

Planning Statement **The Coach House**

Relating to site at
The Coach House, Highgate, N6 4RU

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hghconsulting.com



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by hgh Consulting on behalf of the owners and occupiers of The Coach House on Hampstead Lane, Highgate N6 4RU (“the Site”). The Site is identified in **Figure 1** below. It accompanies a householder application for a first-floor side extension at The Coach House (“the Proposed Development”).



Figure 1: Aerial Site Location

- 1.2 In summary, planning permission is sought for:

“First floor side extension with pitched roof above existing single-story side extension to dwelling.”

- 1.3 The Proposed Development has been subject to pre-application discussions with officers at the London Borough of Camden (“LB Camden”) and is a reflection of the discussions held. Further information on this can be found in Section 2.

- 1.4 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with all supporting plans and documents, including a suite of existing and proposed drawings, a Design and Access Statement, a Heritage Statement and a Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
- 1.5 In accordance with planning law, it provides a detailed assessment of the Proposed Development against all relevant planning policies, and any other material planning considerations.
- 1.6 It demonstrates that the Proposed Development constitutes sustainable development within the terms of the NPPF and that planning permission should be granted without delay.
- 1.7 The following sections comprise:
 - **Section 2** describes the Site and its surroundings;
 - **Section 3** outlines the Proposed Development;
 - **Section 4** highlights the key planning policy framework;
 - **Section 5** contains an assessment of the Proposed Development against all relevant planning policies and other material considerations;
 - **Section 6** assesses the sustainability of the Proposed Development against the NPPF;
 - **Section 7** sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and
 - **Section 8** concludes and summarises why planning permission should be granted.

2.0 The Site and Surroundings

2.1 The Site is located on the south side of Hampstead Lane in the administrative area of LB Camden and the Ward of Highgate. LB Haringey is located to the north of Hampstead Lane. The Site Location Plan is shown in **Figure 2**.

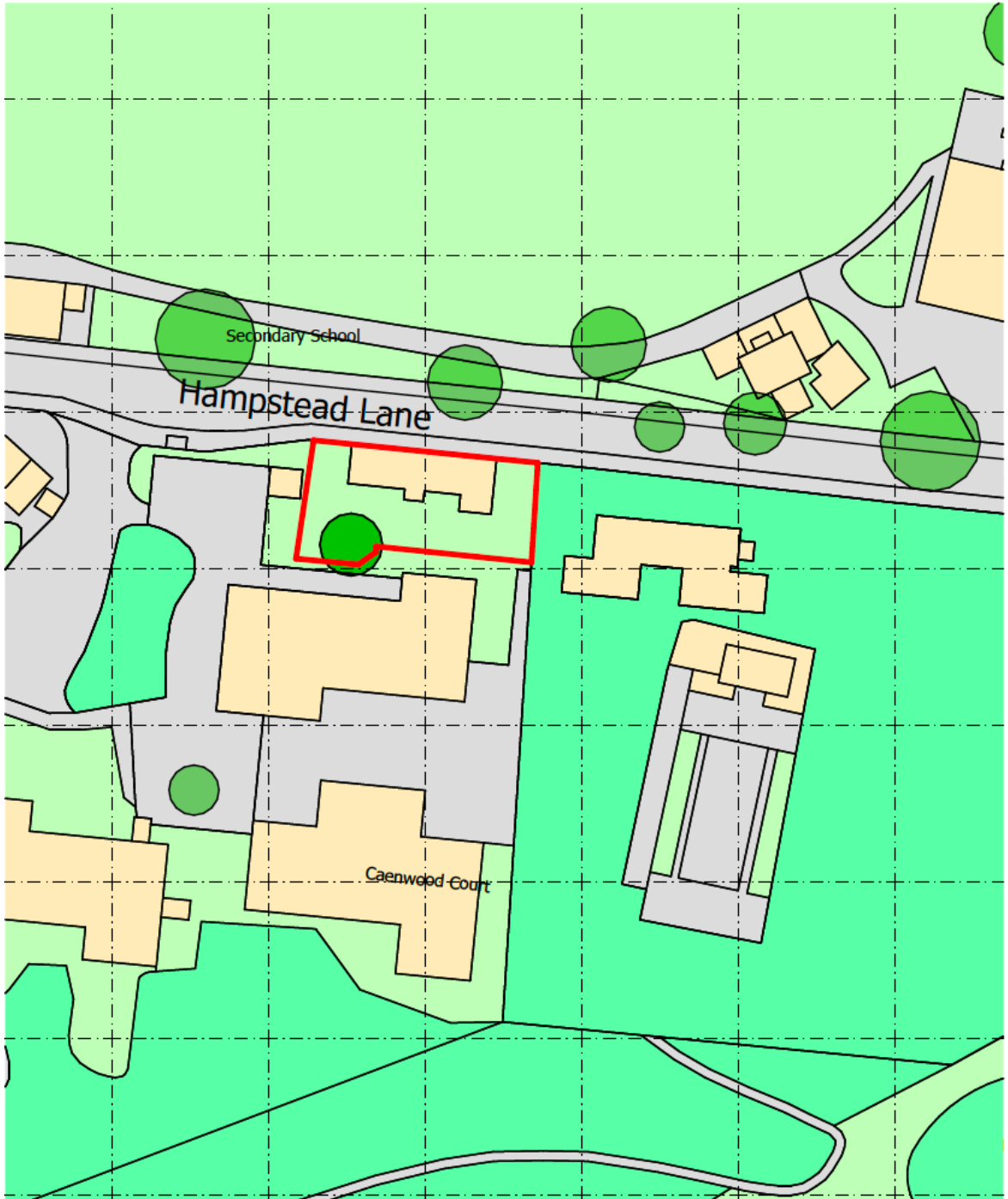


Figure 2: Site Location Plan

- 2.2 The Site comprises an unlisted two-storey detached dwelling and garden, originally built as stables in the 19th century within the grounds of Athlone House. Since then, the Site has undergone complete refurbishment and is now used as a residential dwelling (See **Figure 3**). Direct pedestrian and vehicular access are from Hampstead Lane to the east of the Site.



Figure 3: Front elevation of the Coach House from Hampstead Lane

- 2.3 The building on the Site has distinctive 19th century architectural features which form part of the streetscape along Hampstead Lane. As stipulated in the accompanying Heritage Statement, most of the building is original apart from the modern windows and the substantially altered side elevations. The building is constructed in a mix of London stock brick, red ceramic decorated tiles, timber windows, and a high slated pitched roof. The modern single storey ground floor extension on the eastern flank is also made of stock yellow brick.
- 2.4 The Site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (“PTAL”) rating of 2 and is approximately a 20-minute walk away from Highgate underground tube station, which provides services to High Barnet, Morden and Central London. Highgate High Street is also approximately a 10-minute walk from the Site.
- 2.5 The Site is located in Flood Risk Zone 1 (“Low Risk”) as identified in the Environmental Agency’s Flood Map for Planning.
- 2.6 Furthermore, the Site is located within the Highgate Conservation Area (LB Camden) and adjacent to the Highgate Conservation Area (LB Haringey). The Site is not statutorily or locally listed but is considered to be a positive contributor to the Conservation Area. Further details on this are described in the supporting Heritage Statement.

Surrounding Area

- 2.7 The surrounding area is defined by the predominance of large residential properties which are characterised by a range of building heights and styles. There are many large detached houses on the south side of the street which are set back from the road, and typically hidden behind brick walls or trees. The Coach House contrasts this by sitting against the line of the road.
- 2.8 The Site is surrounded by Highgate Junior School and playing field on the northern side of Hampstead Lane; Athlone House and the Gate House to the west, and Beechwood Bungalow to the east. In addition, immediately to the south (rear of the Site) there are a cluster of new modern residential dwellings (Ceanwood Courts) developed as part of the redevelopment of Athlone House. The buildings surrounding the Site are separated at a reasonable distance from the Coach House and in some instances screened by trees and walls.

Planning Designations

- 2.9 Camden's Local Plan Policies Map (2019) (**Figure 4**) indicates that the Site (circled in red) is designated within:
- Private Open Space (Athlone House);
 - Metropolitan Open Land (MOL);
 - Metropolitan Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (MSINC); and
 - Highgate Conservation Area.



Figure 4: Extract from Camden's Local Plan Policies Map (2019)

Planning History

2.10 The Site's relevant planning history includes:

- 2009/0751/P – Planning permission was granted on the 27th August 2009 for the change of use of the Coach House to a single dwelling house and various extensions and alteration including the remodelling of south elevation, erection of a bay window and conservatory at ground floor of south elevation, and excavation to create a new basement. This permission was only partly implemented, and the basement has not been built.
- 2012/3740/P – Planning permission was granted on the 10th September 2012 for the erection of a single storey side extension to the dwelling. This was amended by planning permission 2012/6790/P in 2013.

Recent Pre-application Discussions

2.11 Formal written pre-application advice (LPA ref. 2019/4805/PRE) for the Proposed Development was provided by LB Camden on the 24th December 2019 following a site visit on 8th November 2019. The pre-application advice was supportive of the proposed development and concludes that the *“scheme is considered overall to be acceptable in terms of open space, design and amenity”*.

2.12 The main comments include:

1. The design is considered to be modest and complementary to the architectural character of the host building;
2. There would be no valuable loss of Private Open Space;
3. A 19% cumulative increase in floorspace from the “original building” is proportionate in size to the main house within the terms of Green Belt / Metropolitan Open Land policy; and
4. The extension would have little or no impact on neighbours in terms of loss of light, privacy and outlook.

2.13 The pre-application requested additional volumetric data for the house and proposed extension (including roof spaces) to enable a more complete comparison to be made with the whole original house and its later extensions.

3.0 Proposed Development

3.1 The application seeks planning permission for:

“First floor side extension with pitched roof above existing single-story side extension to dwelling.”



Figure 5: Proposed Development

- 3.2 A full suite of floor plans and elevations have been submitted, as well as a number of CGIs that accurately visualise the changes. The Proposed Development will sit atop the existing single storey extension to the main dwelling to provide a new double bedroom and *en-suite* bathroom.
- 3.3 The Proposed Development seeks to maintain the existing scale and articulation of the existing building, adopting the same façade proportions as well as the rhythm of the established pattern of the materials and design. The Proposed Development also involves an eastward extension of the existing roof to match the original, still above the proposed first floor extension.
- 3.4 The Proposed Development will measure 19 sqm. The proposed uplift in floor area and volume from the original and existing dwelling is set out below. In total there will be a 19% increase in area and a 15% increase in volume from the original dwelling.

- 3.5 In terms of material finishes, the Proposed Development will be made of London stock brickwork to match the existing building materials, with a symmetrical continuation of the lower red-brick string course on the front elevation. On the eastern wall of the extension the two irregular windows will be the same design of the original but swapped around. The existing and proposed elevation from street view are shown below in **Figures 6 and 7**.



Figure 6: Street View- Existing



Figure 7: Street View- Proposed

- 3.6 There will be no amendments to the existing accesses. Internally, there will be new partitions and a new opening in the wall. No changes to the existing landscaping, boundary walls or gates are proposed other than the reinstatement of the spherical stone pier cap to the top of the pier adjacent to the gates. There are no proposed amendments to the existing transport and parking facilities.

4.0 Planning Policy Context and Framework

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

4.2 The development plan for LB Camden comprises:

- The London Plan (2016, consolidated with alterations);
- Camden Local Plan (2017), and
- Camden Policies Map (2019).

Material Considerations

4.3 Other material considerations include:

- National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) (NPPF);
- Planning Practice Guidance (2019) (PPG);
- Intend to Publish London Plan 2019 (IPLP);
- Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2007), and
- Camden's Altering and Extending your Home CPG (2019).

5.0 Planning Assessment

5.1 This section considers the extent to which the Proposed Development accords with the relevant development plan policies and other material considerations. The key matters for assessment comprise:

- 1) The principle of development;
- 2) Impact on Metropolitan Open Land and Private Open Space;
- 3) Design, townscape and heritage;
- 4) Protecting neighbouring amenity, and
- 5) Nature Conservation.

Principle of Development

5.2 Planning permission is sought for the erection of a first-floor extension above the existing single-story extension on the eastern side of the house.

5.3 Under most circumstances, permitted development rights exist to extend homes. Whilst that is not the case here, their existence demonstrates the Government's intention to support individuals to improve their homes so as to create better places to live.

5.4 The development plan also supports this ambition:

- The IPLP states that "it is important that existing homes of all tenures are well-maintained and are of good quality as these will continue to house the majority of Londoners", with Policy H9 seeking to ensure the best use of existing housing stock; and
- LB Camden's Local Plan Policy H3 seeks to protect existing homes and "ensure that existing housing continues to meet the needs of existing and future households"; and
- More broadly, the NPPF requires local authorities to meet all their housing needs through the effective use of land.

5.5 Planning policy at all levels therefore supports the enhancement of existing housing in appropriate locations, with a priority given to previously developed land.

5.6 The Proposed Development will deliver high-quality additional living space, which optimises the residential use of the Site without compromising the ability of future generations. Being under 100 sqm, the Proposed Development will not require a contribution to affordable housing as per Local Plan Policy H4.

5.7 It is thus considered that the principle of development is acceptable.

Metropolitan Open Land and Private Open Space

5.8 The Site is designated as Metropolitan Open Land ("MOL") and Private Open Space ("POS").

Private Open Space

5.9 London Plan Policy 7.18 resists the loss of open spaces. Local Plan Policy A2 also seeks to protect all designated public and private open spaces and will resist development which would be detrimental to its setting.

- 5.10 The Proposed Development will create a modest additional storey atop an existing extension within an enclosed private residential demise. The Site is not publicly accessible or functional open space such as outdoor sports areas or playing fields which warrant greater protection; and, as shown within the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment, the visual gap between The Coach House and the trees on the plot of Beechwood Bungalow will remain intact. The Proposed Development will not therefore result in the physical loss of any valued open space, nor result in any harm to its character or visual appreciation.

Metropolitan Open Land

- 5.11 Local Plan Policy A2 further states that “*extensions and alteration to existing buildings on open space should be proportionate to the size, including volume, of the original building.*” Similarly, London Plan Policy 2.17 also gives strong protection to maintaining the openness and character of MOL. Indeed, the same level of protection is afforded to MOL as the Green Belt.
- 5.12 The NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in “very special circumstances”. The construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is considered to be “inappropriate development”, other than in a select few cases. The extension or alteration of a building is not deemed to be inappropriate development, providing “*it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building*” (§145d).
- 5.13 It was agreed during pre-application discussions that a cumulative increase in the size of the building from its original form (defined in the NPPF as “*a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally*”) of no more than 20% would be considered not disproportionate.
- 5.14 The Proposed Development results in a 19% increase in floorspace and a 15% in volume from the original building, calculated as follows:
- The “original building” measured *circa* 340 sqm across ground and first floors with a total volume of *circa* 1,420 m³;
 - The 2009 planning permission (LPA ref. 2009/0751/P) included a net increase in 30 sqm at ground and first floors and a new basement measuring 159 sqm. This permission was implemented and the 30 sqm of extensions built, however, the basement was never constructed resulting in a new total floorspace of *circa* 370 sqm and a volume of *circa* 1,518 m³;
 - The 2012 planning permission (LPA ref. 2012/3740/P) included a 15 sqm ground floor side extension. This was amended in 2013, but it did not affect the size of the extension (LPA ref. 2012/6790/P). The second permission was implemented and the 15 sqm extension constructed, resulting in a new total floorspace of *circa* 385 sqm and a volume of *circa* 1,567 m³; and
 - The Proposed Development will measure approximately 19 sqm, thereby increasing the total floorspace to *circa* 404 sqm and total volume to *circa* 1,640 m³.
- 5.15 The Proposed Development is therefore an exception to inappropriate development in MOL as it does not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building in accordance with NPPF paragraph 145(d).

- 5.16 Overall, it is considered that, together with the negligible impact on POS, the Proposed Development is acceptable in both POS and MOL policy terms.

Design, Townscape and Heritage

Design

- 5.17 The NPPF notes that good design is a key component of sustainable development and should contribute to making places better for people. London Plan Policy 7.4 further encourages development to have regard to the form, function and structure of an area, and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings. Policy 7.6 states that architecture should be of the highest quality, responsive and complementary to the surrounding context and cause no unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings.
- 5.18 These principles are echoed in Local Plan Policy D1, Policy A1 and A2 and Camden's Design and Altering and Extending Your Home CPG's which seek high quality design in development. Particularly in relation to extensions, supporting paragraph 7.9 in the Local Plan advises that *"alterations and extensions should be carried out in materials that match the original or neighbouring buildings, or, where appropriate, in materials that complement or enhance a building or area."*
- 5.19 The proposed development is based on principles of good design and has been carefully considered in accordance with local, regional and national planning policy. The proposed design actively respects the existing building and local context through its simple and complementary succession of the existing building and inspiration of the traditional historic features and architecture.
- 5.20 The extension will be made of London stock brickwork to match and maintain a positive relationship with the existing building materials. In addition, the front façade of the proposed extension will match the building line of the existing dwelling at roof level, adopt the same façade proportions, and conform to the rhythm of the established pattern of the materials. On the eastern wall of the extension, the two irregular windows will simply be swapped around from the existing. Thus, from a public viewpoint, there will be no discernible difference.
- 5.21 The Proposed Development is therefore considered to be acceptable in design terms, as supported by the pre-application response which states that, *"the scheme is considered acceptable in design and heritage terms. The works proposed are modest and complementary to the architectural character of the host building."*

Townscape

- 5.22 PPG Paragraph 007 sets out that 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. Local Plan Policy D1 also requires development to consider townscape.
- 5.23 The accompanying Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) assesses the Proposed Development from a number of key views. Specific points were chosen where the Proposed Development might impact on the townscape, landscape, scale, height, massing, the Conservation Areas in both LB Camden and LB Haringey, and the setting of any other identified assets.

- 5.24 The TVIA concludes that the *“the extension is considered to have responded positively to its 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.”* Overall, it is considered that the Proposed Development will have a minimal and neutral visual impact on the local townscape character and setting, character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 5.25 The Proposed Development is therefore considered to be acceptable in townscape and visual impact terms, as supported by the pre-application response which states that, *“the building is only appreciated in kinetic views, with direct views of the street-facing façade only possible from behind the boundary of the playing fields of the school opposite, meaning the visual impact will be minimal.”*

Heritage

- 5.26 A Heritage Statement has been submitted as part of the application which reviews the historical background of the Site and surrounding areas, an analysis of the contribution the extension makes to the setting of the Highgate Conservation Area and an assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development on the significance of identified heritage assets.
- 5.27 The NPPF sets out that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. London Plan Policy 7.8 and Local Plan Policy D2 explain that development should value and conserve heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposed development convincingly outweigh that harm.
- 5.28 The Site is located within the Highgate Conservation Area (LB Camden) and is adjacent to the Highgate Conservation Area (LB Haringey). The Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2007) sets out that high quality design and high-quality execution will be required of all new development, including smaller alterations. All new developments are expected to respect, complement and enhance the special character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area. Fundamental changes to the roofline, insensitive alterations, poor materials, intrusive dormers, or inappropriate windows are argued to harm the historic character of the roofscape and are therefore not considered acceptable.
- 5.29 As previously mentioned, the proposed development has been carefully designed so that it does not have a negative impact on the Conservation Area and will result in a positive impact on the public realm. The primary views from within the Conservation Area are from Hampstead Lane and from here the extended building will continue to sit well within the context.
- 5.30 Overall, the Heritage Statement concludes that *“the overall proposals are considered to have a minimal and neutral impact on the significance of the subject site, on the character of and appearance of Camden’s Highgate Conservation Area, and on the setting of Haringey’s Highgate Conservation Area.”*
- 5.31 On the above basis, it is considered that the Proposed Development is acceptable in heritage terms.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 5.32 London Plan Policy 7.6 and Local Plan Policy A1 stipulate that a high level of residential amenity and functionality is required for all residential development. All development should also seek to safeguard the amenity of occupiers and neighbours.

- 5.33 Given the location of the Proposed Development atop an existing side extension, its modest scale, matching materiality and continued residential use; as well as the Site's position opposite a blank wall on the Caenwood Court flats to the rear and the generous retained separation distances between buildings, the Proposed Development is not considered to result in any adverse impacts on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

Nature Conservation

- 5.34 The Site is located within a Metropolitan Site of Importance for Nature Conservation ("MSINC"). Local Plan Policy A3 seeks to protect and enhance sites of nature conservation and biodiversity. Given that the Site is previously developed land and the Proposed Development is for a first-floor extension atop the existing ground floor extension, it is not considered that there will be any impact on the ecological or arboricultural value of the MSINC. As such, no further assessment is required.

6.0 Sustainable Development

6.1 The Proposed Development achieves the following national sustainability objectives:

Economic:

- It will generate a number of direct, indirect and induced jobs throughout the construction period (some of which will be for skilled workers and potentially earmarked for the local labour force).

Social:

- It will provide an improvement to, and create a higher quality residential living space for the existing occupier to meet their housing needs.

Environmental:

- It will conserve and enhances the natural environment by utilising a previously developed site;
- It will conserve and enhances the historic environment by promoting an appropriate design that responds positively to the character of the area with no harm to heritage assets; and
- It will help to meet the challenge of climate change by being constructed to the latest Building Regulation standards.

7.0 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

7.1 The “*presumption in favour of sustainable development*” within paragraph 11 of the NPPF states:

“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development ... For decision-taking this means:

- *approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- *where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - *the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.*

7.2 Taking the above in order, this Planning Statement has demonstrated that the Proposed Development accords with the relevant policies of the development plan. In particular:

- **POS / MOL:** Local Plan policy A2 and London Plan policies 2.17, 7.18;
- **Design, Townscape and Heritage:** Local Plan policy D1, D2, A1, A2 and London Plan policies 7.4, 7.6, 7.9;
- **Amenity policies:** London Plan policy 7.6 and Local Plan Policy A1; and
- **Nature Conservation:** Local Plan policy A3.

7.3 Furthermore, the development plan for the determination of this application is considered to be up to date by virtue of having been adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and by virtue of still being within the designated Plan period (to 2031).

7.4 The Proposed Development also constitutes sustainable development within the terms of the NPPF as demonstrated in section 6.

7.5 Accordingly, planning permission should be granted without delay.

8.0 Conclusion

8.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by hgh Consulting and submitted on behalf of the owners and occupiers of The Coach House in Highgate in support of a householder application the following development:

“First floor side extension with pitched roof above existing single-story side extension to dwelling.”

8.2 The Proposed Development has been sensitively designed to complement the historic character of the existing building and surrounding area as identified within the accompanying Heritage Statement and TVIA.

8.3 The planning justification for the Proposed Development can be summarised as:

- It represents the efficient use of a previously developed site in order to improve the living conditions within an existing family home;
- It represents a modest extension to the existing building and a cumulative increase in size from the original building of below 20% and is not therefore a disproportionate addition thereby preserving the openness of both POS and MOL;
- It preserves and enhances designated and non-designated heritage assets by providing a high quality design that mimics and respects the character of the existing building; and
- It has no adverse impacts on neighbouring amenity or nature conservation interests.

8.4 Overall, it is considered that the Proposed Development accords with the development plan when read as a whole. The modest extension will have little to no discernible impact upon the surrounding context including open space, MOL or the Conservation Area. The Proposed Development will contribute to improving the building as a single-family residence, whilst ensuring the overall footprint and integrity is sympathetically retained.

8.5 It represents a sustainable form of development and accordingly, planning permission should be granted for the Proposed Development without delay.