



Planning Statement

12 Platt's Lane



Boyer

Prepared on behalf of Mrs Orly Weinberger | September 2016

Report Control

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1. Introduction and Proposal

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of Mrs Orly Weinberger, for subterranean excavation to create a full basement level with rear sunken patio accessed via a new stairway, and new lightwells to the front and side of the building. Also proposed is the replacement of windows and front door at ground floor level on the front and side elevations and the replacement of an existing front boundary fence with a brick pier and metal railing fence.
- 1.2 Planning permission (ref: 2016/0739/P) was granted in May 2016 for the demolition of an existing conservatory and part of the rear wing and the erection of a full width rear/infill extension with 3 rooflights to provide ancillary residential floorspace. This extension was completed in summer 2016.
- 1.3 Permission is now sought for the creation of basement level accommodation to complement the ongoing improvements to the dwelling. The basement will be located almost entirely under the dwelling's footprint, with small lightwell areas outside the footprint. The additional floorspace will provide a living room and dining room, play room, utility space and a gym/yoga room and shower. A room is also identified for any necessary plant.
- 1.4 The basement works would provide 168 sq m of additional floorspace (GIA). This, combined with the previously permitted rear extension, would enable the reconfiguration of the dwelling to provide a high quality five bedroom, family sized dwelling.
- 1.5 In addition to the creation of the basement and associated patio, the following minor works are also proposed:
- Erection of a glazed balustrade surrounding the rear patio
 - Replacement of all ground floor windows on the front and side elevations with timber sash windows to the same dimensions as existing.
 - Alteration to the existing ground floor window to create a new timber door with fanlight above.
 - Replacement of the ground floor front door with a new timber front door.
 - Removal of the existing brick wall on the front boundary and replacement with a brick pier and black metal railing boundary treatment.

1.6 A detailed account of the proposals is set out within the accompanying drawings and Design and Access Statement prepared by XUL Architecture. In addition the application is supported by a Basement Impact Assessment by Soils Limited and a Construction Management Plan by Aleck Associates.

1.7 This Planning Statement assesses the proposals against the policies in the Development Plan and other material considerations which are relevant to the determination of the application. The Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2 – describes the site and surrounding area;
- Section 3 – details recent planning history;
- Section 4 – provides an overview of the principle national, regional and local planning policy and guidance relevant to the assessment of the proposed development;
- Section 5 – provides an assessment of the proposal against the provisions of the Development and other material considerations;
- Section 6 – concludes the findings of the assessment of the proposed development.

2. The Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The site is located on the eastern side of Platt's Lane. The property is not statutorily listed but is located within the Redington and Frogna Conservation Area. The site is not within any Flood Zone or Archeological Priority Area.
- 2.2 The site is located within a predominantly residential area characterised by a mix of large semi-detached and terraced dwellings as well as properties which have been converted into flats.
- 2.3 The application property is one half of a pair of three storey, red brick semi-detached properties which have both been subdivided into flats. No. 12 has been sub-divided into three flats and this application relates to Flat 1, which is located at ground floor level.
- 2.4 The area is characterised by semi-detached and terraced Victorian and Edwardian properties. The built form and pattern of these properties is relatively uniform, with the majority of properties being primarily red brick, two or three storeys in height and having distinctive gables and projecting bay elements on the front elevations. On the opposite side of Platt's Lane some of the properties have been rendered in white painted pebble dash. Generally, each property is built upto or very close to the shared boundary.
- 2.5 The front of the property has a hardstanding area to provide off-street car parking for two vehicles. The front area also benefits from several shrubs and two mature trees. To the rear of the property, there are a number of mature trees along the garden's rear boundary.
- 2.6 The site is within proximity to Hampstead and Finchley Road underground stations and also number of bus routes along Finchley Road. The site is identified as having a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating of 3.

3. Planning History

History of the Site

3.1 Further to the recent planning permission to the rear extension, there is a limited planning history for the site listed on the Council website. For completeness, all the records are listed below:

Address	Description of development/Reference	Decision/Date
12 Platt's Lane, London NW3 7NR	REAR GARDEN: 1 x Sorbus - Fell to ground level. Ref: 2016/1851/T	No objection to works: 08 June 2016
12 Platt's Lane, London NW3 7NR	Demolition of the conservatory and part of the rear wing and erection of a full width rear/infill extension with 3 x rooflight for ancillary residential floorspace Ref: 2016/0739/P	Approved: 12 May 2016
12 Platt's Lane, London NW3 7NR	FRONT GARDEN 1 x False Acacia - reduce height. Ref: 2004/0532/T	No objection to works: 09 February 2004
12 Platt's Lane, London NW3 7NR	REAR GARDEN 1 x Ash - crown thin 25%, crown reduction 25%, crown lift to 8m, remove north vertical main stem. Ref: 2003/2360/T	No objection to works: 30 September 2003
12 Platt's Lane, London NW3 7NR	Change of use of the existing garage to an additional habitable room for the ground floor flat, reinstatement of the original front bay and entrance and the provision of a hardstanding in the front garden. Ref: CTP/E4/4/18/24019/R	Approved: 17 March 1977

Neighbouring properties

3.2 The following applications are also deemed relevant to the current application as they are all examples of recent decisions for applications for the creation of basements at nearby properties along Platt's Lane within the vicinity of the application site:

Property	Application Number	Description of Development	Decision and Date
20 Platt's Lane London NW3 7NS	2014/6825/P	Excavation of single storey basement extension including side and rear lightwells.	Approved: 15 February 2016
45 Platt's Lane, London, NW3 7NL	2012/2728/P	Excavation of existing basement, new windows to rear of house following removal of a brick lean to structure at the rear of the house to form new rear patio area and replacement of door with new window on side elevation all in connection with existing residential dwelling (Class C3).	Approved: 11 July 2012
Flat A 5 Platt's Lane London NW3 7NP	2008/1066/P	Extension at basement level to provide additional accommodation, including the creation of a lightwell to the front of the property (C3).	Approved: 12 May 2008

3.3 This table highlights several comparable permissions on Platt's Lane for the creation of additional basement levels to both single family dwellings and to properties which have already been sub-divided into flats. As such, the principle of this type of development has been established within the immediate locality.

3.4 The recently approved permission at 20 Platt's Lane (ref: 2014/6825/P); is considered to be particularly relevant due to its close proximity to the application site, and because the basement works are of a similar size to the current proposal.

3.5 During the consideration of application ref: 2014/6825/P the officer's delegated report noted "The construction works are of a temporary nature and it is acknowledged will create some noise however should this cause harm to residents amenity it can be dealt with under Environmental Health legislation, the proposed basement use is not considered to cause harm to residents amenity". No objection was raised to the design of the basement which, like this application, involved the creation of discreet lightwells.

3.6 These recently approved developments within the vicinity of the application site occurred under the current Development Plan and so are considered to act as a material consideration in the determination of this planning application. This matter is discussed in more detail within section 5 of this Statement.

4. Planning Policy Context

The Development Plan

4.1 This Section outlines the relevant planning policy context which will be considered in the determination of the application proposals. Section 5 assesses the application proposal against the Development Plan documents which currently comprises the London Plan (as amended 2015) and the Camden Local Plan, which includes:

- Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 (November 2010).
- Camden Development Policies (November 2010).
- The Council's relevant Supplementary Planning Documents have also been considered, in particular Camden Planning Guidance 4: Basement and lightwells (2015) and the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area Statement .
- Although not yet adopted, the Council's Local Plan has reached the submission stage and therefore its policies can be given limited weight.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

4.2 In March 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Department of Communities and Local Government. The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental, and social planning policies for England; it states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of development management, the NPPF advises that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development, not to hinder or prevent development.

4.3 The overarching national planning policy theme evident from the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which the Government have advised should be at the heart of the planning system and, which should be seen as a "golden thread" running through both plan making and decision taking.

4.4 Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

4.5 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF identifies the core planning principles which should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking; these include: Finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives; Seeking to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Regional Planning Policy

London Plan 2015

4.6 The London Plan (as amended March 2015) provides the strategic policy context for all of London and seeks to provide an integrated framework for its development to 2031.

4.7 The Mayor's strategic policies aim to provide more homes, promote opportunity and provide a choice of homes for all Londoners that meet their needs at a price they can afford.

4.8 Policy 3.1 seeks to ensure equal life chances for all. The Mayor is committed to ensuring equal life chances for all Londoners. Meeting the needs and expanding opportunities for all Londoners – and where appropriate, addressing the barriers to meeting the needs of particular groups and communities – is key to tackling the huge issue of inequality across London.

4.9 Policy 3.5 Quality and Design of Housing Developments states that housing developments should be of the highest quality internally, externally and in relation to their context and to the wider environment, taking account of strategic policies in the Plan to protect and enhance London's residential environment and attractiveness as a place to live. Policy 3.5 also refers to the minimum space standards for residential units.

Local Planning Policy

Camden Core Strategy (2010)

4.10 The London Borough of Camden's Local Plan is comprised of the Camden Core Strategy and the Camden Development Policies.

4.11 Both documents were the subject of a joint Examination in Public in May and June 2010. The documents were subsequently adopted in November 2010, and have replaced the previous UDP policies.

4.12 The Core Strategy sets out the key elements of the Council's planning vision and strategy for the Borough up until 2025. The overall vision of Camden's Core Strategy is to create a borough of opportunity.

4.13 The vision includes four themes which aim to make sure that Camden adapts to a growing population; has an economy that includes everyone, is connected where people can live active, healthy lives; and to create a safe Camden that is a vibrant part of our world city.

4.14 The relevant policies contained within the Core Strategy are considered to be:

- Policy CS5 Managing the impact of growth and development
- Policy CS6 - Providing quality homes
- Policy CS13 - Tackling climate change through promoting higher environmental standards
- Policy CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

Camden Development Policies (2010)

4.15 Camden's Development Policies Document sets out the detailed guidance and policies to enable the Borough to achieve the broader objectives as set out within the Core Strategy.

4.16 Policy DP24 requires all developments to be of the highest quality design and to consider amongst others, the character, context and setting of the site and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings, the quality of materials to be used, the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level, the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments and the provision of appropriate amenity space.

4.17 Policy DP25 aims to conserve Camden's conservation areas. The Council will only permit development within a conservation area that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of it.

4.18 Policy DP26 aims to manage the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours. The Council will aim to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by controlling the impact of matters such as visual privacy and overlooking, overshadowing and outlook, sunlight and daylight levels, dwelling and room sizes.

4.19 Policy DP27 requires that application for basements and lightwells demonstrate that a number of criteria are met whilst the Council consider the potential wider impacts of developments.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

4.20 Camden has adopted eight Planning Guidance documents which cover a variety of topics such as design, housing, amenity and transport. Of particular relevance to this application is Camden Planning Guidance 4 (CPG4). The document provides guidance which applies to all developments in Camden which propose new basements.

4.21 The documents sets out the key message that the Council will not permit basement developments which: will cause harm to the local environment and amenity, or will cause instability or result in flooding. The document also sets out how the Council will require applicants to demonstrate, using appropriate methodologies, that schemes will: maintain the structural stability of the application building and neighbouring buildings, will avoid adversely affecting drainage and run-off, and avoid cumulative impacts upon structural stability or the water environment in the local area.

Emerging Policy

4.22 Although not yet adopted, the Council's Local Plan has reached the submission stage and therefore its policies can be given limited weight. Consultation on the Local Plan submission draft took place from February to early April 2016. The submission and examination in public is expected to take place throughout later this year.

4.23 The Local Plan Submission Draft contains Policy A5 - Basements. This specific basement policy sets out that basement developments must not cause harm to the local environment and amenity, or will cause instability or result in flooding. The policy also contains more prescriptive requirements which seek to control the particular siting, layout, scale and design of basement developments.

5. Assessment of the Proposals

5.1 This section assesses the principle of the development and its potential impacts against the aims and objectives of the Development Plan. The section also demonstrates that the proposed development complies with the Development Plan and national planning policy.

Principle of development

5.2 Core Strategy Policy CS6 aims to make full use of Camden's capacity for housing and also seeks to provide homes of the highest quality. Development Policy DP24 requires extensions to be of the highest standard of design and expects developments to consider character, setting and context and form of proposals.

5.3 It is recognised that within the NPPF, paragraphs 131-134, emphasise that account should be taken of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of conservation areas.

5.4 The proposed basement development would provide an improved standard of living accommodation for the existing dwelling and will be created using high quality design which adheres to the Development Plan. The principle of extending a dwelling using high quality design is acceptable in accordance with Camden policies CS 6 and DP24.

5.5 CPG 4 'Basements and Lightwells' contains additional and specific advice relating to basement extensions and associated lightwells to ensure that proposed developments are designed in accordance with policy DP27. The document sets out the key principles for this type of development. These principles relate to the importance of scale, location and overall design of basement developments, and provides additional guidance for developments within conservation areas. The proposal adheres to these principles, as discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Basement Development

5.6 Basement developments introduce a range of very particular issues including impacts on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability. Policy DP27 (Basement and Lightwells) deals specifically with these matters.

5.7 DP27 states that permission will only be granted where a scheme will not cause adverse impacts on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural

stability. The policy requires developers to demonstrate via appropriate methodologies that schemes:

- a) maintain the structural stability of the building and neighbouring properties;
- b) avoid adversely affecting drainage and run-off or causing other damage to the water environment;
- c) avoid cumulative impacts upon structural stability or the water environment in the local area;

5.8 CPG4 outlines that all proposals for basement extensions must be supported by a Basement Impact Assessment produced by a chartered engineer who is a member of their relevant professional body.

5.9 The applicants have commissioned a Basement Impact Assessment by Soils Limited consultants which examines each of the matters set out within policy DP27 and CPG4. The Basement Impact Assessment is included as part of this planning submission.

Basement Impact Assessment

5.10 The BIA provides a detailed assessment of the soil type, flood risk, having been informed by site investigation data and information regarding the construction methods, sequence, loading and allowable bearing capacity. The assessment minimises any potential risk to the structure and foundations of the property and neighbouring properties during the course of construction.

5.11 The Assessment identifies that the proposed basement will not have any impact upon the surface water being received within the site or on neighbouring sites. Furthermore, the site is not located close to an existing water course or a flood risk area.

5.12 Overall the BIA concludes that, subject to an appropriate monitoring regime being established during construction, there are no outstanding issues of concern (singularly or cumulatively) from a stability, groundwater or surface water perspective. Therefore the proposals are in line with Camden's planning policy DP27 and Planning Guidance CPG4.

Design and Impact on Conservation Area

5.13 The application property is located within the Redington and Frognal Conservation Area but is not identified as a building that makes a positive contribution to the conservation area.

5.14 The Development Plan requires development of the highest standard of design that respects the local context and character and preserves and enhances heritage assets, including conservation areas (CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage). All development should consider character and setting, the quality of materials, the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level and the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping, including boundary treatments (DP24 - Securing high quality design). Development Plan Policy DP25 - Conserving Camden's Heritage specifically states that the Council will take account of conservation area statements when assessing applications within conservation areas and only permit developments within conservation areas that preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area.

5.15 Policy DP27 states that 'in determining applications for lightwells, the Council will consider whether:

- i) The architectural character of the building is protected;
- ii) The character and appearance of the surrounding area is harmed.
- iii) The development results in the loss of 50% or more of the front garden or amenity area.

5.16 CPG4 acknowledges that the bulk of basement developments tend to be concealed wholly underground, away from public views. Often skylights and lightwells are the only visible external manifestations associated with basement developments. However, just as overly large extensions above the ground level can dominate a building, contributing to the over-development of a site, an extension below ground can be of an inappropriate scale

5.17 In this case very limited external manifestations are incorporated into the design, the scheme will have no demonstrable impact on the Conservation Area or the character of the property. CPG4 sets out that where basements and visible lightwells are not part of the prevailing character of a street, new lightwells should be discreet and not harm the architectural character of the building, or the character and appearance of the surrounding area, or the relationship between the

building and the street. The guidance also adds that where front gardens are quite long, lightwells can be more easily concealed.

5.18 No. 12 benefits from a set back hard surfaced front area which is used for car parking. A small lightwell is proposed to the front and would be covered by two small areas of louvered walk-on glazing. Given, No. 12's generous setback from the public highway, these small areas of glazing would be barely perceptible from public viewpoints. A similar, small area of walk on glazing will supply a side lightwell. This is located beyond a timber gate which provides access to the rear garden, and will be wholly screened from public views. Other than the inconspicuous front lightwell there will be no external manifestations to basement extension visible from the public domain.

5.19 The Basements and Lightwells CPG4 states that 'any exposed area of basement development to the side or rear of a building will be assessed against CPG1, section 4 'Extensions, alterations and conservatories.' According to this guidance, exposed areas of basements should be:

- Subordinate to the building being extended;
- Respect the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style;
- And retain a reasonable sized garden.

5.20 To the rear of the property a sunken patio, accessed via external steps from the garden, will create an exposed area of basement development. The submitted drawings show that the proposed basement is clearly subordinate to the main dwelling because it is single storey, only involves excavation under the footprint of the host property and permitted rear extension, and has floor to ceiling heights which are not greater than that of the upper floor levels of the house. The basement windows align with the windows on the permitted rear ground floor extension and are of the same form and scale, in order to relate to the façade above.

5.21 The basement extension would involve the creation of a sunken patio, but would still retain the vast majority of the rear garden which will remain very generously sized.

5.22 The proposed subterranean development will therefore allow an increase in floorspace to create a high quality family sized dwelling without having any demonstrable impact on the appearance or massing of the existing building.

5.23 The Redington and Frogna Conservation Area Appraisal has informed the design of the basement proposals. Within the Appraisal, Conservation Area Guideline R/F2 states that extending into basements will only be acceptable where it would not involve harm to the character of the building or its setting. From public views within the conservation area, the external expression of the proposed basement extension will be limited to the small areas of walk-on glazing above the lightwell to the front elevation. As a result the basement will be barely perceptible from public views and will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.24 To the rear, the new glazed doors and sunken patio will only be visible from private views within the application property grounds. The width of the windows would be in line with those permitted within the rear extensions (under application 2016/0739/P) and it is not considered that these features will cause any demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.25 Although not yet adopted, the Council's Local Plan has reached the submission stage and therefore its policies can be given limited weight. Policy A5 (Basements) – relates solely to basements developments and is more prescriptive than the current adopted policies, and sets out that basements proposals should:

- f. not comprise of more than one storey;
- g. not be built under an existing basement;
- h. not exceed 50% of each garden within the property;
- i. be less than 1.5 times the footprint of the host building in area;
- j. extend into the garden no further than 50% of the depth of the host building measured from the principal rear elevation;
- k. not extend into or underneath the garden further than 50% of the depth of the garden;
- l. be set back from neighbouring property boundaries where it extends beyond the footprint of the host building;
- m. avoid the loss of garden space or trees of townscape or amenity value

5.26 The proposed basement adheres to each of these requirements within the emerging policy.

5.27 In addition to the basement works, a number of smaller alterations are proposed to complement the general refurbishments to the dwelling. The existing brick wall

on the front site boundary is structurally compromised. It is proposed to replace the wall with a brick piers and black painted metal railings. These match with the boundary treatment at the neighbouring Windsor Court site, and is considered to enhance the appearance of the conservation area.

5.28 The additional minor alterations involving the replacement timber door and replacement timber sash windows are all considered to be in keeping with the design of the application property and wider conservation area.

Residential amenity

5.29 Development Policy DP27 acknowledges that many of the potential impacts to the amenity of adjoining neighbours are limited by underground development. However, the demolition and construction phases of a development can have an impact on amenity and this is a particular issue for basements.

5.30 In order to ensure that any disruption associated by construction is minimised, a Construction Management Plan (CMP) has been prepared by Aleck Associates Ltd in advance and is included within the application submission. The mitigation measures set out within the CMP can be secured by a planning condition. The CMP carefully considers the key construction matters such as hours of work, construction-related deliveries and waste removal, and method of construction, in order to mitigate the impact of the construction phases on neighbouring occupiers.

5.31 The introduction of front and side lightwells and a rear sunken patio will not allow any overlooking to adjoining properties and will not have any demonstrable impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.

5.32 In terms of the impact on living accommodation for occupiers of the application premises, the basement extension will provide a high quality, enlarged dwelling. The new floorspace will benefit from natural light from the front and side lightwells, and full floor to ceiling glazing on the rear elevation fronting the sunken patio. It is considered that these lightwells will ensure that the basement receives satisfactory levels of natural light.

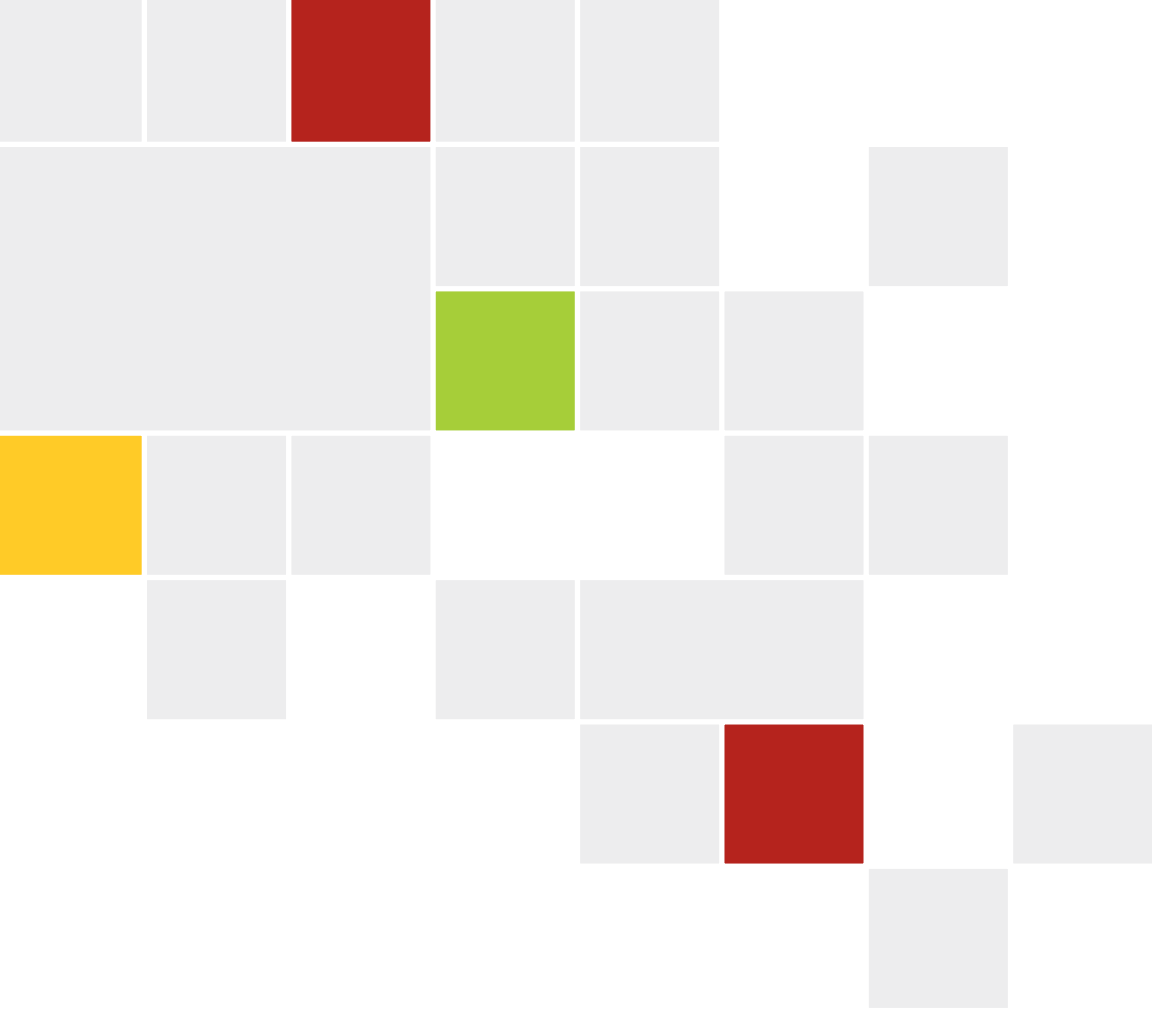
Trees

5.33 The application site currently benefits from a tree on the site's front boundary, and several mature trees along the rear garden boundary. The Tree Report sets out how tree protection barriers and construction exclusion zones will be utilised to

ensure the health of all trees on site. A suitably worded condition can be imposed to ensure that the proposed measures are adhered to.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed development seeks to create a basement extension for additional floorspace incorporating a kitchen, playroom, gym and yoga room and utility areas to enlarge the existing ground floor flat. The proposal includes the creation of discreet lightwells to the front and side elevations, and a sunken patio with steps leading up to the garden, and it will be barely perceptible in any public views.
- 6.2 The basement is considered to be in keeping with the scale and proportions of the existing property and the consented extension to the rear of the property. The proposed glazing to the rear, and the very discreet front and side glazed lightwells will allow significant natural light into the basement. The design of the basement, being entirely subterranean, prevents the loss of privacy or overlooking to the occupiers and neighbours of the property. Furthermore, there will be no public views into the proposed lightwell due to its low level and set back position.
- 6.3 The proposed basement is therefore compliant with all adopted policy and, in particular, accords with the design principles outlined in policy DM27 and the council's CPG on Basements and Lightwells. In addition the proposal accords with the more prescriptive basement requirements as set out within the Council's emerging Local Plan policy A5.



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