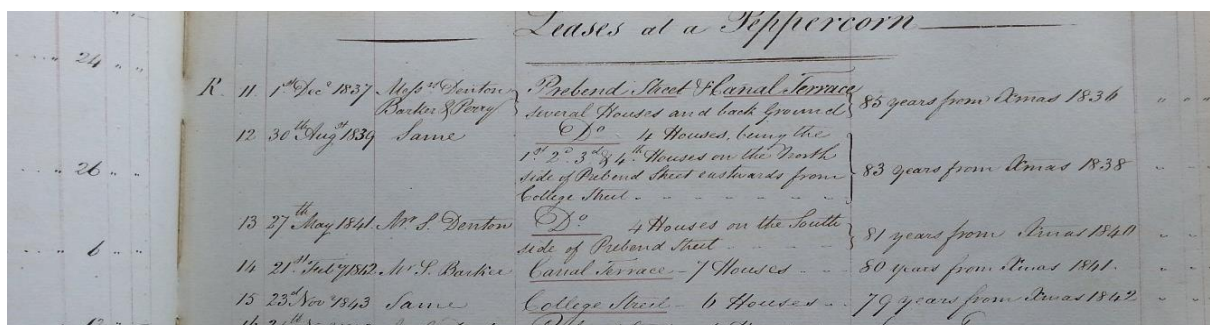
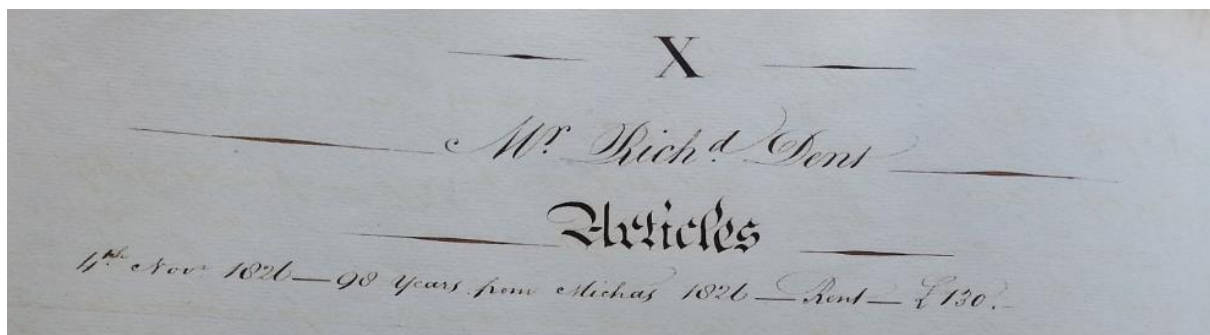
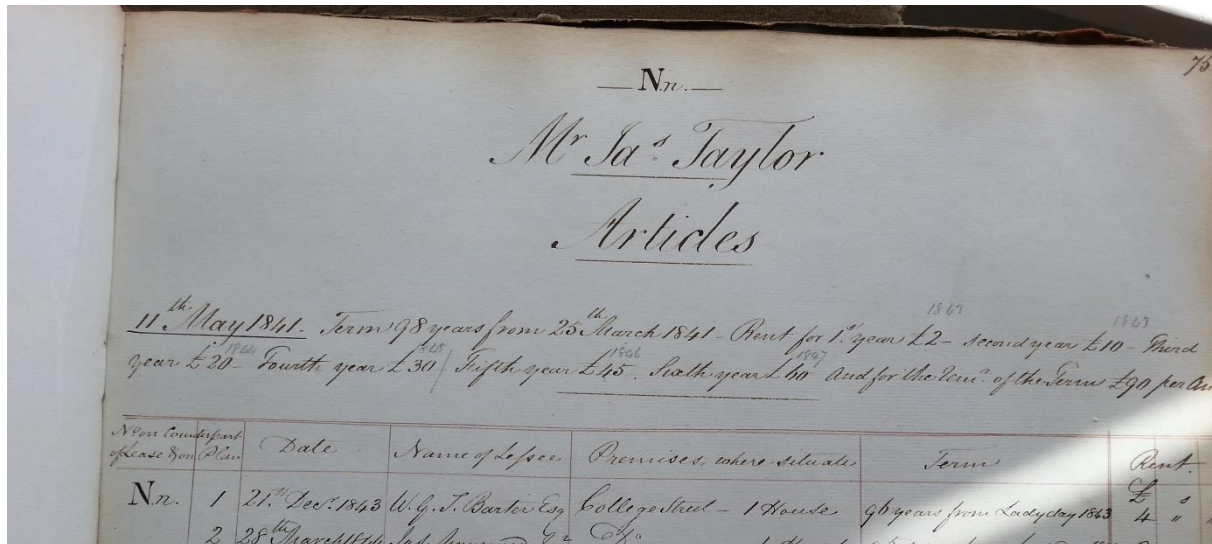
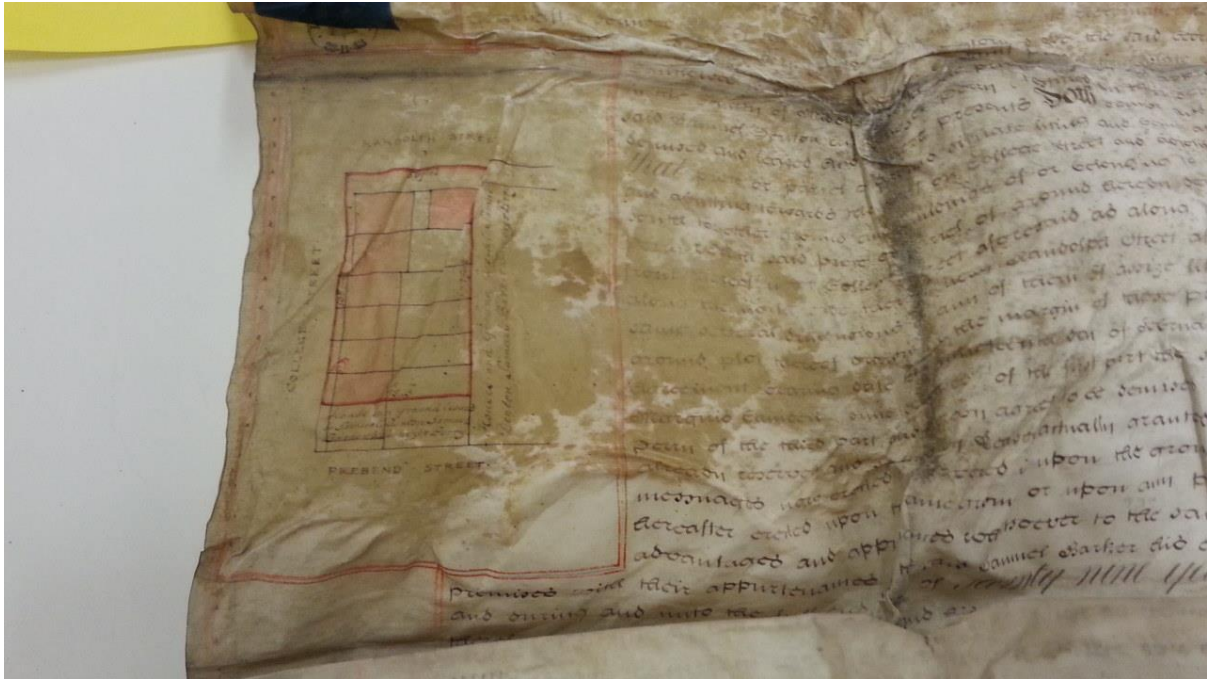


No 152 Royal College Street [2017/6978/P](#)

Commentary on proposal

Register and Deeds from Camden Estate (London Metropolitan Archives)





The conservation areas

Architects can design housing for any site, but must take context into account. The design & Access statement gives insufficient recognition that 152 Royal College Street is within Camden Broadway conservation area and directly adjacent Regents Canal conservation area and Grade II listed bridges.

Land history

The Camden Estate, on the land of the Lords Camden, was started in 1789 at the southwest (Camden High Street) and completed in 1870 at the north-east (now York Way). The Veterinary College was opened in 1791, and College Street was set out along with Camden Street and Bayham Street. The Regents Canal was built by 1820 and Camden Road laid out in 1826. Housing was built at Randolph Street in 1830s, and on College street working northwards to meet it. Nos 152 and 154-164 were built in the early 1840s. The builder of the site for 152 was James Taylor, and for 154-164 was Richard Dent. The architectural surveyor for the whole Camden Estate was Joseph Kay (1775-1848), of 6 Gower Street, vice-president of the Royal Institute of British Architects. *The history of the whole Estate is relevant for this exposed site.*

Design proposals

Nos 154 and 156 are in the original London stock, with slated valley roofs. Adjacent rebuilding (158-164) complemented that, in using brick and maintaining the window line. Creation of the Camden Broadway conservation area in 2007 sets a higher standard for new building than previously.

Other buildings have been recreated in stucco – but this is not to found at Nos 154-156. Note the facades of the upper floors on Nos 154-156 Royal College Street with brick arches decoration and no balcony match nos. 120-122 Camden Road, also within Camden Broadway conservation area:



Royal College Street



Camden Road

Negative characteristics

1. 'Brutalist' style. The proposal is to make large expanses of wall with coloured concrete blocks, and large picture-frame sliding windows. This is a deliberate contradiction to the Georgian style of the adjacent conservation area houses, which is classic stock brick with sash windows.
2. Roof-line/height. The proposal raises the roofline above that of adjacent nos. 154-156, which are the original that should now be preserved within the Conservation Area. Camden's policy is to maintain existing roof levels where they are rows (here, nos 152-156). The Regents Canal Conservation Area Statement says "Roof extensions which fundamentally alter the roof form of buildings where visible from the canal will not normally be permitted".
3. Back extension. The proposal is for a three-storey back extension, which is not in keeping with adjacent housing and will reduce light to the back gardens (no lighting assessment is made in the D&A). The first storey terrace opens towards the Regents Canal, in contradiction to the management plan of the conservation area statement.

The Regents Canal Conservation Area Statement says "Rear extensions should be as unobtrusive as possible and should not adversely affect the character of the building or the conservation area. Rear extensions will not be acceptable where they would spoil a uniform rear elevation of an unspoilt terrace or group of buildings, particularly when the elevations concerned are clearly visible from the canal." The terrace overlooking the canal is inappropriate from the viewpoint of the Canal conservation area. A third floor terrace is not in keeping with the adjacent conservation area Georgian houses.

4 Entrances. The front entrance is higher than ground level – not appropriate since the original building was at ground level – and requires steps.

5. Windows. The natural lighting to the basement front room is only by a small vertical strip of window at the front elevation. However, this is presented as a horizontal basement window in the D&A ground floor plan.

6. Loss of the retail unit changes the 'street front', a further disappointment which extends the negative frontages of nos. 158-164. It changes from the 'public' space at the corner shop – close to the public space of the canal walkway – into a privatised frontage guarded by heavy iron doors.