



Planning Statement

10 Downside Crescent



Boyer

Report Control

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1. Introduction and Proposal

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of Asif Noor and Sabina Khan, to support a planning application relating to 10 Downside Crescent, London, NW3 2AP
- 1.2 Planning permission is sought for subterranean excavation to create a new basement level, supplied by two enclosed lightwells located to the rear of the dwelling. Also proposed is the erection of a single storey rear extension with a flat roof.
- 1.3 In addition, it is proposed to install a new driveway entrance gate and increase the height of a section of the property's existing boundary wall. The driveway is to be resurfaced and a new patio area is proposed directly to the rear of the property.
- 1.4 Planning permission (ref: 2016/4413/P) was recently granted in February 2018 for the erection of a single storey rear extension and removal of rear chimney breast; excavation of single storey basement; and alterations to front driveway and boundary walls. Construction works relating to this permission have not commenced.
- 1.5 Permission is now sought for an amended iteration of the previously approved proposals. The proposed rear extension projects no further to the rear than the previously permitted rear extension and is narrower and set further away from the site's common boundary.
- 1.6 The proposed basement will be located under the dwelling's existing footprint, with an area also projecting underneath, but not beyond the proposed rear extension. The two basement lightwells will supply natural light to the new accommodation, which includes a playroom, gym, shower room and plant/utility room. The basement works would provide 133 sq m of additional floorspace (GIA), and this combined with the proposed rear extension would enable the reconfiguration of the dwelling to create a high quality, family sized dwelling.
- 1.7 The proposed alterations to the property's front entrance gate and boundary wall are identical to those approved earlier this year under the previous application.
- 1.8 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 GEA and an Arboricultural Report by Southern Ecological Solutions.

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 Downside Crescent. The property is not statutorily listed but is located within the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area and has been identified as making a positive contribution to the area. The application property forms one half of a pair of three storey, red brick semi-detached properties.
- 2.2 The site is located within a predominantly residential area characterised by a mix of large semi-detached dwellings as well as properties which have been converted into flats.
- 2.3 The site is not within any Flood Zone or Archeological Priority Area.
- 2.4 The Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011) notes that Downside Crescent is densely lined with late-Victorian red brick, three-storey gabled houses with front gardens. The gabled roofscape is distinctive and virtually intact. Houses on the street are semi-detached and sited close together to form a relatively uniform frontage.
- 2.5 Hard-standings and cross-overs have recently replaced some front gardens within the area, and garages and car shelters on the ground floors have been added to the fronts of some houses which break the pattern of these houses and their streetscape. Indeed, the front of the application property is already hard-standing, as are the front of both adjoining properties (No's 8 and 12) as well as several properties on the opposite side of the street.
- 2.6 The site is within close proximity to Belsize Park underground station and also a number of bus routes along Haverstock Hill. The site is identified as having a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating of 5 (Very Good).

3. Planning History

History of the Site

3.1 Other than the recent planning permission for the basement and rear extensions, there is a limited planning history for the site listed on the Council website. However, for completeness, all the records are listed below:

Address	Description of development/Reference	Decision/Date
10 Downside Crescent, London NW3 2AP	Erection of a single storey rear extension and removal of rear chimney breast; excavation of single storey basement; and alterations to front driveway and boundary walls Ref: 2016/4413/P	Approved February 2018
10 Downside Crescent, London NW3 2AP	Construction of a roof extension on front elevation of single dwellinghouse (Class C3) Ref: 2006/0623/P	Approved: April 2006
10 Downside Crescent, London NW3 2AP	Erection of a single storey rear extension, new brick wall and gates to front, alterations to existing external openings and creation of new dormer to rear roofslope and installation of new rooflights to front roofslope Ref: 2004/2794/P	Approved: August 2004
10 Downside Crescent, London NW3 2AP	Formation of a crossover and use of the area to the north side of the house as a hardstanding for car parking Ref: 8400012	Approved: March 1984

Neighbouring properties

3.2 The following applications are also deemed relevant to the current application as they are all examples of recent planning permissions for the creation of basements at nearby properties along Downside Crescent within the vicinity of the application site:

Property	Application Number	Description of Development	Decision and Date
23 Downside Crescent London NW3 7NS	2014/7587/P	Excavation of single storey basement, erection of full-width rear extension following demolition of existing part width extension. Conversion from 2x flats to single family dwelling house	Approved: May 2015
8 Downside Crescent, London NW3 2AP	2007/5005/P	Erection of a two-storey and gable-end side extension single store ground floor extension to rear with partial basement, alterations to the existing dormer windows to single-family dwelling house (C3) alterations to windows at first floor plus new French doors at first floor rear main elevation).	Approved: February 2008

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 2016) and the Camden Local Plan, which includes:

- Camden Local Plan (2017).
- Camden Planning Guidance 4: Basements (2018)
- The Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)

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 (2016)

4.6 The London Plan (2016) 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. The London Plan sets out that 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 proposed residential units.

Local Planning Policy

Camden Local Plan (2017)

4.10 The Camden Local Plan sets out the Council's planning policies and replaces the Council's previous Core Strategy and Development Policies planning documents. The Local Plan provides planning policies that respond to changing circumstances and the borough's unique characteristics and contribute to delivering the Camden Plan and other local priorities. The Local Plan covers the period from 2016-2031.

4.11 The Local Plan is intended to help deliver the objectives of creating the conditions for harnessing the benefits of economic growth, reducing inequality and securing sustainable neighbourhoods. The Plan also assists the delivery of other

plans and strategies prepared by the Council and other service bodies, for example masterplans and planning briefs.

4.12 The policies, which are relevant to this planning application, contained within the Local Plan are considered to be:

- Policy G1 - Delivery and location of growth
- Policy A1 – Managing the impact of development
- Policy A4 – Basements
- Policy D1 – Design
- Policy D2- Heritage

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Camden Planning Guidance 4 – Basements (2018)

4.13 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 – Basements (2018). The document provides guidance which applies to all developments in Camden which propose new basements.

4.14 The document 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.

Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)

4.15 The Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011) seeks to define the conservation area's special character and gives consideration to the key issues and pressures which affect the area.

4.16 The document contains sections which relate specifically to Downside Crescent, and also outline a management strategy for the area which identifies actions for particular care required to preserve and enhance the areas' character.

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 Local Plan policy H1 (Maximising housing supply) highlights that the Council will aim to secure a sufficient supply of homes to meet the needs of existing and future households by maximising the supply of housing within the borough.

5.3 Local Plan policy H3 (Protecting existing homes) sets out that the Council will aim to ensure that the borough's housing stock continues to meet the needs of existing and future households. The proposal, which seeks proportionate extensions to an existing single family dwelling, will help create a high quality family sized dwelling.

5.4 A recent planning permission at the property (2016/4413/P) for a similar sized rear extension and a basement extension, established that alterations and extension to the dwelling are acceptable in principle.

5.5 The acceptability of the detailed design of these proposed extensions are considered within the following sections.

Basement Development

5.6 Proposals to create basements introduce a range of very particular issues including impacts on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability. Consequently LB Camden have adopted Policy A5 (Basements) which highlights that the Council will only permit basement development where it is demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that the proposals will not cause harm to:

- a. neighbouring properties;
- b. the structural, ground, or water conditions of the area;
- c. the character and amenity of the area;
- d. the architectural character of the building; and
- e. the significance of heritage asset.

5.7 Camden Planning Guidance: Basements (CPG 4) also provides detailed guidance outlining how the Council will apply planning policies when making decisions on new basements developments.

5.8 Policy A5 also sets a number of prescriptive tests which basement proposals must meet. These are listed below with an assessment of each test provided in bold italics. Basement developments should:

f. not comprise of more than one storey. ***The proposed basement is single storey.***

g. not be built under an existing basement. ***The property does not have an existing basement.***

h. not exceed 50% of each garden within the property. ***The basement is far smaller than 50% of the garden area***

i. be less than 1.5 times the footprint of the host building in area. ***The existing building's footprint is 93 sq m; as such 1.5 times the footprint would be 139 sq m. The proposed basement's footprint is, including the lightwells is 133 sq m which is less than 1.5 times the footprint of the host building.***

j. extend into the garden no further than 50% of the depth of the host building measured from the principal rear elevation. ***The existing depth of the host building is 10.25m. The proposed basement will extend 5.12m beyond the principal rear elevation. This is less than 50% of the depth of the host building.***

k. not extend into or underneath the garden further than 50% of the depth of the garden; ***The proposed basement will not extend 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. ***Both sides of the proposed basement are set in from either common boundary with neighbouring properties.***

m. avoid the loss of garden space or trees of townscape or amenity value. ***The planning application is supported by a tree survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment by Southern Ecological Solutions. This confirms that, providing tree protection measures are put in place, no trees identified during the survey will be impacted by the proposed basement.***

5.9 Policy A5 (basements) outlines that proposals for basements must not harm neighbouring properties or the structural, ground or water conditions in the area. In order to demonstrate compliance with the policy, planning applications for basement extension must be supported by a Basement Impact assessment (BIA) produced by chartered engineer who is a member of a their relevant professional body. The applicants have commissioned a Basement Impact Assessment by Geotechnical and Environmental Associates (GEA) which addresses each of the matters set out within Local Plan policy A5. This BIA is included as part of the planning application submission.

Basement Impact Assessment

5.10 The BIA, having been informed by site investigation data and information regarding the construction methods provides a detailed assessment of the soil type and flood risk. The BIA also provides details relating to the construction 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 basement planning policy A5 and Camden Planning Guidance: Basements.

Design and Impact on Conservation Area

5.13 The application property is located within the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area.

5.14 Camden's Local Plan policy D1 (Design) requires new development to be of the highest standard of design that respects the local context and character and preserves and enhances heritage assets, including conservation areas. 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.

5.15 Local Plan Policy D2 (Heritage) sets out that the Council will preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas. In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas the Council will take account of conservation area statements and appraisals, when assessing applications within conservation areas.

5.16 The Parkhill Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal contains a specific section which addresses basement developments. This highlights that the Council will resist basement developments, and associated lightwells where they are considered to harm the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.17 The Conservation Area Appraisal explains that the creation of new lightwells can harm the relationship between the building and the wider streetscape, as well as resulting in the loss of garden space. Railings around lightwells can cause a cluttered appearance to the front of the property. The inclusion of rooflights within the landscaping of a front garden can result in light spill for these subterranean rooms and harm the garden setting.

5.18 The Camden Planning Guidance: Basements (2018) 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

5.19 The Camden Planning Guidance: Basements 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, 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.

5.20 The principle of a basement at 10 Downside Crescent projecting beyond the property's rear elevation has already been established by the previous planning permission granted earlier this year (2016/4413/P). Whilst, the current proposal

creates a larger basement than previously permitted, the majority of the basement would be underneath the building's footprint and would not extend as far beyond the principal rear elevation as the extant, permitted scheme. The proposed walk on glass louvres avoid the use of external balustrading which could have a greater impact visual impact on the conservation area.

5.21 In this case very limited external manifestations are incorporated into the design, and the basement will have no demonstrable impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area or host property.

5.22 The sole visible elements of the basement are the two discreet areas of walk on glazing which would be located above the basements two lightwell areas, out of sight from the public domain. In accordance with the Council's various basement guidance, including the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal, the proposal avoids siting and lightwell or glazing to the front of the property. Both the areas are located to the rear and will have no demonstrable impact on the character of the conservation area.

5.23 In addition to the basement, a single storey rear extension with a flat roof is proposed. The extension's footprint is almost identical from that approved under the previous planning permission (2016/4413/P). However, the extension's flank elevation is set further away from the common boundary with the neighbouring property, No 12 Downside Crescent, thus minimising any impact on neighbouring occupiers.

5.24 In assessing the previous planning application at the property, the Planning Officer noted that:

"Although the scale of the rear extension would be fairly large with a maximum depth of 7.1m, this is considered acceptable given the surrounding context whereby all buildings on this side of Downside Crescent already feature large rear extensions. Furthermore, although the host building is a different architectural style to the majority of the buildings on the street, it is similar in style to adjoining no.8 which itself has a fairly large rear extension measuring 5m deep and 9m wide approved in 2008 (ref: 2007/5005/P). The proposed extension is therefore not considered to overwhelm the host semi-detached building or its adjoining neighbour, nor cause harm to the character and appearance of the wider Parkhill Conservation area"

5.25 As with the previously permitted extension, the current proposal is subservient to the scale and mass of the host dwelling, and will not project beyond the depth of the rear extension at the neighbouring property, 12 Downside Crescent. The

extension will be finished in white painted render to complement the existing rear elevation. As with the previous permission, the proposed windows and doors will have powder coated aluminium frames. Accordingly, the proposals are considered to be in compliance with Local Plan policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage).

- 5.26 Minor alterations are proposed to the site's boundary treatment and driveway area. The boundary alterations are identical to those permitted under the previous application, and include the removal of the existing black metal entrance gates and replacement with new black sliding gates. The existing hedge and trees along the front boundary would be retained. It also proposed to increase the height of a small a small section of the boundary wall between No's 10 and 12. This would be raised to the height of the remainder of the wall and would be finished in matching brickwork, ensuring that it is a sympathetic addition.
- 5.27 The existing driveway is to be resurfaced in permeable buff coloured resin bound gravel. As the proposed surfacing is made of porous materials the resurfacing is permitted development, not requiring planning permission, in accordance with Class F of the General Permitted Development Order 2015.

Residential amenity

- 5.28 Camden Local Plan Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) sets out that the Council will seek to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours. The Council will grant planning permission for development unless the proposals cause unacceptable harm to the amenity. The factors the Council will consider in determining planning applications include visual privacy, outlook, sunlight daylight and overshadowing.
- 5.29 The proposed basement has no external manifestation other than the proposed walk on lightwell glazing. The proposed rear extension will be constructed parallel to the northern boundary wall shared with No. 12 Downside Crescent. The extension is set further away from the shared boundary with No. 12 than the previously permitted extension (2016/4413/P), and will have no demonstrable impact on the neighbouring residents' daylight or sunlight levels or privacy.
- 5.30 As with the previously permitted application, the rear extension has south facing windows looking towards No. 8 Downside Crescent. The rear elevation of this

neighbouring property is set back and there is a large amount of vegetation along the boundary which prevents any overlooking between the properties.

5.31 Local Plan policy A1 also seeks to mitigate the impact of construction of neighbouring residents. As with the previously permitted application, it is anticipated that the future submission of, and compliance with, a Construction Management Plan relating to the basement works will be secured by s106 legal agreement.

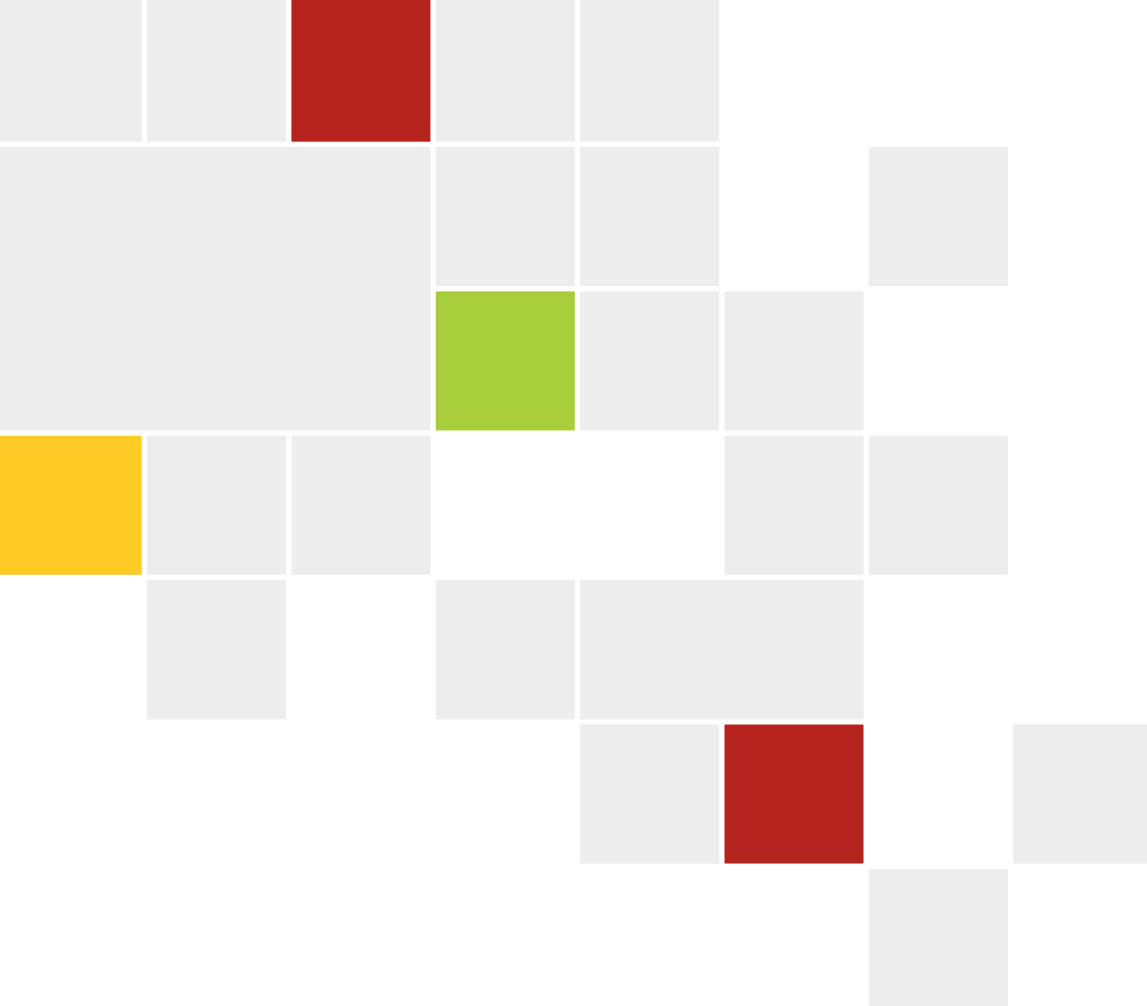
5.32 The forthcoming Construction Management Plan would carefully consider the key construction matters such as hours of work, construction-related deliveries and waste removal, and method of construction, in order to mitigate the impact of the construction phases on neighbouring occupiers.

Trees

5.33 The application site currently benefits from a tree on the site's front boundary, and a number of mature trees within the rear garden. The Arboricultural Report which accompanies this planning application sets out how tree protection barriers and construction exclusion zones will be utilised to ensure the health of all trees on the site. A suitably worded planning 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 playroom, gym, shower room and utility areas to enlarge the existing single family dwelling. The proposal includes the creation of discreet lightwells to the rear of the property, which will not be perceptible within any public views.
- 6.2 The basement is considered to be in keeping with the scale and proportions of the existing property and complies with each of the specific design criteria set out within Local Plan policy A5 (Basements). The design of the basement, being entirely subterranean, prevents the loss of privacy or overlooking to the occupiers and neighbours of the property.
- 6.3 The proposed rear extension is slightly smaller than that approved under the previous permission at the property (2016/4413/P). Accordingly, the rear extension will have no greater impact on neighbouring residents than the previous scheme.
- 6.4 The alterations to the site's boundary treatments are also identical to that previously permitted. The proposals are considered to be in fully compliant with Camden's Local Plan policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage).



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