

Ms Tessa Craig
Camden Planning Department

By email to: tessa.craig@camden.gov.uk
Cc: planning@camden.gov.uk

London 2016-06-15

Dear Ms Craig,

Re Objections to Planning Application Reference No. 2016/2507/P, Proposed Development at 150 Haverstock Hill, London.

Below are my comments to the planning application for change of use, part demolition and addition of a floor, rear roof terrace and solar panels on 150 Haverstock Hill.

First a few words about the use of 150a Haverstock Hill:

I run my business from my home, thanks to modern technology. I am an executive committee level global headhunter, executive coach and I am a Visiting Fellow at Cranfield University School of Management's Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility.

I am an early riser (4:30am) and literally spend 24 hours per day in the house weeks on end, only going in to the City for a few hours' meetings 2-3 times per week, errands etc. and I very rarely travel. I have done this since late 2010 and as I will be 60 years old in November, this is not likely to change. This property also largely represents my retirement savings.

Over the 14 years that I have been the owner and occupier at 150a, Haverstock Hill, there have been many planning applications requested by the property owners around me. If you go back through these you will find that I have largely agreed, including major alterations to 154 and 152 and if I have had issues I have suggested a practical solution to resolve these concerns. Thus we have all lived in peace and in a spirit of cooperation for many years between 148, 152, 154 Haverstock Hill and 2, Upper Park Road.

I was also a witness on behalf of Camden Council when Mitchells & Butler took the council to court as a test case for extended opening hours in Hampstead when the new licensing laws for opening hours were introduced in 2005.

The above planning application concerns me deeply as it will very adversely affect me and my property 150a Haverstock Hill. This letter contains my concerns and as they are many I apologise in advance for the lengthiness of this letter. However, without the detailed description and photographs of the actual situation it is not possible to see the real and material impact on 150a of the proposed development from the information submitted in drawings and plans. May I also record that my educational degree is Master of Science of Engineering.

This letter is organised in 9 sections with accompanying photographs:

1. Origins and history of 150a - Crown Cottage
2. Inaccuracies and omissions in drawings and documents
3. Light

4. Noise
5. Privacy
6. Access for repairs
7. 150a becoming entirely boxed in on 4 sides
8. Solar Panels
9. Conservation aspects

1. Origins and history of 150a – Crown Cottage

150a is a very well maintained, three floor, 100 sq.m freehold domestic residence with ancient antecedents (at least 17th century).

Information handed over between consecutive owners record that an article in The Sunday Telegraph published the research of a local Hampstead historian in the early 1980ies highlighting the stay of Charles II during his reign (1660-1685) in what is now known as Crown Cottage. I have also been advised that the then owners resisted a proposed listing of the cottage around this time.

According to the specialist surveyor for ancient buildings that surveyed 150a at the time of my purchase in 2002, it is one of less than 50 wooden cottages left in London originating from before the Great Fire in 1666. Post this date building in wood was prohibited and the cottages gradually were torn down and replaced with more fashionable stone and brick houses. The fact that Crown Cottage is still here is nothing short of a miracle.

In the Belsize Residents Association's – History of Belsize Park, the house can be also seen on Wellers map from 1862 (second down from corner of Haverstock Hill and Upper Park Road) .
<http://www.belsize.org.uk/downloads/links/fullhistory.pdf>

152 was later 'wrapped around' 150a in the then gap between what is now 154 and 150a.

Originally 150a was an all-wood structure. It is still in majority a wooden structure with brick walls inserted on the ground floor. The upper floors are all wood where they are not built into 152. The top floor is almost completely freestanding apart from a short joint wall with an extension to 152 B.

150a is listed in the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, 2011 as a building of Positive Contribution, as is 152, 154 and 150.

150a, Crown Cottage, is beautiful, serene, and an utterly unique and picturesque building internally and externally.

2. Inaccuracies and omissions in drawings and planning documents

I have noted a number of omissions and incorrect representations in the submitted drawings and planning documents.

The height of proposed structure incorrect vis-à-vis 150a - section AA on drawing HH14 06C

The proposed total height of the two-storied dwelling is 5.3 metres. The height to the roof of 150 today is 3.33 metres for the part sharing a boundary wall with 150a (+- 0.13 m (uneven paving) from street to 150a/152 entrance and 3.2 meters from entrance floor to 150 roof, measured repeatedly with laser measure).

According to the drawing, the top of the new 150 roof would come up to a point where the terrace door frame can be seen fully, as is the top part of the door and a row of windowpanes can be seen partially above the new 150 roof. A row of windowpanes in the terrace door can be seen fully above the glass-screen. The height of the roofline in the planning documents is described as 'in line with the existing glazed doorway'.

The actual height from 150a flat-roof to the top of the terrace doorframe is 2.09 meters and to the top of the glass in the door 1.93m. As depicted on the drawing the height of the roof is about $\frac{1}{4}$ below the top pane top edge = 8cm, this would mean height from 150a flatroof of i.e 1.85 metres. The flat roof is at this point 6-8 cm below (sloping towards the front drain) the roof of 150. Deducting this means the height relative to 150 roofline is 1.77-1.79 metres.

Adding this measure to the height of the current 150 roofline the new construction at 5.3 metres will thus be 18-20 cm higher than represented on the drawing, significantly underestimating what the actual impact on both 150a and 152 would be.

The height measurements in the planning documents used for light calculations etc. are not taking into account the lower situation of 150a windows.

It also means that the glass screen will have more impact as it is situated higher than 150a roof.

The front window location 11 cm below the 150 roofline will also be more affected in line with the above.

This means that all the drawings of how high the proposed new roofline of 150 will be vis-à-vis 150a (and 152) are incorrect and not showing the impact they will have in reality.

Windows missing from drawings and documents

Windows to the rear of my building (5 in number) have not been noted in any drawings, or reports, excepts the east rear study window and dormer who are stated as having no interest in respect to light. However, they and the others are important for other reasons, see below. Thus the five windows are:

First, is the large work-room side window facing towards 2 Upper Park Road. See photo below.

Second: Next to the work room window is a bathroom window, normally open.

Third; above these two windows is a large dormer window leading to my bedroom on the second floor. This window is regularly kept open for ventilation as the window facing the street brings too much noise into the bedroom.



Fourth and fifth are the skylights on the kitchen flat roof that can be seen above and below. They are also normally slightly open for ventilation a large part of the year.

Flat 152 C (having a window at the back of my flat roof area) has not been recorded on the drawings. Importance of this will be described later.



Incorrect size and placement of skylight and windows on flatroof facing 150 - first floor

The skylight and windows on the flat-roof area towards the roof of 150 are incorrectly sized and placed.

The major skylight giving the living room light has not been numbered on drawing HH14 01A showing the side section of 150a. The drawing shows a small box from the side, lower than in reality and with no inclination of the window, which it has, see photo.

On drawing HH14 06C Section A-B first floor, this skylight is shown as being a small square window (best guess approx. 0.65 metres x 0.65 metres) set well back from the boundary wall.

The window aperture actually measures 1.57 metres x 1.21 metres and covers the entire width of the flat roof area up to the boundary wall edge. The proposed wall of the second floor of 150 would, literally, go up at the edge of the glass of this window. This means all passage externally past this window would be impossible unless you walk on the glass. See photo.

Please note that no alterations to any dimensions of window apertures in 150a have been done during my ownership.

The window furthest from the street, nr 8 on the drawing HH14 01A, Section, is shown smaller and set back from the boundary wall compared to its actual size and situation. This window also covers almost the entire width of the flat roof area, which means that access to the back of the property will be extremely difficult. See photo below.



148 – drawings not showing that Grade II listed 148 hallway protrudes 92 cm into 150.

I am not sure if the owner of 148 has pointed this out, but to make the picture complete; all representations of the new dwelling on drawings HH14 O1A and HH14 O6C shows the entrance hallway of 148 as only protruding slightly beyond the partition wall into 150, in line with the front.

This is not the case, 148 protrudes 92 cm from the boundary wall into 150. See photo below.

The plans, as they stand, show a staircase coming up in this space, and a closet in this corner in the first floor front bedroom...this would virtually cut the 148 entrance hallway in two triangularly.



This photo also shows a corner of my large skylight and how very close the buildings are.

3. Light

Breaches of rights to light

Right to Light Consulting has written a letter to you dated 2016-06-13 stating that in their view, as no site visits at 150a or 148 were done when the Hawkins Environmental light report was done, after their own site appraisal, that the proposed development is likely to;

- Breach the 45 degree test in relation to the front window of 150a
- Breach the VSC test for daylight in respect to the front habitable window of 150a
- Breach the VSC test for daylight in respect to the side habitable window of 150a
- Breach the Winter sunlight hour test in respect of the side habitable window of 150a
- Infringe upon the legal rights of light of 150a

Please note that the assessment was done using only the information in the submitted drawings and documents, combined with findings of the on site visit.

I notice that Paragraph 6.9 of the Planning Statement also declares:

“In respect of 150a, it is noted that the owner has elected to enclose the passageway that once existed between the application site and that property, and that space is now served by three roof lights.”

The way the text is worded implies that there is no habitable space on the ground floor and thus no effect on 150a.

This room is in fact my living room and very large, around 45 sqm, the skylight and slanted window being the main light source. This extension was done over 30 years ago, long before I became the owner of the property.

Proposed semitransparent glass wall on rear terrace

The plans propose a 160 cm high wall extending from the rear of the first floor back bedroom along the proposed terrace to the back boundary wall of the property. As mentioned above the effect of the wall will be higher than 160 cm as the flat roof of 150a is lower than the roof of 150.

Although this wall might be semi transparent at the start, the air-pollution will quickly make this glass division dirty.

This phenomenon is evidenced from external walls and windows of our buildings and the fact that even the internal walls of 150a need to be repainted every three years due to air-pollution. Hence after 3-4 years there is doubt that this semi transparent wall will let through much light.

Sunlight on my small outside area

Today the wall facing towards 150 is bathed in sunlight from the moment the sun comes up until around 3:30/4pm in the afternoon.

With the 2.3 metres high wall up to the edge of my terrace door and the 1.6 metres high semi transparent glass wall there will at no time of the day be any direct sunlight on my outside area.

4. Noise

External

The back section of 150 is very narrow (about 2.5 metres). See photo below:



This mean that the proposed roof terrace and big rear bedroom glass doors will open up next to almost all my windows (9 of the total of 12), the closest directly at the proposed glass wall and the furthest within a circle of +- 2.5 metres in diameter horizontally and vertically, including all the windows at the back of the house, see below.



The windows in the photo above lead directly into the bedroom, workroom, living room and kitchen the three latter are open to each other. Several of these windows are open continuously April – October and on warm days in between.

People sitting on the terrace talking, music playing from there or from the open bedroom terrace doors of 150 **cannot be escaped anywhere in 150a even with windows closed**. This is as all windows (except at the front of the house) are facing directly towards or are adjacent to the planned terrace, two of them (terrace door and slanted rear window) lead directly

into two floors (living room and workroom) and the latter is situated directly against the proposed glass wall.

This was clearly evidenced during a period of several years when the owner of 152C rented this apartment as a half-way house to recovering alcoholics and drug-addicts. The noise from this small window at the end of my kitchen flat-roof could be heard everywhere in the house and seriously affected my health as I rarely got a nights proper sleep during these years.

I worked in Mayfair in those days, so I did not suffer from noise during day-time which I will now, working from home.

Directly inside the terrace door is my desk where I work all day. I have confidential conversations with senior executives all over the world on behalf of my clients. Even with closed windows, and doors, all noise from the planned roof terrace will be heard, including in my bedroom right above, due to the proximity to my windows.

Internal

The living room wall on the ground floor of 150a is shared with 150 in its entire length. This wall is a single skin brick wall with no insulation or cover today.

I can hear anyone talking, laughing or playing music on the 150 side of the wall. I can hear every time they go to the bathroom, turn on a tap or slam a cupboard door. Luckily the tenants know that the sound carries and we all take care to not make too much noise in the back section.

Should this space become a permanent dwelling with the kitchen and all the potential noise this can create as well as the planned toilet with a shared wall with my living room (and bathroom planned directly above), the noise disturbance potential is considerable and the sophistication of any soundproofing would have to be very high.

5. Privacy

150a

The proposed location of the rear roof terrace will make a direct line of sight through my second floor bedroom window into the area of the room where I undress.

With the help of the smallest stool, looking over the proposed glass wall will be easy and this gives direct views into my kitchen, living room (directly into my sofa) and my workroom as all these windows are at the back where the glass wall is.

2 Upper Park Road.

The owner is unwell (stroke) and I have not been able to contact her daughter, so I mention this in case they have not had the chance to be consulted.

The submitted proposal has not mentioned that the proposed roof terrace is looking straight into the first floor bedroom of 2 Upper Park Road. To ensure privacy, we have allowed the creepers to grow high between our properties. These will be removed with the planned development of 150, thus allowing a direct view into the two bedroom windows of 2 Upper

Park Road and probably also the adjacent property (second and third windows on the long wall). See photo below.



This photo is taken from what is suggested as the rear elevation of 150, on drawing HH14 06C.

6. Access for repairs

An old wooden building requires constant repair and repainting to ensure the integrity of the outer skin of the building.

The planned first floor development of 150, will make the access for repairs to 150a very difficult due to the extremely small space that will be left everywhere around the house and the impossibility to pass externally past the front large skylight.

The only access to repairing the outside and flat roof of 152C and the rear extension of 152 B is via the 150a kitchen flat roof.

Access beyond the rear (slanting) window to these properties will not be possible as the glass wall is positioned right up to it, even if I allowed all the materials, workmen and tools to pass through my living-room, workroom and narrow staircases over the fitted carpets...

7. 150a becoming boxed in on all 4 sides

Around 2/3 of the **front** wall (left side) and the **left side** wall for all three floors of 150a is built in to 152, sharing ground floor with the drycleaners, first floor with 152C and second floor partially with 152 B.

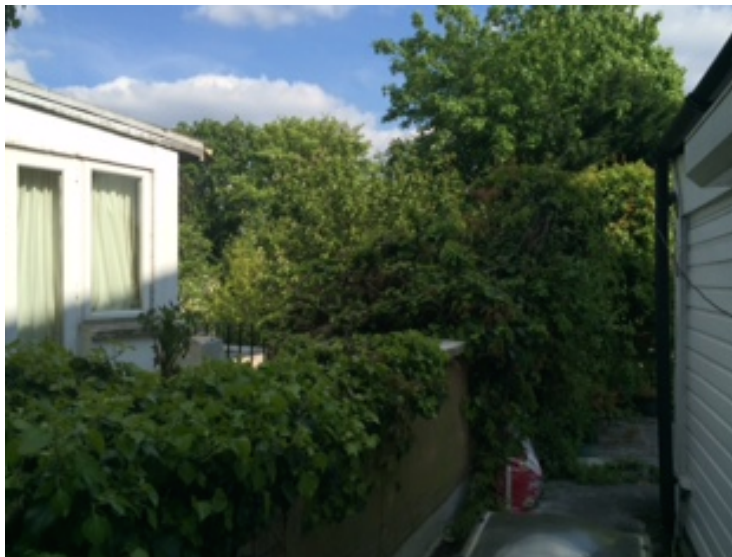
The **rear** ground floor wall of 150a shares a boundary wall with Nr 2 Upper Park Road. This is in my kitchen wall.

Today the first floor of Nr 2 Upper Park Road has a 'cut out' with a balcony and space between the house and the garden wall (there is waist high wall between us on the first floor).

The entire row of row houses (2,2a,2b,4,4qa,4b) on Upper Park road has recently received planning permission to extend the ground floor into the gardens and add second floors on top of the first floors. I.e. they will become three floor dwellings.

Nr 2 Upper Park Road is being sold due to the elderly owner's illness (Mrs. Anne Hayman) and the prospective buyer (who owns another of the houses in the row in question) is discussing the purchase with Mrs. Hayman's daughter. This potential buyer has informed me that he intends to build out Nr 2 all the way to the boundary wall and add then add a second floor to the same size. I.e. he will eliminate the balcony and build out to the boundary wall.

This means in effect adding two floors of solid wall at the edge of my kitchen flat roof and the finished height will be higher than the top of the entire height of 150a. Thus the entire back of the house will be boxed in and left in shadow as will the small flat 152 C. See photos below.



View from 152C window end of kitchen flat-roof towards 150 roof. 2 Upper Park Road balcony on the left. The new wall would be around 4 metres more built on top of the wall in the middle of the photograph



View from 150 towards 152 C, with 2 Upper Park road on the right.

The difference in roof heights can clearly be seen; the start of 150a second floor is just above the guttering at the top left corner. Following the line around to the flat roof white edge above the 152C window and over to the brick wall.

A reasonable assumption is that any buyer will wish to maximise their habitable floor space in a similar manner.

The entire **right side** wall (living room wall) of 150a is a shared wall with 150 on the ground floor. If 150 adds a first floor, 150a will in effect be boxed in on all four sides except the width of the entrance path of 120cm. See photo from front below.



150 first floor sticks out (as can be seen above and below) in front of the front wall of 150a.

The photo below shows the view from my workroom front window towards our entrance. The new 150 walls will go up 2.1 metres on top of what is now there. All that will be left in front of 150a is this narrow gap, but with another floor on top. The view below will become only the vertical 1.2 metre sliver straight ahead.



Apart from completely boxing in 150a and severely lowering the property value, it will become a dark, dank and depressing house to live in.

The wooden structure needs free flow of air and sunlight to keep dry and healthy and not develop humidity and mould problems. With the soon to be high boxing in at the back of the building, the additional proposed boxing in of 150a on the remaining two sides would be damaging for the fabric of this beautiful (and very serene) very old cottage.

I also currently maintain an array of colourful plants that cheers up an otherwise (already) gloomy narrow entrance way on behalf of all of the property owners of 152 A, B, C and 150a. This contributes to the easy rental and value of 152 A, B and C and the property value of our properties.

With a second floor on 150, there will not be enough sunlight or daylight to grow plants in the entrance. This affects the visual aspect and value of our properties.

The aspect from the street will be completely altered, as 150a, now a building rated in the conservation guidelines as having positive contribution to the streetscape would be completely invisible from Haverstock Hill. All sight of this unique and picturesque building will be lost from the street.

8. Solar panels

I am a great proponent of sustainable energy and energy efficiency (my industrial specialisation where I work since 36 years is Energy & Sustainability), however, the planned solar panels are a concern.

From the sustainability statement: The plan is for the provision of a 1.25 kWp roof-mounted PV array in the form of 5 panels (8 sq. metres in total). This means each panel will be 1.6 sq metres. Standard size PV panels are about 1.6 metres long and 1 metres high (and around 5

cm thick). i.e. 1.6 sq metres each. For the PV panels to have the best sun they will need to be lined up along the entire length of the new roof facing south / south west = minimum 9 metres if they are all lined up next to each other with no gap between panels in a line facing towards the sun with their backs towards 152 and 150a.

PV panels are normally angled at 30 to 45 degrees. At 30 degrees the height of the raised back of the solar panel above the roof-line will be 50 cm and at 45 degrees the back of the solar panel will be 71 cm.

That means that their back top edge will extend above the windowsill of my bedroom window, on the second floor, and at the higher angle significantly (30 cm) above the windowsill straight in front of my only major window left without a wall in front of it.

9. Conservation area aspects

150a is listed in the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy adopted in 2011 as a building of Positive Contribution, as is 152, 154 and 150.

Re request for demolition: Page 54 – in the Conservation guidelines for Parkhill and Upper Park says under the heading of Demolition: “New development, involving the demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, will not be supported by the Council (policy CS14 of Camden Core Strategy and policy DP25 of Camden Development Policies).”

The current signage of 150 is highly unattractive and against conservation area rules, as the reports mention, however, it could easily be changed into an attractive shop front with signage in tune with the style of the buildings around it, without the need for demolition and redevelopment.

Re the change of use of 150; losing commercial properties that means life and movement in our block would, in my view, be detrimental to the community and this is also discouraged in the above Conservation Area guidelines.

Regarding the proposed porch on the front of 150; no other property within this line of properties with positive contribution has outside space for bicycles and bins. This would significantly alter the front aspects of the street, look untidy and likely become the perfect place for passers by to dump unwanted cigarette butts, empty cans, fast food wrappers and other rubbish the way they do into the entrance to 150a and 152, throwing it through the gate, where at least it can't be seen from the street until we clear it away.

I would greatly appreciate if the committee, before any decisions are made, could make a site visit to assess the effects of the proposed development of 150 on the surrounding properties, and 150a in particular, in real life as this is not practically possible to do from the submitted drawings and reports.

Yours sincerely

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