



14 Greenaway Gardens, Hampstead, London NW3 7DH
Townscape Visual Impact Assessment

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14 Greenaway Gardens, Hampstead – Townscape Visual Impact Assessment

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The subject site at no. 14 Greenaway Gardens, Hampstead, London NW3 7DH comprises a two-storey detached house (with additional space in the attic floor) built in the 1920s (which is principally neo-Georgian in style with some Arts and Crafts features), a garage, a front driveway/garden, and a “T-shaped” garden to the rear. The garden to the rear includes a lawn, a tennis court, a swimming pool, and a pool house (for which planning consent has been given for its demolition, ref: 2021/0984/P). The subject site is located within the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area, within the London Borough of Camden.
- 1.2. This Townscape Visual Impact Assessment (“TVIA”) has been produced to assess the visual impact of the proposals on the townscape surrounding the subject site, and in particular two principal views of the area. It should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Statement (also authored by Heritage Information Ltd. and dated May 2022). The proposals involve the retention of the front and side (south-east) elevations (restoring features which are beyond repair, such as windows), alterations to the side (north-west) and rear elevations, the provision of a single-storey rear elevation, and internal re-modelling. (89.2% of the original external walls visible from the public realm would be retained.)
- 1.3. This assessment complies with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, July 2021) and the online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in respect of Heritage issues. It also considers the National Design Guide (2019) [Appendix 2] and the *Buildings in Context Toolkit* (2001).
- 1.4. The proposals may have an impact on the character and appearance of the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area (“CA”) and the settings of other nearby heritage assets. The building on the subject site is considered to make a moderate and neutral to positive contribution to the townscape, and to the character and appearance of the CA. The subject site is located on a long sloping street, and its general townscape is spacious and residential in character, with large, detached, two to three storey houses – typically in red brickwork, and built in the 1920s in an idiom with Neo-Georgian and Queen Anne Revival elements.
- 1.5. The setting of a heritage asset is defined as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Elements of a setting may make a positive, neutral or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral (NPPF glossary).
- 1.6. Historic England’s **Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3** (December 2017) [Appendix 1] observes that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset (paragraph 10). The document states that the protection and enhancement of setting is intimately linked to townscape and urban design considerations. Setting often relates to townscape attributes such as enclosure, definition of streets and spaces and spatial qualities as well as lighting, trees, and verges, or the treatments of boundaries or street surfaces. The document also recommends that where complex issues involving views come into play in the assessment of setting – whether for the purposes of providing a baseline for plan-making or for development management – a formal views analysis may be merited.

1.8. Authorship

- **Dorian A T A Crone** BA BArch DipTP RIBA MRTPI IHBC - Heritage and Design Consultant. Dorian has been a Chartered Architect and Chartered Town Planner for over 30 years. He has also been a member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation for 25 years. Dorian is a committee member of The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (“SPAB”), the International Committee on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), ICOMOS UK and Institute of Historic Building Conservation. He is the Chairman of the City Heritage Society, and a panel member of the City Conservation Area Advisory Committee. He has been a court member with the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects and a trustee of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust. He is currently a trustee of both the Dance and Drake Trusts and a scholar of SPAB.

Dorian has worked for over 30 years as Historic Buildings and Areas Inspector with English Heritage, responsible for providing advice to all the London Boroughs and both the City Councils. Dorian has also worked as a consultant and expert witness for over 20 years advising a wide variety of clients on heritage and design matters involving development work, alterations, extensions and new build projects associated with listed buildings and conservation areas in design and heritage sensitive locations. He is a panel member of the John Betjeman Design Award and the City of London Heritage Award. He is also a Design Review Panel member of the Design Council, Design: South-West, and the London Boroughs of Islington, Lewisham, Wandsworth and Richmond-upon-Thames. In addition, Dorian has also been involved with the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition Architectural Awards and the Philip Webb Award along with a number of other public sector and commercial design awards. He is also a panel member of the City Conservation Area Advisory Committee.

- **Dr Daniel Cummins** MA (Oxon) MSc PhD IHBC – Historic Environment Consultant. Daniel is an historian with a BA and Master’s in History from Oxford University and a doctorate from the University of Reading, where he specialised in ecclesiastical buildings and estates and had his work published in leading academic history journals.

Daniel has a Master’s in the Conservation of the Historic Environment and provides independent professional heritage advice and guidance to leading architectural practices and planning consultancies, as well as for private clients. He undertakes detailed historical research, significance statements, character appraisals, impact assessments and expert witness statements for new development projects, as well as for alterations and extensions which affect the fabric and settings of Listed Buildings and Locally Listed Buildings, the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, the outstanding universal value of World Heritage Sites, and all other types of heritage assets.

- **Melisa Thomas** BA PGDL LPC MSc – Heritage Consultant. After graduating from her BA Hons. degree in English and History, Melisa pursued a career in the law while also working as a specialist guide, researcher and lecturer at Strawberry Hill House, Richmond-upon-Thames. She has since completed a Master’s degree in the Conservation of the Historic Environment, and has been working for a number of years as a Heritage Consultant on complex cases (including Appeal work) involving heritage planning, design and townscape matters. Due to her background in the law, she keenly follows developments in the regulation of the historic environment through legislation, policies and case law.

2.0. METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA

2.1. A site visit was carried out on 1st February 2021, during which two key viewpoints were selected within the public realm from which the townscape character of the subject site may best be appreciated and understood [Figure 1]. These specific points have been chosen where the proposals might impact on townscape, landscape, scale, height, massing within the Redington/Frogna Conservation Area (“CA”), in the London Borough of Camden; and the settings of other identified heritage assets. Consideration has been given to the historical development of the area, its physical fabric (i.e. building types and materials), and key views to any notable historic buildings or other landmark structures.

- **Viewpoint 1:** Looking north-westward along Greenaway Gardens
- **Viewpoint 2:** Looking south-eastward along Greenaway Gardens



Figure 1: The location of the subject site (outlined in red) and nearby statutorily listed buildings (marked with small blue triangles). Views labelled 1 and 2.

- 2.2. **LI & IEMA’s Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment:** This Townscape Visual Impact Assessment (“TVIA”) takes into account the good practice guidance outlined in *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, Landscape Institute (“LI”) and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), 3rd Edition, 2013: (“GLVIA3”). This guidance pertains to urban townscape as much as landscape. The guidance does not provide a detailed universal methodology, but it recognises that much of the assessment must rely on professional judgment.
- 2.3. **Historic England’s Setting of Heritage Assets:** This TVIA responds to Historic England’s *Setting of Heritage Assets* [Appendix 1], which observes that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset (paragraph 10). The document also recommends that where complex issues involving views come into play in the assessment of setting – whether for the purposes of providing a baseline for plan-making or for development management – a formal views analysis may be merited.
- 2.4. The analysis carries out a review of the proposals in the spirit of Paragraph 133 of the NPPF using the accepted and established criteria of most Design Review Panels and in particular used by the Design

Council. (Dorian Crone is a Design Review Panel Member of Design:South-West, the London Boroughs of Richmond-upon-Thames, Wandsworth, Islington and Lewisham, and the Design Council.)

- 2.5. In accordance with **Steps 1 and 2** of the Historic England criteria [Appendix 1], the TVIA will firstly establish a baseline for each view against which to judge the impact of proposals upon the local townscape. The townscape in each view is described in terms of its constituent elements and character, including development patterns and scale (including use of materials, massing, density and enclosure), any heritage assets, green and open spaces, transport routes and uses; the way in which the townscape is experienced and by whom also forms part of the assessment. The extent to which proposals have an impact on the existing townscape character is often related to the sensitivity of the townscape to change. Criteria for assessing townscape sensitivity have been based on a variety of factors and attributes which are generally agreed to influence the existing character and value of the townscape:

Sensitivity	Criteria
Very High	Strong townscape structure and a distinctive intact character exhibiting unity, richness and harmony, and a strong sense of place. Internationally or nationally recognised townscape, e.g. a World Heritage Site or Grade I listed building, extremely susceptible to minor levels of change.
High	Strong townscape structure, distinctive features and a strong sense of place with some detracting features. Nationally or regionally recognised townscape or high quality and distinctive character, e.g. a Grade II* listed building or a conservation area containing a high proportion of listed buildings, susceptible to change.
Medium	Recognisable (perhaps locally recognised) townscape structure with some distinctive characteristics e.g. a Grade II listed building, a group of locally listed buildings or a conservation area, and in a reasonable condition. May be capable of low levels of change without affecting key characteristics.
Low	Undesignated townscape of local value with few distinctive characteristics. May contain elements in a poor state of repair. Capable of moderate levels of change/enhancement.
Negligible	Weak or disjointed townscape structure, capable of high levels of change/enhancement.

Source: Based on GLVIA3 (2013).

- 2.6. Using the baseline, the impact of the proposals on the views will be assessed by considering how the townscape may be changed or affected by reason of the latter's location or design. Aspects of townscape and design such as scale, height, mass, orientation, palette of materials and landscaping are particularly relevant. The assessment will illustrate how the proposals might affect the elements that make up the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the townscape and its distinctive character, and how observers may be affected by any changes in the content and character of the views. The potential impacts have been categorised as:

Magnitude of Impact	Criteria
Negligible	Impacts considered to cause no material change to the visual quality of the view.
Minimal	Impacts considered to make a limited impact on a townscape where there is some sensitivity to change. Where the proposed change would form a minor component of the wider scene that may affect slightly the character and quality of the townscape in the view or the setting of a heritage asset.
Moderate	Impacts considered to make an appreciable difference or change the quality of the townscape where there is some sensitivity to change. Where the proposed change would form a recognisable new element within the scene that would noticeably have an impact on the quality and character of the townscape in the view or the setting of a heritage asset.
Substantial	Impacts considered to cause a fundamental change in the appreciation of the townscape where there is a high sensitivity to change. Where the proposed change would affect the quality and character of a valued view, the character and quality of a highly sensitive townscape, or the setting of a highly significant heritage asset.

Source: Based on GLVIA3 (2013).

2.7. Impacts are therefore assessed in terms of the sensitivity of the townscape affected and the magnitude of the impact or change, and whether the impact is considered to be positive, negative or neutral. If the proposals will enhance the character and quality of the townscape, then the impact will be deemed **positive**; however, if they fail to sustain the quality of the townscape in the view by the removal of characterising elements or add new intrusive or discordant features then the impact will be deemed **negative**. If the proposals preserve the quality of the townscape in the view, or where positive and negative impacts are finely balanced then the impact will be deemed **neutral**.

2.8. Summary of Townscape Context:

2.8.1. The Redington/Frogna Conservation Area (“CA”) is characterised by its large detached and semi-detached houses which are “*typical of the last years of the 19th and early years of the 20th centuries*” in a “*variety of formal and free architectural styles*”, by its mature trees and dense vegetation, and by its “*contours and slopes causing numerous views and vistas and giving emphasis to many of the buildings*”.

2.8.2. The CA is sub-divided into eight areas [Figure 2], and the differences between these sub-areas are outlined in the CA Statement (2000). The subject site is within sub-area 6, which comprises three parallel roads (i.e. Bracknell Gardens, Greenaway Gardens and Chesterford Gardens) which each have their own “*distinct character determined by style of architecture, density of development, topography and sense of enclosure/openness*”. The subject site is located in Greenaway Gardens, which has “*large, detached, red brick, two/three-storey neo-Georgian houses making up both sides of the street*”. Common features include “*prominent chimneys, dormer windows, rounded bay windows and classically influenced detailing*” [Figure 4, Figure 5, Figure 6, Figure 7 & Figure 8].



Figure 2 (left): Redington/Froggnall Conservation Area (“CA”). Subject site outlined in red.

Figure 3 (right): Sub Area 6. Subject site outlined in red.

2.8.3. The house on the subject site has medium architectural interest mainly by virtue of its front elevation, and it is a typical example of the houses in the street in terms of its style, idiom, detailing, proportions, materials, height, bulk, scale and massing. The Redington Froggnal Neighbourhood Plan (Referendum Version, March 2021) recognises nos 2-17 (odd and even) Greenaway Gardens as being positive contributors to the character and appearance of the CA. In concurrence with the Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that the house at no. 14 Greenaway Gardens makes a minimal and moderate and positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA, and as a whole, the subject site is considered to make a minimal and neutral to positive contribution.



Figure 4: Greenaway Gardens streetscape (looking north). Note the slope in the road. Approximate location of subject site indicated by red arrow.



Figure 5 (left): No.s 3 & 4 Greenaway Gardens (on the south-west side of the road).



Figure 6 (right): No.s 6a & 7 Greenaway Gardens, located opposite the subject site (on the south-west side of the road).



Figure 7 (left): No.s 8, 9 & 10 Greenaway Gardens (on the south-west side of the road).



Figure 8 (right): No.s 11, 12 & 12a Greenaway Gardens (on the north-east side of the road).

3.0. TOWNSCAPE VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

3.1. The **National Design Guide** (“NDG”) drafted by the **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government** (October 2019), has helped inform the designs of the proposals, as well as this Townscape Visual Impact Assessment. The NDG is the national planning practice guidance for “beautiful, enduring and successful places” [Appendix 2]. It states that the components for good design are: the layout (or masterplan); the form and scale of buildings; their appearance; landscape; materials; and their detailing. The NDG focuses on what it terms the “ten characteristics”: Context, Identity, Built Form, Movement, Nature, Public Spaces, Uses, Homes and Buildings, Resources, and Lifespan. The first three characteristics are especially pertinent to this TVIA. The current proposals address these characteristics in a positive and appropriately creative way, as demonstrated in the Proposed Views in Figure 10 and Figure 12.

- Context: The proposed scheme has been designed according to a thorough understanding and

appreciation of the context, history and cultural characteristics of the subject site and the surrounding neighbourhood. The proposals involve retaining the front elevation and front garden; and the design of the front part of the proposed side elevations uses the same materials and architectural language as the front elevation. Therefore, the positive contribution which the subject site makes to the townscape and to the character and appearance of the CA, would be conserved.

- **Identity:** The house on the subject site is approximately the same age as the street and most of the other houses on the street. The style, materials and form of these buildings are similar, being in red brickwork with neo-Georgian style front elevations, and tall, steep-pitched clay-tiled roofs inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement. The proposed scheme retains the building's identity, and conserves its group value with its neighbours. It does this by retaining the existing front elevation (from which the building principally derives its architectural character), and re-designing the side elevations in matching materials and in a style reflecting that of the front elevation.
- **Built Form:** The proposed scheme involves retaining the existing height, bulk, scale and massing of the subject site, when viewed from the street. The building would therefore continue to integrate well with the surrounding area, responding to the scale, massing and height of neighbouring buildings and the general pattern of heights in the surrounding area.

3.2. The ***Building in Context Toolkit*** (2001) was formulated by **English Heritage and CABE (Design Council)** to stimulate a high standard of design for development taking place in historically sensitive contexts [Appendix 3]. The founding and enduring principle is that all successful design solutions depend on allowing time for a thorough site analysis and character appraisal to fully understand context. The application of the principles of good design is considered to reduce or remove potential harm and provide enhancement. It is considered that the proposals have taken full account of the eight principles, as follows:

- **Principle 1: *A successful project will start with an assessment of the value of retaining what is there.*** The existing house derives most of its (medium) architectural interest from its 1920s front elevation which is a well-judged balance between neo-Georgian and Arts and Crafts styles with some attractive and appropriately proportioned detailing. In addition, its style and idiom matches those of many of the other buildings along the street, and as such it contributes neutrally to positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area ("CA"). The historic interest of the subject site mainly derives from the building's group value with the other houses in the street, and by the fact it was built at approximately the same time as the street. The rear elevation and the interior of the house, however, have been much altered, and in a manner unsympathetic to the historic character of the building. They therefore detract from the building's architectural interest. It is considered that if the front elevation and most of the side elevations were to be retained (demolishing the rear elevation and the interior), the house would continue to complement the existing townscape of Greenaway Gardens. In addition, the original roof form and the neo-Georgian appearance of the rear elevation at first floor level would be retained. The house would continue to contribute neutrally to positively to the character and appearance of the CA, given that the proposed alterations are well considered, retaining the form of the building and re-using original bricks and tiles. The proposed planting and landscaping would enhance the character and appearance of the CA.
- **Principle 2: *A successful project will relate to the geography and history of the place and lie of the land.*** The history of the local area and of the subject site itself has been assessed by Chapter 3 of the Heritage Statement (May 2022). The proposals have thus been informed by an understanding of the history, character and identity of the subject site, the streetscape, and the

surrounding area.

- **Principle 3: A successful project will be informed by its own significance so that its character and identity will be appropriate to its use and context.** The heritage significance of the subject site has been assessed by Chapter 5 of the Heritage Statement, and its heritage context by Chapter 2. The proposals have thus been informed by an understanding of the heritage significance of the subject site; the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the contribution which the subject site makes to it; and the contribution which the subject site makes to the settings of any other nearby heritage assets.
- **Principles 4 & 6: A successful project will sit happily in the pattern of existing development and the routes through and around it. A successful project will respect the scale of neighbouring buildings.** The proposals involve retaining the existing height and front building line of the house, as well as its bulk, scale and massing when viewed from the street. As such, the building would continue to “sit happily” in the pattern of existing development, respecting the scale of neighbouring buildings.
- **Principle 5: A successful project will respect important views.** The subject site does not affect any views recognised by the local planning authority as being important. However, as shown in this TVIA, the views of the front elevation of the subject site from the street have been of primary consideration – and the proposals have been designed in order to conserve these views.
- **Principle 7: A successful project will use materials and building methods which are as high quality as those used in existing buildings.** The proposals involve the use (and re-use) of traditional materials which match those of the existing building, and which are of as high quality (if not more so) than the existing building. The proposed building methods would be of as high standard as the existing building, at least.
- **Principle 8: A successful project will create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting.** The setting of the subject site and that of the nearby houses would be enhanced by the proposed planting and landscaping, thereby contributing positively to the character and appearance of the CA.

3.3. Baseline Viewpoint 1 – View from Greenaway Gardens, looking north-westward



Figure 9: Baseline View 1 looking north-westward from Greenaway Gardens, towards the subject site.

- 3.3.1. View 1 is taken from the south-western side of Greenaway Gardens, looking north-westward towards the subject site. The purpose of this View is to show the effect the subject site has on the townscape, the character and appearance of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area (“CA”) and the settings of other heritage assets.
- 3.3.2. The View includes part of the pavement of the south-west side of the road (on the left), and the houses on the north-east side of the road – with part of the front elevation of no. 15 on the right, and the subject site at the centre. The View provides an impression of the undulating nature of Greenaway Gardens, with its northernmost end on a higher plain, sloping downwards to the south. The townscape is spacious due to the length and width of the road, the distance by which the houses are set back from the street, and the spaces between the houses. The architectural character of the townscape in View 1 is dominated by the two storey detached houses at no.s 11, 12, 12a, 14 and 15 Greenaway Gardens, with their red brickwork and tall, steep-pitched, clay-tiled roofs. The front elevations are neo-Georgian in style and proportioning (with sash windows, rendered porches and detailing including quoins), and the roofs and chimneys are Arts and Crafts inspired. The townscape is also characterised by its verdancy, by virtue of its trees and planting (both within the front and rear gardens rather than the pavements). In the distance, the rendered rear elevations (at second floor level) and the tall, steep-pitched, clay-tiled roofs of no.s 11 and 9 Oakhill Avenue may be glimpsed. The front boundary treatment of the subject site has a somewhat unsightly make-shift quality, comprising timber posts and chaining between them.

- 3.3.3. View 1 has **medium sensitivity**, as it shows a recognisable townscape structure with some distinctive characteristics of the Redington/Frognaal CA. It does not encapsulate the character and appearance of the whole of the CA, but it is a good representation of Sub Area 6.. There is low capacity for change and enhancement.
- 3.3.4. The subject site sits comfortably within the streetscape – its front building line, spacing, height, bulk, scale, massing, materials, idiom, architectural detailing and proportions all reflecting those of its neighbours. As such, it has group value with some of the other houses along the street. **The subject site is considered to make a moderate and neutral to positive contribution to the townscape and setting in View 1, as well as to the character and appearance of the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area and the settings of other nearby heritage assets.**

3.4. **Proposed View 1 – View from Greenaway Gardens, looking north-westward**



Figure 10: Proposed View 1 looking north-westward from Greenaway Gardens, towards the subject site.

- 3.4.1. The View with the proposals can be seen in Figure 10. The existing front elevation has been retained (with some repair-work), and the side elevation has been rebuilt (re-using original bricks and tiles). The only visible difference to the house is the new proposed dormer windows to the side elevation, which are considered to make a minimal and neutral impact on the townscape. The design and proportions of these proposed dormer windows reflect those of other dormers within the View, not least the existing dormer windows to the front elevation of the subject site. The proposed window to the side elevation at first floor level (to the right of the chimney breast) is not visible within this view, as it is hidden behind trees within the front garden of no. 15.

- 3.4.2. The proposed scheme sits comfortably within the townscape in this View. The proposed alterations form a very minor component of the wider scene, and they therefore only slightly affect the character and quality of the townscape in the view. Accordingly, **the magnitude of impact of the proposals on View 1 is considered to be minimal to negligible and neutral.**

3.5. **Baseline Viewpoint 2 – View from Greenaway Gardens, looking south-eastward**



Figure 11: Baseline View 2 looking south-eastward from Greenaway Gardens, towards the subject site.

- 3.5.1. View 2 is taken from the south-western side of Greenaway Gardens, looking south-eastward towards the subject site. The purpose of this View is to show the effect the subject site has on the townscape, the character and appearance of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area (“CA”) and the settings of other heritage assets.
- 3.5.2. The View is framed by part of no. 12 Greenaway Gardens on the left, and includes part of the pavement of the south-west side of the road (on the left), and the houses on the north-east side of the road – with part of the front elevation of no. 16 on the right, and no.s 12a and 14 (i.e. the subject site) and 15 are at the centre. The architectural character of the townscape in View 2 is dominated by the two storey detached houses at no.s 12, 12a, 14, 15 and 16 Greenaway Gardens, with their red brickwork and tall, steep-pitched, clay-tiled roofs. The front elevations are neo-Georgian in style and proportioning (with sash windows, rendered porches and detailing including quoins), and the roofs and chimneys are Arts and Crafts inspired. The townscape is also characterised by its verdancy by virtue of its trees and planting (both within the front and rear gardens rather than the pavements). The front boundary treatment of the subject site has a somewhat unsightly make-shift quality, comprising timber posts with chaining between them. View 2 also

provides a glimpse of the modern fenestration to the side (north) elevation of the subject site towards the rear, which is rather haphazard and incongruous appearance.

- 3.5.3. View 2 has **medium sensitivity**, as it shows a recognisable townscape structure with some distinctive characteristics of the Redington/Frognaal CA. It does not encapsulate the character and appearance of the whole of the CA, but it is a good representation of Sub Area 6.. There is low capacity for change and enhancement.
- 3.5.3. The subject site sits comfortably within the streetscape – its front building line, spacing, height, bulk, scale, massing, materials, idiom, architectural detailing and proportions all reflecting those of its neighbours. As such, it has group value with some of the other houses along the street. **The subject site is considered to make a moderate and neutral to positive contribution to the townscape and setting in View 2, as well as to the character and appearance of the Redington/Frognaal Conservation Area and the settings of other nearby heritage assets.**

3.6. Proposed View 2 – View from Greenaway Gardens, looking south-eastward



Figure 12: Proposed View 2 looking south-eastward from Greenaway Gardens, towards the subject site.

- 3.6.1. The View with the proposals can be seen in Figure 12. The existing front elevation has been retained (with some repair-work), and the side elevation has been rebuilt (re-using existing bricks and tiles) with its front part mostly retaining the appearance of the existing side elevation. The untidily arranged modern windows towards the rear of the side (north) elevation have been removed. The arrangement of the proposed new windows to this elevation is more considered – creating a more restrained architecturally literate approach,

which is more appropriate to a side elevation than the existing “busy” arrangement. The relocation of the rear chimney helps visually frame the building within the streetscape. There is no perceptible increase in bulk, scale, mass and depth of the building in this view.

- 3.6.2. The proposed scheme sits comfortably within the townscape in this View. The proposed alterations form a very minor component of the wider scene, and they therefore only slightly affect the character and quality of the townscape in the view. Accordingly, **the magnitude of impact of the proposals on View 2 is considered to be minimal and neutral to positive.**

4.0. CONCLUSION

- 4.1. This Townscape Visual Impact Assessment, in accordance with the latest Historic England guidance on setting and townscape [Appendix 1], has undertaken the recommended four-step approach in establishing the visual impact of the proposal on the local townscape and the character and appearance of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area in the two Views. The heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposal have been identified (Step 1), the contribution of setting to the significance of these heritage assets has been assessed (Step 2), the impact of the proposals on the settings and significance of these heritage assets has been assessed (Step 3), and the design has sought to minimise harm and to maximise enhancement to the significance and settings of these heritage assets (Step 4).
- 4.2. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s National Design Guide (2019) [Appendix 2] and English Heritage and the Design Council (formerly CABI)’s the *Building in Context Toolkit* (2001) [Appendix 3] have both been used to inform the proposals (i.e. the architectural quality of the proposed building itself as well as its sensitivity to the townscape, CA and settings of any other nearby heritage assets). The NDG and *Building in Context Toolkit* have also been considered in this TVIA when evaluating the designs of the proposals, and their impact on the surrounding townscape, as well as the character and appearance of the CA and settings of any other nearby heritage assets.
- 4.3. The existing townscape is spacious and residential in character, with large, detached, two to three storey houses – typically in red brickwork, and built in the 1920s in an idiom with Neo-Georgian and Queen Anne Revival elements. Taking into account the National Design Guide (2019) [Appendix 2] and the Building in Context Toolkit [Appendix 3], the proposed scheme complements the townscape in terms of its proportions and detailing. Its potential impact on the character and appearance of the CA has been mitigated by retaining the front elevation, which is the principal aspect of the building which contributes positively to the CA; and the proposed side and rear elevations would involve the re-use of existing bricks and clay tiles.
- 4.4. **The proposals overall will have a minimal to negligible and neutral to positive visual impact on the local townscape character and the setting, character and appearance of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area.** The design of the proposed work has been based on a thorough understanding of the history and development of the subject site, and also of the historic and existing townscape of the Conservation Area within the two assessed Views.

APPENDIX 1: HISTORIC ENGLAND'S PLANNING NOTE 3: "THE SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS", DEC 2017

This note gives assistance concerning the assessment of the setting of heritage assets. Historic England recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps that apply proportionately to the complexity of the case, from straightforward to complex:

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.

The setting of a heritage asset is 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced'. Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset. The starting point of the analysis is to identify those heritage assets likely to be affected by the development proposal.

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated.

This assessment of the contribution to significance made by setting will provide the baseline for establishing the effects of a proposed development on significance. We recommend that this assessment should first address the key attributes of the heritage asset itself and then consider:

- the physical surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets
- the asset's intangible associations with its surroundings, and patterns of use
- the contribution made by noises, smells, etc to significance, and
- the way views allow the significance of the asset to be appreciated

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it.

The wide range of circumstances in which setting may be affected and the range of heritage assets that may be involved precludes a single approach for assessing effects. Different approaches will be required for different circumstances. In general, however, the assessment should address the attributes of the proposed development in terms of its:

- location and siting
- form and appearance
- wider effects
- permanence

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

Enhancement may be achieved by actions including:

- removing or re-modelling an intrusive building or feature
- replacement of a detrimental feature by a new and more harmonious one
- restoring or revealing a lost historic feature or view
- introducing a wholly new feature that adds to the public appreciation of the asset
- introducing new views (including glimpses or better framed views) that add to the public experience of the asset, or
- improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset including its setting

Options for reducing the harm arising from development may include the repositioning of a development or its elements, changes to its design, the creation of effective long-term visual or acoustic screening, or management measures secured by planning conditions or legal agreements. For some developments affecting setting, the design of a development may not be capable of sufficient adjustment to avoid or significantly reduce the harm, for example where impacts are caused by fundamental issues such as the proximity, location, scale, prominence or noisiness of a development. In other cases, good design may reduce or remove the harm, or provide enhancement. Here the design quality may be an important consideration in determining the balance of harm and benefit.

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

It is good practice to document each stage of the decision-making process in a non-technical and proportionate way, accessible to non-specialists. This should set out clearly how the setting of each heritage asset affected contributes to its significance or to the appreciation of its significance, as well as what the anticipated effect of the development will be, including of any mitigation proposals.

Assessment Step 2 Checklist

The starting point for this stage of the assessment is to consider the significance of the heritage asset itself and then establish the contribution made by its setting. The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance. It may be the case that only a limited selection of the attributes listed is likely to be particularly important in terms of any single asset.

The asset's physical surroundings

- Topography
- Aspect
- Other heritage assets (including buildings, structures, landscapes, areas or archaeological remains)
- Definition, scale and “grain” of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces
- Formal design (eg. hierarchy, layout)
- Orientation and aspect
- Historic materials and surfaces
- Green space, trees and vegetation
- Openness, enclosure and boundaries
- Functional relationships and communications
- History and degree of change over time

Experience of the asset

- Surrounding landscape or townscape character
- Views from, towards, through, across and including the asset
- Intentional intervisibility with other historic and natural features
- Visual dominance, prominence or role as focal point
- Noise, vibration and other nuisances
- Tranquillity, remoteness, “wildness”
- Busyness, bustle, movement and activity
- Scents and smells
- Diurnal changes
- Sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy or privacy
- Land use
- Accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement
- Degree of interpretation or promotion to the public
- Rarity of comparable survivals of setting
- Cultural associations
- Celebrated artistic representations
- Traditions

Assessment Step 3 Checklist

The following is a (non-exhaustive) check-list of the potential attributes of a development affecting setting that may help to elucidate its implications for the significance of the heritage asset. It may be that only a limited selection of these is likely to be particularly important in terms of any particular development.

Location and siting of development

- Proximity to asset
- Position in relation to relative topography and watercourses
- Position in relation to key views to, from and across
- Orientation
- Degree to which location will physically or visually isolate asset

Form and appearance of development

- Prominence, dominance, or conspicuousness
- Competition with or distraction from the asset
- Dimensions, scale and massing
- Proportions
- Visual permeability (i.e. extent to which it can be seen through), reflectivity
- Materials (texture, colour, reflectiveness, etc)
- Architectural and landscape style and/or design
- Introduction of movement or activity
- Diurnal or seasonal change

Wider effects of the development

- Change to built surroundings and spaces
- Change to skyline, silhouette
- Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc.
- Lighting effects and “light spill”
- Change to general character (eg. urbanising or industrialising)
- Changes to public access use or amenity
- Changes to land use, land cover, tree cover
- Changes to communications/ accessibility/ permeability, including traffic, road junctions and car-parking, etc
- Changes to ownership arrangements (fragmentation/ permitted development/ etc)
- Economic viability

Permanence of the development

- Anticipated lifetime/ temporariness
- Recurrence
- Reversibility

APPENDIX 2: THE NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE, MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's **National Design Guide** ("NDG") is the national planning practice guidance for "beautiful, enduring and successful places", published in October 2019. Its stated components for good design are: the layout (or masterplan); the form and scale of buildings; their appearance; landscape; materials; and their detailing. It focuses on what it terms the "ten characteristics": Context, Identity, Built Form, Movement, Nature, Public Spaces, Uses, Homes and Buildings, Resources, and Lifespan.

Below are extracts which are relevant to heritage/conservation, design, and townscapes.

Context:

para 38: *An understanding of the context, history and the cultural characteristics of a site, neighbourhood and region influences the location, siting and design of new developments.*

para 40: *Well-designed new development responds positively to the features of the site itself and the surrounding context beyond the site boundary. It enhances positive qualities and improves negative ones. Some features are physical, including:*

- *the existing built development, including layout, form, scale, appearance, details, and materials;*
- *local heritage... and local character...*
- *views inwards and outwards;*

para 42: *Well-designed new development is integrated into its wider surroundings, physically, socially and visually. It is carefully sited and designed, and is demonstrably based on an understanding of the existing situation, including:*

- *the landscape character and how places or developments sit within the landscape, to influence the siting of new development and how natural features are retained or incorporated into it;*
- *patterns of built form, including local precedents for routes and spaces and the built form around them, to inform the layout, form and scale...*
- *the architecture prevalent in the area, including the local vernacular and other precedents that contribute to local character, to inform the form, scale, appearance, details and materials of new development...*
- *public spaces, including their characteristic landscape design and details, both hard and soft.*

para 43: *However, well-designed places do not need to copy their surroundings in every way. It is appropriate to introduce elements that reflect how we live today, to include innovation or change such as increased densities, and to incorporate new sustainable features or systems.*

para 45: *When determining how a site may be developed, it is important to understand the history of how a place has evolved. The local sense of place and identity are shaped by local history, culture and heritage, and how these have influenced the built environment and wider landscape.*

para 46: *Sensitive re-use or adaptation adds to the richness and variety of a scheme...*

para 47: *Well-designed places and buildings are influenced positively by:*

- *the history and heritage of the site, its surroundings and the wider area, including cultural influences;*
- *the significance and setting of heritage assets and any other specific features that merit conserving and enhancing;*
- *the local vernacular, including historical building typologies such as the terrace, town house, mews, villa or mansion block, the treatment of façades, characteristic materials and details...*

Identity:

para 52: *Well-designed new development is influenced by:*

- *an appreciation and understanding of vernacular, local or regional character, including existing built form, landscape and local architectural precedents;*
- *the characteristics of the existing built form...*
- *the elements of a place or local places that make it distinctive; and*
- *other features of the context that are particular to the area...*

This includes considering:

- *the composition of street scenes, individual buildings and their elements;*
- *the height, scale, massing and relationships between buildings;*
- *views, vistas and landmarks;*
- *roofscapes;*
- *the scale and proportions of buildings;*
- *façade design, such as the degrees of symmetry, variety, the pattern and proportions and windows and doors, and their details;*
- *the scale and proportions of streets and spaces;*
- *hard landscape and street furniture;*
- *soft landscape, landscape setting and backdrop;*
- *colours, textures, shapes and patterns.*

para 55: *Well-designed places contribute to local distinctiveness. This may include:*

- *adopting typical building forms, features, materials and details of an area;*
- *drawing upon the architectural precedents that are prevalent in the local area, including the proportions of buildings and their openings;*
- *using local building, landscape or topographical features, materials or planting types;*
- *introducing built form and appearance that adds new character and difference to places;*
- *creating a positive and coherent identity that residents and local communities can identify with.*

para 56: *Materials, construction details and planting are selected with care for their context. ... They contribute to visual appeal and local distinctiveness.*

para 57: *Design decisions at all levels and scales shape the character of a new place or building. Character starts to be determined by the siting of a development in the wider landscape, then by the layout – the pattern of streets, landscape and spaces, the movement network and the arrangement of development blocks. It continues to be created by the form, scale, design, materials and details of buildings and landscape.*

para 58: *Where the scale or density of new development is very different to the existing place, it may be more appropriate to create a new identity rather than to scale up the character of an existing place in its context. New character may also arise from a response to how today's lifestyles could evolve in the future, or to the proposed method of development and construction.*

para 59: *Where the character of an existing place has limited or few positive qualities, then a new and positive character will enhance its identity.*

Built Form:

para 64: Well-designed new development makes efficient use of land with an amount and mix of development and open space that optimises density. It also relates well to and enhances the existing character and context.

para 65: Built form is determined by good urban design principles that combine layout, form and scale in a way that responds positively to the context.

para 66: Well-designed places also use the right mix of building types, forms and scale of buildings and public spaces to create a coherent form of development that people enjoy.

para 68: Built form defines a pattern of streets and development blocks. ... Street types will depend on:

- their width, relating to use;
- the height of buildings around them, the relationship with street width, and the sense of enclosure that results;
- how built up they are along their length, and the structure of blocks and routes that this creates;
- the relationship between building fronts and backs, with successful streets characterised by buildings facing the street to provide interest, overlooking the active frontages at ground level...
- establishing an appropriate relationship with the pattern, sizes and proportions of existing streets in the local area.

para 69: Well-designed tall buildings play a positive urban design role in the built form. They act as landmarks, emphasising important places and making a positive contribution to views and the skyline.

para 70: Proposals for tall buildings (and other buildings with a significantly larger scale or bulk than their surroundings) require special consideration. This includes their location and siting; relationship to context; impact on local character, views and sight lines; composition – how they meet the ground and the sky... These need to be resolved satisfactorily in relation to the context and local character.

Movement:

para 81: A clear layout and hierarchy of streets and other routes helps people to find their way around...

para 82: Wider, more generous spaces are well-suited to busier streets... Narrower streets are more suitable where there is limited vehicle movement and speeds are low.

para 83: Well-designed streets create attractive public spaces with character, through their layout, landscape, including street trees, lighting, street furniture and materials.

para 86: Well-designed parking is attractive, well-landscaped and sensitively integrated into the built form so that it does not dominate the development or the street scene.

Nature:

para 92: Well-designed places provide usable green spaces, taking into account:

- the wider and local context...
- how spaces are connected;
- the balance between public and private open spaces...

Public Spaces:

para 105: Careful planning and design create the right conditions for people to feel safe and secure... These include:

- buildings around the edges of a space;
- active frontages along its edges, provided by entrances onto the space and windows overlooking it, so that people come and go at different times;

para 107: A well-designed public space that encourages social interaction is sited so that it is open and accessible to all local communities. It is connected into the movement network, preferable so that people naturally pass through it as they move around.

APPENDIX 3: THE BUILDING IN CONTEXT TOOLKIT

The Building in Context Toolkit grew out of the publication **Building in Context** published by English Heritage and CABI (now the Design Council) in 2001. The purpose of that publication was to stimulate a high standard of design for development taking place in historically sensitive contexts. The founding and enduring principle is that all successful design solutions depend on allowing time for a thorough site analysis and character appraisal to fully understand context.

The eight Building in Context principles are:

Principle 1

A successful project will start with an assessment of the value of retaining what is there.

Principle 2

A successful project will relate to the geography and history of the place and lie of the land.

Principle 3

A successful project will be informed by its own significance so that its character and identity will be appropriate to its use and context.

Principle 4

A successful project will sit happily in the pattern of existing development and the routes through and around it.

Principle 5

A successful project will respect important views.

Principle 6

A successful project will respect the scale of neighbouring buildings.

Principle 7

A successful project will use materials and building methods which are as high quality as those used in existing buildings.

Principle 8

A successful project will create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting.