

**28 Ryecroft Road, Norbury,
SW16 3EG**

**Heritage Statement for
Proposed Development within a
Conservation Area**

Client: HWJ DEVELOPMENTS LTD.

AB Heritage Project No:10647

Date:24/08/2015

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Heritage Statement for Proposed Development within a Conservation Area

Client HWJ Developments Ltd.
Project Number 10647
Prepared By Tom Wilson
Illustrated By n/a
Approved By Hannah Simpson

Rev Number	Description	Undertaken	Approved	Date
02	Final	TW	HS	03/09/2015
01	Draft	TW	-	01/09/2015

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Enquiries To:

AB Heritage Limited (Head Office)
Caerus Suite, 150 Priorswood Road,
Taunton, Somerset, TA2 8DU
Email: info@abheritage.co.uk
Tel: 03333 440 206



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been prepared by AB Heritage on behalf of HWJ Developments Limited in support of proposals regarding 28 Ryecroft Road.

28 Ryecroft Road is an inter-war detached house. It is not listed or locally listed, but is within Norwood Grove Conservation Area.

The proposals are for structural repairs and other renovation work, plus side and rear extensions.

This heritage statement provides an assessment of the impact that the proposed development would have on the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site location and description

- 1.1.1 28 Ryecroft Road is a two-storey detached house located in Norbury (Plate 1). Ryecroft Road itself is in the shape of a loop extending south of Crown Lane, and number 28 is on the eastern part of the road, but the 'inside' (i.e. west) side of the loop. 28 Ryecroft Road is bounded by another detached house to the north and a footpath to the south, which extends westwards and uphill to the other side of the Ryecroft Road loop. Ryecroft Road is a residential area, with access to parkland to the south.

1.2 Aims of this report

- 1.2.1 This report aims to present the history and significance of the building, including its contribution to the conservation area, and to outline how the proposal would affect the conservation area.

2. LEGISLATIVE, PLANNING AND GUIDANCE CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The following legislative and policy context is relevant to the proposed development with regard to the historic environment.

2.2 Statutory protection

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990, as amended)

2.2.1 This Act provides protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.

2.2.2 Section 69 of the Act instructs that conservation areas are defined and designated as such by local planning authorities, by virtue of their, “*special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*”.

2.2.3 Section 72 of the Act requires that, in the exercise of planning functions, “*with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area... special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*”.

2.3 National planning policy

National Planning Policy Framework

2.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012) requires applicants assess (to a proportionate level of detail) the effect on heritage assets that would be affected by development, including any contribution made by their setting (Paragraph 128).

2.3.2 Paragraph 131 provides policy regarding the determination of planning applications, and states that local planning authorities should take account of:

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

2.3.3 The NPPF (Paragraph 132) states that the need to conserve heritage assets is related to their importance, and provides policy regarding substantial harm:

“Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional”.*

2.3.4 Paragraph 134 states that impacts of ‘less than substantial harm’ should be weighed against any public benefit of a proposed development, such 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 securing its optimum viable use”.

- 2.3.5 Paragraph 138 states that *“not all elements of a... Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance”*. It also cautions that loss of a building (or other element) that makes a positive contribution to the significance of a conservation area may be substantial harm or less than substantial harm, depending on the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area.

2.4 Regional planning policy

The London Plan

- 2.4.1 Policy 7.8 of The London Plan (Heritage Assets and Archaeology) includes policy relating to planning decisions. It states:

C: Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.

D: Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

- 2.4.2 Paragraph 7.31 provides further explanation of the policy, stating:

Crucial to the preservation of this character is the careful protection and adaptive re-use of heritage buildings and their settings. Heritage assets such as conservation areas make a significant contribution to local character and should be protected from inappropriate development that is not sympathetic in terms of scale, materials, details and form. Development that affects the setting of heritage assets should be of the highest quality of architecture and design, and respond positively to local context and character outlined in the policies above.

2.5 Local planning policy

Croydon Local Plan: Strategic Policies

- 2.5.1 Croydon Local Plan provides the following policies with respect to Character, Conservation and Heritage:

SP4.11 The Council and its partners will promote the use of heritage assets and local character as a catalyst for regeneration and cohesion and to strengthen the sense of place.

SP4.12 The Council and its partners will respect, and optimise opportunities to enhance, Croydon’s heritage assets, their setting and the historic landscape, including through high quality new development and public realm that respects the local character and is well integrated.

SP4.13 The Council and its partners will strengthen the protection of and promote improvements to the following heritage assets and their settings:

- a. Statutory Listed Buildings;
- b. Conservation Areas;
- c. Historic Parks and Gardens;
- d. Scheduled Monuments;
- e. Archaeological Priority Zones;
- f. Local List of Buildings;
- g. Local List of Historic Parks and Gardens;
- h. Local Areas of Special Character
- i. Local Designated Views;
- j. Croydon Panoramas; and
- k. Landmarks

Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan 2006) Saved Policies 2013

2.5.2 A number of policies from the former Croydon Replacement UDP are saved, and may be salient to this proposed development.

2.5.3 Policy UC3 (Development Proposals in Conservation Areas) states:

Development will only be permitted if all the following criteria are met.

(i) It can be demonstrated that the proposal pays special attention to scale, height and massing, historic building lines, traditional patterns of frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis, plot widths, detailed design and traditional use of materials and detailing.

(ii) If outside a Conservation Area, the proposal does not affect its setting or views in and out of the conservation area.

(iii) Existing traditional features including boundary walls, ground surfaces, shopfronts and street furniture are retained and where necessary restored.

(iv) Boundary treatments such as walls, gates and fences are of the type traditionally used in that area.

(v) Open spaces, trees, hedgerows and other landscape features contributing to the character of the area are retained and protected.

(vi) The character of the area would not be adversely affected because of the traffic generation, vehicle parking and servicing, or noise.

2.6 National planning guidance

Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

- 2.6.1 The NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance, which is a 'live' document first published online on 6th March 2014 (<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk>). It includes a section entitled, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'.
- 2.6.2 Paragraph 018 of that section provides guidance concerning harm in relation to conservation areas. It states that, "*An unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area is individually of lesser importance than a listed building*".
- 2.6.3 Paragraph 020 provides guidance on what constitutes public benefit, which is salient to Paragraph 134 of the NPPF (above). It states that:

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 7). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:

- *sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting*
- *reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset*
- *securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation*

2.7 Local planning guidance

Croydon Council Requirements for the Validation of Planning Applications

- 2.7.1 Croydon Council has produced an advice note for planning applicants. These requirements state that for applications within or adjacent to a conservation area, an assessment of the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area is required.
- 2.7.2 The requirements also state that, "*The level of detail necessary in a heritage statement will vary with each application*".

Croydon Council Conservation Area General Guidance

- 2.7.3 Croydon Council has produced general guidance for development and maintenance of properties and sites within conservation areas in Croydon. This document is a Supplementary Planning Document to Croydon's Local Plan, and a material consideration when the Council assesses planning applications.
- 2.7.4 This guidance provides a description of special character. Key considerations are the architecture (e.g. locally-significant styles and periods, design elements, key features and materials), road and plot layout, infrastructure, landscape, boundary treatments and historic

street furniture. Historic associations with notable people or events may also contribute to historic character.

2.7.5 The guidance stresses the importance of ensuring that extensions respect the proportions and fenestration of existing buildings, and those in the wider area. Side extensions may be acceptable, depending on the merits of individual cases. They should be set back from the front elevation. Careful consideration is required regarding:

- impact on the integrity of the original adjacent properties
- effect on the street scene and ‘architectural rhythm’ of buildings and spaces between them
- gaps between properties that may make a positive contribution to special character

2.7.6 The guidance states that two-storey rear extensions are unlikely to be considered acceptable, since they may have an ‘overbearing impact’ on the building’s appearance, and may intrude into and overshadow neighbouring properties to an unacceptable degree.

2.7.7 The guidance states that roof extensions are unlikely to be acceptable, but where they are considered appropriate they will be, “subordinate to the building’s size, with any added height and bulk kept to a minimum”. In addition, materials and roof forms should match the existing building.

2.7.8 Regarding dormer windows, the guidance states that they may be used, but should be appropriate in design and materials, should integrate with the existing window pattern, and usually should not be wider than windows present on the rest of the building. Dormers should be set in from the edge of the building so as to avoid dominating the roof or compromising its integrity. In addition, any rooflight should be flush with the roof pitch.

2.7.9 The guidance states that window design, quality and materials make important contributions to the character of a building and wider conservation area. New windows should not be in UPVC or aluminium, and the Council encourages removal of existing unsympathetic alterations. New windows should be of high quality and design, and care should be given to their impact on character and appearance.

2.7.10 Chimney stacks make an important contribution to character, the guidance states, and should be retained.

Norwood Grove Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

2.7.11 The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Norwood Grove is a Supplementary Planning Document and material consideration for planning applications. The Management Plan provides guidelines for development within the conservation area.

2.7.12 The Management Plan provides the following guidance regarding side extensions:

8.3.3: Two storey side extensions may not be considered to be acceptable if they would result in a negative impact on the special character of the host building and the streetscape character of a collection of buildings. It is acknowledged that in the Ryecroft Road Character Area there are several existing examples of two storey side extensions,

constructed prior to the conservation area designation, that have had a negative impact on the character and appearance of individual buildings and the wider conservation area. These existing two-storey side extensions should not be considered to be a precedent for further inappropriate development.

8.3.4: Where side extensions are considered to be acceptable in principle, the extension must be carefully designed so as to be subservient to the existing building. All side extensions should be set back by at least 1m from the front building line at ground floor level and at least 1.5m at first floor level.

2.7.13 Regarding the proportions of extension roofs and dormers, the Management Plan states:

8.3.6 Roofscapes make a significant contribution to the character of the Norwood Grove Conservation Area. Large roof extensions including dormer windows that are visible from a public highway are generally not considered to be appropriate due to the disruption of the predominant rhythm and proportions of the prominent roofscapes. Roof extensions must not unduly dominate the roof of the main building.

Croydon Council Supplementary Planning Document No. 2 (SPD2): Residential Extensions and Alterations

2.7.14 This document provides guidance to ensure that extensions and alterations to residential buildings are of the very highest design quality. It states that:

“Any proposals which effect a Conservation Area will be expected to be of the highest quality and will be required to respect the established character, appearance, materials, boundary details, street scene and trees.”

2.7.15 The guidance states that the Council require extensions in historic areas to be designed with particular care, in order to complement the character of existing buildings. Advice regarding appropriate design, applicable to all extensions whether in a historic area or otherwise, is provided.

2.7.16 The guidance also advocates reuse of building materials, although in the context of sustainability rather than heritage.

2.8 Other guidance

Historic England, 2015, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment

2.8.1 Historic England provides the following advice to planning authorities for when assessing proposals:

25 In deciding applications for planning permission and listed building consent, local planning authorities will need to assess the particular significance of the heritage asset(s) which may be affected by the proposal and the impact of the proposal on that significance

2.8.2 Regarding the importance of good design, Historic England provide the following guidance:

53 Both the NPPF (section 7) and PPG (section ID26) contain detail on why good design is important and how it can be achieved. In terms of the historic environment, some or all of the following factors may influence what will make the scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and proposed use of new development successful in its context:

- *The history of the place*
- *The relationship of the proposal to its specific site*
- *The significance of nearby assets and the contribution of their setting, recognising that this is a dynamic concept*
- *The general character and distinctiveness of the area in its widest sense, including the general character of local buildings, spaces, public realm and the landscape, the grain of the surroundings, which includes, for example*
 - *The street pattern and plot size*
 - *The size and density of the proposal related to that of the existing and neighbouring uses*
 - *Landmarks and other built or landscape features which are key to a sense of place*
 - *The diversity or uniformity in style, construction, materials, colour, detailing, decoration and period of existing buildings and spaces*
 - *The topography*
 - *Views into, through and from the site and its surroundings*
 - *Landscape design*
 - *The current and historic uses in the area and the urban grain*
 - *The quality of the materials*

2.9 Compliance with planning policy

- 2.9.1 The assessment for this heritage statement has been conducted with appropriate reference to the legislation, policy, standards and guidance described above.
- 2.9.2 In compliance with the NPPF and local planning policy, this heritage statement provides an assessment of the significance of heritage assets on or near 28 Ryecroft Road, and identifies the potential impact of development on those assets.

3. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT BASELINE

3.1 Statutory designated heritage assets

Conservation Area

- 3.1.1 28 Rycroft Road lies within Norwood Grove Conservation Area, which the Norwood Grove Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan states is focussed around Norwood Grove Mansion. This, and the park surrounding it, forms the most significant of three character areas (Norwood Grove, St. John's College, and Rycroft Road). The second character area, St. Joseph's College, includes a cluster of Georgian to Edwardian buildings (including listed buildings) approximately 200m from 28 Rycroft Road, but also the reservoir and the highest concentration of later twentieth century buildings in the Conservation Area. Rycroft Road character area contains residential development including three locally listed Victorian buildings (Nos. 69, 69A and 71, approximately 180m from 28 Rycroft Road), but is otherwise twentieth century, predominately inter-war, in date.
- 3.1.2 Rycroft Road is typified by detached or semi-detached houses of approximately equal size and in regularly-sized plots (cf. Plates 1, 9-15 & 18). The Norwood Grove Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan considers the public realm to be in good condition and streetscape to be of high quality (Plate 19). There is no public space, but the houses along Rycroft Road generally have well-maintained front gardens, and there are grass verges and mature trees. The area is crossed by the footpath that forms the southern boundary of 28 Rycroft Road (Plates 16 & 17).
- 3.1.3 Key architectural features in Rycroft Road character area identified in the Norwood Grove Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan include:
- Prominent, often recessed porches
 - Bay windows
 - Timber framed windows, often with leaded lights
 - Projecting gables
 - Dormer windows
 - Prominent chimney stacks
 - Gablet roof features
 - Clay tiles, sometimes scalloped
 - Red or London stock bricks
 - Render as part of original house design
 - White render and half-timber facing
 - Slate or hand-made clay roof tiles
 - Clay chimney pots

Listed Buildings

- 3.1.4 There are no known designated heritage assets on the site of 28 Rycroft Road or within 100m of it.
- 3.1.5 Norwood Grove Mansion is a Grade II listed building (List Entry Number: 1079286), located 300m south of the proposed development. It is an early nineteenth century, stuccoed, two-storey winged house with a lead domed roof.
- 3.1.6 There are also three Grade II listed buildings approximately 200m away from the 28 Rycroft Road, on the north side of Arnull's Road, which are late eighteenth or early nineteenth century dwellings (List Entry Numbers: 1358826, 1079306, and 1358818).
- 3.1.7 None of these listed buildings share a setting with 28 Rycroft Road.

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

- 3.1.8 Norwood Grove is a Registered Historic Park and Garden (List entry Number: 1000823). It is an early twentieth century public park, which was formerly part of a nineteenth century estate. The adjacent park is to the east and southeast of the house and is planted with mature trees. The gardens are to the south and west of the house. There are panoramic views of suburbs to the west and south-east.
- 3.1.9 The park is accessible from Rycroft Road via a path past a bowls green to the back of Norwood Grove Mansion. Although there are long southerly views from parts of Rycroft Road, the park and house are obscured by trees and landform.

Other statutory designations

- 3.1.10 There are no other designated assets in the vicinity of 28 Rycroft Road, or that would be affected by the proposed development.

3.2 Non-statutory designated heritage assets

Locally listed buildings

- 3.2.1 Croydon Council keeps a list of buildings of townscape, landmark or local historic merit. These buildings may not meet the current national standards for statutory listing but, in the Council's view, are nonetheless worth conserving for their local architectural or historic interest.
- 3.2.2 Three locally listed buildings are located on the western side of the Rycroft Road loop. These are Nos. 69, 69A and 71. To the east, St. Joseph's College on Beulah Hill is also locally listed.

Archaeological Priority Zones

- 3.2.4 28 Rycroft Road is not within an Archaeological Priority Zone, as defined by Croydon Council.
- 3.2.5 Norwood Grove Archaeological Priority Zone is located approximately 300m to the south of 28 Rycroft Road. The boundary of the Archaeological Priority Zone is defined by the lane running northwest to southeast past Norwood Grove.

3.3 Non-designated heritage assets

Historic Environment Record Data

- 3.3.1 There are no assets or events recorded on the Historic Environment Record within 100m of 28 Ryecroft Road.

3.4 Historic map evidence

- 3.4.1 The earliest map of Ryecroft Road located during this survey is an Ordnance Survey town map of London from 1850. The site of 28 Ryecroft Road is in the southeast corner of a long, narrow field extending south from Crown Lane alongside Ryecroft Road, with the footpath that runs along the southern site boundary depicted. This land use is unchanged in a series of maps throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century up to, and including, the 1:2,500 scale map of 1916. (A 1:10,560 scale London County Series map of 1919 also shows the site of 28 Ryecroft Road as unoccupied; however, some doubt should be accorded to that map, since it's 1938 revision also depicts the site as empty).
- 3.4.2 A building is first depicted at the 28 Ryecroft Road in 1935. The 1935, 1:2,500 scale, map shows the building as a simple square footprint. While there is only limited detail at this scale, other buildings along the road are depicted with various extensions, so it is reasonable to assume that the simple form of 28 Ryecroft Road was accurate. A building (part of a row) is also depicted on the 1938 1:10,560 scale Surrey and Kent maps, but not in sufficient detail to help understand the building's history.
- 3.4.3 In contrast to 1935, the 1952, 1:1,250 scale, map depicts 28 Ryecroft Road with a bay window on the left (i.e. south) of the front elevation, and two protrusions to the rear. These appear to be in the same footprint as the kitchen extension on the left (i.e. north) of the elevation and a smaller one to the right, where the French windows are present today. The north side wall of 28 Ryecroft Road, which has an OS benchmark on the corner, appears to be the same distance from the site boundary in both maps (this is significant to interpretation of the building's history, below).
- 3.4.4 The next map of any detail is from 1971-74, and depicts an extension on the left (south) side, extending to the boundary: this is most probably the extant garage. The building was at that time the same footprint as the existing building.
- 3.4.5 Later maps surveyed for this assessment are insufficiently detailed to determine whether any changes have been made in the intervening years.

4. RESULTS OF A SITE VISIT

4.1 History of the building

- 4.1.1 28 Ryecroft Road has been altered several times.
- 4.1.2 The map evidence suggests that the bay windows on the front elevation (Plates 1 & 8), the kitchen extension and French doors on the rear elevation (Plates 3 & 4), the garage (Plates 1 & 10) and the lean-to (Plate 5) are not original. Site inspection confirmed this to be the case with the exception of the left front bay window, for which insufficient fabric was exposed to make an interpretation.
- 4.1.3 The right-hand side of the front elevation has also been modified (Plate 5). This is evidenced by separate phases in the brickwork where the pebbledash has been removed (indicated by changes in fabric and bond pattern), and differences in the foundations visible where shallow excavations have taken place to investigate services (Plate 6). The ground floor windows also do not match, the right hand one being also lower than that to the left, to allow room for a jettied bay window on the first floor (Plate 5). The possible interpretation that a two-storey side extension has been added is disproved on the basis of the map evidence (above). A more likely interpretation was provided by reports from a previous owner who stated that there was a garage at that location (Mr. H Jamieson, pers. comm. 20/08/2015), a form visible on 31 Ryecroft Road on the opposite side of the street (Plate 15). At some point, the garage for 28 Ryecroft Road has been replaced by a downstairs reception room, and a bay window has been added at the first floor (Plate 5).
- 4.1.4 The provenance of the pebbledash surface is unclear. Where it has been removed on the front (Plate 7), south (Plate 8) and north elevations, no evidence of an earlier surface was observed during the site visit. It is possible that the pebbledash is the original surface; however, the original brickwork may have been unsurfaced (both treatments, and render, are present on surrounding buildings).

4.2 Condition of the building

- 4.2.1 A condition survey has not been carried out as part of this heritage assessment. However, the following issues have been reported by the developer to AB Heritage (Mr. H Jamieson, pers. comm. 20/08/2015). Subsidence is present on the front and left elevations. Where the pebbledash has been removed, the brickwork is in a poor condition, with frequent cracking of individual bricks at the surface as well as horizontal and vertical cracks along the elevations (cf. Plates 7 & 8). The developer also reports (*ibid.*) that some internal structural timbers are at an advanced state of decay, and in addition, that the building contains asbestos.

4.3 Relationship with the historic character of the area

- 4.3.1 28 Ryecroft Road is one of a row of detached buildings along the stretch of the road between the footpath and Crown Lane, which may have been built at the same time (Plates 11-14). All appear to have been modified to varying degrees, including extensions and new renders and fenestration. The buildings further south (e.g. Plate 18) are generally more recent than the row of which 28 Ryecroft Road is a part.

- 4.3.2 28 Ryecroft Road is notable for its location on a footpath. When viewed from the west the building is clearly visible in longer views (Plate 16), but as one approaches (Plate 17, cf. Plate 2) the reduction in height means that the adjacent vegetation screens more of the existing building (and location of proposed extensions).

5. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 Significance of 28 Ryecroft Road

- 5.1.1 The existing property is of such low significance that it may not be considered a heritage asset in its own right. However, it does make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of Norwood Grove Conservation Area, as indicated in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

5.2 Contribution of 28 Ryecroft Road to the conservation area

- 5.2.1 28 Ryecroft Road makes a positive contribution to the special character and appearance of Norwood Grove Conservation Area. However, the building is one of approximately 40 such buildings in this, the least significant of the conservation area's three character areas. 28 Ryecroft Road's contribution is increased by its location adjacent to a footpath crossing the area. However, its contribution is reduced by the level of alteration that has previously been carried out to the building.
- 5.2.2 Of the key architectural features identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal, 28 Ryecroft Road has bay windows, a recessed porch, projecting gables and clay tiles on the walls and roof. However, it does not have (or has lost) its timber-framed windows, with or without leaded lights, since the windows are modern. It also lacks dormer windows, which are common enough to be listed as a key architectural feature in this character area. The original surface treatment is unknown; however, the building does not currently have exposed red or London Stock bricks, render or white render and half-timber facing. Finally, while the building does have prominent chimney stacks with clay pots, the owner reports that these are at risk of collapse.
- 5.2.3 The above observations considered together, 28 Ryecroft Road makes only negligible contribution to the significance of the conservation area.

6. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1.1 The proposed development concerns reconstruction of the building to fix serious problems with the structural integrity and fabric (Mr. H Jamieson, pers. comm. 20/08/2015). In addition, the proposals would replace the failing south wall with a new two-storey extension, and add a two-storey flat-roofed extension to the rear. The extensions would be lower than the existing roof height (*ibid.*).
- 6.1.2 On the front elevation, the front, right-hand ground floor window would be moved into line with the left-hand window. The first floor window above the entrance would be replaced; the replacement would be slightly larger due to addition of fanlights in similar proportion to the other windows (the existing window is the only one on the front of the house that currently does not have fanlights). Two rooflight windows would be created on the front elevation, with a third, slightly lower rooflight of the same size on the side extension. There would also be a relatively small and simple three-light window (i.e. without fanlights) on the front elevation of the extension.
- 6.1.3 On the south elevation, the two ground-floor windows would not be replaced, but a window would be constructed on the first floor of the extension. The two chimneys on the south elevation would be removed as part of the works to rebuild the wall. A new chimney, of the same style but slightly lower in height, would be constructed on the side extension towards the rear.
- 6.1.4 On the rear elevation, the two-storey extension would have French doors on the ground floor and two large windows on the first floor. There would also be two dormer windows installed in the existing roof. The rear elevation would be flat roofed, while the side elevation would have a hipped roof to the rear with a small single-light window.
- 6.1.5 On the north elevation one small ground-floor window would be blocked and replaced with a slightly smaller window adjacent to the side door.
- 6.1.6 It is also proposed to remove the existing pebbledash and replace it with render.

7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Unmitigated impact of the development

- 7.1.1 The proposed development would have a beneficial effect on 28 Ryecroft Road, because it is currently at risk and the proposals would provide it with a sustainable future. This would be a major benefit, although the building is of negligible significance in heritage terms and is best considered in the context of being an element of the conservation area, rather than an 'asset' in itself.
- 7.1.2 Any development of 28 Ryecroft Road is likely to affect the special character and appearance of the conservation area to some extent, because the positive contribution that the building makes would be affected. This impact would be increased by the building's location adjacent to a footpath crossing the area, which means that it would have an impact on more people and to a greater extent.
- 7.1.3 It is notable that most of the adjacent houses on Ryecroft Road are also considered in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This includes several that have two-storey extensions and dormer and/or rooflight windows. Therefore, while the Management Plan is clear that existing two-storey extensions do not create a precedent for future development, the Appraisal indicates that any buildings so altered may continue to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

7.2 Mitigation of impacts through careful design

- 7.2.1 The design submitted as part of this planning application incorporates a number of alterations to the original design, which reduce the impact the development would have on the conservation area. These are as follows.
- The height and proportions of the proposed side extension have been revised in order to comply with local policy and guidance, including that side extensions should be set back by at least 1m from the front elevation and 1.5m from the first floor level.
 - The depth of the side extension has been reduced, thus reducing the distance along the footpath where two-storey extensions on 28 and 30 Ryecroft Road would be present on both sides.
 - The design for rear dormers have been reduced in scale, and lowered to the extent that they would not be visible from the street.
 - The design for the first floor windows on the rear elevation has been re-aligned to make them uniform.
 - The existing roof and wall tiles would be carefully removed, kept and re-used, wherever possible.
 - The modern replacement window frames would all be removed and replaced with timber-frame windows, which would be of a design that reflects the character and period of the building.

- The pebbledash, which must be removed in order to carry out repairs to the brickwork, would be replaced with render. In accordance with the Council's advice a coloured render would be used, rather than painting the surface.
- All new materials would be chosen to match those of the existing building.

7.3 Residual impact

- 7.3.1 The amended design has avoided several impacts to the building, and also provided some benefits (e.g. timber windows; render) that would increase the contribution the building makes to the special character of the conservation area. As such, it complies with most of the requirements detailed in the planning framework, including Croydon Council's guidance for extensions in conservation areas (Croydon Council 2013b, Section 5.3).
- 7.3.2 However, careful design has not removed all potential impacts of the proposals that are highlighted in local policy. The rear extension would alter the proportions of the existing building, and would be visible from the neighbouring public footpath. In addition, while rooflights are not prohibited by the guidance, the rooflights on the front elevation may result in some harm to the visual appearance of the building, even in their redesigned form. Similarly, while the side elevation conforms with the guidance in terms of its size and proportion, the proximity of the footpath means that some alteration to the context and character of the streetscape would occur.
- 7.3.3 While the development would affect the conservation area, given the very low magnitude of that impact and the very minor contribution of this building to the conservation area's significance, the development is likely to result in negligible effect, which would be 'less than substantial harm' in policy terms.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Croydon Council Conservation Officer

- 8.1.1 The developer has liaised closely with Croydon Council planning department regarding the proposed development at 28 Ryecroft Road. This has included the provision of formal pre-application advice supplied (without prejudice) by Mr Toby Gethin, Planning Officer, on 13th August 2015 (ref: 15/03139/PRE).
- 8.1.2 Mr Gethin provided advice regarding the policy background relevant to the proposals and the acceptability of the design as conceived at that time. Mr Gethin's advice has been considered while developing the submitted design, which is the subject of this assessment.

9. CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1.1 This heritage statement provides an assessment, to a proportionate level of detail, of the effect on the historic environment that the proposed development would have. This is in accordance with the NPPF and local policy.
- 9.1.2 In keeping with legislation and planning policy, the developer has paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. This is evident from the careful design that has taken place as a result of ongoing consultation with Croydon Council.
- 9.1.3 28 Ryecroft Road is not of sufficient significance to be considered a heritage asset, but does contribute to the significance of the conservation area. While careful design has ensured that adverse effects of the proposed development are minimised, it would result in a very low or negligible degree of harm to the special character of the conservation area.
- 9.1.4 Given that the proposal would result in some harm, albeit very limited, this should be, “weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use”. (NPPF Paragraph 134). The Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph 020, states that public benefit may include, “reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset”.
- 9.1.5 The very low level harm to the conservation area should be weighed against the overall benefits of the proposal, including the need to renovate the property before its condition deteriorates beyond the point that repairs would be economically sustainable. Consideration should be given to the fact that the design seeks to provide public benefits to the conservation area, including improvements to the front elevation, preservation of views through the conservation area and structural repairs required to ensure a sustainable future for the building.

10. REFERENCES

10.1 Statutory legislation

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10.2 National planning policy and guidance

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DCLG, 2014, *National Planning Practice Guidance, Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*

10.3 Regional planning policy

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10.4 Local planning policy and guidance

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10.5 Other guidance

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10.6 Secondary data sources

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10.7 Cartographic sources

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Ordnance Survey County Series: Surrey 1867 (1:2,500)

Ordnance Survey County Series: Surrey 1869 (1:2,500)

Ordnance Survey County Series: Surrey 1867-1879 (1:2,500)

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Ordnance Survey County Series: Surrey 1898 (1:10,560)

Ordnance Survey County Series: Surrey 1898 (1:2,500)

Ordnance Survey County Series: Kent 1898 (1:10,560)

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Ordnance Survey Plan 1984 (1:10,000)

Russian Map: London 1985 (1:25,000)

Appendices

Appendix 1 Photographs

All photographs taken on 20th August 2015.



Plate 1: Front elevation of 28 Ryecroft Road



Plate 2: Garden, showing dominance of 26 Ryecroft Road and vegetation screening by the footpath



Plate 3: Rear elevation, showing relationship with 26 Ryecroft Road



Plate 4: Rear elevation, showing relationship with 30 Ryecroft Road



Plate 5: Front elevation, showing exposed brickwork and later alterations (probable replaced garage)



Plate 6: Phased brickwork on front elevation (right of the door)



Plate 7: Front elevation first floor window, showing the condition of the brickwork and cracking



Plate 8: South elevation, adjacent to bay window, showing the condition of the brickwork and cracking



Plate 9: Front elevation, with 26 Ryecroft Road and the footpath entrance



Plate 10: Front elevation, with 30 Ryecroft Road and the footpath entrance



Plate 11: Part of the row along Ryecroft Road: the building to the right makes a neutral contribution



Plate 12: Part of the same row along Ryecroft Road, which makes a positive contribution



Plate 13: Part of the same row along Ryecroft Road, which makes a positive contribution



Plate 14: Part of the same row along Ryecroft Road, which makes a positive contribution



Plate 15: 31 Ryecroft Road, with garage; similar to probable former design at 28 Ryecroft Road



Plate 16: Long view along footpath



Plate 17: View from middle of footpath: increasing vegetation screening



Plate 18: House further south along Ryecroft Road, which makes a positive contribution



Plate 19: View south along Ryecroft Road



AB Heritage Limited (Head Office)
Caerus Suite, 150 Priorswood Road
Taunton, Somerset, TA2 8DU
Tel: 03333 440 206
e-mail: info@abheritage.co.uk