

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

J E S T I C O + W H I L E S

Project title: PROJECT OASIS

Project number: 2069

Date: December 2007

1 Cobourg Street, London NW1 2HP

Tel: 020 7380 0382 Fax: 020 7380 0511

E mail: j+w@jesticowhiles.co.uk

www: jesticowhiles.co.uk

ARCHITECTS LONDON + PRAGUE + MUNICH

Executive Summary

Tindall overseas are the landowners and occupiers of office accommodation on the site. They have been an employer on the site and in the area for many years and they have recently refurbished their building on Finchley Road and let this to Allied Irish Bank, who are an excellent blue chip tenant. Their Headquarters are also based on the site. Tindall have recently expanded their organisation and wish to remain in this site. They are therefore seeking planning consent for a 2 storey building plus a semi basement level, to allow their expansion and accommodation on the site. This Design and Access statement supports the application dated 21st December 2007.

The development offers the following benefits:

- Redevelopment of a site that contains a poor quality and crumbling building and a poorly used backland area.
- A development built to 21st century standards offering a more accessible and energy efficient workspace.
- Enhancement of an abandoned woodland copse with increased habitat diversity.
- Use of a brownfield site in line with Government policy.

Date of revision	Issue no.	Details of revision	Issued by
04-06-07	P1	First Issue – for planning application	CM
21-12-07	P2	Planning Application	CM

Contents

1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Design Team	4
3.0 Context Study	5
History	
General Site Description	
Setting	
Topography	
4.0 The Design Process	6
Physical Assessment	
Economic	
Planning History	
Policy	
5.0 Design	7
Use	
Amount	
Layout	
Scale	
Landscaping	
Appearance	
6.0 Access	8
Highways and Site	
Building Access and Circulation	
7.0 Conclusion	8

1.0 Introduction

This report was originally commissioned in December 2004 by Manorhall Management on behalf of Tindall Overseas Ltd. to establish design criteria for the redevelopment of the site to the rear of 202-204 Finchley Road, London. It summarises general planning history and key relevant policies and restrictions and site development potential.

The first part of this report comprises a context study, made by recording and photographing extensively in the streets immediately surrounding the site, and looking into the history and development of this part of Hampstead. The second part follows the general format recommended for Design and Access Statements and describes the proposals.

2.0 Design Team

Proposals have been carried out by Jestico + Whiles Architects in association with the specialist consultants for Tindall Overseas Ltd.

Client:

Tindall Overseas Ltd. Rear of AIB Suite A, 204 Finchley Road, London NW3 6BX

Architect:

Jestico + Whiles, 1 Cobourg Street, London NW1 2HP

Structural Engineer:

Wareham & Associates Ltd., The Post House, Kennel Lane, Windlesham, Surrey GU20 6AA

M+E and Energy Consultants:

Fulcrum Consulting, 62-68 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4RR

BREEAM Assessor:

Fulcrum Consulting, 62-68 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4RR

Traffic Consultant:

iTransport LLP, Grove House, Lutyens Close, Chineham Court, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG24 8AG

Landscape Architect:

Philip Cave Associates, 5 Dryden Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9NW

Environmental Consultant:

Catherine Bickmore Associates, LGF-5, Lafone House, 11-13 Leathermarket Street, London SE1 3HN

Acoustic Consultant:

Bickerdike Allen Partners, 121 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6RG

Construction Advisor:

Neilcott Construction Group, Excel House, Cray Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR5 3ST

3.0 Context Study

History

The area surrounding the site was built up with the introduction of the railway in late Victorian and Edwardian periods. The Hampstead Junction Railway was opened in 1860 linking Richmond to the Docklands via Camden Town. The surrounding area gradually developed around 1900 linking the villages of Frognal and West End to Hampstead, with affluent residential property. Finchley Road was built up as a commercial ribbon, with small shops and public buildings. The railway cutting was covered in 1961 between Finchley Road and the original Hampstead tunnel and the site extended further east at the end of the 1960's

The site itself comprises a collection of pockets of land within an urban block that have been abandoned or under used since the first was formed in 1967 when a porters lodge and store was built in 1967 for a transport terminal on Finchley Road.

General Site Description

The site is accessed from Finchley Road, via a drive beneath nos.202-204 (Formerly Meridian House and Prime House). The location plan, 2069-0500-P3 indicates the application boundary shown in red for the entire site (3594 m²), though the relevant area of the site upon which the building is located is to the east end and is approximately 919 m², of which 400m² is a wooded copse.

This portion of the site is generally rectangular though is split into two halves, north and south by a retaining wall and a difference in level up to about 2 metres at the west end. The north half is the wooded copse to which a blanket preservation order (KF/C537 2005) has been placed. Please refer to the Ecological Assessment Document and Landscape Statement attached. The southern half is largely hardstanding with a small lodge/bungalow and storage building. The site slopes down from east to west by 2 metres.

Setting

The site is set in the centre of a large urban block. The edge of the block to Finchley Road is generally three levels dense residential apartments over small shop units and Arkwright Mansions which are large Victorian Residential Blocks. The remaining sides are lined generally with 4 storey Victorian and Edwardian villas occasionally interrupted by in-fill developments. Within the block, much of the space is landscaped gardens with mature trees, though land over the railway tunnel as been developed with a number of bungalows and two-storey houses along with the rebuilt extension to 202-204 Finchley road and the commercial units of Hampstead Gate to the south west.

Topography

Hampstead is situated at the top of a hill, therefore the site location slopes down gradually to the south and west with a few local fluctuations caused originally by the construction of the railway.

4.0 The Design Process

Physical Assessment

The surrounding buildings vary in style, materials, age and form, without regularity or consistency. These range from single storey brick built garages through to 4 storey Victorian villas and 1970's 2 storey houses. Also to the south on Frognaal is a five storey concrete frame hotel. As acknowledged by your consents for this site a wholly contemporary building here is appropriate and there are no real contextual references to be taken from other buildings. Refer to drawing 2069-0520-P1 and -0521-P1 for photographs towards and within the site.

Economic Assessment

The provision of office space has the potential to offer a number of positions of employment and space for up to three small businesses.

Social Context

The proposal aims to be concealed as much as possible by the surrounding trees and landscape so that the impact of the scheme to the immediate neighbourhood is kept to a minimum, the topography of the site will help to reduce the visual mass of the building when seen from neighbouring properties. From outside the urban block the scheme will have no negative visual impact.

Planning History

The London Borough of Camden file no. reference is F6/7/B and the site is periodically referred to as rear of 200 Finchley Road. The Decisions listed below are to be found in Appendix One. Originally it appears that the 'Caretakers Bungalow' was ancillary to the overall use of the site as a Travel Centre.

On 9 April 1991 (9005492), the Council granted conditional Consent for the 'erection of a three storey building for mixed uses within Class A2 (professional services), B8(storage/warehouse) and C1(residential) uses with associated terraces and car parking...' The development was not, as far as it is known, commenced and therefore as set out in Condition 1, the Consent expired 5 years after the date of permission.

On 7 January 1992 (9005492) the Secretary of State found in favour of the above Approval but agreed to the *removal* of Condition 06 that the uses hereby permitted shall be ancillary to the use of the ground floor of 200 Finchley Road.

On 15 March 1996 (9501702), the Council refused Planning Consent for 'demolition of dwelling and use of site for car parking' for reasons of policy restricting additional vehicle traffic.

On 15 August 2003 (PWX0302161), the Council approved the application by Jestico + Whiles on behalf of Tindall Overseas for the perimeter development scheme comprising 'the erection of 11 two storey business units' including one 2-storey unit on the subject site. This Approval has not been implemented and is subject to a 5 year limitation.

On 30 March 2004 (PWX0103104), the Council refused the application by K A Smith for the demolition of the existing single-storey dwelling unit and the redevelopment of the site through the erection of a three storey block containing five self-contained flats, with associated parking spaces for six cars. It appears that this Application was made by owners of the site prior to its purchase by Tindall Overseas, and that it had rested on the Council file for some time.

On 22 October 2007 (2007/2801/P), the Council refused application by Jestico + Whiles on behalf of Tindall Overseas for the demolition of the existing single-storey dwelling unit and the redevelopment of the site through the erection of a three storey office building. The ground for refusal was predominantly excessive bulk and mass.

Policy

The proposal is in accordance with Camden and National planning policy. Current Policy is contained in the UDP June 2006 and SPG's. Full details of this and individual policies below can be accessed on <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/our-plans-and-policies/>.

Evaluation

Planning precedent over the last 40 years appears to show a general trend towards office development for this part of the site rather than residential due chiefly to a conflict in residential and commercial traffic. The constraints of access within this site do not allow for segregated pedestrian access. The issues of servicing and refuse collection also become problematic. The copse, along with planting to neighbouring property, is a key site feature that is protected by Council Policies EN31-37 and TPO KF/C537 2005, though is in poor condition following years of neglect. The density of this wooded space provides a degree of cover to the site. Existing buildings surrounding the site are varied in mass and height will capably absorb the impact of a significant development.

5.0 Design

Use

To follow the planning precedents for the site and considering the access constraints the proposal will be for office use. The site is adjacent to the town centre zone of Finchley Road, as well as being surrounded on the west and south west by commercial use spaces. Therefore the office use will offer little adverse impact on the surroundings.

Amount of Accommodation

Due to the woodland copse the proposal occupies only half of the site area, part of the parking for remainder of the site has been utilised to provide adequate external space adjacent to the entrance. A margin of space has also been left to allow for construction and maintenance of the proposal without impacting on the adjacent gardens. The net office space proposed is 1039m² and the number of people circulating will begin at 40, though will not exceed 80 during rush hour. However the rush hour period has been extended by flexible working practices. Refer to the Transport Statement attached.

Layout

The proposal includes a rectilinear office space on two main floors that have views out to the wooded copse to the north and a further half level of accommodation as a semi basement. The west end of the building contains the entrance and core facilities to address the approach to the site from the neighbouring external space behind 202-204 Finchley Road.

Landscaping

The woodland copse to the north is integral to the scheme as it provides important external amenity for the office users. The diversity of the copse is being enhanced and the trees renovated to relieve overcrowding and to allow healthy future growth. In addition further species are being planted to increase the habitat diversity. A non-intrusive path is being introduced with seating to allow access to this space. Conversely hard landscaping is being introduced to the entrance area to welcome people to the building. Refer to Landscape Statement and Ecology assessment attached for full details.

Appearance

The materials proposed within the elevations further reflect the siting of the building. We propose use of wood as vertical elements and glass façade with various green tones. This represents and reflects the adjacency of the building to the wooded area. The remainder of the building will be over-clad vertical European Larch weatherboarding to soften the impact of the building where seen from neighbouring property. Other materials will be glass and render. The main material to the north and south façades is a curtain walling system which is a timber / aluminium composite frame. The spandrel panels will be glass with an opaque inner pane. The entrance area has the same cladding. A low level timber screen is proposed to guide visitors on foot to entrance space from the car parking area.

6.0 Access**Highways and Site Access**

iTransport were instructed by Tindall Overseas to carry out transport assessments. The full study is part of this application but the key issues are summarised below:

- The site is well served by rail bus and underground public transport.
- Access to the site for all users, vehicular and pedestrian, is restricted to a 3.2m high drive beneath 202-204 Finchley Road, though visibility on to Finchley Road is acceptable in both directions.
- The number of parking spaces for the entire site will be reduced to 36 including 2 spaces for disabled parking. Vehicle recharging points will be available for a total of 4 parking spaces.
- A servicing bay will be available for a long wheel-base transit type van.
- Refuse will be stored just within the site entrance and will be enlarged to deal with the proposal.
- A dry riser inlet serving the proposal will be located on Finchley Road for the Fire Brigade.

Building Access and Circulation

The building and environment is not for public use, though the building will be fully accessible by disabled employees and visitors. The entrance to the building is via a level threshold and circulation is enabled by means of a lift and sufficiently wide doorways. Corridor widths, lobby sizes and door positions have been carefully considered in the floor layouts. WCs and a shower facility for all users regardless of ability is located close to the entrance.

7.0 Conclusion

In summary we believe that throughout the design process the team have taken on board the client's and the planning authority's policies and comments and integrated appropriate solutions into the design. The design proposals will provide an opportunity for the site to become an attractive place to work whilst being discreet to those in the community.