

## Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee

57 Camden Mews  
London NW1 9BY

**Date:** 24 October 2015

**Planning application Reference:** 2015/5046/P

**Proposal:** Extension to existing family house and construction of a new family house in the driveway

**Summary:** The proposal will not enhance the Conservation Area and should be **rejected**. The height and volume of the proposal, the significant over development of the site and the loss of green space will damage the character of the Camden Mews

**Comments:**

1. Though the proposals are generally well developed, the drawings are technically inadequate
  - 1.1. Numerous aspects of the elevations such as absence of framing appear schematic, and some will clearly look different when detailed.
  - 1.1. Few colours are given and for such elements as render, window frames and 'opaque glass cladding', this will have a significant impact on the design
2. The height and volume of the proposal appear inappropriate in relation to neighbouring buildings
  - 2.1. Despite the proximity of Abingdon Close – a development that is identified as making a negative contribution to the Conservation Area Management Strategy - it is essential to consider the predominantly small scale of the Mews
  - 2.2. In relation to other buildings in Camden Mews which do not make a negative contribution, the added height of these houses, clearly visible looking up Camden Mews, would be harmful. Third storey developments are inappropriate for the Mews.
  - 2.3. In common with the recent proposal for No. 59, which we have also argued against, the unusually deep mews plots and set-back of the top floor keeps this bulk from directly overbearing the mews. However, they would set an unwelcome precedent, further eroding the important hierarchy between low mews structures and higher buildings in the

I Secretary: Hugh Lake, 17 Camden Square NW1 9UY

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main streets adjacent, enshrined in the Conservation Area Statement and Management Strategy as follows:

*The original character of the mews as subsidiary to the Square has largely been respected in the modern redevelopments, which are generally of two or two-and-a-half storeys and of a high design standard. Recent development at the top end towards York Way has three storeys, is clearly visible, and is damaging as it overbears the mews.*

Furthermore, the following statement relating to Murray Mews in 2011 has since become increasingly relevant to Camden Mews as well:

*The trend to intensify residential development means that house heights are incrementally increasing; most third floors are stepped back but care will be needed to ensure that this does not become the norm and that the original mews' scale remains dominant*

- 2.4. Squeezing two houses into this site would result in the loss of most of the site's un-built space. The paved side parking and shed area offers no benefit to adjacent properties, but the loss of front and rear garden spaces would be harmful.
- 2.5. Although the rhythm of individual openings and structural forms, ignoring the undue prominence of the structures, would enhance the Camden Mews streetscape, details are needed for the slatted and perforated screens shown to the entire ground floor façade. Without this information it is difficult to ascertain whether the openings are large enough to avoid giving a cloistered, forbidding street frontage.
3. Whilst some of the materials are durable in themselves, without more detail it is difficult to establish their likely durability in context.
4. The introduction of a third storey will negatively impact on the privacy of 208 Camden Road
5. Sizeable shrubs in front of the house, which soften the tightly built character of the mews, will be lost in the development.
  - 5.1. Front garden planting is cited as an important element in the Conservation Area Statement and its loss here would harm Camden Mews.
6. The proposal involves significant overdevelopment of the site.
  - 6.1. The planning application states that no car parking spaces currently exist on the site and none would be lost, but this is incorrect. The double gates lead to a car parking space, currently occupied by a silver-coloured car.
  - 6.2. Loss of this generous parking space would increase demand on the very limited parking available in Camden Mews unless no parking permit were to be allowed for either proposed house on this site.

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7. Whilst the floor plans are skilfully worked out, the abnormally narrow house to the southwest – scaling less than 3.3M wide – makes its viability as a family questionable. It would certainly feel uncomfortable.
8. We strongly oppose this application.
  - 8.1. Its bulk would be harmful to the character of Camden Mews.
  - 8.2. Its approval would further fuel pressure to permit practically full three-storey houses throughout the Mews
  - 8.3. There would be a loss of the important green space fronting the Mews.
  - 8.4. It is a clear example of overdevelopment and contrary to the safeguards enshrined in the Camden Square Conservation Area Statement and Management Strategy.



**Signed:**

David Blagbrough  
Chair  
Camden Square CAAC

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