



Heritage Statement: Proposed Bathrooms

10 Grand Union Walk, London
Borough of Camden

On behalf of Mr Jarrett Brown

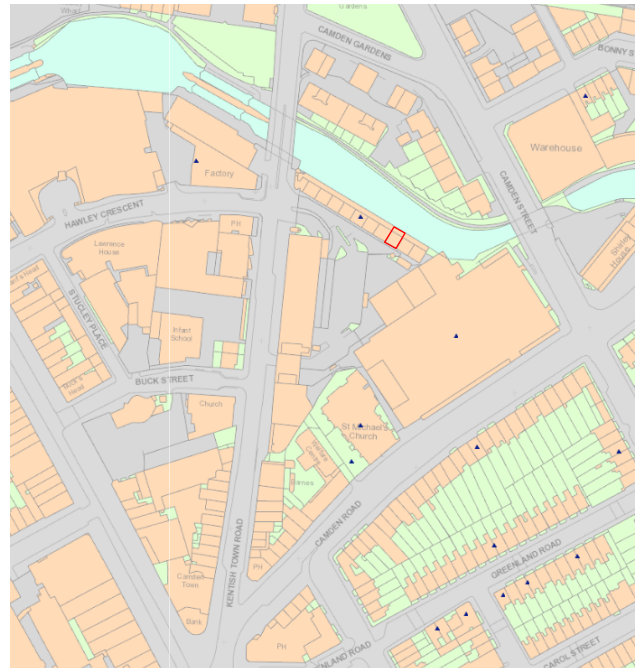
October 2020 | Project Ref. 00102 | V.1



JON LOWE
HERITAGE

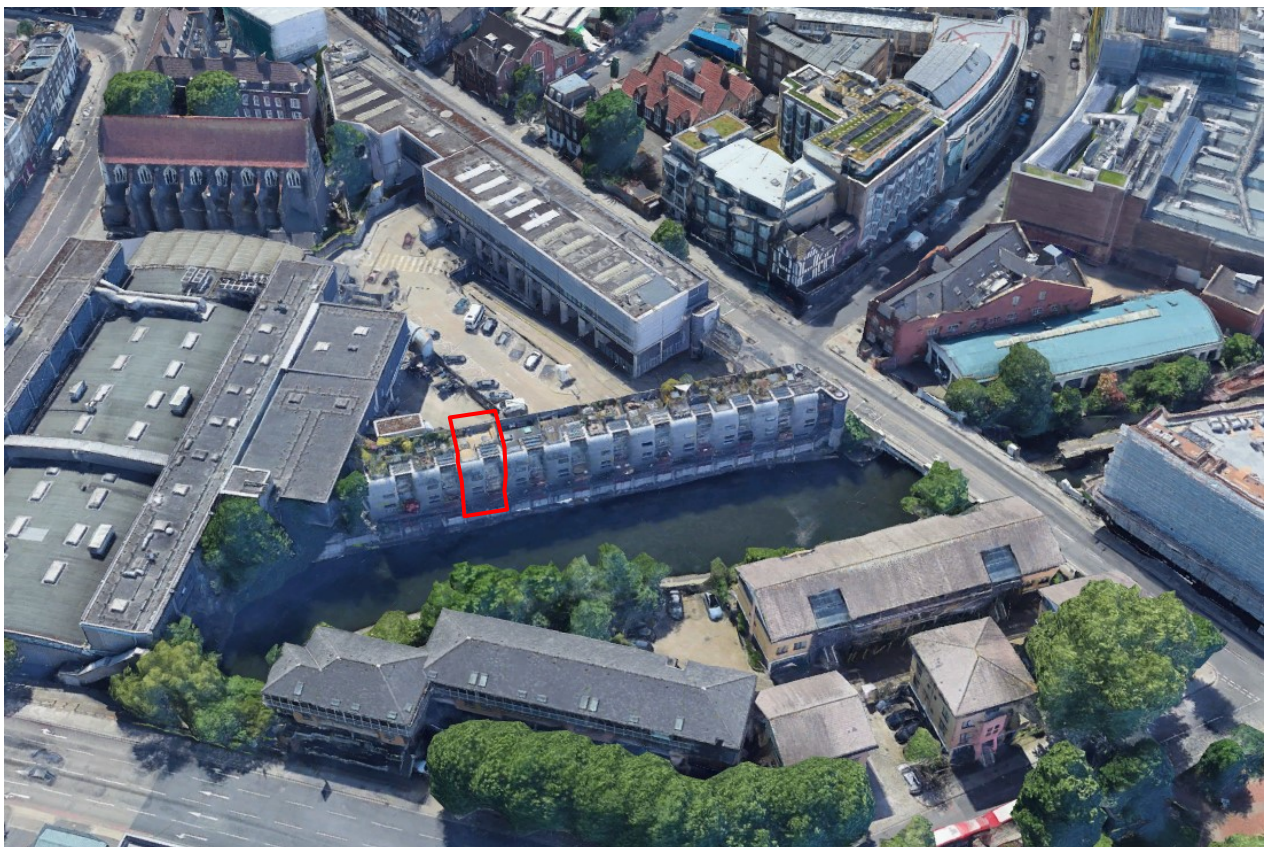
Introduction

1. This Heritage Statement accompanies an application seeking listed building consent to replace fitted bathroom cabinetry at ground and second floor within No. 10 Grand Union Walk, Camden NW1 9LP. (The application site hereafter) The property was designed as a single dwelling unit and remains as a private dwelling. The statement includes an assessment of the significance of the building and the contribution of the fitted bathroom cupboards to that significance. It appraises the effects of the proposed works on the significance of the listed building to support Camden Borough Council with determination of the application.
2. Nos 1-12 Grand Union Walk is a terrace of 10 houses and 2 flats built in 1986-88 as part of a wider development by J. Sainsbury's to designs by Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners. The terrace forms a north facing single aspect linear block of shallow depth that fronts the grand Union Canal to the north. The terrace is architecturally and visually distinctive and is one of the only residential examples of the High Tech movement.
3. The terrace was added to the national list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest at Grade 2 on 19 July 2019. At the same time the adjacent Sainsbury's supermarket was also listed at Grade 2.



Site location. Listed buildings are identified by blue triangle

Aerial view showing application site and terrace's canal frontage



4. The building is situated within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area (designated 25th April 1974 with boundary extensions and adjustments 1983, 1984, 1985 and 2004). The proposals do not have any effect on this asset and therefore its significance is not appraised here.
5. Listed building consent and Planning permission have recently been granted for refurbishment and minor alteration (2020/0123/L&2020/0135/P). The application originally included a proposal to replace the tired bathroom units and sanitaryware but the application was amended prior to determination to remove these works.
6. This Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with drawings and supporting statement setting out the current and proposed arrangement prepared by Hugh Cullum Architects.

Historic Background

7. The list description summarises the site's history:

"In the early 1980s J Sainsbury took ownership of a former industrial site in the heart of Camden with a view to developing an urban superstore. The scope of the project reached beyond just the store and between 1986 and 1988 a mixed-use scheme comprising a supermarket (listed Grade II), a terrace of houses (1-12 Grand Union Walk), a commercial building (known as Grand Union House) and a small crèche building were constructed to designs by Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners.

Situated to the south of the Grand Union Canal (originally Regent's Canal), the site



1952 aerial photograph showing the former commercial buildings of the Aerated Bread Company. The approximate footprint of 1-12 Grand Union Walk is shown as a red tone.

was in mixed industrial and residential use in the C19. During the C20 an increasingly large part was occupied by the Aerated Bread Company (ABC), which ceased production in 1982 leaving a roughly triangular site bounded on two sides by busy roads and on the third by the Grand Union Canal. In April 1985 Sainsbury's obtained outline planning permission for a scheme by Scott Brownrigg and Turner. This, however, was rejected by Sainsbury's newly-established vetting committee, chaired by the architecture critic Colin Amery. Amery was formerly assistant editor to the Architectural Review and architectural critic for the Financial Times; in his new role he reported directly to supermarket chairman, Sir John Sainsbury. Amery described the approved scheme as 'not quite good enough' for the site and in November 1985 the architects were replaced by Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners on his recommendation. Sainsbury's also owned a plot north of the canal which was designated for a housing association development under a section 52 agreement in the outline planning permission of 1985. Although it formed part of the planning permission, it was not included in Grimshaw's site.

Though opposed by the Regent's Canal Conservation Advisory Group, the scheme Grimshaw devised for Sainsbury's enthused Camden's planners, who, as he recalled it, wanted a sophisticated modern building rather than a pastiche. Detailed planning permission was granted in May 1986, having been commended by the Royal Fine Art Commission as an 'example of bold and enlightened patronage'. Construction commenced in August 1986, with Wimpey as main contractor."

8. On 31 October 2003 planning permission (2003/1569/P) was granted and subsequently implemented for:

"The use of the roof of the residential block of flats as a terrace for residents, and the associated raising of parapets on side and rear elevations, glass/steel balustrading to the front elevation, timber decking, replacement rooflights, and external lighting."

9. Individual properties have been subject to changes affecting character and appearance. At roof level the properties have been finished with roof decking,

seating and planters of varying designs, materials and quality. Internally several of the properties have been altered with typical changes including: replacement floor finishes; enclosure of the gallery to form a room or variation to the balustrade; new bathrooms and kitchens.

10. Upon completion, in 1988, the original designs were illustrated and described in the Architects Journal. (See right)

Significance

1-12 Grand Union Walk

11. The detailed list description (Appendix 1) gives the following principle reasons for the designation of the building:

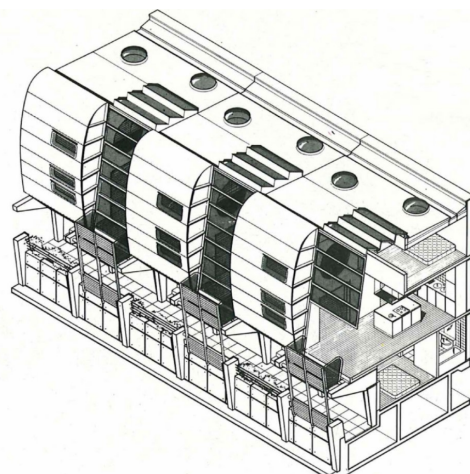
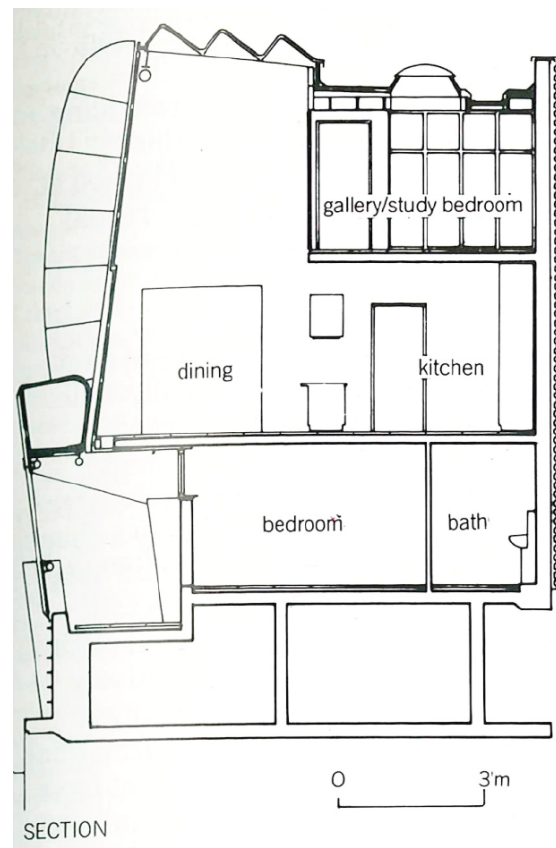
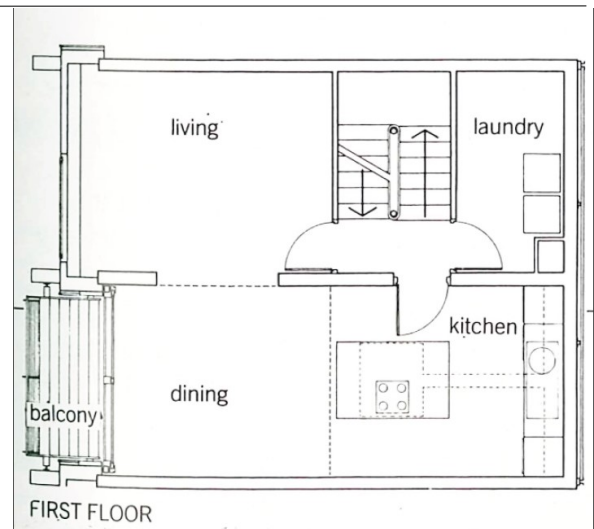
Architectural interest:

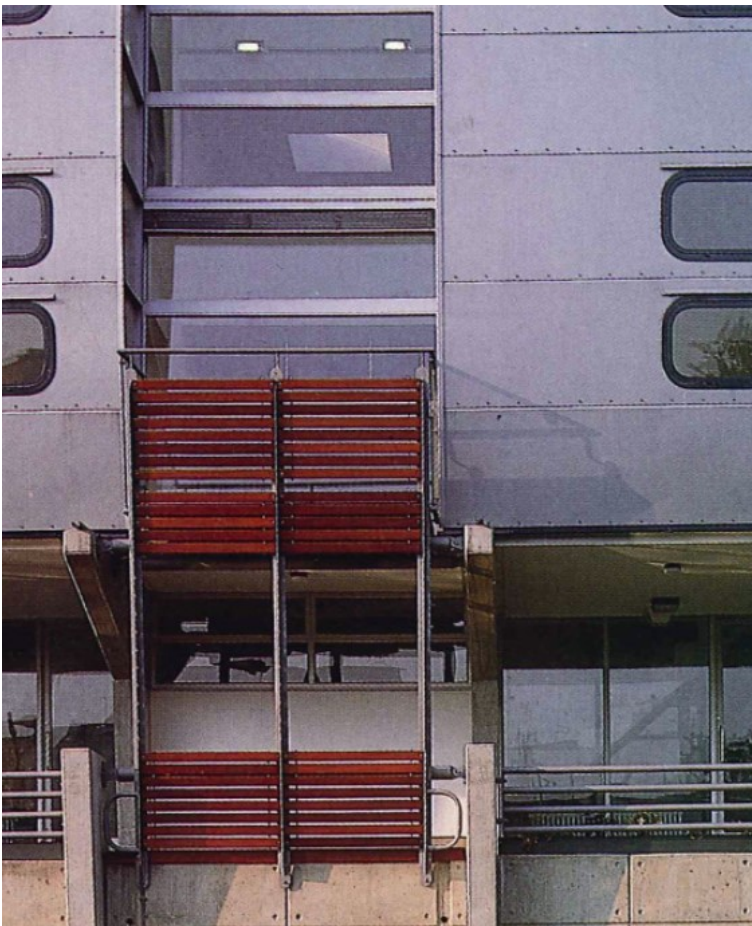
- in its bold styling, resourceful planning and creative use of materials and detail, it is a scheme which exploits the canal-side setting with humour and panache;
- as one of few examples of High-Tech style applied to housing;
- as part of an ambitious and successful mixed-use scheme which marked a turning point in the career of Nicholas Grimshaw, one of the country's leading proponents of High-Tech architecture.

12. As a recent addition to the national statutory list the description is accurate and comprehensive, setting out the history of the asset and an architectural description of the interior and exterior.
13. The listing review included an internal inspection of two of the houses and neither of the two flats. No.10 was not inspected.
14. The list description recognises changes to have taken place prior to listing: *"the interiors of the houses have been altered ad hoc over time, with some fittings and finishes being altered or replaced"*. It highlights that the main feature is the double height space and there is no mention of the bathroom fixtures, fittings or sanitaryware.
15. By adding the buildings to the list it is clear that the level and nature of variation from the original design has not diminished the overall architectural interest.

No.10

16. The property's interest derives from it forming part of the terrace with each of the three principal reasons





Architect's Journal images showing frontage after completion

for designation, cited above, being applicable.

17. The house retains the original plan form and much of its original character but it has undergone minor alterations, redecoration and upgrading of services. As with many of the houses the upper floor landing features the post 2003 roof access stairs with a glass access pavilion over. Other works include: (1) The second floor mezzanine gallery has been enclosed with the removal of the original railing and insertion of large aluminium framed sliding windows; (2) At ground floor the wall between bedroom and entrance hall has been supplemented with additional plasterboard; and (3) there has been replacement and slight reconfiguration of services including replacing floor radiator in first floor living room with new wall mounted radiator.
18. The decorative order and condition of the property is relatively tired and in need of attention. The listed building consent and planning permission supports sensitive repair, restoration of key architectural features and works of alteration that accord with the spirit of the original design intention.
19. The existing bathroom units are likely to be original and therefore the design and you reflect the original fit-out and design intent. It is not known to what extent Grimshaws were responsible for the detailed design and selection of cupboards but it is likely that the project's limited budget and client brief were influential. The cupboards and units are tired and not in good condition and at over 35 years old may have reached their life expectancy. (The units are melamine coated chipboard). The units are not of intrinsic heritage value but the design of integrating cupboards, mirror and considering the bathroom as an ordered and considered space is of interest.

Legislation and Policy

Legislation

20. The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the current legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas and is a primary consideration.
21. In respect of proposals affected listed buildings, Section 66 states that "in considering whether to grant planning permission of permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses". (My emphasis).

National Planning Policy Framework (revised 2019)

22. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England, providing a framework within which locally prepared plans can be produced. It is a material consideration and relates to planning law, noting that applications are to be determined in accordance with the local plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Chapter 16, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', is of particular relevance.
23. Heritage assets are recognised as being a irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. (Paragraph 184) The conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is also a core planning principle.
24. Conservation (for heritage policy) is defined at annex 2 as: "a process of maintaining and managing change in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance." It differs from preservation which is the maintenance of something in its current state.
25. Significance (for heritage policy) is defined at annex 2 as: "The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting..."
26. At paragraph 185, the NPPF, directs that local plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, taking into account four key factors:
 - a. "The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b. The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - c. The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - d. Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place."
27. Describing the significance of any heritage asset affected is the responsibility of an applicant with any assessment being proportionate to the asset's significance. (Paragraph 189)
28. Identifying and assessing the particular significance

of any heritage asset potentially affected by a proposal, taking into account evidence and expertise, is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authorities. The purpose of this is to 'avoid or minimize any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal'. (Paragraph 190)

29. In decision making where designated heritage assets are affected, Paragraph 193 places a duty of giving 'great weight' to the asset's conservation when considering the impact of a proposed development, irrespective of the level of harm.
30. Harm to designated heritage assets is categorized into 'substantial harm', addressed in Paragraphs 194 and 195 of the NPPF, or 'less than substantial harm', addressed in Paragraphs 196.
31. The effects of any development are assessed on the asset as a whole and against its archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interests as the core elements of the asset's significance.

Local Policy

32. Relevant local planning policy is set out in the Camden Local Plan 2017. Policies D1 Design and Policy D2 Heritage are of most relevance.

33. Policy D1 relates to development. The change or alteration of a layout of a kitchen is not considered to be classified as 'development'. Nevertheless the following principles are adhered to:

A Respects local context and character;

B Preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage;

E Comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character.

34. Policy D2 Heritage sets out the means by which the Council will preserve or enhance the Borough's heritage assets. In respect of listed buildings it states that the Council will:

J Resist... alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building



Existing bathroom at ground floor



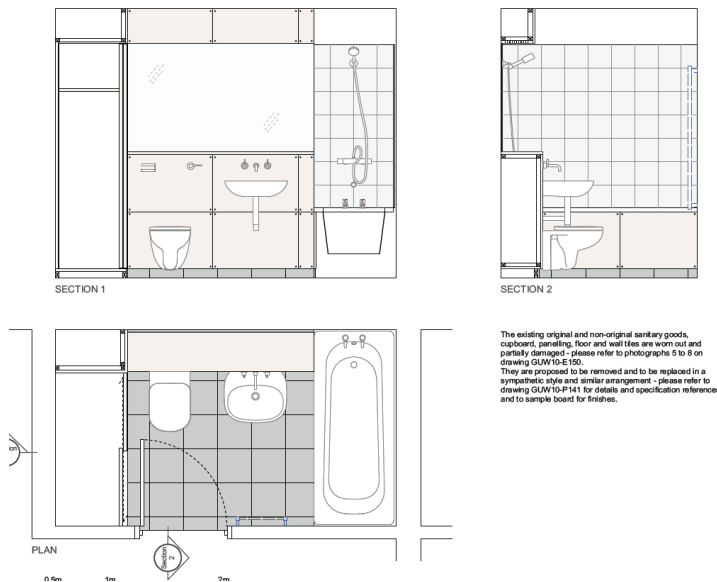
Existing bathroom at second floor

Proposed Works

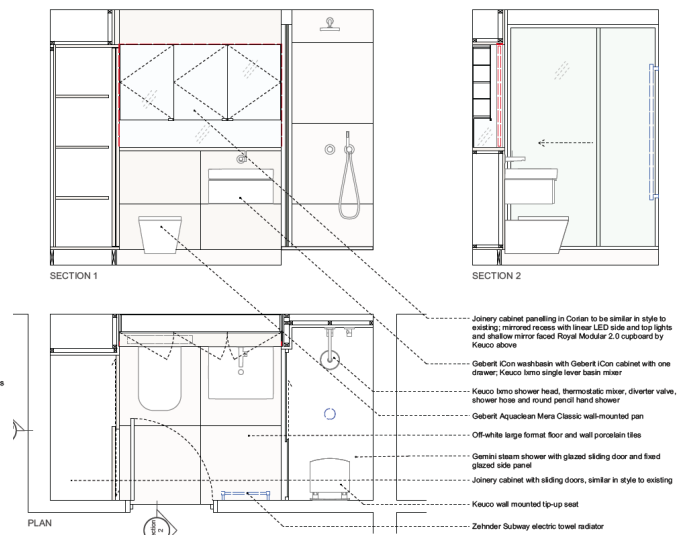
35. It is proposed to remove the existing bathroom cupboards, fixtures and fittings, including sanitaryware, to refurbish the rooms for their continued use as bathrooms. The current fixtures and fittings are in relatively poor condition, low quality construction and a low quality materiality. As these include a mix of coated chipboard or MDF dating from the 1980s and have been exposed to the humidity of windowless bathrooms, they have reached the end of their serviceable life span.
36. A proposed new layout has been designed by conservation accredited architects, Hugh Cullum Architects, in consultation with Jon Lowe Heritage

Ltd. The proposal responds to a brief set by the current owner/occupier/applicant, who acquired the building because of its architectural interest. Sustaining the character of the bathrooms and adhering to the design principles is a key objective and the proposed changes seek to maintain the spirit and overall arrangement of the original but update the rooms for continued occupation and enjoyment of the house.

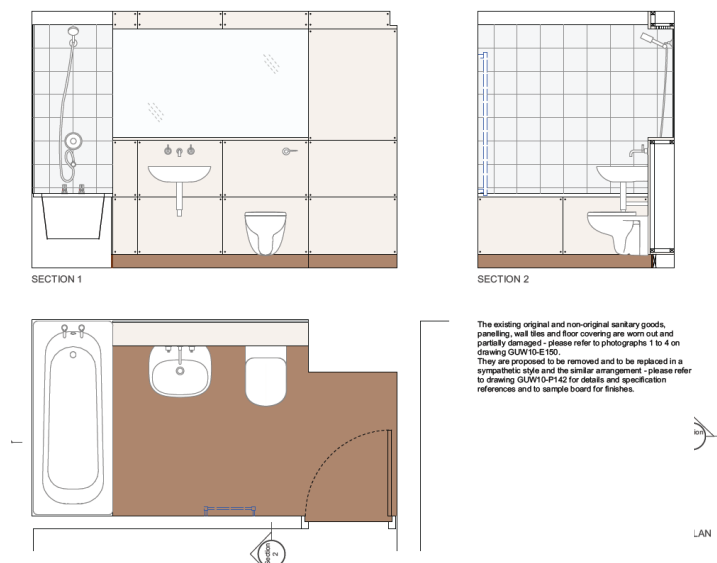
37. The full scope of the proposals is presented in annotations on the proposed drawings submitted with the application and with a design and access statement.



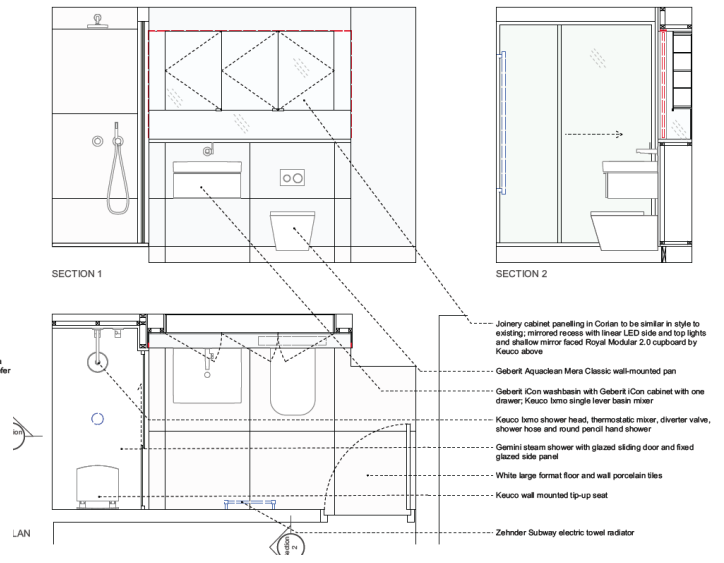
Existing ground floor bathroom



Proposed ground floor bathroom



Existing Second floor bathroom



Proposed Second floor bathroom

Assessment of the Effects of the Proposals

38. The impact of the proposals on the significance of the listed have been appraised.
39. There will be some loss of original bathroom units but only a minimal change to the designed layout. The proposal retains arrangement of all units being set against the rear wall of the building but offers showers instead of baths and new an improved cupboard and mirror arrangements. The overall layout and character of the original cabinetry is captured in the proposed replacement.
40. The loss of units is not considered to adversely effect the special interest of the listed terrace. The list description recognises the degree of prior change to the interior of the houses and it does not specifically mention or lay importance on the layout, fixtures or fittings of the bathrooms although it is recognised that the description is not a definitive list of features. The proposal will result in a minor change and slight deviation from the original deign but it is concluded here that the impact of this change is neutral in its effect.
41. The following key points are relevant to this conclusion:
 - The units are beyond their serviceable life and they have limited intrinsic heritage value.
 - Loss of the fabric would be allowed within the exercising of like-for-like replacement and as such the issues is primarily the nature and layout of the replacement units.
 - The proposed works are minor in nature and have no effect on the structural plan form, spatial arrangement and features of interest that are expressly noted in the list description.
 - The proposal maintains the original layout principles and does not deviate from the general configuration or original concept.
 - The original cupboards and sanitaryware are discontinued products that could not be replaced entirely-like-for-like.
 - The proposed units and the design are of high quality and are in keeping with the character of the existing.

- The proposed changes are comprehensive rather than piecemeal, giving careful consideration each bathroom as a designed element within the building.

Conclusion

42. The proposed works are consistent with the inherent value and character of 10 Grand Union Walk as part of a listed terrace. The kitchen design has taken into account the asset's interests and sought to minimise or avoid harm.
43. As with any building of age its fittings will experience change over time and the management and nature of that change is key to preserving the inherent significance. The list description has been recently prepared and clearly states the reasons for designation. This heritage statement has reviewed the building, the terrace and the available documentary evidence and concludes that the proposals are sympathetic and appropriate to the original intended design, preserving the overall integrity and character of the listed building. Its primary features and characteristics will remain and will respect the design intent of the original. Where variation from this arises the level of change is minor and of little or no consequence to the special architectural or historic interests.
44. Overall there will be no loss of significance and the character and special interests of the listed terrace would be preserved. The proposals have been informed by an understanding of the significance of the assets and therefore special regards and attention has been had to the desirability of preserving or enhancing interests. The proposals are therefore consistent with S.66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
45. The proposed works represent a minor internal alteration to continue the onward occupation and enjoyment of the building. The works do not constitute development but they accord with the objectives of Local Plan Policy D1. Likewise Local Plan Policy D2 is complied with as the features and character of interest are persevered and the essence and spirit of the original design is preserved. In accordance with the NPPF this report provides a proportionate description of the significance of the heritage asset affected by the proposed works and the impacts and effects of the proposed of the significance of the asset have been fully assessed. It is concluded that the proposal has a neutral effect on significance of the listed building and is therefore accordant with legislation and policy that seeks to protect the historic environment.

Appendix 1

List Description

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1464061

Date first listed: 19-Jul-2019

Statutory Address: 1-12 Grand Union Walk, Kentish Town Road, London, NW1 9LP

Summary

Terrace of 10 houses and 2 flats, 1986-88, built as part of a wider development by J Sainsbury's to designs by Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners, architect in charge, Neven Sidor; structural engineers, Kenchington, Little and Partners.

Reasons for Designation

1-12 Grand Union Walk, London, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Architectural interest: * in its bold styling, resourceful planning and creative use of materials and detail, it is a scheme which exploits the canal-side setting with humour and panache; * as one of few examples of High-Tech style applied to housing; * as part of an ambitious and successful mixed-use scheme which marked a turning point in the career of Nicholas Grimshaw, one of the country's leading proponents of High-Tech architecture.

History

In the early 1980s J Sainsbury took ownership of a former industrial site in the heart of Camden with a view to developing an urban superstore. The scope of the project reached beyond just the store and between 1986 and 1988 a mixed-use scheme comprising a supermarket (listed Grade II), a terrace of houses (1-12 Grand Union Walk), a commercial building (known as Grand Union House) and a small crèche building were constructed to designs by Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners.

Situated to the south of the Grand Union Canal (originally Regent's Canal), the site was in mixed industrial and residential use in the C19. During the C20 an increasingly large part was occupied by the Aerated Bread Company (ABC), which ceased production in 1982 leaving a roughly triangular site bounded on two sides by busy roads and on the third by the Grand Union Canal. In April 1985 Sainsbury's obtained outline planning permission for a scheme by Scott Brownrigg and Turner. This, however, was rejected by Sainsbury's newly-established vetting committee, chaired by the architecture critic Colin Amery. Amery was formerly assistant editor to the *Architectural Review* and architectural critic for the *Financial Times*; in his new role he reported directly to supermarket chairman, Sir John Sainsbury. Amery described the approved scheme as 'not quite good enough' for the site and in November 1985 the architects were replaced by Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners on his recommendation. Sainsbury's also owned a

plot north of the canal which was designated for a housing association development under a section 52 agreement in the outline planning permission of 1985. Although it formed part of the planning permission, it was not included in Grimshaw's site.

Though opposed by the Regent's Canal Conservation Advisory Group, the scheme Grimshaw devised for Sainsbury's enthused Camden's planners, who, as he recalled it, wanted a sophisticated modern building rather than a pastiche. Detailed planning permission was granted in May 1986, having been commended by the Royal Fine Art Commission as an 'example of bold and enlightened patronage'. Construction commenced in August 1986, with Wimpey as main contractor.

Each of the elements had very different planning and servicing requirements, lifespans and tenure and all needed to be fitted together on the compact, inner-city site. Grimshaw's scheme permitted each element to take its own form with the architectural design establishing continuity through a common palette of colours and materials. The location of the principal elements were dictated by the constraints and opportunities of the site: the supermarket occupies the main street frontage, the amenity of the canal is given over to the housing, and the vehicular entrances and first-floor commercial units assigned to the non-retail Kentish Town Road. A subterranean car park runs under most of the site.

It was Camden which stipulated the provision of housing, workshops and a crèche on the site. The original outline permission for the housing was for flats but at Grimshaw's suggestion this became a terrace of freehold houses (actually 10 houses and two flats), which are listed at Grade II. The housing offered Grimshaw his first opportunity to fit out a complete and relatively fixed interior; most of his previous commissions being single volume, open-plan spaces capable of flexible subdivision by occupants. When each house was sold the new owner received an 'owners manual', complete with specifications, details of services and suppliers. The commercial units, more familiar ground for Grimshaw, were housed in a single building. These were originally intended as workshops, at Camden's request, but by the time the building was completed the use had changed to B1 (general business use).

Nicholas Grimshaw was born in 1939 in Hove. He studied architecture at the Edinburgh College of Art between 1959 and 62, and in 1962-65 at the Architectural Association. After graduating he established a practice with Terry Farrell, forming his own practice in 1980. Prior to the Camden scheme his portfolio was made up of light-weight, small or medium-scale projects on dispersed sites for industrial or leisure clients. Along with the *Financial Times* Printing Works (1987-8, Grade II*) and the Waterloo Eurostar terminus (commissioned 1988, built 1990-3), the Camden project

therefore occupies a pivotal position in Grimshaw's oeuvre. From the early 1990s Grimshaw came to popular attention with flagship projects such as the British Pavilion for the Seville Expo of 1992 for which he was awarded a CBE and the Grandstand to Lord's Cricket Ground (1998). Grimshaw's inclusion in the 'British Architecture Today: Six Protagonists' exhibition at the 1991 Venice Biennale heralded an international dimension to the practice which included the Berlin Stock Exchange (1997) and Bilbao Bus Station (1999). Grimshaw received a knighthood for services to architecture in 2002 and is the 2019 recipient of the RIBA Royal Gold Medal. He is considered one of the pioneers of High-Tech architecture, a movement strongly identified with Britain in the late C20.

Details

Terrace of 10 houses and 2 flats, 1986-88, built as part of a wider development by J Sainsbury's to designs by Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners, architect in charge, Neven Sidor; structural engineers, Kenchington, Little and Partners

MATERIALS: concrete block cross walls with concrete floors and an asphalt-clad timber roof. The front walls are part-glazed, part-clad in smooth-skinned aluminium panels. Back walls are clad in pressed aluminium panels with horizontal ribs to match the rear of Sainsbury's and Grand Union House.

PLAN: the houses face north, directly onto the Grand Union Canal, their front doors opening off a private walkway along the water's edge, accessed from Kentish Town Road. The upper floors are cantilevered out over the walkway, giving a larger floor plate on the first and second floors. Each house is two bays wide and the roofs are flat; a roof garden was added to each house in about 2006 when a steel structure which spanned the terrace was placed on top of the existing roofs.

A dog-leg stair against the east party wall connects each level. The ground floor has an entrance hall, en-suite bedroom and plant room. The plant room is to the rear and has direct access to the car park. A service core against the back wall runs through the house from the plant room, passing through a utility room on the first floor and a bathroom on the second floor. At first floor the principal rooms form an 'L' around the stair – a living room to the front, overlooking the canal, leading through to an open-plan kitchen and dining area. The dining area also overlooks the canal and is a top-lit double-height space, the kitchen is towards the rear. The second floor comprises a bedroom to the front and a mezzanine room overlooking the dining area to the rear (in many cases this is now an enclosed room), and the bathroom at the back of the plan.

The two flats in the terrace are situated by the entrance off Kentish Town Road. One is a ground and first-floor maisonette, entered directly off the canal-side walkway and the other is a studio flat entered via a radiused stair tower

which punctuates the end of the terrace.

EXTERIOR: the terrace uses an industrial imagery, chosen to reflect a canal-side setting. It is defined by the alternating in-and-out of the jettied upper-floor bays. The east bay of each house curves outward from top to bottom, and is skinned in smooth aluminium panels. It has a vertical row of three horizontally-orientated windows with radiused corners, sealed into the cladding panels with black rubber gaskets. The bay's lobe-like section projects forward of the west bay which is fully glazed, flat, but canting inward from bottom to top. The lower part can be raised by a motorised mechanism, opening the interior to a small balcony. The balcony front canting outwards and is formed of slatted timber held on vertical steels which extend down and form part of the balustrade enclosing the walkway beneath.

At ground floor each bay is demarked by tapered concrete brackets supporting the jettied upper floors. The bays alternate between smooth white render with clerestory windows and fully glazed, the latter set back from the walkway up three steps and providing the entrance into each house. The balustrade of the walkway is made up of alternating slatted timber with bench seats and steel bars, now with an extra steel grid.

On the top of the terrace the steel mesh balustrades of the later roof gardens are visible.

INTERIOR: the most striking space within each house is the double-height dining area, lit by the full-height, openable glazed wall and from above by three radiused skylights. This space is overlooked on the second floor by the mezzanine room at the rear and by the front bedroom through a large circular window in the side wall. The stair has open string, beechwood treads and risers with tubular steel newels. The newels carry a glass partition up through the house between each flight of stairs, and a tubular steel handrail. Joinery comprises flush panel beech doors and square-section door frames without architraves, set flush with the wall face. Door furniture includes steel L-shaped lever handles from D Line.

The houses now all have a steep flight of stairs at the very top of the house to give access to the roof terrace and while these are not all identical, they have been carefully integrated into the original balustrades. Otherwise, the interiors of the houses have been altered ad hoc over time, with some fittings and finishes being altered or replaced. Only two houses were inspected internally but it is understood that all retain their distinctive double-height dining area, albeit in many the mezzanine room has been enclosed to give privacy. The flats were not inspected internally, they are understood to have been altered but their original plans were much more conventional to begin with.

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