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**41-42 Chester Terrace, London, NW1 4ND: Alterations to the ground floor sash windows with apron door**

**Design & Access Statement and Heritage Appraisal  
(To accompany Listed Building Consent Application)**

**June 2015**

**Introduction**

1. No. 41-42 Chester Terrace is a Grade I listed building (c1825), part of the grand-palace style terrace by John Nash, within the Regents Park Conservation Area in the Borough of Camden.
2. In June 2013 Listed Building Consent (2013/1888/L) and Planning Permission (2013/1426/P) have been granted for the conversion of two existing adjoining houses at Nos. 41 and 42 Chester Terrace to form a single family dwelling. The granted scheme has been implemented on 16th April 2014 with the start of the excavation and underpinning works.
3. Furthermore, a consent was granted for the subterranean development to the side of the building under the existing garden in September 2014 (LBC 2014/2938/L and PP 2014/2872/P).
4. Consent was also granted in December 2014 for Amendments to the approved applications 2013/1888/L and 2013/1426/P, including internal alterations and proposed changes to demolition (LBC 2014/5315/L and PP 2014/4977/P).
5. Following on from the previously granted permissions and their implementation on site started, Stephen Levrant: Heritage Architecture Ltd was commissioned to prepare a Design & Access Statement and Heritage Appraisal whose purpose is to provide heritage based evidence in support of the proposed alterations to the 2 no ground floor windows with the apron door. This statement complies with the requirements of the NPPF-National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) ("The Framework") and Local Planning policies in respect of Heritage issues.
6. This document should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
  - Architectural/Planning drawings by MMM Architects Ltd;
  - Architectural drawings by Stephen Levrant: Heritage Architecture Ltd;
  - Structural Engineer's drawing and detail by Sinclair Johnston;
  - Photos of the ground floor windows with the apron door to be altered.

## **Context**

7. Chester Terrace is located on the eastern boundary of Regents Park and No. 41-42 is at the northernmost end and separated from the terrace. The house fronts on to Chester Terrace with gardens to both sides and rear. The site is bounded to the north by Cumberland Place, to the east Chester Terrace, and to the west by Outer Circular. Regent's Park is situated to the west.
8. The property is within the Regent's Park Conservation Area within the Borough of Camden. The entirety of Chester Terrace is listed Grade I (under a single entry) and is additionally surrounded by a number of other listed buildings and the Grade I registered Regent's Park.
9. Nos 41 and 42, have been designed by John Nash, prince Regent's architect, built in 1825, by James Burton. The design is a Grand Palace style terrace comprising 37 houses and 5 semi detached houses. Chester Terrace has been the longest unbroken terrace that was built at the time of Regent's Park developments.
10. The interior of both houses have sustained considerable alteration and change particularly in the second half of the twentieth century. Other than the front façade hardly any of the original fabric remains.
11. In 2013 permission was granted (2013/1888/L and 2013/1426/P) to unify the two adjoining houses to form a single family dwelling together with internal alterations. In order to achieve this the new openings at the east end of the party/spine wall on all levels from the Ground Floor (Entrance Hall) to Third Floor (Landings) are proposed. All the openings are same width and same location (for details see enclosed Construction drawings and details by Sinclair Johnston, May 2015).
12. Following on from that in May 2015 a Listed Building Consent (2015/0938/L) was granted for repair and restoration of windows. The proposed works consist of the repair and overhaul of windows of historic interest, the replacement of some early sashes in poor repair and the replacement of modern sashes with new to match historic design and profile. In the Decision notice the officer acknowledged that *"Extensive research and recording has resulted in this submission which reflects what is now considered to be the least invasive or harmful approach and with the least loss of any remaining significant historic fabric. The special interest of the listed structure will be preserved, thereby preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the Listed Grade I building and the Regent's Park Conservation Area."*

## **Significance Assessment**

13. As recommended by NPPF (March 2012), proposals for the alteration or redevelopment of listed buildings or buildings within a Conservation Areas should be considered and be based on an understanding of the site's significance.
14. The concept and the design of the whole of Chester Terrace have architectural and historic interest in both national and local terms. The houses in Chester Terrace are listed for 'group value', being part of the composition of neo classical buildings built around Regent's Park.

15. The elevations remain very much as originally conceived and constructed, enhancing the evidential value of this property and its group value as a typical terrace development of the Regency period.
16. The special interest of the buildings would normally be expected to include the internal layout and finishes and fittings that formed part of the original construction that were contemporary with Nash's external fabric. However, the interior of the buildings and indeed the whole of Chester Terrace were entirely re-modelled and re-planned in the 1960's as part of The Louis de Soissons Partnership's design. Furthermore evidence shows that 41-42 Chester Terrace went through numerous alterations over the years, their internal layout changed to a great extent, the original proportionality and plan form are lost. No original fabric remains, apart from a party wall and the external walls. The significance of the interior and the internal layout is therefore minimal.
17. In summary, ground floor windows significance is as follows: generally original openings (high significance) with early round-arched window frames and glazing bars (high significance); mix of modern single glazing and early/late date panes and modern single plate glass (no and medium/high significance). Generally modern staff bead, cords and fittings of no significance throughout.

### **Present Proposal**

18. The proposed works that form part of this application have arisen from a need to provide clear headroom for access into the garden on both (South and North) elevations (W-G41-02 and W-G42-02).



Fig 1. W-G41-02 (external elevation)

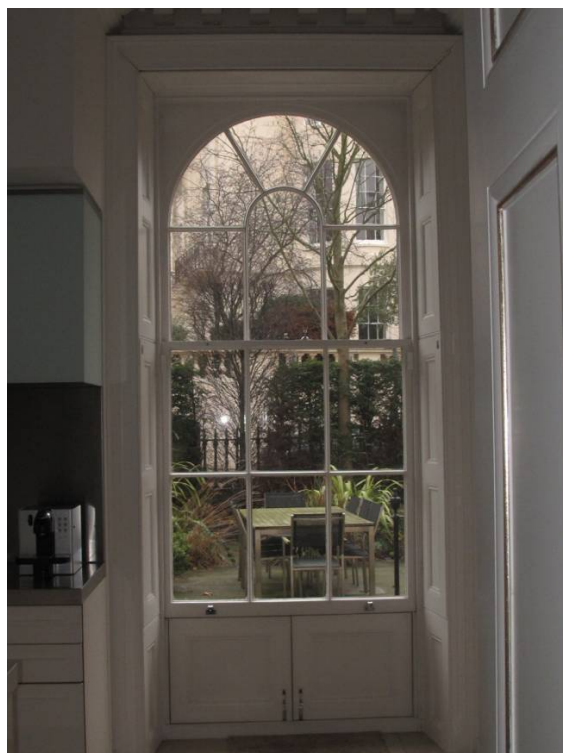


Fig 2. W-G41-02 (internal elevation)



Fig 3. W-G41-02 (detail)



Fig 4. W-G42-02 (external elevation)



Fig 5. W-G42-02 (internal elevation)



Fig 6. W-G42-02 (detail)

19. The existing round-arched 6-over-6 sash windows with the apron door are not original but are of historic interest because of its early frame, glazing bars and apron door. The staff bead, cords and fittings are modern and of no significance. Modern single plate glass is also of no significance. There are only three historic glass panes identified on the North elevation window (W-G41-02) which are to be retained.
20. The current consent (2015/0938/L) is for the general repair and overhaul of the windows and the replacement of the existing apron doors in poor condition to match historic profile and design (at W-G42-02). All the modern damaged/scratched panes of glass are to be replaced with single plate Crown glass with adhesive film to panes under 800mm to be applied.
21. As these two windows are the only access into the garden from the principal rooms on the Ground floor and as they are restricted in height (around 1.8m clear headroom when opened) the modification to the windows needed to be explored. We are therefore proposing to modify the sash window by increasing the height of the frame into the wall above, so that the top and bottom sash can be pushed higher up above the ceiling line and thus provide the clear headroom for access into the garden (see enclosed drawings by SLHA and Sinclair Johnston for more details).
22. All the modified or replaced details are to match historic design and profile. Externally there will be no change to the appearance of the windows or the building elevation.

#### **Pre-Application Advice (Apr/May 2015)**

23. The alternative solutions for the garden windows modification and garden access have been discussed by exchange of letters/emails with the Local Planning Authority (Antonia Powell, Senior Planner) and The Crown Estate (Paul Prentice)
24. They were in principal “*open to consider alternative proposals*” and supportive in principle of the proposed modifications.

25. The LPA officer acknowledged that *“the low height of the open window could cause some interference with garden access...”* however *“the existing window is of high significance so any adaptation would have to be extremely sensitive.”*
26. The Crown Estate *“agreed in principle to the alteration of the housing of the ground floor sash window to provide clear headroom for access into the garden, subject to detail.”*

### **Impact Assessment and Justification Statement**

27. This assessment aims to appraise the impact of the proposal on the special interest of the heritage asset within the site: No. 41-42 Chester Terrace. Furthermore, the assessment considers the impact of the proposed works on the Grade I listed house and the Regents Park Conservation Area; and on the setting of the designated and non-designated heritage assets within and surrounding the site.
28. The impact assessment on the special interest of the heritage asset and the conservation area also takes into account whether the proposal causes substantial or less than substantial harm by altering or eroding the authenticity and the heritage values identified on the assets.
29. The overall impact of the proposed development on the identified heritage asset is considered to be **minor/beneficial**.
30. Due to the restrictive access into the garden from the principal rooms on the ground floor the proposed modifications to increase the headroom are considered to be essential in order to sustain the continued use and the long term conservation of the heritage asset.
31. The minor intervention on the historic building fabric is limited only to two ground floor windows with apron door. The proposed modifications will not be visible, as they are of the structural/functional nature. These are necessary functional interventions that are intended to be practically reversible and of high quality.
32. Following the revision of the alternative proposals and further site investigation, we consider that these proposed works will not have an adverse effect on the special interest and appearance of the main house and its setting, nor the character of the Regents Park Conservation Area and are consistent with the spirit of local policies and national conservation principles, particularly NPPF policy principles guiding the determination of applications for consent relating to all heritage assets.
33. The proposed alterations will not adversely alter the special interest of the house at No41-42 Chester Terrace. Surveys, investigations, recordings and documentary research/analysis have been undertaken to inform the design. The assessments and analyses that have been carried out have not only informed the design process, but are also believed to be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage assets and its setting.
34. Although the proposal is considered to have minor impact on the historic building fabric, the benefits that thus accrue, as propounded in the PPS 5 Good Practice Advice notes include, sustaining its significance as a heritage asset; optimum viable use of the heritage asset in support of its long term conservation; the enhanced status makes a

positive contribution to the economic vitality and sustains the unique attributes of the Crown Estate community.

35. It is, therefore, considered that the proposed modification to the sash garden windows would have a minor and beneficial impact on the special interest of the Listed Building. The holistic approach to the windows of Nos 41-42 would contribute to the group value of the terrace and therefore enhance the special architectural significance of the building and the Conservation Area.

### **Conclusion**

36. The proposed modifications to the sash windows have been designed to the highest architectural standards, and will be constructed to exacting conservation requirements. The works are necessary in order to enhance access into the garden from the living quarters and provide for its future through achieving present day acceptable standards in one of the most affluent areas of London.
37. English Heritage (now Historic England) "Conservation Principles" and the NPPF define conservation as "managing change". Buildings, designated or undesignated heritage assets, are dynamic environments that have been subject to change and in order to remain a sustainable, welcoming and pleasing place they will continue to change.
38. Furthermore, the applicant has recognised the importance of undertaking investigations and analysis necessary for the assessment of the effects of the proposed works on the special interest of heritage assets. This approach has been both beneficial with regard to the consideration of alternatives and important with regard to the process of acknowledging the best practice guidance as outlined in NPPF.
39. It is considered that the proposed modifications are acceptable in conservation terms. It is substantiated by the research undertaken as well as the Windows Schedule submitted as part of the 2015 application for the repair and restoration of windows (2015/0938/L).
40. The significance of the heritage asset and the surrounding Conservation Area is not challenged. The proposal results in degrees of **impact** across the site and within its settings which are considered to be **minor and beneficial** and would assist in the long-term use of the heritage asset.
41. It is considered that the proposed works cause "**no harm**". If, however the officer may find that the proposals do cause a degree of harm, we believe that this cannot be greater than 'less than substantial harm'. In which case the proposal will be clearly balanced by the following public benefits: the optimal viable use of the property developed through a sensitive and sympathetic design that maximises the intrinsic qualities of the existing building, further revealing its heritage value and enhancing the quality of its setting.
42. It is therefore concluded that the proposed works satisfy the relevant clauses of the NPPF. These are consistent with the spirit of local policies and national conservation principles and therefore there must be a presumption for its approval.

**Stephen Levrant: Heritage Architecture  
Architects and Heritage Asset Consultants**