

**STATEMENT  
OF  
HISTORIC  
SIGNIFICANCE**

**33 CLARENCE TERRACE  
LONDON  
NW1 4RD**

**10<sup>th</sup> August 2023**

# ROBERT SHAW ARCHITECTS

## 1.00 UNDERSTANDING

- 1.01 33 Clarence Terrace is a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor apartment within a building, newly constructed in 1965 by the Crown Estate. This building replaced the 1823 building, designed by Decimus Burton, under the supervision of John Nash, forming a part of the Regents Park development.
- 1.02 The façade of the block facing north-east over Regents Park is a faithful replica, in Italianate stucco, of the Decimus Burton original. Behind this façade is an unremarkable 1960's block of flats, with brickwork external walls, concrete balconies, and single-glazed softwood-framed sash windows.



- 1.03 Clarence Terrace is Listed Grade 1 (as part of Nos. 1–43 Clarence Terrace, NW1). The original Listing was in 1970, and amended in December 1987, as follows:

*TQ 2782 SE CITY OF WESTMINSTER CLARENCE TERRACE,  
REGENT'S PARK, NW1*

*34/21*

*Nos 1 to 43 consec*

*9.1.70 (formerly listed as Nos 1 to 12 (consec)*

*GV I*

*Unified terrace block. 1823 by Decimus Burton under Nash's supervision, as part of Nash's Regent's Park Crown Estate development and built by James Burton (completely reconstructed 1965). Stucco; slate roofs. Graeco-Roman palace in the Nash manner, composed in 3 blocks with hexastyle portico to centre of main range, lower links set back behind colonnade screens and advanced flanking pavilions with pilaster order. 3 storeys and dormered mansards. 15 window wide main range, 3-window links and 3 window fronts to flanking pavilions with 5-window returns. Enclosed pilastered porches to inner returns of flank pavilions; doorways behind screen in links and to main portico podium.*

*Channelled podium-ground floor with semicircular arched windows; segmental arched openings to podium of screens; architraved and corniced 1st floor windows. The hexastyle portico has a giant Corinthian order with the main entablature broken forward over it surmounted by shallow pediment. The screens in front of links have giant paired Ionic columns carrying entablature. The flanking pavilions have 1st and 2nd floors dressed with giant Corinthian pilastered paired to angles. Balustraded parapet to main range which has geometric patterned 1st floor balcony, balconettes to links. Tasselled spearhead area railings.*

*John Nash: John Summerson.*

*Listing NGR: TQ2777682325*

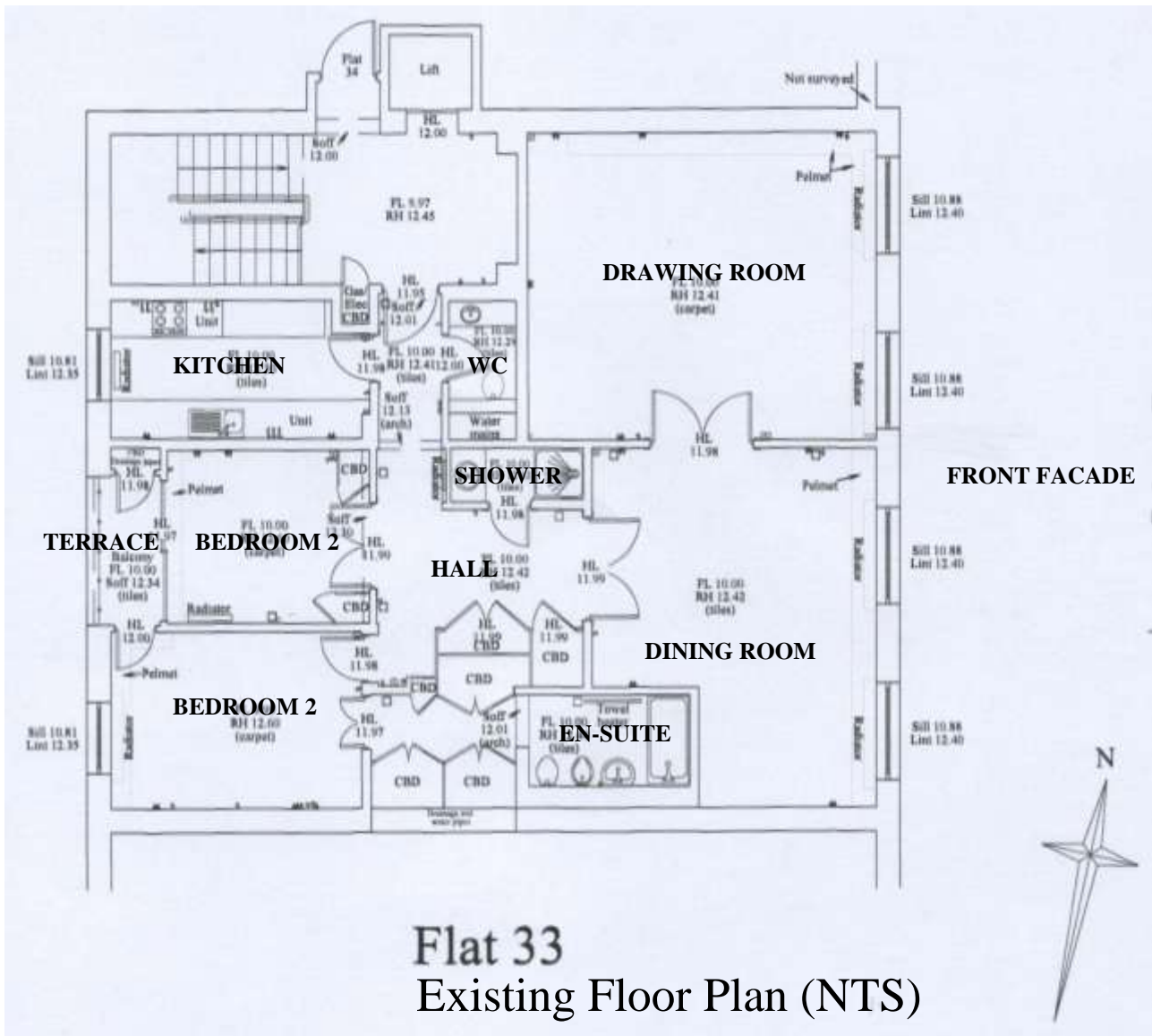
- 1.04 Whilst the entirety of the building benefits from the Grade 1 Listing, it is quite clear that the Heritage Value is entirely in its group value within the Regents Park perimeter, where it sits between Cornwall Terrace and Sussex Place, each with similarly classical facades.



- 1.05 However, two things need to be made clear, first is that the “Curtilage Listing” means that any object or structure included within the curtilage of the building, whether fixed to that building or not (since before 1948) is included in the Listing; and Buildings are Listed in their entirety. There is no such thing as “just a listed façade” or “just a listed staircase”. All proposed alterations do require to be submitted for Listed Building Consent.
- 1.06 Listed status does not prevent building works being carried out to that building, but it does mean that greater scrutiny is applied by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to proposals which affect the Heritage Quality of such a building in order to prevent damage to that Heritage Asset.

## 2.00 PROPOSED WORKS

- 2.01 The works proposed to No.33 are almost entirely internal re-organisation of spaces. However, it is also proposed to replace the single-glazed aluminium framed sliding door to the balcony from Bedroom 2 and the decayed wooden doors, also to the balcony, from Bedroom 1 and to the pipe-duct.



2.02 It is proposed that the existing 2-piece sliding aluminium frames patio door is replaced with a new aluminium bi-fold door.

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- 2.03 The bedroom 2 door threshold is completely rotted away and must be replaced. The solid door at the other end of the balcony is also decayed beyond reasonable repair and must also be replaced. It is proposed to renew these doors with white, powder-coated aluminium, solid (un-glazed) matching doors.



**ROTTED DOOR THRESHOLD**

**ROTTED DOOR LEAF AND FRAME**

- 2.04 It is proposed to install air conditioning in the apartment. This will necessitate a compressor unit being positioned externally on the balcony, standing against the bedroom door and with a height lower than the balcony railings.
- 2.05 One further, necessary improvement is to treat the basement storage room with waterproof render.

- 2.06 The joinery detail of the window frames, throughout the building (four at the front and two at the rear) is “a good try” in terms of 1965’s understanding of historic replication, but is not as subtle as Burton’s frames would have been. They have 4mm single glazing which is thermally poor by current standards. It is proposed to retain these frames and to do any necessary spot-repairs to the joinery.



**1965 WINDOW SASH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY**

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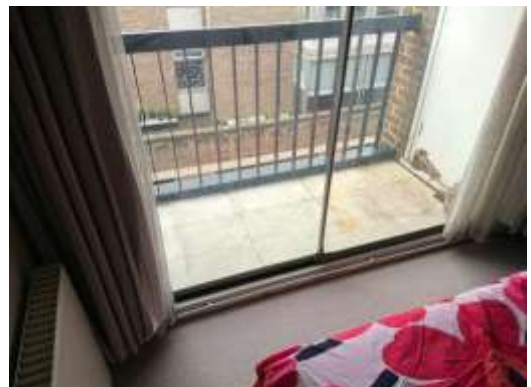
- 2.07 An eventual “environmental” improvement may be internal secondary glazing (either Selectaglaze or Storm, ideally) but that is not part of this proposal.
- 2.08 The internal re-arrangement of spaces is quite extensive and, at the time of writing, is a matter of discussion with the Freeholder. The building structure appears to be a concrete frame and slab, with the internal partitioning non-load-bearing. So the internal partitioning can be re-positioned without many constraints.
- 2.09 It does appear to achieve a more usable layout without the requirement for altering any of the external walling – particularly the front wall or windows.



## Proposed Floor Plan (NTS) Flat 33

### 3.00 BUILDING ELEMENTS

- 3.01 Nothing in the entire building fabric of Clarence Terrace is “historic”, although the front façade is a replica of the original Decimus Burton classical design.
- 3.02 As a guide to the view of respected “others” on the architectural significance of Clarence Terrace, Dr Pevsner, in his first edition of “The Buildings of England (except the cities of London & Westminster)” dated 1952 writes as follows (after describing the adjoining Cornwall Terrace) “*Clarence Terrace (1823) perhaps by Decimus Burton, is shorter and also Corinthian. The ends here project a good deal, an introduction of depth into the composition which is taken up boldly by Sussex Place (1822)*”. This is emphasizing the “stage set”, cyclorama-value of the terraces as their major importance.
- 3.03 The replacement for the aluminium patio doors will be metal-framed and powder-coated to a mid-grey colour. In visual terms, this change will be of minimal importance. The opening is set back from the façade of the rear brick wall by the depth of the balcony.



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3.04 White coloured replacement doors at each end of the balcony will have no appreciable effect of the external appearance of the rear façade of the building.

3.05 An externally positioned (balcony-mounted) air conditioning condenser unit has previously been approved in March 2022 for 27 Clarence Terrace; and a (similar in appearance and dimensions) air-source heat pump was approved in May 2020 at 11 Clarence Terrace. Such units can be removed as and when better systems are developed.

**A TYPICAL AIR-CON CONDENSER UNIT**



3.06 It should be possible to achieve a maximum noise level from such a unit of no greater than 15dB. However, if required, a specialist acoustic report will be presented. In terms of noise nuisance, the maintenance of continuing low-output noise over time depends to a great extent on good regular maintenance.

3.07 Waterproof rendering to the basement storage room is a practical necessity. The room allocated to No.33 is one of a long row of such spaces beneath the pavement alongside the service road.

3.08 These underground stores have obviously been subdivided by a concrete block wall out of larger areas. The presence of timber duck-boarding confirms the flooding threat. The damaged wall surfaces show the inadequacy of existing damp-proofing. The proposal to re-render with a SIKA-based waterproof render should be accepted – and probably applauded.



#### 4.00 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.01 Clarence Terrace, as a whole, is certainly of **High Significance** as a Heritage Asset. This is principally, if not entirely, because of its group value within the stage-set of the Regents Park perimeter terraces. Several of the other classical terraces in the Nash Regents Park Estate have also been completely rebuilt in post-war years, most recently the western quadrant of Park Crescent, and the quality of the townscape has generally been maintained intact.
- 4.02 There are “purists” who argue against “façadism” (see “The Creeping Plague of Ghastly Façadism” pub. Spitalfields Life Books 2019 *inter alia*). The alternative view that the importance of certain aspects of Heritage Assets within the townscape, particularly their Group Value, is too great for their re-use for different practical functions to be resisted, is surely more constructive.
- 4.03 The alterations proposed here at 33 Clarence Terrace are minimal in their effect on the external appearance – just replacement balcony doors on the 1965-modern rear elevation and a floor-mounted A/C compressor unit largely concealed behind the railing. All the other alterations are to unexceptional 1960’s interiors, and are of no historical or architectural consequence.



**ROBERT SHAW**

**Architect Accredited in Building Conservation**

**15th August 2023**