

## **Design Statement**

**1 and 2, 66 Fitzjohns Avenue**

**London**

**NW3 5LT**

Proposal for:

*Amendment to planning permission ref: 2015/5847/P 'Erection of pair of semi-detached, two storey 3-bed dwellings with basements, following demolition of existing pair of semi-detached dwellings to include an additional storey at second floor level, set back from the front elevation'.*

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## **Introduction**

The application is accompanied by:-

Planning Policy Statement

Daylight/ Sunlight Report

Architect's drawings

Three Dimensional images of the proposal

Letter from Structural Engineer

Access Statement (Lifetime homes checklist)

## Location Plan



## Existing Property

Fitzjohns Avenue is a main road running from Swiss Cottage to Hampstead, NW3. The Avenue typically has large villa style properties which have largely been divided into flats. There is a wide range of architectural styles in the Avenue.

Units 01 and 02, 66 Fitzjohns Avenue are accessed by a private side road.

The planning history of the properties is not completely clear but we believe that the properties were converted from outbuildings to residential in the 1980s and that further alterations were approved through planning approvals in the mid 1990's.

The existing houses have two floors (ground and first).

The architectural style of the properties could be described as post-modern which was popular for a period in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The horizontal arched windows, exaggerated arched lintol band, vertical band of decorative stucco, 'gable end' parapets are elements that have been borrowed from traditional architectural styles but have been distorted and used in a combination that is not a recognised historic pattern. The brickwork and render of the front façade is painted white. There is no evidence that the style of the front façade has any relation with the building that occupied the site prior to residential use in the 1980s. Three of the facades are against the property boundary and are unadorned fairfaced brickwork.

The properties sit behind 64 Fitzjohns Avenue, which is a Victorian Villa displaying Gothic and Queen Anne revival style of the 1870s and 1880s. The rear of this property has been subjected to a number of modifications. The property is now divided into flats and includes a basement / lower ground floor level over the entire footprint of the property and with basement lightwells to the rear and front. A tall screen of planting (bamboo and birch tree) exists between 64 Fitzjohns Avenue and 66 Fitzjohns Avenue.

## Photographs of existing



View from Fitzjohns Avenue- Entrance Driveway



View of 66 Fitzjohns Avenue Front Elevation from the North

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66 Fitzjohns Avenue Front Elevation



66 Fitzjohns Avenue Side Elevation from the North





66 Fitzjohns Avenue Front Elevation





66 Fitzjohns Avenue Rear Elevation



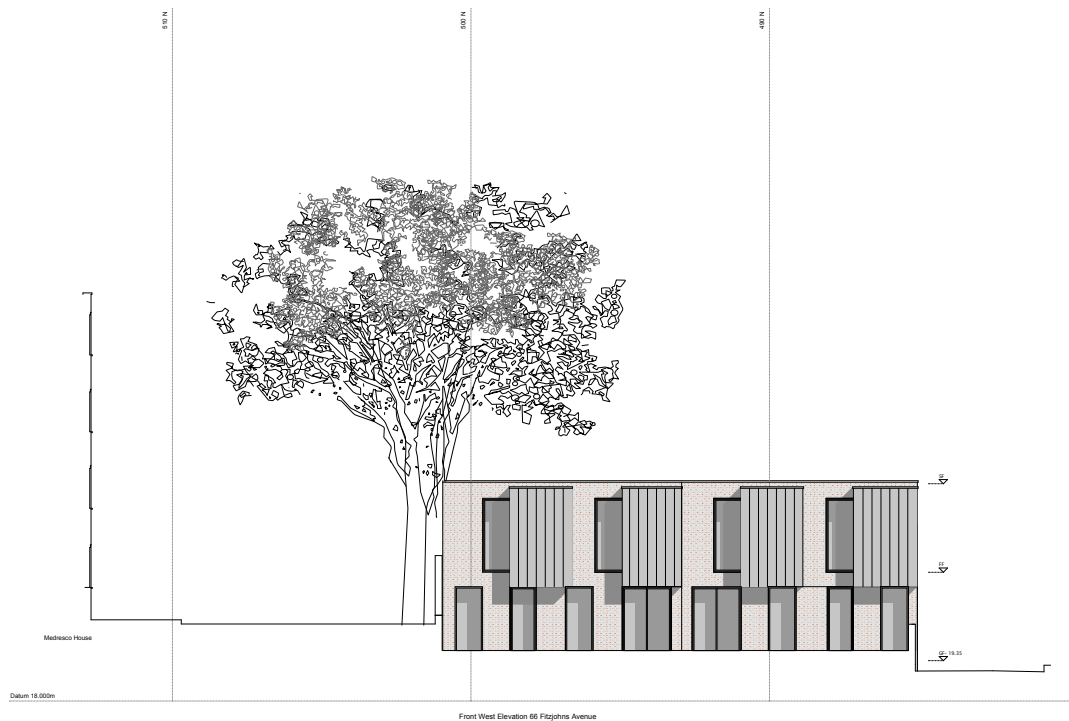
66 Fitzjohns Avenue Existing Roof



64 Fitzjohns Avenue Side/ Rear Elevation

## Design Statement

This application is for a second floor level addition to the scheme approved under the application reference- 2015/5847/P on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2017. The previously approved application was for the 'Erection of a pair of semi-detached, two storey 3- bed dwellings with basements, following demolition of existing pair of semi- detached dwellings'.



Application 2015/5847/P- Approved Front Elevation

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Proposed Front Elevation



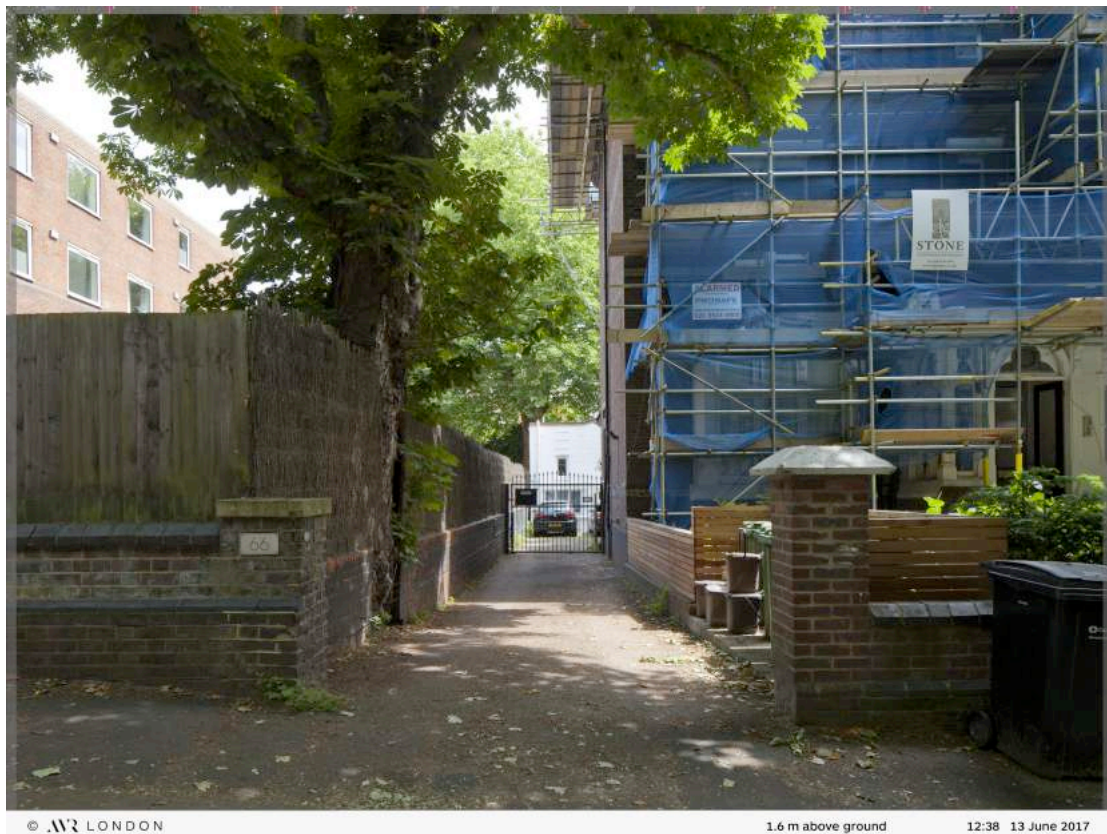
Existing Front Elevation

## Existing and Proposed Front Elevations





Proposed Front Elevation view from Side Access



Existing Front Elevation view from Side Access

The additional level will add a bedroom space with bathroom to each house.

The application building is behind the main terrace of buildings on Fitzjohns Avenue and as such should read as subservient to these much larger properties. The original Victorian buildings facing directly onto Fitzjohns Avenue have a formality that is expressed through hierarchy of elements, traditional buildings forms, use of ornate details and complex mix of materials - such as different brick types.

The proposed building replaces 1980's mews houses that in turn replaced the coach houses for the main building (64 Fitzjohns Avenue). It is intended that the modest nature of these earlier buildings is carried through to the new proposals.

## Form and massing

The form of the proposed houses is non-traditional. Absence of features such as pitched roofs, timber sash windows, bay windows avoids the building competing with the dominant original building stock on Fitzjohns Avenue and Akenside Road. The pared back, simple style helps reference the proposed building back to the non-domestic roots of the original building on the site.

The proposed second floor level will be set back from the line of the approved front elevation to reduce the massing. The second floor will also be set back from the rear elevation to establish a hierarchy with the levels below. With the set back from front and rear and the difference in material choice between this level and the lower levels the upper level is seen as being subservient to the lower floors and the massing and visual appearance is diminished. It is considered to resemble an attic or loft storey.

The proposal is accompanied by a daylight/ sunlight report that concludes- *'The analysis indicates that all surrounding properties are in accordance with the BRE Guidelines for daylight and sunlight with the proposal in place, meeting the BRE Guidelines in terms of VSC and APSH in the proposed situation'.*

Overall, the proposed houses as previously approved have been designed so that the new ground floor accommodation sits within the footprint of the existing building. The height of the



front projecting bays is equal to the existing gable walls of the front façade. As demonstrated in the following diagram- 01 and submitted with the application (drawing 1169.SK05).

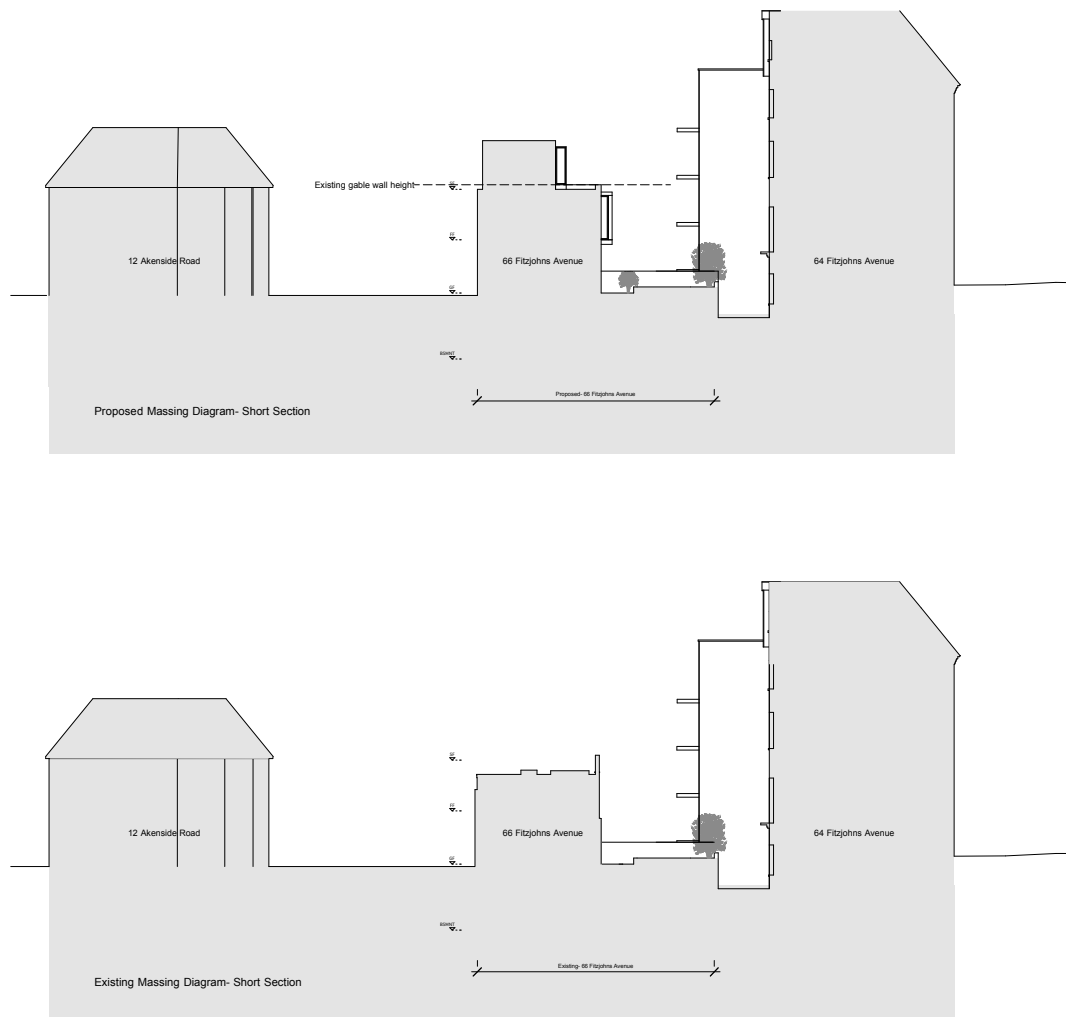


Diagram 01- Existing and Proposed Sections

## Materials

The proposed ground and first floor will be second hand London stock to front façade (excluding bays) and rear and sides. This is the most common form of brick used in the surrounding area and it's use will help tie the new building to the existing context. As the building is located up to the boundary on three sides the use of London stock brickwork provides a material that is commonly used for boundary walls and is a low maintenance option. The brickwork will be used in a simple form with no decoration. This standard London building material will ensure a pared back and simple aesthetic.

The projecting bays of the first floor will be clad in Siberian larch timber. The timber will weather to a silver grey colour and the organic nature of this material will work with the leafy character of the context.

The proposed second floor is also to be clad in Siberian larch timber with horizontal joints. The timber will weather to a silver grey colour and mimic grey slate and leadwork that is commonly used in the area, but give a softer feel to the second floor level. As the second floor is set back then the use of Siberian larch distinguishes this element from the ground and first floor and signals that this is roof level accommodation. This helps to visually support the concept that the ground and first floors are the dominant features and the second floor is subservient to these. The association that timber cladding has with utilitarian buildings will reinforce the connection the proposal has with the non-domestic nature of the original building on the site.

The position of the proposed houses at the rear of the main terrace of buildings means that it sits amongst trees. The use of grey timber boarding for the roof storey will allow the building to fall back and not stand out against this backdrop. The timber offers a natural, textured and subtly toned surface and as the properties have no fenestration on three sides there will be no detail to catch the eye.

## Style

The existing 1980s post-modern style of the existing building does not relate to any other building types in the area and is therefore not a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

The architecture of the proposal is a simple contemporary style found at numerous sites within the Borough and Conservation Area. We believe the contrast with the more traditional forms of building in the area is a good combination and a positive addition to the Conservation Area. The proposal is clean in line and will be well detailed.

The general style has evolved from the requirement for the building to retain privacy between 64 and 66 Fitzjohns Avenue and the desire to make the second floor subservient to the ground and first floor.

The Siberian larch timber cladding provides a clean, modern interpretation of lead cladding. The openings for windows and doors are large giving a light contemporary feel inside and out.

The area offers no one dominant architectural style and no one style that should be mimicked or repeated. The properties facing Fitzjohns Avenue are mainly decorative Victorian villas. The large neighbouring block of flats is a highly contrasting and of poor aesthetic quality, 1960s building.

The location of the building set back from the main Fitzjohns Avenue frontage and the small scale of the proposal dictates that it is not appropriate to adopt a pastiche of the the decorative Victorian villas. A simple, plain style that suggests a mews building or quasi-commercial building is more appropriate.

The proposed replacement building is designed to be subservient to the much grander and substantial in bulk and massing building at 62- 64 Fitzjohns Avenue. The simple style, small scale and limited palette of materials for the proposed building combine to achieve this.

Hampstead, as a wider area, has a reputation for including a variety of contemporary and individual buildings. The introduction a high quality modern architecture into the area has been frequently embraced in the past.

## Fenestration

Fenestration has also been treated in a manner that avoids a pastiche of the traditional windows of the original properties directly facing Fitzjohns Avenue. The glazing is intended to form 'gaps' within and between materials rather than stand out as details. At ground floor the glazing reads as a void between the masonry flank walls and the masonry of the first floor. Timber clad projections at first floor provide simple elements behind which windows are concealed. The structural glass boxes of the second floor have glass to glass junctions that avoids the details that window framing would create. This approach creates a simplicity of form that reinforces the proposed building as subservient to the original larger buildings on Fitzjohns Avenue and Akenside Road.

The ground floor windows are clear glass but are protected from overlooking by the overhanging first floor bays.

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The first floor windows with clear glass are in the side of the projecting bays. The direction of the windows prevents overlooking on both directions. Forward facing first floor windows have obscure glass.

The second floor bathroom windows have obscure glass. The second floor bedroom windows to the projecting bay will have obscured glass where facing onto 62- 64 Fitzjohns Avenue. The glass to the sides of the bays will be clear.

The main entrances to properties on Fitzjohns Avenue and Akenside Road are a point of focus through the architectural devices of porches, decorative fascia boards, columns, steps, pitched roofs and symmetrical positions within larger architectural features. It is proposed that the entrances to the proposed houses read as subservient to these existing 'grand' entrance doors. They will use the same materials as used elsewhere (timber boarding), will be minimally detailed and will share larger openings within the masonry with glazing and they will not be symmetrically placed.

## Basement

The basement as proposed has been previously approved under application 2015/5847/P.

The basement is single storey with a floor to ceiling height of 2500mm. It will be largely open plan kitchen and dining plus some secondary accommodation (storage, utility, plant, stair) at the rear. The open plan area will be naturally lit by overhead glazing (pavement lights).

An zone above the basement structure has been allowed for planting of lawn and shrubs.

The basement is designed to be unobtrusive. The basement is proposed to extend under the existing building footprint and under the hardstanding at the front. No lightwell is proposed. Pavement lights (or rooflights at external ground level) will be incorporated into the planting of the gardens.

The basement has been designed to be constructed to avoid affecting any other buildings in close proximity as illustrated in the previously submitted basement impact assessment.

## External amenity

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The external amenity as proposed has been previously approved under application 2015/5847/P.

The area of existing external amenity is retained. The quality of this external space will be improved with soft landscaping (grass) and planting shrubs.

The planting to the boundary (62- 64) will be retained and replaced to match the existing.

## Car parking

The car parking as proposed has been previously approved under application 2015/5847/P.

It is understood that there is currently an allowance for off-street car-parking on the front hardstanding. Due to restrictions of the hardstanding size and planting arrangement the current arrangement does not easily allow two vehicles to enter or exit independently. Sufficient hardstanding has been provided in the proposal for off-street parking and the current situation of restricted vehicle movement has not been made worse.

## Trees

The proposal for the trees has been previously approved under application 2015/5847/P.

There are trees on and adjacent to the site as illustrated in the previously submitted Arboricultural Report.

The largest is a London Plane (labelled T10). This tree has been assessed by an arboricultural consultant who has reported that there is no risk of detrimental affect on the tree by the proposed development. Also detailed in the Reoprt are the necessary measures for it's protection during construction.

A tree next to the entrance to the site will have root protection measures put in place during the construction period.

One tree on the site may need to be removed as part of the construction process but will be replaced at completion.

An ornamental pine tree will be removed.

New soft landscaping and planting will be undertaken as part of the development. This will include retention and reinstatement of the boundary planting.

## Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

The re-building of the two houses will enable an upgrade of the current energy efficiency performance beyond the minimum U value requirement of the Building Regulations and will include the following where possible:

Installation of new efficient gas condensing boilers with a SEDBUK 'A' rating.

Installation of solar panels for electricity generation may be possible on the second floor roof as this is south facing and faces an open car-park that is not overshadowed.

Insulation will be used in excess of recommended standards for all building elements.

Argon gas double glazing with low emissivity glass will reduce heat loss.

Underfloor heating will be supplied to all floors which will optimise energy efficiency due to its lower temperature requirement (ie. 35 degrees compared to 75 degrees for conventional radiators).

The construction of the junctions to the external envelope will be detailed to minimise air leakage and therefore heat loss.

Materials with low embodied energy will be used where possible for the new build construction for example the proposed Siberian larch and use of reclaimed London stock brickwork.

The use of Sedum planting for the roof will help the building fall back, not stand out or make a statement within the context of the green corridor within which it sits. The roof will also add to and encourage natural diversity on the site.

## Refuse

The refuse storage as proposed has been previously approved under application 2015/5847/P.

The existing refuse and recycling storage on the right hand side of the entrance of the private access road will be retained.



Bicycles

The bicycle storage as proposed has been previously approved under application 2015/5847/P.

Facility for securing bicycles will be incorporated into the external works for both houses.

## **Access for All**

The works to the proposed houses have been designed to allow ease of accessibility and use.

The design complies as follows with the 16 Lifetime Homes Standards:

### **01 Car Parking**

Cars will be able to stop outside the front of the houses where off-street parking is provided.

### **02 Access from car parking**

Access from car will be directly to access ramps.

### **03 Approach**

Access from car to front door is direct and short down an access ramp.

### **04 External Entrances**

The proposed entrance will be illuminated by overhead lights.

### **05 Communal Stairs**

There are no communal stairs as the house is a separate dwelling.

### **06 Doorways and Hallways**

Any new internal doors will have a minimum 700mm clear opening width.

### **07 Wheelchair accessibility**

Wheelchair accessibility is maximised by providing open plan living, kitchen and dining.

### **08 Living Room**

The living room is on the entrance floor which is at ground floor level.

### **09 Bed space at ground floor**

No bed space is provided on the ground floor entrance level as existing. A bedroom could be incorporated in the future.

### **10 WC at ground floor**

A WC is proposed at ground floor entrance level.

### **11 Bathroom walls**

New walls in the bathrooms will be constructed with blockwork and timber stud and plywood that would be capable of supporting adaptations such as handrails.

### **12 Lift**

The inclusion of a future lift is not possible although a stair lift could be provided if required.

### **13 Main Bedroom**

The main bedroom and bathroom are on the same level on the first floor or second floor.

**14 Bathroom Layout**

The bathrooms are all generous in size.

**15 Window Specification**

New windows will be openable with long lever handles which allow easy operation.

**16 Fixtures and Fittings**

New switches, sockets, ventilation and service controls will be located at a height that is between 450mm and 1200mm from the floor.