60, CADOGAN SQUARE, LONDON, S.W.1.

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PARTICULAR SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC INTEREST AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY, ITS FEATURES AND ITS SETTING, AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER, APPEARANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HANS TOWN CONSERVATION AREA, SUBMITTED IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSALS FOR ALTERATIONS AT UPPER AND LOWER GROUND FLOOR LEVELS

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report has been prepared by Paul Velluet on behalf of the owners of no. 60, Cadogan Square for submission in support of proposals for alterations at upper and lower ground floor level associated with the proposed creation of a one-bedroom, self-contained flat at upper ground floor level and a three-bedroom, self-contained two-storey maisonette at upper ground and lower ground floor levels. The report identifies and assesses the particular special architectural and historic interest and significance of the property, its features and its setting, and its contribution to the character, appearance and significance of the Hans Town Conservation Area. Details of Paul Velluet’s qualifications and experience are appended at the end of the report.

1.2 The report concludes that the parts of the property that will be affected by the proposed, modest alterations externally and by the proposed, more extensive, but still modest, alterations internally, possess only limited or no particular special architectural and historic interest and significance, and do not contribute to any meaningful degree to the settings of adjacent and nearby listed buildings or to the character, appearance or significance of the relevant part of the Hans Town Conservation Area.

2. THE PARTICULAR SPECIAL INTEREST AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY

2.1 The property comprises a six-storey, 1880s, Queen Anne style, residential building, located on the west side of Cadogan Square at the corner of Milner Street, with formal frontages to both, within the Hans Town Conservation Area. The entrance to the building is located on Milner Street. Internally, the property comprises some six, self-contained apartments, including two, at upper ground and lower ground floor levels, which will be affected by the submitted proposals. Reference to the relevant street-directories suggests that having been left empty for a number of years from 1947 the ground and upper floors were converted into four flats sometime before 1957. However, site analysis of the interior of the building as existing, suggests that the property may have been partially converted or significantly altered at a much earlier stage.
2.2 The property was first listed in April, 1969 together with no. 60A, Cadogan Square, immediately adjacent to the west, with a frontage to Milner Street. Anomally and incorrectly, the properties are also listed under the address – Nos. 60 and 60A, Milner Street on English Heritage’s National Heritage List for England web-site. The description accompanying the listing-entry is extraordinarily brief and succinct:


The property is noted as having group value.

From the description, it would appear that nos. 60 and 60A were listed entirely on the basis of their external appearance and the suggested attribution of their design to Shaw, and that the interest or otherwise of their interiors played no part in the decision of the Secretary of State to add the properties to the Statutory List.

As raised quite justifiably in the Heritage Statement submitted in support of the application for Listed Building Consent for proposed internal alterations to the second floor level apartment approved by the Council in February, 2013 (Council reference LB/12/05149), and not questioned in the officers’ report, the attribution of the design of the properties to Richard Norman Shaw is open to challenge; not only because of their omission from any list of works by Shaw in authoritative accounts of his work (see below), but because of the character and quality of the design of the properties; not least, when compared with the character and quality of houses in the Square which are reliably attributed to him, such as the grade II* no. 62, Cadogan Square, on the opposite corner of Milner Street, and nos. 68 and 72, further south along the west side of the square, built in 1883 and 1887-1888 respectively (see photograph and illustration below), let alone of Ernest George’s grade II* listed no. 52 of 1886-1887. In addition, the date of construction is also open to question (see below).
2.3 Whilst there is no specific reference to either no. 60 or 60A, Cadogan Square, in the relevant volume of *The Buildings of London – London 3: North-West* (Bridget CHERRY and Nikolaus Pevsner, Penguin, 1991), the authors describe the significant development history and distinctive character of the Cadogan Estate, and of Cadogan Square in particular, identifying the ‘unadventurous terraces’ designed by G.T. Robinson, and the more interesting houses designed by architects such as J.J. Stevenson, F.G. Knight, A.J. Adams and Norman Shaw, William Young, Ernest George, and George Devey, E.T Hall, G.E. Street and David Brandon.

2.4 The development history and distinctive character of Cadogan Square was most authoritatively described by Mark Girouard in two, detailed and well-illustrated articles published in the 16th and 23rd November, 1978 issues of *Country Life* (‘Cadogan Square, Chelsea – I’ and ‘Cadogan Square - II’). In discussing the development of the Earl of Cadogan’s Estate by the Cadogan and Hans Place Ltd and others from 1876 onwards in the second article, Girouard comments that in proposing the development of the sites of no. 54 to 60 (even) on the west side of the Square, Cadogan had to sub-lease his own property back from the Cadogan and Hans Place Estate Ltd in order to build on it and continues:
'Lord Cadogan originally planned to build four houses. Designs were produced in 1877 by William Young, the future architect of the War Office building in Whitehall and the Municipal Chambers in Glasgow.... The Cadogan Square houses were a natural by-product of Chelsea House; designs for both projects were illustrated in *Town and Country Mansions*, a handsome piece of self-advertisement, entirely illustrated by his own designs which Young published in 1879 (see illustration directly below).

Financially the houses proved to be white elephants. They were said to have been badly constructed; at any rate it took from eight to eleven years to dispose of them, and it was probably because of this that the fourth house, which would have completed the block on the corner of Cadogan Square and Milner Place, was never built. Instead, Lord Cadogan sold the underlease in 1886-1887 to a builder, William Douglas, who built two houses on the site (Nos. 60 and 60A) to a different design. Douglas had already built large numbers of houses in the Queen's Gate area, but went bankrupt in 1888, before his Cadogan Square houses were finished.'

As noted above, Reference to the relevant street-directories suggests that having been left empty for a number of years from 1947 the ground and upper floors were converted into four flats sometime before 1957. However, site analysis of the interior of the building as existing, suggests that the property may have been partially converted or significantly altered at a much earlier stage. The tight configuration and steep going of the principal (and only) staircase in the property and the crudely-detailed wire-caged lift-shaft at its centre tend to validate such a view.
2.6  As to the attribution of the design of no. 60, Cadogan Square and its matching companion at no. 60A, whilst the external design of the street-frontages draws in part from William Young’s design for the aborted end house of his planned terrace of four houses, and in other part from the work of Adams, Devey, Shaw, Stevenson in the square – particularly in its gabled outline, its projecting, splayed bays at ground and first floor levels, and, of course, its prevailing use of red brick, it offers none of the picturesque qualities and refinement of Shaw’s houses in the square – nos. 62, 68 and 72. Importantly, the property does not appear in the schedule of Shaw’s works contained in either edition of Andrew Saint’s comprehensive and authoritative Richard Norman Shaw (Yale University Press, 1976/1977 and 2010). Equally, in his history dissertation for Part II of the University of Cambridge Architecture Tripos – The Cadogan and Hans Place Estate, 1980 – J.J. Broome, who had full access to the Cadogan Estate archives, states:

‘The site of the fourth house (no. 60) in William Young’s group for Lord Cadogan had lain empty and was eventually taken, in 1886 by William Douglas, who was just finishing nos. 76-82. Douglas must have been aware that it was in Lord Cadogan’s interest to get this difficult site developed, for he was not slow to demand a peppercorn rent and permission to build two houses (nos. 60 and 60A). Douglas’ architect was F.G. Knight, who had designed several houses in the area, especially south of the square in Cadogan Gardens, and liked to be thought of as the architect of the whole area. It took several redesigns before Knight’s proposals for the two houses were accepted either by Lord Cadogan or by the Architect of the Metropolitan Board of Works. The design makes no effort to complete Young’s composition- the houses are not so tall as his and the style is much closer to the Gothic side of Queen Anne.’

2.7  As Mark Girouard notes in discussing Cadogan Square and its development in his Sweetness and Light: The Queen Anne Movement, 1860-1900 (Clarendon Press, 1977):

‘A few of the houses were designed for occupation by individual clients, but the majority were built in blocks by different building firms as speculations….

‘The area rapidly assumed a character suitable to its position, poised between aristocratic Belgravia and artistic Chelsea. The first occupants varied between upper class and upper middle class, between rich and very rich, and between gently artistic and mildly philistine. Shaw, Stevenson, and others catered for the artistic; the more conventional element was catered for by architects like Niven, who proclaimed that in his designs ‘the quaintness of the so-called Queen Anne style is studiously avoided’. In effect this meant that his houses, and others on the estate, especially the many houses designed by G.T. Robinson, were recognizably influenced by ‘Queen Anne’, but were a little stodgier, and a little closer to genuine Queen Anne or Georgian. The public failed to differentiate and thought of the area as a ‘Queen Anne’ one. The style’s
appearance in so well-heeled a neighbourhood was impressive evidence that it really had arrived, and probably did as much as anything else to release the flood of ‘Queen Anne’ that followed in the 1880s.’

2.8 The architectural and historic significance of no. 60 resides fundamentally in its gabled, red-brick faced, ‘Queen Anne’ style street-elevations and its roofline and the contribution they make to the coherent and distinctive architectural character and appearance of Cadogan Square. Whilst clearly not of the same architectural order of a number of other listed properties in the square, including those rightly attributed to Shaw, no. 60 contributes with Shaw’s no. 62, Cadogan Square directly opposite, although to a lesser extent, in defining the junction of Milner Street with the square.

2.9 Internally, the principal living room and bedroom of the present apartment at upper ground floor level in no. 60 facing on to the square, comprise generously proportioned, architecturally coherent and attractively detailed spaces, with classically profiled ceiling-cornices, chimney-pieces and fire-places, and high-quality door and other joinery, including some polished hardwood doors. Whilst the former, separate room just inside the street-entrance facing on to Milner Street is also generously proportioned with classically profiled ceiling cornices detailed and other features, its coherence has been diminished by the creation of a wide opening into the common circulation area adjacent. The originality of many the internal features at upper ground floor level is uncertain. The very fine, carved Carrara marble chimney-piece in the principal reception room of the apartment, for instance, is either an imported, 18th century piece, or a very good modern reproduction, and complements the delicately detailed plasterwork decoration on the ceiling. By contrast, the layout of the common circulation area linking the entrance from the street to the staircase and lift, and the configuration of the corridor and kitchen within the apartment appear to be contrived and awkwardly detailed. It is clear that the entrance lobby from the street has been adversely altered. The geometry and detailing of the common staircase also appears to be awkward and contrived, and surprisingly modest in size given the scale of the property as a whole. It is reasonable to suggest that interior of the property at ground floor level possess only limited architectural and historic interest and significance and that this is effectively confined to the principal reception room and bedroom in the existing apartment.

2.10 Sub-divided sash-windows on the flights of the stone, common-staircase leading down to the lower ground floor and the first floor open on to an entirely utilitarian internal light-well of no architectural interest or significance extending down to a stone-paved area at lower ground floor level. The flank wall to no. 58, Cadogan Square is faced in painted render, and the walls of no. 6 in painted brickwork. The heavily over-painted, stone staircase leading down to the lower ground floor follows a similarly tight configuration geometry to the staircase above and is of entirely utilitarian character, with limited sections of ironwork balustrading and hand-railing. The staircase is
constrained in width by the crudely fixed and poorly-detailed wire-caged lift-shaft at its centre, and is of no particular special interest or significance in itself and makes no meaningful contribution to the particular special interest or significance of the property as a whole.

2.11 The lower ground floor level apartment is accessed from the base of the staircase and lift. The room layout of the apartment follows that of the upper ground floor directly above, but subdivided in part with non-loadbearing, plastered, brick partitions. The rooms are plain and simple. There are no ceiling-cornices or other features of note. The doors are four or six-panelled – some plain some simply moulded. The door to the kitchen has been provided with a fire-resisting facing on its inside. A number of the doorways have no architraves, others have modest architraves of traditional detail, and a number have entirely modern architraves of crude profile. Whilst most of the carpeted and lino-covered floors seem to be of solid construction, the large space directly below the main entrance area and common circulation area at upper ground floor level, and used as a boiler-room and storage area for entire block, has a suspended, timber-boarded floor. The chimney-pieces and fireplaces in the living room and the bedroom have been lost, but that in the simple chimney-piece in the kitchen survives although over-painted. A glazed door with side-lights opens into the base of the internal light-well from the circulation corridor. The apartment possesses no features of particular special interest or significance nor does it contribute in any meaningful way to the particular special interest or significance of the property as a whole.

2.12 Parts of this space extend into the basement-area and are top-lit with two glazed paving-blocks set behind and well concealed by the painted, stone balustrading that extends along the back of the public footway at street level within two of the triple-arched, projecting loggia containing the main entrance to the building (see photograph below). A passageway located directly below the steps leading up to the main entrance to three, disused, low, storage-vaults located below the public footway – one of which is fitted as a simple wine-cellar. Eight other disused, low storage-vaults are located below the public footway around the Milner Street and Cadogan Square frontages of the building and are accessed from the deep and very narrow basement-area that extends around the base of the building. The vault on the Cadogan Square frontage nearest no. 58 is lined with glazed tiles, possibly for long-lost use as a cold larder. A flight of stone steps leads down to the basement-area from a gate in the area-railings at the corner of the building. A small section of the basement-area adjacent to the projecting splayed bay fronting Cadogan Square and accessed from the living room of the apartment is glazed over and enclosed to each side. Neither the basement-area nor the vaults are of particular special interest or significance in their own right nor do they contribute in any meaningful way to the particular special interest or significance of the property as a whole.
3. THE CONTRIBUTION MADE BY THE PROPERTY TO THE CHARACTER, APPEARANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HANS TOWN CONSERVATION AREA

3.1 The property falls within that part of the Hans Town Conservation Area identified as one of three sub-areas as ‘West of Sloane Street (Rose Red City)’ in the townscapes analysis section (Section 4) of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council’s Hans Town Conservation Area Proposals Statement, published in January 2000.

3.2 The authors of the Statement rightly state that ‘the areas west of Sloane Street and south of Harrods within the conservation area represent one of the distinctive townscapes in London’. The authors continue:

‘The sea of Queen Anne revival red brick exuberance of Cadogan Square, Lennox Gardens, Pont Street and surrounding streets are undoubtedly of national importance and present unique townscapes. The area’s distinctiveness is not only due to the almost uniform use of red brick idiom but is also derived from the diverse contributions from a multitude of influential contemporary architects’.

3.3 The authors of the Statement begin their analysis of the sub-area by describing Cadogan Square and its character:

‘In the area’s heart is Cadogan Square which remains a showcase(sic) to the dynamism of the Queen Anne revival architecture of the 1870s and 1880s and is a rare example of a complete townscape designed in the style. The square includes contributions
from leading architects of the time and reflects their individually, diverse interpretation of the Queen Anne revival idiom. The development of Cadogan Square is a rarity, as seldom has such a diversity of architects contributed to a single speculative housing scheme in London (including R. Norman Shaw, J.J. Stevenson, Gerge Devey, A.J. Adams, G.T. Robinson and Ernest George and H.A. Peto). The result is one of the most striking and distinctive squares in the city and of national importance.

The character of Cadogan Square is of a visually, overwhelming symphony (sic) of imposing, red brick terraces framing the central mature gardens. All terrace elevations are sufficiently high to contribute to a clear sense of enclosure to the gardens, yet the generous space between terraces and the north-south alignment of the Square results in a pleasing sense of openness which complements well with (sic) the impressive mature trees of the central garden. Despite the uniformity of red brick as a facing material, the monotony (sic) so characteristic of many formal, stucco faced squares is absent and the emphasis is firmly on diversity of individual frontages or of small groups of buildings.

One of the most striking aspects of Cadogan Square is the contrast between the character of the east side where all of the buildings read clearly as a distinct group with the visual emphasis on the collective contribution to the flow (sic) of the terrace, and west side where the emphasis is on individual facades, often strikingly different from each other. The reason for such a contrast is the fact that the east side was designed by a single architect (G.T. Robinson) as part of a single contract (and the resultant constraints), whilst the west side was developed more incrementally in parcels and individual plots by a variety of different architects who often differed markedly in their approach'.

3.4 In describing the west side of Cadogan Square, the authors of the Statement state that:

‘The west side of the Square contains the most celebrated examples of Queen Anne revival buildings and the striking innovative nature of many of the frontages ensure that the west side is clearly the most impressive architecturally. The character is one of staggered rhythm of individual facades, albeit all interpretations of the red brick Queen Anne idiom. It is clear that the southern end of the west side (from say Nos.50-82) (sic) with the elegant red brick facades appears to be altogether of a more refined appearance and demonstrates a greater degree of integrity as a group than the rather coarse (sic) and more robust and fragmented northern end (from No. 28-50) (sic), where the delicate, red brick facades are somewhat overpowered by the copious use of stonework.

The southern end of the western terrace includes some of the finest buildings within the Queen Anne Revival style. In particular, Nos. 62, 68 and 72 by the much celebrated R. Norman Shaw, are an inspirational light in the movement. Few buildings can match the elegance of Shaw’s facades. His distinctive style is apparent in the fine
inter-relationship between the verticality and refined detailing of the red brick façade and its gable reinforced by the flanking bay outreach (sic) and he white-painted, graceful multi-paned windows. (as well as Shaw's trademark contrast between symmetry and asymmetry.) Shaw's No. 62 is a more restrained façade than Nos. 68 and 72, although the building makes a strong and imposing corner statement on the junction with Milner Street, framing a fine view of the stock brick and stucco terraces to the west.

The most immediately distinctive building on the west side is Ernest George and Peto's exuberant and eye-catching No. 52. Its façade consists of a rich interplay of the copious detailing of buff terracotta mouldings, delicately carved red brickwork, decorative leaded lights and copper-clad outreach (sic) within the distinctive gabled Queen Anne revival façade. The building remains one of the liveliest and most exuberant examples of the Queen Anne revival style. The terrace, from this point northwards continues in the red brick idiom, albeit in a more robust manner with stonework competing with, or overpowering the red brick facades. In particular, sober stonework overpowers the facades of Nos. 28-36 (designed by George Devey), which consequently lack the refinement and elegance so characteristic of the Queen Anne Revival style'.

3.5 As note in paragraph 2.7 above, the architectural and historic significance of no. 60 resides fundamentally in its gabled, red-brick faced, 'Queen Anne' style street-elevations and its roofline and the contribution they make to the coherent and distinctive architectural character and appearance of Cadogan Square. Whilst clearly not of the same architectural order of a number of other listed properties in the square, including those rightly attributed to Shaw, no. 60 contributes with Shaw's no. 62, Cadogan Square directly opposite, although to a lesser extent, in defining the junction of Milner Street with the square. Even though it appears that no. 60 was not designed by Shaw, it clearly contributes to the particular character, appearance and significance of the relevant sub-area as identified in the Council's Hans Town Conservation Area Proposals Statement and to the settings of adjacent listed buildings in both Milner Street and Cadogan Square – nos. 60A and 58, Cadogan Square respectively - and to nearby listed buildings along the west side of the square. The authors of the Council's Statement rightly note the 'strong and imposing corner statement on the junction with Milner Street, framing a fine view of the stock brick and stucco terraces to the west' made by Shaw's no. 62, Cadogan Square. Whilst they make no reference to no. 60 on the opposite corner of the junction, it is reasonable to suggest that it plays a critical role in framing the view westwards along Milner Street.

3.6 Importantly, the current proposals do not involve any changes to no. 60, Cadogan Square the property, either internally or externally, which will affect the significant contribution made by the street-elevations and roofline of the property to the
character, appearance or significance of the Hans Town Conservation Area or to the settings of adjacent or nearby listed buildings.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 From the above it is reasonable to suggest that the parts of the property that will be affected by the proposed, modest alterations externally and by the proposed, more extensive, but still modest, alterations internally, possess only limited or no particular special architectural and historic interest and significance, and do not contribute to any meaningful degree to the settings of adjacent and nearby listed buildings or to the character, appearance or significance of the relevant part of the Hans Town Conservation Area.

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26th September, 2014.

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PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE PROPERTY AS EXISTING

The upper part of the street-elevation of no.60 to Milner Street and Shaw’s no. 62, Cadogan Square on the opposite corner
The ceiling and floor of the principal entrance lobby to the property
The base of the common staircase leading up to the first floor and the lift adjacent
The common circulation area and the separate room beyond at upper ground floor level
The entrance to the upper ground floor level apartment and the internal corridor
The living room in the upper ground floor level apartment
The bedroom in the upper ground floor level apartment
The staircase leading down to the lower ground floor level and the lift-shaft in the well
The corridor and circulation area within the lower ground floor apartment
The living room and kitchen in the lower ground floor level apartment
The boiler-room and store-room and the base of the light-well at lower ground floor level