

Dear Charles,

I leave in Highgate and I am opposed to the scheme related to the Athlone House. The house is a treasure and it needs to be preserved.

Best wishes,
Luigi Ventimiglia

Charles Thuaire,
Case Officer,
Planning Services,
Camden Council,
Camden Town Hall,
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London
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By Email

8 January 2014

Dear Mr Thuaire,

Planning reference 2013/7242/P - Erection of 8 bedroom single dwelling house (Class C3) with basement car park, swimming pool and plant rooms, and associated landscaping, following the demolition of Athlone House.

SAVE Britain's Heritage writes to reiterate a strong objection to this application, which seeks permission to demolish Athlone House.

Athlone House is a significant Victorian country house in a prominent position overlooking the Highgate side of Hampstead Heath. It was built in 1870-2 for the industrialist Edward Brooke, to designs by architects Edward Salomons and J. P. Jones. It is a highly picturesque composition which is successfully accommodated into the surrounding natural landscape, through its use of materials, modulated elevations, and attractive fish-scale slate roof. The building served as a hospital between 1945 and 1999, before becoming surplus to requirements and passing into private hands.

It is located within the Highgate Conservation Area (Camden designation) and noted for being a 'positive contributor to the Conservation Area'. English Heritage declined to list Athlone House, largely due to alterations made during institutional use, but made their decision with 'a heavy heart'. Their current objection lodged against this planning application firmly supports the

consensus that Athlone House is a fine building worthy of retention, and that this application should be refused.

There are significant grounds to refuse this application.

SAVE agrees with the English Heritage assessment that this proposal will cause substantial harm to the designated Highgate Conservation Area, and paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) therefore applies:

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

The total loss of Athlone House, an undesignated heritage asset, and the substantial harm caused to the designated Highgate Conservation Area, is not outweighed by the benefits resulting from the proposed new private residence. The design is at odds with its surroundings as a result of its size, massing, and proposed materials, notably Bath Stone, and will detract from the public views from the Heath. The ostentatious design of the proposal fails where the design of Athlone House succeeds, in respecting and assimilating into its surroundings, whilst still being a handsome building in its own right.

The proposal further contravenes planning guidance relating to Metropolitan Open Land, which stipulates that the replacement of existing dwellings should not be materially larger. The proposed development is larger than Athlone House, both in massing when seen from key public views, and in terms of an increase in floorspace.

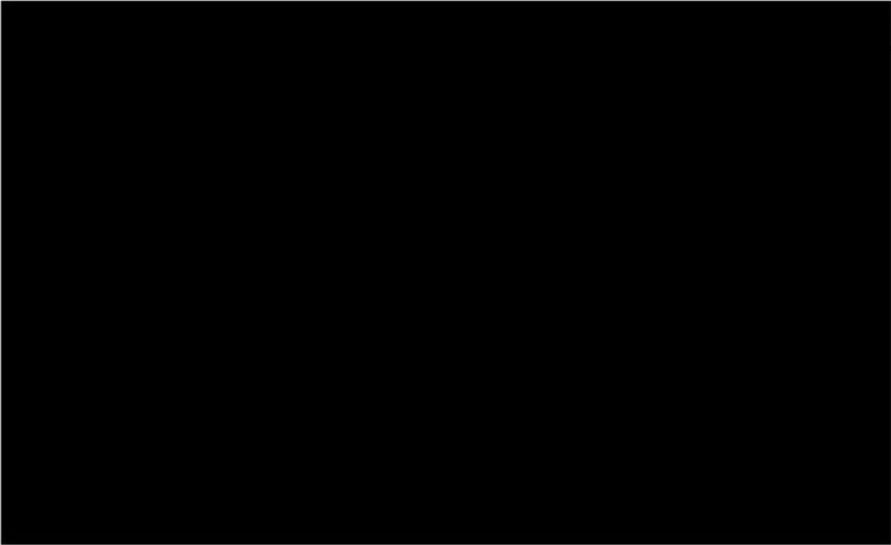
Furthermore, there is very significant local opposition to this application. The principles of planning as set out in the NPPF note that, 'planning should be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings'. The proposed demolition of Athlone House and its replacement with a larger property has been the cause of considerable local, and national, outrage for several years, and these views must be taken into account when deciding this application.

It is clear that because this application proposes the total demolition of Athlone House, causing significant harm to the Conservation Area, as well as the design of the proposed replacement and the level of public opposition, this application should be refused.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Fox
Caseworker



Dear Mr Thuaire,

With notes from a Town & Country Planning application, for replacement of Athlone House, Hampstead Heath, with another building, I write to add my objection to the many previously received. There is a TCPA conditional consent to a development in the grounds of this 19th century house, for repair and refurbishment of this house, sited as a landmark on Hampstead Heath. It is due to be put into effect.

An application has been made in this context, made in disregard to those conditions. So it is incumbent upon a planning authority to have both regard to prior undertakings and those of the Council as a whole, for all Green Flag areas and open spaces which it maintains.

A 19th century house in its landscape is a development of the 18th century landscape tradition, which has wide public interest and some disregard is implicated in this (repeated) application. A landmark due repair and refurbishment to meet a prior condition, is the basis of this and other objections.

Yours sincerely,

Colin D. Brooking
Bsc. Hons BA Hons Dip. Arch.

