

London Borough of Camden Design Review Panel

Report of Chair's Review Meeting: 115 Frognal

Friday 16 December 2016

5 Pancras Square, London, N1C 4AC

Panel

Peter Studdert (chair)

Catherine Burd

Attendees

Alfie Stroud	London Borough of Camden
Peter Kelly	London Borough of Camden
Edward Bailey	London Borough of Camden
Deborah Denner	Frame Projects
Roland Karthaus	Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Kate Phillips	London Borough of Camden
Richard Wilson	London Borough of Camden
Edward Jarvis	London Borough of Camden
Gavin Sexton	London Borough of Camden

1. Project name and site address

115 Frognal, London NW3 6XR

Planning application reference: 2016/5380/P

2. Presenting team

Paul Crocker	Client
Mark Ruthven	Studio Mark Ruthven
Vasilis Aronidis	Studio Mark Ruthven
Moji Pucket	Studio Mark Ruthven

3. Planning authority's views

Camden are supportive in principle of the demolition of the existing 20th Century building and redevelopment of the site - providing the new proposals will make a positive contribution to its setting and the wider conservation area. Since the planning submission, the design has been developed through pre-application discussion as well as consultation with the neighbours. Camden are keen to ensure that the highest quality design is delivered through the architectural expression, materials and detailing.

4. Design Review Panel's views

Summary

The Camden Design Review Panel is supportive of the general plan, scale and arrangement of forms on the site, however further work is required to clarify the architectural expression, to deliver a coherent and convincing building. The articulation and stepping to the front elevation should be simplified as well as the disposition of materials across the scheme. Overall the panel feels this is an understated scheme that could be further refined in order to achieve a higher order of architectural quality appropriate to its prominent position in the Hampstead Conservation Area.

Layout and massing

- The scale and massing of the new house is appropriate within the context, and the building form makes good use of the site's opportunities.
- The panel welcomes the building's relationship with the landscape to the front and the garden to the rear and feels that the forms respond sensitively to the setting and the neighbours.

Architecture and landscape

- In the context of offering its support for the fundamental principles of the design, the panel recommends further thought to refine the architectural expression.

- The panel supports the choice of materials, with high quality brick and porphyry walls, slim profile metal windows, and zinc roof.
- However, the panel thinks that the architecture would benefit from a simpler more confident approach to achieve a successful 21st century house in this prominent corner location in Hampstead.
- Stepping back from the detail of the design to re-confirm the inspiration for the project, perhaps through reference to architectural precedents, could be helpful at this stage.
- Aspects of the design that the panel suggested would benefit from simplification and clarification included: the entrance canopy; the stepping profile of the brick facades; the small area of pitched roof to the southeast; the chimney; the transition from brick to stone on the rear façade to reflect the shell like concept.
- In general, the panel thinks that allowing the arrangement of interior spaces to inform the external architectural expression more, would enhance the scheme.
- Alternative visualisation techniques may be more helpful to explore and communicate the scheme's architectural qualities – the watercolour illustration does not help convey confident, contemporary architecture.
- The panel feels that the hedge to the front boundary of the site is an appropriate response.

Next Steps

The panel is supportive of the proposals, subject to the above comments being addressed and would be happy to comment on revised designs, if it is helpful as part of the planning process.