**Heritage Statement for proposed work to 70 Albert Street, NW1 7NR**

This document was prepared by myself, the current applicant for planning permission, Mr. A. C. Morris. It is intended to provide the **heritage statement** which is required to accompany an application for listed building consent for the proposed *mainly restorative* work which is required for the front area of 70 Albert Street, London NW1 7NR.

Only a small amount of building work is required and it is mostly restorative rather than new development, but because the property is in a grade 2 listed area, a heritage statement is nonetheless required.

I have been informed that the information required for this heritage statement is described in the document "Camden’s Local Area Requirements for Planning Applications (2018)", p.15 "Section 3: Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas". It is there stated that further advice should be obtained from "Camden Local Plan policies D1 [design] and D2 [heritage]". I have consulted these sources thoroughly. Accordingly, the required content of this document is described as *in blue italics*, and provided in black, as follows.

*You must provide information about:*

* *the significance of the heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by their setting*

The relevant heritage asset is the street facing front garden area. The original boundary wall and paving for that area was reduced to rubble many years ago by two large Plane trees which grew in that area and which have since been completely removed. Furthermore, the steps from the front garden down to the basement were removed when houses 68 and 70 were converted into a single property several decades ago by my (now deceased) parents, at which time access to the newly combined basement areas was via steps down from the 68 front garden only.

The very large stumps from the two plane trees in the front garden were only removed this July, which was a major task and left a big mess. The sloping garden area has since been dug over and raked flat and horizontal, to the level of the original garden, with thick wooden retaining planks, and planted with grass. That work is only intended as a temporary tidying up operation while awaiting the planning permission being sought here.

The joint property was left to myself and 5 siblings. Three out of the six of us now live elsewhere and wanted to sell up. The properties were therefore both legally and physically separated and number 68 was sold at the end of June 2021.

The proposed work to number 70 consists only of the following. The restoration of its front garden area to its original partially paved state with a boundary wall and new cast iron railings; the rebuilding of steps access to the basement area as an almost exact copy of the existing steps for number 68; the enclosure of the small area under the steps to the front door of number 70, which it may have had originally; and the waterproofing of the remaining coal cellar which is under the path to the front door and accessed via that covered area.

* *the principles of and justification for the proposed works*

As explained above, the original front garden boundary wall was effectively demolished by the large trees that grew in it and were since removed. The proposed work to the front garden area is therefore essentially *restorative*. The proposed steps access to the basement area is *necessary* in order to restore the access from the street to the basement which was lost when the combined basement areas for 68 and 70 were reseparated when 68 was recently sold. The proposed new enclosure of the small area under the steps to the front door is typical to most properties in this street. The London-stock brick structure and hard-wood window and door in that proposed small enclosing wall are even more in keeping with the original enclosing wall than those now existing in most other neighboring properties.

* *the impact of the proposal on the significance of a heritage asset, does it cause substantial harm or total loss of significance.*

The proposed works are all minimal and essentially restorative, apart from waterproofing of the walls and ceiling of the coal cellar, which is an improvement and is not visible from the street.

*The information should explain:*

* *the sources that you have considered*

I have read the Local Plan policies D1 [design] and D2 [heritage] which I was directed to. The proposed work is very minimal and clearly conforms to all of these requireents. It is essentially restorative and uses traditional materials throughout.

* *the expertise that you have consulted*

The proposed work submitted was designed and drawn up by myself. Both my parents were architects and I studied architecture myself, completing Part 1 and two years' work experience in an architects' office. Therefore, although I did not complete Part 2 Architecture so that I am not officially qualified as an architect, I do have some previous experience working with building and planning regulations.

The only possible change of use which the proposed work involves is that the very damp remaining coal cellar, under the path from the street to the front door, would be waterproofed so that it could be used as a storage area, and possibly also for placing a washing machine and a drying machine.

* *the steps that have been taken to avoid or minimise any adverse impacts on the significance of the asset.*

I moved to 68 Albert Street in 1963 (we were forced to move then because the council demolished the entire beautiful terrace in Regents Park Road where I used to live). At that time my parents removed 2 of the original 3 coal cellars, and rebuilt the steps access to the basement, in order to increase light coming into the house. About 30 years ago my parents also acquired the neighboring house at number 70, upon which they did the same to the front garden of number 70 and combined the two front basement areas into one, so removing the separate steps access to number 70. As explained above, a few months ago number 68 was physically reseparated and sold, so there is *no longer any street access*, via the steps in 68, from the basement area to number 70. Access to the street from the basement is presently via the front door only.

The proposed design for the front garden area of number 70 is very close to how it was when I move here in 1963, before its boundary wall was gradually destroyed by the trees which grew in it. The main difference in the proposed design is the addition of railings to the boundary wall (to the street and to number 68), which it did not have before. However, that is very much in keeping with the rest of the street. While there is no proposed garden gate, such railings are a desirable feature insofar as they are a discouragement to bicycle thieves, litter bugs and fouling dogs.

In conclusion, this heritage statement may seem rather long winded in defense of such a minor proposed amount of work, but that is because where in doubt I have included as much information as I could think of, in the hope that it covers all of the required points.