



The Heath & Hampstead Society

The Society examines all Planning Applications and Notices of Intent for tree work relating to Hampstead and Hampstead Heath Fringes, and assesses them for their impact on the Conservation Areas, the local environment and building stability.

To London Borough of Camden, Planning Team

Planning Ref: 2023/4898/P
Address: 2 and a half, Rudall Crescent London NW3 1RS
Case Officer: Kristina Smith
Date: 12th July 2024

We have noticed an additional point concerning flooding of the site.

The existing and proposed elevations show the level of the hardstanding by the existing extension that forms the 2-storey building is being raised in order to prevent a step up across the entrance door to the ground floor level. This will have the effect of allowing any flood water in this very low-lying part of the garden to enter the house. Presumably the architects of the existing building lowered the level of the hardstanding in order to prevent this.

Three quarter of the upper garden, currently under grass though mossy and with other signs of dampness, is being removed to a significant depth to lower it to that of the lower hardstanding, seven steps down. This large amount of soil will now no longer absorb any rainfall which will now either fall directly or run off into this lower area. While providing drainage would stop the need to paddle in and out of the house as we presume currently occurs after storms, raising this lower level somewhat will significantly increase the risk of water being directed into the house unless there is a steeper slope away from the house and regular maintenance of the drains with leaf clearance throughout the autumn and winter.

If the owner is sufficiently disabled to require a carer and to avoid a step-up into the house, negotiating such a slope might not be sufficiently easy. With climate change the water running into this area and the risk of it passing into the house at times is only going to increase.

All in all, the permanent changes to this property with its several problems for the current owner now and in the future in an attempt to make it more disabled-friendly, plus the damage to the Conservation Area and neighbours' enjoyment of their gardens, with additional run-off sent to the sewer system above a Camden Flood Zone, are not really supportable.

This residence would not seem to be appropriate for much longer, and we would suggest is not very amenable to adaptation for a disabled person who already requires a number of handrails to assist access. At a later stage, more temporary measures such as a through-ceiling lift to the first floor with an external wheelchair lift from the upper to lower garden if needed would be more acceptable, though it might be better to begin again with a more suitable and more easily adaptable property.

Objections from neighbours have been put forwards regarding shade from the proposed extension and its original screening hedge. Removing the hedge and installing a green roof is not a Biodiversity Net Gain or mitigation for the flood risk harm done to the South End Flood Zone. The roof will now require considerably thicker and stronger joists to take additional weight, further increasing shade to neighbouring gardens.

Dr Vicki Harding Society Tree Officer, Planning Sub-Committee