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# Heritage Statement

Flat 4, 55 Fitzjohn's Avenue, London, NW3 6PH

Iceni Projects Limited on behalf of  
Mr Pere Guardiola

December 2017

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ON BEHALF OF MR PERE  
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**Heritage Statement**  
FLAT 4, 55 FITZJOHN'S AVENUE, LONDON, NW3 6PH



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## APPENDICES

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement report is supplied to accompany pre-application discussions regarding the proposed works to Flat 4, 55 Fitzjohn's Avenue, NW3 6PH (henceforth 'the Site'). The application follows the grant of consent for a series of internal and external works to the property, under application references 2017/4819/P and 2017/4830/L; some of the consented works are included within this application. The works proposed here comprise a series of internal alterations.
- 1.2 The Site is listed at Grade II, and sits within the London Borough of Camden's Fitzjohns and Netherhall Conservation Area.
- 1.3 The report will:
- Set out the relevant legislative and policy framework within which to understand the proposed works to the Site;
  - Provide a proportionate and robust analysis of the Site and surrounding area's historic development;
  - Describe the site and identify designated heritage assets;
  - Appraise the heritage significance of the Site and identify the contribution to the Fitzjohns and Netherhall Conservation Area; and,
  - Provide a detailed assessment of impact for the proposals on the Site's special character and significance, and on the character and appearance of the Fitzjohns and Netherhall Conservation Area.
- 1.4 The existing Site and surrounding area was appraised during two site visits (March and May 2017), and a desk-based study of primary and secondary sources was also undertaken to inform report findings. This includes review of British History Online sources, an Ordnance Survey Map regression, and review of adopted local plan guidance documents, particularly the Fitzjohns and Netherhall Conservation Area Character Appraisal. Other sources consulted include the British Newspaper Archive (online), London Metropolitan Archives and Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre.
- 1.5 The report is produced by Iceni Projects. Specifically, it is authored by Laurie Handcock MA (Cantab) MSc, Director – Heritage, with assistance from Stephen O'Fegan BA MSc, Assistant Heritage Consultant.

## 2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICY, AND GUIDANCE

2.1 Where any development may have a direct or indirect effect on designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure the proposals are considered with due regard for their impact on the historic environment.

2.2 Primary legislation under Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas 2.2Act) 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 Secretary of State, as relevant, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

2.3 Section 72(1) of the Act, meanwhile, states that:

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

### **National Planning Policy**

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

2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted in 2012 as the planning policy framework for England, superseding the previous framework, including the design and heritage policies set out in Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1), and Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5).

2.5 The NPPF promotes sustainable development as a fundamental theme in planning and sets out a series of 'Core Planning Principles' (Paragraph 17). These core principles of sustainable development highlight that planning should be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives; that it should secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity; and that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

2.6 The NPPF Glossary defines a 'heritage asset' as:

*'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes*

*designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).'*

- 2.7 Chapter 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment contains the relevant Heritage policies, replacing PPS 5 Planning for the Historic Environment. It sets out the need to assess the significance of a heritage asset and any contribution made by its setting in a manner proportionate to the asset's importance (Paragraph 128). Once significance has been established, the impact of any proposals on the asset's identified significance should then be considered (Paragraph 129), with 'great weight [...] given to the asset's conservation' (Paragraph 132)
- 2.8 Case Law has established that Paragraphs 132 to 134 form a 'sequential test' in determining how the level of harm, where identified, should be weighed against any wider public benefits of a proposed scheme.<sup>1</sup> Where harm is identified as being substantial, which equates to 'very much, if not all, of the significance [being] drained away', the test of Paragraph 133 should be applied.<sup>2</sup> This is not considered to be relevant to this case and will not be addressed further here.
- 2.9 Where harm is judged to be less than substantial, as is likely to be the case here, the test of Paragraph 134 should be applied. This stresses the need to weigh harm 'against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.'
- 2.10 Heritage public benefits are defined in the Planning Practice Guidance (addressed below) as follows:

*'Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 7). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.'*

*Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:*

- *sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting*
- *reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset*
- *securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation'*

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<sup>1</sup> *R (Pugh) v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government*, 2015

<sup>2</sup> *Bedford Borough Council v Secretary of State for CLG*, 2013

2.11 Wider public benefits are defined in Paragraphs 7 and 9 of the NPPF as follows:

*'7. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:*

- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;*
- a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy. [...]*

*Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to):*

- Making it easier for jobs to be created in cities, towns and villages;*
- Moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature;*
- Replacing poor design with better design;*
- Improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and widening the choice of high quality homes.'*

#### **Planning Practice Guidance**

2.12 Noted above, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in 2014 to supplement the policies set out in the NPPF. Of particular note is the additional clarification on heritage public benefits, reproduced above, but the guidance chapter on Conserving and enhancing the historic environment also sets out guidance points on heritage issues, including an expanded definition of significance as it relates to decision-taking.

2.13 Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary as:

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

2.14 Paragraph 008 of the PPG adds:

*'In legislation and designation criteria, the terms 'special architectural or historic interest' of a listed building and the 'national importance' of a scheduled monument are used to describe all or part of the identified heritage asset's significance. Some of the more recent designation records are more helpful as they contain a fuller, although not exhaustive, explanation of the significance of the asset.'*

## **Regional Planning Policy**

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### **The London Plan**

2.1 Regional policy for the London area is defined by the London Plan (Greater London Authority/ Mayor of London 2011), Revised Early Minor Alterations to the London Plan (Greater London Authority/ Mayor of London 2013) and Further Alterations to the London Plan 2014 Consultation Draft (Greater London Authority/ Mayor of London 2014), and defined by the London Plan Consolidated with Amendments (2015).

### **London Plan Consolidated with Amendments (2015)**

2.2 The Consolidated London Plan (GLA 2015) incorporates the changes made in the Revised Minor Alterations to the London Plan (GLA 2013) and Further Alterations to the London Plan (GLA 2014). The Revised Early Minor Alterations to the London Plan (REMA) set out minor alterations in relation to the London Plan and changes to UK legislation including the Localism Act (2011) and the NPPF. The revisions amend and split paragraph 7.31 supporting Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology with regard to developments affecting the setting of heritage assets, the need to weigh developments causing less than substantial harm on heritage assets against the public benefit and the reuse or refurbishment of heritage assets to secure sustainable development. The Glossary for the REMA also contains definitions for 'Heritage Assets' and 'Substantial Harm'. The Further Alterations to the London Plan (GLA 2014) updated policy in relation to World Heritage Sites in London and the assessment of their setting.

2.3 The Consolidated London Plan deals with heritage issues in Chapter 7, London's Living Spaces and Places – Historic environment and landscapes.

2.4 Policy 7.8 'Heritage assets and archaeology' establishes the following clauses regarding heritage assets in London:



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

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

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

## **Local Development Plan**

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- 2.5 Camden Development Policies forms part of the Council's Local Development Framework, which sets out the planning strategy and policies. The lead document of the LDF is the Core Strategy, which sets out the key elements of the Council's planning vision and strategy for the borough and contains strategic policies. The Core Strategy contributes to achieving the vision and objectives of Camden's Community Strategy and helps the Council's partners and other organisations deliver relevant parts of their programmes.
- 2.6 Camden Development Policies contributes towards delivering the Core Strategy by setting out detailed planning policies that the Council will use when determining applications for planning permission in the borough, in order to achieve the vision and objectives of the Core Strategy.

### **Camden Development Policies 2010**

- 2.7 DP24 – Securing high quality design - The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:
- a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;
  - b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;
  - c) the quality of materials to be used;
  - d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;
  - e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;

- f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;
- g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;
- h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and
- i) accessibility.

## 2.8 DP25 – Conserving Camden’s heritage

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.

### **Core Strategy 2010**

2.9 CS5 - Managing the impact of growth and development - The Council will manage the impact of growth and development in Camden. We will ensure that development meets the full range of objectives of the Core Strategy and other Local

Development Framework documents, with particular consideration given to:

- a) providing uses that meet the needs of Camden’s population and contribute to the borough’s London-wide role;

- b) providing the infrastructure and facilities needed to support Camden's population and those who work in and visit the borough;
- c) providing sustainable buildings and spaces of the highest quality; and
- d) protecting and enhancing our environment and heritage and the amenity and quality of life of local communities.
- e) The Council will protect the amenity of Camden's residents and those working in and visiting the borough by:
- f) making sure that the impact of developments on their occupiers and neighbours is fully considered;
- g) seeking to ensure development contributes towards strong and successful communities by balancing the needs of development with the needs and characteristics of local areas and communities; and
- h) requiring mitigation measures where necessary.

2.10 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;
- 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.

### 3. HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

#### **Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area**

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- 3.1 The Conservation Area was divided between three historic estates that, combined with the growth of London's urban centre during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, largely account for the residential development of the area. The three Manors were Hampstead, Belsize Estate, and Greenhill. Hampstead Manor, the largest of the three, was a small upland village in medieval times, stretching from Hampstead to the modern Kilburn High Road, and had highly desirable farmland. Eventually the land was sold and divided amongst heirs, with Finchley Road developed around 1873. At this time, the estate was further divided, and two new roads proposed: Fitzjohn's Avenue, and Priory Road. In 1875 the contract for development was tendered, and road making began, with the majority of houses built over the next ten years. The bricks used for their construction came from a brickfield on the nearby Heath.
- 3.2 The street layout was determined from a desire to connect Swiss Cottage and Hampstead, but three railway tunnels also influenced their positioning. The North London Railway made a tunnel between Hampstead Heath Station and Finchley Road and Frognel in 1860. To the east of Fitzjohn's, the tunnel runs under properties and their gardens, but the northern end of Netherhall Gardens was designed to lie over the tunnel. The Midland Railway connected to St Pancras in 1868, with a mile long Belsize Tunnel linking Haverstock Hill and Finchley Road. Nutley Terrace, which had to run over the line of the tunnel, was therefore laid with an angle to Fitzjohn's Avenue. A second Belsize Tunnel was required by 1884.
- 3.3 The neighbourhood was built in the decade after 1876, with the adjoining streets slightly less spacious than the main Avenue, but still comprised of large building plots, containing detached and semi-detached dwellings, with some having enough space for carriage drives. Netherhall Gardens and Maresfield Gardens were named after a manor and parish of the Maryon Wilson (who developed Finchley Road) family estate in Sussex. The architectural interest in the area arose from the buyers of freeholds, who would commission architects to create high quality, one of a kind buildings. The area quickly became popular with artists, writers, social reformers, and those in a medical profession. Popular architectural styles varied, and include Queen Anne revival, Arts and Crafts (influenced by Norman Shaw, who built three properties in the area, two which survive), and Gothic. Some houses were so large that letting them became difficult, and a number were converted into girls' schools by the 1890s for this reason.
- 3.4 Since the initial development of the area there has been some small scale backland development, particularly in the 1920s and 30s, while in the 1970s, a number of local authority housing schemes were built by the London Borough of Camden on the sites of demolished houses.

## **The Tower, 55 Fitzjohn's Avenue**

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- 3.5 55 Fitzjohn's Avenue, known from its inception as the Tower, was built in 1880-81, while J.T. Wimperis, who is discussed further below, was 51, and operating alone. The house was commissioned by one Herbert Fleming Baxter, a merchant and shipping entrepreneur who had made a not-inconsiderable fortune through transatlantic trading. His principal home was Sibdon Castle, in Shropshire, with The Tower operating as his London base. The house, designed in what Pevsner has described being in the Baronial style, appears to have been a deliberate attempt, further to his ownership of a castellated country seat, to place Baxter, an industrialist, firmly in the mode of the landed gent. As recorded in *The Building News*, the house was presented visually as a grand, almost intimidating structure, and the *News* noted that,

*A Domestic Medieval style has been adopted, admitting of much variety of treatment, and is executed in red brick, with black pointing, Portland stone dressing, Broseley tile roofs, ornamental crestings and terminals, with wrought iron finials (sic) to the tower, partly gilded. The builder is Mr. William Brass, of Old-Street, St Luke's.*

- 3.6 The house appears to have remained in a single occupation until 1979, when it was subdivided to form 10 flats. Subsequent planning applications in the 1980s and more recently have seen the building further altered; it was listed at 1999, with considerable internal works having taken place prior to that point.

## **J.T. Wimperis**

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- 3.7 John Thomas Wimperis FRIBA, born in 1829, appeared to develop his architectural practice in the 1860s, and worked largely within London until his retirement in 1898. His work and practice is inextricably linked to the Grosvenor Estate, within which he completed much of his work; from 1887 he was an approved architect for the estate.
- 3.8 Having taken on William Henry Arber into his practice in 1889, two years after his formal approval by the Grosvenor Estate, the firm became known as Wimperis & Arber, a significant output of fine residential and commercial buildings emerged. Many of Wimperis's buildings fell into one of these two categories, although it is notable that he was responsible for the Palace Theatre, in Plymouth; a handful of church restorations; and a series of 'urban agricultural buildings, including stables at North Audley Street and Lees Street, and 'farm house' style houses elsewhere in Westminster.
- 3.9 Stylistically, Wimperis's work varied, as was often the case with the jobbing Victorian architect, from the High Gothic, such as at 55 Fitzjohn's Avenue, through the Queen Anne, and neo-classical strands, either Italianate or in the Renaissance Revival and Pont Street Dutch mould. There is no question that both heading up his firm alone, and with Arber alongside him, Wimperis's practice was a busy one, and a number of his buildings remain. His work suggests good connections within the

Upper and Upper Middle Classes, with a number of personal commissions; in addition to the Tower, houses in Ramsgate, Putney Heath, and elsewhere, are found scattered amongst his many late Victorian townhouses and commercial premises.

- 3.10 Ultimately, Wimperis never reached the upper reaches of the late Victorian architectural world, but his work is often well-detailed and well-mannered, if occasionally overly-exuberant, despite the broad variation in the styles and typologies on which he worked across his career; accordingly, a handful of his buildings are now statutorily listed.

## 4. SITE DESCRIPTION AND IDENTIFICATION OF ASSETS

### Site Location

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- 4.1 The Site is located on the western side of Fitzjohn's Avenue, south of the centre of Hampstead and north of Swiss Cottage in the London Borough of Camden. It is situated on a piece of the road which falls noticeably from north to south, and is characterised predominantly by its topography, and the presence of significant street trees on each side of the road. Straight, and framed by these large trees, with large, predominantly Victorian properties set within large gardens beyond, Fitzjohn's Avenue has a pleasing, planned feel, generous and green feel.

### Surrounding Heritage Assets

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- 4.2 The Site is statutorily listed, and sits within the Fitzjohns and Netherhall Conservation Area. Given that the proposed works are entirely proposed to focus on the interior of the building, it is not considered appropriate or necessary, however, to assess the proposals' impact on this heritage asset. Given that the proposals will not have an external manifestation, there will not be a visual or experiential impact on the Conservation Area's character and appearance, and accordingly, any further assessment is excluded from this Statement.

### Site Description

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- 4.3 The Site is the ground floor flat of 55 Fitzjohn's Avenue, also known as The Tower, is a large detached house dating from 1880, with later century additions. The house is constructed of red brick with stone dressings, and its varying roofline is made up primarily of tiled hipped roofs with cresting and finials, with tall enriched brick chimney-stacks. The house is asymmetrical in its design, and was designed in the Gothic baronial style. Built to three storeys with an attic and lower ground floor, there are three bays to original house. The southernmost bay forms a tall stair tower, which has a pyramidal roof and weathervane above a continuous range of shaped windows, with themselves have bartizans at angles. At the ground floor, a double pitched entrance porch is approached by balustraded steps and there is a central oriel window. The central bay of the house has a single transom and mullion window at each floor; with a balustraded balcony at the ground floor. The northern bay project through three storeys with three light transom and mullion windows. At the second floor, there is a round-arched arcaded balcony with balustrade. To the rear of the Site is a modern conservatory style extension, completed in 2004. Also significant to the Site is a brick boundary wall to the street, which is stone capped.
- 4.4 Internally, the flat is divided into ten rooms. Having historically formed the principal entertaining spaces for the building while it remained in single occupation as a residential dwelling, the building's large rooms, arranged around a central hall, reflect a fairly typical late nineteenth century ground

floor arrangement. An original floorplan (see figure 1.2) shows that having passed through the vestibule into the central stair hall (which has, as discussed below, lost its principal stair, which was removed and reconfigured as part of a 1979 programme of works), one was presented with entrances to the front Drawing Room, and rear Morning Room and Dining Room. While the Drawing and Morning Rooms retain their broad form, the last of these has been subdivided to form two bedrooms, while some further rooms, including a small kitchen, bathroom and utility room were formed in the northern portion of the building.

- 4.5 The walls are panelled throughout, including timber doorframes, and there are also decorative timber ceilings to the Hall and reception, as well as more simply designed detailing in the other rooms. There are a number of historic chimneybreasts within the flat, including the entrance hall, the main hall, the reception room, and two of the bathrooms. There is hardwood flooring throughout. To the north of the Site is a modern extension, a single room which houses a contemporary kitchen, and to the west, at the rear of the Site, a late twentieth century conservatory style extension which leads to the communal back garden.



## 5. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Assessment Methodology

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- 5.1 The assessment methodology used here for assessing the significance of the identified heritage assets and their settings is the framework set out in Historic England's best-practice guidance document *Conservation Principles, Policies, and Guidance* (2008).<sup>3</sup> Broadly, this proposes the use of four key heritage values – evidential, historical, aesthetic, and communal – in assessing what makes a place and its wider context special.

The four values are defined summarily as follows:

**Evidential value** derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

**Historical value** derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative.

**Aesthetic value** derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

**Communal value** derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects.

### The Site

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#### 55 Fitzjohn's Avenue: Overall Significance

- 5.2 55 Fitzjohn's Avenue, or The Tower, is a good example of a large late 19<sup>th</sup> century gothic house, in what is considered to be the Baronial Style. Externally, the house remains in much the same condition as it did when it was constructed. The principal additions to the building include some small modifications, such as access doors, resulting from the internal division of the house to flats, in addition to the creation of some canted, timber framed bay windows at lower ground level, and the aforementioned conservatory, to the rear. The house is considered to be of high heritage significance, as a Grade II listed building. Though the house originally sat within a larger landscaped

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<sup>3</sup> <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/conservationprinciplespoliciesguidanceapr08web.pdf/>

garden, later development of the area means the house sits in a narrower lot, with a communal back garden. The boundary treatment to the road is a brick wall with stone coping and large stone enriched pyramid and ball caps, and is included as part of the listing for the building. The wall is well related to the host building, which is a prominent characteristic of the Conservation Area, and this relationship contributes well to that.

- 5.3 To the rear of the house, the façade has been altered with the insertion of a conservatory styled extension at ground floor level in 2004, which replaced a simple 1980's timber porch. As the ground floor, and thus the extension, is raised, a staircase leads in to the communal garden. The extension as it exists is of a low quality design, and is not sympathetic to the building, and in some parts feels unfinished. The extension is primarily glazed with large windows between thick timber oak framing. The staircase that leads to the garden is timber and of a simple design. Supporting the extension are steel vertical steel beams, which are not finished and concealed in any way. Drawings from the listed building consent for the extension (2004/0275/L) illustrate that it was not part of the final design scheme to leave any sort of support beams underneath the extension, which was somewhat canted and partially built on top of the lower ground floor, and their presence indicates that the work was carried out poorly and they were required to stay in place to support the structure. Overall, the conservatory in its current condition is viewed as harming the setting and significance of the house more generally.
- 5.4 As will be discussed below, The Tower has been heavily altered internally since its construction, most notably as a result of a conversion project that took place after 1979, wherein the property was subdivided into 10 flats. The below provides a detailed assessment of the detailing that remains internally, but it is of particular note that the principal stair has been heavily altered, the secondary or service stair lost, and much of the internal decoration internally lost. Within this context, it is of note that the building's listing, in 1999, took place without sight of the building's interior, and that the principal reasons for designation were the quality of the building's exterior; its relatively unusual baronial finish, allowing it to be readily legible as a grand, individually designed house for a wealthy private client; and the involvement of J.T. Wimperis. It is our view that, to a large extent, the building's significance is derived from these features, and that the degree of internal alteration does ensure that less significance can be derived from its interiors generally.
- 5.5 Nonetheless, the building does derive notable significance from its interiors, and much of its retained original detail is found within Flat 4. As outlined below, however, there is considerable evidence that much of the apparently historic fabric has been subject to change, and what appears on first sight to be a well-preserved set of Victorian interiors actually shows evidence of considerable later alteration. Carried out by someone attempting to provide a historicist response to the building's fabric, it is nonetheless clear that the building as it stands contains a mixture of fabric, some of it historic, some of it later, which has been moved, rearranged and altered. As such, the degree to which the building derives significance from its interiors has been compromised.

### Internal and flat

- 5.6 The house was converted to 10 flats in 1979, at which time the character of the building was altered, and the significance of the house was immediately impacted through its subsequent division. The division of a single dwelling into multiple units obviously required internal alterations as well, which resulted in material change, and in many of the flats, much of the historic material was lost entirely. A good deal of alteration to the ground floor flat occurred as a result of the division of the house, while significant historic detailing survives, albeit not all in its original form or location. While much of this material remains in situ, there is evidence suggest that some of the material may have been relocated or salvaged from elsewhere in the building, as a result of modifications elsewhere.
- 5.7 The building's history and development in terms of its plan form can be read in a relatively straightforward manner. As has been outlined above, the building was re-planned and converted in 1979, with subsequent redevelopment works following on from this in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, and the principal alterations that this introduced to the Flat as a result included the removal of the staircase (and a later lift) from the main stair hall, and the subsequent alteration of the space; the subdivision of the former Dining Room to form two bedrooms; the addition of a new conservatory to the rear; and the addition of a new kitchen to the northern side of the house, and alterations to other rooms in the vicinity.
- 5.8 In the stair hall, the staircase appears to have been removed and rotated (from a south to north orientation, to a north to south one) to provide access to the upper storeys from a new northern entrance to the building, outside of Flat 4. In losing the staircase, the ceiling height in the Hall became irregular, and a stepped ceiling was created, in the space where a void would previously existed, with open views up to the first floor, and a landing above. The late twentieth century dropped ceiling in this location incorporates stained glass panels, which allow light from the first floor communal landing to enter the flat, and are also possibly the original external windows from the front reception room (the former Drawing Room), as their design is similar to those visible on the drawing of the Site from *Building News*. This also demonstrates that the extant stained-glass windows, which display fish motifs, are not original, though they may be interpreted as historic without closer inspection. Indeed, they well be late nineteenth century work, but may well not be original to the house. In terms of the Hall itself, while it appears to contain a large amount of historic fabric, of a good quality, there is extensive evidence that much of the fabric has been altered, and in some instances, its relocation required modification of the historic material and planform.
- 5.9 The subdivision of the former Dining Room is equally easy to read in the building's fabric due to the relatively unfinished nature of this work. Cornicing in both of the bedrooms formed from this subdivision are uncomfortably divided by the dividing wall, as is the extant panelling. The two rooms directly abut, and in the case of the southernmost bedroom, has a direct outlook onto, a rear conservatory. This structure, of heavy pegged oak, was added relatively recently, as a replacement for an earlier conservatory of a late 1970s or early 1980s date. This first conservatory had a broadly

square plan form, and projected considerably further into the rear communal garden than the current version; it was accessed via a stair in its southwest corner. The current conservatory, whilst using some high-quality materials, sits uncomfortably with the existing building, cutting through stone string courses, and appearing to be finished with little regard to its context. It clearly detracts from the significance and special character of the listed building.

- 5.10 Other additions to the building internally, include through the addition of a new kitchen to the northern side of the building, the creation of a sunken utility room below the new stair access to the first floor, and the conversion of a WC to a bathroom; these have had a lesser impact on one's reading of the original plan form, and on the building's original detail. The kitchen sits beyond the former envelope of the house, and with a door which, while appearing to be a reconstruction, or an amalgamation of historic timbers, has the feel of a former external door which has become internal. The kitchen, being later, and with modern fittings, is of negligible value, and makes no contribution to special character, while the similarly later and highly altered bathroom and utility room make no discernible contribution towards significance, and can also be considered of negligible value.
- 5.11 Beyond these obvious changes, the dwelling's appearance and fabric poses several questions. Principal amongst these relates to the building's extensive panelling, and by extension, to the wooden ceiling detailing. Throughout the building, this is of pine, and can be read as such as a result of its grain and colouring. Furthermore, the panelling and ceiling decoration is entirely glued, rather than being pegged or nailed. Not only would the use of pine be unusual in public rooms, unless it was designed to be painted, the use of glue suggests that it is perfectly possible that even if the fabric was original, it had been refitted, instated at a later date, or heavily altered. The fact that the current pine panelling is unpainted is particularly unusual. The building's interior has been examined by Patrick Baty, an historian of paint and colour. He has considerable experience of studying, researching, assessing, and teaching in relation to historic paints and pigments, and is the author of *The Anatomy of Colour* (Thames and Hudson, 2017), a forthcoming book which is likely to be the principal text on the subject. Having visited the Site, Mr Baty concluded that, in his view, the extant panelling is likely to be original, has not been subject to paint historically, and appears to have been waxed.
- 5.12 As such, it would appear that the panelling, unpainted, glued, and of pine, does appear to be of some age, and does appear to be presented in close to its original state. The implication is that costs were being cut within the building's interior as the build was being completed, and solid hardwood was being eschewed in favour of the much cheaper pine, in a stained and unpainted condition. The relatively poor quality of the finish can be read most dramatically when it is seen in conjunction with the building's high quality, dark stained oak fireplaces. In the Drawing Room in particular, the contrast is particularly noticeable, and the jointing between the oak and pine appears to represent a poor quality of workmanship. There is also evidence of patching in and alteration. In the main Hall, for example, the panelling, as is typical for much of the flat, shows a variation in patina, and slight

inconsistencies in form, between the east and west walls, suggests that some of the panelling was relocated from elsewhere, where it was exposed to different conditions. This is partly understandable, as the removal of the staircase clearly exposed areas of walling, where panelling was required to match what is assumed to have been the existing. It is of some note, however, that the differences in patina between apparently original areas of panelling, and this known later area of additional panelling, are not particularly striking, perhaps suggesting that they are not of wildly different ages. Nonetheless, the evidence of glue and nails heavily implies that even if the pine panelling is of some age, that it has been heavily altered, and possibly removed and reinserted in places; clearly, the current condition does not reflect that originally designed by Wimperis, in any event.

- 5.13 Questions also arise about the building's stained-glass windows and internal doors. As noted above, in relation to the hall, it would appear that the stained glass windows above the windows in the principal rooms are later insertions, albeit possibly representing Victorian work. It is known that the main windows below these stained glass panels were replaced, and many are double glazed, or are of clearly modern construction. What is of note is that although it would appear that the stained elements are later insertions into these locations, there is a certain amount of consistency about the scheme, as if they were purchased for insertion as part of a single collection of windows. Their detailing is slightly at odds with much of the retained detail within the property on fireplaces and elsewhere, but they are appropriate in terms of their age and general style.
- 5.14 The internal doors, similarly, are largely of oak construction, including their architraves (in contrast with the pine panelling), but are particularly notable for a pair of double doors with carved wooden decoration in their central panel. These two pairs of door match one another, and are of a good quality, but appear somewhat at odds with the rest of the property, given their materiality and detailing. While thematically similar (through its use of floral detailing in the carving, reflected in the fireplaces and some retained windows), there is not clear sense of these doors forming part of the same decorative scheme as the rest of the property. In addition, these doors are hung so that, when open, their detailed face sits adjacent to the wall, hidden from view. When closed, the detailing sits facing into the main reception rooms, rather than the hallway. It is strongly suggested that these doors too are an addition from another property, or are, at the very least, not an in situ original feature. Other doors in the property shown different designs, and are largely also made of oak in contrast to the pine found elsewhere. It is also apparent that the lower rails of the doors have been altered, and are inconsistent with the overall design of the door, which implies that the doors were crafted for different frames, or that there has been a noticeable change in floor level.
- 5.15 Overall, therefore, one is left with an interior which shows Wimperis' broad intentions for the interiors of The Tower, but shows clear evidence of alteration, and is far from the original interior it appears to represent on first viewing. Of particular note in significance terms are the retained and clearly original fireplaces, found in the hall, former Morning Room, former Drawing Room, and the northern portion of the now subdivided former Dining Room. Beyond this, it is our view that most of the

remaining detailing has been compromised and altered to an extent. Thus, while the panelling within the building may well be original, it is of comparatively poor quality, and unusual cheapness for the principal rooms of an apparently high-status house, while there is considerable evidence that some doors and stained glass windows are later additions. Given this, and the significant alterations to the hall through the removal and reconfiguration of the stairs, it is our view that the interiors of Flat 4 are of medium value overall. Clearly, the best-preserved elements of the building are the former Morning Room, Drawing Room, and the southern end of the hall, but even these are unlikely to be experienced and appreciated as they were originally. As noted above, these areas of the building are of noticeably greater significance than the northwest portion of the house, around the altered hall, divided former Dining Room, kitchen and service areas.

## 6. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

### Summary of Proposals

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- 6.1 The proposals are outlined fully in both the submitted drawings, and the Pre-Application Design Report produced by Pennington Phillips; it is therefore necessary to summarise these only briefly here, for reference.
- 6.2 The current proposals can be divided into internal and external proposed works. The former include:
- The movement of the kitchen from the small outshot on the northern side of the building, to the former Morning Room, and the conversion of the former to an office;
  - The creation of a WC and bathroom, within the main hall of the property;
  - The painting of panelling within the property;
  - The removal of some later decoration, such as applied mouldings within the main reception room;
  - Replacement of bathroom fittings;
  - The removal, in parts of the property, of non-original engineered oak flooring, and its replacement with a similar, higher quality finish, preserving original floors underneath where they remain;
  - General upgrade of wiring and pipework, including newly introduced services for the new kitchen and bathroom.

### Assessment Methodology

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- 6.3 The impact assessment uses as its basis the assessment methodology set out in paragraphs 132 to 134 of the NPPF, and is applied in line with the interpretation established in current case law.

### Impact Assessment

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#### Internal Works

- 6.4 The internal works are intended to allow the upgrade and general improvement of the property, which has not seen significant refurbishment works in a significant period of time. In addition, they would

allow the property to be used in a more effective way, without causing undue harm to heritage significance. The requirement for such a change arises from the building's recent history. Having originally formed a group of entertaining spaces, as part of a large house with bedrooms and associated spaces upstairs, Flat 4 represents the series of spaces that were least well-placed, arguably for conversion as part of the 1970s and 1980s works to create 10 flats on the Site. Formed of a group of large entertaining spaces, opportunities for creating bedrooms, kitchens and other spaces without an entertaining focus were relatively limited, arguably. The solution, to create a new, stand-alone kitchen in a new-build element to the north of the building, and to subdivide the Dining Room to create bedrooms, has resulted in the Flat possessing the spaces it needs to operate as a single Flat. However, some of these spaces are compromised. In particular, for a dwelling of this scale, the size of the kitchen, and its awkward location, is a significant issue.

6.5 The proposed movement of the kitchen in particular, therefore, looks to allow the dwelling to operate more effectively, without causing harm to the building. We recognise that at the pre-application stage, there were some concerns about how a kitchen could be created in this location without causing harm to the building. As such, further investigation, and careful and considered design, has been undertaken to demonstrate that the servicing for such a room can be introduced without causing harm to historic fabric. New kitchen units are proposed to be introduced to the northern wall of the former Morning Room which would sit in front of the retained panelling, allowing this feature to be preserved and boxed in (despite the considerable uncertainty about its age and significance). In the context of our knowing that the current floor in this space is modern, it is also considered to be able to introduce a new island unit into the space to provide additional worktop space, hobs and a sink. A new floor build-up, and space within the floor void, allows the opportunity for a system of venting and pipework to be introduced which does not create any loss of historic fabric, or the visual intervention of modern servicing. The approach proposed avoids the insertion of any significant high level ducting by using a low, possibly rising extractor unit adjacent to the hob; this will vent downwards, and out through the building laterally, below the floor. Ultimately, this approach allows the former Morning Room, a room whose original function has been lost societally, to be given a new use at the heart of the house. As the social life of dwellings has moved, in the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, towards the kitchen (once a secondary or service room), the use of one of this Flat's principal rooms for this purpose, rather than siting it away from the its core, is entirely appropriate, in our view. This is particularly the case in light of the careful, preservative approach that can be taken to providing kitchen infrastructure.

6.6 The creation of a new room within the hallway will also avoid harm to the building, whilst improving the functionality of the building. As noted above, this area was originally subdivided for a lift, which was converted to a store room adjoined by a new dining room area in the 1980s phase of works. It is also notable that the removal of the principal staircase to the first floor has resulted in the unusually formed and domineering capped area at ceiling height that – rather than conveying the sense of openness that is likely to have arisen from the stairwell – does the exact opposite. The proposal for



a bathroom in this area is therefore considered to be in an area of substantial change, and, further, it is considered to enhance rather than detract from the aesthetic interest of the entrance hallway space, which has otherwise been heavily altered. This alteration would not result in the loss of any historic fabric, given that it is known, in light of the significant changes within the hall, that the panelling in this location is not historic. It would be possible to create this bathroom whilst detailing it in such a way as to allow it to sit comfortably within the context of the existing hall. An approach will be taken which seeks to align the external form of the space with the wider decoration within the hall; this will include ensuring that it possesses a clean junction with the dropped ceiling height, and avoids a gradually stepped feel to the ceiling level in this location. It is therefore our view that the proposed creation of the bathroom avoids harm to the hallway; using historic precedents, this work would allow the creation of a space in an area previously including subdivisions, and would not generate a significant change in the overall, historic scale of the hall. Whilst avoiding harm, it would create a family bathroom, replacing the contrived, sunken bathroom currently in place under the modern stairs. This space will be re-used as a utility room, which better suits its form.

- 6.7 In terms of the replacement of the existing floorboards, an exploration of the existing flooring has taken place. This has included the lifting of a number of floorboards, to better understand the floor build up and what survives in historic fabric terms below the modern floor surface. This has revealed some areas of historic floorboards, and illustrated that the current flooring consists of modern, engineered oak boards. This reflects the fact that the bottom rail of various doors has been cut to adjust for the raised floor levels, which lends a certain irreversibility to the current floor level. As a side note, this may also be why the panelling throughout the building appears to have been altered historically, given that it aligns with the current floor level. As such, the proposed approach, which sees the floor level retained in its current position, with the extant floorboards retained and preserved below new boards, will see historic fabric preserved, whilst a high-quality finish is maintained throughout the property. As such, this element of the work is considered to preserve the listed building.
- 6.8 It is also proposed to paint the existing panelling. As noted above, the panelling scheme is highly problematic, and regardless of whether it is original or not, it is clear that it has been subject to significant change, and is unlikely to be in situ. The exposed pine, poor quality glued joints, and awkward jointing with primary features such as the fireplaces suggest at least that the current condition of the panelling should not necessarily be seen as requiring preservation. Indeed, in our view, there is a strong indication that it has been altered (possibly to accommodate raised floor levels) and incorporates large areas of adaptation or re-insertion. It is of final note that some woodwork is clearly added, for example the mid height panels to the south reception room, which adds some weight to the possibility that the joinery has been reordered. In a broader context, it is clearly the case that pine panelling, in addition to being almost universally used in service rooms during the latter part of the nineteenth century, was a material that was intended to be painted, given its poorer quality finish. It would therefore be entirely typical for panelling of this type to be painted, even though

in this case, that does not seem to have taken place ultimately. Its painting is therefore considered to avoid harm to the significance of the listed building, and to have the potential to act as an enhancement to the space. This conclusion also applies to the ceiling-level joinery, which would also have been intended to be painted in imitation of lime plasterwork detailing such as ribs and cornices. We are therefore of the view that the painting of this panelling would not generate material harm to the listed building/ Although it does not appear that it was originally the intention to paint the panelling, there is considerable uncertainty about the historic condition of this fabric, and given the degree of change to this fabric, it is certainly clear that its condition and appearance should be a secondary concern.

- 6.9 In terms of the proposed rewiring, and alterations to servicing, the general principle would be to reuse existing sockets where possible, however, as discussed above, it is also of note that the skirtings and panelling above have been altered previously and that their significance is accordingly lessened by these interventions. It is also considered that some skirting boards are later additions. Each proposed socket location should therefore be considered on its own merits. Overall, it is our view that a rewiring programme can take place without harm to the significance of the listed building.

#### **Summary**

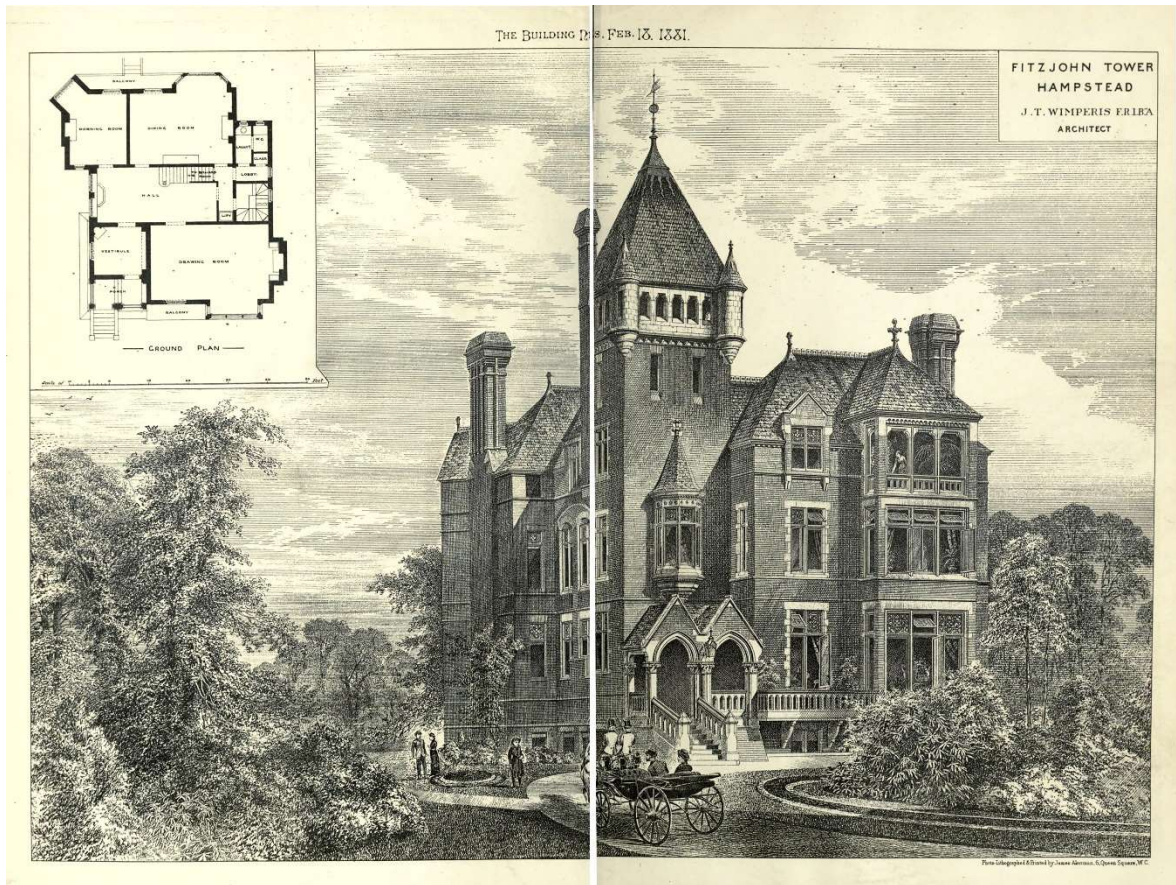
- 6.10 Overall, it is our view that the proposed development will allow the significance of the listed building to be enhanced overall. Internally, the proposed works are relatively light-touch, and have been undertaken following an extensive review of the building's historic fabric, history and development. It is clear, ultimately, that the level of internal alteration is significantly greater than perhaps appears to be the case on initial inspection, and the ability to undertake works without generating harm to significance is, accordingly, greater than one might initially expect. The proposed works will secure the future use of the flat, and ensure that it better reflects modern living, whilst avoiding harm to significance, and allowing for a general improvement in its internal decoration which will clearly create an uplift in the aesthetic qualities of the spaces. We therefore believe that there will be an enhancement, as a whole, to the significance of both The Tower, as a Grade II listed building.

## 7. CONCLUSION

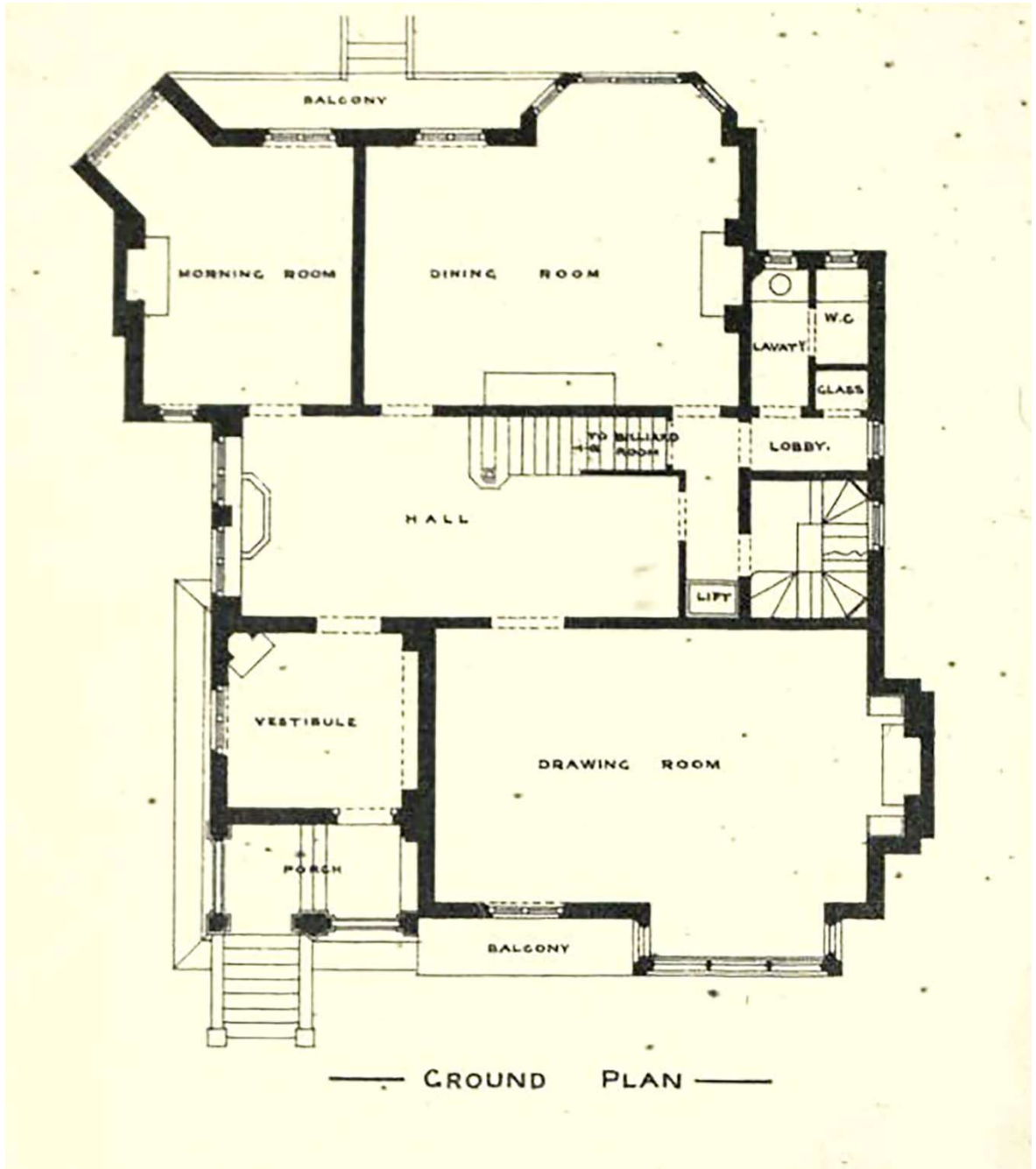
- 7.1 The above has set out the Site's background, describing the Site and its surrounding context, outlining its historic development, significance and special character, and the present contribution of the Site to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and identifying the relevant heritage legislative and policy context within which the proposals must be placed.
- 7.2 Overall, this has established that the Site, while being of high heritage significance overall as a Grade II listed building, shows evidence of considerable alteration internally, with Flat 4 in particular appearing to have subject to a careful programme which introduced considerable historic material from beyond the property, and moved much of its retained historic fabric.
- 7.3 The assessment has identified that the proposed internal and external works are fairly minor in their extent, and have been based on a thorough understanding of the building's history, development and significance, including significant assessment of its historic fabric on site, and in comparison to other properties of a similar date. It is concluded that the sensitive works, whilst securing a more effective use for this rather compromised property, generate an overall enhancement to the listed building. It is our view that overall, even if individual elements are considered by the authority to generate some harm to the listed building, any loss of historic fabric can be entirely avoided, and given that new insertions are also focused on parts of the Site which have seen considerable alteration, loss of historic plan form, or of understandings of its historic circulation, will also be preserved. The clear enhancement afforded by the proposed new conservatory will offset any areas perceived in isolation to be harmful.
- 7.4 It is therefore judged that the proposals would preserve to the significance of the locally listed building, and therefore NPPF paragraph 134 does not apply. Given the above, we are of the view that the emerging proposal meets the statutory and policy requirements of Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, relevant NPPF heritage policies, and identified local plan policies. We are therefore of the view that there are no heritage reasons to withhold consent in this case.

## A1. HISTORIC PLANS

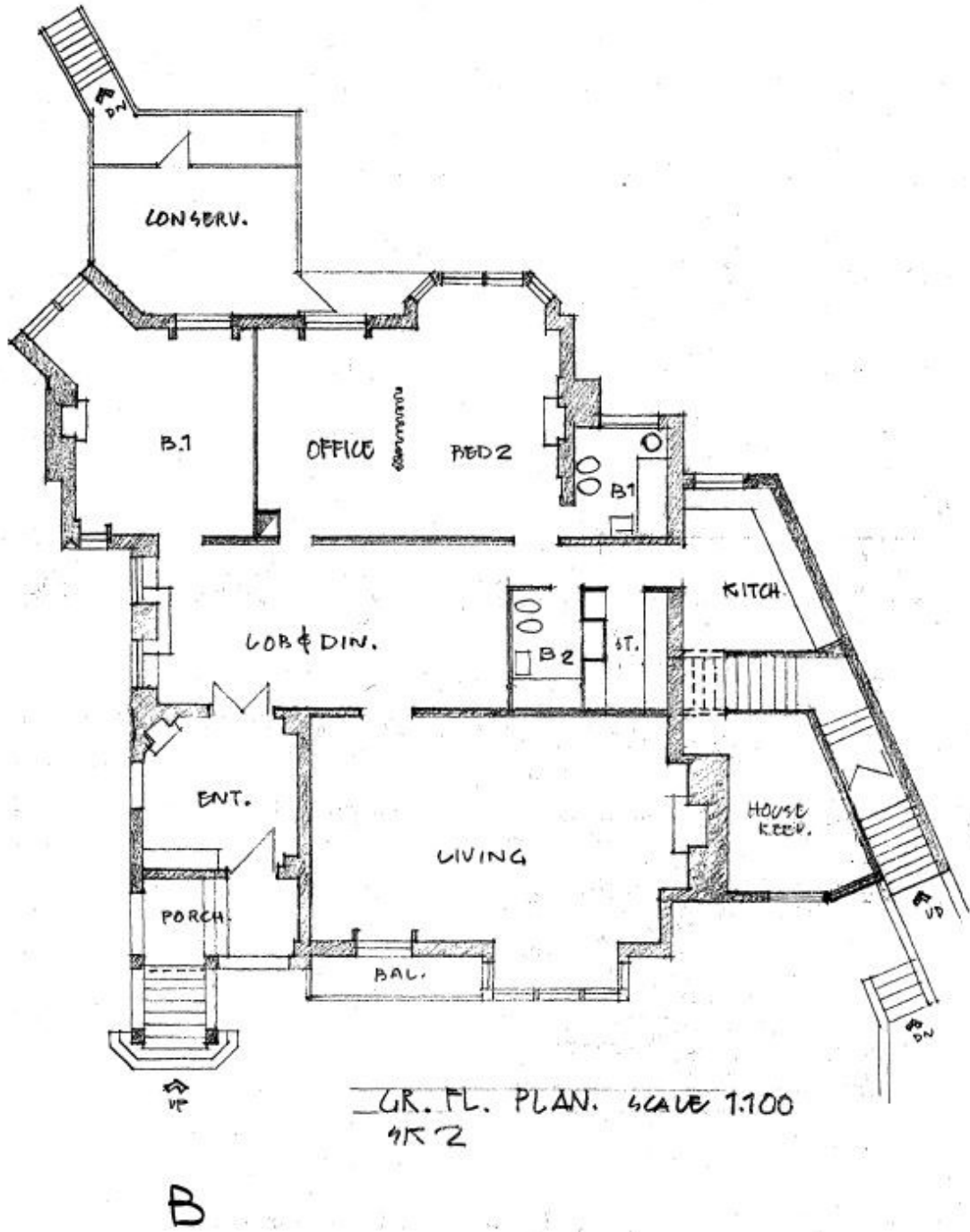
A1.1 Illustration from Building News, February 1881, showing The Tower, as completed.



A1.2 Floor Plan from Building News, February 1881.



A1.3 1979 Floorplan, showing the Raised Ground Floor, as it was laid out at the time of its subdivision.



A1.4 Current Floorplan, for comparison with the above.



## A2. SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

A2.1 View of the hall, looking towards the late dropped ceiling, and new panelling.



A2.2 View within the later conservatory.





A2.3 View within the former Morning Room, proposed for conversion to a kitchen, showing the retained fireplace and modern engineered oak flooring.



- A2.4 View within the former drawing room, showing the relocated stained glass, and later, applied decoration above the panelling.



- A2.5 View of the junction between the panelling and fireplace. This view shows evidence of the panelling being glued, and shows the poor quality of the junction between fireplace and panelling.

