

# PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT 150 HAVERSTOCK HILL LONDON NW3

## HERITAGE STATEMENT



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## Introduction

1. This Statement reviews heritage and design considerations of the proposed alteration and change of use of No.150 Haverstock Hill NW3 from A1 to C3. It concludes that the development will enhance the character of the Conservation Area and the setting of No.148 Haverstock Hill, listed Grade II.

2. I am a Chartered Accredited Specialist Conservation Architect, Chartered Town Planner, Member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation and Recognised Practitioner of the Urban Design Group. I have specialised in historic conservation for over 40 years. I hold an Architectural Heritage Award, Civic Trust Award and Wandsworth Council Design Award. I founded and led the Council's Conservation and Design Team from 1984 to 1991. I am familiar with the area and context of the proposed development.

## Site description

3. No. 150 Haverstock Hill is a single storey commercial unit wedged between Nos. 148 and 152 Haverstock Hill. The frontage plot width is approximately 4.2m. At approx. 5m depth two steps inwards reduce the width to around 2.5m. The total depth is around 14.2m.

4, No 148, listed Grade II is an early C19 villa, set at the NW end of its side facing garden extending SE. The list description reads:

TQ2784NE HAVERSTOCK HILL 798-1/52/787 (East side) 14/05/74  
No.148

GV II

Detached house. Early C19. Stucco. Irregular slate roof. 2 storeys and attic. Double fronted with 3 windows plus single window 2-storey entrance extension to left. Pilasters at angles, with plaster wreaths on capitals, support attic sill cornice; plain 1st floor sill band and band above 1st floor windows. Round-arched doorway with radial patterned fanlight, part glazed door and C20 hood. Central ground floor French windows with margin lights have console bracketed cornice and rosette enriched head. Upper floors have sashes, 1st floor in rosette enriched architraves; central window blind. Garden front with large bow-fronted ground floor window having cast-iron balcony over conservatory. Battlemented single storey extension to east. INTERIOR: not inspected.

The garden wall to No.148 is separately listed.

5. No. 152 is a 4+ roof storey building, present at 1874, probably dating from around 1850. An attached building of domestic scale to the rear, roofed in clay tile, now No.150A may predate 152. No.152 and the former Haverstock Arms Public House (now NW3 Bar) at the corner both have recent mansard roof extensions replacing original valley roofs.

6. The map regression below displays change between 1874 and the present: At 1874 there was a small gap between 148 and 152, with a small building attached to 148, not the present single storey building.

At 1952 the listed villa was numbered 150, with the single storey frontage building numbered 150A. The shape of the villa suggests the shop may have been formed from an attached single storey building at around 1900. After 1952 renumbering made the villa 148 and the shop 150. The garden of 148 extended further SE than at present. A modern block of flats now occupies the SE end.

7. The villa's form, shallow roof pitch and attic cutaways in the blocking course suggest the attic storey may have been formed later. A flat roofed rear extension, seen in an aerial view may also be later.

8. The villa's garden is heavily treed. In summer, views from the SE on Haverstock Hill conceal much of the building, making the shopfront and backdrop brick wall more prominent. The unrelieved red brick flank wall to No 152, clearly intended as a party wall to later development is now adorned with dish aerials, boiler flues, cables and poorly matched brickwork. It rises three storeys above the shopfront, marring oblique views of the group from the SE.

9. The ground floor fascias of 152 and the Public House, exceeding 3.5m height are matched by the false fascia of 150 with an actual ceiling height of around 2.7m. The shop front's building line is consistent with 152 and the gateway to the villa but projects forward some 2.7m from the villa's façade. The impact of the imposing fascia, box and projecting illuminated signs, shutter box, corrugated roller shutter and shop fitting dominates and obscures oblique views towards the villa.



1874 – small outbuilding







Aerial view, 150 at full depth. Note pre-extension roofs, 152 and 154



View from SW, unrelieved flank wall to No. 152



View from NW, impact of existing front of 150 on setting of 148 villa.



View of group from NW, existing front of 150 obscures most of No. 148.



## Heritage assets

10. The heritage assets affected by the proposed development are:

- The setting of No. 148 Haverstock Hill
- The character of the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area

11. In this case they are clearly interlinked. Assessment of development proposals should be addressed with reference to relevant policy and guidance.

## Setting

12. English Heritage document “**The Setting of Heritage Assets**” 2012 defines setting (2.1) as ‘the surroundings in which [the asset] is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral’ (also on NPPF p 56).

13. (2.4) states:

...Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset...

14. The EH document sets out 4 stages of assessment prior to making a decision on a proposed development:

Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;

Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);

Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;

Step 4: explore ways of maximising enhancement and avoiding or minimising harm;

15. The EH Key Principles (p16) go on to explain:

Change, including development, can sustain, enhance or better reveal the significance of an asset as well as detract from it or leave it unaltered...

The design of a development affecting the setting of a heritage asset may play an important part in determining its impact. The contribution of setting to the historic significance of an asset can be sustained or enhanced if new buildings are carefully designed to respect their setting by virtue of their scale, proportion, height, massing, alignment and use of materials. This does not mean that new buildings have to copy their older neighbours in detail, but rather that they should together form a harmonious group. (121)

16. Assessment Step 2, a checklist of attributes (p 19) helps to elucidate or explain possible contribution of setting to significance. Any attributes in this case should be applied in respect of the residential and commercial surroundings as a whole. A negative grading can be applied to the historic conversion of a residential building or buildings originally part of the villa to a visually repellent commercial premises. A

corresponding benefit of the proposed development is sustaining or enhancing residential character through attractive well-designed harmonious new building.

17. Step 3, assessment of the proposed development (p 21) sets out a further checklist of possible attributes, some of which may be pertinent, e.g. architectural style, massing, materials, proportions, land use.

18. Step 4 considers maximising enhancement and minimising harm through good design.

## **Conservation area**

19. The present boundary of the Conservation Area was adopted in July 2011, the same date the Council approved a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. It defines special character in part as:

...Part of the suburb of Belsize...the busy, urban nature of Haverstock Hill and the quiet residential streets that branch from it... and  
...Italianate Victorian semi-detached houses are the characteristic building type, with twentieth-century housing styles ranging from garden suburb to modern movement and contemporary insertions...

20. The Spatial analysis (5.1) mentions 148 Haverstock Hill as a landmark building and (5.2) key views including up and down Haverstock Hill. Identified as a Character Zone, it included the description:

The Haverstock Arms public house forms a group with two shops; then, set back behind high railings is an important early nineteenth-century house, 148 Haverstock Hill; it is stuccoed, has two storeys and an attic, and rosette-enriched decoration pre-dating the suburbanisation of the area.

21. The Appraisal includes No150 (p33) as a positive building, contributing to the character of the CA. P45 notes that some shops

“...have been altered with large signs which extend out of the fascia zone and there have been unsympathetic shop front replacements.”

22. P47 notes that

...the list of buildings...[which] positively contribute to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, will be kept under review to aid decision-making and the preparation of proposals;  
...applications for development will be determined having regard to the special interest of the Conservation Area and the specialist advice of conservation officers;

23. The CA appraisal (p56) expresses a presumption for retaining “gaps,” i.e unbuilt space between buildings where they fulfil an important townscape role, but identifies instances where infill can preserve or enhance character or appearance. Whilst No. 150 is not strictly a gap it may be perceived as such in context. No. 150 is not an extension to any building, is not identified as fulfilling an important townscape role or contributing to a coherent group of buildings.



## **Local Plan Policy**

24. Policy DP24 requires a high standard of design in alterations and extensions to existing buildings, quality materials and visually interesting frontages at street level.

25. Policy DP25 of Camden Development Policies includes the following relevant parts:

...the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;
- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;
- c) 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;
- g) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

Policy DP30 expects shopfronts to be of a high design standard in relation to surrounding properties.

## **NPPF**

26. Paragraphs 126, 128, 129, 131, 132, 137 would appear to be relevant or partly relevant to this application. Particular attention is drawn to paragraph 131:

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.

27. In addition, paragraphs 9 (replacing poor design with better design) and 67 (Poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment) are relevant to the shopfront and advertising display signs.

## **Assessment – setting of a heritage asset**

28. Applying steps 1-4 of the EH guidance:

1. The heritage asset affected is identified at paragraph 10 above
2. The setting contributes to understanding the significance of the asset as one of the earliest domestic buildings in Haverstock Hill, one of very few surviving single family houses and for its architectural quality. The setting is considerably harmed by the intrusion of the poorly designed adjoining building at No 150.



Composite drawing showing added height of proposed development on facade of existing building.

3. Comparative drawings of existing and proposed developments show that:
  - a- Proposed height, about 1.5m above present fascia, closely matches the two storey flank extension and banding above first floor of the villa, 148 Haverstock Hill.
  - b- Additional height will slightly mask flank wall to No 152.
  - c- Setting back the front wall by approx. 1.2m will reveal more of the villa in oblique views from NW.
  - d- Domestic use better relates to the predominant use of the area, is a good neighbour and creates a more active, visually interesting street frontage for longer periods.
  - e- Harmonious materials, scale and proportion are employed.
  - f- Rendered front boundary wall to match height of villa boundary will improve appearance at edge of footway
  - g- Removal of the crass and obtrusive shopfront increases visual attention on the villa.
4. The design maximises enhancement and has no harmful impact.

## Assessment – conservation area

29. In considering the status accorded at p33 to No 150, the CA Appraisal does not refer to the shopfront or indicate how the “positive contribution” conclusion was reached. Self-evidently, the present shopfront, fittings and signage would be refused permission if applied for. The poor design of the shopfront and its forward position in relation to No. 148 would also breach Policy DP25g. If the opportunity afforded by DP25c and the Appraisal’s (p47) review policy were now taken I would contend that the existing building should be considered to detract from the character of the CA. This in turn should weigh in favour of the proposed development.

30. In summary, replacing a poor shopfront, discordant signage and security shuttering with a well-proportioned domestic façade in locally harmonious brick walling and painted timber windows will enhance the setting of the landmark listed villa, No. 148, character and appearance of this stretch of Haverstock Hill and the Conservation Area generally. Viewed from nearby buildings, the green roof will further enhance appearance.

## Conclusions

31. From the above assessment I consider that:

- the existing façade makes no significant contribution to understanding or appreciating the significance of the listed villa, No 148 Haverstock Hill or the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area.
- The shopfront fitting, security shutter, position and advertising signs harm the setting of No 148, character and appearance of the CA.
- If reviewed under DP25c and CA Appraisal p47, the existing building should fail inclusions as a positive contribution to the CA.
- The proposed development replaces poor design with good design
- Residential use is more consistent with the character of the listed villa and this part of the CA.
- The proposed development will enhance the setting of the villa, the character and appearance of the CA.
- No harm will be caused to any heritage asset.
- There are no other material considerations which indicate otherwise.
- Planning permission should be granted.

**JACK WARSHAW**

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