

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	24/11/2009
			Consultation Expiry Date:	04/11/2009
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Jenny Fisher			1. 2009/3324/P 2. 2009/3325/C	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
48 Queen's Grove London NW8 6HH			Refer to decision letter	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
1. Erection of a three storey residential dwelling house with basement extended underneath rear garden and underground parking (following demolition of existing two storey residential dwelling house and coach house) (NB previous planning permission and conservation area consent granted for partial demolition and rebuild behind front facade of single family dwelling house (Class C3) 2007/6101/P and 2007/6104/C) 2. Demolition of existing single dwelling and coach house.				
Recommendation(s):		Refuse planning permission Refuse Conservation Area Consent		
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission Conservation Area Consent		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	05	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
			No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	<u>English Heritage</u> This application proposes the demolition of a two-storey 1930s Neo-Georgian villa of red brick construction, and erection of a replacement residential property of three storeys in height with a large basement area beneath. We note that in January 2008 a planning application (your reference 2008/6010/P) was approved by the London Borough of Camden for demolition and rebuild of the existing property, but with retention of façades to Queen's Grove and St John's Wood Park. The character and appearance of the Conservation area would have been materially unaffected by this proposal. The current application proposes complete demolition of the existing building, however. The existing neo-Georgian villa is identified in Camden BC's draft St John's Wood Conservation Area Appraisal as a building which continues positively to the character and appearance of the area. Paragraph 4.24 of PPG15 notes a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area, and states that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings. The applicant has not supplied sufficient justification for the proposed demolition of the existing building. Their analysis is based on a limited consideration of suggested aesthetic shortcomings to the existing building, and a contention that the proposed building will be of superior quality. English Heritage does not share these views. The existing building is identified as a positive contributor to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by virtue of its strong architectural presence, materials, and demonstration of a historic period of development. The applicants have not provided justification for the proposed demolition in line with paragraphs 3.15, 3.19 and 4.24 of PPG15. Whilst the merits of any proposed replacement building are a material consideration under PPG15 paragraph 3.19(iii), these merits cannot in themselves be given as the sole justification for demolition of an existing building identified as making a positive contribution to a Conservation Area. Notwithstanding this, we are unconvinced the design of the proposed replacement building is appropriate in this location. <u>City of Westminster</u> Does not wish to comment on the proposals					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	The site falls within the St. John's Wood Conservation Area there is no CAAC to consult.					

Site Description

This site occupies a prominent corner plot at the junction of Queens Grove and St. Johns Wood Park. The boundary between L.B.Camden and the City of Westminster runs along the centre of St. John's Wood Park and Queen's Grove.

The premises comprise a two storey single family dwelling with a rear extension and a two storey coach house accessed via St John's Wood Park. The coach house accommodates a double garage with residential use on the first floor.

The area is predominantly characterised by large detached houses and pairs of villas. The St John's Wood Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy identifies the existing building as a positive contributor.

The site is within the St. Wood Conservation Area and has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 4 (good). The character of the CA is strongly influenced by its initial development as a middle and upper middle class suburb from the late Georgian period up until about 1840.

Relevant History

April 2008 2007/6101/P Approved

Demolition and rebuild behind the principle facades of the single family dwelling house (Class C3) including excavation at basement level to provide additional accommodation, dormer windows to roof, erection of a single storey rear extension to connect to new coach house and alterations to side vehicular access.

41 Queen's Grove

Planning permission (reference 2006/3619/P) was granted on 08/12/2006, for the *Demolition behind retained front facade and the erection of a building comprising basement, ground, first and second floor level roof storey with integral double garage for use as a single family dwelling (Class C3), plus creation of raised patio at rear and alterations to fenestration of retained front facade*. An associated Conservation Area Consent (reference 2006/3620/C) was also granted on 08/12/2006.

41 Queen's Grove

Planning permission (reference 2007/3397/P) was granted on 22/11/2007, for *Erection of a building comprising basement, ground, first floor and roof storey for use as a single-family dwellinghouse (following the demolition of existing single dwellinghouse)*. The associated application for Conservation Area Consent (reference 2007/3398/C) for the *demolition of existing single-family dwellinghouse* was also granted on 22/11/2007.

42 Queen's Grove

Planning permission (reference PE9900345) was granted on 22/02/2000, for the *demolition of existing house and erection of a new detached dwelling*. The associated Conservation Area Consent was also granted on 22/02/2000. These works have been undertaken and completed.

Relevant policies

Replacement UDP Policies: SD6 (amenity), SD7 (noise pollution), SD8 (disturbance from plant), appendix 1 (noise standards), H1 (new housing), H7 (lifetime homes) B1 (general design principles), B7A (character and appearance of conservation areas), N5 (biodiversity), N8 (ancient woodlands and trees), T3 (pedestrians and cycling), T7 (off-street parking), T12 (works affecting highways)

Camden Planning Guidance: biodiversity, car-free, conservation area, construction and demolition, cycle, daylight, landscaping and trees, lifetime homes, overlooking, parking stress, res. develop. standards, waste

St. John's Wood C.A. Statement

Assessment

The recently approved scheme (2007/6101) was largely façade retention but also allowed for new dormers in the existing roof; approval was recommended following several months of negotiation. The resulting scheme was supported because it did not have a negative impact on the street scene or views of vegetation in neighbouring gardens along Queen's Grove, and it largely retained the scale, proportion and architectural characteristics of the main house (and coach house), thereby preserving the character and appearance of the street and of the CA. The application involved substantial demolition, therefore PPG15 tests had to be addressed, it was decided that they were adequately met. Elements of the building that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA (the front and side elevations, chimney stacks and roof form) would be retained. It was concluded that the scheme would have resulted in the redevelopment of the site in a manner that would have preserved the character and appearance of the property and the CA.

The Current Proposal:

- Total demolition of the existing dwelling house and its detached coach house.
- Replacement of the existing house with another single family detached dwelling house although overall to a much larger scale than the existing. It would occupy a slightly larger footprint, infilling the gap between the existing house and its coach house on the flank elevation. It would also be somewhat taller (by about 750 mm) than the existing building. The coach house would not be rebuilt.
- The construction of an underground car park to replace the double garage. Mechanical plant would be installed in a basement that would be excavated.
- Landscaping.

Consideration

Design

Although what is proposed appears to be a modest increase in size, the visual impact would be very different because the design and massing proposed present it as a significantly larger in volume. Although generous in size, the volume of the existing building is not fully appreciated as a consequence of its design. It comprises two storeys but the mass is reduced by the design of the pitched roof that is hidden in part behind a parapet. Features including prominent chimney stacks provide vertical interest and break up the overall volume.

The proposed structure would present a large square volume; three storeys high, with a flat roof which would serve to exacerbate its large scale and box-like mass. As such, although only a slight increase in height and footprint is proposed, a building that would visually dominate neighbouring properties would result. The design of the proposed replacement building is inconsistent with UDP policy B1 that requires amongst other matters, the height, scale, massing, proportions and bulk to respect the local area and adjoining buildings. In addition, the application is contrary to policy B7 that requires a building that would replace one to be demolished, to enhance the CA to "an appreciably greater extent than the existing building." The proposed development does not merit the demolition of an adequate building, which is visually pleasing, consistent in scale with the street and a positive contributor to the character and appearance of the CA.

Demolition

It is important to recognise the contribution that the existing building makes to the street scene and the St John's Wood East area. It typifies and illustrates the interwar period of architecture and the change in style in the area (from villas) and of building materials (from stucco to brick) but at the same time the footprint respects and follows the established plot size on Queen's Grove, and front building line (even with its later coach house and other later buildings on the flanking part of the site). It also allows for the retention of important long views of greenery in the rear gardens of Queen's Grove. PPG15 para. 4.27 notes a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area, and states that proposals to demolish such buildings should be assessed against the same broad criteria as proposals to demolish listed buildings.

As with PPG15, the CA Appraisal and Management Strategy states that the Council will normally

expect buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA to be retained.

In accordance with PPG15, applications for the demolition of a building that make a positive contribution to the CA must justify reasons for its loss under the three tests in paragraphs 3.16-3.19.

However, the required three tests in paragraphs 3.16-3.19 have not been addressed by the applicant. Rather the support document cites "that the positive contribution that this house makes to the CA [area] is a limited one and that a proposal that could make a better contribution could justify complete demolition of the building." It goes on to state..."that the lack of detail on the building makes less of a contribution than the stucco rendered villas and that the demolition can be justified by the replacement with a building that not only is sympathetic to the area in terms of volume and type but with its attention to detail can make an equal if not better contribution to the Conservation Area."

The insufficient analysis is based on a limited consideration of suggested aesthetic shortcomings to the existing building, and a contention that the proposed building will be of superior quality but these broad statements are not sufficient to warrant loss of the existing positive contributor. The support documents do not directly address the three PPG15 tests:

1. The condition of the building, cost of repair and maintenance. No information has been provided by the applicant but there is also no evidence to show to the contrary that the building is not in good condition. Therefore, this consideration is not a justification for demolition.
2. The efforts to retain and re-use the building. There is no information as part of this application to cite if this exercise has been undertaken.
3. The merits of the proposed building. This issue is discussed above; it is considered that the quality, scale or aesthetic of the new building would not be such an improvement of the current building to accept its demolition.

This application does not meet the three PPG15 tests and is inconsistent with B7 because it would involve the total demolition of the existing building that is a positive contributor to the CA, and replacement with a building that is larger in scale, bulk and footprint to the existing one. Its loss cannot be justified by a new building, the design of which would not relate to, improve, preserve or enhance the street scene or the character of the CA any more than the existing 1930's house.

Trees

The site is the subject of a Group TPO which runs along the boundary with St Johns Wood Park. Only the False Acacia (T6) remains from this TPO. Three Limes were allowed removal in 2004 (ref: 2004/0205/T) subject to replacement. These trees have yet to be replaced. There is scope within the current proposals to incorporate replacement tree planting on the front and side boundaries. This is indicated on the proposed site plan. In addition a Myrobalan Plum on the frontage with Queens Grove is the subject of a TPO. Both the False Acacia and Myrobalan Plum are shown as being retained. A tree protection plan has also been provided. This is considered satisfactory. The proposals involve the removal of four trees from the rear garden (T1 & T2: 2x Pears, T3: a Flowering Crab, T4: a Myrobalan Plum) and also a crab Apple at the front (T5). The principle of the removal of these trees was accepted with the previous approval for this site (Ref: 2007/6101/P).

Previous comments (2007/6101/P) state, following guidance on basement construction, that a margin of 2m should be retained to the rear boundary for replacement planting for trees removed in the rear garden. The Arboricultural report states that a soil depth of a min. of 750mm should be provided to enable for the planting of two semi mature trees along with associated landscaping at the tree. Section AA (Drwg No EPV206) shows a soil depth of 1m. This is considered acceptable in the context of the configuration of the garden in relation to adjacent buildings.

Transport

Off-street parking: The proposal includes the demolition of an existing coach house with a double garage and the construction of an underground car park in the place of this. The underground car park has only sufficient space for 2 car parking spaces on the vehicle lift itself; because there are no additional parking spaces in the underground car park other than these spaces on the lift. However

given that there is no increase in the number of spaces on-site compared to the existing situation with the coach house; this amount of car parking is acceptable despite exceeding the parking standards.

Cycle parking: The proposal is for 1 residential unit; therefore 1 cycle storage/parking space is required. The applicant has not specifically included provision on the plans for the required amount of cycle storage/parking in the proposed design; however there is sufficient space to store a bicycle in the proposed building that is convenient and easily accessible on the ground floor level. Therefore this requirement has been satisfied.

Construction Management Plan (CMP): The proposal involves the complete demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of a new dwelling house. The previous planning permission (2007/6101/P) did not include the requirement to provide a CMP. Although the scale of construction works for this proposal is greater than the previous proposal, the access arrangements are still the same as the previous proposal. Vehicles would still have the option of stopping on-site, and alternatively there is sufficient width for vehicles to stop on either St John's Park or Queen's Crescent. Further, the site is easily accessible from Finchley Road via Boundary Road, so the vehicle route is adequate. Therefore, a CMP is not needed for this development.

Highways Works Immediately Surrounding the Site: In order to tie the development into the surrounding urban environment, a financial contribution should be required to repave the footway adjacent to the site on both St John's Park and Queen's Grove and the vehicular crossover on St John's Wood Park. This work and any other work that needs to be undertaken within the highway reservation in a scheme that was in all other respects acceptable would be secured through a Section 106 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) Agreement with the Council. This s106 obligation would also require plans demonstrating interface levels between development thresholds and the Public Highway to be submitted to and approved by the Highway Authority prior to implementation. The Highway Authority reserves the right to construct the adjoining Public Highway (carriageway, footway and/or verge) to levels it considers appropriate

Standard of accommodation

The applicant has addressed the 16 Lifetime Homes criteria. Room sizes comply with residential standards and would receive adequate natural light and ventilation. There would be adequate storage for waste.

Amenity

No windows are proposed within the flank wall adjacent to 47 Queen's Grove. There would no adverse impact for adjoining occupiers by reason of loss of light or overlooking. The proposed drawings show a plant room at basement floor level, the applicants have submitted details of the proposed plant and a background noise levels. However they have not given specific details of how each piece of equipment would comply with the Council's noise standards. It is therefore recommended that an informative be added to the decision notice advising the applicants that in a scheme that was in all other respects acceptable the Council would expect full details of the location of each piece of plant and how it would comply with the Council's noise standards.

Sustainability

The applicant has declared that timber would be from sustainable sources would be encouraged. Had it been possible to recommend approval more details about sustainable measures that could be applied to the scheme would have been required.

Recommend refusal of planning permission and conservation area consent.

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