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24a York Rise, London NW5 1ST

5 March 2015

Comments on the application reference: 2015/0369/P
44 Dartmouth Park Road, NW5 1SN

Preliminary observations

We have strong objections to the proposals, although we appreciate the attempt to restore some of the original embellishments at the front of the house.

We live at 24A York Rise, the property on York Rise that stands next to 44 Dartmouth Park Road. We received notice of this application only after telephoning Camden Planning and asking to be consulted. On the Site Location Plan drawn by the architects of this application, 24A York Rise is shown – but is not given a house number. It consists of two parts with a courtyard between them. The smaller part stands at the end of the back courtyard (the proposed gardens) of 44 Dartmouth Park Road. Not for the first time, we ask Camden Planning to establish 24A York Rise, in its proper place, in the record of buildings in the borough. [Note 1]

Flats to let, or for leasehold sale?

It is not said whether the new flats are for short-term lets to tenants, or whether they will be for sale on long leases. It is important to know this – in assessing the question of garden maintenance, for example.

Excavation to make a basement

We do not see why a large amount of energy should be expended, with considerable disturbance to neighbours, on digging out a basement for an already large house. This building is within a few metres of an underground river and is in an area in which subsidence is common. The proposal's 'Basement Impact Screening Assessment' (page 12, question 12) denies that the house is within 100 metres of a watercourse, but this is wrong: the Fleet river flows under York Rise past 44 Dartmouth Park Road. [Note 2]

Our house, in its main part, has a lower-ground level: a cellar. This is an essential storage space in a small house. This is not mentioned in the Basement Impact Assessment Screening document, submitted with the application. Our cellar was made as part of the original construction of the building in 1975–6. The floods of summer 1975 occurred during construction of the house, and site flooded. Our cellar is tanked and has always been dry.

If, however, this part of the development should go ahead, we expect to see a management plan, with a time schedule for the works.

Overlooking

Our house is already overlooked by the rear windows of 44 Dartmouth Park Road. The creation of a balcony for the flat on the first floor will make an outdoor space looking over our house. The use of glass for the new lobby and for the balustrades makes for exposure, not privacy. The dormer windows add another two overlooking windows.

Gardens

We appreciate the proposal to remove the concrete in the garden and cover the area with soil. But we want to ensure that the part of our house adjacent to this garden remains free of plants. If the ground floor flats are let to tenants, we wonder who will maintain these gardens.

Green roof

We also appreciate the proposal to make a green roof on the extension at the rear of the house. We assume that it will need no maintenance and won't be used as a garden.

Colour

The elevation to the garden shows parts of the frame to the doors and windows in red and blue. These colours are not in sympathy with the neighbourhood. (When we re-roofed and re-cladded our house with zinc in 2011 we were required to use a grey zinc, as close as possible in colour to the artificial slates we were replacing.)

Notes

1. Camden Planning does not seem to know where 24a York Rise stands. The Location map for the previous application for 44 Dartmouth Park Road (2014/4133/P) shows our house as part of 44 Dartmouth Park Road. We were not included among the neighbours for that application. In 2010, when we applied for permission to reroof our house, the application was at first assumed to be for 24 York Rise, the house that stands on York Rise between Chetwynd Road and Dartmouth Park Road.
2. See the map in the book by Stephen Myers, *Walking on water: London's hidden rivers revealed* (Stroud: Amberley, 2011), page 142. See also 'The lost rivers project' on Camden Council's website: <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/air-quality-and-pollution/water/lost-rivers-project.cn>. The photos of the course of the North-East Branch of the river Fleet include one looking past the Dartmouth Arms pub on York Rise.