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**DESIGN AND ACCESS  
STATEMENT**

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In respect of  
**FLAT 4,**  
**24 BELSIZE CRESCENT**  
**LONDON NW3 5QU**

On behalf of  
**MR GILEAD M J**  
**ROSENHEIMER**

CgMs Ref: TG/MS/8797

Date: December 2007

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**CONTENTS**

1.0	PROPOSALS .....	2
2.0	BACKGROUND .....	3
3.0	DESIGN .....	5
4.0	ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSALS .....	6
5.0	DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHEME .....	8
6.0	INCLUSIVE DESIGN .....	9
7.0	ACCESS .....	10
8.0	SUMMARY.....	11

**PLATES**

1- 31

**APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1: List Description
- Appendix 2: Documentary Research
- Appendix 3: Historic maps
- Appendix 4: 1896 Drainage Plans
- Appendix 5: 1904 Drainage Plans

## **1.0 PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 This application relates to the self-containment of an existing maisonette at second and attic floor level, at flat 4, 24 Belsize Crescent. The proposals include the erection of a glazed entrance at second floor landing level, a fully glazed stair enclosure between second and attic level, the creation of a number of openings between rooms and some internal subdivision to create a second bathroom.
- 1.2 The proposals have been developed in accordance with Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006 policies, Camden's Supplementary Planning Guidance 2006, namely Sections 19, 26 and 40, and guidance in PPG15 (1994) and British Standard 7913 (1998).

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 Prior to commencing any design proposals an historical and architectural assessment of the building was undertaken in order to fully understand its significance as a Grade II listed building. The non-invasive visual assessment was supplemented by documentary research undertaken in the Camden Local Studies Library, London Borough of Camden Town Planning Department and the London Metropolitan Archives, the results of which are included at the end of this statement.

2.2 The building is Grade II listed and is located within the Belsize Park Conservation Area. The building was designed by Harry B Measures and built by William Willett in 1886 as a single family dwelling. Analysis of the building informs us that it retains original fixtures and fittings and evidence of its original plan form. Unfortunately it was not possible to obtain access into the basement, ground and first floor flats as these are privately owned. However, planning records suggest that new openings have been created, including a wide opening between the front and rear rooms at ground floor level. It does appear that the ground floor front room retains an elaborate cornice which is likely to be original. The communal hall also retains a wealth of architectural detailing including its original open well timber staircase which rises between ground and attic level, original joinery, cornices, skirtings and a dumb waiter.

2.3 A history of the building is included with this statement and a more recent analysis of the planning history of the building is set out below. The Council online planning records do not document the consent for the conversion into flats, only the more recent applications, as set out below.

06/02/2007 - Planning permission granted for the enlargement of an existing dormer window at the rear and installation of a new window in the side elevation in connection with the non-self-contained second floor and attic level maisonette.

06/02/2007 - Listed building consent refused for internal alterations in connection with the self containment of the second floor and attic level maisonette including the installation of an internal staircase and the enlargement of the dormer window on the rear and new window in the side elevation. The enlargement of the dormer window and new side window were considered acceptable. However, the application was refused on the grounds

that the internal staircase and proposed partitions would affect the special interest of the listed building.

The decision was appealed and the application dismissed.

16/04/2007 - Planning permission granted (subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement) for the change of use of the second floor and attic level maisonette to two self-contained flats (1 x 2-bedroom and 1 x 1-bedroom) plus the enlargement of the rear dormer window and insertion of the side window.

16/04/2007 - Listed building consent granted for internal alterations in connection with change of use at second floor and attic level maisonette and two self-contained flats (1 x 2-bedroom and 1 x 1 bedroom) plus enlargement of dormer at rear and new window in side elevation.

- 2.4 The second and attic floors within the property remain as a non self-contained maisonette and the owner of the property, my client, is seeking to self contain this maisonette through the erection of a glass partition as an entrance and insertion of a simple glass fire enclosure within the stairwell to satisfy Building Regulations. The works proposed have been worked up following an analysis of the special interest of the listed building.

### **3.0 DESIGN**

3.1 The proposals are put forward following consultation with the council's conservation officer, Joanna Ecclestone. They comprise:-

- Creation of an opening between the front and rear rooms at second and attic level, retaining downstands and nibs and to be hung with doors;
- Creation of an opening between the two front rooms at second floor level;
- Erection of a partition within the rear room to create a bathroom – this was granted consent as part of a previous listed building application ((Ref. 2007/1685/L);
- Insertion of cupboards as storage under the eaves at attic level;
- Erection of a fully glazed entrance door and staircase enclosure.

3.2 The second floor retains skirtings, cornices, dado and fireplaces of interest. Although the skirtings will be cut and removed they will be reused, attached to the new doors to retain the historic fabric, architectural features and proportions within the rooms.

3.3 Any new partitions, such as the new entrance and partitions to create the new bathroom, will be scribed around existing skirtings, cornices and dado rails to ensure the historic fabric is unharmed.

3.4 A model of the proposed glass stair enclosure has been produced and we will be submitted with the application. It has been designed to be as unobtrusive as possible to allow maximum visibility when looking up from ground floor level. The methods of attachment, to the plaster underneath the treads, will be undertaken using six attachments which will be fixed to the underside of the staircase to limit the impact on the historic fabric. Only a minimal amount of historic fabric, namely the handrail and string and part of the floorboard and only the width of the glazing, will be removed.

#### **4.0 ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSALS**

4.1 Paragraph 3.5 of PPG15 sets out the issues that are generally relevant to the consideration of all listed building consent application. These are considered below in relation to the proposals at Flat 4, 24 Belsize Crescent:

#### **4.2 The importance of the building, its intrinsic architectural and historic interest and rarity, in both national and local terms**

4.2.1 The building was designed by Harry B Measures and built by William Willett in 1886 as a single family dwelling. Willett's obituary in *The Times* gave a brief description of the houses that the firm constructed.

*"There is an individuality about Willett houses...the houses in the Eton avenue district of South Hampstead...are built on an extended ground plan, the aim, wherever space permits, being to avoid a lot of stair climbing, and to provide large well-lighted rooms, and also to do without basement rooms."*<sup>1</sup>

4.2.2 The role of the Willetts as a building firm in the Victorian era is aptly summoned up by *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

*"The standing of urban speculative builders diminished in the second half of nineteenth century Britain, but the Willetts were exceptions to this rule. In a construction world dominated by building contractors and professional architects, they turned out high-class houses of dignity, comfort, and real architectural merit by an old fashioned method. They were the last great Victorian speculative builders."*<sup>2</sup>

4.2.3 The building is already subdivided into flats but remains in residential use, the use for which it was originally intended. Despite the alterations which have been made to date, including openings between rooms, the special interest of the building and its original internal joinery remain apparent.

#### **4.3 The particular physical features of the building (which may include its design, plan, materials or location) which justify its inclusion in the list.**

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<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, March 5<sup>th</sup> 1915; p. 10; issue 40794; col E.

<sup>2</sup> Internet 1.

- 4.3.1 Despite subdivision, the original layout of the building and hierarchy remain clearly discernible. The proposals will retain the evidence of the historic floor plan through the incorporation of doorways where openings are proposed to retain the original proportions of the rooms and the historic joinery and fixtures and fittings will remain largely in tact. Where skirtings are to be removed, they will be reinstated, attached to the new doors to retain the proportions of the rooms.

**4.4 The building's setting and its contribution to the local scene.**

- 4.4.1 There are no changes proposed to the exterior of the building other than those approved as part of the previous planning application (Ref. 2007/1684/P)

**4.5 The extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community.**

- 4.5.1 The proposals will provide a more sensitive use of the building at second and third floor level as a single flat as opposed to two flats as two flats is likely to require greater subdivision and a greater number of services i.e. two kitchens.

## **5.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHEME**

5.1 Following the historic and architectural assessment and advice in relation to the special interest of the building, initial drawings and a scale were produced for a pre-application meeting with the council's conservation officer. The meeting was held on 25 October 2007 with Joanna Ecclestone who gave positive feedback. Following the meeting, Ms Ecclestone, provided written comments by email. These comments included:

- No objections to the separation of the unit by a glazed screen;
- Need to satisfy building control requirements in terms of means of escape;
- Full details of how the partitions will be fixed to the staircase should be submitted with the application;
- The wide opening between the two larger rooms on the second floor would be acceptable subject to the doors being detailed in such a way not to detract from the existing design scheme of the room;
- No objections to the wide opening between the front and back room but a wider nib than initially proposed should be retained on the party wall side;
- Eaves cupboards should be amended to have doors sitting within frames rather than hidden frames as initially proposed;
- Full details of internal service pipe routings and joist directions and any new flues, vents or pipes on the exterior should be shown on the drawings;
- Details of any works to existing plaster surfaces to be submitted.

5.2 All of these comments have been addressed in the new proposals and the necessary details provided on the application drawings.

5.3 The partitions to be erected to create a new bathroom within the rear room at second floor level was approved as part of the previous listed building application (Ref. 2007/1685/L).

5.4 The fully glazed staircase enclosure has been designed to allow the original timber staircase to remain visible when viewed from ground floor and attic level. It will be attached to the stair in six places on the underside of the treads.

## **6.0 INCLUSIVE DESIGN**

- 6.1 Consideration has been given to providing a lift from ground to attic level for disabled access it is considered that given that the principal staircase is one of the most important features in this historic building and that the floor plan remains largely untouched, that insertion of a lift for disabled access would harm the special interest of this listed building. The proposals have been developed in accordance with the Building Regulations and the door and staircase widths are appropriate for use and fire safety performance.
- 6.2 The attached Building Regulations Consultant's report provides an assessment of the proposals in light of Building Regulations and concludes that the proposals accord with fire regulations.

## **7.0 ACCESS**

- 7.1 The property is beneficially located between Belsize Park, Finchley Road and Swiss Cottage tube stations. There is also pay and display and local residents parking along Belsize Crescent. The proposals will have no impact on accessibility or parking. In fact the reduction in the number of flats is likely to reduce the need for on-street parking.

## **8.0 SUMMARY**

- 8.1 Currently the maisonette at second and attic level is not self-contained. The occupier has to lock the doors at second floor level before ascending the staircase to attic level which is inconvenient.
- 8.2 The proposals have been developed with an understanding of the special interest of the listed building and with an aim of limiting the impact on the historic fabric or internal layout of the building. As a professional consultant, I consider the proposals accord with Policies B1, B3 and B6 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement UDP 2006 and Sections 19, 26 and 40 of Camden Supplementary Planning Guidance 2006 and PPG15.

## **SOURCES CONSULTED**

### Primary Sources

Census Returns        1891 – 1901

Street Directories    1886 - 1959

*The Times*, November 12<sup>th</sup> 1913; p. 11; issue 40367; col D

*The Times*, March 5<sup>th</sup> 1915; p. 10; issue 40794; col E.

### Camden Local Studies Library

Drainage application 3576, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1887<sup>3</sup>

Drainage application 717, 14<sup>th</sup> April 1904

Drainage application 3581, 11<sup>th</sup> March 1909

Drainage application 9392, 30<sup>th</sup> November 1933

OS maps 1866 – 1935

1883 map published by Hutchings and Crowley

1885 map of Hampstead and Highgate, by G.W. Bacon

### London Metropolitan Archives

ACC/3657/0111B/002. Envelope 7, renaming of Prince Consort Road, 30<sup>th</sup> October 1873.

ACC/3657/0111B/002. Envelope 7, Mortgage between Mr William Willett to E.Wooley Esq and F. G. Thynne Esq. 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1887.

### Secondary Sources

#### **Books**

Baker (ed.) *The Victoria Country History of Middlesex, volume IX* (Oxford, 1989)

Belsize Conservation Area Advisory Committee, *Belsize 2000, a living suburb*, (London, 2000)

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<sup>3</sup> Please see footnote 5

Cherry and Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, London 4: North* (London, 1999)

Mavis and Ian Norrie, (ed.) *The Book of Hampstead*, (Hampstead, 1968)

Clive and David Smith, *Hampstead past and present*, (London, 2002)

Thompson, *Hampstead Building a Borough, 1650 – 1964*, (London, 1974)

Wade (ed), *The Streets of Belsize*, (Hampstead, 1991)

### **Internet sources**

[www.oxforddnb.com/articles/36/36912](http://www.oxforddnb.com/articles/36/36912) Andrew Saint, 'Willett, William, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, 2004) (date accessed 15/08/2007).

### **Repositories and Collections Consulted**

Camden Local Studies Library

London Borough of Camden Town Planning Department

London Metropolitan Archives

**PLATES**

1- 31



Plate 1:



Plate 2:



Plate 3:



Plate 4:

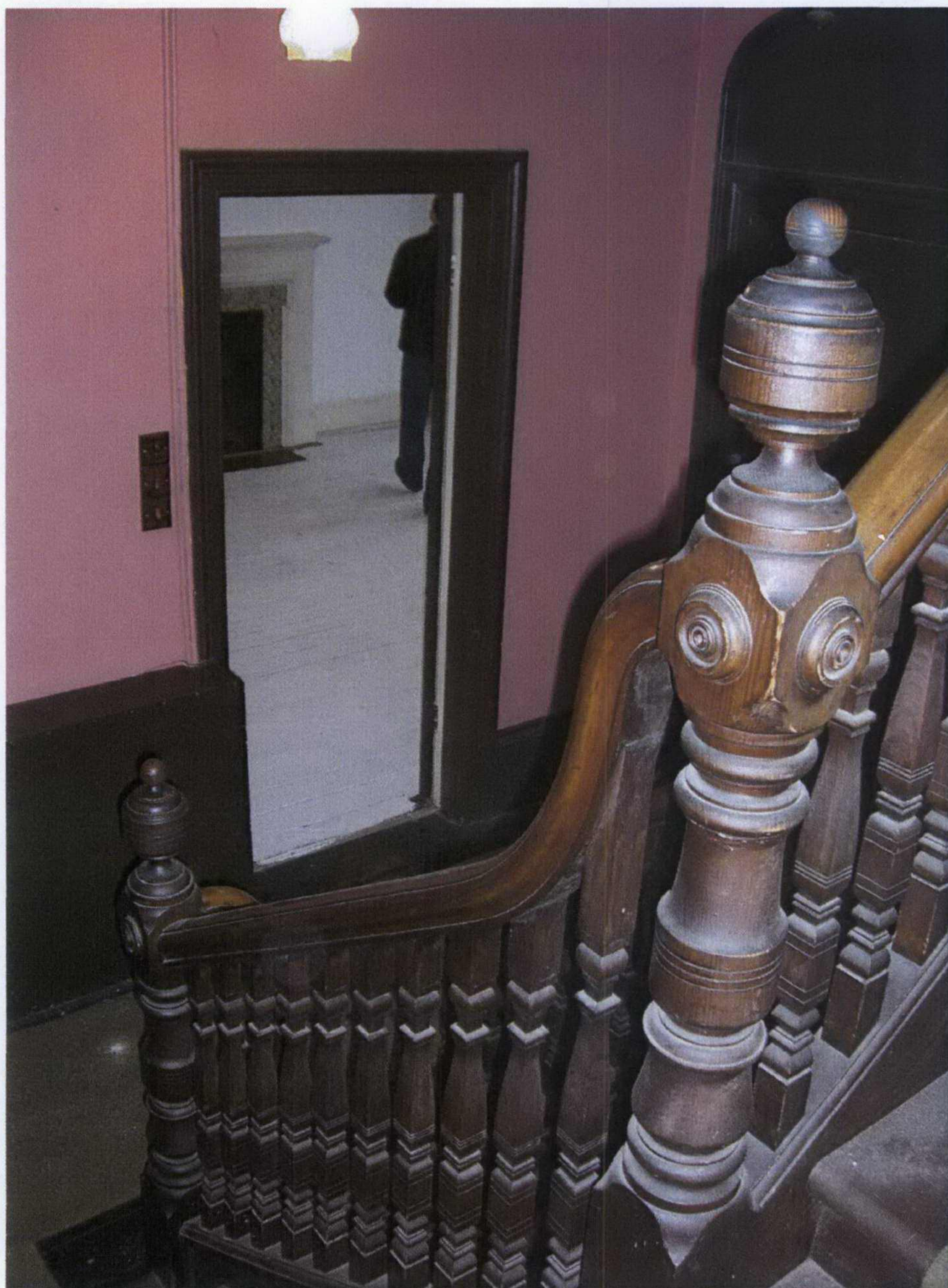


Plate 5:



Plate 6:



Plate 7:



Plate 8:



Plate 9:



Plate 10: