



Highpoint II - External decoration & repair works

Highpoint II, North Hill, London N6 4AZ

Design & Access Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment

Introduction

Highpoint II was designed by Tecton (headed by Berthold Lubetkin) as a 7-storey block of 12 duplex flats (plus penthouse), and was completed in 1938. This followed Highpoint I which had been completed in 1935. Both buildings are Grade I listed (first listed in 1974 - see next page for Historic England listing description).

Listed Building consent was granted last year for façade and window repairs and decorations to Highpoint I (Haringey ref: HGY/2025/0480) - these works have now been completed. Works to the same specification are now proposed to Highpoint II - rendered areas of facade and windows. In addition, the areas of tiled cladding are in need of maintenance and repair.

This statement supports the application for Listed Building consent for these repair and decoration works to the external facades of Highpoint II.



Location plan with Highpoint II highlighted in red



Front (east) elevation of Highpoint II

HISTORIC ENGLAND LISTING:

Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: I
List Entry Number: 1079183
Date first listed: 10-May-1974
Date of most recent amendment: 19-Nov-1975
List Entry Name: HIGHPOINT II
Statutory Address 1: HIGHPOINT II, 51-62, NORTH HILL N6

Details

TQ 2887 NORTH HILL N6 (West side) 800/40/180

Nos 51-62 (consecutive)

HIGHPOINT II 10.5.74

GV I

Block of twelve flats and penthouse. 1936-8 by Tecton. Reinforced concrete, the central bays a prototype of the egg-crate or box-frame construction that revolutionised the design of flats after the Second World War, with monolithic construction to either side - reflecting the different plan forms of the maisonettes within. Cladding of faience with inset brick panels to centre reflects the structure, marble cladding to entrance; flat roof with curved roof to penthouse. Six storeys. Large cantilevered canopy to front, partly resting on two casts of Erectheion caryatids obtained from the British Museum and intended by Lubetkin 'to be read not as part of the building but as a garden ornament'. Square paned windows to entrance foyer, and bronzed doors; metal windows with mullions forming regular rectangular openings to all flats, glazed bricks to service stairs. Rear aviary. INTERIOR. Central six four-bedroomed maisonettes, with double height living rooms and an oval stair giving on to open landing. Double-height living rooms were a feature of luxury modern flats at this time, for instance the particularly complex planning of No.10 Palace Gate by Wells Coates. Maisonettes at either end with four bedrooms intended for larger families. Separate lifts and stairs for tradesmen and servants. Suites of maids' rooms on the ground floor. The main entrance leads under canopy to boomerang-shaped foyer, with curved travertine ramps on either side leading to lifts, which open directly into the flats. Conoid metal wall-lights a distinctive feature. On top, penthouse flat was originally Lubetkin's own London home. Two bedrooms, two bathrooms and large living room under curved roof which suggests a symmetrical plan below that is in fact disturbed by axial lines placed off-centre below, with concealed light sources within and to inglenook fireplace. Large fully-opening windows on to terrace, with built in marble seat within. Tiled floors throughout, while the entrance lobby and living room are lined in thick sand-blasted Norwegian pine panelling, likened to an early form of brise soleil or to a Russia dacha. John Allan has written that more even than the caryatids, this interior cameo of a world both modern and filled with history seems to support Colin Rowe's thesis of another tradition of Modernity, in contradistinction to the supposed minline of Gropius, Meyer, Marinetti; a counter-formulation represented by such as Stravinsky, Joyce, Picasso, Eliot and Proust that embraces metaphor, irony and multiple meaning (p.303). Le Corbusier's own penthouse at the Porte Molitor in Paris may also have been an inspiration. Highpoint Two is remarkable in that it advances the imagery of modernism beyond that of the classic white concrete box found next door at Highpoint One. It is at once luxurious and rich in its materials, while anticipating the use of box framing with brick and tile infill that Lubetkin, Tecton and others were to employ in low-cost housing after the war. The caryatids also anticipate the ironical historical statements of recent post-modernists. When it was completed critical reaction to the building was hostile, as young architectural students seeing Lubetkin as the master of modernism in England could not understand how he had progressed beyond the confines of the international style. Now it can be appreciated as perhaps the more revolutionary of the two Highpoint blocks. Sources Peter Coe and Malcolm Reading, Lubetkin and Tecton, Architecture and Social Commitment, Bristol, Arts Council, 1981, pp.120-4, 152-8 John Allan, Berthold Lubetkin, Architecture and the Tradition of Progress, London, RIBA, 1992, pp.252-312
Listing NGR: TQ2826987801

Proposed works:

Render repairs & decorations:

The areas of rendered facade are proposed to be pressure washed, then any damaged areas proposed to be repaired and all rendered areas redecorated with Sika microporous paint.

This specification is as per works to Highpoint I (Haringey ref: HGY/2025/0480 - consent granted in 2025).

Steel window repairs & decorations:

The windows at Highpoint are W20 steel windows by Williams & Williams. They are not galvanised so require regular maintenance to keep them in good condition. The steel windows were made to small tolerances, therefore cannot simply be re-painted, as too many layers of paint would inhibit their smooth operation / opening.

The windows have not been decorated for some years, so all require decoration and some require repair works as they have rusted. The rust treatment works involve stripping back the paintwork to metal, coating with a rust inhibitor, priming and painting.

This specification is as per works to Highpoint I (Haringey ref: HGY/2025/0480 - consent granted in 2025).

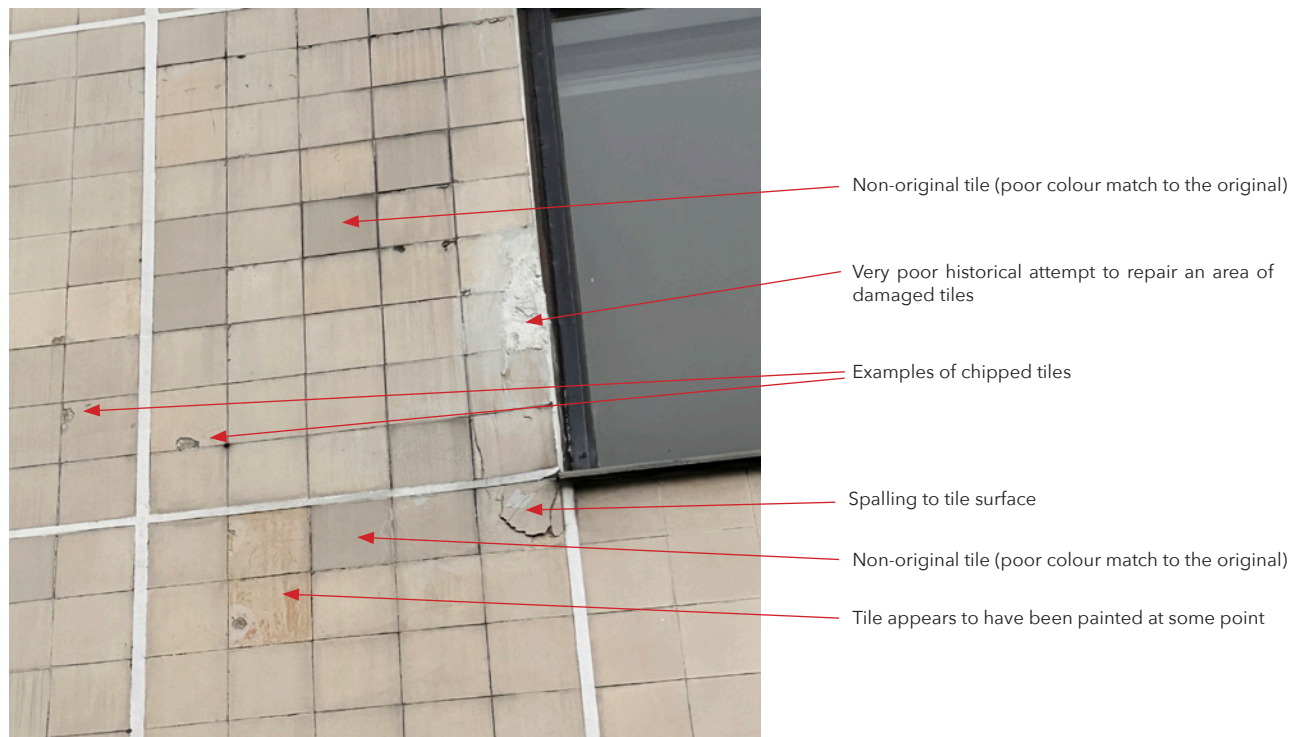


Replacement facade tiles:

The northern and southern wings of Highpoint II are clad externally in cream / buff coloured glazed clay tiles. This is in contrast to the dark brick infill panels of the central section of the building, reflecting the different construction types (reinforced concrete frame to the central section, with monolithic loadbearing external walls and spine beam to the north / south wings). This also corresponds to the different apartment types internally.

The tiled cladding is in need of maintenance and repair - there are many cracked, chipped, damaged tiles, as well as many areas where tiles have historically been replaced with a poor colour match.

The photo below is an example of a particularly damaged area of facade (at the southern end of the rear facade, 1st floor level), nevertheless shows the multitude of issues that warrant restoration:



There is also an area where damaged tiles at 5th floor level have fallen from the facade. Clearly this is a serious concern in case further damaged tiles should fall.

The proposal is for all tiles in a poor condition to be carefully removed and replaced with new clay tiles, to match the original. The proposal also includes removing all non-original tiles of a poor colour match and replacing these with the same new tiles, to match the original. All original tiles in a good condition will be retained and cleaned by gentle pressure washing.

Drawing 2545.PL.10.205 shows an extract of the rear façade as an example area of the tiles to be replaced.

We have been working closely with Craven Dunill Jackfield - a traditional tile manufacturer who specialises in restoration projects, including producing the tiles that formed part of the recent refurbishment of Finsbury Health Centre (also by Lubetkin with Tecton). We have been through a process of sampling to match the colour, glaze and precise size of the original tiles. - see specification on the following page.

Highpoint

145x143x8mm wall tile



Dust pressed, machine glazed wall tile in glaze reference MG14 - 4 sec



Biscuit Firing Temperature: 800°

Glaze Firing Temperature: 1090°

Biscuit Type: Standard White Clay

Dimensions: 145x143x8mm

Silicone sealed



CRAVEN DUNNILL
JACKFIELD

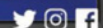
1872 - 2022

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The following photos show the existing condition of the tiles, and also illustrate the historical replacements that are a poor colour match. As is clear in the photos, the facades of Highpoint II would benefit enormously from the careful restoration treatment proposed that will help to maintain and preserve the listed heritage asset in good condition.



Southern end of rear facade



Southern end of rear facade



Northern end of rear facade



Northern end of front facade



Northern end of front facade - 1st floor

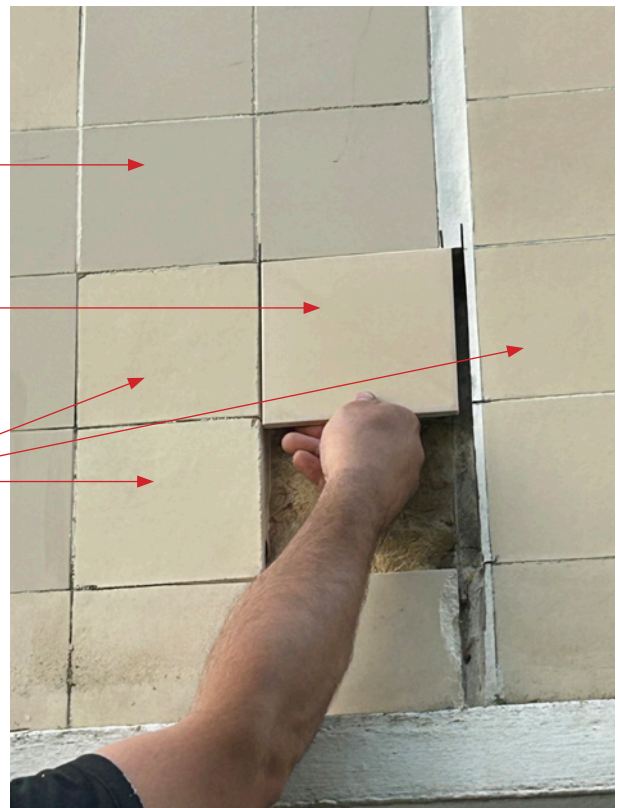


Southern end of front facade - 1st floor

Non-original tile (poor colour match to the original)

Sample tile indicating proposed colour match
(Note sample tile is representative of proposed colour match only - not tile size nor glaze)

Original tiles



Sample tile held in situ adjacent to existing tiles