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Development Management (Camden Council)

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**FAO: Neil Collins**

Dear Mr Collins

**OLD CONDUIT HOUSE, 1 LYNDHURST TERRACE LONDON NW3**

**LPA Ref Nos: 2014/2529/P & 2014/2571/L**

**Erection of single storey garden unit with link corridor structure and interior alterations to listed building**

**objection to APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT**

I refer to these applications and strongly object to the proposals, the detailed material reasons for which I explain in this letter.

**Pre-Application Consultation**

I am unaware of any effort made by the applicant to engage with me, my neighbours or residents in the immediately surrounding area; a process specifically encouraged by the Government.

I can only assume that the applicants consciously ignored the community because they instinctively knew how the community would react and how poorly the proposals would be received.

Accordingly, there is no Statement of Community Involvement accompanying the application.

In my opinion, this reflects the applicant’s complete disregard for the community and the significant adverse impact of the proposals on those neighbouring the development particularly and the surrounding area generally.

Like the other objectors to this application, I object in principle to the development of the rear garden. The proposals are completely unacceptable to me as a matter of principle. If the applicants had had the courtesy to meet with me prior to the application’s submission, it would have saved wasting everyone’s time in deliberating over such an unacceptable development.

**Heritage & Design**

The Design & Access Statement accompanying the application states that the rear garden proposals reflect the features of the listed property, are not overpowering and are sustainable.

These are completely ludicrous assertions without any substance or justification.

In my opinion, the garden development proposals will cause significant damage to the setting of the host Grade II\* listed building and its fabric where the existing and proposed buildings are proposed to be joined.

Furthermore, the proposals are completely out of character with the surroundings and will cause demonstrable, significant harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

By this I am referring to siting, form and appearance in particular.

Whilst every application is rightly considered on its own merits, I am extremely concerned that if permitted, this alien addition to this historic townscape will irrevocably damage the visual tone of the area. This will in turn encourage others with the same disregard as the applicant for our precious heritage assets to promote incongruous schemes and use the current application if approved as a reflection of the area when plainly it is not and never should be.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of March 2012 sets out the requirements for good design to which the Government attaches great importance including that: “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people….” and that it should “….. respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials…”

The NPPF states that “In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.”

There is no Heritage Impact Assessment with the application, which I consider is further evidence that the proposals patently adversely impact on heritage assets and cannot be justified.

The Heritage Statement fails in all respects of what may reasonably and objectively be considered to be an impact assessment on the application property’s heritage assets.

A careful examination of the Council’s Fitzjohns/Netherhall Conservation Area Statement clearly reveals the fundamental shortcomings and unacceptability of the garden development proposals. The following quotations from the Statement clearly demonstrate the point:

1. Although not always visible from the street the rear gardens form large blocks of open land making a significant contribution to the character of the area.
2. Extensions and conservatories can alter the balance and harmony of a property or of a group of properties by insensitive scale, design or inappropriate materials. A number of additions have harmed the character of the area and further inappropriate erosion will be resisted. In an area with large plots with open green land there is also pressure for backland development which can reduce the quality of the visual as well as ecological environment.
3. Rear extensions will not be acceptable where they would spoil an uniform rear elevation of an unspoilt terrace or group of buildings.
4. Rear gardens contribute to the townscape of the Conservation Area and provide a significant amenity to residents and a habitat for wildlife. Development within gardens is likely to be unacceptable.

The NPPF sets out clear criterion for assessing and refusing applications impacting on heritage assets, including:

1. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.
2. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation.
3. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.
4. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent.

Turning to the interior proposals, these too will cause significant adverse effect on the character of this Grade II\* listed building. Firstly, by breaking up the plan form of the 1st floor “en-suite room” and on its character and fabric by removing a section of wall at the rear of the lower ground floor linking the dining and leisure areas.

For all the reasons stated, there are clear and compelling reasons for the Council refusing the application on heritage and design grounds.

**Trees**

By the applicant’s own admission, as acknowledged on the planning application form, “there are trees or hedges on your own property or on adjoining properties which are within falling distance of your proposed development.”

The Tree Report is of no substance in terms of addressing the materiality of this issue.

There is no Arboricultural Assessment accompanying this application to address the impact of the proposals on root structure and canopies and thereby integrity of mature tree specimens.

As such, I am extremely concerned that the proposed garden development will damage and ultimately may result in the loss of mature tree specimens which will impact on the verdant quality of the conservation area.

Trees are of course expressly protected in conservation areas and unless this matter is completely and satisfactorily addressed by the applicant, then this application should be refused.

**Conclusion**

I would reiterate that I object in principle to the proposed development.

For all the reasons I state in this letter, in my opinion the proposals are completely unacceptable and I would request that the Council refuses planning permission and listed building consent for these applications.

I would also request that you keep me informed as the application proceeds and how the Council intends to decide the application.

Yours sincerely

**Robert Newmark**