

Appendix 3

Statutory Listing

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Summary

Nos. 80-90 South Hill Park is a terrace of six houses, built 1954-6 to the designs of Stanley Amis and William and Gillian Howell, for themselves and four other families. Pursuant to s.1 (5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the first and second floor extensions above what was originally the garage of No. 80 South Hill Park are declared not of special architectural or historic interest.

Reasons for Designation

Nos. 80-90 South Hill Park, 1954-6, by Bill and Gillian Howell and Stanley Amis, for themselves and four other families, are listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * Design interest: a bold and rational reinterpretation of the terraced town house in the early post-war period; * Plan: ingeniously planned on narrow, deep plots, the use of a central stair in each house keeps circulation space to a minimum, while natural light, room width, and flexibility of use are maximised; internal glazed screens and double-height spaces enhance the sense of drama and openness; * Use of materials: though the timber to the front of the terrace has been replaced, the simply-detailed use of exposed and transparent materials throughout the terrace expresses and enhances the structural and architectural composition of the houses; * Architects: the terrace is an early work by members of what would become Howell, Killick, Partridge and Amis, one of the leading post-war firms of architects, and was extremely influential on Howell and Amis's later work, repeating motifs first developed here; * Influence: the terrace was much publicised as an ingenious solution to building narrow-frontage terrace houses; it was influential on a younger generation of architects, and the deep plan anticipates that used in some of the exemplars of high-density public housing of the period; *

Context

The terrace is part of a group of post-war private houses in South Hill Park, and an example of Camden Council's approach towards innovative

design for houses and housing in the early post-war decades; * Intactness of vision and expression: despite alterations, the key qualities which made these buildings influential at the time of their construction, and makes them of special interest now, still prevail.

History

Nos. 80-90 (even) South Hill Park were built in 1954-6 to the designs of Bill and Gillian Howell and Stanley Amis, while they were all working for the London County Council's Architect's Department Housing Division. Built for themselves and four other families, a primary constraint of the design for the South Hill Park terrace was cost. There had been a terrace of four large Victorian houses on the site before it was bombed, but, to bring it within range of the young architects, the four houses had to be replaced by six. As with the council housing on which they were working at the time, the solution to achieving the necessary density was to make the frontage small and the plan deep. Bill Howell, Gill Sarsen (later Howell) and Stanley Amis had met at the Architectural Association before working for the LCC. They had visited Le Corbusier's first Unité d'Habitation in Marseilles in 1951-2, and had been impressed by his tight planning and use of double-height, deep rooms. The visit was to be a major influence on the design of maisonettes they were then developing with Colin St John Wilson, Peter Carter and others for the LCC, most famously in the great slabs of the Roehampton Lane, now Alton West Estate, Wandsworth (listed Grade II*). The terrace at South Hill Park is contemporary with their work at Roehampton Lane, and shows that the design could be developed for private terraced housing. The houses' narrow (12ft) width is close to that of the individual units of the Unité, and they also adopted Le Corbusier's Modulor system of proportions. Within the simple envelope of the terrace, a complexity of spatial arrangements was achieved in houses of surprising size and flexibility.

The six houses were much publicised as an ingenious solution to building narrow-frontage terraced houses and achieving spaciousness through

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sectional planning and internal transparency. The houses were novel too, because of their extensive use of timber. Until building licences came to an end in 1954, softwood timber was in short supply, and this is the first post-war use of the chunky, heavy-sectioned, timber that became so important in British houses of the later 1960s. The quirky nature of the service pipes and much of the detailing of the shelves and cupboards came from the architects having to fashion everything from first principals at a time when almost nothing was available from builders' merchants. The deep plan anticipates that used in later high-density public housing such as Lillington Gardens, Pimlico (Darbourne and Darke, 1964-8, Phase I listed Grade II*), and the Barbican, City of London (Chamberlain, Powell and Bon, 1962-82, listed Grade II).

The houses were extremely influential on Howell and Amis's later development as members of Howell, Killick, Partridge and Amis, and on a younger generation of architects, for their planning and use of exposed materials, particularly the thick timber sections. House and Garden considered that 'the houses have a vibrant quality. They are homes, easily run and adaptable to all phases of family life.'

Details

Nos. 80-90 South Hill Park is a terrace of six houses, built 1954-6 to the designs of Stanley Amis and William and Gillian Howell, for themselves and four other families.

Materials

The houses are constructed with cross walls of brick and concrete floors. The front and back elevations were originally composed of glass and timber, but are now aluminium, PVC and glass to the front, and a mixture of timber, steel/aluminium and glass to the rear. The roofs are flat.

Plan

Each house is one structural bay wide (although appearing as two bays to the front), and three storeys high, with a basement which because of the fall of

the land to the west, opens at garden level to the rear. At the south end of the terrace No. 80 has an additional bay which originally housed a basement studio and ground-floor garage above, but this bay is now believed, with the addition of two further storeys above (these additions not forming part of the listed building), to form two self-contained flats. No. 86 is also believed to be occupied as two maisonettes. The houses have alternate mirrored plans, each having a narrow cantilevered central staircase, and all but No. 86 having a partially double-height principal living space to the rear. The floor plans of the six houses were all subtly different to suit their original clients, but were all designed with flexibility in mind. In all, apart from No. 80, the semi-basement level could be let as a self-contained space, or incorporated into the main house to be used as an additional living- or playroom. In No. 80 the double-height space is between the basement and ground-floor levels, rather than ground and first floor as in the other houses. The other houses originally had a garage incorporated into the floor plan, adjacent to the front door. The garages have all now been converted into additional living space, but maintain a similar glazing pattern to the original glazed garage doors.

Exterior

The houses have a distinct, grid-like, character to their elevations: the division between each house is marked by the exposed ends of the party crosswalls, acting as piers, and the floor slab edges form continuous horizontals delineating storeys. The glazed front doors, each with a sidelight to one side, are recessed, with the former garages either to the right or left. Steps lead down to basement level. The former studio and garage to No. 80 takes the form of an extra cross-walled bay at the end of the terrace, which has now been extended upwards by two storeys, in a style broadly to match the rest of the terrace. What was originally a stained timber framework holding the windows and white-painted timber spandrel panels, has

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been replaced across all six houses with a dark aluminium framework and white PVC panels. The largely accurate replication of the original glazing pattern means that this alteration has had surprisingly little impact on the overall character of the terrace.

The four-storey rear elevations are also defined by their strong gridded character, despite various changes across the terrace. The cross walls project, terminating vertically as brick piers, and these are spanned by balconies, most with their original timber and glass balustrades at first and third floors, and some with their original pergola at second floor over the balcony beneath (No. 86 has an additional balcony at second floor, and the first-floor balcony has been enclosed in glass and incorporated into the house). The cross walls are terminated horizontally at roof level with a concrete beam which spans between them. Spiral stairs of cast iron or timber originally linked the first-floor balconies with the garden, but a number of these have now been removed as the lower ground floor rooms have been incorporated into the main living spaces of the houses. The frames holding the glazing in the rear elevations have been variously renewed, but the fact that they are recessed back from the party walls, and that they all share a simple, modern aesthetic, reduces the impact of these changes.

Interior

Interiors originally had un-plastered painted brick walls and timber ceilings. The central dog-leg stairs have open timber treads supported on concrete spine beams, enclosed by glazed partitions, allowing light to be transmitted through the depth of the houses. Internal doors between living spaces were also glazed. The interiors are characterised by the use of exposed and transparent materials, expressing and revealing the structure of the buildings. The original balustrades to the balcony of the first-floor living space incorporated bookshelves or fitted cupboards. Amis's former house, No. 84, had a fireplace central to this balustrade, but this was never a convenient feature as the flue rose through the centre of

the bedroom above, and has since been removed.

Notwithstanding a greater level of variation to the rear, the terrace retains its uniform gridded character externally. From the outset, each of the houses were slightly different, reflecting the needs of each client, and all were built to respond flexibly as those needs changed. Despite subsequent internal and external changes, the group still represents the original architectural intention: to create light, spacious, flexible family homes. What made them influential, and makes them of both architectural and historic interest now, is their ability to achieve this through ingenious planning on deep, narrow plots, enhanced by the simple, honest, use of exposed and transparent, materials, allowing for the ongoing adaptation of the buildings without the loss of these fundamental qualities.

Sources

Books and journals

Cantacuzino, S, Howell Killick Partridge and Amis, (1981)

'*Architectural Design*' in *Six Houses at Hampstead*, London, , Vol. vol. 26, (November 1956), pp. 402-406

'*House and Garden*' in *Each Only Twelve Feet Wide*, , Vol. vol. 12, (February 1957), pp. 48-53

'*Architectural Review*' in *12-foot frontage terrace houses in Hampstead*, , Vol. vol. 120, (November 1956), pp. 290-295

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation

Heritage Significance is assessed by looking at the building within its setting. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset and may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or be neutral

(National Planning Policy Framework, Annex 2 Glossary)

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Significance is assessed in line with Historic England's 2019 guidance advice note 12, which sets out the following criteria by which significance should be assessed:

Archaeological interest:

Assessing the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity that is worthy of expert investigation

Historic and cultural Interest:

Assessing the potential of a place to provide a material, illustrative or cultural record of the past and current lives of individuals and/or communities. An asset can also provide significance derived from the collective experience of the communities that have used and lived within and around it, as well as symbolising faith, cultural identity or political movements and ideologies.

Architectural and artistic interest:

Assessing the design and aesthetics of a place relating to the construction methodologies and technology, craftsmanship, decoration, design ethos and spatial quality and its interaction with historic and cultural interest above.

Assessment of setting:

This includes identifying the setting and assessing whether, how and to what degree elements of the setting contribute and/or detract from the significance of the heritage asset. This includes consideration of the physical surroundings and relationship with other nearby heritage assets. It also includes the way the asset is appreciated and perceived such as key viewpoints towards and from the site as well as patterns of use associated with the site itself and neighbouring buildings and landscapes. Within that context, we have assessed the building as follows:

Highly significant:

Rhythm, geometry and proportion of the facade composition and fenestration

Material choice and quality ie simple robust, pared back - externally (front

and rear) Vertical brick piers, legibility of concrete ring beams, timber windows.

Internal materials ie exposed brick, quarry tiles, timber glazed screens
Primacy of the main 6 houses within the terrace, reading the no.80 extension as an addition, in a complementary but distinct language.

Protecting and enhancing views from the Heath

Significant:

The exact finish of the concrete appears to have been fairly low quality in line with the cost constraints of the project and now the number of repairs needed being evident. It is therefore our assessment that it is the legibility of the concrete ring beams in the original designs that is significant beyond its material quality.

Finish of the glazing

Low significance:

Flank walls - mostly largely unseen from the street. The significance they do have is in colour. The vertical brick party wall piers are dark brick whereas the flank walls are in a lighter brick.

Roof - the terrace has always been significantly lower than the adjacent terraced houses and therefore slightly out of scale - it could easily take another storey/greater articulation of the roof. Roof coverings and details such as rooflights are largely unseen from the street.

Present day fenestration materials and details

Present day top floor no.80 extension i.e. the greenhouse and lean-to not in keeping with original material design intent.