

25 Old Gloucester Street,
Bloomsbury

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Figure 1.1: Site location plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Montagu Evans LLP have prepared this Heritage Statement to accompany the applications for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for the proposed works to 25, Old Gloucester Street, in the London Borough of Camden (LBC). The description of development is as follows:

“The construction of a basement beneath an extension at ground floor level of the building in D1 use; and the alteration at ground and first floors along with the construction of a single storey extension at second floor level to provide 6 residential units (Use Class C3).”

1.2 The property at 25, Old Gloucester Street is included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest at Grade II. The full list entry is included at **Appendix 1** to this report. The description of the building includes the following:

“St George the Martyr Boys School, now private residence. 1877-8. By J and S Flint Clarkson. Stock Brick with yellow brick and some stone dressings, slate roofs. Early Gothic style comparable with No.24 (qv) [...] Later rear extension of no architectural interest. Interior not inspected. Forms a group with St George the Martyr Church, Queen Square (qv) and No.24 (qv).”

1.3 The site is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, which was first designated in 1968, and is located in the south west of Camden. The Conservation Area Appraisal adopted by LBC in 2011 has informed the assessment carried out in this document.

1.4 The property has previously been the subject of applications seeking planning permission and listed building consent for a two-storey extension at second floor level to the rear (2011/0879/P and 2011/0882/L) which were withdrawn, prior to an application for a single storey extension at second floor level to the rear (2011/6097/P and 2011/6431/L) which was granted consent on May 28th 2012.

The Proposals

1.5 The proposals would deliver the following:

- Six residential apartments at first to third floor level with external amenity space in the form of high level terraces;
- Improved facilities for community use at ground and basement floor level with external amenity space;
- The lateral extension of the existing basement, ground and first floor to the rear, and a two storey extension to the rear of the property, with sympathetic elevational treatments.

1.6 The important underlying element of the proposals is the continued function of the community space in the lower floors of the building. The proposals are submitted on behalf of the applicant, Nilkanth Estates Limited (NEL), a company whose purpose is to manage the property interests of the BAPS organisation. The charity ‘BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha’ is a spiritual, volunteer-driven organization

dedicated to improving society through individual growth by fostering the Hindu ideals of faith, unity, and selfless service.

1.7 The community use will occupy the basement and ground floor levels of the building, once refurbished and extended.

1.8 The proposals involve the conversion of part of the ground floor, and the areas above to create six residential apartments for the private rental market. This will provide an income for the charity, to help support the community uses and provide for maintenance and servicing.

1.9 This report should be read alongside the drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Buchanan Hartley Architects Ltd. These are listed in the cover letter submitted with this application.

1.10 By virtue of paragraph 128 of the NPPF, applicants for development proposals which have an effect upon the historic environment are required to describe the significance of the identified assets so that the impact of the proposals may be understood. This report will fulfil this requirement by presenting an historic and architectural appraisal of 25 Old Gloucester Street and its contribution to the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The relevant statutory and planning policy considerations are outlined in **Section 3.0**, and the proposals are described and justified against that policy framework at **Section 4.0**.



Figure 1.1: 25 Old Gloucester Street from the Queen's Square

2.0 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND HERITAGE APPRAISAL

Historic Development of the Bloomsbury Area

- 2.1 Bloomsbury's development began in the mid-17th century, as London expanded to the north, and soon became a fashionable suburb.
- 2.2 Bloomsbury's characteristic grid-style layout of streets and squares is evident on Roque's Map of 1746 (**Figure 3.1**), which indicates Montagu House and Bedford House along the north-western fringe of the development, with fields behind. Old Gloucester Street was laid out in the early 18th century, extending south east from Queen's Square, with the Church of St George at its north western extent.
- 2.3 The Church of St George the Martyr was built at the northern end of Old Gloucester Street circa 1706 to designs by Arthur Tooley, and acted as a chapel of ease for St Andrew's Church in Holborn before later becoming a parish church in 1723. Queens Square, in which the church is now situated, was laid out ten years later, between 1716 and 1725.
- 2.4 Development continued in the environs of Old Gloucester Street, with urban expansion primarily comprising further townhouses, and the replacement of some earlier properties.
- 2.5 During 19th century redevelopment in the area, the Church of St George the Martyr was heavily restored by SS Teulon. Between 1863 and 1864, Teulon built a school associated with the church, situated on the eastern side of Old Gloucester Street (**Figure 3.2**). This was known as *St George the Martyr Girls and Infants School*. The map illustrates the density of development in this part of Bloomsbury, with Queens Square at the north of Old Gloucester Street forming a rare open space.
- 2.6 No. 25 Old Gloucester Street was built by J & S Flint Clarkson between 1877 and 1878 as a new boys' school with accommodation for a caretaker and masters, associated with the church and deliberately built to complement the style and materials of Teulon's earlier girls' school. The foundation stone was laid in 1877, and in July was reported in *The Builder* (**Appendix 2**), with the following commentary:
- "The parish church, the schools for girls and infants, erected in 1864, and the new schools for boys, bearing a general resemblance to them, will be close together... Caretaker's, Master's, and assistant Master's residences will be placed in the tall front building next Queen-Square."*
- 2.7 The opening of the school was later reported in *The Builder* in February 1878 (**Appendix 2**), which explained:
- "The building just completed has been arranged to serve two special purposes. The school and class rooms will give desk accommodation for 200 boys. When required, the rooms will be the hall of the parish, in which social meetings, concerts etc. will be held. The large room is 60ft by 34 ft. on the floor, covered with a boarded and panelled hammer-beam roof."*

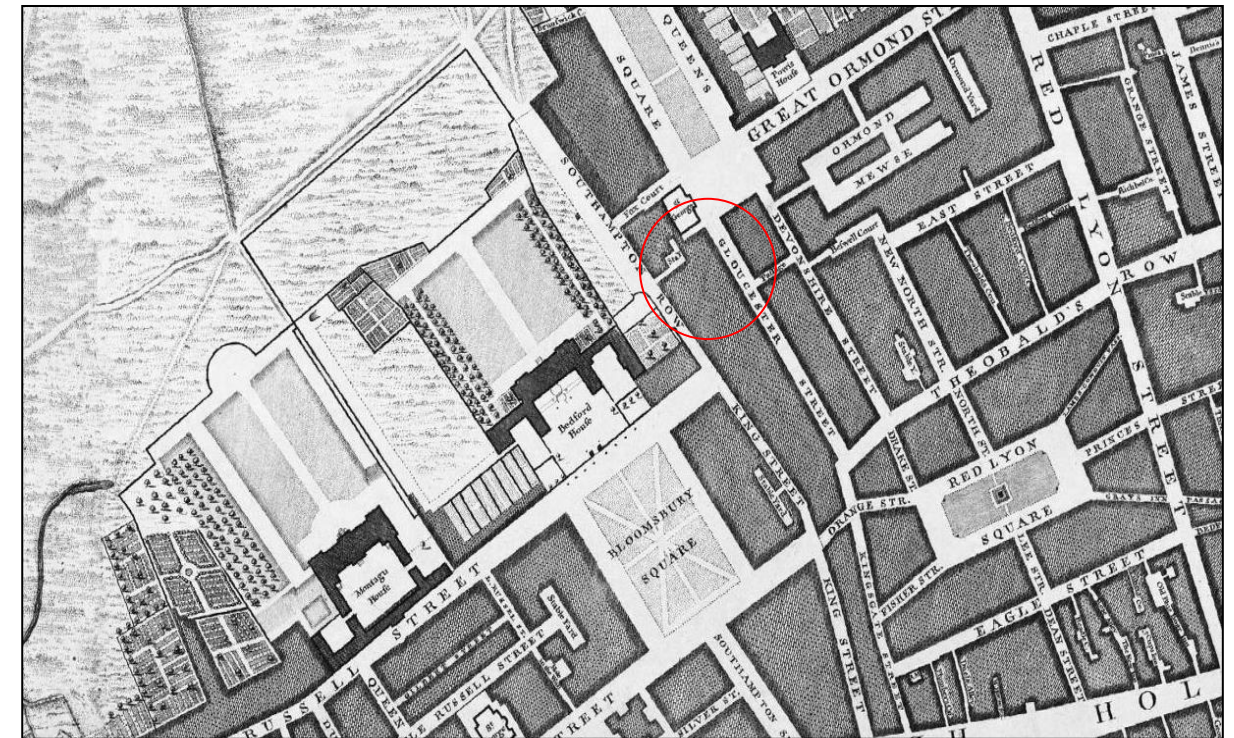


Figure 3.1: Roque's Map of 1746, showing the location of Old Gloucester Street and the Bloomsbury street pattern

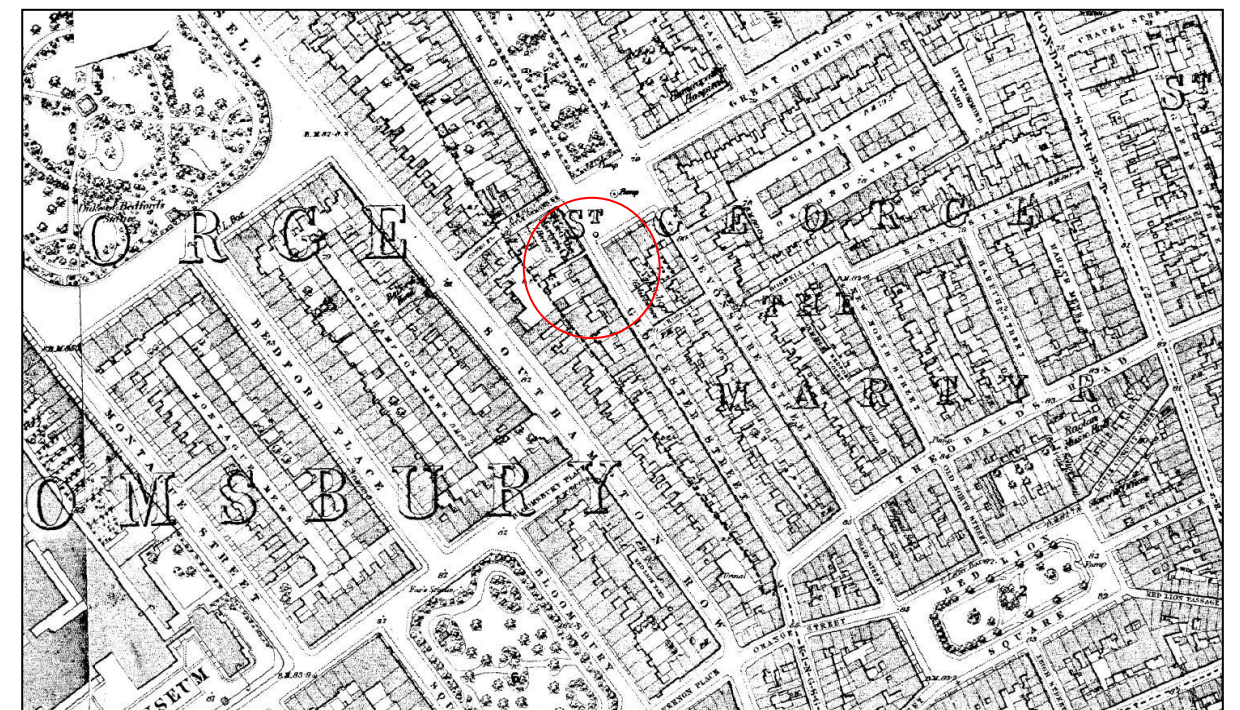


Figure 3.2: 1870s OS Map