

**Design Statement**

rev03

**7, 8 Oak Hill Park Mews**

**London**

**NW3 7LH**

**Planning application**

PLANNING 12

**Steel and cable balustrade  
behind planters (with planting)  
to existing roof terrace**

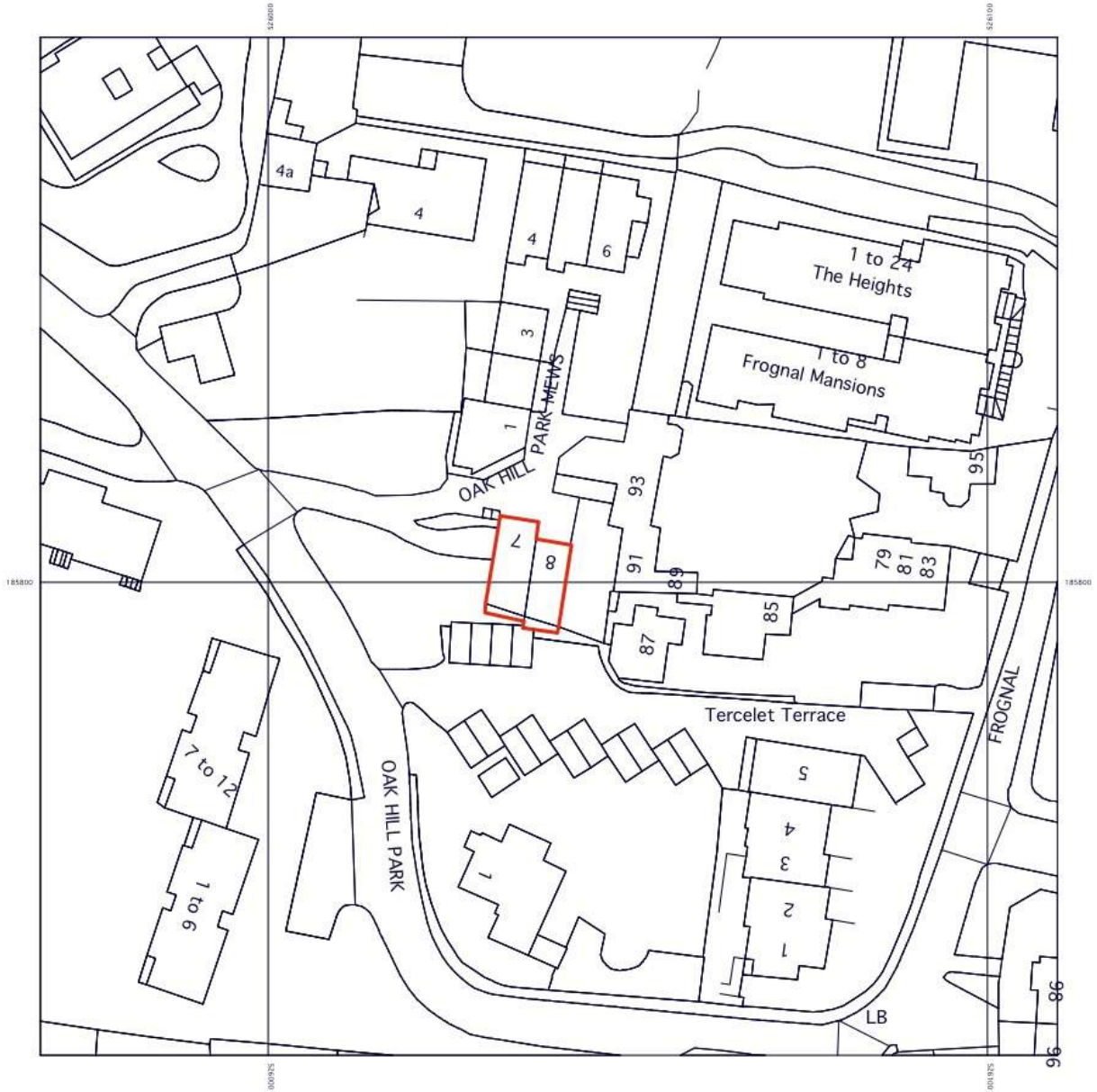
and

**previously consented side extensions and roof extensions**

## **Contents**

Location Plan  
Photographs of Existing  
Existing Building  
Planning History  
Design Statement

Location Plan



**Photographs of Existing**



**South Elevation**





North Elevation



North Elevation





**South East Elevation from 1 Oak Hill Park Mews**



**South Elevation from 1 Oak Hill Park Mews**





**West Elevation**

## **Existing Buildings**

The existing buildings at 7 and 8 Oak Hill Park Mews sit within the conservation area of Hampstead.

The existing building at 7 and 8 Oak Hill Park Mews is a pair of semi-detached three storey single-family dwellings built over an underground car park. In plan the building reads as two rectangles offset from each other.

The building was built in about 1962 in a contemporary style, with a flat roof and terraces at second floor that are cut into the rectangular massing of the building. There are large expanses of glazing to the elevations and a mix of cladding materials consisting of timber, brickwork and slate. There are existing door openings onto the terraces at second floor level.

To the south of the site the ground falls away to an area with two rows of lock up garages. To the east there is amenity space on the ground floor level and residential properties of three storeys plus pitched roof beyond. Oak Hill Park Mews extends to the north. To the west of number 7 Oak Hill Park Mews there is a green space with mature trees, access to the underground car park and Oak Hill Park road beyond.

To the flat roof above the properties there is an existing plant room. The flat roof is at present accessed via a fixed ladder to the rear of number 8.



## Planning History

**Refused** (Nov 16 2011)- Full Planning Permission. Under application 2011/4671/P planning permission was refused for erection of extensions at second floor level front and rear, erection of roof extension with rear roof terrace including balustrading all in connection with existing dwelling houses.

**Appeal Decided** (Nov 19 2013)- Full Planning Permission. The above application was appealed and refused under application 2012/4929/P.

**Granted** (May 13 2015)- Full Planning Permission. Under application 2014/7160/P permission was granted for the creation of front and rear extensions and associated alterations to building fenestration.

**Granted** (Sep 8 2015)- Full Planning Permission. Under application 2015/3569/P permission was granted for the installation of accessible roof lights and new plant at roof level.

**Granted** (Mar 14 2016)- Certificate of Lawfulness (Proposed). Application 2015/6854/P confirmed the lawful use of existing flat roof at third floor level as a terrace, in association with existing dwelling house.

**Granted** (Jun 21 2016) - Variation or Removal of Condition(s). Under application 2016/2156/P removal of condition 4 of application granted 08/09/2015 for installation of accessible roof lights and new plant room at roof level and for use of existing flat roof at third floor level as a terrace, in association with existing dwelling house.

**Granted** (Sep 21 2017) - Full Planning Permission. Under application 2017/3844/P permission was granted for installation of accessible sliding box roof lights and new plant room at roof level and for use of existing flat roof at third floor level as a terrace, in association with existing dwelling house. Erection of front and side extensions and associated alterations to building fenestration.

## Design Statement

### Outline of proposals

The purpose of this application is for the approval of the erection of planters and balustrade to the roof edge to the third roof terrace.

The application also includes previously consented elements of development as follows:

*Creation of front and side extensions and associated alterations to building fenestration.*

Consented application 2014/7160.

and

*Installation of accessible sliding box roof lights and new plant room at roof level. Erection of front and side extensions and associated alterations to building fenestration.* Consented application 2017/3844.

### Balustrades and planters-

This submission is for the erection of planters and balustrade to the roof edge to the third roof terrace (terrace as consented under application 2015/6854/P) at 7 and 8 Oak Hill Park Mews. It is proposed that the balustrades will be painted steel balustrades and hand rail with vertical stainless steel wire cable infill. The planter will sit in front of the balustrade and facilitate planting to grow up the wire cable to the balustrades. It is proposed that the balustrades to the north, south, east and west façades are 1100mm high from finished floor level with the planters at 400mm high.

The balustrades respect the day and sun light constraint reports prepared by Jessop Associates and provided as part of planning application 2012/4929/P and its subsequent appeal.

The balustrades will be designed to be as minimal as possible and are set back from the edge of the facades there by limiting any potential overlooking to adjacent properties and views to the balustrades from street level. The balustrades therefore do not have a negative effect on the Conservation Area.

The balustrades are required for safety purposes. The use as terrace is existing but cannot currently be used safely.

The balustrades respect the day and sun light constraint reports prepared by Jessop Associates and provided as part of planning application 2012/4929/P and its subsequent appeal.

The over-riding aim is to provide guarding at roof level for safety purposes.

The most fitting way of doing this is using glass as it is already a material widely used in the existing building. The glass is lightweight in appearance, clear (transparent) so avoids creating a sense of mass and is set back from the building edge.

If however it is concluded that guarding can be provided in a manner that is more agreeable to the planning department then the applicant is open to agreeing a revised solution. In order to facilitate this as an option a separate application has been submitted for planning approval that presents an alternative proposal (clear glass set back from roof edge). We trust that both applications will be processed by the same planning case officer allowing their individual merits to be properly considered.



The planters are 400mm high and so will project only 150-200mm above the existing parapet upstands.

The planting will provide a natural softening that compliments the very green setting of the building.

The balustrade (comprised mainly of stainless steel cable) will sit behind the planters and planting and set in from the roof edge. They will be entirely concealed by the planting and so will not be visible from the public realm.

The planters are positioned behind the existing parapet upstand. They have a depth of 400mm (front to back) and the setting of the balustrade behind the planters (set back from roof edge) will limit any potential overlooking to adjacent properties and views onto the balustrades from street level.

The roof has permitted use as a terrace. It is very common to include planting on a terrace. The proposal therefore is an intervention that would be undertaken anyway outside of the planning process.

This proposal has not been tabled previously - either pre-application advice or planning application format. Therefore there is no specific advice to measure the proposal against. However we have assessed the proposal in terms of the points raised with respect to the glass balustrade proposals i.e. previous pre-application advice (2014/1824/PRE), verbal advice given at a meeting on site (17.04.19) and in particular pre-application advice (2019/1501/PRE). Please see below some comments that refer to specific points raised in this advice:-

## CPG Altering and extending your home

### 1) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'A terrace area provided at roof level should be set back .....behind a parapet on a flat roof.'*

### b) WEBB comment:

i) The proposed balustrading is set back behind the planter and behind the parapet of the flat roof.

### 2) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'A terrace will only normally be acceptable on the rear of properties.'*

### b) WEBB comment:

i) The host building has no obvious dominant front or rear. The side of the building approached by pedestrians, with front doors, is probably the least public face of the building. The building is unique, it stands apart from other buildings and has no obvious formal frontage. The architecture of the host building seems to treat all side with equal status. The proposed balustrading has been treated similarly – the balustrading has been set back on all sides but without emphasis on any one side.

### 3) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'It should not result in the parapet height being altered, ...'*

# WEBB ARCHITECTS LIMITED

b) WEBB comment:

- i) The parapet height is being retained. The balustrade is set back behind the parapet and will have no impact on any of the existing façade fabric;
- ii) The proposed balustrades will be at a significantly lower height than the proposed / approved plant room enclosure and access enclosure;

4) Pre-appl comment :

- i) *'Any handrails ..... be invisible from the ground.'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) The handrail, part of the balustrade, is set back behind the planter and planting and as such will be concealed by the planting;

5) Pre-appl comment :

- i) *'Glazed balustrades around balconies or roof terraces are unlikely to be acceptable on traditional buildings because they can appear unduly prominent...'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) Glass balustrades are not proposed for this option;
- ii) The only readily visible element of the proposal is the planting. This will merge with the very green surroundings of the host building;
- iii) The planting, the only visible part of the proposal is an intervention that would be undertaken anyway as part of the use of the roof as a terrace;

6) Pre-appl comment :

- i) *'It should not result in overlooking of habitable rooms of adjacent properties.'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) The property stands apart from it's neighbours and on two sides is surrounded by open ground. Overlooking of neighbours is not considered an issue.
- ii) The permitted use of the roof as a terrace already exists as both properties benefit from a certificate of lawfulness confirming the roof as a terrace under refs 2015/6853/P and 2015/6854/P, therefore it is not considered that the installation of balustrades would intensify their use to an extent that would increase overlooking or loss of privacy.



## Hampstead Conservation Area statement

### 7) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'In an area of such variety the roofscape changes from street to street. Great care therefore has to be taken to note the appropriate context for proposals as insensitive alterations can harm the character of the roofscape with poor materials, intrusive dormers, inappropriate windows. In many instances there is no further possibility of alterations.'*

#### b) WEBB comment:

i) The roofs of the host property are flat and so continued use for terraces with just the addition of planters and planting (and concealed cable balustrade) means that any alteration to the existing building is minimal.

### 8) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'Care should be given to locating gardens [terraces] so that they do not have a detrimental impact on the street scene, surrounding buildings or on the architectural quality of the building.'*

#### b) WEBB comment:

i) The guarding is composed mainly of planting, with concealed balustrade, set back from the building edge. Any more elements such as handrails and posts are concealed by planting. As such they are a low impact intervention.

### 9) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'....the handrails would not be sufficiently set back behind the line of the roof slope, and will be highly visible from the ground.'*

#### b) WEBB comment:

i) Planting will be visible. This is considered a common and welcome visible element.

### 10) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'.... the glazed balustrades around the roof terraces would be unacceptable as they appear unduly prominent and given their reflective qualities would fail to appear lightweight.'*

#### b) WEBB comment:

i) The planting will be visible in a positive manner;  
ii) Reflective qualities are not applicable with this proposal;

11) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'To the North, the glass balustrades will be obscure and 1.7m high ....'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) The planters are 400mm high and the balustrades, in the application proposal, are standard height (1.1m) and concealed by planting.
- ii) The possibility of the balustrades appearing more solid has been designed out.

12) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'The applicant has outlined that they believe there is no prevailing pattern of building type that establish a 'character' within this conservation and that the use of glass balustrades would not be uncharacteristic given the modern forms and mix of styles found in neighbouring properties.'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) This proposal does not alter or add to the existing fabric of the host building;
- ii) The installation of planters and planting does not need to correspond to any specific style as plants are a universal element that can sit with any form or style of building;

13) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'The conservation area statement acknowledges that Hampstead has a variety of building types, ages and styles.'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) Building type, age and style is largely irrelevant when considering the introduction of planting;

14) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'...the proposal does not integrate well with the host properties and appears as an incongruous addition that has not taken into consideration the context of the buildings, streetscene or conservation area.'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) The planting will not read as part of the building;
- ii) Questions of failure to integrate or incongruous addition are not relevant as the planting will read as a separate element in the same way that a tree sits next to the building;
- iii) The only solid building material element that could be visible is the planter – but as this is only 400mm high and sitting no more than 200mm above the existing parapet then it will not be seen from the public realm;



15) Pre-appl comment :

i) *The Council's Conservation Officer has reviewed this proposal and does not consider that the balustrades would preserve or enhance the Hampstead Conservation Area.*

b) WEBB comment:

i) In terms of visible impact on the Conservation Area the proposal consist of introduction of greenery. Throughout Hampstead the addition of natural planting is common and welcome;

16) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'The applicant has acknowledged that the balustrade would be visible from the public realm and neighbouring streets. The photos showing the proposed height of the balustrades also confirm its visual prominence.'*

b) WEBB comment:

i) The planting will be visible in a positive manner;

17) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'The site given its location, open character and varying land levels within the surrounding streets makes both properties highly visible in both long and short views.'*

b) WEBB comment:

i) The building is visible from many locations - close and far.

ii) What will be visible however is the strong architecture of the stonework etc of the existing building not the addition of planting when the site is surrounded by abundant greenery;

18) Pre-appl comment :

i) *'Although glass balustrades have been granted at lower levels in historic planning applications, the Council have maintained the viewpoint that glass balustrades obscure or clear would be an inappropriate addition at roof level given its prominent location and then photos provided further support that these would be visible in long and short views from the street.'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) See above.
- ii) Glass not used or relevant in this application;

19) Pre-appl comment :

- i) *'.....the proposed balustrades would impact on the integrity of the existing building appearing as an afterthought rather than part of the integrated design of the buildings.'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) The inclusion of planting to any property would only be considered as a thoughtful addition – never an afterthought;

20) Pre-appl comment :

- i) *'It is not considered that glazing at high level, given its reflective qualities, would appear lightweight.'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) Glass not used or relevant in this application;

21) Pre-appl comment :

- i) *'In particular the use of obscure glass would make the balustrade appear as a solid and dense addition'.*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) Glass not used or relevant in this application;

22) Pre-appl comment :

- i) *'.....the balustrades would be much closer the roof edges and appear as a solid addition which would be read as an extension.'*

b) WEBB comment:

- i) Glass not used or relevant in this application;

23) Pre-appl comment :

- i) *'The obscure glazing further adds to its solid appearance'.*

b) WEBB comment:

i) Glass not used or relevant in this application;

24) Pre-appl comment :

*i) It is noted that both properties benefit from a certificate of lawfulness confirming the roof as a terrace under refs 2015/6853/P and 2015/6854/P, therefore it is not considered that the installation of balustrades would intensify their use to an extent that would warrant a reason for refusal in terms of further overlooking or loss of privacy.*

b) WEBB comment:

*i) This is as we understand also.*

## **Summary**

The proposed planting will be a welcome natural installation to the roof terrace. The proposal will not add to or alter the existing architecture. Elements of the installation that are not green planting will be concealed – planter behind existing parapet upstand and cable balustrade behind the planting.

The proposal provides the safety necessary for the terrace in a manner that does not alter the building fabric.