

Mr Gideon Whittingham  
East Area Team  
Planning and Regeneration  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London WC1H 8EQ



10A South Grove, London N6 6BS

**By email only – 30 June, 2015**

Dear Mr Whittingham,

**RE: Planning Application Reference 2015/0441/P – 53 Fitzroy Park, N6 6JA**

On behalf of the Highgate Society, I write to submit our very strong objections to the revised proposals for 53 Fitzroy Park, as appended to the above application.

Building design

1. No alterations to the original exterior design appear to have been made as part of the present revision, and therefore we repeat our view that the proposed house is out of keeping with its immediate environs in form, style, scale, bulk and materials.
2. As has been pointed out by many of the other objections, and as we noted in our letter of 5 March, 2015, the building mass above ground floor level is significantly larger in this scheme – 175% larger – than that which was detailed in the approved application, 2011/1682/P, thus clearly illustrating the unacceptable expansion of visible built structure which will occupy the majority of the perspective into the property. As such, the proposed house remains in conflict with the fundamental principle of its situation within the Fitzroy Open Space, a fact perhaps best illustrated by Wolff Architects' own Proposed Views of the house, provided on pages 26-29 of the Design and Access Statement. Many of these hypothetical views also seem to depict trees and shrubs which will be removed during the building process, if they have not already been so.
3. We remain unsatisfied with the treatment of the façades. Notwithstanding the very costly nature of the materials which are proposed, we do not believe the house is appropriate to the area. It has a harsh and industrial aspect, which is out of keeping with the semi-rural, verdant quality of Fitzroy Park. Nor do the architects address in their rebuttal our previous assessment of the materials chosen – stark white stone and dark bronze – as austere and visually intrusive. They state only that they have aimed at a simplicity of detail and used high quality cladding, but these are aspects of the design which have no bearing on how the physical structure in its entirety will manifest itself or be perceived.

Landscaping and open space considerations

Our objections to the impact this proposal will have on the aboriginal environment of Fitzroy Park are unchanged from our previous letter. We remain particularly unhappy that so many large-crowned mature trees from the centre of the site – trees which provide a visible depth and expanse of foliage stretching westward toward the Heath – are to be removed. Their replacement with multiple low-scale shrubs and thinly leaved upright specimens is inadequate.

Excavation, traffic and amenity Issues

We note that the primary focus of the revisions currently under consideration has been to correct the errors and misstatements of the previous Construction Traffic Management Plan. We wish to

emphasise further that the need to recalculate the entire CTMP represents a worrying justification of the very deep concerns expressed so many previous objections to this scheme.

1. Projected traffic is still well in excess of what might reasonably be expected from a private home renovation, and is estimated to reach levels four times greater than that predicted for the large-scale, municipal Ponds Project being carried out by the Corporation of London. Moreover, we understand that while it is proposed to restrict tipper size to two-axle 10-t HGVs, similar intentions for the Ponds Project have run into difficulties as these smaller lorries are increasingly unavailable for service, and a reversion to 20-t and even 30-t vehicles may be required to complete the dam works.
2. We remain very unhappy with the degree and duration of disruption which will be caused by such an enormous project. The inconvenience forced on all affected parties – neighbours, allotment holders, Bowling Club members, pedestrians, cyclists, Heath and ponds users – is not acceptable simply for the benefit of a single individual. Footfall and cycle traffic along Fitzroy Park is continuous throughout the day, as identified by the traffic survey commissioned by Wolff Architects from Motion; motorised vehicles pass approximately once every three minutes. With swept path analyses showing a minimum of five-point manoeuvres to access the site, executed in such tight conditions as to provide no peripheral buffer nor allow any margin for error, we estimate that the road will be closed to all users for more than half an hour per HGV journey, leading to a build-up of traffic on each of these occasions.
3. Severe road damage will be inevitable, despite claims to the contrary, and not just in Fitzroy Park, but also Merton Lane which will bear the bulk of the holding time for the HGV rotas. And it is important to stress again that the inconvenience such an intense construction project will cause is not limited to its duration, but also encompasses the ensuing effects of this destruction of road surfaces, curbs and pavements, as well as collateral damage to boundary walls, roadside trees and other general infrastructure. We maintain our objection to the exemption of this application from the CIL on the grounds that it is a Self Build property, and believe there is clear evidence it should at the very least be subject to an S106 Agreement to deal with the negative impacts it will have on the locality.

We would finally refer to the recent Planning Inspector Appeal Decision in the case of Athlone House, APP/X5210/A/14/2220872, which determined incontrovertibly that there is “a requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving designated heritage assets,” and that those assets comprise:

- the overarching aspects of the significant character within a Conservation Area; and
- the well- and long-established views of open land, which are intrinsically linked to the historic relevance of an area.

On the basis of the preceding points, the Highgate Society strongly objects to this redevelopment scheme for 53 Fitzroy Park, and submits that the planning application should be rejected.

Yours sincerely,

TR Blackshaw  
Highgate Society Planning Group

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