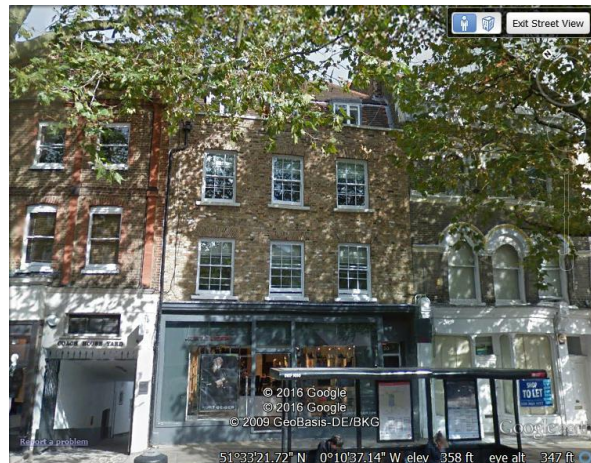


## HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

for

Removal of part of the modern internal ceiling in the living room



**FLAT 3**  
**30 HAMPSTEAD HIGH STREET**  
**LONDON**  
**NW3 1QA**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 We have been instructed by Royston Properties ("the applicant") to prepare this Heritage Impact Assessment ('Statement') in support of an application for Listed Building Consent (LBC) for the partial removal of a modern internal ceiling in the kitchen/living/dining room ('proposed works') at the Flat 3, 30 Hampstead High Street, NW3 1QA ('Site').
- 1.2 The purpose of this Statement is to identify the works that are the subject of the application and to demonstrate the works would not cause harm to the significance of this heritage asset, in compliance with legislation and planning policy.
- 1.3 This statement should be read alongside the submitted plans.

### **DESCRIPTION OF SITE**

- 1.4 The Site comprises Grade II listed terraced property within the Hampstead Conservation Area (CA) dating from the early C18th. It is understood that the property was re-fronted in the C19th. The property extends over 3 floors plus attic. A commercial unit occupies the ground floor with residential use above. Flat 3 comprises a two bedroom flat located wholly within the attic space.
- 1.5 Flat 3 is accessed via a single door onto Hampstead High Street. A communal hall and stairwell provide access to the second floor entrance which leads to a private staircase to the attic space.
- 1.6 The terrace within which the Site is located typically comprises commercial units at ground floor with residential above. The Site lies within the Hampstead Conservation Area.

## HERITAGE CONTEXT

- 1.7 Listed Buildings are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and are designated for their architectural or historic interest. The listing of a building does not equate to a preservation order precluding change.

- 1.8 The Listing entry for the property states:

*“Terraced house with later shop. Late C18, refronted early C19. Yellow stock brick. Tiled mansard roof with dormers. 3 storeys and attic. 3 windows. C20 shopfront. Upper floors with gauged flat brick arches to recessed sashes. INTERIOR: not inspected.”*

- 1.9 Conservation Areas are also protected by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

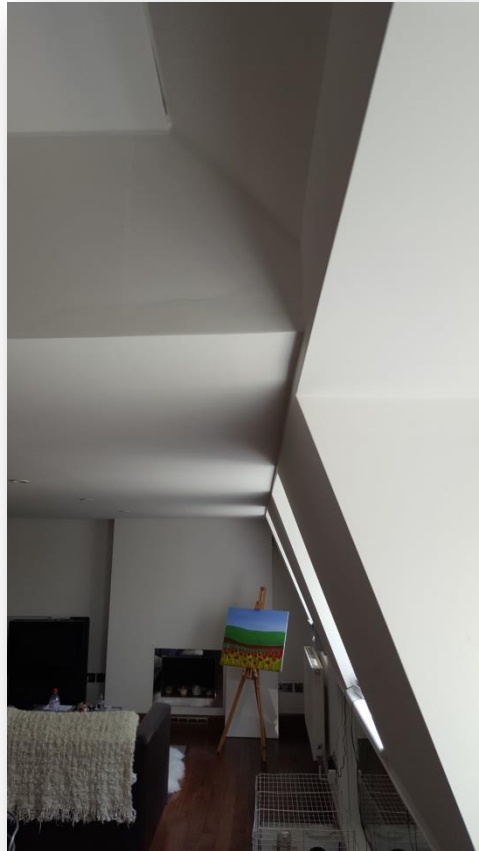
## BACKGROUND

- 1.10 The applicants purchased the Site in 2012 at which time the property had been subject to refurbishment works and internal alterations. The works included the installation of rooflights (for which planning permission was granted but listed building consent was not), internal alterations including covering paneling within the living room, replacement internal doors and the removal of internal ceilings throughout.

- 1.11 Following the purchase of the property, the Council approached the applicants (the new owners) with regard to unauthorized works undertaken prior to their purchase. There then followed an application for retrospective consent for these (2007/0685/L) which was refused. In refusing LBC, the Council warned of enforcement action against the works. The applicants engaged with the Council and it was subsequently agreed to reinstate the ceiling within the main living room and to exposure paneling in the same room. These works were duly undertaken. The Council inspected the

works and closed the case. No enforcement action was pursued in relation to any works at the Site.

- 1.12 A photograph of the modern ceiling, as is exists, is shown below.



- 1.13 The applicants now wish to pursue the removal of part of the modern ceiling within the main kitchen/living/dining room. At present, the majority of the room has a very low ceiling height of only 2m which is causing increasing problems and difficulties in seeking to secure tenants. The property is indeed currently vacant. The low internal ceiling height within the primary living space is thus limiting the viability of the flat for residential purposes and compromising the amenity of occupants.

- 1.14 In order to secure the long term viability of the property and to enable it to meet modern and expected living standards, it is proposed to remove, in part, the modern plaster board ceiling within the main living area. A cornice detail would be retained around the edge of the room to denote and identify the height/position of the original ceilings therein. The bulk head over the kitchen area (2.4m above floor level) would remain as existing.
- 1.15 An agreement has been reached with the freeholder in relation to these internal works.

#### PLANNING HISTORY

- 1.16 Table 1 below provides a summary of planning history associated with the Site (this does not include reference to other parts of 30 Hampstead High Street and is limited to Flat 3, the subject of this submission).

Application Reference	Details	Decision
2007/0685/L	Installation of rooflight and internal alterations to the existing top floor flat (retrospective)	LBC Refused # 2007
2007/1968/P	Rooflight	Planning permission granted June 2007 LBC Approved
2006/2795/LBC	Internal alterations to top floor flat including insertion of double doors between lounge and kitchen and new doors to bathroom	September 2006

- 1.17 Whilst 2007/0685/LBC was refused, the Council noted that *“Some of the work is not considered to be contentious in listed building terms, including the installation of two*

*small conservation rooflights, kitchen fittings, general timber repairs, the alterations to the partitioning in the rear room, and the laying of new flooring over the existing."*

## 2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Full details of the proposal are shown in the drawings that accompany this submission.

### SCHEDULE OF WORKS

- 2.2 The works are internal only and relate to the modern replacement ceiling in the main living/dining area only. As shown on plan, it is proposed to remove the modern plasterboard ceiling whilst allowing for a retained 'cornice' detail (100mm projection) that would extend around the perimeter of the room. The works do not involve any works to the internal face of the roof void, ceiling joists or beams. A photograph of the internal face of the roof slope and existing beams, to be retained as existing, is shown below.



## **OBJECTIVE OF THE ALTERATIONS**

- 2.3 As set out in part 1 of this Statement, the sole living area of the flat has, for the most part, a ceiling height of only 2m. This falls notably below the minimum ceiling heights now deemed necessary to provide adequate living standards – a matter reinforced by the difficulties being experienced in letting the property. The proposal is therefore required in order to enhance functionality of the property, secure its long term use for residential purposes and to improve the living conditions/amenities of occupants of the property. In turn, this would secure the long term viability and therefore protection of the property.



### **3.0 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)**

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's approach to planning and provides advice about how to implement the legislation which covers the historic environment, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, an objective that lies at the heart of the advice contained therein.
- 3.2 Paragraph 126 recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and seeks to conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. Paragraph 128 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected and provide information on the significance of any heritage assets affected and the contribution made by its setting, the level of detail to be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact on that significance.
- 3.3 Paragraph 134 states that where a development proposal leads to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
- 3.4 The advice within the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) expands on that offered within the NPPF. Paragraph 18 addressed the issue of conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and emphasises that conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It does not preclude change per se.

### **London Plan**

- 3.5 Policy 7.8 deals with heritage assets and archaeology. It states that development affecting heritage assets and their setting should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale materials and architectural detail.

### **Development Plan**

- 3.6 The following policies of the Core Strategy (2010) are considered relevant;

- CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

- 3.7 The following Development Policies are considered relevant;

- DP25 Conserving Camden's Heritage

## 4.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### Significance of Heritage Assets – Listed Building

- 4.1 The significance of 30 Hampstead High Street can be summarised as:
- Its external architectural design being typical of a C18th/C19th albeit with a later shop front;
  - the internal plan form and remaining original architectural detailing.
- 4.2 An assessment of the impact of the works on the significance of the building, as required by the NPPF (paragraph 128), is provided below.

### Impact on designated heritage asset – Listed Building

- 4.3 The schedule of work is set out in Section 2 of this statement together with the rationale behind their need/intent.
- 4.4 The ceiling in the main living area/kitchen is modern, having been formed in 2007. No works are proposed to the internal face of the roof void or any of the timbers/beams. The partial removal of the ceiling would not therefore result in the loss of any historic fabric.
- 4.5 In the assessment of application 2007/0685/L, which included the removal of internal ceiling and the Council noted that *“the opening up of the ceiling void creates a tall space which is not in keeping with the character of the building at this level. The traditional hierarchy of floors dictates that those floors above and below ground floor and piano noble level have a lesser floor to ceiling height, in keeping with their less important and*

*more utilitarian status. The alteration to the floor to ceiling height and the visible roof timbers are at odds with the traditional character and historic interest of the building.”*

- 4.6 In response to the Council’s previous concerns, it is highlighted that the works now proposed would retain a cornice/bulkhead detail around the perimeter of the room. The height of the walls would remain as existing and the height/position of the original ceiling would remain legible. The original proportions of the room would therefore remain discernable and appreciable. The traditional hierarchy of rooms throughout the building would be understood. The identified significance of the building would not be compromised or harmed.
- 4.7 The works are reversible without harm to the fabric or significance of the building.
- 4.8 The works cannot reasonably be considered to cause harm or loss to the significance of the building. Instead, they ensure the flat meets modern day living expectations and allow a reasonable level of amenity for occupants. The works thus secure the long term viability of the upper floor as a single residence and contribute positively to its preservation.

#### **Impact on designated Heritage Asset – Conservation Area**

- 4.9 The works are internal only and have no external manifestation. The significance, character and appearance of the CA would not be impacted upon by the partial removal of the ceiling herein proposed.

## 5.0 OTHER MATTERS

### THE ASSESSMENT OF COMPARABLE WORKS IN OTHER LISTED PROPERTIES

- 5.1 It is accepted that every application must be determined on its own merit and each listed property is unique in terms of its significance. However, the Council's previous concerns about the removal of the internal ceiling rely on matters of principle – that being the change in the proportion of the room and the failure to respect traditional floor to ceiling height hierarchy.
- 5.2 The removal of internal ceilings at attic level formed part of a retrospective application for listed building consent that was submitted to Westminster Council (15/01454/LBC) in relation to 6 Hanover Terrace, an important Grade I listed property designed by John Nash and forming part of the Crown Estate. In a similar manner to the works proposed herein, the works at 6 Hanover Terrace involved removing the internal ceilings in the attic rooms, save a 'cornice' detail (as proposed under this application). The top floor rooms and landing thus extended up to roof level with new rooflights installed to provide additional light into the rooms. The photograph below shows a view through the new rooflights formed on this Grade I Listed building and the bedroom below with the ceiling removed.



- 5.3 Historic England was consulted and attended a site visit/meeting during the application process. They raised no objection to the works for which retrospective consent was being sought and ultimately gave authorization to the Council to determine the application. The matter of relevance here is that Historic England saw and considered the removal of the internal ceilings within this Grade I listed building (and therefore the associated change in room proportions/floor to ceiling height) and did not express any reservation or concern about this as a matter of principle.

- 5.4 Westminster duly granted Listed Building Consent for the works, including the removal of the internal ceilings and resulting change in floor to ceiling heights in the attic.
- 5.5 In the case of 6 Hanover Terrace, it was accepted that the removal of the internal ceilings at attic level (which were modern in the same manner as those the subject of this application) and the associated change in the proportions of the roof or visibility of the roof structure, did not harm the significance of a Grade I listed building. Similarly, it has been demonstrated that the significance of 30 Hampstead High Street (which includes Flat 3) would not be harmed by similar works.
- 5.6 For the reasons set out above, the works to the Listed Building do not lead to the total or partial loss of any historic fabric and do not cause harm to its identified significance. The works fully accord with the thrust of the NPPF and development plan policy in this regard.

## 6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The applicants are committed to the long term protection of the heritage asset. The proposed works are heavily influenced by the desire to bring the property up to modern day living standards and to enhance its function as a dwelling by removing the unduly low ceiling height within the living area. The proposed works are therefore intended to keep the building in a viable and economic use to meet the needs of the applicant.
- 6.2 The proposed works would not compromise future generations to meet their own needs and would not cause harm or loss to the architectural and historic importance of the building or its fabric. The works are reversible without impact on the building. The Proposal comprises sustainable development consistent with the NPPF.
- 6.3 The works the subject of this submission help secure the long term future of the building. This is in the public interest and desirable in planning terms.
- 6.4 The proposal complies with all relevant Local Plan policies and with central government advice. In our judgment no other material considerations weigh against it.
- 6.5 Accordingly we trust the Council will determine that the application for planning permission and Listed Building Consent can be approved.