

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2016/4699/P	Ben Metcalfe	52A Sarre Road NW2 3SL NW2 3SL	05/09/2016 22:54:02	OBJ	

Dear Sir / Madam,

As the owners of flat 52A, my wife and I wish to raise some issues and objections regarding this application. Firstly, the plans that Emmanuel and Kate Brandariz's architect, Mr. Michalina Tar of Build London Architecture, has submitted, are incomplete and omit parts of our three-bedroom ground floor garden flat that have an immediate bearing on the application. A glass roofed conservatory extends out from the side of the rear of the building (where our main bedroom is) on one side, and a small extension to the main bedroom extends out on the other side of the rear of the building. This makes the ground floor one large oblong shape (with a bay window at the front) rather than the shape with a narrower rear that is shown on Mr. Tar's plan.

It is important to note that the conservatory is not simply a place to sit, but is an integral part of the flat. The doors to the main bedroom are accessed from the conservatory: my wife and I cannot go in or out of our bedroom without walking through the conservatory. This includes any use of the bathroom and toilet and kitchen which are all on the other side of the conservatory to the main bedroom.

The proposed roof terrace means that anyone using the terrace will be able to look directly down, through the glass roof, into an important part of our flat. This will be inhibiting for anyone coming and going from the back bedroom and using the conservatory, and represents a significant reduction in the degree of privacy that we have enjoyed for the nine years since we purchased our flat. Furthermore, the floor to ceiling glass frontage on the hip to gable rear dormer loft conversion will represent a further encroachment on the privacy of our conservatory and on the toing and froing of anyone using our main bedroom. The proposed loft conversion is designated as a 'large living room and kitchen area' meaning that it will likely be the most used part of flat 52b during waking hours. No matter how considerate the people in 52b may be, under the proposed arrangement we will always feel exposed using the spaces to the rear of our flat.

I know that a view of our conservatory is already afforded to the bedroom overlooking it on the first floor, but this view is tangential, and there is, anyway, a big difference between a glance from a bedroom window, and a full view from a roof terrace, or from the floor to ceiling glass frontage of an open plan living space.

There is also a skylight at the back of the kitchen (adjacent to the conservatory) that will be open to views directly down on it from the roof terrace and glass fronted living area.

Perhaps the greatest impact that the proposed changes to 52b will have on our property is on the use of our garden at the rear of our flat. When we purchased our flat nine years ago we were buying a three-bedroom garden flat with limited views into it from surrounding properties and a large degree of privacy. Our kids, one and three when we moved in, have been growing up in this garden, chasing each other around, and splashing about in a paddling pool in the summer. My wife spends a lot of time out there gardening, and sitting in the sun when it shines. Anyone using the garden in the future will feel a lot more inhibited and self-conscious if they are overlooked by people on a roof terrace, or in a floor to ceiling glass fronted living area. Again, I know that 52b is already afforded a good view of the garden

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from the bedroom at the back of the first floor, but once more, there is a big difference between a glance from a bedroom window and people sat out directly above you on a roof terrace, or looking out from floor to ceiling glass frontage, no matter how nice those people might be.

Furthermore, anyone sitting in the garden and facing towards the house will be afforded a wide open view of the living room and kitchen area of 52b. Consideration of this fact makes clear that the proposed changes will significantly reduce the level of privacy between the occupants of the two flats.

The garden had been a communal garden shared between flats 52a and 52b when the house was first divided into flats in the 1970s. In the early 1980s the then owners of flat 52a purchased the exclusive use of the garden from the then owners of flat 52b for the considerable sum of over £10 000. Since then the outside area to the rear of the property has been for the exclusive use of the owners of 52a, as it was when we bought our flat nine years ago. What Kate and Emmanuel now propose represents a fundamental change in the use of the outside area to the rear of the building: what is essentially proposed is that the outside area is returned to a shared space. This is a fundamentally different arrangement to the one that existed when we bought 52a nine years ago, and also to the one when Kate and Emmanuel bought 52b just over a year ago.

The proposed changes also threaten a significant change in the balance between the two flats within 52 Sarre Road. A three-bedroom garden flat beneath a three bedroom first floor flat will, if the proposed works go ahead, have above it a two floor property with four or even five bedrooms, and the dimensions of a house. This has important implications, particularly if 52b is let to tenants in the future. Such a property could easily accommodate seven or eight tenants with the accompanying potential problems of noise, waste, parking etc.

We are not against Kate and Emmanuel carrying out a loft conversion. Far from it, we gave consent for a deed of variation that incorporated the loft space into their lease so that they could expand into it and make it a habitable area. We would be perfectly happy for them to carry out a conversion along the lines of our neighbour's at 54 Sarre Road (the other half of the semi-detached house to 52) which features the original sloped roof extended out to the side of the building with velux windows. This would meet Kate's and Emmanuel's wish to increase the value of their property and expand their living space, and would also have the merit of preserving the essential appearance of a hundred years old suburban semi, rather than imposing a very large box on the roof.

The first we knew of the extent of these proposals was when Kate and Emmanuel served us with a party-wall notice on 25 / 7 /16. Since then my wife and I have been through a lot of worry and stress and sleepless nights. I have had to do a lot of work involving the council, surveyors and neighbours, and going over various documents and online information in order to adequately respond to this situation. We expect to do some work and undergo some inconvenience in order for neighbours to be able to carry out a loft conversion and we are happy to co-operate. I feel, however, that many of the difficulties of the last seven or eight weeks could have been avoided had a more reasonable plan for conversion been followed. With this in mind, I hope that should any further planning application be necessary, than whoever makes it – Mr. Tar, or Kate and Emmanuel themselves – will pay close

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					attention to the guidelines and advice offered by Camden Council and the government and submit a more sober and appropriate proposal.
					Yours Sincerely, Ben Metcalfe

Total: 10