

Heritage Statement

Red Lodge, 51 Palace Court, Westminster

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On behalf of: TIKO Construction Limited **Ref:** 0307

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Ignus Froneman, Director at Cogent Heritage, in consultation with the Applicant, TIKO Construction Limited.
- 1.2 The application involves minor alterations to the entrance gate and boundary wall of the subject building, known as Red Lodge, at No. 51 Palace Court in Bayswater. The proposed development involves a change to the design of the vehicular gate (on Palace Court) as was previously approved. The application is retrospective, in that the gate has been installed and is presently *in situ*. Also included is the proposed recladding of the adjoining boundary wall with red bricks, laid in lime mortar, to exactly match the remainder of the boundary wall. This part of the proposal has not been implemented.
- 1.3 Red Lodge is unlisted, but falls in the Bayswater Conservation Area.
- 1.4 The closest listed building is the grade II listed former terraced house at No. 47 (now the Capellania Catolica Española, or Spanish Catholic Chapel). It is not considered that the significance of this building could reasonably be affected by the proposed development and, in accordance the basic, stepped approach propagated in Historic England's *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (GPA 3), this listed building has not been taken forward for a detailed assessment.
- 1.5 The Heritage Statement therefore focuses on assessing the effects of the gate on the significance, character and appearance of the Bayswater Conservation Area.
- 1.6 The report was informed by a site visit, in March 2021, when the gate was inspected and photographed in its context. This report does not set out the Development Plan policies, or the National Planning Policy Framework, or the provisions of s.72 of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, focussing instead on an assessment of significance, contribution and impact, before coming to an overall conclusion about the acceptability of the proposal.

2 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION

Historic background

- 2.1 In the late 18th century, Bayswater was still rural, and most of its 56 properties in 1773 were probably at Westbourne green, according to the *Victoria County History*¹ from which much of the next section was taken. Speculative building along the Uxbridge Road, now Bayswater Road, was started by John Elkins, a bricklayer or brickmaker of South Street, St. George's, Hanover Square.
- 2.2 Widespread speculative building was carried out by Edward Orme, from around 1809. He paid for Bayswater chapel in 1818, to serve houses which he had presumably erected in Petersburgh (later St. Petersburgh) Place, leading north from the Uxbridge Road to a 'street or place called Moscow Cottages', linked to Black Lion Lane by a road soon called Moscow Road. The two new roads were said to commemorate Orme's business dealings with Russia, but may equally have been named in honour of Tsar Alexander I's visit to England in 1814. Orme Square, whose south side was formed by the Uxbridge Road, was built between 1823, when land was bought east of Petersburgh Place.
- 2.3 During the 1830s Victoria Grove (renamed to the present name, Ossington Street, in 1873) was laid out from the Uxbridge Road, on part of Gravel Pit field. By the 1840s, artistic and literary figures were attracted to the district, which was then still semi-rural. Leinster and Prince's squares were begun in 1856, with Kensington Gardens Square to the east, and mews alleys to the south, behind Moscow Road. Leinster Square had a few residents in 1858 and was the first to be finished, by 1864. By 1862 it was said that a 'great and aristocratic town' had grown up, faster than all other suburbs, during the past ten years [ibid].
- 2.4 Building covered the whole of Bayswater by 1865, when the only sites for infilling were south of Moscow Road, chiefly along the east side of Victoria Grove (see the 1881 Ordnance Survey map at **Fig 1** overleaf, which by then still showed this land as undeveloped). During the late 19th century Bayswater's social composition became more mixed, with the population more cosmopolitan, as is exemplified by the consecration of a synagogue in St. Petersburgh Place in 1879, and the Greek Orthodox cathedral, in Moscow Road in 1882.

¹ *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 9, Hampstead, Paddington*, ed. C R Elrington (London, 1989), pp. 204-212. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/middx/vol9/pp204-212>



Fig 1: Extract of the 1881 Ordnance Survey map, with the application site highlighted red.

2.5 Building activity in the late 19th century was limited mainly to the piecemeal replacement of houses whose leases had expired. The oldest houses were west of Lancaster Gate, along Bayswater Road and around Moscow Road. Part of Bayswater Hill was taken for the Red House of 1871, designed by J. J. Stevenson as a precursor of the 'Queen Anne' style – this was not the same building as the application site, which today is also known as Red House. The only new road was west of Orme Square, where Shaftesbury House disappeared, and Palace Court was driven north to Moscow Road. Some houses were built here in 1889 and Palace Court Mansions were inhabited from 1890. Many Palace Court residents had aesthetic tastes similar to those in Bedford Park in Ealing; they included Wilfrid Meynell and his wife Alice, the poet (1847-1922), and the Irish painter George William Joy (1844-1925) a frequent exhibitor at the Royal Academy, for whom the original building on the application site was built.

2.6 The *Pevsner*² guide describes Palace Court as the 'most interesting place in the borough' for late Victorian domestic architecture; although the listed building at No. 47 is highlighted, No. 51 is not mentioned. The *Victoria County History* mentions several of the buildings on Palace Court, including No. 51, which it notes was built in 1889 for G.

² *The Buildings of England, London 3: North West*, Bridget Cherry, Nikolaus Pevsner (Yale University Press, 1991)

W. Joy. The 1896 Ordnance Survey map (**Fig 2**) shows the building's footprint shortly after completion. This can be compared with the largely similar 2003 version (**Fig 3**).



Fig 2: Extract of the 1896 Ordnance Survey map, with the application site highlighted red.



Fig 3: Extract of the 2003 Ordnance Survey map, with the application site highlighted red.

2.7 Palace Court is an interesting street, being effectively a single house deep and with its west side backing onto Ossington Street; although there are mews houses on Ossington Street, Palace Court is very compact as a street block. The application site seems to

have always been somewhat unique in the street morphology, as an unusual end-block with a frontage to both Palace Court, and the garden plot to the north – which itself is dressed as a principal façade and again entirely unique within its context. Judging from the 1896 Ordnance Survey map (**Fig 2**), it seems as though this arrangement of an undeveloped front garden at the northern end of the block may have been the result of the underground line in that location. Whether that was a deciding influence can only be left to speculation, but regardless of the reason for it, the application site has a unique and unusual relationship with its context.

- 2.8 An oblique aerial photo of 1949 (**Fig 4**) shows the application site from the south, at that time with a pitched roof, and with a relatively tall boundary wall seen clearly visible.

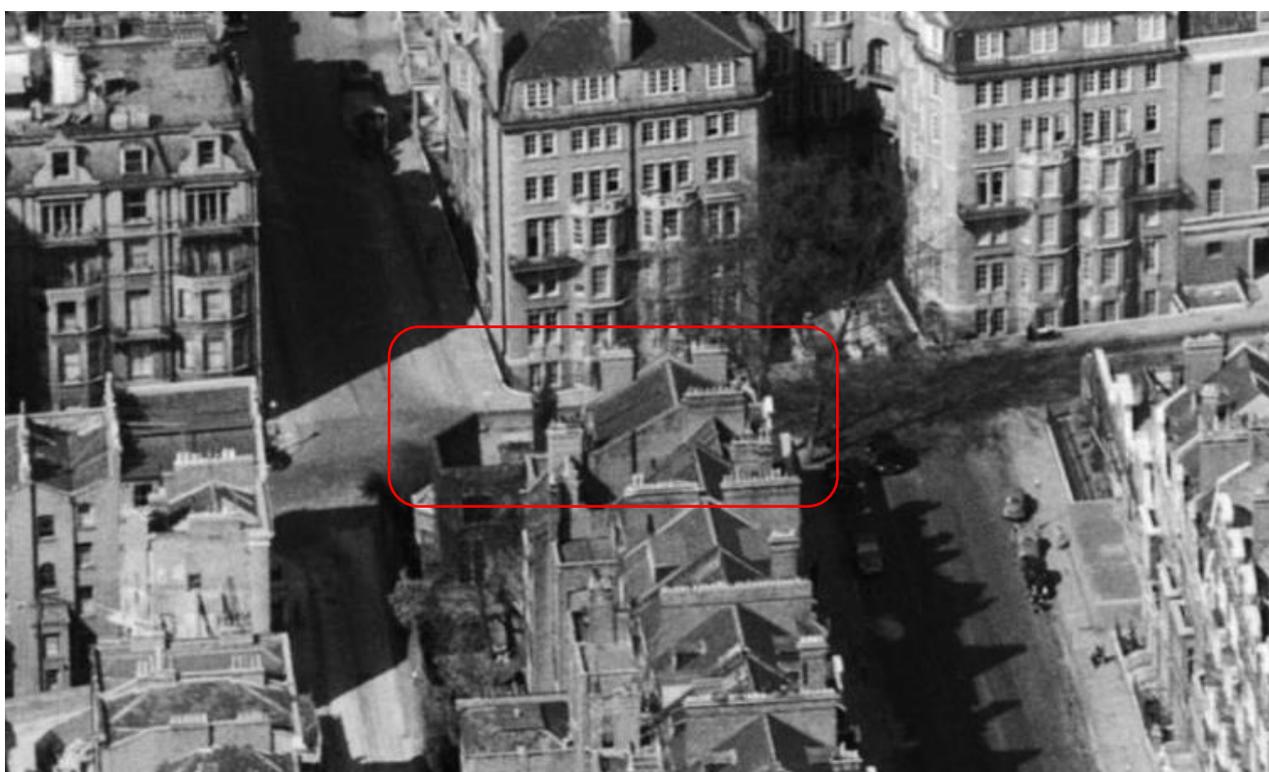


Fig 4: Extract of an oblique aerial photo of 1949, with the application site (highlighted red) seen from the south.

Significance of the Bayswater Conservation Area

- 2.9 The relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Bayswater Conservation Area is *Conservation Area Audit No. 6 Bayswater* (adopted on 13 July 2000). The introduction, on page 1, summarises the conservation area as follows:

“The townscape of the Bayswater Conservation Area is uniform despite its being composed of several distinct areas developed over the space of about 70 years and by different estates and speculators using different architects. Although the architectural details vary, they have a common source in the Italianate style. The consistent scale of the development, density and above all the use of stucco overcomes what are in effect

superficial differences. The excellence of the street layout itself, a regular composition of streets and squares, enhances this impression of unity."

- 2.10 The *Conservation Area Audit* states, still on page 1, that the building heights range from four and in some cases five storeys (with basement, attic and sometimes dormers), to modest villas of almost rural character and scale. It goes on state that:
- "In a smaller area this variation in height might lead to a fragmented townscape, but in an area the size of Bayswater, where the scale of each development was considerable, one finds coherence within each individual street."*
- 2.11 This is relevant to Palace Court, perhaps not so much in the consistency of scale, but rather the late-Victorian red brick houses.
- 2.12 The *Conservation Area Audit* notes that a rough division can be drawn between Tyburnia, which was laid out from 1807 for the Church Commissioners, and Bayswater, which essentially takes in everything to the west (this is the part of the conservation area within which the application site falls). According to the *Conservation Area Audit*, the overall form of Bayswater, by contrast with Tyburnia, was built up by several different speculators according to different plans, and the layout can be traced back to earlier field boundaries, footpaths and tracks.
- 2.13 Under the heading "*Architectural and Historical Characteristics of Buildings*" on page 7, the *Conservation Area Audit* notes that most of the area was developed with terraced houses, but there are also isolated pockets of semi-detached houses; most of these can be classified as villas, and they vary in scale and pretence. The terraced houses also range from relatively modest buildings to the mammoth buildings in Kensington Square Gardens or Cleveland Gardens. Key features are pedimented windows, sometimes with pilasters; grand entrance porches with Doric or Tuscan columns; stucco, treated as rustication to the ground floor, elaborate basement area railings; iron balconies; projecting cornices or sometimes pierced parapets fronting mansard roofs with dormers.

Contribution of the application site to the Bayswater Conservation Area

- 2.14 The original house on the application site was part of the late Victorian domestic development on Palace Court, notable for its Arts & Crafts/Queen Anne architecture, and it had some associative interest, having been built in 1889 for G. W. Joy. However, the building today has been completely rebuilt. On 15 January 2015, Westminster City Council granted permission for the demolition of the existing building and construction of replacement 5 storey building (with a 2 storey basement and roof terrace) under reference 14/05175/FULL. The existing boundary wall and piers with decorative carved stone panels were permitted as part of that application.

2.15 The present reconstructed house, evidently newly rebuilt, generally plays a positive role in the streetscape as an example of a high status and prominent 'bookend' to the northern end of Palace Court. It is a substantial, imposing building and its prominence at the end of the block gives it a presence 'in the round' as is illustrated on **Photos 1-3** below.



Photo 1: Red Lodge, seen slightly obliquely from the north, at the junction of Hereford and Moscow Roads.



Photo 2: Red Lodge, seen obliquely from the NE, on Moscow Road.



Photo 3: Red Lodge, seen obliquely from the south, on Palace Court.

- 2.16 Red Lodge is distinct from the run of typically red brick Arts & Crafts, or Queen Anne, late Victorian houses and mansion blocks on Palace Court. That is not only because of its scale, its imposing north elevation and unusual positioning on the block, but also by the more elaborate detailing than is typically seen in the local context, e.g. the stone dressings, with extensive quoining and corniced stone parapets. The window proportions, quoins and mansard lend it something of a slightly French flavour, though it is too eclectic to be categorised as a chateau style house.
- 2.17 On Ossington Street (**Photo 4**) the elevation steps down from the climax of a projecting NW corner, capped with taller mansard. Although there is a sense of smaller scale subservience, this is only a nod towards the mews to the south on Ossington Street; the 2 storey flank with projecting stone bays under a deep stone parapet is still very much part of the imposing north façade, and does not meaningfully translate as a mews house.
- 2.18 Therefore, Red Lodge occupies a unique place in the local street morphology, as an unusual end-block with a frontage to both Palace Court and the garden plot to the north, and this then wraps around onto Ossington Street. It is also a uniquely imposing and large terminating block, of a style that is different from its immediate neighbours, and a scale that has perhaps more in common with the mansion blocks to the north than the terraces houses to the south, on Palace Court. The imposing north elevation is facilitated by the ability to insert windows, in a way that is not possible elsewhere on Place Court.



Photo 4: Red Lodge, seen from the west on Moscow Road.

2.19 Red Lodge is also unique in that it has typical iron area railings to the Palace Court frontage (**Photo 5**), although there is then a transition to another type of boundary along the north of Palace Court, Moscow Road and Ossington Street: the tall red brick boundary wall with elaborately carved stone piers, topped with ball finials and with a stone plinth and dentil corniced stone coping.



Photo 5: Red Lodge, seen obliquely from the south, on Palace Court.

2.20 The taller stone gate piers, featuring similar decorative carved floral motifs and ball finials, mark the main entrance (**Photo 6**).



Photo 6: Frontal view of the gate piers to Red Lodge, on Palace Court (**Note:** the black panel to the right is yet to be clad in red brick laid in lime mortar, matching the remained of the boundary wall).

2.21 The positive contribution of Red Lodge to the character, appearance and significance of the conservation area extends to the boundary wall. The boundary wall is tall and somewhat unusually elaborately detailed, and uniquely wraps around three sides of the application site. However, together with the gate piers, the boundary wall is not seen in its context as an isolated feature. Instead, it is plainly part and parcel of the large and unusually imposing and positioned Red Lodge. When seen in this context, it is plainly no more than a subsidiary feature to the main house, that reflects, and is commensurate with, its stature and scale. This can be seen from **Photo 7** below.



Photo 7: Red Lodge, seen obliquely from the NE, on Moscow Road.

3 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 The proposed changes are, on the whole, relatively minor; these have been carefully designed to blend well with the existing house and the existing boundary wall and gate piers, to avoid harm to the character, appearance and significance of the conservation area.
- 3.2 The proposed changes are summarised as twofold below, and then assessed inter alia:
- i. A new metal gate with arched top, holding a lamp, and with delicate floral motifs, some picked out in gold paint, and echoing the carved decorative panels on the gate piers.
 - ii. Recladding of the boundary wall on Palace Court in red brick, laid in lime mortar, to exactly match the remainder of the boundary wall.
- 3.3 **New metal gate:** Red Lodge is an imposing house that is unique within its context; it effectively has two main fronts (one to Palace Court and one to the front garden to Moscow Road), and it may be said that even the subservient frontage to Ossington street is not properly a rear elevation, but more of a designed side elevation, with some stature. Moreover, unlike the terraced houses on Palace Court, Red Lodge is further set apart by its tall and unusually elaborately detailed boundary wall and stone gate piers that wraps

around three sides of the application site. It is plainly a house that is very different from the others in the local context (and it is notably not a mansion block, as the ones on Moscow Road, opposite).

3.4 Starting from first principles, the exceptional set of circumstances that apply in the case of Red Lodge means that a design response for a gate that is different to what is seen elsewhere in the conservation area may reasonably be expected. Indeed, that can already be said of the existing boundary wall and gate piers, which are entirely without precedent in the local context. The unique circumstances mean that the gate, although different from the typically wrought iron area railings and gates elsewhere, is not necessarily out of keeping, incongruous, or harmful to the significance, character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.5 Given that the gate has already been installed, it is possible to look at it in its context and judge its effect in terms of the wider street scenes and the more intimate pedestrian experience. The gate, although relatively elaborately embellished, is broadly commensurate with the imposing nature and stature of the house, including its prominence. That is well illustrated in **Photo 8** below, in which the gate can be seen to be a very much subsidiary feature to the house, and entirely in proportion with, and complementary to, the gate piers and adjacent wall (yet to be clad in brick). Seen in this context, the gate has a traditional appearance, complementary to that of the house. It preserves (if not enhances) the significance, character and appearance of the conservation area.



Photo 8: Red Lodge, seen obliquely from the NE, on Moscow Road.

3.6 The previous photo has shown how the gate works well in the broader street context of the house and boundary wall, when seen at a distance. But the design of the gate also works well at the more intimate pedestrian level, where it is possible to appreciate how its design reflects, and picks up on, the floral motifs and ornamentation of the carved stone insets to the flanking gate piers (and in turn also the stone piers to the rest of the wall). That can be seen from the frontal view at **Photo 8** below. Therefore, the design of the gate works at both the 'macro' street context and the 'micro' pedestrian level of a passer-by. Should it be considered that the extent of gilding to pick out some of the decorative motifs is excessive (e.g. some of the border decoration), it would be possible to adequately control that by way of a condition, to the effect that the painting scheme should be submitted to and approved by the City Council, and maintained as approved.

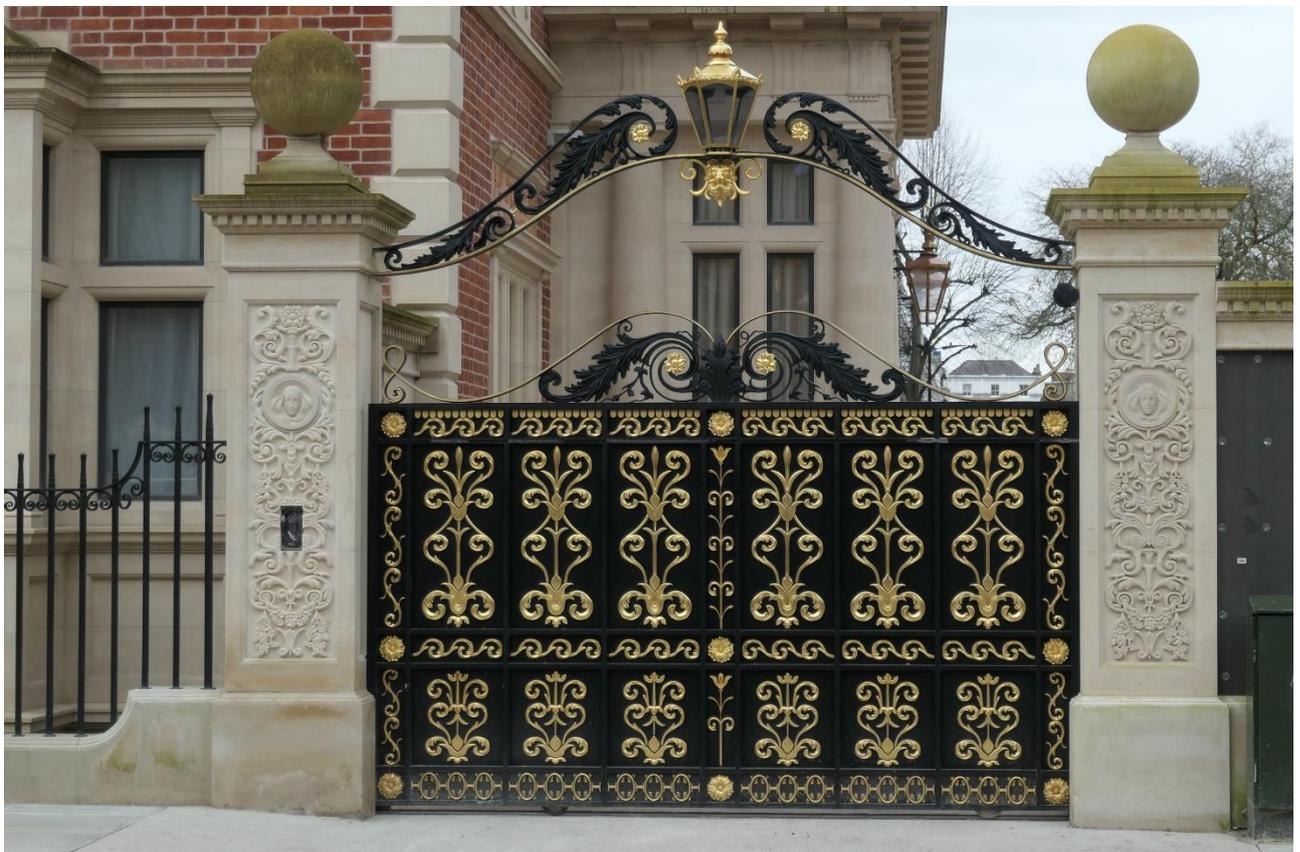


Photo 9: Frontal, detailed view of the gate and piers to Red Lodge, on Palace Court.

3.7 When looking at the image above (**Photo 9**), the solid panel to the gate steps down from the tall boundary wall to the right, and the area railings to the left, making a transition between the two. A plain railing style gate would look more incongruous, as it would result in a more a dramatic step-change to the tall pier and the solidity of the high brick wall. The solid panel of course also provides privacy, which again reflects a unique situation. It might reasonably expected that a house of this stature, in such a prominent

location, might enjoy some privacy to the only garden/amenity space it has: the front garden. This aspect of the proposal must also be placed in the context of the solidity of the tall boundary wall (itself indicative of privacy commensurate with the nature of the property). The gate does not introduce visual solidity or impermeability where that is absent, but rather it is a congruent continuation of the solidity of the existing garden wall. When understood in that context, it does not appear especially unusual, or unexpected. This aspect of the design responds to the status quo, and leaves the significance, character and appearance of the conservation area unaffected.

- 3.8 An arch with a lamp above the entrance was approved as part of Application 07/05955/FULL and this feature is also entirely acceptable; if anything the present one is better articulated and with a greater finesse that complements the building well.
- 3.9 **Recladding the boundary wall on Palace Court in red brick, to match exactly match the remainder of the boundary wall:** This part of the proposal has not yet been implemented, but it is proposed to clad the wall with red bricks, set in lime mortar, to exactly match the remainder of the boundary wall. This would leave the significance, character and appearance of the conservation area unaffected.

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The proposed changes are, on the whole, relatively minor; they have been carefully designed and detailed to avoid impacts on the significance, character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.2 Because no harm has been identified, there are no policy conflicts with the London Plan or Westminster's Local Plan policies. Neither does the proposal trigger paragraphs 195 or 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposed development also complies with the statutory duty in s.72 of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act, 1990. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the proposed development should be granted permission.