

Objections to 2015/5761/P

1a Winscombe Street

from Kate Disney

41a Chester Road

N19 5DF

I wish to object to the planning application for 1a Winscombe Street on the grounds that it would reduce amenity to neighbours, spoil the area and potentially damage trees. I have detailed my reasoning below.

I live at 41a Chester Road in the maisonette covering the ground and lower ground floor with full access to the garden. The proposed extension of 1a Winscombe Street will not only effect me severely but it will also effect every house, flat and community building that makes up the block of buildings that can be seen on the location plan (os extract) enclosed by Bertram Street, Chester Road and Winscombe Street. The rear of the houses on Winscombe Street and Bertram Street are currently uniform, unaltered and back onto each other leaving a corridor of small but pleasant rear gardens down the middle. This can be seen well on pages 5&7 of the design and access statement. I also think that the proposed plans contradict with the aims of Camden Planning Guidance on numerous points that I will go into.

Although the proposed extension will apparently not be visible from the street or alter the front of the building it will be highly visible —if not dominant and overbearing— from almost every other residence on the block. Given that most people gain their utility from looking out the rear of ones property, over green space rather than looking out the front, over the road, I propose that the view from the rear of the property should be given considerable weight given the large amount of people who will be affected and the amenity lost.

“...it is often the uniform look of the front of the houses that is the most attractive element in a conservation area. The use of the same materials, the same design of

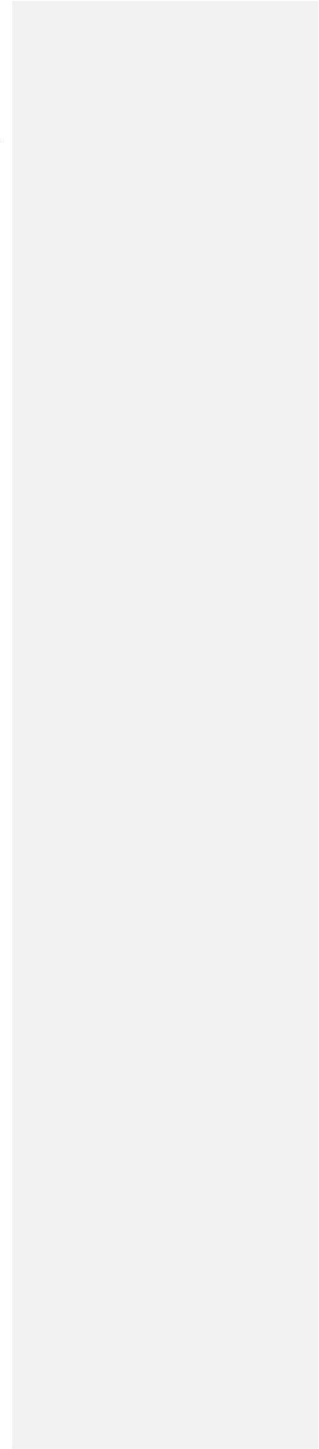
windows, doors and porches, uninterrupted roofscapes, parapets and chimneys all work together to give the area its architectural charm and character; it feels nice to be there (pg. 14)¹.”

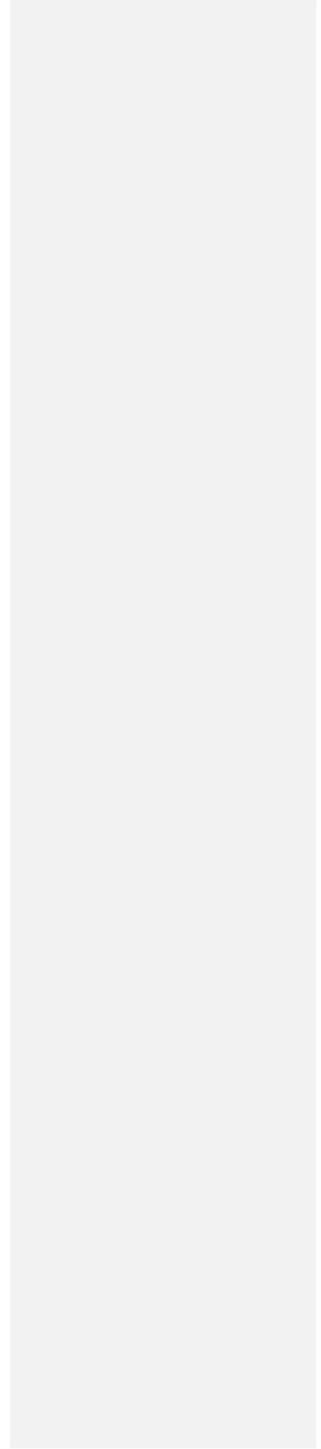
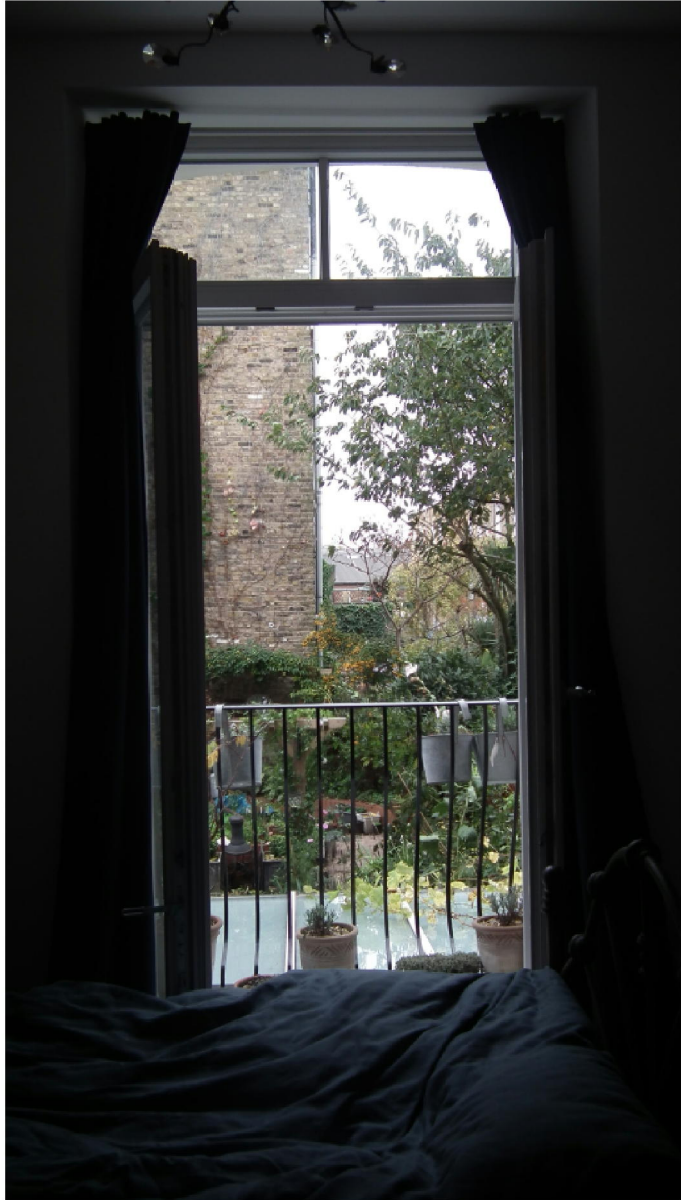
The block of houses currently has this “uniform look” and “charm” and most residents are delighted to be there but the proposed extension would completely spoil this. There has been no concern in the use of the same materials or in the design to make it any less overbearing. Any use of minimal materials such as glass merely leads to enormous problems of overlooking and loss of privacy to a great many residents around them especially as there has been no consideration for light spillage, glare or reflections in accordance with CPG6. One would expect such problems given the small size of the rear gardens on the block meaning that the neighbours directly behind are already within the 18m recommended minimum distance that is good practice for habitable rooms of different units to be directly facing each other, including balconies (CPG 6: Amenity). The two-storey extension reduces this to approx 14.7m with no measures to reduce overlooking and lack of privacy. The single storey extension reduces this to 8.1m with a planter and a hedge being the only measures used to protect privacy. This is completely unacceptable when there is no need for the extension. The single storey extension and roof terrace will also bring 41 and 43 Chester Road within approximately 10m of habitable rooms (including balconies) from different units facing each other.

Aside from the damage done to the block I would like to raise some objections that I have as the owner and resident of 41a Chester Road, most of which are entirely applicable to 43a and to some extent the residences of 39a and 45a Chester Road, 2a, 2 and 4 Bertram Street and 3 Winscombe Street and possibly others. The houses on Chester Road do not have any privacy issues that I am aware of but the roof terrace would be a horrendous invasion of privacy where there is no need. People sat on the terrace would look directly into my master bedroom and en suite, which is at the same level as the proposed terrace and has a Juliette balcony with large

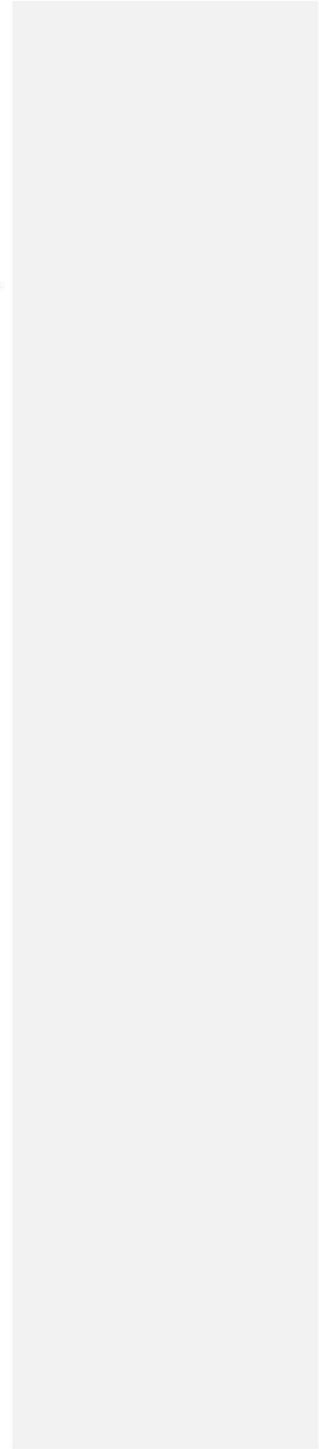
¹ Energy efficiency planning guidance for conservation areas. Camden

French doors. This would force me to keep the curtains closed, use electric lights and not benefit from solar gain. This South facing aspect is the whole reason I bought the property. Below is a picture from inside my bedroom. The view would be almost entirely replaced with the two-storey extension and the terrace will be directly opposite.

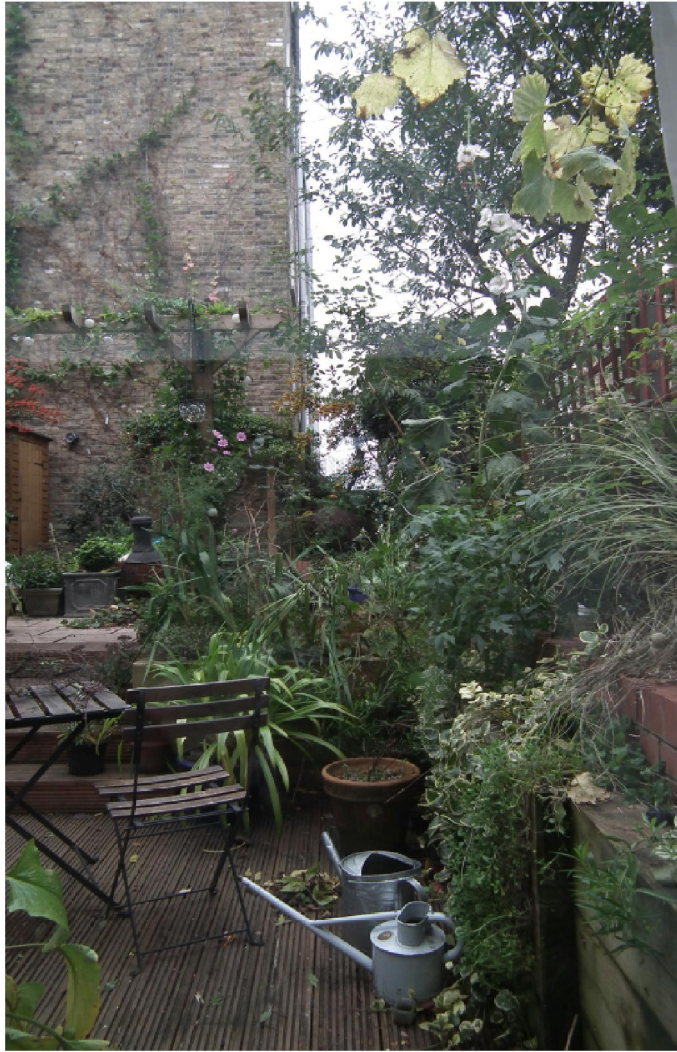




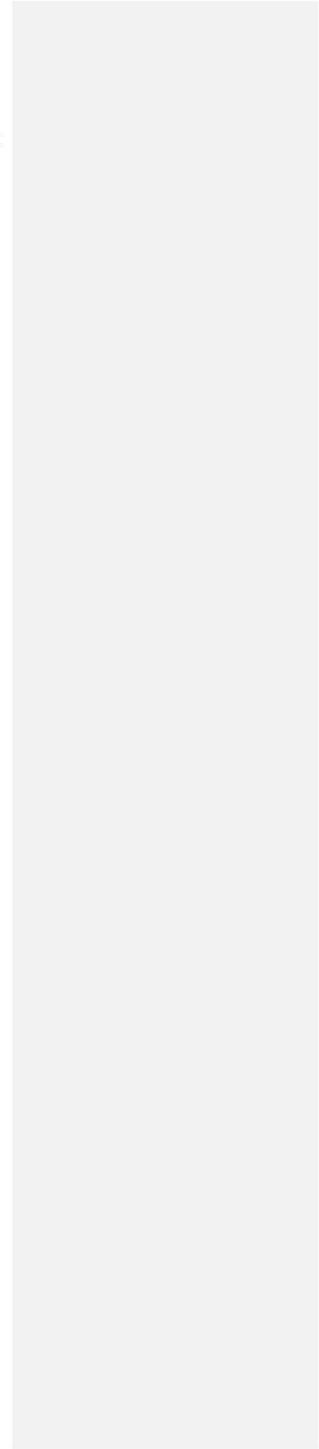
The terrace would also look directly into my kitchen and living room, which are located on the lower ground floor in an extension with glass bifolding doors and a glass roof. I work from home and normally use the extension and garden to exercise and work because it is warm and light filled. To be overlooked would drastically



reduce my amenity from this space. Below is a view from inside my property, sat



on my sofa with the bifold doors open.



The proposed terrace will be almost as high as my pergola with a further 1.5m of shrubbery for privacy. Furthermore, the two-storey extension is proposed to extend 1.5m, almost in line with my fence. The view from the rear of my house is already predominantly of a wall, but this extension would rob me of the only bit of light and view that I do get. The sun comes around here in the afternoon and this small amount of sun is precious to me. I would be horrified if my rear view was to be entirely wall and I was subjected to even more shade. In their drawing and access statement the applicants suggested that the gardens on Chester Road are at a higher level (pg 9). This is misleading as the gardens are at many different levels. The best way to understand this is to see it (though you can see it in the picture to an extent) and I would be more than happy to allow access to my house if it would [help](#).

Currently the garden is surrounded by a fence (made up of sleepers, planters and fence of varying heights depending on levels in the garden) of almost 6ft on all sides topped with trellis (or something similar) of about 1.5ft to keep my dog in. When seated in the living room or in the garden this fence is quite high enough. The fence abutting 1 Winscombe Street is South facing and any extension here would be equivalent to erecting a significantly taller fence on the most important side. As I already have a five storey building which blocks most of the light at the end of my garden I believe that special consideration should be given to the small amount of light that I do have access to with no further building allowed.

The proposed two-storey extension goes against CPG: Design Supplementary Guidance.

4.13 “extensions...that rise above the general height of neighbouring projections and nearby extensions, will be strongly discouraged (p33)².”

The only two neighbouring extensions are at 41a and 43a Chester Road and are at lower ground floor level only but here the gardens are significantly larger and there is no property directly facing the rear.

² http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=3369897&

Policy DP24 of Camden Development Policies states that

"The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

- a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;*
- b) the character and proportions of existing buildings where alterations and extensions are proposed;*
- c) the quality of materials used;"*.

I cannot see how this proposal had considered any of the above.

Furthermore, 24.13 goes on to say

"Development should not undermine any existing uniformity of street or ignore patterns or groupings of buildings. Overly large extensions can disfigure a building and upset its proportions. Extensions should therefore be subordinate to the original building in terms of scale and situation, unless, exceptionally, it is demonstrated that this is not appropriate given the specific circumstances of the building. Past alterations or extensions to surrounding properties should not necessarily be regarded as a precedent for subsequent proposals for alterations and extensions (p.94)."

Paragraph 24.14 of the same document requires that *"Design and Access statements should include an assessment of local context and character, and set out how the development has been informed by and responds to it."* Again, I cannot see that this was done adequately.

In paragraph 24.20 Camden Council states clearly that they *"resist development that occupies an excessive part of a garden, and where there is a loss of garden space which contributes to the character of the townscape."* Although just less than 50% of the garden will be taken over by the extension this is a mere technicality. The remaining garden is mainly shaded by fences and would not contribute to the character and identity of the area in the same way. Nor would it contribute to the environment and the drainage in the same way.

It should also be noted that the Pyrakanthor tree in the garden of 41 Chester Road is not where it has been shown on the plans in the application. It is in fact about 1cm away from the corner of 1 Winscombe Street where there is also a large forsythia. This area of 41 Chester Road is raised and the roots of this tree will be entirely exposed and thus very likely damaged during the building of any extension. This tree is important for my privacy but also provides berries for the birds and currently has a birds' nest in it. I imagine the cherry tree in 43 will also be damaged. Of more serious concern are the three trees in 43 Chester Road which are protected under Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 all of which would be affected by the development.

In summary, I do not consider any aspect of the proposal for 1 Winscombe Street suitable. The application has failed to consider any of the guidance offered by Camden, the extensions are overbearing, not in keeping with the surrounding buildings, dominates the host building and garden and overlooks and removes the privacy of a great many neighbours. I would ask Camden to dismiss this application in its entirety.