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AMENITY GROUP CONSULTATION COMMENTS

Date 3 October 2017

Planning Application Address & Number

6 Stukeley Street WC2B 5LQ, 2017/4135/P

Proposal

Partial demolition of existing single-storey house and creation of 2 dwellings (1x2-bed 4-person, 1x2-bed 3-person) following erection of first floor and roof extension, excavation of basement level / lightwell and associated alterations (C3).

COMMENTS

The CGCA objects to these proposals, which are materially similar to proposals in an application that was refused by Camden, with the refusal upheld on appeal (see 2016/1445/P). The proposals in this application do not sufficiently address the reasons the Council gave for refusing the application, which were validated by the planning inspectorate. As such, the reasons the Council refused the previous proposals remain. This current application should be judged in the light of the inspector's decision letter and current adopted planning policies.

This site falls within the Seven Dials Conservation Area and, thus, is subject to Camden policies for conservation areas, including the Seven Dials Estate Conservation Area Statement, a statutory planning guidance document. This document notes that 6 Stukeley Street makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the conservation area.

The building's design, which contributes to the character of the conservation area, includes its "simple utilitarian appearance" (according to the inspector). Further, the Seven Dials Estate Conservation Area Statement specifies that the lower roof lines and cottage appearance of No. 6, as well as 4-14 Stukeley Street, contribute to the conservation area and, thus, are of local heritage value. Thus, it is well-established that 6 Stukeley Street is a recognised asset to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

6 Stukeley Street is a single-storey building with a hipped slate roof. As noted by the inspector, the building has a "modest scale including its height." The proposals would demolish the existing building behind a retained façade and replace it with a four-storey building that not only eliminates the "modest scale" of the building itself, but also would extend over the neighbouring buildings, including exceeding 4 Stukeley Street by more than 2 metres and 8 Stukeley Street by 1.5 metres.

The increase in height and mass would contradict the Conservation Area Statement and would result in a canyon-like effect on Stukeley Street by making this narrow street feel claustrophobic and pinned in. (We note that Stukeley Street measures just over 5.2m at its widest in this location.) The bulk and height of the proposed scheme will severely obscure the current views and outlook across the existing building, both from the street as well as from neighbouring commercial and residential properties.

These latest proposals do not address the height, bulk and mass issues raised by both the Council and the inspector. As proposed height increase would result in a harmful loss of scale within the streetscape, as well as an increase of enclosure within this part of the street and the loss of the view above the existing building towards the rear elevations of other buildings

Covent Garden Community Association, *continued...*

within the conservation area would be harmful to the character and setting of the conservation area.

Further, the proposed design is out of keeping with the conservation area and adjacent buildings. The proposals call for the building to consist of glass blocks, which clash with the existing character of Stukeley Street and surrounding properties, including nearby almshouses, and upend the scale of the area's built environment.

The CGCA agrees with the inspector that this is sufficient reason to refuse the application. However, we also object to the impact on residential amenity, including outlook, privacy and views, and quality of residential accommodation, including sustainability.

Ultimately, the proposals will have significant negative impacts on Stukeley Street, including adjacent residents and tenants. As the recognised amenity society for Covent Garden, the CGCA represents the voices of local residents and, as such, our comments reflect the concerns of the community at large. Affected residents have voiced their objections and concerns directly to the CGCA.

The proposed development would turn a narrow, yet open and light thoroughfare, into a dark and unremarkable alley. Existing residents, including those in Goldsmith Court, would have significant impact to their amenity, including to their access to daylight and sunlight and existing views. The proposals do not respect the character of the Seven Dials Conservation Area and, as such, fail to enhance or protect the conservation area. Given this, the proposals are inappropriate and should be refused.

Comments submitted by

Meredith Whitten on behalf of the Covent Garden Community Association

