

Furnival House lies within the Highgate Conservation Area. The special interest of Highgate Conservation Area derives from the history of the area and evolution of the original settlement. Highgate's historical narrative is discernible in the varied sequence of built development, spanning in time from the medieval village through to its expansion in the Victorian period and its consolidation in the 20th century.

Private 'mansion' flats, well established in central London as a lifestyle choice for middle-class professionals and retirees, emerged in Highgate c1900 while flats above new shopping parades provided generous accommodation for shopkeepers and less-affluent residents and commuters. was built in Cholmeley Park in 1916 as a hostel for female staff of the Prudential Assurance Co. and it is a unusual and high quality example of a purpose built building of this type and accordingly contributes to the significance of the Highgate Conservation Area. The proposed works would have a neutral impact on the significance of the Highgate Conservation Area.

Furnival House is a grade II listed building and is a good example of the neo-Wren (or 'Wrenaissance') style of the early 20th century. It is four storeys high in red brick with rubbed brick and stone dressings, the stone centrepiece with a semi-circular Ionic portico crowned by a segmental pediment carved with the company crest. The forecourt is enclosed by walls and a pedimented gateway with iron gates.

The list entry sets out its reasons for listing as:

Special historic interest as a purpose-built hostel for domestic staff of one of the nation's major firms, built at a time when accommodation for emerging groups of women in cities was being defined, and reflecting the attention to staff welfare to which the Prudential Assurance Company was particularly committed;

Special architectural interest as a handsome institutional building in the Edwardian Baroque style built with quality materials and craftsmanship, making rich use of the patron's motto and crest through architectural detail;

While the interior has been much institutionalized, the special interest can be clearly identified in some areas, particular the elaborately plastered entrance hall and the remains of the dining hall;

The quality brick and stone entrance boundary wall and composite stone balustrades in the grounds reflect its awareness of its location of quality. It has also a group value with the Grade II Cholmeley House next door, a moderne apartment block of the 1930s, and a claim can be made for its associational group value with the Grade II Prudential Assurance headquarters at Holborn Bars by Alfred Waterhouse*

The existing flat entrance is located within an original opening as shown by historic elevations on page 11 of the design and access statement. It is unclear from the information provided if the door here is original or a replacement with a similar design.

The main impact of the proposed works would be on the architectural composition of the building and a direct impact on its high-quality materials and craftsmanship. The building is

in a Edwardian Baroque style and its proportions and rusticated plinth are important components of its overall composition. The material lost through the proposed works would include a modern replacement window, some recent but high-quality masonry, and would involve the loss of a couple of courses of the original high-quality masonry which forms part of the rusticated plinth.

The proposed enlarged opening is located on the in the first bay, close to the two other openings within the east elevation. This has the unfortunate impact of concentrating the number of openings to one side creating a more unbalanced elevation. This helps erode the characteristics of the plinth as an element which is designed to have a solid but well-proportioned and consistent appearance.

The proposed door itself has not been designed to reflect the building. The number of glass panes does not reflect the existing 3 over 3 arrangement in the window, nor those in the upper floors above. It is also noted that the other doors at plinth level on this elevation, including in the original opening, have a solid bottom half in line with the cills of the windows and this helps the building retain a visual solidity at the plinth level where it meets the ground. The pane arrangement and full height glazing make the proposed door an incongruous addition, its proportions conflicting those of the existing building.

Paragraph 205 of the NPPF states 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.'*

Paragraph 208 of the NPPF also states that *'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'*

Cumulatively, the siting and design of the proposed works, as well as some minor loss of original high quality building fabric, would be considered to cause some less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building. This harm should be given great weight and that great weight should be weighed against public benefits. The site is a private residential flat and the works are not required to secure the long-term viable use of the building. The benefits from the works proposed would be private in nature and would not outweigh the harm identified to the designated heritage asset.