


APCAR SMITH PLANNING

Chartered Town Planning Consultants

Our Ref: CA/grc/2822
Your Ref: 2014/2822/P



O Nelson Esq.,
Planning Department
West Area Team
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall Extension, Argyle Street
London WC1H 8NJ

9 June 2014

Dear Mr Nelson

60 Fellows Road, London, NW3 3LJ
Proposed Extension at Second Floor Level with Balcony above


I act for the owner/occupiers of the garden flat at 60 Fellows Road – Mr and Mrs Ran. I have looked at the details of the two current planning applications, looked at this stretch of Fellows Road from the street and also from within their property and rear garden. I am setting out below representations objecting to the above mentioned application on the basis of its impact on the street scene and harm to the Conservation Area as well as in terms of its detrimental impact on my client's amenities (particularly in respect of loss of privacy and light). I am writing separately regarding the other application before you.

Unfortunately the submitted plans are inaccurate and I would respectfully suggest that prior to the application being determined you ask the Applicant's agent to submit revised plans that properly show the property. Of particular relevance in this respect is the fact that neither the ground floor plans or the side and rear elevations show a single storey side extension that is part of my clients kitchen. This kitchen extension has a glazed roof through which most of its light is received. Plate 1 shows the rear elevation of this kitchen extension; Plate 2 is taken from the single bedroom looking in to the lightwell between the kitchen extension and single storey extension above which it is intended to build and Plate 3 is taken from within the kitchen/dining area looking up through the glazed roof towards the existing side extension above which the additional floor and terrace are proposed to be sited.

Street Scene/Conservation Area Issues

As you will be aware the site falls within the Belsize Conservation Area. Thus the visual impact of the proposals, particularly in terms of how they affect the public realm/street scene, are of fundamental importance.

Cont'd/.....



I have looked carefully at this stretch of Fellows Road – In particular the group of properties from 50 to 56 Fellows Road within which the application premises lie. These are essentially semi-detached properties (apart from No.64 which is detached). Subsequent to their original construction the pairs of properties have tended to have been linked by single storey side extensions. Indeed this is the existing situation at the application premises where there is a single storey side extension adjoining a single storey side extension to No.58 (see Plate 4 attached). An existing two storey side extension is noted to No.52 Fellows Road (see Plate 5). This demonstrates the unacceptability of such additional extensions. That at No.52 is harmful to the street scene and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The only other two storey side extension is to No.64 Fellows Road (see Plate 6). However that property differs from the others in that it is detached and there is no adjoining extension to No.66. Furthermore as can be seen from the photograph and site inspection that two storey extension does not run to the side boundary.

Furthermore the detailed design of the extension, in particular the fenestration treatment, is out of keeping with the building and the street scene due to the absence of the brick window header, the window not being centrally positioned (as are the window and door below) and the window being substantially larger than the window below.

Although not referred to as part of the description of development the proposals also involve alterations to the roof of the porch and windows above to enable the roof of the porch to become a balcony. This will be harmful to the appearance of the building and the street scene. We note that the drawing refers to the balcony to match those at 68 and 70 Fellows Road. However they are not part of the same group of properties and do not indicate that such balconies are acceptable.

When considering the impact of a balcony or roof terrace on the street scene it should be remembered that it is not just the proposed railings that will be visible. It is common with balconies and roof terraces to put tables, chairs, parasols etc outside on the flat roofed areas behind the balustrading. Such “paraphernalia” will draw attention to the balcony and roof terrace making it even more harmful in the street scene.

The proposal is clearly contrary to various planning policies and guidance. In terms of the National Planning Policy Framework it is contrary to Para 60 which refers to it being proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. The proposed extension does not follow the distinctive features of the street scene of this area. It is also considered that the proposals fail to comply with Para 64 which says that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area. Indeed the proposals are considered to be harmful to the character of the area.

Para 131 of the NPPF is also of relevance, given the site's location within a Conservation Area. This refers to Local Authorities taking into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, when determining planning applications. Given the way in which the proposed extension will not be in keeping with the character of the area it will clearly not make a positive contribution.

As regards the Local Authority's Core Strategy I consider that the proposals fail to comply with Policy CS14 which requires the promotion of high quality places and conservation of the Borough's heritage. In particular the proposals fail to comply with Criterion (a) and (b) of the policy which require the highest standard of design that respects local context and character and either preservation or enhancement of the heritage asset.

Similarly the proposals fail to accord with relevant Development Policies – in particular Policies DP24 and DP25. The design is not of high quality as required by Policy DP24. It fails to respect the character, setting, context and form of neighbouring buildings (Criterion (a)); It also fails to respect the character and proportions of the existing building (Criterion (b)). In terms of Policy DP25, which relates to the conservation of the Borough's heritage, the proposals fail to take account of the Conservation Area Statement (as required by Criterion (a) and discussed below); also the proposals will not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area (as required by Criterion (b)).

The proposals also fail to comply with the relevant aspects of the Council's detailed guidance in respect of side extensions as contained within CPG1 "Design". Para 4.16 specifically requires side extensions to be no taller than the porch. The existing side extension is to the same height as the porch. The proposal is a full storey higher than this plus the balustrading on top of the roof so as to provide for the proposed roof terrace.

As can be seen from Plate 4 there is a view across the roof of the single storey extension to trees at the rear. This view would be lost by the proposals. As a result the development is also contrary to Para 4.17 of CPG1 which states that the infilling of gaps will not be acceptable where existing views or gaps are compromised.

The same paragraph also refers to infilling of gaps not being acceptable where architectural symmetry or integrity of a composition is impaired. By being situated adjacent to the existing side extension of No.58 Fellows Road and within a group of properties where there are primarily single storey infill extensions, the proposals will also harm the symmetry and integrity of the group of properties.

The Conservation Area Statement identifies the current issues that the Conservation Area faces with new development that involves an infilling of gaps within frontages being specifically referred to. The addition of roof terraces are also specifically

referred to with reference to inappropriate railings that are prominent in the street scene. Policy BE37 is of specific relevance. This states that side extensions would only be acceptable where they do not upset the character and relationship between properties, particularly where there are views through to rear mature gardens as is the case here. The policy states that the infilling of gaps will be resisted where an important gap is compromised or the symmetry of the composition of a building would be impaired. In this case the gap is important as the mature trees can be seen at the rear. Furthermore the symmetry with No.58 Fellows Road would also be impaired. However, and in any event, the policy states that where side extensions would be acceptable they should be single storey only. The proposal is clearly for a second storey plus the railings above to provide for the terrace.

Residential Amenities

From the proposed roof terrace there will be overlooking of my client's rear garden and also, at close proximity, clear views into my clients kitchen/dining area through its glazed roof. It is noted that the rear elevation of the proposed extension has no window and thus this issue is solely from the proposed roof terrace.

The extension would also reduce the light received in my clients kitchen/diner. The side extension is due south of their kitchen/diner and thus the additional development proposed will block both daylight and sunlight from the glazed roof. It will also result in a significant loss of light to my clients single bedroom which opens onto the lightwell – the only means of light to this room is through the double doors shown in Plate 2 where light is already restricted but would be made significantly worse by the proposal.

This impact on my clients privacy and light to their kitchen/diner (a habitable room) and a bedroom is contrary to Policy DP26 which states that the Council will protect quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting planning permission for development that does not cause harm to amenities. Privacy is referred to at Criterion (a); overshadowing at Criterion (b); and loss of sunlight and daylight at Criterion (c). It is clear from this policy that the proposals should be refused.

Conclusions

For the reasons stated above the proposed development is harmful to the appearance of the building and its contribution to the street scene. It also fails to either preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The second floor extension adds unacceptably to the bulk of the building and significantly reduces the important visual gap between No's 58 and 60. It also harms the symmetry with No. 58. This is compounded by the roof terrace above the proposed extension and the balcony above the existing porch.

The proposals are also harmful to residential amenities – in particular resulting in loss of privacy to our clients rear garden and kitchen/diner as well as loss of light to the kitchen/diner and a bedroom.

Cont'd/S.....60 Fellows Road

For these reasons it is hoped that planning permission will be refused under delegated powers. If, despite these issues and the fact that the proposals clearly fall to comply with many aspects of policy and supplementary guidance, Officers are considering recommending approval, we would ask that the application be reported to Committee so that Councillors can decide for themselves whether there are any circumstances that mean that their adopted policies and guidance should be ignored.

Yours sincerely



Carolyn Ancar

c.c. Mr and Mrs O Ran

PLATE 1



PLATE 2

