

**Heritage Statement:
43 Cumberland Terrace**



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Introduction

This report was commissioned by Andrew and Sukey Brecher in September 2016 in support of an application for Listed Building Consent for alterations to 43 Cumberland Terrace. The apartment occupies the top, third floor of two former town houses.

This report provides an account of the historic development and an assessment of the significance of the apartment, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework. The NPPF sets out that applicants for applications such as this should *'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'*. The report also describes the proposals and provides justification against the stipulations and policies set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the London Borough of Camden's local plan.

The report was prepared by Cordula Zeidler IHBC, a conservation professional with wide and significant experience in the assessment of development proposals in the historic environment.

Executive summary

The third floor apartment at 43 Cumberland Terrace forms part of a building that is listed at Grade I with group value and that is located in the London Borough of Camden's Regent's Park Conservation Area.

Cumberland Terrace was developed in 1826 to a masterplan by John Nash and designs by James Thomson for the Crown. The original design was in the form of a terrace of town houses with mews to the rear, but the overall effect was that of a symmetrical elevation framing Regent's Park which did not give away the internal partition into individual residences.

The apartment at no. 43 stretches across the top floor of two former town houses, previously numbered nos. 19 and 20, and also includes a small basement unit which was created in the 1960s by completely remodeling the basement plan of the terrace.

Cumberland Terrace experienced relatively minor bomb damage in the Second World War (though the southern of the town houses that today forms no. 43 was seriously damaged), and a decision was made to convert most of Cumberland Terrace into flats. This work was carried out in 1958-60 to designs by Louis de Soissons. It entailed the loss of the original staircases, partitions and finishes, and today only the party walls and main elevations survive of the original period of construction.

43 Cumberland Terrace retains no original internal features other than its party walls and is in need of refurbishment. The proposals entail a small number of alterations which would leave the elevations and party walls unaltered, and introduce modern kitchen and bathroom fittings, see minor alterations to non-original elements of plan form, and changes to the modern decorative scheme. The small basement unit would see some minor additions. None of these changes would affect the significance of the listed building, which lies first and foremost in its impressive external appearance as a part of the overall setting of Regent's Park with Nash's terraces, and therefore the proposals comply with the policies for heritage assets set out in the relevant Planning Act, the NPPF and Camden's local plan.

1 Historic development

Cumberland Terrace was conceived as part of a grand scheme by John Nash for the creation of a new park framed by enclosing terraces of palatial town houses. The park occupies an area which was originally known as Marylebone Park. In the 18th century it was used as farmland by the Duke of Portland and in 1811 it reverted to the Crown.

A proposal for comprehensive development by John Nash for a considerable number of buildings in and around the park was chosen but implemented only in part. It included a circus at Portland Place and one in the park, as well as two crescents north of it, and twenty-six villas in the park. This ambitious plan was realised in a very rudimentary fashion; built were only the terraces surrounding the park; to the south (Park Square, Ulster Terrace, York Terrace and Cornwall Terrace), east (St Andrew's Terrace, Cambridge Terrace, Chester Terrace, Cumberland Terrace and Gloucester Gate) and west (Clarence Terrace, Sussex Place and Hanover Terrace with Kent Terrace set behind, a small number of villas in the park, and half a circus at Portland Place.

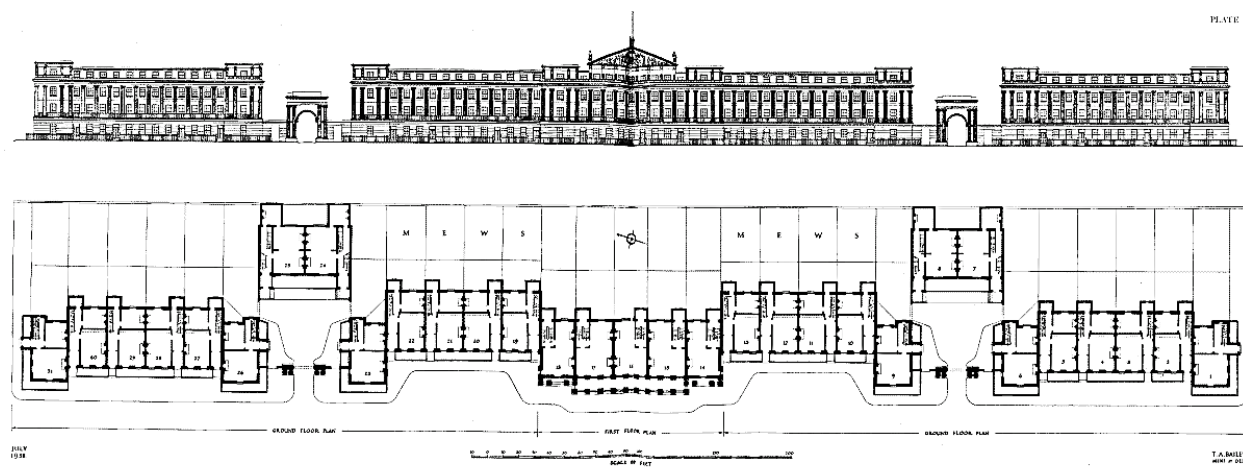


Fig. 1: The plan shows the lost original layout of Cumberland Terrace with no. 43 occupying the two houses directly to the north (left) of the central projecting wing (Survey of London)

The terraces, designed by Nash, were built between 1821-6, and the architect in charge of Cumberland Terrace was James Thomson. It was planned and built as town houses.

No. 43 stretches across two of the original town houses which were before the Second World War numbered 19 and 20 Cumberland Terrace (from south to north).

Cumberland Terrace experienced mostly only minor bomb damage, with the exception of the southern of the two houses which today forms 43 Cumberland Terrace, and the mews behind, which are shown with serious damage (Fig. 2, p. 5).

A comprehensive scheme for refurbishment and conversion into flats of the central and south section was carried out between 1958 and 1960 to designs by Louis de Soissons for the Crown. The Crown had initially hoped to demolish and redevelop the Nash terraces around Regents Park to avoid the major expense of a refurbishment but were pushed back by government and retained the facades.

As part of its conversion, the houses in this section of Cumberland Terrace lost their individual staircases and much of their plan form, and floors and ceilings were rebuilt in modern materials. Today only the elevations and party wall structures of the Nash period survive.

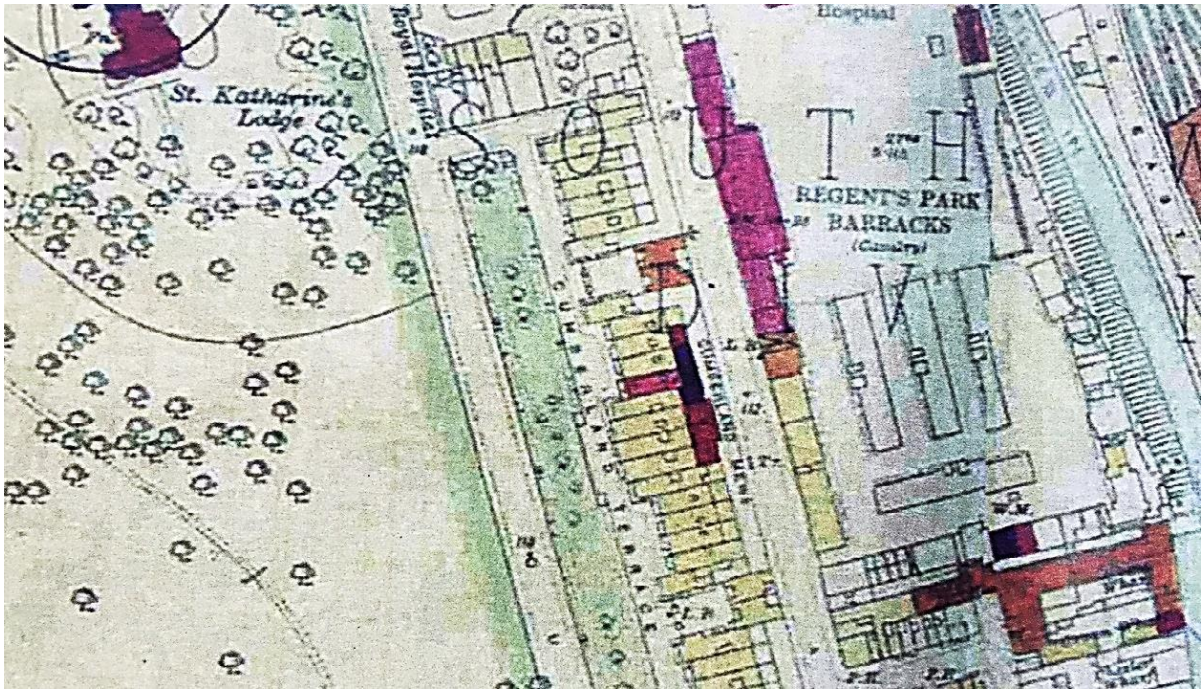


Fig. 2: Extract from LCC bomb damage map, showing Cumberland Terrace with blast damage (marked in yellow), and no. 19 (now no. 43) and some mews buildings with serious damage (marked in red/ black)

2 The existing fabric & its significance

Fabric

The top floor apartment at 43 Cumberland Terrace stretches across two former town houses and was formed after the Second World War when a breach in the party wall was made.

Original fabric survives only in the form of the structural elements of the front and rear elevations, and the structural components of the party walls between the town houses, built in brick with a modern plaster finish. The roofs have been largely rebuilt with a flat profile, and only some roof members and the upper section of the pitch surviving (the latter in the southern house). All internal partitions, floors and ceilings are of modern construction; floors and ceilings are built in concrete and with metal laths, and partitions are constructed apparently in clay pot/ tiles.

Both houses have lost their staircases which would have been accommodated to the rear, in those areas now occupied by a kitchen and small bedroom. The plan form has seen further alterations, namely:

- the introduction of two lobbies, a corridor, WC and coat cupboards in the southern house along the southern party wall, and
- the insertion of bathrooms between the front and rear rooms in the northern town house.

All internal finishes date to the post war period. These include: modern cornices of various modern designs; a timber, Regency-style fire place in the southern front room; deep timber skirtings; door and window architraves and joinery, floor coverings in the form of carpets, lino and tiles; plaster wall finishes; kitchen and bathroom fixtures and fittings.

In the basement is a small unit which forms part of the ownership of this apartment. It stretches across one bay and extends to half the depth of the house. This is accessed by a central corridor which laterally links all basements. It has a modern plain interior and modern finishes and was formed when the original lower floor of the town houses were combined. It is all modern fabric and is of no significance.

Significance

The significance of Cumberland Terrace lies primarily in its symmetrical exterior which forms an important backdrop to Regent's Park, and an important component of John Nash's overall compositions of palatial stucco terraces at the park's perimeter. The interiors of Cumberland Terrace, other than their party walls, have been lost, and the modern interiors and their finishes as well as the modern elements of plan form are of no significance. Only the remaining party walls are of some secondary significance as they indicate the lost original layout of 3-bay wide town houses.



Front and rear room in the southern house



Kitchen in the former stair compartment in the southern house



View through the breach in the party wall from the north into the south house



Northern house front room



West bathroom



East bathroom



Opening up showing ceiling construction in concrete with metal laths



Opening up showing typical wall construction apparently in clay pot/ tile



Typical modern cornice/ architrave



Central basement corridor



Basement unit with modern plan form and finishes



External view of rebuilt north roof with southern roof in background

3 The proposals and their impact on the heritage asset

The proposed alterations are shown on Syte Architects' drawings and described in their Design & Access Statement. They are all internal, and aimed at modernising an apartment which was substantially rebuilt in c1960 and has seen very little modernisation since then. The proposals entail a limited number of alterations to already-altered elements of the plan form and changes to modern decorative finishes. In detail, the proposed alterations and their impact on the significance of the heritage asset are as follows:

- In the southern house, provide a WC and handwash basin the space occupied by a double coat cupboard, using existing drainage routes, and providing a new coat cupboard in the lobby. This would have no impact on significance as the area has been comprehensively modernised previously and has a modern plan form.
- In the southern house, remove the lobby and WC and their partitions from the rear room, and in their place fit a larger kitchen with new fittings. This change would reinstate the original plan form (this space historically occupied the staircase compartment) and this would be a benefit.
- In the southern house, remove the modern double doors between the front and rear room, slightly widen the opening and provide sliding doors. This would have no impact on significance as the existing fabric is modern and the proposals are minimal.
- In the southern house, remove the modern timber chimney piece from the front room, and insert a chimney piece in lime stone with appropriate dimensions in both the front and rear room. This would have no impact on the significance of the listed building as the existing chimney piece in the front room is clearly a poor quality modern element, and its replacement is appropriate, whilst the rear room will benefit from the reinstatement of a chimney piece where none exists at present.
- In the northern house, provide new sanitary ware in the bathrooms and make some minor changes to their plan form. This would have no impact on significance as those spaces are entirely modern and without significance.
- In the northern house, move the modern partition between the rear rooms to create two double bedrooms. These rooms are both without significance and this change would not have an impact on the heritage asset.
- In the northern house's front room, replace a modern built in wardrobe with new, including a dressing table, and also insert a further wardrobe on the opposite wall, equally with a dressing table. The existing fittings in this room are modern, and the proposed elements are in essence pieces of furniture which are appropriate for the room and will not negatively impact on the significance of the heritage asset.
- Generally remove modern cornices, replace modern skirtings with new shallower skirtings, remove modern architraves, replace modern timber doors with new flush timber doors, and replace all modern floor finishes above the floorslabs with new finishes. As all those existing finishes and elements are recognisably of a post-war date and of no significance, their renewal or removal would not affect the significance of the heritage asset, but would help to sustain the listed building's optimum viable use.
- In the small basement unit, remove a modern handwash basin and modern cupboard, and insert a small bathroom and kitchen in their place. As this room was formed after the Second World War by newly subdividing the basement spaces throughout the terrace, and as it contains modern fabric only, these minor changes would have no effect on the significance of the listed building.

4 Conclusion

The NPPF and Camden's Development Framework require that proposals to alter heritage assets are assessed in regard to whether or not they cause harm to the asset's significance. The NPPF also makes it clear that local authorities should take account of *'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'*.

In this case, because of the altered condition and the modern nature of the interior of the building, the fact that the significance of the heritage asset lies in its contribution to the setting of Regent's Park and its overall external appearance, and because of the proposed minimal scope of interventions to modern fabric and plan form only, it is clear that no harm would be caused to the significance of Cumberland Terrace, but that the scheme would allow the continued viable use of this part of the building as a residence, and that Listed Building Consent should therefore be granted.

Appendix I
Planning Policy and Guidance

Proposals for alterations to listed building have to be assessed against national and local policy and guidance set out in law, the national planning policy framework, the local plan, and any other relevant adopted guidance. The policies and guidance quoted below are relevant for this application.

A Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Act is the legislative basis in determining applications that have an impact on the historic environment. Section 66 imposes a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings:

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 or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72(l) of the above Act sets out considerations for development that would affect conservation areas:

... with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

B National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England. It has the following relevant policies which should be taken into account for proposals such as this one:

As regards to the significance of a heritage asset, the framework contains the following policies:

126. 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.

And:

129. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account 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.

In determining applications local planning authorities are required to take account of significance, viability, sustainability and local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF identifies the following criteria in relation to this:

- *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.*

Harm:

As regards any 'harm' to the significance designated heritage asset, the framework states:

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. [Paragraph 132]

C The London Borough of Camden's local policies

Camden's Development Policies, contained in the 2010 Local Development Framework, state in Policy DP25:

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.*

Camden's Core Strategy (2010) has the following policy as regards heritage assets:

CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

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 [...]*

**APPENDIX II:
SOURCES**

Survey of London: Volume 19, the Parish of St Pancras Part 2: Old St Pancras and Kentish Town. Originally published by London County Council, London, 1938.

The Buildings of England. London 3: North West. London 1991.

The Crown Estate: The Future of the Regent's Park terraces. Statement by the Crown Estate Commissioners. 1957. Held at the RIBA Library.

-- The Future of the Regent's Park Terraces. Second Statement by the Crown Estate Commissioners. March 1959. Held at the RIBA Library.

-- The Future of the Regent's Park Terraces. Third Statement by the Crown Estate Commissioners. June 1962. Held at the RIBA Library.

London County Council: Bomb Damage Map

**APPENDIX III:
List Description**

TQ2883SE CUMBERLAND TERRACE 798-1/82/290 (West side) 14/05/74

Nos.1-59 (Consecutive) and attached railings

GV I

Monumental palace-style terrace of 59 houses. c1827. By John Nash and J Thomson. For the Commissioners of Woods, Forests & Land Revenues. Built by JG Bubb; arches built by WM Nurse. Stucco.

Houses in 3 blocks linked by "triumphal" arches leading into 2 courtyards with pairs of houses and drives leading to former mews. Terrace approximately 240m long.

EXTERIOR: central block (Nos 20-49): 4 storeys and basements. Central projecting Ionic decastyle pedimented portico of Giant Order, flanked by slightly less projecting similar single bays with paired columns and attic storeys. Rusticated ground floor, with square-headed doorways with patterned fanlights and panelled doors where not converted for use as windows, forming a podium. Cast-iron balconies between columns. Entablature topped by balustraded parapet with vases and sculpture of figures on dies. Tympanum filled with sculpture of allegorical figures and figurative acroteria at angles. Flanking the portico, 11 bays of rusticated ground floor and Ionic pilasters rising through 1st and 2nd floors to carry entablature at 3rd floor level; cornice and blocking course above attic storey. Architraved sashes to upper floors; 1st floor with continuous cast-iron balcony. Terminating bays forming projecting single bay pavilions similar to single bays flanking pedimented section of portico. "Triumphal" Arches: linking the central and outer blocks. Single, central, architraved archway flanked by paired Ionic columns carrying an entablature and blocking course. Linked to the blocks by rusticated stucco screen walls. Outer blocks (Nos 1-17 & 52-57): 11 bays each similar to those flanking central portico and terminating in similar bays at each end. End houses of blocks with stucco pilastered porticoes on returns. Pairs of houses in courtyards behind Arches (Nos 18 & 19 and Nos 50 & 51): stucco with slated roofs and central chimneys. 2 storeys and basements. 5 windows. Corinthian pilasters rise through ground and 1st floors to carry modified entablature with cornice at eaves level surmounted by arcaded parapet. Pilastered porticoes with round-arched entrances. Recessed sashes; ground floor tripartite. Plain 1st floor sill band. Nos 58 & 59: pair of houses set back from terrace at north end. Stucco with rusticated ground floor and projecting pilasters at angles. 3 storeys and basement. 3 windows in all. Projecting centre bay with coupled entrances flanked by pilasters and surmounted by parapet of Greek fret pattern with acroteria on dies. Square-headed doorways with fanlights and panelled doors. Recessed sashes, upper floors architraved; 1st floor with balconies to flanking sashes and central pedimented, tripartite casement. Cornice at 2nd floor level breaking forward with pilasters; similar above 2nd floor with blocking course.

INTERIORS: not inspected.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with tasselled spearhead finials to all areas and gardens of Nos 58 & 59. HISTORICAL NOTE: designed to give the appearance of a palace overlooking the natural landscape of Regent's Park. The King's guinguette, had it been built, would have stood almost opposite. (Survey of London: Vol. XIX, Old St Pancras and Kentish Town (St Pancras II): London: -1938: 116).

Listing NGR: TQ2868783106