

Comments of the Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Forum

Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Forum objects to these proposals. Our reasons are upheld by the Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Plan, which is a statutory planning document of the London Borough of Camden. The Neighbourhood Plan states:

Para 1.3

Neighbourhood plans are mainly intended to be used making planning decisions. When a development or change is proposed in Dartmouth Park, Camden Council will have to refer to the Neighbourhood Plan and check whether proposals are in keeping with policies the community has developed.

Para 2.8

Key issues for the neighbourhood are:

- Preserving the sense of place, which involves protecting the green spaces and setting and the built heritage;
- Housing, and in particular the continuing and *increased availability of affordable housing*.

Para 3.2

We want to: *maintain and enhance the essential and unique character of the area*

Para 3.19

Policy DC1(c) Seeks to permit appropriate and useful development and change whilst avoiding the *intrusion of out-of-scale buildings into the street scene*.

Para 3.20

Policy DC2 (a) In the case of developments within the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area, ...ensuring that the development *preserves and enhances the character or appearance of the Conservation Area*

Para 3.26

Policy DC3 (a) achieving high quality design that respects the scale, mass, density and character of existing and surrounding buildings and preserves the open and green character of the area

(d) where multi-storey developments are permitted..., avoiding the *juxtaposition of buildings of significantly different scale and massing and incorporating a gradual transition from the scale of the surrounding built context where appropriate*

Para 4.11

H1 (a) There are a number of key threats to...a stable and inclusive community, which would weigh on the negative side in assessing any development. These include: *a trend to over-provision of high-end housing*, which would reduce the existing diversity and range of tenures...

In summary, therefore, the Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Forum states, in alignment with its approved policies:

- This proposal is harmful to its setting, because of its size and bulk. It is an *intrusion of an out-of-scale building into the street scene*.
- Its plan projects northwards considerably beyond the face of existing buildings which is deleterious to the amenity of its neighbours, particularly to its south and west.

- It breaks the existing swathe of back gardens which is an importantly biodiverse amenity.
- It is too high, particularly in relation to its two neighbours. Dartmouth Park Road building heights decrease towards the east, ending with First House. It fails to avoid *the juxtaposition of buildings of significantly different scale and massing* and does not incorporate *a gradual transition from the scale of the surrounding built context where appropriate*. It would be logical to have a height that was 'halfway' between the two neighbours.
- Its architecture is wholly discordant. Its styling and proportions appear to refer to neighbouring buildings and typology, but instead they undermine them. This site is not the continuation of a terrace. It is a stand-alone site, which might be able to accept an excellently designed one-off building.
- The proposal does nothing to *increase... the availability of affordable housing*, rather it continues *a trend to over-provision of high-end housing*.
- It does nothing to *preserve and enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area*.

We would also like to comment on the advice from the Camden Design Review Panel. Camden appears to have decided that this proposal was not important enough to merit the normal 5 member review panel, but instead opted for a chair plus one member panel, with no conservation officer present. In view of the number of pre-app comments (including our own) that the developer and Camden had already received about this proposal, we think this decision was ill-advised, considering the nature of the proposal and the context.