

35 GREAT JAMES STREET

WC1N 3HB

15030

Design & Access Statement
July 2015



MAREK WOJCIECHOWSKI ARCHITECTS
LONDON

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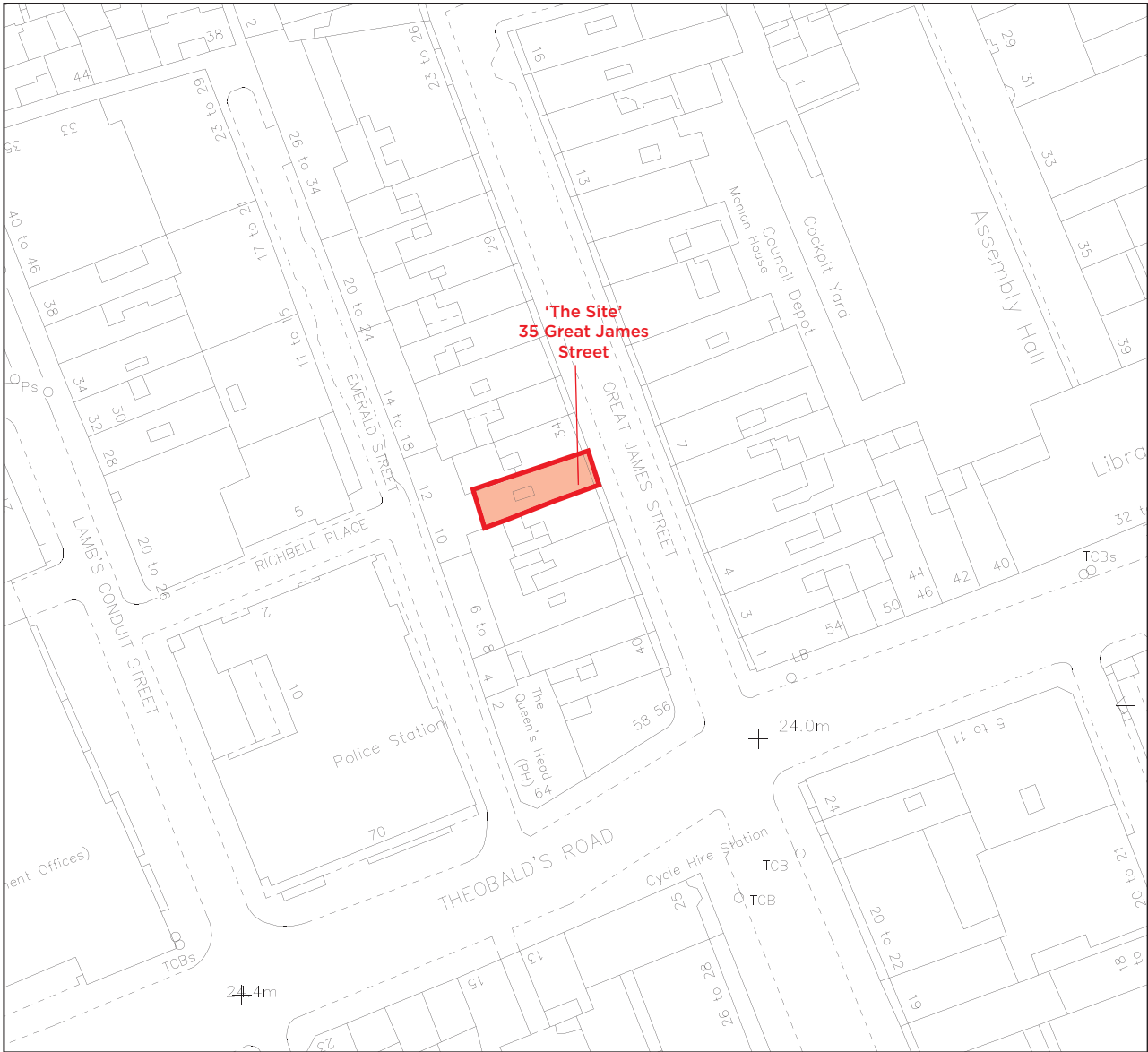
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SECTION ONE:
INTRODUCTION





Site Location Plan
Approx. 1:1000 @ A3



Great James Street and Surroundings
Aerial View 01 (Site outlined in red)



Great James Street and Surroundings
Aerial View 02 (Site outlined in red)

1.0 PROJECT INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Marek Wojciechowski Architects have been instructed to prepare full planning & Listed building application for the property 35 Great James Street, WC1N 3HB. The site consists of a 5-storey property, arranged over lower ground to third floor levels, and is Grade II* listed. The property is currently vacant, but was last used as offices (B1 use).

1.2 This application relates to the proposed change of use and refurbishment of the property from B1 office use to C3 residential use, to provide a single family dwelling.

1.3 Works related to the above change of use are outlined in the plans in section 2.0 and 3.0 of this report, and include (but are not limited to):

- Proposed change of use from B1 office to C3 residential;
- Proposed 4 person lift
- Demolition and replacement of ground floor extension roof and corresponding roof lights to form terrace at first floor level
- Lowering of front and rear vaults
- Excavation of the rear lower ground floor to create family room;
- Demolition of non original built in joinery
- Leveling of non-original raised floor at first floor level;
- Extension of rear closet wing to match adjacent property;
- Demolition of non-original roof to reinstate pitch on the front Facade and roof terrace to the rear of the site
- Works to refurbish the historic front façade.

1.4 This document provides an explanation of the proposed scheme, evaluated against the history of the building and its site surroundings, as well as all local and national planning policy.





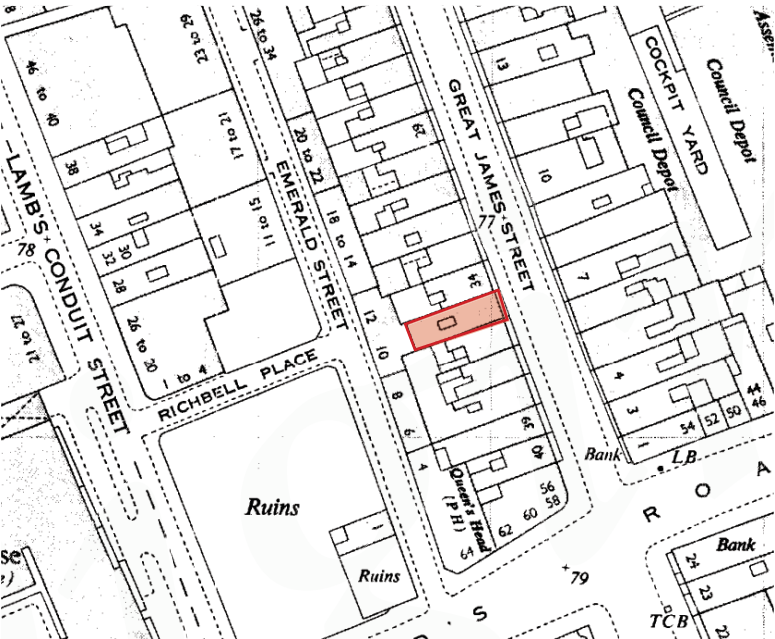
1870s
Ordnance Survey Map
35 Great James Street
& Surroundings
(Approx. site outlined in red)



1890s
Ordnance Survey Map
35 Great James Street
& Surroundings
(Approx. site outlined in red)



1930s
Ordnance Survey Map
35 Great James Street
& Surroundings
(Approx. site outlined in red)



1950s
Ordnance Survey Map
35 Great James Street
& Surroundings
(Approx. site outlined in red)

2.0 SITE HISTORY & CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT

2.1 The application property was Grade II* listed in October 1957 along with nos. 26-37 and 39-40 consecutively, and is described by English Heritage in the following statement:

"14 terraced houses. 1720-24. For J Metcalfe. Brown brick, upper storeys with some refacing in multi-coloured, yellow (Nos 28, 34 & 40) and brown stock brick (1st floor and above of No.30). 4 storeys and basements. 3 windows each. Nos 27-38 and 40, good wood architraved doorcases with enriched, carved brackets carrying hoods with panelled soffits, most with patterned fanlights and panelled doors. No.27, C20 hood with shaped brackets; No.39, architraved doorcase with pilasters, plain cornice, radial fanlight and panelled door. Red segmental arches and dressings to flush framed windows, No.35 upper storeys with glazing bars. Some frames reeded with roundels. Parapets. Some original lead rainwater heads with lion masks. INTERIORS: mostly having fine panelling. Staircases mostly with twisted balusters, column newels and carved brackets to treads. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn or torch flambe finials to areas."

2.2 A full historic building assessment ('Statement of Significance') has been undertaken by The Architectural History Practice, and has been appended to this application. This report has influenced the proposals outlined in sections 2.0 and 3.0 of this document.

2.3 The property is situated within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, a famed example of formal town planning with a predomination of terraced townhouses. The LBC Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (April 2011), notes that whilst the area is dominated by office use, "More recently there has been a trend towards converting townhouses in office use back to single family residential use, typically in streets such as Great James Street and Doughty Street." (p.75)

2.3 With this historic context in mind, the proposals set out in this planning application look to respect and enhance the quality and heritage of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and of the listed building, and returning it to its original residential use.

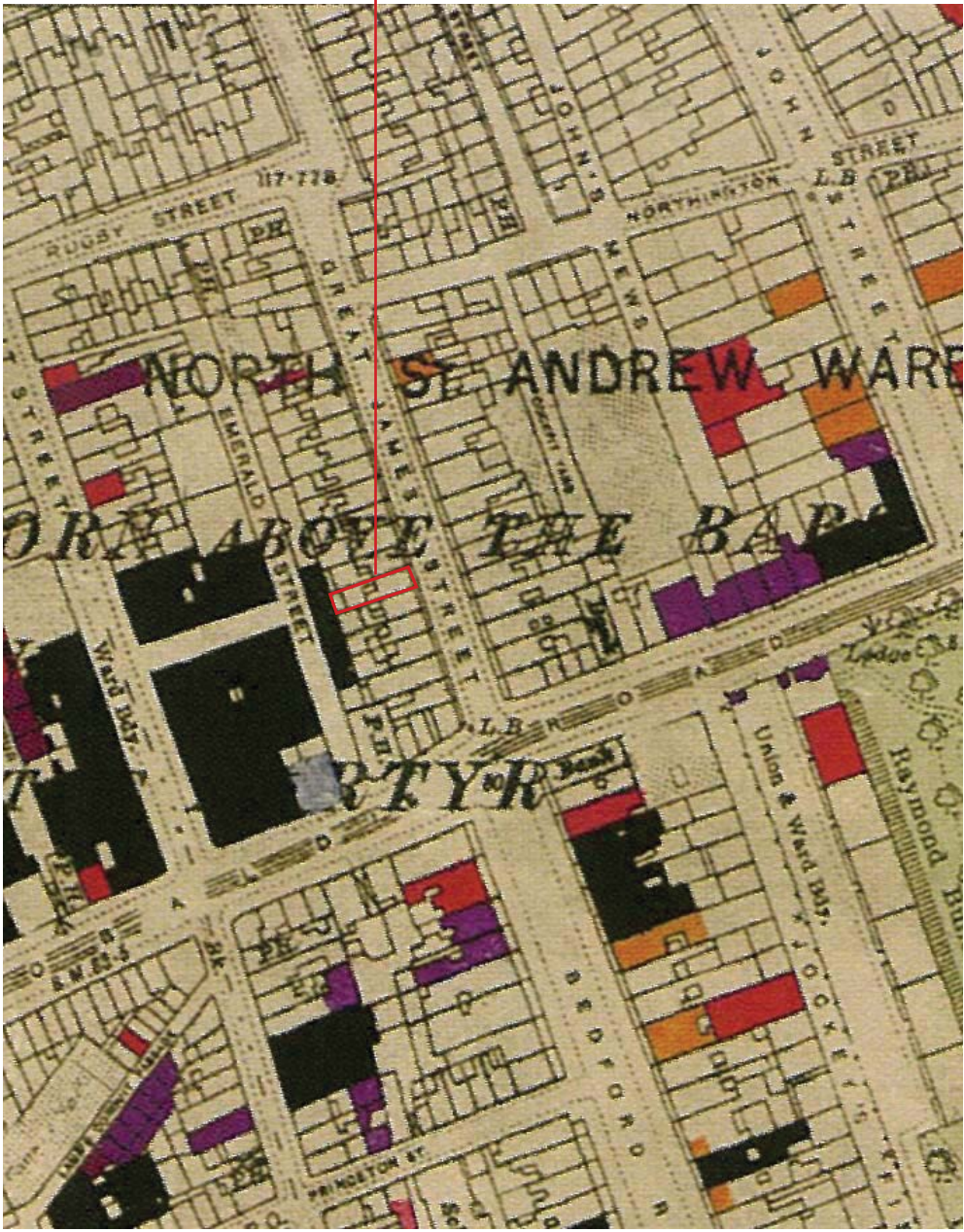


Refer to image shown to the right for enlarged map

'The Site'
35 Great James Street



Bomb Damage - Holborn Area



Bomb Damage - Great James Street

3.0 BOMB DAMAGE

3.1 As the bomb damage map below shows, the application property remained intact after WWII, however the mews buildings fronting Emerald Street and the majority of Lambs Conduit were left damaged beyond repair, so are likely to have been rebuilt.

Key



V1 flying bomb



V2 long range rocket

Orange
General Blast Damage - not structural

Light Red
Seriously Damaged but repairable at cost

Dark Red
Seriously Damaged, doubtful if repairable

Purple
Damaged beyond repair

Black
Total destruction





1972

Historic Photograph
View of the rear of the property
(prior to 1980s rebuilt closet wing)



2015

Current Photograph
View of the rear of the property
(showing 1980s extended
closet wing)





35 Great James Street - Street View



View out to rear from roof Level



View of non-original rear closet wing



View of closet wing roof



Front lightwell

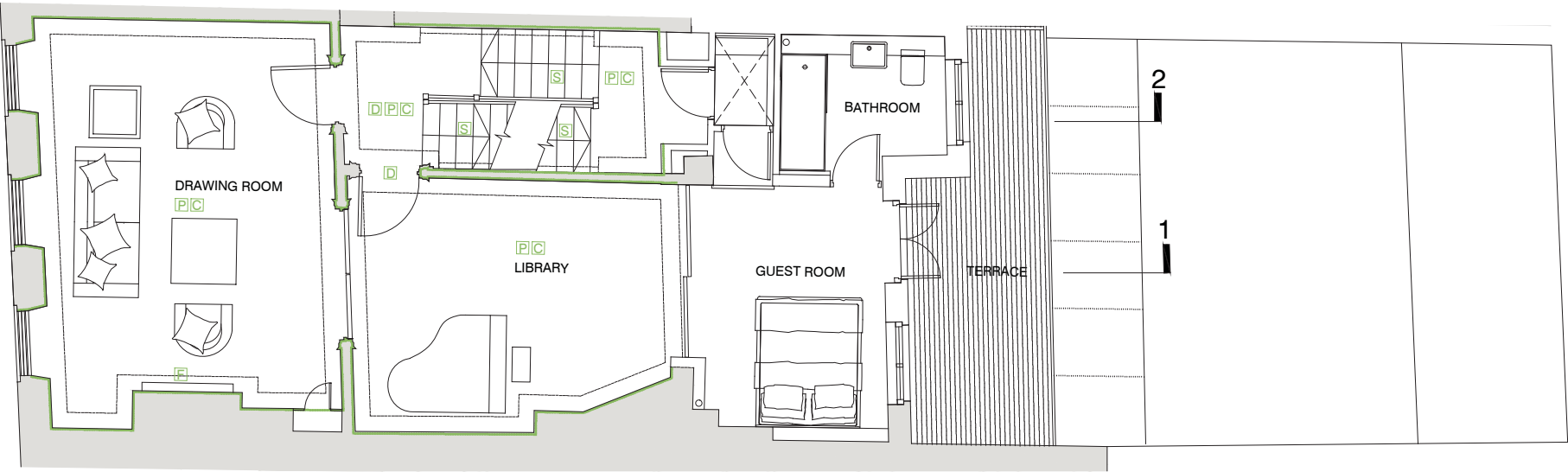


Ground Floor Lightwell & Roof light

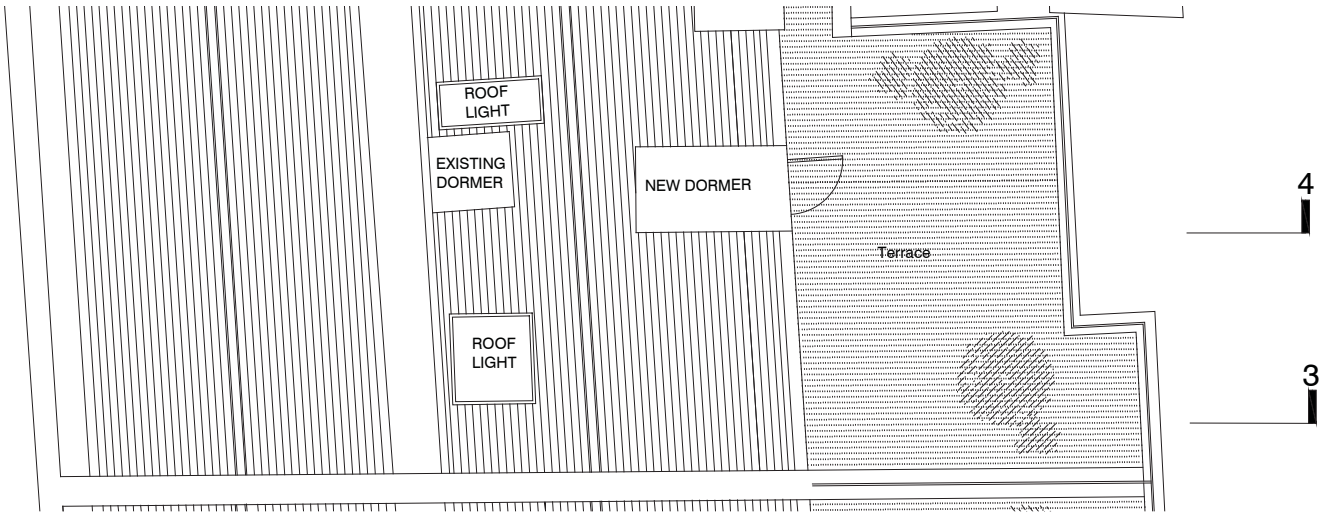


First floor fine room





Consented First Floor Plan
14 Great James Street
Consented Drawings ref: 2013/3114/P



Consented Roof Plan & Terrace
15 Great James Street
Consented Drawings ref: 2013/3117/P

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The only planning history for 35 Great James Street is listed below :

35 Great James Street; WC1N 3HB.
28 Jan 1980 (HB2204R)
Consent for the rebuild and extension at rear to provide new lavatories. Enclosure of basement light well.

3.2 Consents have been granted in recent years for change of use from office (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) and extensions to a number of properties along Great James Street, with examples as follows:

36 Great James Street (Neighbouring property)
14 March 2005 (ref 2005/0265/P)
Consent for change of use from office (Class B1) and residential use (Class C3) to a single family dwelling house (Class C3), together with associated works including the erection of a 2 storey rear extension, creation of new stairs in front area and basement opening and alterations to existing front railings.

34 Great James Street (Neighbouring property)
26 Sept 2013 (ref 2013/4419/P)
Consent for change of use from offices (Class B1) at basement and ground floor level and 3x1 bed flats (Class C3) at first to third floor level, to a single dwelling house (Class C3), including replacement ground floor rear extension with first floor external terrace and associated works.

14 Great James Street
10 January 2014 (ref 2013/3114/P)
Consent for the change of use of existing office building (Class B1a) to single family dwelling (Class C3), to include the erection of a two-storey rear extension at lower ground and ground floor level with terraces at ground and first floor level following demolition of existing two storey extension, alterations to rear façade, and erection of dormer and terrace at rear roof level.

15 Great James Street
10 January 2014 (ref 2013/3117/P)
Consent for the change of use of existing office building (Class B1a) to single family dwelling (Class C3), to include the erection of a two-storey rear extension at lower ground and ground floor level with terraces at ground and first floor level following demolition of existing two storey extension, alterations to rear façade, and erection of dormer and terrace at rear roof level.

32 & 33 Great James Street; WC1N 3HB.
10 Oct 2014 (ref 2014/4168/P)
Consent for change of use office (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) use at ground and 1st floor levels of No.33 and 2nd and 3rd floor levels of No.32 (4 x 1 bed).

30 Great James Street; WC1N 3EY
10 July 2014 (ref 2014/1571/P)
Consent for change of use from office (B1a) to single family dwellinghouse (C3), erection of rear extension following demolition of existing extension and installation of rear glass balustrade at 1st floor level.

37 Great James Street; WC1N 3HB
24 July 2004 (ref 2004/0157/P)
Consent for change of use from office use (Class B1) to single dwelling house (Class C3).

3.3 Given the similarity of the above applications to the works proposed in this document, they suggest that returning the building to its original residential use, would be acceptable in principle. The policy implications of these proposed changes are considered on the next page.





Conservation Area Plan with site location

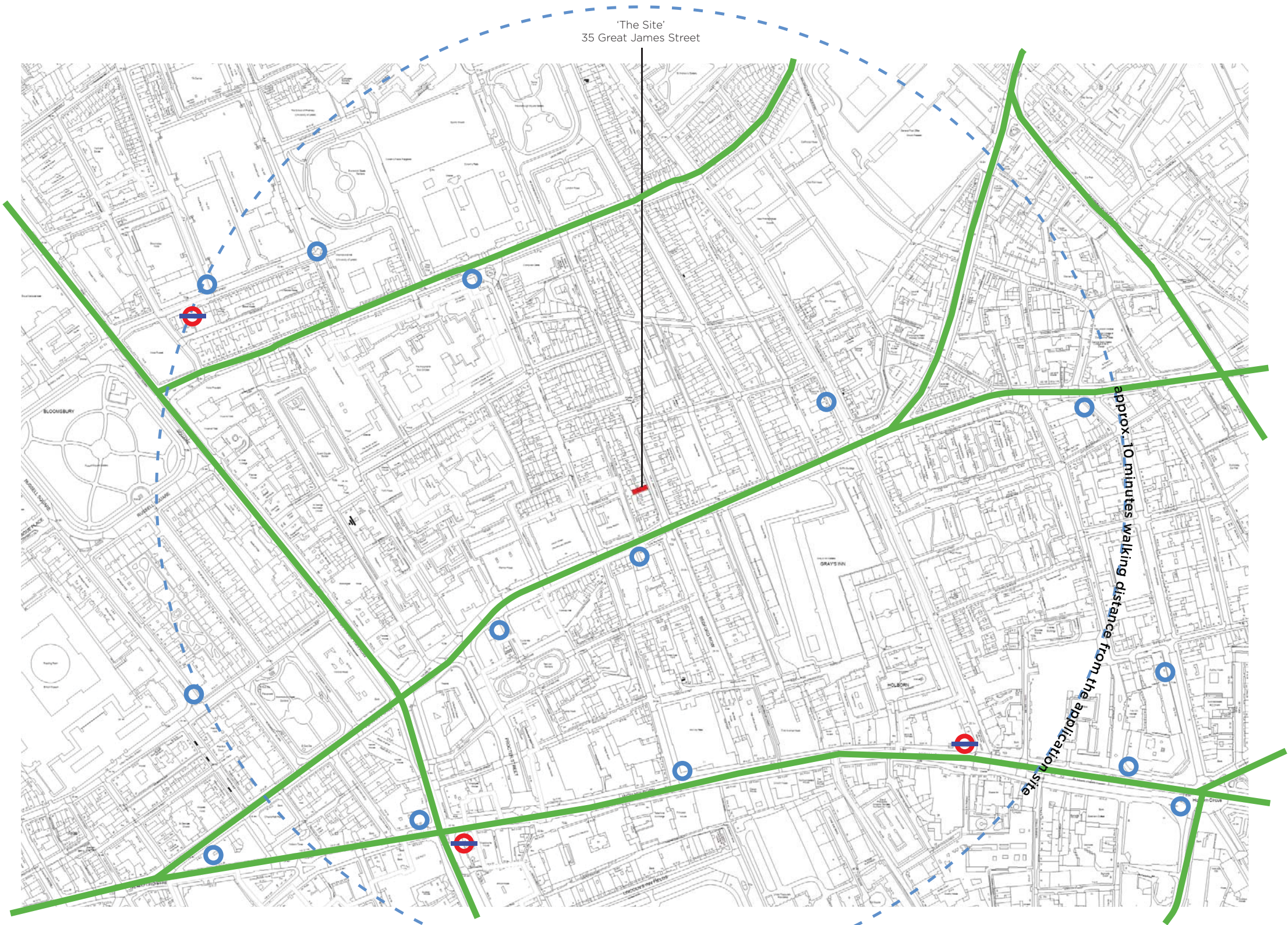
- Site Location
- Conservation Area
- Green Spaces in Area





7.0 CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

7.1 The property lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, a famed example of formal town planning with a predomination of terraced townhouses. It is, however on the periphery of this designated heritage asset, and its immediate surroundings reflect piecemeal redevelopment on a predominantly large scale.

7.2 With this historic research in mind, the proposals set out in this document look to respect and enhance the quality and heritage of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and the listed building, providing an exemplary residential development and improving the built environment.





- Conservation Area Plan with site location
-  Cycle Hire Stations
 -  Underground Station
 -  Mainline train station
 -  Major Bus route (8, 19, 25, 38, 55, 59, 68, 188, 242...)

8.0 TRANSPORT LINKS ASSESSMENT

8.1 Transport Links

The application site has excellent access to nearby transport links. The site has a PTAL rating of 6b (excellent).

The application site has excellent access to nearby transport links. It is noted in Camden's Core Strategy CS11 that as part of its approach to minimising congestion and addressing the environmental impacts of travel, the Council will look favourably on developments that minimise the provision for private car-parking and, in particular through car-free developments in the boroughs most accessible locations.

8.2 Underground/National Rail

Within 8 minutes walking distance is Chancery Lane underground station which provide access to the Central Line. Within 10 minute walking distance is Russel Square Station, which opens up connections to the Piccadilly underground line. Also Euston & Kings cross are located North of the site and opens connection to National Railway and airport trains

8.3 Bus

Just 2 mins walk from the site is a major bus route which connects the City of London with Waterloo and the West End.

* Walking times obtained from Transport for London's website.
** Walking times obtained from Google Maps' travel calculator.





Site location Plan

9.0 Amenity ASSESSMENT

8.1 Surrounding Area

The application site has good access to numerous nearby, high-quality gardens and green spaces. They are all maintained to an excellent condition and should provide adequate amenity space for the users of 35 Great James Street.

The closest of these are listed below:

- ① **St. George's Gardens**
Described by the LBC as "St George's Gardens is a real oasis. The many large plane trees create shade and imposing ivy clad tombs and gravestones are found throughout the Gardens. The Gardens comprise the sites of two former burial grounds, those of St George the Martyr (Holborn) and St George's Bloomsbury (Camden). The renovated Chapel of Ease now provides a meeting place for local groups as well as a store for the gardener."
- ② **Red Lion Square Gardens**
Described by the LBC as "Red Lion Square is the hidden jewel of Holborn. It was laid out in 1698 and took its name from a famous local inn, with traffic mostly passing by at just one end it is very quiet and secluded. The Square also has some statuary, including a bust of the philosopher Bertrand Russell."
- ③ **Bloomsbury Square Gardens**
Described by the LBC as "Laid out in 17th century as the piazza to the Earl of Southampton's mansion, Bloomsbury Square has outlived the building it was intended to grace and now stands as a companion piece to Russell Square. A recent refurbishment aimed to reflect elements of Humphrey Repton's 1806 layout, restore the views and link to the nearby Russell Square. New railings and a hornbeam fence were introduced along with new paths, park furniture and landscape improvements."
- ④ **Queen's Square**
Described by the LBC as "Away from the busy traffic routes through Bloomsbury is peaceful Queen Square. The square is packed with features - lawns, rose beds, flowers, shrubs, trees, statues and monuments. The square is much used, especially in the summer."
- ⑤ **Russell Square Gardens**
Described by the LBC as "This large square is situated just behind the British Museum. It was completed in 1806 to a design by Humphrey Repton for the 5th Duke of Bedford, whose statue still stands in Gardens today. Russell Square has a café which is open all year and the expansive lawns and vibrant floral displays make it a popular lunchtime spot."
- ⑥ **Russell Square Gardens**
Described by the LBC as "Brunswick Square was constructed as part of the recreation grounds of the Foundling Hospital, an orphanage founded by the distinguished seaman Captain Thomas Coram in 1739. Today Brunswick Square is open to the public as a garden. Brunswick Square was recently renovated with new railings, paths, park furniture, tree and landscape improvements."



10. IDENTIFYING NEED / CHANGE OF USE

10.1 This section is to be read in conjunction with Appendix D - the Loss of Employment Supporting Statement by Montagu Evans.

10.2 Although set out in the accompanying report, the need for the change of use comes from the general under utilisation of the site, the low standard of office accommodation and high cost associated with refurbishment to office space (which would then expect to yield a low rent).

An extract from Camden Planning Guidance 5 as follows:

“Camden’s Core Strategy sets out the projected demand and planned supply of office floorspace in the borough. We expect the supply of offices to meet the projected demand over the plan period and as a result we may allow a change from B1(a) offices to another use in some circumstances, such as older office premises or buildings that were originally built as residential dwellings. Our priority is for the replacement use to be permanent housing or community use. This approach is in line with policy DP13 Employment premises and sites in the Camden Development Policies.”

The site at No. 35 Great James Street identifies with a number of these considerations. It is an old premises which would have been built originally as a single family dwelling, and this application proposes to return the property to its original residential use.

10.3 The building is severely constrained in terms of its ability to provide suitable accommodation for B1 uses and is entirely unsuited to other business uses other than office. The building suffers from poor layout and lacks an open office floor plan. Given the significant refurbishment works needed and the listed status of the property, the standard of B1 accommodation that could be achieved through refurbishment is extremely limited.

10.4 Furthermore the framework places emphasis on the need for residential accommodation and states:

“Local planning authorities should ... approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings (currently in the B use classes)”

The demand for housing in the United Kingdom and, in particular, in London is exceptionally high. As noted in Camden’s core strategy, any opportunity to reuse existing buildings to increase the availability of sustainable quality homes should be regarded as beneficial, particularly when it returns a character building to its original use.

