

15 Montpelier Grove (Kentish Town Conservation Area) Planning Comments

Negative effects on community - due to:

- We are a quite community with many families and vulnerable residents. We are worried that this project will transform our lives into a construction site again as complete works were completed on the same property 2 years ago.
- Disturbance / Nuisance:
 - For some of our children, this means more than half their early childhood was spent around a construction site with very high noise levels.
- Shading / loss of daylight:
 - We believe the extension violates the 45-degree line rule and that the windows providing natural light to our kitchen and habitable rooms will be rendered useless.
 - In addition, the height of planned separation walls is 1 foot short of doubling current original walls up to 2.75m of doubling the height of the current wall.
 - Finally, we have residents in 16 Montpelier Grove who suffer from long term conditions (e.g. claustrophobia) and we believe that approving such plans for 15 Montpelier will create a tunnel environment for residents where access to sunlight has already been consistently and substantially reduced (by other council approved rear garden extensions over the last couple of years).
- Overlooking & loss of privacy:
 - During works: we will live in a complete lack of privacy for our families with tens of construction works constantly overlooking into our kitchens, rooms and living spaces.
 - After the works: new extension design poses a great threat to our privacy given it overlooks our only living spaces and our children rooms.
- Incremental intensity of residential use

Issues with the Design proposed:

- Designs that are out of scale or "character": given we are within the Kentish Town conservation area, we expect the Council to preserve its character and monitor the execution of previous works before.
- The property was completely renovated two years ago and we are surprised the council did not check the compliance of such works with the local character.
- We want to point to the inappropriate use of material especially for side extension roofs: plastic (see picture below) as well as the loss of character on the front yard (modern paving, low quality bricks, unfinished works)
- We note from the Kentish Town Conservation Character Appraisal guidelines that "*Roof materials are typically slate and artificial slates should be avoided*" and "*Extensions to front or side roof slopes are likely to break the important, regular composition of the roof lines and so harm the appearance of the conservation area.*" We believe this has not been the case in the previous development and will be aggravated by the current proposal.
- The residential areas are homogeneous historically and by design. The poor replacement of original building details and loss of gardens is detrimental to the quality of the residential area. The repair and reinstatement of these elements would enhance the conservation area.
- We believe community involvement is very important in order to promote 'ownership' of the council's Character Appraisal and Management Strategy by both the local community and the Council in order to achieve incremental improvements.
- Risk of Over development: This is particularly relevant as we believe changes will be out of character in the area, especially for Montpelier Grove where all the buildings are considered by to have a positive effect on the Kentish Town Conservation Area.

Positive change?

There appears, as in many conservation areas, to be insufficient knowledge of the Conservation Area status amongst residents resulting in poor alterations and erosion of details. Examples of harsh cleaning, poor pointing to new building and re-pointing were also damaging to the buildings and the area. We believe that the Council should consider the architectural value added by recent new developments to the Kentish Town Conservation Area.

Kentish Town Conservation Area is characterised by residential properties set in large gardens with an abundance of trees, especially on Montpelier Grove. In recent years, conservation areas in Camden have seen a growth in new development and extensions to existing accommodation, together with a reduction in garden space and / or the destruction of trees. The hope the Council will resist this type of development where it is considered to harm the character and appearance of the conservation area.

When considering applications for building extensions within the Conservation Area, we believe the Council must put in place effective measures to be taken during demolition and construction works to ensure the stability of the building and neighbouring properties.

Residents of 14 and 16 Montpelier Grove