into Great Russell Street. Tavistock Chambers is situated at the junction with Bloomsbury Way and is seen together with Nos 23-26 (consec) Museum Street, since they are both red brick mansion blocks with residential uses above ground-floor shops. They continue the theme of strong parapet lines, vertically proportioned fenestration, horizontal banding and rustication along the street. Nos 30-34 (consec) is a late 20th century block that is sympathetic in terms of its scale, massing, fenestration pattern and detailing and consistent with the four-storey stucco terraces that are typical of the New Oxford Street frontage.
- 5.115 Along Bury Place, the buildings are a mixture of mid to late 19th century buildings, ranging from three to five storeys, adhering to several architectural styles, and constructed from a range of materials including traditional stock brick and stucco render. Within the street, there is general consistency in the use of vertically proportioned windows, banding and strong parapet lines. Between Galen Place and Great Russell Street is a high quality group of uniform stucco-faced terraces of three and four storeys with classically influenced detailing. They are seen together with four-storey terrace at Nos 17-19 opposite. Museum Mansions is a slightly taller block of five storeys, which continues the theme of classically-influenced detailing. At the southern end of the street, Museum Chambers and Russell Chambers are also of five storeys in height, forming a pair of red brick mansion blocks flanking the street. Both have contrasting horizontal banding and four-storey vertical bays. To the south of Museum Chambers is a terraced property with a yellow brick frontage, which forms a group with the side corner public house which has a frontage on Bloomsbury Way; each has horizontal banding and a three-bay street frontage.

- 5.116 Coptic Street is a narrow street with significant enclosure provided by the predominantly four-storey buildings along it. The view north is terminated by the British Museum. Building forms and materials vary along the street. At the southern end, the four-storey stuccoed terraces turn the corner into New Oxford Street turn. On the eastern side of the street they adjoin a 1990s five-storey residential block of sympathetic scale and materials, designed in a modern idiom by Avanti Architects. Opposite, Nos 5-10 (consec) comprise a relatively uniform 19th century terrace with simple yellow stock brick facades featuring rubbed brick heads to the windows and a strong parapet line. Evidence of earlier shopfronts remains at ground-floor level in the terrace at Nos 7-10 (consec), in the form of console brackets and fascias. At the junction with Great Russell Street, No 30 is a four-storey former dairy dating from 1888, which provides visual interest in the street and terminates the view along Streatham Street. Built in yellow stock brick, it is an ornate building with contrasting red brick and stucco detailing, and is characterised by wide, arched windows at ground-floor level and steep gables and tall chimneys at roof level. To the north, Nos 32 and 33 form a distinctive pair, comprising simple yellow stock brick facades with a continuous stucco band. No 32 has three storeys, and at street level incorporates a shopfront and an archway accessing a rear yard. No 33 is a four-storey terraced house with a central doorcase with scroll details. Flanking the junction with Streatham Street is a pair of five-storey, late 19th century mansion blocks constructed from red brick with identical details. Both blocks have a rusticated base, red sandstone banding, cornicing and keystones, and a continuous parapet.

The Back Streets

- 5.117 Little Russell Street, Gilbert Place, Streatham Street and Willoughby Street are quiet, narrow back streets with generally residential uses that are enclosed by a variety of two-five storey buildings. The character of these streets derives from the combination of materials, ages and styles of the buildings. Facing materials are a combination of yellow brick, red brick and stucco.
- 5.118 Along Little Russell Street, between Bury Place and Museum Street all the buildings contribute to the character of the area. Along the northern side development consists of predominantly four-storey terraces. Nos.18-21 (consec) are grade II listed, early 18th century four-storey terraced houses with mid 19th century stucco frontages of the same design. They have classically influenced details including window surrounds, bracketed hoods over the doors, horizontal banding and cornicing. These are seen as part of a group with Nos 16 and 17 to the east and Nos 22-42 (consec) to the west which are also stucco-faced, have similar detailing but are slightly taller. No 27 is a prominent element in the street, it is a late 19th century, three-storey Queen Anne style school building, built in yellow brick with contrasting red brick and stone dressings and

decoration and a central gable. Nos 28-30 (consec) is a single five-storey 20th century block (1930s) with a simple, symmetrical multicoloured brick frontage incorporating some classical motifs including the pediments over the doors, central pilasters and horizontal banding.

- 5.119 Along the south side of Little Russell Street the scale varies significantly. Nos 1-4 (consec) is the four-storey return wing of the Avanti Architects' housing scheme which primarily faces Coptic Street. Further east, Museum Chambers turns the corner from Bury Place. This is a five-storey red brick late 19th century block with vertical bays and stucco detailing. This adjoins the rear of the Kingsley Hotel on the Bloomsbury Way frontage. The rear of St George's Church is set back from the street with a small area surfaced in York stone paving within which are two mature trees. These are significant elements in the street, reducing the impact of the scale of the rear of the hotel. To the west of the church is a two-storey block adjoining a three-storey grade II listed stucco-faced house, originally part of a terrace and dating from the early 17th century.
- 5.120 Along Streatham Street, east of Bloomsbury Street there is significant variation at roof level and in materials. There are, however consistent frontage railings and a couple of small trees within the street. Along the south side, the gable of No 10 Bloomsbury Street adjoins a three storey rear extension that is consistent with the Bloomsbury Street frontage and a stucco-faced archway with pediment over that terminates the view along Willoughby Street. On both sides of the road at the eastern end of the street are a pair of late 19th century flat blocks built in red brick. These have roof level gables and chimneys and form a group with No 30 Coptic Street, which terminates the view to the east. The views of the rear access balconies and cast iron columns of the northern block can be gained from Willoughby Street. Nos 1 and 3 Willoughby Street are a pair of four storey terraces with simple elevational treatment and a continuous parapet adjoining a two storey rear projection to No.39 Great Russell Street that provide a significant degree of enclosure to the street.
- 5.121 The north side of Gilbert Place is formed by the plain brick rear elevations of the mansion blocks fronting Great Russell Street. The rear of Nos 52-57 (consec) has been rebuilt in recent years and is neutral in townscape terms. Along the southern side the buildings are a combination of predominantly 19th century warehouse buildings all of which contribute to the character of the street. Nos 8-10 (even) and 14 are four storey stucco-faced blocks with vertically proportioned openings, classically influenced detailing and have a uniform parapet height. Nos 11-13 (odd) is a single two-storey block with a long horizontal window at first-floor level and large square openings at ground floor. The five-storey rear elevation of Nos 28-30 Little Russell Street has large window openings and is faced in a glazed white brick.

The Yards

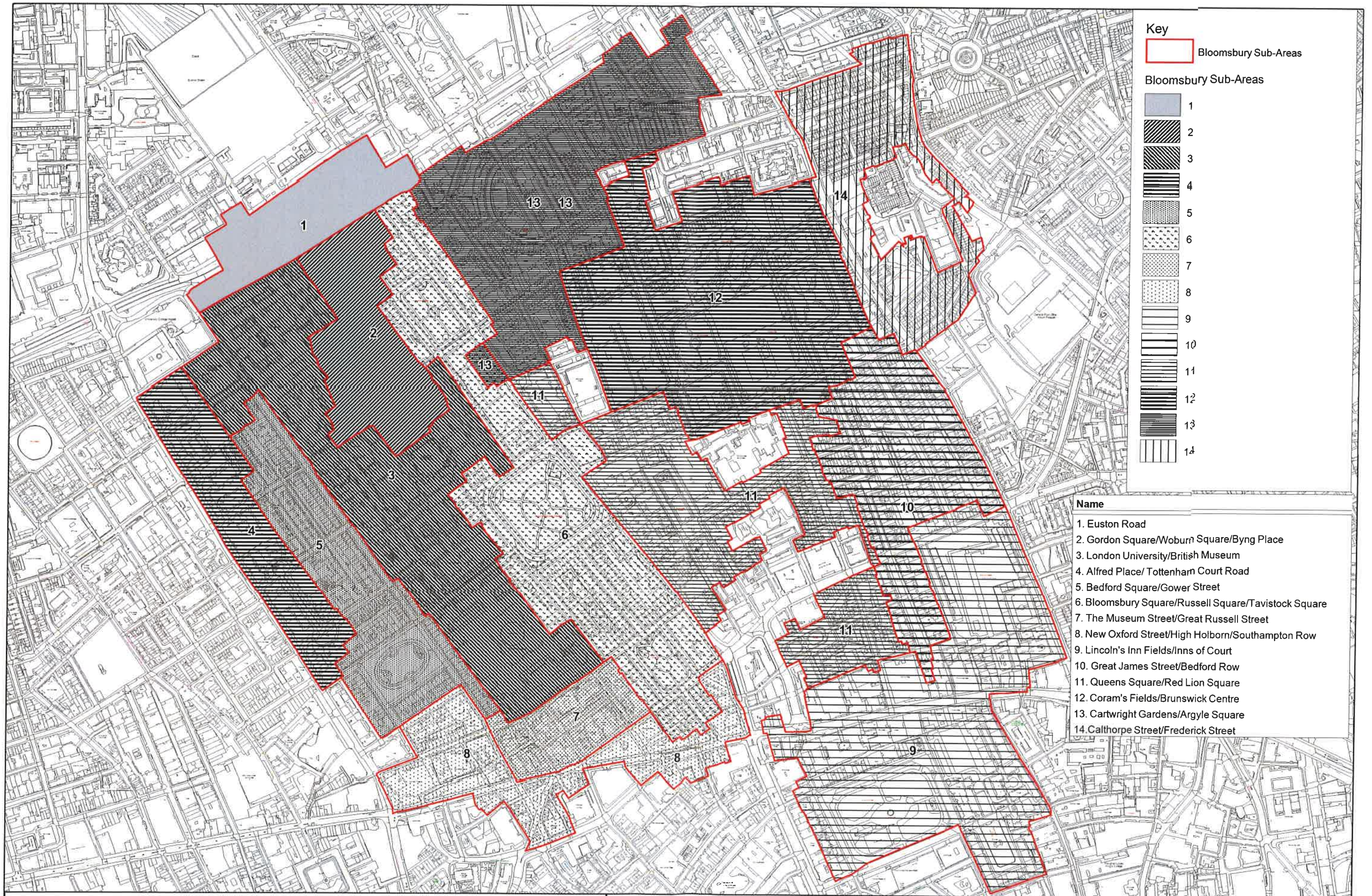
- 5.122 Pied Bull Yard and Galen Place are two small, interconnected courtyard areas with a footpath link between Bury Place and Bloomsbury Square. Of particular note is the rear of Nos 66-71 (consec) Great Russell Street, which forms the north side of Pied Bull Yard. This is a successful late 20th century redevelopment scheme that has created an attractive, small scale shopping environment.
- 5.123 Streatham Place is a small, quiet yard accessed under an archway from the New Oxford Street frontage. This is enclosed on the south side by a two storey yellow brick warehouse building. The rear of the flat blocks fronting Streatham Street enclose the space to the north enabling views of the cast iron columns and decorative iron balconies of their rear access galleries.

Sub Area 8: New Oxford Street/High Holborn/Southampton Row

- 5.124 This sub area is characterised by areas of large-scale, late 19th and early 20th century blocks fronting busy thoroughfares. Development followed the construction of new routes combined with the widening of earlier streets, thereby cutting through the earlier 17th and 18th century street pattern. The narrow back streets in the sub area reflect the earlier layout. The predominant use is commercial, with a range of shops, banks, offices, hotels and theatres. Residential accommodation generally takes the form of mansion blocks.

New Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road

- 5.125 West of Bloomsbury Street on the north side of New Oxford Street, Nos 64-72 (even) is a surviving 19th century terrace of consistent design with a continuous parapet, arched windows, rusticated pilasters, and projecting cornices at third-floor sill level and parapet level. Further west, towards the junction with Tottenham Court Road, the frontage is characterised by larger scale early 20th century commercial buildings. They are generally of four principal storeys, faced in Portland stone, with classical detailing and tall steel-framed windows extending between first and third floors. This junction is a hub of activity for vehicles and pedestrians. The wide pavement incorporates an entrance stair to Tottenham Court Road Underground Station. The headquarters building for Burton the Tailors is a robust grade II listed landmark on the north-east corner of the junction, designed by Harry Wilson in 1929. It has five main storeys, rising to seven storeys to emphasise the corner. The facade is accentuated by a series of Corinthian columns, between which are single and tripartite metal-framed windows. The building reads as a group with Nos 80-116 (even) New Oxford Street, which comprises four main storeys with a set-back fifth floor and two attic storeys in a mansard roof. The frontage contains arched Diocletian window openings and has a continuous cornice line at parapet level. Located at No 269 Tottenham Court Road, the grade II listed Dominion



Bloomsbury CA Sub - Areas



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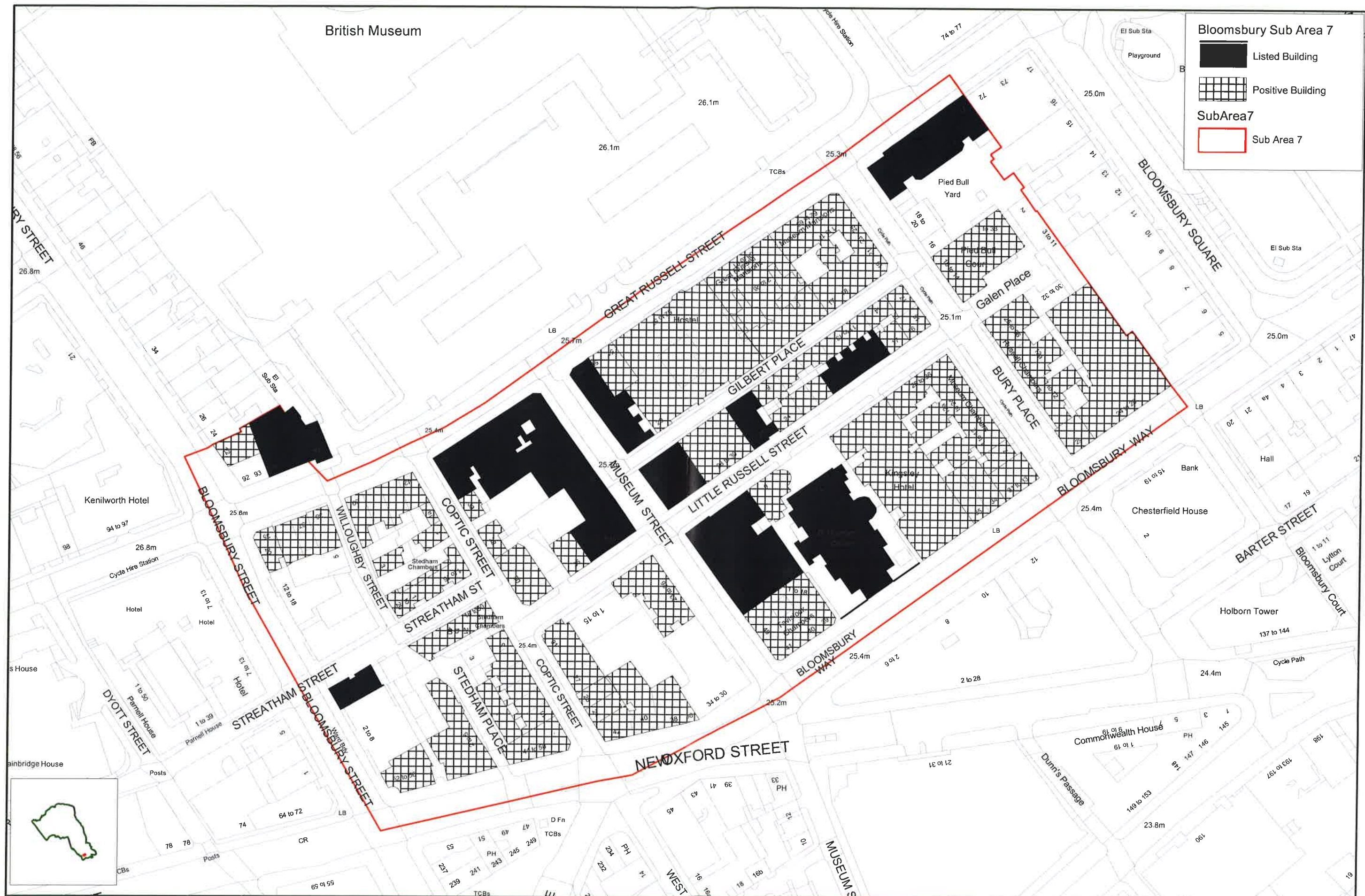
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Bloomsbury CA Sub Area 7 Townscape Appraisal



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