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**For the Attention of Patrick Marfleet – Planning Officer**

**By Email: [Patrick.marfleet@camden.gov.uk](mailto:Patrick.marfleet@camden.gov.uk) and BY POST**

5<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Our ref: PJ/hr/GLO0011

Dear Sirs,

Re: **Letter of Objection to Planning Application 2017/0836/P at  
Flat 2, 16 Belsize Avenue, London NW3 4AU**

We act on behalf of Glorious Spring Limited which is the registered owner of Flat 3 being the ground floor flat at 16 Belsize Avenue, London NW3 4AU.

We understand that on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 an application for full planning permission was registered for the "*erection of a single storey side/rear extension at lower ground floor level including side infill extension to western elevation*". We further understand that mandatory public consultation ended on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017. However, following our telephone conversation on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2017 we understand that our letter of objection would be considered prior to any decision being made.

As a preamble we wish to remark that the Camden Conservation Area Statement specifically refers to No. 16 Belsize Avenue. Whilst not listed, we respectfully suggest that its mention in the Conservation Area Statement indicates that it is sufficiently important a building to warrant very careful consideration before any dramatic change of appearance should be permitted.

Our client objects to the application on a number of grounds:-

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1. Camden Design Planning Guidance 2011 provides that "*rear extensions should be secondary to the building being extended*". By virtue of the height and proportions of the proposed extensions which include a full length rear extension of the existing paved area and up to the site's side boundaries, the proposal is not secondary to the building. The proposal including the demolition of the Ground Floor balcony (for further comment see below) fundamentally changes the architectural appearance of the building and we respectfully suggest that the nature of the proposed extensions and consequential alterations to the building's appearance are greater than secondary and, in that regard, contravene current planning policy.
2. Should an extension of this nature be permitted it will create precedent which may be used throughout the conservation area and result in a change and damage to the conservation area.
3. The proposed development appears to require demolition of the metal balcony forming part of the first floor flat and which like the similar railings to the front of the building is an important feature of the building. We suggest that in the absence of agreement with our client to permit such demolition the scheme cannot be implemented. The Design and Access Statement claims that the building does not appear to be much altered externally from the time of construction "*save for the rear Ground Floor balcony which seems to have been altered in the past and currently is in poor state of repair*". No evidence is given to support the assertion that it has been altered and no explanation is given (even if it were relevant) as to how it is said to be in a poor state of repair. Our client rejects these assertions and submits that the balcony is an important feature of the building.
4. The Design and Access Statement claims at Section 3.1 that the new extension, when viewed from the rear, "*will form a neutral 'plinth' to the upper well articulated parts of the building*". Our client disagrees as the architectural integrity of the building will be substantially altered and diluted by such a construction as it changes the relative proportions of the building between the proposed footprint and the upper levels.
5. The proposed development will mean that the ground floor balcony will be demolished and its character lost. The replacement intended is to be a "*Ground Floor rear roof terrace area ..... finished with terrace tiling.....demarcated by the reinstated metal guarding*." This is a fundamental change of character to the building. Further given its age, there is no certainty that the old ironwork of the railing will wholly survive the demolition. The Design and Access Statement's criticism of the ground floor balcony as "unsightly" is rejected by our client. On the contrary, the balcony is considered a very attractive feature.

6. The security of our client's flat and the remainder of the building will be compromised if the proposal is permitted. The extensions reach the same level as the ground floor balcony and, in consequence, if such extensions are constructed, an intruder would be able to cross from the flat roof of the extension onto the ground floor flat's balcony and obtain access through the balcony windows or simply by accessing the roof of the extension obtain entry through the ground floor flat's kitchen window.
7. The building's overall safety would be compromised. The proposed side extension would be brought up to the boundary of the site removing the passage from the front of the building to the rear. This would have the effect of making access to the rear for emergency services difficult, if not impossible.
8. The visual amenity of the ground floor flat would be very substantially compromised if the proposed development was permitted. The views of the garden would be reduced and the balcony converted to what would be no more than a demarcated area of the roof of the proposed extensions with part of the view being no more than the rest of the extension's roof.
9. In short, for the reasons given above, the assertions made in the Design and Access Statement to the effect at Section 3.3 that "*the proposed extension will not affect the amenity ..... of the neighbours in the host building at No. 16*" is plainly incorrect given the compromise to security, compromise to safety, loss of the balcony feature belonging to our client's flat and loss of visual amenity.

Our client has had the benefit of seeing the objections of the Camden Conservation Area Advisory Committee. We and our client agree with the objection made by the Committee to the effect that the proposed extension into the garden and sideways beyond the full width of the house is harmful to the proportions, style and character of the house and entails a loss of amenity to the other occupiers. Both we and our client also agree with the objection lodged by GL Hearn on behalf of the freehold owner of 18 Belsize Avenue.

For all the reasons set out above, we respectfully request the council to refuse permission for these proposals which will have a significant detrimental impact on the character and nature of 16 Belsize Avenue, its occupiers and on the conservation area generally.

Yours faithfully,

