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| 2015/2658/P | Ellen Gates | 11 Grove Terrace<br>London<br>NW5 1PH | 16/06/2015 22:34:30 | OBJ | I am chair of the Grove Terrace Residents Association and I am writing on behalf of the members to object to the proposals set out in these applications.<br><br>We have no objections in principal to an extension of roughly the form and size proposed. However, we do have objections to a number of details of the current proposals.<br><br>Context<br><br>Nos 6-27 Grove Terrace is listed Grade II* and is located in the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. The Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Statement records that 'Nos 6-27, with their curtilages . . . are an unusually comprehensive survival of an 18th century piece of speculative development and are listed Grade II*.' It notes that 'The Terrace reads as a unified whole but has a pleasing rhythm within it.'<br><br>The rear gardens are within the curtilage of the listed buildings and sit at the heart of the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. They are bordered by brick walls of the same age as the buildings. These gardens are long and narrow, so that each house in Grove Terrace has the benefit of views over at least three or four gardens to each side—an unsurpassed example of borrowed landscape. Together they form a large open green space that has existed since Grove Terrace was built in the eighteenth century.<br><br>We therefore believe very strongly that it is essential to protect and preserve this space and its historic character.<br><br>Form and size of rear extension<br><br>The proposal is for a rear extension, which would be in addition to an existing closet wing. The Design and Access Statement indicates that the new extension would project by 4 metres from the existing line of the main house and by 2.6 metres from the line of the existing closet wing.<br><br>The Association has always been very concerned about the building of new structures in the gardens of Grove Terrace. Although there are numerous variations in the form of existing extensions (most of which are Victorian in age), with one exception they are all modest in size and of a fairly traditional form. (The one exception, at number 19, was strenuously objected to by residents, refused by Camden, and only allowed on appeal.)<br><br>We note with approval that the proposal is for an extension at ground floor level only. On that basis, we believe the general form and size of the extension is acceptable, subject to one qualification. It is not possible to tell from the submitted documentation how the proposed extension would relate to the existing extensions on the neighbouring properties, numbers 27A and 26. We understand that the extension on number 26 is approximately 3.6 metres from the main house, so believe that the proposed extension at number 27 would project beyond its neighbour. We believe strongly that the new extension should not project further into the garden than the neighbouring extensions. This is important not only to prevent the extension intruding into views from the houses of the immediate |

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neighbours but also to protect the views up and down the gardens, which as noted above is one of the most significant features of the Terrace. We also believe that any larger extension would be out of keeping with the historic nature of the Terrace and the scale of its development up to the present.

Potential excavation of lower ground floor

It is not clear from the submitted documentation whether it will be necessary to carry out any excavations at lower ground floor level. Although we are advised by the owners that no significant excavation is intended, the papers do not include an elevation to show how the existing depth of the LGF may be increased by the proposal. It does appear that the width of the LGF will be increased, to bring it right up to the boundary wall with No 26, and this in itself is a concern. Nor is any construction management plan submitted which would explain how any excavation would be carried out.

We would object strongly if any significant excavation is required for the extension. The houses in Grove Terrace have minimal foundations, and the garden walls have virtually no foundations. Moreover, the houses are located on London clay, which is prone to shrinking / swelling, heave and movement, and there is frequent movement of the houses in Grove Terrace. At present, the houses tend to move in concert, as a block, so there is limited visual evidence of such movement on the exterior. However, there is serious concern among the residents that disturbing the foundations of one house could have significant impacts on the stability of other houses in the Terrace. If any significant excavation is proposed, there is a significant risk that not only neighbouring properties but also other houses on the Terrace could be adversely affected.

In any event, no excavation should be permitted without the submission of a construction management plan explaining in detail how the excavation would be carried out and how other properties in the Terrace would be protected.

Light pollution

The Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy specifically notes the ‘quality of darkness at night’ that characterises the conservation area. The Grove Terrace gardens contribute significantly to that quality. At present, they constitute a large area of darkness with minimal external lighting; this is extremely rare in London. There are a number of features of the proposed extension, however, which would create night-time illumination that would impact negatively on this existing quality of darkness.

We object strongly to the proposed roof light in the extension. This would introduce a large area of glass which would not only be intrusive to immediate neighbours, but would also erode the character of this dark area more generally. There are no enforceable means of preventing this. Day-time reflection would also be intrusive. There would be no significant gain to the occupants of the house, as the area of the proposed extension receives limited daylight due to sun angle.

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The proposed glass doors in the end wall of the extension and the window in the side wall of the extension would also contribute to light pollution and the erosion of the special character of these gardens. Although there is currently a set of glass doors in the main house, this is at lower ground level. Moving the doors up to ground floor level and projecting them 4 metres into the garden will significantly increase the negative impact of the light pollution.

Detriment to historic character

The style of the extension is consciously 'contemporary'. For example, although the main structure is proposed to be brick, the doors and windows use slim metal frames, rather than wood. We believe this approach is inappropriate for a Grade II* listed property. It would be inconsistent with the style of the vast majority of extensions on the Terrace and would detract from the historic character of the Terrace. We believe that traditional materials should be used (such as wood for frames), even if they are used in a more contemporary style.

For these reasons the proposed development in its current form should be refused.

We would like to be notified of the date for any committee consideration of the applications and to have a representative attend and speak at any such meeting.