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**A014**  
131 Gloucester Avenue, NW1 8LA  
December 2015

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# Design and Access Statement

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**From top left clockwise**

Front elevation

View from garden

View from Fitzroy Road

View from Fitzroy Road

**Proposal**

**Subdivision of existing property to form two separate dwellings (1 x 2-bed flat, 1 x 4-bed townhouse); small oriel window rear extension and the remodelling of existing infill glazed extension and lower- ground floor layout.**

**1.0 Introduction**

1.1. This statement is written in support of the planning application at 131 Gloucester Avenue, London, NW1 8LA (the application 'site') for subdivision of existing property to form two separate dwellings, and remodelling of existing two storey infill extension and lower-ground floor layout (the 'proposed development').

1.2. The proposed development will provide the following accommodation:

Lower Ground Floor	Flat 1	2 bed 4 Person
Upper Floors	Flat 2	4 bed 8 Person

**2.0 Site Description**

2.1. A four storey terraced house constructed in London stock brick with a stucco frontage at lower and upper ground floor levels and a porch. The building displays moulded window surrounds, and balustrades at first floor and parapet level to the front elevation. It is located on the southern side of Gloucester Avenue, near the junction with Fitzroy Road. It lies within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area and is noted as a building that makes a positive contribution to the conservation area.

**3.0 Planning History**

3.1. The property was originally built as a single dwelling house but was converted into flats including a first floor extension as a result of a planning permission granted in August 1966 (Ref: 2706).

3.2. Permission was granted in 2000 to return the property to a single family dwelling house (Ref: PEX0000307).

3.3. In 2001 a further permission was granted for the erection of a two storey rear infill conservatory extension and external alterations to the rear elevation (Ref: PEX0100269). This was made subject to a condition that the bed sit accommodation identified on drawing shall only be used as annex accommodation occupied solely for purposes incidental to the occupation and enjoyment of No.131 Gloucester Avenue as a single dwelling house and shall not be use as a separate unit of accommodation in the interest of the visual amenities of this part of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area.

**4.0 Designations**

4.1. The property is within Primrose Hill Conservation Area, but not listed.

4.2. The property is subject to an Article 4 Direction (3 March 1983) removing permitted development rights in the conservation area for the following types of work:

- Extending a property
- Constructing a hard standing
- Erecting gates, fences, or walls next to the highway
- Constructing a means of access to a highway
- Painting exterior brickwork visible from the highway

## 5.0 Design

### 5.1. Renovation

The majority of the work to the property will be renovation. This will include:

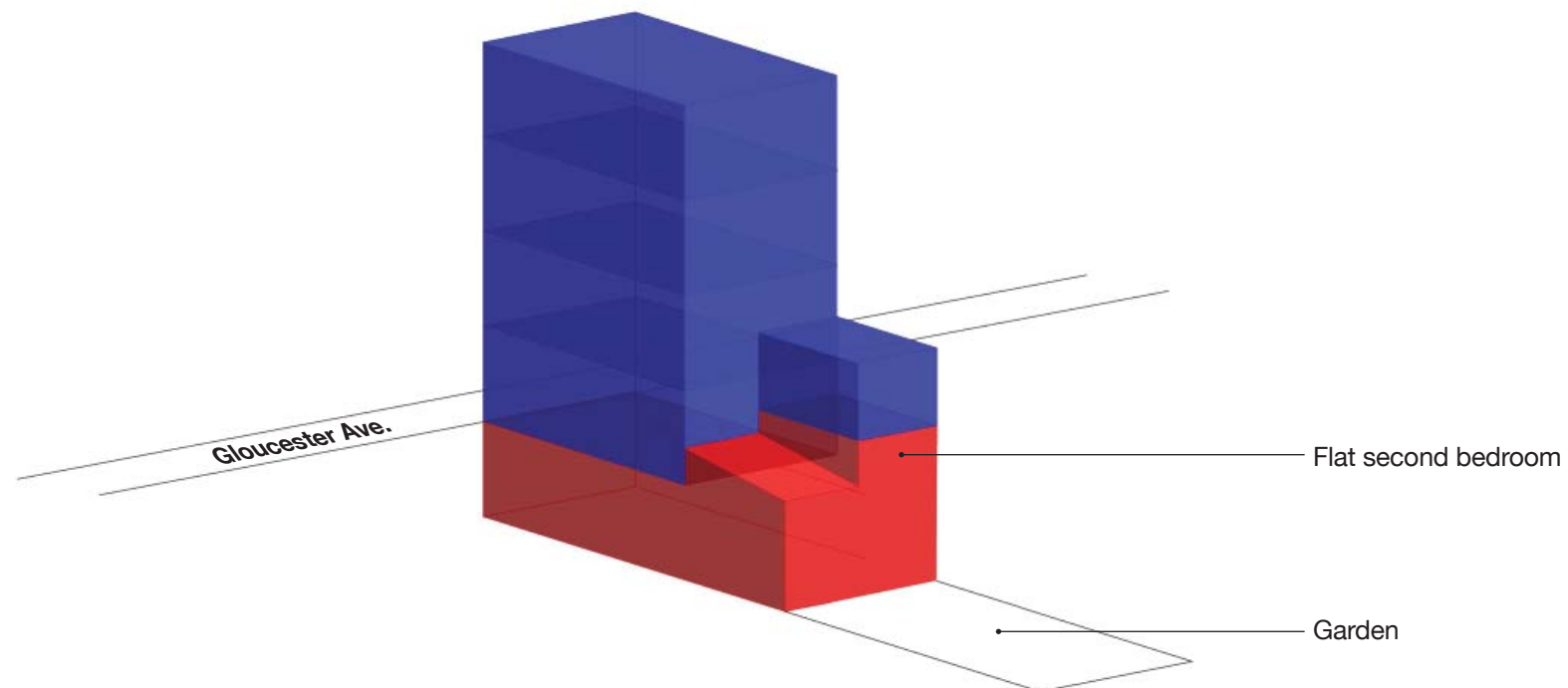
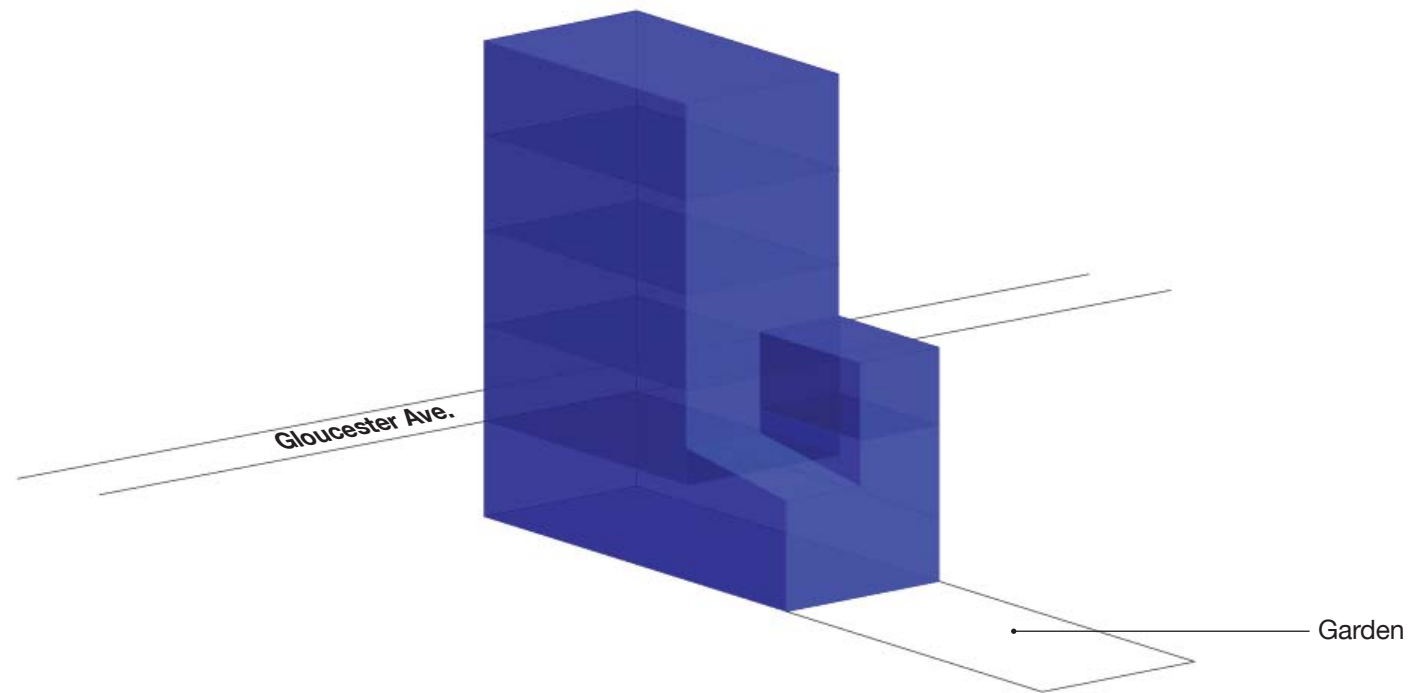
- Upgrading building services
- Re-pointing of brickwork
- Repairing roofing, flashings and copings
- Internal and external painting and decorating
- Removal of unwanted plants from paving, balconies, parapets and gutters
- Repair and/or replacement of windows and doors where necessary
- Repair and/or replacement of external fencing and balustrades

All of the above will be “like-for-like” changes which will not alter the external appearance or character of the property.

### 5.2. Reconfiguration

In order to create two dwellings, internal partition walls will be added to separate the lower ground floor and the rest of the house. A new mezzanine floor will be added within the double-height volume at the rear of the property to form a second bedroom.

To maximise the amount of indoor space in the flat, a protruding window is proposed. This will offer greater connection to the garden from within the flat, improve light levels and create an interesting internal space.



#### From top

Existing

Proposed

Key:

Main House 

Flat 

## 6.0 Materials

All new building elements will be consistent in terms of materiality and aesthetic. Their palette will be complementary to the existing materials, while also being distinct in order to clearly demarcate the old and the new.

The glazed atrium and the extended oriel window to the flat will have simple, minimalistic detailing. The other primary material other than the glass will be slim dark metal frames, mullions and sills. This will offer a clear contrast to the white-painted timber sash windows that are found in the rest of the property.

The existing timber trellis fence to the perimeter of the first floor terrace will be removed and replaced with a simple black-painted metal balustrade. This will be in keeping with the edge-protection in neighbouring properties.



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### Material precedent

Private House Extension, Hackney  
Platform 5 Architects

## 7.0 Planning Context

### Legislative Background

7.1. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires local planning authorities when determining planning applications to “have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations”. Section 70(2) of the 1990 Act is to be read in conjunction with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which provides that “if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”.

### Development Plan

7.2. The Development Plan for the purposes of this process is defined in the 2004 Act as:

- The London Plan (the Regional Spatial Strategy), and
- the Development Plan Documents (taken as a whole)

which have been adopted – in this case the Camden Core Strategy (CS) and the ‘saved’ policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

7.3. Policy 3.5 of the London Plan is relevant to the proposed development. Refers to The Local Development Framework (LDF) consists of a series of documents. The most important of these is the Core Strategy (adopted in 2010), which sets out the spatial vision for Camden and a strategy for how this vision will be achieved.

7.4. It is considered that the following Core Strategy policies are directly relevant to the proposal:

- CS6 - Providing Quality Homes
- CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage
- DP2 – making full use of Camden’s capacity for housing
- DP24 – Securing high quality design
- DP25 – Conserving Camden’s heritage
- DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

### Other Material Considerations

7.5. The National Planning Policy Framework explains that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development is about positive growth – making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations and that the planning system is about helping to make this happen. Development that is sustainable should go ahead without delay.

7.6. In addition the Housing Standards SPG is considered of relevance to the proposed development.

## 8.0 Planning Analysis

8.1. The main considerations are whether the design, scale and appearance of the proposed alterations would be compatible with the property, the location and its setting within the conservation area and whether there would be any adverse impact on the daylight, outlook or privacy of any neighbouring properties. These are discussed below, along with any other considerations as appropriate.

## 9.0 Principle of Development

9.1. The National Planning Policy Framework introduces a presumption of granting planning permission for sustainable development and a presumption in favour of residential development. However, there are no specific policies for residential extensions.

9.2. Policy CS6 (Providing Quality Homes) states that the Council will aim to make full use of Camden’s capacity for housing by:

- maximising the supply of additional housing to meet or exceed Camden’s target of 5,950 homes from 2007-2017, including 4,370 additional self-contained homes;
- maximising the supply of additional housing over the entire plan period to meet or exceed a target of 8,925 homes from 2010-2025, including 6,550 additional self-contained homes;
- Supporting the supply of additional student housing, bedsits and other housing with shared facilities providing this does not prejudice the Council’s ability to meet the target for the supply of additional self-contained homes, the balance of uses in the area; and the quality of residential amenity or the character of the surrounding area;
- minimising the net loss of existing homes;
- Regarding housing as the priority land-use of Camden’s Local Development Framework.

9.3. In addition the Camden Development Policies 2010-2025 states in para 6.18 that “the Council aims to close the gap between housing demand and supply by minimising the net loss of existing homes, and by regarding housing as the top priority when considering the future of unused and underused land and buildings.”

9.4. The desire for provision of more housing in the borough is further reiterated in Policy DP2 - Making full use of Camden’s capacity for housing which resists development that results in the net loss of two or more homes.

9.5. The proposed development provides an additional residential unit and supports Policy CS6.

## 10.0 Impact on the Property, Location and Conservation Area

10.1. Paragraph 56 of the NPPF confirms that good design is key; it is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Paragraph 58 states that planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development; respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

10.2. Paragraph 60 advises that planning decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles; although it is proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

10.3. Paragraph 63 advises that in determining applications, greater weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area.

10.4. In this respect the NPPF offers support to the proposed development which is of a high quality design and will improve the appearance of the property.

10.5. Policy DP24 – Securing high quality design states that the Council will require all development to respect the existing context, character, and appearance, taking opportunities available to improve the quality and character of buildings

10.6. With regard to alterations to the glazing and existing rear infill extension, The Council states that:

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.

10.7. The proposals show that the proposed alterations result in a more subordinate development of a much more diminutive scale than the existing extension and therefore do not conflict with policy DP24.

CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

The Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

- requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;
- preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens;
- promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;
- seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible;
- protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites inside and outside the borough and protecting important local views.

10.8. The NPPF defines a heritage asset as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. The site, which is within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area, is a defined heritage asset.

10.9. In this respect, the NPPF, at paragraph 128, states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

10.10. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

10.11. In addition, paragraph 132 of the NPPF, states that

*"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should*

*be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting..."*

10.12. The NPPF confirms at paragraph 138 that not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance.

10.13. Policy 7.8 of the London Plan states that development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

10.14. DP25 – Conserving Camden's heritage Conservation areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, 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, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and
- preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

10.15. In this respect, it is clear from above that it is first necessary to define the significance of the heritage asset (the Primrose Hill Conservation Area).

10.16. The Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement provides more detail on the designation of the Conservation Area. It characterises this part of the conservation area as dominated by long terraces of mid nineteenth century houses that are set back from the pavement.

10.17. Each terrace is constructed in London stock brick with decorative stucco features to the front elevation, usually painted white or cream, which serves to unify the terrace. These stucco features often include a rusticated ground floor, projecting window cills and hoods (usually to ground and first floors), moulded window surrounds, parapets and balustrades. A number of properties have projecting door hoods or porch features supported by columns.

10.18. However, the appraisal makes no specific reference to this terrace on Gloucester Avenue. In this respect there is no specific guidance on the significance of the conservation area in relation to the site.

10.19. As stated above, the NPPF states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any

heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

10.20. It is therefore clear that the significance of the conservation area arises from the stucco frontages and not the rear of the properties which appear to have undergone numerous alterations over the years.

10.21. Therefore, in accordance with the NPPF it is considered that the rear of the property does not contribute to the significance of the conservation area and only the frontage is considered of significance.

10.22. In this respect, the above significant heritage features will remain intact and the proposed development will have no impact on the stucco frontage of the building, the garden, vegetation or character of the property.

10.23. In addition, as stated above, the rear of many properties on Gloucester Avenue and, indeed, the Primrose Hill Conservation Area have been significantly altered and there is no clear rhythm or historically notable/characteristic design which would be prejudiced by these proposals.

Visual amenity – not visible from street

10.24. In respect of the design, as stated above, the proposed extension will be underneath an existing side extension and will not have any impact on the heritage asset.

10.25. In respect of the modifications to the rear fenestration, the existing upper ground floor bay will be rebuilt within the existing profile to reflect traditional window proportions and materials will match the existing.

10.26. The relevant tests as set out in s72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 are that the proposed development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and of its setting.

10.27. In this respect, in accordance with the guidance as set out in the NPPF, the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the conservation area is minimal and for the reasons stated above, the proposed development clearly preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area and therefore meets the statutory test.

10.28. The proposed development will not result in any detriment to the character or appearance of the area, the townscape, building lines and will complement the existing building. There are no conflicts with any of the above criteria.

## Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

### 10.29. DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

The Council will protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity.

The factors we will consider include:

- visual privacy and overlooking;
- overshadowing and outlook;
- sunlight, daylight and artificial light levels;
- noise and vibration levels;
- odour, fumes and dust;
- microclimate;
- the inclusion of appropriate attenuation measures.
- We will also require developments to provide:
- an acceptable standard of accommodation in terms of internal arrangements, dwelling and room sizes and amenity space;
- facilities for the storage, recycling and disposal of waste;
- facilities for bicycle storage; and
- outdoor space for private or communal amenity space, wherever practical.

10.30. There will be no loss of privacy. The infill extension will not lead to an increase in the sense of enclosure. There will be no impact on parking, noise, odours or vibration. The proposed development will have no impact on the neighbouring properties.

## 11.0 Summary and Conclusions

11.1. This statement is written in support of the planning application at 131 Gloucester Avenue, London, NW1 8LA for subdivision of existing property to form two separate dwellings, remodelling the existing infill extension and lower-ground floor layout.

11.2. The application property sits within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area and is a four-storey semi-detached house of which the application site makes up the lower two storeys (lower-ground and upper-ground floors) and is located on the southern side of Gloucester Avenue.

11.3. The National Planning Policy Framework introduces a presumption of granting planning permission for sustainable development and a presumption in favour of residential development.

11.4. The proposed development meets all the relevant design standards as set out by the Development Plan.

11.5. The significance of the conservation area therefore arises from the stucco frontages and not the rear of the properties which appear to have undergone numerous alterations over the years.

11.6. In this respect, the above significant heritage features will remain intact and the proposed development will have no impact on the stucco frontage of the building, the garden, vegetation or character of the property. Therefore all conservation tests are met.

11.7. There can be no objections in relation to neighbouring amenity, or parking.

11.8. Therefore in accordance with relevant national, strategic and local plan policy and as such, in accordance with Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 planning permission, in our assessment, is justified.