

Holly Cottage, 12 The Mount, NW3 6SZ

Application for Planning Permission & Listed Building Consent

Heritage and Design and Access Statement

1.0. Historic background

1.1 The village of Hampstead has a special and unique character attributed to its topography and the Heath, as well as variation in size and quality of buildings and street patterns.

1.2 Hampstead is situated on the hills that extend across North London from Finchley Road to Highgate. Its unique layout has grown from its topography; dense clusters of streets and alleys, areas of grids and large open spaces. The skyline is significant as it can be viewed from other parts of London including the city centre.

1.3 The streetscape is mostly composed of small squares, steep lanes and passageways. There is a close and irregular grouping of the old buildings. The surrounding streets are mostly 19th century.

1.4 Many of the buildings are red and yellow brick with Arts & Crafts decorative features. Green hedges, foliage and lush gardens are part of its rich mix. Street architecture such as original lamp posts feature on many of the streets and lanes.

2. Setting

Holly Cottage is a Grade II listed semi-detached house situated on the west side of The Mount, leading from Heath Street up to Mount Square. The site lies within the Hampstead Conservation area and also within an Archaeological Priority Area.

The site sits mid-slope of the Mount with a large garden at a lower level than house, sloping upwards to the house. Holly Cottage shares a party wall with no. 11 and their elevations are very similar at the front. The boundary wall surrounding the garden faces a series of garages and mews houses. The rear of the house faces into a narrow courtyard formed by surrounding houses. A narrow passageway runs alongside the wall and east side of the house to the courtyard.

The front and side elevations of the house are visible from The Mount and the rear from a courtyard behind it. The house is one of a group of houses which are set behind front gardens with boundary walls. This street is very varied, with building of all sizes and ages and with a great variety of parapet and roof heights. Holly Cottage and the house to which it is attached, Caroline House, are not a pair of similar houses and they do not form a part of a unified group of buildings. Most houses appear to date from the 18th century, with many later alterations. The street patterns and pedestrian routes in the locality are typical of the Hampstead Conservation Area.

Holly Cottage is a three storey residential dwelling with a cellar under the pavement beside it. The date of its construction is unclear: the ground floor external walls are of brick but the external walls of the upper floors are timber framed. This timber frame is clad with weatherboarding on the flank and rear elevations. It is possible that the timber structure predates the C18 work.

The 'front elevation of the house, facing south down the garden, has cement-pointed plum stock brickwork of early C18 (c. 1730?) date, with lime-pointed gauged red brick flat arches. The eastern elevation at ground floor level is mainly plum stock brickwork, but the single-storey ground floor rear extension is of painted brickwork. Much of the front elevation was covered with ivy until recently.

The hipped roof over the east half of the house is tiled, while the west half of the roof has a slate slope at the rear and a flat asphalt-covered roof at the front, hidden behind a front parapet. Front elevation windows are timber framed sashes with partially exposed boxing. They have.

There is a handsome C18 doorcase at the front door, which is half glazed with bracketed open pediment and architraves.

The boundary wall is exposed plum stock brick, matching the front elevation of the house. There are three steps leading up to the garden door. There are a number of rain water, soil and gas pipes passing through and down the east flank wall.

All windows are C20, with a variety of glazing bars and detailing.

The painter Ford Maddox Brown lived in this house in 1883, and the house appears in the background of his 1852 painting 'Work'.

When the house was acquired by the current owners, there was almost no sign of any original internal fabric, apart from the early C18 staircase. An investigative survey, the findings from which were included in the documentation presented with the previous applications, revealed original panelling behind plasterboard in almost all rooms and this plasterboard has now been removed to expose the panelling.

3. Planning background

- 3.0. This application is supplementary to the Planning and Listed Building applications 2013/4097/P and 2013/4165/L, approved in 2013, for internal and external alterations to the house including replacing rooflight and windows, adding insulation behind the timber weatherboard cladding, addition of trellis/ fencing to garden wall, removal of modern studwork, alterations to internal walls and re-exposure of historic panelling.
- 3.1. A previous planning application had been submitted in 2003 regarding the garden and boundary wall.
- 3.2. The current proposals have been developed following discussions with the Planning and Conservation officer Victoria Pound.

4. Current status of the project

- 4.0. Following the approval of the previous application, all the plasterboard and insulation have been removed the original panelling behind has been revealed (see attached photo file). Most rooms have original panelling in them, but this requires significant repair. The conservation officer Victoria Pound has visited the site and inspected the panelling.

5. Design & Heritage Statement

5.0. External and internal proposals are as follows;

5.1. External Alterations

5.2. New Pitched Roof Section

The flat section of roof has an asphalt finish which is poorly detailed and would be difficult to repair or renew to current codes of practice; asphalt is not an appropriate material for a building of this nature. Likewise, because of the effect of the requirements of current leadwork codes and the resulting increased loads on the structure, replacement with lead is not a sensible option. The current proposal is therefore to construct a slate-covered pitched roof in place of the current flat roof, matching that at the rear, with lead gutter behind the front parapet. Differential weathering of the brickwork sloping along the west chimney indicates that in the past a pitched roof may have been there instead of the current flat section (see photo 22).

The photograph document image 9 shows the existing front elevation. The existing rear ridge or the existing vertical wall cannot be seen over the parapet. The top of the new pitch will reach the existing ridge. The new pitched roof will not be visible from any point on the ground. Re-instating a pitched roof would not, therefore, affect the character or appearance of the house.

5.3. Upgrading roof insulation

The current roof insulation is very minimal. Permission has been granted for the application of external insulation under the weatherboarding to the flank and rear walls, thereby increasing their thickness. In order to weather this at the top the eaves of the roofs above will need to be extended, necessitating stripping and recovering the roofs. We believe that it makes sense to add external insulation to the roof at the same time, thereby creating a continuous insulating blanket around the house. The existing roof tiles and slates will be re-used. Apart from the resulting slight increase in roof height there will be no effect on the character or appearance of the building.

5.4. Rooflights

It is currently very difficult to obtain access to inspect and maintain the roof gutter. Access conservation rooflights are proposed in the existing rear pitch and one in the new front pitch to provide access to both the front and rear gutters for maintenance. Neither of these will be visible from the street or any public open space.

5.5. Rear Elevation Windows

The four rear windows of are modern and do not contribute to the character of the house. It is proposed that these windows be replaced with new double glazed sash windows with glazing beads and profiles to match the original windows throughout the house. The windows are to be designed with reference to Romney's House on Holly Bush Hill, the only other house in the area with timber cladding, which has similar sized windows and recently received consent to replace them with sash windows. These new windows serve the staircase and bathrooms at the back of the house, so double glazing should not detract from the appearance of the house. Similar new double-glazed sashes at the rear elevations were approved for the nearby Romney's house.

6.0 Internal Alterations

6.1 Staircase Panelling

Recent investigations have revealed timber boarding around the staircase enclosure. This consists mainly of horizontal boarding of varying sizes, with small amounts of vertical boarding and some applied battens to replicate panelling. This boarding has evidently been taken off and refixed a number of times and it gives a slight feeling of oppression. In order to relieve this feeling, dado panelling is proposed throughout the staircase to match the existing plain panelling of the main rooms on each floor. In order to minimize any damage to the existing boarding the new panelling will be fixed to the floor and held in place at the top by the dado rail which will be screwed to the existing panelling.

6.2 Ground floor

The existing floor is C20 concrete, parts of which show signs of having previously been overlaid with wood parquet. It is proposed to replace this with a limecrete floor, which is a sustainable, breathable lime based floor slab with insulation. This will improve the thermal performance of the house, allowing underfloor heating in place of radiators, as well as improving the breathability of the structure.

7.0 Sustainability

- 7.1 The new rear windows will be double glazed with a low-E coating. The front windows will be draught proofed. The roof will be insulated to current building regulation standards. New insulation has been very carefully considered in order not to risk damaging or otherwise jeopardising the original historic fabric and will consist of eco-friendly breathable materials.

8.0 Impact assessment

- 8.1 The proposed changes will have little impact on the exterior views of the building from the street.
- 8.1 The proposed internal alterations have been modified slightly from those that received approval last year, following the discoveries after removal of the plasterboard, including necessary structural alterations and additional support.
- 8.2 The new panelling and roof will have a significant positive impact on this house.

9.0 Access Statement

- 9.1 No change is proposed to the current access of the building.

10.0 Summary

- 10.1 The current proposals aim to provide repair and refurbishment to the family house. They aim to enhance the overall character and significance of the building.

Roger Mears Architects

Sources consulted:

Images of England database for listed buildings/ English Heritage Archive

British Listed Buildings Website

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16 April 2014