

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2017/3755/P	Mark Liebenrood	20 Ospringe Road	18/07/2017 09:03:19	OBJ	<p>I have examined the plans for this application and am very familiar with the area. The property is one of a pair built in red brick and of a markedly different size, style, and period to the rest of the street. Most properties nearby in Lady Margaret Road have low boundary walls, some surmounted by hedges. In the main, walls on nearby properties, even those with hedges, are not anywhere near as high as the side wall and gates proposed here, which are around 178 cm. The height of the existing side wall and its top fence can be justified to some extent by the raised rear garden, which was visible when the wall was being repaired some years ago. The property is semi-detached and its neighbour has low brick walls to the front, surmounted by hedge on one side, but this remains low.</p> <p>The materials of the front gate and the sliding gate have not been specified. They are presumably intended to be of some kind of sheet metal. Use of opaque materials like this, especially on the large area of the sliding gate, would be unique to this area with the exceptions of 77 and 79, which have decorated front gates incorporating sheet lead or a similar material and stand out from the rest of the street. If the application were to be approved in its current form, the gate materials should be specified before approval, as should those of the capping stones on the pillars adjacent to the gates. But even capping stones would distinguish the property further from its neighbour. Unlike this application, both 77 and 79 use hedging to increase the height of their boundaries. This softens the very enclosed appearance of 77 in particular.</p> <p>When all the features of this development are considered together - the large areas of opaque gates, the iron railings, and the significantly increased height of part of the walls - this would create an unnecessarily defensive and separated appearance to the property and mark it out still further from the rest of the street. Camden Planning Guidelines 1, section 6.35 encourages low boundary walls with hedges for boundaries. As currently designed, although it certainly offers site security and privacy, the proposal does not offer continuity with the street scene (6.35). Nor does it make a strong positive contribution to the street scene (6.36). Instead it detracts by strongly separating it from the street and distinguishing the property visually from its neighbours.</p> <p>The application should not be accepted in its current form but substantially reconsidered. I would suggest hedging instead of cast iron railings at the front. The height of the extended side wall should be reconsidered and would be better executed with hedging. I question whether gates are appropriate here, especially on the large opening to the car parking area, but if they are seen as acceptable in principle then they should preferably feature a lower open design rather than using an opaque material. The large gates on the Ospringe Road side of 48 Lady Margaret Road feature an open design to reasonable effect.</p>