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**HERITAGE NOTE**

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**STUKELEY STREET**

**JULY 2016**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Heritage Note has been produced by CgMs RPS in relation to an application for the redevelopment of 6 Stukeley Street, Covent Garden London. It should be read in conjunction with the submitted full drawing pack and design and access statement.
- 1.2 6 Stukeley Street is a non-listed building located within the Seven Dials Conservation Area, falling within the London Borough of Camden. While the property is not a designated heritage asset, it is noted within the Conservation Area appraisal as providing a positive contribution to the streetscape, alongside the majority of the south side of the street. This identification is primarily in recognition of the variety of form within the building line of the group, contributing to the utilitarian, informal and ad-hoc appearance of the buildings.
- 1.3 It is noted that the proposals are for the redevelopment of the site to provide two residential dwellings. The client is now in receipt of pre-application advice from the council which has raised some concerns on heritage grounds regarding the loss of the non-listed building. CgMs has been asked to provide clarity on the contribution of the building to the surrounding conservation area and assess the impact of the proposals upon the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## 2.0 HISTORY

- 2.1 While the area now occupied by Stukeley Street was beyond the Roman Walls of Londinium, traces of development in the locality have been found dating from the Roman era. This settlement, a Saxon trading post, was then known as Lundenwic, and was subsequently abandoned in the 9th century when the reoccupation and better defences of the nearby Londinium made the settlement no longer an attractive location.
- 2.2 Stukeley Street, first named 'Coal Yard' and later 'Goldsmith Street', prior to clearance and development formed part of Bear Croft or Bear Close. This area was so named as it comprised pasture land belonging to *The Bear* inn, which was located on the south side of Broad Street, St. Giles.
- 2.3 The location of streams leading into the River Fleet dictated the positioning of many of the subsequently developed street layouts. The informal grating and draining of these streams allowed for building to take place at street level, contributing an organic grain to the layout.
- 2.4 As noted Stukeley Street was, up to 1883, known as The Coal Yard. This is supported by historic references for it being used for the storage of fuel, however it is considered likely that the name was in fact taken from the owner of Bear Close, Bessitt Cole Esq. Nevertheless the character and grain of the surrounding streets at this time includes yards and workshops associated with local industry.
- 2.5 John Roque's map of 1745 shows a cross shaped street with both arms labelled as 'Coal Yard'. To the south of the street a small yard to the rear is recorded as, 'Calenders Co' perhaps indicating a candle making work shop. While the varying scale of mapping provides intermittent information, the yard to the rear of Stukeley Street appears to have persisted, labelled as 'Kings Arms Yard' in an OS map of 1875. By 1896 the street appears to have been renamed Goldsmiths Street. The central block of the street at this time has been redeveloped into a school, now the city literary Institute, rebuilt in 1939.
- 2.6 Analysis of the historic mapping shows a clear divide between No. 6 and 8 Stukeley Street, persisting up until the mid-twentieth century. This is suggestive of internal works to the building at this date and is indicative of the wider redevelopment and loss of industry in the area following the end of the Second

World War. Historic survey photographs dating to the 1970s further show the alterations to window and door openings towards the end of the century, unlike the better preserved eastern end to the street row.

### **3.0 SITE ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 The site currently comprises a single storey brick building, near the western end of Stukeley Street. The building is of unprepossessing appearance, constructed of brick and is of a single storey with a pitched roof hidden behind a parapet wall. Although the paintwork to the main façade obscures the colour and texture of the brickwork it is considered to match that of the terminating building to the west which uses a London stock brick.
- 4.2 Comparisons between the present façade and historic survey photographs held by the London Metropolitan Archive show that the majority of the openings within the main façade have been unsympathetically altered, widening the window to the east of the main door and lowering the door height. These works have left the original brick architraves associated with the original window and door openings in place, resulting in a mixed brick stock to the main façade. While the use of white paint attempts to blend these works with the whole, the resulting patchwork effect detracts from the appearance of the building and imbues the façade with a 20<sup>th</sup> century character.
- 4.3 This character is underscored by the similar alteration to the neighbouring building to the west. Here comparison of survey photographs from 1975 show that the original shop frontage has been removed and replaced by two smaller openings, leaving the lintel above. Additional redevelopment within the immediate vicinity includes the five storey mixed commercial and residential building opposite the site, which comprises Goldsmith Court.
- 4.4 Consistent with the character of this building, later alterations within the surrounding streetscape are predominately of a much larger scale, and terminate views from either end of the street, creating an enclosed feel to the site. This limits the contribution of the site to the surrounding area, and consequently the character of the building can only be appreciated when immediately adjacent.
- 4.5 The limited contribution of this building is emphasised when it is compared to the character and appearance of the conservation area within the small courtyard space to the east of the site at Smarts Place. Here, while the quality of the buildings is evidentially incidental and functional, the retention of original openings, irregular façade treatments and sympathetic but contemporary

modern alterations have preserved the legibility of the space as a historic courtyard with later additions.

- 4.6 Similarly the building immediately to the east at 8 Stukeley Street, is in comparison of a much higher quality. Elements such as the first storey 'hay loft' door, chamfered corner façade, large entrance way and multipaned single pivot windows are all indicative of its original industrial use. It is noted that while historic mapping indicates the street layout dates to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the style of fenestration and brick stock is nineteenth century in character and points to the redevelopment of the buildings along this street at this time.
- 4.7 It is notable that the site is not listed individually for its townscape merit but rather grouped with the neighbouring buildings. As noted above it is clear that within this group, whilst retaining certain elements such as the use of similar materials allows the block to form an identifiable cluster of buildings, the contribution of the site itself to the surrounding conservation area resides in the contrast the building provides with the taller surrounding late 20<sup>th</sup> century development. Furthermore it is apparent that while the built form respects the original building line of the street, a site visit has ascertained that the fabric appears late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century in character with a number of late 20<sup>th</sup> century modifications. It is acknowledged that these modifications have retained a smaller scale and incidental, functional appearance which alludes to the workshops and yard that originally occupied the site. However while the building is historic it is concluded there is very little intrinsic worth in heritage terms to the fabric of the site itself, with regard to either evidential or aesthetic value.

#### **4.0 PROPOSALS ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT**

- 4.1 The proposals are for the redevelopment of the existing building creating two small houses. The proposals have been developed to retain the informal character of the site ensuring an asymmetrical façade within the group of buildings is maintained.
- 4.2 Using the height of the existing building to the east of the site as a guide, the proposals are for three storeys with a mansard above. This roof height extends to the second of the two small houses. However it is noted that within the group the variety of roof height is maintained, dropping with the retaining an informal incidental appearance within the street scape.
- 4.1 A sympathetic pallet of materials takes inspiration from the surrounding context, with the proposals constructed out of glazed white bricks, echoing the neighbouring building to the west. Existing elements such as the retention of decorative details to suggest a lintel, ensures a stylistic relationship with the group is retained.
- 4.2 At ground floor large square casements create a span of glazing reflecting the shop frontages to the end of the street, and larger opening in the adjacent building to the west. The glazing reflects the mix and variety of development in the area which combines historic workshop and yard spaces with contemporary development such as can be seen at Smarts Place.
- 4.3 Section 12 of the NPPF (March 2012) indicates the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. Paragraph 134 states that where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal. Paragraph 138 further notes that not all aspects of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance.
- 4.4 Guidance has been adopted in order to support the NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance, (PPG) (2014). It states, conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change, requiring a flexible and thoughtful approach. Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. It states an important consideration should be whether the proposed works adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset's special architectural or historic interest. Adding, it is the degree of harm rather than the scale of development that is to be assessed.



- 4.5 As part of Camden Development Policies 2010-2025, adopted November 2010, 'DP24 Securing high quality design' states that the Council require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect proposals to consider: the local character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings; the quality of materials to be used; the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level; the appropriate location for building services; the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments; the provision of appropriate amenity space; and accessibility.
- 4.6 'DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage' emphasises that where development is proposed within a conservation area the Council will: take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications; only permit development that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area; 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.
- 4.7 As has been demonstrated in the site assessment, the site is considered within the conservation area appraisal to make a positive contribution to the conservation area along with the surrounding cluster of buildings. It has been determined that while the structure appears of an age, the visible alteration and low quality repairs in the main façade limit its contribution to the group.
- 4.8 Added to this, due to the relatively sheltered position of the building in the street front, the character and contribution of the site can only be experienced when in immediate proximity to the site itself. Given the superior quality of neighbouring buildings, it has been determined that the building has been included within the group primarily in response to the variety of form and informal incidental appearance it contributes to the group. In line with paragraph 138 of the NPPF it is considered therefore that its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area is limited.
- 4.9 Therefore the proposals, which maintain the variety in building line, small scale and quiet domestic aesthetic, protect this contribution - retaining a consistency in materiality and built form. In line with national planning policy and policy DP25 it is

considered therefore that the redevelopment of the site would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

## FIGURES



Figure 0.1 Stukeley Street 1978. A portion of the site showing the fenestration of the original brick building can be seen to the extreme left of this image.



Figure 0.2 Stukeley Street 1978. A portion of the site showing the fenestration of the original brick building can be seen to the right of this image. This also shows the substantial amount of development within the rest of the street and the original smaller scale of development within the surroundings.

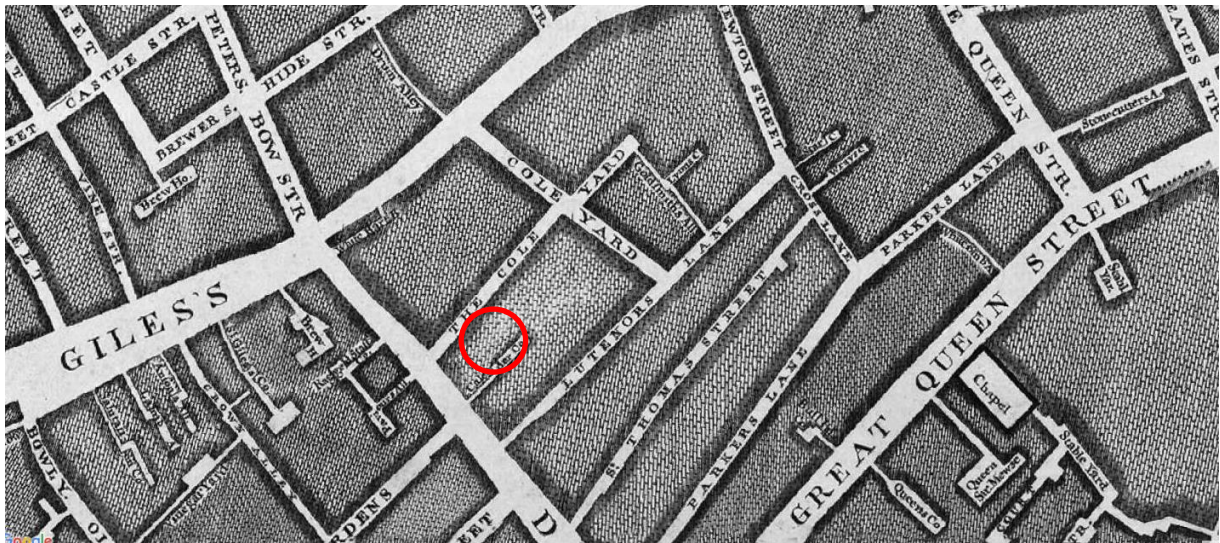


Figure 0.3 John Roque map of 1745

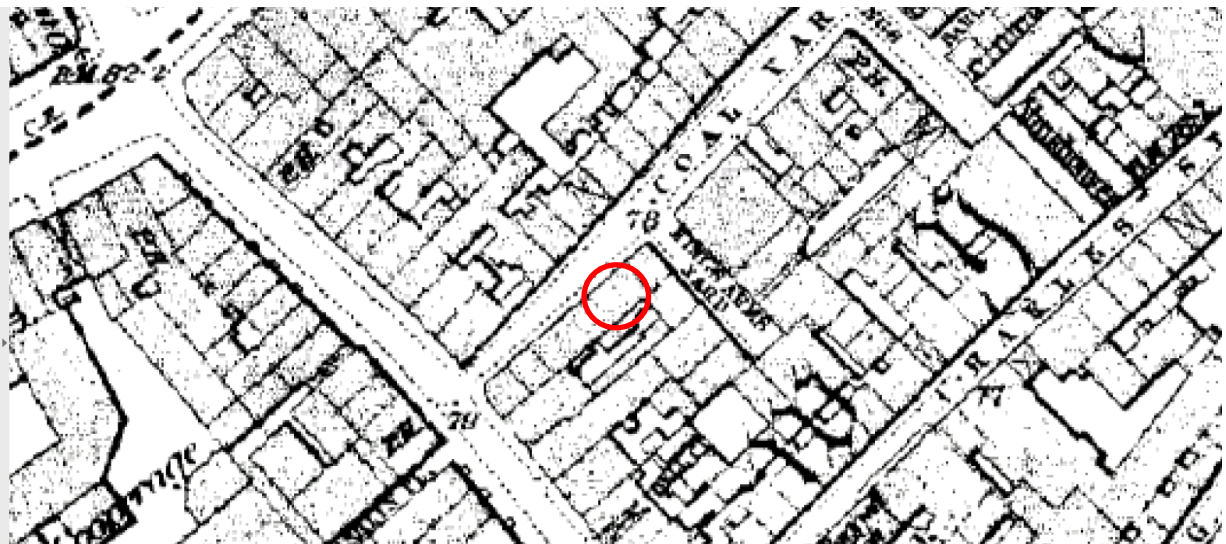


Figure 0.4 OS map 1875

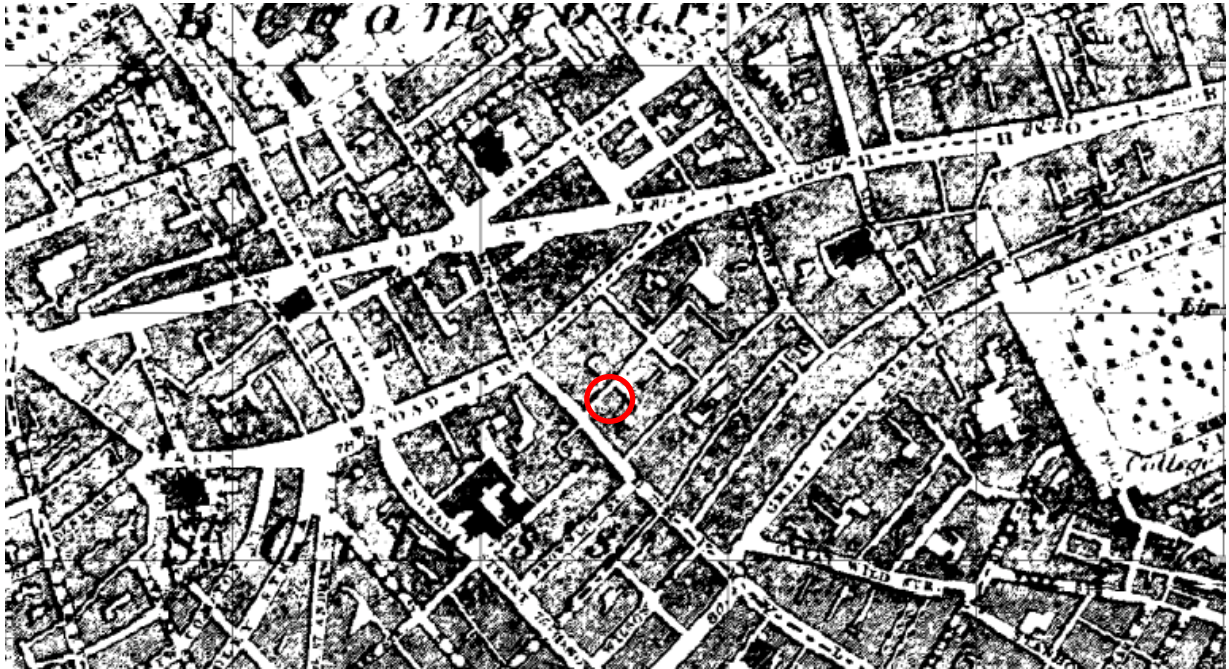


Figure 0.5 OS map 1882

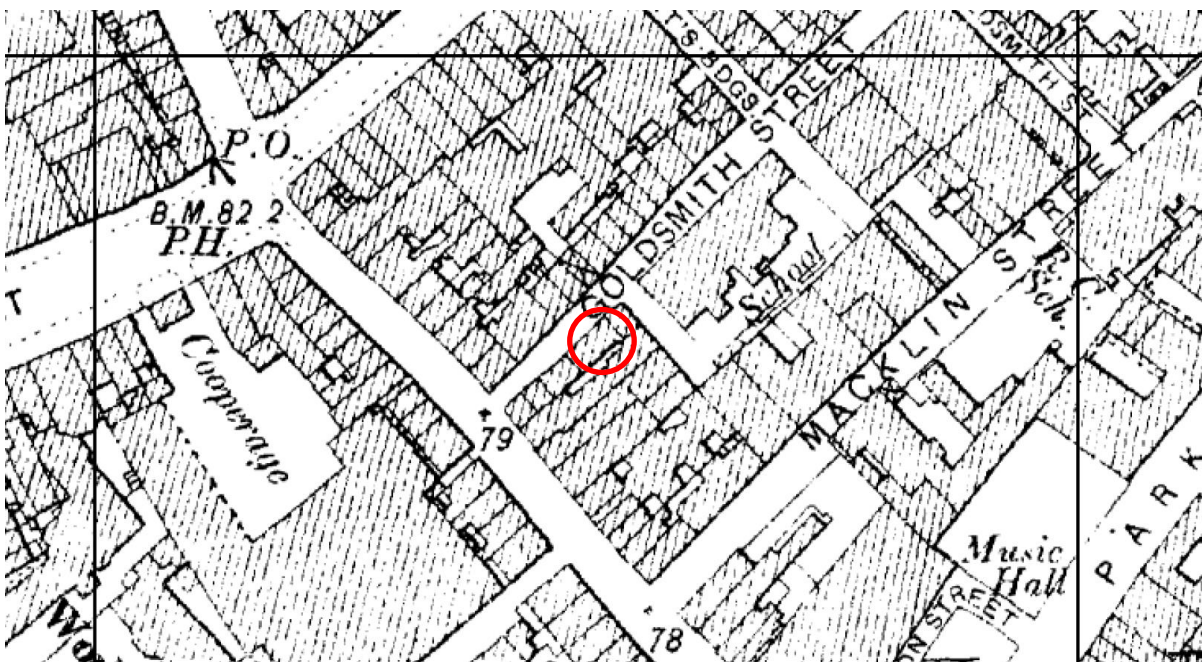


Figure 0.6 OS map 1896

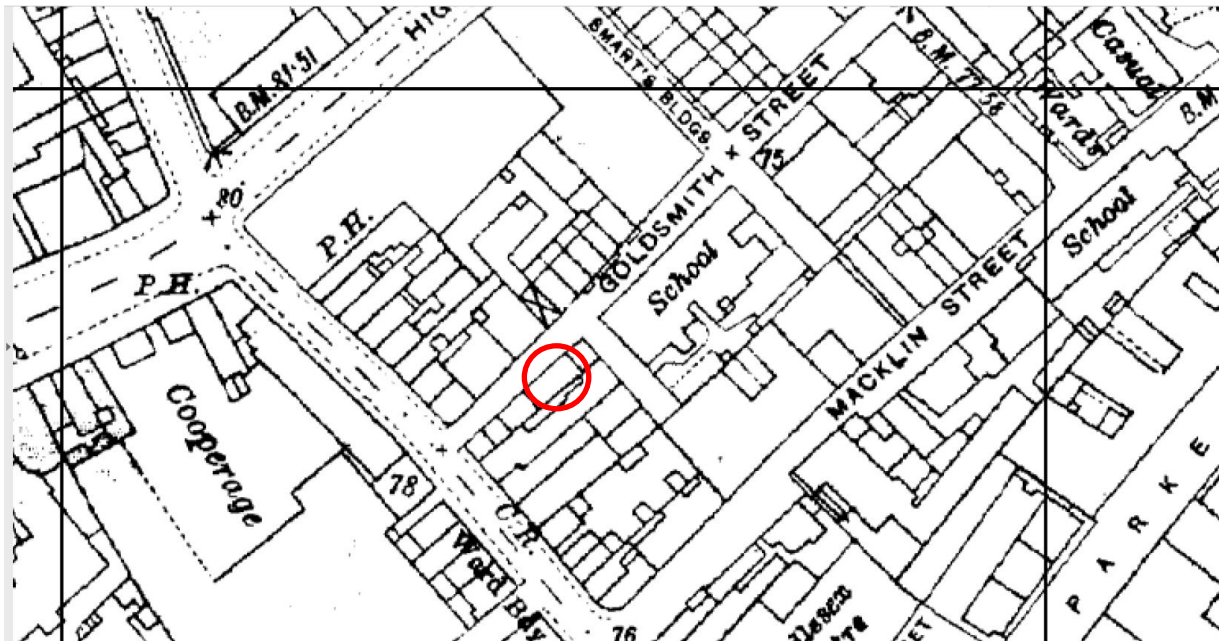


Figure 0.6 OS map 1916

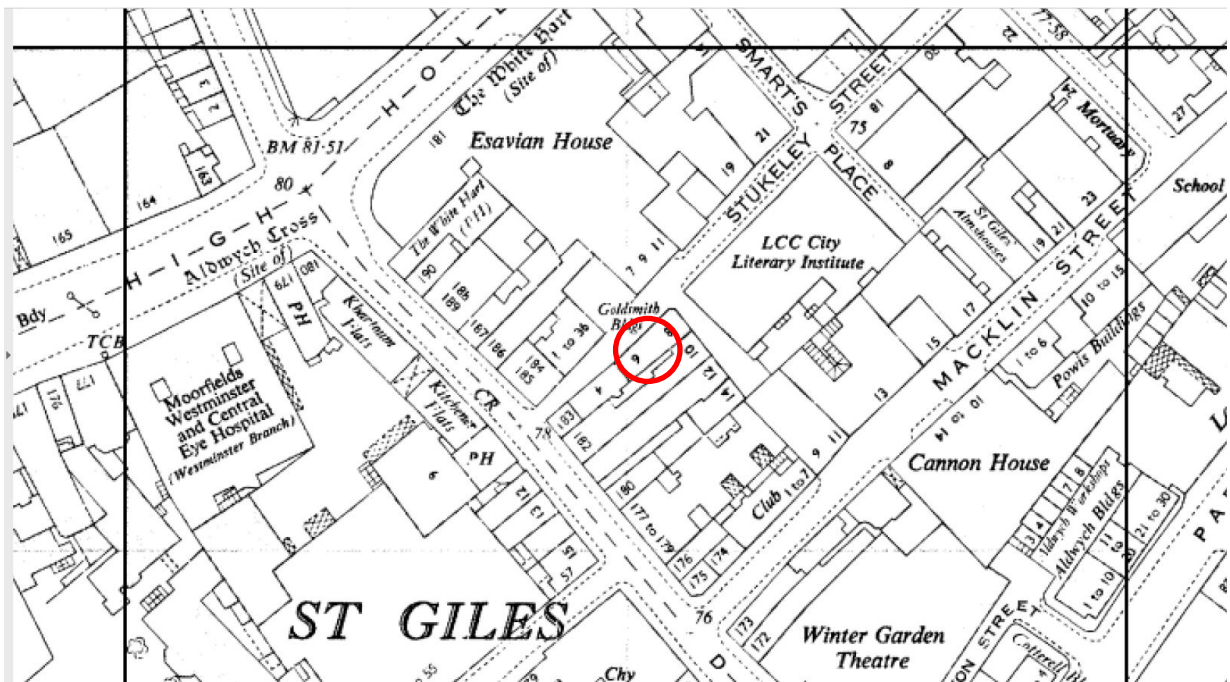


Figure 0.7 OS map 1952