



Planning Statement

Coal House, Branch Hill

July 2023





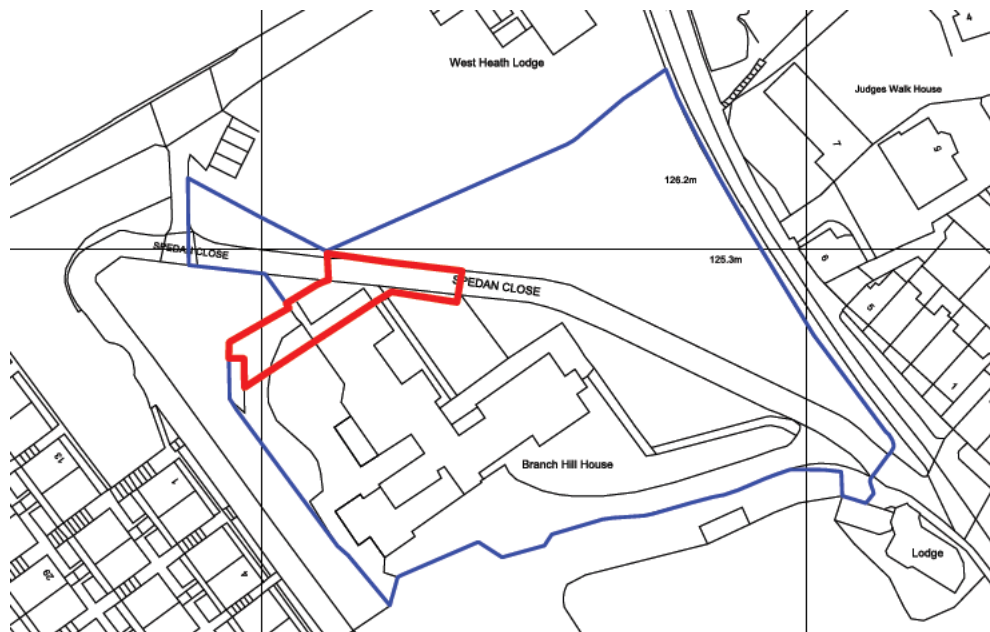
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by hgh Consulting on behalf of Almax Group Capital Limited (the “Applicant”), in support of a full planning application submitted to the London Borough of Camden (“LBC” or “the Council”) to create a self-contained dwelling at Coal House, Hampstead, NW3 7LS (“the Site”).
- 1.2 The site adjoins the existing Branch Hill House, which benefits from planning permission for the change of use from a care home (C2) to residential units (C3), approved in August 2021 (ref: 2019/6354/P). This application is to be brought forward as a stand-alone full planning application, with consideration made to the wider change of use of the Branch Hill House site (“main permission”).
- 1.3 In parallel with this application, a s.96A non-material amendment application will be submitted to regularise changes that are required to the main permission to facilitate the proposals sought under this application submission.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



- 1.4 Full planning permission is sought for:

Construction of a self-contained dwelling to the north west of Branch Hill House, with associated access and landscaping.

- 1.5 This Planning Statement assesses the proposed scheme against the adopted development plan and other material planning considerations and should be read in conjunction with the other supporting information submitted, which comprises:

- (a) Application and CIL forms;

(b) Application plans (Stanhope Gate Architecture (SGA));

- Site Location Plan;
- Block Plan;
- Existing Ground Floor Plan;
- Existing First Floor Plan;
- Existing Second Floor Plan;
- Existing Roof Plan;
- Existing Elevations;
- Existing Sections;
- Proposed Basement Plan;
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan;
- Proposed First Floor Plan;
- Proposed Second Floor Plan;
- Proposed Roof Plan;
- Proposed Elevations; and
- Proposed Sections.

(c) Affordable Housing Statement;

(d) Design and Access Statement;

(e) Arboricultural Impact Assessment;

(f) Daylight and Sunlight Report (internal);

(g) Basement Impact Assessment;

(h) Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy;

(i) Heritage Note; and

(j) Energy and Sustainability Assessment;

1.6 The remainder of this Planning Statement is set out as follows:

(a) Section 2 describes the development site, site designations and planning history;

(b) Section 3 details the pre-application feedback;

(c) Section 4 describes the proposed development;

(d) Section 5 sets out the relevant planning policy framework and guidance;

(e) Section 6 assesses the proposed development against relevant planning policies having regard to other material considerations; and



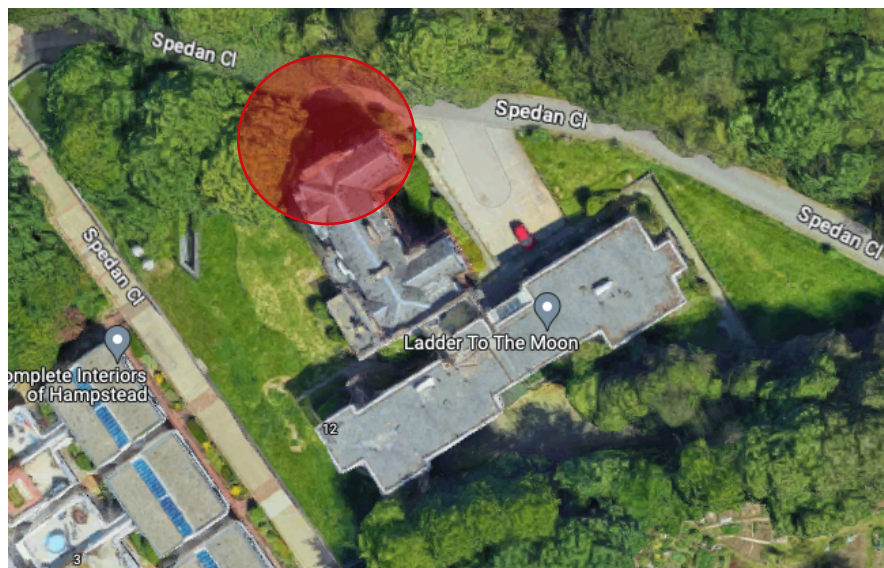
(f) Section 7 sets out our summary and conclusions.

2.0 THE SITE CONTEXT

The Site

- 2.1 The site measures approximately 348.5 sqm and is accessed via gates directly off Branch Hill in the administrative boundary of London Borough of Camden. The application boundary is shown on the accompanying site location plan and indicated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Aerial Image of the site indicated in red



- 2.2 The site adjoins the north western flank elevation of Branch Hill house, an Edwardian building of little architectural interest which has planning consent to be sensitively restored and converted into residential development, and a poor quality, modern extension built in the 1960s which has planning consent to be demolished and replaced.
- 2.3 The site currently comprises grassland and lies adjacent to the future pedestrian walkway leading down to Branch Hill Estate (Spedan Estate).

Planning Designations

- 2.4 Branch Hill House and the 1960s extension are unlisted but are located within the Hampstead Conservation Area (HCA). Most relevant is sub area 6 of the HCA, which describes the area as “principally woodland on the western slopes of Hampstead which buildings play a subordinate role” with a number of low-rise detached houses, ranging from mansions to smaller cottages. There are also a few Georgian and mid-19th Century terraces and a few apartment blocks.
- 2.5 The main building (Branch Hill House) is recognised as making a positive contribution to the character of the HCA. It is also noted that the setting of Branch Hill House has been significantly altered over the last three centuries since its construction in the early 18th century as a country house in the suburb of Hampstead, with the most recent extension comprising of the 1960s block.

- 2.6 The triangular portion of land north of Spedan Close and much of the surrounding area, including Branch Hill House Gardens, Branch Hill Wood and Branch Hill Allotments, is identified as a Borough Grade 1 Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (“SINC”) and as a Local Green Space (“LGS”).
- 2.7 In relation to other locational and environmental designations, the following are considered relevant:
- (a) The site has a has PTAL rating of 1b (poor), with Hampstead Underground station 500m to the south west (7-minute walk), with several bus routes at the junction of Heath Street and the A502 (routes 46, 268, 603 and N5).
 - (b) The site is being located within the Hampstead Heath Archaeological Priority Area.
 - (c) The site is located within Flood Zone 1.

Planning History

- 2.8 An application was approved on 11 August 2021 (ref: 2019/6354/P) for the change of use of Branch Hill House from a care home (Use Class C2) to residential (Use Class C3), including associated external alterations, demolition of the 1960s care home and the extension and erection of a replacement building including a basement, access, servicing and car parking. This planning permission included provision of a substation in the proposed Coal House location.
- 2.9 A Minor Material Amendment application (MMA) pursuant to S.73 of the Town & Country Planning Act (as amended) was approved on 30 August 2022 (ref: 2021/5377/P) for the variation of conditions 2 (approved plans), 13 (cycle parking) and 24 (housing) in order to make minor material amendments to the development.
- 2.10 The proposed amendments included revisions to:
- (a) basement layout;
 - (b) internal layout of flats, including the amalgamation of four flats to create two larger 3beds, revising the total number of units on site from 34 to 32 units;
 - (c) levels shown on drawings (following detailed surveys)
 - (d) massing, including realignment of external walls and various design refinements;
 - (e) various exterior design refinements; and
 - (f) relocation of substation to an underground location under the driveway.

3.0 PRE-APPLICATION

- 3.1 Pre-application discussions were held with the Council in October 2022 (ref: 2022/4298/PRE) and detailed feedback was received.
- 3.2 Table 1 below outlines how key elements of officer feedback has been considered and responded to by the design team to inform the proposed application scheme. Further commentary is provided within Section 6 of this Statement and within the accompanying Design and Access Statement:

Table 1: Response to Pre-app Feedback

Pre-app Feedback	Application Response
<p><u>North-West Elevation</u>: The proposed extension will screen the upper-ground and first floors of the facade, including the architecture. The proposal to conceal its architectural features and detract from its existing scale.</p>	<p>The Northwest facade is a secondary, flank elevation with little merit. Views are restricted and it can only be appreciated from the driveway immediately to the North.</p> <p>The proposed building is well considered and provides a well composed and proportioned north-wees facade, with more refined massing and sensitive treatment to scale. It will incorporate elements of the main house design like cornices and other stone features.</p>
<p><u>Scale and Massing</u>: The proposed fails to appreciate the verticality of the existing building and will read as an out-of-scale addition in the context of the approved new extension which also has a strong sense of verticality and is generally of a similar height to the existing house.</p>	<p>The concerns raised regarding the lack of verticality of the pre-application proposal have been addressed through the increased heights of the building and windows to achieve proportions closer to the existing building.</p> <p>A more compatible triangular form has been given to the pediment. The stone bands run from the existing building to the new at the same level. These changes enhance the sense of verticality and improve the scale of the building.</p>
<p><u>Northern Section of Branch Hill House</u>: The footprint of the proposed extension would encroach upon the driveway by skirting its western edge, thereby resulting in an overbearing bulk and form at this point, giving a sense of overdevelopment on the site.</p>	<p>The proposed house occupies only a modest footprint within the entire site and is not considered a harm to the existing Branch hill site or the Conservation Area. On the contrary it provides a more refined treatment to the N/E end of the building and preserves the sense of openness of the site.</p>
<p><u>Affordable Housing</u>: The addition of a single self-contained residential unit to the originally approved scheme would require a re-calculation of the affordable housing contribution approved under application ref: 2019/6354/P (as amended under ref: 2021/5377/P).</p>	<p>The main permission will deliver 4 social rented units and this was considered to form the maximum amount of affordable provision that the Site could physically and viably deliver and this was supported by extensive viability testing. Whilst it is not proposed to re-open viability discussions in respect to the main permission, it is not considered that the overall viability of the development will have improved.</p> <p>Nevertheless, it is proposed that a separate upfront financial payment will made to reflect the proposed additional dwelling.</p>

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development

4.1 This planning application is for:

Construction of a self-contained dwelling to the north west of Branch Hill House, with associated access and landscaping.

4.2 A summary of the proposed development is provided below:

Proposed Development

- (a) A single dwelling with 3 bedrooms (6-person) with a GIA of 178sqm.

Design and Appearance

- (b) The dwelling will be four storeys in height, inclusive of accommodation in the basement.
- (c) The dwelling will exceed the minimum floorspace requirements and nationally described space standards.
- (d) The design adopts traditional forms, materials and detailing with the use of natural facing brick, natural slate pitched roof, stone feature (including windows surrounds, pediments, and cornices). Windows will have timber casement.

Amenity

- (e) A garden is proposed to the rear of the dwelling and will include a lower area and a raised area. The provision of private amenity space totals 141.5 sqm.
- (f) The development has direct access to the existing open space within wider Branch Hill House site and the publicly accessible open space of Hampstead Heath, which lies to the north.

Landscaping

- (g) The scheme retains the character and layout of the site, including the existing rear lawn and the raised area to the north west.
- (h) The area to the front of the Coal House will be landscaped with the same elements, patterns and finishes of the main Branch Hill House consented proposals.
- (i) The sycamore tree T50 is to be retained and pruned.

Access and Parking

- (j) The development is car free, in line with the redevelopment of the wider Branch Hill House site.
- (k) 3 long-stay cycle parking spaces are provided, with a visitor short-stay cycle space.

Waste and Recycling

- (l) A bin store is located at the front of the proposed Coal House.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Statutory Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

5.2 The statutory development plan for LBC comprises:

- (a) Camden Local Plan (2017); and
- (b) The London Plan (2021).

5.3 Other material considerations include:

- (a) The Major's Housing SPG (2016);
- (b) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021);
- (c) The Planning Practice Guidance (2019); and
- (d) Hampstead Conservation Area Appraisal.

Relevant Planning Policies

5.4 The development plan policies relevant to this application are summarised below.

- (a) Local Plan Policy A1: Managing the impact of development;
- (b) Local Plan Policy D1: Design;
- (c) Local Plan Policy D2: Heritage;
- (d) Local Plan Policy H1: Maximising housing supply;
- (e) Local Plan Policy H4: Maximising the supply of affordable housing;
- (f) Local Plan Policy H7: Large and small homes;
- (g) London Plan Policy D3: Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach;
- (h) London Plan Policy D6: Housing Quality and standards;
- (i) London Plan Policy GG2: Making the best use of land;
- (j) London Plan Policy H2: Small sites; and
- (k) London Plan Policy T5: Cycling.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 This section assesses the proposals against the development plan and other material considerations and provides the planning justification for the proposed development.

Principle of Development

- 6.2 Section 5 of the NPPF sets out that the Government is committed to increase the overall level of supply and mix of housing to meet local needs. Chapter 11 promotes the effective use of land. Planning decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and promote and support the development of underutilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing. This sentiment is reiterated at policies D3 and GG2 of the London Plan.
- 6.3 The addition of new housing is supported by Policy H1 of the London Plan, which seeks to increase the housing supply within the borough. Further, the proposal for a three-bedroom self-contained dwelling is in accordance with Policy H7 of the Local Plan, which seeks to promote the development varied sizes of dwellings.
- 6.4 The use of the site for residential purposes is acceptable in principle through the grant of planning permission under ref: 22019/6354/P, which established the change of use from a care home to residential (Class C3). The proposed development therefore comprises an appropriate use in the context of the main planning consent at Branch Hill House. Thus, the principle of an additional dwelling on the site is supported.

Affordable Housing

- 6.5 Policy H4 of the Local Plan confirms that where development sites are split or separate proposals are brought forward for closely related sites, an appropriate affordable housing contribution is required. The Council will seek to use planning obligations to ensure that all parts or phases of split or related sites make an appropriate affordable housing contribution.
- 6.6 As noted by the pre-application response (Appendix 1), the Council require the net increase of a single unit to be considered within the context of the main application at Branch Hill House. The approved application at Branch Hill House was for the creation of 34 dwellings. This was the basis of the grant of planning permission and the S.106 agreement.
- 6.7 The permission was later amended under a S.73 application (ref: 2021/5377/P), which reduced the quantum of units from 34 to 32 residential units. The affordable housing contribution agreed under ref: 2019/6354/P was not revised through the agreed Deed of Variation.
- 6.8 The Affordable Housing Statement outlines that the net increase of one dwelling would still fall short of the originally consented 34 dwellings. Nevertheless, it is proposed that a separate upfront financial contribution will be made to reflect the proposals.

Residential Standards

- 6.9 Policy H10 of the London Plan (2021) and Local Plan Policy H7 emphasises support for the provision of a mix of housing units of different sizes. Together with the housing mix approved at the main permission, the proposal would introduce a three-bedroom dwelling which will create further mix of housing across the whole site, in accordance with policy rationale.

Internal Amenity

- 6.10 The internal layouts of the proposed new home have been designed to achieve a functional and attractive configuration that will contribute towards providing a high-quality of accommodation, suitable for modern family life, in line with London Plan policies D5 and D7.
- 6.11 The Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) 2015 requires a minimum of 108sqm for a 3-bedroom, 6-person property. The size of the proposed dwelling far exceeds the NDSS standards, providing 178sqm of accommodation, and is policy compliant.
- 6.12 The proposed dwelling is designed to be accessible and inclusive and is designed to meet the Mayor's housing standards and is compliant with M4(2) of the Building Regulations for Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings. The proposal therefore complies with the Major's Housing SPG (Standard 11), Local Plan policy D1 and London Plan policies D5 and D7.

External Amenity

- 6.13 The Mayor's Housing SPG Standard 26 requires a minimum of 5sqm of outdoor amenity space to be provided for 1-2 person dwellings and an extra 1sqm for each additional occupant, requiring 9sqm for the 3-bedroom, 6-person dwelling proposed.
- 6.14 A garden is proposed to the rear of the dwelling and will include a lower area and a raised area. A total of 141.5 sqm of private amenity space is proposed, inclusive of the front and rear lightwells. The new dwelling will also have access to the immediate green space at the Branch Hill House site as well as accessibility Hampstead Heath located approximately 350m to the north of the site, along West Heath Road.
- 6.15 The dwelling proposed as part of this application is therefore compliant and far exceeds the relevant standards and polices set at a national, London and local level.

Design & Heritage

- 6.16 The site is within the HCA but does not comprise a listed building. As set out in NPPF paragraphs 200 and 206, weight and consideration should be given to the setting of heritage assets including conservation areas:

'Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.' (Paragraph 206).

- 6.17 A thorough heritage-led design approach has been pursued by SGA in collaboration with SLHA in order to present the proposed dwelling that follows the historic character of the area. The positive contribution provided by the existing house to the conservation area, derived from its imposing scale and elaborate architectural features, together with the way it comfortably sits in its grounds (despite being hidden from the public highway), has been considered through the design evolution of this proposal.
- 6.18 SLHA consider that the site currently makes a limited contribution to the character and appearance of the HCA as a whole as it is not characteristic of other properties within the Branch Hill sub area. The proposed extension will not negatively impact upon the character and appearance of the HCA.
- 6.19 Notwithstanding this, the proposed design seeks to copy the existing Edwardian architecture of the host building, both in terms of materials and finishes, but also in terms of architectural proportions and detailed design. Although attached to the existing building, it will be slightly set away at its roof level which will be topped by a curved barrel-vault style roof. The front and rear elevations will be set back from the main front and rear building lines of the mansion, responding to the tight constraints of the small bank of land upon which it will sit.
- 6.20 The architectural ethos of the main building with regards to materials and architectural features, unlike previous extensions that have been added within the 20th Century. The heritage statement confirms that the scale and design of the proposal responds sympathetically to the main building. The extension will also be subservient to the main building, largely screened by existing vegetation.
- 6.21 No harm is anticipated to the character of the Conservation Area (and heritage assets within it) through the creation of a sympathetically design single dwelling. Development will make a positive contribution to the streetscape and will incorporate high quality materials and landscaping appropriate to its context.
- 6.22 Therefore, the proposed scheme from a heritage perspective is deemed to be in line with NPPF paragraphs 197 to 202; London Plan Policy HC1 and D3; Local Plan Policy D2: Heritage.

Trees and Landscaping

- 6.23 The NPPF (2021) states that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environment and that existing trees should be retained wherever possible. This is reinforced by Policy G7 of the London Plan (2021).
- 6.24 Sharon Hosegood Associates (SHA) have carried out the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Report, which is submitted in support of this planning application.
- 6.25 As detailed by the AIA Report, there are two small, low quality trees, enclosed by a wall on the southern side. Beyond the wall is a path, and south of that is a mature sycamore T50. T50 will be retained in accordance with the details in AIA Report and will require pruning. The two small trees will be removed.
- 6.26 The removal of the two small trees will be more than compensated for by the extensive landscaping as part of the larger scheme in the immediate vicinity. The trees within this development are not considered to be aged or veteran, rendering the principles within paragraph 175 of the NPPF not applicable in this situation.

- 6.27 This is in accordance with London Plan Policy G7(c).
- 6.28 The proposed development includes a comprehensive and high-quality landscape strategy. The provision of a garden at the rear of the dwelling incorporates the retained T50 tree and newly lawned area will comprises the private amenity space, together with the front and rear lightwells. The AIA concludes that the scheme is acceptable from arboricultural perspective and that it complies and is compatible with national and local policies in relation to trees. The scheme is compliant with London Plan policy G7 and Local Plan policy A3.

Ecology

- 6.29 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF requires planning decisions to enhance the natural and local environment by protecting sites of biodiversity value and minimising impacts on biodiversity. Paragraph 180 advises that biodiversity in and around developments should be incorporated into their design.
- 6.30 There are no ecological constraints to prohibit the development of this site and the proposed development presents an opportunity to provides a positive contribution to the protection and enhancement of the site's ecological value. This is consistent with the requirements set out by Local Plan policy A3.
- 6.31 The enhancement to the existing T50 tree and planting on site as well as the consideration to the character of the nearby SINC and the ecological enhancement approved under application ref: 2019/6354/P ensures the development is acceptable in ecological policy terms.

Transport

- 6.32 The site's PTAL 1b (poor), with Hampstead Underground station 500m to the south west (7-minute walk), with several bus routes at the junction of Heath Street and the A502.
- 6.33 The net increase of one dwelling is not anticipated to warrant a parking space and this the proposed will be car-free. This is consistent with the main permission at Branch Hill House. Future occupiers are able to access the existing Zip-Car facilities within the local road network.
- 6.34 The scheme provides 3 long stay cycle spaces by way of the secured cycle storage at the basement of the Branch Hill House, in accordance with the requirements of the Camden Planning Guidance (CPG). 1 short-stay space is also provided at the front of the site.
- 6.35 The approach to car and cycle parking is in accordance with the approved strategy at the Branch Hill House development and therefore line with Local and London Plan.
- 6.36 A dedicated bin store will be provided at the front of the site to ensure that refuse would not be deposited on the street and so would not harm the street scene. Future residents are also able to use the waste storage in the basement of the Branch Hill House, if needed.
- 6.37 Deliveries and servicing, including refuse collection and emergency vehicle access will be from Spedan Close, via Branch Hill.

Drainage

- 6.38 By virtue of the site's low probability of flood risk, the incorporation of SUDs principles and appropriate management arrangements will be undertaken in line with those that were approved as part of the Branch Hill House development.
- 6.39 The proposed development complies with the policies within the Development Plan.

Energy & Sustainability

- 6.40 The energy strategy for the creation of the single dwelling at the Coal House site will be integrated within the approved strategy of the Branch Hill House scheme. The sustainability strategy also follows the same design measures of the main Branch Hill development including. The details of this are outlined within the accompanying Energy and Sustainable Assessment.
- 6.41 The strategy therefore demonstrates that maximised energy efficiency measures and minimised carbon emissions accord with the national, London and local planning policy objectives.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 6.42 The approved CIL Schedule of the Mayor of London (MCIL2) requires a contribution of £80 per sqm for development in Camden (index linked, at £86.06 for 2023) and the Council's adopted 2020 CIL Schedule requires a contribution of £644 per sqm in this location (Zone C) (index linked, at £648 in 2023).
- 6.43 At the time of writing, the proposal is therefore expected to contribute approximately £130,622.68 towards CIL (both Mayoral and LBC) which will be payable on implementation of the development.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application proposal is for the demolition of the existing underground vaults to create a self-contained dwelling at Coal House, Hampstead.
- 7.2 The high-quality design of the new dwelling is in keeping with the built form of the adjoin property, Branch Hill House, and takes architectural inspiration from the existing residential character of Branch Hill and wider Hampstead Conservation Area.
- 7.3 With reference to the Development Plan policies, the proposed development is accepted for the following reasons:
- (a) The creation of single dwelling on the site will make an effective use of land;
 - (b) The tree and landscape strategy protects the existing sycamore tree T50 and creates a high quality private amenity space.
 - (c) The residential accommodation proposed is of a high-quality residential standard and will create a much-needed family home;
 - (d) The design of the dwelling mirrors the architectural of Branch Hill House ensuring a seamless extension is created that follows the historical character of the area;
 - (e) Sufficient cycle storage is provided to promote the use of sustainable transport modes and future occupants will have access to existing Zip-Car facilities in the local area.
- 7.4 The proposal is compliant with policies in the adopted Local Plan, London Plan and NPPF. Based on the detailed assessment presented in support of the planning application, and in accordance with the sustainable development, design, and housing objectives of the NPPF, the applicant contends that the case in support of the proposed new dwelling is compelling.
- 7.5 As such the scheme should be supported by the Council and planning permission granted.



Appendix 1: Pre-application Response (ref: 2022/4298/PRE)



Date: 08/12/2022
Our ref: 2022/4298/PRE
Contact: Daren Zuk
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Dear Nick Belsten,

Re: Branch Hill House, London, NW3 7LS

Thank you for submitting a pre-planning application enquiry for the above property. The required fee of £1,084.00 was received on 10/10/2022 and a site meeting took place at the subject site on 11/10/2022 with planning and conservation officers.

1. **Proposal**

The proposal includes the erection of a self-contained dwelling to the north of the Edwardian Block (Branch Hill House), in addition to associated external alterations.

It is noted that the pre-application is in association to planning permission 2019/6354/P, dated 11/08/2021.

2. **Site Description**

Branch Hill is an old route skirting the edge of Hampstead Heath, linking up with West Heath Road and situated in the Hampstead Conservation Area. The site in question is accessed directly via gates fronting Branch Hill and contains the Edwardian extension to an earlier 18th Century villa (now demolished), converted into a care home in the 1960s with a large and incongruous 1960s extension to one side. The grounds of the original house were extensive and, whilst these have been truncated and modified at various points throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries, the site still benefits from a generous open space in front of the building and a wooded area to the North, which is a SINC and is a natural landscape recognised on the local list, along with the allotments to the South. To the rear of the site lies the Branch Hill Estate (or Spedan Estate), a Grade II listed housing estate built in 1974-6. Respecting the character and topography of the area, the buildings play a subordinate role to the landscape, being built into the slope of the land with an ingenious series of roof gardens. To the front of the site, on Branch Hill itself, is a late 19th Century former gatehouse, which is also Grade II listed.

The portion of the site in question is a small plot of land located on the northwestern flank of the Edwardian building, adjacent to a future pedestrian walkway leading down to Branch Hill Estate (Spedan Estate).

3. Relevant Planning History

2019/6354/P - change of use of Branch Hill House from care home (Class C2) to residential (Use Class C3) and associated external alterations, demolition of the 1960s care home extension and erection of replacement building, including basement, comprising residential accommodation (Class C3), ancillary plant, access and servicing and car parking. **Granted 11/08/2021**

4. Relevant Policies and Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The London Plan 2021

Camden Local Plan 2017

- A1 Managing the impact of development
- D1 Design
- D2 Heritage
- H1 Maximising housing supply
- H4 Maximising the supply of affordable housing
- H7 Large and small homes

Hampstead Conservation Area Appraisal

5. Assessment

The planning considerations material to the determination of this application are as follows:

- Land Use
- Design and Conservation
- Amenity

6. Land Use

The addition of new housing is supported by Policy H1, which seeks to increase the housing supply within the borough. Further, the proposal for a three-bedroom self-contained dwelling is in accordance with Policy H7, which seeks to promote the development varied sizes of dwellings. Thus, the principle of an additional dwelling on the site is supported.

Policy H4 on maximising affordable housing requires a contribution to affordable housing from all developments that provide one or more additional homes and involve a total addition to residential floorspace of 100 square metres GIA or more. It is noted that the addition of a self-contained residential unit to the originally approved scheme would require a re-calculation of the affordable housing contribution approved under the original permission. This is a key component of the proposed development and will require careful consideration prior to a formal application being submitted.

It is noted that Policy H4 (in the paragraph under criteria i) refers to split sites and states- 'We will seek to ensure that where development sites are split or separate proposals are brought forward for closely related sites, the appropriate affordable housing contribution is comprehensively assessed for all the sites together. The Council will seek to use planning obligations to ensure that all parts or phases of split or related sites make an appropriate affordable housing contribution'.

7. Design and Conservation

The existing Edwardian house is a tall and elaborate three-storey mansion raised on a basement tucked into the hillside of its wooded site within Sub-Area 6 (Branch Hill) of the Hampstead Conservation Area. As such, it is considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area. It should be noted that, in defining the character of Sub-Area 6, the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement states that it is principally woodland, with buildings playing a subordinate role. The architecture of the house, constructed from red brick with stone embellishments, is elaborate with a vertical emphasis. It is characterised by high window openings with stone detailing, together with tall chimneys which articulate the facades. Despite being built as an extension to an earlier Georgian house and now flanked by a 1960s extension (to be demolished), at its north-western section it reads as a building in its own right with standalone qualities, particularly as seen in northern views from the driveway and to a certain extent from the Grade II listed Branch Hill Estate in the south-west. As such the existing north-west elevation is an important composition in its own right, characteristic of architecture of the Edwardian period.

Despite the demolition of the earlier Georgian house and its replacement with the 1960s wing, together with the building of the Branch Hill Housing Estate in the lower section of the grounds, the house still reads as an integral part of a wooded and secluded landscape with rustic overtones, which is included on Camden's Local List as of value in the Natural Features or Landscape category. The approved replacement extension to provide new residential accommodation, in conjunction with the conversion of the main house to residential use, retains the sense of an imposing mansion set in its own mature landscape. As a whole, the approved scheme subject of planning permission 2019/6354/P has a strong vertical emphasis, with the proposed extension stepping down to its lowest section closest to the front gate, so as to reduce its impact on the Grade II listed lodge and in views from the street.

The proposed two-storey addition on the opposite north-western side of the mansion is intended to read as a low-rise annexe on the site of the approved plant room which has been designed to be set into the earth bank between the existing flank wall and the driveway which skirts the house on its north-east frontage. Its height and bulk will be prominent as seen from the driveway, both from the south-east and from the north-west. It will also be directly visible in views from the south-west, read as part of the mansion's south-west garden elevation from the Branch Hill Housing Estate. The extension will be especially prominent in winter when the leaves are off the trees. As a whole, the extension will be more concealed from the north, due to the presence of a cluster of mature trees which are a key feature of the site's wooded landscape.

The proposed design seeks to copy the existing Edwardian architecture of the host building, both in terms of materials and finishes, but also in terms of architectural proportions and detailed design. Although attached to the existing building, it will be slightly set away at its roof level which will be topped by a curved barrel-vault style roof. The front and rear elevations will be set back from the main front and rear building lines of the mansion, responding to the tight constraints of the small bank of land upon which it will sit.

The existing north-west elevation, as stated above, reads as a key elevation of the existing Edwardian mansion, being designed in an elaborate style with moulded stone cornices marking each storey, a number of large windows with stone dressings, and tall chimneys also dressed in stone. The façade treatment contributes to the sense that the house should be read in the round within its generous grounds. The proposed extension will screen the upper-ground and first floors of the facade, including the architectural features mentioned above (which, although intended to be retained *in situ*, will be blocked and concealed from

view behind the fabric of the proposed extension). Although the existing house is not a listed building, the positive contribution it makes to the conservation area is derived from its imposing scale and elaborate architectural features, together with the way it comfortably sits in its grounds (despite being hidden from the public highway). The proposal to conceal its architectural features and detract from its existing scale and proportions will be contrary to guidance in CPG1 and the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement, as well as Policy D2, due to the loss of historic features.

An additional concern is the underwhelming height and scale of the extension which has been designed as such so as not to detract from the main house. However, by being of such dimensions and proportions, it fails to appreciate the verticality of the existing building and will read as an out-of-scale addition in the context of the approved new extension which also has a strong sense of verticality and is generally of a similar height to the existing house. The size of the approved extension at the southern end of the main house has been carefully considered in terms of its relationship with the house and will act as a replacement for the existing outdated 1960s wing. As such, the approved development principally is situated on the south side of the site, with only a low-level plant room approved on the northern side which will not impact on the proportions and features of the north-west elevation. The northern section of the mansion has generally been left untouched, allowing its historic form to remain as existing with no negative impacts on its immediate setting or upon the main driveway from which there is a sense of openness. In contrast, the footprint of the proposed extension would encroach upon the driveway by skirting its western edge, thereby resulting in an overbearing bulk and form at this point, giving a sense of over-development on the site which is recognised of importance as an entry on the Local List.

In summary, due to its design and location, it is considered that the addition of a two-storey residential unit on the north-western end of the existing mansion building will cause harm to the character and appearance of Sub-Area 6 of the Hampstead Conservation Area, and will have a negative impact on the grounds of Branch Hill House which is locally listed.

8. Amenity

Due to the scale, size, and location of the proposed residential dwelling, it is not anticipated that it will cause any significant harm to neighbouring amenity.

9. Sustainability

The Council will seek to ensure that development does not increase flood risk and reduces the risk of flooding where possible, through the incorporation of water efficiency measures (policy CC3).

Developments must be designed to be water efficient. This can be achieved through the installation of water efficient fittings and appliances (which can help reduce energy consumption as well as water consumption) and by capturing and re-using rainwater and grey water on-site.

Policies D1 and CC2 of the Local Plan encourage sustainable urban drainage systems, green roofs and walls and high quality hard and soft landscaping.

10. Conclusion

The proposed addition of a self-contained three-bedroom residential unit to the approved scheme is acceptable from a land use and amenity perspective, subject to more analysis of any further requirements for affordable housing contributions on this site. However, the design of the proposal including scale and massing, as well as the siting on the north-west

side of the existing historic mansion, are cumulatively considered to be harmful to the significance of the locally listed building and the wider conservation area. The proposal is considered to be contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

11. Planning application information

Should you choose to submit a planning application which addresses the outstanding issues detailed in this report satisfactorily, I would advise you to submit the following for a valid planning application:

- Completed application form
- An Ordnance Survey based location plan at 1:1250 scale denoting the application site in red
- Floor plans at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Roof plans at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Elevation drawings at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Section drawings at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- The appropriate fee
- Please see [supporting information for planning applications](#) for more information

We are legally required to consult on applications with individuals who may be affected by the proposals. We would put up a notice on or near the site and advertise in a local newspaper. The Council must allow 21 days from the consultation start date for responses to be received. You are advised to contact your neighbours to discuss the proposals.

Non-major applications are typically determined under delegated powers, however, if more than 3 objections from neighbours or an objection from a local amenity group is received the application will be referred to the Members Briefing Panel should it be recommended for approval by officers. For more details click [here](#).

This document represents an initial informal officer view of your proposals based on the information available to us at this stage and would not be binding upon the Council, nor prejudice any future planning application decisions made by the Council.

If you have any queries about the above letter or the attached document, please do not hesitate to contact Daren Zuk on **020 7974 3386**

Thank you for using Camden's pre-application advice service.

Yours sincerely,

Daren Zuk

**Senior Planning Officer
Planning Solutions Team**



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