

MADDOX PLANNING

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22/03/2023

18A Caversham Road, London NW5 2DU (Appeal Ref. APP/X5210/W/22/3312142) **Final Comments**

Dear Vicky,

Thank you for forwarding the Council's Statement of Case and the third-party representation. Accordingly, please find below our final comments. We haven't sought to address each and every point raised by the Council and the third party, as the majority are already addressed in the Appellant's Statement of Case.

Response to the Council's Statement of Case

In paragraph 1 of the Council's comments on the grounds of appeal, the Council allege that they never received any emails requesting an update on the pre-application advice request (ref. 2021/3753/PRE). As set out in Paragraph 1.7 of the Appellant's Statement of Case, the Appellant's architect attempted to contact the local authority but no response was received. Regardless, the onus should not be on the Applicant to chase the Council in order for them to issue pre-application advice in a timely manner or to find out why there is a significant delay. If the authority offers this service and charges a fee, it should provide some level of customer service.

In paragraph 2 of the Council's comments on the grounds of appeal, the Council claim that because other properties on this side of the street do not have rear extensions and because the properties which do are half-width (except for 6A which has a two-storey half-width extension), that the proposed extension would cause harm to the host property and this group of the buildings. In paragraph 3, the Council go on to state that although the proposed extension would only be visible from private views, *"the proposed extension is considered to disrupt the consistency of the rear elevations of the terrace and would have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, wider terrace and surrounding conservation area."*

As set out in the Appellant's Statement of Case, whilst the rear of the buildings along the terrace is relatively undeveloped, they are secondary, less sensitive elevations which can accommodate some change, unlike the principal front elevations. The Council agree that the proposed extension would only be visible in private views within the Conservation Area and have no objection to the proposed depth and height of the extension. It is

therefore the width of the proposed extension which is considered by the Council to be inappropriate. As set out in Paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 of the Appellant's Statement of Case, the proposed single-storey extension cannot reasonably be described as unsympathetic or dominant in relation to the four-storey host building, where a large usable area of garden is also retained. The extension can only be seen in private views, and these would also be limited due to the nature of the extension being single storey in height, in turn limiting the impact of the proposed extension on the wider group and surrounding Conservation Area.

In paragraph 4 of the Council's comments on the grounds of appeal, they refer to the CAS and state that rear extensions *"can alter the balance and harmony of a property or a group of properties by insensitive scale, design or inappropriate materials"*. Because of this, the Council consider a half-width (or slightly greater) extension to be more appropriate.

However, the CAS further elaborates that the suitability of a rear extension will be based on its general effect on neighbouring properties and the Conservation Area. Paragraph BE21 of the CAS states that the acceptability of larger extensions depends on the particular site and circumstances. The plot at 18 Caversham Road is large and comfortably fits the proposed extension without it impacting any neighbouring properties or the wider Conservation Area. The single-storey extension does not compete with the host property meaning its scale, design and form remain intact. legible and coherent with the group of buildings it forms part of.

In paragraph 5 of the Council's comments on the grounds of appeal, it refers to the extension at no. 21 Caversham Road. The Council state that a *"rear extension just a little over than half the width of the rear elevation would be more appropriate and in keeping with the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding conservation area."* We fail to see why a single-storey half-width/ three-quarter-width is more in keeping with the host property. If anything, it's more incongruous with the upper floors of the building. If the extension was two or more storeys, then we could understand the Council's concern and need for the width to be reduced, but we see no benefit to the host building or the Conservation Area in reducing the width of the proposed single-storey extension. The current proposal is clearly subservient in scale and respects the appearance of the appeal property.

The Council also allege that the extension granted at no.70 Caversham Road is a different context to the proposed extension at no. 18 Caversham Road due to the different architectural composition and detailing of the two 'terraces', where it is argued that there is a clear consistency and coherent appearance along 2-26 Caversham Road and not at 52-72 Caversham Road.

Both groups (2-40 Caversham Road and 52-90 Caversham Road) are identified within the CAS as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the importance of both sets of terraces to the heritage asset is identified as being the wide tree-lined street with glimpsed views through to the rear gardens. The impact of the proposed development at each property upon the wider Conservation Area is therefore assessed against the same heritage principles. The images of the rear elevations of no.18 and no.70 Caversham Road provided on page 6 of the Council's Statement of Case also highlight the similarity between no. 70 and no.18 Caversham Road in terms of their identity within a pair of mirrored properties, which then sits within the wider group. Both are also groups which are not characterised by full-width extensions and allowing a full-width extension at no.70 but not at no.18 highlights inconsistency in the Council's decision-making.

Third-party representation

The allegation of harm to the living standards of other residents in the building by reason of environmental welfare is wholly inaccurate. The extension is proposed to be built on existing hardstanding and the extension includes a green roof, meaning the amount of greenery on site is increasing. It's also important to note that the other residents in the building don't have access to the rear garden. The third-party commentator also claims that the extension will "destruce (assumed meant to say 'destruct') the integrity of heritage building sites...". This is a bold statement without any reason given to support it. The reason why we think the development causes no harm to the Conservation Area is set out in the Appellants Statement of Case.

Conclusion

This letter, alongside the Appellant's Statement of Case, demonstrates that the proposed extension is sympathetic to the host property and the Conservation Area. There is no harm as a result of the development.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AF', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

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