

## Heritage Statement

# Heath House, Hampstead London NW3 7ET



**July 2023**

# **Heath House Hampstead**

## **Heritage Statement**

**prepared for**

**Tarun Cheema, Aria Construction Management Ltd.**

**by**

**The Architectural History Practice Ltd.**

**July 2023**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

This report is based on a Significance Assessment which was originally commissioned by Hush Property Ltd. in 2011, to inform proposals for modifications to planning and listed building consents granted in 2008. A revised statement was prepared in 2017 to accompany a new application incorporating elements of the 2012 proposals and some new elements. Consent was granted in 2018. The present statement was commissioned by Tarun Cheema, Aria Construction Management Ltd on behalf of clients to support a minor alteration to the existing consents. All the reports have been prepared by Neil Burton FSA IHBC, a director of The Architectural History Practice Ltd.

Heath House (National Grid Reference. TQ2628586484) is a handsome house, originally built in the first half of the eighteenth-century, which has a prominent position at the highest point of Hampstead Heath, with a view across the whole of London. The property occupies a large triangular site at the convergence of two roads, Spaniard's Road and North End Way. The house itself stands at the apex of the site facing south. To the north stretches a very large garden enclosed by an old brick wall, which is now in separate ownership and occupation, with new residential buildings. Heath House is listed grade II\* and stands within the Hampstead Conservation Area of the London Borough of Camden.

## **2.0 Owners and Occupiers**

The early history of ownership and occupation of the present building is unclear. The property was originally copyhold, and some information about early occupiers can be gained from the Hampstead Manor court rolls. By 1720 three cottages on the site, the property of John Fletcher, had been converted into two dwellings, one of which was occupied by 'William Brooks, gentleman'. This may have been the 'good brick house about half way over the Heath with a view across nine or ten counties' mentioned in J Soames's guidebook to Hampstead Wells, published in 1734 which was probably the house to which Christopher Arnold, a goldsmith and partner in Hoare's Bank, was admitted as tenant in 1744. The property was then described as, 'two, formerly three, messuages, cottages or tenements' and also '20 rods [of land] railed in behind'. Despite the lack of clear documentation, it seems probable that the main house was built in about 1720. The style of the main front, with its red brick surrounds to the windows, is characteristic of the first decades of the eighteenth century

From the 1740s the succession of owners and occupiers is fairly well-established. Christopher Arnold, as a goldsmith and banker was clearly wealthy. On his acquisition of the property he also acquired a further 120 rods of land, which he added to the garden. On his death in 1758 he left a substantial estate, including property in Hampstead and Buckinghamshire to his wife Mary Arnold, and also left several bequests to the Hoare family.

Mary Arnold continued to live in the house, which was described in a 1762 survey of the Hampstead Manor lands as a 'capital messuage being the dwelling house of and belonging to Mrs Arnold, with outhouses, coach house, stabling, necessary houses, large gardens and forecourt', until her own death in 1770. It then passed to Robert Hoare as trustee under her will, though the rate books show that the building was actually occupied by a James Marshall and Frances Marshall. In 1776 a William Guidot was admitted as tenant and he was replaced two years later in 1778 by John Fryer, who acquired a further sixty-six rods of land, 'adjoining the garden and premises fronting the courtyard'. In 1793 Fryer in turn was replaced by Samuel Hoare; the property was then described as 'a copyhold messuage or tenement, coach house, stable, buildings and large garden'. In fact, the rate books show that Hoare had been living at Heath House since 1790.

Samuel Hoare was a distinguished figure in London Society, a Quaker banker with strong philanthropic instincts, who played a conspicuous part in the campaign to abolish the slave trade. During his residence, at Heath House he entertained many distinguished figures of the time, including Samuel Wilberforce. The Hoare family lived at Heath House for much of the nineteenth century, though the building was let to tenants after 1875.

In 1888 the Hoares leased Heath House to Algernon, later Sir Algernon Borthwick, the editor of the Morning Post. It was he who gave the building the name of 'Heath House'; previously it seems to have been known as 'The Heath'. In 1901 the property was sold to Edward Cecil Guinness, the brewing millionaire who was created Earl of Iveagh in 1919. Lord Iveagh purchased Kenwood House in 1925 as his residence and Heath House then passed to his son Walter Edward Guinness, created Baron Moyne in 1932. Lord Moyne (or his executors for he died in 1944) retained ownership of the house until some years after the Second World War. During the war the building was slightly damaged in an air raid in 1941 and was made uninhabitable.

In the early 1950s Heath House was sold to Donald Forrester, a director of the Cunard shipping line and a wealthy shareholder in several major companies. Between 1952 and 1955 he and his wife Gwyneth restored the house. The Forresters occupied the building until 1971 when it was sold to Mr Peter King, publisher of Screen International magazine. In 1977 it was again sold to John Sunley, a property speculator, who disposed of the property in less than a year to a Saudi owner. The house did not change hands between 1979 and 2007 but was not regularly occupied, although it was fully maintained. The house was acquired by Hush Properties in 2007.

Since that date the building has remained empty and unoccupied through discussions over planning permission and listed building consent for a conversion into several separate dwellings. The existing consents have been implemented to a limited extent and in preliminary works the vast majority of the internal finishes to the building were removed. The stripping out revealed a complicated patchwork of internal fabric, much of it clearly dating from the Twentieth century, and also a considerable amount of timber decay. Continuing vacancy, the poor condition of the fabric and a long pause in building works have caused the house to be placed on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register (category C).

### **3.0 Development History**

#### **The Eighteenth Century**

The original building date of the house is unknown but may have been c1720. The main five-bay front looks early-eighteenth century in its detailing but the first certain evidence of its existence is a painting by T Ramsey in a private collection, possibly a Guinness collection (fig.1). Ramsey was flourishing in the 1750s, and the costumes of the figures in the picture are of that period. The painting shows the house itself looking much as now, with red brick walls, two main storeys, a hipped roof and dormers and with a yellow brick flat-roofed two-storey addition with a canted bay window on the east side. To the west of the house is a detached building with small pediment which was presumably the coach house and in front is a tall topiary hedge and a central gateway with brick piers topped by urns.

The accuracy of the painting is confirmed by the 1762 survey of the lands of Hampstead Manor (fig.2), which shows the outline of the house together with the extension on the east side with its bay-window projection and an addition at the north west corner; in front of the house was a square forecourt, to the north west was a substantial building which was presumably the stables and also various other small buildings. This plan also shows that the garden which was enclosed by what was presumably a brick wall.

At some unknown date, probably shortly after Ramsey's painting was executed, both the main house and the eastern addition were raised by one storey. Early photographs of the house (figs. 3 & 4) show that both the main block and the eastern extension then had three full storeys, with a narrow full-height addition on the west side of the main house as well.

### **The Nineteenth Century**

There appears to have been very little change in the buildings during the nineteenth century. Newton's 1814 map of Hampstead (fig.5) shows just the house and the stable block. By the time of the first Ordnance Survey of 1879 (fig.6) the square forecourt had been enlarged and given a curving sweep, the main house had been enlarged by the addition of a new block at the north east corner and a new building had been erected on the west side of the stable yard, backing onto what was then called North End Road (now North End Way). The stable yard was entered from North End Road, through an opening in the boundary wall. The east side of the garden was landscaped with planting and irregular paths; the west side was more regular, with greenhouses and what was presumably a gardener's cottage at the north west corner. By the time of the 1895 Ordnance Survey (fig.7) most of the garden had been returned to grass, but the greenhouses and gardener's cottage remained.

### **The Twentieth Century**

Shortly after acquiring Heath House, Edward Guinness employed the building and decorating firm of George Trollope & Sons to make various unspecified improvements to the building. A plan of the basement made in 1902 in connection with these works survives in the Camden drainage records (fig.10). Trollopes were a well established firm with a large and upmarket domestic practice and they specialised in the creation of new interiors in 'traditional' styles.



Further alterations were made by Lord Moyne in the 1930s. Moyne was keen on both architecture and antiques. In the mid 1920s he commissioned the antique dealer Amyas Fleming to design a neo-mediaeval house for him at Climping in Sussex. In the mid 1930s he was making improvements to the amenities of Heath House. The extent of the works is not clear but comparison of the present first floor layout with a 1935 plan preserved in the Camden drainage records (fig.12) suggests that they were substantial and included the insertion of the present main staircase, which was certainly in existence by 1950 when it was photographed by the London County Council.

After the Second World War Heath House was purchased by Mr Forrester and his wife Gwyneth, who employed the architect R.C.N Golding LRIBA to oversee its restoration. Roland Claude Neville Golding is an obscure figure. According to his application in 1943 to become a Licentiate of the RIBA, he trained at the Regent Street Polytechnic and University College, commenced practice in 1926 and worked for nine years in the office of George Coles, a well-known cinema architect. Coles noted on the application form that Golding had been 'responsible for several theatres built under my name' and was an extremely competent architect. After 1935 Golding worked in several other commercial practices before joining Hendon Borough Council in 1937 as Deputy Borough Engineer. His later career is unknown and there is no mention of him or his work in the usual documentary sources, although a note in his RIBA file states that he continued practice until about 1970.

In January 1952 Golding made an application seeking the Borough Council's permission for 'alterations and reconstruction of parts of the drainage system, consequent on the reconstruction of the premises'. Although the application refers to 'drawings in roll D7322' which were submitted to the council, there are now apparently no drawings and no other information about these works in the records of the Camden Planning Department.

In the 'restoration' works, the upper storey was removed from the main house and the front elevation of the building was returned to something like its external appearance in Ramsey's painting of the 1750s. The extent of the rebuilding of other parts of the house is unclear. The brickwork of the south-east wing with the bay window looks quite modern and the fenestration of the south front has been altered. On the west side of the house a full-height projection containing a secondary stair and lavatories, which is shown on a drainage plan of 1902 (fig.10) was completely removed and the end wall of the house rebuilt.

Inside the house the main stair inserted by Lord Moyne was retained but alterations were made to the plan of the building and many of the finishes were renewed. It was at this time that the stable block and other buildings around the stable yard were cleared away; presumably many of them had suffered bomb damage.

In the thirty-five years since the sale of the building by Donald Forrester in 1971 there have been a number of minor additions and alterations. To the west of the main building a utilitarian garage was built and what was probably intended as a chauffeur's house. Inside the main house there have clearly been a series of improvements to the amenities of the building, especially in areas like the kitchen and bathrooms.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Heath House faced south over a forecourt enclosed from the road junction by a dwarf brick wall with railings and two gates with pairs of square brick piers on either side. In 1922 a war memorial was erected in the centre of the road junction in front of the house. Immediately following the restoration of Heath House in 1953, the war memorial was moved from its position in the middle of the road in front of Heath House to a new position nearer the house, on land which was donated by the Forresters; the memorial was also extended

## **4.0 Building Analysis**

It is clear that Heath House has been considerably altered during its life. Given the lack of readily available documentation about the house itself and its reconstruction in the early 1950s, any building analysis must rely partly on stylistic evidence.

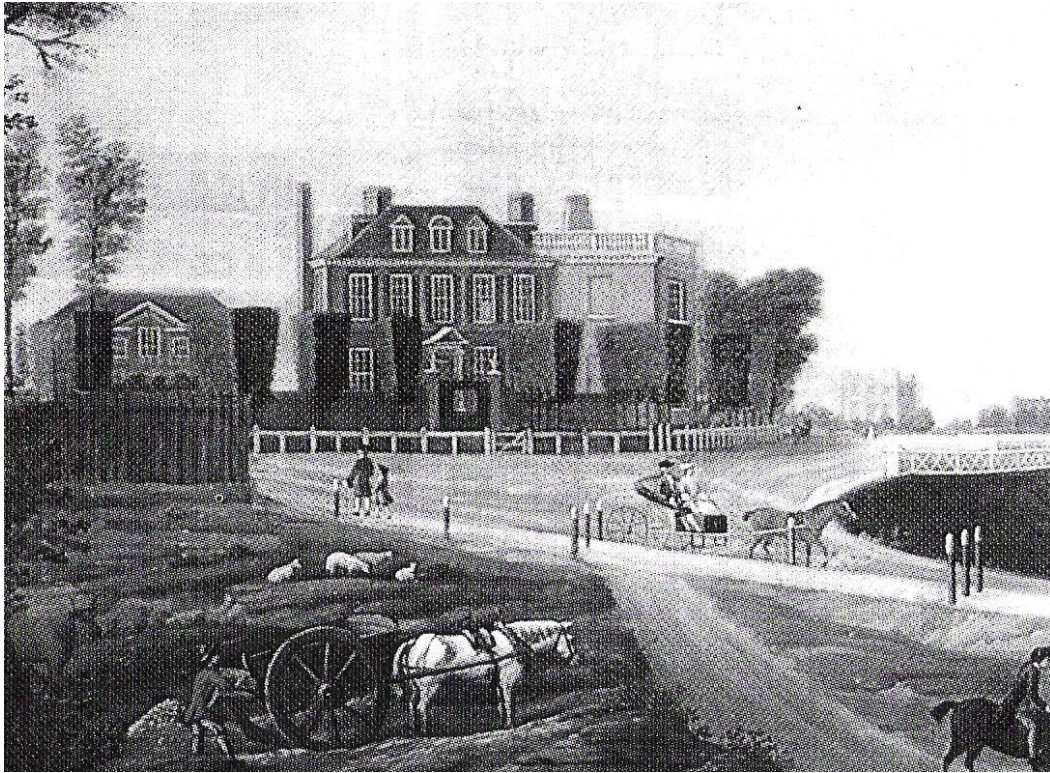
The original house was presumably the five-bay two-storey building with a tall hipped roof shown on Ramsey's painting of the 1750s, which was probably built between 1700 and 1720. To this was added a two-storey eastern extension with a canted bay window commanding the view south over Hampstead Heath to London. Canted bay windows were fashionable in the 1750s and it seems likely that this eastern block was added by Christopher Arnold soon after his acquisition of the house in 1744. The block appears to be of two builds because of the differing appearance of the brickwork; recent stripping-out has revealed that the northern part of the eastern block is clearly secondary to the southern part.

It was probably around the middle of the eighteenth century that both the main house and the eastern extension were raised by one storey. This entailed the loss of the original hipped roof and of the balustraded parapet on the eastern extension (see Figs. 3 & 4). It may have been at this time that the eastern block was enlarged to engulf the eastern half of the rear facade of the original house, although the architectural character of this part of the building is still late Georgian.

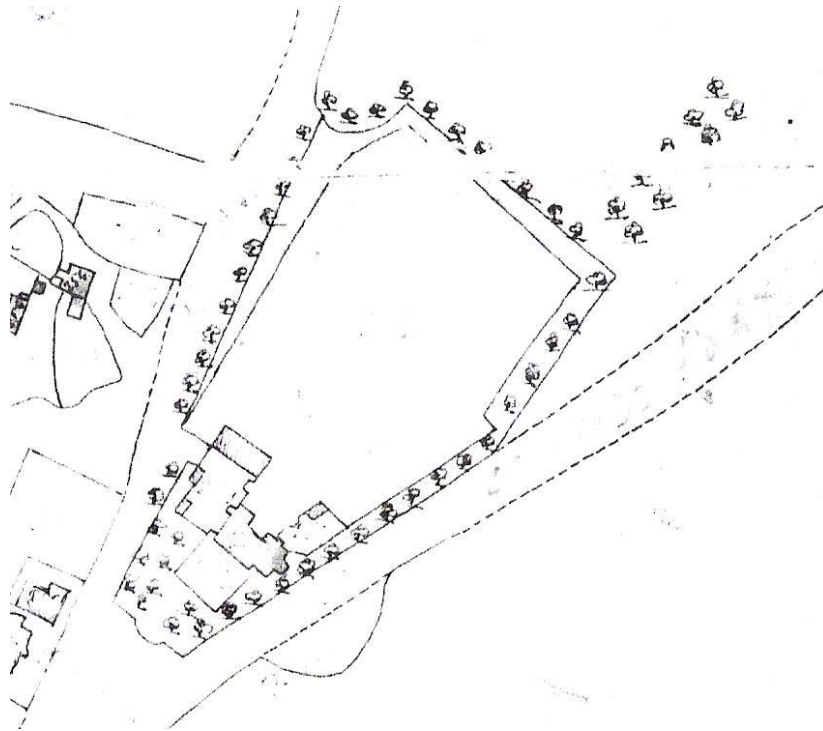
The external appearance of the house today is substantially a product of the rebuilding of the early 1950s, which removed the whole of the upper storey of the main house and its eastern extension, and re-created the appearance shown in Ramsey's painting, with a hipped roof with wide eaves over the main block, three dormers in the front roof slope and even the tall chimney at the north end of the west end wall. The balustrade on the eastern block was re-created in concrete, as was the modillion cornice round the whole building. It appears that all the windows were renewed. Given the very severe constraints on building in the early 1950s, the reconstruction is very creditable, and shows an assured handling of Georgian detailing.

The interior of the house which the Forresters acquired in the early 1950s was fitted up in Georgian style which was probably mostly twentieth century work. The present main stair was installed some time between 1935 and 1950, probably in the later 1930s. Photographs taken in 1950 by the London County Council show that much of the panelling was already installed, probably by Lord Moyne or possibly by his father and other Georgian-style detailing was inserted in the 1950s. It became clear from the initial opening-up done in connection with remedial works, that almost all of the visible internal surfaces and detailing dated from the twentieth century. Further stripping has been carried out and few finishes now remain.

The original outbuildings to the house have all gone, presumably removed in the 1950s. The brick wall enclosing the large garden is probably of eighteenth-century date, and certainly eighteenth-century maps show a wall on this line.



**Fig.1 A detail from a painting by T. Ramsey (fl. 1750s) of Hampstead Heath, showing Heath House with its stable block**



**Fig. 2 Detail from the survey of the manor of Hampstead 1762 (Camden Local Studies library)**



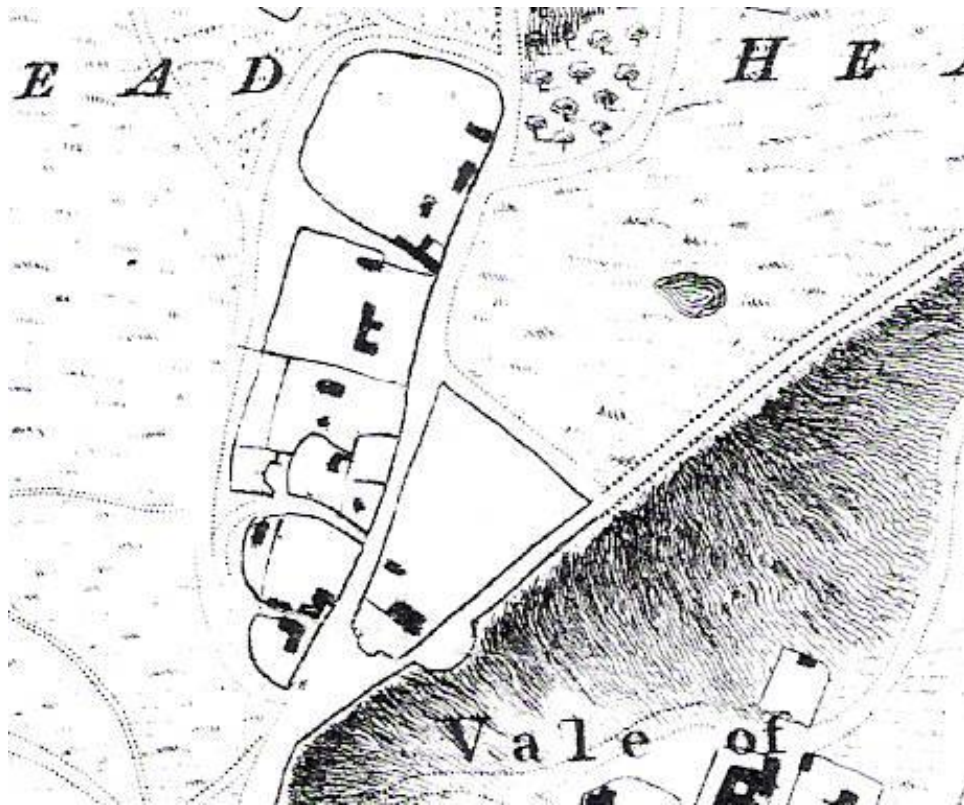


**Fig.3 Heath House in 1900 , from *The Sphere Magazine*  
(Camden Local Studies Library)**

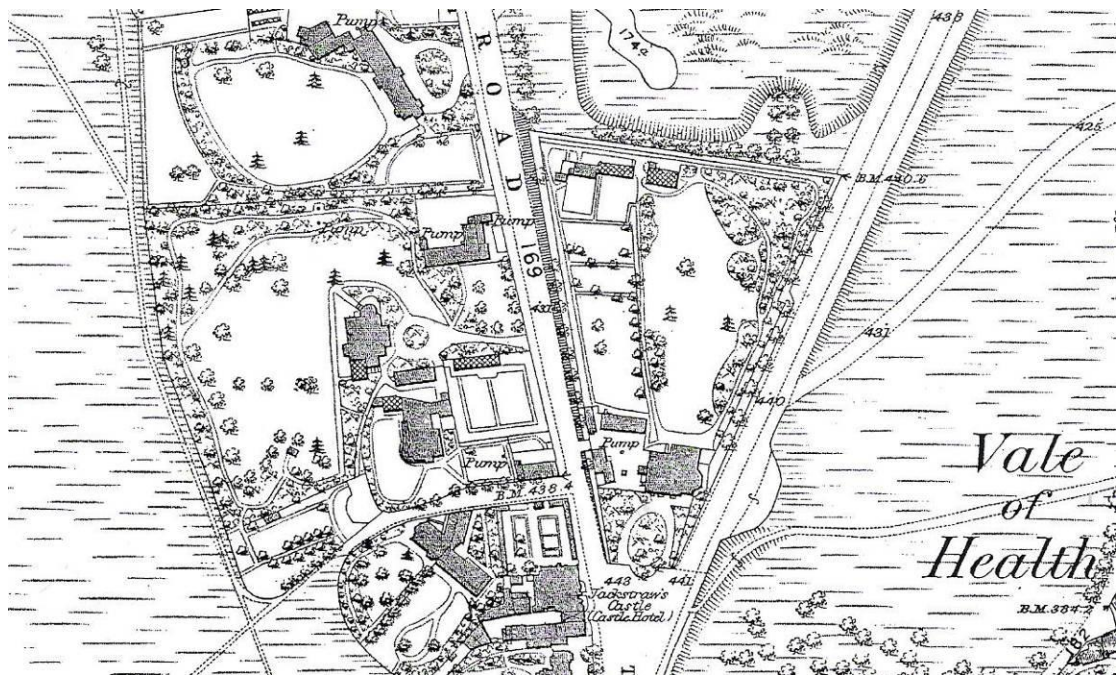


**Fig.4 The main front of Heath House in 1942  
(London Metropolitan Archives)**

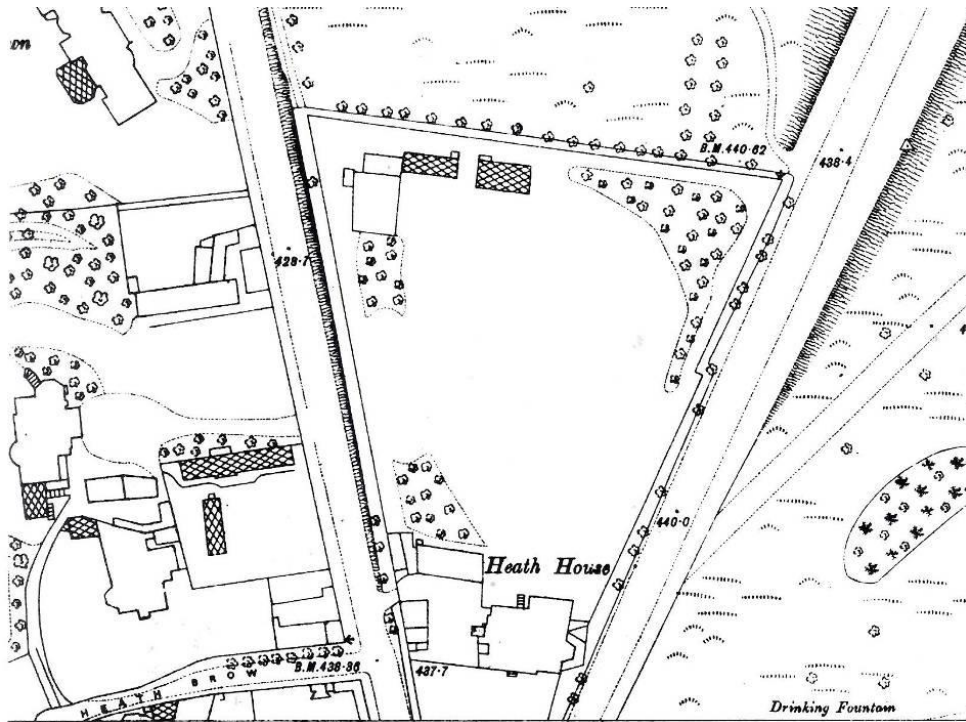




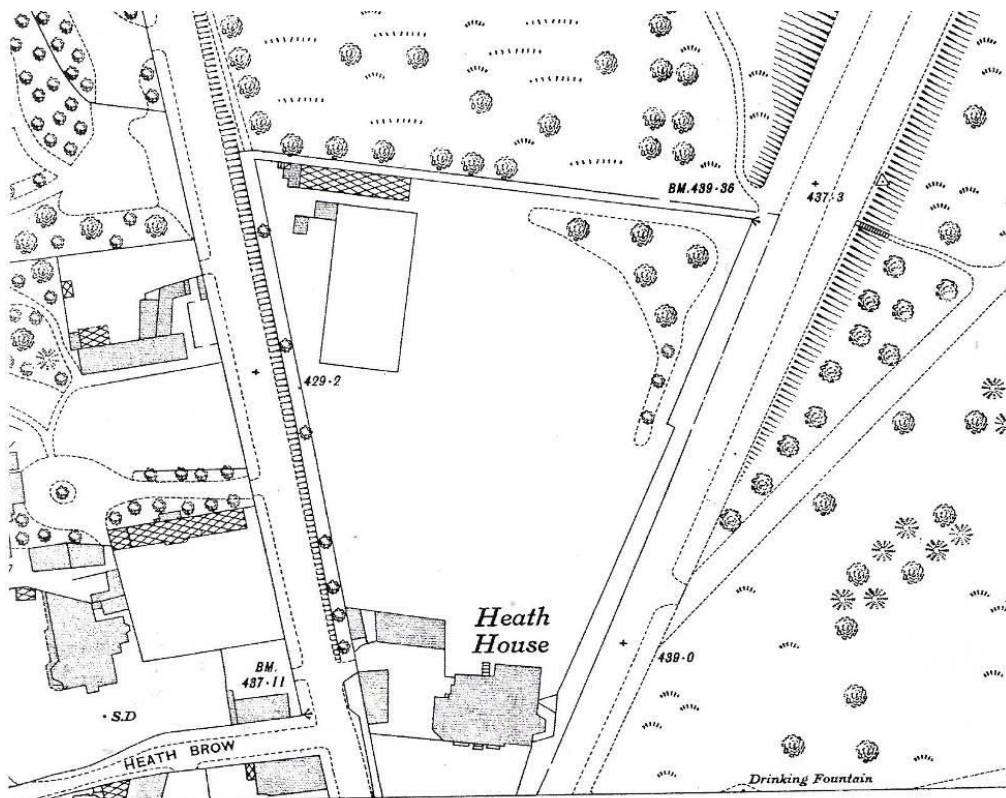
**Fig.5 Newton's map of Hampstead 1814**



**Fig.6 Ordnance Survey 25":1 mile 1879**

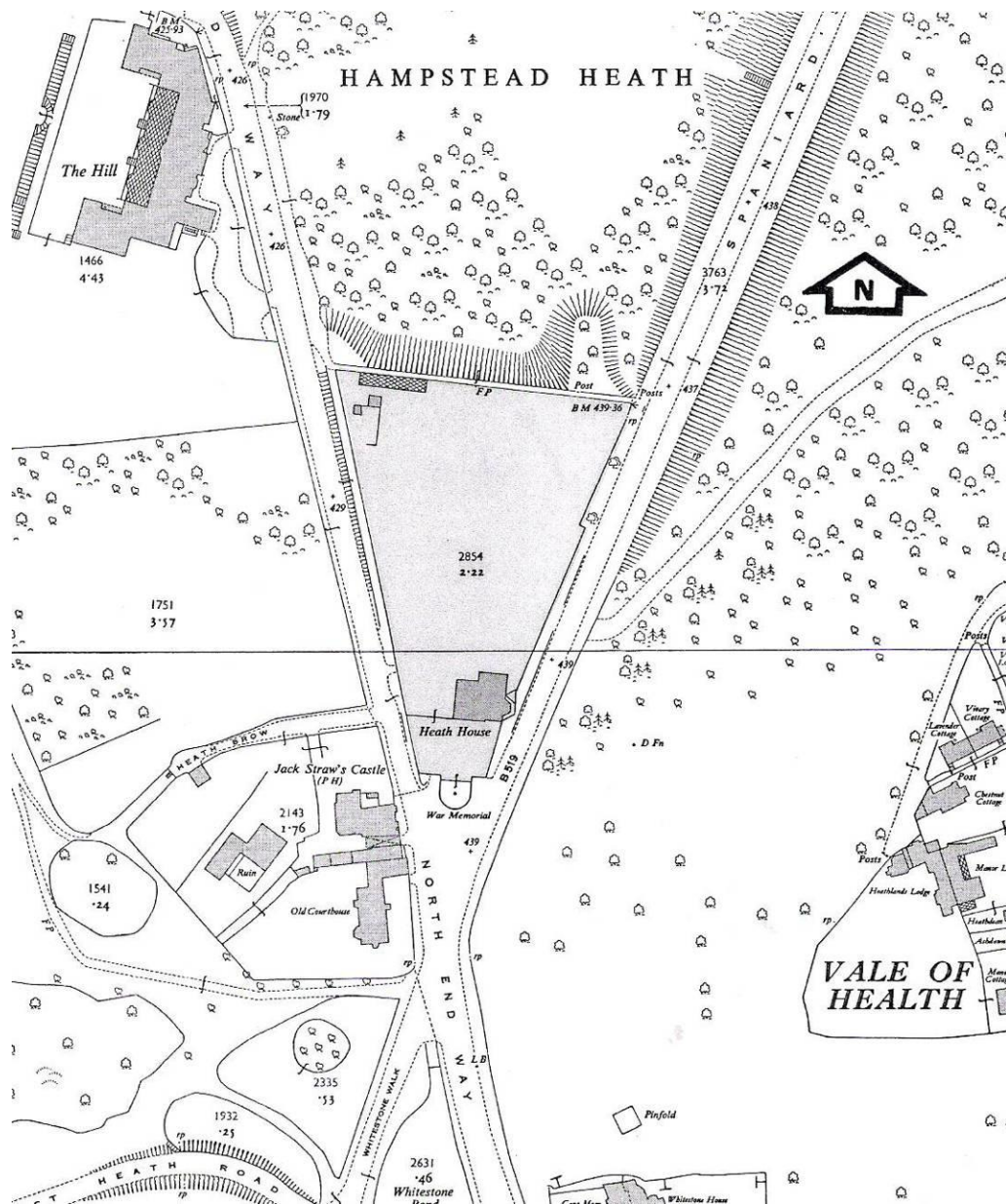


**Fig.7: detail from Ordnance Survey 5':1 mile 1895, sheet II:79**

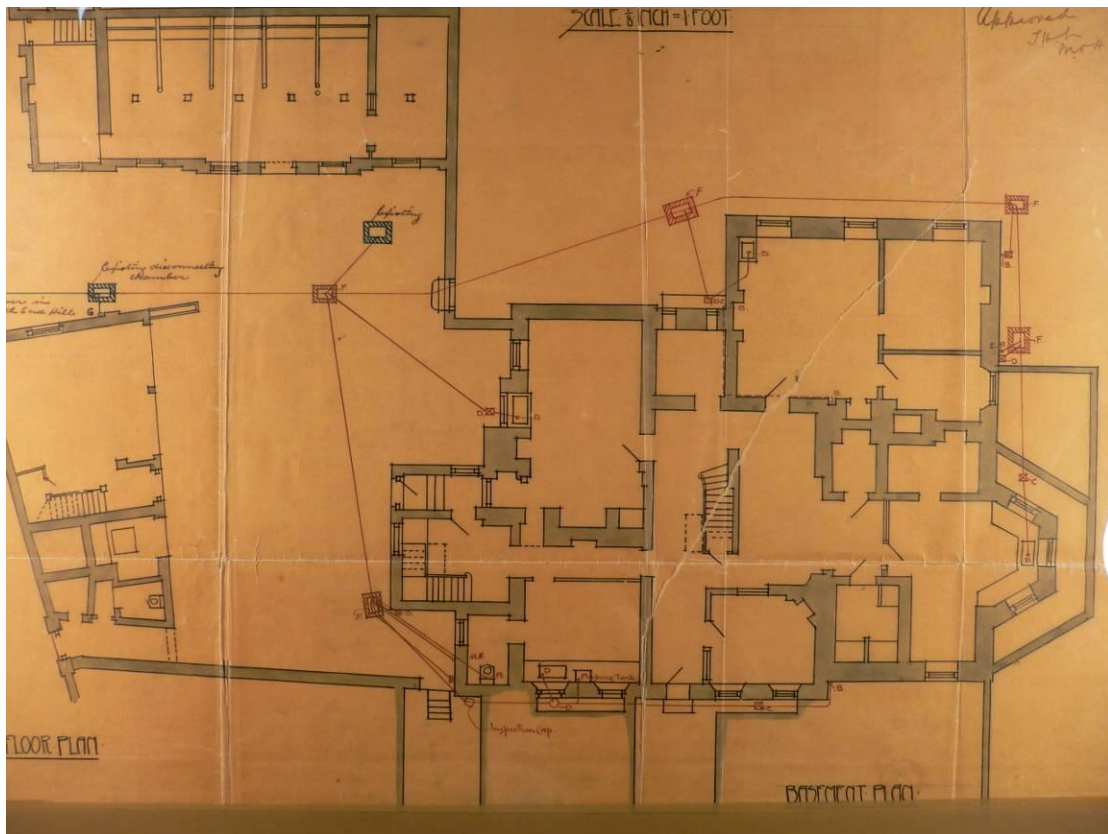


**Fig.8: detail from Ordnance Survey 5':1 mile 1935 sheet II:79**

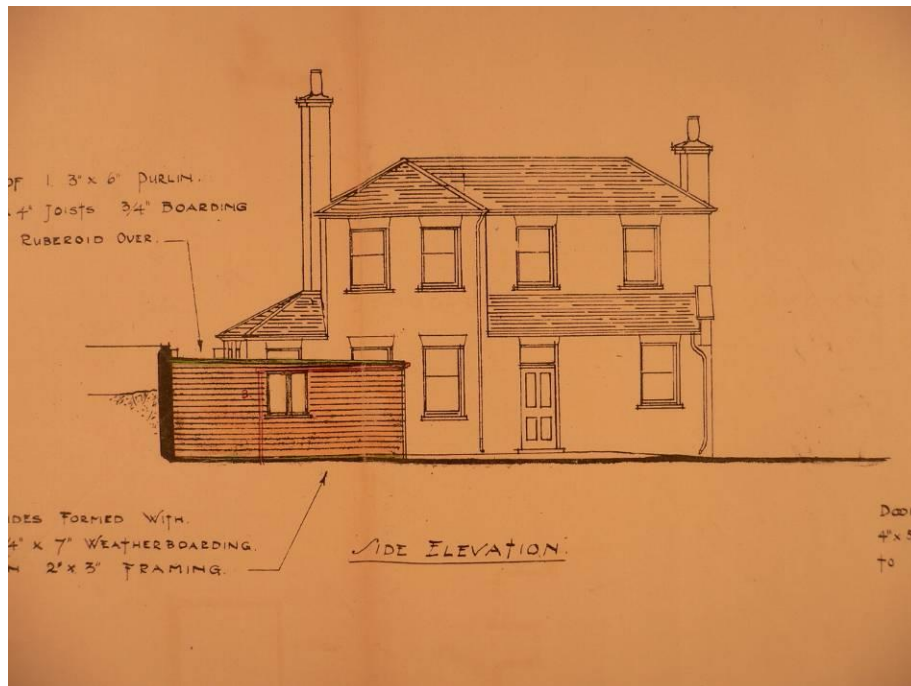




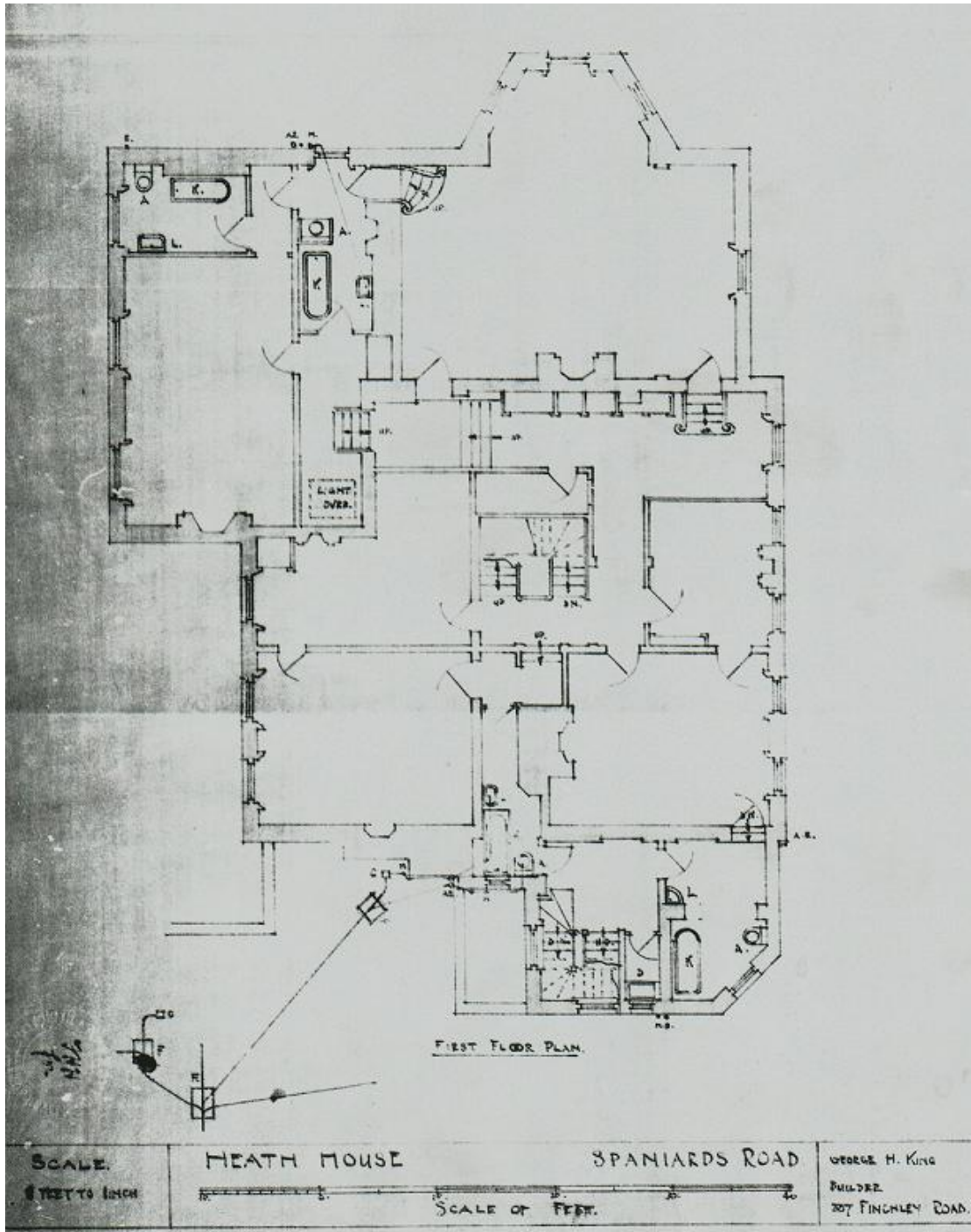
**Fig.9 Detail from the Ordnance plan of the Heath House site from the sale catalogue of c1979 (Camden archives)**



**Fig.10 Basement plan of Heath House, from a drainage plan of 1902 (Camden Archives)**



**Fig.11 elevation of the former building on the west side of the stable yard from a drainage plan of 1937 (Camden archives)**



**Fig. 12 A plan of the first floor of Heath House as existing in 1935  
(Camden Drainage records)**

## 5.0 Assessment of Significance

The assessment of the significance of historic buildings and their settings is not an exact science; it is based on detailed knowledge of the building type, a comparison with what exists elsewhere, and the extent to which it may be distinctive or have special meaning for different groups of people.

Statutory designations provide some guide to the importance of historic buildings. Heath House is listed Grade II\*. This means that the building is considered to be of particular importance and more than special interest. Only 5.5% of listed buildings are Grade II\*. The list description is included in the Appendix.

In 2008 English Heritage (now Historic England) published *Conservation Principles*, which identified four principal heritage values which might be taken into account when assessing significance and which can be used to amplify the assessments in the statutory lists. These values are *Evidential*, deriving from the potential of a place to yield (mainly archaeological) evidence about past human activity; *Historical*, deriving from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present; *Aesthetic*, deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place; *Communal*, deriving from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience and memory.

In 2012 the Department of Communities and Local Government issued the National Policy Planning Framework (slightly revised and updated in 2019 and 2021) which suggests that for planning purposes, the significance of historic buildings should be assessed under the headings of *archaeological*, *architectural*, *artistic or historic* (which are closely related to the Historic England values) and points out that significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence but also from its setting.

Heritage Significance is classed using descending levels of value, following guidelines established by James Semple Kerr, which have been adopted by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England and others. The levels of significance are:

- *Exceptional* - important at national to international levels
- *Considerable* - important at regional level or sometimes higher
- *Some* - usually of local value only but possibly of regional significance for group or other value
- *Little* - of limited heritage or other value
- *Neutral* - features which neither enhance nor detract from the value of the site
- *Negative/intrusive* - features which detract from the value of the site

The following assessment is of the *overall* significance of the building in the categories suggested by Historic England and the NPPF.

#### **Archaeological Significance/Evidential value**

The house was apparently constructed on a site previously occupied by three cottages but there is probably little below-ground archaeology of any value. The building was very considerably reconstructed in the 1950s. The fabric of the standing structure, in its present stripped-out state, is of ***some evidential value*** because it shows clearly the extent of the modern changes.

#### **Historical Significance**

The house is of ***considerable historical significance*** as a conspicuous minor gentry house on the edge of Hampstead Heath, which was presumably built on its present site to take full advantage of the view. The occupation of the house by a succession of bankers from 1744 onwards, including members of the Hoare family, provides relatively early evidence of the importance of Hampstead as a place of retreat from the City. The house has strong associations with Samuel Hoare, a founder member of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade and also with the Guinness family who gave Kenwood House and its contents to the nation under the Iveagh Bequest.



### **Architectural Significance**

The original building was a minor gentry house of c1720, probably built without benefit of an architect and was enlarged piecemeal during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The original planform is unknown because of very extensive internal alterations in the early Twentieth century. Many of the internal finishes were also of this date, or of the 1950s when the house was substantially reconstructed and reduced in size. Most of the internal fittings and finishes like panelling have now been removed. The house is of ***some architectural interest and significance***

### **Artistic Significance/Aesthetic value**

Heath House has ***some aesthetic value***, principally for its external appearance, which is largely the result of a 1950s rebuilding following a 1750s oil painting. The interior spaces are now a muddle, the result of repeated alterations and rebuildings over the course of two centuries. They have also lost most of their fittings and detailing, of whatever date. The present interiors are of ***little aesthetic value***

### **Communal value**

The house has always been a private residence and has ***little communal value***, but it is a conspicuous element in the group which includes Jack Straw's Castle and Whitestone Pond

### **Setting**

The immediate setting of the house has changed very considerably since the mid-twentieth century. The original stable yard buildings were damaged in 1941 and removed in the 1950s. The very large garden to the north of the original house had reached its present extent by the 1760s and the red brick wall which encloses the garden is probably of mid-eighteenth century date, but much of the garden is now in separate ownership and occupation and a large new structure has been erected within it. The original frontage to the south has also been altered and obscured by the re-positioning of the war memorial in the 1950s directly in front of the main house.

## **6.0 The Proposed Works and their Impact on the Built Heritage**

The current proposals are detailed in the drawings and statements submitted by the applicants. In sum, the proposals consist of very minor amendments to the works consented in 2009 and 2018.

### **Exterior:**

No changes are proposed to the external elevations.

### **Interior:**

The space under the modern terrace at the rear of the main house, where stairs and a domed hall are currently proposed, will instead become part of a study incorporating two spaces within the main house. A portion of the rear wall will be removed to create the new study. In the modern building attached to the west side of the original house a new stair will be formed from the basement to the lower ground floor.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed variations to existing consents would cause no harm to the significance, character and special interest of Heath House. The proposed basement to lower ground floor stair is in a new part of the building. The formation of a study partly in the original house will entail a very minor loss of plain walling in an unimportant space. The proposed changes will help to secure the 'optimum viable use' for the building in order to preserve it in a beneficial use for future generations. Given the very poor state of the building at present, the prospect of this benefit far outweighs any 'less than substantial harm' in the terms of Section 132 of the NPPF.

## **7.0 Sources**

### Archive Sources

- Camden Archives
  - Drainage Plans
  - Manorial Records
  - Maps
  - Photographs
  - Sale Catalogues
  - Press Cuttings
- Camden Planning Department
  - Record files
- RIBA Library
  - Licentiate Applications

### Published Sources

- Victoria County History of Middlesex, Vol IX 1989
- Christopher Wade *The Streets of Hampstead* (2000)
- C & D Smith *Hampstead Past and Present* (2002)

## **Appendix: List Descriptions**

### **HEATH HOUSE**

#### List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: HEATH HOUSE  
List entry Number: 1113183  
**Location:** HEATH HOUSE, NORTH END WAY  
County: Greater London Authority  
District: Camden  
District Type: London Borough  
Grade: II\*  
Date first listed: 14-May-1974  
UID: 477608

#### Details

#### CAMDEN

TQ2686SW NORTH END WAY 798-1/16/1215 (East side) 14/05/74 Heath House

#### GV II\*

Substantial detached house. Early C18 with early C19 extension to right. Later addition to the rear. Multi-coloured stock brick with red brick dressings and band at 1st floor level. Hipped tiled roof with segmental headed dormers and late C19 terracotta bracketed cornice. 2 storeys, attics and semi-basement. Double fronted with 5 windows. Extension has 2 windows. Ionic pedimented portico; radial patterned fanlight and panelled door. Gauged red brick flat arches to slightly recessed sashes with exposed boxing. Extension with tripartite sash at ground floor level. Terracotta cornice surmounted by cement balustraded parapet. Right hand return with canted bay rising full height of house. INTERIOR: not inspected. HISTORICAL NOTE: from 1790 the home of Samuel Hoare, Quaker banker and philanthropist. The house has associations with William Wilberforce and Elizabeth Fry.

Listing NGR: TQ2628586484



## HEATH HOUSE GARDEN WALL AND RAILINGS

### List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: GARDEN WALL AND RAILINGS TO HEATH HOUSE

List entry Number: 1113184

**Location:** GARDEN WALL AND RAILINGS TO HEATH HOUSE, NORTH END WAY

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden

District Type: London Borough

Grade: II

Date first listed: 14-May-1974

UID: 477609

### Details

#### CAMDEN

TQ2686NW NORTH END WAY 798-1/8/1216 Garden wall and railings to Heath 14/05/74 House

#### GV II

Garden wall & railings. C18. Brown brick garden wall with buttress piers along Spaniard's Road. Extension with cast-iron railings and urn finials.

Listing NGR: TQ2630986515



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