



Design & Access Statement (incorporating Heritage Statement) / Planning Statement

9 Fitzjohn's Avenue, London, NW3 5JY

“Change of use from hostel for temporary accommodation of homeless families (Class C1) to single family dwelling house (Class C3); demolition of existing five-storey height rear fire escape stair structure; demolition of 1970's single storey rear boiler room extension and 1970s five-storey height rear extension and replacement with four-storey brick rear extension with set-back fifth floor roof room and terrace, and part two-, part single-storey rear extension with roof terrace; replacement and repositioning of rear windows and french doors at first, second and third floor levels, and insertion of new windows to north and south elevations and roof; provision of new basement level; part demolition and replacement of front boundary wall and retention of existing 2 car parking spaces in front garden with amended access, and associated landscape improvement works.”

AZ Urban Studio / Planning & Development Consultants / April 2013



Urban context - rear of site / inner block

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement is provided in support of a full planning application and conservation area consent for demolition for development described as:

“Change of use from hostel for temporary accommodation of homeless families (Class C1) to single family dwelling house (Class C3); demolition of existing five-storey height rear fire escape stair structure; demolition of 1970’s single storey rear boiler room extension and 1970s five-storey height rear extension and replacement with four-storey brick rear extension with set-back fifth floor roof room and terrace, and part two-, part single-storey rear extension with roof terrace; replacement and repositioning of rear windows and french doors at first, second and third floor levels, and insertion of new windows to north and south elevations and roof; provision of new basement level; part demolition and replacement of front boundary wall and retention of existing 2 car parking spaces in front garden with amended access, and associated landscape improvement works.”

The statement should be read in conjunction with the other planning application documents which are:

- Completed planning application form and certificates
- Planning application drawings prepared by Finkernagel Ross architects
- Lifetime Homes compliance statement by Finkernagel Ross architects
- Basement Impact Assessment prepared by GEA
- Structural Engineering Planning Report by Engenuiti
- Reports on Daylight & Sunlight (x2) prepared by Right of Light Consulting
- BREEAM Assessment prepared by Ian Waters Design
- Aborigicultural Assessment prepared by Treetec

This planning application follows the recent grant of planning permission (ref 2012/6451/P, granted April 2013) for development described as:

“Change of use from hostel for temporary accommodation of homeless families (Class C1) to single-family dwelling house (Class C3).”

As the principle of the change of use to a single dwelling house is established by this earlier permission, the focus of this statement is upon the physical alterations and extensions to the building now proposed.



The general facade-pairing of 9-11 Fitzjohn's Avenue



The coherent architectural style of Fitzjohn's Avenue street frontage (5-11)

2. Assessment - The site and context

Location

The application site is located on the west side of the lower part of Fitzjohn's Avenue, within the Fitzjohn's and Netherhall Conservation Area. The site is within a residential area, although some institutional uses can be found along the street. The area is well served by public transport, with Finchley Road station and bus routes some 5mins walk away, and a number of buses also routed along Fitzjohn's Avenue. An extensive range of local shops and services are also available at Finchley Road.

The Fitzjohns and Netherall Conservation Area

The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) at paragraph 128 outlines how an applicant should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. Further, it states that the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. The following section of this report sets out such a description of significance.

Fitzjohn's Avenue is located within the Fitzjohns and Netherall Conservation Area (a designated heritage asset), the evolution, character and appearance of which is set out in the Council's Fitzjohns and Netherall Conservation Area Statement (2001).

The essence of that character is captured in the first paragraph at p.10 of the Statement which describes how:

'Long views along the Avenues combine with substantially scaled properties and generous grounds to create an imposing district.'

Fitzjohn's Avenue clearly forms the central structuring avenue of the conservation area, set out to a design by Spencer Wilson and executed from 1875 onwards. As noted in the Council's Conservation Area Statement, by 1883 Harpers magazine could call it *'one of the noblest streets in the world'*. The generous tree-lined street

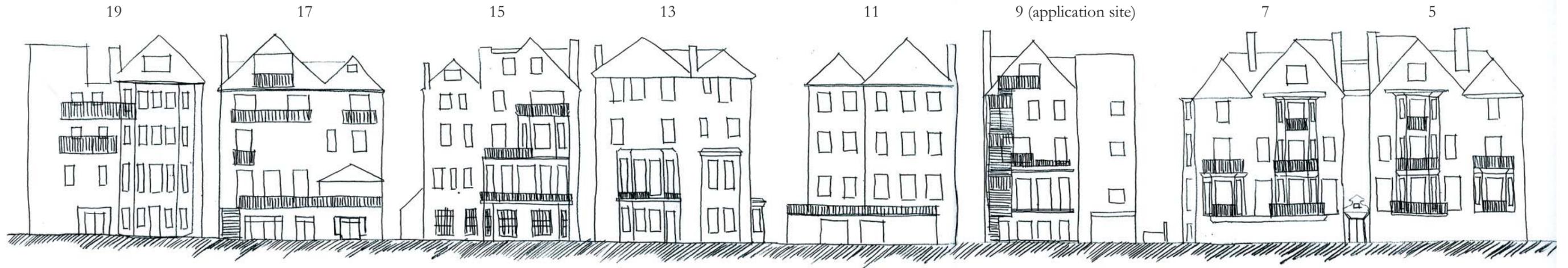
provided a new and grand connection between the then established centres of Swiss Cottage and Hampstead. From 1876 to the late 1880s the large plots either side of Fitzjohn's Avenue were developed, including one-off buildings commissioned by private individuals (some by notable architects). Much of the land on either side of Fitzjohn's Avenue was built under a building lease to Herbert and Edward Kelly, speculative builders, resulting in the repeated use of standard typologies and paired or grouped houses, with near identical street facades, with variety limited to the secondary facades and detailing.

Architectural style is diverse around the principal typology of large detached or semi-detached imposing houses, with Queen Anne, Neo-Gothic, Arts and Crafts and Jacobean all employed. The common eaves and roof heights, hipped roofs, and use of brick provide a general and strong degree of harmony along the street facades.

The Council's Statement notes on p.10 in summary that the range of detail found upon buildings in the area includes: fine rubbed brickwork, terracotta enrichments, stained glass, fine wrought iron work, Tudor-style chimney stacks, extensive tiling and tile hanging, Oriel windows, stone mullions to windows, bay windows, large studio windows for artists, well-detailed front walls, gate piers, decorative tiled front paths, doorways and large porches, elevated ground floors.

Further detailed analysis of the particular character of the relevant part of Fitzjohn's Avenue is provided at p.17 of the Statement, looking in detail at *'Sub-area 1: Fitzjohn's'* and noting:

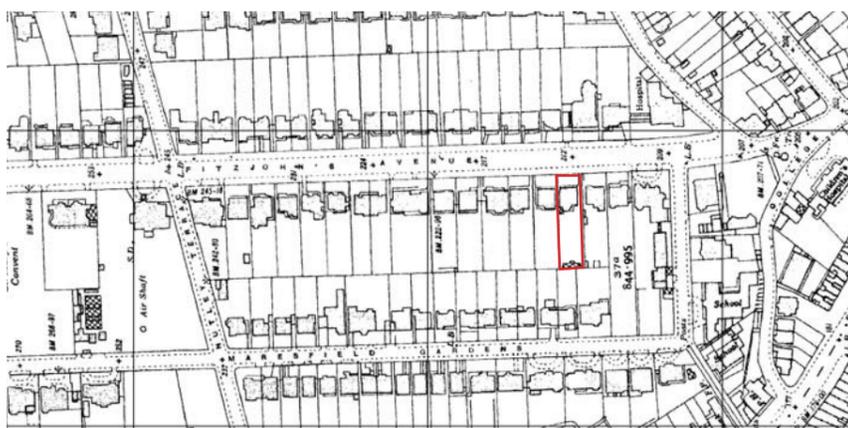
'On the west side there are more detached properties, Nos. 27-35 and Nos. 3-21, with emphasis given to the entrance porch and broad steps ... Some have triple storey bays and predominant is the use of purple brick with red bricks for decorative features on windows and string courses. Some ironwork remains above bays and at windows.'



Diagrammatic rear elevation as existing from 5-19 Fitzjohn's Avenue



Rear elevation in context - oblique aerial



OS plan 1934-1935 showing Fitzjohn's Avenue

The Statement identifies important views within the Fitzjohn's sub-area at p.21, noting '*Fitzjohns Avenue, both directions*'. At page 30 of the Conservation Area Statement nos. 3-35 (odd) are identified as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. Today, those elements of character highlighted more than 10 years ago in the Conservation Area Statement largely remain.

No.9 Fitzjohn's Avenue and the immediate context

No. 9 is a large (lower ground plus four storey) detached house, built in purple brick with red brick / terracotta detailing and set within a substantial plot on the west side of Fitzjohn's Avenue. It is the third of a loose grouping of eight buildings (nos.5-19 odd) that – upon the street façade – display clear formal design similarities (see images on p.2).

With a central entrance from broad steps and combination of 3 storey projecting bay and 3-bay width main body of the façade, together with tall chimney stacks and front dormer window, no.9 has an imposing presence upon Fitzjohn's Avenue. The general condition and contribution of those buildings at nos.5-19 (odd) varies greatly, from the bright red brick and clean detailing of the recently refurbished nos. 5 & 7, to the unfortunately altered façade of no.11 with principal front entrance steps and chimneys removed. Whilst the façade of no.9 retains most of the original features it is in a generally poor state of repair and has a run-down appearance, reflecting its half-century in use for institutional purposes.

As is typical of large 'estate' building projects of the late 19th Century, a rigid set of architectural guidelines to ensure a homogenous and harmonious public street frontage gives way at the rear, private, facade to individual taste and discretion. There is no rhythm or pattern to the original rear elevation treatment, other than a the general 2/3 and 1/3 vertical division to buildings and the resulting roofscape. Map regression confirms that such variety at the rear was an original quality of this part of the street (see 1934-5 OS plan, for example).

No.9 was given a projecting bay at lower and ground floors, built in contrasting red brick to the primary purple brick employed on the house. No.11 had no bay, and a recessed building line for its northernmost third. Nos. 13 and 15 both had projecting bays of different forms, 17 has not and 19 has a wide full height bay.

Over the century and a half since first built, and in particular in the last two decades (after the Conservation Area was designated), subsequent alterations and extensions have been approved that have contributed further to that original variety of rear elevation and roofscape. Roof valleys have been in-filled, and large dormers added along side roof slopes (nos. 5, 9, 15, 17, 19) to gain additional roof-level accommodation. Rear extensions and alterations of various forms have been carried out, including the demolition and rebuilding (with extended rear footprint and full basement) of 5 & 7, full height rear extension of 9 (see details below), substantial single storey rear extension to 11, 2 storey rear

extension (lower ground / upper ground) to 13, first floor rear extension to 15, full width lower ground floor extension and half-width conservatory style extension to 17 and creation of inset balcony at roof level, lower ground and ground floor rear extensions to 23 and 27, and substantial lower ground and ground floor extensions together with terraces above and inset roof balcony at 29. From a detailed review of the planning register it can be seen that a great number of those extensions and alterations were approved by the Council after the designation of the Conservation Area.

No.9 Fitzjohn's Avenue

The rear of no.9 is characterised by a series of additions and alterations, the combined effect of which is to give the rear of building a sadly utilitarian and institutional appearance.

The monolithic full-height extension on the south side of the rear gives an almost unbroken mass of brick, continuing right up to the southern ridge level, where its abrupt termination dominates the roofscape of the building. Also at roof level, it is notable that the main body of the building has a gable ended roof (as opposed to the more common hipped rear in the area). With no clear variation in masonry age, it appears that the gable may be original.

The second dominating and utilitarian feature is the massive full-height fire escape stair on the northern side of the rear elevation, projecting some 4.5m beyond the rear of the main body of the house that it is attached to. Whilst the generous platforms of the escape stair provided useful rear amenity space to the former multiple occupants of the building, the stair is harmful to the character of the building. A further addition is the single storey (lower ground floor level) boiler room added to the south side of the rear, projecting beyond the full height rear brick extension a further 4m, and also added in the 1970s.

It is also notable that the upper part of the rear main body of the house (i.e. above the bay) has poorly ordered window arrangement, in contrast to the generally formal arrangement found upon the upper rear floors of neighbouring properties. There is multiple visual evidence in the masonry of alterations, repositioning and repair, and therefore it is likely that the windows and doors on that part of the building have been the subject of change, most likely to suit the institutional use of the building during the second part of the 20th Century.

Contribution of no.9 to the significance of the Conservation Area

In summary, and as confirmed by the 2001 Conservation Area Statement, the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area is rooted in the broad formal tree-lined avenue layout of large houses set in generous plots with street facades and roofscape displaying a coherent architectural language and fine detailing. At the rear of the properties on the west side of the street, the character is one of variety – both original and furthered through later extensions and alterations. 9 Fitzjohn's Avenue displays a near original street façade with much detailing characteristic of the area. Whilst the key elements are present, there is a need for extensive repair. At the rear, number 9 has been heavily altered and extended to the degree where the original architectural character of the building is both lost and obscured, as the photograph and analysis diagram (right) shows. In our opinion the alterations and additions to the rear of the building are to the extent of the being harmful to both the host building and the character and appearance of the conservation area.



1970s rear extension (lift shaft and additional rooms)

Poor window and door arrangement within modified rear elevation

Fire escape stair - with platforms used as amenity terraces

1970s rear extension (boiler room)



Harmful form and appearance

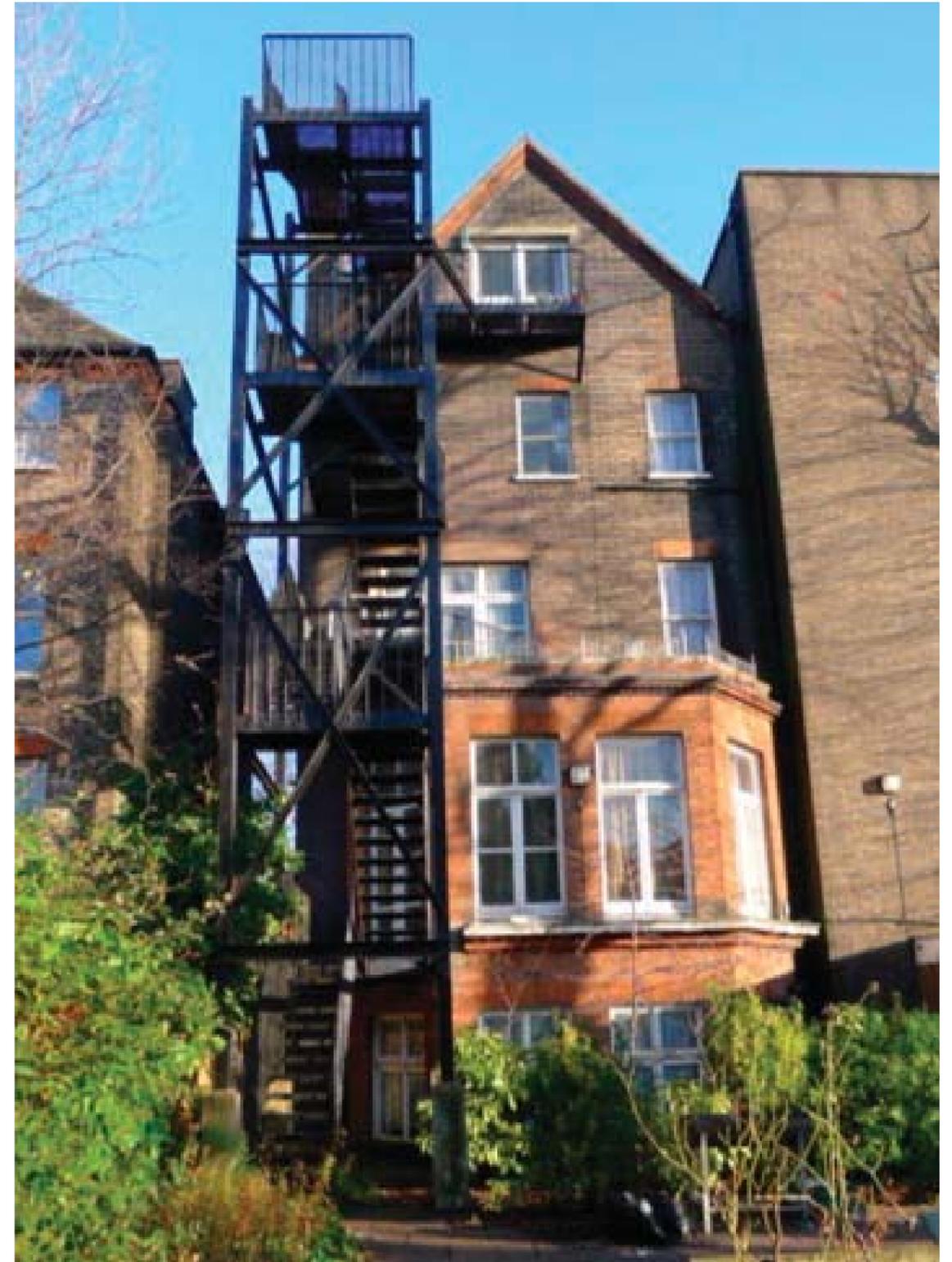
Original architectural character of the building marginalised and altered - no longer visually dominant

Harmful form and appearance

Diagrammatic analysis of existing rear elevation



Existing fire escape stair structure, viewed from rear of no.11



Rear elevation, as existing, seen from garden of no.9



Extensions under construction at basement and ground floor levels to rear at 2 and 4 Maresfield Gardens



Substantial neighbouring extension (communal hall / synagogue) at adjacent building no.11



View north-west from escape stair at no.9 - note existing extensions to rear along Maresfield Gardens



View of site (partially obscured by trees) from upper floors of 4 Maresfield Gardens

3. Planning policy context

Statutory provisions

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that when making any determination under the Planning Acts, that determination should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990 also requires that the local planning authority, in exercising their planning functions within conservation areas, pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

National planning policy

The National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is a material consideration in planning decisions. Relevant provisions of the NPPF for this proposal are the requirement for good design that reinforces local distinctiveness (chapter 7) and guidance on conserving and enhancing the historic environment (chapter 12).

Paragraph 129 of the NPPF states that Local Planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal and take that assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

The NPPF further states, at paragraph 131, that in determining planning applications local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 137 states that local planning authorities should treat favourably proposals that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset.

The development plan

The development plan for the area comprises the London Plan 2011, and the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework including the Core Strategy DPD 2010, and the Development Policies DPD 2010-2025. Policies contained in the Core Strategy and Development Policies relating to the built environment are relevant to the application, as explored further below.

Core Strategy Policy CS5 Managing the impact of growth and development sets out how the Council will manage the impact of growth and development in Camden. CS6 Providing quality homes, sets out how the Council will aim to ensure the maximum supply of high quality homes. CS13 Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards sets out policy for reducing the effects of and adapting to climate change. CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage sets out the Council's overarching policy on securing a quality built environment.

Development Management Policy DP3 Contributions to the supply of affordable housing expects all residential developments with a capacity for 10 or more additional dwellings to make a contribution to the supply of affordable housing.

Policy DP6 Lifetime homes and wheelchair housing requires that all housing should meet lifetime homes standards and 10% should either meet wheelchair housing standards or be easily adapted to meet them.

Policy DP8 Accommodation for homeless people and vulnerable people sets out how such accommodation shall be supported, and conditions where its loss will be acceptable.

Policy DP18 Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking sets policy for limiting parking provision in new development, and Policy DP19 Managing the impact of parking sets out detailed considerations relating to the provision of parking.

Policy DP22 Promoting sustainable design and construction requires development to incorporate sustainable design and construction measures.

Policy DP24 Securing high quality design requires all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design.

Policy DP25 of the Development Policies DPD confirms that the Council will (a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas and (b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

Policy DP26 of the Development Policies DPD states that permission will only be granted for development that does not cause harm to amenity, and outlines a number of factors to be considered.

Policy DP27 Basements and lightwells sets out the assessment information the Council will require in such cases, and states that the Council will only permit basement and other underground development that does not cause harm to the built and natural environment and local amenity and does not result in flooding or ground instability.

Other guidance

Camden Planning Guidance (2011) is adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance, and comprises a series of eight documents providing further guidance on matters set out in development plan policy. CPG1: Design, CPG2: Housing, and CPG7: Transport are directly relevant to the proposed development.

The Fitzjohns and Netherall Conservation Area Statement (1991) sets out the special interest of the conservation area (see section 2 above), and provides guidance on the Council's approach to the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area.

The proposed development has been formulated with careful consideration of the aforementioned policy and guidance provisions. In the subsequent section of the report exploring and explaining the Design of the proposed development reference is made where necessary to the relevant policies and guidance, setting out how they are met.

4. Evaluation

Options

A recent planning approval has been gained for the change of use of No.9 to return the premises to a single dwelling house with 12 bedrooms. The applicants now wish to undertake a more comprehensive refurbishment and conversion of the premises, with the aim of improving the external appearance of the building (particularly at the rear), improving energy efficiency for the long-term, maximising living and service space and light at the entrance and lower floors, and creating high quality internal spaces that will meet their family living requirements.

Two approaches to meeting this brief have been explored by the project's architects – the first, making use of permitted development rights available following implementation of the extant change of use permission, together with other works that are not 'development'; the second, a high-quality design response to the challenge of repairing the harm done by previous extensions, additions and alterations, providing a carefully crafted combination of both traditional and contemporary design.

Option 1: the 'non-planning' route

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 (as amended) provides a wide range of opportunities for carrying out extensions, alterations or other improvements to dwellings, subject to various limitations and conditions.

Firstly, the desire to insert various new window openings to the side and rear elevations to improve their appearance and the amount of daylight and sunlight entering the property could be generally met under the permitted development provisions available. Similarly, the repositioning of poorly located windows in the rear elevation could also be addressed in this way.

Secondly, the desire to reduce the visual dominance of the 1970s full height rear extension by reducing it in plan at the third floor to a set-back 'roof room' with terrace and establishing a parapet wall at second floor level could also be carried out under the permitted development provisions available, subject to materials

matching. In this case we believe there is probably no restriction on the provision of a balcony or platform as the alteration at third floor would not be an extension (it would be a reduction) and also it would not be an alteration to the roof.

Having examined where the extent of the original dwellinghouse is likely to have been at the rear of the property (i.e. where the five storey 1970s extension was built from), there is also scope for undertaking a rear extension as permitted development. As the 1970s extension is of such height, demolishing it to make way for a lower, permitted development, extension would result in a significant loss of valuable floorspace. However, the main 2/3 width of the building (where the bay is) could be extended by 4m plan depth (following removal of the fire escape stair), single storey, to a height of 4m assuming that it was set in to 2m from the boundary with no.11 to the north. Such an extension would provide valuable additional lower-ground floor accommodation with the 4m height allowing a good amount of light to penetrate deep into the plan. Making use of the full 4m height allowance would also part obscure the bay at upper ground floor level.

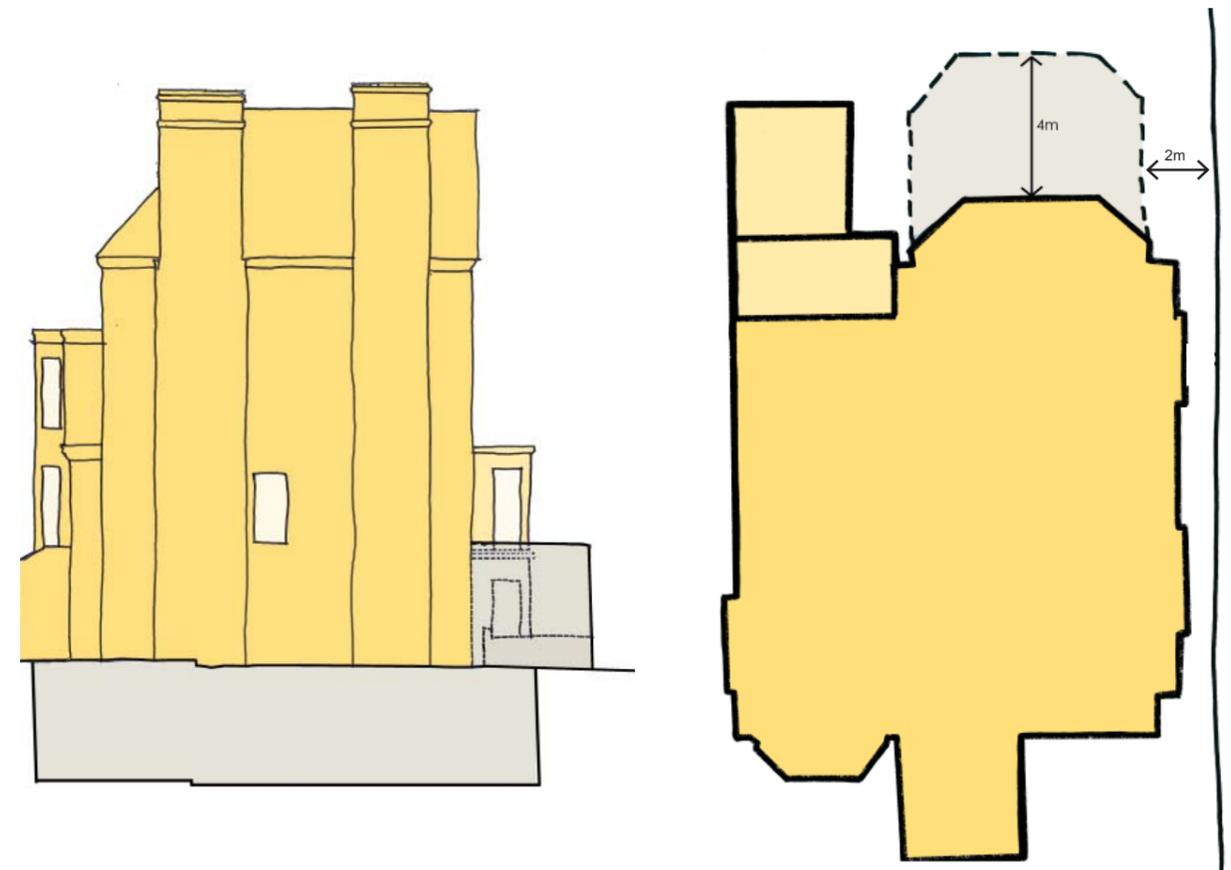
Thirdly, the client requires basement accommodation to provide wine cellars and household storage, and this could be carried out within the footprint of the dwelling without constituting 'development' as long as it had no external manifestation.

In summary, the 'non-planning' route could secure many aspects of the brief in terms of gaining additional floorspace, achieving better internal daylight and sunlight, and in some areas allowing for improvements to be made to the external appearance of the building. However, the constraints imposed by limitations upon permitted development are general and not site-specific, and therefore when applied fully to this particular building allow some unusual and unfortunate results in terms of building form (such as part obscuring the upper-ground level rear bay). Whilst the 'non-planning' option is therefore useful as a baseline or fallback position, it does not meet the key client objective of achieving the highest quality design

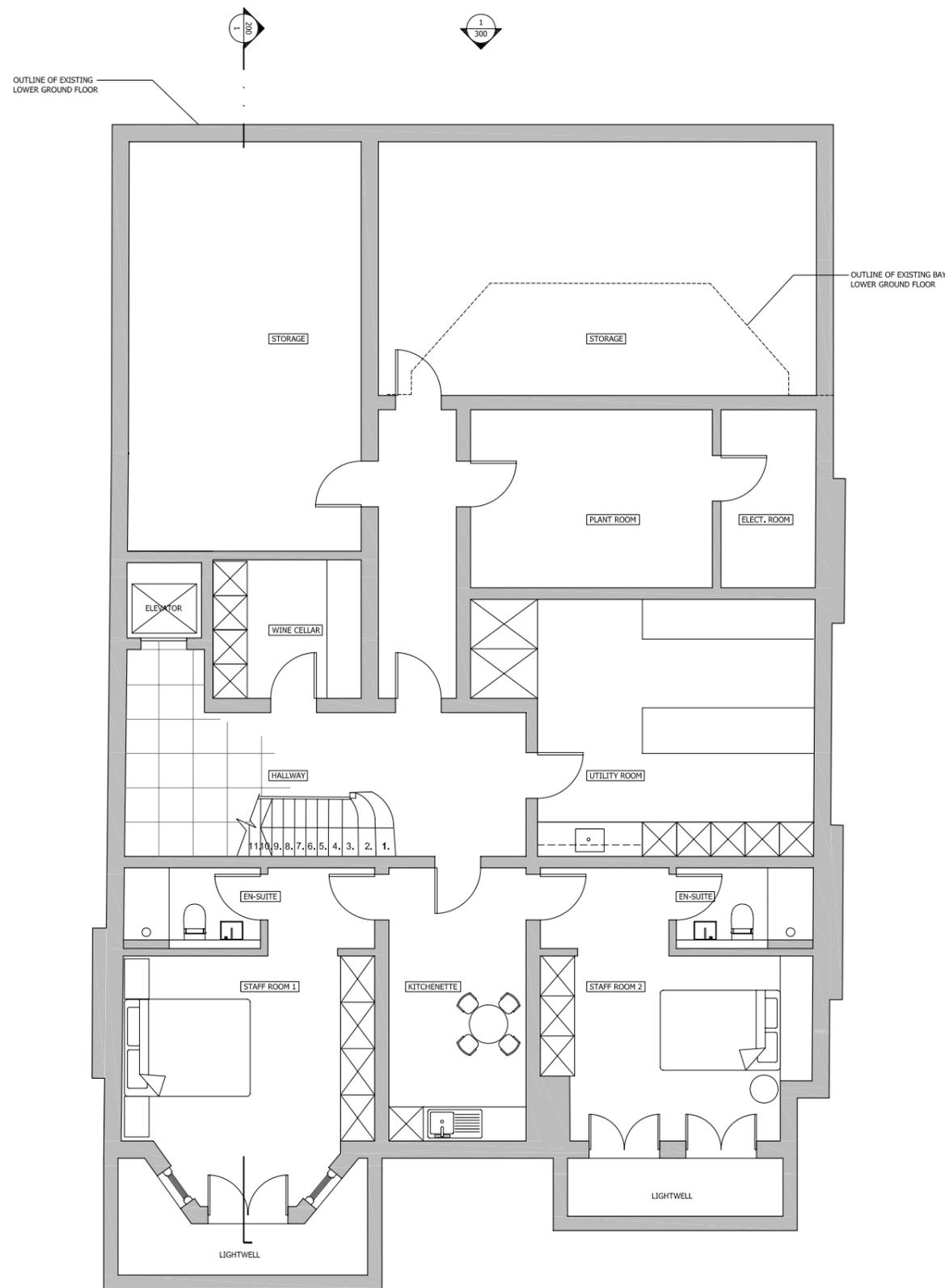
and fully addressing the opportunity to enhance the external appearance of the building at the rear.

Option 2: design-led repair and extension

The second option, taking a design-led approach to remodelling the rear of the house is that now proposed and explored fully in the remainder of this statement. This design combines a high-quality contemporary approach to extending the rear of the building at the lower levels (lower ground / upper ground) with a comprehensive approach – using a more traditional design – to repairing the appearance of the building at the upper, more widely visible, levels. We feel that such an approach re-balances the appearance of the rear of the building. As set out below, it is felt that this option offers a significant enhancement to the appearance of the building, and an overall net enhancement to the character and appearance of the conservation area.



Diagrammatic side elevation / section and plan to show 'non-planning' option



Plan showing proposed basement level and lightwells to front

5. Design

Design: Use / Amount

The proposed use as a single dwelling house is as already approved in the recent grant of planning permission (ref 2012/6451/P) and the relevant planning policy considerations associated with the loss of hostel accommodation and creation of a 12 bedroom single family dwelling house were assessed fully in that application. Returning the building back to its original use a large single family dwelling, commensurate with its scale and prominence and the original vision for the area when laid out in the 1870s, is also considered to be an enhancement to the character of the conservation area.

An increase in the amount of accommodation of 294m² (GEA) is proposed, 233m² of which is located at basement level. The basement accommodation will provide cellaring for wines and the necessary storage and service space associated with the running of a large family home. The total floorspace of the resulting dwelling is 1158m² (existing 864m²). Development Management Policy DM3 requires that developments capable of providing 10 or more dwellings contribute to the provision of affordable housing. The supporting text to that policy at paragraph 3.8 identifies that 1,000m² gross floorspace is used by the Council as a guide to assess such capability.

Whilst the proposed development does exceed the 1,000m² guidance threshold, it is not capable of providing 10 or more dwellings for the following reason. The proposed basement is located between -1m and -4m (below site ground level) and contains most of the increase in floorspace. However, the proposed basement level accommodation is not suitable for use as a self-contained dwelling due to the obvious general lack of light and outlook. Camden Planning Guidance 4 *Basements and Lightwells* confirms at para 2.55 that basement accommodation to provide living space will be subject to the same standards as other housing in terms of space, amenity and sunlight. Camden Planning Guidance 2 *Housing* also provides supplementary guidance on the application of policy DP3 and confirms that in assessing capacity, the Council will take into account whether the additional area is capable of forming habitable space.

As the proposed basement is not floorspace that is capable of being used as a dwelling, it must be discounted from the assessment, giving a total of 925m². However, two habitable rooms (staff bedrooms) are provided at basement level making use of extended depth existing lightwells and this floorspace should be included within the assessment resulting in the total gross floorspace for the purposes of Policy DM3 being 972m².

Notwithstanding the fact that the additional floorspace at basement level that if counted would lead to the breach of the 1,000m² threshold is not capable of being used for habitable rooms or as self-contained dwellings, it is also relevant that similar basement floorspace could be added without the need for planning permission, and therefore without engaging any development plan policy considerations including those regarding affordable housing.

For these reasons stated we believe that the proposed development when properly assessed against Policy DM3 does not trigger a requirement for consideration of affordable housing provision.

Design: Extent of demolition and proposed Layout / Scale / Appearance

Introduction

The Assessment section above provides a thorough analysis of the existing form and appearance of the rear of No.9, and also the varied context of rear elevations within which it is located. It is fair to say that history has not been kind to the rear of this property, and this starting point provides an opportunity for significant enhancement.

The design approach to the rear of the house responds directly to the assessment of place and context, and is simple – it seeks to remove the harmful additions and ‘settle’ the upper parts of the building back into a traditional and formal style, whilst creating a high quality contemporary extension at the lower levels (lower ground / upper ground). Whilst the upper levels are re-ordered with traditional window and door sizes and arrangement, the lower levels are extended with a simple and elegant glass enclosure that encapsulates the existing rear bay window as a dramatic and sculptural form within the enclosure. The diagrams provided (left) show the intention of the design approach – in the existing condition only a vertical central section of the building displays the original architectural character of the building, and the scale, design and prominence of the additions either side (the stair and the 1970s extension) cause a significant degree of visual harm. The proposal (below left) removes the harmful elements and reveals and re-instates the original architectural character at the prominent upper levels, whilst introducing new high quality contemporary additions at the lower, more discreet levels, that are wholly subservient to the re-instated dominance of the host building. The proposed design is fully described below, and assessed in terms of compliance with planning policy, guidance, and its impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Demolition

As noted above, the application building has been the subject of various extensions and alterations in the second half of the 20th Century. The result of this at the rear of the building is stark and harmful in appearance, and the proposed development includes the removal of these later additions and their replacement with more considered and high-

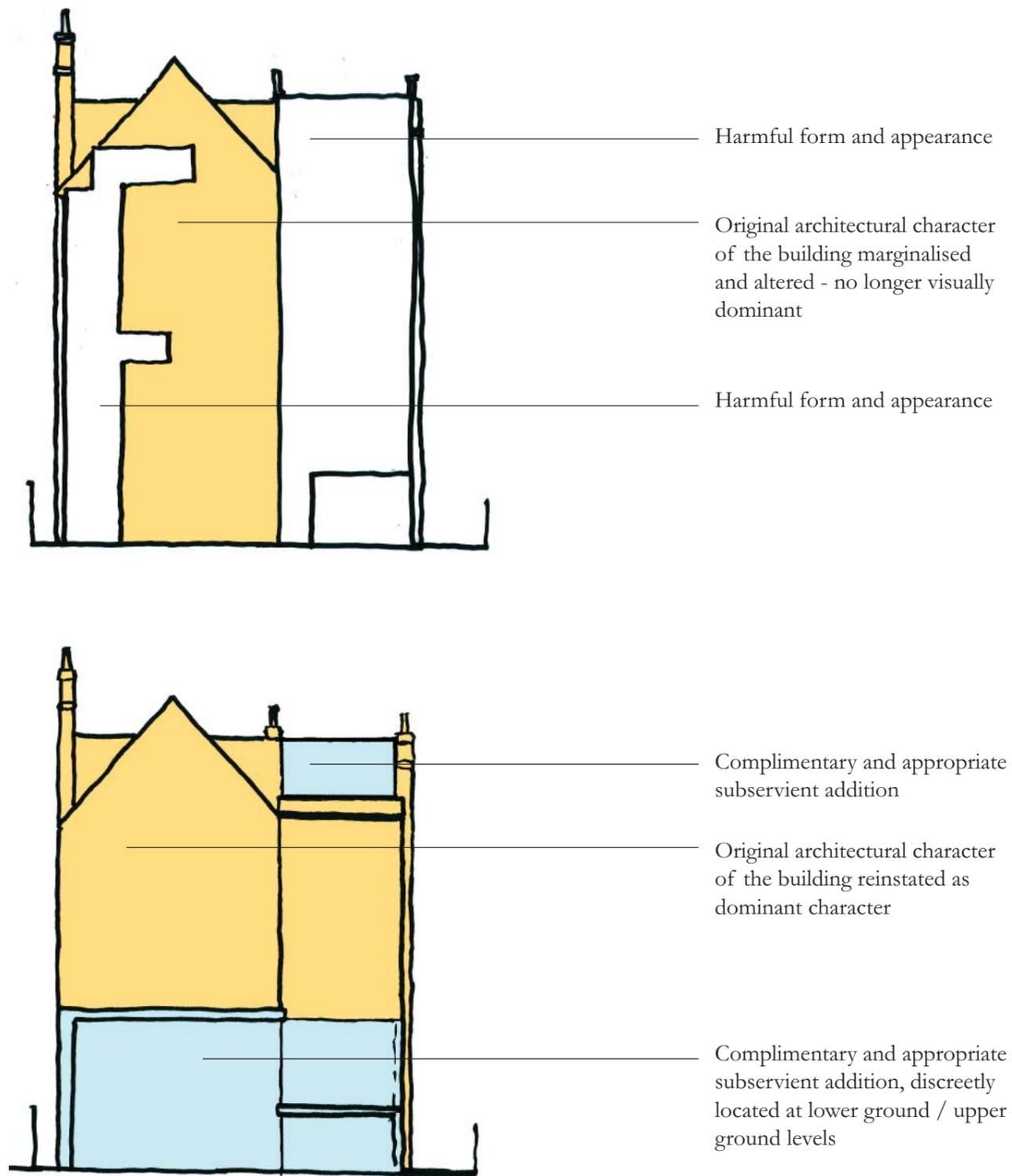
quality built form, as detailed below. A set of plans and elevations showing the full extent of demolition proposed are included in the submission. The key areas of demolition are:

- 1970s five-storey height rear extension / boiler room
- Rear fire escape stair
- Lower ground floor rear wall (bay window)
- Part of upper ground floor rear bay window
- Various small areas of external wall to allow insertion of new windows / doors or repositioning of existing
- Various internal partition walls

The NPPF recognises at para 138 that not all elements of Conservation Areas will contribute to their significance. Camden’s Core Strategy Policy CS14, Development Policy DP25 set out further detail on the Council’s approach to maintain the character of Camden’s conservation areas.

The *Assessment* section provided above in this statement provides a description of the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the contribution that the application building provides to that character and appearance. The utilitarian design and unrelieved mass of the 1970s extensions, together with the alien appearance of the rear stair structure, render those elements of the building harmful to both the host building and the wider character and appearance of the conservation area, and their removal is therefore justified.

It should be noted that the demolition drawings submitted show all areas of built fabric removal and not just those elements of demolition that require Conservation Area Consent. Indeed, we believe that only the demolition of the full height 1970s rear extension could be defined as substantial demolition in the context of this large building. Many of the smaller areas of elements of demolition noted above and upon the drawings are not substantial demolition and could be carried out and subsequent alterations additions made without the need for conservation area consent nor planning permission. For completeness and to avoid confusion all demolition is included on the drawings and put forward in the application for conservation area consent for demolition.



Diagrammatic analysis of existing rear elevation and proposed design approach



Computer generated image of the proposed rear elevation

Layout and scale

The layout and scale of the proposed extensions have been carefully designed to respect and respond to the original architectural form of the building, and to respond to the established character of the surrounding area, including the various lower floor extensions to neighbouring properties described above.

Basement

The proposed basement extends to the rear wall position of the existing lower ground floor extension (to be demolished), and the Arboricultural Assessment submitted confirms that as such there will be no impact on the adjacent trees as the root structure will have developed around the existing lower ground level structure. The rearward extent of the basement is comparable to the rear building line of no.7 to the south. At the front of the building, the existing lightwells serving the lower ground floor are continued down to basement level and will be secured by grilles at the lower ground floor level. Due to the lower ground floor location, together with distance from the street (7m from front boundary) the proposed lightwells will be largely hidden from view and will have no impact on the setting of the building. A Basement Impact Assessment is submitted providing further detailed information to meet the requirements of Policy DP27 Basements and lightwells and the further guidance contained in Camden Planning Guidance 4: Basements and lightwells. The Daylight & Sunlight report submitted confirms that the two basement staff bedrooms will receive an appropriate level of lighting.

Lower ground / upper ground

At these levels the rear extension is effectively in two parts, reflecting the distinctive two-thirds / one-third typology of the host building, and indeed generally throughout the area.

The first part is the double-height space that extends across two-thirds of the width of the rear elevation and some 2.6m from the existing bay. This is 1.3m less in plan than the large full-height steel fire escape stair that it replaces, and 1.4m less than what could be achieved using permitted development rights. Due to the presence of the existing fire escape stair structure that extends further rearward and is of much greater height than the proposed extension, there is a resulting

benefit in terms of the outlook from the rear windows of no.11 to the north. The relevant BRE guidelines regarding impact upon daylight received by the windows to the north (no.11) are met, full details of which are contained in the Daylight and Sunlight Report submitted. An accessible terrace is maintained at first floor level on the retained roof of the projecting bay, as existing.

The second element is linked to the first internally, and extends across the remaining one-third of the rear elevation, providing a winter-garden type room that can be opened up for semi-outdoor living. It is single storey in height and located at lower ground floor level, with an accessible amenity terrace above at upper ground floor level. This element extends 2.5m to the rear beyond the existing wall of the building, and the same distance beyond the extent of the double-height space, further responding to and emphasising the typology of the original host building.

Upper floors

The removal of the existing full height escape stair from the main body of the building takes with it the use of the stair platforms at second and third floors as amenity terraces. These terraces are not replaced in the proposal, and the access doors are removed and replaced with windows as described fully in the appearance section below. The 1970s five-storey addition on the southern third of the rear elevation is, as existing, problematic visually because of its unrelieved mass and poor formal relationship with the main 3-bay wide part of the upper rear elevation. It is proposed to demolish that part of the building (as shown in detail on the Demolition drawings), and rebuild it projecting 2m further to the rear and with a reduced mass at the final (3rd floor) level and also 30cm narrower throughout its height to settle the proportion of the rear facade and to re-establish a clear eaves line. The small projection in depth gives it visual definition and purpose, whilst the reduction in height and the clear parapet expression lines confirm it as a secondary element to the main body of the building. A small amenity terrace is provided at 3rd floor level to enjoy the westerly aspect from, and to be used in association with the small set-back 'roof room' at the same level.



Example 1. East London house (David Mikhail Architects)



Example 2. Hampstead garden flat (Finkernagel Ross Architects)



Example 3. 27 Daleham Gardens (within same conservation area, approved 2005 (2005/3754/P))



Computer generated image - detail of rear lower floors extension and retained bay form within

Appearance

The proposed works to the front of the building are limited to the full replacement of windows with new double glazed timber frame sash windows, and general repair and maintenance of all other materials and decorative features. At second floor level it is also proposed to replace an existing window with timber framed French doors from which the small terrace above the projecting front bay can be accessed, as can be found in the same position on neighbouring properties. Further details regarding landscape and parking are set out below.

New windows and doors (at the lower ground floor level) are proposed on both north and south side elevations, to provide light and natural ventilation into the deep plan of the building, and will be traditional timber frame double glazed units to match the simple design of the original secondary facade openings.

The proposed new basement level has no external manifestation beyond the discreet lightwells at the front of the building, extended down from those existing within the existing lower ground floor level.

At the rear of the building the design approach, as set out above, is to remove the 1970s additions that are poor and harmful in their appearance and to repair and 'settle' the upper parts of the building (1st, 2nd, 3rd floors) to re-establish the dominance of the original architectural style and character of the house in this prominent position. This is achieved by replacing the 1970s tall extension with a more clearly defined and purposeful element, built in brick to match the host building, with reduced massing achieved by a reduction in the width of the vertical brick element and set back top floor with clearly expressed parapet, and timber framed sash windows on rear and side elevations to reduce further the perceived mass. The poorly arranged windows and doors on the main part of upper rear elevation are replaced and repositioned in a symmetrical arrangement, following that generally found in the same area on neighbouring buildings. This formal re-arrangement, together with the replacement of the tall 1970s extension, re-establishes the original architectural style and character of a large and prominent main part of the rear facade.

The rear extensions at lower ground and upper ground floor are designed to be wholly subservient in appearance to the now re-established original architectural characteristic of the host building displayed fully on the floors above. The dynamic, interlocking relationship between the two elements (in scale and in plan) reflects and emphasises the same dynamic found in the plan form of the host building. The double-height element is respectful of the bay form found upon the building and encapsulates it – clearly visible and discernable in its form – within the new double-height space. The extension is purposefully lightweight in appearance to minimise its perceived mass and to provide a clear visual link from the grounds of the house into the building and the retained bay – the same is of course true in reverse, with dramatic views available from upper ground floor out into the large rear garden. The examples shown (left) demonstrate how contemporary design can contribute positively to the architectural significance of a historic building (a Grade II listed building in the example top left) in a historic environment context when it is executed purposefully and with the utmost concern for quality of detailing and materials, and remains subservient to the host building.

Landscape and Access

As existing, at the front of the house the southern half of the front garden provides parking for two cars, with the vehicle entrance opening taken from the southern pier of the central entrance pedestrian entrance gate.

The proposal retains the parking for two vehicles, with a modified vehicle entrance that is relocated approx 1.3m to the south. This modification will allow the setting and prominence of the main entrance to the house to be enhanced, with a new area of grassed landscape to the south of the entrance pathway. This will provide a more balanced appearance to the front of the property, with the visual impact of parked cars reduced as they are moved to the south, away from the formal central axis of the house. Further, the prominence of the central pedestrian gate will be enhanced as a new length of brick wall to the south will be added, resolving the current issue of it

appearing oddly isolated in the middle of the plot. In terms of policies DP19 and DP25/DP26, the proposed alterations will improve both the setting of the building and associated soft landscaping.

The proposed relocated vehicle access will meet the relevant visibility splay requirements as shown on the proposed site plan. There is no impact upon street trees and no requirement for any modification to the existing parking bays marked on the public highway. An alteration to the position of the existing crossover is required, and the applicant will meet all costs associated with the works within the public highway.

In accordance with policy DP18, the presence and retention of two off-street parking spaces will require the development to be ‘car capped’ and will enter into an appropriate legal agreement with the Council to secure this.

A Lifetime Homes compliance prepared by the project’s architects is submitted as part of this application, and demonstrates how the proposal will achieve the Lifetime Homes standards, to comply with policy DP6.

Sustainability

Policy DP22 Promoting sustainable design and construction encourages developments that are not new-build to achieve EcoHomes ‘excellent’. For refurbishment projects EcoHomes assessment procedure has been replaced by BREEAM Refurb methodology.

A BREEAM Refurb pre-assessment has been carried out and confirms that the proposed development will achieve ‘Excellent’ rating, representing a significant enhancement in environmental performance over and above the existing standard of the building.

Summary of compliance with planning policy – layout, scale and appearance and impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area

Development Policy DP24 requires design excellence, and Policy DP25 requires that development in conservation areas preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area. Camden Planning Guidance 1: Design provides further detailed guidance.

Policy DP24 confirms that the Council seeks to

encourage outstanding architecture and design, both in contemporary and more traditional styles. It goes on to state that ‘unless a scheme is within an area of homogenous architectural style that it is important to retain, high quality contemporary design will be welcomed’. The further detailed guidance in CPG1: Design takes this further at section 4.7 under the heading ‘Good practice principles for external alterations’ and states that ‘A harmonious contrast with the existing property and surroundings may be appropriate for some new work to distinguish it from the existing building’. CPG1 goes on to provide further detailed guidance upon materials within section 4.7, stating that

‘In historic areas traditional materials such as brick, stone, timber and render will usually be the most appropriate complement to the existing historic fabric; modern materials such as steel and glass may be appropriate but should be used sensitively and not dominate the existing property.’

The site and its neighbouring buildings, and the conservation area in general, do display a good degree of homogenous architectural style, particularly at the street frontages, as set out fully in the assessment section above. However, that homogeneity is greatly reduced at the rear of the buildings, where a range of original and later added building forms and styles give a good degree of variety to the appearance and character – particularly at the lower floors - whilst generally conforming to some basic rhythm and uniformity in the plan form and roofscape.

The proposed development re-instates the original architectural character of the rear of the building at the upper floors, re-establishing as the dominant character those most prominent parts of the building. At the lower floors, it is of much lesser importance to maintain what little original architectural style remains at the building, as those lower floors do not contribute significantly to the character and appearance of the area. This is clearly evidenced by the variety and diversity existing along the rear of the street, and recent planning approvals for lower ground and ground floor rear extensions in a variety of forms and architectural styles in Fitzjohn’s Avenue and properties to the rear in Maresfield Gardens.

The rear extensions at lower level and the design of the roof room proposed do carefully and appropriately respond to the considerations set out in Policy DP24 (a-c, in particular) and the guidance in CPG1: Design in terms

of form, layout and scale. Accordingly, we believe that the use of high quality contemporary design and materials to execute such building forms achieves what CPG1 usefully terms ‘a harmonious contrast’ – the harmony is found in the form, scale and layout and its relationship to the host building and surrounding area, whilst the contrast is found in the sensitive use of contemporary design and materials. The result is clearly defined and high-quality, sensitive in its relationship with the host building, and wholly secondary and subservient to the (re-instated) dominant character of the host building.

Whilst the proposals at the rear of the building represent high quality and appropriate design in their own right, the existing poor quality and harmful form and appearance of the rear of the building allows the proposals to not only preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, but also to provide a clear enhancement, meeting both the statutory obligations and the requirements of the NPPF and development plan policies CS14 and DP25.

Summary of compliance with planning policy – amenity considerations

Policy DP26 sets out the Council’s requirements for development to not cause harm to amenity, both in terms of neighbouring occupiers and future occupiers of the development proposed.

Two Daylight and Sunlight reports are submitted as part of this application, one examining impact on neighbouring properties, the other the internal living conditions of the proposed dwelling. Both reports conclude that the relevant BRE standards are met. In terms of the further requirements relating to internal space standards, the proposed dwelling will provide high quality internal accommodation with generous room sizes. Storage space is well provided for at basement level, allowing the remaining rooms of the house to be used to their optimum spatial performance. Cycle storage space is available internally upon entry at lower ground floor level. Refuse and recycling storage will be provided in a small enclosure located discreetly on the south side of the house.

A large rear garden is also maintained, and specific design features of the layout of the house allow a strong connection between house and garden at the lower floors of the building.

In terms of avoiding overlooking of neighbouring properties and gardens, it should be noted that there are existing amenity areas at first, second and third floors on the rear elevation of the building, and also a series of balconies at the rear of no.7 to the south that allow extensive overlooking of the garden of no.9. The proposed small amenity terrace at roof level follows the guidance in CPG1 (para 5.25) on roof level terraces, and provides views to the west and north, avoiding any overlooking into the upper level windows of no.7 to the south.

The impact of the construction phase of the development upon the amenity of neighbouring properties will be minimised through the application of the measures set out in Section 4 of the Structural Engineering Planning Report submitted as part of this application.

6. Conclusion

This statement sets out a detailed assessment of the site and context, a description of how the proposals have been formulated in response to that assessment to enhance the building and the conservation area, and an assessment of how the development complies with planning policies and guidance at national, regional and borough levels. The proposed development will transform a building that has been neglected and harmed over the last half-century into an exemplar of what the Council’s guidance terms ‘harmonious contrast’ design. The original character of the building will be re-instated to the degree that it once again becomes prominent and dominant, with a carefully crafted and subservient contemporary extension at the lower levels, and a small contemporary addition at roof level. Further improvements to the front of the building and its landscape setting are also proposed.

The resulting dwelling will not only provide a net enhancement to the character and appearance of the conservation area, but will also deliver an exemplary standard of family accommodation, with a greatly enhanced environmental performance secured for its future use.

For these reasons we believe that planning permission and conservation area consent should be granted.