

**PLANNING STATEMENT AND  
HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**35 Elsworthy Road,  
London NW3 3BT**

Prepared for

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# Contents

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1	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2	PRELIMINARY MATTERS.....	4
	The Application Site .....	4
	Relevant Planning History .....	5
	The Proposal .....	5
3	PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK.....	6
	2023 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) .....	6
	Development Plan .....	6
	<i>The London Plan</i> .....	6
	<i>Camden's Local Plan 2017</i> .....	6
	<i>Supplementary Planning Guidance</i> .....	7
	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 .....	7
4	The Heritage Asset and Assessment.....	8
	<i>The Elsworthy Conservation Area</i> .....	8
	Summary Conclusions.....	9
5	THE PROPOSAL AND PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE .....	11
	<i>Mitigating the effects of Climate Change</i> .....	11
	<i>Impact of the Proposals on the Visual Appearance of the Building</i> .....	11
	<i>Impact of the Proposals on the Conservation Area</i> .....	11
	<i>Impact on Residential Amenity</i> .....	12
	In Summary .....	12
6	CONCLUSIONS .....	13

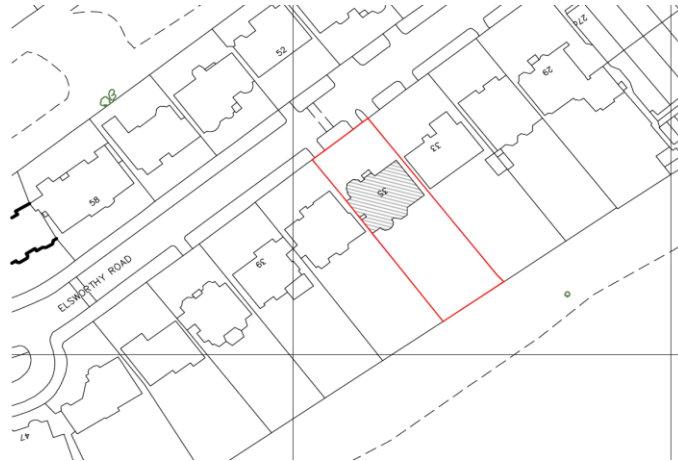
## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is written in support of an application for planning permission for the erection of a plant/storage shed in the rear garden; a bin enclosure in the front garden together with new timber gates and fence along the frontage. The proposals also include a comprehensive landscaping scheme for the front and rear gardens.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the following:
- Architectural drawings of Burwell Architects;
  - Design and Access Statement dated 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024;
  - Planting Details of Alaster Anderson dated January 2024;
  - Noise Impact Assessment of Ion Acoustics Ltd dated 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024;  
and
  - Tree Support Statement of Tree Projects dated 27<sup>th</sup> July 2023
- 1.3 This statement firstly deals with preliminary matters and describes the application site and its surroundings; identifies any relevant planning history; and briefly describes the proposed development. Section 3 provides the planning policy framework in which this application needs to be assessed. Section 4 provides an overview of the Elsworthy Conservation Area (in which the site is located) and its significance as a designated heritage asset and provides an assessment of the impact the proposed development would have on that significance. Section 5 demonstrates why the proposals are in compliance with planning policy and Section 6 draws on the conclusions reached.

## 2 PRELIMINARY MATTERS

### The Application Site

- 2.1 No. 35 Elsworthy Road is a detached three storey building situated on the south side of the road and backs onto the public open space of Primrose Hill.



- 2.2 The building is in the Arts and Craft style, constructed in red brick with painted timber framed windows.
- 2.3 Originally constructed as a single family dwelling house, the building was converted post war into two self-contained units comprising a maisonette on the ground and first floors with a separate flat on the second floor. The top floor flat was accessed via a separate entrance on the west side of the building which was constructed in the 1960's.
- 2.4 The property is currently vacant and has been for a number of years.



37 Elsworthy Road

## Relevant Planning History

- 2.5 Planning permission was granted on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015 under application ref. 2014/5463/P for conversion of the building from the 2 flats back into a single family dwelling house and alterations and extension of the building including demolition of the side extension and excavation under the footprint of the house and rear garden to create additional habitable accommodation. This permission was lawfully implemented and such is certified by a Lawful Development Certificate issued by the LPA on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2018 (2018/2010/P).
- 2.6 In July 2023 planning permission was granted under Section 73 of the Act (2022/1085/P) for minor material amendments to the approved scheme referenced above which include changes to the size and depth of the basement and removal of two large lightwells in the rear garden; and elevational changes including amendments to the rear dormers and central windows. This permission has been implemented and building works are well underway.

## The Proposal

- 2.7 Planning permission is now sought for works to the front and rear gardens including the erection of new front boundary treatment and bin enclosure in the front garden; and a rear garden outbuilding for plant and garden storage. The proposals also include a landscaping scheme for both the front and rear gardens.

*Please refer to the architectural drawings and Design and Access Statement for full details of the scheme proposals.*

### 3 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

#### 2023 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.1 At the heart of the revised Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 3.2 The revised NPPF makes clear that the starting point for decision making is the development plan and a presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change that statutory status. Applications for development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Local Plan should therefore be approved without delay.
- 3.3 The NPPF recognises that the planning and development process is fundamental in achieving the creation of high-quality buildings and places in which to live and work and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- 3.4 The NPPF identifies the importance of heritage assets (includes Conservation Areas) both in terms of local historic value and highest significance such as World Heritage Sites and that they are an irreplaceable resource. LPAs should afford great weight to the asset's conservation relevant to its significance.
- 3.5 Paragraph 192 of the revised NPPF requires Local Authorities, when determining planning applications, to take account of "*the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*"

#### Development Plan

- 3.6 Having regard to the 2023 NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance, the proposal has been assessed in relation to relevant policies contained within the Mayor's London Plan dated March 2021 and the London Borough of Camden's Local Plan adopted on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017 where this is in general conformity with the revised NPPF.

#### *The London Plan*

- 3.7 The London Plan is a spatial development strategy for London which provides guidance to assist local authorities when preparing their local plans. Policies within local plans thus need to be in general conformity with the London Plan.

#### *Camden's Local Plan 2017*

- 3.8 One of the main objectives identified in the Council's Local Plan is to manage change

and growth in a manner that respects the character, heritage and distinctiveness of the Borough for it to continue to be a popular place to live, work and visit.

3.9 The building lies within the Elsworthy Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset. It is not a statutorily listed building.

3.10 The following policies within the Local Plan are therefore directly relevant in the consideration of this application:

- A1 - Managing the impact of development;
- C1 – Health and Wellbeing;
- D1 - Design;
- D2 – Heritage;

### ***Supplementary Planning Guidance***

3.11 The following supplementary documents have also been considered:

- CPG1 – Design;
- CPG6 – Amenity;
- CC1 - Climate Change Mitigation

### **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**

3.12 Whilst the NPPF and development plan are material considerations, the approach to conservation areas is underpinned by the statutory requirements in Section 72 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (1990 Act) where, in determining development proposals, Local Planning Authorities should pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of a conservation area or its setting.

## 4 The Heritage Asset and Assessment

4.1 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of a heritage asset and advises “The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.”

4.2 When reviewing development proposals, it is important to establish the heritage significance of an asset in question and an informed judgement needs to be made. This process is discussed in a publication produced by Historic England entitled “*Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment*”. Of particular note in page 2 of the document:

- *Understanding the **nature of the significance** is important to understanding the need for the best means of conservation....*  
*Understanding the **extent of that significance** is also important because this can....lead to a better understanding of how adaptable the asset may be.....*
- *Understanding the **level of significance** is important as it provides the essential guide to how policies should be applied.*

4.3 It is therefore important to keep in mind that the heritage asset in this instance is the Conservation Area in which the application site is located, and not the building itself.

### **The Elsworthy Conservation Area**

4.4 The Conservation Area was first designated in 1973, extended in 1985 and again 1991. It encompasses an area of approximately 16 hectares extending from Primrose Hill Road in the east to Avenue Road in the west.

4.5 Urban development of the area occurred between 1840 and the early 1900s following the construction of major roads in the late 1820s to provide links with central London with large middle class housing development starting in the 1840s along the newly created Avenue Road. The acquisition of Primrose Hill in 1842 for public recreation increased the attractiveness of the area for residential development.

4.6 The area is thus characterised by terraced townhouses, large semi-detached villas and large detached houses following a ‘garden suburb’ pattern built for wealthy families wishing to live in spacious and pleasant leafy surroundings within easy reach of central London, the character of the area which remains today.

4.7 Elsworthy Road runs east west from Primrose Hill Road to Avenue Road and is largely characterised by detached villas on generous plots consistent with the ‘garden suburb’



pattern of development in the conservation area. Buildings are set back from the street and original boundary treatments consisted of low walls, wooden fences/gates and privet hedges. Whilst some changes have occurred over the years, the character of the area is still one of spacious leafy streets and generous plot sizes.

- 4.8 The proposed front boundary treatment of trees and hedging behind wooden fencing and gates reflects the original pattern of development in the area and thus ensures the character and appearance of the conservation area is preserved.
- 4.9 The bin enclosure will be screened by a timber fence and hedging to minimise its visual impact. The bin enclosure would sit within the front garden adjacent to the side boundary and behind the front fence and gates. This modest enclosure would have no material impact therefore on the street scene. The character and appearance of the conservation area would not therefore be harmed.
- 4.10 The outbuilding in the rear garden to house plant and storage would be timber clad with a green roof to ensure it sits comfortably within the garden setting. The outbuilding would sit adjacent to the rear boundary and the flat roofed structure would not rise above the height of the existing boundary wall/fence ensuring there would be no visual impact therefore from the public realm and the open space of Primrose Hill at the rear.
- 4.11 The character and distinctiveness of the locality with its detached villas on generous plots in a leafy environment would thus remain ensuring therefore that the character and appearance of the designated heritage asset (the conservation area) would be preserved.

### **Summary Conclusions**

- 4.12 The significance of the conservation area lies in the urban development of the area in the 1840's to early 1900s with terraced townhouses, large semi-detached villas and large detached houses in spacious leafy surroundings following a 'garden suburb' pattern built for wealthy families.
- 4.13 The proposed plant/storage shed in the rear garden, the bin enclosure in the front garden together with the new front boundary treatment is founded on principles of good design. The use of traditional materials would be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. The host building retains its sense of place within the street scene as a detached villa on a generous plot set within a green and leafy environment, an important facet of the character of the Elsworthy Conservation Area. As such, the historic value and significance of the conservation area would be preserved.

- 4.14 Paragraph 202 of the NPPF advises that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 4.15 Taking account of the Council's character appraisal for the Elsworthy Conservation Area and in assessing this against the proposed development, it is held that the proposals would not result in any harm to the historic value and significance of the conservation area and therefore public benefits do not need to be demonstrated. That said, the new front boundary treatment would be a public benefit improving the local townscape thereby enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.16 The proposed development would not harm the historic value or significance of the Conservation Area (the heritage asset) and it will be wholly conserved in compliance with the overarching objectives of the NPPF and relevant policies contained within Camden's Local Plan.

## 5 THE PROPOSAL AND PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE

- 5.1 As the NPPF advises, planning law requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The proposed development meets the aims and objectives of national and local planning policies and planning permission should therefore be approved without delay in accordance with the NPPF.

### *Mitigating the effects of Climate Change*

- 5.3 Policy CC1 of the Local Plan requires all development to minimise the effects of climate change. The building is currently undergoing major refurbishment works following the grant of planning permission in 2015 and the recent approval for minor amendments to the 2015 approved scheme which ultimately provides an opportunity to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by improving the thermal efficiency of the building and lower energy usage through upgrade of internal services.

### *Impact of the Proposals on the Visual Appearance of the Building*

- 5.4 Local Plan Policy D1, amongst a number of criteria requires development to be sustainable, high quality in design with materials which complement local character.
- 5.5 The proposed single storey garden structure for plant and storage has been carefully considered and sensitively designed to ensure it sits comfortably within the garden setting thereby minimising any visual impact. The new front boundary treatment of painted timber fencing and gates reflects the original pattern of front boundary treatment in the locality thereby ensuring the prevailing character of the local street scene is maintained.

### *Impact of the Proposals on the Conservation Area*

- 5.6 Although not a statutorily listed building, the application property lies within a designated heritage asset, being the Elsworthy Conservation Area. It is important therefore to keep in mind that the heritage asset is the conservation area in which the building is located, and not the building itself. Section 72(1) of the 1990 Act states that special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 5.7 Policy D2 requires development to preserve and where possible, enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 5.8 The proposed bin enclosure in the front garden and the rear garden plant/storage shed would sit comfortably within their respective garden settings. Further, the new front boundary treatment would be in keeping with the original pattern of development in this part of Elsworthy Road where low walls, timber fences, gates and hedges are prevalent within the street scene and thus form part of the character of the local area. Further, the use of traditional materials would respect the host dwelling and local context.
- 5.9 Overall, the proposed development would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

#### ***Impact on Residential Amenity***

- 5.10 Local Plan policy A1 seeks to protect the living conditions and quality of life of existing occupiers and neighbours.
- 5.11 Given the small scale of the proposals and the rear garden outbuilding sitting close to the rear boundary and below the height of the existing boundary treatment with its mature trees and shrubs, the proposed development would not have a noticeable impact on neighbouring occupiers. Furthermore, the Noise Impact Assessment of Ion Acoustics Ltd demonstrates the plant located within the garden shed would not have an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers in respect of noise nuisance. The proposed development therefore complies with policy A1.

#### ***In Summary***

- 5.12 For the reasons given in Section 5 of this statement, the proposed development meets the aims and objectives of the adopted Local Plan, and in particular those policies relevant to this proposal as referenced in Section 3 of this Statement.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The proposed development comprising a plant/storage shed in the rear garden; a bin enclosure in the front garden together with new timber fencing and gates to the front boundary would be respectful to the pattern of development in the locality and would not therefore harm the visual appearance of the building or local townscape. The proposed development would meet the needs of the present without compromising future generations to meet their own needs.
- 6.2 The architectural and historic integrity of the property and wider context are protected and the character and appearance of the conservation area would be preserved.
- 6.3 The use of the building as a single family dwelling house would safeguard existing residential amenity.
- 6.4 The proposed development is in accordance with Section 72 of the 1990 Act and complies with the aims and objectives of the development plan and with central government advice in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In our judgement no other material considerations weigh against it.
- 6.5 Accordingly, we trust the London Borough of Camden will determine that the application for planning permission can be approved.