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traditional excellence

## Heritage Statement

### **26a Ferncroft Avenue, Hampstead, London, NW3 7PH**

Statement prepared by Chilcroft Heritage Planning  
July 2023



Corporate members of:  
The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings  
Historic Houses Association  
The Georgian Group



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## **1) INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1) I am Haig Dalton, founder of Chilcroft Heritage Planning, an established independent heritage consultancy since 2006. Previously I was a local planning authority Design and Conservation Officer, within development control departments. I have worked on a wide range of projects throughout the United Kingdom, predominantly (but not exclusively) for private sector clients.
- 1.2) I hold a masters degree in Historic Building Conservation (MSc); a postgraduate qualification in Architectural History from the University of Oxford (Oxon); I am an Affiliate member of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC).
- 1.3) Over the last 18 years I have specialised in the historic environment, both in terms of understanding and analysing physical fabric, and in terms of policy application, specifically by assessing impacts, providing advice and supporting development proposals. My experience includes a diverse range of cases relating to the assessment of physical changes to, and development affecting all manner of heritage assets, and their settings.
- 1.4) I have undertaken numerous impact assessments where I have considered the impacts of new development on the historic environment (dealing with physical impacts, setting, townscape, views and inter-visibility), including dealing with the effects of development on heritage assets in urban contexts.
- 1.5) I have provided expert evidence at appeals, including public inquiries, on behalf of both appellants and local planning authorities.
- 1.6) I understand my roles as part of the heritage statement; to give independent and objective evidence on matters within my expertise, based on my own independent opinion and uninfluenced by the instructing party; the applicant. I confirm that I have stated the facts and matters on which my opinion is based, and that I have not omitted to mention facts or matters that could detract from my conclusions.

- 1.7) I believe that the facts stated within this heritage statement are true and that the opinions expressed are correct. I have drawn attention to any matters where I consider I lack sufficient information to reach anything other than a provisional conclusion. I have adhered to the standards and duties of the professional bodies I am a member of, and will continue to adhere to those standards and duties.
- 1.8) I was first approached in relation to the proposal in September 2021, when I was asked to provide an initial conservation assessment on behalf the applicant. My quote was based on several stages/elements, the first of which was an initial case review followed by a site visit in May 2022. I confirm that I am able to act as the applicant's heritage expert following this initial work.
- 1.9) As an independent expert witness, I have formed my own opinions and have come to my own conclusions about the effects of the proposed development on heritage assets.
- 1.10) This report will describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by the setting, as required by Para.194 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2021). It will assess the significance of the heritage assets by way of Historic England guidance *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017) in accordance with their preferred five-step procedure, identify, assess and explore the significance of their setting and consider the appellant's scheme in relation to them.

## 2) LEGISLATION AND POLICY

- 2.1) Legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Sections 16 and 66 of the Act place a duty on the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings.
- 2.2) Section 72 of the Act places similar duty on the decision maker with respect to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas, however this does not extend to the setting of conservation areas.
- 2.3) The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** constitutes the Government's current national guidance and policy regarding development in the historic environment. It is a material consideration and includes a succinct policy framework for local planning authorities and decision takers. It relates to planning law by stating that applications are to be determined in accordance with the local plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.4) Paragraphs 189 to 193 of the NPPF deal with conserving and enhancing the historic environment with emphasis on "significance", defined in Annex 2 as:

*"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance"*

- 2.5) Annex 2 of the NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

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

- 2.6) Paragraph 194 of the NPPF places a duty on the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, providing a proportionate level of detail. The effects of any development on a heritage asset therefore need to be assessed against the four components of its heritage significance: its archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interests.
- 2.7) Paragraph 195 of the NPPF notes that 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 into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 2.8) Paragraph 199 applies specifically to designated heritage assets. It states that great weight should be given to their conservation (requiring a proportionate approach) irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial or less than substantial harm.
- 2.9) Conservation (for heritage policy) is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:
- “The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance”*
- 2.10) The importance and relevance of this definition is that it does not suggest conservation to be the same as preservation. Indeed, what sets conservation apart is the emphasis on proactively maintaining and managing change and not on a reactive approach to resisting change. In its simplest interpretation conservation could amount to a change that at least sustains the significance of a heritage asset.

- 2.11) Paragraphs 201 to 202 describe two levels of potential harm that can be caused to the significance of designated heritage assets, namely substantial harm and less than substantial harm. These effects are to be weighed in the planning balance according to the guidance set out within the paragraphs, bearing in mind the statutory provisions above. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including grade I and II\* listed buildings should be wholly exceptional.
- 2.12) Paragraph 202 deals with cases of less than substantial harm and notes that any such harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Heritage protection and the conservation of heritage assets are recognised as of benefit to the public.
- 2.13) Harm is defined by Historic England as a change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.
- 2.14) Paragraph 206 of the NPPF notes that 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.
- 2.15) **The National Planning Practice Guidance** provides advice on enhancing and conserving the historic environment in accordance with the NPPF. The PPG currently relates to the 2019 version of the NPPF but will be updated in due course to reflect NPPF 2021.
- 2.16) In regards to the setting of heritage assets the PPG notes:

*“The setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage.”*



2.17) The guidance notes that a thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

2.18) In relation to harm the guidance states:

*“Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, 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.”*

2.19) Paragraph 020 of the document notes that public benefits can be heritage based and can include:

- Sustaining or enhancing the significance and the contribution of its setting;
- Reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset; and
- Securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset for the long term.

2.20) The **Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning** Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2017) is a document published by Historic England as a second edition in December 2017, replacing the earlier 2015 setting guidance. The document provides for a thorough understanding of the setting of a heritage asset and the relationship of the setting to curtilage, character and context.

2.21) The guidance document notes, in paragraph 18, that the protection of the setting of heritage assets need not prevent change. The document recognises that not all heritage assets are of equal importance and states that the contribution made by their setting to their significance will also vary. Not all settings have the same capacity to accommodate change without causing harm to the significance of the asset.

2.22) As per earlier Historic England guidance, the document advocates a stepped approach to assessing the impact of change within setting on the significance of heritage assets. This stepped approach is:

Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;

Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);

Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;

Step 4: explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and

Step 5: make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

2.23) Guidance under Step 2 notes that the asset's physical surroundings and how the asset is experienced (such as views, noise, tranquillity, sense of enclosure etc.) should be taken in to consideration.

2.24) Step 3 is also important in making it clear that a proposed development should not be assessed in terms of its impact on setting; instead it should be assessed in terms of the impacts on significance. That is to say, what matters is not the extent of visibility of the development or change to the setting of an asset, but the extent of change to its archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest. In some circumstances, this evaluation may need to extend to cumulative and complex impacts which may have as great an effect on heritage

assets as large-scale development and which may not only be visual. At the very least the assessment should address the key attributes of the development in terms of its location and siting, form and appearance, additional effects and permanence.

- 2.25) Paragraph 39 notes that options for reducing the harm arising from development may include the relocation of elements of a development or changes to its design. It notes that good design may reduce or remove the harm.
- 2.26) **Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** requires great weight to be given to preserving the setting of a heritage asset. In *Jones v Mordue [2015] EWCA Civ 1243* the court confirmed that if the decision-maker has worked through the relevant heritage paragraphs in the NPPF, they will have complied with the s66 duty.
- 2.27) In *Barnwell Manor [2014] EWCA Civ 137* the court confirmed that great weight should be attached to the desirability of preserving the setting of a heritage asset.
- 2.28) **Redington / Frognal Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan (December 2022)** notes that the Conservation Area will continue to change and adapt and that good conservation is about preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area, without causing harm.
- 2.29) Enhancement of the Conservation Area may be achieved through working with owners to reverse harmful alternations and to promote good design (see 5.1).
- 2.30) Building design should not support stylistic imitation and recognises the well established principle that buildings should be ‘of their age’ including design for superior environmental performance benefits (see 6.3).

### 3) ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 3.1) The proposed site is located in Ferncroft Avenue, to the northern side of the highway. It is a residential road made up of primarily detached dwellings set back from the highway with front gardens and driveways forward of their principal elevations. The dwellings are situated in rectangular sized plots with the majority of their respective curtilage made up at the rear of the buildings.
- 3.2) The dwellings within the immediate setting of the proposed site are not designated heritage assets. The building of 26a Ferncroft Avenue and the immediate area around it are situated within the protected area of the Redington/Frognal Conservation Area. It is a well established area, created from 1870 onwards, on former agricultural land. Although the streets and suburbs around it have evolved with some more modern buildings around them, the setting of Ferncroft Avenue maintains a quieter, more insular environment, away from the busier roads nearby and sits on the outskirts of Hampstead.
- 3.3) Ferncroft Avenue maintains a high degree of vegetation which adds to its idyllic feel and unique character and identity. The most prominent buildings within the broader setting are that of 6 & 8 Ferncroft Avenue, a Grade II listed building (**List No. 1078342**) to the west of the proposed site and 12 & 14 Ferncroft Avenue, also Grade II listed (**List No. 1078343**). The proposed site shares its Grade II listing with 26 Ferncroft Avenue (**List No. 1078344**).
- 3.4) 26a Ferncroft Avenue is located within the Redington/Frognal Conservation Area and historically remained as open farmland up until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The land was farmed by Manor Farm, Frognal up until 1843 when the then owner died. After this, many attempts were made by the then owners to lobby Parliament towards the favourable development of their land, without success. By the 1870's however, the pressure for more residential homes on the outskirts of London finally saw Parliament relent and the baton was swiftly taken up by an ambitious Irish builder-developer, George Washington Hart, who teamed up with architect Charles Quennell to oversee the development of the surround area.

- 3.5) Construction first started at the northern end of the Conservation Area with housing built in Clorane Gardens, Rosecroft Avenue, Hollycroft Avenue and Ferncroft Avenue. Charles Quennell's influence was such that Pevsner famously described this area as "Quennell-land", accounting for over 100 detached buildings constructed in 16 years. Their partnership continued up until the outbreak of WW1 in 1914, lasting a staggering 18 years. In that time, the areas around Hampstead were transformed into a metropolis of leafy avenues. Like many corner properties associated with their developments, 30 Ferncroft Avenue was famously built as an on-site sales office and prospective buyers would be shown plans of houses under construction and taken on tours of any sites that they were interested in. Although Quennell employed many architectural styles, the area is best known for the use of Queen Anne Revival, Neo-Georgian and Arts & Crafts.
- 3.6) Ferncroft Avenue is a straight road with mainly 3 and 4 storey semi-detached properties and detached villas. Garden trees disbursed along the pavements are an important part of the character of the area and soften an otherwise urban built landscape. Buildings are made up of red brick with plain tiles, tile hanging, timber sash and casement windows. Some buildings contain architectural detailing including the use of Dutch gables, bay windows, open porches and brick quoin dressings. 26 and 26a Ferncroft Avenue are specifically identified and a photo shown in the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan (Dec, 2022).
- 3.7) The principal dwelling of 26 Ferncroft Avenue shares its Grade II listing with the proposed site and comprises the more significant building of the two. Constructed as the largest and most significant villa within Ferncroft Avenue (see **Fig 2**), it was deliberately placed upon the brow of the hill, making it not only the most prominent building within the road but also giving it a commanding view over the other neighbouring villas. The three storey building has a pair of two large bay windows topped with a gable end to the west side and a carriage driveway, with a pair of entrances onto the road. It is finished off with three large chimney stacks, with the service wing and coach house to the eastern side. The significance of the dwelling is best derived from its principal elevation, as well as from its formal rear curtilage space to the north.



- 3.8) The buildings of 26 & 26a Ferncroft Avenue were historically built as one property, with the smaller 26a Ferncroft Avenue serving as the coach and later motor house to the main dwelling of 26 Ferncroft Avenue. Constructed in 1898 by George Washington Hart and designed by Charles Quennell, the building was converted into a dwelling in its own right in the 1980's. It shares its Grade II listing with the main house of 26 Ferncroft Avenue, to the side of it. Built of red brick over 2 storeys with a tipped tiled roof and timber casement windows, it has an asymmetrical design with a left handed gabled bay. At the foot of this is the former vehicle entrance, now in-filled with glazing and a single door. Historically there were a pair of full height timber doors (**see Fig 14**) with a single door opening to the right side and round headed brickwork (**see Fig 15**).
- 3.9) The rear elevation of the building has been extended in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century with a 2 storey extension, completed in two parts, leaving a patchwork of brickwork that speaks of an incohesive design (**see Fig 8 & 9**). Although these existing extensions cannot be said to harm the listed building, they arguably fail to make any meaningful contribution to it and the overall design could be much improved. Whilst it is of a style and material finish consistent with the historic core of the building, it is arguably of least importance to the significance of the listed building or broader contribution to the appearance of the Conservation Area more generally. The irregular design gives a somewhat disjointed appearance to this northern elevation, which makes little contribution to the Conservation Area itself due to limited visibility or public views that carry. What views there are from this aspect focus on the roofline and upper elevations of the building and are mainly attributed to the neighbouring curtilages, as well as some glimpsed views from the rear curtilage space of dwellings within Hollycroft Avenue.
- 3.10) The character and appearance of the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area is not substantively derived from archaeological or artistic interest but aesthetic value. Whilst there is some potential for archaeological interest in the form of evidence of Ferncroft Avenue's adaptation and use, this is unlikely to be of inherent special interest, or of considerable heritage significance. Neither can 26 & 26a Ferncroft Avenue be described as having any historic interest prior to its 1898 design, having been built on previously undeveloped farmland.

- 3.11) Whilst 26a Ferncroft Avenue is undoubtedly of merit to the Conservation Area, that merit is currently largely derived by the appreciation of its principal elevation as seen from the public aspect of Ferncroft Avenue (see **Fig 3**). The Conservation Area also benefits from the frontage of the building, including the set back of its building line, the driveway approach and existing landscaping, which all contribute to its character and appearance.
- 3.12) Overall, the proposed site and curtilage of 26a Ferncroft Avenue plays a peripheral, albeit positive, role in the character and appreciation of the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area and as part of the setting of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century development that comprises this part of the area, with a degree of associative interest. In terms of how the curtilage contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area of the building, it plays an important role as part of a collective appearance.



**Fig 1:** Ferncroft Avenue is a straight road made up of mainly semi-detached and detached villas built around c.1900. The tree lined road has buildings set well back from the frontage, with wide curtilages.

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**Fig 2:** 26 Ferncroft shares its Grade II listed status with the proposed site neighbouring it. Together they were built in 1898 and are of a Queen Anne Revival, style of architecture.

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**Fig 3:** 26a Ferncroft Avenue is the original coach/motor house of the adjacent 26 Ferncroft Avenue. The Grade II listed building may have been built shortly after the main house but together are of the same architectural style.

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**Fig 4:** 26 Ferncroft Avenue and 26a Ferncroft Avenue are a Grade II listed building, formerly built as one and now separated into two dwellings. The former motor house remains subservient to the main house.

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**Fig 5:** The proposed site sits within the Redington Froggnal Conservation Area and contains a number of listed and locally listed buildings, of a similar style of architecture, that contribute to the areas character and appearance.

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**Fig 6:** The former vehicle entrance originally had a pair of timber barn style doors, with the lintel being original. The existing door and windows are from the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century and of no historic fabric value.

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**Fig 7:** The historic doorway to the residential first floor will be maintained. A pair of small timber garage doors added in the 1980's will be returned to a single arched doorway, as it originally was in c.1898.

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**Fig 8:** At the rear of the building, the building has been previously extended in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Completed at different stages, it lacks a coordinated design that truly enhances the listed building.

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**Fig 9:** The rear elevation of 26a Ferncroft Avenue displays a piecemeal approach to being extended and is capable of significance improvement. The proposed replacement extension would improve upon this.

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**Fig 10:** The proposed design would retain the subservient feel of the former motor house in relation to 26 Ferncroft Avenue beside it. The design would uphold their shared significance and their setting.

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**Fig 11:** The existing rear curtilage of 26a Ferncroft Avenue contains modern late 20<sup>th</sup> Century landscaping and fabric. The proposed extension would not amount to the loss of any historic curtilage fabric or features.

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**Fig 12:** The original access and doorway to the first floor will be retained, which is considered to be of significance to the listed building, its appreciation and the character of the Conservation Area.

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**Fig 13:** The existing front window does not contain any historic fabric and dates from the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, when the building was converted to a dwelling. Many of the internal features date from this conversion.

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**Fig 14:** A photograph taken in the 1980's during the buildings conversion into a dwelling. It shows the original large garage opening with barn style timber doors, with views out to the garden beyond.

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**Fig 15:** The photo shows the building under conversion in the 1980's with a pair of smaller garage doors in the side opening and the brickwork to the first floor staircase badly damaged and now subsequently rebuilt.

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#### **4) IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1) Whilst the living arrangements of an owner cannot be a primary consideration in the case of a listed building in a Conservation Area, they will undoubtedly feature in any residential improvements and done sympathetically, can also maintain the character and appearance of the area. We have worked with the applicant to ensure that the listed building of 26 & 26a Ferncroft Avenue remains the primary consideration.
- 4.2) From the outset we were keen to promote a high quality design proposal, that would actively emphasise the origins of the building as the former coach/motor house, retaining wherever possible the original features of the listed building and seeking to promote the more humble nature of the building, as a former ancillary building, without gentrifying this architectural style. The humble design of the principal elevation is a key feature within this part of the Conservation Area and of importance to the significance of the neighbouring listed building of 26 Ferncroft Avenue. Therefore, a sensitive design approach is required, one that preserves or better reveals this significance.
- 4.3) The proposed development would involve the extension and partial remodelling of the existing dwelling, amounting to a two storey rear extension, to create additional and enhanced living space, replacing and improving upon an existing late 20<sup>th</sup> Century extension to the building that is of poor quality.
- 4.4) The location of the proposal is deemed to be the most acceptable, being located at the rear of the building which makes the least contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The rear elevation of the building is hardly witnessed from the streetscape of Ferncroft Avenue and has been extensively altered with late 20<sup>th</sup> Century extensions, that are of no significance to the listed building. The proposed development would focus on the replacement of these modern additions to the existing building, retaining the historic frontage of the building in full. The principal elevation of 26a Ferncroft Avenue, which makes the greatest contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, will remain largely unchanged.

- 4.5) The design of the proposed extension draws upon the existing style of the building and adopts a use of materials that is consistent with this. It is of a proportionate scale, size and bulk and would sit comfortably in relation to its curtilage and neighbouring dwellings beside it. The existing height, pitch and overall form of the roof would be respected and the extension would sit below the historic ridgeline of the main portion of the building. The proportions are modest and do not attempt to push beyond a comfortable scope of development. On balance, the proposed development is considered to be proportionate and will respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 4.6) The proposed design will use materials that are consistent with the local vernacular and will respond to the existing style of the *Quennell* building. The materials proposed are of a high quality, consistent with the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Specific material choices that are deemed to be capable of best maintaining this can be secured by condition.
- 4.7) The overall size, scale and mass of the proposed rear extension is considered to be acceptable, having due regard to the existing building around it. The proposed design would not overshadow the historic core of the building to the front of it and is capable of remaining subservient. Whilst there would be some views of the proposed side elevation and roofline from the streetscape, these would be no more or less visible than the existing extension that they would replace and on balance, would have a neutral impact.
- 4.8) From the public realm of Ferncroft Avenue and Hollycroft Avenue to the east of the proposed site, the latter from where filtered views are possible, there would be a limited sense of the proposals. The creation of the proposed extension would be set well back from the northern boundary at the rear of the proposed site, furthest from other listed buildings in Hollycroft Avenue and the wider public gaze. The topography of the site would also assist in this, with the existing and proposed ground floor of the dwelling being set low down in the rear curtilage space, which rises sharply and is elevated behind the rear elevation. The front elevation of 26a Ferncroft Avenue would appear, for the most part, unchanged together with the setting of its front curtilage.

- 4.9) Inside 26a Ferncroft Avenue, the historic floorplan of the former coach/motor house would be respected. Although the floorplan of the building was much altered in the 1980's conversion of the building to a dwelling, the former vehicle parking bay clearly remains visible at the front of the building and its integral walls and structure would be respected, without loss of historic fabric. As a large open space, this former parking bay would be kept as one space, comprising the main entrance hall into the dwelling, with a staircase integrated into the far corner. Around this, existing stud walls would be reconfigured to create a freshly designed floorspace for bedrooms and bathrooms. The existing historic structural walls of the former coach/motor house would be respected and the proposed design of the reconfigured space would work around them, to maintain the historic fabric of the building. Although little else survives from the original building and throughout comprises modern fixtures in the form of skirting boards, flooring and cornicing, the applicant has a resolute desire to improve upon these fixtures and replace them with suitable alternatives, more commensurate with the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century building.
- 4.10) The principal elevation is arguably of the greatest significance to the listed building and as part of the proposals, we were keen to understand the original design of the building, its evolution and how we could best enhance its appreciation. As part of this, we sourced photographs of the frontage from its 1980's conversion, which showed that various elements had been added to the building, beyond its original design. In particular, we were keen to see the former vehicle entrance and side door return to their original configuration, moving away from the 1980's attempt to reshape their design. As part of this, the proposed design would see the former vehicle entrance better emphasised, with wide span full height glazing, replacing the existing glazing bars, to create a visually more complete opening. The single door to the side of this would be retained, bricking up the small window to the side of it and returning it to just a single arched doorway, as it was always historically intended to be. This cleaner, less fussy design will better present the principal elevation as it was historically designed to be, hinting at its former use, alongside the more prominent 26 Ferncroft Avenue that stands beside it.

- 4.11) At the rear of the building, the two 1980's extensions to the building would be replaced with a more coherent design, capable of enhancing the overall appreciation of the heritage asset. The bulk of this proposed extension would be focused at ground floor level, which sits below the main level of the rear curtilage space, rising to a first floor level. A rear facing terrace would top off the ground floor level, with the two storey element of the extension sitting well behind the neighbouring 26 and 28 Ferncroft Avenue, to each side of it. The terrace would be screened to each side with evergreen plants, to protect the privacy of each property, with the views from the terrace focused northward overlooking its own rear curtilage space.
- 4.12) The proposed design would use red brick with full height rear doors. This would be topped off with two gable ends of differing heights, situated behind the historic ridgeline of the building. The use of gable ends is consistent with the frontage of both 26 & 26a Ferncroft Avenue and the overall design approach, although contemporary, is distinctly rooted in the buildings historic design and use of materials and the proposed design would complement this, whilst leaving a clear distinction between old and new. This design approach is consistent with both Historic England general principles *Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (2015) and 6.3 Building Design of the Redington/Frogna Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan.
- 4.13) Whilst the historic fabric of the listed building is more difficult to upgrade in terms of its thermal benefits, the existing 1980's extension provides limited opportunity for improvement and predates what is now known about climate change. In this sense, the proposed replacement extension provides a further opportunity to improve upon existing. By comparison, the proposed design is designed with environmental performance in mind and provides an exciting opportunity to improve upon existing, with a radical design capable of best responding to these challenges. As part of this, the historic portion of the building will also be internally upgraded to improve its thermal performance, without harming the external appearance of the heritage asset. This approach is supported by 6.3 Building Design of the Conservation Area management plans which states that buildings should be 'of their age' rather than of a stylistic imitation. The proposed design correctly responds to this.

## **5) SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **Legislation, Policy and Guidance**

- 5.1) The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 contains a statutory duty to give considerable importance and great weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building in the planning balance. Preserving means to do no harm.
- 5.2) The NPPF lays down an approach that corresponds with the statutory duty of the 1990 Act. In cases where harm occurs, the NPPF requires balancing the benefits of a proposal against harm resulting from it.
- 5.3) The Camden London Borough Council's adopted Development Plan policies require development proposals to conserve heritage assets (such as listed buildings) and their settings.
- 5.4) The guidance in Historic England's Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management provides a framework for identifying and managing change.

### **Conclusions**

- 5.5) The proposal is of an architectural and material quality that would maintain the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is proportionate in relation to its scale and would remain subservient to existing.
- 5.6) The proposal would preserve the overall appreciation of the principal elevation and frontage of 26a Ferncroft Avenue, which makes the greatest contribution to the Redington/Frogna Conservation Area, with no adverse effect.
- 5.7) The proposed development would not have any wider implications upon the settings of listed buildings or heritage assets, that could be thought harmful.
- 5.8) The proposal respects the neighbouring dwellings and will maintain the c.1900 character of the ribbon of development along Ferncroft Avenue.



- 5.9) The proposed design and extension is of a size, scale and bulk that would remain subservient to the historic core of the listed building and does not attempt to push beyond a comfortable scope of development. The proposal would preserve the significance of the listed building.
- 5.10) The proposal would preserve the significance of the neighbouring listed building of 26 Ferncroft Avenue, which shares its Grade II listing with the proposed site. The design is respectful of the host building and would remain subservient to it. The significance of 26 Ferncroft Avenue which is best appreciated from its principal elevation and from its rear curtilage space, would be preserved, with no loss of significance. The proposals would reinforce the subservient relationship between the two buildings, through the improvements to the frontage of 26a Ferncroft Avenue, making it clearer that it was the former coach/motor house to the main villa beside it. This can only be seen in a positive light and is to be encouraged.
- 5.11) The proposal would upgrade the environmental benefits of the building and provide for enhanced thermal benefits throughout the replacement extension, in addition to upgrading the internal insulation of the historic portion of the building. Whilst this would involve some changes to the building, the overall appearance of the building within the Conservation Area would be maintained. This is in accordance with 5.1 Conservation Strategy of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Plan.
- 5.12) The proposed development would enhance the character and appearance of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area through the improvement of the principal elevation of 26a Ferncroft Avenue, taking its design closer to how it was originally constructed in 1898 and reversing many of the unsympathetic changes made when the building was converted to a dwelling in the 1980's. The proposed rear extension to the building would improve upon existing, replacing late 20<sup>th</sup> Century additions to the building that are of no historic significance. Whilst these rearmost changes would amount to improving the significance of the listed building, there would be no adverse impact as witnessed from the public realm of Ferncroft Avenue or Hollycroft Avenue, with no harm to its character or appearance.

## **6) APPENDIX**

### **Historic England List Entry**

#### **26 AND 26A FERNCROFT AVENUE**

Grade II

List Entry Number: 1078344

Date first listed: 11 January 1999

#### **DETAILS**

TQ2585NW FERNCROFT AVENUE 798-1/24/433 (North East side)  
Nos.26 AND 26A

Detached house and attached former coach/motor house now converted to a dwelling. 1898, coach/motor house possibly later. By CHB Quennell; built by GW Hart. No.26: red brick with tile-hung 1st floor. Tiled hipped and gabled roofs with overhanging bracketed eaves, tall brick chimney-stacks and dormer with small gable. Asymmetrical design. 3 storeys. 3 windows plus single storey 2-window right hand bay. Left hand gabled bay with canted bowed bay sash windows to ground having entablature lintel which continues across the facade on columns and 1st floor with pulvinated lintel and cornice and tile-hung apron. 3rd floor Venetian type sash window in gable with short lengths of moulded cornice at angles to appear as a broken pediment. Central entrance bay with porch formed by entablature and columns with enriched capitals and cast-iron and glass hood; part-glazed panelled door with overlight. To right, a tripartite sash with corresponding sash at 1st floor and single sash above porch. Single storey bay has 2 sashes with gauged brick flat arches, a brick modillion cornice and blocking course. No.26A: red brick. Tiled hipped and gables roofs with overhanging eaves and eaves cornice extending across the gabled left hand bay to form a pediment. Asymmetrical design. 2 storeys. Irregular fenestration of 2 windows.

Former vehicle entrance in gabled bay converted to a window and entrance with central casement above having relieving arch in pediment with arrow slit window above. Right hand bay with segmental-arched window appearing behind a C20 window and staircase leading to 1st floor entrance with porch formed by entablature carried on a column; 3-light 1st floor window. INTERIORS: not inspected. (British Architect: 2 September 1898).

Listing NGR: TQ2546985978



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