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Heritage Statement

45 Hollycroft Avenue, London, NW3 7QJ

PLANNING APPLICATION

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1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Alexander Martin Architects to accompany a planning application submitted for **45 Hollycroft Avenue NW3 7QJ**. This report is to be read in conjunction with the planning drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by AMA.

Need for Assessment

Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states: “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....”

This short Heritage Statement assesses the significance of heritage assets in or near the Site and any in the wider area that might potentially be affected by the scheme proposals. The scope is considered sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of heritage assets.

Heritage Assets

The NPPF defines a “heritage asset” as:

“A building, monument, site place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest”.

The definition includes both designated heritage assets (of which, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are relevant here) and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

In line with Paragraph 194 of the NPPF, the significance of the potentially affected heritage assets is outlined in this Heritage Statement, including any contribution made by setting to the significance of the identified heritage assets.

Identified Heritage Assets

There are two Designated Heritage Assets that could potentially be affected by the proposals.

- Nos 43-45 Hollycroft Avenue.
- Redington and Froggnal Conservation Area (CA).

Listed buildings

Law

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (“PLBCAA”) provides that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority 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.

NPPF

“Significance” is defined within the NPPF as being:

“the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its “setting”.

Local Plan

Lambeth Local Plan 202-2035 Policy Q20, Statutory listed buildings, states Development affecting listed buildings will be supported where it:

- i. would conserve and not harm the significance/special interest;
- ii. would not harm the significance/setting (including views to and from);
- iii. would not diminish its ability to remain viable in use in the long term; and
- iv. is justified and supported by a robust Heritage Statement.

Paragraph 10.98 states: ‘The council will support only the minimum amount of alteration necessary to secure the optimum viable use of a listed building. Where a building is already in its optimum viable use, alterations which diminish significance will be resisted’.

New work should preserve significance, reinforce appropriate local characteristics and, where possible, secure enhancement of the listed building (paragraph 10.99).

Description

43-45 Hollycroft Avenue consists of a semi-detached property built 1905.

No.45 was Nationally Listed (Grade II) in January 1999 as one-half of semi-detached pair (with Nos. 43, 43A). It is briefly described (Reference: TQ2554285989) as follows:

Pair of semi-detached houses. 1905. By CHB Quennell; built by GW Hart. Red brick with brick patterning and quoins to 1st floors. Tiled hipped and gabled roofs with overhanging eaves having painted wooden soffit; tall slab chimney-stacks. Symmetrically designed pair. 3 storeys. 2 windows each. Entrances in outer bays having hoods on shaped brackets and fanlights above this. Ground floors with canted bay windows having glazing bars to upper halves only. 1st floor; gauged brick flat arches to tripartite sashes and central bays with 3-light sashes having segmental relieving arches infilled with herringbone brickwork. Gables with 3-light sashes, modillion brickwork eaves, diaper patterning between modillion bands and broken into by main roof eaves. Slab stacks rise behind. INTERIORS: not inspected.

CHB Quenell (1872–1935) began practice in 1896, working with his brother William developing houses at Hampstead Garden Suburb and then with developer George Washington Hart. Quenell's work is typical of the English Domestic Revival tradition drawing heavily on the Arts and Crafts style and integrating Neo-Georgian features. His work was instrumental in shaping the character of the Reading/Frognaal area and English suburban architecture more generally.

Nos. 47 and 49 to the south are also nationally listed and attributed to Quenell. Five semi-detached pairs nearby in Ferncroft Avenue are also attributed to Quennell and listed as Grade II.

Conservation Areas

The Application Property lies within the the Redington and Frognaal conservation area.

Law

1. Section 72(1) of the PLBCAA provides that in the exercise, with respect to any

buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of (amongst others) the planning Acts, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

2. The South Lakeland District Council v Secretary of State for the Environment case and the Barnwell Manor case (East Northamptonshire DC v SSCLG) establish that “preserving” in both s.66 and s.72 means “doing no harm”.

NPPF

3. Paragraph 196 of the NPPF provides that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. This appraisal considers whether the Scheme may result in less than substantial harm.

Paragraph 190 of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting its setting), taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. That assessment should then be taken into account when considering the impact of the proposal on the heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Local Plan

Camden Local Plan Policy Q22, Conservation areas, states that development proposals affecting conservation areas will be permitted where they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas by:

- i. respecting and reinforcing the established, positive characteristics of the area in terms of the building line, siting, design, height, forms, materials joinery, window detailing etc.
- ii. protecting the setting (including views in and out of the area).

Local Plan paragraph 10.6 state that applicants will be required to provide a heritage statement for their proposals which explains in detail the significance (character and appearance) of the conservation area affected by the proposals and the impact of the proposals on that significance. Proposals that will have a harmful impact will be required to meet the relevant tests set out in the NPPF.

Description

45 Hollycroft Avenue lies within the subarea known as the 'Crofts'. Alongside Ferncroft and Rosecroft Avenue, Hollycroft Avenue represents the second phase of development of the northern part of the CA at the turn of the 19th century.

Hollycroft Avenue is described as more modest and informal than Ferncroft. It is characterised by mature London Plane trees with pairs of houses in red brick, interspersed by houses with rendered upper floors. Windows are typically traditional timber frame box sash or casement style. Many of the properties draw heavily upon the Arts and Crafts style integrating Neo-Georgian features. Much of Quenell's work was instrumental in defining the character of the CA.

Conservation Area Guidance

The Redington and Froggnal conservation area appraisal and management strategy was adopted in 2000. Camden recently updated the conservation area appraisal and management plan. This was subject to a public consultation on March 20th, 2022.

The recently updated guidance includes No. 45 within a group of buildings in Hollycroft Avenue that make a positive contribution to the area -1-23(odd), 27-41(odd), 51-53 (od), and 2-18 (even). The revised guidance also includes this same group.

The latest guidance (6.4 Alterations, extensions, and infill) states; 'Dormers and roof lights should be on rear roof slopes and not front roof frontages'.

2.0 Proposed Alterations

The description of development is for “*a dormer window extension with a timber framed casement window to the south-facing side elevation, three conservation style rooflights to the rear roof pitch, loft conversion and the formation of a staircase from the second floor to the loft level.*”

The proposed alterations that may affect designated heritage assets comprise:

- Loft conversion.
- Formation of a staircase from the second floor to the loft level (there is currently no staircase up to the loft).
- Three rear roof slope conservation-style rooflights.
- Side dormer with a flat roof and timber framed casement window.

3.0 Assessment of the Proposals

The scale of the proposed changes is relatively modest, with all external alterations confined to the side and rear.

The proposed staircase will be inserted in an existing box room, intruding upon the second-floor landing to a modest degree.

The flat roof dormer option is a historically appropriate design that follows in terms of scale, materials, and fenestration pattern from other windows on the property, which have a consistent appearance.

Due to its siting, scale, materiality and architectural design, the proposed dormer window extension and conservation rooflights would preserve the character and architectural integrity of the main house and maintains the appearance of the street and wider CA, with all external alterations confined to the side and rear. It is respectful of the architectural period, style, and design of the existing host building.

The dormer window is an essential leitmotif of the English Domestic revival architecture and the Garden Suburb that Quenell championed.

The flat-roof dormer is an historically appropriate design and would be in keeping with several other neighbouring buildings, including those attributed to Quenell, that also have side (and front) dormers. It would not result in any harm to the amenity of the occupiers of any neighbouring properties in terms of privacy, overshadowing or overbearing impact. It also complies with the dimensions stated within the CA design

guides with regards to height and set-back.

All proposed conservation rooflights are on the rear roof slope and are set flush within the roof plane.

4.0 Conclusion

The proposals maintain the integrity and quality of design within the area in terms of height, mass, materiality, and detailed design.

The proposed alterations and extensions are modestly scaled and will not result in any harm to the listed buildings or the conservation area. They will have a neutral effect on the character and appearance of the host and the wider CA. There is, therefore, no requirement that public benefits are offered to offset less than substantial harm.

The proposals therefore accord national, regional, and local planning policies and guidance regarding the preservation, conservation enhancement of designated heritage assets.