

September 2015

Planning Statement

17 Middlefield, London NW8 6ND

Prepared by Savills UK



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1. Introduction

1.1 This statement has been prepared in support of a planning application at 17 Middlefield which proposes:

“Demolition of existing building, formation of new basement level, and construction of new 5-bedroom family dwelling above.”

1.2 This report has been prepared following an examination of the site and surroundings, research into the planning history of the property, and an examination of relevant policy documents.

1.3 In addition, a pre-application enquiry with Zenab Haji-Ismail of the London Borough of Camden was carried out in May 2015.

1.4 This statement provides the background information on the site and an assessment of the proposals in relation to planning policy and other material considerations, and is set out under the following sections:

- **Section 2** outlines the site and its context within the surrounding area
- **Section 3** provides an overview of the planning history
- **Section 4** provides an outline of the proposals
- **Section 5** examines the main planning considerations
- **Section 6** draws our conclusions in respect of the proposals

2. Site and Surroundings

- 1.5 17 Middlefield is a 2 storey detached property arranged as a single family dwelling.
- 1.6 The building is east facing, and features a reasonably proportioned west facing garden to the rear. The rear boundary of the site backs on to Finchley Road.
- 1.7 The building is not listed, and does not lie within a conservation area.
- 1.8 17 Middlefield is part of a group of similar detached buildings, which form part of the wider 'Middlefield' area. Immediately opposite the application site is one of two 3 storey residential terraces also forming part of Middlefield, and south of these is Blair Court - a 12 storey residential tower block.



View of 17 Middlefield looking West, showing the wider estate and Finchley Road

- 1.9 The proposals follow a successful planning application at 23 Middlefield, also owned by our client, for the erection of a two storey plus basement dwelling house (ref. 2013/3003/P).
- 1.10 In progressing the design proposals for No. 17 Middlefield, we have aimed to provide a similarly high quality, contemporary proposal which compliments, rather than replicates, that approved at No. 23 Middlefield.
- 1.11 In addition to the proposals approved at No. 23 Middlefield, many of the properties nearby have been altered in the past, most notably at no.21 Middlefield which features

a 2-storey side extension and a single storey conservatory extension at the rear. No.27 Middlefield also features a full-width single storey rear extension.



View of 17 Middlefield looking East

- 1.12 As shown from the above view, the property features a conservatory to the rear which was granted planning permission in 1991 (ref. PEX0100619).
- 1.13 This local area features a variety of built forms: detached houses, terraces, and blocks of flats, all of which are of fairly low grade architectural quality.
- 1.14 A high brick boundary wall forms the rear boundary of the site offering limited protection from Finchley Road, a major 6-lane arterial route into (and out of) London.
- 1.15 Numerous bus routes operate along Finchley Road. A short walk to the north is Swiss Cottage London Underground station and South Hampstead London Overground station.
- 1.16 Primrose Hill is a short distance east of Middlefield, and south of Primrose Hill is The Regent's Park.

3. Proposals

3.1. It is proposed to demolish the existing building, and create a high-quality modern family home.

- A new basement level will be created, providing additional residential accommodation.
- At the rear of the property, it is proposed to lower the level of the garden. The new basement accommodation will open out onto this new 'sunken garden' courtyard area.
- A ground floor rear extension is proposed, essentially resulting in an 'L' shaped building at this level.
- Additional accommodation is proposed at second floor level, within the new roof. The building will not be any higher than existing.
- It is proposed to marginally extend the footprint of the front of the building, so that it is line with its neighbour at No. 19.
- At the front three skylights flush with the roof slope are proposed, and at the rear two dormer windows are proposed in addition to a further skylight flush with the roof slope.
- The new dwelling will comprise 5 bedrooms arranged over the upper floors of the building, and living accommodation at ground floor and basement level.



4. Planning Considerations

- 4.1. The 2004 Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act requires that determination of any planning application must be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2. In this case the development plan comprises the London Borough of Camden's Core Strategy, the Camden Development Policies documents, and Camden Planning Guidance documents. The London Plan 2011 is also part of the Development Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) are also of relevance.
- 4.3. The following section sets out the considerations of the proposed development in relation to relevant planning policy and guidance – in addition to the pre-application advice received from officers – under the following headings:
- Demolition of existing building
 - Design of replacement building
 - Height, bulk, scale, massing and footprint
 - Detailed design
 - Subterranean development
 - Residential Amenity
 - Sustainability
 - Trees and Landscaping
 - Transport and Servicing
 - Access

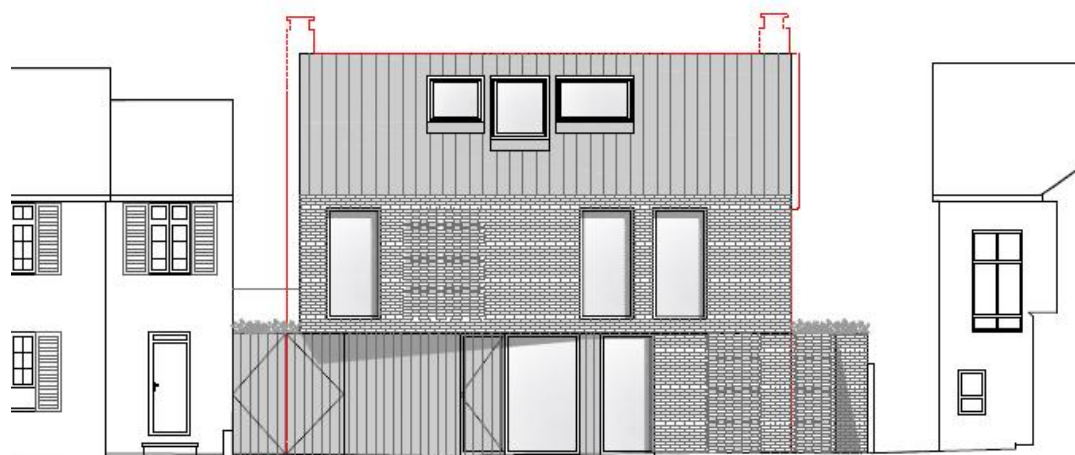
Demolition of Existing Building

- 4.4. The building is not listed, nor are any buildings adjacent to the site statutorily listed. The site and its surroundings are not located within a conservation area. There are no conservation areas within proximity to the site.

- 4.5. The property can be demolished without any requirement for planning consent or conservation area consent, as Permitted Development. However under part 31 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, an application to the local planning authority is needed to check whether the authority requires prior approval of the method of demolition (in line with the conditions to part 31 of the GPDO).
- 4.6. We note that the pre-application feedback stated that *“In principle, there is no objection to the proposed demolition and rebuild as a modern four storey house.”*

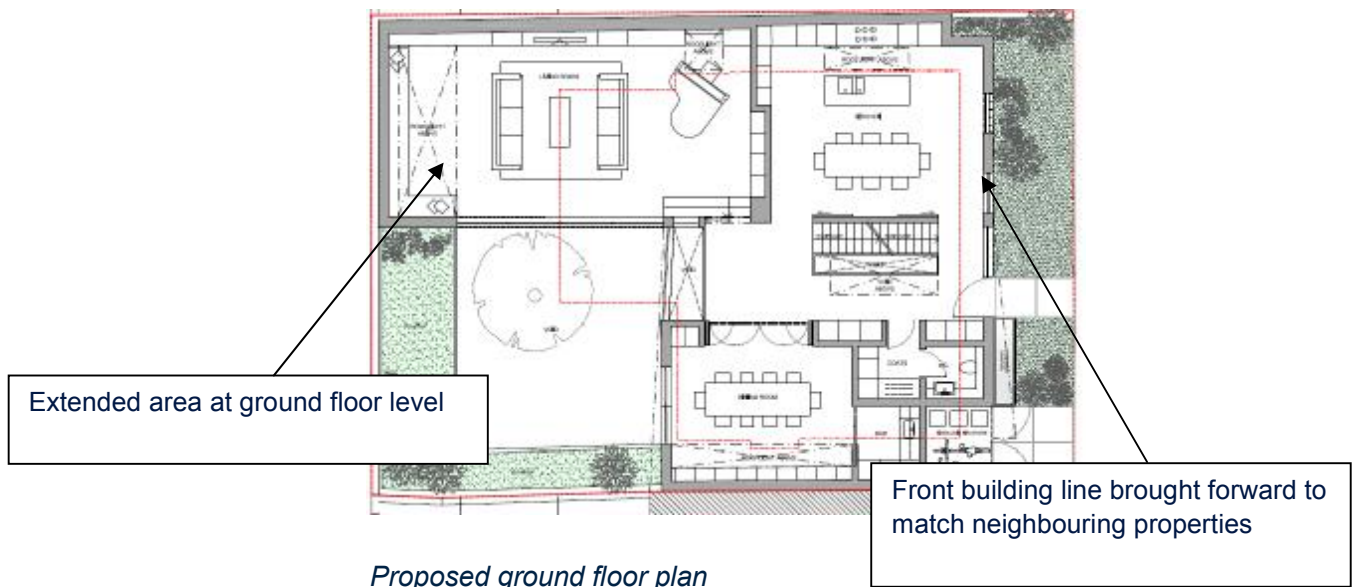
Design of Replacement Building

- 4.7. The proposal involves replacing an existing dwelling of poor architectural quality with a new dwelling of high quality and design.
- *Height, scale, bulk, massing and footprint*
- 4.8. The size and spatial arrangement of the building has been carefully considered, and feedback in relation to the approved proposals at 23 Middlefield has been taken on board in the evolution of the design for No. 17 Middlefield. We have had particular regard to Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) 1, which requires extensions to respect and preserve the original design and proportions of a building.
- 4.9. Of particular note, the replacement building will be to the same height as the existing building, ensuring that the building’s relationship to neighbouring buildings remains the same.



Proposed front elevation (height of existing building shown in red)

- 4.10. The proposals retain a gap on either side of the property, as per the existing situation, with side extensions only proposed at ground floor level which in any case would be hidden by the existing boundary fence on either side. This is in accordance with CPG 1 which places value on gaps between buildings, particularly where they soften the urban scene and provide visual interest. The proposals ensure that a sense of separation between the properties on either side is maintained, maintaining the character of the properties as 'detached' dwellings, and the views between the properties are preserved.
- 4.11. In terms of the proposed footprint of the building, it is proposed to form an 'L' shape, extending the ground level into the rear garden at the northern part of the site. This extended area is only at ground floor level, ensuring that it is visually subordinate to the main building. At the front, the new dwelling will extend slightly further than the existing front building line, so that it is in-line with neighbouring properties which are already further forward, as shown in the drawing below.



- 4.12. In summary, it is considered that the proposed bulk and massing of the replacement building will maintain the prevailing characteristics of the urban grain of this part of the locality, having regard to its presence on the street frontage and relationship to neighbouring properties.

- 4.13. We note that the pre-application advice received stated that:

"In principle, there is no objection to the proposed demolition and rebuild as a modern four storey house. The success of the proposal will be down to the detail and the high quality materials used. You are advised to set out details of proposed materials when the application is submitted"

4.14. As such, the proposed plans are annotated in detail, setting out the proposed materials of every element of the replacement building.

- *Detailed design*

4.15. The main difference between the existing and proposed building is the adoption of a contemporary design approach. A similar approach has been chosen to that at No. 23 Middlefield, which also adopted a contemporary design. We have sought not to copy the design of No. 23 but develop a complimenting contemporary high quality design, which draws upon the local surrounding built environment in terms of materials and fenestration proportions, in addition to general scale and massing discussed above.

4.16. The design has been developed in light of Policy CS14(a) of the Core Strategy which requires “development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character” and Policy DP24 which requires “all developments 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; and the quality of materials to be used.”

4.17. The proposals are designed to incorporate contemporary, yet complimenting materials to the surrounding properties, whilst featuring interesting detailing such as recessed windows and ‘punctured’ brickwork. High quality brick is proposed, similar in colour to neighbouring buildings, complimented by grey patinated metal panelling. The main roof will be metal patinated zinc. Our client would be willing to accept a condition requiring details of materials to be submitted and approved by the Council.

4.18. The placement of windows and rooflights have been designed to add interest to the building, and rear dormers are proposed which are in line with those approved at No. 23.

4.19. The CGI images below show the proposed replacement dwelling from both the front and rear viewpoints.



Proposed front elevation (above) and proposed rear elevation (below)



Subterranean Development

- 4.20. The basement will follow the footprint of the ground floor and open onto a sunken courtyard area. This is in the style approved at No. 23, which was considered an “inventive and resourceful use of space” within the pre-application feedback for that proposal. Full height patio doors are proposed from the basement living room to the court yard. In order to ensure that the basement elevations are not overly glazed, the elevation facing Finchley Road features only two windows, with access to the courtyard provided through unglazed doors.
- 4.21. Regard has been had to Policy DP27 and the supporting CPG4: Basements and Lightwells. As such, this application is supported by a Basement Impact Assessment (BIA), which identifies potential impacts of the proposed scheme on structural stability and the water environment and sets out mitigation measures.
- 4.22. A Construction Traffic Management Plan is also submitted with this application, using Camden’s standard proforma. This has been sent to Steve Cardno, Principal Transport Planner at Camden Council, who has reviewed the report and concluded that it is a good draft CMP which can be submitted in support of the planning application.

Residential Amenity

- 4.23. We are aware of the Council's CPG 6 and Development Plan Policy DP26 which states the need to protect residential amenity for occupiers and the potential effects of the scheme on any neighbouring properties.
- 4.24. The scheme has been designed to take account of privacy, overlooking and sunlight/daylight of neighbouring properties.
- 4.25. The positioning of windows within the new building will not give rise to any potential for overlooking to neighbouring residential properties. No balconies or terraces are proposed at first or second floor level.
- 4.26. Windows are front or rear facing, owing to the site layout and the orientation of the proposed dwelling. There are no windows in the flank elevations of the main building, maintaining the existing arrangement on site.
- 4.27. The development is therefore in accordance with Policy DP26 part (a).
- 4.28. This is agreed in the pre-application response, which states that:
- “The proposed extension at ground floor level which extends out to the boundary is unlikely to impact the amenity of neighbouring residents as the extension will be in line with the existing boundary wall and the development would only be seen from the first floor. Due to the scale of the proposal, its modest height and the proposed green roof, the proposal is not considered to significantly harm the outlook enjoyed by neighbouring occupiers.”*
- 4.29. Similarly, with regards to sunlight and daylight, the proposed extension is at low level and as such it is not considered that there is any scope to significantly impact on neighbouring properties in terms of daylight/sunlight.
- 4.30. In addition, acceptable sunlight and daylight would reach all rooms within the new dwelling ensuring a good residential environment is provided.
- 4.31. Accordingly, the development is in accordance with Policy DP26 part (c).

Sustainability

- 4.32. The development proposes to achieve a high standard in terms of sustainable design.

4.33. In accordance with the pre-application advice, a Sustainability Report prepared by EAC Ltd is submitted with this application which concludes that the proposals complies with the following standards:

- CO2 reduction of 35% beyond part L of the 2013 Building Regulations
- 20% of the energy reduction should be from renewable sources
- Water efficiency of 110 litres per person per day

Trees and Landscaping

4.34. The existing site is of extremely low quality in landscape terms. At both the front and rear is a simple grass and hardstanding arrangement.

4.35. The landscaping proposals are focused on the sunken courtyard rear garden area. The new courtyard will include planting, and a large mature tree in the centre. At ground floor level a series of planters have been introduced, reducing the size of the sunken courtyard in the process. To the front, more attractive grass and planting is proposed, thereby improving the appearance of the street more generally.

4.36. New usable amenity space to the new dwelling is a major benefit in the proposed development of the site.

4.37. In accordance with the pre-application advice, a noise assessment has been carried out and accompanies this application, showing that the smaller sunken garden will provide better quality amenity space as a result of experiencing less noise from the nearby Finchley Road.

4.38. In addition to the above, sedum roofs are proposed on the three flat roofs created at first floor level, to the sides and rear of the property.

Transport and Servicing

4.39. The scheme will provide adequate waste and recycling storage within the site, taking into account the Council's aspirations within Core Strategy policy CS18 on 'Dealing with our waste and encouraging recycling'.

4.40. Provision for refuse, recycling and secure cycle parking will provided within a dedicated integral storage space within the front (east) elevation of the premises, accessed externally.

4.41. The pre-application advice states that a financial agreement will be required to secure a financial contribution towards repaving the highway adjacent to the site.

4.42. Our client is willing to make this payment and we look forward to confirmation of the amount from the Council once the application has been registered.

Access

4.43. The LPA currently require that all new housing will be accessible to all and should be built to Lifetime Homes standards (CPG1). The new dwelling has been designed to be accessible and in accordance with lifetime standards, as set out in the enclosed Lifetime Homes statement prepared by Rodic Davidson Architects.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. It is proposed to demolish the existing building at 23 Middlefield and construct a new, contemporary, high-quality family home.
- 5.2. Positive pre-application consultation with planning and conservation officers from the London Borough of Camden have taken place prior to the submission of this application.
- 5.3. We consider the redevelopment of 17 Middlefield to be a well-designed and appropriate dwelling fit for the needs of the modern occupier of family-sized homes. Careful consideration has been given to the need to provide the highest standards of residential amenity for the new occupiers of the dwelling, whilst at the same time protecting the existing amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 5.4. We consider the proposals are in accordance with the policies of the development plan, and that planning permission should be granted accordingly.