

Planning Department
Camden Council
Camden Town Hall Extension
Argyle Street
London
WC1H 8ND

17th November 2011

Dear Sir/Madam

**16A Lyndhurst Gardens
Planning & Conservation Area Applications**

On behalf of my client, Lyndhurst Gardens LLP, I have today submitted a planning and conservation area application via the planning portal. The application seeks permission to replace the existing single storey dwelling with a single storey dwelling including excavation at basement and sub basement levels.

The application comprises the following:

- Application Forms
- Certificates
- Existing & proposed Drawings – Vabel Limited
- Computer Generated Images – Vabel Limited
- Design & Access Statement – Vabel Limited & Weldon Walshe
- Lifetime Homes Assessment – Vabel Limited
- Construction Management Plan – Webb Architects Limited & TTP Consulting Limited
- Hydrology Report – SLR Consulting Limited
- Arboricultural Report – Tre Tec
- Structural Report – Michael Chester & Partners
- Geo-Technical Assessment - Geotechnical Consulting Group LLP
- Energy Assessment – Price & Myers
- Code for Sustainable Homes Pre-Assessment – Price & Myers
- Heritage Assessment – Weldon Walshe
- Network Rail Correspondence – appended to this cover letter

No planning application fee is required as this is a resubmission following the withdrawal of application number 2011/2456/P.

Background

In June 2011, an application was submitted by Webb Architects Limited on behalf of Lyndhurst Gardens LLP to replace the existing single storey dwelling with a two storey dwelling including basement and sub basement levels (reference 2011/2456/P). The application was supported by a Planning Statement prepared by Webb Architects which included:

- Structural Report – Michael Chester & Partners
- Hydrology Report - SLR Consulting Limited

- Arboricultural report – Tre Tec

The Planning Statement also included a planning policy analysis, brief energy details, a construction management plan and design details all of which were prepared by Webb Architects.

Following submission it was clear there were a number of important omissions from the application including a geo-technical report and heritage assessment.

Whilst the applicant undertook some public consultation prior to submission, a significant number of objections were made to the application by the local community. As such, the application was withdrawn in August 2011.

Planning Policy

In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for this area comprises the London Plan 2011 and Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies 2010. In addition, the Council adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance in April 2011 relating to, inter alia, basements and lightwells (CPG4). This document cross refers to Camden's Geological, Hydrogeological and hydrological Study – Guidance for Subterranean Development 2010. Whilst this document is not part of the Development Plan it provides technical guidance to assist the Council in ensuring developers meet the requirements of DP27.

The principle of redevelopment is acceptable as demonstrated in the Heritage Statement and Design and Access Statement.

With regard to basement development, a certain amount can of course be undertaken within permitted development rights, e.g. within the footprint of the dwelling as originally constructed. As the proposal goes beyond the footprint, the application will be determined against policy DP27 of the Development Policies and CPG4.

Policy DP27 contains a list of general criteria that basement applications will be assessed against. In this respect, the application has evolved taking this into account. Similarly, when assessed against CPG4 and the supporting technical guidance, it has been demonstrated that the proposal is acceptable.

First application Issues

The following is a summary of the main issues raised in relation to the first application and the applicant's response. These include detailed comments submitted by Landmark Trees (arboricultural assessment comments) and Stephen Stark (soil investigation and structural report comments) on behalf of 16 Lyndhurst Gardens, Barton Willmore on behalf of Marie Curie Cancer Care, Signet Planning on behalf of St Christopher's School and Belsize Residents Association:

1. Impact on trees. In light of previous comments and the new proposals, this matter has been revisited by Tre Tec in association with the Council's tree officer. With the adoption of a root protection zone for the Lime tree within the garden of number 18 Lyndhurst Gardens, the conclusion is that there will be no detrimental impact on the trees.
2. There is no basement impact assessment. This is incorrect; a detailed hydrology assessment based on Camden's 2011 Planning Guidance 4, Basements and Lightwells, was submitted.

This has been updated with, inter alia, additional borehole information. A detailed response to the points made by Michael Stark is also set out in the updated hydrology assessment. In addition, a detailed geo-technical assessment (ground movement) has now been prepared by Geotechnical Consulting.

3. Scale & massing excessive. There is no increase in the number of dwellings.

The scale of development has been reduced when compared to the first application as has the number of storeys above ground.

With regard to the footprint, the existing dwelling totals 167.3m². With permitted development this could increase to 250.8m². The proposed dwelling has a footprint of 207m² which represents a 17.5% decrease.

The existing dwelling has a garden area of 155m² although 91.7m² of this is paved. The proposed dwelling has a total garden area of 100.3m² although there are additional areas of planting on the north, east and southern boundaries, along with a secondary garden at ground to the north eastern corner of the site amounting to 35.9m². This gives a total proposed garden area of 136.2m². Whilst the overall proposed garden area is smaller than the existing garden area there are two important factors to consider. First, the amount of non paved area has significantly increased (from 63.3m² to 136.2m²). Not only is this more sustainable but it will also give a greater 'green' feel to the area. Secondly, there is a proposed green roof (167.3m²) which again is very sustainable and will also increase the 'green' feel to the area.

4. Design. As set out in the Design and Access Statement:

.....by virtue of the self effacing expression of the building's architecture it is subservient to the existing scene, singing a quiet descant to the Wagnerian quality of the late 19thC buildings. However within its private and semi-private spaces it is unashamedly contemporary.

The Heritage Statement sets out the justification for demolition of the existing dwelling and goes on to advise in relation to design that:

The prevailing architectural style of the conservation area is Queen Anne revival. To attempt a pastiche of this style would not catch the character of the conservation area for it is the patinated maturity of the late 19thC buildings that gives the area its character and historical context. A new building in that style, no matter how scrupulously and academically detailed, would be obtrusive by its newness.

The simple modern style of the building does not endeavour to match the architectural style of the existing buildings nor out-pomp them (Pevsner's phrase and very useful). Yet it is not self effacing, especially in the bold use of modern materials and simple geometry of the entrance to the house.

It is often acceptable for new buildings to contrast and counterpoint the historic environment rather than conform to it, providing they do not dominate the existing built scene. This new building is of high architectural quality, using appropriate materials and modern design solutions to provide an improved replacement of the

existing bungalow that remains a substantially hidden building, but which represents improvement and enhancement of the more private parts of the conservation area.

5. Impact on heritage assets/no PPS5 assessment. Unfortunately a detailed PPS5 assessment was not submitted with the first application. This has now been undertaken by Weldon Walshe who have concluded that:

The architect for this proposal could have concluded that the privacy of the site presented a tabula rasa to allow architectural expression without regard to the context of the conservation area. However the iteration of the design has been sensitive to the context whilst counterpointing the prevailing architectural style. Its design is particularly careful in the immediacy of its neighbouring buildings and does not merely sit quietly into the conservation area but enhances it.

6. Loss of privacy. The first floor has now been removed.
7. No Design & Access Statement. This is not correct although it is acknowledged that the Design and Access Statement submitted with the first application was insufficient.
8. Impact of Construction. This matter has been reviewed in the Construction Management Plan.

Changes made as a result of the above issues

As a result of the issues raised in relation to the first application and on-going discussions with officers, the following is a summary of the main changes that have been made and are reflected in this new application:

1. Removal of first floor and associated roof terrace. This was primarily in response to the objections raised by the School relating to overlooking, as well as claims by some of the neighbours that the bulk and mass were considered overdevelopment.
2. Reclaimed brick cladding. The natural stone cladding previously proposed has been replaced with traditional reclaimed red brick. This will reinforce the fact that the proposed single storey dwelling is subordinate to, and in keeping with, the period houses either side of it.
3. Green Roof. The new scheme incorporates a green roof with greater bio-diversity to the entire roof. This will visually maintain the line of the "garden band" that runs behind the original houses.
4. Reduction in building height. As mentioned in point 1 above, the first floor has been removed reducing the maximum building height by 3.4m. In addition, the proposed building sits 500mm lower than the single storey element of the previous scheme. This translates to a new building height of approximately 2.25 metres lower than the ridge height of the existing house. Three dimensional modelling of the site shows that the proposed building will be a significant improvement when viewed from all neighbouring properties. The lower height of the proposed building combined with its green roof and vernacular facing materials means that it blends in with its surroundings, continuing the green garden band of Lyndhurst Gardens.

5. Reduction of footprint and built space. The north east corner of the building is to be removed and replaced with a garden, significantly reducing the bulk, mass and footprint of the proposed building adjacent to the boundary with the School and number 18 Lyndhurst Gardens. The remainder of the east "wing" will be pulled away further from the boundary with the School by 2metres, and also from the boundary with number 16 Lyndhurst Gardens. Provision has been made for screening planting between the house and these boundary walls.
6. Reduction of footprint below ground level. To comply with the Root Protection Zone, the building footprint below ground level has also been reduced.

Pre-submission Consultation

Prior to submitting the first application in June 2011, the applicant met with a resident from 16 Lyndhurst Gardens who runs the management company which looks after 16 Lyndhurst Gardens on two occasions. On the 13th June, the applicant wrote to neighbours at 16 and 18 Lyndhurst Gardens, along with St. Christopher's School, offering the opportunity to meet and discuss the proposals. However, the invitation to meet was not taken up.

On the 6th October the applicant met the Bursar of St Christopher's School at the school. The new scheme was presented which included the removal of the first floor and revisions as listed above and in the Design and Access Statement. The applicant then presented the scheme to members of the School's Board of Governors on the 11th November 2011.

Following the withdrawal in June, the applicant has met officers on three separate occasions.

Conclusion

Whilst the first application was withdrawn earlier this year, this application has nevertheless benefitted from the public response in terms of addressing the issues previously raised. As a result of this, and indeed the additional supporting information prepared, we consider that this application represents a significant improvement.

I look forward to receiving confirmation that the applications have been validated. In the meantime, if you require any further information or clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Mark Pender
PAD Planning architecture design