

For the attention of Obote Hope

From Andrew Morris and Quan Hoang, of Flat 1, 5 Hillfield Road.

We would like to object to the proposed plans for 3 Hillfield Road, application 2015/2075/P.

Firstly, we believe the plans and application are both inaccurate and inconsistent, and without being so, it's not possible to accurately assess them for their impact on us and the neighbourhood. It would also therefore be impossible to verify, post any development, whether in fact the work is done to specification.

1. If you refer to the cross section drawing, the small original kitchen that sticks out into garden is shown to be much larger than it actually is and may underplay the significance of the proposed extension. Its eaves are 2.10-2.15m high, with some of the top parts of the roof going up to 2.9 metres. The plans show its eaves to be intersected by the roof of the new extension whose height is listed as 2.9m. The thickness of the roof in the plans are around 25cm, so combined they do not make up the 2.9m mentioned in the plans - at least 55cm out. The cross section diagram shows virtually all of the bay window still being visible above the extension roof, and that the top of the proposed roof is no higher than the floorboards on the 1st floor.

When you then consider the rear elevation drawing, it shows the extension height coming up right to the window sill of the bay window which is not consistent with the above observations, and would also mean it is significantly higher than the 1st floor floorboards.

These 2 inconsistencies are both misleading, and depending which diagram you look at, it can look less impacting than it really is, but also gives scope for the developer to implement differently.

Based on this, I would request the plans are refused.

We would also like to request that the applicant's diagram claiming light levels should be dismissed entirely. It shows from the highest window which faces out into our garden and it is comparing to the existing plans, not proposed, with a 45 degree angle, not the 25 that Camden use. It also shows our windows and doors completely out of scale (double doors are much smaller than shown).

Please see attached pdf for annotated plan drawings.

2. There are other inaccuracies in the application; I am not suggesting the applicant is dishonest, but we believe the 2 points below are not as stated on the application.

a) the applicant has stated no trees or bushes will be removed. A large apple tree has already been cut down and a number of other large trees along the fence have been cut back. There are trees further down the garden that will need to be cut down in order for the excavation of land and steps up to the garden.

b) the applicant has also stated the property is vacant. This is, or has not been the case, as someone has been living there for the last year or so.

The significance of these 2 points does not necessarily impact the application, but we feel it's important to point them out as they wouldn't be on the application form if not potentially relevant, and in our case, will reduce the green feel of the gardens.

Objections:

On the subject of the actual plans, from what we can tell, we would like to object in the strongest way, for the following reasons:

1. Loss of light - this is the single most important concern we have. There will be a massive reduction of light to our property. The original design of these buildings was for the side inlet to provide light into the property along with privacy, and even the small single story kitchen was designed to be low height and not taking up the full width of the protruding part of the buildings. This maintains a flow of extremely valuable light to the rear parts of the properties. The original design would therefore be compromised if these plans are to be permitted. (Please see annotated photos A and B)

We do not get much light into the rear of the property as it currently is, even with the light well/in-let; my partner works from the room with double doors facing out and finds it quite gloomy at times, however, she rests assured that in the afternoon when the sun comes round, albeit at a low height, that the light shines back around to the rear of the property which is very much valued - this would never happen again if the plans go ahead. We also plan to start a family and that room would serve as a bedroom for our family; I'm not sure it would be fair to have children growing up in such a dark room with artificial light 100% of the time. It's worth pointing out that our ceilings are of a lower height than number 3.

The applicant's application form states the inlet serves no useful purpose. I would like to re-iterate it does indeed have a significant purpose as explained above. The plans of leaving just the inner most part of this as a lightwell, will have virtually no benefit for the applicant's property; due to the aspect of the property, the light needs to come round from the rear, from the north westerly side (Please see Photo C), and as result they will have insufficient natural/ambient light to their property.

This will also increase both number 3's and our heating and energy costs by reducing light.

From reading CPG6, we found sections 6 in general and 10.18 particularly relevant.

2. Overshadowing - the plans will make our property have a feeling of being trapped with such a high wall being so close to the property, extending out 11.5 metres from the beginning of our garden which is overbearing and impacts on privacy and the amenity.

This will overshadow our courtyard, windows and our garden area. The proposed 2.9 m is too high and does not take into account that their property is already significantly higher being on a hill and the proposed green roof will have plants growing at least 10 cm high.

From reading CPG6, we found section 7 relevant, particularly 7.9.

3. Outlook - Green Woodland Feel -The gardens themselves are very special and precious. They are a rarity in London, being almost that of a woodland, particularly at this end of Hillfield Road, and it would be a massive shame and loss for this to change - these plans imply the destruction of further greenery into the gardens. This amenity is there for many to enjoy, all the neighbouring properties plus people who walk up Gondar Gardens can enjoy the outlook of the gardens (Please see photo E)

We can currently see much greenery from our windows, across the gardens with the trees on public land running up Gondar Gardens. This has already started to be impacted due to the building boards the applicant has placed in the garden; the loss of light has already been noticeable and the end result will be a wall of bricks. (Please see photo D)

The collective impact of losing so much light, being overshadowed and loss of amenity of a relaxed, garden feel, we believe will break our right to enjoy a peaceful life in our home.

The dominant structure reaching over 11.5 metres into the garden at the full width of the property, is completely out of keeping of the original character and will impact the feel of this end of the street as well as taking away any privacy or solace we find in our garden.
We rely on this green open garden space as a place of relaxation and dealing with stresses of life and work.

From reading CPG6, we found section 7 relevant

4. Guttering and Surface Water - the plans are to build right on top of the boundary wall, yet the roof is flat and there is no guttering shown. Whilst there are details of a 'green' roof, there is nothing to show that heavy rainfall will not overflow into our property. Even if there's soil on the roof, water has to go somewhere and with recent years having record heavy rainfall with climate change suggesting this to continue to worsen, this may not be sufficient and resulting water could spill over (including soil etc).

The details by the vendor of the roof refer to guttering and how important it is to keep clear and maintain the roof and weeding etc. I don't believe this roof is appropriate to be used right up onto a border. We have concerns regarding what access will be required for this maintenance.

We also have further concerns regarding the maintenance of this green roof, as their current garden has been neglected over the past few years with people living there. Because of this, we have had damage to the fence and our shed due to over growing trees and ivy damaging the wood.

Lastly, with the slope of the property and boggy gardens in winter, we already have a lot of issues with surface water coming down into the property; there is no where for it to flow to and removing this green space, excavating into the garden plus drainage concerns I can't see that this won't further these problems.

Other comments:

Other extensions referenced in application:

#84 is south facing with the extension sunken low into the ground. So it neither has the same impact on light or overshadowing.

#2 is also south facing and replaced a conservatory with no existing in-let or neighbouring property.

#47 - extension is much less dominating with glass sloped roof and doesn't appear to come out as far into garden and original building height is less.

#49 was done in two stages with the second appearing to be competing with number 47's build out justified by not going out further than properties either side.

Our end of the gardens are well preserved with a woodland feel, and the only major extension is Gondar House which we comment on below.

If the fact that these were approved is because of each neighbours ever competing extensions, then we will ultimately lose these gardens and such great areas of green space.

Example of similar plan being rejected:

Gondar House, NW6 1QG (next to 1 Hillfield Road)

This extension was proposed to come out a similar distance, blocking light and overshadowing number 1 Hillfield Road. The final approved plans are in keeping with the properties on this street, leaving an in-let in place, the property even is at an angle working away from number 1 Hillfield. It also

has a similar single storey further part which doesn't cover the full width, again preserving the light. If this had gone ahead as originally proposed then number 1 Hillfield would have lost similar light and feel entrapped the same as we could be if these plans are approved.

Cumulative effect of the bulk of this building.

There are already plans for a roof dormer, which potentially work has already commenced (scaffolding has been up for 7 months although no actual work has appeared to have commenced).

The approved single extension under permitted development ref 2014/3320/P

Whilst potentially not relevant, but since the proposed plans refer to them, I would like to raise that from my understanding the approved PD plans for a single storey extension are not permitted development and should have required full planning because the extension is stepped/using side elevation and going outwards, and is wider than 50% of the property.

http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/100806_PDforhouseholders_TechnicalGuidance.pdf

Pages 21 and 23-26 show this.

Thank you very much for reading this, we appreciate this is quite a lengthy objection but we feel very strongly that these plans should not be approved.

Kind regards,

Andrew Morris and Quan Hoang
Flat 1
5 Hillfield Road
London
NW6 1QD

