COOKE
FAWCETT
ARCHITECTS

Rose Cottage, Vale of Health, NW3 1AX
Design and Access Statement
02.07.2017 - Revision C
170702_135_REP_DAS_RevC

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

This document accompanies an application for Listed Building Consent for proposed works to Rose Cottage, a small terraced cottage located with the Vale of Health in Hampstead.

1.2. Context

Rose Cottage was recently purchased by the applicants Simon and Sarah Walker.

Although in reasonable general condition, the property has had no maintenance or refurbishment work done to it for some time. The previous owner inherited the property from a relative and then lived in the building for several years without investing significantly in the up keep of the building.

Alongside a general need to redecorate and modernise aspects such as services, there are also several issues including structural movement, timber decay, and damp, which need to be addressed.

From the Building Survey Report referred to later in this document, provided by Warmans –

It would appear that this building has not been particularly well looked after over the last 50 or so years and now more substantial and specific rather than general repair is required.

The applicants' intention is to use this moment, when the building is unoccupied, to address existing failings and arrest ongoing decay and structural movement. In parallel they want to take this opportunity to make minor adjustments to the internal layout including, for example the creation of a bathroom on the same level as the bedrooms.

The existing property is listed (Grade II) and located with the Hampstead Conservation Area. The applicants are highly conscious of the need to approach any works with a sensitivity towards the character and existing built fabric of this heritage asset. Motivated by both their interest in learning more about the history of their property, and also by a desire to approach refurbishment in a scholarly manner, the applicant commissioned The Architectural History Practice to produce a heritage assessment of the building, prior to design work commencing. This document, included with the application and referred to under point 1.4 below, has formed the basis for our approach to the design of the proposed works.

One significant reason behind the works currently proposed, is to avoid a situation in which further decay could necessitate the need for more substantial and invasive works in the future. The proposed package of works will in part act to safeguard the future of the built fabric of the property by addressing current issues before they get worse.

1.3. Summary of proposed works

Taken as a package of refurbishment, the proposed works include aspects which would typically be considered routine repair and maintenance (for example, like for like redecoration and the replacement of some areas of outdated services) alongside other items for which listed building consent is required (for example structural alterations and replacement of windows). These works are described in the accompanying schedule of works and set out into two categories to reflect the above: a) works requiring listed building consent, and b) works considered routine repair and maintenance which should be considered deminimis subject to their completion on a like for like basis.

This document, and the supporting documents and drawings describe 'the proposed works' holistically, on the basis that describing the works which require consent without referring to items of repair and maintenance would first, make it difficult to understand the works in the round and second, run the risk of missing items of work from the consent on the grounds that they could be considered deminimis only to later find out that approval was required.

1.4. Supporting information

This document is submitted together with a set of existing and proposed drawings. In addition, the following documents have also been submitted:

- A building survey report completed by Warmans at the time of the purchase of the property
- A heritage statement provided by The Architectural History Practice, comprised of two parts:
  - An assessment of the existing building
  - An assessment of the proposed changes and their impact on the heritage asset
- A structural statement provided by Philip Cooper of Cambridge Architectural Research (CAR ltd)

Existing west facing elevation (formerly the front)

Existing east facing street elevation (formerly the rear)

2. Site

2.1. The Vale of Health

The Vale of Health, originally known as Hatchett's Bottom is a small Hamlet located to the north of the main area of Hampstead, embedded within the landscape of Hampstead Heath. The development of the area was made possible by the draining of an area of previously swampy and unattractive land, by the Hampstead Water Co. in 1777. Several small cottages were originally built to house the poor in 1779. By 1815 the Hamlet was described as comprising 4 houses and 10 cottages and by 1851, 18 houses were identified. The name 'The Vale of Health', recorded in 1801, may have originated as a euphemism which was exploited or as a new name invented in a deliberate attempt to change the image of the place from that of a swampy area of unattractive land to one of a picturesque hamlet located within bucolic landscape surroundings. The name is potentially attributable to John Rudd, who was likely the builder of Rose Cottage.

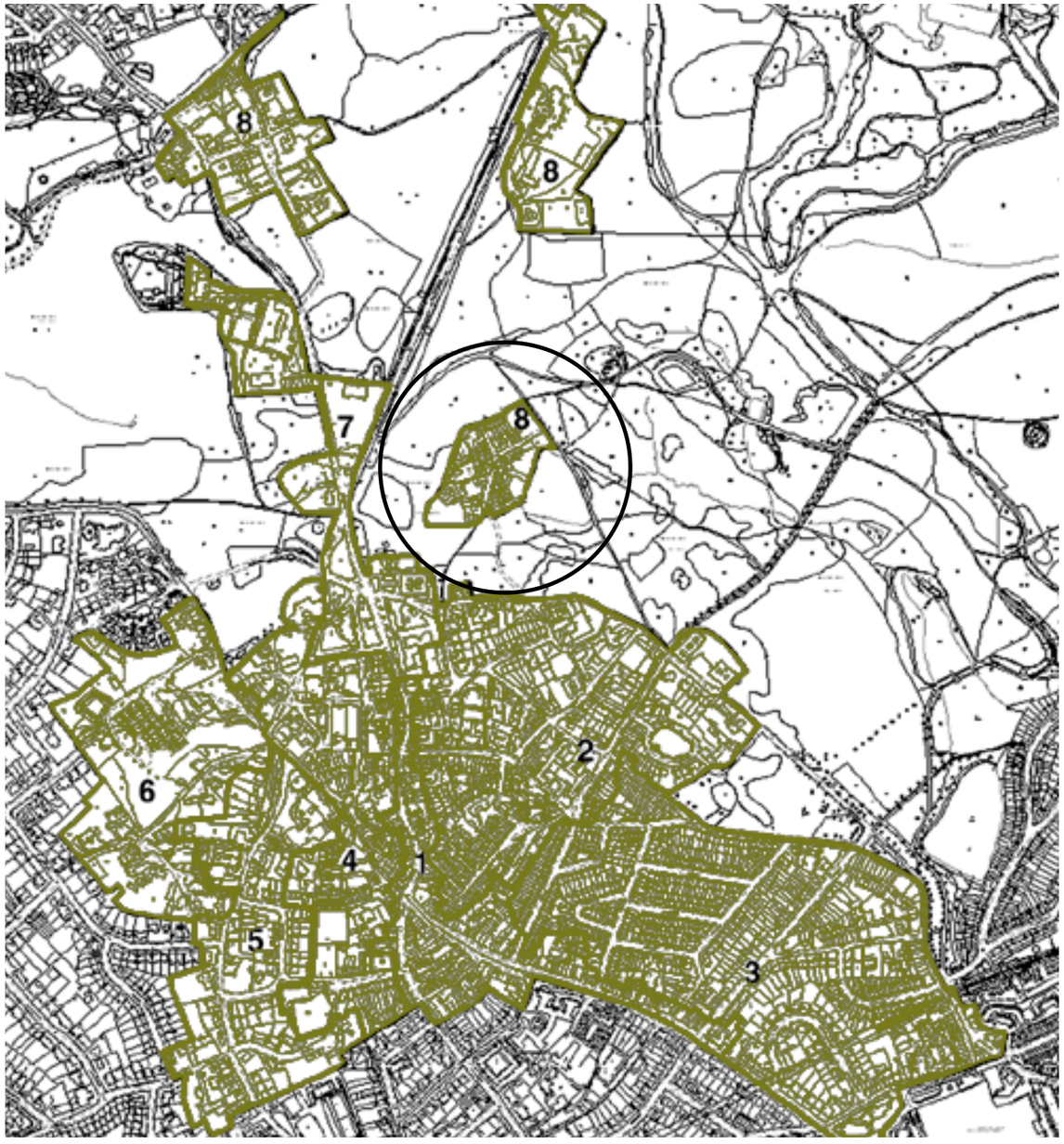
During the early 20th century the Vale of Health became known as an area of attractions, and became somewhat 'vulgarized' by the reputation of its tavern, tea gardens, merry-go-rounds, and slot machines. However, it never lost its appeal as somewhere one could experience village life in such proximity to the centre of London. The Vale of Health today very much maintains the appearance of a picturesque hamlet surrounded by the lush landscape of the heath.

2.2. The setting

The Vale of Health is accessed on foot directly from Hampstead Heath or from Hampstead via a small footpath which starts at the north end of Holford Road and skirts around the western and northern edges of the Vale. By car, there is only one point of access; a street also names the Vale of Health is accessed from East Heath Road. The Vale of Health itself is formed of one main street which divides into two branches serving its east and west sides. Rose Cottage is situated on the western branch. On entering the Vale of Health the topography initially gives the visitor the impression of descending slightly into a small hollow, the terrain then rises up slightly as you approach the centre of the Vale and its Northern part, where Rose Cottage is situated.

John Constable. Hampstead Heath: The Vale of Health, Probably 1820-1822
The view describes the view from above the Vale of Health pond towards Highgate and the heath

Scott Macfarland. View of The Vale of Health, looking towards Hampstead 2007



Map of Hampstead Conservation Area - Number 8 indicates outlying areas including Vale of Health

2.3. Hampstead Conservation Area

The Vale of Health lies within the Hampstead Conservation Area, it falls within one of the areas designated 'outlying areas' which also includes North end, and The Elms.
The following text is part of the introduction provided in the council conservation area statement:

Hampstead was designated a Conservation Area (with North End, the Elms, Vale of Health, Downshire Hill) on 29 January 1968. The reasons given for its designation were:

- *the large number of listed buildings of architectural interest, the historical association of these buildings in terms of former residents and of the village in the context of the history of London as a whole;*
- *the street pattern of the original village which is retained and is reflected in the fragmentation of the street blocks and close and irregular grouping of the old buildings;*
- *the striking topography which gives rise to the complex of narrow streets and steps characteristic of the village and provides an important skyline when viewed from other parts of London;*
- *the proximity of the unique open space of Hampstead Heath and its integration with the village on the northernside. (LB Camden, Planning & Development Committee - 30 October 1967, Report of the Planning Officer).*

The statement includes the following description of the Vale of Health:

The Vale of Health is a tightly knit enclave of modest houses in a hollow completely surrounded by the Heath. It stands on the edge of a large pond, built as a reservoir in 1777 by the Hampstead Water Company. Today a man-made island refuge for birds at the centre increases the pond's visual attraction. The development of the enclave began when the reservoir was created and the remaining drained land became available for building. The Vale is approached down a leafy lane from East Heath Road. Its narrow roads and alleyways create intimate vistas, with the added impact of views of the Heath, with its trees and vegetation. There is a delightful mixture of buildings. Early 19th century cottages, many weatherboarded, combine with larger villas and terraces. The secluded nature of this residential enclave, the varied scale and forms of the modest houses, contrasting with the natural backdrop of the Heath give the Vale of Health a unique charm. Apart from the older cottages the houses are predominantly late 19th century.

The statement goes on to describe Rose Cottage as one of...*a pretty row of early 19th century two and three storey painted cottages with neat gardens (Old Cottage, Woodbine Cottage, Rose Cottage, North Villa, South Villa, Vale Cottage, Vale House - all listed).*

3. Existing Building

3.1. Arrangement

The existing building is a small cottage organised over two principle floors. The orientation of the property has been reversed at some point so that the principle means of access is now from the rear (east) of the house. For clarity, in this document, the principle west elevation in which the existing veranda faces the garden will be described as 'the front' as per its original orientation, and the east façade to the street, through which the property is entered will be referred to as 'the rear'.

The house is currently entered via one of two doors, both of which open onto the thin paved area of garden which runs alongside the existing rear addition. The first door provides access to the existing bathroom located at the street end of the property and through which the kitchen can be accessed. The second door, which is clearly the main front door (albeit further from the gate to the street), provides access into the hallway at the foot of the stairs. From this point, one can enter either the kitchen, or the main reception room, or take the stairs to the first floor.

Accommodation at ground level comprises a main reception room occupying the main part of the original plan, two small kitchen spaces divided by an existing chimney breast, a bathroom and a separate WC. At first floor, the main front area of the plan is divided into two bedrooms. The rear portion of the plan, above the existing kitchen is made up of two smaller bedrooms, the second of which can only be accessed through the first.

At the front of the building, facing the garden, an attractive timber verandah structure provides a balcony at first floor level and a covered patio at ground floor adjacent to the main reception area. This patio is immediately adjacent to existing glazed doors which provide access to the garden.

3.2. Listing and heritage significance

Rose Cottage is listed grade II. The accompanying heritage statement provided by the Architectural History Practice provides a detailed description of the history of the building and its significance as a heritage asset.

3.3. Previous works

The property has been significantly altered since it was originally built. As is typical for a property of this sort, records are incomplete, and any attempt to accurately catalogue and date the evolution of the property is a non-exact science. That said it seems clear that the property as it stands today is the accumulation of a series of alterations including potentially the extension and alteration of the rear addition which may have originally only been one storey. The opening up of the ground floor reception room, the addition of the front veranda, the reorientation of the building and possibly the reorganisation of the existing roof are also all likely 20th century alterations. Further assessment is provided in the accompanying Heritage Statement.

A reasonable reading of the existing building is that it doesn't retain any particular form or plan layout that could be truly regarded as original, but rather reflects a pattern of gradual change and alteration over the last two hundred years, typical for this type of property.

More recent refurbishment, redecoration and maintenance works have included the installation of more modern paper linings, applications of external cementitious render and generally more modern finishes and fittings throughout.

Generally, the property is in a reasonably unmodernised state, with the exception of some roofing works believed to have been completed in the recent past.

3.4. Current condition

On purchasing the property, the applicant commissioned a building survey from Warmans. This document is submitted as a supporting document along with this application. This report, its assessment of areas of concerns, and the recommendations for repairs presented, form the basis for the scope of the proposed works.

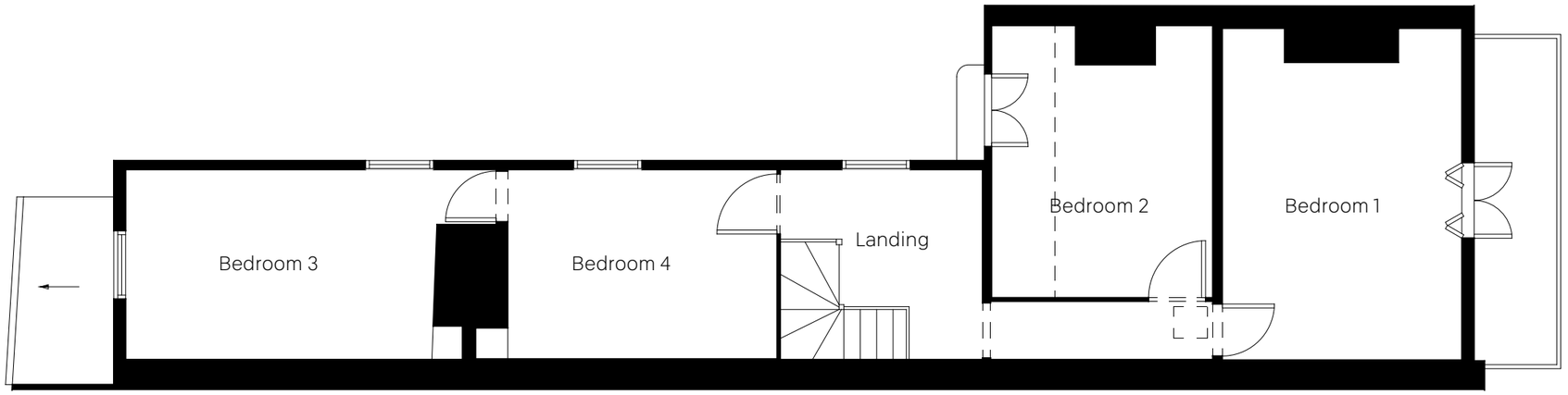
The Warmans' report highlights numerous issues and it is not the intention of this document to provide a summary of their report. It is important however to draw specific attention to several key issues which are interrelated – namely structural stability, drainage and dampness.

The property has experienced significant historic settlement, evidence of which can be seen in the unevenness of the existing floors. Cracking in relatively recent decoration suggests that movement is ongoing. The Warmans' report suggests that this movement is likely the result of poor drainage conditions leading to the gradual erosion of the ground beneath what are likely to be relatively feeble footings. Many issues including cracking, dampness, water ingress, timber decay and the general out of level condition of the floors appears to stem from this issue of historic and ongoing movement.

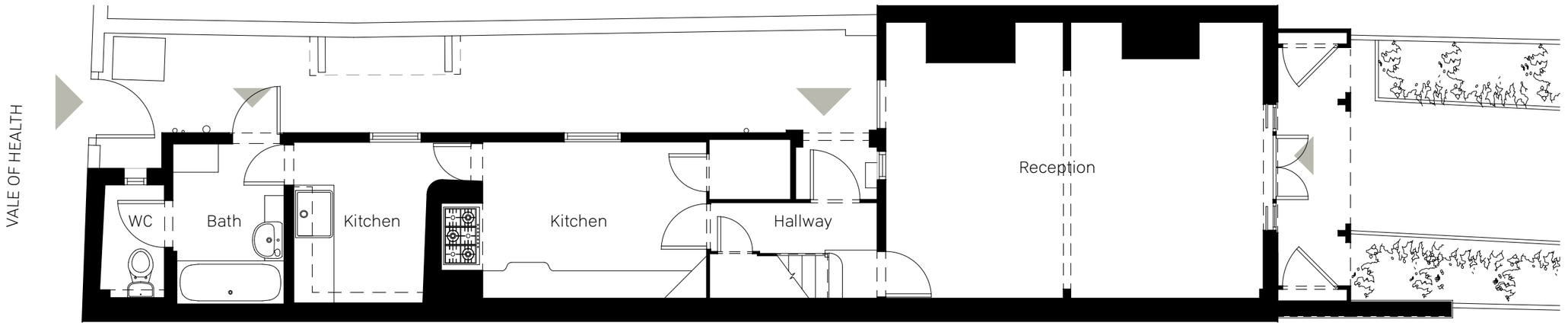
While this situation is not understood to represent a significant structural threat to the building it has come into focus now, partly because the opportunity presents itself to resolve it, as something which needs significant and specific action. This thinking directly informs the proposed structural alterations to the existing rear addition, which are aimed at arresting movement and providing a robust backdrop for improvements to drainage, waterproofing and the general refurbishment of the property

3.5. Structural assessment and proposals

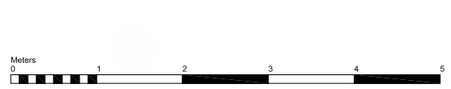
Philip Cooper of Cambridge Architectural Research has been appointed as project structural engineer. Having reviewed the condition report and made a visit to site he has provided a series of proposals which address the various areas of structural work required. This structural design work is included as a supporting document along with this application. The structural solutions proposed are aimed to address issues highlighted in the Warmans' report whilst also responding to the applicants aims of the property.



First floor plan



Ground floor plan



Clockwise from bottom left:

1. Paved pathway to west of Rose Cottage
2. Street elevation and adjacent properties
3. Street elevation and cottage beyond
4. Passageway lining rear addition of property (view to street)
5. Passageway lining rear addition of property (view to house)
6. Principle west facing elevation

Clockwise from bottom left:

1. Kitchen
2. Upstairs bedroom in rear addition
3. Bedroom in main part of 1st floor (east)
4. Master bedroom at 1st floor (west)
5. Ground floor reception room
6. Ground floor reception room

4. Planning context

The proposed works include only minor changes to the existing building and are mostly focused on repair and refurbishment. They do not include any change of use or extensions. On this basis, it is understood that the key planning constraints are the listed status of the building and the building's location within the Hampstead Conservation Area. Informed by these two criteria, the proposed design aims to address existing failings and the aspirations of the applicant without harming the character or appearance of both the building or its surroundings.

5. Proposals

5.1. Overview

The proposed works are listed in the schedule of works, submitted with this application. Most of the proposed works consist of repair and maintenance aimed at addressing the issues highlighted in the Warmans report. In addition, the following specific items of work are proposed and submitted for approval as part of this application:

5.2. New solid floor build-up through existing rear addition

A new solid floor build-up comprising reinforced concrete slab, damp proof membrane, insulation and screed is proposed.

This build-up will provide stability to the existing flank wall of the rear addition via projecting hit and miss concrete tongues evenly spaced under the existing wall. The new build up will eliminate damp issues in the part of the building, and provide a solid base for new finishes and repairs to existing fabric. The intention is to reuse existing stone floor finishes where possible and complement these with new stone to match the existing.

5.3. Removal of existing rear chimney breast

The proposal includes the removal of the kitchen chimney breast. The existing kitchen is divided into two small spaces by the existing chimney. The resulting spaces are undersized and difficult to use. Combining the two rooms will create a more generous kitchen space appropriately sized for a three-bedroom property and large enough to include an informal dining area.

The removal of the existing chimney is made possible through the installation of a slender steel frame which also serves to stabilise the existing rear addition and arrest rotational movement.

The proposed frame will be concealed within nibs in the existing walls and a down stand in the kitchen ceiling. These nibs and down stand will refer to the existing layout of the room and allow the history and evolution of the space to remain readable in the new configuration.

No change is proposed to the chimney above roof level, the external appearance of the building will remain unchanged as a result of the removal of the breast at ground and first floors.

5.4. New footings for balcony

New footings will provide stability to the balcony structure. The proposed footings will be below grade and will be invisible in the final condition

5.5. Balcony modifications

The existing balcony does not provide the necessary fall protection because the openings between the existing balustrade members exceed a spacing of 100mm. The balustrade structure is also not strong enough to resist impact. As such, in the present condition the balcony represents a life safety risk. The proposed works include the following structural strengthening measures:

- Addition of slim 45mm X 45mm vertical timber elements to the back face of the existing vertical posts.
- Addition of a tie back at roof level to restrain the top of the structure
- Addition of a slim 25 X 25mm horizontal steel bar to provide enhanced impact resistance at handrail height.

The proposals also include the installation of a clear glass layer on the inside face of the handrail. This serves to reduce the open spacing of the balustrade. On balance, it is felt that a discreet glass layer, would be of minimal visual impact compared to the alternative of changing the spacing of the balustrade members which would change the appearance of the balcony.

5.6. New floor build-up in 1st floor rear addition

The existing floor boards are a mixture of old and more recent boards and their condition varies. The ambition is to raise and protect the existing boards with the intention of re-using them where possible. Whilst the floor boards are out of the way, services will be re-run, the existing joists will be levelled through the addition of firring pieces, and a new plywood deck will be installed to add rigidity to the existing floor structure. The exposure of the existing joists will provide the opportunity to fix or replace any joists which have either been damaged by decay or insect attack or have come loose from their sockets.

5.7. Floor ventilation

Current floor ventilation is inadequate and is causing dampness and timber decay. It is likely that historic vents may have been covered over or impacted by the settlement of the building and / or subsequent changes to landscape levels.

New telescopic vents will be installed in the front and rear elevations of the main reception room to provide enhanced air flow to the sub floor.

5.8. Replacement of existing PVC rainwater gutters and downpipes

Existing rainwater gutters and downpipes will be replaced with cast iron versions more in keeping with the original property.

5.9. Modifications to external landscaping

Existing paving to the rear of the property will be lifted and set aside for re-use. New build-ups will be installed incorporating below grade drainage, damp proof membranes and robust interfaces at the building façade. Paving will be re-laid to fall away from the building, incorporating surface drainage to manage run off.

To the west (front) of the property the level of the existing paving will be lowered to create a more robust interface (step up) between outside and inside. A new soakaway will be created to ensure that any surface run off cannot exert water pressure on the façade of the house.

5.10. External joinery (doors and windows)

The proposals include the refurbishment of all external timber joinery. The intention is to repair existing timber where possible and in all other situations replace doors and windows like for like.

In addition to refurbishing the majority of the existing windows the following changes are also proposed:

- Existing casement window to kitchen to be replaced with timber framed glazed French doors to provide access to the outside space
- Existing rear door to main reception room to be replaced with new glazed timber door (existing security bars removed)
- Existing panel beneath remaining kitchen window to be internally lined and insulated.

For a list of the proposed window works, refer to the accompanying window schedule.

5.11. External finishes

The existing rear addition appears to have been rendered with a cementitious product. It is expected that this non-breathable layer is having an adverse impact on the performance of the brick wall beneath and is exacerbating damp issues. This existing render will be carefully removed and replaced with a more sympathetic, breathable lime based render.
External paint finishes will be replaced as part of the works.

5.12. New Bathroom at first floor level

There is currently only one WC and one bathroom in the property. Both are located at ground floor beyond the existing kitchen. Although consistent with the evolution of these kinds of properties, this arrangement is now considered highly impractical and unfit for purpose. One key aspect of the proposed works is the creation of a new bathroom at 1st floor level.
At present in the rear addition at first floor there are two rooms classified as bedrooms. In practice, the fact that to access one of these rooms one must walk through the other means that it isn't realistic to describe both these rooms as bedrooms. The proposed works will convert the existing room adjacent to the staircase into a new bathroom and corridor providing access to the rear bedroom. The existing WC at ground level will remain as a guest WC and the existing ground floor bathroom will be stripped out and replaced with an area for coat storage.

5.13. New linings

For the most part, new linings will be like for replacement of existing linings. Areas of original defective, de-bonded plasterwork will be replaced with suitable lime based products. The Warmans report highlights the risk of working with existing lathe and plaster ceilings and as such, rather than interfere with these it is proposed to board over the existing ceilings leaving the original layers intact.

The existing rear addition currently suffers from extremely poor thermal performance – the existing flank wall is only one-half brick thick. The proposals include the lining of this flank wall with an insulated build-up comprising of insulated studwork separated from the existing wall by a damp proof membrane.

5.14. Services

The proposed works include a general upgrade to services. This will include rewiring, re-plumbing, a new boiler installation, new connections for the proposed new bathroom and the replacement of the existing mains water supply pipe which is lead. Where possible existing cable and pipe runs will be re-used to avoid cutting into existing fabric except where necessary.

5.15. Proposals Checklist

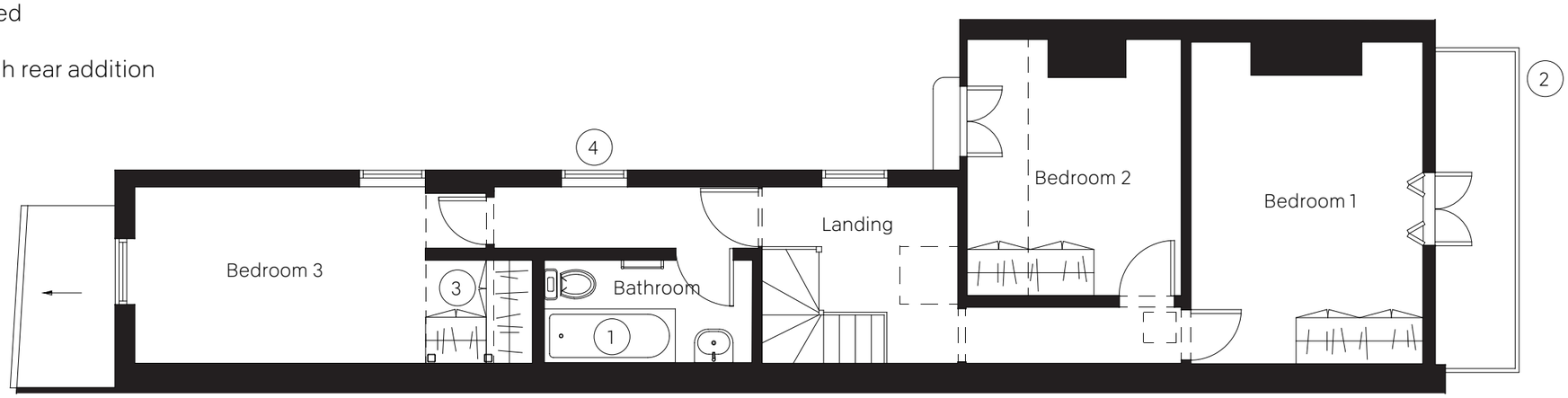
- Use - The current use of the building is C3 (residential) and will remained unchanged
- Amount- The proposed works will not impact the footprint of the building – all the proposed changes relate strictly to the internal arrangement of the building.
- Layout - In broad terms the layout and orientation of the building, including the location of the main reception room, main bedrooms and kitchen, will remain largely unchanged. The only layout changes relate to the opening up of the kitchen and the creation of the new bathroom at first floor.
- Scale - The proposed works will have no impact on the scale of the building
- Landscaping - In principle, there will be no change to the existing landscape, following completion of the works both the front and rear garden layouts will remain as they currently exist. The completed works will incorporate improved drainage and provision for management of surface run off to ensure that issues of dampness associated with the existing landscaping are avoided.
- Appearance - the appearance of the building will remain generally unchanged. There are no works proposed which will have a significant impact on the exterior of the building. Where repairs and changes are proposed they will have a like for like appearance. Minor changes such as the replacement of an existing window with a French doors will be entirely in keeping with the idiosyncratic past evolution of the building and will not have a detrimental impact on the character of the building.

5.16. Access

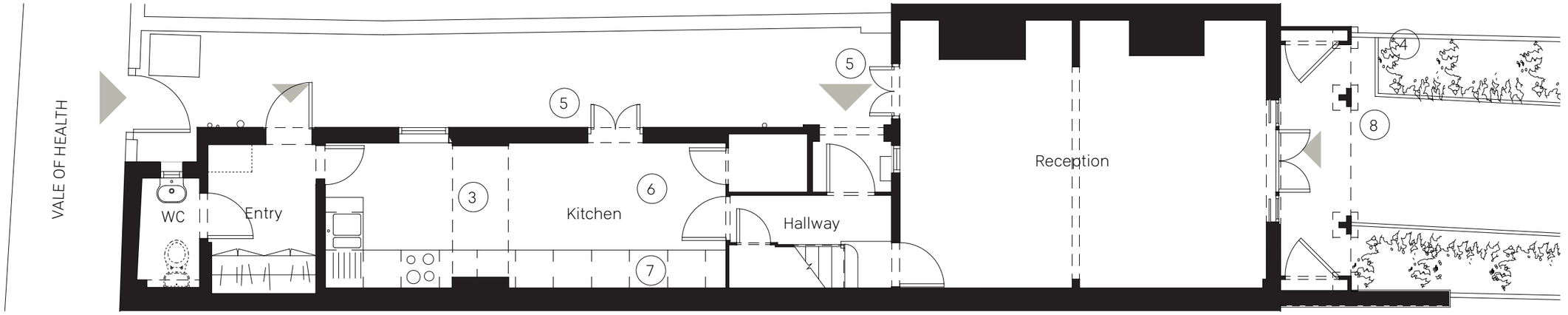
There is no intention to change any of the existing access arrangements.

Notes

1. New bathroom
2. Balcony strengthening
3. Chimney breast removed
4. Windows and doors refurbished
5. New doors
6. New solid floor buildup through rear addition
7. New kitchen
8. Balcony footings



First floor plan



Ground floor plan

6. Conclusions & Justification for Proposals

For the most part, the proposed works consist of minor repairs and refurbishment. These works, if completed independently of one another, would be unlikely to warrant an application for listed building consent. On this basis, the proposed refurbishment works represent an appropriate and logical response to the current condition of the existing building.

Works which clearly do require listed building consent (including the removal of the rear chimney breast, the new bathroom layout at first floor, and the changes to some of the doors and windows) have all been considered in the context of the heritage assessment provided by the Architectural History Practice.

In summary, while this building is of considerable significance in terms of its history and setting, it's built fabric is unremarkable and lacking any specific characteristic or identity which would justify its absolute preservation. Moreover, the building itself is the product of an evolution containing many iterations and as Neil Burton observes in his statement – *The interior planform has been very considerably altered and much of the original fabric has been lost.*

What Aesthetic value the building does present relates to its picturesque external appearance. In this context, the proposed changes do not represent a detrimental impact –

6.1 Plan changes

- The changes to plan form represented by the removal of the existing chimney, although spatially transforming will neither have a negative impact on a plan form of any significance or result in the loss of built fabric of any specific importance. Rather this change will simply represent the next step in a simple evolution which has likely seen the rear addition of this building change many times since its original construction. Evidence of the evolution of the building will remain readable in the nibs and down-stand left as evidence of the location of the chimney breast.
- The division of the plan at 1st floor to create the new bathroom should equally be judged in the context of a plan form which is unremarkable, of little historic interest and also likely itself the product of previous changes. The partitions creating the bathroom will also be easily reversible should anyone choose to open this space up as one room in the future.

6.2 External joinery (doors and windows)

- Externally the doors and windows of Rose Cottage do not present a specific historic image in the same manner as say, the grand sash windows of a Georgian terraced house. Rather the value of these elements lies in their overall contribution to Rose Cottage's overall picturesque appearance.
- In this context, it is logical and appropriate that over the life time of the building doors may become windows and vice versa. As such changing a window to a door at this point in the life of the building will not have any detrimental impact on the character of the building.

6.3 Balcony changes

- The existing balcony structure, while clearly a charming and important feature, is currently not safe to use. It would be irresponsible to do work to this building without addressing this fact. In this context, a design is proposed which provides a solution considered acceptable by building control, while minimising impact on the visual appearance and character of the building.
- Structural strengthening measures have been sized to have minimal impact on the proportion of existing members and the choice of glass as a fall prevention measure is considered light touch in comparison to redesigning the geometry of the balustrade to subdivide the existing gaps.
- Changes to this element must also be seen in the context of an understanding that this is also not an original element of the building. As such we believe it is more important to find a way of ensuring it can continue to be used rather than treating the existing fabric as something which must not be adapted.

6.4 Structural interventions

- The structural changes which form the basis for the proposed works have been carefully considered. Replacing the floor build-up in the rear portion of the house will address an issue of dampness and decay that otherwise would be likely to continue to impact the property ad infinitum. The light weight steel frame proposed to remove the chimney breast and provide stability and bracing to the rear addition is a structural economical way of arresting movement in this part of the building. Taken collectively the structural changes proposed are considered the correct level of intervention in this building at this point in its evolution; they are easily executable with minimal impact on surrounding built fabric and will arrest ongoing issues which if otherwise left unchecked could warrant more significant intervention in the future.

As described in the introduction to this document, the applicant wishes to take this opportunity to invest in Rose Cottage now, to arrest ongoing dilapidation and safeguard the future of the building. In parallel they see the opportunity to address failings in the current layout in a manner which will enhance the buildings ability to be used and enjoyed by both themselves and other future occupants. In this context, the proposed works represent a reasonable and proportionate approach to the owner's needs measured against the need to recognise and respect the value of this building as a heritage asset.

Appendix 1 - Schedule of Supporting Documents

This document should be read in conjunction with the following drawings and documents

By Cooke Fawcett Architects

Existing drawings

- 135_RVH_0100_PLANS-EX-50_RevC
- 135_RVH_0500_ELEVS-EX-50_RevC
- 135_RVH_0600_SECTS-EX-50_RevC

Proposed drawings

- 135_RVH_1100_PLANS-PR-50_RevD
- 135_RVH_1500_ELEVS-PR-50_RevB
- 135_RVH_1600_SECTS-PR-50_RevB

Schedule of works

- 135_SCH-0100_ScheduleOfWorks_RevD

Window schedule

- 135_SCH-0200_WindowSchedule_RevC

By others

Heritage Statement (Neil Burton, Architectural History Practice)

- Rose Cottage Vale of Health Statement of Significance 2017

Structural Statement (Philip Cooper, Cambridge Architectural Research Ltd)

- Rose Cottage structural report

Building Survey Report (Warmans)

- RoseCottage_BuildingSurveyReport

Appendix 2 - Practice Profile

Cooke Fawcett Architects is an architectural practice founded in 2015. The practice was set up to combine and build on the significant experience of its two founding directors in cultural buildings, housing developments, educational institutions, commercial office and research buildings.

Prior to establishing the practice Oliver Cooke and Francis Fawcett worked for some of Europe's leading architectural practitioners including Renzo Piano, Allies and Morrison Architects, Jamie Fobert and Make Architects.

From 2007 until 2015 Oliver and Francis worked for Pritzker Prize winners Herzog & de Meuron Architects in both their Basel and London offices. Notable projects from this period include the Tate Modern Extension in London, the Wood Wharf development at Canary Wharf and the Blavatnik School of Government which was runner-up for the 2016 Stirling Prize, and on which Francis worked as project architect during design and delivery stages of the project.

Oliver and Francis met while studying architecture at the University of Cambridge. They subsequently studied together again as part of a combined academic programme organized by the universities of Harvard and ETH Zurich where Oliver and Francis respectively completed their architectural education. This shared experience underlines an ongoing interest in architectural research.

Alongside ongoing design projects both Oliver and Francis continue to pursue academic and research interests. As a Winston Churchill Fellow, Oliver is currently completing a research project aimed at learning from successful housing design in Europe and the United States, Francis teaches an architectural design studio at the University of Cambridge. Both directors have been guest lecturers and critics at several major universities.

The work of Cooke Fawcett covers a range of different sectors and scales. Rather than focus on a specific size or type of building, the practice focuses on projects in which potential for innovative design can be successfully employed to meet a client's specific brief and aspirations. The practice is currently engaged on a wide variety of projects including commercial development, private housing and cultural work. Projects with which the practice is involved frequently involve developing a sensitive approach to working with heritage assets.

Notable current and recently completed projects involving heritage assets include a private house in a conservation area in Islington, the refurbishment of a grade II listed Victorian villa in Highgate, the conversion of a grade II apartment in Westminster, the conversion of a grade II listed commercial property in Pimlico, the refurbishment and extension of a grade II listed building in Kensington, the replanning as artists studios of a converted school in a conservation area in Cornwall, and the conversion and extension of a grade II listed commercial Georgian building in Farringdon, central London.