**SUMMIT HOUSE, HIGHGATE  (REF: 2014/4931)**

**CAR PARKING ISSUES  - STATEMENT  (NOVEMBER 2014**)

1. An application has been submitted by Mr Jeffrey Stuart Salmon to LB Camden for the change of use of Summit House, Highgate from offices (Class B1) and / or medical consultancy rooms (Class D1) to single dwelling house (Class C3).
2. It would appear from the Council’s website that the application has generated no objections. In other words, the proposals are of no concern to local residents and local amenity groups. However, it is understood that the initial view of the Council’s transport officer is that off-site car parking should be restricted for the proposed residential dwelling, by way of a condition.
3. Government guidance in relation to conditions, notably as set out in the NPPF and the on-line NPPG is that planning conditions should only be imposed where they are:

* Necessary
* Relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted
* Enforceable
* Precise and reasonable in all other respects

1. Relevant local policies in relation to transport are contained in the Camden Development Policies document, adopted in November 2010. It is noted that the document contains policies to restrict car parking provision and that Appendix 2 contains car parking standards. However, it is important to look at the objectives behind the policies, for example as follows:

* The purpose of a transport assessment is ‘to ensure that a proposal will not cause harm to the transport network or to highway safety...’ (para 16.10)
* ‘Developments that add to the supply of car parking can have an impact on parking conditions in the Borough  (para 19.1)
* The Council generally welcomes proposals to reduce the amount of off-street parking in the Borough, provided that the removal of spaces would not (for example) cause difficulties for existing users and displace parking to controlled parking zones  (para 19.14)

1. Summit House currently contains an area of 10 car parking spaces. (The 10 spaces were approved by virtue of application ref: 07/05/2008). The spaces are well used during all times of the day, by both employees and visitors to both the serviced offices and the medical consultancy rooms.  As stated clearly in the planning statement, submitted in support of the application, a clear benefit of the application proposals is the reduction in traffic. In particular, the current arrangement whereby vehicles turn into the private access from Highgate West Hill is far from ideal.
2. Summit House is a relatively large property, with potential to accommodate a large family sized dwelling. Clearly, a property of this size will generate a requirement for parking spaces for members of the family and for visitors. It is unrealistic to expect a property of this size to provide, for example, only one parking space. Indeed to do so would be very unusual, and in practice, will generate increase demand for spaces on-street.
3. There is very limited parking available on-street in the vicinity. Much of Highgate West Hill is covered by both double-yellow and single-yellow lines restrictions. There is already evidence of illegal parking. There are however, 13 controlled parking spaces in this stretch of Highgate West Hill. My client undertook a survey on the relatively ‘quiet’ times of Friday 7 November at 22.45 and Sunday 9 November at 10.30. Even at these quieter times, 11 out of 13 spaces were occupied. (Photographs are available on request).
4. The implications of a restriction on parking spaces within the proposed residential dwelling is to force members of the family and visitors to search for parking spaces on-street. This potentially could result in a reduction in the availability of controlled parking spaces, or an increase in illegal parking in the area. In either case, this will impact on parking conditions and will have a detrimental effect on highways safety, contrary to the objectives of the Camden Development Policies document. As a consequence, an unreasonable reduction in off-street parking provision will be harmful.
5. By way of example, other residential properties in the immediate vicinity have adequate provision for off-street car parking. For example, the adjoining no. 37 Highgate West Hill has 5 garaged spaces, plus room for additional non-garaged spaces. To penalise my client on the basis of a residential proposal, which has significant benefits to the amenities and character of the area, would be highly unfair. Importantly, to impose a condition limiting the number of spaces is unnecessary and unreasonable, and as a consequence would be contrary to the tests set out in both the NPPF and the NPPG.
6. For the sake of co-operation, my client is prepared to agree to a reasonable and sensible reduction in off-site car parking provision. In light of the size of the property and the character of the area, it is considered that 5 spaces to serve the proposed residential dwelling is appropriate. This will have the effect of reducing off-street car parking provision by 5 spaces, a not insignificant amount, especially in light of the Council’s policies and objectives for parking. As described above, a further reduction will impact upon parking provision and highways safety in the area, which in turn will have a detrimental impact upon the conservation area.