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Heritage Appraisal  
Nos. 1-5 Erskine Mews, London NW3 3AP  
April 2021





## 1 Introduction

1.1 The following Heritage Appraisal has been prepared by The Heritage Practice in support of proposals for the alteration and extension of the existing mews buildings at nos. 1-5 Erskine Mews, London NW3. This report should be read in conjunction with the drawings and Design and Access Statement prepared by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Architects and the Planning Statement prepared by SM Planning.

1.2 Erskine Mews comprises 5, two storey dwellings constructed in the late 1960's/ early 1970s. The mews is entirely concealed from public view, accessed via a gated vehicular archway beneath no. 2 Erskine Road. The scheme proposes single storey roof extensions to all of the dwellings in the mews.

### Research and report structure

1.3 The purpose of this report is to set out the historic development and significance of nos. 1-5 Erskine Mews (hereby known as the site) and to assess the proposed scheme against that significance and relevant historic environment policy and guidance.

1.4 **The site does not lie within a conservation area** but is adjacent to Primrose Hill Conservation Area. The five dwellings are **not identified as locally listed**.

1.5 Desk-based and archival research has been combined with a visual assessment and appraisal of the existing building and its context.

1.6 This appraisal is divided into two main sections. The first (Section 2) describes the site and its historic development and significance. This section of the report focuses particularly on the character and appearance of the 'mews' as a building typology. The second part of the report (Section 3) provides a brief description of the proposals and assesses them against significance and relevant historic environment policy. The report will consider the form, height, and scale of the buildings within Erskine Mews

and how collectively these, and the proposed site, contribute to a cohesive and balanced townscape.

### Designations

1.7 As noted above, nos. 1-5 Erskine Road does not form part of a conservation area. Primrose Hill conservation area borders the site to the north and east (figure 1).

1.8 The Primrose Hill Conservation Area was designated on 1st October 1971 and extended to include the north part of Erskine Road on the 18th of June 1985. The designation report notes that the character of the area "is made up of a series of well laid out Victorian terraces. It is residential in character, although there are a number of local industries, and it has its own shopping centres, a primary school and, because of the vicinity of Primrose Hill, is extremely well provided with open space".

1.9 The adopted Conservation Area Statement published in 2001 (CAS), divides the area into four sub-areas entitled:

1. Regent's Park Road South;
2. Central Area
3. Regent's Park Road North
4. Gloucester Crescent

1.10 Sub area three (Regent's Park Road North) adjoins the site. This sub area is located to the north of the Conservation Area. The southern part of the area slopes steeply from east to west, towards Primrose Hill. The north boundary is defined by the railway line and the west boundary follows the former St. Pancras Borough boundary.

1.11 The area is dominated by Regent's Park Road which is the principal road that curves along its entire length. The CAS describes 'numerous secondary roads radiate from Regent's Park Road and enclose relatively small and irregularly shaped blocks with central mews developments.'



1.12 This pattern of development is prevalent throughout the conservation area, with primary roads, containing three and five storey Victorian terraced housing forming perimeter blocks around smaller scale, secondary and often ancillary buildings.

1.13 Commentary of Sub area 3 on page 20 of the CAS goes on to say 'within the centre of the small blocks are a number of single access mews developments. These mews are similar in character to those within Sub Area 2, the Central Area.' This mews character is discussed in more detail section 2.

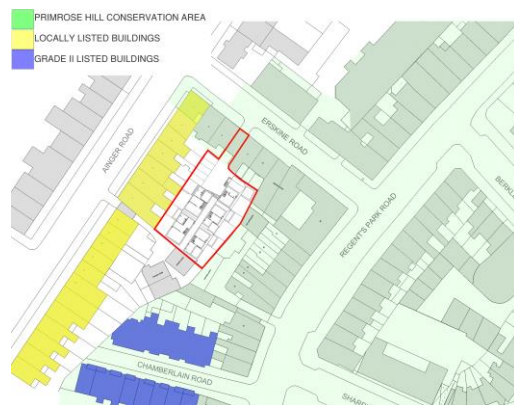


Fig. 1 Heritage asset map

1.14 The site forms part of a relatively densely packed series of mews developments inside of the parameter surrounded by Regents Park Road (to the east), Erskine Road (to the north) and Ainger Road (west) and Chamberlin Road (to the south)

#### Regents Park Road

1.15 The site is overlooked from the east by the terrace group at nos. 77-87 (odd) Regent's Park Road. The terrace is three storeys with mansard roofs. The ground floor is primarily commercial containing shopfronts.

#### Mayfair Mews

1.16 Regent's Park Road is separated from the site by Mayfair Mews. This narrow mews backs onto the site and contains two and three storey buildings.

#### Erskine Road

1.17 There are several short roads that run north of Regent's Park Road. This includes Erskine Road which provides a link across the old St. Pancras Borough Boundary to Ainger Road.

1.18 The south side of the street adjoins the site and comprises mid 19<sup>th</sup> century terrace of four storey buildings with rusticated ground floors. All of the terrace has mansard roof additions making them five stories tall. Some properties are in commercial uses with the addition of later shopfronts. Access is provided to Erskine Mews, via an archway in the terrace.

#### Ainger Road

1.19 Ainger Road bounds the site to the west. The road is outside of a conservation area but the terrace at nos. 1-7 and nos.8-29 are identified by LB Camden as locally listed (non-designated heritage assets). Nos.1-7, which adjoins the site, are four stories in height with half containing roof additional roof extensions.

#### Ainger Mews

1.20 The site is bound to the south by Ainger Mews. This is a small rear courtyard accessed via an archway beneath no. 8 Ainger Road. The mews is also outside of the conservation area and comprises 3 modern two storey buildings.

#### Chamberlin Street

1.21 There are two groups of listed buildings within the site's wider context located either each side of Chamberlin Street which is the southern perimeter block of the site. The



terraces was grade II listed in 1999 and is three storeys high with raised ground floors and basements with lightwells surrounded by decorative railings. Almost all the properties have roof alterations in the form of large box back mansard extensions.

1.22 For reasons identified below, the scheme is not considered to harm the setting of nearby listed buildings.

1.23 The following section provides an account of the site's historic development.

## 2 Site and context

2.1 The following section provides a brief description of the site and its context and sets out a summarised historic development of the site.

### Historic development

2.2 The site was originally constructed as typical mews in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The site first appears on the 1850 OS Map (figure 2) which shows the completion of Regent's Park Road with the roads to the west south still under construction.

2.3 The built development of the area is complete by the 1890 OS Map (figure 3) which clearly shows the layout of the mews. The mews was originally constructed as 10 terrace buildings of varying width, 5 on either side of a central courtyard.

2.4 The 1901 GOAD plan (figure 4) describes the original mews in detail. Nos.2-9 were 'stables with dwellings over.' Nos.1 and 10 are described as firewood store at ground level with dwelling at first floor level. This confirms the appearance of the former mews was typical London Mews with stabling at ground level and accommodation above.

2.5 The scale of the former dwellings on the site are also indicated by the numbers and letters assigned to each property on the GOAD plan. The number '2' tells us the buildings were two stories high (consistent with the description). The letter 'o' indicates the buildings would have had a slate roof. These would have been pitched roofs.

2.6 The buildings which surround the mews on Erskine Road and Ainger Road were four storeys high with slate roof and two storey outriggers. These terraced houses are now contain mansard roof and are five stories high.

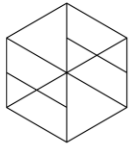


Figure 2: 1841-52 OS Map



Figure 4: 190 GOAD Plan.  
The number '2' indicates the number of stories.  
The letter 'O' - indicates slate roof



Figure 3: 1890 OS Map

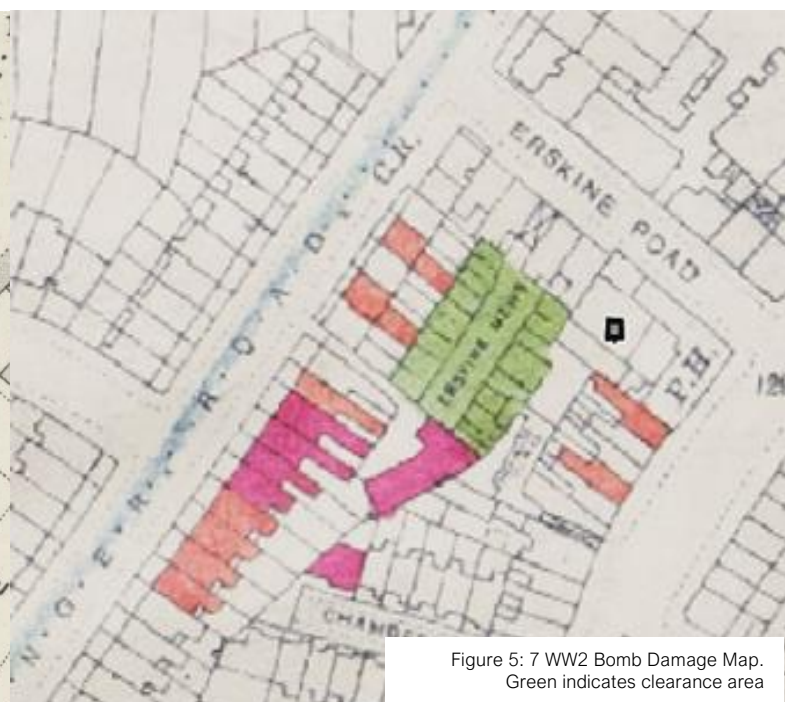
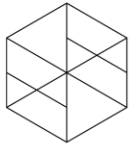


Figure 5: 7 WW2 Bomb Damage Map.  
Green indicates clearance area



2.7 The former buildings on the site were set against the east and west boundary walls compared with the current arrangement which are set in the centre of plan with amenity space to the edges.

### Post War

2.8 The site appears to be already earmarked for clearance in the bomb damage maps from WW2. This may have been due to the poor quality of the buildings or slum clearance (figure 5)

2.9 The site was not redeveloped until the late 1960s when the current dwellings were constructed.

### Site Description

2.10 Today nos. 1-5 Erskine Mews is a group of two storey buildings clustered together in the centre of the mews providing private amenity space for each dwelling at the rear of the properties against the tall boundary walls. This has narrowed the gap between each terrace but has also pushed the dwellings away from the buildings which surround the site.

2.11 The site is not visible from public vantage point with only narrow, glimpsed view to the front of the mews visible from the gated entrance on Erskine Road (figure 6).

2.12 The dwellings currently has a flat roofs. The mews dwellings are constructed in a stretcher-bonded reclaimed stock brick with blue engineering brick strong course above the ground floor windows, distinguishing the bressummers and facing brickwork of the former mews buildings which previously occupied the site.

2.13 The windows are stained timber in a horizontal format but with matching stained timber boarding above the first-floor windows, which extends to the underside of the parapet coping. This gives the aperture a more vertical emphasis. Together with facing brickwork and

string course detail this assigns the group some of the key characteristics of traditional London mews properties providing a contemporary interpretation of the former mews on the site (figure 7).



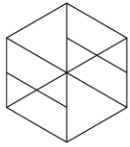
Figure 6: Glimpsed view of the entrance of the mews from Erskine Road



Figure 7: View looking south of Erskine Mews house no. 5 (front) and no.2 (left). The image shows how the original design sought to emulate the traditional London Mews design on a contemporary style.

### Significance

2.14 As a comparatively modern set of buildings outside of a conservation area, the existing group has little embodied historic value despite the history of the site and the nature and interest of earlier buildings on the site. It does however reflect the decline of London's inner-city areas in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century and efforts made by Councils to rejuvenate areas characterised by dereliction and redundancy of historic buildings.



2.15 The group was built in brick to match the former mews properties and the facing brick link it with historic neighbours. The window and brick detailing, albeit of its time, has sought to reference the key characteristic of the former mews buildings in a stylised and contemporary manner.

2.16 The site is located very discretely between the residential terrace properties on the main roads. The dwellings are clustered around the small enclosed courtyard, accessed from the original gated archways.

2.17 The mews is hidden from public view, therefore allowing the residential terraces to dominate the townscape. The mews is largely seen from above in private views from the upper floor windows of neighbouring properties. Some of these views are from within the conservation area looking out. The views afford a conspicuous mass of flat roof which fails to provide the traditional, more finely grained perspective, appearance and shadow than would be provided from a more traditional pitched roofs.

2.18 The buildings are not considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and do not meet Camden's criteria as locally listed buildings. The mews properties have been brought inward to provide private amenity at the rear of each house. This has narrowed the central courtyard between each terrace group, creating a cramped internal relationship. However, they display materials and architectural expression and scale in common with many other mews buildings across the area and within Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

2.19 Its contribution to the setting of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area is neutral with the buildings forming a restrained and complementary backdrop to its more historic context.

## The London Mews

2.20 This section sets out a clear understanding of the value of the mews building and considers the form and scale of the former mews buildings on the site prior to their replacement in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

2.21 The first mews were built in the 17th and 18th centuries as stabling yards serving the principal terraces and squares of the Georgian City. The tradition of building mews continued throughout the 19th century, but over the last 75 years their function has changed. As households dwindled in size and carriages were replaced with motor cars, accommodation for grooms and coachmen was no longer needed and mews buildings became separate properties from the houses they originally served. Today, although some are still used for garaging, most have been converted into residential use and provide an important reservoir of small-scale houses.

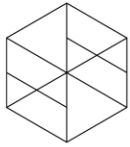
2.22 The London Mews is a building typology with a typical set of characteristics which give a mews its distinct character and appearance. This includes:

- Contrast in Scale

The original 'secondary' importance of mews (in comparison to the main streets and the main buildings which they used to serve), is reflected not only in the smaller size, but also in the smaller scale of these service streets and buildings.

- Enclosure

When mews were purely service streets, effort were made to isolate them visually from main streets. An entrance through a narrow alleyway on the ground floor of a large terrace in the main street was a common type of access to mews in the early/mid 19th century and before.



- **Architectural Details & Materials**

Generous ground floors with timber coach-doors below timber bressummers to span the wide openings typify a mew building. Smaller domestic windows would be present on the upper floors often with split-level winch-doors, are some of the most characteristic features of mews buildings. Mews are typically stock brick or painted brickwork with cast iron vents, gutters and wrought iron hinges and foot scrappers.

Typically, a mews would have a pitched roof clad in traditional roofing material such as slate or lead. The roof would have included partywall upstands and chimneys

- **Landscape**

Mews always have direct access to the carriageway to allow easy access for vehicles and animals. The paving would have typically been hard wearing granite setts.

## **The Original Erskine Mews**

2.23 While a good deal of information has been forthcoming through this historic research it is the case, as with most historic buildings, that it is not possible to provide a truly comprehensive account of the original mews development at the site. In addition, the research and analysis set out in this report is restricted by the type and number of archival resources available during the current COVID pandemic.

2.24 Nevertheless, archival research has been combined with similar mews precedents to give a clearer idea of the sites original form and scale.

2.25 Erskine mews is currently two storeys with a flat roof. Each of the 5 dwellings has consistent floor to ceiling heights of 2.5m for both ground and first floors.

2.26 The original mews buildings would have had a greater floor to ceiling height at ground floor level to allow for carriages or stabling (The GOAD plan of 1901 confirms the buildings had stabling at ground floor with dwellings above). This could have extended to roughly 3m.

2.27 We also know that the original mews buildings had a slate roof (refer to the GOAD plan). This would have meant the roof would have been pitched (refer to Appendix B).

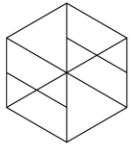
2.28 Baynes Mews, in Belsize Village, is a remarkably similar precedent. It was built around the same time, has broadly the same area and sense of enclosure, as well as position secondary to a principal shopping thoroughfare (Belsize Lane). Baynes Mews retains its original mews buildings. The buildings within Baynes Mews are two storeys plus pitched roof (figure 8). The buildings have a slate clad roof pitched at 35degrees.

2.29 The depth of the current Erskine mews properties match that of the original mews buildings on the site, which is a typical depth for single room deep mews property. However, they have been brought inward to provide private amenity at the rear of each house when redeveloped. This has narrowed the gap between each group but has also pushed the dwellings away from the buildings which surround the site.

2.30 The former mews building on the site were located tight against the rear boundary wall of the mews closer in proximity to the neighbouring dwellings.

2.31 The depth of the rear gardens of principal street frontage properties which enclose the site are relatively consistent for the area and by no means closer than other mews sites or typical central London proximities between developments.





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*Figure 8: Elevation and section of Baynes Mews building. We would have expected the original mews buildings at the site to have looked very similar to this.*



### 3 Assessment of the proposed scheme

3.1 The following section provides a brief overview of the proposed scheme and assesses the effects of the proposal. The main issue to consider is the impact the scheme would have on the character and appearance of the mews and the setting of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. This section should be read with the accompanying Design and Access Statement which provides more detail on the proposed scheme.

3.2 Importantly the proposed roof extension will only be seen in private views from neighbouring properties. There is no public views of the site and no views of the proposals from the entrance of the mews on Erskine Road.

3.3 The affect, therefore on the setting of the adjoining conservation area and character and appearance of the immediate area more generally is extremely limited.

#### Outline of the proposed scheme

3.4 The proposals seek to extend the existing buildings within the mews to provide single storey roof extensions to each mews property

3.5 The extensions will provide an additional bedroom and bathroom to each house. The internal alterations will have no bearing on the character and appearance of the conservation area and this appraisal does not consider such details any further. The focus of the following section is on the effect of the proposed roof extension.

3.6 The proposed roof extensions (figure 9) have been designed in the form of stylised pitched roofs. The roofs and have been sculpted and massed to limit the impact on the surrounding properties and create high-quality contemporary residential accommodation. The windows would be flush or inset from the roof.

3.5 The proposed roof extensions would be clad in standing seam zinc and incorporate green roofs (figure 10). The windows would be aluminium with matching perforated metal facade enclosing the balconies No other external changes are proposed to either the front or rear elevations.

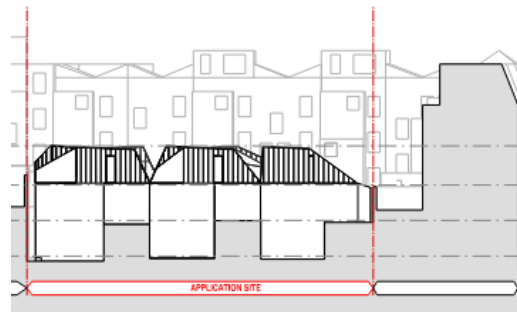


Figure 9: Proposed roof extension

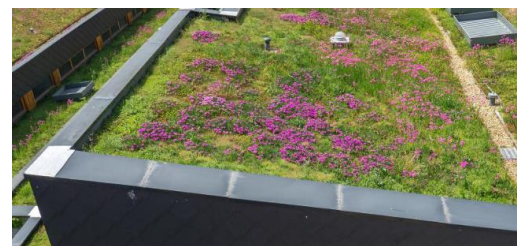


Figure 10: Standing seam zinc and green roof. Proposed materials for the roof extension.



### Assessment of the proposals

3.7 The existing buildings at nos. 1-5 Erskine Road are neutral contributors to the character and appearance of the area generally. They are discreet, low level cluster of dwellings largely hidden from view. The site is small scale and has an intimate mews character. The dwellings retain the same qualities of traditional mews buildings.

3.8 The principal elevations are articulated and composed in such a way as to reflect the architectural traditions of a typical London mews but in a contemporary manner having regard for their age and use as dwellings. The facades have a recessive, neutral quality.

3.9 However, the buildings are clustered closely together and lack termination. They are largely seen from above, from windows in the rear facades of adjoining buildings, where the conspicuous flat roofs fails to provide the more finely grained perspective, appearance and shadow that would be expected of a roofscape.

### Form

3.10 The proposed roof extensions would read as an appropriate addition to a mews building. Mews buildings typically have pitched roofs. The original buildings on the site had pitched roofs. The existing dwellings are contemporary interpretation of the traditional buildings which would have originally occupied the mews. The proposed alterations would be architecturally sympathetic to the age and character of the building in line with Camden guidance.

3.11 The roof pitched would be asymmetrical and faceted to break down the form and distinguish each dwelling. This will also aid views through and between the roofs. Creating individual roof forms in this way would distinguish each building and help separate the closely knit cluster.

3.13 The scheme is in line with Camden January 2021 supplementary planning guidance which seeks innovative approach to the roof design which is supported by pre-application advice.

3.14 Lb Camden pre-application letter dated 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 confirms, "the massing of the roof extensions is split so that each property would have its own splayed roof extension. The splitting of the massing with 'valleys' between the extensions would allow views through, thus helping to maintain the open character of the mews... The massing would be further reduced by angling the outer walls of the roof extensions inwards and angling the roof so that the height of the extension is reduced adjacent to the 'valley' cut through. All of these design devices would help to reduce the massing and would assist in maintaining the subservience of the extended Erskine Mews properties in relation to the perimeter buildings."

### Balconies

3.15 The balconies complement the form and treatment of the proposed roof. The window and balconies are flush or inset so as not to break the form of the roof and reduce the impact on the elevation

3.16 They are screened further reducing the presence and prominence and finished in materials and colour to match the existing elevations. This accords with guidance in paragraph 5.17 of the supplementary planning guidance for home improvements (published January 2021)

### Materials

3.17 The proposed pitched finely grained cladding would feel more appropriate than the existing mass of flat roofs. This would relate to the host dwellings and continue the design approach, but retain an appropriately contemporary feel, providing modern pitched



roofs of varying steepness, clad in traditional standing seam roofing materials.

3.18 The green roof would provide a distinctly contemporary and highly sustainable approach to the roofs which would vastly improve the impression of the site from neighbouring properties and help soften, enliven and add interest and biodiversity to the existing roofs.

### Harmony

3.19 Camden supplementary planning guidance encourages "comprehensive design for the whole group" where a group of buildings are originally designed as a complete composition.

3.20 The proposed design takes this approach and considered the site as a whole, resulting in unity and cohesion which better preserves the existing appearance of the area.

### Contrast in Scale

3.21 Nos. 1-5 Erskine Road are something of a recessive townscape element and, as with most planning application, consideration needs to be given to disturbing the existing balance and to maintain the subservient relationship between the mews and the principal terraces which surround it.

3.22 The proposed extension would not upset the local townscape balance. The new roofs would remain subordinate to the host dwellings and the adjoining terraces. They have been designed to have the minimum necessary height. The proposed roofs slope away from boundary walls forming a further recessive feature in the roofscape and have been split for form valleys between each roof element.

3.23 The proposal is not visible in the streetscene. The proposal roofs would not give no undue prominence to the buildings when



<b>Utopia village</b>	2 & 3 storeys plus roof
Chalcot Road	3 storeys plus 1
Gloucester Avenue	3 storeys plus 1

Figure 11: Utopia Village example taken from Appendix B to indicate change in scale between mews and main buildings

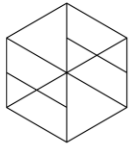
viewed from the neighbouring buildings and would allow them to continue to have a neutral role within the area and setting of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

3.24 In this case, the proposed increase in height of the building is entirely contextually appropriate. The overall proposed height of the mews buildings would remain subordinate to the principal frontage buildings.

3.25 The proposed contrast in scale between the mews and the principal frontage building on Regents Park Road, Erskine Road and Ainger Road would be consistent with the comparable contrast in height seen in other mews developments in the area.

3.26 The study set out in Appendix B show some typical Camden mews properties. All the mews examples are in the north part of the borough. The examples typify the general character of a London mews as set out above. The mews are typically 2 storeys in height with pitched roofs. Many of the mews have original or later habitable 2nd floor accommodation in the form of attic conversions or roof extensions.

3.27 The information below each picture outlines the scale of each mews example compared with the scale of the principal frontage building which it would have originally served.



3.28 For example: Utopia Village in the Primrose Hill Conservation Area is a 2 & 3 storey mews with pitched roofs. The mews original served the houses on Chalcot Square and Gloucester Avenue which are 4 storeys in height (3 plus mansard roofs). This gives a contrast in scale of +1 & 2 storey between the mews and main building (figure 11).

3.29 The examples indicate that the mews are typically 1 storey below the height of the principal buildings, although this can vary between 0 and +2 storeys heights difference.

3.30 Erskine mews currently has a three storey difference in height between Erskine Road and Ainger Road. The proposal would result in a two storey difference in height between the principal frontage buildings. This is well within the typical contrast in height found between mews and principal frontage buildings in the area.

### Original Mews Roofs

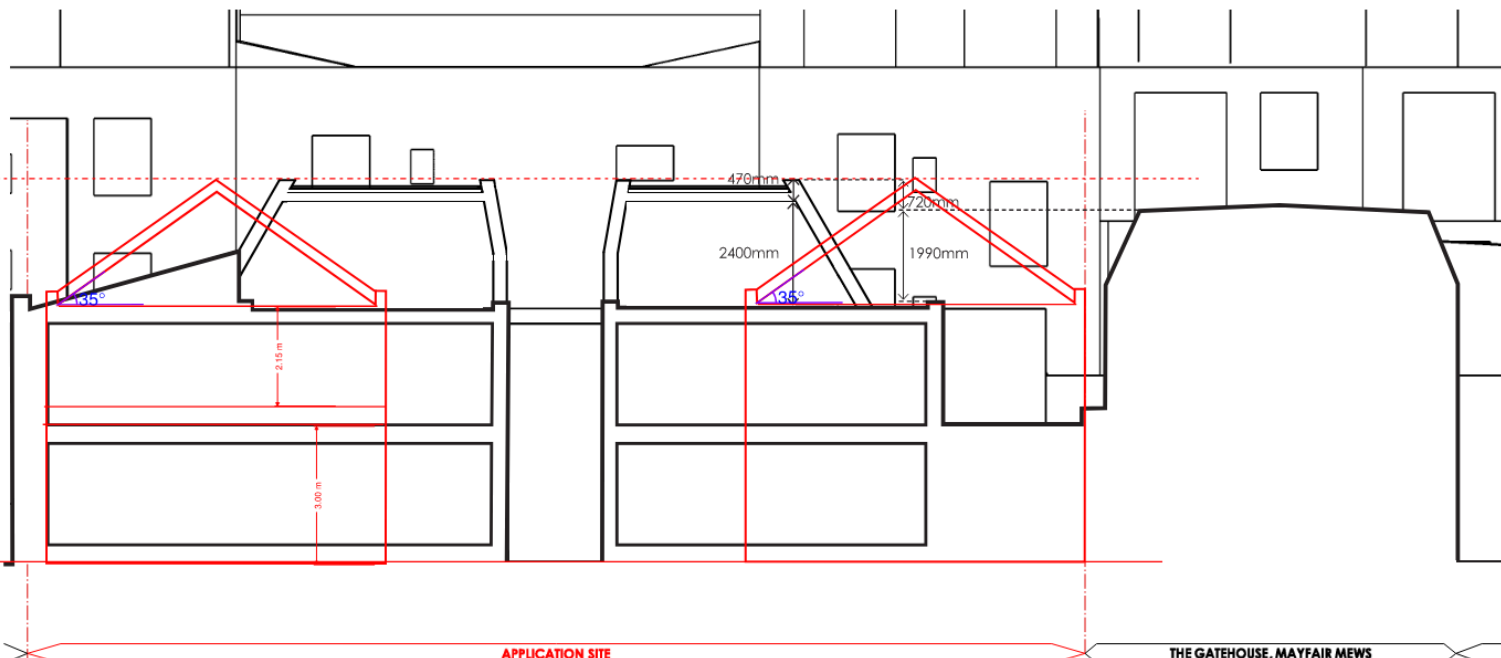
3.31 In addition the proposal is considered to more likely to align with the height of the original mews buildings on the site.

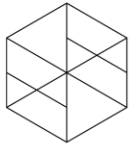
3.32 We have interpreted the likely scale of the original buildings in the mews based on what we know about the previous buildings in the mews which existed until the 1960s. This is shown in figure 12.

3.33 We set the building at their original depth and positioned the buildings in their original location against east and west boundary wall (figure 3 and 4). We set the height based on level from the courtyard with a 3m floor to ceilings height at ground level with a modest 2.1m at first floor level (the existing dwellings have a consistent floor to ceiling height of 2.5m for both ground and first floors. The original mews buildings would have had a greater floor to ceiling height at ground floor level to allow for carriages or stabling (figure 4). We have assumed a 35degree pitched roof which matches the existing original Baynes Mews buildings.

3.34 The result at figure 12 shows our reasonable assumption for the scale of the original mews buildings on the site (outlined in red). This would be equal in overall height to the proposed roof extensions and would have been positioned closer to the neighbouring boundaries.

Figure 12: Proposed section drawing overlaid with theoretical original mews building on the site (outlined in red).





3.35 In this respect the proposed original mews development on the site is considered commensurate with the traditional surrounding mews developments.

3.36 The existing buildings at no. 1-5 Erskine Mews has some synergy with traditional mews development and character of the local area. Its existing qualities help to reinforce the historic and architectural interest of the latter. The proposed roof extension would not affect the sites ability to do this. The proposals would introduce another recessive element that echoes the historic and architectural interest of the area. Overall the mews would retain its small scale intimate character.

3.37 The proposal would not harm the inherent character and appearance of the Primrose Hill conservation area. The proposed scheme is not at odds with scale or prevailing local character or materials for mews development. The proposed roof extension would not cause harm to the host buildings or to the setting of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

#### **Setting of Grade II listed building on Chamberlin Street**

3.38 There is a strong sense of separation between the listed terrace on Chamberlin Street and the site. The rear of the properties on the north side of Chamberlin Street face the site at a distance of approximately 24m. The proposed recessive extensions would represent a change within the wider setting of the terrace but would continue to allow the site and its immediate neighbours to have a restrained and unassuming townscape role as part of the urban townscape.

3.39 The setting of all the nearby listed buildings is characterised principally by a variety of phased inner London development. This includes 19th-21st century buildings, the use of which often reflects the period of their construction. This surrounding townscape

includes a broad range of building types, dates, heights and architectural language.

3.40 The alterations to the rear of the buildings will not be visible at the lower levels because of intervening development and the positioning and depths of buildings within the urban block. The new roofs would be visible from the upper floor rear windows of the listed terrace on the north side of the street.

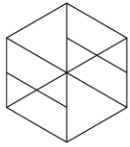
3.41 This view will change to a small degree with the addition of the proposed roof extension but its visibility will clearly be limited. The proposed extension would not obscure the view or infill a area of sky in the view given the low scale of the site. The listed terrace, much like the other properties which surround the site would remain visible and would be unaffected by the proposed roof extension.

#### **Policy compliance and conclusions**

3.42 In relation to the policy requirements set out in the NPPF, it is considered that the proposed scheme would not cause harm to the significance or interest of the host buildings and it would not cause harm to the significance or setting of designated heritage assets. The proposals would therefore comply with national historic environment policy.

3.43 In terms of the LB Camden Local Plan, the proposal would accord with D1 Design which sets out that development should respect and respond positively to existing buildings, the streetscape and the wider context. It should respond to local architectural character and surrounding heritage assets. As set out above, it is considered that the proposed scheme meets these policy objectives. The proposal would respond to and reinforce local character and distinctiveness. The proposal would not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on views of grade II listed terrace in Chamberlin Street

3.44 Policy D2g resists development



outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area. For reasons set out above, it is considered that a recessive and complementary addition to a recessive and complementary cluster of building would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and would therefore accord with local policy in this regard.

3.45 The Camden supplementary guidance 'Design' discusses situations where roof extensions may be appropriate to non-residential properties. Whilst not strictly relevant it provides a useful guide to the acceptability of the proposed scheme. Paragraph 5.13 states rooflights, additional storeys, mansards, and other roof alterations **are likely to be acceptable where:**

- Good quality materials and details are used and the visual prominence, scale and bulk would be appropriate having regard to the local context;
- There is an established form of roof addition or alteration to a group of similar buildings and where continuing the pattern of development would be a positive design solution, e.g. helping to reunite a group of buildings or townscape;
- Alterations are architecturally sympathetic to the age and character of the building and retain the overall integrity of the roof form.

The scheme complies with all of these criteria.

3.46 Paragraph 5.14 discusses where roof alteration or **addition is likely to be unacceptable** in the following circumstances where there is likely to be an *adverse effect on the skyline*, the appearance of the building or the surrounding street scene:

- Buildings which have a roofline that is exposed to important Londonwide and local views from public spaces;
- Buildings whose roof construction or form are unsuitable for roof additions;
- Buildings designed as a complete composition where its architectural style

would be undermined by any addition at roof level;

- The impact on adjoining properties both in terms of bulk and design and amenity of neighbours would be detrimental, e.g. due to a loss of light from the additional height;
- Buildings that are part of a group where differing heights add visual interest and where a roof extension would detract from this variety of form;
- Where the scale and proportions of the building would be overwhelmed by an additional extension/storeys.

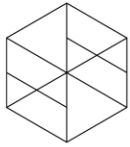
The scheme doesn't affect the skyline or meet any of these criteria.

3.47 The Camden supplementary guidance 'Home Improvements' has already been referred to above. The guidance notes at 2.22 that roof extensions that are visible from the street will not be allowed where it would harm the host building and should;

- Be subordinate to the host building;
- Include features informed by the host building and surrounding context;
- Take the form of a traditional mansard, a modern interpretation or a more innovative approach, supported by pre-application advice;
- Where a group of buildings are originally designed as a complete composition a comprehensive design for the whole group is encouraged. Your design should be supported by pre-application advice, prior to a planning application submission.

The proposed scheme complies with all of these criteria.

3.48 For reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposed extension would sit comfortably on the host building, would relate to and reinforce its architectural character and would relate well to surrounding development. The proposed scheme would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area and would not harm the setting of nearby listed buildings.



## Appendix A

### Relevant Historic Environment Policy Context

This appendix sets 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. The following policies are underpinned by this legislation which at section 72 of the Act seeks to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas.

A conservation area is a Designated Heritage Asset as established and defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (see below). No. 18 Clerkenwell Close forms an element with the Clerkenwell Green Conservation Area. It is not identified as a building that should be retained in the Clerkenwell Green Conservation Area Design Guidelines which suggests that its contribution to local character and appearance is not considered to be positive.

#### **The National Planning Policy Framework (2012)**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and revised in 2018. It sets out the government's approach to dealing with the historic environment. Section 12 of the NPPF deals specifically with this area of policy. Policies relevant in this particular case are as follows.

**Paragraph 189** states that applicants should 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.' A history of the site and its context are set out in Appendix A.

**Paragraph 193** sets out that '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).

**Paragraph 194** sets out that 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. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

**Paragraph 196** notes that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

**Paragraph 200** sets out that 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.

**Paragraph 201** notes that 'Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.'





Any proposals that represent change within a conservation area should be judged on the basis that 'great weight' should be given to the asset's conservation. In this case, the proposals need to preserve or enhance the conservation area in terms of statutory considerations and to prevent harm to the designated heritage asset as a whole. Policy allows for proposed schemes to be justified and particularly where any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset may be caused. Harm can also be outweighed by public benefits as noted above.

#### London Borough of Camden Local Plan

Camden's Local Plan was adopted in June 2017. The most relevant policy in this case are Policies D1: Design & D2Heritage.

With regard to design D1 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";
- c. is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;
- f. integrates well with the surrounding streets and open spaces

With regard to Conservation Areas, policy D2g states that the Council will:

- Resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area.

Supporting text paragraph 7.48 confirms,

*"Due to the largely dense urban nature of Camden, the character or appearance*

*of our conservation areas can also be affected by development which is outside of conservation areas, but visible from within them. This includes high or bulky buildings, which can have an impact on areas some distance away, as well as adjacent premises. The Council will therefore not permit development in locations outside conservation areas that it considers would cause harm to the character, appearance or setting of such an area."*

#### Camden Planning Guidance

##### Design - January 2021

Section 5 provides general principles for non-domestic buildings which is a useful guide for considering the principle of development at 1-5 Erskine Mews.

##### *Roofs*

Paragraph 5.13 states rooflights, additional storeys, mansards, and other roof alterations **are likely to be acceptable where:**

- Good quality materials and details are used and the visual prominence, scale and bulk would be appropriate having regard to the local context;
- There is an established form of roof addition or alteration to a group of similar buildings and where continuing the pattern of development would be a positive design solution, e.g. helping to reunite a group of buildings or townscape;
- Alterations are architecturally sympathetic to the age and character of the building and retain the overall integrity of the roof form.

Paragraph 5.14 discusses where roof alteration or **addition is likely to be unacceptable** in the following circumstances where there is likely to be an adverse effect on the skyline, the appearance of the building or the surrounding street scene:



- Buildings which have a roofline that is exposed to important Londonwide and local views from public spaces;
- Buildings whose roof construction or form are unsuitable for roof additions;
- Buildings designed as a complete composition where its architectural style would be undermined by any addition at roof level;
- The impact on adjoining properties both in terms of bulk and design and amenity of neighbours would be detrimental, e.g. due to a loss of light from the additional height;
- Buildings that are part of a group where differing heights add visual interest and where a roof extension would detract from this variety of form;
- Where the scale and proportions of the building would be overwhelmed by an additional extension/storeys.

#### *Balconies and Terraces*

Paragraph 5.17 confirms that balconies and terraces should complement the elevation upon which they are to be located. Consideration should therefore be given to the following:

- Detailed design to reduce the impact on the existing elevation;
- Careful choice of materials and colour to match the existing elevation;
- Possible use of setbacks to minimise overlooking – a roof terrace need not necessarily cover the entire available roof space;
- Possible use of screening (frosted glass etc) to prevent overlooking of habitable rooms in residential properties or nearby gardens, without reducing daylight and sunlight or outlook.

#### **Home Improvement - January 2021**

Section 2.2 deals with roof extensions

It states *“A successful roof extension would consider the overall roof form of the existing building, adjoining buildings and impact in key*

*views (when relevant) and be proportionate to the roof slope being extended.”*

The guidance tells us that:

A new roof level should:

- Be subordinate to the host building;
- Include features informed by the host building and surrounding context;
- Take the form of a traditional mansard, a modern interpretation or a more innovative approach, supported by pre-application advice;
- Erecting a roof extension on a building within a complete terrace or group that currently has no extensions and it is not identified in Conservation Area Appraisals as being significant for its roofline, it is likely to be acceptable, generally, in a traditional form;
- Where a group of buildings are originally designed as a complete composition a comprehensive design for the whole group is encouraged. Your design should be supported by pre-application advice, prior to a planning application submission.

#### **The London Plan 2021**

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 from 2019-2041. It forms part of the development plan for Greater London. London boroughs' local plans need to be in general conformity with the London Plan, and its policies guide decisions on planning applications by councils and the Mayor.

The 2021 London Plan is a new London Plan (also known as a Replacement Plan). This means it is not an alteration or update to previous London Plans. This new London Plan is the third London Plan, the previous ones being the 2004 London Plan produced by former Mayor of London Ken Livingstone, and the 2011 London Plan produced by former Mayor of London Boris Johnson. All of the other iterations of the London Plan from 2004-2016 have been



alterations. This London Plan replaces all previous versions.

Chapter 7 deals with 'Heritage and Culture' including **Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth**. Policy HC1c relates to development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings.

It states that "Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process."

Chapter 3 considers 'Design' including **Policy D1 London's form, character and capacity for growth** addresses the issue of understanding character and context.

Part A of this policy sets out the requirements for assessing an area's characteristics. It states that 'Boroughs should undertake area assessments to define the characteristics, qualities and value of different places within the plan area to develop an understanding of different areas' capacity for growth' including, inter alia, 7) historical evolution and heritage assets (including an assessment of their significance and contribution to local character; and 12) views and landmarks.

Policy D1 part B sets out the steps for using this information from Part A to establish the capacity for growth of different areas and ensure that sites are developed to an optimum capacity that is responsive to the site's context and supporting infrastructure. D1(b) 3 states 'following the design-led approach (set out in Policy D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach) to establish optimised site capacities for site allocations. Boroughs are

encouraged to set out acceptable building heights, scale, massing and indicative layouts for allocated sites, and, where appropriate, the amount of floorspace that should be provided for different land uses.'

**Policy D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach** confirms a design-led approach to optimising site capacity should be based on an evaluation of the site's attributes, its surrounding context and its capacity for growth to determine the appropriate form of development for that site.

This includes;

D3 (A) All development must make the best use of land by following a design-led approach that optimises the capacity of sites

D3 (D) Development proposals should:  
*Form and layout*

1) enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to existing;

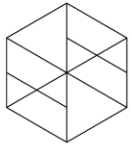
*Quality and character*

11) respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character

12) be of high quality, with architecture that pays attention to detail, and gives thorough consideration to the practicality of use, flexibility, safety and building lifespan through appropriate construction methods and the use of attractive, robust materials which weather and mature well

13) aim for high sustainability standards (with reference to the policies within London Plan Chapters 8 and 9) and take into account the principles of the circular economy

14) provide spaces and buildings that maximise opportunities for urban greening.



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Heritage Appraisal  
Nos. 1-5 Erskine Mews, London NW3 3AP  
April 2021

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## Appendix B

### North Camden Mews Study

This looks the height mews properties compared with height of the principal buildings with surround them.

The examples chosen are typical mews properties are all in north of part of the London borough of Camden

Erskine mews existing	2storeys
Erskine mews proposed	2 storeys plus 1 (habitable roof)
Erskine Road	4 storeys plus 1 (mansard roof)
Ainger Road	4 storeys plus 1 (mansard roof)



**St Georges Mews** 2storey plus roof  
Regent Park Road 3storey plus roof



**Utopia village** 2 & 3 storeys plus roof  
Chalcot Road 3 storeys plus 1  
Gloucester Avenue 3 storeys plus 1



**Primrose Mews** 2 storey plus roof  
Sharples Hall Street 3 storeys  
Regents Park road 4 storeys



**Rochester Place** 2storey plus roof  
 Rochester Terrace 2 & 3storeys plus roof



**Daleham mews** 2 storeys plus roof  
 Daleham Gardens 2 storeys plus habitable roof



**Baynes Mews** 2 storey plus habitable roof  
 Belize Lane 2 & 3 storey



**Belsize Park Mews** 2 storey plus roof  
 Belize Lane 2 Storey plus 1.



Belsize Park mews and Baynes Mews are similar in scale and approach from the street as Erskine Mews

It is noteworthy that Belsize Park Mews has been redeveloped in the later half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and contains 2 storey dwellings with flat roof much like Erskine Mews. Baynes Mews, which adjoins directly to the north, retains its original mid 19<sup>th</sup> century properties which are 2 storeys with pitched roof.

These are taller than the properties in Belsize Park Mews as can be seen from the image opposite.



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1-5 Erskine Mews

North Camden typical Mews properties



**West Hampstead Mews** 2 storeys plus roof

West End Lane

3 storeys plus roof



**Kings Terrace, Camden town**

Camden High Street

2 plus 1

4



**McCrone Mews, Belsize** 2& 3 storeys plus roof

Belsize Lane

2 storeys plus roof



**Eton Garages**

2 storey plus 1 (hab roof)

Eton Avenue

2 storeys plus 1 (hab roof)



**Belsize Court Garages** 2 storeys plus 1 (hab roof)

Belsize Place

3 storeys plus 1



**Steeles mews**

2 storeys plus 1 (hab roof)

Haverstock hill

3 storeys