

HERITAGE STATEMENT

NYX LONDON

DECEMBER 2020



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of an application for a lightweight bioclimatic pergola to provide shelter to an existing tenth-floor rooftop bar at the Jury's Inn Hotel, Holborn, and the extension of a lift overrun to improve access to the space.

The building has been in hotel use since the 1990s, and the use of the tenth floor as amenity space is well-established. The terrace currently has a canopied sky bar to the south, which has recently been removed to facilitate roof repairs. It is proposed to replace the canopy with an improved pergola, comprising metal posts and beams supporting retractable flat panels.

At the same time, it is proposed to extend the lift structure to improve visitor access to the terrace. The positioning of the new structure has been carefully considered to minimise any visual effect, and it will sit over the existing roof access housing.

The hotel is presently undergoing refurbishment as part of a post-COVID regeneration strategy. The terrace forms part of the amenity space of the hotel, which will be open to guests and visitors following full refurbishment of the property to rebrand the hotel to a "NYX by Leonardo" hotel brand.

The hotel brand is a youthful concept that incorporates extensive levels of artistic elements from both local and international artists within the interior design scheme. The new pergola and lift will improve the access to and enjoyment of the roof terrace space, improving the amenity of the hotel.

Whilst not widely visible, its appearance is appropriate to both the host building and its urban, city centre context.

The building sits on the corner of a busy junction between Southampton Row and Theobalds Road. The townscape is characterised by buildings of scale which naturally draw the eye upwards when travelling along the street.

The site itself is not located in a Conservation Area but lies adjacent the boundary of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area which was designated in recognition of its fine Victorian and Edwardian historic buildings and patterns of streetscape. The monumental Grade II listed Victoria House lies in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area across the street from the site and dominates the streetscape and views looking north on Southampton Row heading north. Its ground floor units are currently vacant and detract from the otherwise vibrant and mixed streetscene at ground level which is characterised by retail premises to the north.

The redbrick, decorative facades of the Grade II listed buildings of Avenue Chambers and Sicilian Avenue are eye catching features on the south side of the crossing. The Grade II* listed Central St Martins College of Art and Design is a seven storey building which frames Southampton Row to the south.

The settings of the listed buildings comprise primarily a busy vehicular junction which does in part distract from the appreciation of the listed buildings. That said, the original uses and locations of these listed buildings on this major junction crossing mean they have always been experienced in this busy urban streetscene.

These buildings of scale and architectural importance, which are appreciated in views north and south along Southampton Row and west to east along Theobalds Road, create a point of townscape significance at this junction.

The proposals respond to the requirements of policies D1 (design) and D2 (Heritage), and will improve the amenity value of the existing roof terrace space. Overall it is our view that the proposed roof terrace will not have any material effect on the setting or significance of nearby heritage assets.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Montagu Evans has been instructed by Jurys Inn Ltd (hereby referred to as 'the Applicant') to produce this Heritage Statement in support of proposals for a new bioclimatic pergola and extension to the existing lift to the roof terrace at the Jury's Inn Hotel, Holborn, London.
- 1.2 This assessment considers the heritage sensitivities and townscape qualities of the immediate setting of the Site, and undertakes an assessment of the proposals upon the contribution made by the building to neighbouring heritage assets, including the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- 1.3 Montagu Evans has undertaken a thorough appraisal of the historic development and existing context of the site and its immediate setting to inform this submission, informed by a site visit in July 2020.
- 1.4 This report presents the background research conducted to inform the proposals and an assessment of the proposals.

SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.5 The Site is located at a location of high townscape significance on the north-eastern side of the junction between Theobalds Road and Southampton Row.
- 1.6 The present building dates to the post-war period, and is a landmark feature in the locality by virtue of its scale and position adjacent to a busy junction.
- 1.7 The building is not in a Conservation Area, but is close to the boundary with the Bloomsbury CA to the west and north. It is also in the setting of a number of listed buildings, including the grade II listed Victoria House and the grade II* Central St Martins building to the south.
- 1.8 There is presently a roof terrace at tenth floor level, which was until recently covered by a pergola, prior to its removal to facilitate repair works to the roof. The terrace provides important amenity space for the use of guests to the hotel.
- 1.9 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area 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.

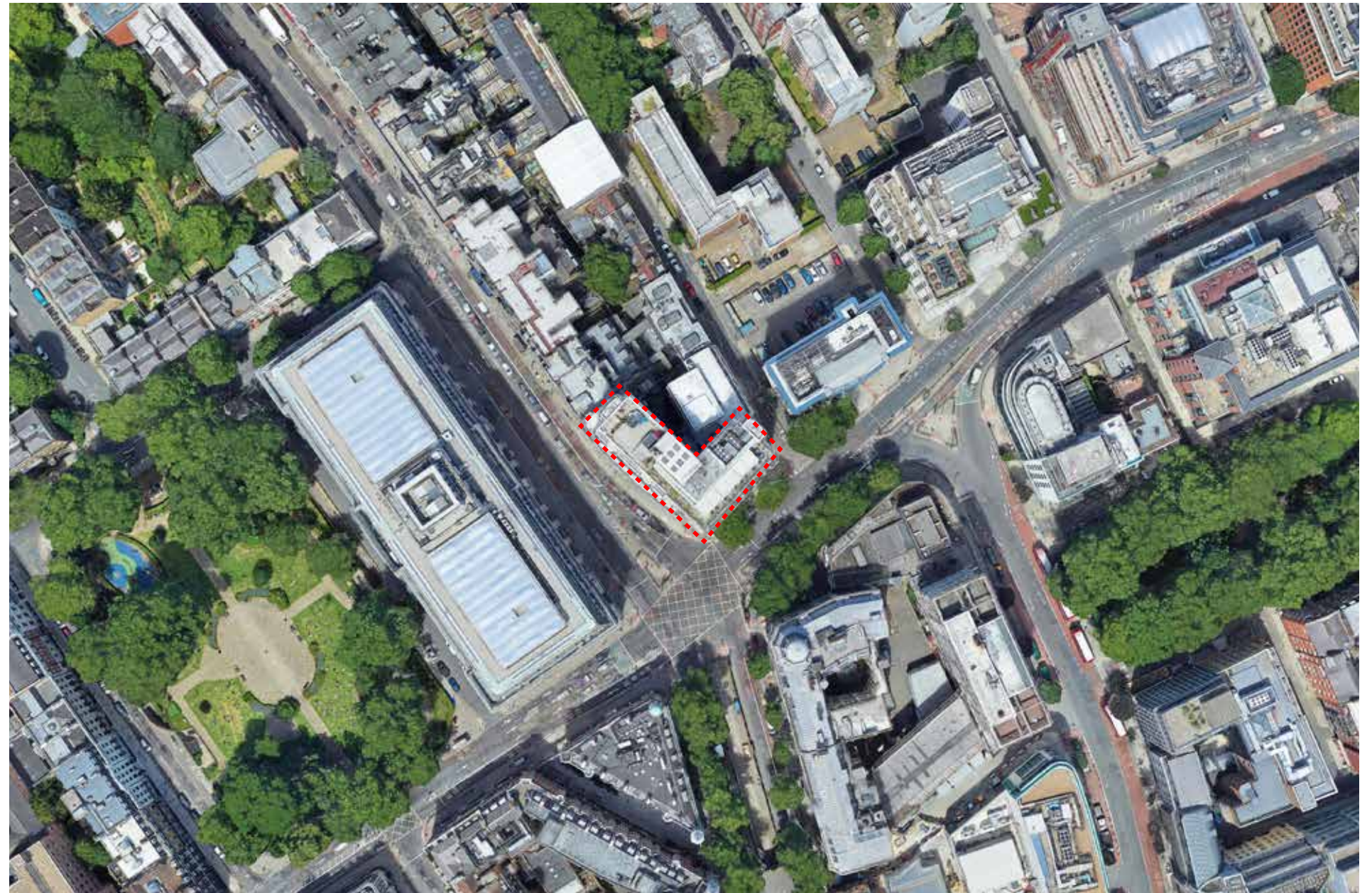


Figure 1.1 Aerial View of Site within Queen Square context. Source: Google (base map)

2.0

LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

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LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

2.1 This section sets out the planning policy context for the redevelopment of the Site, including national and local guidance.

LEGISLATION

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS ACT) 1990

2.2 The Site does not comprise any statutorily listed building and is not located in a conservation area.

2.3 With respect to this application, the applicable statutory provisions are:

- Section 66(1) the determination of applications.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2.4 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 stipulates that where in making any determination under the Planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, and the determination must be made in accordance with that plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following documents form the statutory development plan:

- The London Plan (July 2011 with alterations 2016); and
- Camden Local Plan (2017).

LONDON PLAN (2011 WITH ALTERATIONS 2016)

2.5 The London Plan is “the overall strategic plan for London, setting out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of London over the next 20–25 years” (p.10). The policies relevant to the assessment of heritage are included at Chapter 7 (London’s Living Places and Spaces).

2.6 Policies 7.4 (Local Character) and 7.6 (Architecture) require development to make a positive contribution to the public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape, and to take references form the form, mass and orientation of the existing built environment.

2.7 Policy 7.8 (Heritage Assets and Archaeology) outlines policy requirements for development affecting heritage assets. Part C of the policy states that new development “should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.”

2.8 The supporting text in support of Policy 7.8 was subject to minor additions in the review of October 2013. It is stated that crucial to the preservation of London’s unique character is the careful protection and adaptive re-use of heritage buildings and their settings.

CAMDEN LOCAL PLAN (2017)

2.9 The Camden Local Plan was adopted by the Council on 3rd July 2017, and replaced the Core Strategy and Camden Development Policies as the Development Plan.

2.10 Section 7 Contains policies relating to Design. The policies which are of relevance to this application are included below.

2.11 Policy D1 (Design) outlines the Council’s approach to securing high quality design in development. The following requirements for development are salient to this application:

- “a. respects local context and character;
- b. preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 – Heritage;
- c. Is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- d. is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses;
- e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;
- g. is inclusive and accessible for all;
- j. responds to natural features and preserves gardens and other open space;
- k. incorporates high quality landscape design (including public art, where appropriate) and maximises opportunities for greening, for example through planting of trees and other soft landscaping;

- l. incorporates outdoor amenity space;
- m. preserves significant and protected views;
- o. carefully integrates building services equipment.

The council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.”

2.12 Policy D2 (Heritage) outlines the Council’s approach to designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings. With regard to designated heritage assets, the policy outlines the approach to substantial or less than substantial harm.

2.13 The Council will:

- “g. resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of the conservation area; and
- h. preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden’s architectural heritage.”

2.14 The following parts of the policy relate to Listed Buildings.

“To preserve or enhance the borough’s listed buildings, the Council will:

- i. resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
- j. resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building;
- and
- k. Resist development that would cause harm to the significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.”

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) (2019)

- 2.15 Chapter 12 of the Framework outlines the Government's policy regarding design. It emphasises that *"good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people"*.
- 2.16 In relation to design policies, Paragraph 127 states that good design:
- "a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public spaces) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
 - f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and where crime and disorder, and the and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."*
- 2.17 Paragraph 130 advises that planning decisions should:
- "Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development."*
- 2.18 Paragraph 131 promotes sustainable development and appropriate design:
- "In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings."*
- 2.19 Chapter 16 of the Framework (paragraphs 184 to 202) sets out the Government's policies relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. The Framework stresses that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance (paragraph 184). The guidance continues to place the assessment of the significance of heritage assets and the effect of development on this at the heart of planning for the historic environment.
- 2.20 The approach to managing change to designated heritage assets set out in the 1990 Act is reflected in National Policy and those policies within the statutory Development Plan.
- 2.21 Annex 2 of the Framework makes clear that "conservation" is a dynamic process that maintains and manages change to a heritage asset in a way that "sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance".
- 2.22 The definition of the setting of a heritage asset in the Framework is the "surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced." Further, the extent of a setting "is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve." Setting is not itself a heritage asset but elements of a setting "may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset."
- 2.23 The emphasis is on understanding what is special about a heritage asset, and by extension, identifying those elements which are capable of accepting change without harm to the special heritage values of a place.
- 2.24 Where developments affect the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraphs 193 to 196, and 200 of the Framework are engaged.
- 2.25 Paragraph 193 states:
- "When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*
- 2.26 Where a proposal takes the opportunity to enhance or better reveal the significance of a designated heritage asset then paragraph 200 applies:
- "Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably."*
- 2.27 Conversely, where development is deemed to cause harm, one must demonstrate the works have clear and convincing justification, and, furthermore, that harm is offset in some way proportionately by countervailing public benefits. That harm would, nevertheless, attract great weight in planning balance.

- 2.28 Paragraph 196 refers to “less than substantial harm” which practically applies to most areas where harmful works take place to a designated heritage asset. In this case, that harm would be weighed against public benefits. Such benefits can be improvements to townscape through a complementary and high quality building and the realisation of land use planning objectives which in the case would secure retail use in an international shopping district.
- 2.29 With clear and convincing justification, and providing a clear set of public benefits, the City Council would be able to discharge its legal obligations under 16(2), 66 (1) and 72(1). Without it, then an authority may well be acting contrary to its legal duties if, for the sake of argument, it could be persuaded to do so.
- 2.30 Our assessment considers that there is no harm to the significance of heritage assets arising from the Proposed Development, however, if the Council take a differing view, and find some harm to the listed building or conservation area, then the policy test at paragraph 196 would be engaged.
- 2.31 The Glossary contained in Annexe 2 of the NPPF defines ‘conservation’ in relation to heritage as:
 “The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.”
- 2.32 Ultimately, the preservation of significance is paramount in planning considerations relating to the historic environment. Therefore, concern for the preservation of fabric or particular features, although likely to be relevant considerations for an individual case, is superseded by the necessity of sustaining significance.

NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE (FIRST LIVE 2014) (“NPPG”)

- 2.33 This guidance was published as a web-based resource on 27th March 2014. The publication includes useful guidance on decision-taking with regard to historic environment matters. Paragraph 3 provides guidance on conservation, and states that:
 “In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time[...]
 Where changes are proposed, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-taking to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate, enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development.”
 Paragraph: 033 Reference ID: 18a-003-20140306
- HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT GOOD PRACTICE ADVICE IN PLANNING, NOTE 2, MANAGING SIGNIFICANCE IN DECISION-TAKING IN THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**
- 2.34 Historic England published its Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning, Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment in April 2015. The guidance is intended to assist those implementing historic environment policy, and provides information on assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and further understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness. We have had regard to this guidance in preparing our appraisal and Statement of Significance for 25 Old Gloucester Street and the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

BLOOMSBURY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (2011)

- 2.35 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy was prepared by the Council to define the special interest of the conservation area, in order to understand and protect its key attributes, and implement measures to ensure appropriate enhancement.
- MATERIAL CONSIDERATION**
- 2.36 In addition to legislation and policy, the assessment will take into consideration relevant planning guidance and any material considerations, including:
 - National Planning Practice Guidance (online);
 - National Design Guide (2019);
 - Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)
 - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017);
 - Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011); and
 - Kingsway Conservation Area Statement (2001).

3.0 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

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HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 This section provides a description of the historic development of the Site and that of the surrounding area.
- 3.2 The section and **Section 4.0** has been informed by secondary sources, including:
- Victoria County History;
 - The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Statement
 - The Kingsway Conservation Area Statement.
- 3.3 The Site sits at a principal intersection within the wider, predominantly residential development of Bloomsbury.
- 3.4 Bloomsbury's development began in the mid-17th century, as London expanded to the north, and soon became a fashionable suburb.
- 3.5 Bloomsbury's characteristic grid-style layout of streets and squares is evident on Rocque's Map of 1746 (**Figure 4.1**). The character of development at the Site is not shown, and Theobalds Road and Southampton Row are shown separated, with the road instead turning obliquely south to Kingsgate Street.
- 3.6 Theobalds Road was named for a route used by James I when travelling to and from Theobalds Palace, and was traditionally pronounced 'Tibbalds'.
- 3.7 Kingsgate Street was renamed Southampton Row after Thomas Wriothesley, the fourth Earl of Southampton. In 1896, the Central School of Art and Design was established by the London County Council, as a purpose-built facility for the education of craft workers.
- 3.8 The first OS shows the fine-grain terraced development that dominated the area. At this time, Theobalds Road and Southampton Row did not join at the Site, with the road instead turning obliquely south to Kingsgate Street (**Figure 4.2**).

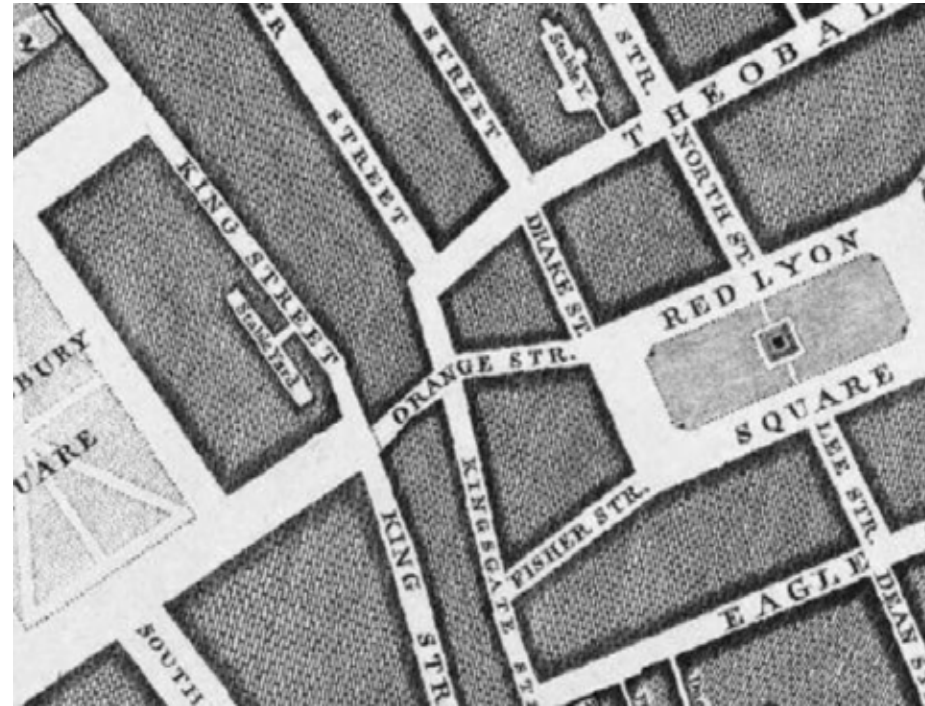


Figure 3.1 Rocque's Map of 1746



Figure 3.2 First OS showing fine grain development, predominantly terraces

- 3.9 To the south, Kingsway was laid out to replace the irregular medieval street arrangement with a wide thoroughfare between Vernon Place and Aldwych. As part of the redevelopment, 3,700 residents were displaced from their homes, and the resultant road was opened by Edward VII in 1905.
- 3.10 The buildings along Kingsway were built predominantly as part of a single phase, as a broad avenue, between 1898 and 1914, though not all were complete until the early 1930s.
- 3.11 **Figure 4.3** is a 1904 photograph showing a corner between Southampton Street and Theobalds Road, including a large sign advertising English and American Dentistry. It is unclear which corner this is, as although the building no longer remains, a number of the buildings at the junction post-date the image.

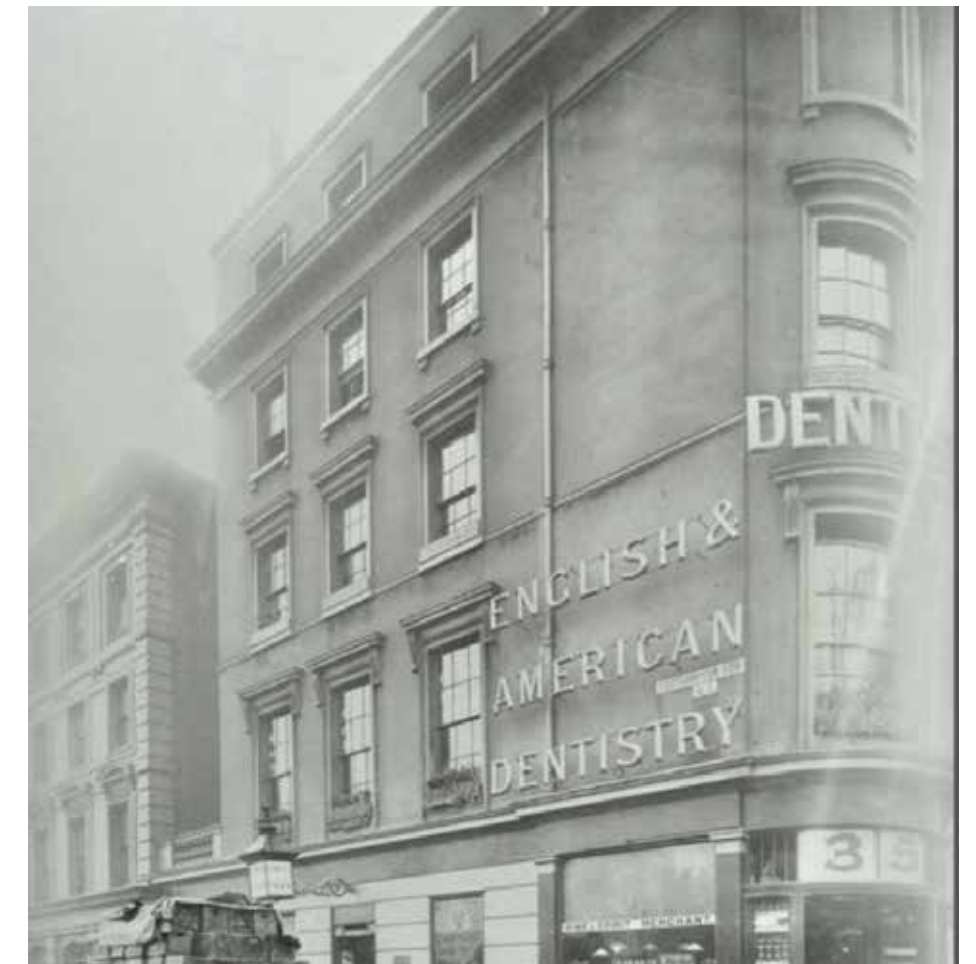


Figure 3.3 1904 photograph showing the corner of Southampton Row and Theobalds Road (source: Collage)

- 3.12 The locality suffered extensive bomb damage during the Second World War, and the map at **Figure 4.3** shows the buildings at the Site had been 'damaged beyond repair' (purple).
- 3.13 The present building at the Site was constructed in the early/ mid-1950s, as indicated in the historic photograph at **Figure 3.4**. The 1955 photograph shows the hotel under construction, with hoardings marking the boundary. A small part of Victoria House can be seen to the left hand side, and the road layout appears as it does today.
- 3.14 The 1965–1970 OS at **Figure 3.5** shows the present configuration at the Site and in its environs.
- 3.15 This is reinforced on the 1990s OS, which shows the dense urban environment in the environs of the Site.



Figure 3.4 Bomb damage map showing the buildings at the Site destroyed



Figure 3.5 1955 photograph showing the construction of the Southampton Row elevation at the Site (source: Collage)

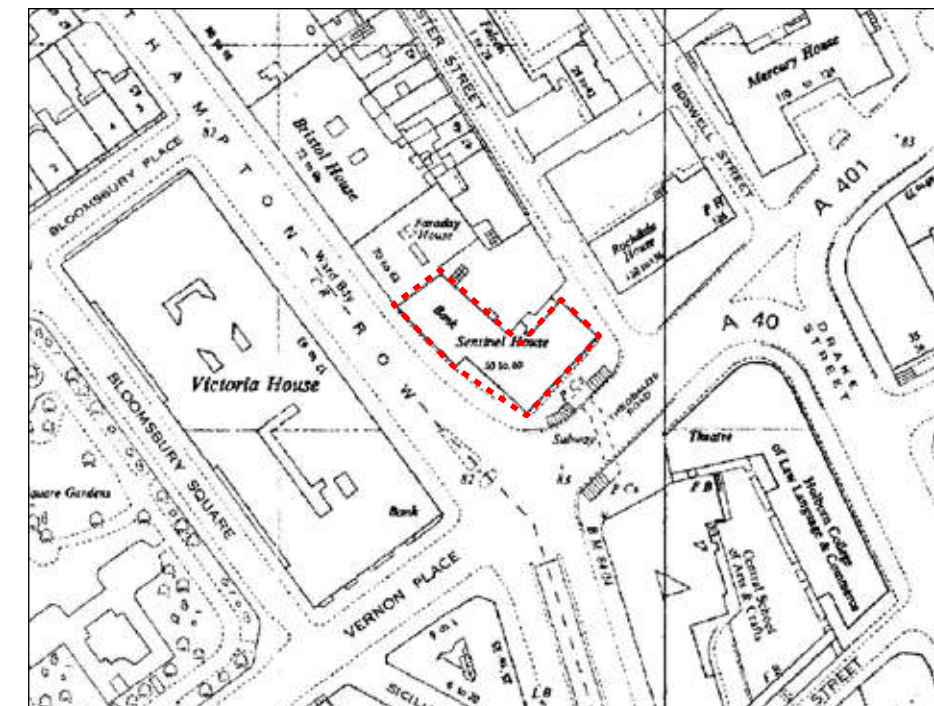


Figure 3.6 1965–1970 OS showing the new development at the Site

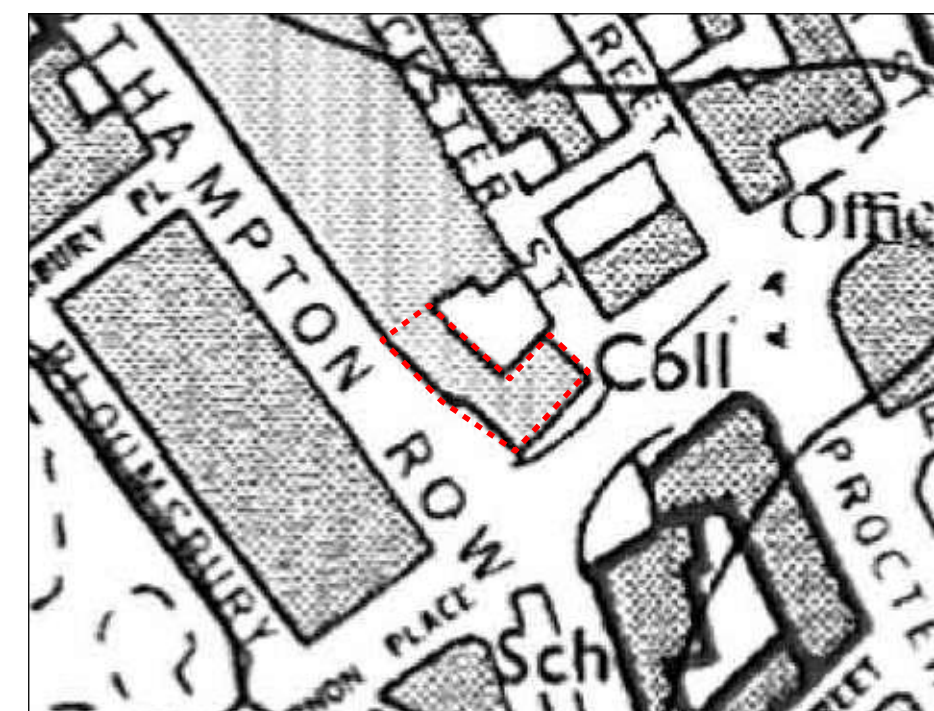


Figure 3.7 1991–1995 OS

- 3.16 The Site is now undergoing renovation, with works anticipated to conclude in 2020.
- 3.17 The building is in use as a Jurys Inn, situated at a point of transition in the townscape. The proximity to Holborn Station means that a high volume of pedestrian traffic passes the building, in addition to the vehicles on the road.
- 3.18 The building is a noticeable presence in the streetscape due to its scale, but has a nondescript with no particular aspects of note which a pedestrian could identify, or describe, to utilise the building for wayfinding. Its plain elevations have no particular character, and whilst the ground floor forms part of the varied commercial development in the locality, the upper parts to the elevation are plainer, and have a utilitarian character.



Figure 3.8 The existing façade of the building

4.0 THE PROPOSALS

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THE PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The proposals seek add a new bioclimatic pergola above the existing roof terrace on the south side of the Nyx London Hotel, and the extension of one of the three passenger lifts at the building to facilitate access to the terrace.
- 4.2 The existing roof has been used as an amenity terrace for more than 20 years, and the previously existing canopy structure has been removed to facilitate roof repairs undertaken as part of a programme of refurbishment which seeks to revitalise the hotel and contribute to a high-quality, rebranded destination to function in a post-Covid market.
- 4.3 The Nyx brand has a youthful concept that incorporates extensive levels of artistic elements from both local and international artists within the interior design scheme. The proximity of the hotel to the old art college and the ethos within the urbanisation of the immediate area are the reasoning behind selecting this location for NYX.
- 4.4 The new pergola would extend the usable season of the roof terrace, replacing previously existing rain-screen cladding. It would cover approximately 47% of the area, and comprise a lightweight canopy supported by vertical metal posts at regular intervals, with lateral beams at a uniform height.
- 4.5 The canopy would stand approximately 3m above the existing building height, which would be a minor addition to the scale of the building, further reduced by its lightweight appearance.
- 4.6 The lift's extension has been positioned to minimise its visual impact, being situated between the existing three shafts. The existing roof access housing, which has an attractive, curved form, would remain legible.
- 4.7 Particular attention has been paid to any potential for visibility of the proposals from the surrounding townscape. To address this point, BHA have produced three visualisations to illustrate the appearance of the building in the existing and proposed condition.
- 4.8 These demonstrate that, owing to the height and positioning of the proposals, the effect on the surrounding built environment would be very limited.



Figure 4.1 The NYX By Leonardo brand concept. Image of the bar area.



Figure 4.2 The NYX By Leonardo brand concept. Image of a typical bedroom.

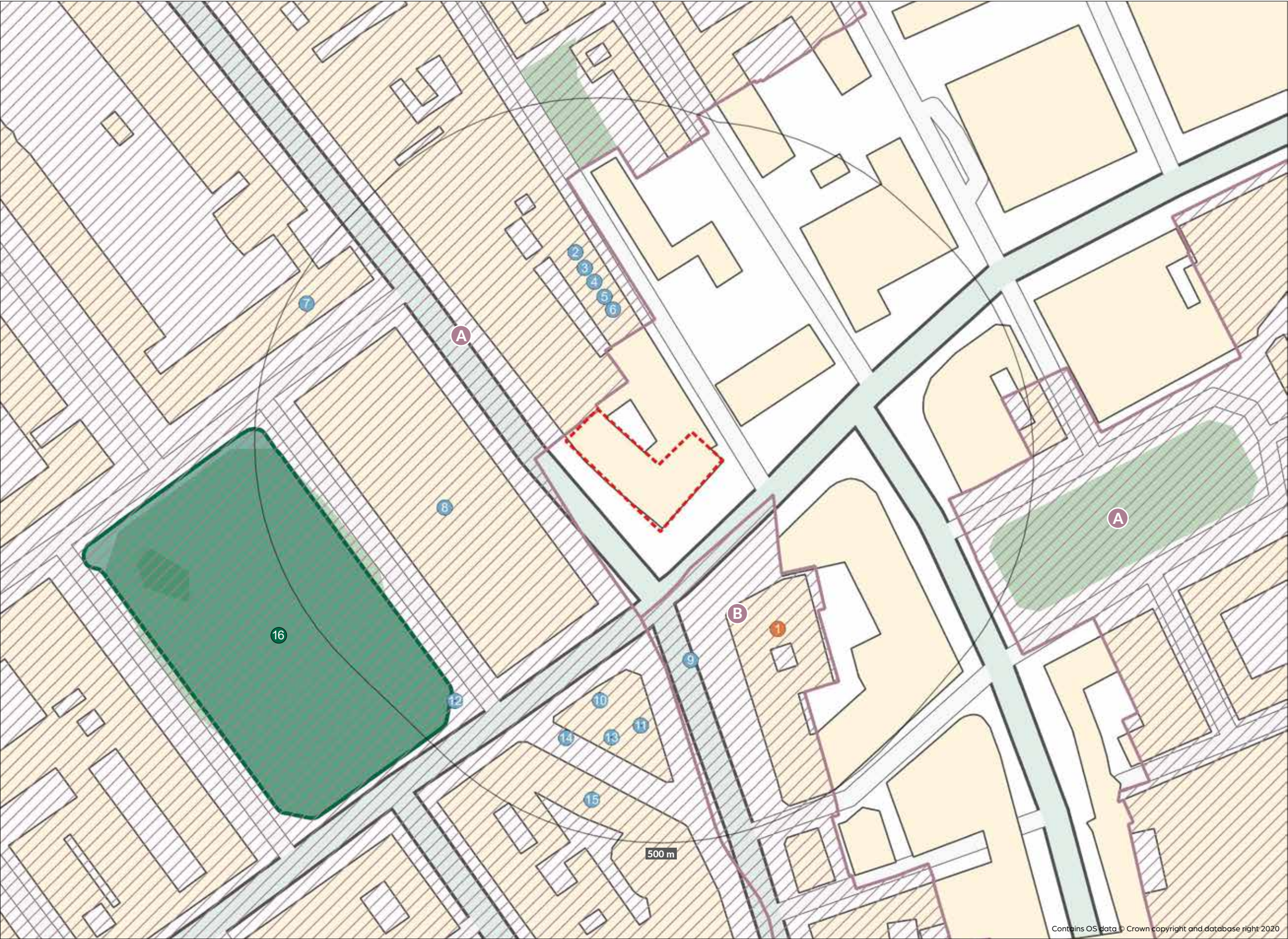
5.0

HERITAGE APPRAISAL AND ASSESSMENT

NYX LONDON

HERITAGE APPRAISAL AND ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 This section sets out an appraisal of those heritage assets which fall within the setting of the Site. Professional judgement has been used to select those which may experience change to their setting as a result of the proposals.
- 5.2 The heritage assets are identified below with a short description.
- 5.3 In the context of the definition of setting offered in the Framework, (which advises this is ‘surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced’), this defines the setting of heritage assets in very broad terms. Indeed, such a broad scope means that many development proposals may be held to come within the setting of a heritage asset. Most would agree however that aside from some generic inter-visibility, a great number of such proposals could not reasonably be held to engage with or alter the setting of heritage assets in a material way.
- 5.4 Owing to the contained nature of the Proposed Development at roof level, the prevailing height of other buildings in the surrounding area, and the screening provided by the existing building forms, the effect on the setting of some built heritage assets is restricted. For the purposes of this document therefore professional judgement has been used to select those built heritage assets that are likely to experience change to their setting, and by extension, their heritage significance.
- 5.5 Those listed structures indicated on the Heritage Asset Map but not included here for the aforementioned reason are as follows:
- Nos. 1–5 and attached railings (grade II);
 - K6 Telephone Kiosk adjacent to garden railings (grade II);
 - Nos. 43, 44, 45, 46 and 47 and attached railings (grade II);
 - Three Lamp Posts (grade II); and
 - Bloomsbury Square (grade II RPG).



HERITAGE ASSET PLAN

- Application Site
- Conservation Areas
- A. Bloomsbury CA
B. Kingsway CA
- Listed Buildings
- Grade II*
1. Central St Martin's College of Art and Design
- Grade II
2. No 43 and attached railings
3. No 44 and attached railings
4. No 45 and attached railings
5. No 46 and attached railings
6. No 47 and attached railings
7. Nos 1-5 and attached railings
8. Victoria House and attached railings
9. Kingsway Tram Subway (Northern section only)
10. Avenue Chambers
11. Nos 25-35 and 35a and attached screen to Sicilian Avenue
12. K6 Telephone Kiosk, Adjacent to garden railings
13. 6-20, Sicilian Avenue
14. Three Lamp Posts
15. Nos 1-29 and attached screen
- Registered Park and Gardens
16. Bloomsbury Square (Grade II)

LOCATION:
Jury's Inn Hotel, Holborn, WC1B 4AR

DATE:
July 2020

SCALE:
1:1,250 @ A3

FIGURE 5.1 Heritage Asset Plan

▲ NORTH



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CONSERVATION AREAS

BLOOMSBURY CONSERVATION AREA

- 5.6 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area is situated between Euston Road in the north, and Lincoln’s Inn Fields in the south. Development in the area began in the second half of the 17th century, and the area retains some buildings from this early phase of development. Later built form is varied, consisting predominantly of 18th and 19th century townhouses and, most obviously, institutional and landmark buildings such as those associated with University College London and the British Museum. The historic presence of these establishments has contributed to the cultural interest of the area, which is further enhanced by its former occupants, who include the famous ‘Bloomsbury Group’ of early 20th century artists and intellectuals.
- 5.7 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area as a whole derives its special interest from its surviving early street pattern, which is laid out in a rectilinear pattern with straight streets leading to open squares, which are often landscaped. The dominant architectural form is the townhouse, with some earlier 17th and 18th century examples surviving alongside later 19th century properties, though a large proportion have been adapted during the 20th century for office or other uses.
- 5.8 The Site borders the CA to the north. It does not make any particular contribution to its setting, and forms part of the wider context of dense urban development in the surrounding area.

CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING TO SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.9 The site is bordered by the Bloomsbury CA to the north, and to the west on the opposite side of Southampton Row.
- 5.10 Owing to its scale and proximity, the building is a noticeable element in the setting of the CA, however its character is not in keeping with the prevailing residential development, or the materiality of the CA.
- 5.11 This part of the setting of the Conservation Area is a highly urbanised junction, which is heavily trafficked, and understood as part of the modern city.

ASSESSMENT

- 5.12 The proposals would introduce a high quality, lightweight bioclimatic pergola at roof level on the existing building, and extend a lift to improve access. The effect of these changes is contained; it would be understood in the context of the existing hotel building, and would be seen only in views toward the roofline.
- 5.13 The new pergola would extend to approximately 3m above the existing roof height, and would be a lightweight addition providing shelter for the existing roof terrace.
- 5.14 In some views, the new lift overrun would be visible, in the context of the existing lift shafts. Their curved aspect would remain appreciable, and the bulk of the new addition has been minimised through careful positioning, and a refined design.
- 5.15 The change would be experienced within a very limited context as part of the wider setting of the CA, appearing in views east from Theobalds Road, and north along Southampton Row. The intrinsic character and appearance of the CA, and the appreciation thereof, would be preserved. The new addition would be seen in the context of the existing tall development in the vicinity, and of the existing building which makes a limited contribution to the CA.
- 5.16 The character and appearance of the Bloomsbury CA would not change. The appreciation thereof would likewise be unimpeded.



Figure 5.1 Map of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area

KINGSWAY CONSERVATION AREA

- 5.17 The Kingsway Conservation Area was first designated in 1981, and follows the broadly north–south route of Kingsway, now Southampton Row, described by Pevsner as retaining ‘*much of its Beaux–Arts panache, lined with commercial buildings on a colossal scale*’.
- 5.18 The buildings along Kingsway were built predominantly as part of a single phase, as a broad avenue, between 1898 and 1914, though not all were complete until the early 1930s. The route is believed to be the first in London targeted to ease traffic problems by incorporating a tramway beneath the road.
- 5.19 The buildings are characterised by their Portland stone facades, some of which have Nouveau motifs.
- 5.20 In terms of use, buildings in the CA predominantly accommodate commercial uses at ground floor, with offices above. The shop fronts have undergone piecemeal alterations over the last century, though some retain their original character and proportions.
- 5.21 The northern boundary of the CA is defined by the Central School of Art, to the south of the Site.

CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING TO SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.22 The Kingsway Conservation Area has a highly urbanised setting, defined by the principal routes at Theobalds Road to the north, and Lincoln’s Inn Fields/ Kemble Street to the south.
- 5.23 As the CA is focussed on a heavily trafficked route through the city, and indeed built as such, the vehicles passing through the CA form a key element of its experience, and the intersecting roads provide a plurality of views into and out of the CA. These are contained by the scale of surrounding development, which contributes further to the ‘city’ experience of the CA and its surroundings.
- 5.24 The four buildings marking the corners of the Theobalds Road/ Southampton Row junction collectively form part of a legible street layout, and thus the three lying outwith the CA contribute to its setting to the north.
- 5.25 The building at the Site is experienced peripherally in some views north from the CA, and whilst a noticeable element in its setting, does not make any particular contribution to its character or appearance.

ASSESSMENT

- 5.26 The new roof terrace would be experienced in some views north out of the CA, and would be understood as part of the existing urbanised context.
- 5.27 The new lift overrun has been carefully considered to preserve the curved aspect of the existing lift overruns. The bulk of the extension has been minimised through careful positioning, and a refined design.
- 5.28 The pergola would extend to approximately 3m above the existing roof height, and have a lightweight appearance. Whilst perceptible from within the northernmost parts of the CA, it would have no effect on its character or appearance.
- 5.29 The new addition would be seen in the context of the existing urban development in the vicinity, and of the existing building which makes a limited contribution to the CA.
- 5.30 The integrity of the CA as an early 20th century principal route would be preserved, and the ability to appreciate the character and appearance of the CA would not change.

LISTED BUILDINGS

6-20 SICILIAN AVENUE (GRADE II)

- 5.31 6–20 Sicilian Avenue was added to the statutory list in 1974, and comprises a shopping parade with offices above, built between 1906 and 1910 by RJ Worley.
- 5.32 The buildings are of five storeys, in red brick with white terracotta dressings. There are Corinthian columns on plinths at ground floor with entablature.
- 5.33 The buildings possess historic and architectural interest as a good example of an early 20th century shopping parade, which is an attractive feature in the streetscape, which forms part of an ensemble with the separately listed Avenue Chambers and Sicilian Avenue buildings.

AVENUE CHAMBERS (GRADE II)

- 5.34 Avenue Chambers was added to the statutory list in 1974, and comprises the northern portion of a wedge-shaped building comprising a shopping parade with offices above, forming the return to Sicilian Avenue. It was built between 1906 and 1910 by RJ Worley, and comprises a five storey building in red brick with terracotta dressings.
- 5.35 The building possesses historic and architectural interest as a good example of an early 20th century shopping parade, which forms part of an attractive ensemble with the separately listed Sicilian Parade buildings.

NUMBERS 25-35 AND 35A AND ATTACHED SCREEN TO SICILIAN AVENUE (GRADE II)

- 5.36 This building was added to the statutory list in 1974, and comprises the western portion of a wedge-shaped building comprising a shopping parade with offices above, forming the return to Sicilian Avenue. It was built between 1906 and 1910 by RJ Worley, and comprises a five storey building in red brick with terracotta dressings.
- 5.37 The building possesses historic and architectural interest as a good example of an early 20th century shopping parade, which forms part of an attractive ensemble with the separately listed Sicilian Parade and Avenue Chambers buildings.

CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING TO SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.38
- These buildings form a wedge-shaped development on the south-west corner of the junction between Theobalds Road and Southampton Row. Along Sicilian Avenue, the buildings are experienced within a tightly contained context, with an enclosed, attractive character, in which they mutually contribute to one another’s setting and significance.
- 5.39
- The principal frontages to Southampton Row and Theobalds Road are experienced within a more varied, city centre context. The busy thoroughfares of the road are heavily trafficked, and contribute to the urban character of the scene, whilst Bloomsbury Square to the north-west provides some relief from the urban environment.
- 5.40
- The Site is a peripheral element in the setting of the listed buildings, situated to the north-east on the opposite side of the junction. It makes a positive contribution to their setting insofar as it reinforces the line of the roads, however its character and materiality contrast with those of the listed buildings, and are understood separately.

ASSESSMENT

- 5.41
- The new pergola and lift extension would be peripherally visible in the setting of the listed buildings. These would be experienced as part of the urban centre in the vicinity of the buildings, and would have no effect on their intrinsic significance, or the appreciation thereof.

CENTRAL ST MARTINS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN (GRADE II*)

- 5.42
- Central St Martins College was added to the statutory list in 1982. The college was built to designs by AH Verstage of London County Council Architects’ Department, and comprises a five storey building with a 14-window front to Southampton Row, and a six-window return to Theobalds Road.
- 5.43
- The building has a Cornish granite base and Portland stone upper, with detailing including a lead Ogee dome to the canted corner, and a ground floor sculpture showing a woman with a sword supporting the coats of arms of St George and the City of London.

- 5.44
- The building derives its considerable historic and architectural interest from its survival as a purpose-built art school of note, which is a good example of an early 20th century building by the LCC architects department. Its former students include a number of notable artists, which contribute further to its historic interest. The building is a notable presence on the corner between Southampton Row and Theobalds Road.

CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING TO SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.45
- The Central St Martins College building is situated at the north-eastern corner of the Kingsway Conservation Area, and the contemporaneous development along the route makes a positive contribution to its setting.
- 5.46
- Its setting is highly urbanised, and the visitor is aware of heavily traffic passing along Theobalds Road, and Southampton Row. The scale of surrounding development reflects its predominantly commercial use, and reinforces the city centre character.
- 5.47
- The Site is situated opposite the building to the north, through the relationship between the two is limited to one of proximity. In terms of period, character and use, the two are dissimilar, and the Site makes no particular contribution to the significance of the listed building, or the appreciation thereof.

ASSESSMENT

- 5.48
- Owing to the proximity and urban character of the building’s setting, the new terrace would be a minimally intrusive element in the setting of the listed building; seen in some views west across the College’s front elevation.
- 5.49
- The new lift overrun has been carefully considered to preserve the curved aspect of the existing lift overruns. The bulk of the extension has been minimised through careful positioning, and a refined design.
- 5.50
- The pergola would extend to approximately 3m above the existing roof height, and have a lightweight appearance. Whilst within the setting of the listed building, it would have no effect on its character or appearance.
- 5.51
- The new addition would be seen in the context of the existing urban development in the vicinity, and the host building in particular.
- 5.52
- The ability to appreciate the significance of the listed building would not change.

VICTORIA HOUSE AND ATTACHED RAILINGS (GRADE II)

- 5.53
- Victoria House was added to the statutory list in 1990, and comprises a 1926–1932 commercial building constructed by Charles William Long for the Liverpool Victoria Insurance Company.
- 5.54
- The building has a steel frame clad in Portland stone with bronze infill panels and copperlite glazing surrounds. Detailing includes ornamental brass work by the Bromsgrove Guild, and sculpture by Herbert William Palliser.
- 5.55
- The building possesses historic and architectural interest as a good example of an early 20th century commercial building.

CONTRIBUTION OF SETTING TO SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.56
- Victoria House is situated at the north-western corner of the junction between Southampton Row and Theobalds Road, and is experienced within relatively narrow context, owing to the scale and density of surrounding development.
- 5.57
- The two roads are heavily trafficked, and contribute to the urban character of the scene, and the pedestrian crossings around the square of the junction provide space from which the architectural interest of the building can be appreciated, particularly in views north or east.
- 5.58
- The Site is a prominent element in the setting of the listed building due to its proximity on the opposite side of Southampton Row. The building reinforces the line of the roads, however its character and materiality contrast with those of the listed building, and it makes no particular contribution to the significance of Victoria House, or the appreciation thereof.

ASSESSMENT

- 5.59
- The urban environment in the surroundings of the listed building would limit views of and toward the new pergola and lift extension. The terrace may appear in some views north towards the building, but would be understood as part of the existing host building, and would have no effect upon the appreciation of Victoria House.
- 5.60
- The pergola would extend to approximately 3m above the existing roof height, and have a lightweight appearance. Whilst within the setting of the listed building, it would have no effect on its significance.
- 5.61
- There would be no change to the significance of the listed building, or the appreciation thereof.

6.0

TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL AND ASSESSMENT

NYX LONDON

TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL AND ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 This section provides a description of the townscape in the environs of the Site.
- 6.2 The Site sits on the north-eastern side of a crossroads junction between Theobalds Road (the A40) running broadly east-west, and Southampton Row (A4200) from north- south.
- 6.3 The townscape in the vicinity of the Site is characterised by the following elements:
 - The rectilinear open space of the traffic junction;
 - The wide pavements lining both roads, with some street trees;
 - The more formal grid layout of Bloomsbury, with polite squares to the north east and south west;
 - The large scale and continuous building line of development along both roads.

TOWNSCAPE SURROUNDING THE SITE

- 6.4 The Site as existing comprises the Jurys Inn, which presents ten storeys above ground to Theobalds Road, with grid-like fenestration. The elevation to Southampton Road is more varied, with a curved aspect at ground floor with active shop frontages, six initial floors above and a further set-back addition giving the building a defined top, middle and bottom.
- 6.5 The entrance to the Jurys Inn is situated at ground floor level on the south side, with another entrance at the return to Southampton Row. These aren't particularly noticeable to the passing visitor, as the scale of the building as a whole overwhelms the modest doorway.

- 6.6 The Site sits at a point of transition in the townscape, at the north-eastern side of the junction between Southampton Row and Theobalds Road. To the south, Holborn Station, situated at the junction between Southampton Row and High Holborn, is an important tube interchange used by a large number of people.
- 6.7 The road converging at the Site have almost continuous building lines, punctuated at intervals by secondary and tertiary routes leading back from the main frontage. The intersection between the two is marked by a significant traffic junction, with traffic lights for both motorists and pedestrians causing travellers to pause, and are perhaps more than usually aware of their immediate environment.
- 6.8 In terms of use, the surrounding environment is predominantly commercial, with shops, restaurants and offices situated to make use of the proximity to Holborn Station. Opposite the Site, the ground floor units at Victoria House are currently vacant and detract from the otherwise vibrant and mixed streetscene.
- 6.9 Buildings at the corners of the junction are of roughly 5-10 storeys, marking the location as a point of townscape significance. These well-defined corner buildings provide a contrast from the open junction space.
- 6.10 To the south, the Central St Martins Building and the opposite Avenue Chambers building both have prominent domes marking their chamfered corner elevations, with that at Central St Martins being larger and more ornate. Victoria House, on the north-west side of the junction, has a distinctive form with classical detailing and a mansard, which is an attractive element in views north.
- 6.11 The Site, in contrast, is less well-defined. Whilst the largest building at the junction, the corner of the building presents a blank elevation with illuminated signage at ground floor, whilst its grid-like glazing gives the building a strong horizontal emphasis.
- 6.12 Owing to its scale, the building is a noticeable presence in the surrounding townscape, but its effectiveness as a landmark or point of navigation is limited by its nondescript appearance. There are no particular distinguishing elements which a pedestrian could note, or describe, to utilise the building for wayfinding. Its plain elevations have no particular character, and whilst the ground floor forms part of the varied commercial development in the locality, the upper parts to the elevation are plainer, and have a utilitarian character.

- 6.13 There is a noticeable difference between the scale, materiality and character of development along the primary frontages of Theobalds Road and Southampton Row close to the junction, and the lower-scale, predominantly brick development set back within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Old Gloucester Street, to the immediate east of the Site, has a far more intimate, enclosed character, leading to Queen Square, which in turn forms an attractive garden square with a more domestic feel.
- 6.14 In the wider environs of the Site, the character changes from densely developed arterial routes to narrower streets lined with lower-scale development, including 18th century housing, some of which has been re-used as office space. To the north and west, the more formal arrangement at Bedford Place has a wholly different character, not influenced by the Site or its environs.
- 6.15 Bloomsbury Square, to the west of the Site, has an open, historic character, with brick and render buildings and a formal layout focussed on the central open space. Whilst the rear elevation of Victoria House is a large, prominent element in the experience of the square, its character is more polite, and whilst the sense of a city centre remains, its historic appearance differentiates the space from the transitory focus of the junction and primary frontages.
- 6.16 To the south-west of the Site, Sicilian Avenue, set-back from the junction, is an angled pedestrian shopping arcade, with attractive, well-detailed shopfronts and a historic character. The route is commonly used by pedestrians to shortcut the corner to Southampton Row, and the space has a sense of relief from the heavily trafficked frontage.



Figure 6.1 Site elevation along Southampton Row



Figure 6.3 Western elevation with adjacent buildings along Southampton Row, as seen from opposite pavement



Figure 6.5 The principal frontage of the hotel on the north side of Theobalds Road



Figure 6.2 View north along Southampton Row



Figure 6.4 Poorly defined entrance to the building on the corner between Southampton Row and Theobalds Road



Figure 6.6 The Site seen from the south-east corner of the junction, taking in the building on the opposite side of the crossroads



Figure 6.7 View from the Site towards the south, taking in the chamfered corner elevations of the Central St Martins buildings and the north-eastern corner of the Sicilian Avenue building, and a view along Sicilian Avenue to the rear



Figure 6.8 View south along Southampton Row, showing signage at ground floor



Figure 6.9 View from the Bloomsbury Place junction back towards Theobalds Road, taking in the attractive side elevation of Victoria House



Figure 6.10 The elevation of Victoria House



Figure 6.11 The entrance to the Site seen in a view north, taking in the elevation of Victoria House



Figure 6.13 View south along Southampton Row



Figure 6.12 Victoria House and the Sicilian Avenue building, looking west



Figure 6.14 Corner view of the old Central St Martins Building



Figure 6.15 View east along Theobalds Road, framed by the Site and the Central St Martins Building



Figure 6.17 Other varied shop fronts in the vicinity



Figure 6.19 View west along Theobalds Road



Figure 6.16 Buildings on the east side of Southampton Row, north of the Site, showing varied signage



Figure 6.18 Development to the north-west of the Site along Southampton Row



Figure 6.20 Low-scale development in the wider vicinity



Figure 6.21 View from the Site west along Theobalds Road



Figure 6.22 Closer view of the corner elevation of the Old Central St Martins Building



Figure 6.23 View north along Southampton Row towards the Site



Figure 6.24 Frontage to the south, adjacent to Catton Street



Figure 6.25 View towards the Royal College of Anaesthetists, to the east along Theobalds Road

ASSESSMENT

- 6.17 The Site sits at a position of townscape prominence, at the point of conjunction between two main routes in the city centre. At ground level, the building has commercial frontages, as well as the principal entrance to the hotel.
- 6.18 The hotel as existing is undergoing significant refurbishment, as part of proposals to re-invigorate its offer and re-brand, creating a sense of destination which will contribute to a vibrant and attractive streetscape.
- 6.19 There is an existing terrace at roof level, which has until recently included a pergola above to provide shelter. This has been removed as part of roof repair works. The new pergola, and the lift extension, would improve guests' enjoyment of the space, and support the hotel use of the host building.
- 6.20 Three views have been produced to illustrate the effect of the proposals on the views from the surrounding context.

6.21 BHA have produced visualisations from three locations to illustrate the visual effect of the Proposals. The positioning of these is illustrated at **Figure 6.26**.

6.22 **Figure 6.27** shows that the change from this perspective would not be noticeable, and the before and after view would remain the same.

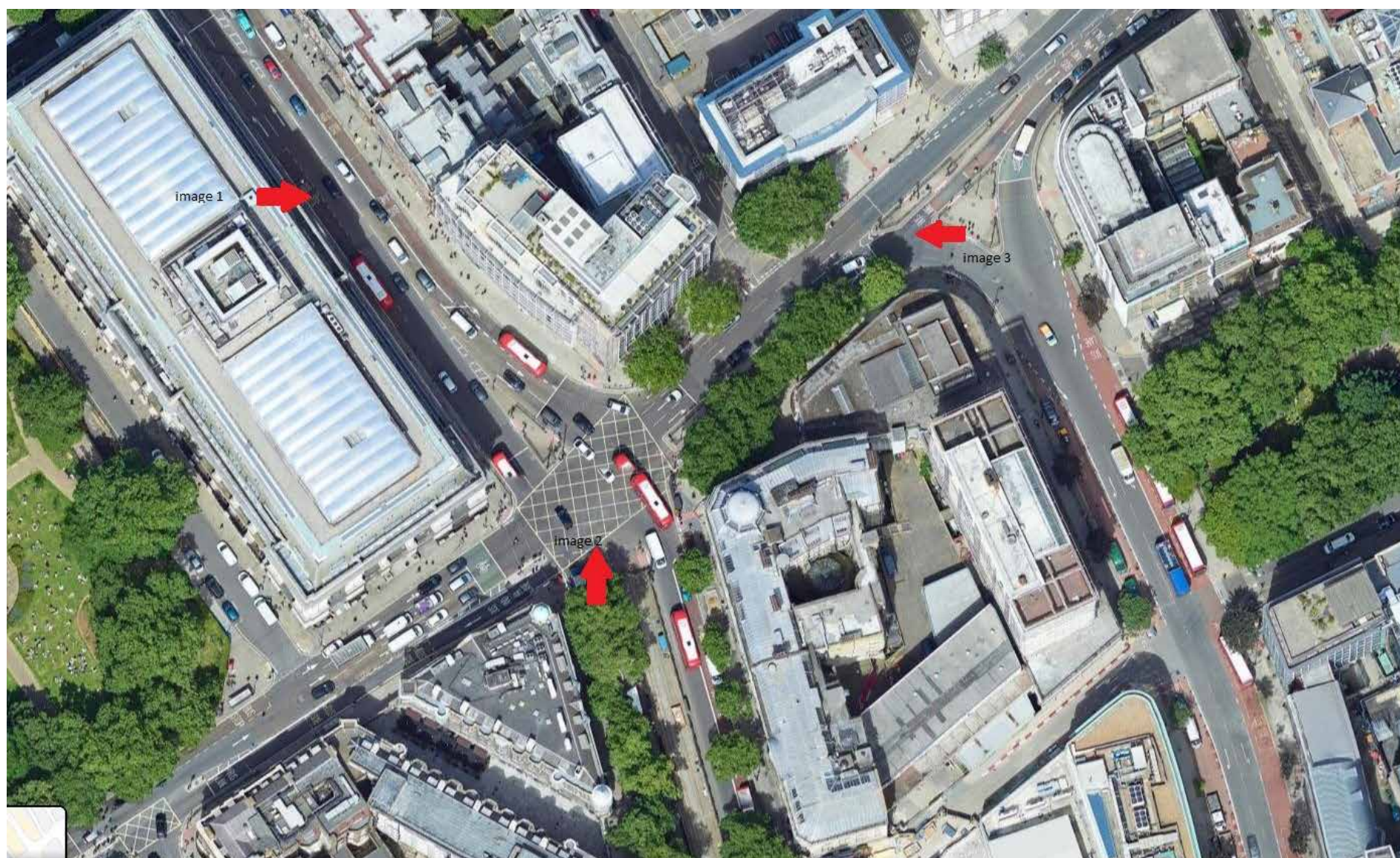


Figure 6.26 Map showing viewpoints



Figure 6.27 View 1 existing and Proposed

- 6.23 Viewpoint 2 is illustrated at **Figures 6.28 and 6.29**, and Viewpoint 3 at **Figures 6.30 and 6.31**. In both cases, the change would not be perceptible to the casual observer.
- 6.24 The change to the existing townscape context would be minimal. The existing building, whilst a prominent element in the townscape, is experienced within a relatively contained context due to the scale and orientation of surrounding buildings. The lift overrun would be visible in some views north and south along Southampton Row, though these would naturally be views toward the upper storey and not at street level – the viewer would have to look up toward the building.
- 6.25 In such views, the new pergola would be in the context of the existing building, and would provide an attractive feature enticing pedestrians toward the building, contributing to a vibrant townscape.



Figure 6.28 View 2 Existing



Figure 6.29 View 2 Proposed



Figure 6.30 View 3 Existing

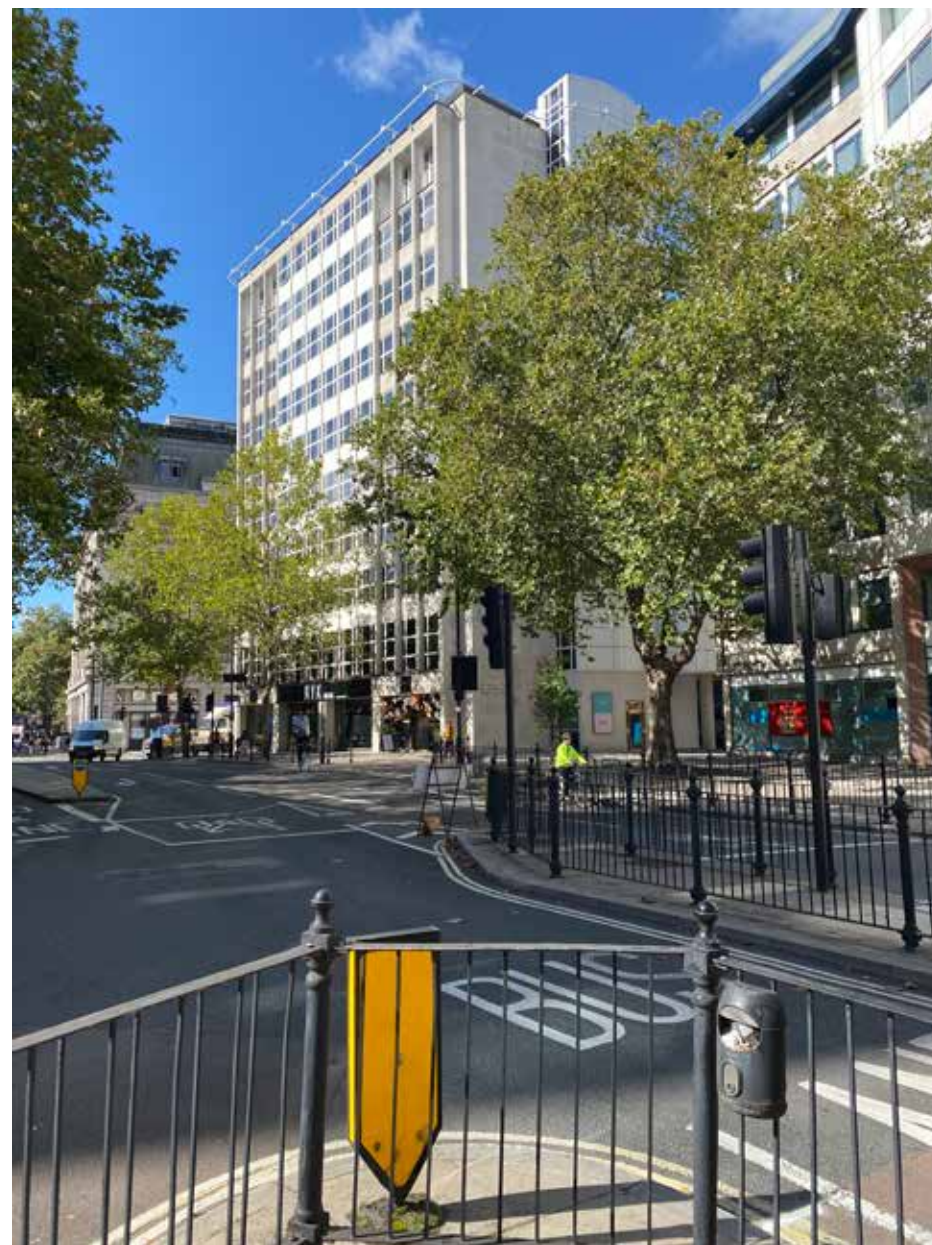


Figure 6.31 View 3 Proposed

- 6.26 The position of the Site, at the juncture of two principal routes through this part of London, contributes to a space where pedestrians naturally pause and look up at surrounding built form.
- 6.27 Improving the use of the roof space would enhance the townscape character of the locality by providing an accessible new terrace for visitors to the hotel, and contribute to the vitality of the host building.
- 6.28 The proximity to Holborn Station means that the immediate environment is commonly traversed by a high number of commuters and pedestrians. The Jurys Inn building, by virtue of its scale, forms a focal point in the surrounding townscape.
- 6.29 Our assessment finds that the new pergola will improve the appearance of the building in the streetscene and enhance its presence in the townscape.
- 6.30 The lift extension will not materially affect the building's presence in the streetscape, or its contribution to the setting of neighbouring heritage assets.
- 6.31 The proposals thus respond to the requirements of policies D1 (design) and D2 (Heritage), and would contribute to a high quality, accessible amenity space at an existing building.

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