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# Design, Access and Planning Statement

Westcott Court, 13 Holmdale Road, NW6 1BH

Applicant: **Filip Saranovic**  
Client Ref: **2327FS**  
Agent: **Detailed Planning Ltd**  
Date: **December 2023**

## Introduction & Existing Site

The application site is a three-storey block of flats known as 'Westcott Court' situated on the east side of Holmdale Road. It is in use as three separate 2-bedroom flats. To the south a block of three garages is situated.

The garages and flats are unlisted and the site does not lie within a designated conservation area; however it lies just outside of the boundary of the West End Green Conservation Area.

The site lies within the Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Area.

The proposal is for a three-storey rear extension to the block of flats, and demolition and redevelopment of the garage block to provide a single dwelling. Removal of the hardstanding forecourt is also proposed to be replaced with softscaping.

## Policy Assessment

It is understood that the below policies are relevant to the proposal:

### **National Planning Policy Framework (2021)**

#### **The London Plan (2021)**

#### **Camden Local Plan (2017)**

A1 - Managing the impact of development

D1 - Design

H1 – Maximising housing supply

H6 – Housing choice and mix

T1 – Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport

T2 – Parking and car-free development

#### **Camden Planning Guidance (2021)**

CPG – Design

CPG – Amenity

CPG – Home Improvements

CPG – Transport

#### **Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan (2015)**

Policy 1 – Housing

Policy 2 – Design & Character

Policy 8 – Cycling

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## National Planning Policy Framework (2021) & The London Plan (2021)

The proposed dwellinghouse exceeds nationally described space standards for a two-storey, two bedroom property. GIA tables have been provided with the submitted drawings as well as room areas to demonstrate compliance with this policy. Storage has also been proposed to comply with the requirement.

As recognised within the pre-app report the development complies with sustainability as it removes parking, therefore the development is 'car-free'.

## A1 - Managing the Impact of Development

To address this the proposal has been designed so that impact to neighbours amenity is addressed. Submitted light assessment demonstrates that light levels are acceptable and privacy issues are addressed by considering form, scale and development is designed respectfully.

## D1 - Design & CPG - Design

These policy emphasises the Council's commitment to ensuring high-quality design in development. It mandates that development should respect local context, preserve the historic environment, and be sustainable in design and construction, considering climate change mitigation. The policy promotes durable and adaptable construction, inclusive and accessible spaces, and designs that enhance health while minimising crime. It emphasises integration with surroundings, preservation of natural features, and provision of outdoor amenities. The Council intends to resist poorly designed developments that neglect opportunities to enhance an area's character and functionality. The policy spans various aspects, including landscape design, housing standards, and the careful integration of building services equipment.

The proposal takes great care to comply with this policy. The rear extension to the existing flats have been designed with materials in keeping to the existing building & area and its scale is less than that of the adjacent building at no.15. Furthermore the design incorporates a stepped elevation where the depth and width is reduced at each floor level. The extension is poorly visible from the public realm. In the area there are many examples of this similar addition to the rear of the building and can therefore be considered within keeping of the area.

With regards to the new build infill there are examples of this principle development type in the immediate area including on Westcott Close.

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No.41



No.31A

These examples demonstrate that the characteristics of the area include infilling development with a mix of architectural styles. The new build sits between mixed architectural styles and the choice of brick on the ground floor is well established in the immediate area. The first floor and roof uses a red pigment zinc to match the tiles used on the existing block and other buildings.



*Vimzinc PIMONT Red*

The scale of the development is two storey only, ensuring no creation of the appearance of bulk and dominance to the area.

It could be said that the existing garages are currently out of keeping being in their use (unsustainable) and location as they are set further rearwards creating a hard-standing area breaking the building line as well as encouraging anti-social behaviour. The proposal now includes further positive landscaping to the front.

Occupancy quality of accommodation is also taken into account. The flats are enlarged to provide more adequate internal space with improved layouts.

The private garden currently used for the ground floor flat only, will be retained for their use with ample space remaining.

To the new build, adequate internal space standards, light and outdoor amenity space are proposed to provide a high quality accommodation.

## H1 – Maximising Housing Supply & H6 – Housing Choice and Mix

The development supports council housing targets by providing additional housing by using poorly used existing land.

The two bed new build dwelling house helps accommodate either families or other other occupancy providing flexible accommodation.

The development will comply with accessible dwelling regulations M4(2) by providing ramped access, sufficient corridor/door widths and adequate size WC to ground floor.

## T1 – Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport & T2 – Parking and car-free development

To limit car usage and comply with these policies the proposal is car free and provides cycle storage for the new dwelling.

The site is located close to transport links and scores a PTAL rating of 5 (very good).

## CPG – Amenity

Compliance with this policy has been summarised below:

### Ground Floor Flat

- Benefits with improved internal space standards
- Includes large garden to rear
- Side bedroom includes dual aspect with rear patio providing a sense of outlook
- Neighbours amenity managed by ground floor extension not extending beyond existing outrigger of no.15
- Stepped away from the rear of the properties on West Cottages
- Light assessment demonstrates that the development passes in terms of light for occupancy and light for neighbours

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- Being ground floor there is little opportunity for overlooking

#### First Floor Flat

- Benefits with improved internal space standards
- Set back further from neighbouring properties to reduce visual impact
- Light assessment demonstrates that the development passes in terms of light for occupancy and light for neighbours
- The flat currently has rear facing windows, the proposal does not seek to add more windows therefore it would not make the current situation worse
- Obscure windows to the side prevent overlooking to the patio of the new build dwelling house
- Will look out on to sedum room providing improved outlook

#### Second Floor Flat

- Benefits with improved internal space standards
- Set back further from neighbouring properties to reduce visual impact
- Light assessment demonstrates that the development passes in terms of light for occupancy and light for neighbours
- The flat currently has rear facing windows, the proposal does not seek to add more therefore it would not make the current situation worse
- Obscure windows to the side prevent overlooking to the patio of the new build dwelling house

#### New Build Dwelling House

- Conforms with national space standards
- Provides outdoor amenity space
- Dual aspect (rear and front windows)
- Ground floor outlook on to private patio
- Light assessment demonstrates that the development passes in terms of light for occupancy and light for neighbours
- First floor rear windows would not create a privacy issue as it would not look on to habitable windows or private amenity space as to the rear is the flank wall of the properties of West Cottages

# Revised Development Proposal in Response to Pre-Application Advice

The applicant previously submitted a request for pre-app advice under the reference 2021/2091/PRE dated 14/01/2022. This submitted proposal seeks to address the comments and concerns raised within the pre-app report received.

The below summarises the comments raised by the planning officer and how these have been mitigated in the submitted proposal.

## Design and Conservation

### Rear extension to block of flats

#### Officer's Comment

*The principle of the extensions is acceptable but without elevations to indicate the appearance of the extensions on the building, the design, treatment and materials, it is not possible to comment fully upon the townscape merits of the proposed extension(s) and the acceptability in terms of the Council's design policies and guidance.*

#### Response

It is understood the principal of the extensions is acceptable, however further changes have been proposed to satisfy other comments raised.

#### Officer's Comment

*Whilst detailed elevations have not been submitted, the plans show that there are half-width set-backs at first and second floor levels, with doors on the side flank for access to the terraces. Subject to the submission of detailed elevations, this may look cluttered on elevation, or perhaps the deeper sections should be set on the north side of the elevation, so that it reads as a pair with the extension to no. 15. In brief, the Council's design policies and guidance seek to ensure that new development respects the context character and appearance of the built environment in terms of scale, siting, form, design and architectural appearance.*

#### Response

It is recognised the importance to address the character of the area and ensure scale siting form and general architectural appearance is a positive contribution to the area. The revised proposal shows a full width ground floor extension, however, on the first and second floor the extension is re-sited to the north side adjacent to the large flank wall forming the outrigger of no.15.

Furthermore, the extensions are set back at each level, both in terms of depth and width to reduce the appearance of bulk.

The revised proposal does not include terraces to the roofs reducing the risk of clutter. A green roof is proposed to improve the environmental impact and soften the appearance.

## New Dwellinghouse

### Officer's Comment

*There are well defined building lines at the front and rear along Holmdale Road. Our preference would be for the new dwelling to respect the established building lines at the front and rear. Officers consider that the new dwellinghouse should be brought forward to match the front building line of Holmdale Mansions (no. 18). This would allow for the rear building line of the dwellinghouse to be brought forward to also align with the rear built line of no. 18, which would minimise any impact on the amenity of these residents (discussed further in the 'Residential Amenity' section below).*

### Response

The revised proposal now includes new building lines to address this comment. The ground floor front elevation is now flush with Holmdale Mansions to the south. The first floor is set back slightly to create a subordinate appearance as well as add architectural merit as the materials change from brick to zinc cladding.

To the rear, the ground and first floor building line is now flush with the rear of Holmdale Mansions. This would address concern of amenity to the local residents as identified and suggested by the planning officer.

### Officer's Comment

*Whilst the existing area in front of the garages is currently used for parking, forecourt parking is not common along Holmdale Road. Ideally, the existing front treatments along Holmdale Road (mix of paving and soft landscaping) should be provided as forecourt parking is not in keeping with the appearance of the surrounding properties and area.*

### Response

The proposal no longer includes parking provision. The proposal now includes further softscaping to provide a positive impact to the appearance of the area.

### Officer's Comment

*In terms of its detailed design, minimal details have been submitted, however it is*



*considered that the proposed fenestration to the front elevation could be better arranged on the elevation. More detailed drawings with elevations and details of the fenestration would be required at full planning stage.*

#### Response

The street benefits from a variety of architecture styles and the new proposal now recognises the need to provide improved fenestration as highlighted in the comment. We have carefully addressed this by including a brick ground floor and zinc first floor. Half dormers are proposed with architectural glazing, these are placed in the zinc clad first floor. With the low eaves dropping either side reducing the scale of the development. The choice of zinc Pigmento Red of the first floor resembles the clay tiles.

## Residential Amenity

### Rear Extension to Block of Flats

#### Officer's Comment

*Officers are concerned that new terraces to the rear of Westcott Court could result in increased overlooking of West Cottages, and potentially rooms and amenity spaces of the new dwelling on the site of the garages.*

#### Response

The revised submitted proposal no longer includes roof terraces. This is as to the current arrangement.

### New Dwellinghouse

#### Officer's Comment

*The gap between the north side elevation of the new dwellinghouse and the side elevation of the block of flats would be approximately 1.5m. The side elevation to the new dwellinghouse would be a blank elevation. There are concerns that the new dwellinghouse would cause an unacceptable loss of light and outlook to the side windows to the existing flats at ground and first floor levels. It is acknowledged that these windows currently serve kitchens and bathrooms. However the proposed plans show that a bedroom is proposed within the ground floor flat facing the new dwellinghouse. It is unlikely that this new bedroom would receive sufficient levels of daylight and sunlight to be acceptable according to BRE guidance.*

#### Response

Careful consideration has been made to address this comment. The revised proposal no longer includes the 'infill' extension, this has then allowed for a revised arrangement to the ground floor flat. The revised submitted proposal shows a ground floor bedroom now benefiting from a side and rear glazed doors. This means they benefit from improved outlook

and light. Furthermore, light tests have been carried out and submitted as part of this application to demonstrate the acceptable day light.

#### Officer's Comment

*Additionally, at present, a two-storey high wall is proposed extending beyond the ground floor window of the block of flats at no. 18. This is likely to lead to an unacceptable loss of amenity to the ground floor residents in terms of loss of light, outlook and sense of enclosure. As discussed above, should the footprint of the new dwellinghouse be moved forward to match the front built line of no. 18, then the rear building line should be brought forward to match the rear building line of no. 18 also, which would eliminate any negative amenity impact.*

#### Response

By removing the previously proposed 3 storey 'infill' extension and by positioning the new build dwelling house further forward this has been positively addressed.

#### Officer's Comment

*With respect to the interior of the new dwellinghouse, there are windows only to the front elevation of the property, with rooflights proposed on the flat roof sections (on both floors). There are concerns that the habitable rooms within the dwellinghouse would not receive sufficient light, particularly the living and dining area to the rear of the property, being only served by one narrow rooflight. A new dwelling would also be expected to provide an adequate area of enclosed private amenity space which should be capable of receiving sufficient light.*

#### Response

With the new positioning of the dwelling house a large rear outdoor patio is proposed. This allows for rear windows to be proposed thus creating further light for the occupancy. The proposal has been subjected to light tests that demonstrate their compliance.

## Transport

### Cycle Parking & Car-Free

#### Officer's Comment

*In accordance with London Plan policy, two secure, weatherproof cycle parking spaces should be provided as part of the provision of the new three-bedroom dwellinghouse.*

*Policy T2 of the Local Plan states that the Council will limit the availability of parking and require all new developments in the borough to be car-free. The council will not issue on-street parking permits in connection with new development and will use legal agreements to ensure that future occupants are aware that they are not entitled to on-street parking permits.*

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## Response

The proposal includes cycle parking for the new dwelling house. The revised proposal no longer includes off-street parking and the applicant is aware of legal agreements being required.

## Summary

The proposal is for a three-storey rear extension to the block of flats, and demolition and redevelopment of the garage block to provide a single dwelling. The above statement demonstrates the understanding of the requirements from the pre application advice and provides evidence that the proposal is a positive opportunity for the site.

We trust the Local Planning Authority considers this application favourably and provides the required planning consent. I look forward to any discussions with the planning department throughout this application. I trust that the enclosed information is sufficient to approve the application, however, should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Kind Regards,

Regards,

Chris Watkins BSc(Hons) MCIAT  
Chartered Architectural Technologist  
Dec. 2023