



Heritage Impact Assessment

74 Wood Street,
Barnet

December 2021 | Project Ref 5756B

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1. Introduction

- 1.1** This Heritage Impact Assessment has been written by Dr Jonathan Edis, Director of HCUK Group, behalf of Wood Street Veterinary Hospital. It relates to proposals to add a single storey side/rear extension to part of 74 Wood Street, Barnet, which is a grade II listed building within Wood Street Conservation Area (Figure 4).
- 1.2** Pre-application advice has been sought from the London Borough of Barnet in respect of a proposed extension to house a CT scanning machine in connection with the longstanding use of 74 Wood Street as a veterinary surgery. A memorandum was received in response (19/8376/QCJ), containing generally negative assertions relating to harm to the significance of the listed building. The proposed extension has been revised, following the pre-application consultation.
- 1.3** 74 Wood Street forms a loose group with two other listed buildings known as Ravenscroft Cottages (otherwise known as Jesus Hospital), and Garrett's Almshouses. The pre-application response from the London Borough of Barnet does not suggest that the application proposal would have an effect on the setting of these listed buildings, which are distant from the visual influence of the proposed extension.
- 1.4** The author of this assessment has nearly forty years of continuous employment in the heritage sector, including a decade as a conservation officer advising local planning authorities on applications affecting heritage assets. A large number of those cases have involved the extension of listed buildings in conservation areas.
- 1.5** A number of site visits have been undertaken. HCUK Group was involved in an earlier assessment relating to the pre-application discussions, during which the effects of the proposal on the setting of nearby listed buildings was explored. For the avoidance of doubt, careful consideration has been given to the effect of the proposal on the setting of all nearby listed buildings, including 74 Wood Street, in the preparation of this assessment.

2. Heritage policy and guidance

- 2.1** The council is required by sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building. The council must also give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the listed building. There is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm the special interest of the listed building though the presumption will plainly be lessened if the harm is less than substantial within the meaning in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as is explained further below.
- 2.2** Section 72(1) of the Act states that special attention shall be paid by the decision maker to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 2.3** Harm is defined by Historic England as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.¹
- 2.4** The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the NPPF (2019) as being made up of four main constituents, architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest and artistic interest. The setting of a heritage asset can also contribute to its significance.
- 2.5** The assessments of heritage significance and impact are normally made with primary reference to the four main elements of significance identified in the NPPF.
- 2.6** The NPPF requires the impact on the significance of the heritage asset to be considered in terms of either “substantial harm” or “less than substantial harm” as described within paragraphs 202 and 202 of that document. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that substantial harm is a high test, and recent case law describes substantial harm in terms of an effect that would vitiate or drain away much of the significance of a heritage asset.

¹ Paragraph 84 of Conservation Principles (2008)

- 2.7** Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance.
- 2.8** Paragraph 018 of the National Planning Policy Guidance (ref: 18a-018-20190723) confirms that within each category of harm, the extent of harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.
- 2.9** Local heritage policy has been taken into account in the preparation of this assessment.
- 2.10** This assessment is confined to an assessment of the significance of heritage assets and the impact of change on that significance. It does not address the planning balance in which public benefit is weighed against the degree of harm, if any.

3. Statement of Significance

Introduction

- 3.1** This chapter of the assessment identifies the significance of the relevant heritage assets.

Wood Street Conservation Area

- 3.2** The development of the area is summarised in the council's appraisal of Wood Street Conservation Area appraisal as follows:

"The medieval roads and livestock market at the junction of Wood Street and Barnet High Street gave the area its original importance. During the 18th century, this was superseded by the many inns and taverns along the High Street which served the coaching trade. The area, largely untouched by railway-based suburbanisation, has survived relatively undeveloped, and modern planning and conservation area policies have helped to secure its preservation."

- 3.3** Wood Street predates the medieval period as an east-west route along the length of a topographical ridge from St John the Baptist Church. The area surrounding the junction of Wood Street and Barnet High Street (formerly the Great North Road) operated as a large market following a granting of Royal Charter in 1199. The market had developed by the 16th Century and had become established as one of the primary livestock markets for the trade into London.

- 3.4** The historic background and character of the area are set out within the Wood Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal Statement (Adopted 2007). The boundaries of Wood Street Conservation Area were set out in 1969 and expanded in 1979, it extends the length of Wood Street and arterial side streets from High Street and Barnett Hill in the east to Whalebones Park in the west. The application site is located in Character Sub Area 2 : Wood Street From Tudor Hall to the Black Horse Public House. The key characteristics noted include;

- *"Generally, buildings are of high architectural or historic value with many of them statutorily and locally listed.*
- *Most buildings were built from the 18th century onwards, although earlier medieval remnants can be found.*
- *There are also a number of re-fronted timber framed buildings with large central chimneystacks and clay tiles roofs behind brick or stucco fronts.*
- *At the eastern end of Wood Street buildings are domestic in scale, set back behind sizable front gardens with low level walls, walls topped by railings, and hedges. Being two or three storeys tall, they are unpretentious in form, design and detailing.*
- *Very mixed uses with residential and commercial (offices) interspersed with community and institutional uses.*
- *Progressing westwards on the south side, buildings are generally larger two and three storey villas set behind front gardens.*
- *Almshouses are an important feature of this part of the conservation area, namely the 17th century Ravenscroft Cottages, 18th century Garretts Almshouses and 19th century Leathersellers Almshouses. These are single storey, of simple form, red brick with clear uncluttered clay tiled roofs and prominent chimneys, and they are all listed grade II.*
- *Leathersellers Almshouses are laid out as three sides of a square in a Tudor style. They were first built in c.1837, but two sides were rebuilt in 1966. The iron gates are an important feature of the conservation area.*
- *Late Victorian buildings of note are Ewan Hall and The United Reformed Church. These are good examples of Victorian ecclesiastical architecture. Though unlisted, they all contribute to the townscape of the area.*
- *The former Births, Marriages and Deaths Registry Office (dating from 1914) is another building of note, with red brick walls, clay tiled roof, a stone door surround, sliding sash timber windows and very prominent chimneys.*
- *Buildings and hedges provide informal sequences of frontages and setbacks.*
- *There is less traffic and it becomes quieter moving further away from the busy High Street.*
- *Common materials are render in muted tones with clay tiled roofs or clay pantiles and timber sashes. Red brick and orange/brown clay tiles predominate. There is some flint and stone (e.g. Church House) plus some London Stock brick with stone dressings (e.g. The Black Horse Public House).*

- *Paving in places is sometimes inappropriate e.g. outside Barnet College in the High Street*
- *Street furniture could be more co-ordinated*
- *There are good mature trees in private gardens*
- *Well tended formal parks and open green spaces are notable to the south, behind former Barnet Museum*
- *Large historic granite kerbs remain and there are well detailed though modern pavements on the north side of Wood Street with large module paving slabs in sound condition*
- *Traffic in the area is busy particularly in the morning and afternoon rush hours"*

3.5 The conservation area is clearly a significant historical place within a regional context.

74 Wood Street

3.6 74 Wood Street (Figure 4) was first designated on 26 September 1957. Listed grade II, it is officially described as follows:

"Early C19 stucco villa. Two storeys, 3 windows, plain sashes. Porch with slender columns. Low pitch hipped slate roof with eaves overhang. Contemporary iron gate and posts."

3.7 A building is shown in this location on the Enclosure Award map of 1818 but the floor plan is not exactly the same as what we see today (Figure 1). However, the present arrangement seems to have been in place by the time of the O.S. map of 1896 (Figure 2).

3.8 It is understood that the building has been in use as a veterinary surgery for about 130 years, albeit there was a "principal" residential element in the early days of that use. This is confirmed in an entry in the Barnet Press of 22 July 1905, which records the birth of a daughter of W.D.W. Wallis, M.R.C.V.S, of 74 Wood Street.

3.9 The interior of 74 Wood Street has been extensively altered as a result of more than a century of use as a veterinary surgery, and the original floor plan has been adapted. The building is of local interest, and it forms a loose group with two other

nearby listed buildings.² It is a physical connection with the past development of Wood Street, and this part of Barnet.

Summary of significance

3.10 Wood Street Conservation Area is an area of special architectural and historic interest, and regional significance. 74 Wood Street is a detached villa of c.1820 that has been in use as a veterinary surgery since about 1890, and which has been altered and extended. It is of local historical interest.

² Ravenscroft Cottages, otherwise known as Jesus Hospital, and Garrett's Almshouses.
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4. Heritage Impact Assessment

Introduction

- 4.1** This chapter of the assessment describes the proposed development and its effect on the heritage assets identified in the previous chapter.

Proposed development

- 4.2** The proposed development is an extension to the service range that juts out to the left hand side of the rear of 74 Wood Street. It is proposed to house a CT scanner for the use of the veterinary surgery.

Effect on 74 Wood Street

- 4.3** The extension will not be attached to the original building of c.1820 (Figure 6). It will be attached to a service building, the footprint of which came into being at some time between c.1820 and c.1896. It should be noted that there is a history of extension directly on the west side of the listed building (Figures 2 and 3) and that the current proposal is in an area that would have been hidden from public view by those glazed and solid extensions for many decades between (and possibly before and after) the 1890s to the 1930s. The current proposal is set back, compared to the extensions shown on the O.S. maps of 1896 and 1936 (Figures 2, 3 and 5).
- 4.4** The proposed extension will cause no loss of original or significant historic fabric. It will not impact on any significant aspect of the floor plan, and it will have no effect on the character of the listed building. 74 Wood Street will be just as significant after the completion of the proposed development as it is now. Paragraphs 201 and 202 of the NPPF will not be engaged, and there will be preservation for the purposes of the council's duties under sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Act.

Effect on Wood Street Conservation Area

- 4.5** The proposed extension is so small in relation to the conservation area, as a whole, that its visual effect will be very small. Even in the context of being attached to a grade II listed building, the impact will be minor, and none of the characteristics identified by the council in respect of the conservation area (see Chapter 3) will be harmed.. There is no reason to suppose that Wood Street Conservation Area will be less significant after the completion of the proposed development than it is now, and paragraphs 201 and 202 of the NPPF will not be engaged. The inward investment into the continued use of the building as a veterinary surgery, which has been part of its history for more than half of its life, is a material public benefit which in itself outweighs any possible perception of harm.

Summary of effects

- 4.6** The proposed development will not harm the significance of any heritage assets, and it will in fact continue the longstanding use of this building, which is in the interests of the conservation area.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1** Wood Street Conservation Area is an area of special architectural and historic interest, and regional significance. 74 Wood Street is a detached villa of c.1820 that has been in use as a veterinary surgery since about 1890, and which has been altered and extended. It is of local historical interest.
- 5.2** The proposed development is an extension to the service range that juts out to the left hand side of the rear of 74 Wood Street. It is proposed to house a CT scanner for the use of the veterinary surgery.
- 5.3** The extension will not be attached to the original building of c.1820. It will be attached to a service building, the footprint of which came into being at some time between c.1820 and c.1896. There is a history of extension directly on the west side of the listed building and that the current proposal is in an area that would have been hidden from public view by those glazed and solid extensions. The current proposal is set back, compared to the extensions shown on the O.S. maps of 1896 and 1936.
- 5.4** The proposed extension will cause no loss of original or significant historic fabric. It will not impact on any significant aspect of the floor plan, and it will have no effect on the character of the listed building. 74 Wood Street will be just as significant after the completion of the proposed development as it is now.
- 5.5** The proposed extension is so small in relation to the conservation area, as a whole, that its visual effect will be very small. There is no reason to suppose that Wood Street Conservation Area will be less significant after the completion of the proposed development than it is now, and the inward investment into the continued use of the building as a veterinary surgery, which has been part of its history for more than half of its life, is a material public benefit which in itself outweighs any possible perception of harm.

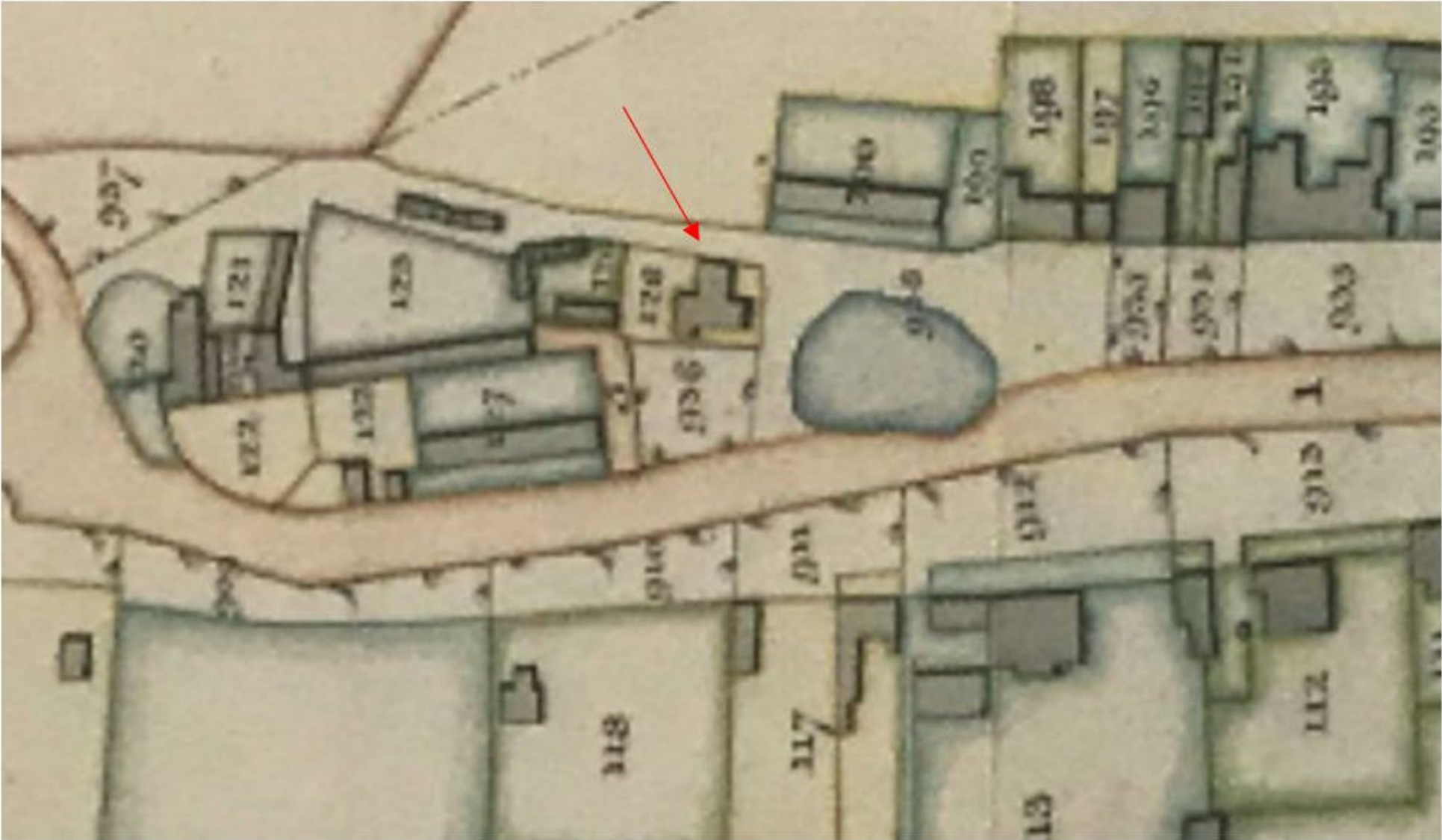


Figure 1 – 1818 Enclosure Award Map

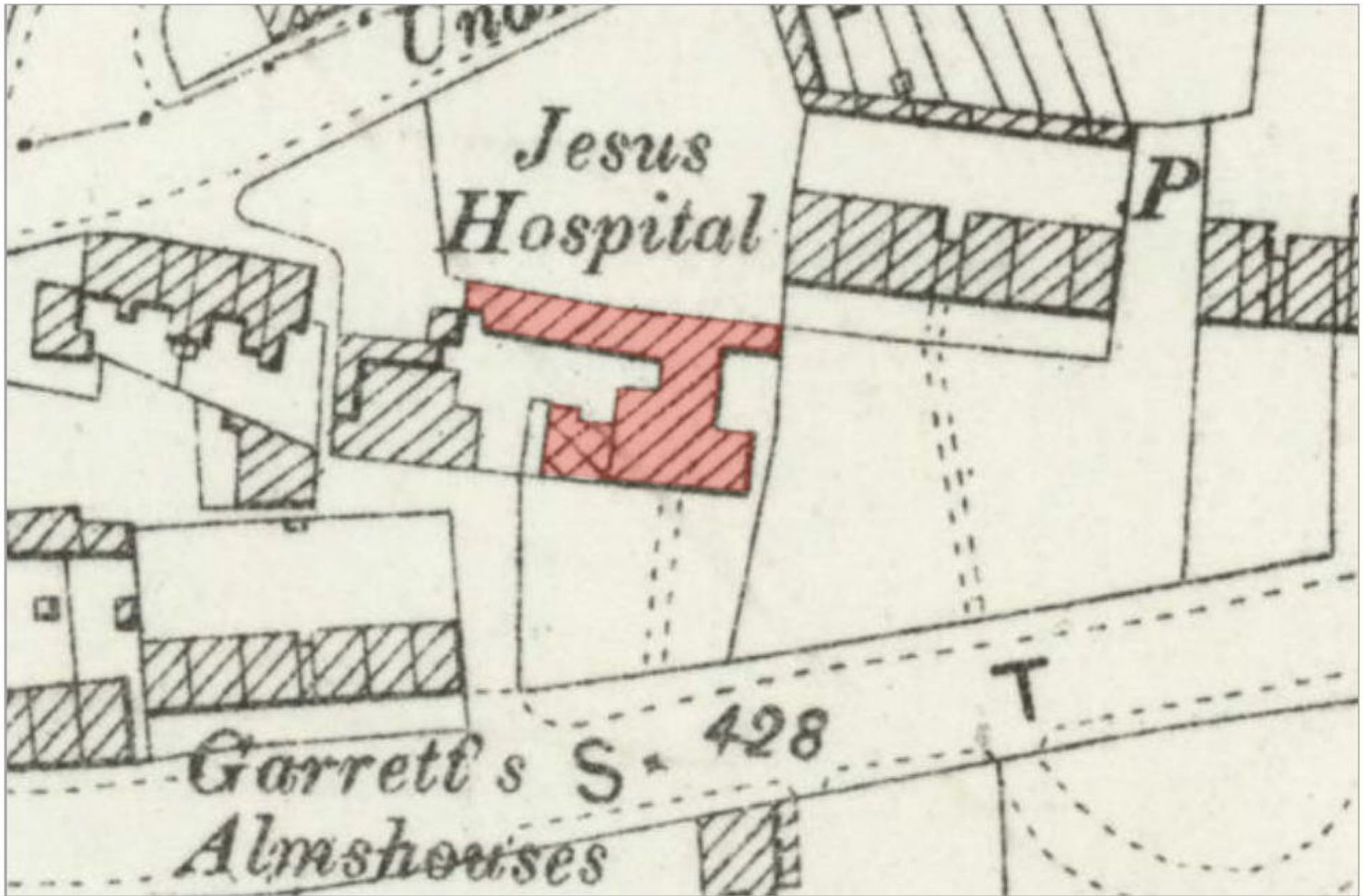


Figure 2 - Extract from the O.S. map of 1896. The building now known as 74 Wood Street has been shaded pink for ease of identification. The references to Jesus Hospital and Garrett's Almshouses are to other neighbouring buildings. Note the glazed extension on the west side of the building, denoted by cross hatching. By 1936 this structure had been replaced by a solid building (Figure 3).

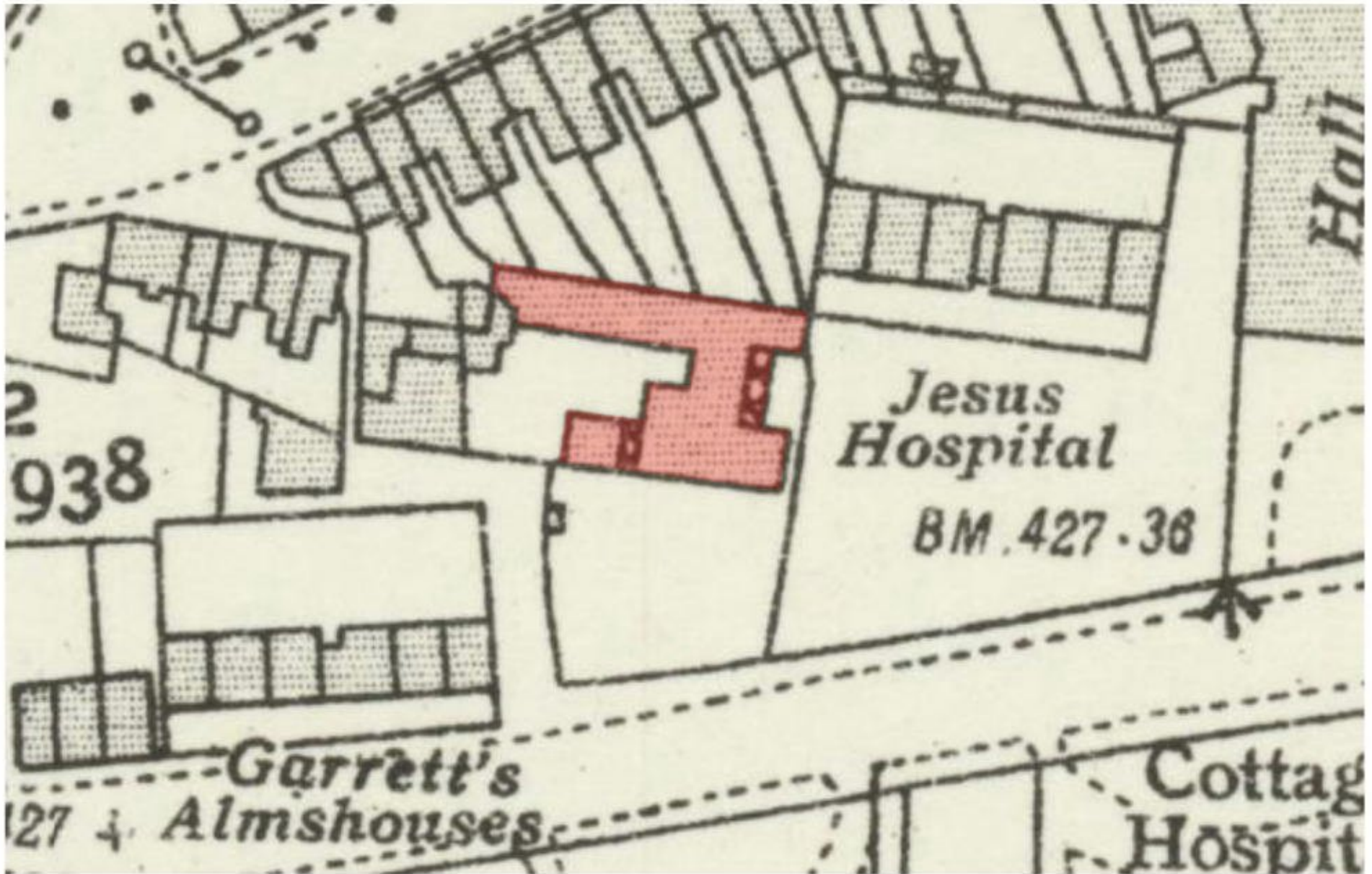


Figure 3 - Extract from the O.S. map of 1936 showing that the former glazed structure attached to the west side of 74 Wood Street had been replaced with a solid roofed building, attached to the original house by a glazed link. This part of the building has since been demolished.



Figure 4 – Front elevation



Figure 5 – The site of the proposed extension, seen looking from Wood Street.



Figure 6 – The site of the proposed extension.