

# Land Adjacent to 1 St Johns Wood Park,

Planning Statement

indigo.

## **Indigo**

In conjunction with

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Contents	Page
<b>1. Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Background</b>	<b>3</b>
Site and Surroundings	3
Relevant Planning History	4
<b>4. Proposed Development</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5. Planning Policy Context</b>	<b>6</b>
National Planning Policy Framework	6
National Planning Practice Guidance	6
The Development Plan	6
<b>6. Key Planning Considerations</b>	<b>8</b>
i. The Principle of Residential Use	8
ii. Affordable Housing	8
iii. Density	9
iv. Mix	9
v. Housing Quality	9
vi. Townscape	10
vii. Design and Layout	11
viii. Amenity	11
ix. Sustainability	12
x. Transport and Parking	13
<b>7. Conclusions</b>	<b>14</b>

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# 1. Executive Summary

1.1. The proposed development seeks consent for:

*'Redevelopment of the site following demolition to a residential development of 9 no. dwelling houses (Use Class C3), cycle storage, refuse storage and plant'.*

1.2. The development comprises 3 x 2-bed, 3 x 3-bed and 3 x 4-bed private dwellings. The development will provide an appropriate mix of residential housing on a vacant brownfield site in a sustainable location in an area where there is a significant housing shortage.

1.3. The proposal will provide a high quality well-designed building that will protect the amenity of surrounding occupiers, as demonstrated in the accompanying reports to this application.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1. This planning statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the development of 9 No. residential dwellings at Land adjacent to 1 St Johns Wood Park, London NW8 6QS.
- 2.2. The proposed development seeks consent for:
- 'Redevelopment of the site following demolition for a residential development of 9 no. dwelling houses (Use Class C3), cycle storage, refuse storage and plant'.*
- 2.3. The proposed development comprises 3 x 2-bed, 3 x 3-bed and 3 x 4-bed private dwellings over seven storeys including basement and associated works.
- 2.4. Further details of the proposed development are set out in Section 3.
- 2.5. This planning statement sets out the planning justification in support of the proposed development.
- 2.6. The application is also supported by the following additional documents:
- Package of application drawings, prepared by Maccreanor Lavington;
  - Design and Access Statement, prepared by Maccreanor Lavington;
  - Application and CIL forms, prepared by Indigo Planning;
  - Affordable Housing Statement, prepared by Grimshaw Consulting;
  - Townscape Assessment, prepared by Van Bruggen;
  - Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Report, prepared by GIA;
  - Noise Impact Assessment, prepared by Hepworth Acoustics;
  - Sustainability and Energy Assessment, prepared by Ridge;
  - Transport Statement, prepared by Ridge;
  - Outline Construction Management Plan, prepared by Ridge;
  - Basement Impact Assessment, prepared by Ridge;
  - Sustainable Drainage Strategy, prepared by Ridge; and
  - Statement of Community Involvement, prepared by Kanda.

### **Scope of the report**

- 2.7. This statement comprises the following sections:
- A description of the application site and surroundings and planning history is set out in Section 3;
  - A description of the development proposals is provided in Section 4;
  - An outline of relevant national, regional and local planning policy and other relevant documents is set out in Section 5;
  - The key planning considerations are set out in Section 6; and
  - Our conclusions are set out in Section 7.

## 3. Background

### Site and Surroundings

- 3.1. The proposed development site is located adjacent to 1 St. John's Wood Park, NW8 6QS, approximately 1 mile south of Hampstead, London. The site is a vacant former garage site located within a primarily residential area and is bounded by housing on all sides; with 2.5 and 3 storey properties to the south and west, and taller blocks to the north ranging from 4 to 12 storeys.
- 3.2. As illustrated by Figure 1 below, the site is not within a conservation area and there are no nearby statutorily listed buildings. The site benefits from a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating of 6a, which denotes 'excellent' accessibility, and is close to the Borough's boundary with the London Borough of Westminster.

Figure 1: Conservation area boundaries, listed buildings and locally listed buildings.



## Relevant Planning History

### Site Planning History

- Planning permission was granted 22 June 2018 (LPA ref. 2017/0851/P) for the erection of a 3 storey plus basement, 5-bed single dwellinghouse (Class C3), including new boundary walls following demolition of 6 existing garages on land adjacent to 1 St. John's Wood Park (as an amendment to planning permission ref 2015/4800/P dated 11/04/2016 to allow an enlargement of the approved basement and sub-basement and an increased width of 0.3m to the whole building).
- Planning permission was granted on 11 April 2016 (LPA ref. 2015/4800/P) for the erection of a 3 storey plus basement, 5-bed single dwellinghouse, including new boundary walls following demolition of 6 x existing garages on land adjacent to 1 St. John's Wood Park (Class C3).
- Planning permission was granted on 2 September 2014 (LPA ref. 2013/6731/P) for the erection of a 3 storey, 5-bed single dwellinghouse, including new boundary walls following demolition of 6 x existing garages on land adjacent to St. John's Wood Park (Class C3).

## 4. Proposed Development

- 4.1. The proposed development seeks consent for:  
  
*'Redevelopment of the site following demolition for a residential development of 9 no. dwelling houses (Use Class C3), cycle storage, refuse storage and plant'.*
- 4.2. The proposed development comprises 3 x 2-bed, 3 x 3-bed and 3 x 4-bed private dwellings over seven storeys including basement and associated works.
- 4.3. As set out in the relevant planning history of the site, the principle of residential development is established. This application seeks to optimise the development potential of the site, having regard to context and amenity.
- 4.4. The proposed development will provide much needed new housing, making better use of the site whilst preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 4.5. The site has excellent access to public transport facilities; with a PTAL rating of 6a. A car-free scheme is therefore proposed.
- 4.6. Refuse and recycling storage has been located at ground floor level within the communal area.
- 4.7. The design and access statement which accompanies this application provides more detail on the proposed development and design rationale.



## 5. Planning Policy Context

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out government planning policy with which development plans must accord. It is a material consideration in decision-making. At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.2. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with part C specifying:
- “For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.”
- 5.3. The message from the Government, via the NPPF, is that the first instinct of local planning authorities should be to support sustainable development. Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way, and decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

### National Planning Practice Guidance

- 5.4. The Government has published the final version of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). It is also a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 5.5. Existing technical guidance including the Practice Guidance has now been cancelled. The NPPG provides an explanation of the government’s interpretation of policy in the Framework.

### The Development Plan

- 5.6. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.7. The current Development Plan for the London Borough of Camden includes the London Plan 2016 and the Camden Local Plan 2017. The relevant policies from each of these documents are identified below.
- 5.8. Key policies relevant to this application are:

#### The London Plan 2016

- London Plan 2016 (relevant policies include – Policy 3.3 Increasing housing supply; Policy 3.4 Optimising Housing Potential; Policy 3.5 Quality and Design of Housing Developments; Policy 3.8 Housing Choice; Policy 3.14 Existing Housing; Policy 7.2 An Inclusive Environment; Policy 7.4 Local Character; Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology).
- 5.9. The GLA are currently preparing a new London Plan (also known as a Replacement Plan). The Replacement Plan Examination Hearing are timetabled to commence in January 2019. Key emerging policies relevant to this application are:

### **The Draft Modifications to the Emerging London Plan August 2018**

- Draft Modifications to the Emerging London Plan August 2018 (relevant policies include – Policy GG2 Making the best use of land; Policy GG4 Delivering the homes Londoners need; Policy D2 Delivering good design; Policy D4 Housing quality and standards; Policy D6 Optimising housing density; Policy D9 Basement development; Policy H1 Increasing housing supply; Policy H2 Small sites; and Policy H12 Housing size mix).

### **LB Camden Local Plan 2017**

- G1 Delivery and location of growth
- H1 Maximising housing supply
- H4 Maximising the supply of affordable housing
- H6 Housing choice and mix
- H7 Large and small homes
- A1 Managing the impact of development
- A4 Noise and vibration
- A5 Basements
- D1 Design
- CC1 Climate change mitigation
- CC2 Adapting to climate change
- CC5 Waste
- T1 Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport
- T2 Parking and car-free development

### **Camden planning guidance**

- CPG 1 Design
- CPG 2 Housing
- CPG 3 Sustainability
- CPG Basements and Lightwells
- CPG Amenity
- CPG 8 Planning obligations

## 6. Key Planning Considerations

6.1. The key issues in this case are:

- i. The Principle of Residential Use;
- ii. Affordable Housing;
- iii. Density;
- iv. Mix;
- v. Housing Quality;
- vi. Townscape;
- vii. Design and Layout;
- viii. Amenity; and
- ix. Sustainability.

### i. The Principle of Residential Use

6.2. As set out in Section 2, the principle of residential use at the application site is established through the site's planning history.

6.3. The proposals will restore a vacant site back to use, ensuring a sustainable long-term future for the site and the delivery of much-needed high-quality homes. This will address identified local and strategic housing need, including for family-sized accommodation. The Council's SHMA (February 2016) identifies a housing need for market housing of 6,600 additional homes over the plan period (2016-31).

6.4. The proposals therefore fully accord with:

- Paragraph 59 of the NPPF, which seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing and requires that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed;
- Paragraph 68 of the NPPF, which indicates that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, with part C of the paragraph stating that to promote development of a good mix of sites, local planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites through their decisions - giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes;
- Policy 3.3 of the London Plan, which identifies a pressing need for more homes; and
- Camden Local Plan Policy H1, which supports the provision of housing within the borough in order to exceed the target of an additional 16,800 homes by 2030/31. In particular self-contained homes, vacant properties and sites with existing residential permission are viewed as a priority area for residential development.

### ii. Affordable Housing

6.5. The development is proposing less than 10 dwellings. In accordance with Policy H4 of the Local Plan, a payment in lieu has been calculated as per the relevant formula set out in CPG 2. The accompanying Affordable Housing Statement, prepared by Grimshaw Consulting, confirms the level of Payment in Lieu.

6.6. Whilst the statement focuses on the viability reasons that preclude on-site provision of affordable housing, we note the following additional points:

- If it were found to be viable to provide affordable housing on-site, the tenure would need to be shared ownership, due to the design of the building, with a single core;
- Service Charges are likely to be high for this building, which would make it difficult to meet the Council's affordability criteria and maintain viability for the developer; and
- The scale of on-site provision (between 1 and 3 affordable units), would be difficult to sell to a registered provider. Due to the number of mergers taking place, registered providers are becoming larger and less interested in acquiring small lots of affordable housing. Grimshaw Consulting's recent experience is that registered providers will only consider proposals for more than 25 affordable homes, with small and medium providers only considering proposals providing a minimum of 10 affordable units.

### iii. Density

- 6.7. The Council will expect the density of housing development to take account of the density ranges set out in the London Plan's Sustainability Residential Quality density matrix (under Table 3.2 of the Plan). As the site is well served by public transport, the Council will "expect densities towards the higher end of the appropriate density range in the matrix".
- 6.8. The density of the proposed development would equate to approximately **239** u/ha, which aligns with the higher-end of the density range for the 'urban' setting as set out within the matrix. The proposed density therefore accords with the London Plan and is considered acceptable.

### iv. Mix

- 6.9. As set out in Policy H7, the Council will take a flexible approach to assessing the mix of dwelling sizes proposed in each development having regard to, amongst other matters, the different dwelling size priorities for market homes; site size, and any constraints on developing the site for a mix of homes of different sizes; and the economics and financial viability of the development.
- 6.10. Notwithstanding this, the Council's SHMA (February 2016) indicates that the greatest requirement in the market sector is likely to be for two- and three-bedroom homes. The Dwelling Size Priorities Table in the Local Plan has been based on the outputs of the Camden SHMA and identifies 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom market housing as being in "high" demand.
- 6.11. The provision of 3 x 2-bed, 3 x 3-bed and 3 x 4-bed accommodation will both make an important contribution to meeting identified need and fully accords with Policy H7.

### v. Housing Quality

- 6.12. The key issue in terms of residential standards of accommodation are discussed below, and can be summarised as:
- Size of homes;
  - Outdoor amenity space;
  - Lifetime homes standards; and
  - Provision of refuse/ recyclables storage.

#### Size of homes

- 6.13. All homes have been designed so that they will provide a high quality of accommodation for future occupiers and are all dual aspect. All units exceed the nationally described space

standards (March 2015). The development therefore adheres to Table 3.3 under Policy 7.6 of the London Plan and Local Plan Policy H6.

- 6.14. All bedrooms are generously sized, with a minimum floorspace of 8.5 sqm for single bedrooms, 10.6 sqm for double bedrooms and easy access to bathrooms. This exceeds the minimum guidance set out in Camden Planning Guidance 2 (CPG).

#### **Outdoor amenity space**

- 6.15. All habitable rooms have access to natural light and ventilation and meet the required BRE standards. All homes meet London Plan Draft and Housing SPG private amenity space requirements for 5sqm of private outdoor space should be provided for 1-2 person dwellings and an extra 1sqm.

#### **Provision of refuse/ recyclables storage**

- 6.16. In accordance with CPG 01, Section 10: Waste and Recycling Storage, the refuse and recycling storage areas have been provided at ground floor level which can be accessed via the residential core and side passageway or directly from Middlefield Road. The route to the refuse store has been designed to keep walking distances under a maximum of 30m between the entrance door of each flat and the refuse store.
- 6.17. In accordance with London Plan guidelines, it is proposed that the store will accommodate 2 No. 1100L waste bins and 2 No. 1100L recycling bins. Adequate space for refuse vehicle turning will be available on Middlefield Road.

#### **Summary**

- 6.18. The proposal accords with the policy objective of increasing housing supply, reuse of a vacant site and ensures the proposal has a long-term sustainable use. In addition, the design included in the proposal creates a high-quality housing development in line with the Local Plan 2017 vision for Camden.

#### **vi. Townscape**

- 6.19. This scheme meets the high standards of design required by all levels of policy. The NPPF at paragraph 127 states that policies should, amongst others, ensure developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place, respond to local character, are visually attractive and optimise the potential of the site for accommodating development.
- 6.20. Policy D1 seeks to secure high-quality design in development that integrates well with the surrounding context and character.
- 6.21. A Townscape Appraisal has been prepared by Van Bruggen. The baseline assessment has established that the site is not located within a sensitive townscape, as it does not lie in a conservation area nor does it include any heritage assets. It also does not fall within a local or strategic view, as recognised by regional and local planning policy. The likely views are very limited, and any effect is likely to be confined to the adjacent streets only.
- 6.22. The assessment demonstrates that the scheme proposal will be visible from a very confined area of St Johns Wood Conservation Area, and only to a limited degree and will appear as part of the wider townscape that includes much taller buildings. The relationship and distance of the site with listed buildings in the study area, and scale of the scheme proposal, are such that in no case will there be any impacts on the heritage significance of any other statutory listed building.

## vii. Design and Layout

- 6.23. As set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, prepared by Maccreanor Lavington, the proposals seek to create a modern interpretation of 19th century mansion blocks featuring bay windows, generous proportions and a decorated facade.
- 6.24. The size of the block relates to the wide street and other mansion blocks prevalent in the surrounding area.
- 6.25. The building is setback from the street, allowing for foreground landscaping to the building including tree planting. This new building aims to set a precedent on the street of a high density formal street edge that can be lined with trees in keeping with the character of local neighbourhoods. All flats are dual aspect and feature generous winter gardens and terraces for private amenity.
- 6.26. The proposals have been informed by extensive pre-application discussions, and were subject to a rigorous appraisal by the Design Review Panel (DRP) on 14 September 2018. The DRP subsequently provided their written response on 28 September, which summarised that: *“the panel supports the design approach to the site, and feels that with further design development in specific areas, the project could set a valuable precedent for a residential intensification in similar urban settings. The height of the block is appropriate to the local context, and the plans, materials and detailing are well-considered.”*
- 6.27. The design development of the proposed scheme has evolved in response to addressing all of the comments that have been raised on the emerging proposals since the first round of pre-application discussions in January 2018. This sequential process, together with details of the design response is set out at pages 31 to 34 of the enclosed Design and Access Statement.
- 6.28. The design response to feedback received can be summarised as resulting in the acceptable height and massing of the proposed development, a more articulated roof design to stimulate visual interest, further articulation and refinement to the top floor setback, a mix of small projecting balconies and Juliette balconies to the rear elevation, and the building line being pulled-back on the sides to match that of No. 1 St John's Wood Park.

## viii. Amenity

### Daylight and Sunlight

- 6.29. Policy A1 seeks to manage the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours by only permitting development that does not cause harm to amenity. The factors which determine this include visual privacy, overlooking, outlook, sunlight/daylight and noise.
- 6.30. An Internal Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Assessment has been prepared by GIA. The assessments show that the proposed development will provide future occupants with excellent levels of daylight, with all the habitable rooms (100%) meeting or exceeding the levels of Average Daylight Factor (ADF) and No-Sky Line (NSL) recommended by BRE. All rooms have been designed in accordance with the Room Depth Criterion (RDC) where applicable. Further details can be found in Section 5.1 of the GIA assessment.
- 6.31. All the living areas suitable for testing (100%) see good levels of sunlight in winter and throughout the year, exceeding the recommendations set by BRE. Further details can be found in Section 5.2 of the GIA assessment.

### Overshadowing

- 6.32. With regards to overshadowing, 75% of the proposed garden at ground floor will see more than two hours of direct sunlight on 21 March, exceeding the BRE recommendation. Further details can be found in Section 5.3 of the GIA assessment. In conclusion, the proposed

development will offer future residents excellent daylight and sunlight amenity.

- 6.33. A Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Impact Assessment has also been prepared by GIA to understand the potential effect that the development may have on the neighbouring properties' levels of daylight and sunlight enjoyment. This assessment indicates high levels of compliance with Vertical Sky Component (VSC) and NSL criteria in accordance with BRE guidelines (2011). 98.8% of rooms assessed meet VSC and NSL criteria, with 100% meeting Annual Probable Sunlight Hours (APSH) criteria. The sunlight criterion demonstrates an excellent rate of compliance at 100% of rooms assessed.
- 6.34. Whilst GIA acknowledge that there are daylight impacts to two of the surrounding residential properties, for the reasons set out within their report, GIA believe that they are acceptable and supportable at planning.

### **Overlooking**

- 6.35. Policy A1 also aims to ensure that the potential impact of development on the privacy and outlook of neighbouring properties and their occupiers is fully considered. The Council will therefore expect development to be designed to protect the privacy of the occupants of both new and existing dwellings to a reasonable degree. Camden's Planning Guidance entitled 'Amenity' specifies that to ensure privacy, it is good practice to provide a minimum distance of 18m between the windows of habitable rooms in existing properties directly facing the proposed.
- 6.36. Paragraph 2.5 of the Amenity CPG states that where there is an existing street or public space, this space is considered to already provide an adequate separation between properties and so the 18m guideline will not apply.
- 6.37. In terms of the design response, the proposed layout is structured between two main façades addressing existing public spaces, with both facades following established street frontages. A partial deepening of the building footprint is proposed towards the garages and garage access at Middlefield at the rear of the building, which does not face any habitable room within the nearest 18m.
- 6.38. Proposed openings towards the south are setback from the boundary and do not face habitable rooms directly. The relationship with existing gardens is also similar to other existing properties in Middlefield and typical of the mews character of this aspect. Tree planting also provides screening at this elevation.
- 6.39. The ground floor unit is raised towards St John's Wood Park, where the lightwell and planting serve as buffer to the street. Towards the back the unit opens to a private garden that is screened from Middlefield through a garden wall and planting. All other amenity is either open towards St John Wood's Park, where distance between opposing frontages is circa 30m, or roof terraces behind solid 1100mm parapets.

### **Noise**

- 6.40. A Noise Assessment has been prepared by Hepworth Acoustics in accordance with the NPPF, LB Camden Amenity SPG (2018) and British Standards.
- 6.41. Noise surveys have been carried out to determine background noise levels.
- 6.42. As set out in the accompanying Noise Assessment appropriate design criteria has been incorporated from BS 8233:2014 into the design proposals and therefore no specific noise mitigation measures are necessary to meet relevant acoustic design criteria.

### **ix. Sustainability**

- 6.43. Sustainability is integral to the design and proposals include measures to meet the key

sustainability objectives.

- 6.44. The London Plan at Policy 5.2 states that development proposals should make the fullest contribution to minimising CO2 emissions in accordance with the energy hierarchy of 'Be Lean: use less energy'; 'Be Clean: supply energy efficiently'; and 'Be Green: use renewable energy'. In addition, the policy requires new major residential development to achieve zero carbon dioxide emissions. We note that the proposed development of 9 units does not fall under the GLA definition of 'Major Development', which is defined in residential terms as development comprising 10 or more units. Camden's Local Plan states that the Council will require developments to minimise their effects on climate change and meet the highest feasible environmental standards.
- 6.45. A Sustainability and Energy Assessment has been prepared by Ridge, which accompanies this application. In accordance with the Mayor's Energy Hierarchy the preliminary assessment confirms a 40.14% reduction against Part L following implementation of the proposed green technology. This reduction corresponds with the London Plan and Camden Local Plan Policy CC1.

#### **x. Transport and Parking**

- 6.46. CPG 7 states that a development should be a car-free development when it is in an accessible location.
- 6.47. The site has a PTAL score of 6a, which denotes 'excellent' accessibility. The nearest railway station that serves the proposed development is South Hampstead, located approximately 600m north-west of the site which provides London Overground services to London Euston and Watford Junction approximately every 20 minutes.
- 6.48. The closest London Underground station is Swiss Cottage, located approximately 340m north of the site. Swiss Cottage is located on the Jubilee Line within Zone 2, providing direct services across Central London approximately every 3 minutes. There is also a variety of bus routes. The scheme therefore proposes a car-free development, in accordance with Local Policy.
- 6.49. The proposed development includes secure cycle parking, which is located on the ground floor close to the entrance of the building and has been designed in line with CPG 7. Secure cycle parking will be provided for 18 bicycles, in accordance with the minimum standards set out in the London Plan under Table 6.3.
- 6.50. The numerous modes of transport available from the site means that there is no unacceptable transport impact on the transport system, highway network, on-street parking or footway space.



## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1. The proposal represents an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable scheme which will meet Camden and London Plan policy objectives.
- 7.2. The principle of development is acceptable, as it will provide much-needed residential housing on a vacant brownfield site in a sustainable location.
- 7.3. The proposed development has been informed by extensive pre-application discussions with officers, and a comprehensive assessment by the Design Review Panel. This has resulted in a building of high quality that will infill a vacant urban site whilst setting a valuable precedent for future residential intensification in the area.
- 7.4. The proposed development represents a high-grade design, which responds well to the surrounding urban fabric without having a material impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties. As such, it is concluded that the development will enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding townscape above the existing and neglected garage block and vacant land. The scheme will also provide a high-quality environment for future occupiers and the accommodation delivered will meet and exceed the required internal space standards.
- 7.5. The application is accompanied by a suite of supporting documents which demonstrate that the development is in accordance with national, regional and local planning policies and guidance. Having regard to all the above, the application should be supported by the local planning authority and approved without delay, in accordance with the NPPF.

