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91 GOWER STREET DEVELOPMENT

Design, Access & Heritage Statement

University College London (UCL)

UCL Reference: PS1001

SBA Job No: 1656

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CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement is prepared by Saunders Boston Architects on behalf of University College London (UCL). It supports the application for listed building consent for the proposed alteration of 91 Gower Street.

1.2 91 Gower Street is one of several properties forming a terrace of Grade II listed Georgian town houses located in the Bloomsbury area of central London. Bloomsbury is in the Borough of Camden and approximates to the area from Euston Road in the north to High Holborn in the south and from Tottenham Court Road in the west to Grays Inn Road in the east. Gower Street runs from north to south, parallel to, and one block east, of Tottenham Court Road. The area was developed by the Russell family (Dukes of Bedford) in the 17th and 18th centuries into a fashionable residential area, much of which remains today, and provides the character and attractive aesthetic that is still associated with the name worldwide. Although residential use is still important, the area is now known more as the home to several universities, numerous health care institutions, commercial offices and hotels.

1.4 University College London, with 13,000 staff and 38,000 students, was founded in 1826 and is the leading university in London, one of the largest in the country and is centred in the Bloomsbury area. The university occupies many of the buildings in Bloomsbury, some purpose built, some converted from residential and other uses, some historic and some modern.

1.5 91 Gower Street was purchased by UCL in c. 2011 (although it may have bought and sold the property prior this) and it has recently become vacant after a period of being leased as professional offices.

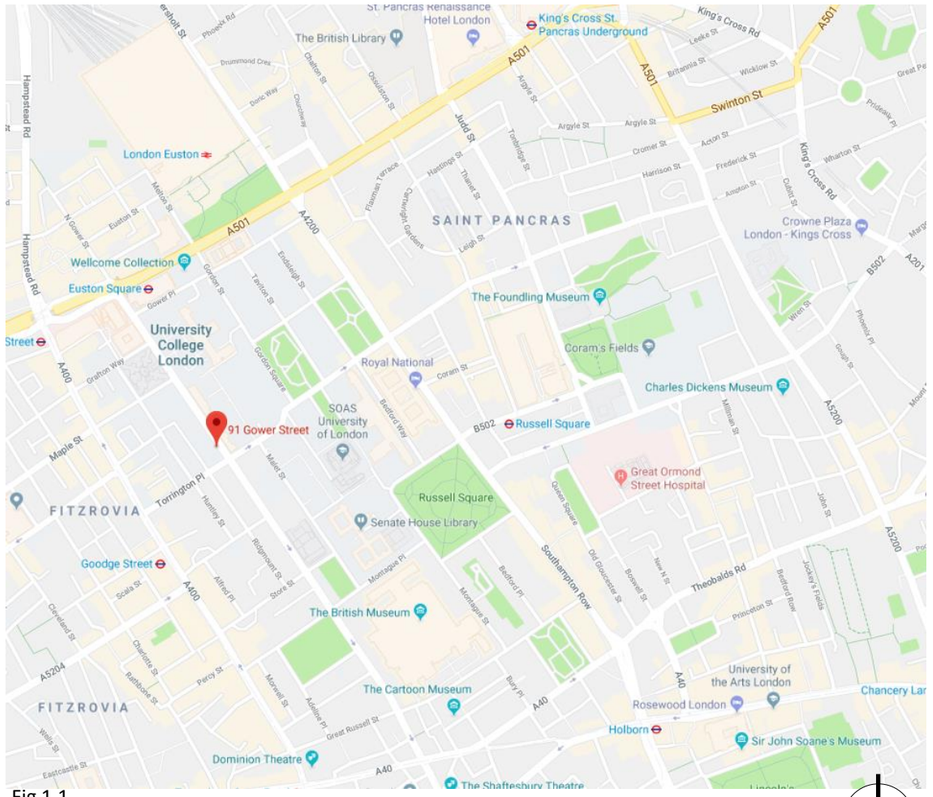

Fig 1.1
91 Gower Street Site Location

2.0 EXISTING SITE AND BUILDINGS

2.1 SITE AREA

2.1.1 As noted in the introduction, 91 Gower Street is one of several properties forming a terrace of Georgian town houses located in the Bloomsbury area of central London. The site is on the west side of Gower Street and is typical of a Georgian residential plot. The long, narrow plans runs from the front entrance on Gower Street to the rear entrance on Chenies Mews. No 91 sits with only two further properties in the terrace to the south, before being bounded by Torrington Place.

2.1.2 The building is well located within the University campus, sitting opposite the Roberts Building, one of the main University buildings stretching out from the main Wilkins Building just north along Gower Street.

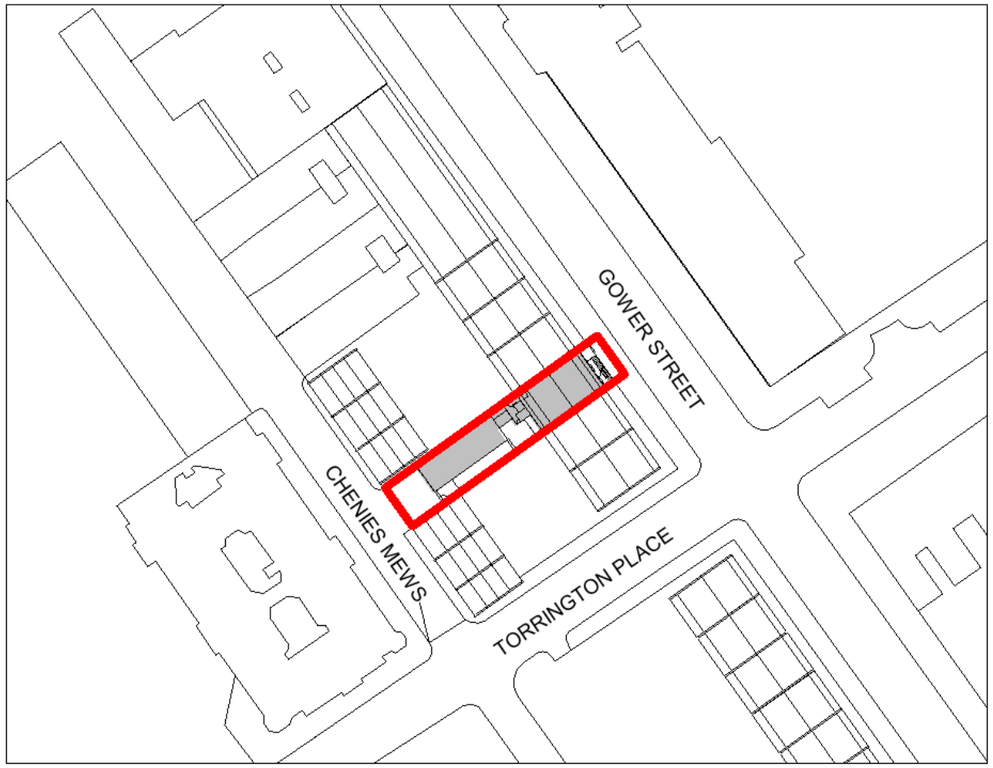

Fig 2.1
91 Gower Street – Site Plan

2.2 SITE CONTEXT

2.2.1 Gower Street

The Western side of Gower Street comprises a terrace of 3-4 storey Georgian town houses with additional accommodation in the mansard roofs and basements below street level. The houses were constructed in the late 18th century and are characterised by yellow stock brick, stucco banding, parapet walls and frontage railings.

The eastern side of Gower Street is predominantly lined with institutional buildings belonging to UCL. The buildings are 5.5 storeys and made from stone in a neo-classical style. Planted trees along the eastern pavement add to the rhythm of the street.

The heights of buildings on both sides, and the rigour of repeated details, create a uniform and linear character along Gower Street.

Fig 2.2
Gower Street Listed Townhouses

g 2.3
ower Street, towards
CL Building

Fig 2.4
91 Gower Street

2.2.2 Chenies Mews

Chenies Mews is characterised by two-storey mews houses adjacent larger mansion houses and UCL buildings. Whilst the buildings differ in scale and form, they are grouped together by a common use of brick.

The street is bounded by the UCL Hospital Rockerfeller Building at the northern end of the mews.

The mews comprises a one-way traffic system, with vehicles entering from Huntley Street and exiting onto Torrington Place.

Fig 2.5
Rear of 91 Gower Street

Fig 2.6
Mews Houses adjacent site

Fig 2.7
Chenies Mews towards UCL H
Rockerfeller Building

2.3 CONSERVATION AREA

2.3.1 The site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, which covers approximately 160 hectares of Camden. Bloomsbury was designated as a conservation area in 1968 in order to protect developments constructed during and preceding the Georgian era.

2.3.2 Proposals for development within this area will need to ensure they are in line with national and local planning policy. The relevant planning policies for development within the conservation are as follows:

- With respect to development in the conservation area, the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 72, requires "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".

- National Planning and Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2018, Section 16 highlights the importance of protecting historical assets, which make a positive contribution to the historic environment.

- Camden Local Plan (2017) Policy D2 requires that proposals in involving Designated heritage assets hoping to receive consent from the Council must "preserve and, where appropriate, enhance 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 and locally listed heritage asset".

- Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2011 provides detailed information on the special interest of the conservation area, to facilitate the preservation and enhancement of its key attributes.

2.4 LISTED BUILDING STATUS

2.4.1 91 Gower Street is Grade II 'listed' (list entry Number:1113047) as part of a 'Group' comprising '87-97 and attached railings'. The description (see below) lists the important features and highlights the 'historical' importance of No. 91 as the home of George Dance the Younger, which is commemorated by a 'blue plaque' fixed to the front elevation of the main building.

Summary	This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.
Name	NUMBERS 87 TO 97 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS
List Entry Number	1113047
Location	County: Greater London Authority District: Camden District Type: London Borough
Grade	II
Date First Listed	28-Mar-1969
Details	CAMDEN TQ2982SE GOWER STREET 798-1/94/608 (West side) 28/03/69 Nos.87-97 (Odd) and attached railings GV II Terrace of 6 houses. c1789. Darkened stock brick with slate mansard roofs and dormers. Nos 95 & 97 with rusticated stucco ground floors. 3 storeys, attics and basements; No.91, 4 storeys. 3 windows each. Round-arched doorways with pilaster-jambs and cornice-heads, fanlights (Nos 91 & 93 radial patterned) and panelled doors. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes, No.91 with glazing bars. Ground floor and 1st floor of No.91 with bracketed sills. Plain stone 1st floor sill bands. No.87 with 1st floor cast-iron window guards. Parapets. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas. HISTORICAL NOTE: No.91 was the home of George Dance the Younger, architect (GLC plaque). (Survey of London: Vol. XXI, Tottenham Court Road and Neighbourhood: London: -1949: 78).

2.5 EXISTING BUILDINGS

2.5.1 Today, the site comprises two separate buildings; the main building fronting Gower Street is a typical five storey (including basement) brick-built Georgian terrace house with slate covered pitched roof. The second building is a single storey brick-built 'annexe', with a felt covered flat roof, located in what would have been the garden. A car parking area sits between the Annexe and Chenies Mews, flanked on both sides by modern 'Mews' style residential properties developed in the late 20th century.

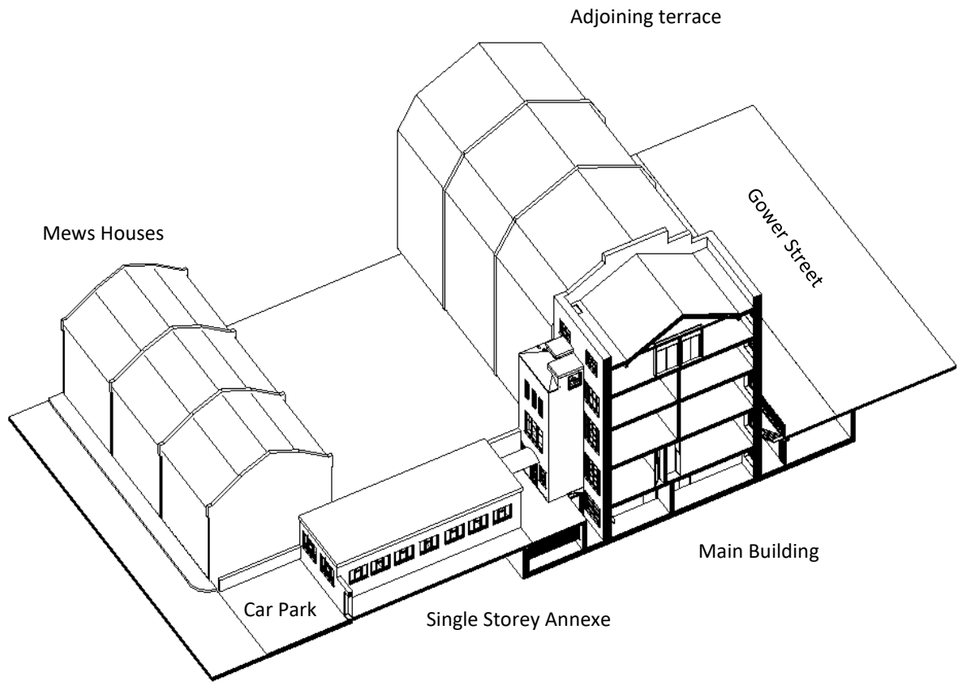

Fig 2.8
3D View of Existing Buildings

2.6 PLANNING HISTORY

2.6.1 There have been several applications in relation to the conversion of the site from offices to residential flats. As far as we are aware, these works have not been undertaken and the building has continued to be used for commercial purposes.

Reference	Description	Date	Decision
2004/2893/T	REAR GARDEN 1 x Ash - pollard or fell.	06-07-2004	No Objection to Works to Tree(s) in CA
PS9704476R1	Change of use and works of conversion from offices to use as three self-contained flats, as shown on drawing numbers E257/01A and /02.	28-07-1997	Grant Full Planning Permission
LS9704477R1	Change of use and works of conversion from offices to use as three self-contained flats, as shown on drawing numbers E257/01A and /02.	28-07-1997	Grant L B Consent with Conditions
PS9704476	Conversion of house presently used as offices into three self-contained flats, including alterations. (Plans submitted)	30-05-1997	Withdrawn Application-revision received
LS9704477	Conversion of house presently used as offices into three self-contained flats, including alterations. (Plans submitted)	30-05-1997	Withdrawn Application-revision received
P9601285	Change of use and conversion from offices to a single family dwelling together with works of alteration, partial demolition to internal additions and basement entrance and minor glazing over rear area, as shown on drawing nos. E257/ 01, 02, 03, 04, 05.	29-04-1996	Grant Full Planning Permission
L9601286	Works of alteration and conversion in connection with change of use and conversion from offices to a single family dwelling, as shown on drawing nos. E257/01, 02, 03, 04, 05.	29-04-1996	Grant L B Consent with Conditions

3.0 HISTORIC CONTEXT

3.1 BLOOMSBURY

3.1.1 Previously occupied by agricultural land, the area of Bloomsbury emerged as an urban development from circa 1660, as part of a period of rapid expansion which lasted several centuries. Restoration works following the Great Fire of London are believed to be the catalyst for this new wave of building, which developed into the construction of fashionable suburbs. The new townscape signified a departure from the medieval alleys and courtyards and instead drew influence from the Palladian architecture of Covent Garden (developed by the Duke of Bedford and Inigo Jones in 1630).

3.1.2 Between 1750 and 1830 landowners between Great Russell Street and Euston Road began to capitalise on the demand for fashionable residences. During the Georgian and Regency period a unified architectural design for developments, such as Bedford Square, was enforced by the Bedford Estate's design code, which restricted builders to specific materials, proportions and surfaces.

3.1.3 During the 19th century, residential interest in Bloomsbury began to decline, with the construction of fashionable villas in Belsize Park and St John's Wood. As a result, other building uses were introduced and the area saw an increase in commercial uses.

3.1.4 In 1828, London's first university opened in 1828 with the construction of the Wilkins Building in Gower Street. University College London subsequently expanded to occupy a large proportion of the surrounding area throughout the 19th and 20th century.

3.1.5 Today, Bloomsbury retains the formal order of wide streets, arranged in a grid pattern, punctuated with leafy squares.

3.2 GOWER STREET

3.2.1 Aligned with historic tracks across the area, Gower Street forms one of the main routes through the Bloomsbury area. Its broad street, lined with trees on the eastern side, is a typical example of 18th century town-planning.

3.2.2 The Georgian townhouses on the western side of the street were constructed as part of the Bedford estate development. The architectural proportions comprise 3-4 storey buildings fronting the highway with smaller mews houses located at the rear of the properties. The uniformity across the frontages is a result of the contractual restrictions placed upon builders by the Bedford Estate design code.

3.2.3 The western side is occupied by the landmark Cruciform building, which was constructed in 1896 to replace the original University College Hospital built in 1833. The cruciform plan marked a notable departure from 'pavilion'-style hospital design and differs from the Georgian terraces in its use of red brick.

3.2.4 On the eastern side of Gower Street, adjacent the Wilkins Buildings, stands two 20th century academic buildings. The Anatomy Building was constructed in 1923 and is characterised by a rusticated plinth and classical proportions. Designed by the same architect, the neighbouring property (directly opposite No. 91) was built in 1959 in a similar yet evidently 'stripped-back' classical style.

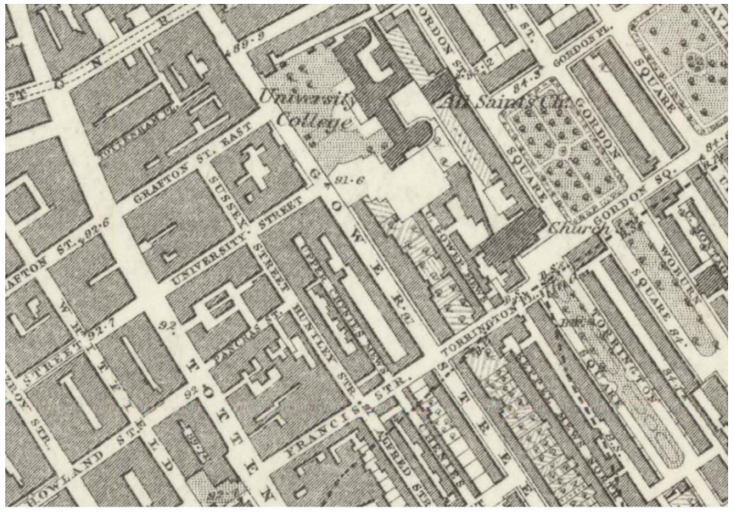

Fig 3.1 Middlesex XVII OS Map (Surveyed 1868-1873)

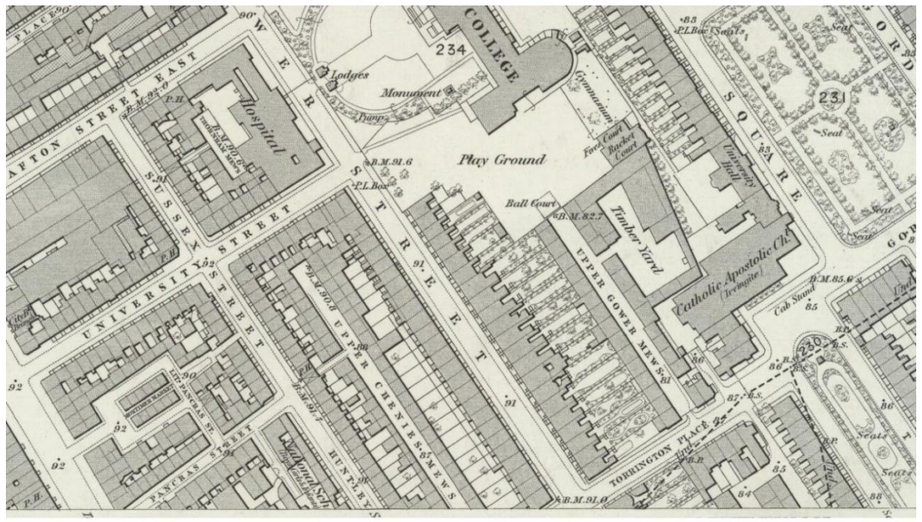

Fig 3.2 London (First Editions c1850s) XXV – OS 25 Inch England and Wales (1870)

3.2.5 The Middlesex XVII OS Map (Surveyed 1868-1873) and London XXV OS Map (1870) shows the UCL Wilkins building with generous front gardens opposite the UCL Hospital building. No. 91 Gower Street is shown as a terrace of houses opposite similar buildings, with smaller mews structures at the rear.

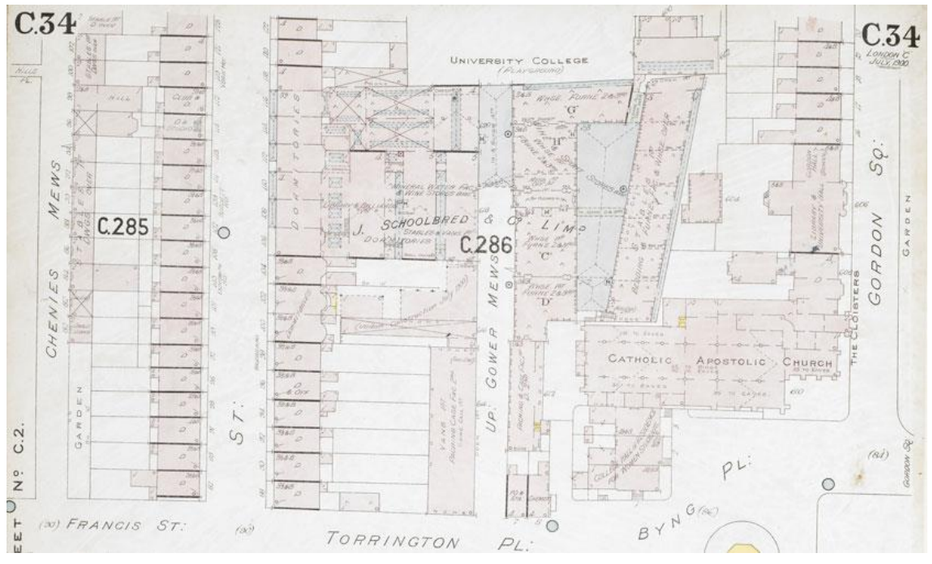

Fig 3.3 Insurance Plan of London North West District Vol C Sheet 34 (1900)

3.2.6 The Insurance Plan of London North West District Vol C Sheet 34 from 1900 shows a garden at the rear of Nos. 87-97 Gower Street, in place of stables or mews houses. The map also shows the expansion of the university with dormitories infilling an area of land between Gower Street and Upper Gower Mews.

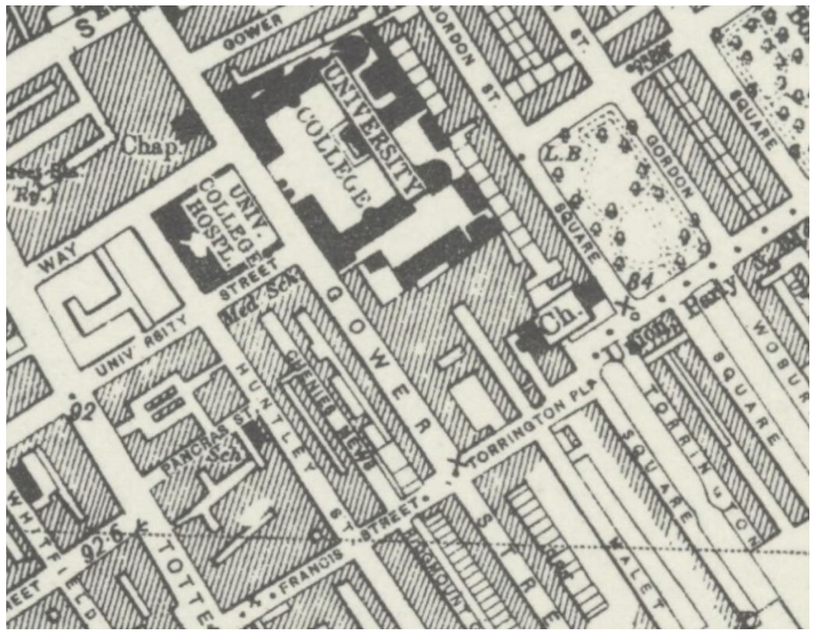

Fig 3.4 OS 6 Inch England and Wales (1938)

Fig 3.5 OS National Grid Map (1954)

3.2.7 The 1938 OS Map continues to show gardens at the back of 91 Gower Street, whereas the 1954 OS Map depicts the annexe building at the rear of the property. It is therefore assumed the annexe building was added to the site in the years following WWII.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 The heritage statement considers the effect of the works upon the existing site of 91 Gower Street and the impact on its neighbours within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

4.2 The primary importance of the site is its contribution to the unity of the streetscape. The significance of the terrace as a whole is explicit in its listing as a collection of 10 dwellings (No.s 87-97) and their common boundary railings.

4.3 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal highlights Gower Street and the surrounding area (Sub Area 5), as being an "exemplary piece of late 18th Century town planning"[1]

4.4 A consistency of detailing along the main street façade is clearly evident and its importance is documented in the 1949 Survey of London by JR Howard Roberts and Walter H Godfrey:

"Each of these houses is three storeys in height above a basement, with stock brick facings, plain parapet and slate-covered mansard roofs with dormer windows lighting the attics... The first and second floors have each three sash windows and a stone string-course runs at first floor sill level. In place of the northern window on the ground floor is the entrance beneath a semicircular brick arch..... The entrances are wide, with generous stone thresholds and steps, the impression of width being increased by the skilful treatment of the wrought-iron railings"[2]

The survey notes No 91 in particular as having a different roof configuration to the adjacent buildings: "No. 91 has had its front wall raised to convert the attic into an additional storey".

4.5 Alongside the architectural merit of the buildings, a number of features within the streetscape are noted as being significant to the character of Gower Street. These include the trees along the eastern side of the road, and the iron coal hole covers outside the following properties: 2,6-20 (even), 19, 25, 29, 31,41, 43, 47, 51, 55-69 (odd) 66-72 (even), 71, 74, 75-85 (odd), 80, 89, 93.[3]

4.6 The urban grain changes significantly from the front to the rear of the site, which backs onto Chenies Mews. The buildings immediately adjacent the site are two-storey dwellings and reflect traditional mews fenestration with large openings on the ground floor and smaller windows above. The houses are twentieth century developments, on a site formerly dedicated to stables and dwellings servicing the townhouses on Gower Street. Further along the street the stables have been replaced by larger institutional buildings belonging to UCL.

4.7 The single storey annexe at the rear of 91 Gower Street is set back from the mews houses by a car-parking area, and appears from historical maps to be a mid-20th century addition.

4.8 The site directly faces the side of Gordon Mansions (Nos. 31-75), a five-storey apartment building dating from the beginning of the 20th Century. This building is noted as positively contributing to the character of the area, alongside the contemporary development of nos. 51-53 (odd).[4]

4.9 Other elements of interest in the streetscape of Chenies Mews include cobbled and York stone paving, as well as stone bollards. Directly outside 91 Gower Street, these elements have been replaced by tarmacadam road surfacing and a concrete dropped kerb.

4.10 The property holds additional historical value as the residence of the architect George Dance, between 1741 and 1825. He is known for designing Newgate Prison, as well as being a founding member of the Royal Academy. Following his death at the property he was buried in St Paul's Cathedral. A blue plaque commemorates his residency at the house.

4.11 The interior of the property has been subjected to a number of alterations over the years in line with its conversion from residential use to offices. These include the addition of WCs, internal partitions, office based joinery, single-glazing units and electrical cabling. In addition a number of asbestos panels have been used to board-up fire places, window openings and as a fire-proofing measure for internal doors.

4.12 The fabric of the building has been poorly maintained and prolonged evidence of water-damage is particularly evident within the basement level.

[1] Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, adopted 2011, p38
[2] 'Gower Street', in Survey of Londonn:Volume 21, the Parish of St Pancras Part 3: Tottenham Court Road and Neighbourhood, ed JR Howard Roberts & Walter H Godfrey, London 1949
[3] Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, adopted 2011, p136
[4] Bloombury CA Sub Area 5 Townscape Appraisal Map

5.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

5.1 DESIGN OVERVIEW

5.1.1 The design proposes the refurbishment of the offices in the Georgian townhouse. Internal works aim to upgrade the existing finishes and office facilities, while protecting the existing period features. Minor external works are proposed, with the repair of external wall and floor finishes, plus replacement of the roof covering.

5.1.2 Alternations and minor amendments to the layout of the buildings provide the opportunity to improve upon poorly implemented installations, such as ill-fitting doors, asbestos panels and unsightly Georgian-wire glass partitions.

5.1.3 The works favour the preservation and importance of the building's listed status, replacing elements in poor condition with those that take precedent from older features within the property.

5.1.4 In addition, the proposals aim to improve the quality and accessibility of the spaces, with increased access to natural daylighting, ventilation and improved thermal performance.

5.2 SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED WORKS

5.2.1 Basement Level (incl. Vaults / Courtyards)

- **Boiler Rm - *B92*.** New secure timber doors installed to all vaults.
- **Rear Courtyard.** External rear gate from parking area repainted.
- **Rear Lobby – *B94.*** New secure external timber door with curved fan light in existing opening.
- **Front External**. Spot repointing & making good to walls.

5.2.2 Ground Floor (Main Building)

- **Entrance Lobby - *G99*.** Strip out riser and services adjacent to entrance door. Remove existing floor tiles, substrate inspected to see if any existing flag stones remain. Assume new vinyl tiles & entrance mat.
- **ISD Office 1 – *G01***. Secondary glazing to be replaced. Door D-N01 to be replaced (see 5.2.8); door D-02 to be refurbished; (cupboard) door D-03 to be rehung on opposite side
- **ISD Store – *G02*.** Remove alcove shelving, window pelmet & security grille.
- **Rear Corridor – *G97 & G96*.** New access control lock to be installed to rear external door.
- **WC 1 & WC 2 – *G94 & G95*.** Damp-proof treatment of walls as per damp specialist report. Removal of existing sanitary and installation of new fixtures.

5.2.3 Ground Floor (Annexe and External Areas)

- **No works proposed inside Annexe**
- **External Landscape.** Broken / loose paving slabs to be replaced / reset. New hard-standing to be installed at rear parking area to create level threshold at annexe entrance.
- **Rear Carpark Area.** No work proposed, but waste bins to be stored here. Either 3 no. 360L bins (1 for each waste stream) or more likely 1 no. 660L bin (mixed recycling) & 1 no. 360L bin (general waste). These can be stored/arranged running perpendicular to Chenies Mews, or organised backed on Annex rear wall, as demand requires. As a newly occupied building demand is yet to be established, but UCL's cleaning / waste contractors will be able to adapt to cater for any estimated needs. See PS010001-SBA-XX-ZZ-DR-A-0501_Site Plan.

5.2.4 First Floor

- **ISD Office 2 & ISD Office Space –*101 & 103*.** Existing shelving units and joinery removed. Secondary glazing replaced.
- **Bookable Meeting Room – *102*.** Existing shelving units and joinery removed.
- **Tea Point 1 - *104*.** Joinery removed and new tea making facilities installed.
- **Hallway.** Stair balusters prepared before being redecorated. Hand rail to be sanded and re-varnished.

5.2.5 Second Floor

- **Agile Offices 1 & 2 - *201-202*.** Existing shelving units removed. Secondary glazing replaced.
- **Agile Office 3 - *203*.** Existing joinery removed and adjacent surfaces made good.
- **Toilets.** Ill-fitting door at top of steps removed. WC cubicles and sanitary ware removed. New WC installed.
- **Hallway.** Georgian-wire glazed partition and door removed. Existing handrail reconnected to flight of stairs above.

5.2.6 Third Floor

- **Agile Offices 4 & 5 - *301-302***. Existing shelving units removed. Secondary glazing replaced.
- **Tea Point 2 - *303*.** Kitchen equipment removed and new facilities installed.
- **WC4 - *398*.** Sanitary-ware removed and new WC facility installed.
- **Hallway.** Open up & remove partition concealing original hand rail.
  Form new riser on half landing to match floor below.
  Existing store cupboards removed and new cupboard installed.

5.2.7 Finishes

All internal floor finishes to be replaced. Localised repairs to wall and ceiling surfaces. Skim plaster finish to all surfaces prior to decoration.

5.2.8 Doors

All original internal doors onto stairwell to have asbestos removed and be upgraded to be fire-rated according to UK Building Regulations Part B compliant fire strategy, using intumescent material. Modern internal doors to stairwell either upgraded in a similar

fashion, or replaced with panelled timber door to match existing precedent within the building. Refer to Door Schedule for further details.

5.2.9 Windows

All retained windows to be repaired and opening functions restored to working order.

5.2.10 Joinery

All existing skirting and dado rails to be retained, repaired and redecorated, where condition permits. Where fresh sections of room perimeter become exposed or are created, new dado and skirting to match existing profiles will be installed.

5.2.11 Fireplaces

Boarded up fireplaces to be aesthetically reinstated.

5.2.12 Services

Existing mechanical and electrical services to be stripped out and new system to be installed.

5.2.13 Roof (Main Building)

Roof structure to be inspected. Existing roof covering to be replaced with slate tiles to match existing.

6.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT & PROPOSAL JUSTIFICATION

6.1 Basement Level

6.1.1 The proposed refurbishment at basement level addresses the removal of asbestos containing materials identified within the Lucion Environmental Survey.

6.1.2 The replacement of the boiler and associated gas & electrical connections will better serve the building to both expel damp & water ingress, as well improve the comfort and wellbeing of users. Existing doors onto B2 & from the external well to the lobby from the basement both are in such a state of disrepair that replacement is theonly way to ensure the security of the new boiler. In addition to providing an improved level of security, these doors, along with the introduction of new timber doors to the vaults at basement level will help to improve the air-tightness of the building fabric.

6.1.3 The over-boarding with plasterboard to all the rooms within the basement is required in order to achieve a 60 minute fire rating compartmentation between floor levels, in a way that causes minimal damage or alteration to the existing building. A reversible necessity to ensure the building can meet the legislative requirements of its new usage.

6.2 Ground Floor (Main Building)

6.2.1 There are currently secondary glazing units installed to the windows fronting Gower Street. These single glazed aluminium sash windows are heavy and many appear to have faulty mechanisms, causing them to drop suddenly. It is proposed these units are replaced with new vertical sliding units with tilt mechanism for easy cleaning.

6.2.2 Works to the existing WCs at ground floor level aim to improve the quality of facilities for the users. As well as the replacement of sanitary-ware, the proposals aim to address the ingress of damp, evident on the external wall as per recommendations from the damp proof specialist.

6.3 First Floor

6.3.1 The proposal to strip out elements of office-based joinery will remove detrimental additions that are not part of the historic fabric.

6.4.2 The introduction of a tea point in the rear post-room will improve the amenities for the users on the first floor and below and will mean they do not have to travel to the top floor kitchen to access these provisions.

6.4 Second Floor

6.4.1 The out-dated toilet facilities on this floor will be improved by removal of the existing sanitary-ware and the installation of a new WC. The new layout proposes one cubicle, rather than two, which provides the opportunity to create a landing space at the top of the steps. This, along with the removal of the ill-fitting door at the top of the steps will reduce the risk of falling and improve the overall quality of the space.

6.4.2 The stripping-out of the Georgian-wire glass partition and door at the bottom of the third flight of stairs will remove a detrimental addition to the hallway. Once removed it is proposed the handrail between flights is reinstated.

6.4.3 Similarly the removal of built-in desks and shelving units will dispose of unsightly and redundant elements, added in recent years as part of the use of the building as commercial premises.

6.5 Third Floor

6.5.1 Alterations to the third floor layout aim to improve the use of space. The relocation of the kitchen wall will increase the capacity of the tea-point and create a functional area from redundant circulation space on the third floor landing.

6.5.2 The bathroom-suite installed on the third floor is in poor condition and inappropriate for use in an office environment. Proposals to replace this bathroom with a renewed WC facility will have negligible impact on the layout/existing fabric and will improve facilities for the users.

6.5.3 Again, later additions of built-in joinery will be removed and a new cupboard installed in the third floor hallway. The removal of these elements will improve the overall quality of the spaces and will not have a significant impact on the building as a heritage asset.

6.6 Finishes

In order to restore the internal walls to a smooth finish, it is proposed lime plaster is used for localised repairs and a skim finish is applied to all walls and ceilings, taking care to protect historical features, such as cornices and ceiling roses.

6.7 Doors

Many of the doors are in poor functioning condition, with heavy opening mechanisms. A specialist survey identified asbestos insulating board has been applied to the majority of doors opening onto the stairwell as a fire-protection method. Some doors are clearly later additions to the property. The works required to restore the doors to good working order, remove asbestos panels and adequately protect the doors from the spread of fire will be extensive. With this in mind, it is proposed all original doors leading from offices onto escape routes are upgraded using intumescent material and the later doors either receive the same treatment or are replaced with new period style panelled doors. One such modern door is onto ISD Office 1, or reception. Here the introduction of a vision panel in the door leading to the reception from the entrance hall will help users navigate themselves on entering the building.

6.8 Windows

Restoration of all windows in the main house to functioning order aims to preserve the original historic fabric.

6.9 Joinery

Existing dado rails and skirting boards have been noticeably chipped and damaged over the years with the installation of data cables. It is therefore proposed these wherever possible are repaired and redecorated. Any freshly exposed or created perimeters to rooms, or where the existing is too badly damaged to repair, are proposed to have dado rails and skirting boards are replaced to match existing profiles.

6.10 Fireplaces

The aesthetic reinstatement of fire-places in each room aims to remove harmful asbestos panels and the detrimental addition of electric heating appliances. In doing so, the works intend to restore historic features of the building.

6.11 Services

In order to improve the efficiency of the building, the proposals include the stripping out of existing mechanical and electrical services and the installation of a new system. The design of the new system will seek to minimise routing of pipes, improving on the existing conditions.

6.12 Roof (Main Building)

Generally, the roof is in poor condition with many slipped, cracked and friable slates. There is evidence of several poorly executed emergency repairs. The proposals include the removal of the entire mansard roof covering and replacement with new welsh slates to match existing. If possible, the works intend to reuse slates in satisfactory condition.

6.13 Visual Impact

6.13.1 The majority of the works relate to the refurbishment of internal elements and as such have little visual impact upon the property.

6.13.2 At basement level the visual impact of external courtyard proposals will have a positive effect on the overall aesthetic of the building by repairing and restoring the existing surfaces.

6.13.3 From street level, the proposals will have no visual impact on the historic setting of Gower Street.

7.0 SUSTAINABILITY AND WELL-BEING

7.1 This project is largely concerned with creating office workstation space for staff that are likely to spend most of the working day at their desk. In this respect every effort has been made to provide every workstation with a direct view of a window and access to natural ventilation.

7.2 The design ensures that easy access is provided to sufficient toilets, break-out space and meeting rooms.

7.3 The design proposals allow for good quality lighting and heating and generally aim to create a comfortable and safe working environment with as low energy input as practical given the historic building setting.

7.4 The waste storage and management of the building will comply with UCL's wider policies on this, currently achieving around 60% of waste being recycled and aiming to increase this number to 85%. None of UCL's office waste is sent to landfill. This reflects UCL's commitment sustainable operationally principles.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The proposed works aim to improve the internal and external conditions of 91 Gower Street, while preserving the historic character of the site. As such, the majority of the design proposals comprise minor internal works to improve the current use of the building as offices.

8.2 Externally, there will be no change in scale or form to the existing building, and minor works are proposed to repair and upgrade the existing elements. As such the works will not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area.

8.3 The proposed replacement of the roof coverings, and secondary glazing will improve the internal comfort level for the users and protect against further decay of the existing fabric.

8.4 The potential of the site is optimised in providing much needed improved office space for the UCL administrative teams. As such, the scheme makes a positive contribution to the user-groups of 91 Gower Street, as well as the existing context.