

# ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein –Brighton BN1 1NH

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Official list entry Location. **53, OLD STEINE:**

Heritage Category: Listed Building Grade: II. List Entry Number: 1380669

Date first listed: 20-Aug-1971. Statutory Address: 53, OLD STEINE

Location: Statutory Address: 53, OLD STEINE

District: The City of Brighton and Hove (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Non-Civil Parish. National Grid Reference: TQ 31205 04022.

Details : BRIGHTON

No.53 OLD STEINE 577-1/64/634 (West side) 20/08/71. TQ3104SW

Grade II

*Terraced house. Early C19. Stucco. Roof obscured by blocking course. 4 storeys over basement. 2-window range. Up steps to round-arched entrance with fanlight of decorative glazing bars set under prostyle porch consisting of a pair of Tuscan columns, responds and entablature: jambs sub-ordered with quarter pilasters. To the right a full-height canted bay with tripartite windows. All windows flat arched. First-floor veranda rebuilt in mid to late C19. There is a single window-range above entrance. Across the top is a continuous entablature with dentil cornice. Currently in process of restoration. INTERIOR: not inspected. No.53 was home to Major-General Sir Arthur Clifton, a veteran of the Battle of Waterloo. Nos 52 (qv) and 53 form a group with Marlborough House (qv). Listing NGR: TQ3120504022*



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## 5.1 HERITAGE VALUES. (National Guidance)

When developing suitable policies for the Historic Environment, within a planning context, Local Authorities refer to the guidance produced by the statutory advisors, such as Historic England. This guidance informs planners and other decision makers on the most appropriate way to manage, interpret and implement any changes to our historic sites. Historic England published *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance* (2008), setting out six high-level principles:

- The Historic environment is a shared resource
- Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment
- Understanding the significance of a place is vital
- Significant places should be managed to sustain their values
- Decisions about change should be reasonable, transparent and consistent
- Documenting and learning from decisions are vital.

The principles offer a clear, over-arching philosophical framework of what conservation means at the beginning of the 21st century. In order to manage the changes and the impact of those changes, we need to fully understand the significance of the site. The significance of a site or building is measured using the four value categories:

- Evidential values
- Historical values
- Aesthetic values
- Communal values

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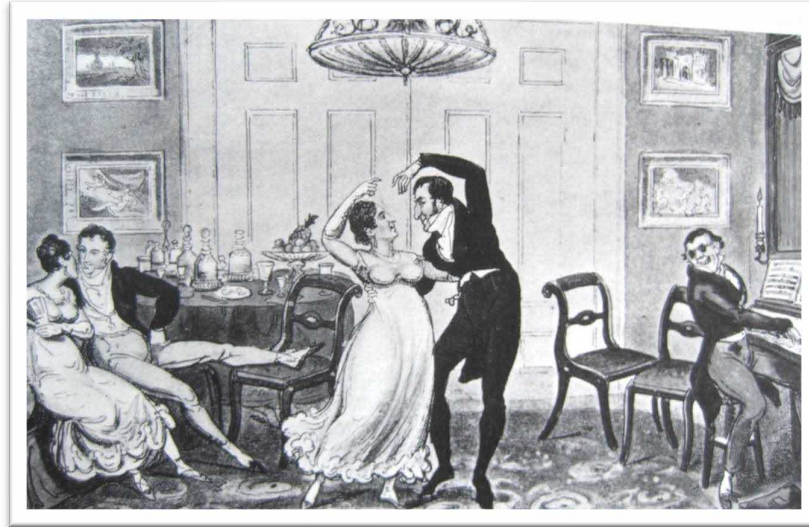
## EVIDENTIAL AND HISTORICAL VALUES

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**6.1** We have seen above, in Section 5.0 that a Georgian house had a set hierarchy of importance relative to the floor level and prominence (or otherwise) of the rooms based on their original uses. Further, we must take into account the degree of intactness, or alteration. The Ground and First Floors would have been considered the principal rooms; whereas, the basement and attic floors, as we have seen described above, were the least important areas, reserved for servants, and therefore, undecorated- and often in the top floor- unheated. Below: *The Dinner Locust* [c.1815], after E.F. Lambert, shows a modest urban dining room. Above: A scene after dinner [c.1815] when the ladies are joined by the men, after drinking. [Cruikshank, *Ibid* pg. 43]

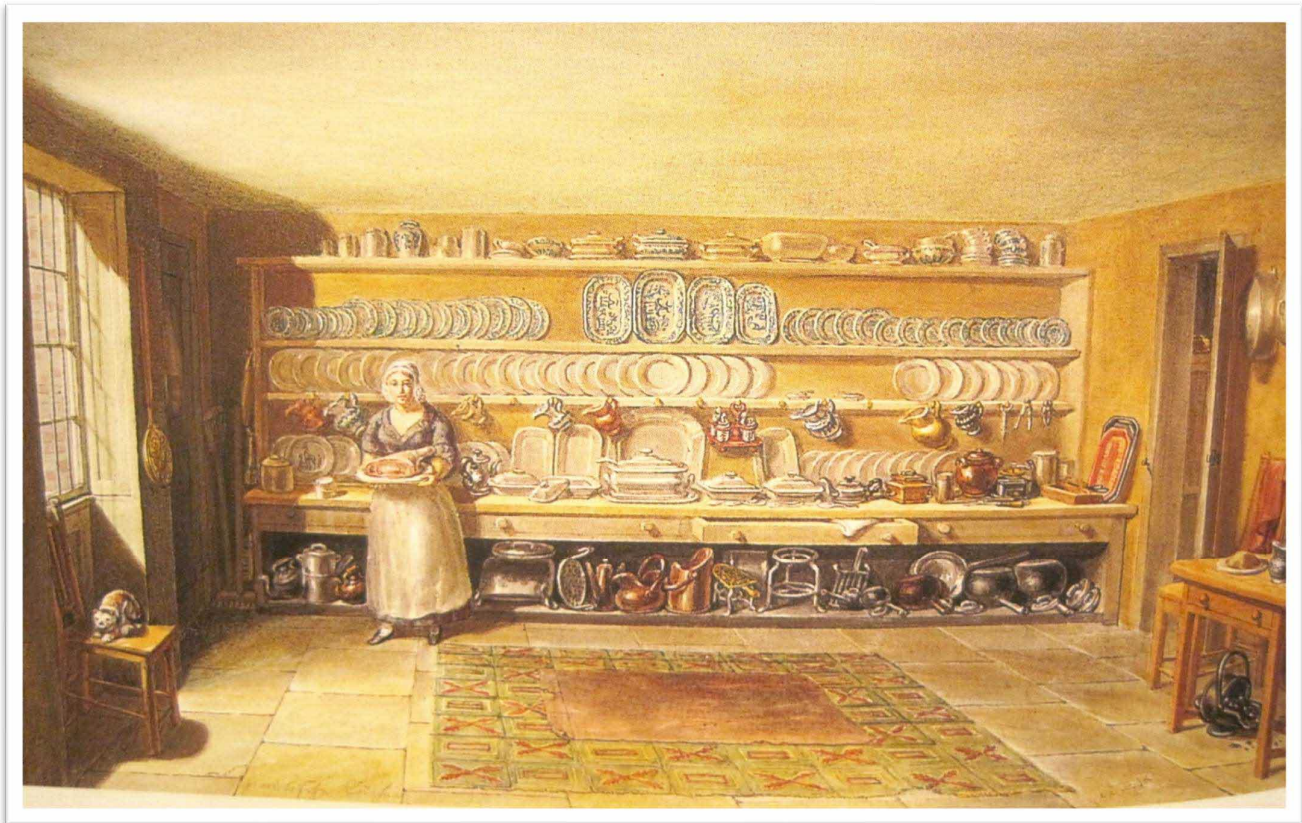


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### 6.2 Historical Evidence: Survival of Original Plan-Form and Features.



**6.3** Historical precedents: As explained in Sect.5.0, the Basement or Lower-Ground Floor would have originally housed the Kitchen and servants' quarters. Above, from Neil Burton & Dan Cruickshank's text "*Life in the Georgian City*", (Ibid, pg.164) showing what a typical Georgian basement looked like in the 1830's; here, the kitchen at 14 Francis Street, Bloomsbury, London (and drawn in 1846 by George Scharf). The illustration above shows the same time-frame as Nos. 52-53 when they were first constructed; or perhaps remodelled (if it is the case there were earlier Georgian terraced houses on this site previously).

The 'envelope' or brick structure of these late Georgian houses is of High Significance throughout- and is noted in Sect.7.0. Unfortunately, the early to mid-Victorian houses fronting East Street have been comprehensively gutted and altered so that only the external 'envelope' and facades survive. Some historic features do survive to the frontage buildings at Nos. 52-53 facing The Old Steine, so where these still exist, they will obviously hold a 'High Significance.' The Steine was partly re-numbered c.1871. The construction of a subway was proposed in 1913, but it was never built.

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## 6.4 History and significant persons of the Old Steine.



**Lieut.-General Sir Arthur Benjamin Clifton, GCB, KCH, KSA, KSW.** [b.1771- d.1869]. Image: Portrait by William Salter.  
Above right: The staircase at No.52 with inset niche.

**6.5** Originally, The Steyne was an open space from the 17<sup>th</sup>-C.; but it was enclosed in 1787. Its name was changed to distinguish it from New Steine. The Wellesbourne river nearby was seasonal and used to flood the area at times; now it runs in a culvert beneath the gardens. Old Steine was favoured by the medical profession: 14 doctors and dentists here in 1851.

**No. 52** was the home of Lieut.-General Sir Arthur Benjamin Clifton for over 30 years who lived here until his death in 1869. [See portrait above]. Lt.-Gen Clifton was decorated for his part in the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, for commanding the Second Union Cavalry Brigade. In 1842, Clifton succeeded Prince Albert as Colonel of the 11<sup>th</sup> [Prince Albert's Own] Regiment of Light Dragoons [Hussars]. He lived on to be the oldest knight in the country by the age of 97. Poignantly, he died, alone and unmarried, at his home at 52 Old Steine, where he had lived for at least 30 years.

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## LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

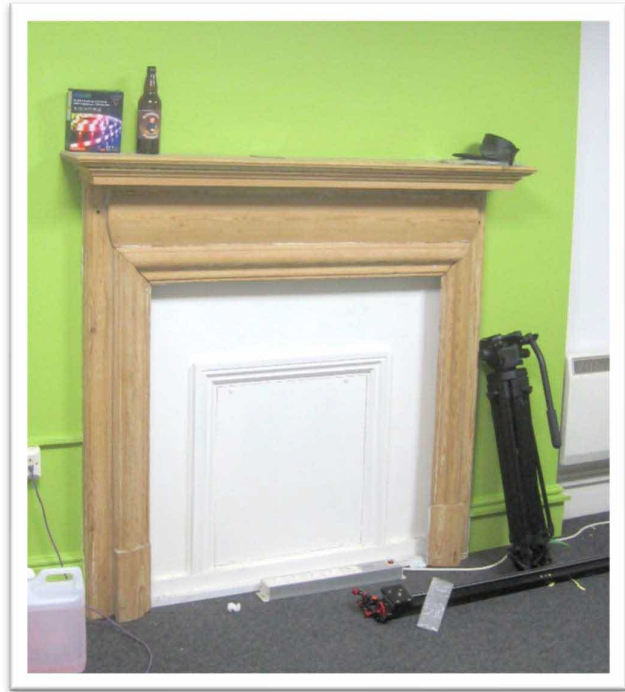
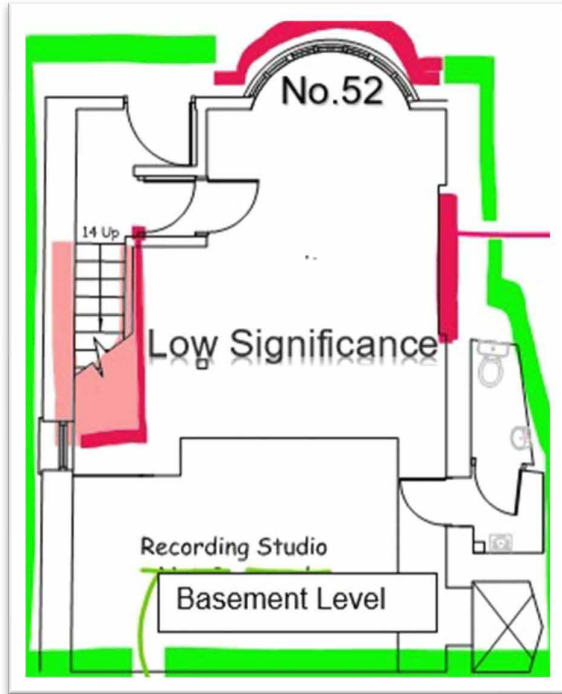
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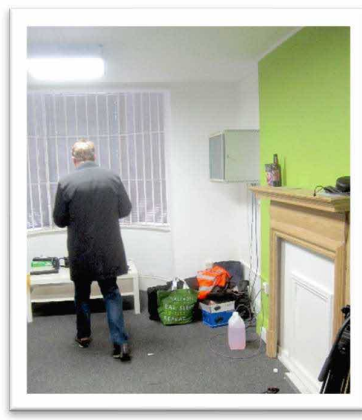
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## 7.0 Levels of Significance - Basement Level –No 52 - LOW SIGNIFICANCE



Feature of Interest: Chimneybreast and fire-place surround [contemporary with c.1800].



7.1 No.53 Old Steine: At this level, very few historic features have survived to indicate its early use; just the chimneybreast in each house. The basic structural form of the house, e.g., its load-bearing brick construction, “envelope”, chimneybreasts still survive. Therefore, given its degree of alteration, and the lesser importance of the basement in the house hierarchy, the Lower Ground Floor levels have only a Low Significance, as we see on the next page. [Despite lacking evidence, it may be the kitchens were at the rear.]

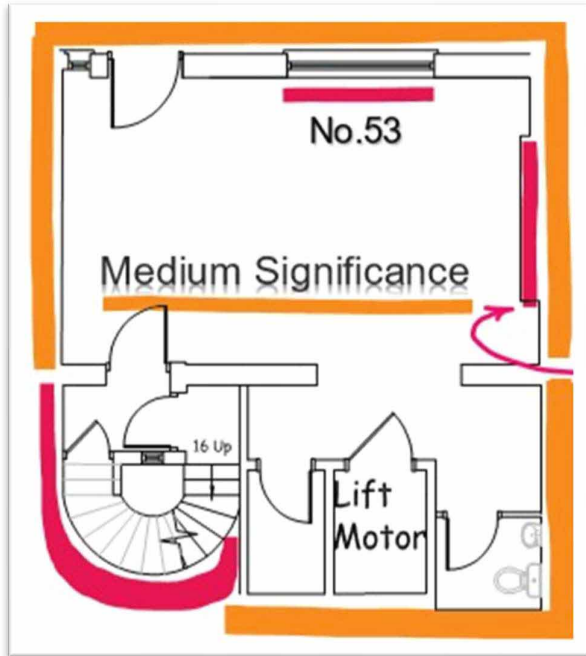


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Basement Level –No 53 - **MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE / HIGH SIGNIFICANCE**



7.2 No.53 Old Steine has an intriguing feature: the elegant staircase runs the full height of the house, even down to the Lower Ground floor, with its mahogany hand-rail and stick balusters, which is unusual. Also, the curved front bay window is a feature of special interest, as is the chimney-breast. The cast-iron fire-place inset is of interest, although this is a late Victorian addition, most likely. The elegant surviving features of historic merit make No. 53's Lower Ground Floor of greater interest, or of 'Medium' Interest, in the author's view. However, it must be noted the individual architectural features are of 'High' Significance.

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## 7.3 –Lower Ground Floor Level - MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE

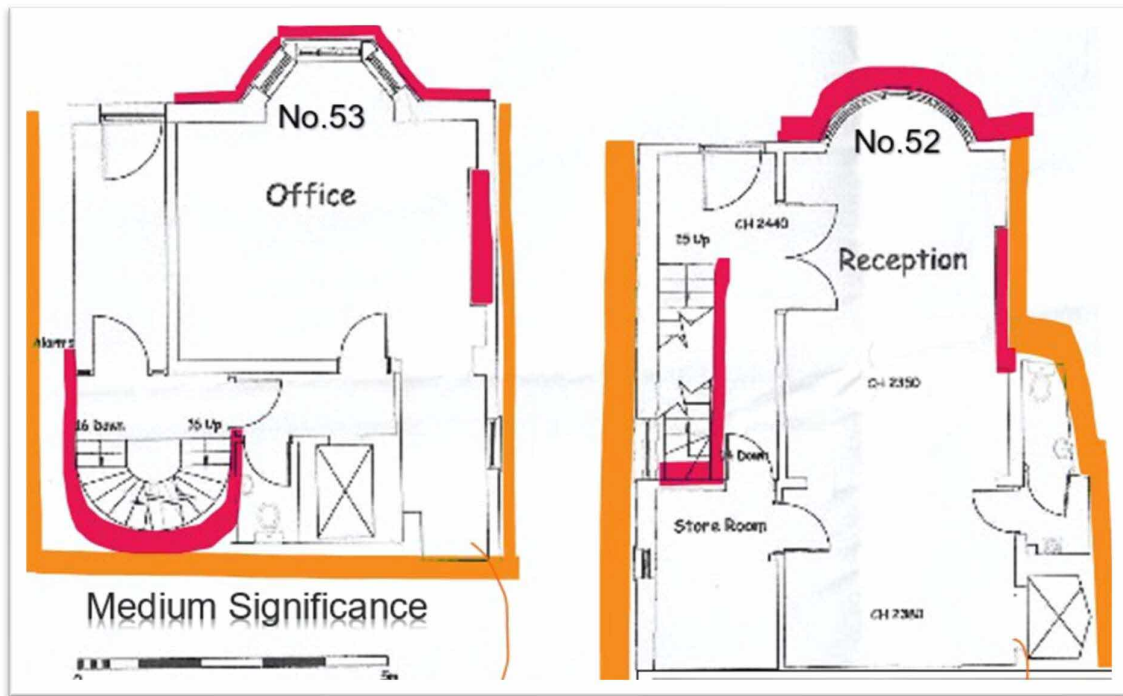


**7.4** Lower Ground Floor: No. 52 Old Stein. The surviving features of interest here make the basement level of this house of more significance than No. 53. However, it must be said that the decorative features and fenestration throughout both houses is very good, including the reeded window surround and curved bay window seen here.

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## 7.5 Ground to First Floor. MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE / HIGH SIGNIFICANCE



7.6 The overall interest of the Ground Floor level over both Nos. 52 and 53 appears to be 'Medium' Significance, because they still have the original plan-form (room size and volume) and the authentic window bays, window reveals and architraves. Other than this, however, the early 19thc. fireplace surrounds haven't survived at this level. The staircases all survive, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Floors across both 52- 53 have character-defining features and area all of 'High Significance.'

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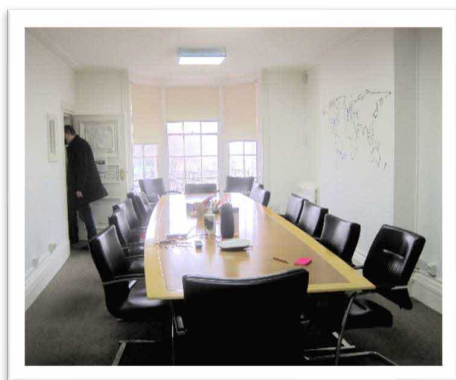
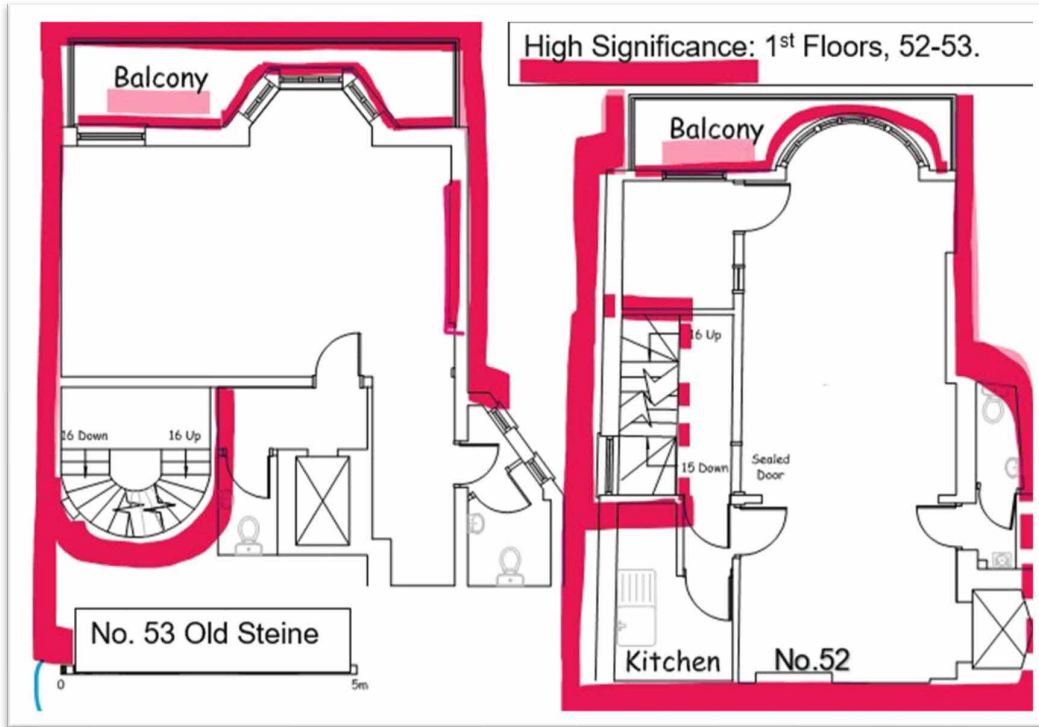
7.7 This page, clockwise: Top left- No.53 front Reception Room with original windows and paneled reveals. Top, right- shallow niche (one of two). Right: middle and bottom- Original staircase with stick balusters and mahogany handrail. Bottom left: Original staircase at No. 52 with matching joinery and elegant newel post.

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## 7.8 The First Floor: Front Reception Room and Main Importance.- **HIGH SIGNIFICANCE**



7.9 The First Floor retains its importance, being a principal room, on a principal floor- or the *piano nobile*. The chimney-breast structure is intact in the front room and its original volume is relatively unchanged. The large bay window at the front retains its original placement. However, it would appear some windows are replicas, but the original panellled reveals survive. As the List Entry says, No. 53 has a tri-partite window. No. 52 has a curved window bay with side lights and still enjoys its original marble fireplace surround. As an important Reception room and floor level, this front rooms retain a 'High Significance' overall.

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## 7.10 First Floor: Surviving Original Regency Features in No. 53 Old Steine.



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## 7.11 First Floor, Front Building: No. 52 Old Steine- Surviving Features.



*Note:* The reeded door and window surrounds match the mantelpiece shown in Sect. 6.1 (page 34) shown dated c.1815 in E.F. Lambert's lively illustration. It is likely the original fireplace surround matched this



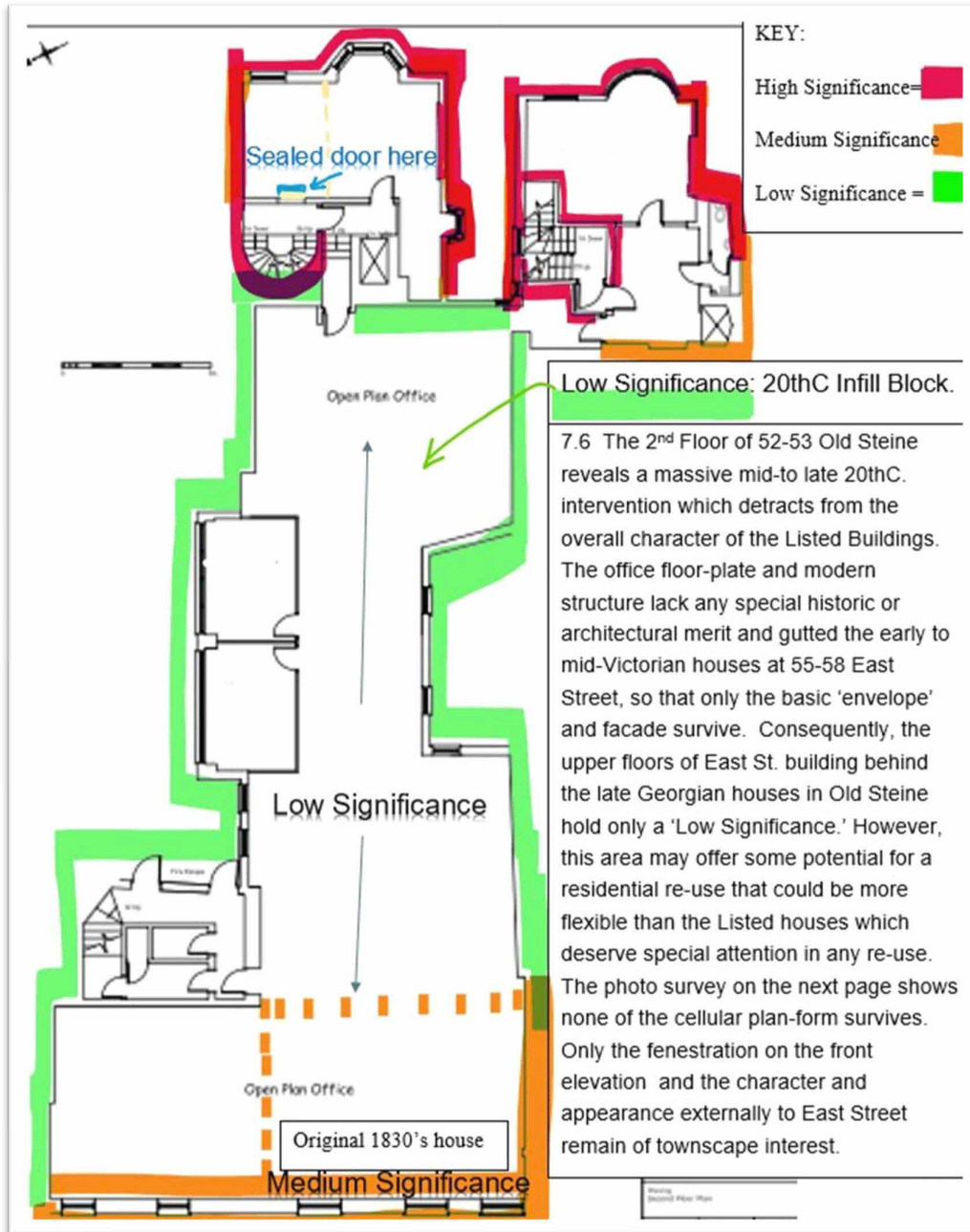
No. 52. The elegant staircase echoes 53 with its mahogany handrail. The curved window bay has a reeded architrave and 6/6 sash window with matching 4/4 side lights. Staircase: This is also important for being the principal circulation space in the house.

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## 7.12 The Second Floors: Modern Interventions (Mid 20thC.)

LOW SIGNIFICANCE / MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE / HIGH SIGNIFICANCE





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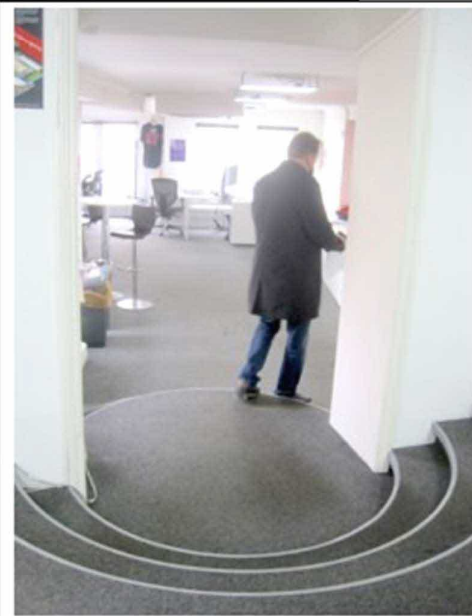


7.13 Above: the front Reception Room (or former Bedroom) at No.52 with its elegant curved bay. Below: The Reception Room of No.53 which was formed of two separate Bedrooms originally.



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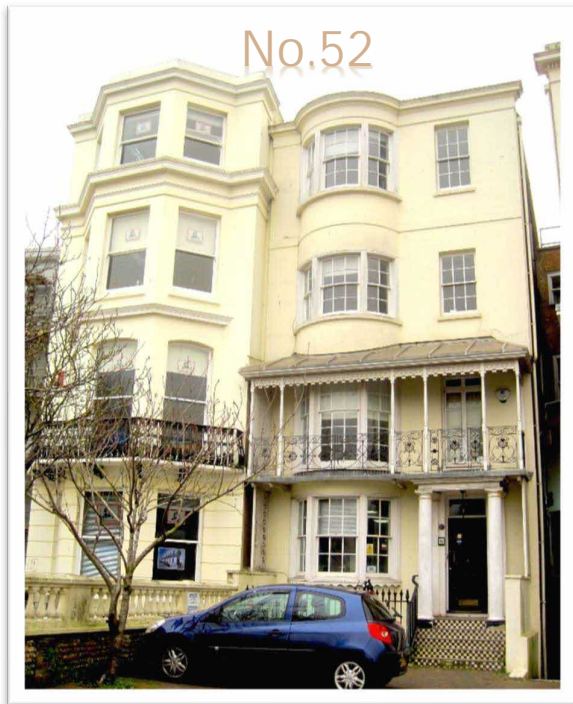
7.8.2 The modern mid 20thC. office block behind Nos. 52-53 Old Steine has little architectural or historic merit. There is a surviving mid Victorian rooflight, which should be retained; except for this and the front elevation to East Street, it lacks interest. [See also, Floor-Plan on page 51, Sect. 8.2.2].

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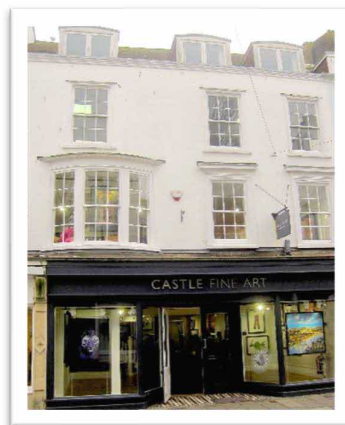
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7.14 External Features: High Significance, 52-53 The Old Steine, and Nos. 55-58 East Street (Valley Gardens, and Old Town Conservation Areas).



7.15 It is considered that the entire front Georgian buildings at Nos. 52 to 53 Steine hold a High Significance in Listed Building terms for their architectural and historic merit. The rear upper facades at 55- 58 East Street similarly are of Medium to High Significance because they retain some Regency and mainly Victorian features and offer continuity making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Old Town Conservation Area.

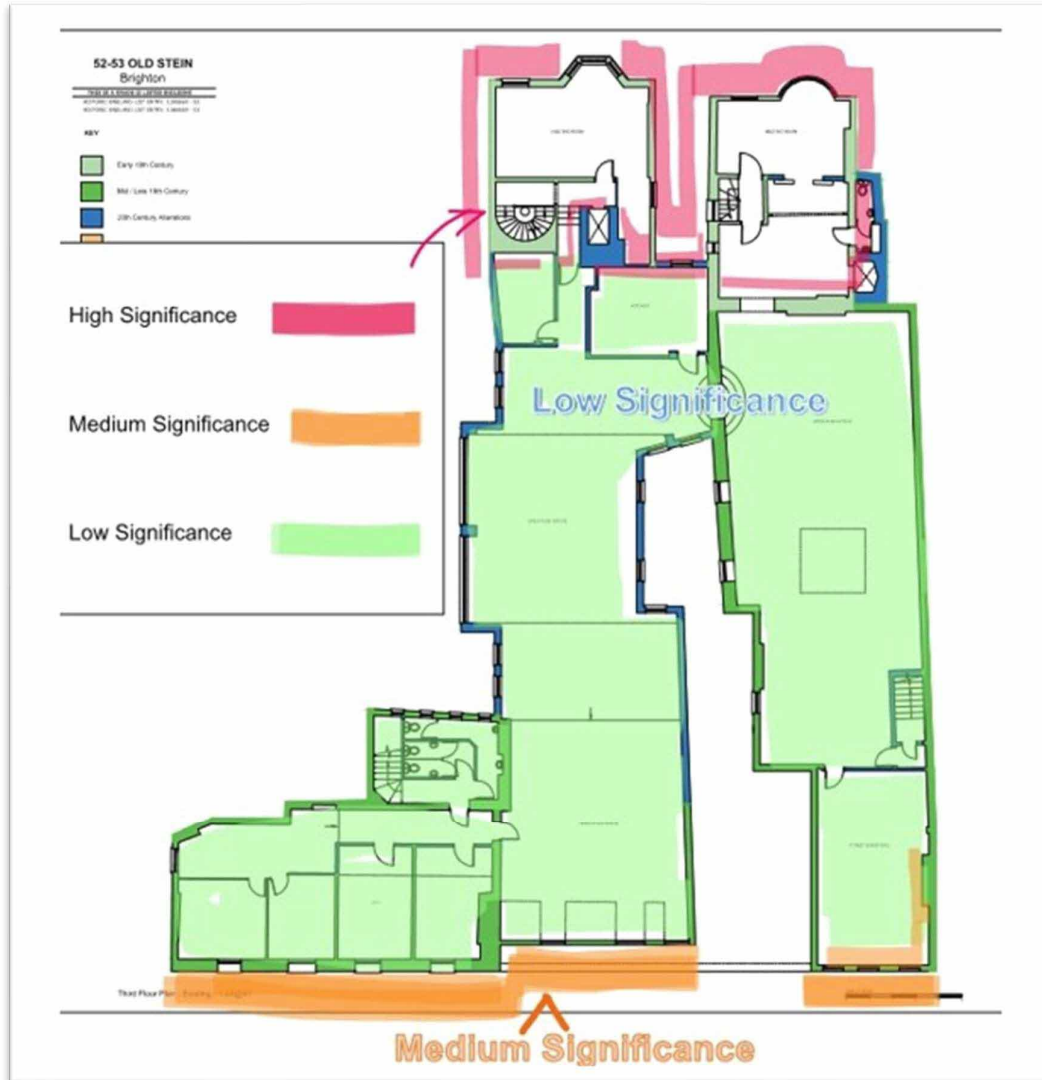


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## 7.16 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Plan: Levels of Significance.

LOW SIGNIFICANCE / MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE / HIGH SIGNIFICANCE



7.17 The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Floor levels behind Nos. 52-53 Old Steine have been so comprehensively altered and gutted for modern offices that the only features of significance here appear to be the actual 'envelope' or load-bearing brick structure left from the 19<sup>th</sup>C. and the front elevation and windows. However, while several remain on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, the windows belonging to this property at the upper levels to East Street appear to be mainly replicas, and therefore not of 'High' significance. (See also Section 8.2.2).

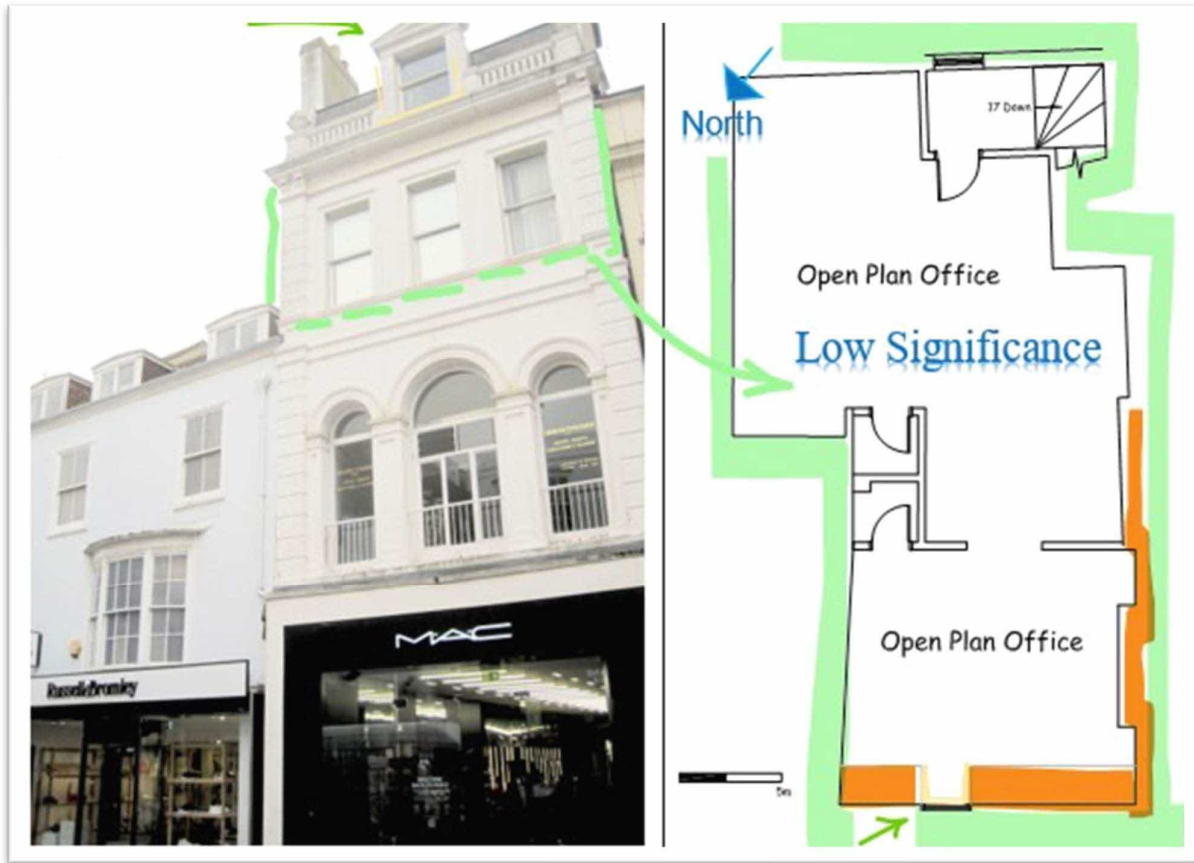
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7.18 4<sup>th</sup> Floor 52 Old Steine: Top Floor Open Plan Office.

LOW SIGNIFICANCE / MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE



7.19 The top or 4<sup>th</sup> floor level is generally of “Low” Significance and would be anticipated to have little architectural interest here, having been either storage for 19<sup>th</sup>C retail use, or possibly an upstairs flat for the ‘middling’ classes. However, from the large 1<sup>st</sup> Floor arched, tripartite windows, it would appear that this floor was always used for retail and the large plate-glass windows is typical of late Victorian showrooms, for example for furniture display. However, the contribution of this detailed elevation with pedimented dormer, tall chimneystack and balustrade has sufficient merit to be considered of “Medium” Significance because it lends a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Old Town Conservation Area.

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# SCHEME PROPOSALS AND IMPACT

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## 8.1 - Design Principles / Planning Update –February 2024

Further to preparation of our initial proposals for consideration by the local authority, Planning and listed building permission was granted in June 2023 –REF BH2023/00018 for Part Change of use from Office to student accommodation.

Following this planning approval a new pre planning application was submitted to the local authority–ref PRE2023/00149, for proposed construction of an additional storey over the central modern section of Number 53. The summary feedback was that '*subject to further details about the proposed extension (detailing and visual modelling of the extension from vantage points surrounding the site), and justification for the studio layout, the proposals would be acceptable in principle*'.

Part of this feedback was as follows / categorised as 'Needs Attention':

*The proposed additional storey would be over a part of the building of less historic and architectural significance and is considered acceptable in principle. Indicative visuals have been provided which suggest that the additional storey would not be visible from Old Steine to the east or East Street to the west. Further information should be provided at application stage to evidence this. This could include 3D visualisations and verified views.*

Further to this helpful feedback we have now proceeded to prepare as part of our full planning application a number of additional detailed building cross sections and elevations showing how the extra proposed storey would look, as well as a set of accompanying 3D visuals and specialised verified views as requested.

We have also since carried out a full services integration exercise with the assistance of specialist fire, mechanical and electrical, structural and acoustic consultants to ensure that the building fully complies with all regulatory requirements whilst remaining sympathetic to all of its survived historic fabric elements.

During the process of further historical investigations as to the buildings origins we were able to establish that Numbers 52 & 53 have undergone a number of internal changes, to both to their number of floors as well as their external material appearance, evolving from Georgian to Victorian architectural fashions as illustrated below:

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**Marlborough House** –Illustration 1787 –Samuel Hieronymus Grimms –Prior to construction of immediately adjacent numbers 52-53



**Marlborough House - Painting dating around 1800-** Please Note No 53 is 1 storey shorter and has a more Georgian period elevation - later adapted to the current Victorian bay window style with first floor projection balcony. No 52 shows a previous 2 storey timber framed building on its site - now demolished).



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**Marlborough House - Illustration 1810** - Miss Fitzherbert's House Next To Marlborough House / corner of Number 53 (to Storey Shorter) also part Visible prior to early / Mid Victorian upgrade and adaption.



**Modern Day Photo vs 1890 Photo** - Please Note No 52 is 1 storey shorter so top floor is late 19th century / early 20th century addition.

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## 8.2 - Internal Period Walls to Number 52-53 Old Stein / New Acoustic sound separation requirements

Further to additional exploratory investigations, it has been established that all east facing rooms to numbers 52-53 are in fact clad with modern plasterboard walls and imitation cornice and skirting details (to historic timber structural cross braced frames within –no trace of original historic fabric lathe and plaster).

All these modern intervention works (new plasterboard walls / sash window / balcony repairs and associated leadworks etc) can be traced to an extensive refurbishment of Numbers 52-53 Old Stein dating from 1993 to 1994. This can be evidenced by a commemorative plaque located on the ground floor reception area of Number 52 stating it was attended / opened by the then Lord Mayor of the City in 1994.

Due to this now established modern internal fabric, we have been able to prepare as requested a set of comprehensive detail 1:5 acoustic floor and wall build ups, noting that given the age and multiple stages of phased construction / adaption that have taken place going back to the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century, further details may be required to be prepared prior to any on site construction works to ensure any later discovered survived element historic fabric walls and ceilings are thus maintained in-situ.

## 8.3 - New Proposed Central Fourth Floor Extension

The new proposed central fourth floor extension is to be located over the low heritage significance central section of the building dating from late 20<sup>th</sup> Century works, which is constructed of a solid build over steel frame with concrete intermediate floors decks.

### Materials / Windows

The new proposed central fourth floor extension is to be clad in a natural patina zinc standing seam finish which takes on a similar material finish to lead cladding. All new proposed fourth floor windows are to be made of slender aluminium framed windows, with the lower windows of the central section of the building to be replaced with new period correct timber casement sash windows.

All period survived existing sash / casement window are to be fully restored / redecorated to match existing in-situ.

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## New proposed pitched roof section

As part of our detailed services integration design exercise carried out prior to submitting our full planning and listed building scheme proposals, it was established that there was a need for a large cold-water tank to be located at fourth floor level, to be laid on top of a section of modern flat roof –as highlighted in red Below.



In order to minimise its impact, we have proposed a carefully considered and complementary traditional slate pitched roof design, to then entirely hide within the proposed water tank whilst at the same time creating a more visually pleasing traditional roof detail to this immediate area, akin to the multiple pitched roof forms found on Marlborough House.



Existing Flat Roof Elevation



Proposed Slate pitched Roof Elevation

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## 8.4 OFFICE- LOW SIGNIFICANCE



**8.5** While it is obvious, it is worth noting on the “Levels of Significance” that the 20thC. office conversion has almost entirely erased any features of interest, except for the East St. facade and windows [replicas]. Otherwise, there is no real contribution to the Listed Buildings, giving flexibility here to a return to a form of residential use, for example. Above, a glimpse of the modern office conversion on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the block facing East Street: only the front wall and the early 19thC 6/over/ 6 pane sash windows have survived this brutal office extension.

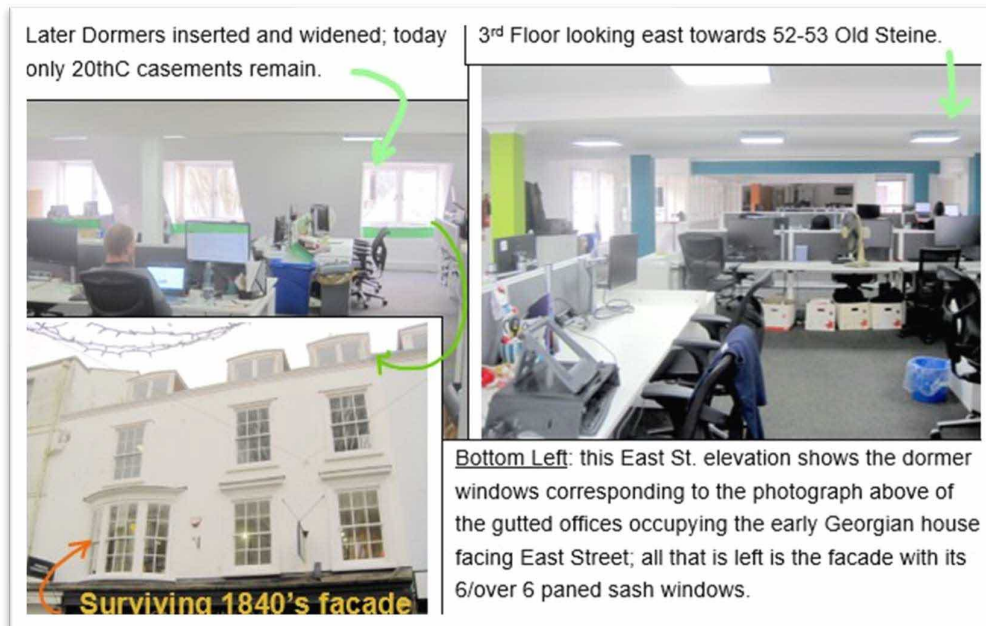
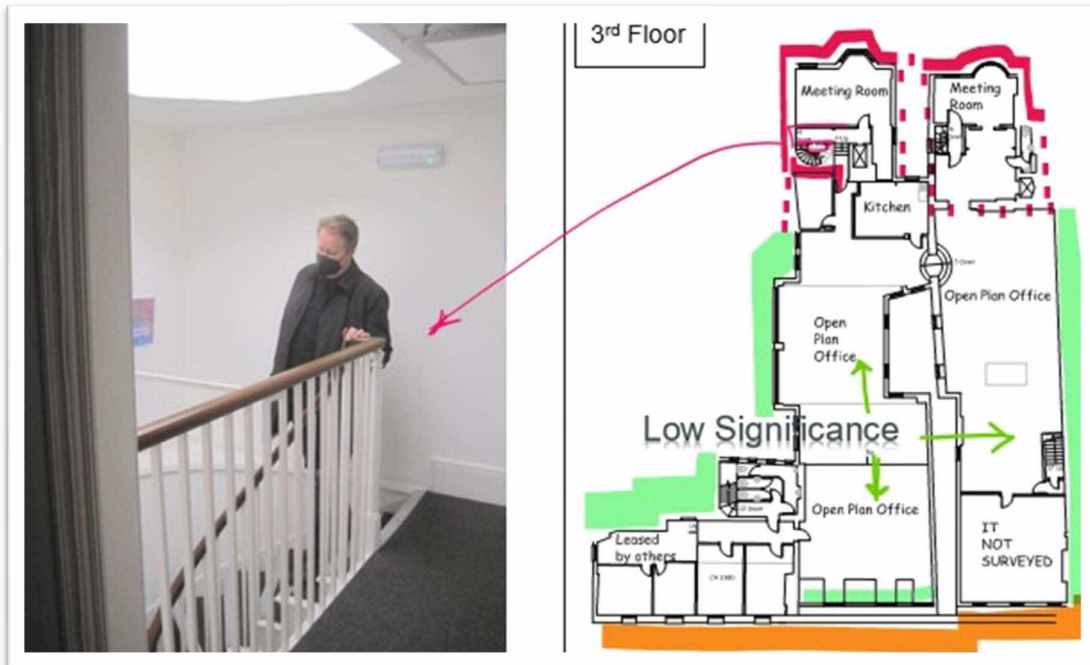


**8.6** Above left: A view of the office extension on the top floor adjoining No.53 Old Steine showing how the walls were altered to accommodate the office block infill. Above right: the ordinary office infill block with Fletton brick walling in modern stretcher bond and sash windows with plate-glass.

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8.7 The only features which are of special interest on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor appear to be the roof-light introducing daylight on the original late Georgian staircase which is itself a feature of “High” architectural and historic interest. The unusual thing about this stair is that it is of high quality from the top floor right down to the basement, a unified whole of High Heritage Significance.



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## 8.8 Gazeteer: Details- External historic features of merit



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## 8.9 Internal Features of Merit: Original Staircases and Balustrades



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## CONCLUSIONS

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## 9.0 Conclusion: Potential Impact of residential scheme



9.1 Nos. 52- 53 The Old Steine originally started life as fashionable residences, and with some care to maintaining all period survived internal features, could be restored to a suitable form of dwellings again. The former offices to the rear and incorporating Nos. 55 to 58 East Street have been so compromised and altered that they offer a more flexible approach, when considering our proposed scheme for student accommodation. As such the area for multiple occupation, and provided that the means of access and secondary means of escape can be agreed with Planning and Listed Building Consent, should offer a suitable use, overall.

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## 9.2 Guidance and philosophy followed

The alterations proposed within the scheme that we submit for consideration, as set out in this document, are necessary in order to provide a sustainable long term solution for 52-53 Old Stein in improving the general internal and external arrangement and improving and recreating sympathetically the current surviving period features within the structure wherever possible, through to the affected area as illustrated, we have carefully followed Historic England's **Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance (CPPG) 2008** document. Item 1.5 states:

*“Advice and assistance should be available from public sources to help owners sustain the heritage in their stewardship”*

Having explored the options available during the early stages and considered not only the client's requirements, the sustainability of each option and the impact upon the wider heritage assets and conservation area, considering Local and National Planning Policy along with guidance from the statutory bodies this scheme was evaluated and considered to be a low impact on the existing significant heritage assets, with highest level of sustainability in the long term.

### Outline of Proposals

Description of proposals –As listed in above sections

### Impact upon Heritage Values

The focus of your decision should be on the significance and the overall impact, balanced with the investment proposed by the client for the conservation, restoration and repair of this listed building. This scheme will only enhance the property and allow enough modernisation that will not negatively impact upon the heritage values, so it should therefore be supported.

### Conclusion

In considering the contents of this application in full, it is respectfully requested that this application is supported as the enclosed demonstrates that the scheme proposes less than significant harm on the overall significance of the existing heritage asset buildings or its setting within the immediate conservation area and adjacent Listed buildings also as above described.

***“Proportionality should govern the exercise of statutory controls” (CPPG: 2008)***

If there are any areas within the application that require further information we would encourage local authority feedback, in order to amend any aspect within the proposals prior to a decision being formally determined.



Ewan Stoddart  
Ba Hons Dip Arch  
RIBA Chartered Architect