

# Great James Street

Scheme address: Great James Street, WC1N  
Architect: Emrys Architects  
Developer: GMS Estates Ltd  
Client/owner: GMS Estates Ltd  
Completed: October 2013  
Scheme description: Two Grade II\* Listed Georgian properties that have been the head offices of GMS Estates for generations have been redeveloped for the twenty-first century. A melee of unconnected post-war extensions and dank lower ground spaces has been replaced with two storeys of striking workspace. Original eighteenth century oak-panelled rooms lead through to bright new offices with an asymmetric lofted ceiling that incorporates recessed lighting to accentuate the geometric planes.

A triangulated roof perches over this new area to the rear of the existing terrace, its height and form designed to fit key points around the perimeter. This contemporary folded roof is complemented by the use of a copper bronze alloy, the patina selected to harmonise with the existing buildings. An old silver vault has become a meeting room with the barrelled ceiling and heavy steel door retained.

Panel comments: *"The house is part of a group of houses from 1721, part of the developing character of the London terrace house. The careful restoration of the main rooms of the original house include the staircase and finely panelled rooms. This has been accompanied by an inventive reworking of the subsidiary buildings in the rear yard, where new spaces have been introduced, making effective use of natural lighting through several levels of office space. At the same time, the new buildings stand away from the earlier structures, preserving the special character of the old, while enhancing natural light in the new. It is an opportunity also to acknowledge the close working between the architects and the council's conservation team."*



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