

Address:	Land North of St Edmund's Terrace Primrose Hill London NW8 7QU	
Application Number:	2011/0919/P	Officer: Gavin Sexton
Ward:	Camden Town with Primrose Hill Swiss Cottage	
Date Received:	17/02/2011	
<p>Proposal: Erection of three blocks of flats (two 6-storey blocks and one 5-storey block) with basement to provide 41 (32 private and 9 affordable) residential units (Use Class C3) and erection of 2 storey dwelling with basement (Use Class C3), following demolition of existing 8 flats and 2 houses.</p>		
<p>Drawing Numbers: P_00_G100_003A, P_00_JA12_001A, P_00_JA12_002A, E_S_G100_001A E, E_N_G100_001A E, E_E_G100_001A E, E_W_G100_001A E, E_S_G100_002A E, E_N_G100_002A E, E_E_G100_002A E, E_W_G100_002A E, S_AA_G100_001A, S_BB_G100_001A, S_AA_G100_002A, S_BB_G100_002A, P_00_G200_001B, P_01_G200_001B, P_02_G200_001B, P_03_G200_001B, P_04_G200_001A, P_05_G200_001A, P_RF_G200_001A, P_B1_G200_001A, P_B2_G200_001A, P_00_G200_002B, P_01_G200_002B, P_02_G200_002B, P_03_G200_002B, P_04_G200_002A, P_05_G200_002A, P_RF_G200_002A, P_B1_G200_002B, P_B2_G200_002A, E_S_G200_001B, E_N_G200_001A, E_E_G200_001B, E_W_G200_001A, E_S_G200_002B, E_N_G200_002A, E_E_G200_002B, E_W_G200_002A, S_AA_G200_001A, S_BB_G200_001A, S_CC_G200_001A, S_DD_G200_001A, S_AA_G200_002A, S_BB_G200_002A, S_CC_G200_002A, S_DD_G200_002A, S_EE_G200_002A, S_FF_G200_002A, B1_P_00_G200_001B, B1_P_01_G200_001B, B1_P_02_G200_001B, B1_P_04_G200_001A, B1_P_05_G200_001A, B2_P_00_G200_001A, B2_P_01_G200_001A, B2_P_02_G200_001A, B2_P_04_G200_001A, B2_P_05_G200_001A, B3_P_B1_G200_001A, B3_P_00_G200_001A, B3_P_01_G200_001A, B3_P_02_G200_001A, B3_P_03_G200_001A, B3_P_04_G200_001A, B1_E_S_G200_001B, B1_E_N_G200_001A, B1_E_E_G200_001B, B1_E_W_G200_001A, B2_E_S_G200_001A, B2_E_N_G200_001A, B2_E_E_G200_001A, B2_E_W_G200_001A, B3_E_S_G200_001B, B3_E_N_G200_001B, B3_E_E_G200_001B, B3_E_W_G200_001B, TH_P_B1_G200_001A, TH_P_00_G200_001A, TH_P_01_G200_001A, TH_E_AL_G200_001A, D_AL_G251_001A, P_AL_D811_001A, B2_P_00_D811_01_001A, B2_P_01_D811_02_001A, B1_P_03_D811_03_001A, and B3_P_02_D811_04_001A.</p>		
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant conditional permission subject to S106 legal agreement.		
Applicant:	Agent:	
Regents Park Estate (GP) Ltd c/o Agent Montagu Evans	Montagu Evans Clarges House 6-12 Clarges Street London W1J 8HB	

ANALYSIS INFORMATION

Land Use Details:			
	Use Class	Use Description	Floorspace
Existing	C3 Dwelling House	Various Thames-water related infrastructure functions (sui generis)	Housing: 968m ² Total site area: 4100 m ²
Proposed	C3 Dwelling House	Various Thames-water related infrastructure functions (sui generis)	Housing: 9058m ² GEA

Residential Use Details:										
	Residential Type	No. of Bedrooms per Unit								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9+
Existing	Flat/Maisonette	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Proposed	Flat/Maisonette	5	16	7	13	-	-	-	-	-

Parking Details:		
	Parking Spaces (General)	Parking Spaces (Disabled)
Existing	10	0
Proposed	29	4

OFFICERS' REPORT

Reason for Referral to Committee: The application is a major development and is required to be reported to the Development Control Sub-Committee by clause 3(i).

1.0 SITE

- 1.1 The site is situated on St Edmund's Terrace on the south-western edge of Primrose Hill. It is located south of the Barrow Hill Reservoir, with an 87 metre frontage to St Edmund's Terrace. The site is concealed by a screen of trees and vegetation behind black railings to the St Edmund's Terrace frontage. The existing buildings on site range from 1-6 storeys and are of no architectural or historical merit. They consist of post-war residential buildings, disused workshops and Thames Water facilities, set amongst access roads, car parking and hard landscaping surfaces.
- 1.2 The Barrow Hill Reservoir outside of the site to the rear (North) is a large barrel vaulted structure. Although its white form is visible from afar and its presence is unmistakeable, its low scale does not disturb the continuation of the green open spaces. The site is surrounded by an abundance of designated public open space to its East in Primrose Hill. Ormonde Terrace facing onto Primrose Hill is a Victorian terrace of four storeys with basement and roof level accommodation. Directly South of the site is Danes Court which presents 9-floors of accommodation to St Edmunds terrace, adjoining 3 and 4 storey post-war housing. The St. Edmund's Terrace southern streetscape elevation consists of short rows of contemporary, low scale terrace housing juxtaposed with large mansion style residences. Their building scale and character is diverse, however the urban blocks are

defined by a relatively consistent fine urban grain. Generally the buildings fronting St Edmunds Terrace are of the order of 4 to 6 storeys tall.

- 1.3 The existing entrance to the site is immediately adjacent to a large pedestrian entrance to Primrose Hill. The site is within 250m of the nearest playground in the park.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for the demolition of the existing 10 residential units on site and replacement with 40 residential flats within three 5 and 6 storey blocks and a further 'gate-house' dwelling. The blocks would be orientated with long elevations facing East/West and are numbered 1 to 3 from West to East on the drawings. They would be set behind an entrance driveway and areas of landscaping, approx 10m back from the St Edmunds Terrace frontage. New roads on the West and East boundaries of the site would be constructed in order to allow access by large vehicles to the Barrow Hill reservoir to the North (rear). An existing Thames Water borehole would be retained in the North East corner of the site.
- 2.2 The proposal includes a shared basement level which incorporates a communal swimming pool, car parking for 33 vehicles (including up to four disabled bays) and servicing related plant rooms. The gate house has its own separate basement.
- 2.3 The proposals are for 40 residential flats (5 x one-bed, 15 x two-bed, 7 x three-bed, 13 x four-bed flats) and a two-bed dwelling in the form of a gate-house. The flats would be provided within three blocks. Block 1 to the West would contain 8 affordable units, provided at ground and first floors, with 8 market units on the top four floors. The affordable units at ground floor would be social rented (1 each of one-, two-, three- and four- bed units) and at first floor they would be intermediate (1 one-bed and 3 two-bed). The affordable units would be served by their own entrance to the ground floor of block 1, accessed via a separate gate in the street frontage. Internally the shared ownership units on the first floor would be accessed via the central stairwell. Blocks 2 and 3 would contain 12 market units each.

Revisions

- 2.4 Various revisions have been received during the course of the application:
- The housing provision has been amended to include 8 units of affordable housing in block 1.
 - The parking provision in the basement has been amended to reduce the number of available spaces from 37 to 33.
 - A Basement Impact Assessment has been submitted.
 - An additional pedestrian entrance has been incorporated close to the entrance to Primrose Hill.
 - Demolition drawings were submitted.
 - Minor amendments were made to the East elevation of block 3 including provision of framework at lower level to support ivy growth for screening purposes

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 The design proposals for the site have evolved extensively during pre-application discussions with officers and following engagement with local community groups and

individuals. In particular the height and bulk of the blocks was discussed extensively with officers.

- 3.2 In **April 2009** an application (2009/0113/P0) was **refused** for demolition of ten vacant residential units (8 flats and 2 semi-detached houses) and redevelopment of the site to provide 22 residential units (three 3-bed, thirteen 4-bed, and two each of 5-bed, 6-bed and 7-bed) within two linked blocks; plus associated basement facilities: fitness and leisure, car parking (24 spaces), cycle storage/parking (88 spaces), servicing, refuse stores and plant & machinery.

Reasons for refusal included:

- Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the quantity, quality and distribution of affordable housing is the best that could be achieved across this site and across the linked application site of Twyman House.
- The proposal, by reason of its scale, bulk, height and detailed design, would be detrimental to character of the area.
- The proposal, by reason of its scale, bulk, height and siting, would be detrimental to important local views.
- The proposal, by reason of its scale, bulk, height and siting, would be detrimental to the appearance, setting and enjoyment of public open space.

- 3.3 **April 1966** planning permission was granted for erection of two 3-bedroom houses and eight 3-bedroom flats on the site. This permission was implemented.

Other local sites

Guinness Court (St Edmunds Terrace)

- 3.4 **December 2010** planning permission was granted subject to S106 (2010/4850/P) for erection of two buildings (4-storeys and 6-storeys) with basement to provide 64 (28 private and 36 affordable) residential units (2 x 4-bedroom, 15 x 3-bedroom, 19 x 2-bedroom, and 28 x 1-bedroom) with 29 car parking spaces (19 underground and 10 surface level), 71 cycle parking spaces, and associated landscaping (following demolition of all existing buildings on site).

Barrow Hill Reservoir

- 3.5 Although no application has been submitted it is understood from Thames Water that the decommissioned reservoir is to be replaced by a new one which would be brought into service. Details are currently under discussion with officers and an application is expected in the coming months. It is understood that Thames Water have had detailed discussions with the owners of the application site regarding the phasing of work and the implications for construction are acknowledged in the submitted Construction Management Plan.

Regent Heights (35 St Edmunds Terrace)

- 3.6 **November 2000** planning permission was granted for (PEX000080/R1) erection of a 7 storey building plus basement parking comprising twelve flats and four dwelling houses.

4.0 CONSULTATIONS

Statutory Consultees

4.1 **Environment Agency - No objection**

- Recommend surface water management good practice advice in cell F5 of Flood Risk Standing Advice to manage surface water run-off and ensure drainage does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

4.2 **Royal Parks - Objection.**

- Design has been improved – in particular relating to access roads.
- Building closest to Primrose Hill is overbearing on the green space.
- There is too great a potential for light spill.

4.3 **Thames Water:**

- Recommend a number of informatives related to development on land under which water mains pass.

4.4 **City of Westminster - No objection**

4.5 **TfL - No objection due to the distance of the site from the TLRN**

4.6 **Conservation Area Advisory Committee**

The site is not in a Conservation Area but the **Primrose Hill and Regent's Park CAACs** have objected in a joint submission:

- Bulk and mass of block 3 is too high and over-dominant especially in views from lower locations within Primrose Hill but also in views from higher locations.
- Would prefer to see one storey removed from block 3 to bring it to level comparable to Ormonde Terrace. Would suggest that additional storey could be added to block 1 which would be less damaging.
- Unconvinced by general design approach which is too monumental for this informal location. Concerned about impact of white masonry on the Hill. Welcome revised treatment to rooftop elevations. Advise that framework provided to Hill elevation of block 3 to enable growth of vertical greenery to screen masonry.
- Advise that landscape plan should be agreed with Royal Parks and secured by S106 for a planting scheme within Hill adjacent to area of site.
- Opposed to any scheme which does not include Affordable Housing.

4.7 **Adjoining Occupiers**

A site notice was displayed outside the site from 09/03/11 to 30/03/11. The application was advertised in the Ham & High on 17/03/11. Letters of notification were sent to the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Number of letters sent	28
Total number of responses received	29
Number of electronic responses	24
Number in support	14
Number of objections	15

Letters of objection were received from residents at 5 and 11 St Edmunds Terrace, 52, 65 Ormonde Terrace and Ormonde Terrace Ltd (two letters - on behalf of residents of Ormonde Terrace) and residents of Danes Court at flats 1, 2, 5, 16, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 27. The objections raised have been summarised below:

4.8 **Impact on Danes Court:**

- Block light, add to local noise, would introduce overlooking.
- Views of Primrose Hill lost from flats.

4.9 **General Amenity**

- Windows would be close to existing properties on St Edmunds Terrace.
- Disruption over 18-24 months intolerable.
- Little amenity or open space provided on site.
- Increased potential for overlooking.

4.10 **Transport**

- Amount of traffic generated – both during and after construction.
- Allowance of one car-space per unit is flawed and will lead to increased on-street parking congestion, especially at weekends.
- Additional local traffic will make St Edmunds Terrace/Wells Rise junction and corner of Ormonde Terrace more dangerous and a safety risk to families using Primrose Hill.

4.11 **Design**

- Overdevelopment of the site creating urban canyon along street.
- Will dominate view from the Hill, especially in winter.
- Height should be reduced so development not visible from within Primrose Hill, especially from top of hill and on eastwards paths.
- Views from within Primrose Hill not preserved.
- Failure to accurately take into account impact on existing townscape and built environment is serious defect of proposals.
- Proposed buildings will draw the eye from summit of Primrose Hill.
- Proposals are intrusive and insensitive.
- Proposals will cause harm to wholeness, appearance and setting of open space.

4.12 Letters of **support** have been received from 14 local residents.

- Site will benefit from development
- Currently site is an eyesore, blot on landscape.
- Very good architecture and well finished buildings.
- Proposals seem well considered in design and scale.
- Will enhance surroundings.
- Look forward to completion of architecture which blends in with natural beauty of Primrose Hill.
- St Edmunds Terrace has mix of good and not-so-good developments and this will enhance area.
- Scheme is sensitive to surrounding park land and residential uses.

4.13 **Elsworthy Residents Association:**

- Qualified support as an improvement over previous scheme.
- Unclear whether view of GPO tower will be lost.
- Hope that PV on rooftop will not be visible above roof line.

5.0 **POLICIES**

5.1 **London Plan (Consolidated with alterations since 2004) February 2008**

Key London Plan policies

- 3A.1 Increasing London's supply of housing
- 3A.2 Borough housing targets
- 3A.3 Maximising the potential of sites
- 3A.7 Large residential developments
- 3A.8 Affordable housing
- 3A.9 Affordable housing targets
- 3A.10 Negotiating affordable housing in individual private residential and mixed-use schemes
- 3A.11 Affordable housing
- 3D.10 Metropolitan Open Land 178
- 3D.14 Biodiversity and nature conservation
- 4A.7 Renewable energy

5.2 London Plan Interim Housing SPG dated April 2010 London Plan (Consultation draft replacement plan 2009)

- Policy 3.4 Optimising housing potential
- Policy 3.13 Negotiating affordable housing on individual private residential and mixed use schemes
- Policy 7.19 Biodiversity and access to nature
- Policy 3.10 Mixed and balanced communities

5.3 LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

Core Strategy Policies

- CS1 Distribution of growth
- CS4 Areas of more limited change
- CS5 Managing impact of growth
- CS6 Providing quality homes
- CS11 Sustainable travel
- CS13 Tackling climate change
- CS14 High quality places and conserving heritage
- CS15 Parks, open spaces and biodiversity
- CS16 Health and wellbeing
- CS17 Safer places
- CS18 Waste and recycling
- CS19 Delivering and monitoring the Core Strategy

Development Policies

- DP1 Mixed use development
- DP2 Making full use of housing capacity
- DP3 Affordable housing
- DP5 Homes of different sizes
- DP6 Lifetime homes and wheelchair housing
- DP16 Transport implications of development
- DP17 Walking, cycling and public transport
- DP18 Parking standards
- DP19 Impact of parking
- DP20 Movement of goods and materials
- DP21 Highway network
- DP22 Promoting sustainable design and construction
- DP23 Water

- DP24 High quality design
- DP26 Impact on occupiers and neighbours
- DP27 Basements and lightwells
- DP28 Noise and vibration
- DP29 Improving access
- DP31 Open space and outdoor recreation
- DP32 Air quality and clear zone

5.4 **Supplementary Planning Policies**

- CPG 2006
- CPG 2011:
 - Design CPG 1
 - Housing CPG 2
 - Sustainability CPG 3
 - Basements and lightwells CPG4
- Draft Amenity CPG6
- Draft Planning Obligations CPG8

5.5 **Site Allocations Document**

The site is #48. The suggested approach for site re-development is for '*Residential-led redevelopment to make the most of this unique site whilst safeguarding the setting of and views from Primrose Hill*'. Development will be expected to:

- Contribute towards affordable housing
- Be of an appropriate scale, bulk and mass so as not to appear overly dominant in the St Edmund's Terrace street scene or when viewed from surrounding parkland
- Contribute towards the verdant streetscape of St Edmund's Terrace and address community safety through design
- Safeguard important views from Primrose Hill
- Provide on site open space and enhance the quality of adjacent spaces

6.0 **ASSESSMENT**

6.1 The principal consideration material to the determination of this application are summarised as follows:

- Land use
- Housing
- Design
- Neighbour amenity;
- Transport
- Open space
- Sustainability
- Basement
- Other issues

Land use

6.2 The existing buildings on site comprise a pair of semi-detached three bedroom dwellings and a four storey block of 8x three-bedroom flats. The buildings have all been empty for some time and are occupied only by live-in site security. The site allocation document suggested use for the site is housing, with a contribution to affordable housing. The principle of replacement housing on site is therefore acceptable in terms of policy CS6 and DP2 of the LDF which seek to maximise the provision of new housing within the borough.

The site is not in a Conservation Area and therefore the demolition is not accompanied by an application for Conservation Area Consent. The redevelopment would not result in the net loss of any housing units and therefore the demolition is not resisted in principle.

Housing: Affordable Housing

- 6.3 Policy DP3 expects new development to make a contribution to affordable housing. The proposals involve the provision of 8090sqm GEA of net additional habitable floorspace over the existing 968sqm. This additional space exceeds the threshold capacity of 50 units (5000sqm) beyond which 50% affordable provision is expected.
- 6.4 Policy DP3 sets out that the Council will expect affordable housing provision to be on-site. As originally submitted the scheme proposed no affordable housing on site, nor off-site in a direct manner, for reasons of viability. In order to demonstrate the viability argument against the provision of affordable housing, the applicant submitted a detailed economic appraisal of the site prepared by Shaw Corporation. The appraisal examined the viability of housing on site in four distinct scenarios, based on different proportions of tenure types within the proposed buildings. The four scenarios tested by the viability assessment were as follows:
1. policy compliant scheme (50% affordable, 50% market)
 2. scheme providing 22% affordable housing (45% social rented/55% intermediate)
 3. scheme providing 22% intermediate-only affordable housing
 4. fully market based scheme
- 6.5 Of the options tested, the viability assessment found that only option 4 (fully market led scheme) would lead to an acceptably profitable scheme, albeit with a negative residual value. The viability of the policy compliant (50% scheme) would fall significantly short of viable delivery, as would the 20% SR/Intermediate mix, both of which would produce negative residual values. The findings of the viability report were that the developer would take a reduced profit from the scheme, even in the event of building out the all-market scheme, with all costs and sales values being as predicted.
- 6.6 The shortfall in the ability of the development to generate a positive return is linked in part to the exceptional costs of the site. The site was originally purchased from Thames Water and comes encumbered with easements related to the below ground water main infrastructure and requirements to maintain access routes to the Barrow Hill Reservoir and the abstraction borehole to the rear of the site. Officers acknowledge that the site has significant underground constraints which add to the complexity, timescales and hence cost of development and which place limitations on the extent of the site which can be reasonably and practically built on.
- 6.7 The Council engaged independent valuers (BPS) to test the evidence and conclusions of the viability assessment. BPS undertook an in-depth review of the assessment which was supplemented by additional evidence and sensitivity information from the applicant. A number of meetings with representatives of the applicant were also held in order to discuss particular issues and test assumptions. It is considered that the BPS analysis was a comprehensive assessment of the submission details.
- 6.8 However officers remained convinced that the site had the capacity to support affordable housing and so a further alternative scenario was examined with a nominal 10% of the housing uplift provided as affordable floorspace. This led to the current affordable housing package, each element of which is discussed in further detail below:
- A) 11.5% of net additional floorspace (932m2 GEA) on site to be affordable housing comprising:

- a. Four Social Rented units (1 each of one-, two-, three- and four- bed units) at ground floor
- b. Four Intermediate (1 one-bed and 3 two-bed) at first floor
- B) An off-site contribution to enable development at Guinness Court
- C) A deferred affordable housing contribution.

- 6.9 **A) 11.5% provision on-site** The applicant has demonstrated that the scheme would be expensive to deliver, due to characteristics of the site, the specification and exceptional costs. Officers accept that there are limitations to the extent to which affordable housing may be provided on site, for viability reasons. There are also layout and access issues that arise in respect of providing affordable units which would not attract unaffordable service charges or introduce other practical issues about sharing facilities and hence costs on site. These issues are evident in the need to provide a distinct entrance to the affordable units and self-contained bin and bike storage areas within the bottom two floors of block 1. It is considered therefore that the provision of 11.5% of new floorspace as affordable housing on site is the maximum that could reasonably be expected from the proposed scheme. The characteristics of the affordable provision are discussed in further detail in the following section (Affordable Housing mix and type). Final details securing the affordability of the units would be secured by S106 legal agreement.
- 6.10 **B) Off-site contribution** Guinness Trust has indicated that their Guinness Court development (see site history) was budgeted on the basis of receipt of HCA grant for 13 new Social Rented units. The loss of that grant has required a re-consideration of their scheme which would lead to the provision of those 13 SR units as affordable rent instead. This would be a significant change to the affordability of the units and would be an unfortunate impact of the change to HCA grant funding. The extant planning permission for the site arose from a long process of negotiation and the officers report presented to Members noted that the *"the proposed development is ... at the margins of viability and a higher level of affordable housing provision would render the scheme financially unviable"*. Guinness Trust has subsequently calculated that their budgetary shortfall amounts to £1.1M. The applicant has offered to cover this shortfall in the form of a financial contribution. It is regrettable that further money is required to deliver Social Rented units which have already been approved and expected. However it is considered that this contribution would enable the delivery of a tenure which is proving increasingly difficult to achieve in the Borough and is acceptable.
- 6.11 **C) Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution** The scheme would not deliver the LDF target of 50% on-site affordable housing. Officers recommend that the scheme be approved despite this shortfall, due to the problems achieving viability in the current market conditions, in particular where receiving finance for relatively complex schemes such as this, appears to be difficult. However officers further recommend that consent should only be granted on the basis that scheme's viability be re-appraised at a later stage. In the event that the viability improves to such an extent that the development could bear the costs of more affordable housing and yet still make a sufficient profit for there to be a proper incentive for a developer to bring it forward, the developer would make a greater contribution to affordable provision in the borough, in the form of a financial sum. The contribution itself would be capped at the 50% GEA target for the development, calculated using the formula in CPG, less the floorspace provided on site and enabled at Guinness Court. Officers recommend that the re-appraisal be undertaken as close as possible to the point of completion of the development or once sales of a significant proportion of the units has been achieved. This measure would be secured by S106 legal agreement.

Affordable Housing mix and type

- 6.12 The tenure split in floorspace terms is 408sqm: 295sqm (NIA) which equates to roughly 72:28 and is an acceptable split. The size and mix of units is acceptable within each Affordable Tenure type and in particular the provision of two large family sized social rented units is welcomed.
- 6.13 Locations on site for affordable housing are very limited due to the constraints of the scheme and the sloping site. The scheme uses a central lobby in block 2 as the access point for all market units and this would bring with it considerable service charges. It is therefore necessary to separate the access arrangements for the affordable tenures, with block 1 providing the only workable practical location providing level access and floorplates which could reasonably accommodate affordable housing.
- 6.14 The affordable provision would achieve a good standard of internal amenity, with high floor to ceiling heights and generously sized flats. The standard of outlook and daylight of the flats is considered in the section on amenity below. The affordable flats were originally to be sold at market rate and are considered to have an acceptable standard of internal amenity. Overall the quality, mix, type and amenity of affordable housing provision on site is acceptable. Final details of the affordable housing internal layout, as agreed by an RSL, would be secured as part of the S106 legal agreement.

Housing Density

- 6.15 Policy CS1 of the LDF Core Strategy seeks to focus growth in the most accessible parts of the Borough. In order to make the most efficient use of land higher density development is encouraged in those locations which are well served by public transport and there is an expectation that densities will be towards the higher end of the density ranges set out in the London Plan. It also states that development schemes with a density below that of the surrounding area will normally be resisted. The emphasis on higher density development is reinforced by policy DP2 of the LDF Development Policies.
- 6.16 Policy 3A.3 of the London Plan (2008) requires that the potential of development sites be maximised. The application site does not fit neatly into the matrix in terms of its 'setting'. The area would be described as an 'urban' location given its distance from a town centre, however, in terms of the predominant form of development within the area (4-6 storeys) it would be categorised as a 'central' location. On the basis of the matrix a development on the site should seek to provide between 35-95 and 35-110 units per hectare depending on the number of habitable rooms provided per unit. The density matrix remains unchanged in the emerging replacement London Plan (2010). The scheme proposals are at a density of approx 430 habitable rooms/hectare (which equates 98.5 units/ha) which accords with the density recommended by London Plan matrix of Table 3A.2 (which accompanies policy 3A.3) for a site of PTAL rating 2-3.
- 6.17 The scheme proposals are at a density of approx 430 habitable rooms/hectare (which equates 98.5 units/ha) which accords with the density recommended by London Plan matrix of Table 3A.2 (which accompanies policy 3A.3) for a site of PTAL rating 2-3. The proposed density would accord with the recommendations of policy CS1 which refers to the London Plan matrix and is acceptable.

All Housing: Standard of accommodation

- 6.18 Policy DP26 of the LDF Development Policies requires development to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation in terms of their internal arrangement, dwelling sizes and amenity space. Camden's CPG on Housing sets out the Council's standards for new residential development. In general the quality of amenity for residents would be very high in terms of size of units, accessibility and quality of finish. All of the units would

generously meet the minimum unit and room sizes to accord with both Camden CPG and the Mayor's minimum standards in the London Plan Interim Housing SPG dated April 2010.

- 6.19 The market flats are all accessed via a main lobby entrance and concierge in the central block, or via lifts/stairs from the basement for those arriving by private vehicle or bicycle. In order to minimise the service charge, which is likely to be high for a development of this specification, the affordable units would be accessed via a separate entrance at ground floor to block 1. The Social Rented units would occupy the ground floor and the Intermediate units the first, accessible via the stairwell.
- 6.20 The private flats within the new development would provide a wide mix of unit sizes from 1 to 4 bedrooms, in a mix which is acceptable in terms of policy DP5. The market units would have the benefit of private amenity space in the form of gardens and terraces. The upper floor units have generously sized external terraces. The affordable units would have access to a small portion of open space adjacent to their entrance way. However the application site is located immediately adjacent to the Primrose Hill and is in close proximity to Regents Park. There is a children's playground within Primrose Hill, 250m from the adjacent entrance to the Park, involving no road crossings for residents of the development.

Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Housing

- 6.21 Policy CS6 of the LDF Core Strategy states that the Council should aim to minimise social polarisation and create mixed and inclusive communities by seeking a variety of housing types suitable for different groups including families and people with mobility difficulties. Policy DP6 of the LDF Development Policies seeks to deliver this, it states that 10% of all new housing should either meet wheelchair housing standards, or be easily adapted to meet them. Paragraph 6.9 of the policy states that affordable wheelchair units should be fitted out as such from the outset. Policy DP6 also requires that all new dwellings be designed in accordance with lifetime homes standards to support the changing needs of a family's lifecycle.
- 6.22 The submission documents identify that the units would be expected to meet all of the Lifetime Homes Standards. Furthermore a plan has been submitted indicating how 10% of units would be wheelchair compatible. A single, fitted-out wheelchair unit within the affordable provision would also be provided and secured in its fitted-out form by S106 legal agreement. The Council's access officer raised some minor concerns about the lifetime homes details submitted, however it is likely that these would be easily rectified at the detailed design stage and no further details are required at this point. The provision of all units to be constructed to lifetime homes standards and 10% wheelchair housing should be secured by condition.

Occupier Daylight/Sunlight and outlook amenity

- 6.23 The sloping topography of the site and the desire to avoid the underground water infrastructure places constraints on the developable area of the site. This has led to a relatively high density of the built form on site, with some consequent impact on the amenity of some units.
- 6.24 The applicant has submitted a detailed daylight/sunlight study of occupier amenity. It demonstrates that within the development the majority of windows on principal facades would receive access to daylight in excess of the BRE recommended levels. The exceptions to this are located under the overhang on the south side of block 1, on the secondary block facades which face each other (east elevation of blocks 1 and 2 and west elevations of blocks 2 and 3) and lower ground floor accommodation for the lower level of two duplex flats at the rear of block 3. Windows on these identified elevations would receive below 27% VSC but the daylight study shows that all living rooms and all but three

bedrooms would receive daylight in excess of the recommended ADF levels for the relevant room. The bedrooms affected would be within a duplex private unit across lower ground and ground floors of block 3, with the upper floor living room and bedrooms receiving a good quality of daylight.

- 6.25 The daylight analysis has not been re-run for the re-configured ground and first floors of block 1 (affordable units) however the alterations to the layout has resulted in few changes to the functions of the rooms previously tested and therefore the general results remain relevant. A new window has been added in one instance where the daylight requirements of a room in the new configuration have increased as a result of the change from bedroom to living room. Overall the levels of expected daylight would meet the required BRE standards and are acceptable.

Occupier outlook and privacy

- 6.26 In general all flats would have good quality outlook from all aspects. However the sloping topography of the site would lead to some rooms at the rear of the development having limited outlook. The bedrooms in unit G3 and G4 at rear ground floor in block 1 would be served by large rooflights rather than windows and as demonstrated above they would receive adequate daylight, however they would have no outlook from those bedrooms. G3 is a duplex unit with a dual aspect living room on the upper (1st) floor which would provide an acceptable quality of outlook from the primary living areas and overall the flat would therefore have the benefit of an acceptable level of outlook. Flat G4 would have no outlook other than a skylight in one of the four bedrooms, but would have a good quality of outlook from all remaining rooms. Overall the reduced outlook from the limited number of affected rooms would not be sufficiently harmful to the amenity of those occupants to justify refusal of the proposals and therefore the amenity is considered to be acceptable.
- 6.27 The blocks would be located 8m apart. The location of habitable rooms has been arranged to minimise the potential for overlooking of other rooms of the same function. Living rooms occupy corners of the blocks, with the bedrooms and bathrooms located on the secondary elevations facing the other blocks. The windows on these secondary elevations are staggered and do not face each other directly. The applicant has proposed a frosted glazed screen to a limited number of bedrooms where there would be potential for direct overlooking, although no details have been provided. It is acknowledged that the facing windows on four elevations are closer than the expected minimum distance between facing rooms. However this is a high density development where the majority of occupants would be making an informed choice about purchase, aware of the context and proximity of other residents. It is therefore considered that the relatively close proximity of windows to each other is generally acceptable and a condition on further details of integrated privacy screening would be only required in respect of windows on the ground floors of blocks 1 and 2, where social rented and market units would potentially share limited views of each other. A further condition would be added to securing opaque glazing to the bathrooms which face each other on the secondary elevations.
- 6.28 The landscaped spaces between the blocks are shown as being laid out as in a highly formalised manner with running water features and courtyard planting. Their function is to provide pleasant outlook from the flats rather than a communal dwell space and therefore they would introduce very limited potential for intrusion into the privacy of the nearest ground floor windows.
- 6.29 Throughout the development flats at ground floor would have generous headroom of 3.1m in living rooms and 2.9m in bedrooms. Overall the flats would benefit from a high quality of internal amenity, with some individual rooms having lower but acceptable levels of daylight or outlook.

Refuse and recycling

- 6.30 All new developments are required to provide adequate facilities for recycling and the storage and disposal of waste in accordance with policies CS18 and DP26 of the LDF.
- 6.31 The private units would have a single storage location at basement level, close to the basement vehicle entrance and front gateway. It would be discretely integrated into the design of the scheme and would provide sufficient storage space for six 1100l eurobins and 6 recycling units. Street Environmental Services have indicated that the scale of provision is acceptable. The refuse would be close to the main vehicle entrance.
- 6.32 For reasons of practicality and minimising the service charges the affordable units would have their own refuse area at ground floor in block 1. The bins would need to be brought to a location accessible by refuse collectors at the appropriate time. This could be undertaken by the on-site management team which would be secured by S106 legal agreement as part of the terms of the affordable housing provision.
- 6.33 The individual units are of sufficient size to accommodate internal collection of recycling prior to it being placed in the central stores. The provision of the refuse stores would be secured by condition.

Design

- 6.34 Policies CS14 of the LDF Core Strategy and DP24 of the LDF Development Policies require all new developments to be of the highest standard of design. They should respect character, setting and context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings.
- 6.35 The site is immediately adjacent to Primrose Hill and Barrow Hill reservoir, both of which are designated open spaces (the former is public and the latter is private) and Metropolitan Open Land (MOL). Regents Park is approximately 500m to the south but not considered to be affected by the development due to distance from the site. The site is not within a Conservation Area or in close proximity to any listed buildings.
- 6.36 It is relevant to note that the Eastern half of the site was deleted from the Schedule as forming part of the Barrow Hill Reservoir Metropolitan Open Land (paragraph 11.2.4 of the Camden Replacement UDP Inspectors Report 2006.) In reviewing the Camden Site Allocations document the Inspector's recommendation was that the site could provide for a high quality residential environment which related well to the adjoining Metropolitan Open Land with the provision of on-site open space.
- 6.37 While not falling within the MOL designation, the site is located sufficiently close to Primrose Hill and the Reservoir to merit particularly close attention to its impact on the open spaces. The Inspector further observed that "*the proximity to, and visibility from, Primrose Hill will require a particularly careful design approach*".
- 6.38 **Design Background** The scheme's concept has been strongly influenced and subsequently based on a detailed site analysis and its proximity to adjoining and surrounding properties. Prior to submission the applicants design team engaged in a series of design based discussions with officers and other interested parties including the Primrose Hill CAAC. Initial proposals which sought to maximise development opportunities whilst responding to both the historic and contemporary contexts were significantly scaled back in response to concerns about their impact on views from Primrose Hill.
- 6.39 Options for a stepped arrangement with lower scale adjacent to the Park and a taller block to the West were considered to be overly prominent in the panoramic views from the Park summit. Subsequent alternatives including differing floor plates, massing options and

building forms were explored in order to best respond to both the views from the summit and from within the park.

6.40 **Design Considerations** The main issues for consideration are the impact that the development would have on:

- The wholeness, character, appearance and setting of Primrose Hill and adjoining Barrow Hill Reservoir (designated as the open space and MOL) to the north and east;
- The ability to appreciate and recognize the important (non-designated) panoramic view of the horizon south from summit of Primrose Hill toward the North Downs
- Appropriateness and quality of design and use of materials having particular regard for immediate context, status and character of the area.

6.41 Thames Water constraints require that a 3m wide zone be retained on both sides of shallow water mains and a 5.5m clear air zone above ground to enable maintenance access to the pipes. This height clearance is evident in the cutaway/overhang on the front of block 1. The footprint of potential built form on site is further directed by the need for 3.6m wide access roads to the West and East within the site. It is clear from the proposals that the underground infrastructure has had a strong influence on the building layout.

6.42 The scheme proposals comprise three separate residential blocks of roughly equal size and height with a set back upper floor above 4 (block 3) or 5 (blocks 1 & 2) storeys. The lower floors would be masonry with recessed window openings. Bronze metal oriel window bays project between first and third floors. On blocks 1 and 2 the fourth floor would contain a 'loggia' colonnade with setback full height glazing. The upper floors would be finished in dark bronze patterned panels. Roof plant has been distributed across each block and contained with the building mass to reduce additional height and provide a 'clean' roofscape.

6.43 **Impact on Primrose Hill: Scale and Height** The consistency of scale and height of the blocks when viewed from St Edmunds Terrace provides a uniform response within the site. This scale and height is consistent with the scale of development within the cluster of residential blocks located in the area, such as along Titchfield Road to the West and Prince Albert Road to the South and other approved residential development within Camden along St Edmunds Terrace (see Site History). The scale of the proposed development is considered to sit comfortably within the area of built development of which it forms a part.

6.44 Blocks 1 and 2 will have limited impact on the park due their distance from it. Other than the roofscape (discussed above) and north elevations, the views are limited to oblique and short range views from within the nearby streets. Block 3 has the potential to be the element which would have the most impact on the park, particularly its East elevation. The overall height and parapet line responds to, and is generally consistent with the roofline of Ormonde Terrace, taking into account the rise in slope up the hill. Moreover the modular rhythm and architectural language of the façade has been strongly influenced by the Terrace. The vertical rhythm of the park elevation allows the bulk of the block to be broken down and to fit sensitively on the site.

6.45 The development would be evident in westward approaches from within the Park. This would be more pronounced in Winter. Whilst set apart from Ormonde Terrace, further down the Hill, the development would nonetheless provide a certain continuity of height at roof level. The CAAC have expressed a preference for removal of a further storey from block 3 with a compensatory storey added to block 1. It is considered that this would heighten the apparent massing on site and upward step would potentially draw further attention to the buildings, irrespective of the season.

- 6.46 **Impact on Panoramic View** The development site is located on the upper slope of the southern part of Primrose Hill within the foreground of southwesterly views from the summit of Primrose Hill. Two strategic views commence at the summit: one to St. Pauls Cathedral and the other to the Palace of Westminster. The site is outside of these strategic views but is considered to form an important part of wider panoramic view of the horizon from Primrose Hill. In this regard special attention was been paid to preserving the ability to view the southwesterly horizon from the summit of the Hill.
- 6.47 From the summit of Primrose Hill the proposed scheme would slightly breach the canopy of the mature trees which surround the site. However the overall height it is not considered to harm the ability to appreciate and recognize the horizon. The architects have rationalized the roof top plant and removed a segment from the middle block to ensure that the sky is seen between and not just above the blocks, thereby reducing their perceived bulk. As such the scheme is considered to preserve the wholeness and setting of the view from Primrose Hill which forms an important visual relief above the city.
- 6.48 **Gate House** The Gate house is designed to reflect and complement the finishes, materials and general design approach of the main buildings. The dwelling would be a discrete addition to the streetscape and is acceptable.
- 6.49 **Design: Detail and Materials** The proposed facades incorporate both modern and traditional materials, within a contemporary idiom. The facades are broken down into a series of elements which in turn create a module that is repeated throughout the scheme with slightly different fenestration patterns to each block. The variation provides visual interest as well as rhythm and continuity.
- 6.50 Vertical emphasis is created through the fenestration pattern which helps break up the facades and provides depth to the elevation. The projecting bays are designed to provide occupants with the advantage of the views, and they add three dimensional depth and order which relates to the rhythm of the terrace townhouses adjoining the site. The scheme also creates a more subtle horizontal modulation through heavily rusticated ground and lower ground which defines the base of the blocks; dressed ashlar stone middle floors; 'loggia' stone columns representing the entablature and the penthouse floor the attic storey. Overall the facades comprise the essence of classical architecture which seek to correspond to the language of Regency dwellings which surrounding the park and make-up the prevalent character and appearance of the area.
- 6.51 The facades use the limited high quality palette of natural materials appropriate for the setting of the development. The use of stone and bronze for the main body of the facades would provide a high quality neutral response to the park. This architectural treatment of the penthouse elevation comprises a more verdant roof form which will provide an appropriate backdrop to the trees with the use of bronze tiled 'ivy' textured patented cladding panels. A condition would be added to secure details of all the external facing details and materials, including glazing, balconies, balustrades, doors, facing materials (stone panels, fins & spandrels) and boundary treatment.

Design: Conclusion

- 6.52 The development proposals provide an appropriately high quality response to the site which would not cause harm to the wholeness, appearance, setting or enjoyment of the Park or the panoramic view from the summit.

Neighbour Amenity

- 6.53 The development has no adjoining residential neighbours but does face Danes Court, dwellings at 4, 5 & 6 St Edmunds Terrace and 1-5 Ormonde Terrace, c.30m from the

location of blocks 1-3. Local residents have objected to the application on the basis of loss of daylight, overlooking, impact of construction noise and nuisance and impact on local parking and traffic conditions. The latter point is dealt with in the section on Transport.

Neighbour Amenity: Daylight

- 6.54 Being to the North of the closest residential properties the development would have no impact on sunlight to those properties. The applicant has submitted daylight assessments for two scenarios: 1) the development proposal and 2) an alternative where the site was built out historically in a manner consistent with the rest of the street. It is considered that only the first scenario is relevant and the results are assessed below. The study assesses the impact on the nearest dwellings, all of which are in Westminster. The results are summarised below.
- 6.55 **Daylight to 1-5 Ormonde Court:** This four storey end of terrace building, divided into flats would see four windows at ground level experience a reduction of greater than 20% in Vertical Sky Component (VSC) which would result in a perceptible difference in daylight. Two of these openings are in a doorway and the other two relate to dual aspect rooms which would retain their daylight distribution (DD) and a good quality of Additional Daylight Factor (ADF), well above the BRE recommended ADF levels.
- 6.56 **Daylight to Danes Court:** This 9 storey 20th Century block would see 13 windows on the lower floors of Danes Court losing greater than 20% of existing VSC. Of these 9 are recessed windows within deep balconies which will allow limited light access by design. Many of the remainder are served by windows on a second aspect. Overall the rooms affected would retain a good quality of ADF and very limited change DD.
- 6.57 **Daylight to 4, 5, 6 St Edmunds Terrace:** These three storey properties with lower ground floor would experience limited change to the daylight, with no windows receiving a reduction of 20% in existing VSC levels and therefore the impact is likely to be only marginally perceptible.
- 6.58 Overall it is considered that there would be some impact on daylight to properties on the South side of St Edmunds Terrace but overall the affected rooms are expected to retain a good quality of daylight and the impact would not be sufficiently harmful to justify refusal of the proposals on grounds of loss of neighbouring daylight amenity.

Neighbour and Occupier Amenity (Noise)

- 6.59 Noise can have a major effect on amenity and health and therefore quality of life. Policy DP26 and DP28 of the LDF Development Policies seek to ensure that new development does not cause noise disturbance to the occupiers of neighbouring properties. It states that permission will not be granted for plant or machinery which exceeds Camden's noise thresholds. It also states that the Council will seek to minimise the impact of noise from demolition and construction.
- 6.60 The high specification of the proposed flats comes with a significant quantity of plant equipment. In order to minimise the height of the blocks the plant has been located more discretely within the development by incorporating it within louvred enclosures on the recessed side elevation of the penthouse level accommodation. These areas of plant would be only marginally visible from the street. Submission of an acoustic report demonstrating how the proposed plant would meet the Council's noise standards would be secured by condition, in addition to the Council's standard condition governing plant noise levels.
- 6.61 The submitted noise report identifies the nearest noise receptors as being on the far side of St Edmunds Terrace and that the background noise levels are fairly low for such an inner

urban location. The assessment identifies the noise category as NEC B, which indicates a relatively low level of ambient noise. It sets out recommended glazing specification to reduce the impact of road noise on occupants. Due to the high specification of the scheme and the relatively low ambient noise levels it is not considered necessary to condition adherence to these recommendations.

Neighbour Amenity: Construction Nuisance

- 6.62 The submission details indicate that the development is likely to take in excess of two years to complete. The submitted Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) gives details of measures to mitigate the impact of vehicle movements on local amenity. Further measures to minimise other potential impacts migrating from the site, such as dust and dirt, would also be secured as part of an agreed Construction Management Plan. Thames Water are currently working on development proposals to replace the Reservoir to the North of and accessed via the site and the S106 for this application would require co-ordination and liaison on construction matters in the event that the construction periods overlap.

Overlooking of Neighbouring Properties

- 6.63 Policy DP26 of the LDF Development Policies requires that new development does not cause unreasonable overlooking to neighbouring properties to the detriment of their occupiers. Camden Planning Guidance recommends that a distance of 18m be maintained between facing habitable windows to ensure that privacy is maintained. The main blocks of the development would be at least 30m from the nearest habitable rooms on the South side of St Edmunds Terrace. The gate house at the back of pavement would be 18m from the nearest windows of 6 St Edmunds Terrace. The proposal will not result in a significant increase in overlooking.

Lighting - Impact on Park

- 6.64 Development in close proximity to the Park could have the potential to draw unnecessary attention to itself from within the Park during the evenings and night-time. The design approach has made efforts to minimise the levels of glazing at penthouse level in block 3 and the rooftop units have considerably smaller areas of fenestration than their equivalents in blocks 1 and 2. An indicative lighting scheme has been submitted which indicates considered levels of lighting focussed largely on the front elevation and pedestrian areas. However there will by necessity be some lighting close to the Park for community safety reasons and in order to ensure the safety of pedestrians in the vicinity of the basement parking entrance. A condition would be added requiring a detailed lighting strategy showing lighting levels and areas of light spill and how the lighting has been designed to minimise the impact on local wildlife.
- 6.65 The Royal Parks have objected to the development due to the potential for light spill into Primrose Hill. It is considered that any development on this site is likely to lead to some ambient light spill into the Park and therefore the principle of light spill cannot reasonably be used as a reason for refusal. The park closes after dusk all year round and therefore night-time views from within the park are not a common feature. Overall it is considered that the measures taken to minimise ambient light spill will assist in minimising the impact of the development, with further details secured by condition.
- 6.66 **Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)**
The applicant has submitted a CTMP which indicates a 130 week construction period with vehicle movements to and from the site peaking at 4-5 inbound and outbound per hour. However no figures are given in terms of relative breakdown of vehicle sizes for those movements or of the duration of those levels of movement.

- 6.67 The applicant has indicated that discussions have been held with the nearest school (St Christina's school) about mitigating the impact at peak times of activity at the school. Policy DP20 of the LDF Development Policies requires that construction management plans are secured in order to minimise the impact of development on the local road network and local communities. Such measures would be sought in a detailed Construction Management Plan to be secured by way of S106 legal agreement.

Transport

- 6.68 The site is located within the Primrose Hill (CA-J) Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), between St Johns Wood and Primrose Hill, on the border with Westminster. It is just over 1.1 km East of St Johns Wood station and immediately North and West of Regent's Park. The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of only 1b (very poor), although the submitted Transport Statement (TS) indicates that the PTAL level is marginally better at 2. The TS is of an acceptable level of detail and standard for a development of this size and nature.
- 6.69 A draft residential travel plan has been submitted and a final version would be secured by s106. The level of on-site car parking is 1 space per private unit, with the provision of spaces for the affordable units being prohibitively expensive. This represents the maximum provision in terms of Camden parking standards. Given the poor local access to public transport this level of provision is acceptable.
- 6.70 Policy DP18 of the LDF Development Policies requires that new residential developments provide 1 cycle parking space per unit and a further space per 10 units or parts thereof once a threshold of 20 units has been reached for visitors. Secure and covered cycle parking is proposed within the basement for the private units and within the ground floor of the affordable housing element. The floorspace set aside for provision is acceptable. Further details of the affordable cycle storage would be secured by condition and the provision of all cycle storage would be secured prior to first occupation.
- 6.71 The proposed design includes a large paved area in front of the building that is intended to be used as a turning area and for off-street servicing. It is possible that this area could be used for additional parking by the building users. It is not appropriate to restrict this by design as it would greatly reduce the ability to use this area for off-street servicing and turning. Therefore, a condition would be added requiring details of a management scheme to ensure that no parking is allowed within the forecourt area and that this is enforced by the building management and further that all servicing shall take place within the confines of the site.
- 6.72 The proposals include a new vehicular crossover to the west end of the southern site boundary and the removal of an existing crossover to the east end of the southern site boundary. Therefore a S106 clause to secure the costs of highways works would be required.
- 6.73 During the assessment various access amendments were made to the scheme. A pedestrian gate has been added to the frontage to provide direct walk-up access for the affordable units. A further pedestrian gate has also been added to the East boundary, immediately beside the entrance to the park.
- 6.74 There have been many comments received about local pedestrian safety and the impact of local traffic congestion on free movement. Given the scale and location of the development it is considered appropriate to secure a contribution towards improving the pedestrian and environmental improvements in the area. This would be secured by S106 legal agreement.

- 6.75 There has been considerable objection to the perceived impact of the development on local on-street parking. The provision of parking spaces for the private units would ensure that the development does not add to current on-street CPZ parking, which restricts local parking between 08:30 and 18:30. All of the units would be secured as car-capped in order to ensure that no Camden residents permits are issued to occupants for use on the North of St Edmunds Terrace. The South side of St Edmunds Terrace is in Westminster and no permits would be issued to non-Westminster occupants. Along Ormonde Terrace the parking is controlled by Westminster, with a CPZ on the West and a single yellow line on the East, which allows non-resident parking at weekends. The key demand for the weekend parking appears to arise from park visitors and it seems unlikely that the proposed development would exacerbate the situation. Overall the transport impact of the development is acceptable.

Open Space

- 6.76 In reviewing the site allocation details for St Edmunds Terrace site #41 the inspector commented that provision of open space would be expected on site. This is supported by policies CS15 and DP31 of the LDF which require that the existing public open space deficiency within the Borough is not created or made worse by development. If development is likely to lead to increased use of public open space then an appropriate contribution should be made to the supply of open space.
- 6.77 Slightly more than half of the site (approx 2330sqm) would remain unbuilt and the setback of the residential blocks from the street provides an opportunity for high quality landscaping and a visual separation of the development from the street. Of the unbuilt space approx 900sqm would be provided as outdoor space of amenity value, with the remainder providing a service driveway, access to the basement and the necessary access routes for servicing the reservoir. A proportion of this space would be suitable for general amenity use for occupants and the remainder for visual amenity.
- 6.78 Camden's CPG expects 9sqm of open space per bedroom. The draft CPG provides a breakdown of the types of open space which contribute to different forms of amenity as follows: playspace (2.5sqm per child), general amenity space (4.5sqm per additional bedroom) and natural greenspace (same as general). The top two floors of each of the three blocks would have access to extensive terraced space and can be discounted from the need for provision. The result is that there would be a total net addition of 58 bedrooms to the site.
- 6.79 Using the CPG figures as the basis for assessment the development should provide 52sqm of child playspace and 261sqm each of general and natural amenity space. A total of c. 900sqm formally landscaped outside amenity space would be provided, however this type of space is unlikely to be particularly attractive to children and would not contribute to natural and semi-natural greenspace. The site has immediate access to substantial open space at Primrose Hill less than 10m away, with a local area of equipped play within 250m. The site would therefore not exceed the distance thresholds set out in the CPG and open space provision may be made off-site.
- 6.80 It is therefore considered appropriate to seek a contribution towards the maintenance and improvement of existing off-site playspace and natural green space as follows:

Area	Type	Cost per sqm	Total
261	Natural green space	£16.42	£4286
52	Child playspace	£199.48	£10373
Total			£14659

Education Contribution

- 6.81 The proposed development would provide 31 net additional units on site and therefore a financial contribution is required towards the provision of educational facilities within the local area in accordance with policy CS10 and CS19 of the LDF Core Strategy. Based on the formula contained in Camden Planning Guidance (2006) £294,237 should be sought towards the provision of educational infrastructure. This would be secured by S106 legal agreement.

Contaminated Land

- 8.82 There are no unacceptable risks associated with the site and past uses and hence there is no need for a condition seeking further details.

Sustainability

- 6.83 The applicant has submitted Energy Strategy and Code for Sustainable Homes pre-assessment reports. The energy statement sets out the design approach giving consideration to the energy hierarchy (Be Lean, Clean and Green).
- 6.84 The design approach has sought to maximize daylight penetration across all blocks. The design approach achieves that as far as possible however this increases the area of exposed walls and thus reduces the Fabric Energy Efficiency (FEE) of a dwelling, however, this is offset by reduced necessity to use artificial lighting. The Be Lean approach to Energy efficiency measures contribute limited improvement (approx 1%) to reducing the baseline carbon emissions over the latest Part L requirements, which represents a 26% improvement on the recently superseded 2006 Part L requirements. However the inclusion of a natural gas CHP system sized in order to meet 100% of the development's hot water demand (including swimming pool) would result in 11% carbon reduction. The final addition of ground source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels to the roofs would further reduce the energy consumption by 6.7% bringing the total energy reduction to 18.2% below current building regulations. This does not meet the Council or Mayor's target of 20% but is considered to be sufficiently close to the target to be acceptable in the context of this development.

Code for Sustainable Homes

- 6.85 The submitted Code for Sustainable Homes indicates that Level 4 would be achieved, by a close margin (<1%). Generally it is recommended that a margin of 4-5% is necessary in order to ensure compliance. The Councils sub-targets would be achieved in the Energy, Water and Materials categories. The applicant has stated that they consider the total predicted score of the CSH Pre assessment to be a true reflection of the building's sustainable potential. These measures, including post-completion certification of Code Level 4, would be secured by S106 legal agreement.

Air quality Assessment

- 6.86 CHP is proposed which may have implications for local air quality. The submitted air quality assessment indicates negligible impact from the CHP due to the high level extract flue. The CHP, including details of the extract flue location, would be secured by S106 as part of the scheme's sustainability measures. Control of dust and construction air pollution would be secured through the detailed Construction Management Plan, also secured by S106.

Local Labour and Procurement

- 6.87 The proposed development is a major development which will involve a significant construction contract. In accordance with Policy CS19 of the LDF Core Strategy and Camden Planning Guidance (2006) it is recommended that the developer provide construction training opportunities for local residents related to the development through a recognised local initiative. The developer should also use reasonable endeavours to ensure that supplies and services are sourced locally. The creation of local employment

and business opportunities will reinforce neighbourhood renewal objectives and improve the sustainability of the local economy. Such measures would be secured via legal agreement.

Biodiversity

- 6.88 The site is adjacent to Primrose Hill which is a SNCI of Grade II borough importance, noted for bird life. The ecology of the site has been identified as a combination of dense scrub, grassland and hard standing and is summarised as having limited habitat ecology value, although two bat roosts were found within the existing buildings. The submitted ecology report sets out mitigation measures to relocate the existing bat roosts prior to the demolition of the relevant buildings. A Natural England European Protected Species (EPS) Licence will need to be gained in order to move the existing roosts.
- 6.89 The removal of a small number of existing trees is identified as having a moderate adverse impact in the context of the local area. The ecology report identifies new planting species to support local habitat creation including the incorporation of bird and bat boxes on the site. The recommendations of the two submitted ecology reports would be secured by condition. Details of the acid grassland substrate for the green roofs would also be secured by condition prior to installation.
- 6.90 An informative would be added to the permission requesting that all survey data, including Phase 1 habitat maps, green roof area and planting schemes, should be made available to Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL), the London Environmental Records Centre.

Basement

- 6.91 The site rises steeply by 11m from East to West across the site. The proposed residential blocks would sit towards the rear of the site in order to avoid the Thames Water infrastructure on site and to minimise the visual impact of the bulk and massing as seen from the street.
- 6.92 The development would involve considerable works of basement construction, with the main basement covering almost 2500sqm GEA at the upper level with a sub-basement of c. 1000sqm below, at the Eastern end of the site. The sub-basement would house plant equipment in a fully enclosed box with limited external breakouts to the rear.
- 6.93 The main basement would provide car and cycle parking, refuse and recycling facilities, a swimming pool and leisure facilities and space for further plant equipment. The need for extensive space in the basement for plant equipment has arisen in part at least from the need to minimise the height of the above-ground buildings which resulted in the removal of all signs of rooftop plant. The sloping nature of the site would mean that the basement excavation would be approx 4.5m at its shallowest point to the South, with the deepest works approx 11m below ground levels to the rear of the site adjoining the reservoir site.
- 6.94 The nearest buildings to the site of the basement are located approx 30m to the South and 40m to the West. The Barrow Hill reservoir, soon to be replaced, sits 15m North of the site boundary with the decommissioned surge tank being the closest structure to the site, at approx 5m. The applicant has provided a Basement Impact Assessment which addresses the screening flowcharts of the CPG. It summarises the following contextual details:
- Site has been barely developed in its history and there is no sign of contaminants
 - Borehole records from the site show that the development would sit on London Clay
 - St Edmunds Terrace is not identified as being at risk from surface water flooding

- Groundwater was encountered at various levels on site and main water table is more than 15m below ground level and would be at least 8m below the basement
- The soil has low hydraulic conductivity which will lead to no significant lateral groundwater flows.
- Agreement has been reached with Thames Water about approach to basement construction and an acceptable exclusion zone to protect TW assets has been agreed.
- Temporary propping will be required during construction in order to control extent of lateral deflection.
- Surface water attenuation has been designed in to the scheme to ensure run-off is reduced from existing rates

- 6.95 The basement construction would be under the proposed buildings (and the spaces between them). It would adjoin the boundary to the North but would leave borders of 10m to the East, 15m to the West and 25m to the South. The East and West borders would be hard landscaped with access roads for reservoir access. A landscaped area to the South would retain tree specimens and native planting would be supported throughout the site. It is considered that the footprint of the basement would not have a significant impact on the ability of the site to support planting which is characteristic of the area. The basement would be sufficiently far from existing trees to avoid their root protection areas. The spaces between the buildings have been demonstrated to be designed to support planting schemes and water features.
- 6.96 The limited external manifestations of the basement would be limited to covered lightwells to the west of block 1 and to the rear of block 3 and the ramped vehicular access point to in the undercroft of block 3. These lightwells would not be visible from the public realm. Similarly the vehicle entrance would be oblique to the street and not overly visible. The external manifestations of the basement are acceptable.
- 6.97 The gate house, with its own basement would have two lightwells : the smaller being approx 4m from the boundary on the East elevation (approx 1.5m deep x 2m wide) and the second larger lightwell on the North side of the house, invisible from the street. The size and location of these lightwells is acceptable. Overall the visual impact of these elements would not be significant or harmful to the appearance of the buildings or the area generally. They would not result in undue light spill to the surrounds.
- 6.98 There is evidence on the site of the reservoir ground to the north being shored by piling works and officers are aware of ground movement as being cited as one reason for decommissioning of the reservoir. The embankments are currently undergoing monitoring in order to inform the final design of the basement structure. The retaining walls would comprise a significant 600mm secant piled wall in response to the local ground conditions. Thames Water maintain easements and controls on the site and their infrastructure abuts it directly to the North. They are likely to require detailed agreement on all piling measures and final design of the structural elements of the basement scheme.
- 6.99 The applicant has submitted further details in respect of Surface Water runoff. The site is currently approx 60% covered by impermeable surfaces. The addition of the green roofs to the three flat blocks would decrease this proportion to 44%. The green roofs and overall surface water containment on the scheme would be designed to accommodate the rainfall from a 1 in 100 year storm event, plus a further 30% climate change increase. The applicant has stated that the proposed green roof and holding tank measures would ensure that the development would achieve the Mayor's 'essential standard' of 50% attenuation of all runoff, above the greenfield rate. They have further stated that, in the event there is sufficient space available, a larger volume of holding tank would be provided in order to

meet the Mayor's '*preferred*' standard' of maintaining Greenfield runoff rate. A condition would be added to any permission requiring final details of the attenuation measures proposed, subject to a minimum of meeting the Mayor's *essential* standard.

- 6.100 The level of detail submitted by the scheme is considered to be sufficient to ensure that the design approach has adopted the necessary measures to mitigate the potential impact of the basement construction on the nearest structures and the local water environment. The basement would not have a significant impact on local amenity, the visual amenity or landscaped quality of the site. Due to the scale of the works it is considered appropriate to condition the retention of a suitably qualified engineer to maintain responsibility for ensuring that the works carried out in accordance with a design which has been approved by a building control body. Overall the basement element is acceptable and in accordance with policy DP27.

Archaeology

- 6.101 The site is not in an area designated as being of archaeological importance. No further details of archaeology would be sought.

Trees and Landscaping

- 6.102 An arboricultural report has been provided which satisfactorily demonstrates that significant trees on the site can be retained on the frontage. Two trees on the site are proposed for removal as a consequence of the proposals (T26 and T27) in order to create the main vehicular entrance way. Four additional trees are proposed for removal (Ashs:T37- T39 and Lime:T28) on the grounds of arboricultural management due to these trees being in poor condition and/or of very limited amenity value. Groups of self sown Ash and Sycamore are proposed for removal.
- 6.103 Two new access roads would be provided on the West and East edges of the site in order to facilitate future access to the reservoir by heavy lifting equipment. These access roads would be constructed using a no-dig approach and Cell-web upper layers, in order to protect nearby tree roots. The creation of an access road would also require the removal and replanting of two recently planted Birch trees on the street (T47 and T48). Both trees are in poor condition and their replacement in a nearby position is considered to be acceptable. The replanting would be undertaken by the Council's arboricultural services and the costs (£1000) of the replanting and 3 years watering and maintenance would be recovered from the applicant by S106 legal agreement.
- 6.104 The Landscape Plan shows scope for replacement tree planting mainly on the front boundary in conjunction with other native shrub planting to create a verdant frontage into the site. The landscape proposals also indicate new wrought iron railings and gates to the front boundary, courtyard planting with water features between the proposed blocks, wildflower garden and hedge screening in front of the blocks and native species planting within the boundary verge. Green roofs are indicated for each of the blocks in the form of acid grassland. The proposed planting and green roofs will contribute to increasing the biodiversity value of the site.

Community Safety and Social Cohesion

- 6.105 In Policy CS17 the Council seeks to ensure that development fosters sustainable communities which meet the needs of existing and future residents, their children and other users; contribute to a high quality of life; and provide opportunity and choice. To achieve this, development should, among other things, enhance the environment and promote social cohesion. More specific to the proposals appeal the explanatory text in para 17.5 states: *"The Council wants to ensure that Camden's spaces and places can be used by all members of the community. People will make more use of high quality, safe streets and places and this will, in turn, increase perceptions of safety and reduce the opportunities for*

crime. Development which restricts movement into or through a scheme, such as 'gated' developments will not be permitted". This approach is supported by policy CS6 which aims "to minimise social polarisation and create mixed and inclusive communities across Camden by: j) seeking a diverse range of housing products in the market and affordable sectors ..." and "k) seeking a range of self-contained homes of different sizes to meet the Council's identified dwelling-size priorities".

- 6.106 The LDF and associated guidance create a normal presumption against the creation of gated areas, which are perceived as dividing communities and reinforcing negative perceptions of an area. This development would retain the railing on the existing street boundary and would be separated from the street by a deep verge and access road. It would not promote through access by the general public but would maintain sufficient levels of security and community safety measures to ensure that the street is overlooked by occupiers. The inclusion of affordable housing has the benefit of ensuring that the development contributes to social cohesion and would assist in the provision of a diversity of housing provision in the borough. Overall the development is unlikely to contribute to opportunities of crime and would support the aim of increasing local social mix.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposals have evolved from a market-only residential scheme to include on-site affordable housing, with a policy compliant mix of generously sized social rented and intermediate units. This is a significant achievement in a site which has a difficult topography and is constrained by large underground infrastructure. Significant efforts have been made to minimise the visual impact of the development on the amenity and enjoyment of park users in adjoining Primrose Hill. Overall the proposals represent a good opportunity to return a semi-derelict and vacant site back into intensive residential use, in a high quality and sensitively designed scheme.

- 7.2 Planning Permission is recommended subject to a S106 Legal Agreement to secure the following Heads of Terms:

- Car Capped
- On-site affordable housing
- Off-site Affordable Housing Contribution
- Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution
- Education Contribution
- Construction Management Plan
- Local Procurement
- Employment and Training
- Highways Works
- Parks and Open Space Contribution
- Pedestrian and Environmental Improvements
- Sustainability measures including Code for Sustainable Homes Level
- Sustainable Energy measures including CHP
- Travel Plan

8.0 LEGAL COMMENTS

- 8.1 Members are referred to the note from the Legal Division at the start of the Agenda.