

Planning Application 2014/6213/P

No: 35 Flask Walk

I wish to make an objection to the granting of permission on the basis of the following:-

In general, this row of cottages has gardens of appropriate size for dwellings of their period and have not been unduly built on since the original rear extensions were built. The existing structure already exceeds an area considered by Camden Basement Planning guidelines to be a maximum (50%).

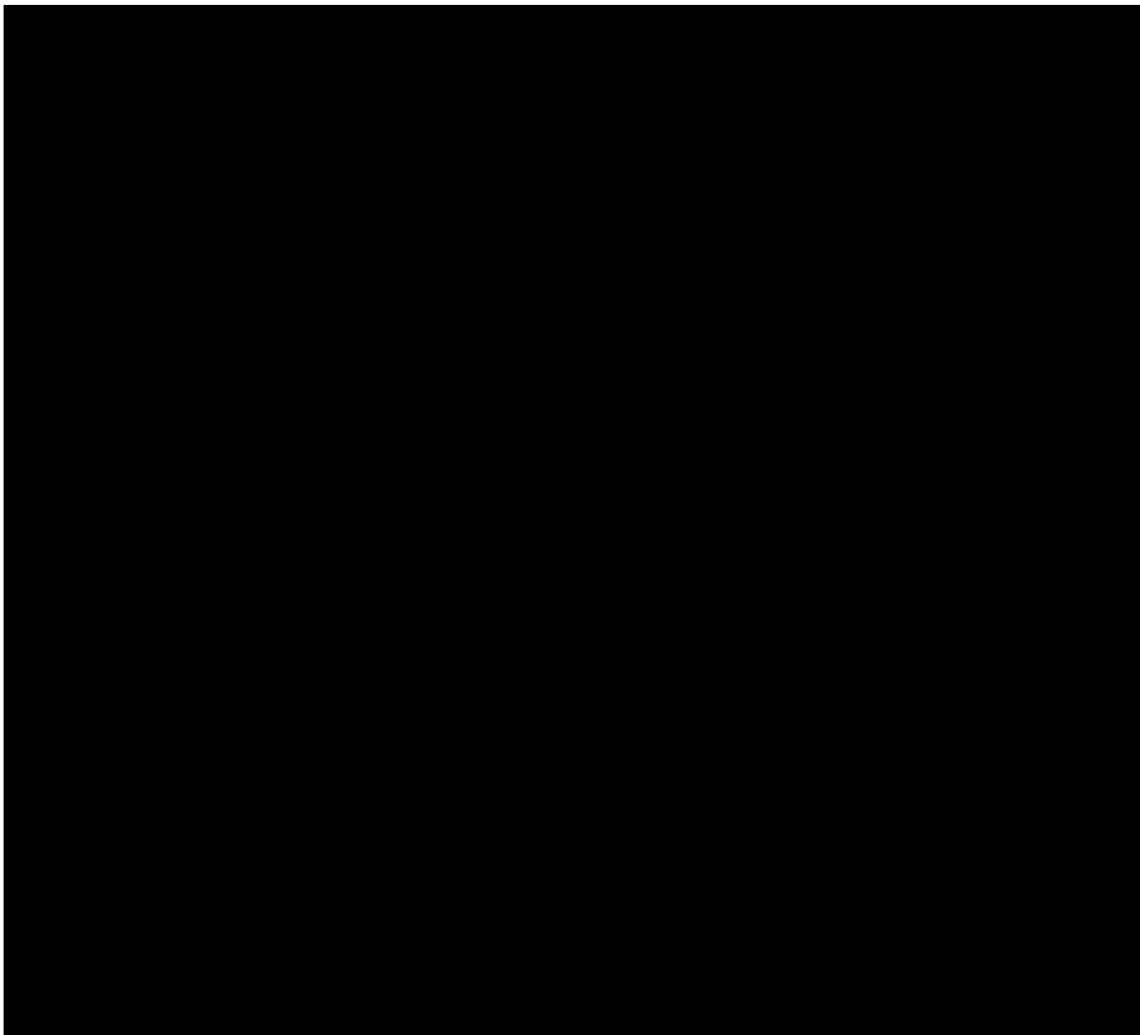
The lowering of the studio floor quite clearly can be described as a basement or underground development and applicants are required to provide an Impact Assessment see Camden Planning Guidance/ Basements and lightwells.

Digging down by a metre may alter the drainage /ground water flow. No specific information has been given on the total depth and form of the existing and future building foundations. There is no description of the depth and form of #35 and neighbouring buildings foundations. The application does not include an independent impact assessment, an investigation into the structures of the adjoining row of listed buildings, the nature of the land and its susceptibility to movement, the incidences of any past movements and the potential risks posed. I am concerned that, in the absence of appropriate detail, permission may be granted inadvertently.

The eastern flank/boundary wall, which will be increased, is already oppressive and is part of a structure in excess of the maximum proportion of a garden in the guidelines for basements. It will further reduce the sunlight reaching the neighbouring garden. I also draw your attention to the claims in the Design and Access Statement para 5.4, Conformity para 2. where my view is that the horizontal increase in the high profile walls of the studio by over a metre each side does not meet the criteria to which it refers.

The practical integration of the studio and the house sets a precedent which will encourage further infilling of the garden which will then be lost to future generations and set a precedent for other residents to follow in the future.

Hugh Long
41 Flask Walk
NW3 1HH



Joyful Future Holdings Limited
c/o John Tang
The Hollies
Church Road
Clearwell
GLOS
GL16 8LG

Re: 35 Flask Walk
Ref: 2014/6213

Dear Sir/Madam

We are the owners of a property in Lakis Close.
We object to the proposed application to develop 35 Flask Walk on the following grounds:

1. Such development will increase the building density of the local area; an area which is already at a compact and dense level - we would suggest at capacity. Increasing the density with more urban development, can have an impact on existing residents quality of living and feeling of space and well being.

2. The proposed building works (i.e. The depth of proposed underground annex and works relating to the boundary wall between the property and Lakis Close) are likely to impact on existing (already limited) vegetation. In particular they may damage the roots of some significant trees in the immediate area.

3. Increased density of development may lead to increased parking requirements; whether it be now, or at a later stage when the redeveloped 'self contained' annex is potentially sold off as an individual property in its own right; history in the local Hampstead area, shows that this is an all too often occurrence.

4. Finally, (as owners of a property in Lakis Close) we are not aware of a formal right of access from 35 Flask Walk to the Close. The proposed introduction of an actual formal built doorway to the Close is particularly worrying. This element needs to be clarified before any further decisions can be taken. Such development seems like an over intrusion into the Close - an already compact area with a tight knit community, where residents already learn to live within a limited...and secure...space. We understand that any previous access arrangements by the annex at 35 Flask Walk were temporary and in the interests of helping a disabled and elderly resident.

We trust you will take these matters into consideration.

Yours sincerely

Mr & Mrs John Tang

Claire Potter
37 Flask Walk
London NW3 1HH

10 October 2014

ATT: Mandeep Chaggar
Regeneration and Planning
Development Manager
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Judge Street
London WC1H 8ND

Subject: 35 Flask Walk NW3 1HH
Planning Application 2014/6213/P
2014/6564/L

Dear Ms. Chaggar,

As a home owner in the borough of Camden, I am writing to you in the capacity of your role as Regeneration and Planning Development Manager in the London Borough of Camden because I would like to raise with you my serious concerns and worries regarding the redevelopment of 35 Flask Walk, NW3 1HH. I condense my objections into three main issues:

1. *The heritage of the Flask Walk cottages Nos. 35-41*
2. *The joint structural concerns of the Flask Walk cottages Nos. 35-41*
3. *The invasion of privacy, overlooking and density of living*

I live next door to No. 35 at 37 Flask Walk, and as you are aware, our cottages Nos. 35 – 41 form part of four Grade II listed heritage properties on the street (see Hampstead Conservation Area Guide, pps 57-58). As a group, the four properties are listed in numerous local and English heritage books, online architectural forums and conservation reference points. From my personal experience having renovated the interior of my property, these four Georgian cottages built in the 1700s are stand on nothing but clay and sand, have no foundations and are mutually dependent on each other for their structural security. When reflooring our living room in 2012 and pulling up the floorboards we confronted by nothing more than a cavity of dirt: there are no foundations to these four adjoining properties. The structural manner in which these joint cottages were built is the first point I would like to make in relation to the application to redevelop No. 35:

1. *That no evidence or investigation has been made into how the below ground intervention being proposed (stating a metre but to be questioned) by the applicant will affect the communal structure and safety of the four joint heritage properties that already suffer from subsidence and unmodern foundations. As such, I raise the question of whether this disturbance will put the structural security of the four properties at risk.*

Regarding the significance of the cottages in terms of their history and character, the application to abut a self-contained property to the rear of the existing heritage property and in essence, to the four properties as we are all so densely linked, seems not only counterintuitive, but not in keeping with the guidelines that Camden Council created in its Conservation Area Statement, Topography and development (p.58), stating that 'The additions of windows, attic rooms, additional storeys, can cause invasion of privacy through overlooking'.

In relation to this statement, I draw your attention to three considerations:

- i. If the applicant were seeking to build a new rear duplex property from scratch (is a second home within the larger home with separate entry and letterbox), it would contravene the above Camden Council statement because the applicant seeks to add not only **25% more window frontage**, but seeks to excavate for additional storeys to the current artist's studio increasing gross floor space from **36.1sq.m to 62.9sq.m** (see Table 1, Schedule of Accommodation, Existing and Proposed).
- ii. As the neighbouring property to No. 35, we share common walls and fences. Currently there is a very tall and large wall at the back of my property which was erected in 1968 by the applicant's aunt Mrs. Grosvenor, for use as a artist's studio. I attach photos for your attention in order to add information to the applicant's proposal which neglects to draw attention to the impact of the proposal on the four adjacent properties, 37-41 Flask Walk, of which the applicant's property is a part. In order to demonstrate the direct vis-à-vis between my property and No. 35, I attach two photos taken from the interior of my bathroom. As you will see, due to the proximity of the four cottages, our gardens, and indeed Mr's Grosvenor's artist studio, look directly into and onto my property. I also attach a photo from the rear of my garden looking into No. 35 which shows the shared wall looking to be *extended by 1.5 meters* thus blocking light and shared gardens from each other.
- iii. Despite the applicant's proposal that 'Because of the oblique angle of these windows to Lakis Close, the view out of them into the neighbouring properties on Lakis Close will be minimal' (Point 4.1). As you will see from the photos, my bathroom window at No. 37 is 3 meters from the corner of the current studio wall and window and if the proposal goes ahead, from my bathroom I will be able to look directly *into and onto a new home*. I regret to point out that this is not an 'oblique angle' in any way. The redeveloped studio will *look directly into my bathroom, office, kitchen and dining room* and furthermore, the proposed 1.5m extension of the upper level (clerestory) will bring both properties into even closer proximity, over-contact and over-looking. *The privacy on both sides* will be seriously compromised and as a parent and homeowner, I am very concerned about this invasion of privacy and the overlooking that will be increased if the proposed conversion goes ahead.

My second objection regarding the redevelopment of the artist's studio into self-contained accommodation is based on *the necessity for an open space* within the Lakis Close/Flask Walk, Back Lane, New End conflux. The current studio at No. 35, built in 1968 as an artist's studio, remained as such until Mrs Grosvenor passed away last year. Prior to that it was a garden in the same capacity as the other four cottage gardens 37-41. To enlarge the current studio into self-contained accommodation for a small family or couple would not only further reduce the amount of light, but seriously impact upon the calm and necessary patch of nature that exists almost in a valley-like way between the tall buildings and houses around it. I cannot underscore

enough to you the movement of birds, animals, bees and insects along the four gardens and to diminish the garden capacity at No. 35, to build it up, to convert the studio into accommodation, to lose part of the garden to a covered walk way and to extend a 1.5 meter wall along both sides of the garden is not A. in keeping with the heritage of the site, B. in keeping with the important nature patch or C. in keeping with the space required between neighbours to live in a harmonious and peaceful way. This is the second objection I would like to make in relation to the proposed conversion and enlargement of the artist studio:

2. *That to add to an already built up space, to remove garden and extend already high walls would add noise, remove light, intensify traffic, diminish garden and nature space and reduce the space neighbours need in their personal everyday living and movement.*

I would like to make the proposal to the Council that if the artist studio is not used in and for its original capacity that it be reverted to a garden space thus lowering the density, environmental impact and raising the balance and harmony extant between the four heritage cottages and offering space, light, garden, privacy and security to the four cottages. Hampstead Conservation Area Guide makes clear this need for 'balance and harmony' between heritage properties as well as noting how 'rear gardens and backlands contribute to the townscape of the Conservation area' (p.60).

Whilst it may be argued that the rear of the property does not form part of the visible frontal heritage of the Grade II listing, in the applicant's proposal it states that '16.2 cubic meters of the 297.5 cubic meters of the listed building (that is 6%) will be demolished and altered' (see 'Demolition Point 9' in 'Household application for Planning Permission for works or extension to a dwelling and listed building consent'). Whilst this might not seem like much, it is the location of the accommodation that poses the most significant problem: it is situated in a cul-de-sac, joined very closely to four Heritage cottages and will block light, garden space and increase density. The addition of a modernised annex to the rear of the property will create an overlooked and unprivate accommodation that lies within an open cul-de-sac that at least 20 properties directly look onto. As the gardens of the four cottages 35-41 lie at the heart of this junction and cul-de-sac, to erect an overlooked, self-contained accommodation seems contrary to what the space is there for in the first place: to provide space, nature and light between homes. Furthermore, the current working artist's studio which the community can partake in and enjoy is *very different* to the construction of an overlooked home. This brings me to my third point,

3. *That the redevelopment of the garden studio at No. 35 Flask Walk into 'self-contained accommodation with a separate entrance' will seriously compromise the privacy and open space required for harmonious living.*

Lastly, to cloister the back of No. 35 with new raised and extended walls, to extend into the ground a basement-like excavation and to enlarge the volume of the studio into self-contained accommodation is akin to dividing the property into two homes with no regard for the heritage of the adjoining cottages on Flask Walk. I sincerely hope that you are able to consider this proposal from both the point of view of a Development Manager and also as someone who appreciates the importance of safeguarding the appearance, the practical function, the environmental footprint and the community interest that lies in how we approach building and development in the London Borough of Camden.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards, Claire Potter.



