
51 Frognal, Hampstead, NW3 6YA

Heritage, Design and Access Statement

Prepared By



Nicholas Taylor and Associates
128 Sothwark Street
London
SE1 0SW

Tel: 020 7928 8955
Fax: 020 7928 8506
Email: npt@nptaylor.co.uk

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement explains the design of the alterations made to 51 Frognal which require retrospective Listed Building Consent. The issues of Heritage, Design and Access are addressed in turn. Firstly, the heritage value of the asset is determined, then the design of the works are explained relative to this, and finally the issue of access is addressed.

2.0 THE HERITAGE ASSET

A) The nature of the heritage asset

- 2.1 N° 51 Frognal is a Grade 2 Listed Building (see Appendix 1). It is one half of a pair of semi-detached houses (49 & 51 Frognal), and was constructed in 1886 by the architect Sir Reginald Blomfield for himself.

B) The level of importance of the asset

- 2.2 The exteriors of 49 and 51 remain largely unchanged. Regrettably the inside of N° 51 has lost much of its original character. The property was converted in the late 1950's into three flats and a garage was provided for the ground floor flat with access from the front.

- 2.3 The effects of the subdivision were as follows:

- 1) Main staircase of entrance hall boxed in to create separate secure access to the upper floors
- 2) Several of the side and rear windows, including the first and second floor "French windows" were replaced, and are not original.
- 3) Entrance hall became dingy through reduced size and lack of natural light
- 4) Creation of projecting bay at front of the house, lower ground level, to accommodate garage, thus altering the original composition
- 5) Raising the floor level of ground floor reception room resulting in steps between main part of reception room and rear part (see section drawing 301)
- 6) Consequent alteration to proportions of reception room (effectively less head room)
- 7) Dining area of rear part of reception room became barely practicable because of reduced area (about 2m in depth)
- 8) Erection of steel escape staircase at rear of property
- 9) Formation of ensuite accommodation to bedrooms resulted in them becoming smaller and darker

- 2.4 The works to implement these changes were executed in the late 1950's or early 1960's, but not to a high standard

- 2.5 Other changes which have taken place, though the date is not known, included the alteration of the existing basement to introduce a workshop area, store and boiler room.
- 2.6 Subsequently, the interior of the property fell into a state of disrepair with little or no maintenance taking place over the years, which resulted in problems with damp and flooding. We understand that following the implementation of the granted permission, a fire two years ago also damaged parts of the interior, which prompted the owner to progress with a further repair and renovation of the property.
- 2.7 The owner has copies of the fire insurance claim that was submitted at the time to substantiate this point

C) The setting of the heritage asset

- 2.8 The setting of N° 51 is concentrated on the road known as Frognal, which lies within the Hampstead Conservation Area. The road is residential in character. The proposals have no impact on the setting of the asset.

D) The approved scheme

- 2.9 In 2009 Camden Council approved various changes to the interior under planning application (2008/5628/P) and listed building application (2008/5735/L). The ground floor reception room was extended into the back garden with removal of the arched rear window and the addition of a glass rear extension. This would accommodate a new dining room, The extension is confined to the rear of the house and does not impact greatly on neighbouring properties. It is sympathetic to the scale, character, appearance and proportions of the existing building. It was envisaged that a more transparent and bright interior could be achieved. One other effect of the extension was that the rear wall of the house effectively become an internal wall, reducing its importance even if the 2009 fire had not occurred
- 2.10 Secondly, the damp basement cellar with its restricted headroom and no windows was altered to provide new amenity and living space within the flat. The new basement's headroom was increased by 1m, which had no impact on the floors above and is not visible from street level.

3.0 THE DESIGN

- 3.1 The alterations to the approved scheme for which retrospective approval is now sought include the following:-

Basement Staircase:

- 3.2 The Council approved the moving of the basement staircase from the middle of the basement to one side. This meant that the staircase intruded less upon the basement space. However, it still took up some space; the resulting basement was too small for its intended use as a media room.
- 3.3 The owner has therefore extended the basement and relocated the staircase to the extended area. At the same time he has substituted a spiral staircase for the

original, so as to take up less space. This solution has the added advantage of bringing natural sunlight to the basement.

- 3.4 The approved scheme did NOT comply with the Building Regulations in respect of means of escape. The master bedroom at the rear ground floor had only one means of escape in the event of a fire, namely via the hall to the front door. A secondary means of escape is also needed. The spiral staircase which gives direct access to the garage and then the street provides the necessary secondary means of escape.

Rear of Dining Room:-

- 3.5 In 2009 a fire occurred at the back of the house which damaged irreparably the arch and the adjacent side of the wall of the dining room. In order to prevent this part of the house collapsing the builder removed the damaged archway and side wall, inserted temporary props and eventually permanent steel joints. The builder removed all damaged material, including the bricks from the site, thereby making it difficult for the owner to reinstate the wall to its previous design.
- 3.6 The owner concluded that the damage actually presented a opportunity to create a more attractive and functional dining room. The scheme shown on the plans submitted with the application is for a more spacious area which works well with the dining room. Moreover, it brings more light into the hall which was dark, as noted earlier.

Conclusions

- 3.7 The owner of the property has undertaken the additional works that consent is now being applied for with his own personal aspirations to provide a high quality upgrade of the interior. The materials and finishes that have been employed in the works are all of a standard that enhance the existing property and detailing of the glass extension and new staircase is felt to preserve the integrity of the historic building in a contemporary manner. The owner realises that to fulfil his ambitions with the property renovation permission should have been obtained for the alterations carried out on his instructions. He now seeks consent to obtain this consent retrospectively.

4.0 ACCESS

- 4.1 Frognal is located with good connections to the city centre. Finchley Road and Frognal Rail station is 0,4 miles away with regular trains to and from the centre of London. There is a 7-minute walk to the nearest tube station.
- 4.2 The proposals involve no change of access to the original dwelling house, or the actual flat to which this application relates. Both vehicular and pedestrian access will remain as existing.

APPENDIX 1:

Listed building details

Location: (West side) Nos.49 AND 51

Street: Frognal

Grade: II

Reference No: 798-1-52137

Date of listing: May 14 1974



[View a full sized photograph](#)

Description:

Pair of semi-detached houses. 1886. By Sir Reginald Blomfield; No.51 for himself, No.49 for TJ Cobden-Sanderson, Arts and Crafts bookbinder. No.51 altered. Red brick. Slated roofs with hipped dormers, projecting eaves with central bracket, tall slab chimney-stacks and gables to outer bays. 2 storeys, attics and semi-basements. 3 windows each plus 1 window recessed entrance bays. Doorways with bracketed hoods and panelled part-glazed doors approached by steps. Gauged red flat brick arches to recessed sashes, outer bays tripartite with the attics having blind lunettes over central windows, ground floor inner bays tripartite with cornices. 1st floor sashes have louvred shutters. No.51 has late C20 basement garage and tripartite bay window to ground floor. Gables with moulded timber soffits returning inwards for a short length at bases to appear as broken pediments. INTERIORS: not inspected.

Location of Listed Building