



HERITAGE STATEMENT FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION

**3, 4, 5 and 6 Oak Court
St Albans Villas
Highgate Road
London
NW5 1QU**

Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 Oak Court, St Albans Villas- Window Replacement and General External Repairs as well as Refurbishment of Internal Communal Circulation Areas including Fire Precautionary Upgrade Works

Prepared on behalf of
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**Job No: 30914
Date: May 2020**

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18 May 2020 13:48:10



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Heritage Statement

1.0 Introduction

1.1 General

- 1.1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Paul Westbrook of Baily Garner LLP (the Agent) on behalf of Angelina Obeng (the Applicant) who in turn is acting on behalf of the London Borough of Camden (LBC). This Statement accompanies a Listed Building Consent Application and Full Planning Application for the proposed replacement of the existing PVCu double glazed windows to the front elevation and the single glazed timber windows on the rear elevation where indicated on the accompanying plans. All replacement windows are to be timber with Slimlite double glazing. Included in the proposal is the carrying out of necessary maintenance repairs to the external fabric as well as the redecoration of previously painted surfaces. In addition is the refurbishment of the internal communal circulation areas including fire precaution upgrade works. The submission of the applications follows on from a joint site visit between Zachary Munro (Baily Garner LLP – the agent) and Neil Baxter (Senior Planner, LBC), given the nature and extent of the intended works the latter recommended the Applicant submit both applications.
- 1.1.2 Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 Oak Court, St Albans Villas (here after referred to as the Site) are located within the Borough's Dartmouth Park Conservation Area and are group registered as being Grade II Listed (list entry number: 1379017) in Historic England's National List.
- 1.1.3 The Site is located on the busy Highgate Road and is described by Historic England as follows:-

*'Details
CAMDEN*

TQ2886SW HIGHGATE ROAD 798-1/20/862 (East side) Nos.3-6 (consec) St Alban's Villas

GV II

2 pairs of linked semi-detached villas. Mid C19. Colour rendered brick with stucco dressings and bands to upper floors. Angles have clasping pilasters, ground floor rusticated, 2nd of Ionic type; paired to party walls. Slated hipped roofs with long slab chimney-stacks on the party walls. 3 storeys and semi-basements. 2 windows each plus 1 window each in narrow 2-storey linking bay. Round-arched entrances with rusticated voussoirs. Each has a ground floor canted bay rising from the basement and having rusticated mullions with keystones to windows with parapet having a continuous band. Between Nos 4 & 5 a bowed 3-light window. Casements to upper floors architraved; 1st floor eared with cornice and sill brackets, 2nd floor with sill brackets. INTERIORS: not inspected.'

- 1.1.4 The Site was listed in January 1999 and is known to of been built shortly after 1850 despite being somewhat Georgian in architectural style. Over the decades its physical appearance has been significantly altered particularly since the beginning of the twentieth century.
- 1.1.5 The London Borough of Camden (the Council) is the freeholder of the Site which comprises twelve residential flats of which eight are Council tenanted and as such provide much needed social housing accommodation, the remaining flats are leasehold.

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1.2 Brief History

(source: Streets of Kentish Town, Camden History Society- A survey of streets , buildings & former residents in a part of Camden published 2005)

- 1.2.1 St Albans Villas were built on the former grounds of a grand mansion called Kentish Town House built in about 1777 by London solicitor Gregory Bateman. The house was demolished in 1850 and shortly after Lady Burdett-Coutts, granddaughter of the Duchess of St Albans purchased the estate which adjoined her Highgate properties and then set out St Albans Villas and St Albans Road.
- 1.2.2 The Villas took their name from the original Duke of St Albans Inn that stood on the corner of Swains Lane and indirectly from a former actress of Irish peasant stock, Harriet Mellon, the resident of nearby Holly Lodge further up the hill. In 1827 the 9th Duke of St Albans became Harriet's second husband. Her first husband had been Thomas Coutts, a wealthy and elderly banker of Holly Lodge and from whom on his death she inherited a fortune. The Duchess of St Albans herself died in 1837, leaving her estate to a granddaughter of her first husband Angela Burdett. Ennobled in 1871, she is best remembered as a philanthropic millionairess and Edward VII is reported to have described her as, "after my mother, the most remarkable woman in the kingdom".
- 1.2.3 No. 4 St Albans Villas was once occupied by Thomas Idris, Mayor of St Pancras 1903-04 and founder of the famous soft drinks company whose works were in Camden Town.

2.0 Requirements

- 2.1.1 This statement responds to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment for planning applications affecting heritage assets requiring an assessment and statement considering the impact of the proposed development.
- 2.1.2 The structure and content of this statement has been informed by DCLG Circular 01/2006 Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System (12 June 2006) and Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them (CABE, 2007).
- 2.1.3 This Statement comments on the condition of the Site only in relation to the proposed works and as such does not constitute a full building report. The author has carried out a non-intrusive inspection of the site from ground level only; the weather conditions at the time of the visit were dry and overcast with a temperature of 20°C. In addition to the inspection the author has relied upon photographs taken by others at different times of the year including aerial photos whilst making this Statement.

3.0 Description of Proposal

- 3.1.1 The Applicants' principal intention is to address the visual harm done to the front elevations of the Site by the presence of the double glazed PVCu windows. At the same time, it needs to improve upon the thermal and maintain the acoustic comfort of its residents. The use of double glazing does both, as well as reduces resident's fuel bills.

3.2 Windows

- 3.2.1 For the most part the proposed works relate to the replacement of all windows on the front elevation and a number of windows on the rear elevation, as indicated on the accompanying plans. All replacement windows are to be timber with Slimlite double glazing. The use of 14mm thick Slimlite sealed units keeps the overall thickness of the windows to a minimum whilst complying with the latest version of Approved Document L1B: Conservation of fuel and power in existing dwellings.

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3.2.2 Front Elevation Casements

3.2.3 The use of multiple glazing bars is typical on period buildings and as such the fenestration of the proposed front elevation casement windows has been based on those of the neighbouring buildings Nos. 1 and 2 St Albans Villas (see photos) which have retained theirs in some form or other. The glazing bars are to be structural. The proposed windows are to be of redwood with oak cills.

3.2.4 Rear Elevation Casements

3.2.5 The fenestration of the proposed rear elevation Slimlite double glazed casement windows is to be 'like-for-like'. The existing windows are assumed to have been installed in the 1970s.

3.2.6 All Other Windows

3.2.7 All other windows are to be repaired and eased to ensure smooth operation before being redecorated.

3.3 External Doors

3.3.1 The circa 1920/30s communal front entrance doors (see photo) are to be retained including their decorative leaded porthole glazing. Where necessary, the doors are to be repaired and eased to ensure smooth operation before being redecorated using a breathable heritage black finish.

3.3.2 The rear elevation timber French doors and their side/top lights are to be repaired where necessary and redecorated.

3.4 Chimney Stacks & Party Wind Walls

3.4.1 Viewed from the ground, through binoculars, the rendered chimney stacks and parapet walls appeared to be in fair condition with some cracking. The render is assumed to be cementitious and the intention is to remove any defective areas using hand tools to avoid cutting into brickwork beneath. If the majority of the render is found to have blown then the intention is to re-render the chimney stacks and wind walls using a naturally hydrated NHL3.5 Lime mortar. Unlike cement based mortar, Lime mortar has a lower compressive strength and is more flexible and permeable, therefore it is a more sympathetic material to use on brickwork of older buildings.

3.4.2 None of the chimney pots are original and appeared to be in fair condition. Should any be found to be defective then they will be replaced for clay pots.

3.5 Roof Structures & Coverings

3.5.1 Pitched Roof Structures

3.5.2 Aerial photos show the structures to be parallel ridge and hipped structures with shared lead or zinc valleys. The structures appear to be of sound condition and are not showing signs of deflection or splaying.

3.5.3 Pitched Roof Coverings

3.5.4 Aerial photos show the existing roof coverings to be of artificial slate with plastic vent tiles and clay ridge tiles. The coverings are considered to be circa 10-22yrs in age and as such are in fair to good condition with minor defects. The intention is to carefully brush off any moss growth and replace any broken or missing tiles on a 'like-for-like' basis.

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3.5.5 Skylights

3.5.6 There are a number of fixed and openable skylights to the main roofs which again are considered to be circa 10-22yrs old and as such do not require replacement.

3.5.7 Flat Roofs & Coverings

3.5.8 Flat Roof Structures

3.5.9 Aerial photos show the structures of the assumed circa 1970's rear addition flat roofs to No.4; the front elevation bay roofs; the link flat roof between Nos. 4 and 5 and lastly the outer most flank flat roofs at either end of the site are considered to be in sound condition.

3.5.10 Flat Roof Coverings

3.5.11 Aerial photos show the coverings to the two outer most flank roofs and the link roof to be bituminous felt with lead flashings again circa 10-20yrs old. As such they are assumed to be in a fair-good condition. The intention is to brush off any accumulated loose debris and re-point any loose sections of flashings.

3.5.12 Aerial photos show the coverings to the bay roofs to be of asphalt and in fair-good condition and as such the intention is to only apply a brush applied a solar reflective paint to prolong their serviceable life.

3.5.13 Aerial photos show the covering to lower height rear addition of No. 4 to be asphalt which is in fair condition. The intention is to carryout minor asphalt repairs and apply a brush applied solar reflective paint to prolong its serviceable life.

3.5.14 In addition, there is a row of fixed sky lights along the rear edge of the roof, however their condition cannot be commented on until access is provided.

3.5.15 Soffits & Fascias

3.5.16 The existing soffits and fascias are not original and like the roof coverings are estimated to be circa 10-20yrs old, the intention is to prepare and redecorate them. Note the soffits incorporate circular vents.

3.5.17 Gutters & Rainwater Goods

3.5.18 The existing guttering is PVCu and circa 10-20yrs old, as such its condition is assumed to be fair. The intention is to carryout minor repairs and ensure that the gutters are flowing freely.

3.5.19 Although cast iron was widely used by the mid 19th century the existing cast iron down pipes are thought to be circa 1920/30's and their condition fair. The intention is to ensure the downpipes are freely flowing and to redecorate them.

3.5.20 Soil & Vent Pipes

3.5.21 Again, although cast iron was widely being used by the mid 19th century the existing cast iron soil and vent pipes to the Site are thought to be circa 1920/30's and their condition fair. The intention is to redecorate them.

3.5.22 Walls & Stucco Render

3.5.23 The external walls are fully rendered and do not appear to be suffering from any significant movement, leaning or bulging. Despite this the Ashlar stucco above ground floor is cracking. The cracking can lead to moisture ingress and subsequent failure of the stucco.

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- 3.5.24 The rear, side and in particular the front elevation walls above ground floor display Ashlar stucco whilst the lower and ground front elevations are plain rusticated banded. In the absence of a mortar analysis test result it is difficult to determine what material has been used therefore it is the intention to conduct such a test in order to carry out sympathetic repairs. Nevertheless the author is of the opinion that given the render is very hard it could well be Portland cement stucco which became widely available in the 1850s.
- 3.5.25 **External Decorations**
- 3.5.26 All previously painted surfaces will be redecorated using breathable finishes where appropriate, colours to match existing.
- 3.5.27 **Communal Front Entrance Steps**
- 3.5.28 The communal front entrance steps are of concrete and are in need of minor repair. The steps of No. 5 have an asphalt covering which has slumped down the risers and as such poses a hazard to the health and safety of both residents and visitors to the Site; the intention is to renew the asphalt.
- 3.5.29 **Boundary Walls & Fencing**
- 3.5.30 The modern post and rail fencing to the private rear gardens is considered to be in fair condition and as such will be repaired where necessary and treated with clear wood preservative to prolong its serviceable life.
- 3.5.31 The rear boundary walls are considered to be in fair condition and as such will be sympathetically repaired.
- 3.5.32 The front boundary wall is of brick construction and is not original despite having stone copings. The wall requires some re-pointing and re-bedding of copings.
- 3.5.33 **Gates, Railings & Handrails**
- 3.5.34 The front elevation gates, railings and entrance step handrails are not original and in good condition and the intention is to redecorate them in black paint as existing.
- 3.5.35 The metal guarding to the flat roof of the rear addition of No. 4 is not original and the intention is to redecorate it in black paint as existing.
- 3.5.36 The cast iron balcony guarding to the rear elevations of Nos.5 and 6 are considered to be the original and as such are to be retained and redecorated in black paint as the existing.
- 3.5.37 **Paths**
- 3.5.38 The front garden paths are of tarmac and will be repaired as such.
- 3.5.39 The rear paths are paved with concrete slabs, which where necessary, will be re-bedded.
- 3.5.40 **Scaffolding**
- 3.5.41 There will be a need to erect scaffolding around the Site in order to safely carry out the proposed works. Given the Site is Listed the scaffolding will, where practical, be raked to minimize the use of scaffold ties. In addition, and where required, scaffold transoms will be fitted with end caps to protect the masonry.

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3.5.42 **Internal Communal Circulation Area Works**

3.5.43 **Fire Precaution Upgrade Works**

3.5.44 **Emergency Lighting & Fire Detection Systems**

3.5.45 In the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower tragedy The Council is, as are other Local Authority social housing providers, compelled to safeguard the health and safety of its residents and visitors to its flatted accommodation in the event of fire outbreak. Related to this is the Council's legal obligation under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to carry out Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) of such buildings. As a result and in an attempt to fulfil the recommendations of its FRAs for the Site the intention is to:

- Install an emergency lighting system within the common escape routes which are the internal communal circulation areas.
- Install a Grade A fire detection: LD2 coverage system again within the common escape routes as well as a heat detector/sounder within the hallway/lobby of each flat opening onto an escape route. The detectors/sounders are to be interlinked.

3.5.46 The cabling within the escape routes is to be protected within surface mounted galvanised metal trunking. To avoid damaging any period ornamental plasterwork to walls and soffits within the areas including any period joinery, skirtings, dado rails etc. the intention is to consult the conservation officer concerned on the routing of the cables and positioning of detectors. Being largely surface mounted it will be relatively easy to remove the systems at a later date with minimal disturbance.

3.5.47 **Entrance Doors to Flats**

3.5.48 Although not included in the FRA recommendations the Council's intention is to replace any non-complaint flat entrance doors and frames which open onto the common escape routes for compliant FD30s fire door sets.

3.5.49 The majority of the existing doors and frames are assumed to be circa 1920/30s in age and are essentially flush faced in style with letter plates (see photo). The replacement door sets are factory produced and although available as flush faced will not be possible to replicate the profile of the letter plates.

3.5.50 Although the existing door frames will need to be replaced, the intention is to reuse the existing architraves.

3.5.51 **Landlord Electrical Cupboards**

3.5.52 Although not included in the FRA recommendations the Council's intention is to replace any non-complaint electrical cupboards within the common escape routes (see photo) for fire resistant cupboards. The intention is to replicate their appearance as best as possible and to consult with the conservation officer on their finished appearance.

3.5.53 **Floor Coverings**

3.5.54 The existing floor coverings are vinyl sheet and are considered to be in fair condition. The intention is to replace them for slip resistant vinyl sheet coverings, colour to be confirmed.

3.5.55 **Decorations**

3.5.56 To mitigate fire spread the intention is to strip the walls and soffits of the common escape routes of any existing wall paper back to bare substrate before preparing and redecorating

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them with Class '0' paint. The existing wall paper is not considered to be of any architectural or historical interest.

3.5.57 Should the substrate prove to be lath and plaster or lime plaster and have failed then the intention is to sympathetically patch repair the damage with the same materials.

3.5.58 All other previously decorated surfaces be it varnished handrails will be redecorated, colour and finish to match existing.

4.0 Justification of the need for the works

4.1.1 Throughout its history the Site has undergone a number of significant alterations as such it could be argued that it **has lost much of its original appearance**.

4.1.2 Historic England's description of the Site makes no reference to the fact that today all the front elevation windows are double glazed PVCu, therefore it can only be assumed that they were installed post Listing and possibly without planning permission or Listed Building Consent.

4.1.3 **The PVCu windows are not sympathetic to the age of the Site** and detract from the aesthetic tenets of classical architectural designed centred around the proportions of the Golden ratio or Golden rectangle as such, they could depreciate the market value of the Site. Given the above it is felt that the replacement of the PVCu windows for timber windows with Slimlite double glazing is justifiable.

4.1.4 In order to meet the statutory requirements of the Regulatory Reform Act (Fire Safety) 2005 and to carry out the recommendations of its FRAs in addition to meeting its own fire safety requirements, the Council must complete the proposed fire precaution upgrade works. At the same time it is sensitive to the needs of conservation and therefore is prepared to consult the statutory bodies concerned as to its proposed works.

4.1.5 Lastly, the carrying out of general yet sympathetic maintenance repairs and redecorations will not only prolong the service life of the Site but revitalise its general appearance.

5.0 Design in accordance with Listed Status.

5.1 Use

5.1.1 The building is currently used for residential purposes being divided into twelve self-contained flats and is to remain so.

5.2 Amount

5.2.1 The proposals will neither create additional buildings nor extend the existing.

5.3 Layout

5.3.1 The proposed works will not alter the foot print of the Site or the layout of any flats or the internal communal circulation areas.

5.4 Landscaping

5.4.1 The landscaping surrounding the building will remain as existing and therefore does not form part of the proposals of this application.

5.5 Appearance

5.5.1 By replacing the windows it is thought that the external appearance of the Site will to some extent return it to its original appearance.

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5.5.2 The Council's Building Control will be notified as to the replacement of the windows and flat front entrance doors opening onto the common escape routes. Building Control will also be notified about the emergency lighting and fire detection system installations.

6.0 Access

6.1 Generally

6.1.1 The proposed works will not affect the existing access arrangements and therefore do not form part of this application.

6.2 Parking

6.2.1 The proposed works will not affect the existing arrangements and therefore do not form part of this application.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1.1 The Applicant's proposal will to some extent return these imposing Villas back to their original appearance. Added to this is the reassuring presence of fire detection, emergency lighting systems and the adequate fire checking of escape routes.

7.1.2 Lastly, the undertaking of the proposed general maintenance repairs and redecorations will not only extend the life expectancy of the Site but revive its appearance.

References

- Streets of Kentish Town. A survey of streets, buildings & former residents in a part of Camden – Camden History Society 2005, ISBN 0 904491625.
- Wikipedia – Angela Burdett-Coutts, 1st Baroness Burdett-Coutts.

APPENDIX PHOTO SCHEDULE

A





Photo 1. Nos. 3-6 Oak Court (cream and white)



Photo 2. No.2 St Albans Villas



Photo 3. No. 1 St. Albans Villas



Photo 4. Nos.3-6 Oak Court - rear elevations



Photo 5. No. 4 Oak Court - lower flat roof



Photo 6. No. 4 Oak Court - higher level flat roof



Photo 7. No. 6 Oak Court - flank flat roof



Photo 8. No.6 Oak Court -main roof



Photo 9. No. 5 Oak Court - main roof



Photo 10. No.3 Oak Court - main roof



Photo 11. No. 5 Oak Court - communal front entrance steps



Photo 12. Electrical cupboard within communal entrance hall



Photo 13. Generic flat entrance door



Photo 14. Internal communal area



Photo 15. Oak Court - front boundary wall



Photo 16. Oak Court - front boundary wall