



Historic England

LONDON OFFICE

Mr Alex McDougall  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London  
WC1H 8ND

Direct Dial: 020 7973 3785

Our ref: P00445369

6 May 2015

Dear Mr McDougall

**ARTHUR WEST HOUSE 79 FITZJOHN'S AVENUE LONDON NW3 6PA**

Thank you for your letter of 27th April 2015 notifying us of the amendments to the proposed redevelopment of Arthur West House, 79 Fitzjohn's Avenue, London NW3 6PA (Application No 2014/7851/P).

My earlier letter of 17th February 2015 suggested a reduction in scale and the increased setting back of the building footprint would lead to an improved relationship with the surrounding Conservation Area.

I note that the building line has been brought back further from Fitzjohn's Avenue and that this will result in a better relationship with the adjacent buildings and improved planting opportunities. This amendment is to be welcomed.

There has been a reduction in the overall height of the structure by 1.5m. The particular benefit that has arisen here is a much improved relationship between the parapet of the proposed building and the eaves line of the adjacent properties. However, the upper two storeys remain disproportionately large through their sheer vertical nature. No other buildings in the Conservation Area resolve their rooftops in this fashion.

Despite the welcome reduction in height that these amendments bring about, the overall bulk of the proposed structure will be taller than that of the existing building, with the exception of its corner tower. The harm resulting from the 'excessive height' of Arthur West House as identified in the Conservation Area appraisal would not therefore be wholly mitigated. Options to reduce the harmful visual impact of these upper two storeys should be fully explored to the Council's satisfaction, these could include the removal of an upper storey or reconfiguration through setting back.

Ultimately your council will need to be convinced that an opportunity to better reveal or enhance the significance of the Conservation Area has been sought, and that any less than substantial harm has been outweighed through public benefits (NPPF Paragraphs 134 and 137).



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### **Recommendation**

We would urge you to address the above issues, and recommend that the application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice. It is not necessary for us to be consulted again. However, if you would like further advice, please contact us to explain your request.

Please note that this response relates to historic building and historic area matters only. If there are any archaeological implications to the proposals it is recommended that you contact the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service for further advice (Tel: 020 7973 3712).

Yours sincerely

**Matthew Cooper**

Assistant Inspector of Historic Buildings

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