

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
for
Athlone House



October 2013

9 Port House, Square Rigger Row, Plantation Wharf, London, SW11 3TY.

Tel: 020 7223 0895

E: enquiries@jfa.co.uk – w: www.jfa.co.uk

Contents	
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	7
3. CONSULTATION	11
4. LIMITATIONS, CONSTRAINTS & ASSUMPTIONS	14
5. PLANNING POLICY	15
6. LANDSCAPE – TOWNSCAPE ASSESSMENT	24
7. VISUAL ASSESSMENT	54
8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	80
Figures	
1. LANDSCAPE CONTEXT AND FEATURES PLAN	
2. TOWNSCAPE QUALITY AND VALUE SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE PLAN	
3. TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS PLAN	
4. DESIGNATIONS	
5. HYDROLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	
6. SKYLINE VIEW	
7. AGREED VIEWPOINTS PLAN	
Dwg No 9135-01 Rev A – Hard & Soft Landscape Proposals	
Dwg No 9135-02 Rev A – Landscape Strategy	
Appendices	
I VIEWPOINTS	
II PHOTOGRAPHS	
III CGI METHODOLOGY	
IV GUIDELINES FOR LVIA THIRD EDITION	

Executive Summary

Introduction

The proposal site is located at the north eastern corner of Hampstead Heath on Hampstead Lane. It sits within the London Borough of Camden close to the London Borough of Haringey. The site is occupied by a single dwelling, Athlone House, previously known as Caen Wood Towers. Although designed and built in 1871 as a residential dwelling, the building has been used for a number of purposes and has been subject to a number of alterations and no longer resembles its original design. The house is currently in a degraded state, boarded up and semi-derelict. The grounds still retain much of their character as the type of historic garden landscape that would be expected to accompany such a house. However, the additions and demolitions of various extensions and the recent history of neglect have resulted in the landscape becoming degraded and overgrown within much of the site.

Planning permission was granted in 2005 for the reinstatement of Athlone House to a single residential dwelling, the conversion of the associated smaller dwellings on the site and the construction of 22 apartments in three separate buildings. As part of that application, an area of the grounds of Athlone House was donated as an extension to Hampstead Heath. The area of land has since been incorporated into Hampstead Heath and the apartments to the north-east have been constructed and are now occupied.

In 2009, an application was made by Athlone House Ltd for the demolition of Athlone House and its replacement with a single residential dwelling and associated staff quarters and garaging. This application was refused in 2010. The decision was appealed by the applicant and the application was sent to Inquiry in February 2011. The appeal was dismissed due to the size of the proposed building and its resulting impact upon the Metropolitan Open Land.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) relating to the proposed development was produced in 2009 by Randle Siddeley Associates. Jaquelin Fisher of JFA Landscape and Ecology Ltd was called to provide evidence at the Inquiry, in support of the LVIA, which was generally supported by the Inspector. This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been produced to accompany a planning application for an amended proposal which takes



into account the comments from the Inspector. This LVIA responds to the amendments made to the original proposed design and reflects the changes in National and Regional Planning Policy which have occurred since the Inquiry in February 2011.

The proposed scheme is to demolish the existing dwelling, Athlone House, and to replace it with a three-storey dwelling with tower. The surrounding landscape is to be restored, re-establishing historic landscape features and enhancing habitat features within the site.

This assessment has shown that, although the existing building is of some merit to the local area, the semi-derelict state of the building, along with the degradation of its setting have a negative impact upon the Conservation Area and the local townscape. The Inspector, in his report, stated that a new dwelling of good quality design could also have a beneficial impact upon the Conservation Area. This assessment agrees with that statement.

Planning Policy (see chapter 5 for more detail)

This assessment shows that the proposed development on the site of Athlone House is in accordance with existing planning policy. This builds on the findings of the Inspector in his report, which stated that if the proposed building were of a similar mass to the existing building then it would not adversely impact upon the MOL and that a well-designed building could form a positive addition to the Conservation Area.

This chapter has found that the proposed development accords with relevant policy as relates to landscape, townscape and visual issues in the NPPF, the London Plan and the London Borough of Camden LDF.

Landscape and Townscape Assessment (see chapter 6 for more detail)

The area of the proposed development is characterised by large dwellings set within their own grounds, glimpsed through a strong landscape structure. The proposed development comprises such a development and is therefore considered to be appropriate to its context. Athlone House makes a marginally positive contribution to the Conservation Area but its degraded state and setting are currently detracting from the quality of the Conservation Area in the region of Hampstead Lane. The lack of trees in the northern area of the proposal site detracts from the green character of Hampstead Lane as evidenced elsewhere along its



length. Elsewhere along the road, buildings are glimpsed between trees whereas the views towards Athlone House are open.

Hampstead Heath is an area of protected open land with a semi-natural character within an otherwise generally built up area. It contains a strong landscape structure with variety in landform and hydrological features. It is highly valued locally. The edge of Hampstead Heath is shown to be characterised by a very strong landscape structure with large residential dwellings rising above the trees and glimpsed between them. The proposed development is such a dwelling, set within a strong landscape structure that will reinforce the character of the edge of the Heath. The proposed development is appropriate to its context.

The historic landscape of the site is still visible but is in need of restoration and enhancement. The buildings have fallen into disrepair and the footings of the demolished extensions are still evident, adding to the sense of disrepair and neglect. Although the main building is of interest, it is the setting of the site and its landscape which is of greater importance. It is this which forms the transition between the edge of the Conservation Area and Hampstead Heath and which forms the setting of the buildings.

The type of development proposed is not dissimilar in type to the existing, i.e. a large residential dwelling set within its own landscape. The proposed development has been shown to have a beneficial impact upon the local townscape and landscape and on the site. This stems from the removal of a degraded building and its replacement with one that is not and the sensitive restoration of the historic gardens and landscape setting of the site.

Visual Assessment (see chapter 7 for more detail)

Chapter 7 assesses the potential impacts of the proposed development on views. Although views can be affected by landscape elements, they are considered to be a separate issue and are assessed as such.

As stated in the previous Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and within the Inspector's Appeal Decision Report, the predicted impacts upon longer distance views, i.e. viewpoints 4-8, from Parliament Hill and the Tumulus, are negligible.



Of the twelve viewpoints assessed, impacts on nine of them were shown to be beneficial in nature. This is due to the removal of a degraded building from views, its replacement with a shorter one in good condition and the restoration of the historic landscape of the site. These are shown to reduce the visual impact of the dwelling on views from the Heath as compared to the existing Athlone House and to improve the character of the townscape, particularly when viewed from Hampstead Lane. All other views are neutral in nature as it is not possible to see either the reduction in the height of the tower or the improvement in the state of the building.

The most notable change is considered to be on viewpoints from the grounds of Highgate School which is in close proximity to the proposal site. From this view it is considered that the nature of the views of the building will change, due to the difference in the articulation of the roofline as viewed from this point. The removal of a semi-derelict building and its replacement with a new building of high architectural quality is a beneficial change. New mature tree planting is proposed which will provide an enhancement of the Conservation Area and will restore the character of this area, i.e. large houses in a parkland setting. This enhancement will also result in a change of view from this point, with the introduction of large trees between Highgate School and the proposal site providing a beneficial softening of views into the site and framing the buildings.

Of the twelve viewpoints assessed, magnitude predicted impacts were shown to be negligible on six, small on five and large on one. Impacts of small magnitude were predicted on views from the gazebo and nearby (viewpoints 1 and 2), from the area of donated land to the north west of the proposal site (viewpoint 10) and from the area of donated land to the east (viewpoint 11 and 12). This is due to the close proximity of the viewpoints to the proposal site. Impacts of large magnitude were predicted on receptors within the grounds of the school (viewpoint 9) due to the open nature of the views resulting from loss of vegetation within the proposal site.

All impacts from views are either minor, moderate or negligible in terms of their significance. From the six more distant viewpoints within the Heath (viewpoints 3 to 8) three impacts are neutral and three are minor beneficial; from closer views (viewpoints 1,2,10,11



and 12) all impacts are minor beneficial; and from Viewpoint 9, impacts are moderate and beneficial.

The amended scheme has resulted in a reduction of mass as perceived from short and medium distance views from the Heath. Of particular note are the removal of the courtyard wing and the reduction in fenestration on the southern, eastern and westerns façades. The new scheme reduces the visibility from seven of the twelve viewpoints. These constitute the short to medium distance views from the Gazebo, the area of Kenwood House, from Highgate School and from the donated land. There were no perceived changes on the view from viewpoints 4-8 due to the distance from the proposal site.

Summary

The proposed development is shown to be in character with the local landscape or townscape and, in fact, is shown to have a beneficial impact upon them. It is shown to have a neutral or beneficial impact upon the agreed views as verified by the images in Appendix I. The amended scheme is shown to be an improvement upon the appeal scheme and has responded to the points raised by the Inspector. That the amended proposed development does not constitute a distinctly different element within the landscape than the existing building and that the replacement of the degraded building with a new one of agreed architectural merit and the restoration of the historical landscape constitutes a benefit to the local landscape and townscape of Hampstead. It can, therefore, be concluded that the proposed scheme constitutes a positive addition to the landscape of the MOL and seeks to conserve and enhance the Conservation Area.



1.0 Introduction

1.0.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been produced on behalf of Athlone House Ltd to support a detailed planning application for a residential dwelling and associated landscape design on the site of Athlone House on Hampstead Lane. It forms part of a suite of documents supporting the planning application for the development proposal and should be read in conjunction with other documents, particularly the Planning Statement.

1.1 The Document

1.1.1 This document has been produced by: Jaquelin C Fisher BSc MSc CMLI FAE, who has 19 years of experience as a Chartered Landscape Architect, has written numerous LVIA's and was a member of the team who wrote the 2nd Edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment; Wendy Fowler BA(Hons) PGDipLA PGDipUD CMLI, Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute and Recognised Practitioner in Urban Design with the Urban Design Group, who has over 9 years' experience producing LVIA's and is the lead author of this LVIA. Natasha Newbury BA(Hons) Dip LA provided the landscape design and planting strategy that is submitted as part of the planning application for the site.

1.1.2 The document has been produced in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), 2nd Edition, produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment¹, and Landscape Institute Advice Note: Use of Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Assessment². These are widely considered to be the industry standards on the subject. Since this document was written, a third edition of the GLVIA has been produced. However, the Landscape Institute guidance states that any assessment commenced under the second edition (GLVIA2) should be completed using that same guidance.

¹ The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment 2nd Edition (2002) [Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment](#)

² Landscape Institute [Advice Note 01/2009: Use of Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Assessment](#)



- 1.1.3 The purpose of this document is to make an assessment of the local landscape and townscape in and around the proposal site so as to ascertain the potential landscape, townscape and visual impacts of a residential development on the proposal site and its surroundings, in particular the Highgate Conservation Area. It also seeks to address issues raised by the Planning Inspector in his Appeal Decision Notice in 2011. See page 4.
- 1.1.4 The assessment distinguishes between landscape (townscape) impacts and visual impacts. Landscape impacts are changes in the fabric, character and quality of the landscape. Visual impacts relate solely to changes in available views of the landscape and the effects of those changes on people. Impacts can be beneficial as well as adverse.
- 1.1.5 This chapter provides the background to the project, including the planning history of the proposal site and issues arising from it.
- 1.1.6 Chapter 2 explores the proposed residential development and landscape design, describing the different elements of the scheme and outlining any changes from that submitted as part of the previous, refused application.
- 1.1.7 Chapter 3 details the consultation that has been held in relation to the proposal site as far as it relates to landscape, townscape and visual issues. It then goes on to address those issues raised.
- 1.1.8 Chapter 4 outlines the limitations of the assessment and any assumptions that have been made as part of the assessment process.
- 1.1.9 Chapter 5 makes an assessment of the existing policy relating to landscape and visual matters that exists at the National, Regional and local scale. It then goes on to assess the proposal in relation to the policy baseline.
- 1.1.10 Chapters 6 and 7 explore the landscape/townscape and visual baseline of the area. For each chapter, receptors are identified and an assessment made of the predicted impacts upon them. Where impacts are adverse, mitigation to offset, reduce or remedy those impacts has been proposed and a further assessment made of the residual impacts. The



methodology for each aspect of the assessment is included at the beginning of each chapter.

1.2 The Proposal Site

1.2.1 The site is located at the north eastern corner of Hampstead Heath on Hampstead Lane. It sits within the London Borough of Camden but the boundary with the London Borough of Haringey lies just to the north of Hampstead Lane, to the north of the proposal site. See Figure 1 – Landscape Context and Features Plan.

1.2.2 The proposal site is occupied by a single dwelling, Athlone House, previously known as Caen Wood Towers. Although designed and built in 1871 as a residential dwelling, the building has been used for a number of purposes, most recently as a hospital and, prior to that, as an RAF Intelligence Training School under the guise of a convalescence home. The building has been subject to a number of alterations and no longer resembles its original design. A number of extensions were added during its time as a hospital but these have since been demolished. The house is currently in a degraded state, boarded up and semi-derelict.

1.2.3 The grounds still retain much of their character as the type of historic garden landscape that would be expected to accompany such a house. However, the additions and demolitions of various extensions and the recent history of neglect have resulted in the landscape becoming degraded and overgrown within much of the site.

1.2.4 Further details of the landscape of the proposal site are included in Chapter 6.

1.3 Planning Background

Approved Scheme 2005

1.3.1 Planning permission was granted in 2005 for the reinstatement of Athlone House to a single residential dwelling, the conversion of the associated smaller dwellings on the site and the construction of 22 apartments in three separate buildings. As part of this application, an area of the grounds of Athlone House was donated as an extension to



Hampstead Heath.³ The area of land has since been incorporated into Hampstead Heath and the apartments to the north-east have been constructed and are now occupied.

Refused Scheme 2009 and Subsequent Appeal and Enquiry

1.3.2 In 2009, an application was made by Athlone House Ltd for the demolition of Athlone House and its replacement with a single residential dwelling and associated staff quarters and garaging. This application was refused in 2010. The decision was appealed by the applicant and the application was sent to Inquiry in February 2011. The Inspector's Report within the Appeal Decision Notice⁴ stated the main issues for consideration as:

- Whether the proposed demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with another building constituted inappropriate development in Metropolitan Open Land;
- Whether the proposals would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area;
- The effects of the proposed development on the 'character, appearance and setting of surrounding open space'; and
- If the proposed development is inappropriate development in Metropolitan Open Land, whether it is outweighed by other special circumstances.

1.3.3 The Inspector raised several key points throughout his report within the Appeal Decision Notice that are considered relevant to this assessment. These are that:

- The existing building makes a limited contribution to the Conservation Area (paragraphs 35 and 37);
- A contemporary building of 'sufficient quality could preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area at least as much, if not much more, than the building which exists at present (paragraph 38);

³ Greater London Authority (30 November 2010) Planning Report PDU/0861b/01

⁴ Paul Jackson (April 2011) [Appeal Decision relating to appeal refs APP/X5210/E/10/2135359 & APP/X5210/A/10/2135357](#)



- There is an acknowledgement by all parties of the quality of the design proposed (paragraph 39);
- ‘The building’s influence on the Conservation Area would be positive’ (paragraph 41);
- There would be more uncertainty if a new occupier sought to increase the amount of accommodation, i.e. provide more than one property (paragraph 43);
- The loss of the contribution provided by the existing dwelling to the Conservation Area would be outweighed by ‘the long term contribution made by the appeal scheme’ (paragraph 44);
- The house would not conflict with the aim of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (paragraph 45);
- The proposed dwellings would not unacceptably affect views from the Heath or other nearby open space (paragraph 53);
- The proposed development ‘would not diminish the character, appearance or setting of surrounding open space and would not conflict with London Plan, Camden Core Strategy or City of London Policies that aim to protect Hampstead Heath’ (paragraph 57).

1.3.4 The report also stated that the appeal was dismissed due to the size of the proposed building and its resulting impact upon the Metropolitan Open Land.

1.3.5 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) relating to the proposed development was produced in 2009 by Randle Siddeley Associates. Jaquelin Fisher of JFA Associates Ltd was called to provide evidence at the Inquiry, in support of the LVIA, which was generally supported by the Inspector.

Revised Scheme

1.3.6 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been produced to accompany a planning application for an amended proposal which takes into account the comments



from the Inspector as summarised above. Details of the scheme are included in the following chapter.

- 1.3.7 This LVIA responds to the amendments made to the original proposed design and reflects the changes in National and Regional Planning Policy which have occurred since the Inquiry in February 2011.
- 1.3.8 Although the Inspector agreed with the conclusions of the LVIA, i.e. that the proposal site was not visible from more distant views and that the predicted impacts were negligible, the London Borough of Camden has requested that all viewpoints be reassessed as part of this LVIA. The original nine viewpoints have been re-assessed against the proposed scheme, with three additional close viewpoints, 12 in all. These are found in Appendix I of the LVIA.



2.0 Overview of the Proposed Development

2.0.1 The proposed scheme is to demolish the existing dwelling, Athlone House, and to replace it with a part two and part three-storey dwelling with a tower. The surrounding landscape is to be restored, re-establishing historic landscape features and enhancing habitat features within the site. The associated buildings along Hampstead Lane do not form part of this planning application.

2.0.2 As per the previous, refused, submission, the new dwelling has been designed by Professor Robert Adam of ADAM Architecture and will be finished in a natural buff stone with a copper roof. Joinery and windows are to be constructed using hardwood. Refer to the 2013 Design and Access Statement for full architectural details of the current proposed building⁵.

2.0.3 A summary of the key changes from the appeal scheme that will affect the visual and landscape impacts are included here:

- Courtyard wings omitted – removing additional areas of built form, particularly when viewed from the west and east;
- Alteration to third storey so that the façade appears as a roof and two storeys of windows rather than three storeys of windows when viewed from southern, eastern and western sides;
- New bay window on eastern elevation to increase articulation within the façade;
- Removal of staircase, ramp and basement window levels from western elevation, potentially reducing appearance of the scale of the house when viewed from the Heath.

2.1 Proposed Landscape Design

2.1.1 The landscape design for the site proposes to retain and enhance many of the historic layers that were once attributed to the site. In addition, the planting proposals aim to

⁵ Robert Adams Architects (2012) [Design and Access Statement](#)



mitigate any visual impact the proposed development may have on available views, as identified in this report. The gardens surrounding the house have been associated with several estates and designers since the late 18th century. The original landscape was designed by Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown whilst the current layout is attributed to Edward Milner with rockwork by James Pulham. (Reference should be made to Catherine Bickmore Associates: The Historic Landscape Appraisal for Athlone House 2013.)

- 2.1.2 The proposals will recreate the rolling lawns and shrub beds which once existed and restore many of the elements that are in disrepair in order to enhance the associated Conservation Areas and Metropolitan Open Land, as well as create a setting which befits the architectural excellence of the proposed house.
- 2.1.3 The relationship between the site and its surroundings will be improved upon, particularly in relation to Hampstead Heath, as the proposals extend the parkland character at the southern end of the house which abuts the Heath. (See Drawing 9135-01 Hard and Soft Landscape Proposals for details of the design.)
- 2.1.4 There is no significant vegetation along the eastern boundary of the proposal site with Caenwood Court and this has resulted in the loss of the setting and visual enclosure of both sets of buildings. The proposed design includes the creation of a new shrub border with specimen trees to echo those on the southern boundary. This forms part of the landscape restoration generally and will have the added benefit of softening views into the site from adjacent areas. (See Drawing No 9135-02 Rev A– Landscape Strategy.)
- 2.1.5 The design shows the restoration of the sunken garden to the east of Athlone House. This includes the restoration of hedges and planting beds. Existing shrub planting is to be improved and managed. New trees are to be planted in the south western corner of the site, laid out in the characteristic parkland style, so that they appear semi-natural. This will contribute to restoring the visual setting of the house when viewed from the Heath to the west. Proposals include the introduction of a fruit and nut terrace, an area of acid grassland, created to encourage diversity and wildlife, wildflower planting in grassed areas and new native species planting, especially in woodland areas. Native trees will be planted, especially on boundary areas to reinvigorate the woodland edges and to take over



from the mature existing specimens when they eventually die or are no longer safe. This will provide for the continued integration of the property into the surrounding shelterbelt and woodland setting. It will restore the parkland setting to complement the replacement dwelling and fit in with the Fitzroy Park characteristic large dwellings in parkland settings.

- 2.1.6 The Pulhamite rock work around the lake will be restored and will include the restoration of the rustic bridge and boat house as recorded in 1881. The fernery around the woodland pond will also be restored as well as the folly to the south of the site.
- 2.1.7 Loss of tree planting in the north eastern corner of the site has further contributed to the degradation of the quality of the townscape in this area of Hampstead Lane. This is further explored in Chapter 6 – Landscape and Townscape Assessment. New specimen Oak trees will be planted in this area which will contribute to the restoration of the arboreal character of Hampstead Lane and bring it into line with the areas of the road to the east and west. This will also help restore the visual setting of the proposed dwelling when viewed from this area, particularly Highgate School. This is explored further in Chapter 7 – Visual Assessment.
- 2.1.8 The woodland edge to the north west of the house will be rejuvenated, thus enhancing the naturalistic woodland boundary treatment to the site. Walkways within this area will also be restored.
- 2.1.9 The majority of existing trees within the site are to be retained, which will ensure that the mature landscape setting of the site is retained, particularly when viewed from Hampstead Heath.
- 2.1.10 The existing pond in the north western corner of the proposal site is to be restored, along with a small waterfall which once existed thus enhancing the historic landscape which once existed. A new pond is also proposed to the north east of the existing at a higher elevation. A new pond is also proposed to the east of the proposed house, which will create a feature on entering the property and form part of the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). This will also enhance biodiversity.



2.1.11 A new forecourt has been created to the north of the house, the design of which will make reference to the formal entrance to the proposed house. This shape of the courtyard will be defined by a stone balustrade. The central focus to the space will be an ornate tiered stone fountain which will be made of similar stone to that used on the proposed house. A car lift located in the forecourt will allow easy access to basement parking provided underneath the house.

2.1.12 Semi-porous sealed gravel will be used on the main drive leading to the house, and Breedon gravel is to be installed within the main courtyard. The footpaths around Athlone House gardens will be a mix of porous gravel paths, with the reintroduction of the original woodland paths. This will also form part of the SuDS.

2.2 Access and Circulation

2.2.1 The access road is to be moved slightly to the north to allow greater space for planting between it and the boundary with Caenwood Court.

2.2.2 The forecourt of the house may accommodate casual car parking for up to 4 cars such as when there are deliveries or a need for temporary visitor car parking.

2.2.3 A secondary drive has been created, leading from the main drive to Caen Cottage to the north of the proposal site.

2.3 Lighting

2.3.1 Lighting during construction will be kept to a minimum and directed away from any bat habitat via the use of hooded luminaires with zero upward lighting components.

2.3.2 Final ambient landscape lighting design will be low level, low energy light output LED luminaires with zero upward light distribution and not directed towards any known bat habitats.

2.3.3 Any security lighting will be PIR (Passive Infra-Red) controlled with inbuilt limited time on function and, again, be downward directional with zero upward light distribution.



3.0 Consultation

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 A Statement of Community Consultation was produced in relation to the revised development proposals for Athlone House⁶. The relevant elements are summarised here but the document should be referred to for a comprehensive explanation of consultation activities. Additionally, London Borough of Camden was consulted and agreed on Key Views in September 2012.

3.2 Consultation Events

3.2.1 In order to seek the views of local stakeholders and local residents on the revised proposals, the Athlone House Design Team arranged a public consultation programme prior to the submission of a planning application. The public consultation programme comprised:

- A meeting with Highgate Ward Councillors on 19th July 2012;
- A meeting with members of the Athlone House Working Group on 19th July 2012; and
- A two-day Public Exhibition at the United Reformed Church on 20th and 21st July 2012.

3.2. Landscape and Visual Issues Arising

Meeting with Highgate Ward Councillors

3.2.1 A letter was received from one of the Councillors who was unable to attend the meeting, which laid out the following points that were relevant to this assessment:

- The bulk and massing of the proposed dwelling result in a very different appearance that is out of character with its surroundings;

⁶ Quatro (August 2012) Statement of Community Consultation



- The existing building makes a positive contribution to the surroundings; and
- The bulk and massing as viewed from Hampstead Lane, the Heath and other viewpoints is still too high.

Meeting with Athlone House Working Group

3.2.2 The Athlone House Working Group raised concerns regarding the replacement of the existing building with one that they considered to be ‘significantly larger’.

Public Consultation

3.2.3 Many respondents acknowledged that the scale of the proposed house had been reduced from the previous, refused scheme. However, some still expressed concern that the proposed dwelling would still be larger than the existing Athlone House

Summary of Issues Raised

3.2.4 The key issues raised as part of the consultation regarding the revised scheme can be summarised as:

- The existing building is a positive addition to the local area and should be retained;
- The proposed building is out of character with the local area; and
- The proposed building is still too large in bulk and mass.

3.3 Response to Issues Raised

3.3.1 This assessment has shown that, although the existing building is of some merit to the local area, the semi-derelict state of the building, along with the degradation of its setting have a negative impact upon the Conservation Area and the local townscape.

3.3.2 The Inspector, in his report stated that a new dwelling of good quality design could also have a beneficial impact upon the Conservation Area. This assessment agrees with that statement.



- 3.3.3 This assessment in Chapter 6 will show that the local townscape of the Conservation Area contains buildings from a range of periods and does not gain its character purely from architectural style but rather from the scale and massing of buildings and their setting. It will also show that large dwellings are a characteristic feature of the local townscape and the edge of the Heath and that these also come from a different range of time periods and are in a range of different architectural styles.
- 3.3.4 The assessment shows that the replacement of a large residential dwelling, designed by a notable architect and located within a strong landscape structure, with another dwelling of similar size, also by a notable architect and set within a similar restored landscape, does not constitute a significant change to the character of the site or the local area.
- 3.3.5 The visual impact assessment in Chapter 7 shows that the proposed development will not be of significantly larger mass when viewed from different areas from within the local streets and from the Heath and, in fact, that the proposed dwelling has a smaller mass when viewed from certain locations.



4.0 Limitations, Constraints and Assumptions

- 4.0.1 The assessment has been undertaken during late summer when there is almost full foliage on the trees and shrubs in the area. This can potentially reduce the visual impact of any proposed development. However, thick belts of trees or shrubs will still have a screening impact during winter months when they have no foliage. Although winter assessments show a worse-case scenario in terms of foliage, the sun is generally lower, reducing contrast and therefore potentially reducing visual impact further. Therefore, undertaking the assessment during late summer or early autumn provides some of the best lighting conditions for taking photographic viewpoints. However, it should be noted that the assessment is undertaken on site as opposed to using photographic views. Use was made of winter images submitted as part of the appeal scheme to aid assessment of comparative impacts during winter months. Despite strict guidance on how such photographs are taken, they are intended to be illustrative and are not meant to replace the experience of visiting the viewpoint in person.
- 4.0.2 It is not possible or practicable to assess the potential visual impact of a proposed development from every part of the local area. The purposes of the LVIA are to assess the ‘worst-case scenario’ and to establish a Zone of Visual Influence. Narrowing the assessment to a series of representative viewpoints is generally considered to be sufficient to fulfil these tasks. In this case, viewpoints were agreed with the London Borough of Camden. These comprise the nine viewpoints that were included as part of the 2009 LVIA and an additional three viewpoints located closer to the proposal site.
- 4.0.3 This assessment is concerned purely with changes to the scale, massing and setting of the proposed building. The only references to architectural style are in relation to townscape assessment where homogeneity or variety in architectural style may be a contributing factor towards townscape character.



5.0 Planning Policy

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Since the production of the Randle Siddeley LVIA in 2009, the relevant planning policy has changed considerably. The most notable change is the replacement of the Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In addition, the London Borough of Camden has replaced its Unitary Development Plan (UDP) with the Local Development Framework (LDF). This chapter reflects these changes and outlines the relevant updated policies.

5.1.2 This chapter identifies the planning policy that is relevant to landscape and visual issues on the proposal site before assessing the degree to which the proposed development accords with those policies.

5.1.3 This chapter shows that the proposed development on the site of Athlone House is in accordance with existing planning policy. This builds on the findings of the Inspector in his report, as outlined in chapter 1, which stated that if the proposed building were of a similar mass to the existing building then it would not adversely impact upon the MOL and that a well-designed building could form a positive addition to the Conservation Area.

5.1.4 This chapter includes the following elements:

- Identification of relevant planning policy;
- Assessment of degree to which proposed development accords with relevant planning policy; and
- Summary



5.2 Planning Policy Baseline

*National Policy – The National Planning Policy Framework (2012)*⁷

5.2.1 In 2012, all PPSs and PPGs were replaced by the new NPPF, a single document combining the relevant planning policy. Instead of a series of separate documents, each chapter of the NPPF deals with a different aspect of planning policy, often broadly corresponding to the superseded PPGs and PPSs.

Chapter 1 – Sustainable Design

5.2.2 The NPPF states that ‘the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development’ (NPPF paragraph 6). It then goes on to say that the planning system needs to perform a number of roles including ‘an economic role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment...’ (Paragraph 7).

Chapter 7 – Good Design

5.2.3 Chapter 7 of the NPPF relates to good quality design. Paragraph 60 states that ‘planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles of particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness’.

5.2.4 ‘Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.’ (Paragraphs 60 and 61.)

Chapter 9 – Protecting Green Belt Land

5.2.5 The proposal site is located within designated Metropolitan Open Land which is given the same protection as Green Belt within planning policy. Therefore, the chapter in the NPPF

⁷ Department of Communities and Local Government (2012) [National Planning Policy Framework](#)



relating to Green Belt is relevant. Details regarding MOL are included within the London Plan, explored later in this chapter.

- 5.2.6 The NPPF states that ‘the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open,’ (NPPF paragraph 79). It goes on to state that ‘when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt,’ (paragraph 88).

Chapter 11 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- 5.2.7 The NPPF seeks to protect the natural environment including ‘protecting and enhancing valued landscapes,’ (paragraph 109).

Regional Policy – The London Plan (2011)⁸

Policy 2.18 Green infrastructure: the network of open and green spaces

- 5.2.8 This policy relates to the Mayor’s obligation to ‘protect, promote, expand and manage the extent and quality of, and access to, London’s network of green infrastructure. This multifunctional network will secure benefits including, but not limited to: biodiversity; natural and historic landscapes; culture; building a sense of place; the economy; sport; recreation; local food production; mitigating and adapting to climate change; water management; and the social benefits that promote individual and community health and well-being.’

Policy 3.5 Quality and Design of Housing Developments

- 5.2.9 This policy emphasises that new developments should be of the highest quality and be ‘in relation to their context and to the wider environment’ and to take into account the obligation of the London Plan to ‘protect and enhance London’s residential environment and attractiveness as a place to live’.

Policy 7.1 Building London’s Neighbourhoods and Communities

- 5.2.10 Policy 7.1 relates to the quality of the environment and states that ‘people should have a good quality environment in an active and supportive local community with the best

⁸ Greater London Authority (2011) [The London Plan](#)



possible access to services, infrastructure and public transport to wider London. Their neighbourhoods should also provide a character that is easy to understand and relate to.’

Policy 7.4 Local Character

- 5.2.11 This policy states that ‘development should have regard to the form, function, and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings. It should improve an area’s visual or physical connection with natural features. In areas of poor or ill-defined character, development should build on the positive elements that can contribute to establishing an enhanced character for the future function of the area.’

Policy 7.8 Heritage assets and Archaeology

- 5.2.12 Policy 7.8 relates to the protection of heritage assets, including Conservation Areas. It states that such assets should be recorded so ‘that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.’

Policy 7.11 London View Management Framework

- 5.2.13 The London Plan identifies a list of strategic views from and between significant buildings or landscapes. Separate planning guidance has been prepared in the form of the Revised London View Management Framework SPG⁹. Views that have been designated at both London-wide and Borough-wide level are located close to the proposal site.

Policy 7.12 Implementing the London View Management

- 5.2.14 ‘New development should not harm, and where possible should make a positive contribution to, the characteristics and composition of the strategic views and their landmark elements. It should also preserve or enhance viewers’ ability to recognise and to appreciate strategically important landmarks in these views and, where appropriate, protect the silhouette of landmark elements of World Heritage Sites as seen from designated viewing places.’

⁹ Greater London Authority (2010) [London View Management Framework](#)



Policy 7.17 Metropolitan Open Land

5.2.15 The London Plan outlines the importance of MOL and the Mayor's commitment to protect it. 'The strongest protection should be given to London's Metropolitan Open Land and inappropriate development refused, except in very special circumstances, giving the same level of protection as in the Green Belt. Essential ancillary facilities for appropriate uses will only be acceptable where they maintain the openness of MOL.'

Policy 7.18 Protecting Local Open Space and Addressing Local Deficiency

5.2.16 Policy 7.18 relates to the protection of areas of open space.

Policy 7.21 Trees and Woodlands

5.2.17 This policy relates to the protection of trees and woodlands. The proposal site contains numbers of mature trees which would be affected by this policy. The policy also obliges the suitable replacement of any trees lost through development.

Local Policy – London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework (2010)¹⁰

DP24 – Securing High Quality Design

5.2.18 Policy DP24 seeks to protect the quality of the built environment through the reflection of local character in new development. The policy states that new development will consider:

- a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;
- b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;
- c) the quality of materials to be used;
- d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;
- e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;
- f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;

¹⁰ London Borough of Camden (2010) Local Development Framework



- g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;
- h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and
- i) accessibility.

DP25 – Conserving Camden’s Heritage

5.2.19 Policy DP25 sets out the Council’s obligation to protect and enhance the character of Conservation Areas both in relation to sites within the Conservation Area and those that abut it or that might impact upon its setting.

DP31 – Provision of, and Improvements to, Open Space and Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities

5.2.20 This policy relates to the Council’s commitment to improve access to open space and sports facilities as well and the improvement of the quality of those areas in existence.

CS14 – Promoting High Quality Places and Conserving Our Heritage

5.2.21 This policy further reiterates the Council’s obligation to preserving the heritage assets, including Conservation Areas, and creating a high quality public realm.

CS15 – Protecting and Improving Our Parks and Open Spaces and Encouraging Biodiversity

5.2.22 Policy CS15 sets out the Council’s commitment to protecting and improving the areas of open space within Camden, including parks and the Metropolitan Open Land. It also specifically mentions Hampstead Heath and the need to take into account of any development that may impact upon the Heath and views to and from it.

5.3 Compliance of Proposed Scheme with Identified Planning Policy

The NPPF

5.3.1 The relevant paragraphs of the NPPF relate to the protection of the landscape and the natural and historic environment, the protection of Green Belt land (MOL) and the promotion of good design.



Protection of Green Belt Land (MOL)

5.3.2 The revised proposal has reduced the floor space as compared to the 2009 submission and is considered to be comparable to that of the existing dwelling. It has addressed the Inspector's comments by reducing the size and mass of the proposed building, particularly when viewed from the Heath. This has been achieved by the removal of the staff wing and the reduction of the fenestration from four storeys to two on the western elevation.

Good Design, Protection of Local Distinctiveness and Historic Landscapes

5.3.3 As demonstrated in Chapter 6, the surrounding area does not take its character from the specific period style of dwellings, but rather from their mass and setting. The existing house is a building of its period set in a landscape setting stemming from an earlier period. The proposed building will be of a comparable scale, of its period and set within the same landscape. Therefore, if built, it will not adversely impact upon the townscape of the area.

5.3.4 The Inspector also stated within his report that it was acknowledged by all parties that there was no disagreement about the quality of the architecture of the proposed property. The same architect and similar, albeit smaller, building in a similar style is proposed for this application.

5.3.5 The proposed development accords with the relevant sections of the NPPF.

The London Plan

5.3.6 The relevant policies within the London Plan relate to the protection of open space, the protection of the MOL, the preservation of heritage assets, the protection of key views and the reinforcement of local character.

5.3.7 The issue of the MOL is addressed in the previous section and it is not necessary to repeat this here. The proposed development seeks to retain and enhance the historic landscape of the site, thus protecting its setting and important elements of the landscape structure around the edge of Hampstead Heath. English Heritage deemed that the existing building



was not worthy of listing and the Development Brief (1999)¹¹ placed greater emphasis on the preservation of the historic landscape than the building. The townscape assessment has shown that the character of the area does not stem from the period of the buildings but is a combination of the scale, setting, massing and landscaping of such buildings. The replacement of one large dwelling, designed by a well-known architect and set within a historic landscape with another is not considered to adversely impact upon the character of the area. In fact, the removal of a degraded and semi-derelict building with a new, family dwelling, of high quality architectural design and detailing is considered to be a positive addition to the area.

London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework (2010)

5.3.8 This addresses the same issues as identified within the London Plan and NPPF.

5.4 Conclusions of Planning Policy

5.4.1 This chapter has found that the proposed development accords with relevant policy as relates to landscape, townscape and visual issues in the NPPF, the London Plan and the London Borough of Camden LDF.

5.4.2 The Inspector, in the 2010 decision, found that there was provision within the relevant policy to allow a replacement dwelling of a similar size and bulk to Athlone House without adversely impacting upon the MOL. The amended proposals constitute such a dwelling. The Inspector also stated that the proposed development ‘would not diminish the character, appearance or setting of the surrounding open space and would not conflict with the London Plan, Camden Core Strategy or City of London Plan policies that aim to protect Hampstead Heath.’¹²

¹¹ London Borough of Camden (1999) Planning Brief: Athlone House

¹² Paul Jackson (April 2011) Appeal Decision relating to appeal refs APP/X5210/E/10/2135359 & APP/X5210/A/10/2135357 Paragraph 57



6.0 Landscape / Townscape Assessment

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This chapter describes the context in which the proposal site is located. This is used to identify potential landscape and townscape receptors that may be impacted upon by the proposed development.
- 6.1.2 An initial analysis of the wider area has been undertaken, followed by a second assessment specifically relating to the proposal site. This process allows the identification of sites of poor landscape/townscape character in wider areas of generally good landscape/townscape character, which is particularly relevant in this case.
- 6.1.3 The information has been gathered from a combination of desktop and site surveys, utilising both on-site and standard published research. These documents are explored in greater detail in the following pages.
- 6.1.4 This chapter demonstrates that the local townscape is generally a combination of ‘high’ or ‘medium-high’ quality according to Table 1 - Townscape Assessment in section 6.2 with the exception of the area of Athlone House which is shown to be of ‘medium-low’ quality. These are shown on Figure 2 – Townscape Quality and Value Sensitivity to Change. It also shows that this townscape takes its character from the type and scale of housing and not the style and that, therefore, the change in architectural style of the building will not adversely impact upon the character of the local townscape and the Conservation Area. Conversely, the assessment shows that the replacement of the degraded building with one that is not, together with the restoration and enhancement of the landscape structure of the site, will create a beneficial impact of intermediate magnitude and minor/moderate significance on the local townscape and the Conservation Area. This is in accordance with the views expressed by the Inspector in his 2011 report.
- 6.1.5 This chapter assesses the local landscape character of the Heath to be of ‘high’ quality according to Table 2 – Landscape Quality in section 6.2 below. The assessment shows that the proposed development will have an impact of intermediate beneficial magnitude and minor / moderate significance on the character of the local landscape, including the



MOL, and an impact of large magnitude and moderate beneficial significance on the character of the proposal site.

6.1.6 This chapter comprises the following elements:

- Assessment methodology used to assess potential impacts upon landscape and townscape receptors;
- Townscape character assessment to establish a townscape baseline and therefore its sensitivity to change;
- Assessment of landscape setting of the proposal site to assess its quality and sensitivity to the type of change proposed;
- Assessment of proposal site to assess its character and sensitivity to the type of change proposed;
- Assessment of magnitude and significance of predicted impacts on identified receptors and identification of mitigation measures to reduce, remedy or offset predicted impacts, if required, and assessment of residual impacts that are predicted to remain after mitigation measures have been implemented.

6.1.7 Reference is made to Figures 1, 2 and 3 and the photographs in Appendix II.

6.2 Assessment Methodology

6.2.1 This landscape assessment has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines as set out in the document, 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Second Edition', (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)¹³. This is widely regarded by professionals as the industry standard on the subject. The term 'landscape' is used to refer to both landscape and townscape as applicable. In the terms of assessment, 'townscape' is a way of referring to the built landscape. Therefore, references to 'landscape' in the

¹³ The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment 2nd Edition (2002) [Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment](#)



general description of the assessment should be considered to refer also to 'townscape', unless otherwise specified.

- 6.2.2 A desktop study of the site was undertaken, including an assessment of character, landform, landscape features, historic evolution, policy and designations. This information was both used for, and assessed against, the site visit.
- 6.2.3 During August and September of 2012, the proposal site and the surrounding area were visited on foot, including Hampstead Lane between Kenwood House and the top of Highgate Hill, the area of Sheldon Avenue and Bishopswood Road to the north of the proposal site, the area around Fitzroy Park and Highgate West Hill to the west of the proposal site and Hampstead Heath to the south and west of the proposal site. Each of these areas was evaluated, the findings of which are included in this chapter.
- 6.2.4 Photographs of these areas are included in Appendix II.

Definition of the Study Area

- 6.2.5 The assessment has been confined to an area approximately 1-2km from the proposal site. This is considered a sufficient area to establish the landscape baseline. In a more rural setting, a wider area would potentially be studied. However, the nature of a built environment such as London means that the character of the landscape changes with a much finer grain than might be found in open countryside. See Figure 3 – Townscape Character Areas.
- 6.2.6 A brief description of the existing land use of the area is provided and includes reference to existing settlement, transport routes and vegetation cover, as well as local landscape designations, elements of cultural and heritage value and local landmarks or tourist destinations. These factors combine to provide an understanding of landscape value and sensitivity, and an indication of particular key views and viewpoints that are available to visual receptors and therefore are to be included in the visual assessment.



Townscape and Landscape Quality and Value

- 6.2.7 Townscape assessment is the process of separating the local built form into areas of differing character and assessing their respective quality and therefore sensitivity to change. Townscape Assessment is recommended by the GLVIA as an aid to assess the sensitivity of the townscape to new development. See Figure 2- Townscape Quality and Value Sensitivity to Change Plan.
- 6.2.8 Townscape and landscape quality has been assessed using a five point scale as is recommended by established document such as the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges¹⁴. These criteria are shown below in Table 1 – Landscape and Townscape Quality.

¹⁴ Department for Transport (2003) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Volume 11 Section 3 Part 5 – Landscape Effects



Table 1 – Landscape and Townscape Quality

Landscape/ Townscape Quality/Value	Key Characteristics
Very High	Landscape, townscape/streetscape of international importance, such as a World Heritage Site, or national importance with few visually intrusive or incongruous features and containing internationally recognised buildings or features. Very highly valued by national/regional/local authorities and the wider public.
High	Landscape, townscape/streetscape of national and/or regional importance containing many attractive and harmonious features and few visually intrusive or incongruous features. Buildings and streetscape maintained in good condition and kept clean. Qualities typically found within National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and Conservation Areas or comprehensive high quality modern developments. Very highly valued by national/regional/local authorities and the wider public and typically considered very attractive by most people.
Medium-High	An attractive landscape or townscape/streetscape with some attractive features but also minor blemishes, such as unattractive buildings and property boundaries. Overall the landscape is cohesive and distinctive and buildings and streetscape generally in good condition and well maintained. Valued by regional and local authorities and the wider public. Typically considered attractive by most people.
Medium	A reasonably attractive landscape or townscape/streetscape with a mix of attractive features and intrusive elements. Buildings and streetscape vary in quality. Considered pleasant but unremarkable by most people. Typical of most landscapes and townscapes in England. Considered pleasant but unremarkable and moderately valued by local authority and most people.
Medium-Low	An unremarkable landscape or townscape/streetscape with some blemishes, such as major roads and structures, industrial areas, pylons and unattractive buildings and building façades. Plots awaiting redevelopment, some derelict buildings, litter and dirt. Typical of areas identified for regeneration. Little value attributed by local authority and the local public.



Low

A degraded landscape or disturbed townscape with derelict buildings and open, but previously developed areas, awaiting development or working industrial areas. Many unattractive and intrusive features, litter and dirt. Typical of areas identified for comprehensive redevelopment. No value attributed by local authority or by local public.

Landscape Impacts and Receptors

6.2.9 Landscape impacts are defined by the Landscape Institute as ‘changes to landscape elements, characteristics, character, and qualities of the landscape as a result of development’ and these may be adverse, neutral or beneficial. Landscape receptors are features that are affected by landscape impacts and may include the following:

- **Landscape elements:** introduction or removal of trees, vegetation and built features and other elements which together form landscape patterns;
- **Landscape patterns:** degradation or erosion of groups and arrangements of landscape elements, which form patterns that are characteristic of landscape character types;
- **Landscape character:** the landscape character is a product of a combination of factors that contribute to the creation of a unique setting. Landscape character is a product of the combination of geological features, geomorphic processes, floral and wildlife associations, with social, economic and cultural forces; and
- **Cumulative landscape impacts:** these are defined by the Landscape Institute as resulting from additional changes to landscape amenity caused by the proposed development in conjunction with other development (associated or separate from it), or actions that occurred in the past, present or are likely to occur in the foreseeable future.

6.2.10 The landscape impacts have been assessed by consideration of three criteria:

- The **sensitivity** of the landscape resource or receptor (see



- Table 2 – Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors);
 - The **magnitude** of the affected landscape resource (see Table 3 – Magnitude of Predicted Impacts); and
 - The **significance** of the impact (see Table 4 – Significance of Predicted Impacts).
- 6.2.11 Consideration of the sensitivity of the landscape receptor against the magnitude of change posed by the development to give the significance of the impact is fundamental to landscape assessment and each of these criteria has been defined in more detail with relevance to this assessment.

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

- 6.2.12 The sensitivity of landscape receptors have been determined by reference to the baseline assessment of the existing landscape or townscape and are classified using criteria ranging from ‘high’ to ‘low’. The classification of sensitivity with regard to landscape receptors is defined further in Table 2 – Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors and is derived from consideration of the importance of the receptor, its scarcity and its ability to accommodate the type of development proposed.
- 6.2.13 It is important to use sensitivity criteria of an appropriate scale for the development. In some cases where criteria are chosen to reflect nationally sensitive sites, such as designated National Parks or Areas of Outstanding National Beauty, it is possible that issues of local importance are under emphasised. The opposite is also true. If the highest significance is assigned to nationally designated landscapes and the study area falls within one, there is the assumption that all of the land within that study area is of the highest sensitivity to change. This is not the case as many designations, such as AONBs, are broad-brush and the sensitivity criteria should be altered accordingly. Sensitivity criteria should be reviewed on a case by case basis.



Table 2 – Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

Sensitivity Rating (Potential acceptance to change of the type and scale of development proposed)	Mitigation Potential – to maintain the landscape quality and landscape character of the area
Highly sensitive to change	Where any development and the type of development proposed could greatly negatively affect landscape/townscape character and “sense of place.” Where mitigation required - effective mitigation difficult to achieve.
Moderately sensitive to change	Where some types of development and the type of development proposed could have a negative effect on landscape/townscape character and “sense of place.” Where mitigation required - effective mitigation is possible but results may take time to be effective.
Low sensitivity to change	Where most types of development of the type envisaged would be accommodated without negatively affecting landscape/townscape character and “sense of place.” Where mitigation required - effective mitigation is readily achievable.

Magnitude of Impacts

6.2.14 Magnitude of landscape impact is a function of the degree of change to the landscape element. For example, the addition of a large total length of hedgerow to a site, as compared to the existing amount of hedgerow, would be considered to be an impact of higher magnitude. A block of woodland that was removed in its entirety could be considered to be subject to an impact of the maximum magnitude criteria.



Table 3 – Magnitude of Predicted Impacts

Predicted Impacts	Magnitude
Significant loss / damage / destruction of, or major alternation / changes to, key elements / features / characteristics of the receiving landscape.	Large
Partial loss / damage / destruction of, or major alternation / changes to, key elements / features / characteristics of the receiving landscape.	Intermediate
Minor loss / damage / destruction of, or major alternation / changes to, key elements / features / characteristics of the receiving landscape.	Small
Very minor loss / damage / destruction of, or major alternation / changes to, key elements / features / characteristics of the receiving landscape.	Negligible

Nature of Impacts

6.2.15 Magnitude, and therefore significance, is not a reflection on the nature of the impact, i.e. if the impact is beneficial or adverse. An impact may be of large magnitude but of beneficial nature, as in the hedgerow example above. Impacts may be one of the following:

- Beneficial – an improvement on the current view;
- Neutral – no change in view or impact deemed to be neither beneficial or adverse; or
- Adverse – new elements detract from the visual amenity

Significance

6.2.16 The two main criteria that determine significance are **magnitude of the impact** and the **sensitivity of the location or the receptor**. Significance varies from site to site and the criteria need to be adjusted in each case. It is worth noting that a higher level of significance is generally given to large-scale impacts and impacts on sensitive locations.



This means that small impacts on sensitive areas are usually more important than large impacts on less sensitive areas.

6.2.17 A matrix to determine the significance of impacts is included below (Table 4 – Significance of Predicted Impacts).

6.2.18 Significance is a combination of the **magnitude** and the **sensitivity**. However, magnitude is not a judgement on the adverse or beneficial nature of the impact and therefore significance cannot be such a judgement either.

Table 4 – Significance of Predicted Impacts

		Sensitivity of Townscape to Change of the Type and Scale Proposed		
		Low	Moderate	High
Magnitude of change caused by proposals	Large	Moderate	Moderate / Major	Major
	Intermediate	Minor / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Major
	Small	Minor	Minor / Moderate	Moderate
	Negligible	No Change / Negligible	No Change / Negligible	No Change / Negligible

6.3 Townscape Character Assessment

6.3.1 This section makes an assessment of the townscape character and quality of the area surrounding the proposal site. A desktop assessment was undertaken of published information. The proposal site is located at the edge of Hampstead Heath in the Highgate Conservation Area. See Figure 4 - Designations. The London Borough of Camden has produced a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy¹⁵ relating to the area. No such document as yet exists for the part of the Conservation Area that falls within the London Borough of Haringey.

¹⁵ London Borough of Camden (2007) [Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy](#)



6.3.2 The area was visited to evaluate the townscape character and to make a judgement of the townscape quality and sensitivity to change. The assessment shows that the local townscape is generally of ‘high’ or ‘medium-high’ quality and value and of ‘low’ sensitivity to the type of development represented by the proposed development. The exception to this was the area immediately around Athlone House, which was shown to be of ‘medium-low’ quality. See Figure 2 – Townscape Quality and Value Sensitivity to Change.

Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy

6.3.3 The document outlines the character of the Conservation Area as ‘of a close-knit village crowning one of the twin hills to the north of London.’ There are important views from within the Conservation Area towards central London and St Paul’s Cathedral, some of which are protected as part of the London View Management Framework SPG¹⁶. The document states that the character of the Conservation Area stems from the relationship between the topography, open spaces, urban form and architectural details.

6.3.4 The area has a long history of development, much relating to its location close to London and its proximity to toll roads that later appeared. As such there are examples of houses from the 16th Century onwards. However, much of the development pattern, according to the Conservation Area Appraisal, relates to the 18th and 19th Centuries.

6.3.5 The Conservation Area is divided into sub-areas. The proposal site falls within the second of these: Fitzroy Park.

6.3.6 The document states that this area contrasts with the village centre, relating more to the historic estates that used to occupy the area. This historic use reflects in the strong landscape structure which, along with the presence of Hampstead Heath, creates a wooded and semi-rural to suburban character.

6.3.7 The appraisal refers to Athlone House specifically in its text, describing its location set into the hillside overlooking the Heath. The appraisal states that ‘as such, it is a positive

¹⁶ Greater London Authority (2010) [London View Management Framework](#)



contributor to the Conservation Area.’ However, it acknowledges that the house is in a deteriorated state.

Historic Development of the Built Form

- 6.3.8 The Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy states that there is history of settlement in the area going back to the 14th Century. However, the key periods of expansion appear to be in the 18th and 19th Century. The Ordnance Survey maps from 1870-1975 show that the Conservation Area is primarily characterised by parkland landscapes relating to the estates in the area. The area around Highgate West Hill appears to be an extension of the village of Highgate, with houses, church and a pub overlooking a central village green. At this point, Highgate is still a relatively isolated village.
- 6.3.9 By 1935, new housing estates have been developed to the east and south, bringing the suburban edge of London closer to the village. Despite this, the area around Highgate West Hill and the area to the west of this remain relatively unchanged, still being characterised by large, individual dwellings set back from the road in private grounds.
- 6.3.10 Highgate School, to the north of the proposal site, and the first of the associated dwellings appear in the late 19th Century. The site is a cricket ground on maps prior to this. More houses are built in the roads around the school in the 1920s and gradually the development in Haringey expands and joins up with this.
- 6.3.11 Infill development occurs throughout the 20th and continues into the early 21st Century but the key character areas remain distinct.

On Site Townscape Character Assessment (refer to Appendix II for photographs)

- 6.3.12 A townscape assessment was undertaken as part of the LVIA produced to support the previous planning application in 2009. This assessment does not seek to replace that assessment but, instead, concentrates on the area within approximately 1km radius of the proposal site.



Hampstead Lane (refer to Photo Sheets 1, 2 and 3 in Appendix II)

- 6.3.13 Hampstead Lane runs along the north of Hampstead Heath from west of Kenwood House to Highgate Hill. This townscape assessment concentrates on the stretch running approximately 1km either side of the proposal site, as the character of this stretch is relevant to the proposals. Along the section west of Athlone House, the character of Hampstead Lane is influenced strongly by Hampstead Heath and the properties along this route. A strong green structure dominates the southern side of the road for a distance, with views over matures trees and shrubs. (See Photograph 1) West of Stormont Road high brick walls appear, relating to the historic parkland of Kenwood House, which is now part of Hampstead Heath. (See Photograph 5)
- 6.3.14 The north side is characterised by large detached dwellings set back from the road behind walls. (See photographs 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8.) These are the southern edge of the character area described next. The dwellings stem from a range of periods but are primarily from the 19th and early 20th Century. Large, forest-scale trees in the verges, together with planting from the Heath create a sylvan character to the road. (See Photograph 1) The quality of the townscape in this area is ‘high’, according to Table 1 – Landscape and Townscape Quality.
- 6.3.15 In the region of Athlone House, the northern side of the road is characterised by the playing fields to Highgate School, creating an open space around which the large houses of the surrounding areas can be seen (see photograph 11). There is less tree planting in the region of Athlone House, creating direct views into the site. This is not in keeping with the character of the area in which houses are generally seen between trees (see photographs 12 and 14).
- 6.3.16 Buildings in this area are set well back from the road and do not strongly influence the character of the street directly as they do along the stretch of the road to the west of Athlone House. Glimpses of these dwellings can be seen from the road, particularly Athlone House and the very recent development, Caenwood Court (see photograph 10). The exceptions to this are the three small buildings that historically formed part of the grounds of Athlone House and which form part of the boundary wall with Hampstead



Lane (see photographs 13 and 14 on Photo Sheet 2). One of these has been restored to a residential property in association with the Caenwood Court development and the other two remain in a semi-derelict state. Although Athlone House and the associated small buildings have a historic interest and make a contribution to the Character Area, their degraded state and that of the grounds detracts from the quality of the street scene. The lack of trees along the northern edge of the proposal site means that this stretch of Hampstead Lane is not as leafy as other parts. The townscape quality of this area is judged to be 'medium-low' (see Figure 2 – Townscape Quality and Value Sensitivity to Change).

6.3.17 To the east of Highgate School and Athlone House, the character starts to change without the influence from the Heath. However, the historic parklands and extensive grounds of the houses in this area contain large trees which can be seen over the high walls along the southern edge of the road. See Photo Sheet 3.

6.3.18 To the east of this , buildings on the north side of the road become smaller and tend to become terraced rather than detached, changing the character of the road in its approach to the top of Highgate Hill and the High Street (see photographs 16, 17 and 18). The townscape in this area is judged to be 'medium-high', according to Table 1 – Landscape and Townscape Quality. See Figure 2.

Area north of Hampstead Lane and West of Highgate School (refer to Photo Sheet 4)

6.3.19 There are clear distinctions in character in the area within 1km of the proposal site. The area to the north, around Highgate School is characterised by large, detached dwellings from the range of periods from the late 19th Century to the present day (see photographs 21 and 26). The houses are set back from the house at a consistent distance of approximately 5m and the streets are green with frequent mature forest-scale trees such as Oak and Beech. Away from the school, the dwellings become smaller but are still large and detached. There are several examples of dwellings from the 1960s and later and these are not considered to detract from the unity of the character area due to their similar siting



and massing as the neighbouring dwellings (see photographs 23 and 24). This area has the character of a leafy, wealthy suburb.

- 6.3.20 This area has a strong character with consistent building types and scale and large forest-scale trees in good condition and can be classified as being of 'high' townscape quality according to Table 1 – Landscape and Townscape Quality. See Figure 2.

Area north of Hampstead Lane and East of Highgate School (refer to Photo Sheet 5)

- 6.3.21 Further to the east, in the region of North Road, the character changes to that of a finer urban grain with smaller dwellings that are generally terraced. These houses are much smaller in scale than within the previous area described (see photographs 28 and 30).
- 6.3.22 North Road has the character of a typical London street, being wide with Plane trees and a strong built frontage on both sides. Streets away from this are still green and leafy with tree planting but trees include smaller species such as Birch (see photographs 31 and 32). There are more instances of late 20th Century design in this area.
- 6.3.23 The townscape in this area is less grand, containing smaller houses, often terraced and more often from the middle to late 20th Century. It is considered that this area contains buildings of lower architectural merit and is less distinct than within the area previously described. However, the townscape is still relatively cohesive despite more cul-de-sac type developments. This area is therefore defined as being of 'medium-high' quality according to Table 1. See Figure 2.

Area south of Hampstead Lane and to the East and South East of Athlone House (refer to Photo Sheet 6)

- 6.3.24 This area is characterised by leafy green roads with properties set well back from the road (see photograph 33). The area around Fitzroy Park is informal with large dwellings set back in large grounds and not visible from the road for the most part. This character appears to stem from the area's history as a series of individual estates. Notable dwellings include The Summit and Kenwood House but dwellings range from a variety of periods, including high quality examples from the 1970s. See photographs 35, 37 and 40.



6.3.25 Further south along Fitzroy Park, the dwellings become smaller and are located closer to the road and in less extensive grounds. An area of allotments and a series of dwellings stemming from the early 20th Century give the area a village-like character in places (see photograph 39).

6.3.26 This area has a strong and distinctive character with high quality buildings from a range of periods, including the late 20th Century. The range of styles and periods does not detract from the character of the area but, rather, contributes towards it. It is considered that this area is of the 'high' quality townscape. See Figure 2 – Townscape Quality and Value Sensitivity to Change.

The Grove and Highgate West Hill (refer to Photo Sheet 7)

6.3.27 The small village green at the junction of these roads with South Grove has a distinct village-like feel, with the pub, church and other dwellings overlooking the space (see photographs 41 and 45). Large mansion houses, similar to those to the west of the school and north of Athlone House, are located along The Grove (see photograph 42). A distinctive feature in this area is Witanhurst, an early 20th Century Georgian Revival Mansion¹⁷. This area contains a very high concentration of listed buildings, including several Grade II* examples (see photographs 46 and 47).

6.3.28 Again this area has a strong character, focussing on the village green with associated community facilities. The period of the buildings is considered to be more homogenous with this contributing to the particular character of this area. A busy road runs through the village green type area which is a minor detraction from the impression of a village character. It is considered that this area is of 'high' value townscape according to Table 1. See Figure 2.

Holly Lodge Gardens (refer to Photo Sheet 8)

6.3.29 To the south of Highgate West Hill is the Holly Lodge Gardens Estate built in the 1920s. This estate has a distinct character, separate from those above and is in a separate

¹⁷ Wikipedia, 2012 Witanhurst [online] Available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witanhurst> [Accessed 6th September 2012]



Conservation Area. It is considered to be the edge of the on-site townscape assessment for this report and is therefore not considered in detail here. However, the character of the area is strong with distinct views towards the City. It is considered to be of ‘high’ quality townscape.

Conclusion of Townscape Character

6.3.30 The area within approximately 1km of the proposal site has a series of distinct character areas, all of which can be considered to be of ‘medium-high’ to ‘high’ quality townscape. The exception was found to be the area immediately around Athlone House which was shown to be of ‘medium-low’ quality. See Figure 2 – Townscape Quality and Value Sensitivity to Change. Each of these character areas is defined by a series of different characteristics relating to house type, massing, setting and vegetation. Although many areas contain buildings primarily from one period in history, usually the 18th and 19th Century, there are numerous examples of buildings dating from the late 20th and even early 21st Century. These do not appear to detract from the character of the area and are, in fact, considered to contribute towards it. Many of the areas which contain buildings from a range of periods are considered to be of high quality townscape according to the methodology.



Table 5 - Townscape Quality and Value

Character Area	Townscape Quality / Value
Hampstead Lane (to the west of Athlone House)	High
Hampstead Lane (in the region of Athlone House)	Medium-Low
Hampstead Lane (to the east of Athlone House)	Medium-High
Area north of Hampstead Lane and West of Highgate School	High
Area north of Hampstead Lane and East of Highgate School	Medium-High
Area south of Hampstead Lane and to the East and South East of Athlone House	High
The Grove and Highgate West Hill	High
Holly Lodge Gardens	High

6.3.31 It is concluded that Athlone House itself makes a marginally positive contribution to the Conservation Area but that its degraded state and setting are currently detracting from the quality of the Conservation Area in the region of Hampstead Lane. The lack of trees in the northern area of the proposal site detracts from the green character of Hampstead Lane as evidenced elsewhere along its length. Elsewhere along the road, buildings are glimpsed between trees whereas the views towards Athlone House are open.

6.3.32 The area of the proposed development is characterised by large dwellings set within their own grounds, glimpsed through a strong landscape structure. The proposed development is for such a type of development and is therefore considered to be appropriate to its context. It is therefore concluded that the sensitivity of the local townscape to the proposed development is 'low'.



6.4 Landscape Character and Setting

- 6.4.1 The landscape character and setting describes the context over an area of approximately 1-2km radius from the proposal site. The information taken from the site visit is used to assess landscape quality and as a basis against which to assess the proposal site in detail. This is used to identify sites of lower quality in areas of generally higher quality, as in the case of Athlone House.
- 6.4.2 This section identifies potential receptors to landscape impacts that may be caused by the proposed development. Such receptors may be designations or individual landscape elements which combine together to form the character. It also makes an assessment of the quality of the landscape of the Heath. Reference is made to Figures 1-4 and Photo Sheets 9 and 10.
- 6.4.3 This section shows that the landscape of the Heath is interesting, with variety in land cover and views towards important areas of the City. It shows that the key designations that must be considered are the MOL and the Conservation Area, the latter of which is dealt with in the previous section. It shows that the local landscape is undulating, resulting in some open areas with views towards the City and some visually enclosed areas. The local landscape has a sylvan character stemming from its history as a series of estates, such as Kenwood House and Beechwood. It demonstrates that the area is of 'high' landscape quality according to Table 1 in section 6.2.
- 6.4.4 The assessment of the landscape character and setting demonstrates that the edge of the Heath is characterised by a strong landscape structure with views towards large residential dwellings set within their own grounds. The proposed development is not dissimilar in character to the existing site and is appropriate to its context. Therefore the local landscape is of 'low' sensitivity to the type of proposed development.

Designations

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)

- 6.4.5 The proposal site is located in an area of Metropolitan Open Land, a designation equivalent to Green Belt in planning terms. Green Belts are offered specific policy



protection within the NPPF and MOLs are subject to specific protection within the London Plan. See Figure 4 for the location of the various designations.

Conservation Area

6.4.6 The proposal site is located within the London Borough of Camden (LBC) Conservation Area – Highgate in sub area 2 – Fitzroy Park. The Highgate Conservation Area spans the London Boroughs of Camden, Haringey and Islington. The proposed development could potentially impact upon those parts of the Conservation Area within Camden and Haringey. Only Camden has produced a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, containing baseline information about the area. This document is explored as part of the Townscape Assessment in the previous section.

Registered Parks and Gardens

6.4.7 The proposal site adjoins part of the Kenwood Registered Park and Garden. The visual impact of the development upon this area will be assessed within this document. There is another Registered Park and Garden in the area of Highgate Cemetery. However, the proposed development is not visually exposed to the cemetery and this, combined with the distance between the two, mean that the proposed development will not have an impact upon the Registered Park and Garden.

Open Space

6.4.8 The area of Athlone House is designated as Open Space within the London Borough of Camden LDF. This seeks to improve public access to areas of open space and to improve their quality. An area of the gardens of Athlone House was donated as an extension to Hampstead Heath as part of the 2005 Planning Permission.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

6.4.9 Sites of Special Scientific Interest are not landscape designations but their quality and preservation mean that they can be considered landscape assets.

6.4.10 There are two SSSIs in close proximity to Athlone House, both within the Kenwood Registered Park and Garden. It is not considered that the proposed development will



impact upon them in landscape terms but the views from this area are assessed in Chapter 7 – Visual Assessment.

Ancient Woodland

- 6.4.11 There are two key areas of Ancient Woodland in proximity to the proposal site which correspond broadly with the two SSSIs within Kenwood Registered Park and Garden.

Topography and Hydrology (refer to Figure 5)

- 6.4.12 The area varies greatly in height, ranging from 30mAOD in Kentish Town and 40mAOD in South Hampstead to approximately 130mAOD in the Highgate Conservation area around Highgate Hill. This is one of the highest points in London. This changing topography and the resulting views towards central London are strong characteristic features of the area (see photograph 59 on Photo Sheet 9). See Figure 5 which illustrates the key ridgelines and topographic features in the vicinity.
- 6.4.13 The underlying geology, combined with the overlying topography results in a series of ponds, streams and ditches. Some of these relate to Hampstead Heath and are likely historic drainage features, whereas some are more ornamental and are likely historic features relating to the estates in the area, such as Fitzroy Park.
- 6.4.14 There are 18 large ponds within Hampstead Heath, at Highgate Ponds to the north east and Hampstead ponds to the south west. Some of these are used for bathing.

Vegetation

- 6.4.15 The area is characterised by the remnants of historic parks and estates in the area. These leave a legacy of woodland belts and copses, as well as mature parkland trees. The presence of Hampstead Heath gives the area a semi-rural character with areas of rough grassland and wooded horizons (see Figure 6).
- 6.4.16 Mature trees occur throughout the built form, away from Hampstead Heath and the historic estates. These give a feeling of stature and maturity to the surrounding townscape as well as the feeling of a suburban village (see Photo Sheets 1 to 8).



Land Use and Settlement

- 6.4.17 The area was originally a small village, close to the historic city of London, and which now forms the central part of the more recent conurbation. However, it retains certain characteristics of its history as a rural village with a distinct identity. This is reinforced by Hampstead Heath which further supports the semi-rural character of the area. The area is generally residential with associated schools, shops and other community facilities. The area contains many large, detached dwellings, some of which can be viewed from the Heath, set within a wooded background.
- 6.4.18 The townscape of the area is explored in greater detail in the townscape assessment in the previous section and demonstrated in Photo Sheets 1 to 8.

Access and Rights of Way

- 6.4.19 Hampstead Heath provides an extremely large area of publicly accessible open space and is crossed by a series of footpaths and tracks. Figure 5 illustrates the main defined footpaths across the Heath.
- 6.4.20 The National Trail, the Capital Ring, passes in an arc approximately 1km to the north west and north east, passing through Highgate Wood. A spur from this, the Drollis Valley Greenwalk, passes approximately 1km to the north west and joins in the footpaths near Hampstead Gold Club. It is considered that these are too distant from the proposal site to be impacted upon by the proposals.
- 6.4.21 Informal routes run through the old orchard to the north west of the proposal site and through the historic Athlone House gardens to the south. The proposals will not affect the landscape character of these, but views from these areas are assessed in Chapter 7.

Conclusion of Landscape Setting

- 6.4.22 Hampstead Heath is an area of protected open land with a semi-natural character within an otherwise generally built up area. It contains a strong landscape structure with variety in landform and hydrological features. It is highly valued locally. The landscape of Hampstead Heath is of 'high' quality for the most part and 'very high' quality in the area



of Kenwood House, according to Table 1 in the methodology. See Figure 2 – Townscape Quality and Value Sensitivity to Change.

6.4.23 The edge of Hampstead Heath is shown to be characterised by a very strong landscape structure with large residential dwellings rising above the trees and glimpsed between them. The proposed development is such a dwelling, set within a strong landscape structure that will reinforce the character of the edge of the Heath. The proposed development is appropriate to its context and therefore the sensitivity of the local landscape to the type of change proposed is ‘low’.

6.5 Site Features (refer to Photo Sheet 10)

6.5.1 An analysis of the proposal site was undertaken with a two-fold purpose:

- Firstly, the information from the assessment is used as a comparison to the wider landscape setting to assess the contribution that the proposal site makes to the wider area; and
- To identify landscape receptors specific to the proposal site, usually landscape elements such as trees and hedgerows.

6.5.2 The assessment of the site features demonstrates that, although the historic landscape structure of the site still exists, it has become degraded and is in need of maintenance and restoration, particularly on the northern and eastern boundaries (see photographs 63, 64 and 66). The remains of the floor plates of the demolished buildings and the degraded state of the main house create a semi-derelict character (see photograph 60). This assessment shows that the landscape quality of the proposal site is ‘medium-low’ due to its degraded and semi-derelict state, particularly in the north and east. This accords with the townscape assessment which has shown that the townscape of the area of the site is of ‘medium-low’ quality.

6.5.3 The type of proposed development is not dissimilar to that currently existing on the proposal site, albeit in a degraded and semi-derelict state. The sensitivity of the proposal



site to the proposed development is ‘low’ according to Table 2 – Sensitivity of Landscape receptors.

Topography and Hydrology

6.5.4 The proposal site is located on the edge of a rise in the land, giving the house raised views over Hampstead Heath and making it visible from the higher points of the Heath (refer to Figure 6). There are small ponds and streams located to the north west of the proposal site which was historically part of the grounds and in the north western corner of the proposal site. The latter has become overgrown and is in need of management.

Vegetation

6.5.5 The proposal site still retains much of its historic parkland and gardens from its heyday as a residential dwelling. These are considered to provide an important element of the setting of the dwelling and aid its sensitive visual integration into the local landscape and townscape. The existing house is glimpsed over areas of tree planting and in between trees. Refer to Figure 6 and photograph 55 on Photo Sheet 9.

6.5.6 There is little vegetation between Athlone House and the nearby Caenwood Court or along Hampstead Lane and the lack of enclosure from this aspect is considered to adversely impact upon the character of the site and the setting of the main building. This is also outlined in the townscape assessment in section 6.3. See photographs 63, 64 and 66.

Land Use and Settlement

6.5.7 The proposal site contains a single building, Athlone House, which was designed and built as a residential dwelling before being commandeered by the RAF for use as a training base under the guise of a convalescence home. It was later taken on by the NHS who added several functional extensions to the building and used it as a hospital.

6.5.8 At some point in its history, the distinctive gables and certain other ornamental features have been removed. The Historic Building Report, produced by Dr Miller deals with this issue in greater detail.



6.5.9 Although the insensitive extensions have been demolished, the building is boarded up and the foundations of the extensions are still evident, adding to the derelict and building-site character of the area immediately around the house. A distinctive feature of the house is the tower which rises approximately an additional two storeys on the western elevation. This elevation is considered to be most visible from the Heath. See photographs 60, 61, 62 and 67.

Access and Rights of Way

6.5.10 Although there is currently no public access to the proposal site, it has been designated as Open Space in the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework. See Figure 4. These are described within the LDF as ‘Accessible areas of open space which improve the quality of urban form by providing a break in otherwise dense urban fabric.’ Areas of the gardens of Athlone House have already been donated to provide an extension to Hampstead Heath as part of the 2005 Planning Permission.

Conclusion of Site Features

6.5.11 The historic landscape of the site is still visible but is in need of restoration and enhancement. The buildings have fallen into disrepair and the footings of the demolished extensions are still evident, adding to the sense of disrepair and neglect. Although the main building is of interest, it is the setting of the site and its landscape which is of greater importance. It is this which forms the transition between the edge of the Conservation Area and Hampstead Heath and which forms the setting of the buildings.

6.5.12 The landscape of the proposal site is of ‘medium-low’ quality according to Table 1 in the methodology. This is due to the remaining landscape structure within the site and the existence of some historic features being offset by the poor condition of the building and the degraded state of the landscape and grounds.

6.5.13 The type of development proposed is not dissimilar in type to the existing, i.e. a large residential dwelling set within its own landscape and therefore the sensitivity of the proposal site to the changes proposed is ‘low’ according to Table 1 – Landscape and Townscape Quality in the methodology.



6.6 Assessment of Landscape and Townscape Impacts

6.6.1 This section addresses the character of the local townscape, landscape and the proposal site as discussed in the previous section. Their sensitivity to change has been assessed along with the magnitude and significance of any predicted impacts upon them. Where predicted impacts are adverse, mitigation measures are described, along with any residual impacts. Overall, the assessment concludes that the effects are beneficial and no mitigation measures are required. The following paragraphs set this out in detail.

Townscape Character and the Conservation Area

6.6.2 As demonstrated in the townscape assessment in Chapter 6, the townscape in the area within approximately 1km of the proposal site is shown to generally be of ‘high’ to ‘medium-high’ value with this dropping to ‘medium low’ quality and value in the area of the proposal site (refer to Figure 2). The area has been shown to take its character from the scale and massing of buildings, together with the sylvan character of the streets. It has been shown that the character does not stem from the particular period of the buildings.

Assessment of Predicted Impacts

6.6.3 The local townscape, including the Conservation Area, is of ‘low’ sensitivity to the type of dwelling proposed as part of this application.

6.6.4 The proposed development is for the removal of the degraded Athlone House and its replacement with a residential dwelling of similar type designed to a high architectural standard and set in a restored historic landscape. Such a development would have a beneficial impact upon the Conservation Area, restoring a degraded area and allowing it to form a positive element within the local townscape. The development would have a beneficial impact of ‘intermediate’ magnitude, according to Table 3 – Magnitude of Predicted Impacts in the methodology.

6.6.5 A sensitivity of ‘low’, when combined with a beneficial magnitude of ‘intermediate’, results in a predicted beneficial impact of ‘minor/moderate beneficial’ significance, according to Table 4 – Significance of Predicted Impacts. No mitigation is required.



Landscape Character, Hampstead Heath and the MOL

6.6.6 The landscape of Hampstead Heath has been assessed as being of ‘high’ quality according to Table 1 in the methodology. This reflects the semi-natural character of the Heath, the variety in landform and the strong landscape structure.

Assessment of Predicted Impacts

6.6.7 The landscape of Hampstead Heath is characterised by a strong green edge with glimpses towards large residential buildings from a variety of periods, set within a strong landscape structure (see Figure 6). Athlone House is visible from areas of the Heath and the landscape setting of proposal site is an important part of its edge, forming part of the transition from an informal quasi-rural landscape to the built form (see photograph 55). It is therefore considered that the proposed development is not out of character with this and that the Heath is of ‘low’ sensitivity to the type of development proposed.

6.6.8 The proposed development will preserve and enhance the landscape setting of the site, contributing positively to the setting of Hampstead Heath. Although the architecture of the proposed dwelling will change, it is of a type and scale that is similar to the existing building and to other buildings within the area, some of which are visible from the Heath. Overall, the proposed development will have a beneficial impact upon the landscape of the Heath through the restoration of a historic landscape and the removal of a degraded building.

6.6.9 The magnitude of such an impact upon the Heath would be ‘intermediate’. This is because the scale and type of the building does not differ greatly from that of the existing building and the improvements to the site in landscape terms would be consistent with landscape generally within the Conservation Area and harmonious with both the Heath and the proposed new house. According to Table 4 – Significance of Predicted Impacts in the methodology, a sensitivity of ‘low’ combined with a beneficial magnitude of ‘intermediate’ would result in a predicted impact of ‘minor / moderate’ beneficial significance. As such, no mitigation is required.



Character of the Proposal Site

6.6.10 The proposal site has been assessed as being in a degraded state, particularly in the area of the buildings (refer to Photo Sheet 10). The landscape structure is generally intact but in need of restoration and management. The house and the associated dwellings are in a degraded and semi-derelict state and are shown to have a detrimental impact upon the Conservation Area. The removal of the 20th Century extensions is still evident on the ground, giving the site a slight sense of a semi-derelict building site (see photograph 60).

Assessment of Predicted Impacts

6.6.11 The proposed development seeks to replace the existing building which, although it has historic character, has fallen into disrepair and has been shown to detract from the quality of the local townscape and Conservation Area. The proposals seek to replace this building with a new residential dwelling of a similar scale in a restored historic landscape. The landscape and townscape character assessments and the site assessment have shown that the type of proposed development is not out of context with the proposal site and the surrounding area. Therefore, the proposal site is of 'low' sensitivity to such a change.

6.6.12 The proposed development constitutes major change in terms of the replacement of a degraded building with one that is not and the restoration of the landscape structure of the site. New trees and areas are to be planted within the grounds, as shown on drawing 9135-01 – Soft Landscape Plan and detailed in Chapter 2. These proposals will see the restoration of the sense of enclosure and definition within the site both from the east and from Hampstead Lane. The predicted impacts upon the character of the proposal site are of 'large' beneficial magnitude.

6.6.13 A landscape receptor of 'low' sensitivity, when combined with a predicted impact of 'large' beneficial magnitude, results in a predicted impact of 'moderate' significance.

Summary of Landscape and Townscape Impacts

6.6.14 The local townscape, including the Conservation Area, the local landscape of Hampstead Heath, including the MOL, and the proposal site have been shown to be of low sensitivity to the type of development proposed. This is due to the proposals being of a type that is



suitable for their context, i.e. a large, distinctive dwelling set back from the road in a strong landscape structure. This has been shown to contribute to the aims of conserving and enhancing the Conservation Area.

6.6.15 The proposed development has been shown to have a beneficial impact upon the local townscape and landscape and on the site. This stems from the removal of a degraded building and its replacement with one that is not and the sensitive restoration of the historic gardens and landscape setting of the site.

Table 6 - Summary of Predicted Landscape Impacts

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity to Change	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Impact	Nature of Change
Local Townscape Character	Low	Intermediate	Minor / Moderate	Beneficial
Local Landscape Character	Low	Intermediate	Minor / Moderate	Beneficial
Character of the Site	Low	Large	Moderate	Beneficial

6.7 Summary of Landscape/Townscape Assessment

6.7.1 The Landscape and Townscape Assessment demonstrated that the character of the local townscape was not dependant on the period or architectural style of the buildings but stemmed from their type and setting, i.e. large, generally detached dwellings set within strong landscapes with trees characterised by mature large-scale trees.

6.7.2 The townscape assessment showed that the local townscape is generally of high or medium-high quality due to the consistency of development type throughout the area and the strong tree cover. This is contrasted by the townscape quality in the vicinity of the proposal site which is shown to be medium-low. This is due to the loss of the landscape structure in the vicinity of the proposal site which has a detrimental impact upon the arboreal character of Hampstead Lane. This is further compounded by the semi-derelict condition of Athlone House and its associated buildings.



- 6.7.3 As the local townscape is defined by large-scale dwellings from a range of periods and in a range of styles, set within a strong landscape setting, and the proposed dwelling is considered to be such a dwelling, the sensitivity of the townscape to the type of change proposed is low.
- 6.7.4 The quality of the landscape of Hampstead Heath was shown to be high and that of the proposal site to be medium-low. The latter is due to the degraded state of the landscape of the site, particularly in the northern area and along the boundary with Caenwood Court.
- 6.7.5 The edge of the Heath around Athlone House is characterised by distinct buildings, set within a wooded landscape. The existing dwelling forms part of this character type. The proposed dwelling is also considered to constitute a distinctive building, of a similar mass to the existing building, set within the restored historic landscape of the site. Therefore, the sensitivity of the landscape of the Heath to such a development is low.
- 6.7.6 As the existing degraded state of the proposal site is shown to have a detrimental impact upon the local townscape and landscape, the proposed development with its restored landscape setting will have a beneficial impact upon the local landscape and townscape.



7.0 Visual Assessment

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 The section assesses the potential impacts of the proposed development on views. Although views can be affected by landscape elements, they are considered to be a separate issue and are assessed as such.
- 7.1.2 This chapter demonstrates that the sensitivity of all viewpoints to the type of development proposed is 'low'. This is due to the following factors:
- The type of proposed development is not dissimilar to that of the existing building;
 - The type of development proposed, i.e. a single large dwelling set into a mature landscape, is not out of character with the local area; and
 - Views of the Heath which include the proposed development already contain buildings protruding above and between the wooded skyline.
- 7.1.3 The predicted impacts upon all views are shown to be beneficial or neutral in nature due to the following three main factors:
- the removal of a degraded building from the street scene;
 - the restoration of the site's landscape structure and its corresponding positive enhancement of the townscape along Hampstead Lane; and
 - the reduction in height of the proposed tower as compared to the present Athlone House when viewed from Hampstead Heath.
- 7.1.4 The chapter will show that magnitude of impacts is generally 'negligible' or 'small' from distant views but is 'large' when viewed from Highgate School. Impacts are shown to be negligible or small due to the relative similarity in scale and massing of the existing and proposed buildings when viewed from the Heath. The greater magnitude of impacts when viewed from Highgate School is due to the proximity to the proposal site and the open view caused by loss of trees within the site, making it possible to see the different



articulation of the roofline of the proposed dwelling as compared to the existing building. Reference is made to Figures 1, Figure 6 and the CGIs in Appendix I. Reference is also made to the CGIs submitted as part of the appeal scheme.

7.1.5 Significance of impacts on views is shown to be either negligible or minor with the exception of the view from Highgate School which is shown to be of moderate significance.

7.1.6 This chapter includes the following elements:

- Assessment methodology used to assess potential impacts upon visual receptors;
- Identification of potential visual receptors and representative viewpoints;
- Assessment of magnitude and significance of predicted impacts;
- Comparison of impacts of current scheme compared to the appeal scheme;
- Identification of mitigation measures to reduce, remedy or offset predicted impacts (if required); and
- Assessment of residual impacts that are predicted to remain after mitigation measures have been implemented.

7.2 Methodology

7.2.1 This visual assessment has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines as set out in the document, 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Second Edition', (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)¹⁸. This section outlines the methodology used to identify visual receptors and the criteria for assessing them.

¹⁸ The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment 2nd Edition (2002) [Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment](#)



7.2.2 A site assessment was undertaken to establish the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) of the proposal site by identifying potential visual receptors to change. This section outlines the full methodology used to assess the impacts upon those receptors.

Definition of the Study Area

7.2.3 The London Borough of Camden requested that the viewpoints assessed as part of the 2010 appeal scheme, along with three additional viewpoints. (Pers comm LBC September 2012.) See Figure 7.

Visual Impacts and Receptors

7.2.4 Visual impacts are concerned wholly with the effect of the development on receptors. Receptors are defined as individual views and the general visual amenity of people who have (or will have) views of the development. Visual impacts may include the following:

- **Visual obstruction:** physical blocking of view;
- **Visual intrusion:** the visual intrusion of the proposed development into an existing view or loss of particular landscape element or features already present in the view; and
- **Cumulative visual impacts:** the cumulative or incremental visibility of similar types of development may combine to have cumulative visual impact, this may be where more than one development may be viewed simultaneously from a viewpoint, or occur sequentially where developments may be viewed from a number of differing locations, most commonly from a road, rail route or long distance path.

7.2.5 The potential visual impacts have been assessed by consideration of three criteria:

- The sensitivity of the receptor (Table 7 – Sensitivity of Visual Receptors);
- The magnitude of the impact upon the view (usually determined by the amount of the view that is affected by the proposals) (



- Table 8 – Magnitude of Predicted Visual Impacts); and
- The significance of the impact (Table 9 – Significance of Predicted Impacts).

Sensitivity

7.2.6 Based on the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), the different receptor categories are ranked in order of their sensitivity to visual impacts as set out in Table 7 – Sensitivity of Visual Receptors. The sensitivity of the receptors depends on two key elements:

- **Activity which the receptor is undertaking** - those who are walking within designated landscapes are considered to be of the highest sensitivity as they are considered to be there specifically to enjoy the countryside. Workers, for example, are considered to be concentrating upon their work and are therefore considered to be less interested in the surrounding landscape.
- **Context of the proposed development** – is the proposed development in keeping with the surrounding area or is the proposed use incongruous with local settlement patterns and land uses.



Table 7 – Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Sensitivity	Mitigation Potential – to maintain the quality and character of views
High sensitivity to change	Where any development, including the type of development proposed, could greatly negatively affect townscape character, and “sense of place”, townscape settings and/or valued views and thus greatly alter the character, quality and amenity of views for more vulnerable receptors such as residents and other community groups where views are open and direct. Where mitigation required - effective mitigation difficult to achieve.
Moderate sensitivity to change	Where some types of development, including the type of development proposed could have a negative effect on landscape/townscape character and “sense of place”, townscape settings and/or valued views and thus moderately alter the character, quality and amenity of views for vulnerable as well as less sensitive receptors such as residents and workers and where views are less extensive. Where mitigation required - effective mitigation is possible but results may take time to be effective.
Low sensitivity to change	Where most types of development of the type envisaged could be accommodated without negatively affecting landscape/townscape character and “sense of place” or valued views or visual receptors and where visual receptors are not vulnerable, because views are distant, or screened or for passing motorists, people engaged in sporting activities and where views are partial/transient. Where mitigation required - effective mitigation is readily achievable.



7.2.7 Although receptors within their own residential properties are considered to be of high visual sensitivity, visual amenity is not considered to be a material planning consideration unless the change to the view is significantly changed by the proposed development.¹⁹

Magnitude of Visual Impacts

7.2.8 Magnitude of visual impact is more complicated than that of landscape impacts and is a function of the following factors:

- The distance from receptor to the source;
- The nature of the impact (obstruction, intrusion, cumulative); and
- The degree of change to the existing view caused by the construction of an intrusive feature or the obstruction or modification of an existing view. The overall effect upon visual amenity can range from degradation to enhancement.

7.2.9 For example, an obstruction to the large part or all of a view at a close distance to the receptor would likely be considered an impact of higher magnitude than the intrusion of the proposed development into the distance of a small part of the view.

¹⁹ Planning Portal [FAQ: Applications Process](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/general/faq/faqapplyprocess) [online] Available at <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/general/faq/faqapplyprocess> [Accessed 20th September 2012]



Table 8 – Magnitude of Predicted Visual Impacts

Predicted Impacts	Magnitude
The proposals form a significant and immediately apparent part of the scene that affects and changes its overall character.	Large
The proposals may form a visible and recognisable new element within the overall scene and may be readily noticed by the observer or receptor	Intermediate
The proposals constitute only a minor component of the wider view, which might be missed by the casual observer or receptor. Awareness of the proposals would not have a marked effect on the overall quality of the scene.	Small
Only a very small part of the proposals is discernible and/or they are at such a distance that they are scarcely appreciated. Consequently they have very little effect on the scene.	Negligible

Nature of Impacts

7.2.10 Magnitude, and therefore significance, is not a reflection on the nature of the impact, i.e. if the impact is beneficial or adverse. Impacts may be one of the following:

- Beneficial – an improvement on the current view;
- Neutral – no change in view or impact deemed to be neither beneficial or adverse; or
- Adverse – new elements detract from the visual amenity.

Significance

7.2.11 The two main criteria that determine significance are **magnitude of the impact** and the **sensitivity of the location of the receptor**. Significance varies from site to site and the criteria need to be adjusted in each case. It is worth noting that a higher level of significance is generally given to large-scale impacts and impacts on sensitive locations. This means that small impacts on sensitive areas are usually more important than large impacts on less sensitive areas.



7.2.12 A matrix to determine the significance of impacts is included below (Table 9 – Significance of Predicted Impacts).

7.2.13 **Significance** is a combination of the **magnitude** and the **sensitivity**. However, magnitude is not a judgement on the adverse or beneficial nature of the impact and therefore significance cannot be such a judgement either.

Table 9 – Significance of Predicted Impacts

		Sensitivity of Visual Receptor to Change of the Type and Scale Proposed		
		Low	Moderate	High
Magnitude of change caused by proposals	Large	Moderate	Moderate / Major	Major
	Intermediate	Minor / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Major
	Small	Minor	Minor / Moderate	Moderate
	Negligible	No Change / Negligible	No Change / Negligible	No Change / Negligible

Photographic Data and Production of Photomontages

7.2.14 This LVIA has been confined to a series of twelve viewpoints agreed with the London Borough of Camden. The location of these viewpoints is shown on Figure 7 – Agreed Viewpoints Plan. Photographs taken from those locations and the associated Computer Generated Images (CGIs) are included in Appendix I. The methodology used to produce those photomontages is included in Appendix III.

7.3 Visual Baseline

7.3.1 This chapter assesses the visual envelope of the proposal site and assesses the sensitivity of the receptors at each of the viewpoints agreed with the London Borough of Camden. These viewpoints are shown on Figure 7 – Agreed Viewpoints Plan. It shows that the existing building, Athlone House, is visible from a range of locations within Hampstead Heath and from the grounds of nearby Highgate School. All views were shown to be of



'low' sensitivity to change, according to Table 7 – Sensitivity of Visual Receptors. This is due to the proposed development being appropriate to the local context and not dissimilar in type to the existing development on site and other such sites in the area, as demonstrated within the townscape and landscape assessment in Chapter 6.

Viewpoint 1 – from the Gazebo in Hampstead Heath

7.3.2 From this viewpoint, it is possible to see the tower of Athlone House set amongst the landscape structure of its grounds, as well as some of the roof. In this same view it is also possible to see the spire of St Michael's Church and Witanhurst. These buildings are characterised by their scale and their setting within a predominantly wooded skyline. See Figure 6 which is a panoramic view taken from Viewpoint 1. The location of these buildings are shown on Figure 1.

7.3.3 The proposed development has been shown to be in character with the local area and therefore the sensitivity of this view to change is 'low'.

Viewpoint 2 – From area of Hampstead Heath south of Viewpoint 1

7.3.4 Viewpoint 2 looks towards the site from the Heath but from further to the south than viewpoint 1. From this viewpoint it is possible to see Caenwood Court to the right of Athlone House. It is also possible to see the spire of St Michael's Church and Witanhurst. All four buildings are set within their landscape setting and in the context of the surrounding wooded skyline although Athlone House and Caenwood Court have no intervening landscape structure and therefore a weaker landscape setting than the other buildings.

7.3.5 The proposed development will not be out of context with the existing development within the view and has been shown not to be out of context with the local townscape. Therefore, the sensitivity of this view to the type change that would result from the proposed development is 'low'

Viewpoint 3 – From the Grounds of Kenwood House and the Iveagh Bequest

7.3.6 Athlone House is hidden from this view by the intervening trees. However, it is possible to see Witanhurst and the spire of the church beyond. The winter CGIs submitted as part



of the appeal scheme demonstrate that the building will be partly visible during winter months.

- 7.3.7 As it is possible to see Witanhurst, the spire of St Michael's Church and the existing Athlone House (during winter months), the proposed development will not be out of context. The proposed dwelling has also been shown to be not dissimilar in size and type when viewed from these locations. Therefore the sensitivity of the view to change is 'low'.

Viewpoint 4 – from Parliament Hill

- 7.3.8 Athlone House is screened from this viewpoint by the existing landscape structure. However, it may be possible to see glimpses of the house during winter months when there is no foliage on the trees.

- 7.3.9 As the proposed development is not dissimilar in type or scale to the existing Athlone House and its gardens when viewed from this angle, the view is of 'low' sensitivity to such a change.

Viewpoint 5 – From Parliament Hill South of Number 4 Pond

- 7.3.10 It is possible to see the top of the tower of Athlone House from this point and the impact will likely be more noticeable during winter months. However, as mentioned previously, the change in building will not result in a materially different element within views when viewed from this point.
- 7.3.11 The proposed building is not dissimilar in type and massing than the existing building and therefore receptors of this viewpoint are of 'low' sensitivity to such a change.

Viewpoint 6 – from the Tumulus

- 7.3.12 When viewed from this site, the area is generally wooded but with some buildings, including Athlone House, protruding above the skyline. It is possible to see the tower of the existing building when viewed from the Tumulus, protruding above the trees.
- 7.3.13 Residential dwellings, including Athlone House are visible above and between the trees. The proposed development would constitute a similar type of development to the existing



Athlone House and other nearby buildings also visible from the Heath. It would not be out of context with the surroundings as viewed from this point and, therefore, receptors at this point are of 'low' sensitivity to such a development.

Viewpoint 7 – West of Highgate Bathing Pond

7.3.14 It is possible to see the top of the tower of Athlone House over the top of the treeline and this will be more noticeable during winter months. However, the tower forms a negligible feature within the view, being barely perceptible.

7.3.15 As with the previous views, residential dwellings are visible above the trees and the proposed development will not be dissimilar to Athlone House. This receptor is of 'low' sensitivity to such a change.

Viewpoint 8 – from Parliament Hill South West of Number 1 Pond

7.3.16 The tower of Athlone House protrudes above the treeline in this view as within the previous viewpoints from Parliament Hill. However, the surrounding development is far more evident in this view with buildings visible between the trees in both summer and winter months. It is possible to see the spire of St Michael's Church along with other residential dwellings.

7.3.17 Receptors at this point are of 'low' sensitivity as the proposed development is appropriate to the context as viewed from this point.

Viewpoint 9 – from Highgate School

7.3.18 This viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposal site and looks in over the northern boundary. The existing building is seen within the view, forming one of a number of built elements extending above the tree line.

7.3.19 The townscape assessment in Chapter 6 has shown that the proposed development is of a type that occurs regularly within this character area, i.e. a large residential dwelling set within a landscaped setting. The townscape assessment has also shown that the grounds of Athlone House have become degraded, particularly in the northern part, and therefore no longer contributes to the sylvan character of the area. The proposed dwelling and



associated landscape design has been shown to make a predicted positive contribution to the local townscape. The proposed development is appropriate to its context as viewed from this point and therefore receptors are of ‘low’ sensitivity. This also reflects that receptors at this view will likely be engaged in activities related to the school, primarily sports and education, and are less focussed upon their surroundings.

Viewpoint 10 – Hampstead Heath Extension Woodland

- 7.3.20 It is possible to see Athlone House glimpsed between the trees and shrubs within the Hampstead Heath Extension Woodland. This was originally part of the gardens of Athlone House and is therefore in close proximity to the building. The site will likely be more visible from this viewpoint during winter months when there is no foliage on the trees and shrubs, although still well-screened by tree trunks and branches.
- 7.3.21 The area has been shown to be characterised by large residential dwellings set within landscaped gardens containing large, forest scale trees. These dwellings are often visible from areas of the Heath and from the local streets. It has also been shown that the proposed development will be an improvement to the local area view the removal of a degraded building and its replacement with one that is not. Therefore the viewpoint is of ‘low’ sensitivity to such a development.

Viewpoints 11 and 12 – Donated Garden Land of Athlone House

- 7.3.22 These have been assessed together as they are essentially the same in terms of location and type of view towards the house. These areas form part of the historic gardens of Athlone House and therefore are in close proximity to the building. It is possible to see the existing building through the trees and the visibility will likely increase during winter months when there is no foliage on the trees.
- 7.3.23 As this is part of the gardens of the house, it is appropriate that the house be viewed from within them. It is also characteristic of the Heath that dwellings be visible between the foliage of the surrounding landscape structure. The proposed development includes the restoration of the historic landscape of the site and the setting of the building, particularly when viewed from the east. The proposed development doesn’t constitute an element that



is different to those within the existing view and the sensitivity of this receptor to such a change is 'low'.

Summary of Visual Baseline

7.3.24 The landscape and townscape character assessments showed that the area is characterised by large dwellings set within mature landscaped grounds, visible glimpsed between trees from the local streets and over the tops of trees when viewed from the Heath.

7.3.25 The proposed development constitutes a large dwelling set within such a strong landscape structure and viewed between and over trees. Other such dwellings do not detract from the local visual amenity but form part of it. Therefore the sensitivity of receptors in the chosen locations to such a development is 'low'.



Table 10 – Summary of Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Viewpoint	Description	Sensitivity
1	The gazebo in Hampstead Heath	Low
2	Area south of gazebo in Hampstead Heath	Low
3	Grounds of Kenwood House and the Iveagh Bequest	Low
4	Parliament Hill	Low
5	Parliament Hill South of Number 2 Pond	Low
6	The Tumulus	Low
7	West of Highgate Bathing Pond	Low
8	Parliament Hill South West of Number 1 Pond	Low
9	Highgate School	Low
10	Hampstead Heath Extension Woodland	Low
11	Donated Garden Land from Athlone House	Low
12	Donated Garden Land from Athlone House	Low

7.4 Assessment of Predicted Visual Impacts

7.4.1 This section makes an assessment of the predicted impacts upon the visual receptors identified in the previous section, 7.3. This section assesses the magnitude and then significance of predicted impacts upon views, in accordance with the tables in the methodology in section 7.2. Magnitude of impacts takes into account the proposed replacement dwelling and also the comprehensive planting design that has been created for the site. It also makes a comparison of the existing proposed scheme with the appeal scheme.

7.4.2 This section shows that all predicted impacts are beneficial or neutral in nature. This is either due to the removal of the degraded and semi-derelict existing building from views



and its replacement with a good quality building set in a restored landscape, or that the proposed building appears lower than the existing building in many views.

- 7.4.3 Impacts of greatest magnitude are on nearby receptors, as would be expected. From these viewpoints, it is possible to see the differences between the existing and proposed buildings more clearly and also are more likely to see the proposed planting design. From the other locations, the proposed development will generally be seen within the context of the surrounding wooded horizons and the impact of the planting design will not be so apparent.
- 7.4.4 The view most affected by the proposals is that from Highgate School. The townscape assessment showed that the existing site in its current state had a detrimental impact upon the local townscape when viewed from this area, partly due to the degraded state of the building and partly due to the loss of trees and other vegetation along this stretch of Hampstead Lane.
- 7.4.5 This section also shows that the amendments to the design since the appeal scheme are most notable from viewpoints closer to the proposal site, in particular viewpoints 1 and 2 which look towards the western elevation which has been subject to the most change. Impacts upon viewpoints 9 and 10 are also different as a result of the amended scheme. All changes are positive.

Viewpoint 1 – from the Gazebo in Hampstead Heath

- 7.4.6 From this viewpoint, it is possible to see the tower of Athlone House set amongst the landscape structure of its grounds. In this same view it is also possible to see the spire of St Michael's Church and Witanhurst. These buildings are characterised by their scale and their setting with a predominantly wooded skyline.
- 7.4.7 The proposed development would result in the removal of the existing tower of Athlone House from the view and replacement with the roof of the new dwelling. The new roofline also incorporates a tower which is located further to the north when viewed from this point. The landscape setting of the house is to be restored but this will be less noticeable from this viewpoint.



- 7.4.8 Although the style of the architecture will change, it is considered that the nature of the view will not change. At present it is possible to see a large, architecturally distinct dwelling set into a wooded historic landscape. The proposed development will not change this. However, the location of the tower will be located further to the left when viewed from this point.
- 7.4.9 Although views towards the proposed dwelling would be greater in winter months when there is no vegetation on trees, this assessment relates to changes in scale or quality of design and the proposed dwelling is of a comparable scale and quality of design and it will not be in a degraded state.
- 7.4.10 The sensitivity of the visual receptor has been shown in section 7.3 to be 'low'. The predicted impacts upon views from the gazebo would be 'small' according to



Table 8 – Magnitude of Predicted Visual Impacts. However, the current dwelling is in a degraded state and therefore the proposed development would make a beneficial impact upon the view.

7.4.11 An impact of small beneficial magnitude on a receptor of low sensitivity would produce an impact of ‘minor beneficial’ significance.

Comparison to Appeal Scheme

7.4.12 Although the western frontage of the current scheme is greatly changed from the appeal scheme, some of the alterations are screened from this viewpoint by the intervening vegetation. The amended roofline, removing a layer of windows from the top of the building, will reduce the appearance of mass from this viewpoint, although not change the actual scale of the building. It may have been possible to see the proposed basement fenestration and courtyard wing of the appeal scheme during winter months and therefore the current scheme is less visible than the appeal scheme.

Viewpoint 2 – From area of Hampstead Heath south of Viewpoint 1

7.4.13 The impacts upon this view are essentially the same as from viewpoint 1. From this point it is possible to see the proposed building in the context of Caenwood Court. The assessment of this viewpoint is as per viewpoint 1 and would not require mitigation.

Comparison to Appeal Scheme

7.4.14 It would likely have been possible to see the proposed courtyard wing and extra basement fenestration from this point, particularly during winter months when less screening would be offered by the intervening vegetation. The removal of these from the proposed scheme will be an improvement during such winter months. The removal of the top layer of windows, and its replacement with roof will reduce the perceived mass of the building when viewed from this point and is therefore less visible than the appeal scheme.

Viewpoint 3 – From the Grounds of Kenwood House and the Iveagh Bequest

7.4.15 The nature of the building and its general massing will not change, particularly as the existing and proposed buildings are generally screened from this point by the intervening vegetation.



7.4.16 The sensitivity of viewpoints within the grounds of Kenwood House is ‘low’, according to the methodology. The proposed development will not constitute a material change from the existing building when viewed from this point. Therefore, the magnitude of predicted impacts is ‘negligible’. An impact of ‘negligible’ magnitude on a receptor of ‘low’ sensitivity would result in a predicted impact of ‘negligible’ significance. The nature of the development is not considered to have changed and is therefore neutral in nature. Such an impact would not require mitigation.

Comparison to Appeal Scheme

7.4.17 The removal of the courtyard wing of the proposed dwelling from the design will reduce the massing of the building from where it is visible, possibly during winter months when the trees offer less of a screening effect. The visual impact is therefore reduced.

Viewpoint 4 – from Parliament Hill

7.4.18 The existing and proposed buildings are shown to be screened from this point by the intervening vegetation (refer to photographs in Appendix I). It is likely that visual impact will increase during winter months. Although elements of the new building will be visible, the reduced contrast caused by atmospheric conditions over longer distances, particularly in winter when the sun is lower, will likely mean that the proposed dwelling forms a negligible element within the view. The magnitude of predicted impacts is ‘negligible’ and neutral as it is not possible to see the degraded state of the existing building from this point and there is no perceptible reduction in mass.

7.4.19 The visual sensitivity of receptors in this area of the Heath are ‘low’. An impact of negligible neutral magnitude on a receptor of low sensitivity produces a predicted impact of negligible neutral significance. This impact does not require mitigation.

Comparison to Appeal Scheme

7.4.20 The previous CGI images, produced as part of the appeal scheme, show that the proposed dwelling will be partly visible through the trees during winter months. However, the depth of tree planting means that the majority of the building would still be screened, hiding the majority of the changes in the design of the dwelling. The most notable change



would be the removal of the fenestration on the top floor of the building and its replacement with roofing. However, this is unlikely to be significantly noticeable due to the reduced contrast at this distance, particularly during winter months. Thus this view is essentially the same as in the appeal scheme.

Viewpoint 5 – From Parliament Hill South of Number 4 Pond

- 7.4.21 The proposed dwelling will protrude above the skyline to a slightly lesser degree than the existing dwelling due to the reduced height of the proposed tower as compared with the tower of the existing building. Otherwise, the massing and scale of the proposed building is not distinctly different from the existing building. The magnitude of impacts is therefore ‘negligible beneficial.’
- 7.4.22 Receptors at this viewpoint are of ‘low’ sensitivity according to the methodology. An impact of negligible beneficial magnitude on a receptor of low sensitivity would produce a predicted impact of ‘negligible beneficial’ significance.

Comparison to Appeal Scheme

- 7.4.23 The appeal scheme CGIs show that the top of the proposed dwelling would be visible during winter months. However, it will not be possible to see the changes between the current and appeal schemes due to distance and reduced contrast. The view of the new proposal is therefore similar to the appeal scheme at this location.

Viewpoint 6 – from the Tumulus

- 7.4.24 It will be possible to see the tower of the proposed building above the treeline, which is verified by the enclosed photomontages. The tower of the proposed building will appear lower in the view than that of the existing building, due to the reduced height of the proposed tower as compared to the height of the existing tower of Athlone House. The reduction in intrusion into the views will be beneficial in nature. The impact will therefore be of ‘negligible beneficial’ magnitude.
- 7.4.25 Receptors at this viewpoint are of ‘low’ sensitivity. An impact of such a magnitude on a receptor of low sensitivity would produce a predicted impact of ‘negligible beneficial’ significance.



Comparison to Appeal Scheme

7.4.26 From this location, the view of the proposal is similar to the appeal scheme.

Viewpoint 7 – West of Highgate Bathing Pond

7.4.27 The proposed tower will be located slightly to the left of the existing tower in the current view but there will be no noticeable change to scale or intrusion into the view. Therefore the magnitude of impacts is ‘negligible’. This impact is neutral in nature as it is not possible to see the degraded state of the existing tower when viewed from this point and is not therefore possible to see the improvement in the condition of the building. There is also no discernible reduction in intrusion into the view from this location.

7.4.28 Receptors in this area are of ‘low’ sensitivity as per the other viewpoints in the Heath. Such an impact on a receptor of low sensitivity is of ‘negligible’ neutral significance.

Comparison to Appeal Scheme

7.4.29 Due to the intervening woodland, it would not be possible to see the differences between the proposed scheme and the appeal scheme. Therefore, the view from this location is similar to the appeal scheme.

Viewpoint 8 – from Parliament Hill South West of Number 1 Pond

7.4.30 The proposed tower will protrude above the treeline but to a lesser degree than the existing tower in the accompanying photomontages, reducing the visual impact of the proposed dwelling compared to the existing dwelling. Therefore, the predicted impact upon views will be ‘negligible beneficial’.

7.4.31 Receptors at this viewpoint are of ‘low’ sensitivity as shown in section 7.3. An impact of negligible beneficial magnitude on a receptor of low sensitivity would produce a predicted impact of ‘negligible’ beneficial significance.

Comparison to Appeal Scheme

7.4.32 The view from this point will not be dissimilar to the appeal scheme as it will not be possible to see the alterations in the building design.



Viewpoint 9 – from Highgate School

- 7.4.33 It will be evident that the proposed dwelling is different from that of the existing dwelling when viewed from this point. This is due to the different articulation of the roofline and, in particular, the domes which are distinctly different from the existing building. However, the roof will be slightly lower than the existing and such a dwelling is not out of context in the Conservation Area which displays a range of different dwelling types and styles. Number 22 Bishopswood Road, for example, a nearby private dwelling, also displays similar domes. This is discussed in greater detail in section 6.3 – Townscape Assessment.
- 7.4.34 The existing dwelling has been shown within the townscape assessment to be detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area. The proposed development will replace a degraded building with one in good condition and also the restoration of the landscape structure in this area. The proposed planting design will result in the restoration of the green character of this part of Hampstead Lane, bringing it back into line with the character of the surrounding area.
- 7.4.35 The landscape restoration of the site would reinstate the green character of Hampstead Lane in the vicinity, which appears to have lost much of its large scale tree planting. Therefore, the proposals would have a beneficial impact upon this viewpoint and the local area.
- 7.4.36 This viewpoint is of ‘low’ sensitivity as shown in section 7.3. The magnitude of impact is considered to be ‘large’. Such an impact on a receptor of low sensitivity would produce a predicted impact of ‘moderate’ beneficial significance.

Comparison to Appeal Scheme

- 7.4.37 The appeal scheme CGIs demonstrate that it would have been possible to see elements of the proposed courtyard wing on the north west corner of the building from the school site. This would have been visible in both winter and summer months. The removal of the courtyard wings from the proposed design means that the new proposals are less visible than the appeal scheme.



Viewpoint 10 – Hampstead Heath Extension Woodland

- 7.4.38 The existing building is in a degraded state as acknowledged in the Inspector’s Appeal Decision Notice after the 2011 Inquiry. It is possible to see this at such close proximity. The proposed development will replace the degraded building with one in good condition, together with the restoration of the landscape structure and gardens of the site. This will result in a beneficial impact.
- 7.4.39 The proposed dwelling will not be of a dissimilar scale or massing when viewed from this point but it may be possible to see the change in articulation of the roof line and the change in location of the tower on the proposed building as compared to the existing. Therefore the magnitude of predicted impacts will be ‘small’ and beneficial.
- 7.4.40 This viewpoint is shown to be of ‘low’ sensitivity to the type of development proposed. An impact of small magnitude on a receptor of low sensitivity produces an impact of ‘minor’ beneficial significance

Comparison to Appeal Scheme

- 7.4.41 This viewpoint looks towards the north western corner of the proposed dwelling. It was originally proposed within the appeal scheme to have an additional courtyard wing in the area. This has been reduced, removing a large area of built form which would have intruded into this view. Therefore, the proposed building is less visible than the appeal scheme.

Viewpoints 11 and 12 – Donated Garden Land of Athlone House

- 7.4.42 The proposed dwelling will not be perceived much differently from the existing building in terms of massing and form. However, the proposed landscape design includes the restoration of the historic gardens and grounds of the site as well as further parkland planting and reinforcement of boundaries. The magnitude of change is ‘small’ and of beneficial nature.
- 7.4.43 The previous section has shown that the sensitivity of receptors to the type of development proposed is ‘low’. An impact of small magnitude on a receptor of low sensitivity results in a predicted impact of ‘minor’ beneficial significance.



Comparison to Appeal Scheme

7.4.44 These views look towards the southern elevation of the proposed house. A layer of fenestration has been removed from the design and replaced with a roof. This will be visible from these viewpoints, particularly during winter months. This change in the articulation of the roof will reduce the impression of mass when viewed from this area. The proposed dwelling will be less visible than the appeal scheme from this location.

Summary of Predicted Visual Impacts

- 7.4.45 As stated in the previous Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and within the Inspector's Appeal Decision Report, the predicted impacts upon longer distance views, i.e. viewpoints 4-8, from Parliament Hill and the Tumulus, are negligible.
- 7.4.46 Of the twelve viewpoints assessed, impacts on nine of them were shown to be beneficial in nature. This is due to the removal of a degraded building from views, its replacement with a shorter one in good condition and the restoration of the historic landscape of the site. These are shown to reduce the visual impact of the dwelling on views from the Heath as compared to the existing Athlone House and to improve the character of the townscape, particularly when viewed from Hampstead Lane. All other views are neutral in nature as it is not possible to see either the reduction in the height of the tower or the improvement in the state of the building.
- 7.4.47 The most notable change is considered to be on viewpoints from the grounds of Highgate School which is in close proximity to the proposal site. From this view it is considered that the nature of the views of the building will change, due to the difference in the articulation of the roofline as viewed from this point. The removal of a semi-derelict building and its replacement with a new building of high architectural quality is a beneficial change. New mature tree planting is proposed which will provide an enhancement of the Conservation Area and will restore the character of this area, i.e. large houses in a parkland setting. This enhancement will also result in a change of view from this point, with the introduction of large trees between Highgate School and the proposal site providing a beneficial softening of views into the site and framing the buildings. This planting is shown on Figure 8.



- 7.4.48 Of the twelve viewpoints assessed, magnitude predicted impacts were shown to be negligible on six, small on five and large on one. Impacts of small magnitude were predicted on views from the gazebo and nearby (viewpoints 1 and 2), from the area of donated land to the north west of the proposal site (viewpoint 10) and from the area of donated land to the east (viewpoint 11 and 12). This is due to the close proximity of the viewpoints to the proposal site. Impacts of large magnitude were predicted on receptors within the grounds of the school (viewpoint 9) due to the open nature of the views resulting from loss of vegetation within the proposal site.
- 7.4.49 All impacts from views are either minor, moderate or negligible in terms of their significance. From the six more distant viewpoints within the Heath (viewpoints 3 to 8) three impacts are neutral and three are minor beneficial; from closer views (viewpoints 1,2,10,11 and 12) all impacts are minor beneficial; and from Viewpoint 9, impacts are moderate and beneficial.
- 7.4.50 The amended scheme has resulted in a reduction of mass as perceived from short and medium distance views from the Heath. Of particular note are the removal of the courtyard wing and the reduction in fenestration on the southern, eastern and westerns façades. The new scheme reduces the visibility from seven of the twelve viewpoints. These constitute the short to medium distance views from the Gazebo, the area of Kenwood House, from Highgate School and from the donated land. There were no perceived changes on the view from viewpoints 4-8 due to the distance from the proposal site.

7.5 Summary of Visual Assessment

- 7.5.1 The assessment of the visual baseline showed that all of the receptors assessed were of 'low' sensitivity. This is due to the proposed development not being out of character with either the local townscape or the landscape as viewed from the Heath.
- 7.5.2 Magnitude on all but one of the views was showed to be of small or negligible magnitude. This is due to the comparative similarity in type and scale of the proposed dwelling to the existing building, particularly when viewed from the Heath. Impacts on the view from



Highgate School were shown to be ‘large’ in magnitude. This is due to the proximity and visual openness between the proposal site and the school. This proximity and openness allows the viewer to see the difference in articulation of the roofline between the proposed scheme and the existing dwelling. This differing roofline is shown not to be out of character with the local townscape. However, planting will be enhanced in this area of the proposal site in order to restore the sylvan character of this part of Highgate Lane and to reduce the magnitude of impacts when viewed from Highgate School. This is illustrated on Figure 8.

- 7.5.3 Significance of impacts on all but one of the viewpoints was shown to be negligible or minor and, from Highgate School, to be moderate. These are due to the issues raised above.
- 7.5.4 The impacts were all shown to be neutral or beneficial in nature. Beneficial impacts stemmed from the reduction of intrusion of the proposed building as compared to the existing building when viewed from areas of the Heath in the vicinity of Parliament Hill and the Tumulus or from the replacement of a degraded building and the restoration of the historic parkland. Views of neutral nature were from more distant viewpoints from where it was not possible to see the reduction in the height of the tower or the degraded state of the existing building.
- 7.5.5 Potential visual impacts caused by the proposed scheme are reduced in magnitude from the appeal scheme for many of the viewpoints. The primary causes of these relate to the removal of the courtyard wing and the alteration of the western façade from four storeys of windows to two and from three storeys to two on the southern and eastern façades. This results in a reduced perception of mass when viewed from the Heath. These alterations are not noticeable in longer distance views from the area of Parliament Hill and the Tumulus but are shown to generally be an improvement on potential visual impacts.



Table 11 – Summary of Visual Impacts

Viewpoint	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance	Nature
1	The gazebo in Hampstead Heath	Low	Small	Minor	Beneficial
2	Area south of gazebo in Hampstead Heath	Low	Small	Minor	Beneficial
3	Grounds of Kenwood House and the Iveagh Bequest	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral
4	Parliament Hill	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral
5	Parliament Hill South of Number 2 Pond	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Beneficial
6	The Tumulus	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Beneficial
7	West of Highgate Bathing Pond	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral
8	Parliament Hill South West of Number 1 Pond	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Beneficial
9	Highgate School	Low	Large	Moderate	Beneficial
10	Hampstead Heath Extension Woodland	Low	Small	Minor	Beneficial
11	Donated Garden Land from Athlone House	Low	Small	Minor	Beneficial
12	Donated Garden Land from Athlone House	Low	Small	Minor	Beneficial



8.0 Summary and Conclusion

8.0.1 This document includes an assessment of the existing landscape, townscape and visual baseline. It addresses the issues raised as part of the 2011 Inquiry and as a result of more recent consultation. It addresses the changes in local and national planning policy and the amended scheme for the proposal site. It demonstrates that the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact upon the local landscape and townscape, including the MOL and the Conservation but, conversely, it will have a beneficial impact on both.

8.1 Landscape Policy (refer to chapter 5)

8.1.1 The proposed development is shown to accord with the relevant local and national policy. This agrees with the findings of the Inspector during the 2011 Inquiry and his subsequent report.

8.2 Landscape and Townscape Assessment (refer to chapter 6)

8.2.1 An assessment of the local townscape demonstrated that its character was not derived from a particular period of building but from the type and setting, i.e. a large, architecturally distinct dwelling set in a mature landscape. The proposed dwelling was shown to constitute such a dwelling and would therefore not be out of character with the local townscape.

8.2.2 The townscape assessment also demonstrated that the current state of the proposal site and Athlone House has a detrimental impact upon the character of Hampstead Lane. This is due to the degraded state of the current building and the loss of the landscape structure in the site through its recent history. As a result, the proposed scheme with its strong landscape design including the restoration of the historic landscape and the setting of the house is shown to be of beneficial impact to the local townscape and the setting of Hampstead Lane. It is therefore shown that the proposed scheme constitutes the enhancement and protection of the Conservation Area.

8.2.3 The assessment of the local landscape character of the Heath showed that its edge in the region of the proposal site was characterised by a wooded landscape punctuated by



distinctive buildings, including Athlone House. The proposed development is also a distinctive building set within a mature landscape and will not be out of character with the local area. The restoration of the landscape setting of Athlone House is shown to be of beneficial impact to the local landscape.

8.2.4 The landscape of the proposal site is also shown to be in a degraded state with the loss of mature tree planting resulting in a lack of setting to the building and no definition between the proposal site and Caenwood Court. The landscape scheme seeks to restore the setting of the building and Hampstead Lane in the vicinity of the proposal site. It also redefines the boundaries between Athlone House and Caenwood Court, restoring their settings.

8.3 Visual Assessment (refer to chapter 7)

8.3.1 The visual assessment demonstrated that the sensitivity of local visual receptors to the type of change posed by the proposed scheme was low. This was due to the similarity in type of development to that which presently exists on site.

8.3.2 Magnitude of impacts was shown to be negligible or small for 11 of the 12 viewpoints selected. This was due to the comparative similarities in the type and massing of the proposed building to the existing when viewed from the Heath. A greater magnitude of impact was demonstrated on viewpoints from Highgate School due to the proximity of the two sites and the loss of landscape structure in the north of the proposal site and along Hampstead Lane. This results in the potential to see the roof of the proposed dwelling which is distinctly different from the roof of the existing Athlone House. However, this was shown to be in character with the local townscape which includes other dwellings with similar such roof types.

8.3.3 The nature of all impacts was shown to either be neutral or beneficial. This is mainly due to the reduced height of the tower on the proposed dwelling as compared to that on the existing dwelling. This results in a reduced intrusion into views from the Heath, particularly from the area of Parliament Hill and the Tumulus. Beneficial impacts also stem from the restoration of the landscape setting of the site and the contribution to the



arboreal character of this stretch of Hampstead Lane. The removal of a semi-derelict building and its replacement with a building in good condition will also have beneficial impacts.

8.4 Summary

8.4.1 The proposed development is shown to be in character with the local landscape or townscape and, in fact, is shown to have a beneficial impact upon them. It is shown to have a neutral or beneficial impact upon the agreed views as verified by the images in Appendix I. The amended scheme is shown to be an improvement upon the appeal scheme and has responded to the points raised by the Inspector. That the amended proposed development does not constitute a distinctly different element within the landscape than the existing building and that the replacement of the degraded building with a new one of agreed architectural merit and the restoration of the historical landscape constitutes a benefit to the local landscape and townscape of Hampstead. It can, therefore, be concluded that the proposed scheme constitutes a positive addition to the landscape of the MOL and seeks to conserve and enhance the Conservation Area.

