

Land at Midland Crescent, Finchley Road, NW3

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

2004-00-BR-1000-P01

August 2014

prepared by CZWG Architects LLP





Aerial Photograph of the site and context



View of the site & context looking North up Finchley Road

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Statement

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Stadium Capital Holdings.

The site is presently owned by Stadium Capital Holdings and Network Rail.

It accompanies the full planning application for the erection of a part 3 and part 5 storey building with two further levels below street level comprising flexible commercial space (Use Classes A1/A2/A3/A4/B1/D1 and D2) at lower basement and ground floor levels. 60 student bedrooms arranged using cluster and studio units with communal kitchen, lounge and dining room areas from gantry level (basement -1) to second floor level. The main student common room is located at track level (basement -2) and associated landscaping to site. As well as 9 private residential units comprising of 2no. 1Bed, 5no. 2Bed and 2no. 3Bed apartments within the first to fourth floor levels.

The Statement should be read in conjunction with the other documents submitted with the planning application.

The report responds to the requirement of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006 (the "GDPO") for most planning applications to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement that explains:

- The design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and,
- How issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.
- The scheme will provide inclusive access to all.

1.2 Report Structure

Based on Circular 01/2006 and CABE advice, this statement takes the following structure:

- Section 2.0 "Site Analysis": provides a review of the existing physical, social and economic characteristics of the site and its surroundings in terms of its history, land uses and public transport accessibility, and provides a brief review of relevant design related policies and guidance.
- Section 3.0 "Design Development": provides an analysis of the form, character and visual role of the proposal and an analysis of the constraints to, and opportunities for, the site's redevelopment.
- Section 4.0 "The Proposal": describes the proposal and outlines the approach taken in terms of use, amount, scale, layout, landscaping, appearance and access.
- Section 5.0 "Computer Generated Images".
- Section 6.0 "Access": illustrates the measures taken within the design to make the scheme inclusive to all.
- Section 7.0 "Next Steps": this sets out additional information that may be dealt with via planning conditions and will be subject to the level of detail incorporated within the planning application.

1.3 Consultation

Pre-application consultation on the proposals has included a number of meetings with officers from London Borough of Camden (LBC) and the local Crime Prevention Design Advisor (most recently 13th August 2014).

Presentations were also made to the following local groups with an interest in the site: WHAT (West Hamstead Action for Transport), the Rosemont Trust, the Finchley Road Community Forum and West Hampstead Local Interest Group. Following those meetings feedback comments were sought and changes made to the scheme.

An onsite meeting has taken place with Network Rail Asset Protection to assess and help alleviate Network Rail concerns. The design has developed in line with the comments raised.

Following the meeting with Network Rail a consultation with Kier Group was arranged. The meeting sought to utilise the vast experience of the construction group to inform the ongoing design, and how to deal with the site constraints, informing decisions being made on construction methodology, programming and ongoing maintenance of the building.

1.4 Project Team

Client :	Stadium Capital Holdings
Architect :	CZWG Architects LLP
Planning Consultant :	Savills
Community Liaison :	Quatro Public Relations
Renewable Energy Consultant:	Metropolis Green
Engineering:	Ramboll (UK)
Transportation :	Tim Spencer and Co
EIA Scoping/Screening :	Ramboll (UK)
Daylighting and Sunlighting Consultants :	Drivers Jonas
Noise and Vibration:	AECOM
Mechanical and Electrical Engineering:	KUT
Student Management Consultant:	CRM
	Jones Lang Lasalle
Fire Engineering:	Ramboll (UK)
Ecology:	Capita Symonds



2.0 Site and Historic Analysis

2.0 Site and Historic Analysis

2.1 Introduction

This chapter demonstrates that a clear understanding of the site's characteristics and its context has been gained. "Context" relates to the physical, social and economic characteristics of the area together with the planning policy context – namely the policies and guidance that affect and shape the development of the site.

This information gathered is evaluated in order to define those constraints that restrict the site's development capacity and potential opportunities/options for its redevelopment.

2.2 Strategic Context

The site sits within the London Borough of Camden in the West Hampstead ward.

It is located to the north of Regents Park on the Finchley Road (A41), a busy thoroughfare connecting Regents Park and the west-end of London to the south with the A406 North Circular road and the M1 motorway to the north.

2.3 Socio-Economic Context

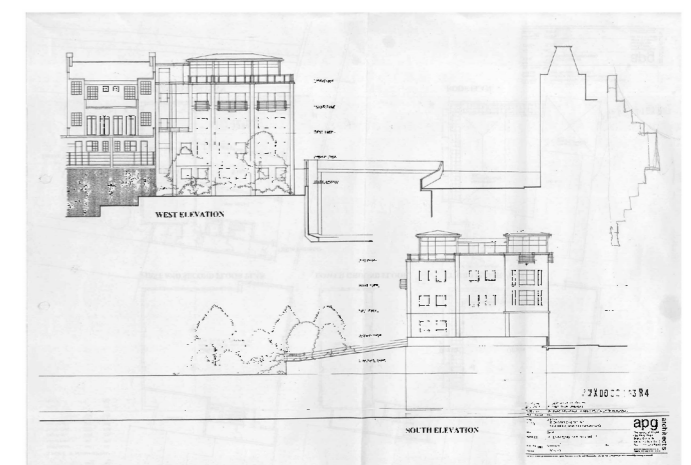
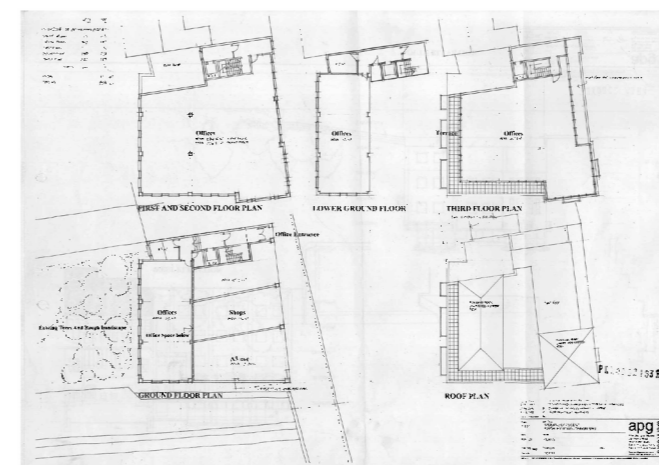
Camden's Core Strategy identifies its population as ethnically diverse, with around 30% of residents from black or minority ethnic groups (compared to the England average of 9%); almost half of Camden residents have qualifications of at least degree level while a quarter have few, if any, qualifications and many lack basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Overall recorded crime levels have been falling in recent years but are still above the average for London and there are wide differences in the life expectancy of Camden's residents. It contains wide inequalities in household income, health and other characteristics and every part of the borough has areas of relative affluence alongside areas of relative poverty. Camden is one of the most polarised boroughs in London with some of the wealthiest areas in England as well as some of the most deprived.

According to Camden's Adopted Core Strategy, the site falls within West Hampstead Interchange Growth Area. This area is a significant public transport interchange with three stations (served by London Underground, Thameslink and London Overground) and a number of bus routes. However, links between these are poor and need to be improved. The Core Strategy also identifies the Growth Area as having opportunities for redevelopment of under-utilised sites, particularly along the railway lines.

2.4 Planning History and Framework

Outline planning permission was granted in 2005 for the erection of a building comprising basement and four upper floors for use as retail and offices at the eastern end of the site and the reserved matters were approved in October 2010 (LPA refs: PWX0002163 & 2008/4958/P).

The full planning history is covered in the Savills Planning Statement accompanying the planning application



Application PWX002163

2.5 Planning Policy Context

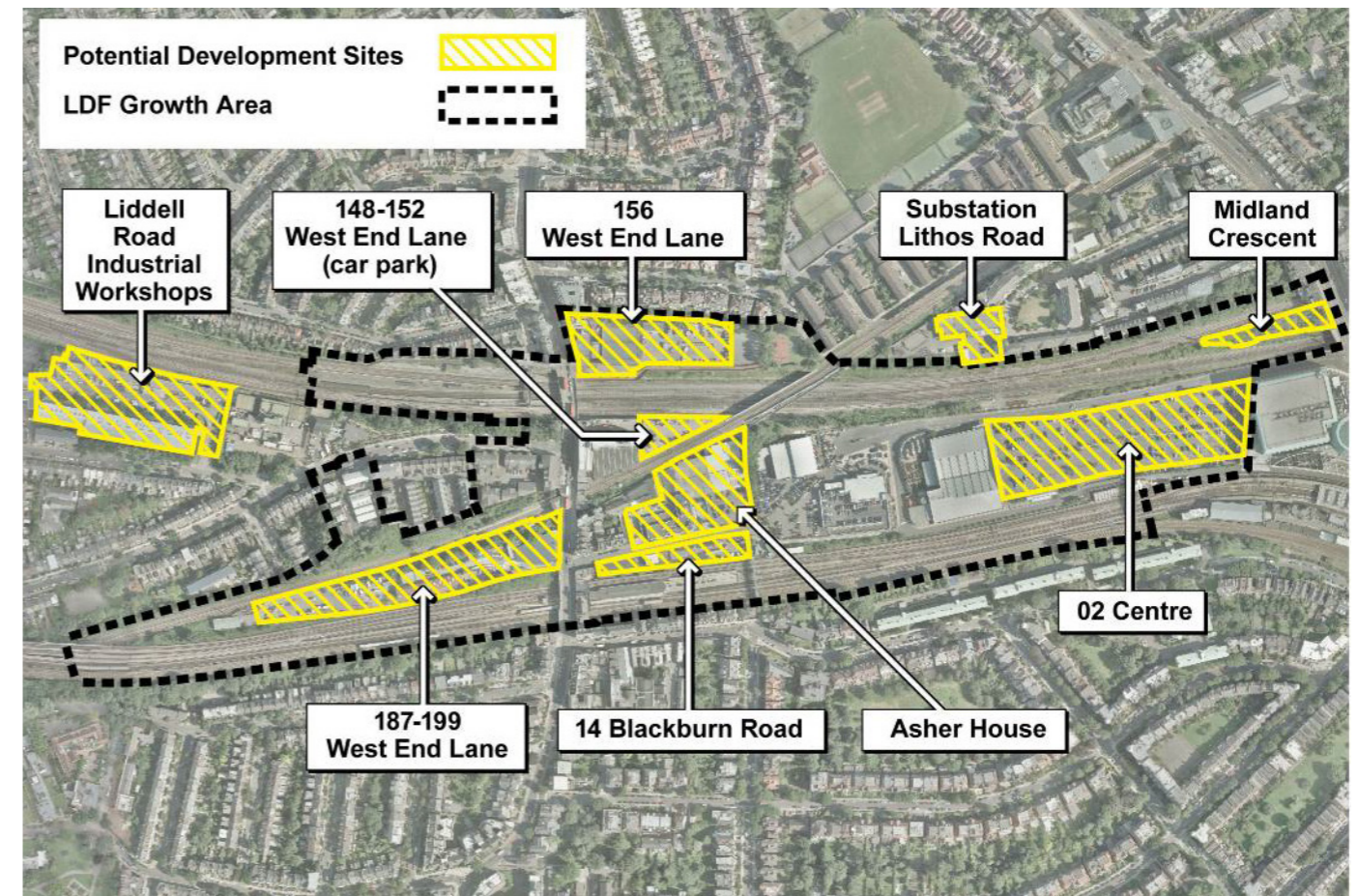
In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

The redevelopment proposals for the Midland Crescent/ Finchley Road site must, therefore, take account of relevant national, regional and local planning policy. The relevant development plan in this instance comprises the London Plan (2011), Camden's Core Strategy (2010) and Camden's Development Policies (2010).

Material considerations that have also contributed in shaping the development proposals include the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and various supplementary planning guidance documents adopted by Camden in April and September 2011.

The Site is a previously designated site located within the West Hampstead Interchange Growth Area and this is recognised in the London Plan and the Council's Core Strategy. In addition the element of the site fronting Finchley Road is located in the town centre. The preferred vision for accommodating growth in this area includes various transport improvements alongside opportunities for redevelopment of under utilised sites adjacent to the railway lines. The Council anticipates that the scale of growth at West Hampstead Interchange is more likely to be in the region of 1,000 homes and 7,000sq m of business floorspace (along with some other uses).

Developing the Site for a high quality mixed use development would assist in meeting the vision for growth in this area.



Aerial map showing the West Hampstead Growth Area as set out in Camden's Local Development Framework and individual sites identified for possible development

2.6 Site History

The site was first developed as the 'Finchley Road and St John's Wood' station, on The Midland Railways London Extension into St. Pancras. It was opened on the 13th July 1868. The station comprised two platforms and had its entrance off the west side of Finchley Road. The brick building comprised a ticket office with staff accommodation on the upper floor.

At the time a goods yard lay immediately to the south and it wasn't until two years later a permanent rail connection between Swiss Cottage and West Hampstead was formed.

The original station was remodelled to allow better access to the passenger platforms in 1884. The station was well used reaching a peak in 1898 when 87,592 tickets were issued in a single year.

In 1907 the Midland Crescent, a single storey semi-circular parade of small shops was built fronting the Finchley Road which gave the site its name. However

by this time the success of the station was under threat with road transport improving and becoming ever more popular and passenger numbers soon began to fall away.

By 1915 passenger numbers had reduced to just 15,000 a year. On 11th July 1927 the station was closed to passengers all together although the station building remained largely intact until the 1960's with the booking office let as a workshop.

Ultimately demolition of the old station was piecemeal. Most dramatically the platforms were cut back in 1982 when the line was electrified in 1983 the station was closed completely and the site sat dormant.

Nothing remains of the original station today and only the retaining wall from the 1967 photograph can be found remaining.

The crescent buildings were demolished in the 1980's. The site has remained vacant ever since.



Map of West Hampstead and Swiss Cottage from 1878



The crescent in 1907 soon after it was built



Looking east along the station platform into the Belsize tunnel in 1936



Looking east across the site in 1966



Looking west down the track in 1967 the Finchley Road

2.7 Site Description

The application site area is 0.15 hectares and is a gradually tapering triangular shape. The site is approximately 115m long and tapers from 22m across the frontage with the Finchley Road to 8m at its narrowest point.

Historically the previous built use of the site was for commercial and retail space in a crescent shape and as a railway station before that. The disused crescent building was demolished in the mid 1980's and now the site sits vacant.

Currently the site is used to display a large, free standing billboard advertisements facing the Finchley Road.

Immediately to the north of the site is 279 Finchley Road, a brick built parade of ground floor commercial units with a further two storeys of residential apartments above and a pitched roof over, built circa 1900. This building is stepped at the rear. The southern half is suspended above the railway.

Immediately to the south is a plain concrete wall approximately 1.5m high protecting the railway below. This wall wraps around the corner with Blackburn Road and continues west 60 down the slope for nearly 100m.

The vacant site and the open railway combine to make a very poor townscape and environment on the Finchley Road at the corner of Blackburn Road.

As the triangular site continues to a point heading west the site is bounded on both north and south sides by operational railway lines.

Opposite, on the east side of the Finchley Road, are parades of shops similar to 279 with commercial ground floor and either two or three storeys of residential accommodation above and a flat roof. These buildings were built circa 1930.



Aerial photograph showing the site sitting in the railway land, the Finchley Road and the O2 Shopping centre.

To the south, on the corner of Blackburn Road & Finchley Road is the O² Centre, a shopping centre & cinema complex circa 1998.

Opposite, is a 7 storey hotel. These buildings define the space of the road junction (controlled by traffic lights).

The Finchley Road functions as a vibrant arterial route for connecting central and north London as well as

being an important focal shopping and entertainment destination in its own right.

“To the west West Hampstead has a distinctive village character. West End Lane in particular brings people together to shop and mingle at cafes and restaurants, especially on weekends and evenings when the high street really comes to life. It offers many residents the perfect balance of intimacy and cosmopolitanism so

prized in London”. Taken from ‘Shaping the Future of the West Hampstead area : Consultation on key issues, May 2011’.

West Hampstead is an area of growth. It has been identified as an ‘area for intensification’ in the London Plan and a ‘growth area’ in Camden’s Local Development Framework (LDF).

2.8 Site Photos

The images opposite are an edited version of an extensive photographic study of the site.

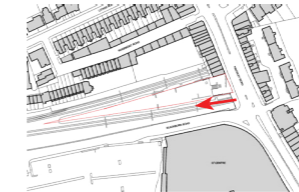
Location photographs are an invaluable resource acting as a reminder of the site, they are to be used as a touchstone to its prevailing conditions throughout the design. They are more than just a literal reminder of the site; they are there to refer to, against which a measure of a the developing design can be made at any time.



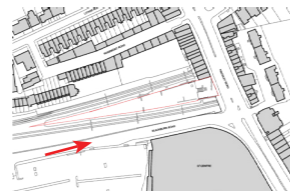
view across Finchley Road - May 08



view west from Finchley Road bridge Feb 08



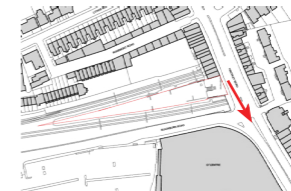
view west from Finchley Road bridge May 08



view east on Blackburn Road - Jan 12



view of 279 gable end - Jan 12



view down the Finchley Road - May 08

