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Heritage Appraisal – Proposed Outbuilding,  
Apothecary House, no. 47 Highgate West Hill,  
London, N6 6DB  
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## 1 Introduction

1.1 The following Heritage Appraisal has been prepared in support of proposals to provide an outbuilding within the residential curtilage of no. 47 Highgate West Hill, London, N6 6DB. The proposed building would have no direct effect on any listed fabric. This report considers the proposed building against relevant historic environment policy, particularly in relation to the setting of listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area.

1.2 No. 47 Highgate West Hill is a grade II\* listed building, added to the statutory list in 1954. The list description for no. 47 reads as follows:

*Detached house. c1730 with early C19 extension, restored late C20. Red brick with yellow stock brick extension. Tiled roof with dormers. 2 storeys and attics. Double fronted with 5 windows; single window projecting extension to right. C20 wooden doorcase with pilasters and pediment; panelled door. Flush frame sashes with exposed boxing; ground floor segmental-arched, 1st floor flat arched. Extension with flat arches. Central 1st floor window surmounted by blind lunette breaking into broken bracketed pediment. Bracketed cornice below parapet. INTERIOR: not inspected but noted to retain some panelling, a contemporary staircase and fireplace. (Survey of London: Vol. XVII, The Village of Highgate (Parish of St Pancras part I): London: -1936: 95-102).*

1.3 No. 47 also forms part of the Highgate Conservation Area (designated by LB Camden in 1968 and extended in 1978 and 1992). With nos. 45, 46 and 46a, no. 47 forms part of a small enclave slightly detached from Highgate West Hill and the local street scene. The principal dwelling and listed building at no. 47 is the most visible within this small group; the house can be seen from Highgate West Hill set back from the road and at an angle. Its c. 2008

extension is not visible, nor is the site's large and generous garden.

1.4 There are a number of nearby listed buildings, the significance and setting of which have also been taken into account in the development of the proposals and in the preparation of this appraisal. The most relevant include:

- Nos. 45 and 46 Highgate West Hill - grade II\* (listed as a pair);
- Reservoir pavilion – grade II.

1.5 This appraisal has been prepared following research into the historic development of no. 47 and surrounding buildings and site and context assessment. Research has been undertaken at the London Metropolitan Archives, the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution and the London Borough of Camden's Local Studies and Archive Centre. A number of online sources have also been used including British History Online.

1.6 This report is focused on the effect of the proposed outbuilding on the site, on the setting of nearby listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area.

### Report structure

1.7 The following report provides an overview of the historic development and significance of the proposed site within its context and then considers the effects of the proposal on significance and against relevant historic environment policy. Section 2 describes the proposed site and its relationship with its context and Section 3 considers their proposals and their effects on the historic environment.

### Author

1.8 This appraisal has been prepared by Kate Graham of The Heritage Practice. Kate Graham (MA (Hons) MA PG Dip Cons AA) has



extensive experience in dealing with proposals that affect the historic environment having in recent years been Design and Conservation Manager at the London Borough of Islington and Senior Historic Buildings at Areas Adviser at Historic England. She also has an extensive background in research, in policy analysis and in understanding historic buildings and places. She has trained as a historian and has a specialist qualification in building conservation. Kate is also a member of the London Borough of Islington Design Review Panel.

1.9 Historical research for this report was undertaken by Dr Ann Robey FSA, a conservation and heritage professional with over twenty years experience. She has worked for leading national bodies as well as smaller local organizations and charities. She is a researcher and writer specialising in architectural, social and economic history, with a publication record that includes books, articles, exhibitions and collaborative research.

## 2 The site and context

2.1 The site of the proposed outbuilding is located to the south-west of the principal dwelling and listed building at no. 47 Highgate West Hill, tucked against the garden boundary wall (figure 1).



Figure 1: Proposed site plan with site of outbuilding shown.

2.2 The plot associated with no. 47 is generous and incorporates a large, distinctive and characterful house with a c.2008 single-storey contemporary extension along its northern boundary (figures 2 and 3). A two-storey garage terminates this run of development. The wide garden is laid to lawn with areas of hard surfacing (patios/paving etc) and mature planting (figure 4). The proposed site of the outbuilding was previously occupied by a enclosed area containing a large timber climbing frame (figure 5).

2.3 As noted above, no. 47 forms part of a small group set away from Highgate West Hill. While it is possible to see the main house from the road, the majority of the plot is very private and enclosed. A tall and robust brick wall and mature planting protect the site from public view and add to the strong sense of enclosure.



Figure 2: Model from c. 2007/8 prepared in support of the extension the proposed. It is useful to include here as it shows the extent of the plot and that the proposed building will be tucked well away from the principal listed building (proposed outbuilding indicated).



Figure 3: Apothecary House.





Figure 4: Garden at no. 47 with view through to nos. 45 and 46 Highgate West Hill.



Figure 5: Former climbing area within the site.

2.4 No. 47 Highgate West Hill is a site that is characterised both by historic and contemporary architecture and historic and contemporary landscaping treatments and features. These elements are complementary and ultimately relate positively to the most important part of the site, the principal listed building. The following paragraphs summarise how the site at no. 47 has evolved.

### Historic development

2.5 No. 47 was built in c. 1703 on land enclosed from Highgate common. From 1771, the house fell into the ownership of a Mr Wetherall. The Wetherall family owned the building until at least the 1930s. An image of 1780, shows how the house looked at that time (figure 6).



Figure 6: View from Pond Square, 1780. The image shows a two storey side/ancillary wing that was converted into the existing eastern range in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

2.6 Mapping evidence of 1803 and 1813 (figures 7 and 8) shows that the plot has developed since the house was originally constructed. The plot, marked '2' on figure 7, was clearly much smaller, running east-west more or less in line with the main house's principal elevation.



Figure 7: John Thomson's map of 1703.

2.7 In 1813, it appears that this plot layout may have changed. Figure 8, which relates to the rerouting of an existing footpath, indicates a curved line extending out from Apothecary House to no. 46. This line now approximately corresponds to the existing plot as shown in subsequent historic mapping from 1842 (figure 9). Apothecary House is entirely identifiable in the 1813 image.

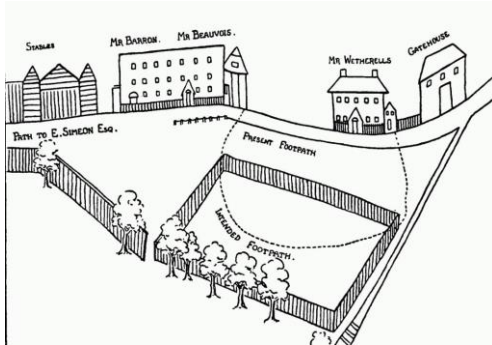
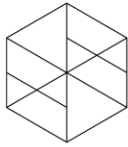


Figure 8: 1813 map of the proposed footpath showing no. 47 and nos. 45-46.

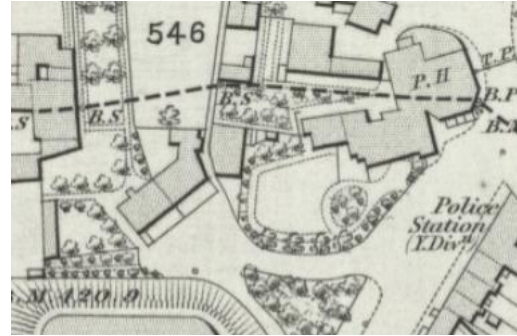


Figure 10: OS map 1969.



Figure 9: 1842 map showing Apothecary House and the form of the existing plot.

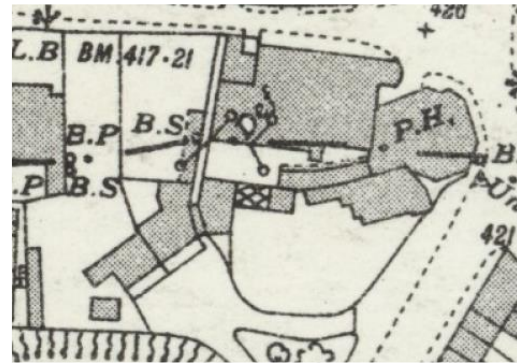


Figure 11: OS map 1938.

2.8 The Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1869 indicates that the house had been extended to the west by this time and that the boundary was well planted (figure 10). By the 1930s, development (including a greenhouse) extended across the northern boundary of the site (figure 11).

2.9 The site remained broadly as per the 1930s layout until the early 2000s when the outbuildings to the west were demolished and redeveloped with the existing modern side extension (as shown in figure 2).

## Significance

2.10 Apothecary House is clearly a building of significance as acknowledged by its grade II\* listing. It is a unique building architecturally, a villa type of development responding to late 17<sup>th</sup> century and early 18<sup>th</sup> century fashion. The building has been extended during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and again in the early 21<sup>st</sup> and remains a prominent and robust feature on the site.

2.10 As noted above, it is likely that the garden relates to an extension to the south in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is possible that parts of the brick boundary wall date to this period. The existing garden is very large and provides a soft and hard landscape setting to the listed building. There is no evidence as to indicate any historic design or scheme to the front garden and its current character and appearance is largely modern.

2.11 The proposed site of the outbuilding is positioned well away from the house on the site



of a play area. In terms of the current garden layout, which is compartmentalised to a degree through landscaping and planting, the proposed site sits within an existing and distinct and separate area of the garden. It contributes to the significance of the listed building in that it forms part of its residential curtilage but there is no particular historic or architectural contribution made by the proposed site to significance overall.

### Contribution to the Highgate Conservation Area

2.12 Apothecary House clearly makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area and it is clearly and important townscape component albeit set back from the road. The more recent side extension is less visible from Highgate West Hill, as is the majority of the garden – very limited areas of the garden closest to the house may be glimpsed through the ironwork gateway at the front of the house to the street.

2.13 The garden as a whole is a large space with mature planting that contributes to the generally green character of the site and to the wider conservation area. The general spaciousness of the site adds to the character of larger dispersed dwellings arranged around large gardens and is evocative of the conservation area's semi-rural character (characteristics described in the *Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*).

2.14 It is really the sense of openness and greenery of the garden above the garden walls to no. 47 that contribute to the character of the conservation area. This is because the garden is so enclosed and protected by the boundary wall and mature planting. There is no real intervisibility between the garden proper and the conservation area and particular features or details of the garden layout or planting do not contribute to the significance of the local area.

2.15 This is acknowledged in the Delegated Report for the 2007 permission (2007/4403/P and 2007/4406/L) which sets out that: *'Overall, it is considered that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of this part of the Highgate Conservation Area as the boundary treatment to the site is such that the extension would not be widely visible; the proposal would preserve the special historic and architectural interest of the listed building.'*

### Contribution to the setting of listed buildings

2.16 The contribution made by the site of the proposed outbuilding is discussed in 2.11 above. With regard to other listed buildings, specifically nos. 45 and 46 Highgate West Hill, no. 47 clearly amplifies the importance of the Georgian pair (built c. 1728). There are strong historic associations between the three listed sites that go back to this period. While architecturally distinct, nos. 45-47 are a characterful and robust group.

2.17 The main contribution of the site to the setting of no. 47 and neighbouring listed buildings at nos. 45 and 46 is through the role it plays in adding texture and character to their setting as well as visual amenity.

## 3 The proposals and their effects

3.1 The following paragraphs provide a brief description of the proposals and consider their effects against the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area and in relation to the setting of nearby listed buildings. It also considers the proposals in relation to relevant historic environment policy (Appendix A).

3.2 The proposals involve the provision of a small garden building to the south-west of the principal listed building on the site of the former play area, close to the gated vehicle access into the site (figure 1). The proposed building would be lower in height than the existing single





storey side extension to the listed building and has been designed to be a very modest and simple addition to the site.

3.3 The proposed outbuilding would be clad in cedar with plain elevations to the west and south elevations with window and door openings to the east and north. The openings would be detailed a dark powder coated aluminium. The colour of the cedar is intended to complete the colour and tone of surrounding brickwork. There was previously a substantial timber outbuilding within the garden (demolished as part of the 2007 approved scheme) and timber has traditionally been an appropriate fabric for modest, ancillary structures within the grounds of more polite examples of architecture.

3.4 The building has been sited, designed and can be constructed without having any effect on existing planting so that the visual quality of the existing garden can be retained.

3.5 The proposed building is slightly taller than the existing boundary wall to the private driveway to the south. However, given the level of mature planting in this area, which helps to screen the property and give privacy, the proposed building has only a very marginal visibility which includes from the end of the shared driveway with nos. 45 and 46. It would not be visible from the street or from the wider conservation area.

### Assessment

3.6 The proposed building is an ancillary structure to the principal dwelling, situated within its residential curtilage. It is modestly scaled and simply detailed and set well away from the listed building at no. 47 and other nearby listed buildings (at their closet points, the proposed building is 16m away from the listed house). As a lightweight, simple and secondary structure ancillary to the residential use of the main house, a building of this type is entirely appropriate in this context.

3.7 The proposed outbuilding would cover just under 5% of the existing open garden/driveway area (3.2% of the plot as a whole), a fact that reflects a minimal increase in built footprint on the plot. A very generous garden would be retained.



Figure 12: View west along boundary wall to no. 47.



Figure 13: View east only site boundary to no. 47.

3.8 The proposed site of the outbuilding doesn't contribute substantially to the significance of the listed building other than forming part of its residential curtilage and adding to a sense of openness and spatial quality. Of course, with the proposed outbuilding, it would continue to form part of the house's residential curtilage and its low height and scale would preserve the sense of openness across the garden. In short, the proposals would not cause harm to the setting of no. 47 Highgate West Hill.

3.9 The proposed building would have a very limited visual effect on views from nos. 45



and 46 and this is clearly mitigated by the amount of mature planting around the boundary to no. 47 (figures 12 and 13). The proposed building would not be visible in reality. In any event, a modest timber building of this type is not a discordant feature in this area of a purely residential character.

3.10 Those aspects of the garden at no. 47 that contribute to the setting of nos. 45 and 46 – i.e. openness, mature planting, greenery and a certain spatial quality – will be entirely unharmed and retained by the proposed scheme. In this regard, the outbuilding would not cause harm to the setting of nearby listed buildings.

3.11 Statute and relevant policy provision rightly seek to protect the setting of listed buildings where it contributes to their significance and special interest. Causing harm to setting should clearly be avoided unless it is justified and/or outweighed by other considerations. In this case, harm is not caused by the proposed scheme as already identified.

### Highgate Conservation Area

3.12 Local policy is in line with the statutory provision in that development should preserve the character and appearance of conservation areas. The garden at no. 47 contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area through a sense of openness and its mature planting which adds to the verdant quality of the area. Also, the relationship between the high status historic building and its generous plot is a characteristic of the Highgate Conservation Area.

3.13 The proposed scheme would have no impact on the qualities that contribute to character and appearance. The openness and spatial quality would be retained as would the relationship between the main house and its plot. There would be no visual effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposed scheme would not affect the appearance of the site and its relationship

with the surrounding conservation area and would not in any way affect its townscape value.

3.14 No 47's garden would continue to:

- contribute to Highgate's semi-rural feel;
- visually coalesce and relate to the green character and planting of the reservoir, street planting and nearby garden planting;
- provide a leafy backdrop to Highgate West Hill;
- be of a generous size, befitting the listed house and its extension, while maintaining a sense of openness and a distinct visual relationship between house and garden; and,
- be a well planted and mature garden with soft and hard landscaping.

### Summary

3.15 It is therefore considered that the proposed scheme does not cause harm to those qualities of the site that contribute to the setting and therefore the significance of nearby listed buildings. Further, it is considered that the proposed scheme does not cause harm to the characteristics of the site that contribute to the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area.

3.16 For these reasons and for those set out above, it is considered that the proposals comply with the relevant statutory provision and relevant historic environment policy.





## Appendix A

### Relevant Policy Context

The following paragraphs briefly set out the range of national and local policy and guidance relevant to the consideration of change in the historic built environment. The relevant statutory provision for the historic environment is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

#### National Planning Policy & Legislation

Section 16 of the **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** requires that:

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

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that:

*"...special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."*

The revised **National Planning Policy Framework 2018** (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. There is a general presumption in favour of sustainable development within national planning policy guidance. Paragraphs 189, 190, 192 and 193 are relevant to this application.

#### Paragraph 189

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record

should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

#### Paragraph 190

Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

#### Paragraph 192

In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

#### Paragraph 193

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

#### 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:



- 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.

#### **London Borough of Camden Local Plan**

Camden's Local Plan was adopted in June 2017. The most relevant policy in this case is Policy D2: Heritage.

With regard to Conservation Areas, the policy states that the Council will:

- Require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character and appearance of the area.

With regard to the setting of Listed Buildings, the policy sets out that the Council will:

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