

## **HERITAGE STATEMENT PLANNING APPLICATION**

**For a proposed re-opening of an annex to a bedroom and the reinstatement of a window in the side elevation of the annex on the lower ground floor at Flat D, 13 Wedderburn Road, London NW3 5QS (a Listed Building).**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **ANNEX TO A BEDROOM**

This report has been prepared with due consideration to the references listed in the reference section of this note and should be read in conjunction with the enclosed drawings and documents, which are intended to assess the impact of the proposal on the existing building and the surrounding area. Structural aspects were examined and reported on by Arun Associates whose report is attached.

The proposed Annex reinstatement will provide space for a study area to a small existing bedroom. A window is proposed to be reinstalled in its original location to enhance ventilation. Re-opening the Annex will also provide access to hitherto isolated communal utilities pipework of the overall building to allow periodic maintenance to be carried out as required under the terms of the lease to the property. No structural alterations nor demolitions to the main building structure are proposed as part of this minor re-instatement.

### **HISTORY**

13 Wedderburn Road is one of a pair of semi-detached houses designed and built in 1888 by Horace Field. The houses were built on part of the grounds of Rosslyn House, bought by the first Earl of Rosslyn, Alexander Wedderburn, in 1792. The building was used as a hostel before the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war. During the war, at the instigation of Anna Freud, the youngest daughter of the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, the building was used as a shelter for families and orphans displaced by bombing damage in the east end of London. After the war it reverted to being used as a hostel until converted into private flats sometime before 1980.

The lowermost three storeys each now comprise one flat. The fourth and fifth floors (roof) house a fourth apartment. The flats are designated A to D downwards from the uppermost level. The building is on a slightly inclined site with the front of Flat D, the subject property, having a lower ground floor elevation. The rear of the flat opens onto its private patio and garden at the ground floor level through a kitchen door.

The original staircase to enter the building when it was a hostel has now been blocked off, probably at the time of conversion into flats. The main communal entrance is now to the right-hand side of the building. The original steps and landing are now a private terrace belonging to the upper ground floor Flat C and have been blocked off to the front with a brick wall and utilities service cupboards. Flat D occupies the entire lower ground floor including the space beneath the original main entrance staircase. It is this space, until very recently hidden behind built-in bookcases in a bedroom, that is proposed to be reinstated to habitable space as an annex to the bedroom. That it was originally part of the bedroom is evidenced by still extant carpet grippers and electric light fittings within that space.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

There have been no planning applications nor building alterations specifically registered for Flat D on the Camden Listed Buildings Applications website and non-known to have taken place by the current occupier.

The following applications and approvals are listed on the Camden website for 13 Wedderburn Road:

2007/1528/P Flat A. Alterations at roof level including the installation of a rooflight, new folding doors to lower-level dormer on south elevation, installation of new folding door and glass balustrading to dormer on west elevation. Granted 24-05-2007.

2007/1529L Flat A. Alterations at roof level including the installation of a rooflight, new folding doors to lower-level dormer on south elevation, installation of new folding door and glass balustrading to dormer on west elevation, replacement of single glazing to windows (x 3) at roof level on north elevations and internal alterations. Granted 24/05/2007.

2004/4700/L External alterations to front elevation entrance path wall and porch parapet wall surfaces at ground and first floor levels to prevent further rainwater damage to existing brickwork. Granted 01/03/2005.

## **ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The significance of the building, taken from its English Heritage listing ref. 1379147, is that it is an early example of a number of buildings designed and built in this area in the 1880's by Horace Field. The property is in red brick with a hipped and tiled roof over eaves and cornices with shaped gables and tall brick chimneys. The white-painted windows are mainly casements in the front with sashes at the rear and dormers in the roof. The building exudes modest Queen Anne styling and comprises five storeys including developments in the roof structure. It is of historical significance that the building still retains much of its original form and features and that it was used by Anna Freud as a hostel for displaced families and orphans in the 1940's. Significant original features of the building are mainly visible on the front elevation from the road.

## **IMPACT OF PROPOSALS**

### **ENHANCEMENT**

The reinstatement of the single window and the uncovering of the original arch in the bedroom will return the bedroom area closer to its original build condition. Both elements will greatly enhance the beauty of that internal area and provide much needed extra space for a small study area annex to the bedroom. The window will be reinstated in a form in harmony with the window design of the building with the facility to provide ventilation. The window location is on the lower ground floor and will look out on a private front garden area demised solely to Flat D. The garden rises steeply away from the house to the road and so the window will not be visible from the road and will be barely visible from any other flat or building in the area. Most of the proposed work will only be visible from within one Flat D bedroom.

### **MITIGATION OF NEGATIVE IMPACTS**

The section of wall to be removed which currently abuts the existing masonry arch has been examined by consultant surveyors (Arun Associates) who have confirmed that it is not loadbearing and can be safely removed (report attached). Major structural support is provided immediately in front of the arch by a Rolled Steel Joist supported on pillars and enclosed in box work in the bedroom. The annex area has been sealed off by this wall probably since the house was converted

into flats in the late 1970s and has suffered from limited ventilation. A second internal wood and plasterboard stud wall originally provided a screen from utilities pipework entering the house from the street however it is in a dilapidated and partly rotten state and will be replaced by new box work providing access to the pipework as required under the lease. The proposed re-integration of the Annex to the bedroom area will greatly enhance the conservation of the original masonry and provide a better ventilated, and healthy, habitable space.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The proposed Annex reinstatement will have no detrimental impact on the significance of the existing building, rather it will restore one small area closer to its original build condition and greatly enhance its beauty and utility whilst honouring the original style of the building.

An engineering review has concluded that the reintegration of the Annex with the bedroom will have no negative effect on the existing building structure. The improved access will enhance and facilitate ventilation, renovation, redecoration and utility pipework maintenance ensuring more effective conservation of this listed building for the benefit of the Conservation Area.

The proposed work will reveal original 1880's architectural detail currently obscured by 1970's utilitarian development significantly enhancing the form and utility of the existing bedroom.

## **References:**

- (1) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as updated September 2023
- (2) Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- (3) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (updated to Nov 2023)
- (4) Camden Council online archive of planning applications
- (5) Historic England Advice Note 12 (Oct. 2019): Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets
- (6) Historic England Advice Note 16 (2021): Listed Building Consent