

**An objection to the application to erect a garden shed at 29 Dartmouth Park Road NW5 1SU – application 2017/6068/P - from the Bellgate Mews Residents Association.**

Dear Sirs,

**Re - Application 29 Dartmouth Park Road NW5 1SU - 2017/6068/P**

Please find below our comments on the application.

**1.0 Information provided and not provided in the application.**

1.1 Beginning with the title, the application is disingenuous. The proposal is referred to as shed, is clearly considerably more than a shed. A dictionary definition may be useful here,

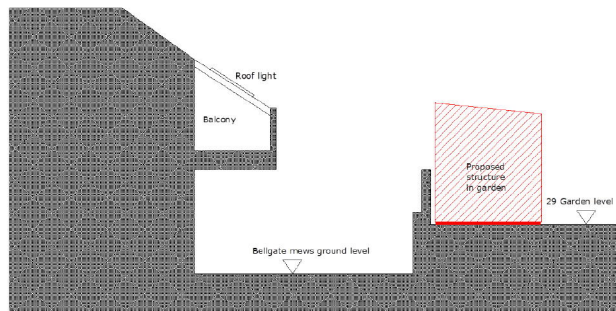
*“a slight or rude structure built for shelter, storage, etc.”*... If we refer to Camden’s UDP/Framework document, in clause 2.1.7 relevant for a conservation area we find the following: “Rear garden shed/greenhouse in a conservation area exceeding 10 cubic metres shall be treated as an extension for the house”. This is clearly a garden room with the potential for a variety of uses, which is located less than 5m from the windows of residential buildings in the mews behind at the level of the bedrooms. The elevation shown is that of garden room that will be used as part of the house.

1.2 The foundation solution/protection and retention of trees in the conservation area, we find it difficult to believe that this foundation solution is appropriate to the site conditions. The plan form of the building shows a cut out for the tree that is very tight to the trunk. This presents a number of potential problems that have not been identified or addressed in the tree report. The tree is not a single straight trunk but splits into 2 separate ones, the one to the house side spreading at a less than 75deg angle towards the house which would place the trunk at the 3m level much closer to the front. We also doubt if there would be sufficient space for the tree to move in the wind or to take account of future growth. The roof of the new structure will also divert water away from the roots, placing the viability of the tree at risk in periods of low rain fall. The foundation solution

relies on a regular pattern of the plastic stakes and would need to follow the perimeter of the structure or have an element of cantilever to the raft if this were not possible. With respect to the first point in the area of the cut out next to the trunk, the roots will be very dense in this area. The method statement stated in the application could not be followed. If there is the need to cantilever the raft then it will dramatically increase in thickness, which could only be accommodated by raising the height of the building. The intrusive nature of the foundation proposal so close to the root bowl would put the tree at risk and we suspect the end goal is the complete removal of the tree.

- 1.3 The application seems to be missing key information, we would argue, because this would reveal the true impact of the proposal on the neighbouring properties and the conservation area as a whole. The drawings both fail to show context in respect of the buildings around the proposal and deliberately clip the views or omit to show key information. There are lines that allude to fences and screening that does not exist. The actual wall between garden and the mews is not shown and is fudged with a fake fence line, giving a misleading impression that it is higher than it is, and thus to the amount of the proposed structure that will be above the wall line. There is also no design and access statement. We have provided below what we believe is the missing section taken front to rear through the wall with the mews to illustrate our understanding of the proposal in figure 1. Rear and flank elevations are also omitted. We hope this will make the point that that the missing information is more than an administrative oversight. We feel the Architects are fully aware of the nature of the information on this drawing as they have even omitted their title block from

this drawing.



**Figure 1** Section through garden of 29 and Bellgate Mews proposal shown in red hatch.

**2.0 The built reality compared to the drawn proposal. With the limited information on the drawing, assumptions have to be made. These are made with a justification given.**

- 2.1 The raft or base appears to be 100mm deep (taken from dimension on elevation). This is shown bearing directly on the ground. This cannot be the case for a number of reasons: the structure would remain damp and rot, also this does not allow for seasonal movement or heave of the roots. Thus, the reality would be that this would be a suspended structure; the thickness would need to increase and, due the limited headroom in the building, the roof would have to increase in height.
- 2.2 The proposal states that a planted roof will be used. The drawings seem to indicate a thickness of 100mm. Assuming that this is just a fascia board then certain assumptions have to be made for a living roof: there will be drainage and a soil layer. We assert that this would be 100mm minimum, there would need to be a water proofing membrane, a protective layer and deck laid to minimum 1:20 fall. This, we argue, would add a further 120mm. Even though the span is around 3m, the dead load would be high due the construction. We would expect the structural depth to be around 250mm. When this build up is compared to the dimensions on the drawing, the actual internal ceiling height would be circa 2.1 m. It is clear that the

purpose of the room is some of sort of party, music, hobby or office space. This ceiling height would not be suitable for these purposes. Thus, we would expect the as built to migrate higher during the construction. This would place Camden in a difficult position as enforcement would be both costly for the tax payers of Camden plus could result in a case brought against Camden by the residents of Bellgate Mews if infractions were let go, neither of which is in the communities' interest.

### **3.0 Planning considerations.**

- 3.1 Size, bulk and scale. The proposal, although drawn as building at the end of a residential garden, in fact sits in an elevated position (ground level 1.5m above street level in mews) directly in front of habitable room windows (4.3m). The massing and scale will produce an oppressive and overbearing sense of enclosure to the front of the houses in the mews. This is further exacerbated by the choice of materials. Even though from the applicant's side they have chosen a Western Red Cedar board, on the mews side this is plywood with creosote. That is not to say, a change of material in this area would change the comments made but it does show a less than neighbourly approach by the applicant.
- 3.2 Loss of light to residential properties. One would need a daylight study to quantify this matter but there would be loss of light. Even if this could be shown not to be material, it would still be detrimental to the existing houses in Bellgate Mews.
- 3.3 Noise and environmental nuisance. It is clear that the building is not a shed due to its size and fenestration despite the description. The likely use by the applicant or subsequent residents of 29 would be for other purposes that could both increase the activity and noise at the end of their garden. Within 5m and at the same level are the bedrooms of the residential properties in the mews. Their right of privacy and quiet enjoyment of their home should not be put at risk.
- 3.4 Risk to trees and landscape which provide a positive contribution to the Conservation Areas. These trees are not just at the bottom of a private garden but are principle landscape features within the mews.
- 3.5 Detriment to the streetscape to Bellgate Mews and the conservation area as a whole. The design of the building is a plywood box stained in

creosote in an elevated position at the end of the mews. It makes no positive contribution to the Conservation area as demanded under the UDP and Framework document. In fact, we would assert that it positively harms the Conservation Areas by its form, materials used, scale and location.

- 3.6 Risk of precedent. Granting of such a scheme would set a dangerous precedent, which would be used by the other houses in the road to adversely affect the environmental quality of the residents of Bellgate Mews and similar locations.

We would ask the Authority to consider the above comments and would urge that this application, and the further variants of it that we expect to be follow, be refused.

**Deborah Ryan, Chair, Bellgate Mews Residents Association, 6 Bellgate Mews, London NW5 1SW.** [REDACTED]

