

7 ST KATHERINE'S PRECINCT, REGENTS PARK

HISTORIC BUILDINGS ARCHITECTS REPORT



January 2012

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Study

This study and report were commissioned in January 2012 by Crawford Partnership to assist in the preparation of proposals for alterations and additions to 7 St Katherine's Precinct. They are intended to assess the historical and architectural significance of the buildings and fabric and to advise on proposals being prepared in as much as they affect the historic built fabric on the site and in its local context in terms of Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 "Planning and the Historic Environment" (PPG 15) and Camden Council's Replacement Unitary Development Plan (RUDP).

1.2 Methodology and Proposals

Visual inspection of the building, set out in section three of the report, was undertaken by Alasdair Glass of Donald Insall Associates to review the provenance and to assess it individually and contextually. Historical research was undertaken by Joanna Moore of the Architectural History Practice and is set out in section two of the report.

Proposals prepared by Alan Crawford, Architects are described in their Drawings Nos: **2011-269/-2-100** to **404**. These are described and assessed for their impact on the special interest of the property in section four of this report.

1.3 Legislative Background

1.3.1 The Status of the Location and the Buildings

The building was listed Grade II*, with Nos 1 and 3 and 6-9, in 1974 at Grade II* and for Group Value:

*Location: NOS. 1-3 AND 6-9 (CONSECUTIVE) ST KATHERINE'S
PRECINCT, BOROUGH OF CAMDEN, GREATER LONDON*

Date Listed: 14 May 1974

*Grade II**

Domestic collegiate buildings of the Royal Hospital of St Katherine, now private dwellings. 1828 by Ambrose Poynter. Grey brick with stone dressings. Symmetrical composition comprising 2 similar blocks (Nos. 1-3 and 6-8) linked to The Danish Church, The Pastor's House and St Katherine's Hall by an arcaded screen wall. EXTERIOR: each block of 3 storeys and attics. No 9 in the form of a porter's lodge, fronting the park and attached to No.7 Main blocks with 3 windows; Nos. 1 & 8 with canted oriel windows and sculptured coats of arms on returns facing the Park. Four-centred arched doorways with fanlights and panelled doors. 3-light sash windows with stone architraves and mullions; 1st floor with hoodmoulds. Stone 1st floor sill string. Similar string above 2nd floor windows: stone-capped parapet

forming gables to attics with 2-light windows. Slated roof with tall moulded brick Tudor style chimneys appearing between the gables. (No. 9, L-shaped lodge etc). INTERORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings to Nos 6-9 areas.

The group includes the Grade II* listed St Katherine's Chapel and is flanked by the Grade I listed Gloucester Gate and Cumberland Terrace.

It is within the Regent's Park Conservation Area, designated by the London Borough of Camden.

The building was originally, is now and has always been in single-family occupation.

1.3.2 PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 5 ('PPS5')

Any works affecting a 'heritage asset' are subject to the guidance of Planning Policy Statement 5 and in this case the 'heritage assets' are the Regents Park Conservation Area and the Listed building; and since there is minimal impact on the conservation area the main asset to be considered is the Listed building. The policies are non-specific and the most relevant are as follows:

Policies HE6 and HE7 require an appropriate degree of understanding of the heritage asset and its significance in order to allow informed judgements to be made.

Policy HE9 gives principles for determining applications involving designated assets such as Listed buildings. It is not considered that the Application involves substantial harm or loss of significance, being the most extreme situation covered by Policy HE9.2, and as such the relevant parts of the policy are:

- HE9.1, which states that 'There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets....Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.' : and

- HE9.4, which recognises that development can sometimes be accepted even where it is not possible to avoid harm to a heritage asset and states that 'Where a proposal has a harmful impact on the significance of a designated asset which is less than significant harm, in all cases local planning authorities should (inter alia):

(i) Weigh the public benefits of the proposal (for example that it helps to secure the optimum viable use of the heritage asset in the interests of its long-term conservation) against the harm.' and

(ii) recognise that the greater the harm to the significance of the heritage asset the greater the justification will be needed for any loss'.

1.3.3 Camden Local Development Framework

CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

The Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

- a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;

- b) preserving and enhancing 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;
- c) promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;
- d) seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible;
- e) protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites

Policy DP24 - Securing high quality design

The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

- a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;
- b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;
- c) the quality of materials to be used;
- d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;
- e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;
- f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;
- g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;
- h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and
- i) accessibility.

Policy DP25 - Conserving Camden's heritage

Conservation areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;
- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;
- c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and
- e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

Listed buildings

To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- e) prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- f) only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building; and
- g) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

- 25.13 In order to protect listed buildings, the Council will control external and internal works that affect their special architectural or historic interest. Consent is required for any alterations, including some repairs, which would affect the special interest of a listed building. The matters which will be taken into consideration in an application for alterations and extensions to a listed building are those set out in Policy HE7 of PPS5.

Policy DP26 - Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

The Council will protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity. The factors we will consider include:

- a) visual privacy and overlooking;
- b) overshadowing and outlook;
- c) sunlight, daylight and artificial light levels;
- d) noise and vibration levels;
- e) odour, fumes and dust;
- f) microclimate;
- g) the inclusion of appropriate attenuation measures.

We will also require developments to provide:

- h) an acceptable standard of accommodation in terms of internal arrangements, dwelling and room sizes and amenity space;
- i) facilities for the storage, recycling and disposal of waste;
- j) facilities for bicycle storage; and
- k) outdoor space for private or communal amenity space, wherever practical.

Policy DP27 - Basements and lightwells

In determining proposals for basement and other underground development, the Council require an assessment of the scheme's impact on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability, where appropriate. The Council will only permit basement and other underground development that does not cause harm to the built and natural environment, local amenity, and does not result in flooding or ground instability. We will require developers to demonstrate by methodologies appropriate to the site that schemes:

- a) maintain the structural stability of the building and neighbouring properties;
- b) avoid adversely affecting drainage and run-off or causing other damage to the water environment;
- c) avoid cumulative impacts upon structural stability or the water environment in the local area;

and will consider whether schemes

- d) harm the amenity of neighbours;
- e) lead to the loss of open space or trees of townscape or amenity value;
- f) provide satisfactory landscaping, including adequate soil depth;
- g) harm the appearance or setting of the property or the established character of the surrounding area; and
- h) protect important archaeological remains.

The Council will not permit basement schemes which include habitable rooms and other sensitive uses in areas prone to flooding.

In determining applications for lightwells, the Council will consider whether:

- i) the architectural character of the building is protected;
- j) the character and appearance of the surrounding area is harmed; and
- k) the development results in the loss of more than 50% of the front garden or amenity area.

- 27.9 A basement development that does not extend beyond the footprint of the original building and is no deeper than one full storey below ground level (approximately 3 metres in depth) is often the most appropriate way to extend a building below ground. Proposals for basements that take up the whole rear and / or front garden of a property are unlikely to be acceptable. Sufficient margins should be left between the site boundaries and any basement construction to sustain growth of vegetation and trees. Developments should provide an appropriate proportion of planted material above the structure to mitigate the reduction in the natural storm water infiltration capacity of the site and / or the loss of biodiversity caused by the development. This will usually take the form of a soft landscaping or detention pond on the top of the underground structure, which is designed to temporarily hold a set amount of water while slowly draining to another location. It will be expected that a minimum of 0.5 metres of soil be provided above the basement development, where this extends beyond the footprint of the building, to enable garden planting.

1.4 Significant Findings

The significant findings of this report are:

- 7 St Katherine's Precinct is listed Grade II* and for Group Value and is in the Regent's Park Conservation Area designated by the London Borough of Camden.
- St Katherine's Precinct is flanked by the Grade I listed Gloucester Gate and Hanover Terrace.
- The building was designed by Ambrose Poynter and completed by 1828, as part of the re-location of St Katherine's Hospital to Regent's Park.
- It is one of the earliest examples of the gothic revival style in London.
- The building was originally built as a Sister's House for the Hospital and has always been in single-family occupation.

1.5 Significant Issues

The key significant issues addressed in this report are:

- Whether the proposed underground basement extension and ground floor conservatory have an unreasonable impact on the historic character and fabric of the listed building.
- Whether the proposed underground basement extension and ground floor conservatory have a significantly adverse effect on the setting of the adjoining listed buildings and the character of the Conservation Area.
- Whether the proposed internal alterations to the existing building have an unreasonable impact on the special interest of the building.

1.6 Summary Conclusion

The summary conclusions of this report are that:

- The principal interest of the building is as part of the group forming St Katherine's Precinct.
- The proposed alterations to the building would result in a minimal loss of historic fabric and negligible loss of character, continuing the history of constant change without material loss of special interest.
- The discrete nature of the proposed conservatory and underground extension would not have an adverse impact on the special interest of

the building, the setting of the adjoining listed buildings or on the character of the Conservation Area.

- The proposals comply with PPS5 and Local Development Framework Policies and should be accepted as part of the active management of beneficial and sustainable change to the historic environment.

2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The Royal Hospital of St Katherine by the Tower

St Katherine's was founded in 1147 by Queen Matilda, wife of King Stephen, as a religious community and hospital for the poor and infirm, in memory of her sons Stephen and Eustace, who had died at birth. The hospital was traditionally endowed by the Queen Consort, notably Eleanor of Provence in the thirteenth century and Phillipa of Hainault in the fourteenth century. As a result of this female patronage, the institution was unusual in giving equal rights to its three bedswomen and three bedsmen, whose role it was to pray for their deceased benefactors.

The foundation was originally located immediately by the Tower of London. The precinct, totalling around eleven acres, grew to be a medieval village east of the City walls, with strong links to merchants and foreign craftsmen outside of the City's guild restrictions. In 1442 it was granted a Charter of Privileges, which made it and its 23 acre precinct a Liberty with its own prison, officers and court, all outside the City of London's ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction.

As a Royal institution, St Katherine's was not dissolved in the sixteenth century, but re-established as a Protestant house. Its location, however, meant that from its earliest days the area was dominated by slum housing and the low-life of society associated with docks. Writing in his *Survey of London* (1598), the historian John Stow described '*small tenements and homely cottages, having as inhabitants, English and strangers, more in number than some city in England*'.

2.2 The Sale and Clearance of the Site at St Katherine's Docks

By the late eighteenth century the buildings of the foundation were in severe disrepair. The chapel repairs had run up large debts and, according to a report, the '*Brothers' houses... if not repaired soon, great additional expense will be incurred*'. Little work appears to have been done in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, until in 1818 Sir Herbert Taylor was appointed Master of the foundation by Queen Charlotte.

Taylor took a pragmatic, if dramatic, approach to the problem. His first action was to pull down the buildings that were beyond repair (including the Sisters' houses) and sell the materials. At an early stage he entered discussions with the St Katherine's Docks Company on the transfer of the valuable site and securing the long-term future of the foundation.

From 1823 the St Katherine's Docks Company began lobbying government to secure the site; a Bill the following year included six petitions, five of which were in favour of the transfer and included the signatures of over three thousand merchants, traders, craftsmen and bankers. In 1825 the Bill was passed; the last service in chapel was held on 29 October. William Hore, writing around a month later, observed that '*the destruction has commenced, is proceeding, and will be completed in a short time*'.

The Master, Sir Herbert Taylor, seems to have been more concerned with securing an acceptable financial deal than preserving the institution's original site. A key part of the deal was the provision for the institution: the Company paid £125,000 for the Hospital, its land, and rights and privileges. A further £2,000 went to securing the new site at Regent's Park, and £36,600 for the cost of new buildings. The St Katherine's Dock Company also funded the removal of the original church's fittings, including medieval stalls and a fine seventeenth century pulpit. The bedesmen, bedeswomen and Clerks of the foundation were compensated to a total of just over £5,000.

An estimate of 9 August 1825 produced by Stephenson for the St Katherine's Dock Company, held at the National Archives, estimates the cost of constructions as follows:

- A church to hold 600 persons - £10,000
- Master's House and Stables - £7,000
- 3 Houses for the Brothers - £7,500
- 3 Houses for the Sisters - £6,150
- 1 House for the Chapter Clerk - £2,500
- School with Lodgings for the Master - £900
- Porter's Lodge - £550
- Enclosed Drains, Water - £2000

Total - £36,600

The valuation of the estate was apparently rushed and may have short-changed the institution. The London Metropolitan Archives contain the valuation of the land and buildings in 1825, as surveyed by the firm of Claridge and Iveson. It shows that the Church and land were valued at £60,000, with an additional £60,000 expected by the Chancellor. However, the annual income of the estate is shown to be £15,500 a year, meaning that Taylor was satisfied to release the estate for only around eight times its income. The sale of the site also had tragic consequences for the residents of the precinct; only leaseholders and land-owners were compensated, meaning that most of the 11,000 people in the precinct and surrounding area who were displaced by the new docks were left to their own devices.

2.3 The New Site at Regent's Park

The move to Regent's Park fundamentally and irreversibly changed the nature of the institution. Catherine Jamison observes that despite an increase in wealth and privileges in renewed royal patronage, the new site and buildings were '*fatal to its prestige*'. Having been responsible for the temporal and spiritual welfare of several thousand people in east London the institution was reduced to '*a kind of aristocratic Almshouse for the support by Royal Bounty of certain well-born persons of narrow means*'. The change reflects the ambitions of Sir Herbert Taylor, a close friend and defender of the royal family, who held a number of military and state posts in parallel to his role as Master of St Katherine's.

The site, secured as a free gift from the Crown, straddled the Outer Circle road

of the newly laid-out Regent's Park. A sketch of 1825, drawn for the Assistant Surveyor General Stephenson, in the National Archives shows the proposed arrangement of the Master's Lodge opposite the hospital, but no detailed plans survive. The chapel, school and Bedemen's and Bedeswomen's houses were set on the east side, abutting the end of James Thomson's Cumberland Terrace, described by Pevsner as the '*most flamboyant of all the Regent's Park Terraces*'. The Master's Lodge was set on the west side (labelled as a villa in Greenwood's map of 1830) and set in a D-shaped garden on the edge of the park.

The early designs for the precinct have not survived, but were 'grandiose' enough to lead the architect Ambrose Poynter to estimate the cost at £72,300. The figure reflects the high status given to the project by the King and Chancellor, who sought '*great Liberality in the Building*' *befitting its grand surroundings. Sir Herbert Taylor wanted the church, as a royal foundation, to be 'more handsome and ornamented than the Edifices built by the Church Committee'* (the Church Building Commission). Taylor was prepared to compromise size to '*a certain degree of Beauty and such ornaments as may distinguish it from the Common Class*'. The building materials of the lodge and houses were also at odds with their neighbours, in rejecting stone, a 'useless expense' and stucco, the brick buildings kept costs down further. The final estimate was £41,521; the final cost was £47,139. Taylor used his ministerial contacts in enabling the Office of Works to issue the contracts.

King's College chapel in Cambridge and Winchester Cathedral are thought to have served as the models for the west front of the chapel. Correspondence between Taylor and Stephenson in the National Archives directly mentions the Master's Lodge of the recently re-located St Paul's School in Cheapside as a model for the St Katherine's Master's Lodge, illustrated in *The Gentlemen's Magazine*, which noted of the new buildings:

'The architect of the present range of buildings is Ambrose Poynter, esq., a pupil of Mr Nash's, and he has unfortunately adopted the meretriculous and too fantastic style of his instructor, in whose designs the pointed style, the follies of Wyatt are more apparent, than the excellence of the buildings from which genuine authorities can be taken'

Despite the gothic style being at odds with the neo-classical surroundings, the buildings mark the successful arrival of the Gothic style in London. St Katherine's is identified by John Summerson as one of the early 'good' neo-Gothic buildings in the capital which may have been informed by the publication of Augustus Welby Pugin's *Specimens of Gothic Architecture*, published in 1821.

2.4 The Architect: Ambrose Poynter

A student of John Nash, Ambrose Poynter (1796-1886) was probably involved in the Regent's Park and Regent Street schemes as part of his training, and may have become acquainted with the Crown Estate, and perhaps the king himself, through the architect. St Katherine's is his first known independent

commission and would have secured a succession of high-ranking clients.

His other known works include Hodstock Priory in Nottinghamshire (1829-33), repairs at Warwick Castle (1830-31), Scofton-with-Osbertson church, in Nottinghamshire, the churches of Christ Church in (1837), St Paul's (1841) and St Andrew's (1843) in Cambridge, St Andrew's church (1850) in Deal, Kent, restorations to Dover Town Hall, and works to Pynes, a manor house in Devon. The majority of Poynter's works were in the pointed or early English Gothic style.

2.5 The Client: Sir Herbert Taylor

Lieutenant-General Sir Herbert Taylor (1775-1839) was a major political and military figure of the early nineteenth century, as well as the first Private Secretary to the Sovereign of the Crown. Joining the army at 19, he rose swiftly through the ranks, serving in the Napoleonic wars as well as in Ireland, Antwerp and India. In-between conflicts he served the Duke of York as a Personal Secretary and was author of *Memoirs of the Last Illness and Decease of HRH the Duke of York* (1827). From 1805 he became the Private Secretary to King George III, followed by Private Secretary to Queen Charlotte in 1811 as she took guardianship of the king. She appointed him Master of St Katherine's Hospital in 1818. Between 1820-23 Taylor served as Member of Parliament for Windsor. In 1820-27 he served as British Ambassador to Berlin, as principal aide de camp to George IV and military secretary to Lord Wellington from 1827, and as Private Secretary to William IV from 1830.

Taylor was popular at Court and had the confidence of successive monarchs, due to his discreet nature and negotiating techniques. He defended the Duke of York's estate from creditors after his death and later collaborated with the scandalous journalist Charles Molloy Westmacott for the return of documents that revealed secrets about the parentage of Captain Thomas Garth, the King's nephew. By the 1820s he had secured a private pension from the Crown of £1,000 a year, and as such was in a position to seek a house at the heart of respectable society. It is unclear how he came to be selected as Master of St Katherine's other than through his close friendship with Queen Charlotte who, as queen consort, held the patroness role of the establishment. Upon falling into ill health, Taylor travelled to Italy in the spring of 1838. He died in March the following year in Rome; his remains were eventually deposited in a vault in the chapel of St Katherine's.

2.6 The Brothers' and Sisters' Houses

No original plans for the building appear to have survived. A simple outline plan is shown underneath an engraving of 1827, *View of St Katherine's Hospital in Regent's Park* (figure 1), made from a drawing by the architect Ambrose Poynter. At the west end of the houses were small single-storey buildings, which framed the yard like gatehouses. The Brother's houses are shown to the right, and as a simple rectangular block with a single rear extension, as verified in Greenwood's map of 1830 (figure 2). This composition is shown, mirrored, in the rear of the Sisters' houses in the print

View in the Regent's Park of 1828 (figure 3).

The houses were built for couples of a respectable rank, and are of typical terraced house plan for the time. Lower Brothers and Sisters (less frequently in residence) were permitted to let the rooms, but paid a minimal fine in their absence. A copy of the 1829 Warrant of King George IV held in the National Archives gives a simple description of the houses. They were said to include three rooms on the ground floor, two or three rooms on the upper floors, and small attics. In practice these probably corresponded to a dining room and parlour on the ground floor, a large living room and small living room on the first floor, principal bedrooms on the second floor, and servants' quarters in the attic.

The three houses had matching elevations across the terrace. The ground floors were composed of a single window and arch-headed door; a continuous stone string joined the first floor windows sills and continued around the parameter, through a tall west oriel window. A further continuous string led through the top of the second floor windows; the attic storey was set with small gable windows, which returned once to the east and west faces. The south end of the side walls were finished with rectangular chimney stacks, topped with Tudor-style chimneys. The arms of King George IV were set to the right of the oriel window (corresponding with the arms of Eleanor of Provence set on the Sisters' wall). A contemporary review of the precinct is given in the Gentleman's Magazine for July 1828:

'There is but little of a collegiate character about the present buildings, which are more remarkable as being something between a hospital and a palace...

The Houses of the Brothers and Sisters are built in the Domestic style of architecture of the sixteenth century, of brick, with stone dressings, and here the architect has succeeded more happily than in the ecclesiastical portion of the pile; -the two windows in the ends of the structure, the gable over the attic windows, and the picturesque chimney flues, give an air of originality to the houses, which upon the whole, are pleasing specimens of a class of modern buildings which excusably departs from the strictest adherence to authorities, inasmuch as an architect must necessarily unite in a dwelling house modern convenience with picturesque effect'.

All of the buildings at the new St Katherine's precinct were finished by late 1828. However, whether the project was rushed or circumstances changed, Ambrose Poynter was asked to make amendments to the scheme, set out in a bill for £2,630 dated 1 July 1829 held in the National Archives. Regarding the Brothers' houses, the changes included removing middle partitions, enlarging dining rooms and 'opening' the drawing rooms. In both the Brothers' and Sisters' houses, 'altering the patterns of stoves' and fitting the kitchens with new stoves, as well as raising the garden walls and creating individual doorways out of each of the gardens. It is not clear what was done to which house, but the changes can probably be attributed to the wishes of the first residents and their individual household's needs.

Catherine Jamison notes that the new site and buildings were also set with problems, including weak ground and foundations, and bad construction. Either way, accounts in the National Archives show that by 1833 the foundation had spent a further £15,000 on repairs to make the buildings secure

2.7 Later Alterations

A map in the Holborn library dated 1849 (figure 4) shows that by the mid-nineteenth century the Brothers' and Sisters' houses had been enlarged. Extensions were built to all six of the terraced buildings and the single-storey lodges. Of the Brothers' houses, No 1 had an extension to the southeast corner, No 2 had an extension to the southeast corner, and No 3 had a short and wide extension to the south and large extension to the east. Of the sisters houses, No 6, 7 and 8 were extended in the rear gardens.

The OS map of 1870 (figure 5) gives a clearer indication of the extensions. By this date the premises had their own gardens, the houses' garden was the width of the plot and featured planting with a curved north end. Lightwells were added to no. 6, 7 and 8 to bring light down into the rear of the basement floor. This was probably due to the change in use of the lower floor from storage to habitable rooms. The boundaries of the houses were apparently unaltered throughout the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, as no changes are shown on the 1896 and 1935 OS maps.

In 1914 the Hospital was reorganised and returned to the East End, the houses becoming private residences. The Master's House became a hospital in the modern sense of the word and has since been demolished.

In the late 80's the property was extensively refurbishment, including works to all floors.

2.8 The Plates

1. View of St Katherine's Hospital, 1827.
2. Greenwood's Map, 1830.
3. View in the Regent's Park, 1828.
4. Map in Holborn Library, 1849.
5. Ordnance Survey, 1870.
6. Ordnance Survey, 1962.



Plate 2. Greenwood's Map, 1830

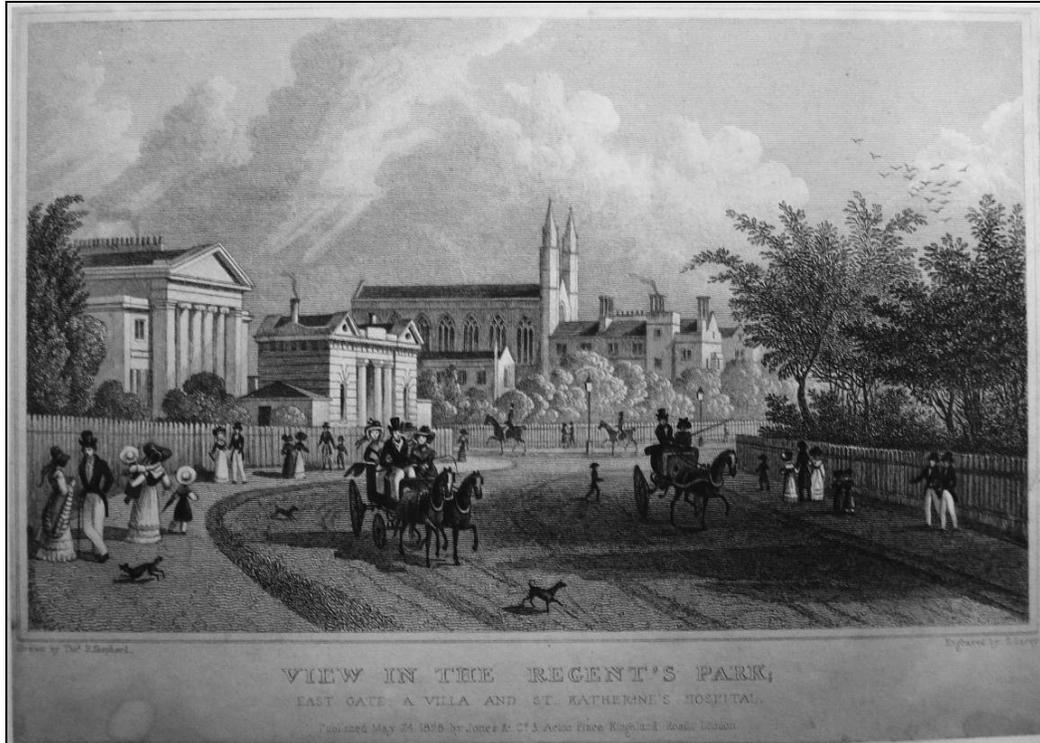


Plate 3. View in the Regent's Park, 1828

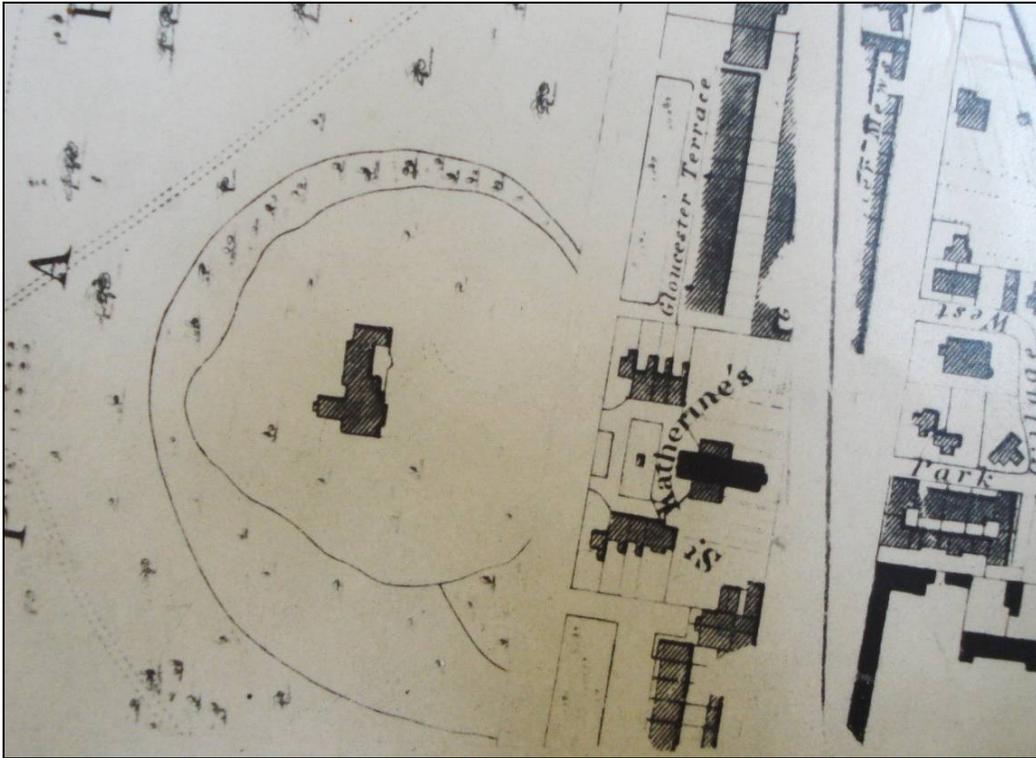


Plate 4. Map in Holborn Library, 1849

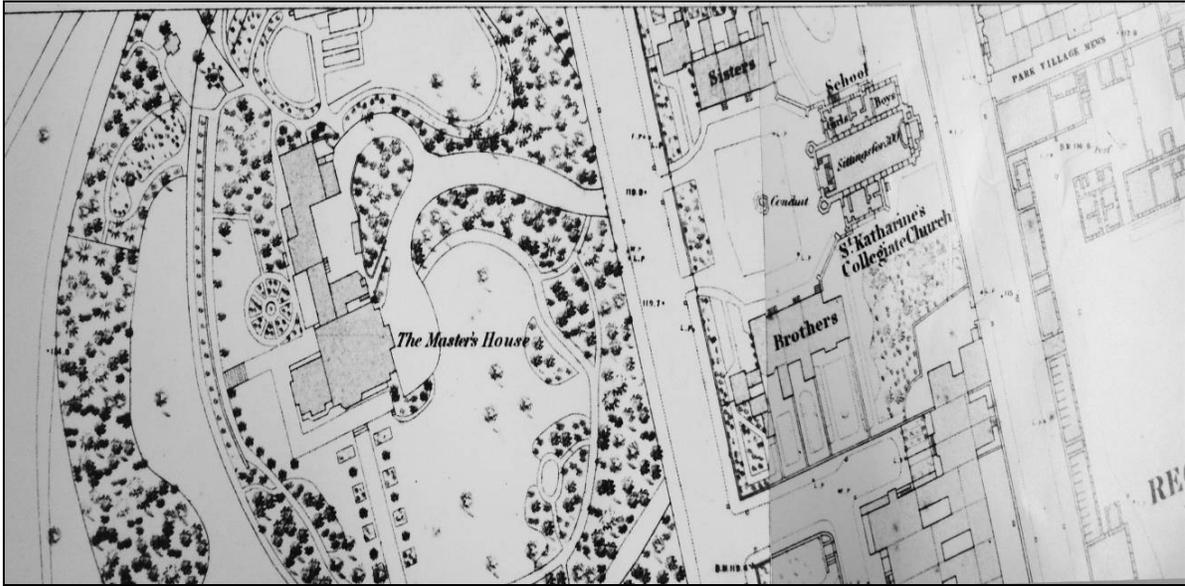


Plate 5. Ordnance Survey, 1870

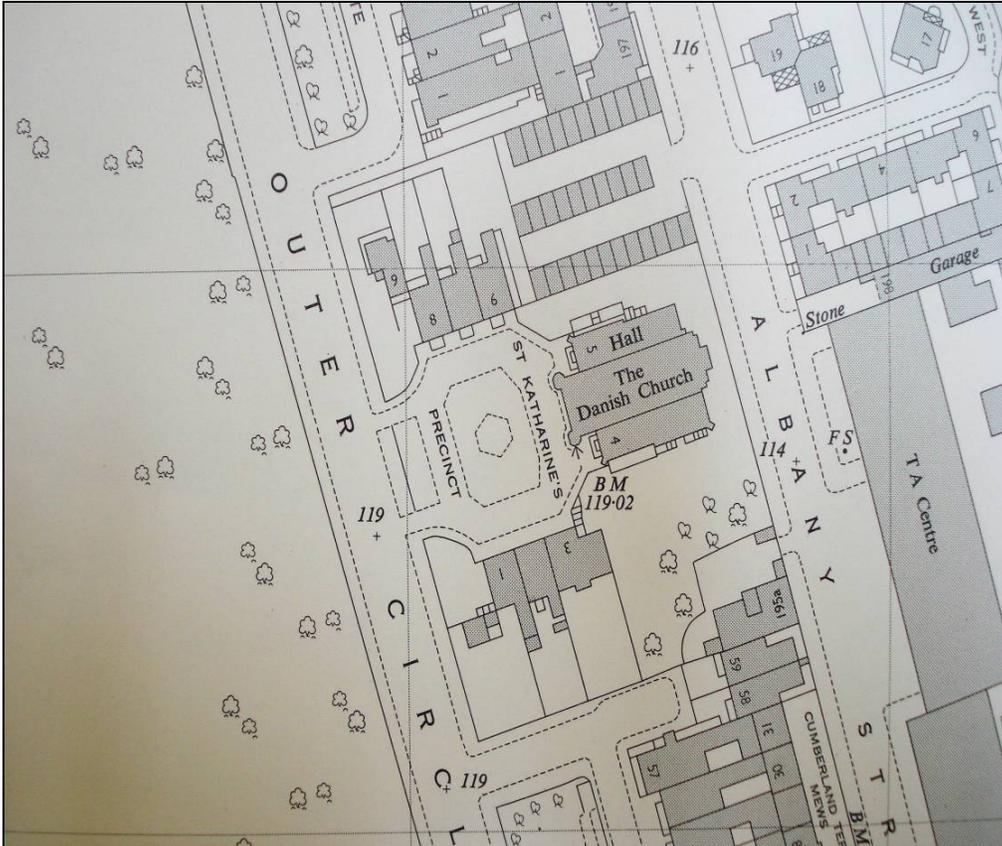


Plate 6. Ordnance Survey, 1962



Plate 7. Ordnance Survey, 1873

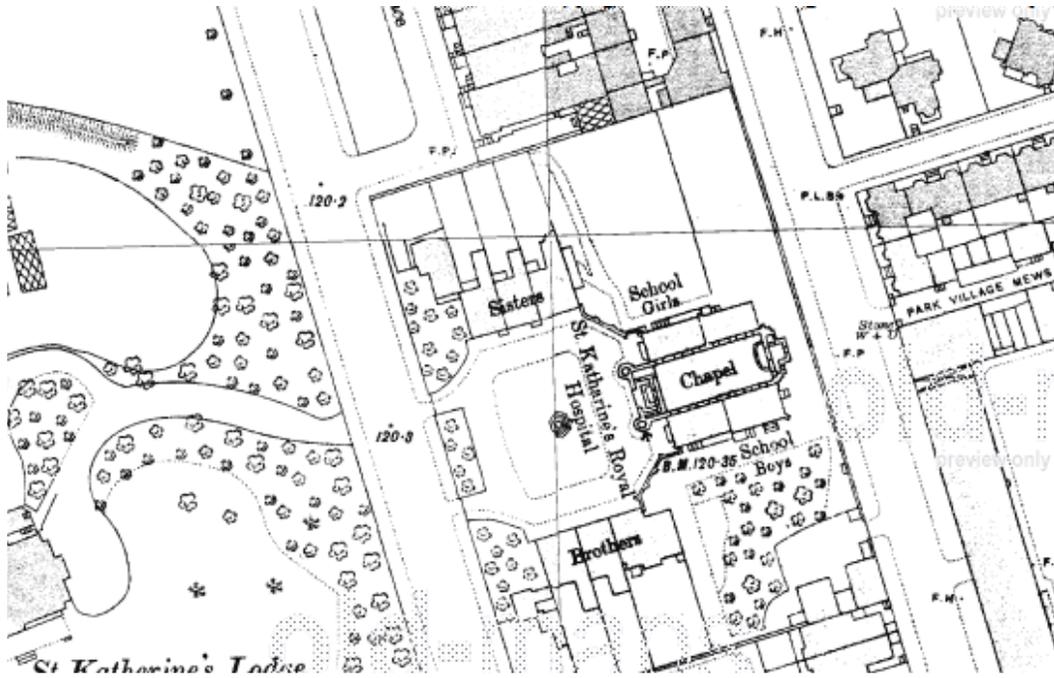


Plate 8. Ordnance Survey, 1895

No 7 St Katherine's Precinct, Regent's Park, London

COMMENTARY ON THE PROPOSALS

1. Description

1.1 Exterior

No alterations are proposed to the front elevation apart from the replacement of the basement window, which will be restored as a sliding sash window with moulded sections and glazing bars in place of the existing modern casement window.

At the rear it is proposed to enclose the area flanked by the rear extension and the party wall (- the rear extension of No 8 -) with a glazed flat roof and rear wall, to form an extension. This will be of minimalist modern design, with large glazed panels in slender black metal frames, similar if not identical to extensions made to No 2 and No 6 St Katherine's Precinct with planning consent. The window of the main house rear room will be extended down and slightly widened to form an entrance into the extension, and likewise the side window of the existing rear extension.

As at Nos 2 and 6, the existing basement light well will be enlarged to fill the whole of the interior, with a structural glazed floor at ground level to admit light to the basement level. The existing (modern) opening through the basement wall will be slightly widened, and the basement walls of the existing rear extension and coal cellar removed or opened up.

1.2 Interior

Ground Floor:

The rear extension will be re-organised to form a lobby with toilet. In the front room the shallow alcoves to either side of the fireplace will be eliminated.

First Floor:

There will be no changes within the main house but the modern bathroom in the rear extension will be re-fitted.

Second Floor:

The wall below the attic stair will be brought forward to provide a walk-in wardrobe and the fireplace will be retained but boxed in to form a bed-head. The bathroom will be re-fitted.

Third (attic) Floor:

A new en-suite bathroom will be installed within a glazed partition, the services being routed via the second floor bathroom below.

Basement:

The existing timber stair will be replaced by a stone-tread stair of the same configuration. The adjoining modern bathroom will be removed and replaced by a new, short stair flight leading down to the lowered floor of the existing rear extension, with further steps down to the new kitchen / dining area under the rear garden. The side wall of the extension will be removed and the interior cleared and fitted out as a lobby. Any other alterations within the main house will be minor.

1.3 Basement Extension

The garden area will be completely excavated to a new (lower) basement level to allow a new kitchen / living area: its flat roof will then be re-landscaped as a garden / patio to finish at the same level as existing. The new kitchen will be lit by an open lightwell at the rear boundary, with access stair and containing any air conditioning services, and by strip-lights incorporated into raised planters

either side of the garden. The party walls will be supported and preserved during the work, but the modern rear wall will be taken down and rebuilt as before. This work largely repeats the work already carried out at No 2 The Precinct with full planning consent.

2 Implications

2.1 Alterations to the Listed Building

Exterior:

The main alteration will be the addition of the new conservatory at the rear of the ground floor. This will be of minimalist construction, almost totally of glass, and in keeping with the accepted conservation principle of making any addition unobtrusive, of good quality and clearly contemporary: its impact on the fabric will be minimal. Almost identical extensions have been granted consent at Nos 2 and 6 The Precinct. The existing railed lightwell is modern and its enlargement will not be harmful to the special interest of the building.

The only other external alteration will be the replacement of the basement front window to its original design, which will be of positive benefit to the building.

Ground Floor:

The only significant alteration is the enlargement of the window in the rear room of the main house to allow access to the new conservatory. The rear extension will be reorganised and its window enlarged to allow side access to the conservatory, but the interior has already been modernised and as a rear extension its elevation is of minor significance. Similar alterations have previously been granted consent at No2 and No6.

First Floor:

The re-fitting of the bathroom in the rear extension will not harm the special interest of the buildings as the interior has been modernised already.

Second Floor:

The alterations to the main front room are of limited significance as the room is an upper room of relatively low status with no outstanding features. The re-fitting of the rear room as a bathroom will not harm the special interest of the buildings as the interior has been modernised already.

Third (attic) Floor:

The subdivision of the room to create an en-suite bathroom will be done discreetly, again in keeping with the accepted conservation principle of making any addition unobtrusive, of good quality and clearly contemporary: its impact on the fabric will be minimal and it will be reversible.

Upper Floors generally:

The replacement of the existing flooring will be of no visual impact after completion, since all the floors will be fully re-carpeted again. The existing flooring is almost certainly standard pine boards of no great quality and intended to be finished with decorative coverings.

Basement:

The basement has always been of minor significance within the house and has been extensively modernised and refurbished in recent years. The access stair is of little intrinsic value and its replacement with an identical stone stair will not cause significant harm to the special interest of the building. The alterations towards the rear (removal of walls and lowering of floor levels) are in remote

rear areas of little historic interest, being mostly confined spaces formerly used as a coal cellar and storage within the footings of the rear extension above.

2.2 **Setting**

The only alteration to the setting of the building will be at the rear, following construction of the new kitchen / dining area under the rear garden. However, following reinstatement of the hard and soft landscaping there will be minimal change to the setting of the building apart from the rear lightwell at the foot of the garden and the toplights integrated within shrub planters along each party wall. All original garden walls will be retained. There will be no adverse impact on the setting of the Listed building, or on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3 **Justification**

The proposed alterations reflect the changing nature of the use of the property arising from changing social and economic circumstances. Whilst always having been in use a single house this has changed over the years firstly with the disappearance of domestics (who would have occupied the basement and attic), and more recently with a dramatic shortage in property, fuelling higher prices and attracting a new type of owner with different lifestyle requirements.

The current kitchen / dining provision in the house is inadequate in terms of both space and layout in an age when more time is spent in these areas by the occupants and the kitchen is more a part of the living space rather than closed off. The proposed new kitchen / living / dining area under the rear garden and extension allows a contemporary-style open-plan area to meet this need with the minimum of alteration to the fabric of the Listed building or adverse impact on its setting.

The alterations to the basement are the minimum necessary to allow an effective connection with the new area, and any alterations to the rest of the basement (which has been modernised in recent years) will be of minor impact.

The alterations to the ground floor largely consist of the creation of a new extension at the rear, to provide more living accommodation and infill an area which is by nature confined and sunless, and of little benefit either as an amenity area or a functioning space, other than (in the form of the modern tight well) as an escape route and source of light for the basement. The extension will be discreet and repeat extensions already made at No 2 and No 6 The Precinct. Some changes to existing fabric are required but are offset by an improvement in appearance and intelligibility.

The alterations to the upper floors of the house (which become increasingly insignificant as one rises up through the various levels) are required to provide an adequate number of bedrooms for a house of this size and status, and where possible to provide en-suite bathrooms to avoid the privacy problems of passing through communal areas.

4 **Conclusions**

The local planning policies applicable to these proposals are outlined in Section 1.3 of this report. Of the conservation-related policies the most relevant are Policy CS14 (the 'Core Strategy') of the Local Development Framework and the saved Policies DP24, 25 and 27 of the Unitary Development Plan.

Policy CS14 is a very general policy which requires a high standard of design and respect of heritage assets, both for historic buildings and conservation areas.

Policy DP24 requires a high standard of design for alterations and extensions. Policy DP25 describes the criteria by which the Local Planning Authority will judge proposals affecting Listed buildings and conservation areas.

Policy DP27 describes the criteria by which the Local Planning Authority will judge proposals for new basements and lightwells and requires such development to adequately preserve the fabric of a Listed building, and its setting, and the conservation area in general.

These policies are mostly non-specific, and the issues of quality and impact on the Listed building, its setting and the conservation area in general are ultimately a matter of professional judgement.

The national conservation policies are contained within Planning Policy Statement 5, and again the guidance is non-specific but focuses on how decisions affecting the historic environment should be made.

Policies HE2, HE6 and HE7 require an appropriate degree of understanding of the heritage asset and its significance in order to allow informed judgements to be made. This has been established through the research and analysis provided in the earlier sections of this report.

Policy HE9 gives principles for determining applications involving designated assets such as Listed buildings and is the most relevant to this Application. It is not considered that the Application involves *substantial harm or loss of significance*, being the most extreme situation covered by Policy HE9.2, and as such the relevant parts of the policy are:

- HE9.1, which states that *'There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets....Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.'* and

- HE9.4, which recognises that development can sometimes be accepted even where it is not possible to avoid harm to a heritage asset and states that *'Where a proposal has a harmful impact on the significance of a designated asset which is less than significant harm, in all cases local planning authorities should* (inter alia):

(i) *Weigh the public benefits of the proposal (for example that it helps to secure the optimum viable use of the heritage asset in the interests of its long-term conservation) against the harm.'* and

(ii) *recognise that the greater the harm to the significance of the heritage asset the greater the justification will be needed for any loss'.*

As is clear from the analysis above, with regard to No7 St Katherine's Precinct there will be no detriment to the conservation area and the challenge is to adapt the building to 21st century living standards commensurate with the type of ownership, both now and in the future, without undue damage to the building or its setting.

The main proposal is to provide a spacious open area in the lower part of the house, in line with present-day lifestyles, to combine kitchen, dining and living space. This could be provided economically and most conveniently by a large rear extension at ground level, but in view of the adverse impact on the Listed building and its setting (and the setting of adjoining properties) the proposal is for a much more complicated and costly extension below ground, as already granted consent elsewhere in The Precinct. This approach is entirely consistent

with good conservation policy, and also with Note 89 of the Practice Guide accompanying PPS5 which states:

'It is important that any use is viable, not just for the owner but for the future conservation of the asset.....If there are a range of alternative ways in which an asset could be viably used, the optimum use is the one that causes the least harm to the significance of the asset, not just through the necessary initial changes but also as a result of wear and tear and likely future changes.'

With regard to the other alterations proposed for the interior, most are minor and reversible, and they can be seen as part of an ongoing process of adaptation as the building continues to respond to changing lifestyles.

The impact on the Listed building is a matter of judgement, based on an appraisal of the building. The special architectural interest of No 7 St Katherine's Precinct lies principally in its role as part of the group of the former Royal Hospital of St Katherine's, which is of both social and architectural interest. Its value lies primarily in its external appearance, which is almost completely unaltered, and especially the front and end gable elevations. The interior has been altered to varying degrees over time and quite radically in terms of the rear and basement areas where the main change is proposed. It is therefore considered that based on this appraisal the proposals will not result in an unacceptable degree of harm to the Listed building.

Appendix I

Sources of Information

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Images

Master's Lodge, 1827 (The Gentleman's Magazine)

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