

KENTISH TOWN ROAD ACTION (KTRA)

19. 09. 17

To: Samir Benmbarek
Planning Services
London Borough of Camden
5 Pancras Square
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planning@camden.gov.uk

Planning Application 2017/4649/P
225 Kentish Town Road NW5 2JU

Dear Samir Benmbarek

Kentish Town Road Action objects to this application for the erection of 4 storey extension (including mansard roof) above existing ground floor commercial unit (following substantial demolition of existing building).

There appear to be no “existing” drawings of the front elevation on the website, but the applicant’s Design and Access Statement declares “The proposal is thus - to extend the property by a single full storey; add in a habitable mansard-style roof”. In our words, this actually means to extend the height of the property by two storeys. KTRA objects to the addition of the mansard roof for two reasons:

1. The addition of the mansard roof creates a clumsy step-like effect with the rooflines of the buildings on either side of the property. We are asking for the mansard roof to be refused and for the roof of the property to line up with the roofline of the building on the right, no. 227 Kentish Town Road.
2. We object to the design of the aluminium-framed windows on the proposed mansard roof. The proposed windows are hideous and unsympathetic to the character of the existing property and to the neighbouring properties.

KTRA objects to the design of the windows on the proposed two storeys below the mansard roof. We object to aluminium frames, which are totally out of keeping with the style of the existing building and the buildings on either side. The applicant’s Design and Access Statement maintains: “Externally, the overall appearance of the scheme follows a loosely classical composition, with traditional materials”. Aluminium frames are certainly not “traditional materials” and should not be used when relating to historic buildings next door.

KTRA also objects to the proposed recessed windows. The applicant’s Design and Access Statement proposes: “The windows are framed and celebrated within splayed reveals reminiscent of historic interiors and donating a stylistic feature to an otherwise straightforward and minimal façade.” We don’t see this clumsy window design as a “celebration” but obtrusive and bearing no relation to the style of the property or the surrounding buildings.

The four apartments within the proposed building will not in any way help with the housing shortage as they fall well below affordable housing requirements and therefore would be very expensive and far out of the

reach of those who need housing most.

We would like to draw your attention to the adopted Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan (which is not referred to in the application): Policy D3: Design Principles states: "Applications for the redevelopment of existing buildings (including demolition and refurbishment) will be supported where they meet the following criteria:

- a) Proposals must be based on a comprehensive understanding of the site and its context.
- b) Proposals must be well integrated with their surroundings and reinforce and enhance local character, in line with paragraph 64 of the NPPF.
- c) Proposals should identify and extrapolate key aspects of character, or design cues from the surrounding area. Appropriate design cues include grain, building form (shape), scale, height and massing, alignment, modulation, architectural detailing, materials, public realm and boundary treatments.
- e) Design proposals must be of the highest quality and sustainable, using materials that complement the existing palette of materials in the surrounding buildings
- f) Proposals must enhance accessibility in buildings by taking into account barriers experienced by different user groups.

This application in no way recognises any of these points and cannot be supported by Kentish Town Road Action:

- The proposal shows no understanding of the site and its context.
- The proposal is not well integrated with the surroundings and does not reinforce or enhance local character.
- The design of the proposed windows and roof extension is in no way appropriate to the shape and architectural detailing of the original façade.
- The proposed aluminium window frames do not complement existing materials in surrounding buildings.
- There are five flights of stairs, and steps into the proposed building, and no lift. Therefore accessibility is neither enhanced, nor even attained.

For all the reasons above, we are asking that this application be refused in its entirety.

Should you recommend approval, we are asking for this application to be heard by the Development Committee.

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter and keep me informed about the progress of this application.

Yours Sincerely

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