

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



3 WINDMILL HILL
LONDON NW3 6RU
TO ACCOMPANY A PLANNING APPLICATION

March 2024
Jonathan Freegard

Design and Access Statement

Location and Description

The application site, 3 Windmill Hill, is a late 19th Century semi-detached house with accommodation arranged over the lower ground, ground, first and second floor levels.

The property is situated within a row of 6 dwellings (numbered 1 to 6) dating from the 1880s. The fronts of the properties are of red stock bricks with plain red clay tile pitched roofs. The rear and side walls have harder, plainer bricks of a similar colour.



Aerial view from west (front) [from Google maps]



Aerial view from east (rear) [from Google maps]

The Hampstead Conservation Area

The property is within The Hampstead Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden, designated on 29th January 1968.

The Hampstead Conservation Area has been subdivided into eight sub-areas according to character. Windmill Hill is within Sub Area Four – Church Row/Hampstead Grove. This area is north-east of Heath Street; and is characterised by a mix of early Georgian houses and Victorian tenements and villas. Principal materials in the Church Row/Hampstead Grove area are red brick, plain red clay tiles, timber and cast iron.

The dwelling is not statutorily listed but is situated within the Fenton House Character Zone of SUB AREA FOUR: Church Row/Hampstead Grove of the Hampstead Conservation Area. A brief description of the dwelling as part of a group is included under Windmill Hill as follows: -

Windmill Hill

*The road winds from Holly Hill to Upper Terrace. At the southern end is the Holly Bush Hill triangular green. On its north side is a row of three fine 1730s houses (Volta House, Bolton House and Windmill Hill House, listed) set back from the road with mature trees in the front gardens behind brick walls with railings. Next to them is the very fine entrance to Fenton House. To the west are the wild roofs of Mount Vernon, located at the apex of Frognaal and Frognaal Rise and described more fully under Frognaal (p.40). The road separates from Frognaal Rise into a narrow road [still Windmill Hill] which twists around **Nos.1-6, a group of six semi-detached red brick 1880s houses with a recessed entrance and wooden balustrades above the bay windows.***

Originally designated a Conservation Area in January 1968 this sub-area was added on 1st April 1978. The current Conservation Area Appraisal was published in October 2002.

Nos. 1-6 Windmill Hill are noted in the Conservation Area Audit (p.56) as contributing positively to the character of the conservation area. These houses are excluded from the Article 4 Direction dated 19.10.76 but are covered by the following restrictions: -

Estate Agent's Boards A direction under Regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 (as amended) is in force in the Conservation Area. The direction means that consent for estate agent's boards does not apply.

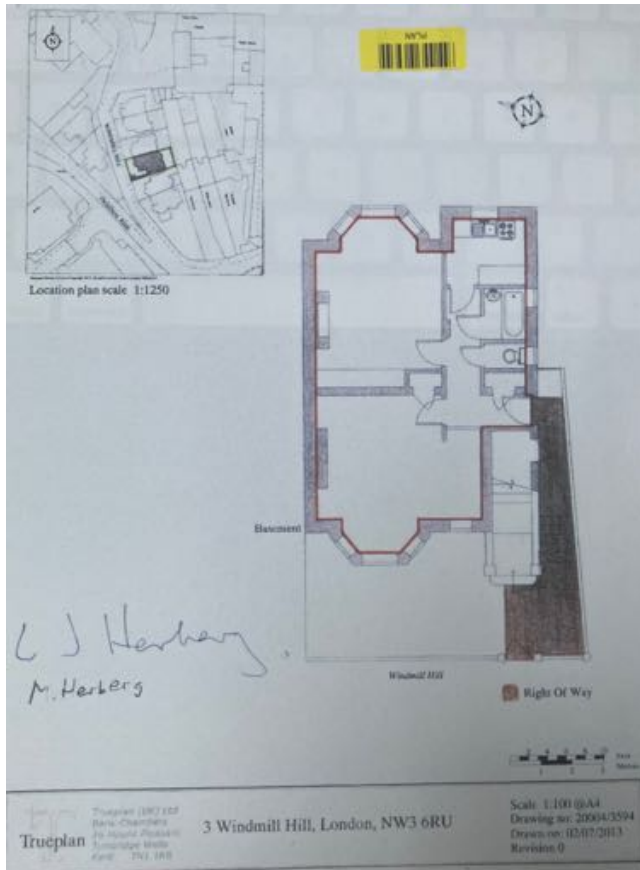
Area of Special Character The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) has a section of particular relevance to the Conservation Area; Chapter 15, Special Policy Areas, The Hampstead and Highgate Ridge Area of Special Character. The policies are contained in Appendix 1 of the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Archaeology The property is in an area identified by English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service as an Archaeological Priority Area.

There are no trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders within the application site. The site is not within the Environment Agency's Flood Zones 2 or 3.

Use

The house (Use Class C3) consists of a main dwelling occupying the upper three storeys and a basement arranged as a separate flat but with no associated external amenity space or external storage. This has worked in the past as the ownership of the two parts remained within a single family that has owned the property for more than 40 years. Both parts are in the process of being acquired by the applicant after being vacant for over two years.



Title plan showing that lower ground floor flat has only a right of way over the side path & no external space.

Planning Development History

The planning history for the application site can be summarised as follows:

Planning Application – TP 29158 (16-03-1942)

Proposal: To convert 3 Windmill Hill, Hampstead, into two self-contained maisonettes.

Decision: Refused 10-04-1942

Reason: The proposed conversion is considered inappropriate and liable to affect adversely the amenities of properties in the vicinity which consist predominantly of single-family dwelling houses.

Planning Application – TP 29153/NW (08-05-1959)

Proposal: Conversion of the basement at 3 Windmill Hill, Hampstead, into a self-contained flat.

Decision: Granted 01-06-1959

Pre-Application advice

An email sent to the Duty Planning officer at London Borough of Camden on 20/1/2024 and again on 11/2/2024 asking if a full application without specific pre-application advice was the best way forward as the alterations proposed are minimal and the policy issues known. This would allow both the Local Authority and the public to fully review and comment on the proposed change of use as well as on the minor alterations.

No response has been received to date.

Relevant planning policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

The London Plan (March 2021)

The London Plan Guidance: Housing Design Standards Plan (June 23)

Camden Local Plan (2021)

D1- Design

D2- Heritage

CC1- Climate change mitigation

CC2- Adapting to climate change

Camden Planning Guidance Documents

CPG Amenity (Jan 2021)

CPG1 Design (Jan 2021)

Camden Local Development Framework Camden Core Strategy 2010 – 2025 (adopted version 2010)

CPG Energy efficiency and adaptation (Jan 2021)

Hampstead Conservation Area Statement (2002)

Specific policies relevant to this application

Camden Local Plan ((March 2020): -

Policy H3 Protecting existing homes

The Council will aim to ensure that existing housing continues to meet the needs of existing and future households by:

a. resisting development that would involve a net loss of residential floorspace

b. protecting housing from permanent conversion to short-stay accommodation intended for occupation for periods of less than 90 days; and

c. resisting development that would involve the net loss of two or more homes (from individual or cumulative proposals), unless they:

- create large homes in a part of the borough with a relatively low proportion of large dwellings;

- ***enable sub-standard units to be enlarged to meet residential space standards.***

Loss of Residential Floorspace (p.62)

3.74 However, the Council also recognises that there are situations where the loss of individual homes may be justified. Policy H3 indicates that such losses may be acceptable in the situations set out in the next four paragraphs.

3.75 Net loss of one home is acceptable when two dwellings are being combined into a single dwelling.

Policy H6 Housing choice and mix

We will: b. expect all self-contained homes to meet the nationally described space standard.

The London Plan Guidance: Housing Design Standards

Part C: homes and private outside space.

C10.1 Provide a minimum of one 5m² of private outside space for homes with one or two bed-spaces, with a minimum depth and width of 1.5m.

Comment: the lower ground floor flat has no outside space.

C10.5 Homes with private rear gardens should accommodate bicycles, mobility scooters and bins, providing that the garden can be accessed directly from the street. Where this is not possible, secure, bespoke covered storage should be provided in front gardens; this should be designed and located to avoid obstructing ground-floor windows.

Comment: the existing lower ground flat has no land on which to place separate cycle or bin storage.

C4.1.2 Visual Privacy

The location of the main living and eating spaces, and the main private outside space, should be optimised to make the most of the best views and the orientation. These spaces should . . . enjoy reasonable privacy through the careful placement of windows.

C4.4 Avoid placing bedrooms and bathrooms on street-facing facades at ground level or where they face onto a courtyard or podium.

Comment: the lower ground flat's bedroom and living spaces are directly overlooked by the front and rear gardens belonging to the upper dwelling at very close proximity.

Proposal

The proposal is for a change of use to recombine the basement flat into a single family dwelling by reinstating the internal stair in its original position.

The present flat with its poor privacy and total lack of external amenity space and storage will become prime living space with access to the rear and front gardens.

The occupancy of the dwelling will be increased from 4 bedrooms to 5 (by virtue of reducing the duplicated kitchen and dining areas) whilst reducing the demands on on-street parking. At present the two dwellings qualify for 4 on-street permits.

The new arrangement will allow the house to use the front and rear gardens without impacting the occupants of the basement flat who have no external area.

The historic value of the building will be enhanced by the following:-

- Restoring the stair to the lower ground floor level
- Restoring the original plan of the basement.
- Relocating the kitchen to its original position, allowing restoration of the original bedroom.

The proposed accompanying refurbishment will include the following alterations : -

- The installation of a high-efficiency (hydrogen-ready) condensing boiler in an existing boiler position serving the whole house. This will be accompanied by the upgrading of the thermal performance of the house throughout with internal thermal linings to external walls, ground floor and roof insulation that have no visual impact externally. This will make the house heat-pump ready for when energy prices change and subject to further planning consent.
- The windows will be replaced throughout with like-for-like timber windows but with double glazing and seals. These do not register as a change on the proposed elevations and as the building is not Listed it is deemed acceptable.
- The rotten timber balustrades on the two 2nd floor balconies with their inner metal frames and wired glass panels will be replaced by simple white-painted steel balustrades following the original pattern as has been done at several other properties in this group. These will have frameless glass panels behind them, set flush with the parapets, to comply with Building Regulations heights and make them unclimbable for children.
- The rear garden will be lowered slightly with a low retaining wall close to the boundary to improve access and privacy (as has been done recently at No.4).
- The brick piers of the front boundary wall will be rebuilt slightly larger with a lower brick wall between and black iron railings to match those of the neighbours at Nos.4 & 5 Windmill Hill.

- Apart from the new glazed doors in place of a window at lower ground floor level and the replacement of a narrow door with a matching window in the rear bay at upper ground floor level, there are no other external changes proposed.



The proposal allows the upgrading of the house and ensures the continued use of this site as a single family dwelling, which is in keeping with the original use.

Arrangement

The new basement will contain the kitchen and dining areas with direct access to the small rear garden. The internal stair linking the lower ground to the upper house will be reinstated in its original position. This will allow the present kitchen/living areas in the upper part of the house to revert to bedroom use. This arrangement will overcome the loss of privacy arising from the garden belonging entirely to the upper house looking into the bedroom of a separate dwelling.

Landscaping

The rear garden will be cleared and improved access provided to the basement rear kitchen. The front garden will have original pathways re-laid and new planting provided. The front wall will be rebuilt as brick piers with railings on a low wall with planting behind to match the treatment at Nos. 4 & 5 Windmill Hill.



Brick piers, railings & planting at 4 & 5 Windmill Hill

Trees

There are no qualifying trees on the site or adjacent sites sufficiently close to require protection from the proposed scale of building works.

Appearance, Character and materials

The new front garden wall and piers will use matching hand-made bricks and cast stone pier caps to match the adjacent houses. The lower ground floor front wall will be cleaned to remove the old paint layers and any damaged bricks replaced to match the existing.

Replacement paving and paths at the front will be of natural Yorkstone.

Although made of steel for strength and durability, the replacement balcony railings will be of similar dimensions and finished in white to replicate the existing timber ones. This has been done previously at the adjacent houses on both sides.

The roof with its plain clay tiles will be retained with only minor replacement of cracked tiles to match the existing.

The rear garden will have an area of durable timber decking that is porous and will not affect the porosity of the ground. Planted areas to the perimeter will be retained.

Sustainability

It is proposed to replace all windows and glazed doors with timber high-performance windows with double-glazing to exactly match the existing fenestration pattern whilst improving thermal efficiency. The external walls and roof will be upgraded with internal thermal linings and the lower ground floor will be replaced with insulation beneath it.

Access Statement

Pedestrian to the property will remain unchanged. There is no vehicular access.

No changes are proposed to the existing entrance and internal stairs to the house. New internal circulation areas and stairs will be designed to meet the requirements of Part M Approved Document of the Building Regulations.

Windmill Hill has on-street controlled residents parking on adjacent streets. The property is well served by public transport being 200 metres from Hampstead underground station and 150m from bus stops on Heath Street.

Summary

The proposed change of use to a single dwelling ensures the continued use of this site as a single family dwelling, which is in keeping with the original use.

The accompanying relatively minor alterations allow the upgrading of the house to meet current environmental performance, amenity and space standards for a family dwelling whilst enhancing its appearance within the Conservation Area.