



Flat 62, Highpoint II - Refurbishment works

Flat 62, Highpoint II, North Hill, London N6 4AZ

Design & Access Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment

Introduction

Highpoint II was designed by Tecton (led by the Russian emigre-architect, Berthold Lubetkin) as a 7-storey block of 12 duplex flats (plus penthouse), and was completed in 1938. This followed the neighbouring Highpoint I, also designed by Lubetkin with Tecton, which was commissioned in 1935 by Sigmund Gestetner.

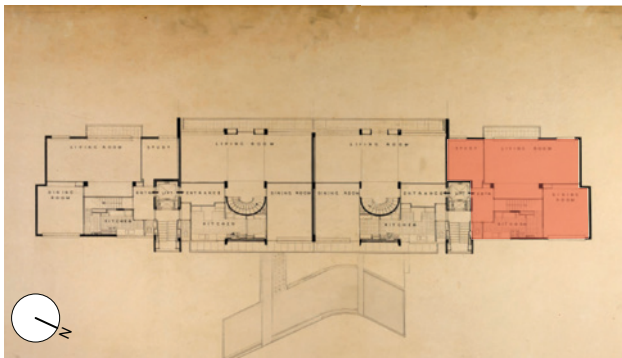
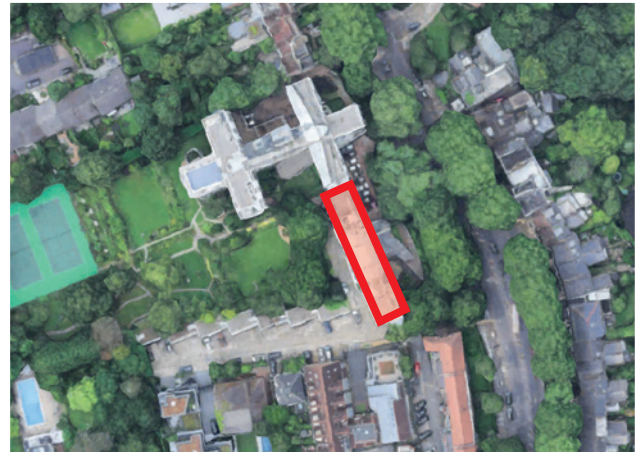
It is Grade I listed (first listed as Grade II* in 1974, then revised to Grade I listed in 2000) – see next page for Historic England listing description. Highpoint sits within the Highgate Conservation Area.

Flat 62 is a duplex flat on the 5th & 6th floors, at the northern end of the building - as highlighted below.

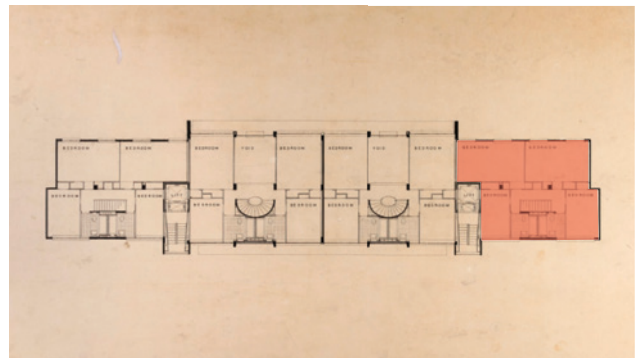
This statement supports the application for Listed Building consent for refurbishment works to Flat 62.



Location plan with Highpoint II highlighted in red



5th floor plan with Flat 62 highlighted



6th floor plan with Flat 62 highlighted



Front elevation with Flat 62 highlighted

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

Planning History

Alterations have been made to Flat 62 over the years by previous owners, most recently including the refurbishment of bathroom 2 under planning consent ref: HGY/2023/3221 in 2023.

Prior to this the kitchen, bathroom 1 and cloakroom WC have been refurbished; a partition and door have been installed on the upstairs landing; timber panelling has been installed to some walls and ceilings, notably in the kitchen and bathrooms. Very few original features exist and the flat is in need of general refurbishment and modernisation.

We have already consulted with Haringey for pre-application advice - ref. PRE/2026/0171

In response to this we have moved the position of the proposed doorway between bathroom 1 and the dressing room further from the window to retain the original "quirky" window detail where the wall narrows to meet the mullion.

A further change to the proposal since pre-app, is the new proposed doorway between the dining room and downstairs storage area (more detail on the following pages).

Existing photos



Proposed Works

As noted above, Flat 62 is in need of general refurbishment and modernisation. The intention is to carry out the proposed works with minimal disruption to the existing historic fabric, and for any new interventions to be in keeping with the spirit of Lubetkin's original architectural intent.

The proposed works are as follows:

GENERALLY:

All floor finishes are proposed to be replaced (none of the existing are original).

All original ironmongery is to be retained and restored to ensure all in good working order and in good condition.

KITCHEN:

New kitchen units, fittings, finishes and appliances to replace the existing, which are non-original except for the stainless steel sink / drainer. The sink is proposed to be replaced as the unit is tired with some stains and dents in places. It also sits at a low level, and raising this to a higher level is not possible due to the window opening arrangement which would clash.

The general layout of the kitchen will remain as existing, so connections to services will remain in the existing locations.

Refer to drawing 2652.PL.20.001-003



DINING ROOM / KITCHEN DOORS:

The non-original sliding door between the dining room and kitchen is proposed to be removed, and replaced with new slim double doors, with the doorway adapted to be centred on the kitchen and head height to match the original doorway to the living room (on the right in the below photo)..

A new doorway is proposed between the dining room and understairs storage area in this non-structural wall, thus providing access to this storage area, whilst freeing up space for a much-needed additional unit in the kitchen. Planning consent has previously been granted for a similar detail at Flat 58 (Haringey ref: HGY/2015/0382).

Refer to drawing 2652.PL.20.010



Existing sliding door between dining room / kitchen



Understairs storage area

CLOAKROOM WC:

The original WC pan is proposed to be retained. A new basin is proposed to replace the non-original existing basin.

Refer to drawing 2652.PL.20.015



STUDY - DOOR TO HALLWAY:

The original doorset is proposed to be rotated through 180 degrees, to open inwards to the Study rather than opening outwards into the Hallway, across the entrance doorway to the lift, as at present. This retains the existing fabric but makes this corner of the Hallway more user-friendly. The deep reveal of the doorway expressed in the Study is made more purposeful, to accommodate the door swing (as per the original arrangement that exists in the bedrooms upstairs).

This is a complete original metal-framed doorset, with hinges welded to the frame - all in good condition. The door will be removed from the hinges, then the doorframe will be carefully eased from the surrounding wall nibs, which will then be made good as necessary. The frame will be rotated through 180 degrees and re-fixed on exactly the same line as existing in relation to the walls either side. The door will be re-fixed to the hinges to now open inwards to the study.

Refer to drawing 2652.PL.20.012-013



UPSTAIRS LANDING PARTITION & DOOR

The non-original partition and door are proposed to be removed, thereby reinstating the original Landing layout, and exposing the original balustrade detailing.

The existing stud partition wall will be carefully dismantled, taking particular care where this meets the balustrade buried beneath; also the existing side wall of the landing and ceiling. Any mechanical fixings will be exposed before being removed to prevent any damage to the balustrade. The balustrade will be made good as necessary and existing paintwork to the handrail will be carefully stripped back to bare wood. The metal bars across the end of the balustrade (visible in the centre photo below) will be stripped back to bare metal and primed. The metal bars and the lower solid section of the long side balustrade will be painted, and the handrail re-finished to expose and preserve the timber finish.



BEDROOM 1 - NEW DOORWAY TO DRESSING ROOM

A new doorway is proposed to open up through the back of the existing bedroom cupboard to access the Dressing Room. This retains the symmetry of the central doorway to the landing and cupboard doors either side in the Master Bedroom, which remain as existing. On the Dressing Room side, the non-original cupboards are proposed to be removed. At present, these cover over what was once a cupboard behind.

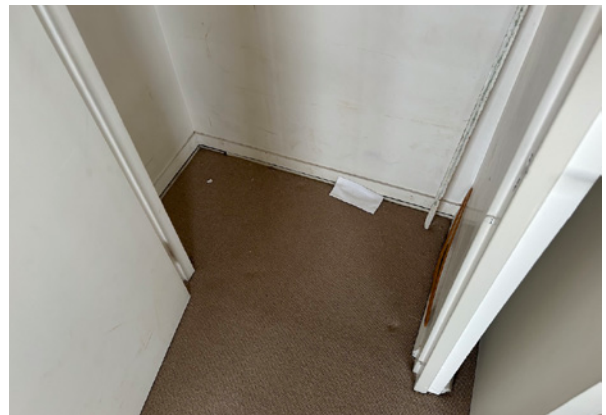
Refer to drawing 2652.PL.20.020-022



Symmetry of existing doors on bedroom side proposed to be retained



New opening to dressing room proposed through the back of the cupboard (open doorway on the left)



Non-original cupboards in dressing room proposed to be removed



BATHROOM 1

New sanitaryware, fittings and finishes to replace the existing, which are non-original - except for the original heated towel rail, which is proposed to be retained but relocated to the wall at the end of the shower.

A new doorway is proposed in the non-structural wall between the Bathroom and Dressing Room.

The general layout of the bathroom will remain as existing, so connections to services will remain in the existing locations.

Refer to drawing 2652.PL.20.025-026 & 021-022



All sanitaryware, fittings and finishes proposed to be replaced



All finishes (including mirrored tiles) proposed to be replaced



Bathroom 1 - mirrored wall to dressing room on left (where new doorway is proposed)



Dressing room - wall to bathroom on right (where new doorway is proposed)

BATHROOM 2

New sanitaryware, fittings and finishes to replace the existing, which are non-original - except for the original heated towel rail which is proposed to be retained. The washing machine is proposed to be relocated from Bathroom 1 to Bathroom 2, and located against the landing wall to preserve the openness of the window elevation.

The general layout of the bathroom will remain as existing, other than the WC moving to the outside wall, but connections to existing service stacks will remain. Existing service risers are currently located on the outside wall as well as the landing wall therefore the WC is proposed to connect into the existing stack on the outside wall.

Refer to drawing 2652.PL.20.027-028



SERVICES:

The existing wiring is old and unsafe and will require re-wiring throughout. All new wiring routes will be carefully chased into the existing walls and then plastered and decorated.

Plumbing and water services connections to existing stacks are retained.

Access

The proposed works do not affect the existing access arrangements.

Summary

The minor alterations proposed are all internal and non-structural, therefore fully reversible. They do not affect any original fixtures or fittings, except the kitchen sink which is in poor condition and not practical to retain.

All proposed works will be undertaken with the utmost care and respect for the original building fabric, with new fixtures and fittings carefully selected to complement and reinforce the modernist architectural character and design intent of the original building. The proposals have been thoughtfully developed to minimise their impact on the listed heritage asset while enabling the flat to meet contemporary requirements. As such, the works represent a sensitive and considered approach to adaptation, helping to secure the long-term future and continued use of the home.