

FLAT 1, 162 HAVERSTOCK HILL, LONDON NW3

PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF EXISTING TWO-STOREY ADDITION

AND CONSTRUCTION IN ITS PLACE

OF REPLACEMENT TWO-STOREY DWELLING

JOINT PLANNING STATEMENT AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The planning application seeks permission for the demolition of the existing two-storey infill addition and its replacement with a new two-storey infill extension, to form a two-bedroom, self-contained dwelling.
- 1.2 The building that is the subject of the application is a modest structure, constructed about 30 years ago under a planning permission granted in 1985, built as an addition to the demi-detached house that has occupied the site since the 1860s. The main house is used as five self-contained dwelling units, including Flat 1.
- 1.3 The adjoining infill development attached to 164 Haverstock Hill (the neighbouring property to the north) is of unusual contemporary design and was granted planning permission, on appeal, in 2003 (see paragraphs 3.16 to 3.18 below).
- 1.4 The site lies within the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area, designated in 1973. Neither 162 Haverstock Hill nor the neighbouring houses are listed buildings.
- 1.5 The flat-roofed extension proposed would, in common with the existing structure, be set back from the front elevation of the host building and would not readily be seen when approaching the site along Haverstock Hill.
- 1.6 A full description of the site, its townscape setting and the design of the new building is set out in detail in the Design and Access Statement prepared by the project architects, Edwards Rensen Architects.

- 1.7 The footprint of the proposed building would be similar to the existing structure, although the replacement building would include an additional single-storey element extending to some 6.4 square metres. The maximum parapet height of the new structure would be the same as the existing building.
- 1.8 The reasons for requiring a replacement building relate to matters of practicality, comfort and energy efficiency; refurbishment of the existing structure would not be a feasible or cost-effective solution to the identified deficiencies in the existing property (see paragraphs 3.1 to 3.4 of the Design and Access Statement).
- 1.9 This Planning Statement and Heritage Statement, which addresses the planning merits of the proposal in the context of the relevant local and national planning policies, should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement prepared by the project architects, Edwards Rensen Architects.

2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The application property is an unlisted building within a conservation area. The relevant legislative requirements are summarised below.
- 2.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with adopted development plan policies, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.3 The site is in a designated conservation area and the Council will be aware of the duty imposed by section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to ensure that new development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

3 PLANNING POLICIES

3.1 The development plan consists of:

- The London Plan 2021; and
- Camden Local Plan 2017.

3.2 Also of relevance is the guidance in the following documents:

- Camden Planning Guidance: Design (2018);
- Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2011 (the Strategy); and
- National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (the NPPF);

3.3 I set out below a summary of, and my comments on (where necessary), the local and national policies that are relevant to the proposal.

The London Plan

3.4 *Policy D4 – Delivering good design*

This policy requires, amongst other things, that Design and Access Statements should demonstrate that proposed developments meet the design criteria in the London Plan.

3.5 *Policy HC1 – Heritage conservation*

Paragraph C of this policy states that developments affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, should avoid harm and identify any enhancement opportunities.

Camden Local Plan

3.6 *Policy A1 – Managing the Impact of Development*

This policy seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours taking into account factors such as privacy, outlook, sunlight, daylight, overshadowing, transport and noise.

3.7 *Policy D1 – Design*

This policy states that the Council will seek to secure high quality design and requires new development to:

- respect local context and character;
- preserve or enhance heritage assets;
- be sustainable in its design and construction;
- include details and materials that complement local character;
- incorporate high quality landscaping; and
- incorporate outdoor amenity space.

3.8 *Policy D2 – Heritage*

This heritage policy reflects the guidance in the NPPF and, amongst other things, states that development that results in “less than substantial harm” will not be permitted unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh the harm. The policy also seeks to preserve trees and garden spaces that contribute to the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Camden Planning Guidance: Design (March 2018)

3.9 The proposed development consists of both a rear and a side extension, so the guidance in this document on both forms of development is relevant.

3.10 With regard to rear extensions, the Camden Planning Guidance on design advises, at paragraph 4.10, as follows:

“Rear extensions should be designed to:

- be secondary to the building being extended, in terms of location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing;
- respect and preserve the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style;

- respect and preserve existing architectural features, such as projecting bays, decorative balconies or chimney stacks;
- respect and preserve the historic pattern and established townscape of the surrounding area, including the ratio of built to unbuilt space;
- not cause a loss of amenity to adjacent properties with regard to sunlight, daylight, outlook, overshadowing, light pollution/spillage, privacy/overlooking, and sense of enclosure;
- allow for the retention of a reasonably sized garden; and
- retain the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity, including that of neighbouring properties, proportionate to that of the surrounding area.”

3.11 With regard to side extensions, paragraph 4.16 of the guidance states that these should be designed in accordance with the general considerations set out at paragraph 4.10 and should also be set back from the main building. Also, paragraph 4.18 states that reference should be made to any relevant conservation area statement, appraisal or management plan.

The Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2011

3.12 At section 5.3, the Strategy states:

“There are many examples of infill between houses in this area, but possibly none as contrasting and eye catching as between numbers 162 and 164 Haverstock Hill where pastiche meets individualism in contrasting versions of contemporary coach-house infill.”

3.13 At section 5.9, the Strategy includes 156-170 (even) Haverstock Hill within the list of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

3.14 Also at section 5.9, the Strategy notes that “the gaps between the semi-detached houses have in most cases been infilled” and comments that many of the twentieth century infills “vary from the pastiche to the individualism for example between 162 and 164 Haverstock Hill – neutral effect [on the character or appearance of the area]”.

3.15 In summary, the Strategy considers that the original houses at 162 Haverstock Hill make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, whilst the infill extensions between them have a neutral effect on the Area.

3.16 However, this conclusion is at odds with the planning appeal decision of 12 November 2003 (reference APP/X5210/A/03/1123118), which found that the infill development at 164 Haverstock Hill, to form a one-bedroom town house, would enhance the appearance of the area. Paragraph 10 of the appeal decision states:

“In my opinion, the proposed house is of a high quality design. It would respect the scale and massing of the existing property at No. 164. I consider the house would possess its own integrity and would provide an exciting contrast to the existing buildings, which would enhance the appearance of the area and would be a considerable improvement compared with the existing garage. I take the view that it would be a welcome addition to the mix of building designs which are already present on Haverstock Hill. In reaching this conclusion, I have carefully considered the Council’s SPG which refers to Italianate style houses elsewhere in the Conservation Area, saying that side extensions should match the original house in terms of idiom and materials. However, it does not refer to such properties on Haverstock Hill and in this case I consider that the proposed development would provide an appropriate alternative solution.”

3.17 Paragraph 11 continues:

“I have also noted from the SPG that the use of lightweight transparent glazed structures is considered appropriate in the Conservation Area with regard to rear extensions. This would be to make them as unobtrusive as possible so that they would not add to the visual bulk of the property and would not obstruct views. The proposed house would be set back some distance from the front elevation of No. 164 and would not be seen when approaching along the road from the north-west or the south-east, thus allowing the four pairs of semi-detached villas to retain their separate character and appearance. It would be seen from the road in front of the property but, in my opinion, its lightweight glazed appearance would help to reduce its bulk and to retain the openness that currently exists between No. 164 and its neighbour No. 162.”

3.18 Paragraph 12 of the decision concludes:

“I conclude that the proposed development would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area and would not be contrary to the UDP policies set out above.”

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

3.19 Paragraph 194 states that in determining applications that affect heritage assets:

“..... local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.”

3.20 Paragraph 197 states that when determining applications affecting heritage assets, local planning authorities should take account of:

- “a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”

3.21 Paragraph 202 states:

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including where appropriate securing its optimum viable use.”

4 PLANNING AND HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The main planning considerations are whether the proposed development would:
- be appropriate in design terms;
 - adversely affect the adjoining properties; or
 - harm the significance of the heritage asset (the Conservation Area).
- 4.2 The significant features of the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area and the impact of the proposal on the Area is explained in the Design and Access Statement prepared by the architects Edwards Rensen Architects, and that document satisfies the requirements of paragraph 194 of the NPPF.
- 4.3 The proposal is to replace an existing two-storey infill development consisting of one small dwelling with an improved building involving no significant increase in footprint or volume. Therefore, there can be no reasonable objection in principle to the proposed development.
- 4.4 The replacement building would satisfy the criteria at paragraphs 4.10, 4.16 and 4.18 of the Camden Planning Guidance on Design because it would:
- be subordinate to the host building;
 - respect and preserve the design of the host building;
 - have no adverse impact on the historic pattern and established townscape of the area;
 - cause no loss of amenity to adjacent properties;
 - result in no loss of garden space; and
 - be set back from the front of the host building.
- 4.5 The contemporary design of the replacement building, including its form, fenestration and materials, would complement the similar (in scale and use) infill extension at 164 Haverstock Hill and would be consistent with the appeal decision of 2003 relating to that scheme (see paragraphs 3.16 to 3.18 above).
- 4.6 The proposal would have no adverse impact on the amenities, including daylight and outlook, of the neighbouring properties because:

- the development would consist of the replacement of an existing building, with only a marginal increase in footprint and volume;
- the occupier of Flat 2 at 162 Haverstock Hill has expressed no objection to the proposal (see the Design and Access Statement); and
- the occupier of the adjacent infill town house at 164C Haverstock Hill has no objections to the scheme (see the Design and Access Statement).

4.7 The proposed extension would appear as a subordinate element to the main house and its use of contemporary form, design and materials would create an innovative addition that is architecturally distinct from, and does not seek to mimic, the host building.

4.8 There is no reason, in principle, why contemporary design, if carefully considered, cannot be acceptable within conservation areas. The use of contemporary and non-traditional forms of design in appropriate circumstances is supported at national level by the NPPF, which states, at paragraph 130(c), that local planning authorities should “not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change”.

4.9 The proposed extension at 162 Haverstock Hill would have no adverse impact on the important architectural and townscape features that are identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy. The rear of the property is concealed from public view and the street scene in the vicinity of the site would be unaffected by the proposed addition. The proposal would, therefore, in the context of the guidance in the NPPF cause no harm to the significance of the Conservation Area.

4.10 Since the proposal would cause no harm (whether substantial or less than substantial harm) to the significance of the heritage asset, it is unnecessary to consider whether the proposal would produce any public benefits that might outweigh any harm caused.

4.11 For the reasons explained above, the proposed development would be appropriate in heritage terms and would accord with the following policies and requirements:

- section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
- London Plan policies D4 and HC1;
- Camden Local Plan policies A1, D1 and D2;
- the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy; and
- section 16 of the NPPF.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 For the reasons set out in this Statement, and in the related Design and Access Statement, the proposed development would:

- be suitable in its design and its effect on its surroundings;
- preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- protect the amenities of the neighbouring properties; and
- comply with the relevant planning policies.

5.2 The Council is therefore invited to grant planning permission subject to appropriate planning conditions.

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