



June 2014

## Proof of Evidence Of David Green RIBA

Town & Country Planning Act 1990, Section 78

Appeal by Zen Developments

Proposed development of 38 Heath Drive, NW3 7SD with a new residential building of 21 apartments and associated landscape

PINS Reference: APP/X5210/14/2215857

LPA Reference: 2013/7355/P

M•R Partnership

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## **1.0 Personal and Practice Details of Mr David Green**

David Green will say:

- 1.1 I am David Green and I am director and co-owner of M.R Partnership Ltd Architects, which was established in 1973.
- 1.2 I studied at the Bartlett School of Architecture between 1977 and 1982 and joined M.R Partnership in 2002. I was previously an associate at Sheppard Robson Architects 1989 – 2002 and Heery Architects and Engineers Ltd. 1982 – 1989.
- 1.3 Further information on the practice can be found at [www.mrpartnership.com](http://www.mrpartnership.com). We have many years experience of working in the London Borough of Camden having designed new and extended several existing houses in the Hampstead area. These include projects in Wadham Gardens, Elsworthy Road, Netherhall Gardens, Willoughby Road and Arkwright Road, all within Conservation Areas.
- 1.4 I was personally responsible for designing the proposal in this application.



## 2. The Brief

- 2.1 The brief from Zen Developments required the demolition of the existing dwelling at 38 Heath Drive and the design of a new residential apartment building in a traditional style reflecting the high quality and ambience expected in this Hampstead location.
- 2.2 The development provides a mix of unit types and sizes including 3 bed family size units in a new building designed to respect both the surrounding Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area and the immediate context of the adjacent Finchley Road.
- 2.3 The development is car free and will retain the significant trees currently dominating the site when viewed from both Heath Drive and Finchley Road.
- 2.4 The development is designed to enhance the site and its setting and respond more appropriately to the scale and context of the immediate surroundings.

## 3. Existing Site & Surroundings

- 3.1 The property currently comprises an existing large 9 bedroom dwelling house likely to have been constructed in the mid 1920s in a Neo Georgian style commonly found in adjacent roads in this part of Hampstead. The house has 2 storeys with dormer windows to a 3<sup>rd</sup> storey in the roof. The house is set back from the site boundary on both Heath Drive and Finchley Road due to a group of mature London Plane trees which dominate views to the site from adjacent streets. The plot is unusual in that the front facade and entrance to the house faces Finchley Road yet is accessed from and has its address on Heath Drive. The garden area of the house is mainly to the front and side of the building with only a small external space to the rear.
- 3.2 The site is situated on a prominent corner at the junction of Heath Drive and Finchley Road which are roads of very different scale and character. The existing house forms part of the streetscape of Finchley Road but is remote from Heath Drive due to the greater set back and large plane trees.





No. 35 & 36 Heath Drive



No. 37 Heath Drive



Charles Quennell designed houses in Heath Drive



- 3.3 Heath Drive is a domestic scale suburban street of large houses within Hampstead's Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area. The boundary of the Conservation Area is set around the site of 38.
- 3.4 The site is identified within the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area Statement as being part of a group of buildings, nos. 35-38 Heath Drive, that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Although similar in style no. 38 is however somewhat detached from the above mentioned group due to the existing dwelling being set back considerably from the site boundary and therefore not appearing to be part of this group.
- 3.5 Although nos. 35, 36, 37, 38 share a similar 1920s Neo Georgian style they are untypical of the predominant architectural character of Heath Drive, which is set more by the variety of styles and quality displayed in the large Edwardian houses lining the north western side of the street and by the more consistent group of Charles Quennell designed houses on the south eastern side, all of which were developed much earlier between 1890 until the First World War.
- 3.6 The group of properties nos. 35-38 were developed later than the majority of Heath Drive's houses and reflect the prevailing 1920s/1930s Neo Georgian style of house more commonly found in other nearby roads in the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area and other parts of Hampstead.
- 3.7 This Neo Georgian style is typified by the plainer more formal composition of facades with simpler pitched roof forms, symmetrically placed, small paned traditional sash windows with gauged brick arches and features such as rusticated brick quoins, string course, pedimented entrances and consistent eaves detail.



Apartment block opposite  
on Finchley Road



Apartment block opposite  
on Heath Drive



View of site from north  
on Finchley Road



View of site from west  
on Finchley Road

- 3.8 Heath Drive is also noted in the Conservation Area Statement for its low lying and rather dark and enclosed feel this being mainly due to the dominating large mature London Plane trees lining both sides of the street but also due to the brick boundary walls to the plots, particularly along the group of properties nos 35-38. The large Plane Trees surrounding the site of no. 38 are especially important as they are the defining characteristic and most visible feature when entering Heath Drive and when viewing the site from the North down Finchley Road. The trees overwhelm the view to the extent that the existing dwelling house on the no. 38 site is barely visible from the street in summer.
- 3.9 Finchley Road is a busy main road into London and this section of the street displays buildings of much greater scale and a more urban character. Although there are some individual houses the predominant buildings in the immediate vicinity are the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and early Edwardian mansion apartment blocks located at the junctions of the adjoining streets with Finchley Road.
- 3.10 The junctions of Finchley Road with Heath Drive and both Cannon Hill/Lyncroft Gardens opposite have been developed as an urban 'set piece' with 3 opposing similar scale 5/6 storey mansion blocks on each corner. Each block displays a corner 'tower' with 'turrett' roof form that repeats as a feature of several similar mansion blocks further down Finchley Road and gives the street its unique 'cosmopolitan' and rather 'European' character. The mansion blocks whilst varying in decorative style all feature the same robust red brick construction with heavy stone or brick string courses articulating each storey and giving a horizontal 'banded' emphasis to the main facades.
- 3.11 From the point of view of the Finchley Road streetscape the site of 38 Heath Drive forms a 4<sup>th</sup> 'empty' corner at this intersection of streets and urban junction. It is likely the site of 38 was undeveloped at the time of the laying out of Finchley Road and the development of the mansion blocks, most probably a factor of land ownership at the time. The large Plane Trees which presently visually dominate the corner would have existed at the time and were untouched and grew later to their present mature condition.



No. 262 plus terrace nos. 264-270 beyond



Nos. 260-262 Finchley Road plus new sheltered housing beyond

- 3.12 The present dwelling house no. 38 is set well back from the site boundary with Finchley Road to a much greater degree than the other adjoining properties (with the exception of the adjacent modern terrace, nos. 264-270) to allow a driveway, and avoiding the plane trees which were already established in the 1920s when the present house was built.
- 3.13 The present site of 38 therefore appears underdeveloped when viewed/appreciated with the context, townscape and urban grain of Finchley Road.
- 3.14 Immediately to the south of the site is nos. 264-270 Finchley Road, a 3 storey terrace of modern 1960s style houses which is of poor quality and does not relate well to the surrounding streetscape. The terrace is set back from the Finchley Road to the same extent as no. 38, this likely to have been due to the demand for parking on the site in the front in addition to aligning with the earlier structure. There has recently been a failed planning application to demolish and redevelop the property into a new apartment building with a modern design.
- 3.15 Beyond the terrace the older group of large houses nos. 260 & 262 Finchley Road sit further forward to what would have been the original building line when Finchley Road was first laid out.
- 3.16 This building line has been adopted in more recent developments further along the street, particularly the sheltered housing apartment block to the South.
- 3.17 In summary, whilst the present dwelling house is of reasonable architectural quality the site of no. 38 is underdeveloped when viewed in the context of both the Heath Drive and Finchley Road streetscape and can easily accommodate a development of greater bulk and scale.





Existing house at No. 38

#### 4. The Existing House

- 4.1 The proposed development requires the demolition of the existing dwelling house on the site of no. 38. Demolition of an existing building within a Conservation Area requires the Council's consent which has been refused. One reason given for refusal is that the house makes a 'positive contribution to the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area and its loss would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.'
- 4.2 The existing house is of reasonable quality but makes no particular contribution to the Conservation Area. Its architecture is typical of many suburban 1920s and 1930s houses in the 'neo Georgian' style with a plain hipped tiled roof with dormers, symmetrical red brick elevations, and standard sash windows of varying sizes and proportions.
- 4.3 The house's entrance and main frontage faces Finchley Road. The entrance elevation features a projecting full width single storey frontage with centrally placed pedimented porch.
- 4.4 The side elevation facing Heath Drive whilst formal and symmetrical is clearly designed as a secondary garden elevation. It has a projecting central wing with large composite bay windows and no entrance. There is a semi-external covered logia space to one side with a garden door from the main reception room. The rear and south elevations are plain and unadorned.
- 4.5 The main elevations feature standard design sash windows in plain brick facades. The front and garden facades have rusticated brick quoining (1:4) at each corner but no other significant detailing or ornamentation. The cill, lintel and jamb detailing is consistently plain and without adornment.
- 4.6 The roof detailing is simple with standard dormer construction. Some dormer windows appear to have been replaced with metal casements and are not the correct Neo Georgian proportion and style. The eaves detail and soffit feature traditional bracketed dentil features but apart from this the roofs are unremarkable.





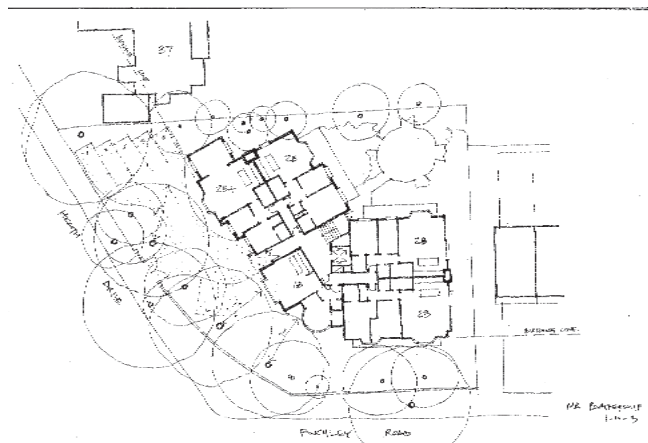
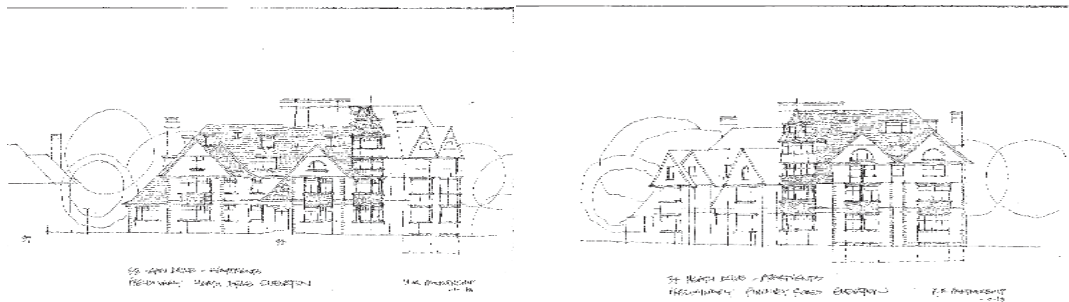
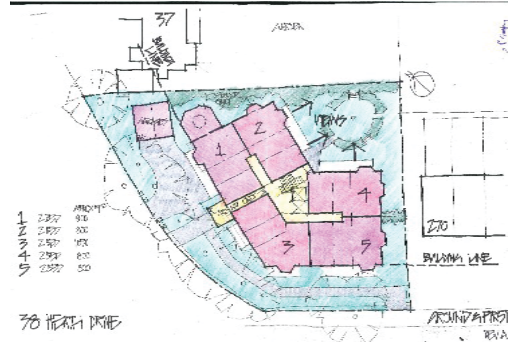
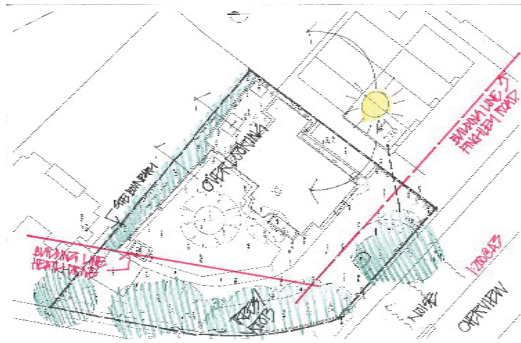
Existing view from  
Heath Drive



Existing view from  
Finchley Road



- 4.7 The house is sited on the southern part of its plot towards Finchley Road and distances itself from the Heath Drive boundary. There are accesses off both Heath Drive and Finchley Road. The aspect and siting of the house and arrangement of the elevations clearly signifies the architect's intent to address Finchley Road rather than Heath Drive.
- 4.8 Although the property is addressed on Heath Drive its aspect, orientation and position in the streetscape is towards Finchley Road. When driving or walking along Finchley Road the house is very much part of the street scene and is viewed adjacent the neighbouring terrace 264-270 Finchley Road. The house is barely seen from Heath Drive being set so far back from the boundary behind the heavy tree screening.
- 4.9 The Redington and Frognal Conservation Area statement notes no. 38 as part of a group of 4 similar properties nos 35-38. Although similar in architectural style and detailing no. 38 is detached from the group and has no real visual relationship. This is evident in aerial photos – no. 38 is clearly part of the Finchley Road grouping of buildings and has little relationship to Heath Drive.
- 4.10 In my professional opinion for the above reasons the existing house on the site of 38 does not provide a positive contribution to nor appear to be physically part of the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area. Its contribution is to the Finchley Road streetscape not Heath Drive. It is neutral, not of particular architectural interest and is set quite apart from the adjacent houses on Heath Drive. The heavy tree screening would result in its demolition being hardly noticeable from Heath Drive and from the Conservation Area for long periods during the year. Its loss would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. On the contrary the character and the appearance of the site would be very much retained due to the mature plane trees, landscaping and front boundary walls, all of which are to be retained.



## 5. Evolution of the Design

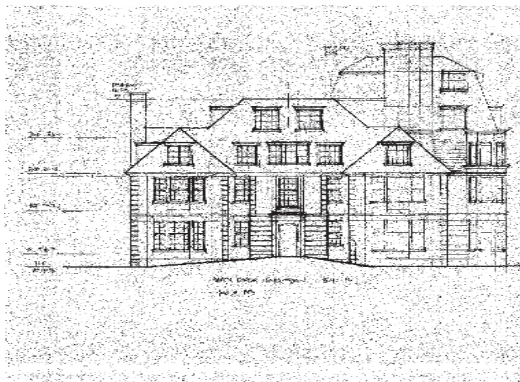
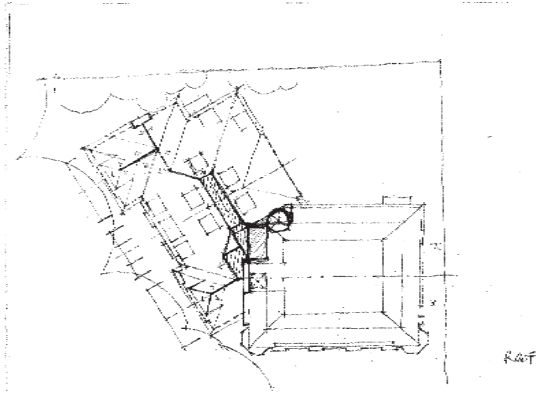
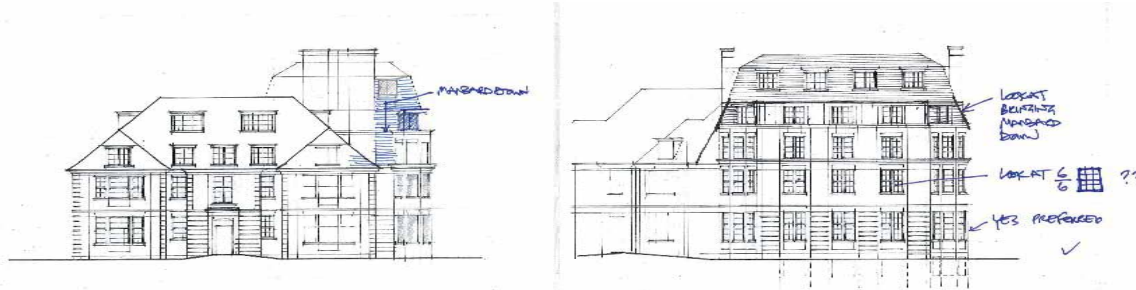
- 5.1 The design of the new apartment block was developed over 3 months in close consultation with the client Zen Developments, the planning consultant Cunnane Town Planning and the Heritage Consultant Chris Miele of Montagu Evans. The massing and style were carefully considered and finalised only after developing and reviewing a number of options, and studying the Conservation Area appraisal and historical articles.
- 5.2 Following a detailed visual examination of the site and surroundings the initial sketch plan was issued on 20.9.13. This set the 'parti' for the scheme: a cranked plan aligning with the frontages of Heath Drive and Finchley Road and set back to allow for the mature tree canopies on the site boundaries. The frontage on the Heath Drive wing aligns with the corner of the roof of no. 37, although the facades are not aligned, following the street pattern. The Finchley Road frontage aligns with the natural and historic building line of the older adjacent properties nos 260 and 262 (not the more recent terrace 264-270).
- 5.3 The footprint is double width with apartments facing to the front and rear, each apartment with views out to gardens.
- 5.4 This early sketch shows the 2 existing site accesses retained but this was later changed to a single entrance to the development reusing the existing access and gates into the site from Heath Drive. The new building has one entrance leading to a communal lift and stair core serving all apartments.
- 5.5 My first elevational sketches issued 1.10.13 picked up on the Arts & Crafts vocabulary of the earlier Charles Quennel designed Houses at 25-26 and 31-32 Heath Drive. These elevations suggest a mix of materials ie. tile hanging and brick and the use of asymetrically placed gables with extended lower slopes to create a less formal and picturesque composition and to break down the mass of the building into a domestic scale. A corner 'tower' with turret roof was also suggested.



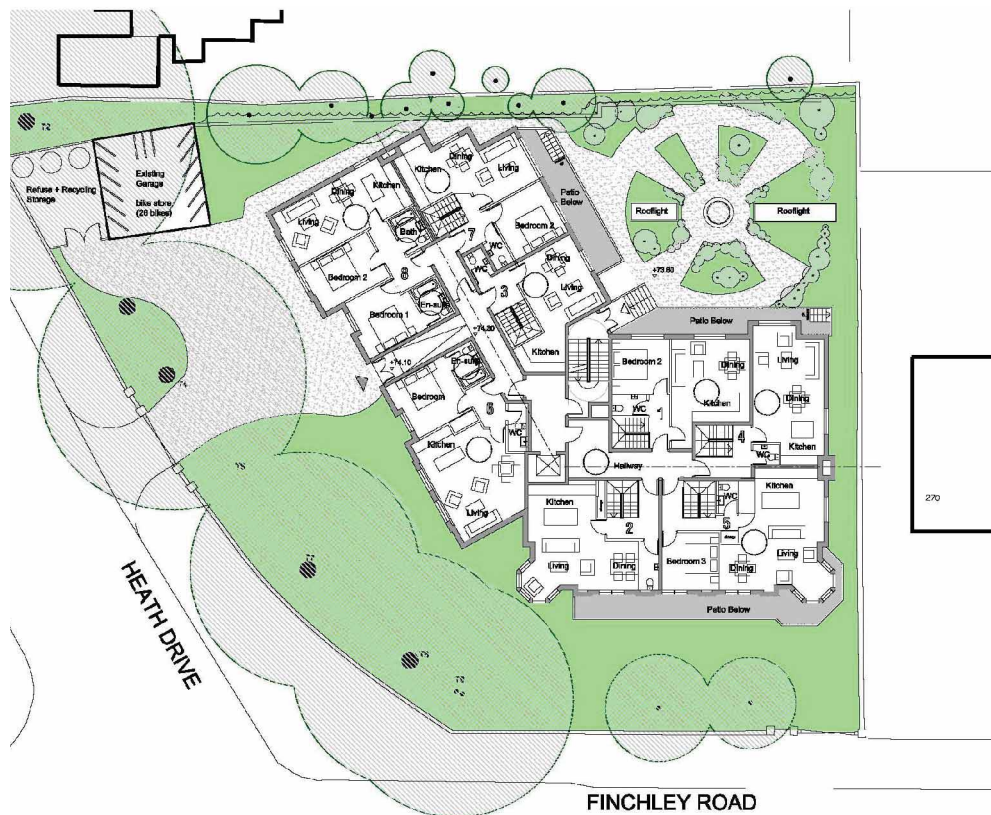


- 5.6 This Arts & Crafts style was debated amongst the team and agreed not to be appropriate. The preferred style was to be 'Neo Georgian' responding to the immediately adjacent group of houses nos. 35-37 Heath Drive as well as the detailing of the existing building.
- 5.7 A further preliminary sketch elevation was issued on 2.10.13 with more formal and symmetrical facades. These featured parapets and a 2 level roof behind, symetrically placed dormers and central pedimented entrance on Heath Drive. The Finchley Road elevation now features more robust bulkier proportions with 'tower' features at each corner.
- 5.8 On 3.10.13 Chris Miele suggested a variation on this more formal theme using a traditional mansard roof form to break up and soften the roofscape.
- 5.9 I then developed several options with mansard roof with and without a parapet, leading to the option of 11.10.13. This version has a parapet storey at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor on Heath Drive wing and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor on the higher Finchley Road wing. The precedent for a 'storey in the parapet' was noted on the Hampstead Garden Suburb estate and I felt very relevant particularly on the Finchley Road wing as giving more 'classical' weight and presence to the higher elevation. This sketch version still includes the corner tower as a knuckle in the cranked plan as seen in several mansion blocks local to the site.
- 5.10 At this stage the plans and elevations were drawn on CAD and issued around the team for review and comment. Note the plans still show the projecting 'tower' feature at the 'knuckle' of the 2 wings and an extended single storey element to Flat 8 at the northern end.





- 5.11 The 18.10.13 plans and elevations were debated at a team meeting. The following points were agreed:
- The Heath Drive elevation is still too formal and palatial and needs to be amended to more domestic proportions relating to nos 35-37. Agreed to amend to 2 projecting bays either side of a simpler central entrance with no pediment, similar to no. 36.
  - The single storey element at the north end is not assisting the composition and is to be removed.
  - The 2 projecting bays to have hipped gables with dormers either side of the double height roof with simpler relationship to the facade below and no parapet. Reduce height and mass of this element of the roof.
  - The tower at the junction of the wings is overscaled and not correct; use a flank wall with monumental brick chimneys to turn the corner, join the roofs and change height and scale.
  - The Finchley Road elevation is generally of the correct scale and proportion but windows need to be ordered in diminishing height between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. Chimneys are to match at either end.
  - All windows to be sash windows.
- 5.12 A further revised version was issued around the team on 23.10.13 and comments incorporated:
- Bring the mansard roof on the Finchley Road wing down to meet the roofline on Heath Drive.
  - The main Heath Drive roofline to be further broken up with a stepped hipped profile and shorter ridge line.
  - Smaller roof dormers above larger dormers.
- 5.13 These last revisions resulted in the finally submitted scheme outlined in more detail in section 6 below. It can be seen that the design of the scheme was finalised after considerable development and discussion in the team over the appropriate roof forms, massing and architectural language.



## 6. The Proposed Scheme – as submitted November 2013

- 6.1 The proposed development provides 21 no. residential apartments in a new building comprising 2 distinct wings. The Heath Drive wing is of 2 storey construction with 2 further stories located in the roof. The Finchley Road wing is a higher 4 storey block with 1 further storey in the roof, and a lower ground floor below garden level.
- 6.2 The proposed accommodation provides the following mix of unit sizes, complying with Camden's Policy DP5.]

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed
Lower Ground Floor	-	3	-
Ground Floor	1	3	1
1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	1	3	1
2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	1	3*	1
3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor	-	1	1
4 <sup>th</sup> Floor	-	-	1
	3	13	5

\* 1 of these 2 beds is a duplex unit with 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

- 6.3 The accommodation provides generous sized apartments exceeding both Camden space standard guidelines and London Plan requirements.

All bedrooms are designed as double bedrooms providing minimum 11m<sup>2</sup> area.



Site section 1-1



Site section 2-2

- 6.4 The layouts provide acceptable outlook and privacy from each flat at both the front and rear of the building with acceptable day lighting. There is no loss of privacy or outlook from any adjacent buildings due to the orientation of the 2 wings of the new development in relation to the site boundaries.
- 6.5 The footprint of the new development is further from the rear and side boundary with adjacent properties than the existing house. This reduces any increased overshadowing of the adjacent gardens that might be caused by the increased height of the apartment block.
- 6.6 At lower ground floor level the footprint is set further in from the boundary with Heath Drive so that excavations avoid the existing root balls of the mature Plane trees. Apartments face onto private patios. Note that the ground floor is raised approx. 1 m above the adjacent garden level to also avoid excavating into the root protection zone. This reduces the depth of the lightwells and increases day lighting into these lower ground floor flats.
- 6.7 During negotiations with the Council these lower ground flats were changed to duplex flats with living rooms at ground floor level, thus providing acceptable day lighting.
- 6.8 Internally the flat layouts are configured to comply fully with Building Regulations Part M and Lifetime Homes guidelines. 2 no wheelchair accessible flats were introduced at 1<sup>st</sup> floor level during the planning negotiation stage.
- 6.9 The footprint of the new development follows the prevailing building lines of Heath Drive and Finchley Road, resulting in the cranked plan with 2 district wings.
- 6.10 On Heath Drive the adjacent houses nos. 35-37 are not face on to the street, therefore the new roof line of 38 is aligned with the front edge of the roof of 37 on plan.





Heath Drive Elevation



Example of symmetrical projecting wings and central entrance bay



Example of raised hipped roof to centre of facade



Example of hipped gable with gabled roof



Precedent of two levels of dormers in roof – Heath Drive

- 6.11 On Finchley Road the new facade is aligned with the existing houses at 260 & 262 Finchley Road and not the adjacent modern terrace of houses nos. 264-270. Nos. 260-262 are much earlier and probably the original houses on the street and therefore define the correct historic frontage and intended building line. It appears that nos. 264-270 were set further back to align with no. 38 Heath Drive but also to allow forecourt parking off Finchley Road.
- 6.12 The 2 district wings present a varying elevation to Heath Drive and Finchley Road respectively, reflecting the very different scale and context of these 2 streets as described in Section 3 above, yet are tied together visually by shared features and proportions.
- 6.13 The Heath Drive elevation is designed to reflect the scale and character of the 3 adjoining houses nos. 35-37 and thus retain the current relationship of the 4 properties nos. 35-38 as a group of similar style houses noted as contributing to the character of the Conservation Area (see site front elevation on Heath Drive overleaf).
- 6.14 The composition of the Heath Drive facade comprises 2 symmetrical wings projecting from a central entrance with 2 recessed bays either side. The projecting wings are in themselves subdivided by composite windows set in a slightly projecting square bay. This composition is found in several other houses in nearby roads in the Conservation Area and breaks down the mass into a symmetrical and formal, yet domestic scale facade.
- 6.15 Windows to this elevation reflect the prevailing pattern of white painted small paned timber sash windows - 5 panes to Ground Floor, 4 panes to First Floor, 3 panes to Second Floor etc., but are articulated in height, width and disposition to reflect the order and proportion of the constituent parts of the facade.
- 6.16 Brickwork will similarly reflect the typical 1920s Neo Georgian style detailing local to the area with rusticated corners (4 bricks: 1), gauged brick flat lintels, brick string course and feature relief panels below dominant windows. The brick will be a dark hand made red to match the adjacent houses, laid in Flemish bond with natural struck joints.



Heath Drive Street Elevation

- 6.17 The entrance to the flats features a recessed door case set between stone mullions in a plain panel with rusticated brick base. The new entrance doors are traditional paneled timber with glazing panel.
- 6.18 The roof to this section will be of traditional hipped construction with clay tile covering and traditional dormer windows. Symmetrical projecting hipped gables project forward over the wings below with gabled roofs over centralised dormers continuing forward from the ridge line behind.
- 6.19 The ridge line steps up in the centre of the facade to allow a second storey in the roof (3rd Floor) increasing the mass in the centre of the composition. The eaves and ridge of the roof are set to exactly align with the roof levels on the adjoining 2 properties nos. 36 & 37.
- 6.20 The Heath Drive elevation therefore retains the appearance of a large Hampstead house on this wing of the new apartment block and respects and reads strongly with the adjoining houses in the group. The coherent architectural grouping of the 4 properties nos. 35-38 noted in the Conservation Area statement is thereby preserved and to a greater degree than currently exists.



Example of corner treatment with tower feature



Example of large chimneys at junction of roofs



Example of mansard over parapet



Example of storey in parapet

6.21 The Finchley Road elevation features similar Neo Georgian window proportions and brickwork details and continues the cill, cornice and string lines across both facades. This facade is however much larger and robust in scale and character reflecting the more urban architecture of the nearby mansion blocks. The facade is presented as a repeating 3 bay elevation between projecting "tower" features at each corner. This composition reflects the greater mass and height and grander "civic" aspect of the facade but retains a comfortable relationship with the Heath Drive facade through its details and proportions.

6.22 The roof form of the Finchley Road elevation is of a traditional stepped mansard design as commonly found on the nearby mansion blocks of flats. The mansard rises behind a 'parapet' storey at 3rd floor level giving additional height to the masonry element yet retaining the main cornice line below. The mansard sets down to the 2nd floor cornice line at each end thereby considerably reducing the bulk and scale of the roof line to a comfortable proportion.

6.23 At the junction of the 2 wings the respective roof lines abut a large masonry double chimney feature which neatly resolves the complex geometry of adjacent roof slopes and incorporates the development's boiler flues unobtrusively.

6.24 The buildings lift shaft is sited in this location so that the height and mass of the chimney feature masks the required lift over-run at roof level. On the short return adjacent the chimney the mansard roof over the Finchley Road elevation sets down 1 further level to top of 1st floor thereby meeting the eaves line of the adjacent Heath Drive roof. The differing roof forms of the 2 district wings are thus unified at the critical junction.

6.25 The garden-facing elevations of the new block continue the language of the front facades around to the rear, with similar proportioned sash windows and brick detailing and a gabled roof to the rear of the Heath Drive wing. At the lower floor level we have introduced Juliet balconies to the larger windows to the rear adding a further layer of detail and providing useful amenity.





View of development from Heath Drive



View of development from Finchley Road

## 7. Views of the Project in the Townscape

- 7.1 The final design resolves the differing scale and context of the Heath Drive and Finchley Road elevations and combines the two wings into a successful whole with similar details and related proportions.
- 7.2 The view from Heath Drive shows the mass and scale of the Heath Drive wing in relation to the adjoining property no. 37. The eaves and ridge lines and window proportions follow through enabling this wing of the development to read as a large house in similar style. Only one storey of brickwork is visible from the street above the perimeter hedge. The hipped roof profiles slope elegantly away with the correct degree of modeling and detail, reducing the mass and apparent height. The higher Finchley Road wing beyond is set well back in this view such that it appears only one storey higher. The large chimney provides the correct height and scale at this junction. The higher wing's massing is very similar to the surrounding mansion blocks in this view.
- 7.3 The view from Finchley Road shows the two wings in their context at the corner junction of the two streets. This view will in reality be heavily screened by the large plane trees. The change in roofline from the lower to higher wings is softened by the junctions of hips and the dropped mansard and articulated by the masonry chimney. The corner towers on the higher Finchley Road facade also articulate the junction and help the mass turn the corner. There is a clear relationship in scale, massing and language with the adjoining mansion blocks on opposite corners. String courses, window cills and details follow through to tie the two facades together. The Finchley Road roofline continues the general mass and scale of the street to the older properties beyond.



Existing Aerial View

## 8. Consideration of the Reasons for Refusal

- 8.1 The Council's decision notice includes 14 reasons for refusal.
- 8.2 Reasons 3 and 5 have subsequently been resolved with the planning officer by amending the lower ground floor flats to duplex flats with living space above ground floor level and by including 2 no. wheelchair accessible flats.
- 8.3 Reason 4 has been resolved by providing further structural and geotechnical evidence to prove the structural stability of the adjacent properties, and no adverse impact on water environment and drainage.
- 8.4 Reasons 6 – 14 will be resolved and covered in a separate legal agreement agreed with the Council's officers in due course.
- 8.5 This leaves 2 principle reasons for refusal that are addressed in my Proof of Evidence:
- 8.6 Reason 1 'states the proposed demolition would result in the loss of a building which makes a positive contribution to the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area to the detriment of its character and appearance.'
- 8.7 In Section 4 I have demonstrated that whilst the existing dwelling house on the site is of reasonable quality it is not of particular interest. Its contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area is not by virtue of its physical appearance but through its setting in a garden set well back from the Heath Drive boundary, allowing green landscaped space in the views from the Conservation Area. The existing house is neutral in this setting and is detached from the other houses in the group of 4 similar properties. It is set physically closer to Finchley Road. The existing structure's contribution is therefore limited and neutral rather than 'positive'. It is the garden setting, the mature plane trees and brick boundary walls with hedges which all provide the major contribution to the Conservation Area. The loss of the house itself would not detrimentally affect the appearance of the site from Heath Drive or the Conservation Area as the green and verdant character would be maintained.





Aerial View with proposed development

- 8.8 I argue strongly that the proposed demolition does not affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in any detrimental way whatsoever.
- 8.9 Reason 2 states that ‘the proposed building by reason of its excessive height, mass and bulk inappropriate design and extent of site coverage fails to relate to the context of the Redington and Froggnal Conservation Area to the detriment of its character and appearance.’ In Sections 6 and 7 I have described how the proposed scheme successfully complies with all these matters.
- 8.10 The proposed scheme is of an appropriate height and not excessively high as alleged in the reasons for refusal. In the Heath Drive view and elevationally the roofline of the Heath Drive wing aligns with the adjacent houses no. 36 and 37. The Finchley Road wing is set back in this view and appears the same height as the surrounding mansion blocks.  
In the Finchley Road view and elevationally the roofline of the higher wing aligns with the adjacent mansion block to the north (no. 280 Finchley Road) and with the older properties to the south (nos. 260 and 262 Finchley Road).  
In views from the rear of the site the development is also of equal height to the existing buildings at nos. 260 – 262.
- 8.11 The proposed scheme is of appropriate mass and bulk and not excessively massive or bulky as alleged in the reasons for refusal. In both the views from Heath Drive and Finchley Road the mass and bulk is appropriate to the context and matches surrounding properties. In the view from Finchley Road the overall bulk is no different to the existing mansion blocks framing the view. In the view from Heath Drive the development appears as two separate visually detached wings – the lower wing’s bulk relates to the adjacent house at no. 37; the higher wing is set well back and relates to the bulk of the mansion blocks beyond.



- 8.12 The proposed building is appropriately designed for its site and setting. The design comprises two linked wings each of which responds to its immediate context. The Heath Drive wing is designed to resemble a large Hampstead house with forms and details relating to the adjacent residential dwellings and other nearby houses in the Conservation Area. The Finchley Road wing is designed to relate to the nearby mansion blocks and the more robust scale of buildings along Finchley Road, yet link to the lower Heath Drive wing by virtue of its similar materials, window configurations and brick detailing. The two wings are united with shared features and proportions, common brick coursing and detailing, the vertical chimney element at the junction of the roof forms and the stepping and profiling of the roof elements to resolve the differing rooflines.
- 8.13 The proposed development does not cover the site excessively. The wings of the development are set well back from the boundaries on each elevation to match adjacent building frontage lines and retain the canopies of the large plane trees. At the rear of the site the degree of openness is increased as the new footprint is further from the rear boundaries than the existing house. Whilst the new footprint is larger and the garden area reduced, the overall provision of open space on the site is still generous for properties in this location. There is 623m<sup>2</sup> of soft landscaped area on the site plus hardstanding areas to the front entrance and rear garden area.
- 8.14 The proposed development very much relates to the context of the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area and this has been explained in Section 6 in detail. The Conservation Area is characterised by its mix and variety of large Edwardian and Neo Georgian styled red/orange brick, clay tile roofed houses set in verdant mature front gardens behind brick boundary walls or consistent hedge lines. Heath Drive itself is dominated by the large mature London plane trees which are all retained. The architecture of the new development takes its cues both from the immediately adjacent group of Neo Georgian style houses and the variety of elevational treatments and roof forms present on houses in various other streets around the Conservation Area.
- 8.15 The proposed development will be extensively landscaped around the new building preserving the green and verdant garden appearance of the site as viewed from Heath Drive.
- 8.16 In conclusion the proposed building is not detrimental to the character or appearance of the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area. The mass, bulk, appearance and general design detail are all in keeping with the character of the area and do not in any way cause harm.

## **9. Conclusion and Summary of Proof**

- 9.1 The site is on a prominent corner with aspects to both Heath Drive and Finchley Road. The site is within the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area but is on its border with Finchley Road. The existing property is the very last building in the Conservation Area.
- 9.2 The existing house whilst of reasonable quality is neutral in its setting and separate from the adjoining group of similar houses. Its location and orientation on the site addresses Finchley Road to a greater degree than Heath Drive. The character of the site when viewed from the Conservation Area is mainly formed by the verdant green appearance and mature plane trees, not the house itself.
- 9.3 The present house on the site is to be demolished to enable a new residential development. The loss of the house would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 9.4 The new development comprises 21 apartments in a traditionally designed building in the Neo Georgian style responding to the varying contexts of both Heath Drive and Finchley Road. I personally designed the proposal after careful study and consideration of the surrounding Conservation Area and the architectural details of its various mix of houses.
- 9.5 The mass, bulk, height and general design of the new apartment building are all carefully considered and appropriate for both the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area and the very different urban character of Finchley Road. The site coverage of the new building whilst greater than the existing house is appropriate for the site and ensures a generous area of landscaped green space is retained.
- 9.6 The mature London plane trees dominating the site are unaffected by the new building.

- 9.7 The computer generated views of the development show the building in its context in both Heath Drive and Finchley Road. The overall scale and roofline follow adjacent buildings and fit comfortably into the streetscape on both streets.
- 9.8 The development is car free and meets all statutory and other requirements of the NPPF, The London Plan, Camden's UDP, Lifetime Homes, Secured by Design and Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4.
- 9.9 The overall development will not be detrimental in any way to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The development is designed to enhance the site and its setting and responds appropriately to the scale and context of the immediate surroundings.

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