



Re; Ref. No 2017/2064/P Jack Straws Castle – Two Houses

The Heath & Hampstead Society object strongly to this proposal.

- 1) Firstly, the Application should be refused in order to discourage future applications to build on this important, prominent and sensitive site.**

In the recent past the owners of Jack Straws Castle have received permission to increase extensively the number of dwellings on the site, but not satisfied with that, the owners have repeatedly attempted, fortunately unsuccessfully, to further increase the size of this important Listed and prominent building. These attempts should be discouraged by a firm refusal.

- 2) Secondly, the Application should be refused because it is on the boundary of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and affects the Heath adversely.**

This Application is proposing a three storey building with its rear three storey wall on the boundary of the Heath - the rear wall is in the same plane as the recent large extension to Jack Straws Castle and they both form a cliff-like building seriously reducing the openness of this part of the Heath.

- 3) We are concerned that if this application for two dwellings is approved another application will follow for a bowdlerised, poor quality and/or entirely different application for two dwellings - which the Council will find difficult to refuse.**

In addition to the above the proposal is deficient as follows:

- a) the design is essentially of two houses inserted uncomfortably into an existing car-park and service yard.

It is difficult to envisage a satisfactory lay-out which retains the car-park.

- b) this proposal does not meet the conditions required for houses – particularly ones in which children will live.

The only access to both houses is across the car park – an unacceptable mix of pollution, pedestrians, children, cars and delivery vans – both dangerous and unpleasant.

- c) the houses have no external space !!
- d) the front of the houses face the car-park and views - particularly from the ground floor living rooms – are of parked cars.
- e) the basement is poorly lit from a narrow light well.
- f) because of the restricted width of the houses all rooms and stairs are cramped – the
- g) secondary bedrooms particularly so.
- h) the rear (west) elevation is on the boundary of the Heath and the many windows would acquire rights of light over MOL which we expect the City would refuse.

These windows as shown would not be permitted by part B4 of the Building regulations – the important rear elevation facing the Heath cannot be built as shown in the application

Urban Form and the `Style` chosen for the Application.

Much is made of the proposed two houses echoing the existing terrace houses to the south of Jack straws Castle

However the `style` chosen for the application – a prim, exact, ordered flat-fronted Georgian/Regency with a high parapet hiding the roof is entirely different from the houses to the south.

These are set behind impressive, well-designed brick walls and gates and directly approached from the road through generous front gardens protected from the street. Each house is slightly varied with visible roofs and eaves, two stories high, pleasantly varied and of an informal character.

The style chosen for the two proposed houses is entirely different - they certainly do not match the existing houses, and in addition are not screened from the road by walls and private gardens which is very typical of the older houses in this part of Hampstead.

Instead they are seen across a car-park – very unsatisfactory.

In summary we consider that this deficient Application should be firmly refused making it clear that the site is unsatisfactory for development and should be maintained as an open car park and servicing yard as originally approved.

From the Heath and Hampstead Society 16.5.2017