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ENGLISH HERITAGE

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Blue Plaque to Sir John Summerson 1 Eton Villas, Chalk Farm, London NW3 4SX

1. Site Analysis

Number 1 Eton Villas is a semi-detached two-storey rendered villa, with an attic and semi-basement, dating from 1849; it is part of a development of six similar semi-detached houses, all listed Grade II. The houses were designed by John Shaw Junior, surveyor to the landowner, Eton College, in a rustic Italian style, with Grecian detail, and built by Samuel Cuming. They form part of what Pevsner described as 'an attractive triangle of ... complete streets: Provost Road, Eton Road, and Eton Villas, with St Saviour's Church as their focus'. The surviving houses in these roads are smaller, middle-class villas reminiscent of John Nash's earlier Park villages and the contemporary St John's Wood, and reflect Shaw Junior's refined taste.

2. Design Process Components

It is proposed that English Heritage erect a standard ceramic commemorative blue plaque at 1 Eton Villas, to commemorate the architectural historian and former curator of Sir John Soane's Museum, Sir John Summerson, who lived there for 43 years, from 1949 until his death in 1992. Summerson was indirectly responsible for the listing of Eton Estate in 1974, and he was regarded locally as the saviour of the area.

There will be no change in the use of the building, no floor space will be added or subtracted, and no new homes will be built on the site. The layout of the building will not be changed, nor will the scale of the building be affected. There will be no landscaping undertaken.

The exterior elevation of the building will be slightly adapted to accommodate the blue plaque (please see enclosed Installation Note). The plaque will be sited on the return wall alongside the stair to the building's main entrance at first-floor level (see enclosed Rectified Positioning Photo). The decision to locate the plaque here, as opposed to the front façade of the house, has been made so as not to disturb too greatly the design of the building, whilst allowing the detail on the plaque to be as visible as possible to the average passer-by.

3. Access

No new access points and routes are proposed. No changes are proposed in relation to pedestrian and cycle routes, road layout, local services and public transport provision. The blue plaque will be visible from the public highway and therefore no new access is required. There is no new need for provision of access for emergency services.

4. Design Solution

The above information has explained and justified the proposed development, and the lack of necessity for arrangements to be made to facilitate access into and through the site in relation to the proposed works. The English Heritage blue plaque design has been developed over 140 years in sympathy with the character of London buildings. It is hand-crafted and is thought to respond positively to most local contexts. The architectural character of this listed building will only be affected in a minor way, and the historic interest of the property and area will be enhanced within the local and wider community.