



# The Coach House, Hampstead Lane, London N6 4RU

## Townscape Visual Impact Assessment

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## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Coach House, Hampstead Lane, Highgate, London N6 4RU is an unlisted building which is located within the Highgate Village Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden. The building comprises a two-storey house originally built as stables in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and it has been altered during the 21<sup>st</sup> century, converted for use as a modern residential dwelling.
- 1.2. The proposals involve a first floor extension over the existing single-storey east “wing”, and an eastward extension of the existing roof to match the original (over the proposed first floor extension).

This Townscape Visual Impact Assessment (“TVIA”) has been produced to assess the visual impact of the proposals on the townscape surrounding the subject site, and in particular three principal views of the area.

- 1.3. This assessment complies with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, February 2019) and the online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in respect of Heritage issues. It also considers the National Guidance on Good Design (drafted by the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government) [Appendix 3]. This report should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Statement (September 2019) which is part of this application.
- 1.4. As detailed in the Heritage Statement, the proposals may have an impact on the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden (“Camden’s CA”), and on the setting of the Highgate Conservation Area in the London Borough of Haringey (“Haringey’s CA”). The setting of a heritage asset is defined as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Elements of a setting may make a positive, neutral or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral (NPPF glossary).
- 1.5. Historic England’s *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (December 2017) [Appendix 2] observes that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset (paragraph 10). The document states that the protection and enhancement of setting is intimately linked to townscape and urban design considerations. Setting often relates to townscape attributes such as enclosure, definition of streets and spaces and spatial qualities as well as lighting, trees, and verges, or the treatments of boundaries or street surfaces. The document also recommends that where complex issues involving views come into play in the assessment of setting – whether for the purposes of providing a baseline for plan-making or for development management – a formal views analysis may be merited.
- 1.6. The subject site is located within the Highgate Conservation Area, which was designated by the London Borough of Camden in 1968 and extended in 1978 and 1992. The Conservation Area is characterised by its open spaces and greenery and by its historic layout and historic buildings (many of which are residential dwellings with generously sized gardens). The London Borough of Camden recognises Athlone House (formerly the mansion at Caen Wood Towers) as being a positive contributor to the Highgate Conservation

Area, along with its ancillary buildings. but this does not necessarily mean it is a non-designated heritage asset. The National Planning Guidance (Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 18a-040-20190723) emphasises that non-designated heritage assets are clearly identified by local planning authorities together with the relevant selection criteria. The building on the subject site (the “Coach House”) was constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the stables for Caen Wood Towers, and as such is one of Athlone House’s “ancillary buildings”. By implication, therefore, the Coach House is considered a positive contributor to the Conservation Area. Its principal heritage significance is derived from its (medium) historical value, and the (medium) aesthetic value of its front elevation. Its setting value is also considered to be medium.

## 1.7. Authorship

- **Dorian A T A Crone** BA BArch DipTP RIBA MRTPI IHBC - Heritage and Design Consultant. Dorian has been a Chartered Architect and Chartered Town Planner for over 30 years. He has also been a member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation for 25 years. Dorian is a committee member of The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the International Committee on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), ICOMOS UK and Institute of Historic Building Conservation. He has been a court member with the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects and a trustee of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust. He is currently a trustee of both the Dance and Drake Trusts.

Dorian has worked for over 30 years as Historic Buildings and Areas Inspector with English Heritage, responsible for providing advice to all the London Boroughs and both the City Councils. Dorian has also worked as a consultant and expert witness for over 20 years advising a wide variety of clients on heritage and design matters involving development work, alterations, extensions and new build projects associated with listed buildings and conservation areas in design and heritage sensitive locations. He is a panel member of the John Betjeman Design Award and the City of London Heritage Award. He is also a Design Review Panel member of the South-West region; as well as the London Boroughs of Islington, Wandsworth and Richmond-upon-Thames and of the Design Council (CABE). In addition, Dorian has also been involved with the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition Architectural Awards and the Philip Webb Award along with a number other public sector and commercial design awards.

- **Dr Daniel Cummins** MA (Oxon) MSc PhD – Historic Environment Consultant. Daniel is an historian with a BA and Master’s in History from Oxford University and a doctorate from the University of Reading, where he specialised in ecclesiastical buildings and estates and had his work published in leading academic history journals.

Daniel has a Master’s in the Conservation of the Historic Environment and provides independent professional heritage advice and guidance to leading architectural practices and planning consultancies, as well as for private clients. He undertakes detailed historical research, significance statements, character appraisals, impact assessments and expert witness statements for new development projects, as well as for alterations and extensions which affect the fabric and settings of Listed Buildings and Locally Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, the outstanding universal value of World Heritage Sites, and all other types of heritage assets.

- **Melisa Thomas** BA PGDipLaw LPC – Heritage Consultant. Melisa’s Bachelor’s degree was in English and History. She then pursued a career in the law for some years whilst also working as a specialist guide

and researcher at Strawberry Hill House, Richmond-upon-Thames (during which time she has presented specialist lectures). Melisa joined Heritage Information in August 2018, and has since worked on a wide range of different projects. She is shortly to complete a Master's degree in the Conservation of the Historic Environment. Her specialist subjects are country houses, buildings from the Georgian period, vernacular architecture and urban townscapes. Due to her background in the law, she keenly follows developments in the regulation of the conservation and heritage industry through legislation, policies and case law.

## 2.0. METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA

2.2. A site visit was carried out on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019, during which three key viewpoints were selected within the public realm from which the townscape character of the subject site may best be appreciated and understood [Figure 1]. These specific points have been chosen where the proposals might impact on townscape, landscape, scale, height, massing, the Highgate Conservation Areas in both the London Boroughs of Camden and Haringey, and the settings of any other identified heritage assets. Consideration was given to the historical development of the area, its physical fabric (i.e. building types and materials), and key views to any notable historic buildings or other landmark structures:

- **Viewpoint 1:** From Hampstead Lane, looking South-West
- **Viewpoint 2:** From Hampstead Lane, looking South-East
- **Viewpoint 3:** From Hampstead Lane, looking South



Figure 1: The location of the subject site (outlined in red); and Verified Views labelled 1, 2 and 3. The boundary between the Camden's Highgate Conservation Area and the Haringey's Highgate Conservation Area is indicated by the blue line. (Please ignore the blue triangle, which has been erroneously placed.)

2.3. This Townscape Visual Impact Assessment ("TVIA") takes into account the good practice guidance outlined in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', Landscape Institute ("LI") and

Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), 3rd Edition, 2013: ("GLVIA3"). This guidance pertains to urban townscape as much as landscape. The guidance does not provide a detailed universal methodology, but it recognises that much of the assessment must rely on professional judgment.

- 2.4. This TVIA considers Historic England's *Setting of Heritage Assets* (as set out in **Appendix 1**), which observes that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset (paragraph 10). The document also recommends that where complex issues involving views come into play in the assessment of setting – whether for the purposes of providing a baseline for plan-making or for development management – a formal views analysis may be merited.

The analysis carries out a review of the proposals in the spirit of Paragraph 129 of the NPPF using the accepted and established criteria of most Design Review Panels and in particular used by the Design Council/CABE (Dorian Crone is a Design Review Panel Member of the South-West Region, the London Boroughs of Richmond-upon-Thames, Islington and Wandsworth, and the Design Council/CABE).

- 2.5. This TVIA has also evaluated the proposals according to the eight principles of the *Building in Context Toolkit* (2001) which was formulated by English Heritage and CABE to stimulate a high standard of design for development taking place in historically sensitive contexts. The founding and enduring principle is that all successful design solutions depend on allowing time for a thorough site analysis and character appraisal to fully understand context; the principles are listed in **Appendix 2**. The application of the principles of good design is considered to reduce or remove potential harm and provide enhancement. This assessment therefore also takes into account the online guidance relating to good design published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, a summary of which can be found in **Appendix 3**.
- 2.6. In accordance with **Steps 1 and 2** of the Historic England criteria [*Appendix 1*], the TVIA will firstly establish a baseline for each view against which to judge the impact of proposals upon the local townscape. The townscape in each view is described in terms of its constituent elements and character, including development patterns and scale (including use of materials, massing, density and enclosure), any heritage assets, green and open spaces, transport routes and uses; the way in which the townscape is experienced and by whom also forms part of the assessment. The extent to which proposals have an impact on the existing townscape character is often related to the sensitivity of the townscape to change. Criteria for assessing townscape sensitivity have been based on a variety of factors and attributes which are generally agreed to influence the existing character and value of the townscape:



Sensitivity	Criteria
Very High	Strong townscape structure and a distinctive intact character exhibiting unity, richness and harmony, and a strong sense of place. Internationally or nationally recognised townscape, e.g. a World Heritage Site or Grade I listed building, extremely susceptible to minor levels of change.
High	Strong townscape structure, distinctive features and a strong sense of place with some detracting features. Nationally or regionally recognised townscape or high quality and distinctive character, e.g. a Grade II* listed building or a conservation area containing a high proportion of listed buildings, susceptible to change.
Medium	Recognisable (perhaps locally recognised) townscape structure with some distinctive characteristics e.g. a Grade II listed building, a group of locally listed buildings or a conservation area, and in a reasonable condition. May be capable of low levels of change without affecting key characteristics.
Low	Undesignated townscape of local value with few distinctive characteristics. May contain elements in a poor state of repair. Capable of moderate levels of change/enhancement.
Negligible	Weak or disjointed townscape structure, capable of high levels of change/enhancement.

Source: Based on GLVIA3 (2013).

- 2.7. Using the baseline, the impact of the proposals on the views will be assessed by considering how the townscape may be changed or affected by reason of the latter's location or design. Aspects of townscape and design such as scale, height, mass, orientation, palette of materials and landscaping are particularly relevant. The assessment will illustrate how the proposals might affect the elements that make up the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the townscape and its distinctive character, and how observers may be affected by any changes in the content and character of the views. The potential impacts have been categorised as:

Magnitude of Impact	Criteria
Negligible	Impacts considered to cause no material change to the visual quality of the view.
Minimal	Impacts considered to make a limited impact on a townscape where there is some sensitivity to change. Where the proposed change would form a minor component of the wider scene that may affect slightly the character and quality of the townscape in the view or the setting of a heritage asset.
Moderate	Impacts considered to make an appreciable difference or change the quality of the townscape where there is some sensitivity to change. Where the proposed change would form a recognisable new element within the scene that would noticeably have an impact on the quality and character of the townscape in the view or the setting of a heritage asset.
Substantial	Impacts considered to cause a fundamental change in the appreciation of the townscape where there is a high sensitivity to change. Where the proposed change would affect the quality and character of a valued view, the character and quality of a highly sensitive townscape, or the setting of a highly significant heritage asset.

Source: Based on GLVIA3 (2013).

- 2.8. Impacts are therefore assessed in terms of the sensitivity of the townscape affected and the magnitude of the impact or change, and whether the impact is considered to be positive, negative or neutral. If the proposals will enhance the character and quality of the townscape, then the impact will be deemed **positive**; however, if they fail to sustain the quality of the townscape in the view by the removal of characterising elements or add new intrusive or discordant features then the impact will be deemed

**negative.** If the proposals preserve the quality of the townscape in the view, or where positive and negative impacts are finely balanced then the impact will be deemed **neutral**.

## 3.0. TOWNSCAPE VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 3.1. Viewpoint 1 – View from Hampstead Lane, looking South-West

#### 3.1.1. Baseline View 1



Figure 2: Baseline View 1 looking South-West from Hampstead Lane.

This View is taken from the north side of Hampstead Lane, to the east of the subject site. It shows the east elevation of the house on the subject site (the “Coach House”), and an oblique view of the front (north) elevation<sup>1</sup>. As the view is from the north side of the road, it is within the Highgate Conservation Area in Haringey (“Haringey’s CA”), looking into the Highgate Conservation Area in Camden (“Camden’s CA”). To the left (east) are the front gates to Beechwood Bungalow, its boundary wall and some of the trees in the front garden of Beechwood Bungalow. To the right (north) are some trees within the grounds of Highgate School. In the distance is the entrance to Caenwood Court and Athlone House. The purpose of this view is to show the part of the subject site which is subject to alteration according to the proposals (i.e. the east elevation and the easternmost part of the front elevation), and its effect on the character and appearance of Camden’s CA on the south side of the street, and the setting of Haringey’s CA on the north side of the street. (Both Conservation Areas are characterised by their open spaces and greenery and by their historic layout and historic buildings.)

<sup>1</sup> The north elevation is referred to as the front elevation, as it is facing the road. However, the main entrance is to the south elevation; and the building would formerly have served the Caen Wood Towers Estate to the south, effectively “turning its back on the road”. Therefore, it is likely that the north elevation was formerly subservient to the south elevation. Today, the building’s principal heritage significance derives from the north elevation; and it is the north elevation which encapsulates the building’s credentials as a positive contributor to the Highgate Conservation Area.



The front (north) elevation of the ground floor is mainly plain London stock brick. The front elevation of the first floor is principally of London stock brickwork, with some red brickwork, moulded brick detailing and purple terracotta tiles. There are eight bays in total, with lower-level windows to the second, fourth, fifth and seventh bays; and higher-level windows within the gable ends of the third and sixth bays. Between the line of the ground and first floors is a string course of angled protruding red bricks; and there is a second string course higher up. Between the two string courses are decorative receding panels of red brickwork. The easternmost bay (i.e. the first bay) has three of these panels, whereas the westernmost bay (i.e. the eighth bay) has five such panels.

The front entrance is to the east of the house, comprising two brick piers with round finials on top of each one (the left (eastern) one substantially damaged), and timber gates. Between the gates and the walls of the house is a wall of London stock brickwork matching that of the brickwork used for the front elevation of the house, and with a string course of angled red bricks which matches the decorative string courses to the house. This wall is lower than the height of the ground floor of the house. The plain wall to the west of the house (dividing the subject site's garden from the street) is significantly lower than the wall to the east; and its brickwork is of a slightly darker shade.

From this view the east elevation at ground floor level appears not to be visible. The east elevation at first floor level is of London stock brickwork; and the lower red-brick string course (as previously described) to the front elevation is continued around the east elevation. There is a gable end at the east elevation, with two windows somewhat irregularly placed within it: a larger sash window to the front, and a very small window further towards the rear. The slope of the gable end is interrupted by a parapet to the front of the house, but it continues further to the rear. Beneath the roofline is some subtle red-brick detailing which is an architectural reference to the red-brick string course between the ground and first floors.

The View has **low sensitivity**. It includes both Camden's Highgate Conservation Area and Haringey's Highgate Conservation Area. The view features a 19<sup>th</sup> century building and some greenery; and to that extent the character and appearance of Camden's Conservation Area is represented. However, it is a moderately contained view within a relatively narrow road with tall trees on either side; and the plain tarmac road is fairly prominent. Therefore, this View does not fully represent the character and appearance of Camden's Conservation Area. The road is a busy thoroughfare experienced by pedestrians and motorists/cyclists alike – but especially motorists/cyclists. The heritage significance of the Coach House is principally derived from the historic and aesthetic values of its front (north) elevation; and it is efficiently encapsulated in this View. There is moderate capacity for change and enhancement. The subject site is considered to make a positive contribution to the townscape and setting in View 1, as well as to the settings of both Camden's Highgate Conservation Area and Haringey's Highgate Conservation Area.

### 3.1.2. Proposed View 1



Figure 3: Proposed View 1.

The View following the proposed first floor extension to the “east wing” of the subject site can be seen in Figure 3. It illustrates how the length of the first (i.e. easternmost) bay of the front elevation at first floor level will be elongated so that it contains seven as opposed to three red-brick “panels”; and yet there is no discernible increase in mass and scale. The boundary wall to the east of the house comprises the same London stock brickwork as the front elevation of the house at ground floor level; and therefore the proposed first floor extension does not have a very noticeable impact on the appearance of the wall and front elevation from this View. The string course between the ground and first floors on the front elevation continues around the proposed east elevation in the same way as it does around the existing east elevation in the Baseline View. The positioning of the two windows to the first floor of the east elevation is different in the Proposed View to how it is in the Baseline View, as they have essentially swapped places. Given the fact the roof of the extended first floor is an exact replica of the existing roof, it looks the same from this View. The extension has been designed to integrate into the original building fully and to complement it in a well-considered visually literate manner (with the same architectural detailing and use of materials). Therefore the extension has little if any visual impact. The damaged finial on top of the easternmost pier has been restored in the Proposed View.

The proposed alterations are not easily noticeable from this View, and they will cause no material change to the visual qualities of the View. Accordingly, the magnitude of impact of the proposals on View 1 is considered to be **negligible and neutral**.

### 3.2. Viewpoint 2 – View from Hampstead Lane, looking South-East

#### 3.2.1. Baseline View 2



Figure 4: Baseline View 2 looking South-East from Hampstead Lane.

This View is taken from the north side of Hampstead Lane, to the west of the subject site. It shows the west elevation of the Coach House, and an oblique view of the front (north) elevation. As the view is from the north side of the road, it is within Haringey's CA, looking into Camden's CA. To the left (north) is the open playing field of Highgate School and some trees. To the right (south) is the boundary wall of brown brickwork (with terracotta tiles on the tops), and some trees in the gardens of the subject site and the driveway of Caenwood Court. The purpose of this view is to show the impact which the proposed alterations might have on the character and appearance of Camden's CA on the south side of the street, and the setting of Haringey's CA on the north side of the street. (Both Conservation Areas are characterised by their open spaces and greenery and by their historic layout and historic buildings.)

The front elevation of the Coach House at ground floor level is mainly plain London stock brick. There are four windows to the ground floor which are seemingly arbitrarily placed. The front elevation of the Coach House at first floor level is principally of London stock brickwork, with some red brickwork, moulded brick detailing and purple terracotta. There are eight bays in total, with lower-level windows to the second, fourth, fifth and seventh bays; and higher-level windows within the gable ends of the third and sixth bays. Between the line of the ground and first floors is a string course of angled protruding red bricks; and there is a second string course higher up.

The ground floor of the west elevation has a French window with a rounded terracotta decoration over the top, which is an architectural reference to the terracotta detailing to the front elevation. The previously mentioned string course between the ground and first floors continues around the west elevation; there is a red-brick string course. The slope of the gable end is interrupted by a parapet to the front of the house, but it continues further to the rear; and there is a large sash window to the front of the first floor and a much smaller window to the rear. There is a tall chimney stack above the apex of the roof, which is visible from the west elevation.

The View has **low sensitivity**. It includes both Camden's Highgate Conservation Area and Haringey's Highgate Conservation Area. The view features a 19<sup>th</sup> century building and some greenery; and to that extent the character and appearance of Camden's Conservation Area is represented. However, it is a moderately contained view within a relatively narrow road with tall trees on either side; and the plain tarmac road is fairly prominent. Therefore, this View does not fully represent the character and appearance of Camden's Conservation Area. The road is a busy throughfare experienced by pedestrians and motorists/cyclists alike – but especially motorists/cyclists. The heritage significance of the Coach House is principally derived from the historic and aesthetic values of its front (north) elevation; and it is effectively encapsulated in this View. There is moderate capacity for change and enhancement. The subject site is considered to make a positive contribution to the townscape and setting in View 2, as well as to the settings of both Camden's Highgate Conservation Area and Haringey's Highgate Conservation Area.

### 3.2.2. Proposed View 2



Figure 5: Proposed View 2.

The View following the proposed first floor extension to the “east wing” of the subject site can be seen in Figure 5. There is very little change, save for the fact the east end of the house has been lengthened, and part of the boundary wall incorporated into the new extension. Given the fact the easternmost bay (to the front elevation) is in the distance, it looks as though it is approximately the same length as the westernmost bay.

There is no discernible increase in mass and scale. The boundary wall to the east of the house comprises the same London stock brickwork as the front elevation of the house at ground floor level; and therefore the proposed first floor extension does not have a very noticeable impact on the appearance of the wall and front elevation from this View. The extension has been designed to integrate into the original building fully and to complement it in a well-considered visually literate manner (with the same architectural detailing and use of materials). Therefore the extension has little if any visual impact.



The proposed alterations are not easily noticeable from this View and they will cause no material change to the visual qualities of the View. Accordingly, the magnitude of impact of the proposals on View 1 is considered to be **negligible and neutral**.

### 3.3. Viewpoint 3 – View from Hampstead Lane, looking South

#### 3.3.1. Baseline View 3



Figure 6: Baseline View 3 looking South from Hampstead Lane.

This View is taken from the north side of Hampstead Lane, to the north of the subject site. It shows part of the front elevation and the east elevation of the Coach House together with the entrance gate, and a glimpse of Caenwood Court in the background. As the View is from the north side of the road, it is within Haringey's CA, looking into Camden's CA. The purpose of this View is to show the impact which the proposed alterations might have on the townscape and the Highgate Conservation Areas when viewed from opposite the gates of the subject site. (Both Conservation Areas are characterised by their open spaces and greenery and by their historic layout and historic buildings.)

As previously outlined, the boundary walls and piers are of London stock brick, as is most of the front elevation of the Coach House. There are two red-brick string courses around the front elevation of the house: One between the ground and first floors (the "lower string course"), and the other higher up. The lower string course continues around the east elevation; and there is similar red-brick detailing to the top of the boundary wall (which is slightly lower down than the lower string course). Although the boundary wall (between Hampstead Lane and the premises of the Coach House) features the same type of London stock brickwork as that of the front elevation of the house, the bonding pattern in the brickwork suggests that the Coach House and the boundary wall may have been built at slightly different times. Nevertheless, both have the same patina of age.

The gate is of timber, and on top of each of the two brick piers are round stone finials. The one to the left (east) is severely damaged.



The larger of the two windows to the east elevation of the Coach House at first floor level is a sash window, slightly off-centre to the right; and with a rounded arch of red brickwork. The smaller one is a casement window situated to the left, also with a rounded red-brick arch.

Visible in the gap between the Coach House and the trees within the premises of Beechwood Bungalow is a glimpse of Caenwood Court. The buildings comprising Caenwood Court are constructed in a modern idiom in a plain style, with a grey palette; and they are not wholly complementary to the character, appearance and settings of the two Highgate Conservation Areas. One mitigating factor is the sedum roof which provides some greenery to the otherwise urban appearance of the buildings.

The View has **low sensitivity**. Although it is from Haringey's Highgate Conservation Area and features a part of Camden's Highgate Conservation Area, the only buildings visible are the subject site (a non-designated heritage asset) and Caenwood Court in the background (which is not a heritage asset). but it is a relatively contained view within a relatively narrow road with tall trees on either side. In addition, the plain tarmackintosh road features in the centre of the view, and continues into the distance. There is minimal capacity for change and enhancement. The subject site is considered to make a positive contribution to the townscape and setting in View 3, as well as to the settings of both Camden's Highgate Conservation Area and Haringey's Highgate Conservation Area.

### 3.3.2. Proposed View 3



Figure 7: Proposed View 3.

The View following the proposed first floor extension to the “east wing” of the subject site can be seen in Figure 7. The length of the Coach House has effectively been elongated so that it incorporates the boundary wall between the site and the street.

As with View 1, View 3 illustrates how the length of the first (i.e. easternmost) bay of the front elevation at first floor level will be elongated so that it contains seven as opposed to three red-brick “panels”; and yet there is little (if any) discernible increase in mass and scale. The boundary wall to the east of the house comprises the same London stock brickwork as the front elevation of the house at ground floor level; and

therefore the proposed first floor extension does not have a very noticeable impact on the appearance of the wall and front elevation from this View. The string course between the ground and first floors on the front elevation continues around the proposed east elevation in the same way as it does around the existing east elevation in the Baseline View. The positioning of the two windows to the first floor of the east elevation is different in the Proposed View to how it is in the Baseline View, as they have essentially swapped places. It is considered that the new window locations complement the shape of the east elevation due to the fact the pitch of the roof continues further to the rear than it does to the front; and the larger window is likely to be more comfortably placed on the side of the longer slope. Given the fact the roof of the extended first floor is an exact replica of the existing roof, it looks the same from this View. The extension has been designed to integrate into the original building fully and to complement it in a well-considered visually literate manner (with the same architectural detailing and use of materials). Therefore the extension has little if any visual impact. The damaged finial on top of the easternmost pier has been restored in the Proposed View.

The gap between the Coach House and the trees on the plot of Beechwood Bungalow is narrower in the Proposed View than it is in the Baseline View. Caenwood Court is somewhat at odds with the character and appearance of the townscape along Hampstead Lane, being plain and modern in design, and grey in colour. The proposed extension of the Coach House will cover up part of the view of Caenwood Court from Hampstead Lane, and therefore it is considered to enhance this View.

The damaged finial on top of the easternmost pier has been restored in the Proposed View.

The proposed alterations are considered to make a limited impact on the townscape in View 3. Accordingly, the magnitude of impact of the proposals on View 3 is considered to be **minimal and neutral to positive**.

## 4.0. CONCLUSION

- 4.1. This Townscape Visual Impact Assessment, in accordance with the latest Historic England guidance on setting and townscape [Appendix 1], has undertaken the recommended four-step approach in establishing the visual impact of the proposal on the local townscape, the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area (London Borough of Camden) in the three views. The heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposal have been identified (Step 1), the contribution of setting to the significance of these heritage assets has been assessed (Step 2), the impact of the proposals on the settings and significance of these heritage assets has been assessed (Step 3), and the design has sought to minimise harm and to maximise enhancement to the significance and settings of these heritage assets (Step 4).
- 4.2. Taking into account national guidance on good design [Appendix 3], the 19<sup>th</sup> century idiom design of the extension is considered to have responded positively to its local context, reflecting the prevailing character, grain, height, scale and use of materials of the townscape in order to integrate successfully within the locally distinctive character.

- 4.3. This TVIA has also evaluated the proposals according to the eight principles of the *Building in Context Toolkit* (2001) which was formulated by English Heritage and CABI to stimulate a high standard of design for development taking place in historically sensitive contexts [Appendix 2]. It is considered that the proposals have taken full account of the eight principles, as follows:
- Principle 1: The existing building is recognised as a positive contributor to the Highgate Conservation Areas by virtue of its outward appearance (i.e. aesthetic value) and historical significance. The proposed works involve re-using existing fabric, and replicating the existing architectural detailing and proportions; and therefore they are in effect retaining what is there.
  - Principles 2 & 3: The Heritage Statement which accompanies this report (also by Heritage Information and dated September 2019) assesses the history of the local area, and the significance of the subject site within Camden's Highgate Conservation Area. The proposed alterations have thus been informed by an understanding of the history, character and identity of the subject site, the streetscape, and the surrounding area.
  - Principle 4: The subject site is located on Hampstead Lane, which has been a main throughfare since the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Coach House was first built as the stables to the Caen Wood Towers Estate. The existing entrance to the subject site was the secondary entrance to the former Caen Wood Towers (the primary entrance being further east); and the proposals seek to maintain the existence of this entrance.
  - Principles 5, 6 & 8: This report has identified three key views of the existing site, and assessed the impact which the proposed changes are likely to have on the subject site itself, on its surrounding streetscape, on the settings of neighbouring heritage assets, and on the character, appearance and settings of the two Highgate Conservation Areas.
  - Principle 7: The proposed works involve replicating the existing architectural detailing, proportions and massing, using good quality workmanship and traditional like-for-like materials.
- 4.4. **The proposals overall will have a minimal and neutral visual impact** on the local townscape character and the setting, character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The design of the proposed work has been based on a thorough understanding of the history and development of the subject site, and also of the historic and existing townscape of the two Highgate Conservation Areas within the three assessed Views.

## **APPENDIX 1: HISTORIC ENGLAND'S PLANNING NOTE 3: "THE SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS", DEC 2017**

This note gives assistance concerning the assessment of the setting of heritage assets. Historic England recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps that apply proportionately to the complexity of the case, from straightforward to complex:

### **Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.**

The setting of a heritage asset is 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced'. Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset. The starting point of the analysis is to identify those heritage assets likely to be affected by the development proposal.

### **Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated.**

This assessment of the contribution to significance made by setting will provide the baseline for establishing the effects of a proposed development on significance. We recommend that this assessment should first address the key attributes of the heritage asset itself and then consider:

- the physical surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets
- the asset's intangible associations with its surroundings, and patterns of use
- the contribution made by noises, smells, etc to significance, and
- the way views allow the significance of the asset to be appreciated

### **Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it.**

The wide range of circumstances in which setting may be affected and the range of heritage assets that may be involved precludes a single approach for assessing effects. Different approaches will be required for different circumstances. In general, however, the assessment should address the attributes of the proposed development in terms of its:

- location and siting
- form and appearance
- wider effects
- permanence

#### **Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.**

Enhancement may be achieved by actions including:

- removing or re-modelling an intrusive building or feature
- replacement of a detrimental feature by a new and more harmonious one
- restoring or revealing a lost historic feature or view
- introducing a wholly new feature that adds to the public appreciation of the asset
- introducing new views (including glimpses or better framed views) that add to the public experience of the asset, or
- improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset including its setting

Options for reducing the harm arising from development may include the repositioning of a development or its elements, changes to its design, the creation of effective long-term visual or acoustic screening, or management measures secured by planning conditions or legal agreements. For some developments affecting setting, the design of a development may not be capable of sufficient adjustment to avoid or significantly reduce the harm, for example where impacts are caused by fundamental issues such as the proximity, location, scale, prominence or noisiness of a development. In other cases, good design may reduce or remove the harm, or provide enhancement. Here the design quality may be an important consideration in determining the balance of harm and benefit.

#### **Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.**

It is good practice to document each stage of the decision-making process in a non-technical and proportionate way, accessible to non-specialists. This should set out clearly how the setting of each heritage asset affected contributes to its significance or to the appreciation of its significance, as well as what the anticipated effect of the development will be, including of any mitigation proposals.



## Assessment Step 2 Checklist

The starting point for this stage of the assessment is to consider the significance of the heritage asset itself and then establish the contribution made by its setting. The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance. It may be the case that only a limited selection of the attributes listed is likely to be particularly important in terms of any single asset.

### The asset's physical surroundings

- Topography
- Aspect
- Other heritage assets (including buildings, structures, landscapes, areas or archaeological remains)
- Definition, scale and "grain" of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces
- Formal design (eg. hierarchy, layout)
- Orientation and aspect
- Historic materials and surfaces
- Green space, trees and vegetation
- Openness, enclosure and boundaries
- Functional relationships and communications
- History and degree of change over time

### Experience of the asset

- Surrounding landscape or townscape character
- Views from, towards, through, across and including the asset
- Intentional intervisibility with other historic and natural features
- Visual dominance, prominence or role as focal point
- Noise, vibration and other nuisances
- Tranquillity, remoteness, "wildness"
- Busyness, bustle, movement and activity
- Scents and smells
- Diurnal changes
- Sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy or privacy
- Land use
- Accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement
- Degree of interpretation or promotion to the public
- Rarity of comparable survivals of setting
- Cultural associations
- Celebrated artistic representations
- Traditions

## Assessment Step 3 Checklist

The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of the potential attributes of a development affecting setting that may help to elucidate its implications for the significance of the heritage asset. It may be that only a limited selection of these is likely to be particularly important in terms of any particular development.

### Location and siting of development

- Proximity to asset
- Position in relation to relative topography and watercourses
- Position in relation to key views to, from and across
- Orientation
- Degree to which location will physically or visually isolate asset

### Form and appearance of development

- Prominence, dominance, or conspicuousness
- Competition with or distraction from the asset
- Dimensions, scale and massing
- Proportions
- Visual permeability (i.e. extent to which it can be seen through), reflectivity
- Materials (texture, colour, reflectiveness, etc)
- Architectural and landscape style and/or design
- Introduction of movement or activity
- Diurnal or seasonal change

### Wider effects of the development

- Change to built surroundings and spaces
- Change to skyline, silhouette
- Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc.
- Lighting effects and “light spill”
- Change to general character (eg. urbanising or industrialising)
- Changes to public access use or amenity
- Changes to land use, land cover, tree cover
- Changes to communications/ accessibility/ permeability, including traffic, road junctions and car-parking, etc
- Changes to ownership arrangements (fragmentation/ permitted development/ etc)
- Economic viability

### Permanence of the development

- Anticipated lifetime/ temporariness
- Recurrence
- Reversibility

## APPENDIX 2: THE BUILDING IN CONTEXT TOOLKIT

The Building in Context Toolkit grew out of the publication **Building in Context** published by English Heritage and CABI in 2001. The purpose of that publication was to stimulate a high standard of design for development taking place in historically sensitive contexts. The founding and enduring principle is that all successful design solutions depend on allowing time for a thorough site analysis and character appraisal to fully understand context.

**The eight Building in Context principles are:**

### **Principle 1**

A successful project will start with an assessment of the value of retaining what is there.

### **Principle 2**

A successful project will relate to the geography and history of the place and lie of the land.

### **Principle 3**

A successful project will be informed by its own significance so that its character and identity will be appropriate to its use and context.

### **Principle 4**

A successful project will sit happily in the pattern of existing development and the routes through and around it.

### **Principle 5**

A successful project will respect important views.

### **Principle 6**

A successful project will respect the scale of neighbouring buildings.

### **Principle 7**

A successful project will use materials and building methods which are as high quality as those used in existing buildings.

### **Principle 8**

A successful project will create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting.

## **APPENDIX 3: SUMMARY OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE ON GOOD DESIGN (DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT)**

### **Why does good design matter?**

Good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that design quality matters and that planning should drive up standards across all forms of development. As a core planning principle, plan-makers and decision takers should always seek to secure high quality design.

Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations. Good design responds in a practical and creative way to both the function and identity of a place. It puts land, water, drainage, energy, community, economic, infrastructure and other such resources to the best possible use – over the long as well as the short term.

Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 26-001-20140306

### **Planning should promote local character (including landscape setting)**

Development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

The successful integration of all forms of new development with their surrounding context is an important design objective, irrespective of whether a site lies on the urban fringe or at the heart of a town centre.

When thinking about new development the site's land form should be taken into account. Natural features and local heritage resources can help give shape to a development and integrate it into the wider area, reinforce and sustain local distinctiveness, reduce its impact on nature and contribute to a sense of place. Views into and out of larger sites should also be carefully considered from the start of the design process.

Local building forms and details contribute to the distinctive qualities of a place. These can be successfully interpreted in new development without necessarily restricting the scope of the designer. Standard solutions rarely create a distinctive identity or make best use of a particular site. The use of local materials, building methods and details can be an important factor in enhancing local distinctiveness when used in evolutionary local design, and can also be used in more contemporary design. However, innovative design should not be discouraged.

The opportunity for high quality hard and soft landscape design that helps to successfully integrate development into the wider environment should be carefully considered from the outset, to ensure it complements the architecture of the proposals and improves the overall quality of townscape or landscape. Good landscape design can help the natural surveillance of an area, creatively help differentiate public and private space and, where appropriate, enhance security.

Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 26-007-20140306

## **A well designed space has a distinctive character**

Distinctiveness is what often makes a place special and valued. It relies on physical aspects such as:

- the local pattern of street blocks and plots;
- building forms;
- details and materials;
- style and vernacular;
- landform and gardens, parks, trees and plants; and
- wildlife habitats and micro-climates.

Distinctiveness is not solely about the built environment – it also reflects an area's function, history, culture and its potential need for change.

Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 26-020-20140306

## **A well designed space is attractive**

The way a place looks, sounds, feels, and even smells, affects its attractiveness and long term success. Streetscapes, landscapes, buildings and elements within them all have an influence. So too can more transient elements – such as the way sunshine and shadows move across an area or the way it is maintained and cleaned. Composition of elements and the relationship between colours, textures, shapes and patterns are all important, as is the depth of views, particularly across roofscapes or between buildings.

Paragraph: 021 Reference ID: 26-021-20140306

## **Consider layout**

This is how buildings, street blocks, routes and open spaces are positioned in an area and how they relate to each other. This provides the basic plan for development. Developments that endure have flexible layouts and design.

New development should look to respond appropriately to the existing layout of buildings, streets and spaces to ensure that adjacent buildings relate to each other, streets are connected, and spaces complement one another.

The layout of areas, whether existing or new, should be considered in relation to adjoining buildings, streets and spaces; the topography; the general pattern of building heights in the area; and views, vistas and landmarks into and out of the development site.

There may be an existing prevailing layout that development should respond to and potentially improve. Designs should ensure that new and existing buildings relate well to each other, that streets are connected, and spaces complement one another. This could involve following existing building lines, creating new links between existing streets or providing new public spaces.

In general urban block layouts provide an efficient template with building fronts and entrances to public spaces and their more private backs to private spaces. Such layouts minimise the creation of unsupervised and unsafe public



spaces and unsafe access routes. However building frontages do not have to be continuous or flat. Breaks and features particularly where they emphasise entrances, can be successfully incorporated.

There should be a clear definition between public and private space. A buffer zone, such as a front garden, can successfully be used between public outdoor space and private internal space to support privacy and security.

Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 26-024-20140306

## **Consider form**

Buildings can be formed in many ways, for example tall towers, individual stand alone units, long and low blocks, terraces. They can all be successful, or unsuccessful, depending on where they are placed, how they relate to their surroundings, their use and their architectural and design quality.

Similarly streets can take different forms. From wide motorways with few entrances and exits to narrow lanes with many buildings accessed directly from them. Care should be taken to design the right form for the right place.

Some forms pose specific design challenges, for example how taller buildings meet the ground and how they affect local wind and sunlight patterns should be carefully considered. The length of some lower blocks can mean they disrupt local access and movement routes. Stand alone buildings can create ill defined spaces around them and terraces can appear monotonous and soulless if poorly designed.

Paragraph: 025 Reference ID: 26-025-20140306

## **Consider scale**

This relates both to the overall size and mass of individual buildings and spaces in relation to their surroundings, and to the scale of their parts.

Decisions on building size and mass, and the scale of open spaces around and between them, will influence the character, functioning and efficiency of an area. In general terms too much building mass compared with open space may feel overly cramped and oppressive, with access and amenity spaces being asked to do more than they feasibly can. Too little and neither land as a resource or monetary investment will be put to best use.

The size of individual buildings and their elements should be carefully considered, as their design will affect the: overshadowing and overlooking of others; local character; skylines; and vistas and views. The scale of building elements should be both attractive and functional when viewed and used from neighbouring streets, gardens and parks.

The massing of development should contribute to creating distinctive skylines in cities, towns and villages, or to respecting existing skylines. Consideration needs to be given to roof space design within the wider context, with any adverse visual impact of rooftop servicing minimised.

Account should be taken of local climatic conditions, including daylight and sunlight, wind, temperature and frost pockets.

Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 26-026-20140306

## **Consider details**

The quality of new development can be spoilt by poor attention to detail. Careful consideration should be given to items such as doors, windows, porches, lighting, flues and ventilation, gutters, pipes and other rain water details, ironmongery and decorative features. It is vital not only to view these (and other) elements in isolation, but also to consider how they come together to form the whole and to examine carefully the 'joins' between the elements.

Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 26-027-20140306

## **Consider materials**

Materials should be practical, durable, affordable and attractive. Choosing the right materials can greatly help new development to fit harmoniously with its surroundings. They may not have to match, but colour, texture, grain and reflectivity can all support harmony.

There are a wide range of building and open space materials available and more products developed all the time. Innovative construction materials and techniques can help to achieve well designed homes and other buildings. This could include offsite construction and manufacturing which can help to deliver energy efficient and durable buildings more quickly. Although materials and building techniques may not be specified before planning permission is granted, the functions they will be expected to perform should be clear early on.

Paragraph: 028 Reference ID: 26-028-20140306