

Devonshire House School  
69 Fitzjohn's Avenue, London, NW3 6PD

Planning Statement

Prepared by Crawford and Gray Architects Ltd

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## 1. Introduction

This Planning Application is for the proposed extension and alteration works at 69 Fitzjohn's Avenue. The works comprise:

- a) Extension of the existing basement under the existing raised terrace and to the south of the existing toilets (involving basement excavation of approximately 168sqm).
- b) Creating a new light well to the south of the building measuring approximately 6.9m by 1.83m (1.26m in front of the proposed bay window). The lightwell would join to an existing lightwell on the southern elevation.
- c) Creating a new light well to the north of the building measuring approximately 3.9m by 3.2m and small new lightwell (3.4m by 1m) to front of the building covered by a grille at floor level.
- d) The replacement of the non-original full width pitched roof rear extensions with a new glazed flat roofed extension. The existing extension projects approximately 2.22m from the rear elevation with a staff room projecting 6.07m from the rear elevation. The proposed replacement extension would project 3.9m from the existing rear elevation increasing to 5.83m to incorporate a staff room.

## 2. Information to accompany the application

The following Planning Application documentation has been prepared on behalf of the home owners:

- Planning Application form
- Planning Application Fee (via separate online payment)
- Location Plan at a scale 1:1250 with the site boundary identified in red, and a blue line drawn around any adjacent land owned by the applicant.

- Site Plan - clearly indicating north, at a scale 1:500, showing footprints of all buildings existing on site in relation to site boundaries and neighbouring buildings
- Existing and proposed floorplans, elevations and sections to a scale of 1:100 printed at A3 indicating all parts of the building to be demolished
- Design and access statement
- Photographs of the site
- Acoustic report (in respect of the new plant room equipment)
- Basement Impact Assessment
- Sustainability and Environmental Report
- Tree report/survey
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Traffic Impact Management Plan
- Community Infrastructure Levy Form

### 3. Background to the Site

No. 69 Fitzjohn's Avenue is part of the Fitzjohns Netherhall Conservation Area (Sub area 1), situated on the southern edge of Hampstead between Rosslyn Hill and Finchley Road.

Connecting Hampstead village with Swiss Cottage, Fitzjohn's Avenue is the main through road at the centre of the conservation area. It was developed from the 1876 as a wide road planted with trees and with large houses well set back from the pavement. A number of these large houses were in schools from the 1890s adapted.

No. 69 Fitzjohn's Avenue is located closed to Arkwright Road, part of a group of large houses with generous gardens developed in 1870s-1880s for private individuals as a one-off buildings in a variety of styles, including Queen Ann, Domestic Revival and Arts and Craft. In the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (February 2001) (CAAMS) Fitzjohn's Avenue is indicated as a most prominent street in the area with numerous detached houses. In particular no.69 is identified as a building which makes a 'positive contribution' to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

As indicated in the Survey of London, the building was built in polychrome *Rundbogenstil* for Charles Kemp Wild in 1877. It comprises ground, first and second floor plus roof and basement level and an early extension to the side.

Whilst the front of the building and the front driveway has been retained close to its original state, the rear of the building has been previously extended by an unattractive structure, coming to the end of its maintainable life.

The interior use of the building has been developed over time and it currently lacks a fully efficient layout with adequate catering and teaching supporting facilities.

The school lunches are served in a teaching room on the ground floor, which is also used for tuition, music and other school matters, whilst the kitchen is a cramped space at basement level.

The basement suffers from a poor connection to the main access at ground floor level/ the rest of the school and would benefit from better levels of natural light and ventilation.

#### **4. Pre-application Consultation**

In preparation for this application, a pre-application had been submitted by Crawford and Gray Architects on behalf of the Devonshire House School (Ref with Camden Planning Department (2014/6727/PRE)).

The advice issued by the Camden Planning Department on 11 December 2014 confirmed that *“given the size and design of the proposed ground floor and basement extension, the development may be considered acceptable”*.

With regard rear extension works at ground floor level it was assessed that:

*The replacement extension would have a sympathetic appearance and is considered an improvement on the existing configuration which is untidy and fragmented especially at roof level with varying heights and pitches of roofs.*

*The glazed extension would allow the existing building to be easily read and would have a lightweight appearance. The proposed glazed staff room would have an improved relationship with the host property, in comparison to the existing timber structure, as it would appear as a continuation of the proposed ground floor glazed extension.*

*The depth of the extension is 1.7m greater than the existing 2.2m extension and its size may be considered subordinate to the host property.*

With regard extension works at basement level it was assessed that:

*The basement extension would not be disproportionately large and its external manifestation below the existing terrace would not harm the relationship of the host property with the garden.*

*The proposed extension of the lower ground floor level to the south of the existing toilets and the excavation of an associated lightwell would be in keeping with the existing basement elevation and lightwell on the southern elevation (facing towards No.67).*

However, it has been suggested to give further thought to the design of the basement windows of the rear elevation. These have been revised to relate better to the windows at 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor level.

With regard to Amenity, it was assessed:

*The proposed extension is unlikely to have any impact on the neighbouring properties in terms of loss of daylight / sunlight, overlooking or loss of privacy by virtue of its scale and siting in relation to neighbouring properties.*

As also recommended, specific supporting information had to be provided on:

- any structural impact assessment of the proposed basement extension works
- any impact on trees on or adjacent to the site
- any acoustic impact of the proposed plant room equipment

## **5. Main relevant strategies and policies**

As confirmed at planning application stage, the main planning considerations applying to the proposed development are:

- Core Strategy CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage development)
- Development Policy DP24 (Securing high quality design)
- Development Policy DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage).

- Development Policy DP26 (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours)
- by policy DP27 and supplementary planning document Camden Planning Guidance 2013 (CPG4 Basements)
- Camden Planning Guidance (CPG1 Design)

## 6. **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is considered that:

- a) the application scheme fully accords with the relevant planning policies and – as indicated in the Design and Access Statement - will improve significantly the School facilities without any detrimental effect on the building, the street scene, neighbouring properties, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- b) the building will benefit from better flow and circulation, more energy efficiency and a better environment for children and the school staff.
- c) the relevant technical reports/ information submitted with the application fully demonstrate that the works will not harm the neighbouring building and conservation area.