

27 JOHN STREET

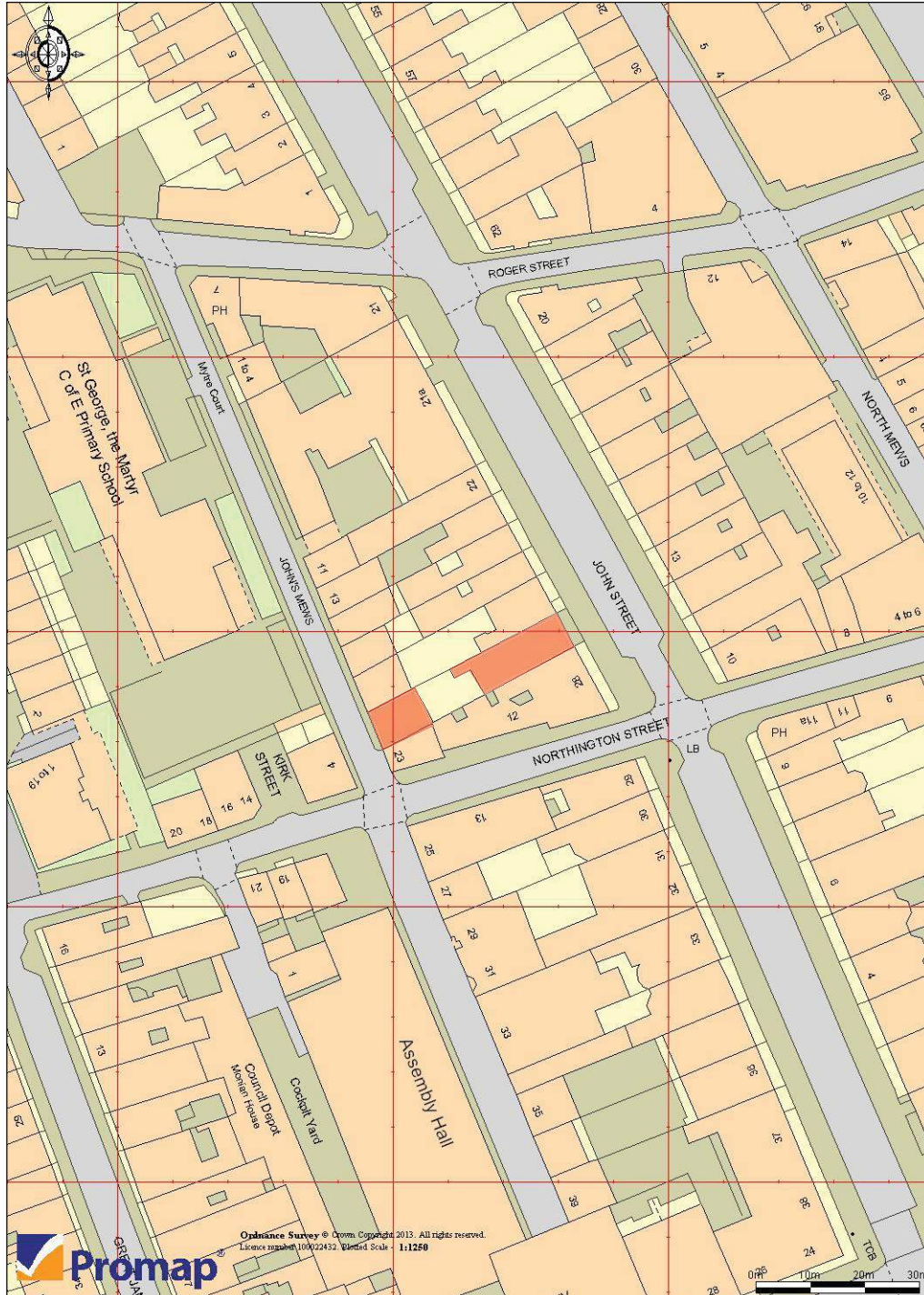
Historic Building Report
for Shirley Ungemuth and Philip Greader

September 2013



Donald Insall Associates

12 Devonshire Street, London W1G 7AB • Tel 020 7245 9888



Ordnance Survey map with the site marked in red.
[Reproduced under Licence 100020449]

CONTENTS

27 JOHN STREET & 21 JOHN MEWS, CAMDEN HISTORIC BUILDINGS REPORT FOR PHILIP GREATER

September 2013

1.0 HISTORIC BUILDING ANALYSIS & ADVICE

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 The Buildings and their Current Legislative Status
- 1.3 Assessment of Significance
- 1.4 Summary of the Proposals and Justification

2.0 HISTORY

- 2.1 Development of the Area
- 2.2 27 John Street
- 2.3 21 John Mews
- 2.4 Occupancy
- 2.5 Relevant Planning History
- 2.6 Plates
- 2.7 List of Sources

3.0 BUILDING DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The Setting
- 3.2 27 John Street Externally
- 3.3 27 John Street Internally
- 3.4 21 John Mews Externally
- 3.5 21 John Mews Internally

4.0 COMMENTARY ON THE PROPOSALS & JUSTIFICATION

- 4.1 Description of the proposals
- 4.2 27 John Street
- 4.3 21 John Mews
- 4.4 Impact of the proposals
- 4.5 Justification of the proposals

APPENDICES

- I Statutory List Description
- II Relevant Planning Policy

Issue date: 4 September 2013

Checked by: HXP

1.0 HISTORIC BUILDING ANALYSIS & ADVICE

1.1 Introduction

Donald Insall Associates was commissioned in August 2013 by Philip Greder to assist them in the preparation of proposals for 27 John Street and 21 John Mews.

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

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

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

1.2 The Buildings and their Current Legislative Status

27 John Street and 21 John Mews are within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden. 27 John Street is listed at Grade II and its statutory list entry notes that it has 'group value' with neighbouring buildings. 21 John Mews is noted as making a positive contribution to the conservation area. In order for a local authority to grant listed building consent, the proposed new work must be justified according to the policies set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. This states that the public benefits of a proposal, including securing its optimum viable use, should outweigh any harm caused to the significance of a designated heritage asset. A copy of the statutory list entry is included in Appendix I and of the relevant planning policy in Appendix II.

1.3 Assessment of Significance

Construction began on 27 John Street and 21 John Mews in approximately 1812, though it seems the buildings were not completed for some years, presumably due to the slow-down in the London building boom at that time. The four-storey house was built with a flat-fronted, three-bay elevation probably for a wealthy, professional family. The ratebooks do not make clear whether 21 John Mews building was specifically associated with the main house, but it is likely it was. Both buildings seem to have remained in a relatively unaltered state until the early 1970s when the house was converted to offices and a mansard roof and small extension added. At the same time, 21 John Mews was demolished and rebuilt.

The significance of 27 John Street resides primarily in its handsome, early-19th century street elevation and the relationship this has to the neighbouring buildings of a similar date. Together these create a pleasing and unusually complete late Georgian streetscape. The 'office' use of the street facing rooms detracts from the elevation, however, as indicated by spot lighting and the poor, standardised replica cornices.

The rear elevation is of some interest in that it retains some original fabric at lower levels; the upper section, however, has been rebuilt on several occasions and the fenestration pattern altered. Therefore, it is of less significance overall. The modern,

ground floor extension detracts from the appearance of the building, as do the utilitarian finishes of the former garden and the absence of any attractive landscaping.

Internally, the most significant element is the original, main staircase and the original plan form where it survives on the first floor. Elsewhere, the original plan form is still discernable, but much altered and only a few scraps of original historic fabric, such as some fire surrounds and shutters remain. Poor-quality replica cornices, the subdivided rooms and 1970s door joinery all detract from the building's significance.

21 John Mews is described as making a positive contribution to the conservation area. From the mews, however, the only contribution this 1970s building makes is that it is of the approximate scale and mass of the original 19th-century building. Its elevation design and detailing are crude. Its garden elevation is similarly crude, its only contribution being to maintain the original spatial and hierarchical relationship to 27 John Street. At best, this building makes a neutral contribution to the conservation area.

1.4 Summary of the Proposals and Justification

The proposals would return 27 John Street to its original use as a single-family dwelling and amalgamate the existing two flats at 21 John Mews into a single house with garaging below. The scheme would see the removal of inappropriate alterations at 27 John Street, the repair of the historic fabric including the façade and the principal stair, and the introduction of modern services. At both 27 John Street and 21 John Mews, internal and external finishes would be upgraded and beneath the garden and 21 John Mews, a basement would be constructed to provide 27 John Street with the facilities required of a house of this size and stature in the 21st century.

The minor harm caused to the listed building by a few alterations proposed in this scheme is easily outweighed by the benefits both to the historic environment and the wider public. The scheme will maintain the building in full, active and viable use; this will ensure the most significant element of the historic fabric – the street elevation – is maintained and preserved. The scheme will also see the creation of more historically appropriate detailing, including doors, cornices, skirting and other joinery, which will benefit the heritage asset. There are no changes which will affect the overall significance of the listed building. The proposals should therefore be acceptable in terms of the NPPF.

2.0 HISTORY

2.1 The Development of the Area

The origins of the land ownership for John Street are unclear. It seems that it once lay in the Parish of St Andrew's Holborn, though it has also been suggested that it formed part of the Doughty Estate in St Pancras. The *Survey of London* Volume XXIV suggests that actually only Upper John Street - now Doughty Street - belonged to that Estate.

Rocque's Map of 1746 [plate 1] shows that while the land to the east and west of the site had been fully developed by the mid-18th century, the area in between remained largely as gardens. This map gives no indication of John Street but the beginnings of Northington Street, formerly Little James Street, running east-west across John Street can be seen.

Development of these garden plots began in earnest in the 1790, though it met with stiff opposition from wealthy local residents whose fine, long views to Highgate and Hampstead were cut off.¹ In 1792, Henry Doughty precipitated the building of the comparatively grand Upper John Street by granting leases to Joseph Wigg, a carpenter, and George Slaton, a builder, to erect twelve houses on his land south of Guilford Street. About the same time, the architect Samuel Pepys Cockrell was helping the Foundling Hospital develop its land into the imposing Brunswick and Mecklenburg Squares.

Doughty's buildings can all be seen on Horwood's 1799 map [plate 2], as can two terraces at the south end of John Street. On the plot adjacent to the study site, the first house and mews of the central section of John Street appears to be under construction.

The onset of the Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815), caused a slow-down in London's building boom and, presumably as a consequence, development on John Street was stilted. Horwood's 1813 map [plate 3] shows that while No 27 seems to be under construction, it does not appear to be complete. Six years later Horwood's 1819 map [plate 4] also indicates that many of the buildings on John Street, including No 27, were still unfinished and only a few buildings had been constructed along John Mews.

2.2 27 John Street

No original drawings or lease documents for 27 John Street appear to have survived. It is shown by Horwood to have been built on a relatively broad plot with flat front and rear elevations and a garden and dedicated mews building to the rear, though the garden boundaries were not yet defined.

The Ordnance Survey Map of 1873 [plate 5] shows the buildings in more detail, indicating that the main house was slightly set back from the street and its entrance was reached via a footbridge over a basement light well. To the rear was a very small closet that was probably original to the building and that No 26 John Street was of a very similar design. In comparison, the houses further north on John Street were built on narrower plots and with smaller gardens.

¹ Godfrey & Marcham 1952.25f

The earliest surviving plans for 27 John St date from 1905 [plates 6a & b] when the house was in the possession of Rev. F. Thorne who was then vicar of Holy Trinity Church in Gray's Inn Road². These plans show the house to be arranged in three bays, with the main entrance to the left and a typical plan for a terraced house of this type with a front room, a rear room and a main stair to the rear. There is a small, presumably single storey closet to the rear and the building has no servant's stair.

The buildings passed unscathed through the Second World War³ and two photographs taken in 1950 [plate 7a & b] show the façade to have been unaltered except for the addition of some unsightly pipework to service the bathrooms added in 1905.

In 1973, a further series of photographs was taken [8a-c]. Of particular interest is the photograph of the rear elevation which clearly shows that by this time it had already been rebuilt above the first floor and the scar at first floor level suggests that there had previously been a two-storey structure with a pitched roof attached to the left side of the elevation. Curiously though there is no indication of this structure on the OS maps of 1914, 1934, 1954 or 1968.

The following year, 1974, extensive works were carried out on the building and a mansard added. Unfortunately Camden Planning Archive have so far been unforthcoming with the documents of these works but photographs taken that year [plates 9a – b] show the building with its new mansard.

2.3 21 John Mews

No plans survive for the original mews building, though the Ordnance Survey Maps suggest that its footprint was unaltered until its demolition in 1974. One photograph remains of the original garden elevation dating from 1973 [plate 10]. This suggest that it formed one of a pair of two-storey, mews buildings with slate roofs and that some alterations had occurred to the size and location of its windows.

In 1974, the plot was redeveloped into a two-storey building with a mansard [plate 11].

2.4 Occupancy⁴

The street names for this area, seem to have changed several times before the 1840s as has the house numbering system, consequently the occupancy record for the site is a slightly opaque. It certainly seems that the John Street buildings were slow to find residents and during the 1820s many buildings on the street were empty.

The first available ratebook for the area dates from 1812 and does not include house numbers. It and the rate books for the next five years contains separate entries for both John Street and New John Street but it is not clear whether No 27 is included in the list. The entries for the 1820s are similarly haphazard though thereafter the record for 27 John Street becomes more reliable, though that for the mews does not.

1831 Thomas Townsend

1841 William Henry Langley (but 26,27,28 all owned by William Carr Foster, resident of No 28.)

² Charles Booth Survey Notebook 1886-1903

³ London Bomb Map 1939-1944

⁴ St Andrew and St George the Martyr Ratebooks

1850 William Langley
1861 Rev J.W. Worthington⁵
1905 Rev. F. Thorne⁶

2.5 Relevant Planning History

So far, requests for the building file from Camden Planning Archive have not yielded any results. However it is clear that extensive alterations were made to the building in 1974, since which time 27 John Street has been in office use and 21 John Mews had a residential use.

2.6 Plates

- 1 Rocque's Map 1746
- 2 Horwood's Map 1799
- 3 Horwood's Map 1813
- 4 Horwood's Map 1819
- 5 Ordnance Survey Map 1873
- 6 27 John Street Plans 1905 (Camden Local Archive)
- 7 27 John Street Photographs 1950 (SC/PHL/01/165)
- 8 27 John Street Photographs 1973 (SC/PHL/01/165)
- 9 27 John Street Photographs 1974 (SC/PHL/01/165)
- 10 21 John Mews Photograph 1973 (SC/PHL/01/165)
- 11 21 John Mews Photograph 1974 (SC/PHL/01/165)

2.7 List of Sources

Primary material in the following archives:

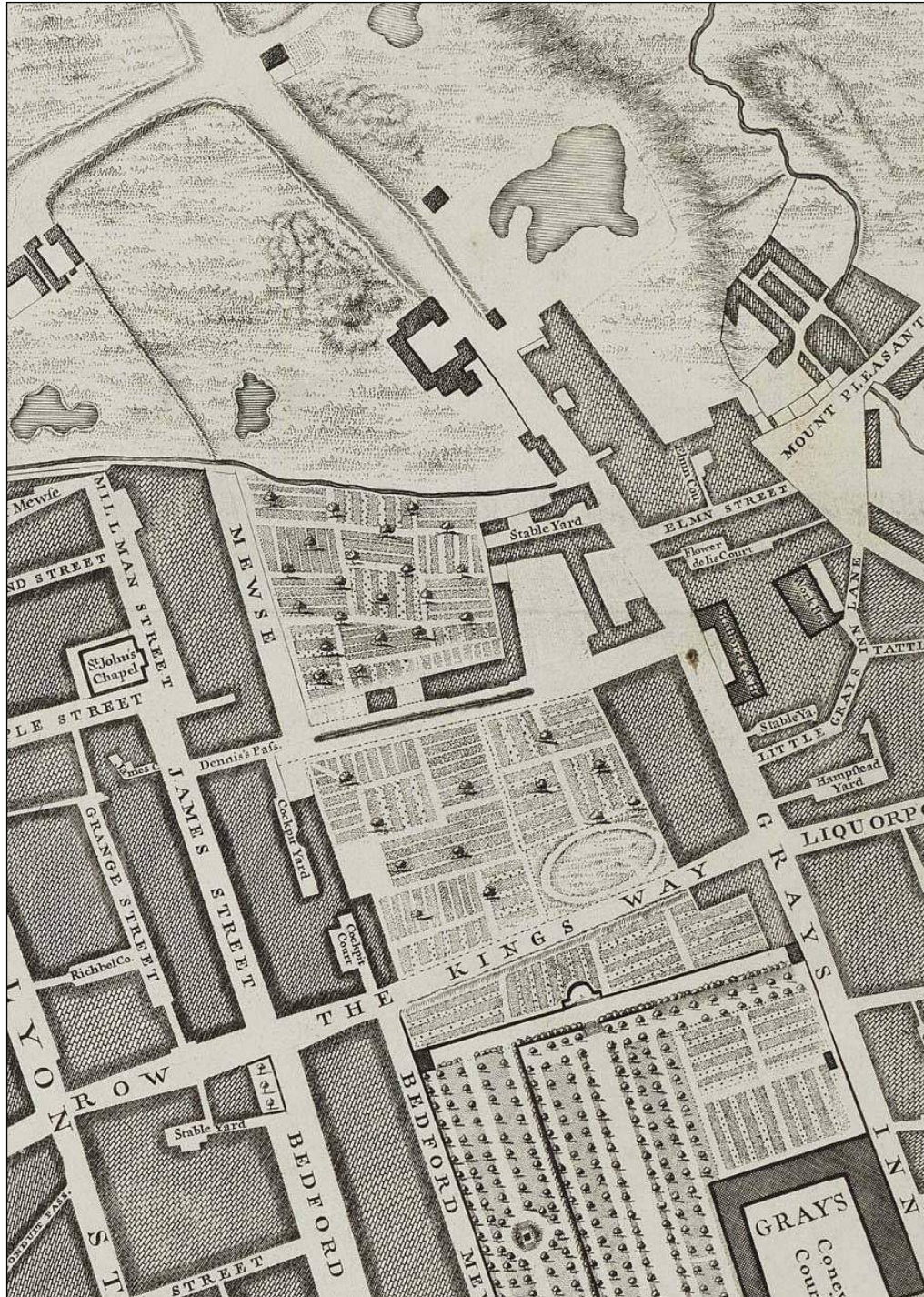
London Metropolitan Archive
Camden Local History Library

Secondary Material

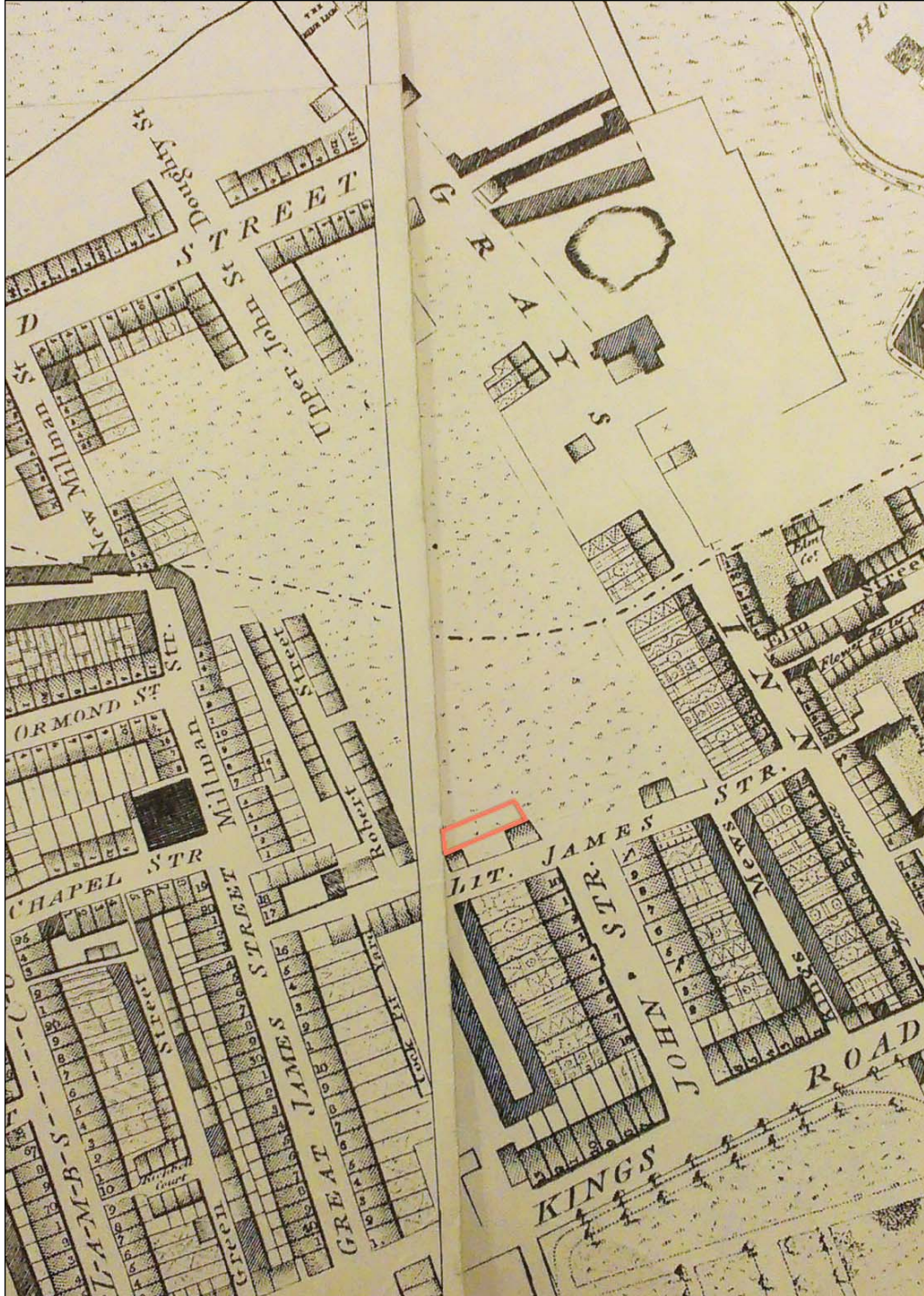
Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement
Charles Booth Survey Notebook 1886-1903
http://booth.lse.ac.uk/cgibin/do.pl?sub=search_catalogue&args=holy+trinity+gray's+in+n+road
Godfrey, W. & Marcham, W. (editors) Survey of London volume 24 - The parish of St Pancras part 4: King's Cross Neighbourhood 1952

⁵ Ratebooks after 1861 no longer available.

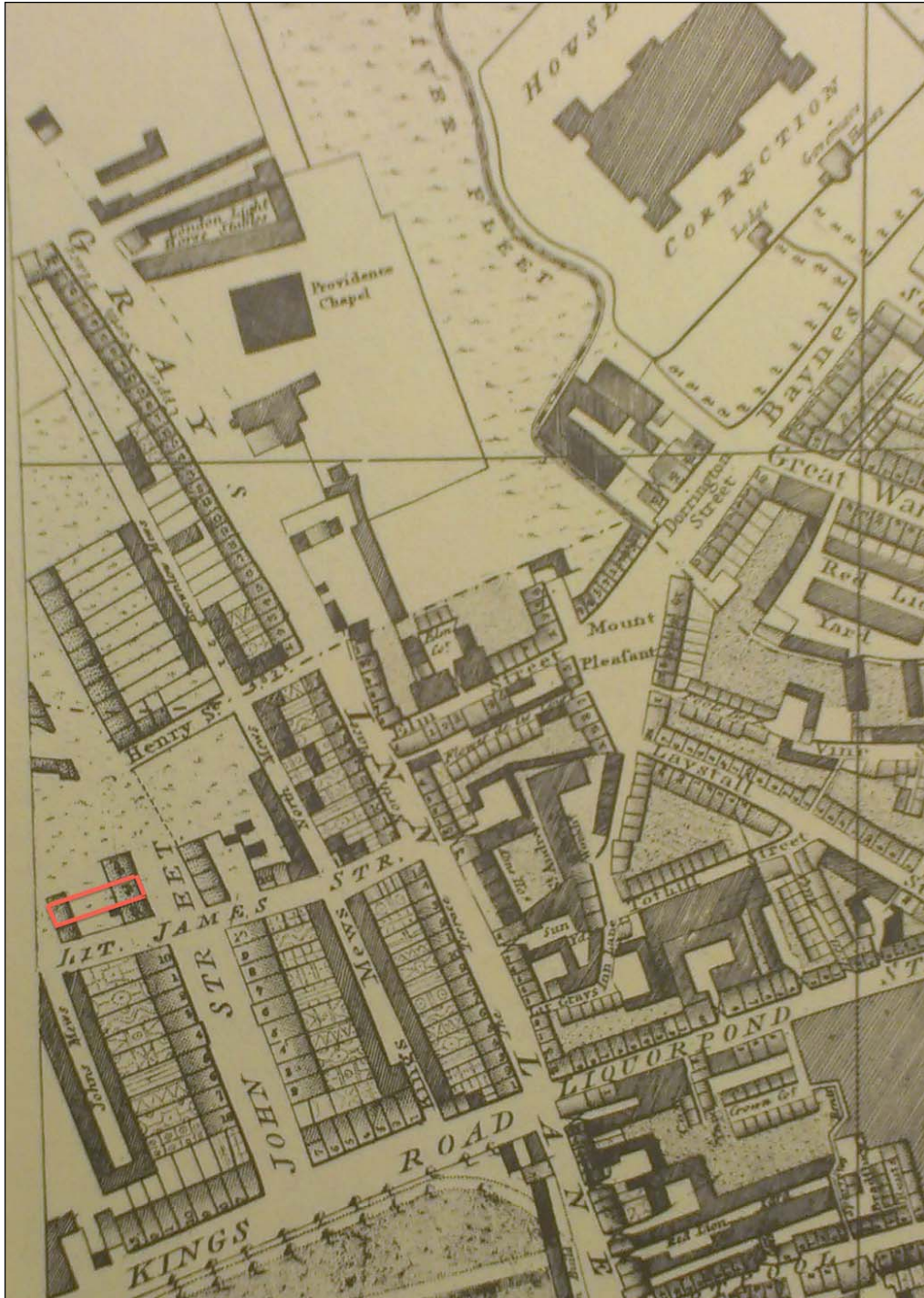
⁶ Charles Booth Survey Notebook 1886-1903



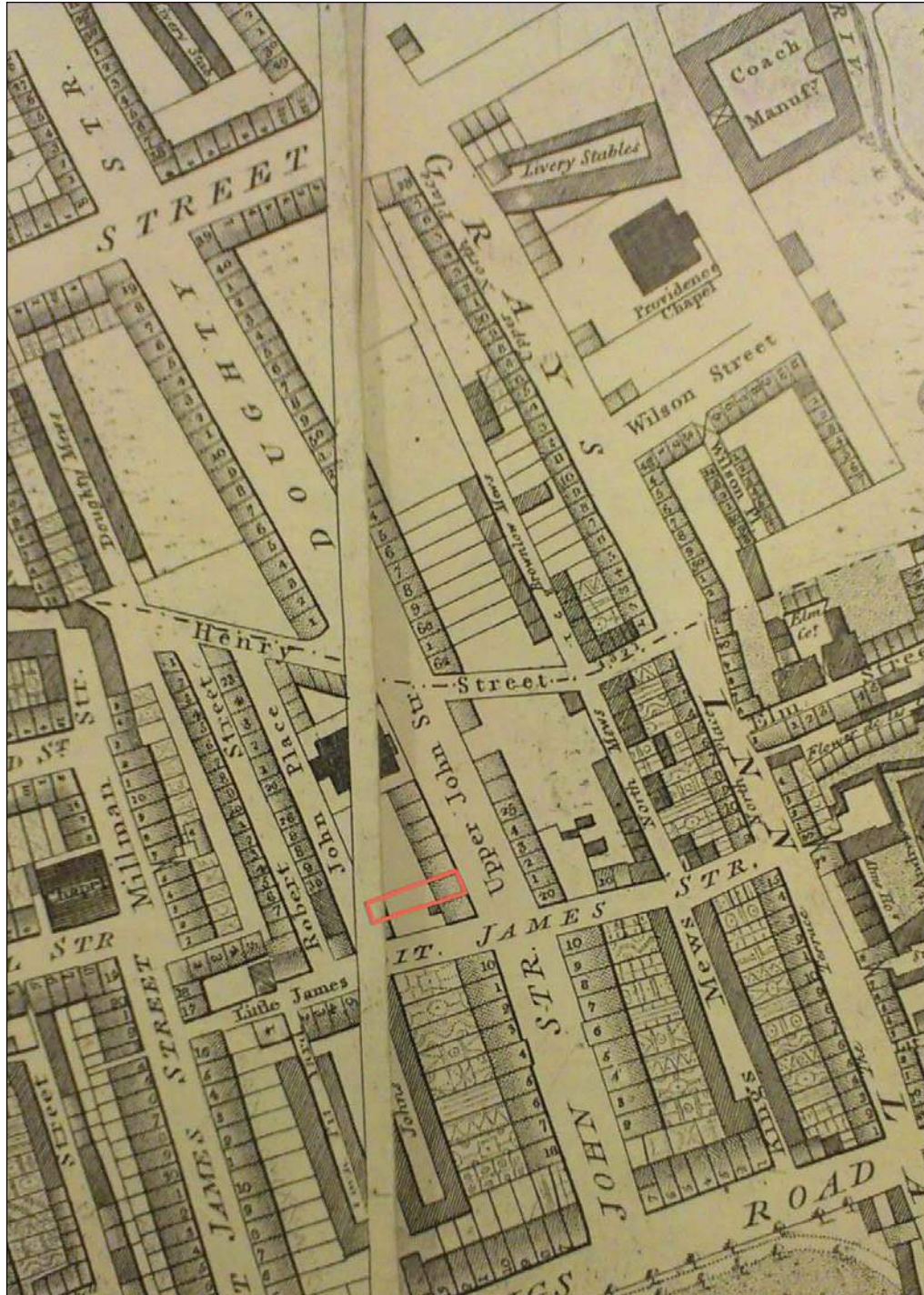
1. Rocque's Map 1746



2. Horwood's Map 1799



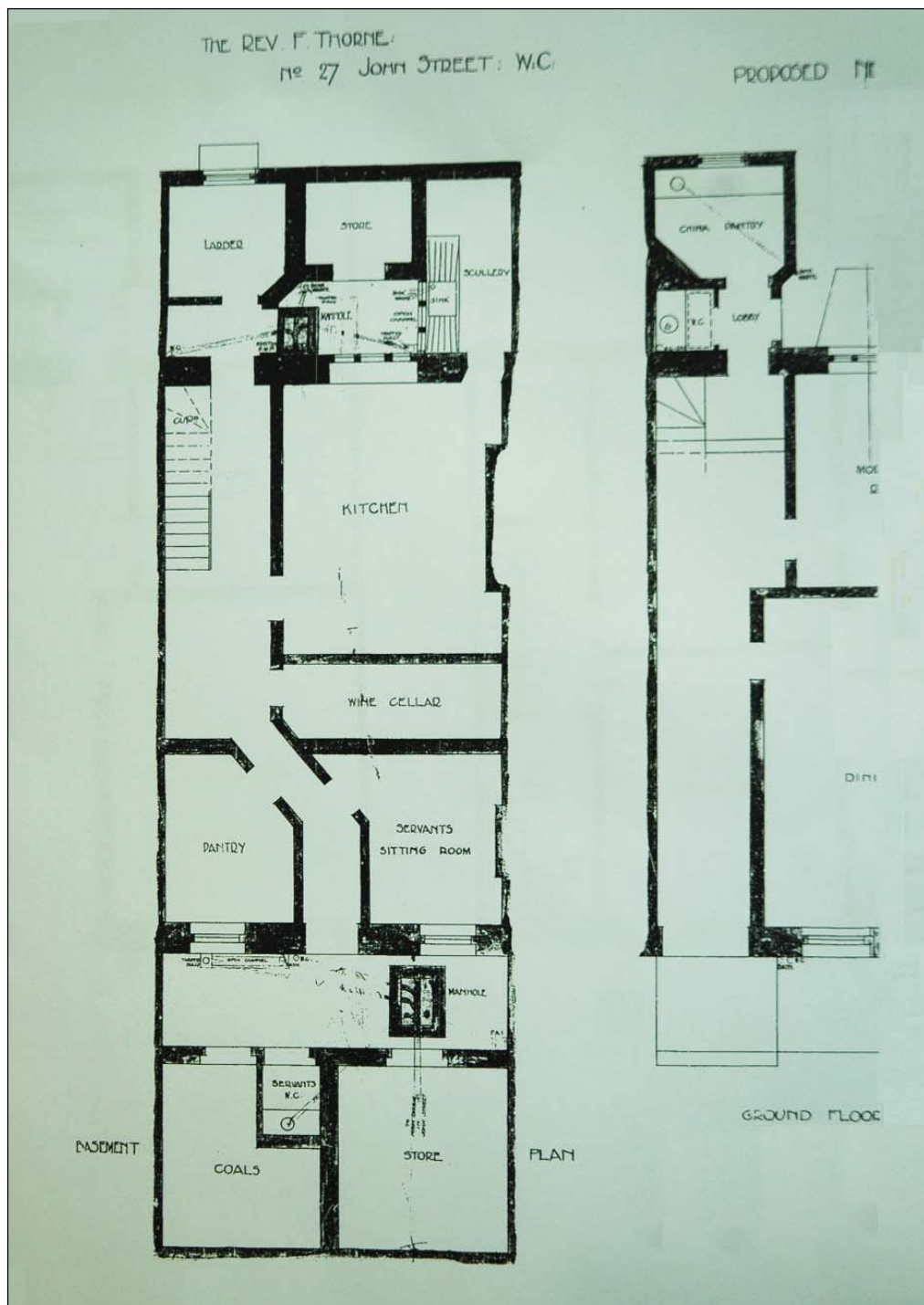
3. Horwood's Map 1813



4. Horwood's Map 1819



5. Ordnance Survey Map 1873



6. 27 John Street Plans 1905 (Camden Local Archive)



7a. 27 John Street Photographs 1950 (SC/PHL/01/165)



7b. 27 John Street Photographs 1950 (SC/PHL/01/165)



8a. 27 John Street Photographs 1973 (SC/PHL/01/165)



8b. 27 John Street Photographs 1973 (SC/PHL/01/165)



8c. 27 John Street Photographs 1973 (SC/PHL/01/165)



9a. 27 John Street Photographs 1974 (SC/PHL/01/165)



9b. 27 John Street Photographs 1974 (SC/PHL/01/165)



10. 21 John Mews Photograph 1973 (SC/PHL/01/165)



11. 21 John Mews Photograph 1974 (SC/PHL/01/165)

3.0 SITE SURVEY DESCRIPTIONS

3.1 The Setting

The street retains much of its original Georgian character and is mostly lined with flat-fronted late-18th-century and early-19th-century four-storey townhouses with footbridges and basement areas and little adornment except for intricate door casements, some of which have double doors. There is some early 20th century rebuilding of the terraces to the north.

The street is a broad, tree-lined throughfare with tarmac covering and parking on both sides. The pavement is unusually wide with flagstone and granite curbs in places, and modern concrete slabs elsewhere. Most buildings have retained their original railings and street signage has been kept to a minimum.

3.2 27 John Street Externally

Street Elevation

This building is four storeys over a basement plus a slate mansard roof and dormers added in 1973. The dormers are leaded and the timber sashes are in a poor state of repair.

The elevation is flat fronted, built of yellow stocks and arranged in three bays with gauged flat-headed arches, the gauged brickwork was once painted red and the cills all appear to be stone. The recessed sashes are late 20th century replacements arranged as six-over-six panes between basement and second floor and three-over-three on the third and fourth floors. The windows to the first floor are full height and give access to a continuous stone balcony with original cast iron railings. There is a modern cast iron down pipe near to the party wall with No 26.

The building has a handsome entrance which forms a pair with that at No 26. It has a round-headed brick arch containing a recessed reeded timber frame with lion mask stops and mutule cornice heads. Over this is an elaborate fanlight with incorporated lamp-holder (the lamp holder only exists at No 27.) The entrance step and the footbridge bridge have been replaced with concrete. The railings appear to be original with urns at the corners but the metal arch spanning the gate to the basement steps was added in the 1970s. These steps are modern stainless steel. The basement lightwell has modern paving and modern timber doors beneath the footbridge. The basement windows have a slightly arched gauged brickwork heads, that to the left was once a door the brickwork at this level is painted white.

Rear Elevation

This is a flat-fronted elevation in five storeys over a basement. There is a low-quality, flat-roofed modern extension on the ground floor.

Between basement and first floor levels the elevation is original and constructed in plumb brick, above this the elevation has been rebuilt in yellow stocks on two separate

occasions. The second floor elevation, including the arched stair window was rebuilt prior to 1973 presumably using the original fenestration pattern since it is similar to that of No 26. Thereafter the third and fourth floors were rebuilt with a new, three bay pattern. At first floor level is the scar of a former two-storey extension with a pitched roof and the main window opening here has been enlarged apparently in 1973 to give access to a utilitarian, steel balcony.

The sash windows are all replacements of various ages except for that on the ground floor which is original. The first and ground floor windows are tripartite sashes. The glazing patterns vary – six over six on third and fourth, eight over eight on second floor, four over four at first floor, six over six at ground floor and eight over eight in the basement. The brickwork at ground and basement level is painted white and the basement light well has modern paving and finishes.

The rear extension is a cavity wall construction built of modern stocks with concrete copings. The only opening is a doorway with a concrete lintel and timber door and fixed light panel.

The Garden

This has modern concrete paving and is used as parking. It is accessed via a garage door beneath the mews building from John Mews. The garden wall to the south forms part of the rear extension to No 128 and probably dates from the early-mid 20th century. The north garden wall contains some early 19th century brickwork with slight buttresses and some late 20th century brickwork.

3.3 27 John Street Internally

Internally, the building underwent much alteration in the 1970s and while some of the original plan form remains, nearly all historic finishes and detailing have been lost.

Fourth Floor

This floor is within the modern mansard dating from 1973, however, in keeping with the original plan form of the lower floors it divided into a front and rear rooms. All elements of this floor are modern. The mahogany staircase dates from the 1970s and is of relatively good quality. There is a modern roof light.

Third Floor

This has a modified plan form and both the front and rear rooms have been subdivided and WC's inserted. The rooms to the front and rear could not be accessed but are believed to contain nothing of historic interest, other than perhaps some window linings and blocked up chimneybreasts. The landing finishes are all modern with a glazed timber fire door.

Second Floor

The 1970s mahogany staircase terminates on the second floor landing and the finishes here are all modern.

The main front room has been subdivided into two and a corridor inserted. A blocked up chimneybreast remains and each of the front windows have probably original architraves and shutters painted shut.

The room to the rear retains its original plan form and a blocked up chimneybreast. The room as a large, single window architrave may be of some age, but is not original.

All other features including the cornice, doors and dado plus the finishes are modern.

Main Staircase

The original main staircase descends from the second to the ground floor. It is open string cantilevered stair with its original, elegant mahogany handrail with simple square balusters, stone treads and skirtings. At the foot of the stair the handrail rolls into a tight scroll. The stair compartment is lit by a tall window with an arched top and has possibly original shutters now painted shut. The cornice and mouldings are modern replicas.

First Floor

This floor retains more historic features, but not many. The plan form is original but the door casements, doors, cornices and skirtings are all replacements. The ceiling roses are all replicas of no merit.

The front room retains what could be an original, carved fire surround of good quality and is certainly of the right era but it has modern green marble inlay and hearth. The dado and window architraves may be original but have been cut around when secondary glazing was installed, and no shutters remain.

The rear room has a late 19th century character with wall mouldings and an elaborate chimneypiece which includes a mirror and fluted Corinthian columns is late 19th century. The marble lining and hearth are modern. The cornice, ceiling rose and skirtings are similarly modern. The window linings to the large, tripartite sash are probably late 19th century and may have shutters behind but these have been painted over.

Ground Floor

The entrance lobby has modern panelling and a modern internal door. Above this door is a fan light which matches the one to the exterior. It appears to date from the early 19th century but is unlikely to be in its original position and may have been salvaged from another building on the street. All the finishes, cornices and skirtings are modern

At the foot of the stair, the last step is very shallow, suggesting the floor height may have been raised, the cornice and ceiling rose here are modern.

The front room has been subdivided, though its curved edges to the rear are probably original (No 26 has a similarly shaped plan form.) The windows architraves and shutters are original. There is the remains of a blocked up chimneybreast. The cornice is modern.

The rear room retains its original plan form and has an original tripartite window with original shutters painted shut. The cornices, ceiling rose and dado are modern. The wall

mouldings may be late 19th century. There is a marble fire surround which appears to early 19th century, though surprisingly plain.

Rear Closet

This appears to be all modern construction and plan form with modern joinery and finishes.

Basement

The main rear room retains its original plan form, however, the rest of the basement is much altered. Some plain, possibly original shutters survive in the main rear room otherwise all finishes are modern. The void beneath the footbridge at the front of the building has been incorporated into the building and the original exterior wall partially removed. The under-street vaults remain, only the one beneath the footbridge could be accessed and has been refinished.

3.4 21 John Mews Externally

Street Elevation

This modern two-storey elevation is utilitarian and built in yellow stocks with a slated mansard containing two oversized dormers with metal sashes. At street level is a recessed sliding garage door with a recessed house door to the right. At first floor is a large and a small window with concrete lintels and cills each with extruded metal sashes. There is some wiring running across the elevation and an extractor pipe protruding on the first floor. The street is tarmacked and has a small pavement.

Rear Elevation

This modern two-storey elevation is built in yellow stocks with a slated mansard containing two dormer with metal sashes. At ground floor level is a double garage space with a concrete lintel and to its left a flush door. The first floor has a large and a small window with concrete lintels and cills and extruded metal sashes. Overall, the elevation is drab and cheaply constructed.

3.5 21 John Mews Internally

The mews contains two flats, one to the first floor, one to the second. All construction and finishes are entirely modern.

4.0 COMMENTARY ON THE PROPOSALS & JUSTIFICATION

4.1 General description of the Proposals

The applicant owns the freehold to 27 John Street and 21 John Mews.

The proposals would return 27 John Street to its original use as a single-family dwelling and amalgamate the existing two flats at 21 John Mews into a single house with garaging below.

The proposals would see the removal of inappropriate alterations at 27 John Street, the repair of the historic fabric, and the introduction of modern services. At both 27 John Street and 21 John Mews, internal and external finishes would be upgraded and beneath the garden and 21 John Mews, a basement would be constructed to provide 27 John Street with the facilities required of a house of this size and stature in the 21st century.

The proposals are shown on drawings produced by Donald Insall Associates.

4.2 27 John Street

4.2.1 Externally

On each elevation, the scheme would include the repair and replacement on a like-for-like basis of all brickwork, leadwork and stonework as necessary. The removal of any redundant pipework and services and the replacement of all external pipework to match existing cast iron pipes. The repair of existing sash windows.

Roof

The replacement of the existing, 1970s flat roof, the relocation of an existing roof light, the removal of redundant plant machinery and the relocation of security handrails away from street sight lines.

Front Elevation

- Repair balcony as necessary.
- Reinstate York paving to front basement area.

Rear Elevation

- Relocate an original, tripartite sash window from the ground and its insertion into the existing window opening on the second floor.
- Remodel the modern, tripartite, sash window on the first floor to include a French window.
- Remove the modern steel balcony and create a new stair to the extension roof.
- Rebuild the 1970s ground floor extension on a slightly enlarged footprint with a roof terrace above and new, timber French windows to the garden.
- Repair or replace on a like-for-like basis of all brickwork, leadwork and stonework as necessary.

- Remove redundant pipework and services and the replacement of all external pipework to match existing cast iron pipes.

Garden

The removal of the existing modern car park paving, insertion of walk on roof lights and creation of planting beds.

4.2.2 Internally

On all floors

- Replace all modern doors, architraves and skirtings with ones with appropriate, traditional detailing.
- Repair of all joists, shutters, aprons, fireplaces and mouldings.
- Repair original stone stair and handrail as required.

Fourth Floor

- Insert modern partitions in the main rear room to provide bathrooms and the relocation of some door openings.
- Replace modern, stair handrail with ones of a traditional design.

Third Floor

- Remove a modern partition and renew existing plasterboard partitions as required.
- Relocate modern partition in front room.
- Relocate door openings.
- Replace modern, stair handrail with ones of a traditional design.

Second Floor

- Reinstate original plan form to front room.
- Insert modern partition to rear room to provide bathroom & dressing room.
- Close door opening to rear room.
- Replace modern, stair handrail with ones of a traditional design.

First Floor

- Replace modern cornices in front and rear rooms with ones of a traditional design.
- Insert new double door opening between front and rear rooms with appropriately detailed doors.

Ground Floor

- Reinstate original plan form to front room
- Remove modern paneling
- Replace modern cornices with ones of a traditional design.
- Enlarge door opening between hall and front room

- Relocate modern partition and historic, but non-original fanlight.
- Create new door opening to rear room.
- Enlarge existing rear window opening into door to extension.
- Cover-over rear basement area with glass floor.
- Remove existing modern partitions within extension.

Basement

- Repair and tank street vaults.
- Rebuild internal partition walls.
- Block up rear window but retain paneled surround.
- Demolish existing basement extension and extend basement beneath garden and 21 John Mews.

4.3 21 John Mews

4.3.1 Externally

On each elevation, the scheme would include the repair and replacement on a like-for-like basis of all brickwork and the removal of any redundant pipework and services. The modern metal windows would be replaced with traditionally detailed double-glazed, timber sashes and the dormers would be clad in lead. The street door would be replaced with a traditionally detailed half-glazed door. On the garden elevation, the ground floor would be extended to align with the extension as Nos. 13 & 14 John Mews and three sets of double-glazed timber French windows introduced. Two roof lights would be inserted into the garden paving.

4.3.2 Internally

A basement would be created, the plan form remodeled, a new staircase inserted and all the finishes and services upgraded to provide quality, residential space.

4.4 Implications of the Proposals

The proposals would see the repair and upgrading of all external and internal historic fabric at 27 John Street and in particular, the reinstatement of historically appropriate detailing such as cornices and doors. This would improve the appearance of the listed building and the conservation area. The rebuilding of the extension using more sympathetic materials and the landscaping of the garden would also improve on the existing fabric and be of benefit to the listed building. The only potential harm to the building would be caused by the relocation of the original, ground floor window and the enlargement of the existing opening, and by the introduction of double doors in the front and rear rooms. However, these alterations are minor, the extent of the harm is very limited and they would not alter the significance of the listed building.

At 21 John Mews, the new windows, street door and leadwork would all improve the setting of the listed building and the conservation area.

The more interventionist element of this scheme is the creation of a new basement beneath the garden and mews building. However, No 27 already has an area of basement

located beyond the rear 19th century elevation of the listed building and its original basement area. The new construction will glaze over the altered, original basement area which will cause some minor harm to the altered plan form. The new basement will then be linked to the main building by a door and short flight of steps, in this way, the basement extension will not effect any historic fabric and will have no impact on the significance of the building.

4.5 Justification of the Proposals

These proposals will cause 'less than substantial harm' to the listed building. In such instances, the NPPF requires that this harm be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

This report has found that the significance of 27 John Street resides primarily in its handsome, early-19th century street elevation and the relationship this has to the neighbouring buildings of a similar date. The current proposals will help to secure this significance in the long-term by returning the building to its optimum viable use, which in this instance means re-establishing No 27 as a single residential house.

The majority of the proposed works are repairs and improvements to the historic building and its setting and would see the creation of more historically appropriate interiors. These works are all justified as they will increase the significance of the listed building.

Since residential use in the 21st century is not the same as residential use in the 19th century, No 27 must be altered to provide suitable, modern facilities and services to ensure its viability as a family dwelling. Such alterations are necessary to provide bathrooms and improve circulation and flexibility of space within the building, however they will cause some limited harm to the listed fabric. Others alterations such as the basement extension and the rebuilding of the ground floor extension have been designed to have no impact upon any historic fabric and will cause no harm to any historic fabric.

The benefits of the proposal are:

- Returning No 27 to its original use
- The comprehensive repair and upgrading of the buildings according to current conservation guidelines and methodologies.
- The replacement of inappropriate alterations and interiors with traditionally detailed elements.
- The creation of a flexible, large family residence facilities at No 27 with suitable, modern services and facilities.
- The creation of a family-sized, contemporary residence at No 21.
- The significance of the listed building and the conservation area will be more readily appreciable.
- The improvement of energy performance, in particular at 21 John Mews.

In conclusion, the minor harm caused by a few alterations proposed in this scheme is easily outweighed by the benefits both to the historic environment and the wider public. The scheme will maintain the building in full, active and viable use; this will ensure the

most significant element of the historic fabric – the street elevation – is maintained and preserved and there are no changes which will affect the overall significance of the heritage asset. The proposals should therefore be acceptable in terms of the NPPF.

Appendix I

Statutory List Description

TQ3082SE JOHN STREET 798-1/96/944 (West side) 24/10/51 Nos.22-28 (Consecutive) and attached railings [?]

GV II [?] Terrace of 7 houses. c1800-19.

Yellow and multi-coloured stock brick with stucco bands at 1st floor levels. Nos 27 & 28 with slated mansard roofs and dormers. 4 storeys and basements; Nos 27 & 28 with attics. 2 windows each; Nos 26 & 27, 3 windows each; No.28 double fronted with 5 windows. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes, most with glazing bars; 1st floors with cast-iron balconies, except No.28. Parapets. No.22: square-headed, architraved doorway with patterned rectangular fanlight and panelled door. INTERIOR: noted to retain reeded marble fireplaces on ground and 1st floors. Stairs with square balusters. No.23: similar doorway to No.22. INTERIOR: noted to retain reeded marble fireplaces on 1st and 2nd floors (original centres covered in). No.24: similar doorway to No.22. INTERIOR: noted to retain marble fireplaces with original centres on ground floor. No.25: similar doorway to No.22. INTERIOR: noted to retain marble fireplaces on ground floor. Good marble fireplace 1st floor front room with bas relief on front panel, reeded and with rosettes; original iron centre. Nos 26 & 27: round-arched doorways with reeded doorframes, lion mask stops, mutule cornice-heads, patterned radial fanlights and panelled doors. No.27 with lamp-holder incorporated in fanlight. No.26 with fluted lead rainwater head. No.28: round-arched doorway with attached Doric columns carrying entablature; patterned radial fanlight and panelled door. Cornice and blocking course. Wrought-iron overthrow lamp-holder. Return to Northington Street with 1 window and mid C19 entrance with stucco surround and console-bracketed cornice. Dentilled cornices. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas.

[?]

Appendix II

Relevant Planning Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990

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

Section 66 (1) states: *'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'*

Section 72(1) of the above Act states that *'with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area'*.

The NPPF

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable*

- *communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

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

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

English Heritage Guidance

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

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

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

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

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

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

And:

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

The London Plan

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

Specifically, the Plan includes the following relevant policies:

Policy 7.8: Heritage Assets and Archaeology

Strategic

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

Planning decisions

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

Policy 7.9: Heritage-led regeneration

Strategic

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

Planning decisions

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

Camden Local Plan

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

DP24 – Securing high quality design

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

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

DP25 – Conserving Camden’s heritage

CONSERVATION AREAS

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

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

Camden’s Core Strategy states the following regarding heritage:

CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

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

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

Bloomsbury Conservation Area

The conservation area appraisal contains the following relevant descriptions of John Street:

5.174 Bedford Row, Doughty Street and John Street are wide thoroughfares characterised by larger properties. There is a progression in scale (and grandeur) from Millman Street, through Great James Street to Bedford Row. There is no planned open space in the sub area, although the more formal streets are characterised by regularly spaced street trees, planted at regular intervals in the pavement.

5.178 Although once primarily residential, the area now has a mixture of uses. The main and secondary thoroughfares (John Street, Doughty Street, Bedford Row, Rugby Street and Great James Street) are dominated by office uses but retain some residential uses (in particular in Millman Street). Throughout the sub area, there is an increasing trend to return townhouses to their original use as single family dwellings

5.182 The townhouses along John Street, Doughty Street and Guilford Street are of significance as they are almost complete Georgian streets, lined with terraces. John Street dates from the mid 18th century, whilst Doughty Street and Guilford Street span the late 18th century to the early 19th century.