15 Oak Village, London NW5 4QP 29.09.2015

Objection Planning application 2015/5082/P 1 Oak Village

We object to this application on a number of grounds.

1. **Local List**

This property is a non designated heritage asset included on Camden’s Local List because of the architectural and townscape significance of the surviving houses in Oak Village, Elaine Grove and Julia Street (except 14 Oak Village which is excluded because of its different architecture).

The degree of intactness, uniformity and high level of preservation is cited as the main reason it is a striking and attractive townscape.

Whilst the 1-21 block (where we live) is less uniform than the rest of Oak Village/Elaine Grove, there is still a high degree of identity and rhythm which is not respected in these plans.

These plans do not respect Oak Village’s character and attractiveness and reasons for its inclusion in the Local List. If local list inclusion is to mean anything, they should be rejected on these grounds alone.

1. **Overdevelopment**

All other houses in the 1-21 block are two-storey cottages designed in almost Georgian proportions with similar shaped back extensions. These plans create a three-storey building with asymmetrical back and roof gables, a building which will be much bigger and totally out of character with the rest of the Village.

As a double fronted house, 1 Oak Village can accommodate a larger ground floor extension than any other house in this Village apart from 21 Oak Village (also double fronted). However, increasing the depth of the house and current extension at first floor and creating an additional deep storey at roof level with a new gabled roof creates a dominating and bulky building inappropriate to its setting and represents a huge increase in the volume of the original cottage, contrary to DP 24.

*Back extensions*

Camden’s policy on back extensions is quite clear; they must be subordinate to the main building, unless specific circumstances apply. No such case has been made. The rebuilt back extension and gables will be bigger than the original house and do not “respect and preserve the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style”.

There are no plans provided to show the scale of the proposed back extension in comparison to 2 Oak Village. Careful consideration is needed to ensure that 2 Oak Village is not overwhelmed at first floor or roof level.

*Roof proposal*

The plans envisage increasing the height of the roof to cover the whole building. No 21 Oak Village (the nearest equivalent house and no 1’s matching pair at the end of terrace) was allowed a modest increase in the height of its roof. So a **similar** increase in height could be accommodated. However, it is important to ensure that it is a **similar** increase based on a match or near match to no 21, not an increase in height determined by other factors.

Any windows set in the front roof that are visible from the street are unacceptable and pierce the harmony of the unbroken roof scape. Non dormer windows set in the back roof are acceptable.

The roof gables are the worst and most unacceptable part of the proposals, a total violation. The two gables of differing depths are suitable for modern housing estate not a terrace of Victorian cottages and certainly not a terrace of cottages regraded as heritage assets. The design is inappropriate in context, the scale is too large and visually over prominent.It is out of style and sympathy with other roofs, it unbalances the building’s composition and the scale and proportion and height are overwhelming at the back of the house.

The finishing and materials, black painted timber cladding are out of character and contrary to DP24 and CPG1..

These plans should be rejected because:

* They take no account of Oak Village’s position on the Local List which applies to all included houses equally.
* They are overdevelopment of a Victorian cottage.
* The plans for both the back extension and the roof development are contrary to DP24 and CPG1 as are the finishing and materials.
* Accepting these proposals would open the way for a rash of other proposal from householders wanting extra space.

That the architects have so comprehensively ignored DP24 and CPG1 and failed to provide a design and access statement implies that they either haven’t bothered to consider Camden’s planning policies or they are confident that they will not be applied.

We are sympathetic to the applicants’ desire for more space and we would urge they to consider the approach adopted by 21 Oak Village after the owners plans for roof level expansion were rejected. This solution provided more extra space than no 1’s plans without detriment to the Village’s character, streetscape and neighbours.

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