Primrose Hill, Merthyr Tydfil

RECORD OF BUILDING AND CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORT, WITH REPAIR PROPOSALS

(449)2503-GWP-A-HIS-P01
Date: 05.03.25
Prepared by: AD
Checked by: RT

gwparchitecture

Foundation for Jewish Heritage

CONTENTS

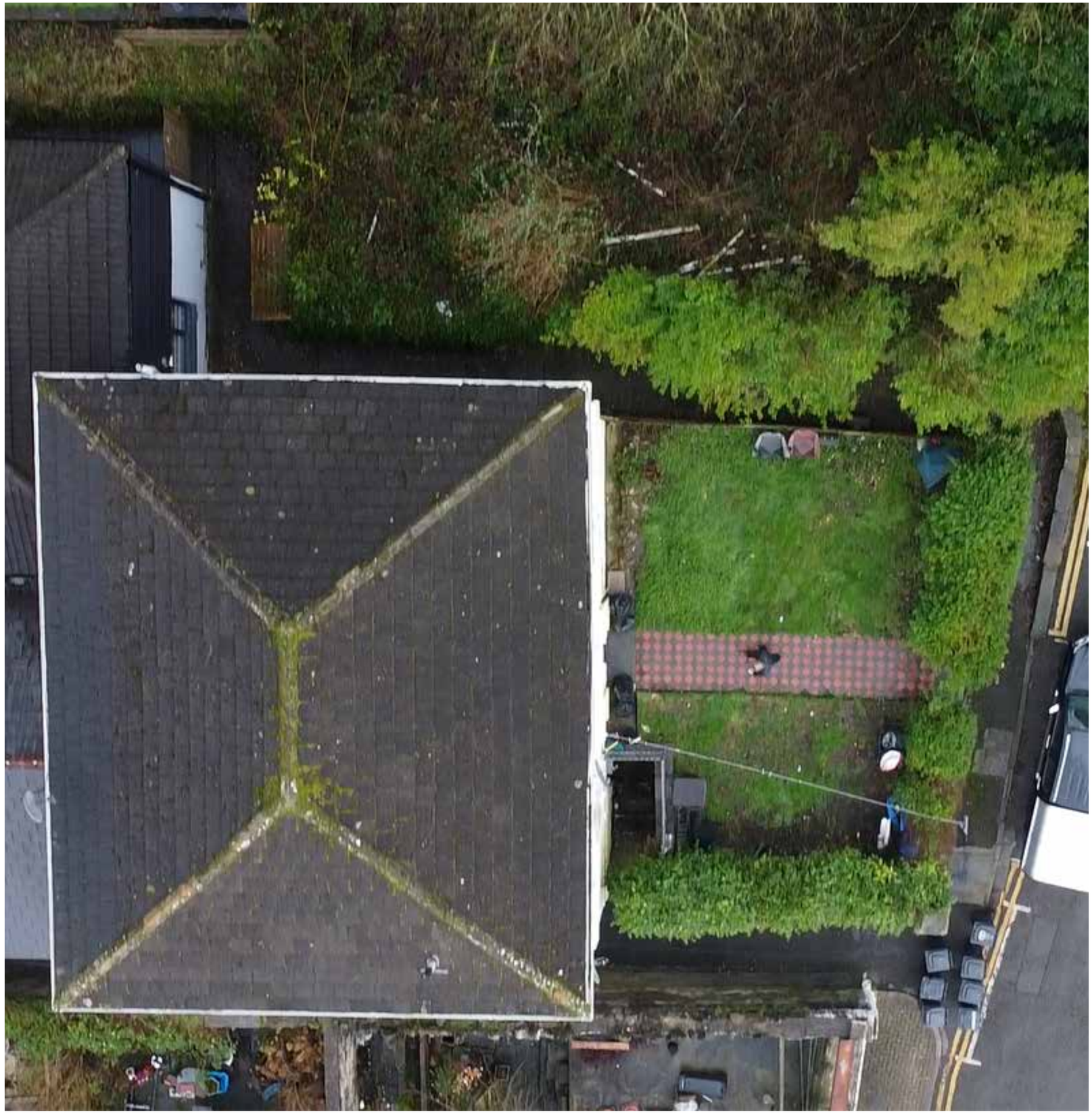


Image from Drone (source: Mann Williams)

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES OF REPORT

1.1 Introduction and Purpose

This Record of the Building and Condition Assessment is written by GWP Architecture on behalf of the anticipated owners of the site and the heritage asset, the Foundation for Jewish Heritage.

The building is located at the top, north east, end of Church Street, at the point that the road turns southwards and becomes Brynteg Terrace. The building is immediately north west of the old Synagogue building.

Built in the early-to-mid 19th century, the building is of three full storeys plus a half lower ground floor / basement. Its principal elevation - an attractive smooth rendered symmetrical Classical-style facade with large timber sash windows looks out onto the road (and the Synagogue).

The purpose of this report is to comprise a full record of the building - externally and internally - and summarise the condition of the respective elements of fabric. The report also summarises the proposed repair, restoration and adaptation approaches.

1.2 The Inspection and the Report

The report is based on a visit undertaken on Tuesday 17th December 2024.

The inspections were purely visual and undertaken from external ground level and all accessible internal floor levels. A drone was flown over the roof, and so photographic footage from above the roof was available.

Our best endeavours were used to see as much as was reasonably possible from as good a vantage point as possible; however, we cannot guarantee that all defects have been identified, due to access, the height of the building, poor lighting in areas, furniture in areas and the inability to see some areas properly. Some issues will only become evident when scaffolding, or other direct access, is set up. As a result, we would recommend that any costings allow a robust contingency for defects yet to be established.

No intrusive investigations were undertaken nor any intervention with mechanical tools. We have also undertaken no assessment of the ground conditions nor the foundations for the building. Likewise, we did not undertake a level assessment of the walls for their verticality.

The assessment and this report are not intended to establish every defect or issue, but to provide a preliminary review of what is readily apparent and visible, given access and visibility constraints. Prior to rectifying defects, a more detailed assessment of the specific aspect may be deemed beneficial, by a suitable specialist / conservator.

The report, along with the photographs within this report, seek to give an appreciation of the areas of the fabric which would require, or benefit from, attention. It is possible that not all examples of each particular defect type have been identified, however, those defects which were most evident should have been identified.

Should works proceed to repair and restore aspects of the building, more detailed appraisals of some aspects of the building fabric may be necessary, including some opening up, and a design and detailed specification may need to be produced, upon which this report may, if relevant, guide.

During any repair works, once access is improved with scaffolding installed, and paintwork etc has been stripped, then a more detailed assessment can be made of certain aspects. However, using the specifications within the report, it should be clear to those engaged in any detailed design and physical repair work what the nature of repair proposed is for each defect, once its full extent is discovered.

Following description of each defect, suggestions have been given as to ways in which the defects might be remedied.

1.3 Statutory Designation - Listing

Primrose Hill is protected by a grade II listing, which was designated on 22 August 1975, and was last amended on 13 January 1988.

The listing (with a Cadw ID No. of 11425) states:

History

Early to mid C19.

Exterior

3-storey, 3-bay cement-rendered elevation, ground-floor rusticated. Hipped tiled roof. Smaller pivot windows without glazing bars to second-floor; sashes with glazing bars to lower floors. Simplified pilastered doorcase with modern door and fanlight. Small enclosed forecourt with right-hand gatepiers.

1.4 Authorship

This document has been produced by Ashley Davies, an RIBA-accredited Specialist Conservation Architect, following a visit to, and appraisal of, the site in January 2025.

Ashley is also a Chartered Architect, a member of the RIBA Conservation Register National Steering Group; a Supporter of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation; has twice been the conservation specialist on the RIBA Regional Architecture awards panel; has lectured in 'Conservation Principles' at University; has presented at conferences on the theme of building conservation; and has appeared on a few television programmes talking about his passion for restoring historic buildings. He has undertaken several Building Conservation courses, including at SPAB and the RIBA. He has delivered dozens of heritage-led projects over his career involving the repair, restoration and adaptation of many grade I, II* and II listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monument.

In addition – and often, in parallel - Ashley has assessed and written over 140no. Historic Building Reports for over 90no. historic buildings and sites, including over 40no. Detailed Condition Assessments.

1.5 Summary of Building Condition and Approach to Repairs

There is a mix of quality to the interior of Primrose Hill. The ground floor entrance lobby is very attractive and in seemingly good condition. The single staircase is a little tight, but, again, that appears to be in a reasonable condition. To the west of the entrance lobby, the flat is well decorated and appears to be in a reasonable condition. However, to the east of the entrance lobby, the finishes within the flat are in an extremely poor condition. Some of the wall surfaces are wet and many of them are coated in black mould. Around the fireplace on the east external wall, the walls are stained orange. The first floor flat above is also in a reasonable condition; although there are two areas where damp is a problem. The second floor flat is, likewise, in a reasonable condition; although, again, there are some signs of damp and cracking in the plaster. There is a storeroom at the rear of the stairs at ground floor, which also has damp on the walls. It was not possible to access the matching storeroom at first floor, however, it must be assumed that this is also suffering from damp.

Why is the one flat coated with staining and wet - to walls and ceilings - with large areas of mould growth, whilst the matching flat on the other side is not. The windows are all double glazed, and new, so this is not a factor. The proposals involve removing all the plaster and investigating the masonry behind. There could be defects in the walls; there could be cold bridges; there could be damp coming in from outside and, unable to escape through the cement render, it has saturated the walls, causing damp conditions internally. However, the level of condensation in this flat is extremely high, and one feels that part of the problem may be with the tenant's living habits and the poor services. There appears to be no background heating on (we were advised that the boiler did not always work); it does not look like the windows were often opened to ventilate the space; insulation had been applied to the inside face of walls (thereby stopping any warmth getting into the walls and drying them out); and it looked like washing was regularly dried in the space and cooking a regular thing, with questionable hood ventilation.

There may well be an issue with the walls; they may well be holding moisture unable to escape due to the cementitious render and gypsum plaster; there may well be gaps in the construction and/or cold bridges. This will all need to be investigated once the render and plaster is off. However, there is also poor heating (maybe none), poor ventilation (arguably none) and a lot of moisture-producing activity inside. We are also aware that the tenants regularly clean down the walls. This may also be adding moisture into the plaster.

The staining is awful around the fireplace particularly, on the east wall. It is orange in colour. It appears the fireplace is blocked up at this point, which is not ideal. However, to make this worse, at some time in the past, the chimneys appear to have been removed. This means that there may be no air movement / ventilation within the chimney breast and flue. As a result, the stale and stagnant air within the flue, holding old soot and 'nasties', is not ventilated out of the fabric, as intended; and so, it sits there, reacts with moisture within the masonry, and is drawn, hygroscopically, through the masonry to the surface and stains the plaster an orange colour, and potentially leads to mould growth and noxious odours. The more moisture the wall holds, the worse the reaction. This soot can also badly damage the masonry itself. Once the plaster has been removed and the wall allowed to dry out, the proposals involve incorporating a vent in the face of the fireplace and a vent at the top of the wall, where the chimney used to be. Thus, some ventilation can be reintroduced into the flue.

Also, to the right of the fireplace is a recess. This is caked in black mould deposits. It is probable that this is so bad because the thickness of the wall in this area is much less than the rest of the wall; and so, there is a greater cold bridge to the outside and, hence, this is a coldest part of the wall, which condensation would immediately move towards.

There is more mould on the walls and ceilings within the bathroom, lobby and kitchen; where there appears to be a lot of moisture being produced, little heat and little ventilation.

Whilst the first and second floors are not too bad, one area of damp, mould and crystallised salts appears on the wall directly above where the problem below exists, suggesting there could be an issue with the fabric, particularly in the recess with the cold bridging. It is an area of wall where the render externally is looking especially dark, stained and damp; and it is the area where there is a rain water downpipe, which might have been leaking; and an area where the old chimney breast may not be suitable vented.

To another room in the same first floor flat, there is water-staining, dampness, spalled plaster and crystallised salts on the external front wall. There is a significant amount of cracking render on the outside just above this point. This might explain how the inside face of the wall is damp - water has been getting behind the render, cannot evaporate externally and so is finding its way to the inside face of the wall, and drying, leaving salt crystals. The plaster needs removal and a new lime plaster applied.

This leads onto the main problem externally. The front elevation has been applied with a cementitious render. The substrate behind the render (i.e. the masonry with which the walls were built) appears to be red brick; however, there could also be stone. Given the age of the building, this render would initially have been a lime and sand render, not cementitious.

Clearly apparent across the elevation are numerous cracks in the render. This is a problematic issue. Traditional buildings made of solid masonry walls are designed to be slightly flexible. Lime mortar and render provides that flexibility, which allows the walls to expand and contract nominally without cracking. Cement render is not flexible, and so any expansion or contraction in the walls cannot be absorbed by the coating. The result is often the appearance of cracks within the cement render. Once cracks occur, water enters the wall through the cracks and is held between the render and the masonry. Lime render is vapour-permeable, whilst cement render is impermeable. So, if the render was lime, not only would there be many fewer, if any, cracks; but also, the moisture absorbed into the wall fabric would be drawn out of the wall (hygroscopically) through the joints and render, would sit on the surface of the wall, and be evaporated by the sun and wind. With cement render, it is not possible for the moisture to escape through the coating, and hence to evaporate on the surface. As such, a cement rendered wall, once cracks occur, holds onto the moisture. This can result in various defects – the breaking down of the masonry itself; the widening of cracks (as moisture held, freezes and expands); saturation of the masonry, which could cause damp or mould internally (especially if the internal plaster is gypsum, not lime, as it is here); saturation of timber in contact with the masonry, which could cause mould, rot or infestation; and a generally unhealthy building.

A quick response would be to repair the cracks; but this would not address the problems. More cracks will appear in time, and more water will get behind the render. In addition to this, we are aware of significant issues with water ingress to the fabric causing problematic mould growth to the internal face of the walls. The walls are, of course, not insulated (which they cannot be, being solid masonry); however, damp walls perform very badly as insulators, whilst dry walls are good insulators. The most important thing for the building is to dry out the walls and ensure they do not, again, become saturated. The only way to do this is to remove the water ingress causes (i.e. cracks in render, poor rainwater goods, lack in internal ventilation and heating) and then to ensure that the walls are vapour-permeable from both the outside face and the inside face.

To that end, we recommend very carefully hacking off the cementitious render to the external face (as well as the cementitious / gypsum plaster to the internal face), allowing as long a time as possible for the external walls to dry out, by exposing both external and internal faces of the masonry to evaporation), and then re-applying a 3-coat lime render to the outside face of the walls (and a 3-coat lime plaster to the inside faces). The external render will need to be smooth-finished with the top coat, rusticated at ground floor and incised at upper floors, to emulate coursed finished stone, to match the design of the existing stucco.

Trying to remove cementitious render, which usually bonds extremely well to masonry, can cause damage to the stone. However, sometimes it can be removed fairly easily with little damage; with the work in the right hands. This is a risk; however, given the damp conditions internally, this may be a risk which needs to be taken.

To this west side elevation, the render is roughcast. It is not known whether this is cementitious; however, it is assumed to be. There are 'scars' in the render where previous pipework has been removed, and there is the occasional crack in the render; however, apparently where recent smooth repairs have been applied. In the main, the render is showing very few cracks and very little damage. Whilst we would prefer all renders to be lime, where the render is little damaged and appears to be keeping the rain out, then we would suggest that it remain in place - at least for now. Any cracks should be made good, and the whole wall should be re-painted; but we might suggest this render is not hacked off at this stage. There is a crack in the window cills which also requires a local repair.

To the east side elevation, the render is also roughcast; however, here it is a mixture of off-white and light grey with dark grey and green environmental and organic staining. It is not known whether this is cementitious; however, it is assumed to be. This elevation comprises several soil drainage pipes, surface water drainage pipes and condensate pipes. It is assumed that, over time, leaks from one of more of these pipes has stained the render. It is also of concern that the rainwater pipe spills out onto concrete, which them runs into a gully. This means that the water splashes off the concrete and probably splashed back onto the wall.

The worst of the mould growth inside is on this elevation, at ground floor, and also at first floor. It is not possible to determine if there are any defects in the masonry of the wall which would have caused this issue; or whether there are problematic cold bridges; or that it is simply a case on internal condensation; however, the worst issues are within a recess in this wall.

We recommend that the internal plaster is removed and the masonry investigated from inside. This may remove the need to expose the masonry from the outside; however, it may not. So, for now, we also recommend that the render is also removed from the outside face and, once the wall has dried out, and any defects in the masonry addressed, then the walls should be re-rendered with a roughcast lime render. We also propose that the drain is provided with a shoe which dresses into the gulley cover to stop the chance of splashback.

All of the windows to the front elevation comprise sealed double-glazed units. However, it appears as though, rather than each glass pane being individual, each sash is a full glass pane, and the timber glazing bars are planted on, externally and internally. All 8no. windows appear to be modern and are likely to have been recently installed. With this in mind, they are generally in a good condition.

The windows on the east elevation are double glazed; however, those on the east and north elevations are still single glazed. We proposed these are re-glazed with Slimline double glazing.

The roof is a simple rectangular hipped roof, covered in concrete tiles and rounded concrete ridge and hip tiles. The surface of the tiles is heavily mossed on the ridge and some hips. However, there do not appear to be any lost tiles, nor slipped tiles, and only a small number of broken tiles. In this regard, the roof covering appears to be in a reasonable condition. The roof would benefit from a clean of all the moss, and the edges of the roofing membrane cut back; but no significant work is suggested to the roof covering.

It is noticeable that there are no chimneys penetrating the roof. With several fireplaces inside, there would have been at least two chimneys, possible four, penetrating the roof. These have all been removed. It does not appear as though the tops of these flues have been vented since the chimneys were removed, which is a worrying sign. It is recommended that a vent is added into the external wall at each floor, to ventilate the flue.

Covered by ivy and other vegetation, to the side of the path, east of Primrose Hill, is a retaining wall, approximately 3m high, made of rubble stonework. It is assumed that the stones are bedded on a lime mortar (albeit not confirmed) and that it used to be pointed in a lime mortar; however, it is apparent that the wall has more recently been pointed in a cementitious mortar, using a buttering / part rendering which has covered much of the stonework. The wall is covered in vegetation, to face and top, and so the wall could barely be inspected; however, there is concern about the use of cement for the pointing and for the restriction this will have put to the passage of moisture through the wall.

A 'makeshift' drainage hole was apparent at the base in one location; however, it is not clear whether there is a full drainage provision to this wall. That being said, percolation tests undertaken to the ground above suggests a good level of natural drainage in the ground above this wall.

1.6 General Views of Primrose Hill

View of Frontage from Garden to South

View of Frontage from Synagogue Steps to South East

View from South West, with access lane down to left

View from road from South

1.7 General Views of Primrose Hill and its relationship with the Synagogue

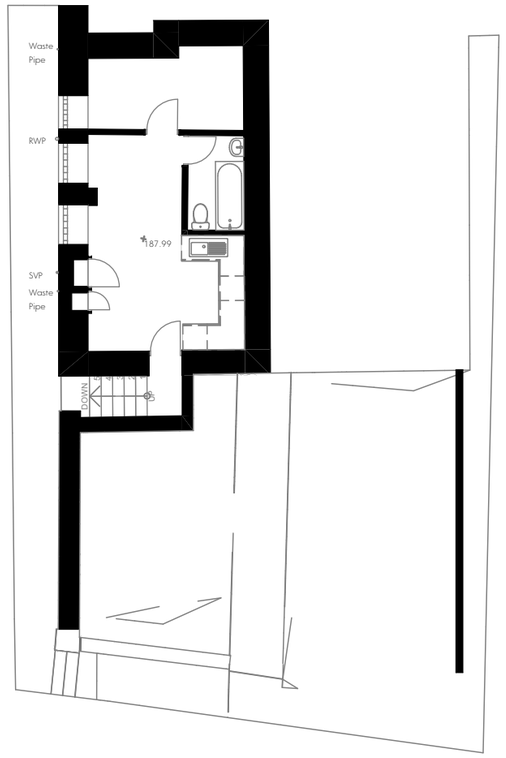
View from South of Primrose Hill to left and Synagogue to right

View of Primrose Hill from Synagogue Front Steps to South East

View of Synagogue from Primrose Hill Front Garden

View of Synagogue from 'Right of Way' Path to East of Primrose Hill

1.8 Building Plans



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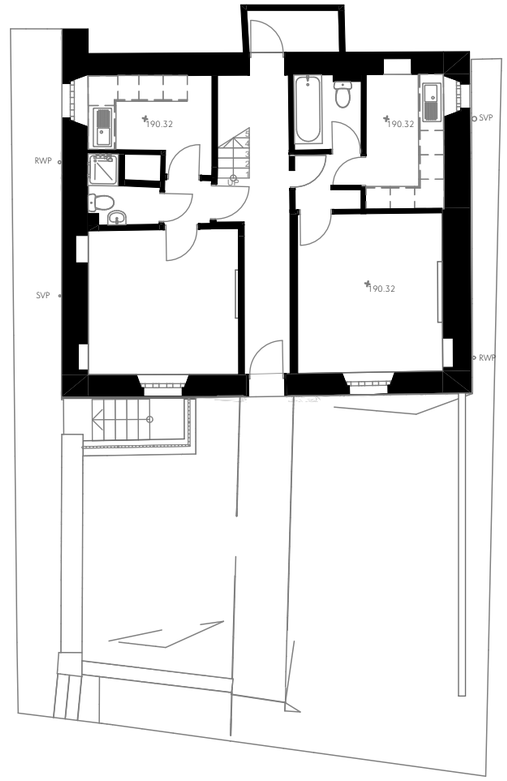

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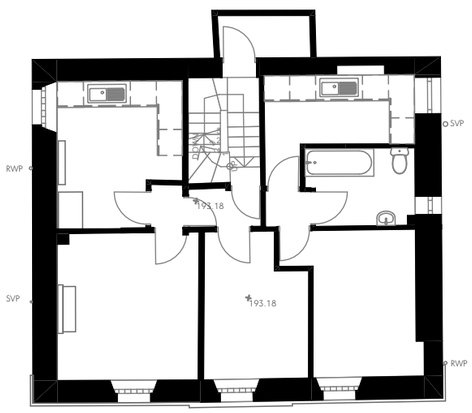

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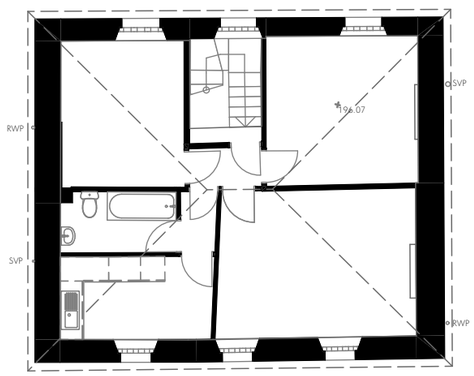

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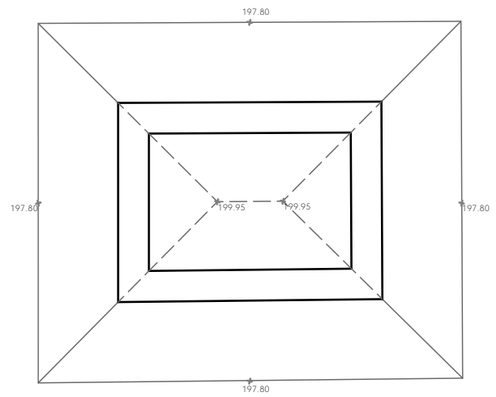

Existing Roof Plan
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GWP Architecture

All drawings and specifications should be read in conjunction with the project health and safety plan, any possible conflicts should be presented to the Planning Coordinator.

All work to be carried out in accordance with current Building Regulations.

Contractors must verify all dimensions at the job before commencing any work or making shop drawings.

Written dimensions should be taken.

Do not scale off drawing.

Do not take digital dimensions from this drawing.

Any discrepancies to be reported to the Architect.

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Scale - 1:150 @A3

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Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch
P02	07.02.25	Updated to suit comments	MH	BP
P01	30.01.25	First Issue	MH	BP

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Job Title
Primrose Hill House

Client
Foundation for Jewish Heritage

Existing Plans

Name	(449) 2503-GWP-01-B1-D-A-(00)-0001		
Scale	1:150@A3	Revision	P02
Drawn/Checked	MH/BP	First Issue	07.02.25
Drawing Status	S0 - Drawing		

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1.9 Building Elevations

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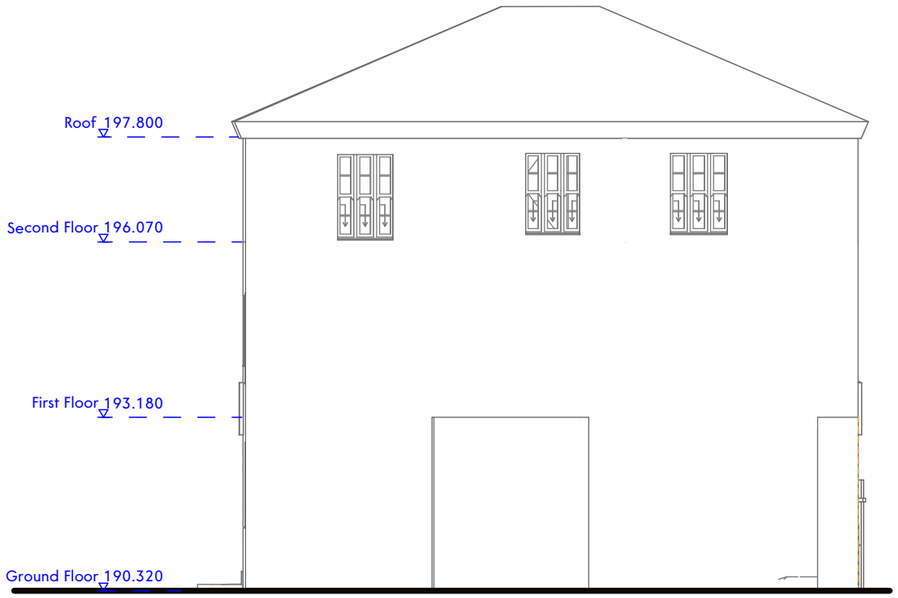

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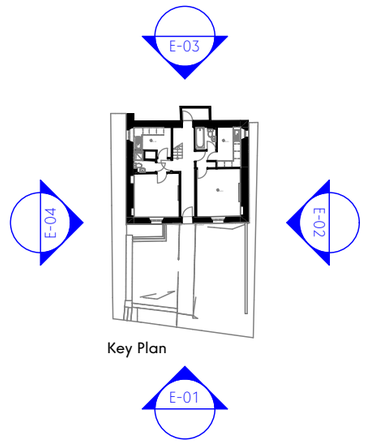

Key Plan

Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch
P01	31.01.25	First Issue	MH	BP

GWP Architecture

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GWPA Ref

(449) 2503

Job Title

Primrose Hill House

Client

Existing Elevations 1.2

Name	(449) 2503-GWP-01-ZZ-D-A-(00)-0007		
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Drawn/Checked	MH/BP	First Issue	31.01.25
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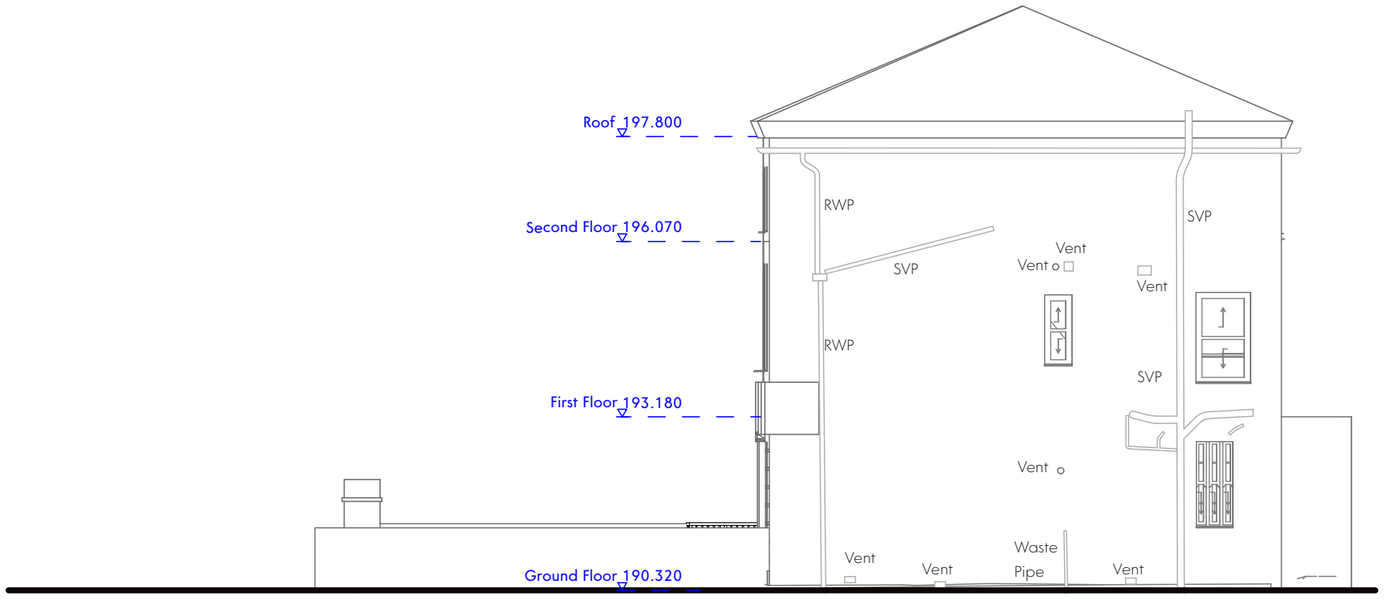
1.9 Building Elevations



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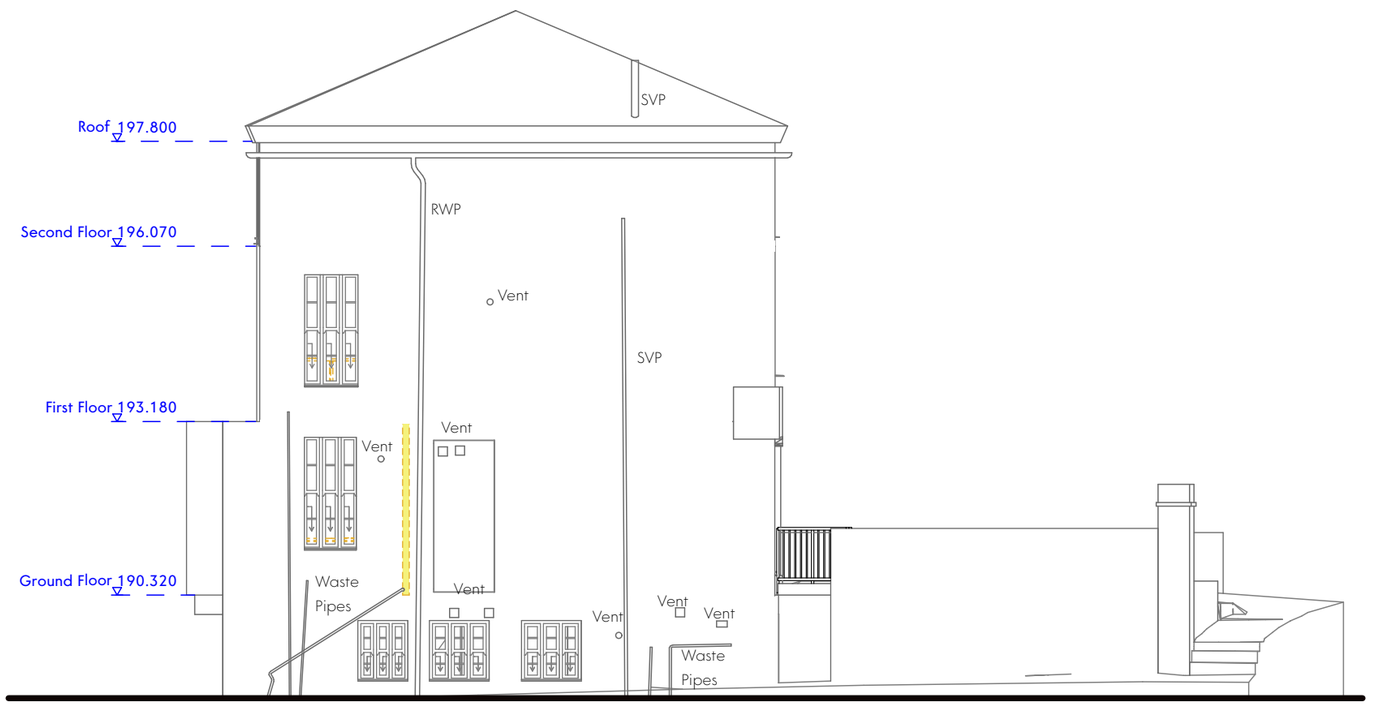

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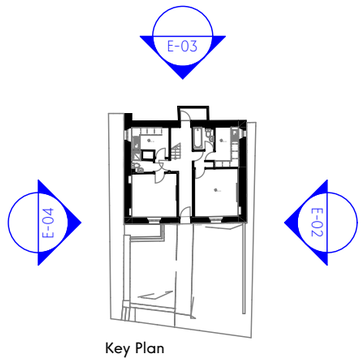

Key Plan

Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch
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Job Title

Primrose Hill House

Client

Existing Elevations 1.1

Name	(449) 2503-GWP-01-ZZ-D-A-(00)-0006		
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Drawn/Checked	MH/BP	First Issue	31.01.25
Drawing Status	S0 - Drawing		

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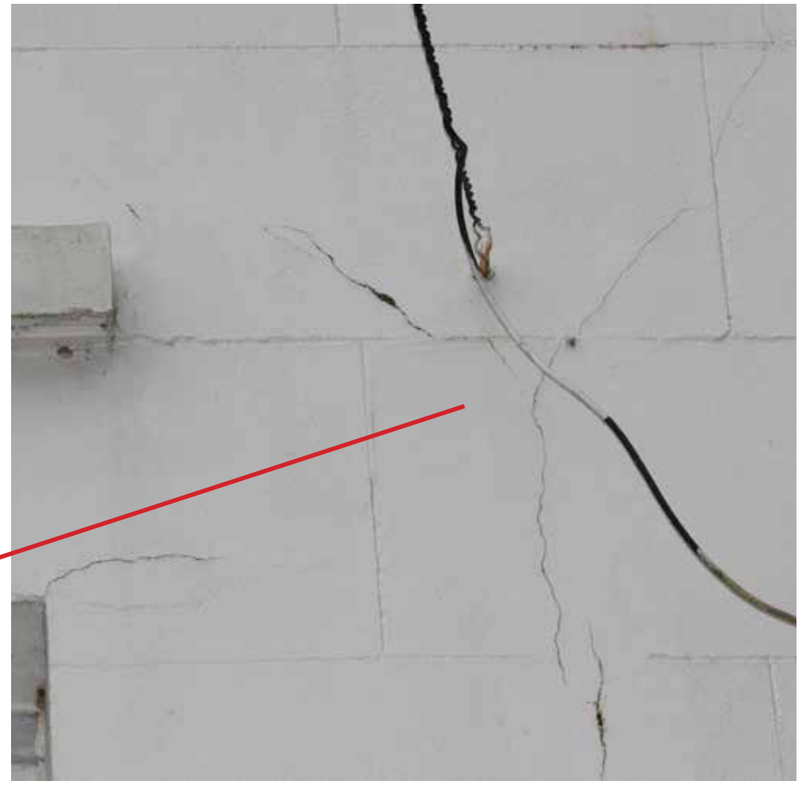
2.1 Front Elevation - Cementitious Render

The front elevation has been applied with a cementitious render, sometimes known as 'stucco'. To the upper two floors, the render has been incised to emulate coursed finished stone. Below the flat deep band underneath the first floor window cills, the render has been rusticated. The substrate behind the render (i.e. the masonry with which the walls were built) appears to be red brick (as suggested by the one view in the bottom right photo on the next page); however, there could also be stone. Given the age of the building, this render would initially have been a lime and sand render, not cementitious.

Clearly apparent across the elevation are cracks in the render - see photos on this page and the next page. This is a problematic issue. Traditional buildings made of solid masonry walls are designed to be slightly flexible. Lime mortar and render provides that flexibility, which allows the walls to expand and contract nominally without cracking. Cement render is not flexible, and so any expansion or contraction in the walls cannot be absorbed by the coating. The result is often the appearance of cracks within the cement render. Once cracks occur, water enters the wall through the cracks, and is held between the render and the masonry. Lime render is vapour-permeable, whilst cement render is impermeable. So, if the render was lime, not only would there be many fewer, if any, cracks; but also the moisture absorbed into the wall fabric would be drawn out of the wall (hygroscopically) through the joints and render, would sit on the surface of the wall, and be evaporated by the sun and wind. With cement render, it is not possible for the moisture to escape through the coating, and hence to evaporate on the surface. As such, a cement rendered wall, once cracks occur, holds onto the moisture. This can result in various defects – the breaking down of the masonry itself; the widening of cracks (as moisture held, freezes and expands); saturation of the masonry, which could cause damp or mould internally (especially if the internal plaster is gypsum, not lime, as it is here); saturation of timber in contact with the masonry, which could cause mould, rot or infestation; and a generally unhealthy building.

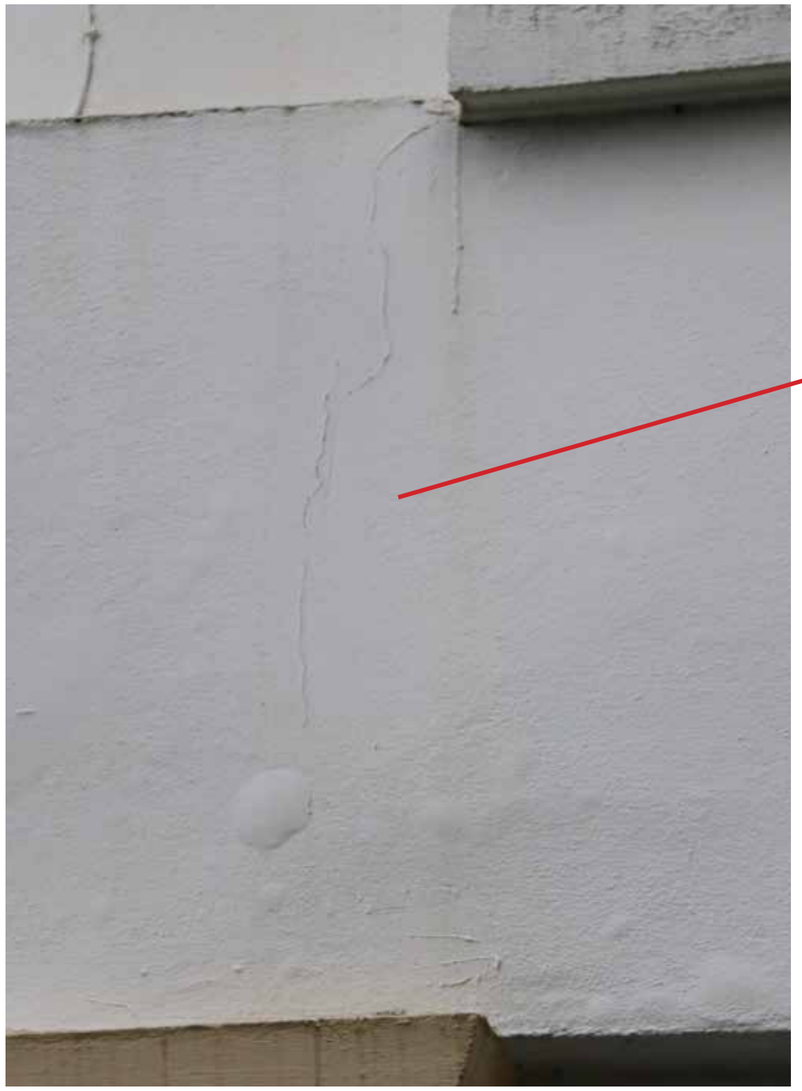


2.1 Front Elevation - Cementitious Render

A quick response would be to repair the cracks; but this would not address the problems. More cracks will appear in time, and more water will get behind the render. In addition to this, we are aware of significant issues with water ingress to the fabric causing problematic mould growth to the internal face of the walls. The walls are, of course, not insulated (which they cannot be, being solid masonry); however, damp walls perform very badly as insulators, whilst dry walls are good insulators. The most important thing for the building is to dry out the walls and ensure they do not, again, become saturated. The only way to do this is to remove the water ingress causes (i.e. cracks in render, poor rainwater goods, lack in internal ventilation and heating) and then to ensure that the walls are vapour-permeable from both the outside face and the inside face.

To that end, we recommend very carefully hacking off the cementitious render to the external face (as well as the cementitious / gypsum plaster to the internal face), allowing as long a time as possible for the external walls to dry out, by exposing both external and internal faces of the masonry to evaporation), and then re-applying a 3-coat lime render to the outside face of the walls (and a 3-coat lime plaster to the inside faces). The external render will need to be smooth-finished with the top coat, rusticated at ground floor and incised at upper floors, to emulate coursed finished stone, to match the design of the existing stucco.

Trying to remove cementitious render, which usually bonds extremely well to masonry, can cause damage to the stone. However, sometimes it can be removed fairly easily with little damage; with the work in the right hands. This is a risk; however, given the damp condition internally, this may be a risk which needs to be taken.



2.2 Front Elevation Ground Floor Windows

All of the windows to the front elevation are of 6-over-6 timber sashes, painted off-white. The glazing panes are sealed double-glazed units. However, it appears as though, rather than each glass pane being individual, each sash is a full glass pane, and the timber glazing bars are planted on, externally and internally. All 8no. windows appear to be modern and are likely to have been fairly recently installed.

With this in mind, they are generally in a good condition. One window - that being the ground floor bottom right (the room with particularly bad condensation and internal mould growth) is in need of some re-painting - see bottom right hand photo. Also, the left hand side of the cill to this window is showing signs of saturation, and potential loss of timber strength, due to being unprotected by paint in this area.

With the proposals, we recommend lightly rubbing down all windows and providing them with a couple of coats on new paint, matching the existing off-white colour. The timber cill to the ground floor right hand window may require some localised removal of timber with a new spliced repair inserted, before re-coating.

2.3 Front Elevation First and Second Floor Windows

On this page are photos of the 6no. upper floor front elevation timber sash double-glazed windows. The top left window appears to have a section of planted-on glazing bead missing - see within red box. A replacement section should be formed and re-planted. Aside from that, a light rub down and re-coated is probably all that is required.

2.4 Front Elevation Front Door

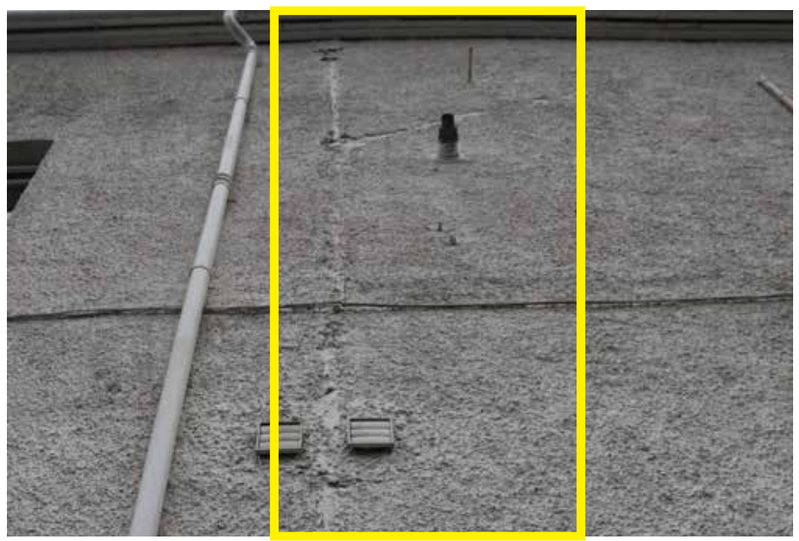
The 6-panelled timber front door does mot appear to be original. It appears to be in a relatively good condition and, like the windows, may only need a light rub down and a re-coat.

The 6-paned glazed over-panel is, however older. It still possesses single glazed individual panes, all of which are intact, with consistent painted putty to all panes.

The frame around this over-panel should also be rubbed back and re-coated; after which a silicone mastic seal should be applied around the edges of the door and over-panel.

3.0 Side (West) Elevation

To this side elevation, the render is roughcast, also painted off-white. It is not known whether this is a cementitious; however, it is assumed to be. There are 'scars' in the render where previous pipework has been removed (see yellow box below), and there is the occasional crack in the render; however, apparently where recent smooth repairs have been applied (see red box below). In the main, the render is showing very few cracks and very little damage. Whilst we would prefer all renders to be lime, where the render is little damaged and appears to be keeping the rain out, then we would suggest that it remain in place - at least for now. Any cracks (such as that in the red box) should be made good, and the whole walls should be re-painted; but we might suggest this render is not hacked off at this stage. There is a crack in the window cills - see red box - which also requires a local repair. There is a drainage channel at the base of the wall - see photo below - which appears to be in a reasonable condition; however, it contains some surface cracks which should be repaired; and the drain cleaned out.



3.0 Side (West) Elevation

The 3no. 6-over-6 timber sash windows at the base of this elevation, and the 2no. central-pivotted windows down the side, at ground and first floor, are all timber windows, painted off-white. The panes to all 5no. windows are single-glazed. In the main, they appear to be in a reasonable condition, some having recently been re-painted; however, the timber cill to the middle low window has suffered from water ingress and is showing signs of loss of body. This should be rubbed back and, if any of the wood is soft, or 'gives' to the penetration of a sharp object, then the soft central should be cut out and a new section of timber spliced in, and the cill painted.

Indeed, it is proposed that all windows and cills are lightly rubbed back and re-painted a matching off-white.

It is also proposed that the glazing to all 5no. of these windows are replaced with 'Slimline' double-glazed units with white spacers.

4.0 Side (East) Elevation

To this side elevation, the render is also roughcast; however, here it is a mixture of off-white and light grey with dark grey and green environmental and organic staining. It is not known whether this is a cementitious; however, it is assumed to be. This elevation comprises a number of soil drainage pipes, surface water drainage pipes and condensate pipes. It is assumed that, over time, leaks from one of more of these pipes has stained the render. It is also of concern that the rainwater pipe spills out onto concrete, which them runs into a gully. This means that the water splashes off the concrete and probably splashed back onto the wall.

The worst of the mould growth inside is on this elevation, at ground floor. It is not possible to determine if there are any defects in the masonry of the wall which would have caused this issue; or whether there are problematic cold bridges; or that it is simply a case on internal condensation; however, the worst issues are within a recess in this wall.

We recommend that the internal plaster is removed and the masonry investigated from inside. This may remove the need to expose the masonry from the outside; however, it may not. So, for now, we also recommend that the render is also removed from the outside face and, once the wall has dried out, and any defects in the masonry addressed, then the walls should be re-rendered with a roughcast lime render. We also propose that the drain is provided with a shoe which dresses into the gulley cover to stop the chance of splashback.

4.0 Side (East) Elevation

The 3no. windows on this elevation are timber-framed and all incorporate double-glazed panes. There is a sash window to the ground floor and two part-top-hung casements part-fixed windows to the first floor. All would benefit from a light rub back and re-coat.

It is recommended that all joints in all pipework is checked and any issues with either pipes or joints addressed.

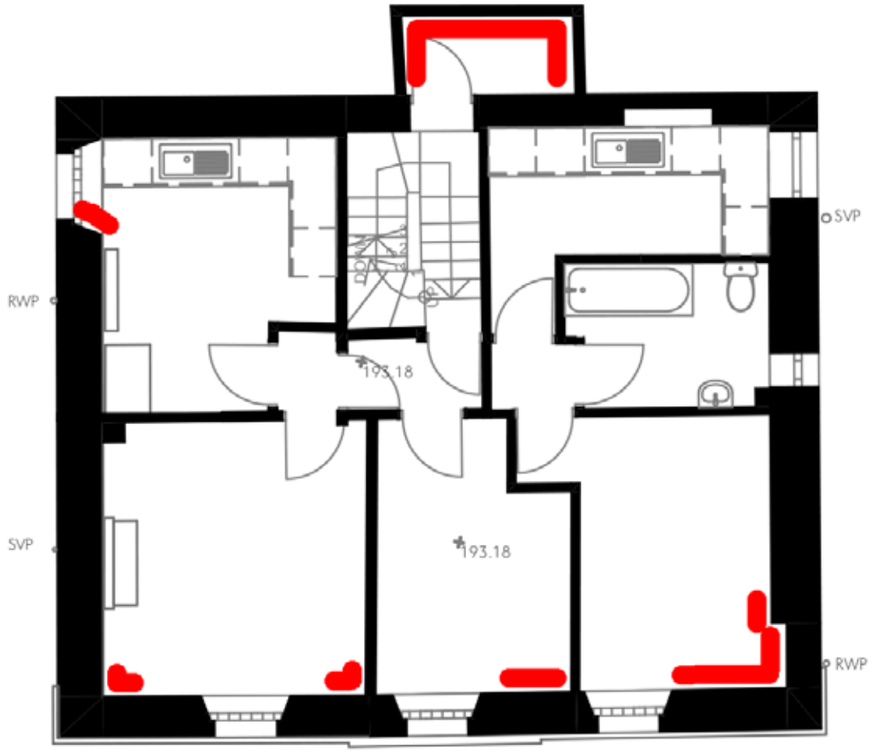
5.0 Rear (North) Elevation

The majority of the north external wall is not internal, apart from the top section. The view of the top section of this rear elevation is so limited that no assessment can be made on it. The one thing that is apparent is that there has been some patch repair work undertaken to the render.

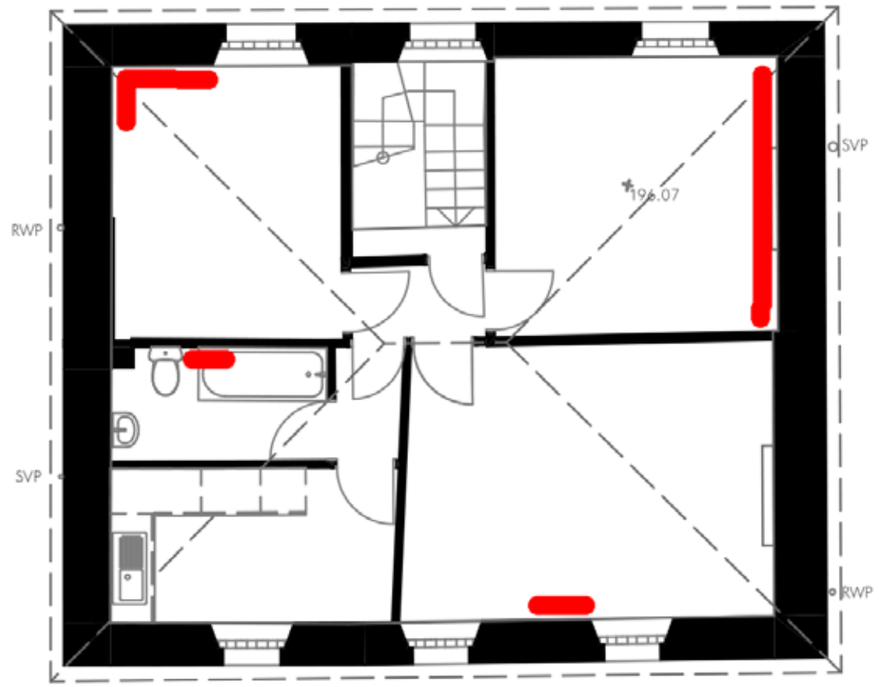
Images from Drone (source: Mann Williams)

6.0 Obvious Signs of Internal Damp on Walls

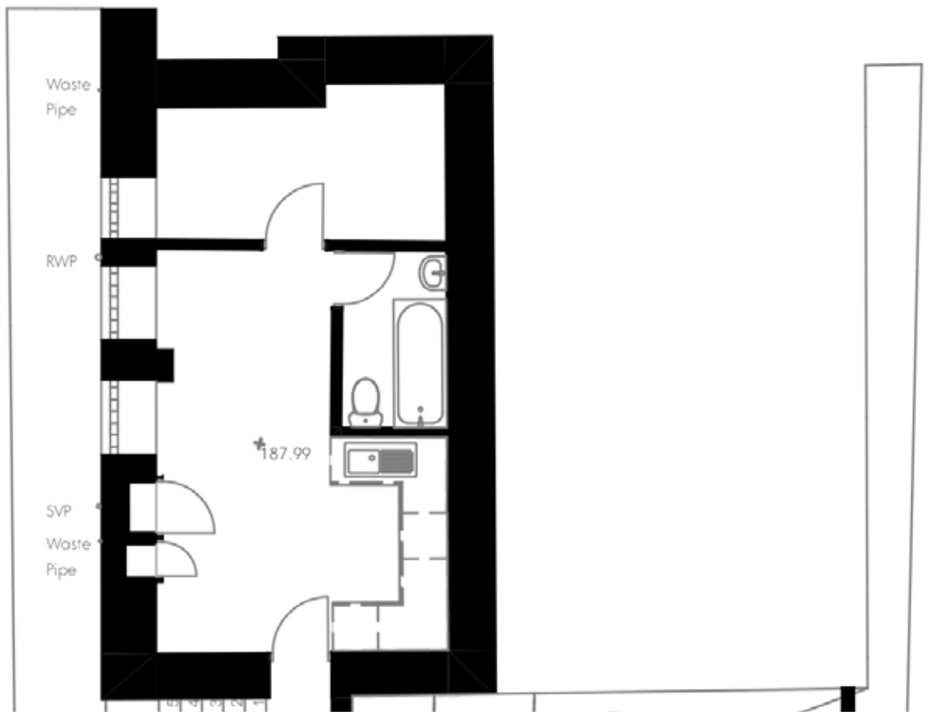
Insofar as it might help determine where likely damp ingress issues are, on this page, in red on the plan below, we identify where damp is clearly apparent on the internal face of the external walls.



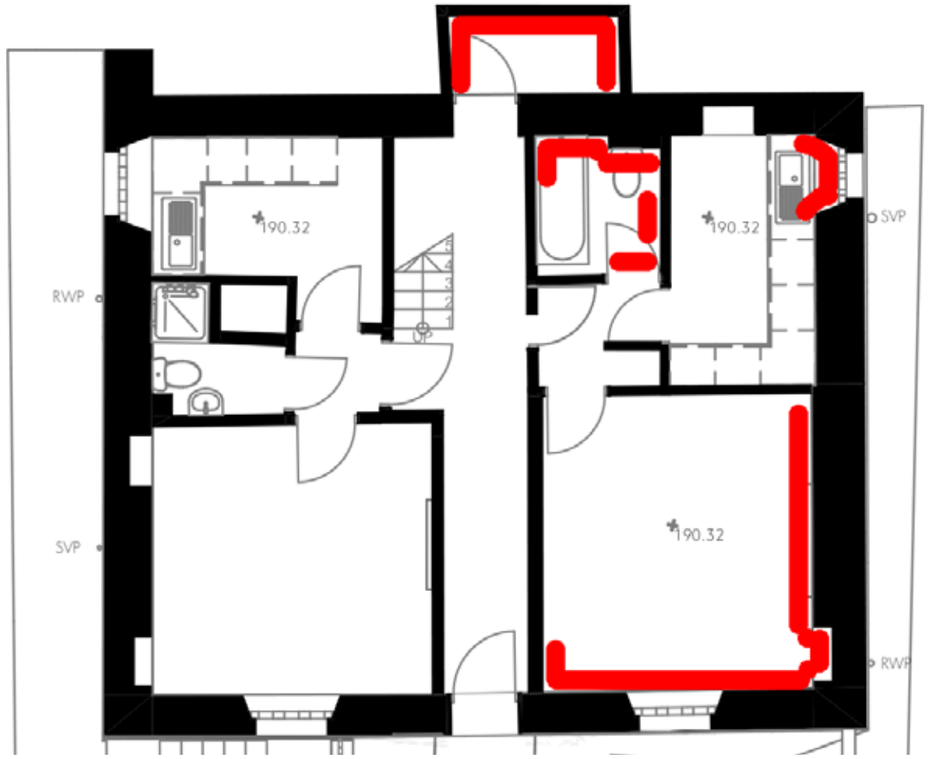
First Floor



Second Floor



Lower Ground Floor



Ground Floor

7.0 Roof Covering

The roof is a simple rectangular hipped roof, covered in concrete tiles and rounded concrete ridge and hip tiles. The surface of the tiles is heavily mossed on the ridge and some hips. However, there do not appear to be any lost tiles, nor slipped tiles, and only a small number of broken tiles. In this regard, the roof covering appears to be in a reasonable condition. To the north pitch, it appears as though the bottom four courses have been replaced in the more recent past. One of those 'new' tiles is broken down the middle - see red box on next page.

There is a membrane underneath the tiles which dresses into the gutters. In some cases, the membrane extends too far and is subject to flapping in the wind.

There is one soil and vent pipe penetrating the roof covering on the south west corner. This has a lead collar.

It is noticeable that there are no chimneys penetrating the roof. With a number of fireplaces inside, there would have been at least two chimneys, possible four, penetrating the roof. These have all been removed. It does not appear as though the tops of these flues have been vented since the chimneys were removed, which is a worrying sign.

The roof would benefit from a clean of all of the moss, and the edges of the roofing membrane cut back; but no significant work is suggested to the roof covering.

Images from Drone (source: Mann Williams)

View from South West

View from South

7.0 Roof Covering

Images from Drone (source: Mann Williams)

View from East

View from West

View from South

View from North

7.1 Eaves

The eaves are made up of thick timber fascia and a curved timber soffit, both painted. There is not a continuous ventilation gap at the base of the eaves, which is unfortunate; however, there appears to be a gap at each corner of the soffit, presumably providing ventilation to the roof build-up.

It is not possible to determine the condition of the fascia and soffit from this distance; and so it will be necessary to review them in more detail once scaffolding is up.

This being said, they appear to be in a reasonable condition, and may only be in need of a rub down and re-paint.

8.1 Side Path

The side path has a concrete surface which appears to be in a reasonable condition.

There is a timber boarded fence between the path and the front garden to Primrose Hill.

This path constitutes a 'Right of Way' to the property behind and to the north of Primrose Hill, which is accessed via a timber boarded gate - see top right photo.

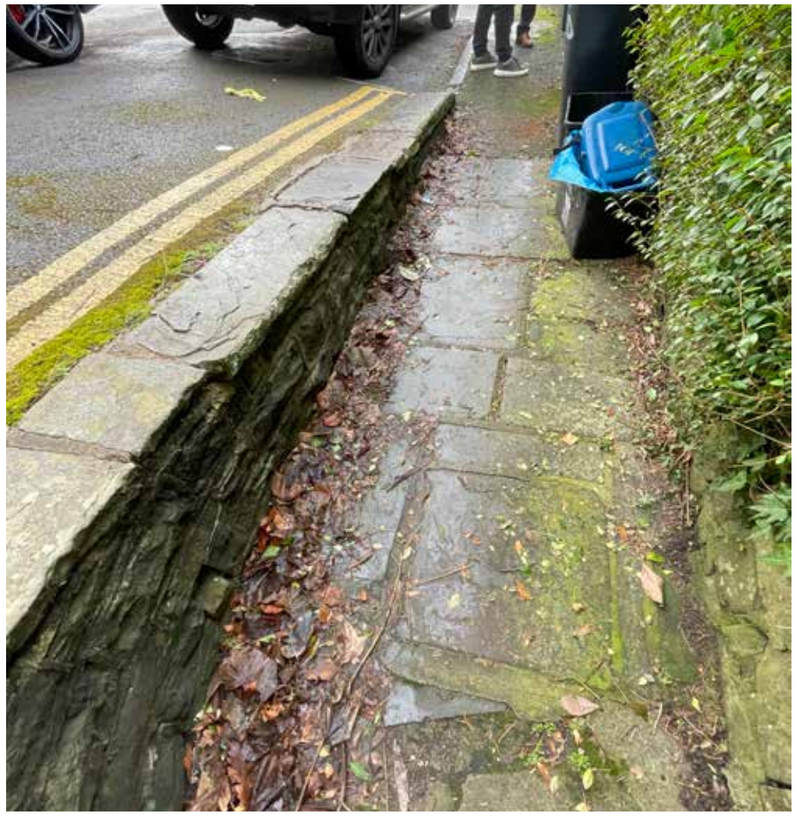
8.2 Retaining Wall

Covered by ivy and other vegetation, to the side of the path, east of Primrose Hill, is a retaining wall, approximately 3m high, made of rubble stonework. It is assumed that the stones are bedded on a lime mortar (albeit not confirmed) and that it used to be pointed in a lime mortar; however, it is apparent that the wall has more recently been pointed in a cementitious mortar, using a buttering / part rendering which has covered much of the stonework. The wall is covered in vegetation, to face and top, and so the wall could barely be inspected; however, there is concern about the use of cement for the pointing and for the restriction this will have put to the passage of moisture through the wall.

A 'makeshift' drainage hole was apparent at the base in one location; however, it is not clear whether there is a full drainage provision to this wall. That being said, percolation tests undertaken to the ground above suggests a good level of natural drainage in the ground above this wall.

9.1 Front Pavement

Between the tarmac road and the front wall to Primrose Hill's front garden there is a row of coping stones and then a drop to an area of stone flag paving. The tarmac is sloped, whilst the flagging is level, with the stone-capped wall acting as a retaining wall for the sloped road. The retaining wall then curves around at the top, leading towards the Right of Way path. At the bottom of the path is a set of three stone steps faced on the risers in blue-black engineering brick.



9.2 Front and Side Walls

To the west and south of the front garden is a pennant rubble stone enclosure wall, part retaining on the west. On the corner is a square, tall gate-post.

The stonework is bedded in lime mortar. In the past, it has been re-poined in cement mortar; however, a fair bit of that has broken up and fallen away. Many of the joints are recessed and in need of pointing.

The proposals involve raking out the joints and removing what remains of the cement pointing, and re-poring the whole wall in a lime mortar.