



Built Heritage Statement

**Arran House Hotel
77—79 Gower Street
Bloomsbury
WC1E 6HJ**

**Victor House Hotel Ltd.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Arran House Hotel, 77-79 Gower Street WC1E 6HJ

This appraisal has been prepared by CgMs on behalf of Victor House Hotel Ltd. and considers the impact of the proposed development on Arran House Hotel, 77-79 Gower Street, Bloomsbury, WC1E 6HJ, henceforth referred to as 'the Site'.

The application relates to the proposed installation of en suites to all rooms throughout the hotel, and a basement extension to the rear of the Site to improve and upgrade its current run down appearance.

The Site is located on the west side of Gower Street, London Borough of Camden. It is 300 metres east of Goodge Street Underground Station. Large UCL buildings dominate the immediate area. The hotel comprises two terraced townhouses linked together as one property with internal access between them. The townhouses date to the end of the eighteenth century.

The Site is listed as part of a single listing for Numbers 51 to 85 Gower Street. It is also located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. There are 28 listed buildings within 200 metres of the Site boundaries, however as the proposals primarily involve internal works there will be no impact on the setting of these buildings and they will not be assessed within this report.

This report will therefore present a summary of the relevant legislative framework and planning policy at national, strategic and local levels, with special regard to that which relates to development affecting the settings of heritage assets. It will also provide an assessment of the history and the significance of the site and its surroundings, as well as an assessment of the impact of the described proposals.

This report finds that the proposals for the Site are in accordance with the relevant local and national planning policies and guidance and precedents set at neighbouring properties and the proposals should therefore be found acceptable on heritage grounds.



Figure 1: Aerial view of Gower Street with the Site, 77-79 Gower Street, indicated in red outline.



Figure 2: Arran House Hotel, Gower Street.



Figure 3: Location within a simplified map of London.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 LEGISLATION AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The current policy system identifies, through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), that applications should consider the potential impact of development on Heritage Assets. This term includes both designated heritage assets, which possess a statutory designation (for example listed buildings, conservation areas, and registered parks and gardens), as well as non-designated heritage assets.

Legislation

Where any development may affect designated or non-designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure proposed works are developed and considered with due regard for their impact on the historic environment. This extends from primary legislation under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The relevant legislation in this case extends from Section 16 of the 1990 Act which states that in considering applications for listed building consent, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the Listed Building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Furthermore, Section 72 of the 1990 Act states that in exercising all planning functions, local planning authorities must have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing Conservation Areas.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published March 2012

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 27 March 2012, is the principal document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It has purposefully been created to provide a framework within which local people and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) can produce their own distinctive Local and Neighbourhood Plans which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities. The NPPF should therefore be approached as a piece of guidance in drawing up these plans.

When determining Planning Applications the NPPF directs LPAs to apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development; the 'golden thread' which is expected to run through their plan-making and

decision-making. It must be noted however that this is expected to apply except where this conflicts with other policies contained within the NPPF, including those relating to the protection of designated heritage assets. (Paragraph 14)

Section 7, 'Requiring Good Design' reinforces the importance of good design in achieving sustainable development, by ensuring the creation of inclusive and high quality places. This section of the NPPF affirms, in paragraph 58, the need for new design to function well and add to the quality of the area in which it is built; establish a strong sense of place; and respond to local character and history, reflecting the built identity of the surrounding area.

Section 12, 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment', Paragraphs 126-141, relate to developments that have an affect upon the historic environment. These policies provide the framework to which local authorities need to refer when setting out a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment in their Local Plans.

The NPPF advises local authorities to take into account the following points when drawing up strategies for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and preserving them in a viable use consistent with their conservation;
- The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that the conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- The desirability of new development in making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;
- Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

These considerations should be taken into account when determining planning applications, and in addition, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality, should be considered.

The guidance contained within Section 12, 'Conserving and enhancing the

historic environment', Paragraphs 126-141, relate to the historic environment, and developments which may have an effect upon it. These policies provide the framework to which local authorities need to refer when setting out a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment in their Local Plans.

In order to determine applications for development, Paragraph 128 states that LPAs should require applicants to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected and the contribution made by their setting. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the significance of the asset and sufficient to understand the impact of the proposal on this significance. According to Paragraph 129, LPAs should also identify and assess the significance of an heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal and should take this assessment into account when considering any impact upon the heritage asset.

Paragraphs 132 to 136 consider the impact of a proposed development upon the significance of a heritage asset: Paragraph 132 emphasises the need for proportionality in decision making, and identifies that when a new development is proposed, the weight given to the conservation of a heritage asset should be proportionate to its importance, with greater weight given to those assets of higher importance. Paragraph 134 states that where less than substantial harm is proposed to a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, which include securing the asset's viable optimum use.

With regard to Conservation Areas, it is acknowledged in Paragraph 138 of the NPPF that not all aspects of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. This allows some flexibility for sustainable development to take place in or near Conservation Areas, without causing harm to the overall heritage significance of the heritage asset.

National Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (DCLG, March 2014)

Guidance has recently been adopted in order to support the NPPF. It reiterates that conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle. It states that

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conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change that requires a flexible and thoughtful approach, and further that neglect and decay of heritage assets is best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Where complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim should then be to capture and record the evidence of the heritage asset's significance, and make the interpretation publically available. If works to a heritage asset include the complete or partial loss of a key element to the heritage asset, these must be identified prior to any harm likely to be caused.

Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. An important consideration should be whether the proposed works adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset's special architectural or historic merit. It is the degree of harm rather than the scale of development that is to be assessed. Substantial harm is stated to be a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the NPPF.

Harm may arise from works to the heritage asset or from development within its setting. *Setting* is stated to include the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced, and may be more extensive than its curtilage. A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (English Heritage, 2008)

Conservation Principles outlines English Heritage's approach to the sustainable management of the historic environment. While primarily intended to ensure consistency in English Heritage's own advice and guidance through the planning process, the document is commended to local authorities to ensure that all decisions about change affecting the historic environment are informed and sustainable.

This document was published in line with the philosophy of PPS5, yet

remains relevant with that of the current policy regime in the emphasis placed upon the importance of understanding significance as a means to properly assess the effects of change to heritage assets. The guidance describes a range of heritage values which enable the significance of assets to be established systematically, with the four main 'heritage values' being: evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal. The Principles emphasise that 'considered change offers the potential to enhance and add value to places...it is the means by which each generation aspires to enrich the historic environment' (Paragraph 25).

Good Practice Guide for Local Heritage Listing (English Heritage, May 2012)

This document offers a comprehensive guide to local heritage listing in England and provides good practice in developing a new local heritage list, or making improvements to an existing one. In order to remain flexible enough to respond to local needs, decisions on the way in which assets are identified, and the system adopted for managing the local heritage list, are matters for LPAs and their communities.

In terms of the assessment procedures to qualify a building/structure for local heritage listing, nominated assets will need to meet the requirements of the selection criteria. Where possible assessment processes, including public consultation, should be relied on to identify errors or inaccuracies in supporting information. It is also important to identify assets at the assessment stage that should not be added to the local heritage list.

Selection panels offer an effective way in which to independently assess nominated assets. Membership should be drawn from a representative cross-section of the community and not restricted to professionals. The panel's primary responsibility will be the production of a shortlist that can be presented for public consultation. It may occasionally be necessary to seek specialist advice when assessing a particular asset type. The first source of expert knowledge will usually be from within the local authority, with external specialists supplementing this expertise where necessary.

Overview: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning

The PPS5 Practice Guide was withdrawn on 25 March 2015 and has been replaced with three separate Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (GPA's) published by English Heritage (now Historic England). Historic Environment *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1 (GPA1): The Historic Environment in Local Plans* provides guidance to local planning authorities to help them make well informed and effective local plans. This was published on 25 March 2015. *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (GPA2): Managing Significance in Decision-Making* was published on 27 March 2015. This document includes technical advice on the repair and restoration of historic buildings and alterations to heritage assets to guide local planning authorities, owners and practitioners and other interested parties. Published on the 25 March 2015, *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (GPA 3): The Setting of Heritage Assets* replaces English Heritage's previous guidance which was published in 2011. The Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes are intended to assist councils, owners, applicants and practitioners implement the historic environment policies in the NPPF and the related guidance in the Planning Practice Guidance.

In accordance with the NPPF, the first three adopted GPA's emphasise that the information and assessment work required in support of plan-making, heritage protection, applications for planning permission and listed building consent should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected and the impact on the significance of those heritage assets.

At present, there are some gaps in the guidance formally provided by PPS5 Practice Guide. It is hoped that these gaps will be filled by the emerging *Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 4: Enabling Development and Heritage Assets*, and the two Historic Environment Advice Notes entitled *Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (HEA 1)* and *Making Changes to Heritage Assets (HEA 2)*, for which the consultation process finished on 17 April 2015. If, as predicted, these documents are adopted in 2015, the resultant suite of advice notes will completely replace the guidance set out in the former

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PPS5 document. Each of the aforementioned documents are detailed further beneath.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 1 (GPA1): The Historic Environment in Local Plans

This advice note focuses on the importance of identifying heritage policies within Local Plans. The advice stresses the importance of formulating Local Plans that are based on up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area, including the historic environment, as set out by the NPPF. The document provides advice on how information about the local historic environment can be gathered, emphasising the importance of not only setting out known sites, but in understanding their value (i.e. significance). This evidence should be used to define a positive strategy for the historic environment and the formulation of a plan for the maintenance and use of heritage assets and for the delivery of development including within their setting that will afford appropriate protection for the assets) and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The document gives advice on how the heritage policies within Local Plans should identify areas that are inappropriate for development as well as defining specific Development Management Policies for the historic environment. It also suggests that a heritage Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in line with Paragraph 153 of the NPPF can be a useful tool to amplify and elaborate on the delivery of the positive heritage strategy in the Local Plan.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 2 (GPA2): Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment

This document provides advice on numerous ways in which decision-taking in the historic environment could be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to its significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the

significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information and is as follows:

1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;
2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change; and
6. Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

The advice reiterates that heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Assessment of the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting at an early stage can assist the planning process in informed decision-taking. The document sets out the recommended steps for assessing significance and the impact of development proposals upon it, including examining the asset and its setting and analysing local policies and information sources. In assessing the impact of a development proposal on the significance of a heritage asset the document emphasises that the cumulative impact of incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change. Crucially, the nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording which may be necessary.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 (GPA3): The Setting of Heritage Assets

This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document is an update to guidance previously published by English Heritage *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2011) in order to ensure

that it is fully compliant with the NPPF and is designed to aid practitioners with the implementation of national policies and guidance relating to the historic environment found within the NPPF and PPG. The guidance is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 document and does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.

As with the NPPF the document defines setting as 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve'. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset nor a heritage designation and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.

While setting is largely a visual term, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset, the way in which a heritage asset is experienced, can also be affected by other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour, while setting may also incorporate perceptual and associational attributes pertaining to the heritage asset's surroundings.

This document provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regard to the management of proposed development and the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals. It is further stated that changes within the setting of a heritage asset may have positive or neutral effects. It is stated that the contribution made to the significance of heritage assets by their settings will vary depending on the nature of the heritage asset and its setting and that different heritage assets may have different abilities to accommodate change within their settings without harming the significance of the

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asset and therefore setting should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Although not prescriptive in setting out how this assessment should be carried out, noting that any approach should be demonstrably compliant with legislation, national policies and objectives, English Heritage recommend using the '5-step process' in order to assess the potential affects of a proposed development on the setting and significance of a heritage asset, with this 5-step process continued from the 2011 guidance:

1. Identification of heritage assets which are likely to be affected by proposals;
2. Assessment of whether and what contribution the setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset;
3. Assessing the effects of proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset;
4. Maximising enhancement and reduction of harm on the setting of heritage assets; and
5. The final decision about the acceptability of proposals.

The guidance reiterates the NPPF in stating that where developments affecting the setting results in 'substantial' harm to a heritage asset's significance, this harm can only be justified if the developments delivers substantial public benefit and that there is no other alternative (i.e. redesign or relocation).

Strategic Policy

The London Plan: The Spatial Development Strategy for London Consolidated with Alterations since 2011 (Greater London Authority, March 2015)

On 10 March 2015, the Mayor of London published adopted *The London Plan: The Spatial Development Strategy for London Consolidated with Alterations since 2011*. From this date, the policies set out in this document are operative as formal alterations to the London Plan the Mayor's spatial development strategy and form part of the development plan for Greater London. In particular, the document encourages the enhancement of the historic environment and looks

favourably upon developments which seek to maintain the setting of heritage assets.

Policy 7.8 *Heritage Assets and Archaeology* seeks to record, maintain and protect the city's heritage assets in order to utilise their potential within the community. Revisions in the October 2013 edition include amendment and split to Paragraph 7.31 of this policy. Essentially, the revised policy requires that developments which have an affect upon heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

Policy 7.4 *Local Character* requires new developments to have regard to the local architectural character in terms of form, massing, function and orientation. This is supported by Policy 7.8 in requiring local authorities in their LDF policies, to seek to maintain and enhance the contribution of built, landscaped and buried heritage to London's environmental quality, cultural identity and economy, as part of managing London's ability to accommodate change and regeneration.

Policy 7.9 *Heritage Led Regeneration* advises that regeneration schemes should 'identify and make use of heritage assets and reinforce the qualities that make them significant'. It is recognised that heritage assets should be put to a use suitable for their conservation and role within sustainable communities and that successful schemes can help stimulate environmental, economic and community regeneration.

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Local Policy

Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025, adopted 2010

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a group of documents setting out planning strategy and policies in the London Borough of Camden. The principle LDF document is the Core Strategy, which sets out key elements of the Council's planning vision and strategy for the borough and contains strategic policies. The following Core Strategy policies relate to development concerning the historic environment in the borough:

Policy CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage seeks to ensure that places and buildings are attractive, safe and accessible by: requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character; 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; promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces; seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible; protecting important local views.

Camden Development Policies 2010-2025, adopted November 2010

As part of Camden Council's LDF, Development Policies 2010-2025 set out detailed planning criteria that are used to determine applications for planning permission in the borough. Policies pertinent to the historic environment include the following and are to be read in conjunction with the Core Strategy document:

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.

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, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention; not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area it is in; and preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

With regard to the setting of Listed buildings this policy states that the Council will not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of Listed buildings. Additionally, the Council will seek to protect other designated or undesignated heritage assets including: Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and London Squares.

Planning Guidance

CPG 1 Design, adopted April 2011, amended September 2013

To support the policies of Camden's LDF, Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) forms a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), an additional "material consideration" in planning decisions, which is consistent with the adopted Core Strategy and the Development Policies. Following statutory consultation the Camden Planning Guidance documents (CPG1 to CPG8) replace Camden Planning Guidance 2006.

The Council formally adopted CPG1 Design on 6 April 2011, which was subsequently updated on 4 September 2013 following statutory consultation to include Section 12 on artworks, statues and memorials. This guidance applies to all applications which may affect any element of the historic environment and therefore may require planning permission, or conservation area or listed

building consent.

With regard to proposed development within, or affecting the setting of, conservation areas in the Borough, Council will only grant permission that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area. When determining an application, guidance on such matters are set out in the Core Strategy policy CS14 and Development Policy DP24, as well as that in conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans. Totally or substantially demolishing a building or structure in a conservation area is deemed a criminal offence without first getting consent from the Council. Also, demolition would not normally be allowed without substantial justification, in accordance with criteria set out in the NPPF.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Basements and Lightwells DPD

The latest version of the guidance on Basements and Lightwells, CPG4, is dated July 2015.

It recognises that there 'can be benefits from basement development in terms of providing additional accommodation' and identifies considerations including impact on the amenity of neighbours, groundwater and surface run-off, architectural character of buildings and surrounding areas including gardens and trees and that conservation area character is preserved or enhanced' (paragraph 2.3).

The definition of 'larger basement extensions' include those which 'extend outside the footprint of the building'. It notes that these can have a greater impact on the water environment and can reduce the ability of the garden to support trees and other vegetation (paragraph 2.5). It notes that the Council's preferred approach is for basements to be no more than one storey and not to extend beyond the footprint. The application proposal is one storey but would extend beyond the footprint. The policy does not preclude basements in such circumstances but it is relevant to address the issues raised in that section of the guidance and we do so in the Planning Assessment section below and in the accompanying heritage statement.

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In the case of listed buildings the guidance states that 'applicants will be required to consider whether basement and underground development preserves the existing fabric, structural integrity, layout, interrelationships and hierarchy of spaces and any features that are architecturally or historically important... the acceptability of a basement extension to a listed building will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the individual features of the building and its special interest' (paragraph 2.9). It goes on to suggest that 'applicants should contact the Council at the earliest opportunity to discuss such proposals' and this pre-application submission follows that advice.

On trees and landscaping, the guidance suggests at paragraph 2.16 that 1 m of soil above a basement would be expected (an increase from 0.5 in the Development Policies document) and that 'the use of SUDS is sought in all basement developments that extend beyond the footprint of the original building'.

The guidance states that planning applications will be required to be accompanied by a Basement Impact Assessment (BIA).

3.0 ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC APPRAISAL

3.1 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF BLOOMSBURY

Bloomsbury represents a period of London's early expansion northwards, dating from the mid-17th century, which continued through the Georgian and Regency periods to around 1840. This period of expansion, which followed the Plague in 1665 and the Great Fire in 1666, replaced a series of medieval manors on the periphery of London and their associated agricultural and pastoral land. The first swathe of building created a mix of uses, however later expansion northwards focused on providing grander residential districts for wealthy families.

This was carried out speculatively by a number of builders on leases from major landowners and followed a consistent form with terraced townhouses constructed on a grid pattern of streets and landscaped squares. The progression of development across the Conservation Area illustrates the subtle changes in taste and style in domestic architecture that occurred throughout the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. The Victorian era saw the establishment of University College and an expansion in specialist hospitals around Queen Square.

Much of the Bloomsbury area was held by the Bedford estate, which held 112 acres in the 18th century. The holdings of the Duke of Bedford originated as the estate of Thomas Wriothesley, later Earl of Southampton, who acquired them at the dissolution of the monasteries in 1545. This estate was inherited by Rachel (née Wriothesley), daughter of the fourth Earl of Southampton, when the Southampton title became extinct. It passed to the Dukes of Bedford through her marriage.

It was the widow of the fourth Duke, Gertrude Leveson-Gower, who was a prime mover in the residential development of the estate in the late eighteenth century. Gower Street is named after her. Much of this development was in the form of "wide streets and grand squares fit for the gentry". It was a well-timed development; the Bedford Estate's Bloomsbury rental was worth about £13,800 in 1805, but jumped to £17,242 in 1806 because of all the new buildings.

Following a slump in the 1830s the area revived as a popular location for institutions. The area saw a great deal of rebuilding after the 99 year leases from the 1770s fell in; the Bedford estate seized the opportunity for wholesale redevelopment of streets no longer suited to their location. For example the mews properties rear of the Site were torn down in 1880. The vacant land was mostly let to institutions for rebuilding from this time.



Figure 4: 1835 Gower Street, looking south from Grafton Street.



Figure 6: 1840, proposed plan for of Lord Southampton's estate.



Figure 5: King George and Queen Mary ride past 10 Gower Street in the early 20th century. Note that the windows have been replaced with large Edwardian panes, and no longer retain the original 8-pane windows shown in figure 6.

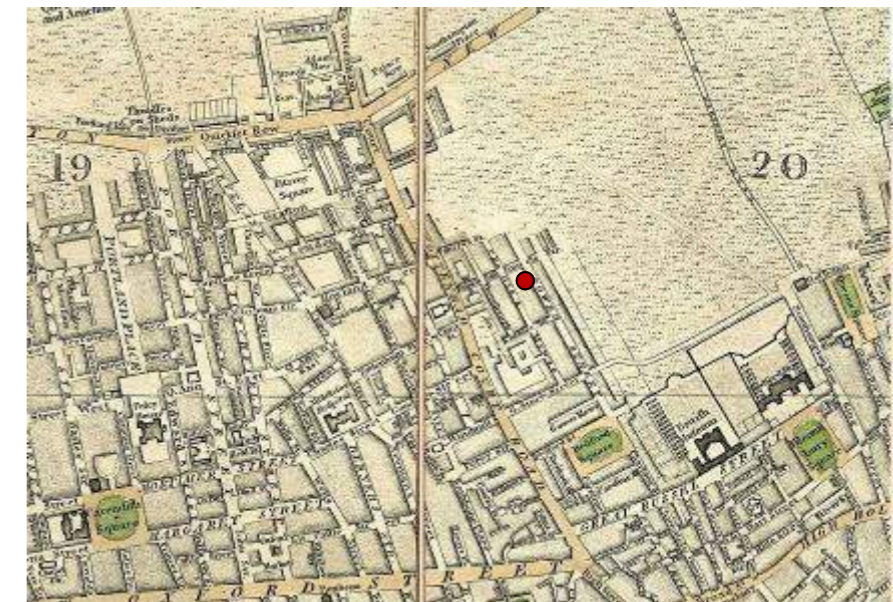


Figure 7: 1795 Cary's New And Accurate Plan Of London And Westminster.

3.2 HISTORICAL MAP PROGRESSION



Figure 8: 1875-8 OS Map. In 1880 the mews buildings rear of the Site were demolished.

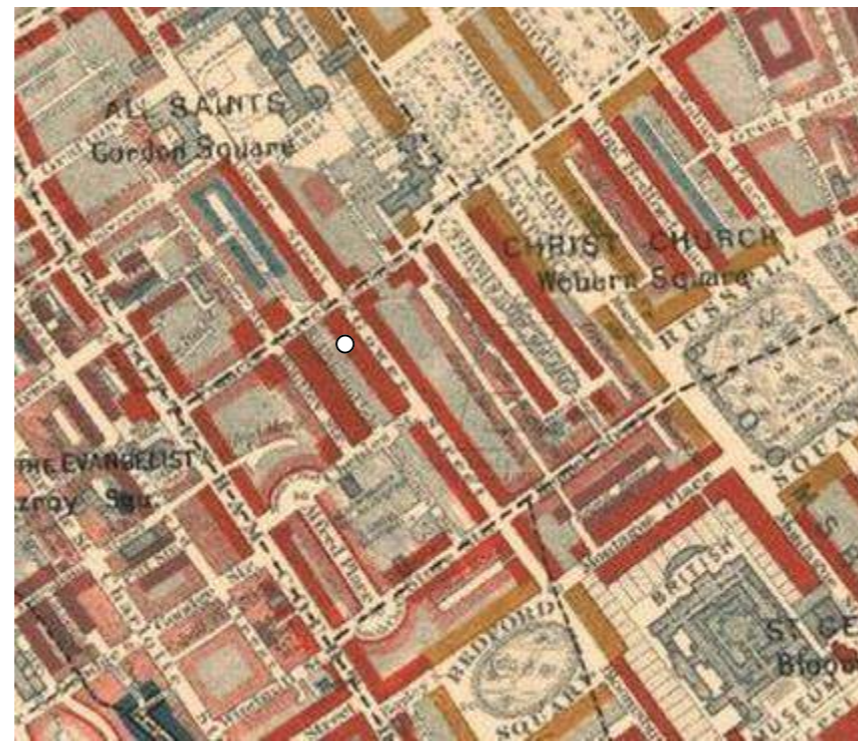


Figure 9: 1898 Charles Booth Poverty Map. Site is 2nd highest: 'Middle Class—well to do'. Pink: 'Fairly comfortable', and orange: 'Upper Middle and Upper Class—Wealthy'.

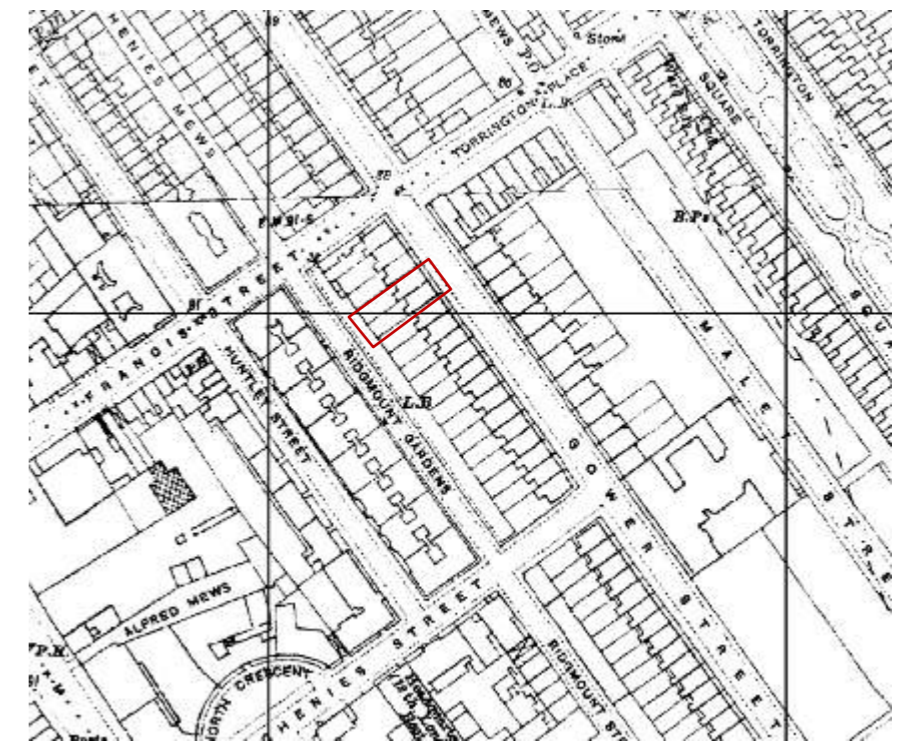


Figure 10: 1916 OS Map

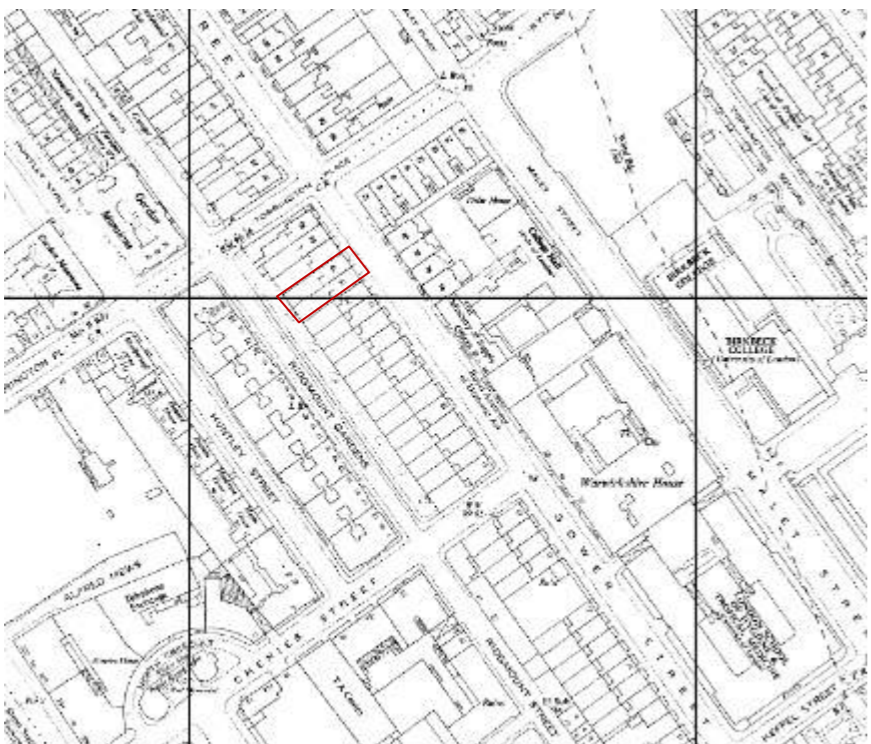


Figure 11: 1952-3 OS Map



Figure 12: 1966-79 OS Map



Figure 13: 2015 Location Plan.

3.3 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF 77-79 GOWER STREET

The Site is within 61-85 Gower Street, a group of properties developed in a single period of development with a completion date of 1787. Gower Street itself had been developed from 1780.

The first occupant of No. 77 was resident by 1792. This was one William Blewart, an East India merchant. No. 79 was on its second resident by 1796, one William Dixon, a captain in the Royal Navy. Both were family dwellings for the wealthy; servants would have been employed, and at this time there was a mews block to support these functions.

The property changed hands through a number of gentlemen ranging from merchants and lawyers to sculptors and musicians—including the eccentric Robert Cooke from 1806, who became master of Westminster Abbey choir. In the mid-19th century, however, No.77 became the surgery and consulting rooms of a dentist. It is likely to have also served as a home for him and his family, however it is an indicator of a wider move in the area away from a purely residential neighbourhood to one more suited for institutional and office purposes. No.79 had by 1871 become a lodging-house.

The Bedford Estates records efforts to preserve the genteel residential character of the area in the mid-19th century, with efforts to 'prevent or at least discourage the conversion of dwelling houses into private hotels, boarding houses, institutions, offices, and shops' (Olsen, 1984). Efforts to retain the character of the area included preventing the passage of traffic with strategically placed gates (for one at the north end of Gower Street, see figure 4). These were removed by Act of Parliament in 1890.

A Goad insurance plan of 1980 shows the Site and its terrace as all still domestic residences. Indeed, the dentist proved short lived and No. 77 remained a single family dwelling until 1907 when it became a lodging-house run by one Franz Zugbaum. No.79 returned to domestic use in 1888 but returned to a lodging-house in 1900. These changes do not necessarily appear to have been sanctioned by the appropriate authorities as the Goad insurance plan of 1933 (see figure right), labels Nos. 77 and 79 as both remaining domestic residences. There are however neighbouring properties acknowledged as being in office or hotel use.

The use of these properties as lodging-houses in the first half of the 20th century is supported by the drainage plan of 1933, which shows two full



Figure 14: Typical original elevation Gower Street. Notice elaborate fanlight detail no longer extant to either building. Source: Survey of London.

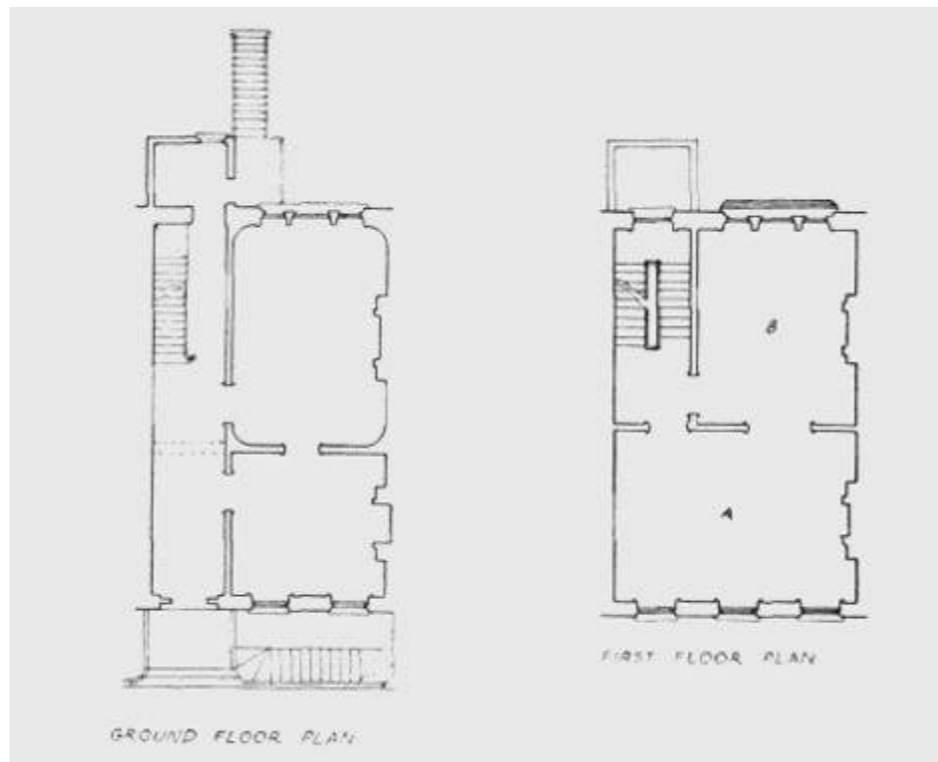


Figure 15: Typical original plan Gower Street. Source: Survey of London.

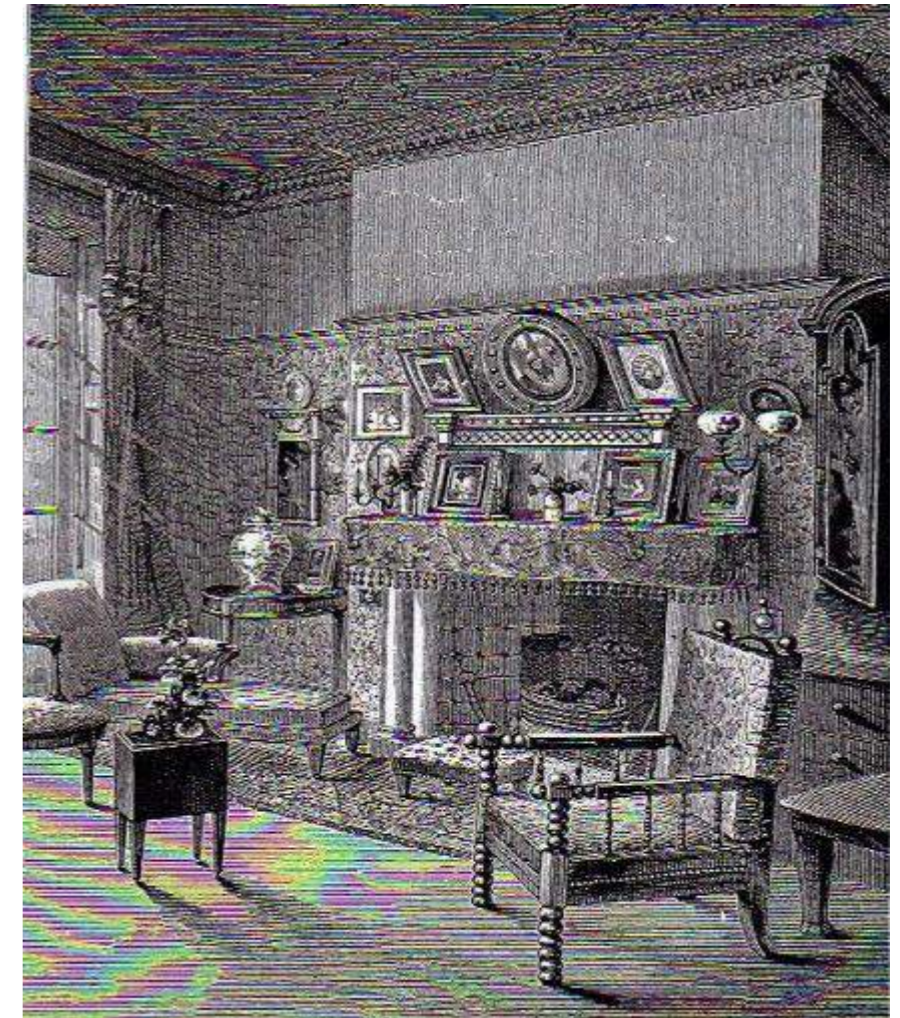


Figure 16: A Gower Street drawing room, 1875.

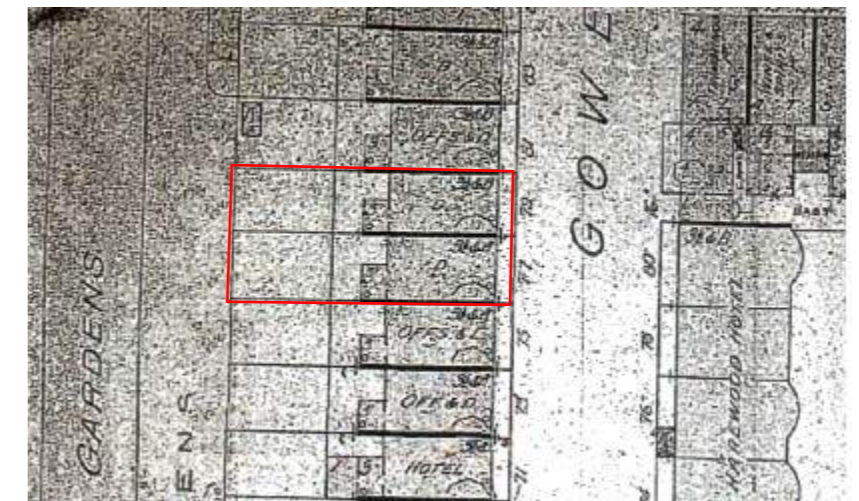


Figure 17: 1933 Goad Plan showing offices, hotels and domestic properties.

3.3 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF 77-79 GOWER STREET

bathrooms in the closet wing, and sinks in every room which could conceivably have been used as bedrooms, including the ground floor reception rooms. There also appears to have been internal partitions inserted to create extra bedrooms, as shown in the 1933 plans. This is certainly the case at first floor, and may also be the case at 2nd and 3rd floor.

The two lodging-houses were amalgamated after the Second World War by Anne Reavely, owner of No.79. The name Arran House first appears in 1958 in the Post Office Directory.

In 1973 permission was seemingly granted for the formation of openings between the properties at basement and 2nd floor levels. However no record of this permission can be found except as referred to in the Officer's Report ref. 2012/2825/L. This reference includes a date but no reference number.

In 1986 permission was refused for *internal alterations involving the installation at ground, 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors of purpose-built shower and bathroom units*. It is also noted that the property did not at this time have planning permission for use as a hotel, despite being in this use for over three quarters of a century at that time. It was considered at the time that the changes would have a detrimental impact on the character of the building. The decision does not seem to have taken account of the previous subdivision of rooms and the alterations required to amalgamate the two properties including the formation of openings, as permitted in 1973.

In 2008 retrospective planning permission was granted to the neighbouring hotel at 73-75 Gower Street for the installation of en-suite bathrooms throughout and other internal alterations including the alteration and insertion of partitions. The proposals were found acceptable in part because the property had previously undergone alterations—similar in fact to those now apparent at the Site, the Arran House Hotel.

In 2012 permission was granted for the sub-division of a room at basement level and the installation of en-suite facilities.

1924 No. 77

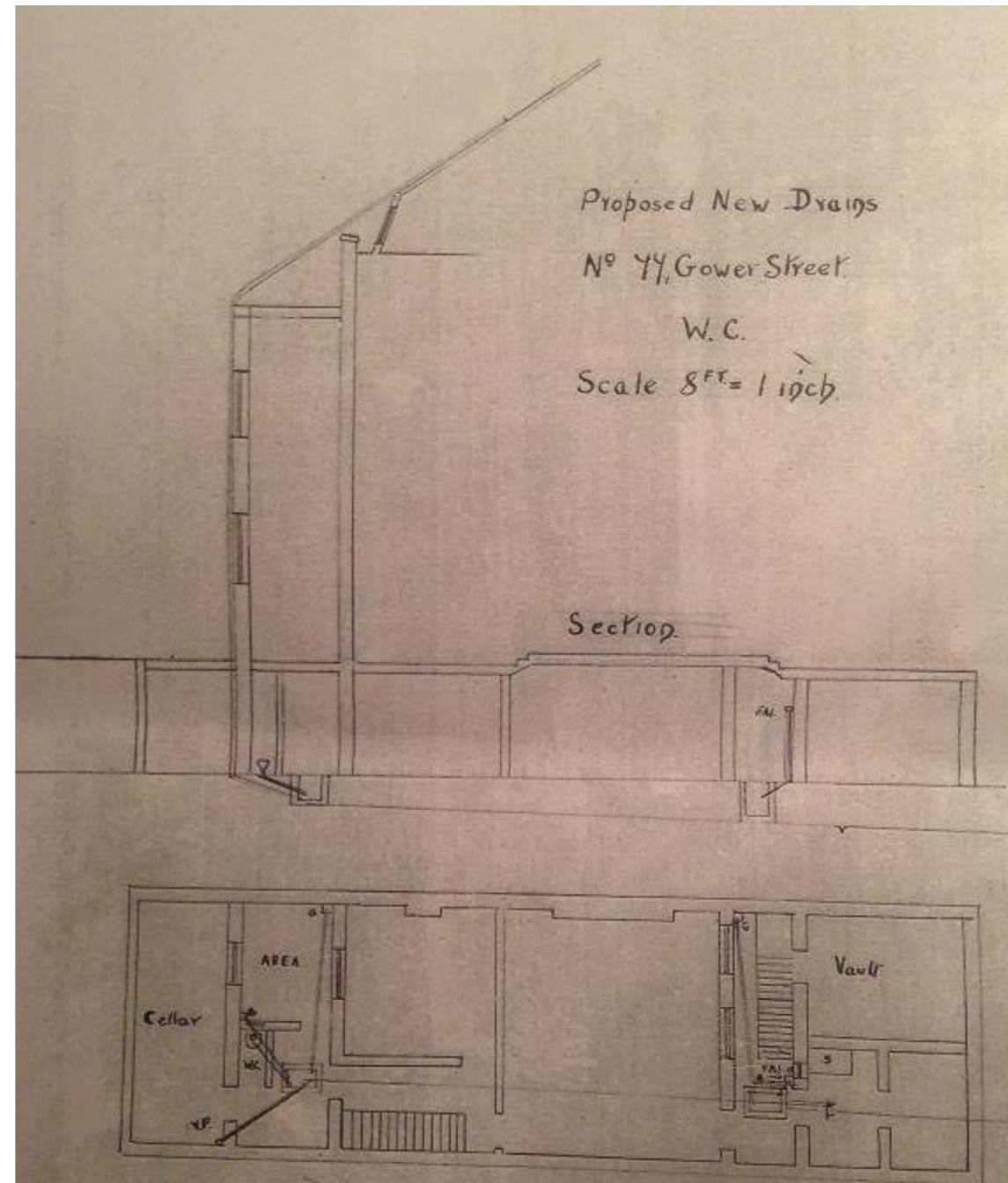


Figure 18: Section and plan of No. 77 showing room configuration and proposed drainage

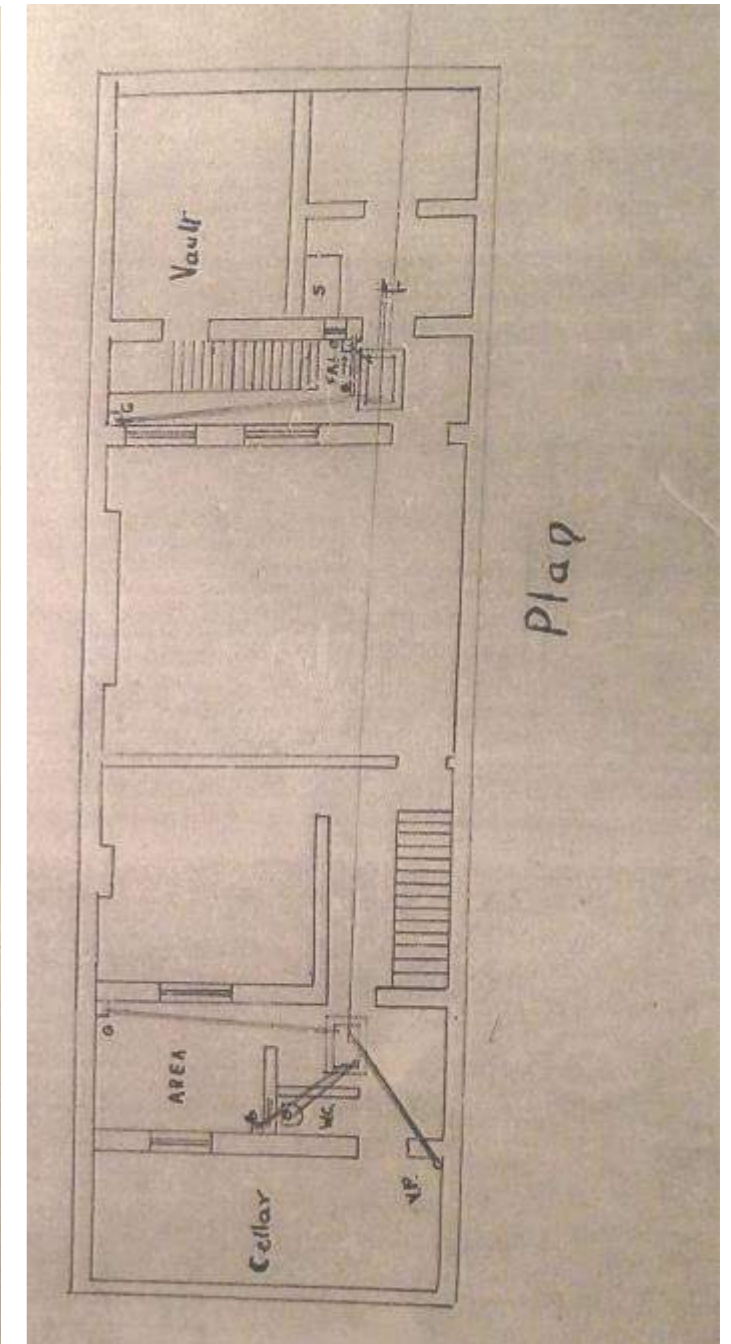


Figure 19: Plan of No. 77 showing room configuration and proposed drainage

3.3 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF 77-79 GOWER STREET

1933 No. 77

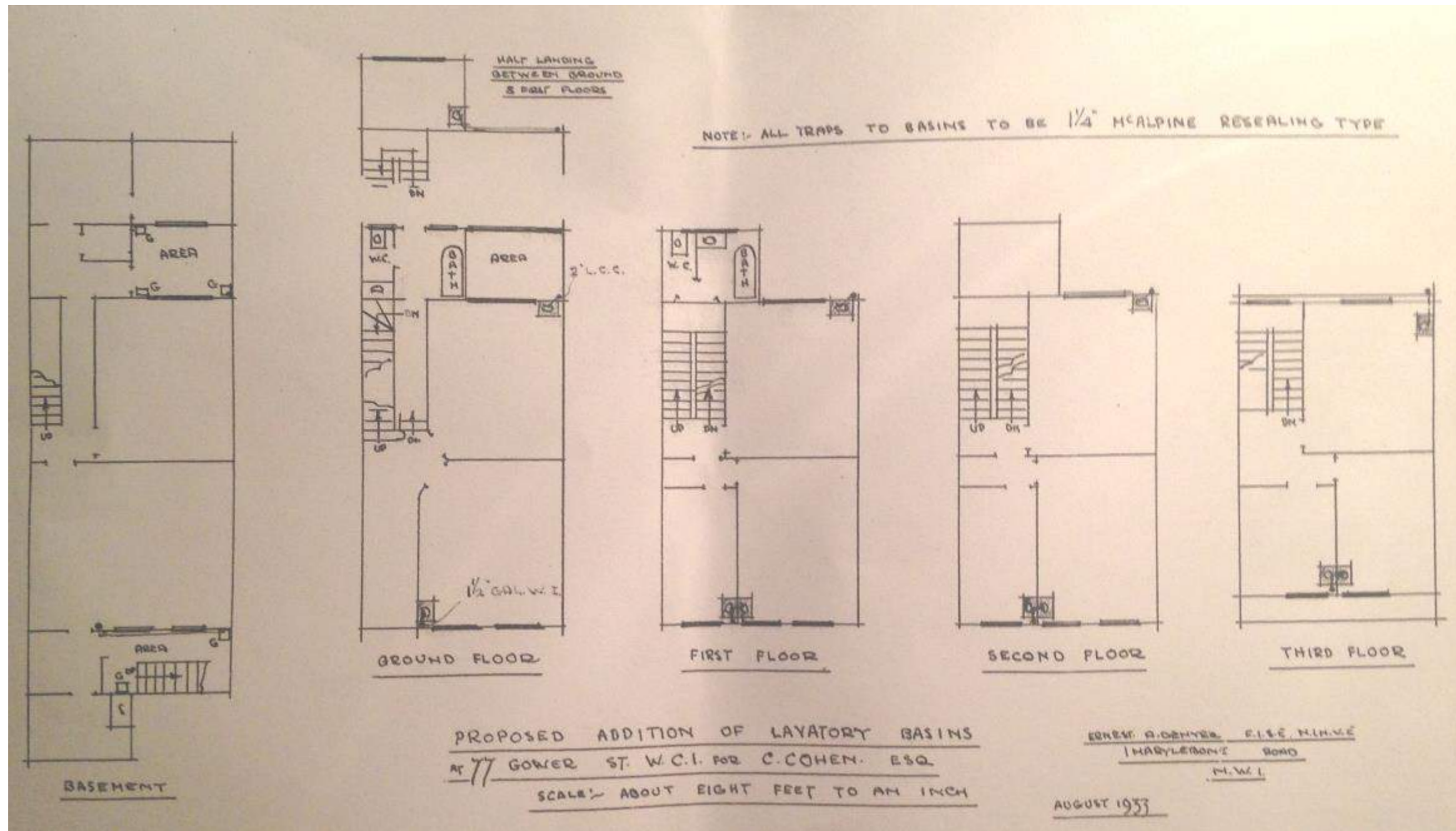


Figure 20: Plan showing the building has been subdivided at upper levels since the early 20th century

3.3 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF 77-79 GOWER STREET

1923 No. 79

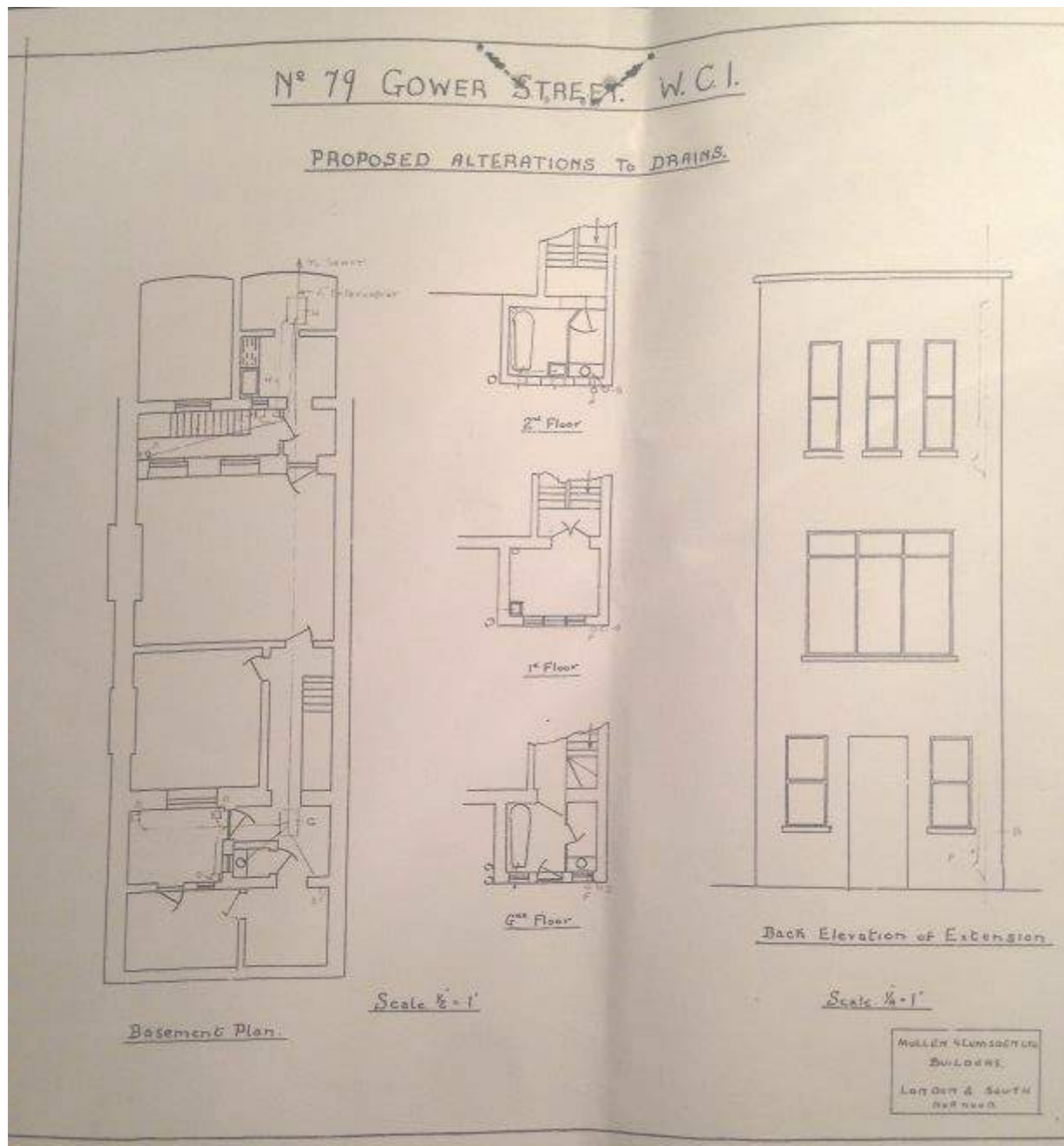


Figure 21: Note elevation is of the closet wing. The fenestration matches to the closet wing fenestration at No.77 in 1933.

3.4 SITE ASSESSEMENT: ARRAN HOUSE HOTEL

The Site, at Numbers 77-79, is located on the western side of Gower Street between Torrington Place and Chenies Street. Originally built as two separate family residences on five floors (including basement), internal links have been formed to create a single hotel building.

Exterior

The exterior of both buildings are almost identical to one another with the exception of No. 77 having two over two windows as opposed to one over one. Both buildings are three storeys in height with basement and attic. They are three bays wide with four inch recessed sash window as per the requirements of the 1774 Building Act.

Both buildings have plain fanlights above six panelled raised and fielded timber doors. Surrounding the doors on each building are restrained stone door surrounds of slightly differing designs with dentil cornice above. A plat band separates the ground floor from the first, a typical feature of an astylar terrace. Above are sash windows with dormer windows to attic.

Although the buildings are technically connected, comprising one hotel, their interior shall be dealt with separately for the sake of clarity.

Interior

77 Gower Street

Commencing at lower ground floor, the interior has been altered significantly with very little of historic or architectural interest remaining. The exception of this is the staircase which still retains its metal hand rail, , spindles and stone steps. The steps have unfortunately been clad in unsympathetic tiles however. The later addition to the rear underneath the garden, features nothing of historic or architectural interest. There is a plain door linking the rear kitchen room to No. 79. Flagstones survive to the rear garden area at this level.

At ground floor level, the hallway has undergone a number of modifications including the installation of a glazed lobby door, and Victorian ceramic tiles to the floor. Of interest in the hallway is the surviving original cornice which consists of repetitive mouldings including, a bucranium/swag/patera detail, a typical Adam detail of the period. The



Figure 22: View South along Gower Street showing No. 79 to the right and 77 to the left



Figure 23: The plan form of the building has been severely eroded through the lateral conversion of both properties, much to the detriment of the understanding of the buildings' forms



Figure 24: Modern plain doors are a characteristic feature in both buildings, here seen to the basement of No 77



Figure 25: In a number of locations partitions have been insensitively installed - here blocking the window to No. 77, further eroding the building's special interest

3.4 SITE ASSESSEMENT: ARRAN HOUSE HOTEL

ceiling reflects a Victorian intervention, being constructed of lincrustra.

The ground floor front room is one of the most intact within the building. The room retains its original waterleaf enriched cornice, beaded panelling to window aprons and shutter boxes (Figure 28). A Victorian ceiling rose can be seen to the centre of the ceiling. Most of the skirtings in this space are non original and the fireplace is a later addition. The rear room features an historic cornice of interest but no other features of merit. An en suite is located within the corner disrupting the room's original proportions. The closet wing to the rear features nothing of any historic or architectural interest.

One of the most interesting elements of the buildings is the rebated geometric, open string staircase which is typical of the age, constructed of soft wood spindles and mahogany hand rail. The ground floor is terminated in the curlicue fashion (Figure 26) The stair's original appearance has been eroded by the presence of modern partitioning used for fire compartmentalisation. The half landing features panelled door constructed in MDF and of little interest.

The first floor at this level has been extensively reconfigured. The original opening from the landing to the rear room has been blocked up and access to the front room is via a plain timber door with vision panel (figure 27). The front room now contains a corridor that links No. 79's front room to No. 77's. The original grand *piano nobile* is now divided into two spaces, further eroding its appearance. Part of the original cornice is visible in the corridor, although most of this has been replaced in the other enclosed rooms. The rear room still retains its original proportions and cornices albeit with a small toilet to the corner.

The second floor follows a similar form to the first albeit with a more subdivided front room. The top storey is a converted mansard and features nothing of architectural or historic merit.

79 Gower Street

The original plan form of No. 79 is almost identical to No. 77. At basement level this form has been heavily altered as approved in the 2012 listed building consent. This has resulted in much of the original plan form at this level being lost. Of significance here is the surviving stair and wrought



Figure 26: No. 77 Ground floor landing showing Victorian ceramic tile floor and plain geometric stair



Figure 27: No. 77, first floor landing, note original door opening lost to left of image, and original door no longer extant to front room



Figure 28: Original timber aprons survive below a number of windows



Figure 29: The historic installation of secondary glazing has had a detrimental side effect in the installation of unattractive perforated sound proofing where the original shutters were once located

3.4 SITE ASSESSEMENT: ARRAN HOUSE HOTEL

iron hand rail, both exposed and in a good state of repair (Figure 30). The later addition to the rear underneath the garden features nothing of historic or architectural interest.

At ground floor, the lobby entrance features a later tiled floor and the original newel post has been enclosed by a cumbersome foliage embellished detail. The front room features many features of historic interest and has had a later Victorian alcove insert separating it from the rear room. A bathroom has been installed in the corner affecting the plan form of the space. The rear room also features cornice details of interest and a bathroom is located within the corner of the room impacting on the original form of the room.

Access to the first floor is via a highly unattractive and inappropriate door with glass vision panel above. The original doorway into the rear room has now been blocked up and reads as a plain wall. Upon entering the space that would have originally been the front room, a lateral corridor appears providing access to No. 77. This intervention has completely ruined the original plan form of the building. This front room and rear room have been impacted upon by subdivision and the installation of bathrooms.

Progressing to the second floor, at half landing level, there are two toilets located in the closet wing which are accessed by panelled doors with stained glass windows above. These are later additions but do have some historic and architectural interest.

The second floor has limited interest with later addition Victorian picture rails and fireplaces with ceramic cheeks. Original timber window aprons can be found in the front and rear rooms. The spaces have been subdivided further eroding the legibility of their original plan form. Similar to No. 77, the attic storey features nothing of special interest with plain coving, dry lining and modern fireplaces throughout.



Figure 30: No. 79- the basement stair still retains its original wrought iron hand rail



Figure 32: No. 79's ground floor newel post has been inappropriately altered with this clumsy foliage clad element



Figure 31: Later Victorian alcove separating the front and rear room of No. 79



Figure 33: Small lobby entrance which has affected the plan form of the upper levels of both buildings.

3.5 CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT

Bloomsbury Conservation Area, designated in 1968, covers an area of approximately 160 hectares extending from Euston Road in the north to High Holborn and Lincoln’s Inn Fields in the south and from Tottenham Court Road in the west to King’s Cross Road in the east.

Sub-area 5 is described as an exemplary piece of late 18th century town planning, consisting of terraced housing built speculatively by a number of different builders to a plan produced by the Bedford Estate. The terrace frontages have a strong uniformity since they are of similar scale and proportion and share neo-classical architectural elements. The blocks maintain a continuous parapet line at roof level and banding at first-floor level. There is a strong urban grain: townhouses within terraces have consistent widths, containing three windows of vertical proportions.

The Conservation Area Appraisal states that the window opening are ‘*mostly sliding sashes subdivided into small panes by slender glazing bars*’, however this is not the pattern in Gower Street or at the Site where the original windows have been replaced from the early 20th century. Doorways do however mostly have semi-circular arches containing fanlights with decorative radiating glazing bars. The terraces in Bedford Square are the most ornate, whilst those in Gower Street tend to be plainer in architectural detail. Dating from 1775, Bedford Square is one of the most significant and complete examples of a Georgian square in London. Its national importance is acknowledged by the grade I listed status of all the townhouses fronting the square. The square is the centre piece of the Bedford Estate’s planned development which includes a series of interlinked streets and spaces and is a major focal point both along Gower Street and within the wider Bloomsbury area.

The square provides a tranquil space despite the traffic along Gower Street. Only the west side of Gower Street retains a substantial number of 18th-19th century properties, the east side having been largely replaced by institutional buildings associated with the expansion of University College London; however the strong linear character remains.

The west side of the street is characterised by the repeated yellow stock brick fronts with tuck pointing, fenestration pattern, window detailing, the frontage railings, stucco banding and parapets, chimney stacks and pots, and the shared height of the three storey blocks with mansard roofs. The most notable variation is the treatment of doorways.

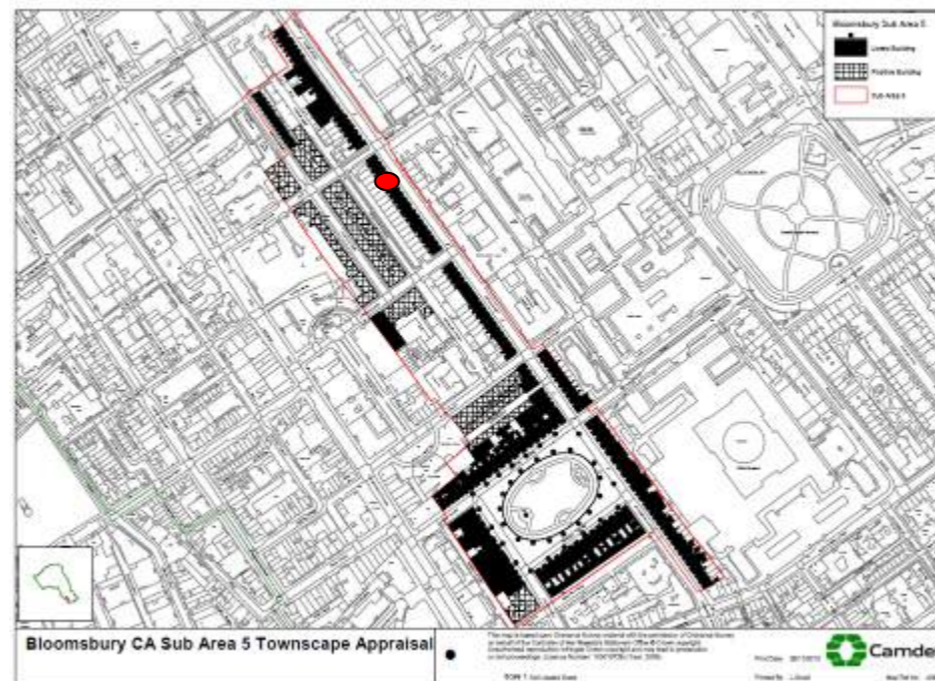


Figure 34: Sub-area 5 Conservation Area Map.



Figure 36: View of Bedford Square



Figure 35: View of Bedford Square.

4.0 PROPOSALS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

4.1 PROPOSALS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

The proposals seek to improve the visual appearance of the structures which are in great need of upgrading. The primary works seek to install a basement extension to the rear of the building for a kitchen and dining space, and internal alterations to improve the layout of the hotel and provide en-suite bathrooms throughout.

The creation of the hotel has resulted in the two buildings being linked internally at basement, first and second floor levels. This is not unusual in this location with adjacent Cavendish Hotel at 73-75 to the south having a similar layout. The lateral conversion has however, had the unfortunate side effect of reducing the legibility of the buildings' original plan forms.

Presently Arran House Hotel has 30 bedrooms with a ground floor reception area and a lounge in No.77. There is a small dining room and kitchen at basement level, also in No.77. The rear gardens have a run down, overgrown appearance. Originally these gardens would not have been so extensive as they would have originally contained mews houses, demolished in the 1880s.

The proposed changes to both Nos. 77-79 and the impact these have are outlined below:

Basement Level

No. 77 would see the division of the front room (currently a dining room) for two guest rooms. The kitchen to the rear room would also be converted and the existing lateral conversion blocked up. Although the subdivision of the front room presents an element of harm to the building, it is located in a room of limited significance, and the removal of the lateral access from the rear room is considered to be sufficient to outweigh that harm.

No. 79 would see the reconfiguration of modern partitioning in the front room to enable the incorporation of two rooms with en-suite facility the rear rooms would also contain individual rooms. No historic fabric would be affected by these proposals, with any alterations being undertaken to modern partitioning.

The proposed basement extension extends out the rear of both properties, and would be accessed via a jib door in both properties' rear store rooms. The installation of this addition is not considered to affect the special interest of the building and the new space would read as one room reflecting the buildings joint use.

Ground Floor Level

The general appearance of No. 77 at this level will remain the same,

although the existing rear reception room becomes a guest room and the front lounge area becomes a reception room. The main change here involves the removal of a small section of the party wall between the two properties. As the other lateral openings are proposed to be closed, this opening is essential for the proper functioning of the hotel. It is proposed that this opening be a jib door to reduce the visual impact of the proposals.

To the garden area part of the stock brick wall is to be widened and an stair will link the basement dining room to the ground floor.

First and Second Floor

In both Nos. 77 and 79, the proposals at the first and second floors are considered to present the main heritage benefits. The front rooms have been subdivided extensively on both floors and all the rear rooms have either been subdivided or contain bathrooms within their footprints, further affecting the plan form of these spaces.

The proposals seek to reconfigure these stud walls and more importantly, remove any evidence of lateral openings. In addition to this, they will remove insensitive detailed doors replacing them with accurate timber panelled replicas. The understanding of the original plan form will also be reintroduced with the installation of additional doorways off the landings, providing access to the rear rooms.

Third Floor

The habitable third floor is a modern intervention, the reconfiguration of this space is not considered to affect the special interest of the building due to it lacking any significance.

Stair

The internal alterations proposed also present a major consequential benefit in restoring both staircases to their original appearance. At present they have been boarded up, removing any appreciation of their geometric grandeur. By ensuring the new rooms are compliant with fire regulations, the stair boarding can be removed, enhancing a key heritage feature of the building.

General

The principle of installing wet services into the building has already been established as shown in the 1933 plans that shows basins on all levels.

Where ever possible, original cornicing and skirting will be installed to match original.



Figure 37: No. 79 Basement stair. Note inappropriate door opening to the left linking No. 77. The proposals would seek the removal of this element restoring the original separation to the right and 77 to the left



Figure 38: Modern fire place to No. 77 front room. To the right of this, a jib door is proposed providing access to No 79.

4.0 PROPOSALS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

4.1 PROPOSALS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

As previously mentioned consent was granted in 2012 for the subdivision of No. 79 at lower ground floor to provide two rooms with en-suite facilities. As the current proposals at this level at No 77 are broadly similar, the Council's comments are considered to be still relevant. These were:

'The installation of partitioning will impact on the original room layout at this level, but it is considered that, in this area of lesser significance, that the installation of demountable partitioning will not have a significantly detrimental impact on the building's overall special interest.'

As such the proposals at lower ground floor in No. 77 in this instance are considered to be acceptable.

With respect of the other floors it has been demonstrated that the proposals seek to upgrade and improve the quality of the hotel whilst doing so in a manner that is compliant with the NPPF, Camden's Local Plan and national legislation.

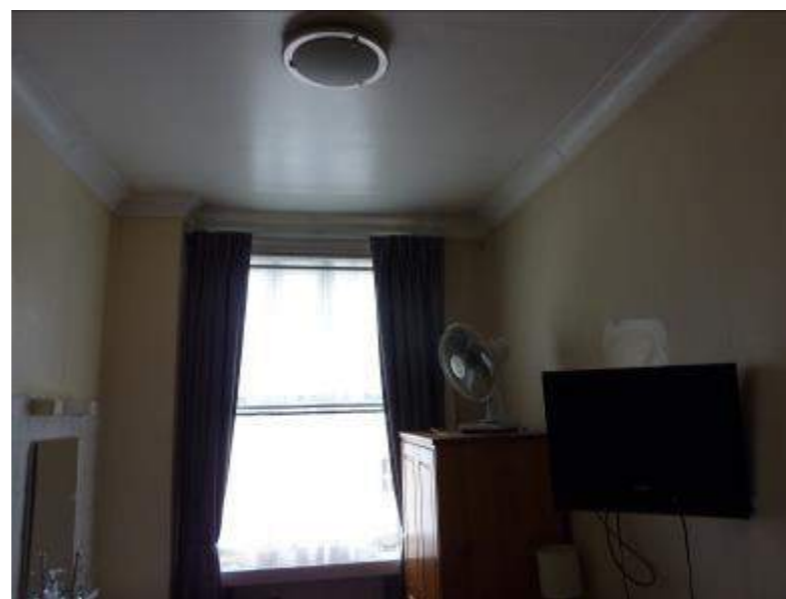


Figure 39: The grand appearance of the front rooms have been completely undermined by modern partition with, in many places, poor cornice details.



Figure 41: The first floor plan showing blocked up lateral access and opening up of original doorway from landing to rear room.

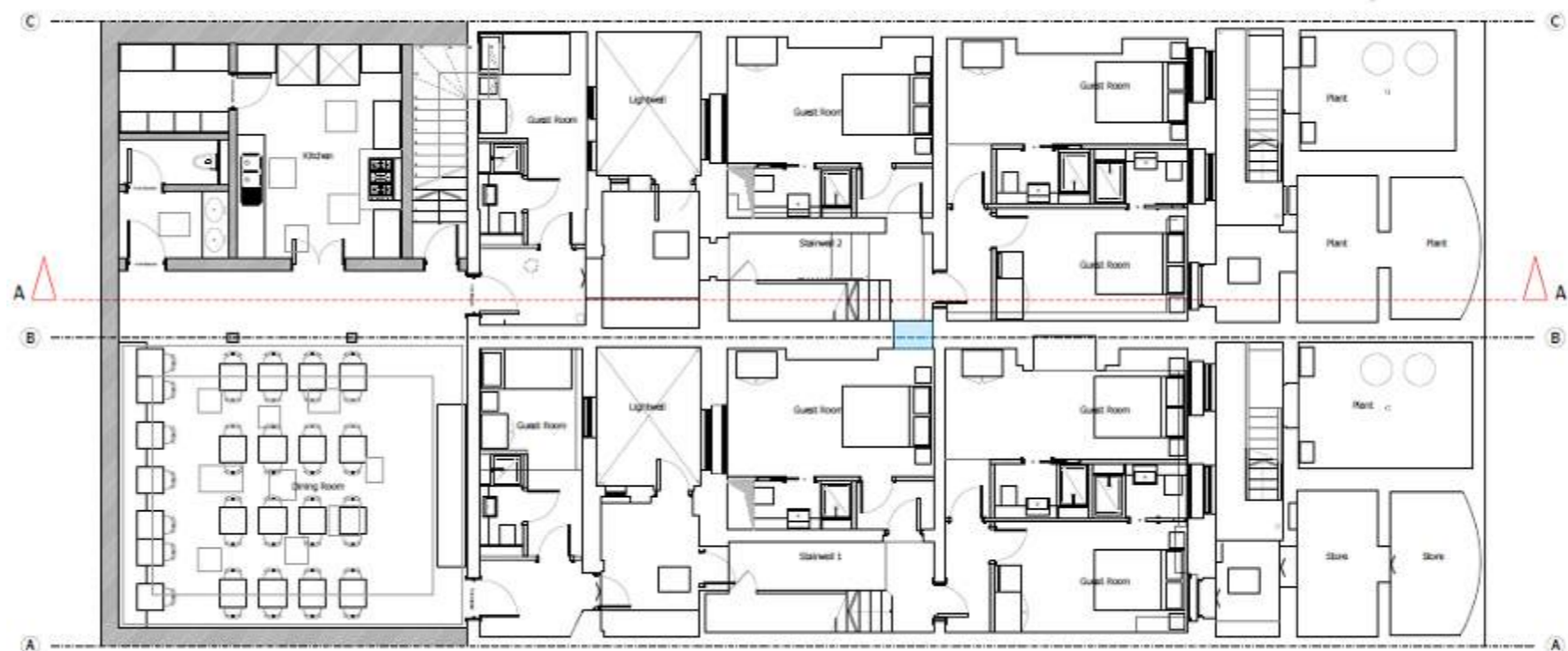


Figure 40: Proposed basement showing blocked up lateral access and installation of basement to the rear to ensure the hierarchy and plan form of the building can still be appreciated.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This report has provided a full assessment of the property 77-79 Gower Street. The National Planning Policy Framework states that in determining applications, local planning authorities require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting, to fully understand the impact of the proposal. Due to the fairly minor nature of the exterior works, this heritage statement has provided a brief analysis of Bloomsbury Conservation Area and the study site. It has further assessed the effects of the proposals on the significance of any heritage assets affected.

77-79 Gower Street consists of two Georgian buildings, laterally converted in the 1970s and currently in use as a hotel. This change fundamentally eroded the appreciation and functionality of the structures. The insertion of lateral corridors on the first and second floors and the extensive subdivision of a large number of the rooms has made the original plan form barely discernible.

Despite this, the building still retains a number of elements of historic and architectural interest, notably, their geometric staircases, stone service stairs along with some original cornices, skirtings and dado rails. Although there are a number of fireplaces within the building, none of these appear to be original, mainly being Victorian or later additions. A number of the closet wings also feature stained glass windows and panelled doors, later additions that have some historic interest.

Bearing these considerations in mind, the proposals seek to address the aspirations of the client to provide en-suite facilities to all rooms, and provide additional space for dining without harming the buildings' special interest. This has been achieved by sensitively upgrading the premises to meet modern day requirements, whilst taking the opportunity to provide substantial heritage benefits in accordance with the NPPF.

The main physical change to the buildings is the extension of the lower ground floor below the garden. Although normally this may be considered harmful in plan form terms, due to its location at the rear of the property and the fact that entrances to it are partially concealed through the use of jib doors, the extension should not affect the appreciation of the building's original hierarchy or plan form.

The removal of later boarding to both stairs, the blocking up of a number of lateral openings, the reintroduction of plan form and period details in a number of locations is considered to far outweigh the minor harm caused by the proposals.

This report has demonstrated that the proposals are in accordance with

chapter 12 of the NPPF, namely that they do not cause harm to the heritage asset, and in fact return the buildings more to their original appearances, preserving and revealing their special interest.

APPENDIX A: LIST DESCRIPTION

NUMBERS 51 TO 85 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS, 51 TO 85, GOWER STREET

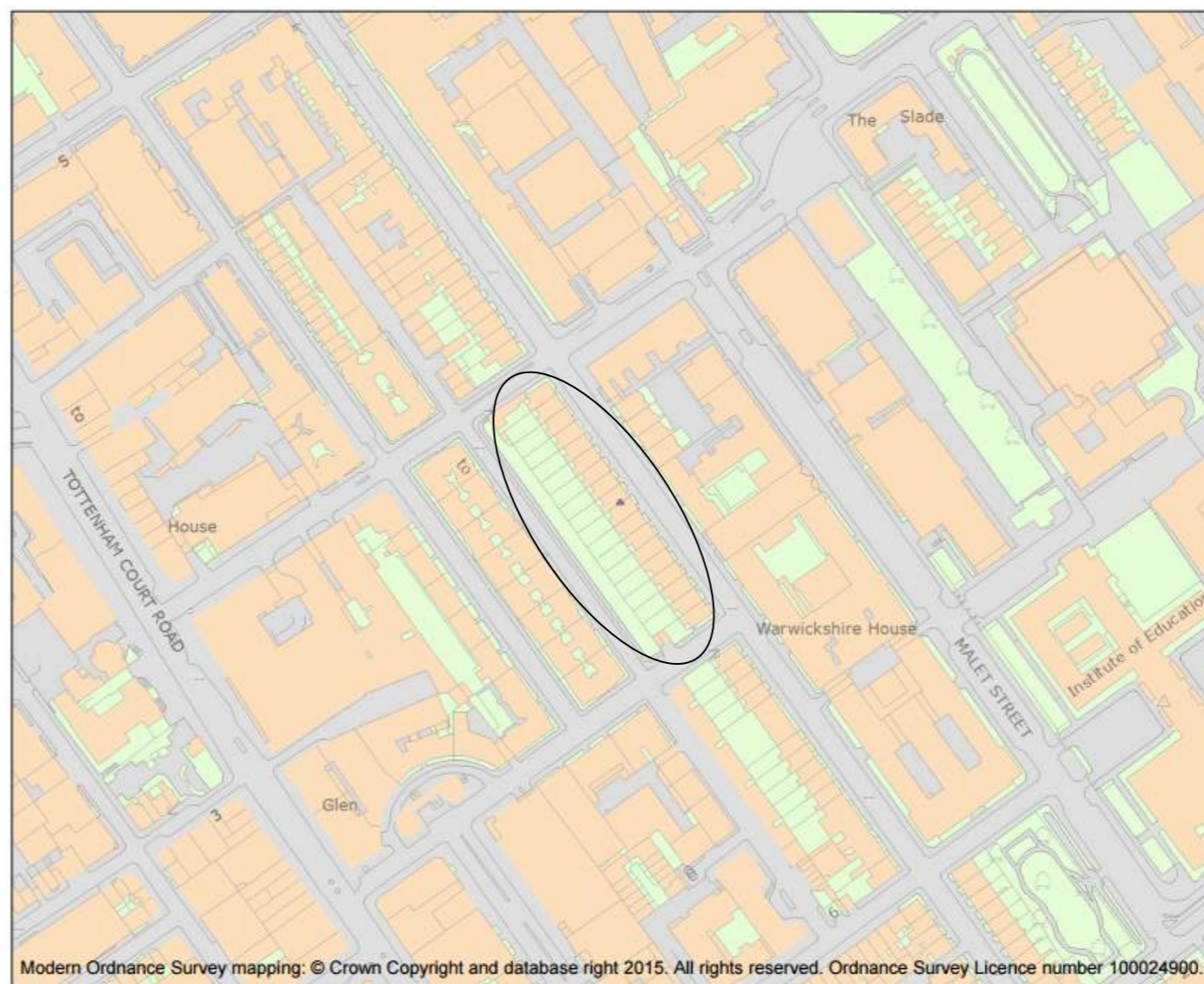
List entry Number: 1322177

Grade: II (GV)

Date first listed: 28-Mar-1969

Listing NGR: TQ 29680 81981

Terrace of 18 houses. Nos 51-59 built 1786; Nos 61-85, 1787. Darkened yellow stock brick. Stucco band at ground floor level and to 1st floor sills. Slated mansard roofs with dormers. 3 storeys, attics and basements. Nos 65, 67 & 73, 4 storeys. 3 windows each. Entrances with stucco surrounds with pilasters and dentil cornices; alternating round and segmental-arched doorways with fanlights and panelled doors. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sash windows, most with original glazing bars. Ground and 1st floor windows with bracketed sills and cast-iron window guards. Nos 65 & 67 ground floor windows in segmental-arched recesses with stucco archivolt, impost and keys. Stone dentil cornices; Nos 65, 67 & 73 cornices at 3rd floor level. Parapets. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings, mostly with urn finials, to areas.



Name: NUMBERS 51 TO 85 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS

Heritage Category:	Listing
List Entry No :	1322177
Grade:	II
County: Greater London Authority	
District: Camden	
Parish: Non Civil Parish	

For all entries pre-dating 4 April 2011 maps and national grid references do not form part of the official record of a listed building. In such cases the map here and the national grid reference are generated from the list entry in the official record and added later to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings.

For all list entries made on or after 4 April 2011 the map here and the national grid reference do form part of the official record. In such cases the map and the national grid reference are to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings only and must be read in conjunction with other information in the record.

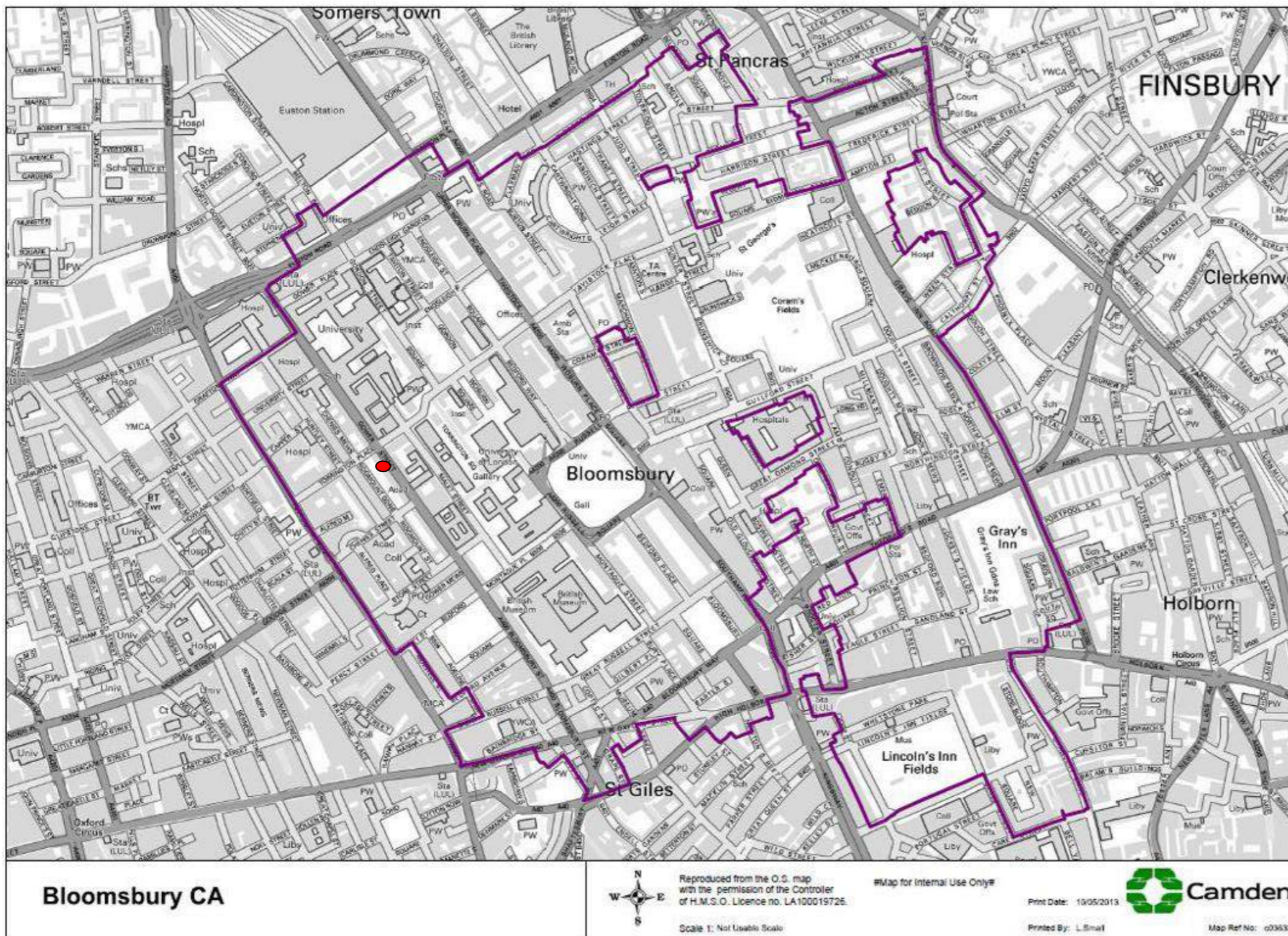
Any object or structure fixed to the principal building or buildings and any object or structure within the curtilage of the building, which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July, 1948 is by law to be treated as part of the listed building.

This map was delivered electronically and when printed may not be to scale and may be subject to distortions.

List Entry NGR:	TQ 29680 81981
Map Scale:	1:2500
Print Date:	11 September 2015



APPENDIX B: CONSERVATION AREA MAP



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