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1st November 2014

Cover letter, Grounds of Appeal - application ref. 2014/3077/P

Dear Sir,

We are writing to appeal the decision to refuse the application ref. 2014/3077/P for 17 Lancaster Grove.

The two main areas of contention appear to be: the proposed front balustrade and proposed rear stair. These were discussed in conversation and in email between Studio DuB and Mr Hope. In these exchanges the agent was lead to believe by Mr Hope that the amendments made in response to the points he raised had indeed satisfied the points he raised.

We note the following errors made:

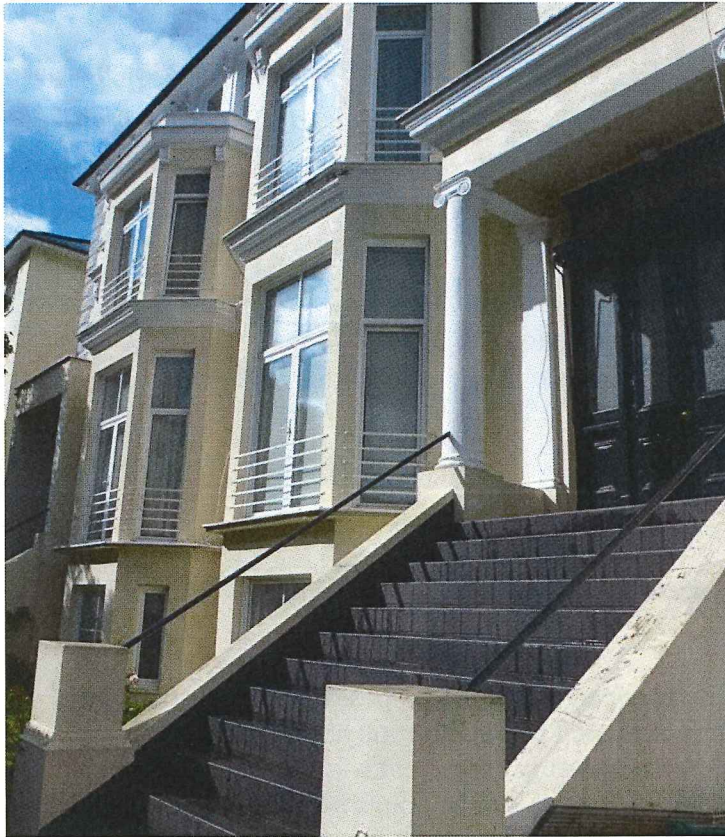
Application Description:

The description of the application on the portal contained several errors, the most glaring of which was the re-writing of the proposal as "replacement of the ground floor bay window to the front elevation", when there has never been a proposal to replace any windows. The description on the agent's application was actually to "Install glass balustrade to front bay window". In conversation Studio DuB drew Mr Hope's attention to all the errors and he has updated the description yet the following errors remain in general:

Proposed glazed balustrade:

Mr Hope has repeatedly described this proposal as "glazed bars", (at least five times in the Report) although the balustrade has been drawn and described as a proposed glazed panel and is therefore transparent with no bars. In writing he actually drew the agent's attention to a nearby property with what can only be described as unsympathetic, additions which visually obstruct the windows and form a non-compliant balustrade solution, "we would support traditional railings similar in design with number 11 and 13 Lancaster Grove" (his email 11th August 10.51). Whatsmore, Mr Hope had not seemed to notice that these railings are by no means "traditional" and are actually installed to modern replacement windows with functionless external plastic handles which combine to create a travesty of the Conservation Area, please

refer to attached photographs of nearby properties, no.11 and 13 Lancaster Grove. The thought of a Planning Officer citing these railings as a design to which we should aspire does not do any credit to the Planning Authority.



Proposed stair to garden from upper ground floor:

Mr Hope has repeatedly described this as a “stair enclosure” and “stair well”, (approximately ten times in the Delegated Report) despite it being drawn and described as an uncovered, single flight of external stairs. “Enclosure” is erroneous as it suggests he is thinking of something more bulky with two sides and a roof which the proposal does not have. When presented with this in conversation and with photographic and plan drawing evidence that a flight of external stairs is a characteristic of the neighbourhood Mr Hope wrote “I think this should be ok.” (his email of 5th August 15.58pm).

Mr Hope suggests a spiral stair solution for 17 Lancaster Grove, despite being aware that in a city block with some 40 houses, at least 20 of these have a straight flight of stairs from the rear of the raised ground floor to the gardens, and that only one of the 40 has a spiral stair.

Furthermore, since the spiral stair is relatively new and serves a single storey off-shoot to a house it seems to be spurious to cite this as relevant to 17 Lancaster Grove which has no single storey off-shoot and far more in common with all the 20 other properties with straight flights of stairs. Mr Hope notes that the stair would not be mirrored in the existing attached house, no. 19 Lancaster Grove, but this is true of 8 (almost half) of the cases of the pre-existing single flight stairs to semi-detached

houses. It is even true of the neighbouring duo of no. 13 and no.15 Lancaster Grove: in that no.15 has a rear stair but its neighbouring semi-detached house no. 13 does not.

Studio DuB made amendments as recorded and agreed and resubmitted these, plus further supporting photographs of neighbouring properties and invited Mr Hope to "Please contact me directly should you have any further queries pre determination" (email 10th August). During that discussion and after, in conversation and in writing Mr Hope said that he was "writing up the report for approval" (his email of 11th August at 10.51am). Therefore it is understandable that the client and agent were both surprised about and disappointed in the decision, which we have now come to appeal.

Yours faithfully,

Studio DuB Architects

