

Heritage statement

33 Highgate High Street, N6 5JT

To create an opening within the 1st floor wall to achieve an open-plan office

INTRODUCTION

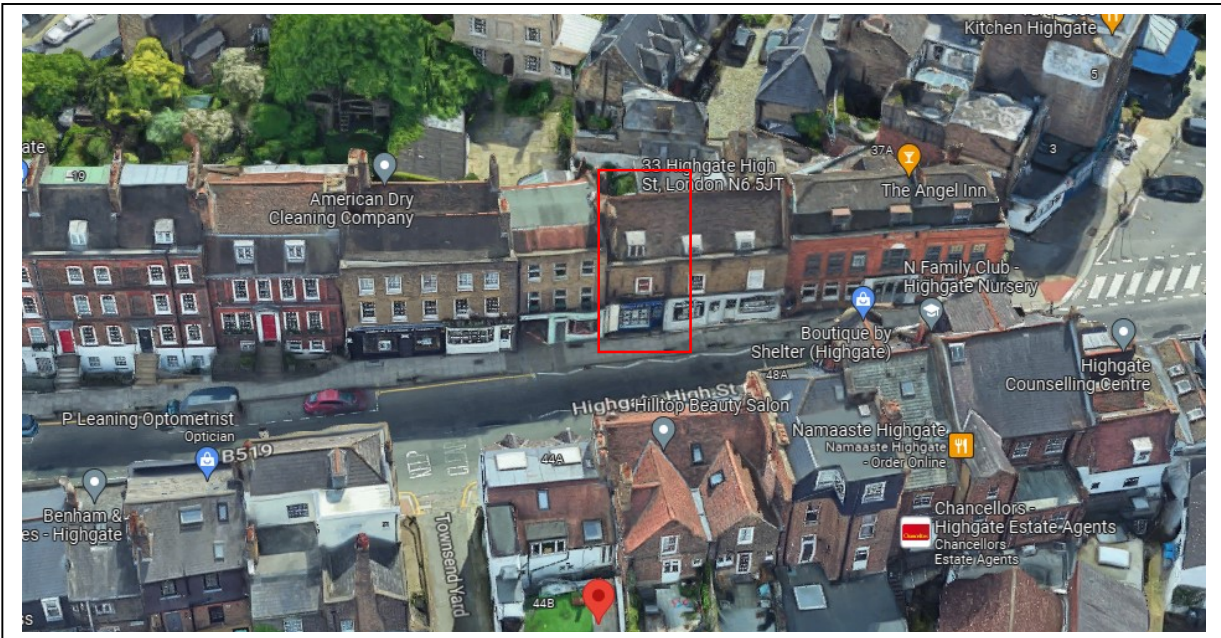
- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a Listed Building Consent application for creating an opening within a wall at 1st floor level to achieve an open-plan office in meeting the essential business needs of Taylor Gibbs estate agency, located at 33 Highgate High Street, N6 5JT, Camden, London
- 1.2 This Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the NPPS (Section 194-202) and D2 of the Camden Local plan for (listed building and Conservation area) which states that special regard must be given by the Authority in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, and their setting. Its purpose is to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed works.
- 1.3 The purpose of the Statement is to review the prevailing policies and other material considerations that are relevant to the determination of the Listed Building Consent and to present a case for granting permission.

THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The applicate site is located on the south side of High Gate High Street, Camden, close to its junction with South Grove. There are a number of small shops along the High Street with a comprising of boutique's, retail shops and restaurants.
This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



*Extract from Historic England.org.uk
(application site circled in red)*



Aerial view of the application site and of High Gate, High Street, N6 5JT



*Existing Street Scene
Street Scene: High Gate High Street*

2.2 The application site is one of a short terrace of four late 18th century houses, re-fronted in the mid-19th century with later shops. No.33 is a two storey Grade II listed building. It is comprised of a single fronted retail unit with office accommodation on both ground and at first floor levels. The main external walls are of solid construction with yellow stock brickwork and a tiled dual pitched roof with the original chimney stack intact. There is also a front dormer at roof level as the attic is used as storage. Access to the building for the general public and staff is through the main entrance facing High gate, High Street. There is another entrance for staff to the rear of the property as shown below.



Existing Rear Elevation



Existing Rear Elevation & of adjoining neighbouring properties

3.0 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 3.1 The document sets out the up-to-date national policy position for Heritage buildings and must, therefore, be used in the determination of this planning application. The most relevant sections are highlighted below.
- 3.2 To enable the determination of applications, the significance of any heritage assets affected needs to be described as part of the supporting information. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance (paragraph 194).
- 3.3 Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. (paragraph 195)
- 3.4 In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraph 197)
- 3.5 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance (paragraph 199)
- 3.6 Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional (paragraph 200)
- 3.7 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (paragraph 202)

4.0 Camden Local Plan (2017)

Policy D2 Heritage;

4.1 (Page 235)

Designated heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
- b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
- c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible;
- d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

4.2 (Page 236)

Listed buildings are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- i. resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
- j. resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building;
- k. resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.

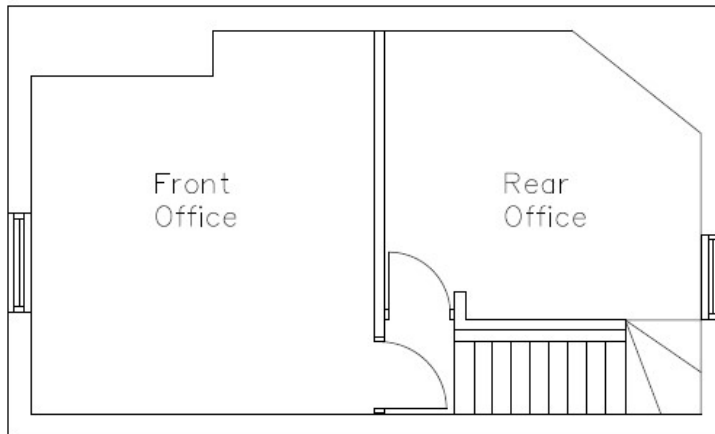
Designated heritage assets (Page 237)

4.3 Designated heritage assets include listed buildings and structures, registered parks and gardens and conservation areas. The Council will apply the policies above and will not permit harm to a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the harm. Any harm to or loss of a designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification which must be provided by the applicant to the Council. In decision making the Council will take into consideration the scale of the harm and the significance of the asset.

4.4 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework the Council will only permit development resulting in substantial harm to or loss to a grade II listed building, park or garden in exceptional circumstances and will only permit development resulting in substantial harm to or loss to a grade I and II* listed building, grade I and II* registered park or garden in wholly exceptional circumstances.

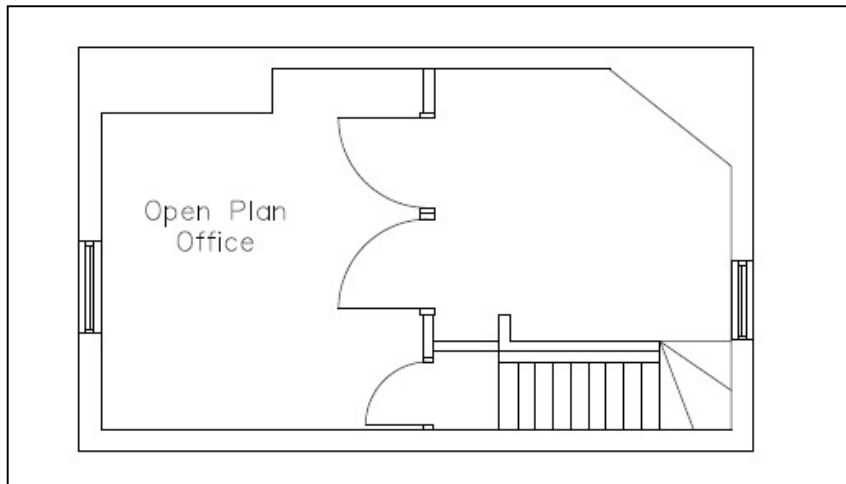
5. APPLICATION PROPOSAL

5.1 Listed Building Consent is sought to create an opening within the 1st floor wall to achieve an open-plan office. The existing floor plan as shown below currently comprises of two offices accessed by internal doors from a lobby.



Existing Floor Plan

The proposed floor plan involves create an opening within the 1st floor wall with double-doors, while retaining the lobby and existing door opening to the office located to the front. A fire-resistant door is required to meet building control regulations for fire and safety.

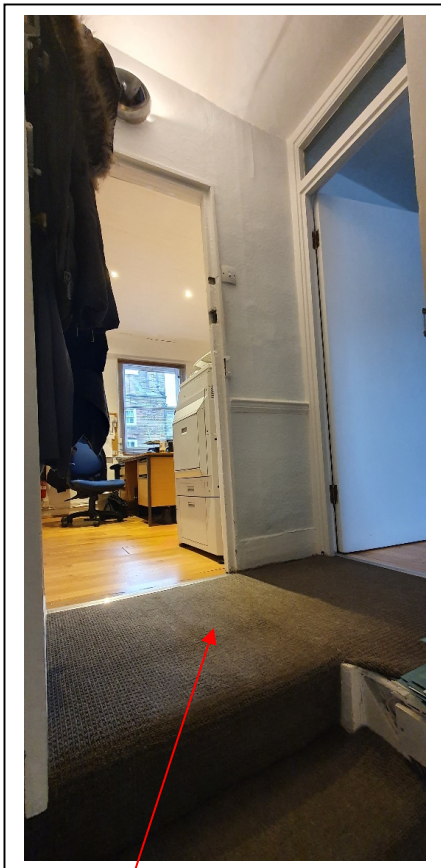


Proposed Floor Plan

5.2 Description of Proposed works;

The work consists of installing a beam to create the opening. This will provide the necessary support for the roof load as advised by an experienced and qualified structural engineer. The construction work will be carefully carried out by an experienced and vetted contractor with building control approval.

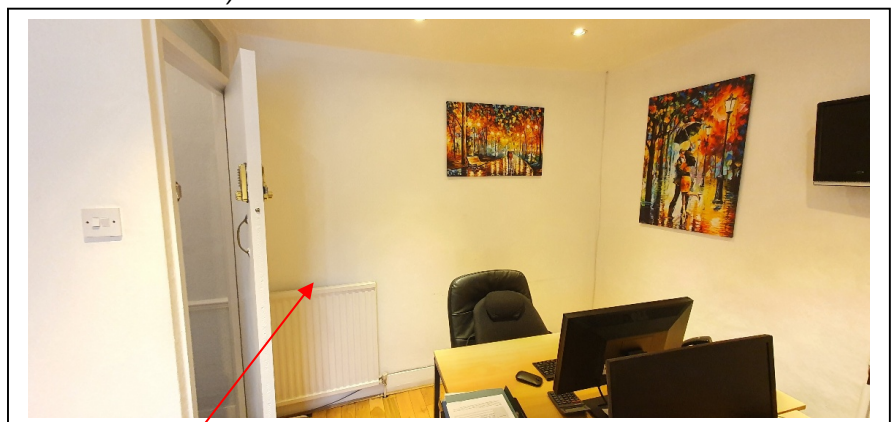
The 1st floor wall would then be carefully dismantled to create an opening as shown on the proposed drawing. The lobby at 1st floor level will be retained in order to comply with building regulations for fire and safety. The ceiling would be made good by continuing the lath and plaster ceiling with matching materials after the opening has been made. Similarly, the floor will also be made good by continuing the floor with matching flooring throughout.



Existing 1st floor lobby to be retained



Opening to made within *Internal Wall* at 1st floor level (viewed from inside front office)



Opening to made within *Internal Wall* at 1st floor level (viewed from inside rear office)

5.3 Justification

Layout

The purpose of the open plan office will enhance the functional operation of the office and provide improved open communication within the Taylor Gibbs team which is much needed. The open plan office will also bring in more natural light to the office area.

Scale

Creating a larger opening at 1st floor level does not impact the scale of the existing property whatsoever.

Appearance

As this only involves creating a larger opening within the 1st floor wall, the external appearance of the building is completely unaffected.

The proposal duly respects the preservation and enhancement of that asset, in accordance with Camden Heritage planning policy and NPPF for heritage sites.

The proposal is a carefully considered design to provide a reasonable size open-plan office in line with today's modern standards in terms of facility and use, whilst at the same time respecting the neighbouring properties and the Heritage of the area.

There will be no adverse impact upon the use and enjoyment of all those properties which surround the application site.

The proposed works would make better use of the existing floor space, enhancing the current facilities on offer. They would create an open plan office to serve the current business needs of the owner and also for future users. The presence of the internal double doors allows for either an open plan office or for privacy the doors can be closed between the offices. For future users of the building, if the internal wall was to be reinstated, this would be very straight forward by constructing a timber stud wall partition.

The proposal would therefore represent a sustainable form of development in accordance with paragraph 202 which states heritage assets should be put to viable uses. The proposal does not conflict with any other NPPF policy for heritage sites as the appearance of the building is remaining unchanged and the creation of a large opening at 1st floor level to achieve an open plan office does not in any way affect the public interest. As already mentioned, future users of the building can easily re-instate the opening with a timber stud partition if required.

The potential impact the proposal has on the significance of the building has been carried as shown in Table 1 below, outlining each element of the proposal;

Feature	Description	Significance	Proposed Works	Possible Impact	Justification or Mitigation
Internal Wall (1st floor office)	Timber framed, lath and plaster finish	Low	Create opening in wall to achieve open-plan office	None	Better use of the space to create an open plan office to meet current business needs
External Walls (Front & Rear)	Solid walls	High	None	None	No impact
Windows at 1st floor level (Front & Rear)	Timber framed, single glazed sash windows	Moderate	None	None	No impact
Ceiling	Lath and plaster	Low	To continue existing lath & plaster ceiling with matching lath and plaster	None	No impact
Flooring	Natural wood floor covering (but not original to the	Low	To continue existing natural wood floor covering with matching	None	No impact
Internal Door	Timber construction	Low	To replace door with an FD30 fire rated door	None	No impact

Table 1: Assessment of proposal on significance to building

5.4 Heritage and Impact on the Significance of the Building

5.5 Impact upon the Setting

The significance and special interest of the building lies within its external façade and social context within the Town. The proposed development would not affect the exterior of the building, comprising internal works only, and therefore would not impact on the significance or setting of the heritage asset when viewed externally from High Gate High Street. The proposal would therefore comply with the provisions of NPPF (paragraphs 197,199,201) and policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan, which aim to conserve the heritage significance and setting of an asset.

5.6 Impact upon the Building

- 5.61 The proposed works would be carried out in a sensitive manner to ensure the historic and architectural importance of the building is maintained.
- 5.62 The internal works involve the installation of timber beams to carry the roof load above in order to create the required opening within the 1st floor wall.
- 5.63 It is accepted that the proposed works would alter the internal layout of the existing first floor. The works are completely reversible as a timber stud partition can be installed for future users of the building.
- 5.64 It should be noted that the proposal to create an open office of the existing office's is not an attempt to modernise the building's interior. Instead, it seeks to make better use of the current space without impacting on the historic fabric or integrity of the building, providing an upgrade to the existing facilities and services on offer. The proposal would therefore fully accord with the provisions of both local and national policy which encourage flexible solutions for the re-use of buildings (or part of a building in this case), where they are sympathetic to the character and historic integrity of the asset.
- 5.65 During the course of the works the existing timber floor would be protected and polished on completion. In addition, the existing walls would be repainted using matching white emulsion. The proposed works would therefore preserve any features of special architectural or historic interest. Further details of the proposed finish can be provided at conditions stage if necessary.
- 5.66 As a result, the proposed works would have a neutral impact on the original building, and would conserve all features of historic significance or interest in accordance with the NPPF for Heritage building and Camden Council Local plan under D2.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Listed Building Consent is sought to create an opening within the existing 1st floor wall while still retaining the existing lobby and approval should be given. The proposal complies with the NPPF policies and with the Camden Local plan policies for heritage buildings with no significant impact to the building as demonstrated within this report.
- 6.2 The proposed works would have no adverse effect on the historic integrity of the Listed building and it's setting, nor to any features of architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 6.3 The proposed works would making better use of the existing space and will enhance the current facilities on offer. The works are completely reversible as the wall can easily be re-instated for future users of the building if required.
- 6.4 The proposed works would have no adverse effect on the historic integrity of the Listed building and it's setting, nor to any features of architectural or historic interest which it possesses as shown in Table 1.

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