

London Borough of Camden
Development Management
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5 Pancras Square
c/o Town Hall,
Judd St
London
WC1H 9JE

4 February 2018

Dear Ms Chana

I am the owner of 76 Lawn Road, NW3 2XB. I am writing to object to the planning application for the house next door, 75 Lawn Road (Planning reference 2017/6726/P).

Before discussing my objections to the plans for 75 Lawn Road, I would like to emphasize that my house, 76 Lawn Road, is situated between 77 and 75, both of which are planning increased footprints, especially at the sides and back, and digging of basements (77 has been approved, 75 has not yet submitted basement plans but has made this intention clear in an email to me). This will be submitted when/if planning permission for increased footprint is approved. This leaves me in between 2 very big projects which will threaten the structure of my house, and make living in it whilst construction is going on quite unbearable. It is likely that I will be forced to move out for a considerable period. I would like to be certain that that this will be given due consideration by the planning committee both in terms of ground and water movement, structural considerations, stress and noise.

The submitted planning application for 75 Lawn Road conflicts with a number of published planning and conservation policies and guidances, including Camden's Local Plan 2017, Camden's supplementary planning guidance CPG 1- Design and CPG 5 □Amenity, and the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy.

Key areas of concern are:

- Overbearing and development in rear gardens
- Overlooking and loss of privacy
- Inappropriate design
- Impact on the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area

Overbearing – rear of property

At the rear of the property, the proposed rear two-storey infill extension, which also extends the existing pitched roof outwards into the garden of 75 Lawn Road, will create a domineering and bulky two-storey rear extension that is totally out of scale with the original house. Viewed from my garden, the development's size will be overbearing and out of character for the rear of these 1920s Arts & Crafts style family homes. The proposed width will be more than double the existing two-storey rear extension at 75 Lawn Road; the addition of a pitched roof adds considerably to the overall depth and height of the roofline at the back of the house.

Figure 1 (overleaf) is an illustrative image to show the increase in bulk and overbearing nature of the overall extension. The development is contrary to Camden's Local Plan Policy A1 and Camden Planning Guidance 6 in terms of the impact of the development and the proximity, size and cumulative effect of structures. The proposed structure will have a detrimental effect on my property, specifically my garden.

Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) 1 (Design) requires that development should have a minimal visual impact on, and is visually subordinate to, the host garden. It should also not detract from the open character and garden amenity of the neighbouring gardens. The proposed two-storey, plus pitched roof, rear extension at 75 Lawn Road clearly fails that guidance.

Both 75 Lawn Road and my own house, 76 Lawn Road, already have historic additions at the sides of the houses. At 75 Lawn Road, Second World War bomb damage required the rebuild of the side garage and 1st floor extension on the south flank; for reasons that are not recorded this rebuild (between 1945 and 1953) was sited further towards the back garden than the original garage. This created the current rear projection from the house that is approximately 2.3m wide where it meets the garden. In 1956 a matching side extension was built on my house. Both existing extensions have flat roofs and are clearly subordinate to the main houses, unlike the proposed development.

The proposed new rear extension at 75 Lawn Road will be around 6m wide, more than double the existing width of the rear projection and with a far higher roofline as viewed from my property. This scale of development is inappropriate. A one-storey infill extension would avoid this issue.



Figure 1: Illustration of impact of proposed rear two-storey extension as seen from the middle of the garden at 76 Lawn Road

Loss of privacy – rear of the property

The first floor of the proposed two-storey rear extension at 75 Lawn Road will create a new master bedroom suite. Currently the only window at number 75 that overlooks my garden is the post-1945 side extension window to the small 2.3m wide room. The window of the existing main rear bedroom at 75 Lawn Road does not overlook my garden.

Under the proposed development the window for the new master bedroom suite will be pushed out into the garden by about 3.5m and will have a single large window with a full view of my garden. This will increase overlooking.

Camden guidance requires that privacy of neighbours is protected.

Overbearing – front of the property

The impact of the proposed development of the side extension at the top of the driveway of 75 Lawn Road does not fully come across in the CAD before and after images provided by the applicants in 'Front and 3D massing views' (Figure 2).

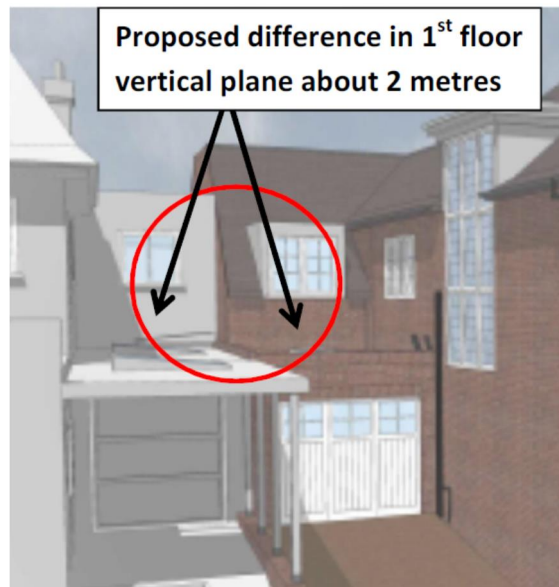


Figure 2: Excerpt from applicants' 'Front and 3D massing views' showing planned 1st floor front extension (annotations added)

The CAD image does not fully represent how the vertical plane of the new front-extended 1st floor extension will no longer be flush with the 1st floor of my house, 76 Lawn Road. The proposed floor plans show that this face has been pushed forward from the existing house by approximately 2m. It will thus project forward significantly compared to the existing house and be very visible from both of my two 1st floor windows that are nearest to the boundary with 75 Lawn Road.

The proposed design will create the only example along this row of Lawn Road Arts & Crafts style houses where the 1st floor front facade is not flush with the adjoining house.

Combined with the proposed new front dormer window, the proposed 1st floor front extension is contrary to the guidance in the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy.

Inappropriate Design – rear of property

The overbearing mass and scale of the proposed two-storey rear infill extension, plus new extended pitched roof, does not respect the local context and character and is contrary to Local Plan Policy D1. The extension is clearly not subordinate to the original house (CPG 1), as is shown in the applicants' own images (Figure 3).

The design pays no attention to the prevailing scale, form and proportion and materials of the original 1920s house. It will also destroy the remaining symmetry with its twinned house, 74 Lawn Road.

Several extensive renovation projects have already been carried out, or are planned, along this row of Arts & Crafts style twinned houses. In no other case has a two-storey rear extension been built where the width of the two-storey extension is two-thirds of the width of the whole house. All other existing or permitted two-storey extensions are at most one-third of the width of the whole house and therefore appear subordinate to the original property. Thus the total mass and height of the proposed rear extension does not respect the existing patterns of rear extensions, where they exist.



Figure 3: Applicants' before and after' CAD images

The bulk, mass and scale of the proposed domineering rear extension at 75 Lawn Road would be unprecedented, contrary to planning guidance, and should be refused.

Impact on the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area

Several aspects of the design and development plan are contrary to the Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area. Here are two examples.

Demolition

75 Lawn Road is one of the 1920s houses that have been judged to make a positive contribution to the conservation area and are thus under its protection. The conservation area strategy, in line with other Camden planning guidance including the Camden Local Plan, states:

"The Council will not grant consent for the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area".

It is therefore unacceptable that the planning application includes the demolition of the whole of the back of the house, including a substantial section of the original 1920s house (Figure 4, overleaf). While it may be appropriate (given an acceptable design) for the post-1945 side of the house to be demolished and rebuilt, it is against conservation area principles and planning guidelines for a large section of the original 1920s house to be demolished.

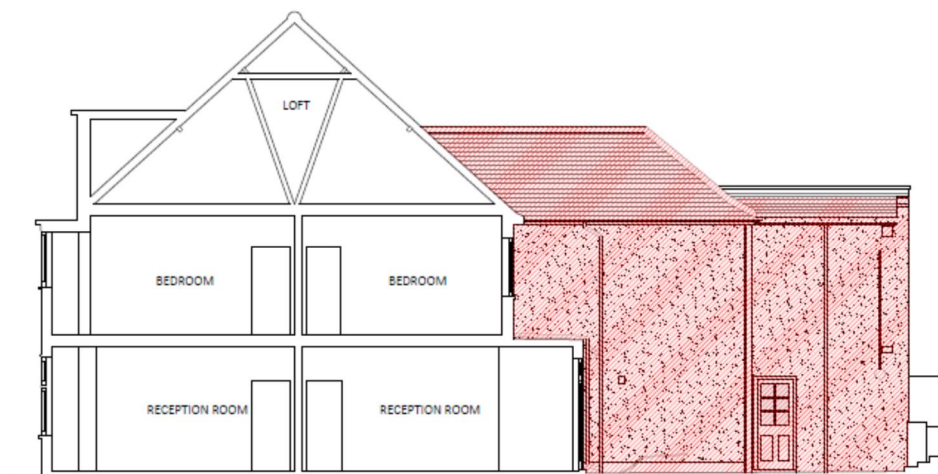


Figure 4: "Floor Plans Sections and Elevations – existing": Section B-B; Applicants' red = Proposed area for demolition

This demolition of a large section of the original fabric of the Arts & Crafts style house is unnecessary for the renovation of one of these houses and should be refused. The conservation area strategy states: 'New development, involving the demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, will not be supported by the Council (policy CS14 of Camden Core Strategy and policy DP25 of Camden Development Policies).'

Separately, proceeding with unnecessary demolition is contrary to a number of environmental policies and guidelines. These include:

- **GLA Sustainable Design and Construction SPG 2014.** Section 2.7.8: Design Stage, Managing existing resources. 'Developers should always look for options to sensitively reuse, refurbish, repair and convert buildings, rather than wholesale demolition.' Section 2.7.21: 'Reducing waste, which is at the top of the waste hierarchy, should be developers' preferred option. This means, it is better to prevent waste being produced in the first place rather than to recycle or dispose of waste that is produced. Developers should focus on opportunities for waste reduction from the outset, at the earliest stages of design'.
- **Camden Planning Guidance CPG 3 – Sustainability.** Section 8, Sustainable use of materials, Section 8.4 Managing existing resources: 'You should always look for options to sensitively reuse, refurbish, repair and convert buildings, rather than wholesale demolition (see Camden Development Policies paragraph 22.4). This will reduce the amount of resources used and will help reduce construction waste.'

Materials for rear façade

The proposed development is also inappropriate in terms of the use of red brick as the façade for the whole of the rebuilt rear of the house (Figure 3). A key design feature of the (originally) two-storey 1920s style Arts & Crafts style houses on the west side of Lawn Road is that the backs of the houses are white pebbledash render.

Currently these houses (nos. 72-82) have white render finish at the rear (at 72 Lawn Road the render is unpainted). To depart so radically from this design feature would be contrary to conservation area guidance and out of character with a prominent heritage feature of these properties.

Previously Camden Planning has insisted that renovations of these properties retain a white render finish and it would be inconsistent to allow otherwise. Any development at 75 Lawn Road should therefore be required to use white render at the rear.

Infill Extensions

After demolishing the post-1945 side extension, the applicants propose to rebuild from the ground up. The new design includes a large ground floor front extension and, as mentioned above, a 1st floor front extension and front dormer window.

The Parkhill and Upper Park Conservation Area Appraisal states that where infill extensions are acceptable in principle they should:

- Be no more than two storeys in height with the highest part of the extension no higher than the line of the cornice to the front porch. Mansard roofs and entrance doors into the side extension are not considered acceptable.
- Be subordinate to the design of the main building and clearly read as an extension.
- Be set back from the front and rear building lines by a minimum of 1m (a larger setback may be required in some circumstances).

The proposal for the new side extension does not meet these criteria:

- The rebuilt two storey side extension would not be subordinate to the main building. The large ground floor front extension means that *the footprint of the side extension will increase from currently around 13 sq. metres to a total of more than 30 sq. metres – i.e. more than doubling the footprint.*
- The greatly enlarged side extension does not meet the desired setback distances.
- The increased bulk of the side extension, combined with the new large side pitched roof, means that the proposed side extension would not be clearly identified as an extension to the original property.

Basement plans

As mentioned, the new owners of 75 Lawn Road have informed me that they will be following this planning application with a separate application for a basement under the whole of the proposed extended footprint of the house.

This is not included in the present application, unlike at 77 Lawn Road where the recent planning application (2016/1737/P) included both the proposed changes above ground and the new basement.

Regarding 75 Lawn Road, should Camden Planning clarify the basement plans in order to be able to make a comprehensive assessment on the overall scale of the redevelopment planned for the property?

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,
Ellen Solomon
76 Lawn Road