



10A SOUTH GROVE
HIGHGATE
LONDON
N6 6BS

Samir Benmbarek
Planning Solutions Team
Planning and Regeneration
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Argyle Street
London WC1H 8EQ

20 January, 2018

By email only

Dear Mr Benmbarek

RE: Planning Application Reference 2017/5297/P – Flats 2 and 3, 3 Highgate High Street, N6 5JR

On behalf of the Highgate Society, I would like to submit the following comments on the application to replace the rear façade windows and install a roof terrace at 3 Highgate High Street, as per the application reference above.

Windows

The Society does not support the proposed plans to alter the window forms. Although the building is not statutorily listed, it is identified by Camden as a positive contributor to the Conservation Area. And although only the rear façade is affected, Camden Council Conservation Area Management policy is quite clear that “the loss of ... sash windows ... can have a considerable negative impact.” We would therefore stress that best practice in terms of historic preservation of a heritage asset, in this case the Highgate Conservation Area, and according to adopted policy is to replace original architectural features only when absolutely necessary and with like for like. It should be pointed out that the comparative photos included in the application are of the rear façades of Bisham Gardens, whose houses date to a later development period, and not those of the terrace in question.

We are also unhappy with the proposed additional balcony unit. However small or incremental, such features fundamentally alter the character of the original Victorian elevation and therefore should be resisted in the interests of historic design integrity.

Roof Terrace

The Highgate Society also finds the proposed introduction of a roof terrace within the original valley roof unacceptable. Not only does such a structure provide precedent to allow future applications for full infill of the valleys, it also compromises the essential nature of the terrace's historic roof configuration. As was pointed out in the Officer Report on the refusal of 2005/2189/P to build a roof extension at this property, "The roofscape remains unimpaired by roof alterations and roof extensions. Policy justification states that ... it is important to preserve the roofs unaltered where this occurs." The authentic valley roofs of Nos. 3-9 Highgate High Street continue to remain intact, and we would emphasise that as such, they constitute a meaningful and valuable element of historic relevance which should not be corrupted. On a practical note, the replacement of the valley and its accompanying guttering system with a large area of flat roof is also likely to pose problems of damp and drainage to the adjacent external wall and the structure of the ceilings below, thereby compromising the quality of the historic fabric.

On the basis of the above, the Highgate Society objects to Planning Application 2017/5297/P to alter the windows of the rear façade and install a roof terrace at 3 Highgate High Street on the grounds that these proposals will cause harm to an original building and positive contributor in the Highgate Conservation Area.

Yours sincerely,
TR Blackshaw
Highgate Society Planning Group

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