

15 Southampton Place

London WC2E 8ND

Heritage appraisal



October 2012

Consultancy for the
Historic Built Environment

KMHeritage

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1 Summary

The report describes the history and evolution of 15 Southampton Place and its context. It was built as a house in 1757-1763 to the designs of Henry Flitcroft and forms part of a group of buildings planned on axis with Bloomsbury Square. The building was listed at Grade II* in October 1951 together with nos. 14-22 in the same terrace. 15 Southampton Place experienced substantial alterations in the 19th century in association with its use as legal offices, a use that caused it to be joined with No 14 throughout the 20th century. An ugly ground floor extension was added. Major works were carried out in the 1970s, including the installation of a lift.

15 Southampton Place retains evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value, though its aesthetic value has been reduced by substantial internal alteration. The heritage significance of the building now is located in its external architectural expression and appearance, its overall shape and form, and in its retention of an approximate Georgian plan shape.

The proposed scheme is for conversion of the listed building from the present office and part residential use into six flats, a use close to its original one. It does this while preserving the key elements of heritage significance in the building. The appearance of the listed building to Southampton Place will remain unaltered. The unattractive ground floor extension to the rear is replaced, and the first floor front room is recreated as one space. The insertion of service spaces occurs to the rear of the spine wall, in the secondary rooms of the plan. In overall terms the proposal will secure and enhance the listed building by repairing its fabric and removing later detrimental works. The scheme balances necessary alteration and conversion with works to mitigate the effects of conversion, as shown in the detailed drawings.

The proposal will provide the listed building with a long-term and sustainable future without causing any harm to its heritage significance or that of any other heritage asset. For these reasons, set out in more detail in the report, the scheme complies with national and local policy and guidance for the historic built environment

2 Introduction

2.1 This report has been prepared to support listed building consent and planning applications for 15 Southampton Place London WC2E 8ND. The report has been prepared for Holborn Links Ltd.

Purpose

2.2 The purpose of the report is to set out the history and significance of 15 Southampton Place in the light of the proposed conversion of the building from office to residential use, to assess the proposed scheme and its effect on heritage significance, and to consider this against relevant national and local policy for the historic built environment.

2.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Brimelow McSweeney Architects.

Organisation

2.4 This introduction is preceded by a summary and followed by a description of the site and its context. Section 4 provides an account of the building's historic development and an analysis of its heritage significance. An outline is provided in Section 5 of the proposed scheme. Section 6 sets out the national and local policy and guidance relating to the historic built environment that is relevant to this matter. Section 7 describes the effect of the scheme on heritage significance and Section 8 assesses the proposed development against policy and guidance. Appendices include the list description and sources of information.

Research, analysis and sources

2.5 It should be noted that in common with many historic buildings, it is not possible to provide a truly comprehensive analysis of the building's history of

intervention and change. The research and analysis set out in this report is as thorough as possible given the type and degree of available archival resources. The research and analysis set out in this report is as thorough as possible given the type and availability of archival resources. Research has been carried out using a number of online sources and at the London Metropolitan Archives, the London Borough of Camden's Archives Centre, English Heritage and the British Library. A full list of sources and archives consulted is set out at appendix B.

- 2.6 This desk-based and archival research has been combined with an assessment of No. 15 Southampton Place in its current condition where access has been possible and judgement applied as to the most likely historic development and story of the building. Plans of neighbouring properties have also been consulted in order to inform this process. Further sources and evidence may become available at a future date that adds to our knowledge and understanding of the building and its history. Further evidence in relation to the building's fabric will also be more obtainable once the building is vacant and more detailed inspection works can be undertaken.

Author

- 2.7 The lead consultant and editor of this report is Kevin Murphy B.Arch MUBC RIBA IHBC. He was an Inspector of Historic Buildings in the London Region of English Heritage and dealt with a range of major projects involving listed buildings and conservation areas in London. Prior to this, he had been a conservation officer with the London Borough of Southwark, and was Head of Conservation and Design at Hackney Council between 1997 and 1999. He trained and worked as an architect, and has a specialist qualification in urban and building conservation.
- 2.8 Research for and drafting of this report was undertaken by Kate Graham MA, PG DipCons(AA). Kate is a historic

environment professional, has been an assistant Historic Buildings and Areas team leader in the London Region of English Heritage, as well as working in English Heritage's policy team. Kate has also worked at the Architectural Heritage Fund.

3 Site location and description

3.1 The following section describes the nature of the site and its context.

Site location and description

3.2 No. 15 Southampton Place is located on the west side of Southampton Place, which runs between Bloomsbury Square to the north and High Holborn to the south (Figure 1). It was built as a house in 1757-1763 to the designs of Henry Flitcroft and forms part of a group of buildings seemingly planned on axis with Bloomsbury Square.



Figure 1: Site location plan - the site is marked in red.

- 3.3 The building forms part of a terrace of similar properties on the west side of Southampton Place and faces another similar terrace opposite on the east side. It is built in brick over three storeys plus basement and a double height mansard housing two additional floors. In total, there are six floors of accommodation. Several other buildings in the terrace, but not all, have a similar arrangement.
- 3.4 The principal elevation to Southampton Place is in brick with a stucco band between ground and first floors and a dentilled cornice at parapet level (figure 2). These features add uniformity to the group of buildings within the terrace. Variations in No. 15's appearance from others in the terrace include a wooden door casing with columns supporting entablature and pediment and 6x9, rather than the prevailing 6x6, sash windows at first floor level. The door's fanlight is a single pane with no glazing bar detailing.
- 3.5 The rear elevation is much altered and there is no longer a rear yard or open space to the property.
- 3.6 The building is currently in use as offices and there is separated office accommodation provided from basement to third floor level. There is a small flat at fourth floor level.



Figure 2: No. 15 Southampton Place, street elevation.

- 3.7 The basement floor is accessed via stairs to the street and from within the building. It now extends beyond the building line to the west. There is a lift in the south-west corner of the building that provides access to all floors except the fourth. At ground floor, two rooms are accessed from the spacious and lofty entrance hall. The rear wall has been pierced at this level to provide access to a 1970s ground floor rear extension. There is a lightwell between the extension and the original house.
- 3.8 At first floor level, there are two rooms accessed off the main stair landing. A further room is accessed through either of the former. The lift tower and WC facility are located at the south-west corner. This layout is repeated

at second floor level. Three rooms are accessible from the stair landing at first floor level. There is also a small cupboard on this floor. The fourth floor has been altered to accommodate a small flat with bed/sitting room, bathroom and kitchen. The boiler house is located at this level.

- 3.9 The roof is covered in clay tile with two dormers at third and fourth floor on the Southampton Place elevation and single, wider dormers at each floor to the rear.
- 3.10 There are two chimney breasts to each floor, in front and back rooms, forming part of the party wall with no. 16 Southampton Place. Only the front and back rooms of the first floor have fireplaces. Windows throughout are timber and in a traditional style. All are 6x6 sash windows, with the exception of the first floor to Southampton Place where they are 6x9. The windows to the ground, first and second floors have a deep panelled reveals. There is a dado rail to rooms at ground, first and second floor levels and also to the main corridors and stair, again only at these levels.
- 3.11 The historic development of the building is set out in full in section 4 of this report.

Designations

- 3.12 No. 15 Southampton Place was listed at Grade II* in October 1951 together with nos. 14-22 (consecutive) in the same terrace. The relevant section of the list description¹ reads as follows:

Terrace of 9 houses. c1758-63. Probably under the direction of Henry Flitcroft. Nos 19, 20 & 21 altered mid C19. No.22 mid C18 with C19 alterations. Darkened multi-colour stock brick with a stone band at 1st floor level. Tiled mansard roofs with dormers. 3 storeys, attics and basements. 3 windows each. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sash windows. Bracketed cornice below parapets. Nos 14-18: Nos 14, 15 and 16 with wooden

¹ The list description is included at Appendix A

doorcases with engaged Doric columns carrying entablature and pediment. No.15 with triglyphs and dentil open pediment. Nos 17 and 18 with round-arched doorways with patterned fanlights, sidelights and panelled doors. No.16 with original lead rainwater head, with lion mask, and pipe. INTERIORS: not inspected but noted to retain good staircases, fireplaces and panelling, those of Nos 14, 15 and 17 being especially fine. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with torch flambe finials to areas, No.17 with lamp-bracket overthrow.

- 3.13 The purpose of the list description is to provide outline descriptive details of the building for purposes of identification and understanding. A listing in 1951 is very early, and this highlights the architectural and historical importance of the listed building.
- 3.14 As a listed building, no. 15 Southampton Place is a designated heritage asset, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area

- 3.15 Southampton Place is one of the streets forming the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. While the proposals will not have an impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as they do not include any external alterations and extensions, it is useful to note this point here.
- 3.16 The Conservation Area covers a very large area running from Euston Road to the southern edges of the borough. It is characterised by a formal grid layout of streets and squares enclosed by mainly three- to four-storey 18th and early 19th century buildings. Southampton Place is located in sub-area 6 which is focussed on Bloomsbury Square, Russell Square and Tavistock Square. Southampton Place and its buildings embody the character of the wider area.

4 Historic development and significance

- 4.1 This section provides a brief overview of the historic development of Southampton Place and its immediate surroundings. It also provides a more detailed history of no. 15 Southampton Place and any likely changes and developments that have had an impact on the building, its special interest and significance.

The growth of the Bloomsbury Area

- 4.2 Development of the Bloomsbury area first began in earnest during the 1660s when the Earl of Southampton built Southampton House on what is now the north side of Bloomsbury Square. High Holborn was already part of a key route linking the City with Westminster and onward routes to the west and development had already begun to line its edges by this time.
- 4.3 After the Restoration, widespread development of the area began. Landowners, following the example of the Duke of Bedford who had built Covent Garden with his architect Inigo Jones, saw an opportunity to develop similar fashionable areas based on similar formally planned principles. The first landowner to seize the initiative was the Earl of Southampton who was granted a building licence for the construction of Bloomsbury Square in 1661. William Morgan's *Map of London* of 1682 shows how developed the area around Bloomsbury Square was at this time (figure 3).

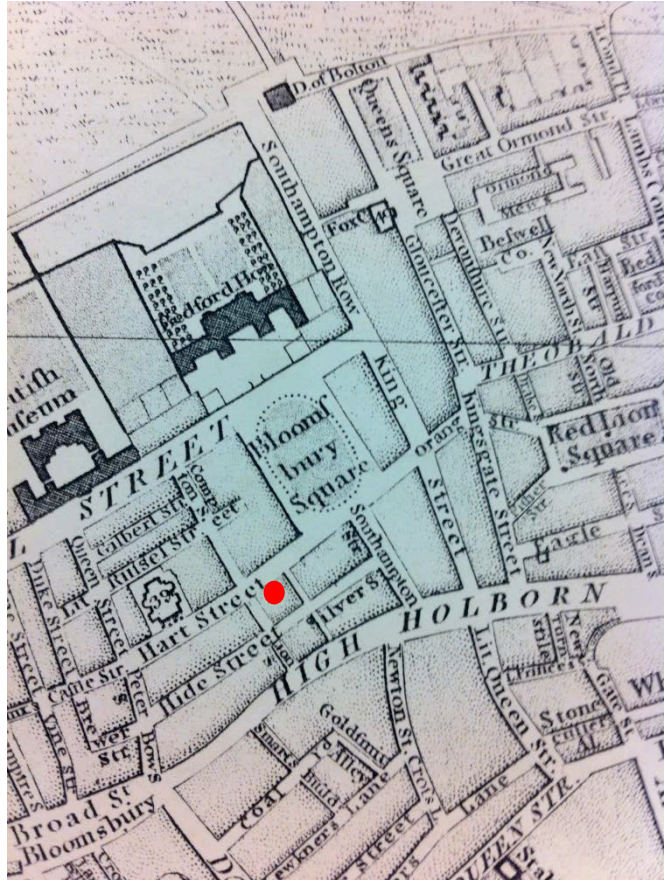


Figure 3: Morgan's Map of London of 1682. The approximate location of no. 15 Southampton Place is marked. Here Southampton House is annotated 'Bedford House' a reflection of the fact that the Earl's property passed by marriage to the Earls of Bedford on his death in 1667.

- 4.4 Several recognisable streets and squares are depicted in this map extract such as Red Lion Square, Theobalds Road and Southampton Row. Southampton Place, or Southampton Street as it was known until the 1930s, has also been laid out with development either side. The area had a parish church, St George's Bloomsbury, and a small market in the vein of Covent Garden on Barter Street. Due to the area's mix of residential streets and shops and other social and religious amenities the area became known as 'the little town'.
- 4.5 Development beyond the Bloomsbury Square area gathered pace in the second half of the 18th century and

ultimately stretched to Euston Road. For the area immediately around Bloomsbury Square the pattern of development was set and, in terms of street pattern, would remain largely unaltered until the later 19th century. Figure 4 shows Bloomsbury Square in 1746 with open fields to the villages of Hampstead and Highgate beyond. The terraces around the square appear as impressively uniform elevations to the square, complementing the architecture of Southampton/Bedford House and the buildings of Great Russell Street. A number of original properties on Bloomsbury Square survive behind new fronts and stucco. These date to 1662-5. It is likely that the late 17th century buildings of Southampton Place were very similar.

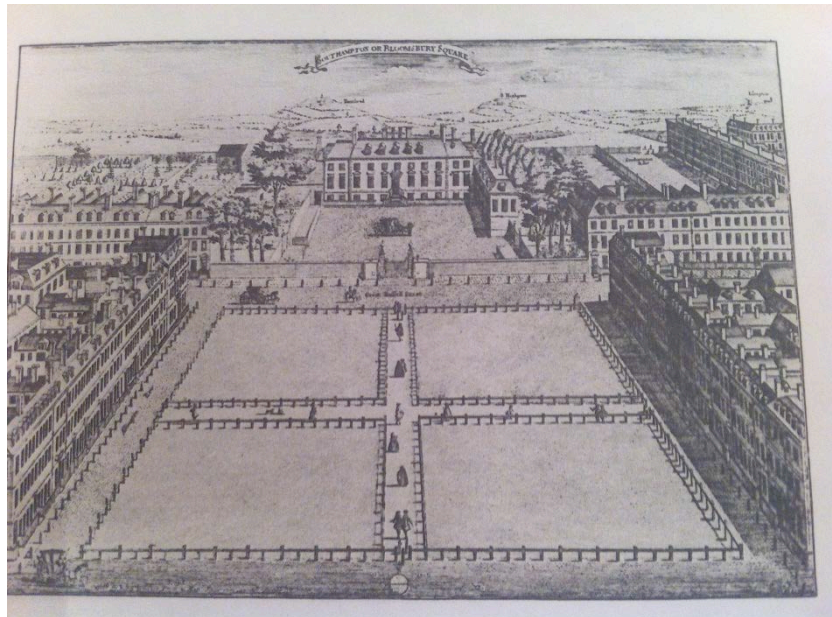


Figure 4: Birdseye view of Bloomsbury Square, 1746 (The Squares of London)

- 4.6 As ever, while the street pattern was well established by the late 17th century, the built fabric of the area evolved according to taste, design and will. The Russell, or Bedford family, who had acquired the Earl of Southampton's Bloomsbury holdings through marriage, undertook development around Bloomsbury Square and in other areas and demolition and reconstruction of buildings was inevitable.

- 4.7 One of the more significant changes was the demolition of Bedford/Southampton House in the early 19th century. In its place was constructed Bedford Place, leading north to Russell Square. Southampton Street formed part of a notional visual axis, if not an actual one, leading from High Holborn to Russell Square and beyond. Another change that would have undoubtedly added to the area's cachet was the opening of the British Museum on Great Russell Street in 1759, in the former Montagu House. This was rebuilt in the late 1820s.
- 4.8 From the early to mid-19th century, while streets and squares of terraced houses were being built in other areas of Bloomsbury, the proximity of the Bloomsbury Square area to the commercial areas of Holborn and to the various Inns of Court saw many houses around Bloomsbury Square and to the east and west become used for offices. Many were used by solicitors and other such professions. Many legal firms and chambers still have offices throughout this area.
- 4.9 By 1896, the OS Map published in that year (figure 5) indicated that the area essentially still had a predominantly Georgian townscape. Buildings of a larger footprint, mid-terrace, indicate where later development has broken this pattern such as at the corner of Holborn and Southampton Street and in Hart Street, later Bloomsbury Way. By 1916 (figure 6), Sicilian Avenue had been built to the north-east of Southampton Place and the Kingsway had been completed, running south from the Bloomsbury Way/Southampton Row junction, taking out and remodelling the southern section of Southampton Row. In addition, an office block was built on the corner of High Holborn and Southampton Place in 1904.

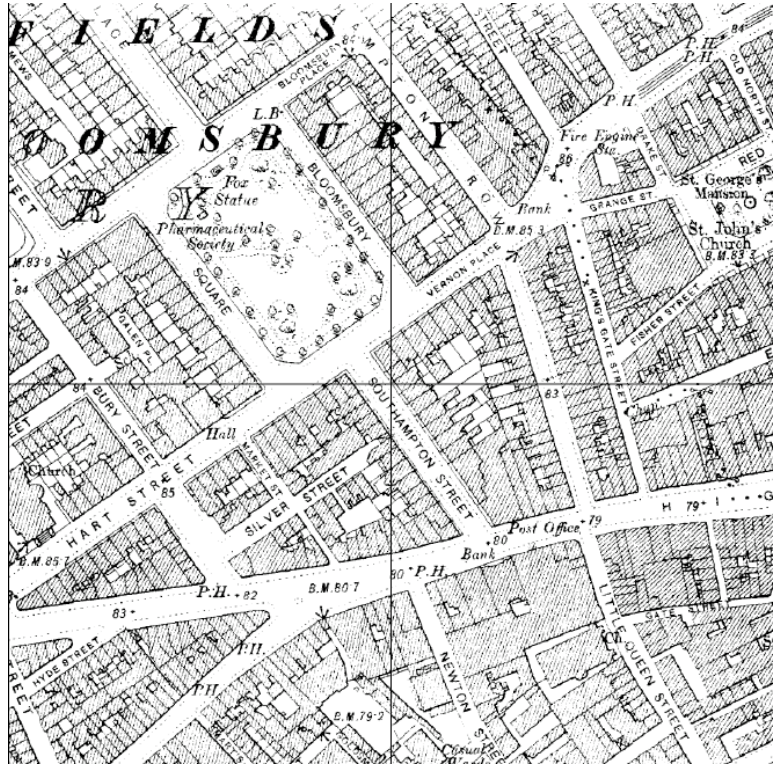


Figure 5: OS map of 1896



Figure 6: OS map of 1916

4.10 The OS Map of 1952 (figure 7) shows some of the damage caused by World War II bombings in the local area. The buildings of Red Lion Square and around Theobalds Road to the north are largely ruinous. Victoria House has also been built on the east side of Bloomsbury Square. The war and early 20th century development clearly had a significant and lasting impact on the local area. The area around Southampton Place does clearly preserve some of its planned Georgian integrity. Silver Street, which ran from Southampton Place to Bury Place has been renamed Barter Street.



Figure 6: OS map of 1952

The development of Southampton Place

4.11 As set out in 3.3-3.5 above, Southampton Place was first laid out in the late 17th century as Southampton Street, probably during the late 1660s or early 1670s. The form of the buildings is unknown but it is likely that they took the form of terraced buildings in and around Bloomsbury

Square (figure 4). These were three-storey buildings with attics expressed as dormers in mansard roofs. The buildings appear as three bays wide. They are not entirely dissimilar to the buildings on Southampton Place as they are today, at least in the most basic form. As seen in Rocque's map of London of 1746 (figure 8) Southampton Place was linked to Bloomsbury Market, the miniature Covent Garden, by Silver Street.

- 4.12 By the late 1750s/early 1760s the buildings of Southampton Place were almost a hundred years old. This presumably led to an 'upgrade' planned by the Bedford Estate and most likely undertaken or directed by the eminent 18th century architect Henry Flitcroft. Flitcroft began his working life as a carpenter but through the patronage of Lord Burlington and other, he eventually became the Comptroller of the Office in Works in 1758, a position he held until his death in 1769. Flitcroft was a proponent of the Palladian style and ideals. The terraces of Southampton Place were formed with this in mind from the alignment of each building's elevation, through to their window proportions and in the planning and volume and dimensions of the buildings' interior spaces. Collectively, the individual elements of the terraces on either side of the street form an aesthetically pleasing composition.
- 4.13 Flitcroft was an 18th century architect of considerable note and had an impressive body of work. This included the church of St Giles in the Fields, Wimpole Hall and parts of Woburn Abbey, the seat of the Dukes of Bedford and Russell family.



Figure 8: Extract from Rocque's Map, 1746

- 4.14 Later mapping evidence shows that little has changed significantly in Southampton Place since the existing buildings were constructed. Horwood's map of 1819 (figure 9) obviously shows the street after the c. 1760s reconstruction of its buildings and with more clarity.

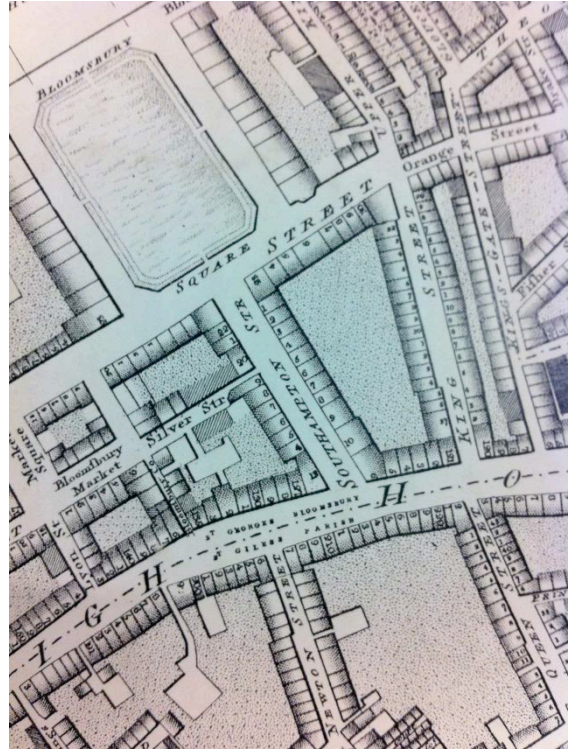


Figure 9: Horwood's Map of 1819.

- 4.15 There is a narrower passage through to Silver Street, or Barter Street as it is now known. Buildings of a slightly larger footprint occupied sites at the southern end of Southampton Place. The individual properties on the street are numbered and behind each is indicated an area of garden. These garden areas are shown in later OS maps (figures 5-7) and are increasingly encroached upon as time moves on.
- 4.16 This mapping also shows changes such as the construction of the office block on the corner of High Holborn and Southampton Place in 1903 and new post-18th century development on the opposite corner. Today, there is a new, sensitively designed infill development facing nos. 15 Southampton Place which leads through into Southampton Row.
- 4.17 Southampton Place also survived unscathed from wartime bomb damage as indicated in figure 10. As set out above, large areas to the north and east of Southampton Place were quite heavily bombed and as a result there are many

streets and squares in Bloomsbury that were rebuilt during the post-war period.

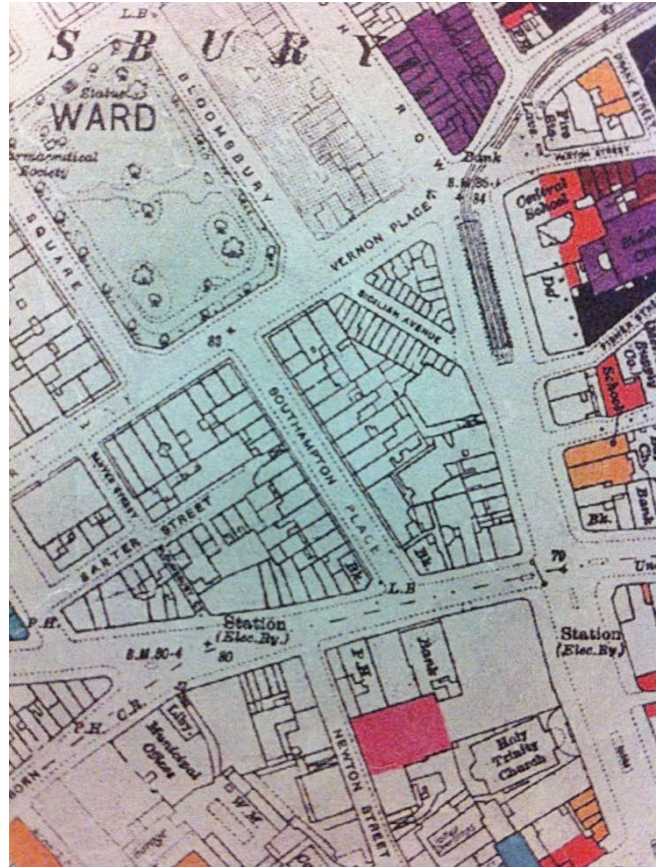


Figure 10: London County Council Bomb Damage Map, 1945

15 Southampton Place

- 4.18 No. 15 Southampton Place was originally built in the late 1750s/early 1760s. The houses of the street were intended for the wealthier classes and their quality and status is reflected in their height, layout, internal rooms and external appearance. The listing description for no. 15 reports that although the interiors were not inspected it was ‘noted [that the terrace] to retain good staircases, fireplaces and panelling. Those of nos. 14, 15 and 17 are especially fine.’
- 4.19 As constructed, no. 15 would have had a good number of these features. Figure 11, which depicts a room of no. 14 Southampton Place which provides good evidence as to

how the interior of no. 15 might have originally appeared, though many differences existed between houses fitted out for individual leaseholders.



Figure 11: Ground floor room of no. 14 Southampton Place (1970)

- 4.20 A visual inspection of no. 15 Southampton Place reveals that the only visible remaining features in the building are parts of a historic staircase, cornicing and panelled window surrounds. Documentary and mapping evidence indicates that since its construction, no. 15 has been extended and altered to meet the requirements of its owners and occupiers according to need, style, taste and varying approaches to conservation best practice.
- 4.21 As early as 1828, the buildings of Southampton Place were perhaps no longer in solely residential use. Robson's *Directory of London* reveals that in 1828, no. 14 was occupied by A Trail, a 'Writing Master in the New System'. By 1836, it was occupied by a surgeon and by 1843, a solicitor. Many of the buildings in Southampton Place at this time were occupied by solicitors. In 1853, solicitors Routh and Rowden occupied no. 14. Subsequent directories indicate that the practice had expanded to Routh, Rowden and Stacey by 1860 when

John Walker and Son, Auctioneer was established at no. 15. By 1881, no. 15 was occupied by George Carew and Henry Peale Bird, both solicitors, Walter Blackett, architect and the offices of the Latchingdon Brick Company.

- 4.22 By 1900, both nos. 14 and 15 Southampton Place were occupied by Routh, Stacey and Castle solicitors and the buildings were in use by the expanded practice until 1981 at the latest when it is indicated that another firm of solicitors.
- 4.23 The use of both buildings by the same firm ultimately had an impact on the layout of the building. The Goad Insurance Map of London (1888) shows the building as offices and at three and a half storeys. The half presumably relates to the single storey mansard roof which is indicated and the description does not include the basement.
- 4.24 By 1948, an amendment to the Goad Map (figure 12) indicates that the building was three storeys with two attics, an indication that in the intervening years, the mansard roof was adapted to provide an additional storey. Other buildings on the street have this arrangement but not all and this highlights that the double-height mansard was not an original feature (figure 13).

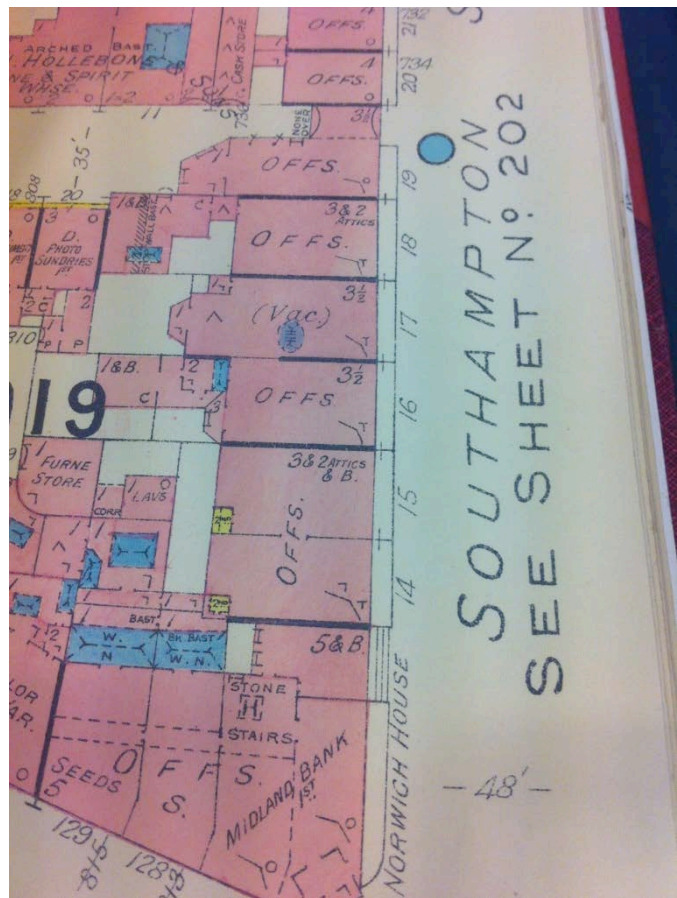


Figure 12: Extract from Goad's Insurance Map of London (1848)

- 4.25 The Goad extract also shows that nos. 14 and 15 were interconnected which might be expected when both buildings had a single user. It is also evident that the rear yard was partially open with some outbuildings constructed to the rear of the property by this time.
- 4.26 Therefore, either in the late 19th or early 20th century, no. 15 Southampton Place was altered to provide additional accommodation with lateral access to no. 14. It is likely that the interior of the buildings may have been redecorated and modified also at this time and that the windows were replaced throughout. A photograph of the 1940s (Figure 14) shows that all the windows to the main elevation were 1x1 sashes at this time. The dormers have 6x6 sashes. Interestingly, it also appears to show that the front door has been partially blocked and made to appear as a window complete with cill. The main door to the

solicitors' premises must have been at no. 14 Southampton Place. All the windows in this section of the terrace are shown as identical which may reflect a collective enhancement by a freeholder.



Figure 13: Varying roof designs on the eastern side of Southampton Place.



Figure 14: No. 15 Southampton Place, 1940s.

- 4.27 The next known period of the building's alteration was in the early 1970s. Applications made by TP Bennett for Hammerson, the then owners of the building, proposed a range of changes to nos. 14 and 15 as well as other buildings in the street. There are a number of photographs from this time taken by the GLC's Historic Buildings Division which may have been an effort to record the buildings before the extensive planned alterations to the building were executed (English Heritage Library and London Metropolitan Archive; limited reproduction rights).

- 4.28 The proposals effectively involved the ‘modernisation’ of the office accommodation with the provision of lifts to buildings in the terrace on the western side of Southampton Place, including nos. 14 and 15 (LB Camden planning refs HB182, 12965, N14/23/F/13775). The description of development was ‘Alterations to and restoration to Georgian standards as offices’ and ‘The erection of two lift towers including toilets and ground floor extensions, and details of the windows to the rear extension.’ These applications were approved in 1972.
- 4.29 The planning drawings (figures 14a-e) provide details of the interventions made. The lift tower was and is attached to the south-west corner of the building and ran its full height with a boiler room on its uppermost level. It necessitated the removal of windows, a large section of the back wall and involved modifications to the roof. The historic roof line can still be seen in the boiler room.
- 4.30 As well as a record of the rear extension, which left a light well between the original property and the new build at ground and basement levels, the plans show the bricking up of openings between nos. 14 and 15 at ground, second and third floors. The opening was located at the same point on each floor: in the south-west corner of the front room, breaking through the party wall beside no. 14’s chimney breast.
- 4.31 The drawings also record that partitions were removed at first and fourth floor level, new partitions inserted at second and third and that all fireplaces were removed from the second and third floors. The layout shown in the 1972 plans corresponds to the building’s current layout although the first floor room is now also partitioned to create two smaller areas.
- 4.32 It is probably that all the windows at this time were altered from 1x1 sashes to the 6x6 and 6x9 sash windows that now form part of the building. The current windows are not all entirely appropriately detailed although they are good quality reproductions. This work presumably formed part of the alterations to ‘Georgian standards.’

The current non-original door may have also been fixed at this time.

- 4.33 The building's subsequent planning history has been limited to relatively small changes such as a new opening between nos. 14 and 15 and its later blocking up and changes or retention of use applications.
- 4.34 As a result of its development history and use, no. 15 Southampton Place now has a rather careworn and approximate feel and character. Its principal elevation, although modified, does have a later 18th century architectural integrity but the interior only shows fragments of this. The original layout of the building is still legible and there is a good surviving 18th century cornice to ground, first and second floors. The building has retained its chimney breasts and also some 18th century joinery.
- 4.35 Elsewhere there are signs of a late 19th or early 20th century redecoration of the property. The dado applied to ground to second floors is likely to date to this time as are some of the cornice details on the third floor. The building's remaining fireplaces also date to this time.
- 4.36 The works of the early 1970s had a dramatic impact on the building by extending it and adding a lift tower to its rear. Clearly the conservation philosophy applied at the time - though it would not perhaps now - was that this was on balance acceptable when weighed against changes to the windows and the returning or continuation of the principle rooms on the ground, first and second floors to a later 18th century character and appearance.

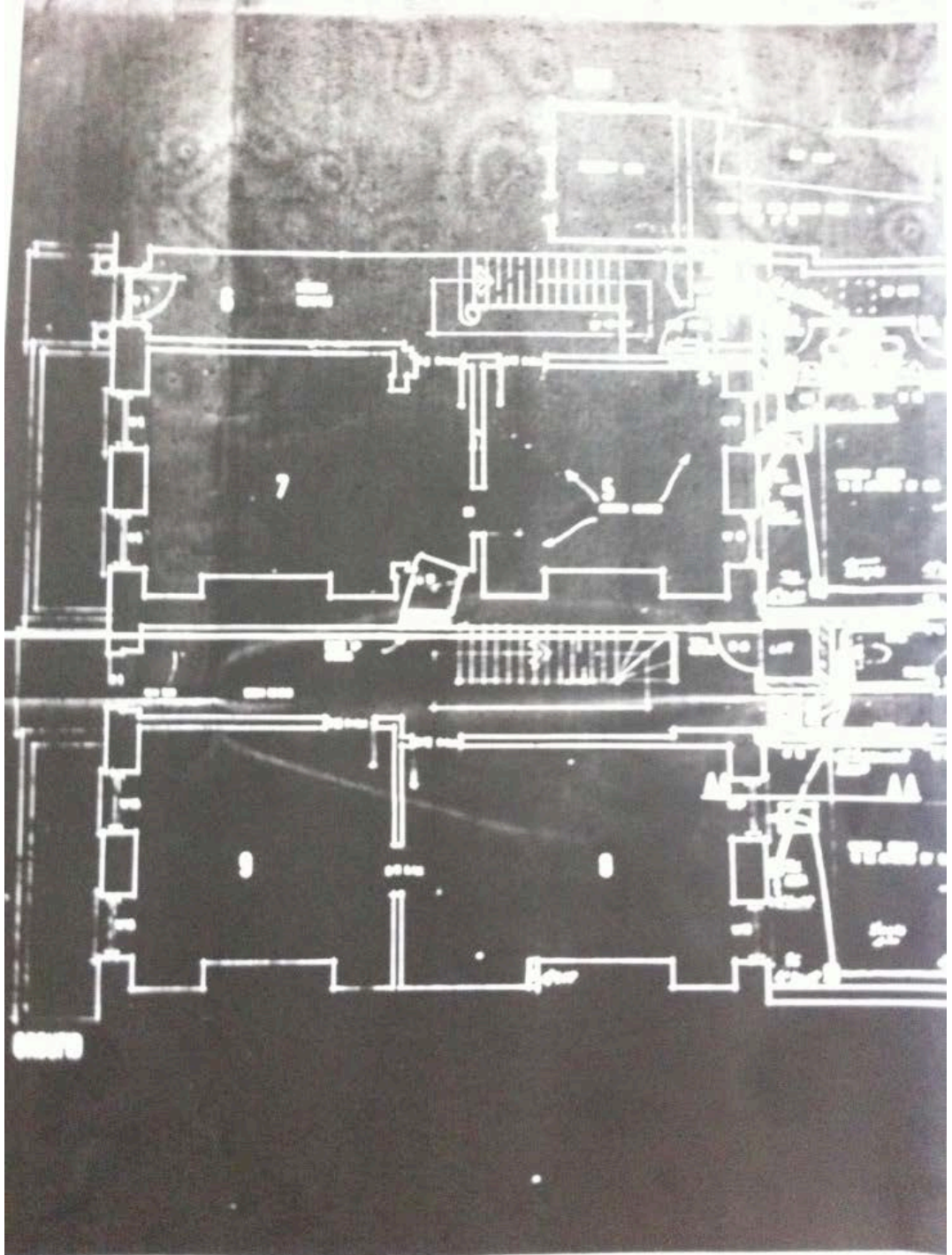


Figure 16a: Ground floors plans, 1972 for 14 and 15 Southampton Place (Southampton Place is on the left)

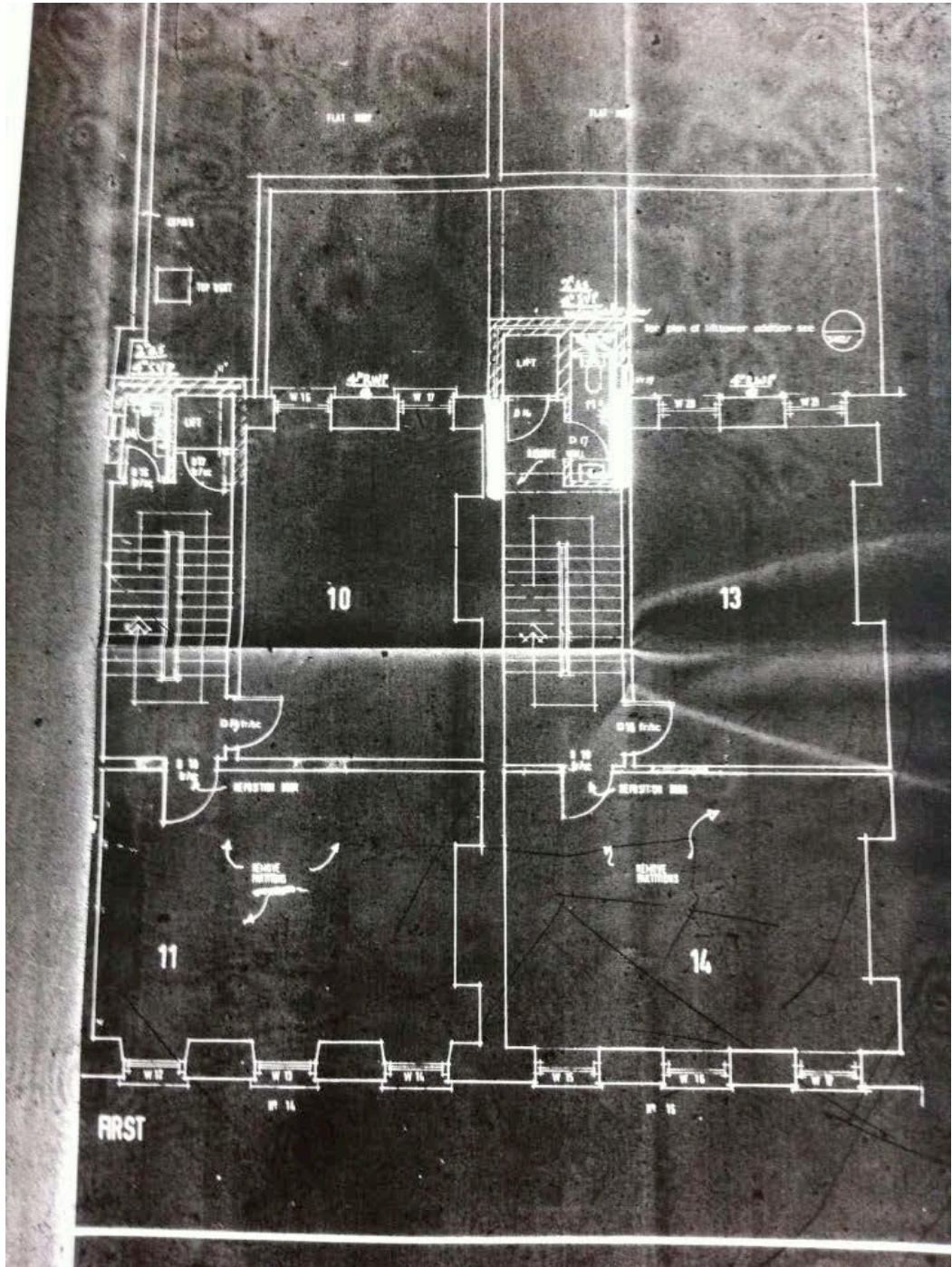


Figure 16a b: First floors plans, 1972 for 14 and 15 Southampton Place

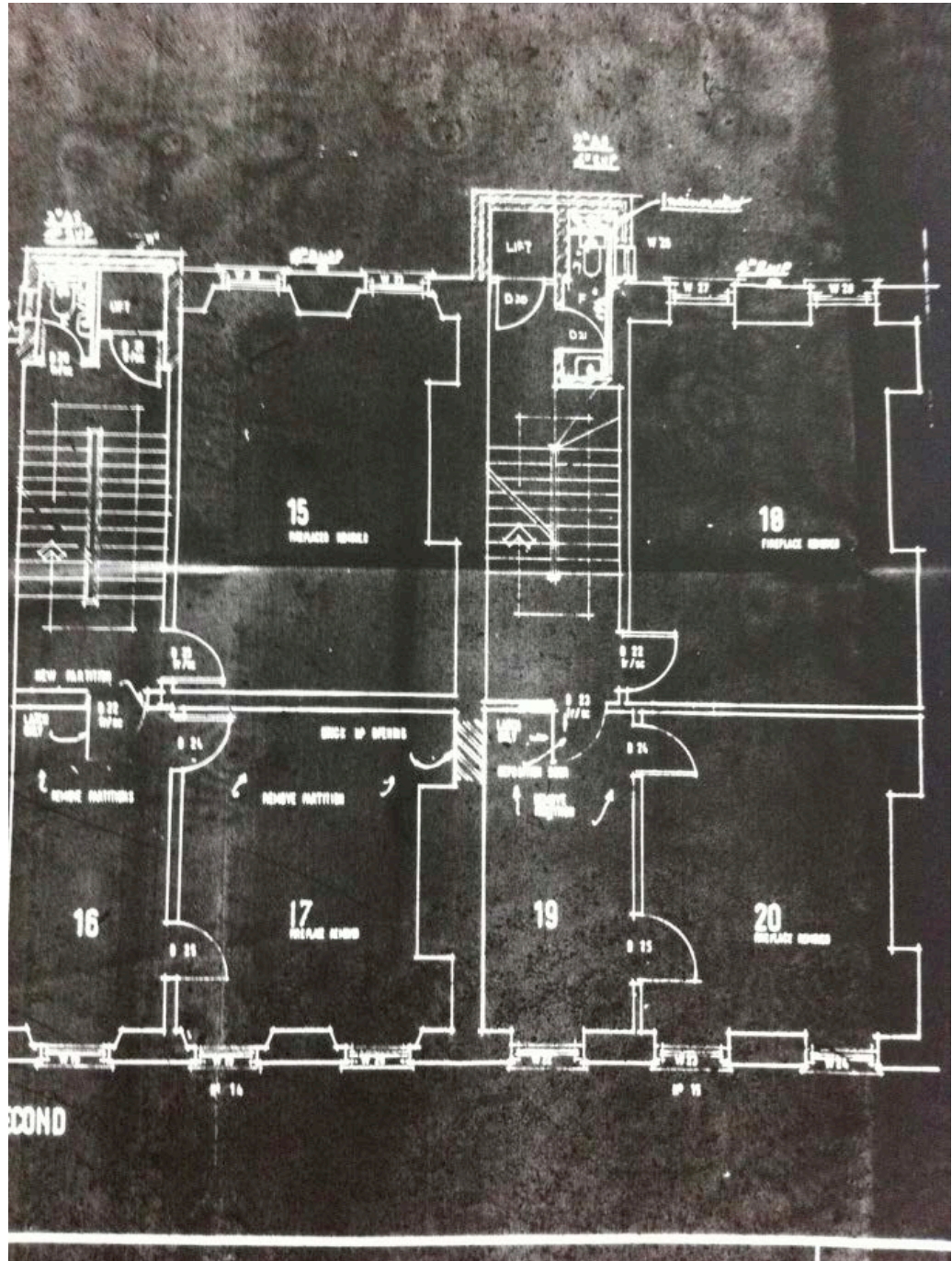


Figure 16c: Second floor plan, 1972

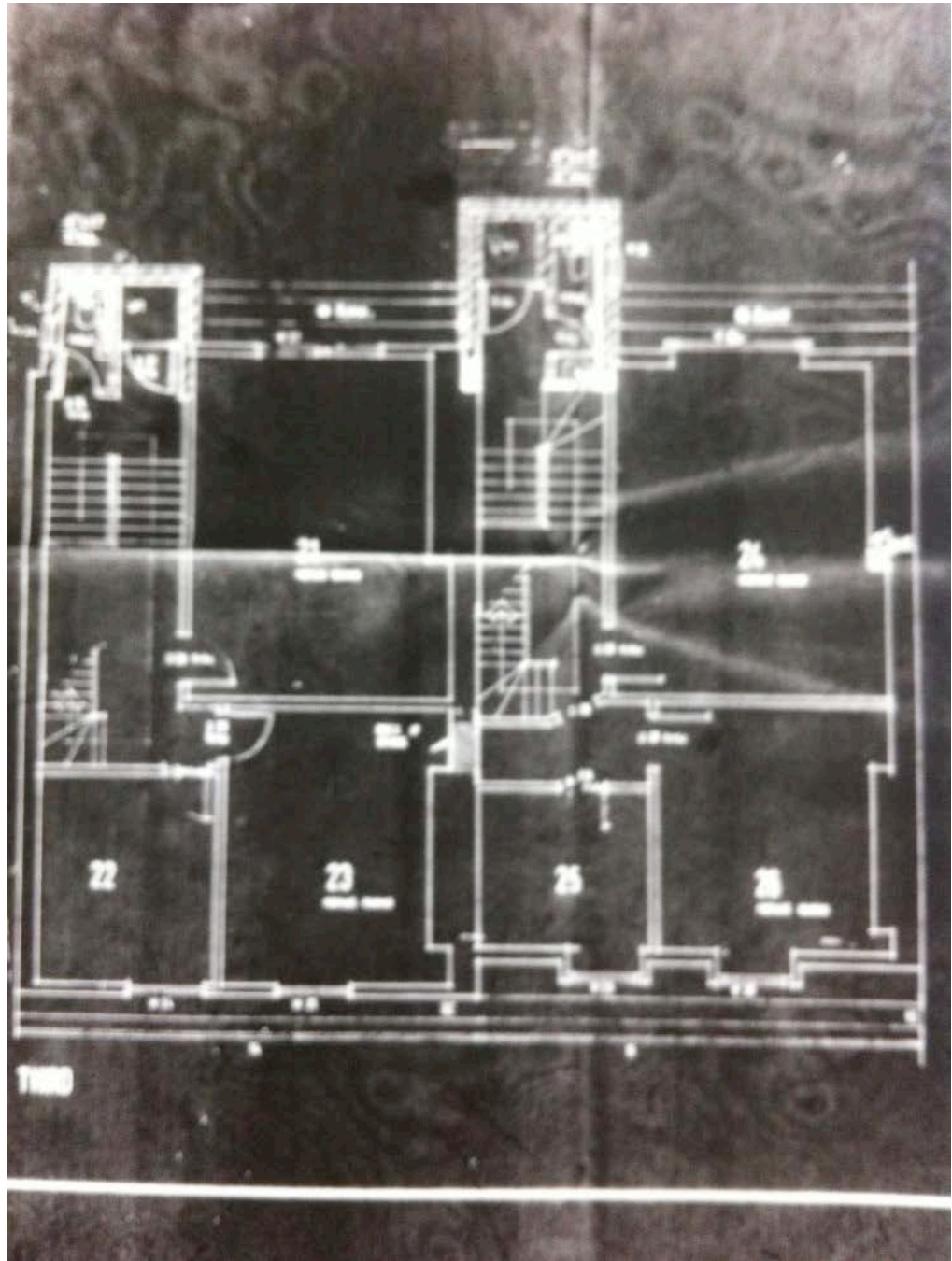


Figure 16c: Third floor plans, 1972

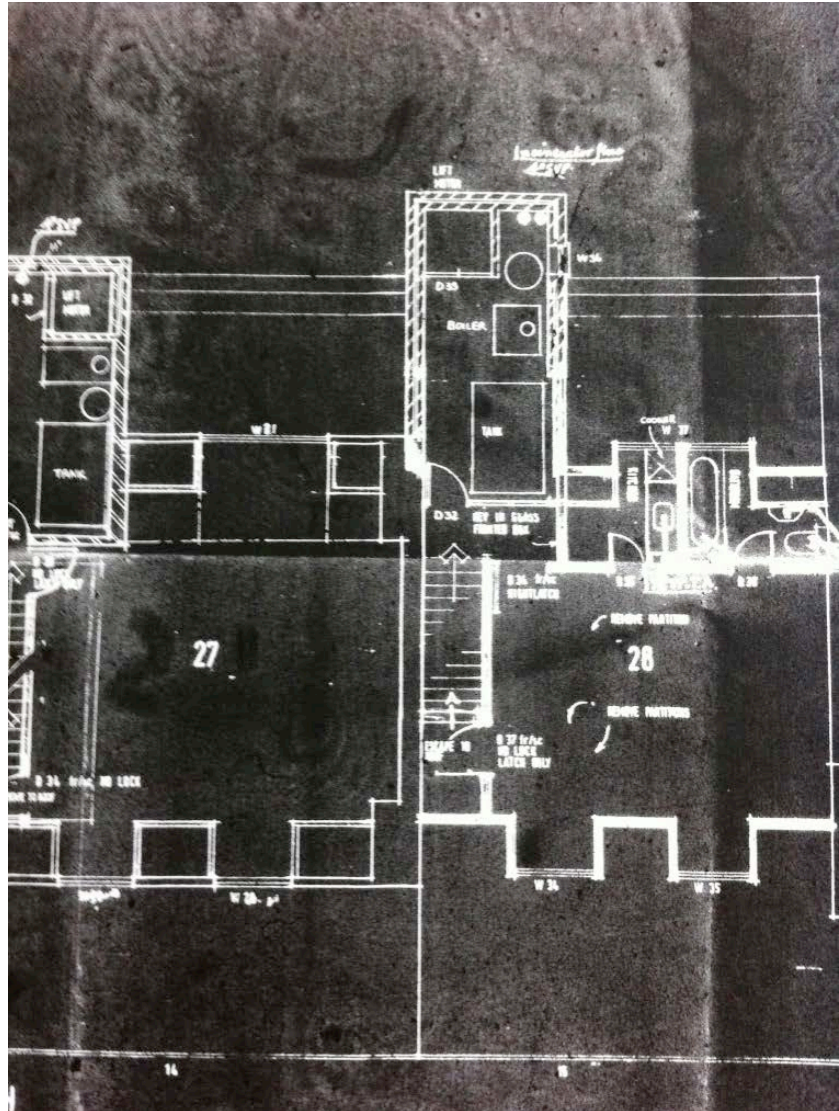


Figure 16e: Fourth floor plan, 1972.

The heritage significance of No. 15 Southampton Place

- 4.37 No. 15 Southampton Place is a grade II* listed building. This designation highlights that the building is architecturally and artistically of greater importance, particularly against comparable examples of later 18th century Georgian terraces. As an individual building, no. 15 is well proportioned and crafted and as part of a terrace, presents a unified and cohesive appearance that is emblematic of the Bloomsbury and wider London

townscape. It's Grade II* listing reflects not its internal condition now, but the condition it may have been internally when listed, the survival of its plan form, its historic significance in the development of Bloomsbury and the architectural quality of its elevation to the street.

- 4.38 No. 15 Southampton Place forms part of a fine Palladian terrace, most likely laid out by Henry Flitcroft. It formed part of a planned area of London that was influenced by the development of Covent Garden and through its various landowners or freeholders. In that, the building tells part of the story about the development of 17th and 18th century London and has a strong association with an architect of note and national importance. This historical and associational value gives additional weight to the building's significance. These values are expressed principally in the building's external architectural expression and appearance, its overall shape and form, and in its retention of an approximate Georgian plan.
- 4.39 The significance of the interior of the building as a high quality Georgian terraced house has been diminished through a number of interventions in the years since its construction. The plan form is legible beneath later partitioning and there is surviving cornicing which is of the same design as that in the image shown in figure 11. The window surrounds have been retained and elements of the staircase. There are no obvious windows remaining in the building. Inappropriate partitions and suspended ceilings have been introduced and generally, the building does not have the character or appearance of a Grade II* listed property.
- 4.40 There is some communal interest in the building in that it was home to a firm of solicitors for much of its life which was a sign of historic changes of use in the local area. This use left its mark on the building's fabric which although diminishing the importance of the building as a Georgian building of some importance, it does reflect its ability to evolve according to changing needs and requirements of its owners and users.

- 4.41 The greatest interest of the building is in its aesthetic qualities and appearance and certain remaining internal features which not only serve to illustrate the development of the local area but contribute significantly to the physical appearance and character of the street and to Bloomsbury as a whole.
- 4.42 15 Southampton Place therefore clearly retains evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value, though its aesthetic value has been reduced by the degree of internal alteration. The heritage significance of the building now is located in its external architectural expression and appearance, its overall shape and form, and in its retention of an approximate Georgian plan shape. The appearance of the building to Southampton Place remains intact and of high quality, though the rear elevations have been compromised by various interventions.

5 The proposed scheme

- 5.1 The following section briefly outlines the proposed scheme for 15 Southampton Place, which is illustrated in the drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Brimelow McSweeney Architects.

The need for the scheme

- 5.2 15 Southampton Place has experienced a long process of change, and the original domestic nature of the building (as a single house) has been lost. In purely heritage terms – apart from any commercial imperatives - the building needs a sustainable future and a programme of building work to repurpose and repair the building. The building requires a new use that will sustain it economically and physically for another century, and an architectural proposal that looks at the building as a whole.

The nature of proposed scheme

- 5.3 The proposed scheme for 15 Southampton Place seeks to achieve this by returning the listed building to residential use. Apartments are proposed, which will be inserted into the plan, working with the underlying grain of the building. Service spaces are clustered around the spine wall, placing rooms to the back and front of the building, as would be expected.
- 5.4 The proposed scheme will give the listed building a sustainable future in a use close to its original use, and does so while preserving the key elements of its heritage significance. The unattractive extension to the rear is replaced, and the first floor front room is recreated as one space. The insertion of service spaces occurs to the rear of the spine wall, in the secondary rooms of the plan. In overall terms the proposal will secure and enhance the listed building by repairing its fabric and removing later detrimental works.

- 5.5 The proposals allow for the creation of six residential units. There are two on the ground floor and one that occupies both the third and fourth floors. Overall, the general principle underpinning the proposals is to work with the original plan of the building and its remaining historic features. Partitions in the principal front rooms of the first and second floors will be removed to reintroduce some of the original character of these spaces.
- 5.6 Where new partitions are necessary in order to make the building useable for multiple residential purposes, these are located in the rear rooms with new waste and servicing provision either housed in the existing chimneys or sensitively located either abutting the chimney breasts or in the corner of the room. The Design & Access Statement sets out the careful option appraisal regarding service routing that was undertaken, and the proposed works represent the optimum balance between what is required for practical reasons and the preservation of the internal volumetric character of the listed building.
- 5.7 Existing cornices will be preserved within the service riser with a new matching cornice running along the enclosure. The new partitioning, to provide necessary bathrooms, will be designed to appear as new interventions and will not be full height so that the original appearance of the room can be perceived and understood. A shadow gap will emphasise the inserted nature of the bathroom partition. The exception to this is on the upper floors, where the floor to ceiling height doesn't permit this approach. Here, on floors of lower heritage significance in the traditional hierarchy of Georgian houses, the partitions will be full height, and a matching cornices run along the new ceiling junction.
- 5.8 Windows to Southampton Street are to be retained and refurbished with secondary glazing inserted internally. Windows to the rear and altered elevation are to be double glazed replica timber windows, using a suitably minimal double-glazing system that will not significantly alter the appearance of the rear elevation, and will assist

in achieving the better thermal performance of the listed building, and thus help it contribute to climate change mitigation. The scheme acknowledges the greater heritage significance of the front elevation by using secondary glazing in that location.

- 5.9 Other interventions in the rear elevation will be of minimal effect. A new door will be introduced to the rear extension, but within the lightwell and in a style similar to the surrounding windows and inserted within the existing aperture of the window. The building will appear unaltered when seen from the open space to the rear with only the insertion of one window in the return side wall at fourth floor - set behind the parapet line – being the only meaningful change, and this having very little visual impact.
- 5.10 The application for listed building consent is accompanied by a series of large-scale details showing the respectful and historically accurate approach to the restoration of the listed building. These drawings show in detail how services will be inserted carefully alongside the chimney breasts in the rear rooms. It makes clear the rationale for the size and proportions of the service riser, with services positioned to avoid damaging the cornices that will be retained – pipe work will pass outside the cornice zone. New partitions will be scribed around existing features such as dado rails – a long-established approach. Traditional materials will be used throughout. Joinery and plasterwork will be either retained and repaired, or replaced to match or where missing entirely, a style appropriate to the age of the building will be used.

Conclusion

- 5.11 The proposed scheme will give the listed building a sustainable future in a use close to its original use, and does so while preserving the key elements of its heritage significance. The appearance of the listed building to Southampton Place will remain unaltered. The unattractive ground floor extension to the rear is replaced,

and the first floor front room is recreated as one space. The insertion of service spaces occurs to the rear of the spine wall, in the secondary rooms of the plan. In overall terms the proposal will secure and enhance the listed building by repairing its fabric and removing later detrimental works. The scheme balances necessary alteration and conversion with works to mitigate the effects of conversion, as shown in the detailed drawings.

6 The policy context

- 6.1 This section of the report briefly sets out the range of national and local policy and guidance relevant to the consideration of change in the historic built environment.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.2 The legislation governing listed buildings and conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 6.3 On Tuesday 27 March 2012, the Government published the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which replaces Planning Policy Statement 5: 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (PPS5) with immediate effect.
- 6.4 Section 12 of the NPPF deals with 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'. It says at Paragraph 126 that 'Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment', and that
- 'In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:*
- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
 - *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
 - *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;*
 - *and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place'.*
- 6.5 The NPPF says at Paragraph 128 that:
- In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution*

made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

- 6.6 A detailed description and analysis of the heritage significance of 15 Southampton Place is provided earlier in this report.
- 6.7 The NPPF also requires local planning authorities to 'identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal'.
- 6.8 At Paragraph 131, the NPPF says that:
- 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.*
- 6.9 Paragraph 132 advises local planning authorities that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting'.

6.10 The NPPF says at Paragraph 133 ‘Good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning.’ Paragraph 133 says:

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- *the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- *no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- *conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- *the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

6.11 Paragraph 134 says that ‘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.

6.12 Further advice within Section 12 of the NPPF urges local planning authorities to take into account the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset when determining the application. It says that ‘In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.

6.13 Paragraph 137 of the NPPF advises local planning authorities to ‘look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably’.

6.14 Paragraph 138 says that:

Not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

6.15 The NPPF incorporates many of the essential concepts in Planning Policy Statement 5 ‘Planning for the Historic Environment’. PPS5 was accompanied by a ‘Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide’, published by English Heritage ‘to help practitioners implement the policy, including the legislative requirements that underpin it’. The ‘Guide’ gives, at Paragraph 79, a number of ‘potential heritage benefits that could weigh in favour of a proposed scheme’ in addition to guidance on ‘weighing-up’ proposals in Paragraphs 76 to 78. These are that:

- 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.

6.16 Paragraph 111 of the Guide sets out the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that local planning authorities when making decisions must 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses' and 'pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance' of a conservation area.

Camden Council's Local Development Framework

6.17 Camden Council adopted its Core Strategy and Development Policies on 8 November 2010. Core Strategy Policy CS14 deals with 'Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage' and says:

'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;

e) protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites inside and outside the borough and protecting important local views'.

6.18 The commentary to the policy says:

'Our overall strategy is to sustainably manage growth in Camden so it meets our needs for homes, jobs and services in a way that conserves and enhances the features that make the borough such an attractive place to live, work and visit. Policy CS14 plays a key part in achieving this by setting out our approach to conserving and, where possible, enhancing our heritage and valued places, and to ensuring that development is of the highest standard and reflects, and where possible improves, its local area'

6.19 It goes on to say

'Development schemes should improve the quality of buildings, landscaping and the street environment and, through this, improve the experience of the borough for residents and visitors'

6.20 Regarding Camden's heritage, the Core Strategy refers to Policy DP25 in Camden Development Policies as providing more detailed guidance on the Council's approach to protecting and enriching the range of features that make up the built heritage of the borough

6.21 Policy DP25 deals with 'Conserving Camden's heritage', and is as follows:

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.*

Listed buildings

To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- e) prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;*
- f) only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building; and*
- g) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.*

Archaeology

The Council will protect remains of archaeological importance by ensuring acceptable measures are taken to preserve them and their setting, including physical preservation, where appropriate.

Other heritage assets

The Council will seek to protect other heritage assets including Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and London Squares.

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area conservation area appraisal

- 6.22 The current Bloomsbury Conservation Area conservation area appraisal was adopted in April 2011. 15 Southampton Place is located in Sub Area 6 of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

7 The effect of the proposals

- 7.1 This section sets out the effect of the proposed scheme outlined in section 5 above on 15 Southampton Place, a listed building and designated heritage asset. It takes into account the significance of the heritage asset as set out in section 4 and the policy considerations outlined in section 6.

The effect of the proposals on Nos. 15 Southampton Place

- 7.2 The building's greatest interest and significance lies in its Southampton Place elevation, the rear elevation has been too altered to hold any real interest, a still legible plan and layout and in its remaining 18th century features. These elements would not be harmed by the proposals. The removal of partitioning from the principal rooms at the front of the building would enhance the building and this is a benefit of the scheme.
- 7.3 A degree of partitioning is provided to the rear room of the ground to third floors in order to introduce bathrooms into the layout. While this does have an impact on these spaces, the partitioning will not be full height and ground and first floors, and will be detailed so as to complement the features of the room. This reduces the harm caused as the significance of these areas, in terms of the original plan and in the 18th century historic fabric, would remain obvious and is therefore undiminished. If the proposed accommodation was to have a different layout to avoid partitioning of this kind, it would not be possible to provide a unit to each floor and flats would be split between levels. This would involve the complication of secondary staircases for access or the reconfiguration of the main stairwell both of which would have a more negative and harmful impact on the special interest of the building.

- 7.4 The proposals work with the underlying plan and grain of the building rather than imposing a new plan upon it. There is no removal of historic fabric and therefore in theory, any proposed changes are reversible at any point in the future. Although it is considered that the partitioning proposals represent a neutral change in the overall package of works proposed, if it were perceived that this element of the scheme did cause harm, then the proposals should be judged against policies of the NPPF.
- 7.5 Only paragraph 134 of the NPPF would be relevant here. This states that ‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.’ Any perceived harm would be outweighed by the positive measures of the proposals including generally upgrading the building’s appearance, removing later, less sensitive interventions, reinstating elements of the original plan in key rooms and in returning the building to its original use. These aspects of the proposals enhance the listed building and its significance and therefore bring about wider benefits.
- 7.6 Camden’s listed building policy states that the council will only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building. As set out in section 5 above and in the preceding paragraphs, it is considered that while the proposals represent a change to the building, the special interest or significance that it holds is undiminished by the proposals. The original layout and plan of the rear rooms and their historic features will continue to be legible.
- 7.7 Overall, the proposed scheme represents a balanced approach to the designated heritage asset, taking into account the significance of no. 15 Southampton Street and balancing this with reintroducing a residential use to the building. Obviously to facilitate this use, changes will be made to the property but these are considered to be

on balance sensitive, appropriate and on balance,
acceptable.

8 Compliance with policy and guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 8.1 This report has provided a detailed description and analysis of the significance of 15 Southampton Place and its heritage context, as required by Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 8.2 In respect of Paragraph 131 of the NPPF, the revised scheme can certainly be described as ‘sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation’. It secures the ‘positive contribution’ that 15 Southampton Place makes to the conservation area and the setting of other listed buildings, and the overall scheme contributes to sustainable communities by helping to reinvigorate a listed building, and in turn enhancing the economic vitality of the conservation area and this part of Camden.
- 8.3 The proposed development complies with Paragraph 133 of the NPPF. It does not lead to ‘substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset’. It also complies with Paragraph 134 for the reasons given in detail earlier. We do not believe that the scheme involves any ‘less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset’, but any such ‘less than substantial harm’ that can be ascribed to the scheme is greatly outweighed by the benefits generated by the scheme in terms of intrinsic quality and providing the building with a future – this is addressed in detail in Section 7.
- 8.4 The scheme very definitely strikes the balance suggested by Paragraph 138 of the NPPF – it intervenes in 15 Southampton Place in a manner commensurate to its relatively low internal significance as a listed building, its contribution to the conservation area and its contribution to the setting of other listed buildings. This balance of intervention versus significance is described in detail earlier.

- 8.5 The scheme also does the relevant things that the 'Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide' urges in its Paragraph 79. For the reasons explained earlier, the proposed development 'makes a positive contribution to economic vitality and sustainable communities', and 'is an appropriate design for its context and makes' – indirectly by enhancing the broader permitted scheme – 'a positive contribution to the appearance, character, quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment'.

Camden's Local Development Framework

- 8.6 In satisfying the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, the proposed scheme also complies with Camden's local policies. It will undoubtedly 'respect local context and character' and 'preserv[e] and enhance[e] Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings', as required by Core Strategy Policy CS14.
- 8.7 In respect of Policy DP25, the scheme, as explained earlier, is one that 'preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the [Bloomsbury Conservation Area]' and involves 'alterations and extensions to a listed building where... this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building'. No harm is caused to the setting of any other listed building.
- 8.8 For these reasons, and those given earlier, the proposed development is consistent with Camden's Local Development Framework policies regarding works to listed buildings and the setting of listed buildings, and thus complies with Policy DP25

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 No. 15 Southampton Place was listed in 1951 as a building of significant architectural and historic interest. Today, the building has a careworn feel and it could benefit from varying degrees of enhancement. There is little to suggest a Flitcroft or associate interior and the interior is in fact relatively very plain, having been modified and altered during the early 20th century and 1970s.
- 9.2 The proposed changes to the building do not involve the loss of historic fabric or impose a radical overhauling of the interior of the building. The approach to the proposed layout of accommodation is a sensitive approach and the best workable solution in this case. The building will be returned close to the use that was originally intended by the architect and landowner and one that historically characterised the early development of Bloomsbury.

Appendix A: List description

CAMDEN

TQ3081NW SOUTHAMPTON PLACE 798-1/100/1472 (West side)
24/10/51 Nos.14-22 (Consecutive) and attached railings

GV II*

Terrace of 9 houses. c1758-63. Probably under the direction of Henry Flitcroft. Nos 19, 20 & 21 altered mid C19. No.22 mid C18 with C19 alterations. Darkened multi-colour stock brick with a stone band at 1st floor level. Tiled mansard roofs with dormers. 3 storeys, attics and basements. 3 windows each. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sash windows. Bracketed cornice below parapets. Nos 14-18: Nos 14, 15 and 16 with wooden doorcases with engaged Doric columns carrying entablature and pediment. No.15 with triglyphs and dentil open pediment. Nos 17 and 18 with round-arched doorways with patterned fanlights, sidelights and panelled doors. No.16 with original lead rainwater head, with lion mask, and pipe. INTERIORS: not inspected but noted to retain good staircases, fireplaces and panelling, those of Nos 14, 15 and 17 being especially fine. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with torch flambe finials to areas, No.17 with lamp-bracket overthrow. No.19: mid C19 stucco front with rusticated ground floor and archway to Barter Street. Facade flanked by rusticated Ionic pilasters rising through 1st and 2nd floors carrying entablature with bracketed cornice and balustraded parapet. Original wooden C18 doorcase with attached Doric columns carrying entablature with triglyphs, mutule pediment and panelled reveals. Architraved sash windows with keystones; 1st floor with pulvinated frieze and dentilled, pedimented cornice. Balustraded balconies. INTERIOR: not inspected but noted to retain staircase with turned balusters and twin column newels and good C18 fireplace. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached C19 cast-iron railings to areas. Nos 20 & 21: altered in C19. Yellow stock brick with stucco ground floor. 4 storeys, attics and basements. 3 windows each. Round-arched ground and 1st floor openings with

moulded impost bands and stucco archivolt to ground floor. Stone balcony with heavy corbels and cast-iron balcony at 1st floor level. Recessed sash windows. Stucco cornices at 3rd floor level. Parapet with moulded stucco coping. INTERIOR: not inspected but noted to retain a simple staircase with square balusters. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with spearhead finials to areas.

No.22: mid C18, altered in C19. Multi-coloured stock brick and stucco ground floor with band above. 4 storeys, attic and basement. 3 windows. Wooden doorcase with enriched pilasters carrying mutule cornice; panelled reveals, fanlight and panelled door. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sash windows, the centre window of 1st floor in arched recess. Parapet. INTERIOR: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas. HISTORICAL NOTE: No.17 was the home of Henry Addington (Prime Minister 1801) and Cardinal Newman (GLC plaque).

Listing NGR: TQ3038881578

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