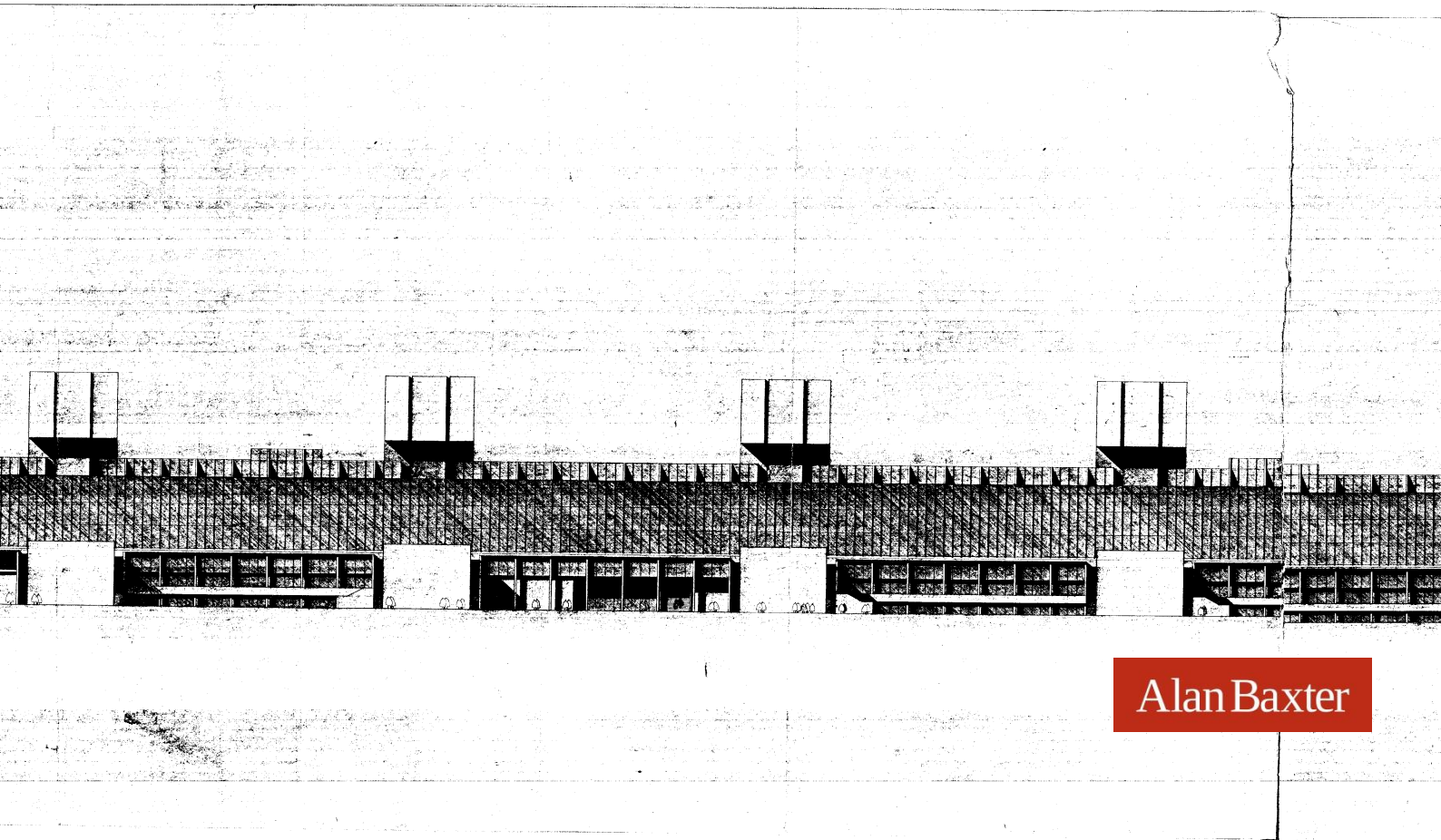


UCL Institute of Education,
No. 20 Bedford Way:
Phase 2d – Works to Levels 5
& 9

Heritage Statement
Prepared for
University College London
March 2022



Alan Baxter

UCL Institute of Education, No. 20 Bedford Way: Phase 2d Heritage Statement Prepared for University College London February 2022

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Executive summary

Introduction

No. 20 Bedford Way is located in the London Borough of Camden. It is part of a larger building comprising Nos. 17, 20 and 26 Bedford Way, which house various functions of University College London (UCL). The whole building is listed at Grade II* and is in the vicinity of several other heritage assets. It also lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. This Heritage Statement relates to Phase 2d of UCL's Masterplan project. This involves decanting departments of the university currently housed in the listed terraces of Woburn Square, into the fifth and ninth floors of the building in Zone C (between Cores B and C) with associated changes to the existing cellular offices and rooms to support the work of the two departments.

History and Significance

The building was designed by Sir Denys Lasdun, one of Britain's foremost twentieth-century architects, and was completed in 1976. It is an excellent example of a post-war university teaching and administration building and is characteristic of the large-scale Brutalist development of the 1960s and '70s. Its bold expression of function, form and materials typifies Lasdun's mature work. Its architectural interest derives from its sophisticated use of horizontal strata and imposing towers that make up its strong, sculptural form, and from the high-quality of its finishes, including concrete poured in situ (particularly in the building's circulation cores). A design feature of interest is the inherent flexibility of the original internal spaces, with light weight partitions intended to be rearranged or removed as the university's needs evolved.

The building is remarkable for its architectural innovation and flexibility of use. At the same time, it is also true that the layout of the building presents issues in terms of accessibility and wayfinding, some of which have been exacerbated by later interventions.

Proposals

The current application relates to changes to the decant of two of the university's departments into Levels 5 and 9 of the building, both in Zone C. This will include alterations to the existing cellular compartmentalisation of these zones. On Level 5, the existing cellular offices and service corridor on the eastern (Bedford Way) side of the building are to be reconfigured with more open plan teaching rooms. Similarly, the existing compartmentalisation of Offices No. 560 & 562 on the western (Woburn Square) side of Level 5 is to be altered to provide two teaching rooms.

On Level 9, the rearrangement of five small, one-person offices and larger lecture rooms along the eastern side of the building will result in thirteen two-person offices; two larger open-plan offices and three meeting rooms. The cellular offices along the western side of the offices are to be altered to an open-plan study area, three small meeting rooms and quiet rooms and a dedicated communications room. Details and finishes are to reflect those already approved and implemented in the Phase 1 works in Zone A. Secondary glazing is to be upgraded across all of the windows on both levels.

Impact

The works to the partitions and upgrading of finishes and materials will have no impact to the significance of this Grade II* listed building other than a negligible heritage benefit in supporting the maintenance of the building in its original design use. It is not known whether one of the remnant secondary glazing systems is original. Applying a precautionary principle, the removal of this last remnant of what may be original fabric would have some minor harm to potentially original fabric. However, this would amount to less-than-substantial harm to the historic and architectural significance of the building overall, and at the very lowest end of less-than-substantial harm. This would be outweighed by the minor heritage benefits of increasing uniformity across the exterior elevations of the building and the substantial sustainable public

benefit of increasing thermal efficiency and supporting the continued occupation of the building by the university departments that it has housed since its opening in the 1970s.

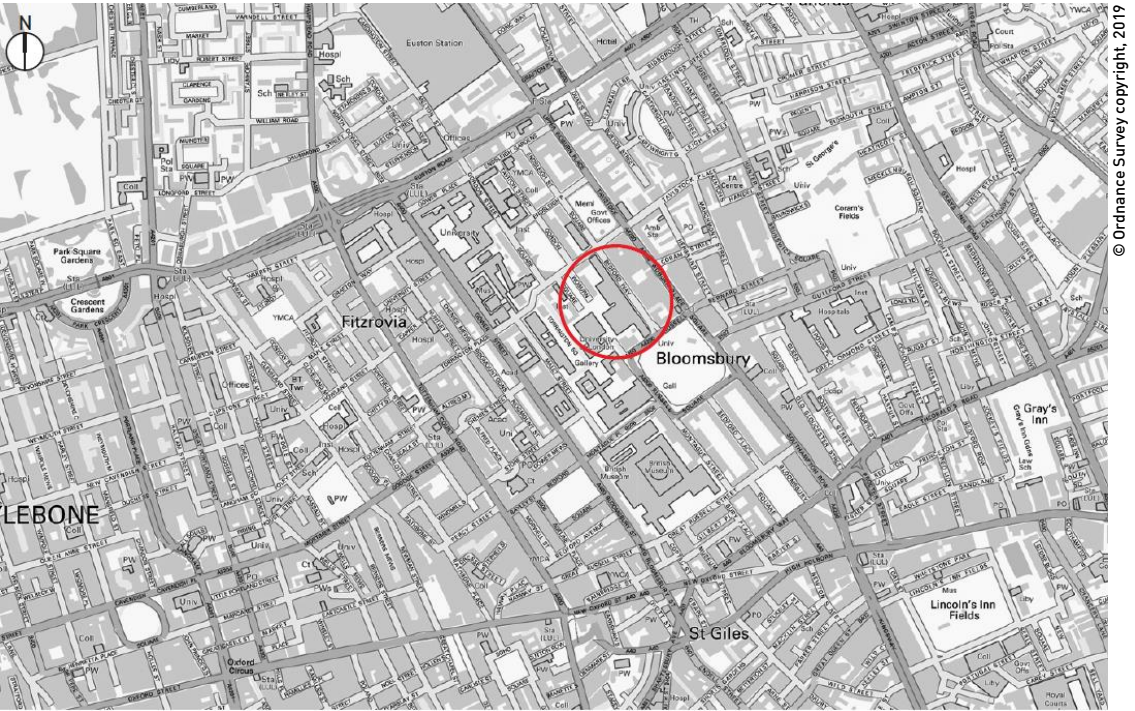


Fig. 1—Location plan

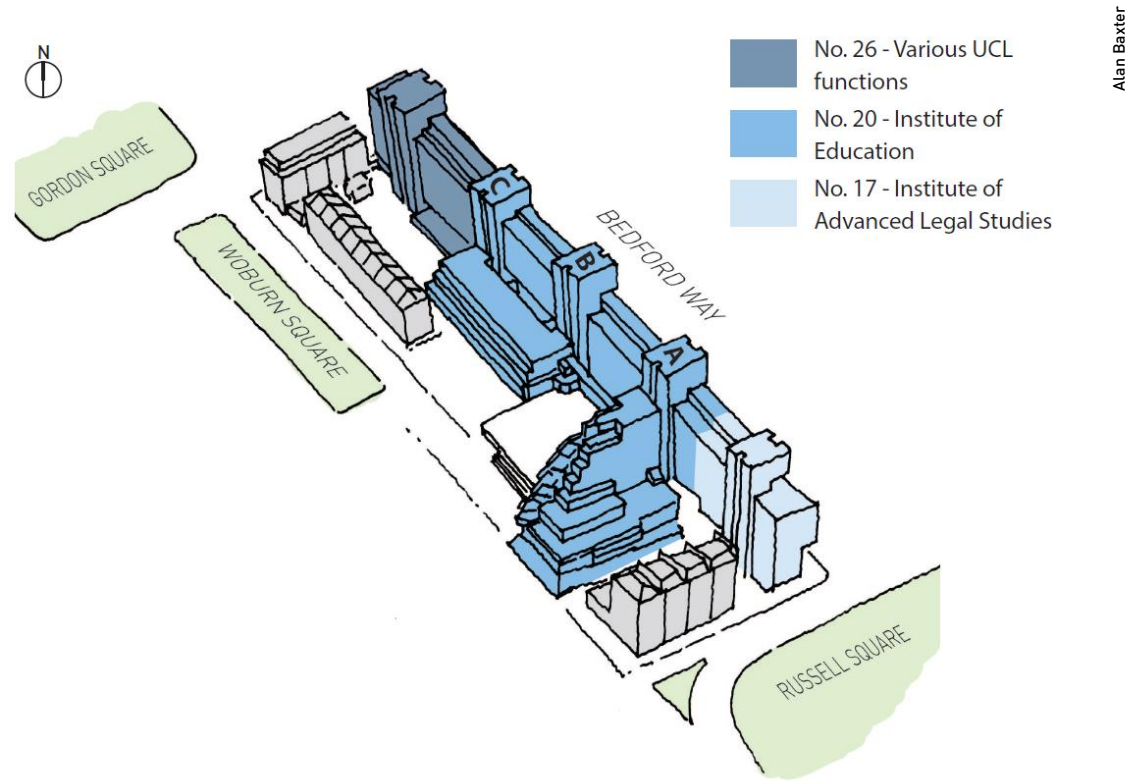


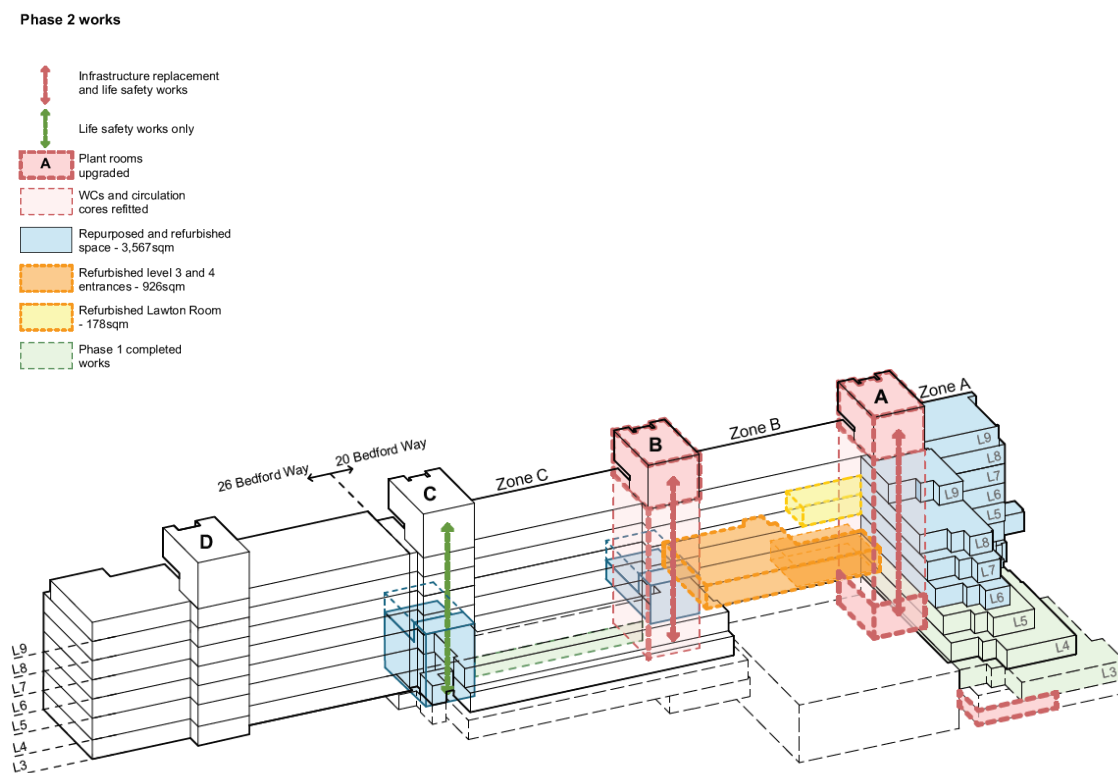
Fig. 2—Aerial sketch showing the building’s occupiers. Viewed from the south

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Alan Baxter Ltd for University College London (UCL) to accompany a listed building consent applications for proposed works to Levels 5 and 9 of No. 20 Bedford Way: part of a Grade II* listed Brutalist building comprised of Nos. 17, 20 and 26 Bedford Way. This report considers both floors together due to the similarity of the works. University programme and budgets may mean that the applications are submitted separately however. The building accommodates the Institute of Education at No. 20 in the southernmost part of the building as well as the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies and other functions of UCL. The building lies within Bloomsbury Conservation Area and was designed by the celebrated twentieth-century architect Sir Denys Lasdun.

This report concerns Zone C of the Institute of Education at No. 20 (see Fig. 3 for zoning, below). These proposals form Phase 2d of the Institute of Education's Masterplan, adopted in 2016 with a view to extending, reorganising and improving No. 20 Bedford Way. The building's worn-out fabric and unclear layout are detrimentally affecting the experience of staff and students using the building with staff and student surveys showing that the current state of the building is putting-off potential students and staff. Originally, the full extent of the Phase 2 works relate to Levels 6 to 9 of the west wing, Levels 5 to 9 of Zone A and the entrances on Levels 3 and 4 in Zone B, in addition to Cores A, B and C. Phase 2d is an additional stream of works, the need for which has arisen due to some departments of the Institute needing to vacate their existing offices in Woburn Square and the educational and academic advantages of co-locating them with the other departments of the Institute of Education.



Penoyre Prasad

Fig. 3—Diagram showing parts of No. 20 affected by proposals, viewed from the west

1.2 Structure and methodology

This opening Chapter serves to introduce the site, whilst Chapter 2 of this report outlines its historic context and that of the wider area. Chapter 3 assesses the significance of the listed building and its contribution to Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Chapter 4 summarises the proposals and provides an assessment of their potential impact on the listed building, based on the understanding of the site given in Chapter 2 and in relation to relevant policy and guidance. Chapter 5 weighs the heritage impact of the proposals against their planning and public benefits. Chapter 6 contains supporting information, including a list of sources consulted, Nos. 17, 20 and 26 Bedford Way's list description, the Historic Environment Record (HER) search results map, and relevant policy and guidance.

This report is based on site visits undertaken in February 2022, in addition to many visits to the building by the authors in the years prior to this submission and the critical review of the sources listed in Chapter 6. A search of the Historic Environment Record has been carried out; however, below-ground archaeology is outside the scope of this report.

It is the nature of existing buildings that details of their construction and development may be hidden or may not be apparent from a visual inspection. The conclusions and any advice contained in this report — particularly relating to the dating and nature of the fabric — are based on our research, and on observations and interpretations of what was visible at the time of our site visits. Further research, investigations or opening up works may reveal new information which may require such conclusions and advice to be revised.

1.3 The listed building

The Grade II* listed building comprises Nos. 17, 20 and 26 Bedford Way and takes up the length of the urban block between Tavistock Square to the north and Russell Square to the south. The main elevation faces Bedford Way to the east. To the west the block is enclosed by rows of nineteenth-century terraced houses facing Woburn Square at the northern end with direct access to Thornhaugh Mews to the south.

The building consists of nine levels with the lower two levels below ground. Level 3 is the ground-floor level as experienced from Bedford Way whereas Level 4 is the ground-floor level for the Woburn Square/Thornhaugh Mews entrance, reflecting the differing ground levels along the two sides of the building. There is interconnectivity between these two levels in the shared, split-level reception and circulation area between the two entrances. The building has a long linear, north-south plan with five distinctive core towers. The projecting ziggurat wing of Core Tower A faces the extension to the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS); another Lasdun project

1.4 Designations

No. 20 Bedford Way was listed Grade II* on 4 December 2000. Several other buildings in the immediate vicinity are also listed. They include the Grade II group listings for the terraced houses Nos. 10 to 18 Woburn Square, Nos. 55 to 59 Gordon Square and Nos. 21 to 24 Russell Square. To the south-west, SOAS is Grade II-listed, while its extension—the Phillips Building—is Grade II*. Russell Square is listed at Grade II on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. Two nineteenth-century parish markers in Woburn Square are also on the Council's local list.

The site lies within Bloomsbury Conservation Area, designated in 1968. There have been several extensions, reflecting a growing appreciation of high-quality Victorian, Edwardian and twentieth-century architecture. Bloomsbury Conservation Area has numerous Sub-Areas; No 20 Bedford Way straddles Sub Area 3: University of London/British Museum and Sub Area 6: Bloomsbury Square/Russell Square/Tavistock Square.



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Fig. 4—Designations plan. The Institute of Education is outlined in red



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Fig. 5—Bedford Way elevation of the building, looking south from Tavistock Square

2.0

Understanding No. 20 Bedford Way

2.1 Historical overview

This application follows several others submitted as part of the overall masterplan and the following section includes here a shared historical overview of the site's history, detailing the historic development of Bloomsbury and the expansion of the University that led to the construction of Lasdun's building on Bedford Way in 1970–76.

2.1.1 The seventeenth-century Southampton Estate

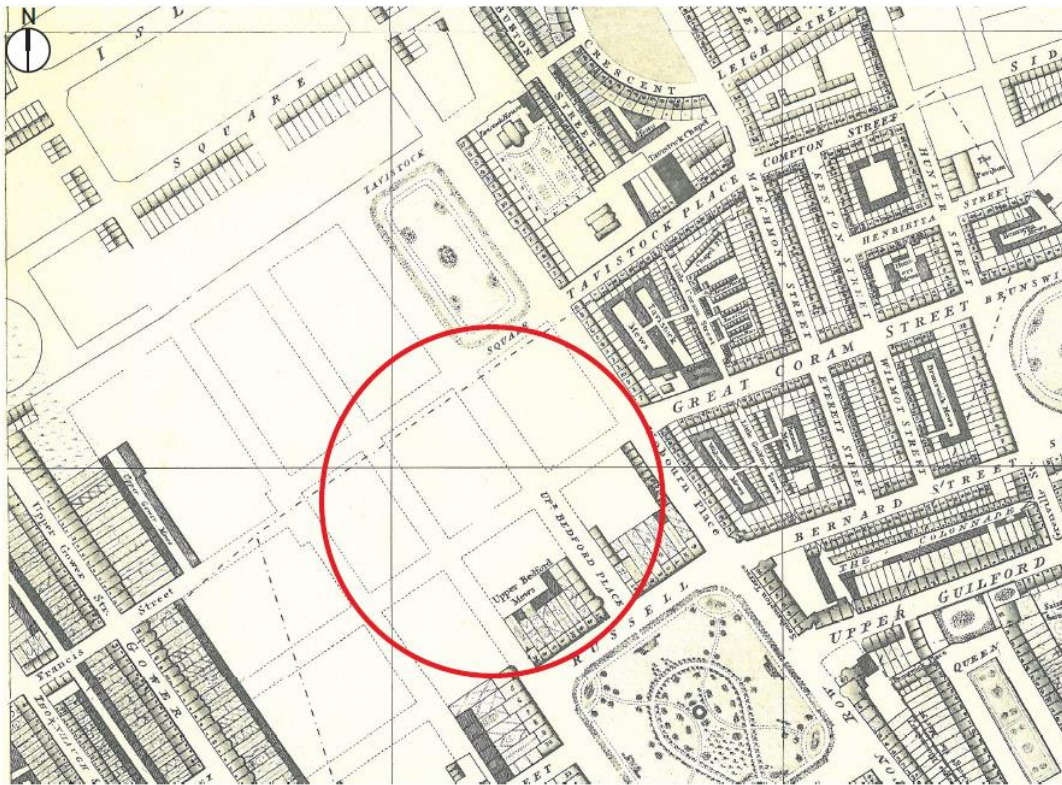
Before the eighteenth century the site of No. 20 Bedford Way consisted of agricultural fields, called Lamb's Conduit Fields. The land belonged to the Earls of Southampton, who first began to develop the estate with Southampton House and Southampton (now Bedford) Square in the 1660s. In 1669 the land came into the ownership of the Russell Family – the Dukes of Bedford – through marriage, as part of the Bloomsbury Estate. This area stretched from Tottenham Court Road in the west; Oxford Street in the south; New Road (now Euston Road) in the north and Woburn Square and Southampton Row in the east. Southampton House was renamed Bedford House when it became the London home of the Dukes of Bedford.

2.1.2 Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century development of the estate

The large-scale development of the Bedford Estate continued in the late eighteenth century, transforming the rural landscape into a planned, residential estate. Bedford Square was laid out from 1776. In 1800, Francis Russell, the 5th Duke of Bedford (1765–1802) demolished Bedford House, commissioning James Burton (1761–1837) to develop the land. Burton created Russell Square between 1801 and 1804, while the renowned landscape designer Humphry Repton (1752–1818) laid out the gardens. Upper Bedford Square, leading north from Russell Square, was laid out at this time (Fig. 6), with this street later renamed Bedford Way. By 1870 a terrace of houses had been built along Upper Bedford Square, with mews buildings to the rear. The terraces of Woburn Square had also been built by this point, as well as Christ Church on its northeast side (Fig. 7).

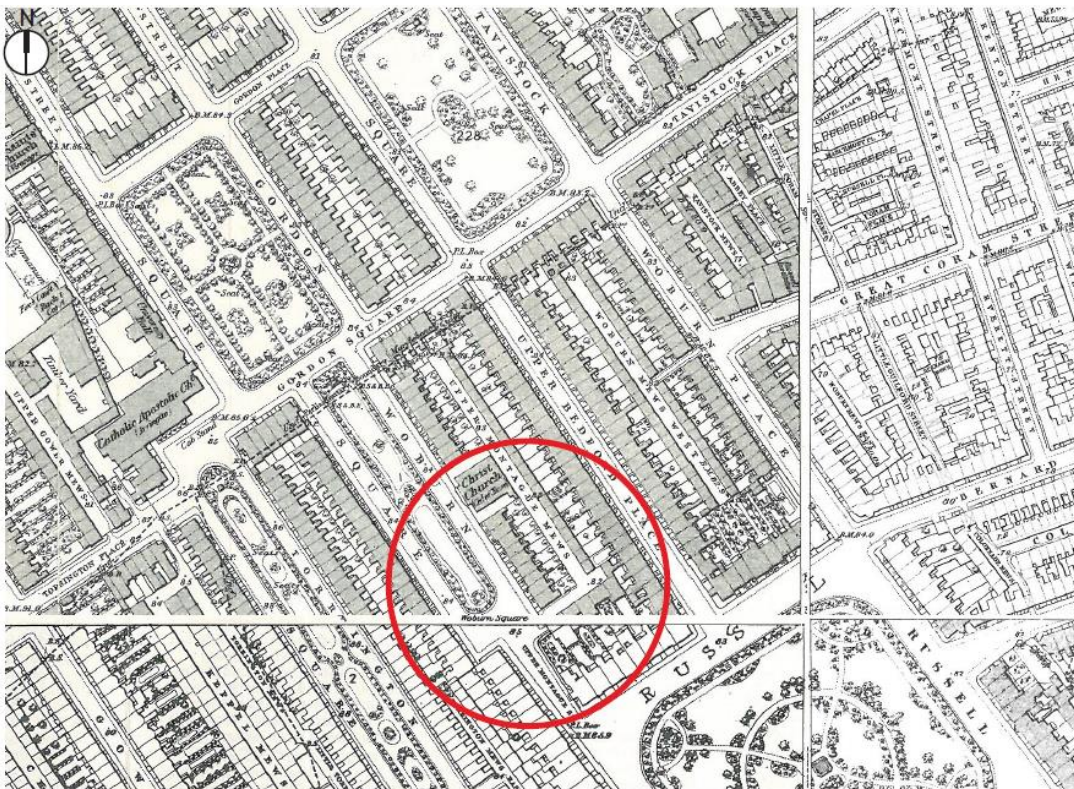
2.1.3 Diversification of Bloomsbury

The University College— UCL today—was established in 1826, inspired by Jeremy Bentham's (1748–1832) radical proposal for a secular university. The University's first building was the classically-styled college on Gower Street, designed by William Wilkins and opened in 1829. Over the course of the nineteenth century, Bloomsbury attracted a wide range of institutions and other occupants; to the north new railway termini on Euston Road led to a proliferation of hotels, whilst the British Museum to the west was formally opened in 1857.



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Fig. 6—Horwood's Map of London, 1815



© Crown copyright, 1870

Fig. 7—OS map, 1870

2.1.4 Early twentieth-century

In the first half of the twentieth century, Bloomsbury's major development was associated with the expansion of the University, between Gower Street and Russell Square. This expansion, coupled with the introduction of railways, hotels and office uses led to a decline in residential occupation by the wealthier population, who moved to other fashionable areas of London. During the 1930s a new aesthetic and scale was adopted by the University and an expansion scheme was prepared by the architect Charles Holden (1875-1960), with a spine of buildings extending from Montagu Place to Byng Place, and from Malet Street to Woburn and Russell Squares. However, by the outbreak of the Second World War only Senate House was complete.

2.1.5 The university's post-war development of Bloomsbury

War-time bombing destroyed some of the older housing stock in the area which allowed the opportunity for new, large-scale developments, including the present No. 20 Bedford Way. Following the Second World War, the University expanded further south and east initiating further demolitions of historic buildings to make way for new university buildings. In 1959 UCL commissioned Leslie Martin and Trevor Dannatt to design a development plan for the Bloomsbury district. The scheme was supported by the London County Council and the Royal Fine Art Commission. Martin recommended Denys Lasdun (1914-2001) to draw up the first detailed designs and in 1960, Lasdun was commissioned to design an extension to the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and a new building for the Institute of Education and the Law Institute between Bedford Way and Woburn Square, to include a near 1000-seat auditorium.

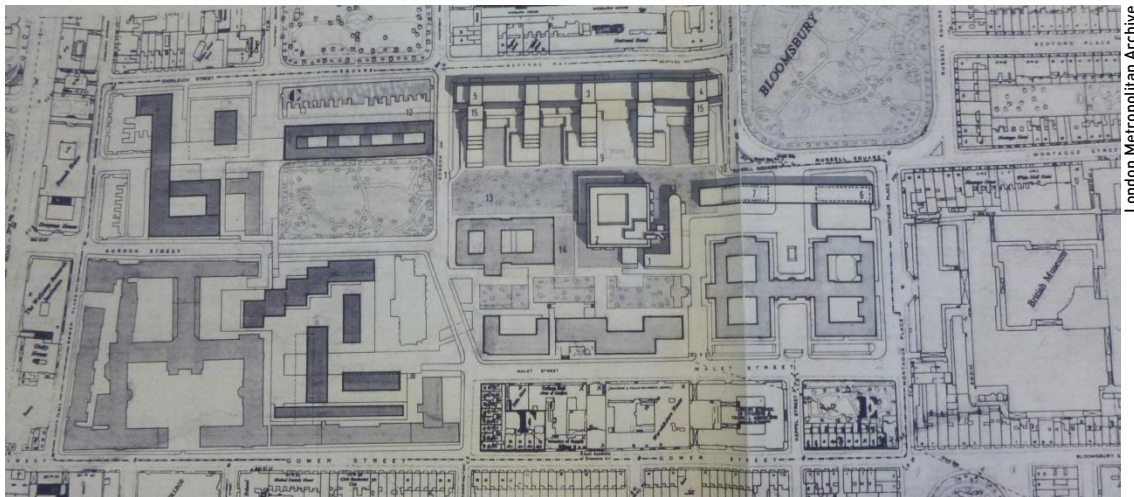


Fig. 8—Development plan for Bloomsbury, with Lasdun's SOAS extension and the IoE/Law Institute in the centre. c. 1966

Brutalist buildings

'Brutalism' as an architectural term originates from the use of exposed materials including raw concrete (*béton brut*). It has come to be used to describe the imaginative sculptural treatment of the volumes and surfaces of a building for the power of their formal expression, often in relation to the expression of internal functions. This was in contrast to the polite modernism of the Festival of Britain period which preceded it.

Brutalism was used almost exclusively in the public sector, for housing, and educational and cultural buildings. Its uncompromising aesthetic and demanding engineering and construction techniques made it unsuitable for commercial development, for which low-risk building processes and an inoffensive aesthetic were more appropriate.



Alexandra Road Estate, Neave Brown
(1972–78)



Barbican Estate, Chamberlain,
Powell and Bon (1962–82)



Brunel University, Richard Sheppard,
Robson and Partners (1965–66)



National Theatre, Denys Lasdun
(1969–76)



Royal College of Physicians, Denys
Lasdun (1960–64)



Trellick Tower, Erno Goldfinger
(1968–72)

2.1.6 Lasdun's design and construction (1966–77)

Lasdun designed a modular building in the Brutalist style, which could be constructed in phases as funding was made available and land acquired. Initial drawings for the Institute of Education and Law Institute, dated 1966, show a building formed of nine storeys, three of which are below ground, articulated by a grid of pre-fabricated bronze-anodized aluminium panels and glazing, set in a structure of in-situ and precast reinforced concrete (Figs. 9-11). The spine of the building along Bedford Way is punctuated by five concrete service towers (Cores A to E), and five stepped wings, resembling ziggurats, that project west from the spine toward Woburn Square. Each wing is dominated by an external over-scaled concrete staircase.

However, in the mid-1960s a shift in public attitudes toward historic conservation occurred, in part as a result of the changing nature of Bloomsbury and UCL's approach to commissioning contemporary architecture from the 1930s onwards, at the cost of the area's older terraces. A conservation campaign to save Woburn Square from demolition, set up by UCL lecturers and students and headed by renowned architectural historian John Summerson, gained traction in 1968. In February 1969 a debate was held during a meeting of the University Convocation where the conservationists proposed that at least the facades of the Georgian terraces be retained. They lost the debate, but soon the tide would turn in their favour.

Construction started in September 1970, by which time the plans for Levels 1–4 (the three below-ground floors and ground floor), including the split-level entrance from Bedford Way (which addressed the change in ground level between Bedford Way and Thorough Mews) and principle stair to the below-ground auditorium, known as University Hall (now Logan Hall), had been revised. Construction began with the spine of the building, progressing from south to north. (The north core tower was only completed in 1978, a year after the Institute was officially opened by the Queen Mother). The first and only ziggurat wing to be built was the existing west wing; delays to funding gave the conservationists time to list the remaining Georgian terraces in the area, preventing the completion of three of the wings. The fourth unexecuted wing would have enclosed the forecourt to the north of the completed west wing. Whilst the site was cleared in 1974, funding for the construction of the wing never came, and the site remains undeveloped to this day.

Lasdun designed the building with the future, evolving needs of the university in mind; its plan-form was intended to be flexible, with light-weight partitions that can easily be removed and rearranged. The history of alterations to the interiors since the 1970s, particularly the teaching spaces on the upper floors, indicates the success of this original concept.

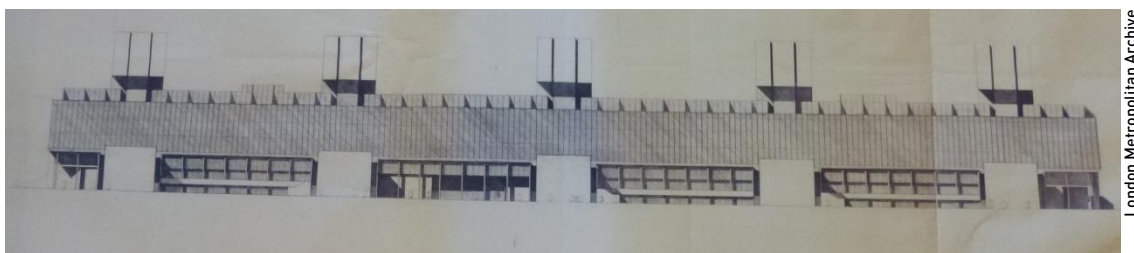


Fig. 9—Lasdun's design for the east (Bedford Way) elevation of the Institute of Education and Law Institute, 1966

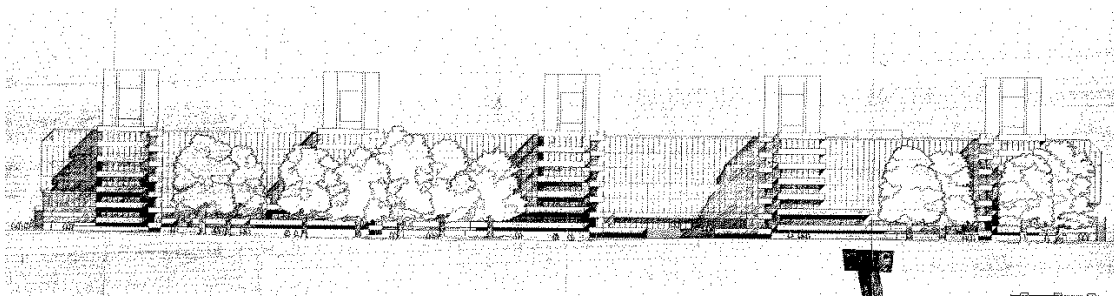


Fig. 10—Lasdun's design for the west elevation of the Institute of Education and Law Institute, 1966

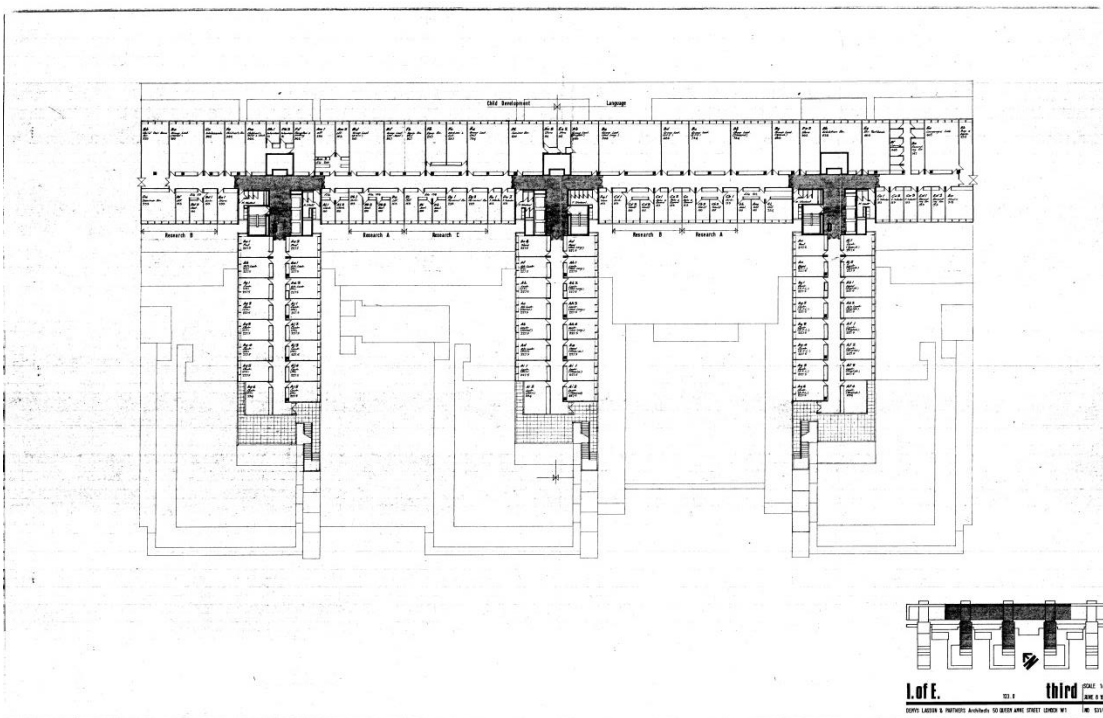


Fig. 11—Lasdun's original plan for the IoE (Level 7), 1966. Only the wing to the right was constructed

2.1.1 Extensions by Lasdun, 1990–93

In 1990–93 an extension was built to the rear of Zone C to house the Institute's library, partly incorporating the foundations that had been laid for the unexecuted wings. The three-storey extension (on Levels 3–5), was designed by Lasdun and uses the same vocabulary of a grid of aluminium panels and glazing.

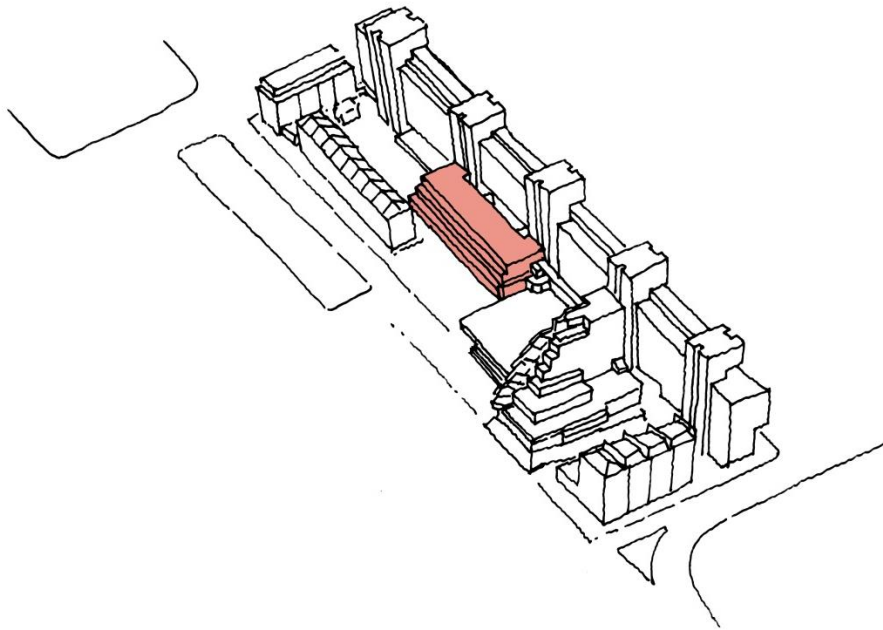


Fig. 12—Aerial view of the listed building, viewed from the south; Lasdun's library extension, built in 1993, is highlighted

In 1993 the entrance from Bedford Way was also reconfigured. The IoE was originally entered through the still existing pair of doors at street level (Level 3), set in a recessed curtain wall of glazing between Cores A and B, which accessed the main atrium and stair to University Hall. The 1993 entrance accessed Level 4: first floor level as seen from Bedford Way, reached by a stair from street level that projects beyond the concrete piers supporting the overhanging upper floors. This was to allow direct access to the internally reconfigured main reception on Level 4. Internally, a walkway takes the visitor from the revolving door at the top of the stairs to the main circulation space and reception area, now on Level 4, through a narrow double-height space to the north of the original entrance. This rearrangement was Lasdun's recognition of the poor navigation afforded by the original entrance which, in the recessed curtain wall, is not obvious and results in a poor user-experience of the building. The projecting stairs and large overhanging sign were Lasdun's attempt to make the entrance more visible. This adaptation has however, left the building with a confusing double entrance arrangement, which makes wayfinding difficult and accessibility extremely problematic. Additionally, the original 'central' circulation core, executed in high-quality concrete with stairs down to the basement lecture theatre and one of the most important architectural spaces in the building, was side-lined by this arrangement.

For those entering the building via the original entrance on Level 3, there is no clear view of the reception and no clear indication that one has entered at a floor lower than the 'entrance' and reception. For those entering Level 4, the stairs and circulation of the building are not immediately understood. Whilst designed by Lasdun, the later staircase is a relatively unsuccessful intervention and results in extreme difficulties for people of limited mobility and unclear wayfinding for all.



Fig. 13—No. 20 Bedford Way under construction, mid-1970s, viewed from Thornhaugh Mews, facing north



Fig. 14—Completed west wing in 1975, from Thorhaugh Mews, facing north

3.0 Assessment of significance

3.1 Assessing significance

Assessing significance is the means by which the cultural importance of a place and its component parts is identified and compared, both absolutely and relatively. The purpose of this is not merely academic; it is essential to effective conservation and management because the identification of elements of high and lower significance, based on a thorough understanding of a site, enables owners and designers to develop proposals that safeguard, respect and where possible enhance the character and cultural values of the site. The assessment identifies areas where no change, or only minimal changes should be considered, as well as those where more intrusive changes might be acceptable and could enrich understanding and appreciation of significance.

Statutory designation is the legal mechanism by which significant historic places are identified in order to protect them. The designations that apply to No. 20 Bedford Way are listed in Section 1.4. However, it is necessary to go beyond these in order to arrive at a more detailed and broader understanding of significance that considers more than matters archaeological and architectural-historical. This is achieved here by using the terminology and criteria from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, adopted 2021). This document Squares the concept of significance at the heart of the planning process.

Annex 2 of the NPPF defines significance as:

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008) includes a methodology for assessing significance by considering 'heritage values'. In this instance NPPF interests are used because their adoption simplifies the preparation and assessment of planning and listed building consent applications, but the equivalent heritage values are given in brackets for reference.

This assessment uses three main types of interest as defined below:

Architectural and Artistic Interest ['aesthetic value']: *These are the interests in the design and general aesthetics of a Square. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.*

Historic Interest ['historical value']: *An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide an emotional meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a Square and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity ['communal value'].*

Annex 2 of the NPPF defines **archaeological interest** [‘**evidential value**’] in the following way:

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Archaeological interest is not assessed in this report; however, the HER search results map has been consulted and is included in Section 6.3.

The assessment of significance is usually an amalgam of these different types of interest, and the balance between them will vary from one case to the next. What is important is to demonstrate that all these interests have been considered. This is achieved by assessing the significance of the whole site relative to comparable Squares, and the relative significance of its component parts.

This assessment begins with a Summary Statement of Significance, followed by an assessment of the significance of the interior areas affected by the Phase 2d proposals, and the building’s contribution to Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

3.1.1 Levels of significance

High significance	Original elements or features that make an important contribution to the historic or architectural interest of the heritage asset.
Moderate significance	Original elements or features that contribute to the historical or architectural interest of the building as a heritage asset, but which have lesser inherent interest.
Limited significance	Elements or features that contribute little to the overall significance of the heritage asset, but which have some inherent historic or architectural interest.
Neutral significance	Later elements or features of little or no interest, which do not contribute to the historic and architectural interest of the heritage asset.
Detracts from significance	Later elements or features that obscure or otherwise impair the historic or architectural interest of the heritage asset.



Fig. 15 - Corridor of Level 9. Note lack of natural light.

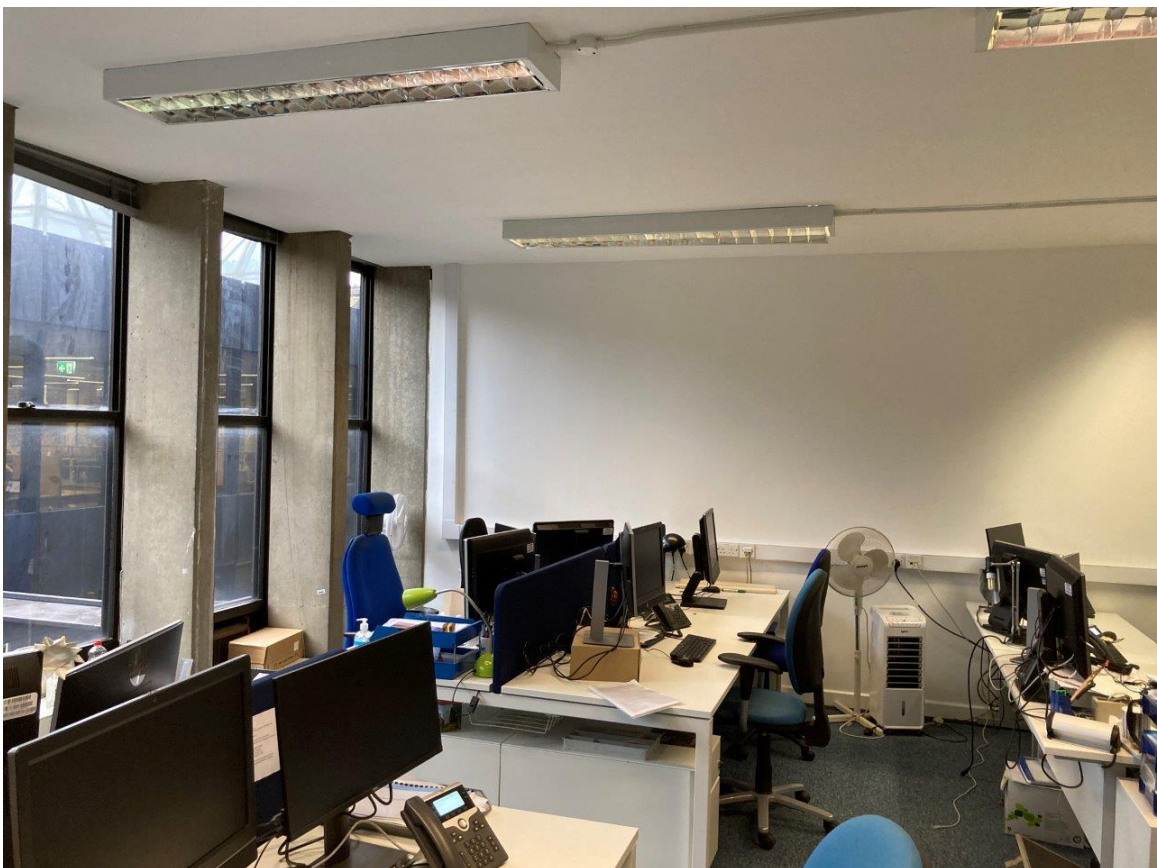


Fig. 16 - Typical internal finishes (Room 560)

3.2 Summary statement of significance

3.2.1 Exterior

The historic interest of No. 20 Bedford Square lies in it being an excellent example of a university teaching and administration building, designed by one of Britain's leading post-war architects. It is characteristic of the large-scale, Brutalist development of the 1960s and '70s, and its bold expression of function, form and materials typifies the mature work of Denys Lasdun. The arrested development of No. 20 Bedford Square, specifically the incomplete design for multiple western 'spurs', reflects the growing importance of the historic building conservation movement in the mid- to late twentieth century.

The architectural interest of its external appearance lies primarily in the sophisticated use of horizontal strata contrasting with vertical elements: its imposing towers give a strong, sculptural form, in addition to the exceptionally high-quality finish of the materials comprising bronze-anodized aluminium panels, fair-faced concrete and bespoke, glazed curtain walling that was at the forefront of the technological capabilities of the day. Overall, the exterior of the building is of **high significance** with the fine detailing of the contrasting materials a significant component of that significance.

3.2.2 Interiors: Zone C (Levels 5 and 9)

Lasdun designed the interiors to be flexible, with the intention that as the needs of the university evolved, so too would the layout of the building. In line with this, the majority of the interiors have been extensively altered and are of **neutral significance**; however, original fabric remains in the external window frames and structural elements, usually finished in fair-faced concrete. Surviving original fabric, especially the exceptional quality of concrete and window frames are of **high significance**. The interplay between these materials is a key component of the experience of being in the arrival area and they are therefore of **high significance**, whereas all other surviving original fabric and plan-form are of **moderate significance**. However, modern finishes such as carpets, skirting, and paint and plaster on the concrete columns, and later infill partitions, obscure the original finishes and **detract from significance**.

The plan form of the building, with axial routes sectioned by doors separating each zone with spaces leading off of these and their meeting at the open spaces of the entrance hall and core staircase, are of **high significance**. The cellular compartmentalisation of the zoned areas is of **neutral significance** however with Lasdun, with particular foresight, always intending for these spaces to be altered to meet the future needs of the occupiers of the building. Some of these spaces have been sub-divided and partitioned. Later refurbishments are **neutral** although some of the office doors have some **low significance** as part of the original fabric of the building.

Most of the windows reviewed within Levels 5 and 9 do appear to have forms of secondary glazing although the appearance and type varies across individual rooms. Very little is known regarding the origin and date of the two different secondary glazing systems seen in situ in the building. Other systems may be present in rooms where access was not possible.

The existing systems (the white casement system in Fig. 17 and the bronze sash system in Fig. 18, both on Page 18) may or may not date from the construction of the building, with the latter system more likely to be original. Both systems are notably inefficient when viewed in person with evident air movement into and out of the glazed compartments. The sash system was left partially opened (and thus ineffective) when inspected.

In both cases, the secondary glazing is inconsistent across the elevations of the building when viewed externally, a fact which detracts from the uniformity of the massive, linear strata of the building which are a key part of the significance.

The white-framed, casement secondary glazing is of no historic significance. The brown-framed, sash secondary glazing may or may not be original. As it is not known, we have applied a precautionary approach and assumed it be original. If so, where it survives it may have some limited historic interest and therefore some **low significance**.



Fig. 17— Casement secondary glazing (Room 944, Level 9).



Fig. 18— Sash secondary glazing (Room 936, Level 9).

Contribution to Bloomsbury Conservation Area

The site is located within Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy was produced in 2011. Bloomsbury Conservation Area is generally characterised by its formally planned arrangements of streets and Squares. The document states that:

The quintessential character of the Conservation Area derives from the grid of streets enclosed by mainly three and four-storey developments which have a distinctly urban character interspersed with formal Squares which provide landscape dominated focal points. (LB Camden 2011: 6)

This document divides the Conservation Area into sub-Areas based on shared characteristics. No. 20 Bedford Square is mentioned under two of the sub-Areas. In Sub Area 3: University of London/British Museum, the building is described as part of a group with its neighbour, the Philips Building extension to SOAS, also designed by Lasdun. The document states that the two buildings:

Share a common vocabulary derived from post-war British Brutalist architecture: stark concrete, strongly modelled structures with horizontal glazing, and distinct sculptural forms including vertical circulation towers. While radical interventions in the Bloomsbury landscape, the Lasdun buildings are now part of the established character of the Conservation Area. (LB Camden 2011: 34)

In Sub Area 6: Bloomsbury Square/Russell Square/Tavistock Square, No. 20 Bedford Way is noted for its dominant presence in the Bloomsbury streetscape:

On the north side [of Tavistock Square], the southern end of Denys Lasdun's Institute of Education (grade II listed) has a bronze-coloured glazed curtain wall elevation facing the Square... The western side of the street [Bedford Way] is occupied entirely by the strongly modelled elevation of Sir Denys Lasdun's 1970s grade II* listed Institute of Education and Clore Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. A notable example of British Brutalist architecture, the street elevation is punctuated by the vertical staircase towers and lecture room 'pods' at roof level. (LB Camden 2011: 48) In conclusion, the massive and imposing structure of the building makes a strong contribution to Sub-Area 3 of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, in isolation and as part of a group with other university buildings.*

This contribution results primarily from the holistic experience of seeing the entire, massive, sculptural block rather than individual detailing. Zone B differs from the remainder of the façade onto Bedford Way, however. By dispensing with the metal screens that otherwise cover the glass curtain wall, Zone B is the more inviting and obvious entrance area, the point at which the otherwise monolithic building meets the street of the conservation area. This perception is also true of the northernmost point of the building where a steep, sculptural flight of steps meets the corner of Tavistock Square. These two arrival zones are of particular importance to how the building meets the conservation area.

4.0

Heritage impact assessment

4.1 Proposals

The proposed scheme is part of the second phase of the long-term project to increase teaching and administration space, and improve the user experience at No. 20 Bedford Way. This specific application seeks to upgrade the appearance of Zone C of Levels 5 and 9 to provide improved accommodation for staff and students.

This application seeks to:

- Improve and update the appearance of finishes and fixtures.
- Install bespoke secondary glazing across all windows of the Bedford Way elevation of the building at Levels 5 and 9 and across the Woburn Square elevation of Level 9.
- Alter the partitions at both levels to better suit the needs of the individual teaching departments including removal of the axial corridor at Level 9. All new partitions are to work with the rhythm of the existing articulation of the building into bays.
- Installation of fixed benching with proposed Room L5 (existing Rooms 561; 563; 565; 567 and 595).
- Refurbishment of the Level 5 kitchenette and toilet (Room 582) with removal of the toilet and creation of a cleaning store.
- Refurbishment of the Level 9 toilets with alterations to partitions to create additional office and comms space.
- The works also propose refurbishments to the ceilings of both levels which are a mixture of concrete ribs (with asbestos) behind and later false ceilings. See submitted plans for further detail.

4.2 Heritage impact assessment

4.2.1 Introduction

The individual changes proposed by the application are considered in this section. For more detail relating to finishes, or the design process that has led to the specified design-choices, please refer to the submitted plans and the Design and Access Statement respectively.

4.2.2 Changes to the partitions and ceiling finishes

The proposals seek to make alterations to room layouts on Levels 5 and 9. The existing rooms have modern partitions and built-up floors and ceilings. The partitions are to be removed and the modern finishes stripped back. New partitions are proposed to create a modified layout to provide small meeting rooms and server rooms including increasing a sense of natural light and openness to improve teaching, working and learning conditions.

While the removal of partitions may include the removal of some original partitions, the proposed alterations to layout will have no impact on the historical significance of the building, maintaining the significant structural walls and openings whilst rearranging lesser partitions, as envisaged by Lasdun's flexible aspirations for the internal spaces. The careful refurbishment of surfaces will be an enhancement to the listed building, better revealing the fair-faced concrete where it has been previously overpainted. A holistic review and replacement of finishes and fixtures will enhance the quality of the space and support the ongoing use of the building in its original designed use.

The replacement with different ceiling treatments in the corridors and created rooms, which are variously suspended ceilings or concrete ribs, would be **neutral** in heritage terms and would have no impact on heritage significance provided that the concrete ribs are retained or reinstalled following asbestos removal.

4.2.3 Secondary glazing

If the sash secondary glazing were to be the removal of the remnant systems would result in a small degree **of less-than-substantial harm** to original fabric. Whether the existing system is original or not is not known, and so must, with a precautionary principle applied, be assumed to be potentially original. To outweigh any such harm would be the application of visual uniformity across Zone C of the building at Levels 5 and 9 on the Bedford Way elevation and Level 9 Woburn Square elevation resulting in an improvement to the appearance of the building relative to the existing. Of more weight however would be the environmental benefits of applying a sustainable glazing system to the building, increasing thermal comfort for occupants and reducing energy wastage without any impact to the most significant elements of the building, namely the structural concrete and external framing. These public benefits also contribute to the continued occupation of the building in its optimum viable use. As such, **the sustainability benefits and modest heritage benefits outweigh the small degree of less than substantial harm.**

The difficulty in applying any visually apparent system to a single part of a listed building is somewhat alleviated by the University being in control of most of the building. A comparable, visually consistent secondary glazing system can therefore be applied to other parts of the building as the works come forward.

The internal changes to the building will have **no impact** to the contribution of this important Brutalist building to the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The changes to the visible secondary glazing will increase the architectural uniformity of the building as seen externally but this is a relatively small detail on a building whose primary contribution is read as massive sculptural forms. The enhancement to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area would therefore be a **negligible heritage benefit.**

4.2.4 Refurbishments and change to fittings and fixtures

The existing kitchens and bathrooms are of no historic merit and the refurbishment of these and the other spaces within the subject areas with finishes to match those applied in Phase 1 will have **no impact** to the historic or architectural significance of the building.

5.0

Conclusion: the planning balance

As with earlier phases of development of the masterplan, the works form part of a comprehensive improvement to the internal layout and appearance of the building to enable the Institute of Education to deliver teaching and learning in a way that reflects twenty-first century needs and expectations.

As with all of the works of the masterplan, the proposals will contribute to securing the future of UCL in the building, which is the optimal viable use for which it was designed. Therefore, even talking a precautionary principle, the potentially less-than-substantial harm of the removal of remnants of what may be original secondary glazing and the removal of partitions, is significantly mitigated by the fact that the most significant elements of the building are unaffected. These are the structural concrete, its related forms and the exterior glazing system. The scheme offers substantial public benefits in terms of supporting the long-term use of the building and sustainability benefits, which outweigh the less-than-substantial harm caused by the proposals. The proposed scheme is therefore in accordance with Paragraph 202 of the NPPF, and Paragraph 7.44 and Policy D2 of Camden's Local Plan.

6.0 Supporting Information

6.1 Sources

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6.2 Planning policy

6.2.1 National legislation and policy

Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)

The overarching legislation governing the consideration of applications for planning consent that affect heritage assets is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Areas Act 1990.

Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Act require local planning authorities, in considering whether to grant listed building consent, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Act requires local planning authorities, in considering whether to grant planning permission with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, to pay 'special attention [...] to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Its core principle is to help achieve sustainable development through the planning system. Sustainable development is commonly summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Having been first published in 2012, the Framework was most recently updated in 2021.

Paragraph 194 requires an applicant to give a summary of significance of the building or area affected, proportionate to its importance. This heritage statement provides that information at an appropriate level.

Paragraph 195 advises local authorities to take account of that significance in assessing proposals to avoid or minimise conflict between the proposals and conservation of the asset.

Paragraph 197 emphasises the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of individual assets and wider, local distinctiveness, and the desirability of viable and fitting uses for a building being found or continued.

Paragraph 202 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Additional guidance to help local authorities implement NPPF is set out in:

- the Planning Practice Guidance on the government's website which provides practical advice on applying the NPPF to the planning process and guidance on interpreting the language of the NPPF.
- The Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 entitled 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment'. This is the most relevant to this application of a number of guidance documents by Historic England.

6.2.2 Regional policy

London Plan (2021)

The London Plan (March 2021) is underpinned by the principle of 'Good Growth', that is, growth that is socially and economically inclusive and environmentally sustainable (Paragraph 1.0.1). Paragraph 1.1.4 highlights the positive impact that good quality, affordable homes, better public transport connectivity, accessible and welcoming public space, and built forms that work with local heritage and identity will have on London.

Policy HC1: Heritage conservation and growth states:

- A) *Boroughs should, in consultation with Historic England, local communities and other statutory and relevant organisations, develop evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of London's historic environment. This evidence should be used for identifying, understanding, conserving, and enhancing the historic environment and heritage assets, and improving access to, and interpretation of, the heritage assets, landscapes and archaeology within their area*

For planning decisions, it states:

- C) *Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.*

6.2.3 Local policy

Camden Local Plan (2017)

In July 2017 Camden Council adopted the Local Plan, which has reSquared the Core Strategy and Camden Development Policies documents as the basis for planning decisions and future development in the borough.

Paragraph 7.41 states:

The Council Squares great importance on preserving the historic environment. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act the Council has a responsibility to have special regard to preserving listed buildings and must pay special attention to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Paragraph 7.44 states:

Any harm to or loss of a designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification which must be provided by the applicant to the Council. In decision making the Council will take into consideration the scale of the harm and the significance of the asset.

Policy D2 Heritage states that the Council will:

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 assets.

Designated heritage assets

not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

Conservation areas

e. require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area.

Listed Buildings

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

6.2.4 National guidance

Planning Practice Guidance (Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) (2014)

The aim of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is to support implementation of the policies set out in the NPPF. The section 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' was last updated in April 2014.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2015)

This advice note supports the implementation of policy in the NPPF. This document sets out guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas and landscapes. It contains advice on the extent of setting, its relationship to views and how it contributes to significance. It also sets out a staged approach to decision-taking.

6.2.5 Local guidance

Camden Planning Guidance: Design (Camden Council, July 2015, updated March 2018)

Camden Council is reviewing and updating its Planning Guidance documents to support the Camden Local Plan following its adoption in summer 2017. The update is in two phases, the first of which was completed in March 2018. CPG1 Design will come under review in the second phase, but continues to apply until it is fully updated. Section 3 of this CPG sets out further guidance on how Policy D2 Heritage from the Local Plan (2017) should be applied

6.3 Entry on the National Heritage List



Historic England

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, CLORE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES AND ACCOMMODATION FOR UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

List Entry 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: INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, CLORE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES AND ACCOMMODATION FOR UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

List entry Number: 1246932

Location

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, CLORE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES AND ACCOMMODATION FOR UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, 17, 20 AND 26, BEDFORD WAY

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden

District Type: London Borough

Parish:

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II*

Date first listed: 04-Dec-2000

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 486897

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

798-1/0/10133 BEDFORD WAY 04-DEC-00 Camden (West side) 17, 20 AND 26
Institute of Education, Clore Institute of Advanced Legal Studies and
accommodation for University College

GV II*

University teaching building, 1970-6 by Denys Lasdun and Partners, extended 1990-3, also by Sir Denys Lasdun and Partners. In situ reinforced concrete and precast mullions with a cladding of prefabricated bronze-anodised aluminium panels and window sections. In plan the building makes a strong

barrier to the traffic of Bedford Way while extending the concept of flexible teaching space already explored at the University of East Anglia, Norwich. Six storeys above ground, with three basement storeys, in 1999 numbered 1-9. Flat, paved roof. Long spinal range, with wing to rear, and footings for a second incorporated in 1990-3 library extension. Large basement includes lecture theatre, the Logan Hall, under forecourt facing Lasdun's extension to the School of Oriental and African Studies opposite; conference facilities, students' union and service entrance. Split-level entrance hall gives on to library, drama studio and bookshop, with flexible teaching areas above, mainly facing street, and tutorial rooms, mainly facing courtyard and in wing.

The elevational treatment is in Lasdun's mature language of strata and towers, a grid of aluminium panels and glazing set over concrete plinth on western elevation, with massively over-scaled concrete staircase towers. On the eastern elevation to Bedford Way, the entrance floors are set back behind exposed frame, and has cut-back corners which demonstrate the smooth, sharp concrete particularly forcefully. The quality of finishes is exceptional, and the contrasting texture of materials unique in Lasdun's surviving work. The single spur that was built is highly sculptural, with a striking silhouette of angular concrete escape stairs rising above the floor levels and curtain walling. A similar system of anodised aluminium and glass was adopted by Lasdun for his extension, but with more pronounced glazing bars, and with three pyramidal roof lights that are the clearest indication of the new work. Entrance doors in anodised aluminium surrounds. New entrance on Bedford Way, reached up steps, installed by Lasdun in 1993.

INTERIORS. The interiors are simple, but the quality of concrete finishes is exemplary throughout. The upper teaching spaces were designed to be flexible, and continue to be altered regularly - a tribute to the success of the original concept. The areas of special interest are the lift lobbies, where Lasdun's finishes can be seen at their best, and the entrance hall and principal stair to the lecture theatre. This staircase, in a deep well in which are set giant columns, is a version in smooth concrete with brick treads of his earlier ceremonial stair at the Royal College of Physicians in Regent's Park (LB Camden, grade I), with concrete walls and balustrade. The entrance hall, with pavioured floors, is on two main levels, corresponding to the different level of Bedford Way and the square behind. Separate stairs lead to bookshop on lower level.

While the University of London was discouraged from further expansion in the post-war years it was appreciated that certain departments such as Education, Law and the School of Oriental and African Studies required enlarged facilities. Lasdun was commissioned by the University of London in 1960 to develop the concept of a spinal range along Bedford Way and to its north which had been published by Sir Leslie Martin and Trevor Dannatt the

year before. His task was to integrate the new buildings within an existing urban fabric, whose pattern of Georgian squares was belatedly being appreciated. Lasdun's scheme preserved more terraces than had the earlier proposals, and created a new square between his two buildings, much of it formed over the basement lecture theatre. For him, the relationship between the spine building and the SOAS pavilion is paramount.

The building was formally opened by the Queen in 1977. 'Lasdun's architecture carries absolute conviction', *Architectural Review*, March 1980, p.148. Although a building constructed to a grid, it is Lasdun's interest in planes and interpenetrating masses and belief in pure form and modelling. His synthesis of the modern movement of the 1930s, inspired by working with Wells Coates and Berthold Lubetkin, and his unique understanding of the formalism of the later generation of the New Brutalists makes him a comparable figure with Louis Kahn and is demonstrated particularly well here. This building forms a contrasting mass to the square pavilion of Lasdun's extension to the School of Oriental and African Studies, with which it forms an exceptionally strong group.

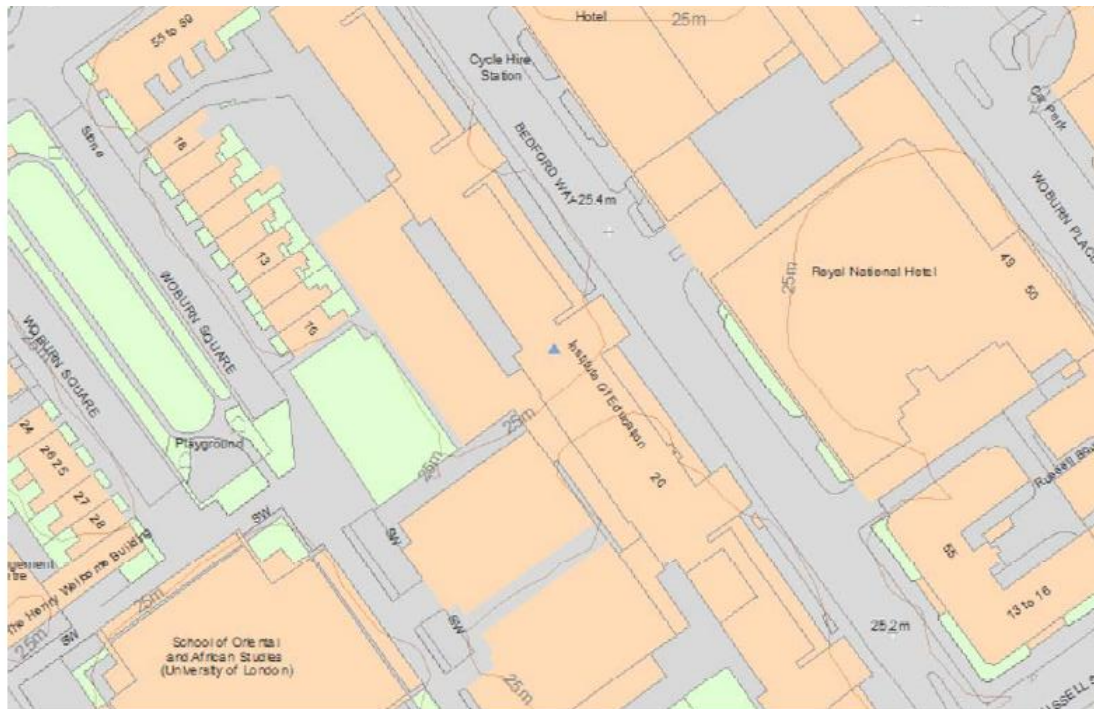
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National Grid Reference: TQ 29954 82136



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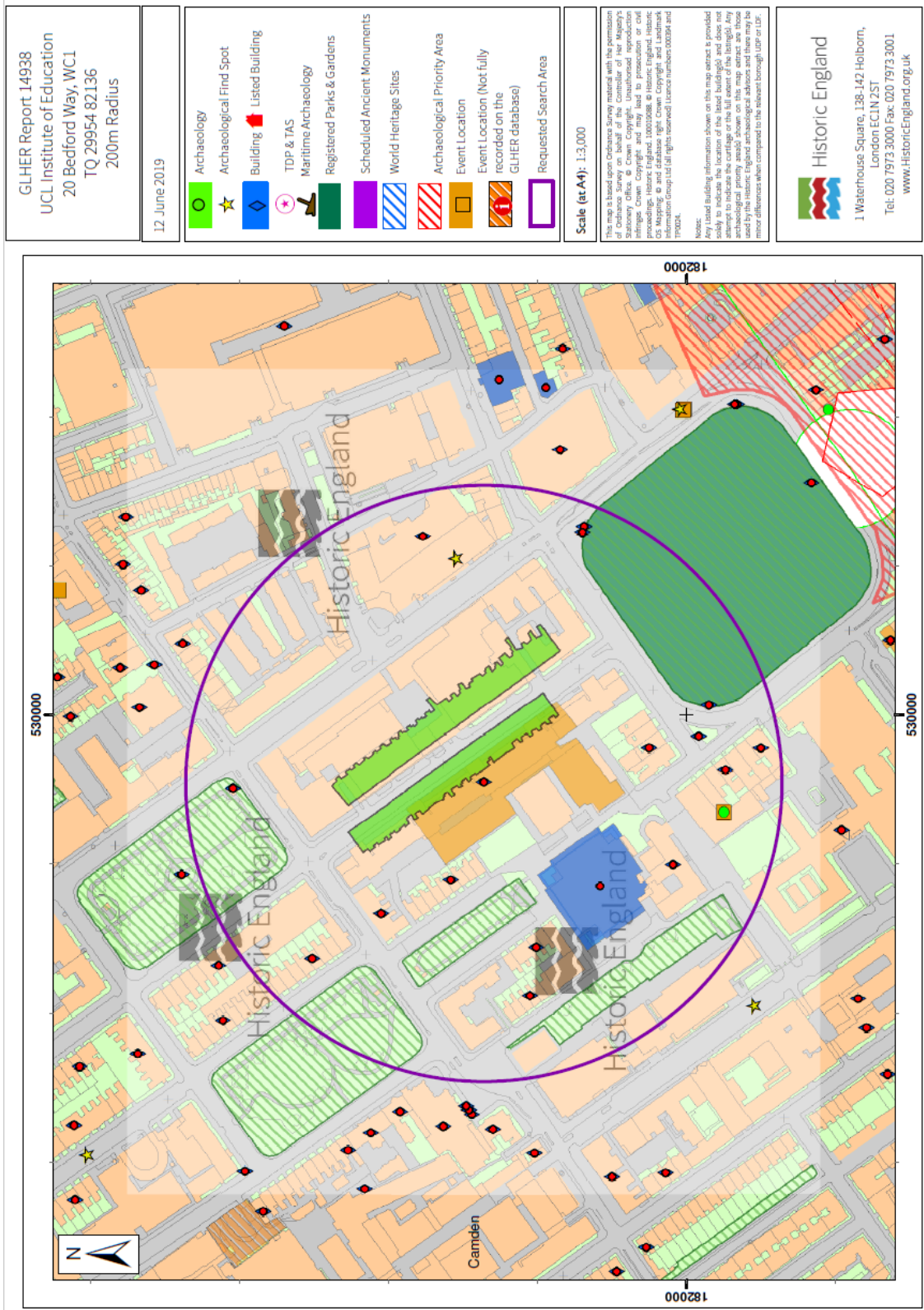
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End of official listing

6.4 Historic Environment Record search results



Alan Baxter

Prepared by Alice Eggeling

Reviewed by Rob Hradsky

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