

## Heritage Statement

**17 East Heath Road, London NW3**



# **Heritage Statement**

**17 East Heath Road, Hampstead, London NW3**

**Prepared for**

**Mr and Mrs A. Saleh**

**by**

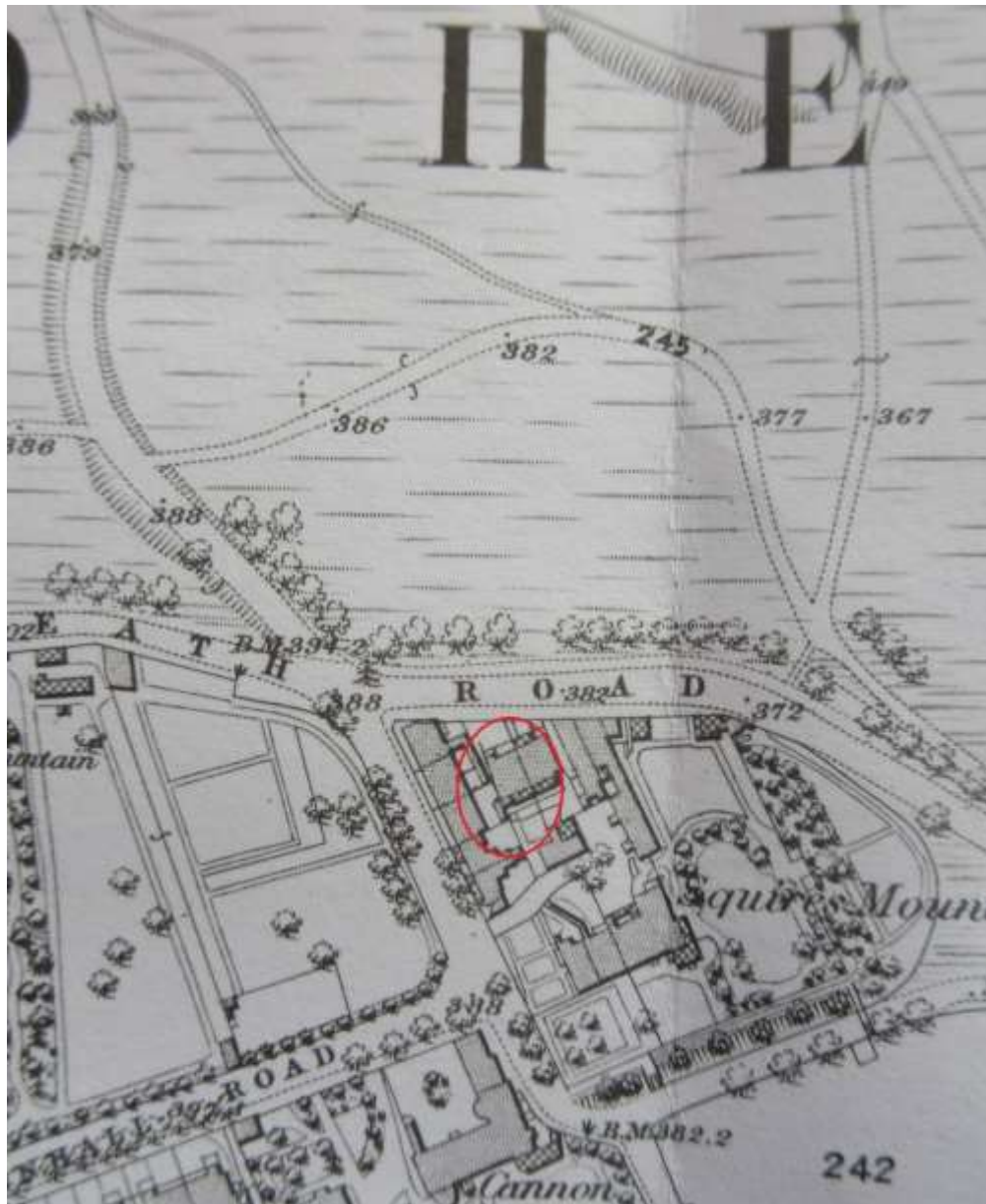
**The Architectural History Practice Limited**

**July 2016**

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by The Architectural History Practice (AHP) at the request of Marek Wojciechowski Architects on behalf of the owners, Mr and Mrs A. Saleh. It has been prepared to accompany and inform proposals to carry out alterations to 17 East Heath Road (NGR TQ 26605 86229), a Grade II listed building lying within the Hampstead Conservation Area.
- 1.2 The statement describes the house and its history, assesses its architectural, historical and townscape significance, and assesses the likely impact of the proposals on that significance. It follows receipt of pre-application advice from the London Borough of Camden (2016/1266/PRE) and meets the requirement of *The National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF), paragraph 128, that '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'.
- 1.3 The statement has been prepared by Andrew Derrick, BAHons AADipl Cons IHBC, a director of AHP, following a site inspection on 30 June 2016.

## 2.0 Historical overview



**Figure 1: Detail from first edition Ordnance Survey map, 1866**

- 2.1 Nos 16 and 17 East Heath Road form a semi-detached pair, and are given a late nineteenth century date in the list entry (appendix 1). However, they are shown on Stanford's map of London and its suburbs (1862) and on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1866 (detail at figure 1), and a date of about 1860 seems likely. This was a time of rapid expansion of the village; Hampstead Heath station opened in 1860 and thereafter the Heath developed as a place of resort and recreation for Londoners. This was shortly before the passage of the Hampstead Heath Act 1871, when the Heath was brought into public ownership and saved from encroaching development.

- 2.2 The properties were originally known as 1 and 2 Portland Villas. The early or original basement arrangements are indicated on drainage plans of 1901 in Camden Archives (that for no. 17 at figure 2), with rear conservatories to both properties at lower ground floor level with a small outhouse alongside, probably for a scullery.

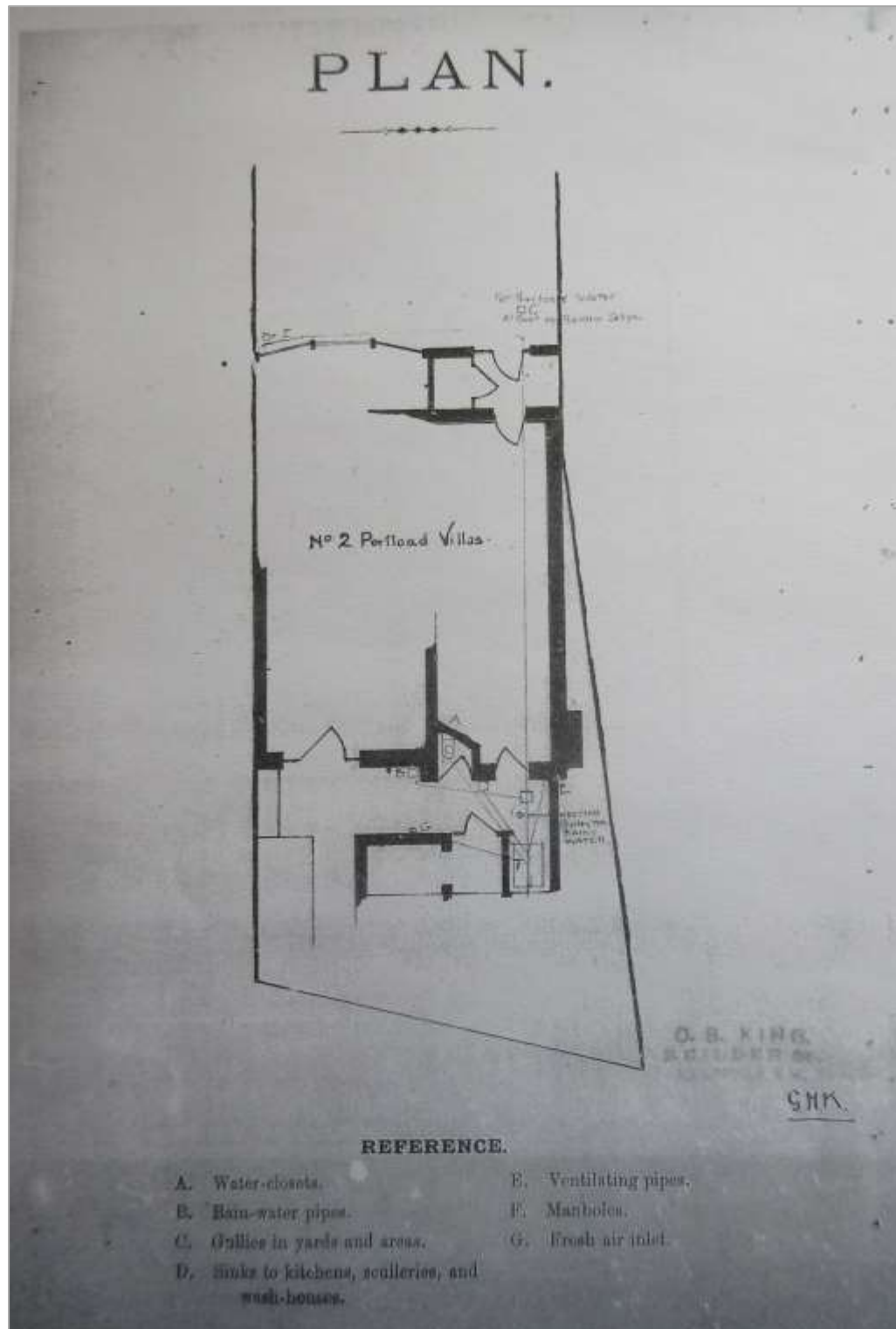


Figure 2: Plan of 2 Portland Villas, 1901 (Camden Archives)

- 2.3 No. 17 is best known as the home between 1918 and 1920 of the New Zealand-born writer Katherine Mansfield and her husband, the poet and critic John Middleton Murry. Mansfield was diagnosed with tuberculosis in 1917, and she and Murry agreed that they should look for a house in an open part of London. Murry wrote: ‘we agreed that I should look for a house in Hampstead, and I found a tall grey brick one, outwardly unprepossessing, but immediately overlooking the Heath. Because of its greyness and its size we christened it the Elephant’.<sup>1</sup> The grey theme was continued inside, in the studio/living room (‘books are good against grey’, said Mansfield) and in the hallway (‘grey is so kind as you come in’).<sup>2</sup> The rest of the house was to be painted a range of colours but when Mansfield visited after the grey undercoat had been applied, ‘the work was stopped at once and the house remained always a pearly grey.’<sup>3</sup>



**Figure 3: Exterior in 1970 (GLC/English Heritage)**

- 2.4 Mansfield spent two years here on and off, longer than at any of her other London residences. She described the view towards the Vale of Health as ‘so beautiful it might be in the country – Russian country as I see it ... if only one could live up here for really a long time and not have to see anybody...’<sup>4</sup> In spite of this social reluctance, visitors included D. H. Lawrence and his wife Frieda, Virginia Woolf (a regular visitor), T. S. Eliot, Bertrand Russell, Lytton Strachey and the painter Mark Gertler. In the basement Murry set up the Heron Press, in emulation of Virginia and Leonard Woolf’s Hogarth Press; limited editions of Murry’s poems and Mansfield’s short story *Je ne parle pas Français* were printed here.
- 2.5 Katherine Mansfield left the house for the last time in September 1920, dying in France in 1923 at the age of 34. Her residency here with Murry is commemorated by a blue plaque on the front of the property, erected by the

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in 1968 GLC report, on English Heritage Blue Plaque file (ref. 1659)

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Wade, C., *Katherine Mansfield in Hampstead*, Hampstead Museum, 1988

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

Greater London Council in 1969. A photograph taken soon after the unveiling of the plaque is at figure 3.

- 2.6 Sadly, the house now contains no evidence of their occupation, having undergone extensive alterations and renovations on several occasions. At some point between 1970 (see figure 3) and 1974 (when the building was listed), the brickwork on the front and side elevations of nos. 16 and 17 was painted. Extensive internal alterations have also taken place to no.17, some of which are shown on plans now deposited on microfilm in Camden Archives (appendix 2 and 3).
- 2.7 Drawings dated May 1963 (by Gerald Murphy & Associates, London N6, appendix 2) show:
- The original form of the rear conservatory and scullery still surviving at that time
  - Blocking of a door from the entrance hallway to front room, and formation of another door to a proposed ground floor kitchen (this proposal appears not to have been implemented)
  - At first floor, the front closet is shown giving off the staircase rather than the front room
  - New French windows at first floor, front room (a metal railing/balcony shown in figure 3 has since been removed)
  - At second floor, formation of a bathroom on the staircase landing.
- 2.8 Drawings of 1966 (Griffiths, Lewis, Goad Partnership, London WC1, appendix 3) show:
- New stairs to front basement area
  - Also at lower ground floor level, removal of glazed partition around internal stair, rebuilding of rear scullery in enlarged form, formation of wider opening between front and back rooms, removal of rear conservatory, new double doors to back garden
  - Ground floor entrance hall, removal of partition panelling and door to basement stair; new glazed door to rear terrace. Note door to front room from entrance hall.
- 2.9 Further changes since the 1960s have included the replacement nearly all of the original internal finishes (cornices, ceiling roses, most fireplaces, skirtings and floorboards).



### 3.0 Architectural Description



**Figure 4: Front elevation**

- 3.1 The house is one of a semi-detached pair, but here only no. 17 is described. Dating from about 1860, the design combines late Georgian and mid-Victorian characteristics. The building is of three storeys over a basement, and two bays width; the inner bay is slightly recessed and the outer bay (containing the entrance) projects; both are gabled, with projecting bracketed eaves. The brickwork (described as grey by Murry and on the GLC blue plaque file) is painted on the front and flank elevations, while the original London stock bricks of the rear elevation are (for the most part) left unpainted. The roof is slated, and there are tall chimney stacks on the party wall with no. 17 and on the flank elevation. The panelled entrance door has a glazed fanlight and sidelights, and is set within a wide, architraved, segmental-arched rendered surround with central keystone. The sash windows of the front elevation have rendered and lugged architraves. On the ground floor is a single tripartite window with mini-balcony in front supported on brackets; on the first floor the inner bay has a square-headed opening in which are set modern French windows, while the outer bay has a round-arched opening. The second floor windows have pointed heads, following the profile of the gables. Modern (1960s) railings lead down to a basement area, with a modern door with sidelights (following the pattern indicated on figure 2, but now opening outwards).
- 3.2 At the side, windows light the stairwell (that to the second floor now a bathroom). A projecting chimney stack at the side originally heated small rooms at the front of the house. Towards the rear, the house is built tight against the property boundary, and the stack does not project.





**Figure 5: rear elevation**

- 3.3 The rear elevation (figure 5) has glazing bar sashes, set in rendered reveals. The windows have been renewed at ground and first floor level, with cruder mouldings and details, but the original windows appear to survive on the second floor. One ground floor window has been replaced by a door giving onto a terrace over a basement addition (built in the 1960s).

- 3.4 Inside, the plan form conforms to the common late-Georgian plan of a smaller front room and a larger rear one at ground and first floor levels, and with three rooms at attic level. More unusually, the stairwell is lit from the side and is set back behind small closets, lit from the front and originally heated by fireplaces served by the front side stack. A bathroom has been formed at second floor level, taking light from the stairwell (not entirely successfully compensated for by the provision of stained glass in the stairwell, providing some indirect light from the front).



**Figure 6: Stair detail**

- 3.5 The house retains its original stair from basement to attic, plain at the lower level and the main stair compact in form, with winders, open string, moulded newels and balusters, and hardwood handrail (figure 6). There is a corner fireplace, possibly original, in the rear room at second floor level. Otherwise, apart from some shutters and doors, the internal finishes have been renewed, with modern fibrous plaster cornices, neo-Georgian fireplaces and modern floor finishes. Victorian-style coloured glass has been introduced in the staircase windows. A raised bathroom floor at first floor level accommodates a sunken bath.

## **4.0 Significance**

- 4.1 The house is in some respects an unremarkable design of c1860, and has been greatly altered. The list entry does not state this explicitly, but it is possible that the pair was listed mainly on account of the historical association of no. 17 with Katherine Mansfield and John Middleton Murry (it was listed five years after the blue plaque was installed). Nevertheless, the building is an attractive period residence, which makes a positive and prominent contribution to the Hampstead Conservation Area. Surviving early and original features are of high significance. 1960s (and later) internal and external alterations are of low significance.

## **5.0 Policy context**

- 5.1 Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting [...]

- 5.2 The NPPF (paragraph 126) enjoins local authorities to:

recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

- 5.3 Paragraphs 132-4 of the NPPF state:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss 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 [...] should be wholly exceptional. [...] Where a development proposal will lead 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.

- 5.4 Camden Council Core Strategy Policy 14 (CS14, 'Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage') states:

The Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

- a) Requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;

- b) Preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens;
- c) Promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;
- d) Seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible;
- e) Protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites inside and outside the borough and protecting important local views.

5.5 Camden Development Policy 25 ('Conserving Camden's Heritage') states:

#### **Conservation areas**

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the 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 preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the 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 area 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.

#### **Listed buildings**

To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- e) prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- f) 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 building; and
- g) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

#### **Archaeology**

The Council will protect remains of archaeological importance by ensuring acceptable measures are taken to preserve them and their setting, including physical preservation, where appropriate.

#### **Other heritage assets**

The Council will seek to protect other heritage assets including Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and London Squares.

## **6.0 Current proposals**

6.1 Please refer to the detailed application drawings and other documentation prepared by Marek Wojciechowski Architects. Briefly, it is proposed to carry out internal and external alterations as follows:

- Lower ground floor: New steps down to front basement area, alterations to basement area, internal alterations including openings within structural walls, rebuilding of rear extension, with glazed addition.
- Ground floor: Adaptation of hall lobby, formation of door to front room, new doors from rear room to garden terrace.
- Stairwell: Strengthening/levelling of stair and removal of Victorian-style glass in windows
- First floor: Removal of raised floor in front room and reinstatement of original floor level
- Second floor: Minor alterations to bathroom
- Attic: Replacement hatch, removal of stud partitions, insulation
- Generally: replace modern cornices, ceiling roses, skirtings, fireplaces and floorboards with examples more in keeping with the age and character of the property.

## **7.0 Impact assessment**

Please see photographs of existing details at appendix 4.

### *7.1 Basement area*

7.1.1 At the front, it is proposed to replace the metal stairs down to the basement, to a slightly different configuration and to resurface the basement area (along with the front forecourt and main entrance steps). The basement door, with sidelights, a 1960s or later replacement, will be replaced with new doors and windows of painted timber, with the opening aligned with the window above. Original or older fabric will not be affected, apart from the removal of a partition wall in the front basement vaults. This would not result in significant loss of historic fabric, and generally the alterations to the front basement area will enhance its character and appearance.

### *7.2 Lower ground floor internal*

7.2.1 The lower ground floor is now devoid of any historic character. The formation of additional openings within the walls is proposed (but not the removal of walls, as recently approved and implemented next door at no. 16). The openings will be proportionate in scale, and downstands would allow the original plan form to be read clearly. The original hierarchy of spaces will be respected, with the architectural detailing kept very simple at this level.

7.2.2 At the rear, a glass addition is proposed. This will be a lightweight and reversible addition, of minimal visibility. It will not impact on historic fabric and will reinstate a feature originally located in this position, albeit to a larger scale.

### *7.3 Ground floor*

7.3.1 In the entrance hall, a door to the front room will be reinstated in the original position. At the rear, the 1960s (or later) door to the terrace will be replaced

with a door more in keeping with the age and character of the property. Original shutters will be retained. Modern cornices, ceiling roses, skirtings, fireplaces and floorboards will be replaced with designs and materials more in keeping with the age and character of the property (detailed in the Design & Access Statement).

#### 7.4 *Stairwell*

7.4.1 The stair has narrow winders with a hazardous inward slope on some of the treads. The stair will be strengthened and levelled without loss of historic fabric, as detailed in the engineer's method statement accompanying the application. On the half landings, modern Victorian-style coloured glass will be replaced by plain opaque glass; the windows themselves will be retained and refurbished. In the second floor stairwell, modern coloured glass set into the wall will be removed and the wall made good.

#### 7.5 *First floor*

7.5.1 The raised floor in the front room will be removed and the original level reinstated. Doors with louvred panels will be replaced with panelled doors repeating the original design. Modern cornices and skirtings will be replaced with designs and materials more in keeping with the age and character of the property (detailed in the Design & Access Statement).

#### 7.6 *Second floor*

7.6.1 As at basement level, the original hierarchy of spaces will be respected, and the architectural detailing kept simple. Alterations to the bathroom and the removal of iron rails outside the rear windows do not raise significant historic buildings issues.

#### 7.7 *Attic*

7.7.1 The proposed replacement hatch, removal of stud partitions, and provision of insulation raises no historic buildings issues.

## **8.0 Conclusions**

- 8.1 No. 17 East Heath Road is one of a semi-detached pair of houses built in about 1860. The buildings are architecturally modest, but characterful, and make a positive contribution to the Hampstead Conservation Area. The greatest significance of no. 17 lies in its occupation between 1918 and 1920 by the writer Katherine Mansfield and her husband, the poet and critic John Middleton Murry. A blue plaque is placed on the building to commemorating their residence.
- 8.2 The house has undergone many changes in the last fifty years, and today retains few of its original internal features and finishes. Current proposals are modest in nature, and are designed to improve the quality of the accommodation, and reverse some of the less sympathetic alterations of recent decades, while making allowance for present-day needs. Surviving historic features and finishes will be retained and no fabric of high significance lost. The building's contribution to the local conservation area will remain undiminished. Relevant local and national policies and guidance have been satisfied, and the proposals accord with the development plan. As such they constitute sustainable development which should be approved without delay (NPPF paragraph 14).



## **Appendix 1: List entry**

Name: NUMBERS 16 AND 17 AND ATTACHED WALL

List entry Number: 1342104

Location: NUMBERS 16 AND 17 AND ATTACHED WALL, 16 AND 17, EAST HEATH ROAD

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden

District Type: London Borough

Grade: II

Date first listed: 14-May-1974

Details

CAMDEN

TQ2686SE EAST HEATH ROAD 798-1/17/363 (South West side)

14/05/74

Nos.16 AND 17 and attached wall

GV II

Pair of semi-detached houses. Late C19. Painted brick with 2 plain 1st floor bands. Slated roofs with tall brick slab stacks. 3 storeys. 2 windows each. Each with double gabled front; gables to outer, slightly projecting bays have projecting bracketed eaves. Entrances in outer bays with wide, architraved, segmental-arched doorways having keystones, fanlights and panelled doors with sidelights. Lugged architraves to sashes. Ground floor, tripartite; 1st floor outer bays, round-arched, inner bays, square-headed with 2-light casements; 3rd floor, sashes with pointed heads.

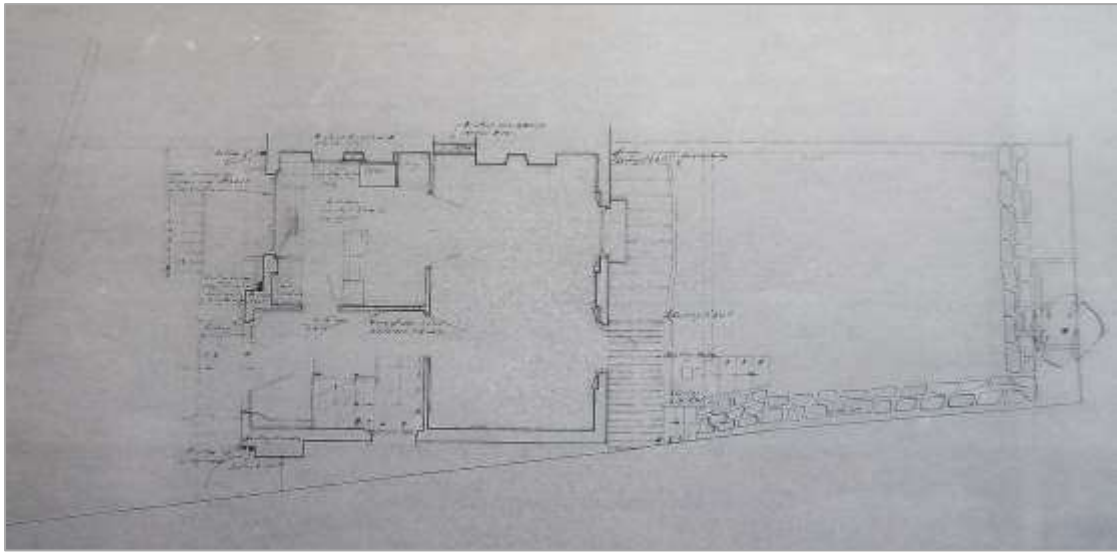
INTERIORS: not inspected.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached brick wall with panels and stuccoed coping.

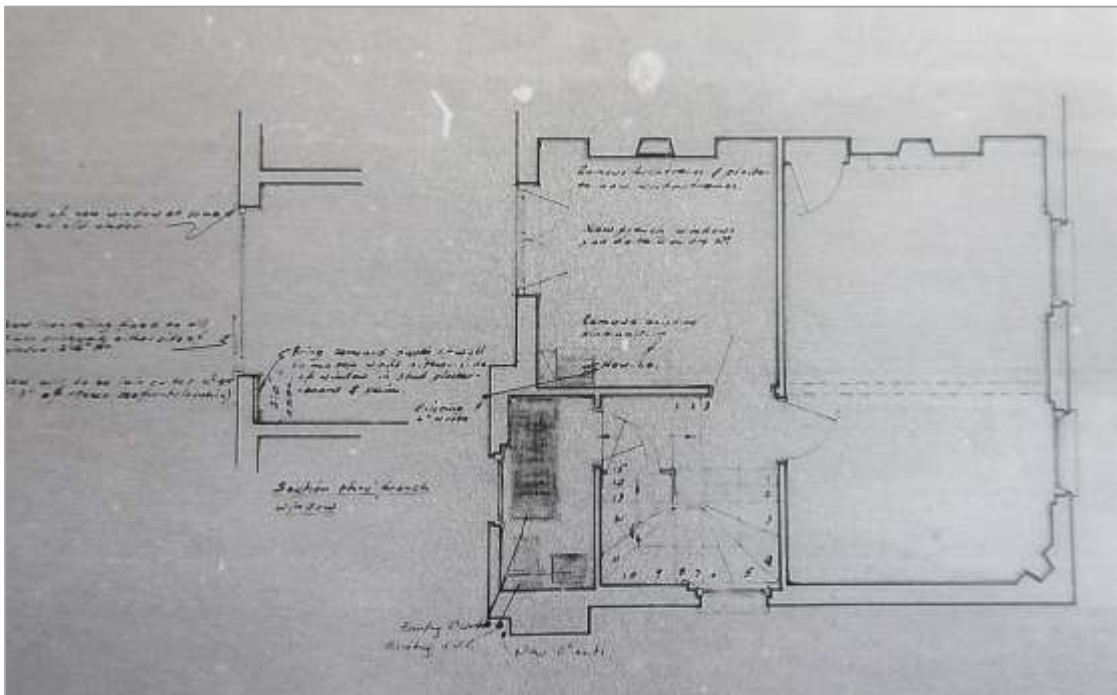
HISTORICAL NOTE: No.17 was the home of Katherine Mansfield, writer and her husband John Middleton Murray, critic, from 1918-20 (GLC plaque).

Listing NGR: TQ2661186231

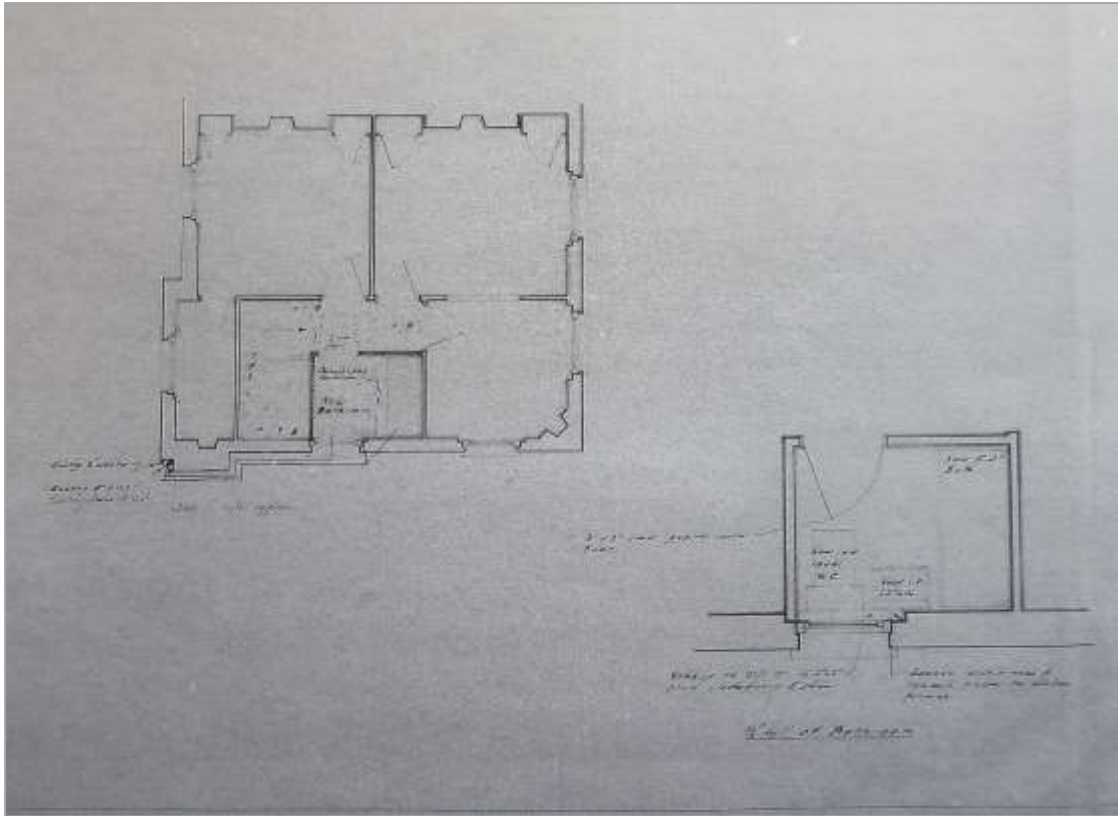
**Appendix 2: Proposed alterations, 1963 (Gerald Murphy & Partners),  
microfilm drawings in Camden Archives**



2a: Ground floor proposed

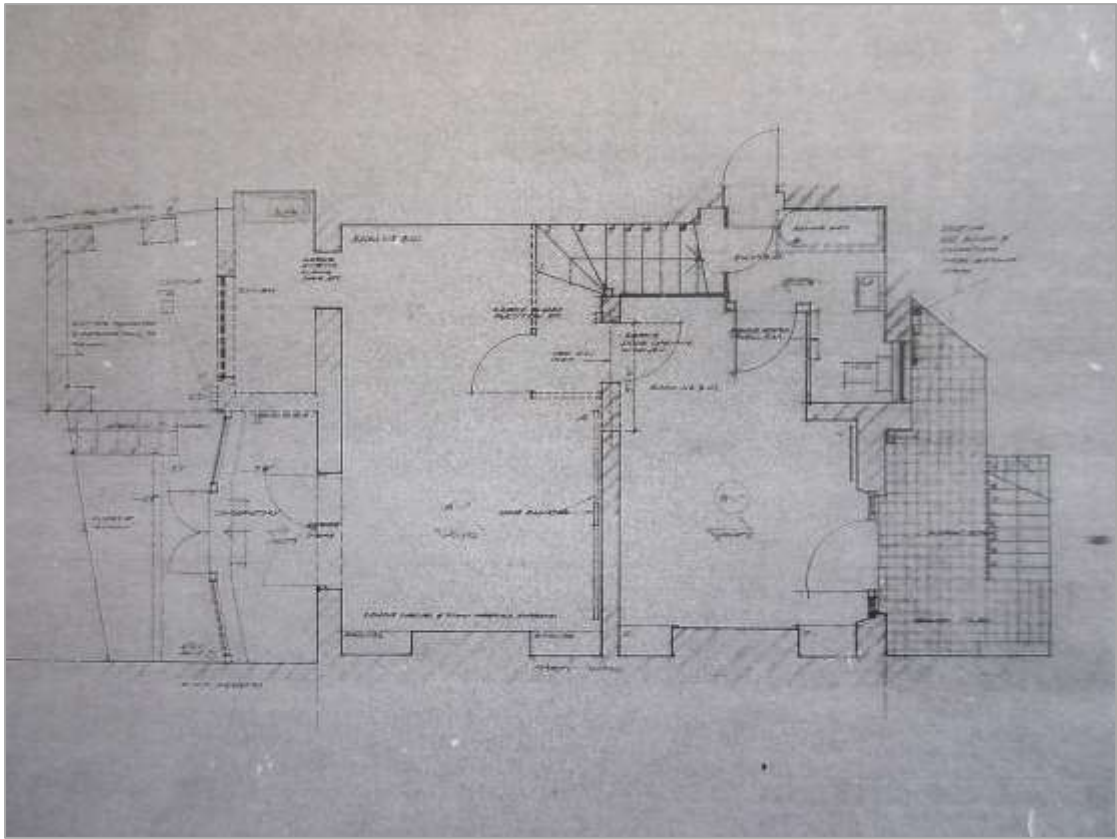


2b: First floor proposed

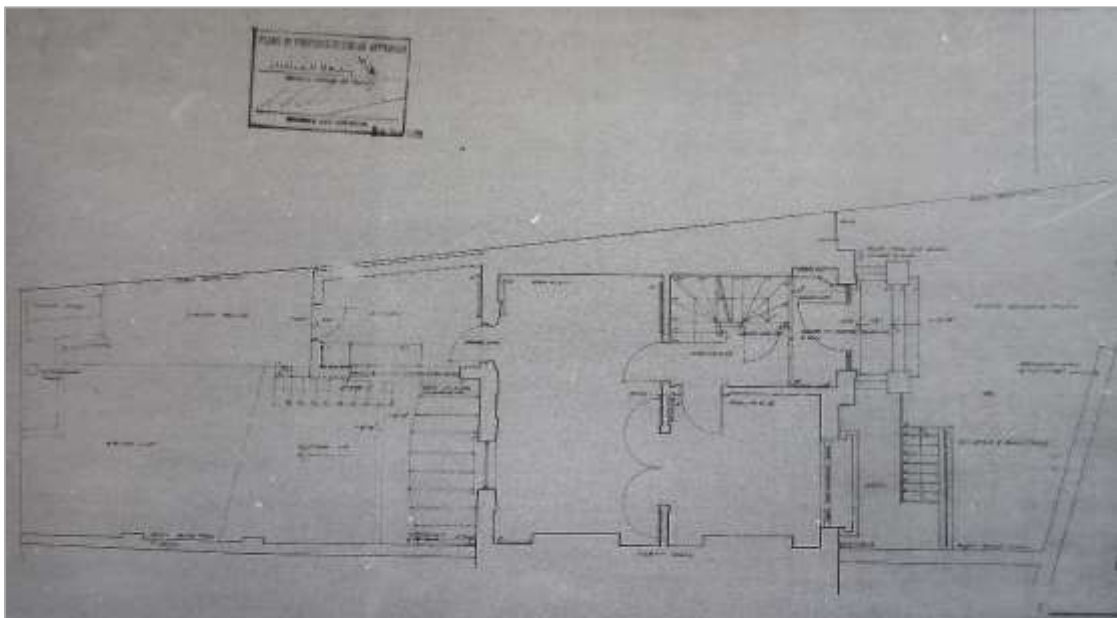


2c: Second floor proposed

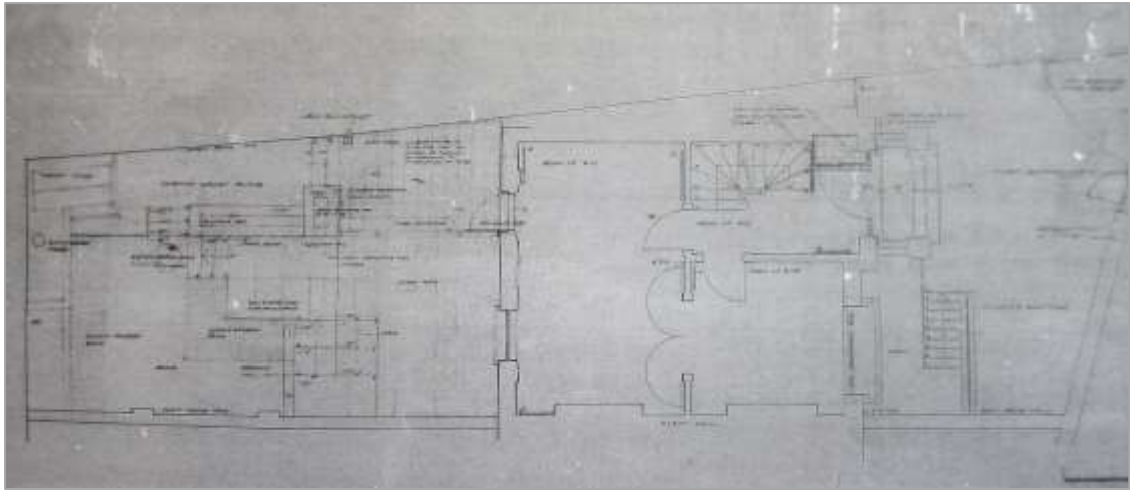
**Appendix 3: Proposed alterations, 1966 (Griffiths Lewis Goad Partnership), microfilm drawings in Camden Archives Drainage**



3a: Basement plan showing demolition and removals



3b: Ground floor plan showing demolition and removals



3c: Ground floor proposed

## Appendix 4: Photographs



4a: Front garden, showing modern tiling, light fittings and railings to basement area



4b: Door to basement area





4c: Doors to basement vaults



4d: Rear basement area





4e: Internal basement view towards stair



4f: Front room basement kitchen



4g: Basement view towards garden



4h: Stair from basement to ground floor



4i: Ground floor entrance hall, with modern floor finish, original stair to left



4j: View from entrance hall to rear room



4k: Ground floor rear room, sash window with shutters to left, modern door to right



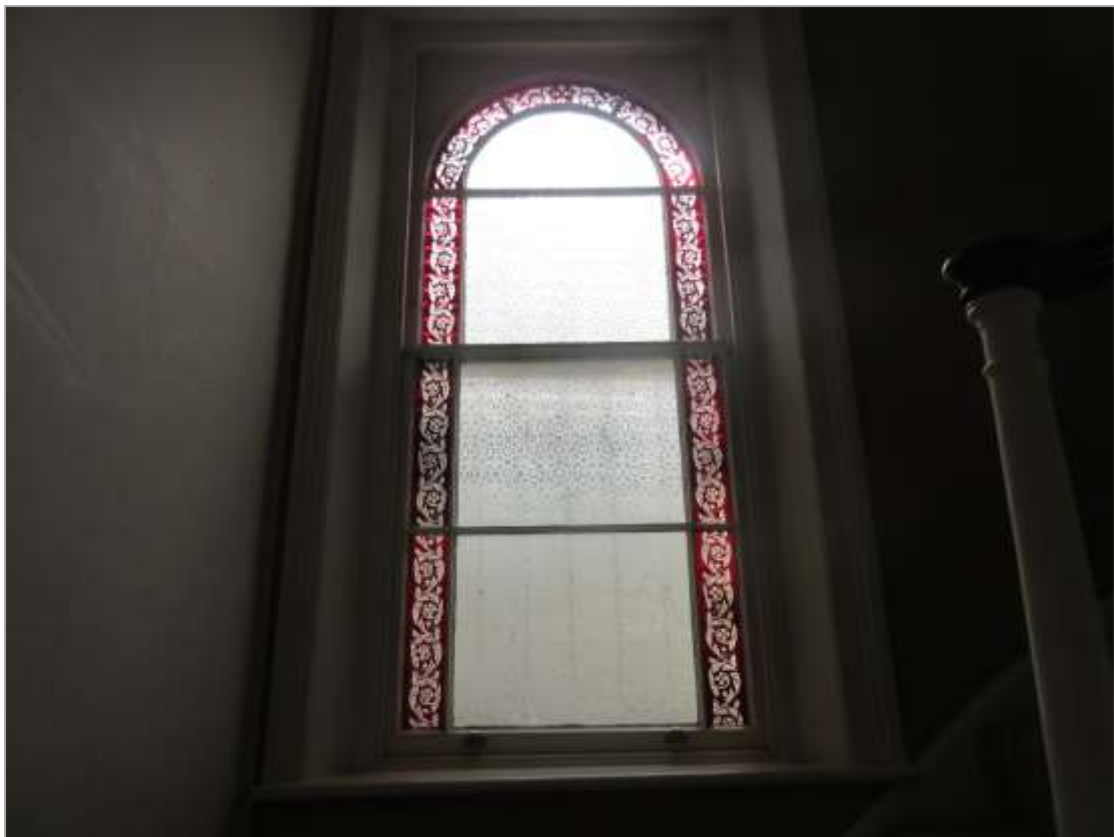
4l: Rear ground floor room, with modern cornices, Regency-style chimneypiece and plastic floorboards



4m: Ground floor towards front



4n: Ground floor front room, salvaged C19 fireplace insert with modern surround



4o: Staircase window, with Victorian-style glass





4p: First floor, from rear bedroom towards raised floor in front bathroom



4q: Modern inserted stained glass in stairwell to second floor





4r: Corner fireplace, second floor rear bedroom



4s: Window, second floor front bedroom



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