

HERITAGE STATEMENT



Fig.1 front elevation

70 ALBERT STREET
LONDON NW1 7NR

Prepared by:

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INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Brian O'Reilly on behalf of the Applicant in support of proposals for works including internal alteration to the grade II listed property at No.70 Albert Street, NW1 7NR.

Albert Street is described as a high-quality streetscape. It is lined on both sides almost without interruption by uniform historic terraces and is wider than nearby streets, creating a sense of space. There are a large number of street trees, complemented by planting in the generous front gardens, which south of Delancey Street are as much as 5 metres deep.

The site comprises a three-storey town house built as part of a terrace of houses built c.1845. It is one of a row of 20 houses. Below is an extract from the listing:

Irregular terrace of 20 houses. 1844-45. The following builders are known: Nos 50-60, probably George Bassett Jnr; Nos 62 & 64, J Tickner; Nos 66 & 68, J Burrows; Nos 70 & 72, J James; No.74, R Radbourn; No.76, AR Rogers; No.78, J Toleman; Nos 80-84, R Batterbury; No.86, JW Hudson. Yellow stock brick and rusticated stucco ground floors. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys and basements. Nos 60, 72, 74, 80-84, with penthouse additions. Nos 52, 68, 76, 78 & 86, slate mansard roofs with dormers. 2 windows each. Square-headed doorways, most with pilaster-jambs carrying cornice-heads; fanlights and panelled doors. Nos 70 & 72, panelled jambs and enriched console-brackets carrying palmette enriched frieze. Nos 86 & 88, enriched console-brackets carrying frieze. Recessed sashes, Nos 52-64, 68-72, & 78 with margin glazing to ground floors. Nos 80-88, tripartite ground floor sashes. Upper floors with architraved sashes (except Nos 84-88); 1st floors with console-bracketed cornices (except Nos 50 & 52). Cast-iron balconies to all 1st floor sashes. No.84 with slightly projecting window bays and parapet and brick dentil cornice. Nos 50-56, parapets. Nos 58-82 and 86 & 88, stucco cornice and blocking course (No.66, cornice cut back). INTERIORS: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached cast-iron railings to areas and steps.

Records show that No.70 & 72 were built together by R Radbourn. The listing dates from 1974.

Since the mid-20th century, the house itself; No.70 formed part of a single family dwelling made up of No.68 & No.70. Recently, the houses have been separated and they are now under separate ownership with the original family still occupying No.70. During the joint ownership, the roofs were extended on both houses and the roof extension was occupied laterally with a connection between both houses at loft level. The entrance to the loft spaces was via a staircase at No.68. When the houses were separated, the connection between loft spaces was blocked up leaving the loft space at No.70 with no formal access other than a ladder.

No.70 is still occupied by several members of the original family and the loft space currently serves as a bedroom, however with access via ladder, it is an insecure and unsafe arrangement.

Our application aims to regularise the current situation so that the loft space is properly integrated to the house.



Fig.2 Street elevation

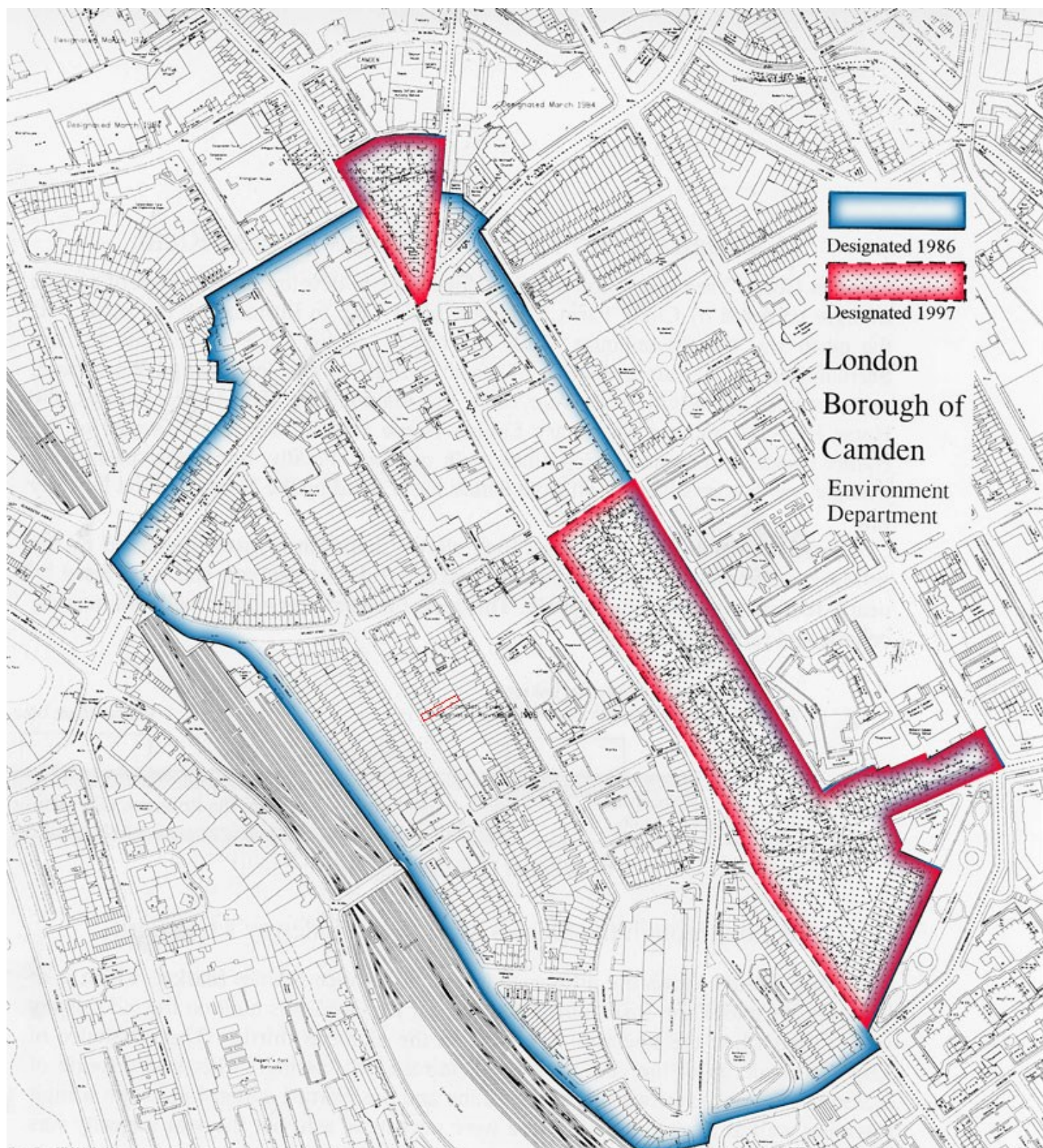


Fig.3 Camden Town conservation map

THE CONTEXT

The listed terrace No.50 to No.88 have had a variety of developments over the years. Only 3 of the houses have not had roof extensions built (No.50, 58 & 64). Several have mansard roof extensions with dormer windows including No.52 to 56, 62, 66, 68, 74, 76, 78, 86 & 88.

The remaining houses No.60, 70, 72, 80, 82 & 84 all have roof extension which are set back from the parapet with flat roofs and small terraces to the front. To the rear of the buildings, there is a variety of extensions and alterations.

This application follows a pre-application made in 2022 Ref.2022/0987/PRE.

Pre-application advice was sought for the replacement of the existing rear extension with new extension with balcony or access above. The replacement of the existing glass roof at ground level, refurbishment of doors and windows, internal works and works to the roof, in conjunction with change of use from single family dwelling to 3 maisonettes.

This application reflects the pre-application advice and it will be retained as a single family dwelling but includes the other items: Replacement glazing and roof glazing, replace rear lean-to conservatory and provide staircase access from ground floor to garden and internally a 2nd floor staircase to existing loft including shower room in loft.



Fig 4 Street elevation showing No.70 & No.72 Albert Street



Fig.5 Birds eye view showing Albert Street

Description of 70 Albert Street

The roof extension at No.70 was developed in the second half of the 20th century by the family who owned both of the houses. No.70 & 72 are listed as a pair and both of these houses have similar roof extensions. The roof extension at No.70 is well established having been in place for the last 50 years approximately.

Although it is not the preferred mansard type extension, it has its own merits and characteristics and has served the house since the construction. It is set back from the parapet and therefore barely visible from the street level. It provides good natural day light onto the space and it has a benefit of a small amenity on the front.

Our intension is to retain this structure but renovate to bring to modern standards of insulation.



Fig.6 view of internal existing staircase



Fig.7 view showing existing loft access

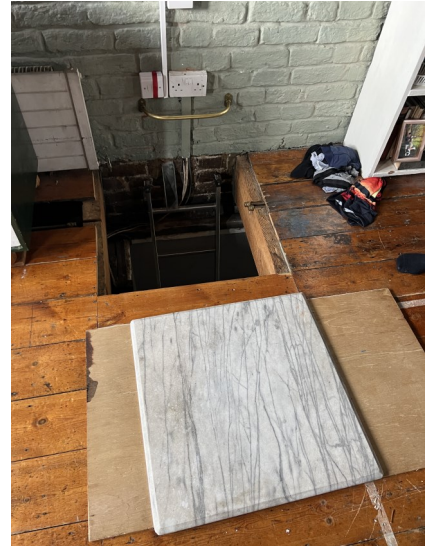


Fig.8 view from loft space showing access from below



Fig.9 view in loft space looking towards the street



Fig.10 view from kitchen/dining towards the garden

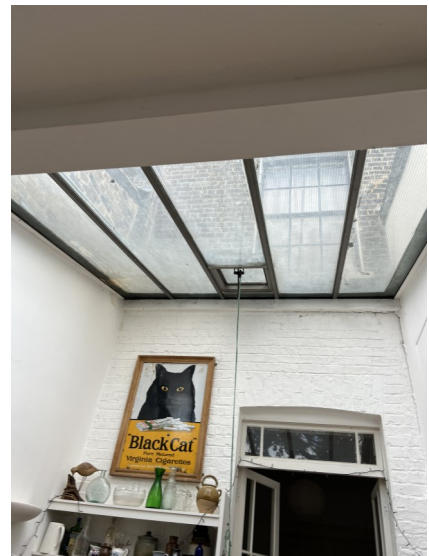


Fig.11 view of kitchen/dining roof glazing

Heritage Impact Assessment/PROPOSAL

The application is made up of a series of small interventions including the following:

External

- The renovation of the existing roof extension including windows and glazing.
The current timber framed windows & doors on the roof extension were installed when the extension was built. They are single glazed and the frames are decaying. Our proposal is to replace the timber framed glazing windows and doors like to like double glazed. We also propose to further insulate the roof.
- Replace existing roof glazing at ground level rear.
The existing roof glazing is single glazed over the dining area and our proposal is to replace this with double glazed units.
- Alter existing timber framed glazing to rear ground floor.
The timber doors to the dining area will be retained but altered to allow access to the new staircase.
- Install steel painted staircase to rear garden.
The proposal is to install a minimal painted steel access stairs from ground floor over the rear conservatory extension to the garden. The house is occupied by an extended family and the new staircase will provide access to the garden without disturbing the private space of another family member.
- Replace existing aluminium framed conservatory at lower ground floor
The existing lean to conservatory at the rear of the existing extension is single glazed and in need of repair. The proposal is to replace completely with a like for like structure in aluminium painted black.



Fig.12 rear elevation view



Fig.13 view showing existing conservatory from garden level



Fig.14 view of ground floor conservatory

Internal

- Install proposed staircase to existing loft space.

The proposal is to install a minimal timber staircase which is subservient to the original existing staircase and clearly shows distinction between old and new.

- Install new shower room in loft space including new partitions.

The proposal is to install a new shower room in order to provide adequate sanitary provision for the number of bedrooms in the house. The proposal also includes a provision of a cast iron downpipe on the rear elevation.

Our proposals are minimal and only being proposed out of necessity and respect for the building so that it can continue to provide an appropriate dwelling.

Our proposal is to provide a modest staircase to the top floor that does not compete with the existing staircase and would be distinct from the existing and more in the language of the existing roof extension so that the house can be understood as a sequence of spaces over time.

The pre-application advice stated that staircase access to the loft space would be acceptable, however with a suggestion that it would be an exchange for removing the existing extension and replacing it with a mansard.

We believe that this is an unnecessary request or condition and the family should not be forced to change a structure that they love and that has been in place for generations in order to provide safe access to the room.

It may not be fashionable or perhaps the form is not properly appreciated but these roof extensions have their own heritage and their own architecture. Mansards may be the preferred form in terms of their relationship with the building but they are not original and we believe that simply removing a structure because it does not comply to current preferences does not do justice to the era in which the existing roof extension. Also, it is wasteful and unsustainable to replace one perfectly adequate and usable structure with another.

The existing roof extensions at No.70 & 72 are both in a modernist style and as the houses were built as a pair, it is appropriate that they both read as a pair. The existing extensions are only visible from certain angles and when viewed from street level, they still resemble the original built form because the extensions (unlike the mansards) are out of view behind the parapet.

The other proposals in our application are to replace like for like and improve the efficiency and thermal quality of the fabric.

We do not intend to alter or remove any historic element of the building.

CONCLUSION

The Site comprises a grade II listed house at No. 70 Albert Street and its domestic curtilage.

We have taken preapplication advice and after consideration have now prepared a listed building application to cover the proposals for the house.

The proposed development includes:

- Adapting the interior layout at 2nd floor to provide staircase access to a habitable loft space and provision of a shower room..
- The replacement of the mid-20th century glazing to the existing roof extension with similar matching but thermally efficient.
- Retention, repair and sensitive restoration of any original decorative features
- Replacement of existing single glazed rooflights to rear at ground floor level with like for like double glazed units.
- Replacement of existing lower ground floor single glazed lean to conservatory with like for like in double glazed units

The proposed development 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 and in appearance from the street it would remain the same.

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.

Access– In terms of access the house would be improved, especially with the addition of a staircase to the existing loft space and also with a direct route to the garden for the members of the family who occupy the ground floor and above. The replacement glazed door would provide more easy access to the exterior spaces.

Sustainability— The improvement in glazing throughout the house together with improved insulation in the roof will substantially increase the efficiency of the house.