Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee

38 Murray Mews
London

Date: 2 November 2024

Planning application Reference: 2024/3805/P

Proposal: Erection of single storey rear extension with an enlarged terrace to the 1st floor. Conversion of garage through minor internal modifications and repairs to existing facade.

Summary: In terms of bulk, amenity, privacy and compatibility with building regulations this proposal fails to maintain or enhance the conservation area and should be rejected.

Comments:

1. The height and volume of the proposed development appear inappropriate in relation to neighbouring buildings.

    1.1. The infilling of the small terrace area aligns with the existing footprint and leaves no terrace or garden space at ground level.

    1.2. The height of the parapet is annotated as '450mm above FFL' - this would not comply with building regulations in respect of guarding which would need to be 1100mm. Additional railings (not shown, but noted as 'tbc by client') or a raised parapet would, therefore, become necessary. This needs to be shown on the planning drawings as it could greatly affect the bulk and massing.

2. By placing two rear windows on the boundary with 39 St Augustine's Road - albeit at high level and possibly obscured - the proposal raises issues of both amenity and privacy

    2.1. The amenity of the two bedrooms proposed at ground level are very poor, inadequate and represent a significant negative step compared to the existing.

    2.2. The windows appear inadequate for the rooms behind.

2.3. The two rear windows overlook the neighbour's rear garden at 39 St Augustine's Road and are inappropriate: they impact on their privacy.

2.4. In addition, the provision of a full width terrace at first floor level with inadequate guarding (not to mention no privacy screening) would offer views directly into the neighbour's rear garden. Whilst this appears to be possible from the current half-width terrace, the proposal would not improve this situation, but rather worsen it.

3. The levels of light and direct sun in the ground floor bedrooms will not be maintained, though the neighbour' s amenity in terms of light appears unaffected

4. The proposed change of use is inappropriate for the conservation area and for its position in particular

4.1. The description of the planning application is:

"Erection of single storey rear extension with an enlarged terrace to the 1st floor. Conversion of garage through minor internal modifications and repairs to existing facade."

This does not mention a key element of the proposal - the creation of a self-contained studio flat through the conversion of the garage which appears to be inappropriate for the small scale of the house as a whole.

4.2. In addition, the compromised nature of the two remaining bedrooms offers sub-standard accommodation levels with poor natural light and no outlook.

5. The proposal involves the loss of the integral garage though it is stated that this is not currently used due to its small size. If a resident's parking permit is already allocated to the unit, this presumably would remain the same. The creation of a self-contained studio flat should not come with the expectation to gain a further parking permit allowance.

6. The proposal fails to support the positive development of the Conservation Area: the provision of sub-standard accommodation is detrimental to the Conservation Area.

7. The proposed development also fails to provide an internal layout that offers spaces that are attractive, well-organised and well-lit

7.1. As described above, the resulting bedrooms would be poorly lit and with no outlook - bed 2 is shown as an internal room with no window.

7.2. Carving up the space to provide a self-contained studio flat in a very small property also appears inappropriate.

7.3. There does not appear to be any provision for refuse and recycling. Presumably this is currently provided within the integral garage which in the proposed plan would no longer be available for such use.

7.4. Currently, the two bedrooms at ground floor level both have large glazed sliding doors to a private patio, providing both light and ventilation. The proposal involves blocking these with the infill extension, and providing two high level slot windows - one to bed 1 and the other to the shared study area housed in the infill extension. Bedroom 2 will have no windows, natural light or ventilation.

7.5. The two slot windows are on the boundary of the site and therefore lead directly onto the neighbour' s rear garden. However, it is unlikely this would be permitted under building regulations due to an 'unprotected area' being on the boundary. At the very least, the slot windows would need to be sealed and have fire rated glazing. Were this to be required, however, the windows would not provide any natural ventilation to the rooms.

7.6. Finally, the lack of guarding on the proposed terrace would not pass building regulations and would undoubtedly result in a different construction.

8. This is an ill-considered proposal which fails to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area and should be robustly rejected.

[redacted]

Signed: **Date: 2 November 2024**
David Blagbrough
Chair
Camden Square CAAC