

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2016/4977/P	Lisa Boher	10 Mansion Gardens	06/10/2016 10:14:12	OBJ	Application Nos: 2016/4976/P, 2016/4977/P, and 2016/4978/P

I am writing regarding the three planning applications for 11 Mansion Gardens, West Heath Road, NW3 7NG, raised following the enforcement notice that was served on the previous withdrawn application (2016/2614/P). My objection covers all three references above – the retrospective application for works already completed in adding decking, fencing and a jacuzzi; as well as something of a retrospective application for works already underway to build a conservatory; and finally to convert the garage into a living area (also already done) and the development of a sizable area of Heath facing greenery into a car park and walled area. Please also note that in my last objection, I was able to email supporting evidence to Kasuni whereas I am unable to on this form. Please let me know an email address I can send this in to.

I believe it is vital to provide some background information around this address to be considered, as I did with the previous application. I live next door to this property, and have done since 2008. In January 2014, work commenced on replacing a broken boiler at the house. A company was brought in, Pimlico Plumbers, who following this initial job have since consecutively installed:

- 2 new boilers
- a new kitchen
- 2 bathrooms
- gas pipes all replaced digging up the driveway
- new driveway
- replaced all windows
- heavy fencing erected surrounding the property and on facing West Heath Road
- removed garden and installed raised decking, screens and jacuzzi
- removed further windows and replaced with doors
- bricked up the garage
- removed the garden area at the back of the house and replaced with decking and a hot tub
- stone cladding to external Heath facing wall not in keeping with Mansion Gardens covenant
- house entirely wrapped in scaffolding for months on end whilst the roof, all brickwork and other external details were worked on.

Now, some 34 months of continuous building work later (5 and often 6 days a week as well as some evenings!), the new kitchen and bathrooms, in fact the entire interior, has been completely ripped out. The house is an empty shell whilst a new mezzanine floor is installed inside to increase the number of bedrooms from 3 to 5, and the garage has been closed off and converted into a room without planning permission. It must be noted that all of the above took place whilst the owner refused to move out, so every day for over two years the workmen would arrive and set up, then set down again at the end of each day. In conversation, they have admitted that this refusal to move out more than doubled the length of time this work has taken thus far.

Outside, in the front garden – which is visible to all residents as well as the public from the main road – large planting has been removed, and tons of earth excavated to start the conservatory. This has been

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covered in plywood hoardings along the length of the entrance approach into Mansion Gardens, and is unsightly to say the very least. Within the past couple of weeks, two further structures have been built in the front garden. In addition, it is worth noting that the removal of the garden at the back of the property has involved cladding one of the Heath-facing walls in non-regulation brickwork which is not in keeping with the character of these Ted Levy properties. I can see that this has been briefly alluded to in the planning application, and it looks terrible and does not fit in with the surroundings at all. In fact, the application mentions “new estate” on a number of occasions when in fact the houses were built over 30 years ago, and Ted Levy designed homes are now a large part of Hampstead’s heritage.

I would like to point out the following specific issues with the planning applications that have been resubmitted:

The decking/jacuzzi (2016/4976/P):

This work was started and completed over a period of almost a year (2015) with constant digging, drilling, dust and dirt in a very confined space only a couple of feet from my home. All fencing was replaced (including our joint fence dividing the two properties and their access doors). The fencing used is very bright and oppressive and has restricted access to my garden due to the excessive thickness. This fencing has been constructed with a standard fence internally, with thick concrete posts, and then a further layer of thick boarding c. 6 inches either side of the internal fence resulting in fencing around the entire property that is around a foot in thickness. It stands out against all other properties in the area as it is so vivid and obvious.

My view has also been obstructed by a very large and obvious frosted glass panel the height of the first floor in order to give the owner ‘privacy’ for the jacuzzi. It is extremely noticeable and blocks my existing views to the Heath; one of the reasons I purchased my home. In addition, the balcony on the first floor has been increased significantly without planning and isn’t included on the application – where the building is an ‘L’ shape, the balcony has been extended in a triangular shape that is visible from the road, and is not mentioned in any of the applications here. The plans attached to the related documents for each application clearly show the balcony extension, and it’s listed as “existing plan and elevations” – there is no mention that this has been added without planning permission – how can this be? In fact in the supporting photos of the application, there is a clear photo of the balcony before without the 50% increase in size! The sympathetic wooden balcony has also been replaced with glass and metal which further makes the property stand out.

The jacuzzi, when in use, sees billowing steam travel towards my property and onto West Heath Road. I almost called the Fire Service the first time until I realised it was the jacuzzi, but members of the public are likely to do the same as it has been placed right on the embankment bordering West Heath Road, and is only inches from the road.

The garage conversion and proposed parking (2016/4977/P):

As previously stated, this is already underway, with the garage already removed and former garage door now bricked up, plus the wall knocked down and all land excavated for parking. It is unsightly to say the least, and the views across the Heath which have been enjoyed by residents for the past 30 years have now been replaced by 8 foot high hoardings. The proposed parking area would involve extreme works immediately adjacent to the single point of access to Mansion Gardens, and would therefore

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impact ALL residents. It will also see a huge wall go up where there has never been one previously, severely blocking light to the road.

The arborist's report makes mention of trees in this area requiring fencing and soil protection. It also states that two Silver Birches will be removed to make way for the parking area. The report states (page 5) "the trees are healthy and attractive landscape features, however, they are only visible to the residents of Mansion Gardens". Whether a tree is visible to 10 or 100 people is not justification to remove "healthy and attractive" trees for the sake of a car! Similarly there are numerous references within the report warning of the damage caused to trees by construction works, and states that a number of trees will be vulnerable given the intended (and progressing) works, namely to the roots of existing birch, cherry, holly and yew trees. This is totally unacceptable, especially bordering the Heath. This would set a very dangerous precedent! Especially as the report makes it clear that extensive protective fencing will be required, which will add even more unsightly and, judging by the example provided in the report, will further block light and views currently enjoyed by all the residents of Mansion Gardens.

The proposed conservatory (2016/4978/P):

Firstly, the design and access statement refers to Mansion Gardens as a 'new estate'. This is not correct, it is over 30 years old! One of the justifications for this conservatory is that the occupants at number 4 have one. This is also not true – they do not have a conservatory. The application states (correctly) that this structure will be visible from the road. It will not only be visible, but it is imposing and oppressive. The structure will have non-regulation windows, and the building "will be constructed from white powder coated aluminum", again in stark contrast to the other properties and the covenant protecting their appearance. It is to be built extremely close to both the Mansion Gardens access road, and West Heath Road on the other side. And contrary to dismissive comments on the application that it will not 'significantly' add to the size of the building, the plans make it plainly clear that it will indeed significantly increase the footprint of this building. I do not see why all the remaining residents should have to sacrifice views and natural light to support the whims of an owner who seems to change his mind and who has no regard for the suffering he is inflicting on his neighbours.

I cannot stress enough how disruptive and upsetting this work has been thus far, and continues to be. My house is covered in dust, sand and dirt, and I have had to request window cleaning by the owner of number 11 on a number of occasions in order to see out of the windows! In fact, I have not been able to open my windows for ventilation for over two and a half years now due to the environment created by this excessive and never-ending work.

There have also been years of obstruction with all the vans that come and go, and I am blocked in my drive regularly. This is a private single lane road, and having up to 6 large vans onsite at a time for the first 18 months has taken its toll on the road surface. At that point, the other owners had had enough and finally the Pimlico workers started parking on West Heath Road after increased opposition from other residents. I was working from home during 2015 but was forced to change jobs at the start of 2016 as the noise and dust was damaging my health and wellbeing and I could no longer be around my house during the day due to the incessant drilling, banging and diggers.

On another, more serious, note, the arguments around parking for residents came to a head when the

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owner of number 11 threatened to hit me after I had a guest visit me for one hour at my house in February 2016. I had to call the police and Mr. Bloomfield has been sent a warning letter from West Hampstead police regarding his behaviour. It left me very shaken up, and I had my elderly mother staying with me at the time who was very frightened by his aggressive behaviour. And recently, he has installed a multitude of cameras and a security guard who questions residents of both Mansion Gardens and Firecrest Drive as to their business! In fact, Mr. Bloomfield is inviting a great security risk as there are unknown people hanging around outside his house all day, sometimes waiting for friends who are working on site.

Quite simply, this major residential project has caused untold angst, stress, noise, dirt, pollution and obstruction in what was once a peaceful Heath facing green and tranquil space. I respectfully ask that you do not grant any of these applications. I would also request that you send an inspector out on a regular basis as work continues despite the previous planning application, and its withdrawal, plus an enforcement notice being served for works already completed without planning. The owner has a blatant disregard for planning rules and does not think they apply to him/his property, and has said as much in the past.

I thank you for your careful consideration with regards to the negative impact this work will have and has, indeed, already had for the past three years. Please recognise the rights and wellbeing of the rest of the Mansion Gardens owners and deny these three applications.

Kind regards,
Lisa Boher

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