

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2016/2992/P	ADN Planning Ltd	8 Kerria Way Woking	14/07/2016 14:05:48	OBJ	Mr Raymond Yeung Planning Officer London Borough of Camden 5 Pancras Square London NIC 4AG My Ref: F/0149/H Date: 14th July 2016

Dear Mr Yeung,

Re: Planning Application for the erection of two storey side extension at 2 Fitzroy Close, Highgate, N6 6JT

We write on behalf of the owner of Number 5 Fitzroy Close, whose property faces toward the application property. We wish to formally object to the application.

The application property forms part of a small group of 5 detached houses that comprise Fitzroy Close. It is a gated private close with direct access from Fitzroy Park. All five houses are individually designed, but follow a contemporary style, the character being one of low density with the houses generally dominating their plots. The application property is not listed, but is located within the Highgate Conservation Area.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states, "The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment." It further recognises, "Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people," (Paragraph 56). At paragraph 137 the Framework states, "Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset (conservation area) should be treated favourably."

The Camden Core Strategy Policy CS14 (Promoting High Quality Places And Conserving Our Heritage) states that the Council will seek to preserve and enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas. It also recognizes that high quality design takes account of its surroundings and what is distinctive and valued about the local area. This policy is further re-enforced by policy DP25 (Conserving Camden's Heritage) of the Camden Development Policies, which states at section b) that it will only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area. It further states at section e) that it will preserve trees and garden spaces that contribute to the character of a conservation area, and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage. Policy DP26 of the Camden Development Policies document is concerned with managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours and states that permission will only granted for development that does not have an adverse impact upon visual privacy and overlooking; overshadowing and outlook; sunlight daylight and artificial light levels etc.

Application No: **Consultees Name:** **Consultees Addr:** **Received:** **Comment:** **Response:**

As previously stated, the site falls within the Highgate Conservation Area and the Council have identified Fitzroy Park as a Sub Area 2 in the Conservation Area Statement. It also includes Fitzroy Close, which it states as being built in the grounds of the former Heathfield House garden. It further states, "Two houses on the south side were built as a pair with monopitched roofs," but recognises that both have been altered. Number 2, it states, has a heavy glazed double-height porch added, whilst Number 1 has been completely re-modelled.

The proposed extension is large, with the first floor extending out some 4.5 metres beyond the existing side wall of the house. This will be cantilevered over the ground floor element. It is a corner site and, as acknowledged by the architects in their Design and Access Statement, highly visible in long views up and down Fitzroy Park. What is evident from both the site plans and aerial photographs is the very large building to plot ratio, of at least 2:1. Consequently, the property has very little external amenity space around it. This has been reduced over the years with a series of works to the building, including extensions. It is considered that the proposed extension will almost entirely fill-in the area to the side of the house and the eastern boundary. This will have the effect of creating a cramped, overdevelopment of the site, with the resulting house appearing to be almost shoe-horned into the plot. It is considered that this overdevelopment will be harmful to the open spacious character and appearance that forms an important component to this part of the Conservation Area. It will therefore be contrary to policies CS 14 of the Council's Core Strategy and DP 25 of the Development Policies document.

There is further concern as to the impact of the extension upon a belt of trees, which are located immediately beyond the eastern boundary of the site. The applicant has commissioned a Tree report by SJA, which concludes that the proposal will have no adverse impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the local landscape or the conservation area. A close look at the proposals and their relationship with the trees on this boundary would suggest otherwise. The Conservation Area Statement opines, "The character of the area is derived from the close relationship between the topography, the soft landscape and the groups of individual houses built within it." The proposed extension is shown as directly abutting the edge of the Root Protection Area. There is every possibility that the roots of a line of Beech trees, which are growing on the adjacent land, would suffer from root compaction caused by additional footfall along the side of the house. Further, these trees are recorded as having a height of between 10 and 16 metres and of being young or semi-mature. It is therefore likely that these trees will suffer from pressure from the owners of the house to cut back, or severely reduce their height and form to avoid them being in contact with the house. Indeed, the report recommends pruning works to these trees where their branches lean towards the application property. This will, as previously stated, have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area and the outlook enjoyed by the properties to the north, particularly Number 5 Fitzroy Close.

Whilst these trees have been categorized individually as being of grade "C" (poor), they nevertheless have a collective value that makes an important contribution towards the appearance of this part of the Conservation Area, providing an important back drop to the houses beyond. Policy DP25 of the Camden Development Policies document seeks to preserve trees that contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. There is no certainty that these trees will survive for any length of time post construction, and as they fall outside of the site and therefore beyond the control of the applicant, the

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LPA would be unable to require replacement trees should this situation arise.

Turning to impact upon residential amenity, there is concern that the proposal will be detrimental to the amenity of the adjoining dwellings, particularly Number 5 Fitzroy Close. As well as the loss of outlook, caused by the potential loss of trees, there is also the issue of overlooking. It is proposed to construct a balcony at first floor level along the front of the proposed extension, which will be accessed from two bedrooms. It is considered that this balcony will allow direct views into the houses opposite and, in the case of Number 5, although there would be no direct overlooking into the property, the perception of being overlooked from the use of the balcony would be sufficiently material as to result in the loss of amenity to the occupiers. It is, therefore, considered that for these reasons the proposal would be contrary to Policy DP 26 of the Camden Development Policies document.

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed extension, in combination with previous additions, will result in an overdevelopment of the plot and this, with the potential loss of trees, will have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Further, the potential loss of trees, and the proposed balcony, will result in the loss of outlook and privacy, both real and perceived, to Number 5 Fitzroy Close. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS14 of the Camden Core Strategy and DS 25 and DS26 of the Camden Development Policies document. In these circumstances we consider that the application should be refused.

Yours sincerely,

David Norris
ADN Planning Ltd
