

DESIGN BRIEFS FOR ASPIRATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

Site reference RF 1: Meridian House

Address: 202 Finchley Rd, London NW3 6BX.

Photo DS 1: Meridian House, 202 Finchley Road, Streetscape



Photo DS 2: Meridian House, Aerial View



Site area: 310 square metres

Description

The site was originally a railway cutting, the tunnel starting where there is now a car park to the rear of the site.

Meridian House is a featureless modern block, lacking detail to the façade and constructed from materials which are not in keeping with the streetscape, producing a negative contribution. The site includes 50 car parking spaces to the rear, despite its high PTAL rating of 6a.

This residential section of Finchley Road (within the Redington Froggnal Conservation Area) is characterised by Victorian and Edwardian blocks of mansion flats, situated immediately north of Meridian House.

The office space at ground-floor level is occupied on a leasehold basis from the owner. Above Allied Irish Bank are eight residential flats: 1A, 2A and flats B to G.

Potential development

Ten larger 100-120 sq.m or 15 smaller 60-70 sq.m residential units, with A1, A2, A3 or B1 use class at ground level, incorporating an active frontage.

Opportunity

A redevelopment here, in conformity with policy BD4 and the BGI policies here would be favourably considered if it were to be set back in order to incorporate a pocket park. Although setting back the development would change the character of the Finchley Road streetscape, such a set-back would deliver improved townscape benefits, including the potential to create a pocket park.

Although it is a relatively recent block, buildings dating from the 1960s have already been or are due to be demolished and replaced, eg in Redington Road and Redington Gardens.

Appropriate uses include a retail unit or community facility, such as an NHS GP practice, at ground-floor level to support the growth of existing retail activity on Finchley Road, as at 317 Finchley Road, or contribute to social cohesion and inclusion .

Such a site, with its high PTAL rating, and proximity to retail and leisure facilities, could also provide ideal accommodation to cater for older age groups, among which population growth in the Plan Area is forecast to be concentrated. It should be redeveloped as a car-free site and redundant parking space to the rear used to provide substantial greening and biodiversity measures, including trees, native hedgerows and a natural pond, providing a link to the adjoining copse.

Constraints

Meridian House is currently occupied by unknown tenants, including Allied Irish Bank. It may be that the owner of the building would be sympathetic to the idea of redevelopment .

Conclusion

It is possible that the site is available, and the Forum will need to liaise with Network Rail, which owns the site and Overground line running beneath. A four-storey residential block, in brick and stone, would add a significant number of units and at the same time enhance the Finchley Road streetscape.

It is highly desirable that any replacement building will include an urban pocket park, such as below. This would considerably enhance Finchley Road and provide amenity in a part of the Plan Area with poor access to green space.

In keeping with the Conservation Area principles, a gap is to be incorporated on either side, between it and neighbouring buildings, in order to afford view to rear gardens and rear garden tree corridors.



1 “An Effective Town Centre First Policy: what needs to be in the new PPS6”, December 2007. The Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) , the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), the Food Access Network, Friends of the Earth and the Women’s Institute
 2 Dutch & Dutch tel. con, re Meridien House

Site reference RF 2: Conrad Court, 27 Redington Gardens

Address: Conrad Court, 27 Redington Gardens, London NW3 7RX

Photo DS 3: Conrad Court, 27 Redington Gardens, Aerial View



Photo DS 4: 27 Redington Gardens, Front Elevation



Description

Currently owned by the Republic of Poland, of 47 Portland Place, London W1B 1JH and occupied by Embassy staff. It is adjacent to 24 and 25-26 Redington Gardens, both of which have been subject to recent applications for demolition. These and other buildings in the Conservation Area, notably those constructed between the 1950s to 1980s, have frequently been demolished and replaced.

However, such accommodation is given protection by Policy H5 of the Camden Local Plan. Paragraph 3.133 states, "Where the existing housing is for key workers or provided in connection with a job, redevelopment should provide for the same group of occupiers unless their needs have been met elsewhere, in which case social affordable rented housing and intermediate housing will be sought". Notwithstanding this protection, it is noted in the emerging London Plan (policy H12 para 4.12.5) that, "one-bedroom units play a very important role in meeting housing need, and provision in new developments can help reduce the pressure to convert and subdivide existing larger homes. However, one-person and one-bed units are the least flexible unit type so schemes should generally consist of a range of unit sizes."

The site is located in close proximity to two tributaries to the underground Cannon Stream.

Site area: 1,168 sq. metres

Opportunity

The site could be redeveloped in accordance with the Redington Frogna! Neighbourhood Plan policies BD and BGI to provide up to 40 units of upgraded accommodation, car-free and possibly incorporating community meeting space. The Forum would look favourably on any development scheme which seeks to take advantage of the opportunity to daylight the underground stream(s) beneath the Redington Gardens carriageway and between Templewood Gardens and Heysham Lane.

Constraints

The building is currently occupied, providing 41 self-contained bedsits. No development plans have yet been submitted.

Conclusion

This site is suitable, achievable and potentially available. It is within easy walking distance of Finchley Road and bus routes between central London and to Mill Hill, North Finchley and Golders Green.

A new development at this site would be expected to be informed by the Redington Frogna! Neighbourhood Plan policies BD and BGI. The situation, adjacent to mature woodlands, means that any enhancements to biodiverse habitat here would be especially valuable.

It is also notable that the development site lies directly above the underground Canon Stream. Basement excavation here is likely to create considerable problems for the watercourse, both upstream and downstream. To alleviate such problems for the community, consideration should be given to daylighting the fresh water section of the underground Canon Stream. This will also help to prevent flooding at the junction of Heath Drive and Finchley Road and help to meet Camden's Policy CC3 to ensure that development "does not increase flood risk and reduces the risk of flooding where possible. It will also help to reduce sewer flooding by alleviating pressure on Thames Water's sewers. Thames Water Utilities encourages all initiatives that either keep rainwater out of the sewer network or, slow down the rate of flow into sewers

Site reference RF 3: 1 Platt's Lane

Address: 1 Platt's Lane, London NW3 7NP

Photo DS 5: 1 Platt's Lane, Aerial View



Photo DS 6: 1 Platt's Lane, Streetscape



Site area: 500m2

Description

This site is a former old people's home, currently arranged as 22 self-contained bedsits. Unsympathetic front, side and roof extensions to the original CHB Quennell house have resulted in a building which forms a negative contribution to the streetscape. Notwithstanding a PTAL rating of 3, the site incorporates excessive off-street parking.

Amount of development

Accommodation for community or educational use or use as a health centre / GP practice.

Opportunity

Recent planning consents for new large developments on Finchley Road and Kidderpore Avenue can be expected to lead to a growing local demand for nursery school places. The Plan Area does not have any early years provision and it is suggested that the site could help to meet this gap in provision for an age group if the Mayor's Clean Air targets are achieved, and the Ultra-Low Emission Zone implemented (in 2020). As has been noted in email correspondence by the Head of Governors at St. Luke's Church of England School, the site could be utilised to meet the demand for nursery education (or child care), as a result of forecast growth in the 0 to 3 years age group.

The Forum consider that community use is an appropriate aspiration for this site, with the specific use to be determined by the community's future needs.

Constraints

It has not been possible to make contact with the registered owner of the building.

Conclusion

The site is suitable for residential use and a variety of community uses, from educational (nursery / child care or tertiary) use, as well as for a health centre or GP practice, but is not currently known to be available.

If it were to become available in the future, the Neighbourhood Plan would support a development that is informed by the Redington Frognal Neighbourhood Plan policies BD and BGI and maximises the opportunity for tree planting, to help counter current high particulate levels.

Site reference RF 4: Garages (eight) on south side of Frognal Lane

Address: Frognal Lane, London NW3 7DX

Photo DS 7: Frognal Lane Garages, Aerial View



Photo DS 8: Frognal Lane Garages Streetscape



Site area: 210 square metres

Description

This site, on the south side of Frognal Lane, opposite number 3, comprises eight garages.

This is not an efficient land use, is not consistent with sustainable transport policies, and Local Plan Policy T1 10.19 supports the development of parking space for alternative uses. The Forum note that garages in the Redington Frognal area are increasingly being sold for development. Between 2010 and 2015, garages at six sites were demolished to make way for residential development. The majority of the garages are unused.

Opportunity

The site could be utilised for a low-level residential development, subject to any impacts on amenity being satisfactorily addressed.

Constraints

The garages are owned by residents of Palace Court, 250 Finchley Road.

Site reference RF 5: Rear of 23-27A Frognal

Address: Rear of 23-27A Frognal, London NW3 6AR

The site area is shown shaded in purple.

DS 9: Garages and land to rear of 23-27A Frognal,



Sources: Land Registry based on Ordnance Survey



Photo DS 10: Garages to Rear of 23-27A Frognal, Streetscape

Site area: 650m²

Description

The site accommodates seven backland garages, and the access way between 25s and 25c, leading to behind 25b Frognal as described in Land Registry title number LN121820. The site is situated close to Finchley Road, in an area where trees and soft landscape have become depleted, and in a part of the Plan Area which is classified as open / green space deficient.

Amount of development

If the development does not begin within three years of the date of consent, the site could be holistically developed to accommodate c. 2-3 car-free units (or as appropriate) within a green setting.

Opportunity

The site could be utilised to contribute to Camden's requirement for new homes while, at the same time, meeting the Redington Froggnal goal of increasing green space, biodiversity, native trees and hedges. The Arup / Redington Froggnal underground rivers research shows this to be close to an underground river and to have formerly supported many natural ponds. New residential units are to be complemented by new biodiverse green space.

Constraints

Currently car parking and hard surfaced, with poor access. Any new development would be subject to any impacts on the amenity of neighbouring properties and gardens being satisfactorily addressed.

The land is owned by separate owners and is comprised of the following Land Registry titles: LN 121820, NGL 201021, NGL 85340, LN 154773, LN 250891, NGL 161814, NGL 199290, LN 147289.

Conclusion

The site is suitable, and at least part of the site is available.

The site is suitable for redevelopment, but only part is currently available. The entire site is therefore able to be designated only as an aspiration for the neighbourhood forum.

The redeveloped site should also include substantial permeable natural soft surface, trees and hedging, ideally with a natural pond, as part of the green corridor and bat flight paths, to support the bats which fly overhead .

Site reference RF 6: Hampstead Gate, 1A Frognal, London NW3 6AL

Address: Hampstead Gate, 1A Frognal, London NW3 6AL

Photo DS 11: Hampstead Gate Aerial View



Photo DS 12: Hampstead Gate Internal Site Streetscape



Site area: 1775 m2

Description

The site is currently in use as an office accommodation complex of nine office buildings over three floors, with garages and parking spaces. Despite the high 6A PTAL rating, it has an excessive amount of hard surfacing and off-street parking places. The site is located above a tributary to the underground River Westbourne and in an area at risk of surface water flooding

Future redevelopment would expect better, more efficient use of the land through alternative use of garages, reduced parking provision, a higher density development of workshops and co-working facilities, incorporating soft landscape and trees and contributing towards Camden's employment development targets. Alternatively, if considered appropriate, the site could be utilised for a mid-rise car-free residential or mixed-use development in which hard surface is returned to natural soft surface (in accordance with the emerging London Plan) and the design is informed by the Redington Frognal Neighbourhood Plan BD and BGI policies.

Amount of development: c.16 employment units (or a greater number of residential units).

5 Arup report "Redington Frognal Sub-Surface Water Features Mapping"

6 Flood risk from surface water: <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map>

Opportunity

The site would meet need for workshop employment and training and co-working space in Camden and would be very attractive to a developer seeking to acquire non-residential land.

Constraints

Currently offices, with a number of separate freehold owners, it would be desirable for the site to be developed as a whole.

Conclusion

The site is suitable, but not currently available, although a recent advertisement notes that, "Vendors may also consider selling freehold interest".

If the site were to become available during the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Plan would encourage a scheme with substantial permeable soft surface, trees, hedging, benches, outdoor seating and a natural wildlife pond. A natural wildlife pond is suggested not just for its water storage capacity but also for biodiversity benefits, including to the adjoining copse, and the minimal once yearly maintenance requirement.

Hampstead Gate is well-situated to accommodate workshops, co-working and other employment space, and a café, which could be complemented by a local Post Office functioning as a Community Enterprise Hub (if this would be commercially viable).

A redevelopment such as this would introduce some charm and greenery, and revitalise this area, also providing an amenity to guests at the adjacent Quality Hotel.

7 Grovelands, 1A Hampstead Gate, Frognal, NW3

<http://www.grovelands.net/property/hampstead-gate-1a-frognal-london-nw3/>

8 i.e. surface that allows water to percolate into the soil to filter out pollutants and recharge the water table.

9 Promoting dragonfly diversity in cities: major determinants and implications for urban pond design

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10841-012-9522-z>

10 <https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles/reports/making-the-connection>

Site Reference RF 7: Rear of 166-200A Finchley Road and Adjacent to Hampstead Gate, London NW3 6BX

Address:

Photo DS 13: Rear of 166-200A Finchley Road and Adjacent to Hampstead Gate, Aerial View

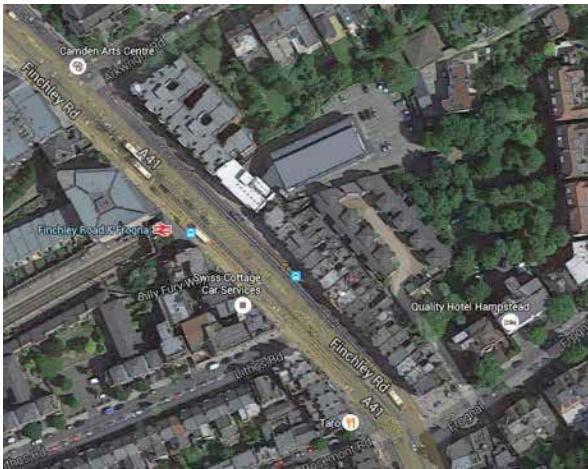


Photo DS 14: Rear of 166-200A Finchley Road and Adjacent to Hampstead Gate, Streetscape



Photo DS 15 Internal Site Alleyway Photo DS 16 Front doors to Flats at Rear of Finchley Road



Site area: 1900m²

Description

The site consists of residential flats, situated directly to the rear of and above Finchley Road retail and office units and immediately to the west of Hampstead Gate. The flats are accessed via a seedy alleyway, which suffers from antisocial behaviour and (in May 2016) rat infestation. A further entrance exists from Frognal, which is shared with the Hampstead Gate office development. Each unit has its own entrance fronting onto the alleyway. The accommodation is unlikely to provide accommodation of an acceptable standard.

Amount of development: c.36 units in total.

Opportunity

The apartments are in need of refurbishment. This can be achieved without affecting the Finchley Road facades through the addition of comprehensive rear extensions with active rear frontages. The very convenient location means that the refurbished apartments would become highly desirable accommodation, for older people, young people and key workers alike.

Constraints

The accommodation has a variety of private owners and is not currently deliverable or available for redevelopment.

Conclusion

The site is suitable for redevelopment, but there is no indication that it is available currently or in the short to medium term. If the site were to become available in the future, either as a whole or in part, the Neighbourhood Forum would support any development that is informed by the Redington Frognal Neighbourhood Plan policies. This must include the retention of the entire Finchley Road façade, which is included on Camden's Local List.

Site reference RF 8: 282-284 Finchley Road

Address: 282-284 Finchley Road, London NW3 7AD

Photo DS 19: 282-284 Finchley Road Aerial View



Photo DS 20: 282-284 Finchley Road Streetscape



Site area: 360 m2

Description

The site accommodates a pair of two-storey semi-detached houses, two garages and off-street parking. To the north of the site are buildings of four storeys high, at Studholme Court, and a five-storey Edwardian mansion block is immediately to the south.

If the sites were to become available they could be re-developed more intensively, to a height of 4-5 storeys, but retaining gaps on both sides, to provide views to rear garden trees, and soft-surfaced front and rear gardens with hedges. Any replacement building must conform to the Redington Froggnal BD and BGI policies.

Amount of development: c. 12 units

Opportunity

A new four to five-storey building of twelve units would be more in keeping with the height of other buildings lining Finchley Road and could present a highly desirable development, as at 38 Heath Drive.

Constraints

Both houses are privately owned, by different owners.

Conclusion

The site is suitable for redevelopment, but there is no indication that it is available currently or in the short to medium term. To be effective, the sites would ideally be 'assembled' by a developer capable of taking them on over time and developing an effective block.

If the site were to become available in the future, the Neighbourhood Plan would support any development that adheres to the Redington Froggnal policies for Sustainable Design and Character and Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure.

Site reference RF 12: Row of Ten Garages at Studholme Court

Address: Studholme Court, Finchley Road, NW3 7AE

Studholme Court: Site Plan



Studholme Court: Row of Ten Garages Backing onto Croft Way



In the event that the garages in public ownership at Studholme Court become redundant, these might in future be utilised as a community facility, eg shared office space or workshops, for use by Studholme Court residents.