



PLANNING STATEMENT

4 Wadham Gardens, London NW3 3DP

Prepared for

Mr & Mrs L Brown

JULY 2014

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is written in support of an application for planning permission for excavation under the annex and part of front garden to provide additional accommodation and erection of an extension at first floor level.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the following:
- Architectural drawings by Burwell Deakins Architects;
 - Design and Access Statement of Burwell Deakins Architects dated 30/07/14;
 - Construction Method Statement of Elliott Wood Partnership dated July 2014;
 - Basement Impact Assessment of Site Analytical Services Ltd dated July 2014; and
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report of Landmark Trees dated 2/7/14.

The Application Site and Surrounding Area

- 1.3 4 Wadham Gardens is a detached single family dwelling house located on the east side of the road and sits opposite Harley Road. It is set back from the street frontage behind a dwarf wall, metal railings and gates. The facade of the building is painted stucco, a finish typically found within the local streetscape.
- 1.4 The application proposals relate only to the later annex addition and involve excavation under it to provide additional accommodation and an extension at first floor level.
- 1.5 The property lies within the Elsworthy conservation area. The area was once farmland owned by the Eton College Estate dating back to the fifteenth century. Development commenced in the nineteenth century and the area is now predominately residential in character comprising buildings set back from the street frontage on generous plots and set in a green and leafy environment. The main building and later annex are not listed buildings.

Relevant Planning History

- 1.6 The host property was completely refurbished and extended some years ago under the auspices of a planning permission (LPA ref: 2005/5131/P) granted in early 2006 for alterations and extension to the building including the conversion from two units

into a single family dwelling and excavation to enlarge the basement area.

Pre-Application Engagement with the Council

- 1.7 In accordance with the advice of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), pre-application engagement has been undertaken with the Council. The scheme submitted for the purpose of this exercise involved the excavation under the annex to form a new basement level and an extension at first floor level to form additional accommodation. A copy of the Council's response, reference 2014/0592/PRE is appended hereto.
- 1.8 It was concluded that as the basement did not include any lightwells and it did not extend much beyond the footprint of the original building, there would be no impact upon the external appearance and the proposal was considered to be acceptable.
- 1.9 With regard to the first floor extension, concern was expressed by Officers with regard to the size of the addition which in turn was considered to have a harmful impact upon the visual appearance of the host property, particularly the rear elevation.
- 1.10 Further discussions subsequently took place with the Council's Officers with a view to reducing the scale of the first floor and it was felt that an extension of a reduce size could be supported. It is therefore as a result of these further discussions which have informed the application scheme now submitted for consideration.

The Proposal

- 1.11 Planning permission is now therefore sought for a modest extension at first floor level to the annex which in turn would create access into the side addition from the host dwelling at first floor level. Materials would reflect those on the existing building ensuring therefore that the architectural quality and character of the existing building is not compromised.
- 1.12 Excavation under the annex and part of the front garden is also proposed which would provide additional living accommodation as an extension to the existing basement level under the parent building. No external manifestations are proposed and the development therefore would be entirely underground not visible from any public or private view.

Refer to architects drawings and Design and Access Statement for further detailed information of the scheme proposals.

2 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012. The new NPPF largely carries forward the planning policies and protections contained within Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) albeit in a more streamlined form with an emphasis on a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 2.2 The NPPF makes clear that the starting point for decision making is the development plan and applications for development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved.
- 2.3 The NPPF establishes a number of core principles that underpin the planning system which includes conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance so that their contribution and enjoyment can continue for this and future generations.
- 2.4 The Framework encourages design to secure the optimal and efficient use of a site whilst responding to local character and history.
- 2.5 Paragraph 126 recognises that heritage assets (includes conservation areas) are an irreplaceable resource and seeks to conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. It is appropriate to consider the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 128 requires applicants to provide information on the significance of any heritage assets affected and the contribution made by its setting, the level of detail to be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact on that significance.
- 2.6 Paragraph 135 is relevant to this proposal as it relates to the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset (the application property) and requires that a balanced judgement should be made in determining such applications having regard to the scale of any harm or loss, the relative significance of the building and its contribution to the significance of the designated heritage asset (Elsworthy Conservation Area) as a whole.

Development Plan

- 2.7 The proposal has been assessed in relation to the 'development plan' which comprises relevant policies contained within the London Plan, dated July 2011, the Council's Core Strategy, adopted in November 2010 and the Development Policies also adopted in November 2010.

London Plan

- 2.8 Consistent with the NPPF, strategic advice in the London Plan seeks to ensure that development affecting a heritage asset and its setting conserves its significance by being sympathetic to its form, scale, materials and architectural detail (policy 7.8).

Core Strategy

- 2.9 One of the main objectives identified in the Council's Core Strategy is to manage change and growth in a manner that respects the character, heritage and distinctiveness of the Borough for it to continue to be a popular place to live, work and visit.
- 2.10 The application property is identified as being within the Elsworthy Conservation Area. The following policies from the Core Strategy are therefore considered to be of particular relevance in the determination of this application:
- CS5 Managing the impact of growth and development; and
 - CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving local heritage.

Development Policies

- 2.11 Development Policies sets out more detailed policies to aid in delivering the overarching objectives of the Core Strategy. Relevant Development Policies are:
- DP22 Promoting Sustainable Design and Construction;
 - DP23 Water;
 - DP24 Securing high quality design;
 - DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage;
 - DP26 Managing the impact of development on neighbouring occupiers; &
 - DP27 Basements and Lightwells.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 2.12 The Council's supplementary planning guidance entitled "Basements and Lightwells" adopted in September 2013 is also a material consideration in the determination of

this application.

2.13 Regard is also had to the Elsworthy Conservation Area Appraisal adopted in 2009 and produced by the Council to provide a basis for guiding development and the approach to be taken in the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area.

3 PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE

NPPF

3.1 Paragraph 14 states:

*"At the heart of the NPPF is a **Presumption in favour of sustainable development...."***

3.2 As well as the five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development, the NPPF also relies upon The United Nations General Assembly definition: "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

3.3 In that context, the NPPF identifies three dimensions to 'sustainable development':

- An economic role;
- A social role; and
- An environmental role.

3.4 A presumption in favour of sustainable development is seen by Minister's as a *"golden thread running through both plan making and decision-taking"* . It makes clear that the starting point for decision making is the development plan and applications for development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Plan should be approved without delay.

3.5 The proposed development would meet the needs of the present occupiers without compromising the ability of future generations to come. As evidenced throughout this statement, the proposal also fully complies with development plan policy as well as the advice offered in the NPPF. For these reasons the proposal comprises sustainable development and should be approved.

Development Plan

3.6 Consideration has been given to prevailing development plan policies. Every effort has been made to ensure the proposals, whilst meeting the expectations of modern day living, do not harm the architectural quality and integrity of the existing building, the significance of the Conservation Area or the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. To that end, the proposed development would be executed to a very high standard ensuring the proposal is respectful and harmonious with the integrity of the existing building, the townscape character and local distinctiveness of the

area, in accordance with Core Strategy policies CS5, CS14 and Development Policies DP24, DP25 & DP26.

Impact upon the Existing Building and Surrounding Area

New Basement level

- 3.7 Excavation directly under the footprint of the annex and part of the front garden would provide additional ancillary accommodation wholly underground and not therefore directly visible from any public or private view. No external manifestations are proposed and the below ground extension would not result in more than 50% of the front garden area being built under. Following completion of the development the front garden would be reinstated as existing and there would be no evidence therefore of the new basement level.

Landscaping and Trees

- 3.8 The front garden area is currently hard surfaced with perimeter planting and will be reinstated following completion of the development. The rear garden is unaffected by the proposals. Whilst no trees are to be felled as there are a number of mature trees in the vicinity of the application site, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment was commissioned and forms part of the application documents. The report of Landmark Trees dated 2nd July 2014 concludes that the proposed development is a sufficient distance from any tree roots and is not therefore considered to impact significantly upon the wider tree population or local landscape.

Please refer to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment report of Landmark Trees for further detailed information in this regard.

- 3.9 As such the underground extension would not harm the architectural character of the building and wholly preserves the established character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding area and thus accords with policies CS5, CS14, DP24 & DP25.

Construction of the Development

- 3.10 A comprehensive site investigation has been carried out and such findings are that the geology is capable of supporting the loads from the proposed development.
- 3.11 As advised in the CMS of Elliott Wood Partnership and the Basement Impact Assessment of Site Analytical Services Ltd, the proposed structural design and scope of the works should not have any significant adverse impact on the structural stability of the existing building or neighbouring structures.

- 3.12 As the development is an extension (of less than 500sqm) to an existing dwelling and is not new build, the proposals are not in conflict with policy DP22.

Flooding

- 3.13 The site is not within the flood plain and is identified as being within an area of low risk from surface water flooding. The ground cover of the existing front garden area is that of paving with perimeter planting. This is not expected to change and the completed development therefore is unlikely to cause a worsening effect on the water table or result in surface water flooding.

Please refer to the CMS of Elliott Wood Partnership and the Basement Impact Assessment of Site Analytical Services Ltd for further detailed information in this regard.

- 3.14 For the reasons given in paragraphs 3.10 to 3.13 above, the proposed subterranean development is in accordance with development plan policies DP23, DP27 and supplementary guidance CPG4.

First Floor Extension

- 3.15 Further discussions with the Council's Officer's following the initial pre-application scheme have informed the proposal to extend the side annex at first floor level to form a link to the main dwelling. It is now visually smaller in height, scale and bulk to that originally proposed resulting in a modest addition which would be subordinate to the host dwelling ensuring therefore that the architectural quality of the building is not compromised. Further, the extension would be constructed with a palette of materials to match the existing building to be respectful to it and not undermine its quality, character or visual appearance.
- 3.16 Wadham Gardens contains a mix of fine detailed buildings, whilst uniquely designed they share a common form and style with a varied mix of materials including a combination of brick and decorative tiling which creates a strong architectural vocabulary and others with large expanses of stucco as with the application property which add contrast to the streetscape.
- 3.17 The host building is uniquely designed but shares a common architectural language which is replicated in the proposals and retains original architectural detailing to respect the existing building and surrounding streetscape whilst ensuring therefore that the character and appearance of the conservation area is preserved and thus accords with policies CS5, CS14, DP24 & DP25.

Impact upon Residential Amenity

- 3.18 The application building is a detached dwelling and the proposals allow for an increase in residential floor space, much of which would be underground, not visible from any public or private view and not therefore harmful to existing neighbouring occupiers.
- 3.19 The modest first floor extension would be constructed above the annex adjacent to the neighbouring property to the north, no. 6 Wadham Gardens. Whilst there is a window on the flank elevation of the neighbouring property it is our understanding this serves a stairwell and is not therefore a habitable room.
- 3.20 The lack of windows on the side elevation of the new addition would preclude any loss of privacy.
- 3.21 The proposal would not cause harm or injury to the amenities of any adjoining occupier and therefore accords with the requirements of Development Policy DP26.

In Summary

- 3.22 In summary and for the reasons set out above, the proposals are not in conflict with prevailing planning policies and should be approved without delay.
- 3.23 Further, the pre-application advice sought from the Council is such that the scheme has the support of Senior Officers and that an application would therefore be looked upon favourably.

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The proposed development would meet the needs of the present occupiers without compromising future generations to meet their own needs and is therefore sustainable development consistent with the NPPF.
- 4.2 The proposal provides additional ancillary residential accommodation required for contemporary living without compromising the architectural integrity of the existing building or causing harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Furthermore, there would be no significant adverse effect upon existing residential amenity as a result of the development.
- 4.3 The proposals comply with all relevant development plan policies, supplementary planning guidance and with central government advice in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In our judgement no other material considerations weigh against it.
- 4.4 Accordingly we trust that Camden Council will determine that the application for planning permission can be approved.

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1

Date: 13/3/14
Your ref:
Our ref: 2014/0592/PRE
Contact: David Peres da Costa
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Dear Ms Rust,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Re: 4a Wadham Gardens, NW3 3DP

Thank you for your enquiry received on the 20th January 2014, regarding the proposed basement and first floor extension at the above property. This property falls within the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area (Sub-Area 3: Willett Development).

Willett developed the Free Style and the eclectic 'Queen Anne' Style which was, 'An attractive medley of picturesque features including Dutch gables and irregular windows with small panes and white glazing bars' (Michael Jenner, London Heritage). His developments and those that copied them elsewhere became known as 'Willett style'. As such, the Willett development forms an important and unmistakable group within the Conservation Area.

Alterations and extensions can have a detrimental impact either cumulatively or individually on the character and appearance of the area. Examples within the area include extensions that negatively affect the scale, symmetry, or relative dominance of parts of existing buildings.

The Conservation Area retains many diverse historic rooflines which it is important to preserve. Fundamental changes to the roofline, insensitive alterations, poor materials, intrusive dormers, or inappropriate windows can harm the historic character of the roofscape and will not be acceptable.

Within the different sub-areas of the Elsworthy Conservation Area there are many interesting examples of historic rear elevations. The original historic pattern of rear elevations within a street or group of buildings is an integral part of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As such rear extensions will not be acceptable where they would compromise the special character. This is especially true of 4 and 4a Wadham Gardens whose rear elevation can be viewed from the private amenity space within Wadham Gardens.

The proposed basement extension does not include any lightwells so would not impact on the external appearance of the host property. The scale of the basement which does not extend much beyond the footprint of the original building may be considered acceptable. In accordance with policy DP27 Basements and Lightwells and Camden Planning Guidance 2013 (CPG4), a basement impact assessment would need to be submitted with any future planning application. The BIA will include the following stages:

- Stage 1 - Screening;
- Stage 2 - Scoping;
- Stage 3 - Site investigation and study;
- Stage 4 - Impact assessment; and
- Stage 5 - Review and decision making.

Each of these stages is explained in CPG4 (Basement and lightwells). You should also refer to Chapter 6 of the Camden Geological, Hydrogeological and Hydrological Study, which is available on the Camden Council website. At each stage in the process the person(s) undertaking the BIA process on your behalf should hold qualifications relevant to the matters being considered.

The existing building (4A Wadham Gardens) appears as a subordinate addition to the main building. The extension at 1st floor would infill an important gap between 4a Wadham Gardens and the neighbouring property, 6 Wadham Gardens. The 1st floor extension is considered disproportionately large and would be particularly harmful to the rear elevation of the host property. Moreover, the principle of a 1st floor extension is considered unacceptable because of the likely harm to roof form and existing architectural features that are important for Willett style properties.

The ground floor front extension may be considered acceptable.

Please note that the information contained in this letter represents an officer's opinion and is without prejudice to further consideration of this matter by the Development Control section or to the Council's formal decision.

I trust this information is of assistance. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone on 020 7974 5262.

It is important to us to find out what our customers think about the service we provide. To help, we would be very grateful if you could take a few moments to complete our [pre application enquiry survey](#). We will use the information you give us to monitor and improve our services.

Yours sincerely

David Peres da Costa
Planning officer
Development Management West Team