

**Flat 5, 10 Cambridge Gate, London, NW1:  
Amended Heritage Statement – July 2019**

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## Introduction

- 1 This report has been prepared to support an application for the refurbishment of the apartment and installation of 2 condenser units at Flat 5, 10 Cambridge Gate, London, NW1. The report should be read in conjunction with the drawings that accompany this report.
- 2 The report has been prepared by Nick Collins BSc (Hons) MSc MRICS IHBC of KMHeritage. Nick has twenty years experience in the property sector, including most recently as a Director of the Conservation Team at integrated design consultants, Alan Baxter & Associates. Nick spent eight years at Historic England as Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings & Areas where he led a specialist team of historic building inspectors, architects, and archaeologists on a wide range of heritage projects in East & South London. Previously Conservation Officer at the London Borough of Bromley, Nick began his career at international real estate consultancy Jones Lang LaSalle as a Chartered Surveyor.

## History

### Development of the area

- 3 Regent's Park was created at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the Commissioners of Woods, Forests and Land Revenues, who decided that the farm land at Marylebone was ripe for such development. John Nash was the architect to the Office of Woods and Forests and created the Grand Design that was to form the basis of the Park as it is known today.
- 4 Nash's vision for The Park was as an assemblage of villas in landscape with almost continuous belt of terraces around its edge. On the land now occupied by Cambridge Gate, Decimus Burton had designed The Colosseum in 1824. Similar in architectural style to the Pantheon in Rome, it was built as an exhibition hall to house a gigantic 360 degree panorama painting of London.

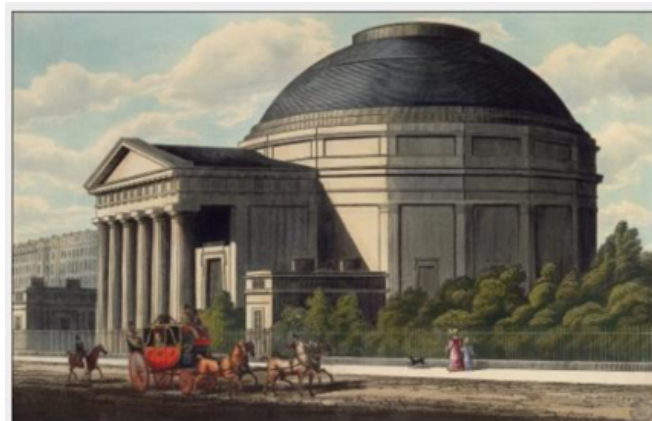


Figure 1: The Colosseum, Regent's Park c.1840 © Westminster City Archives

- 5 By 1875 the exhibition had lost its popularity and the decision was made to demolish the building and replace it with private housing.
- 6 Cambridge Gate was designed by Thomas Archer and Arthur Green and erected between 1875-77 in the 'French Renaissance' or 'French Second Empire' style. Other work by the same architects in a similar style include Hyde Park Hotel and Whitehall Court, which fronts the River Thames on the Embankment. This style (and the use of Bath stone) was unique to Regent's Park – the majority of other development being in a classical style.
- 7 Following the Second World War, when the demand for grand central London housing had declined and there with much bomb damage, Cambridge Gate was earmarked for demolition.
- 8 The Crown Commissioners wrote, in 1962, "We now announce a complete scheme for the preservation of all the existing Nash Terraces facing Regent's Park or forming part of the entrances to the Park. When the scheme is finished the fronts and ends of every such Terrace will correspond with Nash's original design and every building should have an effective use and a life of at least 60 years". However, they also stated "that Someries House, Cambridge Gate and Cambridge Terrace should not be preserved but be demolished."
- 9 In the end, only Someries House was entirely demolished – and replaced with Sir Denys Lasdun's Royal College of Physicians.
- 10 In 1994, 1-9 Cambridge Gate was subject to a comprehensive conversion, refurbishment and partial redevelopment from office to residential use. Works involved the major reconstruction of the terrace and include demolition and rebuilding of parts of the mews buildings as well as the rear elevation to the main terrace and considerable internal re-organisation.



Figure 2: Rear elevation of 1-9 Cambridge Gate (2019)

- 11 No.10 Cambridge Gate was not included as part of this comprehensive redevelopment as it had been originally constructed as a Mansion Block of apartments. However, the end of Cambridge Terrace and 10 Cambridge Gate had suffered extensive bomb damage in the War and large parts, particularly at the rear, had been reconstructed in 1956 by David Stern Architects. Floors were strengthened, new steel beams installed and new masonry partitions were located on existing and new steelwork to provide an altered plan form layout.
- 12 Flat 5 is known to have undergone a number of changes to its plan form, including alterations in 1989 and 2014. At the time of the 2014 works it was noted that 'Wall stubs indicate the location of original walls and evidence an alteration to an earlier historic floor plan'.

### **The flat prior to fit out**

- 13 As referred to above, prior to the recent strip out, the flat had been subject to an almost entire re-build and refurbishment. This is apparent from photographs of the flat before the strip out and is confirmed by the findings of the strip out too.
- 14 The most important space, both historically and physically, within the flat is the principle reception room at the front of the apartment. This space retains its historic proportions and is in a part of the building that has been subject to neither bomb damage nor more recent re-build (as is the case with much of the rest of Cambridge Gate).
- 15 However, as can be demonstrated both from the pre-strip out photograph and also as a result of the strip-out, there is no remaining historic fabric in terms of detailing within this space.



Figure 3 Principal reception room pre-strip out

- 16 Figure 3 shows the room prior to strip out. This shows that the ceiling has already been altered, and lowered to incorporate recessed ceiling lights and the wall panelling is matched into the radiator cover – none of which are of any age. This would indicate that none of the coving or panelling or skirting was original.
- 17 The modern nature of all of the fixtures and fittings is further illustrated post strip-out. Figure 4 shows that the panelled mouldings had been ‘glued’ onto the wall around a modern radiator, and that the herringbone/parquet flooring was laid over and glued onto a modern chipboard suspended floor that also incorporated modern electrical sockets. The strip out also revealed modern plasterwork throughout, further indicating the extent of previous change.



- 18 Anecdotal evidence also suggested that the fireplace was not original.
- 19 Photographs of the kitchen pre-strip out also show an entirely modern kitchen. There were no remnants of any historic fabric within this space.





Figures 5 & 6: Modern kitchen

20 The rear of the building contains bedroom accommodation and bathrooms. It is known that this part of the building suffered extensive damage during the Second World War and was substantially re-built. This is evidenced in part by the external brick work but also confirmed following the strip out works by the entirely modern breeze block and stud partitions between the rooms.



Figure 7 & 8: Modern breeze block and stud partition walls between the bedrooms

21 Figures 7 & 8 show modern walls partitions with modern plaster covering, and modern chipboard suspended floors which also contain electrical sockets.

- 22 The fixtures and fittings in the bathrooms were also contemporary and of no special interest.
- 23 Having carefully analysed all of the pictures of the pre-strip out state of the apartment compared to the existing state, the only place where an element of fabric which might have been of some historical value was the former shutter case to the window in the hallway. This is illustrated below. However, even here, the post strip out photograph shows that there would not have been space for the shutters to fit in the remaining space so the detailing shown in figure 9 could have been simply to give a more historical finish.



Figure 9: Pre-strip out and Figure 10: Post strip out.

- 24 It is proposed that this detail will be reinstated as part of this application. It should be noted however that all of the windows are modern timber sashes with modern window furniture, sash cords etc. and that in this particular window the radiator cover below is also part of a more modern fit out.
- 25 It can therefore be concluded from the pre and post-fit out photographic evidence (which is also referenced in the previous listed building application in 2014) contained no elements of original detailing and has been subject to multiple refurbishments and alteration – in part through changing tastes since its construction, and in part from the damage caused during the second world war.

## **The heritage context**

26 No.10 Cambridge Gate forms part of the Grade II listed 1-10 Cambridge Gate, which was listed in May 1974. It also lies within the Regent's Park Conservation Area, first designated in 1969.

27 There are a number of other statutorily listed buildings in the vicinity, including:

- Royal College of Physicians – Grade I
- 1-10 Cambridge Terrace – Grade I
- 55-85 (odd) Albany Street – Grade II
- Regent's Park – Grade I Registered Landscape
- Assorted lampposts and retaining walls

## **Heritage significance**

28 The Regent's Park Conservation Area and the statutory listed buildings are 'designated heritage assets', as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

29 'Significance' is defined in the NPPF 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'. The Historic England 'Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide' puts it slightly differently – as 'the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest'.

30 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment' (Historic England, April 2008) describes a number of 'heritage values' that may be present in a 'significant place'. These are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value.

31 No.10 Cambridge Gate has considerable historical value as part of the larger terrace and in terms of its location. Situated on the site of Decimus Burton's Colosseum, the building is one of the few 'new' private housing developments that were carried out in the Park in the later nineteenth century and in a completely different style to the other earlier developments around the Park – reflecting the changing tastes throughout that century.



- 32 The written evidence of the changing professional opinion towards the buildings' merit is also particularly important and a clear example of how the significance of architecture is subjective and changes over time. Clearly identified as being of no architectural interest and worthy of demolition following the Second World War – and into the 1960s – by 1974 it was regarded as being of sufficiently 'special interest' to warrant its listing.
- 33 The evolution of the building, including its considerable re-building, is also interesting from a historical perspective as reflecting good practice and conservation philosophy at that time.
- 34 The architects, Archer and Green are important architects of the second half of the nineteenth century, and other buildings, such as Whitehall Court, are also now recognised as being worthy of listing.
- 35 In terms of its architectural and aesthetic significance, No.10 Cambridge Gate, as part of the whole block is a fine example of the French Renaissance style in Britain and was clearly executed to a high standard – reflecting the nature of its occupiers.
- 36 This significance has been considerably lessened by the substantial rebuilding that has taken place behind the façade – firstly after bomb damage and secondly from the comprehensive redevelopment in the 1990s.
- 37 The architectural significance of the block now lies primarily in its front (and side) elevations fronting Regent's Park.
- 38 The specific significance of Flat 5 is similarly reduced by the extent of internal alteration that has taken place since the Second World War – leaving only the volume of the principal reception space, fronting the Park, in its original form. Whilst No.10 did not form part of the comprehensive redevelopment in the 1990s it was substantially rebuilt in 1959 following the War.
- 39 Whilst the subject of a considerable strip out, photographic evidence clearly demonstrates that the result of this considerable change is that there were no fittings and details of any special interest within the apartment.

### **The policy context**

- 40 This section of the report briefly sets out the range of national and local policy and guidance relevant to the consideration of change in the historic built environment.
- 41 The legislation governing listed buildings and conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 42 ). Section 66(1) of the Act requires decision makers to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses' when determining applications which affect a listed building or its setting. Section 72(1) of the Act requires decision makers with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area to pay 'special attention... to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'

#### The National Planning Policy Framework

- 43 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has recently been revised and was re-issued on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

- 44 Section 16 deals with 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'. The NPPF says at Paragraph 189 that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

- 45 A description and analysis of the heritage and townscape significance of the site and its context is provided in this report.

- 46 At Paragraph 192, the NPPF says that:

In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

- 47 Paragraph 193 advises local planning authorities that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting'.

48 Paragraph 195 says:

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use

49 Paragraph 196 says that 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

50 Paragraph 197 goes on to say 'the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset when determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset'.

51 Paragraph 200 of the NPPF advises local planning authorities to 'look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

52 Paragraph 201 says that:

Not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

#### Local Policy: London Borough of Camden

53 The London Borough of Camden adopted its Local Plan in 2017. Policy D2 relates specifically to Heritage.

54 With regards specifically to listed buildings, this states:

- To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will
- Resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
- Resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and
- Resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building though an effect on its setting.

#### The proposals

55 The proposals are for the installation of two condenser units on the flat roof top and the refurbishment of the apartment in a style that respects the significance and status of the space but recognises that there is no historical precedent within the apartment to specifically guide the approach.

56 With regards the installation of two condenser units, these will be located on the flat roof top to the rear of the building adjacent to the proposed units that serve Flat 2/3 – a location agreed with the Crown Estate. The units will be screened by a grey metal acoustic enclosure to further minimise their impact.

57 The units will be discretely located where they are entirely unseen from the public realm and will sit on a part of the building re-built in the 1950s.



Figure 3: The proposed location of the units, set down behind the brick parapet



Figure 4&5: These pictures show the top of the lightwell on the left and looking up through the lightwell on the right.

- 58 The condenser units will be connected to the flat via pipework that will be discretely positioned in the internal lightwell – a space of no heritage value and again,

completely unseen (even within the building, as most of the windows into the lightwell are obscured).

- 59 The proposal will cause no harm to any historic fabric of importance, and will not cause harm to heritage significance through visibility. Their installation will however allow for a quality of accommodation that is commensurate with the quality and status of the building and its location.
- 60 With regard to the proposed fit out of the apartment, this is described in detail in the Design & Access Statement.
- 61 As described earlier, there is no documentary evidence as to how the apartment would have looked originally and it is likely that due to the high-status nature of the occupiers for much of its life, the apartment would have been subject to constant updating to ensure that it was always following the high-fashion of the day.
- 62 Due to the lack of actual historical reference points, the architects have taken inspiration from the Late Victorian period, which was defined, amongst others, by intricate details, patterning and classical interior elements such as mouldings and trims. In the principal reception room wall detailing will be painted so that it creates a level of interest, but does not overwhelm the room (as is illustrated in the D&A) and the proposed herringbone timber flooring is entirely appropriate for an interior of this style.
- 63 The approach to the bedrooms and bathrooms is more simple – as to be expected but will continue traditional detailing such as timber skirtings and simple coving. Modern fixtures and fittings in the kitchen and bathrooms will replace similarly modern ones.
- 64 The overall approach is a sensitive one that continues the tradition of ensuring the highest quality interior design to the space in a style that reflects the age and status of the building whilst also recognising that there were no remaining features of original fabric remaining within the apartment.

### **Compliance with policy and guidance**

- 65 This report has provided a description and analysis of the significance of the site and its heritage context, as required by Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In addition, the report also describes that we do not believe the proposals will affect that heritage significance.
- 66 The conclusion of our assessment, contained in previous sections in this report, is that the proposed scheme preserves the special architectural and historical interest of the listed building, the setting of nearby listed buildings and the Registered Park



and the character and appearance of the Regent's Park Conservation Area. The proposed development thus complies with S.66(1) and S.72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It does not lead to 'substantial' harm or any meaningful level of 'less than substantial' harm to any heritage assets.

#### The National Planning Policy Framework

- 67 In respect of Paragraph 192 of the NPPF, the proposals contribute to 'sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'. It helps to sustain the use of the building and enhances it through the quality of the design and materials. Ensuring that the quality of accommodation within the building is of the highest quality and commensurate with the historical and architectural aspirations of the building when conceived and constructed.
- 68 The proposals comply with Paragraph 193 of the NPPF – the proposals have been developed with a full understanding of the significance of the listed building, conservation area and the setting of the listed buildings and the elements of it that are important to conserve.
- 69 Having regard for the discussion earlier in this report, the proposed scheme complies with paragraph 195 of the NPPF – it certainly does not lead to 'substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset'. The proposal very evidently does *not* result in the 'total loss of significance' of the listed building, conservation area or the setting of other listed buildings.
- 70 It also complies with paragraph 196. It does not lead to any meaningful level of 'less than substantial' harm to designated heritage assets.
- 71 The only potential for 'less than substantial' harm would be if the proposed scheme caused the loss of a significant component of the special interest of the listed building. The report in previous sections explains why this is not the case – the apartment contained no elements of historic detailing and had been entirely refurbished – probably multiple times – since its construction and following severe bomb damage in the Second World War. The proposed refurbishment of the apartment is in a style that respects the significance and status of the space but recognises that there is no historical precedent within the apartment to specifically guide the approach.
- 72 Similarly, the proposed units will be hidden from public view and located on a part of the building that was largely re-built following extensive bomb damage in the Second World War. The proposal allows the building's high status to be retained and enhanced.

## Local Policy

- 73 In terms of Camden's local policies, in meeting the criteria of national policy, the proposals also meet the requirements of local policy. The proposals will not 'cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building' as explained above.
- 74 Overall, the proposals have been designed to ensure that the special architectural and historical interest of the listed building is entirely preserved and is arguably enhanced by the upgrading of the quality of the accommodation within – in line with the historical intention that the building would provide accommodation of the highest quality and standards within London.

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