

CAMDEN SQUARE CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

COMMENT ON THE PROPOSAL

For

51 -53 Agar Grove

Application No 2014/2833/P

**Planning Department
Camden Council
Euston Rd**

Attention Mr Jonathan Markwell

30th June 2014

Dear Mr Markwell,

The Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CSqCAAC)
OBJECTS to the proposal Application 2014/2833/P.

Officers should note that this is a replacement for an existing condemned building in a long street in a Conservation Area. Its treatment has thus to be dealt with with particular care. We object on a number of grounds:


Inadequacy of the Submitted Material

The relative modernity of the proposal need not be an impediment to a successful solution here, but many external elements would need to be shown in more detail (window framing, glass guarding panels, etc.) to give a clearer idea of actual appearance.

While the drawings of the assumed existing / original building have an element of conjecture, various elements are inconsistent, highly unlikely, or conflict with original photos.

The two top floor heights are shown as equal, which is practically never the case. The pre-existing South Elevation is incorrect in its proportions and inconsistent

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with the photos in the Design and Access statement and the actual remaining parts. For example:

1. The top floor windows in the photo of No. 53 are significantly shorter than those of the floor below; the drawn version shows much less of a difference.
2. The shallow roof pitch in pre-existing Section B and West Elevation is likely to be roughly accurate, but the much steeper roof pitch shown in the pre-existing and proposed South Elevations is inconsistent and inaccurate.
3. The South Elevation roofline of Nos. 55-57 is also inaccurate, showing a much steeper pitch than exists. The proposed drawings continue this, requiring a steeper pitch to the hip ends than to the front and rear roof slopes, unlikely to be built as drawn.
4. The position of the roof-lights in plan is inconsistent with the elevations.

Note: It is impossible to judge the final form of this building from the material submitted. **This proposal should be rejected until correct, consistent drawings are submitted.**

Detailed Comments

1. From the material submitted it appears that the proposed main replacement structure is much bulkier than the original or adjacent structures when viewed from St. Paul's Crescent. The details of the design are particularly critical.
2. The limited gradation of window proportions with no concomitant gradation of ceiling heights is harmful to the scale of Agar Grove. Even Nos. 55-57, identified as poorly proportioned in the Camden Square Conservation Area Gazetteer (updated by the CAAC in 2011 but as yet unadopted) has a significant hierarchy to the ceiling and window heights.
3. The squat proportions of the front bays give no sense of presence to the entrance floor and weaken the only feature of the front elevations.
4. The consistent verticality of the other windows is also an interference, as is the height of brickwork above the second floor windows.

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Thus the proposal makes a very negative impact on the rhythm of that side of Agar Grove.

Proposed Cladding Material

The bronze coloured metal clad side wing would need unusually good detailing to avoid looking like a modular tack-on box.

A specific planning condition should be placed on the quality and application of any such cladding

Overshadowing

The proximity of the rear structure to 19 St Paul's Crescent is likely to harm the rear aspect of that house and its small garden, even if strict lighting angles are achieved.

OVERALL CONCLUSION

Apart from various, serious, technical errors in the drawings and poor contextual proportions, the main reason for rejecting this scheme is over-development.

There is no justification for increasing the volume of the original pair of semi-detached houses so significantly as well as constructing a separate building at the back of the much-reduced garden.

While this application should be considered on its merits, the loss of the original buildings (which made a positive contribution to the Conservation Area) from unapproved demolition and excavation work five years ago should not be ignored.

The view of the CSqCAAC specialists is that this proposal fails to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area and should thus be rejected.

[Redacted]

*H B Lake
Secretary*

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