

Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee

17 York Way

Date: 16 November 2023

Planning application Reference: 2023/3891/P

Proposal: Renovation of the existing public house (sui generis) at ground floor and basement level and erection of an additional storey, an infill extension and a roof extension to provide seven self-contained flats (Class C3)

Summary: The CAAC objects to the proposal: it fails to maintain or enhance the conservation area. Any revised application would need to deal with the issue of overdevelopment and the treatment of a façade that is more sympathetic to neighbouring buildings and historical precedent

Comments:

1. There are concerns about the technical adequacy of the drawings.
 - 1.1. Whilst the supporting documentation is generally of a high standard, there are crucial omissions. One such is that of a section of the proposed development which in this case would be essential as two additional floors are being proposed.
 - 1.2. Dividing the existing second and third floors into three would be dependent on whether appropriate floor to ceiling heights can be achieved. The absence of a section drawing makes it impossible to determine whether this is feasible.
2. The massing of the proposed development is inappropriate.
 - 2.1. Whilst infilling the gap between 17 York Way and 164 Agar Grove would be a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, the addition of a roof top mansard extension would be out of proportion and harmful, especially in this exposed position at the edge of the Conservation Area
3. Although the three upper stories of the main building keep a certain hierarchy and relate reasonably well to neighbouring buildings, this is undermined by the overly high roof extension with unsympathetic dormer windows.
4. The proposal fails to support or enhance the existing rhythm of neighbouring buildings.

Secretary: [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee

- 4.1. The addition of a further bay on the north side of the building, at the chamfered corner between Agar Grove and York Way, makes the façade on this side unnecessarily cramped and unbalanced.
 - 4.2. The redesign of the ground floor façade is no improvement on that which currently exists as it retains and distorts a number of the existing elements without improving their proportions.
5. The choice and colour of materials generally supports historical precedent
 - 5.1. The use of a dark brown colour for the window surrounds and glazing bars is positive and more historically accurate than the predominant white that can be seen in the majority of buildings in the neighbourhood.
 - 5.2. However, the glass balustrade at roof level would be an alien element and at odds with the attempt of creating a façade that appears to be of the Victorian period. That is not to say that glass in itself would be rejected, but it would have to be in keeping with the architectural language of the proposal.
6. The style of the proposed development fails to enhance the Conservation Area
 - 6.1. Whereas the proposed façade, which is to be almost completely rebuilt, shows some attempt to reflect the style of the mid Victorian period, the execution of the detailing is too feeble to be convincing – e.g. the use of two over two sash windows with a central glazing bar, the random Corinthian capitals on the ground floor and the rather squeezed proportions of the entablatures above the windows.
 - 6.2. Inspiration for a historically more appropriate façade treatment could have been gathered by studying the former pub on the corner of Brewery Road and York Way, just diagonally opposite the application site.
7. As there is no section– neither of the building itself nor its context – it is difficult to judge the potential impact of the proposal on privacy
 - 7.1. There may be some overlooking issues from the proposed west-facing balconies on the upper levels over the rear gardens of nos. 160, 162 and 164 Agar Grove,
8. The daylight and sunlight report claims that all light levels will be within the planning targets.

Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee

9. Retention of the pub and converting the floors formerly used as hotel rooms into flats would be positive in principle, but adding a further two floors would be overdevelopment.
10. The internal layout of the flats seems to have been well thought through
 - 10.1. The floor plans of the proposed flats seem compliant with the current planning guidance and building regulations.
 - 10.2. It is positive that thought has been given to disabled access and the provision of dual aspect flats with relatively generous amenity spaces.
11. Despite the claims made in the Community Involvement Statement, the public consultation would seem to have been fairly limited. Anecdotally, a member of the CAAC executive and her household who live nearby have no recollection of this consultation and nor do her neighbours. Furthermore, a “worried neighbour” anonymously has leafleted our street about the proposal to raise awareness and it has never cropped up at meetings of the Camden Square Neighbourhood Association which covers much the same area as the CAAC.
12. Even though there are aspects of this application that are positive, overall it fails to maintain or enhance the conservation area: the addition of two whole floors will lead to over development and the treatment of the façade is unconvincing.
13. In its current form therefore this application should be rejected Should a revised version be submitted, a section of the building itself and its context will be crucial.



Signed:

David Blagbrough
Chair
Camden Square CAAC

Date:

Secretary:  