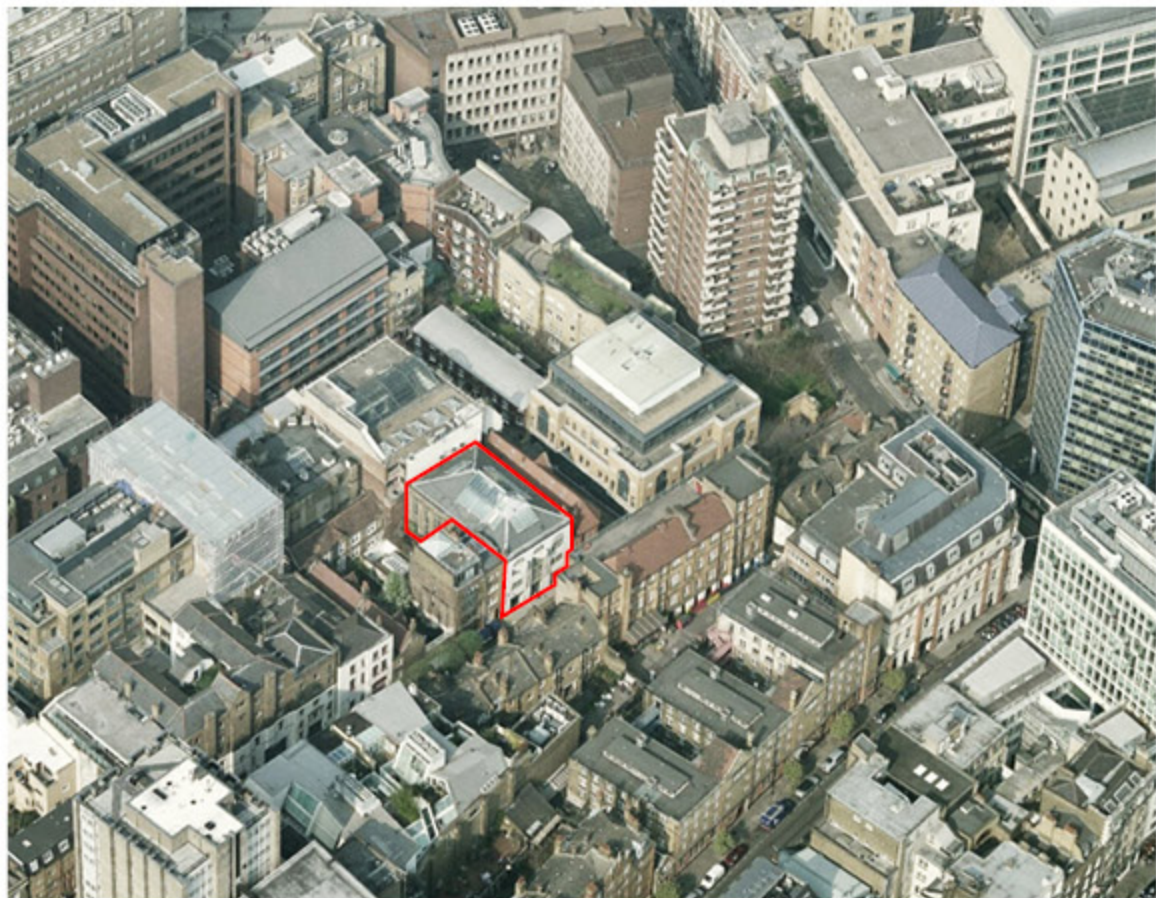




23 Macklin Street
Design and Access Statement
December 2013



Aerial perspective from the south showing 23 Macklin Street within the context of urban fabric.

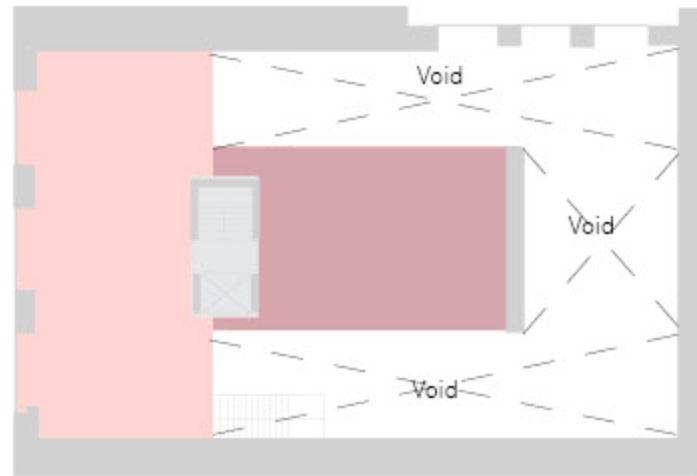
23 Macklin Street

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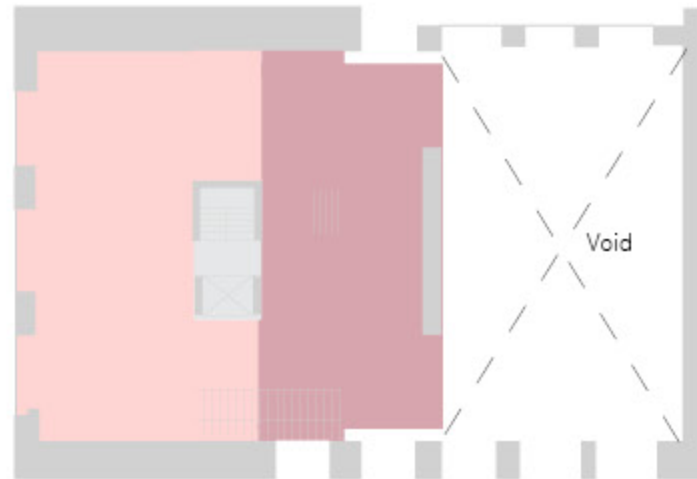
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Architectural model of proposal, scale 1:50



Existing floor plan diagram



Proposed floor plan diagram

23 Macklin Street plays a valuable role in Covent Garden's rich theatrical tapestry. The unique nature of the building as a scenery painting workshop has resulted in its original use becoming obsolete through advances in technology and changing economies in theatre. The attempt to convert the building into a single residence in the 1990s has resulted in the current arrangement which is fundamentally flawed as a house and which has also lost much of the original character and the unique quality of the original construction.

Working closely with historic building experts Donald Insall Architects, and the rest of the experienced design team, Carmody Groarke has sought to sensitively re-arrange the internal layout to meet the needs and standards of a contemporary home whilst celebrating and emphasising the qualities of this Grade II listed building.

The proposals seek to correct the 1990s intervention by demolishing much of the modern construction and re-instating a large 'hall' warehouse space as a singular volume at the first floor. Historic building research shows this simple 'hall' volume is much closer to the original shape and proportions of the historic layout. The new arrangement allows for a better connection of the primary bedroom spaces to daylight and fresh air vastly improving the quality of these spaces in order to create a dwelling within the building.

Internally, the proposals will reveal historic fabric where possible, removing many of the dubious interventions of the 1990s refurbishment (such as the 'varnishing' of the brickwork, installing plastic glazing floor details etc) to allow the original character of the space to be celebrated. Wherever possible the historic beams and columns (which would have originally have been expressed), will be conserved and revealed.

Historically, wall space in the main part of the building was at a premium to maximise working space with the set canvases. Windows have therefore been limited to the western facade creating an imbalance in natural light, therefore the Western side has been flooded with daylight and the Eastern side significantly darker. The proposal to introduce a number of high level clerestory windows to the eastern facade, within the brick arches, will allow daylight from both sides. These new windows bring light and air into the house which is necessary to create habitable rooms in the upper floors.

The proposals also look to amend the facade to Macklin Street from the 1990s historicist interpretation. The proposals emphasise the hierarchy of the original functional facade with prominence given to the central bay and new metal framed windows providing a suitably Victorian industrial aesthetic.

The modern render will also be removed to expose the historic fabric. The original brickwork will be revealed and will therefore provide a connection to the surrounding streetscape.

This scheme has been developed through consultation with English Heritage, the Theatre's Trust and Camden Design and Conservation officers. This process has added to the authenticity of the design response; conserving and revealing historic fabric wherever possible, returning the quality of a large hall to the building and providing better accommodation for the new life of the building as a modern home.



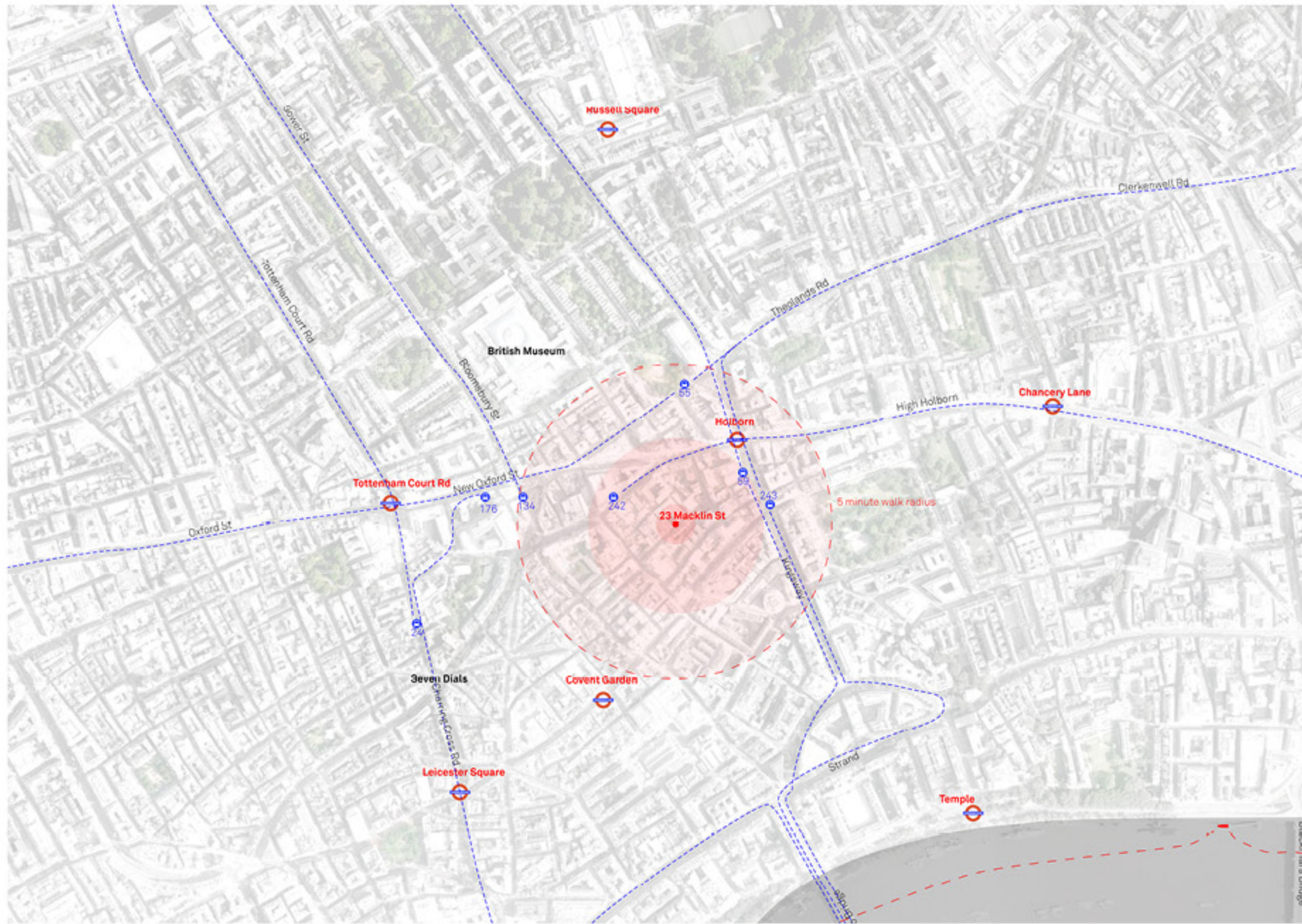
Aerial photograph of 23 Macklin Street illustrating proximity to open space and central London landmarks

2.1.11 Open space and landmarks

23 Macklin Street has access to a multitude of public gardens and is located within walking distance to many of central London's landmarks.

These parks include to the North and North East Bloomsbury Square Gardens, Red Lions Square Gardens, and Grays Inn Gardens. To the West Soho Square, and to the North West Russell Square, Bedford Square Garden, Gordon Square and Tavistock Square Gardens.

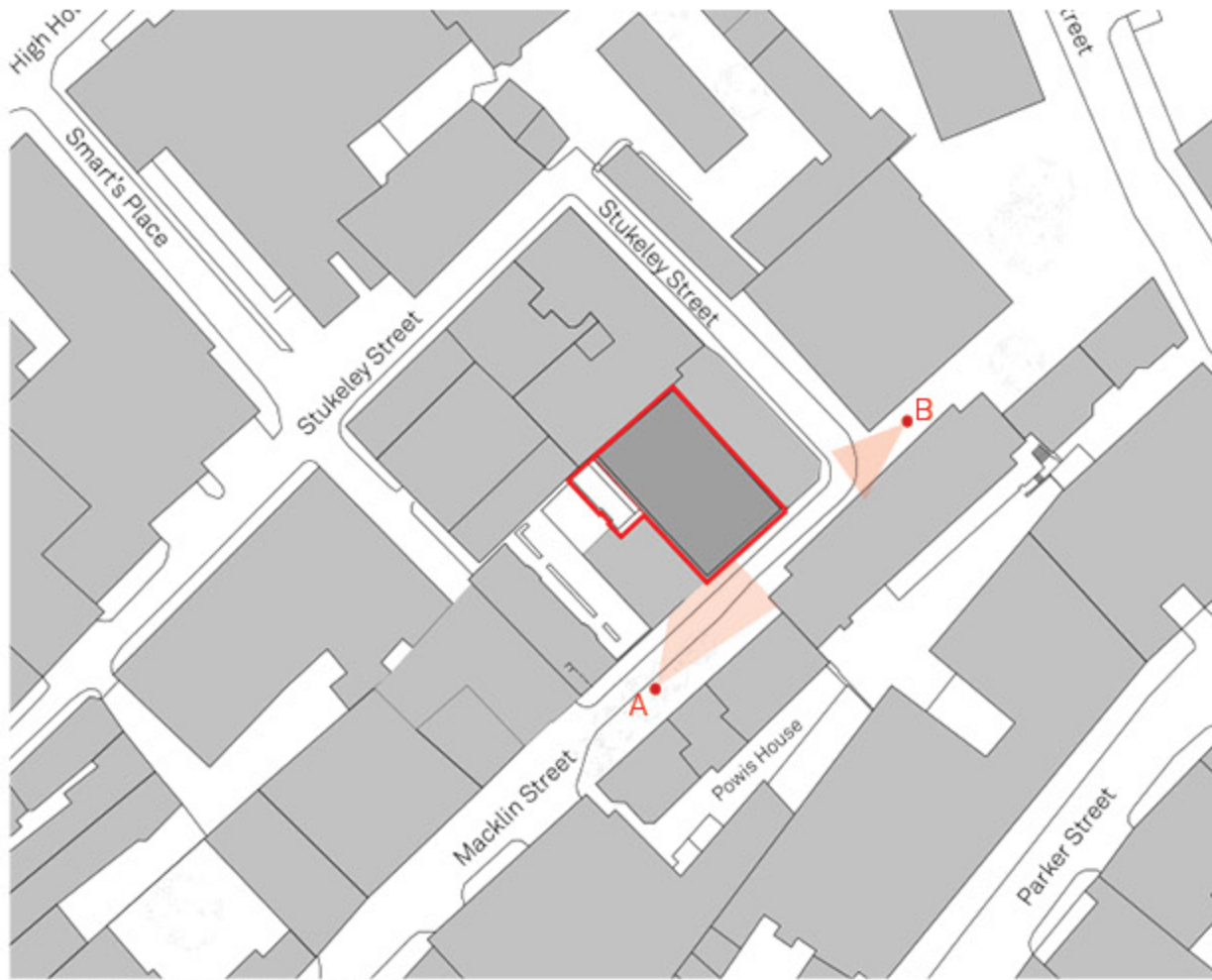
These landmarks include The British Museum and Russell Square to the North, Covent Garden to the South and Seven Dials and Soho Square to the West.



Transport map illustrating the site accessibility to public transport networks.

2.1.2 Transport Connections

23 Macklin Street is well served by public transport services as would be expected from its central London location. Holborn, Covent Garden and Tottenham Court Road tube stations are a close walk away along with many nearby bus routes. Bus 55 with very good East-West connections, and bus 59, 243 and 176 for South connections, and the 24 and 134 for North connections. The site is ten minutes walk to Waterloo Bridge and 20 minutes walk to Blackfriars Bridge where there are ferry connections along the Thames. The existing building already has dedicated underground offstreet parking.



Site Context Plan highlighting 23 Macklin



View (A) looking north-east down Macklin Street



View (B) looking south-west up Macklin Street

2.1.3 Streetscape

Macklin Street is a short and narrow side street to the West of Kingsway, parallel and to the South of High Holborn. It is in the The London Borough of Camden situated at the fringes of Covent Garden. The street runs between Drury Lane and Newton Street.

The overall character of the streetscape is defined by brickwork which is the dominant facing material on the Macklin Street buildings. The roofscape of Macklin Street is a mixture of flat parapets and gables. The height of the buildings along the street vary between three and five stories. The only break in this building height is at the Western end of Macklin Street where a tall modern point block stands.

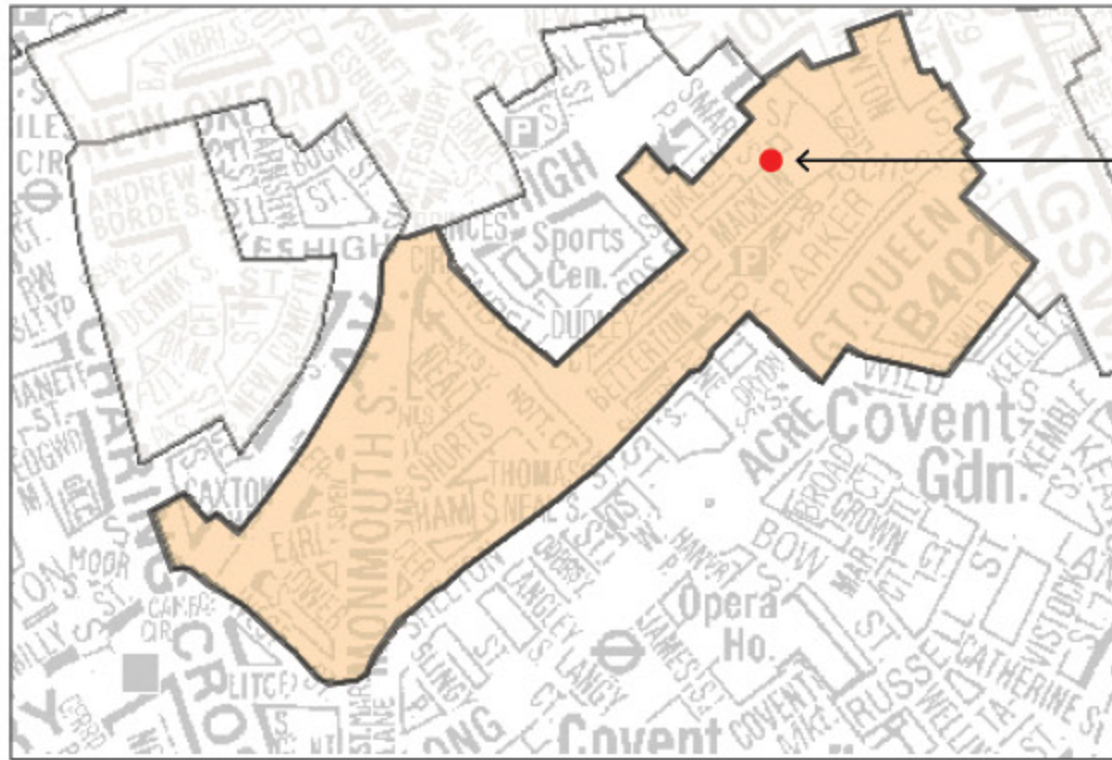
23 Macklin Street is built to the back edge of the pavement, with the ground floor entrances enclosed by timber shutters. However the shutters are generally kept open, and therefore the entrance doors are set back approximately 600mm in the building line.

2.1.4 Surrounding Amenities

23 Macklin Street is located between three buildings (and fronts onto Macklin street, a narrow side street). The West boundary 21 Macklin Street is currently occupied as a residence. The East boundary 25 Macklin Street, a converted mortuary is currently occupied with offices. To the North it shares a rear boundary with 22 Stukeley Street, that is occupied as a commercial office space.

The building stock on Macklin Street is a mixture of nineteenth century construction, including former warehouses, flats, a primary school opposite the site and a small number of twentieth century buildings. The predominant uses are residential and office.

View from 23 Macklin Street looking across the street Powis House flats.



Camden Council Conservation Area Map highlighting Seven Dials Conservation Area

Key of map
 Conservation area
 Adjoining conservation area

23 Macklin Street

2.2 Conservation Area

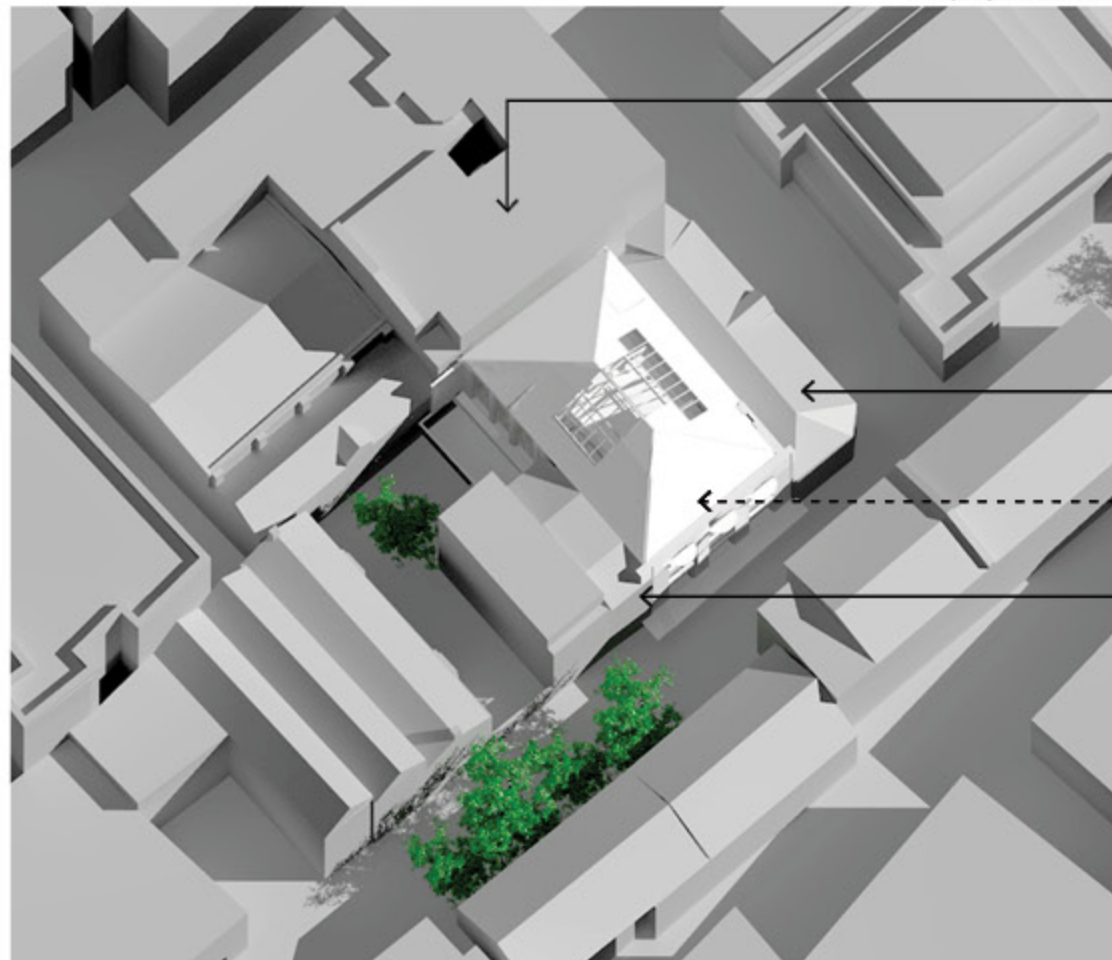
The London Borough of Camden has a total of thirty-nine conservation areas covering 11km² (approximately fifty per cent of the borough). 23 Macklin Street is in the Seven Dials Conservation Area.

2.3 Listed Building

23 Macklin Street was listed as Grade II on the 7th June 1982. The *English Heritage Statutory List* description states:

*"23 Macklin Street. Grade - II
 Formerly known as: No. 36 CHARLES STREET. Painting rooms for theatrical scenery. 1851-52. Large stucco-fronted building of rectangular plan. 3 storeys 3 bays, the openings in full height round arched recesses. Central loading doors on upper floors, flanked by sash windows with glazing bars. Ground floor openings altered at centre and left. Half glazed door and small window at right. INTERIOR: not inspected but the large interior space, with its paint frame, a large cast-iron frame designed to be winched up and down through a slot in the floor so that the artist painting a scenic backcloth can work comfortably at first-floor level, survives and is the earliest known survival of a separate scene-painting premises outside a theatre. HISTORICAL NOTE: of considerable historical interest as having been the workshop of Thomas Grieve and Son, scenic artists, from 1851 to 1879, who initiated the system of free-lance painters working on their own premises rather than within theatres."*

The Historic Building Report prepared by *Donald Insall Associates* provides justification according to the policies set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* with an assessment of the significance of the building and an explanation of the schemes 'impact of significance.' Please see Appendix.



22 Stukeley Street: Not Listed

24 and 25 Macklin Street: Grade II Listed

23 Macklin Street: Grade II Listed

21 Macklin Street: Not Listed

Aerial rendering from south-west showing building within context of streetscape



North Main Hall showing imperfections in the brickwork patterns, possibly due to past damage.



Colour Key:
General blast damage, minor in nature

1939-45 London County Council Bomb Damage Map highlighting bomb damage to 22 Stukeley Street.

2.4.1 Damage

Damage during World War II

A map dated 1939-45 London County Council Bomb Damage Map shows there was damage to the northern neighbouring property on Stukeley Street but that 23 Maoklin street escaped any material harm. The orange on the map indicates 'general blast damage, minor in nature.' It is unlikely that there caused any serious damage to 23 Maoklin Street. However, there is a possibility that some minor damage could explain the change in brick pattern between the arches in the northern boundary wall.

2.4.2 Fire Damage

Evidence at the V&A Archive describes a fire at 23 Maoklin Street in 1868, seventeen years after the building was constructed.

This may explain why there are no remaining timber painting frames on the site.



View looking south in the main hall into the side corridor between the historic fabric and 1990s insertion.



View to doorway between second floor office and library balcony with limited daylight.



Third floor bedroom within the 1990s addition.



Joinery from the 1990s in the sitting room next to the kitchen on the first floor.



View from the first floor looking down the entry stair showing 1990s glazing features.



View of corridor on ground floor.

3.1 Client Requirements

The client purchased 23 Macklin Street to be their home for the foreseeable future. When the client first viewed the property they were drawn by the truly extraordinary space that the historic building could offer. Having lived in the property in its current configuration for a number of years, it has become increasingly apparent that, in addition to the current failings in respecting the historic character of the space, the layout is significantly deficient for a home.

3.2 Short-comings of the building

The building was not originally designed as a home and as such the conversion to a single residence would always be a difficult task to successfully achieve. The design conceived and implemented in the 1990s is problematic, as a home, for many reasons:

- Internalised rooms with no access to fresh air or sunlight.
- Rooms of parsimonious proportions (which are accentuated by the generous scale of the building overall).
- Maze-like layout at ground floor level.
- Horseshoe shaped, very tall main space which is both difficult to use and appreciate.
- General construction quality is both poor and has no reference to the original building's qualities.
- Ill conceived details from the 1990s that were fashionable rather than timeless.

Having lived in this current configuration the client feels that they understand the many shortfalls of it and are in a position to build an alternative design which will work infinitely better as a home for themselves and potentially for others in the longterm future.



1851
Scenery Painters: Thomas Grieve, William Telbin, and John Absolon

Interior photograph of 23 Maoklin Street (dated unknown) (1950s-1980s) image supplied by Theatres Trust



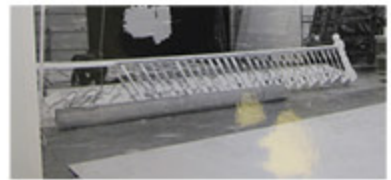
1970/1980
Malcolm Ryan-Photographic Set Builders and scenic contractors
 (photograph dated 1950's-1980's)



Pre 1922 Scenery Workshop: Alick Johnston's father owned 23 Maoklin st stage scenery business (Alick Johnston took over from his father after returning from the war)



Alick Johnston- London stage scenery business in 23 Maoklin Street (took over from his father after returning from WW1)



1970 Scenery Building

1998 Residential Conversion



2013

1922 Scenery Workshop: Alick Johnston established his studio in 1922 and for the next 50 years was responsible for the scenery for major West End productions.

50 years

1982 Listed as Grade II

4.1.1 Changing Use

Vertical Painting Workshop Typology

Historioally, the European method of theatre scenery painting was to paint horizontally on the floor. However, due to constraints on space such large footprints were not feasible in London and the 'vertioal method' of painting was introduced. The vertioal process, or the 'English Method' was developed in response to these constraints. 23 Maoklin Street is one of four nineteenth century vertioal scenery workshops in London.

1851-2 Purpose Built Scenery Workshop (1851-1879 Thomas Grieve and Sons, scenic artists)

Painters Thomas Grieve, William Telbin and John Absolon worked together for many years on various projects. It is believed that finanoial suocess from the display of their panorama *'The Route of the Overland Mail to India, 1852'* to the public at Regents Park allowed the consortium of painters to purpose build their own workshop. The scene painting workshop at 23 Maoklin Street was constructed in 1851-2 by Grieve, Telbin, and Absolon. Robert Thorne notes in his article about the building that the men were not the first soene painters to strike out on their own but *"may have been the first to design their own building from soratoh."*

Production

Many paintings were produced at 23 Maoklin Street including scenery for elaborate Shakespearian productions staged by Charles Kean at the Princess' Theatre oiroa 1850.

Pre 1922 Alick Johnston's father- Stage Soenery business

1922 Alick Johnston- London stage scenery business (took over from his father after returning from WW1) and for the next fifty years was responsible for the scenery for major West End productions.

1970/1980 Photographic Set Builders and Scenic Contractors

From Theatres Trust Arohive photograph (dated 1950's-80's) the following observations oan be made: 23 Maoklin Street was used as a 'Soenio Studio' by the Malcolm Ryan-photographio set builders and scenio contractors. Malcolm Ryan's studios have since relocated to South London.

1970 Used for Scenery Building

Although the original purpose of the building was for theatre scenery painting, in the 1970s the building was used for scenery building.

1982 Listed as Grade II

On 7th June 1982 the building was included in the Statutory List as Grade II.

1998 Residential Conversion

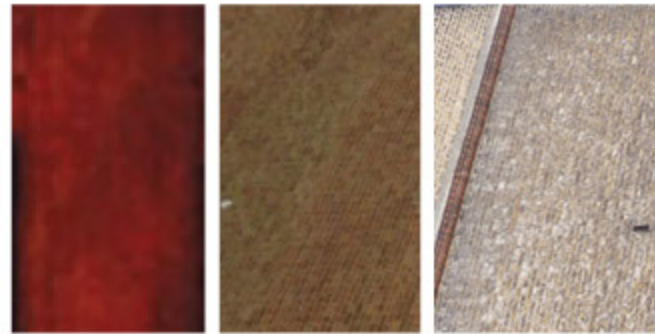
In 1998 the building was converted to a single family dwelling house with a self contained flat on the basement level. There were also external alterations.

Large Entrance Door



Elms Lester Painting Mara's Scene Painting Harker's Rooms

Brick Facade



Elms Lester Painting Mara's Scene Painting Harker's Rooms

Glazed Roof Light



Mara's Scene Painting Shop Harker's Rooms

Two-three storey space



Mara's Scene Painting



**Elms Lester Painting Rooms
Flitcroft Street, 1903-4**

Painting Rooms for theatrical scenery built in 1903-4 for Messrs W & J Elms Lester. An important and complete survival of a theatrical scene-painting workshop. The centre of the building is occupied by the painting frames, workspace is lit by the projecting lantern which has cast-iron framework to glazing. The first floor painting area, supported on a steel frame, gives access to four 50'x 30' painting frames which run along the outer side walls and both sides of the inner dividing screen wall. Each cast-iron frame can be raised or lowered by electric winches. The large entrance lobby to the front has a hoist and trap doors, which facilitated the exit of completed backdrops from the painting rooms, via the full-height doors in the facade.



**Mara's Scene Painting Shop
Newport Street, 1913**

Built in 1913 to the designs of John A J Woodward of Kennington Oval, the LCC's District Surveyor for the area, by George Brittain Contractor to the Duchy of Cornwall Estate. It is the facility to design an entire theatrical set that makes this group of workshops unique. Nos. 5 & 7, the three storey part housed the painted scenery shop, and originally had eight frames run in pairs and first run by William Raphael. Narrow unloading doors and ground floor wide door is evident on No. 7. In No 5 the full height and width of the building could be used to stretch the canvas and winched up and down. Nos. 1 & 3 was a carpentry workshop for theatrical 'props' and scenery, first occupied by John Brinskill. No.1 (left hand side) is of 2 storeys. No 3 is of three storeys with hipped roof. 2 lower storeys have 4 cambered fixed casements leading door to 1st floor and wide door to ground floor.



**Harker's Rooms
Queens Row, 1904**

Painting rooms for theatrical scenery. Built in 1904, and partly rebuilt in mid 20th Century for Joseph Harker. The building is constructed from English bond brick with a gabled roof (mostly glazed). Open plan. 2-storey gable end of 3 bays has red brick segmental arches over metal casements flanking double doors to ground and 1st floors; moulded red brick cornice beneath gable with louvred oculus. Rear elevation facing Horsley Street rebuilt in mid 20th Century. INTERIOR: large room, lit by glazed roof, is occupied by large wooden paint frames with pulleys and counterweights; these occupy the side walls and the centre of the room. Large double doors to ground and 1st floors of rear wall. An important and rare survival of a theatrical scene-painting workshop, named after Joseph Harker (1855-1927) who was one of the most important theatrical scene painters of his day, having made this reputation through his designs for Henry Irving's productions at the Lyceum.

4.1.2 Precedent Study: Scenery painting workshops in the UK

There are only four known surviving nineteenth Century scene painting workshops in London, the oldest of which is 23 Macklin Street. A study of the four buildings has helped to identify the important typological features consistent with scenery painting workshops that will be of greatest importance to retain and celebrate in this proposal.

Typological Features:

Glazed Roof

- Elms Lester Painting Rooms: Large projecting lantern with cast iron framework to glazing.
- Mara's Scene Painting Shop: Large glazed roof light.
- Harker's Rooms: Gabled roof mostly glazed.

Two-Three Storey Space for Painting

- The vertical workshop typology uses a system of frames and pulleys to enable a vertical painting process:
- Elms Lester: First floor painting area supported by steel framing enables access for painting frames (50" x 30").
 - Mara's Scene Painting Shop 5 & 7: Shop 5 uses the full height and width of building to stretch canvas and winch up and down.
 - Harker's Rooms: Open plan two storey gable end over three bays.

Large Entrance Door for Large Items

- Elms Lester: Large entrance lobby with hoists and trap doors facilitated the exit of completed backdrops from the painting rooms, via the full-height doors in the facade.
- Mara's Scene Painting Shop: Narrow unloading doors at the three storey scenery shop and a wide ground floor door at number 7.
- Harker's Rooms: Casement flanking double doors into the two-storey zone of the ground to first floor.

Brick Facade

All three scene painting workshops have brick facades, expressing their industrial qualities as functional buildings with strong functional agendas.

Painting Frames

- Elms Lester: Painting frames (50" x 30") accessed from first floor and run along the outer side walls and both sides of the inner dividing system.
- Mara's Scene Painting Shop (5&7): Originally eight frames run in pairs. In No 5 the full height and width of the building could be used to stretch the canvas and winched up and down for the convenience of the artist working at 1st floor level. Four vertical frames surviving.
- Harker's Rooms: Large wooden paint frames with pulley and counterweights occupy side walls and the centre of the room.