

## **PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

Conversion of the existing building from 3 dwellings to 2 dwellings including creation of basement extension, together with associated external works including modification of single storey rear extension with raised parapet and new roof terrace, alterations to fenestration and front boundary treatment, removal and replacement of trees, installation of condenser in rear garden, and installation of solar panels to roof

 52 Aberdare Gardens, London, NW6 3QD

**Prepared by Hume Planning Consultancy Ltd.**

On Behalf of E. & C. Bensoussan

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared in support of a detailed planning application to Camden Borough Council (CBC) as Local Planning Authority (LPA) for development comprising;

*Conversion of the existing building from 3 dwellings to 2 dwellings including creation of basement extension, together with associated external works including modification of single storey rear extension with raised parapet and new roof terrace, alterations to fenestration and front boundary treatment, removal and replacement of trees, installation of condenser in rear garden, and installation of solar panels to roof*

- 1.2 This Statement provides an overview of the site, its context, and the relevant planning history. It provides an assessment of the proposed development against the development plan for the Borough, the London Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework. This Statement focuses principally on the key issue which concerns the design and impact on the surrounding character of the area, then provides a summary review of technical considerations (including residential amenity, parking and trees).

- 1.3 It is relevant that – in line with paragraph 39 of the NPPF – the Applicant has undertaken pre-application engagement with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in advance of the submission of this application.

- 1.4 The application is supported by the following documents which should be read in conjunction with this Statement:

- Application & CIL Forms
- Drawing Package: Hudson Madigan
- Arboricultural Survey & Impact Assessment: Marcus Foster
- Basement Impact Assessment (BIA): PJCE & PGE

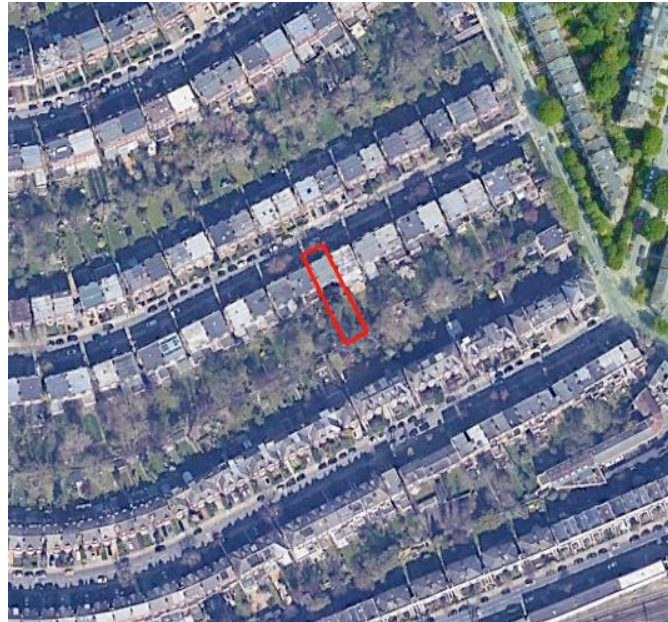
- 1.5 The above documents should be read alongside the Planning Statement and the planning application forms in order that a comprehensive understanding of the proposal is obtained.

- 1.6 The site in its current configuration comprises of three separate residential flats, with the building having previously been subdivided some years prior. The property is currently vacant and – despite its location within a designated conservation area – has fallen into a relatively poor condition. The proposed development would revitalise the building and provide an opportunity to improve the appearance of the site and its contributions to the conservation area, re-introducing high quality family accommodation at ground, first, and second floors whilst retaining a second residential flat at ground level only, with the basement extension providing ancillary accommodation only.

- 1.7 Overall, it is asserted that the proposal represents a sustainable form of development which is consistent with the provisions of the development plan and the NPPF. It would deliver a high-quality form of residential development, including bringing an existing built resource back into use as a larger family home in this location. In this context, planning permission should be granted.

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION & PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 The site is located off the southern side of Aberdare Gardens within the Swiss Cottage ward in Camden. The site covers an area of approximately 510sqm and comprises a large three-storey semi-detached property which dates back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.



**Figure 1.** Aerial image of the application site

- 2.2 The existing building is currently vacant but was last arranged as three flats (2 x 2 bed units and 1 x 3 bed unit) with an underground cellar at lower ground floor level comprising circa 23sqm of floorspace with head height above 1.5m as existing. The site has a large garden to the rear, exceeding 22m in length, and a concrete area to the front of the site which is enclosed by a low boundary wall. This boundary wall is an unoriginal feature and is in poor condition partly resulting from damage caused by the roots of the boundary trees resulting in a relatively poor quality interface with the streetscene in this part of the Conservation Area, set amongst a poor quality series of block paving slabs which themselves have been adversely impacted by poor management of the boundary trees, of cracked and uneven appearance.
- 2.3 The site falls within the South Hampstead Conservation Area. It should be noted, however, that the property is not a listed building, nor does it adjoin any listed buildings or structures.
- 2.4 The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is at very low risk from surface water flooding according to the Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning.



**Figure 2.** Photograph of front elevation of existing building

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 2.5 From a review of the Council's online planning records, there is no directly relevant planning application history related to the overall development of the site.
- 2.6 It is nonetheless relevant that an application for the removal of a number of trees was submitted to the Local Planning Authority on 29 July 2021. This application was withdrawn following a site meeting with the Council's Arboricultural Officer, Mr N Bell. During this meeting, it was agreed in consultation with the Arboricultural Officer that – whilst the quality of the trees proposed for removal is poor – the most appropriate means of securing their replacement would be through a planning application, wherein the imposition of planning conditions would secure the implementation of any appropriate replacement trees in the long term. This is considered in greater detail in Section 6 of this Statement and the supporting Arboricultural Report.

### 3. PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

- 3.1 In preparing this application the Applicant has undertaken pre-application engagement as outlined below. In line with paragraph 39 of the NPPF, the Applicant has sought to front-load discussions with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in recognition that *“early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties”*.
- 3.2 A virtual pre-application meeting was held with the case officer on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Follow up written advice (and informal discussion of the proposed development) was received on 13 December 2021 under LPA reference 2021/4137/PRE.
- 3.3 The feedback confirmed the overall acceptance of the proposed development, principally the principle of converting the building from three dwellings to two dwellings, resulting in the loss of no residential floorspace in accordance with Policy H3. It confirmed that the development of basement residential accommodation was acceptable in principle, subject to the provision of necessary information to support the technical assessment of such through a Basement Impact Assessment, which is duly provided as part of this application.
- 3.4 It went on to report that the overall quality of accommodation would be acceptable in meeting space standards and providing quality family accommodation.
- 3.5 In respect of design and conservation, the LPA's pre-application response made clear that there is no objection to the rear extension refurbishment which is of an appropriate scale and materials, and would not be harmful to the character and appearance of either the host property or the wider conservation area. It confirmed the acceptability – and indeed encouragement – of Solar PV plans at a high level. The response further established support for the replacement of windows to match the existing in design and materials; as well as improvement of the front boundary wall and provision of bin storage as shown.
- 3.6 Specific guidance was provided to the Applicant relating to the provision of an outdoor terrace at first floor level, the removal and replacement of trees, and the provision of off-street parking to serve the proposed family home.
- 3.7 It should be emphasised that engagement with the LPA's appointed Arboricultural Officer has also taken place prior to the submission of this application.
- 3.8 Assessment of the proposed development is made in **Section 6** of this Statement, as appropriately informed by pre-application advice.

## 4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The proposed development consists of the conversion of the existing building from 3 dwellings to 2 dwellings including creation of basement extension, together with associated external works including modification of single storey rear extension with raised parapet and new roof terrace, alterations to fenestration and front boundary treatment, removal and replacement of trees, installation of condenser in rear garden, and installation of solar panels to roof.
- 4.2 The design of the proposed development is set out in further detail on the supporting plans and drawings, prepared by Hudson & Madigan, which should be read alongside this Statement to provide a comprehensive understanding of the proposals. As elsewhere, it is relevant that the proposal has been informed by pre-application engagement with the LPA prior to submission, with guidance reflected in the supporting plans.
- 4.3 The proposal would revitalise the current building, providing 1 x 4 bedroom family dwelling (labelled Dwelling 2), and 1 x 1 bedroom flat (labelled Dwelling 1) at the ground floor level with related internal reconfigurations, not themselves requiring planning permission. The basement extension would provide only ancillary accommodation serving the main family home at first and second storey.
- 4.4 Additionally, sensitive alterations are proposed to the building in order to restore and refurbish the site whilst facilitating its conversion. Renovation works as proposed include for:
- Extension to basement to provide additional ancillary residential accommodation serving the family dwelling (labelled Dwelling 2 on plan);
  - The repair of the existing front boundary wall to match existing;
  - Creation of front and rear lightwells to the extended basement area;
  - Removal of existing chimneys;
  - Insertion of new windows and doors to the site and rear elevations and all existing windows to be replacement with double glazed units in a similar style and material as existing;
  - Creation of a rear-facing terrace at first floor level with appropriate dense vegetation screening and metal balustrade to side elevation; and
  - Installation of solar PV panels to the flat roof at the rear of the building
- 4.5 Car parking is to be retained as existing, with no off-street parking proposed. The existing dwellings (x 3 residential dwellings) currently benefit from the opportunity to apply to the Council's relevant department for parking permits, without undue restriction imposed by the planning system. It is expected that the proposed development would continue to benefit from such provisions, where the control of opportunities to apply for a parking permit (per dwelling; here for 2 x dwellings) should continue to apply as a noted betterment of the current provisions afforded to 52 Aberdare Gardens were it occupied as 3 x separate dwellings.
- 4.6 Bin and bicycle storage are proposed at the front elevation of the property in line with relevant standards and policies, appropriately screened from the wider streetscene.

## 5. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Decisions on planning applications must be made in accordance with the policies of the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance the Development Plan for the purposes of S38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) comprises the adopted Camden Local Plan (2017) and the London Plan (2021).
- 5.2 In addition to the policies of the Development Plan, there is other guidance which is material to the determination of planning applications including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), Camden Planning Guidance (CPG), Swiss Cottage Conservation Area Design Guide (2010) and South Hampstead Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011) among others which are referred to as appropriate.
- 5.3 The most relevant development plan policies are identified below and, these together with relevant NPPF references are addressed where appropriate within the planning assessment in **Section 6** of this Statement.

### CAMDEN LOCAL PLAN (2017)

- Policy G1: Delivery and location of growth
- Policy H3: Protecting existing homes
- Policy H6: Housing choice and mix
- Policy H7: Large and small homes
- Policy A1: Managing the impact of development
- Policy A5: Basements
- Policy D1: Design
- Policy D2: Heritage
- Policy CC2: Adapting to climate change
- Policy T2: Parking and car-free development

### LONDON PLAN (2021)

- Policy D6: Housing quality and standards
- Policy D10: Basement Development
- Policy H9: Ensuring the best use of Stock
- Policy H10: Housing size mix
- Policy HC1: Heritage conservation and growth
- Policy G7: Trees and woodlands
- Policy T5: Cycling
- Policy T6.1: Residential Parking

### CAMDEN PLANNING GUIDANCE (CPG)

- CPG: Amenity (2021)
- CPG: Basements (2021)
- CPG: Design (2021)
- CPG: Housing (2021)
- CPG: Energy efficiency and adaptation (2021)
- CPG: Trees (2021)

### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (2021)**

- Paragraph 8: Achieving sustainable development – economic, social & environmental objectives
- Paragraph 11: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Paragraph 110: Considering development proposals through the promotion of sustainable transport
- Paragraph 120: Making effective use of land
- Paragraph 130: Achieving well-designed places
- Paragraph 131: Importance of trees
- Paragraph 197, 206: Proposals affecting heritage assets

## **6. PLANNING EVALUATION & OPPORTUNITY**

### **Principle of Development**

- 6.1 It is recognised that policies G1 and H3 of the Camden Local Plan are central in consideration of the proposed development as a matter of overarching planning principles. The application site is located within an existing residential area within a highly sustainable location in Swiss Cottage, where the principle of development is supported under Policy G1. It is relevant that the Policy H9 of the London Plan itself supports the efficient use of housing stock.
- 6.2 Policy H3 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to protect existing homes through a criteria-based approach, that (a) resists development that would involve a net loss of residential floorspace, or which (b) would result in the conversion of existing residential floorspace to short stay accommodation, or (c) would involve the net loss of two or more dwellings. Criteria (b) and (c) are not relevant here.
- 6.3 As established through pre-application engagement, the proposed development would not result in the net loss of floorspace. It would remain in residential use, albeit across 2 dwellings rather than 3 which would create a net loss of only one dwelling in order to create a larger family dwelling as part of the housing mix at the site.
- 6.4 In this regard, the proposal fully complies with criterion (a) of Policy H3. The proposed development, as a starting point and as referenced clearly in pre-application advice from the LPA, should be regarded as acceptable in principle.

### **Housing Mix**

- 6.5 It is relevant that Policy H7 of the Camden Local Plan seeks to ensure that all housing development, including development for the conversion of existing homes, includes a mix of large and small homes. It is noted that supporting text to Policy H7 identifies local housing mix in the Borough as being comprised largely of relatively small dwellings. It is further recognised the Policy H6 also encourages housing choice and mix.
- 6.6 The proposed development would deliver 1 x 4 bedroom family home, and 1 x 1 bedroom flat. We consider that this compares favourably with the current configuration of the building, which provides for 2 x 2 bedroom flats and 1 x 3 bed flat. The provision of a quality 1 bedroom flat alongside a larger family home will rebalance the availability of family accommodation in the local area, where a large proportion of buildings have been gradually subdivided over time whilst still providing a smaller unit.
- 6.7 As such we consider the proposal to comply with the objectives of Policy H7, and those of H6 in seeking to create mixed and varied housing suitable for Camden's existing and future households.

### **Character and Appearance**

- 6.8 Section 12 of the Framework relates to design and states the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment stating that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. This proposed development has been closely underpinned by such principles, as reflected both in this statement and the application plans. As part of the development plan, under Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan

development should consider the character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings, and the quality of materials used. In similar regard, Policy D2 deals with heritage matters and outlines that the Council will preserve, and where possible, enhance Camden's diverse assets and their settings including conservation areas. It is also relevant that Policy D6 of the London Plan has informed the proposal. Due regard has also been had to the South Hampstead Conservation Area, 'Character Appraisal and Management Strategy' (February, 2011) which has informed the design process and current application proposals.

- 6.9 The site layout and design has been refined following identification of the site's opportunities and constraints; and through extensive pre-application engagement as outlined previously in **Section 3** of this Statement.
- 6.10 In considering the design, character and appearance of the proposal in its heritage context it is then important to note that the subject site is not listed though it does fall within the South Hampstead Conservation Area as above (formerly the Swiss Cottage Conservation Area). The following 'definition' of the specific character area containing Aberdare Gardens is given as '*Central wedge – Aberdare, Broadhurst, Canfield, Compayne and Greencroft Gardens*', and includes the east side of Priory Road. It outlines that in the heart of the conservation area properties are some of the most ornate and attractive in the area with lively roofscapes, timber and ironwork porches, typically late 19th century multi-paned sashes and gaps between houses contributing to character. It recognises that the vegetation (both front and rear) is considered a prominent feature with buildings set-back and boundaries demarcated by ornate garden walls. No.52 itself has a red brick frontage (and yellow stocks to the side / rear) with corbelling, brick arches, painted sub-cills, ground floor bays and a decorative Dutch gable. The roof tiles to the front are clay with bands of rounded 'club' tiles to add decoration.
- 6.11 The specific design form and appearance has been directly informed by local cues, specifically the host building itself. The proposed development seeks to restore and revitalise the building and provide an opportunity to improve the appearance of the site and its contributions to the conservation area. The core character of the South Hampstead Conservation Area would not be lost through the proposed series of refurbishment and development works, as is reflected in the LPA's pre-application advice which considered in detail a range of interventions intended to bring the building back to a higher quality addition to the streetscene.
- 6.12 Specifically in terms of the changes to fenestration, all of the existing windows are to be replaced with double glazed units to a similar style and materials as existing and the new windows will also match the existing style of windows at the property, as agreed through pre-application discussions with the LPA prior to submission. The refurbishment of these windows will have no widely perceivable impact on the character of the host building, and in any event would be reflective of the existing style and material as existing as shown on plan.
- 6.13 The rear kitchen extension is to be upgraded with parapet raised, installation of high quality crittal style doors fitted to the rear and where required brickwork will be used to match the existing building. It is proposed to create an outdoor terrace above the extension at first floor level, which will have a metal railings to the boundary with dense landscape screening behind providing screening of up to at least 1.8m in height,

preventing any sense of undue overlooking or enclosure. Whilst pre-application engagement recorded in writing a concern regarding the potential for overlooking, it is noted that verbal engagement during the pre-application meeting itself reached a different conclusion. In either event, it is a material consideration that the dwellings at both No. 50 also currently benefit from a similar rear roof terrace at this level. The provision of a roof terrace of similar style and proportion is not considered discordant with the established pattern of neighbouring built form in this stretch of Aberdare Gardens. The provision of a generous 1.8m screening to the boundary-side of the proposed terrace significantly limits the potential for harmful overlooking, or the perception of such.

- 6.14 Solar panels are proposed to the rear flat roof section of the building, however these will not be visible from the public realm. It should be noted that a number of other properties along Aberdare Gardens have solar panels installed at roof level, including at Nos. 16 and 38 Aberdare Gardens. Other sustainability elements to the building include re-using the existing property, improved glazing providing thermal benefits, additional planting and the installation of permeable surfacing to aid sustainable drainage, as supported by Policy CC2 of the Local Plan.

- 6.15 The Swiss Cottage Conservation Area Design Guide (2010) (as the South Hampstead Conservation Area was formerly known) notes on that:

*“incremental reinstatement of quality details, reinstating garden walls and railings and front gardens will enhance the area”* . Paragraph 7.22.

and

*“Where front refuse bin stores are considered necessary, great care should be taken to ensure that the store is located sensitively. This would include concealment by existing boundary walls and planting, the use of sensitive materials (reclaimed brick or timber) and siting away from the main frontage of the building. The Council will resist the loss of original boundary treatments and the iron and wooden elements and planted greenery associated with them”*. Paragraph 13.47

- 6.16 Directly informed by this heritage guidance, the street-elevation of the property is to be resurfaced and re-landscaped to increase the amount of planting and prune the existing boundary hedgerow and a screened bin store and cycle store would also be provided, providing visual improvements. Repair to the front boundary wall is proposed, to correct years of neglect to the quality of the wall which has been negatively impacted by the roots of the two existing poor quality trees.
- 6.17 It is held that the proposed development affords the opportunity to introduce enhancement to the site's street frontage, in compliance with the guidance of the extant Design Guide where efforts to re-address the streetscene more positively are clearly encouraged.
- 6.18 As informed by the above assessment and supporting drawing package, it is considered that the siting, scale and design will not cause a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the application site or the surrounding conservation area.

## Proposed Basement Extension

- 6.19 With regard to the proposed basement extension, Policy A5 is relevant to the proposal which states that the Council will only permit basement development where it is demonstrated that the proposal would not cause harm to neighbouring properties, the structural, ground or water conditions of the area, the character and amenity of the area, the architectural character of the building and the significance of heritage assets. CPG: Basements (2021) outlines the LPA's specific guidance on basement accommodation, and this has been referred to throughout the preparation of the scheme, including in directing the content and approach of the submitted Basement Impact Assessment.
- 6.20 It is highly relevant that the existing building benefits already from an existing basement level (rising to circa 1.5m in head height). Therefore it is important to note that the proposed development is to extend at basement level in order to increase the height and floor area so that additional ancillary residential floorspace can be created at this level.
- 6.21 A Basement Impact Assessment accompanies this application which confirms that technical acceptability of the proposed basement-level extensions. Detailed review of the Basement Impact Assessment should form part of any assessment of this proposal, and its contents should be considered in full alongside this Statement which provides only a summary against relevant planning policies.
- 6.22 With regard to design, the proposed development would bring about limited change to the property's appearance or the character of the conservation area resulting from the installation of lightwells to the extended basement area. Lightwells have been designed to be as discrete and minimal in terms of their size. It is noted that the Swiss Cottage Conservation Area Design Guide (2010) clarifies:
- "In recent years, South Hampstead Conservation Area has seen a proliferation of basement developments and extensions to existing basement accommodation, together with excavation of associated lightwells at the front and rear of properties. Some of these (e.g. on Aberdare Gardens) are overly large, spilling into and resulting in a loss of verdant front and rear gardens, detracting from the serene, leafy character of the rear gardens in the CA".*
- Paragraph 7.11.
- 6.23 In line with Paragraph 13.29 of the same Design Guide, the proposal has been designed to be of a modest size. It does not extend beyond the footprint of the original building, and is not deeper than one full storey below ground level (approximately 3 metres in depth), noting that the existing basement level rises in parts to circa 1.5m head height. It is acknowledged in the Design Guide that this is often the most appropriate way to extend a building below ground, provided that the internal environment is fit for the intended purpose, and there is no impact to any trees on or adjoining the site, to the water environment, or to the visual amenity of the remaining garden and views from neighbouring properties. The same principles apply here, where the outcomes of technical assessment (outlined in the supporting Basement Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Assessment) clearly demonstrate accordance with these principles.

- 6.24 In line with the above, it is considered that criteria (a) – (e) of Policy A5 relating inter alia to neighbouring properties, character, and heritage assets would be roundly satisfied by the proposed development.
- 6.25 In terms of the technical design of the extended basement specifically, there would be no conflict with the policy criteria of Policy A5 (F - M). In this regard the proposal would:
- not comprise of more than one storey;
  - not be built under an existing basement;
  - not exceed 50% of each garden within the property;
  - be less than 1.5 times the footprint of the host building in area;
  - extend into the garden no further than 50% of the depth of the host building measured from the principal rear elevation;
  - not extend into or underneath the garden further than 50% of the depth of the garden;
  - be set back from neighbouring property boundaries where it extends beyond the footprint of the host building; and
  - avoid the loss of garden space or trees of townscape or amenity value
- 6.26 It is asserted therefore that the proposed development positively responds to the characteristics of the site and its surroundings and follows the principles of good design that are recognised both within the development plan and within national planning policy and guidance.

## Living Conditions

- 6.27 Policy A1 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that development protects the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting planning permission to development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents.
- 6.28 Notwithstanding consideration of the proposal as above, the application building shares boundaries with No.50 to the west and No.54 to the east, with which it shares a party wall. Given the setback from the Site's side boundaries, coupled with the overall height and design of the proposal, it is considered that both the proposed first floor terrace and basement development – both individually and cumulatively - would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of no.50 and no.54 in regard to the loss of light, overbearing, overshadowing or privacy impacts. As outlined in detail above, the creation of an outdoor terrace above the extension at first floor level will have metal railings to the boundary with dense landscape screening behind providing screening of up to at least 1.8m in height, preventing any sense of undue overlooking or enclosure. The provision of a generous 1.8m screening to the boundary-side of the proposed terrace significantly limits the potential for harmful overlooking, or the perception of such. The supporting Basement Impact Assessment again confirms that no harmful neighbour impacts would arise from the proposed development.
- 6.29 The existing upper windows on the side elevation are of obscured glazing and the new windows to the rear and side elevations will reflect this, and as such will not result in any increased overlooking, and will in this way safeguard the living conditions of existing and future occupiers.

- 6.30 The new dwellings will meet the nationally described space standards in accordance with Policy H6 of the Camden Local Plan but also D10 of the London Plan, as also reflected in received pre-application advice from the LPA.
- 6.31 Both units are provided with a high quality of accommodation which has been re-organised internally, following the pre-application feedback received. Dedicated bin and bicycle storage will be created to the front and rear which will be discrete, accessible and secure.

## Highways & Parking

- 6.32 The proposals include for the retention of parking arrangements as existing i.e. with no off-street parking. The existing dwellings (x 3 residential dwellings) currently benefit from the opportunity to apply to the Council's relevant department for parking permits, without undue restriction imposed by the planning system. It is expected that the proposed development would continue to benefit from such provisions, where the control of opportunities to apply for a parking permit (per dwelling; here for 2 x dwellings) should continue to apply as a noted betterment of the current provisions afforded to 52 Aberdare Gardens were it occupied as 3 x separate dwellings.
- 6.33 It is noted that Policy T2 would typically limit the issue of on-street parking permits in new development, expecting all new development to be car-free. Whilst a new development in planning terms, it is clear that the existing building subject of this proposal – albeit currently vacant – would bring about greater parking demand from 3 separate dwellings than the proposed 2 dwellings. It is a material consideration that – should the applicant wish to do so – the existing building could simply be reinstated for use as 3 separate dwellings. The net reduction in dwellings relative to the existing should be weighted accordingly in assessing against a strict reading of Policy T2.
- 6.34 The LPA's pre-application planning advice makes clear that:
- "Notwithstanding transport comments [which refer to the need to control on-street parking permits through permit-free development and related legal obligations] – given that the proposal would be a reduction from three units to 2 units parking permits for the remaining 2 units can be retained; there will be no additional parking pressures created as a result of the development".*
- 6.35 The application as submitted is derived from this advice, and it is therefore anticipated that the ability of future occupants of this family home and the separate ground floor flat will continue to be afforded the opportunity to apply for and receive parking permits, which in all instances will involve betterment to the current parking pressures, given the net reduction in dwellings and associated reduction in parking demand.
- 6.36 With regard to cycle parking, Policy T1 of the Local Plan promotes cycling in the Borough, and identifies that the LPA will seek development that provides for accessible secure cycle parking exceeding minimum standards outlined in the London Plan. The proposal would provide 4 secure cycle parking spaces in line with the London Plan, and is therefore in compliance with relevant standards.

## Trees

- 6.37 Whilst a number of trees would be retained as a part of the proposed development, the proposal offers the opportunity to evaluate the quality and condition of these tree-lined boundaries and examining opportunities for enhancement – both in arboricultural terms, but also in respect of the overall setting of the site.
- 6.38 A detailed site-specific arboricultural survey and report was commissioned in advancing the present planning application for the site, in line with pre-application engagement advice which sought to overcome concern regarding the need to deal with trees sensitivity, as informed by CPG: Trees (2019).
- 6.39 It is relevant that an application for the removal of a number of trees was submitted to the Local Planning Authority on 29 July 2021. This application was withdrawn following a site meeting with the Council's Arboricultural Officer, Mr N Bell. During this meeting, it was agreed in consultation with the Arboricultural Officer that – whilst the quality of the trees proposed for removal is poor – the most appropriate means of securing their replacement would be through a planning application, wherein the imposition of planning conditions would secure the implementation of any appropriate replacement trees in the long term.
- 6.40 The proposal results in the removal of eight poor quality individual trees due to proposed general poor health and/or poor form, as informed by relevant British Standard BS5837. Within this, Trees T2, T3, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, and S1 would be removed to facilitate replacement planting with healthier and higher quality trees. Replacement planting is proposed to include four good replacement trees, each of which would be the subject of dialogue with the LPA's Arboricultural Officer but likely to comprise one of the several native species identified on the Tree Planting Plan prepared by Marcus Foster Tree Consultancy.
- 6.41 The removal of the poor quality trees identified in the supporting arboricultural report and their selective replacement – both at front and rear elevations - will not unduly harm the setting or character of the site or its contributions to the conservation area. It will however allow for restorative work to the front boundary wall and surface paving to the street elevation, which have been damaged by the tree roots and not been successfully managed for a period of years, which will go some way in allowing for a holistic improvement to the site's interface with Aberdare Gardens.
- 6.42 It goes on to conclude that the arboricultural impact of the proposed scheme is considered to be low when considered in the context of both managing poor form and health of existing trees, but also where healthy and appropriate replacement planting would be provided.

## 7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 By virtue of the existing planning policy context, together with its relationship to surrounding development, we consider that the proposed development of the existing building satisfies relevant planning policies for the Borough.
- 7.2 The key planning parameters affecting the site have been identified and evaluated above. The proposed development would revitalise and enhance the host building, providing a high quality family home and separate ground floor flat, each providing a high quality standard of living. The property will be brought back into use as two self-contained dwellings, including a larger family dwelling, and will utilise the site more efficiently through the basement extension to increase the provision habitable floorspace available.
- 7.3 Significant investment and improvement works are proposed to the building which will offer enhancements to its appearance, quality of the accommodation and adaptation to climate change, whilst maintaining the character of the conservation area and safeguarding neighbouring amenities. External changes are sympathetic and reflect the heritage setting of the site within the South Hampstead Conservation Area, responding appropriately to the surrounding cues and established built form nearby. The proposal is also supported by a Basement Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Survey, establishing technical support underpinning the proposal as submitted.
- 7.4 For these reasons, it is concluded that the proposal accords with the development plan policies and sits squarely with the objectives of the NPPF and it is therefore asked that the application be considered favourably by officers.