



# The Heath & Hampstead Society

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The Society examines all Planning Applications relating to Hampstead, and assesses them for their impact on conservation and on the local environment.

## To London Borough of Camden, Development Control Team

Planning Ref: 2014/5100/P

Address: The Cottage, Mount Tyndal, Spaniards Rd NW3

Description: New house; demolition of existing house.

Case Officer: Rob Tulloch

Date 27 August 2014

We firstly make the point that the demolition of the existing house should be accompanied by a Conservation Area application. None has been made.

We take very strong exception to this proposal, on these grounds:

### 1. Size and siting of the new house.

It would appear from examination of the Site Designations map (March 2000) that this site is not within Metropolitan Open Land, notwithstanding that it adjoins Hampstead Heath (actually the Kenwood House area), is bordered on 2 sides by the Heath, and that other nearby sites of identical character are so designated. It is clearly an anomaly, perhaps a mapping error.

We look on the site as an integral part of the MOL, on the fringe of the Heath, not only because of its siting but also its conspicuous aspect, viewed from the Heath. The applicants, by illustrating the proposal as sunk inconspicuously in the trees, ask one to believe that it is effectively invisible—whether part of MOL or not. This is quite misleading; the existing house is clearly visible from the Heath, especially during afternoon and evening hours, when its lights are on.

If the site was correctly designated MOL, then the size of the proposed new house would clearly greatly exceed the limits set out in MOL legislation: that the new replacement construction in these circumstances should not be *materially* greater than existing. We do not need to emphasise this, in the light of the Garden House Judicial Review case, well-known to you.

The floor area of the existing house (from applicants' figures): 226.3sq m.

The floor area of the proposed new house (also from the application): 527.4 sq.m

This represents an increase of **233%**

Clearly far exceeding an *immaterial* increase.

Whether you accept the validity of MOL designation or not, we regard this enlargement as grossly excessive on this sensitive site. The applicants state that the new house would be of a scale (and height) matching the existing structure; this is plainly not true.

Moreover, the site planning of the proposal sites the new house very close the boundary of the site, directly facing onto the Kenwood Dairy site. The existing house is located much further back from the Heath, close to the Spaniards Road boundary. The existing house is roughly square in overall footprint, using the site compactly; the new house is long and narrow in plan form, with its long elevation facing the Kenwood boundary, thus maximising its visibility from the Heath.

## 2. Setting

Although the buildings of Kenwood House and the Dairy complex are some way from the site, they must be considered in terms of their setting. Kenwood House is not only Grade 1 listed, but is one of London's most notable houses; its setting is of prime importance. The recently revitalised Dairy group of buildings is of equivalent importance.

This new house, despite the presence of trees, would be unpleasantly obtrusive. It would certainly be visible from the Heath—again, especially during afternoon and evening hours in autumn and winter, when its lighting would appear as a beacon, through its large areas of glazing.

It would seriously damage the setting of the Kenwood group of buildings.

It is just the type of development which is unacceptable on the fringes of the Heath.

## 3. Architecture

We have no objection to the principle of modernist architectural design on this, or many other sites in Hampstead.. However, the virtually fully-glazed elevation facing the Heath, and the opening up of the basement floor to the Heath makes this an unacceptable approach, on this site. The architectural detail is also rather ordinary; it does not present itself as an example of outstanding quality—which we believe is the least that should be required on such a conspicuous site (irrespective of its other flaws)

## 4. Consultations

The applicants state that they have had extensive consultations with “stakeholders”. We have no idea who these might be, but they certainly do not include us. We are also disappointed that there appear to have been 2 pre-application consultations with Planners; we dislike the implication here that this is a “done deal”, and that they believe they have Planners’ support, especially since there are so many clearly negative features of the application.

Please refuse.