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Dear Toni-Ann,

Re: Flat 3, 23 Oppidans Road, London, NW3 3AG

Thank you for submitting the above pre-planning application enquiry on 10/11/2023 for erection of hip to gable roof extension with brick side wall extension (retaining the fascia panels to the existing side elevation roofline), rear roof dormer with dark slate hung tiles and white framed windows and 2 x new Velux windows to the front elevation (replacing a single velux window).

The required fee of £498.70 was received on 14/11/2023.

Site constraints

- Locally listed building
- Slope stability
- Article 4 – Basements

Relevant policies and guidance

[National Planning Policy Framework 2023](#)

[The London Plan 2021](#)

[Camden Local Plan 2017](#)

D1 Design
D2 Heritage

[Camden's Local List](#)

Camden Planning Guidance

Home Improvements (2021)

Site description

The application site forms part of a group of late 19th century Italianate villas style buildings along the southern side of Oppidans Road (18-41) that are identified on Camden Council's Local List of heritage assets (Ref. 647). The group of four semi-detached properties and central terrace are constructed out of yellow stock brick with raised upper ground floors. The subject villa pair has prominent chimney stacks, and an intact hipped roof form with one small rooflight to each of the three elevations.

The Local list description for the site is as follows:

Later 19th century group of Italianate semi detached houses and terraces with recesses between pairs to give the impression of semi detached houses with raised ground floors and overhanging eaves set behind front gardens. On the south side of the road only; a complementary group opposite was later demolished for the residential blocks that stand there today. High degree of consistency creates an impressive townscape.

Relevant Planning History

N/A

Proposal

The proposed works consist of the construction of a roof extension to enlarge the attic level accommodation from 1 x bedroom to 2 x bedroom self-contained unit. The flank wall of the property would be built up to create a gable end with two new windows and the existing hipped roof form extended across to create a full width gable. The existing northern chimney would be extended. The rear roof slope would have a dormer with hung slate tiles, and 2 x new rooflights are also proposed to the front elevation.

Assessment

The planning considerations material to the determination of this application are as follows:

- Heritage and design
- Amenity

Heritage and design

The Council's design policies are aimed at achieving the highest standard of design in all developments. The following considerations contained within Policy D1 are relevant to the application: development should respect local context and character; comprise details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character; and respond to natural features. Policy D2 'Heritage' states that in order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will not permit development within conservation area that fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of that conservation area.

The subject property is part of a uniform pair and the associated Local Listing is noted for its architectural and townscape significance, where intact roofscapes contribute as a key architectural feature to the Italianate villa typology. The proposed replacement of the original hipped roof form with a fully extended gable and associated flat side elevation extension is a substantial alteration to the form of No. 23's roof. This change would harm the uniformity of the semi-detached pair and also with dwellings along the rest of the Oppidans road which all present with intact hipped roof forms to the street.

CPG Home Improvements (2021) states that roof alterations are likely to be acceptable where there are a variety of additions or alterations to roofs which create an established pattern and where further development of a similar form would not cause additional harm. It is considered that given the intact roof form of this specific pair of villas, and the consistency in the front elevational hipped roof forms presenting without alteration at this eastern end of Oppidans Road, the proposed substantial alteration of the roof form would not follow an established pattern of development and would pose additional harm. Further, the alteration would involve the rebuilding of the chimney stack – altering the proportion and compromising this feature.

It is acknowledged that there have been alterations to the roofscapes, however in the immediate context at the east end of Oppidans Road, these are largely confined to the rear leaving the front form intact. The proposed scale of this proposed alteration would cumulatively contribute to eroding the architectural and townscape character and significance of the Locally Listed buildings.

Context and precedents:

The submitted planning statement has highlighted precedents along Oppidans Road to justify the works. None of these precedents are considered relevant for the following reasons:

- Nos. 24, 29 each have original gabled ends and are part of a section of terrace (not semi-detached pair). They are of a different architectural typology where this feature is original.
- At the western end of the Oppidans Road there is a group of three semi-detached pairs of villas which all originally had hipped roofs like the subject building. Four have now had rooftop extension/additions which are considered to be of poor quality and do little to enhance the subject buildings.

- The roof extension to No. 30 was approved in 1984 (8400597) and has a built-up gable behind the chimney stack. The roof extension with extended gable and dormer at No. 32 was approved in 2011 (2011/1353/P) and is paired with No. 33 that had an initial roof extension application refused in 1968 (5748) that was then amended and approved in 1969 (6288). A key justification for the approval of the extension at No.32 was that one already existed on its paired half, and that “the proposal would unite the profile of the pair by restoring symmetry to the building.” At No. 34 the extension was approved in 1975 (CTP/H9/18/7/19801) and projects above the original ridge height of the dwelling.
- These four roof extensions now serve as examples of the harm this style of roof alteration poses and cannot not therefore be used as a reason or sympathetic precedent to justify these works. Further, the additions all occurred prior to current policies and legislation or to the buildings being Locally Listed in 2015, when their surviving architectural and townscape significance recognised as worthy of being preserved under stricter guidelines and planning policy.

Alternatives:

The proposed substantial change to the roof form would not be supportable from a built heritage perspective. However, given the surrounding context of altered rear elevations, if the scheme at No. 23 was rationalised to only include a single rear dormer, with there also being potential scope for slight enlargements to the rooflights (specified as flush conservation style lights) as well – these may be considered an acceptable alternative.

Amenity

The proposal does not introduce any amenity concerns for occupiers of adjacent buildings.

Notwithstanding the comments made above regarding the design and form of the roof extension, the proposed loft floor plan is considered to provide an acceptable level of internal amenity for a two bedroom unit. However, if the proposal is redesigned to only include a dormer, then the extended floor area could unlikely accommodate a two bedroom unit. It is likely that a dormer would only achieve a larger one bedroom unit.

Overall, amenity effects associated with the proposed works are considered acceptable.

Conclusion

When considered cumulatively, the proposed roof addition would pose less than substantial harm to the architectural character and form of the semi-detached villa pair, and the townscape setting and collective group value of the wider Locally Listed buildings on Oppidans Road. The proposal is therefore contrary to Camden Local Plan policies (D1 and D2), Camden Design Guide guidance and the NPPF (Section 16).

Should a planning application be received for these works, they would not be supported from a heritage perspective, and planning permission would likely be refused. However, subject to amendment of the harmful elements and provision of further detail, there is scope for some smaller scale roof level alterations, which may provide for improvements to the existing one bedroom flat.

Any project arising will be assessed according to policies D1 and D2 of Camden's Local Plan of 2017, and section 16 of the NPPF 2023. This, among other things, requires Camden to take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets; and to weigh harm caused to such assets by development against public benefits accruing therefrom, including securing the asset's optimum viable use.

The proposed works are considered acceptable in terms of amenity effects.

This document represents an initial informal officer view of your proposals based on the information available to us at this stage and would not be binding upon the Council, nor prejudice any future planning application decisions made by the Council.

If you have any queries about the above letter or the attached document please do not hesitate to contact Brendan Versluys on **020 7974 3202**.

Thank you for using Camden's pre-application advice service.

Yours sincerely,

Brendan Versluys

**Senior Planning Officer
Planning Solutions Team**