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Planning. Design. Economics.

**81 Avenue Road, Camden, London,
NW8 6JD**

**Planning and Heritage Impact
Assessment**

Mr Mirchandani
1 September 2016

14701/IR/DCa

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning and Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (NLP) on behalf of Mr Mirchandani, the owner of No. 81 Avenue Road, London, NW8. It accompanies an application for planning permission for the proposed demolition of the existing single family dwelling and attached garage on-site and the construction of new replacement single family dwelling and garage.
- 1.2 The site of No. 81 Avenue Road comprises an existing unlisted building and attached garage set on the south-west side of Avenue Road/B525. It is located outside of any adopted conservation area boundary.
- 1.3 This Statement identifies the site's physical and historic context and assesses the planning and heritage considerations related to the proposed redevelopment of No. 81 Avenue Road. The assessment is based upon a site visit and an analysis of photographs, historic mapping and other desk-based secondary data sources.

2.0

Understanding the Context

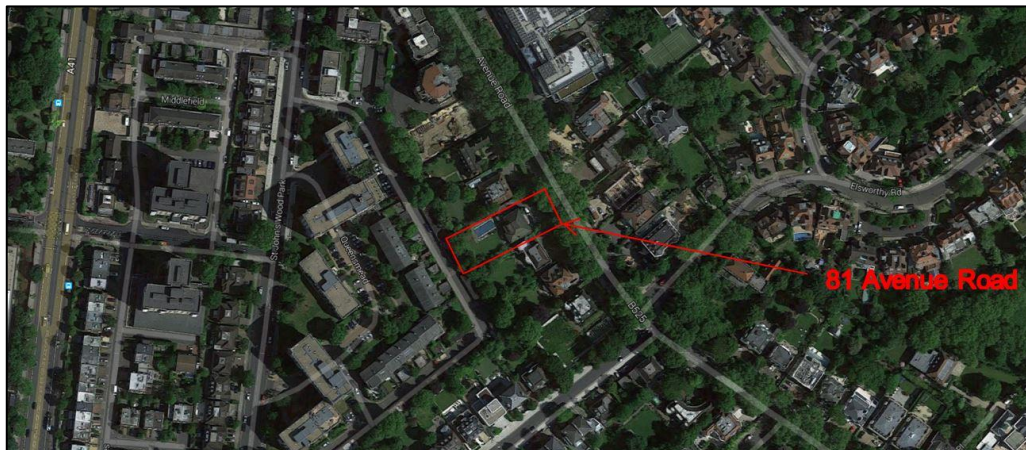
Site Location

2.1

The site is located on the south-west of Avenue Road, to the north-west of the junction of Queen's Grove and Elsworth Road. The site's north-western and south-eastern boundaries are adjoined by Nos. 83 and 79 Avenue Road respectively. To the south-west, beyond the rear garden of the property sits a row of single storey garages set on Queensmead. The site is not located within but is close to the Elsworth Conservation Area, the boundary for which sits to the rear of properties opposite on the north-east side of Avenue Road and further to the south-east along Avenue Road.

2.2

Avenue Road is a classified road (B525) which provides a connection between Regent's Park, to the south, and Swiss Cottage, to the north. The site is in an accessible location being within easy walking distance of Swiss Cottage and St. John's Wood London Underground Stations and local bus routes which pass along Abbey Road.



Map 2.1: Aerial view of 81 Avenue Road (Google Maps, 2015).

Site Description

2.3

No. 81 Avenue Road comprises a substantial detached villa of two principal storeys, plus attic level accommodation, with large front and rear gardens and set back from Avenue Road. It is currently in use as a single family dwelling. The house features a regular (and symmetrical) composition to the front façade, with a central stone portico and projecting canted bays flanking the portico above at first floor level. The building is constructed of brick, with timber-framed sash windows and a clay tiled roof.

2.4

The property has a single-storey side garage which extends to the side boundary wall. The side wall of the garage to the boundary with No. 83 Avenue Road is 1.5m in height. The remainder of the boundary fronting onto Avenue Road is made up of a low level brick wall with metal railings set above to an overall height of 1.5m. The existing building on the site is neither statutorily or

locally listed; is not located within any adopted conservation area boundary, and does not possess and specific architectural or historic merit of note.



Photograph 2.1: The Avenue Road frontage of number 81.

- 2.5 To the rear of the property is a large garden with a swimming pool and several mature trees, including fruit bearing trees such as apple, pear and cherry trees as well as several cypresses, limes, London Planes and an Elder tree. The trees to the front of the property, on the north east side, are younger and smaller than those at the back.

Surrounding Area

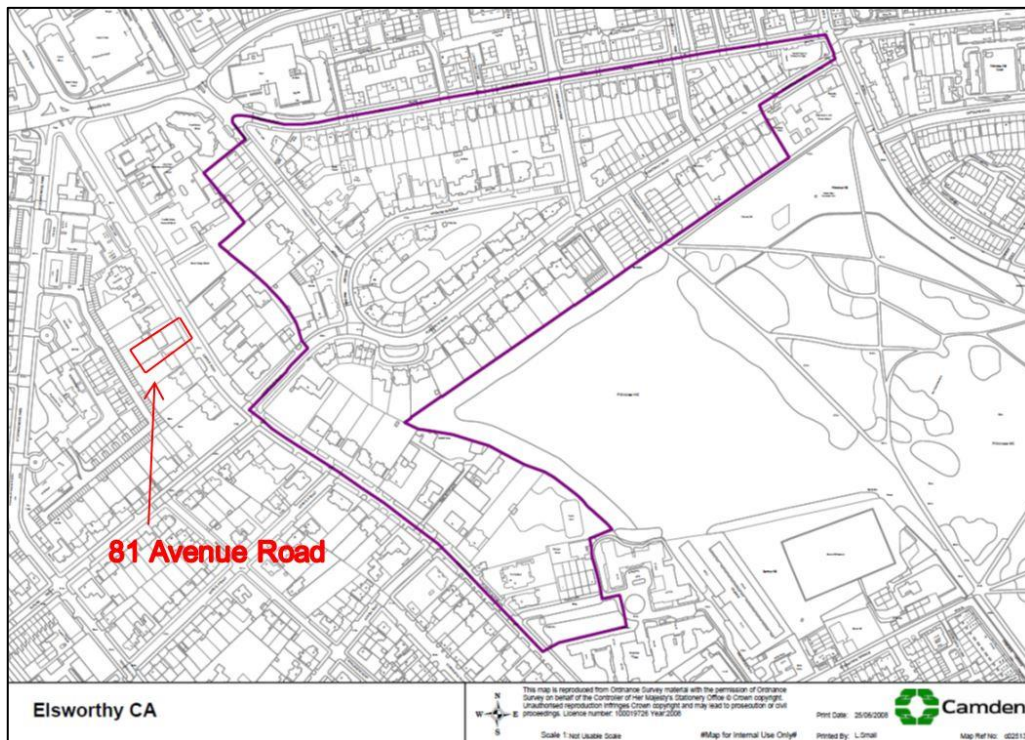
- 2.6 The site is located within a residential area. Avenue Road is a tree lined street characterised by substantial detached properties, set back from the road by front gardens. The front boundaries are defined by brick walls and gate piers, in particular with metal railings set above low lying brick boundary walls. The majority of buildings are two principal storeys with attic level accommodation (as noted in the Design and Access Statement Pre-planning Document). Some properties have basement levels with associated lightwells.
- 2.7 Although the architecture and design style of houses along Avenue Road is varied, there is a prevalence of symmetrical façades and the use of the neo-Classical style. The properties in the immediate vicinity of No. 81 Avenue Road generally date from the 20th Century.

Historic Context

- 2.8 The historic development of the area follows that of the Elsworth Conservation Area (see Map 2.2), which sits to the east. Avenue Road marks the boundary between the London Borough of Camden and the City of

Westminster and the land on which Avenue Road is built historically sat within the Eyre estate.

- 2.9 The Eyre Family, owners of the Hampstead portion of St John's Wood Estate had been keen for building to take place on their land since 1794, though this Bath inspired design was never executed. In 1802, architect John Shaw took over and designed a scheme inspired by late-18th Century planning ideals which was under construction by c.1807.
- 2.10 Colonel Eyre began his road building campaign in 1819 which achieved success in the form of the Finchley Road Act of 1826. Avenue Road was included in this and the southern portion existed by 1824 and the road had been completed by 1829. A building agreement was reached in 1838 and by 1842 there were houses in the Hampstead portion of Avenue Road. A second housing agreement in 1845 resulted in 16 houses being built on Avenue Road.



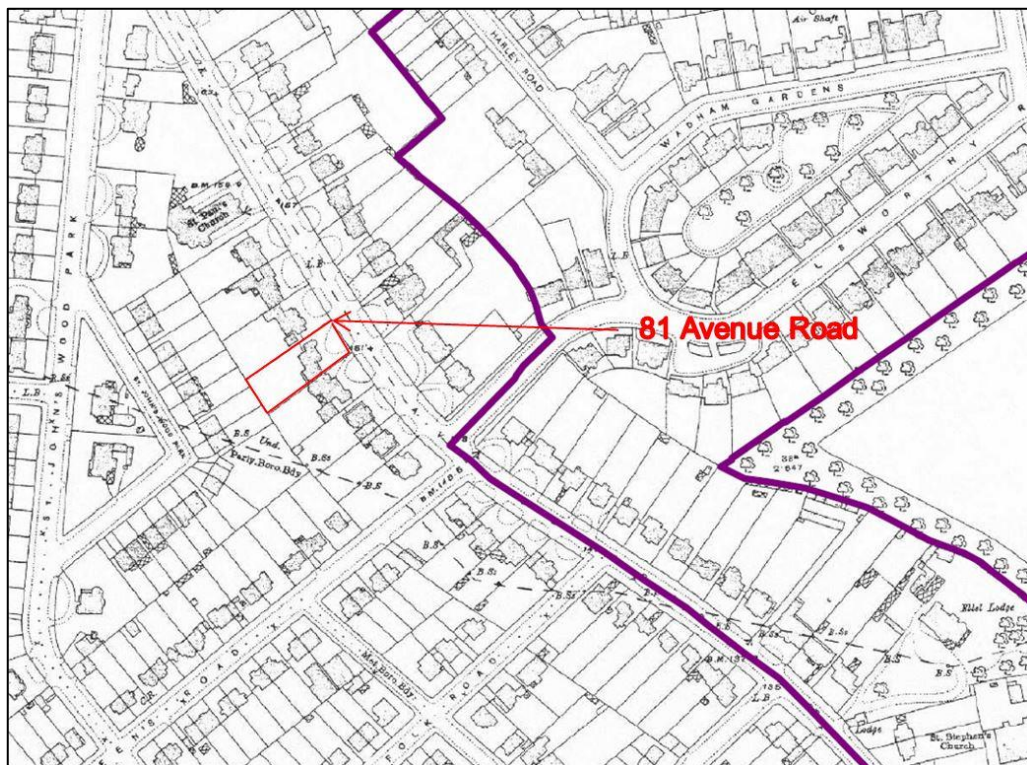
Map 2.2 Map of Elsworth Conservation Area (Camden Council, 2009).

- 2.11 Avenue Road continued to see development up until 1935 and properties along here have persistently been built, remodelled, demolished and rebuilt up to the present day. This was particularly true after the war when the area suffered extensive bomb damage and dilapidation through tenementation.
- 2.12 The road has seen a few famous residents including both William and Wilkie Collins, James Buckingham, Herbert Spencer and the previous house on the site of No. 81 Avenue Road (replaced in the 1950s) is understood to have been inhabited by Hungarian film-producer Sir Alexander Korda from 1933-1939.

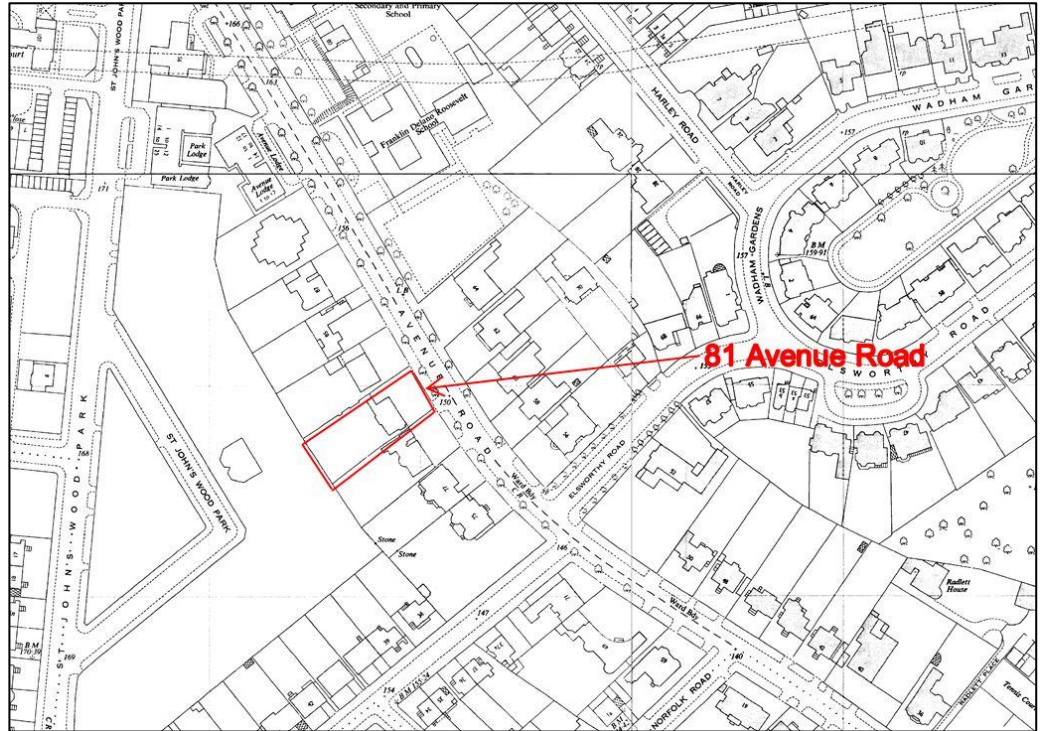
- 2.13 The historic maps (Maps 2.2-2.4) and the Elsworthy Conservation Area Appraisal indicate that the pattern of development of large detached houses along Avenue Road was established by the 1870s. Elsworthy Road and the development along it had been completed by 1914.
- 2.14 The Elsworthy Conservation Area Appraisal notes that:
“The years 1840 to 1914 saw a large amount of speculative residential development of an affluent nature. Terraced townhouses, large semi-detached villas, and latterly large detached houses following a ‘garden suburb’ pattern were built for well-to-do families wishing to live in spacious, pleasant, leafy surroundings within easy reach of central London”. (para. 3.4)
This character as a wealthy residential suburb has remained to the present day.” (para. 3.5)
- 2.15 In relation to the character of the Conservation Area along Avenue Road the appraisal confirms that
“Avenue Road is notable for the greater variety of building heights, styles and materials along its frontage. As it marks the boundary between Camden and Westminster, on its southern stretch the buildings on the western side fall within the City of Westminster portion of the St John’s Wood Conservation Area.” (para. 6.50)
“The prevailing height is two to three storeys (often with a mansard roof or dormer windows at third floor level). There is a general pattern of horizontally proportioned buildings on wide plots with well-defined boundaries to the street.” (para 6.51)
- 2.16 Paragraph 6.53 notes that the decorative façades of 42-48 Avenue Road, to the south of the site, “...form a pleasing group of Italianate style villas with white stucco frontages set back from the street with gardens containing mature trees that complement the already imposing lines of street trees.”
- 2.17 Many of the 19th century detached villas along Avenue Road and outside the conservation area were subsequently redeveloped in the twentieth century.



Map 2.2 (above): OS Map 1871 with Elsworth Conservation Area boundary in purple.



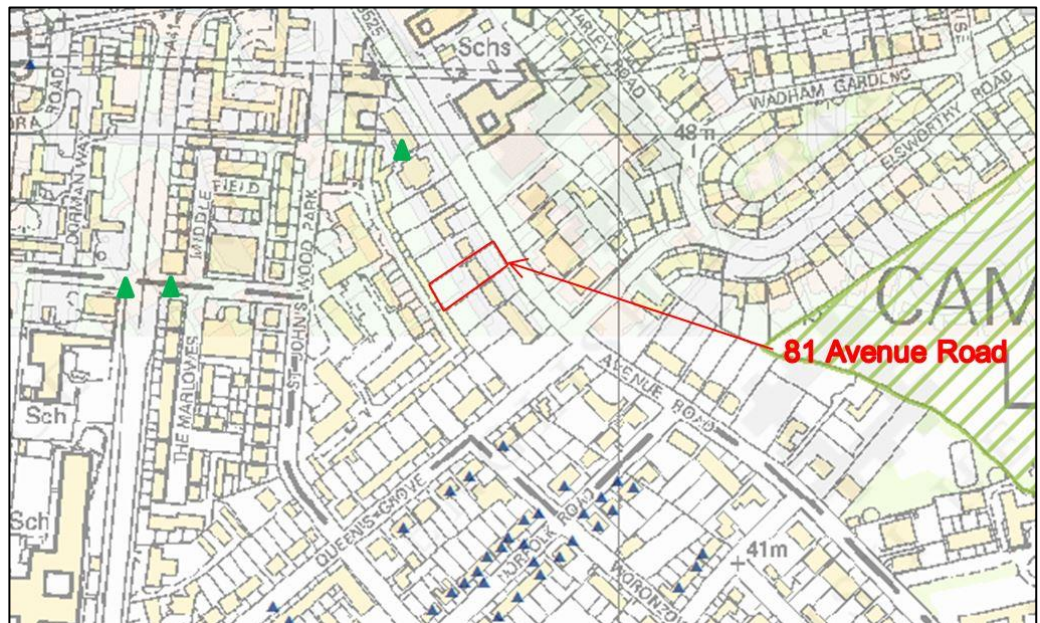
Map 2.3 (above): OS Map 1914 with Elsworth Conservation Area boundary in purple.



Map 2.4 (above): OS Map 1960-66 showing the new house at 81 Avenue Road, constructed in 1954.

2.18

The National Heritage List for England confirms that there are no listed buildings in the vicinity of the site. The proposed development will therefore not affect the setting of any listed properties or structures (see Map 2.5 below).



Map 2.5: Extract Map from National Heritage List for England with additions (statutory and locally listed buildings are indicated with blue and green triangles respectively, © Historic England).

2.19

The London Borough of Camden's local list identifies one building of local interest in proximity to No. 81 Avenue Road, as well as a locally listed boundary stone and a locally listed letter box further afield to the west (see Map 2.5 above).

2.20

The locally listed building close to No. 81 Avenue Road is Avenue Lodge, which is located further to the north-west on Avenue Road, and consists of two inter-war mansion blocks of four storeys with curved bay fronts. The mansion blocks are constructed in a symmetrical neo-classical style of brick with stone quoins and balustrade at parapet level, with central entrances.

3.0

Planning History

3.1

Camden Council's online planning register shows that there have been several applications for extensions to the house as well as some alterations to the house and its boundaries:

Application Number	Application Summary	Date	Decision
2008/1523/P	2 storey side extension	2008	Granted
PE9800247R2	New roof, conservatory to rear, single storey extension to the front, alterations of façade and fenestration, add metal fence to existing boundary wall	1999	Granted
PE9800247R1	Extension at the side and rear	1998	Withdrawn
PE9800247	Extension at the side and rear	1998	Withdrawn
9005259	Metal railings on top of front wall	1990	Granted
CTP/J7/3/B/36792	2 storey rear and side extension	1983	Conditional
CTP/J7/3/B/35489	2 storey rear extension	1982	Conditional
CTP/J7/3/B/35098	1 storey rear extension	1982	Conditional
TP/5972/C/22846	2 storey dwelling house with garage	1955	Conditional
TP/5972/C/1983	2 storey dwelling house with garage	1954	Conditional
TP/5972/128596/8866	Garden room extension	1935	None

3.2

It is understood from this planning history that the existing building at No. 81 Avenue Road was constructed in 1954, replacing an earlier building on the site, when permission was granted for the erection of a detached 2-storey dwelling house and garage, which has been subsequently altered and extended through various later permissions.

3.3

The available planning history for Nos. 79 and 83 Avenue Road (included at Appendix 4 of the application cover letter) indicates that applications were also submitted in the mid-1950s to redevelop those sites, in particular, the planning history for No. 83 indicates that the redevelopment was as a result of 'war damage' caused to the property.

3.4

A full review of relevant national and local planning policy and guidance has been undertaken, and is set out in at Appendix 2, where the key policies and guidance of note are summarised.

Proposed Development

4.0

4.1

The application proposes the demolition of the existing building and attached garage at No. 81 Avenue Road (total floorspace 511 sq.m GIA) and its replacement with a new single-family dwelling, comprising basement level beneath the house and part of the garden. The completed development would provide additional residential floorspace at the property, but the size of the proposed dwelling (1346 sq.m GIA) would be in keeping with the size and appearance of neighbouring properties.

4.2

The proposals are fully described and set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement Planning Document and application drawings. The following provides a summary of the key elements of the proposals:

- The proposed new dwelling and garage will be sited on the same general alignment and footprint as the existing dwelling and garage, with its frontage facing, but set back from Avenue Road.
- The elevational treatment to Avenue Road and to the rear garden is proposed to be symmetrical, in line with the as existing arrangement (to the front elevation) and that of neighbouring properties.
- The attic level accommodation is maintained, albeit now reads more as a traditional second floor level set back behind a parapet, with a central projecting bay and pediment set above.
- The design of the replacement dwelling will use traditional detailing and materials.

4.3

The key changes include:

- 1 The addition of a basement level under the replacement dwelling and part of the garden.
- 2 A decrease in the width of the dwelling, with the replacement dwelling set modestly further away from the boundaries with Nos. 79 and 83 on either side.
- 3 A modest increase in the height of the roof level to facilitate the proposed design, albeit in line with the height of neighbouring properties.
- 4 The use of a more Italianate/Classical style detailing and materials including a painted stucco/rendered façade.
- 5 The introduction of discrete and well-positioned lightwells serving the new basement level.

5.0

Assessment

Key Issues

5.1

The following key design and heritage policy assessment tests have been derived from a detailed review of the relevant planning policy and guidance (included at Appendix 2):

- 1 Is the proposed demolition and rebuilding of No. 81 Avenue Road acceptable in principle?
- 2 Is the design of the replacement dwelling of an appropriate high-quality and suitable for its context?
- 3 Will the proposed development maintain the setting of the adjacent Elsworthy Conservation Area?
- 4 Will the proposed subterranean development works safeguard neighbouring residential amenity, protect existing trees and maintain the viability of the property's garden?
- 5 Are the proposed lightwells acceptable?
- 6 Will the proposed works maintain acceptable levels of residential amenity?

Principle of Redevelopment

5.2

The site of No. 81 Avenue Road comprises a large single dwelling with an attached garage and a swimming pool to the rear garden. The available planning history for the site confirms that the existing house was constructed following the grant of planning permission in 1954, replacing an earlier, and likely war damaged building on the site. The available planning history also confirms that the 1954 house has been subject to substantial later alterations and extensions.

5.3

The proposed re-development of the site with a replacement dwelling will provide an enlarged single family dwelling with ancillary service and leisure facilities within the proposed basement level, and will be constructed in a design style that is entirely sympathetic to the surrounding buildings and setting of the Elsworthy Conservation Area.

5.4

The building that is proposed to be demolished is not statutorily or locally listed and is located outside the Elsworthy Conservation Area. It is not considered to be of sufficient architectural or historic interest to be considered a non-designated heritage asset.

5.5

Notwithstanding the above, the Council's pre-application advice (dated 10 November 2015, under ref. 2015/5916/PRE) confirmed that the existing 1950s dwelling is not considered to be of any architectural merit and that there is no 'in-principle' objection to its demolition.

- 5.6 Therefore, given that the existing building is much altered, is of no particular architectural or historic merit, has no known historic associations and does not form part of the Elsworthy Conservation Area, it is considered that the principle of demolition and redevelopment is acceptable, subject to a suitable high-quality replacement design at least preserving the setting of the Elsworthy Conservation Area (in line with adopted Policies CS14 and DP25 and draft policies D1 and D2).

Design and Suitability for Context

- 5.7 The proposed replacement dwelling at No. 81 Avenue Road has been designed to respond to the architectural design styles of neighbouring properties in the immediate and wider area.
- 5.8 The proposed replacement building follows a generally similar alignment, form and scale to the existing house, and although the proposed mass is greater, this is entirely consistent with neighbouring properties. The proposed replacement design will result in a building with slightly narrower front and rear elevations, modestly increasing the gaps between the boundaries of neighbouring properties. The slightly taller roof level is compatible within the streetscene where there is a clear pattern of large detached three storey buildings of varying heights. The slight increase in the height of the roof would not exceed that of the neighbouring property at No. 83. The proposed roof form, height and arrangement of roof level windows are considered appropriate for the site's context.
- 5.9 The alignment and proportion of the proposed elevations is similar to the existing situation. The small increase in the height of the roof would slightly increase the mass of the building but is appropriate given the pattern of larger scale houses and also mansion blocks on the Avenue Road frontage.
- 5.10 The symmetrical design of the front elevation seen from Avenue Road would be consistent with the existing situation and that of nearby properties. Whilst there are a variety of house types with different design treatments, materials and details along Avenue Road, the majority have symmetrical frontages, with entrance doors set in central bays with vertically proportioned windows and classically influenced styling. The proposed design of the house is therefore compatible with this context.
- 5.11 The pattern of fenestration remains similar to the present house with a central entrance door sheltered by a Classical portico, with a five bay arrangement of window openings to the first floor. The main changes compared to the current situation are in the use of materials, the architectural style and detailing and rationalisation of the attic level accommodation to read more as a traditional second floor level set back from the parapet. The proposed new house is to be faced in painted stucco/render (plain-banded to ground floor level), with Italianate/Classical style detailing.
- 5.12 The use of stucco/render with Italianate/Classical style detailing is seen in the remaining mid-19th Century villas to the south-east along Avenue Road and it

is likely that the previous villa development on this site was of a similar style and materials. The materials and architectural style are therefore considered to be appropriate for the context.

- 5.13 The design of the proposed replacement dwelling has taken its inspiration from the surrounding buildings and context, as set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement Planning Document. The design is similar to the existing house in many respects. The form, scale, alignment and mass are appropriate and consistent with the prevailing character of the immediate and wider area. The design of the proposed house reflects the materials and details evident within the local context and is therefore appropriate both in terms of the choice of design and detailing, which are to a high standard.
- 5.14 The proposed replacement building is of a suitable high-quality design that is entirely appropriate for and respects its immediate and wider context and character. The proposed design of replacement dwelling should therefore be considered acceptable as it is in line with the adopted policies CS14, DP22, DP24 and DP25 and draft policy D1.
- 5.15 Notwithstanding the above, the Council's pre-application advice (dated 10 November 2015, under ref. 2015/5916/PRE) confirmed that whilst proposed replacement dwelling would have a much grander outward appearance than the existing, that this would be in keeping with the surroundings. The Council's advice also confirmed that the siting, footprint, height and overall scale of the proposed replacement dwelling are considered acceptable.

Setting of the Conservation Area

- 5.16 Although No. 81 Avenue Road is not located within the Elsworthy Conservation Area, it falls within its general setting. The boundary for the Conservation Area sits to the end of the rear gardens of buildings on the opposite side of Avenue Road and further to the south-east along Avenue Road. It is therefore important to consider whether the proposed development will at least preserve the setting of the Conservation Area.
- 5.17 The existing building at No. 81 Avenue Road is not visible from views within the Elsworthy Conservation Area and is well screened by the existing buildings on the north-east side of Avenue Road and screening provided by existing trees and front boundary treatment. The proposed development will retain the existing screening foliage and treatment along its frontage and will therefore maintain a visual screen.
- 5.18 The proposed new front façade is considered to be an appropriate design style that is consistent with the character of the properties which exist in the immediate and wider surrounds along Avenue Road and within the Elsworthy Conservation Area. It is considered that the change in the building is compatible with the character of the area and would utilise materials and reflect an architectural style that is already evident in the context and setting of the Conservation Area.

- 5.19 It assessing the effect on the setting of a conservation area, it is useful to consider its significance. The significance of the Elsworth Conservation Area (see Appendix 1) derives from it being an example of a speculatively developed and affluent residential suburb built variously between 1840 and 1914 in which the role of trees and landscape is a significant characteristic. Large detached houses are a feature of the western part of the conservation area and it is noted that on Avenue Road “... *grand detached houses are prevalent in dark red or brown brick, or in painted stucco finishes echoing carved stone buildings.*”
- 5.20 In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed replacement dwelling, finished in an Italianate style painted stucco, would preserve the setting of and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in line with adopted policies CS14 and DP25 and draft policy D2. The Council's pre-application advice (under ref. 2015/5916/PRE) confirms this.

Implications of Subterranean Development

- 5.21 In accordance with adopted policy DP27 (and draft policy A5), the Council will require an assessment of the proposed development's impact on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability.
- 5.22 The proposed basement is set in from the boundaries of the site on all sides, which will minimise any impact on the neighbouring properties. It also means the proposed basement is set away from the mature trees at the boundaries of the site which will be preserved. Basement development is common in the area and has been considered an appropriate form of development for homes of this size.
- 5.23 A Basement Impact Assessment (BIA), prepared by an appropriately qualified consultant, accompanies this submission in order to fully assess the effects of the proposed basement level, which has had regard to Camden's policies and guidance on basement and lightwells.

Arboricultural Considerations

- 5.24 This application submission is also accompanied by a Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan Report. This confirms that seventeen trees were surveyed on site (not including six that were removed by the owner of the property following the survey), which include two Category A trees and seven Category B trees, with the remaining trees categorised as Category C.
- 5.25 The report concludes that the proposed development does not require the removal of any trees of the remaining seventeen trees, which will all be retained and protected as part of the proposed development. As such, there would be no loss of trees of amenity value.
- 5.26 The trees to be retained include the existing trees along the frontage which are proposed to be retained and therefore the character of the street scene in this

locality, which is of houses seen beyond frontage trees, will be maintained. Accordingly there will be no change to the visual amenity of the front or rear garden areas.

Viability of the Rear Garden

- 5.27 The proposal has been designed to ensure that there is adequate depth of soil (1500mm) to maintain the viability of the garden, in line with the aims of adopted Policy DP27 and Policy A5 of the emerging draft Local Plan.

Effect on Ground Water/Flood Risk

- 5.28 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and therefore is not in an area at risk of tidal or fluvial flooding. The Core Strategy, however, indicates that consideration should be given to the potential risks from surface water flooding in this general location. This information will be provided as part of the BIA, which will be based on detailed site investigations including borehole testing.

Lightwells

- 5.29 Two lightwells are proposed to the Avenue Road frontage, either side of the portico and one further lightwell to the rear of the property. A walk-on rooflight is also proposed to the rear of the new kitchen to the rear of the property.
- 5.30 The proposed lightwells are compatible with the design of the house being symmetrical placed either side of the portico. They are appropriately scaled in relation to the house and front garden area. They are some distance from the neighbouring property and set well back within the site.
- 5.31 The proposed lightwells comply with the guidance set out within CPG4, adopted policy DP27 and draft policy A5 and are therefore considered to be acceptable.

Residential Amenity

- 5.32 Whilst the proposed redevelopment of No. 81 Avenue Road occupies a similar above ground level footprint to the existing building and attached garage, the front façade would project slightly further forward, approximately 1000mm, with an extended single storey garage block to the right. The central rear projection would also extend beyond the line of the existing rear elevation by approximately 1990mm, albeit both side elevations would be set further away from the boundaries of adjacent properties; 1670mm on the south side and 1350mm on the northern. The roof of the proposed dwelling would also be approximately 1000mm higher.
- 5.33 Considering these changes in the context of the existing situation and the orientation of the building, it is considered that these changes would not result in any unacceptable changes to levels of daylight or sunlight or give rise to any materially different or unacceptable overshadowing effects.

- 5.34 The habitable room windows proposed at first floor level are generally in the locations that they currently exist. The majority of the proposed fenestration throughout the proposed dwelling has been orientated on an east-west axis as with the existing building, which limits any potential for increased overlooking of neighbouring properties. Only smaller windows will be located on the northern and southern elevations, within the stair core to the north side at first and second floor levels and to the south elevation at second floor level serving a bathroom and bedroom. All windows on the north and south elevations will feature obscure glazing to remove the potential for overlooking.
- 5.35 A central balcony accessed from the master suite dressing room is proposed above the central projection to the rear façade. Considering other similar arrangements at other properties along Avenue Road, there would not be any material loss of privacy as a result of the proposed redevelopment of No. 81 Avenue Road.
- 5.36 The Council's pre-application advice on the proposed replacement dwelling considered that there would be no harm to nearby and neighbouring residential properties in terms of visual privacy and overlooking; overshadowing and outlook; sunlight, daylight and artificial light. This is supported by the results of the submitted Daylight and Sunlight Assessment, which confirms that the proposed development will not give rise to any materially unacceptable daylight and sunlight effects in the context of the BRE guidelines and relevant planning policy.
- 5.37 A Noise Assessment has been undertaken to assess the existing noise conditions of the surrounding area and to establish plant noise emission criteria which the proposed plant will not exceed.

6.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 The existing building at No. 81 Avenue Road was constructed in 1954 and has been substantially much altered through various later planning permissions. It is not statutorily or locally listed, and is not located within any adopted conservation area boundary. Its demolition is acceptable, subject to a suitable replacement building.
- 6.2 The proposed development at No. 81 Avenue Road will deliver a well-designed and high-quality single family dwelling complementary to nearby properties along Avenue Road, and will preserve the setting of the Elsworthy Conservation Area.
- 6.3 The proposed development has been carefully designed and is consistent with the form, massing, scale, alignment and proportion of the existing building on the site, but also other nearby properties fronting Avenue Road. The proposed materials and the architectural style and detailing are evident in existing buildings located to the south-east along Avenue Road, from which the proposed design has taken its inspiration. The proposed design is therefore appropriate to the character and context of the area.
- 6.4 The proposed redevelopment would lead to a net increase in the amount of residential floorspace at the site but this size increase is in-keeping with the size of existing properties in the immediate and wider area surrounding the site.
- 6.5 The massing, scale, proportions, alignment and materials of the replacement dwelling are compatible with the character of the surrounding area. There would be no change to the significance, character or appearance of the Elsworthy Conservation Area, and there would be no impact on its setting given that the proposed development at No. 81 Avenue Road would not be visible from the Conservation Area.
- 6.6 The existing levels of residential amenity will be safeguarded, with new leisure facilities provided by the proposed basement level. All existing mature trees will be protected during the works and the viability of the garden will be maintained by providing adequate depth of soil cover above the proposed new basement level.
- 6.7 The proposed lightwells relate to a small proportion of the substantial front and rear gardens, have been designed to relate to the front elevation of the proposed building and are set in well screened locations so as not to be visually apparent in views from Avenue Road. The existing level of screening and front boundary treatment will be maintained by the proposed development.
- 6.8 The relationship of the proposed development to the neighbouring buildings is very similar to the existing situation. The existing levels of privacy, daylight and sunlight and extent of existing overshadowing will be maintained and there will

be no unacceptable increase in overlooking as a result of the proposed development.

- 6.9 It is therefore concluded that the proposed redevelopment of No. 81 Avenue Road complies with both national and local planning policy and has had regard to all relevant guidance. The proposed development is well-designed and is of a suitable high-quality that is appropriate to the character and context of the immediate area. It would not affect the significance of or the character and appearance of the Elsworthy Conservation Area and is an entirely appropriate form of development within its setting.
- 6.10 On this basis, we consider that planning permission for the demolition of the existing building and its replacement as proposed should be approved without delay as sustainable development that is compliant with the key aims of the NPPF and local planning policy.

Appendix 1 Elsworthy Road CAA Extract

3.0 SPECIAL INTEREST OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

Context and Evolution

3.1 The Elsworthy Conservation Area is situated in an area immediately to the north and west of Primrose Hill. Prior to the nineteenth century the land occupying the current Conservation Area was farmland owned by the Eton College Estate and the Eyre Estate. The Conservation Area designation covers entirely Eton College Estate dating back to the fifteenth century, with the exception of Avenue Road which was within the Eyre Estate.

3.2 The first nineteenth century development close to the present boundary of the Conservation Area and intrusion into the otherwise agricultural character of the Eton Estate was the construction of the London-Birmingham railway line in the 1830s. This through route for long distance travel provided London with its first long distance tunnel, running just south of the future course of Adelaide Road. The entrance to and course of the tunnel can be seen on the 1837 map to the north-east of Primrose Hill.

3.3 Urban development of the area occurred between 1840 and the early 1900s as major roads were built to provide links with central London. Finchley New Road and Avenue Road, running north-south, were laid out in the late 1820s with the construction of large detached upper middle class dwellings starting on Avenue Road in the 1840s. Adelaide Road running east-west was laid out in 1840, effectively dividing the Eton Estate in two, and by 1853 there was considerable development of houses along both sides of the street. By 1856 the first local public omnibus service ran along Adelaide Road. Shortly after the principal roads had been laid out, in 1842, Primrose Hill was acquired for public recreation as an addition to Regent's Park, increasing the attractiveness of the location for residential development.

3.4 The years 1840 to 1914 saw a large amount of speculative residential development of an affluent nature. Terraced townhouses, large semi-detached villas, and latterly large detached houses following a 'garden suburb' pattern were built for well-to-do families wishing to live in spacious, pleasant, leafy surroundings within easy reach of central London.

3.5 This character as a wealthy residential suburb has remained to the present day. There is no real ingress of other uses, with commercial activities being located to the north-east in Swiss Cottage.

3.6 There are no Archaeological Priority Areas within the Conservation Area.

Spatial Qualities

3.7 The area's spatial character derives from the spacious leafy streets and generously laid out plot sizes, complemented by areas of semi-private communal amenity space (see Appendix 3). Terraced development is

predominately of four storeys in the Conservation Area and two to three storeys where detached houses and semidetached villas predominate. Buildings are set back from the street and the original boundary treatments of small walls, privet hedging and wooden gates and gateposts were designed to increase the green, leafy environment of the quiet residential streets.

Views and Vistas

3.8 The most notable views are to and from local landmarks seen from moving around the Conservation Area. The highest point in the vicinity is the summit of Primrose Hill, one of London's royal parks, which has spectacular panoramic views of the capital over Regent's Park to the south-west, and over the Elsworthy Conservation Area to the north and north-west. In the foreground, there are views of the backs of properties along Elsworthy Road and Avenue Road. An important part of the character of the Conservation Area derives from its relationship with the higher ground of Primrose Hill, which is appreciated in views into and out of the area. Other notable views are of the residential tower blocks forming part of the Chalcots Estate north of Adelaide Road, and the of the Swiss Cottage development to the north-west.

3.9 Other notable views and landmarks within the Conservation Area include:

- i) The views of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin to the west and north-west along King Henry's Road and Primrose Hill Road respectively.*
- ii) The view west along Elsworthy Road.*
- iii) The view west along King Henry's Road.*
- iv) The view out of the Conservation Area towards the summit of Primrose Hill from the end of Elsworthy Terrace.*
- v) The view into the Conservation Area looking south-east along Harley Road.*
- vi) The view looking into the Conservation Area looking north-east along Elsworthy Road.*

Building Typology and Form

3.10 Although a range of building types is evident across the Conservation Area, the common building types are terraced townhouses, semi-detached villas and reestanding detached houses set back from the road. These are predominantly terraces and pairs of villas of three and two storeys in height respectively, the higher density terraces and pairs of villas being located in King Henry's Road along the northern boundary of the Conservation Area, and at the eastern end of Elsworthy Road close to the Church of St Mary the Virgin. The terraced and semi-detached properties tend to have basements, while the larger freestanding houses frequently do not. Purpose-built attic accommodation is widespread among all building types; dormer windows and fenestrated gables are abundant.

3.11 Despite the size of the larger houses they were not generally provided with mews and stabling accommodation for horses and carriages in the immediate vicinity, with the exception of No 19 Wadham Gardens (see paragraph 6.64 with regard to No 1 Lower Merton Rise which was built as a coach house and stables for this house). Instead the larger houses were provided with two sets of mews, which were located a short distance to the north, between Adelaide Road and King Henry's Road (outside the Conservation Area, and demolished to make way for the later 20th century Marriott Hotel and the Chalcots Estate).

3.12 More recent development shows less attention to elevational treatment, and the scale, bulk and massing of buildings does not always respect the traditional forms and rooflines of the Conservation Area.

Prevalent and Traditional Building Materials

3.13 Yellow London stock brick and red brick are the predominant materials used across the Conservation Area. Other materials are employed as contrasting features on the late Victorian and Edwardian buildings and different combinations of variously coloured brick, stone, tile, stucco and timber are used as contrasting detail in the treatment of facades across different parts of the Conservation Area.

3.14 In Avenue Road grand detached houses are prevalent in dark red or brown brick, or in painted stucco finishes echoing carved stone buildings.

3.15 King Henry's Road is mostly made up of large semi-detached villas built in yellow London stock brick, with contrasting colours of brick to create string courses and quoins. Additional detailing is created by using painted stucco and carved stone detailing on capitals, keystones, arches, lintels and boundary walls. The exception is No 91a which makes considerable use of decorative wood and tile to create a bespoke detached house.

3.16 The northern part of Harley Road employs a similar range of materials, although the brick employed is darker in colour. Stuccoed pediments, lintels and corbels are prevalent.

3.17 The eastern part of Elsworthy Road and Elsworthy Terrace continue the use of contrasting brick treatments forming decorative lintels and string courses, while stucco decoration takes on Greek and Islamic forms. The use of timber cladding on the northern side of Elsworthy Road is notable, and this is carried through to decorative gables and figurative decoration on window frames.

3.18 The rest of Elsworthy Road, together with Wadham Gardens, contains well-detailed buildings using a rich mix of materials. A combination of brick and decorative tiling creates a strong architectural vocabulary on many properties, while others with large expanses of stucco add contrast to the streetscape. The quality and level of detailing in wood, stucco and stone is high. Each building has unique features, but shares a common form and style with its neighbours to produce strong group value influenced by the Free Style of the 1890s

(whereby architects could pick and mix features from classical, Gothic, English and Scottish 16th century, or Italian and French Renaissance in any combination of building materials they chose).

Characteristic Details

3.19 Although the area was developed in stages over a relatively extended period of seventy years, there has been little subsequent alteration of building frontages. Furthermore, new development during the twentieth century was limited to instances where plots unusually came up for development. The area has also retained its residential character, and as a result much of its architectural detail and character.

3.20 While the terraced houses and semi-detached villas draw their significant character from the proportions of facades, fenestration pattern, spacing and style of entrances, and other architectural detailing, it is the wide palate of complementary traditional materials and details employed by houses in Wadham Gardens and the western stretch of Elsworthy Road which adds to their special character. The buildings share common architectural language, but are each uniquely designed which adds to the group value.

3.21 The majority of original timber sash and casement windows, in a variety of styles, have been preserved. In general, replacement windows have been of a scholarly design finished to a high standard. There is a variety of entrance door designs, ranging from arched openings in stone, to porches and porticoes comprising flat roofs with brackets or columns, sometimes pedimented. Other elevation details include high quality tile cladding, stucco detailing, the use of stone banding and decorative masonry, and intricate timber gable and window decoration. At roof level, the detached houses are terminated by impressive chimney stacks and pots, fine clay tiles and gables in Dutch or Queen Anne Revival styles.

3.22 A notable characteristic of the area are the clear differences in the building styles and materials of each sub-area of the Conservation Area. This includes the styles and materials of the individual boundary treatments of properties in each sub-area, which are especially important as they create uniform and defining frontages that separate the pavement from front gardens, and act as a setting for the built form behind.

3.23 The predominance of low walling combined with hedges, usually in privet, creates a strong landscaped theme in front gardens which is complementary to the tree-lined streets. This characteristic is particularly evident in the western section of the Conservation Area which is home to an estate of houses built by William Willett, and designed as a garden suburb strongly influenced by the Bedford Park development of the architect Richard Norman Shaw and his pupil Sir Ernest Newton, built in Chiswick (see also paragraph 6.13). Here the boundaries were originally planted with privet hedges interrupted by wooden gates and posts.

3.24 Traditional nineteenth-century boundary treatments, including railings and walls, show considerable detail. Gateposts in wood, brick, decorative tile, stucco and stone are banded and textured, contributing to the streetscape. The accompanying low walls, topped by railings or hedges, retain an important linearity at street level, the loss of which would damage the character of the Conservation Area.

3.25 While few railings are original, due to the removal of metalwork as part of the World War II effort, replacements are largely sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Details include foliage and classical motifs. Nos 9, 11 and 11a Elsworthy Road have impressive canopied porches crafted in wrought iron with twists and spirals, and containing stained glass with delicate painted foliage.

3.26 Generally, later developments adhere to plainer architectural styles than older properties. Their greater bulk and density tend to be less subtle than the more ornate style of their nineteenth-century neighbours. Some newer buildings break the established rhythm of development, detracting from the quality of the streetscape and the Conservation Area generally.

Landscape and Public Realm

3.27 The Conservation Area has a spacious layout of residential character, with many street trees, and planting in public and private open space, reinforced by the proximity to the green of the Royal Park at Primrose Hill, which is defined in the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan June 2006 as Metropolitan Open Land and a Site of Nature Conservation Importance.

3.28 What survives of historic interest in terms of the surfacing and character of the public realm is limited to certain areas. More interesting features include the low walls and privet hedges in the western end of Elsworthy Road and Wadham Gardens, together with the rarer survivals of original wooden gates and gateposts that once characterised the boundaries of the Willett development of the 1890s and early 1900s, some of which have been replaced with scholarly replicas. The original late nineteenth and early twentieth century electric street lighting has been lost. Retained features of the historic public realm include York stone paving, granite kerbs, cobbles, historic bollards and post boxes.

Appendix 2 Planning Policy and Guidance

This section provides a summary of the planning policies and guidance of relevance to the site. The statutory development plan comprises the London Plan (2015), the London Borough of Camden Core Strategy (2010) and the LB Camden Development Policies 2010-2025 (2010).

In addition, Camden Council has prepared a Draft Camden Local Plan, which will replace the Council's current Core Strategy and Development Policies planning documents (adopted in 2010).

London Plan

The London Plan (as amended, 2015) provides strategic planning guidance of relevance to London. The proposed development does not however give rise to any strategic planning issues.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012)

Paragraph 14 OF the NPPF sets out that at its heart there *"...is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking"*. The onus is on decision makers to support sustainable development wherever possible and without delay.

The following NPPF Chapters are of particular relevance to the proposed development:

- Chapter 7: Requiring Good Design
- Chapter 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

The NPPF sets out that a core principle is to *"...always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity"*

"Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning..." (para. 56)

Development should *"...respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials..."* (para. 58)

"Planning policies and 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. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness." (para. 60)

Applicants should *"...describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting."* This should be proportionate to the assets significance (para. 128)

Camden Core Strategy (2010)

The following policies of the Camden Core Strategy are of particular relevance to the proposed development:

- a CS13 Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards
- b The Council will require all development to take measures to minimise the effects of, and adapt to, climate change and encourage all development to meet the highest feasible environmental standards that are financially viable during construction and occupation.
- c 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, in particular by requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character, and 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.

Camden Development Policies (2010)

The following Development Policies are of particular relevance to the proposed development:

- d DP22 Promoting sustainable design and construction
The Council will require development to incorporate sustainable design and construction measures.
- e DP24 Securing high quality design
The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and in particular, will expect developments to consider the character, setting, context, form and scale of neighbouring buildings, and the quality of materials to be used.
- f DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage
This policy deals with all heritage assets, but in particular sets out that in order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area.
- g 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.
- h DP27 Basements and lightwells

In determining proposals for basement and other underground development, the Council will require an assessment of the scheme's impact on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability, where appropriate. The Council will only permit basement and other underground development that does not cause harm to the built and natural environment and local amenity and does not result in flooding or ground instability.

Draft Camden Local Plan (2015)

The following policies of the Draft Camden Local Plan are of particular relevance to the proposed development:

i **A1 Managing the Impact of Development**

The Council will only grant permission for developments which do not cause harm to amenity and that they will work to protect Camden residents' quality of life, in particular by making sure that the impact of developments on their occupiers and neighbours is fully considered, and seeking to ensure development contributes towards strong and successful communities by balancing the needs of development with the needs and characteristics of local areas and communities.

j **Policy A5 – Basements and Lightwells**

The Council will only permit basement or other underground development where it is demonstrated to its satisfaction that the proposal would not cause harm to neighbouring properties; the structural, ground, or water conditions of the area; and the character and amenity of the area.

In determining proposals for basement and other underground development, the Council will require an assessment of the scheme's impact on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability in the form of a Basement Impact Assessment and where appropriate, a Basement Construction Plan.

Basement development should not exceed a maximum of 50% of each garden; comprise more than one storey; f. be built under an existing basement, or involve excavation underneath a listed building (including pavement vaults) or any garden of a listed building.

k **Policy D1 – Design**

The Council will expect that any new development is attractive and of the highest standard; respects local context and character and conserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets; is sustainable in design and construction; is carefully designed with regard to architectural detailing; uses attractive and high quality materials, and contributes positively to the street frontage (amongst others).

l **Policy D2 – Heritage**

The Council will 'resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area.'

m Policy CC1 – Climate Change Mitigation

The Council will 'ensure that developments maximise resource efficiency.'

Camden Planning Guidance: Basements and Lightwells CPG4

The document requires the submission of a Basement Impact Assessment of suitable scope to consider issues raised by the site and to be prepared by an appropriately qualified engineer and/or geologist. Consistent with policy DP27 it confirms that a basement development will be acceptable providing it:

- Does not harm the natural and built environment or local amenity
- Result in flooding, or
- Lead to ground instability

In particular consideration should be given to the effect on trees within or adjoining the site, the extent of the basement and the depth of soil cover

Lightwells should either be compatible with the character or the surrounding area or discreet. It is noted that the incorporation of lightwells within plots with long front gardens may be acceptable. Lightwells in rear gardens are more likely to be appropriate providing they are set away from the boundary with neighbouring properties. Railings should not contribute to visual clutter.

Elsworthy Conservation Area Appraisal SPD (July 2009)

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted in July 2009 and is a material consideration in the determination of applications within the Conservation Area or its setting.

The Appraisal notes that:

"Development proposals must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Elsworthy Conservation Area. This requirement applies equally to developments which are outside the Conservation Area but would affect its setting or views into or out of the area." (para. 13.14)

"High quality design and high quality execution will be required of all new development at all scales. It will be important that applications contain sufficient information to enable the Council assess the proposals." (para. 13.15)

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets















This assessment has had regard to Historic England's guidance within 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (March 2015).



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