



Figure 3.3: 1890s OS Map showing the location of the site, and surrounding area



Figure 3.4: Bomb Damage Map showing damaged buildings in the environs of the Application Site

- 2.8 The building was situated opposite Teulon's earlier school, and is first seen on the 1890 OS Map (Figure 3.3) to the south of the Church of St George the Martyr, appearing to replace an earlier terraced property shown at Figure 3.2. The footprint of the school covered the majority of its plot, extending to the rear boundary with the properties along Southampton Row. The surrounding townscape retained the original street layout lined with terraced housing.
- 2.9 The bomb damage map at Figure 3.4 shows the extent of damage sustained in this part of Bloomsbury. Queens Square and the west side of Old Gloucester Street survived intact with the exception of the southernmost end, but substantial areas of damage were sustained to the south and west.
- 2.10 By the 1960s, ruin sites in the area had been redeveloped, including the construction of Rochdale House and Sentinel House at the south of Old Gloucester Street (Figure 3.5). The post-war infill buildings occupied larger footprints than the preceding terraces, and contributed to the diverse range of uses in the area, including a number of hotels, hospital facilities and civic buildings.



Figure 3.5: 1960s OS Map showing changes in the development of the surrounding area



### Assessment of Heritage Assets

#### 25 Old Gloucester Street (grade II)

- 2.11 25 Old Gloucester Street was built in the late 1870s by J & S Flint Clarkson as a parochial school for boys, associated with the Church of St George the Martyr, which is situated adjacent on the western side of Queen's Square. It was added to the statutory list in 1999, the list entry noting that the building "forms a group with St George the Martyr Church, Queen Square and No.24."
- 2.12 The building is in the early Gothic style, and the stock brick elevation with stone dressings is reflective of the design of Teulon's earlier school at 24 Old Gloucester Street on the opposite side of the street. An inscription on the northern end of the front elevation, with the date 1877, states "Glory Be To God St George Martyr School for 200 Boys" along with the bible quotation "The Foundation of God Standeth Sure" (Figure 4.2).
- 2.13 The building has a later extension to the rear which is referred to in the list entry as being of no architectural interest.

#### Exterior

- 2.14 The exterior of the building can be read as two distinct parts. To Old Gloucester Street is the original four storey Early English style school building, whilst a more utilitarian, undecorated two storey section occupies the site to the rear. This two storey extension is surmounted by a steel cage structure. A further, single storey section is located to the rear. The later extension and the single storey section are not visually prominent in the streetscape.

#### Original school building to Old Gloucester Street

- 2.15 The front part of the building possesses historic and architectural interest as a late 19th century school building in the Early English style (Figure 4.1). The inscriptions above the main entrance door and on the northern corner provide evidence of the building's purpose and association with the adjacent church.
- 2.16 The building retains its original fenestration arrangement with high pointed arches above the upper windows, and two entrances each side of the north corner which are similarly detailed. The steeply pitched roof has triple gables at the upper storey, with brick chimneys visible between. This building, the original part of the former school, has aesthetic value, forming an attractive feature in the streetscape, and is perceptibly part of a group with the former Girls' and Infants' School at no. 24 opposite.
- 2.17 The historic appearance of the building is limited from certain perspectives by the visibility of the rear part of the building. The rear section does not contribute to the architectural or artistic interest of the former school, and is clearly legible as a different phase of construction. The steel cage structure above the flat roof is a negative feature which detracts from the appreciation of the historic building.



Figure 4.1: the north elevation of 25 Old Gloucester Street, showing the contrast between the front and rear portions of the building.



Figure 4.2: Inscription with date at northeast corner





**Figure 4.3:** view of the north elevation from passageway between the Church and no. 25, with view of window height disparity, change in brickwork, corrugated structure adjacent, and caged structure to rear



**Figure 4.4:** Oblique views of the rear portion of the building from Queen's Square

#### Rear Section

- 2.18 The rear, two storey portion of the building is later. The footprint of the building appears similar to that visible on the historic maps at **Figures 3.2-3.5**, which leads us to conclude that this part of the building may be a replacement for an original structure.
- 2.19 Whilst faced in stock brick, the extension is utilitarian and the banded cornice detailing present of the former school building is truncated at the adjoining point between these two parts of the property (**Figure 4.3**). The elevational treatment is much simpler, with no ornamentation, and rectangular window openings with lintels above. There is a disparity between the height of the second storey fenestration in the front and rear sections of the building, the openings to the rear are set higher into the wall and extend above the third floor in the front portion.
- 2.20 The lack of consistency in the fenestration, the change in brickwork visible on the north eastern elevation, and change in interior floor levels indicate that this is a later extension to the original building. Furthermore, describing the school in the 1878 article, *The Builder* described the main school room having a “boarded and panelled hammer beam roof”, which does not reflect the arrangement at roof level in the rear two storey building. The windows in the rear section of the building are metal framed crittall style windows of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century date, suggesting this as a likely date for the construction of the rear addition. The extension has a flat roof surmounted by a metal caged structure, which detracts from the character and appearance of the historic building.
- 2.21 The passageway between 25 Old Gloucester Street and the Church of St George the Martyr allows for oblique views of the side elevation of the building from Queen's Square and Old Gloucester Street (**Figure 4.4**). These are, however, limited due to the close proximity of the buildings. When seen from the Square, the four storey front portion makes a positive contribution to the streetscape and the setting of surrounding listed buildings. The rear extension does not contribute to the building's architectural interest or the character of the streetscape.
- 2.22 Situated alongside the north-eastern elevation are large corrugated structures which accommodate services (**Figure 4.3**). A large metal fire escape has been added to the rear of the building within the passageway. These later additions detract from the appearance of the historic building. Further, the passage is presently in poor condition, with litter and graffiti, which are negative features in the setting of both the former school and the adjacent church.
- 2.23 An inspection of the single storey room to the rear suggests this may not be part of this later extension of the building, and is discussed in more detail as part of the internal inspection. Our review of the planning history and historic maps available has not led us to conclusively date this part of the building.

#### Interior

- 2.24 The interior of the property is heavily altered; the plan form has been eroded by later alteration and the partial insertion of new floor levels which are accessed via separate staircases. Whilst the majority of internal architectural features have been removed as a result of later conversion, some simple features remain which are illustrative of the building's former use as a public school building.



2.25 The distinction between the front, original, and later rear sections is evident in the internal plan form and difference in floor levels. The ceiling heights at ground floor level differ by approximately 60cm and the second floor of the rear extension is higher than the third floor of the front section of the building. Consequently, the upper floors in the front part of the building are accessed via a separate staircase from the rear, creating a mezzanine level.

2.26 The building is generally in a poor condition with considerable damage to wall and ceiling treatments, which would require remedial works to bring the building back into use, as demonstrated by Figures 4.5-4.12.

#### *Basement*

2.27 The main room at basement level comprises a large space situated under the later extension. This space is lined with supporting columns to the ceiling (**Figure 4.7**). The internal elevations are faced in glazed brick and are punctuated with internal archways which are of 19<sup>th</sup> century character.

2.28 To the front of the building, the footprint extends into the pavement vaults. The planform is in a cellular arrangement. The space at the basement level is in a very poor condition and internal finishes and wall linings have suffered from damp and water ingress. The flooring is incomplete and there are gaps in wall covering.

#### *Ground floor*

2.29 The ground floor of the building consists of an entrance hall leading to a small reception room and a large central room, which occupies the main body of the rear part of the building. This rear part of the building is noted in the list entry as being a “*later rear extension of no architectural interest.*”

2.30 The entrance hall retains some simple detailing that is reflective of its school use. The space has been significantly altered however through the addition of modern joinery, a suspended ceiling, and modern staircase (**Figure 4.6**).

2.31 The main room at ground floor level is situated above the large basement room, and occupies the same footprint (**Figure 4.5**). The metal framed windows in the south wall are set high, whilst larger, rectangular openings punctuate the north elevation. Dado panelling with some enclosed columns are situated on the southern side. Modern light fixtures have been installed hanging from the ceiling and windows.

2.32 At the rear is a smaller space of a different character, with arched windows and a pitched roof above a single storey. (**Figure 4.8 and 4.9**). It is unclear how this relates chronologically the main rear extension, but stylistically, it adheres more closely to the original front section than the rear extension.

#### *First floor*

2.33 The first floor is accessed from the front of the building, via a modern carpeted stair. There are two reception rooms in the front portion of the building, with an additional staircase leading to the upper floors.



**Figure 4.5:** the interior at basement level



**Figure 4.6:** The interior of the entrance, showing modern suspended ceiling and services