

HeritageCollective

Heritage Statement



59 Ham Street, Ham

On behalf of Gilbert Homes

November 2015

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Authored by:	Jen Coates
Reviewed by:	Ignus Froneman
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CONTENTS		PAGE NO.
1.0	INTRODUCTION	4
2.0	POLICY AND GUIDANCE	6
3.0	ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	9
4.0	POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE	14
5.0	CONCLUSION	18

APPENDICES

Appendix 1:	Site location
Appendix 2:	Photographs November 2015

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Heritage Collective on behalf of Gilbert Homes. The report supports a planning application for the demolition of the current building on the application site and its replacement with four houses. The Heritage Statement should be read alongside all other information submitted as part of the application.

Heritage designations and assets

1.2 The heritage asset in question is the Ham House Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). There are no listed buildings close to the application site but there are several locally listed buildings. The existing modern (c.1950s) building is not considered to be a non-designated heritage asset.

Purpose, Scope and structure of the statement

1.3 The purpose of this document is:

- To provide London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames (LBRUT) with sufficient information about the significance of the heritage assets to determine the nature and extent of potential impacts on their significance.
- To provide (LBRUT) with reasoned justification as to why the proposals are considered acceptable in terms of national and local policy.

1.4 This report deals with heritage matters relating to the conservation area, and specifically the effects of the proposed development on the significance of the area and the significance of nearby non-designated heritage assets.

Background

1.5 Permission was granted in March 2014 (Ref. 14/0297) for the demolition of the existing c.1950s building at No. 57 Ham Street, adjacent to the site. The permission was for the redevelopment of the site with a modern building comprised of timber framing with argon glass and a pebble dashed roof. The conservation officer did not raise any objections to this application. No. 59 Ham

Street is a building of similar age and style but the proposals for this site seek to enhance the streetscape with a more traditionally designed building.

- 1.6 This assessment was informed by a site visit in November 2015 in overcast weather.

2.0 POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Legislation

- 2.1 The decision maker is required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of a conservation area.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.2 The NPPF was published in March 2012 and constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision makers. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the local development plan, unless it is silent or material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration¹.
- 2.3 Section 12 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment, in paragraphs 126 to 141. The NPPF places much emphasis on heritage "significance", which it defines in Annex 2 as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."

- 2.4 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF encourages local planning authorities to recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner *appropriate to their significance*. On the other hand, the same paragraph recognises the fact that new development can make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, which is one of the factors to be taken into account, and that, is reiterated again in paragraph 131.
- 2.5 Paragraph 128 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, to a proportionate level of detail.
- 2.6 Paragraph 129 requires essentially the same from local planning authorities: to identify and assess the *"particular significance"* of any heritage asset. The

¹ Paragraph 215 of the NPPF is relevant in determining the weight that should be attached to it, and has been noted at the end of this section.

significance of the heritage asset should be taken as the benchmark against which the impacts of a proposal are to be assessed.

- 2.7 According to paragraph 131, a number of considerations should be taken into account, first of which is the (relative) desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. It also requires taking into account sustainable communities, including economic vitality, as well as local character and distinctiveness.
- 2.8 Paragraphs 132 to 134 deal specifically with designated heritage assets and states that great weight should be given to preserving a heritage asset, and the weight should be in correlation to the assets significance. These paragraphs also say that harm can either be substantial or less than substantial and should take into account public benefits when assessing the impact of development.
- 2.9 It is worth noting the definition of “conservation” (for heritage policy) in Annex 2 of the NPPF:

“The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.”

- 2.10 The definition does not suggest conservation is the same as preservation. Instead, what sets conservation apart is the emphasis on proactively maintaining and managing change. This is clearly not a reactive approach to resist change, or a requirement to sustain the status quo. Rather, it is a recognition that places evolve and change over time, and that the evolution of the historic environment must be part of this on-going process.

London Plan (2015)

- 2.11 The London Plan (2015) provides a city-wide context within which individual boroughs must set their local planning policies. Policies of relevance to the historic environment include:
- 2.12 Policy 7.4 – Local Character: Buildings, streets and open spaces should provide a high-quality design response that (i) has regard to pattern and grain of existing spaces, (ii) contributes to positive relationships between urban and natural landscapes, (iii) is human in scale, (iv) allows positively contributing buildings to

influence the future character, and (v) is informed by the surrounding historic environment.

- 2.13 Policy 7.8 – Heritage Assets and Archaeology: This policy seeks to safeguard heritage assets. The policy encourages development that (i) identifies, values, conserves, restores, re-uses and incorporates heritage assets, where appropriate, and (ii) that conserves heritage assets and their setting.

London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Local Policy

Core Strategy (2009)

- 2.14 Policy CP7(B) Maintaining and improving the local environment requires

'New development should recognise and compliment the existing local character and contribute to creating places of a high architectural and urban design quality.'

Development Management Plan (2011)

- 2.15 Policy DM HD 1: Conservation Areas – Requires new development to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 2.16 Policy DM HD 3: Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTM) – The council will protect the significance, character and setting of BTM's. New proposals should protect and enhance the setting of Buildings of Townscape Merit.

3.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Introduction

3.1 This chapter is a summary of the significance of the conservation area and 59 Ham Street's contribution to that significance. It also identifies non-designated heritage assets that may be impacted by the proposals.

Ham House Conservation Area

3.2 The Ham House Conservation Area was designated in 1975. Since its designation, it has been extended twice, once in 1982 and again in 2007 when the application site was included in the designation.

3.3 Architectural interest is derived from the diversity of built form in the area. The buildings are of a range of styles and dates but mostly from the 17th and 18th century. These buildings are supplemented by infill development. Due to the lack of a railway at Ham there was no real Victorian expansion of the area which has preserved the architectural diversity. Within the conservation area is the 17th century Ham House (grade I listed) located in a designed park land (grade II* listed). The house and its associated landscape is the focus and most significant component of the area. A number of other buildings within the conservation area are listed. There are also a number of Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTM). Within the conservation area there is additional architectural interest in the treatment of the front boundaries of the properties. These are clearly defined by brick walls and garden planting and reflect the semi-rural character of the conservation area.

3.4 In the conservation area appraisal 59 Ham Street is part of sub-area Ham Street in the Ham House Conservation Area No.23; in this area buildings are in a variety of scales, styles and detailing from one storey bungalows to three storey Georgian Mansions. Buildings within the area are mainly built with brick and have a variety of boundary treatments. Buildings close to the application site are generally terraced and of one to two storeys. Opposite the site is a row of well preserved single storey Almshouses comprised of red brick and terracotta detailing. These buildings are of BTM status.

3.5 The conservation area appraisal identifies the need to retain original or architectural features of detailing and materials.

- 3.6 Ham House Conservation Area is of historic interest. Ham is an ancient village along with nearby Petersham. Ham House Conservation Area has historic interest in illustrating the development of the area over time. The popularity of Ham was first established in the 17th century as it became popular with the aristocracy as a rural retreat. This is illustrated by the building and continued use of Ham House which was built in 1610 for Sir Thomas Vavasour.² Ham House has influenced the subsequent development of Ham and Petersham beyond. It established routes through the area from Ham House Avenues which '*radiate out from Ham House to connect it to Ham and Petersham.*'³
- 3.7 Ham House Conservation Area has associative historic interest with a number of historical figures including William Murray, whipping boy for Charles I. Murray's daughter Elizabeth and her husband the Duke of Lauderdale were responsible for the transformation of Ham House into '*one of the grandest Stuart houses in England.*'⁴
- 3.8 Ham is an archaeological priority area. Evidence of human habitation has been found dating back to the Mesolithic period. A desk based assessment has been provided as part of this application and offers greater detail into the possibility of the archaeological sensitivity of the site within the conservation area.
- 3.9 Ham House Conservation area is of some artistic interest. The conservation area is centred around Ham House which has been the subject of many paintings including Henry Danckerts *The south front of Ham House seen from the Wilderness*, c. 1675-1679. Ham House is of artistic interest in its designed parkland and the conservation area as a whole offers aesthetic interest in its streetscapes. There are also important vistas across the conservation area from Richmond Hill which offers aesthetic interest.

Contribution of the application site to the conservation area

- 3.10 59 Ham Street is a late 1950s building that is at best a neutral contributor to the conservation area. The building is within a large plot of land and its size and location towards the north west of its plot add to the incongruous feel of the

² Richmond Borough Council, Ham and Petersham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, 2007 p.

⁴

³ Ibid. p.7

⁴ National Trust, Ham House History <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ham-house/history/> accessed 6/11/2015

house in comparison with the rest of the buildings in the sub-area of Ham Street which have more historic and architectural associations.

Setting and significance of nearby non-designated heritage assets

- 3.11 Within the vicinity of the application site are a number of locally listed buildings. Those that are most likely to be affected are identified and assessed below.
- 3.12 40-46 Ham Street is a terrace of houses opposite the application site. Architectural interest lies primarily in their front elevations and use of traditional materials; painted brick, clay tile roofs and sash windows. There is additional architectural interest in the treatment of their front boundaries which are separated from the pavement by bushes and picket fencing. The late 19th century cottages have historic interest in showing the development of the area. Their artistic interest, if any, is derived from the matching materials and the traditional frontage and boundary treatment. The buildings are of limited archaeological interest.
- 3.13 1-6 Algernon Tollemache Almshouses are also Buildings of Townscape Merit. These buildings have been well preserved and do not show modern alterations. The buildings have architectural interest in their design and use of materials. They are comprised of red brick, hanging tiles and terracotta with gabled roofs and decorative chimney stacks. They have historic interest as almshouses established by Hon. M Algernon Tollemache in memory of her husband. The almshouses have artistic interest in their aesthetic. The buildings are of limited archaeological interest. They are set back from the pavement with enclosed front gardens.
- 3.14 Stokes House and Bench House are both Buildings of Townscape Merit but due to their location (c.60m away from the site) and the development in-between no impact on their significance will be caused by the new development and they are not assessed as part of this report.
- 3.15 The following paragraphs deal specifically with aspects of the context of the application site relevant to the assessment of the character of this part of the conservation area.
- 3.16 Townscape and topography: Ham village is within the flood plain of the River Thames (although the site is outside of this area). Richmond Hill sits to the east of

Ham and the land rises steeply to this point. The elevated nature of Richmond Hill allows for views over the conservation area. The conservation area appraisal says views from Richmond Hill and elevated parts of Richmond Park:

*'Give the impression of Petersham and Ham as distinct almost rural villages nestled in an expanse of trees and open green space within the river valley bottom.'*⁵

3.17 Character: Ham House Conservation Area is characterised by Ham House and its influence over the development of the area as popular with the aristocracy. This has led to a mixture of houses and styles, from large Georgian Mansions to post war infill development. The area is characterised by this eclectic mix of buildings and boundary treatments. The conservation area as a whole is also characterised by its semi-rural nature, the mature trees, open spaces and use of planting to reflect property boundaries.

3.18 The conservation area noted that Sub-area Ham Street has:

*'Acquired its character over a long period of infill development and redevelopment.'*⁶

3.19 Within the immediate vicinity of the site and the Ham Street sub-area properties are predominately two storeys. They are mostly constructed of brick though some of the Georgian buildings have been painted or stuccoed. There is a diverse range of architectural styles throughout the conservation area but along Ham Street, with the exception of Stokes House and Bench House, the houses are fairly modest terrace houses with simplistic but effective detailing.

3.20 Views/in/out/across: The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies long views to and from the conservation area to the surrounding Richmond Hill and Park. It also identifies views and vistas along the Historic Ham Avenues, the riverside and Ham House itself.

3.21 Long views down Ham Street are characterised by the differing visibility of the buildings. The modest terrace houses have low boundary walls allowing an appreciation of the streetscape, whereas the grander Bench House and Stokes

⁵ LBRUT, Ham and Petersham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, 2007 p. 8

⁶ Ibid. p.20

House are behind tall boundary walls with only their upper storeys and roofs visible.

- 3.22 Views to 59 Ham Street are localised. The 2m high boundary wall to the rear and the wooden fence to the front of the property screen any views to or across the site in these directions.

4.0 POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 This chapter of the assessment examines potential impacts on heritage significance. It addresses the nature of the development and the effects on the core constituents of significance of the Ham House Conservation Area, 40-46 Ham Street and Algernon Tollemache Almshouses.

Description of the site and proposed development

4.2 The existing building is a c.1950s single storey bungalow with yellow stock bricks to the front elevation and painted stocks to the rear and side elevations. There are large glazed windows to the side and rear elevations. The building has a flat roof with a flue sitting in the centre. The building is in a poor state of repair. The house is located in the middle of Ham Street on the western side of the road. The building sits to the north west of its large grounds with some mature trees and planting within the grounds. The site is bordered by a high wooden fence to the front of the property with gate access for a vehicle and to the rear a 2m high red brick wall. The boundary with number 57 is currently comprised of trees and bushes which separate the two plots. To the north west the buildings external wall marks the boundary with the library plot adjacent. Again some tree and shrub planting separate the two plots.

4.3 It is proposed to demolish the present building on site and replace it with four new dwellings comprised of two semi-detached properties. The buildings would be of two storeys plus basement level living accommodation with pitched roofs and gable dormers. The materials have been picked to preserve the architectural and traditional nature of the conservation area and consist of yellow London stock bricks and slate tiles for the roof and sash windows, in keeping with the wider area.

4.4 The front elevation would be two bays with one bay window on each new property that extends from the ground floor to the basement level. There will be glass screening around the bay window to screen the drop to the basement level. The doorways have been given decorative features of keystones and rounded arched doorways to add architectural interest to these elevations. This is in keeping with the style and materials of other properties in the conservation area. The rear elevations are plainer with gabled dormers and casement style doors providing

access to the gardens. The side elevations have been carefully designed to avoid overlooking into neighbouring properties.

- 4.5 The new site will undergo landscaping. It is proposed to place low boundary walls to the front of the site. There will be an area of parking to the front of the properties to avoid on street parking. This will be hidden from the street view by careful planting that will enhance the semi-rural character of the development and preserve the front boundaries. Locating the parking off the road will help to keep the street vista free of congestion.

Assessment

- 4.6 The current bungalow is incongruous compared with the other buildings in the conservation area, both in terms of scale and architectural language. The new building will use traditional materials and architectural detailing to provide four new buildings that will reflect and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. The landscaping of the plot will ensure that the semi-rural character of the area is preserved.
- 4.7 The use of materials and the symmetrical treatment relates more sympathetically to the context of the conservation area and in this respect it is regarded as an improvement, as is the referencing of the vernacular stylistic elements. When judged against the existing building, the height, style and materials of the development would help the development to better integrate with and relate to its context.
- 4.8 The design of the new building with its traditional materials and detailing would help to restore architectural quality and unity within the conservation area.
- 4.9 The change to views within the conservation area will be minimal. The new development is a storey taller than the present building on the site so in immediate views the development will be more visible, but on the other hand the carefully designed buildings will offer a positive enhancement to these views by removing the unattractive wooden fence currently screening the site and replacing it with planting that enhances the green character of the area. The traditional materials and architectural styling will complement views within the conservation area, especially along Ham Street. Longer views from Richmond Hill will not be impacted by the change in views. The rural nature of the area will not be altered

by a building of two storeys that fits in with the surrounding buildings in height, bulk and style. The density of the development is also more compatible with the more historic buildings in the area.

- 4.10 There will be no change in the views from Ham House Avenues.
- 4.11 There will be a slight change in views from outside of the conservation area looking in from Back Lane. In these views the new buildings will be visible above the rear boundary wall. At present the current building at 59 Ham Street can just be seen, in the new proposals the second storey and roof of the property would be visible. Whilst there would be a slight change in views into the conservation area these would only be appreciable from the end of Lovell Road cul-de-sac. The slight change to one view will not harm the character or appearance of the conservation area, but instead contribute in a positive way as more compatible with the character of the area than the existing building.
- 4.12 The architectural interest of the area will be increased and enhanced by the creation of a more interesting and coherent street scene that better fits the character and appearance of its surroundings than the existing building. The new buildings would provide an enhancement to the conservation area. The traditional materials and the stylistic influence from the other terraced buildings within the immediate vicinity of the street will complement the architectural interest of the area and will replace a neutral building with a positive enhancement.
- 4.13 There will be no material change to the historical interest of Ham House Conservation Area. The additional built form will not impact historical associations but will add another layer to the development which characterises the sub-area of Ham Street.
- 4.14 There is the potential for the archaeological interest of the conservation area to be impacted by the proposed development. This is covered in the Desk Based Assessment accompanying this application.
- 4.15 There will be no harm to any artistic characteristics of the conservation area.
- 4.16 There will be no impact on the architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest of 40-46 Ham Street. These buildings will still be understood as late 19th

century buildings that portray the development of Ham overtime. The new buildings will not harm the significance of these non-designated heritage assets.

- 4.17 There will be no impact on the architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest of 1-6 Tollemache Almshouses. These buildings will still be understood as former Almshouses and their significance will not be harmed by the redevelopment of the site across the road.

Summary of impacts

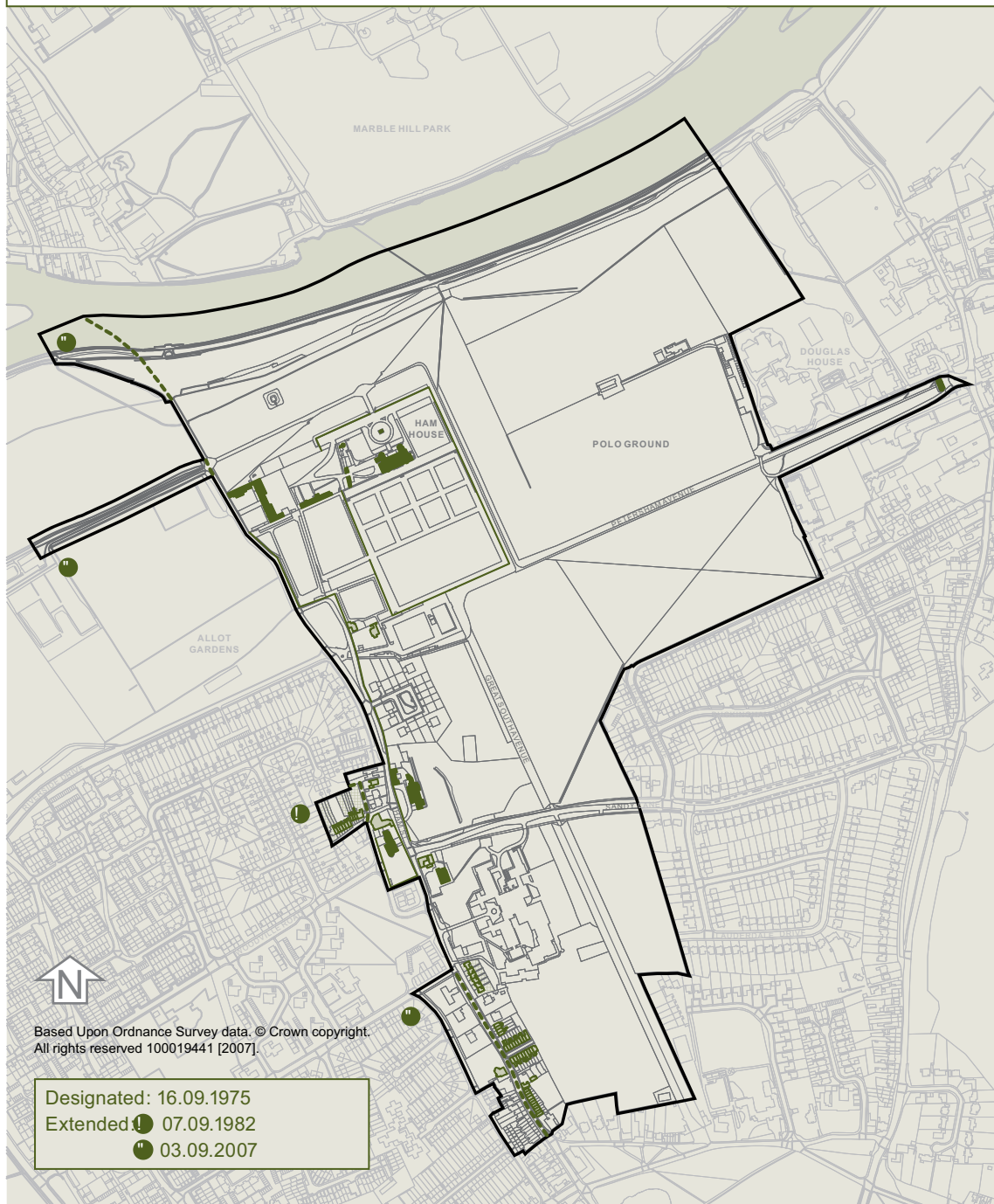
- 4.18 The proposed development will create four houses that better relate to their context and the other buildings in the area. By increasing the number of units on the site it will produce a greater consistency in scale and definition, and a more attractive building that is better suited to its context within the Ham House Conservation Area.
- 4.19 The heritage balance is not negative, or neutral, but positively in favour of the redevelopment of the site. This positive enhancement should be placed into the planning balance as a factor in favour of the grant of permission.
- 4.20 Paragraphs 133 and 134 of the NPPF are therefore not engaged, and there is no overall harm in heritage terms. This represents an enhancement, for the purposes of 72(1) of the Act.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 59 Ham Street is of no architectural or historic interest. The current building at best has a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposed development will provide four new houses of two storeys that reflect the styles, materials and vernacular of the area, and will compliment the character and appearance of Ham House Conservation Area.
- 5.2 The current proposals have been carefully designed referencing the context of the area and respond to the Conservation Area Appraisal which identifies the need for the retention/ opportunity for enhancement of the conservation area through the reinstatement of architectural quality and unity.
- 5.3 There will be no impact on the significance of any non-designated heritage assets as identified in this report. Their significance and interest will not be harmed by the proposed development at 59 Ham Street.
- 5.4 There will be an enhancement for the purposes of section 72(1) of the Act. Paragraphs 132 to 134 of the NPPF are not engaged. The enhancements that will be brought about by the development should be placed in the overall planning balance as a public benefit within the meaning of the NPPF.
- 5.5 In accordance with the Core Strategy and Development Management Plan Policies CP7 (B), DM HD 1 and DM HD 3 the redevelopment of the site has been carefully designed in relation to the other buildings within the conservation area to ensure it is of a similar scale, form and layout and that the building materials match those within the local vicinity.
- 5.6 For these reasons it is respectfully submitted that application be granted permission on heritage grounds.

APPENDIX 1: Site location maps

Ham House Conservation Area no.23



KEY

- Conservation Area boundary
- Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Listed Building
- New Article 4(2) Direction

Appendix 1.1: Ham House Conservation Area courtesy of LBRUT website

APPENDIX 2: Photographs November 2015



Appendix 2.1: Application site with building to be demolished



Appendix 2.2: Application site



Appendix 2.3: View from application site south along Ham Street



Appendix 2.4: Algeron Tollemache Almshouses (BTM)



Appendix 2.5: Buildings in Ham House Conservation Area



Appendix 2.6: Buildings in Ham House Conservation Area



Appendix 2.7: View from street of Stokes House (BTM)



Appendix 2.8: Buildings in Ham House Conservation Area



Appendix 2.8: View from Lovell Road to the rear of the application site