

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2024/3236/P	Christopher Langdon	06/09/2024 09:09:34	OBJ	<p><b>Summary:</b> As the neighbour whose garden and property are directly across the boundary wall from the proposed development, I am writing to object to the height (2.6m) and proximity to my boundary wall (50cm). The outbuilding and pergola would stretch 6m across my boundary wall. I am concerned that the size, proximity of the building and its height will affect our amenity as the proposal contravenes Camden Planning Guidance in several ways. The outbuilding is 40% larger than the current shed.</p> <p>I request that there should be a revised height and a revised distance from my boundary wall. I also request the Council sets conditions to reduce the overall impact on myself and our neighbours of the building and pergola, and that any tree pruning is supervised by the Tree Officer.</p> <p><b>Proximity to Boundary Wall:</b> I strongly object to the new building's proposed distance of 0.5m from our common boundary wall. The new structures would be approx. 3.0m away from the centre of my small garden terrace, which I and my family enjoy as our main seating area. It is a tranquil space, sheltered, and prevented from being overlooked by the two trees. The new building would be approx. 5m from the garden-facing window of my rear extension. The applicant's garden of 75BPG is 15 m long. So there is no need in space terms to jam the building and pergola so close to my much smaller garden.</p> <p>I therefore request the Council sets a condition that the new building is a minimum of 0.8m from the common boundary wall.</p> <p><b>Building Height:</b> I object to the new building - including the proposed green roof - exceeding 2.5m. The building should be the same height as the proposed pergola: 2.5m. The average height of the rear of existing shed (i.e facing my side,) is 2.4m to 2.5m. This is LOWER than the height of the proposed building (2.6m.)</p> <p>I request therefore that the Council does not permit a height of 2.6m as requested in the application. I request that the outbuilding and pergola should both be no more than 2.5m - including the substrate and drainage materials for the green roof.</p> <p>Permitted development gives a "maximum height of 2.5 metres in the case of a building, enclosure or container within two metres of a boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse." If 2.6m were to be approved, the building would be visible and loom above my garden trellis. This contravenes Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) 4.23 and 4.24.</p> <p>The plans (E2) appear to misstate the height of the existing shed (at 2.9m) by measuring only the apex of the shed's sloped roof in the furthest corner. Overall, the outbuilding and pergola are nearly two and a half times the size of the current shed (27.5 m<sup>2</sup> vs 11.48.m<sup>2</sup>.)</p> <p><b>Green roof:</b> While green roofs are a good idea in principle, in an inappropriate location they can also affect neighbours' amenity and privacy - unless clear conditions are set and adhered to. My concern as the closest neighbour is the impact of the roof height, intrusive maintenance, and a risk that the proposed roof might turn brown - if not well cared for: all of which would significantly affect my amenity.</p>

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A green roof expert advised me that the proposed location under a conifer (Leylandii) is not a good siting, as the Leylandii branches will take a significant proportion of rainfall that even drought-tolerant Sedum plants need to thrive. There will also be a lot of dropped leaves from the Leylandii and London Plane, as there are on the current shed. The illustrative photo on the plans is misleading as the green roof shown is in the open.

A well-cared for green roof requires watering in when it is establishing, and in drought conditions, and needs a lot of maintenance, especially leaf removal, given this proposed siting. This will require gardeners to go regularly on the roof; the suggestion in the cover letter of two visits a year is unrealistic - if a green roof is to do well in such an unfavourable location. I am therefore concerned that gardeners will overlook into my garden and impact my privacy. And there will be the loud and intrusive noise of leaf blowers.

While the cover letter refers only to “minor facilitation pruning” of the Leylandii, the arboricultural report acknowledges that a green roof in this location, “would only be feasible if both trees were cyclically pruned.”

I am concerned about the applicant saying during an on-site visit to my garden that she plans to cut back the Leylandii and the London Plane, in order to enable the sedum to grow, effectively prioritising the green roof over the two mature trees.

I request that the Council Tree Officer makes an onsite visit to ensure that the two trees are not cut excessively, and that a full tree protection plan - including the proposed pruning of the trees - is submitted for approval by the Tree Officer, so the tree surgeons' plans are limited to cyclical pruning.

I understand the Council has policies in place aimed at ensuring green roofs are successful and are biodiversity gains, and that the Council has the power to take measures if a green roof were to fail: I would ask the Council to state this policy and potential sanctions in their decision. Also, I ask the Planning Department to engage the Council's Building Regulations team regarding building and fire regulations for the green roof.

My amenity and quiet enjoyment:

Regarding the impact of the outbuilding and pergola on the amenity value of my garden, Camden Planning Guidelines 4.24 state new garden buildings should: “use materials which complement the host property and the overall character of the surrounding area...”

The cover letter specifically cites wooden cladding as one of the measures that “would help to preserve and enhance the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy D2 and the Belsize Conservation Area Statement.”

However, exterior cement fibre panels are proposed for the rear wall directly visible from my garden. The concrete panels can be seen on the website and Facebook pages of the contractors, Rooms Outdoor Contracts Ltd: they are inappropriate and out of keeping with the neighbourhood – per CPG 4.24.

The current shed at 75BPG, as well all the sheds and outbuildings at 42LR, 44LR and 77BPG, are made of wood. I therefore request that the Council requires that the cladding on the outbuilding's wall facing my garden (Elevation R,) be made of a suitable wood - just like the walls of the proposed building where it faces 75BPG.

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Noise:

I request that the Council mandates acoustic soundproofing, and sets conditions that overnight use can be no more than 28 nights per year, and that any subletting or use of the building as a short term let, or for any commercial purposes, would be a breach of the Approval (if given.)

Light pollution:

I specifically request that the Council requires the applicant to take appropriate measures such as warm LED lighting, opaque glass and curtains or blinds. I agree with CAAC's comments on light pollution.

Pergola:

I request that the Council requires that suitable climbing plants to be grown on it. It is a stark aluminium structure, 3m alongside the boundary wall. The fact that it is metal and supported on piles dug 0.5 m deep means it is not really a temporary structure.

Finally, I am somewhat concerned about Room Outdoors Contracts capacity to complete the plans as submitted, given it was recently created after its predecessor company was liquidated.  
(<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/notice/4472837>.) (Oct. 2023)

I request that the Council therefore carefully considers all the comments and objections and sets detailed conditions in the light of this.

I am submitting photographs to support visually my comments.

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