

**ADVICE from Primrose Hill Conservation Area Advisory Committee**

12A Manley Street, London NW1 8LT

1 March 2017

20 Albert Terrace Mews NW1 7TA 2017/0705/P

Objection.

1. The Advisory Committee noted that the proposed basement would add a substantial volume to the existing house, possibly as much as 50% of the existing. The Committee also noted that Albert Terrace Mews is recognized in the *Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement*, the current SPD, at p. 12, as contrasting with the wide roads in the area, and characterized as 'narrow mews roads originally provided servicing to the rear gardens of the villas ... these small mews buildings are generally located directly abutting or close to the highway'. What is significant about the Mews is its character as 'narrow', 'small', with a function of 'servicing', with a subservient, modest character.

*Scale of development*

2. In this context, we advise that the proposal to add a substantial volume to the existing house would constitute overdevelopment.

3. In this we refer to the Planning Inspector's decision dated 12 October 2009 dismissing appeals at 34 Kingstown Street, London, NW1 8JP, refs APP/X5210/A/09/2104256 and APP/X5210/A/09/2104294. In this case, which was for a double basement, the Inspector found (her letter paras 5, 6, 7) that the proposals constituted overdevelopment, her assessment in part founded in the small scale of the street, which was judged in the same category of mews as Albert Terrace Mews. We note that the Inspector in the Kingstown example supported her argument on overdevelopment by reference to design elements which do not apply in the current case. Her argument in terms of scale does apply.

*Neighbours' amenities during construction*

4. The Planning Inspector also argued (at paras 13-16) that, given the scale of the mews street, neighbours' amenities during construction were a material consideration. She commented, 'I have read the comments of neighbours concerning the disruption to their lives during extensive building work that has been carried out in Kingstown Street in recent times (including the excavation of a single-level basement and not a double-depth one as now proposed). The issues raised by neighbours included the noise, disturbance, dust, the considerable lorry movements to remove all the excavated material and deliver materials, traffic congestion and general disruption for those that live in the area.' She continued, 'Kingstown Street is, in reality, little more than a narrow mews access; on-street parking effectively reduces it to a narrow single vehicle width, turning is not straightforward.'

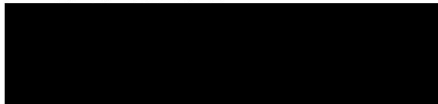
5. The Inspector argued 'it seems to me that Kingstown Street is so narrow, numerous other dwellings are so close, and the appeal site is so restricted, that almost all work must inevitably spill out onto the public street causing unreasonable disruption to the lives of others.' She concluded, 'I do not see that major disruption could be avoided', arguing that this consideration added weight to her conclusion on the main issue.

*External amenity space*

6. The Advisory Committee noted that the application drawings (existing section A) show that the application site extends to the rear wall of the rear terrace: what might be read from

the location drawing as a rear garden is part of the garden of 20 Prince Albert Road. Thus, 20 Albert Terrace Mews has only the garden amenity space which it is proposed to excavate and reconstruct as a largely-roofed basement terrace. While we note the approved scheme for a roof terrace, we nonetheless question whether this basement amenity space meets the Council's standards for external amenity space for what would be a 4-bedroom (5 bed if the media room is used as a bedroom) family house.

7. The proposals would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.



Richard Simpson FSA  
Chair