

Cundy Street Quarter

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# Historic Building Report

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Prepared by Donald  
Insall Associates

May 2020

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GROSVENOR





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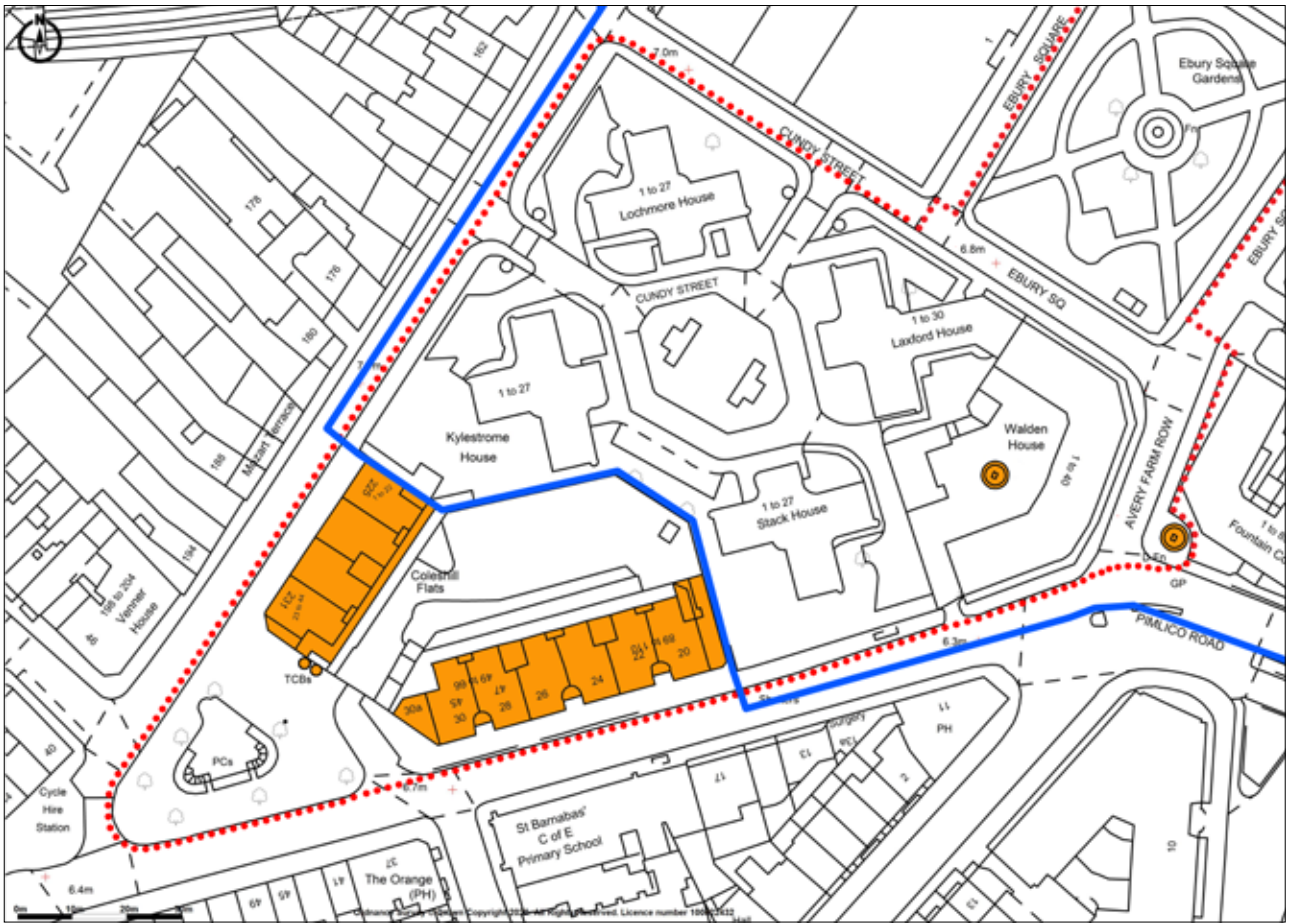
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- ..... Cundy Street Quarter
- Grade II listed structures
- Belgravia Conservation Area boundary



## **1.0 Summary of Historic Building Report**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Donald Insall Associates was commissioned by Grosvenor Estate Belgravia in November 2019 to provide a Historic Building Report and assessment of proposals for the site known as Cundy Street Quarter.

This report focuses on the impact of the proposed development on heritage assets on site. Where a change or intervention to a specific building has a wider incidental effect on the Conservation Area, our report may occasionally note that, but that the overall significance of the Belgravia Conservation Area, and the effect of the proposals on that conservation area and on the setting of nearby listed buildings outside the site, are addressed in the Townscape, Visual Impact and Heritage Report included within the ES rather than in this report.

The investigation has comprised historical research, using both archival and secondary material, and a site inspection. An illustrated history of the site, with sources of reference and bibliography, is in Section 2; the site survey findings are in Section 3. The investigation has established the significance of the buildings, which is set out in Section 4 and summarised below.

Historic buildings are protected by law and in planning policy; the specific constraints for the Cundy Street Quarter site are summarised below. This report has been drafted to inform the design of proposals for the listed structures, by DSDHA, and assess impacts on the unlisted buildings. Section 5 provides a justification of the scheme according to the relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance.

### **1.2 The Buildings and their Legal Status**

The Cundy Street Quarter site is partly located in the Belgravia Conservation Area in the City of Westminster, and includes a number of designated heritage assets: Nos.1, 3, 5-22, 23, 25 and 27-44 Coleshill Flats (Grade II); Nos.20A, 20, 22 24, 26, 28, 30 and 30A and 45, 47, 49-66, 67, 69, 71-88, 91 and 93-110 Coleshill Flats (Grade II), and of all these buildings it is only the basement floors and some ground floor areas that are included in the proposals; the Arnrid Johnston Obelisk (Grade II); a pair of telephone kiosks in Orange Square (Grade II); and a Drinking Fountain at Avery Farm Road (Grade II). Cundy Street Flats and Walden House are both subject to Certificates of Immunity from Listing, that for Cundy Street Flats valid until May 2023, that for Walden House valid until November 2023. Both are considered undesignated heritage assets, Walden House being of lesser significance than Cundy Street Flats.

Alterations to a listed building or structure generally require listed building consent; development in conservation areas or within the setting of a listed building or conservation area requires local authorities to assess the implications of proposals on built heritage. The statutory list descriptions of the listed buildings are included in Appendix I and a summary of

guidance on the conservation area provided by the local planning authority is in Appendix II, along with extracts from the relevant legislation and planning policy documents.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision-making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose statutory duties upon local planning authorities which, with regard to listed buildings, require the planning authority to have '*special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*' and, in respect of conservation areas, that '*special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*'.

In considering applications for listed building consent and planning permission, local authorities are also required to consider the policies on the historic environment set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019. At the heart of the Framework is 'a presumption in favour of sustainable development' and there are also specific policies relating to the historic environment. The Framework states that heritage assets are 'an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations'. The Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework defines a heritage asset as:

*A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).*

The Framework, in paragraph 189, states 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.*

Section 4 of this report – the assessment of significance – meets this requirement and is based on the research and site surveys presented in sections 2 and 3, which are of a sufficient level of detail to understand the potential impact of the proposals.

The Framework also, in paragraph 193, requires that:

*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.*

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 194 that:

*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.*

Section 5 of this report provides this clear and convincing justification.

The Framework requires that local planning authorities categorise harm as either 'substantial' or 'less than substantial'. Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset', the Framework states, in paragraph 195, that:

*... local planning authorities should refuse consent, 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; 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 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.*

Where a development proposal will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the Framework states, in paragraph 196, that:

*...this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*

Regarding undesignated heritage assets, the NPPF set out the following policy in paragraph 197:

*The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

In paragraph 200, the NPPF states the following on new development in the setting of heritage assets:

*Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.*

### **1.3 Summary Assessment of Significance**

The site includes residential buildings of the 19<sup>th</sup> and twentieth centuries; these elements of the site were created following the removal of historic terraced town houses and the loss of a network of back streets with mews accommodation. The site is located in a wider pocket of land in south-west Belgravia that was radically reshaped in the second half of the twentieth century when historic terraces were removed to make way for larger buildings that are generally of a taller scale, and respond differently to the streets they sit in because of their entrance arrangements and lack of small scale rhythm. This has compromised the setting of Ebury Square, laid out in 1820, and of the terraced houses in Ebury Street and in side streets which have views of the tall blocks.

Only part of the site is protected through conservation area designation and listing, namely Coleshill flats which is Grade II listed and in the Belgravia Conservation Area, and the obelisk and drinking fountain which are both Grade II listed. A proposal to extend the conservation area, consulted on in 2013, to include Cundy Street Flats, Walden House and Ebury Square has not been implemented. The setting of the site is sensitive and includes a significant number of listed buildings of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, residential on Ebury Street and in a variety of building types on Pimlico Road.

#### **Coleshill Flats (Grade II)**

Coleshill Flats were erected in 1869-71 by the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company (IIDC) to provide model dwellings for low-income artisans working in Pimlico. The significance of Coleshill Flats, which survives relatively intact, relates to its historical associations with the IIDC's housing programme of the 1860s and 1870s, which was part a wider movement to improve housing conditions for the working classes, and its elegant and progressive architectural design and the external expression of its plan form. The flats also make a positive contribution to the pervading residential character of the Belgravia Conservation Area and the wider townscape. Areas that are to be altered as part of the proposals include the rear basement elevations which follow the original plan form that is significant but have some detracting modern alterations; cast iron railings which are original and significant; and a shop extension on Pimlico Road which has some external significance but whose altered interiors are of neutral significance. It is only the basement and some limited ground floor areas that are included in the proposals.

#### **Marquess of Westminster Memorial Drinking Fountain (Grade II)**

The Marquess of Westminster Memorial Drinking Fountain was erected in 1871 by the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association, on behalf of the Marchioness of Westminster to commemorate her husband Richard Grosvenor, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Westminster (1795-1869). The fountain survives largely intact but has seen poor quality and detracting repairs to its base, the part-loss of its crowning urn, the loss of its spouts and the loss of its function, defects to its decorative mosaic decorations, and slight weathering to its decorative stonework. Its significance relates principally to its historical associations and its ornate Italian Renaissance design, but it also has communal and historic value as a structure provided philanthropically for the urban poor. Its setting has changed and lost some of its quality through the replacement of the building it is located next to.



### **Arnrid Johnston Obelisk (Grade II)**

The Arnrid Johnston Obelisk, originally named 'Children's Group', was designed and executed in the mid-1920s by Swedish sculptor, Arnrid Johnston. The obelisk is a handsome piece of modern art but has poorly weathered and lost its inscriptions to a large extent. The significance of the Obelisk relates principally to its architectural and historic interest as a piece of interwar civic art, designed and carved by a renowned mid-20<sup>th</sup> century sculptor, and its relationship with nearby social housing units provided for families.

### **K6 Telephone Kiosks (Grade II)**

The pair of K6 telephone kiosks in Orange Square are relatively intact and feature domed roofs, unperforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and doors. First designed as a prototype in 1935 by eminent architect Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (1880-1960), the significance of the kiosks relates principally to their special architectural design interest as instantly recognisable and celebrated features of the streetscape.

### **Walden House (unlisted)**

Walden House is subject to a Certificate of Immunity from Listing which is valid until November 2023, and was built as flats in 1924 by the City of Westminster to designs by architects Messrs Joseph on Grosvenor land. It provided flats for families with children. The building is still used for its original purpose, but has modern uPVC windows and new lift overruns. It does not make a positive contribution to the streetscene in Pimlico Road and Ebury Square because of its modest design quality and the lack of activation and rhythm on the street, but its original purpose to house the urban poor has some historic significance.

### **Cundy Street Flats (unlisted)**

Cundy Street Flats were granted a Col in 2013 which was renewed in 2018 for five years. The buildings were developed for housing to designs by TP Bennett & Son between 1950 and 1952. The buildings were designed as four blocks on cross-shaped plans, set at 45 degrees to the street, with landscaping and car parking. The buildings remain in their original use but have been reconfigured internally. Their design is old-fashioned for their date but is well considered. The layout of the estate however, set at an angle to the historic streets around it, disrupts the enclosure of Ebury Street, and this compromises the setting of historic buildings. The buildings make a modest positive contribution to the setting of the street and the conservation area as far as their architectural quality is concerned, but detract in terms of their layout.

The Belgravia Conservation Area and nearby designated heritage assets are assessed in the Townscape, Visual Impact and Heritage Report included within the ES.

## **1.4 Summary of Proposals and Justification**

The proposals would see a comprehensive redevelopment of Walden House and Cundy Street Flats with new buildings for residential uses (affordable, market and senior living) at upper floors and a mix of active uses at ground and below ground level, with a new alignment to re-introduce the lost street enclosure on Ebury Street, and new landscaped routes through the site, some recalling lost historic streets. At Coleshill

Flats (Grade II) there would be some localised reconfiguration of areas of the rear basement elevations and railings, part demolition of one shop unit on Pimlico Road, and changes to the rear lightwells and access to the Coleshill Flats rear basements, alongside a comprehensive re-landscaping scheme for the courtyard between the two Coleshill Flats blocks. Also proposed is the repair and relocation to a prominent nearby position of the drinking fountain (Grade II), and the relocation and repair of the obelisk (Grade II) to a new courtyard setting within the site. The K6 telephone kiosks (Grade II) in Orange Square would be repaired and temporarily relocated to enable relandscaping works, and when those works are complete the kiosks would be reinstated in their near-original location. The unlisted buildings on site, Walden House and Cundy Street Flats, would be replaced by well-considered new buildings in contextual materials, some of greater height than those that exist but relating to surrounding building massing.

The works to the listed buildings bring many heritage benefits and create very little harm to the significance of heritage assets: the Grade II listed mid-19<sup>th</sup> century terraced artisan housing blocks at Coleshill Flats would be enhanced to the rear, but would lose a secondary element of one shop unit and, in addition, would have its historic railings adapted; the Grade II listed 1920s obelisk in the courtyard of Walden House would be repaired and relocated to a nearby, more sheltered public setting which has the potential to enhance its longevity; and the Grade II listed mid-19<sup>th</sup> century drinking fountain would be repaired and relocated to a close-by site where it would be made to function once more for its intended purpose. The impact on fabric and heritage significance of the designated assets on site is largely beneficial, with small areas of minimal and localised harm which would be comfortably outweighed by wider public benefits and heritage benefits.

The proposed replacement of two modestly significant unlisted 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings, Walden House and Cundy Street Flats, would cause some harm but would allow the wide-ranging public benefits of a new sustainable housing development with active uses made possible. This new development would also provide some heritage benefits, namely a repair to the disrupted street enclosure on Ebury Street, and the recreation of lost historic streets inside the block.

For these reasons, the proposals comply with section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; paragraphs 193, 196, 197 and 200 of the NPPF, and the London Plan and Westminster's local plan, and it is the conclusion of this report that they should be granted Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent. The effect of the proposals on the Belgravia Conservation Area and on the setting of nearby listed buildings outside the site are addressed in the Townscape, Visual Impact and Heritage Report included within the ES rather than in this report.

## 2.0 Historical Background

### 2.1 Area History: Development of Belgravia

#### 2.1.1 Origins

The study site originally formed part of the large Saxon manor of Eia or Eye, which includes modern Mayfair, Belgravia, Pimlico and Hyde Park. Pimlico was at that time a marshy area riddled with inlets from the Thames. It was this extensive flat rural manor, sparingly inhabited by shepherds and tenant farmers and infested by thieves operating along its lanes, which was to become one of the most valuable estates in London.

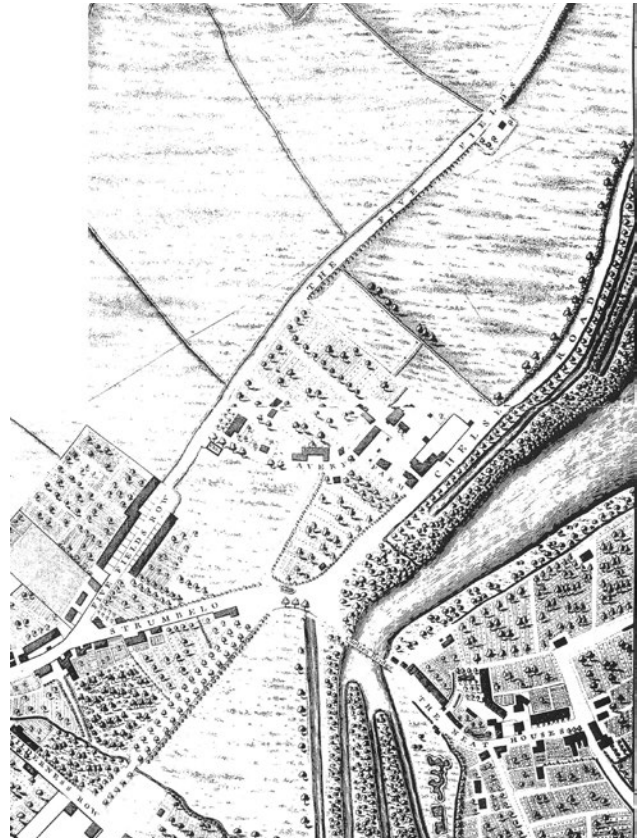
After the Norman Conquest, the manor passed to the Abbey of Westminster, and in 1536 to Henry VIII, when the adjacent manors of Hyde and Neat were separated from it. At that time the district was known as Eibury or Ebury. The 1614 Map of the Manor of Eia shows the area in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century **[Plate 2.1]**. At this time, it was acquired by the Audleys and through them it passed to the Grosvenors in 1665, following the arranged marriage of Mary Davies (daughter of Alexander Davies, the great-nephew of Hugh Audley, the original owner of the estate) to Sir Thomas Grosvenor. Remarkably, the estate remained virtually intact under one family for over three hundred years.

#### 2.1.2 18<sup>th</sup> Century Development

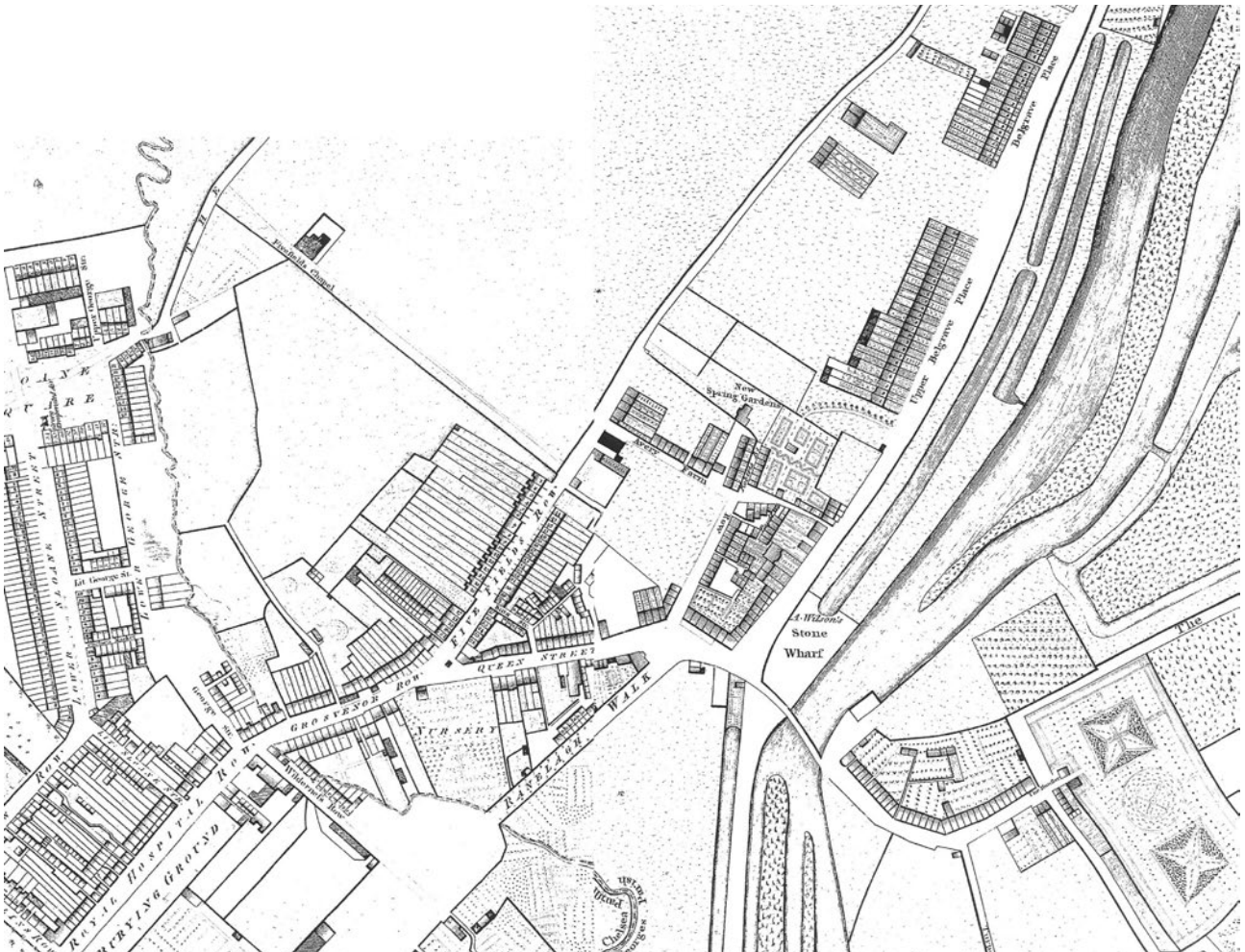
The footprint of the present Ebury Street is shown in Rocque's 1746 map as 'Five Field Row', comprising a lane cutting through the open land of the so-called Five Fields, with fourteen houses on the north side at the south-west end **[Plate 2.2]**. It was in one of these properties on the west side of the street (now Grade I-listed 180 Ebury Street) that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart composed Symphony No.1 in 1764 at the age of 8. Most of these houses, which have been dated by Pevsner as no later than mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, still stand today and a number were listed Grade II between 1958 and 1987. The southern section of the present Pimlico Road is shown partially developed along Jews Row and Strumbelo, while the footprint of Cundy Street was already outlined as a narrow lane, labelled 'Avery Farm Row', passing across the surrounding fields. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the development of the streets bounding the study site progressed steadily, as shown in Horwood's map of 1792-99, where the current Avery Farm Row appears as the west boundary of the built site delimited by Queen Street (later Pimlico Road) and Upper Belgrave Place (later Buckingham Palace Road) on the east **[Plate 2.3]**. The study site, however, still predominantly consisted of open land.



2.1 Manor of Eia Map, 1614.



2.2 John Rocque's Map of London showing early development along Five Fields Row, 1746.



2.3 Horwood's map of London, 1792-99.



### 2.1.3 Cundy's Belgravia and Development in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The formal development known as Belgravia was laid out in the 1820's by Thomas Cubitt and the 1<sup>st</sup> Marquess of Westminster's architect Thomas Cundy. During Cubitt's development of Belgravia, the southern end of Ebury Street was developed with small artisan houses, completed by 1827 [Plate 2.4]. This map also shows that while the south side of Ebury Street was mostly developed, much of the north side of Ebury Street remained open land. By 1848 the area was fully developed, as the editor of *A Topographical Dictionary of England*, Samuel Lewis, stated:

*The ground to the west between Knightsbridge and Chelsea, once called the Five Fields, is now occupied by many well-executed and several truly magnificent buildings, forming streets and squares, erected by the late Marquess of Westminster.<sup>1</sup>*

The central stretch of the street, as far as Lower Belgrave Street, was always known as Ebury Street from its first development in the 1820s. It was not until 1867 that the whole street was designated as Ebury Street and re-numbered. Accordingly, the first Ordnance Survey map of 1869 shows the study site included between the extended Ebury Street, Little Ebury Street (later Cundy Street), and Queen Street (later Pimlico Road) into terraces of houses with rear mews buildings [Plate 2.5]. Hermione Hobhouse describes the specific character of Ebury Street in the context of the major nineteenth-century development of the Grosvenor Estate:

*[...] there were also a number of single sites let to individual entrepreneurs in Ebury Street and roundabout. These smaller men lacked the incentive and, in many cases, the necessary resources to provide their houses with proper sewers and roads, and their streets of middle-class housing, ill-lit and sometimes impassable because of the state of the roadway, hindered the efforts of the larger builders to create a fashionable neighbourhood. The friction between the two types of developer, and even more between the two classes of tenant, caused much bitter feeling in the early years of the development.<sup>2</sup>*

According to Post Office directories from the early-Victorian period, the houses forming both frontages of the thoroughfare were mainly occupied by professionals and tradesmen, while only few esquires are recorded as living in the same street at that time. The 1894 Ordnance Survey map illustrates the redevelopment of the southern section of the study site into the Coleshill Buildings while, just to the north, the gardens of Ebury Square appear to have been redesigned into a geometrical pattern of lawns and trees [Plate 2.6]. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Charles Booth's London poverty map of 1898-1899 indicates that Ebury Street consisted of a mixed population of middle-class and well-to-do residents, with at the 'extreme south west a few poorer houses west of Little Ebury St [later Cundy Street]' and a steady urban deterioration towards the west [Plate 2.7].<sup>3</sup> At the time of Booth's investigation, most of the few town houses which were originally occupied by members of the aristocracy had already been converted into 'good lodgings houses interspersed with shops.'<sup>4</sup>

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1 Samuel Lewis (ed.), *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (1848), p. 571.

2 Hermione Hobhouse, *Thomas Cubitt: Master Builder* (London, 1971), p. 93.

3 'Charles Booth Notebooks', LSE, BOOTH/B/362, p. 47.

4 'Charles Booth Notebooks', LSE, BOOTH/B/362, p. 47.



2.4 Greenwood's map of London, showing the early development of Belgravia, 1827.



2.5 Ordnance Survey map, 1869.





2.6 Ordnance Survey map, 1894.



2.7 Charles Booth's Map Descriptive of London Poverty, 1898-9 (LSE).

#### 2.1.4 The Twentieth Century

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the central areas of Belgravia remained little changed. However, the north and south-east fringes of the area experienced some redevelopment, particularly around Victoria Station. By the 1919 Ordnance Survey map, Queen Street and Upper Belgrave Place had been renamed Pimlico Road and Buckingham Palace Road respectively **[Plate 2.8]**. The most noteworthy 20<sup>th</sup>-century addition was Victoria Coach Station (1932) by Wallis, Gilbert & Partners. The name Cundy Street is first recorded as a replacement for the previous Little Ebury Street in 1937, and was named after the dynasty of the Cundys, architects and surveyors to the Grosvenor estate, who oversaw the development of the estate from 1821 until 1890.

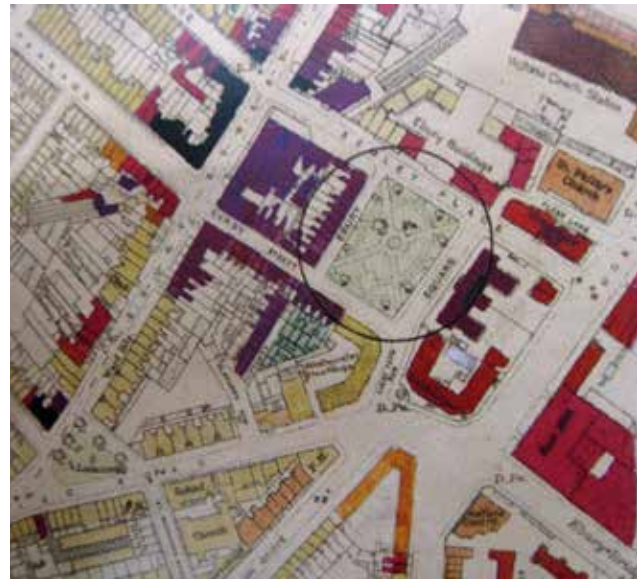
The area was seriously affected by bombing during the Second World War **[Plate 2.9]**. The entire terrace of houses fronting Cundy Street and part of that overlooking Ebury Street were damaged beyond repair. The rest of the buildings falling into the study site were affected by minor blast damage. To the north of the study site, two large plots west of Ebury Square were totally destroyed. The Ordnance Survey map of 1951 shows half of the houses forming the study site were subsequently cleared away, leaving only Walden House, the Coleshill Buildings and seven houses adjacent to the east frontage of Ebury Street **[Plate 2.10]**.

In 1968, the area to the north and west was designated as part of the Belgravia Conservation Area, bounded by Knightsbridge to the north, Grosvenor Place and Buckingham Palace Road to the east and south, and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to the west. The east boundary of the conservation area bisected the study site to include the Coleshill Flats and the west side of Ebury Street but excluded newer development around Ebury Square and the surrounding streets, including Cundy Street, Semley Place and Avery Farm Row.

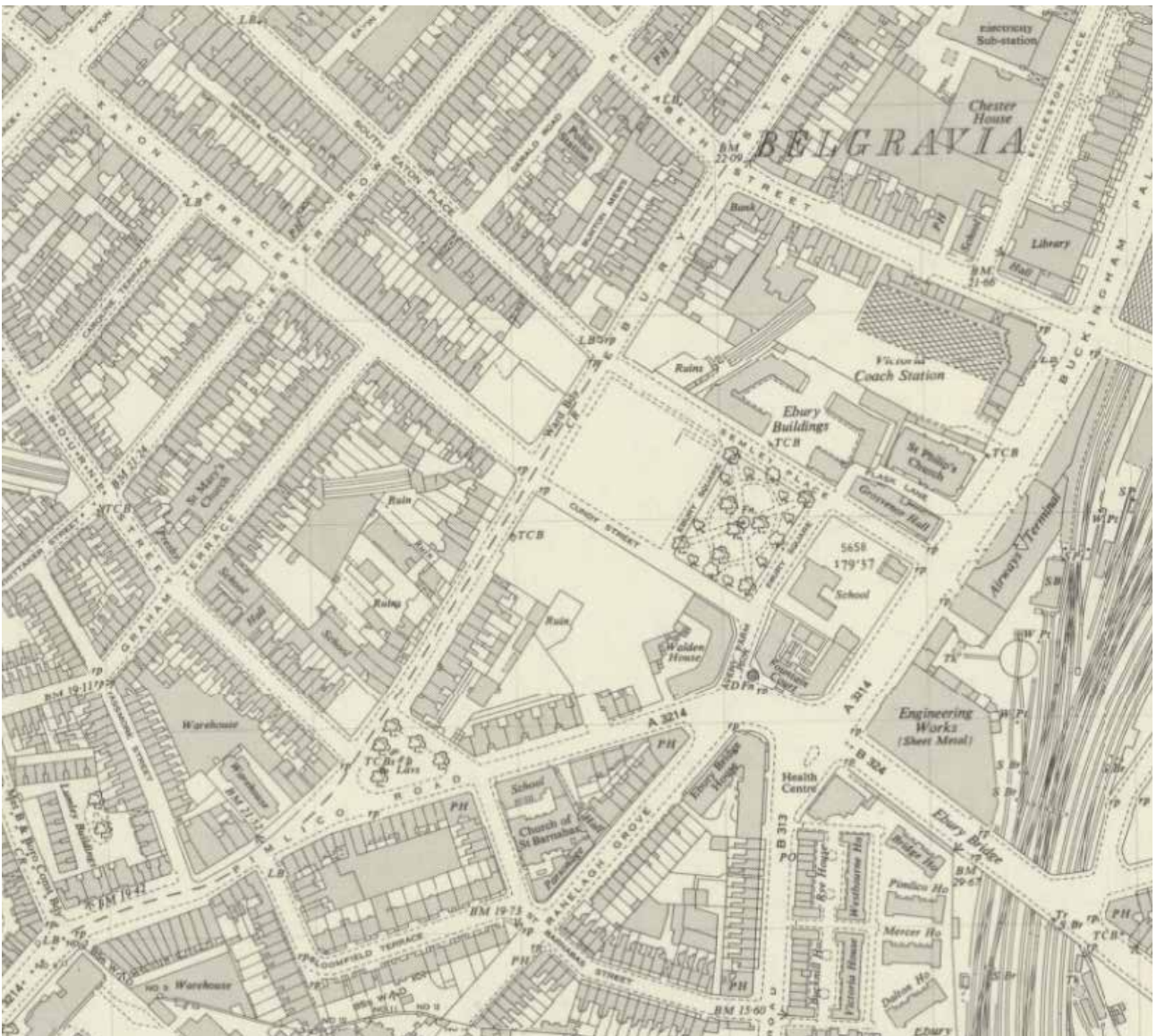




**2.8** *Ordnance Survey map, 1919.*



**2.9** LCC Bomb Damage Map illustrating the devastation around Ebury Square caused by the Blitz, 1939-1945.



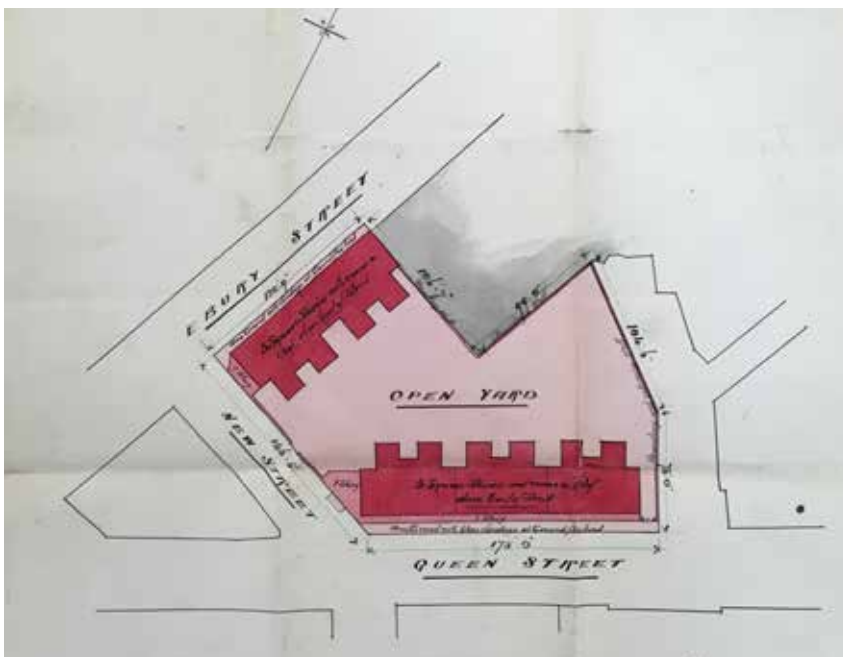
**2.10** *Ordnance Survey map, 1951.*

## 2.2 The Coleshill Buildings (1868-1871)

### 2.2.1 Original Design and Construction

The Coleshill Buildings were built in 1868-71 by Sir Sydney Waterlow's Improved Industrial Dwellings Company (IIDC) as 'model lodging-houses' for local workers. The buildings conformed to a fairly standardised design for affordable workers' housing, which had first been devised by the architect Henry Roberts in the 1840s and 50s. However, Pevsner credits W.W. Lee, a relatively unknown architect, for designing the building exteriors.<sup>5</sup>

An 1871 lease plan, created by Thomas Cundy, shows the site was redeveloped by the IIDC into two five-storey blocks of flats, with additional rooms in the roof, which fronted onto Ebury Street and Queen Street (later Pimlico Road) respectively [Plate 2.11].<sup>6</sup> Although the blocks were similar in plan, the block facing Queen Street (later Pimlico Road) featured an additional four bays. Both blocks backed onto a large open yard, which was enclosed by a wall and accessed via a slip road, labelled 'New Street' (to replace King Street), between Ebury Street and Queen Street to the south of the site. Both blocks featured a single-storey bay adjoining their south end, and the Queen Street block also featured a single-storey row advanced from the main building line.



**2.11** Coleshill Buildings, lease plan, 1871 (Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre).

Photographs from c.1928 show the shopfronts at the ground floor level of both blocks were separated by stucco pilasters and access stairways, with five floors of residential dwellings above [Plates 2.12-2.13]. The upper storeys were faced with yellow brick and detailed with bays of square-headed architraved sash windows, first floor pedimental block courses, and redbrick string bands, separated by recessed bays housing open stairwells with iron-fronted access balconies. According to Pevsner, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Westminster had leased the land cheaply on the provision

<sup>5</sup> Simon Bradley, Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: London 6: Westminster* (Yale University Press: London, 2003), p. 751.

<sup>6</sup> 'Grosvenor Archive', Westminster City Archives Centre, 1049/10/115.

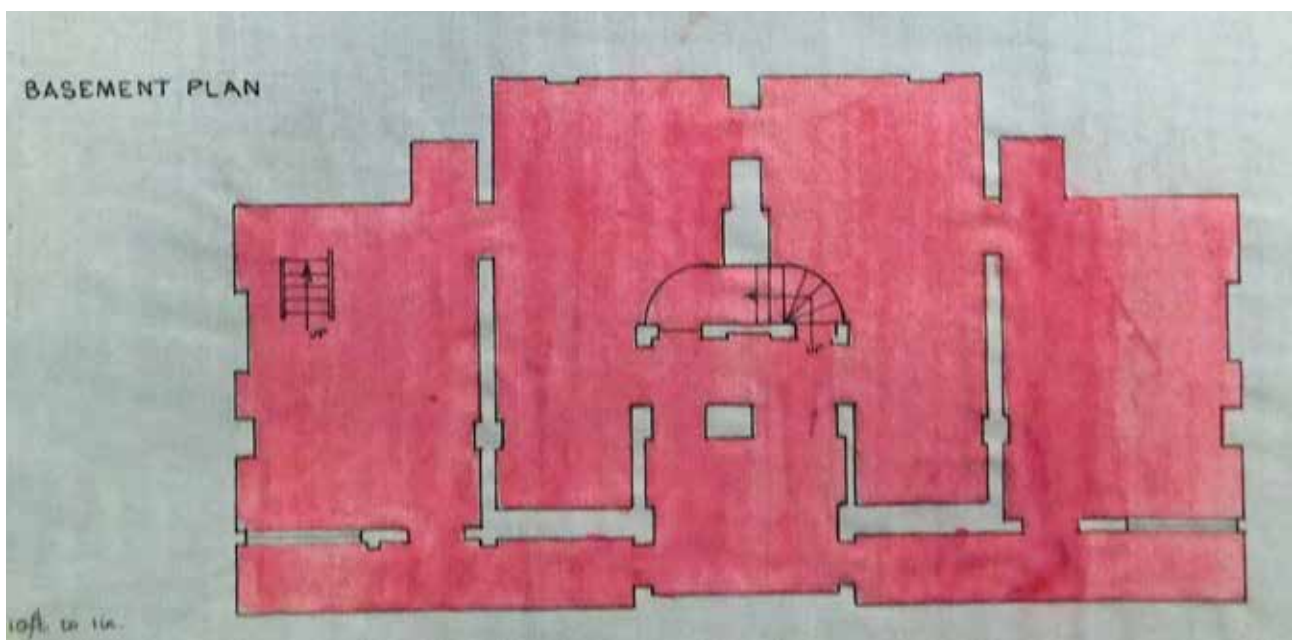




**2.12** Coleshill Buildings, Pimlico Road elevation, c.1928 (Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre).



**2.13** Coleshill Buildings, Ebury Street elevation, c.1928 (Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre).



**2.14** Typical basement layout of the shops fronting the street at Nos.24-26 Pimlico Road, 1969. Flats behind are not shown on plan. (Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives)

that they be 'as attractive as possible'.<sup>7</sup> To that end, each block featured French pavilion roofs with cast-iron cresting and gabled dormers, which Pevsner believes was the work of architect, W.W. Lee.

Internally, the blocks featured smaller dwellings, comprising two rooms and a kitchen, in the centre with larger dwellings, comprising three rooms and a kitchen, occupying the end sections at every level.<sup>8</sup> As a result, over half of the blocks were made up of one bedroom flats, prompting *The Builder* to criticise the development for not being appropriate for families.<sup>9</sup> According to the Survey of London, the flats were entirely self-contained, having their own lavatories and sculleries behind the living rooms no matter how small the flat. Each flat was accessible via its respective balcony, leading from the open stairwells which continued up to the roof. Only the washrooms on the roof were communal. Floors were commonly of concrete, as Allen was an early exponent of concrete construction for cheapness.<sup>10</sup> The basement level was given over to the shops on the street- and flanking sides, while the flats were located behind facing onto the internal yard [Plate 2.14].

According to the LCC Bomb Damage maps, both blocks received only minor blast damage during the Second World War. A 1983 plan by S.R. Coggan, the estate surveyor, indicates no structural alterations had been made to the buildings, although the 'open yard' to the rear of the blocks had by this time been redeveloped into communal car park and gardens with a series of sheds next to the vehicle entrance to the south [Plate 2.15]. The Coleshill Buildings were let to Peabody Trust for use as affordable housing in 1984 and were listed Grade II in 1987.

### 2.2.2 The Improved Industrial Dwellings Company (IIDC)

The IIDC who constructed Coleshill Flats was founded in 1863 by Sydney Waterlow, and was one of the first public housing organisations in Britain. As a commercial company it was committed to building good quality housing that could be let to artisans at a sustainable rent, whilst offering a modest five percent profit for the owner, a higher rate of return on capital than most similar organisations at that time. The company built a number of blocks of flats in London, including the **Ebury Buildings (1871, 1873), and the Lumley Buildings (1875)** to the west along Pimlico Road. The IIDC did not employ architects but instead based their schemes on flats designed by architect Henry Roberts as a prototype for model dwellings, which had been displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851. Roberts' design provided flatted accommodation accessed from recessed balconies that were reached via open stairs. Capable of vertical and lateral expansion to adapt to site constraints, this design was adopted by Waterlow's builder Matthew Allen for the IIDC's first scheme, Langbourn's Buildings, Finsbury, in 1863. Langbourn's Buildings subsequently provided the model upon which all subsequent buildings of this type, including Coleshill Buildings, were built.<sup>11</sup> The internal layouts however conformed to a standardised designed devised by Waterlow and Allen.<sup>12</sup>

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7 Bradley, Pevsner, London 6: Westminster, p. 751.

8 *The Builder* (3 December 1870), p. 962.

9 *The Builder* (3 December 1870), p. 963.

10 'Duke Street Area: Artisans' Dwellings in the Duke Street Area', in F H W Sheppard (ed.), *Survey of London: Volume 40, the Grosvenor Estate in Mayfair, Part 2* (London, 1980), pp. 93-98.

11 *The Builder* (17 December 1870), p. 1011.

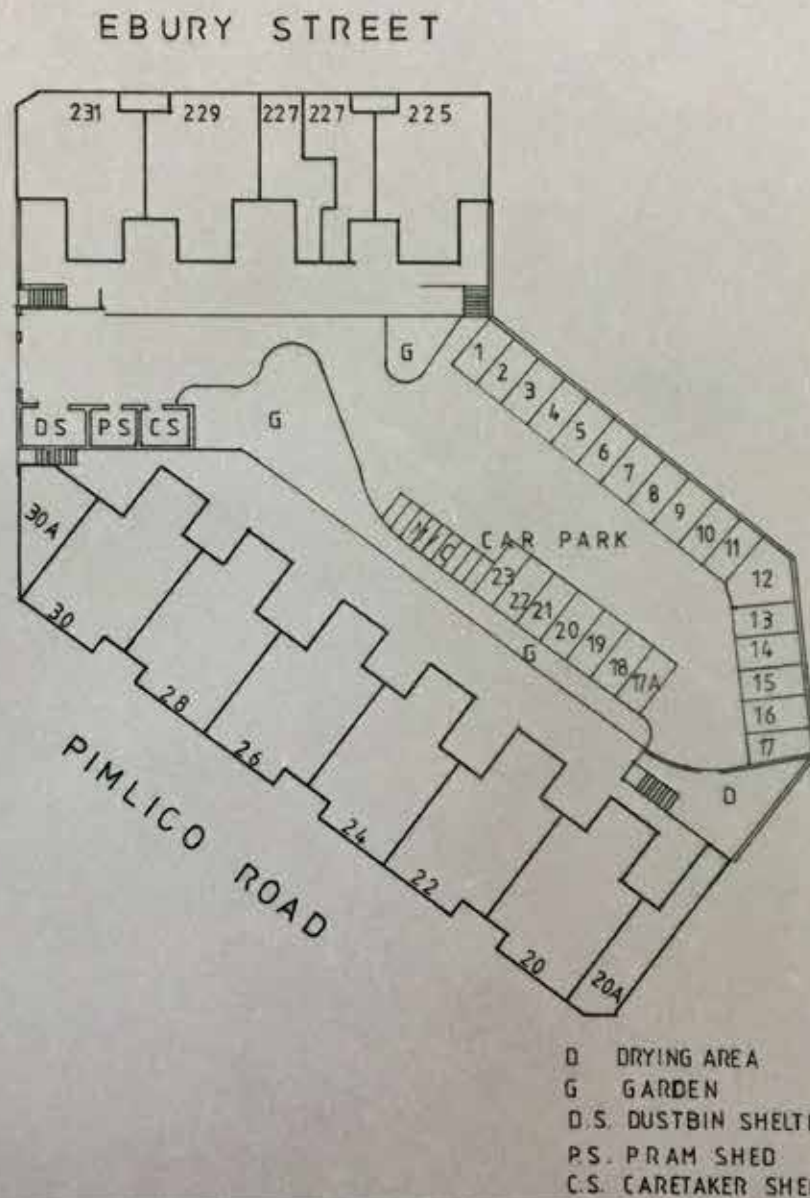
12 'NOS 20A, 20, 22 24, 26, 28, 30 AND 30A AND 45, 47, 49 TO 66, 67, 69, 71 TO 88, 91 AND 93 TO 110 COLESHILL FLATS', Historic England, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1265626> [accessed June 2018].



# The Grosvenor Estate

S.R.Coggan FRICS  
The Estate Surveyor

53 Davies Street London W1. 01-408 0988



Property  
**COLESHILL BUILDINGS**

Title  
**GROUND FLOOR**

Scale 1: 500

Date NOV. 83.

Ref. C.J.P.

Drawing No. CB.2.

This drawing is not to be scaled.  
All dimensions are to be checked  
on site and any discrepancy reported  
to the Estate Surveyor

2.15 Colehill Buildings, ground floor plan showing the development of a car park to the rear, 1983 (Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives).

## 2.3 Marquess of Westminster Memorial Drinking Fountain (1871)

### 2.3.1 History of the Drinking Fountain

The Drinking Fountain on the corner of Pimlico Road and Avery Farm Row was built in August 1871 by the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain Association at a cost of £500. The fountain was erected on behalf of the Marchioness of Westminster as a memorial to her late husband, Richard Grosvenor, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Westminster (1795-1869). Prior to his death in October 1868, Grosvenor had been a politician, landowner and property developer.

The fountain was erected in Pimlico, which formed part of the Grosvenor family's Belgravia Estate, and was prominently positioned on the southwest corner of a square plot bounded by Pimlico Road to the south, Avery Farm Row to the west, Bucking Palace Road to the east and St Michael's School to the north. This plot was wholly undeveloped at the time of the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map in 1869 **[Plate 2.16]**. During the 1870s the majority of the plot was developed as St Michael's Vicarage. There is little information about this vicarage and it is unclear which church it served, but it comprised a single building set within its own gardens. By the 1897 Ordnance Survey map, it appears that the fountain was developed separately to abut the boundary of the vicarage's garden; presumably to be publicly accessible at all times **[Plate 2.17]**. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Pimlico had emerged as a relatively working-class neighbourhood, which may suggest why the public fountain was built here

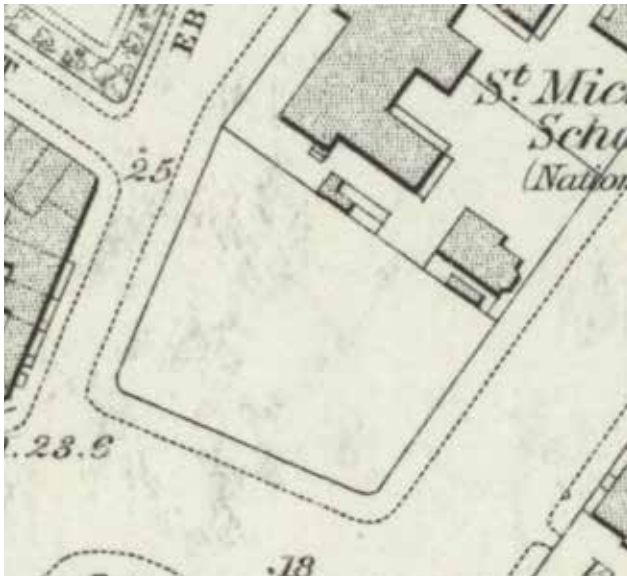
The fountain, which stood at the confluence of Avery Farm Row and Pimlico Road, was 18ft high and designed in an Italian Renaissance style using Portland stone and granite. According to Pevsner the fountain was designed by the Victorian architect Thomas Henry Wyatt (1807-1880).<sup>13</sup> The four faces of the drinking fountain featured enamel mosaics designed and executed by Salviati, a renowned Anglo-Italian firm of glassmakers and mosaicist with headquarters in Regent Street.<sup>14</sup> Following its construction, the Association agreed to maintain the structure, and in February 1876 the land on which the fountain stood was leased to them by the Marquess' successor, Hugh Grosvenor, 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Grosvenor. The Association paid a yearly peppercorn rent on the site of the drinking fountain and the Duke also contributed a £20 annual subscription to their funds. A 1913 watercolour by artist Ethel Woolmer shows the completed fountain within its original setting **[Plate 2.18]**.

In 1925, the City Engineer and Surveyor of Westminster City Council made recommendations to the Association for the repair of the fountain, which included replacing the original supply pipes with push valves and fixing an additional granite step to one of the basins for the use of small children. These repairs were subsequently paid for by the Grosvenor Estate, following consultation with the Association. After the 1925 repairs, the fountain appears to have been left untouched by both the Association and Grosvenor Estate and there is no further documentary evidence relating to the structure until after the Second World War.

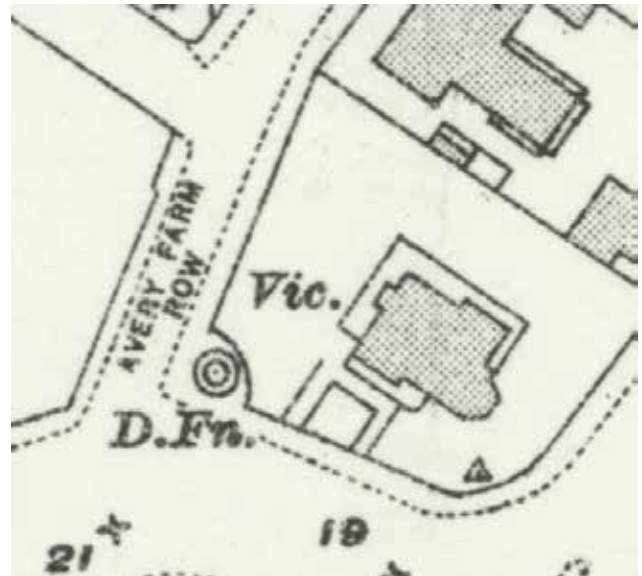
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13 Bradley, Pevsner, London 6: Westminster, p. 750.

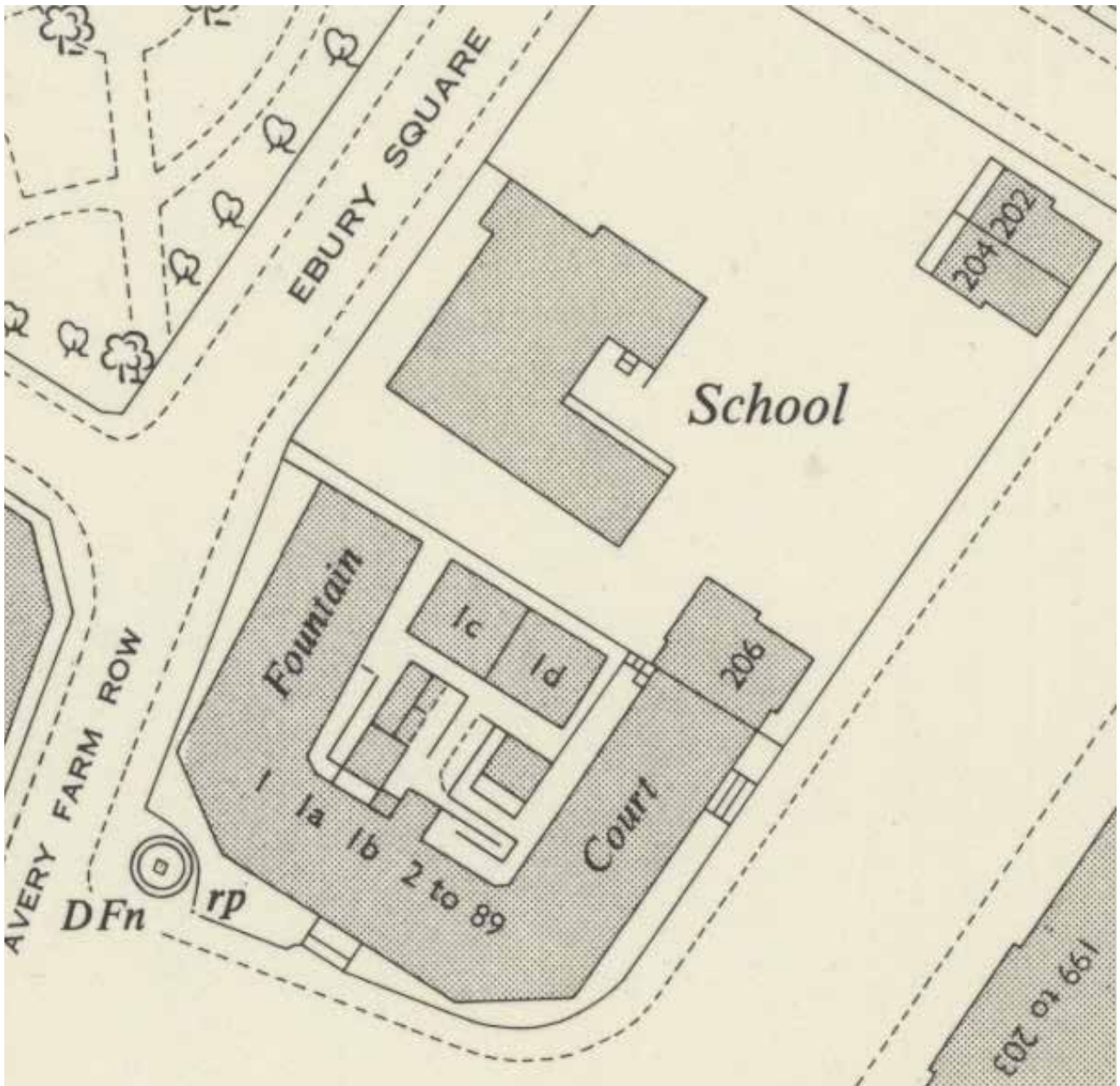
14 'Marquess of Westminster Memorial Fountain', The Salviati Architectural Mosaic Database, <http://salviatimosaics.blogspot.com/2015/02/marquess-of-westminster-memorial.html> [accessed February 2020].



2.16 1869 Ordnance Survey map.

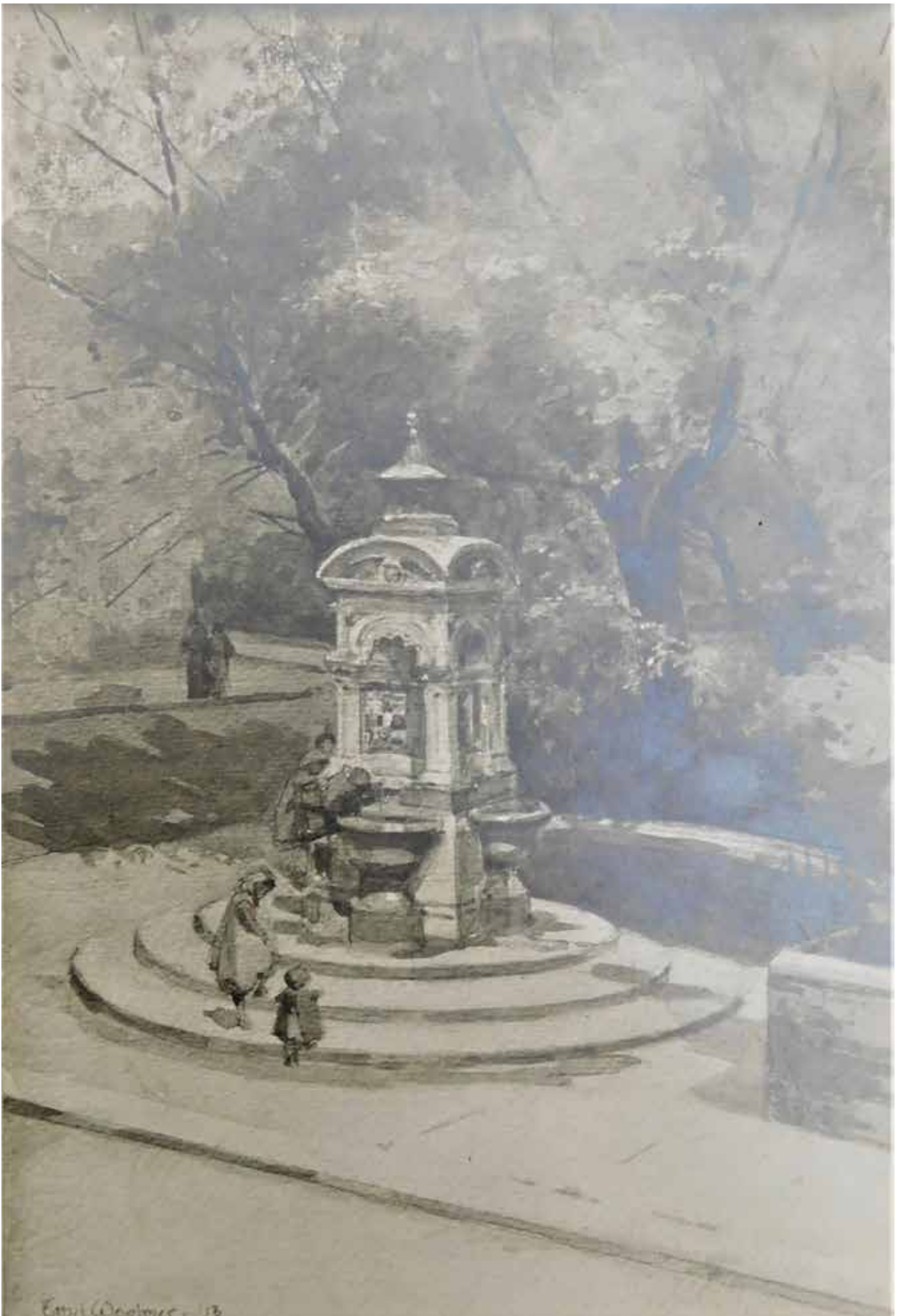


2.17 Location of the fountain shown in the 1897 Ordnance Survey map.



2.19 Fountain Court development shown in the 1951 Ordnance Survey map.





**2.18** Watercolour of the Marquess of Westminster Memorial Fountain by Ethel Woolmer, 1913 (Westminster City Archives).



In c.1933, the vicarage to the northeast of the fountain was demolished and the entire plot adjoining the fountain was redeveloped into a block of residential flats. Designed in a plain neo-Georgian style with redbrick elevations and stone dressings, the new block was named Fountain Court, presumably in reference to the adjoining fountain. Although the fountain itself was not altered as part of this redevelopment, the new building dramatically altered its townscape context **[Plate 2.19]**.

By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the fountain had fallen into disrepair. The Duke of Westminster's annual subscription to the Association is said to have ceased after his death in 1947.<sup>15</sup> In January 1958, the City Engineer and Surveyor wrote to the Grosvenor Estate expressing his concern regarding the defective base and steps, which were said to be in a 'potentially dangerous condition'. By this time the water supply to the basins was also recorded as having ceased.<sup>16</sup> One of the steps had broken away, leaving a void below, and temporary safety measures were taken to trestle it. Nevertheless, there was subsequently a protracted discussion between The Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association and the Grosvenor Estate over who was responsible for the fountain's ongoing maintenance. The Association also appealed to Westminster City Council for financial assistance but the City Engineer and Surveyor refused to make the necessary recommendations to the council, citing 'its condition and the changed conditions of life since it was erected in 1871'.<sup>17</sup>

No further steps were taken to restore the fountain until the 1960s. In March 1962, the Grosvenor Estate terminated Association's lease of the land on which the fountain stood. The lease was subsequently transferred to Westminster City Council, who stated their intention to clear away the drinking fountain and repave the site as a public highway. The Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association, which still owned the structure, sought to raise the funds to either restore or relocate it elsewhere. In July 1962, a survey of the fountain commissioned by the Association and conducted by contractors, F.C. Hoskins & Co., indicated the extent of the damage to the fountain **[Plate 2.20]**. Surplus water was found to have been flowing directly beneath the structure and causing unequal foundation subsidence. It was seen as necessary to renew the water service and fittings and to provide drainage to carry the surplus water into a public sewer. In addition, Westminster City Council required the granite bowls to be infilled to prevent rainwater collecting. Throughout this period, the chairman, Sir Hugh Gurney, wrote to a number of prominent figures including English poet John Betjeman, Minister of Public Buildings and Works Geoffrey Rippon, and newspaper publisher David L. Astor, to see if they would help with the fountain, but none were forthcoming. In October 1962, Westminster City Council officially wrote to the Association asking for the fountain to be removed.

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15 'Papers Concerning the Demolition of A Fountain In Pimlico, Westminster', London Metropolitan Archives, ACC/3168/210.

16 'Papers Concerning the Demolition of A Fountain In Pimlico, Westminster', London Metropolitan Archives, ACC/3168/210.

17 'Papers Concerning the Demolition of A Fountain In Pimlico, Westminster', London Metropolitan Archives, ACC/3168/210.



**2.20** photograph of the Memorial Fountain, c.1962 (London Metropolitan Archives).

However, following a plea from the Association, an extension was granted by Westminster City Council in November 1962 to the end of January 1963 for the removal of the fountain. By this time public pressure for the retention of the fountain had also begun to mount. In January 1963, an article in the West London Press claimed that the removal of the fountain, referred to as 'the only aesthetically pleasing structure remaining in Pimlico Road', was considered to be 'an act of vandalism' by local residents.<sup>18</sup> By March 1963, Westminster City Council had decided to restore the fountain at the public expense, albeit without the provision of drinking facilities. Ownership of the fountain was subsequently transferred by The Association to Westminster City Council in May 1963. Details of the resulting 1960s restoration are unclear, but it is likely that it was carried out by City Engineer and Surveyor in accordance with the concerns first highlighted in 1958. A 1976 photograph of the fountain shows the steps had been repaired, albeit badly, and the granite bowls infilled **[Plate 2.21]**. Part of finial on top of the fountain had also been removed.

No further alterations to the fountain are recorded for the remainder of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, in January 2018, planning permission was granted for 'Repairs to the substructure of the fountain and surrounding paving stones' (17/11142/COLBC). As part of these works, the stone slabs were removed for repair or replacement while ground improvements were undertaken. The stone slabs were subsequently refitted and repointed. No work was done to the fountain itself.

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18 'Papers Concerning the Demolition of A Fountain In Pimlico, Westminster', London Metropolitan Archives, ACC/3168/210.





**2.21** *Photograph of the Marquess of Westminster Memorial Drinking Fountain, Pimlico Road, 1976 (Collage).*

### 2.3.2 Metropolitan Drinking Fountain Association

The 'Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association' was set up by the MP and philanthropist, Samuel Gurney, and barrister, Edward Thomas Wakefield, to provide London's poor with a clean, fresh water supply. The Association was set up in response to the private water companies operating in London which often provided inadequate or contaminated water, as discovered by John Snow during the 1848-54 cholera epidemics. Although the Association was largely motivated by the need for a hygienic water supply, it was also supported by Temperance organisations and Evangelical Christians, who disliked the fact that beer was often more readily available and safer to drink than water.

The Association was inaugurated in 1859 and the first fountain opened on 21 April 1859 on the railings of the church of St Sepulchre-without-Newgate, on Snow Hill. Over the course of the next six years 85 fountains were built, but much of the funding came directly from Samuel Gurney and other members of the association, as donations were not sufficient. The majority of fountains were sited opposite public houses or next to churchyards, and designed to a simple standardised granite pattern. Wealthier patrons were able to commission more elaborate fountains, designed by well-known architects. During the 1860s the Association became concerned with animal welfare and, in collaboration with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, began building troughs across London for horses, cattle and dogs. The name of the Association was subsequently lengthened to include reference to Cattle Troughs.

By the 1870s, the Association was widely established and even Queen Victoria donated money to the cause. In 1879, Charles Dickens Jr.'s Dictionary of London featured the following entry for "Drinking Fountains":

*Until the last few years London was ill-provided with public drinking fountains and cattle troughs. This matter is now well looked after by the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association, which has erected and is now maintaining nearly 800 fountains and troughs, at which an enormous quantity of water is consumed daily. It is estimated that 300,000 people take advantage of the fountains on a summer's day, and a single trough has supplied the wants of 1,800 horses in one period of 24 hours. Several ornamental fountains have been provided by private munificence. Amongst these may be instanced the Baroness Burdett Coutts's beautiful fountains in Victoria-park and Regent's-park the Maharajah of Vizianagram's in Hyde-park; Mrs. Brown's, by Thornycroft, in Hamilton-place, Mr. Wheeler's at the north of Kew-bridge; and Mr. Buxton's at Westminster.<sup>19</sup>*

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the work of the Association declined in importance as private Victorian philanthropy was steadily replaced by improved public services at local government level.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the emphasis of the Association's work began to change. By 1936, it had stopped building troughs, as horses were replaced by cars and lorries. A smaller standard design of fountains for parks and schools was devised in 1929 and remains common. The Association survives as the Drinking Fountain Association and received

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19 Charles Dickens Jr., 'Dickens's Dictionary of London, 1879: An Unconventional Handbook', <https://www.victorianlondon.org/dickens/dickens-d.htm> [accessed February 2020].

a National Lottery grant in 2000 to continue building and restoring fountains. Despite the name, the Association has never restricted its work to the London area. It has been responsible for the construction of fountains all over the British Isles, as well as in such countries as Australia, Africa, Japan and Korea. It also delivers wells and other water projects in developing countries.

## **2.4 Arnrid Johnston Obelisk (c.1925)**

### **2.4.1 History of the Obelisk**

The obelisk which now stands in the courtyard of Walden House was designed and carved by Swedish sculptor, Arnrid Johnston (1895-1972), during the 1920s. Johnston had moved to London in 1914 to study at the Slade School of Art, where she remained until 1921, and subsequently forged a moderately successful career as a sculptor during the inter-war period. However, her work has not been well documented and there is limited evidence relating to the commission of the obelisk or the circumstances in which it was originally designed. Furthermore, despite being acquired by the Duke of Westminster during the late-1920s, there appears to be no mention of the obelisk within the Grosvenor Archives either. Instead, much of the evidence relating to the obelisk has been pieced together from a range of sources including archival documents and contemporaneous publications.

Walden House was built as council flats in 1924 to designs by architects Messrs Joseph for the City of Westminster, on land leased from the Grosvenor Estate. The block, which was named after Alderman Sir Robert Walden who had helped negotiate the donation of the land, was formally opened on 19 May 1924.<sup>20</sup> At the behest of the Grosvenor Estate, the flats were reserved for families with children and were fully self-contained with private WCs and bathrooms, sculleries, living rooms, and balconettes. An original plan of the development by Messrs Joseph shows the building comprised a mix of two-, three- and four-bedroom flats with a large courtyard to the rear featuring bike and pram stores and a communal drying room, all housed in a single-storey L-shaped block **[Plate 2.22]**. It is thought that the rear courtyard was 'intended to serve as a playground' for the children living in the flats, but this is not explicitly referenced in the plan, nor is there any mention of any planned civic art.<sup>21</sup> A photograph of Walden House from c.1924 shows the rear internal courtyard originally comprised an enclosed area of flat ground apparently covered with concrete **[Plate 2.23]**.

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20 'Arnrid Johnston Obelisk', Historic England, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1459927> [accessed February 2020].

21 'Arnrid Johnston Obelisk', Historic England, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1459927> [accessed February 2020].





**2.22** Walden House, ground floor plan by Messrs. Joseph, undated (Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre).



**2.23** Walden House, west elevation facing an internal courtyard, c.1920s (Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre).

The listing description describes the obelisk as being 'of about 1930', but it appears to have been designed some years before. In 1926, Johnston was sent a questionnaire by the art historian, Kineton Parkes, as part of his research for the third volume of his survey *Sculpture of Today*, asking for information about her career. Her response to the questionnaire, held at the V&A Museum's Archive of Art and Design, provides the earliest documentary evidence relating to the work, which Johnston originally entitled 'Children's Group'. Under 'Principal Works', Johnston provides the following description:

"'Children's Group' given by Duke of Westminster in playground of Walden House, Pimlico. Portland stone – 3 sided obelisk – with reliefs of children playing and at the base groups of animals in the round. The whole in a circular base of York stone and brick steps forming 3 seats. 8ft. high.'<sup>22</sup>

A photograph taken c.1926 shows the newly-carved Portland stone obelisk matching the structure installed at Walden House **[Plate 2.24]**.<sup>23</sup> However the photograph appears to have been taken while the structure was still in Johnston's studio. Interestingly, there are no inscriptions on the obelisk at this time and the 'circular base of York stone and brick steps' as described by Johnston were not there either – suggesting that these were intended to be added later. This photograph was reproduced in Kineton Parkes' 1931 *The Art of Carved Sculpture*, in which he described how the sculpture had taken Johnston four years to carve and, at the time, comprised 'Her most important work'.<sup>24</sup>

The 'Children's Group' obelisk appears to have been one of Johnston's first major works since leaving the Slade. The list description claims that it was specifically commissioned to form the centrepiece of the Walden House courtyard.<sup>25</sup> However, the sculpture was initially displayed in an Exhibition of British Decorative Art at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1925, presumably in the form shown in the c.1926 photograph. Walden House had been completed in 1924 and it seems odd that the obelisk was first exhibited at Whitechapel before being relocated to Pimlico. Furthermore, it appears as though the original scheme for Walden House did not include any civic art in the rear yard. However, it is clear from Johnston's own c.1926 description of the work that the obelisk was acquired by the Duke of Westminster specifically for the playground of Walden House. Furthermore, 'Children's Group' was particularly suited to a playground setting; both in its depiction of children playing and in the form of its eventual circular base, which was designed to provide seating.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, it remains unclear as to whether Arnrid Johnston was specifically commissioned by the Duke of Westminster from the outset to design the obelisk as the centrepiece of the playground at the newly-built Walden House, as claimed in the list description; or if the Duke of Westminster acquired the obelisk for the Walden House playground after seeing it exhibited at Whitechapel in 1925.

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22 'Johnston, Arnrid Banniza, 1924-26', V&A Archive of Art and Design, AAD/1990/12.

23 Kineton Parkes, *The Art of Carved Sculpture*, Volume 1: Western Europe, America and Japan (Chapman and Hall: London, 1931), p.125.

24 Kineton Parkes, *The Art of Carved Sculpture*, Volume 1: Western Europe, America and Japan (Chapman and Hall: London, 1931), p.125.

25 'Arnrid Johnston Obelisk', Historic England, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1459927> [accessed February 2020].

26 'Arnrid Johnston Obelisk', Historic England, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1459927> [accessed February 2020].



**2.24** Photograph of the 'Children's Group' obelisk by Arnrid Johnston, c.1926 (V&A Archives).



Irrespective of the obelisk's provenance, it has remained in the same location within the courtyard of Walden House since 1930, and has been left relatively unchanged. Although there are no recorded instances of alterations to the obelisk, on-site investigations have revealed evidence of several ad hoc interventions over the years to repair elements of the structure that have been damaged or weathered. Furthermore, many of the inscriptions on the obelisk have now completely weathered away and are no longer legible.

#### **2.4.2 Arnrid Banniza Johnston (1895-1972)**

Arnrid Banniza Johnston was born in Uddevalla, Sweden, in 1895 to Arthur Sannox Johnston (1863-1929), a corn and grain merchant, and his wife Lily Ann. Arnrid Johnston moved to London in 1914 to study at the Slade School of Art under the tutorship of renowned sculptor James Havard Thomas (1854-1921). She studied at the Slade from 1914-1917 and returned in 1919-1921. During the 1920s and 1930s, Johnston established herself as a prolific sculptor, carving in a variety of materials, and was widely exhibited alongside distinguished contemporaries such as Moore, Hepworth, Skeaping, Lambert and Gertrude Hermes. However, unlike many of her contemporaries, there is relatively little information relating to Johnston's life, and her legacy has largely been forgotten.

Johnston's oeuvre, which came to span sculpture, posters, and illustrated books, was predominantly connected by her love and understanding of animals. 'Children's Group' (c.1925, Grade II), the three-sided obelisk in Portland stone for Walden House, Pimlico, depicted children playing with a base featuring groups of animals in the round. The 'Children's Group' obelisk was considered by art historian Kineton Parkes to be her most important work and, to date, is the only one of her works to be listed.<sup>27</sup> Her other notable works included St. Francis (1921, mahogany); Resting Horses (1922, York grey stone); and the low-relief Pastoral (1923, blue Belgian marble). However, these carvings were presumably private commissions and their present whereabouts are unknown. Her sculpture 'In Pasture' (1930, green serpentine) was exhibited at The London Group's open-air Garden Sculpture Exhibition on Selfridge's Roof Garden in 1930. During the 1930s and 1940s, Johnston was an active member of the The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, which promoted the exhibition of decorative arts alongside fine arts.

In the late 1920s, Johnston began designing posters for the Underground Group and London Transport. Her London Transport posters include several for London Zoo, showcasing her great talents as an animal artist. Between the early 1930s and early 1950s she wrote and/or illustrated over twenty books, spanning fiction and non-fiction. Many of these concerned animals, which she meticulously researched. Amongst her better-known titles were 'Animal Families', 'Animals We Use', 'Animals of India', and 'Fables From Aesop and Others'. Towards the end of her working life she began illustrating the fables of La Fontaine, but her eyesight started to deteriorate and made it impossible for her to continue. She subsequently learned to weave, and continued to produce tapestries until the end of her

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27 Kineton Parkes, *The Art of Carved Sculpture, Volume 1: Western Europe, America and Japan* (Chapman and Hall: London, 1931), p.125.

life. Annrid Johnston died in England on 13 July 1972. In her obituary H.J. Blackham said 'her many friends found her robust generous personality as characterful as her animals.'<sup>28</sup>

## **2.5 Orange Square & K6 telephone kiosks**

Orange Square is a triangular open space at the southern tip of the study site, where Ebury Street joins Pimlico Road. Originally occupied by a small orchard and market garden, shown in Rocque's 1746 map, by the time of Horwood's 1792-99 map the area had been developed with terraced houses facing Five Field Row (later Ebury Street) and King Street (later redeveloped as part of the Coleshill Buildings) with gardens to the rear extending to Queen Street (later Pimlico Road). The Orange Brewery public house, which still exists today, was built on the opposite side of Queen Street in 1846 and it is presumably from this pub that the Square takes its name. By 1865, the gardens to the rear of the houses fronting Ebury Street and King Street had also been developed into residential terraced housing. Another public house, The Three Compasses, had been built at the corner where Ebury Street and Queen Street met.

It appears from the 1894 Ordnance Survey map, that the early residential development on Orange Square was cleared away around the same time that the neighbouring houses to the north-east were demolished to make way for the Coleshill Buildings (1868-70). The completion of the Coleshill Buildings and the new slip road to the south served to separate Orange Square from the neighbouring built development, and created its present form. Rather than being redeveloped, the Square was planted with trees and converted into a public space.

During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Square acquired a series of public utilities including a pair of K6 telephone kiosks at the junction with Ebury Street, built in 1935 to designs by Giles Gilbert Scott (listed Grade II in 1987), along with seating and lavatories.

In 1991, the Grosvenor Estate erected a statue of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in Orange Square to commemorate the bicentenary of his death. Orange Square was chosen due to its proximity to 180 Ebury Street, where Mozart had composed his first symphony in 1764. The Grosvenor Estate commissioned Donald Insall Associates (DIA) to carry out a series of improvements to Orange Square to create a more suitable setting for the statue. DIA's scheme introduced new paving, screening walls and brick planters to form an enclosure for seating focused away from the busy Pimlico Road. Additional tree planting was implemented around the perimeter of the Square. Following a competition, the Mozart statue was designed by Philip Jackson, FRBS, and placed on a Portland-stone cylindrical Doric plinth on the Ebury Street side of the Square, with No.180 in the background. The statue was unveiled on 21 September 1994 by Princess Margaret and the refurbished square was opened to the public.

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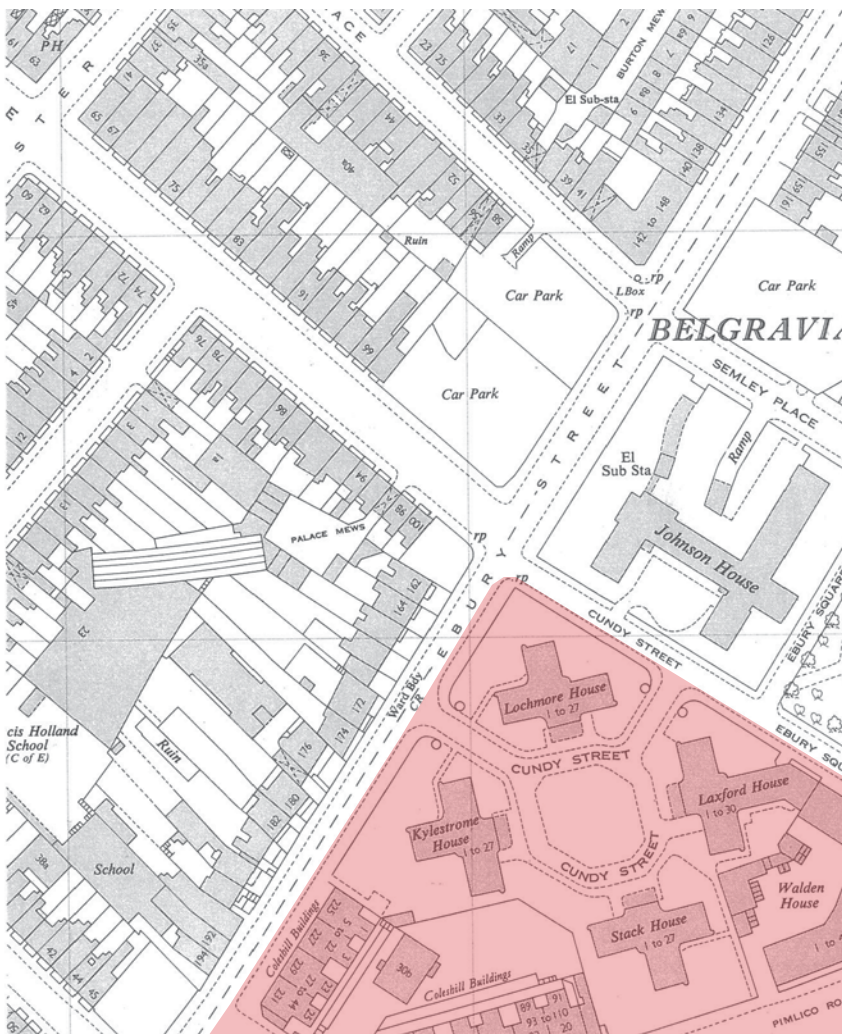
28 'Miss Annrid Banniza Johnston', Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951, University of Glasgow History of Art (2011), [http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib2\\_1207091620](http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib2_1207091620) [accessed February 2020].

## 2.6 Cundy Street Flats

### 2.6.1 The Buildings

The site, which had been built up with terraced residential buildings with rear outbuildings since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, was redeveloped for housing to designs by Thomas Penberthy Bennett & Son, with the assistance of Gilbert P. Scott as consultant architect, and built by Taylor Woodrow Construction Ltd between 1950 and 1952.

The development involved four blocks at high density on a restricted site of approximately triangular layout, resulting from the bomb damage clearance and the demolition of seven terraced houses adjacent to the Coleshill Flats on Ebury Street. The layout was based on the use of a quasi-cruciform plan form for each of the four blocks and a height of 70 feet, in order to achieve an impression of space and perspective and, at the same time, a variety of views from the flats. The footprint of the new scheme is shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1953 [Plate 2.25].



**2.25** Detail of Ordnance Survey map showing the footprint of the Cundy Street Flats scheme, 1953



Original drawings by T P Bennett & Son illustrating the floor plans of the four separate buildings are kept in the Grosvenor Estate Archive [Plates 2.26a-d]. Ground and typical floor plans were published in the 1953 issue of *The Builder* [Plates 2.27a-b].<sup>29</sup> Westminster City Archives Centre holds a site plan showing the landscaping scheme for the communal grounds with car parking at the centre and soft landscaping around the buildings [Plate 2.28].<sup>30</sup> The archive also stores historical photographs showing the buildings in different phases of their construction between 1950 and 1952 [Plates 2.29a-g].<sup>31</sup> The London Metropolitan Archives holds structural plans for proposed steelwork.<sup>32</sup>

Each of the blocks forming the Cundy Street Flats scheme consisted of ground and six upper storeys, including 109 flats in all, subdivided into 32 three-bedrooms, 52 two-bedrooms and 25 one-bedroom apartments. The north, west and south blocks, denominated Lochmore, Kylestrome, and Stack Houses, respectively, were identical in shape; the one located to the east, Laxford House, was slightly modified in order to link with Walden House, creating a virtually continuous and satisfactory elevational treatment to Ebury Square.

The editorial of the aforementioned 1953 issue of the *Builder* stated that

*'it was specially requested that the elevational treatment should harmonise with the eighteenth-century buildings on the other side of Ebury Street.'*<sup>33</sup>

This may explain the use of hand-made Buckinghamshire brick cladding and six-over-six timber sashes for the external envelope. Not surprisingly, Pevsner commented somewhat disparagingly on the eclectic nature of the design as follows:

*These funny creatures have the upright profiles and coloured cylindrical columns of the fifties, with the long rounded balconies of the thirties used to create a kind of vertical crenellation, and sashes of early Georgian pattern.*<sup>34</sup>

Structurally, the buildings consisted of steel frames on mass concrete foundations with solid concrete floors and staircases. The main entrance to each block was oriented inwards towards the central car park, located on their shorter wings below porches supported by squat cylindrical columns clad in yellow faience-glazed tiles. The core was located in the centre of the plan, at the junction of the four arms of the cross, and included a staircase and an automatic lift. The circular staircase shaft, serving all floor levels, projected slightly outwards at the intersection of the orthogonal planes of two arms while rounded balconies added an organic flair and points of visual interest to the frontages overlooking the main streets. Dust chute columns clad with faience-glazed tiles, matching those used for the entrance porches, were located in the central section of the balconies. Each arm of the four blocks was occupied by an entire flat. This plan guaranteed triple exposure, cross ventilation, and acoustic insulation. All flats had also access to a private balcony.

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29 The *Builder* (August 21, 1953), p. 278.

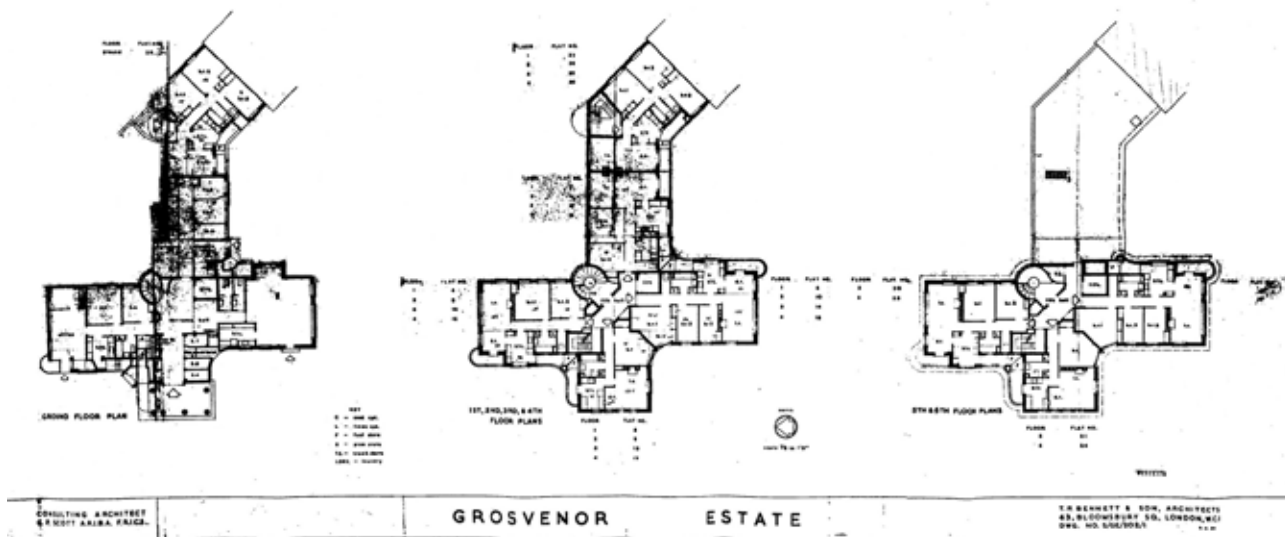
30 Westminster City Archives Centre, 2530/111.

31 Westminster City Archives Centre, 1049/14/124-159.

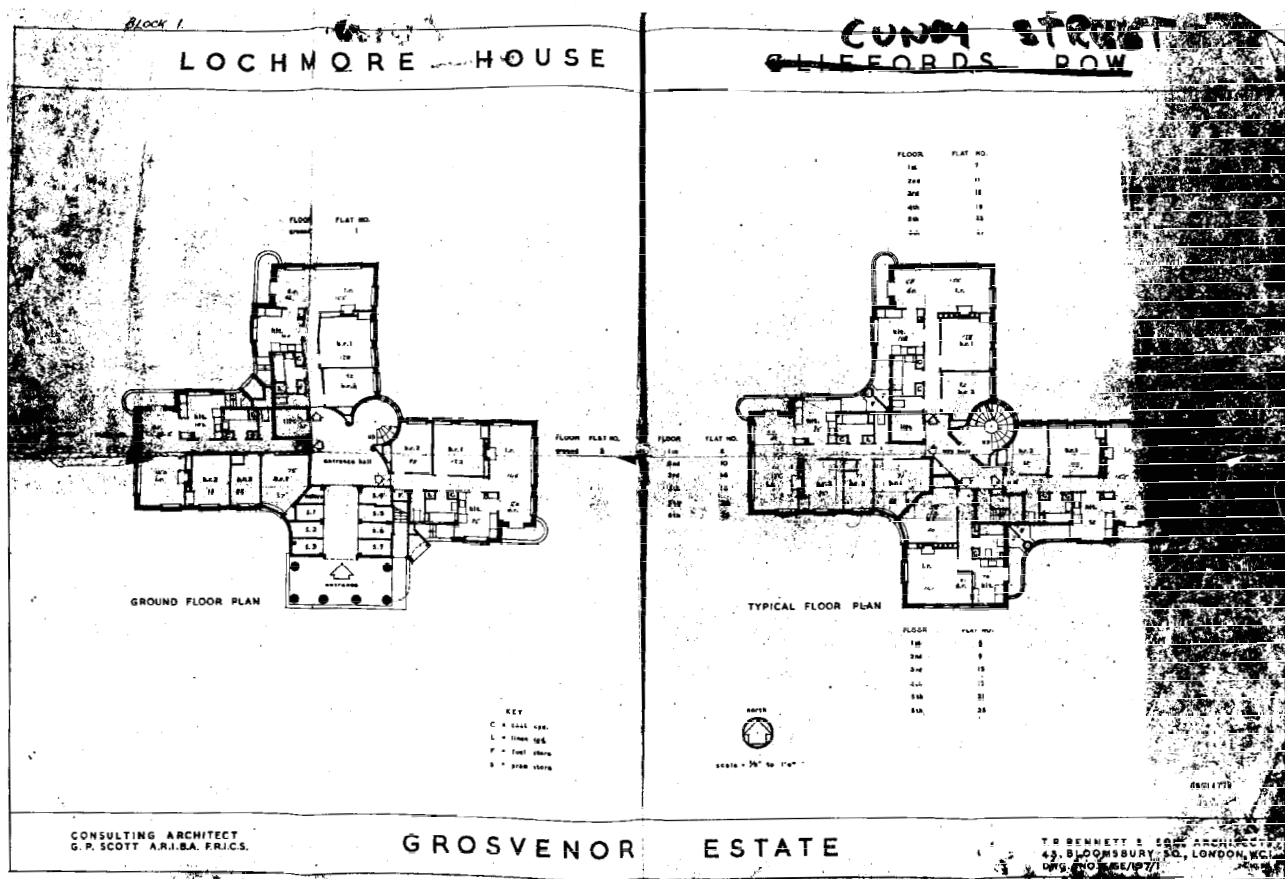
32 London Metropolitan Archive, GLC/AR/BR/06/079132.

33 The *Builder* (August 21, 1953), p. 278.

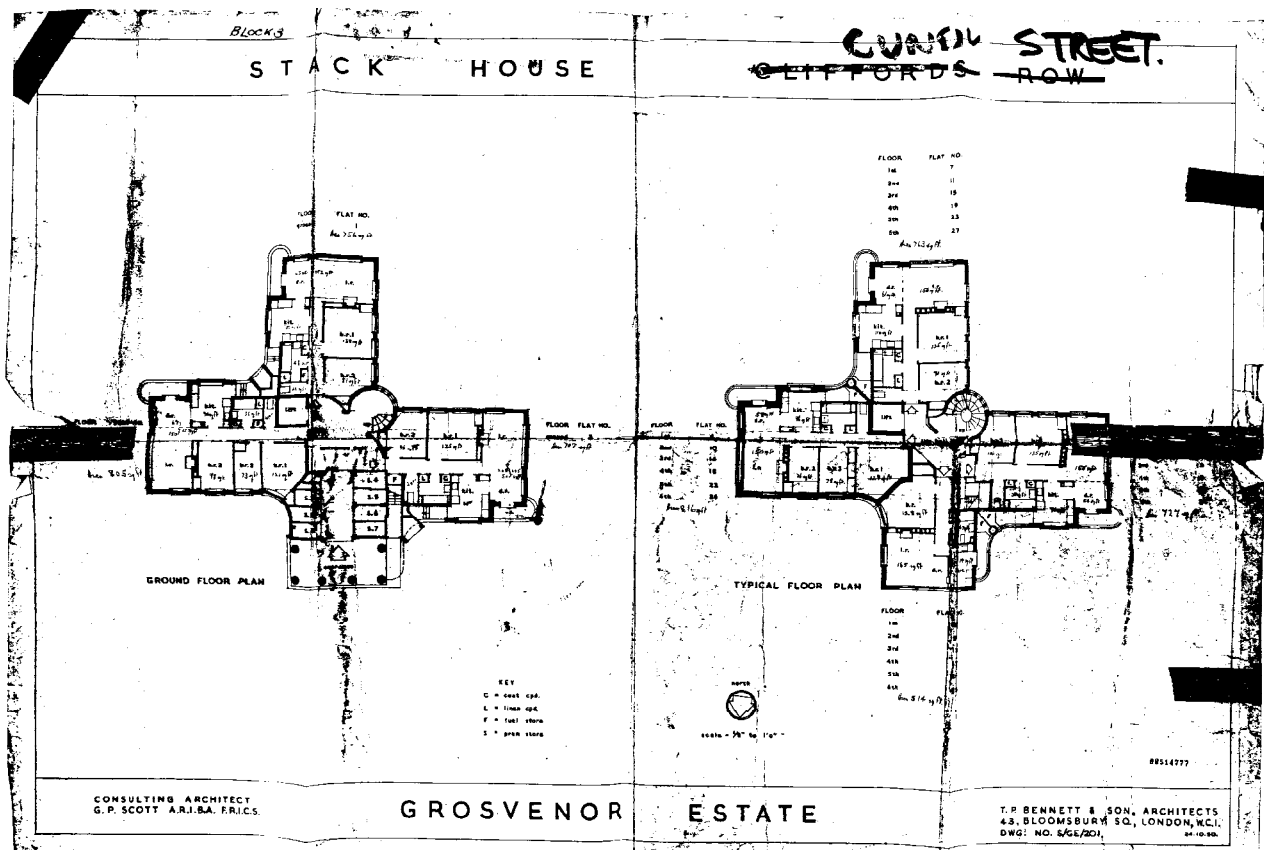
34 Simon Bradley, Nikolaus Pevsner, *London 6: Westminster* (New Haven and London, 2003), p. 751.



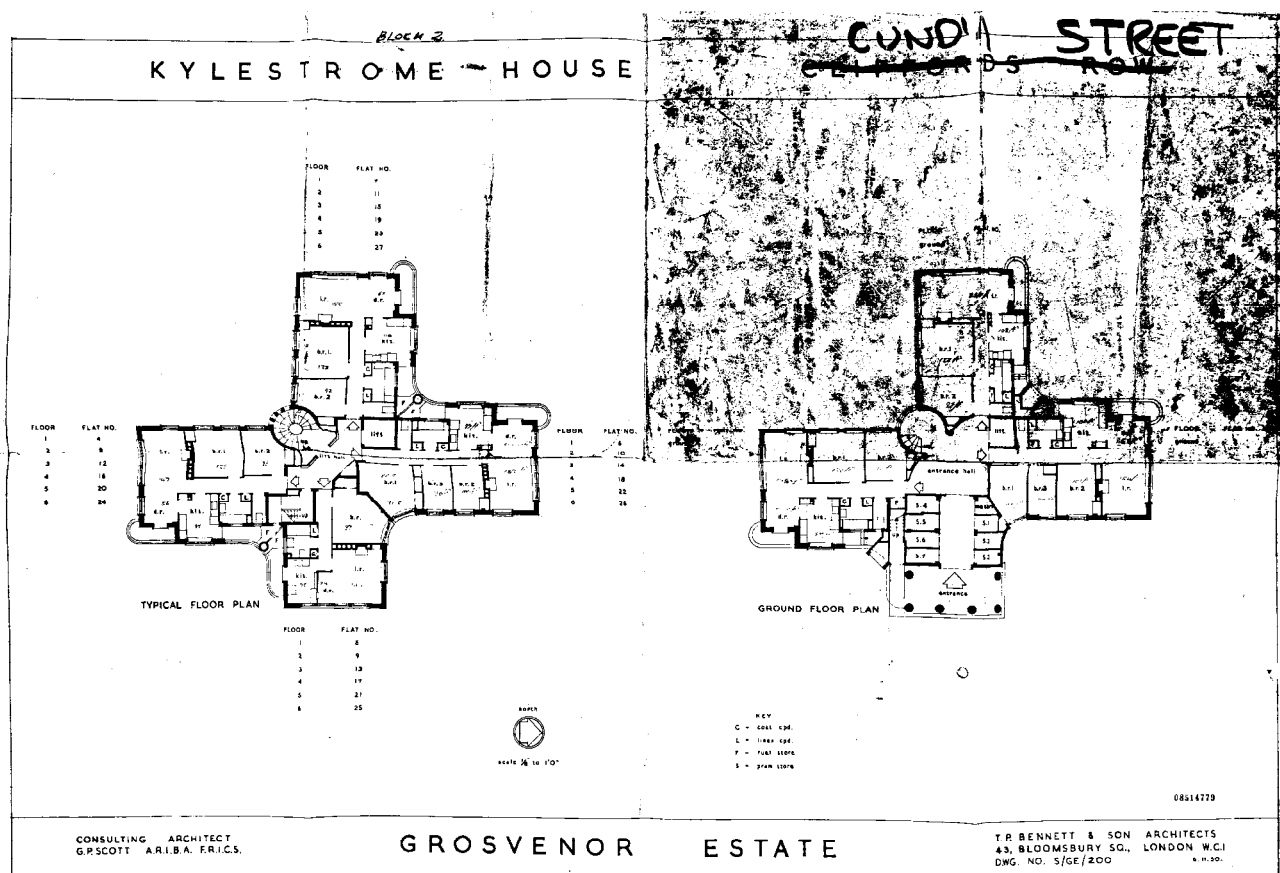
2.26a. Cundy Street Flats, redevelopment scheme by T.P. Bennett and Son, 1950-53, ground floor; first, second, third and fourth floor, and fifth and sixth floor plans of Laxford House, 1950 [Grosvenor Estate Archive]



2.26b. Cundy Street Flats, redevelopment scheme by T.P. Bennett and Son, 1950-53, ground and typical floor plan of Lochmore House, 1950 [Grosvenor Estate Archive].

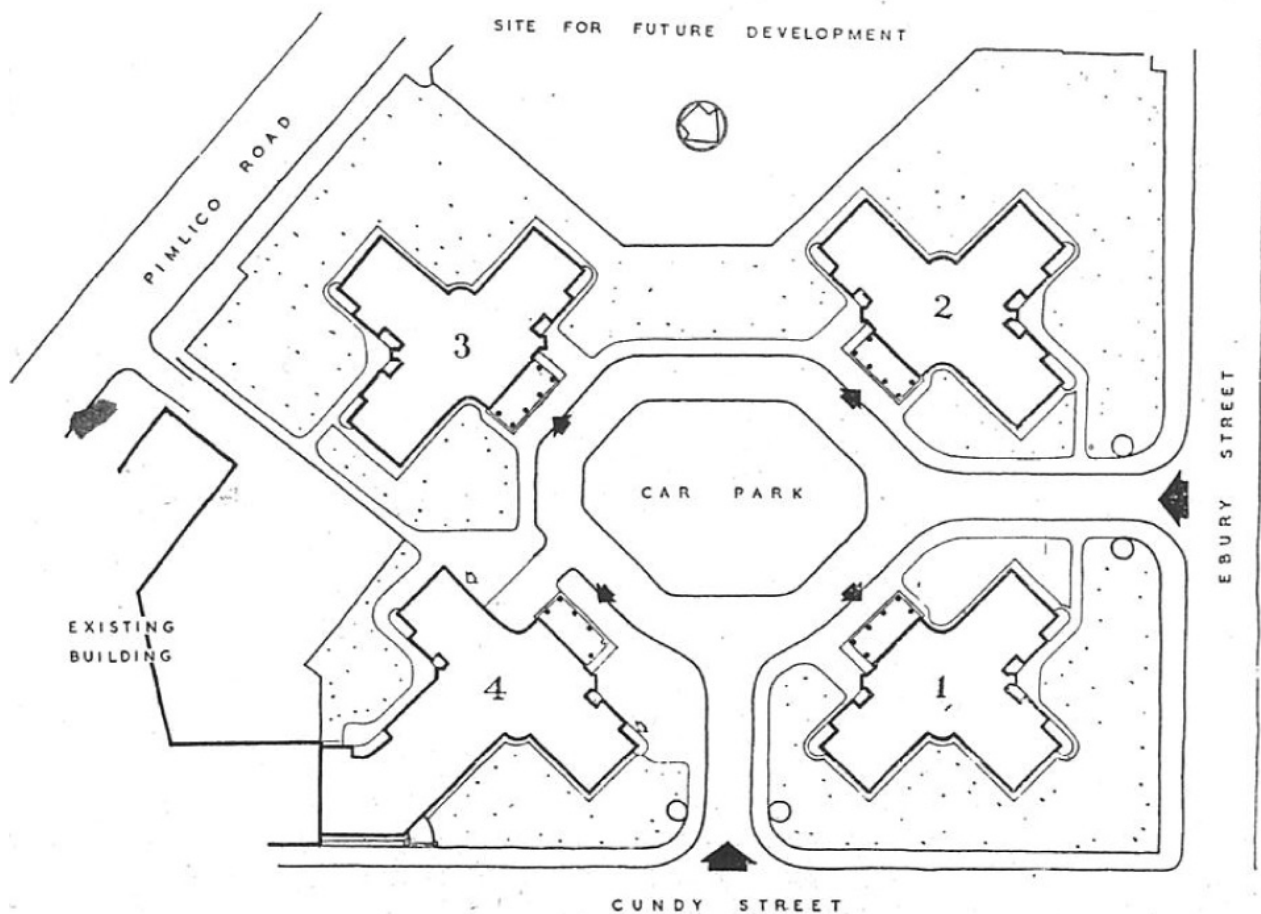


2.26c. Cundy Street Flats, redevelopment scheme by T.P. Bennett and Son, 1950-53, ground and typical floor plan of Stack House, 1950 [Grosvenor Estate Archive].

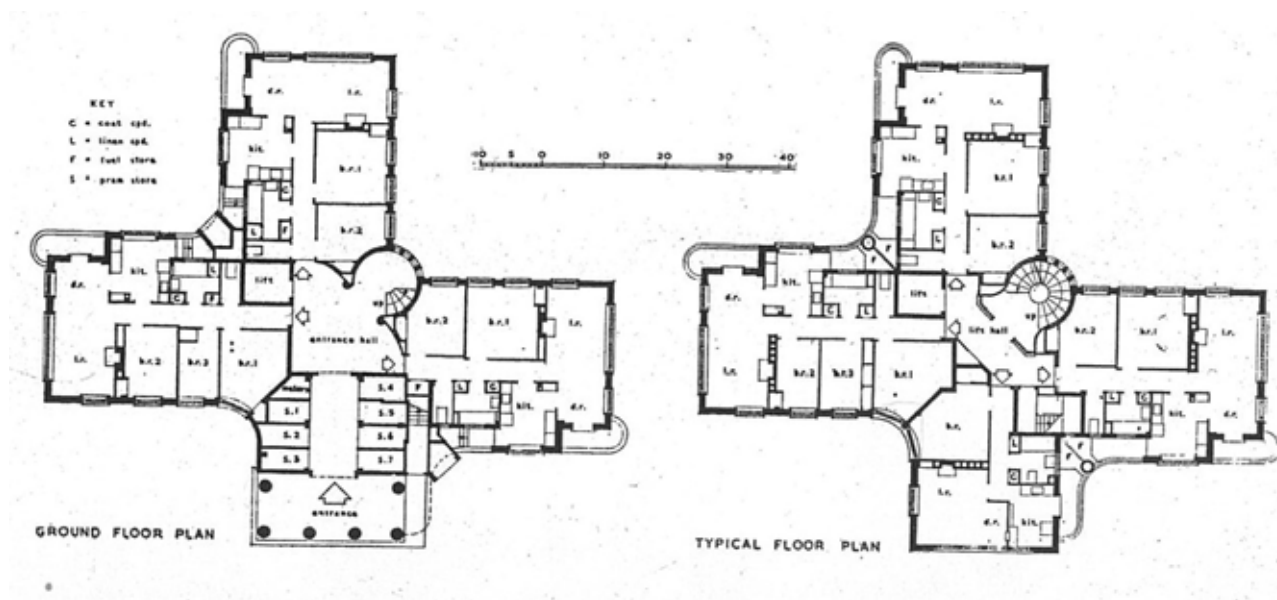


2.26d. Cundy Street Flats, redevelopment scheme by T.P. Bennett and Son, 1950-53, ground and typical floor plan of Kylestrome House, 1950 [Grosvenor Estate Archive].

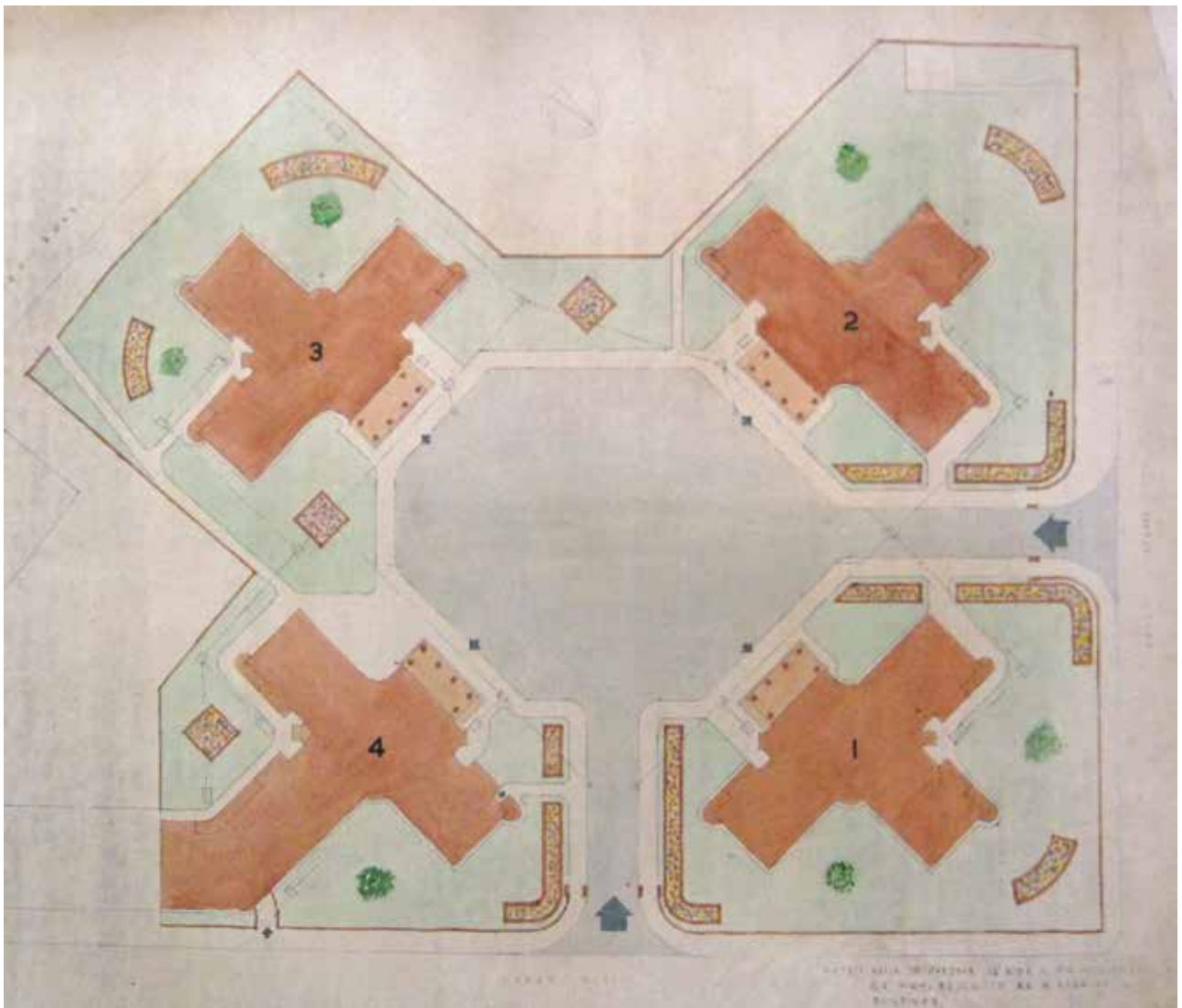




2.27a. Cundy Street Flats site plan, published in *Builder*, 1953.



2.27b. Cundy Street Flats, ground and typical floor plan, published in *Builder*, 1953.



**2.28.** Cundy Street Flats, plan of landscaping scheme for communal grounds, 1951 [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].



**2.29a.** *Cundy Street Flats, historical photograph showing building site looking north, 1950 [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].*



**2.29b.** *Cundy Street Flats, historical photograph showing building site from Cundy Street, 1950 [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].*





**2.29c.** Cundy Street Flats, historical photograph showing building site looking north-west, 1950 [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].



**2.29d.** Cundy Street Flats, historical photograph showing building site looking north-east, 1951 [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].





**2.29e.** Cundy Street Flats, historical photograph showing building site looking west towards Ebury Street, 1951 [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].



**2.29f.** Cundy Street Flats, historical photograph showing building site looking north-east towards Cundy Street, 1951 [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].



**2.29g.** Cundy Street Flats, historical photograph showing completed site looking south-west, 1952 [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].



**2.29h.** Cundy Street Flats, historical photograph showing completed site looking west towards Ebury Street, 1952 [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].



One block, Lochmore House, contained the porter's office and flat, a small communal laundry, baggage store, and community room which, together with a small kitchen and separate lavatories, could be hired by tenants. Several features of the Cundy Street Flats were a clear legacy of Bennett's surviving earlier residential blocks of the thirties, including Eyre Court, Finchley Road; Marsham Court, Westminster; and Dorset House, Marylebone Road, which was listed Grade II in 1998.

The interior finishes in the Cundy Street Flats included ceramic tiles for the entrance lobby and terrazzo for the entrance hall and first flight of stairs, whilst the upper flights were covered with granolithic tiles. The flats had hardwood block floors with the exception of kitchen and WCs covered with Semastic tiles. The staircase included a simple steel balustrade and polished hardwood handrail. Partitions between private and public areas were acoustically insulated cavity walls lined with fibreboard pads. The flat-section roofs were covered in asphalt. Windows to all living rooms and bedrooms were double hung timber sashes; timber casements were installed to kitchens, and Crittall steel casements to bathrooms and WCs. All dressings were in Portland stone. The flats were equipped with modern conveniences, including central heating from a central boiler house; gas multipoint heaters provided hot water; outlets for television and wireless aerial system were located in each living room.

The 1991 Ordnance Survey map does not record any changes to the original layout of the Cundy Street Flats site **[Plate 2.30]**. Internal alterations to layouts of individual flats, involving repartitioning and replacement of joinery fittings and windows, are recorded on drainage plans of the 1960s stored at Westminster City Archives Centre. No historical planning files for the study site are kept at Westminster City Planning Department.

When the Belgravia Conservation Area was designated in 1968 the Cundy Street Flats, along with Ebury Square, were excluded, presumably because they did not fit with the distinctive character of cream stucco terraces, spacious streets and the verdant garden squares to the north and west. The Cundy Street Flats now sit adjoining the east boundary of this conservation area.

### **2.6.2 The Architect: Sir Thomas Penberthy Bennett (1887-1980)**

Sir Thomas P. Bennett's seventy-year career as an architect was assessed in his Obituary published in the *RIBA Journal* in 1980 as follows:

*He will be remembered more as an efficient and clear thinking organiser of the building team and an outstanding public servant, than an avant garde designer. Among his clients, his reputation for efficiency, determination and energy were legendary. Thus he helped enhance the image of the architect in the eyes of the world at large, if not his own image in the eyes of the profession's upper hierarchy of that time in the 50s and 60s when his private practice of T.P. Bennett and Partners was producing a succession of buildings of various types.<sup>35</sup>*

After starting his practical education in 1901 as junior assistant in the Chief Architect's department of the old London & North Western Railway at Euston, Bennett attended the Royal Academy Schools where he was awarded, among other prizes, a silver medal for sculpture. In 1911 he

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35 T.P. Bennett's Obituary in *RIBA Journal* (April 1980), 29.



2.30. Ordnance Survey map, 1991.

entered the Office of Works and, during the war, supervised the erection of emergency hutting in France and Wales. At the end of war he became Chief Assistant to Méwès and Davies Architects, and in 1921 he set up his own practice. The office was later re-named T P Bennett & Son when Thomas's son, Philip (1919-2004), became partner in 1948. About the time of the establishment of his office, Bennett was appointed Head of the School of Architecture, Surveying and Building at the Northern Polytechnic Institute in Holloway, North London, becoming a recognised authority on technical education. During the Second World War, Bennett left his Partners in charge of the established practice to take on a series of public roles, first as Controller of Bricks in 1940, then as Director of Works at the Ministry of Works in 1941, and finally as Controller of Temporary Housing in 1944.

Bennett & Son's commissions covered several sectors, from residential flats (Eyre Court, Princes Gate Court, Dorset House, Westminster Gardens, Marsham Court, etc.) to office blocks (Great Westminster House, Neville House, Cleland House, Atlantic House, etc.), multiple commercial buildings (John Barnes department store, Finchley Road; Poultry Market, Smithfield), banks for the Westminster Bank and Barclays, hospitals (including King Edward VII Hospital for Officers), and cinemas (Saville Theatre; Odeon, Haverstock Hill). Bennett strongly believed in the relationship between sculpture and architecture, employing sculptors and artists such as Eric Gill and Gilbert Bayes on many of his jobs. He also published a monograph on *The Relation of Architecture and Sculpture*.

T P Bennett & Son was particularly renowned for sound contract management and financial control, as stressed in an editorial of *The Times*:

*Though designer of many well known buildings – among them the Saville theatre; the John Barnes store; Eyre Court Flats in the Finchley Road; and offices and flats such as Marsham Court and Westminster Gardens in the Horseferry Road area – Bennett was never “an architect’s architect”, holding unfashionably to the view that good architecture is rooted in good building supported by clear purpose and firm contract administration.<sup>36</sup>*

Thomas Bennett was knighted in 1946 and became a KBE in 1954. Between 1947 and 1960 he was appointed Chairman of the Development Corporation Crawley, Sussex, one of the first New Towns, and also of Stevenage Development Corporation from 1951 to 1953. Following Sir Thomas' retirement in 1967, the firm was led by his son, Phillip, along with a team of partners, until 1979. The practice, which was rebranded 'tp bennett', grew considerably towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and became a Limited Liability Partnership in 2005.

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36 The Times (31 January 1980).



## 2.7 Walden House

Walden House was built as flats in 1924 by the City of Westminster to designs by architects Messrs Joseph on land leased from the Grosvenor Estate.

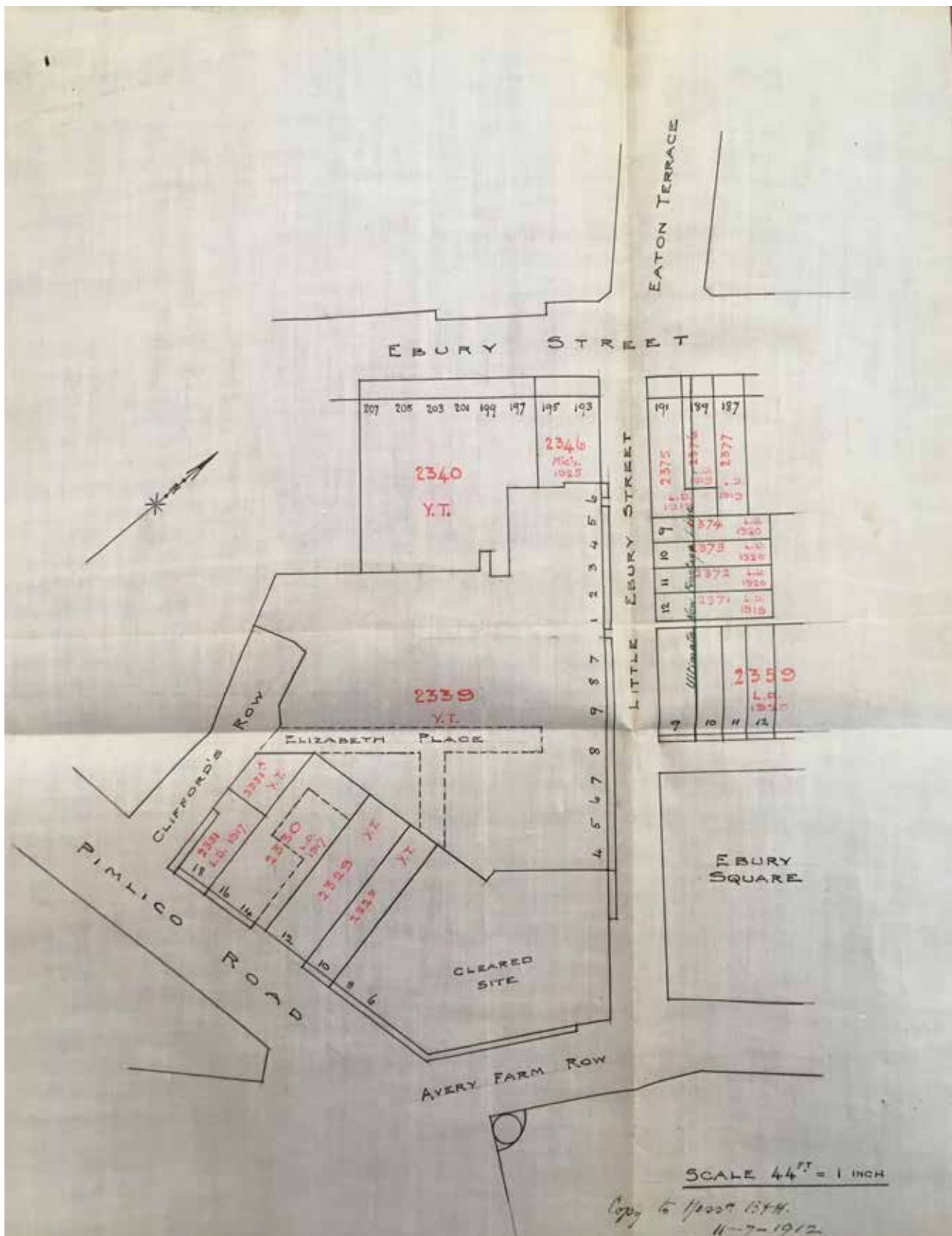
The site, which occupies an irregular plan created by the intersection of historic lanes and field boundaries, was first developed in the late-18<sup>th</sup> century with small houses. The area remained relatively open in the early nineteenth century, but had been densely built up by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Booth's poverty map shows houses on the site as red, "fairly comfortable, good ordinary earnings" [see Plate 2.31]. The Walden House site was cleared by the Grosvenor Estate in 1912 [Plate 2.32]. However, the 1919 Ordnance Survey map shows the site remained vacant until after the First World War.



2.31 Charles Booth's Map Descriptive of London Poverty, 1898-9 [LSE].

Redevelopment of the site did not begin until October 1921 when, following a lull in central government funding for local authority housing, the Duke of Westminster offered the site to the City of Westminster Council (WCC) for rebuilding. WCC subsequently commissioned Messrs Joseph (the successors to architects Joseph and Smith) to undertake a feasibility study for a four storey block of flats.<sup>37</sup> Following the introduction of new housing subsidies by Neville Chamberlain's Housing Act of 1923, which was first introduced in April of that year, Messrs Joseph's scheme received funding. A loan of £26,775 in respect of the State Housing scheme was advanced to Westminster from the London County Council. Walden House was formally opened on 19 May 1924 and named after Alderman Sir Robert Walden, who had helped negotiate the donation of the land.

37 Montagu Evans, 'Walden House Pimlico Road: Certificate of Immunity from Listing Application' (May 2008), p. 18.



Photographs of the building from the 1920s show the Pimlico Road, Avery Farm Row and Little Ebury Street facades **[Plates 2.33a-d]**. The elevations were all relatively plain, and faced with red brick throughout, with a continuous stone string band at first floor level and a brick cornice at fifth floor level. The Avery Farm Row elevation comprised nine bays of flat-arched sash windows over five storeys. The remaining elevations, all five storeys, comprised similar fenestration but also featured long, grilled central balcony openings flanked by two small casement windows. On the external elevations, the end two bays on the Pimlico Road and Little Ebury Street elevations were slightly advanced and the fifth floors windows were positioned inside a broken pediment. This arrangement was repeated with two central bays in the Avery Farm Row elevation. A photograph of the five-storey west elevation indicates that the main entrances to the flats were not from the surrounding streets but from an internal courtyard **[Plate 2.34]**. These entrances were marked with advanced five-storey bays, which were flanked by balcony openings and small casement windows.

The floor plans were similar across all five storeys of the main building, and comprised a mix of two-, three- and four-bedroom flats, while the rear courtyard housed bike and pram stores, and a communal drying room arranged into a single-storey L-shaped block **[Plate 2.35]**. The flats were fully self-contained and had private W/Cs and bathrooms, sculleries, living rooms, and balconettes.

Unlike the neighbouring properties to the north on Ebury Square, the building only experienced minor damage during the Second World War. When the Cundy Street Flats were built in 1950-52, one of the blocks, Laxford House, was designed to link with Walden House to provide a virtually continuous and satisfactory elevational treatment to Ebury Square.

The building was extensively altered in the early 1980s to designs by Phillip Andrews, Chartered Surveyors. Externally, all of the windows were replaced with double glazed units, the balconies were enclosed, and metal escape stairs were added with caged-in escape routes across the roof. Internally, the work included the rationalisation of internal layouts to create larger kitchens and bathrooms, all internal fireplaces were removed, and all joinery and wall finishes were replaced.<sup>38</sup>

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38 Montagu Evans, 'Walden House Pimlico Road: Certificate of Immunity from Listing Application' (May 2008), p. 18.





**2.33a.** *Walden House from the corner of Avery Farm Row and Little Ebury Street, c.1920s [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].*



**2.33c.** *Walden House, Pimlico Road elevation, c.1920s [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].*



**2.33b.** *Walden House, Avery Farm Row elevation, c.1920s [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].*

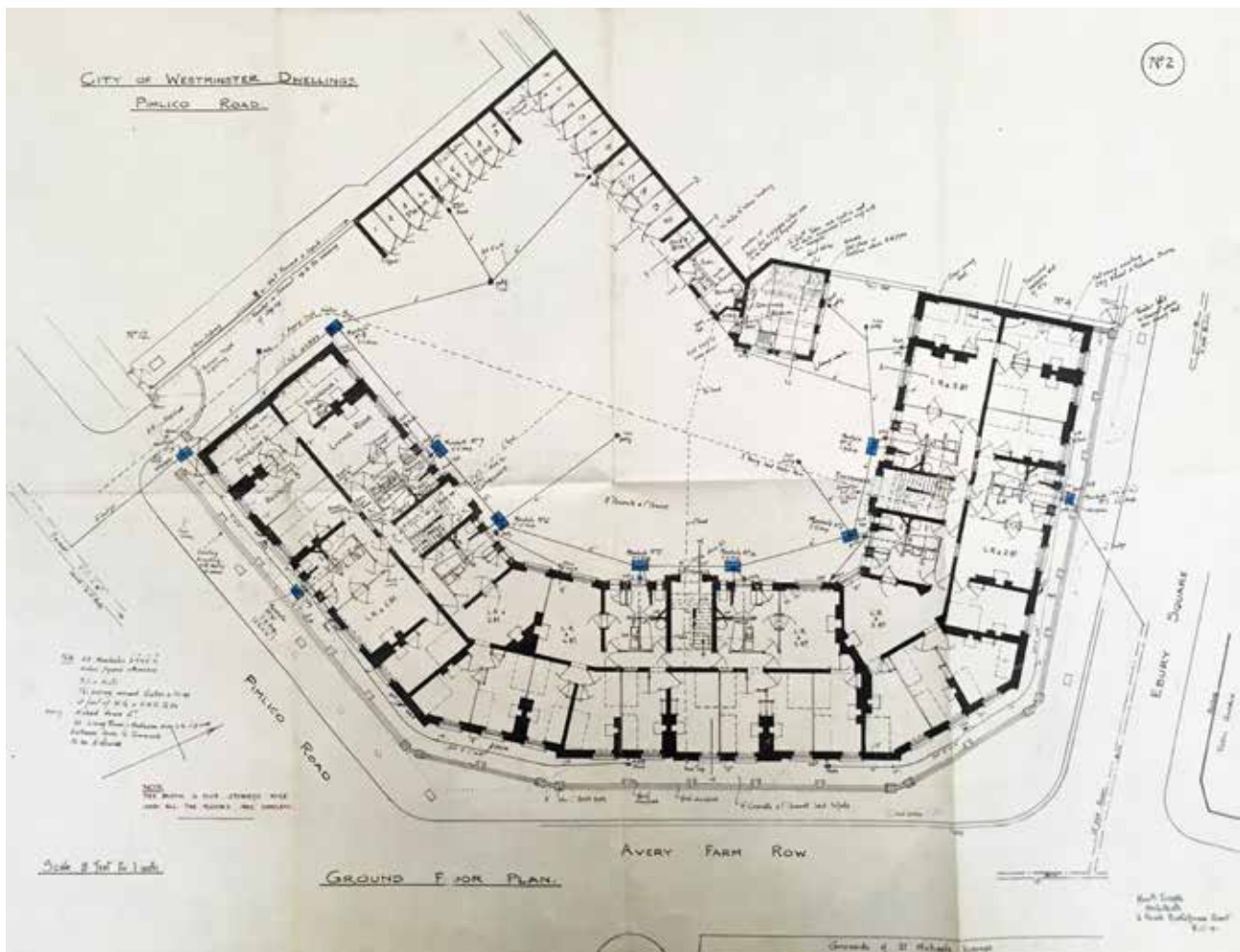




**2.33d.** Walden House, Pimlico Road elevation, c.1920s [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].



**2.34.** Walden House, west elevation facing an internal courtyard, c.1920s [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].



2.35 Walden House, ground floor plan by Messrs. Joseph, undated [Grosvenor papers at Westminster City Archives Centre].

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## 3.0 Site Survey Descriptions

### 3.1 The Setting of the Buildings and the Conservation Area Context

#### The Wider Setting

The site occupies a large urban block in the south-western tip of Belgravia in a pocket of land around Ebury Square that includes a significant number of post-war buildings which do not follow the predominant character of residential 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century terraces in Belgravia.

The site is enclosed by two streets laid out in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, now named Ebury Street to the north and Pimlico Road to the south, which were historically lined by terraced town houses. The site itself was partly rebuilt in the mid Victorian era when Coleshill Flats was built, then in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century for low income housing when Walden House was constructed, and it was more dramatically reshaped after the war with taller blocks, Cundy Street Flats, that broke the established building line and were set away from the street.

Overall, the site sits in an area of Belgravia that has been altered significantly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century following war damage, and the setting of whose historic town houses has been interrupted by taller buildings which lack the small grain and low heights of their older neighbours. Where historic terraces on neighbouring streets are intact, however, they have high townscape value.

#### Ebury Street [plates 3.1-3.3]

Ebury Street retains a significant amount of historic architecture, and is still recognisable as an 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century residential street, though modern development has changed its scale and enclosure in some areas.

Its central section survives as a largely intact Georgian residential street with early 19<sup>th</sup> century terraced town houses in stock brick or with stucco façades, some with ground floor shops, generally three or four storeys above basements.

The eastern end, west of Upper Belgrave Street, was rebuilt after the war with large apartment blocks to the south, but is intact with stucco terraces of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the north.

The western end of Ebury Street is similarly split; beyond the very tall post-war Kilmuir House which breaks the scale with a slab block of nine storeys of flats, the north side has the street's earliest houses, including brick terraces of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, not built in a straight line along the pavement but with various setbacks and hence all the more charming, and later buildings following their scale. The south side has buildings of the later 19<sup>th</sup> and twentieth centuries, all flats for a mixture of tenures, but generally taller and architecturally distinct from each other and the houses opposite.





**3.1** Ebury Street opposite Cundy Street Flats



**3.2** Ebury Street by Cundy Street Flats



**3.3** West end of Ebury Street with Coleshill Flats (right)

### **Pimlico Road [Plates 3.4-3.6]**

Pimlico Road has greater architectural variety in its historic building stock than Ebury Street, reflecting the commercial character of the street with working yards to the south. Buildings on the south side are only one or two storeys above ground floor shops, many Victorian in red brick and architecturally robust rather than sophisticated, with a public houses interspersed and of similar scale. St Barnabas Church and school, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and in rag stone, interrupt the terraces to their west and east and present an atypically closed street elevation.

A dramatic change in scale occurs at the east end where Pimlico Road meets Buckingham Palace Road; the latter has large blocks of flats and offices of seven to nine storeys at the road junction, generally behind low quality architectural facades, which loom over the Pimlico Road buildings. Coleshill Flats, Cundy Street flats and Walden House introduce this greater scale to Pimlico Road proper, but have architectural detail which helps to mitigate this scale somewhat.





**3.4** Pimlico Road with St Barnabas Church



**3.5** Pimlico Road with St Barnabas school and church to the left, Coleshill Flats to the right



**3.6** Pimlico Road east end

### **Orange Square [Plates 3.7-3.9]**

This is a triangular pedestrianised space at the intersection of Ebury Street and Pimlico Road. At its perimeter are mature London Plane trees. The landscaping is traditional but of a recent date; the ground is lined in York stone, and there is a raised seating area in brick, centred on a statue of Mozart, with timber benches and low brick walls at the perimeter to provide enclosure and definition to planted areas. Some typical Westminster street furniture rather clutters parts of the space. A well-used space with some utilitarian finishes and fittings whose appearance could be improved, and which enables views onto the flank elevation of Coleshill Flats. In summer its trees conceal some views down Ebury Street and Pimlico Road.





**3.7** Orange Square and Ebury Street



**3.8** Orange Square and Pimlico Road



**3.9**View from Orange Square to Coleshill and Cundy Street Flats

## **Ebury Square & Cundy Street [Plates 3.10-3.12]**

Ebury Square has suffered dramatically from the effects of the war and all buildings enclosing it were constructed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The space itself retains its historic dimensions. Its enclosing railings are modern and of no interest, but its perimeter is lined with mature London Plane trees which relate to the significant scale of buildings around it. Other landscaping has been refreshed in recent years. In the southwest corner is an early C20 gardener's hut of some charm.

The buildings enclosing Ebury Square have a poor relationship with this space because of their great scale, lack of architectural rhythm and generally inactive ground floor frontages. Starting from the southwest and going clockwise:

Walden House has five storeys of red brick set behind a lightwell, but no doors to animate the façade and little articulation; the link to Cundy Street Flats which adjoins to the west is similar, with an entrance turned away from the street at 45 degrees. Cundy Street Flats is seven storeys and follows the 45 degree angle begun by the link; it has a ground floor level below the street which necessitates a perimeter brick wall with planting to negotiate this drop, creating a barrier.

On the northwest site is the recently completed block at 1 Ebury Square, taking up the entire width of this block; this is six storeys plus set backs with elevations in render and inset metal balconies. This building turns its short elevation to Cundy Street. Cundy Street is a road that lost its historic enclosure when Cundy Street Flats, on its west side, were built. On the east side is 1 Ebury Square and a similar, lower recent residential building fronting Ebury Street, standing at five storeys and faced in brick.

The northeast side of Ebury Square is overwhelmed by the 11-storey tall Semley House, a 1960s slab block with ground floor retail, two storey of car parking, and then flats behind a largely un-modulated facade in render and brick with PVC windows.

On the southeast side is a lower but unrelenting three and four storey police station building in orange brick, a sombre structure of the 1980s/90s that adds nothing positive to the setting of the square. This is adjoined by a nine-storey red brick mid-twentieth century residential building, Fountain Court, to the south, whose scale and indifferent architecture also detract from the square.





**3.10** *Ebury Square looking northwest with Semley House and 1 Ebury Square*



**3.11** *Ebury Square with Walden House and Cundy Street Flats*



**3.12** *Cundy Street*

## 3.2 Coleshill Flats

### 3.2.1 Front Elevations

Coleshill Flats are two blocks of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century artisan housing fronting Ebury Street and Pimlico Road. They were built to a standard design developed as a prototype for artisan housing, and this design has been replicated in other parts of London, including at King's Cross (Stanley Buildings), though on the Belgravia site the buildings have ground floor shops and basements whilst elsewhere they are purely residential and have no basement accommodation.

The block fronting Ebury Street (West block) comprises two pairs of mirrored terraces, while the block on Pimlico Road (East block) comprises three pairs. The buildings are uniformly five storeys tall and their facades are elevated in Gault brick with slender red brick bands, and there are two adjoining recessed communal staircases with balconies at the centre of each paired elevation. Each building has one bay of timber sash windows with fixed bottom lights, and this bay is surmounted by a tall mansard with decorative metalwork on the roof which accommodate a timber sash window in a brick surround. At ground floor level are modern security gates to each entrance, and shops, one per terrace; the shops have original moulded plaster brackets between the units, but the shopfronts appear to be largely later replacements. The Pimlico Road block is flanked by projecting shops that extend beyond the main building line on either side **[Plate 3.13]**. The Ebury Street block features a single projecting shop at the south end which fronts onto Orange Square.

The eastern shop attached to the Pimlico Road terrace at 20a Pimlico Road has a historic canted timber shop front facing south and east, and a rear elevation in unadorned stock brick facing east, whilst its courtyard-facing elevation to the west is also elevated in stock brick and has historic window openings and a door opening with largely replacement frames. The north facing elevation is covered in ivy and could not be inspected.

The buildings were not inspected internally as they do not form part of the proposals for this site. The shop at 20a Pimlico Road was inspected through windows, and this revealed that this shop unit has modernised finishes.





**3.13** Shop at No.20A Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.13a** Shop at No.20A Coleshill Flats, rear elevations 2020 (Insall).

### 3.2.2 Rear Elevations

Both blocks have stepped rear elevations, which are visible from Orange Square and from a communal rear parking area at the centre of the site. These rear elevations are five principal storeys in height over an exposed basement level, and align with the mirrored-pair arrangement of the street-facing terraced elevations (two to the Ebury Street block and three to the Pimlico Road block); they are also elevated in Gault brick with redbrick bands to match the street elevations **[Plates 3.14-3.15]**.

To the rear, each pairing is five bays wide and comprises two full-height deeply projecting wings, designed to house sculleries and kitchens, arranged either side of an inset central bay and two recessed end bays. Fenestration to the central and end bays comprises six-over-six timber sashes with fixed bottom lights, stone sills and stucco lintels. Ground, first and second floor windows are surmounted by a cast-iron ventilation grill. The fenestration to the projecting wings has been altered in many flats on an ad hoc basis, with several openings bricked up, and their general appearance is compromised. At roof level, the end bays of each paired terrace is surmounted by a tall mansard with decorative metalwork while the central bay is surmounted by a projecting blind extension, built in a contrasting yellow brick, with a decorative cast-iron spandrel spanning the gap between the two projecting wings. The projecting wings are surmounted by a yellow brick battlement-style parapet with simple iron railings. Set back behind this parapet are yellow brick extensions with flat roofs and modern windows, which abut the tall original Gault brick chimney stacks projecting through the centre of the projecting wings.





**3.14** Rear elevation of the Ebury Street block, 2020 (Insall).



**3.15** Rear elevation of the Pimlico Road block, 2020 (Insall).



### 3.2.3 Coleshill Flats Rear Basement Elevations

The basement elevations to the rear are set within lightwells, enclosed by bricks walls and original cast-iron railings, which are similarly laid out. Both lightwells are accessible from single-leaf modern timber doors, set within a modern yellow-brick boundary wall enclosing the southeast side of the site, which open onto external brick steps with modern concrete treads and risers, closed concrete strings, and cast-iron balustrades **[Plate 3.16a-b]**. Both lightwells feature additional sets of external brick steps at the far end, which are accessed via the rear yard extending between both blocks, and similarly feature modern concrete treads and risers, closed concrete strings, and cast-iron balustrades (see **Section 3.1.4**) **[Plate 3.17]**. The majority of these steps are in a poor state of repair, showing signs of extensive weathering.

The surface of the lightwells are finished with modern asphalt and feature a series of modern manhole covers **[Plate 3.18a-b]**. The lightwells are enclosed by shallow brick walls surmounted by earth banks featuring an array of planting, which extend to ground floor level where they meet a shallow brick wall finished with original 19<sup>th</sup> century cast iron railings fronting onto the rear yard. The majority of the brick walls fronting onto the lightwell appear to comprise original 19<sup>th</sup> century brickwork, albeit with evidence of modern repointing and painting. However, the top sections of the walls are finished with modern brickwork, presumably to accommodate the earth bank above.

The lightwells provide access to the basement level flats. In both blocks, the basement comprises mirrored pairs of adjoining self-contained flats, each flat occupies a projecting wing, which is two bays wide, with a single recessed bay on either side. The recesses on either side of the projecting wings, which currently serve as small semi-private patio areas, are protected by cast-iron gates and railings and feature openings to the return elevations of the wings **[Plate 3.19]**. The basement elevations appear to have been considerably altered over the years, on an ad hoc basis, and now comprise a varied mix of door joinery, fenestration, and brickwork.



**3.16a** Steps leading down to the lightwell of the Pimlico Road block, 2020 (Insall).



**3.16b** Steps leading down to the lightwell of the Ebury Street block, 2020 (Insall).



**3.17** Additional steps to the rear of the lightwell to the Pimlico Road block, 2020 (Insall).



**3.18a** Lightwell to the Pimlico Road block, 2020 (Insall).



**3.18b** Lightwell to the Ebury Street block, 2020 (Insall).



**3.19** Typical cast-iron gate and railings protecting a recess between two projecting wings on the Pimlico Road block, 2020 (Insall).

## **Ebury Street Block**

### **1 Coleshill Flats [Plate 3.20-3.22]**

Flat 1 is located at the north end of the Ebury Street block and is clad in Gault brick. The entrance to the flat is located on the south return of the projecting wing and comprises a modern opening, featuring a modern architrave and timber-panelled door with a timber panel above, surmounted by a modern asphalt-clad metal canopy. This return also features a modern projecting boiler flue. The rear (east) elevation of the projecting wing is two bays wide and features two different-sized windows divided by a cast-iron downpipe. The smaller of the two windows appears to be a modern insertion, while the larger window appears to be original but has been altered by the insertion of a brick panel. Below the larger window, the brickwork forms a decorative arch. The north return of the projecting wing features two equal-sized sash windows with fixed bottom lights, one of which has been replaced by a timber panel. The recessed bays on either side of the projecting wing feature a single six-over-six sash with fixed bottom lights. External detailing is limited to moulded stone lintels, stone sills and cast iron ventilation grates above some of the windows and also at ground level. Modern external light fittings and wires have been affixed across the elevation.





**3.20** Main entrance, 1 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.21** Projecting wing, 1 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.22** North recess, 1 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).

### 3 Coleshill Flats [Plate 3.23-3.25]

Flat 3 forms a mirrored pairing with Flat 1 at the north end of the Ebury Street block. It is similarly clad in Gault brick although there is evidence of later brickwork alterations. The main entrance to the flat is located on the north return of the projecting wing, facing that of Flat 1. The entrance comprises a modern opening, featuring a modern architrave and timber-panelled door with a timber panel above, surmounted by a modern asphalt-clad timber canopy. The rear (east) elevation of the projecting wing is two bays wide and features two different-sized windows: A small timber casement window, which appears to be a modern insertion, and a larger timber sash with timber-panelling beneath. Below the larger window, the brickwork forms a decorative arch. The south return of the projecting wing features two equal-sized sash windows with fixed bottom lights, one of which has been replaced by a timber panel, and a modern projecting boiler flue. The recessed bays on either side of the projecting wing feature a single six-over-six sash with fixed bottom lights. External detailing is limited to moulded stone lintels, stone sills and cast iron ventilation grates above some of the windows and also at ground level. Modern external light fittings, pipework, and wires have been affixed across the elevation.





**3.23** Main entrance, 3 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.24** Projecting wing, 3 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.25** South recess, 3 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



### 23 Coleshill Flats [Plate 3.26-3.28]

Flat 23 forms a mirrored pairing with Flat 25 towards the south end of the Ebury Street block. It is clad in Gault brick. The main entrance to the flat is located on the rear (east) elevation of the projecting wing, opening onto the lightwell, alongside a timber casement window featuring a timber-panelled fixed bottom light and decorative brickwork below. Unlike Flats 1 and 3, it appears as though the entrance has remained in its original position and comprises an original timber-panelled door with timber-panelled over light and moulded stone lintel. The neighbouring window is also in its original position, but the casement is presumably a later replacement. The entrance is surmounted by a modern asphalt-clad metal canopy and is flanked on either side by cast-iron downpipes. The north elevation of the projecting wing features a single timber sash window with fixed glazed bottom light. Next to this window is another opening which has been bricked up and appears to be a later addition as there is evident variations in the colour and pointing of the surrounding brickwork. The south elevation of the projecting wing features a single timber sash with a fixed timber-panelled bottom light. The recessed bays on either side of the projecting wing feature a single timber sash with fixed bottom lights. External detailing is limited to stone lintels and sills and cast iron ventilation grates above some of the windows and also at ground level. Modern external light fittings, pipework, and wires have been affixed across the elevation.



**3.26** Main entrance, 23 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.27** South recess, 23 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.28** North recess, 23 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).

## 25 Coleshill Flats [Plate 3.29-3.32]

Flat 25 forms a mirrored pairing with Flat 23 at the south end of the Ebury Street block. It is clad in Gault brick. The main entrance to the flat is located on the rear (east) elevation of the projecting wing, opening onto the lightwell, alongside a timber sash window featuring a timber-panelled fixed bottom light and decorative brickwork below. Like Flat 23, it appears as though the entrance and window have remained in their original position. The entrance comprises an original timber-panelled door with timber-panelled over light and moulded stone lintel, but is surmounted by a modern asphalt-clad metal canopy and is flanked on either side by cast-iron downpipes. The casement window is also presumably a later replacement and the glazing has been altered to accommodate a modern vent. The north elevation of the projecting wing features a single timber sash window with fixed timber-panelled bottom light. The south elevation of the projecting wing features a timber sash with a fixed glazed bottom light and a smaller timber casement with glazed overlight. The casement appears to be a modern insertion as there is a notable variation in the colour and pointing of the surrounding brickwork. The recessed bays on either side of the projecting wing feature a single timber sash with fixed glazed bottom lights. The glazing has been heavily altered to accommodate a pair of vents. External detailing is limited to stone lintels and sills and cast iron ventilation grates above some of the windows and also at ground level. Modern external light fittings, pipework, and wires have been affixed across the elevation. There is also evidence of later repairs and alterations to the brickwork. The south recessed bay features an additional window belonging to the shop unit at the south end of the block. This opening, which is clearly a modern insertion, comprises a timber casement window, with poorly-detailed lintel and sill, and modern brickwork below.





**3.29** Main entrance, 25 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.30** Window to projecting wing, 25 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.31** North recess, 25 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.32** South recess, 25 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).

## **Pimlico Road Block**

### **45 Coleshill Flats [Plates 3.33-3.36]**

Flat 45 is located at the west end of the Pimlico Road block and forms a pair with Flat 47. The Gault brick elevation at basement level has been painted white. The main entrance to the flat is located on the rear (north) elevation of the projecting wing, opening onto the lightwell, alongside an original window opening. The entrance comprises a modern timber architrave and panelled timber door with glazed overlight and a moulded stone lintel. The neighbouring window opening has been fitted with an array of modern casements, part-protected by steel railings, with a fixed timber-panelled bottom light. The original decorative brickwork below the window has been painted over and is no longer noticeable. The entrance and window are separated by a cast-iron downpipe. The west return of the projecting wing features two different-sized windows: a small timber casement window with glazed overlight, which appears to be a modern insertion, and a larger timber sash with fixed glazed bottom light. On both windows, the glazing has been altered to accommodate modern vents. The east return of the wing features a single sash window with fixed timber-panelled bottom light. The recessed bays on either side of the projecting wing feature a single six-over-six sash with fixed glazed bottom lights. The glazing to the window on the west recess has been augmented to accommodate a modern vent. External detailing is limited to a mix of original and replica moulded stone lintels, stone sills and cast iron ventilation grates above some of the windows and at floor level. Modern external light fittings, pipework, vents and wires have been affixed across the elevation.





**3.33** Main entrance, 45 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.34** Window to projecting wing, 45 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.35** West recess, 45 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.36** East recess, 45 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



#### **47 Coleshill Flats [Plates 3.37-3.40]**

Flat 47 is located at the west end of the Pimlico Road block and forms a pair with Flat 45 at the west end of the Pimlico Road block. The Gault brick elevation at basement level has been painted white. The main entrance to the flat is located on the rear (north) elevation of the projecting wing, opening onto the lightwell, alongside an original window opening. The entrance comprises a modern timber architrave and panelled timber door with glazed overlight and a moulded stone lintel. Above the entrance is a modern asphalt-clad metal canopy. The neighbouring window opening has been fitted with an array of modern casements, part-protected by steel railings, with a fixed timber-panelled bottom light. The original decorative brickwork below the window has been painted over and is no longer noticeable. The entrance and window are separated by a cast-iron downpipe. The west return of the projecting wing features a single timber sash window with fixed timber-panelled bottom light alongside a projecting modern boiler flue. The east return of the wing features a sash window with fixed glazed bottom light and a large two-leaf, part-glazed timber door with overlight, which appears to be a later insertion. The recessed bays on either side of the projecting wing feature a single six-over-six sash with fixed glazed bottom lights. External detailing is limited to moulded stone lintels, stone sills and cast iron ventilation grates above some of the windows and at floor level. Modern external light fittings, pipework, vents and wires have been affixed across the elevation.



**3.37** Projecting wing, 47 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.38** Window to projecting wing, 47 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.39** West recess, 47 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.40** East recess, 47 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).

## **67 Coleshill Flats [Plate 3.41-3.44]**

Flat 67 forms part of the central pairing, along with Flat 69, in the Pimlico Road block. The majority of the Gault brick elevation at basement level has been painted white, although the brickwork to the west end recessed bay of the flat has remained exposed. The entrance to the flat is located on the west return of the projecting wing and comprises a modern opening, featuring a modern timber architrave and timber-panelled door with a glazed overlight and surmounted by a modern asphalt-clad metal canopy. This return also features a modern projecting boiler flue. The rear (north) elevation of the projecting wing is two bays wide and features two different-sized windows divided by a cast-iron downpipe. The smaller of the two window openings appears to be a modern insertion, while the larger window openings appears to be original but has been altered by the insertion of casement windows above a fixed timber-panelled bottom light. Below the larger window, the brickwork forms a decorative arch but this has been painted over. The east return of the projecting wing features two equal-sized sash windows with fixed bottom lights, one glazed and one timber-panelled. The recessed bays on either side of the projecting wing feature a single six-over-six sash with fixed glazed bottom lights. External detailing is limited to moulded stone lintels, stone sills and cast iron ventilation grates above some of the windows and also at ground level. Modern external light fittings and wires have been affixed across the elevation.





**3.41** Main entrance, 67 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.42** Modern window opening to projecting wing, 67 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.43** Original window opening to projecting wing, 67 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.44** West recess, 67 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).

### **69 Coleshill Flats [Plate 3.45-3.48]**

Flat 69 forms part of the central pairing, along with Flat 67, in the Pimlico Road block. The elevation is clad in exposed Gault brick at basement level. The entrance to the flat is located on the east return of the projecting wing, facing that of Flat 67. The entrance comprises a modern opening, featuring a modern architrave and timber-panelled door with a glazed overlight, surmounted by a modern asphalt-clad metal canopy. This return also features a modern projecting boiler flue. The rear (north) elevation of the projecting wing is two bays wide and features two different-sized windows divided by a cast-iron downpipe. The smaller of the two window openings appears to be a modern insertion and features a large casement window with overlight. The larger window opening appears to be original but now comprises an array of modern casements, partly protected by steel railings, with a fixed timber-panelled bottom light. Below the larger window, the brickwork forms a decorative arch. The west return of the projecting wing features an original window opening, comprising a timber sash window with glazed bottom light, and a neighbouring modern window opening comprising a smaller timber sash. The recessed bays on either side of the projecting wing feature a single six-over-six sash with fixed bottom lights. External detailing is limited to moulded stone lintels, stone sills and cast iron ventilation grates above some of the windows and also at ground level. Modern external light fittings, pipework, and wires have been affixed across the elevation.



**3.45** Main entrance, 69 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.46** Modern window opening to projecting wing, 69 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.47** Original window opening to projecting wing, 69 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.48** East recess, 69 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



### **89 Coleshill Flats [Plate 3.49-3.52]**

Flat 89 forms a pair with Flat 91 at the east end of the Pimlico Road block. The elevation is predominantly clad in exposed Gault brick at basement level, apart from the east return of the projecting wing and the east end recessed bay which have been painted white. The main entrance to the flat is located on the rear (north) elevation of the projecting wing, opening onto the lightwell, alongside an original window opening. The entrance comprises a modern timber architrave and panelled timber door with glazed overlight and a moulded stone lintel. Above the entrance is a modern asphalt-clad metal canopy. The neighbouring window opening has been fitted with an array of modern casements, part-protected by steel railings, and features a fixed timber-panelled bottom light below. Below this window the brickwork forms a decorative arch. The entrance and window are separated by a cast-iron downpipe. The west return of the wing features a sash window with fixed glazed bottom light and a large two-leaf, part-glazed timber door with overlight, which appears to be a later insertion and is now sealed. The east return of the projecting wing features a single timber sash window with fixed timber-panelled bottom light and a projecting modern boiler flue. The recessed bays on either side of the projecting wing feature a single six-over-six sash with fixed glazed bottom lights. External detailing is limited to moulded stone lintels, stone sills and cast iron ventilation grates above some of the windows and at floor level. Modern external light fittings, pipework, vents and wires have been affixed along the top of the basement level of the elevation.



**3.49** Main entrance, 89 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Install).



**3.50** Window opening to projecting wing, 89 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Install).



**3.51** West recess, 89 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Install).



**3.52** East recess, 89 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Install).

### **91 Coleshill Flats [Plate 3.53-3.57]**

Flat 91 is located at the east end of the Pimlico Road block and forms a pair with Flat 89. The elevation is clad in Gault brick which has been painted white. The main entrance to the flat is located on the rear (north) elevation of the projecting wing, opening onto the lightwell, alongside an original window opening. The entrance comprises a modern timber architrave and original panelled timber door with glazed overlight and a moulded stone lintel which is protected by a steel security grille. Above the entrance is a modern asphalt-clad metal canopy. The neighbouring window opening has been fitted with an array of modern casements, part-protected by steel railings, and features a fixed timber-panelled bottom light below. Below this window the decorative arch in the brickwork has been obscured by the paintwork. The entrance and window are separated by a cast-iron downpipe. The west return of the wing features a single timber sash window with fixed timber-panelled bottom light. Access to the east return of the projecting wing is prevented by a set of original cast-iron railings at the east end of the lightwell, but appears to feature two-equally sized window openings. The recessed bays on either side of the projecting wing feature a single six-over-six sash with fixed glazed bottom lights. External detailing is limited to moulded stone lintels, stone sills and cast iron ventilation grates above some of the windows and at floor level. Modern external light fittings, pipework, vents and wires have been affixed along the top of the basement level of the elevation





**3.53** Main entrance, 91 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.54** Front door, 91 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.56** West recess, 91 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.55** Window opening to projecting wing, 91 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).



**3.57** East recess, 91 Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).

### 3.2.4 Coleshill Flats Rear Yard

To the rear of the Coleshill Flats is a large communal yard which is accessed via a slip road off Pimlico Road. The surface of the yard is predominantly finished in tarmac and in poor condition. The entrance is positioned at the south-west corner of the yard, at the narrowest point between the two residential blocks, and comprises a modern electric gate flanked by a modern yellow brick wall containing modern doorways **[Plate 3.58]**. Flanking the south side of the vehicular entrance to the yard is a modest 20<sup>th</sup> century single-storey community building in glazed brick with replacement windows, poor quality additions and inappropriate modern pointing. Past the entrance there is an inconsistent arrangement of benches, trees and perimeter planting in brick-lined beds which line the approach to the east half of the rear yard **[Plate 3.59]**. The north-west and south sides of the rear yard are delineated by the 19<sup>th</sup> century cast-iron railings enclosing the basement lightwells of both residential blocks. The remainder of the rear yard is enclosed by a high brick wall, which appears contemporary with the neighbouring Cundy Street flats, and comprises a car parking area **[Plate 3.60]**. In the north east corner of the yard are a number of modern single-storey sheds, built from corrugated iron and precast concrete, and a bicycle rack **[Plate 3.61]**.



**3.58** *Rear Yard entrance, 2020 (Insall).*





**3.59** View from entrance to the rear yard, 2020 (Insall).



**3.60** Carpark in rear yard, 2020 (Insall).



**3.61** Modern structures in rear yard, 2020 (Insall).



### 3.3 Marquess of Westminster Memorial Drinking Fountain

The drinking fountain is located on the corner of Pimlico Road and Avery Farm Road in the City of Westminster, and just outside of the Belgravia Conservation Area boundary **[Plate 3.62]**. The fountain has remained in this position since it was erected in 1871, although its surroundings have been drastically altered through subsequent redevelopment.

The fountain sits upon a circular three-tier shallow stepped platform formed of stone slabs with grooves around the base for drainage. Designed in an Italian Renaissance style, the fountain is predominantly constructed from Portland stone with a blue granite base. The structure is square in plan and generously proportioned, with four equally-sized faces **[Plate 3.63-3.66]**. Each side features a large contrasting pink granite projecting bowl affixed to the blue granite base. The upper stage of the fountain is elaborately detailed and features pilasters with carved capitals to each corner which support a round arch on each face. The north, south and west sides of the fountain feature a shell niche while the north side has a simpler recess. The niches and recess are all lined with symmetrical mosaics by Salviati incorporating the following inscriptions: '1895' on the south face; 'EMW' on the west face; and 'In memory of Richard Second Marquess of Westminster died 1869' on the east face. Each face of the fountain is finished with a dentil cornice and key pattern frieze beneath a curved pediment. The fountain is surmounted by a decorative urn executed in buff terracotta.

The external appearance and composition of the fountain has largely remained unaltered since it was first erect in 1871. However, the fountain is now in a compromised state of repair. Ad hoc repairs to the stepped platform have generally been of a poor quality and resulted in a patchwork of differently coloured stonework. A modern drain cover has also been crudely inserted in front of the east side of the fountain **[Plate 3.67]**. All of the pink granite drinking bowls have now been infilled and the taps removed. The stonework to the upper stage of the fountain has generally remained in a good condition and the detailing is still clear. However, the mosaics are in a poor state of repair with various cracks and missing pieces. The finial which was originally fixed to the terracotta urn at the top of the fountain is now missing, but the iron dowel is still there.



**3.62** View of the Marquess of Westminster Memorial Drinking Fountain from Pimlico Road, 2020 (Insall).



**3.63** North face of the drinking fountain, 2020 (Insall).



**3.64** East side of the drinking fountain, 2020 (Insall).



**3.65** South side of the drinking fountain, 2020 (Insall).



**3.66** West side of the drinking fountain, 2020 (Insall).



**3.67** Modern repairs and alterations to the stone base of the fountain, 2020 (Insall).



### 3.4 Arnrid Johnston Obelisk

The obelisk is located in the rear courtyard of Walden House. The three-sided, flat-headed obelisk is built of Portland stone and sits on a chamfered Portland stone plinth. The obelisk and plinth, which together is roughly 8ft high, is set on a two-tier, stepped platform comprised of York stone and brick **[Plate 3.68]**.

Triangular in plan, the obelisk has relief carvings to all three faces depicting scenes of children playing: the north-east face is of a boy carrying a toy sailing boat with a dog at his feet; the north-west face shows a pair of girls hoop-rolling; and the south face shows two girls on rocking horses **[Plates 3.69-71]**. These depictions correspond with the original use of Walden House as flats for families with children, and the courtyard as a playground. However, these once-crisp reliefs have since become softened through extensive weathering. There is also a large crack and various pockmarks in the stonework on the north-west face.

The obelisk also features a series of carved inscriptions across the top of all three faces. The inscriptions above the north-west and north-east faces are now too weathered to be legible, but the south face inscription is still clear and reads: 'THE KINGDOM'. Below the south face, the plinth also features a carved inscription, appearing to commemorate the granting of the obelisk to the City of Westminster by the Grosvenor Estate, but again this has similarly been rendered illegible due to weathering. Each corner of the plinth features a stylised animal figure carved in the round, but these have similarly suffered from extensive weathering. A cut in the stone on the north-east corner of the plinth appears to suggest that one of the animal figure carvings has been hewn off at some point and later reinstated.

Beneath the obelisk, the platform is circular in plan and is tiered to form three 'seats' aligning with the corners of the plinth **[Plate 3.72]**. The platform is built of brown brick and is paved with York stone flags. Much like the obelisk, the platform is showing signs of environmental impact and ad hoc interventions. There is green mould present on the brick- and stonework. Much of the stonework is also chipped and has been visibly defaced with modern graffiti. The render skirting around the base of the platform is also in a poor condition. By contrast, the brickwork to the platform appears in a relatively good condition and may have been repointed fairly recently.

#### Walden House Courtyard

The obelisk appears to have remained in its original location within the rear courtyard of Walden House. This courtyard is roughly triangular and is enclosed on the east side by the rear elevations of Walden House and on the west and north sides by single storey brick-faced outbuildings, including bin stores and pram stores **[Plate 3.73]**. The entire courtyard, which was originally concrete, has been covered over with brown paving bricks. Paving bricks have also been laid to form a border around the platform of the obelisk.



**3.68** View of the Arnríð Johnstón Obelisk, 2020 (Insall).



**3.69** North-east face of the obelisk, 2020 (Insall).



**3.70** North-west face of the obelisk, 2020 (Insall).



**3.71** South face of the obelisk, 2020 (Insall).





**3.72** Tiered platform beneath the obelisk, 2020 (Insall).



**3.73** View of the obelisk within the courtyard of Walden House, 2020 (Insall).



### 3.5 Orange Square & K6 telephone kiosks [Plate 3.74]

This is a triangular pedestrianised space at the intersection of Ebury Street and Pimlico Road. At its perimeter are mature London Plane trees. The landscaping is traditional but of a recent date; the ground is lined in York stone, and there is a raised seating area in brick, centred on a statue of Mozart, with timber benches and low brick walls at the perimeter to provide enclosure and definition to planted areas. Some typical Westminster street furniture rather clutters parts of the space. A well-used space with some utilitarian finishes and fittings whose appearance could be improved, and which enables views onto the flank elevation of Coleshill Flats. In summer its trees conceal some views down Ebury Street and Pimlico Road. There is a pair of Grade II-listed 1930s K6 telephone kiosks on the north-east side of the square, abutting the modern boundary wall of Coleshill Flats. Both kiosks are relatively intact and feature domed roofs, unperforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and doors.



**3.74** View from Orange Square towards Coleshill Flats, 2020 (Insall).

### 3.6 Cundy Street Flats [Plates 3.75-3.79]

These buildings are described in English Heritage's (now Historic England) Certificate of Immunity of 2013, and this description is still accurate, and reproduced below. Additional findings of Donald Insall Associates' site survey of June 2018 are added in parenthesis as appropriate.

The estate consists of four seven-storey blocks of private flats: Lochmore House, Laxford House, Stack House and Kylestrome House, laid out on a symmetrical diamond plan around a central courtyard with soft landscaping between.

**[NB:** At the centre of the site is hard standing finished with bound gravel for car parking, and this is connected to Ebury Street and Cundy Street by means of internal roads with recently added barriers on the street line.]

Each block has a staggered cruciform plan comprising three wings of equal length and a shorter entrance wing facing the courtyard. The plans of Kylestrome and Laxford mirror those of Stack and Laxford, but the blocks are otherwise identical. Laxford House differs in that the rear wing is elongated and cranked to connect with Walden House.

The blocks contained 109 flats in all, comprising one, two and three-bedroom units. Lochmore House had a porter's office and flat, and communal facilities for the flats including a laundry and community room.

The buildings are of steel-frame construction clad in hand-made red bricks, with hollow tile and concrete floors. They are designed in the streamlined moderne manner of the inter-war years, with neo-Georgian glazing: an article in *The Builder* (21 August 1953) recounts that the elevational treatment was required to harmonise with the C18 buildings in Ebury Street. Windows are predominantly timber multi-pane sashes, with timber casements to the kitchens and steel Crittall windows to the bathrooms. The concrete floor-slabs are exposed on the underside of the balconies.

The entrance wings have open porches with piloti-like columns clad in coloured glazed tiles: Lochmore -yellow; Kylestrome - blue; Stack - orange-brown; Laxford - pale green. The elevations above have four windows set within recessed horizontal brick surrounds. Of each block, three of the re-entrant angles of the crux are curved; the fourth has the convex projection of the circular stair well which has vertical glazing. The elevations to the south-east and north-west sides each have curvilinear balconies, punctuated by a single bay with paired casement windows lighting the kitchens. A waste disposal chute clad in yellow tiles is placed within the balcony angles. The deep oversailing concrete flat roof is scribed to follow the contours of the elevations.

**[NB** The roofs have been recently refinished, and have prominent safety railings set at the perimeter of each roof.]



**3.75** *Cundy Street Flats courtyard*



**3.76** *Cundy Street Flats courtyard, aerial view*



**3.77** *Cundy Street Flats from Ebury Street*



**3.78** *Laxford House*



**3.79** *Laxford House staircase*



The internal plan comprises a lobby leading to a central entrance hall with a spiral stair placed in one corner and a lift to the opposite side. Each wing contains a single flat with rooms to either side of a spine corridor, leading to a full-width living room at the end.

The main entrances have modern glazed doors. The porch and lobby interiors have ceramic tile flooring; the entrance hall floor and first stair flight are finished in terrazzo. The stairs have a steel balustrade and hardwood handrail. There are glazed hardwood doors to the entrance halls and landing lobbies. Two flats were inspected internally, one of which retained some fitted kitchen cupboards of 1950s appearance and a fireplace with an artificial stone hearth and surround, and possibly original flush panel doors. The level of internal survival throughout the blocks is unclear.

**[NB** A number of ground floor flats were inspected from external viewpoints, and a flat in Laxford House was inspected internally; these flats are comprehensively reconfigured and have modern replacement finishes in bedrooms and kitchens/ bathrooms. Reportedly a number of 3-bedroom flats have been altered to provide two larger bedrooms. In general, those flats that receive new tenants are refurbished by Grosvenor to modern standards, meaning that original internal fittings are replaced.]

### **3.7      Walden House [Plates 3.80-3.83]**

Walden House is an inter-war brick-faced five storey block of flats built on a distorted U-shaped plan which follows the street layout of Pimlico Road, Avery Farm Road and Ebury Square. The ground floor is faced in plum-coloured brick, the floors above in red brick. The building is accessed via its internal courtyard, and its street facing elevations are all set behind perimeter railings contained between brick piers. All elevations have sash windows arranged in bays, some slightly projecting and those projections framed by brick quoins, and each bay has of two or three windows per floor with brick arches above; the sashes are modern double glazed uPVC replacements. There is a brick cornice above third floor level and one above the ground floor, and these and the brick quoins are the only embellishments of the street elevations. The roof is concealed behind the building's parapet, and has visible red brick chimney stacks with tall pots that add a degree of rhythm to the elevations. On Ebury Street Walden House is joined by Laxford House (part of Cundy Street Flats) which is of similar height. The flank elevation of the Pimlico Road wing faces into an internal access road and this elevation is blind.

The building's internal elevations address a courtyard with hardstanding made up of recently applied brick pavers. The elevations are similar to those addressing the streets, but each wing has a plum-coloured projecting bay which accommodates an entrance door into each wing. These bays are surmounted by slate covered structures which are assumed to house lift overruns and are appear to be recent additions.

Walden House has not been inspected internally.



**3.80** *Walden House from Buckingham Palace Road*



**3.82** *Walden House internal elevations*



**3.81** *Walden House from Ebury Square*



**3.83** *Pimlico Road yard looking southwest*



## 4.0 Assessment of Significance

### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of significance of the designated heritage assets on the Cundy Street Quarter site so that the proposals for change to these structures are fully informed as to their significance and so that the effect of the proposals on that significance can be evaluated. The assessment begins with a general summary of the structures' history and significance; then the various elements are assessed according to a sliding scale of significance, reflecting the extent to which they contribute to their special architectural and historical interest.

This assessment responds to the requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework to 'recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance'. The NPPF defines significance as;

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

### 4.2 Coleshill Flats

Coleshill Flats were built in 1868-71 as two terraces of housing for artisans on limited incomes; the buildings followed a standard design developed by architect Henry Roberts that was used by the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company (IIDC) in buildings throughout London. The buildings, arranged behind paired frontages with communal access and with ground floor shops, were designed to accommodate two flats on each floor, with kitchens and sculleries in deep rear wings. The blocks were placed to follow the layout of Pimlico Road and Ebury Street, but the large space between them was apparently not landscaped and has become an area used for car parking that is in poor condition. The buildings' street elevations survive largely intact albeit with some new shop fronts and security gates, whilst their rear elevations have seen more significant and detrimental change when accommodation in the rear wings was adapted to suit modern needs, and fenestration was changed.

The buildings are historically significant as examples of IIDC's housing programme of the 1860s and 1870s that survive relatively intact. The street elevations are of high significance. Their rear elevations, whilst visible from public viewpoints, are somewhat less significant because they have been poorly altered, but they remain historically significant because they illustrate a progressive design which provided occupants with their own kitchen and sculleries inside the building. At basement level, the rear elevations have been altered on an ad-hoc basis and now feature an array of modern fenestration and openings which detract. Original cast iron railings and historic handrails to staircases are significant.

In its present form the yard between both blocks detracts from their significance and forms a poor-quality setting.

### **4.3 The Marquess of Westminster Memorial Drinking Fountain**

The Marquess of Westminster Memorial Drinking Fountain was erected in 1871 by the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association, on behalf of the Marchioness of Westminster to commemorate her husband Richard Grosvenor, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Westminster (1795-1869). The fountain's significance relates principally to its historical associations and its design, but also partially extends to its communal value and setting.

The historical significance of the Memorial Drinking Fountain relates primarily to its associations with the Grosvenor family and the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association during the late-19<sup>th</sup> century. The Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association was a philanthropic movement dedicated to providing clean drinking water to the people and animals of London. Unlike the majority of the fountains built by the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association, the Marquess of Westminster Memorial Drinking Fountain was one of several structures funded through private munificence, in this case that of the Grosvenor Estate, and specifically designed by an established architect. Funded by the Marchioness of Westminster, the fountain was intended to serve a dual role as both a public amenity and a memorial commemorating the life of her late husband, Richard Grosvenor, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Westminster and his achievements. As such, the fountain has a direct historical association with the Grosvenor family and is also significant as an example of the important philanthropic work carried out by the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The memorial fountain is also a notable work of public art in its own right, and of some architectural merit. The architect, Thomas Henry Wyatt, was by the 1870s at the height of his prolific architectural career, during which he designed churches, houses and public buildings across Britain. Wyatt had been elected President of the Royal Institute of British Architects 1870 and was later awarded the Royal Gold Medal for Architecture in 1873. Designed in an Italian Renaissance style, the fountain comprises a classically-detailed Portland stone upper stage, and surmounted by a terracotta urn. The carvings and detailing is of a high quality and, apart from the missing finial to the urn, in an overall good condition. The upper stage of the fountain also features a series of mosaics incorporating inscriptions relating to the life of Richard Grosvenor. These mosaics were executed by Salviati & Co., an internationally-renowned firm of Venetian artistic glass and decorative mosaic manufactures, and are of good quality. However, their appearance has been slightly compromised by later ad hoc repairs. The upper stage of the fountain sits on a blue granite base featuring contrasting pink granite bowls, which add further visual interest to the composition. However, the infilling of the bowls and removal of the taps has diminished the legibility of the fountain's original, and primary, function.

The present siting of the Marquess of Westminster Memorial Drinking Fountain is also of some significance. The specific reasons for erecting the fountain on the corner of Pimlico Road and Avery Farm Row are unknown. However, its prominent location in Pimlico, on land owned and developed by the Grosvenor Estate, is significant for cementing the fountain's historical association with the Grosvenor family. Furthermore, it is sited close to a number of late-19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century affordable housing developments, which together allude to a history of social provision in Pimlico. Although the location of the fountain has remained unchanged

since it was first erected in 1871, the significance of its immediate setting has been diminished significantly through 20<sup>th</sup> century redevelopment. While operational, the fountain would have had communal value for the working class community living in Pimlico, who would have relied on it for clean, fresh water. However, this significance has been somewhat diminished since the removal of the fountain's water supply and the changing social demographic, and is now historic rather than communal.

#### **4.4 Arnrid Johnston Obelisk**

The Arnrid Johnston Obelisk consists of a three-sided, flat-headed Portland stone obelisk, with relief carvings of children playing, set on a Portland stone plinth and mounted on a circular platform of brick and York stone. The obelisk, originally named 'Children's Group', was designed and executed in the mid-1920s by Swedish sculptor, Arnrid Johnston. The significance of the Obelisk relates principally to its architectural and historic interest as a piece of site-specific civic art. As such, this significance also partially extends to its setting.

The Obelisk is a notable work of civic art in its own right. Designed and carved by Arnrid Johnston, a renowned mid-20<sup>th</sup> century sculptor and member of the 'English Independents' group of artists, the Obelisk features a series of finely composed relief carvings depicting children playing across its three faces and stylised animals, expressively arranged at the base of the plinth, carved in the round. The sculptural work is clearly very well executed, despite having been extensively weathered over time, and displays Johnston's talent for carving and illustration. The obelisk, which was considered by the art historian Kineton Parkes to be 'Her most important work', is now one of Johnston's few surviving sculptural works and a good example of inter-war public sculpture.<sup>39</sup>

The historical significance of the Obelisk relates primarily to its association with the development of Walden House, a council housing block built in 1924 and reserved for families with young children. The Obelisk was given to the City of Westminster by the Duke of Westminster in c.1930 and subsequently installed in the courtyard of Walden House as a piece of civic art. The historic associations between the Obelisk, the Duke of Westminster and Walden House, was physically inscribed on one side of the plinth. However, this inscription has now been rendered illegible due to weathering and these historical associations are no longer clear.

The location of the Obelisk in the courtyard of Walden House also forms part of the Obelisk's historic interest. This courtyard was initially used as a playground by the children living in Walden House and it is thought that the obelisk was either specifically commissioned or purchased by the Duke of Westminster to embellish this area. With its stylised depictions of children playing and the raised platform incorporating three low seats, it is clear that the Obelisk related to the original use at Walden House as social housing for families, and this connection has some historic significance.

#### **4.5 K6 Telephone Kiosks**

The pair of K6 telephone kiosks in Orange Square are relatively intact and feature domed roofs, unperforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and doors. First designed as a prototype in 1935 by

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39 Kineton Parkes, *The Art of Carved Sculpture, Volume 1: Western Europe, America and Japan* (Chapman and Hall: London, 1931), p.125.



eminent architect Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (1880-1960), the significance of the kiosks relates principally to its special architectural design interest. This significance also extends to the setting of the kiosks as instantly recognisable and celebrated features of the streetscape.

The K6 telephone kiosk is an iconic work of industrial design, which displays Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's adaptation of neoclassical forms for a modern technological function. The K6 is usually painted red overall, with the crowns situated in the top panels being applied in relief, not perforated. The K6 has eight strips of glass per side, with narrow margin lights to each. Between 1936 and 1968, around 60,000 were installed across the country and are now a familiar sight in most towns and cities. The K6 kiosk was introduced in 1935 to celebrate the jubilee of King George V and, as such, has some limited historical significance for its associations with a nationally important event. It is now the most common type of phone box to survive and is considered to be an iconic national object.

#### **4.6 Cundy Street Flats**

Cundy Street Flats, granted a Col in 2013 which was renewed in 2018, was developed for housing to designs by TP Bennett & Son with the assistance of Gilbert P. Scott as consultant architect, and built by Taylor Woodrow Construction Ltd, between 1950 and 1952, as one, two and three bedroom flats. The buildings were designed as four seven-storey blocks in red brick on cross-shaped plans, set at 45 degrees to the street, with landscaping and car parking. The buildings remain in their original use though have been reconfigured internally: the central staircases survive but flats have been adapted to create larger bedrooms in some cases, and most have been fitted with modern kitchens and bathrooms. These buildings are well built and well maintained. Their design is old-fashioned for their date, but is well considered. The layout of the estate however, set at 45 degrees to the historic streets around it, disrupts the otherwise largely consistent and important enclosure of Ebury Street, and this compromises the setting of historic buildings. The recently renewed Certificate states that 'there are no claims to innovation in terms of design or internal planning, and no internal spaces or fittings of particular significance'. For these reasons the buildings make a modest positive contribution to the setting of the street and the conservation area as far as their architectural quality is concerned, but detract in terms of layout, and have resulted in the loss of the important linear street enclosure on Ebury Street.

#### **4.7 Walden House**

Walden House is subject to a Col, and was built as flats in 1924 by the City of Westminster to designs by architects Messrs Joseph on land leased from the Grosvenor Estate. It provided a mixture of flats for families with children in accommodation that followed the street layout of Pimlico Road, Avery Farm Row and Ebury Square but whose entrances were located away from the street in an internal yard that also houses outbuildings designed for storage. The building, a robust design largely devoid of architectural interest, is still used for its original purpose, and has been refitted externally with uPVC windows and new lift overruns. This building does not make a positive contribution to the streetscene in Pimlico Road and Ebury Square because of its modest design quality and the lack of activation and rhythm on the street but its original purpose to house the urban poor, and its current similar use for social housing, have some historic significance.

## 5.0 Commentary on the Proposals

### 5.1 Introduction

The proposals are shown on drawings by DSDHA architects and Todd Longstaffe-Gowan landscape architects and explained in DSDHA's Design and Access Statement. They would see the demolition and redevelopment of Walden House and Cundy Street Flats with new buildings for residential uses at upper floors and a mix of active uses at ground and below ground level, with a new alignment to re-introduce the lost street enclosure on Ebury Street, and new landscaped routes through the site which are based on historic streets. At Coleshill Flats (Grade II) there would be some reconfiguration of localised areas of the rear basement elevations and railings, part demolition of one shop unit on Pimlico Road, and changes to the rear lightwells and access to the Coleshill Flats rear basements, alongside a comprehensive re-landscaping scheme for the courtyard between the two Coleshill Flats blocks. Also proposed is the relocation and repair of the drinking fountain (Grade II) to a nearby location, and the relocation and repair of the obelisk (Grade II) to a new courtyard setting within the site. The K6 telephone kiosks (Grade II) in Orange Square would be temporarily moved to enable re-landscaping works and then be reinstated.

This report focuses on the impact of the proposed development on heritage assets on site. Where a change or intervention to a specific building has a wider incidental effect on the Conservation Area, our report may occasionally note that, but that the overall significance of the Belgravia Conservation Area, and the effect of the proposals on that conservation area and on the setting of nearby listed buildings outside the site, are addressed in the Townscape, Visual Impact and Heritage Report included within the ES rather than in this report.

### 5.2 Proposals for Coleshill Flats and their Impact

#### Proposals:

The eastern shop attached to the flank elevation of the Pimlico Road terrace at 20a Pimlico Road would be removed behind its decorative shop front, resulting in the demolition of modernised interiors and the shop's rear and flank walls and roof. The east facing main flank elevation of the terrace would be abutted by a new block which would be set back from the building line of the listed building.

The rear basement elevations of both terraces would be altered in some localised areas to create additional access into these buildings. Internal changes will be developed at a later date.

- In the **Ebury Street block**, this would result in the adaptation of two modern windows in closet wings into doors where it appears that originally doors were present, and where it is proposed to introduce frames and door leaves matching surviving originals. Two modern doors would be replaced with doors to historic patterns, one blocked window would be re-opened, and two modern door openings would be converted into windows, according to the presumed original pattern. Otherwise there

would be the removal of redundant clutter and services from the elevation. The historic railings which enclose the basement courtyards would be adapted to form a double gate in the central courtyard. The steps leading from ground floor level to the basement lightwell at the west end of the block would be removed and new steps with salvaged handrails formed in a similar location. The basement lightwell and courtyards would receive a new brick floor finish, and there would be lift access via a new platform lift at the east end.

- In the **Pimlico Road block**, there would also be a reinstatement of two doors in place of modern windows, and replacement of two modern doors in historic patterns, along with the removal of clutter and security bars, and the removal of modern paint on brickwork where this is possible without causing damage. The treatment of stairs would be similar to the Ebury Street block, with three proposed staircases into the lightwell in the place of the existing two. There would be a lift added to the east end of the lightwell to create step free access. The two larger basement courtyards would see their historic gates adjusted to become double gates, and the basement lightwell and courtyards would receive a new brick floor finish.

The courtyard between the blocks would be re-landscaped with new planting and hard surfaces. The modern tall brick wall to Orange Square would be rebuilt to a bespoke design to form an entrance. All outbuildings in the courtyard, including bike sheds and the post-war caretakers building, would be removed.

#### **Impact:**

A number of elements of the proposals constitute enhancements which will strengthen or complement the significance of the listed buildings and which are therefore beneficial. These are the demolition of modern outbuildings and boundary wall and their replacement with well-considered landscaping, and the reinstatement of basement rear doors where these have been lost, along with the removal of modern clutter to rear elevations including security bars and service ducts. These elements are all public environmental benefits.

Other elements would result in the loss either of original fabric or original design, albeit on a small scale, including where railings are to be adjusted, and the rear shop on Pimlico Road is to be lost. Because of their minor scale their impact would be very low and constitute harm at the low end of the less-than-substantial category, and the loss of the rear shop is directly outweighed by the provision of a lift to create access for all to the terrace on Pimlico Road to the basement flats to the rear. The abutment of new buildings is carefully designed and would cause no harm.

### **5.3 Proposals for the Obelisk and their Impact**

#### **Proposals:**

For the obelisk, currently placed in the courtyard of Walden House which would be replaced with a new building, a new location is proposed. The obelisk would be carefully dismantled into its individual components, labelled, packaged and removed off site into safe storage where it would be repaired; a detailed method statement has been provided by Donald



Insall Associates and is submitted with this application. Following the construction of the new development along Ebury Street, the obelisk would be placed into a courtyard which would be accessible via a public route from Ebury Street which also connects to Pimlico Road. The hard landscaping of this courtyard would be centred in the obelisk.

**Impact:**

Whilst the obelisk would lose its historic setting, it is clear from research that the obelisk was a late addition to Walden House; whilst there is a thematic connection between the two, namely the obelisk depicting children and Walden House accommodating families, such a connection would be re-established in the new development where family accommodation is provided, with Walden House residents moving to the new building 'C' which adjoins the obelisk. Overall, there would be no harm per se in the relocation. The repair of the obelisk would be an enhancement, and the obelisk's new setting would likely provide better environmental protection through its more sheltered configuration, and it is likely that this will halt or slow the deterioration of the stone work that has occurred to date. This would be a heritage benefit.

#### **5.4 Proposals for the Drinking Fountain and their Impact**

**Proposals:**

For the drinking fountain, the proposals are also for relocation, and a method statement is provided for this by Donald Insall Associates. This specifies the careful dismantling, labelling, packaging and removal off-site followed by repairs, and later reinstatement on the opposite (west) side of Avery Farm Road. The fountain would then be reconnected to the water mains and fitted with spouts replicating those that were lost, and it would be placed on a bespoke pavement whose pattern would centre on the fountain.

**Impact:**

The fountain lost its historic setting when the building that formed its backdrop was replaced in the twentieth century, and it was further compromised when it was disconnected from the water mains and fell into disrepair. The proposals would enhance the fabric of the fountain and this, alongside bringing it back into function, would be heritage benefits. The proposed new location and setting are appropriate and would cause no harm.

#### **5.5 Proposals for Cundy Street Flats and Walden House, and their Impact**

**Proposals:**

It is proposed to demolish Walden House and Cundy Street Flats and replaced them with three buildings that would house flats above a mix of active uses. The alignment of the facades would follow the street layout on Ebury Street and Pimlico Road. The buildings would be separated by landscaped pedestrian routes set at right angles to the streets, with a passage located adjacent Coleshill Flats on Pimlico Road, and a courtyard accommodating the relocated obelisk; the routes named Elizabeth Place and Clifford Row would denote the locations of lost historic streets. Street elevations of the new buildings would be faced in brick, and differentiated according to their context: on Ebury Street, adjacent to the Grade II listed

Coleshill building, would be a new terrace at four storeys to parapet height with two floors of set-back accommodation above, and shopfronts at ground floor level; on Pimlico Road there would be a five-storey, nine-bay building adjoining the Grade II listed Coleshill block, and a nine-storey and 11-storey building to the east, stepping up in height towards the junction with Avery Farm Road and Buckingham Palace Road, all with active ground frontages; on Cundy Street and Ebury Square would be the return elevations of the 11-storey building from Pimlico Road and Avery Farm Row, and the continuation of the six-storey building from Ebury Street, the latter having greater, set-back height at ten storeys visible beyond at the interior of the site.

#### **Impact:**

The impact of the demolition of Cundy Street Flats and Walden House would result in the loss of two undesigned heritage assets, and this would cause some harm. For Walden House this harm would be lesser because the significance of Walden House is limited and primarily historic; it relates to the relatively rare provision of social housing at the time, and there is no architectural significance associated with this building. Conversely, Cundy Street Flats are of some architectural quality, and the harm caused by their demolition would be slightly greater than for Walden House. However, these buildings, whilst handsome, also detract from the setting of Ebury Street and the Belgravia Conservation Area due to their irregular alignment; their removal is therefore not altogether harmful.

The impact of the new development on the setting of the Belgravia Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings on Pimlico Road and Ebury Street would be overall beneficial; the re-introduction of perimeter buildings on both streets, and the creation of carefully detailed new buildings in appropriate materials would enhance the setting of these streets. There would be greater height at the east end of the site by Avery Farm Road, and at the interior of the block, but this height, whilst a change in scale, is located away from sensitive heritage assets, and carefully handled with interesting architecture which would contribute positively to the wider setting of the Belgravia CA and listed buildings. In particular, the reintroduction of perimeter buildings would improve the settings of the listed buildings on the north side of Ebury Street, namely nos. 162-170, 172, 174, 182 and 184-188 (all Grade II listed), and 180 Ebury Street (Grade I), as well as the setting of Coleshill Flats (Grade II) on Ebury Street.

### **5.6 Proposals for the pair of K6 Telephone kiosks and their Impact**

#### **Proposals:**

It is proposed to relocate the two Grade II listed telephone kiosks, at present situated next to the boundary enclosure to the Ebury Street block of the Coleshill buildings in Orange Square, to a safe location (the courtyard at Walden House) whilst construction is taking place. This would allow Orange Square to be re-landscaped and a new enclosure to Coleshill Buildings being constructed. The kiosks would be repaired as necessary, including replacing the door and re-securing the cover to the equipment panel to the northernmost kiosk; the glazing to the southern box, north elevation, would be locally repaired in one location. Once construction is complete, the kiosks would be reinstated to their previous location, but very slightly set to the southwest so as to enable to placing of a planting bed and new wall.

## Impact:

These proposals would cause no harm. The temporary relocation of the kiosks is necessary and will be on site, meaning that there will be no risk of loss as is sometimes associated with storage of items off site. The exact methods of relocation would be agreed via a detailed method statement, and with a factory-made item such as a phone box this is expected to be straight forward.

## 5.7 Justification of the Proposals

### 5.7.1 Introduction

Proposals for alterations that affect heritage assets are required to be assessed against the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') and the policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework of 2019 (NPPF) and the local authority's local plan which aligns with the NPPF.

The Act protects the special interest of listed buildings:

*'In considering... development which affects 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'. (66)*

The NPPF aligns with the Act in that it seeks to protect heritage significance, but in recognition of the complexities of development it introduces the concept of balancing 'harm' to the significance, or special interest, of a heritage asset against public benefits.

It differentiates between 'substantial harm' and 'less-than-substantial harm'. Substantial harm is only considered acceptable if it is necessary to achieve commensurate public benefits, whilst less-than-substantial harm should be measured against the benefits that arise but without the need to prove necessity.

When considering proposals for undesignated heritage assets, the NPPF makes it clear that a balanced judgement is required that sets 'the scale of any harm or loss' against the significance of the asset.

Development in the setting of conservation areas and listed buildings should 'enhance or better reveal' their significance.

It is the finding of this report that the proposals would create substantial public benefits and heritage benefits, and cause no more than 'less than substantial' harm to heritage significance of designated heritage assets, and that they would enhance aspects of the setting of the Belgravia Conservation Area and the setting of listed buildings on the north side of Ebury Street.

### 5.7.2 Less than Substantial Harm

For the listed structures on site, the above description of the proposals and their impacts identifies a small number of elements of less-than-substantial harm to the significance of Coleshill Flats which would arise from the scheme, and some minimal harm to the obelisk. There would be no harm to the drinking fountain, and no works to the K6 telephone kiosks. The elements of harm have been carefully considered throughout the



design development, and have been minimised as much as possible. In summary, less-than-substantial harm would be caused by: the removal of the internally modernized rear shop at 20a Pimlico Road; adjustments to original railings in the rear basements at Coleshill Flats; and the loss of the obelisk's original context in the setting of Walden House for which it was either designed or chosen.

### **5.7.3 Other Harm**

The demolition of the unlisted Walden House and Cundy Street Flats would cause some harm because of their complete loss, but also provides an opportunity for the reinstatement of the lost important street enclosure on Ebury Street, and for improved architecture which would enhance the setting of listed buildings and the Belgravia Conservation Area. The increase in height, particularly at the east end of Pimlico Road, will be noticeable but cause no harm because of the well-designed architecture of the new buildings, the presence of other tall buildings in the vicinity, including at Buckingham Palace Road, and the low sensitivity of the environment in this area.

### **5.7.4 Public and Heritage Benefits**

The proposed scheme overall would create a wide range of social, economic and environmental public benefits which would amply outweigh the harm described above. These benefits are set out in detail in the Planning Statement by Gerald Eve.

Specifically in regard to the redevelopment of Walden House and Cundy Street Flats, environmental heritage benefits include:

- a) The recreation of the lost perimeter enclosure on Ebury Street.
- b) The reintroduction of lost historic routes through the site at Elizabeth Place and Clifford Row.
- c) The creation of contextual architecture with appropriate materials and proportions on Ebury Street, Pimlico Road, Avery Farm Road and Cundy Street.

The works to the listed buildings specifically would bring heritage benefits for those structures, and these are as follows:

- a) At Coleshill Flats, the provision of high quality landscaping in the place of low-grade outbuildings, modern boundary wall and landscaping which compromises their setting.
- b) The reintroduction of openings to original dimensions in the basement rear elevations of Coleshill Flats, and the replacement of modern doors with more sympathetic joinery.
- c) The removal of clutter from the same elevations.
- d) Repairs to the K6 telephone kiosks.
- e) Repairs to the obelisk and its relocation to a more sheltered setting with the potential to protect it better from the weather.
- f) Repairs to the water fountain and its reconnection to the water mains and reintroduction of its original function.

### **5.7.5 The Harms vs Benefits Balance**

This report has established that there would be some harm arising from the demolition of Walden House and Cundy Street Flats, and to two designated heritage assets, namely Coleshill Flats where some fabric would be lost and adapted, and the obelisk which would lose its historic

setting. This harm enables a wider, beneficial scheme for this site to be achieved. The benefits which would arise specifically for the historic environment and the designated heritage assets on the site and in its setting are substantive and outweigh the harm, as do the scheme's wider socio-economic and environmental benefits.

## 6.0 Conclusion

This is a comprehensive scheme which will bring many wide ranging public benefits, including additional mixed uses that will complement those in the conservation area on Ebury Street, new attractive public realm, housing, and others. In order to accomplish this range of benefits, it is proposed to demolish the unlisted buildings on site which are of limited merit, and replace them with carefully designed new architecture which would respond well to its context. Works to the listed buildings and listed structures are limited and mostly beneficial, and will integrate them better into their settings.

The proposed replacement of two modestly significant unlisted 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings, Walden House and Cundy Street Flats, would cause some harm but would allow the wide-ranging public benefits of a new sustainable housing development with active uses to be made possible. This new development would provide some heritage benefits, namely a repair to the disrupted street enclosure on Ebury Street, and the recreation of lost historic streets inside the block.

The works to the listed buildings would bring many heritage benefits and create very little harm to the significance of heritage assets: the Grade II listed mid-19<sup>th</sup> century terraced artisan housing blocks at Coleshill Flats would be enhanced to the rear, but would lose a secondary element of one shop unit and, in addition, would have its historic railings adapted; the Grade II listed 1920s obelisk in the courtyard of Walden House would be repaired and relocated to a nearby, more sheltered public setting which has the potential to enhance its longevity, and next to a new building which would house Walden House residents, thereby retaining a historic link; and the Grade II listed mid-19<sup>th</sup> century drinking fountain would be repaired and relocated to a close-by site where it would be made to function once more for its intended purpose. Two Grade II listed telephone kiosks would be repaired and relocated to a safe location during construction works and later reinstated, and this would cause no harm.

The impact on fabric and heritage significance of the designated assets on site, and on the setting of the Belgravia Conservation Area and on listed buildings on the site and on Ebury Street (the latter as set out in the Townscape, Visual Impact and Heritage Report included within the ES), is largely beneficial, with small areas of minimal and localised harm which would be comfortably outweighed by wider public benefits and heritage benefits. For these reasons, the proposals comply with sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; paragraphs 193, 196, 197 and 200 of the NPPF, and the London Plan and Westminster's local plan. Therefore, it is the conclusion of this report that they should be granted Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent.

## Appendix I - Statutory List Descriptions

### **NOS 1, 3, 5 TO 22, 23, 25 AND 27 TO 44 COLESHILL FLATS**

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 1 December 1987

**Date of most recent amendment:** 9 August 2000

Block of artisans' dwellings 1871 built by the Peabody Trust. White brick banding, stucco dressings, leaded mansard roofs. 5 storeys and attic. 8 bays. Outer bay to each end and inner pair set forward with square headed architraved sash windows, glazing bars and pedimental blocking courses to first floor; French pavilion roof with cast iron cresting. Gabled dormers. Intervening bays recessed with access balconies with cast iron balustrades and spandrels. Shops to ground floor separated by stucco pilasters and access stairways. London, Vol I. N Pevsner

### **NOS 20A, 20, 22 24, 26, 28, 30 AND 30A AND 45, 47, 49 TO 66, 67, 69, 71 TO 88, 91 AND 93 TO 110 COLESHILL FLATS**

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 1 December 1987

**Date of most recent amendment:** 9 August 2000

II Flatted artisan housing, 1870, built by the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company (IIDC)

**MATERIALS:** White brick with red brick banding, stucco dressings; leaded mansard roofs.

**EXTERIOR:** The building has five storeys and attic, and is 12 bays wide. The outer bays to each end, the fourth, fifth, eighth and ninth bays are set forward with square headed architraved sash windows, glazing bars and pedimental block courses to first floor. Intervening bays are recessed with access balconies with cast iron balustrades and spandrels. The French pavilion roofs have cast-iron cresting and gabled dormers. There are shops to the ground floor separated by stucco pilasters and access stairways.

**HISTORY:** The IIDC was founded in 1863 by Sydney Waterlow and was one of the early builders of public social housing in Britain. The IIDC was a commercial company which demonstrated that it was possible to build good quality housing which could be let to artisans at a sustainable rent, whilst offering a modest five percent profit for the owner. The company built a number of blocks of flats in London to designs adapted from the work of architect Henry Roberts (1803-1876). A design by Roberts, constructed at the Great Exhibition of 1851 as a prototype for public housing, provided flatted accommodation accessed from recessed balconies to the front, which were reached by open stairs. This design,



which was capable of vertical and lateral expansion, was adopted by Waterlow and his builder Matthew Allen. The internal layouts however were designed by Waterlow and Allen themselves.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION: Coleshill Flats, Westminster, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons: \* Historic interest: the building is an example of public housing built by one of the early public housing organisations, which sought to provide improved living conditions for the urban poor. \* Architectural interest: the building is a handsome and externally well-preserved example of its type, which demonstrates the intention of the IIDC to provide light, well ventilated, and well-constructed accommodation for its tenants. The open stair wells and iron-fronted access balconies are standard features of IIDC housing.

### **FOUNTAIN ON EAST SIDE OF JUNCTION WITH AVERY FARM ROW**

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 1 December 1987

TQ 2878 NE CITY OF WESTMINSTER PIMLICO ROAD, SW1 103/37 (north side) Fountain on east side of junction with Avery Farm Row GV II Fountain. Circa 1870. Portland stone, granite base, Italian Renaissance style. Square plan. Pink and grey granite base with projecting bowls now filled. Upper stage pilastered to corner with carved capitals. Shell niche to each side, lined with mosaic work incorporating inscription. Dentil cornice and key pattern frieze. Surmounted by buff terracotta urn. Inscription to east face: "In memory of Richard Second Marquess of Westminster died 1869."

### **ARNRID JOHNSTON OBELISK**

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 22 October 2018

#### Summary

Portland Stone obelisk featuring relief carvings of children playing, Arnridd Johnston, of about 1930.

#### Reasons for Designation

The Arnridd Johnston Obelisk at Walden House, of about 1930, is listed for the following principal reasons:

#### Architectural interest:

\* for the finely composed relief carvings of children at play to the three faces of the obelisk, with stylised figures expressively arranged and the sculptural work, despite its weathering, evidently well executed; \* as the most significant surviving sculptural work by Arnridd Johnston, a renowned artist of the mid-C20; initially associated with the influential 'English Independents' group of sculptors and later a prominent illustrator and designer.

Historic interest:

\* as a significant and celebrated piece of site-specific civic art of the inter-war period, commissioned by the Duke of Westminster for the playground courtyard of a council housing block reserved for families with young children.

#### History

The Obelisk at Walden House was designed and carved by Arnrid Johnston (1895-1972) and presented by the Duke of Westminster to the City of Westminster in about 1930. Johnston was a prolific sculptor and illustrator of the early to mid-C20. Born in Uddevalla, Sweden, she later moved to London and studied at the Slade (1914-1921) under the influential sculptor, James Havard Thomas (1854-1921). Over the course of her career, Johnston produced a number of notable sculptural works, carved both in relief and in the round, working with wood and stone. Her work was featured at exhibitions with other contemporary artists concerned with 'direct carving', referred to in the period as the 'English Independents'. Key exhibitions at which Johnston's work was shown included 'Living British Artists' at Leeds City Art Gallery and the London Group's 1930 'Open-Air Sculpture' exhibition at Selfridges, where her work 'In Pasture' (green serpentine) was displayed alongside works of leading artists of the period including Barbara Hepworth, John Skeaping and Henry Moore. The work for Walden House, simply entitled 'Obelisk', was regarded by the critic and author Kineton Parkes as her most important sculptural work, which he notes to have been carved over a period of four years.

Into the 1930s, Johnston moved into illustration and design work, producing posters for the Underground Group and London Transport (of which a collection are held at the London Transport Museum). Between the early 1930s and early 1950s Johnston also wrote and/or illustrated more than twenty books, which mainly concerned animals; these noted for being meticulously researched and drawn. Significant titles included 'Animal Families', Country Life, 1939, 'Animals We Use', Methuen, 1948, and 'Fables From Aesop and Others', Transatlantic Arts, 1944. In later years her eyesight deteriorated which cut short her illustration work. In her obituary H J Blackham characterised her work as being 'always lively and expressive as well as carefully observed'.

In contrast to other prominent sculptural works by Johnston, the Obelisk was specifically designed for Walden House (not listed). The building, an early council housing block which was built in 1924 to the designs of Messrs Joseph for the City of Westminster, was built on land given over by the Duke of Westminster; this appears to be referred to in the weathered inscription on the plinth of the obelisk. The block was formally opened on 19 May 1924 and named after Alderman Sir Robert Walden, who had helped negotiate the donation of the land. The 40 flats were reserved for families with children living at home, apparently at the request of the Grosvenor Estate. Consequently, the rear courtyard, which was to serve as a playground, was included in the scheme and Johnstone's Obelisk was commissioned as its centrepiece. The sculpture remains within the courtyard, apparently in its original position. Whilst the figures to each of the three faces remain, it is clear the sculptural work has suffered from weathering over more than 80 years, with the original crispness of Johnston's relief carving now softened and the carved inscription to the north-east face of the plinth only partially legible.

#### Details

Obelisk sculpture, of about 1930, designed and carved by Arnridd Johnston.

**MATERIALS:** Portland stone with stock brick structure to the platform.

**PLAN:** circular base with a three-sided plinth.

**DESCRIPTION:** truncated, flat-headed obelisk with relief carving to its three faces, set upon a stepped, two-tier platform and a chamfered plinth. Each of the three carved sections feature scenes of children playing; the north-west face with a boy carrying a toy sailing boat with a dog at his feet and the southern face a pair of girls hoop rolling. The north-east face of the obelisk depicts two girls on rocking horses and beneath, carved onto the plinth, is a weathered inscription (now only partially legible) which appears to commemorate the granting of the land for Walden House to the City of Westminster by the Grosvenor Estate. A further inscription at the top of the obelisk can be seen, but is now mostly illegible. At the foot of the plinth, to each of the three corners, are stylised animal figures, carved in the round.

#### **PAIR OF TELEPHONE KIOSKS ON ISLAND SIDE AT JUNCTION WITH EBURY STREET**

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 21 May 1987

TQ 2878 SW CITY OF WESTMINSTER PIMLICO ROAD, SW1 Pair of K6 Telephone Kiosks on island side at junction 21.5.87 with Ebury Street GV II Pair of telephone kiosks. 1935. By Giles Gilbert Scott. Cast iron. Intact square kiosks of K6 type with domed roof, unperforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and doors.

Listing NGR: TQ2832778475

## Appendix II - Planning Policy and Guidance

### Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Act is legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment.

Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

*in considering whether to grant permission for development which affects 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.*

Similarly, section 72(l) of the above Act states that:

*... with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.*

### National Planning Policy Framework

Any proposals for consent relating to heritage assets are subject to the policies of the NPPF (February 2019). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. With regard to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', the framework requires proposals relating to heritage assets to be justified and an explanation of their effect on the heritage asset's significance provided.

Paragraph 7 of the Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to 'contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' and that, at a very high level, 'the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

At paragraph 8, the document expands on this as follows:

*Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives:*



*a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

*b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*

*c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

and notes at paragraph 10:

*10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).*

With regard to the significance of a heritage asset, the framework contains the following policies:

*190. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*

In determining applications local planning authorities are required to take account of significance, viability, sustainability and local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 192 of the NPPF identifies the following criteria in relation to this:

*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.*

With regard to potential 'harm' to the significance designated heritage asset, in paragraph 193 the framework states the following:

*...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 the any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 194 that:

*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.*

Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm' to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset paragraph 195 of the NPPF states that:

*...local planning authorities should refuse consent, 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; 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 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.*

With regard to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, of the NPPF states the following;

*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.*

In terms of non-designated heritage assets, the NPPF states:

*197. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balance judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

The Framework requires local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and world heritage sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Paragraph 200 states that:

*Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.*

Concerning conservation areas and world heritage sites it states, in paragraph 201, that:

*Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.*

## **National Planning Practice Guidance**

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was published on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019 to support the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 and the planning system. It includes particular guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment in the section: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

The relevant guidance is as follows:

### **Paragraph 2: What is meant by the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment?**

Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in every day use and as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.

In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time. In the case of archaeological sites, many have no active use, and so for those kinds of sites, periodic changes may not be necessary, though on-going management remains important.

Where changes are proposed, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-making in respect of applications for planning permission and listed building consent to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development. Heritage assets are either designated heritage assets or non-designated heritage assets.

Part of the public value of heritage assets is the contribution that they can make to understanding and interpreting our past. So where the complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified (noting that the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted), the aim then is to:

- capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance which is to be lost
- interpret its contribution to the understanding of our past; and
- make that publicly available (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 199)

## Paragraph 6: What is “significance”?

‘Significance’ in terms of heritage-related planning policy is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework definition further states that in the planning context heritage interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. This can be interpreted as follows:

- **archaeological interest:** As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- **architectural and artistic interest:** These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
- **historic interest:** An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation’s history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

In legislation and designation criteria, the terms ‘special architectural or historic interest’ of a listed building and the ‘national importance’ of a scheduled monument are used to describe all or part of what, in planning terms, is referred to as the identified heritage asset’s significance.

## Paragraph 7: Why is ‘significance’ important in decision-taking?

Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.

## Paragraph 13: What is the setting of a heritage asset and how should it be taken into account?

The setting of a heritage asset is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework.

All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset’s curtilage may not have the same extent.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts



on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The contribution may vary over time.

When assessing any application which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation.

**Paragraph 15: What is the optimum viable use for a heritage asset and how is it taken into account in planning decisions?**

The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.

By their nature, some heritage assets have limited or even no economic end use. A scheduled monument in a rural area may preclude any use of the land other than as a pasture, whereas a listed building may potentially have a variety of alternative uses such as residential, commercial and leisure.

In a small number of cases a heritage asset may be capable of active use in theory but be so important and sensitive to change that alterations to accommodate a viable use would lead to an unacceptable loss of significance.

It is important that any use is viable, not just for the owner, but also for the future conservation of the asset: a series of failed ventures could result in a number of unnecessary harmful changes being made to the asset.

If there is only one viable use, that use is the optimum viable use. If there is a range of alternative economically viable uses, the optimum viable use is the one likely to cause the least harm to the significance of the asset, not just through necessary initial changes, but also as a result of subsequent wear and tear and likely future changes. The optimum viable use may not necessarily be the most economically viable one. Nor need it be the original use. However, if from a conservation point of view there is no real difference between alternative economically viable uses, then the choice of use is a decision for the owner, subject of course to obtaining any necessary consents.

Harmful development may sometimes be justified in the interests of realising the optimum viable use of an asset, notwithstanding the loss of significance caused, and provided the harm is minimised. The policy on addressing substantial and less than substantial harm is set out in paragraphs 193-196 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Paragraph 18: How can the possibility of harm to a heritage asset be assessed?**

What matters in assessing whether a proposal might cause harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Proposed development affecting a heritage asset may have no impact on its significance or may enhance its significance and therefore cause no harm to the heritage asset. Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 194-196) apply.

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

Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.

While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later additions to historic buildings where those additions are inappropriate and harm the buildings' significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm, depending on the nature of their impact on the asset and its setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework confirms that 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). It also makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification and sets out certain assets in respect of which harm should be exceptional/wholly exceptional (see National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 194).

## **Paragraph 20: What is meant by the term public benefits?**

The National Planning Policy Framework requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

Examples of heritage benefits may include:

- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting
- reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset
- securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation

## **Regional Policy**

### **The London Plan Policies (Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP) 2016)**

In March 2016, the Mayor published (i.e. adopted) the Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP). From this date, the FALP are operative as formal alterations to the London Plan (the Mayor's spatial development strategy) and form part of the development plan for Greater London.

The London Plan has been updated to incorporate the Further Alterations. It also incorporates the Revised Early Minor Alterations to the London Plan (REMA), which were published in October 2013 and March 2015.

#### **Policy 7.8: Heritage Assets and Archaeology Strategic**

- A. London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.
- B. Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology.

#### **Planning decisions**

- C. Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.

- D. Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.
- E. New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes and significant memorials. The physical assets should, where possible, be made available to the public on-site. Where the archaeological asset or memorial cannot be preserved or managed on-site, provision must be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset.

## **Local Policy**

### **City of Westminster**

#### **CITY OF WESTMINSTER UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2007 – parts saved 2010)**

##### **CHAPTER 10 URBAN DESIGN AND CONSERVATION**

###### **POLICY DES 10: LISTED BUILDINGS**

###### **(A) Applications for planning permission**

Applications for development involving the extension or alteration of listed buildings will where relevant need to include full details of means of access, siting, design and external appearance of the proposed development in order to demonstrate that it would respect the listed building's character and appearance and serve to preserve, restore or complement its features of special architectural or historic interest.

###### **(C) Changes of use of listed buildings**

Development involving the change of use of a listed building (and any works of alteration associated with it, including external illumination) may be permitted where it would contribute economically towards the restoration, retention or maintenance of the listed building (or group of buildings) without such development adversely affecting the special architectural or historic interest of the building (or its setting) or its spatial or structural integrity.

## **WESTMINSTER'S CITY PLAN: STRATEGIC POLICIES**

Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies was formally adopted by Full Council on 13 November 2013 and re-confirmed in November 2017, and has full weight as part of the development plan in taking planning decisions from that date. This document was the result of a review of the City Council's Core Strategy adopted in January 2011 to ensure consistency with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the new London Plan published by the Mayor of London in July 2011, changes to legislation and other updates.

### **POLICY S25 HERITAGE**

Recognising Westminster's wider historic environment, its extensive heritage assets will be conserved, including its listed buildings, conservation areas, Westminster's World Heritage Site, its historic parks including five Royal Parks, squares, gardens and other open spaces, their



settings, and its archaeological heritage. Historic and other important buildings should be upgraded sensitively, to improve their environmental performance and make them easily accessible.

#### Reasoned Justification

The intrinsic value of Westminster's high quality and significant historic environment is one of its greatest assets. To compete effectively with other major, world-class cities the built environment must be respected and refurbished sensitively in a manner appropriate to its significance. Any change should not detract from the existing qualities of the environment, which makes the city such an attractive and valued location for residents, businesses and visitors.

#### **POLICY S28 DESIGN**

Development must incorporate exemplary standards of sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture. In the correct context, imaginative modern architecture is encouraged provided that it respects Westminster's heritage and local distinctiveness and enriches its world-class city environment.

Development should:

reduce energy use and emissions that contribute to climate change during the lifecycle of the development; and ensure the reduction, reuse or recycling of resources and materials, including water, waste and aggregates.

This will include providing for an extended life-time of the building itself through excellence in design quality, high quality durable materials, efficient operation, and the provision of high quality floorspace that can adapt to changing circumstances over time.

#### Reasoned Justification

Westminster requires a special approach to architecture and urban design in order to deliver the council's spatial vision of creating a world-class, distinctive and sustainable city.

Only the best, exemplary design, which respects and enhances the existing qualities and character of the city will be acceptable.

The NPPF places a requirement on local planning authorities to adopt proactive policies and plans to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Sustainable design, refurbishment and construction measures provide one of the most effective and efficient ways in which to reduce resource use, greenhouse gas emissions and local pollution, in terms of the materials used and construction techniques employed, as well as throughout the lifetime operation of the development. Furthermore, excellence in design quality and floorspace adaptability will increase the lifetime of the building and enable its reuse by reducing the need for redevelopment. Detailed design criteria will be set out in City Management policy.

#### **Belgravia Conservation Area**

The application site adjoins the east boundary of the Belgravia Conservation Area, which was first designated in 1968. The conservation area is located in the south-western corner of Westminster. It is loosely

defined by Knightsbridge to the north, Grosvenor Place and Buckingham Palace Road to the east and south, and the boundary with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to the west.

It is adjacent to the open spaces of the Royal Parks Conservation Area to the north and east, to Albert Gate Conservation Area to the north-west and Grosvenor Gardens Conservation Area to the east; Pimlico Conservation Area is just to the south. The Hans Town and Sloane Square Conservation Areas in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea form the western boundary and are also part of the setting of the conservation area.

In October 2013 a draft Conservation Area Audit for Belgravia was issued to identify and protect those qualities which contribute to its distinctiveness and also to provide a framework for its future protection and management. The 'general character' of the conservation area is described as follows:

*Belgravia today remains a desirable residential area, centred upon the original network of stucco-clad squares and terraces dating from the early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.*

*The distinctive character of the conservation area derives from the combination of opulent cream stucco terraces, spacious streets and the verdant garden squares on which these are set. Few public buildings or landmarks were included in the original layout and this, coupled with the consistent use of materials and repetition of classical architectural detailing, contributes to a high degree of townscape uniformity and coherence.*

*Set behind the main squares and terraces, the mews are more intimate, hidden spaces, characterised by smallscale, modest buildings. The areas around Kinnerton Street, Wilton Row and Old Barracks Yard have a particularly picturesque character. Here small artisans houses and mews are set around yards and alleys and a number of small shops, restaurants and pubs give this area an intimate 'village' feel.*

*To the south and east of the main squares, intermediate streets are also lined with more modest terraced housing, these are of a slightly smaller scale than the principal squares and often in half stucco and brick. Some of these intermediate streets including Elizabeth and Eccleston Streets, have a more lively, commercial character with exclusive small shops and cafes to ground floors.*

*Streets in the area to the west, around Caroline and Graham Terrace, are set apart from the busy traffic routes and commercial areas and have a different character once again. These quiet streets are lined with attractive small scale housing.*

*Another distinctive character area is located to the southwest of the conservation area. The area around Ebury Street and Pimlico Road, which predates the original planned Belgravia development has a mixed townscape, and vibrant small shops and cafes around Orange Square. On the streets behind this, simply detailed earlier terraces are mixed in with villas on Bloomfield Terrace, late Victorian philanthropic housing and 20<sup>th</sup> century infill buildings. Finally, the main traffic routes of Knightsbridge and Buckingham Palace Road have a busy commercial character and larger scale of built form.*



