DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT: PART 4

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PART FOUR

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TO ACCOMPANY THIS STATEMENT, PLEASE ALSO REFER TO THESE DOCUMENTS, PROVIDED SEPARATELY:

APPENDIX ONE:

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DAYLIGHT & SUNLIGHT ASSESSMENT (Prepared by Jonathan Ray at

Right of Light Consulting)

<u>APPENDIX TWO</u>: CONSTRUCTION & MATERIALS STATEMENT (Prepared by Emily Kennedy & Peter Morris)

<u>APPENDIX THREE</u>: ENERGY STATEMENT (Prepared by Tygue Doyle at Environmental Engineering Partnership)

APPENDIX FOUR: AIR QUALITY STATEMENT (Prepared by Emily Kennedy & Peter Morris)

APPENDIX FIVE: ACOUSTIC REPORT (Prepared by Nigel Burton at Temple Group)

<u>APPENDIX SIX</u>: HERITAGE STATEMENT (Prepared by Nicola Furlonger)

APPENDIX SEVEN: ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS & MAP (Prepared by Peter Morris)

APPENDIX EIGHT: REPORT OF LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN DESIGN REVIEW PANEL: CHAIR'S REVIEW MEETING, APRIL 2019 (Prepared by Deborah Denner at Frame Projects)

This DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT has been prepared by Emily Kennedy & Peter Morris, February 2020

6.0 THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the existing house at 20 Vicar's Road, plus the untidy garden space that sits beside it, to be redeveloped into one distinctive building, known as The Cloud House, which is to be made up of two semi-detached family houses – one with four bedrooms (to be a self-build home for the architect and his family) and one with three bedrooms (to be sold).

The dwellings have been designed by architect Peter Morris as one development, intended to be a stunning example of contemporary residential architecture for Gospel Oak, where other high-quality infill projects have recently been built, or are being built, by architects like Peter Barber, Burd Haward and Hayhurst & Co. As noted above, the area has a history of delivering pieces of innovative architecture – eg the Benson & Forsyth Mansfield Road houses, and the Neave Brown scheme at Fleet Road. The intention is to add to this rich local heritage with a new urban gem that will provide a beautiful and surprising addition to Vicar's Road.

The existing house on the site is a small, brick Victorian building built in the Gothic style with a pitched roof. It is a small two-up two-down dwelling, with only 75m² floorspace, and is in poor condition, having significant structural and damp problems. The building is not listed and does not lie within a Conservation Area. The front part of the garden space next to the house was until recently owned by the Council and is full of concrete and other detritus, the back part of the garden is partially paved but not particularly attractive.

The above context analysis shows that there is an eclectic mix of building styles, periods, materials and scales in the immediate vicinity of the site, and the street is in the process of undergoing major transformation due to the redevelopment of Bacton Low Rise Estate. Phase One of this residential scheme is now complete. The buildings range from two to eight storeys: there are three-storey town houses immediately to the east of the site, with buildings then stepping up to eight storeys further east; to the rear (north) of the site, the new apartment block is four storeys.

With significant change to its built context, the small existing house at No 20 Vicar's Road now looks like an anomaly on the street – this will be even more evident when the next phase of Bacton Rise is built, with further tall buildings planned for the site next to the church.

Options have been explored with the local authority for retaining the existing property in a new development; however, the structural condition of the dwelling along with the difficulties of integrating the house within a new, more intensive scheme have led both parties to conclude that redevelopment for an exemplary designed scheme is the most appropriate option.



6.0 THE PROPOSAL

(CONTINUED) In the creation of the new design – which takes as its starting point a key feature of both the Grade I and Grade II buildings close to the site – ARCHES –the architect has taken into consideration the eclectic built surroundings, producing a design which is both contextual and modern, as appropriate for an area familiar with architectural originality. The external arches will take their reference from materials and colourings used in the surroundings.

The tallest part of the development is designed to sit lower in height than the base roofline of the listed school to the west. It then steps down in height, in cloud formation, towards the new houses to the east; this height reduction and a gap between the buildings will avoid adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbours. The pair of houses that make up The Cloud House will read as a single semi-detached structure, visually separated by space between it and the school on the west and the houses on the east, with 20A stepped back from the street front, in order to feel as un-invasive as possible.

The development will be built with a hybrid construction system, using Insulated Concrete Forms (ICF) for the perimeter walls and internal walls based on a light steel frame structure, with non-loadbearing walls made with timber frames. The ICF perimeter walls will be covered with high quality render, through-coloured in a buff colour with pinky tones. The curved roofs of 20A will be made with curved glulam joists/ribs spanning between steel beams, topped with a dark grey membrane on the second floor roof, and with a green sedum roof at ground floor level.

Solar control glass will be used on the South elevation – this will both reduce CO2 emissions, and make the glass more reflective, which will allow the building to mirror its context in a subtle way, and provide more privacy. The aim is to use sustainable materials and energy-saving techniques (eg air source heat pump technology for heating) as much as possible throughout the project. The ICF and steel frame construction means that the build can be done speedily, which will reduce energy. And the building will be very well-insulated, making it very energy efficient once it's built.

Internal spaces are intended to provide high-quality flexible living, with visibility between living areas and floors flooded with light. Landscaped outdoor amenity spaces are provided principally through the inclusion of roof terraces, optimising the use of the site and maximising access to sunlight/daylight.

The design of the building meets the requirements of policy and guidance, and relevant housing standards, and, through improving the street scene, would enhance the setting of the two nearby listed buildings. Amenity impacts have been carefully considered to ensure there would be no unacceptable impacts on existing residents in terms of sunlight, daylight, privacy and overlooking.

The design for The Cloud House has been in the pre-application process with Camden since January 2018, and has gone through many iterations, with effort made to create a building which, though striking, sits well within its context and is a beautiful addition to the streetscape.



The final design for this distinctive building, known as The Cloud House, to be made up of two semi-detached family houses, has come about after two years of pre-app discussions with Camden, and we are confident that all design matters raised by the Council and the Chair's Review panel have been addressed. Listed here are the principles of the design, and the key points from the discussions that have been had along the way, in order to clarify how the final design has been reached.

I) THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE DESIGN

In designing the The Cloud House scheme, the architect was led by the following design principles:

- To create a single semi-detached development made up of two houses of the highest architectural quality, which will be beautiful to look at and wonderful to live in. At No 20, a 4-bedroom 3-bathroom three-storey house for the architect and his family, with two roof terraces, and a small rooftop plunge pool. At 20A, a 3-bedroom 2-bathroom three-storey house with a roof terrace. Both will have front and back gardens, landscaping and amenity space.
- To build a scheme that is an asset to Vicar's Road and liked by neighbours, and which replaces the existing house at No 20 and a scruffy area of garden beside it. The plan is to knock down the existing small Victorian house on the site, which is in a poor state of repair, and build on the garden plot beside it, creating an elegant development that will unify the street frontage, match the surrounding buildings in height and be very attractive to look at while remaining deeply respectful of its context, both on the street and in the wider area. Please note: options have been explored with the local authority for retaining the existing property in a new development; however, the structural condition of the dwelling along with the difficulties of integrating the house within a new, more intensive scheme have led both parties to conclude that redevelopment for an exemplary designed scheme is the most appropriate option.
- To match the quality of the indoor spaces with the outdoor spaces, replacing an ugly infill garden plot with well-planned roof terraces for each house, plus small front and back gardens. The plan is to create outdoor areas that are designed to be lived in, with plenty of greenery to soften and enhance the appearance of the building, and contribute to climate change resilience. This greenery will include a green sedum roof at ground floor level for 20A.
- To create a new development that will be as sustainable and energy-efficient as possible. The development will be very well-insulated, and solar glass will be used for all windows on the south-facing elevations. A hybrid heating system, using air source heat pumps, has been incorporated into the design.



THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE DESIGN (CONTINUED)

- To make two houses that will sit well alongside heritage assets in Vicar's Road and the elegant new Karakusevic Carson housing surrounding the site, plus other interesting architecture in the wider area. The development is of a mass and scale that responds to its historic neighbours, and uses materials that will allow the development to sit comfortably with its neighbours. The new Karakusevic Carson flats (plus other new architectural developments locally) feature generous windows and sunny terraces the proposed homes at No 20 and 20A will do the same. All details and materials chosen for the new development will complement the local architectural character.
- To create a new modern development that, while innovative, will be easily-readable and friendly-looking, resonating with the architectural history of the local area. By using arches as a key shape, reflecting the fenestration of both the church opposite and the school next door; and using render colours that echo the surrounding buildings, the whole development is designed to reinforce and celebrate connections with the local area. Exemplary in design, it will be a stylish addition to this eclectic street, and the architect's hope is very much that this project will be a source of pride for Camden Council for many years to come.

2) KEY POINTS FROM PRE-APP DISCUSSIONS WITH CAMDEN COUNCIL

During conversations with Camden Council (CC), officers raised these key points – all of which have been taken into consideration in the final design:

CC COMMENT: KEEN TO HAVE A VISUAL CONNECTION BETWEEN THE NEW DEVELOPMENT AND THE CHURCH OPPOSITE, AND SCHOOL NEXT DOOR

RESPONSE: Building on the heritage value of both St Martin's Church (Grade I listed) and the French school (Grade II listed), inspiration has been taken from the key architectural feature which unites these buildings – the ARCH. There are a range of stacked arches in the fenestration of both buildings in three different styles: Tudor, Trefoil, and Segmental – plus arches in the vaulted ceiling in the interior of the church. This shape has been adopted, simplified and modernised, and used as the visual starting point for The Cloud House. The proposal also reflects the buff colours of the church, the school and the modern houses next door in its choice of render colour – buff with pinkish tones. And draws inspiration from the fact that both the listed buildings nearby have a fairy tale castle look about them – the aim is for The Cloud House to be similarly surprising and delightful in its appearance.



KEY POINTS FROM PRE-APP DISCUSSIONS WITH CAMDEN COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

CC COMMENT: REGARDING THE PRINCIPLE OF KNOCKING DOWN THE EXISTING HOUSE & DEVELOPING THE INFILL PLOT BESIDE IT

 RESPONSE: Council officers support the principle of developing the infill garden plot beside the existing house at No 20. With regard to knocking down the existing house, early discussions explored the possibility of retaining it within a new development – however, the structural condition of the dwelling along with the difficulties of integrating the house within a new, more intensive scheme have led both parties to conclude that redevelopment for an exemplary designed scheme is the most appropriate option.

CC COMMENT: IMPORTANCE OF A STREETSCAPE THAT'S NOT TOO TIGHT – AND A SCALE AND MASSING THAT MINIMISES IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURS

- RESPONSE: There have been many discussions with Council officers about ensuring the streetscape does not feel too tight with the new development, and every care has been taken to minimise potential impact on the outlook for all neighbours. The new house at No 20 will sit further back from the pavement at Vicar's Road than the existing house does. The small roof terrace on the south elevation on the second floor of No 20 is set back, both to create a more interesting profile for the building, but also to make sure a clear view of the east side of the School building is opened up – this will be more open than is currently the case.
- The new house at 20A is stepped back even further from the pavement at Vicar's Road than the new house at No 20, and has a 20 square metre garden at its front. It is also stepped back and separated from its neighbouring house on the east side at first floor level and above, making sure that it has minimal impact on the neighbours' amenities, and ensuring that The Cloud House as a whole reads as a single building, with front gardens and tall windows creating a much more active frontage than currently exists.
- The highest point of the building the roof terrace on No 20 will sit lower than the roof of the School, and will then drop down gradually, in cloud formation, across 20A, again keeping the feel of the building open and as unobtrusive as possible for our neighbours. All rooms at the School overlooking the site are non-habitable and already have obscured glass. Their view will not be affected and there will be no impact on privacy.
- At the back of the development, the rear walls of the buildings from first floor upwards have been kept as far away as possible from the flats with a minimum separation distance of 12 metres. The ground floor at 20A sits behind an existing 3-metre high wall, so will have no impact on outlook or privacy.



KEY POINTS FROM PRE-APP DISCUSSIONS WITH CAMDEN COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

• The size, height and massing of the final design has been agreed in principle by both the internal design committee at Camden Council, and also by the external design committee at Chair's Review.

CC COMMENT: HAPPY IN PRINCIPLE WITH ROOF TERRACES AND A ROOFTOP POOL

• Officers have always been comfortable with the principle of roof terraces and have not objected to plans for a small rooftop plunge pool.

3) FEEDBACK ON SPECIFIC POINTS RAISED AT THE CHAIR'S REVIEW MEETING IN APRIL 2019 REGARDING THE PREVIOUS DESIGN (MODEL PHOTOGRAPHED HERE)

NB THE PREVIOUS DESIGN HAD THE TOP TWO FLOORS OF 20A SET BACK FURTHER, WITH AN OPEN ROOF TERRACE AT FIRST FLOOR LEVEL ON THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING

SCALE AND MASSING

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR'S REVIEW: In broad terms, the panel supports the scale and massing of the development, which appears to sit comfortably between the neighbouring existing buildings. The panel questioned whether the upper levels of the right hand house need to be set back so far? An alternative approach could be to bring this section of the façade in line with the ground floor, to create a loggia around the terrace at first floor level. This would avoid the need for the balustrade with arching form, which may seem a bit odd.

RESPONSE: The architect has now brought the whole façade of 20A in line with the ground floor. But instead
of creating a loggia at the front at first floor level, has allocated a section of the roof above No 20 as 20A's
roof terrace, accessible through a sliding rooflight. This means that <u>both</u> the first floor sitting room and the
open-plan top floor kitchen / dining / living room can be larger, better rooms than in the previous design
(please see model) – and gives 20A a 15 square metre roof terrace which will be sunny at all times of the day
as it is on top of the building. 20A's roof terrace has been set a little lower than No 20's roof terrace, in
order to provide privacy for both parties, and privacy for neighbours in the flats to the north. A hedge and a
rainwater tank will sit between the two terraces, preventing anyone on the terrace at No 20 looking down
onto the terrace for 20A.





FEEDBACK ON SPECIFIC POINTS RAISED AT THE CHAIR'S REVIEW MEETING IN APRIL 2019 REGARDING THE PREVIOUS DESIGN (CONTINUED)

ARCHITECTURE

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR'S REVIEW: The panel thinks the flamboyant architecture could be successful in this context, provided that high quality construction can be achieved. This is likely to require some simplification and rationalisation of the designs. The panel questioned whether the intention is for the external envelope to be integral with the internal structure, or if the building is conceived of as a simple volume with a separately articulated decorative wrap. Clarity on this will inform detail design decisions. If the former, the panel would encourage exploration of barrel vaulted ceilings internally - extruding the form of the arches on the facades into the interior. Externally, the corners of the building are not convincingly resolved. Introducing more solidity might help avoid creating junctions that are difficult to build. The panel feels the current drawings do not do the scheme justice, and one or two professional computer generated images (CGIs) could help to better illustrate the development, as part of the planning submission. At a detailed level, the panel queried whether the entrance under a staircase might seem quite low. The layout of bedrooms at ground floor level could also be refined – to create a more generous lightwell, avoid an opening window onto a neighbouring garden and simplify the party wall.

- RESPONSE: The final design retains the flamboyant spirit of the architecture, but the design has now been simplified and rationalised, and tendered and fully costed to ensure that it is achievable.
- Regarding the relationship between the external envelope and the internal structure, there will now be some internal areas with barrel vaulted ceilings (in 20A: the full length of the entrance hallway, and the ceilings of Bedroom 2 and Bedroom 3; in No 20: the ceilings for the utility room, the dressing room for Bedroom 2, and the dressing room for Bedroom 3). Also, all internal doorways will be arched, creating visual connections with the arched windows and the arches on the façade. The corners of the building have been refined and made more solid to avoid junctions that are difficult to build. Complete plans and images and a new 3D model have now been created, and form part of this planning submission. The entrance under the staircase has now gone, as the position of the stairs has moved internally at No 20. The layout of the bedrooms at ground floor at 20A have also been refined, creating a small back yard (6 square metres) in place of the lightwell, and preventing windows looking out onto a neighbouring garden.



FEEDBACK ON SPECIFIC POINTS RAISED AT THE CHAIR'S REVIEW MEETING IN APRIL 2019 REGARDING THE PREVIOUS DESIGN (CONTINUED)

GLASS FIBRE REINFORCED CONCRETE (GFRC)

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR'S REVIEW: The panel think it would be preferable to express the materiality of the GFRC construction, rather than cladding it with brick slips. A review of the design to minimise the number of moulds required to fabricate the CFRC would also help ensure that costs and complexity are well managed. It supports the idea of grey or buff masonry, which would relate well to the context.

• RESPONSE: Following detailed costings, the idea of cladding the development with GFRC has been revisited. Instead, the building will be covered with high-quality through-coloured Sto thin-coat synthetic render, which will not crack or fade in colour, and will be fine-grained in texture. Render samples form part of this planning submission.

<u>GLAZING</u>

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR'S REVIEW: The scale of the glazing currently shown, with curved tops, is likely to make it very expensive. Introducing some solid panels, perhaps in glazed tiles, could add interest, be more affordable, and provide flexibility to deal with floor plates and privacy issues. The panel also suggests reducing glazing on the east and west elevations, which may need to be fire-rated insulated glass because of its proximity to the site boundaries.

• RESPONSE: More solid panels have now been introduced, and glazing on the east and west elevations has now been minimised. The triple-glazing has now been swapped for double-glazing, due to cost, but solar glass is still to be used on the south elevation. The final glazing plan has been costed and is feasible.



FEEDBACK ON SPECIFIC POINTS RAISED AT THE CHAIR'S REVIEW MEETING IN APRIL 2019 REGARDING THE PREVIOUS DESIGN (CONTINUED)

STRUCTURE AND CONSTRUCTION

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR'S REVIEW: The panel would like to better understand the structure of the building and locations/size of internal columns & floor slabs in relation to the external cladding and windows. This would give confidence that the construction of the building can be resolved, particularly given the heavy loads from the roof top swimming pool. The panel notes that columns, frames for opening windows, and downpipes, not currently shown, should be included on planning drawings in order to give confidence in the quality of the completed building. The experimental nature of the construction proposed means that a greater than normal level of detail should be submitted on materials and construction as part of the application. External wall / floor details at 1:20, and 1:5 details at key junctions would be helpful. The panel also recommends that any planning approval should require approval of sample panels.

RESPONSE: The construction details have now been resolved in conjunction with structural engineers, and have been fully costed by experienced builders in conjunction with quantity surveyors. All details and drawings form part of this planning submission, along with material samples and a 3D model. Please refer to the separate Construction & Materials Statement for further information.

