

Rear of 17 Stratford Villas, Camden

NW1 9SJ



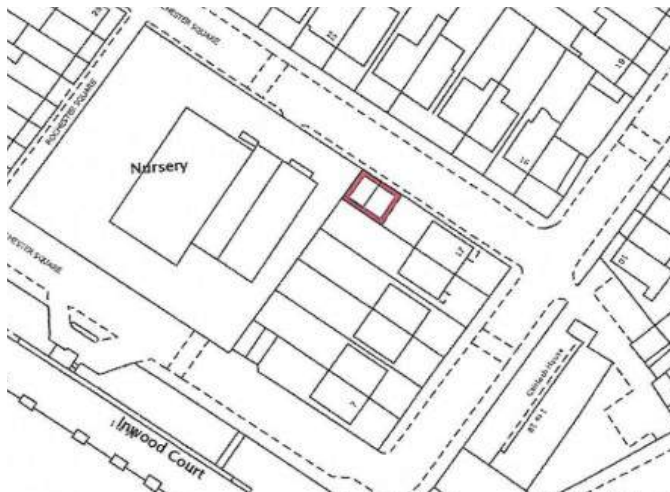
Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Planning and Heritage Design and Access Statement supports a planning application submitted on behalf of our client Mr Richard Marina, in relation to proposals for the demolition of an existing single storey garage and the creation of a single storey 1 bedroom dwelling, to the rear of 17 Stratford Villas, Camden, NW1 9SJ. The proposal will be self built by the owners of the parent property.

The garage to be demolished is located in the rear of 17 Stratford Villas, and was built in the mid to late 1970's. It's main access, as originally intended for a vehicle, is from Rochester Square and meets the back of the footpath edge. A secondary access via a door leads to the garden of 17 Stratford Villas. A new party wall will divide the rear garden to create a boundary and two distinct plots.



Site Location Plan

Structure of the Document

- Section 1 - Introduction
- Section 2 - Description of the proposal
- Section 3 - Description of the site
- Section 4 - Description of the surrounding area
- Section 5 - Assessment of the Planning Policy Framework
- Section 6 - Heritage Statement
- Section 7 - Design and Access Statement
- Section 8 - Conclusions

This Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement should be read alongside the submitted application drawings and tree survey.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the demolition of the existing single storey garage and the creation of a single storey 1 bedroom dwelling house, with access from Rochester Square. The dwelling comprises a shared kitchen, dining and living room, a bathroom, external ground floor patio area and internal bin and bike storage. The size of the dwelling is 50 sq.m GIA. The orientation of the dwelling is south east facing, with full height glazed doors that open onto the patio area. Additional windows are proposed to the north east elevation (fronting Rochester Square), which are part obscured to protect the amenity of surrounding occupiers. Likewise, there are no windows to the south west or north west elevations, and a skylight provides additional light into the rear of the floorplate. Due to its orientation, the dwelling will receive excellent levels of light all year round.

The existing height, scale and mass of the existing garage has been respected and incorporated into the proposed dwelling, as set out below:

Table 1 Existing and Proposed Building Comparison

	Existing Garage	Proposed Dwelling
Footprint	23.56sq.m	56sq.m
Eaves height	2.4m	3m
Ridge height	3.4m	4m
GIA	19.2sq.m	50sq.m

Sustainable Design Features

The proposal incorporates the following sustainable design features;

- Solar collecting roof tiles (with the appearance of slate) to provide hot water and underfloor heating
- Rainwater collection tank
- Natural, cross ventilation
- Off street bin and bicycle storage
- The dwelling has been designed to be adaptable and accessible in accordance with building regulations part M4 (2).

3 THE SITE

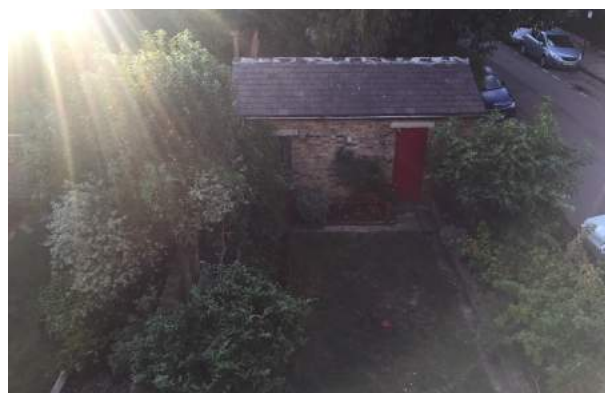
17 Stratford Villas is a semi detached mid 19th Century dwelling. The property has a small front garden, with a semi-basement and steep steps to the front door. The rear garden is some 12.15m meters long, and can be accessed via the side of the property. At the rear of the garden is the single storey garage with a pitched roof, which was built in the mid to late 1970's.



17 Stratford Villas



The garage fronting Rochester Square



View from the first floor of 17 Stratford Villas

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View of the garage from the garden of 17 Stratford Villas



Aerial view of garage site

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4 THE SURROUNDING AREA

Properties on Stratford Villas and Rochester Square were built during an extensive wave of house-building around 1845, which included the first examples of large houses built around Camden Square. Development spread along Camden Road, characterised by urban growth typical of mid nineteenth century London. There was much building activity from the mid-1840s and by 1849, when the following streets were laid out and named: Camden Road, Camden Square, Canteloves Road, Maiden Lane (later known as York Way), Murray Street, Rochester Square, St Paul's Road (later known as Agar Grove), and Stratford Place (later known as Stratford Villas).

To the north of the site is Rochester Square Nursery, a designated London Square (no.258).

Conservation Area Designation

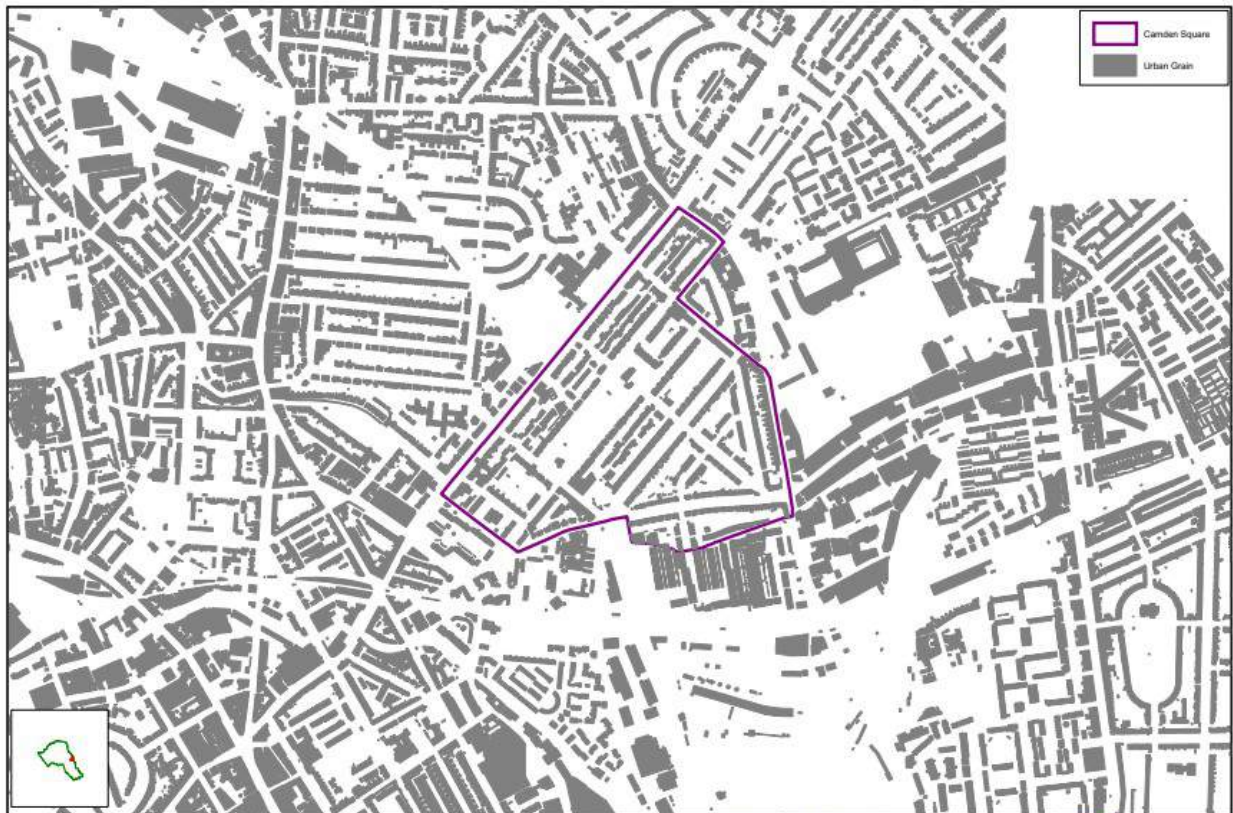
The Camden Square Conservation Area was designated in October 1974. It included Camden Square, and Rochester Square bordered by Camden Road to the north west, the gardens backing the rear of Camden Park Road to the north east, Agar Grove to the south east, and Rochester Square to the south west. The area has been extended twice, first in April 1980, to the north up to the centre-line of Camden Park Road, and to the east up to Agar Grove, then again in November 2002, to the north east from Camden Park Road to York Way, and to the south east of Agar Grove including St Paul's Mews.



View of Stratford Villas

The Conservation Area does not contain an Archaeological Priority Area. There are two areas designated as Neighbourhood Centres, Murray Street at the south west end of the area (towards Agar Grove), and York Way at the north east end.

Camden Square Conservation Area has two open spaces which are designated as London Squares: Rochester Square and Camden Square. These are also designated as Private Open Space and Public Open Space, respectively, in Camden's LDF. Two strategic views in the Mayor of London's View Management Framework cross the Conservation Area, though neither impact upon the application site.



Camden Square Conservation Area Map - Urban Grain

Development Within the Conservation Area

There are a number of examples of contemporary, small scale residential buildings that have recently been built or granted planning permission in the vicinity, these are listed below;

Camden Square Conservation Area:

Address / Planning Reference	Description of Development
Rear of 3 Camden Square (2015/6764/P)	Demolition of single storey garage to the rear of 3 Camden Square (with façade retention) and the erection of a four bedroom three storey single family dwelling.
4 Murray Mews (2004/2616/P)	Erection a maisonette and 3 x 1-bedroom flats
13 Murray Mews (2016/6897/P)	Demolition of garages and creation of a single dwelling
16 Murray Street	Additional storey to single storey dwelling house
Rear of 144-146 Camden Road	Erection of a two storey residential dwelling

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(2010/2152/P)	house (class C3) within rear garden of 144-146 Camden Road fronting Rochester Square.
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Rochester Conservation Area:

Address / Planning Reference	Description of Development
Rear of 6 Wilmot Place 2012/3008/P ref: APP/X5210/A/12/218929	Erection of a two storey basement and ground floor residential dwelling following the demolition of existing four garages (Sui Generis)

In the above example at 6 Wilmot Place, won at appeal, the Inspector found that: *“The proposal would replace the garages, which are identified in the Conservation Area Statement as a negative feature in the street scene, with a modern dwelling of a similar height and mass. This would be a 2-storey house consisting of a basement and ground floor and a flat ‘green’ roof. I am satisfied that the character and the appearance of the Rochester Conservation Area would be preserved.”*

In the above example at 144-146 Camden Road, the officer’s report stated that *“The Camden Square Conservation Area has a positive history of good quality and imaginative in-fill additions”,* and that *“The Council welcomes the creation of additional housing where it meets acceptable standards.”*

The above examples show that new development for small scale residential dwellings that replace existing garages within both Camden Square and Rochester Conservation Areas is an established development principle. This form of development has been found by officers and inspectors, to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas.

5 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENT

The NPPF (2018) states that planning decisions must be determined in accordance with the development plan. The development plan in Camden comprises the NPPF (2018), The London Plan (2015), the Draft London Plan (2017), and Camden's Local Plan (2017). Supplementary guidance contained within the Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2011), is also relevant to the determination of the application.

Heritage Policy

NPPF (2018):

With regard to heritage assets and conservation areas, the NPPF (2018) states the following;

- Para 184: *Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.*
- Para 185: *Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. This strategy should take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*
- Para 189: *In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.*
- Para 192: *In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*
 - a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

Para 193: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the assets conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).

Para 200: 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 the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

- Para 201: Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance.

Assessment of NPPF (2018) policy

The NPPF (2018) provides clear support for new development in conservation areas which preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, stating that not all elements of a conservation contribute to its significance. The proposal to remove a single storey garage built in the mid 1970's, and replace it with a sensitively designed, contemporary dwelling which respects the existing scale, height and mass, is in accordance with the NPPF (2018).

Camden's Local Plan (2017)

Relevant policies from Camden's local plan comprise:

Policy D2 Heritage

Designated heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;*
- b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;*
- c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use. The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.*

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will take

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account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies when assessing applications within conservation areas. The Council will:

e. require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;

f. resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;

g. resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and

h. preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.

Assessment of Camden's Local Plan (2017) policy

Policy D2 provides clear support for proposals that preserve, or where possible, enhance the character or appearance of the area. The proposal, preserves and enhances the character of the Camden Square conservation area, by sensitively replacing the existing garage with a single storey dwelling.

Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2011)

Relevant extracts from the Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2011);

- *Stratford Villas links Rochester Square to Camden Square. This is a narrow street on an important cycle route, but also popular with drivers as a cut through from Camden Road. Lined by terraces of comparatively modest plot widths, its south east side has a shallow set-back only giving space for basement access rather than front gardens. There has been an unfortunate loss of detail (window surrounds and detail, metal work, etc) to some houses.*
- *Private rear gardens quietly add to the quality and biodiversity of the area. The gardens are almost all hidden from the street, glimpses to green space hidden behind and between buildings are precious and add to the quality of the area. At the junctions of streets the gardens of houses facing the main route run parallel to the side street. These side walls and gardens give a green break to the built layout.*
- *Glimpsed views of gardens: An aerial photograph of the area shows how green it is when taking the private gardens into view. The gardens are most visible at the corners of streets, where the gardens run parallel to the side street. At this point, trees and shrubs appear and give a green and important break between buildings. These are*

vulnerable places as development may reduce these green gaps and erode the views across the gardens

- *The general trend in the area is towards intensification of residential use: this shows in recent shop conversions to residential and pressure on building in gardens*
- *The green spaces and trees are critical to the quality of the area. Many trees are mature; planning for maintenance and reinstatement is an important and on-going concern.*
- *Rochester Square and its poor quality public realm is noted as an issue which requires significant improvement.*
- *In undertaking its development control function the Council will ensure that the historic details which are an essential part of the special architectural character of Camden Square Conservation Area are enhanced, preserved, repaired or reinstated where appropriate;*
- *The Council will seek to ensure that the departments responsible for the environment (highways/landscape/enforcement/planning/conservation and urban design) work in an effective, co-ordinated and consultative manner to ensure that historic interest within the public realm is maintained and enhanced where appropriate;*
- *In the residential part of the conservation area investment in the public realm will help support investment in the building fabric of that area and help protect its residential qualities and environment*
- *There is scope for new buildings in the area; particularly the remaining gap sites in the mews and the areas identified for new development in section 5 above.*
- *Development which results in the loss of private open spaces is unlikely to be acceptable if it is considered to harm the contribution of these spaces to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Particular care should be taken when considering development within rear gardens in prominent positions, for example those on corner sites, where the visual impact of a proposal may be greater.*
- *Gaps between buildings represent an important established feature of relief in an otherwise densely developed environment, where the buildings are generally arranged in terraces 3 storeys in height. The Council will resist development in gaps where they are formed;*

- *between semi-detached and detached properties,*
- *back garden development, where it can be seen from the public realm, will be resisted, in order to preserve green gaps within streetscapes and views along rear vistas.*
- *High quality design and high quality execution will be required of all new development at all scales, and opportunities for enhancement and further revealing the significance of the conservation area should be taken.*
- *Unbroken runs of boundary walls to gardens are a key characteristic of the area. The traditional treatment of the boundary varies according to the date and style of property. Paths, boundary walls and other details characteristic of the street should be retained or reinstated unless new solutions can be presented which enhance the area. Where boundary walls or railings have been lost or replaced in non-original materials or to a different design we encourage residents to restore them to their original form.*
- *Front and rear gardens within the residential streets make an important contribution to the streetscape and character of the residential area. The Council will resist the loss of soft landscaping and original boundary walls and railings*

Assessment of Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2011)

The Camden Square Conservation Area appraisal makes reference to the positive contribution that rear gardens make to the area. It also states that rear garden development will be resisted where it is publicly visible. In the case of this application, the proposal seeks to replace an existing garage with a building that respects the existing height, scale, mass and roof pitch. The overall impact of the proposal upon the Conservation Area is minimal, and seeks to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As set out in table 2, there are a number of examples within the Camden Square Conservation Area where existing garages have been replaced by dwellings, and these have been found to be in accordance with the Development Plan and the Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2011). The sensitive nature of the proposal and its minimal style of intervention, ensures that it preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

‘Conservation Area designation is about recognising the significance of an area and what gives it its special character. Designation is not intended to prevent change but to make sure that the effects on what people value about a place are properly considered.’

English Heritage.

Amenity Policy

CPG 6 Amenity:

To ensure privacy, there should normally be a minimum distance of 18m between the windows of habitable rooms of different units that directly face each other. This minimum requirement will be the distance between the two closest points on each building (including balconies).

Where this standard cannot be met we may require you to incorporate some of the following design measures into your scheme to ensure overlooking is reduced to an acceptable level. Design measures to reduce the potential for overlooking and the loss of privacy include:

- *Careful consideration of the location of your development, including the position of rooms;*
- *Careful consideration of the location, orientation and size of windows depending on the uses of the rooms;*
- *Use of obscure glazing;*
- *Screening by walls or fencing; and*
- *Screening by other structures or landscaping.*

The proposed dwelling is 9.8m meters from the nearest habitable room on Stratford Villas, and 15.2m meters from the nearest habitable rooms on Rochester Square. The privacy of surrounding properties is achieved through the new party wall which obscures overlooking from the Stratford Villas properties. The obscured windows fronting Rochester Square and the change in level (Rochester Square properties are set significantly higher), naturally mitigates against room to room overlooking.

Assessment of Amenity Policy

The proposal, by virtue of being set some 9.8 and 15.2 meters from the nearest habitable rooms, in an urban location, and with the proposed mitigation measures (obscured windows and party wall) is in accordance with the Amenity guidance set out in CPG 6. The two elevations with aspect onto Stratford Villas and Rochester Square are appropriately mitigated.

6 HERITAGE STATEMENT

Description of the heritage asset and its setting

As set out in section 4, the site forms part of the Camden Square Conservation Area, it borders Rochester Square, which is a designated London Square.

Though the site is located to the rear of 17 Stratford Villas, in its current form the existing garage fronts Rochester Square, opposite the semi detached houses.

The garage was built in the mid to late 1970's and does not form part of the original layout of Camden Square as conceived, when the area was built between 1840 and 1849.

Properties opposite the site along the eastern side of Rochester Square are uniform in their style and similar in appearance and detailing to Stratford Villas. The properties are semi detached mid 19th Century dwellings with small front gardens, with semi-basements and steep steps to the front doors. The aspect from the front of the properties is over the gardens of Stratford Villas, and further up the road, onto the tree lined site boundary of Rochester Square.

The pavement in front of properties on Rochester Square is wide with York stone paving. On the opposite (application site) side there is a narrow tarmacked footway and a dropped kerb immediately outside the garage entrance. The quality of the public realm here is not wholly in good condition, as the footpath is narrow and the Rochester Square site is in a state of dereliction, though it is screened in most places by semi mature trees and shrubs.

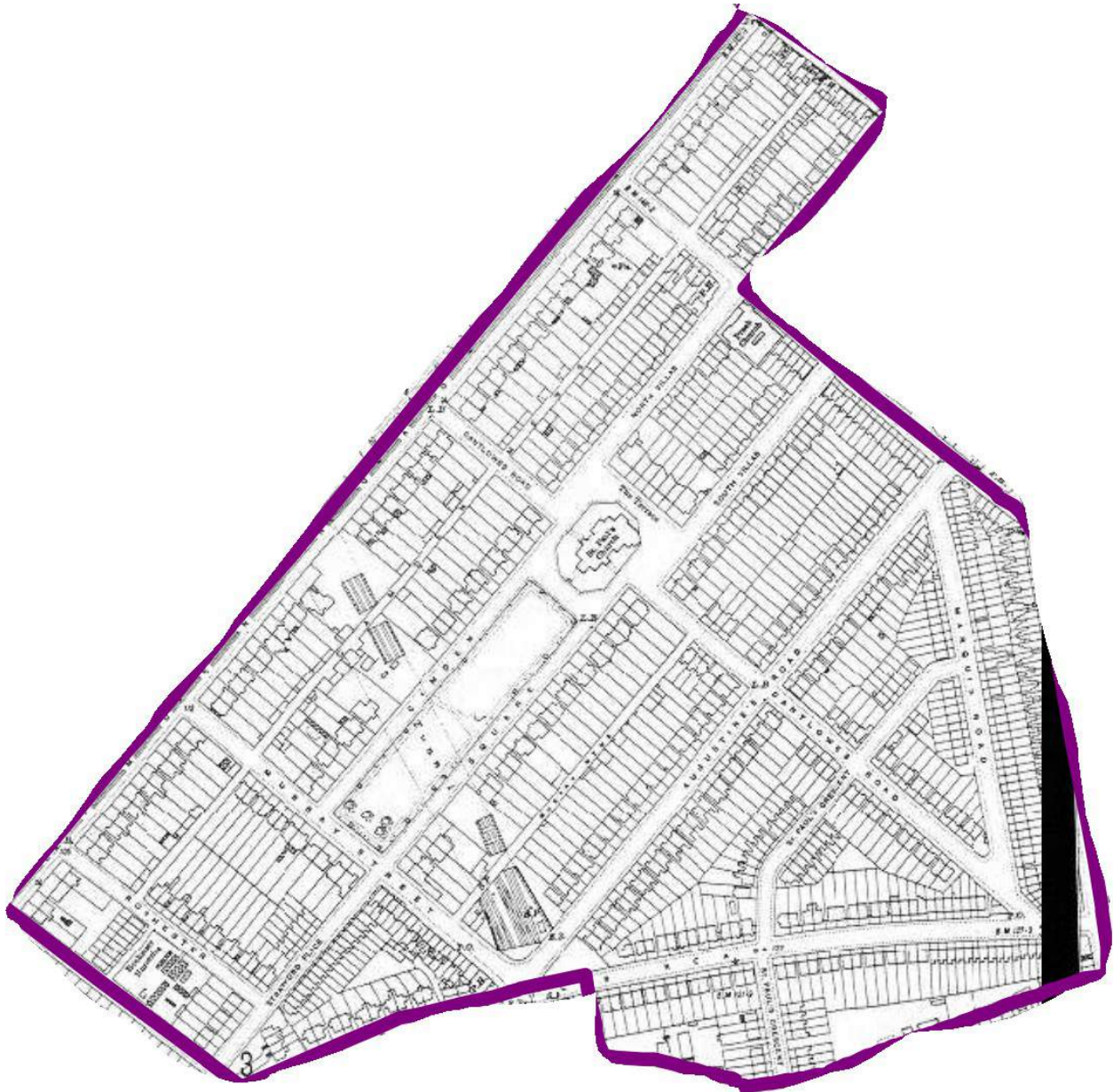


View showing streetscene and public realm

Assessment of significance

The garage is not a heritage asset in its own right, being built in the mid to late 1970's. It does not form part of the architectural or historical significance of the Camden Square Conservation Area. It's detailing is simple, being made of brick, with a dual pitched slate roof with gable ends. Given its simplicity and materials, it is neutral in terms of its significance and contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Historic Map of conservation Area 1914 (the garage is not yet built)



An explanation of the design concept for the proposed development

The design concept is minimal intervention, contemporary architecture which respects the existing scale, footprint, height and materials of the existing garage. Sustainable design features and future proofing measures have been incorporated, to create a high quality dwelling house which sits harmoniously within the Conservation Area.

Though the proposed footprint is larger than the existing garage, its impact upon the Conservation Area and public views are similar to that of the existing garage building, there is very little change overall. The slight increases in height creates a quality living environment (in line with current London Plan standards).

The proposed architecture is contemporary, and uses light yellow London stock brick as found in the surrounding properties in combination with light yellow umbra brick to create visual interest and variations in the detailing of the facade. The simple form of the architecture is complemented by intricacies within the brick detailing, with solid and void elements of the facade creating dynamic textures which interplay with light and protect privacy.

Impact of the proposed development

The proposal, as with the existing building, will be visible from public view, with the side elevation fronting Rochester Square. Its orientation is to the south east, fronting 17 Stratford Villas, with the north east elevation onto Rochester Square forming the return elevation. This differs from the current arrangement of the garage, which is orientated to Rochester Square, where the large blank garage door faces the street, and the return elevation fronts Stratford Villas.

By removing the garage there is no loss of original architectural or historical features relevant to the Conservation Area, as the garage is a 1970's intervention and bears no relation to the significance of the Camden Square Conservation Area. That said, its form and detailing are simple and neutral, and the proposal seeks to respect its overall scale, mass and height, to ensure that the proposal respects the existing built form.

The proposal preserves the character and appearance of the street and would be a significant improvement upon the existing scenario. The garage is only used for storage and has little relation or interaction with the street. The proposed elevation with two windows fronting Rochester Square would improve the site's contribution to the street and the Conservation Area.

The proposed design and material selection will complement the Conservation Area, preserving its character and appearance. The removal of the garage and its replacement with a contemporary dwelling will improve the streetscene and the site's relationship with properties on Rochester Square.

7 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Use

The proposal seeks to create a residential use from what is currently an ancillary residential use. The surrounding uses are predominantly residential in character, which is common throughout the Conservation Area.

Scale & Amount

The proposed single storey scale seeks to respect the existing form of the garage, which is 3.4m in height at the top of the existing ridge. Increasing this to 4m respects the nature of the existing scale, and provides a functional and practical height for the proposed residential use. The amount of development is well mannered and consider, creating one bedroom dwelling of 50sq.m GIA.

Layout

The proposed layout is logical and legible and has been designed to maximise the quality of the living spaces. The orientation of the main aspect is south east facing and maximises the amount of natural light received. The dwelling has been designed to be adaptable and accessible in accordance with building regulations part M4 (2).

Appearance

From public vantage points the proposal will have as little impact as the existing garage. The proposed brick facades create a contemporary and sensitive response to the local vernacular brick buildings within the Conservation Area.

Access

Access into the dwelling is from Rochester Square, whereby an external door leads to a small entrance yard. From there, the front door of the property is accessed. Sliding doors allow the south east elevation to be opened up onto the external patio area. Storage for bins and bicycles is provided within the site, away from the street.

Landscaping

The landscaping is minimal and will be focused around the area of external hardstanding which makes up the patio area.

8 CONCLUSIONS

This Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement supports a proposal for the demolition of the existing single storey garage and the creation of a single storey 1 bedroom dwelling house, with access from Rochester Square. The dwelling comprises a shared kitchen, dining and living room, a bathroom, external ground floor patio area and internal bin and bike storage. The orientation of the dwelling is south east facing, with full height glazed doors that open onto the patio area.

Sustainable design features have been incorporated and include solar collecting roof tiles, a rainwater collection tank, natural, cross ventilation and off street storage for bins and bicycles. The dwelling has been designed to be adaptable and accessible and meets requirements of building regulations part M4(2).

The height, scale and mass of the existing garage has been respected, and the proposed dwelling ensures that it sensitively responds to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

With regard to heritage policy, the proposal is in accordance with the NPPF (2018) which provides clear support for new development in conservation areas which preserve their character and appearance, stating that not all elements of a conservation contribute to their significance. The proposal is in accordance with Camden's Local Plan (2017) Policy D2, which also supports proposals that preserve and enhance the character of Conservation Areas.

The proposal is in accordance with the Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2011) as it seeks to replace an existing garage with a high quality contemporary building of the appropriate height, scale, mass and detailing. As set out in table 2, there are a number of examples within the Camden Square Conservation Area where existing garages have been replaced by dwellings, and these have been found to be in accordance with the Development Plan, including the Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2011). The sensitive nature of the proposal and minimal style of intervention ensures that it preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

With regard to amenity, the proposal, by virtue of being set some 9.8m and 15.2m from the nearest neighbouring habitable rooms, in an urban location, and with the proposed mitigation measures (obscured windows and party wall) is in accordance with the Amenity guidance set out in CPG 6. The two elevations with aspect onto Stratford Villas and Rochester Square are appropriately mitigated.

Overall, the proposal meets the requirements of National, Regional and Local policies. It is therefore requested that planning permission is granted.