

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2024/5752/P	Finn Kay	05/03/2025 10:20:25	OBJ	Objection to proposed planning application number 2024/5752/P

No.20 Murray mews was designed and built by Richard Gibson Architect in the mid 1960's a couple of years prior to the design and build of No.22 by Tom Kay. Tom Kay requested copies of Richard Gibsons plans for No.20 at his design stage for No.22 to enable him to design a building to work in conjunction with No.20. The resultant effort produced a design that allowed the two buildings to feel like a cohesive and elegant double unit, creating a well proportioned and thought out amalgamation. Both architects were happy with the end result.

No.22 subsequently won several architectural awards and has been written about in many articles since with the design cohesion between the neighbouring property No.20 often being mentioned, it is heralded as an innovative and progressive architectural design of it's era.

Murray Mews is a unique time capsule of architecture from the mid to late 20th Century, many young architects bought plots on Murray mews during the 1960's and 1970's and built family homes for themselves or first time builds for private clients. As a result the mews has become known as a major representation of the modern architectural period of the mid to late 20th Century in London. Camden square and the surrounding areas are now a conservation area, Murray mews falls within these boundaries and the importance of the architecture of the mews is noted in the conservation area study. I feel the design relationship between No.22 and No.20 has contributed to Murray mews being a place of architectural interest and it seems wrong that this is now being overlooked by a proposed development of this scale.

No.22 was granted grade 2 listed building status in January 2013.

I quote aspects of Historic Englands list entry:

"No. 22 Murray Mews, built 1970-3 by the architect Tom Kay for himself and his family, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * Architectural quality: the materials are hard, but their effect is softened by the clever use of clerestorey lighting, the detailing is consistent, and the little structure works as an ensemble thought through from first principles; * Planning interest: an ingenious use of a tiny site constrained by planning requirements; the building combines spacious, partly top-lit family accommodation with the architect's office and a student flat set below.

No. 22 is partially supported on the house by Richard Gibson next door. Kay's design respects the very different building lines of his neighbours on either side, being on line with the pavement at ground-floor level and set back on the upper floor, thus acting as a point of mediation between the two."

The proposed alterations to the front of No.20 do not take the combined design of the two houses properly into consideration and will affect some of the visual aspect of No.22 particularly at the junction of the two properties at the first floor as just off the party wall line at this level No.20 is to be extended out in front of No.22, obscuring the view of the design features of No.22 and altering the feel of the two buildings working visually as one.

Aside from my above concerns with the visual aspect of the proposed design of No.20 in relation to No.22 the design will also affect our enjoyment in the use of our property in a number of ways to include:

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To the front of the property.

Overshadowing and obstruction of views from the front first floor terrace which makes use of the afternoon sun.

Overshadowing and reduction of sunlight entering our property at the first floor front windows.

Overshadowing of the first floor skylights on the terrace which provide clerestory lighting as a primary light source to the front of the property at the ground floor level.

Overlooking of our outside spaces from the proposed second story terrace of No.20 onto both the first floor and floor above terraces of our property thus reducing the potential of private use of our outside spaces.

To the rear of the property

Overshadowing and blocking of light entering the property through clerestory lighting at a high level to the rear of our property as the proposed rear 2nd story is higher than our gable end in front of our skylights in the rear roof which again are a primary light source for our living space upstairs.

The owner of the property was in discussion with us last year prior to the submitting of these designs, I raised our concerns for potential alterations to his property that may affect our property and he assured me that he would neither go forward at the front of the property on the first floor past the existing façade or go above the gable end to the rear side of our property. Unfortunately he has not considered either of these points now and it feels that he is pushing his plans to maximise his own space without any concern for how it affects the use of our building or the merit in how the two properties work together as one in their original design.

The proposed plans would turn a small two bedroom, one bathroom house with modest living areas into a large four bedroom, three bathroomed house with a full story of living space. On studying the plans, it is apparent that the extra internal space gained from the first floor extension depth to house an extra single bedroom could easily be achieved with a slight redesign to the interior layout and a little more extension to the rear of the property where it would not affect either of the neighbouring properties. It is also evident that the new bathroom and dressing room shown on the second story roof extension could be reduced slightly in depth with no detrimental affect to their use to avoid the need for this structure to protrude out beyond our gable end.

In summary I do not object in full to the idea of upgrading and extending No.20's internal space by adding a partial extra story or extending in part to the rear if it is thought out more, I do however object to any planned extension to the front of the property at the first floor level and in part to the rear at the second story as it feels that the current design does not consider the needs and concerns for the affect on the use and enjoyment of our properties internal and external spaces. And it ignores the architectural importance of the cohesive design relationship between No.22 and No.20. I feel that with some modest adjustments/modifications to the current design one could still achieve a decent increase in size and improve the potential use of No.20 without having a detrimental affect on the enjoyment of our property or on the effect of the combined design of the two buildings.

Tom Kay successfully opposed a similar proposed extension to No.20 some years ago on similar grounds to those listed here.