



**Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment**

for the Proposed Internal Alterations

at 21 Queen's Grove

*St. John's Wood*

*City of Westminster*

*London*

*NW8 6EL*

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment has been prepared by Clague Architects (Clague LLP) Historic Buildings Team on behalf of Mr James Green of Alexander Green Group, c/o Mr and Mrs Secron. It relates to the proposed alteration of 21 Queen's Grove, a Grade II listed private dwelling.

### 1.1 SITE AND LOCATION

The dwelling, built c.1830-40, is located in St. John's Wood, City of Westminster, north-west London and is Grade II listed. The property is formed within a long Georgian terrace with all other dwellings in the terrace also Grade II listed. The site lies within St. John's Wood Conservation Area under Westminster City Council.

The immediate street setting is predominantly residential in a high-end, well-known, London suburb. St. John's Wood is located in north-west London, in the Borough of Westminster. It is situated to the north of Marylebone and to the south of Primrose Hill.

To the front of the property is a paved terrace area the width of the house, along with a Grade II listed wall along the full length of the front of the terraced houses. There are steps up from the road level to the private terrace area and steps up again to the front entrance. The site has a level decking area to the rear, enclosed within a high-level garden wall.

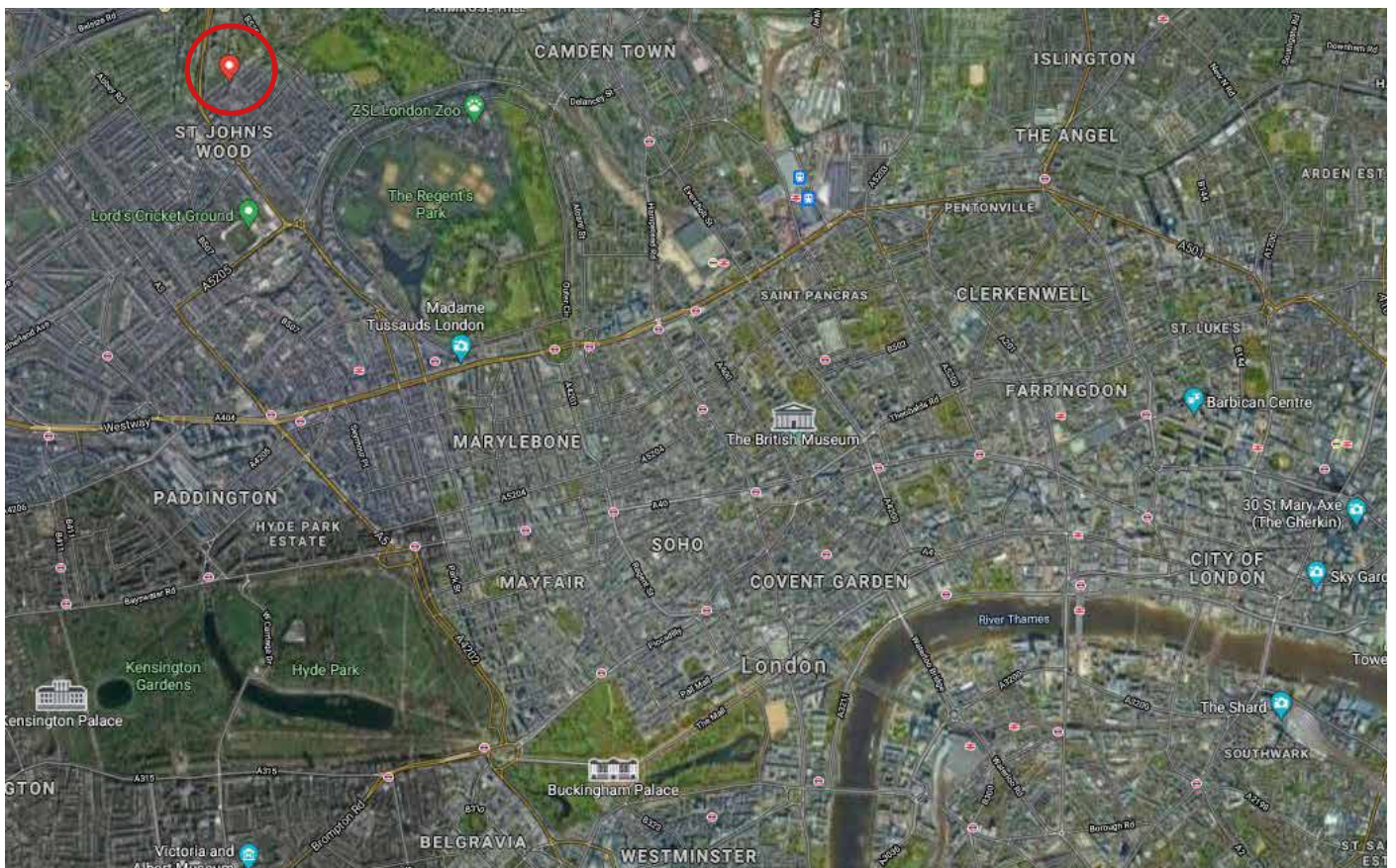


Fig.1 Site Location Plan - Google Maps

## 1.2 SITE ANALYSIS

The site became a protected Conservation Area in the 1960s, meaning that new developments and modern buildings in this area are extremely rare. The wider area of St John's Wood consists mainly of detached and semi-detached villas and apartments in historic mansion blocks. Queens Grove consists of Georgian terraced houses on one side of the street and modern detached villas on the other.

The house is formed over 4 storeys with a converted cellar currently used as kitchen and dining areas with a lower level to the cellar used as a utility room and WC. This lower cellar level lies below the front terrace. The rest of the house consists of the typical 2no. Reception rooms, multiple bedrooms and ensuites. The house was modernised within the last 10 years, however, is in need of a complete internal refurbishment.

The house features single glazed sash windows and is of stock brick with stucco dressings and a slate roof.

As part of the refurbishment works undertaken in previous years, attempts were made to modernise some of the historic details. Some of the alterations and additions were more successful than others but have left the existing historic details in conditions which need improving.

## 1.3 THE PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT

This statement considers the historic significance of the heritage assets on and around the site with reference to the requirements of the NPPF. It provides an assessment of the effect on the setting of the assets, taking into account the GPA 3 guidance on setting from Historic England.



Fig.2 21 Queen's Grove

## 2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The decision maker is required by section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building and its setting when exercising planning functions. The decision maker must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the significance of the listed building, and there is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm its heritage significance.

For the purpose of this statement, preservation equates to an absence of harm. Harm is defined in paragraph 84 of Historic England's Conversation Principles as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.

The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as being made up of four main constituents: architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest, and artistic interest. The assessments of heritage significance and impact are normally made with primary reference to the four main elements of significance identified in the NPPF.

The setting of a heritage asset can contribute to its significance. Setting is defined in the NPPF as follows:

"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."

The NPPF requires the impact on the significance of the designated heritage asset to be considered in terms of either "substantial harm" or "less than substantial harm" as described within paragraph 199 of that document. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that substantial harm is a high test and case law describes substantial harm in terms of an affect that would vitiate or drain away much of the significance of a heritage asset.

Paragraphs 200 and 201 of the NPPF refer to two different balancing exercises in which harm to significance, if any, is to be balanced with public benefit. Paragraph 18a-020-20190723 of National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) online makes it clear that some heritage specific benefits can be public benefits. Paragraph 18a-018-20190723 of the same NPPG makes it clear that it is important to be explicit about the category of harm and the extent of harm, when dealing with decisions affecting designated heritage assets, as follows:

"Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated".

Paragraphs 198 and 199 of the NPPF state that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance, irrespective of how substantial or otherwise that harm might be.

In determining applications, local 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.

The scale of harm is tabulated overleaf:

<b>Scale of Harm</b>	
Total Loss	Total removal of the significance of the designated heritage asset.
Substantial Harm	Serious harm that would drain away or vitiate the significance of the designated heritage asset
Less than Substantial Harm	High level harm that could be serious, but not so serious as to vitiate or drain away the significance of the designated heritage asset.
	Medium level harm, not necessarily serious to the significance of the designated heritage asset, but enough to be described as significant, noticeable, or material.
	Low level harm that does not seriously affect the significance of the designated heritage asset.

Fig.3 Scale of Harm Table

### 3.0 BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT

Historic research into the area of St. John's Wood suggests that the land was occupied for residential development only since the early 19th century. The exploration into the site and dwelling's historic significance will help us understand the reasoning for the listed status of the property. The map below from Historic England represents the listed buildings in the area, with the whole of the terrace on the south side of Queen's Grove being Grade II listed.



Fig.4 Historic England Map of Listed Buildings

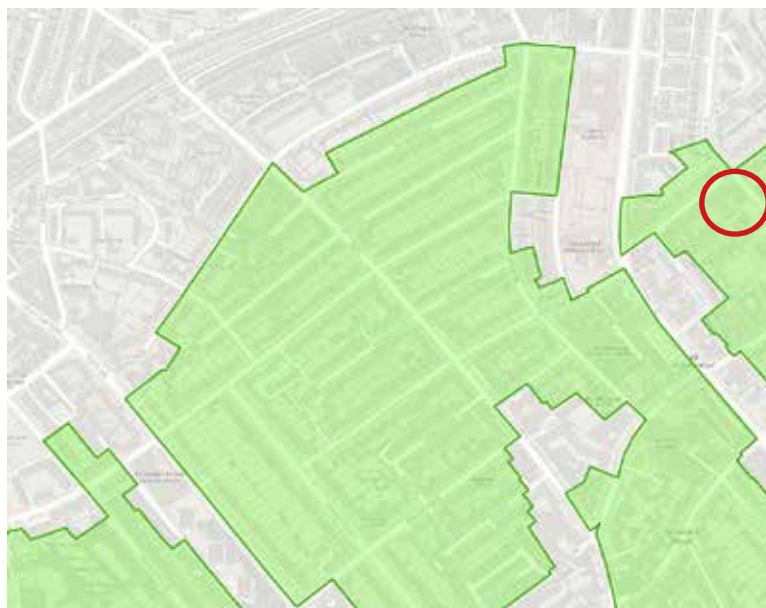


Fig.5 St Johns Wood Conservation Area

### 3.1 EARLY HISTORY

Many years before any houses were built, St. John's Wood was part of the Great Middlesex Forest. During the medieval period the land was owned by the Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, leading to the modern name of St. John's Wood. During the Reformation the land transferred to the crown, and it became Henry VII's hunting ground and a general agricultural area for hundreds of years. The grounds at nearby Marylebone Park (now Regents Park) were also used for hunting but the trees were later felled to meet the demand for timber to build ships and royal palaces.

The land around St John's Wood remained in Crown ownership until the late 17th century. By the mid-17th century most of the remaining trees had been felled, leaving acres of meadow and grassland to provide hay for the capital's thousands of horses.

At this point, much of the land was owned by the Eyre family who decided to design an ideal arcadian suburb on the fringes of London, filled with villa-style detached and semi-detached housing rather than the terraces which had been popular until then. Building began in 1809, and the suburb of St. John's Wood was born as wealthy professionals were drawn to the area for its solitude and privacy. The area experienced heavy bomb damage from the Second World War, and along with this and the expiration of land leases, lead to a second wave of redevelopment.

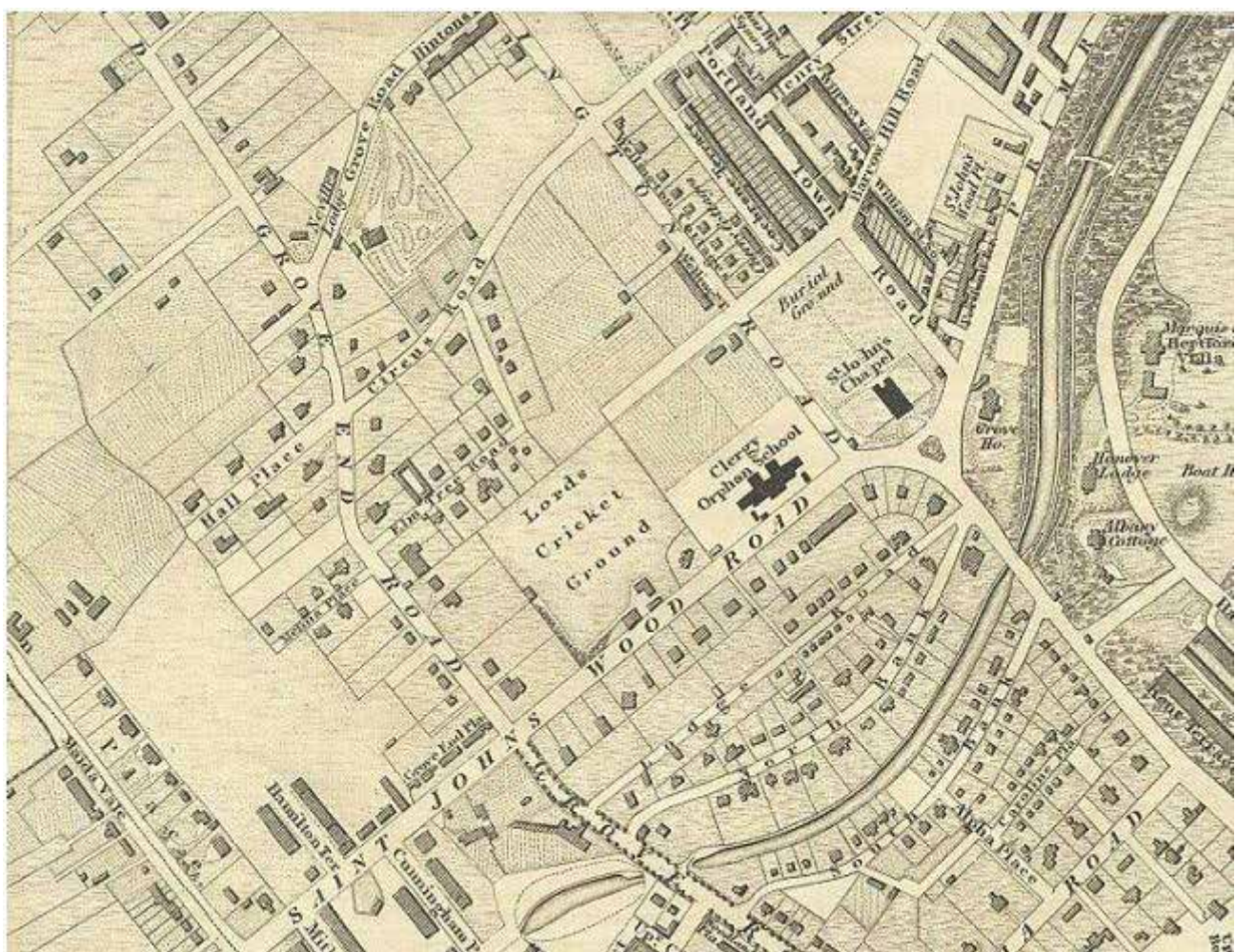


Fig.6 c.1830 - Map of earliest development in St John's Wood



### 3.2 CHARACTER

St. John's Wood represents the first example of suburban development in inner London; its architecture comprising a mixture of early-mid Victorian detached and semi-detached villas and terraces, there now interspersed with a variety of twentieth century buildings, including a number of detached houses from the 1930s and a range of Edwardian and later mansion blocks and flats.

St. John's Wood can be typically described as a low-density townscape with wide tree-lined streets. When residential development began, it was key to maintain some of the original areas of greenery. There is a mixture of house types within the Conservation Area, including small pockets of terraced housing amongst Edwardian mansion blocks.

The building ages map shows the predominantly Victorian character of the Conservation Area, with those from the earliest phase of the development now in relatively isolated groups. The south-eastern corner of the Conservation Area has the main concentration of late Victorian and Edwardian buildings. Similarly, figure 8 shows the Land Use as recorded in 1996, with majority of the buildings being residential.

The exceptions, and the largest non-residential land uses in the Conservation Area, are Lord's Cricket Ground and the Barracks of the Kings Troop, which have long historical associations with the area. Both are a proud part of the area's history but have had little influence on the layout of the residential development.

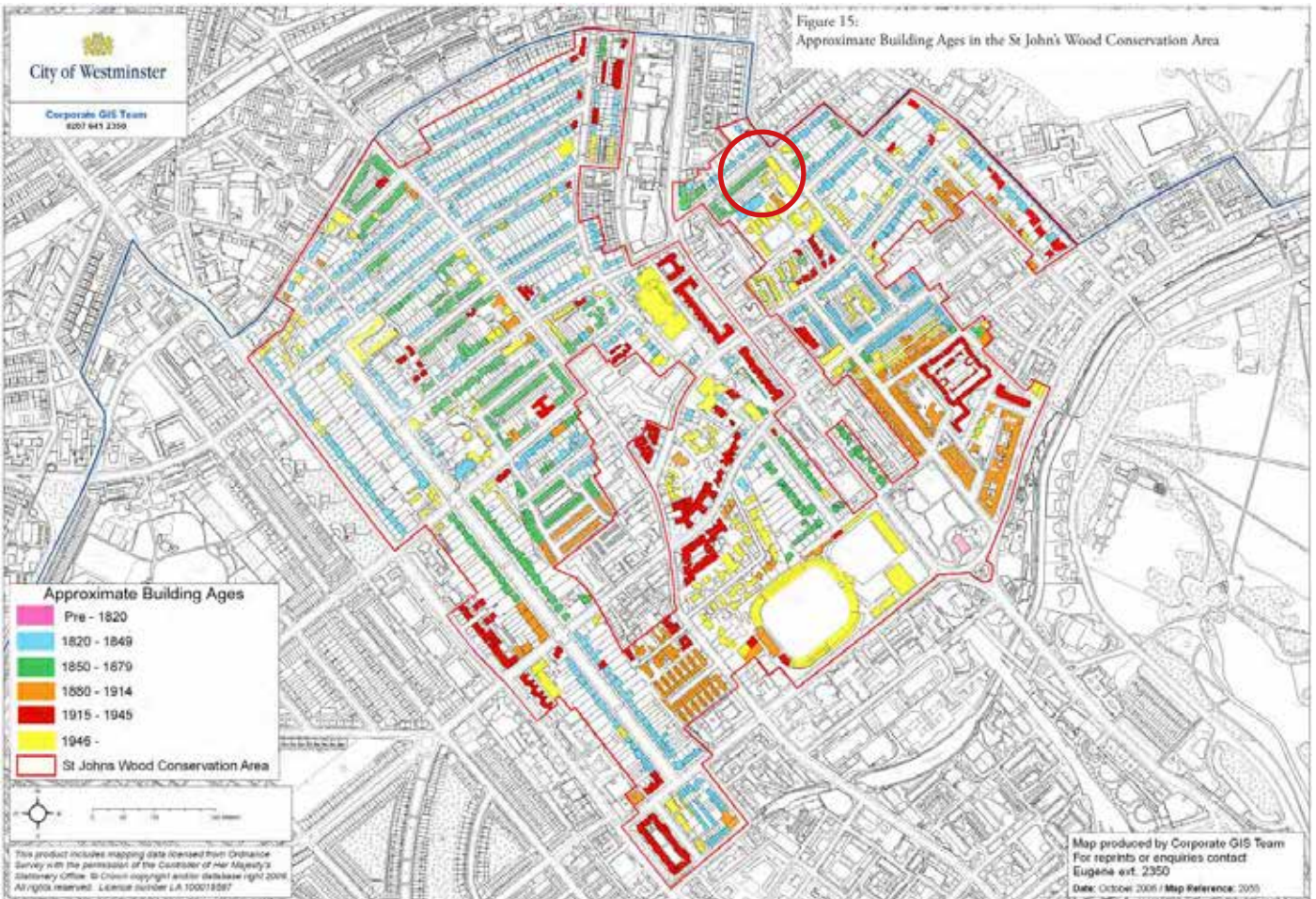


Fig.7 Building Age Map

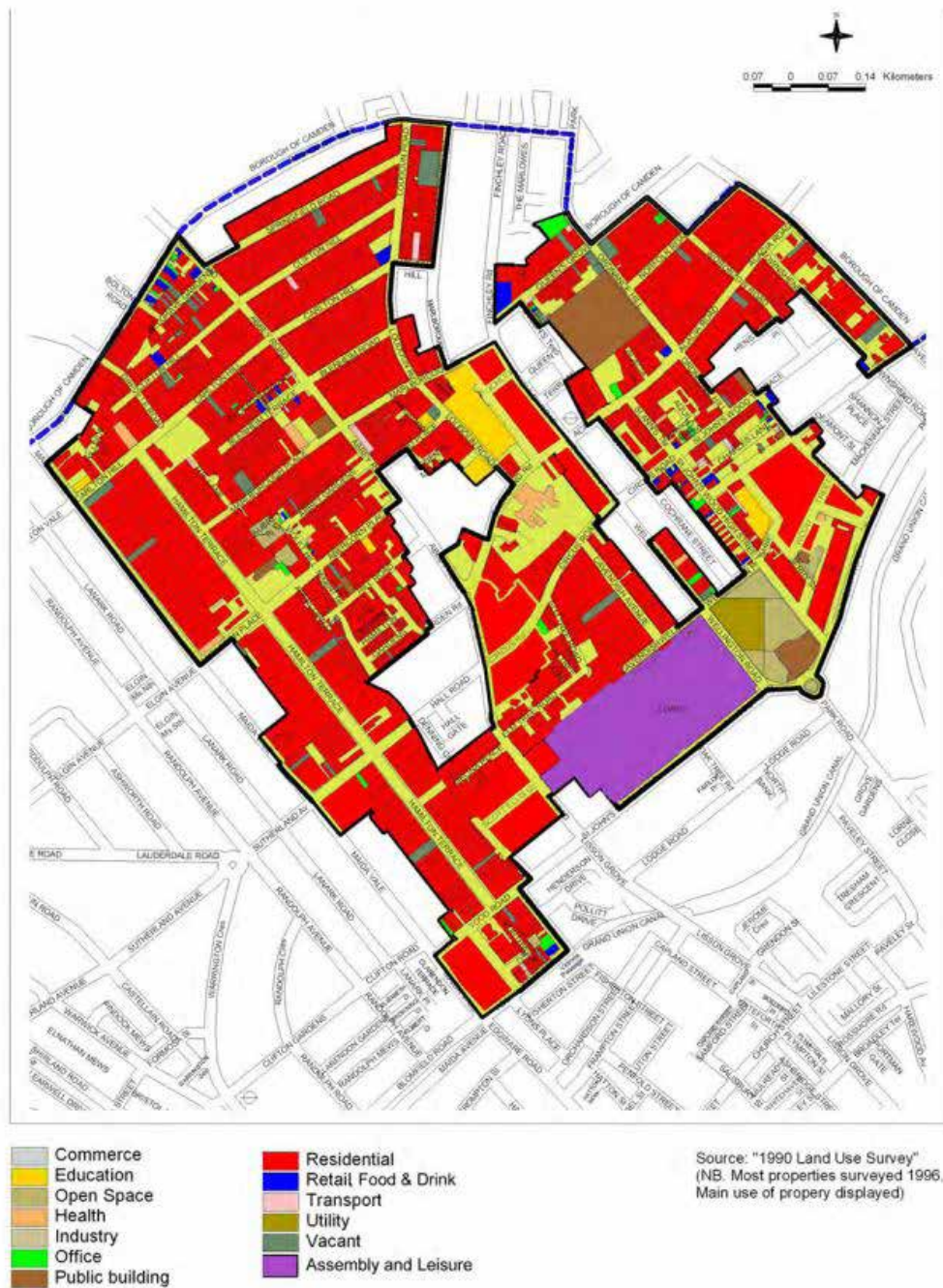


Fig.8 Land Use Map

### 3.3 CARTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

The Maps represent the scale of development in the area from 1866 to 1938 in figures 9 and 10. There was already a fair level of residential development in the area by 1866. This is also represented in the Building Age Map which shows in the colours blue and green, many of the building existing in 1866.

There is little change between the two maps dated 1866 and 1938 respectively, indicating that many of the buildings were constructed before the latter part of the 19th century.



Fig.9 1866 Historic Map



Fig.10 1938 Historic Map

#### 4.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The proposed alterations comprise of the following:

- Removal of internal stud walls
- Block up existing openings
- Removal of sanitaryware and plumbing capped off
- New electrics
- New flooring throughout
- New windows and doors
- New underfloor heating installed
- New kitchen and utility units
- Reordering of the reception rooms, ensuites and bedrooms
- New joinery cupboards, units and shelving
- Exterior painting
- New air conditioning installed in the bedrooms

The proposed works will have a minor impact on the historical interest of the property due to the small scale of works being carried out to mainly the interior of the building, and also the fact that these works will address the issues caused by modern repairs and additions. The historic fabric will remain untouched but protected where it is to be altered. The works to the exterior of the building will freshen up the existing paintwork and replace existing windows, which could both be considered in need of improvement.

All of the proposals throughout have been classed as low and less than substantial harm. The proposals do not propose any changes to historic fabric and therefore should be consented.

##### Basement

The existing basement is formed of one main room, currently used as a kitchen/dining space, with one ancillary room set at a lower level via a short staircase. The rooms are accessed from a rather uneven, narrow staircase from the ground floor. This existing staircase is not historic and will be demolished and rebuilt.

To the rear of the basement floor, there is an existing WC/boiler/storage room. The proposal includes the removal of the sanitaryware and hot water cylinder. This area is to be reordered and repurposed as a Utility room, including new base units and worktop, appliances, and storage cupboard. The windows are to be replaced with new sash windows which will be much more sympathetic to the setting and Grade II listed dwelling.

The existing rear double doors will also be removed and replaced with a new double doorset.

The lower cellar area is situated below the front terrace area above ground. There is a set of external stairs connecting the front terrace with the lower cellar area. There is a set of external stairs connecting the front terrace with the lower cellar area. The existing WC in this area is to be demolished with sanitaryware removed and plumbing capped off. The proposals allow for a new WC/shower room with a pocket door. The internal stairs down to the lower-level area will be widened to improve access.

The existing kitchen area is modern but now dated and in need of refurbishment. The kitchen will be demolished, and a new kitchen is to be installed along with new appliances.

All of the proposals on the basement floor have been classed as less than substantial harm and as low harm as set out in section 2.0. The proposals do not propose any changes to historic fabric and therefore should be consented.

## Ground Floor

The existing ground floor plan is formed from 2 principal rooms all accessed from a long narrow hallway with a smaller room to the rear of the property. The original staircase is positioned to the right of the property along the party wall. The property has two chimneys on the left party wall, one of which is to be demolished. The hallway slopes towards the rear of the dwelling, where there is thought to have originally been a small step. The modern alterations likely created the slope to improve access in the hallway. The proposals seek to reinstate the step to its original position as a historic feature.

The proposals to the ground floor are minimal but important for improving use of space for the occupants. Currently, the access to the reception rooms is through a standard sized door from the hallway, which is to be removed and the opening blocked up. The internal wall to the front reception room is to be opened up for new double pocket doorset. Similarly to the basement, the rear modern window to the ground floor is to be removed and replaced with a new traditional style window, sympathetic towards the Georgian house. In this area, the room is to be repurposed as a WC/boot room with new sanitaryware and plumbing.

These proposals have been classed as less than substantial harm, as they are minor works to non-historic fabric.

## First Floor

The existing first floor is similar in plan to the ground floor, with 2 principal rooms and one in the rear extension with most structural lines continuing through from below. The proposals seek to retain the existing uses for these rooms but redesign the layout of the ensuite. The double doors to the ensuite are to be removed and replaced with a thicker wall suitable for new double pocket doors.

The rear chimney stack is to be removed throughout all floors. This will allow for better use of the existing ensuite space. There will be a new walk-in wardrobe to the front of the ensuite, with the space to include a shower to replace the existing bath, double sinks and a new toilet. Existing plumbing connections are to be used where possible.

These proposals on this floor have been classed as less than substantial harm, as they are minor works to non-historic fabric.

## Second Floor

The existing second floor plan differs slightly to the floors below, with the rear extension only being 3 storeys high therefore there is no room to the rear of the second floor. This floor consists of two bedroom and one family bathroom.

The rear bedroom currently works around the chimney breast, which is to be removed so will create more bedroom space.

The works on the second floor will be minor, with the aim being to reconfigure the family bathroom to find a better use for the space. The designs have been developed with previous sketch ideas exploring a jack and jill bathroom option. The finalised proposal will demolish the existing internal stud wall between the bathroom and bedroom 2, with a new stud wall built further into bedroom 2 to create a wider family bathroom. Bedroom 2 is currently considered a large bedroom, so will not be hindered by the bathroom being widened. The family bathroom is to be widened approx. 300mm to allow for a better layout and new shower enclosure. The existing plumbing connections are to be reused for the new sanitaryware.

These proposals on this floor have been classes as less than substantial harm, as they are minor works to non-historic fabric.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

This planning and listed building application as set out within the submission drawings and documents for changes at 21 Queen's Grove area broadly low impact in nature and are proposed to upgrade the general standard of living at the house with minimal intervention to the historic fabric. This is being achieved through a series of minor interventions that do not adversely affect the external appearance or internal quality of the building, they have been designed to enhance the special qualities with this family home and by default enhance the listed building to ensure it retains its special historic qualities.

In conclusion, the works represent less than substantial harm at the low end of the spectrum and the positive benefits of the stunning interior fitout to refurbish the Georgian property will outweigh any residual harm.

## APPENDIX A

Statutory Address:

2-22, QUEEN'S GROVE NW8

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

County: Greater London Authority

District: City of Westminster (London Borough)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

National Grid Reference: TQ 26729 83601

Details

TQ 2683 NE CITY OF WESTMINSTER QUEEN'S GROVE, NW8 3/27 6.4.82 Nos 2 to 22 G.V. II Terrace of houses. c1830-40 Eyre Estate development. Stock brick with channelled stucco ground floor and stucco dressings; slate roof. Dressed with party wall Ionic pilasters, Nos 2, 3 and 11 to 14 slightly advanced as pavilion and centrepiece. 3 storeys and basement. 2-window wide fronts. Plain pilastered doorways approached by steps to left. Recessed sashes, in architraves, console-corniced on 1st floor, ground floor sashes of nos 2 to 14 tripartite. Plat band over ground floor from which pilaster order rises to damaged entablature with panelled parapet minus inset balustrade. Cast iron 1st floor window guards.

Listing NGR: TQ2672983601