

38 Grosvenor Gardens  
London SW1W 0EB  
Heritage Statement  
City of Westminster  
April 2021



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## Table of Contents

1.0	INTRODUCTION .....	1
2.0	UNDERSTANDING .....	3
3.0	SIGNIFICANCE.....	14
4.0	LEGISLATION AND POLICY .....	16
5.0	SCHEME ASSESSMENT .....	20
6.0	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION .....	22
	APPENDICES.....	23

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**Built Heritage  
Consultancy**

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 The Site

This Heritage Statement has been produced by Built Heritage Consultancy to accompany planning and listed building applications submitted by CGTWorks for 38 Grosvenor Gardens (the 'Site'). The Heritage Statement will proportionately assess the significance of the heritage assets and potential heritage and design impacts of the proposed schemes.

## 1.2 Identification of Heritage Assets to Assess

Paragraph 189 of the revised National Planning Policy Framework February 2019 requires that;

*"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. ...."*

### Listed Buildings

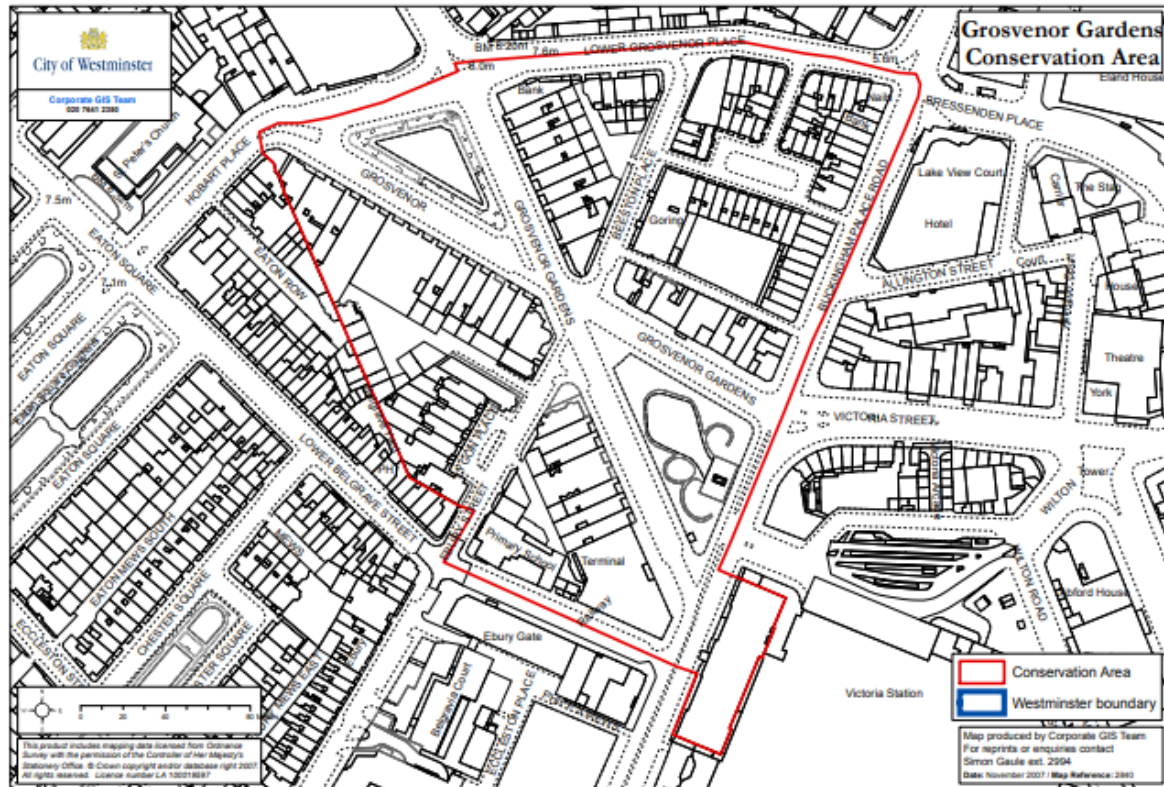
The Site is one of a terrace formed by 36-50 Grosvenor Gardens. The buildings all form part of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century stucco terrace, comprising basement with four upper storeys and a double mansard roof.

The terrace is listed Grade II. They were designated on 14.1.1970.

CITY OF WESTMINSTER GROSVENOR GARDENS, SW1 (west side) Nos 36 to 50 (even)

*Incomplete block of purpose built flats treated as palace facade. Circa 1868. Thomas Cundy III. Stone. Shaped slate mansard roofs. French Renaissance style. 4 storeys plus attic mansard and basement. Each house 3 windows wide. Nos 36 and 44 set forward slightly with rusticated quoins and tall mansard roofs. Projecting Corinthian porches and under arches. Continuous first floor cast iron balcony. Square headed windows to ground and first floor, round headed to second and segmental to third floor. Pediments to dormers; oval dormers above. Rich modillion cornice above third floor. Slab chimneys. Iron cresting to ridge. Area balustrade.*

The Site is located within the Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area, which was first designated in 1969; the boundaries remain unaltered to date.



### 1.3 Scheme Proposals

It is proposed to replace the existing single glazed sashes within the front and rear elevation windows with double glazed sashes.

The front elevation windows would be operated electrically and the rear elevation windows would be of a tilt and turn style.

## 2.0 UNDERSTANDING

### 2.1 History and Development of Grosvenor Gardens

The Grosvenor Gardens area was predominantly agrarian in land use until the eighteenth century. The adoption of Buckingham House as a royal residence in 1767 made the area an increasingly fashionable location that soon led to widespread development.

House building and other development in the area was carried out through the late eighteenth century in an organic and erratic fashion. The street pattern had some resemblance to the current layout with the distinctive northern triangle of Grosvenor Gardens having been formed by 1792 along the edge of Ranelagh Terrace (present day Beeston Place and Ebury Street). (See figure 1.)

Development continued in this way until the 1820s when John Nash's redevelopment of Buckingham House for George IV gave Lord Grosvenor an opportunity to redevelop the area as a fashionable residential address.

The small enclosure of houses on Victoria Square are the oldest buildings in the Conservation Area, having been developed by Matthew Wyatt between 1837 and 1839. These houses were followed shortly by the creation of Victoria Street in 1851 that passed through an area of slum to the west of Westminster Abbey and triggered large redevelopment. The rapid transition towards a fashionable residential neighbourhood was accelerated by the closure of the old canal which was filled in and replaced by the west-end terminus of the London – Brighton line in 1860 and then by a second station in 1863 that was the terminus for the London and Chatham and Dover Railway.

In the mid-1860s the leases of 200 houses expired, giving the Grosvenor Estate and Thomas Cundy III, their surveyor, the opportunity for large-scale redevelopment of the area, forming Grosvenor Gardens. Unlike Thomas Cubitt's developments in Pimlico and Belgravia the landlords of each property developed the land themselves, subsequently letting leases on individual houses rather than housebuilders acquiring long leases from landlords. The buildings along the four built edges of Grosvenor Gardens were completed around 1868.

Since the construction of Grosvenor Gardens the area has changed little save for the construction of Lygon Place on Ebury Street by Balfour and Turner, 1908-10, and then 52 Grosvenor Gardens by Yates, Cook and Darbyshire, with elevations by Lutyens from 1927-30.



## 2.2 Map Regression

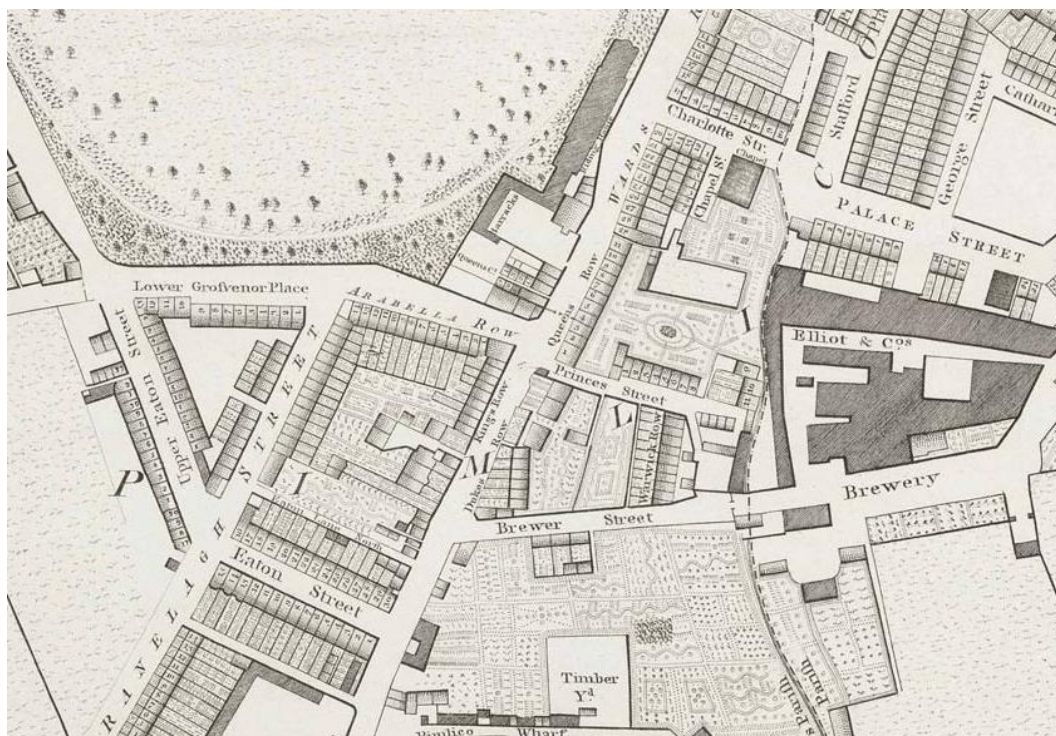


Figure 1. Horwood's Map of 1792. Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area Appraisal.



Figure 3. OS 25inch, surveyed 1869, published 1878.





Figure 4. OS 25inch, revised 1893 to 894, published 1897.



Figure 5. OS 25inch, revised 1914, published 1916.



Figure 6. OS 1 to 1,250, surveyed 1952, published 1952.

## 2.3 Photographic Description

### London Metropolitan Archives



36-50 Grosvenor Gardens, Westminster LB: front elevations. 1965. (Record No. 131257.)



## Photographs



Photo 1. Front elevation of Nos. 38 Grosvenor Gardens.



Photo 2. Grosvenor Gardens terrace.



Photo 3. First, second and third floor windows.





Photo 4. Second, third floors with fourth and fifth in the mansard.



Photo 5. Rear elevation of Grosvenor Gardens.





Photo 6 and 7. Examples of existing sash windows.

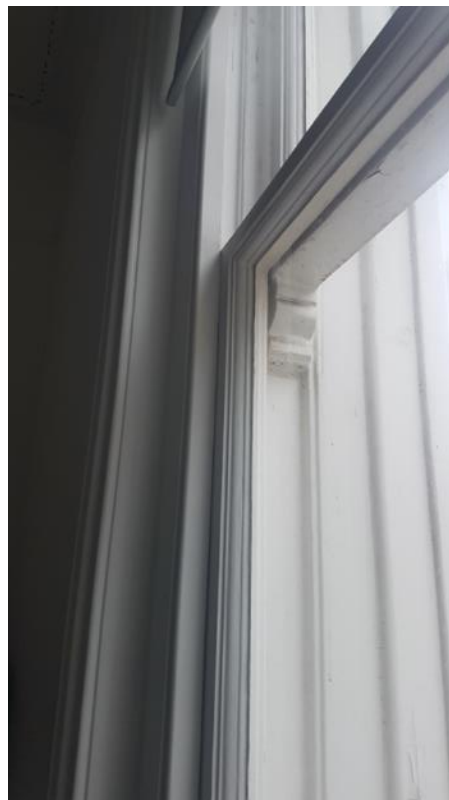
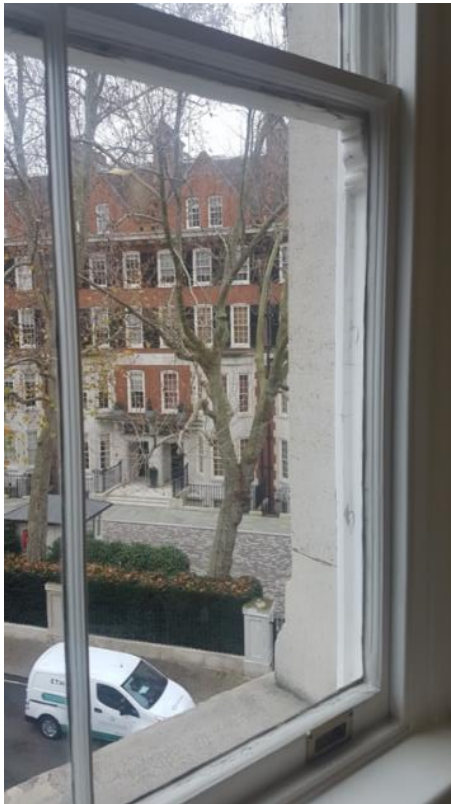


Photo 8 and 9. Existing sash window details.



Photos 10 and 11. First floor French window details.



Photo 12. First floor French windows

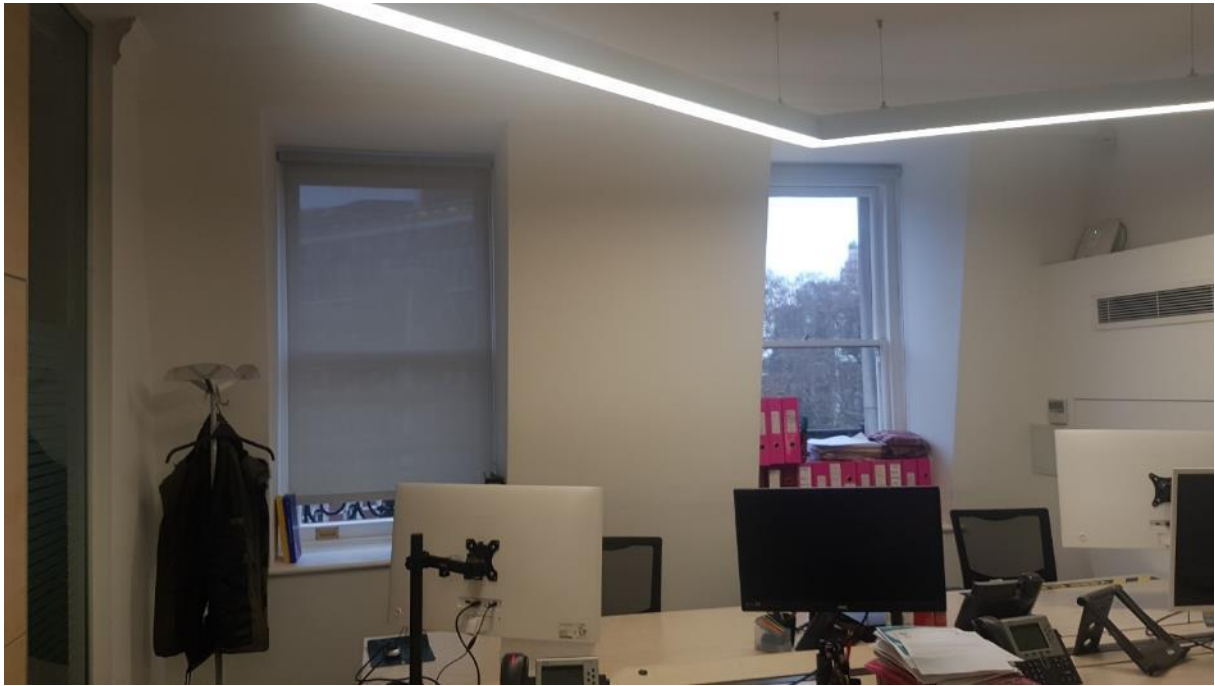
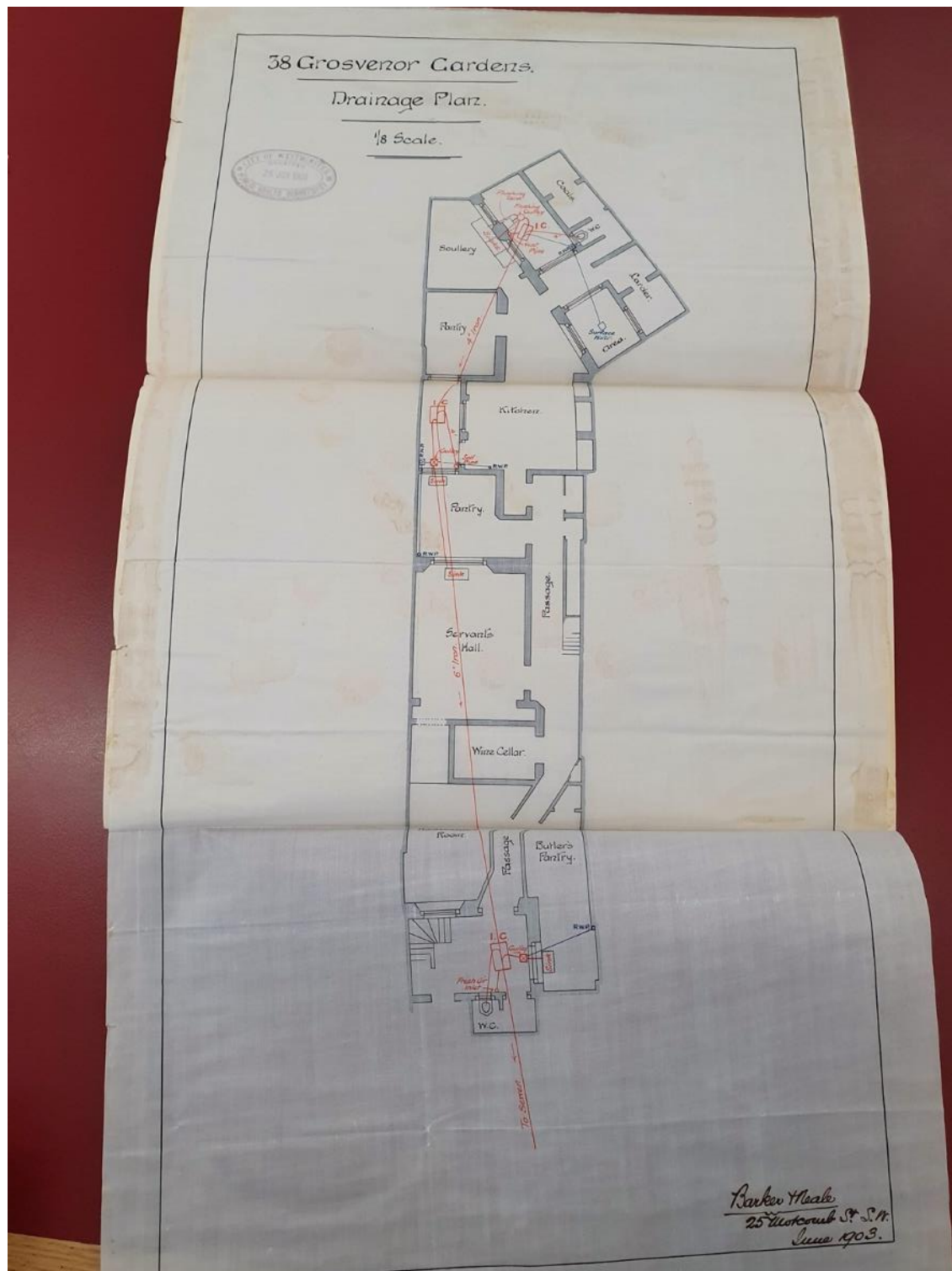


Photo 13 . Front elevation windows in the mansard roof.



## 2.4 Westminster Archives – Drainage plans



Drainage Plan, 1903. Westminster Archives.

There was no information relating to the building's windows in the archives.

## 3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

### 3.1 The Site

The site is part of a listed terrace 36-50 Grosvenor Garden of very grand townhouses. These buildings, which formed part of the original Grosvenor Garden development, were completed circa 1868. They followed the “French Renaissance” style first shown at Victoria Station and the surrounding buildings, with a distinctive architectural character which is unique compared to the rest of Belgravia.

The architectural detailing is in an extravagant renaissance style with complex and elaborate slate pavilion roofs involving ornate chimney stacks and party wall upstands, with decorative ironwork.

The buildings are three bays wide and arranged over four main storeys, with an attic, mansard and a basement. No. 38 is part of an architectural group with Nos. 40, 42, 46, 48 and 50. No. 44 is the central block of the terrace and is architecturally more prominent, in a similar manner to no. 36, the end pavilion.

The elevations are built of a palette of Mansfield and Portland stone and red and gault bricks. The facades have rusticated ground floor facades, ornate first and second floors facades, and decorative dormer surrounds at roof level. The terrace of which they form part is built of stone with rusticated ground floor and front boundary balustrade. There is a continuous balustrade running along the first-floor level and a dentil cornice above a carved terracotta frieze. At roof level, wrought iron cresting cap the slate mansard and tall polychrome slab chimney divide each house.

The significance of the front elevations of the Site and the terrace as a whole is very high. The retained architectural uniformity is an important contribution to their overall significance and group value. The window openings with their hierarchy of size, proportion and design also contribute positively to the overall special interest and significance of the elevations.

The rear elevations are more altered and were in any case much less architecturally expressive than the main frontage. Their surviving original parts make a lesser, moderate contribution to the overall significance of the listed buildings.

Internally the building retains much of its original historic fabric, style and detailing. There are decorative plasterwork ceilings, original doors, cornice, skirtings and architraves as well as a fine staircase with metal balustrading. The historic plan form is also clearly discernible, although there has been some modifications to the plan as the result of the insertion of a lift shaft which was approved in 1954.

### 3.2 Contribution the Site makes to the Conservation Area

Grosvenor Gardens Conservation area contains the two distinct areas of Grosvenor Gardens and Victoria Square. The significance of the conservation area can be attributed to its historical development in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The architectural significance is essentially derived from the formal layout of the public open space at Grosvenor Gardens formed by 2 triangular gardens enclosed by four grand mid Victorian, French Renaissance style terraces with a fifth terrace on Lower Grosvenor Place.

There is a hierarchy in scale with more modest domestically scaled terraces in Victoria Square as well as small mews to the rear.

As part of the original Grosvenor Gardens development the Site makes a high contribution to the significance of the Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area, both individually as well as part of the largely unaltered terrace.



## 4.0 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

The application principally raises design issues and previous proposals have been assessed against the following relevant policy and guidance.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) adopted March 2012 Revised 2019**

The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. At the heart of the NPPF is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

Section 16 of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment recognising that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. The following paragraphs are of particular relevance:

*193. 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.*

*194. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:*

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

*195. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total 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; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, 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.*

*196. 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*

### **Westminster City Plan: Strategic Policies adopted November 2016**

The following relevant policies are cited below:

*Policy S25 (Heritage)* recognises Westminster's wider historic environment, its extensive heritage assets will be conserved, including its listed buildings, conservation areas, Westminster's World Heritage sites, its historic parks including five Royal Parks, squares, gardens and other open spaces, their settings, and its archaeological heritage.

### **Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted 2007**

The following policies are of relevance;

- *Policy DES 1 (Principles of Urban Design and Conservation)* aims to ensure the highest quality in the form and quality of new development in order to preserve or enhance the townscape of Westminster; to provide adequate access; to reduce crime and improve security.
- *Policy DES 5 (Alterations and extensions)* aims to ensure the highest standards of design in alterations and extensions in all parts of the city. The following parts of this policy are relevant,
- *Policy DES 9 (Conservation Areas)* aims to preserve and enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas and their settings.
- *Policy DES 10 (Listed Buildings)* aims to protect and enhance all listed buildings, their settings and those features of special architectural or historic interest that they possess.

The supporting text states the following;

*10.138 Repairs, alterations and extensions are sometimes necessary to modernise or adapt a listed building. Such works, even if very small in scale, can irreparably damage the architectural integrity of a valuable building. Continuity and the preservation of the original fabric are always important for listed buildings. Where they are of architectural or historic interest, the presumption will be in favour of retaining all original features of interest. However, sustainable design principles should also be considered to address in particular energy conservation and the use of natural resources.*

*10.139 Where they are of architectural or historic interest, the presumption will be in favour of retaining all original internal and external decorative features such as fireplaces, windows (including shopfronts) external and internal doors, panelling, window boxes and shutters, staircase balustrades and other decorative woodwork, decorative ironwork, tiles,*

*plaster and stucco work and other features of importance such as roof cresting and leadwork.*

#### **Supplementary Planning Guidance – Repairs and Alterations to Listed Buildings adopted 1995**

*6.13 Windows Original and historic windows should be retained, or where beyond repair, they should be replaced with purpose-made copies. These should accurately match the dimensions, details, materials and finish of the original windows. The introduction of standardised modern windows, especially those made of aluminium, steel or UPVC, can be highly damaging to the appearance of historic buildings, and will almost always be unacceptable. Many twentieth century buildings were designed with mild steel windows, and these too should be retained or replaced in facsimile where they contribute to the character of a building. It is often proposed to replace existing windows in order to return to a more consistent or historic window pattern. Such proposals will be judged according to the historic value and condition of the existing windows, the evidence for the preferred pattern, and the desirability of achieving a uniform pattern e.g. in formal terraces. Decorative elements associated with window such as shutters, blinds, hoods and cill-guards should be retained and repaired. Historic glass, whether decorative or plain, should be retained, and carefully protected from damage during building works. The installation of double glazed units is usually incompatible with the retention of historic windows types due to the thicker glazing bars required. Secondary glazing is more likely to be acceptable, although this too may be damaging to the fabric and appearance of high-quality interiors. Listed building consent for such work will only be granted where these can be carried out without damaging the external appearance of the building or the integrity of historic interiors. The addition of sheets of film to glass for security or solar protection may also require consent.*

#### **Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area Audit, adopted April 2006**

The Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area Audit describes both the historical development, and character and appearance of the conservation area. It is designed to identify and explain important local features such as unlisted buildings of merit, unbroken rooflines and local views. In addition, the audit seeks to apply relevant Unitary Development Plan policies to the local context in order to preserve and/ or enhance the character and appearance of the area.



## 4.5 Relevant Planning History

There have been various planning applications submitted for 38 Grosvenor Gardens. The relevant planning applications follow.

- **05/06069/FULL and 05/06070/LBC.** Permitted. Installation of two air conditioning units at rear second floor level.
- **10/09058/FULL and 10/09059/LBC.** Permitted. Construction of a new glazed rooflight over the existing rear basement lightwell to provide additional office accommodation (Class B1).
- **10/09175/FULL and 10/09176/LBC.** Permitted. Erection of infill extension at roof level between existing roof pitches, with associated alterations to ladders and hatches, in association with creation of additional floorspace at fifth floor level. Associated alterations including the partial removal of roof and internal alterations including the addition of partitions.
- **10/09665/LBC.** Withdrawn. Removal of existing secondary stair adjacent to existing main stair, between ground and second floor, landing to make way for additional WC facilities in order to achieve a suitable toilet provision for office use.
- **10/09857/FULL and 10/09848/LBC.** Permitted. Removal of two existing condenser units to rear of property and installation of new condensers with associated works. Replacement of existing roofing felt to rear gallery with new lead roofing.
- **10/0713/LBC.** Permitted. Internal alterations including the removal and addition of partitions. Refurbishment of external facades including repair to windows and cleaning brickwork.
- **11/03007/FULL and 11/03008/LBC.** Permitted. Installation of plant equipment within front basement vault, with associated new louvred screens and internal alterations.

## 5.0 SCHEME ASSESSMENT

The proposed works are to replace all the existing single glazed sashes within the existing box frames with double glazed sashes. The existing surrounds including the shutters would all be retained.

The windows to the front elevation would be replaced with 'Conte Electric Sash Windows' electrically operated with 'Pilkington Spacia Cool' double glazing.

The rear sashes would be similarly replaced with new sashes with 'Pilkington Spacia Cool' double glazing but with a tilt and turn mechanism rather than electrically operated.

It is proposed to replace all the windows rather than use secondary glazing as the client does not consider that secondary glazing would offer the same level of thermal performance as the replacement windows proposed and aesthetically the new windows would be more visually pleasing than adding secondary glazing where existing shutters etc exist.

### Front elevation

The existing windows to the front elevation are single glazed one over one sashes, with French windows at first floor. There is a hierarchy of style and size of window on the elevation reflecting an identical pattern on the rest of the listed terrace. This fenestration pattern is likely to be original.

The existing sashes are in good to fair condition, there are no obvious signs that the windows are beyond reasonable repair, however there is an issue with both noise and their thermal performance which the current owners would like to address.

The new sashes would be inserted into the retained boxes. The frames would be timber but the windows would be glazed with the Pilkington Spacia Cool glazing which is acoustic laminated glass consisting of two sheets of glass glued together with a plastic film. This glazing also offers additional properties like safety against burglary and prevents the windows from shattering into shards. Pilkington Spacia is vacuum glazing which offer the thermal performance of conventional double glazing in the same thickness as a single glass pane. It can balance historical preservation with modern comfort and environmental requirements.

The glazing also has a solar control low-e coating to reduce solar heat gains, which also provides an improved U-factor for the building, which reduces solar heat gain and improves thermal insulations more than five times greater than normal single glazing.

The addition of an electric motor would allow for high technical and quality performance in terms of safety, energy saving, noise reduction and glass cleaning convenience. The sash cords could be retained but would not be used.

The electric mechanism for each window would be controlled by a small control device on the adjacent wall.

Visually there would be minimal impact on the appearance of the windows as the new sashes would be detailed to match the existing. The slenderness of the double glazed unit would not be readily evident from the street. The addition of the electric mechanism including the control panel and the winding handle in case of power issues, would be seen internally, which may cause a very minor degree of harm to their appearance.

Whilst there may be a minimal impact on appearance there would be loss of historic fabric from the sashes which would constitute a relatively low amount of less than substantial harm when judged against the NPPF paragraph 196, however this could be seen to be outweighed by the public benefit of improved thermal and noise efficiency and improved long term viable use of the building.

### Rear Elevation

The windows to the rear would be similarly replaced: retaining the boxes and subframes but replacing all the existing single glazed sashes with double glazed sashes, glazed using Pilkington Spacia Cool. The thickness of the glass would be slightly more than the existing single glazing.

These windows would have a tilt and turn mechanism. There would be the addition of handles to the insides of the windows to allow for the window to be tilted to open.

Visually the windows would appear near identical to the existing windows with only the addition of the handles. However there would be some loss of historic fabric which contributes to the overall special interest of the listed building although this would constitute a relatively low amount of less than substantial harm in terms of the NPPF guidance. This harm would be offset in part by the public benefit of improving the thermal and noise efficiency of the building so as to ensure its long term use.



## 6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This Heritage Statement has been produced by Built Heritage Consultancy to accompany planning applications and listed building consent applications submitted by CGTworks. It has assessed the impact of the proposed window replacement on the significance of the listed building and the wider Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area.

In summary:

- The buildings form part of a Grade II listed terrace facing one of the two triangular open spaces that characterise the Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area. The contribution these buildings make to the overall significance of the Conservation Area is high.
- The windows of 38 Grosvenor Gardens are of the original design which is reflected in other houses in the terrace. The front elevation and the front elevation of the terrace as whole display a high level of uniformity in their windows. The rear elevations of the terrace are more altered, although the use of timber sash windows is still evident on the whole.
- The front elevation is the most visible and makes the biggest contribution to the conservation area but the rear elevation also contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area and be clearly seen from public views.
- The existing windows are of historic interest, particularly the ground, first, second and third floors of the front elevation and are likely to be original or at least matching the original style. The windows to the rear elevation are of lower significance as there is some variation in the style and less uniformity with the wider terrace.
- The proposed replacement sashes would be timber and glazed with the 'Pilkington Spacia Cool' glazing which is a very slim double glazing. These new sashes would be inserted into the existing and retained frames. There would be the addition of handles and control panels to the windows but otherwise the impact of the new sashes on the appearance of the listed building would be negligible and more aesthetically pleasing than secondary glazing. The client also considers that the thermal performance would be better than other methods of upgrading the windows such as secondary glazing.
- The replacement of the existing sashes will result in the loss of historic fabric. With regards to the NPPF paragraph 196, the proposed replacement of the windows would lead to less than substantial harm to the designated heritage asset. However this relatively low level of harm should be weighed against the public benefit of improving the environmental efficiency of the building, improving the thermal and noise efficiency of the building therefore assisting with its long term viable use.
- Whilst accepting the advice contained with the SPG on listed building and the City of Westminster relevant policies, the proposed alterations could be accepted as the historic fabric lost would only be the sashes and not the window surrounds and the impact on the appearance of the building from public views would be negligible.

## APPENDICES

### Bibliography

The sources noted below have been used in the preparation of this report.

*Westminster City Plan* : Strategic Policies adopted November 2016

*Westminster Unitary Development Plan* adopted 2007

Supplementary Planning Guidance - *Development and Demolition in Conservation Areas* adopted April 1996

Supplementary Planning Guidance - *Repairs and alterations to listed buildings* – adopted

*Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area Audit* adopted April 2006

Department for Communities & Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework*, July 2018

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