

3 Verulam Buildings, Gray's Inn, WC1R 5NT

(Grade II Listed building within Bloomsbury Conservation Area)

Heritage Statement to accompany Listed Building Application



July 2022



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3 Verulam Buildings, Gray's Inn, London – Heritage Statement

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1 INTRODUCTION

1. This Heritage Statement has been produced to support an application for listed building consent. The applications propose minor internal works to the reception and waiting room areas on the ground floor to improve the space utilisation and overall aesthetic of the two rooms.
2. This statement provides an appraisal of the subject rooms within the Grade II listed Verulam Buildings (No. 3), Gray's Inn.
3. The purpose of this Heritage Statement is to demonstrate how the proposed scheme complies with the requirements of the NPPF-National Planning Policy Framework (Revised, July 2018), the NPPG – National Planning Practice Guidance and the local policies - in respect of Heritage issues.
4. This report includes the following:
 - a. An evaluation of the history and development of the site;
 - b. Appraisal of the subject areas within the building and identification of elements of significance
 - c. Proposed works Impact Assessment
5. This Heritage Statement is to be read alongside the Design & Access statement and Design Drawings by Oktra, enclosed with this submission.
6. Authorship: This note has been prepared by Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture Ltd, Conservation Architects and Heritage Consultants specialising in the historic cultural environment. The following team members contributed to the preparation of this report:
 - Stephen Levrant [RIBA, AA Dip, IHBC, Dip Cons (AA), FRSA] – Principal Architect
 - Maida Kaiser [Dipl.Ing.Arh, Mr. Arh] – Senior Architectural Conservation Associate
 - John Mullankuzhy [BA(Hons), MArch., M.Sc.]- Architectural Conservation Consultant

2 LOCATION AND SETTING

7. No 3 Verulam Buildings, lawyers' chambers, is part of the terrace of No's 1-5 Verulam Buildings, Gray's Inn, which is a Grade II listed terrace located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, London Borough of Camden (Figure 2).



Figure 1: Aerial view showing location of subject site (highlighted) within its site context (source: collage)

8. Statutory sites:

Verulam Buildings are all listed Grade II and the listed building description is as follows:

Historic England Listing Description: GV II

5 terraced chambers. 1803 (Nos 1, 2 & 3), 1811 (Nos 4 & 5). Multi-coloured stock brick. 4 storeys and basements. 7 windows each. Nos 4 & 5 slightly projecting. Entrances with semicircular arches, key-stones and impost blocks. Gauged red brick flat arches to recessed sash windows. Parapets. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with urn finials to areas.

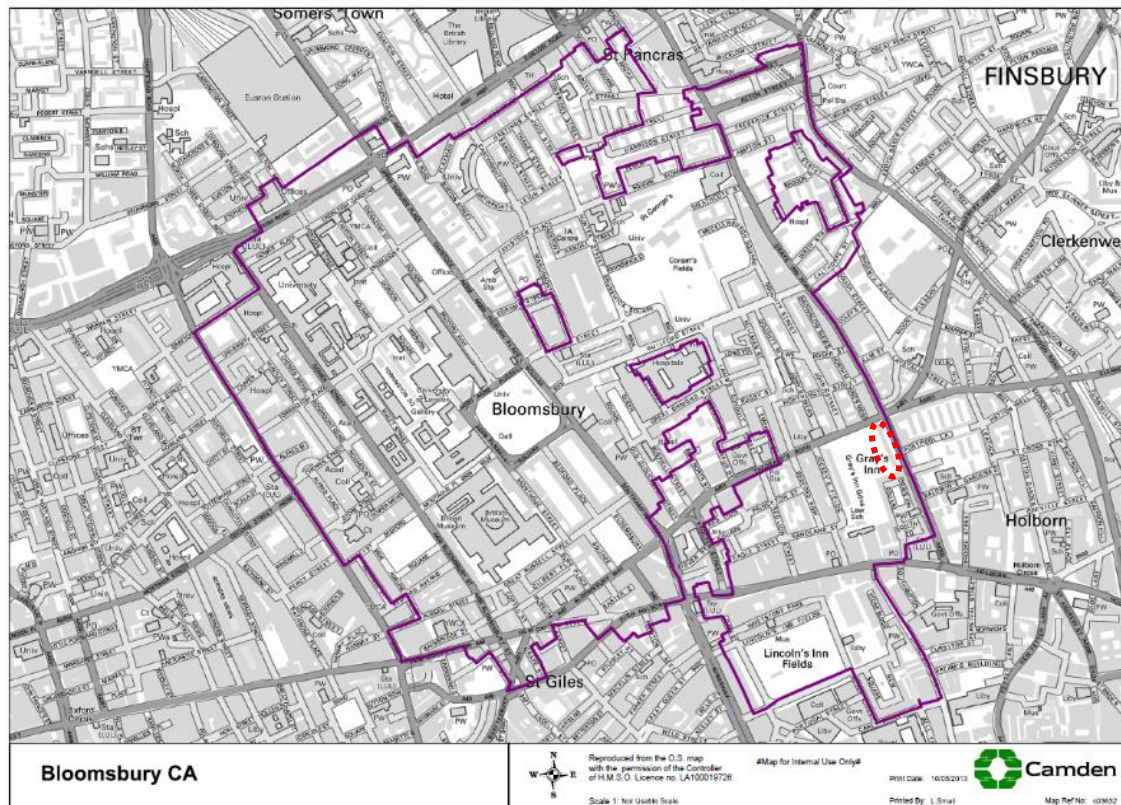


Figure 2: Bloomsbury Conservation Area Map (source: Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy Adopted 2011) (subject site highlighted in red)

9. Bloomsbury is noted for its formally planned arrangement of streets and the contrasting leafy squares. The urban morphology comprises a grid pattern of streets generally aligned running north-west to south-east and south-west to north-east, with subtle variations in the orientation of the grid pattern. The spatial character of Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn differs, being based on a series of interconnected courtyards and open spaces of varying sizes and scales.
10. Gray's Inn Road is a significant tree-lined avenue with wide pavements, slightly sloping down in level north of the junction with Theobald's Road, it is a wide, busy route linking High Holborn in the south to King's Cross in the north. The buildings of the Inns are mainly arranged in terraced or courtyard forms, the latter echoing the form of the original manor houses, albeit at a larger scale. There are a variety of architectural approaches, embracing materials, details and styles, reflecting the various periods of development. Materials include red brick, London stock brick, stone and stucco render. The lawyers' chamber buildings vary in date from the 16th to 20th centuries. They have relatively plain classically-influenced elevations, relieved by horizontal banding, and punctured by regular rows of sash windows and pedimented doorcases. The whole area has a private, internalised feel, hidden from view from the main surrounding streets except at key locations where there are glimpse views into the larger gardens.

3 BRIEF HISTORY

11. The subject building, Verulam buildings, forms part of a wider group of buildings located within the historic site of Gray's Inn, known as commonly as the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn Estates. The building, consists of five dwellings, were later additions to the site. It was built on the former garden land in the early C 19th at the North East Corner of Gray's Inn. According, to the listing description, No. 1-3 Verulam Buildings were built in 1803 and No. 4-5 in 1811. An additional group of Georgian terraced buildings, Ryland Buildings, was built around the same period and this is located on the North West Corner of the boundary.
12. The subject building is a narrow row of four storey Georgian terraced chambers adjacent to Gray's Inn Road. A small boundary wall is situated between the subject building and its street level. The overall elevation has a uniformity appearance with the multi-coloured stock brick and timber 12 panel sash windows composition. Each building elevation comprises three sash windows on each floor. Archival records show no reference to the architect.
13. Gray's Inn is one of four Inns of Court located in London, the inn is professional body for barrister and judges. Gray's Inn was first present on the site from 1370, the site is essentially divided into two squares that include the inn and adjacent buildings. The remainder of the site is covered by its surrounding gardens.



Figure 3: Rear view of the Verulam Buildings (source: Collage)

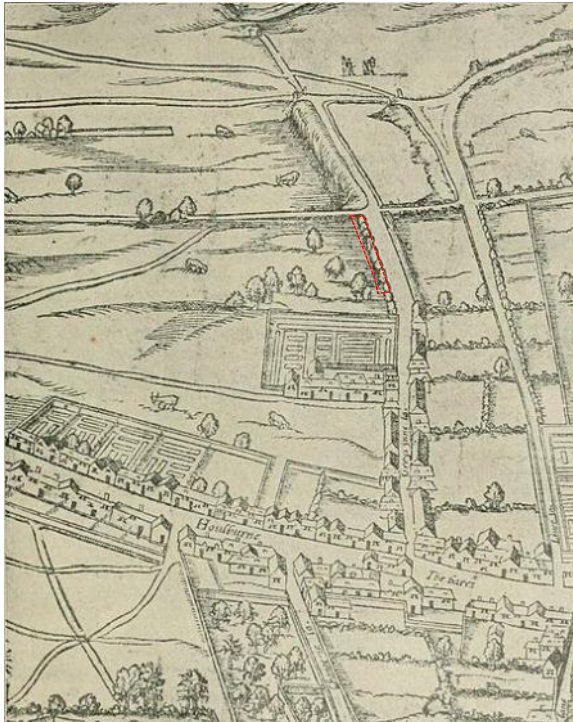


Figure 5: 1591 map of Gray's Inn drawn by Ralph Agas (source: Fletcher, Reginald (1901) *The Pension book of Gray's Inn* (records of the honourable society))

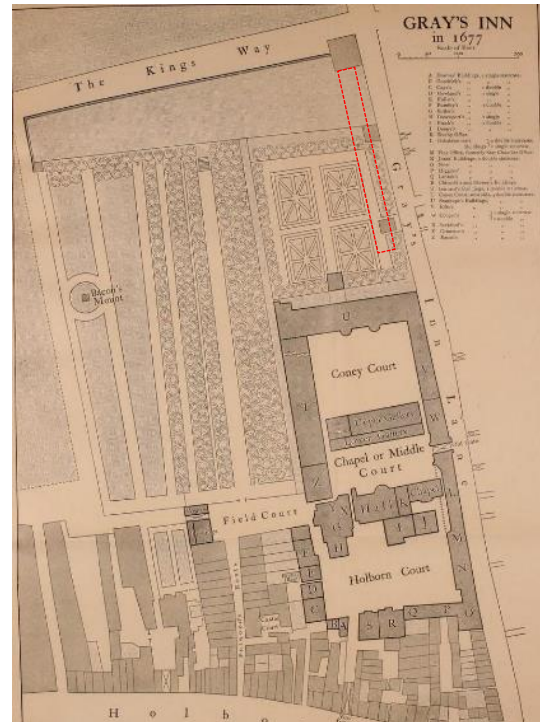


Figure 4: 1677 map of Gray's Inn with the subject building roughly indicated in red (source: Douthwaite, William Ralph (1886). *Gray's Inn, Its History & Associations*. Reeves and Turner).



Figure 6: Bomb damage maps (source: Bomb Damage Maps, Laurence Ward)

14. The subject building avoided any WW2 bomb damage; however, its immediate surrounding area and neighbouring buildings had been heavily inflicted with bomb damage, including the adjacent Gray's Inn. The Bloomsbury Conservation area saw a large redevelopments post WW2.

– An illustrated account of the area's development is traced through a progression of historic maps in Appendix A.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

A full planning history for the site is shown below (relevant applications highlighted):

Planning Reference	Date	Brief Description	Status
3 Verulam Buildings			
HB146	13-05-1970	The provision of additional toilet accommodation in the basement and the repositioning of the secondary staircase from ground floor to basement at 3, Verulam Buildings, North, Grays Inn, W.C.1.	Listed Conditional
8800055	03-02-1988	Change of use from residential to office at ground floor south and basement south.	Grant Full or Outline Perm. with Condit.
9200100	30-01-1992	The construction of a hard tennis court with wire fencing enclosure within Gray's Inn Gardens; at a site to the rear of 1-3 Verulam Buildings and 5-8 Gray's Inn Square.	Refuse Full or Outline Permission
9570279	07-11-1995	2 3 4 Verulam Buildings Grays Inn WC1 Internal alterations at basement ground and second floor including the formation of access between 2 3 and 4 Verulam Buildings at ground and second floor levels. as shown on drawing numbers 4381/08 /09 /11B /12C /13B to /19B and SK/100 to /102.	Grant List.Build. or Cons.Area Consent
2003/2314/L	26-11-2003	Internal alterations to the ground and lower ground floors.	Granted
2006/4478/L	17-10-2006	Alterations including the installation of comfort cooling and alterations to partitioning at basement, ground and second floor levels.	Granted

2007/0292/P	25-01-2007	2-3 Verulam Buildings London WC1R 5LQ Buildings London WC1R 5LQ Replacement of 2 windows with doors at rear lower ground floor level at no.2 Verulam Buildings and formation of rear external area with access steps.	Refused
2007/0299/L	25-01-2007	2-3 Verulam Buildings London WC1R 5LQ Works associated with the replacement of 2 windows with doors at rear lower ground floor level at no.2 Verulam Buildings and formation of rear external area with access steps	Refused
2007/2422/L	24-05-2007	Internal alterations to create openings in stud walls.	Granted
2017/2673/L	09-06-2017	Internal works to provide second bedroom (removal and re-arrangement of stud walling). Insertion of secondary glazed units to all existing sash windows (no. 6 windows in total).	Granted

5 ASSESSMENT OF THE SUBJECT AREAS

15. The areas subject to this application occupy the ground floor of No.3 Verulam Buildings. The rooms subject to proposed internal alterations are the reception and waiting room.

16. The reception room is located on the first right of the main 3VB entrance. The reception room is a large room with three east facing sash windows, with secondary glazing, but the room is dominated by a large centrally positioned modern reception desk unit. There are three thresholds within the reception room; the two west thresholds lead to the cloakroom and waiting room, and north threshold leads to an internal connection to No.4 Verulam Buildings.

17. The waiting room is a smaller sized rectangular room with two west facing sash windows with no secondary glazing. The rooms only threshold is to the reception room.



Figure 7 (top): No. 3 Verulam building indicated above in red outline

Figure 8 (bottom): Subject rooms proposed for internal alterations highlighted in red

Reception room



Figure 9: Central modern reception desk and unit

18. Internally, the reception room is centrally occupied by a large, curved reception desk with a floor to ceiling high adjacent unit. The unit conceals an existing waste pipe from the ceiling to the ground floor, as well as other M&E appliances. The existing waste pipe from the upper storeys is an awkward feature considering its position within the floor plan. The reception unit is a modern timber construction with a glass worktop, it appears to be fixed to the floor it occupies and a small area of the ceiling where existing waste pipe and M&E appliances are located.
19. The rest of the room maintains its original historic features such as cornice, dado rail, fireplaces, skirting, sash windows and shutters. The ceiling and floor have been altered in the past when the reception desk and unit was introduced. As existing, the floor finish are what appears to be modern timber floorboards and the ceiling modern plasterboard with downlights and modern pendant light above the reception desk. Downlights are usually deemed inappropriate on ground floor level within a building of this status.
20. The sash windows in this room have been installed with secondary glazing. The perimeter of the glazing runs along the edge of the head, cill line and along the hinge line of the shutters. Most of the sash windows along this elevation, facing Gray's Inn Road, seem to be installed with the secondary glazing.



Figure 10: The back of the large central reception desk unit has created a narrow hallway between the existing west wall.



Figure 11: Fireplaces on the south(left) and north (right) walls of the reception room.



Figure 12: Ceiling in the reception room



Figure 13: Windows in the reception room. Note the secondary glazing.

Waiting Room



Figure 14: The waiting room as existing

21. The waiting room retains most of its historical features such as its windows, shutters, cornice, fireplace, dado rail and skirting. The floor is currently covered in carpet and the floorboards are not visible.



Figure 15: Waiting room ceiling with modern ceiling pendant.



Figure 16: North wall of the waiting room showing the fireplace, dado rail, and cornice.



Figure 17: South West corner of the waiting room.

6 SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

22. A summary of the subject site's significance is assessed in this section in accordance with the latest Historic England Guidance 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets', published 21 October 2019. The three interests defined by the guidance are 'Archaeological interest', 'Architectural and aesthetic interest' and 'Historic interest'. These are further discussed in the points below.
23. **Archaeological interest:** The subject building is situated in an Archaeological Priority Area (APA). Only parts of the southern section of the Bloomsbury Conservation area fall within an APA, however few areas such as Lincoln's Inn Field and subject site Gray's Inn, have been included within this designation. The subject building forms part of group within the Gray's Inn site, the site's medieval connection and the location of a west to east Roman Road, makes the archaeological interest of site is high. However, this is not of high relevance for the current proposals as they are only for minor internal alterations.
24. **Architectural and artistic interest:** The subject building is a late Georgian terraced chamber and sits along Gray's Inn Road. The boundary wall and gateway east of the subject building; the lodge at the north east corner; and south railing and gates are all a part of the listing. The building is a good representative of its style, age, and typology; therefore, it has medium/high historic interest.
25. **Historic interest:** The subject building association within grounds of Gray's Inn significantly adds to the historic interest of the building. Even though the subject building was built later, it still situated within the historic site and recorded as an extended development to the overall site. The early C 19th building has become part of the historical site plan development. There seems to be no records about the architect of the building; therefore, it has medium historic interest.

7 DESIGN PROPOSALS

26. The proposals relate to minor internal alterations and refurbishment, with minimal interference with the historic building fabric, to two rooms within the ground floor of 3 Verulam Buildings. The rooms subject to proposed internal alterations are the reception and adjacent waiting room.
27. The proposed alterations within the waiting room are very minor with no alterations to the existing historic fabric. The works include new ceiling light pendants, new plant-on mouldings to create a wall panelling effect and general redecoration.
28. The alterations within the reception will see the removal of the modern reception desk, which currently occupies the central area of the room, with a new wall unit located along the west wall that divides the waiting and reception room. Again, all historic features are retained, and the wall unit will be carefully scribed around the skirting, dado and cornice. The waste pipe will be carefully re-routed towards the wall within the ceiling avoiding the floor joists and using the existing service runs where possible.
29. The client is a barrister's office, 3VB, and the internal refurbishments works are aimed at transforming the space into a more spacious and pleasant place for their staff, clientele and visitors.
30. Further assessment of proposed works is included in the following Impact Assessment section below, and full details can be found in the Design & Access statement and drawings by Oktra.

8 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 Impact Assessment criteria

31. The impact of the proposed works on the heritage asset has been assessed in this chapter. Since the works are wholly internal, and have no external manifestation, they cannot have an impact on the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area or on the setting of adjacent heritage assets.
32. The proposed works may result in some impact on the architectural and special interest of the Grade II listed 3 Verulam Building and this is assessed in the table below. For the purpose of assessing the likely impact of the proposed development on the heritage asset, established criteria have been employed.

The impact of the proposals can be grouped into three categories: **neutral, beneficial or adverse**. Within the three categories there are four different levels that can be given to identify the intensity of impact:

- *"negligible"* – impacts considered to cause no material change;
- *"minor"* - impacts considered to make a small difference to one's ability to understand and appreciate the heritage value of an asset.
- *"moderate"* - impacts considered to make an appreciable difference to the ability to understand or appreciate the heritage value of an asset.
- *"substantial"* - impacts considered to cause a fundamental change in the appreciation of the asset.

8.2 Impact Assessment Schedule

Room	Proposed Works	Rationale	Impact & Mitigation
Reception Room	Remove modern reception desk unit and associated joinery/M&E for proposed wall unit against west wall.	Reception desk is a modern joinery unit and finishes are of no significance. Existing waste pipe to be rerouted to a more sensible location within the room.	Moderate beneficial: The plan form of the room will be 'reinstated' and better legible. All the historical features will be retained, and the new wall unit will scribe carefully around the profiles. Downlights will be removed and replaced with

			more appropriate surface fixed pendant lights.
Waiting Room	Minor additions including plant-on mouldings to create a wall panelling effect and general refurbishment/decoration	To modernise and upgrade the room finishes.	Negligible: works will not affect any historical features or the special interest of the room.

8.2.1 Summary of impact

The proposed works are light-touch, avoid any significant intervention to the building historic fabric or its appearance, and are considered to be a heritage benefits to the building.

Overall, given that the changes largely look to upgrade modern fabric and finishes the proposals can be considered to have a neutral and negligible impact and cause no harm to the special interest of the heritage asset.

9 POLICY CONSIDERATION

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.

Section 66 states that in the determination of planning applications which affect a listed building or its setting, 'the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

Response: This report has considered the physical impact of the proposal on the listed building and has determined no harm will occur.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Heritage Policy, NPPF (2012) has since been updated several time, most recently in July 2021. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and outlines how these should be applied.

This section discusses the impact of the proposals according to the NPPF. The NPPF contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development sympathetic to the conservation of designated heritage assets. The policies relevant to heritage matters are contained within paragraphs 184 to 202 of the Framework.

Paragraph 194:

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.”

Response: This heritage statement describes the historic background and development of the subject building and the area. An appraisal of the building’s significance has been undertaken as per Historic England’s guidelines. The relevant HER has been consulted both through archive visits as well as desk-based study. The document provides further information on the development of the area, a detailed planning history and assessment of the areas subject of this application. The extent of information provided has been considered proportional to the significance of the heritage asset and the potential impact of the proposal on its significance.

Paragraph 197:

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”

Response: The proposed development would result in a positive contribution to the appearance and plan form of the subject areas, and subsequently to overall character and appearance of the listed building through the heritage benefits it delivers. The benefits of the proposed development have been discussed in the section ‘Impact Assessment’ above. The proposed works secure the optimum viable use of the property as a functioning workplace, by upgrading it to contemporary requirements.

Paragraphs 199:

“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.”

Response: The proposed development would result in **no harm** and would in fact deliver heritage benefits to the listed building. This has been demonstrated in the section ‘Impact assessment’ above.

London Plan (2021):**Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth**

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.

Response: This heritage statement provides an appraisal of the heritage assets drawing from the relevant historic environment record (HER). The significance of the subject buildings has been assessed as per Historic England guidance.

The proposed refurbishment and minor internal alterations would help in enhancing the subject building, without causing any harm to its special interest.

Camden Local Plan (2017)**Policy D2 Heritage**

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

Designed heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;*
- b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;*
- c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

The Council will 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.

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- e. resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;*
- f. 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*
- g. resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.*

Response: As demonstrated in the sections above, the proposed development intends to refurbish and enhance the existing listed building. This proposal has been informed by an assessment of the building, its historical development and the surviving features that contribute to its special interest. The proposed works would enhance these elements and aid in the long-term conservation of the subject building.

10 CONCLUSION

The proposed development ensures the continuous use of the subject building as offices, without causing any adverse impacts on its special interest. It is considered that this proposal fully complies with the relevant local and national policies in respect of the special interest of the Grade II Listed Building and its long terms sustainable use.

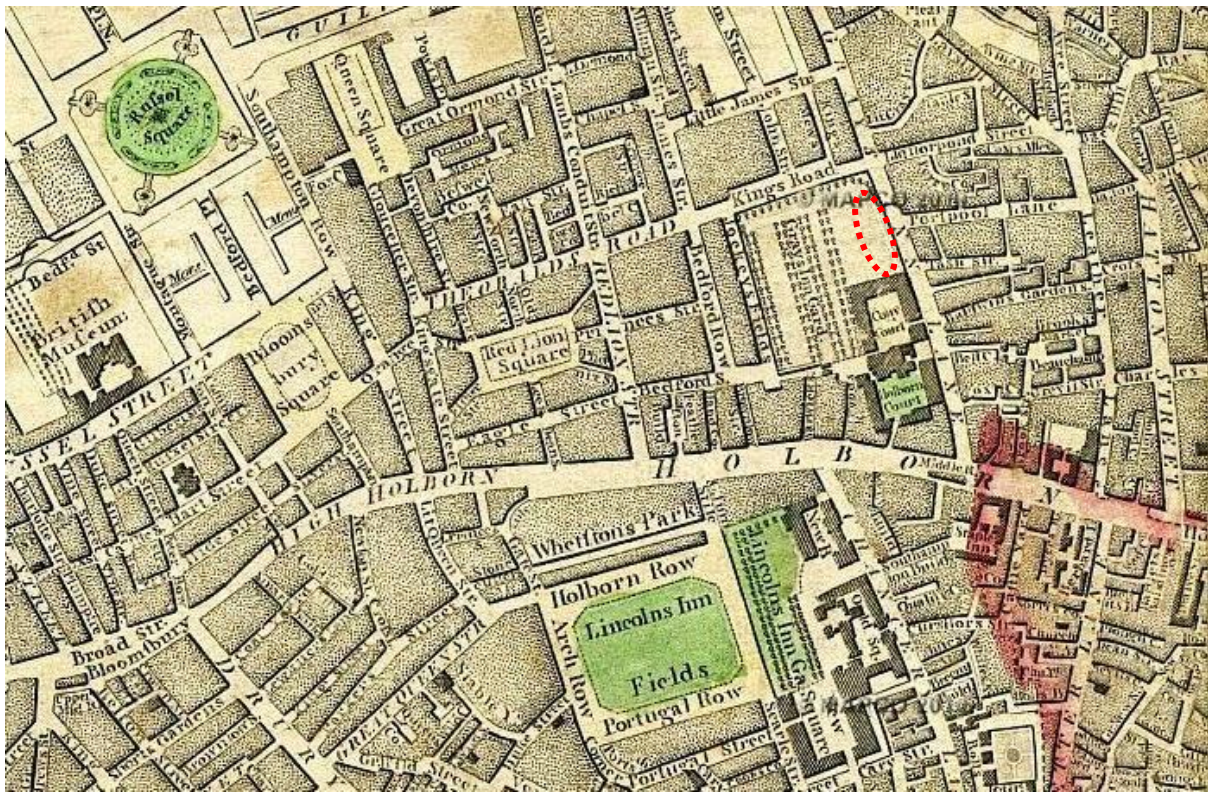
The proposals have been designed so as to cause **no harm** to the significance of the statutorily listed building. **They will affect largely modern unsympathetic fabric internally and within a very limited area,** having a minimal and positive impact on the special Interest of the listed building. It is, therefore, considered that the heritage benefits offered by the scheme would enhance an appreciation and understanding of the special interest of the listed building.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to sustain and enhance the special historic and architectural interest of the statutorily listed building by preserving and enhancing those elements of significance that have been identified as contributing to that special interest and removing or altering those elements which are detrimental to that interest.

It is therefore concluded that the proposed works satisfy the relevant clauses of the NPPF. These are consistent with the spirit of local policies and national conservation principles and therefore there should be a presumption for its approval.

11 APPENDIX A: HISTORICAL MAP PROGRESSION

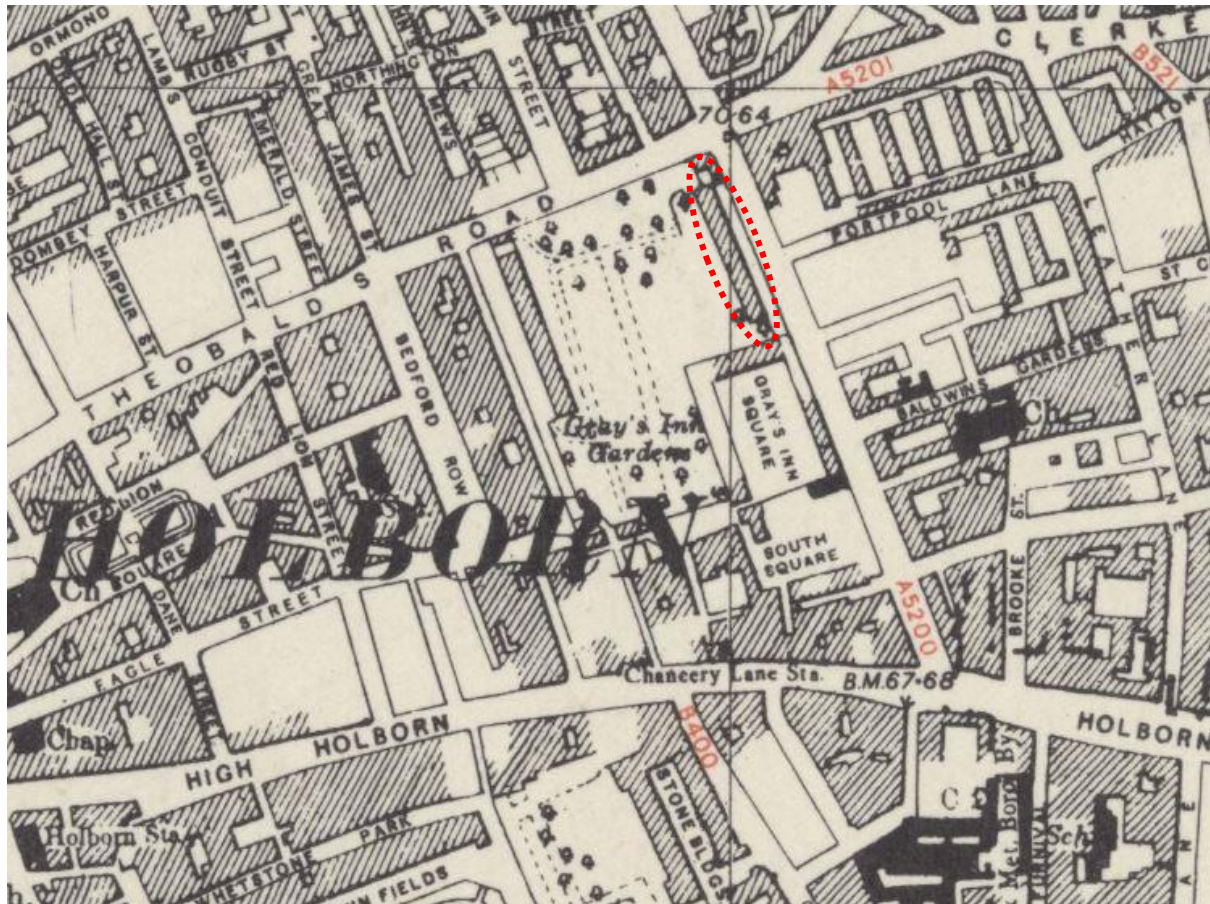
1804



1914



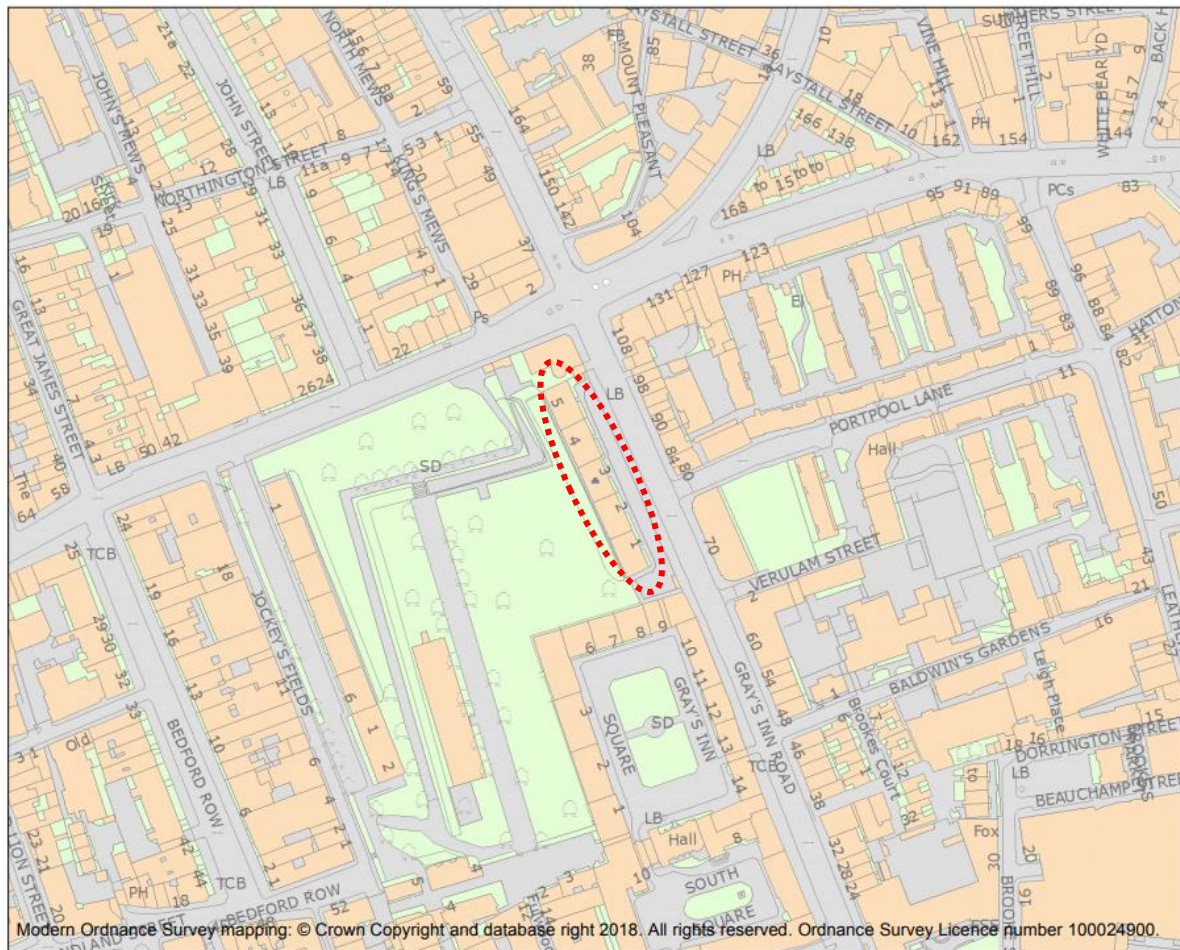
1948



1956



This is a detailed street map of the Holborn area in London. The map shows a grid of streets including Jockey's Fields, Gray's Inn, and Portpool Lane. A red dotted line highlights a specific area near the Gray's Inn and Portpool Lane intersection. Other labels include 'Office', 'Sch', 'Chap', 'Liby', 'Hall', and 'HOLBORN'.

2021

This is an A4 sized map and should be printed full size at A4 with no page scaling set.

Name: VERULAM BUILDINGS NUMBERS 1 TO 5 AND ATTACHED RAILINGS

