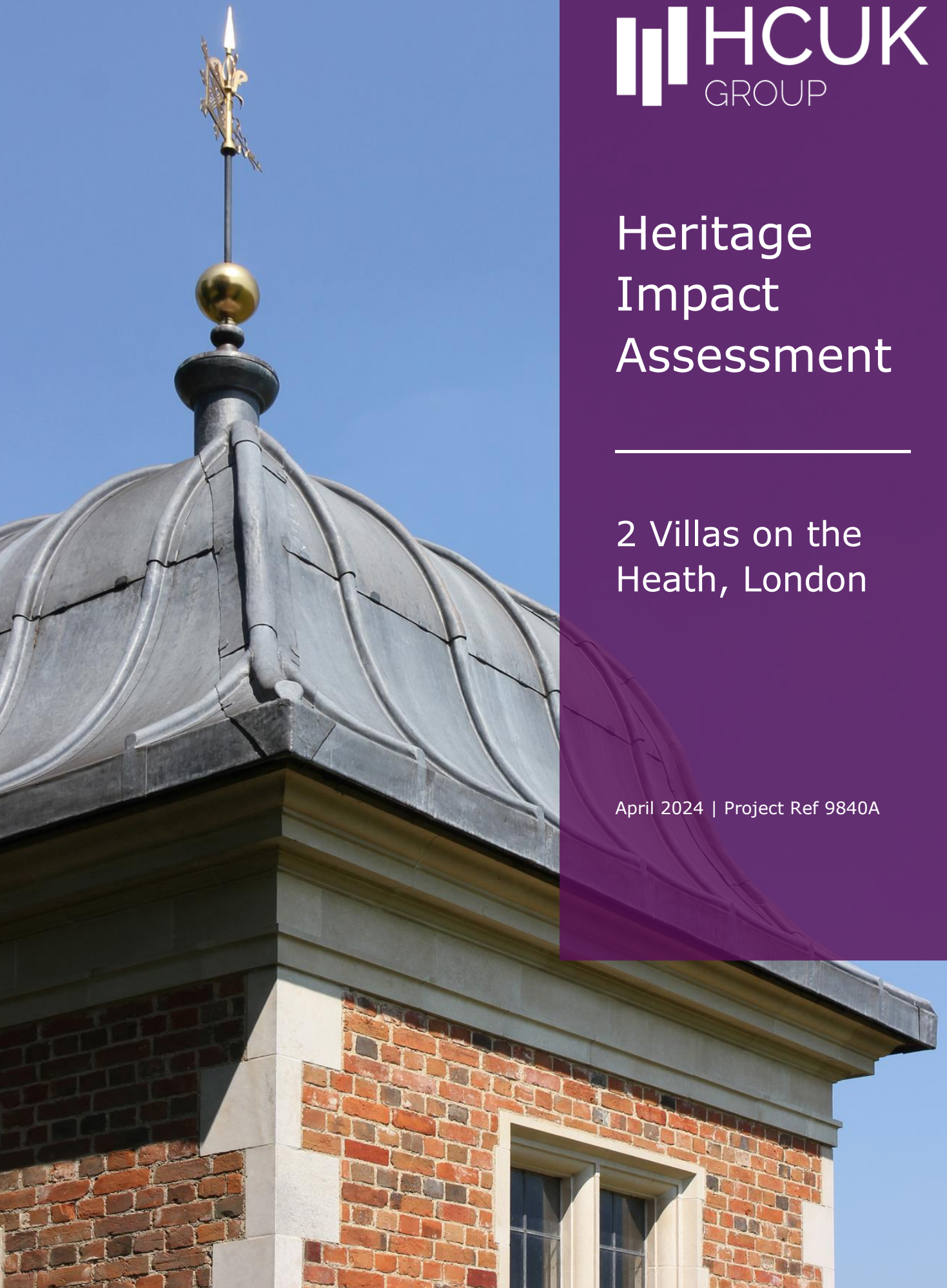




Heritage Impact Assessment

2 Villas on the
Heath, London

April 2024 | Project Ref 9840A





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App. 1 Scale of Harm table (HCUK, 2019)

1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by HCUK Group on behalf of Kudos Design and Build Ltd. It relates to an application for planning permission and listed building consent concerning alterations to 2 Villas on the Heath, London. Camden Council (CC hereafter) are the determining authority.

1.2 2 Villas on the Heath is a grade II listed building (UID: 1379086) which, alongside its matching semi-detached pair, no.1, dates from c.1863. The building is also located within the Hampstead Heath Conservation Area.



Figure 1: 2 Villas on the Heath (grade II)

1.3 In accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2023) this statement describes the significance of the identified heritage assets.

The Proposals and Relevant Background

1.4 In 2020, consent for works to 2 Villas on the Heath were permitted (LPA refs: 2020/1026/P and 2020/1595/L). While this consent has not been implemented, it is relevant to note that these works included overhauling existing windows, the introduction of new floor coverings and replacement of bathroom fittings.

1.5 Current proposals to 2 Villas on the Heath can be summarised as comprising a general refurbishment of the dwelling and minor alterations:

- The sealing shut of the existing ground floor front room door;
- Minor changes to plan form to the rear of the ground floor to provide a more functional residential layout and relocation of the kitchen into the modern extension;
- Minor changes to plan form at second floor level to reconfigure the dressing room and ensuite to the master bedroom;
- Introduction of new period appropriate fire surrounds, joinery, plasterwork, floor finishes and inbuilt joinery furniture;
- The introduction of a new air source heat pump; and
- Refurbishment of the roof.

1.6 The proposals have been based on a thorough understanding of the significance of the identified heritage assets and seek to enhance the functionality of the grade II listed building while preserving its unique heritage values.

Purpose of this Assessment

1.7 The purpose of this Heritage Impact Assessment is to assist with the determination of the application by informing the decision takers on the effects of the proposed development on the historic built environment. Value judgements on the significance of the identified heritage assets is presented and the effects of the proposals upon that significance are appraised. Particular regard is given to the provisions of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. The report also sets out how the proposal complies with the guidance and policy of the

NPPF (December 2023) and local planning policy. The site and heritage assets affected have been observed and assessed following a site visit made by the author in February 2024.

2. Relevant Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1** The decision maker is required by sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building and its setting when exercising planning functions. The decision maker must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the significance of the listed building, and there is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm its heritage significance.¹
- 2.2** There is a broadly similar duty arising from section 72(1) of the Act in respect of planning decisions relating to development within conservation areas.
- 2.3** For the purposes of this statement, preservation equates to an absence of harm.² Harm is defined in paragraph 84 of Historic England’s Conservation Principles as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.³
- 2.4** The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as being made up of four main constituents: architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest and artistic interest. The assessments of heritage significance and impact are normally made with primary reference to the four main elements of significance identified in the NPPF.
- 2.5** The NPPF requires the impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset⁴ to be considered in terms of either “substantial harm” or “less than substantial harm” as described within paragraphs 207 and 208 of that document. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that substantial harm is a high test, and case law describes substantial harm in terms of an effect that would vitiate or drain

¹ Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Limited v East Northamptonshire District Council and others [2014] EWCA Civ 137. This principle has recently been confirmed, albeit in a lower court, in R (Wyeth-Price) v Guildford Borough Council.

² South Lakeland v SSE [1992] 2 AC 141.

³ Conservation Principles, 2008, paragraph 84.

⁴ The seven categories of designated heritage assets are World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Park and Gardens, Registered Battlefield and Conservation Areas, designated under the relevant legislation.

away much of the significance of a heritage asset.⁵ The Scale of Harm is tabulated at **Appendix 1**.

2.6 Paragraphs 207 and 208 of the NPPF refer to two different balancing exercises in which harm to significance, if any, is to be balanced with public benefit.⁶ Paragraph 18a-020-20190723 of National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) online makes it clear that some heritage-specific benefits can be public benefits. Paragraph 18a-018-20190723 of the same NPPG makes it clear that it is important to be explicit about the category of harm (that is, whether paragraph 207 and 208 of the NPPF applies, if at all), and the extent of harm, when dealing with decisions affecting designated heritage assets, as follows:

Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.

2.7 Paragraphs 205 and 206 of the NPPF state that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance, irrespective of how substantial or otherwise that harm might be.

2.8 One of the overarching objectives of sustainable development, as expressed in paragraph 8 of the NPPF, is mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy. Historic England has a Climate Change Strategy, and has published Mitigation, Adaptation and Energy Measures. More specifically, Historic England has published a Heritage and Climate Change Carbon Reduction Plan (March 2022). These and similar strategies run in parallel with heritage-specific methodologies relating to the assessment of significance, and the effect of change on significance.

2.9 Local policy for Camden is contained within the Camden Local Plan (adopted in 2017). Relevant policies from that document are discussed below.

2.10 Policy D1 Design: While not a heritage policy, this general design policy notes that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development and that there is a requirement for development to respect the local context and character

⁵ Bedford Borough Council v SSCLG and Nuon UK Limited [2013] EWHC 4344 (Admin).

⁶ The balancing exercise was the subject of discussion in City and Country Bramshill v CCCLG and others [2021] EWCA, Civ 320.

and preserve or enhance the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage.

2.11 Policy D2 Heritage: This policy notes that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's heritage assets and their settings. The policy notes 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. Of conservation areas, the policy notes that the Council will:

- Require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;
- Resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;
- Resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and
- Preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

2.12 With regards to listed buildings, the policy notes that to preserve or enhance listed buildings, the Council will:

- Resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
- Resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and
- Resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.

2.13 The London Plan 2021 is the spatial development strategy for greater London and as such a piece of relevant planning policy. Of specific relevance is policy HC1 Heritage Conservation and Growth which notes that "*Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings.*"

3. Background and Development

3.1 The land upon which the application site is now constructed was acquired by Donald Nicoll (a tailor and speculator) in the 1850s. Existing buildings on the site, potentially including the parish poorhouses, were demolished and a series of six dwellings were constructed in 1862 by John Culverhouse, a local builder. These dwellings became 1 – 6 Villas on the Heath.

3.2 The six dwellings are located in two rows at a right angle from each other with nos. 1 and 2 located to the north and facing east and nos. 3-6 located further south and facing that same direction (**Figures 2 and 3**). The two separate rows are now both grade II listed but with separate list entries (UID: 1379086 and 1379088, respectively). Also by Nicoll are nos. 7–12 (not listed) located to the south east which were built by 1868.



Figures 2 and 3: Nos. 1 and 2 (left) and nos.3-6 (right)

3.3 The application site and its surroundings can be clearly seen on the 1870 Ordnance Survey Map (**Figure 4**) which shows nos.1-6 and 7-12 clearly alongside other built form. No.2 can be seen to have a rectangular footprint with a narrow and long rear outrigger extending to the east.

- 3.4** Separating the new dwellings from the pond to the east were pleasure grounds (as can be seen on the map) and are known to have included grottos, fountains and arbours to appeal to visitors to the Heath.



Figure 4: 1870 Ordnance Survey Map, surveyed 1866. Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland

- 3.5** At the time of the 1871 Census George Samuel Jealous, a known radical, with interests in the co-operative movement, temperance, vegetarianism and ragged schools, is shown to be living at no.1 Villas on the Heath.
- 3.6** In terms of 2 Villas on the Heath, the application site, the known occupants can be summarised as:
- 1871 Census – George P Gidden and family (harness maker) and family
 - 1891 Census – Fanny Smith (boarding house keeper) and family and lodger, Effie Johnson, (living on own means)
 - 1910 Lloyd George Survey – Occupier John May, Owner, Louise Muncey for F Petfield and W Cook
- 3.7** Nos 1 and 2 and 3-6 were both designated as grade II listed buildings in May 1974.



Figure 5: 1915 Ordnance Survey Map (surveyed 1912). Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland

Development of 2 Villas on the Heath

3.8

2 Villas on the Heath appears to have remained in use as a single family dwelling since its construction in the 1860s. As is commonplace, the building has been altered and adapted over time in accordance with changing domestic requirements and fashions. As a result, the building could no longer be identified as 'intact' or 'unaltered'. Some key changes to the building can be summarised as:

- Relocation of front room/hallway dividing wall to make the hallway wider. While this has changed the plan form of the building and proportions of rooms in comparison to other buildings in the group (nos.1-6), the general compartmentalised plan form and circulation of the building is retained and this could be a historic (i.e. 19th century) change;
- Changes to fire surrounds. No historic fire surrounds survive within 2 Villas on the Heath but a number of modern replicas are present which are broadly traditional in character. In other locations, chimney breasts have been left blank and plastered over (rear ground floor room) or concealed by modern fittings (first floor rear room and second floor rear room);
- Introduction of modern flooring, joinery, in built cupboards and plasterwork etc. Specifically with regards to plaster work a number of decorative modern cornices and ceiling roses have been introduced into the closet wing which

clearly contrasts with the historic ancillary nature of that part of the building. Other cornices are traditional and appropriate in form but have been introduced over modern in built joinery (for example the first floor rear room) indicating their modern nature;

- Roofing over of the former yard area with a large skylight internalising this space; and
- Removing the side wall of the outrigger at ground floor, integrating it in with the former yard area.



Figures 6-9: Former yard, now roofed over and altered ground floor outrigger (top left and right) and chimney breasts present within the building



Figures 10 and 11: Views within the upper floors of the closet wing with out of keeping decorative cornice and ceiling rose

4. Statement of Significance

Assessment of Significance

- 4.1** This chapter of the report establishes the significance of the relevant heritage assets in the terms set out in the NPPF. In accordance with paragraph 194 of the NPPF, the descriptions are proportionate to the asset's significance and are sufficient to understand the nature of any impact the proposals may have upon that significance.
- 4.2** It is recognised that not all parts of a heritage asset will necessarily be of equal significance. In some cases, certain aspects or elements could accommodate change without affecting the Government's objective, which includes the conservation of heritage assets and which seeks to ensure that decisions are based on the nature, extent and level of significance of heritage assets. Change is only considered to be harmful if it erodes an asset's significance. Understanding the significance of any heritage asset affected is therefore fundamental to understanding the scope for and acceptability of change.

2 Villas on the Heath (grade II)

- 4.3** 2 Villas on the Heath was designated as a grade II listed building, alongside no.1, in 1974. It's list description, one of the earlier types for identification purposes only, reads:

Pair of semi-detached villas. c1863. Stucco. Tiled roofs with projecting eaves having carved bargeboards to gabled front elevations. Gothic style. 3 storeys and attics. 1 window each. Recessed pointed arch doorways with hoodmoulds; fanlights and panelled doors, No.1 part glazed. Recessed casements with hoodmoulds; ground floor and 2nd floor, 2 lights; 1st floor 3 lights; attics, single light paired to the neighbouring house by the hoodmould. INTERIORS: not inspected.

- 4.4** 2 Villas on the Heath is a structure of clear architectural interest. Externally, this is as a result of the building's Gothic character and form, characteristic of the mid 19th century, and the consistent form of the building and the group value it shares with no 1 and nos.3-6, all of which are also listed.
- 4.5** The rear elevation of the building has a broadly similar architectural character but is more modest in its detailing, befitting the private rear elevation. The later extension covering over the former yard area is a modern addition of no heritage value but does, positively, retain an understanding that this was formerly an external space through the large rooflight present.
- 4.6** Internally, while altered over time commensurate with its use as a dwelling and changing domestic fashions and requirements over time, the building is also of some architectural interest.
- 4.7** The building's compartmentalised plan form survives broadly intact to all floors but some changes are evident, namely:
- The relocation for the front ground floor wall to widen the hallway;
 - The erosion of the rear ground floor outrigger as a result of creation of a new opening into the modern extension; and
 - Subdivision of the rear room at second floor level.
- 4.8** Architectural detailing at 2 Villas on the Heath is predominantly modern (though some of the cornices present may well be historic and match others present in the Villas on the Heath grouping) but is typically broadly traditional in character and well suited to the mid 19th century date of the building. The main exceptions to this are:
- The overly decorative detailing present within the closet wing upper floors which include decorative cornices and ceiling roses. These spaces would have historically been ancillary and plainly detailed so this modern decorative fabric is out of keeping (**Figures 10 and 11**); and
 - The missing fire surrounds to chimney breasts (**Figure 9**) and chimney breasts which are covered over in various rooms. These changes have obscured historic room proportions and diminished the focus of the chimney breast which would have historically been the focus of principle spaces.

- 4.9** The staircase appears to survive mostly intact and in its original position but it is clear that the bottom flight (ground to first floor) has either been replaced or heavily altered (Figure 12) and the barely twist balusters present throughout the staircase are not original (Figure 13).



Figures 12 and 13: Existing staircase showing modern balusters (left) and modern construction (right)

- 4.10** Historic interest relates to the building's role in the mid 19th century development of Vale of Heath and this part of Hampstead. The building's historic interest also relates to the way in which the building provides evidential and illustrative value as to the domestic, social and economic and architectural fashions of the period.
- 4.11** Overall, 2 Villas on the Heath is a building of clear architectural and historic interest principally deriving from its role as a mid 19th century dwelling in Vale on Heath and its high quality Gothic character and, where present, surviving historic fabric.

Hampstead Heath Conservation Area

- 4.12** The Hampstead Conservation Area was first designated in 1968 (including Vale of Heath) with subsequent extensions made in 1977, 1978, 1980, 1985, 1988 and

1991 and a boundary revision in 2001 with some sections being transferred to the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area.

4.13 The Conservation Area Statement for Hampstead, adopted in 2001, outlines the range of factors which, together, create the area's special interest as:

- It's topography;
- The Heath;
- The range, excellence and mix of buildings; and
- The street pattern and Hampstead's historical association with clean water and fresh air.

4.14 That statement goes on to summarise the area's significance, stating:

The variety of spaces, quality of the buildings, relationships between areas, all laid upon the dramatic setting of the steep slopes are described below. The contrast between the dense urban heart of Hampstead and the spaciousness of the outer areas is one of its major characteristics. It also demonstrates its historic development with the 18th century village still evident, adjacent to the streets created in the Victorian era, as well as many 20th century contributions. The Conservation Area character is therefore derived from the wide range of areas within it, each of which makes an important and valuable contribution to the Conservation Area as a whole.

4.15 In recognition of the area's varying character, it has been divided into a series of eight sub areas with the application site being located within sub area 8, 'outlying areas' which include North End, The Elms and Vale of Heath (where the application site is located).

4.16 Vale of Heath is a tightly knit enclave of modestly scaled residential units to the north of Hampstead, set within a hollow and completely surrounded by the Heath. The separation and isolated position of Vale of Heath and its generally secluded character is a key component of the significance of this part of the conservation area.

4.17 Within Vale of Heath are a series of informal narrow roads and alley ways which create an intimate character and views, often terminating with views of the Heath, further enhancing the tight knit and secluded character of the area.



Figures 14 and 15: Views down narrow roads and alleys within Vale of Heath

4.18 Buildings tend to date from the 19th century and include cottages, villas and terraces, such as the application site and wider terrace (1-6 Villas on the Heath). The variety of scale of built form and design in conjunction with the green context of the settlement provides part of the area's unique architectural character.



Figures 16 and 17: Examples of built form within the Vale of Heath area of the conservation area

4.19 While well concealed, being located down an alleyway (**Figure 18**), 2 Villas on the Heath, as a mid 19th century structure, makes a clear positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area. Glimpsed views of the rear elevation of the building are also possible from the east. Here the white painted rear elevation's upper floors and the modern lantern roof light can be seen (**Figure 19**).



Figures 18 and 19: View of 2 Villas on the Heath down the alley from the south (left) and view of the building's rear (white painted, centre) from the east (right)

5. Heritage Impact Assessment

5.1 This chapter of the report assesses the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage assets identified in the previous chapter. This chapter should be read in conjunction with the preceding chapter, and the drawn submission of the application.

Impact Assessment

Building Wide Alterations

5.2 Aside from changes specific to each floor, discussed below, a number of alterations affect the building as a whole. In order to avoid repartition in the below floor by floor assessment, these works are considered at this stage.

5.3 One such change includes the introduction of new flooring throughout the building and underfloor heating. As part of the earlier application (LPA refs: 2020/1026/F and 2020/1595/L), the decision notice concluded that:

The agents have confirmed that there is no historic flooring underneath the existing tiles in the hallway at ground floor level and that there is plywood underneath the existing tiles in the closet wing, therefore the replacement of flooring on these stated floors would be considered acceptable.

5.4 In addition, investigative works have shown that historic floorboards do survive on the upper floors beneath modern carpets and tiled floors. Existing typical floor sections for all areas have been provided.

5.5 Proposals seek to provide new engineered timber flooring and tiles throughout the building while also providing new underfloor heating and wood fibre insulation between the joists. Underfloor heating is proposed in such a way to avoid any detrimental changes to thresholds or effect on original or historic floorboards which would all be retained (either in situ or re-laid).

- 5.6** The introduction of underfloor heating also has the benefit of facilitating the removal of radiators and reinstatement, visually, of chimney breasts as the heating focus of each room.
- 5.7** Overall, the introduction of underfloor heating as proposed would have no effect on historic fabric (all of which would be retained), would preserve the overall character of the building (where no historic floor surfaces are exposed at present) and would reinstate visual prominence to chimney breasts and fire surrounds. These works would also facilitate improvements to the building's thermal performance through the introduction of appropriate insulation between the joists.
- 5.8** The ground to first floor flight of the staircase at 2 Villas on the Heath (**Figure 12**) appears to have been altered or partly replaced over time and the balusters present are not original (**Figure 13**). It is very likely that a building of this period would have had plain stick balusters for the staircase and this can be seen at no.5 Villas on the Heath in a sales catalogue photograph. Proposals seek to replace the current balusters (stairs and handrail retained) with simplistic square profile features. This change would be wholly minor in the context of the building as a whole, affect modern fabric only and have no bearing on the asset's significance or special interest with a historically appropriate character to the stair core retained and no historic fabric lost.
- 5.9** Other building wide changes include general redecoration and the replacement of modern bathroom and kitchen fittings. These changes affect modern fabric only and are not capable of affecting the significance of the grade II listed building.
- 5.10** In order to enhance the energy efficiency and green energy credentials of the grade II listed building, proposals also include the introduction of an air source heat pump. Unlike at no.1, where the ASHP was located in the courtyard garden, this is not an option at no.2 with the courtyard roofed over. Various locations for ASHP were considered with ultimately the flat roof section of the outrigger on the rear elevation (where the outriggers former attic space has been converted) decided upon.
- 5.11** While located at a high level, this location is well screened from the surrounding area by existing built form meaning that it is not visible in conjunction with the building's front elevation or from surrounding streets. A minor portion may be

glimpsed from the rear (in the general location of **Figure 20**) however a number of factors are relevant here:

- The massing of the existing building and chimneys in conjunction with the angle of view would primarily conceal the proposed plant;
- The plant and its enclosure is of a limited scale to ensure that views of the building's skyline and silhouette would not be affected; and
- The plant is proposed to be contained within a dark grey painted plant enclosure to ensure that, where it is visible, it would blend well with and sit comfortably against the rear elevation of the building.



Figure 20: View from the rear towards the rear elevation of 2 Villas on the Heath where glimpsed views of the ASHP may be possible

5.12 Taking into account the above, the slight visibility of the ASHP (or, more correctly, its dark grey coloured plant enclosure) would not detrimentally effect views of the rear elevation of the listed building or views within the conservation area. The very minor change appreciable in this incidental view would have no bearing on heritage value. The collection of historic buildings visible in this view (**Figure 19**) and key heritage features (including sash windows, London stock brick elevations and a varied roofscape punctuated by chimneys, would be entirely unaffected.

5.13 Other views from upper floor windows of surrounding properties may provide greater visibility of the ASHP and its enclosure. However, these are not designed views and the visibility of a modestly scaled domestic plant enclosure well

concealed on the upper floor of a neighbouring building would not result in any harm to the significance of either the conservation area or listed buildings.

Ground Floor Alterations

- 5.14** To the front of the building no changes to plan form or circulation are proposed. The minor exception to this is that the door between the reception room and hallway would be simply locked shut and not used with access into the through room provided through the dining room doorway. This is an entirely reversible change which would not require listed building consent.
- 5.15** To the rear of the ground floor, it is proposed to relocate the kitchen out of the remains of the closet wing and into the modern extension below the skylight. This part of the building is a wholly modern addition and the introduction of the kitchen into this space would not, therefore, affect any historic fabric. Other proposals here include the introduction of a replacement skylight which would be more contemporary in style (in comparison to the existing lantern skylight present). While the character of the space would be changed as a result of these alterations, the space would still remain evident as a former yard that has been roofed over, thus preserving the slight contribution that the area makes to the significance of the listed building.
- 5.16** Within the remains of the ground floor outrigger, the space would be subdivided with modern partitions to provide a ground floor bathroom and pantry. Important historic circulation (the door between the hallway and outrigger) would be retained and the partial reinstatement of the outrigger's side wall would better reveal the historic form and proportions of the outrigger which would be a beneficial change given the current much eroded character of the ground floor of this part of the building. As such, these minor changes proposed to its to plan form would not erode heritage value and, overall, the significance of the building would be preserved as a result of these changes.
- 5.17** The replacement of the skylight would have a neutral effect on the significance of the conservation area. The existing lantern light, projecting upwards as it does, is visible in views from the east and the proposed flush skylight would avoid this, removing any distraction the modern lantern plays in views to the rear elevation of the listed building.

5.18 Other minor changes and works within the ground floor of 2 Villas on the Heath (aside from those building wide changes discussed above) include:

- Repairs to the original timber shutters present within the front room;
- The removal of the WC from the understairs cupboard and the relocation of the fuse box into this cupboard;
- The introduction of new built in joinery cupboards and seating following the removal of existing modern in built furniture;

5.19 These changes are wholly minor and would have a neutral effect on the significance of the listed building.

5.20 Other works at ground floor level affect decorative fabric only and are as follows:

	Effect on Significance
Fire surrounds	Proposals include the introduction of period appropriate replacement fire surrounds to both chimney breasts. This is a wholly positive change, specifically with regards to the dining room’s chimney breast, as this chimney breast is currently bare. The existing fire surround to the front room is a modern addition and of no heritage value in and of its own right.
Cornices	All existing cornices within the principle spaces of the ground floor are proposed to be retained as existing. To reflect the ancillary character of the spaces and hierarchy of the ground floor areas, no cornices are proposed to the rear of the building (outrigger bathroom and pantry and modern extension).
Ceiling roses	New period appropriate plaster ceiling roses are proposed to be introduced within the main two rooms at ground floor level (reception room and dining room) to elevate the status of these principle rooms in a period appropriate manner.
Skirting boards	Proposals include the introduction of period appropriate tall (210mm) skirting boards to the hallway, front and rear rooms and omission of skirting boards to the rear of the building (closet wing and extension) to better establish the ancillary and formerly external character of this part of the building. Where

	original skirting boards are present within the staircore these will be retained with new to match added as required
Doors	The existing double opening doors on the line of the spine wall appear to be historic (though not original) and very likely date to the later 19 th century. These doors are proposed to be retained as part of the proposals. Other doors are modern four panel replacements and plain in their detailing. However, a series of more decorative four panel doors was found in the attic of the building and it is very likely that these are the original doors present to the ground and first floors (principal levels) of the building. While these are damaged beyond use, proposals seek to replicate these for all doors (aside from the aforementioned historic doors) reinstating a more authentic character to the ground floor joinery

5.21 Overall, the decorative works to the ground floor would result in a clear enhancement to the significance of the building through the introduction of period appropriate detailing of a high quality which seeks to enhance the architectural character and authenticity of the grade II listed building.

First Floor Alterations

5.22 No changes to the general layout or compartmentalised plan form of the first floor are proposed so the building remains broadly as is with a large front room, smaller rear room and diminutive closet wing.

5.23 Aside from changes discussed above (i.e. underfloor heating and new floor finishes), the main change at this level relates to the reinstatement of the chimney breast to the rear room. At present in this space, modern cupboards cover the chimney breast (which has no fire surround) having a notable effect on the room’s proportions and character. Proposals seek to remove these cupboards reinstating the original room proportions and introducing a new period appropriate fire surround to be the focus of the room once more (see below) and new cupboards would be added either side within the niches. These changes would be clearly beneficial to the building’s architectural and historic interest reinstating the character and proportions of the principal room.

5.24 Other changes to the first floor are decorative and can be summarised as:

	Effect on Significance
Fire surrounds	Proposals include the introduction of period appropriate replacement fire surrounds to both chimney breasts. This is a wholly positive change, specifically with regards to the rear room's chimney breast, as this chimney breast is currently bare (and concealed within modern joinery cupboards). The existing fire surround to the front room is a modern addition and of no heritage value in and of its own right.
Cornices	All existing cornices within the principle spaces of the first floor are proposed to be retained as existing with the exception of the area attached to the modern joinery cupboards in the rear room. Proposals seek to reinstate new cornicing around the edge of this space, restoring the proportions and character of the room. To reflect the ancillary character of the closet wing, the overly decorative cornice from this area is proposed to be removed.
Ceiling roses	New period appropriate plaster ceiling roses are proposed to be introduced within the main two rooms at first floor level (reception room and dining room) to elevate the status of these principle rooms in a period appropriate manner. The out of keeping ceiling rose present to the closet wing is proposed to be removed.
Skirting boards	Proposals include the introduction of period appropriate tall (210mm) skirting boards to the main front and rear rooms at first floor level and the omission of skirting boards from the closet wing (in use as a bathroom). These works will better establish the hierarchy of spaces at first floor level, and more widely within the building. Where original skirting boards are present within the staircore these will be retained with new to match added as required
Doors	All doors to the first floor are modern and proposals entail the replacement of these doors with more decorative doors as per the ground floor proposals.

5.25 Overall, the decorative works to the first floor would result in a clear enhancement to the significance of the building through the introduction of period appropriate detailing of a high quality which seeks to enhance the architectural character and authenticity of the grade II listed building.

Second Floor Alterations

5.26 At second floor level changes to layout are wholly limited and involve the re-working of the rear room to provide a more functional dressing room and en-suite layout with a new sliding door in the modern partition (thus avoiding any effect on historic fabric). The existing modern doors in the party wall leading to the rear room would be replaced with a more traditional plain four panelled door to better suit the character of the second floor. The layout would not be dissimilar to the existing and would retain the general compartmentalised plan form present.

5.27 Within the front room it is proposed to board over the chimney breast to provide a more functional arrangement for the master bedroom. While this would result in some effect on understanding the proportions of the room, the change is wholly reversible and this alteration needs to be balanced against the reinstatement of the chimney breast to the first floor rear room. The reinstatement of a chimney breast and room proportions on the first floor (a principal floor within the building) is found to more than outweigh the effect of concealing the chimney breast in this secondary space.

5.28 Other changes relate to decorative fabric and can be summarised as:

	Effect on Significance
Fire surrounds	No fire surrounds are present at second floor and none are proposed in reflection of the floor's more ancillary character.
Cornices	No cornices are proposed to this floor to maintain the subservient and ancillary character of the building's top floor. This includes the removal of the overly decorative cornice to the closet wing which is a clear heritage benefit.
Ceiling roses	No ceiling roses are proposed and any modern ceiling roses present would be removed to better suit the character of the second floor.

Skirting boards	Modest skirting boards of a reduced height and profile are proposed to both the master bedroom and closet wing. No skirting boards are proposed to the ensuite bathroom. These works will reflect the hierarchy of the building and the more ancillary character of the second floor.
Doors	At second floor level a single door (serving the front room) is historic and very likely original featuring a plain four panel detail. Proposals seek to replace modern doors on this floor with new replicas of the historic door (which would be retained). This provides a degree of vertical hierarchy and ensures that the top floors of the building remains subservient in their detailing as would have been present originally.

5.29 Overall, these decorative works result in the second floor having a high quality and period appropriate ancillary character appropriate for this part of the building. No harm to the building's significance would be caused and there would be a slight beneficial effect through the introduction of period appropriate features.

Third Floor Alterations

5.30 Alterations at third floor (the top of the closet wing) are wholly minor and concern detailing only as follows:

	Effect on Significance
Fire surrounds	No fire surrounds are present at third floor and none are proposed in reflection of the floor's more ancillary character.
Cornices	No cornices are proposed to this floor to maintain the subservient and ancillary character of the building's top floor. This includes the removal of the overly decorative cornice to the closet wing which is a clear heritage benefit.
Ceiling roses	No ceiling roses are proposed and any modern ceiling roses present would be removed to better suit the character of the third floor.

Skirting boards	Basic square profile skirting boards of a reduced height are proposed to the closet wing to reflect the hierarchy of the building and the more ancillary character of the third floor.
Doors	As with the second floor, proposals entail the replacement of all modern doors to this level with new plain four panelled doors replicating the existing historic example present to the second floor. This provides a degree of vertical hierarchy and ensures that the top floors of the building remains subservient in their detailing as would have been present originally.

5.31 Overall, these changes are wholly appropriate for use on the top floor (closet wing) of the building. The changes are minor, affect modern fabric only and are not found to result in any impact on the significance or special interest of the grade II listed building.

Roof Level Proposals

5.32 At roof level, proposals relate to the replacement of the existing roof light with a new conservation roof light fitting, the undertaking of structural works (if/as necessary) to roof timbers which would always be retained where possible to ensure a minimised effect on historic fabric, and the introduction of a new membrane and insulation to the roof. Existing slates would be retained where possible with any deficit made up from a matching slate.

5.33 While potentially resulting in the loss of some, wholly limited, historic fabric, these works are essential to ensure the building remains weather tight and capable of protecting the historic fabric below. They will also ensure that the building is sufficiently insulated, an important consideration given the current cost of living crisis and climate crisis. While some new fabric (for example new timber and slates) may be required this will be kept to an absolute minimum and, architecturally, the appearance and interest of the building will be unchanged and preserved. As such, the proposed development is found to wholly preserve the significance of both the listed building and the conservation area.

Summary and Policy Compliance

5.34 The proposed development is based on an understanding of the character of 2 Villas on the Heath and the Hampstead Heath Conservation Area, their historic development and significance. The proposed development has been informed by this alongside desk based research and on-site assessment of surviving historic fabric with the proposals being specifically designed to enhance the functionality of the grade II listed building as a dwelling in the 21st century while being sensitive to, and where possible enhancing, the significance of the assets.

5.35 As identified above, the proposals are found to preserve the significance of the both the listed building and conservation area. Indeed, the works amount to a number of heritage benefits with regards to the grade II listed building which can be summarised as:

- The introduction of underfloor heating which has the benefit of visually reinstating the chimney breasts and fire surrounds as the focus of each room;
- Introduction of insulation to both the building's floors and roof structure in a carefully considered manner to enhance the thermal performance of the building;
- Works to the roof of the building which remove risk associated with water ingress and ensure the longevity of the grade II listed building;
- Minor changes to the plan form of the rear of the ground floor which would better reveal the historic form of the rear outrigger;
- The introduction of period appropriate detailing throughout the building (including fire surrounds, cornices, ceiling roses, skirting boards and doors) which result in a notable internal enhancement to the architectural and historic interest of the building. This is specifically the case as a result of proposals to doors where the building's original style of door (found in the attic and a single second floor door) would be reinstated throughout the building; and
- The opening up of the rear first floor room fire surround which is current concealed, reinstating this principal room's original proportions.

5.36 As such, it is the findings of this report that the proposed works would fall outside of the remit of paragraphs 207-208 of the NPPF insofar as they will not result in any harm to, or loss of significance. There would be preservation for the purposes of Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposed development is also found to comply with those local planning policies discussed in Section 2 including Policy D1 Design (insofar as that policy relates to heritage), Policy D2 Heritage and London Plan 2021 Policy HC1.

6. Conclusions

6.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment presents an assessment of significance of 2 Villas on the Heath and the Hampstead Heath Conservation Area. This is followed by an appraisal of the effects of the proposals upon these heritage assets with consideration given to local and national policy and guidance.

6.2 2 Villas on the Heath is a grade II listed building (UID: 1379086) which, alongside its matching semi-detached pair, no.1, dates from c.1863. The building is also located within the Hampstead Heath Conservation Area.

6.3 Current proposals to 2 Villas on the Heath comprise the general refurbishment of the dwelling and minor alterations to it which can be summarised as:

- Minor changes to plan form;
- The introduction of new period appropriate fire surrounds, joinery and decorative plasterwork;
- Replacement of floor finishes and the introduction of underfloor heating alongside insulation within the floor void;
- The introduction of an air source heat pump; and
- Refurbishment of the roof including the introduction of insulation and a replacement conservation roof light.

6.4 Section 5 of this report presents an assessment of the impact of the proposed works on the significance of the identified heritage assets and concludes that while amounting to a change to the building and within the conservation area, the works as outlined above would entirely preserve the significance of these assets. Indeed, works to the grade II listed building would amount to a clear heritage benefit to the significance of the grade II listed building (benefits listed in full at paragraph 5.35).

6.5 In summary, the proposed works to the grade II listed building and within the conservation area are considered to be proportionate and compliant with relevant policies contained within Section 16 of the NPPF and relevant local planning policy and guidance. There would be preservation for the purpose of the decision maker's

duty under Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990.

Appendix 1

Scale of Harm (HCUK, 2019)

The table below has been developed by HCUK Group (2019) based on current national policy and guidance. It is intended as simple and effect way to better define harm and the implications of that finding on heritage significance. It reflects the need to be clear about the categories of harm, and the extent of harm within those categories, to designated heritage assets (NPPF, paragraphs 207 and 208, and guidance on NPPG).⁷

Scale of Harm	
Total Loss	Total removal of the significance of the designated heritage asset.
Substantial Harm	Serious harm that would drain away or vitiate the significance of the designated heritage asset
Less than Substantial Harm	High level harm that could be serious, but not so serious as to vitiate or drain away the significance of the designated heritage asset.
	Medium level harm, not necessarily serious to the significance of the designated heritage asset, but enough to be described as significant, noticeable, or material.
	Low level harm that does not seriously affect the significance of the designated heritage asset.

HCUK, 2019

⁷ See NPPG 2019: “Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.” Paragraph 018 Reference ID: 18a-018-20190723.

Standard Sources

<https://maps.nls.uk>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>

www.heritagegateway.org.uk

<http://magic.defra.gov.uk>

www.history.ac.uk/victoria-county-history

The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition). Historic England (2017 edition)

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990

National Planning Policy Framework, 2023

National Planning Practice Guidance, 2019

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, Historic England (2008)