

Objection on 2015/4396/P (152 Royal College Street) by Rochester Conservation Area

We object to the application:

1. Conservation setting.

The site has strong heritage interest and is very visible.

It lies within Camden Broadway Conservation Area and is significantly visible from Regent's Canal, Regents Canal Conservation Area and the Grade ii Listed College Road bridge. These are material planning considerations.

Camden Broadway was identified as a Conservation Area only in 2005, and Conservation Area Statement in 2009. There are therefore a variety of buildings and environments that do not balance the heritage interest. Neither 158-164 Royal College Street nor Reachview Close would necessarily be endorsed now. The present application, however, is taken in relation to the whole existing environment.

There has been a change in direction from separating simply 'old' parts of Camden into conservation areas, towards identifying the broader urban grain and historical patterns. Since 2013, there has been identification of Local List assets across the borough with a wider range of features. Equally, in the current review of the Camden Local Plan, and in reviewing its own conservation area statement, neighbouring South Kentish Town CAAC is concerned to ensure all historical patterns of the dense urban area of North Camden Town are valued, and offers support in addressing conservation issues in Camden Broadway.

There is insufficient attention to heritage aspects

2. Setting

The surrounding design is Georgian



Camden Town originated in the Georgian period. The Regent's Canal was built by 1820 - it is bridged (Grade II listed, adjacent to the site) by Royal College Street. Greenwood's 1827 Map

http://users.bathspa.ac.uk/greenwood/map_a4h.html#bottom shows (then) Prebend Street and Randolph Street already laid out. Already, at the northwest corner of College Street and Randolph Street is a terrace. Camden Broadway conservation area statement says of this row: "a uniform three storey terrace of yellow stock brick with shopfronts to ground floor and first floor windows in shallow recessed round arches... though somewhat altered in appearance this terrace retains a significant historic character and appearance typical of the Camden Broadway Conservation Area, including generally sympathetic shopfronts with historic features such as corbelling..." This description also applies to Nos. 154 and 156, which are in the

same character – three-storey, valley roofs, stock brick, no stucco, revealed arched window frames at first floor, wooden shop front and York stone front area – and therefore also central in character to the Conservation Area requiring sympathetic complementarity of the vacant site No. 152.



Although the 1970s building Nos. 158-164 has a mansard roof, the Georgian houses, including Nos 152 & 154, were only three storey. Camden's current policy is to resist roof extensions if it breaks the existing original (here historic) line.

There is insufficient attention to the setting and the architectural and historical significance of the area.

3. Design

The design is not appropriate for the site in North Camden Town

[The scale of plans submitted is 1:100, but 1:50 are required by Camden for conservation areas.]

The facade materials are different from most adjacent and opposite properties, increasing heterogeneity rather than re-finding the original balance.

The full blank brick side-wall that would be normal for Georgian end-of-terrace houses, and has been respected in the adjacent rebuilt corner houses at Rudolph Street, is lost in the proposal.

Ground floor plates, opening glass picture windows, and a railing along the length of the Baynes Street side are inappropriate in a setting where brick / sash or casement windows are the norm.

The first floor sliding windows facing the canal and bridge would be deeply intrusive to the urban landscape.

The proposed fifth floor would also be highly visible (the Design Statement say 'not noticeable from the street', but gives no sightline calculations). Note that Camden Broadway Conservation Area Statement says that No.195 Royal College Street opposite, also at the boundary of both with Regents Canal and Camden Broadway Conservation Areas, "is marred by a highly visible roof extension".

The plan sections show the top floor room under a sloping roof may provide insufficient headroom. It is odd to place a bedroom on the ground floor rear, behind the retail shop service entrance

The entrance design is incoherent. The public entrance to the 'shop' through a side-door on the facade, as if to the maisonette upwards, is less welcoming than the traditional London shop entrance. Meanwhile, the residential entrance through side

'bronze sliding gates' onto a 'grate / scissor lift', which is also the basement service lift, has an equally uncomfortable feel.

While there is a competent basement impact statement, the design is deficient. There is insufficient natural light or natural ventilation to achieve environmental standards for the offices.

The soil analysis does demonstrate a previous basement, but a cellar – for storage of the shop above, or for holding animals and stores for household above. There height of only 2.1m was not habitable.

There are significant concerns about the design

4. Sunlight report.

The proposed back extension is too large

While the analysis has looked at shading from the building, it has only addressed windows. The analysis does not acknowledge that a two-storey extension would substantially reduce sunlight across the whole rear area of No 154, which has no back extension (although previously a lean-to back privy). There is a narrow 6ft brick wall between the Nos.154 and 156. A similar 6 ft brick wall would be expected for the road side at No 152.

The Sunlight Report states that 'there are no gardens to the north of the property' which is clearly incorrect (even if at present hard-surfaced). The modelling forgets the impact on the back gardens of 154 and 156 of the proposed two-storey extension.

Nearby, no 108 St Pancras Way is an example of a property built in the same period, also with rear facing northeast, where it has been required not to build a side extension at first floor in the current restoration, and to restore the 6ft wall.



154 Royal College St.



108 St Pancras Way / Wilmot Place