

# **Heritage Statement**

1 Fitzroy Road, Camden, London, NW1  
8TU

June 2016

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Greg and Eve Cohen ('the applicant'), to provide relevant information to the local planning authority with regard to heritage impacts associated with application proposals for works of amalgamation and various alterations to no. 1 Fitzroy Road ('the Site'), an unlisted building located within Primrose Hill Conservation Area. A map of the conservation area boundary is included at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 This application is made following pre-application discussions<sup>1</sup> with Camden Council and engagement with the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Advisory Committee (PHCAAC). The current scheme design has been refined in response to a number of issues raised by the council officer and to reduce any perceived impact upon the character or appearance of Primrose Hill Conservation Area.
- 1.3 The requirement for this report derives from the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which places a duty upon the local planning authority in determining applications for development affecting conservation areas to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.
- 1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') provides the Government's national planning policy for the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements it sets out that:
- "In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance."*<sup>2</sup>
- 1.5 Paragraph 129 then sets out that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of heritage assets that may be affected by proposals. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of proposals in order to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 1.6 In accordance with these legislative and policy requirements, Section 2 of this report firstly identifies the relevant heritage assets within the Site and its vicinity that may be affected by the impact of the proposals.
- 1.7 Section 3 then provides an appropriate heritage assessment of the special interest of the designated heritage asset of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area, in terms of its historical development and character and appearance. This includes an assessment of the contribution of the Site, as an element within the conservation area, to its overall significance. This assessment is undertaken on the basis of on-site visual survey,

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<sup>1</sup> Ref, 2015/6028/PRE

<sup>2</sup> DCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) 2012 – para.128

focused archival research and existing published information. Importantly, this is proportionate to the importance of the identified heritage asset.

- 1.8 Section 4 considers the impact of the proposed development upon the significance of the conservation area, in light of the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy in the Framework and supported by National Planning Practice Guidance, and local planning policy and guidance for the historic environment, as appropriate. The relevant legislative and policy context for heritage assets is set out in more detail at Appendix 2.
- 1.9 Section 5 provides a summary of the findings.

## 2. Heritage Assets

### Introduction

- 2.1 The Framework defines a heritage asset as:

*“A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.”<sup>3</sup>*

### Designated Heritage Assets

- 2.2 Designated Heritage Assets are those which possesses a level of heritage interest that justifies designation and are then subject to particular procedures in planning decisions that involve them.

#### Conservation Area: Primrose Hill

- 2.3 No. 1 Fitzroy Road is located within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. The Primrose Hill Conservation Area was first designated on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1971, and subsequently extended on 18<sup>th</sup> June 1985. The Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement was adopted in December 2000. The Site is located within Sub-Area 2: Central Area. The document outlined the historic development of the area, and identifies and appraises the character of each of the sub-areas within the conservation area. It also provides guidance and recommendations on its preservation and enhancement.

### Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 2.4 The Framework<sup>4</sup> identifies that heritage assets include both designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

#### Local List

- 2.5 The Council adopted their Local List on 21st January 2015. There are no locally listed buildings, which would be affected by the application proposals. Accordingly, it is not necessary to consider them further in this report.

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<sup>3</sup> DCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) – Annex 2: Glossary

<sup>4</sup> DCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) – Annex 2: Glossary

# 3. Significance of the Heritage Asset

## Introduction

3.1 The Framework defines the significance of a heritage asset as:

*“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”<sup>5</sup>*

3.2 Conservation areas are designated if they are of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.<sup>6</sup> Historic England has published an advice note in respect of conservation areas and this provides a framework for the appraisal and assessment of the special interest and significance of a conservation area, and also provides advice on how to identify whether a building contributes positively to the character or appearance.<sup>7</sup>

## Assessment

3.3 The following assessment of the significance of Primrose Hill Conservation Area and its special interest is proportionate to its importance and provides a sufficient level of description to understand the impact of the proposals on its significance, given their nature and extent. This assessment is based on existing published information, including the adopted Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement, archival research and on-site visual survey.

## Primrose Hill Conservation Area

### *Introduction*

3.4 The conservation area is, for the most part, located on land owned by Lord Southampton, while land to the north and west was owned by Eton College, and to the south, by the Crown Estate. In the Medieval period, the area covered by the Primrose Hill Conservation Area was agricultural land. The land ownership of the area was irregular and largely defined by field boundaries and small streams. It was not until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century that extensive development of the area began, in response to the expansion of London as both a trade centre and fashionable place to live.

### *Historic Development*

3.5 The first major development was the Regent’s Canal, which linked the Grand Canal Junction at Paddington and London Docks. The completion of the canal in 1820 was followed by proposals to develop Lord Southampton’s land for housing. An estate was envisaged of large suburban villas with substantial gardens.

3.6 The estate was developed in the 1840s, after the building of the London and Birmingham Railway in the 1830s. In 1840, the Southampton Estate was sold in

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<sup>5</sup> DCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) – Annex 2: Glossary

<sup>6</sup> HMSO, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 – Section 69(1) (a)

<sup>7</sup> Historic England, Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management, 2016

freehold portions for development. The sale map shows a grand estate consisting of large semi-detached and detached villas located in generous gardens. The layout reflects the current street pattern of the area and incorporates the sweeping curves of the villa development, with the addition of a formal intersection and garden at the centre.

- 3.7 Development occurred sporadically throughout the 1840s. During this time, the last remaining strip of Crown land to the north of Nash's Regent's Park was developed as villas, involving the purchase of small lots of land from various owners of the Southampton freeholds. Smaller developments had also been completed, and included a pair of semi-detached villas at the north end of Fitzroy Road (the Site), and a villa terrace at the north end of Regent's Park Road. The majority of these developments took the form of villas set in their own grounds, or grand terrace compositions with formal landscaped areas. This development, however, differed considerably from that shown in the original plans for the area. The houses were less grand and the pattern of development much denser than had been envisaged.
- 3.8 By 1860, the development of properties of a villa typology had extended westwards along Regent's Park Road, opposite Primrose Hill Park. Elsewhere, however, the large villas had been abandoned for more formal terrace compositions, following a variety of styles. The new layout included symmetrical terraces; St George's Terrace and Chamberlain Street; a formal square, Chalcot Square; and, a sweeping crescent, Chalcot Crescent.
- 3.9 The importance of the railway grew throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A number of businesses were located within easy distance of the railway, with access also to Gloucester Avenue. As a consequence of the growth of the railway and associated activities, noise, vibration and smoke pollution increased. It became apparent that grand villas of the earlier type could not be placed near the railway line and instead, simple terraces were erected in Gloucester Avenue and adjoining streets.
- 3.10 By 1870, the land of the Southampton Estate had been largely developed. Whilst the wide roads of the villa layout were retained, the density of development, particularly in the later phases, was significantly higher than originally intended, particularly in locations close to the railway line. Further streets and mews buildings were introduced to the planned layout, such as Kingstown Street (then Fitzroy Place), Edis Street (then Eton Street) and Egbert Street. These later developments were of regular residential terraces. At the rears of these properties, the long villa gardens were exchanged for small gardens backing onto industrial units or stables.
- 3.11 Manufacturing and the arts played a large part in the development of the conservation area. Alongside Camden Town and Kentish Town, the Primrose Hill area became a centre for piano manufacturing. The area became well known for its association with the arts, and in 1877 a group of 12 artists' studios, the "Primrose Hill Studios", was erected by Alfred Healey.
- 3.12 The final built form of the conservation area varied considerably from what was originally intended by the Southampton Estate. The neighbouring railway line had a significant impact upon the physical layout and environmental quality of the area. This was apparent as many of the buildings which were located close to the railway fell into disrepair, during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

- 3.13 This was a trend that was only reversed on electrification of the railway line in the 1970s. Other factors included the increased pressure for development due to the rapid growth of London, changing architectural tastes and the differences in land ownership across the Southampton freehold.
- 3.14 In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the estate experienced a number of changes. Second World War bomb damage required substantial repairs to a number of buildings, whilst others were completely destroyed. Redevelopment of bomb sites occurred throughout the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Other sporadic developments occurred throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Character and Appearance**

- 3.15 As defined by the conservation area audit, the Site is located within Sub-Area 2: Central Area. This sub area is located to the centre of the Conservation Area and is largely flat with a small incline from south east to northwest. It is neighboured to the north by the railway line and to the south east by Regent's Canal.
- 3.16 The area is urban in character with a high density of development with sporadic areas of greenery. It is dominated by long terraces of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century houses that are set back from the pavement with small lightwells and railings to basement areas, although there are some earlier and later examples.
- 3.17 The building stock within this part of the conservation area is varied and consists of the following main typologies:
- Mid-Victorian Residential Terraces: normally of at least five buildings in length with a uniform architectural character. Generally, the terraces are three storeys in height with a raised ground floor set over a lower ground floor with a lightwell defined by railings. The terraces are constructed of London stock brick with applied stucco decoration (normally painted white/cream) to the front elevations and plainer rear elevations. The principal elevations are normally flat, with stucco clad ground floor, the principal rooms at first floor and secondary rooms above, terminated by a simple cornice and parapet.
  - Late Victorian Terraces: these are generally located at the southern end of Fitzroy Road and date from the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These properties have distinctive architectural features to the front elevation including shallow pitched roofs with overhanging eaves, prominent chimney stacks, deeply recessed front doors, and bay windows at ground and basement levels with Italianate column details.
  - Commercial Premises: A number of terraces were designed to accommodate retail uses, small businesses and public houses on the lower floors, with residential accommodation above. They are located primarily within the small Neighbourhood Shopping Centres to Chalcot Road, Gloucester Avenue, Princess Road and Regent's Park Road whilst the public houses are located on prominent corner sites. Retail and small business units generally occupy a standard width terrace property or corner property, incorporating an original framework and shopfront at ground floor level, and front forecourt (as opposed to basement lightwell) with glazed pavement lights. 19<sup>th</sup> century public houses are of a grander



scale and architectural character and are treated in a more architecturally elaborate manner, particularly the pub frontage, which are highly decorative.

- Late 19<sup>th</sup> century 'Anomalies': these buildings are late Victorian examples of polychromatic brickwork with yellow London stocks enriched with the use of red, brown and glazed bricks to form decorative bands, window surrounds and parapets. Examples of these include Primrose Hill School and Primrose Hill Studios.

3.18 In terms of layout, the conservation area contains a hierarchy of streets and spaces:

- Principal routes (and square)
- Secondary routes
- Tertiary routes consisting of alleyways and 'block infills'

3.19 The principal roads include Chalcot Road, Gloucester Avenue, Fitzroy Road and Princess Road. These roads intersect to form a grid pattern and are largely straight, with the exceptions of Princess Road, which curves to form a small crescent at its southern end and Gloucester Avenue, which then curves sharply and rises at its north end. These roads are of a consistently generous width with wide pavements and central street parking.

3.20 The width of the principal roads, and the numerous intersections, allow long views of buildings within these streets and adjoining streets. Large groups of terraced properties are visible from most vantage points and features such as roof extensions (where they exist) are frequently prominent. Other significant views are of the rears of terraces that face onto principal roads and their small, narrow garden spaces. These gardens often contain mature trees and are bounded by medium height brick walls that side on to secondary roads and alleyways.

3.21 Edis Street and Egbert Street are secondary streets, which have a strong urban character and corresponding high degree of enclosure. These streets are narrow with three storey terrace houses on both sides and views terminated by industrial and residential buildings.

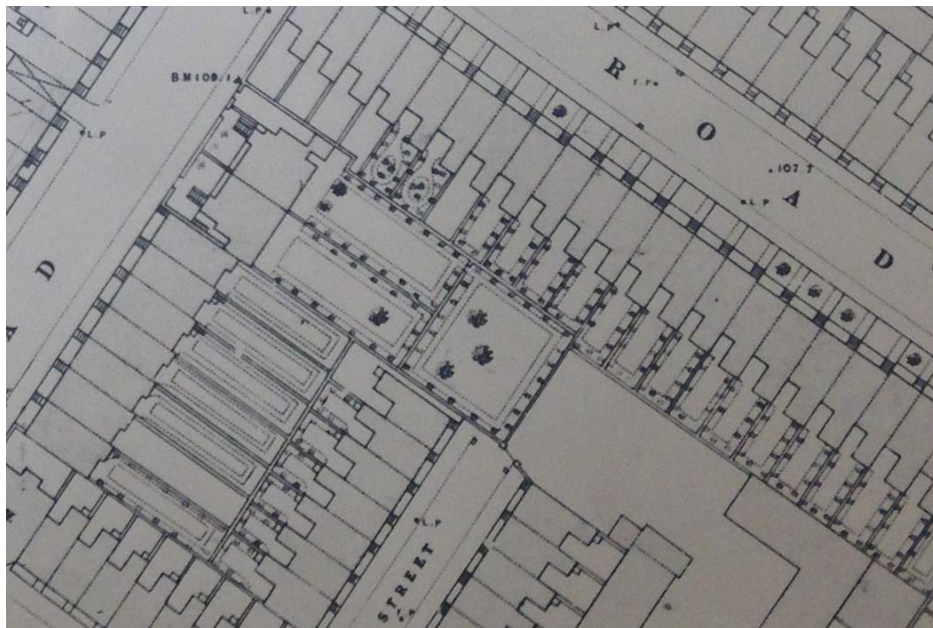
3.22 The majority of land at the centre of the blocks and neighbouring the railway line is occupied by buildings that accommodate a variety of uses, including industry, offices, artist's studios and residential accommodation. These buildings vary in age and style, but are generally lower in height than the surrounding terrace properties. They are arranged around small enclosed courtyards, or gardens, which are accessed from the main highway by a narrow alleyway. These alleyway accesses are generally contemporary with the 19<sup>th</sup> century development of the area and are either located discretely between the residential terrace properties on the main roads or through the terraces via gated archways.

3.23 The prevailing urban and densely developed character of this part of the conservation area is reinforced by the limited number of street trees found on principal and secondary roads. Moreover, private trees are limited mainly to rear gardens and the front gardens

of a number of properties on the south side of Gloucester Avenue. The limited number of trees means on the principal streets creates unimpeded, long views towards distant trees or open spaces. At the east end of Fitzroy Road, the views are blocked by the strong visual barrier of the railway line with glimpses of the Roundhouse building beyond. These elements contrast strongly with the predominantly domestic architectural character and scale of the conservation area.

***Contribution of the Site to the Significance of the Conservation Area***

- 3.24 Nos.1 and 3 Fitzroy Road have their origins c. 1840 prior to the rapid, terraced development of the area from the 1860s onwards. Whether the builder of these properties intended them to form part of a group of similarly designed villas is not clear from the archive information, however, the rapid, urban development of the area soon increased the pressure for development with a shift to the erection of terraced houses. In that regard, the houses contribute positively to the significance of this part of the conservation area as part of an earlier, contrasting phase of development.
- 3.25 Historically, the properties benefited from long, deep gardens as well as what appears to be a communal garden space to the rear (as shown on the 1873 Ordnance Survey (OS) Map). Otherwise, the properties were tightly constrained by the surrounding terraced development. The properties appear to have been extended to the sides by this date.



*Figure 3.1: 1873 OS Map*

- 3.26 By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (recorded on the 1894 OS map), the 'shared' garden no longer formed part of the domestic curtilage associated with the houses and was seemingly occupied by buildings/structures associated with the pianoforte works to the rear (now Utopia Village). The long, deep rear gardens were, however, still extant and associated with the houses. An ancillary structure had been erected in the rear garden of No.1 during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was referred to as a 'studio' on a 1919 drainage plan.

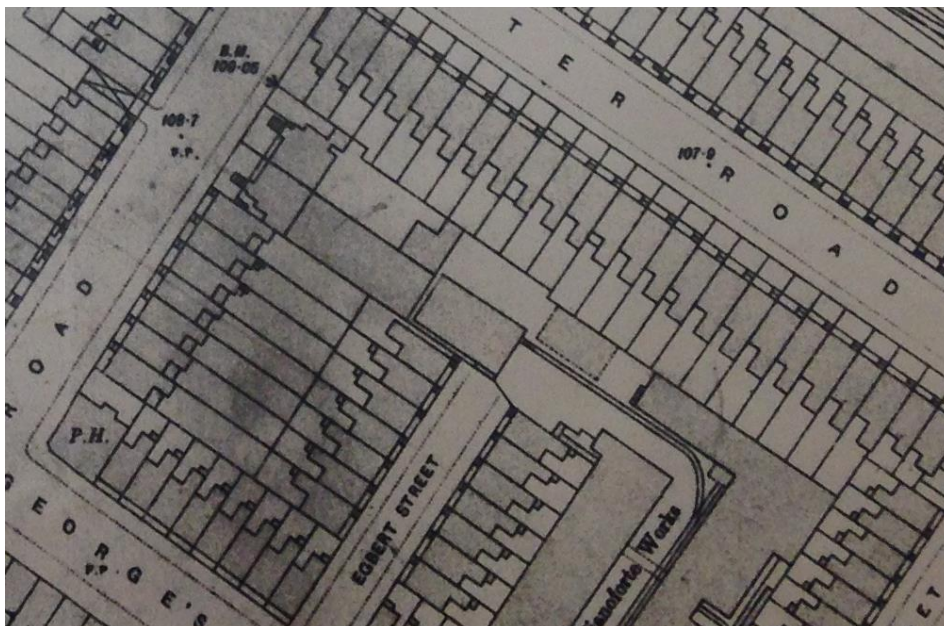


Figure 3.2: 1894 OS Map

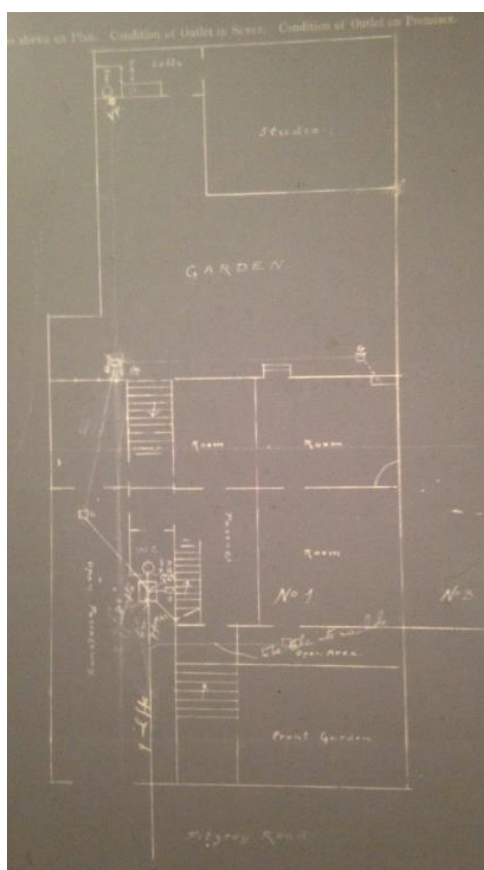


Figure 3.3: 1919 Drainage Plan

3.27 The industrial complex now known as Utopia Village continued to develop and expand during the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and by c.1951/52 (reflected on the 1952 OS Map), acquired a large proportion of the rear gardens of the two properties to facilitate the

piecemeal development of buildings and structures associated with its use as a chemical works. The side extension to No.1 had been rebuilt/remodelled by this point. A 1966 building plan associated with the factory, illustrates the consolidation of the factory complex and the erection of a large building (shown as A on the plan) to the rear of the two buildings. As a consequence of this piecemeal expansion, the properties now retain much denuded domestic plots with very shallow rear gardens and a tightly constrained spatial quality. This disposition is urban in character and generally at odds with the more generous, suburban character associated with this form of early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century development, even in more urban locations.

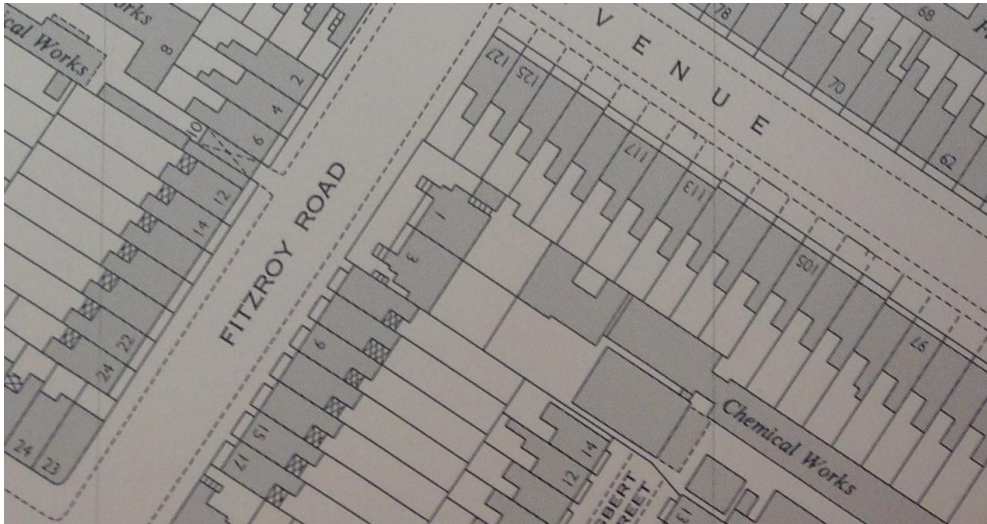


Figure 3.4: 1952 OS Map

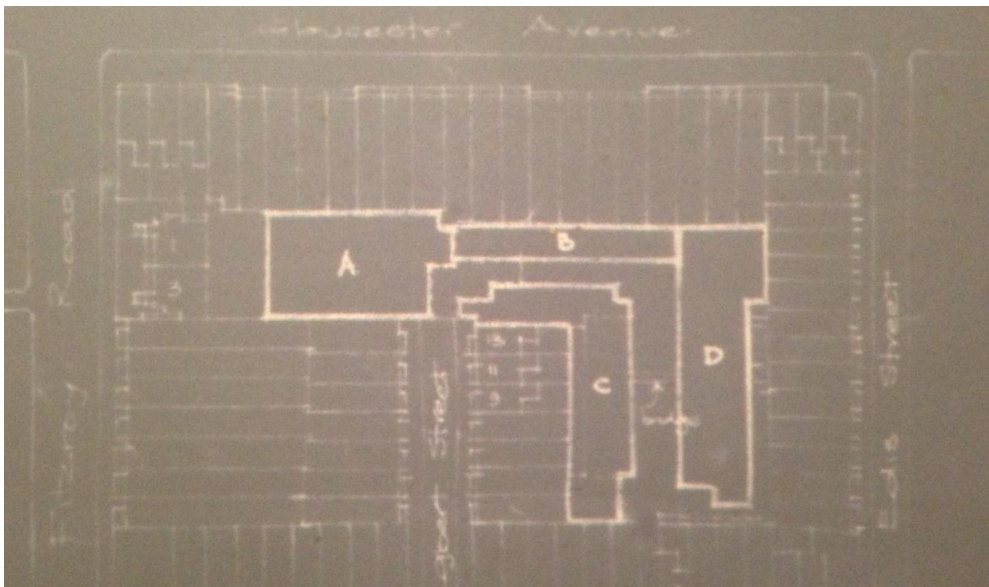


Figure 3.5: 1966 Building Plan

- 3.28 As existing, the Site forms one half of a pair of semi-detached mid-19<sup>th</sup> century villas. The houses are constructed of yellow stock brick with a shallow slate clad hipped roof with a central chimneystack. The existing fenestration to the front elevation takes the form of traditional timber sash windows with margin lights. No.1 retains its original

panelled front door. Whilst the two properties are unified as part of a single architectural composition, the division between the two buildings is clearly evident on the front elevation through the central, axially placed recessed channel and the projecting end entrance bays with simple porches. It is this overall character as a pair of domestic villas, which remains strongly legible, and the contrast with the denser, urban character of the adjoining terraces that is the principal contribution of the Site to the character or appearance of the conservation area.



*Figure 3.6: Front Elevation of Nos.1 & 3 Fitzroy Road*

- 3.29 Both properties have acquired a range of side extensions. Those to No.3 are of seemingly late 20<sup>th</sup> century date, are painted white and set back from the front elevation in the tight gap with the adjoining terrace. The existing side extension to No.1 is, however, very different in form, appearance and relationship to the parent property. It dates from the mid- 20<sup>th</sup> century and accommodates a garage at lower ground floor level with ancillary accommodation above. To facilitate access to the garage extension it was necessary to lower the ground levels associated with the side/front garden, which is now a concrete slab. Through these changes in level, the extension is effectively two storeys in height, and whilst set back from the front elevation of the building, extends to the property boundary and incorporates part of the altered garden wall associated with the terraced properties fronting Gloucester Road. The existing side extensions to both properties and the change in ground levels to No.1 have unbalanced the original symmetrical composition.



*Figure 3.7: Existing Side Extension to No.1 Fitzroy Road*

- 3.30 Whilst the property is three storeys in height (two above a lower ground floor), at the rear of the building it rises to a full four storeys due to the changes in ground level. The rear elevation is of a more utilitarian and unresolved character. The rear elevations of the pair of houses have been subject to a greater degree of cumulative, minor change than the front elevations i.e. through the replacement of windows, painting of the brickwork, insertion of concrete window lintels and works to lower ground floor fenestration.
- 3.31 The change in character between the front and rear elevations are substantial with the sheer elevation and lack of continuation of the shallow hipped roof gives the impression that the property is 'incomplete'. Whilst further documentary evidence would be needed in order to confirm this suspicion, it may have been that the plans for nearby terraced development stymied plans to complete the villas in the traditional manner due to concerns regarding daylight, prospect, amenity etc.
- 3.32 The rear elevations are considered to make less of a contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, except insofar as they reflect the traditional differentiation between public and private facades, and the potential illustration of the consequences in the change of development to terraced housing.



*Figure 3.8: Rear Elevation of No.1 Fitzroy Road*

3.33 As noted previously, the land associated with the houses has been significantly denuded by the 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial complex known as Utopia Village. The rear gardens are now a fragmentary rump of their original extent and dominated by the surrounding terraced development and the unattractive mid-20<sup>th</sup> century industrial buildings that address its eastern boundary. The landscaping associated with the properties, to both front and rear gardens, is predominantly characterised by paving with some low level shrubs and soft landscaping and ornamental planting. As a result, the plot and buildings within it are tightly constrained with a strong sense of enclosure. This effect is mitigated to a minor extent by the soft landscaping and depths of gardens to the surrounding terraces, which help to soften an otherwise dense and overbearing context.



*Figure 3.9: Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century Industrial Buildings of Utopia Village*



*Figure 3.10: Existing Front Garden of No.1 Fitzroy Road*

- 3.34 The front gardens are defined by an historic brick boundary wall to Fitzroy Road and separated by a return of similar height and character. This wall defines the extent of the front gardens (now largely altered) and is consistent with the character of the parent property and wider conservation area and is considered to contribute positively to its character or appearance. The modern gates, however, are of a non-descript design and are not considered to contribute positively to the character or appearance of the conservation area.



## 4. Heritage Impact Assessment

### Introduction

- 4.1 The relevant heritage policy and guidance context for consideration of the proposed development is set out within Appendix 2 of this report and includes:
- The statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 including the requirement to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Importantly, however, the concept of the setting of a conservation area is not enshrined in the legislation and does not attract the weight of statutory protection<sup>8</sup>;
  - National policy set out in the Framework; and
  - Local policy for the historic environment and other relevant material considerations.
- 4.2 In accordance with the requirements of the Framework, the significance of the identified heritage assets, including the contribution made by setting to that significance, has been described at Section 3 of this document.
- 4.3 Importantly, great weight and importance should be placed on; the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.4 The Framework also highlights that when considering the impact of proposals on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation, and the more important the asset the greater the weight should be.

### Heritage Impacts

- 4.5 The current application has been submitted following an earlier pre-application submission<sup>9</sup> and discussions with Camden Council and engagement with the PHCAAC. The scheme design has been refined in response to feedback received and to reflect a detailed understanding of the significance of Primrose Hill Conservation Area, and the contribution that the Site makes to this significance, as set out within Section 3 of this Statement.
- 4.6 It is noted that whilst the pre-application feedback<sup>10</sup> provided commentary on works to the interior of the property as part of the pre-application proposals, as the property is not statutorily listed; such works are outside of the remit of the planning system.

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<sup>8</sup> APP/H1705/A/14/2219070

<sup>9</sup> Ref: 2015/6028/PRE

<sup>10</sup> Ref: 2015/6028/PRE

Accordingly, the proposed internal works are not considered further as part of this report.

### **Primrose Hill Conservation Area**

- 4.7 In the first instance, it is noted that the proposed extension requires the demolition of the existing side extension to No.1. In its current form, the extension dates to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and does not make a strong contribution to the significance of the conservation area. Moreover, the consequential works associated with the formation of this existing side extension, notably the lowering of ground levels to facilitate vehicular access, have had an adverse impact on the significance of the conservation area. The only merit of the existing extension is derived from its recessive character as opposed to intrinsic architectural or historic value.
- 4.8 The proposed extension is two storeys in height, with its ridge height being slightly below that of the existing front entrance porch. The height of the proposed extension has been reduced in response to pre-application feedback, and as a result, it now conforms to advice provided within Section 4 of the Camden Planning Guidance 1 (Design) (Figure 4.1) and guidance within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement. The reduction in the width of the proposed side extension also provides a more uniform pattern with that of the adjoining property. Furthermore, as the proposed side extension would be set back from the front building line of the parent property, and from the side boundary of the Site, it would maintain a more ancillary relationship with the principal dwelling.
- 4.9 The proposed extension would not unbalance the architectural character of these semi-detached properties, as the original symmetrical composition has been compromised as a result of the variety of existing visible side extensions. Given the proximity of the adjacent terrace to the south of the pair of villas, the appreciation of the front elevations of the pair of properties is limited to views directly in front and obliquely. When seen in wider oblique views, the side extensions are not visible, due to the intervening built form, and as such, there is little opportunity for the side extension to impact upon an appreciation of the arrangement of the properties, given its set back from the front building line.

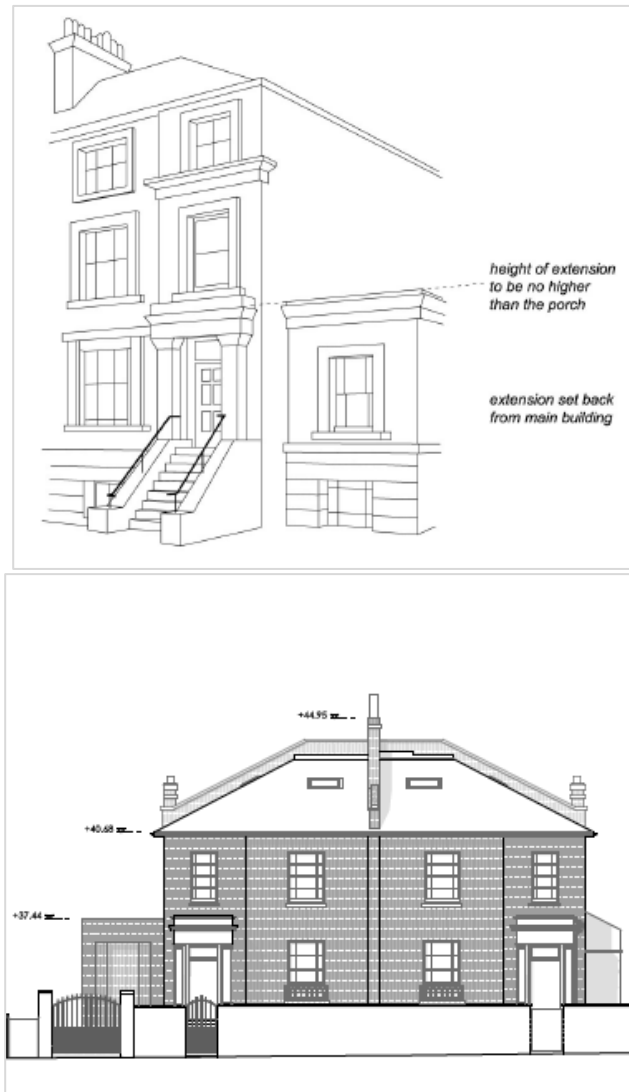


Figure 4.1: LB Camden SPG Guidance (top) and Proposed Side Extension (bottom)

- 4.10 The proposed side extension is considered to have no impact upon the legibility of the original massing of the pair of properties. The revised design provides a contemporary approach, whilst utilising traditional materials, reinforcing a distinction between the original properties and the later addition. This is considered to be an appropriate approach and will have a minimal impact upon the character or appearance of the conservation area, which would be preserved.
- 4.11 Overall, the proposed side extension delivers benefits to the spatial qualities of the villa, and plot in which it is located, and will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.12 In response to pre-application feedback, the size, depth and proportions of the rear extension have also, subsequently been reduced, and the alterations to the rear elevation of the building have also been minimised, to maintain a greater degree of the character of the existing rear elevation. This will further reduce any impacts as a result of the proposals upon the character or appearance of the conservation area.

- 4.13 The extensions are considered to remain subservient to the larger scale of the property. Again, as recommended during pre-application discussions, a contemporary approach has been adopted to the proposed extension and the re-modelling of the lower floors, as appreciated from the rear elevation. Contemporary extensions at the rear of traditional properties are well-established in this part of the conservation area and will have a very limited impact due to the extensive degree of enclosure. The proposed materiality of the extension is traditional, and will integrate with that of the parent property, however, a contemporary approach has been adopted for glazing and fenestration to distinguish between old and new work. Given the comparative plainness of this rear elevation, such an approach is considered to be consistent with its contribution to the significance of the conservation area. The proposed changes to the fenestration are consistent with those on the adjoining No.3 and are considered to reinstate a degree of uniformity to the upper levels of the rear elevation. The rear extension, as proposed, is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.14 As identified at pre-application stage, a potential improvement offered by the current proposals is the opportunity to reinstate the historic ground levels within the front garden thereby enabling the delivery of enhanced landscaping proposals to the front garden and ameliorating the existing incongruous appearance arising from the significant level changes. This aspect of the proposals will enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.15 A basement extension is also proposed as part of this scheme. As the building is not listed, there is no consideration of internal floor levels and hierarchy as part of this report. The existing light well to the front of the property, which is visible from the street, confirms the presence of a basement and demonstrates that it is a characteristic feature of the existing property. The creation of an additional floor level, below the existing footprint of the building will not alter the contribution that that existing building makes to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The external manifestations of the basement are confined to the rear at a lower level, in a discrete location and, as such, are considered to have a neutral effect upon the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.16 Overall, the proposals will preserve the character or appearance of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

## **Review of Heritage Legislation and Policy**

### **Statutory Duties**

#### ***The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990***

- 4.17 The Planning Act 1990 requires regard for the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area, in determining applications. The meaning of preservation in this context, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm. It is demonstrated in this report that the application seeks to minimise heritage impacts, and will, overall, preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## **National Policy and Guidance**

### ***National Planning Policy Framework 2012***

- 4.18 In accordance with the requirements of paragraph 128 of the Framework, the significance of the identified designated heritage asset of Primrose Hill Conservation Area, which will be directly affected by the application proposals, has been described within this report.
- 4.19 It is demonstrated within this report that the proposed alterations are minor in nature and will result in a minimal loss of historic fabric and will, overall, preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, in accordance with paragraph 131 of the Framework. This encourages local planning authorities to take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of all heritage assets, including conservation areas, and putting them to viable uses, consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic viability; and, the desirability of new development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.20 Paragraph 132 requires that great weight should be given to conservation of designated heritage assets. Importantly, Annex 2 of the Framework defines conservation as the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance. It is not a process that should prevent change, where proposals such as this current scheme seek to minimise heritage impacts and can deliver heritage benefits that will, overall preserve the significance of the asset. The proposed designs, overall, provide a positive change to the building, through high quality contemporary additions, and the replacement of extensions, which currently detract from the architectural composition of the pair of semi-detached villas, and the contribution that they make to the significance of the conservation area.

## **Local Policy and Guidance**

### ***London Plan 2015***

- 4.21 This report appropriately identifies the heritage assets that will be affected by the proposals. Overall, the proposals will value, conserve and re-use the existing building as appropriate, in a manner which will conserve the significance of the heritage asset, by being sympathetic to the character and appearance.

### ***Camden Council Core Strategy and DPD***

- 4.22 The proposals are in accordance with the general design principles criteria set out in LB Camden Council's Development Policies DPD, namely Policy DP25, which states that development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation areas, and preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of the conservation area.

## 5. Summary and Conclusion

- 5.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Greg and Eve Cohen to provide relevant information to the local planning authority with regard to heritage impacts associated with application proposals for works of amalgamation and various alterations to no. 1 Fitzroy Road, an unlisted building located within Primrose Hill Conservation Area. A map of the conservation area boundary is included at Appendix 1.
- 5.2 This application is made following pre-application discussions<sup>11</sup> with Camden Council. The current scheme design has been refined in response to a number of issues raised by the council officer and to reduce any perceived impact upon the character or appearance of Primrose Hill Conservation Area.
- 5.3 To comply with legislative and policy requirements, Section 2 of this report firstly identifies the relevant heritage assets within the Site and its vicinity that may be affected by the impact of the proposals.
- 5.4 Section 3 then provides an appropriate heritage assessment of the special interest of the designated heritage asset of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area, in terms of its historical development and character and appearance. This includes an assessment of the contribution of the Site, as an element within the conservation area, to its overall significance. This assessment is undertaken on the basis of on-site visual survey, focused archival research and existing published information. Importantly, this is proportionate to the importance of the identified heritage asset.
- 5.5 Section 4 considers the impact of the proposed development upon the significance of the conservation area, in light of the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy in the Framework and supported by National Planning Practice Guidance, and local planning policy and guidance for the historic environment, as appropriate.
- 5.6 The character and appearance of the conservation area, as identified within the Conservation Area Audit, the conservation area is urban in character with a high density of development interspersed by sporadic areas of greenery. It is dominated by long terraces of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century houses that are set back from the pavement with small lightwells and railings to basement areas, although there are some earlier and later examples.
- 5.7 Nos.1 and 3 Fitzroy Road date from c. 1840 prior to the rapid, terraced development of the area from the 1860s onwards. The rapid, urban development of the area during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century increased the pressure for development space, with a shift to the erection of terraced houses. The Site, as part of a pair of semi-detached properties, contributes positively to the significance of this part of the conservation area as part of an earlier, contrasting phase of development to that of the terraced properties.
- 5.8 Both properties have been subject to a range of alterations over time. Those to No.3 are of seemingly late 20<sup>th</sup> century date, are painted white and set back from the front

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<sup>11</sup> Ref, 2015/6028/PRE

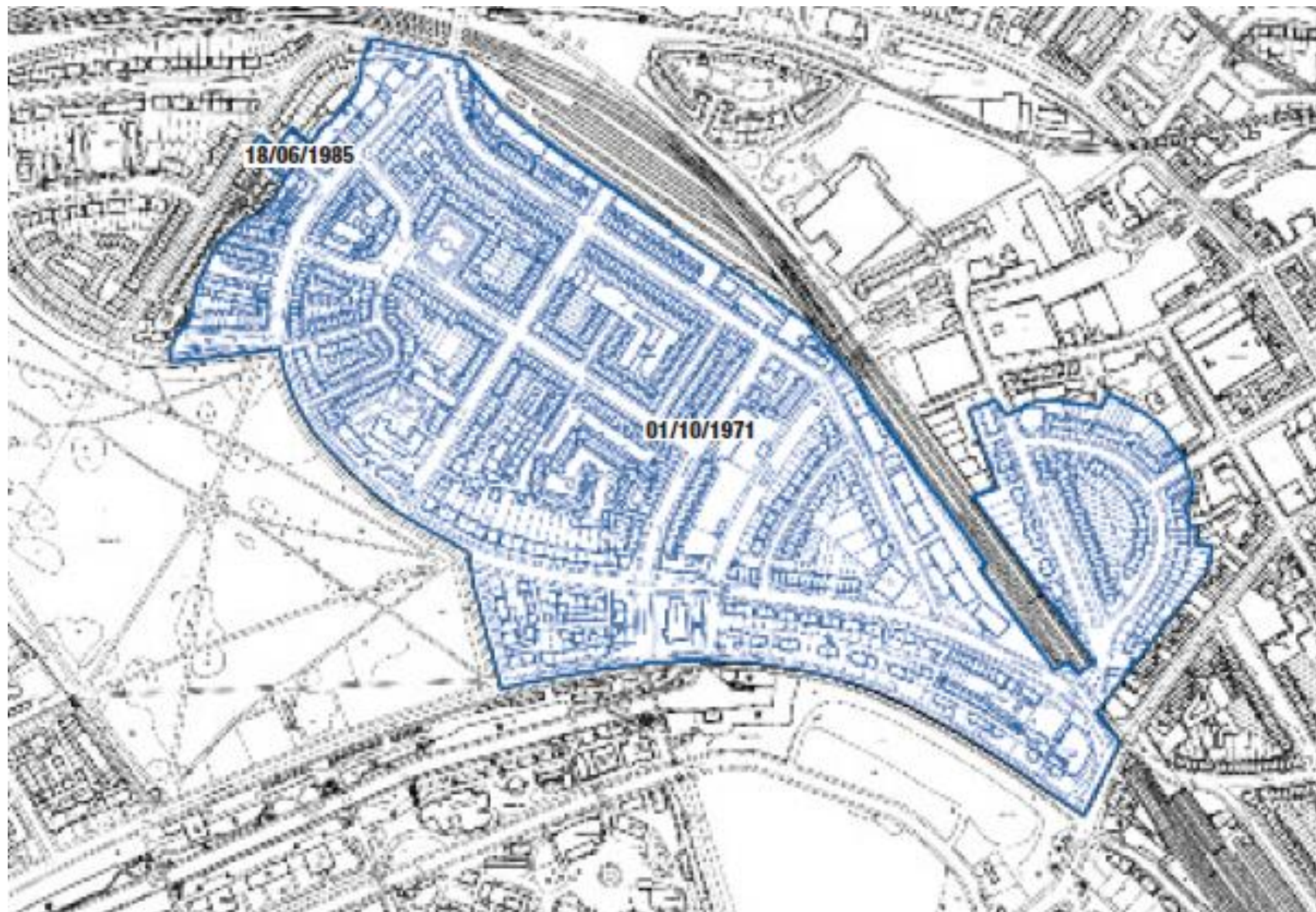
elevation in the tight gap with the adjoining terrace. The existing side extension to No.1 is, however, very different in form, appearance and relationship to the parent property. It dates from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and accommodates a garage at lower ground floor level with ancillary accommodation above. The existing side extensions to both properties and the change in ground levels to No.1 have unbalanced the original symmetrical composition. The rear elevation is of a more utilitarian and unresolved character. The rear elevations of the pair of houses have been subject to a greater degree of cumulative, minor change than the front elevations i.e. through the replacement of windows, painting of the brickwork, insertion of concrete window lintels and works to lower ground floor fenestration. The change in character between the front and rear elevations are substantial with the sheer elevation and lack of continuation of the shallow hipped roof gives the impression that the property is 'incomplete'. The rear elevations are considered to make less of a contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, except insofar as they reflect the traditional differentiation between public and private facades, and the potential illustration of the consequences in the change of development to terraced housing.

- 5.9 The proposed alterations present an opportunity to reinstate the historic ground levels within the front garden thereby enabling the delivery of enhanced landscaping proposals to the front garden and ameliorating the existing incongruous appearance arising from the significant level changes. This aspect of the proposals will enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 5.10 The proposed extension is two storeys in height, as is the existing, however, the proposed extensions are set back from the front elevation of the parent property, side boundary and below the existing eaves. The extension will maintain the existing ancillary relationship between the extension and the house. The proposed side extension is considered to have no impact upon the legibility of the historic massing of the pair of properties. The adopted design provides a contemporary approach, whilst utilising traditional materials, reinforcing a distinction between the original properties and the later addition. This is considered to be an appropriate approach and will have a minimal impact upon the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 5.11 To the rear, the proposed extensions will remain subservient to the larger scale of this part of the parent property. A contemporary approach has been adopted to the proposed extension and re-modelling of the lower floors. Contemporary extensions at the rear of traditional properties are well-established in this part of the conservation area and will have a very limited impact upon the interest of the building and are, overall, considered to be consistent with its contribution to the significance of the conservation area. The proposed changes to the fenestration are consistent with those on the adjoining No.3 and are considered to reinstate a degree of uniformity to the upper levels of the rear elevation.
- 5.12 It is the conclusion of this Heritage Statement that, overall, the application proposals will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. Accordingly, these designated heritage assets would be conserved, and their significance sustained.
- 5.13 This is in accordance with the principles set out in the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy set out in the

Framework 2012 (paragraphs 128, 131, 132, 134, 137) and supported by NPPG 2014, and other relevant local policy and guidance (including FALP 2015: policy 7.8, Policy DP25 of LB Camden's Development Policies DPD and other material considerations.



# **Appendix 1: Primrose Hill Conservation Area Boundary Map**



# Appendix 2: Heritage Legislation and Policy

## Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

With regard to applications for planning permission within conservation areas, the Planning Act 1990 outlines in Section 72 that:

*'s.72(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'*

Recent case law<sup>12</sup> has confirmed that Parliament's intention in enacting section 66(1) was that decision-makers should give "considerable importance and weight" to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings, where "preserve" means to "to do no harm" (after South Lakeland). Case law has confirmed that this weight can also be applied to the statutory tests in respect of conservation areas<sup>13</sup>. These duties, and the appropriate weight to be afforded to them, must be at the forefront of the decision makers mind when considering any harm that may accrue and the balancing of such harm against public benefits as required by national planning policy. The Secretary of State has confirmed<sup>14</sup> that 'considerable importance and weight' is not synonymous with 'overriding importance and weight'. Importantly, however, the concept of the setting of a conservation area is not enshrined in the legislation and does not attract the weight of statutory protection<sup>15</sup>.

## National Policy and Guidance

### National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

The Framework was issued on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and replaces PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment. The Framework provides a full statement of Government's planning policies with regard to achieving sustainable development with the protection of the historic environment as an integral element of environmental quality, which should be cherished and allowed to thrive and grow.

Paragraph 128 outlines the information required to support planning applications affecting heritage assets, stating that applicants should provide a description of the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Paragraph 129 sets out the principles guiding the determination of applications affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, and states that:

*"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal . . . They should take this assessment into account*

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<sup>12</sup> Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Limited and (1) East Northamptonshire District Council (2) English Heritage (3) National Trust (4) The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Governments, Case No: C1/2013/0843, 18th February 2014

<sup>13</sup> The Forge Field Society v Sevenoaks District Council [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin); North Norfolk District Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2014] EWHC 279 (Admin)

<sup>14</sup> APP/H1705/A/13/2205929

<sup>15</sup> APP/H1705/A/14/2219070

*when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."*

Paragraph 131 elaborates that local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 132 regards the determination of applications affecting designated heritage assets. It outlines that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation when considering the impact of a proposed development on the asset's significance. The more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight should be.

Paragraph 132 goes on to specify that any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. It states that;

*"Substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional."*

Paragraph 133 outlines that Local Planning Authorities should refuse consent where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, unless it can be demonstrated that this is necessary to deliver substantial public benefits that outweigh such harm or loss or all of the following apply:

- The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- No viable use of the heritage asset can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- Conservation by grant funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- The harm or loss is outweighed by bringing the site back into use

Paragraph 134 concerns proposed development which will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset. It outlines this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Policy outlined in paragraphs 132 – 134 of the Framework should be interpreted in light of the statutory duties relating to statutorily listed buildings and conservation areas as set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

With regard to applications affecting conservation areas and the setting of heritage assets, paragraph 137 states:

*"Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably."*

Paragraph 138 notes that not all elements of a conservation area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of these assets should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the asset as a whole.

### **National Planning Policy Guidance (2014)**

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2014 has been issued by the Government as a web based resource. This is intended to provide more detailed guidance and information with regard to the implementation of national policy set out in the Framework.

The PPG provides guidance on the implementation of the Framework. At Section 2.0, it is noted that the delivery of development within the setting of heritage assets has the potential to make a positive contribution to, or better reveal, the significance of that asset.

### **The Development Plan**

The Development Plan comprises the London Plan (2015), the LB Camden Core Strategy DPD (2010), and the Development Policies DPD (2010).

### **The London Plan – Incorporating Further Alterations to the London Plan (2015)**

The London Plan was adopted by the Greater London Authority in July 2011 and sets out the Spatial Development Strategy for all Boroughs within Greater London. It replaces the London Plan (consolidated with alterations since 2004), which was published in February 2008. The Plan has been subsequently revised to ensure consistency with the Framework and other changes since 2011. The plan has been amended through the publication of Revised Early Minor Alterations (October 2013) and Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP) were published for consultation in January 2014. An Examination in Public (EiP) in respect of the FALP was opened on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014. On 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014, the Mayor published the report of the planning inspector who undertook the EiP of the Draft FALP.

On 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015, the Mayor published (i.e. adopted) the Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP). From this date, the FALP are operative as formal alterations to the London Plan (the Mayor's spatial development strategy) and form part of the development plan for Greater London.

The London Plan has been updated to incorporate the Further Alterations. It also incorporates the Revised Early Minor Alterations to the London Plan (REMA), which were published in October 2013.

#### *“Strategic*

*A London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.*

*B Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology.*

#### *Planning decisions*

*C Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.*

*D Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.*

*E New development should make provision for the protection of archaeological resources, landscapes and significant memorials. The physical assets should, where possible, be made available to the public on-site. Where the archaeological asset or memorial cannot be preserved or managed on-site, provision must be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset ...”*

#### **LB Camden Core Strategy DPD (2010)**

The Camden Council Core Strategy was adopted on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2010. Core Strategy policy CS14 regards the conservation of Camden's heritage. It outlines the objective of preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings.

#### **LB Camden Development Policies DPD (2010)**

The Camden Council Development Policies DPD was adopted on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

Policy DP25 from Camden's Development Policies DPD regards conserving Camden's heritage and states that to preserve or enhance the borough's conservation areas and listed buildings, Camden Council will:

*“A) Take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;*

*B) Only permit development within conservation areas that preserve and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area;*

*C) Prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;*

*D) Not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and*

*E) Preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.’*

*F) Prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;*

*G) Only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the listed building;*

*H) Not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.”*

## **Other Material Considerations**

### **Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)**

This document provides advice on the implementation of historic environment policy in the Framework and the related guidance given in the PPG. For the purposes of this report, the advice includes: assessing the significance of heritage assets; using appropriate expertise; historic environment records; and design and distinctiveness.

It provides a suggested staged approach to decision-making where there may be a potential impact on the historic environment:

1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;
2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the Framework;
4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change;
6. Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

The document also confirms the importance of design quality and with regard to the historic environment notes that some, or all of the following factors, may influence what will make the scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and proposed use of new development successful in its context:

- The history of the place
- The relationship of the proposal to its specific site
- The significance of nearby assets and the contribution of their setting, recognising that this is a dynamic concept
- The general character and distinctiveness of the area in its widest sense, including the general character of local buildings, spaces, public realm and the landscape, the grain of the surroundings, which includes, for example the street pattern and plot size
- The size and density of the proposal related to that of the existing and neighbouring uses
- Landmarks and other built or landscape features which are key to a sense of place
- The diversity or uniformity in style, construction, materials, colour, detailing, decoration and period of existing buildings and spaces
- The topography
- Views into, through and from the site and its surroundings
- Landscape design

- The current and historic uses in the area and the urban grain
- The quality of the materials

### **Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2016)**

This document sets out a series of conservation principles and guidance regarding the management of conservation areas. It outlines the fundamentals of designation, and, importantly, puts in place processes for character appraisals which may be used to manage development in the area moving forward. It sets an over-arching objective for character appraisals as documents which understand and articulate why the area is special and what elements within the area contribute to this special quality and which don't. Having done this, it outlines an approach.

### **Camden Planning Guidance SPD (2011)**

LB Camden's planning guidance provides further information on the application and implementation of policies contained within the Development Plan.

### **Primrose Hill Conservation Area Conservation Area Statement (2000)**

This document provides an overview of the historic development of the conservation area, an assessment of its character and appearance and then sets out general guidance on how development proposals can sustain this heritage significance.



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