

Dane End, 46 The Drive, Northwood

by Susan Toms

Earlier this year a planning application was submitted to demolish this house and replace it with a modern build. Although the property is not listed the Society was very concerned that this unusual Edwardian house was worthy of preservation and we requested that the application was refused.

Dane End is the oldest house in The Drive, having been built in 1908. It was still the only building in the road at the time of the 1914 Ordnance Survey map. The application to the Council to build the house was made in December 1907 by Swannell and Sly, the local architects and surveyors based at 1a Maxwell Road, Northwood and in the High Street, Rickmansworth. The first occupant was H. Otto Thomas. It was allegedly named Dane End because Great Dane dogs were bred there but it is more likely that the first owner had a family connection with the village of the same name in Hertfordshire.

The house is a most unusual construction, being a substantial three storey building contained almost entirely within a large mansard roof. See Fig. 1.



Fig. 1 - South elevation

The dominating effect of this roof is relieved on the north side by two gables and a small single storey service wing that appears to be original. The main (east) front of the building has an interesting flint detail at second storey level and symmetrical overhangs of the main roof left and right, supported by substantial timber posts. The right overhang forms an entrance porch. See Fig. 2.



Fig. 2 - North-east elevation

Most of the original features remain, although some of the windows show signs of alteration. The exterior has been largely unchanged although the interior was altered when the house was converted to the existing three flats.

In view of its unusual architecture and good state of preservation the Society had recommended that it was included on the Borough's 'Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Importance'.

The current situation is that the application was withdrawn, but there could still be future attempts to develop the site.

My thanks are due to Simon Morgan for supplying all the architectural information and to Miles Faulkner for the photographs.