



**69 Avenue Road, London, NW8 6HP:  
Heritage Statement**

**Heritage Significance and Impact Assessment**

**Dorian A. T. A. Crone MRTPI RIBA IHBC**

**Daniel Cummins MA (Oxon) MSc PhD**

**of**

**Heritage Information**

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## 69 Avenue Road Heritage Statement (January 2020)

69 Avenue Road, London – Heritage Statement

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Contact details: Dorian Crone, [atacrone@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:atacrone@hotmail.co.uk)

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## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. 69 Avenue Road, London, NW8 6HP is an unlisted building within the London Borough of Camden. It is not located within a Conservation Area but there are two nearby Conservation Areas which form part of its setting: the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area and St John's Wood Conservation Area, both within the London Borough of Camden. No. 69 is a large detached house built in 1937 to designs by architects Wimperis, Simpson and Guthrie and forms part of a group of houses rebuilt on the Eyre estate at the same time by the same architects. The building is in the Neo-Georgian style of architecture.
- 1.2. This Heritage Statement has been produced to inform pre-application discussions and an application for full planning permission. The proposed scheme consists of a two-storey rear extension designed in a traditional Neo-Georgian idiom, and a new wing to the north designed in a contemporary/modern idiom.
- 1.3. This Heritage Statement complies with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, February 2019) and the online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in respect of Heritage issues. No archaeological assessment has been undertaken as part of this report.
- 1.4. This Heritage Statement sets out:
  - An analysis of the context of the site and the contribution it makes to the settings of the two nearby Conservation Areas and to the settings of any nearby statutorily listed buildings;
  - An appraisal of the historical development and significance of the subject site as existing;
  - An assessment of the potential or actual impact of the proposed works upon the significance of the site and on the settings of any nearby heritage assets.
  - How the proposed works comply with relevant policies in the NPPF and the PPG, and how the works are in accordance with local, regional and national planning policies.
- 1.5. **Summary**
  - The subject site is neither statutorily nor locally listed, and is not located within a Conservation Area. It is considered to possess medium to high evidential value, medium aesthetic value, low to medium historical value, and low communal value. The setting is considered to be of medium value. The front elevation of the building is considered to make a neutral to positive contribution to the settings of both Conservation Areas. The rear elevation is considered to make a neutral contribution.
  - It is considered the overall impact of the proposals would have a minimal and neutral to positive impact on the settings of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area and St John's Wood Conservation Area, and on the settings of nearby statutorily listed buildings fronting Queen's Grove. The design has fully addressed the settings of the two Conservation Areas and listed buildings in accordance with the Historic England guidance on setting (December 2017). The design has also fully addressed the concerns raised by officers of the London Borough of Camden in their two pre-application advice letters (April and November 2019) in relation to the scale, bulk and depth of the proposed north side extension.

## 1.6. Authorship

- **Dorian A T A Crone** BA BArch DipTP RIBA MRTPI IHBC - Heritage and Design Consultant. Dorian has been a Chartered Architect and Chartered Town Planner for over 30 years. He has also been a member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation for 25 years. Dorian is a committee member of The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the International Committee on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), ICOMOS UK and Institute of Historic Building Conservation. He has been a court member with the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects and a trustee of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust. He is currently a trustee of both the Dance and Drake Trusts.

Dorian has worked for over 30 years as Historic Buildings and Areas Inspector with English Heritage, responsible for providing advice to all the London Boroughs and both the City Councils. Dorian has also worked as a consultant and expert witness for over 20 years advising a wide variety of clients on heritage and design matters involving development work, alterations, extensions and new build projects associated with listed buildings and conservation areas in design and heritage sensitive locations. He is a Design Review Panel member of the London Boroughs of Richmond-upon-Thames, Islington, Lewisham and Wandsworth, as well as the Design Council/CABE. He is also a panel member of the John Betjeman Design Award and the City of London Heritage Award. Dorian has also been involved with the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition Architectural Awards and the Philip Webb Award along with a number other public sector and commercial design awards.

- **Dr Daniel Cummins** MA (Oxon) MSc PhD – Historic Environment Consultant. Daniel is an historian with a BA and Master's in History from Oxford University and a doctorate from the University of Reading, where he specialised in ecclesiastical buildings and estates and had his work published in leading academic history journals. Daniel has a Master's in the Conservation of the Historic Environment and provides independent professional heritage advice and guidance to leading architectural practices and planning consultancies, as well as for private clients. He undertakes detailed historical research, significance statements, character appraisals, impact assessments and expert witness statements for new development projects, as well as for alterations and extensions which affect the fabric and settings of Listed Buildings and Locally Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, the outstanding universal value of World Heritage Sites, and all other types of heritage assets.

## 1.7. Methodology

This assessment has been carried out gathering desk-based and fieldwork data. The documentary research was based upon primary and secondary sources of local history and architecture, including maps, drawings and reports. Particular attention was given to the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre, as well as the City of Westminster Archives Centre which holds the records for the Eyre Estate. Dates of elements and construction periods have been identified using documentary sources and visual evidence based upon experience gained from similar building types and sites. A site visit was conducted on 18 July 2018 when a survey of the site and of the surrounding area was conducted by visual inspection to analyse its significance. Consideration has been given to its historical development and the building types and materials of the key buildings which contribute to the identification of the built form and the understanding of the character of the local area.



## 2.0. LOCATION AND CONTEXT

- 2.1. No. 69 Avenue Road is located on the south side of Avenue Road between the junctions with Norfolk Road and Queen's Grove (Figure 1). Avenue Road is a wide, leafy street with a suburban character, albeit with the road being a relatively busy thoroughfare. The mature trees lining the road, along with hedges and other trees in front gardens or visible behind the houses in rear gardens, help to soften the streetscape (Figure 2). This part of Avenue Road comprising three houses at Nos. 65-71 is one of the few parts not included within a Conservation Area.

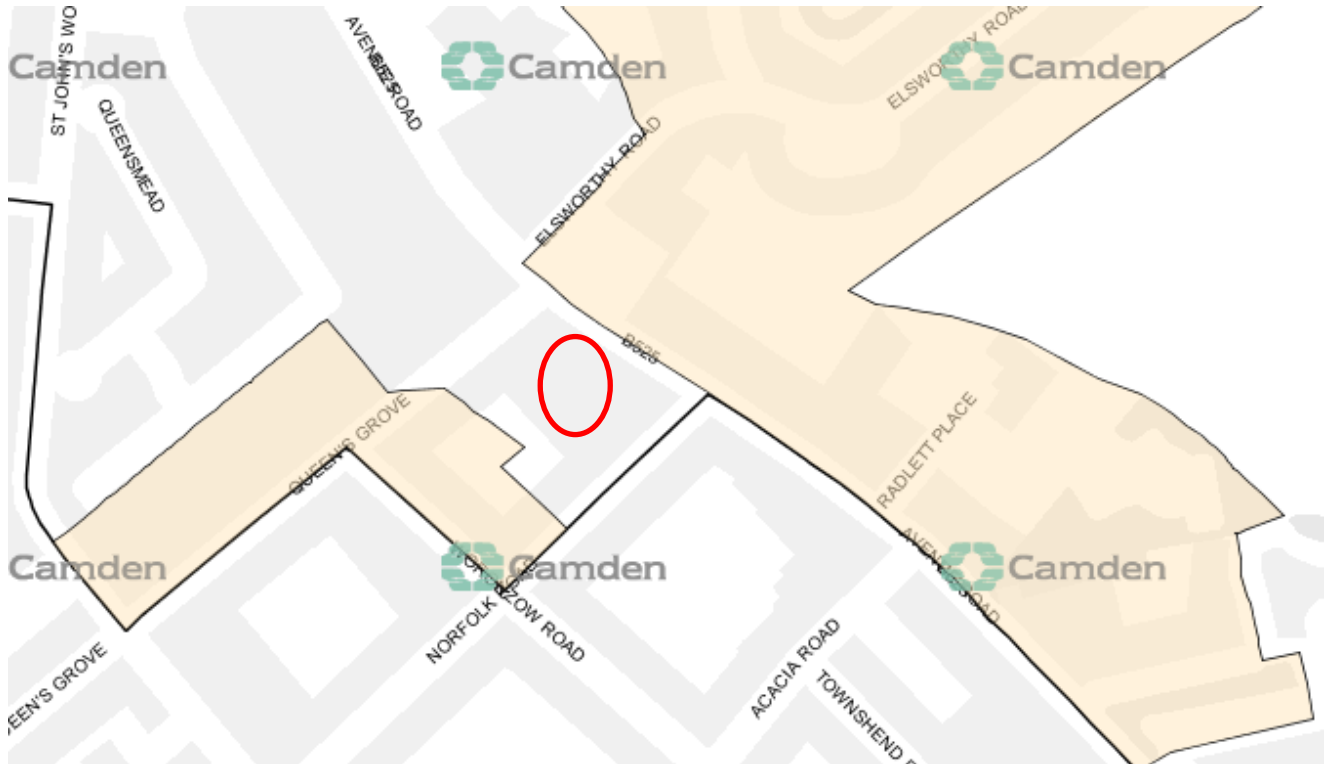


Figure 1: The location of the subject site located between the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area to the north and the St John's Wood Conservation Area to the south-west.



Figure 2: The streetscape of Avenue Road at the junction of Norfolk Road looking towards the subject site.

- 2.2. Historic England's *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (December 2017) provides guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets. The setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Elements of a setting may make a positive, neutral or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral (NPPF glossary). The guidance provides detailed advice on assessing the implications of development proposals and recommends a broad approach to assessment (see **Appendix 1** for an outline of the 5-Step approach described in the guidance).
- 2.3. The subject site is considered to form part of the settings of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area and the St John's Wood Conservation Area within the London Borough of Camden. The expansive rear garden and rear elevation of the subject site forms part of the settings of the Grade II statutorily listed buildings at Nos. 34-37 Queen's Grove, whose rear elevations partially overlook the rear gardens of the subject site.
- 2.4. Opposite the subject site on the north side of Avenue Road is the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area, which was designated by the London Borough of Camden in 1973 and was extended in 1985 to include the buildings on the north side of Avenue Road. No. 69 Avenue Road is located opposite Sub-Area 1: Avenue Road. The character of the sub-area remains that of a wealthy residential suburb characterised by the spacious leafy street and large plots, and an open urban grain. Detached and semi-detached villas and houses of two to three storeys (often with a mansard roof and dormers) predominate; the houses are set back from the road with strong well defined front boundaries often with high walls or gates. The houses have differing styles from the original Italianate villas to the Neo-Georgian rebuilds but all display similar form, height and scale. The prevalent palette of materials includes dark red or brown brickwork, or painted stucco finishes (Figure 3). Most of the villas on Avenue Road within the Conservation Area are replacements, the originals having been demolished and rebuilt from the 1930s onwards; there have been a substantial number of recent planning permissions for retained facades and full demolitions in the vicinity of the subject site, including Nos. 73-75, No. 61 and No. 50. Three original stuccoed Italianate houses survive: Nos. 42, 44 and 48, although even these have been altered and extended. They are two-storey villas with classical detailing with stuccoed front walls and gate piers (Figure 3).
- 2.5. Nos. 46, 48 and 50 Avenue Road are located to the south of the subject site on the north side of Avenue Road; they have been identified by the Council as positive buildings within the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area and are therefore considered to be non-designated heritage assets. The high front boundary walls of the subject site with trees within the front garden and on the street sets a tone of seclusion and exclusivity that prevents any significant appreciation and understanding from the public realm. Moreover, the curved front elevation of the subject site means that the building has very little visual impact within the streetscape of Avenue Road to the south; only from the north is the building more highly visible. The front elevation of the subject site is therefore considered to make a neutral contribution to the streetscape settings of the positive contributors on the north side of Avenue Road, and a neutral to positive contribution to the setting of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area.



**Figure 3: Nos. 46, 48 and 50 Avenue Road (right to left); 46 and 50 were rebuilt during the 20<sup>th</sup> century but all are regarded as positive buildings within the Elsworth Road Conservation Area.**

- 2.6. To the south-west of the subject site and the junction of Avenue Road with Queen's Grove is the East Sub-Area of the St John's Wood Conservation Area, designated by the London Borough of Camden in 1977. Like the principal St John's Wood Conservation Area located within the City of Westminster, the original mid-19<sup>th</sup> century pattern of development on the Eyre estate favoured pairs of Italianate semi-detached villas set on generous plots, creating a new vision of a rural suburb. The prevailing semi-detached villas, including the Grade II listed 34-37 Queen's Grove, are predominantly of three storeys over a semi-basement set back from the street with clearly defined front gardens. Roof forms on semi-detached villas are commonly defined by projecting bracketed cornices and hipped slate roofs (Figure 4). Whilst brick is the major structural material, buildings are often faced in stucco, usually with classical architectural detailing. There was a tendency towards the construction of individual residences in the neo-Georgian style using red brickwork, particularly from the 1930s to 1950s. These buildings dispensed with the classical stucco elevations characteristic of the wider area and rely on red brickwork or contrasting colours of brickwork to create interest and include Nos. 41, 42 and 48 Queens Grove.
- 2.7. The rear elevation of the subject site can only be partially glimpsed from Queen's Grove just beyond the boundary of the Conservation Area and is thus considered to make a neutral contribution to the setting of the St John's Wood Conservation Area. This part of the Conservation Area contains only eighteen houses, two groups of which are Grade II statutorily listed at the northern end of Norfolk Road (Nos. 2 and 3) and Queen's Grove (Nos. 34-37). The rear elevation and garden of the subject site contributes to the suburban garden settings of these listed buildings, but likely only from their upper floors; the principal element of the settings of these listed buildings is the streetscapes of Norfolk Road and Queen's Grove (Figures 4 and 5).





**Figure 4: The Grade II listed Nos. 34-37 Queen's Grove embody the semi-detached villas which characterise St John's Wood, particularly on the Eyre estate.**



**Figure 5: The rear garden and rear elevation of the subject site contributes to the suburban settings of the Grade II listed Nos. 34-37 Queen's Grove.**



Figure 6: The rear elevation of the subject site (indicated) is only glimpsed from Queen's Grove outside the St John's Wood Conservation Area.

## 3.0. HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF 69 AVENUE ROAD

### Brief Historical Background

- 3.1. No. 69 Avenue Road covers two separate historic plots (Nos. 67 and 69) which were built on the St John's Wood Estate belonging to the Eyre family. During the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the ground on which they were later developed formed part of a large meadow known as the Blewhouse Field; the Marylebone and Finchley Turnpike Branch Road (later Avenue Road) was laid through it in 1824 and stimulated the development of large detached houses in the area. The presence of Primrose Hill and Regent's Park was particularly important in encouraging spacious middle-class housing.
- 3.2. The original houses at Nos. 67 and 69 were likely built during the mid-1840s – the lease plans of their immediate neighbours at Nos. 65 and 71 date from 1844 and 1842 respectively. The elevations depicted are typical of the first phase of development on this part of the Eyre Estate, comprising three storey detached Italianate villas with a raised ground floor, stuccoed architectural detailing, central entrance portico and bracketed eaves. Based on the original footprint and drainage plans dating from 1908, it can be deduced that No. 67 was of the same architectural language and scale as its typical St John's Wood villa neighbours. No. 69 may have had a more individual design, perhaps with a two-storey gabled bay to the front elevation like some of the other earlier villas on Avenue Road (Figure 7).
- 3.3. By 1866, the buildings had been subject to substantial alteration and extension. A large side extension, possibly a coach house, filled the north side of the plot of No. 69 which, with an extension built at No. 71, linked the two houses. No. 67 had also been extended substantially on its north side with a similar coach house. The substantial gardens of both houses were well-planted with trees and had a number of pathways around the perimeter of a central lawn space and various garden buildings. Both houses had wide in/out driveways with dense planting to the street boundary (Figure 8).



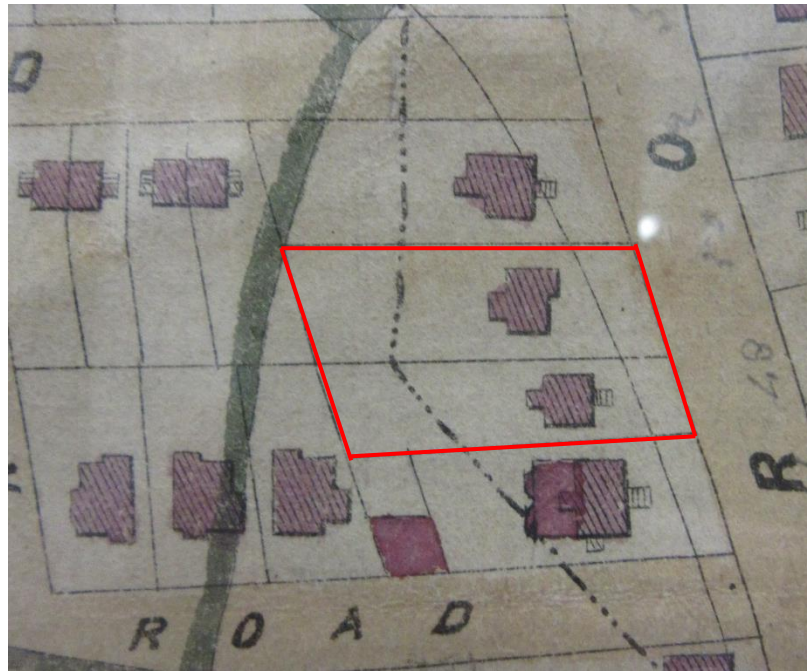


Figure 7: Plan of the Eyre Estate, 1853 (EE 2652/8), the subject site outlined in red.

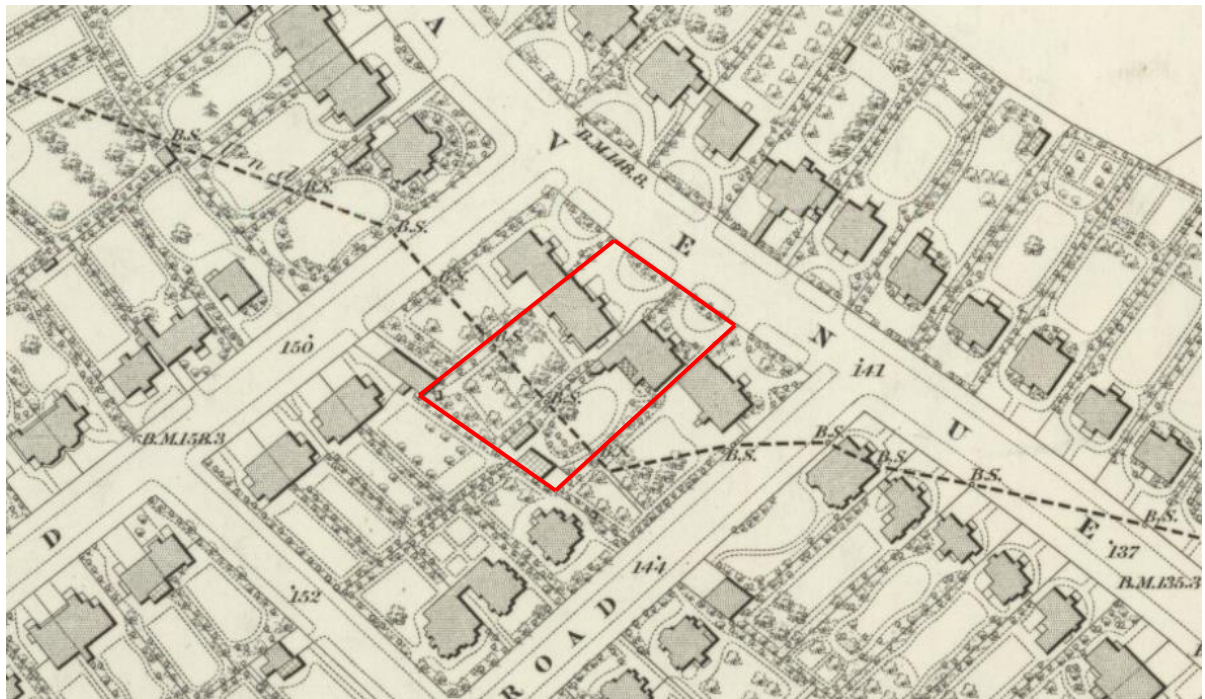


Figure 8: Ordnance Survey (1866).

### The 1937 Neo-Georgian Re-Build

- 3.4. By 1930, the four houses at Nos. 65-71 Avenue appear to have been acquired by a company of developers called Elsworth Limited. The firm had already rebuilt a number of houses on Avenue Road by 1931, advertising them as “embodying the newest principles of heating and labour-saving” (*The Times*, 9 December 1931). Plans were submitted for the rebuilding of Nos. 65, 67-69 and 71 Avenue Road in 1936, 1937 and 1934 respectively to designs by architects Wimperis, Simpson and Guthrie in the Neo-Georgian style (Figure 9). No. 69 was rebuilt combining the plots of the original Nos. 67 and 69 with a rather unusual curved symmetrical principal front elevation of five window bay with central

entrance door. The roof was a large hipped form behind a parapet (Figure 10). The rear elevation was designed with two distinctive full-height parapetted bow windows to the main house and three large flat-topped former windows to the roof plane; the windows were of larger proportions to the rear elevation indicating the location of the principal rooms inside (Figure 11).

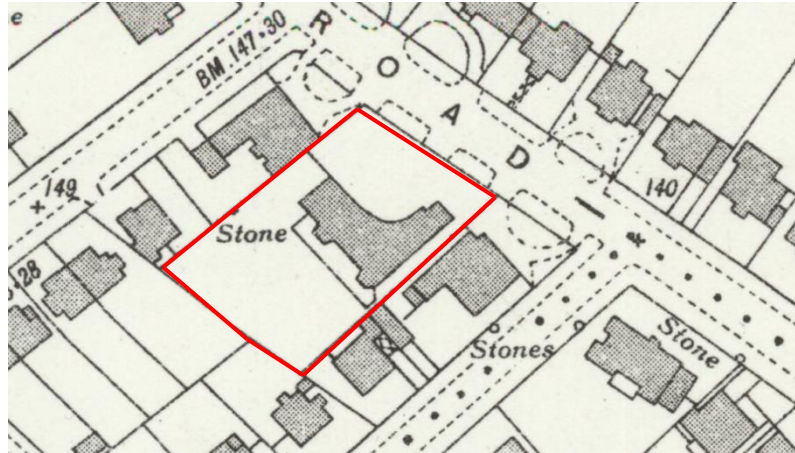


Figure 9: Ordnance Survey (1939), illustrating the rebuilt Nos. 65-71 Avenue Road.

- 3.5. The ground floor was accessed from the front entrance via a circular vestibule and hall. The ground floor plan depicts a house aimed at 'modern' middle-class professionals, with clear delineations between the family reception rooms and the service rooms (Figure 10). The family area comprised a drawing room and dining room lit by the large bay windows, and a study in between. The study and drawing room had access onto the terrace overlooking the garden. The south wing of the house contained the service rooms with a kitchen, pantry (with staff access into the dining room), larder store and maid's sitting room; the pantry was fitted with built-in cabinetry. A trade entrance was provided to the south elevation. This arrangement with spacious above-ground servants' accommodation was typical of the new "labour-saving" houses of the period. The north wing contained a single-storey garage and heating chamber with a flat roof; the garage opened out into a walled courtyard with access onto the main front driveway (Figure 10).
- 3.6. The first floor followed much the same plan form, with the maids' rooms located to the south wing which had its own backstairs down to the trade entrance hall. The curving front elevation was dealt with by unusually shaped bathrooms flanking a regular-shaped bedroom with cupboards filling in the awkward angles. Five family bedrooms were provided at this level; the two principal bedrooms with the large bow windows overlooking the garden had their own private bathrooms and dressing areas with built-in cupboards (Figure 11). The stairs to the second floor were located at the end of the main landing and were lit by a rooflight. The second floor within the large hipped roof provided an additional two bedrooms with a large central games room, all lit by the three dormer windows to the rear elevation. The circulation corridor was fitted with a row of built-in linen cupboards (Figure 12).



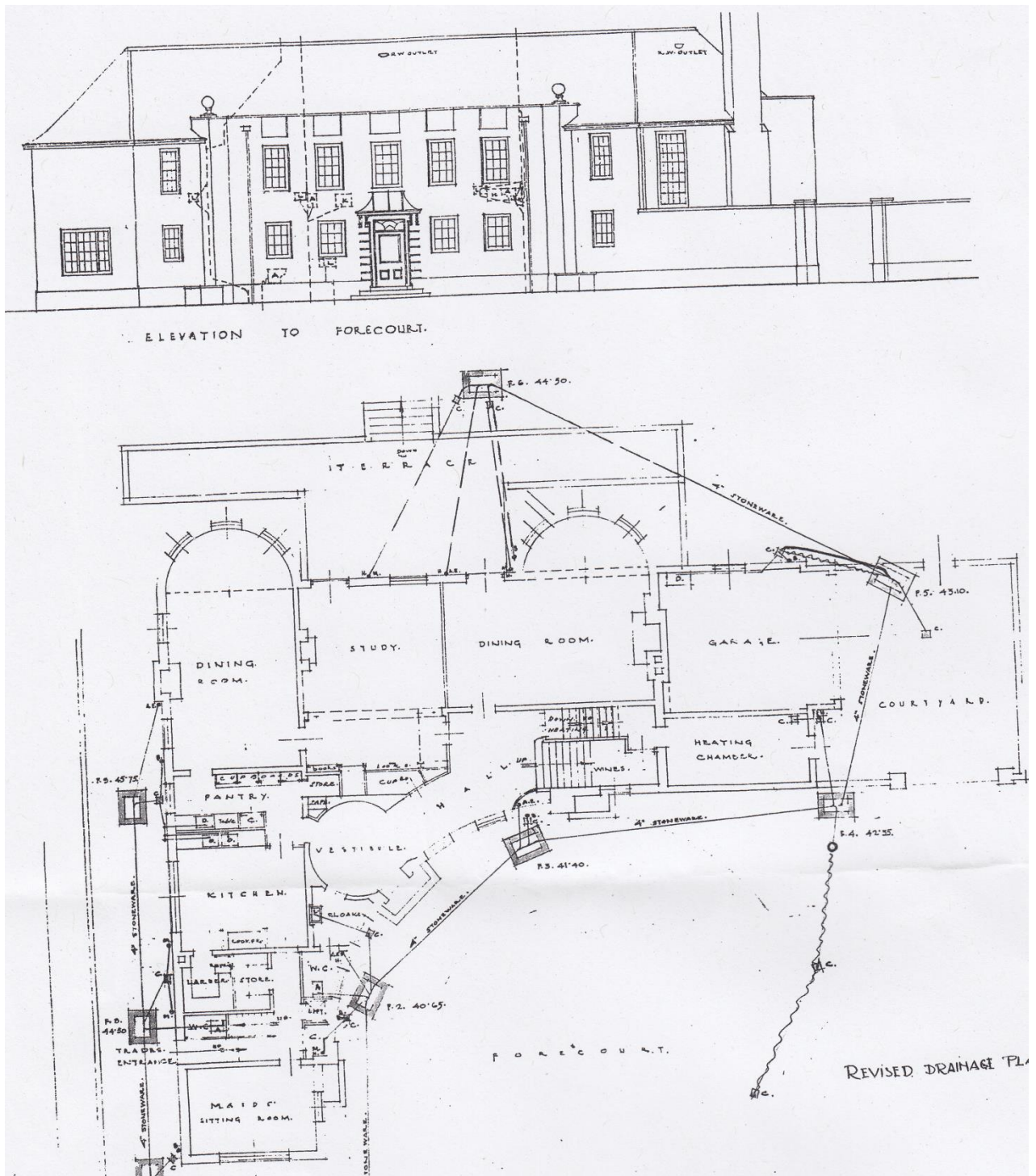


Figure 10: Original 1937 Front Elevation and Ground-Floor Plan.

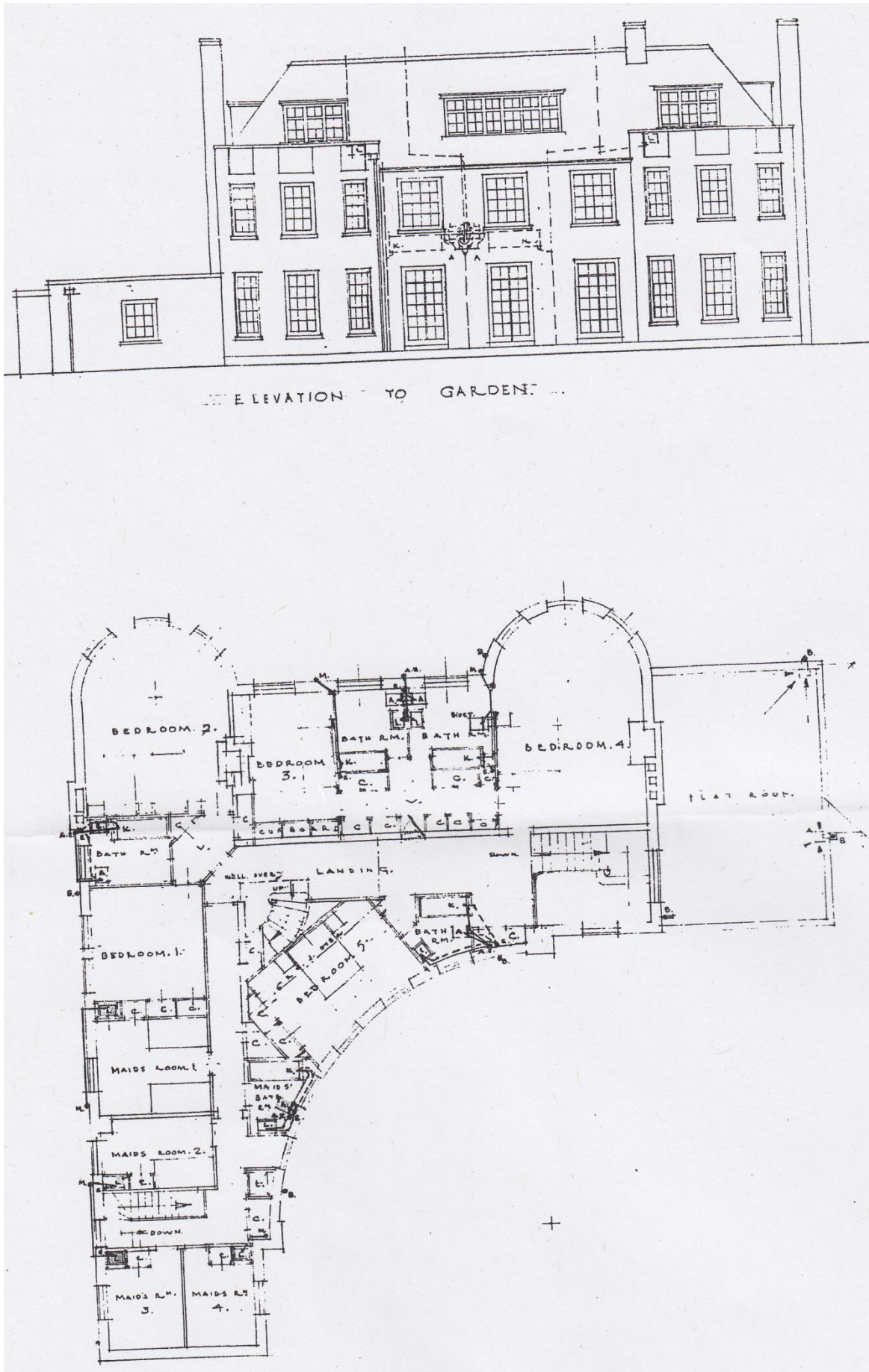


Figure 11: Original 1937 Rear Elevation and First-Floor Plan.



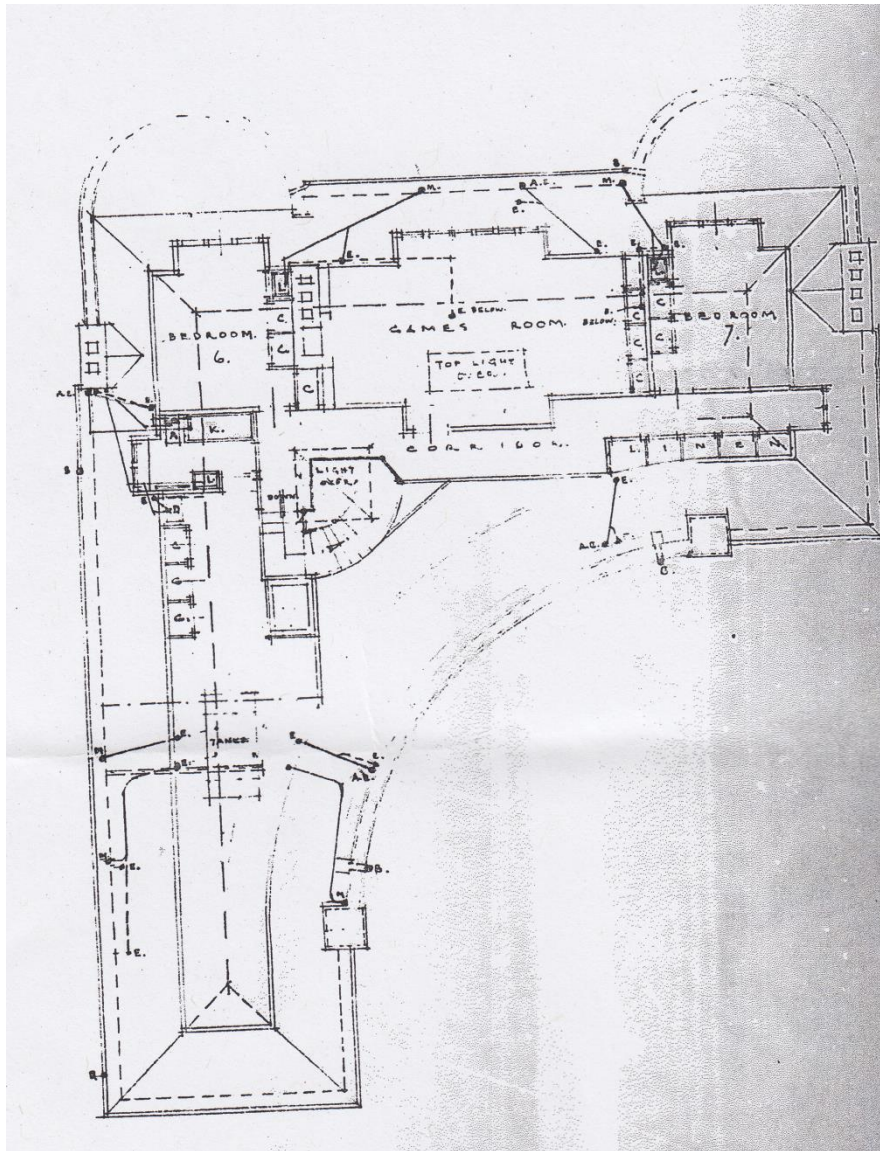


Figure 12: Original 1937 Second-Floor Plan.

- 3.7. No. 69 appears to have been lived in only sporadically during the early years, probably on account of the outbreak of the Second World War. The first owner from 1938 was Henry F Tiarks and his wife, the third generation of a City merchant banking dynasty that was involved in establishing Schrodgers, of which Tiarks was a managing director (*The Times*, 23 May 1938). Tiarks sold the house in 1951. In 1957, the house was put up for sale again and described as “one of the most beautiful houses in London” comprising seven bedrooms, five bathrooms three reception rooms, servants’ suite, and half an acre of garden with a terrace and loggia (*The Times*, 20 March 1957). In 1958, ship owner John Goulandris (grandfather to the present owner) purchased the house from fellow ship owner Constantine Dracoulis for £50,000 (*The Times*, 3 April 1958).
- 3.8. Very few works have been undertaken at the house since that time. In 2005, the walled courtyard was roofed over to extend the garage and the original gateway altered to accommodate a pair of garage doors.

## The Architects

- 3.8. Wimperis, Simpson and Guthrie were a significant inter-war practice. As well as Nos. 65-71 Avenue Road, the firm were also responsible for Nos. 47-49 and 61-63 Avenue Road. Edmund Wimperis and William Begg Simpson were in partnership from 1913, joined by Leonard Rome Guthrie in 1925 just as the firm had won a competition for the rebuilding of Fortnum & Masons, Piccadilly. Their style was eclectic, in common with many architectural practices in the interwar years, ranging from traditional Neo-Georgian (as at Fortnum & Masons – Figure 13) to modern (offices at 1-4 Leicester Square of 1937-8, for example). The practice designed the Cambridge Theatre, Seven Dials, London (Grade II), an early London example of the Moderne, expressionist style (Figure 16), and several private houses in Mayfair, the latter secured through Wimperis' position as an architect to the Grosvenor Estate. No. 63 Harley Street was designed for celebrated surgeon Sir Stewart Duke-Elder and was statutorily listed at Grade II as an exemplar of the inter-war town house with a characteristic combination of traditional and modern elements (Figure 15). Guthrie was also responsible for designing the Neo-Georgian mansion Winfield House in 1936 for American heiress Barbara Hutton, now the residence of the US ambassador and Grade II listed (Figure 14). The large 1930s suburban houses within the St John's Wood area were all built in the Neo-Georgian style. Nos. 47 and 61 Avenue Road are regarded as unlisted buildings of merit within the Westminster St John's Wood Conservation Area, although the former house has recently been redeveloped.



Figure 13: Fortnum and Mason (1925).



Figure 14: Winfield House, Regent's Park (1936).





Figure 15: 63 Harley Street (1934).



Figure 16: Cambridge Theatre (1929-30).

## 4.0. DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBJECT SITE

- 4.1. No. 69 Avenue Road is a three-storey detached house built in dark red brickwork (English Bond). The large hipped roof is of red clay tiles. The principal elevations have remained remarkably unaltered since construction in 1937. The front elevation has a Doric porch with broken pediment which may be a later addition given that it does not match the original design of the porch (ref. Figure 10), painted timber sash windows of six over six panes, and “panelled” parapet to the central curved part of five bays; the recessed “panels” in the parapet are somewhat visually uncomfortable extending right up to the coping stone (it being normal to have a border around the inset “panel”). The central curved part is an unusual and interesting design; it projects forward and is framed by full-height brick piers at either end topped with ball finials. The design is not altogether successful, however, with an awkward junction created between the curved section and flanking north and south wings which have a traditional moulded cornice rather than a parapet. The entirely blank area of wall to the north range and the lack of any brick headers or other detailing to the window openings also lacks finesse (Figure 17). The rear garden elevation is likewise unaltered with its two-storey bow windows flanking a raised terrace accessed via three pairs of timber French doors. The roof dormers are original, although the design is considered to be somewhat clumsy in terms of their dominant size and the awkward relationship with the top of the two storey bows (Figure 18). The only minor alterations have occurred to the single-storey garage block on the north side, where modern glazed doors have been installed to the rear part of the original courtyard area in 2005 (Figure 18).





Figure 17: The principal front elevation of 69 Avenue Road.



Figure 18: The rear garden elevation of No. 69.

4.2. With the exception of the changes made to the north range, the interior has remained remarkably unaltered in terms of plan form and architectural and interior design, detailing, fixtures and fittings. The plan form of the ground floor remains as built even in the south service wing, where the kitchen, pantry and larder store remain in situ with all their original cabinetry and wall tiles, whilst the servant's bell box survives within the pantry area (Figures 19 and 20). The circular vestibule and hall has all original six-panelled doors and cornicing (Figure 21); the space provides access to the principal rooms and contains



the original closed string staircase with “marbled” balusters and ramped brass handrail which terminates in spiral; the fact this spiral is located on the half-landing is highly unusual and somewhat unsatisfactory architecturally, leaving only a plain brass handrail to the ground floor (Figure 22). The suite of three principal rooms remains largely unaltered, particularly the study with its fitted shelving and timber panelling and fireplace (Figure 23). Some alterations have occurred within the drawing room as the fireplace to the north wall appears to have been boarded over (Figure 25). The dining room with its Neo-Georgian chimneypiece remains largely intact however (Figure 24).



Figure 19: The kitchen looking towards the back stairs hall and maids’ sitting room with original tiles, cabinetry and joinery.



Figure 20: Original tiling and servants’ bell-box within the pantry.



Figure 21: The circular vestibule and hall.



Figure 22: The main staircase with unusual arrangement of balusters and spiral handrail standing commencing at the half landing.





Figure 23: The study with original shelving and panelling.



Figure 24: The unaltered dining room with Neo-Georgian chimneypiece.



Figure 25: The drawing room with some alteration to the north wall.

4.3. The first and second floors likewise appear to be almost intact in terms of plan form and there is a good survival of original 1930s fabric, joinery, doors and detailing. All rooms are accessed from long spine corridors leading from the landing areas. All doors and door furniture appear to be original and illustrate well the hierarchy of rooms within the house, with six-panelled doors to the family areas and plain doors to the service rooms on the south side. The original fire surrounds appear to be in situ and the skirting and cornicing is also original in those rooms inspected (Figures 26 and 29). The original tiling is still extant in at least some of the bathrooms, although most of the fittings have been replaced (Figure 27). The staircase to the second floor has been subject to some alteration by the over boarding of the balusters but it nevertheless retains its original handrail and newel posts, and probably balustrading too (Figure 28).



Figure 26: One of the principal first-floor bedrooms showing original cornicing, joinery and fire surround.



Figure 27: The One of the first-floor bathrooms showing original tiling.



Figure 28: The stairs to the second floor lit by a rooflight – the balusters may be concealed within later boarding.





Figure 29: The second-floor games room with original chimneypiece and skirting.

## 5.0. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF 69 AVENUE ROAD

- 5.1. The aim of a Significance Assessment is, in the terms required by Paragraphs 189-190 of the NPPF, a “*description of the significance of a heritage asset*”. In the context of a historic building which has been the subject of a series of alterations throughout its lifetime, it is also a useful tool for determining which of its constituent parts holds a particular value and to what extent. *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2* (March 2015) states that understanding the nature of significance is important for understanding the need for and best means of conservation. Understanding the extent of that significance leads to a better understanding of how adaptable a heritage asset may be. Understanding the level of significance provides the essential guide as to how policies should be applied.
- 5.2. The descriptive appraisal will evaluate the undesignated site against listed selection criteria of ‘Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings’, DCMS, 2018. Historic England’s (formerly English Heritage) criteria outlined in ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance,’ which partially overlap with the Statutory Criteria, have also been considered and encompass the following values:
- **Evidential Value** – relating to the potential of a place to yield primary evidence about past human activity;
  - **Historical Value** – relating to ways in which the present can be connected through a place to past people, events and aspects of life;
  - **Aesthetic Value** – relating to the ways in which people derive sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place;
  - **Communal Value** – relating to the meanings of place for the people who relate to it, and whose collective experience or memory it holds.



- 5.3. Although not officially considered to be one of the four principal values, **setting** is increasingly viewed as an important value that makes an important contribution to the significance of a heritage asset. This assessment of the contribution to significance made by setting should provide the baseline for establishing the effects of any proposed works on significance.

The level of significance for each value and the setting will be assessed using the following grading:

- **High** – values of *exceptional or considerable* interest;
- **Medium** – values of *some* interest;
- **Low** – values of *limited* interest.

#### 5.4. Evidential Value

In terms of the intactness of the house and its research value in revealing previous activity and uses, No. 69 Avenue Road has survived remarkably intact as a typical 1930s suburban house aimed at the middle class professionals. The plan form remains as designed in 1937 and much of the original fabric, including internal joinery, doors, ironmongery, cabinetry, fireplaces and most fixtures and fittings remain unchanged. The uses of the spaces and hierarchy of the rooms throughout the house can be easily understood and appreciated. This good survival enables an appreciation and understanding of the house as an exclusive suburban family dwelling incorporating the latest developments in domestic arrangements. **Evidential value is therefore medium to high.**

#### 5.5. Historical Value

The subject site embodies the development of the Eyre Estate during the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as part of a fashionable suburb around the new turnpike road and in close proximity to Regent's Park and Primrose Hill. The amalgamation of the two plots of Nos. 67 and 69 has been somewhat detrimental to understanding this initial and most significant phase of development. Indeed, the historic interest of the building is that it embodies the large-scale redevelopment of this part of the Eyre Estate during the 1930s and was designed by architects of some significance.

No. 69 Avenue Road was designed by architects Wimperis, Simpson and Guthrie in 1937. Although the firm had a strong reputation for high-quality buildings during the 1920s and 1930s, their Neo-Georgian suburban houses do not appear to have been particularly innovative or exceptional in their design, but rather followed the trend in the architectural style that dominated the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The firm's most innovative and high-quality work has been recognised by Grade II statutory listing.

The quality of the design and the craftsmanship are high, but not considered to be especially innovative and there aspects of the elevational treatments that are awkward, unsuccessful or simply plain with the lack of architectural detailing even given the trend towards simplicity by this time. The quality of the internal fixtures and fittings is not of an exceptional standard and indeed the treatment of the balustrading to the main staircase terminating at the half landing is unusual and unsuccessful; many of the fixtures and fittings appear to be mass produced examples which can be seen in suburban houses throughout the country. The plan is typical of many large middle-class houses of the period, incorporating

novel features such as integrated bathrooms with WCs, and garages, whilst retaining servant's accommodation and a separate service wing albeit with a focus on an improved working environment. These technological improvements in the plan of houses and their fixtures and fittings were not early examples nor were they innovative by 1937.

**Historical value is therefore low to medium.**

## 5.6. Aesthetic Value

This building is a good example of a large detached suburban house in the Neo-Georgian style and forms a group with its immediate neighbours on Avenue Road. The design of the elevational treatments is in the classical Neo-Georgian which characterised much of the work of Wimperis, Simpson and Guthrie and it therefore reflects the architectural style of many of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century replacement houses on Avenue Road and on the adjoining streets within St John's Wood. Indeed, No. 69 forms a group of three houses between Norfolk Road and Queen's Grove which all date from the mid-1930s and which were all designed in the same style by the same architects.

The elevations display examples of quality craftsmanship and use of materials. However there are elements to both front and garden elevations which are somewhat unconvincing and lack finesse: the architectural detailing is considered to be somewhat plain with no detailing to the window openings and a plain expanse of brickwork to the north wing, whilst the large rear dormer windows appear uncomfortable in relation to the bow windows. The treatment of the parapet is considered to be somewhat uncomfortable, whilst the junctions between the curved part of the front elevation and the north and south wings appear awkward. The interior contributes in a relatively minor way to the aesthetic value of the house; whilst the joinery and many of the fixtures are original, they are mostly of a standard design and quality. The extensive landscaping enhances the aesthetic value of the house, both from the street on Avenue Road and to the rear garden.

**Aesthetic value is therefore medium.**

## 5.7. Communal Value

No. 69 has always been a private dwelling and there are no significant persons or historic events associated with the house. The high front boundary walls with trees within the front garden and on the street sets a tone of seclusion and exclusivity that prevents any significant appreciation and understanding from the public realm. **Communal value is therefore low.**

## 5.8. Setting

The setting of No. 69 is considered to be of **medium value**. The setting is divided between the busy streetscape of Avenue Road to the east and quieter suburban streets to the west. Both elements are located within Conservation Areas (the Elsworthy Road and St John's Wood Conservation Areas). The houses on the north side of Avenue Road are considered to be non-designated heritage assets as they

have been identified by the Council as contributing positively to the character and appearance of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area. The expansive rear garden setting with views towards the house is an important characteristic of the St John's Wood area; it also forms part of the settings of two groups of Grade II statutorily listed buildings (Nos. 2 and 3 Norfolk Road and Nos. 34-37 Queen's Grove) whose rear elevations overlook the rear gardens of the subject site.

## 5.9. Summary of Significance

The principal area of significance is therefore derived from the evidential value of 69 Avenue Road in terms of the intactness of the original fabric and plan form. It is not considered, however, that these attributes are of exceptional historical value and certainly do not represent the best and most innovative work of Wimperis, Simpson and Guthrie (which has been recognised through statutory listing). The aesthetic value is derived from the Neo-Georgian proportions of the principal house, and the contribution it makes, together with its landscaping, to the character and appearance of the streetscape on Avenue Road.

## 6.0. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. The proposed scheme consists of a two-storey rear extension designed in a traditional Neo-Georgian idiom, and a new wing to the north designed in a contemporary/modern idiom.
- 6.2. The proposals may have an impact on the settings of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area and nearby Grade II statutorily listed buildings within the St John's Wood Conservation Area whose rear elevations overlook the rear garden of the subject site.
- 6.3. Based on the above detailed assessments in Sections 2 to 5 and in accordance with the Historic England guidance *Setting of Heritage Assets* (December 2017), the following Impact Assessment appraises the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance of the identified heritage assets or on the ability to appreciate them (Step 3) and explores ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm (Step 4) (see **Appendix 1** for detailed guidance notes).
- 6.4. For the purposes of assessing the likely impact to result from the proposals and the subsequent impact on the settings of the identified heritage assets, established criteria have been employed. If the proposed extensions will enhance heritage values or the ability to appreciate them, then the impact on heritage significance within the view will be deemed **positive**; however, if they fail to sustain heritage values or impair their appreciation then the impact will be deemed **negative**. If the proposals preserve the heritage values then the impact will be deemed **neutral**.
- 6.5. Within the three categories there are four different levels that can be given to identify the intensity of impact:
  - **"negligible"** – impacts considered to cause no material change.



- **"minimal"** - impacts considered to make a small difference to one's ability to understand and appreciate the heritage value of an asset. A minor impact may also be defined as involving receptors of low sensitivity exposed to intrusion, obstruction or change of low to medium magnitudes for short periods of time.
- **"moderate"** - impacts considered to make an appreciable difference to the ability to understand or appreciate the heritage value of an asset.
- **"substantial"** - impacts considered to cause a fundamental change in the appreciation of the resource.

- 6.6. Pre-application advice was received from the London Borough of Camden in April 2019 (2019/0415/PRE). Officers raised a number of concerns regarding the proposals: the scale and bulk of the proposed then two-storey side extension and the detrimental impact on the host building and the character of the area by preventing views through to mature trees to the rear; and the depth of the proposed side extension into the rear garden. Additional pre-application advice was received in November 2019 (2019/3720/PRE) following amended designs. Officers' concern was maintained in relation to the two-storey side extension and its depth into the rear garden (c.15m from the existing rear elevation), which was not considered to be subordinate to the host building.
- 6.7. The proposal to leave unaltered the front elevation with its unusual and interesting curved form is derived from the neutral to positive contribution it makes to the setting of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area, and the important group value it possesses with its Neo-Georgian neighbours also designed by Wimperis, Simpson and Guthrie.
- 6.8. During the pre-applications, officers stated that the rear extension was of good design and in keeping with the host building. Indeed, the proposed rear extension has been designed in a traditional idiom which has taken its architectural cue from the restrained Neo-Georgian architecture of the original house and which has formed a significant component of the character and appearance of much of the evolving character of Avenue Road and its adjoining streets since the 1930s. The design of the rear extension therefore integrates successfully with the existing built form on the site and in the surrounding area. This includes the use of a symmetrical composition, use of red brickwork, classical proportions and hierarchy to the window openings, the traditional appropriate design of timber sash windows and French doors, and brickwork detailing above the openings and "panels" to the parapet which reflect those on the original front and rear elevations. The elevation has been articulated by the use of pilasters framing a projecting central bay. The slate roof to the extension will match the retained roof structure in its construction, and traditional detailing and high-quality materials; the roof to the proposed extension incorporates three well-proportioned dormer windows (with a larger central dormer of three lights) and characteristically prominent side chimneys. The proposed proportions and detailing are considered therefore to be more literate and mannered than those of the existing rear elevation of the house.
- 6.9. Furthermore, the height and massing of the proposed rear extension matches that of the existing building, and so any appreciation and understanding of the house from Avenue Road and the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area will not be affected despite the proposed slightly larger footprint of the house to the rear. Despite the slight increase in footprint of the main house into the rear garden, any glimpses of the proposal from the upper storeys of the Grade II statutorily listed buildings fronting Queen's Grove will be sustained and enhanced owing to the high-quality of the proposed traditional design and the retention

of the same massing and ridgeline. The dimensions of the rear garden are considered to be large enough to sustain the proportions of garden space to building within the historically double plot to comfortably accommodate the slight increase in footprint of the main house to the rear; this will also sustain the suburban garden settings of the Grade II listed buildings fronting Queen's Grove from the upper storeys of their rear elevations which partially overlook the subject site and its garden.

- 6.10. In contrast to the traditional design of the proposed rear extension, the proposed new north wing has been designed in a contemporary/modern idiom in the genre of a pavilion or garden building. There are already a number of poor quality single-storey extensions in this location which are of no historical or aesthetic interest, whilst the north elevation of the main house is of plain brickwork and of no architectural interest. The design of the proposed north wing has taken full account of the officer's pre-application advice and reduced its height to single-storey to sustain its subservience to the main house. The extension will be linked to the main house via a recessed visually "lightweight" glazed link; the design of the link to the front elevation ensures that the contemporary addition is visually distinct from the Neo-Georgian main house. The front elevation will also be subservient to the main house by the appropriate use of materials: the use of red brickwork will continue (as existing) together with an appropriately designed timber garage door. Any views of mature trees within the rear garden will be sustained by limiting the height to single storey.
- 6.11. The rear element of the single-storey north extension which would extend into the garden has been designed as a contemporary pavilion using an elegant "light-touch" contemporary design which is located comfortably to the north of the main house and does not visually compete with it in views from the rear garden. The discreet siting of the pavilion ensures it will not be visible within the settings of the St John's Wood Conservation Area and the Grade II listed buildings on Queen's Grove. Moreover, the depth of the extension has been reduced by a further 2 metres in accordance with the pre-application advice of November 2019, making the addition further subservient to the host building.
- 6.12. This impact assessment has also evaluated the proposals according to the eight principles of the *Building in Context Toolkit* (2001) which was formulated by English Heritage and CABI to stimulate a high standard of design for development taking place in historically sensitive contexts (see Appendix 2). It is considered that the proposals have taken full account of the eight principles, particularly in assessing the value of retaining what is there (Principle 1), understanding the history of the place and lie of the land (Principle 2), ensuring the character and identity of the site will be appropriate to its use and context (Principle 3), designing forms and orientation so the buildings sit happily in the pattern of existing development (Principle 4), respecting the important views and vistas (Principle 5), respecting the scale of neighbouring buildings (Principle 6), and using high-quality materials to reflect those on neighbouring buildings (Principle 7).
- 6.13. Overall, it is considered the proposed outline scheme will have a **minimal and neutral to positive** impact on the settings of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area and St John's Wood Conservation Area, and on the settings of nearby statutorily listed buildings fronting Queen's Grove. The design has fully addressed the settings of the two Conservation Areas and listed buildings in accordance with the Historic England guidance on setting (December 2017). The design has also fully addressed the concerns of officers raised during the two pre-applications in relation to the scale and bulk of the proposed north side extension, and its depth within the rear garden.

## 7.0. POLICY COMPLIANCE AND JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

### 7.1. Camden Local Plan (2017)

7.1.1. The Local Plan was adopted by the Council on 3 July 2017 and has replaced the Core Strategy and Camden Development Policies documents as the basis for planning decisions and future development in the borough.

7.1.2. **Policy D1** deals with design:

*The Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development:*

- a. respects local context and character;
- b. preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage;

The proposed rear extension has been designed to the highest standards in order to integrate fully into the surrounding built environment by adopting a high-quality design which responds to the local context and character in which Neo-Georgian redevelopments dating from the 1930s to the present day are a defining feature. The design of the rear extension to the main house has drawn on the built character of the surrounding area in terms of the height, massing, Neo-Georgian architectural language, use of materials and restrained Neo-Georgian architectural detailing. This includes the use of a symmetrical composition, use of red brickwork, classical proportions and hierarchy to the window openings, the traditional appropriate design of timber sash windows and French doors, and brickwork detailing above the openings and panelling to the parapet. The proposed scale, height, bulk and mass is no greater than the existing building, whilst the design of the proposed rear elevation is considered to be more literate than the existing composition, better reflecting the local character. The extension to the roof will match the existing in terms of its structure and traditional detailing and use of materials. The proposed north wing has been designed in a contrasting contemporary idiom to be visually subservient and distinct from the main house; the elegant “light-touch” contemporary design of the garden pavilion is located comfortably to the north of the main house and does not visually compete with it in views from the rear garden. The proposals are therefore sympathetic to the local built environment by reflecting and remaining subservient to the overall form and layout of the area, and help to sustain a sense of place on Avenue Road. Therefore, the proposals comply with Policy D1 by respecting the local context and preserving and enhancing the historic environment.

7.1.3. **Policy D2** deals with heritage:

*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.*

The impact of the proposals is considered to cause no harm to the significance and settings of any heritage assets. A detailed assessment has been made of the heritage significance of 69 Avenue Road; the architectural composition of the existing rear elevation has been identified as not particularly successful and lacking finesse. The significance of No. 69 lies primarily in its front elevation (to be left unaltered) and its contribution to the setting of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area. The proposed rear extension and north wing will preserve and enhance the settings of the adjoining Conservation Areas by the high-quality design using an appropriate combination of traditional Neo-Georgian and



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contemporary idioms for the rear extension and north wing respectively. The proposed new work has taken full account of the settings of the two Conservation Areas and nearby Grade II listed building fronting Queen's Grove in adopting a high-quality literate design which reflects the prevailing built form (height, massing, roof form, materials and architectural detailing) and thereby reinforces the local distinctiveness. There will therefore be no harm or loss of significance to the Elsworthy Road and St John's Wood Conservation Area, or to the rear suburban garden settings of the Grade II listed Nos. 34-37 Queen's Grove.

### **Conservation Areas**

*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:*

- *e. require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;*
- *g. resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and*
- *h. 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.*

The context of the subject site has been assessed fully in relation to its location within the settings of the Elsworthy Road and St John's Wood Conservation Areas. The detailed assessments in Sections 2 and 4 of this Heritage Statement identify the front elevation of the subject site as existing makes a neutral to positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Elsworthy Conservation Area, whilst the rear elevation makes a neutral contribution. The landscaping and planting within the front garden in particular enhance the setting of the Elsworthy Conservation Area. The proposals are considered to sustain and preserve the settings of both Conservation Areas through the retention of the front façade of the original building and the sensitive and well-considered design of the proposed new rear extension and north wing; these proposals will be barely discernible from the public realm, but have responded to the contribution made by the subject site to the settings of the two adjoining Conservation Areas.

### **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:*

- *k. resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.*

This Heritage Statement has identified the key elements of the settings of the Grade II statutorily listed buildings at Nos. 34-37 Queen's Grove, which include the suburban garden setting in oblique views across the subject site from the upper storeys of the rear elevations. It is not considered the proposals would cause any harm to the suburban garden settings of these statutorily listed buildings despite the slight increase in footprint to the rear, owing to the high-quality of the traditional Neo-Georgian design of the new rear extension, the appropriate siting and design of the contemporary north wing, and the retention of an appropriate garden to building proportion.

**The proposals therefore comply with Policy D2.**

## 7.2. London Plan (2016)

7.2.1. The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, and it sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2036. Chapter 7 sets out policies on a range of issues about the places and spaces in which Londoners live, work and visit. The policies are designed to create a city of diverse, strong, secure and accessible neighbourhoods, and a city that delights the senses which has the best of modern architecture while also making the most of London's built heritage (London Plan, para. 7.1.).

7.2.2. **Policy 7.4** deals with local character:

*B Buildings, streets and open spaces should provide a high quality design response that:*

- *d allows existing buildings and structures that make a positive contribution to the character of a place to influence the future character of the area*
- *e is informed by the surrounding historic environment.*

The design of the proposed rear extension has been informed by the surrounding built environment on Avenue Road and on the adjacent streets within St John's Wood. The architectural language, fenestration, materials, detailing, height, bulk and mass, have been a direct response to the prevailing local character and historic environment, ensuring that the proposed new Neo-Georgian rear elevation of the main house and contemporary north wing are positive appropriate additions within the townscape settings of the Elsworth Road and St John's Wood Conservation Areas. The local character and distinctiveness of Avenue Road will therefore be reinforced by the proposals, sustaining and enhancing the settings of all identified heritage assets. The future character of the area will be shaped in a way that is informed by its historical development and built character. The proposals therefore comply with Policy 7.4 of the London Plan.

7.2.3. **Policy 7.6** deals with architecture:

*B Buildings and structures should:*

- *a be of the highest architectural quality*
- *b be of a proportion, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm*
- *c comprise details and materials that complement, not necessarily replicate, the local architectural character*
- *d not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings.*

The proposed rear extension and north wing have been designed in order to integrate fully into the surrounding built environment by adopting high-quality individual designs which reflect the local context, drawing on the architectural language, materials, detailing and forms of the surrounding buildings. The designs do not seek to replicate the local architectural character; rather they present a sympathetic and enhancing opportunity to reinforce the local character and sense of place. The design of the new rear elevation of the main house has drawn on the built character of the surrounding area in terms of the height, massing, Neo-Georgian architectural language, use of materials and restrained Neo-Georgian architectural detailing. The proposed north wing has been designed in a contrasting contemporary idiom to be visually subservient and distinct from the main house; the elegant "light-touch" contemporary design of the garden pavilion is located comfortably to the north of the main house and does not visually compete with it in views from the rear garden. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 7.6.

7.2.4. **Policy 7.8** deals with heritage assets and archaeology:

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

The proposals are considered to preserve and sustain the settings of the adjoining Elsworthy Road and St John's Wood Conservation Areas, and the Grade II listed buildings at 34-37 Queen's Grove. The proposals recognise the importance of traditional restrained Neo-Georgian architecture within both Conservation Areas as a defining feature from the 1930s onwards. The interesting and unusual curved front elevation which makes a neutral to positive contribution to the setting of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area will be left unaltered. The proposed rear extension will be almost imperceptible from the public realm, whilst the proposed contemporary north wing will be a subservient and visually discreet and a distinct addition adjacent to the Neo-Georgian main house. The high-quality design of the proposed new rear elevation and the retention of an appropriate garden to building proportion within the large historically double plot will sustain the suburban garden settings of the listed buildings fronting Queen's Grove. The proposals therefore conserve the significance of all identified heritage assets and so comply with Policy 7.8.

**7.3. The National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)**

7.3.1. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was introduced in February 2019 and provides a full statement of the Government's planning policies.

7.3.2. The NPPF contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development sympathetic to the conservation of designated heritage. The government's definition of sustainable development is one that incorporates all the relevant policies of the Framework, including the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.

7.3.3. Relevant NPPF Policies are found in Section 12 "Achieving Well-Designed Places" and Section 16 "Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment".

7.3.4. Paragraph 124 states that "*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities*". Section 12 goes on to outline the core expectations for good design and the importance of engagement between stakeholders relating to design:

*Paragraph 127. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

- *a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- *c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*



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- d) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*

*Paragraph 131. In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.*

The tenets of these paragraphs support the importance of good design in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment in Section 16:

*Paragraph 192. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- c) *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

This heritage statement has demonstrated how the designs of the proposed rear extension and north wing address the local historic environment by analysing the historic context and characterisation of the area, and providing an appraisal of the history and significance of the subject site. The ***Building in Context Toolkit*** was used as part of the process to ensure to highest standard of design, detailing and suitability to the location and setting of the subject site.

The proposals recognise the aesthetic and architectural significance of the front elevation by preserving it unaltered. The proposed rear extension has been designed to the highest standards in order to integrate it fully into the surrounding built environment by adopting a high-quality design which responds to the local character in which Neo-Georgian redevelopments dating from the 1930s to the present day are a defining feature. The design of the new rear elevation of the main house has drawn on the built character of the surrounding area in terms of the height, massing, Neo-Georgian architectural language, use of materials and restrained Neo-Georgian architectural detailing. This includes the use of a symmetrical composition, use of red brickwork, classical proportions and hierarchy to the window openings, the traditional appropriate design of timber sash windows and French doors, and brickwork detailing above the openings and panelling to the parapet. The proposed scale, height, bulk and mass is no greater than the existing building, whilst the design of the proposed rear elevation is considered to be more literate than the existing composition, better reflecting the local character and distinctiveness. The proposed north wing has been designed in a contrasting contemporary idiom to be visually subservient and distinct from the main house; the elegant “light-touch” contemporary design of the garden pavilion is located comfortably to the north of the main house and does not visually compete with it in views from the rear garden. The proposals are therefore sympathetic to the local built environment by reflecting and remaining subservient to the overall form and layout of the area, and help to sustain a sense of place on Avenue Road; they therefore comply with Section 12 of the NPPF “Achieving Well-Designed Places”.

- 7.3.5. Section 16 deals with Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. Paragraph 184 states that heritage assets “*an irreplaceable resource, and should be 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*”.

*Paragraph 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:*

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- 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 exceptional.

The proposals will not cause harm to any designated heritage assets. The Impact Assessment in Section 6 of this report demonstrates how the proposals will preserve the settings of the adjoining Conservation Areas by the high-quality design using an appropriate combination of traditional Neo-Georgian and contemporary idioms for the rear extension to the main house and north wing respectively. The proposed new work has taken full account of the settings of the two Conservation Areas and nearby Grade II listed buildings fronting Queen's Grove in adopting a high-quality literate design which reflects the prevailing built form (height, massing, roof form, materials and architectural detailing) and thereby reinforces the local distinctiveness. There will therefore be no harm or loss of significance to the Elsworth Road and St John's Wood Conservation Area, or to the rear suburban garden settings of the Grade II listed Nos. 34-37 Queen's Grove.

*Paragraph 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.*

This Heritage Statement has identified the settings of the identified non-designated heritage assets on the north side of Avenue Road. The proposal will not be visible within the settings of these buildings and so will have a negligible impact on their settings and significance.

*Paragraph 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.*

The impact of the proposal has been assessed in conjunction with the effects on the character, distinctiveness and significance of the historic environment. The proposal will preserve the elements which contribute positively to the settings of the Elsworth Road and St John's Wood Conservation Areas, leaving their character and appearance unharmed. Opportunities for enhancements which will better reveal the significance of the Conservation Areas and the contribution the subject site makes to their settings include:

- The implementation of an appropriate literate design sympathetic to its context, which makes a positive, enhancing contribution to the settings and local distinctiveness of the two Conservation Areas through the use of high-quality design, detailing and materials.

### 7.4. National Planning Guidance (PPG)

7.4.1. Updated in July 2019, the PPG is an online guidance resource which is updated continuously.



7.4.2. **Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 18a-003-20140306 - What is meant by the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment?**

- *The conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle...Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets...In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time.*

The proposals recognise that the conservation of heritage assets must be in a manner appropriate to their determined significance and that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource. Equally important is the definition of 'conservation' as the 'active process of maintenance and managing change'. This is implicit in the appropriate works on the subject site within the settings of two Conservation Areas and a number of Grade II statutorily listed buildings on Queen's Grove.

7.4.3. **Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 18a-019-20140306 - How can proposals avoid or minimise harm to the significance of a heritage asset?**

- *A clear understanding of the significance of a heritage asset and its setting is necessary to develop proposals which avoid or minimise harm. Early appraisals, a conservation plan or targeted specialist investigation can help to identify constraints and opportunities arising from the asset at an early stage. Such studies can reveal alternative development options, for example more sensitive designs or different orientations, that will deliver public benefits in a more sustainable and appropriate way.*

A detailed significance and impact assessment has been undertaken as part of this application. Visual inspection of the site informed constraints and opportunities and there was a conscious effort to minimise the impact of the proposed extensions on the settings of all identified heritage assets and to maximise the enhancement of those settings.

## 8.0. CONCLUSION

8.1. The proposed rear extension and north wing at 69 Avenue Road are considered to cause no harm to the significance of any of the identified designated and non-designated heritage assets; rather they will sustain and enhance their settings by the high quality design of the proposals which have been designed to reflect and be subservient to the historic and prevailing townscape of Avenue Road and the adjacent Conservation Areas. The design has fully addressed the concerns of officers raised during the two pre-applications in relation to the scale and bulk of the proposed north extension, and its depth within the rear garden.

8.2. This Heritage Statement, in accordance with Historic England guidance, has undertaken detailed assessments of the local character and significance and settings of all identified heritage assets in order to establish that the impact of the proposals in terms of the height, scale, bulk and mass, layout and use of materials is considered to have a **minimal and neutral to positive** impact on the settings of the Elsworth Road and St John's Wood Conservation Areas, and on nearby Grade II statutorily listed buildings fronting Queen's Grove. The proposed new rear elevation of the main house will draw on the

local architectural character in a considered way to create a more literate Neo-Georgian house, whilst the proposed contemporary north wing has been designed to be subservient and sensitive to the local character and setting of the subject site.

- 8.3. This Heritage Statement has also evaluated the proposals according to the eight principles of the *Building in Context Toolkit* (2001) and thereby demonstrated that the design has suitably addressed the context of the subject site in relation to local character and distinctiveness.
- 8.4. The applicants have recognised the importance of performing investigations and analysis necessary for the assessment of the effects of the proposed scheme on the special interest of the surrounding heritage assets. This approach has been beneficial with regard to the process of acknowledging the best practice guidance as outlined in NPPF and local policies. It is considered that the information provided in this Heritage Statement is proportionate to the significance of the subject site and the special architectural and historic importance of the identified nearby and adjacent heritage assets. It sets out an appropriate level of detail sufficient to understand the potential heritage implications of the proposals in accordance with the proportionate approach advocated by Paragraph 189 of the NPPF.
- 8.5. The proposal is considered to sustain the significance and settings of all identified designated and non-designated heritage assets by preserving and sustaining and enhancing those elements that have been identified as contributing to their special interest. It is therefore concluded that the proposed works satisfy the relevant clauses of the NPPF, as well as regional and local planning policies and conservation principles.

## **APPENDIX 1: NATIONAL GUIDANCE (THE SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS, DECEMBER 2017)**

This note gives assistance concerning the assessment of the setting of heritage assets. Historic England recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps that apply proportionately to the complexity of the case, from straightforward to complex:

### **Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.**

The setting of a heritage asset is ‘the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced’. Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset. The starting point of the analysis is to identify those heritage assets likely to be affected by the development proposal.

### **Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated.**

This assessment of the contribution to significance made by setting will provide the baseline for establishing the effects of a proposed development on significance. We recommend that this assessment should first address the key attributes of the heritage asset itself and then consider:

- the physical surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets
- the asset’s intangible associations with its surroundings, and patterns of use
- the contribution made by noises, smells, etc to significance, and
- the way views allow the significance of the asset to be appreciated

### **Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it.**

The wide range of circumstances in which setting may be affected and the range of heritage assets that may be involved precludes a single approach for assessing effects. Different approaches will be required for different circumstances. In general, however, the assessment should address the attributes of the proposed development in terms of its:

- location and siting
- form and appearance
- wider effects
- permanence



### Assessment Step 2 Checklist

The starting point for this stage of the assessment is to consider the significance of the heritage asset itself and then establish the contribution made by its setting. The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance. It may be the case that only a limited selection of the attributes listed is likely to be particularly important in terms of any single asset.

#### The asset's physical surroundings

- Topography
- Aspect
- Other heritage assets (including buildings, structures, landscapes, areas or archaeological remains)
- Definition, scale and 'grain' of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces
- Formal design eg hierarchy, layout
- Orientation and aspect
- Historic materials and surfaces
- Green space, trees and vegetation
- Openness, enclosure and boundaries
- Functional relationships and communications
- History and degree of change over time

#### Experience of the asset

- Surrounding landscape or townscape character
- Views from, towards, through, across and including the asset
- Intentional intervisibility with other historic and natural features
- Visual dominance, prominence or role as focal point
- Noise, vibration and other nuisances
- Tranquillity, remoteness, 'wildness'
- Busyness, bustle, movement and activity
- Scents and smells
- Diurnal changes
- Sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy or privacy
- Land use
- Accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement
- Degree of interpretation or promotion to the public
- Rarity of comparable survivals of setting
- Cultural associations
- Celebrated artistic representations
- Traditions

### Assessment Step 3 Checklist

The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of the potential attributes of a development affecting setting that may help to elucidate its implications for the significance of the heritage asset. It may be that only a limited selection of these is likely to be particularly important in terms of any particular development.

#### Location and siting of development

- Proximity to asset
- Position in relation to relevant topography and watercourses
- Position in relation to key views to, from and across
- Orientation
- Degree to which location will physically or visually isolate asset

#### Form and appearance of development

- Prominence, dominance, or conspicuousness
- Competition with or distraction from the asset
- Dimensions, scale and massing
- Proportions
- Visual permeability (extent to which it can be seen through), reflectivity
- Materials (texture, colour, reflectiveness, etc)
- Architectural and landscape style and/or design
- Introduction of movement or activity
- Diurnal or seasonal change

#### Wider effects of the development

- Change to built surroundings and spaces
- Change to skyline, silhouette
- Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc
- Lighting effects and 'light spill'
- Change to general character (eg urbanising or industrialising)
- Changes to public access, use or amenity
- Changes to land use, land cover, tree cover
- Changes to communications/accessibility/permeability, including traffic, road junctions and car-parking, etc
- Changes to ownership arrangements (fragmentation/permitted development/etc)
- Economic viability

#### Permanence of the development

- Anticipated lifetime/temporariness
- Recurrence
- Reversibility

### Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

Enhancement may be achieved by actions including:

- removing or re-modelling an intrusive building or feature
- replacement of a detrimental feature by a new and more harmonious one
- restoring or revealing a lost historic feature or view
- introducing a wholly new feature that adds to the public appreciation of the asset
- introducing new views (including glimpses or better framed views) that add to the public experience of the asset, or
- improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset including its setting

Options for reducing the harm arising from development may include the repositioning of a development or its elements, changes to its design, the creation of effective long-term visual or acoustic screening, or management measures secured by planning conditions or legal agreements. For some developments affecting setting, the design of a development may not be capable of sufficient adjustment to avoid or significantly reduce the harm, for example where impacts are caused by fundamental issues such as the proximity, location, scale, prominence or noisiness of a development. In other cases, good design may reduce or remove the harm, or provide enhancement. Here the design quality may be an important consideration in determining the balance of harm and benefit.

**Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.**

It is good practice to document each stage of the decision-making process in a non-technical and proportionate way, accessible to non-specialists. This should set out clearly how the setting of each heritage asset affected contributes to its significance or to the appreciation of its significance, as well as what the anticipated effect of the development will be, including of any mitigation proposals.



## APPENDIX 2: THE BUILDING IN CONTEXT TOOLKIT

The Building in Context Toolkit grew out of the publication **Building in Context**<sup>™</sup> published by English Heritage and CABE in 2001. The purpose of that publication was to stimulate a high standard of design for development taking place in historically sensitive contexts. The founding and enduring principle is that all successful design solutions depend on allowing time for a thorough site analysis and character appraisal to fully understand context.

**The eight Building in Context principles are:**

### Principle 1

A successful project will start with an assessment of the value of retaining what is there.

### Principle 2

A successful project will relate to the geography and history of the place and lie of the land.

### Principle 3

A successful project will be informed by its own significance so that its character and identity will be appropriate to its use and context.

### Principle 4

A successful project will sit happily in the pattern of existing development and the routes through and around it.

### Principle 5

A successful project will respect important views.

### Principle 6

A successful project will respect the scale of neighbouring buildings.

### Principle 7

A successful project will use materials and building methods which are as high quality as those used in existing buildings.

### Principle 8

A successful project will create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting.