

Heritage, Planning and Design & Access Statement

June 2015

Introduction

1. This Statement accompanies a planning and listed building consent submission to the LB Camden for internal alterations at upper ground floor, first floor and loft floor; alterations to the existing dormer window on side elevation; addition of a conservation style rooflight; painting of the house; works to strengthen and repair the building, with repair and renovation of windows, rear balconies and walls to the property.
2. The Statement has been prepared in accordance with guidance contained in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and the Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (2014). Regard has been paid to the Historic England publication on Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008). This Statement has been prepared by Christian Leigh BSc(Hons), MPhil (Dist), MRTPI, who has previously undertaken work on Grade I, II* and II properties within central London and the South East, and prepared advice relating to conservation area designations.
3. Paragraph 128 of the NPPF states that applications for consent affecting heritage assets should be accompanied by a description of the significance of the heritage asset affected and their contribution to their setting of that significance. This assessment was prepared following a review of the statutory records for the property, published documentation and a site visit.

History of the property

4. The subject property forms part of a group of listed buildings, being 13-20 Eton Villas, which were listed in 1974. The list description reads as follows:

*TQ2784NE
ETON VILLAS
798-1/52/416 (East side) 14/05/74
Nos.13-20 (Consecutive)*

GV II

8 semi-detached villas. c1849. By John Shaw. For Eton College. Built by S Cuming. Stucco, ground floors channelled, upper floors as ashlar; stucco quoins. Hipped slated roofs with dormers and bracketed eaves; Nos 13 & 14 with cornice and blocking course. 2 storeys, attics and semi-basements. 2 windows each. Prostyle porticoes with round-arched side openings; doorways with fanlights and panelled doors (some part glazed) approached by steps. Recessed, architraved, mostly tripartite sashes; ground floors with console bracketed cornices. INTERIORS: not inspected.

5. The land upon which the current houses is built was owned by Eton College since 1449, when it was given to the estate of the College by Henry VI as farmland. However, as noted in the listing, the land was not actually developed until the 19th Century, and the villas built in 1849. The land was not fully built until the end of the Century.
6. The group of villas is mentioned in *A History of the County of Middlesex: Vol 9* (1989). This attributes the building of the properties and the 'villa' design to the builder Samuel Cumming, who had taken a sublease from William Wynn; John Shaw (mentioned in the list extract) being the surveyor for the area. The *History* notes that a number of painters, architects and engravers lived in the Villas after they were built, though not at No. 16.
7. The property lies within the wider Eton Conservation Area, designated in 1973. The Council's adopted Conservation Area Statement (2002) identifies the character of this part of the Area as follows:

The east side of Eton Villas (north) comprises eight semi-detached villas of similar plan. They date from c1850. The properties are on two main storeys plus lower ground and attic. They are faced in stucco with projecting porches supported on square section columns. Detailing, where it survives, is relatively simple (these being from that part of the Victorian age when the simplicity of Georgian domestic architecture was still prevalent). Roof form is generally hipped with eaves but Nos.13 and 14 Eton Villas at the junction with Eton Road have a parapet and cornice with a concealed pitch behind.

8. The published literature therefore focuses on the generally consistent appearance of the group of the Eton Villas houses, which derives from the construction as a group at the same time by the same architect. The interiors of the buildings have not been assessed in the published documentation.
9. The property of No. 16 is divided into a separate flat on the lower ground floor, with its own separate entrance. There is no longer an internal staircase to the lower ground floor. There are currently refurbishment works being undertaken to that lower ground floor flat.

The whole property has suffered from serious neglect over many years. Accompanying this submission is surveyor's report that discusses the structural defects of the building. This is readily apparent on site and will need remedial work to ensure the long-term stability of the building.

10. Other Eton Villas properties have been altered in the past. This can be seen from the street, and in particular the provision of new dormer windows to the side elevation. The planning records at the Council also confirms that many of these changes have been permitted by the Council, namely:

- 8 Eton Villas: Dormer windows to property. Granted 2001.
- 9 Eton Villas: Internal works to all levels of the house. Granted 2004 (2004/2974/L)
- 13 Eton Villas: Installation of dormer and erection of a single storey rear extension with terrace over and external stair to the garden. Internal alterations including removal of walls to the first floor, construction of a bathroom between the two bedrooms to the second floor and alterations to the staircase.
- 14 Eton Villas: Installation of roof dormers and rooflight. Erection of a single storey rear extension with balcony and external stair to the garden. Internal alterations. Granted 2006 (ref. 2006/1091/P)
- 15 Eton Villas: Installation and repositioning of roof dormer and rooflights. Widening external doors to the rear elevation. Widening rear balcony and relocating external stair to rear garden. Internal alterations. Granted 2007 (2007/4766/P)
- 17 Eton Villas: Installation of a roof dormer, rooflight and roof lantern. Widening external doors to the rear elevation. Construction of a rear balcony and external stair to the garden. Internal alterations. Granted 2004 (2003/3273/P)
- 19 Eton Villas: Internal alterations and enlargement of dormer on side elevation. Granted 2013 (2013/6989/P)

11. The changes were all permitted when the properties were listed and within the conservation area, ie the policy situation was essentially that which currently exists. They are changes that have generally been sensitive to the host property and the wider area, with the group value of the buildings remaining.

Appraisal of property and proposed works

12. The property forms part of an important group within the conservation area that together still displays the good, consistent character of their original form. This group contributes to the area, and is clearly of positive value to the Conservation Area.
13. That external appearance is the greatest significance to the property. This is confirmed by the published literature that does not refer to the interior of the building. However, the quality of the external appearance to the building is compromised substantially due to the poor structural condition. The defects are easily apparent from public views. It is clear that if those defects are not rectified then the building will continue to deteriorate. Such deterioration would have seriously harmful effects upon the significance of the building and the character and appearance of the Area.
14. The works now proposed are to the upper floor property and would see relatively limited works to the interior of the building. At upper ground floor there would be the reintroduction of original openings between the front and rear rooms and to the hallway. The drawings show that original fireplaces would be reinstated and original coving restored or replaced, to match.
15. At first floor the changes would see the removal of later stud partitioning to the rear, which would improve the appreciation and layout for the second bedroom. To facilitate a modern layout for the house, the rear bedroom area would be divided. This would be through a lightweight partition, which is a reversible change. Other changes show the reintroduction of original doors, or the closing of doors which, provided the original form of the door remains, are reversible changes.
16. The works to the loft space are small scale to the interior, which facilitate the enlarged side dormer. This will allow improved internal accommodation to the property and provision of bedrooms which, it should be noted, remains with a flat on the lower ground floor.
17. The main external works are restricted to the enlarged side dormer. Alterations and enlargements to the side dormer windows have occurred on a number of nearby Eton Villas houses, as noted earlier. The submitted scheme shows this to be undertaken in a traditional fashion, as seen at other buildings including the adjacent house. The proportions satisfy the Council's requirements for dormer windows, in that the roof slope would remain predominately open and undeveloped and in proportion to both the roof space and the other dormer windows. It is evident that significant repair and reconstruction works will be necessary to the roof in any event, so such works would be suited to the altered roof.
18. The other external works would be matters to strengthen and repair the building. This includes the repair of cracking and works relating to subsidence. It is proposed to paint the house, to match the adjoining semi-detached house. The rear balconies would be repaired, as would stonework. Repair and renovation of original sash windows is proposed. As part of the works the building would be brought up to modern standards of insulation and efficiency, which are wider sustainability benefits.

Summary

19. The heritage significance of the property arises due to the exterior appearance and the group value of the listed building, as part of the row of the Eton Villas houses. This contributes to the Conservation Area. The interior of the building is of less significance, notwithstanding the inclusion on the statutory list.
20. The proposed changes to the interior of the property are appropriate and sensitive. A good degree of preservation is shown to the layout and ornamentation within the property, including restoration and renovation of ornamentation. Where work is proposed it is reversible.
21. The works to the exterior of the building would see notable improvements to the appearance, whilst the enlarged dormer reflects those seen in the area. There are also proposed to be important structural works that are necessary to ensure the long term stability of the building. As this is a semi-detached house, then clearly there are implications for the adjoining property should these repairs not be undertaken. The works would lead to sustainability enhancements to the building.
22. It is considered the works would lead to no harm to the significance of the building and, on balance, would be an enhancement to significance due to the benefits arising as set out above. This would consequently lead to an enhancement to the Conservation Area and to the heritage asset, which would be a public benefit.
23. It is concluded that these works would therefore be consistent with the objectives set out in paragraph 131 of the NPPF, namely:
 - *'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'*. The works would enhance the significance of the property; and
 - *'the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness'*. The works would enhance the character and appearance of the building through the renovation of the property.
24. The works would not lead to any harm to the significance of the heritage asset, and so – consistent with the guidance contained in paragraph 017 of the Planning Practice Guidance – the provisions of paragraphs 133 and 134 of the NPPF would not apply.
25. It is therefore concluded the works would have a positive effect upon the listed building, and so would be consistent with the NPPF. There would also be no conflict with Policies CS5, CS13, CS14, DP22, DP24, DP25 and DP26 of the Core Strategy and Development Policies document, and guidance in the Conservation Area Statement and supplementary guidance on Design CPG1.

Photographs of property



Front elevation of property, showing poor condition to elevation, windows and steps



View of other Eton Villas properties, which includes views of larger dormer windows to side roof elevations



Front room at upper ground floor, showing cornice that will be retained and renovated, and shutters to be retained



Cornice in rear room that has been damaged, to be repaired



View from roof towards side dormer at No. 17, which it is proposed to broadly replicate