

33 Willow Cottages
Willow Road, Hampstead
London NW3 1TN

Heritage Statement



Cover Image: Willow Cottages in 1964 (Historic England)

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by heritage consultant Robert Bevan, director of Authentic Futures. Robert has qualifications in architecture, planning and urban design and has worked as a heritage specialist in government and in private practice.

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Location plan

1.0 Introduction

This statement sets out a brief history of 33 Willow Cottages, also known as 33 Willow Road, Hampstead. It explains our understanding of the asset and makes an evaluation of its significance.

It has been written by heritage consultant Robert Bevan of Authentic Futures following archival research and an inspection of the building and accompanies planning and listed building consent applications for works at the property.

The house was built as a single-family dwelling and remains in that use. It was built c.1860 and extensively altered in the 1930s and 1980s and is the end of a terrace of cottages comprising nos 33 – 41. The terrace, apparently erected on the site of parish almshouses, is listed at Grade II.

The proposals continue residential use, upgrading the small, but much altered, dwelling to a contemporary standard including a side extension within the garden walls at semi-basement level. All original elements of the building will be retained with the exception of small areas of material to the flank of the basement to allow for a light-weight extension that creates additional space and light for the flat within.

This report summarizes the research, sets out the history and significance of the listed building and examines the impact of the proposals against its significance, that of the conservation area in which it sits and tests this against policy.

2.0 Understanding the Asset

2.1 A Brief History Of The Area and the arrival of 33 Willow Cottages

Hampstead has its origins in a manor given by King Ethelred to the monks of Westminster in 986 CE. The area's boundaries remained essentially unchanged until the area was incorporated into LB Camden in 1965. Following the dissolution of the monasteries, the manor passed to private hands and was sold on or inherited in the subsequent centuries, growing from into small village by the sandy Heath that was known for its pure water before being subsumed into London.

There was little development in the vicinity of the Site until the very end of the 17th century when a well at Well Walk became a popular spa for Londoners. The popularity of the resort declined briefly after 1714 leaving behind a legacy of fine houses and more simple cottages but it revived once more later in the same century. The healthy reputation of the area had been lost to some degree by the early 19th century when this part of Hampstead was described as being full of 'mean houses and alleys'. The Flask Tavern on Flask Walk was a place where spa water was once bottled for sale. New End, though pre-dating the spa, was one of the areas in the vicinity of the Site that was developed. By 1888, however, when the parish was officially absorbed into London, new development had transformed Hampstead – especially along the High Street.

Willow Road began as a track leading from the Heath to the Long Room of the spa on Well Walk. It ran alongside a small tributary of the Fleet River and first appears on Rocque's map of 1746, but the willows weren't planted until a century later in 1845. The waterway had already become an exposed sewer in this poorer part of the parish by the early 19th century (although the area was also known for its watercress beds). Much of the south side of today's Willow Road was part of the estate belonging to Carlile [sic] House (built by 1692) on the east side of the High Street.



Rocque 1746



The Ellis map of 1762 depicts Flask Walk. Willow Road is not yet marked.

This less than salubrious corner of St John's Parish may have made led to it being seen as a suitable location for housing the local poor. Sources suggest that almshouses owned by the Parish of St John once stood on the site (from an unknown date). G W Potter's book *Random Recollections of Hampstead* (1907) recalls the site from memory and includes a sketch. His text states of the vanished public buildings in the village:

"Among the latter were the parish almshouses, a picturesque group of two old buildings. They stood in a grassy hollow in what is now known as Willow Road. This road has no special name before 1846. The small houses, Nos 33 to 41 in this road, stand on the site of these old cottages. These almshouses had pretty gardens. In one of these gardens, partly enclosed by hedges, there were several bee-hives with thatched coverings. Behind the cottages were the upward sloping meadows of Carlisle {sic} House. More to the right [west] was the large orchard of Norway House...now the site of Gayton Road and Crescent. I have never met with a picture of these old almshouses, but the group was so likely to attract the attention of an artist that I think some sketches of them must be in existence. I have endeavoured to give a picture of them, partly from my own recollection, and partly from the description given of them from an older friend who knew them more intimately. They were taken down about the year 1849.



Sketch from Potter's *Random Recollections of Hampstead*

This date of demolition seems incorrect but Potters' recollection appears otherwise to be confirmed by early maps of the area. The 1762 Hampstead Manor map shows one house in the vicinity of the Site that could have be one of the almshouse buildings and Cruchley's 1835 map shows two structures.



Hampstead Manor Map 1762



Cruchley, 1835, shows two buildings in the vicinity of the Site

Four years later, the 1839 *Hampstead Tithe Map* also depicts two houses side by side among fields, the easternmost surrounded by a rectangular boundary. To their south and west, the field is marked as The Paddock. This was owned jointly by George Nathan Best, the Revd David, Williams and what appears on the tithe record to be described as the 'D D Trust'. The land was rented to a James Augustus Hessey.



Hampstead Tithe Map of 1839

Charles Lee's partial parish map of 1847 also shows two possible almshouse buildings, while a map of 1864 shows structures that might be Willow Cottages (if not entirely accurately depicted). By the time of the first truly accurate map – the Ordnance Survey map of 1868 – the terrace of Willow Cottages is definitely in place. The cottages are described in more detail below.



Charles Lee's partial parish map of 1847



1864 map: The cottages are not shown in their current form but two ranges of buildings of different footprint to those on earlier maps are depicted at the Site. This may, in actuality, be Willow Cottage and earlier census data indicates that they may have been built and occupied prior to this map date.



Ordnance Survey of 1868 showing the cottages definitively in place

The 1868 OS map also depicts several wells in the vicinity of the street and a small structure surviving directly east of 33 Willow Cottages that may have been a survivor of the almshouse complex. At this time Willoughby Road is not in place and the front garden wall of No 33 ran perpendicular from the flank gable of No 33 northwards to Willow Road. Directly to the east of the Site (now in the area of No 33's side garden and where Willoughby Road runs today) was the small structure set in a landscaped area fronted by a wooded bank and what appears to be a drive or hard-standing connecting it to the flank of the cottages in a peculiar arrangement. Given the humble status of the cottages, it is unlikely that it was an outbuilding and appears, from the depiction, to be in separate use.

According to the Camden History Society's *The Streets of Hampstead*, Willow Cottages (actually labelled on a plaque as Cottage's with a greengrocer's apostrophe) were created to house watercress pickers though no evidence is given for this and none has been found. Certainly by this time, Hampstead was substantially more built up.

At the time of this OS map, the north side of Willow Road is still occupied by the East Middlesex Militia Barracks (Burgh House was the officer's mess). The barracks were demolished soon after and replaced by housing. Much of the remainder of Willow Road was still bordered by open land with, towards the Heath, other terraces of cottages with long front gardens that survive today with a variety of boundary treatments.

With London expanding apace, land along and south of Willow Road, including the Carlile Estate was, in 1873, sold to the British Land Company for housing. Denning, Willoughby, Kemplay and Carlingford roads were all laid out by 1878 and the Willow Road frontage completed with red brick terraces on its south side by 1886 – across Willoughby Road from the site.

Carlile (later, also spelled Carlisle) House was demolished and made way for Willoughby Road in 1876. This street in part follows the old house's drive. At this time, the structure and boundaries surviving immediately east of 33 Willow Road were swept away and a new boundary condition established. In the previous few years, Gayton Road and Crescent had been redeveloped by the Paddock's barrister owner, George Nathan Best of Bayfield Hall in Norfolk – although the roads weren't fully built-out until a century later with the erection of modernist houses on the site of Gayton Nursery Garden (to the west of Willow Cottages) by architect Ted Levy, Benjamin and Partners.

While much of the local neighbourhood was solidly middle class when the new houses were built, there was also a population of commercial travellers, tradesmen etc and a number of lodging houses. By the time the First World War was over, however, the area was somewhat run down, a process that had already begun by 1900. Older buildings continued to be demolished including the row of cottages at 1-3 Willow road where Ernö Goldfinger built his modernist home. During the course of the last century, Hampstead's cachet was restored.

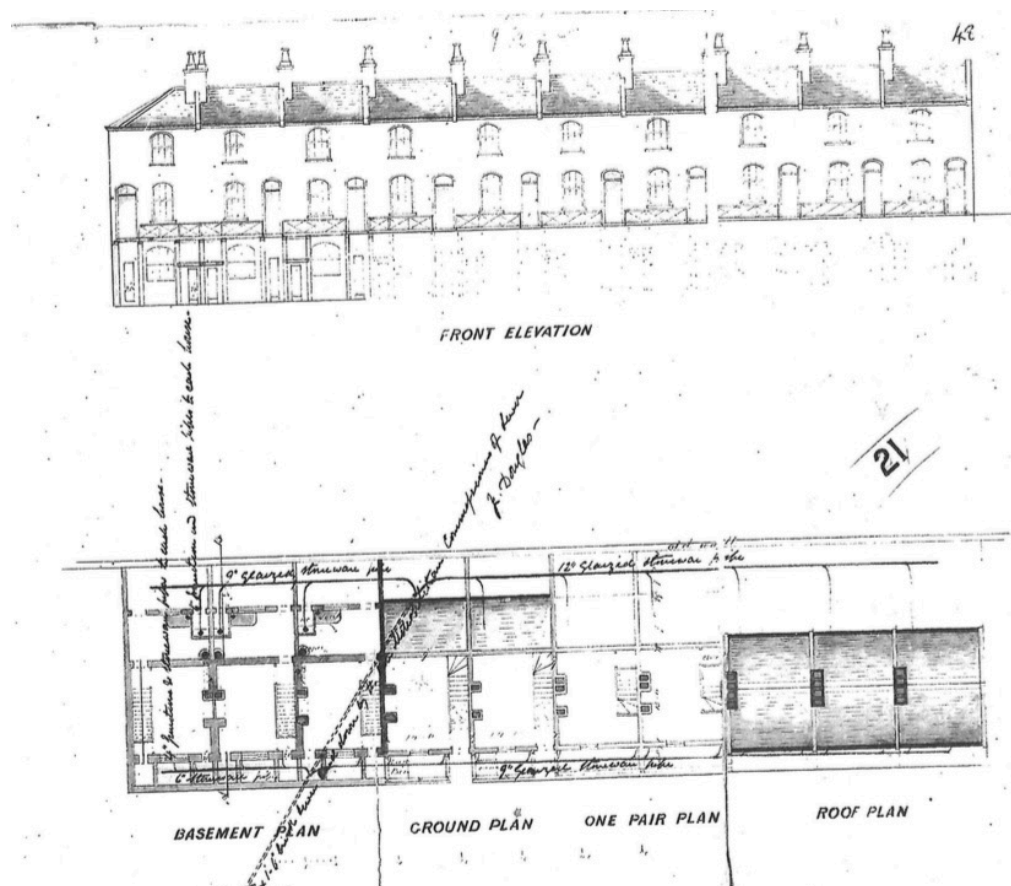
2.2 Willow Cottages In More Detail

Research has uncovered the 1856 drainage plans for the building of Willow Cottages. The new dwellings may not have been built immediately, however, they do appear to have been occupied by 1861.

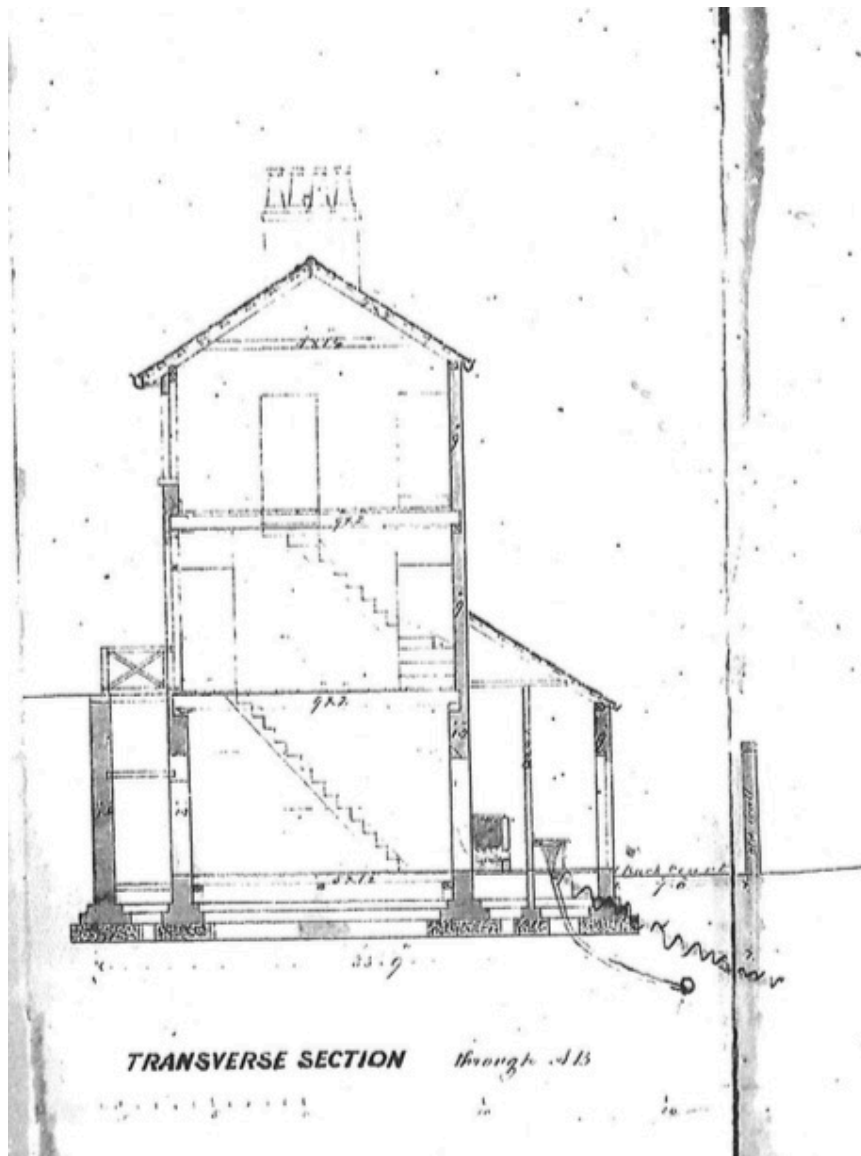
The (somewhat illegible) minutes of the parish Vestry from July 1856 confirm the 1856 application date:

“Mr William Johnson’s successful application to drain 9...cottages....situate [sic] at Lower Heath and known as the site of the late Parish Cottages...”

The 1856 plans show the front elevation of the modest cottages, representative floor plans and a section. They were, perhaps, of old fashioned appearance for their date with a Regency air lent by the arched windows to the street façade and the fanlight above each front door that was reached by a short flight of steps. Decimus Burton-style, St Andrew’s cross railings were proposed for the front areas.



Composite plan and elevation of Willow Cottages that were clearly built as small workers’ cottages of three stacked rooms with a lean-to at the rear. Staircases between the floors were originally on the south side between basement and ground and on the north side from ground floor upwards.



Above: Composite plan and elevation with transverse section showing the original form of the cottages' rear and the separate flights of stairs. The staircase to the basement originally stepped down from the front door towards the rear (a situation currently reversed).

The row – as with others along Willow Road – was sited behind long front gardens (no boundary treatment is shown) and was dug into the slope of the hill at the front. This lends a somewhat bucolic character but one which is then offset by the more urban excavated front area to each house, demarked by cross railings that were either never erected or have since disappeared. The houses each consisted of three rooms stacked on each other at basement, ground and first floor with a single storey mono-pitch covered a room at the basement rear where water came into

the house – presumably into the kitchen. Unusually, access to the front well was via doors under the entrance steps and basement front room. Entering at ground floor, a staircase immediately led down to the basement. Separate stairs to the upper floor ascended along the party wall from what was the rear. Windows are indicated front and rear at basement level but only at the front on upper floors. No flank windows are shown to No 33. The drawings appear to be signed by an H Dunnatt but whether this is the designer of the houses or the builder (or both) is unknown.

The 1894 OS map shows the Site following the clearing of the plot next to No 33 Willow Cottages to create Willoughby Road. Rather than a side garden to No 33, a separate triangular enclosure is shown adjacent to the Willoughby Road flank. By the time of the 1935 OS map, however, new residential development has been built to the rear of Willow Cottages and on the opposite side of Willow Road. The side garden of No 33 is still shown as a separate plot but drainage plans and planning applications suggest that the actuality was either otherwise or was changed very shortly after to a situation where the triangular plot becomes part of the side garden of No 33. The boundary to the Site has then been rebuilt a number of times with the lowest courses of brick to the flank wall post-dating 1935 at the earliest and the upper courses probably a good deal later (a photograph of 1986 shows efflorescence on the bricks).



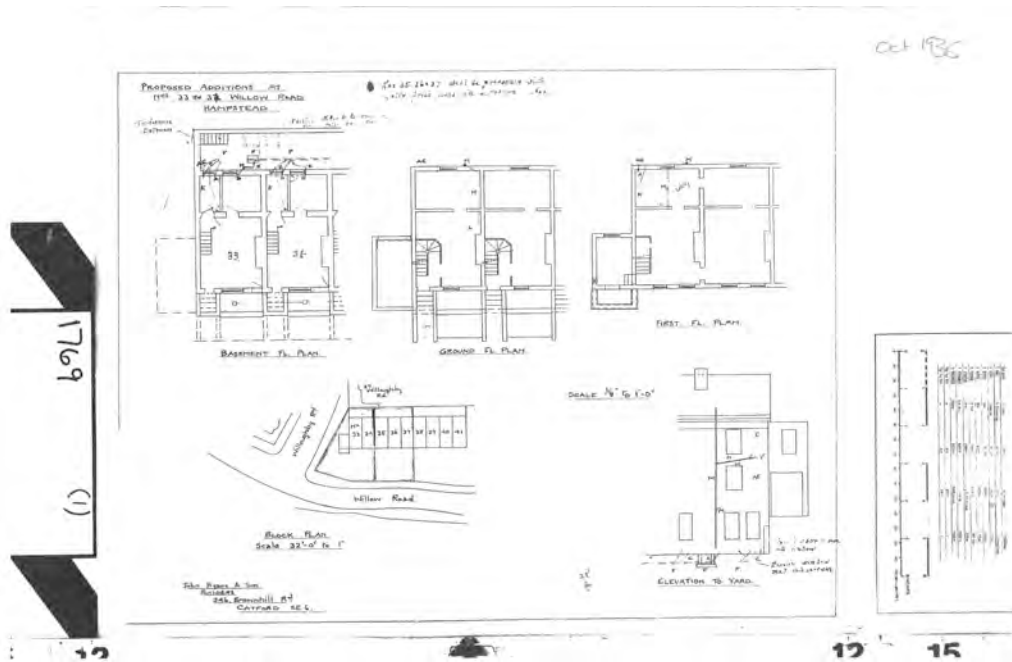
The OS map of 1894 showing the triangular plot next to no 33.



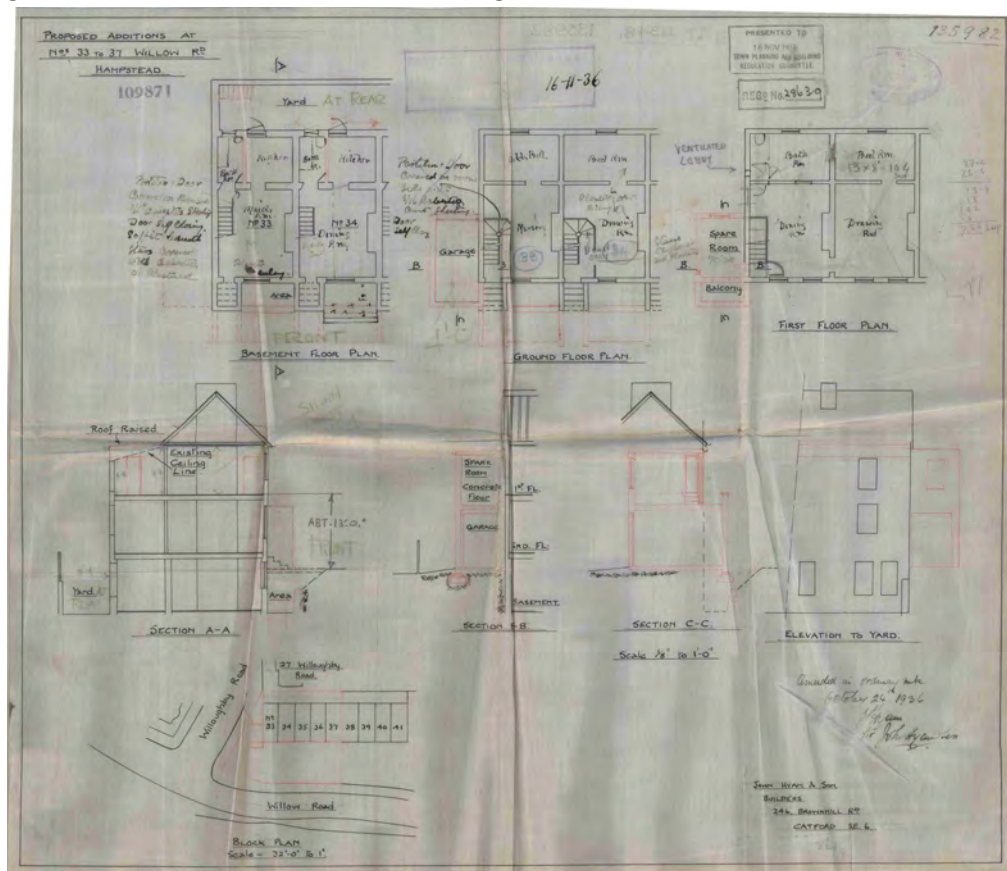
1935 OS: The side lot remains separate from the garden of no 33

A further set of approved plans of Oct and Dec 1936 (the first drainage, the second a planning proposal) for Nos 33 and 34 Willow Road show substantial changes to the houses. A note on the drawing indicates that further proposals will be coming forward for Nos 35 – 37 which were also to be altered at their rear. These approved plans (for Miss Davis/Davies?) of 33 Willow Road show a house that has been extended upwards at the rear by the addition of two additional storeys above the existing rear basement wing. The two houses are to be connected at the front of the first floor between the fireplace and the front elevation. Bathrooms, basins and wcs are to be fitted and what appears to be the rear yard privies demolished. The changes mean that a principal room has been created at each level with one or two secondary rooms to the rear where kitchen and bathrooms are located.

The position of the staircase to the upper floors is also altered. While from basement level they still rise towards the front door, a staircase partition has been introduced at ground floor level that allows the introduction of a staircase on the south wall (ie above the basement stair) that begins with winders and a dog-leg before emerging towards the front of the property at first floor.



Above: John Hyam's plans of October 1936 showing the new configuration with rear extensions and a new staircase location between ground and first floors. The triangular side plot is incorporated into the garden of No 33 and a small flanking extension proposed.



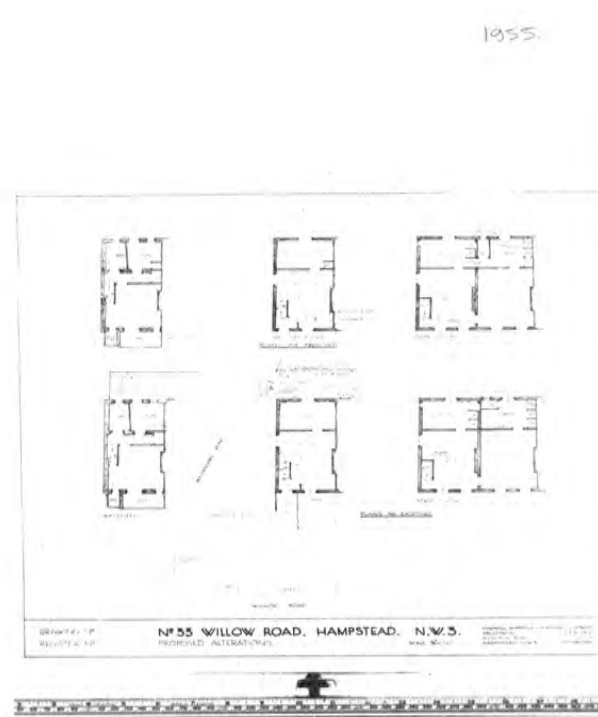
Above, the Hyam drawings of December 1936 that, like the October 1936 plans, show a proposal for a 'spare room' above a garage.

The drawings, by builder John Hyam & Son, also show the approval of a two-storey side extension to No 33 consisting of a ground floor with a spare room and balcony above. It is not known if this permission was implemented – later maps and a lack of evidence on site suggest not. No photographs of such an extension have been discovered.

A John Hyam drainage plan of the following year (1937) shows changes only to the basement and ground floors (as extended to the rear). This shows a kitchen in each rear basement room, doors from the front basement room into the area well and the staircase changes proposed the year before. This appears to have been implemented.

Although Hampstead suffered some bombing damage during the Second World War, the Site vicinity was largely spared with, on the whole, only blast damage nearby.

Shortly after the war, in 1955, further changes to the house were proposed. These drawings, stored on microfiche, are very faint but it is clear that the proposals include the insertion of a window on the external flank wall at ground floor level. The staircase changes again and the internal unification of the properties appears to have been implemented but no side extension is shown built.

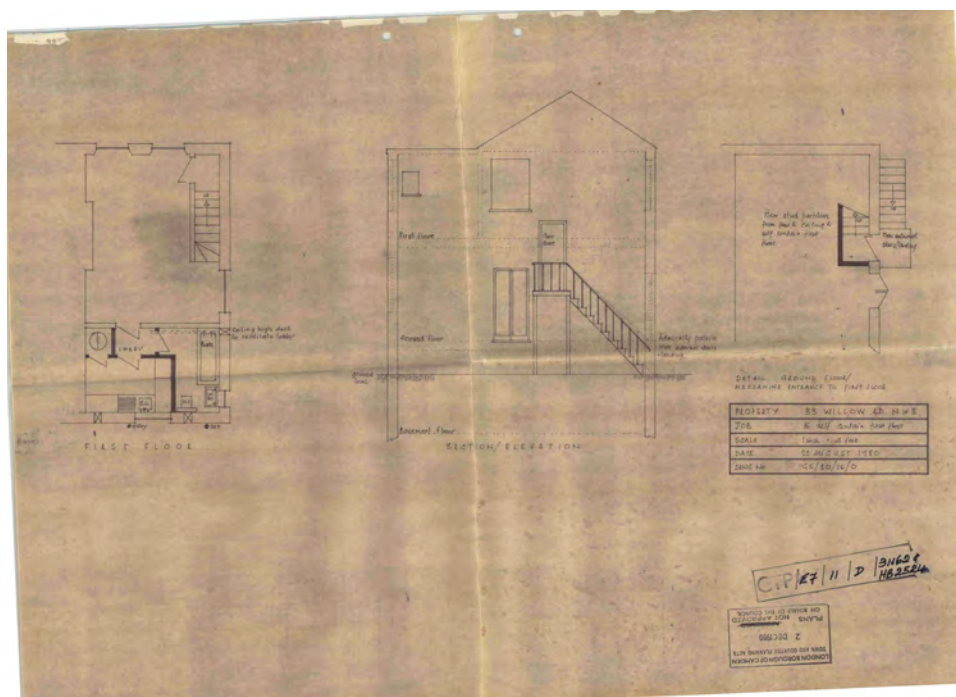


The alterations of 1955

The row of cottages was listed in 1974 at Grade II. It is described thus:

Terrace of 9 cottages. c1866. Stucco with rusticated quoins and 1st floor bands. Slated roofs. 2 storeys and semi-basements. 2 windows each. Square-headed doorways with splayed jambs, fanlights and panelled doors; Nos 33-37 with C20 Neo-Georgian doorcases and doors with arched heads. Entrances approached by stone steps with cast-iron railings. Round-arched recessed sashes with splayed jambs; ground floors with margin glazing. Shaped plaque inscribed "Willow Cottages" between 1st floor windows of Nos 37 and 38. INTERIORS: not inspected. HISTORICAL NOTE: built on the site of earlier almshouses.

There are no proposals for changes coming forward in the following decades but a number of alterations take place during the 1980s. The owner of 33 Willow Road in 1980 is J R Cooper. A September 1980 proposal to create a self-contained first floor flat by building an external access staircase and doorway onto the first floor landing is refused but French doors on the flank at ground floor landing appear to be in place already and the stairs still emerge at the front of the building at first floor.



1980: Proposals for an external staircase on the flank

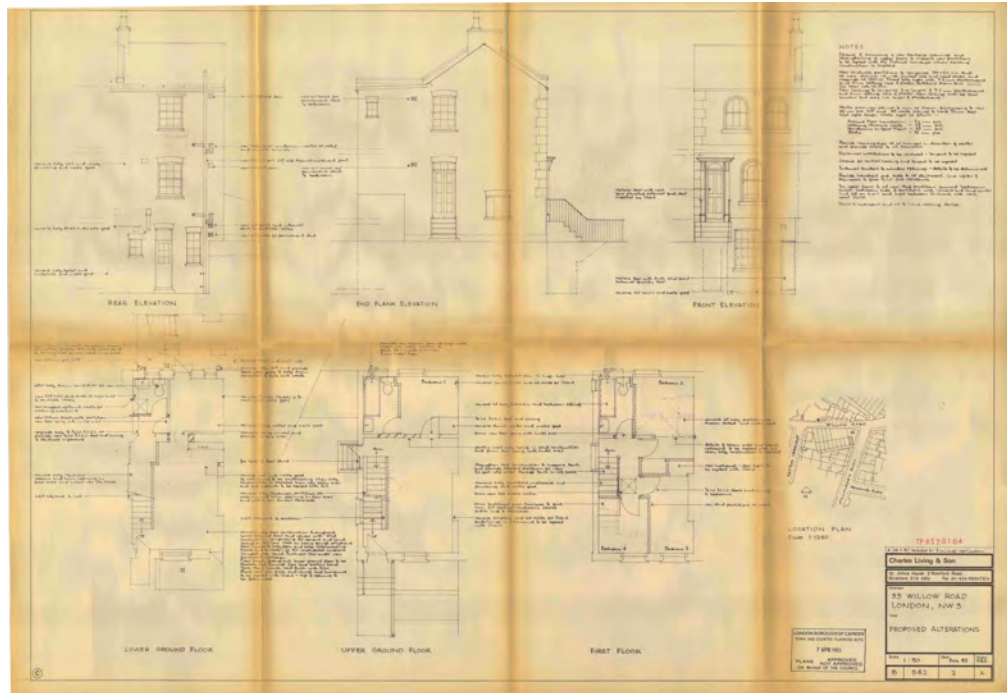
In 1985, further extensive changes to the house are approved including its internal re-planning and the insertion of two new windows. At this point Nos 33 and 34 appear to be in separate use and the opening between the houses at first floor front has been closed up.

At basement level, the proposals, by Charles Living & Sons, show the existing staircase removed and re-orientated through 180 degrees so that it rises towards the centre of the property from the front. New internal partitions are created and others removed.

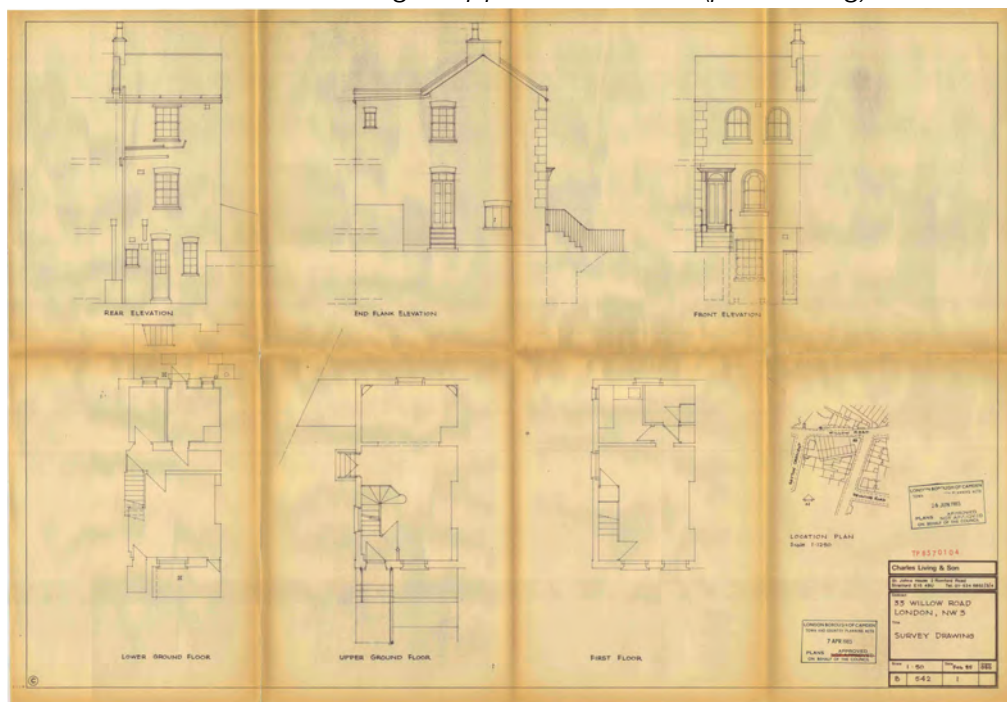
Likewise, at ground floor level, the staircase is re-orientated and a new staircase enclosure created. Other partitions are newly built or removed. Externally, French doors are shown on the flank with steps down to the side garden and the intention is to fix one leaf closed next to the new staircase. (The insertion of bricks below the currently window may indicated the removal of these French doors.) An additional window is installed on the flank lighting the basement staircase.

The staircase from ground to first floor is also switched around and every internal partition at first floor remade. New ceilings and floors are proposed throughout and a new front door and door to the front well proposed. These changes were implemented.

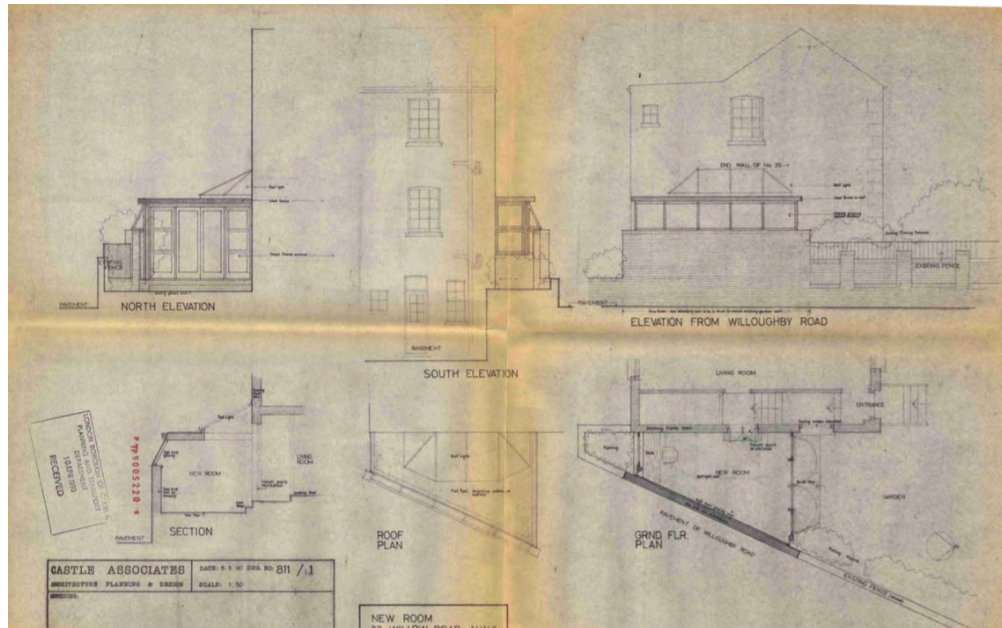
Finally, a note on the drawing states that internal shutters are to be provided with details to be determined. These are the shutters in place in place on the internal front elevation today.



Above and below: The changes approved in 1985 (post-listing)



In 1990, further changes are proposed in the form of a “new room” to the flank of 33 Willow Cottages. The somewhat generic conservatory-style design is unsympathetic to the existing house. The application was withdrawn which suggests that it was indicated by officers that the proposal was likely to be refused.



1990: The proposed conservatory was taller than envisaged in the current proposals, reaching to first floor level

Today, the house appears to retain its original, 19th century windows and frames on its front elevation with those windows on the flank of modern (but in a traditional style) and inter-war Crittalls on the rear.

The front steps are not original and have lost their stone surface and original balustrade. The garden boundary has also been changed substantially. Judging by surviving examples further along the terrace, the front gardens were once bounded by iron railings and gates set into a stone plinth. As the terrace descends the slope, the railings are likely to have been set into a dwarf wall that would increase in height as it gets to the corner (created later) with Willoughby Road.

Much of the wall around 33 Willow Cottages appears to be relatively recent and includes changes such as the formation of a hard standing. However, some 19th century brickwork may survive on the lowest courses of the wall facing Willow Road around the pedestrian gate. Elsewhere, all the structure post-dates the 1930s and appears to have been rebuilt in stages at various times.

Photographs of these elements are included in the submission.

3.0 Significance

3.1 Assessing Significance

Significance is at the heart of the heritage planning process, and is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as:

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

In statutory terms, the importance of Willow Cottages has already been recognised through its Grade II listing. This makes it 'nationally important and of special interest'. However this designation reflects only the statutory importance of the building; it does not set out what features are important, or to what degree; nor does it describe what elements play a neutral role, or detract from significance.

Understanding these aspects is essential in enabling informed decisions to be taken when proposing alterations to the site, so that its special interest can be conserved wherever possible. The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of significance, so that the effects of any proposed changes upon the listed building can be fully evaluated.

This Heritage Statement assesses the significance of the building in accordance with national planning policy guidance and with the 'heritage values' criteria in mind that inform significance as set out in English Heritage/Historic England's *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (2008). There are four broad values, some of which consist of more than one type. These are:

Evidential Value – relating to physical evidence on the site, i.e. archaeology.

Historical Value – how an asset can connect us to the past, usually through illustrating aspects of the past, or by association with noteworthy people, movements or events.

Aesthetic Value – which can derive from the design of an asset, or perhaps through more fortuitous occurrences over time.

Communal Value – relating to what a place means for people, whether it is the commemorative or symbolic values of a place that people derive part of their identity from or have particular memories of, or the social value that accrues to a place which performs a community role through its distinctiveness or function as a place of interaction, or the spiritual value such as can be found in places of worship.

The assessment draws upon the historical understanding set out in chapter 2.0, and follows established conservation practice in using the following terms:

High Significance – original elements that make up the principal historical and architectural interest of the building/site.

Medium/Significance – original elements which contribute noticeably to the site's overall architectural or historic interest; or non-original features of particular historic or design interest.

Low/Some Significance – original elements of rather minor importance, or non-original features which contribute positively to the site's character to some extent.

Neutral or Detracting – features which do not contribute positively to the historic and architectural interest of the site, and in some cases may even detract from an appreciation of its significance.

These terms are used in a purely relative sense within the context of the site, and should not be taken as descriptions of the absolute significance of elements compared to those of other listed buildings. In the accompanying significance drawings, the following colour code has been used ('neutral' and 'detracts' elements have been identified separately to provide a more detailed assessment):

Highly significant – red
Significant – yellow
Some significance – green
Neutral/Detracts – blue

The section below describes the significance of the various parts of the building based on the criteria above. It looks at the terrace as a whole, 33 Willow Cottages and this part of the Hampstead Conservation Area.

3.2 Willow Cottages as a Terrace

As a grade II –listed heritage asset, the terrace is of high significance. Its value is largely aesthetic with some historical value as workers cottages created in the expanding, then suburb of Hampstead.

Because the rears and interiors have been extensively altered in the inter-war period and since, the terrace's principal significance is in its scale, the front elevation, any surviving interiors, and its occupation of the rear of long front-garden plots – an arrangement that is echoed elsewhere in Hampstead such as the rather grander terrace where East Heath Road meets South End Road. Although the *Streets of Hampstead* suggests that Willow Cottages was built for watercress workers, there is no evidence proffered to support this and none has been found separately.

As workers cottages, the scale, elevations and garden context are a humble, more informal composition than might be expected in a more formal, 18th or early 19th century house on a more 'urban' rated street. They are designed to be seen amongst planting but their original garden walls and railings have in large part been lost for much of the frontage. The front elevations and fenestration patterns of the terrace remains much more uniform. They are somewhat old-fashioned for their date and this may be a reflection of the fact that they are by a builder rather than an architect's hand.

The Neo-Georgian doorcases could well have been installed in the 1930s at the same time as the rears of the terrace were comprehensively altered and the front area wells extended. Individual doors and front steps have also been altered since. The front-to-back depth of the front wells varies along the terrace.

Unexpectedly, despite searches at a number of archives, pre-war photographs of the terrace have not been uncovered.

Further elements of the terrace's significance, and that of its setting, are discussed below in the sections on No 33 itself and its role within this part of the Hampstead Conservation Area.



The Site today behind 20th century boundary wall and 1980s gates.

3.3 No 33 Willow Cottages

Number 33 Willow Cottages has been subject to more external change than the remainder of the group; partly because it is an end of terrace and this has provided opportunities for alterations, and partly because of the change in its context with the building of Willoughby Road along its flank. This has led to more individuality in the appearance of no 33 and its setting even while it remains part of a whole. Comprehensive alterations in the 1930s and 1980s have further transformed the original appearance of the building internally and externally.

Despite these alterations to its front, side and rear, overall, it remains of high significance as a grade II listed building. However, its constituent features are of varying significance as set out below:

Front Elevation

The front elevation is, relatively, unchanged in its retention of slate roof, arch-headed windows (which appear to be original or at least early) and stucco finishes, including the moulded quoins.

However, the door and doorcase are much newer. The doorcase, though sympathetic, is potentially part of inter-war changes that occurred along much of the length of the terrace while the door itself is modern. The front steps have been re-finished and stonework lost. The area railings do not appear to be original.

Referring to the original plans (although we do not know if it was actually built as such), it would seem to have had a round-head, recessed entrance door and a much smaller front area than today with crossed railings surrounding it. The original plans also show No 33 as having two basement doors onto the area rather than one – as elsewhere. One door was under the steps, the other, to the right of the basement window, appears to have been removed.

The original front windows are of high significance, the doorcase is of some significance (at best) and the front door and steps of neutral/detracting significance.

Rear Elevation

This face of the building (and the terrace) has been comprehensively remodelled. The changes of the 1930s turned a very basic cottage consisting of three stacked rooms with rear basement extension and outside privy into a small but still simple house with more modern facilities. The rear extension was either removed or remodelled as a full height rear extension to two neighbouring properties with a flat roof meeting the original pitch (adjacent houses followed). With its sloping, tiled sills, concrete lintels and possibly, Crittall windows (which remain in a small flank window and elsewhere on the rear of the terrace), this was the utilitarian aspect of the '30s Neo-Georgianising of the row.

The lowest part of the rear elevation's brickwork, if a retention and adaption of the original, is, therefore, of high significance (of some significance if not) with the rest of the rear brickwork being of some significance only. The wooden sashes at ground and first are modern and are of neutral significance, as are the altered windows and door at basement level.



The rear and flank elevations of No 33. The flat-roofed, full-height rear addition dates from the early 20th century (the bay to No 34 is later). None of the windows in the gable wall are original. A shed occupies some of the extension site. Note the variety of architectural forms and styles including the double height glazed extension on Willow Road opposite.



View to Willoughby Road showing the variety of architectural styles and materials in this part of the Hampstead Conservation Area

Flank Elevation

Originally, the house had no openings in its flank. These were all introduced at various times in the 20th century and subsequently and repeatedly altered.

What appears to be part of the 1930s alterations (although they are not marked on the plans and could be later still) includes a small Crittall window on the first floor serving a bathroom. It now has a brick lintel but retains its tiled sill. It may well have had a concrete lintel similar to the rear elevation windows when built.

The 1930s plans show no further side windows but those on the ground floor and first floor landing are shown as 'existing' in the proposal plans of 1955, suggesting an installation date of between 1937 and 1955. These have concrete sills and arched brick lintels.

The flank window at ground floor was later changed to a pair of French windows with, presumably, steps down into the side garden. This can be glimpsed over the garden wall in a photograph. The location of the steps can be traced in the modern brickwork inserted below the window.

Further changes were made following the 1985 consents including the replacement of the French windows with a ground floor sash above a concrete sill. All sashes on the flank appear to date from the 1980s. This is shown as existing in the survey drawing of 1985 but does not appear in any earlier drawings. Its internal timber architrave actually overlaps the stair indicating that it post-dates the staircase.

Overall, the heritage significance of the flank is high above ground floor where original brickwork remains but there is very limited original brickwork at ground floor. The flank windows and their openings are of no heritage value and have neutral significance. The upper rear part of the flank brickwork (ie that section built when the house was extended full-height in the 1930s) is, at best, of some significance only.

Interior

The many changes made to the interior over the course of the 20th century mean that there is little evidence remaining of the original

organisation and details. The most radical changes were those of the 1930s (prior to listing) and the 1980s (post listing). The house has also been used as one home together with no 34 for a period via an opening in the party wall at first floor level.

Originally, it is likely that there would have been very simple cornices and skirtings at ground and first floor but these have been entirely lost. There may also have been simple mouldings at basement level but these too no longer exist nor does original plasterwork survive elsewhere.

Partitions at ground and first floor level have also been extensively altered – either removed or relocated or new partitions erected at various times including most extensively in the 1980s from which the current arrangement dates. Only short runs of three partitions may contain original material: Firstly, perhaps a fifth of the basement level partition between the original main room and rear room in various sections. Secondly, nibs at either end of what originally would have been the rear, external wall at ground floor level and first level and thirdly, perhaps, a short length at ground floor adjacent to the various staircases that have been built.

Even the staircase compartment has been changed repeatedly from basement to first floor. When built, the houses had an unusual arrangement in that the staircase from ground to basement descended from inside the front door. The staircase from ground to first rose from the middle of the house on the end wall towards the inner front wall at first floor level.

All the changes to this arrangement are unclear but the 'existing' and proposed plans of 1955 both show the ground to first floor staircase rising up towards the front elevation.

Since at least 1985 (from when the current staircase and all its enclosing partitions date), the arrangement has been that the staircase rise from ground to first inside the front door to a middle landing off which various rooms open. The staircase to the basement now descends from the middle of the end wall down to a point beneath the entrance steps. The only internal detail that appears to survive from before the most recent period is perhaps the newel post and some balusters at first floor level which may date from the 1930s changes when the first floor landing was created in this position and were perhaps reused in different ways in the

various remodellings post 1955. It is possible that they are good reproductions. Today, the staircase compartment contains substantial internal windows with wire-glass.

All these changes have been necessary to facilitate the changing plan form that today is very different to the original arrangement. At basement level some sense of the relationship between the rear and main rooms survives with the retention of nibs either side of a wide opening. At ground floor level too, the dimensions of the main room can still be discerned despite the staircase changes. However, the 1930s rear additions and the staircase changes have fundamentally altered the partis. At first floor level, nothing remains of the original arrangement beyond a chimney breast.

The timber shutters installed to various windows also date from this period. They are somewhat sympathetic in design but their cases are heavy and obscure the original windows and mouldings and block a considerable amount of light. They are also somewhat anachronistic, reflecting a Georgian or Regency model rather than a cottage from the second half of the 19th century. Mantlepieces too are modern.

Overall, the interior can be said to be of three phases – Mid-Victorian, 1930's Neo Georgian and 1980s nostalgia. Beyond the nibs and vestiges of plan form mentioned above, nothing remains internally of the Mid-Victorian building, not even its staircase compartment. The first floor has been extensively re-divided. The only important survivors are the front elevation windows that are addressed above.

In significance terms, the interior of the house is of high significance only in the three small vestiges of the original primary rear wall that remain. The interior is of some significance only for what survives of the highly compromised plan form of the main room at basement and ground. All else, including the shutters, plasterwork, the later flank and rear windows are either of neutral significance, or, in the case of most extant internal partitions including the staircase compartment, detract from significance.

A full set of interior photographs is included within the design & access statement.

The Garden and Garden Walls

As demonstrated by the Understanding section above, the long front gardens to Willow Cottages are part of its original setting and these are of interest to the setting of the terrace and contribute to its significance.

However, 33 Willow Road is somewhat of a variation on this pattern. Originally, it had a long, parallel front garden to match its neighbours with parallel boundary walls. But, as explained above, it was also flanked by a small plot with an area of hardstanding/drive. Following the construction of Willoughby Road, this separate triangle of land remained in place until at least 1935 and was incorporated into the side garden of no 33 shortly afterwards, facilitating the proposal for a side extension in 1936. This part of the garden area is then of very little significance in respect of the disposition of the house and terrace – it did not form part of the original terrace design.

The boundary treatment to no. 33 also diverges from the rest of the terrace and post-dates the 1930s changes. In the absence of early photographs, one assumes that there was once a uniform boundary treatment to the Willow Road frontage to the Willow Cottages terrace. The remains of railings and gate piers individually set into york stone near the opposite end of the terrace suggests that this was the original pattern for the whole frontage but this is not certain. Today, front boundary treatments to Willow Cottages vary from railings to wooden pickets to brick walls of various types. The lack of uniformity could be regarded as somewhat detracting from the significance of the setting.

It may be that one or two of the lowest courses of a dwarf wall for these railings survive in front of 33 around the pedestrian gate (this material would be of some significance at most) but south of this a crossover and gates have been created, and a new wall formed to enclose the adjacent triangle of land within the garden from the 1930s onwards. This has been rebuilt since at least once. This length of brick wall is of no intrinsic heritage significance – although a brick wall is a suitable boundary to the terrace in the absence of a surviving run of railings. The poorly designed gates themselves (pedestrian and vehicular) are modern and detract. The stone slab below the pedestrian gate, however, appears to be original and has some significance.

3.2 Hampstead Conservation Area

Most conservation areas are of low significance and of local importance as a type of heritage asset. Hampstead is a conservation area that can be regarded as having at least regional importance in London and its significance is at the higher end of this low range.

Willow Cottages make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area and to its significance. The inter-war alterations to the rear of the properties detract from this assessment, somewhat. Boundary enclosures to the long front gardens of Willow Cottages, in principle, also make up part of this contribution but the boundary of no 33 is poor, making the most minor of contributions to the conservation area by virtue of its presence rather than absence and not for its historic fabric or detailed design. The side garden – formerly a separate plot, has not entirely been satisfactorily integrated to the plot to date.

The Conservation Area Statement for the Hampstead Conservation Area includes Willow Cottages in its Sub Area Three character area (Willoughby Road and Downshire Hill). This area is described thus in the document:

This is the area that curves around the edge of the Heath, built on one side, facing the open spaces and vegetation of the Heath. In general many properties have brick walls (either London stock or gault) to match the main house or its details and there are usually piers with caps, and railings.

Willow Road itself is described as following:

Willow Road runs east from the junction of Flask Walk/ Well Walk down the hill to South End Road. On the south side four storey terraced houses (1870's & 1880's) in red or gault brickwork, face East Heath. At the top of the hill are Nos.42-48, a terrace in gault brick, similar in design to some on Gayton Road. They are three storey with semi-basements, pitched roofs and prominent chimneys due to the stepping of the houses. Some have been painted, which does little to enhance them. The rear elevations are visible from Gayton Crescent and Gayton Road. They have low front brick walls topped with railings between piers. The side brick wall to No.42 has interesting curved coping bricks. A poorly designed dormer mairs No.44. Just beyond the junction with

Gayton Crescent are Willow Cottages (listed), a pretty group of nine cottages, built in the mid- 19th century. They are distinctive due to their pastel colours, long front gardens and unaltered boundary walls, windows and rooflines. The paving in front of the terrace is red brick. On the north side is Willow Buildings, two mid-19th century blocks of flats, raised above street level and facing a courtyard. They were radically altered in the 1960s that included changing the front elevations. The boundary to Willow Road has a brick wall with recessed arches and an arched entrance with steps up to the flats. As the road curves towards South End Road Nos.8-32 form a terrace with a considerable variety of design within it. Most of the buildings are three storey and have semi-basements. Boundaries vary and are either a front wall with piers, caps and railings or a brick wall with a hedge. Bricks generally match the house behind

This description is now somewhat out-of-date in that Willow Cottages is now a uniform off-white and inaccurate in that its boundary walls are not unaltered (a conspicuous misconception). And while the front roof slopes remain unaltered, the rear of the row has been altered considerably and the front wells along the terrace are of varying depths – some much more generous than that at No 33.

4.0 Legislation, Policies and Guidance

4.1 Introduction

This section sets out policies in respect of the preservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting including those related to listed buildings and conservation areas within the National Planning Policy Framework and the London Plan. It also sets out the Council's emerging planning policies in respect of the need to safeguard and enhance heritage assets in line with national policy and guidance.

4.2 Statutory Controls

Listed buildings and conservation areas are subject to the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, together with parts of the *Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013*. Section 7 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act* provides that listed building consent is required for:

any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest ...

Section 16(2) of the Act states that:

In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority ... shall 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.

With regard to applications for planning permission affecting the setting of listed buildings, Section 66 of the Act requires that:

...in considering whether to grant planning permission for development that affects a listed building or its setting or whether to grant listed building consent, the local authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) sets out regarding applications for planning permission within conservation areas that:

s.72(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

There is no corresponding statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of conservation areas.

Case Law

Recent case law has added clarification to the interpretation of Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66 states that special regard must be given by the authority in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing Listed Buildings and their setting.

It has been held that in enacting Section 66(1) of the 1990 Act, Parliament intended that the desirability of preserving the settings of listed buildings should not simply be given careful consideration by the decision-maker for the purpose of deciding whether there would be some harm. It should be given 'considerable importance and weight' when the decision-maker carried out the balancing exercise.

4.3 National Planning Policy and Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework

The *National Planning Policy Framework* introduced in March 2012 replaced previous Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and sets out the Government's planning policies for England on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. The Latest version dates from February 2019.

NPPF identifies the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development and places emphasis on the role of planning in creating strong, vibrant and healthy sustainable communities, strong and competitive economies and protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environments.

It identifies a presumption in favour of sustainable development and entails seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural

and historic environment.

Paragraph 195 of the NPPF (February 2019) requires applicants 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary...

This report meets these requirements at an appropriate level of detail.

National heritage policy governing the application of the primary legislation is contained within section 16 of the latest NPPF.

Pertinent paragraphs to this Site and proposals are:

193. *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). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*
194. *Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:*
- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
 - b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional⁶³.*
195. *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 total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

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

196. 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

197. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect 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.

198. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

In respect of Conservation Areas:

200. Local planning authorities should 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 the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

201. *Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site 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.*

- The NPPF is accompanied by the online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The Government published an updated *Historic Environment* section of the PPG on 23 July 2019 to reflect the changes made to the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) since the 2012 edition.

And as of March 2015, *PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment: Practice Guide* (2010) that predates the NPPF has been replaced by Good Practice Advice notes including, to date:

Good Practice Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment
Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets

This supercedes now withdrawn guidance on the subject (2011).

These documents amplify and explain concepts contained within the NPPF and PPG with the need to assess the impact on the significance of an asset and its setting continuing to be at the heart of the process.

Historic England Advice Notes have also been issued that include detailed, practical advice on how to implement national planning policy and guidance. Among the relevant advice notes published to date are:

Historic England Advice Note 1 - Conservation Areas
Historic England Advice Note 2 - Making Changes to Heritage Assets

Conservation Principles was published by English Heritage (now Historic

England) in 2008. It provides a comprehensive framework for the sustainable management of the historic environment, wherein 'Conservation' is defined as "the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations". The guidance also provides a set of four heritage values, which are used to assess significance. The values are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal and are discussed in Section 4 of this report.

4.4 Regional Planning Policy

The London Plan Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (2016) consolidates alterations to the Plan since 2011. It is the overall strategic plan for Greater London. It sets out an integrated economic, environmental, social and transport framework for the development of London over the next 20-25 years.

It maintains that development should have regard to the physical character of a place through providing high quality design response to the form, function, structure, scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings. Policy 7.8 relates to heritage assets specifically. Relevant elements include the following:

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

...Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology...

Planning decisions

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

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

4.5 Local Planning Policy

Camden's Local Plan, adopted in 2017, sets out the Council's planning policies, providing a robust and effective framework within which development can take place. The principal policy of relevance to this assessment is D2 – Heritage, which is reproduced below:

Policy D2 Heritage

The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.

Designated Heritage Assets

Designed heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, 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:

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

The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

Conservation areas

Conservation areas are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies when assessing applications within conservation areas.

The Council will:

a require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;

b resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;

c resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and

d preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden's Architectural Heritage

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- a. resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;*
- b. b 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*
- c. resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.*

Other heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets

The Council will seek to protect other heritage assets including non-designated heritage assets (including those on and off the local list), Registered Parks and Gardens and London Squares. The effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be

weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, balancing the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan

The Site falls within the boundary of the Hampstead plan adopted in October 2018. This document~~ed~~ also has policies on design and conservation.

Policy DH1 addresses design and encourages local distinctiveness and respect of local character and context by development proposals.

Policy DH2 addresses conservation areas and listed building and states that development proposals should take opportunities to enhance conservation areas and to protect and/enhance buildings that make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Camden Planning Guidance provides advice and information on how the council implements its planning policies. The adopted CPG documents can be 'material considerations' in planning decisions, although they have less weight than the Local Plan or other development plan documents. Adopted CPG documents include:

- Altering and extending your home CPG - March 2019
- Design CPG - March 2019
- Basements CPG - March 2018

The Basements policies state that new basements should be subordinate and respect the original design and proportions of the building including its architectural period and style and minimise the loss of garden. It notes that some areas of Camden are characterised by front lightwells and that their presence helps define and reinforce the character of an area. It adds that basements in long front gardens are more easily concealed by landscaping and that basement extensions to a listed building will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Skylights are not usually acceptable (rather than never acceptable) because of a concern for light spill harming the appearance of a garden setting.

In addition are Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan types of documents that also form part of supplementary planning guidance including the *Hampstead Conservation Area Statement* adopted in 2001.

5.0 The Proposals

The proposals for the Site are for internal rearrangement that reduces later layers of subdivision to make better use of the very small spaces and to update the accommodation to a standard expected for a family house in this area while at the same time conserving its significance and where possible better revealing its significance.

Internally, the floor plan will be rationalised and the evolution of the house from the original stack of single rooms (with a rear basement kitchen) to the two-cell larger house resulting from the full-height rear extension in the early 20th century made more apparent. Various external repairs and reinstatements are proposed such as a stone finish to the front steps and to address the cracking from historic movement (there is evidence of previous corrective measures on the gable) using very small Helibar ties.

A side extension is proposed at semi-basement level that is hidden within the boundary wall of the side garden and capped by a planted roof. This allows the only generous internal space possible within the constrained Site. This extension's front well would be a continuation of the existing well to No 33 which is less generous than those extant elsewhere on the terrace. The rear alley would remain.

The extension would be built into the established slope of the site and would be set at only a slightly lower level than the current basement floor of the house and will be accessed through new openings at basement level.

The front and rear elevations of the new extension will be slightly set back from the existing front and rear elevations of the house. The well in front will be also accessible via a set of shallow external steps from the front garden. The flat roof to the new extension incorporates shielded rooflights orientated to the gable avoid light spill.

The existing boundary wall is, in very large part, a relatively modern construction with a pier and panel design on the Willoughby Road flank. It is also in very poor structural condition with cracks and a pronounced

lean. The aim is to rebuild a more sympathetic wall that has the additional benefit in reducing the underpinning necessary in the gable to the main house by providing additional stability (this is discussed below).

6.0 Impact Assessment

Internal Changes

As has been described above, the interior of the house has gone through repeated and extensive changes that have all but removed original fabric except, potentially, for the small areas of partitions noted. Even the staircase compartment has changed repeatedly. Much of the interior is post-war with many partitions, details such as skirtings, and the staircase dating from the 1980s.

The proposals rationalise the interior layout and in so doing bring more clarity to the house's evolution – ie a stack of front rooms with a rear basement space with later rear extensions above. The result relieves the sense of over crowding internally by simplifying the interior spaces allowing a greater enjoyment of the original volumes and plan form.

The removal of an insensitive bathroom and the insertion of folding partitions and a downstand beam at ground floor, for instance, allow the volumes of the front and rear rooms – the historic two cell layout – to be better read. Interior elements such as any new skirtings and doors will be appropriate for the period and their details can be supplied as a condition. No original features will be lost. The overly heavy reproduction shutters from the 1980s that conceal original details will be removed.

In the basement, a new underheated floor with a gypsum board layer, with timber floating floor over, will be scribed around the historic front window apron. These works aim to resolve issues of damp, remove non-original sections of internal wall, upgrade the existing wc and shower area to create an accessible wetroom solution suited to use by ambulant disabled visitors and involve removing the existing, non-original kitchen and local boxing-out of services. Breathable Dryzone Hi-Lime Renovation Plaster will be used. New furniture elements will all be freestanding and have no impact on the historic fabric.

The 1980s staircase connecting the ground and basement floors will be replaced with an elegant intervention, occupying the same position and width as the extant staircase. This new flight will be formed of a slender section, folded metal plate with discrete structure beneath and delicate metal railings serving as balustrading, clearly reading as a reversible, distinct and contemporary addition and which replaces 1980s pastiche.

At first floor, the proposals remove ill-fitting service enclosures, awkward, built-in cupboards, excessive partitioning and the resulting poor circulation to create two clear and distinct bedroom spaces. A new family bathroom will be located under the ridge, discretely lit from above with a new conservation Velux rooflight set below the slate level. The rooflight will not be visible from Willow Road. This change allows the removal of insensitive wcs and associated partitions and visible pipe runs at first floor and raised ground floor level.

A very minor loss of original material will occur only in the basement area by the formation of the internal connections through the gable wall at basement level to the new extension. Much of this material on the outer face is at present buried.

The effect of these changes on significance is limited but the clarity brought to the floor plan at all levels will constitute a moderate enhancement to the heritage significance of the house, better revealing its historic compartmentalisation. The removal of the ill-judged and low-quality works of the 1980s and the insertion of high-quality contemporary elements that are complementary but make a clear distinction between historic and modern elements is also a gain. Together these substantially outweigh the small loss of material in the basement gable wall.

External Changes to the Existing House

Beyond repairs and the removal of redundant services pipes and an alarm casing, the changes to the main house are limited with the exception of the restoration of the historic appearance of the front steps and front door. These are a key element of the exterior character of the house. At present, the concrete front steps are a prominent detracting element and their remodelling to create a natural stone finish will be a prominent enhancement to the appearance of the house and a positive impact on its significance. The pre-war Neo-Georgian doorcases to No 33 and some adjacent houses on the terrace are not especially fine but have some significance in that they are part of the evolution of the house. The doorcase at No 33 will remain in situ.

Access to the existing lightwell will be reinstated in its original position matching that of the neighbours along the terrace.

The proposal necessitates the blocking up the bottom half of the low level 'sash' (actually a fixed light) in the gable wall that lights the lower end of the basement stair. This window is entirely a late 20th century insertion and has no heritage significance. Salvaged brick and lime-based render to match the existing fabric will be used for the infill area.

Windows and the external door with a fixed light over, to the rear at basement level, are machine-made and not original. They almost certainly post-date the 1930s rear extension. The doors and fixed light will remain but the flanking windows will be replaced in a style sympathetic to the original front windows whose details can be supplied as a condition. The house will also be repainted externally in a shade that tones with the terrace using breathable paint. No new service pipes will be visible externally. These changes to doors and fenestration will, overall, have a neutral impact on significance while the reinstatement of the door to the well will be a minor benefit.

The Extension

The unique plot and boundary arrangements to No 33 as an end of terrace with an enlarged garden is set out above. The terrace as a whole with its relatively long front gardens and small rear yards is set within a heavily planted, informal townscape. This is very different from the more urban terrace that is set at back of pavement level with a front area and whose full facade is visible at a glance. The arrangement at Willow Cottages reflects the semi-rural location at the time of building and in some ways the combination of long front garden, front well and small rear yard reflects a hybrid typology somewhere between a fully urban and fully rural environment. This arrangement is preserved and extended to the new basement addition.

No 33's unique plot – which is substantively different from the remainder of the terrace having absorbed adjacent land in the 1930s – together with the concealed nature of the basement addition, and because of its low-level location and screening planting, means that there is scope here, in principle, for a basement side extension without causing harm to the significance of the property or having any impact on the public realm.

The fact that the entire terrace is not viewed foursquare from back of pavement but is instead appreciated sequentially among planting in kinetic views means that a discreet extension can be achieved without disturbing the balance of the terrace as a whole.

Camden's basement guidance notes that some areas of Camden are characterised by front lightwells and that their presence helps define and reinforce the character of an area (as in this case). It also notes that basements in long front gardens are more easily concealed by landscaping. The proposals are in accord with this advice.

The extension does not displace earlier elements of significance and is carefully limited in terms of the opening up of the basement flank wall of the house.

By virtue of its small scale and hidden location, it is entirely subservient to the main house and set back from its front and rear elevations. The planted roof serves as a continuation of the garden. Inside is a new kitchen space with a folding glazed screen onto the new lightwell which forms the extension's only visible wall. The new room has a cast terrazzo lining to its floor, up the walls to dado height and to the kitchen surfaces and splashback – this high quality treatment continues into the hidden lightwell. The front elevation is faced with fixed panels of textured cast iron – a material also used for delicate balustrading to the new well.

Because the new addition is so effectively concealed, three circular lightwells of descending size are necessary to allow sufficient light in. Externally, they sit within the wild flower planted roof and their pitch falls within raised cast-iron collar shields towards the existing gable to minimise spill to the garden. Thorough planting within the garden and the boundary wall around it further curtail the risk of light spill although it is acknowledged that there may be some very limited awareness of light from these features.

It is noted that light itself is not subject to planning controls and the light sources themselves will not be visible.

Structurally, the new extension, essentially an independent reinforced concrete box hidden beneath ground level, will act as a rigid diaphragm providing lateral restraint to the gable wall. Its substructure does not rely on the existing building for any vertical or lateral support. The excavations for its slab do not extend below the underside of the existing gable wall foundations to No. 33 Willow Road and will not therefore undermine the existing adjoining building. A Basement Impact Assessment has also been carried out and, in heritage terms, it has been demonstrated that the potential for movement is either Category 0 (negligible) or Category 1 (very slight and non structural). Overall, the BIA finds that the impact of the basement will be negligible.

Overall, the extension takes up a small proportion of the garden setting of No 33 (and part of its footprint replaces a timber lean-to shed). It falls within the space standard set out in Camden's basement guidance leaving a substantial area of the garden for planting. It also utilizes a part of the side garden that has never been satisfactorily integrated into the garden as a whole since the area was incorporated within the boundary in the 1930s. It continues the established pattern of Willow Cottages which is of front wells in relatively lengthy front gardens. It does not shorten the length of garden in front of No 33.

The inner edge of the lightwell corresponds to the existing well line to the main house. Its profile in section reflects the existing lightwell to No 33 with a vertical retaining wall up to level and gently sloping from there to garden level (see John Hyam's plan of October 1936 showing a section through the existing lightwell). This softly integrates the well into the garden in a manner that allows planting and rainfall attenuation without diminishing the length of the front garden as has happened elsewhere along the terrace. The lightwell is also concealed from view by its location, by planting and by the boundary wall and a new guard rail to the well.

Overall, the only negative impact on significance will be the small loss of side (not front) garden area and the changed relationship from a gable end rising immediately out of a garden to one related to the discreet extension. This impact on the house will be minor adverse but taken within the context of the overall works to the house where there are minor to moderate enhancements to significance, the better use of this land and the high quality of the extension proposals, the impact of the extension on the house as an asset will, on balance, be neutral.

Hampstead's tradition of contemporary extensions within historic contexts is discussed further below.

Boundary Wall

As evidenced above, the flank garden wall around to a point parallel to the gable only dates from the 1930s when the garden was extended. It is not certain if it even qualifies as a curtilage structure as it appears, in greater part, to post-date July 1948 – some parts date from the 1980s changes.

The wall has no heritage significance with the possible (but by no means certain) exception of the lowest course either side of the pedestrian front

gate. The brick pier and panel design of the wall is also atypical and unsympathetic as a boundary wall to a house of this style which draws on Regency/Italianate models.

It is also in very poor condition and requires reconstruction for this reason alone. This allows the removal of dead planting that has damaged the wall in the past and reconstructing it flat-faced in salvaged stock bricks in English garden wall bond – an appearance much more sympathetic to the terrace.

This approach has an important additional advantage in that it reduces the degree of underpinning needed under the gable wall of the house that would otherwise have been necessary to facilitate the extension. By rebuilding the wall in a stable fashion, mini-piles can instead be used to support the new extension floor slab which provide resistance to the bending loads from the boundary wall and which minimise effects on groundwater flows.

Reconstructing the wall just one course higher also allows the extension behind to be fully concealed from the street beyond.

The detracting modern vehicular metal gates to Willow Road will be replaced by close-boarded folding timber gates on steel frames that further contribute to the shielding of the garden and the works from the road. The pedestrian gate will be refurbished and the modern tubular arch above it replaced with a more suitable flat profiled arch.

These changes to the boundary condition will have a neutral effect on the wall as a potential heritage asset because it has almost no significance to begin with but it greatly improves the setting of No 33, so enhancing its significance. The new wall also enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.



The boundary wall in 1986 during the formation of the vehicular gates. The wall post dates the 1930s inclusion of the side plot into the garden. Only the stump remains of the large sycamore tree that damaged the wall.



There is a great variety of boundary treatments to Willow Cottages in terms of materials, forms and heights. Even in winter, extensive planting forms part of the Picturesque and informal character of the terrace.

Wider Setting: Willow Cottages and the Conservation Area

The relationship of No 33 to the wider terrace has been discussed above; it forms part of a whole but has its own distinctive end-of terrace features. The external proposals to the main house at No 33 have a minor beneficial impact on the rest of the terrace, improving appearance and reinstating some lost historical details while replacing an ugly and failing garden wall with a more appropriate boundary treatment. These proposals enhance the setting of the terrace as a whole as well as No 33 itself.

It is recognised that the form and location of the extension is a departure from the pattern of the rest of the terrace but it is discreet, being set back and down, beneath a planted roof and behind garden planting. It is also a high quality design that respects the terrace without resorting to pastiche. More importantly, the overriding character and appearance of the terrace is more in the Picturesque tradition where it is the interplay between built form and planting that is paramount. Planting, long front gardens and topography mean that the terrace is not a formal, fully urban terrace that is designed to be viewed foursquare and demanding a rigid uniformity to its setting. This allows for informality and for variation that doesn't disrupt the terrace's cohesiveness. Even from the garden of No 34 next door, the extension will only be glimpsed through planting, set as it is behind the continued well and set back from the main frontage. The long front garden remains in situ so the extension does not disrupt this uniting feature of the terrace. No harm is caused.

From further afield, whether from other gardens or in nearby streets, the extension will not be visible at all. Visibility is only likely from the upper floors of some nearby houses including house opposite that has its own substantial and elevated contemporary extension. Again, distance, the sunken and set back nature of the extension and its location behind planting and an improved brick boundary wall means that the extension element has no impact at all on the character or appearance of this part of this part of the Hampstead Conservation Area and causes no harm.

Contemporary Design in Hampstead's Historic Contexts

There is a long and honourable tradition in Hampstead of successful high-quality contemporary insertions within the historic streets of Hampstead. Examples stretch as far back as Goldfinger's house on Willow Road itself through to the pioneers of Hi-tech and others. This

approach – well designed, respectful foils rather than pastiche – is now part of the conservation area’s established character and a recognised way of addressing alterations to heritage assets. These act as precedents for the equally contemporary but respectful proposals. They range from entirely new houses such as that by Mark Guard nearby at 44 Willoughby Road with its white woven screen frontage to 6a Architects 2012 work at the Grade I – listed Romney’s House. The accompanying Design & Access Statement includes other examples of contemporary additions to historic buildings from further afield such as Chris Dyson’s Wapping House and OMXX’s Canonbury House.

Also noted is the very prominent glazed side extension to the Grade II-listed 75 Flask Walk, which is very close to the Site and granted on appeal. In his decision letter, the inspector noted the “considerable variety of architectural styles and forms” in the locale and that the proposal “would make its own modest contribution towards the character and variety of the townscape”. A variety of styles and forms is equally a characteristic of the area where Willow Road meets Willoughby Road.

7.0 Conclusions

The impact of the proposals various elements have been set out above. These range from neutral impacts (such as on the conservation area and setting of the terrace as a whole) to minor and moderate enhancements (such as the internal improvements to the main house). The only negative aspect of the proposal is the small loss of side garden area which is a minor adverse impact and offset by the better use of land and the high quality extension which enhance the setting of the house. The front garden, which is an important element of the character of the house and terrace of which it forms a part is unaffected. There is no impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area beyond the improvement to the appearance of the garden boundary. Overall, significance is either preserved or enhanced and no harm is caused.

In reaching these conclusions great weight has been given to the conservation of heritage assets and their special interest.

The proposals also accord with Camden’s basement policies in that the proposal is subordinate to the main building and respects (rather than

apes) its architectural period and style. Loss of garden is minimised and the long front garden allows the extension to be “more easily concealed by landscaping”. Light spill from rooflights has been mitigated by the tilting of the extension roof towards the gable wall, by their limited scope and by shielding the rooflights with decorative cast iron collars. They will also be concealed by the surrounding boundary wall and planting.

The proposals therefore accord with national, regional and local heritage planning policy and guidance and the granting of planning permission and listed building consent is requested.

9.0 Appendix – List Description

Location

Statutory Address:

WILLOW COTTAGES, 33-41, WILLOW ROAD

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

Greater London Authority

District:

Camden (London Borough)

National Grid Reference:

TQ 26709 85863

Details

CAMDEN

TQ2685NE WILLOW ROAD 798-1/27/1724 (South side) 14/05/74

Nos.33-41 (Consecutive) Willow Cottages

GV II

Terrace of 9 cottages. c1866. Stucco with rusticated quoins and 1st floor bands. Slated roofs. 2 storeys and semi-basements. 2 windows each. Square-headed doorways with splayed jambs, fanlights and panelled doors; Nos 33-37 with C20 Neo-Georgian doorcases and doors with arched heads. Entrances approached by stone steps with cast-iron railings. Round-arched recessed sashes with splayed jambs; ground floors with margin glazing. Shaped plaque inscribed "Willow Cottages" between 1st floor windows of Nos 37 and 38. INTERIORS: not inspected. HISTORICAL NOTE: built on the site of earlier almshouses.

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