

# HANDFORTH

## HERITAGE

Utopia Village, Camden  
Heritage Impact Assessment

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October 2023

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# 1. Introduction

This Heritage Impact Assessment ('report') has been produced by Handforth Heritage to accompany a full-application submission relating to the proposed alterations to Utopia Village, Primrose Hill ('the site'). The site is not statutorily or locally listed but is located within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area and is identified within the council's conservation area statement as being a positive contributor. Subsequently, the site will be treated as a 'non-designated heritage asset' as per the wording of the National Planning Policy Framework

The report has been produced to identify and assess the significance of any Heritage Assets that may be potentially affected by the proposals. This report has been undertaken in accordance with Historic England's guidance on heritage assessments, namely *Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* Historic England Advice Note 12 and *Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (GPA 3).

The proposals seek to upgrade the whole building and include a number of upgrades to mechanical and electrical equipment, fenestration details and other minor changes. These works will improve the sustainability credentials of the building and also seek to provide conservation benefits where possible.

This report should be read in conjunction with the application drawings and the Design and Access statement prepared by AndersonOrr architects.

The legislation and policy framework applicable to this application is set out at Appendix 1.



Figure 1 Site location plan, showing site in red.



## 2. Historic Development

The site and surrounding area was mostly open, undeveloped land until the mid-nineteenth century. The 1828 Greenwood map provides evidence of the lack of the development in the area with the exception of the Regent's Canal to the south and east which was completed in 1820.

The land was owned by Lord Southampton until the 1840s when much was sold off and the area was comprehensively developed. Key changes to the landscape that helped facilitate this boom include the construction of the Regent's Canal and also the London and Birmingham Railway in the 1830s.

A sale map of Lord Southampton's land shows the land laid out in a grid with large, semi-detached and detached villas. The development which in fact took place following the sale was generally on a more modest scale, with mostly terraced houses. The area became a centre for piano manufacturing at the end of the nineteenth century, with a number of works established in the area.

The southern and eastern part of the site was a pianoforte works from the late nineteenth century. The 1870 OS map shows two large linear ranges of buildings with smaller ancillary structures visible. Of note here is there are no structures to the north west of the site or the most eastern extent. Also there is no visible linking bridge at this point.

The wider area is shown laid out around generous roads on a grid pattern broken up by squares and crescents. Although predominantly residential, the railway and Camden Goods Station to the north are prominent features and a number of warehouses and goods sheds form a buffer between the residential area and railway.



Figure 2 1828 Greenwood map, showing indicative location of the site (red) and wider area prior to its development.

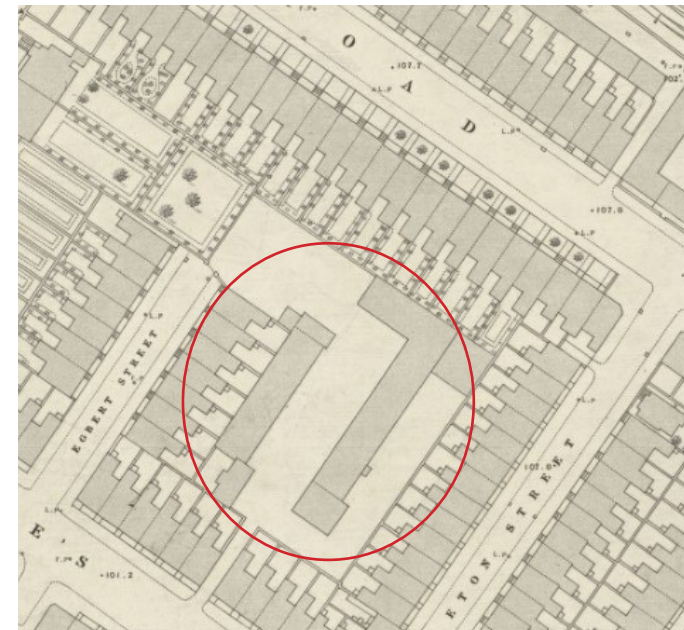


Figure 3 1870 OS map showing complete development of the wider area and structures on the site.

## 2. Historic Development

The 1887 Goad Insurance Plan provides considerable detail about the use and construction of the buildings within the site. The majority of the site has been developed by this point including the eastern and north western extents.

Within the southern arm of the site, the buildings are shown to be masonry with slate roofs. On the north side they are described as three storeys with a setback, two-storey office at the southern end. The three-storey range had a long stretch of rooflights along the rear. It housed packing and polishing functions as well as the 'case room' at lower level, with finishing over. A closed hoist was included. There was a set of stone stairs at the north end of this range, as well as a single-storey building which housed the japanning workshop. Tracks are also shown around the site, presumably to facilitate the movement of goods.

There is a covered passage connecting the first floor to the two-storey range on the south side of the southern arm. This range housed 'case rooms', 'veneers' and 'timber drying' room with thicker walls and iron doors, presumably as a fire break. There was a coach house at the southern end. There were a number of smaller, single storey buildings in a rear courtyard.

Along the east side of the northern arm was a further range of two storey, masonry buildings with slate roofs. This range housed the 'machine shop' and 'stringing'. The north end of this range was a two-storey timber shed on brick piers. A detached building at the north end of the northern arm is labelled 'back shop' and 'marking off'.

The entrance at 7 Chalcot Road is shown to have a timber store above the ground floor entrance.

An aerial map from 1925 provides a useful insight into the appearance of the structures at the time showing the earliest two phases prior to the construction of the mid-20th century additions.



Figure 4 1887 Goad map.

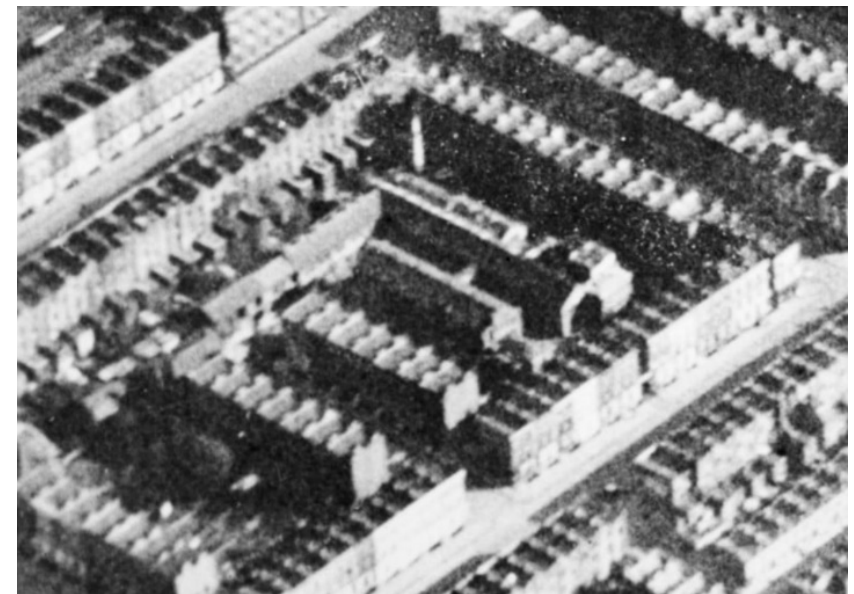


Figure 5 1925 aerial photograph.

## 2. Historic Development

By the 1952 OS map, the buildings in the site are shown as 'Chemical Works'. The plan and layout of the buildings within the site appear largely unchanged, however an extension is shown at the northern end of the north-western building. The railway track around the site is no longer shown. The timber store above the entrance at 7 Chalcot Road also appears to have been removed.

There are planning application drawings from 1955 showing the proposed 'extension of factory for messrs. Westminster Laboratories Ltd. at Chalcot Road.' These show pre-existing buildings along the southern arm of the site, as well as the eastern side of the northern arm. The proposed new works building is shown to fill the north-west part of the site, with a central three-storey block, flanked by single storey elements. The stair core extends to four storeys at the rear of the central block.

A plaque on the site marks the laying of a commemorative stone by 'Simon Brook, Chairman and Managing Director of Westminster Laboratories Ltd on the 10th of April 1957'.

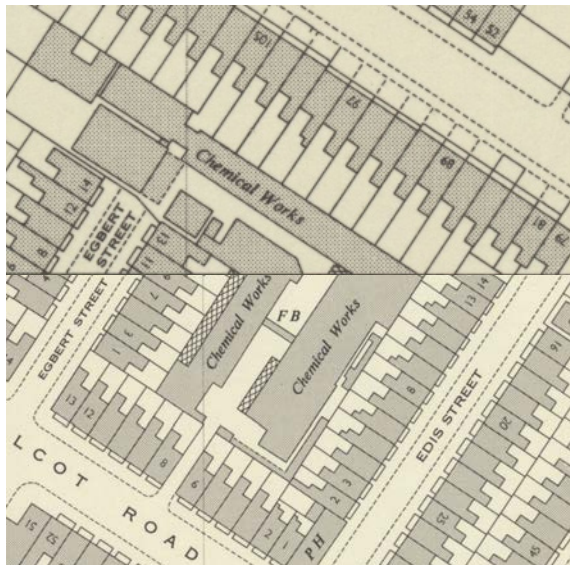


Figure 6 1952 OS map.

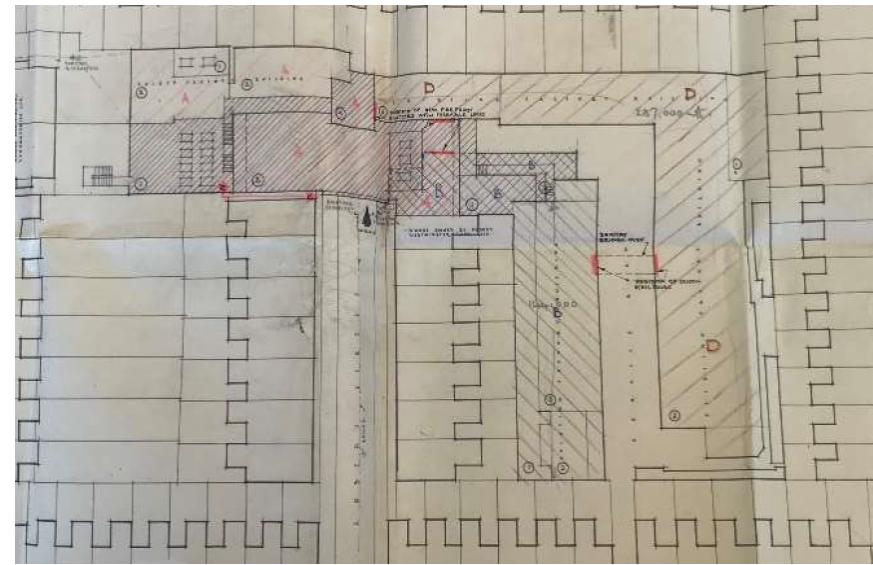


Figure 7 Planning drawings, 1955. Source: London Metropolitan Archives ref: GLC/AR/BR/06/078489.



## 2. Historic Development

By the 1960s the various buildings at the north end of the site appear to have been replaced by a larger building which entirely covers the end of Egbert Street and connects the other buildings within the north of the site.

By the 1982-90 map the site is labelled 'Utopia Village'. Some of the small, detached buildings within the south of the site have been demolished, although the overall layout remains unchanged.



Figure 8 1962-69 OS map.

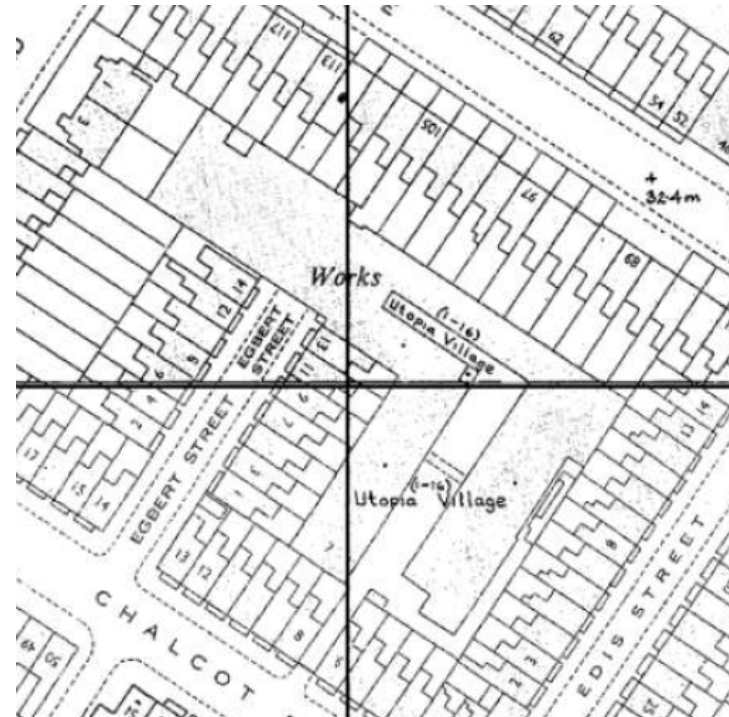


Figure 9 1982-90 OS map.

## 2. Historic Development

The site now is in divided into a number of small commercial units. It is still surrounded by mid-nineteenth century residential development, with rear gardens adjoining the site's boundaries on most sides.

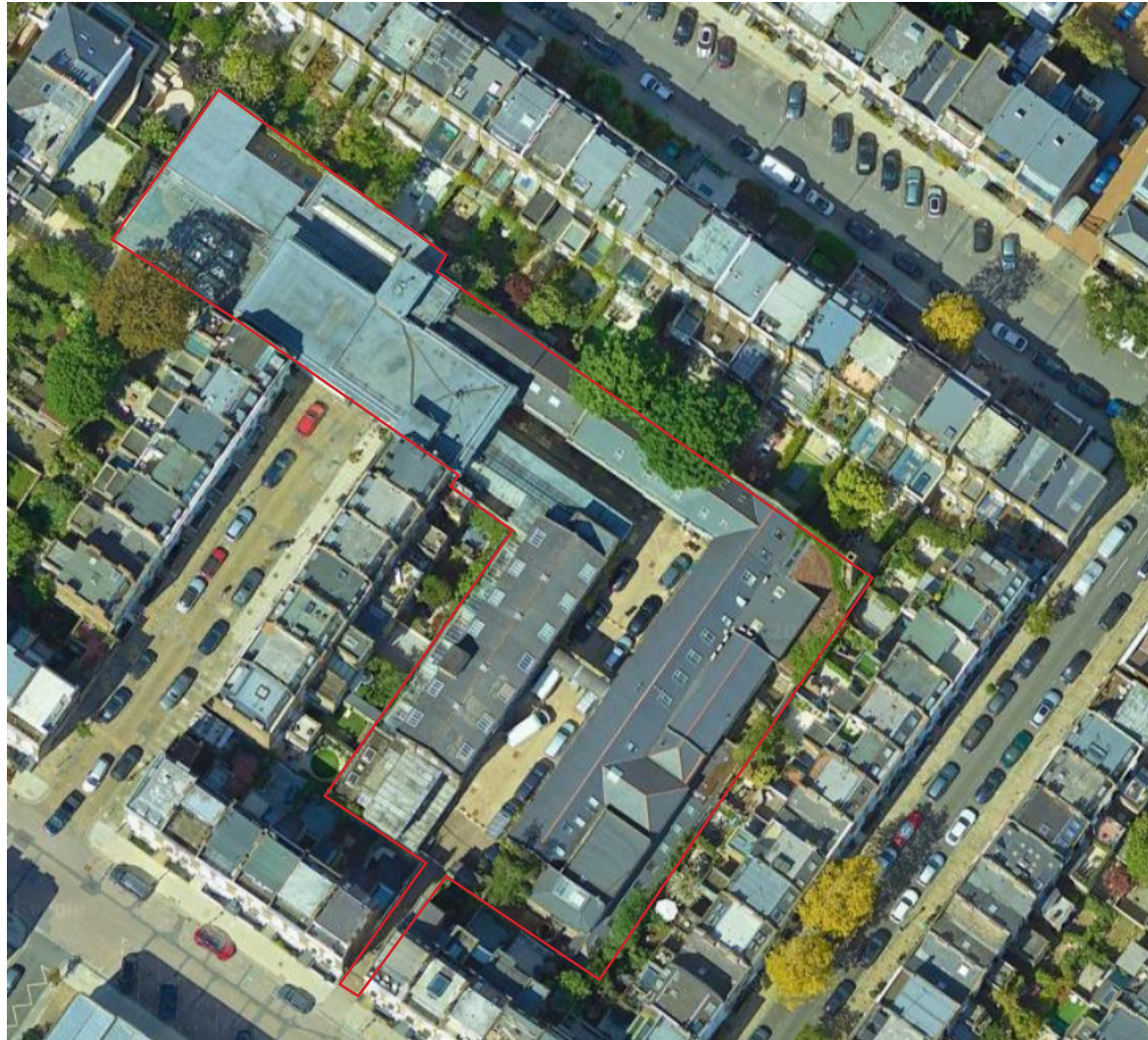


Figure 10 Present day aerial view. Google maps. Indicative site boundary shown in red.



### 3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

An inspection of the relevant databases and sources, including the Historic Environment Record (HER), the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), and the Council's website, has identified numerous Heritage Assets lying within the vicinity of the Site. Following desk based research and on site analysis, professional judgement has been used to identify and select Heritage Assets whose significances may be affected by changes to their settings or direct impacts. This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with Historic England's *Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* and Historic England's *Advice Note 12 The Setting of Heritage Assets GPA 3*. In accordance with Paragraph 194 of the NPPF the level of detail is proportionate to the Assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

The Heritage Assets that have the potential to be affected by the proposals are outlined below:

1. Utopia Village, Non-designated heritage asset
2. Primrose Hill Conservation Area

Other Heritage Assets were identified as part of this process but were excluded from assessment due to either a lack of visible or experiential connection with the Site.

The following section provides a description of the assets above, followed by an assessment of their significance.



Figure 11 Showing the site (1) sitting in its wider listed terrace. The whole image is located within the conservation area (2).

### 3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

#### 1. Utopia Village, Non Designated Heritage Asset

The historic development section of the report has established that the buildings on the site broadly fit into three eras:

1. Original buildings, dating to *circa* 1870s
2. Extensions to original buildings, dating to *circa* 1880s
3. Redevelopment as a chemical factory with new extensions dating to *circa* 1950s/60s.

The site is set within a mews at the rear of the terraces on Gloucester Avenue, Edis Street, Chalcot Road, Egbert Street and Fitzroy Road. It features two pedestrian and vehicular access points via Chalcot Road (between Nos. 6 and 8) and via Egbert Street (between Nos.13 and 14).

The site comprises part two-storey/part three-storey buildings, with the older structures historically operating as a piano manufacturing workshops. The most historic structures are visible on the approach from the Chalcot Road entrance. Here, two structures run in parallel to one another in a linear fashion. The western structure is three storeys and eastern, two. Both feature a similar architectural language being constructed in stock brick with red rubbed brick segmental headers. Almost all original windows have been replaced with unsympathetic uPVC replacements which detract from the appearance of the building. No evidence has been found in relation to the original windows, but they were likely either timber sashes or metal framed.

There is a mid-20th two storey building to the south of the western historic structure. Its principal elevation faces east and consists of a single storey flat roofed projection at ground floor with vertically emphasised fenestration sitting on a brick plinth. Above these are a collection of windows forming a horizontal band set within stock brick. This part of the site is clearly contemporaneous with the other mid-20th century structures and is of no special architectural or historic interest. This is reinforced by the council's conservation area statement describing the mid-20th century structure (of a similar date and style) fronting Egbert Street as a 'negative building'.

The linking bridge which was first constructed in the 1880s connects the two structures at first floor level. This structure has been heavily altered overtime being constructed in asbestos, corrugated metal and trellising and detracts from the aesthetic appearance of the overall structure.

Moving further north the eastern linear block turns a right angle and continues along the northern side of the block. This building again follows the detailing of the other historic



Plate 1 View within the site looking north just off Chalcot Road entrance.



Plate 2 View looking south towards Chalcot Road entrance, later mid-20th century extension visible to the right of the image.



### 3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

buildings within the site. Looking west the mid-20th century interventions are clear with a two storey linear block running along the southern side towards the much larger three storey block with flat roof and single storey porte-cochère below.

This structure sits in sharp contrast to its historic neighbours and is an incongruous addition with vertically emphasised windows and white panelled aprons and lesenes. The porte cochère features granite sett paving which replaced concrete hardstanding as part of a previous scheme of works.

This covered area leads out onto the Egbert Street entrance. This entrance building is similar to the structure within the courtyard being constructed in stock brick with rows of vertically emphasised windows separated by plain white painted aprons and lesenes.

There are some other smaller ancillary structures within the complex to the east of the eastern block and west of the western block. These buildings are only readily visible from private views and have been heavily altered overtime with limited to no interest.

Generally, the 19th century buildings within the site make a positive contribution to the conservation area providing evidence of the importance of Victorian industry during the period, almost being 'cheek and jowl' with its residential neighbours. Architecturally the buildings are of limited value although their form and general appearance give them a distinctive Victorian appearance. Whilst architectural details are limited, the employment of red rubbed red headers show that some expense and thought was given to the structures' original construction.

The original appearance of the building has been somewhat eroded by the later 20th century structures which relate poorly to it in their form, massing and architectural detailing. In addition to this, the buildings have undergone numerous insensitive alterations, including loss of almost all original windows for poor uPVC replacements and blocking up of original openings and windows. Notwithstanding this, and despite its limited visual interaction with the public realm, overall, the buildings provide a positive contribution to the conservation



Plate 3 Showing modern glass lean-to to western edge of historic western block.

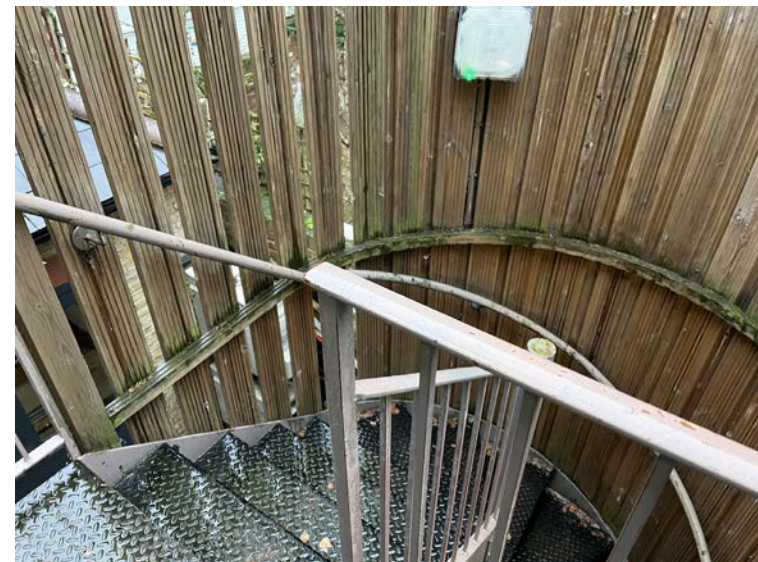


Plate 4 Modern stair and enclosure to south east of the site.



### 3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment



Plate 3 View showing disjointed appearance of windows to historic structure and blocked up former opening to centre. Note also poor appearance of link bridge.



Plate 4 Showing eastern 1870s block with modern window detailing.



Plate 5 Showing modern detailing to bridge and northern 1870s block beneath.



Plate 6 Looking west into the north western section of the site with later mid 20th century interventions clearly visible.



Plate 7 View looking east from within the north western section of the building. Notice almost all structures visible are mid 20th century. Flooring here features granite setts that replaced concrete hardstanding in the 21st century.



Plate 8 View from Egbert Street showing mid 20th century entrance.



### 3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

#### 2. Primrose Hill Conservation Area

The Primrose Hill Conservation Area was first designated in 1971 and extended to the north in 1985.

The Primrose Hill Conservation Area is the only designated heritage asset with the potential to be affected by the evolving proposals. Although there are numerous assets within the wider surrounding area, they are not considered to be affected by the proposals due to the limited nature of the external works. For this reason, the surrounding assets have been assessed as part of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area, within which they are all located.

The site is located in sub-area 2: Central Area of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. The townscape in this area is characterised by a clear grid pattern with short terraces of mid-nineteenth century houses arranged in blocks, with gardens or workshops at the centre of most of the blocks. The grid pattern is broken by a number of crescents and squares. The railway to the north east, Regent's Canal to south east and Primrose Hill Park to south west form strong breaks in the townscape.

The main roads are wide and lined with houses which are mostly three storeys with basements. Some have had attic storeys added. The houses are built of stock brick and have stucco detailing, including channelled basement and ground floor elevations and window surrounds to first and second floors.

There are a small number of later-nineteenth century industrial sites located in mews-like developments to the rear of some terraces. These include Utopia Village as well as Hopkinsons Place and Chalcot Yard, to the west of Fitzroy Road. These industrial buildings are of different architectural style from the earlier and residential development within sub-area 2. They are primarily of yellow stock brick with architectural detailing in red, brown and glazed bricks. They feature gables and windows in rounded arches.

The area also includes various neighbourhood amenities. There is a parade of shops on the south-west side of Chalcot Road with simple shopfronts at ground floor. The shopfronts are somewhat varied although they retain historic console brackets. There are also a number of purpose-built public houses, and Primrose Hill school (c.1885, Grade II listed) is located to the east of the Conservation Area.

The railway to the north of the Conservation Area has had a considerable impact on the layout of development in the Conservation Area.

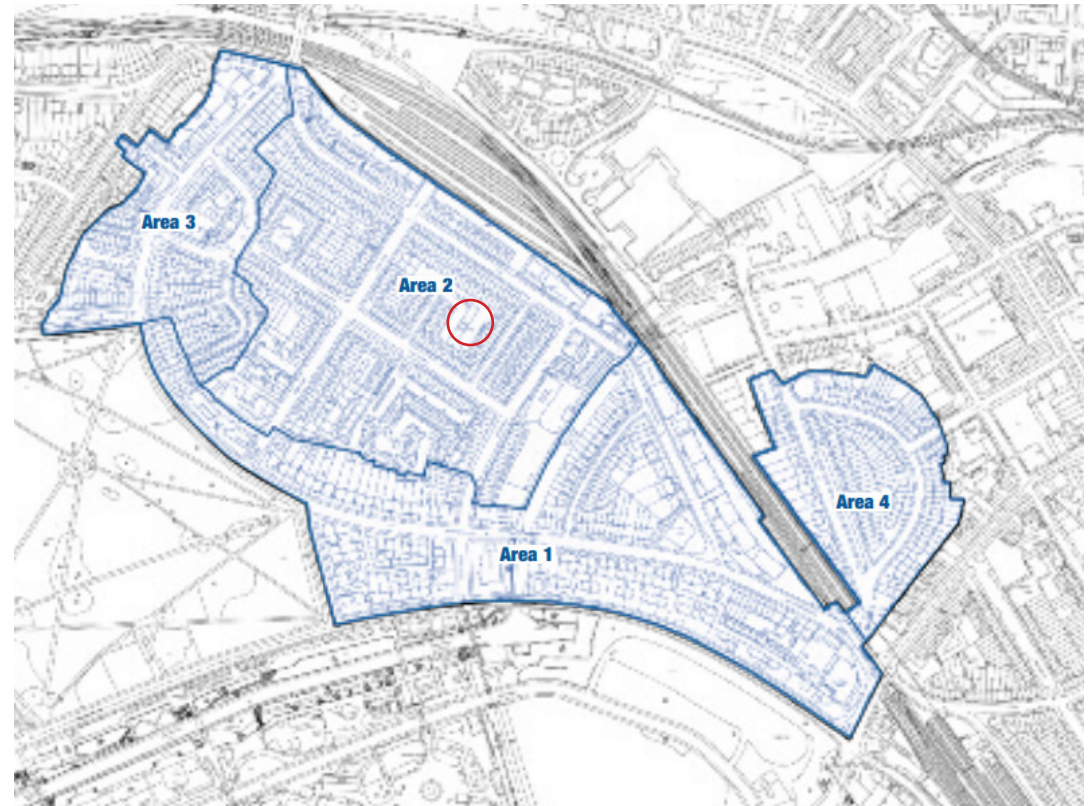


Figure 12 Map of Conservation Area, showing its considerable scale in comparison to the site (indicative location in red).

### 3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

There are few street trees and planted front gardens in this sub-area. Chalcot Square Gardens is the most prominent green area within the Conservation Area. There are some key views of Primrose Hill to the south west of the Conservation Area.

The significance of the Conservation Area is derived from its historic interest as a mid-nineteenth century planned neighbourhood with mixture of uses, including residential, neighbourhood services including public houses and shops, and manufacturing works. It is also derived from its architectural interest with the majority of the original buildings surviving and displaying architectural form and design typical of their construction period. These create an attractive townscape. The Conservation Area overall is considered to have a good level of significance.

The site is mostly concealed from the public realm, with only the sign visible at 7 Chalcot Road and the late-1950s building at the end of Egbert Street. Nevertheless, it is a valuable part of the historic townscape. It partly fills the deep interior of the urban block created in the mid-nineteenth century, as do other nineteenth century warehouses in the Conservation Area. The nineteenth century warehouses help to illustrate not only the original layout of the area, but also the diverse uses which were historically in the area and the importance of the relationship with the nearby railway which supported these manufacturing activities. The historic uses of the warehouses, primarily for piano making, demonstrate the historical importance of a particular industry from the second half of the nineteenth century.

The layout of the site and the original, nineteenth century buildings are considered to provide a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area. There are no significant views identified in the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement which include the site.

The Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement identifies Utopia Village as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. It identifies the 'works at north end of Egbert Street' as negative buildings within the Conservation Area. It also identifies brick setts in the spine roads of Utopia Village, although few areas remain evident.

The features of the site which are considered to make most contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area are:

1. Historic materials;
2. Layout of the site, with buildings flanking spine route;
3. Nineteenth century warehouse buildings. Their age and original intended use are identifiable through their external materials and pattern of windows, their size and shape.



## 4. Proposals and Potential Impact

This Heritage Assessment has identified the Heritage Assets likely to be affected by the proposals and their significances. The key impacts will be on the site itself and the Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

The site is completely surrounded by residential properties and some positively contribute to the character of the Conservation area. The site itself however is a commercial/light industrial building that serves many smaller business within this field.

Outlined below are all the proposals that have the potential to affect the significance of the identified heritage assets, followed by the likely impact.

### Proposals and Potential Impact

In summary, the proposals seek to upgrade the existing buildings and include the demolition of existing lean-to structures, erection of a small 'infill' extension, alterations to the exterior of the building (including replacement/alteration of various windows and doors, removal of external services and plant, improvement of some external finishes and refurbishment of bridge structure), installation of air intake/exhaust features associated with ventilation, heating and cooling, external courtyard landscaping works and replacement of entrance gates.

1. Removal of modern signage and wire gate to Chalcot Road entrance for a lower, more subtle structure constructed in more robust materials that complement the neighbouring railings. Similarly the entrance to Egbert Street will be altered in a similar style. These changes would have an overall **small positive impact** on the conservation area and the site.

2. Refurbishment of existing bridge with replacement glazing cladding and insulation. The existing bridge is not original in appearance and detracts from the general aesthetic quality of the site. Its replacement with a sensitive, high quality replacement would result in an overall **positive impact** on the site and the conservation area.

3. The unsympathetic uPVC windows will be replaced with more traditionally detailed aluminium multi-paned windows. This will have a **considerable benefit** on the site and the conservation area helping to provide it with a more traditional appearance.

4. New plant is required in order to improve the environmental performance of the site. It is proposed that this is housed within the roof and front wall of the mid-20th century, two storey structure to the south of south western 19th century building. This will then be clad with decorative lattice work to provide a more attractive outlook. The structure itself is of



Figure 13 Existing (left) and proposed new entrance gate and signage (right) to Chalcot Road entrance.



Figure 14 Existing (left) and proposed new entrance gate and signage (right) to Egbert Street entrance.

## 4. Proposals and Potential Impact

no architectural or historic interest, and its replacement with a contemporary structure is not considered to detract from the historic or architectural interest of the site. Whilst this will change the appearance of the structure, it would not harm the overall significance of the site or conservation area, resulting in **no impact**.

5. External modern stair to the south east will be reclad. This structure is of no significance and the proposals would have **no impact** on the site or conservation area.

6. The small pitched roof structure to the south east will be demolished for a new courtyard area. This structure is of no architectural or historic interest and its removal will have **no impact** upon the conservation area or site.

7. Infill extension to ground floor mid-20th century north west structure below existing first floor cantilever to rationalise facade. This part of the site is not considered to be of any architectural or historic interest. The proposed changes would not harm any of the site or conservation area's significance and therefore would result in **no impact**.

9. The existing modern glass roof structure to the eastern single storey building will be removed and replaced with some sections of a new pitched roof and new courtyard. This would not harm any of the site or conservation area's significance and therefore would result in **no impact**.

10. Facade enhancements including removal of existing building services making good disturbed surfaces. This would provide an overall enhancement to the building and would therefore have a **positive impact** upon the conservation area and site.

11. New regularly spaced louvred lanterns to the roof of the western building and north eastern building to provide mechanical/exhausts. These will result in a small change to the roof profile of the building, but are traditionally detailed and would not detract from either the significance of the buildings or the conservation area resulting in **no impact**.

12. Minor changes to apertures including reinstatement and new openings. These changes are minor in nature and would not detract from the buildings' overall significance. As such there would be **no impact** on the identified heritage assets.

### Summary

The proposals provide much needed investment into this positive building within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. The proposals will greatly improve the environmental efficiencies of the building and have taken opportunities to restore elements of its original



Figure 15 Existing (left) and proposed new entrance bridge (right).

appearance whilst also adding to its interesting palimpsest through the introduction of new contemporary features.

The proposals provide the opportunity to enhance the significance of the building and also the wider Primrose Hill Conservation Area. We therefore see no heritage reason why the council should not support the proposals.



# Appendix 1: Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

## Legislation

Legislation regarding Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (the 1990 Act).

Section 72(1) states that, in the exercise of planning functions, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

The term “preserve”, within the context of Section 66, has been defined within *South Lakeland District Council v Secretary of State [1992]*, where it was held that the “desirability of preserving” creates a presumption against harmful changes, but not a presumption against any change. Case law has established that the preservation of the setting of a listed building requires considerable importance and weight (i.e. the Barnwell Manor judgment) and that a decision-maker who has worked through the paragraphs of the NPPF in accordance with their terms will have complied with the statutory duty set out in the 1990 Act (i.e. the judgment in *Jones v Mordue & Others [2015]*).

In the judgment for *Palmer v Herefordshire Council* ([2016] EWCA Civ 106), a discussion on the balance between harm and benefit to a listed building was undertaken. It was accepted that “where proposed development would affect a listed building or its settings in different ways, some positive and some negative, the decision-maker may legitimately conclude that although each of the effects as an impact, taken together there is no overall adverse effect on the listed building or its setting”. In essence, where there is some harm and some benefit, these should be given the same weight, and where they are equal in measure, the effect on the listed building would be neutral, and thus its significance would be preserved.

This approach was confirmed in *City & Country Bramshill Ltd v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities And Local Government & Ors [2021]*. In this case Lord Justice Lindblom concluded that ‘the considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preservation [of the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building or its setting], should tip the scales to produce an unequal balance in its favour. However, the SoS should still take account of the actual severity of any change, or scale of change as the Mayoral SPG puts it, and so the extent of impact, as well as the relevance to its significance, and the importance of the asset. The overall weight to be given to any harm, and the conflict with policy, should be a product of these factors.’

## National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The policies relevant to heritage are outlined within chapter 16, ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’. The NPPF places much emphasis on ‘significance’ which it defines as:

*The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or*

*historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence but also from its setting*

The NPPF directs local planning authorities to require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting and the level of detailed assessment should be ‘proportionate’ to the assets’ importance. (Paragraph 194).

Paragraph 195 states that the significance any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal should be identified and assessed. This includes any assets affected by development within their settings. This Significance Assessment should be taken into account when considering the impact of a proposal, ‘to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal’.

Paragraph 199 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.’

It is then clarified that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, either through alteration, destruction or development within its setting, should require, “clear and convincing justification” (Paragraph 200). This paragraph outlines that substantial harm to grade II listed heritage assets should be exceptional, rising to ‘wholly exceptional’ for those assets of the highest significance such as scheduled monuments, Grade I and grade II\* listed buildings or registered parks and gardens as well as World Heritage Sites.

Paragraphs 201 and 202 discuss different levels of harm caused to heritage assets and requires a balance to be applied in the context of heritage assets, including the recognition of potential benefits accruing from a development. In the case of non-designated heritage assets, Paragraph 203 requires a Local Planning Authority to make a “balanced judgement” having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

With regards to conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets, paragraph 206 requires Local Planning Authorities to look for opportunities for new development to enhance or better reveal their significance.

## Planning Practice Guidance

This guidance supports the NPPF and reiterates the importance of conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. An important consideration should be whether development proposals adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset’s significance:

‘it is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development that is to be

assessed’. The level of ‘substantial harm’ is stated to be a high bar, which may not arise in many cases. Whether development proposals cause substantial harm will be a judgment in the decision-taking process, having regard to the circumstances of the case and by applying the relevant NPPF policies. Such harm may arise from works to the heritage asset or from development within its setting. Setting is defined as:

*the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may be more extensive than the curtilage.*

A thorough assessment of the harm development proposals will have on this setting needs to consider, and be proportionate to, the heritage asset’s significance and the degree to which any changes enhance or detract from that significance, and the ability to appreciate and experience it.

## Regional Planning Policy

### The London Plan (2021)

Key extracts from the London Plan relating to this application are outlined below:

Policy D1 London’s form and characteristics

A. Development Plans, area-based strategies and development proposals should ensure the design of places addresses the following requirements:

Form and layout

- 1) use land efficiently by optimising density, connectivity and land use patterns
- 2) enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to existing and emerging street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions

Quality and character

- 12) respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute to the local character
- 13) be of high quality, with architecture that pays attention to detail, and gives thorough consideration to the practicality of use, flexibility, safety and building lifespan through appropriate construction methods and the use of attractive, robust materials which weather and mature well.

Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth

Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets’ significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings, should also be actively managed. Development proposals should seek to avoid harm and

# Appendix 1: Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.

## Local Planning Policy

### Camden Local Plan 2017

Relevant policies include:

Policy D1 Design states the Council will seek to secure high quality design requiring, *inter alia*, that development:

- a. respects local context and character;
- b. preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage;
- c. is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;

Policy D2 Heritage seeks to preserve and where appropriate, enhance heritage assets and their settings. It states that:

The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

### Camden Planning Guidance, Design (January 2021)

This guidance supports the local plan and provides information on detailed design issues including design excellence and heritage, and supports policies D1 and D2 in the Camden Local Plan.

### Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement (2000)

The Statement provides an overview of the historic development of the area. It also describes the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and outlines the key issues for development in the area.

The Statement includes a number of guidelines for development in the Conservation Area. These include:

#### New Development

*PH9: New development should be seen as an opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area. All development should respect existing features such as building lines, roof lines, elevational design, and where appropriate, architectural characteristics, detailing, profile, and materials of adjoining buildings. Proposals should be guided by the UDP in terms of the appropriate uses.*

#### Materials and Maintenance

PH10: In all cases, existing/original architectural features and detailing characteristic of the Conservation Area should be retained and kept in good repair, and only be replaced when there is no alternative, or to enhance the appearance of the building through the restoration of missing features. Original detailing such as door/window pediments and finials, porches, ironwork (window cills, railings), timber framed sash windows, doors, tiled footpaths, roof slates and tiles, decorative brickwork, timber shopfronts, where retained, add to the visual interest of properties. Where these features have been removed, replacement with suitable copies will be encouraged.

PH11: The choice of materials in new work is important and will be the subject of control by the Council. Original, traditional materials should be retained wherever possible and repaired only if necessary. Generally routine and regular maintenance such as unblocking of gutters and rainwater pipes, the repair of damaged pointing, and the painting and repair of wood and metal work will prolong the life of the building and prevent unnecessary decay and damage. Where replacement is the only possible option, materials should be chosen to closely match the original. Generally the use of the original (or as similar as possible) natural materials will be required, and the use of materials such as concrete roof tiles, artificial slate and PVCu windows would not be acceptable.

PH12: Original brickwork should not be painted, rendered or clad unless this was the original treatment. Such new work, whilst seldom necessary, can have an unfortunate and undesirable effect on the appearance of the building and Conservation Area. It may lead to long term structural and decorative damage, and may be extremely difficult (if not impossible) to reverse once completed. Re-pointing should match the original mix and profile as it can drastically alter the appearance of a building (especially when “fine gauge” brickwork is present), and may be difficult to reverse.

PH13: Where replacement materials are to be used it is advisable to consult with the Council’s Conservation & Urban Design Team, to ensure appropriate choice and use.

## Guidance Notes

### Conservation Principles, Policies, and Guidance (English Heritage, April 2008)

This document outlines Historic England’s approach to the sustainable management of the historic environment. While primarily intended to ensure consistency in their own advice and guidance through the planning process, the document is commended to LPAs to ensure that all decisions about change affecting the historic environment are informed and sustainable. This document was published in line with the philosophy of PP55, yet remains relevant with the NPPF and PPG, the emphasis placed upon the importance of understanding significance to properly assess the effects of change to heritage assets. Guidance within the document describes a range of ‘heritage values’ that constitute a heritage asset’s significance to be established systematically; the four main heritage values include: aesthetic, evidential, communal or

historical. The document emphasises that:

*considered change offers the potential to enhance and add value to places...it is the means by which each generation aspires to enrich the historic environment*

### Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes

GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

This document provides advice on the numerous ways in which decision-making in the historic environment can be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to its significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, this document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged, stating that:

*...application proposals that affect the historic environment are much more likely to gain the necessary permissions and create successful places if they are designed with the knowledge and understanding of the significance of the heritage assets they may affect.*

The advice suggests a structured staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information, this is as follows:

This document outlines the significance of the area, its sensitivities and opportunities for enhancement.

- Understand the significance of the affected assets;
- understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
- avoid, minimise, and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF
- look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
- justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change;
- offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

The advice reiterates that direct physical change may affect heritage assets, or by change in their setting. Assessment of the nature, extent, and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting at an early stage can assist the planning process resulting in informed decision-taking.

This document sets out the recommended steps for assessing significance and the impact of application proposals upon a heritage asset, including examining the asset and its setting and analysing local policies and information sources. In assessing the impact of a development proposal on the significance of a heritage asset the document emphasises that the cumulative impact of



## Appendix 1: Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change.

GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (December 2017) (2nd Edition)

This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This guidance updates that previously published by English Heritage (The Setting of Heritage Assets 2011) in order to ensure that it is fully compliant with the NPPF and is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 document. It does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.

Setting is defined 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’. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset or a heritage designation and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset itself. Elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of a heritage asset.

While setting is largely a visual concept, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, setting, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, can also be affected by other environmental factors, including historic associations.

This document states that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset. It is further stated that the contribution made to an asset’s significance by their setting will vary depending on the nature of the asset and its setting. Different heritage assets have the capacity to accommodate changes and, therefore, setting should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Although not prescriptive in setting out how this assessment should be carried out, Historic England recommend using a ‘5-step process’ to assess any effects of a development proposals on the setting and significance of a heritage asset:

- Identifying the heritage assets affected and their settings;
- Assessing whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
- Assessing the effect of the development proposals on the significance of the heritage asset(s);
- Maximising enhancement and minimising harm;
- Making and documenting the decision and monitoring outcomes.