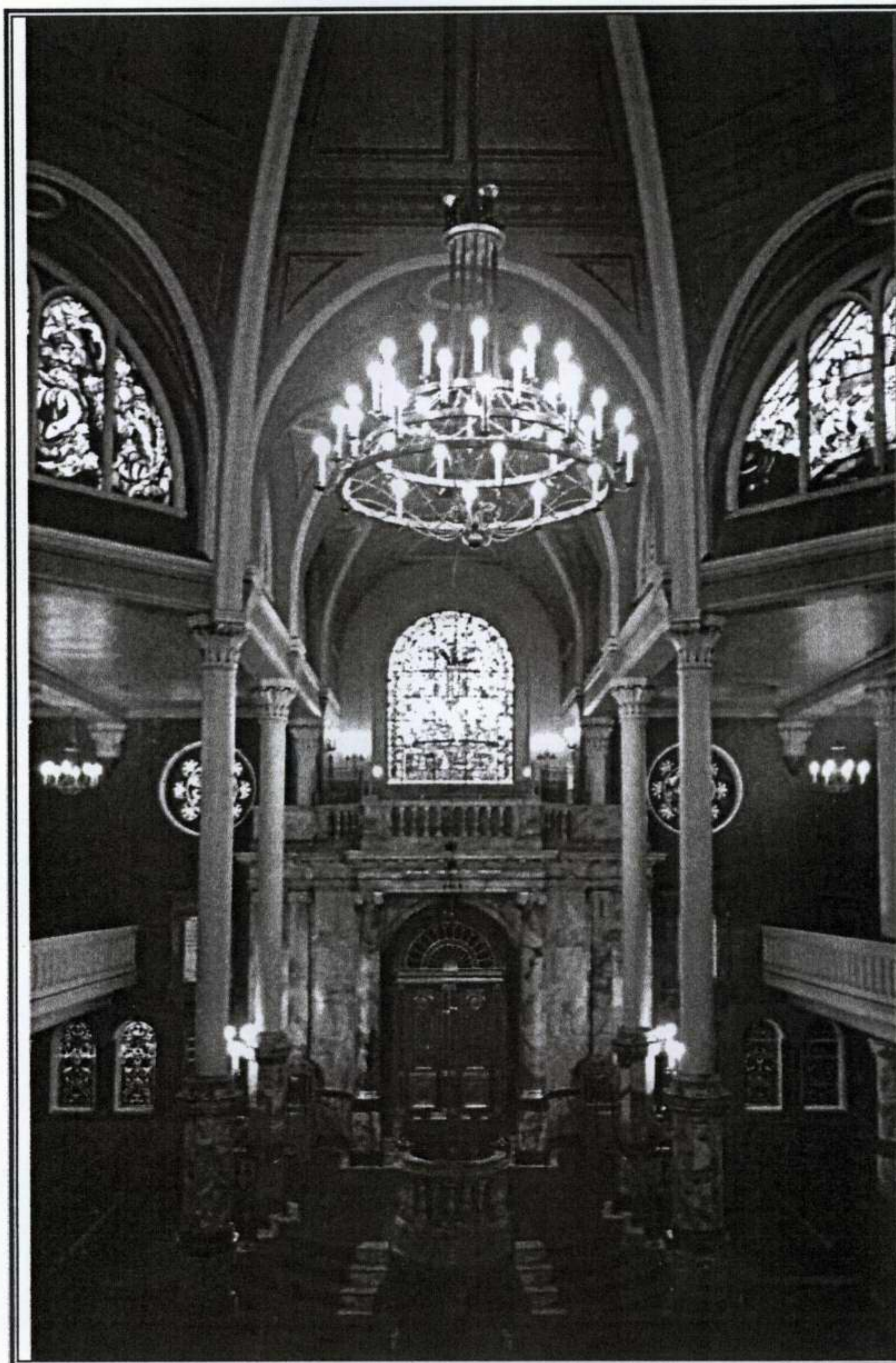


# **Design and Access and PPG 15 Justification Statement**

## **HAMPSTEAD SYNAGOGUE**

**1 DENNINGTON PARK ROAD, LONDON NW6**

### **REPAIRS AND RECONDITIONING**



**July 2007**

**Stephen Levrant  
363 West End Lane,  
London NW6 1LP  
Tel: 0207 435 7502  
Fax: 0207 7949712**



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## **1      Introduction**

This statement is prepared in accordance with PPG 15 paragraph 3.4 - 'Applicants for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals'. This statement shows why the proposed works are desirable or necessary, and provides full information to assess the likely impact of those proposals upon the building and its setting.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the drawings and schedules and other documents prepared by Heritage Architecture and submitted with the Listed Building Consent application.

## 2 Summary

This Listed Building Consent application is for works to the Hampstead Synagogue. The works proposed are for the repair and reconditioning of the building.

### 2.1 **The Existing Building:** (See ref to PPG15 3.5 for detail)

- The Synagogue, built in 1892 is Listed Grade II\*, and fronts onto Dennington Park Road. It was enlarged several times up to 1912.
- The significance of the building lies in the original main Synagogue and its additions and enhancements. They were carried out by architects and designers of repute to very high standards of design and workmanship. (See listing notice at appendix 1). It is one of only 11 grade II\* Synagogues (three of which are disused). There are 44 listed Synagogues in England, 9 of which are disused. The front, of high significance, is the only elevation that can be seen on this landlocked site. The interior is also important for fittings that express its rituals and for its stained glass, and also the use and expression of its space. The walls are virtually unadorned, unusual for a Synagogue of this era, and may have been intended for decoration later.
- **Condition:** Poor. The roofs have been leaking for many years, due to inherent design faults and age. The seating is worn out, toilets are in extremely poor state, M&E services are defunct and there are also structural problems.
- **Setting:** It is within the West End Green Conservation Area, a largely residential area with a retail core. The area is characterised by large mansion blocks of contemporaneous date - late Victorian/early C20th, and with terraced housing in a dense urban grain.
- **The architects:** The principal architect of the Synagogue was Delissa Joseph who was responsible for some of the alterations. He has only one other listed building to his name, but he ran a highly successful and large commercial practice. Later work was carried out by Joseph's successor, Joseph & Smithems; and by Henry Saul and Lewis Soloman.
- **The planning and layout** of the main Synagogue are shown in the accompanying plans. The main Synagogue has a Ladies Gallery and foyers with much circulation space as a result of various alterations. The

other areas find very little use due to their unsuitability for present day observance and community requirements.

- **Use:** It has always been a Synagogue complex and was originally for the largest Jewish community in London.
- **Changes and alterations** to the fabric were many and varied as the building has been adapted to meet the demands of liturgical and social requirements.
- **The new works:** these have been formulated to enable repair and preservation of the main Synagogue building.
- **The principal proposed works are:**
  - Repairs and refurbishment of the Synagogue as detailed in accompanying schedule of works. (Includes external and internal repairs)
  - Introduction of the disabled access.
  - New kitchenette
  - Introduction of the new disabled toilet on the ground floor.
  - new side door to replace existing as well as the enlargement of the existing opening to meet with fire safety requirements for disabled people.
  - Removal of the defective water tanks from the roofs, complete replacement of the cold water system, including a new suitably sized connection to the main in the street.
  - New heating system, involving replacement of the existing pipework.
  - A new gas supply for the boiler plant from the street will be provided by the utility company.
  - The existing wiring will be replaced with more appropriate materials to meet safety requirements.

### **3      History of the site**

#### **3.1      Introduction**

Although a history of the Synagogue had been written by Raymond Apple in 1967, the definitive history of the building and its growth has not been attempted. The research below is therefore not claimed to be comprehensive or exhaustive.

#### **3.2      The Architect**

The building is included on the statutory list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, listed at *Grade II \** - a category reserved for only the top 8% of listed buildings. It was designed in 1892 by the architect Delissia Joseph. Joseph was 33 years old and had been in practice for 10 years when he completed the Hampstead Synagogue. It was an important commission for him and was for the largest community of the United Synagogues. It was won with some measure of nepotism - his uncle N S Joseph was the United Synagogue's architect. During the next 20 years he established a flourishing and highly prolific practice based in the City (telegraphic address: "*Rebuilding London*") which was responsible for a number of important and significant buildings. He made a specialty of exploiting the structures above tube stations for commercial development, and was possibly a pioneer in this highly lucrative field. Among his more important developments were at Chancery Lane Station, (demolished), Moorgate (bombed), Tottenham Court Road, Marble Arch, (the Hotel), and Oxford Circus.

He built a large number of commercial properties: warehouses, factories, showrooms and Hotels that included the Rembrandt Hotel opposite the V&A. , His residential work included blocks of flats at Rutland Court, Rutland Gardens, and Chelsea Court on the embankment, in addition to country houses. His other Synagogue designs included: South East London, Hammersmith, South Hackney, Finsbury Park, Cardiff and Higher Broughton in Manchester. Joseph is largely forgotten these days and much of his work has been demolished. The English Heritage data base of listed buildings in England records only one other listed building to his credit which is the Manchester Synagogue.



### **3.2.1 Original Plans for the Synagogue**

Delissa Joseph's original proposal drawings have recently been discovered and show octagonal stair towers to the front elevation and spire roofs. The building was initially planned to face West End Lane, and the decision to turn the building to face Dennington Park was probably made as an economic expedient to allow commercial exploitation of the valuable retail frontage. There are no detail drawings of this final design change which was made after the submission of the plans for approval by the United Synagogue and the London County Council. Revised drawings, that included sections through the new building, show a simplified plan and elevation of more economical construction. The original design included a classroom block at the rear, but this was not built.

Almost before the building was completed, changes were mooted and the history of the Synagogue from that point up to comparatively recent times is one of a constant battle for extra space. The community in West Hampstead grew prodigiously, exceeding its own records as the most populous community within the UK. Joseph was retained by the Synagogue to advise and carry out redecoration schemes and to install electric lighting. Throughout the early years, memorial stained glass windows were donated by the congregation. (See below).

#### **Alterations and additions to the original design**

The original design left the central space clear of seats, but by 1896 seats were placed in the centre of the Synagogue. The following year, a small block was added to the side to accommodate classrooms, the Boardroom and the *Sukkah*. (A ceremonial structure of leaves and branches open to the sky.) Much of this early extension still remains although a corridor has been driven through it. In 1900/1 the first major extension to the Synagogue was made:

*"The object of the extension is to increase the seating accommodation, both on ground floor and galleries, to provide room for 150 additional worshippers and the improvement/enlargement of the Ark, Reading Platform and accessories thereto and the provision of additional Coal Cellar for the heating apparatus"*

Delissa Joseph was once again commissioned to carry this out. Only the drainage plan survives, showing the extension towards Sandwell Avenue (now Crescent). The contractor was Lovell whose work also involved the installation of a *Sukkah* with sliding roof:

*“Mr Lovell had agreed to do what was necessary to the roof of the classrooms for the purpose of the Sukkah, making one half of the roof to slide and the other half to open upwards. Both movements to be easily worked by one man from the inside also promised to remove the discolouration around the edges of the extension Foundation Stone.”*

### **3.2.2 Garden & Windows**

In 1902 the garden, now removed, was laid out in front of the Synagogue. The early years of the century saw more stained glass windows installed including the rose windows for which the designs were approved by Solomon J Solomon, the distinguished Royal Academician and a local congregant. It is most likely that they were designed and made by the firm of Lavers & Westlake. The donation of windows proceeded throughout these early years of the Synagogue, many in remembrance of those lost during the First War. The record of designers is scant, but is known to include some work by the William Morris Company.

### **3.2.3 Further Alterations**

In 1908 alterations were made to lavatories, although there is still some confusion as to the exact sequence of work and who was responsible. There are plans signed by Henry A Saul and Lewis Solomon which could be for two almost contemporary, but different phases.

Similar confusion surrounds the cloakroom and offices extension of 1912 designed either by Henry Solomon and/or Joseph & Smithem. (The latter have several listed buildings to their credit). These works created the Gentlemen's WCs which are very much the same as they are to-day, and also extended the Synagogue forwards to create the Cloakroom and offices that gives the present distinctive front elevation (the garden was probably removed at this time). However by the following year, 1913, further alterations to the drainage were needed.

### **3.2.4 Extension & Community Centre**

Ernest M Joseph (the successor to Delissa Joseph) in partnership with Smithems was commissioned in 1921 to carry out the next major addition which were additional classrooms and a Community Hall, all erected on the site of Dr Jacob Snowman's stable in Kingdon Road ("the Junior Synagogue block"). Originally only two storeys high with a side entrance, it was very different in style



to the main Synagogue. It represents the next generation of design and is domestic in scale, having good quality brickwork to match the character of the original building, and also shows some fine detailing in tile dressings.

The last involvement of Messrs Joseph as architects for the Synagogue was their *piece de resistance*. This being the superb marble and alabaster *Bimah* constructed in 1923/4 (a raised platform for conducting services and which contains the Ark). Carried out as "beautification" of the Synagogue, the quality of design and use of materials is very apparent.

The old Ark was given to Ealing and Acton Synagogue. Following the completion of this scheme, a member of the community, as a gift in memory of their children, offered to "marble the two pillars in front of the *Almemar*, in order to bring them into harmony with those of the *Almemar* itself." Other members then followed to have all the columns similarly clad. The bronze handrails to the *Almemar* was another gift.

Throughout the 1920s there were constant problems with draughts and ventilation which resulted in the hopper-like shields now in place around the lower walls. Continual efforts to increase the number of seats led to an enforcement order from the District Surveyor to remove these additional seats, considered by him to be a hazard.

### **3.2.5 Third Floor Extension**

The next ten years were without major works. In 1934, the caretaker's flat was built as an extension to the Classroom block to form a 3rd floor. The original parapet design was replicated and the joint was well disguised between the new and existing parapet. The architect H W Ford also was the United Synagogue consultant architect. His work included yet further alterations to the classrooms and also the construction of the *Sukkah* sliding roof.

### **3.2.6 The Hall & Junior Synagogue**

The following year 1935, saw two more projects completed: the Samuel Moses Hall erected and opened for congregational activities (later replaced by present Community Centre, 1964), and the opening of the Junior Synagogue (now demolished and replaced with residential units) that made use of two former classrooms.

### **3.2.7 1935 to 2006**

The Synagogue escaped the War with minor structural damage, but many stained glass windows were destroyed. Reinstatement and reconstruction took place in 1946, after which, in the 1950s, new stained glass windows designed by B Sochachewsky were installed. However there appears to be some early surviving windows still in situ.

In 1953 the present oak doors and fanlights were incorporated in the main entrance. The designer was H A Brabyn, but it is not clear why the original doors were thought to be in need of replacement.

The next and last major phase of building commenced in 1962 with the laying of the Foundation Stone of the new Community Centre, designed by Richard Seifert, architect of Centrepont and the NatWest Tower. It was opened and consecrated in 1964.

In 1973 Maxwell Hutchinson, (the youngest ever President of the Royal Institute of British Architects) designed the ungainly alterations in the Synagogue to provide the Bridal Room and cloakroom, and installed the entirely unwarranted false ceiling to the Office.



## **4      PPG15 Specific Considerations**

### **4.1      Impact**

#### **PPG15 Para. 3.4**

*“...assess the likely impact of their proposals on the special architectural or historic interest of the building and on its setting.”*

#### **Response:**

Proposed works are essential repairs of the original fabric and minor alterations to the interior. The roof repairs, renewal of the seriously sub-standard services and minor internal alterations are necessary for preservation and continuity of the building's life. The physical impact upon the main building is minimal. The original fittings and joinery will be preserved and repaired.

Proposed new kitchenette will not harm the existing fabric; it will replace an existing area that is currently used as a storage space, and is in very bad condition.

A New disabled toilet is required to meet DDA regulations. It is positioned within the existing cloakroom, and will replace a small storage cupboard that is currently in a poor condition.

#### **Setting:**

On all elevations (apart from West elevation) the proposed works are only for repairs and cleaning, therefore it is considered that elevations will remain unharmed.

On the west elevation (see architect's drawing No: CA 505), the proposal is to enlarge the existing door opening and replace the existing door with a timber panelled new door. The existing door is modern and it has no historical significance. It has been created as an additional exit from the main synagogue and to facilitate a link to the Community Hall. The current door is metal and of a crude design, inappropriate for grade II\* building. Furthermore, the existing opening size does not meet current DDA and fire safety requirements.

The door opens into the existing passage and is not visible from the outside. It presents no visual impact upon the setting of the building. On the principal elevation, it is proposed to remove the unsuitable canopy, that is considered to be an inferior element to the setting of the building (blue and white stripped plastic material on a cheap aluminium framework, supported by crude brackets screwed into the brickwork). The forecourt will be re-paved and levelled to meet current DDA requirements.

**PPG 15 3.5 Issues:**

- (i) Importance of the buildings:*
- (ii) Particular physical features:*
- (iii) Extent to which proposed works would bring substantial benefits to the community, in particular by contributing to the economic regeneration of the area or enhancing its environment."*

***(i) Importance of the building, its intrinsic architectural and historic interest and rarity, in both national and local terms.***

Please see the history of the building (page 5)

**PPG 15 Para 3.5 (ii) 'Particular Physical Features'**

**Plan Form:** The main Synagogue building was originally designed to address West End Lane. It was repositioned to allow commercial exploitation of the retail frontage, but the plan form remained essentially the same. This derives from the particular liturgical requirements of this congregation which varies from that which is generally used within the United Synagogues. The requirements for worship which separates men and women, and general space requirements dictated the working plan. Expansion of the congregation demanded a series of further alterations and additions. These are not all ideal, and have affected the original purity of form, particularly at the entrance lobbies where there is now an awkward arrangement of stairs and circulation spaces at gallery level. The existing male toilets at ground level are also an unsympathetic later alteration. The form at ground and gallery levels remains very much as designed.

**Elevational treatment:** The front entrance elevation is of very high significance. The tower and flanking wings provide a powerful landmark presence in the immediate area. The high central polygonal roof is also a feature that can be



seen from West End Lane. The elevation is not as originally designed, having been extended at the wings, but the massing is still successful in leading the eye up to the tower. The brickwork and detailing are of a high order, well proportioned and with subtle articulation and embellishment which is used in an almost Ruskinian manner to adorn structural and functional requirements. No other elevations are fully visible, nor have they been in the past. However, the two side elevations have a simple dignity, with well-crafted detail of equal quality to that of the front.

**Internally:** The vast open space up to the dome resting on pendentives is an inspiring piece of architectural grandeur. The relationship with the ladies gallery and choir is well handled to ensure that none of the majesty of the space is compromised. This spatial mastery is of high significance. The main Synagogue was not decorated or embellished when constructed, but compared to other Synagogues of similar design ethos, it was probably intended for a suitable decorative treatment. However, the early interior perspectives do not indicate a decoration scheme. This programme of decoration started with stained glass windows of which there is now an extremely fine array and of great value. The service platform at the ark and the pulpit are alabaster, replacing the original one of oak. The central columns are also clad in alabaster at their bases, creating a very opulent effect.

**Fittings etc:** Virtually all the early or original joinery remains but the front entrance doors and the lighting have been replaced in the 1950/60s, in a contemporary manner. The seating has been altered and added, but is largely of an earlier period, but it is now in a parlous condition being much patched and repaired. The ceilings and walls remain unadorned with minimal decorative relief mouldings. The draft lobbies still retain their "copperlite" glazing.

***Para 3.5.iv: The extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community.***

The works will bring benefits to the community who worship at the Synagogue. The principle and overriding benefit, (that has a national dimension) is the preservation and sustainability of the Grade II\* Synagogue. This is the fundamental and only reason for the works.

**Preservation of the Grade II\* building:** The repair of the fabric will ensure, for the foreseeable future, the continued survival of the Synagogue in its original use.

**Disabled Access:** At present, the varieties of levels have precluded any disabled access to the Synagogue. There is not a lift, and there are 4 staircases.

The proposal includes introduction of disabled access to the Synagogue and a disabled toilet in addition to seating provision for the disabled members of the community.

#### 4.2 Use

##### **PPG 15 Para 3.10**

*"The best use will very often be the use for which the building was originally designed, and the continuation... of that use should certainly be the first option when the future of a building is considered."*

Response: In this instance, the Synagogue must be able to survive as a building to provide the focal point to allow the community or congregation to also survive. The proposed works will encourage the growth of the congregation, many of which are not enthusiastic about worshipping in a Synagogue afflicted by severely leaking roofs, decaying seats and no heating or acceptable toilets.

#### 4.3 Alterations, Extensions

##### **PPG 15 Para 3.12**

*"Alterations and Extensions...buildings already in well established uses... Changes need to be considered only in this context.... In judging the effect of any alteration or extension it is essential to have assessed the elements that make up the special interest of the building in question. They may comprise not only obvious visual features such as a decorative façade or, internally, staircases or decorated plaster ceilings, but the spaces and layout of the building and the archaeological or technological interest of the surviving structure and surfaces."*

Response: The alterations are needed to secure the future of the Synagogue. They will also provide the long needed re- conditioning of services. The "special interest" of the building will not be affected in any way.

##### **PPG 15 Para 3.13:**



*"Many listed buildings can sustain some degree of sensitive alteration...to accommodate continuing...uses"... "The merit of some new alterations...especially where they are generated within a secure and committed long-term ownership, should not be discounted."*

Response:

Continuing use of the Synagogue is the only reason for the proposed works. The continuing long term ownership (already over 100 years) is the prime concern and reason for the works. The alterations to allow disabled access and upgrade basic facilities have been sensitively formulated.

**PPG 15 - 3.15** states:

*"Achieving a proper balance between the special interest of a listed building and proposals for alterations... is demanding and should always be based on specialist expertise..."*

Response: A balance has been struck in this instance by ensuring that the proposed new work will not be of major impact. Specialist expertise has been engaged since the inception of the project, and will continue throughout. Flexibility and imagination have led to the generation of the project as a means of survival for the Synagogue building.

**4.4 Conclusion**

The proposals have been carefully considered to ensure repair of the fabric as the paramount concern. The alterations to provide modern facilities and disabled provisions are minimal. The works accord with all relevant parts of PPG15. The proposed works have been designed to ensure preservation of the Grade II\* listed building for perpetuity.

### Listing notice

Location: HAMPSTEAD, CAMDEN, GREATER LONDON

IoE number: 477064

Date listed: 25 SEP 1989

Date of last amendment: 25 SEP 1989

TQ2584NW	CAMDEN DENNINGTON PARK ROAD (South side) Hampstead Synagogue II*
798-1/47/306 25/09/89	

Synagogue. 1892-1901. by Delissa Joseph. Red brick with slate roofs. Plan of entrance hall to front of centralised auditorium. Eclectic French Gothic/Romanesque style. EXTERIOR: 3-stage central tower with tall hipped roof, moulded parapet and clasped buttresses continued as octagonal broached ogee-capped turrets. Stepped semicircular arched architrave to doorway; upper stages dominated by moulded semicircular arch with foliate capitals to engaged shafts of 3 orders flanking large window set over 2 order of shafts flanking interlaced arches over narrow lancets. Tower flanked by 2-storey blocks each having 4 round-arched lancets above moulded semicircular arched doorway; 2-storey outer blocks each with hood moulds over 2 round-arched windows to rear of single storey ranges each with 3 round-arched lancets. Central dome to rear has lunettes with graduated arched lights to central drum. INTERIOR: entrance hall with coffered ceiling, mosaic tile floor; 2-bay semicircular arched arcades with foliate capitals to outer bays with decorative wrought-iron balusters to staircases. Galleries flank polygonal-plan centre with ribs of bolection-panelled dome springing from cast-iron columns with waterleaf capitals supported on octagonal marble piers with moulded abaci, which support panelled balcony fronts to 3 sides. Barrel-vaulted "sanctuary" end with segmental-arched archivolt. Marble ark in Classical style, with decorative wrought-iron doors and overlight set in semicircular arch flanked by Ionic columns and quadrants terminated in coupled Ionic pilasters to dentilled entablature and balustraded parapet; marble pulpit in similar style with balusters to front and flanked by swept marble steps. Good stained glass.