

## **Planning and Conservation Appraisal**

### **1.0 Existing Property and Adjacent Property and the proposal.**

1.1 Number 7 Modbury Gardens is an end of terrace house and comprises a lower and upper ground floor, first floor and a second floor within the mansard roof. Planning permission has been granted on appeal to add a half-width glazed extension at the far side of the terrace bordering the open space at the end of the terrace, and this is shown on the submitted plans (existing and proposed) as approved.

1.2 The front elevation has a rendered façade with sash and would not be at all affected either by the approved or this proposal.

1.3 At the rear of the property the house has previously been extended at lower and upper ground floor level as have the majority of properties in the terrace (in various forms). This existing extension is of brick construction with black aluminium frame doors with double glazed panels. There is an existing terrace at first floor level with the balustrade on the west elevation formed by a brick parapet. The remaining west elevation and, south and east elevations have a cedar balustrade.

1.4 The adjoining neighbour's house, 6 Modbury Gardens, has also previously been extended at lower and upper ground floor level. There is an existing terrace at first floor level with a full height translucent glass screen on the west and east elevation.

1.5 That property has also very recently submitted a planning application for a full width rear extension. This has been discussed with the occupiers of number 7 in advance and a common letter signed by both has been submitted along with each application confirming they are in agreement with each other's plans while an image also submitted with each represents what the extensions would look like.

1.6 In the case of number 7 the small single storey extension now proposed is essentially a squaring off of a gap that now exists, to create better useable internal space and it incorporates a non-accessible partly glazed roof. It is of modern simple design which would merge with the existing rear of the property. Similar high quality designs which inspired this are included in the application.

1.7 In terms of design or other impact the extension would not be visible and would not affect the conservation area, while it is of modest size. It makes sense in planning terms as regards the much better arrangement which would internally to the property. All properties in the terrace have been extensively extended in many various ways both at low and higher levels (several more noticeable) and the impact of this small extension would be small and we feel an improvement.

### **2.0 Relevant Planning Policy in the context of the proposal.**

#### **2.1 National Policy - NPPF**

The role of sustainable development is social and economic as well as environmental. Socially and economically this is obviously an acceptable proposal as it would improve living accommodation and allow for some new economic activity. This is made clear in paragraph 7 of the NPPF. Paragraph 14 stresses that LPAs must be approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay and granting permission unless:– any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or– specific policies in this

Framework indicate otherwise. We believe that the benefits of the proposal justify its approval and that the proposal is supported by the NPPF.

2.2 Core Principles under Paragraph 17 ask LPAs to: "...take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas... and ...encourage the effective use of land...".....in reaching decisions. The extension will make the property more effective in its use without adversely affecting its appearance.

2.3 Section 7 on good design, Paragraph 57 states that: "It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes." LPAs should:"...establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit; ...and ...optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development..."

2.4 This new innovative and simple small addition to infill a little-used gap in a contemporary design will remain harmonious and "well – bonded" with both the period house and terrace and result in a synthesis that will also act as a more attractive defining conclusion to the rear of the building than it currently appears. At the same time this would offer the obvious important general policy objective of creating a more comfortable and attractive place to live and maximize the use of the building.

2.5 The NPPF continues by stating developments should aim to ensure that they: "respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;" and "are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping". Local character in this area and street would not be affected by this small extension entirely at rear. This solution is specifically designed to produce an innovative, light, simple and elegant addition which would not antagonise or compete with the building or terrace.

2.6 Both the resulting bulk and mass have been moderated but kept importantly in context with the sideways projection to which it would link both in terms of function and in terms of any visual impact. We therefore consider that this specific proposal is indeed supported by the important objective set out in the NPPF (paragraph 60) which states clearly that: "Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. Camden cannot certainly be accused of this as it follows the scope of the NPPF's paragraph 63 in its planning decisions: "In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area".

### **Local Camden Policy**

2.7 Camden Local Planning Policy 2010 states that: "The Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by: a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and

character; b) preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens; c) promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces; d) seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible; e) protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites inside and outside the borough and protecting important local views." We believe our design achieves the relevant parts of the above.

2.8 In a similar vein Camden LDF Policy DP24 states that: "The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider: a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings; b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed; c) the quality of materials to be used; d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level; e) the appropriate location for building services equipment; f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees; g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments; h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and i) accessibility." Again, the small extension is in conformity.

2.9 Policy DP24 writes: "The Council is committed to design excellence and a key strategic objective of the borough is to promote high quality, sustainable design. This is not just about the aesthetic appearance of the environment, but also about enabling an improved quality of life, equality of opportunity and economic growth. We will therefore apply Policy DP24 to ensure that all developments throughout the borough, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, are of the highest standard of design." Care has been taken to follow this here.

2.10 Local policy stresses that Camden is a densely built-up borough where most development involves the replacement, extension or conversion of existing buildings. Design should respond creatively to its site and its context. This concerns both smaller-scale alterations and extensions and larger developments, the design and layout of which should take into account the pattern and size of blocks, open spaces, gardens and streets in the surrounding area (the 'urban grain'). The Council seeks to encourage outstanding architecture and design, both in contemporary and more traditional styles. Innovative design can greatly enhance the built environment and, unless a scheme is within an area of homogenous architectural style that is important to retain, high quality contemporary design will be welcomed." Again, this emphasises Camden's interest in and support of good quality contemporary architecture which we like to think are producing with this extension.

### **3.0 Conclusion**

There is often scope for design and amenity improvement to properties and there certainly is in the case with this modest addition. We trust LBC will agree with us.

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