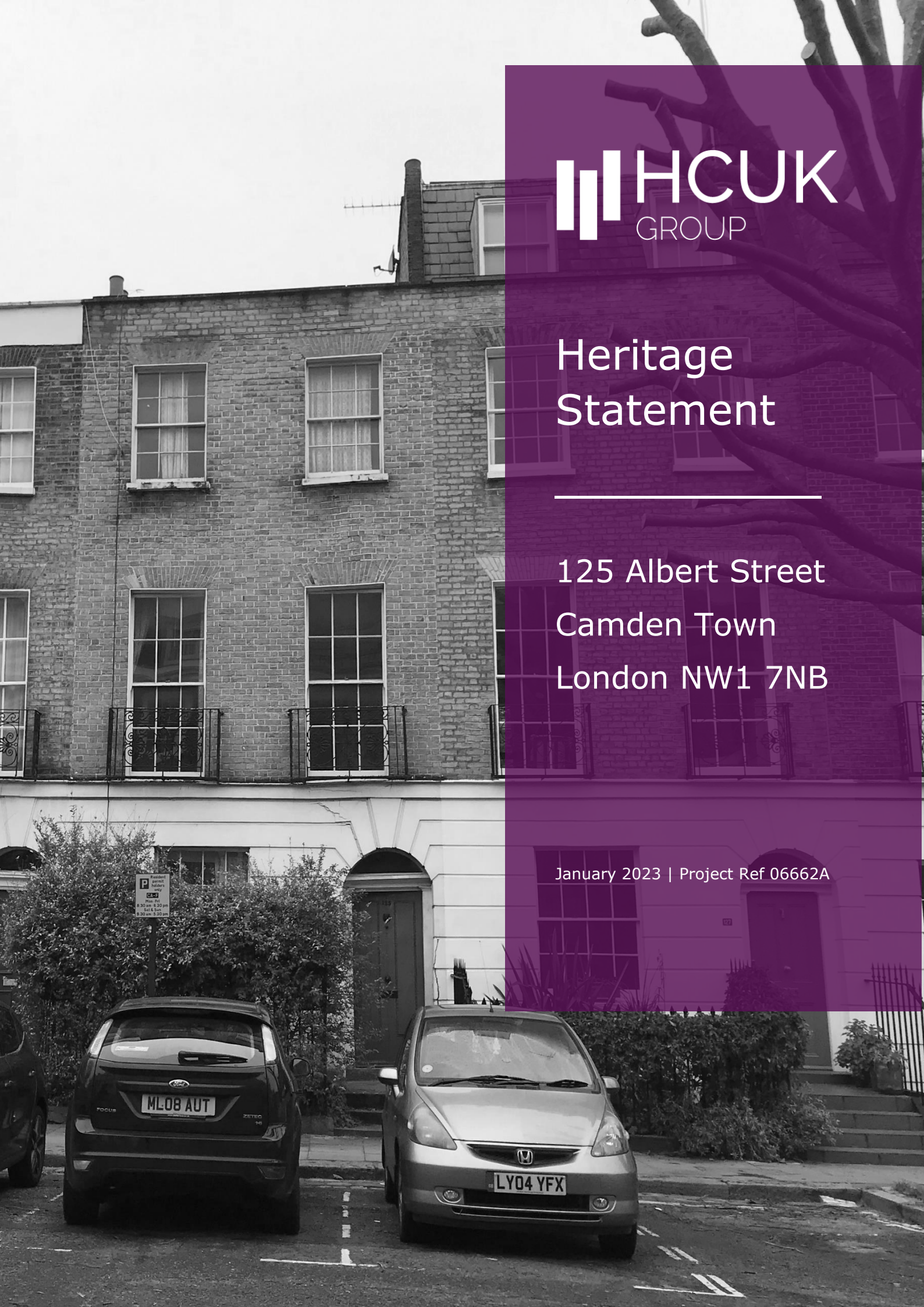




Heritage Statement

125 Albert Street
Camden Town
London NW1 7NB

January 2023 | Project Ref 06662A



HCUK Group is a homeworking (since 2010) multi-disciplinary environmental practice. We offer expert, honest, and independent advice in archaeology, heritage, landscape, arboriculture, and planning based on our considerable experience. We provide a range of services that can be tailored to any site or case, supported by administrative, financial and HR teams. We began life as Heritage Collective LLP in 2010, before becoming Heritage Collective UK Limited in 2014. We became HCUK Group Limited in 2020.



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1. Introduction

- 1.1** This Heritage Statement has been prepared by HCUK Group on behalf of the Applicant in respect to proposed structural under-pinning works to the grade II listed property at No. 125 Albert Street, NW1 7NB, henceforth referred to as the 'Site' (**Figure 1**). The Site is within Camden Town Conservation Area and falls under the jurisdiction of the London Borough of Camden (LBC).

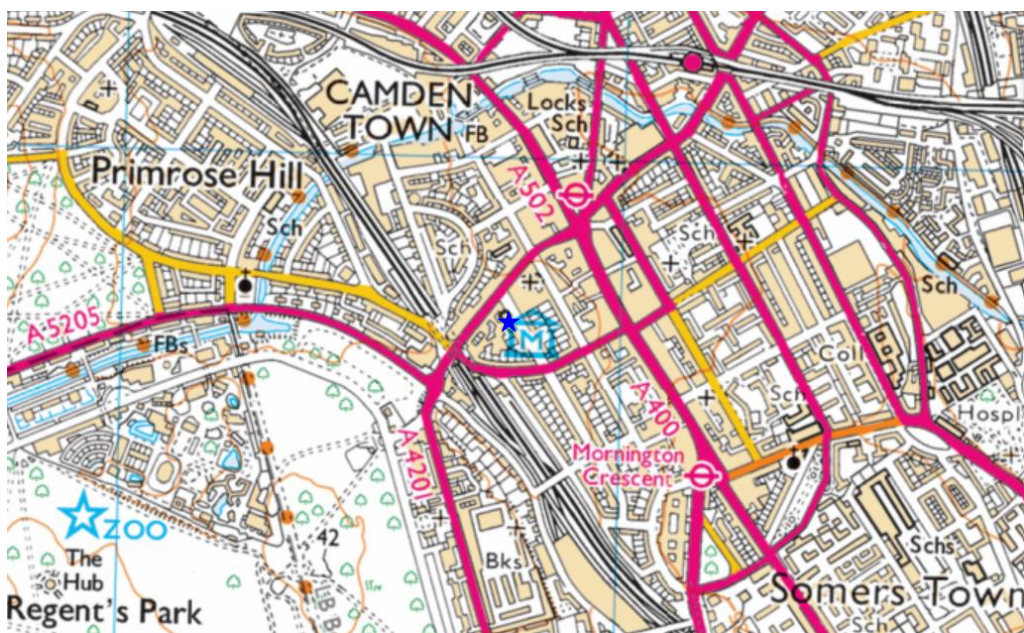


Figure 1: 1:25,000 OS Map with the Site indicated by the blue star. Source: Bing Maps

- 1.2** The Site comprises a three-storey town house built as part of a run of 9 similar terraced houses c. 1845 (**Figure 2**). The terrace is statutorily listed at grade II and comprises nos. 123-139 (NHLE ref: 1378643). Nos. 129-131 were amalgamated during the 20th Century - now the Jewish Museum London. No. 131 originally incorporated a carriage arch giving access to a small mews stable and associated accommodation. Nos. 129-131 now has a slightly wider frontage and differently spaced windows, so what was 9 houses now appears to be 8.
- 1.3** The finely detailed brick and stucco terraces were built in most part by George Bassett, surveyor to the Southampton Estate, in the years 1844-48. The terrace forms part of a high-quality townscape which, thanks to the greater width of Albert Street and its significant length, has the feel of a promenade with its tree lined

walkways. The majority of houses along Albert Street are also grade II listed (**Figure 3**) and, having been developed between 1820 and 1850, possess a high degree of stylistic unity and visual cohesion.



Figure 2: Bird's eye view of the Site (outlined in yellow with red shading) from the west
Source: Google Maps, accessed 15/02/2021



Figure 3: Heritage Asset mapping of the surrounding area with the Site outlined in red.
Source: Historic England on-line map search

The Context

1.4 The proposed structural repair and consolidation works relate to the main front elevation wall and adjoining sections of party wall abutting Nos. 123 and 127 Albert Street respectively. Significant structural repairs to the front wall of the house are urgently required in view of settlement and consequent deflection of the brickwork and cracking to the front elevation (**Figure 5**) and internal partition walls.



Figure 5: Entrance door to No. 125 showing evidence of settlement to the front masonry wall and cracking / movement to the stucco finishes.

1.5 The works are intended in conjunction with, and to facilitate, the internal and external alterations approved under listed building consent ref: 2021/5254/L and planning consent ref: 2021/4360/P. The proposed scheme supports a holistic restoration of this listed building to a good state of repair as part of its use as a single-family dwelling.

1.6 The approved use of the property as a single family residence is the optimum viable use for the listed building in heritage terms following several decades of neglect and rearrangement with kitchens and bathrooms in the 1970s.

1.7 In spite of unsympathetic interventions made during the early-late 20th century, the building retains its original plan form to a substantial degree. However, the rear outrigger was completely rebuilt during the inter-war period (see Section 3 for full details) and now has approval for a replacement rear extension under 2021/5254/L, which is at the implementation stage. Changes to the rear elevation had previously been made, with an appreciable amount of the elevation rebuilt, probably around the same time the former outrigger was reconstructed (**Figure 4**).



Figure 4: View of the rear elevation. No. 125 corresponds to the central two bays beneath the V-shaped parapet. Note the remodelled second floor / mezzanine windows with concrete lintels.

1.8 The application scheme has been prepared and assessed in light of the provisions of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. This report also sets out how the proposal complies with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 and local planning policy and guidance.

Purpose and Scope of this Statement

- 1.9** The purpose of this document is to assist the council in its assessment of the effects of the proposed structural consolidation works and repairs upon the historic built environment and to gauge their suitability in heritage terms. Value judgements on the significance of the heritage assets affected are presented and the effects of the proposals upon that significance are appraised.
- 1.10** The proposed development will directly affect the grade II listed No. 125 Albert Street, however the proposed scheme of repair would not result in any external changes with the potential to effect the listed terrace as a whole, the adjacent terrace at Nos. 99-121 Albert Street and the character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area (**Figure 6**). Accordingly, this report considers the impact of the proposed development on the significance of Nos. 123-139 Albert Street Avenue only.

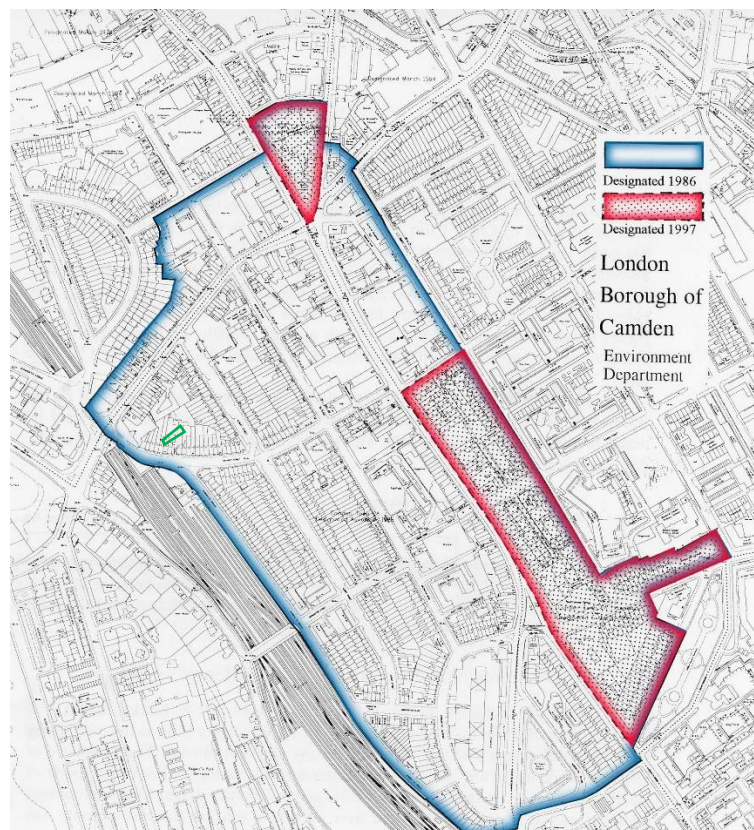


Figure 6: Camden Town Conservation Area boundary. The Site is outlined in green. Source: LBC

- 1.11** This report does not provide an archaeological assessment of below ground potential. However, the Historic Environment Record has been consulted via the Heritage Gateway website and other online datasets and resources have provided background information on the site and surrounding assets. They are referenced within the following text where relevant.

Key Considerations

- 1.12** The key heritage considerations are whether the proposals, i.e., the structural underpinning works, would preserve, enhance or harm the significance of No. 123-139 Albert Street. The preparation of this report was supported by desk-based research and site visits carried out in January and April 2021.
- 1.13** This report should be read in conjunction with the full drawn submission and details of the Site Investigation undertaken by Blue Engineering and Method Statement prepared by Engel Construction.

2. Relevant Planning Policy Framework

Legislation

- 2.1** Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 require the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building and its setting when exercising planning functions. The decision maker must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the significance of the listed building, and there is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm its heritage significance.¹ The presumption will plainly be lessened if the harm is less than substantial within the meaning in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as is explained further below.
- 2.2** There is a broadly similar duty arising from section 72(1) of the Act in respect of planning decisions relating to development within conservation areas. The meaning and effect of these duties have been considered by the courts in cases since the legislation came into effect, including the Court of Appeal decision in relation to *South Oxfordshire DC v SSE & J Donaldson (March 1991, CO/1440/89)*. The Court found that section 72 requires attention to be directed to the effect on the conservation area as a whole rather than on particular parts of it.
- 2.3** For the purposes of this statement, preservation equates to an absence of harm.² Harm is defined in paragraph 84 of Historic England's Conservation Principles as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.³
- 2.4** The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as being made up of four main constituents: architectural, historical, archaeological and artistic interest. The assessments of heritage significance and impact are normally made with primary reference to the four main elements of significance identified in the NPPF.

¹ Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Limited v East Northamptonshire District Council and others [2014] EWCA Civ 137.

² South Lakeland v SSE [1992] 2 AC 141.

³ Conservation Principles, 2008, paragraph 84. *Heritage Asset* is defined by the NPPF (Annex 2) 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'. This includes both designated and non-designated heritage assets.

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021

- 2.5** The NPPF is the principal document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 2.6** *Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* relates to the conservation of heritage assets in the production of local plans and decision taking. It emphasises that heritage assets are '*an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance*'.⁴
- 2.7** Paragraph 197 of the NPPF underlines the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.⁵
- 2.8** Paragraph 195 indicates that all harm should be avoided or minimised and that which remains requires clear and convincing justification (Para 200).
- 2.9** Where proposals give rise to some residual harm the NPPF requires the impact on the significance of the designated heritage asset to be considered in terms of either "substantial harm" or "less than substantial harm" as described within paragraphs 201 and 202 of that document. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that substantial harm is a high test, and case law describes substantial harm in terms of an effect that would vitiate or drain away much of the significance of a heritage asset.⁶ A tabulated the Scale of Harm prepared by HCUK is reproduced in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.10** Paragraphs 201 and 202 of the NPPF refer to two different balancing exercises in which harm to significance, if any, is to be balanced with public benefit.⁷ Paragraph 18a-020-20190723 of National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) online makes it

⁴ *Significance* is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as, "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 not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."

⁵ *Conservation* (for heritage policy) is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: "The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance."

⁶ Bedford Borough Council v SSCLG and Nuon UK Limited [2013] EWHC 4344 (Admin).

⁷ The balancing exercise was the subject of discussion in City and Country Bramshill v CC SLG and others [2021] EWCJ, Civ 320.

clear that some heritage-specific benefits can be public benefits.⁸ Paragraph 18a-018-20190723 of the same NPPG makes it clear that it is important to be explicit about the category of harm (that is, whether paragraph 201 or 202 of the NPPF applies, if at all), and the extent of harm, when dealing with decisions affecting designated heritage assets, as follows:

"Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated."

- 2.11** Paragraphs 199 and 200 of the NPPF state that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance, irrespective of how substantial or otherwise that harm might be.

London Plan

- 2.12** The London Plan 2021 was published on 2nd March 2021 and now comprises part of the development plan for decision making in Greater London. Policy HC1 "*Heritage conservation and growth*" requires that:

C. 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 seek to avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.

D - Development proposals should identify assets of archaeological significance and use this information to avoid harm or minimise it through design and appropriate mitigation. Where applicable, development should make provision for the protection of significant archaeological assets and landscapes. The protection of undesignated heritage assets of archaeological interest equivalent to a scheduled monument should be given equivalent weight to designated heritage assets.

⁸ The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) describes public benefits as "anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress" (<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment/why-is-significance-important-in-decision-taking/>)

Local Plan Policy

Camden Local Plan

2.13 Relevant local policy is contained within the following:

- Camden's Local Plan (July 2017) – Policy D2 relating to heritage, which recognises Camden's wider historic environment and sets out to ensure that its heritage, including but not limited to listed buildings, will be conserved; and Policy D1 relating to design, which requires development to preserve or enhance the historic environment and heritage assets.
- Camden Planning Guidance Design (November 2018) – includes Chapter 3 which relates to Heritage.

Guidance Documents

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

2.14 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG; ref: 18a-018-20190723; updated July 2019) provides advice on enhancing and conserving the historic environment in accordance with the NPPF.

2.15 NPPG notes that public benefits can be heritage based for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit. The guidance goes on to note that examples of heritage based public benefits include:

- Sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting;
- Reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset; and
- Securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long-term conservation.

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

2.16 This document provides advice on numerous ways in which decision making in the historic environment could be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to that significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured, staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information:

- 1) Understand the significance of the affected assets;
- 2) Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
- 3) Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
- 4) Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
- 5) Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance balanced with the need for change; and
- 6) Offset negative impacts to significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

Local Guidance

2.17 The Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2007) has also been taken into consideration in the preparation of this assessment.

3. Background and Development

Historical Background – Camden Town

3.1 Camden, situated in the centre of the old parish of St Pancras, takes its name from Charles Pratt, 1st Earl of Camden, who began to develop the land on the east side of the main (Hampstead) road at the end of the 18th century. Prior to this development the settlement was a small hamlet flanking the Hampstead road, halfway between Hampstead Village and London, comprising a few houses, the parish church of St Pancras and the Mother Red Cap Inn.

3.2 From 1791 onwards the new land plots were leased to builders for the construction of the first 1,400 houses in what was to become known as Camden Town.⁹ John Tompson's 1804 map of the parish shows the early stages of Pratt's development, with terraces on the east side of the Hampstead Road (now Camden High Street) named as Pratt Place, and a grid of streets (Bayham Street, Camden Street and College Street) laid out immediately to the east, bounded on the north by Pratt Street and on the south by Gloucester Place (now Crowndale Road) (**Figure 7**: north is to the right).¹⁰



Figure 7: John Tompson's 1804 Map of the Parish of St. Pancras (north is to the right). The approximate location of the application site is starred.

⁹ Hayes 2020.

¹⁰ British Library Maps K.Top 28.16.a.

- 3.3** The land on the west side of Hampstead Road, which was part of the Southampton (Tottenham) Estate, including what was soon to be developed as Regent's Park and the streets in between (including Albert Street), was undeveloped farmland at this date.
- 3.4** Crown Estate land to the west of the Southampton Estate was developed in the period 1812-1828 into a new royal park, The Regent's Park, which was designed and landscaped for the Prince Regent (later George IV) by his friend the architect John Nash and assistant James Morgan. Formerly a medieval hunting ground and farmland throughout the post-medieval period, this land was initially developed to provide a parkland setting for a private residential estate of fashionable and exclusive grand villas, including a palace for the Prince Regent himself. However, much of the proposed residential estate of terraces and crescents and the new palace never materialised. Leases of land within the park were acquired by public and educational institutions such as the Zoological Society (1828), the Toxophilite Society (1832) and Royal Botanic Society (1832), and the park was opened for public access from 1835 onwards.
- 3.5** The architect John Nash and his assistant, engineer James Morgan, were also responsible for the construction of the Regent's Canal which linked the Grand Union Canal, bringing goods traffic from Birmingham to Brentford and the dockland Thames at Limehouse Basin. The new Regent's Canal, which was completed in 1820, crossed the northern part of Nash's Regent's Park and passed through Camden Town, attracting considerable commercial activity and the concomitant development of workers' housing. The arrival of the railways in the mid-1830s, brought a new station, sidings and goods yards at Euston in 1837, followed by neighbouring Kings Cross (1852) and St Pancras (1868), similarly attracting considerable commercial, industrial and housing development within the southern part of the parish, and encouraging speculative development of more affluent housing in the northern and western parts of the parish closer to the park.
- 3.6** John Britton & Richard Davies' Map (**Figure 8**) shows the extent of development of the royal park (pink) and the Southampton Estate land on its east side (yellow) in 1834. Albert Street (dotted red lines) was still open ground at this time, although a northern access from Park Street, then known as York Street, had been built. The

Site is starred. The map also shows the Regent's Canal and the newly built continuation of the London & Birmingham Railway.

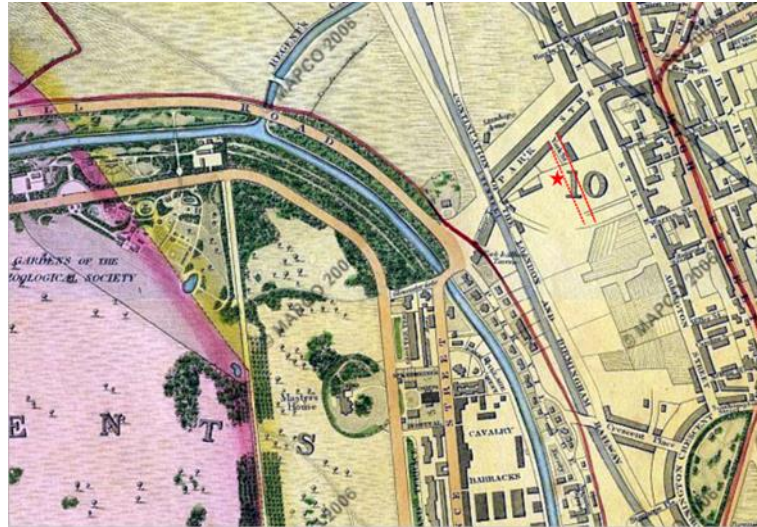


Figure 8: John Britton's map of 1834. Topographical Survey of the Borough of St Marylebone. The approximate location of the application site is starred.

3.7

Although much of the Southampton estate immediately east of Regent's Park and on the west side of Camden High Street was developed in the 1820s, including Arlington Street (**Figure 8**), Albert Street, described by Pevsner as "broad and handsome, with brick and stucco terraces on both sides"¹¹ was not built until 1844-8. This followed the sale of the estate by Charles Fitzroy, 3rd Baron Southampton in 1840-1. The designer responsible was George Bassett, surveyor to the Southampton Estate.

The Site

3.8

The earliest map to show the footprints of the individual houses is the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 25-inch scale map surveyed in 1870 and published in 1875 (**Figure 9**). At this date the stretch of road extending southwards from Park Way to Delancey Street was known as Gloucester Street. No. 125 (highlighted in red), together with its neighbours in the terrace to the south (No. 123) and north (Nos 127-139) show more extensive rear extensions, conventional outriggers with a narrow neck where these abutted the main house to maintain good lighting to the rear reception rooms. The widening of the outrigger is often curved in the form of a

¹¹ Pevsner Architectural Guides: Buildings of England, London Volume 4: North. Cherry & Pevsner 2002: p.385.

bullnose quadrant, which was very much a hangover from the 18th century. No. 125 has no basement, and the main kitchen would have been originally located in the rear outrigger. The remnant of a corbelled flue and projecting end stack abutting the party wall with No. 127 attests to this. There are one or two survivors along the terrace comprising 123-139 Albert Street, although most have now been removed.

3.9

The outriggers to Nos. 123-139 do not appear as homogeneous in plan as their neighbours to the south (99-121), and on the opposite (east) side of the street. The latter are all variations of much shorter closet wings rather than outriggers. This difference is also reflected in the reduced height of the terrace northwards of No. 123. These outriggers originally would have been single storey ranges, though it is not uncommon to find two storey outriggers among properties of this date, and indeed No. 137 Albert Street has a two-storey outrigger accessed via the half landing of the main staircase in the form of an elongated closet wing (**Figure 13**).



Figure 9: 1875 OS Map (25 inches to a mile), surveyed in 1870. No. 125 is highlighted in red.

3.10

Comparison between the 1875 map and 1895 Ordnance Survey 1:1056 scale map (**Figure 10**) reveals minor changes to the footprint at the rear of the building. Essentially the outrigger was squared off. Buildings at the rear of the property, shown as Ranelagh Mews in 1875, were mapped in 1895 as a 'Piano Manufactory', one of the industries for which Camden was well-known. Gloucester Street had become the northern continuation of Albert Street by 1895.



Figure 10: 1895 Ordnance Survey 1:1056 scale map (revised 1894) with No. 125 highlighted.

3.11 Further map regression reveals the footprint of the outriggers to Nos. 123-129 changed markedly between 1945 (**Figure 12**) and 1953 (**Figure 13**) with the re-alignment of the rear boundaries. This is no longer perpendicular to the main terrace but slightly oblique and will have necessitated the complete rebuilding of the outrigger on the new alignment. The use of solid wall construction suggests that this may have occurred prior to 1945, however the configuration of the outrigger shown on the 1913 OS Map (**Figure 11**) is unchanged in 1945 according to the Bomb Damage Map.

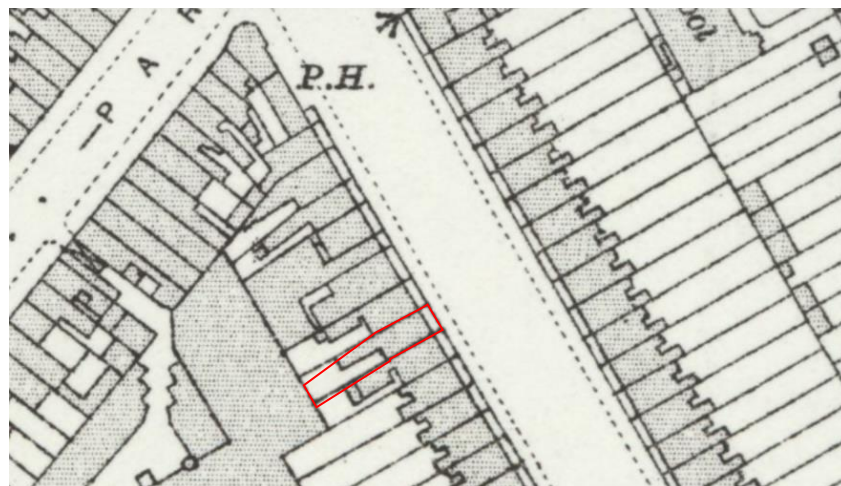


Figure 11: 1913 OS Map. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland. The existing Site boundary is indicated by the red line.



Figure 12: 1945 Bomb Damage Map. Source: Layers of London. The Site boundary is indicated by the red line.

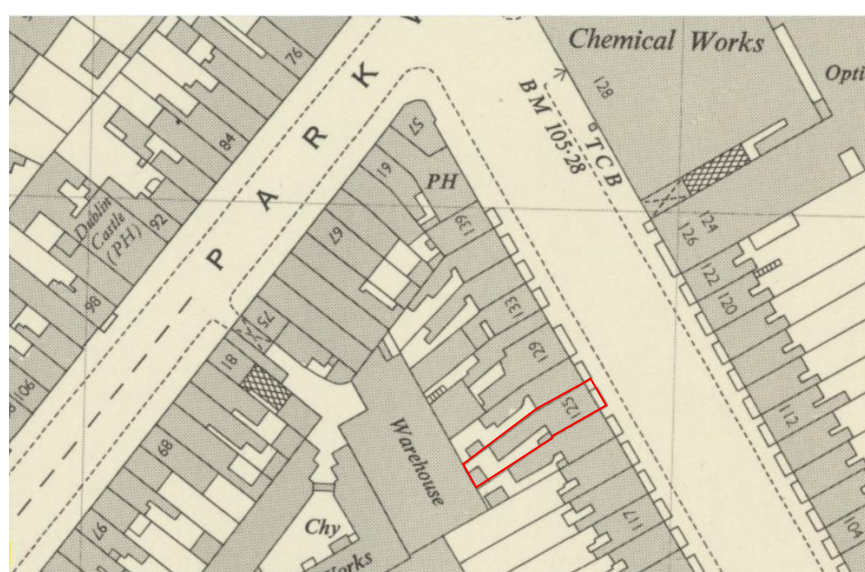


Figure 13: 1953 OS Map. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

3.12

No serious bomb damage was recorded to any of the houses in this part of the street. The principal changes in close proximity to No. 125 have taken place on the opposite side of the street where the northernmost part of the terrace including the corner site had been replaced by a Chemical Works by 1953, and an Optical Works was mapped at the rear of Nos. 120-126, the frontage of which is now occupied by a late 20th century brick-built office building (Nos. 124-126).



Figure 14: bird's eye view of the rear elevations of Nos. 123-139 Albert Street. The Site is outlined in yellow.

3.13 An aerial photograph taken in 1946 (**Figure 15**) shows the roofscape to much of Albert Street and Delancey Street. This was characterised by half hipped butterfly roofs which was the prevalent roof form to these terraced townhouses.

3.14 Nos. 123 and 125 are the only houses on the entire terrace (Nos. 99-139) to retain their original roof structures, although the roof of the host property is very much degraded. The remainder of the terrace has been 'mansarded' since 1946 with projecting dormer windows (sashed).



Figure 15: Aerial view of the Site and surroundings taken in 1946. Source: [EAW000624] A cityscape over Kentish Town, Camden Town, from the south-west, 1946 (Britain from Above)

3.15 The rear elevation of the property has been rebuilt from the upper first floor level using new buff brick and what looks like cement mortar. The rear window openings to the half landing and second floor are both early mid 20th century and of an alien typology. The upper half landing window is a pre-WW2 metal window. Interestingly, as the terrace did not sustain any bomb damage, the rebuilding may be due to inherent structural defects that were corrected, probably in the 1930s.

3.16 Photographs taken in 1975 show the front elevation, looking southeast (**Figure 16**), and northwest (**Figure 17**), together with the rear of the neighbouring house to the south (No. 123) (**Figure 18**). The contrast between Nos. 123-139 at the north end of the street and the remainder of the terrace to the south is marked by a clear height differential and lack of ornamental mouldings to the first-floor windows.



Figure 16: Front elevation in 1975 viewed from the north east. © London Picture Archive Collage Ref. 106216. Note painted brickwork to No. 125.



Figure 17: Front elevation in 1975 viewed from the south east. © London Picture Archive Collage Ref. 106217.

3.17 In 1975 the building was painted, and this is noted in the statutory list description of May 1974. The paint was evidently removed with an abrasive system, possibly sand blasting. This has resulted in the pitted appearance of the brickwork and its lighter colouring. This paint removal was carried out before 2008. The front parapet has clearly also been rebuilt in salvaged stock brick. All but one of the sash windows in the property are modern replacements. This is evident from the horn details and machine cut softwood profiles. None of the windows contain hand made cylinder glass.

3.18 The interior changes made to the building as part of its rearrangement into rooms with kitchens and bathrooms in the latter 20th century were harmful to its significance. However, these lightweight partition and associated kitchens and bathrooms have recently been removed as part of the implementation of the approved consent ref: 2021/5254/L. The associated scheme of refurbishment and extension restores the building to its original use as a single-family dwelling.



Figure 18: Rear elevation of No. 123 (No. 125 visible to the left) photographed in 1975 following the removal of the rear outrigger and party wall projecting end stack. The shadow of the chimney stack remains visible to the partition with No. 125 (note rough brickwork to former flue lining). © London Picture Archive Collage Ref. 106214.

4. Statement of Significance

Nos. 123-139 Albert Street (including the Site)

4.1 No. 125 Albert Street was built as part of a run of 9 town houses c. 1845 (early Victorian) and comprises nos. 123-139 (**Figure 19**). Nos. 129-131 were amalgamated during the 20th Century and is now the Jewish Museum London. No. 131 originally incorporated a carriage arch giving access to a small mews stable and associated accommodation. Nos. 129-131 now has a slightly wider frontage and differently spaced windows, so what was 9 houses now appears to be 8. The terrace was added to the National Heritage List for England on 14th May 1974. The Statutorily list entry describes the terrace as follows:

"Terrace of 9 houses. c1845. Multi-coloured and yellow stock brick, (No.125, painted), No.137, grey stock brick. Rusticated stucco ground floors. No.127, slate mansard roof with attic dormers. Nos 135-139, slightly recessed. 3 storeys and basements. 2 windows each. No.129 incorporated in No.131 with 3 windows. Round-arched doorways with pilaster-jambs carrying cornice-heads; fanlights (Nos 133-137, radial) and panelled doors. No.131, square-headed doorway with C20 door. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes (except No.125 2nd floor, C20 metal-framed casements); 1st floors with cast-iron balconies. Parapets, Nos 123-127 with stucco facing. INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings with spearhead finials."



Figure 19: View of Nos. 123-139 Albert Street from the south east.

- 4.2** The list description merely identifies the building and is not an exhaustive summary of the building's significance or features of special interest.

Assessment of Significance

- 4.3** The following assessment of significance is based on statutory designation and professional judgement against the four values identified within the NPPF / NPPG: architectural, historical, archaeological and artistic interest. The contribution of the building's setting is also assessed.

- 4.4** Within these terms, the significance of No. 125 Albert Street can be summarised as follows:

- **Architectural Interest:** the building is a good example of a relatively complete early Victorian terraced London townhouse, built as part of the speculative expansion of central London during the mid-19th century. With the exception of the rear outrigger (rebuilt, according to cartographic evidence, between 1945 and 1953), No. 125 retains its original plan form, which is a typical London townhouse configuration; two rooms deep at all

three levels alongside a lateral entrance hall, with dog-leg staircase to the rear corner (NW) of the house. The latter feature allows the 'front' room above ground floor to take up the full (two-bay) width of the property. This plan form remains legible at all levels, despite late 20th century interventions which eroded its integrity in places. These alterations included sealing up original doorways, replacement skirtings throughout, fire-boarding to the staircase balustrade, several new partitions and a large opening between the front and rear living rooms to the ground floor (**Figure 20**).

- The ground and first floor rooms retain original plasterwork cornices and ceiling enrichment. This is badly deteriorated where water ingress has occurred (**Figure 21**) and all of the detailing is heavily obscured by thick paint. Nonetheless, the plasterwork is original decorative treatment which contributes to the architectural and artistic interest of the listed building. The feature plasterwork is proposed to be reinstated and restored as part of the proposed refurbishment. The simple cornice detail to the second-floor rooms is not original, comprising off the shelf pre-fabricated lengths of plaster coving. There is no plasterwork detail to the entrance hall and stairwell.



Figure 20: View west from the main ground floor reception room to the rear parlour. The large opening to the partition wall is late 20th century.



Figure 21: The most ornate plasterwork cornicing is at first floor level and is similar to the front and rear rooms. It has been heavily damaged by water ingress in the kitchen (left) or obscured by fitted cupboards in the bed-living room (right).

- Original panelled doors are also found throughout the house with the exception of the second floor. These had previously been over-boarded to achieve a suitable fire rating, or possibly for aesthetic reasons in conjunction with the previous arrangement of the property.

- The 20th century outrigger¹² had negligible heritage interest and did not contribute appreciably to the building's significance besides the retained buttress chimney stack which affirms the presence of the original kitchen within the outrigger. This arrangement is reinstated as part of the approved scheme refs: 2021/5254/L and 2021/4360/P.
- **Historical Interest:** This is primarily illustrative. The building is an example of a mid 19th century town house erected in an affordable but fashionable new upper-middle class suburb in London. The building's association with George Bassett, surveyor to the Southampton Estate, is also of historic interest.
- **Artistic Interest:** Artistic interest is limited to the few decorative features found at the building, including ironwork balconies, and the inherent craftsmanship of the original construction. This encompasses the fine quality brickwork to the main frontage and joinery of the dog-leg staircase which rises through the full height of the building.
- **Archaeological Interest:** The building does not fall within an archaeological priority area. The upstanding fabric to the 19th century parts of the house is of high evidential value. The below ground archaeological potential of the Site is unknown and falls outside the scope of this report.

4.5

In addition to the values identified above the other factors of note include:

- **Group value:** Nos. 123-139 Albert Street form part of a coherent sequence of mid-19th century terraced townhouses to both sides of the street. The listed terrace adjoins nos. 99-121 directly to the south. These are differentiated by a slight increase in height and amplification of the external decorative treatment with moulded stucco architraves to the first and second floor windows and cornice detailing to the parapet. The houses were all built during the 1840s and comprise an intact, good quality architectural group in the classical style within the Camden Town Conservation Area.

¹² LBC's pre-application response refers to a 'closet wing', however, the rear extension and its predecessor do not fit this description and evidently where the kitchen was located and akin to a traditional outrigger. Closet wings are generally much shallower and often rise to several storeys with WCs contained within them, neither of which is the case at No. 125 Albert Street.

- 4.6** The overall significance of No. 125 Albert Street is high in a national context, which is reflected in its statutory grade II listed status. The building's general condition is very poor, underlining the need for considerable investment to return it to a good state of preservation.

Setting

- 4.7** The building's setting has remained relatively unchanged since the property was first listed. However, the remodelling or removal of outriggers to the adjacent buildings on the terrace (No. 123 and particularly Nos. 129-131 to create the Jewish Museum) has introduced an appreciable level of change to the context in which the building's rear elevation is experienced. This is also heavily enclosed by the large warehouse to the west built between 1895 and 1913.
- 4.8** The terrace is best appreciated from Albert Street, from both north and south, where it can be seen and understood alongside the other listed terraced houses which exhibit a high degree of uniformity. There has been some modern development nearby on the east side of the street, with modern residential properties opposite, although this late 20th century building is sympathetic to the terraced style of the street as a whole and does not detract from the building's setting.



Figure 22: View north along Albert Street towards the Site (in the distance on the left)

Contribution of setting to significance

- 4.9** The other listed terraces contribute positively, both visually and contextually, to the significance of the building by providing a good indication of how the surrounding context would have appeared in the mid-19th century. The inconsistency of the roof lines has had an effect on the architectural coherence of the terraces as a group, but this does not prevent or inhibit an appreciation of the significance of the terrace to which No. 125 belongs.

5. Heritage Impact Assessment

Summary of the Proposals

- 5.1** The proposed underpinning works are illustrated at **Appendix 2** with reference to the Structural Engineer's report (in letter form) reproduced at **Appendix 3**.
- 5.2** In terms of the justification for the under-pinning works, investigations into the underlying cause of the extensive cracking to both the internal and external faces of the front wall included bore holes and trial pits to analyse the soil substrate. The results of the laboratory tests show the clay is generally of a high plasticity and of high swell potential when classified in accordance with NHBC Chapter 4.2. This clay would therefore be subject to significant changes in volume due to any changes in its natural moisture content.
- 5.3** In trial pit No.1 and borehole No.1 the clay the was found to be desiccated from 1.4m to 1.9m deep, where tree roots are present to the underside of the foundation. As such that subsidence has likely taken place to the front of the property at 125 Albert Street and along the party walls to the property.
- 5.4** The proposed solution to arrest further movement, and avert the future demise of the historic building as a result of disproportionate collapse, is to underpin the front elevation and the front returns to the party wall below the depth of the tree roots, to a depth of 2.5m. The method of under-pinning is mass concrete, which is a low-tech solution and less invasive than other methods of dealing with soil desiccation such as grout injection. Mass concrete under-pinning has a long lifecycle in preventing further movement to the property.
- 5.5** The underpinning will be sequenced and stepped away from the affected areas of the property, to minimise any differential movement in the property, and thus minimising any potential additional cracking. It is important to note that without the use of any remedial measures, such as the mass concrete underpinning, it is likely the existing condition of the property will worsen and more substantial structural repair works will be required to rectify the situation at 125 Albert Street, which may compromise the future preservation of this listed building.

Assessment of Impact

5.6 With reference to **Appendix 1**, along with the most important considerations relating to the impact of the proposals on the significance of the designated heritage assets discussed within this Statement, judgements on the impact of the proposals on significance have been set out below.

Impact on No. 125 Albert Street

5.7 The proposed works of under-pinning to the front elevation and adjoining sections of party wall comprise structural repairs of consolidation and are evidently necessary to prevent further movement in the structure. The 'do-nothing' option has the potential to result in serious deterioration or catastrophic collapse, necessitating more intrusive repairs or possible reconstruction in new materials further to the inevitable loss of primary construction and associated historic fabric. Further more rapid deterioration of the structure would also affect the adjacent properties within the listed terrace at Nos. 123 and 127 Albert Street. The pre-emptive repair of No. 125 is therefore necessary and of significant benefit to the listed building as a whole.

5.8 The proposed method of under-pinning does not involve the loss of any historic fabric, and that which is required to be removed in order to access the foundations and excavate beneath them to create the mass concrete sections of under-pinning, (e.g. the ground floor carpentry), is to be carefully removed and reinstated in its original location once the under-pinning is in place. The accompanying method statement for the works sets out the process of implementation at pages 3-4 (Activities 1-10).

5.9 Upon completion, the building will be returned to its original appearance leaving no trace of the works visible, either externally or internally. As such, given the urgent necessity and structural nature of the repairs, there are no heritage reasons to delay or avoid undertaking these works. Furthermore, alternative methods have been considered, such as grout injection, but the proposed method of mass concrete under-pinning is considered to be the most effective, least intrusive and most enduring type of repair for this particular situation.

- 5.10** Given that the proposed under-pinning works will stabilise and preserve the building's primary construction and associated historic fabric in situ for the foreseeable future, the scheme of repair would result in an enhancement of the building's significance by virtue of ensuring that further deterioration is halted and future structural demise is averted. The works are also necessary to facilitate the long term use of the property as a single family residence, and therefore are essential in order to secure that element of heritage and public benefit.
- 5.11** No part of the proposed scheme would result in any harm to the significance of No. 125 Albert Street and the heritage benefits of the scheme ensure an overall enhancement of the listed building comprising Nos. 123-139 Albert Street. Accordingly, there is preservation for the purpose of the decision maker's duty under Sections 16(2) and 66 (1) of the Act.
- 5.12** Paragraphs 201-202 of the NPPF are not engaged and the assessment of harm table referred to in **Appendix 1** of this report does not apply. The proposal is compliant with all relevant aspects of local planning policy.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1** The Site comprises a grade II listed house at No. 125 Albert Street and its domestic curtilage.
- 6.2** The proposal is for mass concrete under-pinning of the front elevation and adjoining party walls abutting Nos. 123 and 127 Albert Street. With reference to the submitted Method Statement and engineering plan drawings accompanying this application, the proposed scheme has been assessed in light of the provisions of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 and meets the requirements of paragraph 194 of the NPPF. This report also sets out how the proposal complies with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 and local planning policy and guidance.
- 6.3** The proposed under-pinning works will preserve the listed building, its setting and any features of special interest which it possesses. There would be no harm to the building's significance which would be sustained for the purposes of paragraphs 197 and 199 of the NPPF.
- 6.4** Likewise, the proposed development would preserve the special character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area and would not result in any harm to its significance.
- 6.5** In the absence of harm there is preservation for the purpose of the decision maker's duty under Sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Paragraphs 201-202 of the NPPF are not engaged and the assessment of harm table presented in **Appendix 1** of this report does not apply.
- 6.6** The proposed works of structural repair to this listed building comply with all local and regional policies relating to the historic environment and are commended for approval.

Appendix 1

Scale of Harm (HCUK Group, 2019)

The table below has been worked up by HCUK Group (2019) based on current policy and guidance. It is intended as a simple and effect way to better define harm and the implications of that finding on heritage significance. It draws on various recent appeal decisions and reflects the increasing importance being put on the contribution of setting to significance and the need to create a greater level of clarity within the finding of less than substantial harm (see the NPPF, paragraph 194-196). This has been proving more and more necessary and the table below goes some way to reflect the most recent updates (2019) to the guidance set out within the NPPG¹³

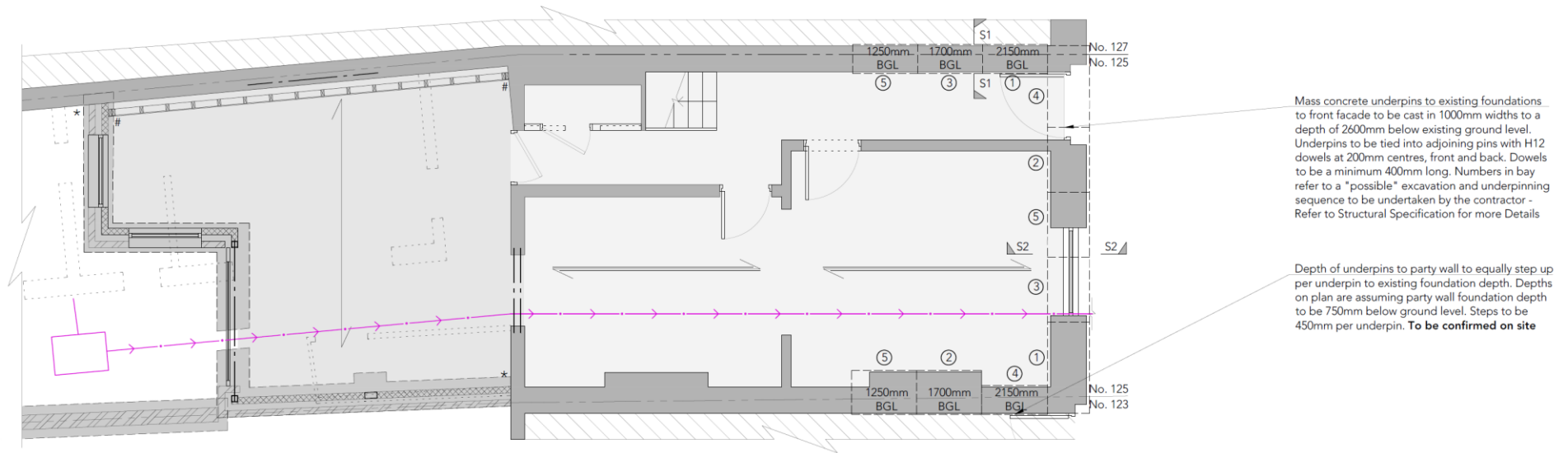
Scale of Harm	
Total Loss	Total removal of the significance of the designated heritage asset.
Substantial Harm	Serious harm that would drain away or vitiate the significance of the designated heritage asset
Less than Substantial Harm	High level harm that could be serious, but not so serious as to vitiate or drain away the significance of the designated heritage asset.
	Medium level harm, not necessarily serious to the significance of the designated heritage asset, but enough to be described as significant, noticeable, or material.
	Low level harm that does not seriously affect the significance of the designated heritage asset.

HCUK Group, 2019

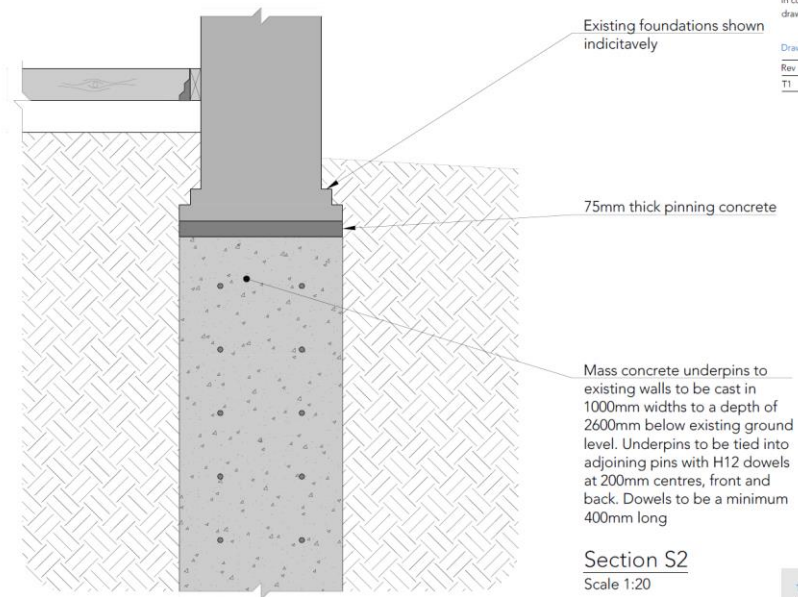
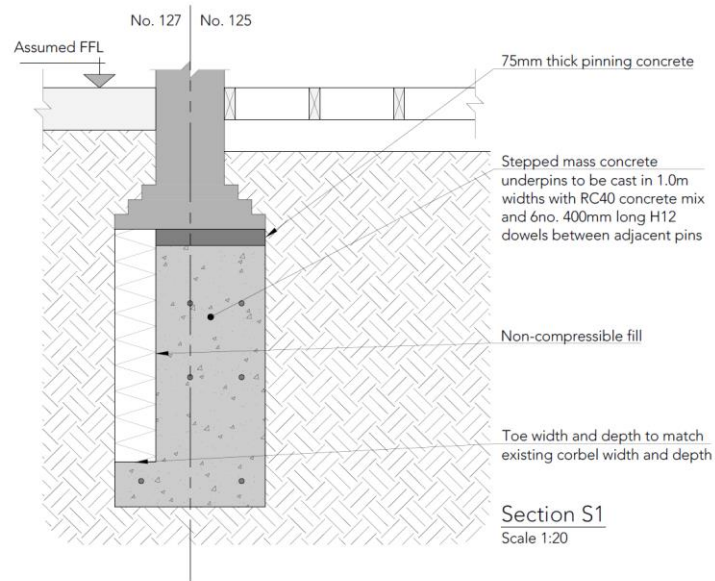
¹³ See NPPG 2019. Section: 'How can the possibility of harm to a heritage asset be assessed?'. Paragraph 3, under this heading notes that '*within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.*'

Appendix 2

Proposed Scheme Details – Blue Engineering



Rev	Date	Description	Drawn	Checked
T1	19.01.23	For Tender	AA	JN



Appendix 3

Report Following Site Investigation (Blue Engineering)

13 December 2022

Caroline Harte
125 Albert Street
London
NW1 7NB

Dear Mrs. Harte,

Underpinning to 125 Albert Street and the party wall with 123 Albert Street

Further to our correspondence from July 14th to Hayley Simpson and yourself on the 29th November, we write to confirm that site investigations have now been undertaken at the property, with the findings described below and the investigations report attached as Appendix A.

A trial pit and borehole has been excavated along the party wall between 125 and 127 Albert Street internally and showed that the house at this position to be founded at 1400mm below ground level, with an assumed corbelling of two bricks providing a 100mm projection. The footing was founded on stiff brown mottled grey clay. Root samples were taken from adjacent and below footing level, at a depth of 1.9m for analysis. The root analysis came back inconclusive on the tree type.

However, soil analysis was undertaken on the clay soil samples, at 0.5m intervals from 1.4m deep to 3.4m deep. The results of the laboratory tests show the clay in generally of a high plasticity and of high swell potential when classified in accordance with NHBC Chapter 4.2. This clay would therefore be subject to significant changes in volume due to any changes in its natural moisture content.

One method of assessing the depth of desiccation is by comparing the natural moisture content with the value of 0.4 x the liquid limit obtained from the Atterberg Limit Tests, a method which was suggested by Driscoll in 'Geotechnique', Volume 33/2, June 1983. However, the value of 0.4 of the liquid limit is the level at which structural movement due to desiccation occurs and it should be remembered that desiccation actually starts in the clay at the value of 0.5 of the liquid limit. These are guidelines recommended by Driscoll and not definitive values.

By comparing the natural moisture contents of the soil samples with the value of 0.4 x the liquid limit on the graphs provided by SubsNetUK, it can be seen that in trial pit No.1 and borehole No.1 the clay is desiccated from 1.4m to 1.9m deep, where tree roots are present to the underside of the foundation.

This concludes that subsidence has likely taken place to the front of the property at 125 Albert Street and along the party walls to the property.

It is therefore recommended that the front elevation and the front returns to the party wall be underpinned below the depth of the tree, we would recommend to a depth of 2.5m deep, to prevent this seasonal movement / subsidence occurring at the property, as the tree root analysis was unable to identify the tree causing the subsidence, and any tree removal has the potential to cause heave, which would further damage the existing property.

Mass concrete underpinning is a low-tech solution to addressing the movement seen at 125 Albert Street, it is less invasive than other methods of dealing with soil desiccation such as grout injection and has a long lifecycle in preventing further movement to the property. The cracking which has already occurred at the property is to a greater extent, than the scope of the cracking likely to occur from underpinning the front elevation and sections of

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the party wall. The underpinning will be sequenced and stepped as we move away from the affected areas of the property, to minimise any differential movement in the property, and thus minimising any potential additional cracking. It is important to note that without the use of any remedial measures, such as the mass concrete underpinning, it is likely the existing condition of the property will worsen and more substantial structural repair works will be required to rectify the situation at 125 Albert Street, which may compromise the heritage of the property.

I trust this letter report is sufficient for your present requirements, but if I can be of any further assistance then please do not hesitate to contact me further.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Mcarr".

Michael Carr MEng
Senior Engineer

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Standard Sources

<https://maps.nls.uk>

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www.heritagegateway.org.uk

<http://magic.defra.gov.uk>

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The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition). Historic England (2017 edition)

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Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, Historic England (2008)