

HeritageCollective

Heritage Appeal Statement

No. 4 Leverton Street

On behalf of Gracie Miller & Will Hitchins

October 2017

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Heritage Appeal Statement has been written by Heritage Collective on behalf of Gracie Miller and Will Hitchins in relation to the refusal of listed building consent and planning permission by Camden Borough Council (CBC) at No. 4 Leverton Street, ref. 2017/1225/P and 2017/1436/L. It should be read in conjunction with the statement of case produced by Simply Planning. The refused proposals involve internal and external alterations. The application was refused on 3 August 2017.

1.2 No.4 Leverton Street is a terraced townhouse, built in the mid-19th century. The application site is Grade II listed as part of Nos. 2 to 26 Leverton Street. and is also located in the Kentish Town Conservation Area. Following officer recommendation, the planning permission application was refused for the following reason:

The proposed rear extension, by reason of its scale, siting and detailed design would result in the further loss of the original built form to the rear of the property and would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the host building, adjoining terrace of properties and surrounding conservation area, contrary to Policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

1.3 The application for listed building consent was refused for the following reasons:

The removal and replacement of the ground floor rear window with an enlarged replacement doorway and further internal works at ground floor, as described within this application, by virtue of their loss of historic features, plan form and fabric, are considered to be harmful to the special architectural and historic interest of the grade II listed building, contrary to policy D2 (Heritage) of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

The proposed rear extension, by reason of its scale, siting detailed design and resulting internal works would result in the further loss of the original built form to the rear of the property and would be detrimental to the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, contrary to Policy D2 (Heritage) of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

- 1.4 Heritage Collective was not involved in the application process and has been instructed here to assess the effects of the proposed development on the historic environment.
- 1.5 This statement covers the listed building consent and planning permission refusals and sets out the reason why the appeals should be allowed. This statement is based on observations made following an inspection of the listed building and conservation area undertaken on the 11 September 2017, and follows a review of the full planning application documentation. Accordingly, this statement presents professional value judgements on the significance of the heritage assets affected and consideration of the appeal site's tolerance for change without causing adverse effects to the significance of the historic environment. Below are the key points regarding the statement of case:
- The reasons for refusal does not reference the NPPF. Therefore an assessment of significance and level of harm has not been undertaken, leaving open to consideration the effect of the proposal on the significance of the listed building and conservation area;
 - The original closet wing has been demolished and the replacement structure totally enclosed by the modern conservatory extension. The legibility and special interests of the ground floor to the rear has been largely lost and by these subsequent extensions.
 - The existing full-width, rear extension (comprising modern closet wing and conservatory-style addition) is entirely modern and of little architectural or historical value, and deviates greatly from the original form and appearance of the rear elevation.
 - The extent and size of rear extensions to many of the neighbouring properties on the east side of Leverton Street.

2.0 RELEVANT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There have been a number of previous applications at No. 4 Leverton Street, all of which involve the rearwards extension of the building. Camden's planning portal details three previous applications, the first of which dates to April 2004 (ref: 2003/1976/P) and proposed the *erection of a single storey rear extension*, which was refused in June 2004 for the following two reasons:

The proposed ground floor extension is considered to be unacceptable and detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing building in terms of scale, bulk, form and detailed design and is, therefore, contrary to policies EN13 (Design of new development), EN22 (Extensions to existing buildings), EN31 (Character and appearance of conservation areas) and EN38 (Preservation of listed buildings) of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2000.

The proposed extension, by reason of its excessive height and bulk on the boundary of No. 6 Leverton Street, would give rise to an unreasonable sense of enclosure, loss of light and outlook to the detriment of the adjoining residents contrary to policy EN19 (Amenity for occupiers and neighbours) of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2000.

- 2.2 Another application for a full width extension was later approved. An application involving the *'demolition of single-storey rear extension at ground floor level and erection of a single storey extension to single family dwelling house'* was approved in June 2007 (ref: 2007/2028/P), and has since been implemented.
- 2.3 The last application at No. 4 Leverton Street, barring the application discussed in this appeal statement, was submitted in September 2008 (ref: 2008/2712/L) and involved the *'replacement of existing timber framed window with timber French doors at ground floor on the rear elevation'*. This application was refused in October 2008 for the following reasons:

The proposed French doors by reason of the loss of the original window, cill and masonry would be detrimental to the special architectural and historic interest of the grade II listed building contrary to policy 6 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006."

2.4 The application was then rejected on appeal in December 2009 (APP/X5210/E/09/2100909/WF), with the inspector concluding that:

the proposed alterations would damage the architectural and historic interest of the building and that they would conflict with national policy as set out in PPG15 and with saved UDP Policy B6. For those reasons I conclude that the appeal should fail.

3.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 3.1 This section considers the architectural and historic interests of No. 4 Leverton Street, its contribution to the Kentish Town Conservation Area and the character and appearance of the conservation area itself.
- 3.2 It is recognised that historic areas are able to accommodate change without necessarily affecting their local character and history¹. Understanding the local character of any area affected is therefore important to understanding the scope for and acceptability of change (NPPF, paragraphs 61 and 129).
- 3.3 In order to better understand what impacts the proposal might have, an assessment of the significance of the heritage assets has been undertaken and the findings presented below.

Development of Kentish Town & Leverton Street

- 3.4 A summary of the development of Kentish Town is provided in the Heritage Statement that supported the applications for planning permission and listed building consent (prepared by Simply Planning), the relevant passages of which are shown below:

Kentish Town originally grew along the Kentish Town Road, and slowly began branching off the road along lanes. Fine houses were built in the rural areas as the area began to gain a reputation as a rural retreat away from the increasing urbanisation and growth of the metropolis.

In the nineteenth century, the right of way across the Flask forecourt (Assembly House) became Leverton Place, and the forecourt was filled with shops. The origin of Leighton Road lay in a path from the Assembly House to Maiden Lane. Development began when landowner Joshua Prole Torriano sold small plots of land freehold to private individuals for houses. The plots provided included individual houses, or small groups of houses that could be developed at one time. Examples include late Georgian stock brick with pared down detailing of two and three storeys with parapets;

¹ English Heritage's 'Constructive Conservation, Sustainable Growth for Historic Places', 2013

stucco villas including one with a pediment of 1830s; and terraced stuccoed and half stuccoed houses of the mid nineteenth century.

By 1894 all the fields in the local area had been built over. The road layout was established by 1875 with the road pattern to the north of Leighton Road, Leverton Street and Lady Margaret Road was laid out perpendicular to Leighton Road in an expanding grid of streets

- 3.5 Within Leverton Street itself there has been widespread, smaller scale development, predominantly to the rear of the terraced properties. As with No. 4 Leverton Street, the original closet wings have been removed or enclosed, and full width extensions at ground floor level are an established feature on the rear of the terrace.

Significance of Nos. 4 Leverton Street

- 3.6 The officer's report makes one mention of the NPPF and no assessment was made in relation to the effects of the proposals on the significance of the listed building or conservation area. In order to better understand what impacts the proposal might have, an assessment of the significance of the heritage assets has been undertaken and the findings presented below.
- 3.7 The significance of No. 4 Leverton Street (together with Nos. is mostly derived from its historical and architectural interest. Its significance is not drawn from any specific archaeological or artistic interest. The historic interest of the listed building is taken from its place within the historic Eyre Estate - it represents a small part in the larger period of growth and development of the Kentish Town area in the 19th century. The list description for Nos. 2-26 Leverton Street is presented below –

Name: NUMBERS 2-26 AND RAILINGS TO NUMBERS 10 AND 20

List entry Number: 1379296

Terrace of 13 houses. c1845. Painted stuccoed brick, slate roofs. One window wide and 2 rooms deep; 2 storeys. First-floor band and moulded cornices stepped as ground rises to north. Projecting first-floor pilaster strips between Nos 2-10, and Nos 18-26; Nos 10-18 separated by recessed

panels. Margin light sashes in moulded architrave surrounds, those to first floor with console brackets and with surviving anthemion cast-iron decoration to sills of Nos 2, 4, 6, 10, 12, 14, and 20. Doors with rectangular top lights set to right of each house, those to Nos 4, 10, 12 and 14 with original doors. INTERIORS not inspected but some noted to retain unusual plaster decoration. The terraces of Leverton Street form a charming group of small-scale, painted houses with distinctive decoration that is very unusual in London Architectural interest of the building is derived from the modest Italianate style in which it was constructed and the stucco dressings it displays in the form of simple classical detailing and a hipped slat roof with large overhanging eaves. A key part of the interest in Regency and early Victorian suburban design was to create a sense of detached villas that were in fact semi-detached pairs.

- 3.8 It is the front elevation of the building which is of primary architectural interest, due to the formal composition, classically derived detailing and materiality. The rear elevation of the terrace is stylistically and architecturally subservient with a functional but traditional appearance. The plain finish illustrates the importance of the frontage as part of the townscape. There is less consistency in terms of building lines and the addition of later rear extensions at ground floor level to a number of the properties has introduced visual inconsistencies, though the upper levels, where they remain visible, contribute to the conservation area due to their form, fenestration and general character being wholly representative of the period.
- 3.9 The architectural interest of the building is further enhanced by its group value with other similar terraced properties along Leverton Street, and the completeness of the group is noteworthy.
- 3.10 The interior of No. 4 Leverton Street remains relatively intact and comprises a typical plan form for a building of its type and age – one front and one rear room with a hallway and staircase adjacent to the side. Greater change is experienced within the single storey rear closet wing, which is entirely modern following the removal of the original closet wing in 2007/08. Historic mapping reveals that the traditional arrangement to the rear of the No. 4 Leverton Street (and on neighbouring properties within the terrace) comprised a single, small outrigger. The existing closet wing is now substantially larger than the original and the majority of the rear elevations and gardens to neighbouring properties

have also been altered to the same degree or more. The existing smaller closet wing (rebuilt in 2007/08 in the same location as the original) has also been internalised by the construction of the larger closet wing and conservatory-style extension, resulting in further loss to the legibility of the rear of the building, both in terms of fabric and appearance.

Significance of Kentish Town Conservation Area

- 3.11 The character and appearance of the Kentish Town Conservation Area is defined in Camden's Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, under the section *Definition of Special Character*. An excerpt of this definition is shown below:

The Kentish Town Conservation Area has at its core the village of Kentish Town located in the old parish of St Pancras, on the Kentish Town Road running north-south from Highgate to St Pancras. The village settlement can still be perceived in the remaining eighteenth and early nineteenth century core.

Leighton Road running east-west links the two separate parts of the conservation area. To the west is the commercial edge on Kentish Town Road with remnants of the roadside taverns, the Assembly House Pub, shops and 304 Kentish Town Road, an eighteenth century building perpendicular to the Road. Leighton Road links Kentish Town Road with Torriano Avenue and is lined with early nineteenth century houses typically in stucco with some brick; individual designs reflect piecemeal development. To the north Leverton Street is a composition of coloured stuccoed houses, some with remaining 'antique greek' ironwork details, and Falkland Place that contains the Public Open Space and play area.

- 3.12 Further on in the document, under the *Assessing Special Interest* section, the character and plan form are described as following:

The Kentish Town Road marks the busy and commercial western edge of the area. Buildings are typically brick and three storeys facing the Road with narrow or no forecourts. Leighton Road is a residential linking road from Kentish Town to Torriano Avenue, lined with two and three storey terraced houses. Perpendicular from this spine road run the quieter, orderly

residential streets, with terraced houses north of Leighton Road, and to the south the detached ad hoc variety of Torriano Cottages. Local landmarks include the red brick former sorting office in Leighton Road and the Assembly House at the corner with Kentish Town Road.

Mature street trees are a characteristic of the side streets; in contrast Torriano Cottages have substantial garden trees and shrubs, and a leafy secluded character.

- 3.13 The application site, by virtue of forming a residual part of the area's early development, contributes to the historic interest of the area. Architecturally the façade of No.4 Leverton and its neighbours are of considerable interest and make a valuable contribution to the surrounding context. The character of the rear garden and rear elevation at ground floor level has been largely lost due to previous extensions, though the rear elevation at first floor level is wholly in keeping and contributory to the conservation area.

4.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

4.1 The appeal is based upon professional opinion and it is the conclusions of the appeal statement that the benefits of the proposals would outweigh harm, and therefore any harm incurred is neutralised.

4.2 This section assesses the effects of the proposed development on the significance of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Kentish Town Conservation Area.

4.3 In response to the refusal, it will be demonstrated that the proposed demolition and replacement of the glazed infill extension and internal alterations will not result in harm to the heritage values of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area. It will be demonstrated that the proposals comply with both national and local policy cited within the reasons for refusal and the more detailed points as raised in the delegated report which can be summarised as:

- Replacement and reconfiguration of the existing single storey glazed infill extension at ground floor level and installation of bi-folding doors across rear elevation creating approximately 1sqm of additional floorspace;
- Removal of internal partition wall to the rear and re-orientation of ground floor WC;
- Retrospective removal of original ground floor rear window and lowering of the cill to create a new doorway to the kitchen area. The aforementioned window was originally an external opening but is now an internal feature following the erection of single storey rear extension at the site.

Proposed Development & Impact Assessment

External alterations

4.4 The proposed scheme involves the demolition of the glazed conservatory-style element of the rear extension and the erection of a new infill extension, the rear elevation of which will match that of the existing closet wing. The roof of

the proposed extension will remain glazed. The proposals represent a minor increase in scale and form. It is argued in the Officer Report in paragraph 2.2.3 that the proposals *'would create a development that would no longer be read as a traditional closet wing and thereby would not preserve or enhance the original character of the building'*. As described in paragraph 3.9 of this heritage appeal statement, the existing arrangement to the rear of No. 4 Leverton Street is so far removed from its original appearance and arrangement that it can no longer be regarded as being traditional in form or scale and therefore contributes little to special interest of the building. The proposed replacement of the glazed infill extension will be carried out within a heavily altered part of the listed building the significance of which has been severely eroded by previous changes.

- 4.5 Regarding the level of change to the rear of neighbouring buildings within the listed terrace, paragraph 2.2.4 of the Officer Report states that they have been altered previously and the *'built form to the rear of the site is considered to make a significant contribution of the special interest of the residential dwelling'*. As previously stated the form of the rear of No. 4 has been subject to changes that has resulted in the loss of legibility, form, appearance, and historic fabric and is a largely modern arrangement. This type of development is now well established on Leverton Street, with extensions to neighbouring properties comprising a broad mix of full-width and one and two-storey structures, creating a rear elevation that differs greatly from its original appearance and form. The rear elevation of No. 4 Leverton Street at ground floor level, in its current form, cannot be considered to make a significant contribution to the special interest of the building and has good scope for change. As such the proposed rebuilding of existing rear extension, due to its location in a subservient and much-altered part of the building, will preserve the building's significance and its contribution to the conservation area.
- 4.6 Bi-fold glazed doors are proposed for the opening on the rear elevation of the new extension. The immediate context of the door is entirely modern and the door itself represents a neutral addition to what is a heavily altered area of the listed building.

Internal alterations

- 4.7 It has been established that the internal partitions forming the existing WC and storage area are entirely modern, having been built following the consent of application 2007/2028/P in 2007. This is important to note when considering the statement below, taken from the first reason for refusing the application for listed building consent:

...by virtue of their loss of historic features, plan form and fabric, are considered to be harmful to the special architectural and historic interest of the grade II listed building...

- 4.8 It is clear to see that the proposed removal of internal partition walls will result in no loss of historic features or fabric. In terms of alterations to plan form and internal layout, the proposals will be affecting a modern and now entirely internalised area of the building, the interest of which was previously drawn from its external form. With this in mind, the proposed removal of these internal partitions will not result in harm to the listed building.
- 4.9 The Officer Report states in paragraph 2.2.5 that the *'proposed reorientation of the ground floor WC would result in the blocking of the original doorway from the vestibule to the closet wing/courtyard, which is a characteristic feature of buildings of this type and an integral component of its original plan form'*. Whilst the former area of access between the house and garden will be removed (now that smaller closet wing is an internal feature), the existing doorway is not original and is located in a non-original position. Historic plans show the doorway to the garden on the return elevation of the closet wing. More importantly however the internalisation of the original closet wing has completely changed the plan form, circulation and how access is made between the internal and external areas of the building of the ground floor's rear area. This level of change has led to loss of special interest. As such there is no risk of the proposed reorientation of the WC affecting historic fabric or plan form and the significance of the listed building will be preserved.
- 4.10 The entire ground floor elevation of No. 4 Leverton Street has been enclosed following the consented erection conservatory structure in 2007 (ref: 2007/2028/P). This has had the effect of internalising the rear ground floor

window, thereby limiting its contribution to the special interests of the building and the conservation area.

Compliance with Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 4.11 Legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas is contained in the 1990 Act. Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Act are relevant and place a duty on the decision maker to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas, and of paying special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.12 The applications were refused with only one reference to the NPPF. On this basis there is no assessment of what level of harm there would be and it is therefore open to consideration of the effects of the proposal on the significance of the listed building and conservation area.
- 4.13 The NPPF provides the national planning framework within which local authorities are required to determine applications and is a material consideration. It requires applicants and local authorities to assess firstly the heritage significance of an asset, whether designated or not, and secondly the effect of proposed works on that significance.
- 4.14 Paragraph 129 requires LPAs to identify and take into account the '*particular significance of any heritage asset*'. This should be taken into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, including by development affecting its setting.
- 4.15 Paragraph 132 applies specifically to designated heritage assets. It states that great weight should be given to their conservation and it requires a proportionate approach (i.e. the more important the asset, the greater the weight attached to its conservation). Annex 2 of the NPPF defines conservation as:

"The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance."

- 4.16 The importance and relevance of this definition is that it does not suggest conservation to be the same as preservation. Indeed, what sets conservation apart is the emphasis on proactively maintaining and managing change and not on a reactive approach to resisting change. In its simplest interpretation conservation could amount to a change that at least sustains the significance of a heritage asset.
- 4.17 Paragraphs 132 and 134 deal with harm. Local authorities are required to take into consideration the particular significance of any asset and the effect of proposed development on that significance. Change to the historic environment can be positive, neutral or negative depending on the type of development or change and the effect on heritage significance. Harm is defined as change that erodes the significance of an asset. Where development will lead to less than substantial harm (paragraph 134) the public benefits of the proposed development should be weighed against the level of harm.
- 4.18 The primary concern therefore is the impact on the significance of the designated heritage assets – No. 4 Leverton Street and the Kentish Town Conservation Area. The impacts of the proposals, specifically the changes to the form and appearance to the rear of the listed building and its impact within the conservation area, are not considered here to meet the threshold as detailed in paragraph 134 of the NPPF of less than substantial harm. As no harm is being caused there is no requirement to provide a balance through public benefits.
- 4.19 In summary, the scheme is considered to accord with the requirements of national planning policy and the application proposals will preserve the significance of the designated heritage assets described above.

Local Policy Framework

- 4.20 A number of policies are cited by Camden in the refusal, these are detailed below:

Local Plan Policy D1 (Design)

4.21 Policy D1 is concerned with design of development and in this case, and seeks to secure high quality design that successfully relates to context and local character. Parts of A, B and E are of particular relevance and require development to:

- a. *Respect local character and context;*
- b. *preserve or enhance the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with "Policy D2 Heritage";*
- e. *comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement local character.*

4.22 The policy is accorded with, insofar as the proposals will be completed to a high standard, using high quality materials and respect the local context and character (a character and context that has been heavily altered).

Local Plan Policy D2 (Heritage)

4.23 Policy D2 focuses on development affecting heritage assets, and seeks to preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings.

- e. *require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;*

4.24 The proposals are wholly appropriate to the special interest of the listed building and conservation and will preserve the significance of both, thereby according with Policy D2 of the Local Plan.

5.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 This statement assesses the significance of the No. 4 Leverton Street and the Kentish Town Conservation Area. Having considered the evidence it is concluded that the proposed alterations to the rear of the building will result in no harm to the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 5.2 No. 4 Leverton Street is part of a Grade II listed terrace dating to the mid-19th century. The building is of special architectural and historic interest and contributes to the character of the conservation area as part of a wider terrace. No. 4 Leverton Street also has both historical interest as one of the mid-19th century houses built as part of the expanding suburbanisation of London, and architectural interest as an example of a Victorian houses with modest Italianate detailing that is mirrored in its neighbours.
- 5.3 The interior of the main house retains its original plan form, though the rear ground floor of No. 4 Leverton Street has been subject to substantial change and the existing fabric and layout is largely modern. The level of change has resulted in the erosion of special interest and the existing extension is of little interest, though does have good scope for change.
- 5.4 The proposed alterations to the rear of the property will be occurring within a much-altered part of the building, one that has greater scope for change, and seek to preserve the significance of the listed building and the conservation area.
- 5.5 Taking into account the requirements of national policy and guidance, Camden Borough Council has also failed to sufficiently assess both the significance of the heritage assets affected and the potential level of harm, in line with paragraphs 128-129 of the NPPF. The proposed changes will result in no harm to the listed building and conservation area. As such the requirement of the 1990 Act has been complied with.

APPENDIX 1: Documentary Research

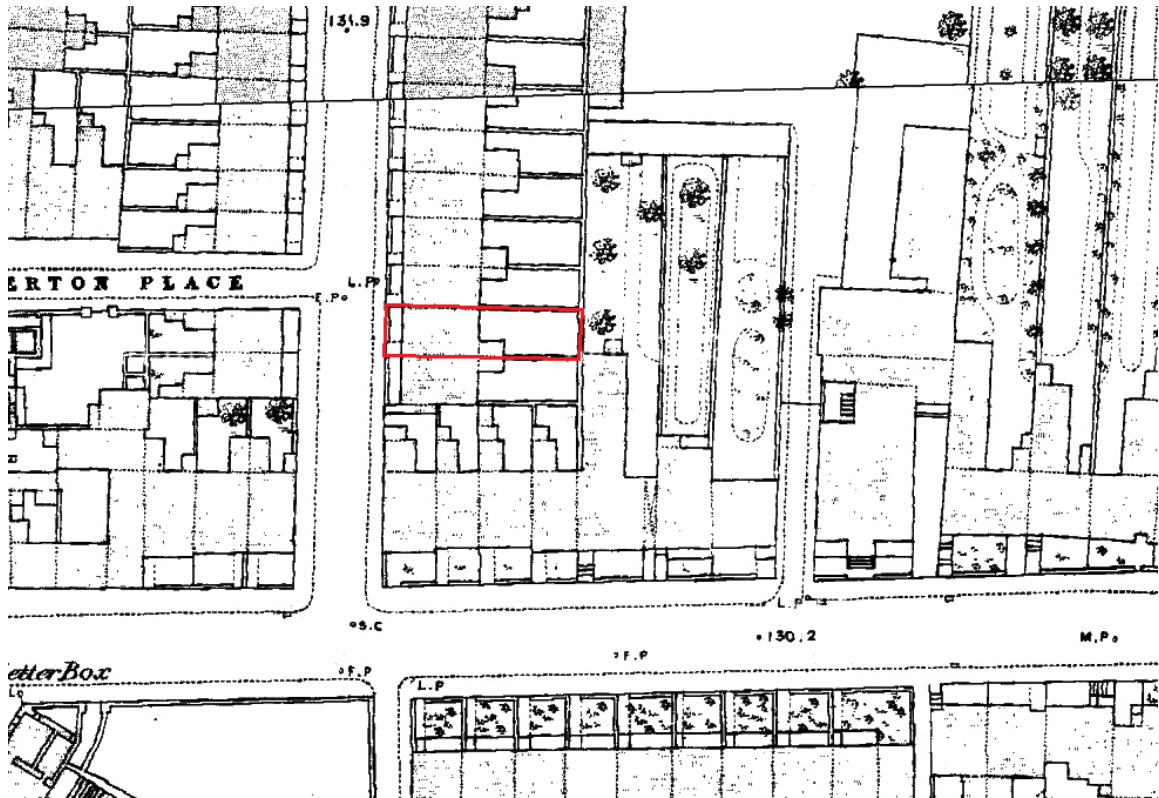


Figure 1: 1971-73 Ordnance Survey Map, No. 4 Leverton Street delineated in red.

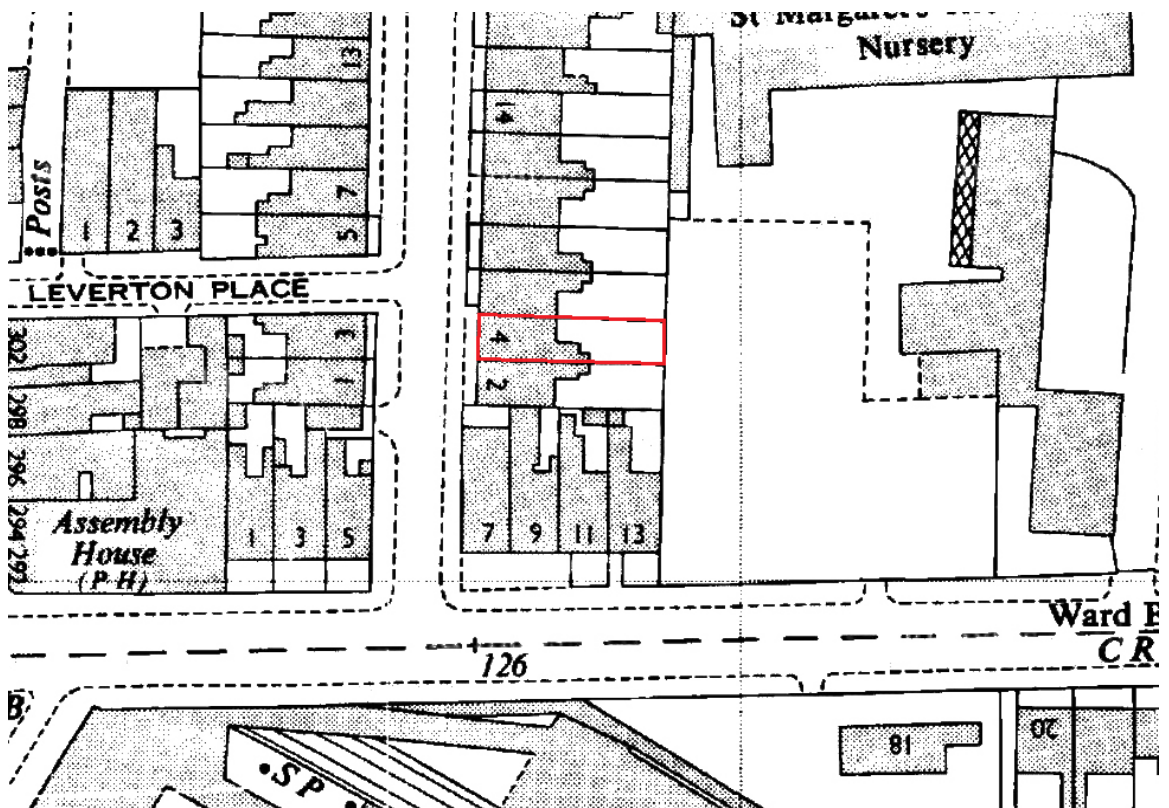


Figure 2: 1956-69 Ordnance Survey Map, No. 4 Leverton Street delineated in red.

APPENDIX 2: Photographs



Figure 3: Rear elevation and rear extension to No. 4 Leverton Street.



Figure 4: Modern conservatory extension to No. 4 Leverton Street.



Figure 5: View through modern doorway from new extension, through to the main house.



Figure 6: View from sitting room, showing internalised wall of closet wing.



Figure 7: View of internalised closet wing.