



The Heath & Hampstead Society

P.O. BOX 38214 LONDON NW3 1XD

The Society examines all Planning Applications relating to Hampstead, and assesses them for their impact on conservation and on the local environment.

To London Borough of Camden, Development Control Team

Planning Ref: 2015/6218/P

Address: RO 29 and 33 Arkwright Road, NW3

Description: 3 new houses.

Case Officer: James Clark

Date 12 December 2015

We oppose this application on a number of grounds:

1. Backland development

The development of new buildings in the gardens of existing houses can only be acceptable if the site/gardens are large enough, and the character of the area remains unharmed. Neither of these conditions exist here.

The gardens of Nos. 29 and 33 Arkwright Road would allow a back-to-back distance of only some 20 metres between houses. This is possibly normal in high-density areas in a central city area, but in our low-density suburban area, it is unacceptable, amounting to oppressive overcrowding. The rear gardens of the new houses would be no more than 4 metres in depth; this is not characteristic of our Conservation Area..

An inevitable consequence would be a substantial loss of trees and green space (see 3 below), which are essential features of the area.

2. Overlooking and loss of other existing amenities.

There would be significant overlooking of adjoining and adjacent gardens from the new houses, to the extent that they would be effectively unusable. All garden privacy would be lost.

There would also be significant harm from light and noise pollution from the predominantly glass facades of the new houses. This would occur all year round, in one form or another, and would blight the lives of many existing and long-standing residents.

3. Loss of trees and green space.

11 of the trees at present on the site would be destroyed. The tree report lists 41 trees, which suggests that the loss would be of only 26% of the tree cover; however, many of the listed trees are remote from the footprint area of the new houses, in the garage court. The percentage of lost trees where it matters, in full sight of existing houses and public roads, is much higher: perhaps 80%. All low-level greenery: grass, shrubs, flowers, etc would be sacrificed.

The "visualisations" presented by the developer suggest that the houses would be enveloped by trees, so that they would hardly be seen. This is grossly misleading; all important tree and green cover would be stripped.

This is totally unacceptable in our Conservation Area.

Our Tree Officer will be writing separately.

4. Access road.

The developer proposes to use the existing narrow driveway serving Nos 25c and 25e for access to the new houses. This is no wider than 3 metres, and must present difficulties already for the existing users, especially when service traffic use it. We do not think that it is wide enough at the moment for builders' vehicles, delivery vans etc, let alone for fire appliances, ambulances or refuse vehicles; when it would be supposed to serve 4 houses, it would be completely inadequate, and a danger to health and safety. Turning geometry at the Frognal access end is also surely non-compliant with your minimum standards.

5. Architecture

You will know that we have always supported and encouraged good architecture when it is presented for permission. Its uncompromisingly modern approach is interesting,, but it seems too starkly extreme in overall aspect, not sitting well in the context of Frognal/Arkwright Road. The SW elevation in particular could be mistaken for an electricity substation. It would benefit from some softening in profile and detail.

Please refuse