

**76C HILLFIELD ROAD
WEST HAMPSTEAD
LONDON NW6 1QA**

TEL: [REDACTED]

Camden Regeneration & Planning Development Management
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 8ND

31st March, 2015

Dear Sirs,

**COMMENTS & CONCERNS RE PLANNING APPLICATION REF: 2015/1173/P
PROPERTY – 76A HILLFIELD ROAD, LONDON NW6 1QA**

Further to your letter dated 18th March, received 21st inviting us to make comments re the above proposed development. I have been resident at 76C Hillfield Road since 1993 and would like to make the following comments/observations re plans presented to us by the development company/new owner of 76A.

Whilst any development has to be profitable and Camden needs to provide further accommodation, we would be grateful if you would take our comments and concerns into account when the Planning Dept., discuss the development. I am writing as, both resident leaseholder of 76C and director of the small limited company which holds the freehold of 76 Hillfield Road and so represents the interests of the leaseholders. We would like to comment upon and have taken into consideration, the following:-

SECURITY:

- a) The addition of two flat roofed extensions would result in the rear development roof finishing within 18" of Miss Ellis (76B) kitchen window and would also give access to my (76c) kitchen window via ladder, which would present us with a serious security issue, which we do not have at present. Both Miss Ellis and I, as resident leaseholders, are single women and one of the paramount issues, when purchasing a home, was of security. At present, due to being on a hill, we have a sheer drop and no risk of ingress, so have enjoyment of safety and fresh air/able to open windows. The neighbouring property/no. 74 has had more than one burglary at the rear of the premises, as West Hampstead police would confirm.
- b) Should our concerns not be taken into consideration, I would ask that all security issues should be stringently applied. At present we have single glazed original sash kitchen windows and we would ask that these are replaced by triple glazed, lockable windows, together with roof alarms/passive infra-red lights, to the standard of whatever measures are advised by our local police officers/ Neighbourhood Watch team.
- c) Our neighbours at 78 have already expressed concerns re the height of the development and the developer/Mr. Adam Andrews promised to review this aspect.
- d) Additionally, I do not know whether the side development, which runs along the walk-way/fence of no. 74, to mid-way along the gardens, would infringe any fire regulations, as no. 74 is a H.M.O., hence numerous residents.

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MAINTENANCE RESTRICTIONS/CONCERNS RE EXTENT OF PROPOSED SIDE/REAR DEVELOPMENT & EFFECT ON SERVICE CHARGES:

- a) **The large, side elevation development, running along the fence/boundary with 74,** covers the whole gravelled area in front of the current/original bedroom and along the boundary fence with 74, apart from a small enclosed well containing sewerage pipes which serves all flats linking to the sewerage drain at the front of the property. Also the water drainage pipe from the 76C roof terrace runs into a drain on the side elevation, as well as other pipe-work serving the building. Currently we have no access problems re maintenance but the new development encloses access to these pipes and ground-works, apart from a small inaccessible well.

The developer/Mr. Andrews has advised us that scaffolding companies can provide a cantilever system and hence able to access all areas. However, as you will appreciate, this would be far more expensive and burdensome re future service charges, when currently a standard tower erected in front of the present bedroom, gives complete maintenance access & does not involve workmen entering the property/76A, with permission for access from 74.

In fairness, the development company/Mr. Andrews, has intimated they MAY offer certain works/exterior re-decoration/refurbishment, as recompense up-front, in lieu of this particular future cost, which is not necessary under the current configuration.

- b) **The two new flat roof additions,** would have to be maintained and replaced, when necessary, solely at the cost to the present/future leaseholder(s) of 76A – i.e. any Service Charges relating to these areas would be recharged in full to 76A, as these are additions and to the detriment, not benefit of the leaseholders of 76 B & C, nor reflected in their current leases. Additionally, flat roofs are notoriously expensive to maintain and need renewing far earlier than sloped/tiled roofs. I note the flat roofed extensions in the **Beresford Mews** re-development have been replaced by sloping roofs, within a very short time span.
- c) Additionally the current service charge split of one third per flat would have to be reviewed, in relation to the new larger footprint of 76A.
- d) **Flood risk?** We rely upon the Planning Dept. advice and knowledge of the area, as so many developments have been approved on this side of the road, eating into natural drainage areas/the gardens. Many years ago, I went to the aid of neighbours, three or four doors along when their basement flat was completely flooded during a storm, with water pouring down the steps and into their home. Whilst the new gratings installed in this road have helped, it does cause us concern, when so many gardens and green spaces are being concreted over, but again, we refer to your superior knowledge and make these points as a comment.

INSURANCE:

The depth of the rear and side extensions would contravene the terms of our insurance policy which states a minimum distance between the building and the trees at the bottom of the garden. The proposed re-development, due to the depth would render our buildings policy and subsidence cover null and void. The trees are important, both as a source of greenery and privacy, not only to us in Hillfield Road but to the Mill Lane apartment buildings, which have do not have gardens only tiny courtyards and walkway. Whilst we have received assurances from the new owner, he can source a new insurance policy giving the same cover, from the insurance brokers he has used on his other developments and the trees will not be touched in any way, without express permission from the freehold company, we have not to date received the information & are of course wary, that cover may be granted this year and then restricted in future years. Our current policy has been in place for 15years+ without a change in terms and we have not encountered any problems. We have to be careful, as the house is strapped on the side elevation (maybe bomb damage in WW2?? as no. 74 so different to rest of road), plus on a hill.

PARKING:

As you are aware, this road is very heavily parked & with re-development all along this road, as well as the neighbouring streets, the problem will only get worse. Mr. Harris the previous owner was not a car owner and used a bicycle.

FOOTPRINT OF DEVELOPMENT:

76A currently comprises of a very large kitchen, bedroom and living room with a compact bathroom. Why then is a completely serviceable bathroom becoming a storage room? Although the plans advise that half of the remaining garden will be decked, this still leaves room in the garden for a small shed for storage.

WORKING HOURS:

As I am currently caring for a friend who has T4 cancer and had a kidney removed due to this disease, I would appreciate a five day reasonable hours worked with no week-end/bank holiday working, unless absolutely necessary due to safety issues.

SAFETY OF BUILDING DURING REDEVELOPMENT

Both lessees need cast iron guarantees from the Planning Dept., that they will fully investigate and assure us that the builders will follow all rules and regulations for the safety of the building as two major supporting walls will have to be removed/altered, should these plans be approved. We assume, the Planning Dept., will check all building regulations and insurances are in place and will closely monitor each stage of any redevelopment, to fully ensure the building remains safe.

Many thanks for your kind attention to these comments. Please be assured, we are not against any improvements to 76A, but have to raise issues that affect us directly or cause us concern.

Yours faithfully,

Vanessa Bennett
Resident Leaseholder 76C
Director 76 Hillfield Road Ltd.

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