London Borough of Camden

Planning & Built Environment

c/o Town Hall

Judd Street

London

WC1H 8ND

 5A Templewood Avenue

 London

 NW3 7UY

26 June 2017

 For the attention of Ms Kristina Smith

Dear Sirs

**Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)**

**Objection to planning application (reference 2017/1229/P) at 5 Templewood Avenue NW3 7UY**

We write to consolidate our objections to the proposed development at 5 Templewood Avenue. We live next to the application site and have a number of concerns about the proposal. These include some significant planning issues which in our view are a breach of the development plan. There do not appear to be any material considerations that would allow the Council to deviate from its adopted and emerging planning policies and as such the application should be refused.

Our main concerns are:

1. Impact on residential amenity;
2. Design;
3. Heritage impact;
4. Loss of housing;
5. Basement impact;
6. Car parking;

We consider these points principally in relation to the new Camden Local plan which already carries substantial weight but which is now due to be adopted by Full Council as the replacement Local Plan after being considered by the Cabinet Committee on 15 June 2017.

We note that the application has given very little regard to the emerging plan which was already at an advanced stage when the application was submitted.

**Impact on Residential Amenity;**

We are concerned on a number of issues that broadly fall under residential amenity. These include;

* Impact of daylight and sunlight;
* Outlook, increased sense of enclosure and overbearing nature of the proposal.

Impact on daylight and sunlight

We have noted the Daylight and Sunlight Assessment (D&SA) by GIA. This assessment was clearly produced as an afterthought. It has been rushed and contains inaccuracies. We have commissioned a review of the D&SA by a specialist surveyor whose report we will forward as soon as possible.

Outlook, increased sense of enclosure and overbearing nature of the proposal

The proposed development introduces a considerable bulk and massing on the boundary with our property. Due to the configuration of our house there is a patio area that is accessed from our all/dining room. The glazed roof of the patio also allows light in to our property.

The proposal would introduce a substantial two storey plus pitched roof extension on the boundary. The existing garage block is much shorter and the roof slopes away, having been designed to respect the layout of our property.

If this new wing is permitted it on its own, it would be the size of a large house and is squeezed in between the host property and our home. The scale of the proposed development on our patio and rooms served from this space would be overbearing. The increased sense of enclosure would be dominated by the proposed flank wall and steeply pitched roof which would have a substantial impact on our enjoyment and use of the patio, which is part of our living area .

The outlook from all of the rooms that look onto the patio will be significantly eroded and dominated by the proposed wing to the building.

Our main living room window, shown on page 2 of our objection, currently has an unobstructed view of trees and sky. The proposed side extension would be some 8m high and would substantially block the view through the window, which is an essential part of the character of the room. There is also a risk that some of the trees which currently screen our living room would not survive construction of the basement.

Local Plan Policy A1 *Managing the Impact of Development* identifies that the Council will seek to ensure that the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours is protected. Given the inaccuracies of the Daylight and Sunlight report combined with the proposed massing close to our house, we have to doubt if the applicant’s team have any concept of the layout of our house and where it sits in relation to the proposed development.

In our view the proposed wing adjacent to our property has a significant negative impact on our outlook, sense of enclosure and is overbearing in its nature. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy A1 as should be refused.

**Design**

The design of the proposed development pays little regard to that of the original house. The extensive redevelopment to the rear completely changes the house to an unrecognisable form. The substantial wings are not only out of keeping with the host house and the neighbouring context but also impact on views of the property from the street.

Any remaining indication of a gap between buildings has been removed. This is out of character with the area where gaps between buildings are part of its layout.

Local Plan Policy D1 *Design* identifies that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development proposals. The application fails to do so on a broad range of criteria set out by this policy including failing to respect the local character and context. The application should be refused in relation to Policy D1.

**Heritage Impact**

The building has been assessed as having positive impact on the conservation area. The Redington Frognal Conservation area Statement identifies that the sub area is known as Redington Road and Templewood Avenue and that it is characterised by large houses that are generously spaced.

The statement also identifies that numbers 1, 1a, 3 and 5 form a group of buildings that individually and as a group have a positive impact on the conservation area.

Local Plan Policy D1(b) *Design* requires that development should preserve or enhance the historic environment and heritage assets. Policy D2 *Heritage* identifies that the Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas. The proposal with its proposed substantial wing will have a considerable impact on views of the building from the street, particularly from Templewood Gardens.. The substantial demolition of the building also seems unnecessary, particularly as this results in fewer dwellings than currently exist. This harms both the building, the group of buildings and the conservation area given the prominent views of the building.

The application therefore fails to comply with Policy D1(b) and D2 and should be refused on these grounds.

**Loss of Housing**

The property is currently in the form of three flats. The proposal seeks to extend the property as well as remove one of the flats. This would create a substantial house with an internal staff apartment or granny annex. In effect two flats are being lost as the house would become 1087 square metres in size with an additional 50 square metres for the separate small flat. This floorspace could deliver nearly 20 units instead on the two.

It is clear that this is a contrived layout that attempts to avoid the important planning policies which seek to prevent the loss of housing. Even then a unit is sacrificed and another provided at such a small space that it only just complies with minimum space standards. The proposal therefore conflicts with Local Plan policy H1 *Maximising Housing Supply* through the loss of a housing unit. This would therefore make it marginally more difficult to meet the 11,130 new homes required between 2015/6 to 2030/31. The application should be refused on this basis.

Policy H7 *Large Homes and Small Homes* sets out the council’s priority for new homes. The policy states that conversion of existing homes should contribute to meeting the priorities of dwellings size. This sets out that two and three bedroom homes are the priory and very large homes and one bedroom homes are low priorities.

The application seeks the removal of three ‘high priority’ mid-size properties and replacing them with two ‘low priority’ very small and very large properties. Even ignoring the loss of one dwelling the proposed mix of units fails to comply with Policy H7 and should be refused on this ground.

**Basement Impact Assessment**

The proposed basement incorporates a large lightwell on the front of the building. This is out of character of the surrounding area and harms the heritage value of the building and the conservation area.

Camden Planning Guidance 4 (CPG4) *Basements and Lightwells* identifies that lightwells should be set away from the boundary to a neighbouring property. Both of the lighwells proposed are very close to both the neighbouring properties and as such fail to comply with CPG4 which is a further reason for refusal.

**Car Parking**

The proposed underground car parking would exceed the amount of car parking that should be provided for the new development. Policy T2 *Parking and Car Free Development* states that the Council will limit the availability of parking and all new developments in the borough should be car free. The substantial demolition and reduction in dwelling numbers must define the proposal as ‘new development’. The provision of car parking either at surface or underground is therefore contrary to Policy T2. The application should be refused on this ground.

**Conclusions**

The proposed development appears to have been devised without any recognition of the location of our house and its widows. The application contains factual errors that are pivotal to the Council’s assessment of the scheme.

The loss of a residential unit and priority types of housing and a replacement with a bigger buildings with fewer units of lower priority seems to be a core problem with the scheme. We are glad to see that the Council has new and robust planning polices that can be used to refuse such a scheme.

The application fails on a range of key planning policies and should be refused. We hope the Council will do all that it can to resist such inappropriate development.

Yours faithfully

 Irving and Marion Yass