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Flat 5, The Gables, Fortis Green Road, London N10 3EA



Heritage, Design and Access Statement

January 2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Roger Mears Architects in support of the proposals for listed building consent of Flat 5, The Gables on Fortis Green Road (Muswell Hill) in the London Borough of Haringey.
- 1.2 The proposals have been prepared on behalf of the clients, Tom Elwood and Harriet Sumner.
- 1.3 Flat 5 is part of a block of private flats built in 1907 by Herbert and William Collins. The building consists of three storeys and makes three blocks in total. They have each a shared entrance off Fortis Green Road and communal gardens at the back. Each flat can access the garden from cast iron balconies and stairs.
- 1.4 The applicants who reside in the top floor flat of the first block (nos 1-6) carried out a sequence of works to this property which remain unauthorised as no listed building consent was received in advance of the works for which retrospective consent is now sought.

2.0 Setting

- 2.1 Fortis Green is a ward in the extreme northwestern corner of the Borough of Haringey, north London. The ward lies between Colney Hatch to the north, Muswell Hill to the east, Highgate to the south and East Finchley to the west.
- 2.2 Fortis Green lies within the Fortis Green Conservation Area, designated in 1974. This area doesn't have a current adopted appraisal hence the Appraisal for Muswell Hill would apply.
- 2.3 The predominant character of this area is characterised by residential development interspersed with community and retail uses. It was initially developed in a 40 year period between 1896 and 1936. Much of this development was undertaken by the Collins family.
- 2.4 The residential development along the Fortis Green frontages and the south side of Fortis Green Road is made up of substantial three and four storeys blocks of flats occupying large plots. Much of the development has a building line set well back behind small communal areas of semi-private space, the front boundaries of which are defined by a combination of railings, walls and hedgerows. The trees along these road frontages are consistent elements that reinforce the sense of enclosure to the street and filter views in the summer months.

3.0 Design and Description

- 3.1 Flat 5 is Grade II listed and is part of a group of three block of flats stretching from nos 1 to 18 (consecutive). A copy of the listing is included in the Appendix.
- 3.2 The Gables were built in 1907 in a style inspired by Arts and Crafts and Jugendstil by the architects Herbert and William Collins who also designed the nearby Birchwood Mansions in the same year.
- 3.3 The elevation is symmetrical with three sections, the centre of each having a wide elliptical red brick arched recessed entrance with a pair of tongue and grooved panelled doors with small paned upper lights. The red tiled roofs have half-hips and gable ends and there are tall plumb coloured brick chimney stacks with terracotta pots and chequer pattern tiling on the flank elevations and each side of the three entrances. Further interest is given to the elevations by the use of two storey bays, gables, balconies, roughcast render and tile hanging set within the brickwork. The windows are a mixture of timber vertical sliding sashes with glazing bars and continuous casements with glazing bars and some leaded lights. Views of the rear of the block are prominent from both Leaside Avenue and Fortismere Avenue. Unfortunately, the outstanding quality of the building has been somewhat

marred by the replacement of some windows and the reduction and capping off of some of the chimney stacks.

- 3.4 Flat 5 was purchased in February 2022 by the current owners and it had already undergone a number of alterations, including new 1960s doors, poor finishes laid out on the original floorboards, replaced fanlights with plain glass within the Hall, cheap kitchen and bathroom fittings and installation of a gas boiler.
- 3.5 Also within the block, originally the kitchens were all two separate rooms with a small scullery kitchen and a dining room. The scullery walls were all removed in the 70s when the freeholder decided to sell off the flats as the scullery kitchens were not practical for modern appliances. Since then individual owners in the other flats have made a variety of changes at various stages in time.

4.0 Design Statement: work already carried out

4.1 The following works were undertaken:

- Alterations to kitchen cupboard to accommodate new boiler, washing machine and water softener. Changes included remodelling the walls and forming a door opening; new skirtings with profile to match existing on sections of new partition
- Opening up a section of the wall within the Shower room to insert the walk-in shower
- Blocking up cupboard door to Hall and reinstatement of skirting section
- Replacing old fittings in the Kitchen and Shower room

Work carried out to comply with current Building Regulations

- Rewiring of the existing electrical system (the installer certificate is available)
- Replacement of gas boiler and associated pipework running outside the walls with a new electric boiler in place of the existing gas boiler; boiler provided with vent
- Plumbing work in connection with existing and new radiators
- Installation of mechanical ventilation within shower room (new extract fan discharging outside – opening had been already cut-out)
- Installation of new fire rated kitchen door opening into the Hall
- Replacement of single glazed fanlights over kitchen door opening into the Hall with fire-rated equivalent

Work carried out that rebalance against any perceived heritage harm to the building caused by the unauthorised works generally:

- Original front door frame retained and modern top fanlight replaced with a new handmade in stained glass to match original within the block
- Stripping out of low quality floor finishes (carpets and lino)
- Insulation installed between the floor board and new engineered wood flooring to improve thermal and sound insulation
- Replacement of 1960s flush panel doors with new 4-panel frames to match original elsewhere within the block; ironmongery (i.e. hinges and door handles) were selected to be in keeping with the style.
- Original single glazed casement windows were retained and modern ironmongery replaced with new in appropriate style
- Original architraves to door frames were retained
- Original skirtings were retained
- Original lath plaster ceilings were retained
- Original coving was retained where it had not already been removed

5.0 Planning Statement

- 5.1 There is no history of previous applications for the flat.
- 5.2 Relevant policies for the assessment of this applications are
- The National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
 - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
 - The London Plan (2021)
 - Haringey Local Plan Strategic Policies DPD (Local Plan 2017)

6.0 Significance, and Impact Assessment Criteria

- 6.1 Flat 5 is of historic and architectural significance as an essential part of a complete block of flats on Fortis Green Road. The architectural and historic interest, and therefore significance, of the building, lies, in part, in its surviving historic fabric, plan form and detailing but most importantly as an element that completed the terrace.
- 6.2 It is the building's external features which are the most important in terms of its Architectural significance. The internal features of flat 5 have undergone a certain degree of alteration and change over time. The other flats in the building have not been assessed as part of this heritage statement.
- 6.3 Significance can be defined as the sum of the cultural values which make a building or site important to society. When a building is listed, its importance is judged on its special architectural or historic interest, considering group value, age and rarity, aesthetic merits, national interest and selectivity (i.e., the best example of a particular type of building when there are many of a similar type and quality). Cultural significance is unique to each place, and therefore the criteria by which significance is assessed is also site-specific.
- 6.4 The rating system is as follows when assessing the significance of individual elements of Flat 5:
- Very High**
- High**
- Medium**
- Low**
- Negligible/ Neutral**
- Detrimental**
- 6.5 Each section contains the following sub-divisions:
- Existing Description: a brief outline of the existing condition
 - Assessment of Significance: Using the above-mentioned criteria
 - Proposals: a brief outline of what was carried out
 - Assessment of Impact: an assessment of the impact of the works on heritage significance.

The magnitude and value are taken into account together according to the table below:

MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT	DEFINITION
High Beneficial	The alterations considerably enhance the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
Medium Beneficial	The alterations enhance to a clearly discernible extent the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
Low Beneficial	The alterations enhance to a minor extent the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
Neutral	The alterations do not affect the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
Low Adverse	The alterations harm to a minor extent the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
Medium Adverse	The alterations harm to a clearly discernible extent the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
High Adverse	The alterations severely harm the heritage values of the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.

Heritage Impact assessment rating system

7.0 Impact Assessment

Existing situation	Significance	Works carried out	Impact on existing significance
Original floorboards covered with poor quality carpet and lino	Very High	Old finishes stripped, insulation installed between floorboards and new floor coverings; New floor finishes fitted, these works are reversible.	Low Beneficial
Original windows	Very High	Retained Recently these have been redecorated. Modern ferramenta replaced with new matching original where this can be used as template	Low Beneficial
Ceilings	Very High	Lath & plaster retained and redecorated	Neutral
Hall cupboard	High	The cupboard was part of the original configuration and it was the best candidate for housing the new shower. The panelled door and architrave were possibly original and were disposed of. Opening was blocked up with plasterboard, a section of reclaimed skirting from the Kitchen has been fitted. No change to plan form.	Low adverse
Kitchen cupboard	Medium	This cupboard was partially altered the way it is accessed. Although of some historic value the interior was not historic and it may well been altered prior to the flat purchase. The new opening made features a panelled door matching the style of the other new doors. No change to plan form.	Neutral
Doors	Detrimental	Original doors to the various rooms had been removed prior to the flat	Low Beneficial

		purchase and these were blank flush doors. These were replaced with new panelled doors, this style matching the original. The Kitchen door is fire rated.	
Kitchen, bathroom fittings and radiators	Detrimental	Old fittings were replaced with modern fittings	Neutral
Entrance door	Medium	Original frame and door retained; top modern fanlight replaced with handmade stained glass replica	Low Beneficial
Fire and smoke detection installed to meet requirements.	N/A	Retain. Fittings are surface mounted.	Neutral
Domestic electrical points raised from floor level skirting mounted-type and installed flush in wall. Cable trunking removed and wiring concealed in walls.	N/A	Retain. Installation has been certified and meets requirements. Cabling is concealed improving the aesthetic of the rooms.	Low Beneficial
Mechanical ventilation to Shower room	N/A	A new mechanical extract was fitted within the opening of the old fitting.	Neutral
Mechanical ventilation to kitchen does not exist.	N/A	An extractor was installed in existing boiler flue following removal of gas boiler to reduce build up of condensation.	Neutral

It is believed that, on balance, the new works as proposed mitigate the effects of previous heritage harm caused by the earlier works.

8.0 Access Statement

There have been no changes to access to the Flat.

Appendix Listing

The Gables are Grade II listed (entry no. 1390723)

Details

800/0/10089 FORTIS GREEN 11-SEP-03 Muswell Hill The Gables

II Block of private flats, 1907 by Herbert and William Collins. Arts and Crafts and Jugendstil inspired. Red and grey-brown brick, tile roofs and dressings. EXTERIOR: Symmetrical in seven alternating bays, three storeys. Central and alternating bays in grey-brown brick, set between offset stacks in similar brick, with chequer pattern band of red brick and buff tile at ground floor. Wide elliptical red brick arch to recessed entrance. Pair of tongue and grooved panelled doors with small paned upper lights, under segmental arch, flanked in the offset, by a six-pane fixed light timber window with square leaded lights, under segmental red brick arch. Continuous band of first and second floor timber casements with square leaded lights; arranged 1:3:1, separated by red brick shafts, tile hanging between the storeys, and under deep low eaves. At third floor, fine cast iron balcony in Jugendstil manner. Intervening bays in red brick; a paired gabled bay set forward slightly, flanked by single bays treated similarly. Gabled bay has ground and first floor segmental arched three-light sashes, the upper sash of each small paned. Upper floor small -paned timber casements under segmental relieving arches, those to third bay replaced, and under paired gables between offset brick shaft. Similar two -light windows to flanking bay. Outer bays have half-hipped roof with gablet to return elevation. Facetted gable to two storey canted outer bay, this with segmental headed sash windows, the upper sash with small panes. Inner roofline continues visually to gabled upper storey set against grey-brown brick offset stack and with four-light timber casement with small panes, under segmental brick relieving arch. Third storey corner casement, two lights to each face, set in pebbledash rendered wall. Return elevations each have pair of external grey-brown brick stacks, appearing to pierce the eaves line and bisecting the line of upper storey casements, with one light to the inner flank of the roadside stack; at second floor offset stacks are tile-capped, continuing in red brick to the eaves and as a rectangular shaft above. Lozenge of buff tiles set diagonally at second floor. South-west stack is reduced. Rear angles repeat treatment of upper storey with corner casements set in pebble-dash rendered wall. INTERIOR: not inspected. HISTORY: this is a fine example of Edwardian flat design. The architects, W.J. and William Collins, were also responsible for the nearby Birchwood Mansions of 1907, an outstanding example of the type, with which this shares many elements. The Gables stands within an outstanding enclave of Edwardian suburban architecture, fronting Fortis Green and Fortis Green Road.

Roger Mears Architects LLP is a growing architectural practice offering a unique combination of sensitive contemporary design and historic building expertise.

In the course of the 43 years since the practice was set up, we have worked on a large number of Grade I, II* and II listed buildings that were no longer fit for purpose, or have suffered from neglect, natural ageing and general building maladies. We have helped to reinstate their integrity and given them a new lease of life, with satisfied clients. Membership of the RIBA and accreditation in historic building conservation (AABC) ensures that the highest standards are maintained at all times.

Our staff include three Partners, two Associates, three Architects, one Architectural Technologist, and the retired founding Partner Roger Mears as a consultant. All architectural staff have a degree of experience of working with historic buildings. Our employees share a genuine enthusiasm for our work: we have maintained a learning environment and have always invested in training, research and continued education.

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