

Planning Statement,
incorporating a Design and
Access Statement to accompany
an application for the erection of
a side extension and alterations
to the roof profile to the rear
and associated alterations at
Heathdene, Vale of Health

Planning Statement incorporating a Design and Access Statement

Heathdene, Vale of Health,
London, NW3 1BB

ADL Planning Limited

INTRODUCTION

1. This written statement has been produced to accompany a planning application for the erection of a side extension, alteration to the profile of the roof of the first-floor rear extension and associated elevational alterations at Heathdene, Vale of Health.
2. This statement identifies how the proposed alterations would contribute to and support the character and appearance of the property, the pair of semi-detached dwellings that this property forms a part and the surrounding Hampstead Conservation Area as a whole.
3. This statement should be read in conjunction with all submitted plans. The relevant drawing numbers or plan descriptions are referenced where possible throughout the discussion on the merits of the proposal.
4. For the avoidance of doubt, this statement also encompasses the requirements of a design and access statement.

APPLICATION SITE

5. The application site is commonly known as Heathdene and forms half of a pair of semi-detached three storey dwellings located on the northeastern side of Vale of Health. The subject site forms part of a cluster of residential properties within the Hampstead Conservation Area. Heathdene and its pair, Ashdown, are semi-detached houses. The application site is not a listed building. The application site differs from its neighbour 'Ashdown' which presents a number of window openings in the side façade.
6. The application site and its pair are constructed of red brick and slate, with ground floor bays and decorative brick work. The application property presents a bay window to the front, contrasting white painted woodwork and slate clad mansard roof with two dormers to the front and rear. There is a recessed single storey garage (used as storage space) to the side and a part ground floor, part first floor extension to the rear. The existing garage and side façade is largely concealed from views by existing vegetation and from the high timber boundary fence with Manor Lodge to the north.
7. The building is set approximately 5m back from the front boundary of the site, with a small front garden area and strip of hard standing to the side, which provides access to the existing garage.
8. The houses in this area are mostly set back behind shallow gardens, and in addition to the semi-detached villas, there are a number of historic terraces present. The properties along this road are characterised by a number of two and three storey dwellings of varying architectural styles that do not follow any discernible pattern of design.

THE PROPOSAL

9. Planning permission is sought under this application for the erection of a side extension, alteration to the profile of the roof of the first-floor rear extension and associated elevational alterations.
10. At front ground floor level, the proposal comprises the replacement of the existing unsympathetic garage door with a traditional mews style timber garage.
11. At first floor side level, the proposal comprises an extension above the existing ground floor single storey side extension. The proposed side extension would be constructed of brick walls, with hipped slate roof and timber windows to harmonise with the main building. The proposed extension would be of a tapered width due to the constraints of the site (reference first floor plan). The extension would contain a bedroom to the front with en-suite to the rear. Two conservation style rooflights are proposed within the side roof slope, with single timber sash window to the front side and rear facades.
12. At first floor rear, the proposed alterations include the removal of the pitched roof and its replacement with a flat roof which would sit below the eaves of the host building. This alteration would allow the reinstatement of the corbelled brick detail under the eaves, and windows with soldier arches to complement the character and appearance of the house. The overall footprint of the building will remain as existing.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

13. 2015/1151/P - Erection of single storey rear extension following demolition of existing single storey rear extensions (approved 09/04/2015).
14. 2017/0668/P - Erection of first floor side extension and alterations to roof of existing first floor rear extension (Refused at Appeal Dismissed on 12 June 2017). The current application before the Council has been submitted following a revised design approach to address the concerns raised within the Council's delegated report and the Planning Inspectorate's Appeal Decision.
15. Also of note is the second-floor side extension incorporating a terrace a second-floor level which was granted approval by the Council on 06/07/1987 at 'Upfleet' which is located directly opposite to the east.

AMENDMENTS FOLLOWING APPEAL DISMISSAL (2017/0668/P)

16. As noted above, the current application before the Council has been submitted following a revised design approach to address the concerns raised within the Planning Inspectorate's Appeal Decision. Both the Council's Delegated report and Inspectorate's Appeal Decision provide direction as to why the previous application (reference 2017/0668/P) was unsuccessful.
17. This application seeks to address the shortfalls of the previous planning application. The revised design of the first-floor extension is now a more harmonious addition to the host building. The height of the extension has been lowered to reduce its impact. The proposed side extension would have the same footprint as the existing ground floor extension,

proportionately replicating the style of the parent property with its narrow proportions and strong vertical emphasis. The proposed first floor front window has been lowered from its previous position, sited below the eaves allowing for the soldier arch above to be replicated. The previously noted deep section of brickwork between the first-floor front window and the garage doors has been reduced to mirror the fenestration pattern of the main building. The rear first floor window presents improved proportions being partially concealed behind the rear parapet.

18. The extension remains to be set back from the front elevation of the house, and would be a storey lower than the main building. The amended design would present as a subservient addition which would not disrupt or unbalance the symmetry of the pair of dwellings. The proposed hipped roof of the side extension would maintain a subordinate relationship to both the host building and the proposed rear alterations.
19. The replacement of the lean-to roof to the rear first floor extension with a flat roof mirrors the earlier application. This aspect of the proposal was not contentious for either the Council or the Inspector.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF MARCH 2012)

20. Under the heading '*Achieving Sustainable Development*' paragraph 9 (page 3) states that;

"Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life". It is important to reiterate that the quality of the residential environment would be significantly improved under this proposal; this is a significant consideration in the determination of this application by the Council.

21. Under the heading '*Presumption of Sustainable Development*' (page 3), the National Planning Policy states in paragraph 14 that;

"At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. "For decision-taking this means:

- *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
- *where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
- *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole;*
- *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted."*

22. The revised proposal accords with the development plan as considered below. It is therefore sustainable development that would improve the quality of the residential environment and on this basis, should be approved by the Council.

23. Under the heading of *‘Core Planning Principles’*, paragraph 17 of the NPPF identifies 12 principles that decision making should follow. These include *“empowering local people to shape their surroundings”* and not being simply about *scrutiny*, but instead being *“a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives”*. This is a key consideration in the determination of this application and should not be overlooked as the proposal clearly presents an enhancement to the residential environment and improves the place where people live.
24. Paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment; good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
25. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF requires that local planning authorities should take account of;
- “The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness”*.
26. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF recognises that;
- “Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use”*.
27. Paragraph 137 of the NPPF states that;
- “Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably”*.
28. For the benefit of clarity, the definition of conservation, heritage asset and significance are included below.
- *Conservation* (for heritage policy) is defined within the National Planning Policy Framework as *“the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance”*.
 - *Heritage assets* are identified as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
 - *Significance* is defined within the NPPF as *“the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting”*.

LDF CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES (2010-2025)

29. **Policy CS14 ‘Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage’** sets out the Council’s overall strategy on promoting high quality places, seeking to ensure that Camden’s places and buildings are attractive, safe, healthy and easy to use; requiring development to be of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character. Specifically, this policy seeks to:
- a. *require development to be of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;*
 - b. *preserve and enhance Camden’s rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas.*
30. Of particular note is paragraph 14.3 which concludes that:
‘High quality design is visually interesting and attractive but it is not just about what things look like. Good design makes places that put people first, are welcoming, feel safe and are enjoyable and easy to use for everyone, whether they are living in, working in or just passing through the borough’. [underlining my emphasis].
31. Paragraph 14.6 notes that:
‘Good design is safe and accessible, and responds flexibly to the needs of its users’. [underlining my emphasis].
32. **Policy CS5 ‘Managing the impact of growth and development’** directs the Council to manage the impact of growth and development. Specifically, in relation to this application, this policy seeks to:
- a. *provide sustainable buildings and spaces of the highest quality and,*
 - b. *protect and enhance the environment and heritage.*

CAMDEN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES (2010)

33. **Policy DP24 ‘Securing high quality design’.** This policy contributes to implementing the Core Strategy by setting out the detailed approach to the design of new developments, alterations and extensions. This policy provides specific criteria against which proposals will be considered.
34. Paragraph 24.4 notes that design excellence is:
‘not just about the aesthetic appearance of the environment, but also about enabling an improved quality of life.’ [underlining my emphasis].
35. Paragraph 24.5 adds that:
‘Design should respond creatively to its site and its context. This concerns both smaller-scale alterations and extensions and larger developments..’ [underlining my emphasis].
36. **Policy DP25 ‘Conserving Camden’s Heritage’.** This policy provides specific direction in relation to maintaining the character within Camden’s Conservation Areas, specifically only permitting development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

DESIGN GUIDANCE CPG1 (2015)

37. The Council adopted CPG1 Design Guidance on 6 April 2011 to support the policies in the Local Development Framework (LDF). The guidance provides information on all types of detailed design. Chapter 2 is specific to ‘*design excellence*’, Chapter 3 ‘*heritage*’ and Chapter 4 ‘*extensions and alterations*’.
38. Chapter 4 provides key messages with regard to extensions and provides the following guidance on page 26.
- *Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings.*
 - *Windows, doors and materials should complement the existing building.*
 - *Rear extensions should be secondary to the building being extended.*
39. Paragraphs 4.16 – 4.18 are specific to side extensions. The guidance notes add that side extensions should:
- *be secondary to the building being extended, in terms of location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing,*
 - *respect and preserve the original design and proportions of the building,*
 - *respect and preserve the historic pattern,*
 - *not cause a loss of amenity,*
 - *allow for the retention of a reasonable sized garden.*
 - *set back from the main building.*

HAMPSTEAD CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT 2001

40. The Hampstead Conservation Area character is derived from the wide range of areas within it, each of which makes an important and valuable contribution to the Conservation Area as a whole. The conservation area statement divides Hampstead into eight sub areas. Each of the sub-areas has one or more character zones. Listed buildings and buildings that make a positive contribution are identified in the audit section and on the sub-area maps. It is acknowledged within this submission that the subject site ‘*Heathdene*’ is identified on page 53 as a building which makes a make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This proposal seeks to build upon this recognised character, preserving the integrity, architectural and streetscape quality of the original building.

CAMDEN LOCAL PLAN SUBMISSION DRAFT 2016

41. The Camden Local Plan sets out the Council’s planning policies and replaces the current Core Strategy and Development Policies planning documents (adopted in 2010). The following draft policies are relevant to the consideration of this application:
- A1 (Managing the impact of development)
 - D1 (Design)
 - D2 (Heritage)

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL

42. With regard to the specific design elements of this proposal, it is acknowledged that the main issues for consideration are the effect of the first-floor side extension on the character and appearance of a pair of semi-detached dwellings, having particular regard to the effect on the Hampstead Conservation Area.
43. It is acknowledged within this submission that Heathdene and its pair, Ashdown, present a relatively distinct symmetrical appearance and that these attractive historic houses make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. However, as acknowledged within paragraph 8 of the Appeal Decision, it is noted that *some buildings have been extended and that amongst the historic houses, there is a variety of forms present* (this is also referenced in the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement 2001). It should also be acknowledged that the application site differs from its neighbour 'Ashdown' which presents a number of large window openings within the side façade. The northern side façade of the application site is largely concealed from public views other than from the properties directly opposite. Views of the side façade of the subject site are also largely concealed by existing vegetation and from the high timber boundary fence with Manor Lodge to the north.
44. It is also acknowledged within this submission that the Council did not object to the alteration to the profile of the lean-to roof of the rear first floor extension with a flat roof. This alteration allows for the reinstatement of the corbelled brick detail under the eaves and windows with their soldier arches, complementing the character and appearance of the house. This aspect of the proposal would not add any significant bulk or mass to the property nor would it have a significant impact on the character of the host building, the neighbouring dwelling and setting of the surrounding conservation area. On this basis, this aspect of the proposal must therefore once again, be considered by Council to be acceptable. On this basis, the focus of this submission relates to the side extension and how the re-design of this element is appropriate in the context of the pair of semi-detached houses and the surrounding Hampstead Conservation Area.
45. It should also be acknowledged within this submission that Council have previously considered that the size, scale and height of the proposed first floor side extension would not cause an undue loss of light or outlook to neighbouring residents.
46. With regard to the proposed side extension, this has been suitably redesigned and reduced in scale under this application, to ensure that this aspect of the proposal does not alter the balance and harmony of a property or pair of properties by insensitive scale, design or inappropriate materials. The revised design of the side extension is unobtrusive and does not adversely affect the character of the building or the Conservation Area.
47. The proposal should be considered in relation to paragraph 134 of the NPPF. Paragraph 134 states that;

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed, against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use”.

48. The proposed side extension is in harmony with the original form and character of the house, being largely concealed from public view by the existing vegetation screen and boundary treatment of Manor Lodge to the north. The recessed location would only allow for glimpses of the side extension from directly opposite and as such, the level of ‘harm’ remains to be quantified. The concealed location and reduced scale should be considered by the Council to be a subordinate addition to the existing building. The design, scale and materials are sensitive to the special qualities of the property and do not undermine the features of original building.
49. The proposed side extension does not infill an important gap and its reduced scale and screened location does not result in the symmetry of the composition of a building being impaired.
50. With regard to policies and guidance contained within the **Core Strategy (Policy CS14 and CS5)**, the proposed side extension will present as an attractive development with a design that respects local context and character. The proposal builds on the supporting text to this policy presenting *good design which is safe and responds flexibly to the needs of its users* whilst providing a sustainable extension to the building which is of the highest quality, ultimately protecting the character and quality of the built environment.
51. With regard to the requirements set out within **Camden’s Development Policies (DP24 and DP25)**, paragraph 24.4, design excellence is *‘not just about the aesthetic appearance of the environment, but also about enabling an improved quality of life’*. The supporting text within paragraph 24.5 adds that *‘design should respond creatively to its site and its context. This concerns both smaller-scale alterations and extensions and larger developments..’* [my emphasis].
52. The proposed side extension would make better use of the land in this sustainable location by providing additional residential floorspace, ultimately presenting a positive improvement to the housing stock of London. The proposal builds upon the direction of paragraph 9 of the NPPF (*Achieving Sustainable Development*) presenting sustainable development with positive design improvements to the quality of the built, natural and historic environment. The proposal makes a neutral contribution to local character and distinctiveness consistent with paragraph 131 of the NPPF.
53. The proposed side extension positively responds to the direction of Policies DP24 and DP25 and the supporting text contained within. The Inspector, within paragraph 13 of the Appeal Decision acknowledges that *‘the extension would result in less than substantial harm due to its size compared to that of the conservation area as a whole’*. On the basis that the extension presents a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, it must also be considered that the reduced scale of the current application extension presents a minimal impact would also facilitate an improved quality of life for current and future residents, responding positively to the site and its context.

54. With regard to Core Strategy Policy DP24 and the specified *detailed approach for alterations and extensions*, the proposed side extension presents a reduced scale and built form to ensure a balanced harmony for the pair of properties. This is magnified by its sensitive scale, design and through appropriate materials. The amended side extension is unobtrusive and does not adversely affect the character of the building or the Conservation Area. The character and proportions of the extension have been redressed in this application to present an appropriate treatment to the streetscape whilst complementing the existing building through its overall design and use of quality materials.
55. The proposed extension positively responds to the supporting text to Policy DP24 by:
- Being consistent with the character and constraints of the site;
 - Respecting the prevailing pattern and scale of surrounding development;
 - Reducing any potential impact on existing rhythms, symmetries and uniformities with its immediate pair, through a recessive design approach, reduced height, scale and overall bulk.
 - Presenting appropriate conservation style materials which are consistent with the parent property.
 - Presenting a suitable design led approach to the future intended use.
 - Not impacting on any views and vistas for nearby properties.
56. With regard to the specific **Design Guidance** for *all* extensions (page 26 - *Camden Design Guidance*), the proposed extension positively responds to the character and design of the property and its surrounds, presenting closely matched traditional materials and design details to ensure the new work blends with the old. The window detail matches the original in terms of type, glazing patterns and proportions (including the shape, size and placement of glazing bars), opening method, materials and finishes, detailing and overall window size.
57. With regard to the *specific design criteria* set out in paragraphs 4.16 – 4.18 (and 4.10) the following response is offered:
- The proposed side extension would be set back from the front and rear main building line. The proposed side extension would not breach the established front building line.
 - The proposed side extension would not impact or block a significant view or gap between buildings. The Hampstead Conservation Area Statement does not identify the side of the application as presenting a significant gap or view which should be protected. The extension would be at first floor level whereby any view to the side would still be preserved.
 - The scale, height and bulk of the proposed side extension would be subordinate to the parent property and would not unbalance the architectural symmetry, integrity or composition of the building and its immediate neighbour. The extension respects the scale and proportions of the existing building being architecturally subordinate, respecting the architectural character and the conservation area as a whole.
 - The proposed side extension would not obscure any significant original architectural features on a side wall. The design of the extension would not appear out of place and

would be appropriate to the residential aesthetic. The proposal presents development of the highest architectural and urban design quality, taking opportunities to improve the quality and character of the building and the way it functions.

- The proposed side extension would not compromise access to the rear of a property.
 - The proposal would not obscure important architectural elements on the side façade.
58. The proposed development would preserve the townscape of Camden and would be of a high standard of design and detail appropriate to the building and its setting. The development would respect the prevailing context, character and appearance of the area and would be of the highest architectural and urban design quality.
59. The proposed low scale design of the side extension respects the character and appearance of the local area and neighbouring buildings. The scale of the extension has been reduced since the earlier submission, with design elements building upon advice contained with the Council's delegated report and the Inspectorate's Appeal Decision. The proposed development reinforces the traditional elements which create the distinct character of the Hampstead Conservation Area. The design of the side extension responds closely to the prevailing scale, form, proportions and materials of surrounding development.
60. The proposed development does not undermine any existing uniformity of the street or ignore patterns or groupings of buildings. The proposed side extension has been reduced in scale and mass and could not be considered to be an overly large extension which disfigures the building or upsets its proportions. The side extension must therefore be considered to be subordinate to the original building in terms of its scale and situation. The proposed architectural detailing has been carefully considered to convey quality of design to maintain and create an attractive and front and side façade.
61. With regard to the **Conservation Area Statement**, the proposed development does not negatively impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and has been designed to respect the built form and historic context of the area, local views as well as existing features such as building lines, roof lines, elevational design, and where appropriate, architectural characteristics, detailing, profile, and materials of adjoining buildings.
62. It is considered that in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, National Planning Policy Framework, the aims of the Camden Core Strategy, Camden Development Policies and the supplementary supporting documents, the proposed development will not have a significant detrimental impact upon the character, appearance or significance of the pair of semi-detached buildings or the broader Hampstead Conservation Area.
63. The proposal is of a suitable scale to retain the existing level of historic cohesion, being set back from the front facade of the house, single storey and lower than the eaves. The size and form of the extension with its appropriate design style would no longer draw the eye, but would have a subservient form, allowing for the symmetry of the pair of dwellings to be maintained.
64. Paragraph 1.2 of the Council's previous Delegated report acknowledges that *'the proposal does*

not represent a substantial form of development'. The proposed side extension has been redesigned under this application in accordance with the general considerations set out in paragraph 4.10 of CPG1. The proposed extension would be read as a secondary element to the main building in terms of its location, form, scale, proportions and detailing. The proposed extension would be of a suitable scale and form to maintain the architectural symmetry and integrity of the pair of semi-detached properties.

65. Consideration has been given in this submission to reducing the bulk and mass of the side extension and any associated impact it may have on the character of the existing property whilst ensuring that an adequate level of internal space is still provided. This re-design approach now creates a more proportionate development which can be accommodated on the side façade, without damaging the visual balance and character of this modest pair of semi-detached dwellings.

CONCLUSION

66. The proposed extensions would be subordinate to the existing building, being of a suitable design, scale and appearance to respect and preserve the character and appearance of the parent property and the Hampstead Conservation Area as a whole. The proposal will not present any adverse impact on neighbouring amenity and on balance should be allowed.
67. The proposal will not cause detriment to the fabric of the original building and would not impede on an important gap and would not harm the character, appearance or significance of the parent building, its pair or the street scene. The proposal will enhance the living conditions for the occupants while maintaining the character and appearance of original building.
68. The proposed extension would add valuable residential floor space to the existing dwelling, being a positive improvement to the housing stock of London. The extension has sufficient integrity to contribute to the amenity of the occupants without detracting from the beauty and character of the area.
69. The design of the proposed extension would not appear out of place and would be appropriate to the residential aesthetic. The proposal remains consistent with the aims of Council policies which seek to ensure that development is of the highest architectural and urban design quality, taking opportunities to improve the quality and character of buildings and the way they function.
70. The proposed side extension by virtue of its reduced size, subordinate design and location would preserve and respect the architectural integrity of the host building and the symmetry with the neighbouring property, respecting the requirements of Policies CS14 and CS5, DP24 and DP25.
71. The application proposal accords with the relevant Camden policies and with the National Planning Policy Framework and on this basis, should be supported.