

PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT

Installation of gas boilers and flue to an existing plant room with associated service runs North of Spedan Close, Hampstead, London, NW3 7XF

Introduction

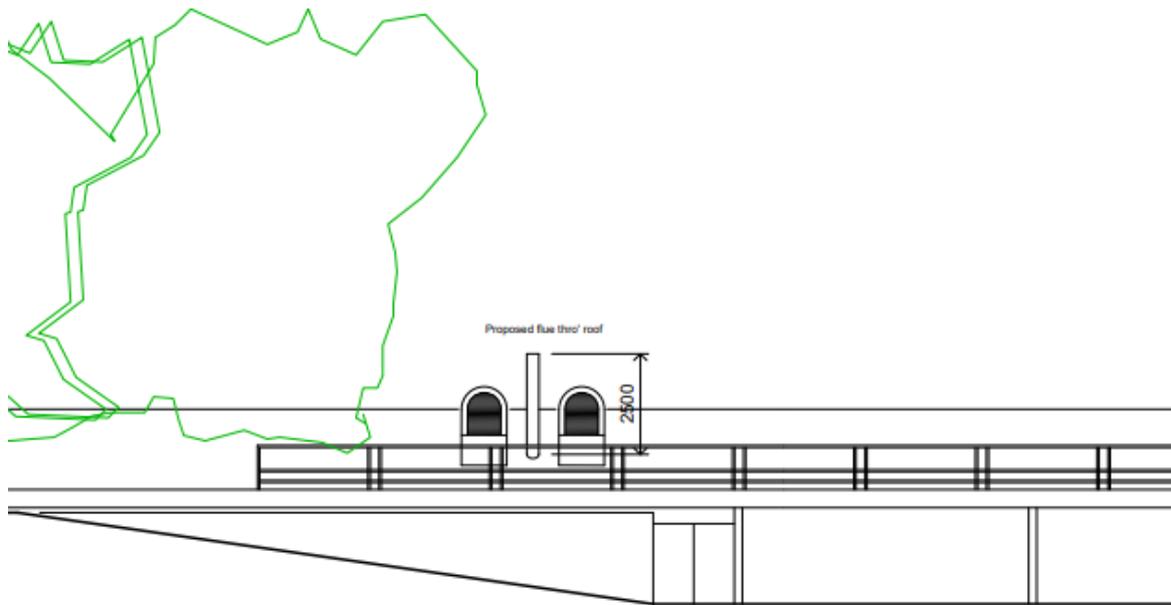
Riseber Consulting Ltd have prepared this Planning & Heritage Statement in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consent from Cenergist Ltd (“the Applicant”) which seek approval for works associated with improving the long term energy viability and sustainability of the existing residential properties at Spedan Close, Hampstead, London, NE3 7XF

The application site is located in the North London area some 0.9km west of Hampstead Heath and 0.2km south of the West Heath. Specifically, the proposal relates to an existing plant room that is located immediately east of the dwellings that form Spedan Close and which is also sited immediately west of Branch Hill House as identified in the aerial image presented below.



The proposal would involve the installation of gas boilers, associated service runs and a single flue through the concrete roof of the existing plant room with the flue being the only noticeable external change to the building. This would project 2.5m above the concrete roof structure and it would sit centrally between two existing periscope vents with an existing stainless steel flue that is situated slightly further to the south east of the periscope vents being removed as part of the scheme.

The proposed new flue would be a black powder coated stainless steel feature with the works to be carried out internally within the plant room comprising the removal of existing gas boilers and the installation of three Remeha Gas Ace 210 200kW floor mounted gas fired condensing boilers in their place along with a pressurisation unit and an expansion vessel as shown on the submitted plans.



The proposal is presented as part of the drive for decarbonisation across London, involving many public and private buildings, which is intended to have a significant cumulative positive environmental effect. Matters relating to planning policy and heritage impacts are important considerations in this case however and this statement therefore comprehensively addresses the issues of most relevance in these respects in presenting an overarching justification for allowing the proposal to proceed.

Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission i.e. new development proposals, to be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan for an area unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Such material considerations can include Government policy statements including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was most recently updated in December 2023.

The application site is located within the London Borough of Camden where the Camden Local Plan was adopted by Camden Council in July 2017. By law, this provides the starting point for the determination of all planning applications across the Borough with the document covering the period up to 2031 and providing the local planning policy framework to guide all development proposals.

From a planning perspective the key policy of relevance in the Camden Local Plan in this case is Policy CC1 which encourages the highest feasible environmental standards and, amongst other things, seeks to promote reductions in carbon dioxide emissions and supports/encourages sensitive efficiency improvements to existing buildings in order to optimise resource efficiency.

These objectives align entirely with the latest version of the NPPF with paragraph 157 first making clear that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future before going on at paragraph 163 to recognise that even small-scale projects such as that being proposed in this instance can make a valuable contribution towards cutting carbon emissions; and at paragraph 164 advising Local Planning Authorities that, in determining planning applications, there should be significant weight given to energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings.

Also forming part of the development plan in this case is the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted by the Council in October 2018 but which does not contain any planning policies that are relevant to this proposal. Policies relating to heritage matters are addressed separately below.

Heritage Policy & Legislation

In relation to heritage matters, the Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty under Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their setting, and any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess; and to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas under Section 72(1) of the same Act. Considerable importance and weight is to be applied to these statutory duties in this case.

Paragraph 203 of the NPPF is also a material consideration and in relation to matters of heritage interest this states that, in determining applications for planning and listed building consent, Local Planning Authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 205 of the Framework further requires that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm would amount to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 206 of the NPPF goes on to advise that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

At the local level these objectives are reflected in Policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan with this stating that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the Borough's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings including conservation areas and listed buildings amongst other assets. The policy makes clear that the Council will not permit development that would result in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm whilst, in specific relation to conservation areas, the policy requires development proposals to preserve or, where possible, enhance the character and/or appearance of the designated area.

The Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan also contains a heritage-specific policy with Policy DH2 stating that proposals must seek to protect and/or enhance buildings (or other elements) which make a positive contribution to the Hampstead Conservation Area within which the site is located.

Planning Assessment

As set out above the proposed development in this case forms part of the drive for decarbonisation across London, involving many public and private buildings, which is intended to have a significant cumulative positive environmental effect. The proposal aligns firmly with the objectives of both the NPPF and Policy CC1 of the Camden Local Plan in this respect which in combination seek to encourage and support sensitive efficiency improvements to existing buildings in order to optimise resource efficiency. Indeed, paragraph 164 of the Framework advises Local Planning Authorities in determining planning applications to give significant weight to proposals involving energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings which would be the case here. The proposal is therefore acceptable in principle in line with these identified policy provisions.

Heritage Assessment

It is important to recognise at the outset of the heritage assessment that not only is Spedan Close a Grade II listed heritage asset but it also forms part of the wider Hampstead Conservation Area. In addition, although not listed in its own right, the immediately adjacent Branch Hill House to the east has sufficient architectural and historic interest to be considered a non-designated heritage asset.

Heritage Significance: Spedan Close

Spedan Close is a housing estate that was built by the Council in the 1970's when it was first called the Branch Hill Estate and subsequently became known as the most expensive Council housing ever built. The white modernist houses are now privately owned and the name of the estate has subsequently been changed to Spedan Close with the estate being listed in 2010. Although strikingly modern and contemporary in its architectural form, the development blends sensitively into the hilly landscape near West Heath and takes advantage of the extensive tree coverage surrounding the site to create an enclosed leafy environment for its residents. Designed by architects Gordon Benson and Alan Forsyth, the properties are limited to two storeys in height but with additional outdoor space in the form of rooftop gardens which are reached by external spiral staircases.



The significance of the estate is derived principally from its special architectural interest as an example of bold 1970's modernist design with it being considered to be one of the best estates designed by Camden Architects' Department who were pioneers of low-rise, high-density housing at that time. The complex stepped-section of the development and its sophisticated use of materials are identified in the listing description as being particular matters of significance with this set out in full below:

798-1/0/10352 BRANCH HILL 09-AUG-10 Branch Hill Estate

II Twenty-one semi-detached houses, 1974-6, by Gordon Benson and Alan Forsyth of the London Borough of Camden's Architects' Department. Minor later alterations.

PLAN

The houses are arranged in three rows stepping down the slope of Branch Hill. There are two blocks of houses, one (three houses wide) set further down the hill from the other (which is four houses wide). The two are linked by the orthogonal grid of brick-paved pedestrian passageways which governs the estate's planning. Parking is provided in a row of garages set into the hill side at the top of the slope. There are two types of house on the estate. The four bedroom properties are located in the first row, at the top of the slope, with two rows of three-bedroom houses below.

MATERIALS

The houses have a reinforced concrete frame with reinforced concrete roof slabs and beams and rendered block cavity walls with load-bearing inner skins.

EXTERIORS

The aesthetic is pure modern in materials, detail and overall form. The bright white, smooth-finished concrete contrasts with dark-stained timber frames and the grey concrete exposed faces of the structural beams and slabs. The latter have rough-sawn board-marks and chamfers, finishes also used for the gangway slabs and the courtyard and terrace walls. The directions of the board-marks are logical: horizontal for the slabs, vertical for the walls and add texture to the elevations, while the chamfers define the edges. The living rooms are completely glazed on one side; the return elevations have long horizontal windows placed high up for the sake of privacy, some wrapping around corners. The arrangement of two rows of wide windows (with some taller casements on the upper storey and wrap-around corners on the lower) on the rear elevation of the four-bedroom houses is a hallmark of the Camden Architects' Department style, as also seen at Dunboyne Road. This is the first view of the estate as one enters from Spendan Close and establishes some of the motifs used throughout, such as the stepped profile of the blocks with their projecting upper storeys. The whole estate is ordered by the strict geometry of the orthogonal plan, which admits little variety of perspective, although the slipped grid to the north of the site interrupts the regularity a little and the plentiful greenness of the garden terraces softens its effect. The brick paving of the paths is also highly characterful.

Each house has a garden terrace on the roof of the next house down the slope, accessed from the living room's French door via a gangway over the horizontal passageways and courtyard. An outdoor metal spiral staircase in the courtyard provides additional access to the gangway and thus the garden terrace and living room too. Each terrace has a top soil, to allow residents to plant a garden, and utilising the full load-bearing capacities of the reinforced concrete roof slabs; there are also window boxes incorporated into the roof slabs along the front of each living room window. Only the bottom row of houses has ground-level gardens. The garden terraces project slightly from the storey below which, given this is the living room of another property, creates a sense of privacy, something further enhanced by the concrete walls shielding the more exposed corners of the terraces.

INTERIORS

The interiors were not inspected but much can be gleaned from contemporary accounts of the estate. The front doors are all on the vertical passageways, which are paved in red brick. In the three-bedroom houses the front door leads to the kitchen and dining room area, on a split level, with steps going down to the bedrooms (which open out onto a small courtyard) or up

to the living room and master bedroom (which cantilever slightly above the bedrooms so as to take advantage of the natural light and views). The arrangement is roughly the same in the four-bedroom houses, but because these are located in the first row an extra storey above the kitchen and dining room can be included where the other rows have the next layer's garden terrace. The absence of the terrace permits a large west-facing clerestory bringing light into the double-height kitchen and dining area and the living room is larger too. In each house, the kitchen counter was a permanent tiled concrete shelf and so these are likely to have been retained. Originally there would also have been storey-height doors, sliding partitions between rooms, built-in cupboards and shelves and chipboard and softwood purpose-crafted staircases. Interior fittings designed by Camden Architects' Department were always good-quality. All the window joinery survives but some of the front doors have been replaced.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES

Also of special interest are the hard surfaces, including the brick and concrete pathways and entrance drive, and a row of concrete garages with semi-circular-headed ventilation shafts at the northern edge of the estate. Its cantilevered roof slab is in board-marked concrete and extends to form a boundary wall to the drive where the slope of the hill steepens; this is also included in the listing.

HISTORY

In 1965, Camden had purchased an Edwardian mansion, Branch Hill Lodge, and its four plus acre grounds. The former was converted into an old people's home; the latter allocated for social housing, despite protestation from locals about building on undeveloped land. Benson and Forsyth, protégés of the Architects' Department's Neave Brown, received the commission in 1970 and decided to retain the mature wooded areas of the grounds by only developing the house's former lawn and gardens, just over half the acreage of the plot. The Department's preference for high-density, low-rise housing was perfectly suited to the limited site, which was also governed by a covenant that stipulated new buildings must be semi-detached and of no more than two storeys. Benson and Forsyth designed a clever scheme of forty-two houses (fourteen 4-bedroom, twenty-eight 3-bedroom) that respected these restrictions but maintained Parker Morris standards of room size and storage capacity. Each house also had a small yard and a roof top garden. Essentially, the model was terraces of houses, as Neave Brown had adopted on early estates, but with narrow walkways in between pairs so that the scheme qualified as semi-detached. In Brown's schemes at Dunboyne Road and Alexandra Road, each floor is stepped back and the living areas placed above the bedrooms so that they open out onto a private balcony and take advantage of extra light. A similar concept is used at Branch Hill, with even greater utility and effect given the sloping topography of the site. The flat roof of each house is the roof terrace of the next house up the slope, such that from above the estate appears as terraced gardens, not too different to the Edwardian gardens they replaced. The density of a multi-storey block was achieved, but the stepped-section plan fulfilled the covenant's requirement for low-storey, semi-detached houses without adopting the suburban layout that such a stipulation would appear to demand. Yet while the design met the brief architecturally, it was a disaster in terms of cost. The land had been purchased at a high price (£464,000 in 1965) and costs of construction escalated in the difficult economic climate of the 1970s. The houses were built on spoil from the construction of the Northern Line in the early 1900s which turned out to require a modified piling system mid-construction. When the new residents finally arrived in 1978, the cost was calculated as over £72,000 per dwelling. By this time, the idealism of the post-war welfare state was on the wane and the reaction against state spending of the Thatcher years was close at hand; the estate, dubbed 'California beach style' by the Evening Standard, attracted negative press coverage. Architectural critic Christopher Knight in the Architects Journal (AJ) was the most scathing. He wrote: 'this bright young architect's vision realised is now notorious and a favourite target for

politicians and furious ratepayers ... conceived as a social time-bomb it is an economic nonsense ... it is financially irresponsible, a slap in the eye to the affluent neighbours whose view has been transformed'.

Knights vitriol in the AJ about the politics of Branch Hill extended only in part to criticism of the architecture. His tone is more equivocal, commenting on but not condemning the estate's old-fashioned style: "window walls, raw concrete, split levels and roof terraces take one back a long way further in psychological distance than the current neo-vernacular: Brave New World in contrast to Loss of Nerve. Branch Hill defies all the rules now laid down by Camden for its housing but it does attempt to make architecture out of the dreary bureaucratic provisions for human life in the 1970s". In Knight's article and another by Jos Boy in *The Architect*, the estate received some criticism: the grid plan lacked variety and the latitudinal passageways were bleak; the estate ignored its surroundings; some elements of the plans within the houses were unhelpful, for example each bedroom courtyard was too far away from the living areas for infants to play there without parental supervision and too small to be useful. Yet in both critical appraisals, the interiors received praise: Knight described them as 'positive, interesting and generous in spirit'; Boys thought 'the inside of any house at Branch Hill is a real treat'. Elsewhere, the response was more glowing. *Building Design* considered that 'the sloping site has been used to great advantage by the architects who have produced a scheme of great sophistication and pleasantness'. The AJ noted: 'Camden have arguably succeeded in building some of the highest quality council accommodation in the country'. Official Architecture and Planning praised the idealism of the architects: 'I suspect lesser or wiser designers would not have got this far ... a matter for reflection for all those that want to do the thing that is right rather than what the unthinking system tells them to do'. The estate received some international attention, an Italian journal arguing that 'design by Benson and Forsyth is undoubtedly a noteworthy one that indicates the high professional standard of English architects expressed in the technical accomplishment of the detailing'. Aside from the notoriety of the politics and the cost, the response to Branch Hill was broadly positive; criticism of the architecture, mostly to do with the orthogonal plan and the arrangement of some of the rooms and outdoor spaces, appeared only in the more thorough appraisals where more detailed commentary was given.

The 1960s and 1970s Camden Architects' Department is renowned for its bold and innovative approach to public housing design. The Borough Architect, Sydney Cook, refused to build high-rise tower blocks favoured by other local authorities (not a single one was built during his tenure) and shunned standardised plans and industrial building techniques. Instead, Cooke favoured low-rise, high density housing and a distinct 'Camden style' emerged from the office, inspired by the architecture of Denys Lasdun and Patrick Hodgkinson at Brunswick Square (with whom Cooke worked when the housing there passed to Camden in 1965). Branch Hill is one of the best examples. Others schemes by the Department are Alexandra Road (Neave Brown, 1973-8, Grade II*), Maiden Lane (Benson and Forsyth, 1979-82, unlisted) and Dunboyne Road (Neave Brown, 1966-9, unlisted)

SOURCES

'Downhill Struggle', Official Architecture and Planning (January 1972) 16 'Value for Money?', *Building Design* (26 May 1978) 36 'Camden's Cream' *The Architects' Journal* (Vol 167, 31 May 1978) 1030-2 Christopher Knight, 'Housing at Branch Hill Hampstead', *The Architects' Journal* (Vol 169, 20 June 1979) 1261-76 Jos Boys, 'A Tale of Two Schemes', *The Architect* (October 1979) 19-22 Fabian Watkinson, 'The most expensive council housing in the world: Camden's public housing of the 1970s'; notes from a Twentieth Century Society walk, 23 June 2001

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Branch Hill Estate is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * special architectural interest of this bold, modernist design of 1970 by Benson and Forsyth; * complex stepped-section, which works brilliantly on a sloping site governed by strict covenants; * the use of materials is sophisticated and the smooth-finished, white concrete contrasts with the dark-stained joinery and exposed structural-skeleton, the latter immaculately-detailed with board-marking and chamfering; * one of the best estates designed by Camden Architects' Department, pioneers of low-rise, high-density housing in the 1960s and 1970s

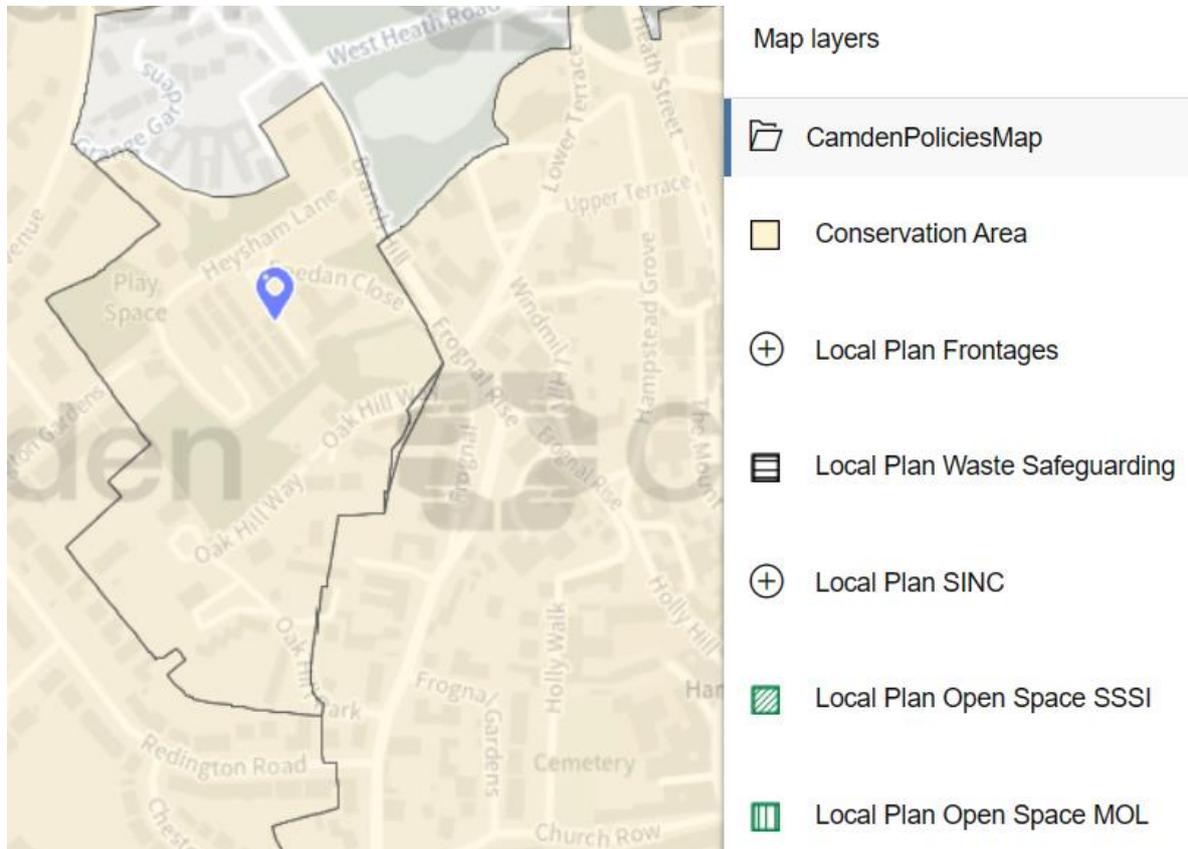


The proposal would involve the installation of gas boilers, associated service runs and a single flue through the concrete roof of the existing plant room which forms part of the undercroft area shown in the photograph above. The new flue would be the only noticeable external change to the building and this would project 2.5m above the concrete roof structure sitting centrally between two existing periscope vents. The existing stainless steel flue also shown in the photograph above that is situated slightly further to the south east of the periscope vents would be removed as part of the scheme ensuring a more cohesive arrangement to the infrastructure projecting from the roof of the plant room and reducing the spread of paraphernalia across this part of the site. Although sitting slightly taller than the existing flue, this would be offset by the reduction in spread of equipment across the site and the proposed new flue would also be black powder coated to make it less visually conspicuous and thus less harmful to the setting of the listed properties on Spedan Close.

There would be no harm caused to the significance of the Grade II listed asset in this case with the proposed works overall instead resulting in a preservation of its significance and an enhancement to its setting through the replacement of an existing visually detrimental and ill-placed silver flue with a black powder coated flue that would be positioned in a far more logical and sensitive location inbetween the existing plant room periscope vents. No harm is identified from a heritage perspective in terms of the works to be undertaken within the setting of the Grade II listed asset or its significance and, this being the case, the proposal accords fully with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the NPPF in these respects along with the key heritage objectives of Local Plan Policy D2 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy DH2.

Heritage Significance: Hampstead Conservation Area

The extent of the Hampstead Conservation Area designation is shown on the Local Plan Policies Map extract below with the application site being identified by the blue pin. The area features predominantly sloping terrain towards the west and south and it is primarily covered in woodland with an abundance of trees and vegetation that extends southwards and in a south westerly direction allowing for an almost seamless blending of the area with West Heath to the north.



The application site is no different in its character to that of the wider Conservation Area with mature trees and vegetation enclosing its site boundaries and providing extensive visual screening of the buildings that are contained within it. Indeed, the road into Spedan Close winds down into the site from Branch Hill meaning that the 1970's estate and the plant room equipment to which the applications relate are situated on a significantly lower ground level than the surrounding streets and properties and not therefore visible from outwith the site. Moreover, as explained above it is the case that the proposal would result in a more cohesive arrangement to the infrastructure projecting from the roof of the plant room and reduce the spread of paraphernalia across this part of the site through removal of the existing flue that projects from the undercroft area and its replacement with a new flue that would be powder coated black and sited centrally between the existing periscope vents.

The development would not be visible from within the wider Conservation Area or from outwith the immediate confines of Spedan Close. As such the proposal would have a neutral impact on i.e. preserve, the character, appearance, setting and significance of the Conservation Area through an overall improvement to the visual characteristics of the site. There would be no identifiable harm caused to this designated heritage asset and so the proposal accords with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF, Local Plan Policy D2 and Policy DH2 of the Neighbourhood Plan in this respect.

Heritage Significance: Branch Hill House

Although not listed in its own right, the immediately adjacent Branch Hill House to the east has sufficient architectural and historic interest to be considered a non-designated heritage asset and it is also considered to be a positive contributor to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area given its visual prominence on comparatively elevated land above the application site.

The building has been unsympathetically altered and extended over the years with bulky and poorly articulated additions that have failed to relate to the original 18th and 19th century parts of the building. Consequently, whilst still retaining some degree of architectural quality and interest, the building is nevertheless considered to be of relatively low significance overall which is evidenced by the fact that it has never been listed or even placed on the local list.

The NPPF affords an element of protection for non-designated heritage assets with paragraph 209 making clear that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset involved.

In this case there would be no adverse impacts upon, and therefore no harm caused, to the character, appearance, setting or significance of Branch Hill House. Indeed, the interrelationship between the non-designated heritage asset and the application site is such that the plant room and its associated equipment occupies a position downhill from Branch Hill House at a point where the land falls steeply away before dropping down to the internal road access for Spedan Close and its undercroft parking area. Whilst the new flue would project from the roof of the existing plant room rather than from its front/side as is the case with the existing, its slightly higher positioning within the site would not in itself cause an adverse impact on the setting of the non-designated heritage asset given that the two would barely ever be viewed in the same context from any public vantage points. Moreover, the consolidation of projecting equipment and the reduction in visual prominence stemming from the installation of a black powder coated flue again would have benefit in enhancing the overall appearance of the application site and setting of Branch Hill House to the extent that there would be a neutral heritage impact in accordance with paragraph 209 of the NPPF.



Summary and Conclusions

The proposed development in this case forms part of the drive for decarbonisation across London, involving many public and private buildings, which is intended to have a significant cumulative positive environmental effect. The proposal aligns firmly with the objectives of both the NPPF and Policy CC1 of the Camden Local Plan in this respect which in combination seek to encourage and support sensitive efficiency improvements to existing buildings in order to optimise resource efficiency. Indeed, paragraph 164 of the Framework advises Local Planning Authorities in determining planning applications to give significant weight to proposals involving energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings which would be the case here. The proposal is therefore acceptable in principle in line with these identified policy provisions.

There would be no harm caused to the significance of the Grade II listed Spedan Close in this case with the proposed works overall instead resulting in a preservation of its significance and an enhancement to its setting through the replacement of an existing visually detrimental and ill-placed silver flue with a black powder coated flue that would be positioned in a far more logical and sensitive location inbetween the existing plant room periscope vents. No harm is identified from a heritage perspective in terms of the works to be undertaken within the setting of the Grade II listed asset or its significance and, this being the case, the proposal accords fully with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the NPPF in these respects along with the key heritage objectives of Local Plan Policy D2 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy DH2.

Similarly there would be no adverse impacts upon, and therefore no harm caused, to the character, appearance, setting or significance of the non-designated Branch Hill House which sits immediately adjacent to the subject site whilst, in terms of potential impacts on the Hampstead Conservation Area, the development would not be visible from outwith the immediate confines of Spedan Close. As such the proposal would have a neutral impact on i.e. preserve, the character, appearance, setting and significance of the Conservation Area through an overall improvement to the visual characteristics of the site. There would be no identifiable harm caused to this designated heritage asset and so the proposal accords with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF, Local Plan Policy D2 and Policy DH2 of the Neighbourhood Plan in these respects.

On the basis of the assessment undertaken it is patently the case that the scheme presented in these applications for planning permission and listed building consent complies with legislative requirements as well as all relevant national and local planning policies and guidance to the extent that an entirely acceptable form of development with significant environmental benefits would be achieved. The Council are therefore respectfully requested to support the proposal by approving the applications without delay in line with the requirements and expectations of paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

This document is produced by **Mark Ketley BA (Hons), Dip TP** and **Joanne Wood BA (Hons), Dip TP** who are the co-owners and directors of planning and heritage consultancy Riseber Consulting Ltd.

With over 40 years of planning and heritage experience between them, including more than 25 years working for a range of Local Planning Authorities in the past, they have a deep knowledge and understanding of the planning system and heritage legislation with a wealth of experience in dealing with development proposals involving listed buildings, conservation areas and heritage settings.

Examples of recent projects involving heritage assets have included:

- Securing planning and listed building consent for a domestic extension to the Grade II listed Snape Castle Barn in Hambleton in North Yorkshire.
- Securing six separate planning and listed building consents for works to the Grade I listed Shortflatt Tower at Belsay; its associated Grade II listed former stables and coach house; and for the construction of a new events suite within the associated walled garden as part of proposals for a now established luxury wedding venue.
- Ongoing consultancy support in relation to restoration proposals for the Grade II listed Oakwood Hall at Wylam in Northumberland comprising the submission of seven separate planning and listed building consent applications for works to the listed building itself and for the construction of various structures and outbuildings within its setting as part of a restoration and enhancement of the wider estate grounds.
- Securing planning and listed building consent for a domestic extension to a Grade II listed dwellinghouse situated within the grounds of the Grade II* listed Windlestone Hall in County Durham. Also located within a Grade II registered park and garden.