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Dear Rocio,

**Re: 3 Inverforth Close, London, NW3 7EX**

Thank you for submitting a pre-planning application enquiry for the above property which was received together with the required fee of £420.00.

**1. Proposal**

1.1. Advice is requested in relation to the following proposed developments: replacement roof to facilitate loft conversion including front and side dormer windows and creation of raised terrace; erection of two bay-windows and porch extension at the front and conversion of garages into habitable space at ground floor level.

**2. Site description**

2.1. The application site relates to a modestly sized, single family bungalow property located within Inverforth Close; a private cul-de-sac with restricted access off North End Way. The close is immediately adjacent to the Hampstead Heath and the entirety of the close remains designated as Metropolitan Open Land. The property is at odds with those in the surrounding area, being the only property of single storey, to have been rendered or to include no private outdoor amenity area.

2.2. To the south east of the site lies Inverforth House, a large listed mansion of c.1906 with its landscaped hill gardens and pergola (listed structure). Due to the siting of the application property within the close and the positioning of adjacent properties, it is not considered to be within the immediate setting of any listed building or structure.

2.3. The application property itself is also not listed, but the site is located within the Hampstead Conservation Area. The Hampstead Conservation Area Statement (2001) does not make special mention of the property or consider that it makes a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area, although it does state that properties as a group within the Close form the backdrop to the adjacent designated Private Open Space and Garden of Special Historic Interest (Hill Gardens); listed structure (Inverforth Pergola) and Metropolitan Open Land (Hampstead Heath).

### 3. Relevant planning history

3.1. There is no relevant planning history for the site.

### 4. Relevant policies and guidance

4.1. The relevant policies that would apply to this proposal are taken from the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework (Core Strategy and Development Policy documents) as adopted on 8th November 2010, The London Plan 2015 Consolidated with Alterations (2011) and the NPPF (2012). The following policies will be taken into consideration:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (2012) (NPPF)**
- **London Plan (2016)**
- **Local Development Framework**
- **Core Strategy (2011)**
  - CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development
  - CS6 – Providing quality homes
  - CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage
- **Development Policies (2011)**
  - DP24 – Securing high quality design
  - DP25 – Conserving Camden's heritage
  - DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours
- **Supplementary Guidance**
  - CPG 1 – Design
  - CPG 2 – Housing
  - CPG 6 – Amenity
- **Hampstead Conservation Area Statement (2001)**

### 5. Assessment

5.1. The main issues to consider in this case are as follows:

- Principal of extensions within Metropolitan Open Land;
- Design and heritage;
- Impact on the amenity of adjoining occupiers;
- Other matters.

#### **Principle of extensions within Metropolitan Open Land**

5.2. Land designated as Metropolitan Open land is afforded the same protected status under planning assessments as that designated as 'Green Belt' land. Policy 7.17 of the London Plan states that "*The strongest protection should be given to London's Metropolitan Open Land and inappropriate development refused, except in very special circumstances, giving the*

*same level of protection as in the Green Belt*". As such the guidance of paragraphs 79-92 of the NPPF on Green Belts applies equally to Metropolitan Open Land (MOL).

- 5.3. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that all extensions to properties within MOL land should be regarded as inappropriate unless it is demonstrated that the proposed extension "*does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building*".
- 5.4. The definition of what constitutes a 'proportionate' addition is not included within legislation and as such must be determined on a case by case basis. A determination of proportionality is also dependant on a number of factors including the size, layout and siting of the existing property as well as the design of the proposed extension; however the proposed uplift in floor area or volume is a well-established measure for this assessment.
- 5.5. Due to the fact that the existing bungalow features a roof with an unusual form, calculating the area of usable internal floor space and therefore a calculation of the proposed uplift becomes rather contrived. As such in this instance it is considered that the proposed uplift in terms of the volume of the property would be the most appropriate starting point for this assessment.
- 5.6. The proposed extensions would result in an uplift of 20.5% from the existing property. This figure would represent the absolute upper limit of what has been considered 'proportionate' in similar previous cases within the Borough and as such it is considered that the proposal would be viewed as marginally too large to be considered proportionate in its current form based upon the fact that the existing property is of such modest size. As such the current proposal would likely be regarded as inappropriate in its current form and would be considered unacceptable in principle. This assessment would be reaffirmed by the comments outlined in the following section.
- 5.7. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that with further reductions to the overall bulk of the proposed roof form as outlined in the following section, the above position could be reassessed and potentially altered if there were also a further reduction in the proposed volume uplift.

### **Design and heritage**

- 5.8. The Council's design policies are aimed at achieving the highest standard of design in all developments. The following considerations contained within policy DP24 are relevant to the application: development should consider the character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings, and the quality of materials to be used. Policy DP25 'Conserving Camden's Heritage' states that within conservation areas, the Council will only grant permission for development that 'preserves and enhances' its established character and appearance.
- 5.9. The existing dwelling appears at odds with those within its immediate surroundings and is not of particular architectural merit. Alterations to the dwelling and changing it to better match the existing surrounding properties is therefore not objectionable in principle, however in order to be found acceptable (notwithstanding the issues set out above), the design would need to be highly sensitive to the prevailing character of this area of the conservation area, as well as to the scale of the existing property and feature exemplar detailed design/featuring.
- 5.10. At ground floor level, the integration of garages into the rest of the plan would not be objectionable as, whilst there would be a loss of parking, space would be retained in the communal courtyard and this change is not considered likely to result in the increase of parking pressure upon any nearby Control Parking Zone.

- 5.11. Also at ground floor level, the addition of extra bay windows and a porch is also not objectionable; however the removal of the pitched roofs of these bays would appear somewhat contrived. Although there would be a general need to reduce overall volume uplift, it is considered that some minor roof elements should be retained to these bays in order for them to be better visually incorporated. It is therefore recommended that the design of these elements is further explored.
- 5.12. In terms of the proposed replacement roof, it is considered that the current design would result in an overly bulky, top heavy and insensitive alteration to the existing property. Whilst it is acknowledged that the 60° pitch of the proposed roof has been informed by those in existence on surrounding properties, the application dwelling is of such a smaller scale and character to those in the local vicinity that this is not believed to be appropriate in this case.
- 5.13. Nearby, Heath Lodge is an example of a poorly conceived roof extension / design to a property that appears to have been originally built as a bungalow. This roof features a top heavy and highly insensitive design, with the Conservation Area Statement regarding this property as one that “detracts from the character of the area and would benefit from enhancement”. Further roof extensions which do not relate well to the host dwelling or retain visual subordination will therefore be heavily discouraged.
- 5.14. It would therefore be the view of planning, conservation and design officers that, whilst the principle of the design may be acceptable; reducing the angle of the pitch and area of the crown would result in a roof addition above the main dwelling with significantly reduced visual impact and greater subordination. Whilst this may result in a reduction to the useable internal floor area at first floor level, it is considered that further reductions as described would be necessary in order to be supported by the Local Authority. This reduction in pitch would also result in further reductions to the proposed volume uplift, resulting in the scheme becoming more acceptable in terms of the impact upon the MOL.
- 5.15. Once the scheme has been amended to address the issue of the bulk of the proposed roof; the success of the final design will depend on the detailed design which requires further consideration from an architectural point of view. For instance, in terms of elevational treatments, a return to red brick would not be objectionable providing that the choice of brick closely matched those on surrounding properties. Further details of specific brick types are therefore suggested alongside any formal submission. As well as careful material choice, a further example of this need would be the design of the dormer windows which could be improved by locating further from the ridge.
- 5.16. Generally it is considered that the principle of the development in design terms could be considered acceptable, however reductions to the overall bulk of the proposed replacement roof would first need to be made before the Local Authority would be able to support the development in design terms. It is therefore suggested that the angle of the pitch is reduced, and the area of the crown minimised to maintain a greater visual sense of subordination between the converted roof and the main dwelling. It is also suggested that the design of the bay windows as well as dormers are further explored in order to ensure that they appear as sympathetic to the character of the dwelling and surrounding properties as possible. These changes would also lead to the overall uplift in volume being reduced – better justifying the scheme in terms of the impacts upon the MOL.

### **Residential Amenity**

- 5.17. Policy DP26 seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity. Factors to consider, and which is particularly relevant to this case, include sunlight, daylight, artificial light levels, outlook and visual privacy and overlooking.
- 5.18. Were the above two considerations found to be acceptable based upon a revised design, evidence would need to be presented which demonstrates that the proposed development would not form an unacceptable impact upon the amenities of any neighbouring resident before the overall scheme would be considered acceptable.
- 5.19. Of particular concern would be the impact that the development would form upon the outlook of the opposite neighbouring properties (in particular nos. 5 & 8) as well as the outlook and light from the adjacent ground floor window at no. 2. It is therefore strongly recommended that evidence to demonstrate this impact is submitted alongside any formal submission (for instance existing and proposed long sections across the courtyard, labelled with sightlines from opposite habitable room windows as well as a day light/sun light report).
- 5.20. Finally concern would also be raised in relation to the views afforded from the proposed raised terrace and the impact that this might have upon privacy of neighbouring residents. As such it is suggested that further evidence is produced in order to demonstrate that relevant mitigation measures have been designed in (i.e. potentially screening along the southern edge) which does not disrupt the overall appearance of the scheme and would avoid an undue impacts upon privacy.

### **Other matters**

- 5.21. It is noted that the site's access via a single width private road is particularly difficult, serves all local residents and that this road is bordered by a large number of mature trees which are automatically afforded protection rights due to their location within land designated as both conservation area and MOL.
- 5.22. In order to demonstrate that any otherwise acceptable scheme could be successfully implemented without causing damage to any part of these surrounding trees or cause undue disruption to the neighbouring residents, it is recommended that an Arboricultural Methods Statements/Trees Management Plan as well as a Construction Management Plan (CMP) are produced and submitted prior to a formal submission. By outlining matters such as expected number and timings for deliveries, delivery routes, parking arrangements for contractors and storage facilitates for construction; the CMP would demonstrate that due care has been taken to avoid unwarranted harm. Similarly it would be expected that due care and relevant mitigation measures were outlined to ensure that no damage to any nearby mature tree would occur during construction (including the parking of vehicles or storages of heavy goods within the Root Protection Areas).
- 5.23. In order for our highways department to efficiently assess the submitted CMP we request that you use the Council's Pro Forma, a copy of which will be sent with these notes. As aforementioned due to the specifics of the site it is of particular importance to place extra focus upon the detailing of arrangements for deliveries (including routes to the site) as well as the locations for parking, storage and loading of construction goods.
- 5.24. Finally it should be noted that as the development property is situated within an intimate residential Close, it is strongly advised that the applicants approaches and consults their

surrounding neighbours in order to discuss the scheme and address concerns prior to submission. Although similarly not a requirement, the Local Authority would also recommend early engagement with the Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee. Their full details are available on our website however the email for the CAAC is [john.jmba@talktalk.net](mailto:john.jmba@talktalk.net)

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1. Overall it is considered that the current scheme would be considered marginally too large to be considered a proportionate increase to the existing dwelling and as such would be considered inappropriate. Furthermore it is considered that, due to the pitch and resulting visual bulk of the proposed replacement roof, the development would cause an unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the dwelling, failing to preserve or enhance the conservation area.
- 6.2. As aforementioned it is however considered that by reducing the angle of the pitched roof, its visual bulk would be lessened, reducing its impact. This would also act to reduce the overall volume uplift, better justifying the development in terms of the impact upon the Metropolitan Open Land. A number of specific design recommendations were also outlined which would be considered to result in a scheme which would be more visually sympathetic.
- 6.3. Prior to a formal submission it was also recommended that the resulting harm formed upon the neighbouring residents as well as nearby mature trees is fully considered, and that evidence of mitigation measures submitted.

## 7. Planning application information

7.1. If you submit a planning application which addresses the outstanding issue detailed in this report satisfactorily, I would advise you to submit the following for a valid planning application:

- Completed form – [Householder]
- An Ordnance Survey based location plan at 1:1250 scale denoting the application site in red.
- Floor plans at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Roof plans at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Elevation drawings at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Section drawings at a scale of 1:50 labelled 'existing' and 'proposed'
- Design and access statement – including assessment of impact of the proposed terrace and relevant mitigation measures
- Sample photographs/manufacturer details of proposed brick cladding as well as other proposed materials
- Sectional 'outlook' drawings to demonstrate impact upon outlook of opposite properties
- Construction Management Plan completed in line with the Council's Pro Forma
- Arboricultural Method Statements (written using current best practice and requirements of British Standard 5837:2012)
- Daylight/Sunlight report outlining the impact upon adjacent habitable room windows
- The appropriate fee [£172.00]
- Please see [supporting information for planning applications](#) for more information.

7.2. We are legally required to consult on applications with individuals who may be affected by the proposals. We would notify neighbours by letter, put up a notice on or near the site and,

advertise in a local newspaper. The Council must allow 21 days from the consultation start date for responses to be received.

- 7.3. It is likely that that a proposal of this size would be determined under delegated powers, however, if more than 3 objections from neighbours or an objection from a local amenity group is received the application will be referred to the Members Briefing Panel should it be recommended for approval by officers. For more details click [here](#).

**This document represents an initial informal officer view of your proposals based on the information available to us at this stage and would not be binding upon the Council, nor prejudice any future planning application decisions made by the Council.**

If you have any queries about the above letter or the attached document please do not hesitate to contact me direct.

Thank you for using Camden's pre-application advice service.

Yours sincerely,

**John Diver**  
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