

Donald Insall Associates

8 Fitzroy Square

Historic Building Report
for Tracy Edmonson



Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

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1.0 Historic building analysis & advice

1.1 Introduction

Donald Insall Associates was commissioned in November 2013 by Tracey Edmonson to assist in the preparation of proposals for 8 Fitzroy Square, Camden. This report draws on a previous historic building report produced by Donald Insall Associates in 2011 to accompany proposals for a rear closet extension to provide No 8 with necessary bathroom facilities. This application was turned down at appeal due to the negative impact the proposed scheme was considered to have on the significance of the rear elevation.

The study has comprised historical research, using both archival and secondary material, and a site inspection. An illustrated history of the buildings and site, with sources of reference and bibliography, is in Section 2; the site survey findings are in Section 3.

The study has established the significance of the buildings, which is set out below. This understanding has informed the development of proposals for change. Section 4 provides a justification of the scheme according to the relevant planning guidance.

The study and report were undertaken by Lucy Ashton of Donald Insall Associates.

1.2 The Buildings and their Current Legislative Status

8 Fitzroy Square is listed with group value at Grade I and is within the Fitzroy Square Conservation Area, Camden. The list description is included in Appendix I.

Alterations to listed buildings require listed building consent and in order for a local authority to grant this, the proposed new work must be justified according to the policies set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. This states that the public benefits of a proposal, including securing the optimum viable use of a listed building, should outweigh any harm caused to the significance of a designated heritage asset. A copy of the relevant planning policy is contained in Appendix II.

1.3 Assessment of Significance

8 Fitzroy Square forms part of a beautiful and largely intact range of Palladian style buildings designed by Robert Adam in the mid-1790s. The square was the centrepiece of a speculative development aimed at the wealthy, upper-middle class.

During much of the 20th century, the building was used as a lodging house for women, but it fell into disuse sometime in the 1970s and shortly after was in urgent need of repair. A major restoration of the building occurred during its conversion to offices in the early 1980s. Nearly all the surviving historic features and fittings were removed from the interior and replaced with modern replicas. Some attempt was also made to reinstate the historic floor plan and modern partitions were introduced between the front and rear rooms on all the floors, except the basement and third floor.

Consequently, the primary significance of the building lies in its street elevation and the relationship that it has with the rest of the range and the square. The rear elevation was always a secondary elevation and its spatial relationship to kitchen block and the mews has

been compromised, but can be understood from the surviving kitchen chimney. The building fabric has been much altered. The closet wing was added in the 19th century and later, an infill wall up to the second floor mezzanine. This was then almost entirely rebuilt, as was the bow wall above the first floor windows, in the late 20th century. As a result, the rear elevation is severely compromised and is of limited interest.

Internally, the building was mostly rebuilt in the 1980s, although the Adam staircase survives. However, at that time, the original plan form of the main rooms was largely reinstated. The staircase and the handsome proportions of the principal rooms on the ground, first and second floor are thus the most significant features of the interior. Also surviving, and of interest, is the distinction between 'served spaces', i.e. the main rooms, and 'service spaces', i.e. the closet wing and stairs. This plan form, the room proportions and hierarchical relationship between the spaces are all significant.

Though these floors tend to read as coherent interiors, what appears to be historic fabric is largely reconstruction and the original interior decoration and plasterwork has been lost. Overall this reconstruction has some merit, but little intrinsic significance. However, where original historic features do survive they are highly significant, in particular the stone staircase, its balustrade and hand rail.

On the third floor, there is nothing of significance, however, in buildings of this kind it was intended that partition walls could be easily moved around on the top floor to suit the needs of the occupants. It is interesting then that the historic flexibility of this floor endures. In the basement, the surviving and only significant element is the staircase. There are no interiors of significance in any part of the closet wing.

The significance of the building might be summarised thus:

Most Significant

- The street elevation and its relationship with Adam's composition of the whole east range. This includes the historic fabric, the railings, paving etc.
- Any other external or internal original fabric where it remains, particularly the staircase.

Significant

- The reinstated plan form and the original proportions of the main rooms.
- The hierarchy of 'served' and 'service' spaces.
- Any 19th-century joinery that survives.

Neutral

- The replica fixtures and fittings.

Detract

- The modern finishes and lesser quality joinery.
- The crude insertion of the cupboard area between the main rooms on the ground floor.
- The burglar alarm on the street elevation.
- The accumulation of air-conditioning units and wiring on the rear elevation and in the roof.

1.4 Summary of the Proposals and Justification

The current scheme seeks to provide some of the bathroom facilities necessary for a dwelling of this size and improve the quality of accommodation in the basement. The impact of these proposals on the historic fabric of the building would be negligible.

This minimal harm would easily be outweighed by the benefits both to the historic environment and the wider public. The scheme would maintain the building in full, active and viable use; this would ensure that the most significant element of the historic fabric – the street elevation – is maintained and preserved. There are no proposed changes which would affect the overall significance of the heritage asset and the proposals should be acceptable in terms of the NPPF.

2.0 History

2.1 The Development of the Area

Rocque's map [plate 1] shows Fitzroy Square was built upon arable land which at that time was known as Home Field.¹ This land belonged to the manor of Tottenhall which had been given to the Earl of Arlington by Charles II.² The Earl's daughter married Henry Fitzroy in 1672 and in the late 18th century their descendant Charles Fitzroy – later Lord Southampton – decided to develop the land as a speculative development.³

Fitzroy Square was the centrepiece of a planned development that was constructed in the 1790's.⁴ The east and south sides of the square were designed by Robert Adam, as one of his last major works before his death in March 1792 [plate 2a & b]. Several months later the building leases for the east side were granted by Lord Southampton with Nos 3 to 8 being leased to Robert's younger brothers - James and William Adam. The square's eastern side terrace – including No 8 – was built between 1793 and 1798.

The east side was designed as a unified composition in subdued relief that bore greater similarity to Robert Adam's Edinburgh work than his London terraces.⁵ The composition of the principle elevation took precedent over the arrangement of the houses behind, and often the party walls did not correspond to the main structural features of the range, as is the case at No 8.

The east terrace had three slightly projecting pavilions, one central and two at each end, with a plainer extension to the north. In all, the range comprised eleven houses, each with a frontage of about 24 feet.

Construction of the south side of the square began in 1794, but work did not begin on the north and west ranges until 1827.⁶

2.2 The Architect

Robert Adam (1728-1792) was born in Kirkcaldy, the son of William Adam who was Scotland's leading architect in the 1720's, 1730's and 1740's. On his return from Rome in the late 1750's, Robert established himself in polite London society and between about 1760 and 1780 he was the most fashionable architect in England. His office was also among the busiest with a huge output, mainly of houses in both town and country. The immense amount of work produced by the Adam office was only made possible by a partnership between Robert Adam and his brothers James and William. They were assisted by numbers of highly-skilled draughtsmen, including George Richardson, Joseph Bonomi and Antonio Zucchi. The firm continued to function into the nineteenth century, although the volume of architectural work undertaken was very much diminished.

¹ Roberts & Godfrey 1949

² Fitzroy Square 2009

³ Fitzroy Square 2009

⁴ Cherry & Pevsner 1998

⁵ Cherry & Pevsner 1998

⁶ Cherry & Pevsner 1998

2.3 No 8 Fitzroy Square

The rusticated entrance to No 8 was contained within the four-storey north pavilion of the terrace, while the main body of the house was located to its left within the extension. This extension was originally designed in three storeys, was not rusticated and had flat headed window [plate 2a & b]. However, an early 19th century illustration [plate 3] suggests that the extension as constructed comprised of three storeys plus a mansard roof.

The original plans to No 8 appear not to have survived, however the interior layout seems to have followed the typical London arrangement, being two rooms deep with the main rooms being flanked by an entrance hall and stairs. Horwood's map of 1796 [plate 4] shows that at No 8, as with several of the adjacent houses, the rear elevation was built as a bow wall leading on to a courtyard garden with a mews building beyond.

What Horwood's map does not show is a small kitchen building, seen in later maps [plate 5], between the mews and the main house. However, such a kitchen block was quite common for the era and given the uniformity of size and location of this kitchen block along the terrace, it could have been part of the original late 18th century plan.

The earliest drainage plan of the building dates from 1929 when the building was used as a women's lodgings [plate 6a & b]. This shows that the dividing walls between the front and rear rooms in the basement and on the ground floor had been removed, probably to provide a larger communal dining room and sitting room for the many residents. At basement and ground floor levels an opening has been made through the rear exterior wall into the closet wing which connected to the kitchen block and the mews to the rear. (By 1953, the arrangement of the basement had not been altered [plate 7]). The closet wing at ground floor level contained a fireplace, at least one window and had a flat leaded roof. A glass roof covered the rear area.

Above the ground floor, the 1929 plans only show the main rear room, the staircase on each floor, part of the closet wing and the mews building. On the first floor and second floors, the rear room was divided by partitions into sleeping cubicles with an opening to the front room, which was presumably also divided into cubicles. The opening to the first floor closet was much as it appears now as was the arrangement of the second floor closet. The rear of the third floor contained an open plan dormitory and a bedroom, probably for the house manager; there was no closet.

A photograph from the 1930s of the street elevation [plate 8] shows that the stone parapet balustrade had been lost and a section of the cornice was missing. Descriptions of an un-accessed archive held at Warwick University⁷ suggest that electric light was installed in 1930 and that some alterations requiring planning permission were also made in 1930 and in 1946.

Sometime in 1970s the building fell into disuse and the planning file records that the building was in urgent need of repair.⁸ Photographs from the late 1970s show the arrangement of some ground floor and first floor rooms and suggest that the plan of the building had altered little since the 1920s [plates 9-14].

⁷ dscalm.warwick.ac.uk

⁸ Camden Building Case File

2.4 Recent Planning History

Camden's planning records show the following recent planning history:

- 1977 8 Fitzroy Square & 13 Grafton Mews
Change of use from hostel to offices and two flats. Refused
- 1979 8 Fitzroy Square & 13 Grafton Mews
Change of use from hostel to offices with hostel in Grafton Mews. Refused.
- 1981 8 Fitzroy Square
Change of used from hostel to offices on basement to first floor, residential on second & third. Appeal refused.
- 1982 8 Fitzroy Square
Change of use from hostel to offices. Permitted at Appeal.
- 1983 Listed Building Consent
Restoration involving reconstruction of part of the rear elevation.
- 1986 Listed Building Consent
Minor internal alterations chiefly the slight widening of some door openings.
- 2001 Listed Building Consent
Internal alterations involving new partitioning at basement level and the installation of air handling units.
- 2009 Change of use from offices to single residence. Permitted.
- 2012 Extension of closet wing & associated internal alterations to provide bathrooms.
Rejected on appeal.

A major restoration of the building occurred during its conversion to offices in the early 1980s [plate 15a-k] when the rear plot containing the kitchen block and the mews were sold off and subsequently demolished. Internally, nearly all the surviving historic features and fittings were removed and replaced with modern replicas. Some attempt was made to reinstate the historic floor plan and modern partitions were introduced between the front and rear rooms on all the floors, except the basement and third floor. At this time, the rear elevation was rebuilt above the first floor windows, and presumably much of the closet wing was also rebuilt, steel reinforcements were introduced to the roof and its structure was at least partially rebuilt and totally reroofed.

The influential architects Stirling, Wilford & Associates took over the offices in 1986 and made minor alterations to the building [plate 16a-f] chiefly altering the width of door openings.

Some further alterations have been made since the 1980s. This has included the subdivision of the basement. On the ground floor a cupboard area has been added between the main rooms, which while possibly echoing the original plan form, has done so in an inappropriate and crude manner. Some partitions have also been reintroduced on the lines of the assumed original plan form.

2.5 Occupants

No 8 was first tenanted to and presumably occupied by Peter Douglas in 1797.⁹ Douglas was a former commander of The East India Company's ship *The Queen*¹⁰; he died in 1802.¹¹ Between 1803 and 1840, the house was leased by Thomas Wilkinson, an employee of the Bombay Civil Service and appears to have been inhabited by Jane Dent and her seven children. The house continued to be occupied by family members until 1892.

In the early 20th century, the house was named Garfield House and occupied by the Homes for Working Girls in London (HWGL). This charity had been set up by John Shrimpton in 1878 to "help those who help(ed) themselves by trying to gain an honest living"¹² and Garfield House provided cheap lodgings for employed women. In 1959 HWGL went into voluntary liquidation and passed its assets to the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).

From the mid 1980s, Stirling, Wilford & Associates used the building as their offices.

2.6 List of Plates

1. Rocque's Map 1746 (LMA)
- 2a-b. Robert Adam's original drawings and engraving c1790 (Soane Museum)
3. Drawing of East Elevation c1800 (LMA)
4. Horwood's Map 1796 (LMA)
5. Ordnance Survey Map 1875 (Landmark Historical Maps)
- 6a-b. Drainage Plans 1929 (Camden Local Archive)
7. Drainage Plans 1953 (Camden Local Archive)
8. Fitzroy Square c1930 (LMA)
9. Entrance Hall 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-52)
10. Ground Floor Room 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-58)
11. Ground Floor Front Chimney Piece (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-57)
12. First Floor Front Room 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-54)
13. First Floor Rear Room 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-56)
14. First Floor Rear Chimney Piece 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-53)
- 15a-k Architect's Drawings 1983 (Camden Local Archive)
- 16a-f Architect's Drawings 1986 (Camden Planning Archive)

2.7 Sources & Bibliography

Archives Visited

Camden Local Studies Archive
Camden Planning Archive
London Metropolitan Archive

⁹ Cherry & Pevsner 1998

¹⁰ The London Gazette 1813

¹¹ The London Gazette 1802

¹² Modern Records Centre

Secondary Sources

Cherry B & Pevsner N The Buildings of England London 4: North 1998

Roberts, H. & Godfrey, W. Survey of London V211949

London Borough of Camden Fitzroy Square Conservation Area Appraisal 2009

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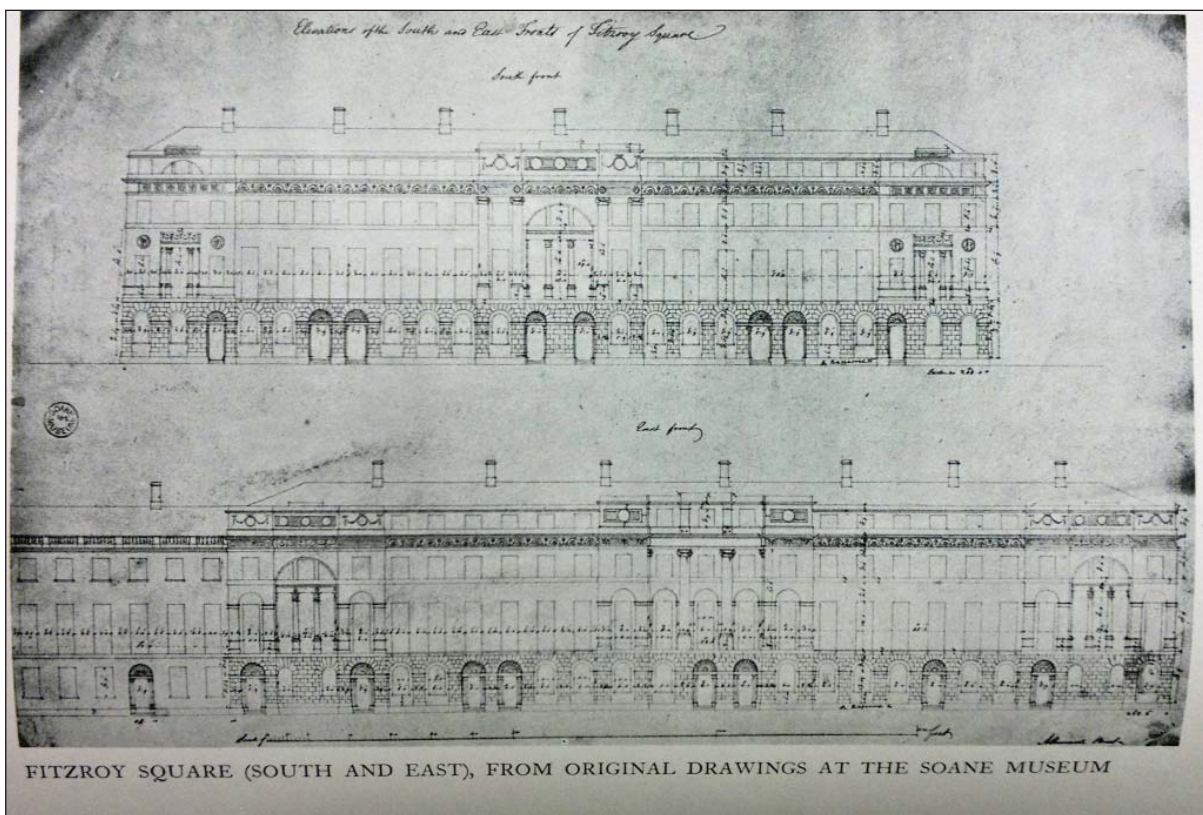
<http://www.london-gazette.co.uk/issues/16739/pages/1131/page.pdf>

<http://www.london-gazette.co.uk/issues/15450/pages/120/page.pdf>

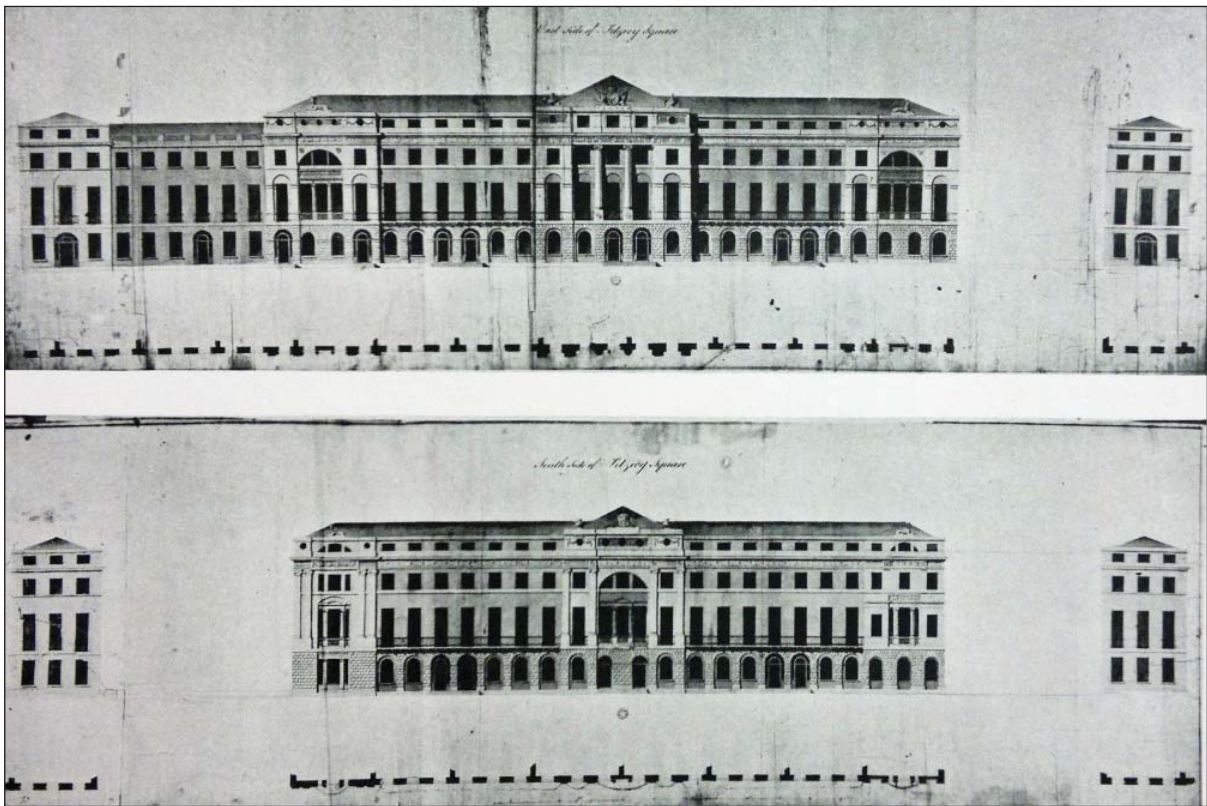
[http://dscalm.warwick.ac.uk/DServe/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqCmd=Document.tcl&dsqItem=Open%20a%20printable%20version%20of%20the%20full%20catalogue%20\(HBG\).pdf](http://dscalm.warwick.ac.uk/DServe/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqCmd=Document.tcl&dsqItem=Open%20a%20printable%20version%20of%20the%20full%20catalogue%20(HBG).pdf)



1. Rocque's Map 1746 (LMA)



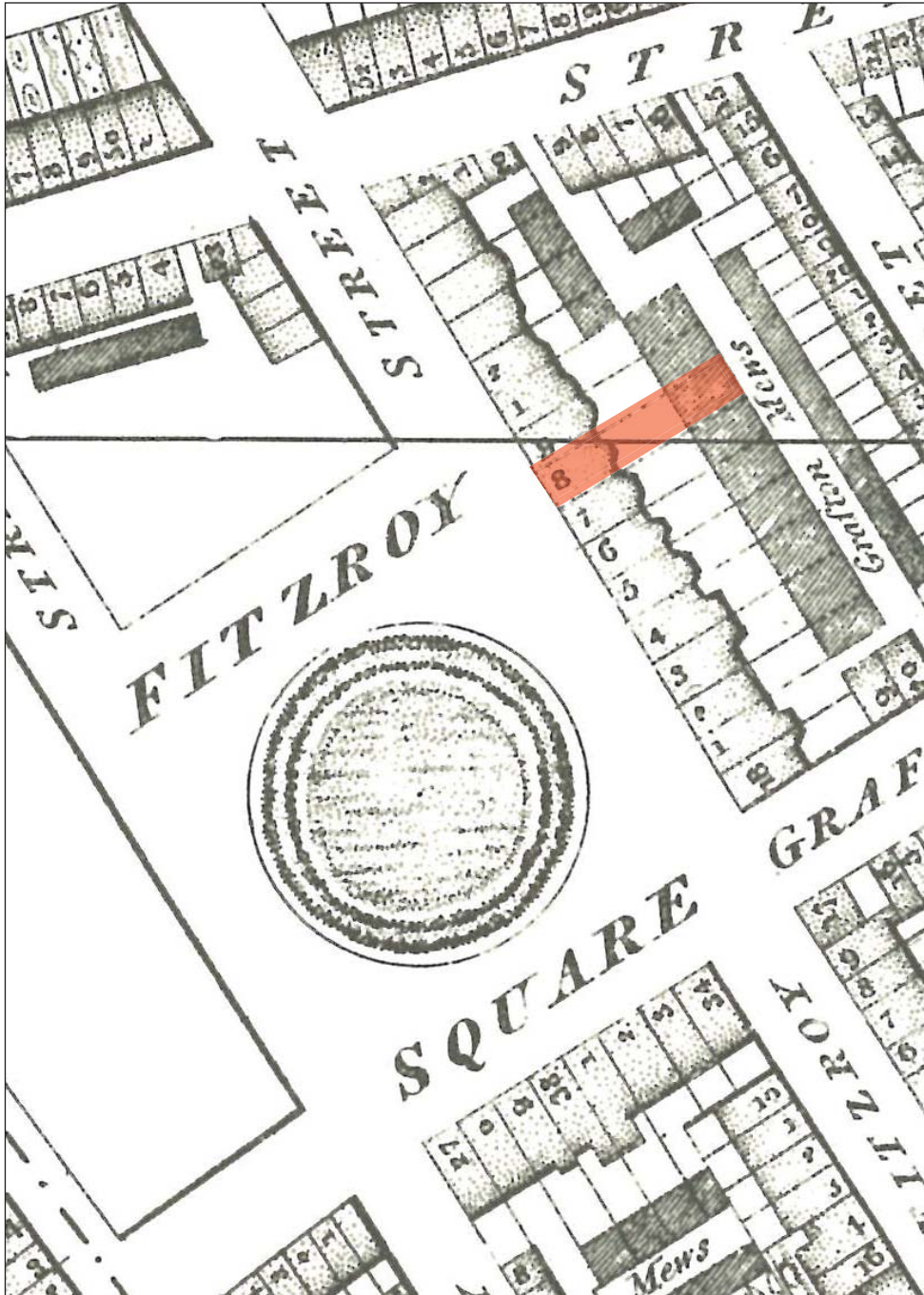
2a. Robert Adam's original drawings c1790 (Soane Museum)



2b. Robert Adam's original engraving c1790 (Soane Museum)



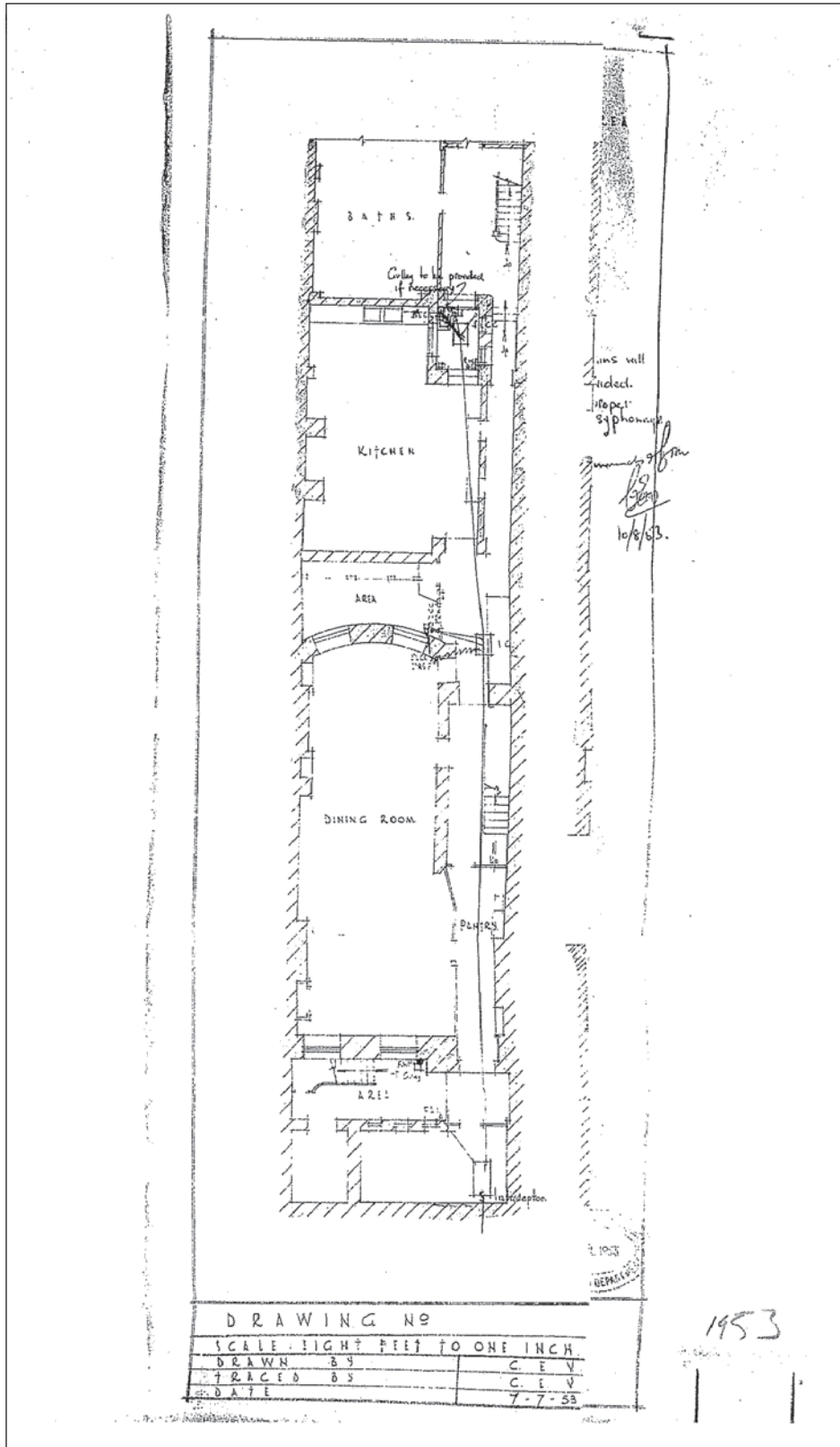
3. Drawing of East Elevation c1800 (LMA)



4. Horwood's Map 1796 (LMA)



5. Ordnance Survey Map 1875 (Landmark Historical Maps)



7. Drainage Plans 1953 (Camden Local Archive) Basement Plan



8. Fitzroy Square c1930 (LMA)



9. Entrance Hall 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-52)



10. Ground Floor Room 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-58)



11. Ground Floor Front Chimney Piece 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-57)



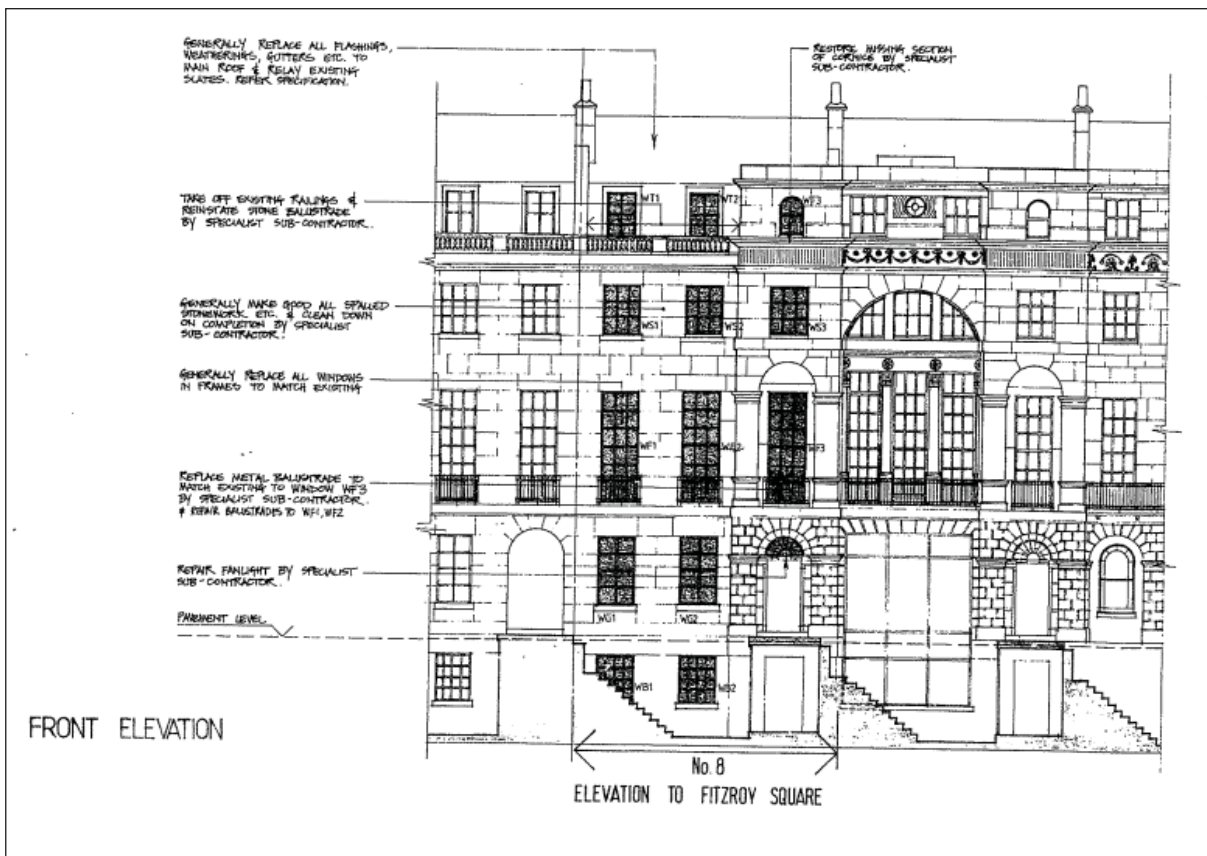
12. First Floor Front Room 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-54)



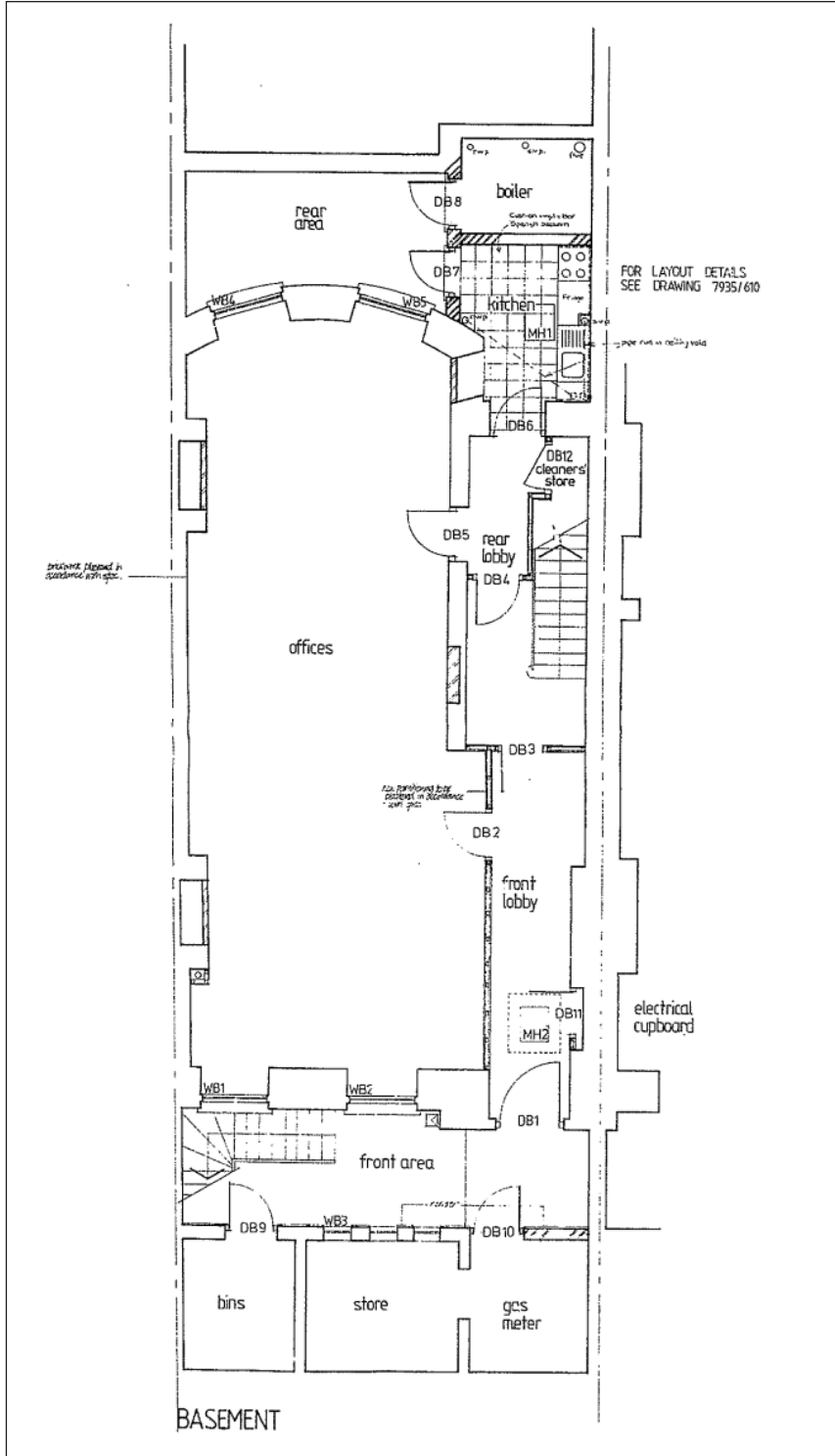
13. First Floor Rear Room 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-56)



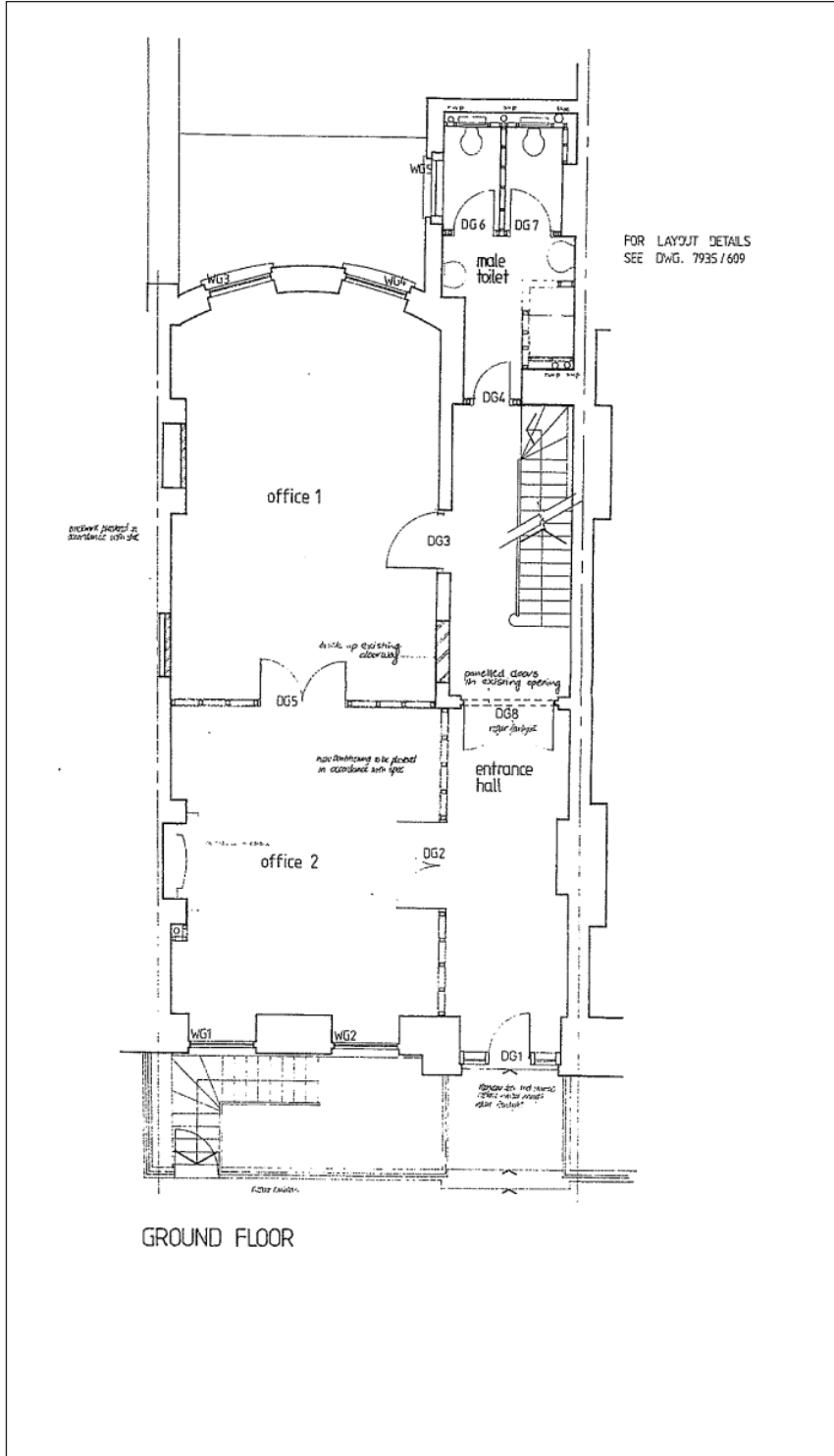
14. First Floor Rear Chimney Piece 1977 (LMA SC/PHL/01/340-53)



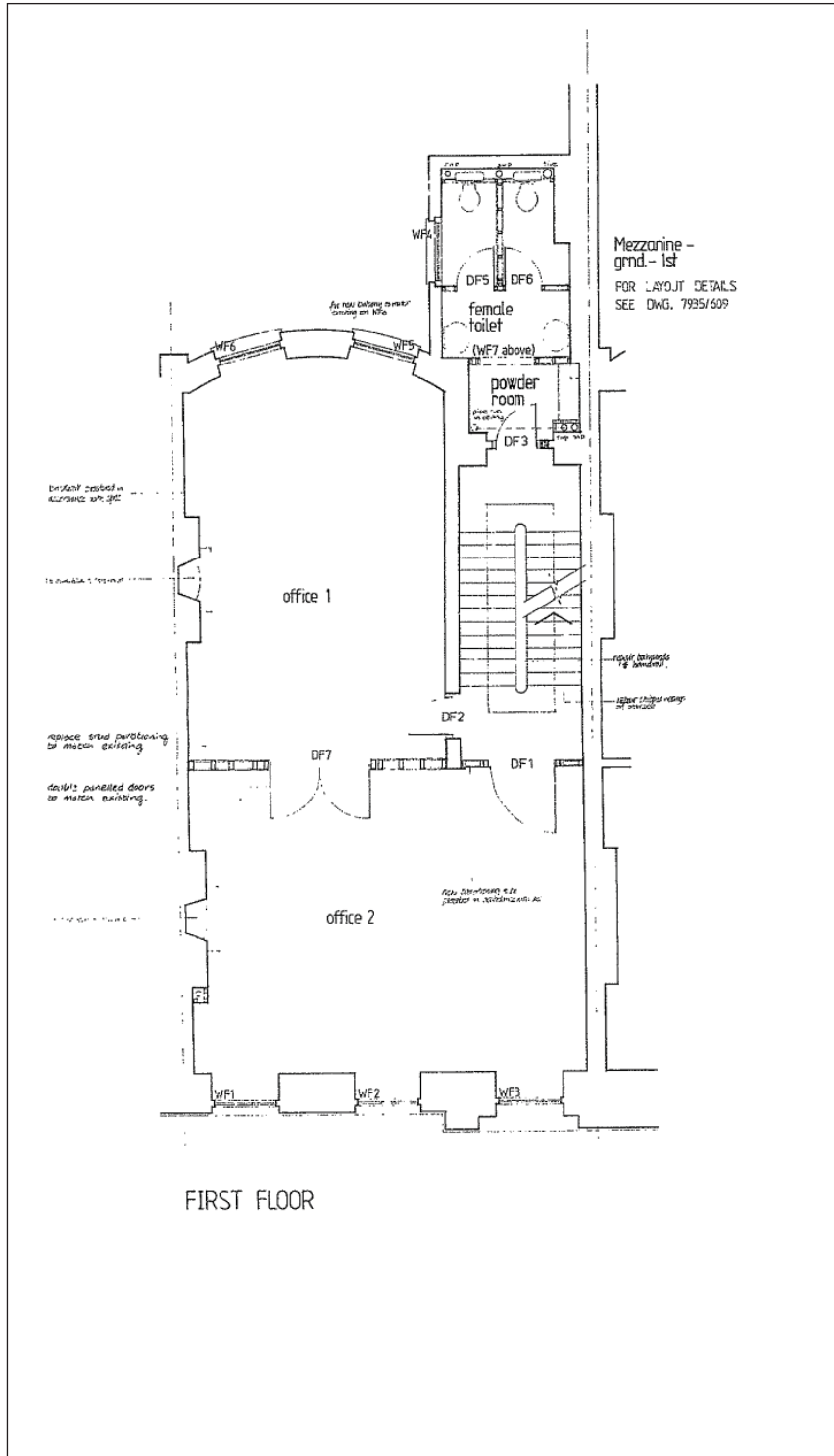
15a. Architect's Drawings 1983 (Camden Local Archive)



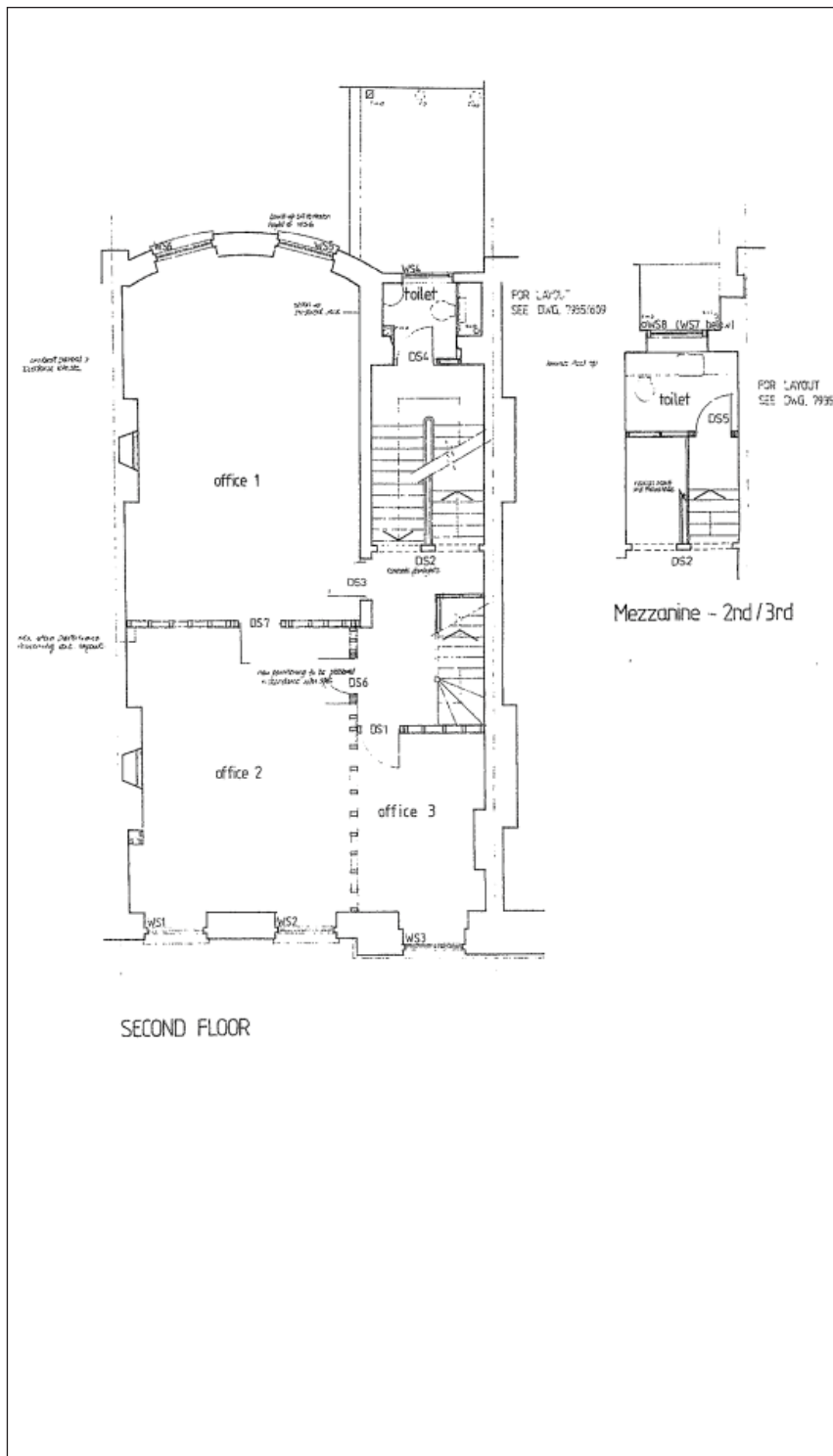
15c. Proposed Basement 1983 (Camden Local Archive)



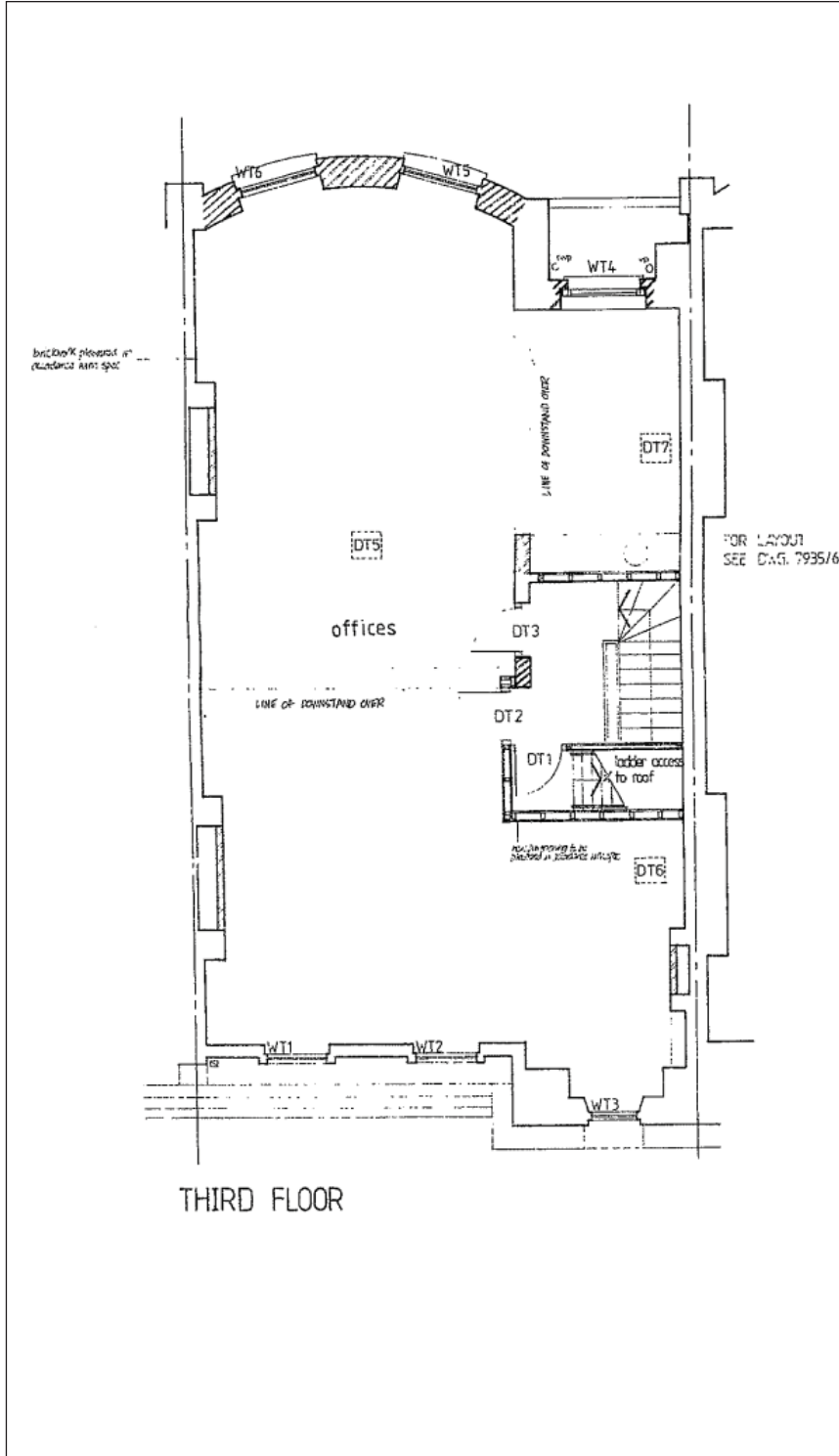
15d. Proposed Ground Floor 1983 (Camden Local Archive)



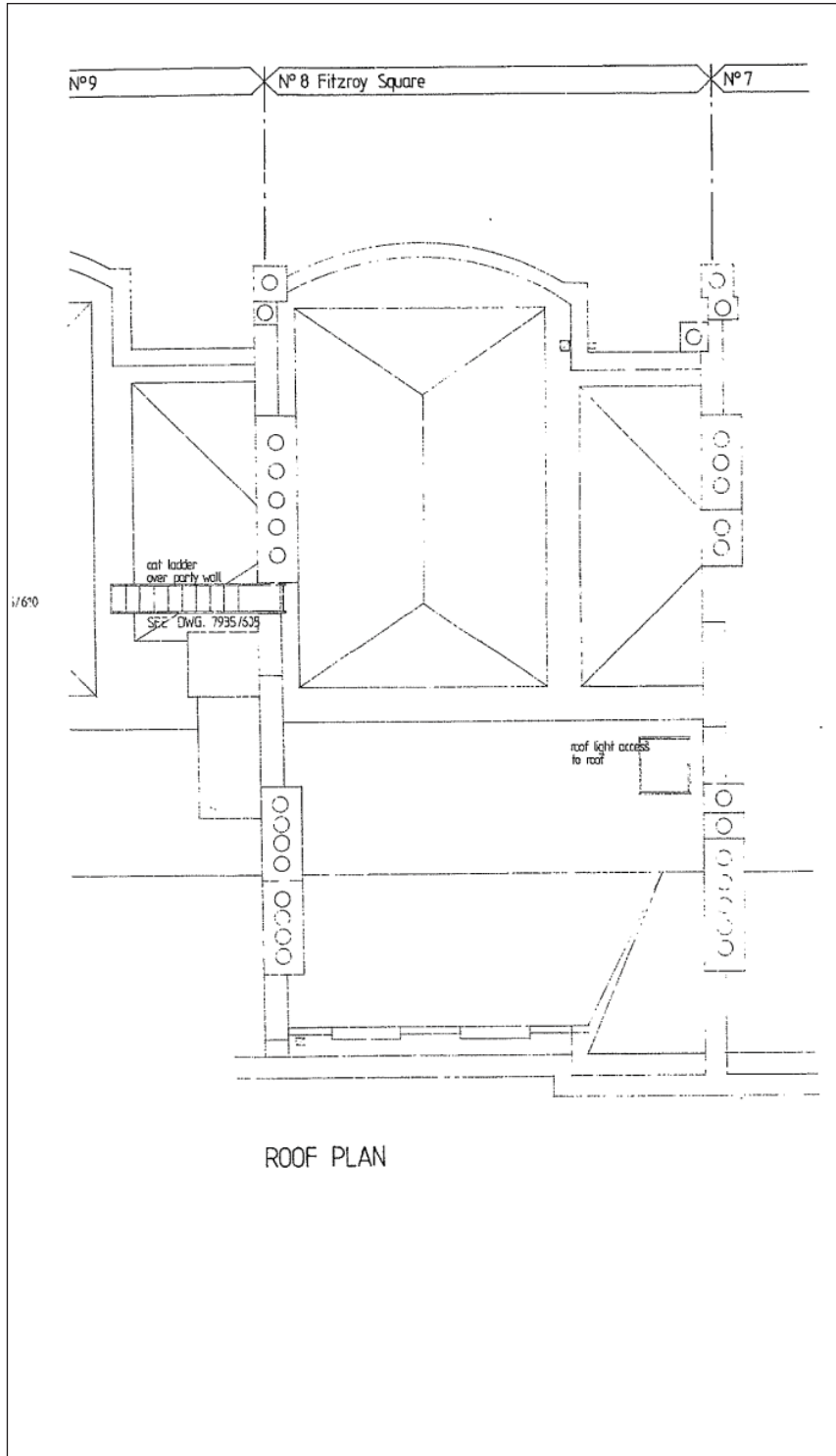
15e. Proposed First Floor 1983 (Camden Local Archive)



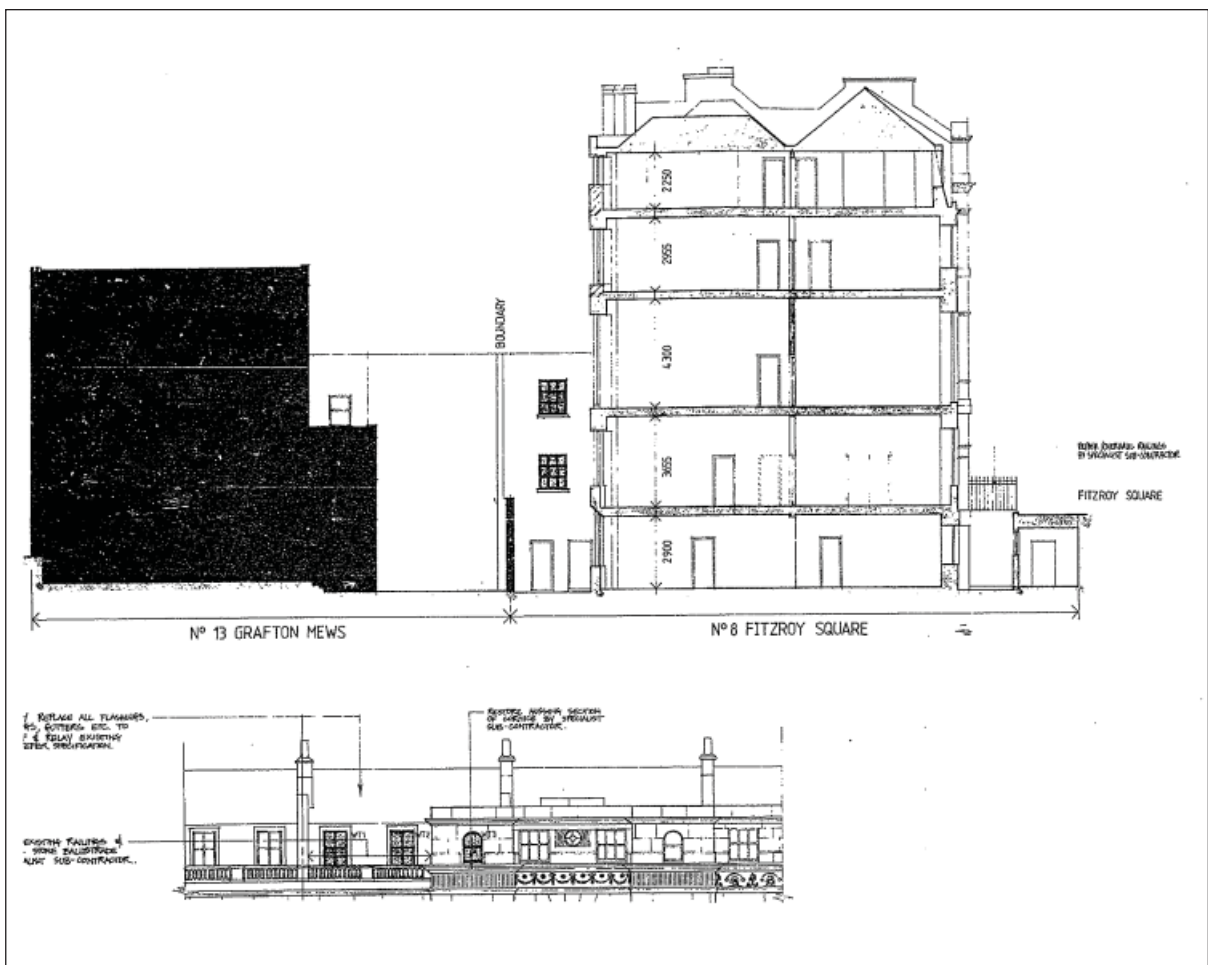
15f. Proposed Second Floor 1983 (Camden Local Archive)



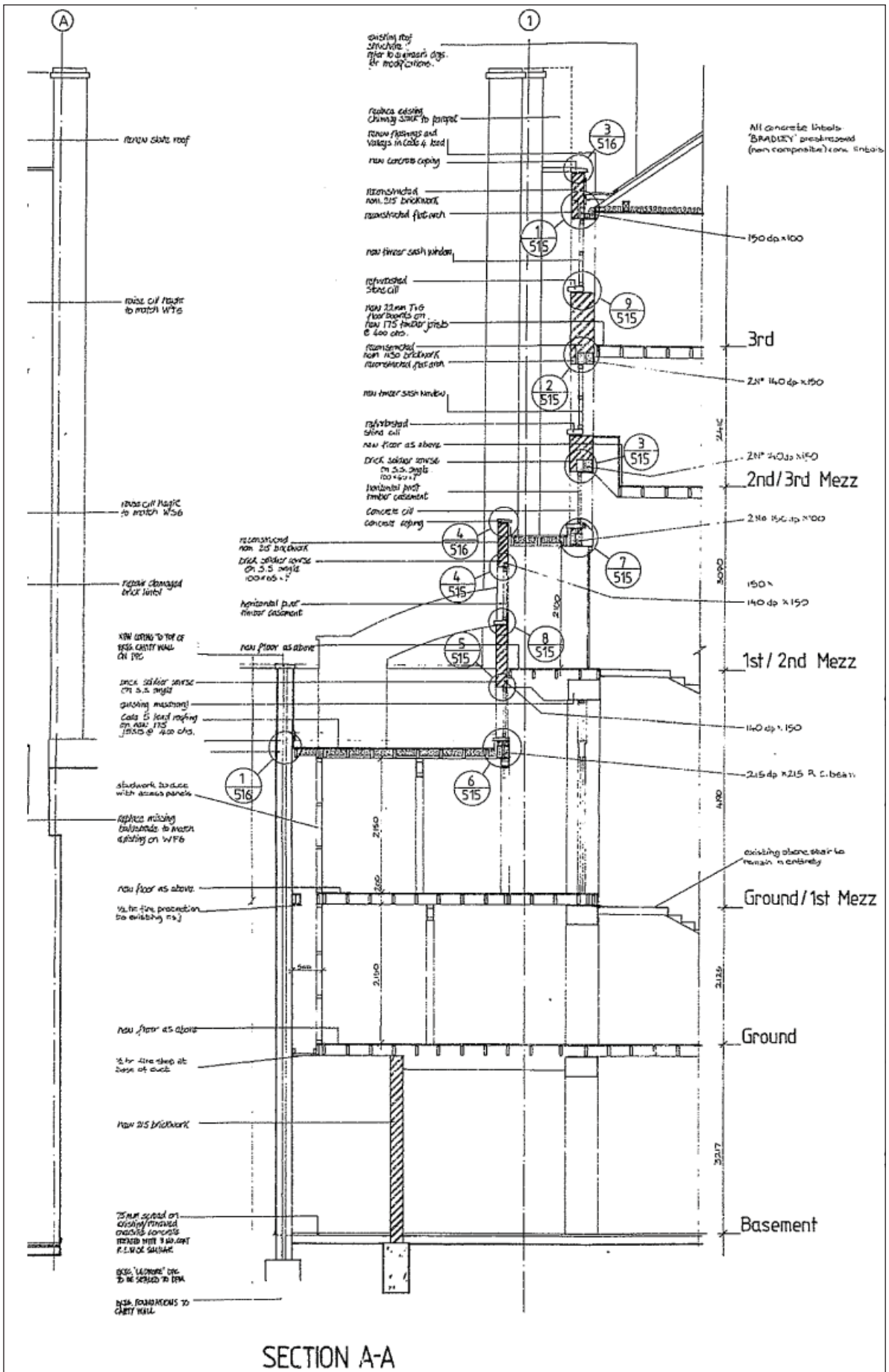
15g. Proposed Third Floor 1983 (Camden Local Archive)



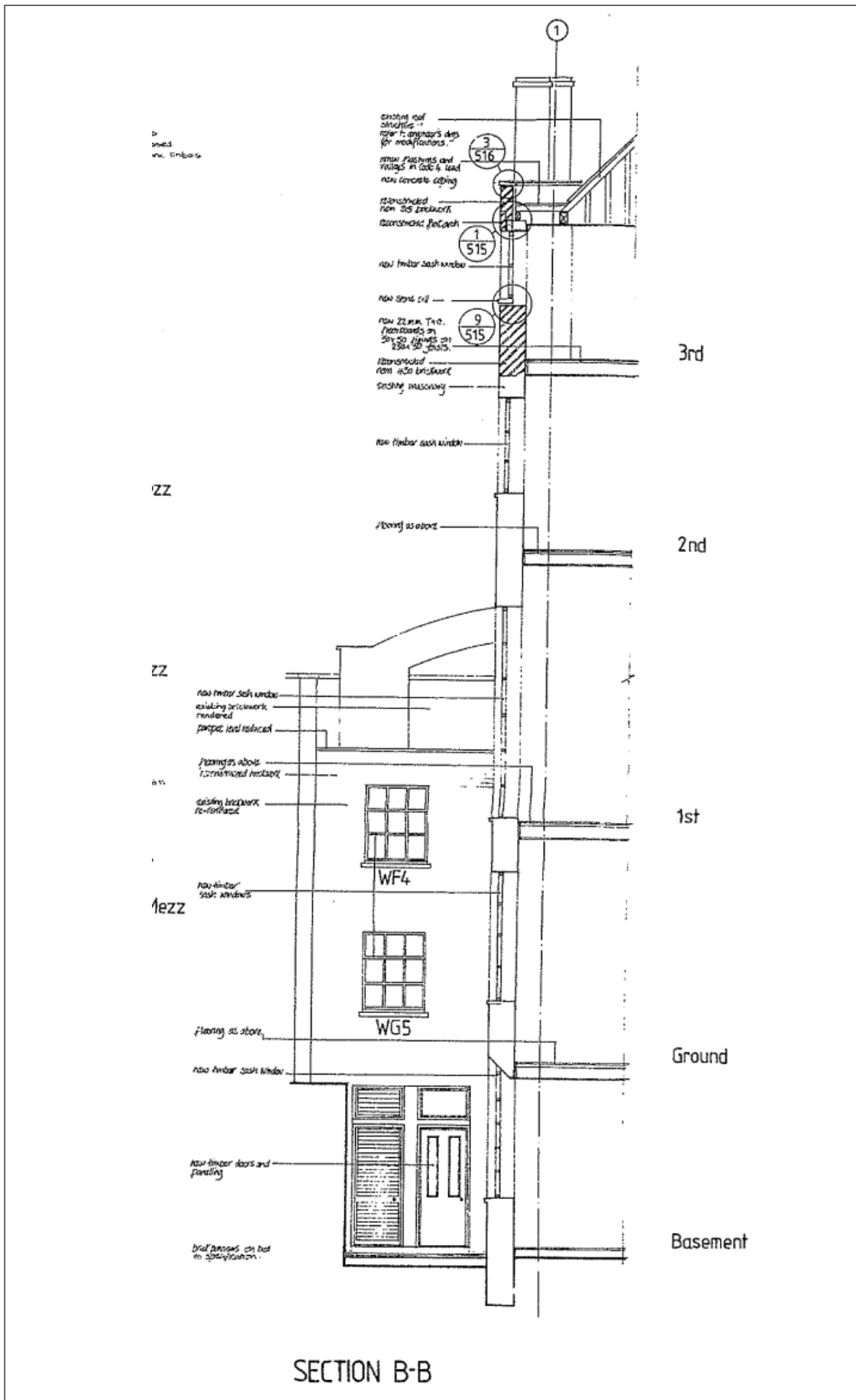
15h. Proposed Roof Plan 1983 (Camden Local Archive)



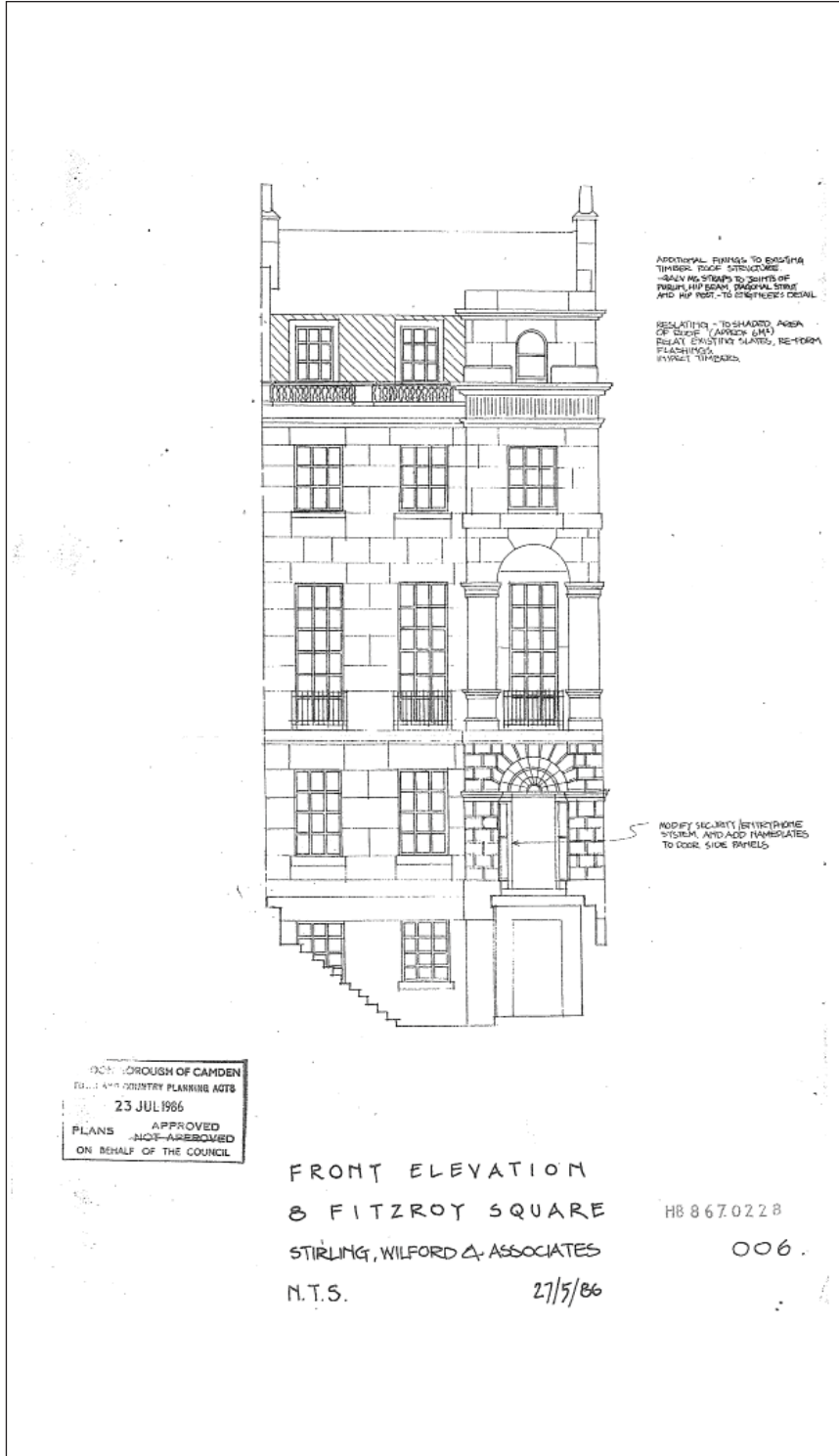
15i. Proposed Architect's Drawings 1983 (Camden Local Archive)



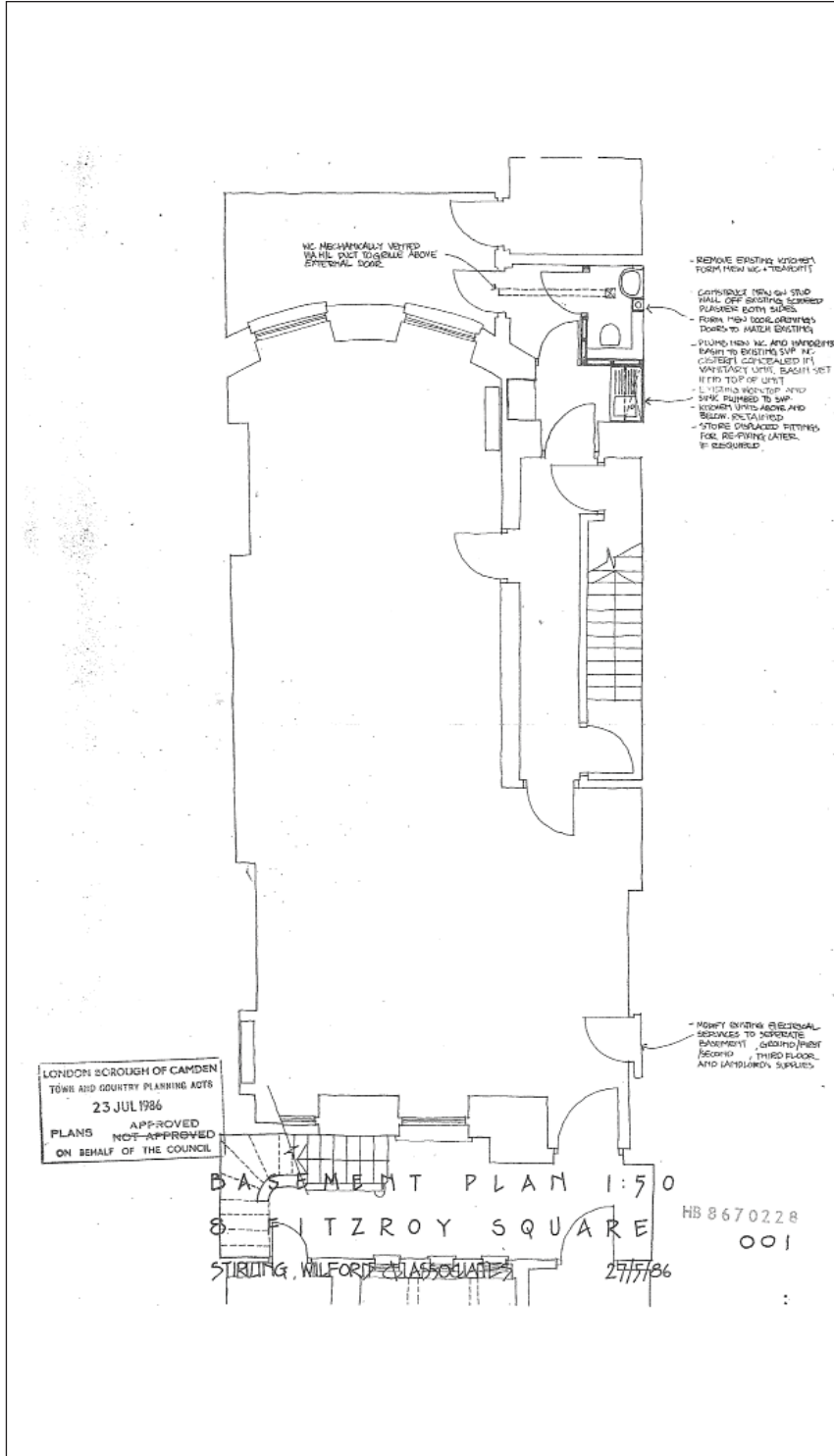
15j. Proposed Architect's Drawings 1983 (Camden Local Archive)



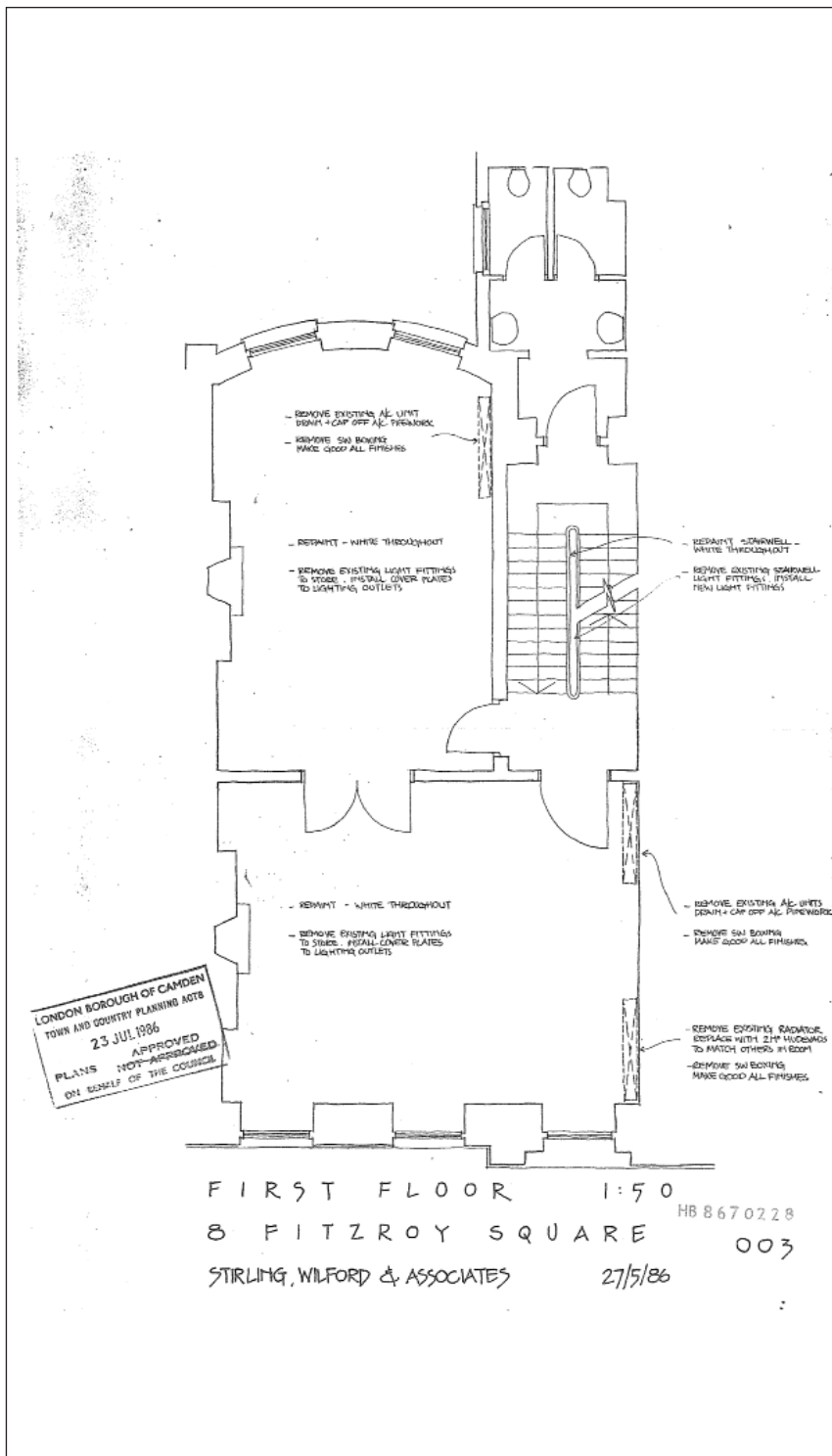
15k. Architect's Drawings 1983 (Camden Local Archive)



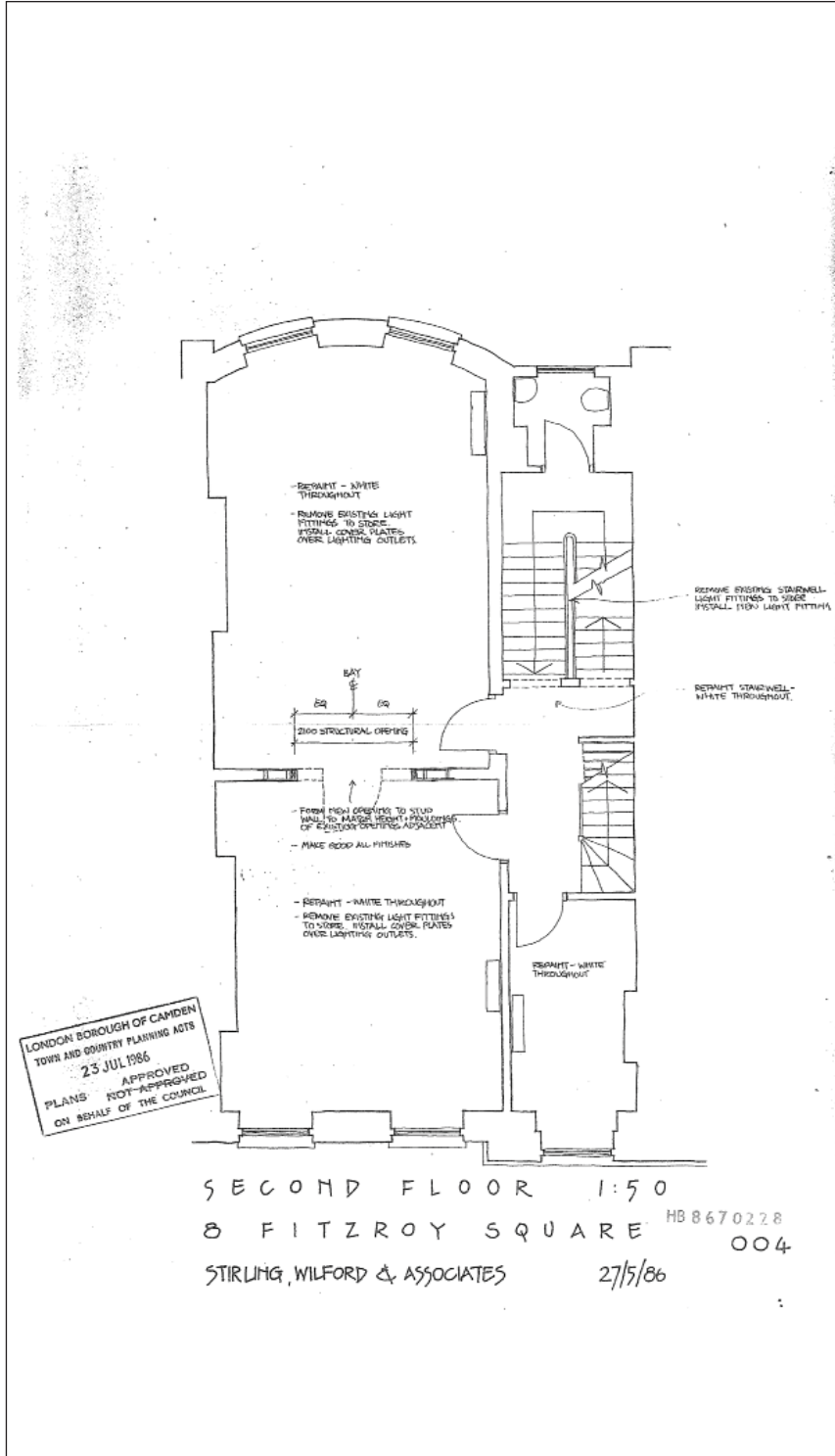
16a. Proposed Architect's Drawings 1986 (Camden Planning Archive)



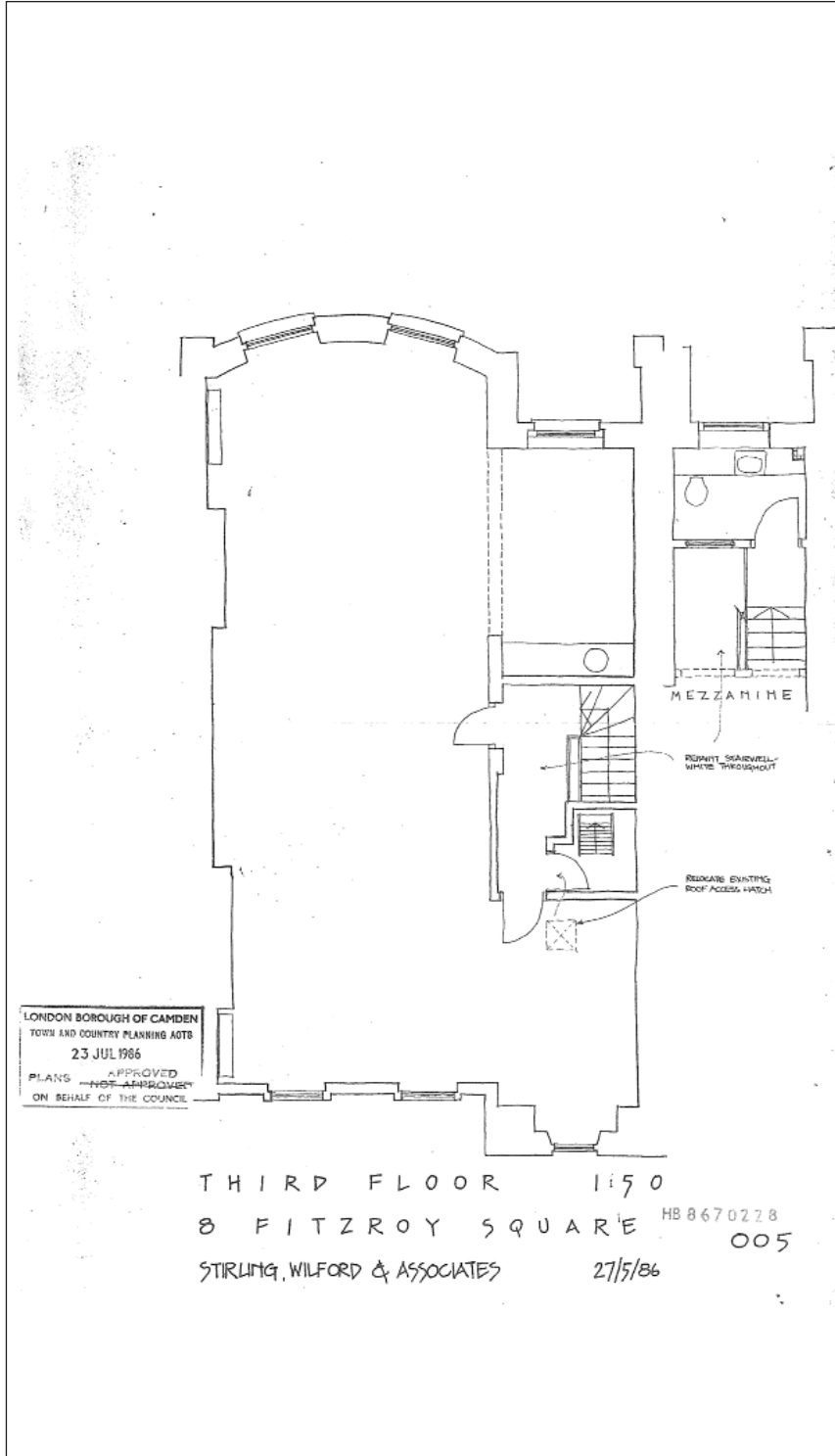
16b. Proposed Architect's Drawings 1986 (Camden Planning Archive)



16d. Proposed Architect's Drawings 1986 (Camden Planning Archive)



16e. Proposed Architect's Drawings 1986 (Camden Planning Archive)



16f. Proposed Architect's Drawings 1986 (Camden Planning Archive)

3.0 Description and assessment of the building

3.1 Setting

Fitzroy Square is in a fairly good state of repair and has been re-landscaped in recent years. It is a comparatively tranquil island within Fitzrovia and retains much of its Georgian character. The east, south and west edges of Fitzroy Square are pedestrianised and traffic can only pass along its northern edge. There is also limited parking along this north edge.

The central, private garden is circular in form and well-tended with a mixture of mature plane trees, grass and bushes. The pedestrianised area contains several public benches and is paved with bonded gravel, while the pavements are a mix of historic and modern stone paving. The street lighting within the square is provided by converted 19th -century lamp posts though to the edges of the square late 20th-century posts dominate.

For the most part the buildings date from the late 18th century and early 19th century, though there are a few early and late 20th century buildings.

3.2 The Building Externally

3.2.1 The Street Elevation

The street elevation is largely as the list description and largely retains its 18th century fabric.

The architectural expression of the elevation does not reflect the internal arrangement of the building. The elevation is built of Portland stone and arranged in three bays. The right hand bay, which contains the entrance, forms part of the rusticated pavilion of the main range and is four storeys over a basement. The centre and left hand bays meanwhile are plainer in finish and form part of the northern extension range. The bays were constructed as three storeys with a slate mansard over a basement. The windows are all square headed with the exception of that on the third floor in the right hand bay which is round headed. The fan light may be original, it could have previously been repaired and is now damaged and missing in part.

The basement area has a mix of 18th century and modern finishes with some 18th century paving stones surviving. The sashes are all modern replicas and the slates on the mansard are in need of some repair. A burglar alarm box is unfortunately placed between the windows on the first floor and detracts.

3.2.2 The Rear Elevation

This consists of a bow wall, the bottom part of which is original, a set-back wall which has been rebuilt in the 20th century and a closet wing that has its origins in the mid 19th century but has also been much rebuilt and is covered with modern render. The windows are all square headed with modern sashes except for three small square windows above the closet wing which were inserted in the 1980's.

The bow wall between the basement and the lintels of the first floor windows is mostly original with some repairs. At basement and ground floor levels, the brick work is painted white.

Above the first floor, up to the parapet, the wall has been almost completely reconstructed using the original 18th century or matching 18th century brick.

The basement and ground floor closet wing was first constructed in the 19th century though its form has changed over time and it was, in part, if not entirely, reconstructed in the late 20th century. The wall is rendered with a concrete coping and flat leaded roof. An infill wall at the level of the first floor mezzanine and rising to the second floor mezzanine has existed at least since the early 20th century but was completely rebuilt in the 1980s works and has a concrete coping and flat leaded roof.

Above this, at third floor level, the original plan form of the set back wall survives, though the wall itself has been completely rebuilt using 18th century bricks.

The rainwater goods are mostly cast iron and are high quality replacements. There is a quantity of obtrusive cabling, wiring and electricity boxes plus an air conditioning unit, all of which detract.

3.2.3 The Roof

Externally the pitched roofs are covered with modern slates and modern ridge tiles. The half pitched roof contains a large leaded vent and a modern roof light has been inserted to the rear of the front pitched roof.

The pots on the chimney stacks may be original but have been coated in some modern paint and have closed caps on top. There is a quantity of air conditioning units.

Internally, the structure of each of the pitched roofs - the front and rear hipped plus the half hip over the stair – has all been substantially rebuilt, probably on several occasions, the most recent being in the 1980s. Consequently the roofs all contain some original, some Victorian and some modern timbers.

The hipped roof to the front of the building contains several steel girders bolted together and the insulation between the rafters prevents further inspection. The two other roofs contain several modern timbers and it appears that older timbers have been removed and then reused.

3.3 The Building Internally

3.3.1 In General

The building was completely refurbished in 1983 after it had been disused for several years. During these works almost all the interior features and finishes that survived at that time were stripped out. Only a few pieces of the original joinery survived and those that did were stripped back to bare timber, repaired, painted and reinstalled. This work has made it impossible to ascertain by visual survey alone whether the shutters and several of the doors are actually original, or are 19th century. According to the 1983 Schedule of Works, the rest of the joinery, plasterwork and features were replaced where possible like-for-like (original features are detailed below). In the main this work was done to a high standard.

At the same time the floors were replaced and several partition walls were reintroduced, in places re-establishing what was considered to be the original floor plan. Repairs were made to the roof structure and the building was then re-roofed.

3.3.2 Vaults

V1

This vault has been rebuilt and has a flat roof supported on steel beams. The finishes are all modern.

V2

This is an original arched vault now rendered with modern concrete.

Area 1

This area has mostly modern finishes, though the original stone paving survives. At street level, the area is guarded by the original cast iron railings.

3.3.3 Basement

B1

A room with a modern plan form, all modern finishes and a solid floor. There is a blocked up original chimney breast in the corner.

B2

Similar to B1

B3

The plan form seems to correspond to the line of the original service passage, though its north wall is a modern partition. The doors and finishes are modern.

B4

Similar to B3 though the north wall seems to be original fabric.

B5

This room has a modern plan form though the door seems to be in its original location and the room retains its chimneybreast. All finishes are modern.

B6.1, B6.2, B6.3

These are service rooms and form part of the rebuilt 19 century closet wing. They have all modern finishes.

B7

This is a boiler room with all modern finishes.

ST1

This is the basement stair. The treads here are carpet laid on concrete but the original stone treads survive beneath these modern coverings. Otherwise all modern finishes.

Area II

This area retains its original plan form – assuming that an external kitchen block was always part of the building design. It contains an original arched chimney flue which connected the kitchen range to the flues of the main building. It retains its original paving slabs.

3.3.4 Ground Floor

G1

This is the entrance hall and seemingly to its original plan form. The external door and shutters for the side lights were repaired and reinstated during the 1980's works and are probably original with modern glazing.

The northern wall is a modern partition on the line of the original wall. The chimneybreast remains but is bricked up, the cornice is a good replica. The dado rail and skirtings are all modern, as is the ceiling and floor. The internal fan light above the doors to G4 is a bland modern replacement as are the double doors. The internal door to G2 is probably a replica.

G2

This room appears to have been returned to its original plan form in the 1980's works when the central partition wall was reintroduced. However it is unlikely that originally there was a communicating door to G3.

The ceiling is modern, the cornice a replica, as is the dado rail and skirting and fire surround. The windows are late 20th century replacements. The shutters may be original. The shutter boxes are modern.

The proportions of G2 and G3 are such that originally the cupboard area between the two rooms probably acted as some kind of anteroom so that one passed from the hall through a door into anteroom and thence through a screen, however it is unclear whether the screen was located in G2 or G3. The screen probably had a downstand beam and columns marking the point where it met the walls so that the anteroom and the main room were read as separate volumes.

G3

This room may now be to its original plan form, however, its west wall is a modern replacement and the current central cupboard area with a lowered ceiling has been roughly inserted since the 1980's works were completed.

In the 1980's when the central partition was returned to the ground floor, the whole of G3 was decorated as a single room with a continuous cornice. The later cupboard partition now cuts through the cornice. The door from G4 is may be original. As in G2 the shutters may be original. The shutter boxes are modern.

Otherwise, the room is much as G2, though the fireplace has been blocked up.

G4

This is the stairwell with an original plan form except for the doors to G3 and G5.

G5

This is a kitchen with all modern finishes. It forms part of 19th century closet wing.

ST2

The cantilevered stone stair is original and has been quite substantially repaired. Broken treads have been pinned and the ground/first floor mezzanine has been propped with a visible steel beam which detracts. The balustrade and handrail seem to be original. All plasterwork and joinery dates from 1980s.

3.3.5 First Floor

P1

This is the principal room of the house and seems to be to its original floor plan, though the partition to P2 is a 1980's reconstruction. The shutters are as elsewhere, though the lowest panels are replacements. The ceiling rose is a replica, as is the fire surround. The door may be original, the double doors are probably modern additions.

P2

Similar to P1.

P3.1 – 3.3

This is a bathroom with mostly modern finishes. Though the origins of the closet wing are 19th century, it was mostly or entirely rebuilt in the 1980s. The opening through the original external wall appears to have a lining of some age, though the actual door frame and architrave appear to be 1980s work. As elsewhere, all other joinery is late 20th century.

3.3.6 Second Floor

S1

Apparently this room was returned to its original plan form in the 1980's except for the opening to S2. The south and east walls are modern partitions. The room has all replica finishes, joinery and plasterwork. The shutters are as elsewhere. The fire surround is a recent insertion, probably Edwardian.

S2

Similar to S1, though only the west wall is a modern partition. The chimneybreast has been bricked up. The door to S5 may be original.

S3

Similar to S1, though the shutters are 1980s.

S4

Of 19th century origin but rebuilt in the 1980s, this is a WC with all modern joinery and finishes.

S5

This is a landing, the plan of which dates from 19th century. The finishes are all 1980s except for the painted timber panel at the top of the stairs which may be early 20th century.

S6

This is a laundry room and appears to have been part of the 19th century construction but was rebuilt in the 1980s. The finishes and joinery are all late 20th century.

ST3

This is a modern timber stair, but seemingly in the position of the original stair.

3.3.6 Third Floor

The partition walls on this floor are all modern.

T1

This is a room with a modern plan form. It retains a chimneybreast, though it is blocked up. As elsewhere, joinery and finishes are all modern.

T2

Similar to T1.

T3

This room has an altered plan form. The finishes and joinery are now all modern.

T4

A room probably with a reconstructed original plan form. All finishes are modern.

T5

This is a landing with a modern plan form and all modern finishes. It contains a modern ladder to the roof.

4.0 Commentary on and justification of the proposal

4.1 Introduction

The proposal is shown on Donald Insall Associates' drawings.

In 2009, permission was granted for the change of use of No 8 from offices back to its original intended use as a single private residence.

The current, proposal forms part of the continuing work to sympathetically restore the building, re-establish it as a large family home and equip it with the modern services appropriate to a building of this size and stature in the 21st century. The house is occupied by the owners and their three children who have spent three years living in the building in order to understand how the spaces within the house work and what their family's requirements are. The key conclusion of that process was the need for more flexible family facilities and, in particular, more bathrooms since the house currently has only a single, small bathroom.

In 2012, a proposal to vertically extend the closet wing to provide necessary bathrooms was rejected on appeal. Therefore, this proposal adds several new bathrooms to the house within the existing envelope of the building and proposes some upgrading of fabric to the basement, while making no interventions into the historic fabric.

4.2 Description of the Proposal

4.2.1 Externally

Changes here would include:

- To the front of building, a new set of doors would be installed under the footbridge in the basement area. To the rear area, the garden wall would be rebuilt with a new arch detailing.

4.2.2 Internally

The internal alterations would include:

- In the basement, the insertion of a WC and laundry into the vaults and the installation of underfloor heating and new stone floors throughout the main building.
- On the first floor, the removal of a modern WC and shower partitions to create a study.
- On the second floor, the blocking up of the large, modern opening between the front and rear rooms and the creation of a new doorway in the modern spine wall. The fixing shut of two existing doors. The addition of modern partitions to the rear room to create a new bedroom doorway, bathroom and wardrobe.

- On the third floor, the relocation and addition of modern partitions to create new ensuite bathrooms for the front and rear rooms. The removal of existing, modern cupboards and the removal of two modern doors.

4.3 Implications of the Proposal

4.3.1 Externally

The implications of the proposal here are:

- The new doors under the footbridge would not affect any historic fabric but would have a minimally negative impact on the original plan form of the basement. Rebuilding the garden wall would not affect any historic fabric and would improve the appearance of this rear area.

4.3.2 Internally

The implications of the proposal here are:

Basement

- The new laundry and WC would be added into a much-altered vault with modern finishes, would not affect any historic fabric and would improve the viability of the building.
- The new stone floor would replace the existing concrete finish thereby improving the quality of accommodation and appearance of the building.

First Floor

- The removal of modern partitions would improve the appearance and plan form of the building.

Second Floor

- The changes here would only affect modern fabric and would provide the building with necessary services.

Third Floor

- The changes here would only affect modern fabric and would provide the building with necessary services.

4.4 Justification of the Proposal

As required by the National Planning Policy Framework, this report has found that the primary significance of No 8 resides in its street elevation which forms the east range of Robert Adam's Fitzroy Square. Since 2009, the building has been undergoing phased works to return it to its original use as a single private dwelling.

The current scheme seeks to provide some of the bathroom facilities necessary for a dwelling of this size. The new heated, stone floors and laundry will improve the quality of accommodation and overall viability of the building. The impact of these proposals on the historic fabric of the building would be negligible and as described by paragraph 134 of the NPPF would cause '*less than substantial harm*' to the listed building.

In such instances, paragraph 134 of the NPPF requires that any harm be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. In this instance, the building's optimum viable use is as a single private dwelling and since the current proposals form part of the wider scheme to return of the building to this use, they carry with them gains for the historic environment.

The benefits of the proposal include:

- Helping to return No 8 to its original use and ensure the sustainability of this use and thus the building's long-term conservation.
- The continued upgrading of interior finishes and move towards creating a large, flexible, family residence with suitable, modern services and facilities.
- Provision of better quality, more viable accommodation in the basement.
- Sustaining the significance of the heritage asset and the conservation area.

Overall, the negligible harm caused by these proposals is easily outweighed by the benefits both to the historic environment and the wider public. The scheme would maintain the building in full, active and viable use; this would ensure that the most significant element of the historic fabric – the street elevation – is maintained and preserved. There are no proposed changes which would affect the overall significance of the heritage asset and the proposals should be acceptable in terms of the NPPF.

Appendix I

Listing Description

Name: NUMBERS 1, 1A AND 2-8 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS AND LAMP HOLDERS

Date first listed: 10-Jun-1954

Date of most recent amendment: 11-Jan-1999

GV I

Terrace of 8 houses forming, with Nos 9 & 10, (qv), the east side of Fitzroy Square. c1792-4. By Robert and James Adam. Nos 1 and 1A restored 1950s after bomb damage. Portland stone with rusticated ground floor. Plain 2nd floor sill band.

EXTERIOR: 4 storeys and basements. 17 window range.

Symmetrical facade (including south bay only of No.8) with 5 centre bays and 3 bays at each end projecting. Round-arched openings at ground floor level with impost bands. Sash windows in shallow, plain recesses. No.7 with rectangular C20 office window. Doorways with pilaster-jambs carrying cornice-heads, some with radial patterned fanlights, panelled doors. 1st floor centre bays with distyle-in-antis recessed, attached Ionic columns rising through the 2nd floor to support the entablature. Square-headed sash windows in shallow round-arched recesses with pilasters. Square-headed, recessed sashes to 2nd floor. End pavilions with distyle-in-antis recessed columns forming a tripartite window with Diocletian window above. Either side, 1st floor window square-headed in shallow round-arched recess with pilasters. Square-headed, recessed sashes to 2nd floor. Wings with square-headed, recessed sashes. All 1st floor windows with cast-iron balconies, those on the wings continuous. Entablature with part of the frieze enriched at 3rd floor level. Attic storey with recessed sashes, the centre bay having pilasters above the columns and oculi to each outer bay. Northern pavilion with round-arched windows to outer bays and central oculus. Cornice and blocking course.

INTERIORS: mostly plain with enriched ceiling cornices. Stone staircases with iron balusters and some marble fireplaces.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas, Nos 4 & 5 with cast-iron lamp-holders.

HISTORICAL NOTE: No.7 was the home of Sir Charles Eastlake, painter & first Director of the National Gallery (GLC plaque). No.8: entrance bay forms north bay of symmetrical facade. 2 bays to left do not form part of the composition and are of a more simple design. Plain ashlar with slate mansard roof and dormers. 3 storeys and attic. 2 windows. Recessed sash windows with 1st floor balconies. Cornice and balustraded parapet.

(See also Nos 9 & 10 Fitzroy Square.)

(Survey of London: Vol. XXI, Tottenham Court Road and Neighbourhood, St Pancras III: London: -1949: 52-8; Lees-Milne J: The Age of Adam: London and New York: -1947: 129-130).

Selected Sources

1. Book Reference - Author: J Lees Milne - Title: The Age of Adam - Date: 1947 - Page References: 129, 130
2. Article Reference - Title: Volume 21 Tottenham Court Road and Neighbourhood St Pancras Part 3 - Date: 1949 - Journal Title: Survey of London - Page References: 52-58

Appendix II

Relevant Planning Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 66 (1) states: *'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall 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.'*

Section 72(l) of the above Act states that *'with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area'*.

The NPPF

Any proposals for consent relating to heritage assets are subject to the policies of the NPPF (2012). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. With regard to *'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'*, the framework requires proposals relating to heritage assets to be justified and an explanation of their effect on the heritage asset's significance provided.

The NPPF has the following relevant policies for proposals such as this:

*14. At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.*

The NPPF sets out twelve **core planning principles** that should underpin decision-making (paragraph 17.). Amongst those are that planning should:

- *not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;*
- *proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs.(...);*
- *always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
- *support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);*
- *conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generation.*

Specifically on applications relating to **heritage assets** the NPPF has the following:

131. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

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

As regards **less than substantial harm** to a heritage asset, there is the following policy:

134. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

English Heritage Guidance

English Heritage's "Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide" (2010) elaborates on the policies set out in the now superseded PPS5 but still applies to the policies contained in the NPPF.

In paragraph 79 the guide addresses potential **benefits** of proposals affecting heritage assets, such as conservation areas. It states the following:

"There are a number of potential heritage benefits that could weigh in favour of a proposed scheme:

- *It sustains or enhances the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting.*
- *It reduces or removes risks to a heritage asset.*
- *It secures the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation.*
- *It makes a positive contribution to economic vitality and sustainable communities.*
- *It is an appropriate design for its context and makes a positive contribution to the appearance, character, quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment.*
- *It better reveals the significance of a heritage asset and therefore enhances our enjoyment of it and the sense of place."*

The Guidance has specific advice for **additions and alterations** to heritage assets. This includes the following:

179. The fabric will always be an important part of the asset's significance. Retention of as much historic fabric as possible is therefore a fundamental part of any good alteration or conversion, together with the use of appropriate materials and methods of repair. It is not appropriate to sacrifice old work simply to accommodate the new.

And:

186. New features added to a building are less likely to have an impact on the significance if they follow the character of the building.(...).

The London Plan

The Consolidated London Plan (2011) contains policies that affect development related to the historic environment.

Specifically, the Plan includes the following relevant policies:

Policy 7.8: Heritage Assets and Archaeology

Strategic

- A *London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.*
- B *Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology.*

Planning decisions

- C *Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.*
- D *Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.*

Policy 7.9: Heritage-led regeneration

Strategic

- A *Regeneration schemes should identify and make use of heritage assets and reinforce the qualities that make them significant so they can help stimulate environmental, economic and community regeneration. This includes buildings, landscape features, views, Blue Ribbon Network and public realm.*

Planning decisions

- B *The significance of heritage assets should be assessed when development is proposed and schemes designed so that the heritage significance is recognised both in their own right and as catalysts for regeneration. Wherever possible heritage assets (including buildings at risk) should be repaired, restored and put to a suitable and viable use that is consistent with their conservation and the establishment and maintenance of sustainable communities and economic vitality.*

Camden Local Plan

Camden's Local Development Framework was adopted in 2010 and contains policies relevant for sites such as this. These policies are as follows:

DP24 – Securing high quality design

The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

- a) *character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;*

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

DP25 – Conserving Camden’s heritage

CONSERVATION AREAS

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

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

Camden’s Core Strategy states the following regarding heritage:

CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

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

- a) *requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;*
- b) *preserving and enhancing Camden’s rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens;*
- c) *promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;*
- d) *seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible.*

Fitzroy Square Conservation Area

The Fitzroy Square Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted in March 2010.

Concerning the character and quality of Conservation Area, the document states:

The Conservation Area boasts a sizeable number of buildings which are architecturally innovative of their period of development. The most notable and imposing group are the grade I listed, Adam-designed, terraces on the south and east sides of Fitzroy Square, with their stone fronted facades and classically influenced detailing and symmetry of elevational composition of the terrace as a whole. This is also reflected in the stucco terrace on the west side (grade II) and in the remaining properties on the north side of the square.*

Appraising Fitzroy Square the document continues:

The principal focal point of the area is Fitzroy Square, planned in the latter quarter of the 18th century as the centrepiece for Charles Fitzroy's speculative development. The area was one of the last projects designed and planned by architect Robert Adam, with his brother James, who built the terraces enclosing the east side followed by the south side of the square in the early 1790s. The architectural quality and historical importance of these terraces is signified by their grade I listing. Adhering to the Palladian style, the four-storey, Portland stone fronts were designed to present a uniform facade to the square. For architectural emphasis, the central and end sections project forward and have more ornate surface treatment. The eastern terrace, built 1793-8, has large arched openings at either end with central columns that give a sense of scale to the blocks.