

November 2013

Planning Statement

15 Wedderburn Road

Prepared by Savills UK incorporating The London Planning Practice Ltd.

Savills UK
33 Margaret St
London
W1G 0JD



Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Site and Surroundings	4
3.	Planning History	6
4.	Proposals	8
5.	Planning Considerations	9
6.	Conclusion	20

1. Introduction

1.1 This statement has been prepared in support of a planning application at 15 Wedderburn Road for the following works:

“Extension of lower ground level, excavation of new basement level, demolition of garage and remodelling of front vehicular entrance and new single storey extension, rebuilding of rear lower ground floor extension, removal of side conservatory, and minor alterations to the treatment of the north, west and south elevations.”

1.2 This report has been prepared following an examination of the site and surroundings, research into the planning history of the property, and an examination of relevant policy documents.

1.3 This statement provides the background information on the site and an assessment of the proposals in relation to planning policy and other material considerations, and is set out under the following sections:

- **Section 2** outlines the site and its context within the surrounding area
- **Section 3** provides an overview of the planning history
- **Section 4** provides an outline of the proposals
- **Section 5** examines the main planning considerations
- **Section 6** draws our conclusions in respect of the proposals

2. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 No. 15 Wedderburn Road is located to the far west end of the road, at the junction of Akenside Road. The existing property is set over lower ground, ground, first and second floor levels, and has been subdivided in the past to form three self contained flats.
- 2.2 The property is a large red brick building which has undergone a number of unsympathetic alterations over time including the garage and ad hoc extensions at the lower levels.
- 2.3 The flat to which this application relates is Flat No. 1, which occupies the entire ground floor and lower ground floor of the building, together with the garden areas and an adjoining single storey garage.
- 2.4 In terms of surrounding uses, Wedderburn Road consists of large red brick mansion houses and flats. A number of these properties are listed. Of particular note, the properties which lie immediately adjacent to the site to the east (Nos 11-13 Wedderburn Road) are two Grade II listed semi-detached properties.
- 2.5 To the rear of the site lies No. 7 Akenside Road, comprising an uncharacteristic single storey dwelling built in the 1980s in the rear part of No. 15 Wedderburn Rd's garden.

Designations

- 2.6 The site lies within the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area. Whilst the property is not listed, it is designated within the Conservation Area Statement as a building which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. As mentioned above, the property immediately adjacent to the site to the east is Grade II listed (Nos. 11 and 13).
- 2.7 The site is not subject to any further designations, as shown by the extract below from Camden Council's Proposals Map.



Application Site

2.8 The site is well located in terms of accessibility, with a PTAL rating of 5. The site is located within a 5-10 minute walk of Belsize Park, Finchley Road & Frognal, Hamstead and Finchley Road stations, providing access to various underground lines (Northern, Jubilee and Metropolitan), as well as the London Overground. The site is also well located for a number of bus routes running along both Haverstock Hill and Finchley Road.

3. Planning History

The key planning history for the building is detailed below:

APPLICATION NUMBER	SITE ADDRESS	DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION
8804720	15 Wedderburn Road NW3	The retention of the enlarged means of access to the highway and the front area parking space.	20/12/1988	Withdrawn
8870653	15 Wedderburn Road NW3	Retrospective conservation area consent for demolition of part of the boundary wall to enlarge the existing means of access to the highway.	20/12/1988	Withdrawn
8702851	15 Wedderburn Road NW3	Change of use of the three lower floors from a self-contained maisonette to a self-contained maisonette and a self-contained flat together with the use of the flat garage roof as a terrace and the construction of a staircase access to it from ground floor level.	28-07-1987	Approved
8401729	15 Wedderburn Road NW3	Erection of a lift shaft at the side	27/12/1984	Approved
8400842	15 Wedderburn Road NW3	The erection of a new house at the rear (now No. 7 Akenside Rd)	11/07/1984	Approved
8400817	15 Wedderburn Road NW3	Alterations by the insertion of new windows and a new dormer window the construction of a new porch and double garage	18/06/1984	Approved
24945	15 Wedderburn Road NW3	The enlargement of an existing dormer at the	19/07/1977	Approved

APPLICATION NUMBER	SITE ADDRESS	DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION
		rear.		
6194	15 Wedderburn Road NW3	The erection of a garage at 15, Wedderburn Road, Hampstead, and the formation of a new means of access to the highway.	16/07/1953	Approved
20513	15 Wedderburn Road NW3	The formation of a garage in the basement of No. 15, Wedderburn Road, Hampstead, and the formation of a new access to the highway.	03/03/1953	Approved
F7/12/5/8064	15 Wedderburn Road NW3	The conversion of No. 15, Wedderburn Road, Hampstead	02/08/1952	Approved

4. Proposals

- 4.1. This application seeks permission for the following development at 15 Wedderburn Road:

“Extension of lower ground level, excavation of new basement level, demolition of garage and remodelling of front vehicular entrance and new single storey extension, rebuilding of rear lower ground floor extension, removal of side conservatory, and minor alterations to the treatment of the north, west and south elevations.”

- 4.2. The proposed basement will provide leisure facilities for the flat and also include an area for plant. It will sit beneath the footprint of the property with some extent underneath the rear patio area and the front garden.
- 4.3. At lower ground floor level, it is proposed to extend this further forward and infill the existing lightwell area at the front of the property to a parking area for two cars, replacing the existing double garage. The existing 1970s extension to the rear is to be demolished and replaced with a new extension which will continue to provide a ground floor terrace on top.
- 4.4. At ground floor level, it is proposed to remove the existing garage and provide a ramped access to the replacement parking space at lower ground floor, together with a small single storey extension to provide a home office with a smaller front lightwell attached. Existing rooflights to the side and rear are to be replaced with rear walk on rooflights which will form an integral part of the landscaping for the site.
- 4.5. The landscaping for the site includes the removal and replacement of some of the trees, new soft landscaping at the rear in place of the existing hard landscaping, soft landscaping in place of the front lightwell and a green wall system to the rear wall.
- 4.6. A number of alterations to the fenestration are also proposed as well as new gates and railings at the front of the property.
- 4.7. Full details of the scheme including materials and fenestration are given in the Design and Access Statement and accompanying drawings.

5. Planning Considerations

- 5.1. S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of any planning application is in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the current development plan comprises:
- London Plan (July 2011)
 - The London Borough of Camden Core Strategy and Development Policies (November 2010)
- 5.2. Camden Council also produces a range of Supplementary Planning Documents, named as Camden Planning Guidance documents. These provide specific planning guidance on topics including design, sustainability, housing, amenity and transport.
- 5.3. The Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area Statement provides guidance with regards to development in the conservation area.
- 5.4. In terms of national policy, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) introduced a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and requires that planning applications for housing in particular are considered in the context of this presumption.
- 5.5. With regard to decision-taking, the NPPF advises that local authorities should approach this in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development and should look for solutions rather than problems. Decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (paras. 186 & 187). The presumption in favour of sustainable development is the golden thread that runs through the NPPF. One of the core principles of the NPPF given in para. 17 is that planning should not simply be about scrutiny but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives.

5.6. The following section sets out the considerations of the proposed development in relation to planning policy and guidance under the following headings:

- Subterranean development
- Lightwells/rooflights
- Design considerations and impact on the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area
- Impact on residential amenity
- Trees and Landscaping
- Access
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Subterranean development

5.7. Development Policy DP27 relates to the creation of basements and lightwells in new development proposals. The policy sets out that the Council will only permit basements and other underground development that does not cause harm to the built and natural environment and local amenity in terms of flooding and instability.

5.8. Camden's CPG 4 'Basements and Lightwells' provides guidance on planning and design considerations in relation to subterranean development in the Borough.

5.9. The proposed basement level will accommodate a pool (relocated from the existing lower ground level), associated changing and shower facilities, games room, cellar, cinema and plant. As such, no habitable rooms are proposed in the basement, in accordance with CPG 4.

5.10. CPG 4 requires that the size of basements be guided by the characteristics of the site. Bearing in mind that the property is large in size, it is considered that the size of the basement is acceptable when considered in the context of the wider site. The proposed basement will extend only marginally into the front and rear gardens (less than 50%), and only one basement level is proposed beneath the lower ground level, which will be 3m in depth in accordance with CPG 4. Where the basement extends below the proposed soft landscaping to the front, at least 0.5m of topsoil is proposed in accordance with Policy DP27, to enable garden planting.

- 5.11. The size and shape of the basement has been guided by the existing trees on site which are being retained, and the identified Root Protection Zones have been taken into account. Further consideration on trees and landscaping is provided later in this report.
- 5.12. The site does not lie within a flood risk zone, as such there are no implications in terms of flooding.
- 5.13. CPG 4 recommends that a Construction Management Plan is submitted with applications for basement development. As such, a CMP has been prepared by Walter Lily and accompanies this submission. It assesses the proposal in terms of site establishment and logistics, with the aim of ensuring that the construction works cause minimal disruption to adjacent residents.
- 5.14. CPG 4 also states that a Basement Impact Assessment (BIA) should be submitted which is site specific and particular to the proposed development. In particular, the guidance states that the Council will only permit basement and underground development that does not:
- cause harm to the built and natural environment and local amenity;
 - result in flooding; or
 - lead to ground instability.
- 5.15. This planning application is supported by a BIA that has been prepared by Geotechnical & Environmental Services (GEA). The BIA is supported by appropriate ground investigations such as borehole and trial pit records, the results of which are detailed within the appendices of the BIA.
- 5.16. Having assessed the proposals, the BIA concludes that the provision of the proposed basement is acceptable in terms of the general construction process, structural stability, maintaining ground conditions, long term integrity of adjacent buildings and the existing property and surrounding infrastructure.
- 5.17. The BIA is also supported by a Basement Methodology Report prepared by Fluid Structures which sets out specific details of the excavation, temporary works and construction techniques to be employed in the excavation of the basement, and also provides details construction sequence drawings.

5.18. As such, the proposed development accords with the requirements of Policy DP25. GEA's report sets out in detail the specific technical details of the proposed basement.

Lightwells/Rooflights

5.19. It is proposed to infill the existing lightwell to the front of the property. CPG4 states that lightwells should be discouraged in locations where they do not form part of the established street character. As such, it is considered that the infilling of this lightwell, and replacement with soft landscaping, is a clear benefit of the proposal and enhances the wider conservation area.

5.20. In terms of rooflights, a number are proposed, however they are considered acceptable as they replace existing glazing at or near the specified locations. The following rooflights are proposed:

- On the eastern elevation within the recessed area. This is considered acceptable as, due to the location, it is not visible from the street, and will not have any effect on the adjacent building as it does not feature and windows overlooking this area. As such there will be no issues in relation to illumination or lightspill, in accordance with CPG4.
- To the western elevation at ground floor level. This will essentially replace the existing rooflight at this location and as such will not introduce any additional glazing, it is therefore considered acceptable and in accordance with policy.
- To the rear, adjacent to the proposed replacement rear extension. These are considered necessary in order to ensure that natural light reaches the proposed basement level. The existing rooflights at the terrace level will be removed, as such the amount of glazing to this elevation will not be significantly different to the current situation. Regardless of this, the property to the rear of the garden on Akenside Road does not have any windows which overlook this elevation, as such there will be no neighbouring properties which would be effected by any lightspill from the proposed skylights. It is therefore considered that the proposed rooflights are acceptable and in accordance with CPG4.

Design considerations and impact on the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area

5.21. The following considers the alterations proposed as part of the development, in terms of their design and impact on the conservation area.

Design Principles

- 5.22. As a starting point, the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) states that Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for development within conservation areas to enhance or better reveal their significance (paragraph 137). At the local level, Development Policy 25 requires that development within conservation areas preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the area.
- 5.23. In terms of design, Core Strategy Policy CS14 requires development to be of the highest standard that respects local context and character. Development Policy 24 re-states this aim and required development to consider the character, setting, context, form and scale of neighbouring buildings, and the character and proportions of the existing building and quality of materials used.
- 5.24. The existing building, as shown in the photo below, has been substantially altered over the years and does not reflect the shape or form of other properties along Wedderburn Road. Despite the fact that the property is identified within the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area Statement as being a building which makes a 'positive contribution' to the conservation area, it does currently have many features which in fact detract from the conservation area. The Conservation Area Statement identifies on page 26 that the property has the addition of a garage that is detrimental to the townscape, whilst the loss of front boundary and creation of hard space and garaging is identified as a 'negative feature' on page 28.



5.25. As such, it is considered that the principle of the proposed alterations to the property, which go some way to enhance the appearance of the property and reverse past unsympathetic alterations, is acceptable. The following considers in more detail the proposed alterations to the existing property in design terms, and their impact on the conservation area.

Front (north) Elevation

5.26. It is proposed to remove the unattractive garage which currently dominates the front elevation. The car parking will be moved to the lower ground level, which will be extended towards the front of the property. Access to the parking will be via a ramp from Wedderburn Road, enclosed with black painted metal work gates. A new brick extension will be added on part of the site occupied by the garage, which will also continue to provide access to flat 2 over its roof. This extension will be smaller in size and scale than the existing garage.

5.27. It is considered that this element of the proposal is a clear benefit of the scheme, as it removes the garage which is identified within the Conservation Area Statement as being detrimental to the conservation area. As a result of the removal of the garage, the footprint of the property at ground level will in fact be less than what currently exists, reducing the bulk and mass of the entire property and thereby reducing its impact on the conservation area.

5.28. A further benefit proposed to the front elevation is the infilling of the existing lightwell. This is an uncharacteristic feature of the wider streetscene and as such, the infilling of this area and replacement with soft landscaping is again a clear improvement to the appearance of the property and its contribution to the streetscene. As noted within the landscaping section below, it is proposed to incorporate substantially more landscaping to the front of the property than currently exists, in order to reduce the amount of hard surfacing and again improve the appearance of the building and its setting.



Existing north elevation



Proposed north elevation

- 5.29. The treatment to the front facade at ground floor level has been slightly amended in order to provide a new entrance and associated windows which align with the existing windows on this facade in terms of positioning and materials used (white painted timber). The unattractive and unsympathetic veranda will be removed and new balustrades and gates to the front will be black painted ironwork to match No. 11 Wedderburn Rd and introduce a greater sense of uniformity to the street.
- 5.30. As such, the proposals to the front of the building, which is of principal importance in terms of its impact on the wider conservation area, are considered to not only preserve, but enhance the conservation area, in accordance with Development Policy 25.

Side (west) Elevation

- 5.31. This elevation faces on to Akenside Road, although it is largely screened from any public view due to the existing brick wall and landscaping. As such, its contribution to the wider conservation area is limited. Nevertheless, this elevation has been carefully considered in design terms to enhance the overall appearance of the property.
- 5.32. Specifically, the existing conservatory will be removed from this elevation, along with its detailing which is uncharacteristic of the style of the building. The doors to the parking area will be at this location, resulting in a decrease in glazing to this element of the elevation.
- 5.33. Further to the rear of the elevation, the existing unattractive windows will be replaced with higher quality windows. Whilst this results in a slight increase in glazing, as shown in the plan below, the majority of these windows will be screened from public view by the existing wall and retained landscaping.



Existing west elevation



Proposed west elevation

- 5.34. As a result of the removal of the garage, conservatory and the replacement rear extension, the extent of this elevation is actually reduced. As such there will be no effect on bulk or mass of the property, as such the proposed elevation will both preserve and enhance the conservation area in accordance with Development Policy 25.

Rear (south) Elevation

- 5.35. To the rear, it is proposed to replace the existing lower ground floor rear extension. This will be largely within the footprint of the existing structure and as such will not have any impact in terms of massing, bulk or sense of enclosure. The terrace will be replaced, with the proposed railings being slightly lower in height than existing, as such ensuring that the replacement extension is in fact more subservient than the existing structure, in accordance with Development Policy 24.

- 5.36. It is proposed to replace the glazing of the lower ground and ground floors of this elevation in order to be more uniform in appearance and be more traditional in detailing.

- 5.37. Given this is clearly a non-original part of the building, and the proposed replacement is within the footprint of the existing extension, it is considered that the proposed replacement is an acceptable alteration to the property and improves its overall appearance.



Existing south elevation



Proposed south elevation

Side (east) Elevation

- 5.38. Apart from the replacement rear extension, as detailed above, no changes are proposed to this elevation. As such, the proposals will have no impact on the setting of the adjacent listed building at Nos. 11-13 Wedderburn Road. The development therefore does not cause harm to the setting of a listed building, in accordance with Development Policy 25.
- 5.39. Overall, it is considered that all the proposed alterations to the building are of the highest standard of design, are elegant extensions that respond positively to their setting and context. They compliment the general character of large, good quality houses that is apparent in this part of the conservation area.
- 5.40. Although the lower part of the building is not readily visible from the public domain, where it can be seen and for residents living in the vicinity, it is considered that the proposals offer an enhancement to the conservation area. The proposals therefore comply with design and conservation policies.

Impact on Residential Amenity

- 5.41. Development Policy 26 requires that development does not cause harm to amenity. The proposals meet the objectives of this policy, as set out below.

Visual Privacy and Overlooking

- 5.42. The proposals will not have any effect on visual privacy or overlooking. No additional windows are proposed to the east elevation which faces onto the neighbouring property at No. 13 Wedderburn Road, as such this property is unaffected in terms of impact on visual privacy or overlooking.
- 5.43. In terms of the rear of the property, the proposed terrace will replace the existing one, and the replacement glazing will be of a similar amount to what is currently there. As such, there is no increase in overlooking. In any case, the property at No. 7 Akenside Road to the rear of the building does not feature any windows on the elevation which faces on to 15 Wedderburn Road, as such there are no residential properties that are effected by the proposals.

Overshadowing and Outlook

- 5.44. The proposals will not result in any harmful increase in sense of enclosure or overshadowing to existing buildings and spaces. As noted above, the proposals do not result in any substantial extension to the existing footprint of the house (indeed the total footprint is in fact less than existing), as such there is no opportunity for harmful increase in sense of enclosure to nearby buildings or spaces.

Daylight/Sunlight

- 5.45. The proposals will have no effect on daylight and sunlight amenity for adjoining buildings and amenity spaces. As noted above, the proposals will not result in an increase in the footprint of the building, and as such will not impact on the neighbouring properties in terms of daylight and sunlight.

Noise and Vibration Levels

- 5.46. No external plant is proposed. The plant relating to the proposed replacement pool will be housed internally within the new basement level. As such, the proposal will not have any impact in terms of noise and vibration levels.

Trees and Landscaping

- 5.47. Development Policy DP25 states the need to preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.
- 5.48. In terms of landscaping, as shown in the existing and proposed ground floor plans, it is proposed to incorporate substantially more landscaping in the front and rear gardens, compared to the current situation. The rear garden is currently predominately hard surface, and it is proposed to introduce soft landscaping to cover a generous proportion of the garden. A green wall is also proposed to the rear boundary, which is clearly a significant sustainability benefit.
- 5.49. To the front, again the existing landscaping has been lost. Indeed, the Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area Statement identifies the "loss of front boundary and creation of hard space and garaging" as a negative feature of the conservation area. As such, the reinstatement of soft landscaping to the front of the property is a clear benefit of the proposals. It will not only improve the appearance of the property, but also of the wider conservation area by being more in character with the front treatment of other properties along Wedderburn Road.

- 5.50. At this early stage, exact specifications of the proposed soft landscaping to the front, side and rear of the property have not been finalised but our client is willing to accept a condition requiring details of the proposed landscaping.
- 5.51. In terms of trees, Development Plan Policy 25 seeks to preserve trees which contribute to the character of a conservation area. Further, CPG 4 states that, when proposing subterranean development, consideration should be given to trees on or adjacent to the site, including the required Root Protection Area (RPA). A Tree Report prepared by Indigo Surveys has been submitted alongside this statement. This report has been produced following an assessment of the condition of the trees on site, in collaboration with Tom Little, Tree Officer at Camden Council. It identifies RPAs which have been taken into account during the design of the scheme. Only minor encroachments are proposed into these areas, which are considered acceptable given the sensitivity of the construction methods.
- 5.52. The Tree Report identifies a small number of low quality trees for removal, including two trees which are subject to historic Tree Preservation Orders. It has been agreed with the Tree Officer that these trees are now of lessened quality and as such, their removal and replacement with appropriate species to be agreed with the Council is considered appropriate and can be agreed via condition.
- 5.53. This development therefore complies with the requirements of Development Policy DP25.

Access

- 5.54. It is proposed to retain the car parking as it currently is (two off-street spaces and two on-street parking permits). The two garage parking spaces are simply relocated to lower ground level. As such, it is considered that the parking provision complies with the above policy and is therefore acceptable.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 5.55. The proposal triggers a CIL contribution as it proposes 389sqm of additional gross internal floorspace. The Council's CIL form has been completed and accompanies this application.

6. Conclusion

6.1. The planning application seeks permission for proposed development at 15 Wedderburn Road.

6.2. The proposals are summarised as follows:

“Extension of lower ground level, excavation of new basement level, demolition of garage and remodelling of front vehicular entrance and new single storey extension, rebuilding of rear lower ground floor extension, removal of side conservatory, and minor alterations to the treatment of the north, west and south elevations.”

6.3. The existing property, whilst identified as a positive contributor to the conservation area, does in fact feature elements which detract from the conservation area, as highlighted in the Conservation Area Statement. The proposals address these areas through the removal of the garage, the introduction of significant soft landscaping to the front of the property, and the general reduction in bulk and mass of the property. It is therefore considered that the proposals represent a significant opportunity to enhance the property and the wider conservation area.

6.4. The proposed subterranean element of the scheme is fully supported by the required documents including a Basement Impact Assessment, Construction Method Statement and Construction Traffic Management Plan. The basement proposals have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of CPG4 and is considered to be in compliance with all relevant requirements.

6.5. The proposed works are therefore considered to comply with all adopted policies of the London Borough of Camden.