





For Hugh Miller

Returning from a late holiday, I have just read the application and all its many attachments only to find that I am too late to comment on line. I wanted to make a few points as I know the building well having lived there for over 10 years!

This is what I would have said if it is of any use for you and your colleagues:

17 East Heath Road is an iconic half of a pair of Grade 2 Listed Houses built about 1860 surrounded by other older listed houses.

Its appearance is more Victorian on the Road elevation and Georgian to the rear.

It is particularly noteworthy due to the literary connections of the Bloomsbury set in the early 20th Century. The house is described by Virginia Woolf and others who came to visit Kate Mansfield and John Murray.

The house does need work to make it worthy of its heritage and nearly all the proposals are potentially sensible improvements.

I am sure that all that follows will be part of your usual diligence. I just thought it worth highlighting them in case it helps your review to have any of them re-enforced by another opinion.

1. **The front gate is to be replaced by a sliding gate.** In other projects, Camden have required that replacement front gates should be open, not solid, even if the previous gate was solid so that the street is brought into the garden.
  - o This requirement should be imposed here to be consistent.
  - o We will not quibble about whether the tree is being removed in order to allow space for the gate...
2. **The appearance of the rear,** arguable more attractive than the front, should be kept harmonious with its proportions and with number 16 next door.
  3.
    - o The main issue is the **GLAZED Extension** for which no real detail is provided.
    - o Is it a room or a canopy? In either case the building line with number 16 is over run.
    - o If it is a room then the plan 23 is misleading.
    - o The Engineers report says
      - A lightweight glazed extension is proposed to the rear patio area and this will be designed by a specialist reputable company. No further details.
4. **Structural works** are mentioned in the FORM engineers report. These are potentially significant works at the lower levels are concerning in that they include
  - o "Lower Ground floor alterations consist of removal of load bearing masonry to form new or enlarged openings all of which are viable and **assuming good practice is followed by a competent contractor** these should not cause any **significant damage or settlements** during the temporary propping and beam insertion stages. Subject to the trial-hole investigations, **underpinning of reduced masonry pier sections may be necessary."**
  - o The existing stair arrangement that leads up to the raised garden level is proposed to be reconfigured and a new feature architectural cantilever stair constructed with a new planter arrangement. It will be proposed that a RC retaining wall is constructed which will retain the soil behind the planter. **The construction of the retaining wall should not present too many difficulties to an experienced ground worker. Subject to the trial hole investigation, the garden wall may need to be underpinned to achieve the new levels and this will be addressed in detailed design stages. The underpinning process itself is a fairly simple and traditional approach to achieving lowered levels to ground adjacent to existing foundations and again should not present a problem for an experienced ground worker"**
5. **These Yellow marks** show above where there is great reliance on the way the actual work done.
  - o This issue is raised as these are older houses with shallow foundations and in an area subject to movement (which is not mentioned).
  - o Further this house shares a single brick wall with its neighbour at #16 so any problems in #17 will impact #16.
  - o Again because I have lived here, I can appreciate the difficulties of such work.
6. **The works to the garden appear minor.**
  - o However, there is the issue of the garden wall. I do not know if the listing extends to this wall but it is certainly at least original to the house and probably older belonging to the cottages in Squires Mount. This wall is now used by these cottages as part of their ground floor rooms so any damage to the wall will extent into the homes of these cottages.
  - o The structural report fails to mention any impact on neighbours, treating the works as garden works alone.
7. There is no access statement. This house is located on a pedestrian crossing and so access can be problematic. Further there is no access other than through the house to the rear.

Thank you for considering all these points which I know impact our former neighbours.

Regards

Steven Bobasch

This e-mail may contain information which is confidential, legally privileged and/or copyright protected. This e-mail is intended for the addressee only. If you receive this in error, please contact the sender and delete the material from your computer.