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2016/2821/P	Graham Newsome	Graham Newsome 15 Countess Road London	13/06/2016 17:28:03	COMMNT	
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Anna Roe  
Planning Department  
London Borough of Camden 2nd Floor,  
5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall,  
Judd Street London  
WC1H 9JE

13 June 2016

Dear Anna,  
17 Countess Road NW5 2NS  
Removal of existing rear lean-to extension and single storey rear extension  
Planning Ref 2016/2796/P Extension

I am writing in connection with the above planning application. I am the adjoining owner to the application property at 15 Countess Road NW5 2NS. I have reviewed the application documents on Camden's website and I have a number of concerns about the application. The removal of the lean-to and proposed new single storey new extension is not something we object to in principle however this application and its sister application for a new rear dormer give us significant concern such that we confirm our objection to this application for the following reasons:-

1. The application documents contain a significant number of deficiencies mainly relating to the inaccuracy of the drawings and Design and Access Statement. This throws into doubt both the validation of the application and the consideration of this application as currently drawn. In our view the drawings are misleading and contain many information deficiencies (I attach our detailed notes which set out the discrepancies shown on the drawings between the application drawings as existing site as built and its surrounding context).
2. To quote examples, the sections and elevations as existing are misleading and do not show key architectural features common to Countess Road and the conservation area, party wall parapets; chimney stacks, corbeled eaves. The site boundary lines annotated on the detailed application drawings as existing and proposed are inaccurate and ignore the terraced house situation and the existence of party walls and part fence walls; there are no dimensions to allow consultees to determine the extent of the development compared to adjoining properties; relative levels of adjoining properties, as existing site property are misleading and I fear inaccurate. Dimensional information and adjoining context is generally absent from the drawings.
3. The relationship of the proposals to adjoining buildings at 15, 19 Countess Road are misleading and prevent simple comparison of the extension proposals with adjoining building structures and levels. The proposed drawings treat the application site in isolation preventing assessment of their impact on the adjoining properties and effect on the conservation area.

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4. The Design and Access statement includes inaccurate 3D drawings which misrepresent the as built situation of 15 Countess Road and the dividing wall between the properties the height and profile of which is inaccurate. The 3D drawing does not show the impact on 19 Countess Road. It is unfortunate the Design and Access Statement neglects to refer to the sister application for new roof dormer extension which is not included on the 3D images provided making it difficult to appraise the full impact of the applications.

#### The Proposals

1. The extension proposals in respect of the scope of demolition and proposed new works are misleading due to the indication of erroneous boundaries referred to above. The result is a misconstrued description of the demolition and proposed plans which appear to indicate that all walls within the erroneous boundary (red dashed line) hatched brown are demolished when these walls are clearly Party Wall structures. In particular one such proposed to be demolished wall is the enclosing wall to 15 Countess Road kitchen. While this may prove not to be the applicant's intention it is the application proposal statement under consideration and should result in refusal or arguably render the application invalid.
2. We believe the extension's rear sloping roof and flat roof may be excessive in height and plan compared to adjoining structures at 15 Countess Road. Without dimensional information and context we are prevented from assessing this properly.
3. The demolition of the lean-to similarly inside an erroneous "boundary line" implies a new wall but then the 'as proposed' plan shows the garden walls as also new. This again may not be the applicant's true intention and requires clarification.
4. Demolition drawings show an extent of removed ground as the difference between proposed new finished level and existing however do not indicate any levels or dimensions and clearly excavation would be far greater to achieve the new floor structures and sub structure under the new finished level. This gives to concern and confusion over the walls being new or retained and it merits clarification to determine the full extent of proposed new structures regardless of ownership of title.
5. Internal alterations to load bearing walls are not well defined on the drawings making it difficult to assess the impact on existing party wall structures and indeed viability of the proposals.
6. I note that 15 Countess Road is quoted in the D+A statement as a precedent however I note that planning policy has been heavily amended since the planning approval of the present structure and the current 'Conservation Area' status removes it from consideration as a precedent for this application. The extension to No 15 was approved in 2001.
7. We do hope that these concerns will be taken account of by case and design officers and the applicant's agent can provide clarification on discrepancies and reflect and modify the design to address these concerns and those below. We have no wish to ultimately prevent modernising and upgrade of this adjoining home if more thought out proposals come forward.

Other related applications  
2016/2821/P Dormer Extension Application

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While it is acknowledged this is a separate application, if approved it could proceed at the same time as an extension (were that proposal also approved). The combined effect of both proposals is what we will have to consider in terms of impact.

1. Similar accuracy and clarification issues exist as the above with the 'Dormer' application. However we also have serious concerns in respect of areas of planning policy. The roof drawings are misleading as they do not show the chimney stacks, party wall parapets or existing eaves corbel details which by omission will affect the actual set back dimension of 500mm on the on plan if taken from rear gutter. We do not find that acceptable but our concern is that what is drawn is the applicant's true intent. It also does not give us confidence in the execution of any consent if the drawings have omitted in error such important features. Similarly the stepped height of eaves between 15-17-19 is not acknowledged on either existing or proposed drawings.
2. The dormer proposed will have a direct impact we believe on our daylight and sunlight through our kitchen windows both roof-lights and clerestory south facing window will be impacted due to the bulk, massing and architectural design of the dormer as currently proposed. If it is not already provided we would ask that the applicant be required to provide a sunlight and daylight study to demonstrate the claims in the Design and Access Statement.
3. The dormer design will increase overlooking of our roof lights and garden.
4. It is out of character with the conservation area and immediate context
5. It will have an overbearing effect on 15 and 19 Countess Road and constitutes a loss of amenity to those properties.

#### Summary

Generally the proposals when the two applications are combined give a feeling that the site is being overdeveloped in the context of the current policies for a conservation area. As a standalone application the adjoining properties will suffer loss of south sunlight and daylight light to their gardens and in the case of No15 to habitable room windows. The dormer is excessive in bulk and mass and does not respect architectural character of the conservation area. The drawings submitted contain inaccuracies.

There is no precedent for the proposal given conservation area status. While we would be agreeable to the principle of a roof-light we feel a more conservation area contextual approach should be taken by the designer therefore we wish to record our objection to this proposal.

The deficiencies in the scheme and inaccuracy of the drawings in terms of boundary condition and lack of accuracy showing relevant context and character details mean that the application drawings should be rejected by the planning authority. We would be willing to enter dialogue with the applicant to see if a revised proposal could relieve our concerns.

Yours faithfully

Graham Newsome RIBA and Christine Menzies

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