

HANDFORTH

HERITAGE

1 Orient Street, Southwark
Heritage Impact Assessment

January 2024



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1. Introduction

This Heritage Impact Assessment ('report') has been produced by Handforth Heritage to accompany full planning and listed building consent applications relating to the proposed alterations to the lower ground floor of the grade II listed No. 1 Orient Street ('the site').

The site is located within the West Square Conservation Area in the London Borough of Southwark. West Square is located to the north-western edge of the borough, and the conservation area abuts Lambeth borough. The West Square Conservation Area is predominantly comprised of residential dwellings, but also includes some schools, the Imperial War Museum and St. George's Cathedral.

The report has been produced to identify and assess the significance of any Heritage Assets that may be potentially affected by the proposals and determine what impact these changes may have on their significance.

This report has been undertaken in accordance with Historic England's guidance on heritage assessments, namely *Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* *Historic England Advice Note 12* and *Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA 3)*. It complies with the requirements of paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states:

The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

This report should be read in conjunction with YARD Architects' Design & Access Statement which provides a detailed overview and rationale behind the design of the proposals.

The legislation and policy framework applicable to this application is set out at Appendix 1.



Figure 1 Site location plan, showing the site in red.

2. Historic Development - Context

Until the post-medieval period, the area to the south and west of the Thames had been known as Southwark Fields, following this, it became known as St. George's Fields. The area in which the site sits was primarily open rural fields up until the 18th century. With the construction of both Westminster and Blackfriars bridges in the mid 18th century, development slowly moved south with several Acts of Parliament being passed in relation to the layout of footpaths and roads across St. George's Fields. The rural nature of the area can be seen in the 1746 Rocque map, where the site can be seen with no visible development, bar Lambeth Road to the north. It was around this time that several plots of land that had been owned by Henry Bartelote were sold to the West family, from where the square derives its name.

The 1799 Horwood map shows the considerable change that had occurred towards the end of the century, West Square, including the site, had been fully developed here, although land to the west remained undeveloped. Construction of the square began in 1791 when the West family granted building leases to Thomas Kendall and James Hedger. By 1794 the west, north and east sides had been completed. The southern side, included the site, was completed between 1800-1810.

By the 19th century the wider area had begun to be developed with more houses, churches, institutions and schools. Visible on the 1872 OS map, to the west of the site, is King Edward's School and its large grounds, and further west is Bethlehem Hospital, one of the first lunatic asylum in Europe. Much of the Georgian housing stock seen on the Rocque map is still extant at this point. The century saw other improvements in public transport resulting in further changes to the appearance of the area, including the straightening of Lambeth Road and St. George's Road which resulted in the loss of numerous earlier streets and buildings.

Today, numerous modern 20th century developments have eroded the area's original Georgian/Victorian appearance. West Square itself still retains much of its Georgian character although the east and western terraces have lost their central pediments and the northern terraces have been replaced with later developments.

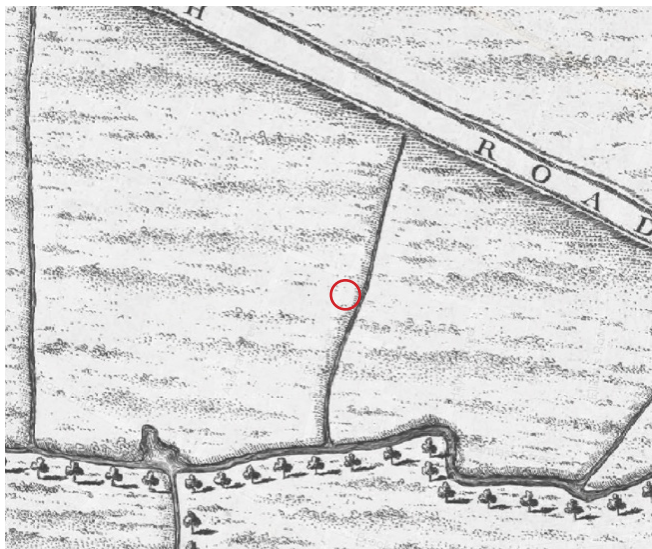


Figure 2 1746 John Rocque map showing the open aspect of the site at this time with no visible housing developments (indicative location of site in red).



Figure 3 1799 Richard Horwood map showing early cartographic evidence of the site (highlighted in red).



Figure 4 1872 OS map. Site highlighted in red.

2. Historic Development - The Site

The earliest cartographic evidence for the building on the site dates to the 1799 Horwood map. Here the building is rectangular in shape with no visible closet wings or outbuildings to the garden. Its neighbours to the south all have the same footprint with the exception of No. 7 which turns the corner and is slightly longer. By the 1872 OS map the site, development to the north has been completed and physically connects to the site, making one continuous terrace with the eastern side of West Square. The rear garden area has also been truncated to an 'L-shape' with smaller structures appearing that are accessed via Hayles Street to the east.

Very little change occurs externally to the property after this. The 1893 OS map shows that some of the rear garden has been incorporated into housing to the south resulting in rectangular plot. A new ancillary building has appeared to the rear of the garden. This structure has been demolished by the 1914 map and the garden appears to have been enlarged to its full length once again to the rear access path. A new ancillary structure has appeared on the southern side of the plot.

The census records provide an interesting insight into the inhabitants of the site overtime. In 1891, six 'heads' are recorded as living in the building with their families, with a total number of 17 people living in the house at this point. Professions include decorator, bookseller, feather curler and plumber. By 1901, the number of inhabitants had reduced slightly to 15. The 1910 Lloyd George Domesday Record records Eleanor Mabel Duchessa Della Torre as the owner of the building. The 1911 census records Thomas Chapman, a house painter and his wife Maregrate living in the property with an adopted son and nephew.

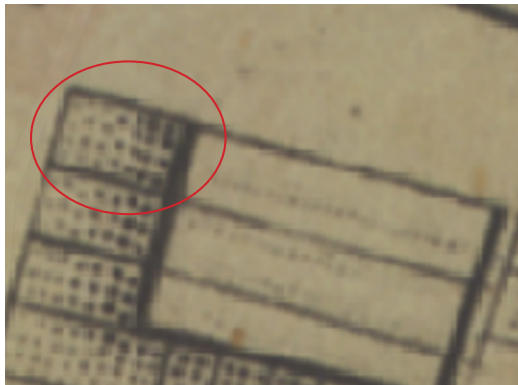


Figure 5 1799 Horwood map showing the site (in red) and its immediate context.



Figure 6 1872 OS map showing the site in red.

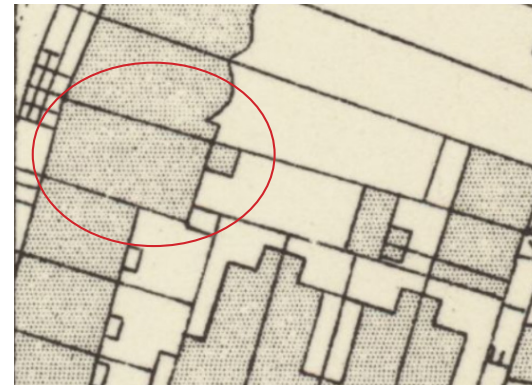


Figure 7 1893 OS map, showing site in red.

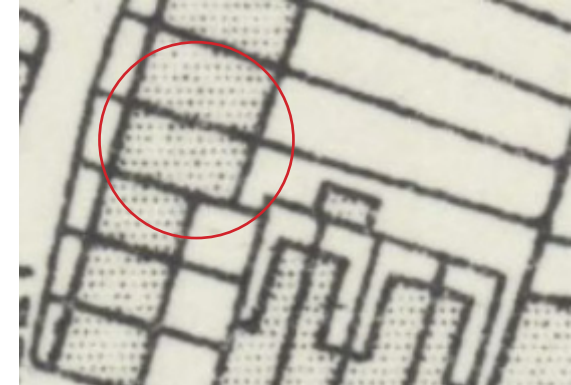


Figure 8 1914 OS map, showing site in red.

2. Historic Development - The Site

A number of historic photographs and drawings provide an insight into the early appearance of the building. Photographs of the building's facade from 1968 show that it historically had a six panelled door with mouldings to the upper four panels. The detail of this is shown in more detail on an undated elevation drawing from the Survey of London. The photographs also clearly show that all four windows on the facade have been replaced at some point. This is evidenced on the upper storeys through the use of timber horns, at upper ground through the use of different a glazing pattern, and at lower ground through the lowering of the sill, allowing an extra row of glazing.



Figure 9 1968 photograph (LMA).



Figure 10 1968 photograph (LMA).

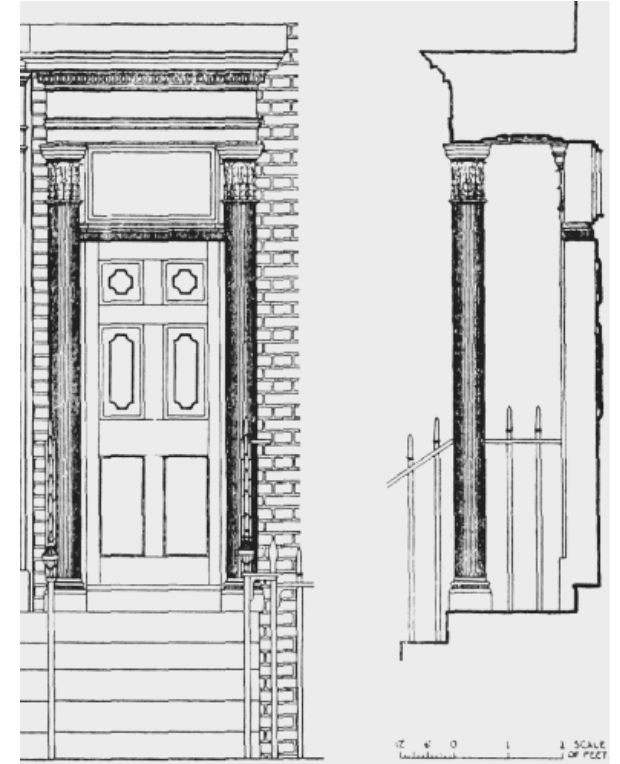


Figure 11 No. 1 Orient Street elevation and section of front doorcase (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol25/pp49-64>).

2. Historic Development - The Site

The planning history for the site also provides a useful indication to the building's evolution. In 2009 listed building consent (09/AP/2165) and planning permission (09/AP/2144) were granted for the *Demolition of existing rear conservatory and construction of a single storey rear extension with partially glazed roof. Reconfiguration of some internal partitions.* Within the planning history for this application it also states that planning permission was granted on 29th April 1980 for the conversion of the property from single dwelling house to two self contained maisonettes.

The following year in 2010, listed building consent (10/AP/0505) and planning permission (10/AP/0504) for *Demolition of existing rear conservatory and construction of a single storey rear extension with partially glazed roof. Reconfiguration of some internal partitions* were granted.

The following comments were made by officers' within the council's delegated report:

The proposals will not be visible from outside the curtilage of the listed building and therefore will not have any impact on the character or appearance of the West Square Conservation Area. The design and materials are appropriate for a conservation area and listed building... There is no loss of historic fabric and the development would not be considered to be detrimental to the character or appearance of the listed building but rather it would preserve its special architectural and historic interest

Reviewing these drawings, it is clear that much of the lower ground floor level has been heavily altered overtime with the erosion of its original floor plan through the loss of its original staircase and provision of new extensions to the rear. Notwithstanding this, the 2010 application did reinstate the staircase in what was likely its original position.

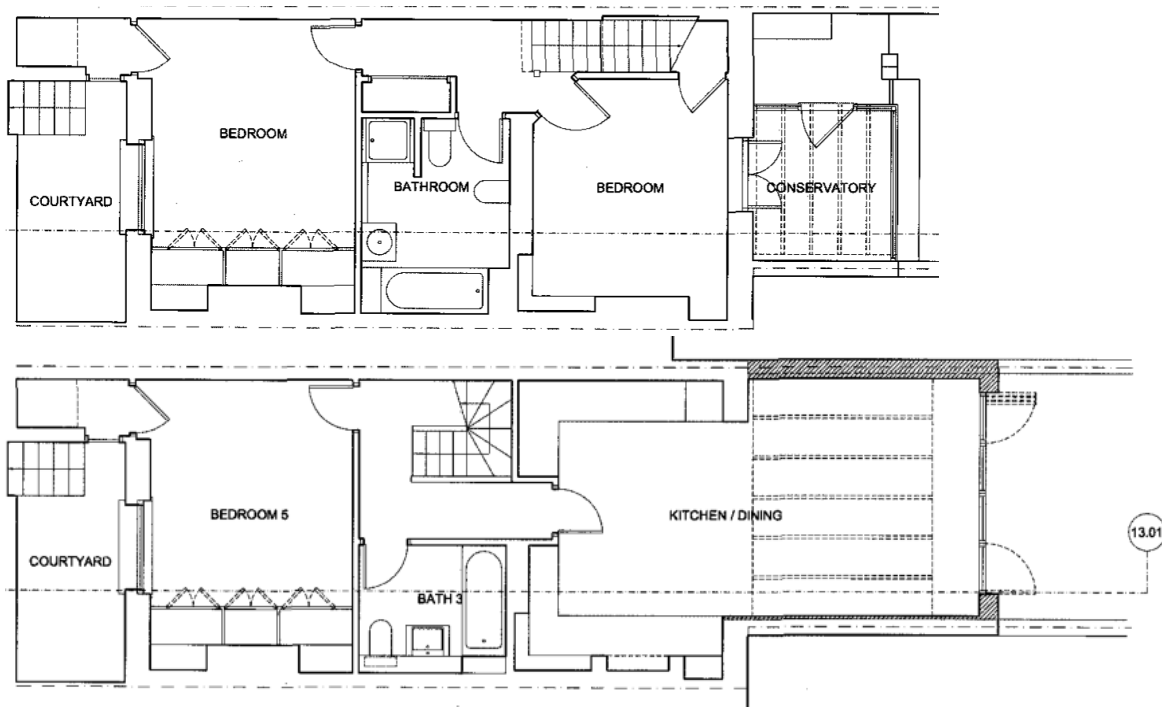


Figure 12 Pre 2010 layout at lower ground floor (top) and consented plan (bottom) from 2010 application.



Figure 13 View of previous conservatory pre the 2010 permissions.

2. Historic Development - Context

No other historic floor plans of the building have been uncovered, but a review of the contemporary properties to the south, confirm that the building was originally two rooms deep, with central spine wall and corner dogleg staircase. No 5's planning history for example provides evidence of this layout albeit the door to the spine wall aligns with the staircase (ref: 21/AP/2418).

No. 3 Orient Street was granted permission for *Erection of a part one, part three storey rear extension at lower ground, ground and first floor level.* (ref: 03/AP/2128). No plans of these drawings were available on Southwark Council's website but figure 16 clearly shows the impact it had on the original rear elevation of the building.

Plans for No. 7 are available online for an application that has yet to be determined. The description of development for this reads as follows:

Construction of a single storey rear extension following the demolition of the existing single storey rear extension and the replacement of the flat roof at first floor level and the installation of a door at second floor level to the rear elevation (Ref. 23/AP/3226)

This application provides useful layout drawings for the building which would have historically been very similar to that of the site.

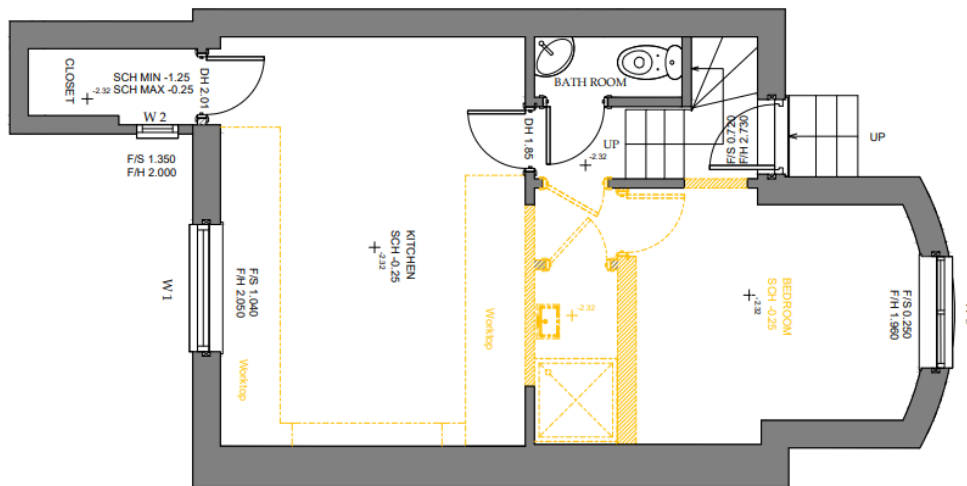


Figure 14 No. 5's internal lower ground floor floor plan, showing elements consented for demolition (in yellow) and indicative historic plan form (ref: 21/AP/2418)

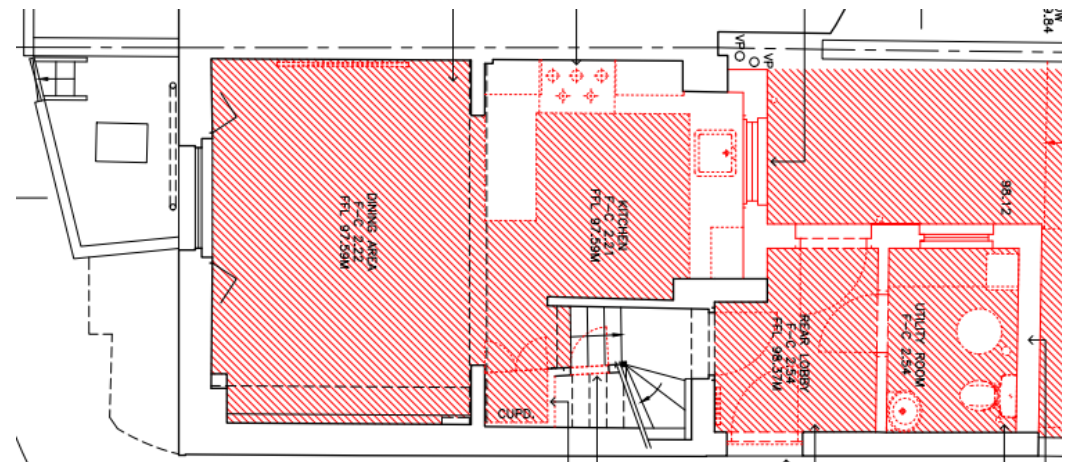


Figure 15 No. 7's lower ground floor layout showing open connection between front and rear room (ref: 23/AP/3226)

3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

An inspection of the relevant databases and sources, including the Historic Environment Record (HER), the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), and the Council's website, has identified a limited number of Heritage Assets within the vicinity of the Site. Following desk based research and on site analysis, professional judgement has been used to identify and select Heritage Assets whose significances may be affected by changes to their settings or direct impacts. This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with Historic England's *Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* and Historic England's *Advice Note 12 The Setting of Heritage Assets GPA 3*. In accordance with Paragraph 194 of the NPPF the level of detail is proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

The Heritage Assets that have the potential to be affected by the proposals are:

1. Number 1 and attached railings, Grade II
2. West Square Conservation Area

Other Heritage Assets identified in the wider area but discounted from this assessment due to the scale of the proposals not considering to affect their significances include:

3. Nos. 3, 5 and 7 and attached railings, Grade II
4. Elliot's Row Conservation Area

These Heritage Assets are highlighted in the oblique aerial view below.



Figure 16 Oblique aerial view showing the site (1), the West Square Conservation Area (2 - green area) and other nearby heritage assets (3 and 4).

3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

1. The Site/1 Orient Street and Attached Railings, Grade II

The site was listed in 1972, with the most recent amendment to the listing being made in 1998. The list description reads as follows:

GV II

Terrace house. Early C19. Brick with slate mansard with dormer behind coped parapet. 2 storeys, attic and basement, 2 bays (1 window on upper floor). Steps up to porch with reeded columns with acanthus capitals, and corresponding pilasters to rear supporting canopy with panelled ceiling, entablature with cornice. Door with 6 panels, reeded cornice head and oblong overlight. Sash windows with glazing bars and gauged brick segmental arches. INTERIOR: not inspected. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: cast-iron area railings and handrails with urn finials at corners

External

The facade of the building retains much of its historic character with original porch, stock brickwork and gauged red brick headers to upper ground floor window. All windows to the facade have been replaced at some point although they have been reproduced faithfully.

Similarly, the rear elevation retains much of its historic appearance, albeit all fabric visible above lower ground floor level dates to the later 19th century full width rear extension. The brickwork to the upper storeys appear to have been cementitiously pointed. All windows on this elevation are later, as evidenced by the horns to the sash windows. The attic features a dormer with modern two over two casement window.

The lower ground floor consists of the 2010 conservatory extension which consists of stock brick with French doors with single panes. The roof of the structure is glazed and gently slopes behind a raised parapet with brick soldier course coping.

Interior- overview

Internally, the property has been subject to numerous alterations overtime, with almost no historic features remaining. The original plan form is largely still appreciable albeit with some modern partitions and alterations visible. The staircase appears to have been replaced, or heavily altered with modern square newel posts visible, although some moulded pendants survive. There are some rail and stile panelling to walls although this is modern and more typical of early 18th century houses.



Plate 1 View of the site's principal and flank facade in the context of its wider listed terrace.



Plate 2 View of site's modern rear full height extension and boundary wall.

3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment



Plate 3 View of modern glazed roof to 2010 extension.



Plate 4 Modern glazing to front facade.



Plate 5 Historic fluted pilasters and mouldings to soffit to entrance porch.

3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

Outlined below is an overview of the lower ground floor level of the building with annotated plans showing photograph locations (also referenced within the text).

Interior- Lower Ground Floor

The lower ground floor is accessed from Orient Street via the front lightwell and internally via the 2010 dogleg staircase at upper ground floor level. The front room is open in plan and the largest room at this level. It is likely at some point that there would have featured a hallway wall which would have been located directly beneath the hallway wall at ground floor. This room is devoid of any features of interest bar its chimney breast. It should be noted that the consented 2010 scheme completely obscured this chimney breast whereas today's layout it is appreciable, albeit with flush side wardrobes present (1). The doors in this room are later replacements (2) of no interest.

Moving to the centre of the building is a modern corridor off which are the bathroom and staircase dating to the 2010 application (3 & 4). The bathroom is located in what would have historically been the original smaller rear room. There does not appear to be any evidence of a chimney breast in this room, or a stack at roof level, which appears to be the case with the buildings' neighbours to the south. It is therefore possible that there was originally a chimney at the eastern side of the house that was removed with the 19th century extension. Alternatively, there was no fireplace in this room and the space was possibly used as a cellar requiring no heating. The hall leads to the original rear wall of the building which features a modern panelled door that provides access to the later additions (5 & 6). A chimney breast survives in this room (with no range or fireplace surviving), this lines up with the stack at roof level and likely dates to the 19th century extension (7).

The final room is the 2010 conservatory which features no elements of architectural or historic interest (8).

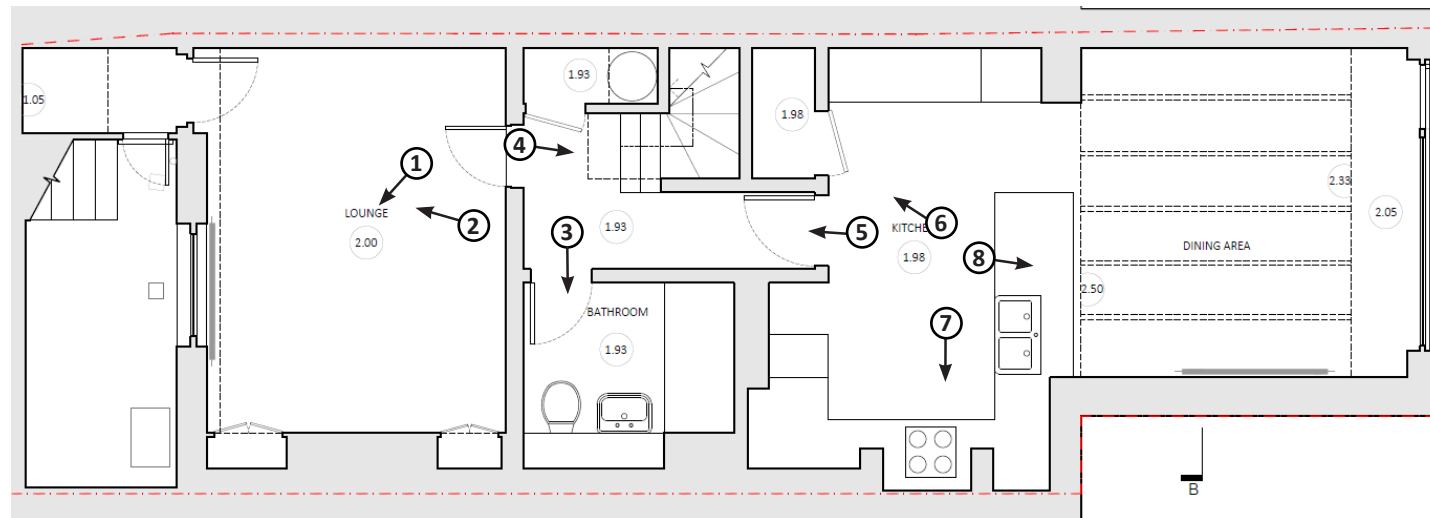


Figure 17 Lower Ground Floor plan, showing photo locations.

3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment



3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

Significance

Architectural Interest: Externally, the building is an excellent example of part of a wider Georgian set piece in one of the earliest squares in south London. Its historic interest has been partially eroded through the loss of its original features such as its windows but these have been replicated to a good standard.

The rear features a full height extension that dates to the 19th century which has eroded its original external appearance and floor plan, although this has not harmed an appreciation of the building's principal elevation and is part of the building's history. The conservatory to the rear dates to 2010 and is of no significance.

Internally, almost all of the building's architectural interest has been lost with the removal of almost all its original features although its original floor plan is still discernible especially at the upper levels. The loss of all joinery, original fireplaces, staircase details has had a detrimental impact on significance.

Architecturally therefore, it is primarily the building's external envelope, especially its principal elevation that is of interest, especially in its contribution to the wider listed terrace and the square as a whole.

Historic Interest: This is primarily illustrative. The building is good example of an early south London Georgian square, built by speculative developers with high aspirations for the future expansion and development of the area following the significant infrastructure improvements.

The overall significance of the site is high in a national context, which is reflected in its statutory Grade II listed status.

Setting

The setting of the building still provides a positive contribution to the building's overall significance, with its principal facade being appreciated in almost its original context. This has been slightly eroded by modern development in the wider area, but its key facade remains unaffected by this.



3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

2. West Square Conservation Area

The West Square Conservation Area was designated in 1971. The council's conservation area appraisal (2013) identifies three sub areas within the conservation area; West Square and St. George's Road, Albert Triangle, and Hayles Street and Brooke Drive. The area is primarily characterised by developments dating to the 18th and 19th centuries.

The council's conservation area appraisal highlights the area's significance:

The West Square Conservation Area is a notable example of high quality late Georgian and mid-19th century townscape, with a number of significant public buildings. The Imperial War Museum, with its surrounding parkland; Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, is the centrepiece of the conservation area. St George's Roman Catholic Cathedral is another important building.

It goes on to state (author's emphasis):

*much of the area today consists of development dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. The layout of this area is largely derived from its rapid growth through the urbanisation of 18th century London and from the construction of Blackfriars Bridge in particular. Robert Mylne's plan of roads radiating from St George's Circus followed the Parisian example, but the geometric layout of his "dissection of the fields" was pure Georgian. **West Square is one of the best Georgian set pieces in the borough, complete with formally laid out central gardens and trees.** The area is bisected by two busy main roads: Lambeth Road and St George's Road, where some street trees help to diminish the effect of the traffic.*

Within the document it highlights where redevelopment opportunities may be possible:

replacement of unlisted structures will normally only be entertained where existing buildings do not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the proposal can be shown to positively preserve or enhance that character and appearance

The appraisal also highlights negative features in the area:

- *Whilst the West Square Conservation Area remains substantially intact, the*



Figure 18 West Square conservation area showing character areas and indicative location of the site highlighted by red circle.

3. Identification of Heritage Assets and Significance Assessment

cumulative effect of small scale changes is damaging the overall character and appearance of the conservation area. Particular problems within the West Square Conservation Area include: replacement windows and doors, loss of architectural details, satellite dishes, inappropriate repair methods and materials.

- Replacement front garden boundary treatments not in keeping with other properties in the conservation area (e.g. rendered walling and modern walling blocks on Brook Drive) are having a negative impact.
- War damage or later demolition resulting in the erection of some buildings that do not enhance the character of the West Square Conservation Area and has affected the consistency of the residential areas. These areas include: Temple West Mews, Nos. 71- 89 (odd) Brook Drive and the Nancy Sear Building, King Edward Walk.

It also provides advice on new design (author's emphasis):

*Although new design should be sympathetic to the existing characteristics of the area **modern design is not necessarily to be precluded**. Success of contemporary design in the conservation area will not come from aping the style of 18th and 19th century houses, but in building on the unique townscape opportunities of building height, set back, plot width (visual rhythm) and continuity that the development pattern affords.*

Where rear extensions are proposed, they should normally be no more than one storey in height, be low key in design and as unobtrusive as possible. Full width rear extensions will normally prove unacceptable. Extensions should be clearly subservient to the main part of a building and not add appreciably to the building's bulk.

The square does feature a number of contemporary rear extensions and outbuildings that have received formal consent from Southwark council, including Nos. 23, 24, 35, 40 & 44. Further details of some of these schemes can be found in Yard Architects' Design & Access Statement.

The significance of the conservation area therefore largely resides in its historic interest for being an early Georgian development in south London. It is also of architectural significance for its high quality, late Georgian and mid-19th century townscape.

The site makes a considerable contribution to this overall significance, through its positive contribution to the listed terrace and wider square.



Figure 19 Showing recently consented rear extension to No. 24 West Square (ref: 22/AP/3562).

4. Proposals and Assessment of Impact

Overview

The proposals relate to the lower ground floor of the building only, and include the following alterations:

- Additional excavation of the lower ground floor (or at least the rear part of it) to create greater head height and a more enjoyable kitchen and dining space.
- Removal of the existing rear extension glass roof, which has poor environmental credentials being too cold in winter and too warm in the summer. The proposals include the reworking of the rear elevation and a new roof constructed to provide a high quality environmentally sound contemporary addition.
- Hard landscaping works adjacent to the extension to make the most of the additional level change, and to ensure a good connection with the garden.
- Alterations to the lower ground floor layout, with retention of the front room and reworking of the existing large bathroom which is to be replaced with a smaller shower room and utility.

Impact

Starting at the front of the property, this bedroom will be retained but access to the space will be provided by new double doors. This change provides a better connection to the rear spaces. The existing spine wall is a modern stud and the door is not believed to be in its original position. Whilst the provision of double doors would not normally be found at this level, considering the extent of change that has already occurred to the building and that no historic fabric would be affected, the impact on the building's significance would be **neutral**. Similar openings have also historically been consented on neighbouring properties including No. 5 (ref: 21/AP/2418) and exist at No. 7.

The existing large bathroom in the central section of the plan will be remodelled to provide a smaller shower room and separate utility. This would have **no impact** on any plan form or fabric of interest.

A new partition wall is proposed to partly enclose the staircase to help closed off the hallway from the kitchen. A new fire rated window will be inserted to provide natural light to the stairs from the kitchen space. The stairs themselves date to the 2010 application and reviewing floor plans of contemporary buildings to the south show that partitions in this location are a common feature. This change would therefore have **no impact** on any plan form or fabric of interest.

A new window is proposed to the former rear wall of the building to allow natural light into

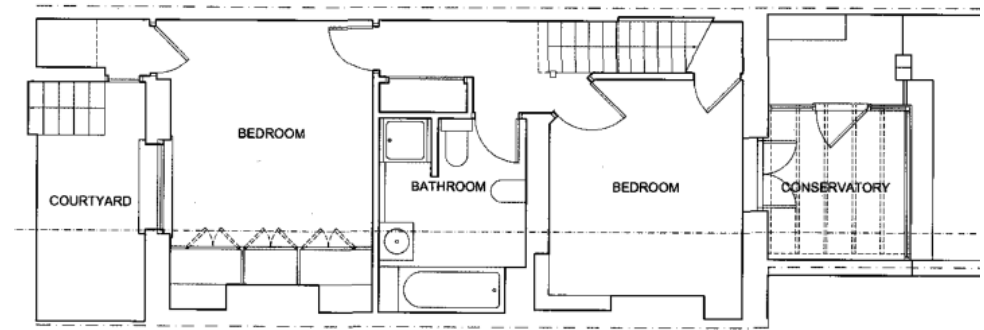


Figure 20 Lower ground floor prior to 2010 consent

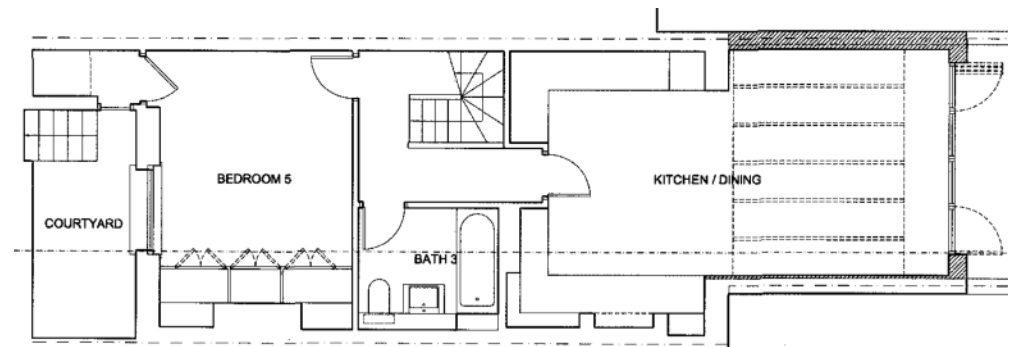


Figure 21 Lower ground floor consented 2010 plan.

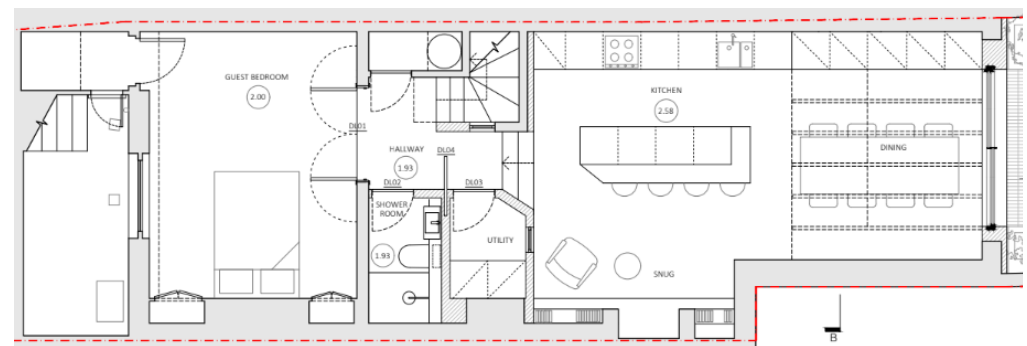


Figure 22 Proposed lower ground floor.

4. Proposals and Assessment of Impact

utility room. It is entirely possible that there was a window here historically that would have matched the fenestration detail above. This change is therefore unlikely to harm any fabric of interest and is considered to result in **no impact** on the significance of the building.

The 2010 application shows that there were wardrobes in front of the chimney breast to the front room historically. These have now been removed better revealing this part of the building. This is considered to have an overall **beneficial impact** on the significance of the building.

Part of the proposal seeks to increase the floor to ceiling height of the modern rear part of the lower ground floor by 600mm. As this change would be undertaken within a later part of the building that has a distinctly modern appearance, it is considered to have **no impact** on the building's overall significance.

It is proposed to remove the existing flat roof to the modern extension and replace it with a smaller quantum of high performance roof glazing, with exposed rafters below to baffle the light. The roof will be highly insulated and clad in anthracite coloured zinc, pitched towards an overhanging zinc gutter. The new rooflight is located towards the kitchen to provide more natural light to the middle of the house. The new opening to the garden has been made slightly smaller, to allow the space for the new long kitchen units alongside the party wall. All these changes would provide a sustainable solution that would have **no impact** on any fabric of interest and would **preserve** the character and appearance of the conservation area and significance of the listed building.



Figure 23 Proposed extension and internal changes to rear (YARD Architects).

5. Conclusion

The proposals seek to refurbish the existing listed building at lower ground floor level and improve the environmental performance of the modern rear extension through internal and external changes.

This report has demonstrated that the building has undergone substantial internal and external changes over its history that have considerably eroded its architectural and historic interest. Internally there is very little of interest surviving. All the proposed changes will preserve the significance of the listed building and conservation area.

Consequently, the scheme is considered to be compliant with national and the council's local planning policies, sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and we therefore see no reason why the application should not be viewed favourably by the council from a heritage perspective.

Appendix: Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

Legislation

Legislation regarding Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (the 1990 Act).

Section 16(2) states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66(1) states that, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development that affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority (LPA) or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Section 72(1) states that, in the exercise of planning functions, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

The term “preserve”, within the context of Section 66, has been defined within *South Lakeland District Council v Secretary of State [1992]*, where it was held that the “desirability of preserving” creates a presumption against harmful changes, but not a presumption against any change. Case law has established that the preservation of the setting of a listed building requires considerable importance and weight (i.e. the Barnwell Manor judgment) and that a decision-maker who has worked through the paragraphs of the NPPF in accordance with their terms will have complied with the statutory duty set out in the 1990 Act (i.e. the judgment in *Jones v Mordue & Others [2015]*).

In the judgment for *Palmer v Herefordshire Council ([2016] EWCA Civ 106)*, a discussion on the balance between harm and benefit to a listed building was undertaken. It was accepted that “where proposed development would affect a listed building or its settings in different ways, some positive and some negative, the decision-maker may legitimately conclude that although each of the effects as an impact, taken together there is no overall adverse effect on the listed building or its setting”. In essence, where there is some harm and some benefit, these should be given the same weight, and where they are equal in measure, the effect on the listed building would be neutral, and thus its significance would be preserved.

This approach was confirmed in *City & Country Bramshill Ltd v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities And Local Government & Ors [2021]*. In this case Lord Justice Lindblom concluded that ‘the considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preservation [of the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building or its setting], should tip the scales to produce an unequal balance in its favour. However, the SoS should still take account of the actual severity of any change, or scale of change as the Mayoral SPG puts it, and so the extent of impact, as well as the relevance to its significance, and the importance of the asset. The overall weight to be given to any harm, and the

conflict with policy, should be a product of these factors.’

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The policies relevant to heritage are outlined within chapter 16, ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’. The NPPF places much emphasis on ‘significance’ which it defines 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

The NPPF directs local planning authorities to require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting and the level of detailed assessment should be ‘proportionate’ to the assets’ importance. (Paragraph 200).

Paragraph 201 states that the significance any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal should be identified and assessed. This includes any assets affected by development within their settings. This Significance Assessment should be taken into account when considering the impact of a proposal, ‘to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal’.

Paragraph 205 requires that ‘When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.’

It is then clarified that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, either through alteration, destruction or development within its setting, should require, “clear and convincing justification” (Paragraph 206). This paragraph outlines that substantial harm to grade II listed heritage assets should be exceptional, rising to ‘wholly exceptional’ for those assets of the highest significance such as scheduled monuments, Grade I and grade II* listed buildings or registered parks and gardens as well as World Heritage Sites.

Paragraphs 207 and 208 discuss different levels of harm caused to heritage assets. and requires a balance to be applied in the context of heritage assets, including the recognition of potential benefits accruing from a development. In the case of non-designated heritage assets, Paragraph 209 requires a Local Planning Authority to make a “balanced judgement” having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

With regards to conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets, paragraph 212 requires Local Planning Authorities to look for opportunities for new development to enhance or better reveal their significance.

Planning Practice Guidance (2019)

This guidance supports the NPPF and reiterates the importance of conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. An important consideration should be whether development proposals adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset’s significance:

‘it is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development that is to be assessed’. The level of ‘substantial harm’ is stated to be a high bar, which may not arise in many cases. Whether development proposals cause substantial harm will be a judgment in the decision-taking process, having regard to the circumstances of the case and by applying the relevant NPPF policies. Such harm may arise from works to the heritage asset or from development within its setting. Setting is defined as:

the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may be more extensive than the curtilage.

A thorough assessment of the harm development proposals will have on this setting needs to consider, and be proportionate to, the heritage asset’s significance and the degree to which any changes enhance or detract from that significance, and the ability to appreciate and experience it.

Local Planning Policy

The Southwark Plan 2022

Key policies relating to heritage that are relevant to this application include: Policy P19 Listed Buildings and Structures which highlights that:

1. Development relating to listed buildings structures and their settings will only be permitted if it conserves or enhances their special significance in relation to:

1. The historic fabric, architectural style and features, curtilage, site layout, plan form and readability, and land use; and
2. The contribution of the building to its setting or its place within a group; and
3. Views that contribute positively to the significance of the building or structure or their setting; and
4. The viable use of listed buildings and structures that is consistent with their on-going and long term conservation.

2. Any harm to the significance of the listed building or structure that results from a proposed development must be robustly justified.

Policy P20 Conservation Areas, highlights that:

1. Development relating to conservation areas will only be granted where it preserves or enhances the character or appearance of conservation areas and their settings, taking into account their significance, views into and out of the

Appendix: Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

conservation area and its positive characteristics identified in Conservation Area Appraisals and Conservation Area Management Plans.

2. The demolition of buildings or structures that make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of a conservation area will not generally be permitted. Any replacement buildings or structures must conserve and enhance the conservation area's historic character and distinctiveness.

3. Any harm to the significance of the conservation area or its setting that results from a proposed development must be robustly justified.

4. Development relating to conservation areas will only be granted where it preserves or enhances the character or appearance of conservation areas and their settings, taking into account their significance, views into and out of the conservation area and its positive characteristics identified in Conservation Area Appraisals and Conservation Area Management Plans

Southwark Core Strategy 2011

Strategic Policy 12 – Design and conservation states, *inter alia* that:

Our approach is Development will achieve the highest possible standards of design for buildings and public spaces to help create attractive and distinctive places which are safe, easy to get around and a pleasure to be in.

We will do this by

1. *Expecting development to conserve or enhance the significance of Southwark's heritage assets, their settings and wider historic environment, including conservation areas, archaeological priority zones and sites, listed and locally listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, world heritage sites and scheduled monuments.*

3. *Making sure that the height and design of development conserves and enhances strategic views and is appropriate to its context, the historic environment and important local views.*

Heritage SPD (2021)

This document seeks to provide an informative overview of the borough's heritage assets, and show how this can be balanced with their commitment to enabling appropriate sustainable development.

West Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2013)

Section 5.3 provides advice on New Design in the Conservation Area and states:

Although new design should be sympathetic to the existing characteristics of the area modern design is not necessarily to be precluded. Success of contemporary design in the conservation area will not come from aping the style of 18th and 19th century houses, but in building on the unique townscape opportunities of building height, set back, plot width (visual rhythm) and continuity that the development pattern affords.

Guidance Notes

Conservation Principles, Policies, and Guidance (English Heritage, April 2008)

This document outlines Historic England's approach to the sustainable management of the historic environment. While primarily intended to ensure consistency in their own advice and guidance through the planning process, the document is commended to LPAs to ensure that all decisions about change affecting the historic environment are informed and sustainable. This document was published in line with the philosophy of PPS5, yet remains relevant with the NPPF and PPG, the emphasis placed upon the importance of understanding significance to properly assess the effects of change to heritage assets. Guidance within the document describes a range of 'heritage values' that constitute a heritage asset's significance to be established systematically; the four main heritage values include: aesthetic, evidential, communal or historical. The document emphasises that:

considered change offers the potential to enhance and add value to places...it is the means by which each generation aspires to enrich the historic environment

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes

GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

This document provides advice on the numerous ways in which decision-making in the historic environment can 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 its significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, this document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged, stating that:

...application proposals that affect the historic environment are much more likely to gain the necessary permissions and create successful places if they are designed with the knowledge and understanding of the significance of the heritage assets they may affect.

The advice suggests a structured staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information, this is as follows:

- Understand the significance of the affected assets;
- understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
- avoid, minimise, and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF
- look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
- justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change;
- offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

The advice reiterates that direct physical change may affect heritage assets, or by change in their setting. Assessment of the nature, extent, and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting at an early stage can assist the planning process resulting in informed decision-taking.

This document sets out the recommended steps for assessing significance and the impact of application proposals upon a heritage asset, including examining the asset and its setting and analysing local policies and information sources. In assessing the impact of a development proposal on the significance of a heritage asset the document emphasises that the cumulative impact of incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change.

GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (December 2017) (2nd Edition)

This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This guidance updates that previously published by English Heritage (The Setting of Heritage Assets 2011) in order to ensure that it is fully compliant with the NPPF and is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 document. It does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.

Setting is defined as 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve'. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset or a heritage designation and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset itself. Elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of a heritage asset.

While setting is largely a visual concept, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, setting, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, can also be affected by other environmental factors, including historic associations.

This document states that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset. It is further stated that the contribution made to an asset's significance by their setting will vary depending on the nature of the asset and its setting. Different heritage assets have the capacity to accommodate changes and, therefore, setting should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Although not prescriptive in setting out how this assessment should be carried out, Historic England recommend using a '5-step process' to assess any effects of a development proposals on the setting and significance of a heritage asset:

- Identifying the heritage assets affected and their settings;
- Assessing whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
- Assessing the effect of the development proposals on the significance of the heritage asset(s);
- Maximising enhancement and minimising harm;