

Steve and Gilda Ruggi

4th July 2014

To:

Hugh Miller

Planning Officer

London Borough of Camden

Town Hall, London WC1H 8ND

Objection to planning application no. 2014/3609/P at 77 Hillway N6 6AB

Dear Mr. Miller,

We object to the proposed plans.

Overall, the proposal needs revision in order to follow guidelines set by the Holly Lodge Estate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Survey (HLCAS), which sets out to conserve the character of semi-detached housing in a landscape of abundant greenery – the key characteristic and value-adding quality of the Holly Lodge Estate which we are all keen to preserve.

In addition, we object to proposed plans with the following detailed points:

1. Appearance of terraced housing instead of semi-detached - As proposed, the front façade of the side extension is not as recommended by the HLCAS:

'The in-filling of gaps between buildings will be resisted where this results in a characteristic gap in the streetscape being closed to an extent that the houses appear linked, or views through to gardens beyond are closed.'

'... houses, particularly on Hillway, are linked by a single storey garage set well back from the building line'

The proposed scheme is pushed considerably forward from the existing footprint up to the front building line of no. 79. The façade for the side extension needs to be considerably set back from the front building line of the door of no.79.

The proposed conversion of the existing car porch into an extended internal space of the house presents the following problems:

- a. Side extension needs to be set-back from front building line: Extending the building line forward to make it flush with the front door of 79 Hillway, as on the submitted plans, diminishes the perception that no. 77 and no. 79 are separate detached houses and is out of keeping with the character of this part of the Holly Lodge Estate conservation area. The extension should be set back by a significant distance from the doorway/facade of 79 Hillway.
- b. Oak-clad portico on 79 Hillway needs to be respected: 79 Hillway has an enclosed porch which is clad in finished oak boards both to the front and the side facing no.77. Since the facing on the 77 Hillway side is actually recessed 5cm inside the 79 Hillway property line, there is no way a neat finish can be created for the proposed flush front of the proposed extension as this would require construction within the curtilage of no 79. Submitted drawings are incorrect in this regard.
- c. Keeping a 'garage'-type façade on the side extension - Design of this front extension presents an unattractive, cluttered façade with a door and a window rather than a more elegant 'garage door'-style façade with single access and no window.
- d. Low forward wall and visual disturbance - Given the slope of Hillway, the height difference at the front between properties is around 1m. Under the proposed design, a person standing on the doorstep of no. 79 would have an unattractive eye-level view of the proposed flat roof garage extension. Furthermore it would be a simple matter for someone to climb onto the proposed roof. No parapet wall has been proposed. These problems are resolved by pushing the extension considerably back and adding a small parapet wall.
- e. Boundary wall: permission - Whilst it is appreciated that the submitted drawings are not engineering drawings, they currently show the proposed side-extension being tied directly into the existing non-party wall of no. 79. No request has been made to no. 79 for permission for such work.
- f. Boundary wall: sound insulation - Aside from the structural and legal issues which e) poses, not having an additional wall built for the proposed extension would reduce the sound insulation between the two houses. What sound insulation is proposed?
- g. Boundary wall: existing wall is sole property of 79 Hillway - Some of the submitted plans (e.g. HIW100) appear to show that at the front of the properties that the aforementioned wall is a shared wall crossing the property boundary line – this is incorrect. The southern wall of no. 79 is entirely within the

ownership boundary of 79 Hillway (NB: this is different from some of the walls on the boundary between nos. 77 & 75).

h. Boundary wall: ventilation - The southern wall of no. 79 has a number of air bricks in it that open to the car porch on 77 Hillway. Such ventilation needs to be taken into account by any proposed extension.

i. Boundary wall: foundation for side extension? - Similarly, no indication has yet been given as to the proposed foundation work required to support any car port conversion and how this will affect the main southern wall foundation of no. 79 from the front all the way to the rear of that property.

2. Building of uncharacteristic studio in back garden - Regarding the back garden scheme, which sees the replacement of existing greenery with significantly reduced green areas, we object to the additional studio construction, which is totally out of character with the neighbouring garden landscapes and shared vistas.

As regards trees, as recommended by the HLCAS: 'All trees that contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area should be retained and protected. Developers are expected to ... demonstrate that no trees will be lost or damaged before, during or after development.'

The proposed garden studio presents a man-made visual intrusion into the current verdant view shared to the rear by properties nos. 73, 75, 77, 79, 81 & 83 Hillway.

a. Proposed studio building out of keeping with Holly Lodge Estate - Currently the only structures existing at the end of gardens (particularly those built in recent years) are small wooden sheds mostly hidden by trees and foliage. Introducing a large studio with multiple large plate glass doors will completely change the tone of the views over the garden areas for all the surrounding properties; we object to the building of this totally uncharacteristic studio, particularly since the existing footprint of the house is already being considerably extended on the proposed plans.

b. Loss of trees and screening - Construction of the garden studio would require the removal of the large laurel tree at the end of the garden. This tree is currently providing almost complete screening of the small 1930s building located in the garden of the house on Robin Grove. Removal of this tree and construction of the studio would therefore open up the communal view to two man-made structures where previously none were visible.

3. Dormers too large – The proposed dormers are too large and should be set back from the main house walls. As per the HLCAS: 'Long, traverse views of mature vegetation are of immense importance to the character of the Estate and are threatened by the construction of ill-considered high dormers or extensions.'

- a. Massing - The proposed new dormers on the north side of the roof appear very large, see drawing HIW-300. One of the proposed dormers, the one in the middle, appears to join up with the enlarged rear dormer creating the appearance of a large mass on the roof towards the rear of the building. This is an unattractive design and is of concern as it is prominent in the rear view of the house from the gardens of adjacent properties.
- b. Privacy and overlook - The proposed middle dormer (enclosing proposed toilet and shower) is shown with a large window which is directly looked into by the existing roof velux window opposite on no.79.
- c. Proximity to 79 Hillway - With the dormers as shown on HIW200 their window glass is only around 2.25m from the edge of roof at no.79 and 4.6m from the south-facing velux of no. 79
- d. Need setting back - The proposed side dormers are drawn extended all the way out to the main house wall (see drawing HIW200. Note: drawing HIW103 appears incorrect in this regard) with large windows in-line with the main house wall and as such constitute more an additional storey rather than a dormer.

Dormers should be set back from the edge of the roof.

- e. Roof Line – Currently no. 79 receives light and a London skyline view over the top of the existing dormer and roof of no. 77. No increase in the roof height or existing dormer height should be allowed.

4. Light Obstruction at Rear Ground Level - It is difficult to tell from the plans how much obstruction of light the proposed rear extension will have at the rear ground-floor level on no. 79. It would be useful if the architect could clarify measurements in this area on drawing HIW100 e.g. indicating the height change in the new proposed side wall and also confirming that the property outline shown of 79 Hillway does not include the fixed awning on the property. Subject to receiving the above information on this we may have further comment but overall we are concerned about the obstruction of light at ground floor level on no. 79 caused by the proposed extension to the rear of no. 77.

5. Height at back – too tall - The submitted plans (drawing HIW301) show the proposed height of the main part of the single-storey rear extension to line

up with existing rear extension of no. 79. However, given that the site and construction of no. 77 is around 1m lower than no. 79, the effect of this lining up again creates the appearance that nos. 77 and 79 are attached, terraced houses rather than detached residences (see HLCAS, pt 1).

a. Keep single 'lower' height - If the proposed roof line of the main rear extension area be dropped slightly, perhaps to be the same height as the lower portion of the proposed extension this would still create a very high-ceilinged room throughout (>2.85m) but would create a more harmonious design and reduce the light obstruction on no. 79.

6. Replacement window style – uncharacteristic to Conservation Area-

The style of the proposed new and replacement windows on the front and rear of the property at first and second floor level appear out of keeping with the Holly Lodge Conservation area.

A copy of the above comments has been sent to the owners of no. 77.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Steve and Gilda Ruggi