

**FIREMEN'S COTTAGES
WEST END LANE FIRE STATION
327B WEST END LANE
WEST HAMPSTEAD
LONDON**

Historic Building Assessment

Summary



Fig: Firemen's Cottages

The Historic Building Advisory Service was commissioned by Dron & Wright on behalf of the London Fire Commissioner to undertake an historic building assessment of a building known as Firemen's Cottages, West End Lane Fire Station, 327B West End Lane, West Hampstead, London.

The purpose of the survey was to undertake an assessment of the historic nature and character of the building that was used as housing for firemen, but is currently vacant. This was undertaken by means of a visual assessment and analysis of the building to understand its means of construction as well as the way it has been altered and adapted over time.

A survey of readily assessable documentary sources was undertaken within the London Metropolitan Archives. Other sources of information were also researched. This assessment aims to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

This is a block of four cottages that is positioned at the back of the service yard behind West End Lane fire station in West Hampstead. These were erected at the beginning of the twentieth century to provide additional living accommodation for firemen who were based at this fire station with an additional six suites of rooms within the main building. Because of their size and having enclosed gardens at the back may have been for married firemen with families.

The cottages, along with the fire station, were designed by the architect W A Scott possibly under the direction of W E Brookes who was then architect for London County Council. Both buildings have a strong Arts & Crafts movement style by which Scott was much influenced. This is considered by Historic England of an exemplar of a series of new London fire stations built at the start of the twentieth century.

It was intended that this terrace of houses would be used in conjunction with the creation of a new fire station on this site to provide additional quarters and so augment those within the main building. They were first occupied when the complex was opened in 1901.

They appear to have been built to a reasonable standard for the period, but combined a mixture of quite traditional as well as novel forms of construction. For example the external walls were of solid brickwork without a cavity and the internal walls both on the ground and first floors are of cast in-situ concrete which was then quite a radical use of this material.

In the intervening years they appear to have been little altered when considering the main structure. Probably the most significant change occurred in the 1960 – 70s when extensions were added to the back of each pair to provide modern bathrooms as well as a back door entrance lobby. At that time the toilet for each house that was in the corner of the kitchen and was accessed from outside adjacent to the back door was removed.

Other more superficial changes have occurred over a wider period of time such as changes to the window glazing, removal or adaptation of chimneys in the kitchens and general small changes throughout the terrace. None of these have resulted in any drastic change to the historic character of the buildings.

They were apparently occupied by fire crew till the end of the 1990s, since when they have been left vacant. As a result they have suffered a degree of deterioration due to lack of maintenance and other causes.

The site inspection was carried out on 29 August, 2018.

Acknowledgements

This report was commissioned by Dron & Wright on behalf of the London Fire Commissioner. The Historic Building Advisory Service would like to thank them as well members of the London Fire Service at West Hampstead fire station for their assistance in providing access in and around the building and with other facilities during our survey.

Thanks are also due to the staff of London Metropolitan Archives for facilitating access to documents within their collection.

The assessment survey were undertaken, and the report compiled by R J Hill MRICS, MCIfA, who also managed the project on behalf of the Historic Building Advisory Service. The historical research was undertaken by S J Hill MA.