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To: **Planning Inspector**

From: **Nairita Chakraborty BA MSc (Hons) RTPI IHBC,**  
Heritage and Townscape Consultant,  
Founder, Revive & Tailor

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> Sept 2024

Title: Heritage Appeal Statement for 26 Medburn Street, London NW1 1RH

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## **Introduction**

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1. This is an Heritage Appeal Statement submitted as part of an Appeal against London Borough of Camden's (the Council) decision to refuse planning permission and listed building consent at 26 Medburn Street, London NW1 1RH (Appeal Site) [Ref: 2024/2102/L; 2024/1213/P] for:

*"Alterations to and partial demolition of the existing single-storey ground floor rear extension, the erection of a ground floor rear infill extension and alterations to existing bathrooms at ground and first floors."*

2. The Appeal Site forms part of a Grade II listed terrace and were added to the statutory list in 1974. The neighbouring buildings at nos 9-19 and 20-25 Medburn Street; 42-65 & 18-41 Charrington Street are also listed and formed part of Brewer's Company Estate built in the 1840s. The buildings also form part of the Kings Cross Conservation Area (KCCA).

3. The Council's reasons for refusal are as follows:

*"The proposed infill rear extension, by reason of its siting, form and scale would be harmful to the special architectural and historic significance of the Grade II listed host building and its setting and the significance of the adjacent Grade II listed terrace through its setting and the character and appearance of the King's Cross Conservation Area, contrary to Policy D2 (Heritage) of the Camden Local Plan 2017."*

## **Qualifications and Experience**

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4. My name is Nairita Chakraborty and I am a Heritage and Townscape Consultant with over 16 years of experience in both public and private sector. I run a company called Revive and Tailor, a Heritage, Regeneration and Place consultancy. My CV is included in Appendix 1 of this statement.
  5. I hold an MSc in Town Planning [specialising in Conservation and Urban Design] from Newcastle University and a BA (Hons) degree [equiv. to Part 1 and 2 Architecture] from School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi. I am also an accredited member of the Royal Town Planners Institute (RTPI) and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC).
  6. In addition to my professional roles, I am one of the 11 Commissioners at Historic England providing advice and guidance to their executive team on the organisation's strategic direction, monitoring its performance against strategic objectives and targets.
  7. In my role as a Commissioner, I chair the London Advisory Committee which is an independent panel of experts, giving advice to the London & South East team on complex development proposals affecting Grade II\* and Grade I listed buildings.
  8. In addition to my Historic England roles, I am a Design Advocate to the Mayor of London, advising the GLA on various strategic sites across the region.
  9. I am also a member of the Design Review Panels at London Borough of Havering and Royal Borough of Kensington Chelsea.
  10. From the start of my career, I have worked on extremely complex strategic regeneration projects. In Middlesbrough Council, I advised on the Middlehaven Masterplan by Late Will Alsop, the scale and massing of new development as well as the integration of highly graded listed buildings within the plan.
  11. At Hillingdon, as the Conservation & Design Officer, I advised on Heathrow Third Runway, assessing the strategic impact on the three historic villages of Harmondsworth, Sipson and Harlington. I also worked with Egret West Architects and Cathedral Group (now U+I) on the regeneration of the Old Vinyl Factory and the wider area with the introduction of Cross Rail at Hayes & Harlington Station. In addition, I advised on the disposal of RAF sites by MoD, for regeneration and conversion to housing. In particular, I worked on RAF Uxbridge and Ickenham Masterplans, advising on the scale of new development in context of listed and unlisted military-based heritage assets.
  12. At Haringey, I was the Principal Conservation Officer during a time when the borough witnessed a significant growth in development sites, including the Mayor's ambitions for Tottenham's regeneration. This included extensive input regarding heritage assets along Tottenham High Road into Arup's Masterplan for Tottenham, Regeneration Frameworks, Area Action Plans and Development Management DPDs.
  13. I also advised on the restoration of several highly graded listed buildings as part of Townscape Heritage Initiative for the High Road. In addition, I advised on the Scheme completed Tottenham Hotspur Stadium

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which included 4 tall buildings of up to 36 storeys proposed by Allies and Morrison Masterplan alongside the refurbishment of the Northern Terrace.

14. One of my key projects was the refurbishment and adaptive reuse of Alexandra Palace following a successful heritage Lottery Fund of nearly £30million. The project is near completion, with the Victorian Theatre now open to public for the first time after 80 years of oblivion.
15. In 2018, I moved to private practice as an Associate Director at Icen Projects' Heritage & Townscape Team gathering experience on the commercial and business development of our industry. Here I worked on strategic sites such as Kneller Hall in Twickenham (Grade II); 2 Stratford Place in Westminster (Grade II); and London Park School at 106 Piccadilly (Grade I).
16. With an innovative and contemporary approach towards conservation and repurposing listed buildings, I founded my own in January 2022, Revive and Tailor. Since its formation, I have advised on several key listed buildings within London boroughs of Camden, Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea alongside strategic sites outside the London region such as Queen Victoria Street in Reading and McKay Trading Estate in Slough.
17. I have extensive experience in dealing with appeal statements and proof of evidences, including being expert witness at public inquiries, informal hearings and examination in public during Local Plan adoption.

#### **Involvement with the Appeal**

18. I was appointed in January 2024 to provide expert advice for internal alterations to No 26 Medburn Street (Appeal Site) and a single storey rear extension. This was following a pre-application consultation received by the Appellants.
19. Upon my appointment, I undertook a detailed research on the historic development of the Appeal Site and the surrounding area. I followed this by visiting the Site where the Appellant explained the works they wished to propose, the Council's pre-application response and their need for the extension. I took this opportunity to externally view the other listed terraces and the sub-area of KCCA. This helped me to understand the key characteristics of the terraces and the Appeal Site's contribution to these heritage assets. I then provided advice to the Appellants as well as their Architects (Atelier Como) in detailing their scope and methodology of works. This was incorporated in a Heritage Statement that was submitted with the application.
20. Upon the refusal of the application, I was asked to provide assistance in appealing the refusal. I have utilised my extensive experience gained from advising on highly graded listed buildings and complex regeneration projects in sensitive contexts.

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21. During the course of my engagement with the Clients, I have visited the Site twice, including attendance as a meeting with the Council Officer on site. I have had regular discussions with the Appellant as well as their Architects throughout the project and all the proposals have included my input.
  22. The information contained herein should be read with the other documents that support the Appellant's case, including the documents submitted with the planning application and the documents prepared by the Architects.

### Declaration of Truth

23. I declare that the evidence set out in this proof for the appeal is true to the best of my knowledge and follows accepted good practice. The opinions expressed are my own and are formed from professional judgement based on my knowledge and good practice.

### Appeal Site Context

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24. The Appeal Site is a three storey house built of yellow stock on the upper floors with rusticated stucco on the ground floor and has a 2 window bay width. Its is a corner property with its side elevation facing Penryn Street. Entrance is through a simple portico along Penryn Street. All windows are non-original, those on the ground floor have rusticated gauged brick arches over the lintel. The first floor has two non original cast iron balconettes in front of its windows. Comparing with the front facade with its nearest neighbours, there is clear distinction between the window frames and lack of detailing over the lintels evidence the later work by the Council in 1972-74 at the time of renovations.<sup>1</sup>
25. The side elevation, contains a rusticated boundary wall at a single storey level ending at a single gate giving access to the communal garden to the rear. The existing single storey extension and historic wing are behind this wall and are not immediately perceivable.
26. To the rear, there are two extensions to the property. The first one built immediately after the terraces were completed, possibly a closet wing, and the second from 1982. During the 1972 renovations, the Council provided a separate brick storage to each of the property which is currently in poor state. Neither of the extensions are of a high quality and are causing structural damage to the property internally.
27. The existing buildings at No 26 forms part of a terrace built between 1841-42 during the development of Brewer's Company Estate, north-east of Somers Town. The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) includes 'reason for designation' which states:  
  
*'Terrace of 4 houses. 1849-52, restored c1972 by LB Camden as a rehabilitation scheme. Yellow stock brick (with later patching) and rusticated stucco ground floors. No.26 slightly taller. 3 storeys and cellars. 2 windows each, No.26 with 1 window return to Penryn Street. Round-arched doorways with pilaster-*

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<sup>1</sup> See Heritage Statement included in Appendix 2, page 11 for historic images.

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*jambes carrying cornice-heads; fanlights and panelled doors. No.26 with prostyle portico on return. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes except No.26 with architraved sashes. All with continuous cast-iron balconies to 1st floor windows. Parapets. INTERIORS: not inspected.'*

### **Summary of Historic development**

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28. A detailed historic development analysis is included in the Heritage Statement, included with this statement in Appendix 2. It is briefly summarised below.
29. The Appeal Site formed part of the area that was originally acquired as pasture land, in 1575, by Richard Platt, citizen and brewer of London, who gave the land to the Brewers' Company in trust for Aldenham School. Following a parliamentary approval for developing the estate in 1811, development in Medburn Street was begun in 1841 and completed by 1870. All the terraces included a closet wing to the rear, as was necessary to house kitchen and bathrooms.
30. The houses were defined as "Type 4 Georgian" under the Housing Act of 1774. The original house would have had two floors and two rooms, aimed at population of modest means. The Historic England guidance on 'Conserving Georgian and Victorian terraced housing'<sup>2</sup> discusses their typical plan forms (pg 8, Section 3.1):

*"The basic plan form of the regular terraced house of the Georgian period (1715-1840) is usually two rooms deep but often with cellar or basement below. The ground and first floors of Georgian terraced houses were often the most significant. These housed service or ancillary rooms in the upper floors of larger houses or in a rear extension and below for smaller houses. There are a limited number of related plan forms with a consistent hierarchy between front and back rooms. The width of the plan was unusually consistent, particularly in London, although depth could be more variable.*

*The standard terrace house plan of the Victorian period (1840-c1900) for the middle class and workers' housing is two floors of two rooms each, with the entrance hall and stairs to one side. Variants usually comprise further floors on top, basements below and extensions to the rear."*

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<sup>2</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conserving-georgian-victorian-terraced-housing/heag277-conserving-georgian-and-victorian-terraced-housing/>

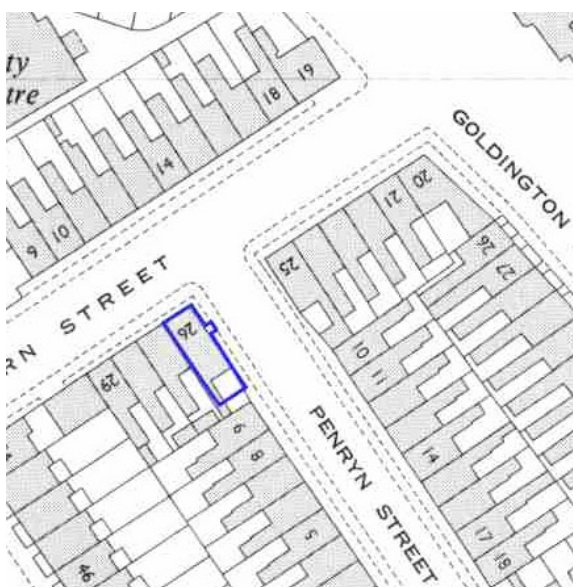
31. It is clear that the Appeal property follows this pattern. Although envisaged in the late Georgian period, the terraces were completed during the Victorian times. The OS extracts from 1871 and 1896 show a series of rear extensions to the terraces, in varying depths. The Appeal site has a deeper footprint and encompasses the whole width of the property.



OS Map of 1871-74 (1:1,056) showing the Site in blue.  
Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100035207



OS Map of 1896(1:1,056) showing the Site in blue.  
Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100035207



OS Map of 1952 (1:1,250) showing the Site in blue.  
Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100035207



OS Map of 1971 (1:1,250) showing the Site in blue.  
Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100035207

32. This pattern continued and by 1952, the Appeal Site appears to show narrow extension to the end of the garden boundary. Other properties in the row appear to have outbuildings to the rear gardens. During this period, the area became popular with squatter and is considered to be the birthplace of 'the



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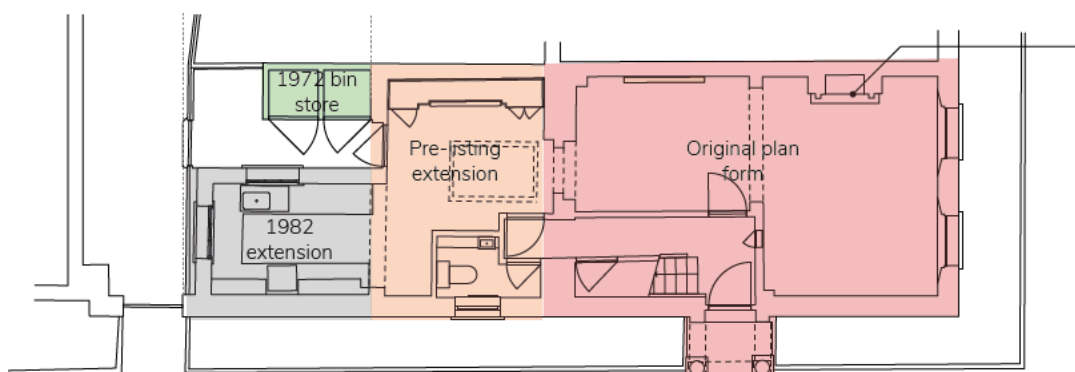
squatting movement'. The squatters community built up from there with around 260 people in several houses.

33. National level survey instigated by Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (formed in 1908, later becoming Historic England) in 1968 allowed the buildings to be listed in 1974. This saved the terrace from redevelopment by Greater London Council (GLC) who owned housing in Charrington, Penryn, Platt and Medburn Streets.
34. A historic photo from 1964 which shows the side boundary wall and a rear extension to the other side of the property. Hovering along the side boundary wall, there appears to be a further structure.
35. The GLC undertook extensive renovation within the terraces, reversing many sub-divisions created by the squatters, and reinstating family housing. All the historic closet wings were demolished and a small store unit was provided to the rear as shown in the 1971 OS map. This included the amalgamation of the rear gardens to provide communal garden spaces.



*Photograph from 1964 showing the single storey full width extension and a high boundary wall, proving no views or access to the rear of the gardens.*

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36. Later planning history includes a listed building consent and planning permission for a rear single storey extension [Ref: 34897] approved in November 1982. This was attached to the historic extension, along the flank boundary wall.



*Historic development of the Appeal Site as deduced from historic maps and surviving plan form.*

### Summary of Significance

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37. The Appeal Site derives its architectural significance being part of a uniform set of terrace and larger housing estate. It also derives interest from the sociological history of the area, from the Brewers' Company as well as the Squatters Movement.
38. The architectural interest lies in its composition as part of a purpose-built housing estate from 1840s to 1870s. The terraces within the vicinity are all listed and together their external elevations form a strong and harmonious streetscape. Nos 26 contributes positively to the overall composition, cohesion and design of the early Victorian housing typology. Internally, whilst the plan form is generally retained, the loss of internal features and detailing has compromised its overall architectural interest.
39. The highest contribution is made by the external elevations, materials, and its prominent corner location, enriched further by the portico entrance on the side elevation. This contributes to the overall townscape of the listed groups.
40. The Site further derives historic interest from being developed as part of the Estate at a time when London's growth to then north was favoured due to the railways. Interest is also derived from the association of the property and the wider area as the origin Squatter's Movement and the related social history.
41. The Appeal Site's relative survival in terms of the external elevations contributes positively to the setting of the neighbouring listed terraces, as a set piece of homogeneous domestic terrace of a similar socio-economic category. However, the later alterations undertaken by the GLA, including the removal of the closet wings and amalgamation of the rear gardens to form an oblong communal space has eroded the original layout of the block as a whole. Creation of entrance gates through the side boundary walls, which would have otherwise hidden the rear gardens, was introduced by the GLA. Many of these units



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have been used for social housing since then, and the communal green space can be accessed only by those who live in the blocks.

42. As such, whilst the external (mainly front elevations) provide a in the townscape, their original layouts are now unrecognisable. Nevertheless, the set composition of the terraces contributes positively to the character of the KCCA.

### **The Proposal and Council's decision**

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43. At present, the existing extensions leave a very narrow 'passageway' width of area to the rear footpath to the communal gardens. The proposal would essentially square this off by allowing a kitchen enlargement for a family dwelling. This would also allow for the existing extensions to be structurally reinforced as these are leaning on to the main building.

44. The application was refused on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024 for the following reasons and is subject of this appeal:

*"The proposed infill rear extension, by reason of its siting, form and scale would be harmful to the special architectural and historic significance of the Grade II listed host building and its setting and the*



*Photographs showing the existing passageway and view of the 1982 extension.*

*significance of the adjacent Grade II listed terrace through its setting and the character and appearance of the King's Cross Conservation Area, contrary to Policy D2 (Heritage) of the Camden Local Plan 2017.*

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45. The original proposal included internal alterations alongside a single storey rear extension. However, the Council's main reason for refusal refers to the rear extension. As such, the paragraphs below discuss only those grounds and not the internal alterations.

46. The accompanying Officer's report states [paragraphs 5.7-5.8]:

*"The house already benefits from a considerably larger rear extension than others in the group. The proposal would result in a rear extension **with a floorplate the same size as that of the host building, which would fail to be subordinate.** It would additionally **conceal the pattern of development and obscure the public view of the back of the terrace through the side gate, presenting instead a solid form.***

*Given the **communal access to the passage and park, works to the back of the house are more widely exposed than similar works would be to houses not arranged in this way, so are more harmful.***

*For these reasons, the enlargement of the rear extensions is considered harmful to the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area."*

47. Further paragraphs 5.10-5.12 of the same report state that:

*"The proposed materiality of the infill extension, being white render with coping stone, to match the materiality of the existing rear extension, as well as the design of the timber panel door to the rear elevation of the infill extension, are considered appropriate and no concern is raised with this aspect of the works.*

*The internal alterations appear acceptable as is the alteration to the roof light on the rear extension.*

*There are no public benefits to outweigh the harm caused under Para 208 of the NPPF."*

48. Prior to the application being submitted, the Appellant sought pre-application advice from the Council. However, this was prior to my appointment, and the proposals did not benefit from the detailed assessment of special interest of the building. Nevertheless, the pre-application consultation feedback dated 10<sup>th</sup> August 2023 stated in section 5:

*"The houses appear to have originally been flat backed, but with unusual lateral externally expressed chimney stacks. Two of the group of four retain their as-built rear elevations while the furthestmost one has a part-width, half-depth rear extension. The garden is enclosed by a storey-height wall and contains two single-storey rear extensions. An initial full-width rear extension occupying half of the garden has itself been extended part width, leaving a quarter of the garden expressed as an open yard, containing a bin enclosure. **The proposed infill extension would create a full width rear extension encompassing the whole of the ground floor amenity space, which together with the existing extensions would fail to be subordinate to the host property. The proposal would not be in keeping with the prevailing pattern of development in rear gardens in the vicinity.***

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*For these reasons, the enlargement of the rear extensions is considered harmful to both the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area.*

*Additionally the proposal would remove the bin enclosures, details of the new refuse storage would be required, storing these in the communal alleyway would not be considered acceptable and would unacceptably alter the public views from the alley.”*

### **The Appellant’s Case**

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49. It is clear that the terraces are far from ‘unaltered’ with severe inappropriate alterations undertaken when the properties were occupied by Squatters. Admittedly, there are two generations of extensions currently on the Appeal Site, with the first dating from 1870s. Their present condition is poor and they lean on to the structure of the main house causing harm to its integrity.
50. In terms of fabric, the “squaring off” the existing footprint of the ground floor extension would not lead to any loss of historic fabric given that the wall being demolished would be part of the 1982 extension. The height of the structure would remain the same; the alleyway to access the communal garden retained.
51. The Council’s main objection is the ‘extent’ of the extension. They state that
- “The house already benefits from a considerably larger rear extension than others in the group. The proposal would result in a rear extension with a floorplate the same size as that of the host building, which would fail to be subordinate.”*
52. The conclusion that the Appeal Site has a larger extension is clearly incorrect. As demonstrated by the OS maps, the Site always had a bigger footprint than the other buildings and that the first generation of ‘extension’ was most likely original. It is also clear that the other terraces also had long rear closet wings, possibly original to their designs. It is only in the 1972 that the rear wings were removed, although the Appeal Site appears to have retained its extension. This is possibly because unlike others in the terrace adapted for social housing, the Site remained a single family dwelling.
53. The Council then go on to say that the resulting extension would be the same footprint as the original house. Again, this is clearly incorrect as the comparison between the old and new footprint is based on the 1972 OS map, following the works undertaken by GLC and not the original plan-form from the 1840s. The Council’s assertion that the footprint would no longer be sub-ordinate is conjectural, based on incorrect understanding of the original footprint of the terraces. Additionally, the ‘squaring off’ an existing single storey extension, only wide enough to cover a narrow passageway, cannot be considered overly obtrusive as the overall ‘plot coverage’ remains marginal. As such, the Council’s objection on the

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point of 'in-subordinate' extension is unsubstantiated and based on incorrect understanding of the historic development of the Site.

54. The Council made the same objection at the time of the pre-application stating that *"The proposed infill extension would create a full width rear extension encompassing the whole of the ground floor amenity space, which together with the existing extensions would fail to be subordinate to the host property."*
55. Despite the Heritage Statement's evidence through the OS Maps, showing clearly the reconfiguration of the rear gardens and extensions in 1972, the Council continued the same line of objection without providing any material to counter the clearly demonstrable history of the properties within the block. This is disappointing as the Appellant went on to some length to appoint my professional services, including additional charges and time.
56. Next, the Council's objection is that the proposal would *"conceal the pattern of development and obscure the public view of the back of the terrace through the side gate, presenting instead a solid form."*
57. The 'pattern of development', in my opinion, has entirely changed. The typical layout is that the rear gardens are obscured by tall side boundary walls. This is demonstrable within any Georgian and Victorian terrace in London and indeed in the country. The side gates were clearly created when the rear gardens were amalgamated by the GLC. The communal access is restricted only to the residents within the block, each householder given a key to the gate.
58. The Council then state that "public view of the back of the terrace" would be obscured. Firstly, there would not have been any public view when the terraces were originally built. Whatever little view the passerby gets from the pavement, is already restricted as the pathway is narrow. Instead, the eye is drawn to the unkempt nature of the remainder of the area, dominated by concrete storage units. This does not provide any understanding whatsoever about the pattern of development. Indeed, the proposal would be an improvement as it would draw the eye to the pathway instead.





*View of the rear upon entering the gates.*



*View of the amalgamated rear gardens and the interface with the rear of properties along Penryn Street*

59. The Council then state “Given the communal access to the passage and park, works to the back of the house are more widely exposed than similar works would be to houses not arranged in this way, so are more harmful.”
60. The amalgamated rear gardens cannot be referred to as a park as the amalgamated gardens are not for public use. These are gardens that provide amenity to the residents of the block and that’s their purpose. It does not have space for any other activity. Access, as stated before, is restricted only to residents. To suggest that there is a ‘communal access to the passage and park’ inflates the use of the amenity space and its landscape importance, which is clearly false.
61. The Council’s further deduction that due to the existence of the passage way, it more widely exposes the rear elevation, and works therefore would be more harmful. I see no logical explanation of this deduction apart from the fact that the Council have entirely ignored the evidence provided to them within the Heritage Statement. The rear gardens were never to be exposed. What is visible is the upper floors, including the buttressing that exists and would continue to be visible, given the extension will remain at single storey.
62. I now come to the reason for refusal itself and the legislative and policy requirements.
63. The Framework and the Guidance, alongside the Conservation Principles and related guidance by Historic England, all recognise ‘conservation’ as the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance. It is not a process that should prevent change.

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64. With regards to management of change, Conservation Principles in paragraph 84 states that:
- “Change to a significant place is inevitable, if only as a result of the passage of time, but can be neutral or beneficial in its effect on heritage values. It is only harmful if (and to the extent that) significance is eroded.”*
65. Indeed, a change can only be considered ‘harmful’ if it impacts on the ‘special architectural and historic interest’ (as included in the legislation) and the ‘significance’ as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The definition of ‘Significance’ includes an understanding of the building’s architectural, historic and archaeological interest. Further guidance from Historic England in assessing significance suggests a thorough understanding of an asset’s historic evolution, past uses and current condition of survival. This cannot be only based on what can be physically seen today, but how the asset has evolved and what interest can be deduced from the layers of historic changes, both physically and socially.
66. The above requires us as practitioners to provide a narrative of the asset’s past and what is important for the future generations that must be conserved. Guidance also suggests that not all parts of an asset would be significant, and as such the analysis should define parts that are more significant and those that are of lesser or neutral significance. In best practice terms, the parts that survive most are considered to be of the highest significance and those that have been altered the most are of least significance. Where elements of interest have been removed entirely, or unsympathetic alterations added, these would be considered to detract from the significance. Some features, historic or modern, could also have a neutral impact wherein they do not contribute to our understanding of the asset, nor detract from it.
67. Simply put, policy and guidance clearly require us to define the ‘special interest’ or ‘significance’ of an asset. Impact of proposals on areas of greater significance would be greater, whereas those of lesser or no significance would be less or not harmful at all. Thus, change that would not impact on the special interest of an asset, should be permitted.
68. In this instance, based on their incorrect understanding of the Site’s evolution, the Council allege that the infilling of the existing extension would be *“harmful to the special architectural and historic significance of the Grade II listed host building and its setting and the significance of the adjacent Grade II listed terrace through its setting and the character and appearance of the King’s Cross Conservation Area”*.
69. As explained in the previous paragraphs, the special architectural and historic significance of the listed terraces, including the Appeal Site, is derived from the external (mainly front) elevations that provide a uniformed and homogenous townscape. This is also suggestive of moderate housing typology of the Georgian and Victorian era with diminutive decorations. The extension does not erode this as it would not impact on any element that is or architectural and historic significance.

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70. In so far as the 'pattern of development' is concerned and its contribution to the KCCA alongside the townscape, it is demonstrated clearly with evidence that the rear gardens have changed considerably since 1870s. Most drastically, this was undertaken by the GLC in 1972 who amalgamated the typical rear gardens and introduced gates on each corner of the block, through the otherwise enclosed side boundaries, to provide access for the residents only. As such the original pattern of development no longer exists.
71. The proposal, therefore, cannot be considered to cause harm to the special interest of the heritage assets that no longer exists, and would accord with the legislative and policy requirement.
72. In addition to alleging harm, the Council also state that there are no public benefits to the scheme.
73. What comprises public benefit is explained in the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) paragraph 20 which states:
- "Public benefits include heritage benefits, and do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.
- Examples of heritage benefits may include:
- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting
  - reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset
  - securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation"
74. Sustaining a heritage asset for a long term use, especially its original use, is best way to conserve any heritage asset. That in itself is a benefit, as is explained in the NPPG. To ensure that a heritage asset continues to be in use, it would have to evolve based on our changing patterns lifestyle as well as social requirements. Our present challenges with climate changes have necessitated better understanding of retrofits, adaptations and reusing existing building stock, be it listed or unlisted. Indeed, the New London Architecture (NLA) undertake an annual "Don't move, improve" award category, encouraging architects to design suitable improvements to existing housing to allow for their long term use.
75. The proposal to "square off" the narrow passage would allow the residents of the house to better use this currently unkempt and wasted space for their family. Whilst this would be for the enjoyment of the residents only, it would ensure longevity of the family housing in the area, which is increasingly been sub-divided for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and student's accommodation.
76. In addition, the works form part of a wider set of repair works, that the Council have not objected to and is now being dealt with under a separate application. This investment in the property, first in last 10 years, would again go on to ensure its long term sustenance, resulting in heritage benefit.



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77. To conclude, the Appellant's case is that there is no harm arising from the proposal, and that paragraphs 206 and subsequently paragraph 208 of the Framework do not apply. However, since the Council have alleged harm it is important to demonstrate that there are heritage benefits to the proposal that would ultimately enhance the listed building.
78. In terms of local policy, the Council's Local Plan Policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) are aimed at achieving the highest standard of design in all developments. Policy D1 requires development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, which improves the function, appearance and character of the area; and Policy D2 states that the Council will preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings.
79. The Council have not objected to the materials and appearance of the structure in terms of design and as such only Policy D2 applies. It is argued that that proposal achieves Policy D1 by increasing the functionality of a currently abandoned space for the use of family and should be thus considered. Additionally, as demonstrated above, the Appellants' case is that the proposal would not harm, and therefore preserve, the heritage assets in question. It therefore fulfils the requirement of the local policies too.
80. Overall, the Appellant considers that the proposal forms part of a wider scheme that offers a number of heritage benefits. This new alteration would have no impact on heritage significance and would deliver heritage benefits by sustaining the building's domestic use as a family house updated to modern standards. Therefore, the proposal preserves and sustains the significance of the designated heritage asset.
81. As such, the proposal would be fully justifiable under local and national plan policies. Accordingly, the assessment has appropriately considered the objectives and principles of the relevant statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy set out in the NPPF 2023 (Paragraphs 198-213) and supported by NPPG, and the local development plan with regard to change in the historic environment. Therefore, it is requested that the Planning Inspector allows the proposal.

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## **APPENDIX 1: Author's CV**

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# Nairita Chakraborty

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Nationality- British

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Heritage and Urbanism, BA (Hons) MSc RTPI, IHBC

## PERSONAL SKILLS

18 years experience working in historic environment, both public and private sectors;

Key expertise in: Heritage led regeneration, Masterplanning, Adaptive re-use of historic buildings, Strategic planning for historic places, and Heritage asset management;

Working collaboratively with architects and engineers to find innovative solution for the adaptation of historic buildings;

Strong negotiation skills representing both client and council sides;

Heritage project management, procurement, design briefs and assessment of tenders;

Keen eye for design quality, detail and craftsmanship;

Comprehensive understanding of architectural history and condition of historic buildings, presenting both graphic and technical reports;

Excellent communication skills including professional presentations, written reports and public talks;

Management and mentoring of junior staff as well as consultants and contractors

## ADDITIONAL ROLES

- Commissioner at Historic England [DCMS]
- Design Advisor, Mayor of London
- Member of Historic England Advisory Committee
- Havering Council Design Panel
- RB Kensington & Chelsea Design Panel
- Guest Crit- University of Westminster

## EDUCATION

### MSc Town Planning

(Specialisation- Conservation and Urban Design)  
Newcastle University  
Sept 2005-Aug 2006

### Bachelor of Physical Planning and Design

School of Planning and Architecture,  
New Delhi  
2000-2004

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Institute of Historic Building Conservation  
(IHBC)

Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

### Further specialist training

RIBA Advanced Conservation (October 2015)  
(2 days)

SPAB Repair of old buildings (May 2015)  
(5 days)

STBA Retrofitting historic buildings

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### Revive and Tailor (Founder)

January 2022- present

Bespoke practice specialising in creatively repurposing existing buildings, breathing new life into unused spaces and capturing the unique character and history of each property.

### Iceni Projects

May 2018- December 2021

#### Associate Director, Heritage & Townscape

- Direct and manage heritage team to execute projects in accordance with the agreed budget, project brief and time scale;
- Provide strategy and overview on projects from the start while mentoring juniors in the team, to achieve best results for the Client;
- Negotiating schemes, where necessary, between Client and Council while liaising with architects and other specialists;
- Prepare and/or review written reports/assessments in accordance with national and local plan policies;
- Represent clients as key witness at public enquiries, providing proof of evidence, appeal statements and keep up to date with case laws;
- Represent the Client at committees and external strategic agencies (eg; Historic England, GLA, Design Council/CABE etc).
- Keep overview of team's spending and income on a weekly basis to ensure that accounts and targets are up to date;
- Pro-actively identify new business opportunities while nurturing existing client relationships to ensure repeat and profitable business;
- Establish and communicate a clear understanding of expected performance and behaviour for all team members, providing the best quality feedback possible;

### London Borough of Haringey

June 2013-May 2018

#### Principal Conservation Officer

- Providing senior level specialist expertise and guidance to officers, members, developers, the public and other stakeholders on all aspects of historic environment, specifically on strategic and regeneration projects;
- Pro-actively advising and assisting in the delivery of the Council's broader planning and regeneration objectives;
- Contributing to the Planning Policy and Regeneration team's wider functions such as Local Development Plan Framework;
- Providing creative and specialist input in negotiating design solutions to achieve the borough's growth vision;
- Leading the implementation of appropriate projects and programmes (eg; Historic Buildings Grants, Environmental Initiatives Programme & Council Schemes), cross-working with other teams such as Housing and Traffic Management and be responsible for the delivery of projects to agreed timescales and resource;
- Leading all public consultations, liaison with external consultants, developers, external agencies, statutory bodies and the public etc, to ensure the effective implementation of conservation projects and initiatives.
- Leading on the stakeholder awareness of good conservation policy and practice, including specialist training for officers and members.

### Other roles:

- London Borough of Hillingdon: Conservation & Design Officer [March 2008- May 2013]
- Middlesbrough Council: Conservation Assistant [October 2006- March 2008]

## OTHER TRAINING

Architecture & Urbanism (Royal College of Art and Architectural Review)

New London Housing Vernacular (Joint event with GLA and Barratt Homes, London)

Climate Change and Historic Environment (London)

HELM event on Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme (Doncaster)

## Academic Projects

**Undergrad dissertation-** Heritage led Master Plan for ancient Buddhist site of Sarnath, Varanasi (Aug 2003-May 2004)

**Post Grad dissertation-** Developing Conservation Guidelines for Historic Living Environments in India (Jan-Oct 2006)

**Research Paper for Conservation module (MSc)-** The dilemma of conservation and the 'commoditisation' of heritage in developing economies (Feb 2006)

**Government of India funded research project-** Eco-Plan for the heritage city of Puri, India (August 2004-June 2005)

## Research Interests:

Innovation in conservation and design

*Inter-culturalism* and conservation

## IT SKILLS

ADOBE Creative Suite,

MS Office, Publisher,

Auto CAD

SketchUp Pro

## Other interests

Architectural Photography

Painting

Travelling

Reading

Dance (Trained in Kathak & Flamenco)

*References available on request*

## PROJECT EXPERIENCE

### Regeneration/Adaptation of Historic buildings

- Townhouses in Central London (Nash's Terraces and Squares, Grade I)
- Holborn Town Hall, London (Grade II)
- Northcliffe House, Kensington, London [Grade II\*]
- TA Centre, Paisley (Grade B)
- Odeon Cinemas [Grade II\* and Grade I in Muswell Hill and Wandsworth, London]
- Alexandra Palace, London (Grade II)
- Hornsey Town Hall, London (Grade II\*)
- 796 and 810 High Road, Tottenham, London (Grade II\*)
- Breakspear House, Harefield, London (Grade I)
- Townscape Heritage Initiative for the restoration of buildings within the Middlesbrough Historic Quarter (Grade II\* and Grade II)
- Middlesbrough Station (Grade II) Improvement project
- Historic dock yard buildings within Middlehaven (Grade II\* and Grade II)

### Conservation & design advice on strategic sites/Master Plans

- Reading Town centre regeneration
- Haringey joint venture with Lendlease on strategic housing in Tottenham
- Tottenham Hotspur Stadium and High Road West, London
- Tottenham and Wood Green Area Action Plans, London
- Haringey Heartlands and New River Masterplans, London
- RAF Uxbridge, West Drayton and Ickenham, London
- Heathrow third runway, Heathrow Spur, High Speed 2 and Cross Rail
- Old Vinyl Factory, Hayes, London
- Redevelopment of Greater Middlehaven area, Middlesbrough

### Community Partnership Schemes

- Co-ordinating with consultants and stakeholders in the pioneer project- Community Heritage Initiative Project (CHIP), funded by English Heritage, aiming to engage the community in preparation of conservation area appraisals.
- Working with the community and consultants in the Heritage Lottery Fund scheme for the regeneration of Council owned Eastcote Coach House and gardens.
- Town Centre regeneration schemes with successful Mayoral Fund bids

### Local Development Plan and Strategic Policies

- Northampton Council **Heritage Impact Assessment**
- Writing policies on **Historic Environment and Urban Design** to be contained within the borough's Local Plan documents and presenting evidence during Public Examination (SP, DMDPD, AAPs).
- Preparing and co-authoring **Urban Characterisation Study** as evidence base for the Local Plan.
- Preparation of **Supplementary Planning Guidance** on Historic Built Environment

### Designation and Management of Heritage Assets

**Designation of heritage assets:** Investigating new and existing Conservation Areas, including Character Area assessments, consultation, notification and adoption.

**Preparing the Local List:** Historic research, photography, architectural descriptions, consultation engagement with stakeholders. Developing online database, and updating Council's mapping system.

**Preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans:** Street by street photographic survey, townscape analysis, historic development, current uses and issues. Assessing scope and opportunities for enhancement.

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## **APPENDIX 2: Heritage Statement**

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# HERITAGE STATEMENT

26 Medburn Street, LONDON, NW1 1RH

MARCH 2024

NAIRITA CHAKRABORTY IHBC RTPI [BA (HONS) M.SC]  
FOUNDER, REVIVE AND TAILOR





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# Section 1

## **Introduction.**

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Assessment has been carried out by Revive and Tailor to provide an appraisal of 26 Medburn Street, London NW1 1RH (henceforth 'the Site').
- 1.2 The building forms part of a grade II listed terrace and were added to the statutory list in 1974. The neighbouring buildings at nos 9-19 and 20-25 Medburn Street; 42-65 & 18-41 Charrington Street are also listed and formed part of Brewer's Company Estate built in the 1840s. The buildings also form part of the Kings Cross Conservation Area.
- 1.3 This statement is to accompany an application for planning permission and Listed Building Consent for:  
*"Alterations to and partial demolition of the existing single-storey ground floor rear extension, the erection of a ground floor rear infill extension and alterations to existing bathrooms at ground and first floors."*
- 1.4 The purpose of this Statement is to assist with the determination of the application by informing the decision makers on the effects of the proposed development on the historic built environment. Specifically, this report assesses:
- Set out the relevant legislative and policy framework within which to assess the Site's heritage impact;
  - Provide a proportionate and robust analysis of the Site and surrounding area's historic development;
  - Offer a full description of the Site and identify relevant designated heritage assets;
  - Assess the significance of the Site and its contribution to surrounding townscape and any potential impact on nearby heritage assets; and,
  - Provide a detailed assessment of impact of the proposals on the Site and its setting, and on the character and appearance of the area and its impact on nearby heritage assets.
- 1.5 In doing so, 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 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 (as amended) and local planning policy.
- 1.6 The existing Site and surrounding area was appraised during site visits in February 2024 in good weather. Research has been carried out at local archives and through online research and digital archives, including the British History Online, the National Archives, and Kelly's and Post Office Directories Archives at the University of Leicester.
- 1.7 The report is authored by Nairita Chakraborty BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI IHBC; Director at Revive and Tailor, with close liaison with Atelier Como. It should read alongside the Design and Access Statement and other documents submitted as part of the application.



Figure 1.1 Site shown in red  
Source: Google maps

Section 2

**Legislation, Planning Policy and  
Guidance.**

## 2 Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

| Legislation   | National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)  |
|---|---|
| <p>2.1 Where any development may have a direct or indirect effect on designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure the proposals are considered with due regard for their impact on the historic environment.</p> <p>2.2 Primary legislation under Section 16 (2) and 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority or Secretary of State, as relevant, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.</p> <p>2.3 Section 72(1) of the Act also states that:<br/><i>'In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'</i></p> <p>2.4 For the purposes of this statement, preservation equates to an absence of harm. Harm is defined in paragraph 84 of Historic England's Conservation Principles as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.</p> | <p><b>National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (As amended)</b></p> <p>2.5 The National Planning Policy Framework was revised in response to the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill on 19 December 2023. This includes reforms to housing delivery and protection from "out of character" residential development within small urban sites, Green Belt alterations, energy efficient building improvements and allocation of agricultural land for development.</p> <p>2.6 Section 12, 'Achieving well-designed places', reinforces the importance of good design in achieving sustainable development, by ensuring the creation of inclusive and high quality places.</p> <p>2.7 Section 16, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', relates to the historic environment, and developments which may have an effect upon it. The framework encourages intelligent, imaginative and sustainable approaches to managing change. Historic England has defined this approach, which is reflected in the NPPF, as 'constructive conservation': defined as 'a positive and collaborative approach to conservation that focuses on actively managing change...the aim is to recognise and reinforce the historic significance of places, while accommodating the changes necessary to ensure their continued use and enjoyment' (Constructive Conservation in Practice, Historic England, 2009).</p> <p>2.8 Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:<br/><i>'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).' Listed buildings and Conservation Areas are both designated heritage assets.</i></p> <p>2.9 'Significance' is defined as 'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.</p> <p>2.10 The 'Setting of a heritage asset' 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. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.'</p> <p>2.11 Paragraph 198 requires local authorities to maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment.</p> <p>2.12 Paragraph 200 states that, when determining applications, local planning authorities should require applicants to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected and any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the significance of the asset and sufficient to understand the impact of the proposal on this significance.</p> <p>2.13 According to Paragraph 201, local planning authorities are also obliged to identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal and should take this assessment into account when considering the impact upon the heritage asset.</p> <p>2.14 Paragraph 203 emphasises that local planning authorities should take account of: the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.</p> <p>2.15 Paragraph 205 states 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. It emphasises that the weight given to an asset's conservation should be proportionate to its significance, and notes that this great weight should be given irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.</p> <p>2.16 Paragraph 206 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.</p> <p>2.17 Paragraphs 207 and 208 address the balancing of harm against public benefits. If a balancing exercise is necessary (i.e. if there is any harm to the asset), considerable weight should be applied to the statutory duty where it arises. Proposals that would result in substantial harm or total loss of significance should be refused, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss (as per Paragraph 207).</p> <p>2.18 Paragraph 208 emphasises that where less than substantial harm will arise as a result of a proposed development, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.</p> <p>2.19 Paragraph 209 requires a balanced judgment for proposals that affect non-designated heritage assets, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.</p> <p>2.20 Paragraph 206 encourages opportunities for new development within, and within the setting of, Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, to enhance or better reveal their significance. It requires favourable treatment for proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset or which better reveal its significance.</p> <p>2.21 Paragraph 213 notes that not all elements of Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites will contribute to their significance, but that, if harm to their significance is caused, decisions should follow the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 207 and 208, as appropriate.</p> |



## 2 | Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

“Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”) (Department for Communities and Local Government, last updated July 2019)

2.22 The guidance on Conserving and enhancing the historic environment in the PPG supports the NPPF. Paragraph 002 states that conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change that requires a flexible and thoughtful approach, and that neglect and decay of heritage assets is best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation.

2.23 Paragraph 006 sets out how heritage significance can be understood in the planning context as archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic, defined as follows:

- archaeological interest: As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- architectural and artistic interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
- historic interest: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation’s history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

2.24 The PPG emphasises in paragraph 007 the importance of assessing the nature, extent and importance of a heritage asset in understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.

2.25 Paragraph 018 explains that, where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 200-202) apply.

2.26 It goes on to state that whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest.

2.27 Harm may arise from works to the heritage asset or from development within its setting. A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

2.28 The PPG also provides clear guidance in paragraph 020 on the meaning of ‘public benefits’, particularly in relation to historic environment policy, including paragraphs 201 to 202 of the NPPF. The PPG makes clear that public benefits should be measured according to the delivery of the three key drivers of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental outcomes, all of which are reflected in the objectives of the planning system, as per Paragraph 8 of the NPPF. Public benefits include heritage benefits, and do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

### Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning

2.29 To support the national policies, three separate Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (GPA’s) have been published by Historic England.

#### GPA 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans [March 2015]

2.30 This advice note focuses on the importance of identifying heritage policies within Local Plans. The advice stresses the importance of formulating Local Plans that are based on up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area, including the historic environment, as set out by the NPPF.

2.31 The document provides advice on how information about the local historic environment can be gathered, emphasising the importance of not only setting out known sites, but in understanding their value (i.e. significance). This evidence should be used to define a positive strategy for the historic environment and the formulation of a plan for the maintenance and use of heritage assets and for the delivery of development including within their setting that will afford appropriate protection for the asset (s) and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

2.32 The document gives advice on how the heritage policies within Local Plans should identify areas that are inappropriate for development as well as defining specific Development Management Policies for the historic environment.

#### GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment [March 2015]

2.33 This document provides advice on numerous ways in which decision-taking in the historic environment could 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, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information and is as follows:

- 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.
- 2.34 The advice reiterates that heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change 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 in informed decision-taking.
- 2.35 The document sets out the recommended steps for assessing significance and the impact of development proposals upon it, 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 incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change. Crucially, the nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording which may be necessary.

## 2 | Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

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

- 2.36 This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. It replaces The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 – 1st edition, (2015) and Seeing the History in the View: A Method for assessing Heritage Significance within Views (English Heritage, 2011).
- 2.37 The advice in this document, in accordance with the NPPF, emphasises that the information required in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consent should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision, and that activities to conserve or invest need to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected and the impact on the significance of those heritage assets. At the same time those taking decisions need enough information to understand the issues.
- 2.38 This note gives assistance concerning the assessment of the setting of heritage assets and the statutory obligation on decision-makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings; and that settings can contribute to the significance of a heritage asset.
- 2.39 This note gives general advice on understanding setting and how it may contribute to the significance of heritage assets. It also provides a staged approach to taking decisions on the level of the contribution which setting and related views make to the significance of heritage assets. It suggests that, at the pre-application or scoping stage, the local authority, having due regard to the need for proportionality:
- indicates whether it considers a proposed development has the potential to affect the setting of (a) particular heritage asset(s), or
  - specifies an 'area of search' around the proposed development within which it is reasonable to consider setting effects, or
  - advises the applicant to consider approaches such as a 'Zone of Visual Influence' or 'Zone of Theoretical Visibility' in relation to the proposed development in order to better identify heritage assets and settings that may be affected.

- 2.40 Particularly for developments that are not likely to be prominent or intrusive, the assessment of effects on setting may often be limited to the immediate surroundings, while taking account of the possibility that setting may change as a result of the removal of impermanent landscape or townscape features, such as hoardings or planting.
- 2.41 This should be followed by an analysis to assess whether the setting of an affected heritage asset makes a contribution to its significance and the extent and/or nature of that contribution; both setting, and views which form part of the way a setting is experienced, may be assessed additionally for the degree to which they allow significance to be appreciated.
- 2.42 The next stage is to identify the effects a development may have on setting(s) and to evaluate the resultant degree of harm or benefit to the significance of the heritage asset(s).
- 2.43 At the proposal stage, ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm should be considered. Enhancement (see NPPF, paragraph 137) may be achieved by actions including:
- removing or re-modelling an intrusive building or feature;
  - replacement of a detrimental feature by a new and more harmonious one;
  - restoring or revealing a lost historic feature or view;
  - introducing a wholly new feature that adds to the public appreciation of the asset;
  - introducing new views (including glimpses or better framed views) that add to the public experience of the asset, or;
  - improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset including its setting.

### Regional Plan Framework

#### London Plan

- 2.44 Regional policy for the London area is defined by the London Plan. The New London Plan has now been adopted (March 2021) and deals with heritage issues in Chapter 7 Heritage and Culture, covering policies HC1 – HC7, London's Living Spaces and Places – Historic environment and landscapes.
- 2.45 Policy HC1 Heritage Conservation and Growth requires boroughs to develop evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of London's historic environment. It further requires Boroughs to use this knowledge to inform the effective integration of London's heritage in regenerative change by:
- 1 setting out a clear vision that recognises and embeds the role of heritage in place-making;
  - 2 utilising the heritage significance of a site or area in the planning and design process;
  - 3 integrating the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings with innovative and creative contextual architectural responses that contribute to their significance and sense of place; and,
  - 4 delivering positive benefits that conserve and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social well being.

- 2.46 Part C - E of Policy HC 1 state that:

C "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 avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process".

D "Development proposals should identify assets of archaeological significance and use this information to avoid harm or minimise it through design and appropriate mitigation. Where applicable, development should make provision for the protection of significant archaeological assets and landscapes. The protection of undesignated heritage assets of archaeological interest equivalent to a scheduled monument should be given equivalent weight to designated heritage assets".

E "Where heritage assets have been identified as being At Risk, boroughs should identify specific opportunities for them to contribute to regeneration and place-making, and they should set out strategies for their repair and reuse".



## 2 | Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

### Local Plan

#### Camden Local Plan 2016-2031 (Adopted 2017)

2.47 Camden's Local Plan 2016–2031, sets out to deliver the borough's strategy for future development.

2.48 Policy D2 relates to Heritage and states:

*The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.*

#### Designated heritage assets

Designated heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
- b no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
- c conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

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.

#### Conservation areas

Conservation areas are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies when assessing applications within conservation areas. The Council will:

- e require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;
- f resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;
- g resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and
- h 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.

#### Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- i resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
- j 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
- k resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.

#### Kings Cross Conservation Area Appraisal (2004)

2.49 The Site forms part of the Kings Cross Conservation Area. The Council has an adopted Appraisal for the area written in 2004. This is largely based on the now outdated PPG 15 and does not necessarily reflect the current policy guidance. Nonetheless, the relevant sections that have been given due consideration in the designing of the proposal are described below.

2.50 The Appraisal describes the Site and its surroundings as part of the St Pancras Gardens sub-area (Sub-Area 1). Within the guidance section of the document, it states Para 7.4.1 states:

*The predominant architecture of the Conservation Area dates from the 19th century. Successful refurbishment and modern design should contribute positively to the character of the area. Appropriate design for the Conservation Area should complement the appearance, character and setting of the existing buildings, historic parks and gardens (including cemeteries) and the environment as a whole.*

2.51 With respect to listed buildings within the Conservation Area Para 7.6.3 states:

*The Council will seek the retention and repair rather than the replacement of structural elements and other original features are missing or have deteriorated beyond repair, should they be replaced.*

2.52 With respect to extensions within the Conservation Area, Para 7.10.1-3 state:

*7.10.1 Extensions can alter the balance and harmony of a property or of a group of properties by insensitive scale, design or inappropriate materials. Some rear extensions, although not widely visible, so adversely affect the integrity of the building to which they are attached that the character of the Conservation Area is prejudiced. Rear extensions should be as unobtrusive as possible and should not adversely affect the character of the building or the Conservation Area. In most cases such extensions should be no more than one storey in height but its effect on neighbouring properties and Conservation Area will be the basis of its suitability.*

*7.10.2 Extensions should be in harmony with the original form and character of the house and the historic pattern of extensions within the terrace or group of buildings. The acceptability of larger extensions depends on the particular site and circumstances.*

*7.10.3 The opportunity for rear extensions may be limited by amenity considerations of the effect on daylight, sunlight, privacy and outlook. Many King's Cross terrace buildings have existing rear closet wings and have small unbuilt spaces at the rear in relation to the site area. Particularly on listed buildings, original closet wings or rear extensions of interest should be retained. The infilling of yards and rear spaces between buildings or the substantial reconstruction of rear walls will normally be unacceptable.*

Section 3

## **History of Site and Surroundings.**



### 3 History of Site and Surroundings

#### Historic Development of the Area

- 3.1 The Site forms part of Brewers Company Estate that lies between Somers Town (on the west) and Pancras Road (on the east). The southern part of the wider area is now covered by the northern portion of St. Pancras Station and the railway issuing from it.
- 3.2 The area was originally acquired as pasture land, in 1575, by Richard Platt, citizen and brewer of London, who gave the land to the Brewers' Company in trust for Aldenham School<sup>1</sup>.
- 3.3 In 1811 the Company obtained an Act of Parliament for paving and improving the estate. The streets now standing on this estate include the eastern part of Aldenham Street, Charrington Street and Barclay Street (the two latter named after the well-known brewers), Penryn and Medburn Streets and Goldington Street and Crescent. The following is derived from the information included in Survey of London<sup>2</sup>.

Medburn Street was begun in 1841, its first nine houses being finished in 1844. After a lull in development the building of the street was resumed in 1849 and completed in 1854. Penryn Street (formerly Percy Street) does not appear in the rate books until 1852, when eighteen houses were occupied.

Medburn Street is numbered from west to east on the north side (No. 9, near the corner of Charrington Street, to No. 19) and east to west on the south (Nos. 20 to 29). On the west side of Charrington Street (south) No. 9A has two ground floor windows and a doorway in the centre, all round arched, but otherwise it matches the rest of the houses in the street, which resemble those of Platt Street. The three centre northern houses (Nos. 13, 14 and 15) project forward 4½ inches; No. 19 at the corner of Goldington Street has a shop. Nos. 25 and 26 at the corners of Penryn Street have side porches and are slightly higher than the other houses.

1 The Aldenham School or Brewers' Company Estate', in Survey of London: Volume 24, the Parish of St Pancras Part 4: King's Cross Neighbourhood, (London, 1952) pp. 124-127. British History Online <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol24/pt4/pp124-127> [accessed 12 March 2024]

2 Ibid

3.4 The Ordnance Survey Maps show the estate as originally built by the Brewers Company dating from 1871 and 1896 (Figs 3.1 and 3.2). All the terraces included a closet wing to the rear, as was necessary to house kitchen and bathrooms.

3.5 During the survey of 1899 by Charles Booth, the Site was identified as "Fairly comfortable with honest earnings" (Fig 3.3). However, much of the surrounding areas were identified as poor. St Pancras Borough Council was the first to undertake such improvements 1906 at Goldington Buildings, at the junction of Pancras Road and Royal College Street, and continued on a larger scale by the St Pancras House Improvement Society (subsequently the St Pancras & Humanist Housing Association, the present owner of Goldington Buildings) which was established in 1924.

3.6 The Hospital for Tropical Diseases moved onto the St Pancras Hospital site in 1948. Further social housing was built by the London County Council, which began construction of the Ossulston Estate in 1927.

3.7 Post war redevelopment at a national level instigated the Minister of Housing and Local Government to initiate a survey of buildings of historic/architectural merit in 1968. This was undertaken by Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (formed in 1908, later becoming Historic England) Due to their historic significance as a largely uniform Georgian estate, buildings within Brewers Estate were listed at grade II.

3.8 Meanwhile, by the 1960s many of the houses within Somers Town as well as Brewers Estate were in a degraded state and were boarded up, purchased by private developers for demolition and redevelopment. However, their historic merit meant that they were saved from demolition and by the early 1970s Greater London Council (GLC) owned housing in Charrington, Penryn, Platt and Medburn Streets.

3.9 During this period, the area became popular with squatter and is considered to be the birthplace of 'the squatting movement'.<sup>3</sup> The squatters community built up from there with around 260 people in several houses.

3 People's Museum Somers Town



Figure 3.1 OS Map of 1871-74 (1:1,056) showing the Site in blue. Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100035207



Figure 3.2 OS Map of 1896 (1:1,056) showing the Site in blue. Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100035207



Figure 3.4 Charles Booth's descriptive map of London poverty 1889. The Site highlighted in blue. Source: British Library



Figure 3.3 OS Map of 1916 (1:2,500) showing the Site in blue. Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100035207



3.10 These houses were liveable. Squatters made their improvements. They knocked down interior walls and installed home-made showers. The absence of interior walls allowed for a more communal mode of living. The squatters were mainly single people, unable to gain housing from the council and squeezed out of renting in London by high private rents. Many were students. The BBC made a film which was broadcast in on 7 November 1973 titled "Somers Town Squatters".

3.11 The Radio Times described its contents:

*'The first of a series of six programmes about six different groups of young people who are dissatisfied with the society in which they live and are trying, in their own way, to change it. The Somers Town Squatters are a loosely knit group of 200-300 young people who have taken over a block of old houses in London and made their homes there.'*

3.12 Following a period of unrest between the squatters community and government, renovation works finally began in the area. All the historic closet wings were demolished and a small store unit was provided to the rear. This included the amalgamation of the rear gardens to provide communal garden spaces (Fig 3.7). Internal improvements were also undertaken to renovate the houses as suitable for family housing.



Figure 3.5 OS Map of 1952 (1:1,250) showing the Site in blue. Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100035207



Figure 3.6 OS Map of 1961-64 (1:2,500) showing the Site in blue. Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100035207

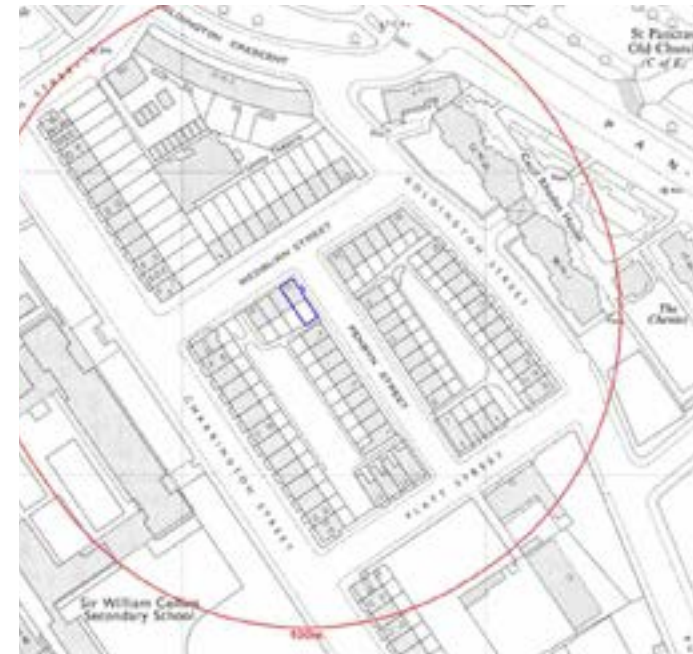


Figure 3.7 OS Map of 1971 (1:2,500) showing the Site in blue. Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100035207



Figure 3.8 Aerial Photo from 1946 [raf\_3g\_tud\_uk\_112\_vp4\_5312] showing the Site most definitely containing a historic extension. Historic England Aerial Photo Archive

### Site History

- 3.13 The property as a type 4 Georgian House would have been of limited space. It is likely that some time soon after the development, a rear extension was built which appears on the OS map regression of 1871. Other properties have along terrace include a closet wing which would have been typical of its time. The 1946 Aerial photo also evidences presence of a rear single storey extension, with other properties having longer closet wings.
- 3.14 The 1971 Map shows all closet wings demolished. Although it does not show the historic rear extension to No 26, it is clear from the archival photo from 1965 (Fig 4.4) that the extension is historical and was not demolished. In contrast the two storey closet wings to the wider terrace are not shown, evidencing that the property retained its rear extension.
- 3.15 Later planning history includes a listed building consent and planning permission for a rear single storey extension [Ref: 34897] approved in November 1982. This was attached to the historic extension, along the flank boundary wall.
- 3.16 There are no records of any works undertaken to the property since then.

Section 4  
**Site Description and Existing  
Condition.**



## 4 Site Description and Existing Condition

### List Description

4.1 The list description for nos. 26-29 Medburn Street is as follows:

'Terrace of 4 houses. 1849-52, restored c1972 by LB Camden as a rehabilitation scheme. Yellow stock brick (with later patching) and rusticated stucco ground floors. No.26 slightly taller. 3 storeys and cellars. 2 windows each, No.26 with 1 window return to Penryn Street. Round-arched doorways with pilaster-jambes carrying cornice-heads; fanlights and panelled doors. No.26 with prostyle portico on return. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes except No.26 with architraved sashes. All with continuous cast-iron balconies to 1st floor windows. Parapets. INTERIORS: not inspected.'

### Site description

4.2 The existing buildings at No 26 forms part of a terrace built between 1841-42 during the development of Brewer's Company Estate, north-east of Somers Town.

4.3 It is a three storey house built of yellow stock on the upper floors with rusticated stucco on the ground floor and has a 2 window bay width. Its is a corner property with its side elevation facing Penryn Street. Entrance is through a simple portico along Penryn Street. All windows are non-original, those on the ground floor have rusticated gauged brick arches over the lintel. The first floor has two non original cast iron balconettes in front of its windows. Comparing with the front facade with its nearest neighbours, there is clear distinction between the window frames and lack of detailing over the lintels evidence the later work by the Council in 1972-74 at the time of renovations [See figures 4.1 and 4.2].

4.4 The side elevation, contains a rusticated boundary wall at a single storey level ending at a single gate giving access to the communal garden to the rear. The existing single storey extension and historic wing are behind this wall and are not immediately perceivable [See figures 4.3 and 4.4].

4.5 To the rear, there are two extensions to the property. The first one built immediately after the terraces were completed and the second from 1982. During the 1972 renovations, the Council provided a separate brick storage to each of the property which is currently in poor state. Neither of the extension are of a high quality and are causing structural damage to the property internally. [See figures 4.5 and 4.6].



Figure 4.1 No 26 from the corner of Medburn and Penryn Streets



Figure 4.2 A comparative corner elevation from 1965 shows the difference in the lintel detailing  
Source: London Metropolitan Archives ©.



Figure 4.3 Side elevation along Penryn Street, showing the front door portico, side boundary wall and entrance to the communal garden.



Figure 4.4 A comparative side elevation from 1965 shows the crude manner of the rusticated boundary wall and the earlier rear extension. There is also difference in the lintel detailing on the two upper floor windows  
Source: London Metropolitan Archives ©.



Figure 4.5 Rear view showing the earlier extensions and entrance gate to the communal garden.



Figure 4.6 Rear view of the extension to No 26 taken from the communal garden.

## 4 | Site Description and Existing Condition

4.6 The internal configuration of the house remains similar those of late Georgian/early Victorian layout with the plan form following the two room on each floor. They would have been categorised as fourth rate houses within Georgian categorisation, based on the London Building Act 1774.

4.7 The ground floor would have contained a reception room to the front and a sitting area to the rear. On the first floor, the front room would have been the parlour with a closet to the rear. The second floor would have contained the bedroom. Kitchen and utility would normally have been at the basement. The absence of a closet wing (in contrast to the rest of the terraces) is likely to have resulted in the addition of the first historic single storey extension immediately after the completion of the terraces. Its construction shows signs of degradation, that evidences that it was only used for secondary purposes such as provision of lavatories.

4.8 The internal alterations, since the Council's acquisition and rehabilitation of the terrace in 1972, have been extensive. Although it retained the plan form and staircase; all fire places are either closed or removed. Within the rooms, the doors and architraves are modern, including the front entrance door. All joinery and plaster work is modern with simple coving details to the ceilings. The original sash windows have been replaced and their shutters lost.

4.9 The rear room of the first floor is likely to have been converted to a family bathroom during the 1972 renovations works. It is likely that the historic extension was rebuilt at this point with the insertion of a roof light.

4.10 The 1982 extension moved the kitchen further to the rear creating a dining hall area. However, both these extensions were poor in quality and are now structurally redundant. Effects of the same are visible in the cracks within the hall (Fig 4.9). The first floor bathroom is also causing severe leakage to the ground floor room below.

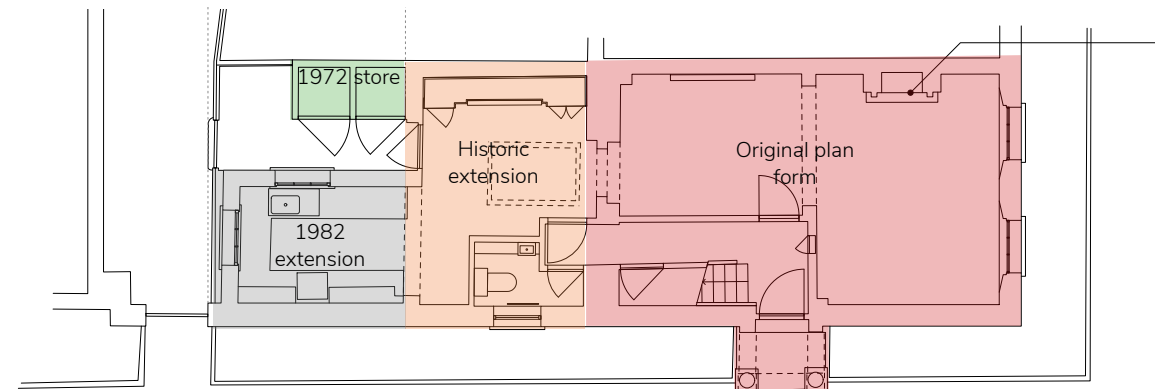


Figure 4.7 Ground floor plan showing the various dates of extensions

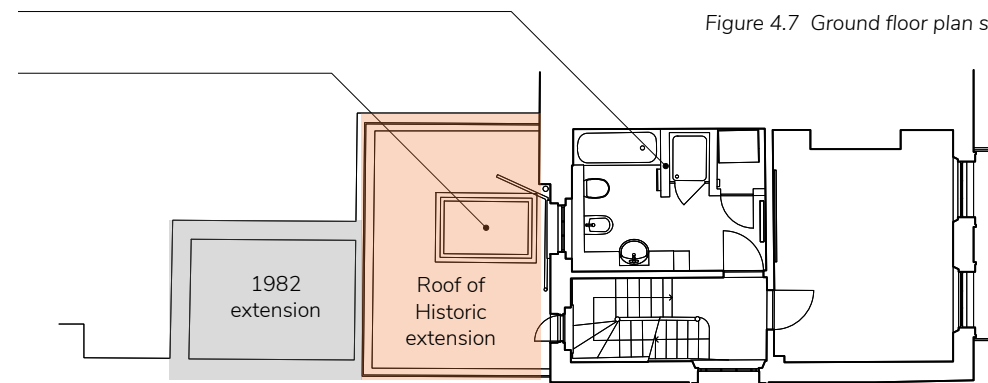


Figure 4.8 First floor plan showing the various dates of extensions



Figure 4.9 The ground floor original hall to the rear, showing signs of structural damage (see the bend to the rear wall) and dampness from the upstairs bathroom



Figure 4.10 The ground floor pre-listing extension rear wall also showing signs of structural failure and dampness (see crack along the door lintel).

## Summary of existing condition

- 4.11 The overall condition of the property is poor with clear modern interventions.
- 4.12 The past alterations have respected the original plan form and historic layout. However, these have also led loss of historic architectural detailing and replacement with inappropriate or poorly considered extensions that are now resulting in greater harm to the original building.
- 4.13 All windows are modern, although they are all timber framed. No shutters have survived. All original doors, architraves and joinery has been replaced.



Section 5  
**Assessment of Significance.**

## 5 Assessment of Significance

### Methodology

- 5.1 The assessment methodology used for assessing the significance of the identified heritage assets and their settings is based on the Historic England's Conservation Principles (both the published version by English Heritage in 2008<sup>1</sup> and the draft revised version by Historic England in November 2017).
- 5.2 Identification of special interest and significance is based on the three heritage interests - historical, archaeological and architectural & artistic - the definitions of these interests are set out in the PPG and cited in section 2 of this report.
- 5.3 This proposes the use of three heritage interests – historical, archaeological, and architectural and artistic- in assessing what makes a place and its wider context special. These are broadly in line with the values evidential [now archaeological], historical, aesthetic [now architectural and artistic], and communal [now part of historical] – set out in the previous, 2008 version, but are consistent with the heritage interests in the NPPF, the definitions for which are now included in the updated Planning Practice Guidance as cited above.
- Archaeological interest: As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
  - Architectural and artistic interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.

<sup>1</sup> <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historicenvironment/>

- Historical interest: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.
- 5.4 These values correspond to the heritage interests as per best practice guidance. In addition, the extent of value us assessed using six criteria:
- The quality and extent of survival of historic fabric.
  - The extent to which the fabric contributes to understanding of history of place and occupants.
  - The originality of the design and the contribution of features to that design.
  - Associations with history, people or events.
  - Contribution towards landmark qualities and public appreciation.
- 5.5 The level of value is assessed using five criteria: high, medium, low, neutral, and negative.
- 1 High – the element is critical to understanding of significance.
  - 2 Medium – the element is important to understanding of significance.
  - 3 Low – the element makes some limited contribution to understanding of significance.
  - 4 Neutral – the element is not negative, and could be enhanced to make a positive impact of the understanding of significance.
  - 5 Negative – the element is harmful or intrusive and detracts from the understanding of significance.

### Significance

#### Architectural Interest

- 5.6 The Site derives its main interest from its architectural composition as part of a purpose-built housing estate from 1840s. The terraces within the vicinity are all listed and together their external elevations form a strong and harmonious streetscape. Nos 26 contributes positively to the overall composition, cohesion and design of the 1840s housing typology.
- 5.7 Internally, the buildings retain less features of historic interest. Although the plan form is generally retained, the loss of internal features and detailing has compromised its overall architectural interest. The property does, however, derives some significance from its planform.
- 5.8 The highest contribution is made by the external elevations, materials, and its prominent corner location, enriched further by the portico entrance on the side elevation. This contributes to the overall townscape of the listed groups.

#### Historic Interest

- 5.9 The Site's association with the Brewers' Company is evident from the name of the streets. As discussed before, the land was gifted in 1575, by brewer Richard PLATT, to endow a school in Aldenham, who was vested in the Worshipful Company of Brewers. The street names reflect many who were related to the livery company or school including Barclay, Charrington, Elstree, Medburn and Stanmore.
- 5.10 The Site further derives historic interest from being developed as part of the Estate at a time when London's growth to then north was favoured due to the railways.
- 5.11 Historic interest is also derived from the association of the property and the wider area as the origin Squatter's Movement and the related social history. Many oral histories from that era have also been recorded by the Somers Town Museum.

#### Summary of Significance

- 5.12 Overall, the property has medium level of significance being part of a uniform set of terrace and larger housing estate. It also derives interest from the sociological history of the area, from the Brewers' Company as well as the Squatters Movement.

### Asset's contribution to other heritage assets

- 5.13 As discussed before, the building forms part of a group of listed terraces including nos 9-19 and 20-25 Medburn Street; 42-65 & 18-41 Charrington Street. These all formed part of Brewer's Company Estate built in the 1840s.
- 5.14 The building's relative survival in terms of the external elevations contributes positively to the setting of the neighbouring listed terraces, as a set piece of homogeneous domestic terrace of a similar socio-economic category defined by the 1782 Housing Law.
- 5.15 The buildings also form part of the Kings Cross Conservation Area. The adopted Appraisal from 2004 states (4.2.27):

*Charrington Street, Penryn Street, Goldington Street and Medburn Street are lined with uniform residential terraces dating from the mid-19th Century...The properties on all of these streets are constructed of London stock brick with rusticated stucco at ground floor level and shallow butterfly roofs set behind parapet walls. The terraces are largely undecorated, although all have arched entrance surrounds, small cast iron balconies at first floor level and have front areas with modern cast iron railings...Two elongated communal green spaces are situated in place of the original rear gardens to Charrington Street, Goldington Street and Penryn Street houses. Views of unaltered rear elevations and butterfly roof lines are visible along these terraces from Medburn Street and Platt Street.*

- 5.16 The above hints at the uniformity in the townscape achieved from the set composition of the terraces. Again, with the visible frontage and corner location, the Site contributes positively to the character of the Conservation Area.

Section 6

# **Heritage Impact Assessment.**

## 6 Heritage Impact Assessment

### Methodology

- 6.1 The impact assessment uses the methodology set out in paragraphs 193 to 196 of the NPPF (whereby relevant) as its basis and is applied with the interpretation established by current case law.
- 6.2 Historic England Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment provides information to assist in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework and the related guidance given in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). These include; assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.
- 6.3 It provides a suggested staged approach to decision-making where there may be a potential impact on the historic environment:
- 1 "Understand the significance of the affected assets;
  - 2 Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
  - 3 Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the Framework;
  - 4 Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
  - 5 Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change;
  - 6 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.'
- 6.4 The affected designated heritage assets in this instance would be nos 9-19 and 20-25 Medburn Street; 42-65 & 18-41 Charrington Street (Grade II) and St Pancras Conservation Area.. The building's special interest and significance has been discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

### Pre-application discussions

- 6.5 The current alterations have been subject to the Council's pre-application process. In their response, the Council raised the following concerns [Ref: 2023/1720/PRE; 10/08/2023]:
- Properties along the street are "mostly unaltered to the rear elevation or feature modest single storey rear extensions."
  - The proposed infill extension would "create a full width rear extension encompassing the whole of the ground floor amenity space, which together with the existing extensions would fail to be subordinate to the host property".
  - The proposal "would not be in keeping with the prevailing pattern of development in rear gardens in the vicinity."
- 6.6 The Council concluded:
- For these reasons, the enlargement of the rear extensions is considered harmful to both the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area.*
- 6.7 Additionally, the Council raised concerns over the removal of the 'bin' stores in absence or other refuse storage. They stated that "storing these in the communal alleyway would not be considered acceptable and would unacceptably alter the public views from the alley".
- 6.8 With regards to the internal alterations, the Council stated:
- The internal alterations appear likely to be acceptable subject to further details as does the alteration to the roof light on the rear extension which should be conservation-style carefully considered and in context of the previously approved applications for planning permission and listed building consent for various schemes of internal and external alterations.*

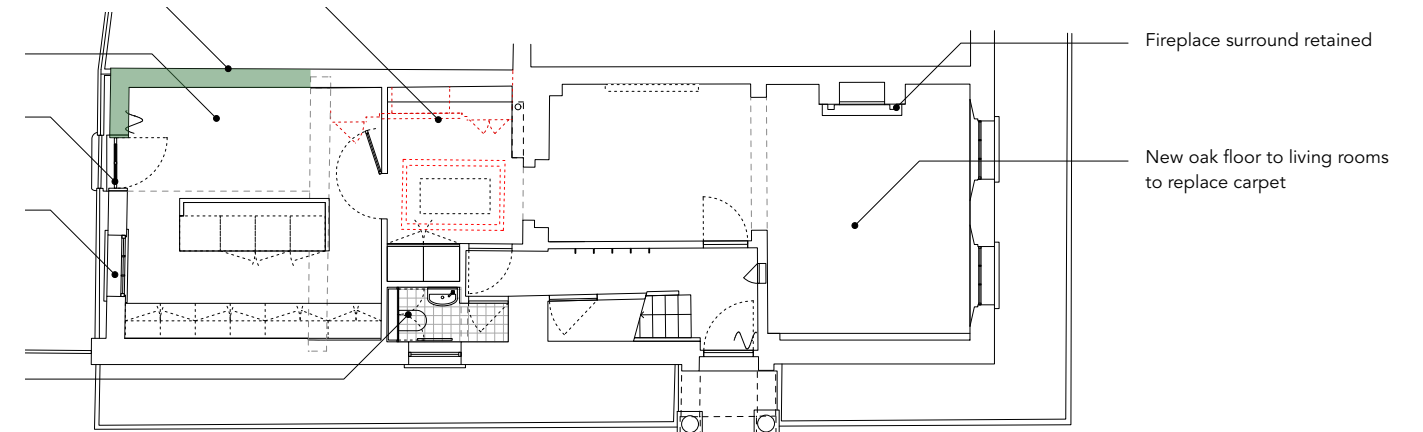


Figure 6.1 Proposed ground floor layout

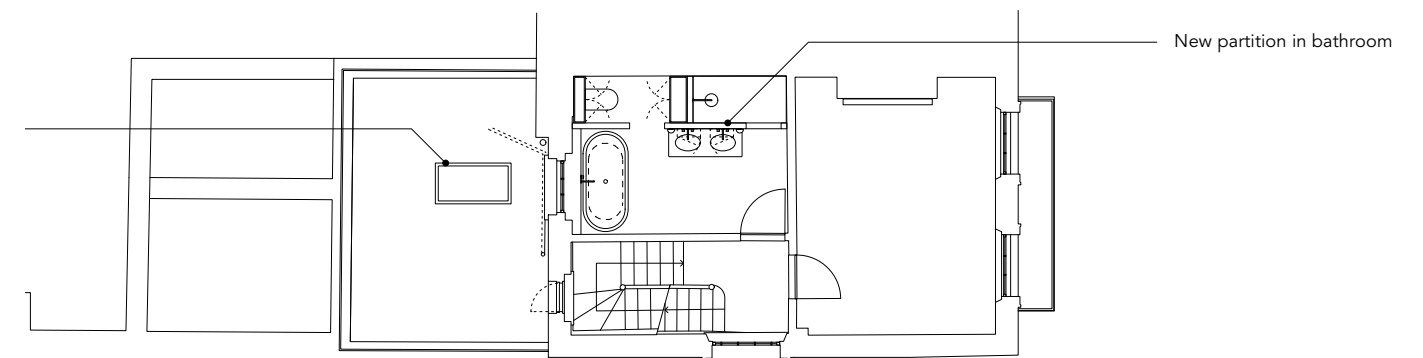


Figure 6.2 Proposed first floor layout



## 6 | Heritage Impact Assessment

### Design Response

- 6.9 Having reviewed the Council's response, the applicant appointed Revive&Tailor to undertake detailed heritage assessment of the property to ascertain the level of past interventions and to better understand the special interest of the property.
- 6.10 An almost forensic research has now been undertaken and presented in the previous chapters, noting the various interventions including those undertaken by the Council in 1972.
- 6.11 It is clear that the terraces are far from 'unaltered' with severe inappropriate alterations undertaken when the properties were occupied by Squatters. That No 26 was subject to a higher level of interventions is clear from a comparison with its neighbours and earlier photos. The latter show several details that no longer exist on the elevations.
- 6.12 Admittedly, there are two generations of extensions currently on Site. Their present condition is poor and they lean on to the structure of the main house causing harm to its integrity.
- 6.13 With regards to the amenity space, while this is beyond the scope of this Heritage Statement, it should be noted that the Council's renovation works in 1972 resulted in the amalgamation of all rear gardens in the block to create a communal garden. These can only be accessed by the residents of the properties within the block, including No 26.
- 6.14 The Council have also raised an objection to the removal of the later brick storage unit. The Council have referred to these as bin store units, although they have never been used as such. The collection of refuse is undertaken from the pavement outside the property, along Penryn Street. There is, therefore, no question of "blocking the alley" and "disrupting views". In any case, the gardens are accessed with four single gates at each corner of the block and are largely private in views. Only upper floors of the rear elevations are visible, and this would continue as the extension would remain single storey.



Figure 6.3 Existing store and access path to the rear



Figure 6.4 Existing alley way to the communal garden, to remain unchanged

### Impact of Proposals

#### Impact on the listed building's special interest

- 6.15 The overarching aims of the proposal is to conserve the listed building with best practice methods, whilst taking the advantage of this opportunity to consider the two generations of ground floor extensions appropriately.
- 6.16 The proposal would "square off" the existing footprint of the ground floor extension. In reality this would mean including a small area currently containing the store and the rear access path. The height of the structure would remain the same; the alleyway to access the communal garden retained.
- 6.17 Structurally, the 1982 extension is leaning on to the rear wall of the main building and the historic extension causing issues to their integrity. The proposal would seek to partially remove the internal walls to create an entirely independent structure which would restore the integrity of the main house.
- 6.18 The existing roof light would be made smaller so it appears better in proportion to the space. Again, this was part of the later extension and would not have any impact on the original building and its special interest.
- 6.19 Internally, general repair works are proposed such restoration of the oak floor in the principal ground floor room. The bathroom at the first floor would be renovated entirely. This would prevent further damp issues within the room below. The bathroom was a later intervention and would not lead any loss of historic or architectural interest.
- 6.20 Overall, the refurbishment and reconsideration of the structurally poor later extension would lead to longevity of the property's use as a single family dwelling. It would, be therefore, an enhancement and refurbish the property.

#### Impact on the surrounding heritage assets

- 6.21 The impact on the surrounding listed buildings and the Conservation Area would be limited to the external appearance. There are no alterations proposed to the two street facing elevations that contribute at the greatest level to the homogeneity and uniformity of the terraces. Thus the setting of the listed buildings and the character of the Conservation Area would remain unharmed. The alley way would continue to provide the glimpse of the rear garden; and the extension would continue to be concealed entirely by the side boundary wall.

## 6 | Heritage Impact Assessment

## Review against Legislation and Planning Policy

## Statutory Duties - The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

6.22 In accordance with the relevant duties of the 1990 Act it has been demonstrated that the development and design of the proposals have had special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest of the listed building and its group. The proposals have sought to avoid and minimise any further harm, and also to ensure that the proposals as a whole retain and sustain the heritage asset.

## National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2023) (As amended)

6.23 In accordance with paragraphs 200-201 of the NPPF, the identified designated heritage assets of the listed building and the group, which would be affected by the proposals, have had their significance described proportionately.

6.24 The proposed scheme has taken account of the key principles set out in paragraph 203, which encourages proposals to consider the desirability of sustaining and also enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; supporting the positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality; and, also the desirability of new development making its own positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

6.25 Paragraph 203 requires that great weight should be given to the conservation of listed buildings. Importantly, Annex 2 of the NPPF defines 'conservation' as the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance. It is not a process that should prevent change, where proposals and the design have been well-informed and considered in light of the Site's particular heritage significance and relative sensitivities, and also forms part of a wider scheme that offers a significant number of heritage benefits.

6.26 Accordingly, this proposal would have been designed after careful understanding of the significance of the assets. Interventions proposed are limited to the rear extensions and would have no impact on physical fabric. Additionally, the proposal would deliver heritage benefits, and therefore would overall conserve this designated heritage asset.

6.27 Paragraph 205 states 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. It emphasises that the weight given to an asset's conservation should be proportionate to its significance.

6.28 In accordance with the same, it is clear that the Site derives its significance from its architectural composition as part of a purpose-built housing estate from 1840s. It also contributes to the setting of the neighbouring listed terraces through its overall composition, cohesion and design. Significance is also derived from the sociological history of the area, from the Brewers' Company as well as the Squatters Movement.

6.29 Internally, later interventions have diminished the interest and is now in need for repair.

6.30 The proposal shows an understanding of this significance and the proposal has given great weight to its conservation.

6.31 Paragraph 206 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

6.32 The proposal does not lead to any loss of historic fabric. The extension is limited to the rear and at a single storey. The "squaring off" of the rear access path and previous storage would have no impact on the understanding of the listed building or its layout.

6.33 In their pre-application response, the Council raised the proposed extension would create "a full width rear extension encompassing the whole of the ground floor amenity space, which together with the existing extensions would fail to be subordinate to the host property". They also stated that the proposal "would not be in keeping with the prevailing pattern of development in rear gardens in the vicinity."

6.34 The Council's main concerns arise from the "squaring off" the small rear space remaining of the original garden. However, this does not take into consideration that in 1972, all the rear gardens were amalgamated, thus disrupting the original layout. What remained of the gardens are now 'yards', being used as utility and storage, many now paved with extensions. These do not contribute to the special interest of the terraces.

6.35 The proposal is merely taking advantage of its corner location (due to lesser possibility of impact on private amenity of neighbours) and filling up a small unusable and unkempt space to include within the living space of the house. The extension would continue to sit neatly behind the existing side wall with no change to the views or the overall composition of the terrace. It should be noted that other corner properties such as no 11 and 9 Platt Street also have similar extensions, the former with a two storey extension.

6.36 Another point the Council make relates to the 'unaltered nature' of the rear elevations and existence of only 'modest extensions'. Neither of these are relates to the significance of the terrace, which is derived from their uniform compositions and streetscape. In views, only the upper floors of the rear elevations are visible. These would continue to remain unchanged and as such, their significance sustained.

6.37 The ultimate policy requirement is to 'sustain the heritage assets significance'. The Framework and the Guidance, alongside the Conservation Principles and related guidance by Historic England, all recognise 'conservation' as the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance. It is not a process that should prevent change.

6.38 With regards to management of change, Conservation Principles in paragraph 84 states that:

*"Change to a significant place is inevitable, if only as a result of the passage of time, but can be neutral or beneficial in its effect on heritage values. It is only harmful if (and to the extent that) significance is eroded."*

6.39 Further, paragraph 102 of the same document states:

*Ideally, proposed changes will cause no harm to any of the values of the place, and the right decision will be obvious. In practice, however, there tend to be options for achieving the objective of proposed change, each of which will have different impacts on values. The predicted long-term or permanent consequences of proposals (in terms of degree, and whether positive, negative or neutral) on each of the identified heritage values of a place, and thus on the significance of the whole, should provide the reasoned basis for a decision, where necessary taking other interests into account."*

6.40 These are two important things to bear in mind when considering impact of proposals.

6.41 In this instance, it is accepted that the resulting extension would 'fill in' the remaining space within the yard. But this alteration will not 'erode' the understanding of the building's significance as part of a designed terrace with simple interiors. Neither would the proposal result in loss of understanding of pattern of development in rear gardens.

6.42 As type four Georgian buildings, these were extremely small and built for the economically weaker sections of the society. In present context, and with proximity to the most accessible station in the country, there is a need to upgrade them for single families. As such interventions that sustain the significance of the building should be permitted under the Framework.

6.43 Paragraphs 207 and 208 address the balancing of harm against public benefits. If a balancing exercise is necessary (i.e. if there is any harm to the asset), considerable weight should be applied to the statutory duty where it arises.

6.44 Although it is considered that no harm arises through the proposal, it is necessary to indicate that the proposal will actually result in enhancements. By removing the structural dependency of the extension, the proposal intends to undo the harm previously caused due to the poor nature of their construction. The refurbishment works are also considered to enhance and stop further decay caused by water leakage.

6.45 As such, the design proposes to create a better living conditions for the family. In doing so, much of the damage done by the earlier interventions would be reversed, ensuring longevity of the main house.



## 6 | Heritage Impact Assessment

### Camden Local Plan

- 6.46 Camden's own policies are reflective of the Framework are reinforce the need to 'preserve and, where appropriate, enhance' heritage assets and their settings. Particular policies relating to listed buildings and conservation areas state that development that would cause harm to their significance or their settings would be resisted.
- 6.47 In this instance, the proposals would not harm the significance of the listed building itself. Nor will it harm the setting of the neighbouring listed terraces or the character of the Conservation Area.

### Summary

- 6.48 The detailed assessment of significance sets out how the proposals will result in a number of enhancements to the buildings. The proposed alterations would enable better use of the existing ground floor extensions.
- 6.49 The highest degree of enhancement would be achieved through refurbishment of the otherwise poorly constructed earlier extension as this would be constructed independent of the main house, reducing their structural impact. Other works would address the water leakage from the first floor bathroom into the ground floor, and make good the existing fabric.
- 6.50 The proposed changes take the opportunity arising from the investment proposed in it, to make these much needed changes and therefore, securing its long term viable use consistent with its conservation. As such, the proposal accords with the relevant policies in the NPPF and Camden Local Plan Policies.



Figure 6.5 Existing view towards the rear of No. 26 Medburn Street along pathway from outside rear of No. 28 Medburn Street.



Figure 6.6 Proposed view towards the rear of No. 26 Medburn Street along pathway from outside rear of No. 28 Medburn Street.



# Section 7 **Conclusion.**

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 This report has set out the relevant legislation and policy context, the historical development of the Site, identified the relevant heritage assets, assessed their significance, and assessed the impact of the proposals on that significance.
- 7.2 The designated heritage assets in this instance is the property itself- No 26 Medburn Street. The building forms part of a group of listed terraces including nos 9-19 and 20-25 Medburn Street; 42-65 & 18-41 Charrington Street. The buildings also form part of the Kings Cross Conservation Area. These would also be affected by the application proposals, due to change in their settings.
- 7.3 The proposal should be assessed in context of the previous interventions, including those undertaken by the Council in 1972. There are two generation of rear extension at ground floor level, hidden behind the existing side wall.
- 7.4 The overarching aims of the proposal is to conserve the listed building with best practice methods, whilst taking the advantage of this opportunity to consider the existing poor condition of the extension.
- 7.5 Section 6 has undertaken a review of the proposal, and their impact on the significance of the listed building. This has also been assessed in light of the relevant statutory duties, national and local planning policy and guidance for heritage assets.
- 7.6 It is our assessment that the heart of revised proposals is the maintenance of the this listed building, and ensure their viable use. The proposed works are intended to make improvements to the quality and functionality of the living accommodation proposed.
- 7.7 As such the proposal as a whole is considered to meet the requirements of NPPF as well as the statutory duties set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990.

# Appendix 1

## **References.**

# Appendix 1: References

## Bibliography

N. Pevsner and B. Cherry, *The Buildings of England: London 3: North West* (London, 2002).

British History Online (1983) *Survey of London: Volume 14*

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (GPA2) (Historic England, March 2015)

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

*Conserving Georgian and Victorian terraced housing: A guide to managing change*. Historic England (July 2020)

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)

London Plan

Camden Local Plan

## Maps

John Rocque, *Environs of London, 1746-63*

Greenwood's map of 1830

Stanford's Map of London, 1860

Charles Booth's poverty map of 1899

OS Map series 1867-1974

## Online resources

<https://maps.nls.uk>

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

[www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk)

[www.history.ac.uk/victoria-county-history](http://www.history.ac.uk/victoria-county-history)

University of Leicester special collections: <http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4>

<https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/>

## Appendix 2

# **Statutory List Descriptions.**

## Appendix 2: Statutory List Descriptions

### 26-29, MEDBURN STREET

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1113125

Date first listed: 13-May-1974

Date of most recent amendment: 11-Jan-1999

List Entry Name: 26-29, MEDBURN STREET

Statutory Address: 26-29, MEDBURN STREET

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden (London Borough)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

National Grid Reference: TQ 29625 83352

#### Details

TQ2983SE MEDBURN STREET 798-1/84/1118 (South side) 14/05/74 Nos.26-29 (Consecutive) (Formerly Listed as: MEDBURN STREET Nos.20-25 AND 26-29 (Consecutive))

#### GV II

Terrace of 4 houses. 1849-52, restored c1972 by LB Camden as a rehabilitation scheme. Yellow stock brick (with later patching) and rusticated stucco ground floors. No.26 slightly taller. 3 storeys and cellars. 2 windows each, No.26 with 1 window return to Penryn Street. Round-arched doorways with pilaster-jambes carrying cornice-heads; fanlights and panelled doors. No.26 with prostyle portico on return. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes except No.26 with architraved sashes. All with continuous cast-iron balconies to 1st floor windows. Parapets. INTERIORS: not inspected. (Survey of London: Vol. XXIV, King's Cross Neighbourhood (St Pancras part IV): London: -1952: 126).





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## APPENDIX 3: References

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*Survey of London: Volume 24, the Parish of St Pancras Part 4: King's Cross Neighbourhood*, ed. Walter H Godfrey, W McB. Marcham ( London, 1952)

Kings Cross Conservation Area Appraisal, London Borough of Camden, June 2004

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (GPA2) (Historic England, March 2015)

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)

### Online resources

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<https://maps.nls.uk>

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

[www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk)

University of Leicester special collections: <http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4>

<https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/>