22/10/2014

PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

Year: 2014

Number: 4726

Letter: P
Planning application address: 85 Camden Mews

Title: Mr.
Your First Name: Charles
Initial:
Last Name: Bear
Organisation:
Comment Type: Object

Postcode: NW1 9BU
Address line 1: 83 Camden Mews
Address line 2: LONDON
Address line 3:
Postcode: NW1 9BU
E-mail:
Confirm e-mail:
Contact number:

Your comments on the planning application: My objections are contained in
(1) the attached document headed "Objections to proposed development at 85 Camden Mews"
(2) the attached technical opinion from a specialist engineer, Mr Graham of Fluid Structures Ltd.

IF YOU WISH TO UPLOAD A FILE CONTAINING YOUR COMMENTS THEN USE THE LINK
BELOW

-
Objections:
https://forms.camden.gov.uk/cus/servlet/ep.getImg?ref=13960889652&print=Y&st=&auth=100001300
Technical opinion from Fluid Structures Ltd:
https://forms.camden.gov.uk/cus/servlet/ep.getImg?ref=13960889653&print=Y&st=&auth=100001300

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Proposed development at 85, Camden Mews [2014/4726/P]

(1) Basic features of the proposal

The proposed development has the following key features:

(a) Demolish the rear facade and build a new rear facade 2.5m further out
(b) Create a new 2.8m deep basement extending to the new rear wall and across the entire width of the site
(c) Excavate to create a new sunken rear garden
(d) New two storey (plus basement level) side extension in place of the current lock-up garage
(e) A large new blank side wall on the SW elevation
(f) Modify the existing front elevation (i.e. as well as the new side extension)
(g) Complete rebuild of the roof to embrace the new footprint.

In reality, apart from partial retention of the existing front elevation, this is a new building dressed up as alteration of an existing one. An existing mews house of perhaps 1200sq ft is sought to be turned into one of about twice that size. It is not surprising that such a radical change leads to serious objections.

(2) Summary of objections

(i) The new building would not preserve the character of the old one. The current building is a distinctive partly Italianate coach house. Its proportions are important and will not be retained. The overall mass, bulk and effect of the building will be very different.

(ii) There is no justification for demolishing the existing rear facade, nor for building a new façade 2.5m further out: see also the Camden Square Conservation Area Management Strategy para 7.5. The suggestion that the proposal retains the design features of the rear façade is illusory: see points (i), (iii) and (iv).

(iii) The new rear elevation would have massively increased window space at ground floor level plus full scale French windows at the new basement level (contravening CPG 1 para 4.7). The new windows at both levels would be far too large. They would also be obviously out of harmony with the arched first floor windows which are an important and distinctive feature for this building. It is not surprising that the developers have failed to provide an image of the new rear elevation.

(iv) The new side (SW) elevation, which would be prominent from the street as well as from several facing properties, would be a blank white wall of 1.5 storeys above the existing adjoining ground floor structure. It has a cheap warehouse-like feel and would be visually disruptive and out of keeping with the variegated textures generally found in the Mews, particularly this part, which are brick, timber, or a mixture.

(v) The basement is too large and extends beyond the footprint of the original building, contrary to CPG 4, para 2.56 and DP 27.9.

(vi) The BIA is inadequate. The proposal fails to provide satisfactory evidence that the works will not damage the building or adjoining properties as required by DP27.3 and by the Camden Square Conservation Area Management Strategy para 7.6 before the application can be approved: *"When considering applications for basement extensions within the conservation area, the Council will need to be satisfied that effective measures will be taken during demolition and construction works to ensure that damage is not caused to the building and any buildings it directly adjoins"*; see also CPG 4, para 2.51. I refer to the attached opinion from John Graham CEng MICE MIStructE MIEI of Fluid Structures Ltd which sets out 9 objections including:

> "4. Drawing number 85_CM_Sk_BC1 also indicates that the base of the party wall will need to be completely demolished and this is unacceptable as the base of the party wall should be retained and underpinned. Demolishing a significant proportion of brickwork at the base of the party wall in this way may lead to excessive damage in no. 83 and this should be avoided.
> 6. …the current design/drawings do not indicate any anti-heave precautions and this is a serious concern as heave of the basement structure may cause serious structural damage if it is not dealt with.
> 7. …the documents do not indicate a safe construction sequence. For example… how the soil will be supported during excavation prior to construction of the reinforced concrete walls…[or] how the walls will be propped when the soil is excavated…
> 2. …the documents do not show the underpinning construction sequence indicating how the soil and party wall will be safely supported while the works are carried out…
> 3. The currently proposed basement wall…extends under the party wall into no.83 and this is not acceptable as the wall should not go beyond the face of the party wall".

(vii) There is a total absence of any indication how the extensive demolition and construction works would be carried out, let alone done in a way which does not involve intolerable disruption to neighbours. Camden Mews is a very narrow one-way street with room for only one vehicle to pass. The basement excavation would, by my calculations, involve removal of over 850 tonnes of soil. The insertion of concrete underpinnings and the demolition and construction of a new roof would also be major undertakings. No thought whatever appears to have been given to compliance with para 2.51 of CPG 4: *"In considering these applications, the Council will refuse permission for such plans which do not minimise the harmful impacts of construction on the building(s) and on local amenities…"* It is therefore not enough to leave such matters entirely to the future negotiation of a s. 106 agreement. The applicant must demonstrate before permission can be granted that the development is capable of satisfying the criterion in para 2.51.

24033/JG

10Th October 2014

Mr Charles Béar,
83 Camden Mews,
London,
NW1 9BU

FLUID.STRUCTURES
ENGINEERS AND TECHNICAL DESIGNERS

Dear Mr Béar,

Ref. Proposed Basement at no.85 Camden Mews

As requested we have reviewed the proposed basement details for no.85 Camden Mews and understand your concern at the proposed works.

Many basements have been constructed in this area using safe and well established techniques such as underpinning. However, although it is fairly common to build basements in this area, the current proposals for no. 85 need further development and clarification before they are satisfactory. The following amendments and further information is required;-

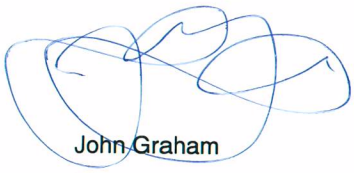
1. The construction method statement is not sufficiently detailed and although it notes "The objective is for the Works to be carried out as safely as possible", it does not clarify how this will be achieved.
2. The underpinning sequence has not been described in sufficient detail and the documents do not show the underpinning construction sequence indicating how the soil and party wall will be safely supported while the works are carried out (i.e. how each pin will be excavated whilst supporting the party wall and soil to prevent subsidence of the floor and walls of no.83).
3. The currently proposed basement wall (as shown on drawing number 85_CM_Sk_BC1) extends under the party wall into no.83 and this is not acceptable as the wall should not go beyond the face of the party wall.
4. Drawing number 85_CM_Sk_BC1 also indicates that the base of the party wall will need to be completely demolished and this is unacceptable as the base of the party wall should be retained and underpinned. Demolishing a significant proportion of brickwork at the base of the party wall in this way may lead to excessive damage in no.83 and this should be avoided. A more reasonable approach needs to be adopted by no.85.
5. No.85 have shown a "special" reinforced concrete wall and foundation under the party wall (as shown on drawing number 85_CM_Sk_BC1) but I understand that they have not asked for your consent for this "special" detail. Mass concrete traditional underpinning is normally used in these situations but I understand that no.85 have not explained why they have departed from this norm and chosen to use a "special" foundation instead.
6. Item no. 20 of the site investigation notes that heave due to unloading during basement construction will need to be dealt with. However the current design/drawings do not indicate

any anti-heave precautions and this is a serious concern as heave of the basement structure may cause serious structural damage if it is not dealt with.

7. Item 22 of the site investigation notes that, "Given the presence of the existing adjacent foundations, close attention in design of temporary and permanent propping is required at all times to prevent settlement or excessive lateral yielding of the excavation/foundations". The current proposals do not indicate how this will be achieved and the documents do not indicate a safe construction sequence. For example, drawing nos. 85_CM_Sk_BC1 and 85_CM_Sk_BC2 do not show how the soil will be supported during excavation prior to construction of the reinforced concrete walls on the party wall line. Also the drawings do not show how the walls will be propped when the soil is excavated to allow construction of the basement slab. If this work is not carried out correctly in accordance with prescribed methods and sequences then there is a high risk that an inexperienced contractor may be appointed to carry out the work without sufficient propping leading to structural damage of neighbouring properties.
8. Drawing no. 85_CM_Sk_BC1 does not show how the top of the basement retaining wall will be propped by the ground floor to ensure lateral stability of the wall and neighbouring property as the drawing currently shows no connection between the ground floor of no.85 and the party wall.
9. Drawing no. 85_CM_Sk_BC1 shows the new basement wall cast directly against the soil beyond the face of the party wall (i.e. inside your property). The new basement wall needs to be moved back so that it lines up with the face of the party wall and it should also be a formed face so that no.83 could use the wall if they required to do so in the future.

It is essential that the above issues are clarified and dealt with before the project proceeds any further. I hope that the above is of assistance,

Yours sincerely



John Graham
Director Fluid Structures
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