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Dear Samir Benmbarek

2017/2902/P, York Rise Estate, NW5

Five blocks external refurbishment – re-roofing, re-pointing new dormer windows etc

This visually significant garden estate was offered its own Sub Area (4) in the Dartmouth Park CA Appraisal. Its close relationship with Nos 16-74 (even) and Twisden Works in Twisden Road is also indicated under Twisden Road in the Appraisal. The Estate buildings are all on full view from these properties. The Estate's mansard roofs are also overlooked from properties on the DPCA slopes of the Hampstead and Highgate ridge up to Dartmouth Park Hill, and from other taller buildings in the vicinity.

I have the following objections:

Application Form: - errors

9 - Materials Windows:

This refers to each sash window having four lights. This is incorrect as the dormer sashes have six lights each in top and bottom sash.

13 - Biodiversity:

This is ticked as No. However it should be Yes as the full length of the site immediately adjacent along the railway embankment is shown on the LDF 2010 proposals map as Habitat Corridors Nos 191 (and 195 across along the deep track). I assume that these designations remain in place in the replacement LDF just published.

15 - Trees and Hedges:

Ticked No, but there are some.

Re-roofing/Sustainability: It is concerning that the Delabole slates are proposed to be replaced by Spanish natural slates. English Heritage tested the existing Delabole slates at the last re-roofing after this became a CA and found these to have a very long remaining lifespan. Only re-nailling was required and replacement of some broken slates. Thus the existing slates were reused and patches of new Delabole slates were placed at the end of the blocks facing the railway line as required. It would be contrary to Council policy on sustainability grounds not to reuse these perfectly good existing slates. Delabole slates visually have a very distinct attractive colouring, different from Spanish slates. A cost saving to the owners could be set towards replacing the artificial slates of Stevenson House by new Delabole slates. This block at the time of this last re-roofing was carried out without St Pancras Housing, the owners at the time, seeking planning consent. Work was then stopped and the Delabole slates on the other four blocks retained.

Window Replacement:

New windows proposed for the dormers should be sourced from the same manufacturer as the sliding sash windows that were installed on the lower floors a few years ago, so these are like for like. The window proposed does not appear identical. It is important that elevationally the fenestration retains its visual integrity. Some of the upper windows at Stephenson House were at the time of the previous re-roofing (mentioned above) replaced with top hung look-a-like sashes. It would seem appropriate to have these replaced with matching sliding sashes.

Re-pointing/Discharge flues from flats following individual central heating installations:

The Council should take note that all discharge flues were installed a few years ago without Origin Housing seeking planning consent. This has resulted in a mismatch of different protruding pipes in shape, location and colour, defacing the attractive blocks. One of the discharge pipes at the top floor at Brunel facing Twisden Road discharges its moisture directly onto the brickwork, which has damaged the pointing and resulting in moss growth on the elevation. There is no point in re-pointing if the source of such incorrect uncoordinated installation is not removed. It would also be considerate if this visual mismatch of protruding flues was rectified during proposed refurbishment works.

Previous planning consent Origin Housing:

Planners should note that requirement for planning consent was ignored for this Estate on a number of recent occasions. Consent granted for the rebuilding of their historic boundary wall with Twisden Road was not executed but instead, without seeking a variation to consent, a series of piers were built along the eastern part of the wall not only removing the visual attractiveness of the continuous wall but thereby providing a horizontal platforms via which trespass to the rear of Twisden Road properties is facilitated. Part of this historic boundary wall has been left in a very poor state of disrepair.

Similarly the central heating installation programme required consent for the location and design of the discharge flues. This was not sought. The random approach to this installation now defaces the buildings, as is clearly visible along the Estate's access road.

Construction Works:

As the blocks sit in close proximity to Twisden Road properties, every effort should be made for the containment of dust, noise and operation of construction traffic during operations.

Yours sincerely

