

# PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

In respect of

**33 Downside Crescent, London, NW3 2AN**

On behalf of

**William Carter**

Planning & Heritage Statement

V1

22 April 2022

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application for planning consent is submitted on behalf of William Carter (the “*Applicant*”) for the following Development at 33 Downside Crescent, NW3 2AN (the “*Site*”):
- “*construction of a single-storey replacement rear extension to an existing dwellinghouse (Class C3)*”.
- 1.2 The Site consists of a three-storey, semi-detached late-Victorian property on the north side of Downside Crescent, along with its associated rear garden. The building is in residential use (Class C3), and has been subdivided into flats, which is understood to have been granted permission in 1968.
- 1.3 The proposal will replace the existing poor-quality rear extension with a new, well-designed rear extension constructed to reflect the character and materials of the building.
- 1.4 The proposed works are not visible from any public space and similar extensions have been approved at a number of properties along the same street.
- 1.5 Currently the ground floor is configured as two separate residential units: a studio unit (Flat D) in the existing rear extension, and a one-bedroom flat (Flat C) in the main footprint of the building. The amalgamation of these two units into a single dwelling has been proposed under a separate Certificate of Lawfulness. Accordingly, the question of amalgamation does not itself form part of this planning application and the sole matter for consideration under this application is the replacement rear extension.
- 1.6 This Planning and Heritage Statement sets out the key planning policies in relation to the Site and assesses the proposed Development against each of these policy considerations. It is accompanied by the following documents:
- Application form;
  - Community Infrastructure Levy form;
  - Design and Access Statement; and
  - Existing, Demolition and Proposed Drawings.
- 1.7 The Planning Statement comprises the following sections:
- **Section 2:** Site and Surroundings;
  - **Section 3:** Planning History;
  - **Section 4:** Proposed Development;
  - **Section 5:** Planning Policy;
  - **Section 6:** Planning Appraisal;
  - **Section 7:** Heritage Appraisal; and
  - **Section 8:** Overall Conclusions.
- 1.8 The following section identifies key aspects of the Site and its surrounding area.

## 2 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The Site is situated to the north of Downside Crescent and currently comprises a three-storey, semi-detached late-Victorian property in use as a residential flats (Use Class C3), as well as a rear garden. This application relates only to the building's ground floor.



*Figure 2.1: Aerial View of the Site (Outlined in Red)*

- 2.2 The building is constructed of London Stock redbrick and has a pitched slate-tile roof. The building is not listed or locally-listed but is located within the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area. The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and has a PTAL of 4.



*Figure 2.2: Front Elevation of the Site (from Downside Crescent)*



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- 2.3 The original rear extension at the site is in a poor state of repair and has been extensively altered over the years. Additionally, the rear extension has also been affected by subsidence given the presence of London Clay as the founding soil on the site.
- 2.4 The existing rear garden is currently divided into two separate amenity spaces, with a patio garden serving the studio unit (Flat D) and the remainder of the garden (partially patio with the rest being lawn) serving the one-bed unit (Flat C).
- 2.5 The site is located to the immediate south of Open Space (which is also designated as a Site of Important for Nature Conservation, Borough Grade 2), and a Neighbourhood Centre to the west. To the north-east of the site is the Isokon Flats along Lawn Road, which are designated as a Grade I listed building. There is a strong boundary of trees lining the northern boundary of the rear garden, providing significant screening to the Open Space to the north and Isokon Flats to the north-east.



*Figure 2.3: Northern Boundary of the Site/Rear Garden*

- 2.6 The wider Downside Crescent consists of similar three-storey, redbrick Victorian townhouses akin to the site, thereby giving the area a uniform and coherent townscape and character. Additionally, the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area is primarily characterised by three-to-four-storey, semi-detached dwellinghouses. A number of these townhouses have been subject to rear extensions over previous years, as outlined in Section 3 of this Statement, as well as the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

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- 2.7 The Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy contains the following description of the area; *“densely lined with late-Victorian red brick, three-storey gabled houses with front gardens. The gabled roofscape is distinctive and virtually intact. The houses are semi-detached, sited close together to form a relatively uniform frontage. Hard-standings and cross-overs have recently replaced some front gardens, and garages and car shelters on the ground floors have been added to the fronts of some houses which break the pattern of these houses and their streetscape”*.
- 2.8 Further information on the building, as well as the wider conservation area and the Isokon Flats, is provided in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, as well as the Heritage Appraisal in Section 7 of this Statement.
- 2.9 The following section outlines the Site and wider area’s planning history.

### 3 PLANNING HISTORY

#### Planning History for the Site

3.1 Table 3.1, below, outlines the relevant planning history for the site.

| Application Reference | Site Address                                      | Description of Development   | Decision (Date)          |
|-----------------------|---|--|--------------------------|
| 2019/5628/P           | 33 Downside Crescent London NW3 2AN               | Erection of single storey rear extension to studio flat.   | Withdrawn<br>July 2020   |
| 2021/2840/P           | Flats C and D 33 Downside Crescent London NW3 2AN | Erection of full-width, single storey rear extension in connection with the conversion of 2 residential units at ground floor level into a single 3-bed residential unit, including alterations at the front to provide a hipped roof above a bay window, boundary railings and tiled entrance path. | REGISTERED<br>02-09-2021 |

Table 3.1: Planning History for the Site

3.2 An application was submitted by the previous owner of the property in November 2019 for the erection of a single-storey rear extension to the studio flat in order to increase its size from 20sqm to 38.5sqm. The application was ultimately withdrawn in July 2020, although details of why this application was withdrawn are unclear. It is noted that the proposed extension in November 2019 was set to protrude by almost 4 metres further into the garden than the extent of the current rear extension and would have extended further into the garden than most of the other extensions along the crescent.

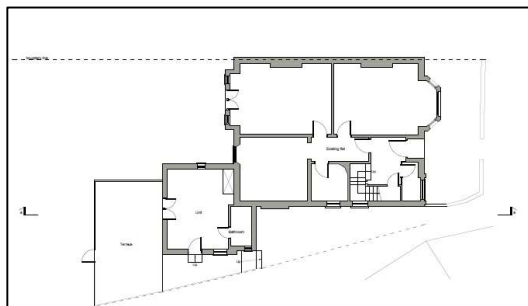


Figure 3.1: Existing Ground Floor Plan

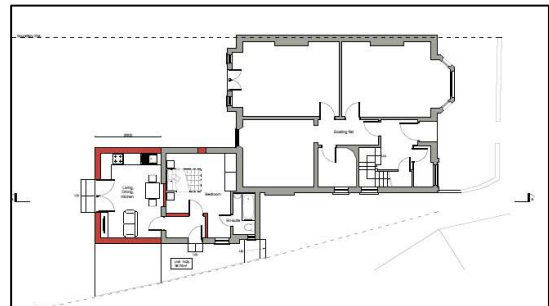


Figure 3.2: Proposed Ground Floor Plan

3.3 The Applicant submitted a planning application in June 2021 which was registered in September 2021 (2021/2840/P). That application is now subject to an appeal for non-determination. The application submitted in June 2021 can be distinguished from the current application on the basis that the previous application from June 2021 involved: (a) several changes to the front façade of the Property (including a new hipped roof above a bay window, boundary railings, replacement window, and tiled entrance path) which changes are omitted from the current application; and

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(b) the amalgamation of the two residential dwellings, which is omitted from the current application (and addressed separately under a Certificate of Lawfulness).

### Surrounding Planning History

3.4 As can be seen from LB Camden's planning history records, a number of the adjoining three-storey Victorian properties on the northern end of Downside Crescent have obtained planning permission for full-width rear extensions. Table 3.2, below, provides a list of key relevant permissions, which are dealt with in further detail below.

| Application Reference | Site Address                                | Description of Development  | Decision (Date)          |
|-----------------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| 2021/2122/P           | 6 Downside Crescent London NW3 2AP          | Erection of a single storey rear extension incorporating a green roof (following demolition of an existing rear extension), installation of a juliet balconys at first floor rear elevation level, replacement of existing windows with double glazing, alterations to front driveway boundary treatment including driveway resurfacing and installation of a timber bin store. Creation of a rear patio and associated external alterations.   | Granted<br>December 2021 |
| 2017/4357/P           | 31 Downside Crescent London NW3 2AN         | Single storey side and rear extension following part demolition of existing rear extension. Erection of rear terrace. Roof extension involving 1x rear dormer, 1x side rooflight and replacement roof coverings. Replacement of single-glazed timber sash windows with double glazing. Alterations to front boundary wall and landscaping.  | Granted<br>October 2017  |
| 2014/3518/P           | Flat 1, 27 Downside Crescent London NW3 2AN | Erection of a full width rear extension as a replacement to existing extension. Alterations to side elevation and installation of railings to front boundary.   | Granted<br>July 2014     |
| 2013/7333/P           | 23 Downside Crescent London NW3 2AN         | Erection of full-width rear extension following demolition of existing part width extension, installation of rear dormer window and two side rooflights, removal of external staircase, and alterations to fenestration and front boundary wall.  | Granted<br>January 2014  |
| 2011/5180/P           | 21 Downside Crescent LONDON NW3 2AN         | Erection of a single storey rear extension with roof terrace and alterations to existing extension at ground floor level, installation of two rooflights to side roof slope, removal of existing car port and reinstatement of ground floor window to front elevation, erection of front boundary wall with railings, alterations to doors and windows to side elevation, replacement of existing rear windows at second floor level, replacement of rear first floor windows with French doors and addition of a Juliette balcony to residential units (Class C3). | Granted<br>December 2011 |
| 2004/2145/P           | 13 Downside Crescent London NW3 2AN         | Erection of single storey rear glazed extension   | Granted<br>July 2004     |



*Table 3.2: Planning History for the Surrounding Area*

**6 Downside Crescent**

3.5 In December 2021, consent was granted at 6 Downside Crescent (ref: 2021/2122/P) for the demolition of the existing rear extension and its replacement with a full-width rear extension. The approved extension was to be finished in second-hand London stock brick to match the existing building with windows and sliding doors in dark-grey powder coated aluminium frames.



*[Image: approved full-width extension at 6 Downside Crescent]*

**9 Downside Crescent**

3.6 In December 2006, consent was granted at 9 Downside Crescent (ref: 2006/4761/P) for the erection of a new conservatory to the existing building.

**13 Downside Crescent**

3.7 In July 2004, permission was granted at 13 Downside Crescent (ref: 2004/2145/P) for the erection of an infill conservatory to create a full-width rear extension.

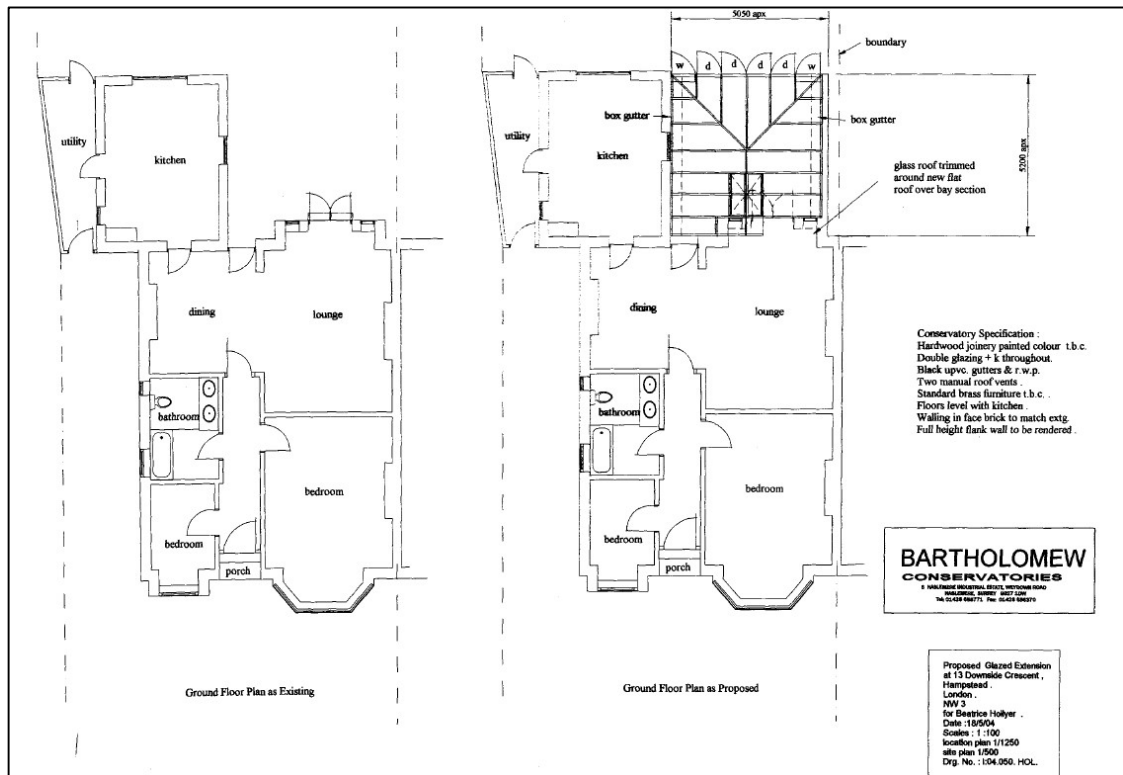


Figure 3.3: Existing and Proposed Floorplans

**21 Downside Crescent**

- 3.8 In December 2011, planning permission was granted at 21 Downside Crescent (ref: 2011/5180/P) for the increase/infill of the existing rear extension to create a full width rear extension.
- 3.9 The infill extension is of a modern design, being primarily composed of glazing, and has a slate roof.

**23 Downside Crescent**

- 3.10 In January 2014, permission was granted at 23 Downside Crescent (ref: 2013/7333/P) for the removal of the existing extension of the building and its replacement with a full-width rear extension.
- 3.11 The rear extension has redbrick side elevations matching the existing and a white render rear elevation with large glazed panels and doors. The extension also has a pitched tiled roof and a large rooflight.



*Figure 3.4: CGI of the Proposed Rear Elevation*

### **27 Downside Crescent**

- 3.12 In July 2014, planning permission was granted at 27 Downside Crescent (ref: 2014/3518/P) for the erection of a full-width rear extension.
- 3.13 The development, similarly to that proposed under this application, removed the existing rear bedroom extension, and replaced it with an extension covering the width of the sub-divided dwelling.
- 3.14 The extension was designed to complement the existing dwelling, using a pitched roof design (built to the same height and as the existing protrusion), with timber framed doors on the rear elevation. Facing and feature brickwork, together with rainwater goods, matched those of the existing sub-divided dwelling.

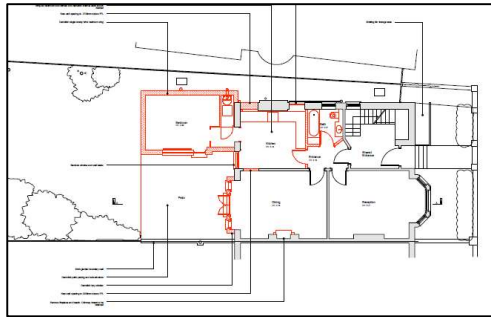


Figure 3.5: Existing Ground Floor Plan

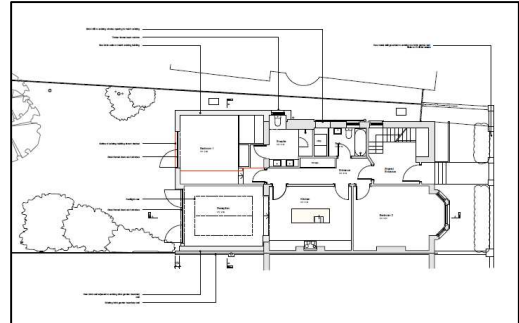


Figure 3.6: Proposed Ground Floor Plan



[Image above: approved scheme at 27 Downside Crescent]

### 31 Downside Crescent

3.15 In October 2017, consent was granted at 31 Downside Crescent (ref: 2017/4357/P) for the demolition of the existing rear extension and its replacement with a full-width rear extension. The rear extension mimics the materials used in the demolished rear extension, and is built using brickwork and with glazing to the rear elevation.

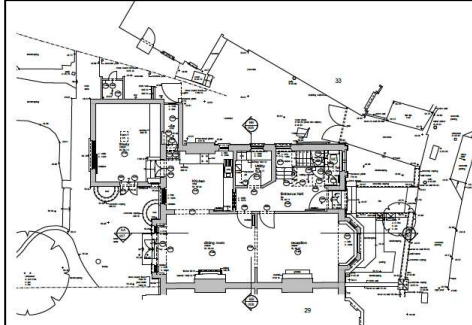


Figure 3.7: Existing Ground Floor Plan

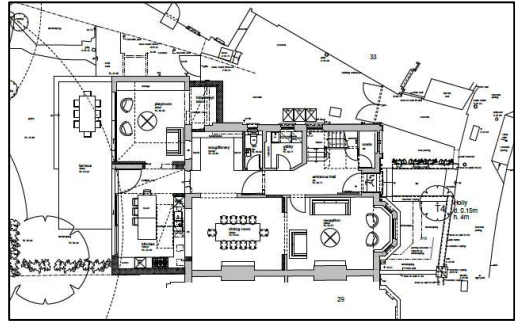


Figure 3.8: Proposed Ground Floor Plan

3.16 Furthermore, there are also other examples of rear extensions at Downside Crescent, approved either by Lawful Development Certificate route or by grant of planning permission. These examples are of a smaller scale than the proposal, but are nonetheless relevant in terms of understanding baseline conditions in the immediate area. These are as follow:

- *2013/7683/P (25 Downside Crescent)*: Lawful Development Certificate granted on 20/12/2013  
“Minor alterations to dwellinghouse including bay window and French door enlargements, alterations to roof of rear extension, 2x rooflights, infill window to existing rear wall and infill brick wall and sliding panel window to rear extension”
- *2006/2759/P (15 Downside Crescent)*: Lawful Development Certificate granted 24/08/2006;  
“Certificate of Lawful Proposed Development for a single-storey rear extension to the dwellinghouse”
- *2004/2794/P (10 Downside Crescent)*: Lawful Development Certificate granted 20/08/2004  
“Erection of a single storey rear extension, new brick wall and gates to front, alterations to existing external openings and creation of new dormer to rear roof slope and installation of new rooflights to front roof slope”.

3.17 The following section provides an overview of the proposed Development.



## 4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The proposed development is for the construction of a single-storey replacement rear extension to an existing dwellinghouse (Class C3).
- 4.2 The development will comprise the removal of the existing rear extension and its replacement with a new, high-quality rear extension. The extension will span the full width of the building and would include a slight side return connecting to the rear extension.
- 4.3 Although the proposal does involve a modest increase in the depth of the extension into the garden (by approx. 1.9 metres), it is noted that the protrusion into the garden is equal to the protrusion of the existing extension at the adjoining property at No. 35. The proposed depth of the extension is, also, equal to the depth of other approved full-width extensions along the crescent. Additionally, the current application's modest extension of 1.9 metres is significantly smaller than the previous owner's former application in November 2019 to extend the property by almost 4 metres.
- 4.4 The proposed extension will be constructed in cavity masonry walls with external London Stock bricks to match the existing property. A decorative coursing of red brick to match and align with that on the existing building will run around the top of the new walls, which will be capped with traditional capping.
- 4.5 The pitched roof over the Bedroom will be clad in slate at a pitch to match that of the existing roof of the addition together with terracotta tiles at the corners. The flat roof over the Reception Room (the "infill" extension) will be lined with a dark grey waterproof membrane.
- 4.6 The proposal will also result in the loss of the existing substandard studio flat, located in the existing rear extension and, in-turn, the increase in the size of the ground-floor flat in the main building from one bed to three beds.
- 4.7 The existing garden, which is currently subdivided in order to serve both existing ground-floor flats independently, will be amalgamated and will serve the single proposed ground-floor unit. The existing patio will also be removed in order to deliver the proposed extension.
- 4.8 For further information on the proposal, please see the accompanying Design & Access Statement and drawings.
- 4.9 The following section assesses the proposal's acceptability in regard to local and national planning policy.

## 5 PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires development proposals to be considered in accordance with the statutory Development Plan and other material considerations.
- 5.2 Camden's Development Plan is formed of the following policy documents:
- London Plan (2021);
  - Camden Local Plan (July 2017);
  - Camden Planning Guidance: Home Improvements (January 2021);
  - Camden Planning Guidance: Amenity (January 2021); and
  - Camden Planning Guidance: Design (January 2021).
- 5.3 On the Council's adopted Policies Map (2014), the site is located within the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area. The site is not a listed (or locally-listed) building. The site adjoins Open Space (which is also designated as a Site of Important for Nature Conservation, Borough Grade 2) to the north, and a Neighbourhood Centre to the west. The Isokon flats, which are designated as a Grade I listed building, are northeast of the site. The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and has a PTAL of 4.
- 5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in February 2019, and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which is an online resource, are also material considerations.

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 24th July 2018 and updated on 19 February 2019. It is the document which sets out the Government's overarching planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 5.6 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, whilst paragraph 8 sets out the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.
- 5.7 Paragraph 8 also states that these roles should not be undertaken in isolation and it outlines that to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. Paragraph 10 states that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF.
- 5.8 Paragraph 127 outlines that planning decision should ensure that developments are:
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; and
  - are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).

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- 5.9 Paragraph 192 states that, in determining applications which affect heritage assets, local planning authorities should take account of:
- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
  - the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
  - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.10 Paragraph 196 also states that, 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.
- 5.11 The following local policies within Camden's Local Plan are considered to be relevant to the proposal:
- Camden Local Plan (July 2017):**
- Policy H1 (Maximising Housing Supply);
  - 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 A3 (Biodiversity);
  - Policy D1 (Design); and
  - Policy D2 (Heritage).
- 5.12 The following section of this statement assesses the proposed Development against relevant policies.

## 6 PLANNING APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The section provides an appraisal of the Development on the basis of the local, regional and national planning policy context provided in Section 5, above.

### Principle of Development

- 6.2 Policy H1 states that the Council will seek to exceed the target for additional homes, particularly self-contained homes, by regarding self-contained housing as the priority land-use of the Local Plan and ensuring that homes are occupied.
- 6.3 Policy H3 outlines that the Council will aim to ensure that existing housing continues to meet the needs of existing and future households and resist development that would involve the net loss of two or more homes unless they:
- create large homes in a part of the borough with a relatively low proportion of large dwellings; and
  - enable sub-standard units to be enlarged to meet residential space standards.
- 6.4 Policy H7 states that the Council will seek to ensure that housing development contributes to meeting the priorities set out in the Dwelling Size Priorities Table. The Dwelling Size Priorities Table identifies one-bedroom (and studio) market units as a low-priority dwelling size, and identifies three-bedroom market units as being a high-priority dwelling size.

### Assessment

- 6.5 The proposal comprises the replacement of the existing rear extension with a new rear extension, resulting in the loss of the existing substandard studio unit (Flat D) and the increase in the size of Flat C from a one-bedroom to a three-bedroom, family-sized unit.
- 6.6 As outlined in the Dwelling Size Priorities Table, the existing units are considered to be low-priority dwelling sizes given they consist of a one-bed unit and studio unit. The proposals, in-turn, whilst resulting in the removal of a dwelling, will remove a substandard, low-priority unit whilst creating a new high-priority unit through the extension of Flat C. On this basis, it is therefore considered that the proposals represent a substantial benefit to the Council's housing stock by delivering housing which better reflects housing need.
- 6.7 In turn, the proposal will help to reinforce the Council's stock of existing housing, most notably family housing, which is considered to be the priority land-use within the Borough. As such, the proposal therefore accords with policies H1, H3 and H7 of the Camden Local Plan, and is considered to be acceptable in principle.

### Design

- 6.8 Policy D1 seeks to secure high quality design in development and requires that development:
- respects local context and character;
  - is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses;

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- comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character; and
  - for housing, provides a high standard of accommodation.
- 6.9 The Camden Planning Guidance: Home Improvements states that extensions and alterations should always be complementary to the existing building and its original features. The Guidance further notes that additions or alterations must complement the property without eroding or harming its character and the surrounding area or having a negative impact on neighbouring amenity.
- 6.10 The guidance also outlines that proposals for rear extensions should:
- be secondary to the building being extended, in relation to its location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing;
  - be built from materials that are sympathetic to the existing building wherever possible;
  - allow for the retention of a reasonably sized garden;
  - retain the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity, including that of neighbouring properties, proportionate to that of the surrounding area; and
- 6.11 The guidance states that the width of a rear extension should be designed so that it is not visible from the street and should respect the rhythm of existing rear extensions in neighbouring Sites.

### Assessment

- 6.12 The proposal will result in the removal of the existing original rear extension and its replacement with a new full width rear extension.
- 6.13 In the first instance, it should be noted that the removal of the original rear single-storey rear extensions has been considered to be acceptable by the Council, as is evidenced by the wider applications along Downside Crescent. The existing extension is also in a poor state of repair and has been altered a number of times over the years.
- 6.14 The proposed extension has been designed to be subservient to the existing building and in keeping with its Victorian character and materials, as well as the character of the wider street and Conservation Area.
- 6.15 The proposed extension will be constructed in cavity masonry walls with external London Stock bricks to match the existing property. A decorative coursing of red brick to match and align with that on the existing building will run around the top of the new walls, which will be capped with traditional capping. The pitched roof over the Bedroom will be clad in slate at a pitch to match that of the existing roof of the addition together with terracotta tiles at the corners. The flat roof over the Reception Room (the “infill” extension) will be lined with a dark grey waterproof membrane. The large windows and doors at the rear of the property are traditionally designed and timber framed.
- 6.16 The use of traditional materials in new rear extensions has already been considered acceptable along Downside Crescent, as is exemplified in the approval at 27 Downside Crescent (ref: 2014/3518/P), which similarly used London stock brick elevations and a pitched slate roof.



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- 6.17 With regard to the rear extension's form, as outlined in Section 3 of this Statement, a number of full-width extensions have been approved along Downside Crescent and, as such, the use of a full-width extension is therefore considered to be appropriate and in keeping with the character of the area.
- 6.18 The proposed extension will also not extend beyond the existing extension's side elevation, and therefore reflects the historic arrangement of the property. The height of the proposed extension will also be broadly in keeping with the existing extension and will therefore not be overly dominant or out-of-keeping with the prevailing character. Finally, whilst the new extension will be deeper than the existing extension, it should be noted that the proposals will not project any further into the garden than the extension of the neighbouring property at 35 Downside Crescent.
- 6.19 It should also be noted that the extension, by virtue of its positioning to the rear and the presence of a timber gate between the site and 31 Downside Crescent, will be almost entirely screened from the street and will therefore not be able to be appreciated from any public viewpoints, in turn minimising any potential impacts on the character and appearance of the building and the wider street. Additionally, other than from the immediately adjoining property at 35 Downside Crescent, there will no visibility of the extension from the other properties along Downside Crescent, given the curvature of the street which results in the primary rear outlook of these properties facing away from the site.
- 6.20 The proposal is therefore considered to provide a high-quality design, in accordance with policy D1 of the Local Plan, as well as the Camden Planning Guidance: Home Improvements. Further detail is the proposal is provided in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, and an appraisal of the proposal's heritage impacts is included in Section 7 of this Statement.

### Quality of Residential Accommodation

- 6.21 Policy H6 states that the Council will expect all self-contained homes to meet the nationally described space standard.
- 6.22 Policy A1 states that the Council will seek to ensure that the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours is protected.
- 6.23 Policy D1 requires that development:
- Incorporates outdoor amenity space;
  - For housing, provides a high standard of accommodation; and
  - Preserves gardens and other open space.
- 6.24 The London Housing SPG (2017) requires a minimum of 5sqm of private outdoor space to be provided for 1-2 person dwellings, with an extra 1sqm for each additional occupant.

### Assessment

- 6.25 As noted above, the proposal consists of the replacement of the existing rear extension with a new rear extension, resulting in the loss of the existing studio unit (Flat D) and the increase in the size of Flat C from a one-bedroom to a three-bedroom, family-sized unit. The issue of the amalgamation has already been addressed by a separate Certificate of Lawfulness, therefore the amalgamation does not form part of this application.

- 6.26 In respect of private amenity space, the existing garden of the property (including front and rear) comprises approximately 266sqm of space, split between the patio serving the studio unit (Flat D) and the patio and remainder of the garden serving Flat C. Whilst the proposed extension would result in a loss of 43sqm of private amenity space, the space which is lost only represents 16% of the total quantum of existing private space and the majority of this space is from the patio areas, which are considered to be visually unattractive and of a low standard of quality.
- 6.27 Furthermore, it should be noted that, given the proposals result in the removal of the existing studio unit, the proposed garden space will only serve a single unit, as opposed to two as existing. The garden space in respect of Flat C actually increases as a result of the removal of the subdivision in the garden space.
- 6.28 The resulting garden of approximately 223sqm is also significantly in excess of the London Housing SPG's requirement of 8sqm of private amenity space for three-bed, five-person dwellings, and the proposals therefore provide ample and suitable private amenity space for future occupiers.
- 6.29 The proposed extension would result in the increase in the size of Flat C to 142sqm, well in excess of the 86sqm minimum requirement for a three-bed, five-person unit set out in the Nationally Described Space Standards, and will therefore provide ample internal space for future occupiers. The proposals will also meet the remaining size requirements set out in the Nationally Described Space Standards.
- 6.30 It should be noted that the existing studio (Flat D) spans approximately 24sqm, and therefore falls significantly short of the minimum floor area of 37sqm (GIA) for studio units set out in the Nationally Described Space Standards. The proposal will therefore result in the removal of a substandard and poorly-designed unit, whilst also providing an improved standard of accommodation for Unit C.
- 6.31 Ample light will also be provided for the proposed unit through the addition of large timber framed windows and doors and rooflights in the extension.
- 6.32 As such, the proposed development is therefore considered to be of a high-quality of residential accommodation and will represent a substantial improvement over the existing situation at the site. The proposed development therefore accords with the requirements of policies H6, A1 and D1 of the Camden Local Plan.

### **Neighbouring Amenity**

- 6.33 Policy A1 states that the Council will seek to ensure that the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours is protected, including visual privacy and outlook.
- 6.34 The Camden Planning Guidance: Home Improvements requires rear extensions to not cause a loss of amenity to adjacent properties with regard to daylight, sunlight, outlook, light pollution and privacy.
- 6.35 The Camden Planning Guidance: Amenity also provides important guidance on all amenity impact issues, in particular overlooking, privacy, outlook and daylight and sunlight.

## Assessment

- 6.36 The proposed rear extension will span a single storey and will not exceed the height of the existing rear extension, and will not therefore result in a material loss of outlook or loss of light over the existing rear extension at the site or the other rear extensions consented on the wider street.
- 6.37 Sunlight / Daylight: Please refer to the Daylight & Sunlight Report by Schroeders Begg (UK) LLP which concludes *“that the impacts of the proposal upon daylight and sunlight to neighbouring residential properties are considered as meeting BRE Guide target criteria, and on this basis, should be considered acceptable”*. In addition, with respect to the neighbouring property at 35 Downside Crescent, the report states: *“there are effectively **no reductions in daylight distribution** thus readily meeting the BRE Guide target criteria”*.
- 6.38 Overshadowing: From the rear garden of 35 Downside Crescent, the proposal will be manifest in a parapet wall some 1.7m taller than the existing boundary wall. Given the low-level parapet height of the wall, together with the absence of any potential sunlight / daylight impacts, we consider the proposed extension would not overshadow the neighbouring property in any way.
- 6.39 Outlook: The proposed parapet wall would be constructed of brick work to match the existing property with a decorative coursing of red brick to match and align with that on the existing building, which will be capped with traditional lead capping.
- 6.40 Light pollution/spillage: The proposed extension would not give rise to any light pollution/spillage issues. Should officers so wish, external lighting can be controlled through an appropriate planning condition to ensure there are no light pollution/spillage issues.
- 6.41 Privacy/overlooking: There are no new windows facing onto the adjoining property at No. 35, which might result in a loss of privacy. Furthermore, the common boundary fence will be retained, thereby ensuring that there will be no consequential overlooking issues from the rear garden of the application site.
- 6.42 Whilst the proposed extension will include two windows on its elevation facing 31 Downside Crescent, the extension will not extend beyond the side elevation of the existing rear extension at the site, which also includes two windows in this position. It should also be noted that, in the existing extension, the closest window serves as the sole outlook in the studio unit, whereas the closest window in the proposed extension will serve an en-suite bathroom for the rear bedroom and will have frosted glass; additionally, there are no habitable rooms along the side elevation of 31 Downside Crescent facing the site. Finally, it should be noted that both properties are separated by a tall timber fence which will prevent direct overlooking between 31 Downside Crescent and the two new windows at 33. As such, the proposals will not result in any material privacy impacts to 31 Downside Crescent.
- 6.43 Sense of enclosure: A ‘sense of enclosure’ is a subjective point and is open to interpretation. A key feature in the design of the extension is that the proposed parapet wall height would be no higher than the existing bay window projection at the rear of No. 35. This arrangement would retain the ‘sky views’ from the rear rooms in the adjoining property and would mitigate any perceived sense of enclosure. It should also be noted that the sense of enclosure at No. 35 is mitigated somewhat due to the extra width of the garden area to the rear of No. 35 which mitigates any potential sense of enclosure as compared to other full width extensions granted along the street.

- 6.44 The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on neighbouring amenity, and is therefore in accordance with policy A1 of the Local Plan, as well as the Camden Planning Guidance.

## Trees & Landscaping

- 6.45 Policy A3 seeks to:
- Resist the loss of trees and vegetation of significant amenity, historic, cultural or ecological value; and
  - expect replacement trees or vegetation to be provided where the loss of significant trees or vegetation or harm to the wellbeing of these trees and vegetation has been justified in the context of the proposed development.
- 6.46 Policy D2 also states that the Council will preserve trees in Conservation Areas.

## Assessment

- 6.47 The proposal will not result in the loss of any trees and will introduce greening/planting in place of the existing paved patio area, where this is not covered by the proposed extension.
- 6.48 As such, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable with regard to trees and landscaping, in compliance with the requirements of Policies A3 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan.

## HOME IMPROVEMENTS: Camden Planning Guidance (January 2021)

- 6.49 Camden's planning guidance on rear extensions, states that they should:
- a. *Be subordinate to the building being extended, in relation to its location, form, footprint, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing;*
  - b. *Be built from materials that are sympathetic to the existing building wherever possible;*
  - c. *Respect and preserve the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style;*
  - d. *Respect and preserve existing architectural features, such as projecting bays, decorative balconies, cornices and chimney stacks;*
  - e. *Be carefully scaled in terms of its height, width and depth;*
  - f. *Allow for the retention of a reasonably sized garden;*
  - g. *Respect and preserve the historic pattern and established townscape of the surrounding area, including the ratio of built to unbuilt space;*
  - h. *Retain the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity, including that of neighbouring properties, proportionate to that of the surrounding area;*
  - i. *Have a height, depth and width that respects the existing common pattern and rhythm of rear extensions at neighbouring sites, where they exist.*

### Assessment

- 6.50 The proposed extension is a single storey extension at the rear of the building which is subordinate to the main building in relation to its location, form, footprint, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing;
- 6.51 The proposal here involves using materials that are sympathetic to the existing building including London stock bricks and decorative coursing to match the main building.
- 6.52 The proposal respects and preserves the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style, by adopting similar materials (London stock brick as well as timber framed windows and doors). In addition, the proposal involves preserving the dominant and subservient part of the extension by introducing a slate roof where the original extension used to be;
- 6.53 The slate roof above the original location of the extension preserves the architectural features of the original property as well as using London stock bricks with decorative coursing to match the original building;
- 6.54 The height, width and depth of the proposed extension is carefully considered and is similar to many other extensions which have been approved along the Crescent demonstrating that these extensions are acceptable.
- 6.55 The extension allows for the retention of a large garden.
- 6.56 The extension will not be visible from the public realm. However, the proposal still retains a large open garden at the rear of the property in order to respect and preserve the historic pattern and established townscape of the surrounding area, including the ratio of built to unbuilt space;
- 6.57 The proposed extension is of a similar size to other approved extensions along the Crescent (and protrudes no further into the garden space than other approved extensions) thereby retaining the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity, including that of neighbouring properties, proportionate to that of the surrounding area.
- 6.58 The extension has a height, depth and width that respects the existing common pattern and rhythm of rear extensions at neighbouring sites. The rhythm of existing rear extensions along the Crescent is retained by the proposals because of the pitched slate roof above the area where the original extension used to be located.



## 7 HERITAGE APPRAISAL

### Introduction

- 7.1 The Site comprises a three-storey, semi-detached property on the north side of Downside Crescent, within the London Borough of Camden. The main building dates from the late Victorian era and is constructed of red brick to its principal façade. The building appears to have been converted into two or three flats in 1968. It is unknown when the existing rear and side extension to the building was constructed, although an extension of the building footprint does appear on historic mapping from c.1910. This extension appears to have been heavily altered over its lifetime (see DAS pg. 4).
- 7.2 The Site is not a listed building, but lies within the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area. The Site also lies to the southwest of Numbers I, 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D and 2-32 Isokon Flats, a Grade I listed building (NHLE ref:1379280). While the Site is proximate to this listed building, it is mainly screened in views from it by planting.

### Relevant Legislation and Policy

- 7.3 The relevant heritage legislation and policy in this case extends from:
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
    - Section 66 which requires that, in determining a planning application that affects a listed building or its setting, the decision maker shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses
    - Section 72 which requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of conservation areas
  - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
    - Paragraph 189 which requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposed development
    - Paragraph 193 which requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of whether harm is substantial or less than substantial
    - Paragraphs 194-196 which require justification for any harm to designated heritage assets and for any identified harm to be weighed against public benefits
    - Paragraph 197, which describes how any impacts to non-designated built heritage assets must be taken into consideration as a balanced judgement by the decision maker
  - Camden Local Plan (2017)
    - Policy D2 Heritage
  - Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)

## Built Heritage Context

- 7.4 The Site lies wholly within the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area. In addition, the Site lies to the southwest of the Grade I listed Isokon Flats (NHLE ref: 1379280). Discussion of the significance of these built heritage assets is provided below.

### **Parkhill Conservation Area No. 33 Downside Crescent (non-designated heritage asset)**

- 7.5 The Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area is a hilly area of predominantly residential development, originally constructed as part of the suburb of Belsize. The Conservation Area is described within the *Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* (adopted 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011). The buildings within the conservation area are mainly detached and semi-detached dwellings. The first buildings within the conservation area were laid out in 1850, but the area mainly contains buildings dating from the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century.
- 7.6 The urban form of the conservation area contributes to its character. This is defined by the main arterial road of Haverstock Hill and the secondary residential streets curving off this route. The character of the conservation area is also defined by its sloping topography and verdant areas, which include large back gardens to most dwellings.
- 7.7 In terms of architectural interest, the character and appearance of the conservation area is defined by the late nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural forms of the buildings within it. Many of these are constructed in an Italianate Victorian style, though the conservation area also has garden suburb style buildings and later additions which add variation. These later buildings include the modernist Isokon Building, which is an example of early twentieth century British modernism and housed many emigre artists of the Bauhaus movement. This building is discussed in more depth below.
- 7.8 The Site lies within Character Zone 2B, Downside Crescent, as defined by the *Conservation Area Appraisal*. This is a subset of Character Zone 2, which includes the residential streets to the east of, and is distinct from the commercial area of Haverstock Hill. The character and appearance of Zone 2B is defined by the series of late Victorian red brick gabled, semi-detached houses that demark the curve of the street. The appraisal notes that the distinctive roofscape of this area is intact and the houses form a relatively uniform frontage.
- 7.9 The Site lies within a key view identified within the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (adopted July 2011). No. 33 is identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal as a building that “makes a positive contribution” to the conservation area, along with all the buildings of Downside Crescent and many nearby on Lawn Road. The buildings of Downside Crescent are identified in the “townscape appraisal map” for the Parkhill Conservation Area as a “positive building”.
- 7.10 The Site contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area as a late Victorian semi-detached house, with associated garden plot. It contributes to the character of the conservation area mainly through its building line addressing the road, and through its massing, typology and residential use.

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- 7.11 The principal façade of No. 33 contributes to the character of the conservation area through its distinct red brick detailing and gabled roofline, which forms a uniform frontage to the street and defines the historic crescent. The Site is identified as making a positive contribution to the conservation area through these features.
- 7.12 The Site also contributes to the character of the area through its external space, with a small front garden and once spacious garden to the rear. However, this formerly spacious garden is today divided between two flats within No. 33, separated into one large timber decked patio which is surrounded by a 2m high fence and another area partially patio with the remainder turfed. This has eroded its contribution to the conservation area. This garden space is also not appreciable from Downside Crescent, where the character of the conservation area is best understood.

### **Numbers 1, 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D and 2-32 Isokon Flats, Grade I listed building (NHLE ref: 1379280)**

- 7.13 Approximately 30m to the northeast of the Site lies the Grade I listed Isokon Flats. The building is an example of minimalist British modernism; it was designed in 1929-32 and constructed two years later. The building was designed by Wells Coates and Partners (later named Isokon) for Jack and Molly Pritchard. The Pritchards worked as a furniture designer and psychiatrist respectively, and were two founding members of Isokon. The architectural and historic special interest of the building lies in its well preserved and distinctive modernist design, based on the “minimum flat” concept pioneered at the Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne in 1929. The flats (and the former Isobar within them, once a restaurant) have further historic interest in their role as a hub of intellectual and artistic life in North London, and later housed emigres from the Bauhaus movement.
- 7.14 The listed building is located in an area of leafy green space to the west of Lawn Road. The building is designed to be appreciated from lawn road, and this leafy setting around the isolated block of flats is indicative of the modernist principles that informed its construction.
- 7.15 The Site lies to the south of the flats. Forming part of the wider residential setting of the flats, No. 33 and its rear garden provide relief to the stark, white, standalone presence of the flats, but do not otherwise contribute to their significance.

## **Discussion**

- 7.16 The proposed development would see the demolition of the small single storey element of No. 33 and the construction of a larger single storey extension to the side and rear of the property. Proposals would also involve alterations to the rear and side elevations of No. 33, along with internal alterations.
- 7.17 The proposals will involve the demolition of the rear single storey element of No.33, and some built fabric to the rear of No. 33. The single storey element may date back to the early twentieth century. However, it is not currently visible from Downside Crescent, where the features of No. 33 that contribute to the conservation area can be best appreciated. Additionally, this extension has undergone much alteration across its lifespan. This means the demolition of this single storey unit will have minimal impact on the significance of the conservation area.

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- 7.18 The proposals will see the construction of a single storey rear extension. The provision of extensions to the rear of the buildings of Downside Crescent is well established, with a number of buildings having large alterations and extensions to the rear. These areas therefore have precedent for alteration.
- 7.19 The single storey size and considered footprint of the proposed rear extension means that it will not be appreciable from the public realm. The extension will not be visible from Downside Crescent (a key view within the conservation area, identified within the *Conservation Area Appraisal*), where the features of interest of the building and its contribution to the character of the conservation area are best understood. The limited height of the rear extension also means that it will not be visible from Lawn Road, and ensure the massing of Nos. 33 and 35 is still contrasted with open space above the proposed extension, to the rear.
- 7.20 While the footprint of the proposed rear extension is larger than the existing rear element, the proposed footprint will still maintain the majority of the garden to the rear of the building that contributes to the character of the conservation area. This garden has already been subdivided and altered over time, reducing the impact of the proposed development. The impact of this larger footprint is further limited by the alterations that have occurred to the rear of other buildings along Downside Crescent. Nos. 5, 6, 21, 23, 27, 29, 31 all appear to have similar size rear extensions and lie within the conservation area (see accompanying DAS, p. 16). The proposed extension extends out into the garden equal to the projection of the existing extension next door to No. 35, as demonstrated within the accompanying DAS.
- 7.21 The design of the proposed extension illustrates that it is a clear new addition, and contrasts with the main building. The design rationale for the proposals is outlined within the accompanying DAS. The design is utilitarian and responds to the “back of house” nature of the rear of the building and the garden, rather than the more decorative front elevation of the building towards Downside Crescent. Proposals use brickwork to respond to the materiality of the host building and surrounding area. The proposed extension also proposes, a pitched slate roof above the location of the previous extension. As outlined in the DAS, this is an acknowledgement of the historical development of the building and the wider area, and was the consented approach at Nos. 27 and 31. The roof finish here is therefore an appropriate design within the conservation area.
- 7.22 The proposed development would represent a minor alteration to the setting of the Isokon Flats that would not be appreciable from where the architectural and historic interest of the listed building is best understood.
- 7.23 It is therefore considered that the proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade I listed Isokon Flats, thus preserving their significance. The proposals therefore comply with Sections 72 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and relevant national and local built heritage policy.

## 8 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposal is for the construction of a single-storey replacement rear extension to an existing dwellinghouse (Class C3).
- 8.2 The site comprises a three-storey, semi-detached late-Victorian property on the north side of Downside Crescent, along with its associated rear garden. The building is in residential use (Class C3), and has been subdivided into flats, which is understood to have been granted permission in 1968. The existing building is not listed or locally-listed, but is situated in the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area.
- 8.3 The proposal will result in the removal of the existing rear extension and its replacement with a new full-width rear extension constructed with traditional materials reflecting the existing building, including external London Stock bricks, decorative coursing of red brick, a slate-clad pitched roof and timber-framed windows. The provision of extensions to the rear of the buildings of Downside Crescent is well established, with a number of buildings having large alterations and similar full-width extensions to the rear. Therefore, there is significant precedent along the crescent supporting an alteration of this nature.
- 8.4 The proposed extension will not extend beyond the existing extension's side wall and will not be of an increased height, and will therefore remain subservient to the main building. Although the proposal does involve a modest increase in the depth of the extension into the garden (by 1.9 metres), the depth of the proposed extension is equal to the projection of the existing extension of the adjoining property at No. 35 and equal to the projections of other approved full-width extensions on the crescent.
- 8.5 The proposal, by virtue of its positioning, will also not be visible from the street or any public viewpoint, and will also not be visible from the wider properties along Downside Crescent, other than 35 Downside Crescent, given the curvature of the street, which results in the primary rear outlook of these properties facing away from the site.
- 8.6 As outlined in the accompanying heritage appraisal included in this Statement, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in heritage terms and will reflect the character and appearance of the existing building and the wider Conservation Area, and will also not have any detrimental impacts on the setting or significance of the Grade I listed Isokon Flats.
- 8.7 Whilst the proposal will result in the loss of a single studio unit (Flat D), the proposal will increase the size of Flat C from a one-bed to a three-bed unit, thereby creating a new family unit which is considered to be a high-priority unit type in the borough, in contrast with the lower-priority nature of studio and one-bedroom units. The issue of the amalgamation of these two units is not part of this current planning application since it has been addressed separately under a Certificate of Lawful Development.
- 8.8 The proposed extension will also help to create a high-quality, spacious family unit, whereas the existing studio unit is of a poor standard of design and significantly smaller than the minimum requirements set out in the Nationally Described Space Standards, spanning only 24sqm.

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- 8.9 The proposal will retain the large majority of the existing rear garden, which will serve the new family unit, and future occupiers will therefore benefit from extensive private amenity space in excess of London Plan and Camden standards. No trees will be lost as a result of the proposed extension.
- 8.10 The proposed development will also not result in any undue impacts on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, and will be acceptable in terms of outlook, privacy, overlooking and daylight/sunlight as evidenced in the accompanying Daylight and Sunlight Report by Schroeders Biggs (UL) LLP in support of this application.
- 8.11 Overall, the proposal is considered to be supported by adopted planning policy, and should accordingly be granted planning permission.