

ADVICE from Primrose Hill Conservation Area Advisory Committee

12A Manley Street, London NW1 8LT

6 May 2015

1-9 Princess Road, NW1 8JN 2015/1849/P

Strongest possible objection. The application goes against recent and established policies and policy guidance: it fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

1. The proposals would involve the destruction of the sloping hipped roofs to both ends of this terrace of 5 houses. The terrace is identified in the *Primrose Hill conservation area statement*, the current assessment and policy guidance for the conservation area, as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area (p. 25).

2. The roof, which has eaves to the main external walls with hips at both ends, is largely unimpaired by later alterations.

3. Camden's current, and recently approved, *Planning Guidance, Design, CPG1* (2014) is explicit and unambiguous at p. 40 para 5.8 that: 'A roof alteration or addition is likely to be unacceptable' where 'Complete terraces or groups of buildings have a roof line that is largely unimpaired by alterations or extensions, even when a proposal involves adding to the whole terrace or group as a coordinated design.' This is the case here.

4. Camden's *Planning Guidance, Design*, is part of the LDF, fulfilling policies CS14 and DP25. It states unambiguously (at 2.6) 'Core Strategy policy CS14 requires development schemes to improve the quality of buildings, landscaping and public spaces and we will not approve design which is inappropriate to its context or fails to improve the character of an area.'

5. More specifically, the houses are components of a distinctive group of terraced houses within Princess Road. Their eaves and the hips at both ends are a roof form distinctive from most of the terraces in Princess Road, which have roofs behind raised parapets. This distinction is important to the significance of the character and appearance of the conservation area where these differences demonstrate different dates of building, and different historic building projects. The proposal to replace the roof and raise the flank walls would substantially harm this distinctive character. It is for this reason that policy guidance PH18-19 categorizes this group of houses as being buildings where 'roof extensions and alterations which change the shape and form of the roof are unlikely to be acceptable.' (*Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement*, pp. 31-32). This policy is particularly important in this case because of the unimpaired character of the roofs to the group and the group's distinctive status in Princess Road. Consequently the proposal would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is the sort of harm which conservation areas were devised to prevent.

6. The policy guidance we cite at PH 18-19 has been upheld on appeal ref. APP/X5210/A08/2086723/ for 30 Edis Street, London NW1 8LE (Camden ref 2008/0977/P) where the issue of the distinctive nature of a group of houses with a comparable roof form in Edis Street, and the policy guidance at PH18-19, was given substantial weight by the Inspector in dismissing the appeal on an application to change the roof (his para 4). He further noted (his para 6) that the proposals 'would also fail to reflect the requirement of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that

special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of CAs'.

7. There is, in this case, a further, supplementary, consideration. The property is adjacent to the Listed Building at 4 St Mark's Square (itself abutting 36 Regent's Park Road): the flank wall and hipped roof of no. 1 Princess Road face the rear of this house (no. 4). The hipped roof at 1 Princess Road complements the hipped roof at the Listed no 4 St Mark's Square. To raise the flank gable as proposed would be intrusive into this balance of roofs, harming the setting, and thus the significance, of the Listed Building. We acknowledge that the roof to 4 St Mark's Square is complex in its forms, with a chimney adding to the whole rear wall, but the main elevation to Princess Road, the most relevant one to the current application, has the line of the eaves, with the roof slope, as a dominant architectural line, and it is this which relates to the eaves at no. 1 Princess Road. The complementary roof forms are also visible in views from St Mark's Square.

8. We see no public benefit outweighing the harm to both the conservation area or the significance of the Listed Building and its setting.

9. The proposals fail to preserve or enhance the recognized character and appearance of the conservation area.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Richard Simpson' with a horizontal line extending from the end.

Richard Simpson FSA
Chair