



Heritage Statement
46A Abbey Gardens
St. John's Wood, London, NW8 9BH, UK
February 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SITE LOCATION

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1.3 THE SITE

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This document has been prepared by EcosMaclean Ltd in support of the planning application for the addition of a single storey rear extension to the lower ground floor following demolition of the non-original conservatory, internal alterations, and addition of a new skylight to the property at 46A Abbey Gardens, NW8 9BH.



The site:
46 Abbey Gardens, NW8

Abbey Gardens, NW8 Google map aerial view



Abbey Gardens Front Elevations

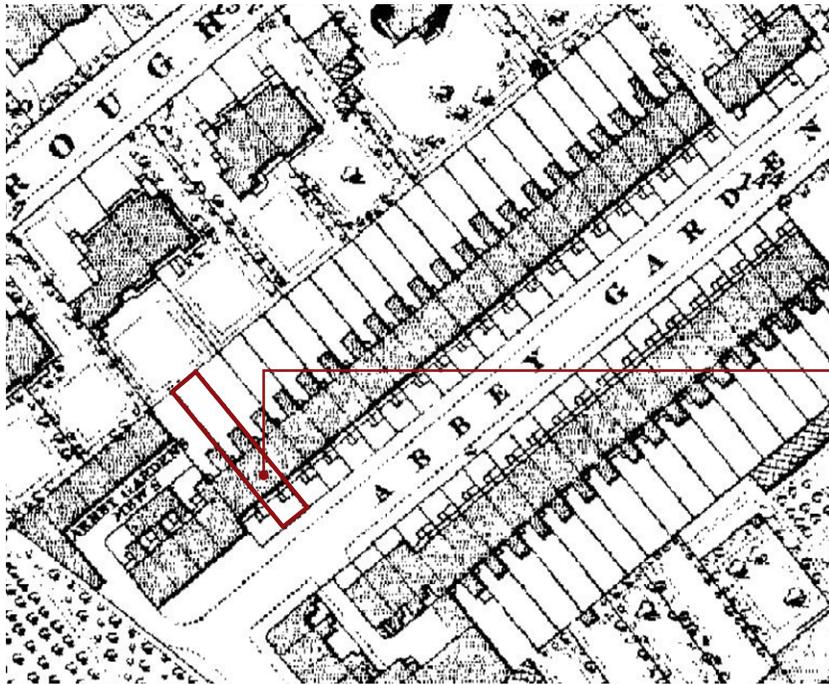
The site is located within the St. John's Wood Conservation Area of the City of Westminster.

The application property is Grade II listed, as mentioned in the St John's Wood Conservation Area Audit 'List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest'.

It is also noted in the St John's Wood Conservation Area Audit that the "excellent mid- Victorian terraces in Abbey Gardens, forms a group worthy of preservation". The front elevations of all the houses in the terrace remain original and well preserved which enhances the historical characteristic of the road.

The English Heritage Listed Building Description (list entry number: 1066527 regarding no 8-48) shows that the key features of the premises relate to the front façade elements:

"Terrace of houses. Circa 1850. Stucco brick, stucco dressings. Roof not visible. 3 storeys and basement. Each house 2 windows wide. Balanced composition; centre and end pairs of houses break forward slightly. Channelling to ground floor. Slightly projecting Ionic porches to right of each house. Panelled doors. First floor continuous bombé balcony. Square-headed windows; architraved above ground floor, corniced to first floor with pediments to centre and end houses. Sashes, margin glazing. Console cornice above second floor. Parapet. 1 of 2 matching terraces lining Abbey Gardens."



1850 map of Abbey Gardens

The site:
46 Abbey Gardens, NW8

The 19th century design features; brick and rendered banding, stone cornices, pediment and columns, timber sash windows and wrought iron balustrades give the front elevation of the house the most important impact. The St John's Wood Conservation Area Audit states that:

The later terraces at Abbey Gardens date from the 1860s and are more conventional mid-Victorian buildings. These three storey yellow brick buildings are half stuccoed with cast iron balconies supported on pillars and a pronounced cornice. Windows are embellished with consoles and pediments at first floor level, and simple surrounds at second floor.'

Over a period the rear elevations have seen a variety of additions.



Abbey Gardens Rear Elevations with a variety of extensions



North side Abbey Gardens front elevations preserved



North side Abbey Gardens rear elevations

The property is a 4 storey height mid-terrace residential townhouse constructed circa 1850. The building is of traditional construction, with load bearing masonry and timber stud walls with timber floors and roof structures. It is understood that the property was constructed in the 19th century at the same time as St John's Wood first developments.

The property is located on the North side of Abbey Gardens with number 44 to the right hand side and number 48 to the left hand side as you view the property from Abbey Gardens; the site is facing Abbey Gardens to the front and bounded by 1-38 Marlborough Place at the rear side of the site.

NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES

The adjoining properties are of a similar age, type and construction and would have been built when Abbey Gardens was developed.

44 Abbey Gardens: The lower ground level has a non-original conservatory with plaster decorations similar to our rear extension and non-original fenestration.

48 Abbey Gardens: The lower ground level has an extension of 6.3m with 3 bifold doors and a rooflight.

PREVIOUS PLANNING APPLICATIONS OF 46 ABBEY GARDENS

Ref. No. 95/04172/FULL
 Decision Issued Date: Fri 11 Aug 1995
 "Doorway enlarged proposed conservatory and altered fenestration, all to rear/ground lower floor"

Ref. No. 96/08118/FULL
 Decision Issued Date: Thu 31 Oct 1996
 "Reinstatement of front railings. Removal of concrete hardstanding & paving front with reconstituted stone"

Ref. No. 97/02396/ADFULL
 Decision Issued Date: Wed 02 Apr 1997
 "Approval of details pursuant to planning consent dated 31/10/96 cond.1: Detailed drawings at scale 1:10 for coping stone & railing"



no44 Rear Elevation



no46 Rear Elevation



no48 Rear Elevation

2.1 THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (updated on 19 February 2019) is the overarching planning policy document for England and provides guidance on how to implement legislation covering the historic environment - the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Section 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment – this section covers the government's policies for the protection of heritage.

The policies advise a holistic approach to planning and development, where all significant elements which make up the historic environment are termed 'heritage assets'. These consist of designated heritage assets (such as listed buildings or Conservation Areas), non-designated heritage assets (such as locally listed buildings), or any other features which are considered to be of heritage value. The policies within this document emphasise the need for assessing the significance of heritage assets and their setting in order to fully understand the historic environment and inform suitable proposals for change to significant buildings.

The NPPF defines conservation as the 'process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains, and where appropriate, enhances its significance.' Therefore a key aim of the NPPF is to encourage the identification of the significance of heritage assets in advance of proposed works (paragraphs 184-202).

2.2 REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London. It sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the Capital to 2031. The local plans for London Boroughs need to be in general conformity with the London Plan, and its policies help guide planning decisions by councils and the Mayor. The Plan was revised in 2011, with alterations in 2013, 2015, and 2016, and there is a new draft London Plan currently under consultation.

Key policies to be considered in relation to our site include:

- Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology
- Policy 7.9 Heritage-led Regeneration

2.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Westminster Council Legislation

Westminster's City Plan 2019-2040 has been submitted to the Secretary of State and is undergoing 'Examination in Public'. Until its adoption, Westminster's City Plan (2016) is the key document for determining planning applications in Westminster. The main policies covered within local legislation and guidance which apply to changes made to heritage assets include the following:

Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies (2016)

- S25 Heritage
- S26 Views

Unitary Development Plan (2007) Saved Policies

- DES9 Conservation Areas
- DES10 Listed Buildings
- DES15 Metropolitan and local views

2.4 HERITAGE GUIDANCE

Guidance documents published by Historic England have been consulted in the preparation of this report. These include:

- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008)3

This document sets out a method for thinking systematically and consistently about the way heritage values can be ascribed to a place (for more information see section 5)

- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)4

This advice note (which supersedes The Setting of Heritage Assets (2011)) offers good practice advice on the setting of heritage assets within the context of the NPPF and revised local policies.



North side Abbey Gardens Rear Elevation



Lower ground floor plaster decorations

In 2008 the Conservation Principles published by English Heritage (which this document updates and revises) described significance in terms of four values:

Evidential value, Historical value, Aesthetic value, Communal value

The terms used in the NPPF (which are also used in designation and planning legislation) are:

Archaeological, Artistic, Architectural and Historic interest.

In our case the significance of the house at No46 is summarised below under the four strands of heritage significance as described in the NPPE, in order to help draw objective conclusions about its significance, and to avoid the subjective attribution of significance without a clear framework.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL & ARTISTIC INTEREST

The significance of 46 Abbey Gardens is not derived from archaeological or artistic interest. Whilst there may be some very limited potential for archaeological interest in the form of evidence of its adaptation and use, this is not inherently of special interest, or of considerable heritage significance. Neither can the surviving detailing be described as having artistic interest, although the few remaining elements of joinery and plasterwork do illustrate the craftsmanship, architectural detailing and trends of the time. The significance of 46 Abbey Gardens instead primarily stems from its architectural and historic interest.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

46 Abbey Gardens is a good example of mid-Victorian architecture and the terrace as a whole is an aesthetically coherent and attractive part of the wider St John's Wood Conservation Area.

Much of the architectural interest of the building derives from its place as part of a reasonably well preserved, speculatively built, mid-19th century London terraced house, as part of a wider pattern of development in St John's Wood at that time. The terrace draws on the Classical order, as was popular at the time, and illustrates one of the prevalent architectural styles of the original development of this area. The front elevation is considered to be of high aesthetic significance, due to the intactness and quality of its ordered architectural composition and the quality of materials.

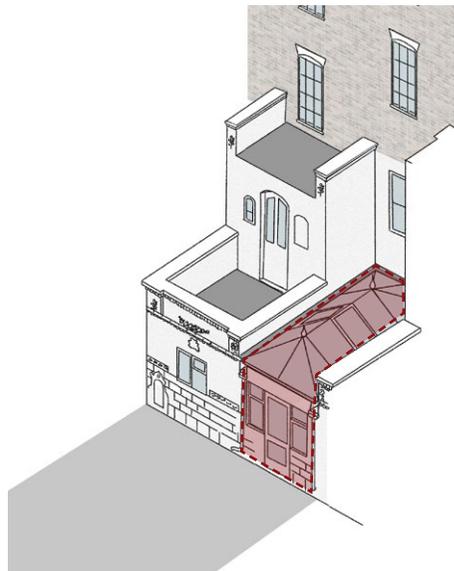
The subservient and more robust rear elevation of the terrace has retained its original configuration and there is a distinct rhythm of butterfly roofs and vent pipes. However the rear elevation of lower ground floor is largely shielded from view by other buildings and whilst there are clear references to the front elevation in the listing description, there are no references whatever to anything at the rear.

Thus, it is not clear whether the dentil mouldings that are featured only in no46 and no44 are original or if there were added later at that period. However it is clear that the features and ornament in stucco in the lower ground floor in the bottom part(brickwork style, they were later additions as they cover both the original extension and the later conservatory.

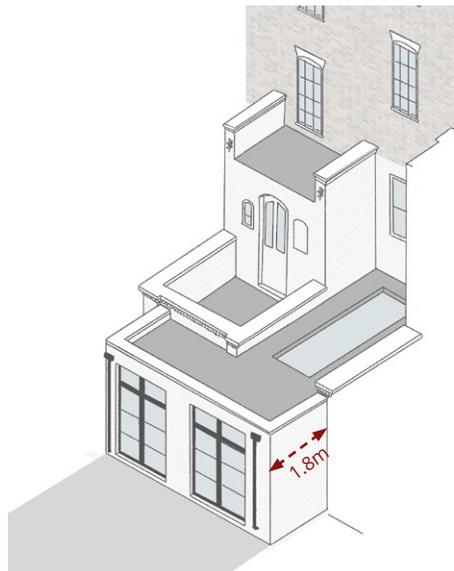
HISTORIC INTEREST

The historic interest of 46 Abbey Gardens is primarily illustrative, as part of the development of St John's Wood, albeit not the villa type typology that set the neighbourhood apart at that time, but rather the more conventional terraced form. It is nevertheless a good terrace, externally intact and, as the list description recognises, with group value derived from the coherent group on Abbey Gardens. It is a pocket of the typical good quality terraced building stock that was constructed in London at that time. The terrace is likewise of some interest in the national context as part of the legacy of London's building stock of this period.

Historic interest extends to the interiors, although it relies on authenticity. At the lower ground floor, which is our point of interest, some alteration has already been occurred, in terms of the conservatory, which is a addition of 1995 next to the original rear extension. (Ref. No. 95/04172/FULL)



Axonometric sketch of existing property



Axonometric sketch of proposal

SCHEDULE OF WORKS

The proposal fully considers the height, scale and character of the St John's Wood Conservation Area to ensure that the quality of the surrounding area is not compromised and that the setting of the Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced.

The principle of the development is to refurbish and rejuvenate this Grade II listed building, to provide a high quality residential property in keeping with the character of the St. Johns Wood Conservation Area. The design, massing and materials of the building envelope have been developed following close consideration of the site and its context.

The proposals relate exclusively to the lower ground floor (46A Abbey Gardens) which is a separate apartment and are summarised below:

- **Removal of non-original conservatory along with the existing fenestration.**

Based on the evidence provided by previous planning applications and the map of 1850 it is clear the conservatory was a later addition which detracts from what could be an early or original extension on the left.

- **Addition of a 1.80m width and 3.1m high extension from the existing one.**

The new extension will be aligned exactly with the neighbour's (no48) existing extension. The height was carefully chosen in order to create a high quality space in the interior whilst keeping the possible original dentil mouldings of the parapets intact.

- **Removal of some internal walls of the lower ground floor original extension.**

The new layout with the removal of some walls will provide a better unified interior space, while letting the natural light be diffused nicely.

- **Addition of 2 double doors in the rear lower ground floor elevation.**

The rear elevation is north facing, so the two double doors will provide plenty of natural light inside of the space and a nice view of the rear garden. The position, dimension and style of the doors respects the historic proportions of the upper elevation and is in harmony with the interior layout.

- **Addition of a new skylight located where the existing conservatory is.**

The new skylight is aligned with the one end of the right double door and will provide better light into the interior.

- **Underfloor heating is to be supplied throughout.**

- **New kitchen in the rear of the lower ground floor**

Our client wants her kitchen in the back of the room so providing natural light throughout the space is important.

- **White render in the extension**

The new extension will have white render to match and respect the existing.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Please note, this Design Access and Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

21005_46A Abbey Gardens_Existing Drawings.pdf
21005_46A Abbey Gardens_Proposed Drawings.pdf