



**PLANNING STATEMENT AND
HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**The Tower House, 12 & 12A Park Village West,
London NW1 4AE**

Prepared for

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DECEMBER 2015

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is written in support of an application for planning permission and listed building consent for alterations and extension to the existing single family dwelling house.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
- Architectural drawings by Collett Zarzycki Architects;
 - Design and Access Statement of Collett Zarzycki Architects;
 - Construction Method Statement of Conisbee dated 14/08/15;
 - Site Investigation Report and Basement Impact Assessment of GEA dated June 2015; and
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report and Outline Method Statement of Landmark Trees dated 25th August 2015.

The Application Site and Surrounding Area

- 1.3 The property is a single family dwelling house comprising lower ground, ground, first and second floors and is situated on the northern side of the road close to the junction with Albany Street. The building is grade II* listed and forms part of a group of 16 related houses built circa 1832-37 as part of John Nash's suburban housing.
- 1.4 The property is situated close to the open space of Regent's Park and the immediate surrounding area is predominately residential in character.

Relevant Planning History

- 1.5 Planning permission and listed building consent was granted in 1987 (Ref: 8701225 & 8770200) for the erection of a conservatory extension at the rear.

Pre-Application Engagement with the Council

- 1.6 In accordance with the advice of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), pre-application engagement has been undertaken with the Council. The scheme submitted for the purpose of this exercise involved the following:
- Excavation under the courtyard to provide additional accommodation;
 - Enlarging the hallway at lower ground floor level by bringing the door forward;
 - Erection of a rear/side extension at lower ground floor level adjacent to

the tower; and

- Minor internal alterations.

1.7 It was concluded that the proposals overall were largely acceptable. Concerns were however expressed with regard to the proposed extension adjoining the tower to create an additional bedroom. The Council's Officer's considered that the single storey extension would *"harm the appearance of this very fine house and that with the later 20th century conservatory which already dominates the rear elevation, the incremental loss of the historic form should be resisted"*. A copy of the Council's response, reference 2014/4050/PRE is appended hereto.

The Proposal

1.8 It is in response to that advice which has informed the scheme now submitted for consideration. Taking account therefore of Officer's views at pre-application stage, the proposal to create an extension adjacent to the tower has been omitted.

1.9 In carrying out investigative work in order to provide the structural information necessary for an application of this nature (excavation under the courtyard) Structural Engineer's informed the applicant that significant works would need to be undertaken to the former coach house and adjoining studio because there is evidence of subsidence and cracking. The necessary works would thus maintain the buildings' structural stability and architectural integrity and ensure its preservation in the long term.

1.10 As a result of this investigation and the structural works needed to safeguard stability, the opportunity has been taken to devise a scheme which also includes excavation under the former coach house and studio to create additional accommodation.

1.11 As such, the final scheme proposals to be considered are:-

- Formation of a new basement level under the former coach house, studio and courtyard to create additional ancillary accommodation;
- Insertion of a new window at first floor level of the coach house;
- Erection of a small extension at lower ground floor level to enlarge the existing entrance hall; and
- Minor internal alterations.

Please refer to the architects drawings; Design and Access Statement and the Structural Report of Conisbee for further detailed information regarding the scheme proposals.

2 THE HERITAGE ASSET AND ASSESSMENT

2.1 No. 12 Park Village West is a single family dwelling house comprising lower ground, ground, first and second floors. The building was listed grade II* in May 1974 along with nos. 1-8, 10-14 & 17-19 Park Village West. Built circa 1832-7 of John Nash's suburban housing, a group of 16 related houses in a picturesque layout close to Regent's Park. Park Village West also lies within the Regent's Park Conservation Area.

2.2 An extract from the statutory listing description reads:

"No. 12 (Tower House): c1834-7 by Nash office for James Johnson, physician to William IV. Low slated pitch roofs with wide bracketed eaves and stuccoed slab stacks with dentil enrichment. Italianate design with 3 storey octagonal entrance tower based on Tower of the Winds on angle of 2 and 3 storey villa. Right hand return with 3 window canted oriel rising through 2 storeys. Pedimented entrance porch with panelled door. Recessed sashes, those above porch blind. Casements with cast iron balcony to ground floor of oriel. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: attached low sleeper wall with columns carrying urns; cast iron railings. No. 12A: single storey pedimented building of later date, with tetrastyle pilaster treatment. The former coach house of No. 12."

2.3 In the late 1980's planning permission and listed building consent was granted for the erection of a conservatory extension in the rear garden and construction of front entrance gates including extension of existing railing along the boundary.

Significant Findings

2.4 The significant findings are:

- The building was listed grade II* in 1974 along with nos. 1-8, 10-14 & 17-19 Park Village West. A picturesque layout of 16 related houses forming a cluster of Nash's suburban housing close to Regent's Park;
- The building was listed not only for group value of Park Village West but also for its contribution to the wider area surrounding Regent's Park;
- The building is a fine example of Italianate architecture and has been well preserved and cared for retaining many architectural and historic features of interest; and
- The single storey building adjacent is a later addition and the former coach house of no. 12.

Significant Issues

2.5 There are two significant issues:

- Whether the proposals, the subject of this application conserve the special architectural interest and significance of the heritage asset; and
- Preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Regent's Park Conservation Area.

Summary Conclusions

- 2.6 Structural works associated with the proposed excavation under the former coach house and studio to form additional accommodation would ensure structural stability is maintained thus conserving the building in the long term particularly as evidence of subsidence and cracking has been found following investigative works by Structural Engineers.
- 2.7 The new level would be under only the later addition and courtyard and would not therefore impact upon the Tower House (no. 12) itself ensuring what is significant about this heritage asset is conserved.
- 2.8 The below ground level would provide ancillary residential accommodation wholly underground and not therefore directly visible from any public or private view. The insertion of a modest opening on the side elevation of the coach house (12A) would not have a harmful impact upon the heritage value of the listed building. It would match an existing window at first floor level and be entirely respectful therefore to the appearance of the existing building.
- 2.9 The internal alterations are minor in nature and would not harm any architectural or historic features of interest. Further, the original plan form would remain clearly discernible.
- 2.10 Overall, the proposals conserve what is special about this heritage asset and preserve any architectural features of interest. Furthermore, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be preserved.
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3 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012. The new NPPF largely carries forward the planning policies and protections contained within Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) albeit in a more streamlined form with an emphasis on a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 3.2 The NPPF makes clear that the starting point for decision making is the development plan and applications for development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved.
- 3.3 The NPPF establishes a number of core principles that underpin the planning system which includes conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance so that their contribution and enjoyment can continue for this and future generations.
- 3.4 Paragraph 126 recognises that heritage assets (includes conservation areas) are an irreplaceable resource and seeks to conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. It is appropriate to consider the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 128 requires applicants to provide information on the significance of any heritage assets affected and the contribution made by its setting, the level of detail to be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact on that significance.

Development Plan

- 3.5 The proposal has been assessed in relation to relevant policies contained within the Mayor's London Plan dated March 2015 (FALP) the Council's Core Strategy, adopted in November 2010 and Development Policies also adopted in November 2010.

The London Plan

- 3.6 Consistent with the NPPF, strategic advice in the London Plan seeks to ensure that development affecting a heritage asset and its setting conserves its significance by being sympathetic to its form, scale, materials and architectural detail (policy 7.8).

Core Strategy

- 3.7 One of the main objectives identified in the Council's Core Strategy is to manage change and growth in a manner that respects the character, heritage and distinctiveness of the Borough for it to continue to be a popular place to live, work and visit.
- 3.8 The application property is identified as being within the Regent's Park Conservation Area. The following policies from the Core Strategy are therefore considered to be of particular relevance in the determination of this application:
- CS5 Managing the impact of growth and development; and
 - CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving local heritage.

Development Policies

- 3.9 Development Policies sets out more detailed policies to aid in delivering the overarching objectives of the Core Strategy. Relevant Development Policies are:
- DP22 Promoting Sustainable Design and Construction;
 - DP23 Water;
 - DP24 Securing high quality design;
 - DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage;
 - DP26 Managing the impact of development on neighbouring occupiers; &
 - DP27 Basements and Lightwells.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 3.10 Whilst the above policies are material considerations, the approach to listed buildings is underpinned by the statutory requirements in Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (1990 Act) where, in determining development proposals, special regard should be paid to the desirability of preserving a building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- 3.11 The Council's supplementary planning guidance entitled "Basements and Lightwells" adopted in September 2013 is also a material consideration in the determination of this application.
- 3.12 Regard is also had to the Regent's Park Conservation Area Appraisal. This document was adopted by the Council in 2011 as a guide for development and the approach to

be taken in the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area.

4 PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE

NPPF

4.1 Paragraph 14 states:

*“At the heart of the NPPF is a **Presumption in favour of sustainable development....”***

4.2 A presumption in favour of sustainable development is seen by Minister’s as a *“golden thread running through both plan making and decision-taking”* . It makes clear that the starting point for decision making is the development plan and applications for development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Plan should be approved without delay.

4.3 As well as the five ‘guiding principles’ of sustainable development, the NPPF also relies upon The United Nations General Assembly definition: “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

4.4 In that context, the NPPF identifies three dimensions to ‘sustainable development’:

- An economic role;
- A social role; and
- An environmental role.

4.5 In essence, sustainable development means ensuring positive growth whilst protecting the natural, built and historic environment and without making lives worse for future generations.

4.6 In that context, the proposed development would meet the needs of the present occupiers without compromising the ability of future generations to come. Furthermore, as evidenced throughout this statement, the proposals conserve the historic environment in compliance with development plan policy as well as the advice offered in the NPPF. For these reasons the proposal comprises sustainable development and should be approved.

Development Plan

4.7 Consideration has been given to prevailing development plan policies. Every effort has been made to ensure the proposals, whilst meeting the expectations of modern day living, do not harm the architectural quality and integrity of the existing

building, the significance of the Conservation Area or the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. To that end, the proposed development would be executed to a very high standard ensuring the proposal is respectful to the form, layout and integrity of the existing building and harmonious with the townscape character and local distinctiveness of the area and accords therefore with Core Strategy policies CS5, CS14 and Development Policies DP24, DP25 & DP26.

Impact of the Proposals upon the Heritage Asset

New basement level

- 4.8 The former coach house (12A) is a later addition and is separated from no. 12 by the front courtyard. The attached studio adjoins the Tower House (no. 12) at the far north west corner. The proposed excavation works avoid the Tower House itself and this building is therefore maintained as originally constructed conserving the significance of the heritage asset therefore.
- 4.9 As the former coach house and studio are later additions it is considered that the creation of an additional floor underneath would not harm the special architectural quality and character of the Tower House (no.12) or indeed the integrity of Nash's planned layout of a picturesque cluster of suburban villas within the Regent's Park Conservation Area.

Insertion of a New Window

- 4.10 As a result of the internal re-arrangement of the coach house and to afford natural light and ventilation into a bedroom, the insertion of a new opening on the flank elevation of the coach house (12A) is proposed. The new window would match an existing window at first floor level and face directly towards the main dwelling, no. 12. The modest size and use of traditional materials ensure the new window is wholly in keeping with the period building and thus entirely respectful to it.
- 4.11 The proposals would conserve the former coach house and studio and ensure its preservation in the long term particularly as Structural Engineers investigative works found evidence of subsidence and cracking.

Construction of the Development

- 4.12 A comprehensive site investigation has been carried out and such findings are that the geology of the area is capable of supporting the loads from the proposed development and that there would be no adverse impacts upon hydrological conditions of the local environment.

4.13 As advised in the CMS of Conisbee and the Basement Impact Assessment of GEA, the proposed structural design and scope of the works should not have any significant adverse impact on the structural stability of the existing building or any neighbouring structures. Indeed, the proposals would strengthen the existing structure which is known to be compromised by subsidence and cracking. The proposals would therefore ensure the building is conserved in the long term.

4.14 As the development is an extension (of less than 500sqm) to an existing dwelling and is not new build, the proposals are not in conflict with policy DP22.

Single storey extension

4.15 The small extension to the entrance hall at lower ground floor level would match existing in form and style to ensure the visual appearance of the building at this lower level is maintained.

Internal alterations

4.16 Internally, the proposals are minor and update the existing accommodation in a sensitive manner to maintain the architectural integrity of the building and ensure any historic features of interest are not compromised. The minor changes wholly conserve the significance of the heritage asset.

Impact of the Proposals upon the Conservation Area

4.17 The application property and surrounding area is characterised by attractive buildings of architectural and historic importance which provide a striking juxtaposition between built form and the large expanse of green open space of Regent's Park. The Conservation Area covers the eastern section of John Nash's early 19th century development and the Council's appraisal document comments that *"It is a small part of a greater scheme that extends to the west into the City of Westminster, and comprises a unique planned composition of landscape and buildings, at once classical and picturesque"*.

New basement level

4.18 Excavation directly under the former coach house and studio would provide additional ancillary accommodation wholly underground. At the rear a lightwell would afford natural ventilation and limited light to the below ground accommodation. The lightwell would be behind the existing boundary wall and not therefore directly visible from any public or private view. Glazed skylights would be incorporated into the courtyard paving to provide a good level of natural light to the new

accommodation. By virtue of the new level being wholly underground, the character and appearance of the conservation area would not be harmed. Furthermore, external manifestations associated with it are discreet ensuring therefore that the conservation area is preserved. The proposal complies with the broad aims and objectives of policy DP22 and the Council's adopted SPD.

Landscaping and Trees

- 4.19 A tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment was carried out by Landmark Trees earlier this year and a meeting was held on site with the Council's Tree Officer, Nick Bell on 5th August 2015. No trees would need to be felled as a direct result of the development and the findings are that the proposals would have a negligible impact upon both on-site and off-site trees with the report concluding that "*The site has potential for development without impacting on the wider tree population or local landscape*".
- 4.20 The report also includes details of tree protection measures during construction of the development.

Please refer to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment report of Landmark Trees for further detailed information.

- 4.21 The underground extension would not harm the architectural integrity and quality of the building and wholly preserves the established character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding area and thus accords with the aims and objectives of policies CS5, CS14, DP24 & DP25.

Flooding

- 4.22 The site is not within the flood plain and is identified as being within an area of low risk from surface water flooding. The small area under the courtyard to be excavated and built under is not therefore considered to result in any significant worsening effect on the water table or result in surface water flooding.

Please refer to the CMS of Conisbee and the Site Investigation and Basement Impact Assessment Report of GEA for further detailed information in this regard.

- 4.23 For the reasons given in paragraphs 4.10 to 4.22 above, the proposed subterranean development is in accordance with development plan policies DP23, DP27 and supplementary guidance CPG4.

Impact upon Residential Amenity

- 4.24 The application site is detached from neighbouring buildings. The proposals allow for an increase in floor space underground, not visible from any public or private view. Further, the modest extension to enlarge the secondary entrance is at the lower ground floor level within the courtyard and would have no impact therefore upon existing neighbouring occupiers, neither would the new window at first floor level because it would be on the flank elevation facing directly toward the host building no. 12.
- 4.25 As such, the development is not considered to cause harm or injury to the amenities of any adjoining occupier and therefore accords with the requirements of Development Policy DP26.

In Summary

- 4.26 In summary and for the reasons set out in this statement, the proposals comply with national and local plan policies referenced in Section 3 of this statement and comply with the statutory tests of Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The proposals would meet the needs of the present without compromising future generations to meet their own needs and ensures the building is conserved in the long term thus achieving sustainable development consistent with the NPPF.
- 5.2 The development as proposed would not harm what is significant about this heritage asset and it would be conserved and protected in the long term. Furthermore, the character and appearance of the conservation area would be preserved and there would be no detrimental impact upon existing residential amenity as a result of the development.
- 5.3 The proposed development meets the statutory requirements of Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the 1990 Act and complies with all relevant development plan policies, supplementary planning guidance and with central government advice in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In our judgement no other material considerations weigh against it.
- 5.4 Accordingly we trust that Camden Council will determine that the application for planning permission and listed building consent can be approved.