

2021

Heritage Statement – THE ELMS



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On behalf of SIAW

15/11/2021

HERITAGE APPRAISAL

Introduction

The Elms is a large detached house set within substantial gardens, dating to c1875, built in the eclectic picturesque style of George Devey. The house is part of a wider site, divided into two after 1987.

The historic building is long with 3 main projecting vertical bays, emphasised by “Dutch Gables” which are replicated on the rear elevation. The gables give a defining characteristic to the building and they were replicated on the later additions in C20. A charming octagonal corner tower with a bell-shaped roof is punctuating the South end of the building, announcing the house from the main original driveway, which has historic ornamental gates and piers. The building is constructed in red brick with terracotta decorative dressings, deep cornices and Welsh slate roof. The house is orientated South-West to North-East, with the rear facing the Heath. The main entrance is in a central bay with a further semi-circular colonnade defining an accent.

There are two C20 extensions; one at the south and another at the north extremes.

The main site was home to St Columba’s hospital in 1957 and was later owned by Woolworths heiress Barbara Hutton. In 1981, it was sold to the president of the United Arab Emirates but it remained unoccupied and, in 1987, was sold to developers. Subsequently the grounds were subdivided into two and a large block of flats was built to the north of the listed building. The gardens to the rear of the Elms were used as a building yard during the building works and were entirely relandscaped by the present owner.

Historic images show much larger extensions which were demolished and rebuilt after 1998.



Figure 1 The Elms, front elevation

Conservation area: Hampstead

The Listing:

The Elms - Grade II Listed – extract from Historic England.

TQ2686NE SPANIARD'S ROAD 798-1/9/1490 (East side) 10/04/81 St Columba's Hospital

Formerly known as: **The Elms SPANIARD'S ROAD**. Detached house. c1875, probably enclosing an earlier building on the site itself of two periods but of which no trace is now visible internally. Red brick with terracotta dressings and Welsh slate roof. Free style, with details and several shaped gables in the style of George Devey. Long irregular 2-storey range having 3 projecting gabled sections and a tower at the south end. C20 north extensions.

INTERIOR: not inspected but noted to retain a large reception room of 2 storey height with carved oak panelling of great richness and individuality, French Renaissance style, a large carved chimney piece and a frieze and ceiling with grotesque grille panels. A full height bay window faces a viewing gallery at 1st floor level above the entrance. Another small room is fitted with C18 style panelling and ceiling plasterwork. A larger saloon has flat Adam style decoration. Traces of woodwork and carving similar to the first room and Jacobean style doors and architraves in the hall and other rooms; also a staircase and stairwell in Jacobean style. Room north of main saloon has damaged decorated ceiling concealed by slung modern ceiling. Former matron's office: altered by partition etc., has good ceiling, fireplace and panelling. Upstairs refurbishment in 1930s has introduced some woodworks and bathroom fittings in Art Deco style.

HISTORICAL NOTE: the house was owned 1894-1908 by Sir Joseph Joel Duveen, art dealer and collector, who had it richly embellished in the 1890s, possibly employing Collcutt, who had also worked in his West End showrooms as decorator. It stands on the site of Mother Huff's Tea Gardens which flourished here for 50 years from 1678.

Listing NGR: TQ2656586936

Legacy The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: 478148

Legacy System: LBS

Legal This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

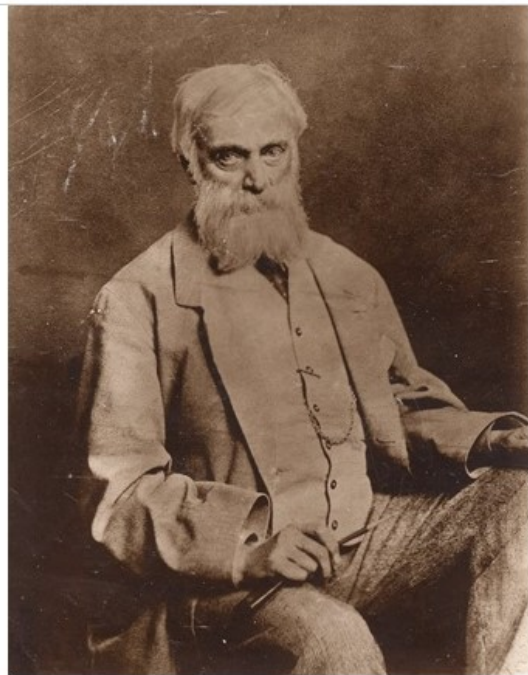


Figure 2- Historic image from 1930

Architect

The original architect of the house in the older format, prior to 1894, was most probably **George Devey**, a very fashionable architect for the wealthy country clientele.

With a shy personality, he avoided publicity, this resulting with the history overlooking his influence. He was very fond of emulating older styles of architecture, extracting the essence of authentic detailing, creating the illusion of genuine antiquity. This became an inspiration for the future architects who study under him, his legacy followed by R.N. Shaw and Charles Voysey who became the founder members of the Arts and Crafts movement.



| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| RIBAPIX REF NO | RIBA5833 |
| ARCHITECT/DESIGNER | Devey, George (1820-1886) |
| IMAGE DATE | 1880 |
| VIEW | Portrait |
| MEDIUM | Photoprint |
| LIBRARY REFERENCE | Portraits |
| ORIENTATION | Portrait |
| COLOUR / B&W | Black and white |
| CREDIT | RIBA Collections |

SUBJECT TAGS

[Architects](#)

Figure 3 George Devey - Image Copyright to RIBA

Extract from Wikipedia:

George Devey (1820, London – 1886, Hastings, Sussex) was an English architect notable for his work on country houses and their estates, especially those belonging to the Rothschild family. The second son of Frederick and Ann Devey, he was born and educated in London.

After leaving school he studied art, under John Sell Cotman and James Duffield Harding[3] with an ambition to become a professional artist, but later trained as an architect.

He often tried to create an artificial impression of a building's age, and of its development over time, by combining the styles and materials of different eras.

During his professional career Devey had a London office in Great Marlborough Street, where he specialised in country houses and estate cottages and lodges.

Without solid evidence, but based on the owner of the house information, it is assumed that the architect responsible for the alterations and embellishments for The Elms was **Thomas Edward Collcutt**, (16 March 1840[1] – 7 October 1924) a prominent Victorian Architect who was also the President of the RIBA in 1906-1908. Sir Arthur Stockdale painted his RIBA Presidential portrait, which was exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts in London in 1910.



| | |
|---------------------|--|
| RIBAPIX REF NO | RIBA100441 |
| ARCHITECT/DESIGNER | Collcutt, Thomas Edward (1840-1924) |
| ARTIST/PHOTOGRAPHER | Cope, Sir Arthur Stockdale (1857-1940) |
| IMAGE DATE | 1903 |
| VIEW | Portrait |
| MEDIUM | Painting |
| LIBRARY REFERENCE | POR/COLL/1 (66PP, Lutyens Room) [PCF22] |
| ORIENTATION | Portrait |
| COLOUR / B&W | Colour |
| CREDIT | RIBA Collections |
| NOTES | NOTES: Thomas Collcutt was President of the RIBA in 1906-1908. This RIBA Presidential portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts in London in 1910. |

Figure 4 - Thomas Edward Collcutt, image copyright to RIBA

Thomas Edward Collcutt designed several important buildings in London including the Savoy Hotel, Lloyd's Register of Shipping and the Palace Theatre.

Extract from Wikipedia:

Collcutt was apprenticed to the London architect R. E. Armstrong, and then employed by the partnership Miles and Murgatroyd.[2] He began working in the establishment of George Edmund Street, with Richard Norman Shaw, before setting up his own practice in 1873 and achieving recognition, winning the Wakefield Town Hall competition in 1877, the Grand Prix for Architecture at the Paris International Exposition in 1889, and the Royal Gold Medal in 1902. He was a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and served as its president from 1906 to 1908. He was a member of the Société Centrale d'Architecture de Belgique, and the Société des Artistes Français.

His most important building in London was the Imperial Institute (1887–93), of which only the central tower remains, now part of Imperial College. In 1899 Collcutt designed the Lloyd's Register of Shipping Building in London, extensively decorated with allegorical sculpture by George Frampton and a major landmark of the New Sculpture movement.

For Richard D'Oyly Carte, Collcutt designed the Savoy Hotel, which has been subsequently altered, and the Palace Theatre, London (1889) in Cambridge Circus, Charing Cross Road, which was built as the Royal English Opera House. Sir Arthur Sullivan's grand opera, Ivanhoe, was the first production at the theatre. Collcutt also designed the Bechstein piano showrooms at 40 Wigmore Street (1889) and the Wigmore Hall (1901). The Palace Theatre and the Wigmore Hall remain essentially in their original forms. Both have strong pale buff terracotta ornamentation, characteristic of Collcutt's work.

Judging by Collcutt's style and looking at other signed projects, presumably he added the decorated ceilings in the principal reception rooms on the ground floor. The monumental Jacobean scale of the

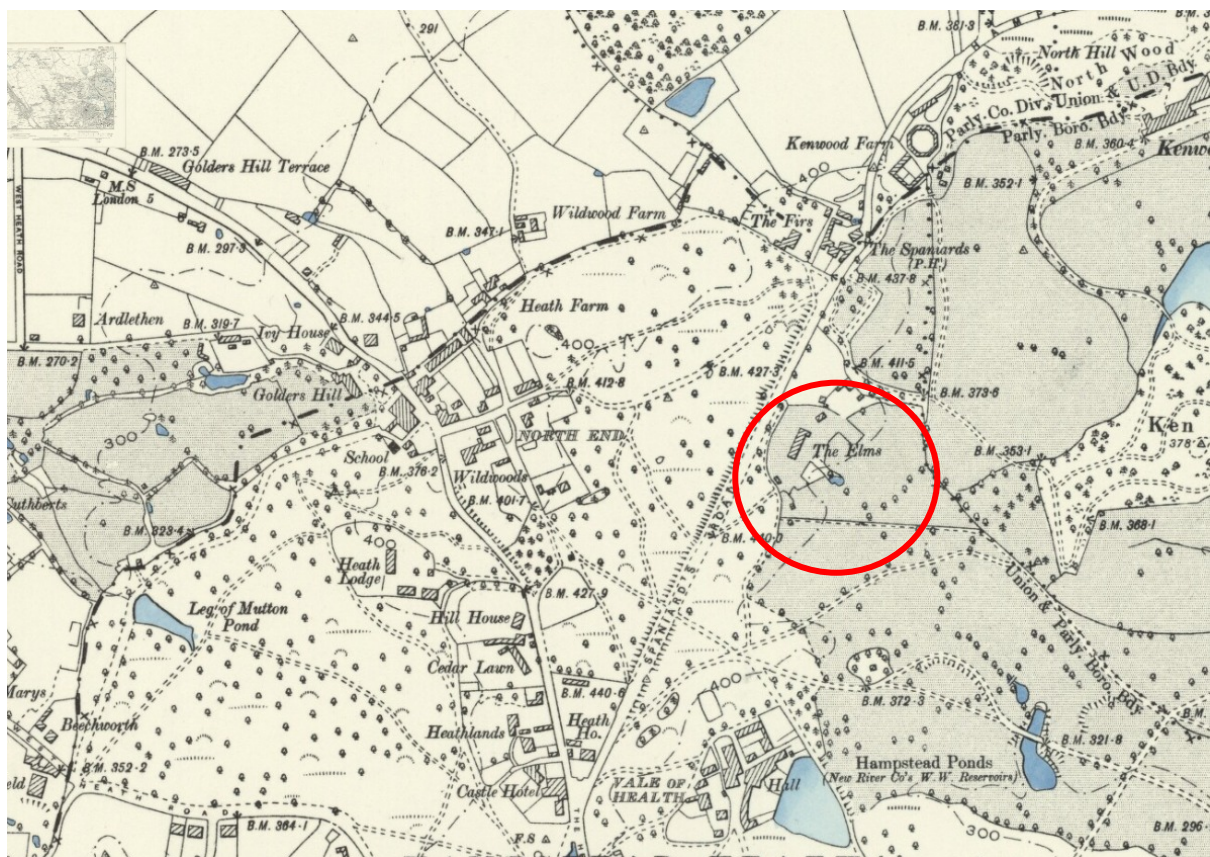
cassette ceilings and wall panelling, the doors and architraves, the fireplaces could be his interventions.

Site history

The earliest records of The Elms start from 1811 when the Lord Chancellor Thomas Erskine lived until 1819. The building took various shapes through time until 1894-1908 when an influential owner took over and embarked on substantial renovations.

Prior to this, the site's history goes further back, as some extracts from the Hampstead historic register will bring light into the sequence of events, highlighting landmark personalities who influenced the local history but with far reaching reverberations.

A very old map shows one building in the same orientation as the current building.



Elms House (The Elms), off Spaniards Road near Jack Straw's Castle, stands on the site of Mother Huff's Tea Garden, which flourished for 50 years from 1678 and was mentioned in a play in 1706. By 1728 Mother Huff herself had moved to the 'Hoop and Bunch of Grapes' at North End. The Elms House was home to Thomas Erskine (later Lord Chancellor) from 1811-1819, became St Columba's hospital in 1957, and was later owned, but rarely inhabited, by Woolworths heiress Barbara Hutton. In 1981 it was sold to the president of the United Arab Emirates but it remained unoccupied and in 1987 was sold to developers and turned into a series of luxury flats.

occupied by Sir Nicholas Conyngham Tindal (1776- 1846), chief justice of the Common Pleas, who may have been responsible for building by 1848 another house on the east side of Spaniard's Road, north of the Elms. Charles Bosanquet (1769-1850), a governor of the South Sea Co., then lived at the Firs, where his brother Sir John (1773-1847), the judge, died.

Influential Owners

To understand the evolution of this house, it is important to understand who lived here, who found inspiration and who was commissioned to add layers of architecture.

From 1894 to 1908 the Elms was the home of **Sir Joseph Joel Duveen** (1843-1908), an art dealer. The house to the north was demolished between 1891 and 1913. A new house, called Mount Tyndale, was built in the 1920s and occupied in 1938 by Viscount Knollys.

***Sir Joseph Joel Duveen** was an art dealer and benefactor of art galleries. Born in the Netherlands, he and his brother Henry J. Duveen founded in Britain the firm of Duveen Brothers.*

He was born in Meppel in the Netherlands on 8 May 1843.

Joseph left Meppel in 1866 and settled in Hull, starting as a general dealer. He possessed a good knowledge of Nanking porcelain, then coming into fashion; cargo loads of this had been brought to Holland by the early Dutch traders with China. He purchased large quantities, which he shipped it to Hull, and found a ready market in London.

Duveen became wealthy and was generous in benefaction of art galleries. He was a subscriber to the public purchase of Velasquez's "Rokeby Venus" for the National Gallery in 1906, and in the same year he presented John Singer Sargent's portrait of Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth, which he bought at the Irving sale at Christie's in 1905 for £1200, to the Tate Gallery.

In May 1908 he undertook the cost (about £35,000) of an extension to the Tate Gallery. It was designed by W. H. Romaine-Walker: five rooms were added to the main floor and two to the lower. It allowed the gallery's paintings by J. M. W. Turner to be displayed and was called the Turner Wing. It was completed in 1910.

He was knighted on 26 June 1908.

Sir Joseph Joel Duveen's galleries in West End were decorated by architect Thomas Edward Collcutt and this indicates the long-standing relationship which generated the subsequent works done to The Elms.

The current owners purchased the house immediately after the refurbishment by a developer, who converted the adjacent property into apartments but restored The Elms into a grand mansion house to include landscape garden and terraces.

Historic sequence



Figure 5 - Historic image of The Elms, 1889

In this image there is a South wing built, not in keeping with the architecture of the house. At the North end, there is a very large 3 storey extension with an additional ground floor side extension.

Both the South and the North extensions have been demolished and rebuilt after 1998.

The Elms as a hospital, known as St Columba's Hospital during WWII and after.



Figure 6 - Historic image with nurses on the grounds of The Elms

Image from E-bay.

Dilapidation

The site somehow entered a dilapidated state and was rescued by a developer in around 1996, who split the properties and separated the boundaries between the mansion house, the subject of our application, from the North development which became a block of luxury flats.



Figure 7 - Historic images from 1996

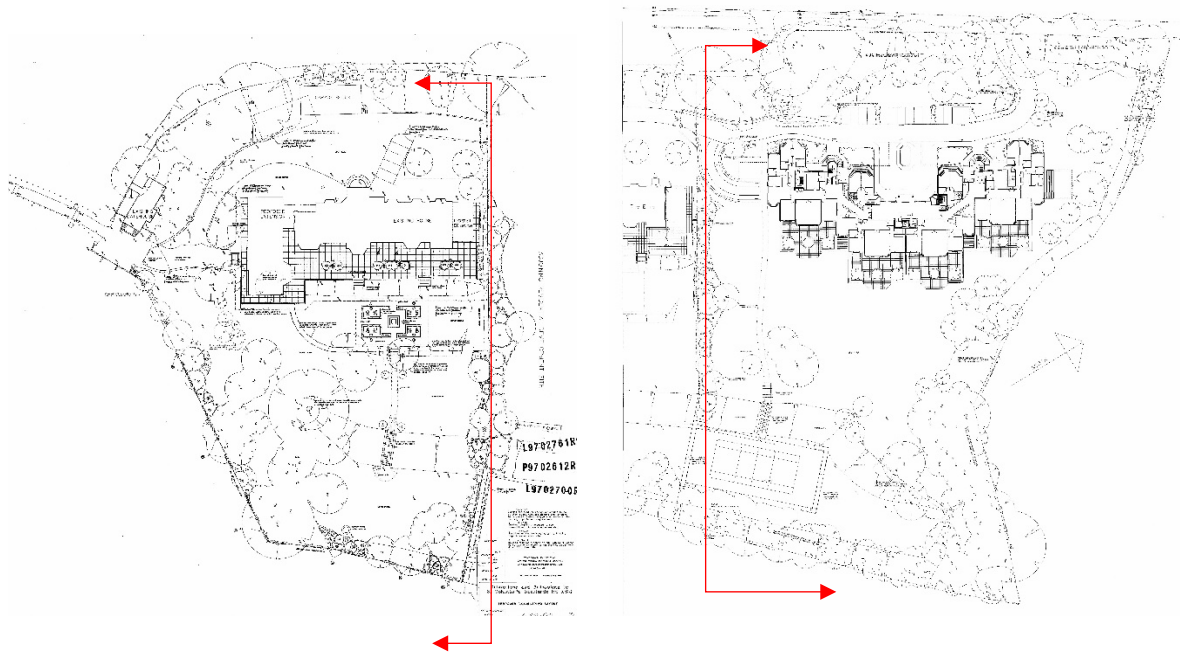
The side tower and the one storey South extension, where a future swimming pool was built in 1998 and a new staircase gabled bay was introduced in 2001 by the current owners.



The main entrance of the house, in 1996



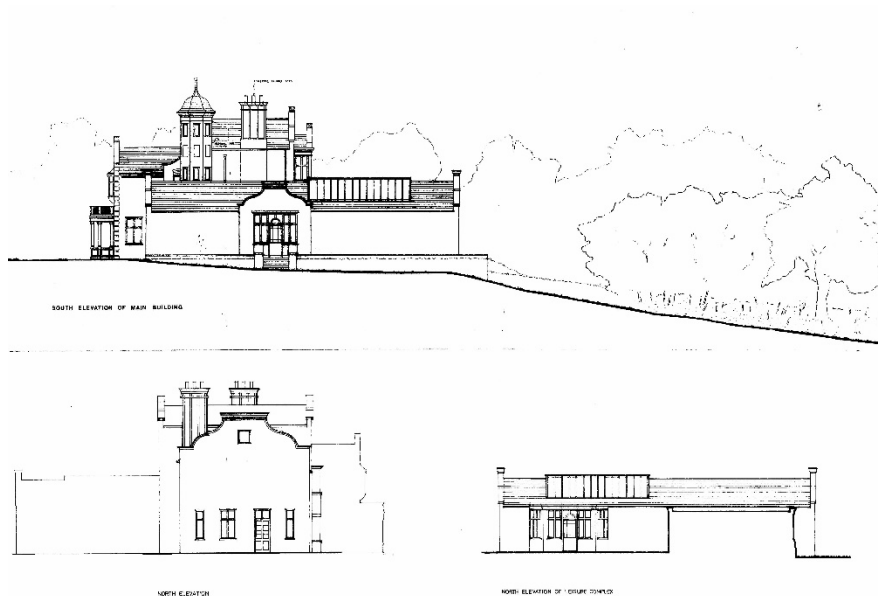
The rear elevation of the house with the stepping ground at the rear, leading to the woodland. The building further North was demolished to make way to a new development of luxury flats and a boundary introduced between the North and South properties.



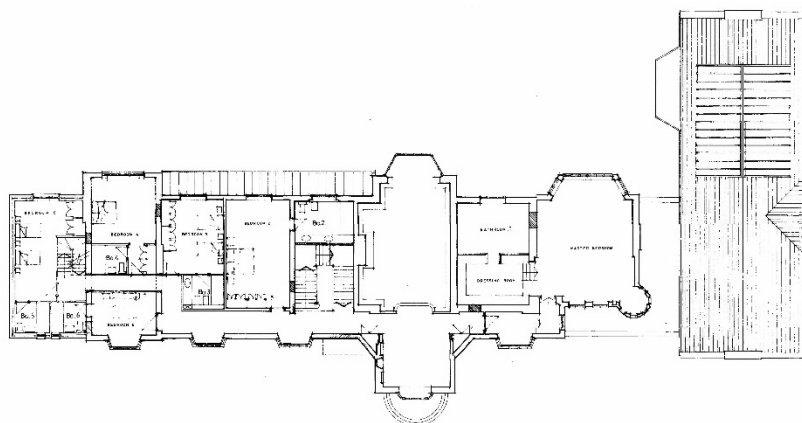
The Site plans are showing the separation of the sites, from the planning application W9702612R1. From 1996, the footprint of the house was established as the current configuration.

HISTORIC EXISTING PLANS

Older Existing plans on record.



The South extension housing the swimming pool house and the gym. We note there was approval for a glazed roof over the pool but not implemented.



The ground floor plan showing the main house with the two extension: to the North side (left side on the plan) and the swimming pool wing to the South, as a side extension connected through a ground floor articulation. The internal configuration has changed since.



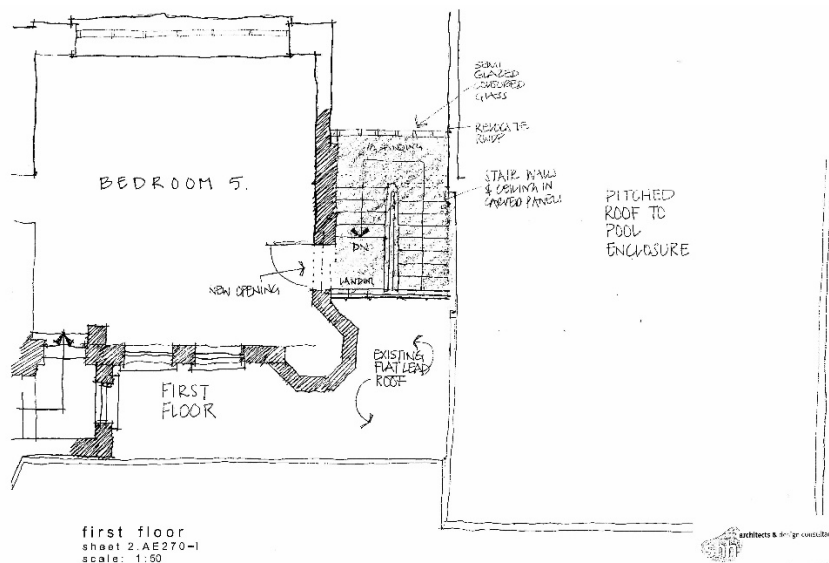
The front and rear elevations, mostly preserved exactly until **2001**, when a staircase was added between the swimming pool and the upper part of the house with a hard landscape design in 2002, improving the terraces at the rear, leading into the wider garden towards the woodland.



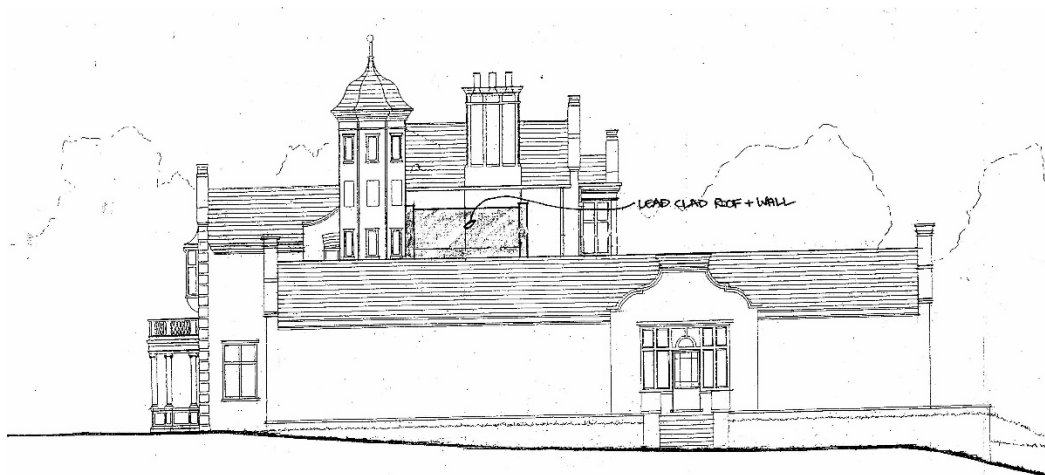
Application from 2001-2, PWX0103677, showing the staircase insertion with gabled walls, connecting the bedrooms from the first floor to the swimming pool, at ground level.



PWX0103677



The staircase plan added to the South end of the house to create a fire exit and connect to the swimming pool house.



Conclusion

The property has been in the same ownership since 2001, as a single family occupancy. They define themselves as the custodians of this property, not just owners. The custodians are passionate about preserving the authenticity while enhancing the asset through carefully introducing the necessary contemporary additions, striking the balance and preserving the dominance of the main heart and ethos of the house.

The historic building acquired two extensions in 1996, at each end of the house: to the South, a swimming pool wing, over the existing footprint of an older extension; to the North a kitchen wing. A further staircase articulation was introduced to the South in 2001, to connect the house to the swimming pool building but most importantly to provide a fire escape at that end of the house.

The North extension comprises the family kitchen with small bedrooms and bathrooms above. The windows of the extension are exact replicas of the historic windows, with leaded lights. The brickwork was chosen to perfectly match the main house, including the thin joints, executed impeccably.

The extension to the South is a large pool building with the Queen Anne gable ends, designed to be harmonious within the elevations. The brickwork is different on this extension, contemporary brick size and joints, achieving an overall similarity to the original house, with some chequered pattern interspersed. The gables size and contour are a good facsimile of the original gables.

The hard landscape design introduced a series of terraces, in 2002, connecting the house through a transitional space towards the larger garden at the rear, leading visually towards the woodland beyond. A landscape designer introduced planting within the terraces and linked the terraces through formal gardens, leading to the main lower garden, a freer style landscape, incorporating a large pond in a valley, walk pathways, a bridge, creating a narrative and a journey.

The new proposal is to refine further those three elements by improving the quality of the connectivity between the house and the nature.

The swimming pool will expand outwards through an open air swimming pool, creating a transitional space, with views towards the pond and the bridge in the valley and the woodland beyond. The roof terrace over the internal swimming pool will maximise the sun exposure and create vistas towards the landscaped garden.

At the North end, the kitchen will acquire a glazed pod extension, connected by a glazed bridge, to bring the dining experience closer to nature, as an immersive experience, connecting the indoors to the wider landscape and the surrounding woodland.

The assessment of the current building is included in the main Design and Access document.

The new elements are designed with great care and consideration of the existing historic elements, respecting the hierarchy while creating a deeper connection between the house and the nature around it.

