

Camden Square Conservation Area Advisory Committee

35 Camden Mews
London
NW1

Date: 10 December 2015

Planning application Reference: 2015/5583/P

Proposal: The partial demolition of a two storey 2-bedroom house and extension to a three storey 4-bedroom house including alterations to front and rear elevations

Summary: The CAAC strongly **objects** to the proposed construction: it will not enhance the conservation area. In particular the overall mass of the development will have a negative impact on both neighbouring buildings and the conservation area in general and with its third storey runs counter to the letter and spirit of the Conservation Area Management Plan.

Comments:

1. The drawings are technically inadequate
 - 1.1. Although windows are clearly defined, the frame sections are much too thin for timber and no colour is stated.
 - 1.2. Practically no detail is shown in elevations. This is particularly important for the proposed Cor-ten steel cladding, attractive in itself, but requiring very careful detailing to avoid its protective rust from staining materials below, both on this and adjoining properties. These elements have a significant bearing on whether any proposal is acceptable and their absence makes a thorough commentary impossible.
 - 1.3. In addition, roof parapets are shown to be very low and the roof-lights behind them are likely to be visible
2. The height and volume of the proposed construction do not relate well to neighbouring buildings and are totally inappropriate for the Mews
 - 2.1. Even though most of the house is set back from the street, the sheer rise to the second floor would be very dominant and the resultant facades would be higher than adjacent Mews buildings.
 - 2.2. As with other recent applications, the proposed development would further erode the important hierarchy between low mews structures and higher buildings in the main streets adjacent, enshrined in the Conservation Area Statement.
3. The dimensions of individual openings do not relate to neighbouring buildings

Secretary: Hugh Lake, 17 Camden Square NW1 9UY

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- 3.1. The window proportions are significantly larger than those of adjacent properties
- 3.2. The windows are joined in full horizontal bands which stress this harmful discrepancy of scale.
4. The proposed development does not support the regular sequence of features characteristic of neighbouring buildings
 - 4.1. The strong chequer-board reversal of solid and glazed areas in the stairway gives the design insensitive, simplistic prominence
 - 4.2. It will also require very careful detailing to work successfully.
5. As already noted, the use of Cor-ten steel cladding and the possibility of rust staining could in the longer term have a negative impact on the visual appearance of the development.
6. The addition of a third storey will have a significant impact on neighboring properties in Camden Road
 - 6.1. It will affect their privacy and could reduce the level of sunlight in their gardens
7. The proposed landscaping fails to preserve the existing characteristics of the area
 - 7.1. Until several years ago, this house had an open railing above the front boundary wall, making the well-planted front garden a particular delight in the predominantly tightly-built street. That benefit was weakened by replacement of the railing with a solid fence, but the trees behind continue to benefit Camden Mews.
 - 7.2. Only one tree is shown in the front garden, whereas there are also two narrower ones near each side boundary. The NE one at least would clearly be lost in this design. The increase of height of the front boundary wall would further reduce the benefit of this garden to the public realm of the Conservation Area and should be resisted.
8. Whilst the interior is generally well laid out, the absence of an enclosure to the staircase at first floor level will require expensive alternative provisions such as a sprinkler system or bulky fire shutters to satisfy Building Regulations.
9. This proposed structure would seriously harm the character of Camden Mews and should be rejected
 - 9.1. It is excessively bulky at second floor level and the lower parts of the Mews elevation further reduce any communal benefit from the reduced front garden.

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- 9.2. This proposal for a three storey building totally contravenes the adopted Management Statement for Camden Square Conservation Area in which Section 7.4 entitled 'New Development' states

The trend to intensify residential development means that building heights are under pressure to increase in the mews; care will be needed to ensure that this does not become the norm and that the original

It is critical that this point must receive the same consideration as all of Camden's other technical requirements in the Planning Department's decision.

10. It is assumed that any new or revised application will be submitted to the CAAC for further review



Signed:

Date: 10 December 2015

David Blagbrough
Chair
Camden Square CAAC