



**Historic Building  
Advisory Service**

# **Historic Building Condition Survey**

**Firemen's Cottages, West End Lane Fire Station  
West End Lane, West Hampstead, London**



August 2019

Reference: 18442A

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

**Historic Building Assessment**

Prepared on behalf of

**London Fire Commissioner  
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By

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Reference: 18442A

**August 2019**

## Contents

	Summary.....	iii
	Acknowledgements .....	vi
1	INTRODUCTION .....	1
	1.1 Project background.....	1
	1.2 Survey Content .....	1
	1.3 Survey Information .....	2
2	GENERAL .....	4
	2.1 Location.....	4
	2.2 Description.....	5
3	EXTERNAL INSPECTION.....	7
	3.1 Main Roof .....	7
	3.2 Ancillary Roofs .....	8
	3.3 Chimneys .....	9
	3.4 Eaves and Rainwater Goods .....	10
	3.5 External walls.....	12
	3.6 Windows.....	15
	3.7 External Doors .....	17
4	INTERNAL INSPECTION – COTTAGE 4.....	18
	4.1 Front Lobby.....	18
	4.2 Sitting Room .....	19
	4.3 Kitchen .....	21
	4.4 Bathroom / Rear Entrance Lobby.....	23
	4.5 Bathroom.....	24
	4.6 Stairs from First to Second Floor.....	25
	4.7 Landing.....	26
	4.8 Front Bedroom.....	28
	4.9 Rear Bedroom.....	29
	4.10 Roof Space.....	29
5	OTHER COTTAGES.....	32
	5.1 Cottage 3 .....	32
	5.2 Cottage 2 .....	33
	5.3 Cottage 1 .....	35
6	PROPOSED WORKS .....	38
	6.1 External .....	38
	6.2 Internal.....	39
7	DESK TOP STUDY.....	42
	7.1 Map Study .....	42
	7.2 Documentary Material .....	45
	7.3 Oral History .....	49
8	LISTING.....	50
9	HISTORICAL ANALYSIS .....	52
	9.1 Building Construction .....	52

	<b>9.2 Significance and Impact on the Heritage Structure.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>60</b>

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**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) for the understanding of heritage assets.

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 1980s when they started to become vacated and as they did they were boarded-up as there was then no demand for such accommodation, with the last person moving out in about 1992, since when they have

been left vacant. As a result they have suffered a degree of deterioration due to lack of use and concurrent maintenance.

The properties were listed in 1990, by which time only one unit was occupied at that time, with the others being closed-up.

It is now proposed to completely to repair and refurbish the houses to good conservation standards so that they can again be used to house fire service personnel. They will still be retained and management by the London Fire Brigade.

In doing this the buildings will be generally restored the appearance and character they had when they were last occupied. That in turn will restore their overall historic character and with that their significance for the site where they will again compliment the main fire station that they were built to serve.

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.

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

**Historic Building Assessment**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Project background**

- 1.1.1 The Historic Building Advisory Service was commissioned by Dron & Wright on behalf of the London Fire Commissioner to undertake a historic building assessment of a building known as Firemen's Cottages, West End Lane Fire Station, 327B West End Lane, West Hampstead, London.
- 1.1.2 The examination of the building was undertaken generally within the guidelines of good surveying and building archaeology practice. The purpose of the survey was to undertake an assessment of the historic nature and character of the building that is presently used as unoccupied cottages. This was undertaken by means of a visual and physical 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.
- 1.1.3 A survey of readily assessable documentary sources was undertaken within the London Metropolitan Archives. Other sources of information were also researched and information gleaned from present and past owners of the site.

**1.2 Survey Content**

- 1.2.1 The aim of this report is to produce an overall impression of the property and its setting at the time of the inspection. This was undertaken by a visual examination of the elements that make up this facility to identify the means of construction, analyse its construction, and assess its historic significance and what historic character remains.
- 1.2.2 Voids, cupboards, closed spaces, etc. were inspected where these were relevant and ready access could be gained. Areas that we were requested or prevented

from entering by the owner / occupant of the facility were also not inspected. Similar considerations apply to surfaces with directly applied coverings such as wall panelling or heavy coverings, fully fitted or stuck down carpets and other sheet floor coverings. In all these cases the general 'feel' of the building has been taken into account to whether there was any historic fabric concealed or there is a need for a further more detailed inspection or opening up of the structure that will involve the client in additional cost.

- 1.2.3 Readily accessible documentary sources were reviewed in an attempt to create an established time and ownership line for the relevant parts of the site and buildings. The results of this research were then applied to the findings from the site survey in an attempt to show the development of the relevant part of the site.
- 1.2.4 This assessment has been compiled generally in line with good practice to meet the requirements of National Planning Policy Framework. It also follows draft guidance Produced by Historic England *Statement of Heritage Assessment* (2019) and *Assessing Significance* (01.01.19). Further guidance has come from *Informed Conservation – understanding historic buildings and their landscapes for conservation* (English Heritage, 2001), 'An approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (Natural England, October 2014) and 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (Historic England, 2008).

### 1.3 Survey Information

- Premises inspected: Firemen's Cottages
- Location: West End Lane Fire Station  
327B West End Lane  
West Hampstead  
London
- Client: London Fire Commissioner
- Property Occupant: London Fire Brigade
- Current Use: Vacant
- Reason For Inspection: Historic building assessment
- Inspection By: R J Hill MRICS, MCIfA
- Inspection Date: 29 August, 2018
- Listed Building? Grade II
- Registered Park / Garden .No
- Scheduled Monument .No

- Conservation Area? Yes
- AONB / National Park? No

## **2 GENERAL**

### **2.1 Location**

- 2.1.1 The site is on the west side of West End Lane and just south of its junction with Fortune Green Lane and Mill Lane. This all within what is now West Hampstead village, but which used to be a small hamlet known as West End.



Fig 2.1.2: West End Lane Fire Station rear

- 2.1.2 The cottages are directly behind and to the west of West Hampstead fire station and they are accessed by a gated drive, or entrance way, along the south side of the site. The fire station has a wide forecourt that opens directly onto West End Lane.
- 2.1.3 The site as a whole is in a street frontage where that has predominantly commercial usage on the ground floor and frequently domestic accommodation of the floors above. In this location the cottages sit towards the back of the plot where other neighbouring properties adjoin it on the south, west and north sides. In more recent times it appears that many of the adjacent sites have been extended towards their rear as back land developments to provide additional residential properties.

- 2.1.4 The site is enclosed by high brick walls, with those on the north and south side being between 3 – 4.0 m high and a wall approximately 2.0 m high on the west. This creates a single enclosed area to the rear of the fire station where this could all be seen as a part of a single homogenous grouping of fire service associated usage.
- 2.1.5 The cottages are separated from the fire station by a wide car parking and vehicle turning area, and onto which they front. At the back of this block there is what appears to be an area of overgrown garden.

## **2.2 Description**

- 2.2.1 This is a two storey terrace of four cottages that from a general architectural consideration of the front (east) of the building suggest that they appear to have been designed to give the impression of being just a pair of cottages with an upstanding parapet dividing wall projecting through the roof. They have been altered with blocks of added bathrooms on the rear as a form of late 20<sup>th</sup> century modernisation.



Fig 2.2.2: Front elevation of cottages

- 2.2.2 These cottages all have the same plan form, but are mirrored or handed one to another across the internal dividing walls. This means that for each pair of cottages the staircases are side by side either side of the wall. Over each pair there is a single open roof space that can be accessed from a ceiling hatch over each landing.
- 2.2.3 The ground floor layout is such that the front door opens into a small lobby at the base of the stairs to the first floor with a door opening to the sitting room. Behind that is the kitchen and leading off of that is a back door lobby formed in the new extension with a bathroom beyond.
- 2.2.4 On the first floor at the head of the stairs is a small landing space off which opens doors to the front and rear bedrooms. Within the front bedroom a wardrobe was formed over the head of the stairs from the ground floor.
- 2.2.5 They do not seem to have been severely altered or adapted on plan over time except for the more modern single flat roof extensions that were added on the back. These are in the form of two combined bathroom blocks in the centre of each pair to provide a bathroom to each cottage.
- 2.2.6 Changes to the exterior have included alterations to the windows, possibly in the middle of the last century, when they were changed to their present form. Probably at the same time as the bathroom extensions were added the ground floor storey walls were completely rendered around and painted externally to match the upper level.
- 2.2.7 Internally the cottages have been changed and altered slightly to suit the fashions and styles of the various times they have been through since they were first built. This has included the removal of the coal fired ranges in the kitchens, and fireplaces to the first floor as well as those in some of the living rooms and the alterations of others.

### 3 EXTERNAL INSPECTION

**NOTE:** when identifying the cottages N° 1 is taken to be at the south end (left when looking from the front) and N° 4 at the north (right)

#### 3.1 Main Roof

- 3.1.1 The roof is a gable ended structure with plain verges that slightly overhang the wall heads, but not to a significant extent. Projecting up through the centre of the roof, over the head of the wall between the two central cottages, is an up stand parapet wall built in brickwork with topped with precast concrete coping stones. This wall runs down from the front and back sides of the central chimneystack and finishes with a level section just above eaves level.



Fig 3.1: Main roof (rear)

- 3.1.2 The main roof coverings are in grey / green Westmoreland rustic pattern slates that are graduated from large slates in the bottom courses to small at the top of each slope. The ridge is capped with grey clayware ridge tiles that are mortared into position. At the bottom of the roof slopes, on both sides, there is a slight kick in the bottom of the slating where this projects over the wide eaves and this is being formed by a tilting fillet on the bottom of the rafters.

- 3.1.3 The roof coverings are flashed into the up stand wall head with lead soakers under the slates and stepped cover flashings over the top.
- 3.1.4 At the verges the slating was pointed up, apparently in lime mortar, over the top of what appears to be under cloaking of machine made quarry tiles or similar.
- 3.1.5 Set in a central position within the rear roof slopes on either side of the central wall are a pair of cast-iron single glazed roof lights over the attic to each house. The gap between them is effectively over the dividing wall between each house below. These are single glazed in obscured glass and they appear to have lead aprons to the front and possibly also lead dressings to the perimeter and the slating.

## 3.2 Ancillary Roofs



Fig 3.4.2: Front porch

- 3.2.1 There are flat roofs over the rear extensions with supporting structures of timber boarding under built-up bituminous felt roofing and these fall from the centres to the eaves on either side. Where these roofs abut the rear wall of the house the felt is dressed up the wall and has a lead cover flashing built-in and that has been cut through the pebbledash above.

- 3.2.2 Over the front doors are flat roofed canopies spanning both sets and that are timber framed with a top covering of lead sheet with welted joints. These are supported by painted timber brackets that project out from the sides of the door openings.

### 3.3 Chimneys

- 3.3.1 Three chimneys project up through the roof coverings. At the head of each gable there is a four flue chimney surmounted by four pots the central stack in the top of the central wall containing eight flues with a similar number of pots to the top.



Fig 3.2: Chimneys

- 3.3.2 There are all rectangular on plan with three slightly projecting courses towards the head with one brick on edge course above those. This is all built in an orangey / red brick and appears to have been re-pointed in more recent times using a buff / grey cement type mortar.

- 3.3.3 The chimneypots to the top of the stack are of various types. In the centre stack these are all modern cannon types and are very evenly mounted. On the south end there is a plain shaft on either end with belly pots in the middle. The east side pot is surmounted by a gas flue terminal type top. The north stack has a similar arrangement to the south, but with no flue terminal fitted.
- 3.3.4 The stacks are weathered into the roof coverings in a similar manner to that to the centre up stand roof wall.

### 3.4 Eaves and Rainwater Goods



Fig 3.3.1: Main roof eaves and gable junction

- 3.4.1 On both the front and back of the terrace the eaves are a wide form and that appear to be completely rendered around the end of the rafter feet to both the underside (soffit) and to the front (fascia). This has a slight bevel junction between the two with the possibly a painted over timber fascia board on the front.
- 3.4.2 In the centre of the front and rear walls under the ends of the central roof wall there is a plain rendered angled bracket. This projects out from the face of the wall and merges with the underside of the eaves.

- 3.4.3 Under the verge at either end of the roof a gable rafter is fixed to the head of the wall. The wall plate at the gables at either end projects slightly beyond the face of the walls and the gable rafter is notched over it.
- 3.4.4 Supported on brackets from the fascia board to both sides of the building is half round section black PVCu guttering that drains to downpipes at either end. On the front south end the downpipes are a mixture of cast-iron and PVCu, whilst that on the north end of the front it is all of cast-iron. At the base both of these sets finish with shoes that discharge over the ground at the base.
- 3.4.5 On the rear there is a downpipe at the south end and one to the south side of the central support bracket. Both of these have the straight section of down-pipe in cast-iron with the swan necks at the top in PVCu.



Fig 3.4.6: Flat roof eaves

- 3.4.6 To the perimeter of the flat roofs there is a fascia board fixed directly to the head of the wall all the way around including the closed end on the west side. On either side of each extension is half round section cast-iron guttering that drains to cast-iron downpipes at the west end of each side and which run down and discharge over gully grids at the base.

### 3.5 External walls



Fig 3.5.1: External wall of cottages

- 3.5.1 The external walls to the main house are all apparently of solid construction and are approximately one and a half bricks thick. These have facings in two distinct sections with the division being a line at ground floor window head height where there is a horizontal tile creasing band all the way around the building that appears to have been painted historically.

- 3.5.2 The section above head height is apparently of solid construction and is finished with heavily over painted pebbledash render that extends up from a bell mouth drip at the bottom above the creasing course.
- 3.5.3 The walls below the tile creasing are now finished in a hard cement spatter dash type render that has used a coloured mortar over a plain cement type base coat. This finish has failed all around the building and is coming off.
- 3.5.4 Where the lower render coating has been lost it exposes the underlying wall structure that is built using orangey coloured brickwork laid in English bond. This used a fairly hard lime mortar with a joint width of approximately 4 mm. It was originally pointed with a white cement type mortar finished with a struck joint to create a heavily defined, but narrow joint.
- 3.5.5 Because of the application of the hard cement render to the lower part of the building there is much evidence of brick spalling and loss of the face of the brickwork from ground level up to approximately 1.2 m above ground level. This is likely to be due to a combination of condensation, general moisture entrapment and frost action resulting from this modern applied surface coating.
- 3.5.6 To the base of the wall can be seen where there was originally a slightly projecting chamfered top rendered plinth all the way around the building formed in a hard mortar. Much of this has been lost or over rendered by subsequent work to the property.
- 3.5.7 Within the face of the lower walls there is some localised evidence for historic brickwork repairs, but not to a significant extent.
- 3.5.8 At both ends of the house at high level in the gables either side of the chimney flues there are vertical terracotta ventilator units built-in to the to provide air flow into the roof space.
- 3.5.9 In the base of the walls to the front elevation at just about floor level in a central position below each window is a built-in terracotta airbrick.
- 3.5.10 On the front elevations there is tile creasing under the ground floor windows cills that appear to be rendered over bull nose or another form of decorative brickwork that has all been painted. The window frames sit above the rendered cills.
- 3.5.11 At first floor level are similar painted tile sills, but these appear to sit directly under the frames to the windows. A full inspection of this area was not possible due to the external openings being fully boarded up and covering those areas.

- 3.5.12 There was no obvious indication in the base of the external walls, where these could be seen externally, to suggest that a damp proof course (DPC) was built into the structure.
- 3.5.13 The single storey extensions to the rear of the building have walls where the external face is laid in English bond using red / brown brickwork that is pointed with a hard cement type mortar. From the apparent thickness of the wall seen through openings this could suggest a cavity construction with the outer face employing snapped headers.



Fig 3.5.13: Rear extension walls

- 3.5.14 There are rendered faced or precast concrete lintels built-in over the head of the window and door openings in the rear extensions.
- 3.5.15 Running around the base of the extension walls from ground level to approximately internal floor level is a rendered band in a hard cement type mortar. There is a bitumen felt type DPC built-in one course of bricks above the paving.

### **3.6 Windows**

- 3.6.1 All the windows around the building were boarded up so no external inspection of these was possible.
- 3.6.2 Internal inspections reveal that these were all single glazed with sheet glass. The original window openings all have timber linings to the reveals with a splayed architrave to the perimeter and were fitted with a window board, but the bathroom windows just had plastered reveals and a painted timber window board.



Fig 3.6.2: Internal view of typical sitting room window

- 3.6.3 In general terms the ground floor sitting room windows are a heavy timber framed three light frame with opening metal casement on either side and a fixed light in the centre. In the kitchens there is a similar timber framed two light window with one side being an opening timber casement. These are all single glazed in sheet glass with ironmongery possibly dating to the 1930s or 1950s.
- 3.6.4 Similarly at first floor level the front bedroom window is a three light casement with a heavy timber surround that is positioned against the dividing wall to the adjacent cottage. Externally these have with a cover panel across the end of the dividing

wall joining to the next frame to give the visual impression of a linked unit. Each frame comprises a fixed light on either side of a central opening metal framed casement of a Crittal type. These are all single glazed in sheet glass and the ironmongery could suggest a style to the 1950 – 60s.

- 3.6.5 In the rear bedrooms the windows are similar to those on the front, but are situated centrally in the wall of the room. The opening central casement is timber framed.



Fig 3.6.6: Typical bathroom window

- 3.6.6 The bathroom windows are a single glazed standard joinery item of 1960 – 70s style with an opening casement on one side of a central mullion with a top opening casement over a fixed light on the other. The ironmongery is all of that period and glazed in obscured pattern sheet glass

- 3.6.7 Variations to the general form of window include where these are viewed internally and so left and right taken accordingly:

**Cottage 4:** the sitting room window stays are of a type that are probably original, but the handles are of a 1960 – 70s style replacements.

The kitchen the window is timber framed with a central mullion with a fixed transom a lower light on either side.

**Cottage 3:** the sitting room right hand side casement has more original style latch handle and which is different from the left hand latch.

The kitchen window is different from those seen elsewhere in the building.

**Cottage 2:** the sitting room has what appears to be the original ironmongery fitted. T

The front bedroom the window has modern, late 20<sup>th</sup> C, ironmongery fitted to the casement.

### 3.7 External Doors

- 3.7.1 All the external doors around the building were boarded up so no external inspection of these was possible.
- 3.7.2 On the front of the building the entrance doors are arranged in pairs and sit within timber frames of a fairly plain type. They have all been painted and have concrete thresholds.
- 3.7.3 In the link to the bathroom extension the external doors are all modern two panel standard joinery items with large glazed panel to the base and a smaller panel to the upper section. These were all glazed with Georgian wire glass and fitted with aluminium leaver latch sets of style contemporary with the building of the bathroom blocks.

## 4 INTERNAL INSPECTION – COTTAGE 4

### NOTE:

All the cottages in this terrace have the same floor plan and the only difference is that adjacent houses have a mirrored layout. Because of this cottage 4 was looked at in detail to establish the form and method of construction of the block as a whole. Only significant differences identified within the others cottages has been highlighted for each where appropriate.

### 4.1 Front Lobby



Fig 4.1: Entrance Lobby

- 4.1.1 This has a floor of concrete with granolithic type top.
- 4.1.2 The walls are all of solid construction where the internal face of the external wall is painted plaster on brickwork. The internal walls are of cast in situ concrete that has used timber boarding as formwork as indicated by casting marks that incorporated the stairs, so they were 'cast-in' at the time of building.
- 4.1.3 There was no indication of there having been a door at the bottom of the stairs to close them off.
- 4.1.4 The lining to the door to the sitting room is painted softwood with 10 mm stops and a simple ovolo architrave on both sides. The door was missing and was originally mounted on a pair of 75 mm steel butts.
- 4.1.5 The ceiling is a lath and plaster type that has been decorated.

## 4.2 Sitting Room



Fig 4.2: Sitting room

- 4.2.1 The floor is a solid concrete structure with a plain screeded surface and not a granolithic finish as the lobby.
- 4.2.2 The walls are generally as that described within the entrance lobby being of brickwork to the exterior and cast in-situ concrete for the internal structures. These have all been finished with what appears to be a two coat lime plaster and then painted.
- 4.2.3 The skirting boards to the base are simple painted timber board with a slight rounded top edge.
- 4.2.4 A picture rail was originally fixed around the head of the wall approximately 30 mm down from the ceiling, but this appears to have been removed some time ago with only a shadow line in the decorations remaining.
- 4.2.5 Where modern decorations, such as wall paper, have been removed it was possible to see the original colour scheme to the walls. At first this had been a uniform cream colour and then red paint applied over it to a height of approximately 1.2 m above floor level all the way around and just above the internal windowsill level. At a later date all of this was over painted with a dark / leaf green paint.
- 4.2.6 Running up the north wall there is a chimneybreast that has a blocked-up fire opening in the bottom. Across the base of the chimneybreast is a 20<sup>th</sup> century decorative style of fire surround that possibly had the flue for a solid fuel combustion or gas stove passing through it into the chimney above. To the front of this is a hearth covered with glazed ceramic tiles approximately 75 mm square of a pinkish buff colour that is flush with the main floor.
- 4.2.7 The modern fire surround it built in multicoloured concrete bricks. Just above the top of this modern facing it is possible to see where the earlier fire opening has been blocked up using London Brick Company (LBC) Fletton type bricks laid in cement mortar. Part of the original fire back of bricks could still be seen behind to and to the side of the later closing.
- 4.2.8 At high level to the left hand side of the chimneybreast there is an arch in the head of the wall that extends sideways to the wall to the kitchen. This would suggest that this may have been where a flue from the kitchen range spanned across to this chimney.
- 4.2.9 The ceiling in its present form has the remains of polystyrene ceiling tiles applied over lining paper on top of plasterboard that has been fixed to the underside of the first floor joists. Along the abutting wall to the staircase (south) there is the remains of the lathing of the original ceiling and there is staining to the exposed floor joists to show where this form of ceiling was originally over the whole room.

- 4.2.10 At the back of the room, on the south side, a small alcove is formed below the upper section of the stairs of the first floor. To the front side of this is a cupboard in the under stairs space.
- 4.2.11 The cupboard doorway has softwood painted lining and surround similar to that to the entrance lobby to sitting room door and similar comments apply. The door was missing and had been hung on a pair of 62 mm steel butts.
- 4.2.12 The cupboard floor is finished with a granolithic type surface similar to that seen within the entrance lobby.
- 4.2.13 The walls inside of the cupboard are plastered and there is a lath and plaster lining to the underside of the staircase. This has all been painted.
- 4.2.14 Leading from the sitting room into the kitchen is an opening from which the door was missing and would have opened into the kitchen as suggested by the position of the door stop. It has softwood linings similar to those to the entrance lobby and it has also been dressed around with applied timber beading on the sitting room side.

### **4.3 Kitchen**

- 4.3.1 The floor is of solid construction with a smooth granolithic type surface that has been covered with what appears to be vinyl asbestos tiles. From their overall size and type it would suggest a date to the 1960 and they are approximately 225 mm square.
- 4.3.2 The walls are generally as that described for the sitting room with a plaster and paint finish that were originally decorated with a dark red or maroon colour to a height of approximately 1.5 m high and above that with cream colour. Over the top of that there is a considerable build-up of fairly modern plastic or polymer based paints and been subsequently covered with wall papers.
- 4.3.3 Over the rear door head is what appears to be a cast in situ concrete lintel using breeze or clinker as an aggregate.
- 4.3.4 It is possible to see ghost lines within the decorations on the surface of the wall to cottage 3 where a wall has been removed. Generally on this wall the decoration pattern would suggest that that was applied at a more recent dating.
- 4.3.5 On the north wall it is possible to see where a chimneybreast has been cut off and plastered over with modern pink gypsum plaster. At ceiling level there is a form of boxed trunking or similar.

- 4.3.6 Around the base the walls, where it survives, is modern standard joinery splayed and rounded timber skirting board that has been painted.



Fig 4.3: Kitchen

- 4.3.7 The ceiling, where it survives, is of lath and plaster and onto which a stippled finish of an Artex type has been applied over the top of lining paper.
- 4.3.8 Below the window the original window board has been lost and it can be seen where this was of glazed ceramic tiles on a rendered bed. Below the cill it is possible to see where waste pipes and similar from the kitchen sink were located.
- 4.3.9 A modern small gas fired instantaneous hot water heater was mounted on the wall to the left hand side of the window.
- 4.3.10 In the position that would have been the rear external door any door frame that might have been there was missing so there is just an opening to the bathroom / rear entrance lobby.
- 4.3.11 On the right hand side of the lobby opening it is possible to see where an earlier external door opening had been fitted. The opening, on the left hand side, has been bricked up or reduced in more recent times using LBC Fletton type bricks laid in a grey cement mortar.

#### 4.4 Bathroom / Rear Entrance Lobby



Fig 4.4: Bathroom / rear entrance lobby with external door

- 4.4.1 The floor is of solid construction with a screed type finish with no applied covering.
- 4.4.2 The walls are of solid construction with a painted plaster finish and standard joinery profile skirting boards to the base.

- 4.4.3 The door to the bathroom is a standard joinery 35 mm thick hardboard flush door that is fitted with an aluminium lever lock set.
- 4.4.4 The ceiling is of plasterboard.



Fig 4.5: Bathroom

## 4.5 Bathroom

- 4.5.1 The floor is of solid construction with a screed type finish with no applied coverings.
- 4.5.2 The walls are of solid construction and where plaster has been lost to the base of one wall it appears that the inner face is of an LBC type brick and this has been rendered with a two coat gypsum type finish. They have then been decorated from behind the position of what would have been sanitary fittings to approximately 1.5 metres high with 100 mm square white glazed ceramic wall tiles. In the centre section on the west wall this is taken up to approximately 2.0 m high, possibly where a shower unit or similar had been mounted.
- 4.5.3 At high level on the west wall is a Thorn gas boiler with a balanced flue unit through the wall to the outside.
- 4.5.4 Running around the head of the wall, just below the ceiling on the north and east sides, is a hardboard duct that contains water pipes that have been partially lagged with what appears to be some form of domestic towelling material.
- 4.5.5 The ceiling is a flat soffit of plasterboard as could be suggested by hairline cracking on the board joints.
- 4.5.6 Sanitary fittings are all modern units made by Royal Doulton and from their overall style would suggest a date to the late 1960's or early 1970's.

#### **4.6 Stairs from First to Second Floor**

- 4.6.1 These are a simple traditional string type staircase of softwood timber construction that run in a straight flight from the lobby at the base to a set of winders or tapered steps at the top where they turn onto the landing.
- 4.6.2 The walls are all of solid construction, generally as described previously including decoration. These have a red band along the base extending up to approximately 1.0 m above the top of the string line on the sitting room side.
- 4.6.3 The handrails are missing, but it could be seen where these were supported on traditional metal brackets. This would suggest that these were originally a timber handrail that stood off of the face of the wall.
- 4.6.4 The window is a heavy timber framed three light unit with a central metal opening light with fixed lights on either side.



Fig 4.6: Ground to first floor stairs

- 4.6.5 The ceiling, where it extends from the entrance lobby space is as that previously described.

#### **4.7 Landing**

- 4.7.1 This is a small area at the head of the stairs and where the flooring still exists it was is of softwood boarding approximately 150 mm wide over softwood joists below.

- 4.7.2 The remains of a short timber balustrade could be seen where there is the sawn off base of a square newel post together with sockets in the edge of the landing to take the balusters. This previously guarded the open side of the landing and extended to the sidewall to the front bedroom wall and door, which was also missing



Fig 4.7: Landing from front bedroom through removed wall

- 4.7.3 The walls to the adjacent cottage and also that to the west end of the landing where it returns to the entrance to the rear bedroom are of cast in-situ concrete. The other internal walls are of timber studwork and lath and plaster. They have all been painted and then wall papered.
- 4.7.4 In the upper section of the landing, stairs and to the internal walls the original decoration was of a leaf green band of paint applied to the top edge of the red lower band and so created a decorative string line. This and the red painted wall below were subsequently covered with white gloss paint as can be seen in places under the subsequent wall paper coverings.

- 4.7.5 The doors into both the front and rear bedrooms have simple painted timber door linings with architraves similar to those noted on the ground floor. Running across the door heads is a small section of painted timber picture rail.
- 4.7.6 The ceiling is of modern plasterboard where the original lath and plaster ceiling has been replaced.

#### **4.8 Front Bedroom**

- 4.8.1 The floor is largely Stirling board or similar, but there is softwood boarding as that for the landing still remaining in some locations.



Fig 4.8: Front bedroom

- 4.8.2 The walls are all of solid construction of cast in situ concrete to the interior and brickwork to the exterior. Where some earlier decorations survive on the north wall this appears to be a cream colour emulsion or lime wash over lime plaster.

- 4.8.3 Skirting boards to the base of the walls all the way around are similar to that noted within the sitting room.
- 4.8.4 Around the head of the walls approximately 300 mm down from the ceiling is a simple splayed profile painted timber picture rail.
- 4.8.5 In the northwest corner is a chimneybreast in the base of which are the remains of a fire opening that has had a timber board fitted over it. It has a polished slate hearth in front and the fire surround is missing.
- 4.8.6 The ceiling, where this still remains, is of lath and plaster finished with lining paper.
- 4.8.7 On the south side towards the landing in a position equating to the former over stairs space there is an indication on the wall face where an over stair cupboard or similar has been removed. This can be seen by both the removal marks on the wall and remains of the cupboard framing towards the landing.
- 4.8.8 At high level on the south end of the wall to the rear bedroom is either a blocked up borrowed light or ventilator between the two spaces.

#### **4.9 Rear Bedroom**

- 4.9.1 The floor and walls are generally as those described within the front bedroom and where the walls are finished with modern decorative wallpaper.
- 4.9.2 The surround to the fire place at the bottom of the chimneybreast is missing.
- 4.9.3 The ceiling has all been replaced with plasterboard over some of the remaining lathing.

#### **4.10 Roof Space**

- 4.10.1 This is accessed from a hatch in the ceiling over the landing and gives into a void that extends over both this and the north centre cottage.
- 4.10.2 The inner face of both end walls appear to be in an LBC Fletton type bricks bedded in an off-white coloured cement type mortar.
- 4.10.3 In the north wall there is a terracotta ventilator grill built in on either side of the chimneystack.

- 4.10.4 The roof is a purlin type structure that has large section timbers spanning through in centre of the slopes over both cottages from the central party wall to the north gable wall. The purlins are strutted by diagonal braces onto the head of wall between these two cottages. The rafters span from the wall heads, over the purlins to a ridge board at the top. At high level over the purlin collars connect to the roof structure and these are on every other rafter for the length of the roof.



Fig 4.10: Roof space from north gable

- 4.10.5 There is timber boarding to the underside of the roof coverings with no underlining felt above as the back of the slates can be seen through gaps within the boarding.
- 4.10.6 The ceiling joists span from side to side and at the ends are fixed to the bottom of each rafter. Binders span over these for the length of the roof and run over the dividing wall in a position slightly inwards of the purlin lines above.
- 4.10.7 The ceilings can be seen between the ceiling joists to be largely of lath and plaster construction. In many areas these are covered by approximately 50 – 75 mm of what appears to be mineral wool thermal insulation quilt. There was much stored material within this roof space that to some extent impeded full viewing of this area.



## **5 OTHER COTTAGES**

### **5.1 Cottage 3**

- 5.1.1 This is generally as described Cottage 4, but the staircase is more complete.
- 5.1.2 The four panel door from the entrance lobby to sitting room is possibly the original and which has been painted and faced on the entrance side with hardboard or similar, possibly to help make this more fire resistant. The panels on the back have had some form of textured coating applied to their face.
- 5.1.3 Within the sitting room the fireplace appears to date to the 1930s or possibly early 1950s as it has a glazed tile surround with an inner set of glazed tiling and a hearth that corresponds with the hearth seen in Cottage 4. This may be part of later refitting restyling at about this period.



Fig 5.1.3: Sitting room fireplace

- 5.1.4 In the kitchen the fire breast has been removed as that noted previously.

- 5.1.5 Within the bathroom there was an enamelled cast iron bath of a 1960-70's pattern.
- 5.1.6 The first floor landing is in an intact condition with the walls and balustrade still in position to the head of the stairs. As surmised in Cottage 4 there is a square newel post that supports a painted timber handrail and in addition the balusters have been faced on both sides with hardboard.
- 5.1.7 Opening off the landing are possibly the original doors that have been faced with hardboard.
- 5.1.8 The front bedroom is generally as that described in Cottage 4, but here the over stairs cupboard and the attached walling is still in existence. This has a pair of four panel doors to the front that have been faced with hardboard on the outside together with applied lipping to the leading edges. Within the cupboard the sidewalls are panelled with timber that has been painted.

## **5.2 Cottage 2**

- 5.2.1 The door from the entrance lobby to the sitting room is a five panel door of original pattern that has not been over clad.
- 5.2.2 Within the sitting room there is a modern fire surround fitted over the original fire opening at bottom of the chimneybreast.
- 5.2.3 Around the head of the sitting room walls is the original pattern picture rail.
- 5.2.4 Within the kitchen the chimneybreast still remains, but the fire opening has been enlarged by width and height. This was possibly to house a kitchen appliance or provide additional storage space of some form.
- 5.2.5 In the bathroom no was shower fitted and there is a bath in situ.
- 5.2.6 The balustrade and newel post at the top of the stairs are fully exposed.
- 5.2.7 The doors from the landing to the bedrooms are all in their original condition and have not been faced, although they show where that have been re-hung.
- 5.2.8 On the north wall of the front bedroom there has been a built in bed head formed against the structure.
- 5.2.9 The front bedroom fireplace opening has been completely covered over.
- 5.2.10 The built in cupboard over the staircase to the front bedroom appeared to be in almost original condition, being fully panelled all the way around.



Fig 5.2.10: Cottage 2 front bedroom over stairs cupboard

- 5.2.11 The ventilator panel between the two bedroom shows where this would have housed a nightlight or similar unit with a suspension hook within it from which it could be hung.
- 5.2.12 Access and therefore inspection within the rear bedroom was curtailed due to a structurally unsafe floor.
- 5.2.13 The bottom of the chimneybreast in the rear bedroom still has a burning basket and the inner face to fireplace, but the outer face and surround is missing.

- 5.2.14 In the rear bedroom in the left side of the chimneybreast is a fitted wardrobe with a pair of three panel doors to the front and similar panels on the outer side. Its overall style and form could suggest a dating to the 1930's.



Fig 5.2.14: Rea bedroom cupboard

### 5.3 Cottage 1

- 5.3.1 The door to the sitting room from the entrance lobby is a modern standard joinery small pane, single glazed door with BMA leaver latch set.
- 5.3.2 The sitting room fireplace has been much opened up to form a large opening with a late 20<sup>th</sup> C tiled hearth set within it. The wall area around this opening has been finished with modern gypsum plaster.
- 5.3.3 In the centre of the sitting room ceiling is a modern plastic ceiling rose around an electrical outlet from which is hung the remains of a modern chandelier type fitting.

- 5.3.4 The door from the sitting room to the kitchen is generally as that described from the entrance lobby.
- 5.3.5 Within the kitchen the chimneystack remains, but this has had the opening much enlarged in width and height. In the upper section there was a built-in cooker unit that appeared to be under some form of steel plate that has possibly been used as an ad-hoc support to the brickwork above.
- 5.3.6 In the rear wall adjacent to the chimney breast is a large opening from where an extractor fan or similar as been removed.
- 5.3.7 The units in the kitchen are all modern standard joinery items with a stainless steel single bowl and single drainer sink in the worktop. There is glazed ceramic tiling to the wall behind these.
- 5.3.8 There is no door to the rear lobby.
- 5.3.9 The bathroom has a solid floor covered with modern glazed ceramic floor tiles.
- 5.3.10 The walls on the west and south sides of the bathroom are covered either up to windowsill level or for the full height with modern 100 mm square glazed ceramic wall tiles.
- 5.3.11 The ceiling over the bathroom is of varnished softwood timber boarding over battens fixed through the plasterboard ceiling above.
- 5.3.12 The stairs and landing are generally as that described for Cottage 2, including the un-boarded balustrade to the head.
- 5.3.13 The doors off the landing to the bedrooms are missing.
- 5.3.14 Within the front bedroom the cupboard unit over the stairs is generally as that previously described. Built-in against the wall to the rear bedroom is the carcass of a wardrobe and the ceiling over this has been adapted accordingly.
- 5.3.15 The front bedroom fireplace has been fully covered over.
- 5.3.16 In the rear bedroom the fireplace has been completely covered over.



Fig 5.3.11: Cottage 1 landing with balustrade at door to front bedroom

## 6.1 External

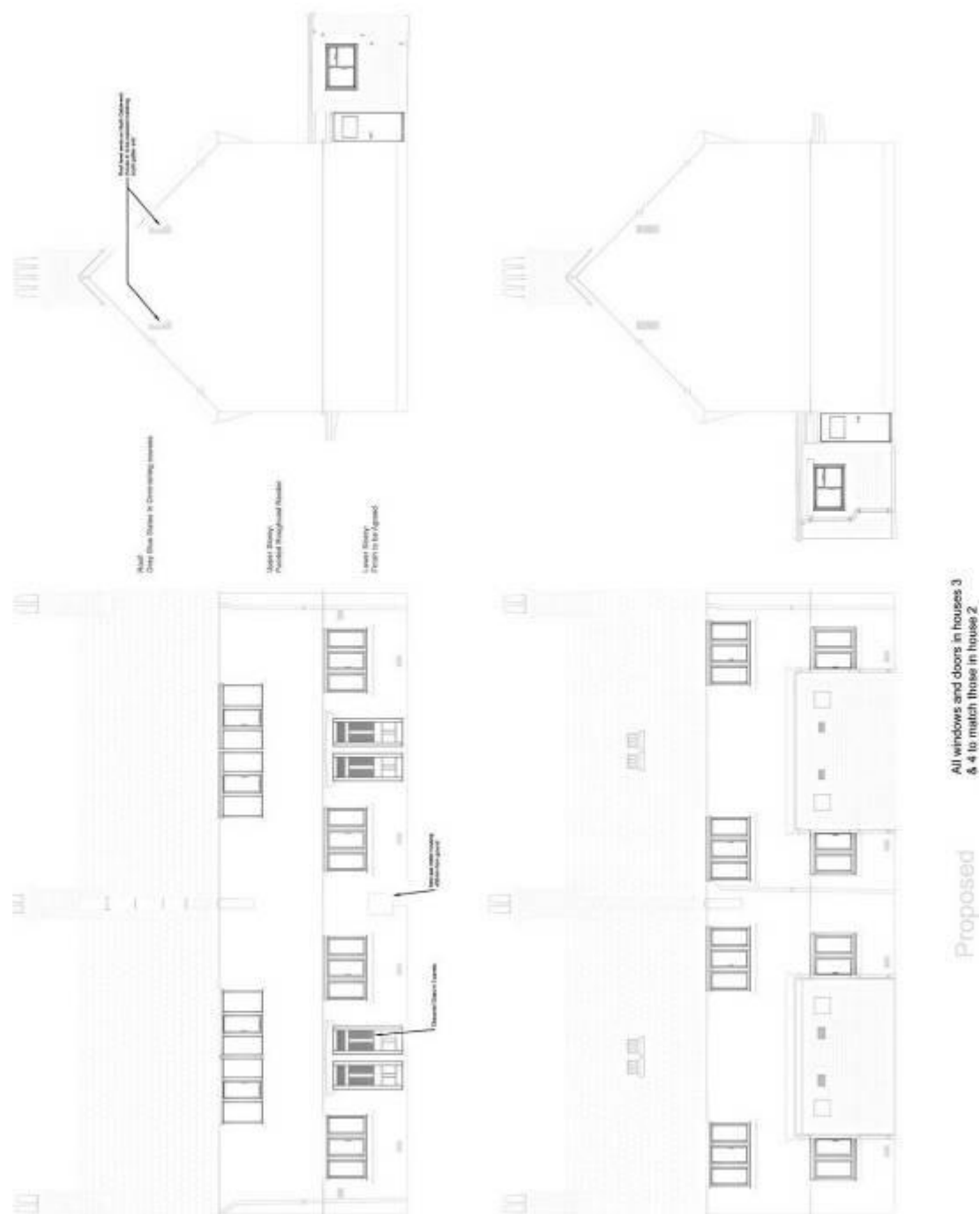


Fig 6.1: proposed external work

- 6.1.1 The primary aspect of the external work will be to restore the fenestration pattern around the building. This will create a unified appearance where all the windows are of a style and pattern that is appropriate for either the older part or the modern extensions.
- 6.1.2 The front doors to the cottages are to be restored to match the original form using what survives as templates for any replacement items that are required. The rear doors to the links to the extension are all modern joinery pieces that can readily be replaced on a like for like basis.
- 6.1.3 The external render to the lower section of the cottages has and is resulting in deterioration of the brickwork that it covers. This present material is to be removed and because of the severely deteriorated condition of the brickwork it is to be replaced with fully vapour permeable lime render with a smooth finish to contrast to the heavy textured finish above.
- 6.1.4 The roof covering over the rear extensions will be stripped and replaced with new matching coverings over new thermal insulation to be incorporated within the structure. At the same time the flashings to the rear walls of the cottages will be re-made and any necessary repairs implemented to the joinery at the eaves and ends.
- 6.1.5 Over the cottages the existing roof coverings to the main roof due to their poor state of repair is to be stripped and then recovered with the existing slates on battens to replicate the existing. Replacement slates where necessary will fully match the existing in size, texture and colour from the appropriate quarries.

## **6.2 Internal**

- 6.2.1 The general layouts of the cottages and the newer extensions will be retained as they are. There will be a small alteration to the connecting doorways between the sitting rooms and kitchens, where the opening will be adjusted so that they are in line with the rear entrance lobby doors.
- 6.2.2 All the doors within the cottages are to be fully overhauled and repaired and where missing these are to be fitted with replica items to match the originals. Door linings and other associated joinery and trim will be similarly restored.
- 6.2.3 Other carpentry and joinery elements will be restored to replicate the original where these have suffered from deterioration or decay over time. This will include repairs to the first floors in some cottages, picture rail reinstatement, repairs and renovations to fitted cupboards and the like. Other parts of the building such as

staircases and associated fittings will be full repaired in a like for like manner to ensure their safe future usage.

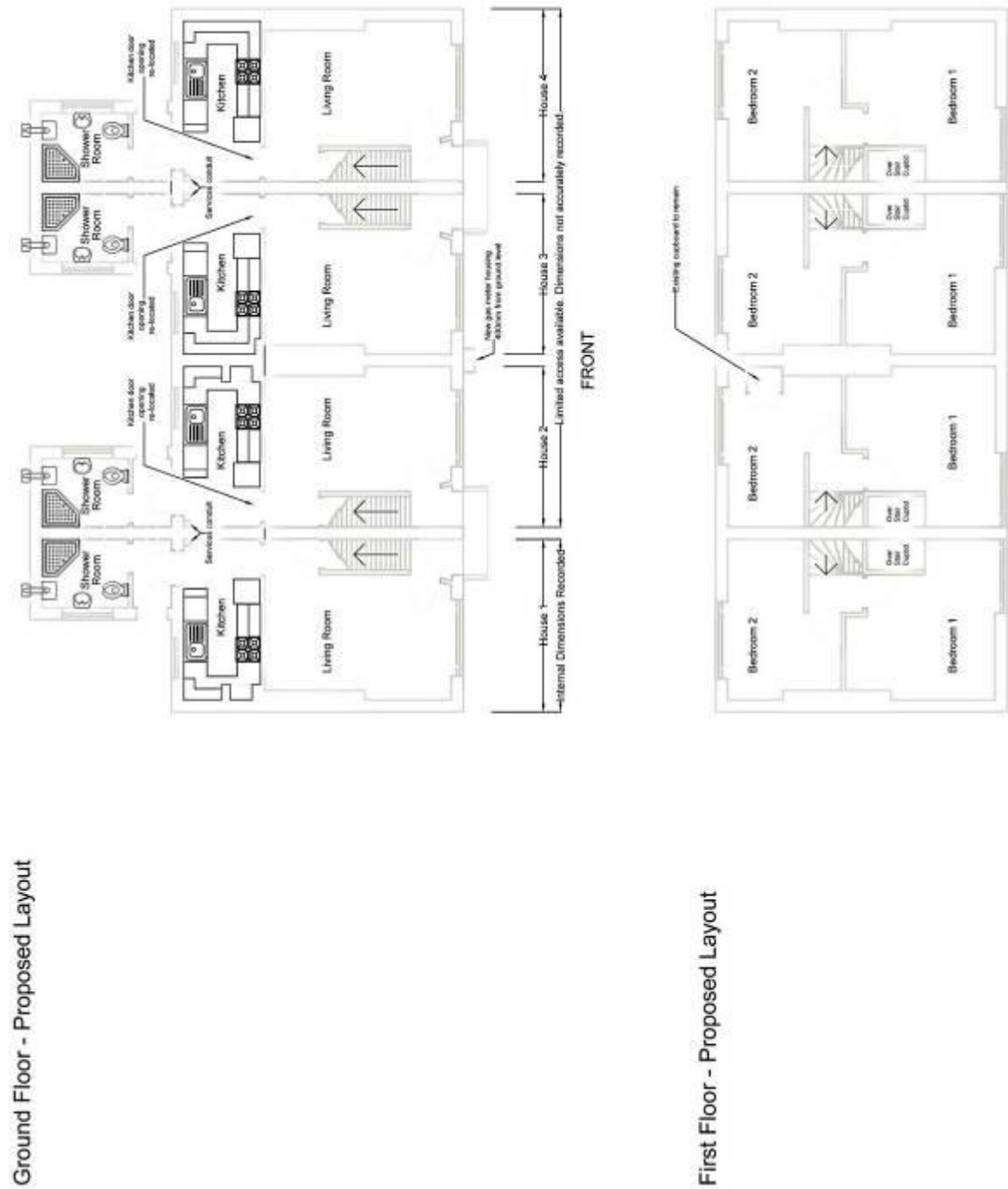


Fig 6.2: Proposed internal work

- 6.2.4 The kitchens and bathrooms will be fully re-fitted with modern appliances to ensure they meet current expected standards for residential accommodation. This will only involve the removal and replacement of modern fittings.
  
- 6.2.5 Fireplaces in the cottages have been much altered and adapted over time and often to suit the fashions of a particular age with no original installation remaining intact. All the modern frontages are to be removed and where there are only fire recesses these are all to be rendered and plastered internally to retain their overall shape and the flues above closed with a ventilator grille in a register plate to prevent condensation build-up in the flues. Existing hearths to be cleaned and retained where they exist.
  
- 6.2.6 Within the roof spaces either side of the central wall the heads of the dividing walls between the north and south cottages of each pair will be raised to the underside of the roof covering to separate one dwelling from another. This is to ensure privacy and security of those living in such adjacent homes as well as prevent fire spread.
  
- 6.2.7 Within the roof spaces thermal insulation is to be upgraded to a minimum of the equivalent of 250 mm of mineral wool insulation quilt. Provision is to be made for the provision of adequate cross flow through this area to prevent condensation creation.
  
- 6.2.8 At present the whole of the area between the cottages and the fire station is used for the manoeuvring of fire appliances, fire fighting drill and parking of vehicles. At times this can result in a shortage of space so that parking occurs very close to the building, which as they are not occupied does not present a problem. Once the houses are re-occupied the proximity of vehicles is likely to create a hazard to the occupants either entering or existing the units as well as increasing the risk of exhaust pollution and impact damage to the fabric.
  
- 6.2.9 To the front of the terrace it is proposed to create a distinct separation between the service yard to the rear of the fire station and the facade of this block. This will consist of a wide strip of granite setts or similar across the front of the building that will have cast iron bollards of an appropriate conservation area style placed at regular intervals along the outer edge. This will replicate the footpath shown on the original plans (Fig 7.2.3) of the cottages and so assist in restoring some of the setting of the buildings.
  
- 6.2.10 Because of the size of modern fire appliances and the exponentially increased number of vehicles using the site since the time of its original design it will not be possible to restore any of the other forecourt features from that time.

## 7 DESK TOP STUDY

### 7.1 Map Study

- 7.1.1 The first accurate map that shows the site is the 25" to the mile scale Ordnance Survey (OS) map that was surveyed in 1866 and published in 1870. This is considerably before the erection of the fire station and shows the site before the development when it was part of the garden of a large detached house that lay the north. The general area around the site appears to have been quite rural or village like in its character and level of development.



Fig 7.1.1: 1866 25" OS map

- 7.1.2 The next map is the OS map at an experimental scale of 1 to 1,056 and dated 1895. The site itself is now clearly defined and the house to the north appears to have been redeveloped or otherwise altered as seen by its shape and other buildings around it. There is much evidence of this area becoming more urbanised with several local roads of housing being seen, especially to the west and northwest.

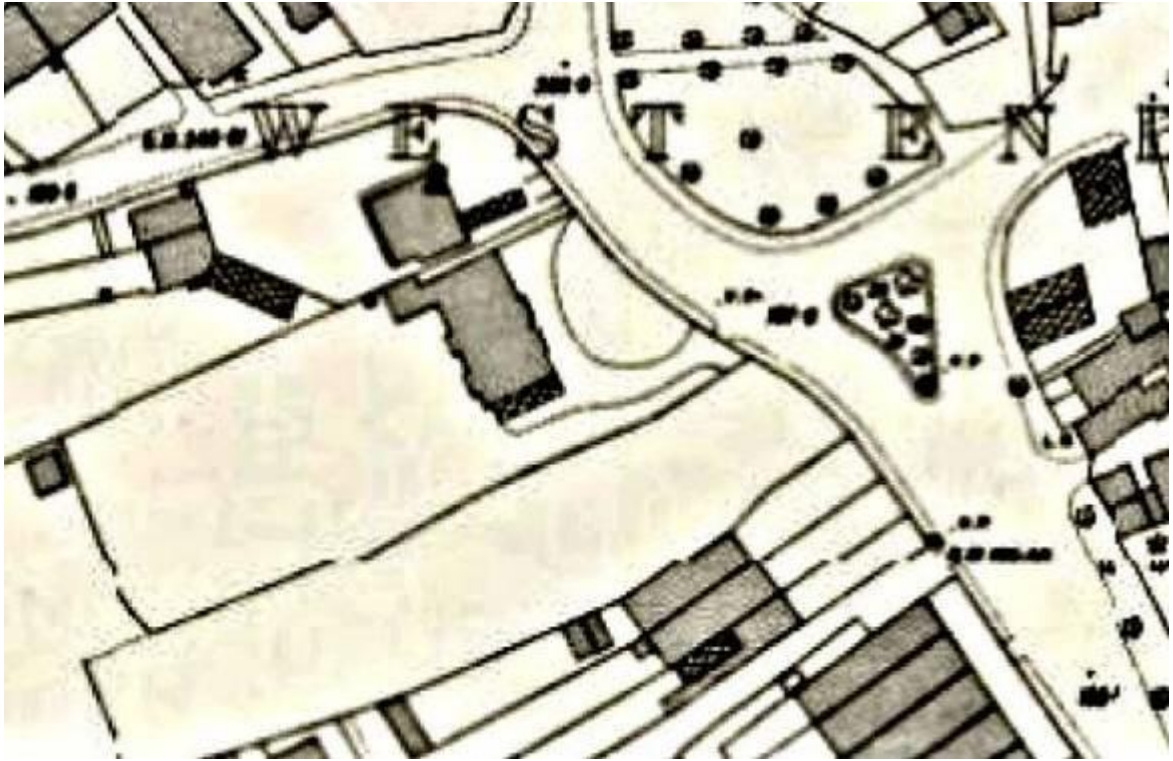


Fig 7.1.2: 1895 1- 1,056 OS map

- 7.1.3 On the OS 25" map surveyed in 1912 and published in 1915 the fire station with the cottages to the rear are clearly seen. This includes the gardens to the rear and the coal stores along the south boundary. It is also worth noting that while there is a nominal area of grass seen to the front of the cottages shortly after their completion in the photograph of circa 1902 (Fig 7.2.7), there is nothing denoted as such on this map, but similar areas are shown elsewhere.
- 7.1.4 The 1934 – 36 revision of the OS 25" map shows no effective difference on this site from that seen on the previous edition.
- 7.1.5 The last historical large scale OS map is the 1953 1:2500 scale map. Here the cottages are labelled as Fire Station Flats and are numbered from the south 9, 10, 11, 12. To the front of the flats in what is now the service yard is a structure identified as a tower, which may have been an additional hose drying and rescue practice tower from war time use. The coal stores against the south boundary are still in place.

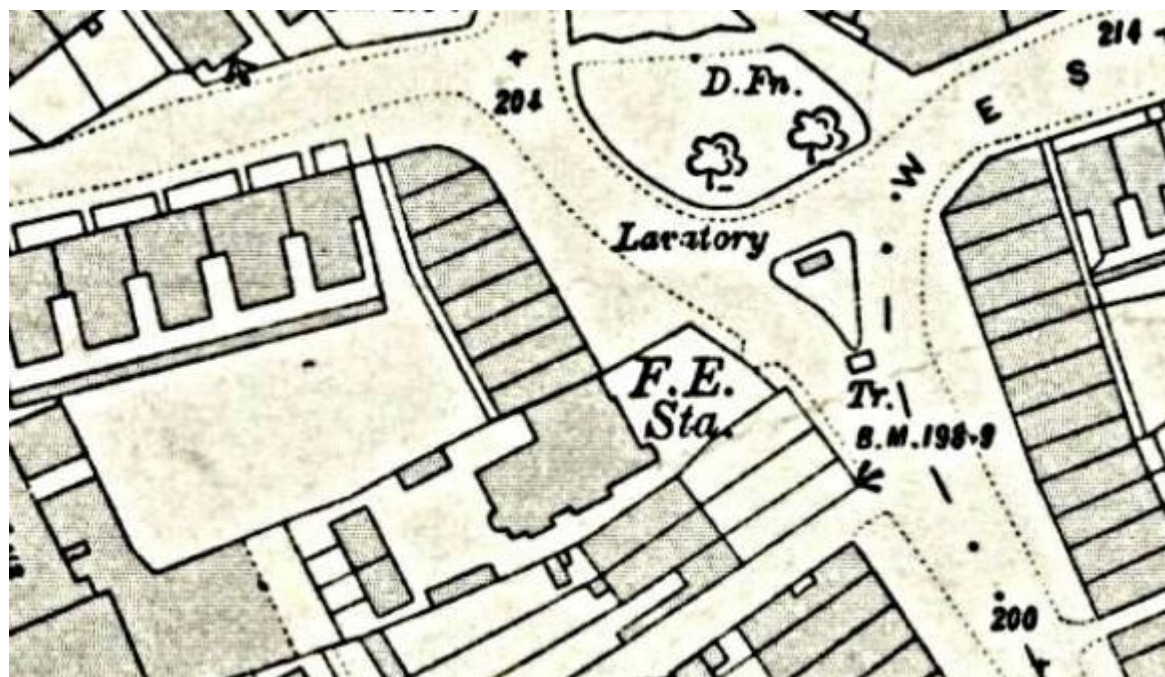


Fig 7.1.3: 1912 25" OS map

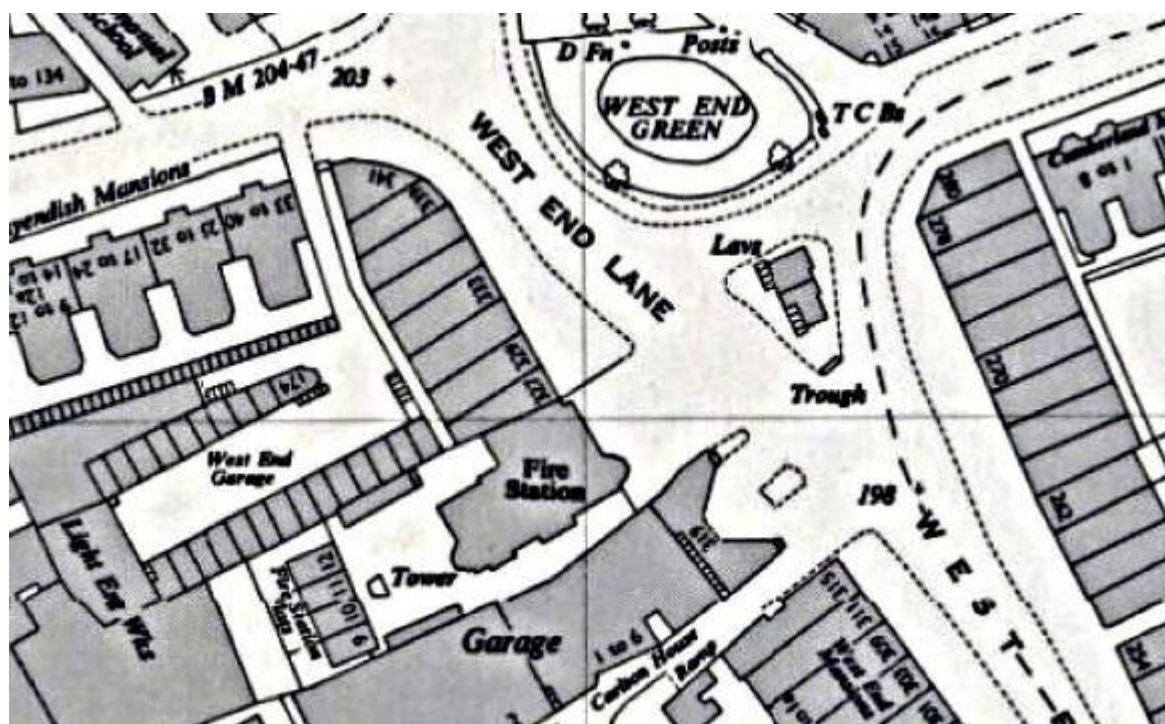


Fig 7.1.5: 1953 1-2500 OS map

- 7.1.6 The proximity of the tower to the front of the houses is such that this would have been against the grass that is seen on the 1902 photograph. When that is coupled with the very intense usage that this fire station yard would have encountered it is likely that such semi domestic use would have disappeared due to the demands for space put upon it.

## 7.2 Documentary Material



Fig 7.2.5: Fire station in 1902

- 7.2.1 London County Council, meeting on 8 February 1898, adopted the recommendation of the Fire Brigade Committee that a '*fire-engine station*' be established at West Hampstead, and authorised it to make the necessary arrangements for the acquisition of a site. The minutes of a meeting on 26 July 1898 record that it was agreed to purchase the freehold of ground opposite

Fortune Green, and the Fire Brigade Committee were authorised to arrange for the erection of the West Hampstead fire station on that site. The minutes of 7 March 1899 record the recommendation that the Council's seal be affixed to a Conveyance by Mr Thomas Potter of the fee simple of the land.

- 7.2.2 A report of the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee: In the minutes of the Fire Brigade Committee 2 November 1899, recommended that the sketch plans of the proposed fire station be approved and the architect be instructed to prepare the working drawings.
- 7.2.3 The report of the Sub-Committee: In the minutes of the Fire Brigade Committee 15 March 1900, recommended: that the modified sketch plans be approved; that the cottages to be erected in the yard of the station for use as quarters for firemen be constructed with 14 inch walls; that the architect (the Council's William Edward Brookes) prepare the working drawings. Approval was given. The estimate for the work was £11,373. [The final cost was under this figure]

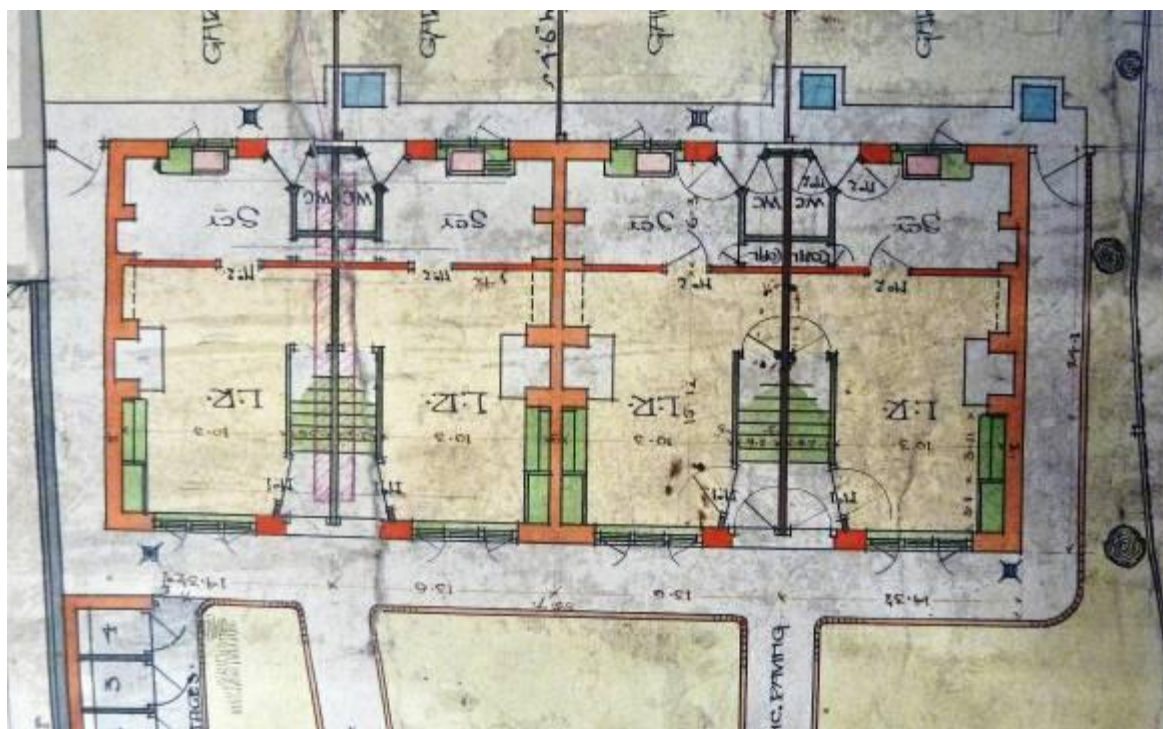


Fig 7.2.3: Approved plan of cottages

- 7.2.4 A file of Fire Brigade papers (LCC/CL/FB/01/100) contains a report, dated 20 June 1901, which states: - *'The building which is being erected will contain several new features, such as the provision of an increased number of sets of quarters with*

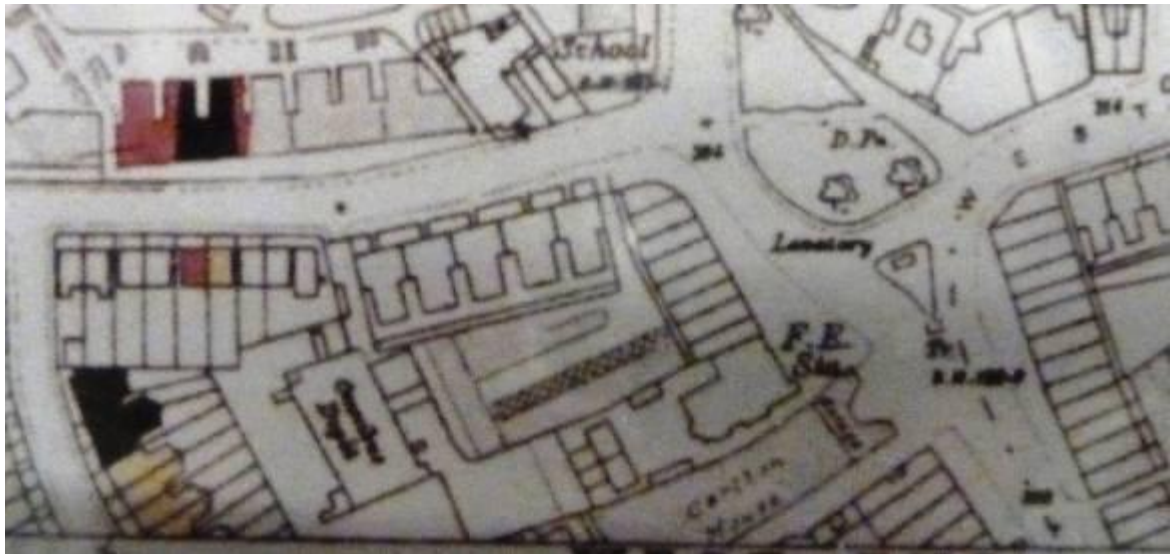
*three or more rooms. The principal feature, however, consists in an arrangement whereby four of the three room sets of quarters take the form of separate cottages, each with its own garden at the rear of the station proper. These cottages will be self-contained and comprise a living room, scullery and lavatory accommodation on the ground floor, and two bedrooms on the first floor. ....The Station which is to be lighted by electricity, is being erected under the supervision of Mr W.E. Riley, the Council's Superintending Architect.*

- 7.2.5 Along with the cottages and the suites within the main building additional storage units were erected along the north and south boundaries for use as coal bunkers. There was one allocated to each set of accommodation and had the appearance of terraces of small brick built sheds with flat, possibly asphalt covered roofs. Those on the south side were allocated for 'men' and on the north side for 'officers'.
- 7.2.6 The memorial stone was laid on the 24 June 1901 and the station was opened 6 February 1902.



Fig 7.2.7: Cottages circa 1902

- 7.2.7 It is possible that the cottages were intended for the occupation by married or other men with families. This can be suggested by a photograph of the terrace taken in 1903 that shows crewmen with many children, who by their relaxed appearance could be suggested to live there.
- 7.2.8 Whilst not directly relevant to the cottages, but as an interesting aside is that the same file contains an extract from the [Fire Brigade] Committee minutes, dated 3 July 1902, reporting that a portion of the ceiling in the quarters of first-class fireman J. Stanwell had fallen in. He received 10/- compensation. His quarters were in the main station]
- 7.2.9 There is no further documentary material found in connection with the building of these cottages
- 7.2.10 Two letters in the file, from the Valuer to the Fire Brigade Committee, are of later interest:-
- 7.2.10.1 The first, dated October 1928, concerns the supply of electricity to the quarters. Suite No 4, occupied by the Station Officer, was already supplied. He reports that the Sub-Officer and firemen tenants of the other 6 suites and 4 cottages have applied for the installation of electricity. He suggested that the work should be carried out and the cost recouped by charging slightly increased rents over a number of years. Wiring would provide each tenement with light, complete with a pendant and lamp, to the living room, scullery, entrance lobby and bedroom: also one plug to take an iron, kettle or other small appliance. He asked the Committee to authorise the wiring and increases of rent – suites numbers 2,3,5,6,7 by 6d per week, and suite no 8 and the cottages by 7d per week. [no references were found relating to the actual amounts of rent charged]
- 7.2.10.2 The second letter, dated 29 May 1930, concerns the setting back of the fire station frontage to West End Lane. This is not relevant to the cottages, but explains the site change as shown on the OS maps. Hampstead Borough Council asked if the LCC would agree to set back the fire station forecourt to align with the frontages of nos. 319-323 in a rebuilding scheme. The Council recommended that a strip of land be surrendered for an addition to the public way.
- 7.2.11 The World War 2 bomb damage map was investigated and no direct damage was received on the fire station site or immediately neighbouring properties. However, two buildings in Holmdale Road to the west at the back of the site were totally destroyed and the properties adjoining them on the south received 'blast damage, minor in nature'




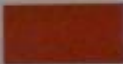


LCC WAR DAMAGE MAPS (1:2500) KEY		
	Black	Total Destruction
	Purple	Damage Beyond Repair
	Dark Red	Seriously Damaged; Doubtful if Repairable
	Light Red	Seriously Damaged; But Repairable at Cost
	Orange	General Blast Damage, Minor in Nature

Fig 7.2.11 War damage map

### 7.3 Oral History

7.3.1 There was no archived recorded oral history in connection with these cottages

## 8 LISTING



© Mr Anthony Rau

IoE Number:	47854
Location:	COTTAGES TO THE REAR OF THE FIRE STATION, WEST
END LANE (west off)	HAMPSTEAD, CAMDEN, GREATER LONDON
Photographer:	Mr Anthony Rau
Date Photographed:	04 December 2006
Date listed:	21 May 1990
Date of last amendment:	21 May 1990
Grade	II

CAMDEN TQ2585SW WEST END LANE 798-1/35/1706 (West side (off)) 21/05/90  
Cottages to the rear of the Fire Station GV II 4 terraced firemen's cottages. c1901. By the London County Council Architect's Department; job architect WA Scott. Rendered brick; ground floor originally exposed brick. Westmorland slate roofs with deadlights; tall brick stacks at centre and on gable ends. Each cottage 2 rooms deep. 2 storeys. 1 window each at ground floor level; 1st floor continuous strip at eaves level to each pair. Paired panelled and part-glazed entrance doors with overlights (except left hand being C20); wooden bracketed plain hoods. Entrances flanked by 3-light casements (all windows originally with small panes). 1st floors with centrally positioned 6-light casement strips to each pair. Rear with C20 single storey bathroom extensions. INTERIORS: have stairs between party walls and sitting rooms with panelled airing cupboards at 1st floor level. Most panelled doors, moulded window frames and picture rails remain. Some original window furniture. The fire station cottages form a complex with No.325, the Fire Station (qv).



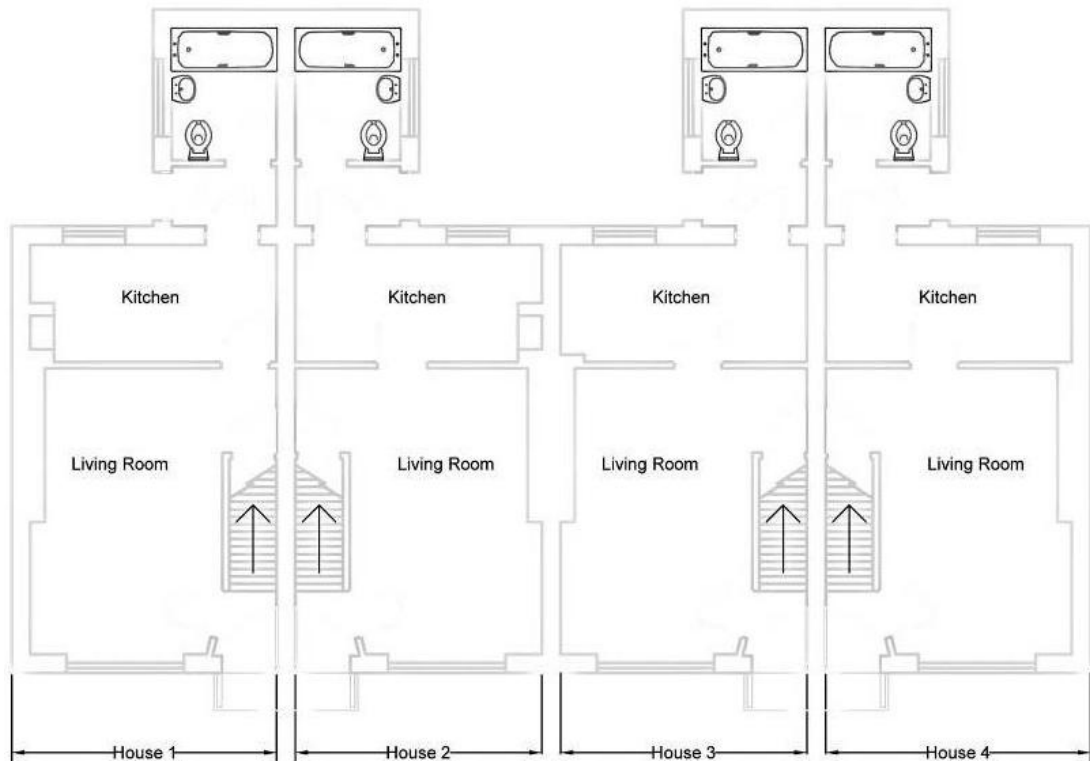
© Mr Steve Kirkland

IoE Number: 478544  
Location: FIRE STATION, 325 WEST END LANE (west side)  
HAMPSTEAD, CAMDEN, GREATER LONDON  
Photographer: Mr Steve Kirkland  
Date Photographed: 05 August 2007  
Date listed: 14 May 1974  
Date of last amendment: 14 May 1974  
Grade II

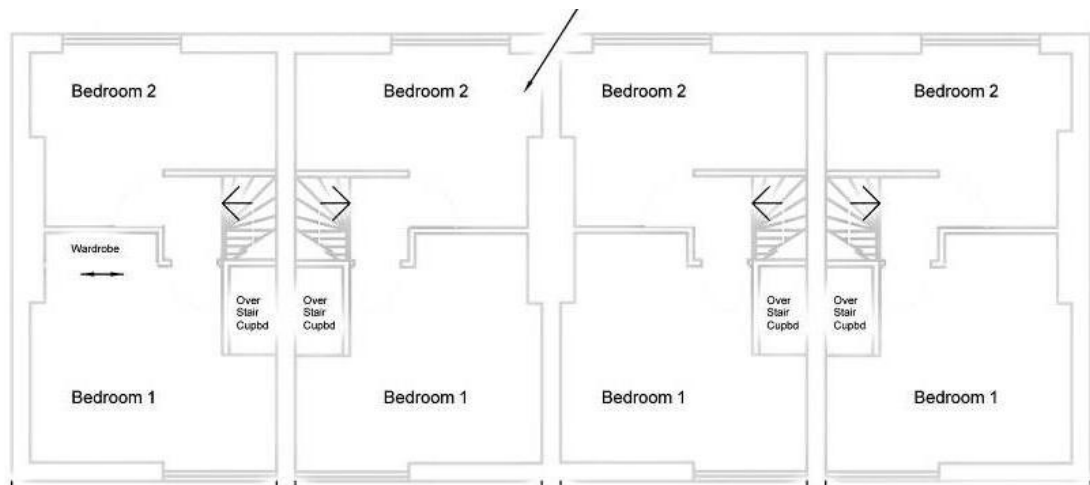
CAMDEN TQ2585SW WEST END LANE 798-1/35/1705 (West side) 14/05/74 No.325 Fire Station GV II Fire station. c1901. By the London County Council Architect's Department, job architect WA Scott. Roughcast walls; glazed brick to part of rear elevation. Hipped Westmorland slated roof with projecting eaves, moulded eaves cornice and tall brick chimney-stacks; double pitched to rear wing having in the angle a tall roughcast former water tower rising from ground floor level to appear above the roof; wooden belvedere with copper pyramidal roof. EXTERIOR: main front with 2 bays of part-glazed engine shed doors to right and to left a polygonal bow window of stone with transom and mullion casements having small leaded panes. 1st and 2nd floor with bands of 5-light casements to outer bays flanking central 3-light bands; all with small leaded panes. Left hand return with similar windows plus a brick 6-light bay window with stone mullions and slated penthouse roof. Rear with cast-iron railings to 1st floor balcony above engine shed. Double gabled wing has similar polygonal bow window to front on right hand bay and 3-light casements to each floor. INTERIOR: mess room has half-height panelling and large segmental arches to window alcoves; segmental-arched panelled door to rear. Similarly panelled fireplace with bracketed mantle. The fire station forms a complex with the firemen's cottages (qv) in the rear yard.

## 9 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

### 9.1 Building Construction



Ground floor plan



First floor plan

Fig 9.1: Plans as existing

- 9.1.1 These cottages were designed with the architects department of London County Council where the project architect was W A Scott who worked under the direction of the senior architect W E Brookes. Scott was much influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement and a few years later went on to become professor of architecture at Dublin University. This project was one of several fire stations erected across London at about the same time and its design is considered an exemplar of such by Historic England.
- 9.1.2 The main structure of the terrace has traditionally built external walls of solid construction being built in one and a half brick thick wall where the bricks are laid in English bond in a traditional lime mortar. The lower half of the external walls, below a horizontal tile creasing course at approximately ground floor level was originally pointed in a hard white lime mortar with a well defined struck joint. The upper section of the walls was finished with pebble dash render from the outset with a bell mouth fillet at the base and over the tile course. This was a common feature for houses of this time and style of design and replicated that employed within the facade of the main fire station building.
- 9.1.3 Over the years the upper wall pebbledash has become very heavily over painted and that has resulted in a visual appearance that is somewhat amorphous due a general loss of surface texture. This is a common problem encountered on most such similar materials and structures.
- 9.1.4 The lower sections of the wall were later faced with a hard cement render that was then finished with a spatter-dash or Tyrolean type finish that from the form of material used and the style could suggest an application date to the 1960 – 70s. This applied material has resulted in very detrimental effects on the brickwork underneath largely due to damp related problems. The use of such hard and vapour impermeable material may also have caused problems to the interior of the cottages in the form of damp entrapment, but which was not considered when initially applied. Such work was considered as providing a uniform appearance to older buildings as a form of visual modernisation at little cost.
- 9.1.5 Around the terrace the windows have had some alteration and adaptation, possibly in two distinct stages. Firstly there has been the removal of the leaded lights as seen in the 1902 photograph, possibly in the 1950s or 60s and then the more modern replacement probably during and post extension phase. The result is that the rear window to the north cottage is a different style to that elsewhere and others have had some minor changes. The removal of leaded light windows has in the past frequently been driven by the occupants of houses as they complain of then being draughty and let the cold in. In addition with many institutionally owned properties the maintenance of windows is always considered an expense and so the removal of aspects such as leaded lights that are perceived to increase costs has always tended to happen.

- 9.1.6 The internal structure is a mixed of what would have been perceived as both traditional and modern when they were built. The roof and first floors are of timber construction of a form and style that was typical for most properties of this age and dating back at least a hundred years. However, the internal walls are in cast in-situ concrete using what appeared to be a form of Portland cement concrete, which was at that time a comparatively new material for that situation and so can be considered quite significant in terms of technological innovation.
- 9.1.7 During the construction of this site it appears that problems were encountered with the foundations under the corner of the watch room in the fire station. A note on the cottage plans show where the foundations under the wall between the two southern cottages were reduced to balance materials and costs for the project diverted elsewhere. As with many projects before and since cost over-runs have had detrimental impacts on buildings and so indicates that these were only ever seen as utilitarian structures rather than ones where money had to be lavished to ensure they were built to a high standard.



Fig 9.1.7: Highlighted note of reduced foundation concrete to dividing wall

- 9.1.8 Each cottage originally had a semi internal toilet with a small larder against the dividing wall adjacent to the original back door. These toilets opened to the outside in the backdoor opening. Ghost lines for these elements were distinguishable on the walls of the kitchen behind the decorations. This arrangement illustrates that they were low quality or workers cottages where such basic facilities were acceptable rather than being built to a standard for senior officer classes.
- 9.1.9 It is possible that the cottage underwent a refitting in the early 1930s as part of the installation of electricity into the accommodation. There was no indication of any old gas piping seen and therefore it may have all been stripped out as part of that

work. The styles of fittings such as more original fireplaces would appear to date to this period rather than that of the original building in 1901.

- 9.1.10 The rear extensions are very much features of their apparent age and time of building in terms of style and construction methods and are typical of the 1960 – 70s. This is also reflected in the interior finishes and fittings in the extensions and it was probably when the kitchen fires as well as those on the upper floors were taken out and / or closed-up. It would also have been the time when the changes in the London clean air acts would have prevented the use of open coal fires and the on-set of the prevalent use of gas fires and central heating.
- 9.1.11 Internally the houses appear to be largely as they were built in respect of layout and fit-out, although there have been a few changes made such as the removal or adaptation of the chimney breasts in the kitchens and the fireplaces elsewhere in the house. It has been mainly in the style and form of internal fittings and decoration application where change has occurred and that has ranged from the 1930s through the 1980s. Each generational change of occupants will have introduced their own fashion and stylistic imprint on the interior so they found them comfortable cottages in which to live. As any house they have never been perceived and therefore not treated as heritage structures, but just a place to live a family life with all the aspects of change and adaptation that goes with that.
- 9.1.12 As each cottage became vacant it was boarded-up to keep it secure. Then since they were last occupied and before listing there has been some amount of deterioration to the fabric and possibly vandalism due to there not being a use for them apart from being generally kept wind and weather tight, which the Fire Service has endeavoured to do within their general budgets.
- 9.1.13 Whilst not directly related to the building construction the area to the front of the building has altered over time, where the grassed area proposed on the initial plans seem to have disappeared within about ten years of their completion. That was probably as a result of the general functioning of the fire station where the land was needed for the manoeuvring of increasingly large vehicles as well as their parking and also combined with fire fighting practice. By the end of the Second World War there was a practice and hose drying tower very close to the front of the block and when that was removed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century the area remained as a blacktop surface.

## **9.2 Significance and Impact on the Heritage Structure**

- 9.2.1 The positioning of a new fire station in West Hampstead came about because of the expansion of London in this vicinity and therefore this was considered to be part of the necessary civic infrastructure to support it. The new building was to

contain some quarters for firemen as had tended to happen previously. What was novel in this situation was that there was to be *'the provision of an increased number of sets of quarters.....in an arrangement whereby four of the three room sets of quarters take the form of separate cottages, each with its own garden at the rear of the station proper.'* This pattern was adopted with other new fire stations that were to follow.

- 9.2.2 The cottages were built as an adjunct to the fire station proper and were never considered as a separate development. They followed the design and appearance of the main building because it was undertaken by the same design team and that would have allowed for a commonality of construction methods and materials to be employed so as to achieve efficient and cost effective budgetary control of the project. That would indicate that their significance is their relationship to the front block.



Fig 9.2.2: Cottage to rear of fire station from site entrance

- 9.2.3 Since their construction the cottages have been maintained as a common piece of the fire station establishment and maintained as such by the fire service under whatever name it may have had at a particular time. As part of the management of the site there was a period when there was no demand for on-site

accommodation for fire crew and so they were boarded-up. However, with changing financial pressures that has now changed and this proposal is to bring these units back into use to form modern comfortable housing units in line with Government policy and fully in accordance with NPPF policy and guidelines.

- 9.2.4 In a general consideration of their plan layout they are little different from other houses being constructed by institutional bodies at that time. In many ways they can be considered as little different from similar properties in the vicinity that are not listed. Their prime significance can be best be considered to be in the relationship they have in serving the main fire station building as this was the purpose and the reason for which they were built together with the external appearance that it followed.
- 9.2.5 However, there is additionally a significant aspect of the construction within these cottages and that is the use of mass concrete to form the cast-in-situ walls to the ground and part of the first floor. All other elements within the fabric both internally and externally can be considered common for small low class houses of this period. They were not built to a high quality, neither were the materials used of any great standard.
- 9.2.6 As part of the overall proposed repair and conservation work to these houses the bulk will be to the interior in the form of comparatively minor changes. There is not intended to be any noticeable form or extent of demolition and removal of the original fabric. In general terms the majority of this can be classed as maintenance and repair and this work can be seen as maintain their significance by retaining their general appearance, fabric and character.
- 9.2.7 Within the detailed condition reports prepared for each cottage the proposed repairs and replacements items are highlighted so as to allow specific consideration on the impact that the work will have the significance of each property. Internally a great deal of this concerns the restoration and repair of joinery, cupboards, doors, door linings, handrails and many other items. All this proposed work will help to restore the historic character of the interiors as this will generally replicate what has been lost or damaged by using surviving existing remnants as patterns where applicable. Such work will only improve the character of the house as the properties will start to regain their visual appearance with the use of more appropriate items and overall it will have a beneficial affect on their significance.
- 9.2.8 In stripping and recovering the main roof there should be no loss of historic material apart from those slates there have perished through age related deterioration or have generally deteriorated. However, such slates will be replaced by fully matching colour and sized material from suitable quarries that from the form of slate would suggest a Cumbrian source. On completion the roof should display no visual difference from what it was previously and at the same

time be fully effective in terms of weather protection. As this will restore the roof there will be no loss of historic character and so will maintain the historical significance of the block.

- 9.2.9 The restoration of the flat roofs over the modern extensions will return them to their original external appearance as well as their function and performance. Thermal insulation will be upgraded to modern standards. Because of the age of the roofs there will be no loss of historic fabric or character and restore matters to how they were when built in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> C, but combined with improved energy efficiency to these parts of the building. Generally the significance this will have can at worst be considered as neutral, but generally it will be positive.
- 9.2.10 The existing chimneys are to be cleaned by a registered chimney sweep and certified as such. The pots will be fitted with clayware venting terminal and the flues within the rooms closed with vented register plates where these remain open. The objective is to prevent condensation accumulation in the redundant flues and so not detrimentally affect the fabric. The improved ventilation this will provide together with the retention of the stacks and terminals will be a positive contribution significance to the overall restoration
- 9.2.11 Rainwater goods around the building are to be overhauled in-situ so will not result in any loss of historic character or fabric and will maintain significance of appearance.
- 9.2.12 The external walls have deteriorated considerably where the lower sections of these rendered in the 1960 – 70s and due to the form of material used at the time. A lot of this has fallen away and taken the face of the decorative brickwork with it and due to its nature it will also have been the source of some of the internal dampness. It is proposed to strip all this inappropriate material and replace it with built-up lime render to restore the appearance of the cottages to what it would have been when originally listed. Because of the severely deteriorated condition of the brickwork this cannot be viably restored without much loss of the original fabric. Whilst not an ideal proposal it will restore some character to the 'modern' external appearance of the block, but it will help reduce damp ingress and retention as well as prevent further fabric damage. While there was some loss of significance of the appearance of the building when the lower render was applied the proposal will result in a neutral affect on the building overall.
- 9.2.13 The windows will be fully overhauled and repaired to the form they generally are and were at the time of listing so as to achieve some uniformity of character. Of these the kitchen window to Cottage 4 will be replaced in a form and style to replicate that which was originally fitted in the opening and therefore match those used elsewhere on the rear elevation. This will maintain and following the replacement of the rear window it can be considered that this will improve the

overall visual character of the building and help maintain significance of the general aesthetic.

- 9.2.14 The external front doors as well as their frames are generally capable of being fully restored so as to retain the existing character and fabric of the cottages. The back doors are all modern standard joinery units that will be similarly replaced as these are completely defective. The balancing nature of this work that will see original forms retained and inappropriate modern forms replaced with more suitable types can be seen as benefitting the buildings significance.
- 9.2.15 Internal fireplaces are of a mixture of forms and styles where they still survive, but most are either lost in some manner or are severely damaged. Where the more original and intact forms survive these will be retained and restored, but where there are effectively only fire recesses these will be cleaned and the openings rendered around and the flues closed as noted previously in this report. That will retain the character of some rooms and restore it in others. Where openings are dressed around it will maintain the general appearance and character of that space. Overall this will result in rooms that are generally more useable and more energy efficient than they are at present, while maintains significance of style and form.
- 9.2.16 The eradication of dry rot and the restoration of first floor structures, particularly against the rear wall will be a distinct improvement in the fabric, although in doing so there will be a loss of historic fabric although this now of a very inferior or degraded type. The areas of replacement flooring and associated ceiling structures will recreate the original structure and appearance with the rooms and spaces that are affected. In turn that will fully restore the historic character and therefore the utility of all these rooms and the structure in general and so can be considered to be a positive improvement and there significantly beneficial.
- 9.2.17 Externally the grassed area to the front of the terrace that was part of the setting at the turn of the century apparently disappeared quite soon after as can be suggested by map evidence. The proposal to form a buffer strip between the houses and the service yard will prevent vehicles parking close against their frontages. This will create a visual gap to the front of the block and help restore its significance in relationship to the fire station building.
- 9.2.18 As a result of these works what historic character they have before the work commences will only be enhanced by the proposals. There will not be any loss of historic fabric except where this has degraded to a level where its retention cannot be justified or is desirable for the longevity of the structures. This will result in a positive effect on their survival and therefore the significance of the cottages.

## **10 CONCLUSION**

- 10.1.1 Over the years, particularly in the last two or three decades these cottages have changed in many ways that vary from fashion to lack of maintenance. In more recent times, largely before they were listed, the cottages have been taken out of use with the concurrent loss of condition through lack of heating and air movement. When all these factors are combined it has meant that there has been some loss of historic character mostly to the interior, but also to a slightly lesser amount externally. Some historic material has been lost through historical changes and alterations, general wear and tear and age related decay, although with no major loss of significance. .
- 10.1.2 Most of any loss of original character has happened as the result of planned changes and alteration to the cottages since they were first built. In the early 1930s they were modernised when electricity was installed and that resulted in the loss of gas light and the fire places were upgraded. Then in the 1960 – 70s they were modernised for a second time when proper in-door sanitation was installed with the new attached bathroom extensions. Other work at that time saw the units clad all around with render and the windows changed to sheet glass if that had not happened during earlier works. During all this the overall significance of the block has been maintained in its relationship with the fire station.
- 10.1.3 Since the changes in the third quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> C the interiors were altered and adapted by the occupants to suit the fashions and styles of the time, especially as that became more popular. That continued right up the point when they became vacant through changes in general housing provision and at which point they were closed-up in succession.
- 10.1.4 The result of slightly over a hundred years of use for their intended purpose these cottages have been continually changed and upgraded to follow changes and improvement in living standards as have occurred. That work will have had an effect on their original design character to one that reflected the time when they were altered or adapted. However, overall those changes have not had any real effect on the significance on this building and the context in which it sits in relationship to the fire station.
- 10.1.5 Overall the proposed works to these buildings are very limited and so there will be effectively no loss of historic fabric and in many areas there will be a positive improvement in historic character and therefore a retention and in some places a restoration of significance. The main objective is to restore these cottages in a manner that preserves as much of their surviving historic character as possible whilst creating homes that are acceptable for modern living and also their site significance.

- 10.1.6 On completion these houses will remain small units of living accommodation for use by members of the London Fire Brigade and therefore there will be no loss of historical significance. In achieving this end they will have been up-date and modernised again and so continue the succession of management that began with their building in 1901.
- 10.1.7 In line with the NPPF these proposals help to ensure that the heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations. These proposals set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of this heritage asset and so prevent further risk to them through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy take into account: the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of this heritage asset, and putting the cottages to a viable uses consistent with their conservation; the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that their conservation will bring. This in turn will create a positive opportunity to draw on the contribution they make to the historic environment and the character of a place in relation to the original fire station building.