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Heritage Statement

In Support of Response to Camden Council's Feedback dated 8 September 2020 on
Application for Internal and External Works to Housden House, 78 South Hill Park

1. We have been in collaboration with the architect Tom Housden of Outpost Architects in providing a response to the comments. This is, we appreciate, a small but complex heritage environment where the peculiarities of the owner/architect Brian Housden's continual additive approach to fittings, causes us to suggest, as we did at the site visit and in the application, a tripartite approach to significance, i.e. of either 'National', 'Local' or 'Personal' importance. We believe the National significant elements of the building, i.e. those aspects that rightly justified the listing are entirely conserved. For some aspects of Local interest such as immovable furniture and a congested kitchen we are only proposing change for strictly practical or safety reasons. Other changes to do with cupboards and shelves we consider to be of Personal interest are quite transitory and in some cases only very loosely fixed to the structure.
2. Outpost's response document dated October 2020 is, we believe, very carefully and sensitively considered in its approach and makes a very logical case for the changes. In as much as one may believe the removal of certain elements of Local or Personal significance constitute some harm, we ask to take account of the fact that there is some tangible level of 'public benefit' in securing the sustainable future of the building by making it safe and practical to live in.

3. There are parallels here with the alterations made to Erno Goldfinger's Grade II * listed Balfour Tower in east London that Citydesigner guided in collaboration with Studio Egret West and AB Rogers towards acceptable change. There, most kitchens and bathrooms were replaced and walls and ceilings lined to meet regulations. Also, and most pertinent, to Housden House, we won support in changing the white painted windows to grey painted aluminium since timber was impractical and white painted metal would look too much like PVC. Similarly we believe that to follow the style of Housden House, expressed metal replacement garden doors at ground level are the appropriate choice for this home.

4. We hope you will consider the propositions and their reasoning and conclude that all the changes now proposed are entirely equitable. We are sure the client would be happy to make the house available for you and your colleagues for a further visit under strict Covid-19 protocols, with these propositions in mind.

Richard Coleman

Citydesigner

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