

HCAAC



Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee

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HCAAC examines received Planning Applications relating to Hampstead, and provides comments as Consultee to Camden Council on proposals' impact

To London Borough of Camden, Development Control Team

Date: 4 June 2017

Planning reference: 2017/1229/P

Address :5 Templewood Avenue London NW3 7UY

The Proposed Work:

Excavation Conversion of 3 existing units to provide 2 units (1x7 bed; 1x1 bed)(C3), including erection of rear and side extensions and plant enclosure to rear; excavation of single storey basement, hard and soft landscaping works.

Having again reviewed the proposed scheme and now examined the Applicants' written submissions we find we should submit the statement hereunder to supersede our comment of 9 May 2017 which should be deleted.

HCAAC objects to this harmful proposal and comments as follows;

1. **Proposals improving upon earlier versions.** We are not aware of details of previous proposals although to judge from the current scheme what was first offered must have been indefensible. Developers offer unacceptable proposals to draw officers into consideration of details that reduce schemes content but which often remain as over-development.
2. **Loss of flats;** Loss of any dwelling unit within the CA is regrettable and against Camden draft local plan 2016 no 6.3. We agree with the HHS suggestion that the remaining small flat is intended merely as an adjunct to this property as a single enlarged investment mansion. We regret the drafting of policy that appears to w the last flat to be so readily discounted and effectively absorbed. Moreover, the benefit of basement conversions has been for many decades of benefit to real housing need which is not the case here. The degree of development here could only be justified if the offer were of an increase in flats to assist towards general housing policy.
3. **Boundary and setting;** The proposed replacement extension on the north boundary of the site is considered a harmful addition to the street scape and the setting of this valued building. It is a considerable enlargement over the existing volume and would seriously compromise the general aim to maximise views between buildings. The existing extension is considered a sufficient impediment not to be exceeded. Its omission would improve the neighbourhood and CA, revealing the building's original detached character and improving its setting particularly its relationship and harmful impact by overshadowing adjoining neighbour no 5a. Retention of the existing extension north face should not be permitted. It is not a valid part of the proposed extension and its omission would provide a small gap between 5 and 5a which is to be preferred for view of green beyond. The ground and basement floor plans would need to be revised but no hardship in that – a separate service door to the front is neither usual nor innovative. Adapt the existing extension's fenestration or reduce the mass of the proposal to the former amount and leave a 1 metre gap to the boundary.

4. **Overdevelopment;** The proposed designs are not of an adequately high quality to enhance the CA. Proposals alter and harm the scale of individual elements of the building such as the loss of the original rear bay window on ground floor level. Current attractive modelling of the building is also lost by these proposed alterations. Extensions to the sides and rear elevations do not indicate the same quality as the original building. The north side extension is of excessive bulk; its connection with the main building is by awkward roof junction from the slope discharging against the main wall. The ‘rusticated’ and other ‘traditional’ details at the rear are negated by the over-sized glazing and long balcony and glass balustrade out of character with the rest. The deep plan effect of the design on ground floor and basement levels increases energy use. Heating and ventilation requirements for this footprint including the basement swimming pool plus gym and cinema require further air conditioning which is not favoured in CA appraisal (currently being updated). All considered against LDC 6.19, 6.98 and 6.99, 7.2, 7.46, 7.7, 7.8, 7.12
5. **Rear garden take-up.** The Site Plan and the CGI in the DAS show a generous expanse of grass as the remaining rear garden. We are concerned at any increase in hard landscaping, fearing especially that the lightwells and terrace shown will soon be argued as inadequate and expanded yet further.
6. **Lightwells harmful impact;** The proposed lightwells to Front and south elevations are not acceptable and are against current CA policy, adding to light pollution within this green corridor of biodiversity. It also risks an insecure frontage, susceptible to flooding. LDC 6.129, 6.12.
7. **Basement harmful impact;** Taking the existing expanse of crawl space traditionally acting as structural ventilation the proposal tries to justify an almost two storey extended basement that extends beyond the perimeter of the main building on the rear and sides. LDC 6.126, 6.129.
8. **Context of the proposal.** General failure of applicants to show full context of their proposals. The impact of the proposed increased side extension on no. 5a adjacent cannot be seen but will involve over-shadowing.
9. **Relation to natural features.** The Applicant quotes the London Plan Policy 7.4A – “...have regard to the form, function and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings. It should improve an area’s visual or physical connection with natural features.” The proposal does not meet these requirements in several cases.
10. **Harm to the CA.** The proposal does not enhance the CA, merely enhancing if at all the investment value of the proposed development. Harm is in the over-large new side extension and in the reduction of rear garden, in the proposal for a car lift structure in the front area suggesting a plan to extend the basement further than at present shown, therefore for basement car parking well in excess of the numbers of cars shown. Harm is in the basement excavation for a clearly and unnecessarily over-sized pool suggesting either regular use by many people - friends or business guests in the manner of a small hotel. There are no compensating public benefits in the proposal to allow this degree of harm. We advise refusal of the proposal in its present form.