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PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

SEPTEMBER 2015

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1. This Planning, Design, Access and Significance Appraisal relates to a proposal to demolish the existing house at No 1 Oak Hill Way and replace it with a new 6no. bedroom house.

The Application Bundle

2. This comprises:

Drawing Number	Drawing Title
S00	Existing Site Plan
SO1	Lower ground floor existing plan
SO2	Ground floor existing plan
SO3	First floor existing plan
SO4	Existing Roof Plan
SO5	Existing Rear Elevation
S06	Existing side NE elevation
S07	Existing front elevation
S08	Existing side SW elevation
S09	Existing section AA
S10	Existing section BB
AP2 01	Proposed lower ground floor
AP2 02	Proposed ground floor
AP2 03	Proposed first floor
AP2 04	Proposed second floor
AP2 05	Proposed roof plan
AP2 06	Proposed front elevation
AP2 07	Proposed rear elevation
AP2 08	Proposed NE elevation
AP2 09	Proposed side SW elevation
AP2 10	Proposed Section BB

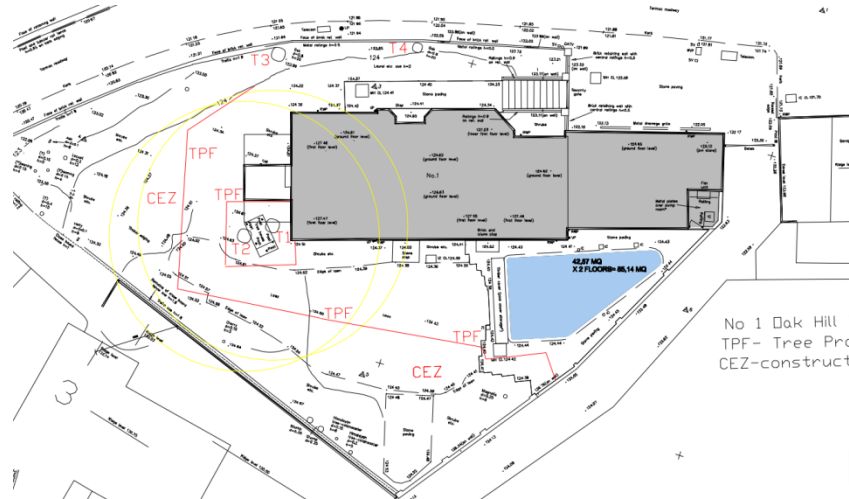
3. A Tree Survey and accompanying Tree Protection Plan by Tretac are also submitted.

2.0 CONTEXT

- The proposal has been designed taking into account the following considerations.

The Site

- The site has an area of 0.09ha. It slopes steeply up from Oak Hill Way and to the west. The rear garden is a full storey higher than the front of the east end of the house.



- The triangular rear garden has a pool and is separated from its neighbours by a 2m wall.

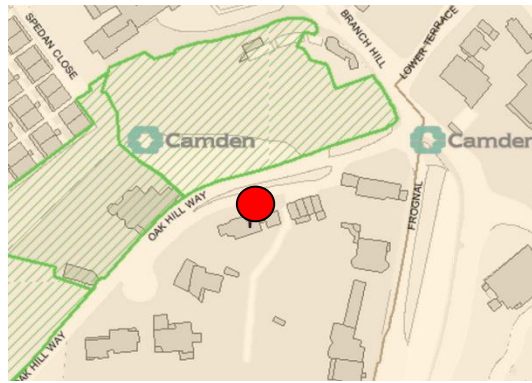


7. The existing house is a mundane design built in the 1960s with a frontage that looks like this:



The Surrounding Area

8. The site is west of Branch Hill in the Hampstead Conservation Area.



9. Branch Hill Woodland is shown on the plan to the north. This was originally part of Hampstead Heath until it was cut off when Branch Hill House was built in its own grounds in the 1860s.
10. The aerial photo below shows that the area is heavily wooded, mainly the old garden of Branch Hill House.

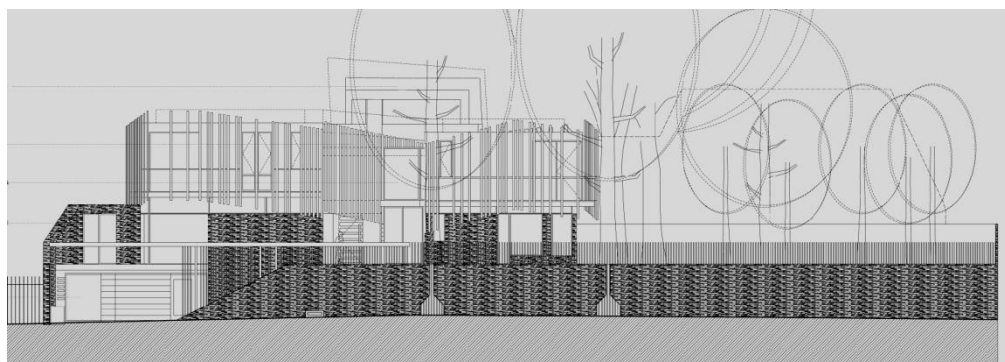


11. Branch Hill Allotments are on part of the former garden and can be seen on the aerial photo.
12. The sloping site also has areas of woodland, open grass and wooded grounds of private houses. One area is particularly known for its bluebells.
13. This area is not considered to suffer from parking stress and the Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) for this site is only 2 (poor).

Planning History

14. This is central to the proposal. Consent has been granted for the alteration or demolition and replacement of the house many times from the 1980s onwards.
15. In 1989 consent 8804731 was granted for alterations and extensions to the house comprising a 2-storey rear extension, a single storey conservatory and a single storey annexe above the garage and a single storey extension with terrace on the west side of the house.

16. In 1992 consents 9200263 and 9260025 were granted for works of partial demolition and extension at lower and upper floor levels and the erection of a new pitched roof and alterations to the external elevation.
17. In 2008 consents 2008/3697/P and 5580/C were granted for the erection of part 2-, part 3-storey dwellinghouse with basement, roof terrace and integral parking space following demolition of the existing dwelling. Its front elevation looked like this.



18. The Case Officer's report said: *The existing dwellinghouse is not a positive contributor in the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement (2002) and is identified as a property which would benefit from enhancement. The existing property is therefore not considered to contribute to the character and appearance of the area; hence, there is no objection to the principle of its demolition subject to an appropriate design for the replacement being agreed. It is noted that English Heritage has no objection to the proposed demolition of the existing dwellinghouse.*
19. In 2010 consent 2010/0149/P was granted for additions and alterations including excavation at basement level to incorporate an additional floor of accommodation for recreational use creation of a sunken courtyard, installation of louvers to glazed atrium and repositioning of glazing as a revision to 2008/3697/P.
20. The Case Officer's Report said: *The proposed design changes have been considered by the conservation and urban design officer, who is happy that the amendments are limited in their impact on the CA and are in the spirit of the approved scheme. As such it is considered that the proposed amendments do not introduce anything new which would warrant an alternative decision.*
21. In 2012 consent 2012/1416/C was granted for demolition of the house.
22. In 2013 consent 2013/7144/P was granted for alterations to existing fenestration and entrance door, erection of mansard roof over garage and demolition of side extension. This consent was implemented.



23. In 2015 consent 2015/0080/P was granted for reconstruction of coach house, internal extension at lower ground floor, 2-storey rear extension addition of front porch, alterations to front and rear following substantial demolition.



24. This has not been implemented. It remains live and is a fallback against which the current proposal must be judged.

Planning Policy

25. Relevant operational policy is in Camden's DPD (2010, the later NPPF (March 2012) and the later still CPG1 Design (September 2013).

The DPD

26. Core Strategy Policy CS14 requires development proposals to promote the highest standard of design whilst respecting local context and character.
27. Policy CS14 is supplemented by Development Policy DP24, which reinforces the borough's commitment to design excellence in both contemporary and traditional styles of architecture.
28. **Policy DP23 - Conservation Areas** says the Council will: take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas; only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area; prevent the total or substantial demolition

of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area.

29. **Policy DP24 - Securing high quality design** says the Council will: require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider: character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings; the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed; the quality of materials to be used; the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level; the appropriate location for building services equipment; existing natural features, such as topography and trees; the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments; the provision of appropriate amenity space; and accessibility.
30. **Policy DP25** states a commitment to only permitting development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

The NPPF

31. This has the following relevant policy:
32. Para 14 sets out the core presumption in favour of sustainable development and says this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.
33. Para 17 sets out 12 core land-use planning principles that should underpin both plan making and decision-taking: relevant ones in this case and to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings; and to encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.
34. Para 56 – Good design is recognised as a key aspect of sustainable development.
35. Para 120 - planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location to prevent unacceptable risks from pollution and land instability.
36. Para 131 – indicates the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
37. Para 133 – where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh it.
38. Para 134 – where a development will lead to less than substantial harm this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
39. Para 138 – not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance.
40. Para 186 – local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development.

Camden's CPG 1 Design

41. The following advice is relevant:

- Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings. Windows, doors and materials should complement the existing building. Rear extensions should be secondary to the building being extended
- Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings. A harmonious contrast with the existing property and surroundings may be appropriate for some new work to distinguish it from the existing building; in other cases closely matching materials and design details are more appropriate so as to ensure the new work blends with the old.

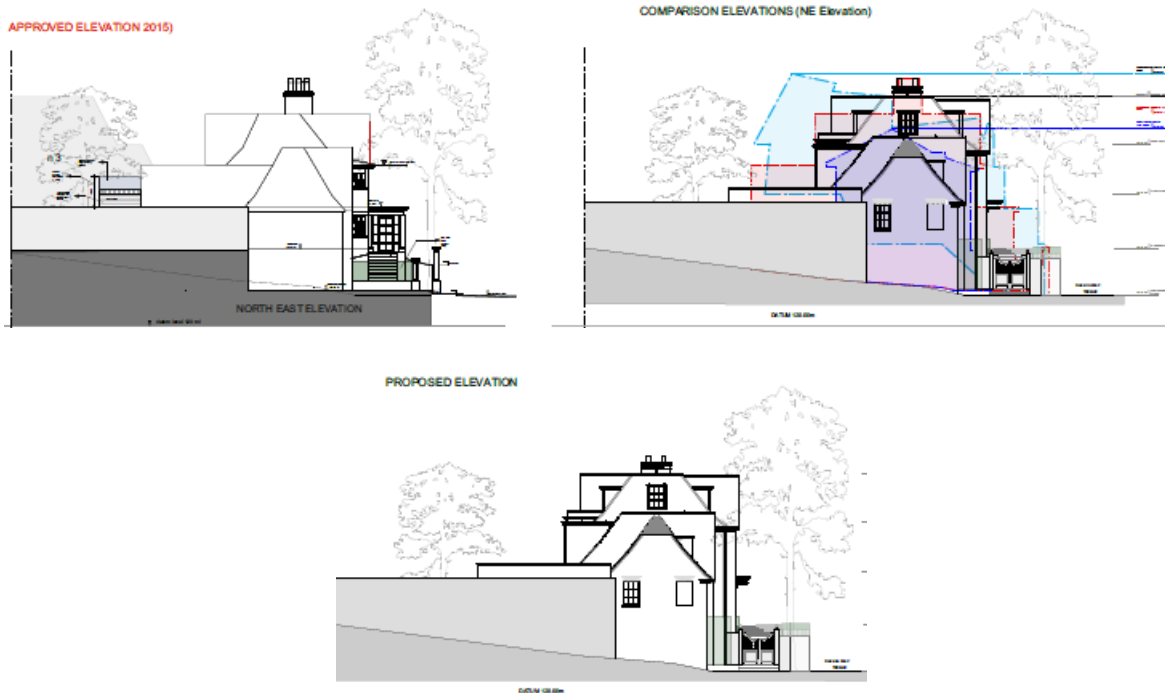
3.0 THE PROPOSAL

42. This involves total demolition of the existing house and its replacement by a house of similar scale to the 2015 planning consent building, as the comparison elevations below show:



43. The upper elevation is that permitted by the 2015 consent 2015/0080/P, the lower one the current proposal and the central one an overlay of these and the 2008 consent 2008/3697/P (in blue). The similarities between the permitted and proposed development are obvious.

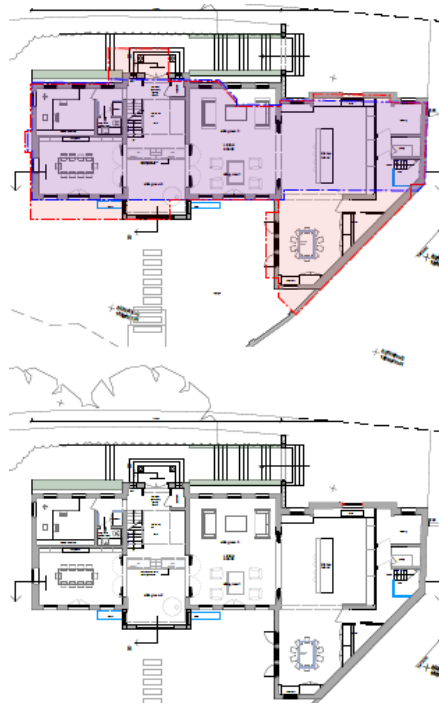
44. The side elevations below also show the close similarity between the permitted and proposed houses.



45. The rear elevations below are private views limited by the high rear wall.



46. The approved and proposed ground floor footprints below are also very similar.



4.0 HERITAGE IMPACT

Heritage Assets

47. The Hampstead Conservation Area Statement Townscape Map shows that No 4, a Victorian house on the opposite side of the road, is the only house on Oak Hill Way that is a positive contributor to the Conservation Area.



48. Historic England's plan above shows that there are two listed buildings or groups of buildings (black triangles) in the immediate area.
49. The 1978 Branch Hill Estate to the west of the site is a local authority flat development – reputedly the most expensive Council houses in Britain - is a low-rise tiered housing scheme built in the 1970s unobtrusively in the midst of woodland. It was listed grade 2 in 2010. It was designed in 1974-78 by Gordon Benson and Alan Forsyth.

50. The covenants that governed the site required the housing to be 2-storey and semi-detached. Narrow stepped paths run down the hillside between the tiered houses which amount to five storeys, but in effect due to the tiering are within the 2-storey stipulation. The houses have gardens that also form the roof of the house below, thus blending into the surrounding green space.
51. Branch Hill Lodge to the north dates from 1868 and was listed grade 2 in 1974. It is the lodge to Branch Hill House and is attributed to Teulon.
52. Branch Hill Woodland is north of the site. It includes Branch Hill Allotments on what was once part of the garden of Branch Hill House (now used by the Council as an old people's home). This was taken over by the local community in the 1980s, which led to the Council earmarking the land for community use as allotments.
53. Branch Hill Woodlands includes a number of areas of woodland, areas of open grass, a wooded bank south of Firecrest Drive as well as the private wooded grounds of Coombe Edge, Oak Hill House and Heysham House. Largely secondary woodland, it includes native and exotic trees, and is important for wildlife. The area of Oak Hill Wood is particularly known for its bluebells.

Heritage Impact

54. Heritage England's criteria for appraising the significance of proposed changes to building's significance are set out in 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' and encompass the following values, which are graded using three categories: **low, medium and high**:
 - **Evidential Value** – the potential of a place to yield primary evidence about past human activity;
 - **Historical Value** – ways in which the present can be connected through a place to past people, events and aspects of life;
 - **Aesthetic Value** – ways in which people derive sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place;
 - **Communal Value** – the meanings of place for the people who relate to it, and whose collective experience or memory it holds.

Evidential value

55. 'Conservation Principles' says this derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity and the physical remains or the genetic lines that had been inherited from the past. The ability to understand and interpret the evidence tends to be diminished in proportion to the extent of its removal or replacement.
56. This is an undistinguished 1960s building that has received consent to be demolished a number of times. It does not reflect the character of the Conservation Area and has **low** evidential value in this context.

Historical value

57. 'Conservation Principles' says that historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative. Historical values are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has

obliterated or concealed them, although completeness does tend to strengthen illustrative value.

58. No 1 has no significant historical associations and its historical value is **low**.

Aesthetic value

59. 'Conservation Principles' says that aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place and can be the result of conscious design of a place including artistic endeavour or the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and be used over time. Many places combine these two aspects.
60. The existing building is specifically mentioned in the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement that says *several undistinguished modern houses have been built among the trees along Oak Hill Way*. It identifies No 1 as a *Building or feature which detracts from the character of the area and would benefit from enhancement* and says it is *a neutral contributor to the Conservation Area*.
61. Its aesthetic value is **low**.

Communal value

62. 'Conservation Principles' says that communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.
63. Communal values are closely bound up with historical value, but tend to have additional and specific aspects. No 1 has no visual or physical association with the activities on the Branch Hill Woodland and its communal value is **low**.

The Proposal's Impact on the Significance of the Heritage Asset

64. No 1's overall contribution to the significance of the Heritage Asset is low.
65. Demolition of the existing house was permitted in 2008 and 2012 and its substantial remodelling was permitted in 2015. It makes no contribution to the Conservation Area and the Council has indicated through these consents that its demolition would not adversely affect the Conservation Area taking all the heritage assets into account.
66. As the present building is a neutral contributor to the Conservation Area there is no presumption against demolition and the elevations above show that the proposed minor changes to the approved scheme will have an insignificant effect on the value of the Heritage Asset.

5.0 CONCLUSION

67. The proposal is consistent with planning policy and does not raise any physical development issues.